The importance of small archaeological finds from Glasinac

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Abstract: This paper presents unpublished finds from the Glasinac area, which became part of the museum’s collections in the last couple of years. Most of them are chance finds of pottery and ornaments or finds from small-scale excavations undertaken recently. The large quantity of stratified pottery from the hillfort of Gradac in Sokolac provides a chronological frame for the activities at the site and exhibits a good correlation with the finds from the previously excavated nearby tumulus. Systematic research of the medieval site of Crkvina at Glasinac plain also revealed the existence of an older hillfort settlement dating to the Late Bronze Age. This recent discovery increases the number of the known hillforts in the Glasinac area from 54 to 55. In the vicinity of this site, we discovered a tumulus necropolis, probably connected to the Crkovina hillfort. One of these tumuli was excavated during 2014 campaign and is described in this contribution.

Key words: Glasinac, Late Bronze Age, Early Iron Age, hillforts, tumulus

Introduction

More than one century after the initial discovery, Glasinac is still one of the most important archaeological areas in the Balkans. In some ways, it became a paradigm of Bosnian prehistoric archaeology. Large quantity of material, mainly from burial mounds, challenged archaeological interpretations for many generations. The main focus of research was, and still is, the interpretation of already existing material that come from more than a thousand tumuli. In addition, the archaeological research has been unable to challenge many of the traditional approaches due to a lack of new research and new data. During the 1950s, A. Benac and B. Čović re-examined the Glasinac material from early excavations and created the basic chronological division of the archaeological material into five phases, Glasinac I–V, which, with some additional changes in certain types of objects, is still applied today. In the 1980s, B. Govedarica created a new approach to the study of the material culture of Glasinac with an emphasis placed on the research of the hillforts. With a new methodological approach and in collaboration with other disciplines, the results – at least those that have been published – were extraordinary. This promising research was interrupted with the outbreak of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the early 1990s. After that, research has never continued to the same degree. In spite of the wealth of studies con-
cerned with the material culture from Glasinac, a great deal is still unknown. This applies in particular to the study of the archaeology of the living. Nevertheless, despite numerous gaps in the earlier research, we have a large database, which can help us with current interpretation.

Crkvina

During the rescue excavations of the medieval necropolis at the site of Crkvina on the Glasinac plateau in 2013–2014 we were able to detect the existence of older cultural layers dating to the Late Bronze Age (Br D – Ha B). In published reports, this site is known as a large medieval necropolis with a possible church structure from the same period. The settlement was built on an elongated hilly plateau, loosely connected in its western part to the neighbouring mountain. The plateau is oriented east-west with a clear view of Glasinac plateau and other hillforts in its surroundings. The hillfort can be classified as a so-called lingulate hillfort, according to classification of B. Govedarica. On the eastern and northern sides, there were no traces of fortifications due to the very steep terrain. The fortification wall is likely to have stood on the western and southern sides, where the approach was the easiest. During the Middle Ages, the whole plateau was used as a necropolis and churchyard. Therefore, any trac-

9 Jašarević / Antić 2017, 225.
10 Стратимировић 1891, 331–332.
11 Govedarica 1985, 17.
es of the prehistoric architecture were destroyed. The layers with cultural materials are very thin and disrupted by very deep burial pits that were cut into the bedrock. The central part of the plateau was destroyed during the construction of the medieval church. Despite these unfavourable circumstances, we were able to collect some finds that helped to define the chronology of the site and its cultural stratigraphy. Most of the material comprised the remains of animal bones, mainly small mammals, sheeps and goats. Game was present in small numbers.

Ceramic finds, which are rather fragmentary, are most important for constructing chronology and stratigraphy of the site. A group of diagnostic vessels with a single high round handle attest occupation of the site during the Bronze Age. A major problem that we encountered, however, was the absence of reliable absolute dates and a lack of stratigraphic context for pottery finds from Glasinac. The basic chronological framework for most prehistoric periods in different regions of Bosnia is in most cases based only on the development of pottery styles. Particularly in areas where metal finds are absent or where metals finds are not well preserved, the pottery, as the most common category of finds, serves as a primary source of information. All ceramic material from Glasinac and the surrounding area, however, comes primarily from early excavations without clear descriptions of the stratigraphic context and the relationships to the metal finds. B. Čović discussed this problem in his doctoral dissertation and suggested how to define diagnostic ceramic forms of certain periods. According to his chronology, vessels with a single high round handle (Fig. 2, 3) or a crest handle, sometimes with perforation, date to the Middle or Late Bronze Age. This is one of the common ceramic types at the Glasinac hillfort and at hillforts around the Glasinac area. The same pottery can be found at sites of Kusača, Belogradčica, Soukbunar, and Fortica. According to the B. Čović's revised chronology, this type of pottery dates Phase Glasinac IIIa-b, although the shapes occurred throughout all phases of Late Bronze Age. In Gradina in Sovići this type of handles is typical for the second phase of this settlement, which can be dated broadly from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age. Pottery from Gradina in Kreće has been dated to the same period based on the comparison with the abovementioned sites. More precise dating has been provided by M. Gavranović. According to him, the dating between the 14th and the 12th century BC (corresponding to the Debelo Brdo Phase B-C) can be proposed. Same pottery type from sites like Prispu near Livno in Western Bosnia has also been dated to the end of the Middle Bronze Age and the Late Bronze Age.

One of the pottery shapes from Crkvina that were partially reconstructed are bowls with flat cut wide rims. This type occurs over a wide territory and had a long tradition of use. At Vara, they were found associated with Phases B and C1, while at Pod near Bugojno they were characteristic of Phase B and often had decorated rims. Finds from Debelo Brdo have been dated to the same period. In the Glasinac area, bowls of this type belong to Phases Glasinac IIIa-b. During fieldwork in 2014 we were able to locate a necropolis with tumuli in Crkvina, which is probably directly related to settlement on the plateau, located some 500 m to the east. About 10 tumuli of different diameter and height are located at the site. This broad meadow on a hill slope does not have a specific name and the site is usually called Brdo above Crkvina. Most of the tumuli are relatively small, around 5 m in diameter and around 1 m in height. The largest tumulus

12 We wish to express our gratitude to dr. sc. Jelena Bula-tović from the Laboratory for Bioarchaeology at Belgrade University for conducting preliminary osteoarchaeological analysis.

13 Čović 1965b, 35–39; Gavranović 2011, 40–111.
14 Horejs 2010, 15.
15 Čović 1965b, 78–79.
16 Ibid. 79.
17 Ibid. 79; 1983c, 431.
18 Ibid., Tab. XXII, 2–4.
Figure 2: Pottery fragments from the Crkvina hillfort
was located on the west side of the necropolis. It had a diameter of 12–13 m and preserved height up to 1 m. This is the only tumulus at the necropolis that has been excavated during the 2014 campaign.

The tumulus was formed from earth and stone, with no traces of any funerary construction. It is interesting that the naturally elevated terrain was selected for the erection of the tumulus, as it added an appearance of a bigger and higher construction. Under the upper layer of the tumulus, almost at its centre, a part of a human mandible and small fragments of human bones were found (Figure 3). The remains were piled up together with fragments of pottery and animal bones. The concentration of the finds shows that it is not a regular, or normative, burial similar to that found in the other excavated tumuli in Glasinac. There was no trace of cremation on the bones, but we cannot confirm an inhumation burial either, as the bones were not in an anatomical position. We further do not know whether the deceased was placed in some sort of a burial pit.

Fragments of pottery and animal bones were also found scattered in this central area. Because of fragmentation, it is impossible to reconstruct precisely the form of the vessels. Based on the composition and small details of design, we can confirm that they are prehistoric, most likely a beaker with two handles and several bowls with slightly cut rims (Figure 4), which we encountered also in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age phases at Glasinac. Therefore, to sum up, the finds of dislocated human bones mixed with ceramics and animal bones suggest that it is a secondary burial, or perhaps the remnants of some kind of a ritual activity, which took place in the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age. Alternatively, the form of these remains may simply be due to a damage caused by looting of the tumuli in the ancient times.

The necropolis near Crkvina has been known since F. Fiala excavated four tumuli at this location in 1895. Three excavated tumuli were empty, while the fourth, which was the largest, contained burnt bones and dislocated remains of the deceased. In this Tumulus IV, Fiala found fragments of iron knives, bronze tweezers, a fragment of probably some kind of boat-shaped fibula, an amber bead, and pottery sherds. It is thus interesting that in both cases, the larger Crkvina tumuli yielded dislocated remains of the deceased.

**Gradac, Sokolac**

Over the last few years, the Museum in Doboj received a collection of pottery from the site of Gradac in Sokolac. These finds are important not because of their quantity, but because of the variety of individual pottery shapes. Gradac has been known for a long time as the place where Č. Truhelka began his archaeological excavations on the Glasinac plateau. His interest focused on the excavation of tumuli around the hillfort of Gradac. Much of the central part of the prehistoric settlement had been destroyed by the construction of the Church of St. Elijah in the late 19th century and by the levelling of the surrounding terrain for outbuildings and an access road to the churchyard. The site is located on a small

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34 Čović 1983c, 422–423; Čović 1987b, 590.
Figure 4: Pottery fragments from Tumulus I, Crkvena
natural rise and strategically dominates over the valley of River Rešetnica and the western part of the Glasinac plateau. The north and east side of the hillfort is rocky with a steep descent towards the river.\(^{40}\) The other two sides of the settlement were probably fortified by a stone wall. The collection of pottery finds at the museum comes either from the area of the modern cemetery or from the east side of Gradac hillfort.\(^{41}\)

Most pottery collected from Gradac in Sokolac contains fragments of handles and rims belonging to different type of bowls and cups. Among the chronologically diagnostic objects are finds of high rounded handles with perforation (Tab. 1, 1). Handles of the same type were found at hillfort of Kusače as well.\(^{42}\) Due to a lack of metal finds from Kusače comparable with those from the Glasinac area, the pottery was dated very widely from the end of the Middle Bronze Age throughout the Late Bronze Age.\(^{43}\) In his revised chronology, B. Čović dated the material from Kusače to phases Glasinac IIa-b, although it could span all phases of the Late Bronze Age.\(^{44}\)

Two handles from Gradac are the so-called small crested handles (Tab. 1, 2. 5). In addition to the Glasinac area, they were found in the ceramic assemblages from sites of Gradina in Sovići and Gradina in Kreće.\(^{45}\) Usually, they are characteristic of hillfort settlements around Sarajevo. Similar finds from Debelo Brdo,\(^{46}\) Fortica,\(^{47}\) and Kotorac\(^{48}\) are all dated to Debelo Brdo Phase C (12\(^{th}\) to 9\(^{th}\) century BC).\(^{49}\) According to A. Benac, pottery with small crested handles from Kotorac can be dated between the 9\(^{th}\) and the 8\(^{th}\) century BC,\(^{50}\) as it was found together with handles of the ansa bifora type.\(^{51}\) This type of handles occurs also in Varvara Phase C-2 (Ha A1), but finds from Glasinac and Sarajevo area date apparently somewhat later.\(^{52}\)

More precise dating can be offered by drawing on the stratigraphy of the settlement of Pod near Bugojno. Bowls with small vertical extension on the handles, seen in the ceramic repertoire from Gradac in Sokolac (Tab. 1, 4), are characteristic of Phase Pod B or Hallstatt B1-B2 of the Central European periodisation.\(^{53}\) More specifically, two ceramic types found in Gradac also appear in Phase Pod B. First is a fragment of a bowl with a faceted rim (Tab. 2, 1). Although it is quite typical of the ceramic material of this period from Central Bosnia,\(^{54}\) it is the first such find from Glasinac. The bowls emerged under the influence of the Urnfield culture from the southern edge of the Pannonian Plain, and became one of the favourite ceramic types in a wide area of Northern and Central Bosnia.\(^{55}\) In the late stages of the Late Bronze Age, they occur in far wider territory. According to B. Čović, it is likely that such a wide distribution was influenced by the exchange with the settlements from Central Bosnia.\(^{56}\) Therefore, it is not a surprise that the same type of bowl with a faceted rim was found at the hillfort of Korita in Southwestern Bosnia.\(^{57}\) Furthermore, there is no doubt that the influence from Central Bosnia, and particularly from the region around the Sarajevo plain, was strongly felt at Glasinac in terms of the selection of ceramic forms and their local production.\(^{58}\) This is supported by a discovery of a bowl from Gradac with one horizontal plastic strip modelled around its body and a vertical strip modelled from its rim to its body, in addition to decoration of zigzag lines (Tab. 2, 2). The same bowl was found at Debelo Brdo and was dated to Debelo Brdo Phase C.\(^{59}\)

In conclusion it can be stated that the chronologically diagnostic pottery pieces from Gradac point to the occupation of this site during the advanced stages of Late Bronze Age.

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\(^{40}\) Truhelka 1889, 25; Čović 1965a, 57.
\(^{41}\) All findings come from a modern burial pit.
\(^{42}\) Čović 1965b, Tab. XXII, 3; 1983c, 422.
\(^{43}\) Čović 1965b, 79-80.
\(^{44}\) Čović 1983c, 422.
\(^{45}\) Kosorić 1983, 78.
\(^{46}\) Kocopril 1994, 11.
\(^{47}\) Fiala 1894, 109; Gavranović 2011, 27, Teil 2.
\(^{48}\) Ćurčić 1908, 377.
\(^{49}\) Korole 1940, 77–82.
\(^{50}\) Gavranović 2011, 27, Teil 2.
\(^{52}\) Gavranovic 2011, 27, Teil 2.
\(^{53}\) Čović 1983c, 422.
\(^{54}\) Čović 1965b, 51; Gavranović 2011, 98, Teil 2.
\(^{55}\) Gavranovic 2011.
\(^{56}\) Ibid. 47.
\(^{57}\) Čović 1965b, 87; Govedarica 1982, 176.
\(^{58}\) Govedarica 1982, 177, Tab. XI, 11.
\(^{59}\) Čović 1983b, 404. 406.
\(^{60}\) Fiala 1894, 110, Tab. III, 3; Gavranović 2011, 27–28, Teil 2.
The archaeological collection of the Tolisa Franciscan Monastery Museum holds an interesting find from the area of Eastern Bosnia. According to the museum inventory, a bronze fibula from the vicinity of the town of Čajniče is a chance find gifted to the monastery from an unknown donor. The fibula belongs to the widespread type of boat-shaped Rusanovići type fibula, as identified by B. Teržan. The fibula has a boat-shaped full cast bow with a small horizontal crest at the top, and with two lines of perforated dots and with a trapezoidal foot with vertical shallow grooves at each end. Part of the foot is damaged and only a section of the ring is preserved. The ring is decorated with hanging pendants characteristic for this type of fibula (Figure 6, 1).

According to B. Teržan, the boat-shaped Rusanovići type fibulae originated from the South-eastern Alpine boat-shape fibulae of the so-called Šmarjeta type. On the Glasinac plateau, however, they received various innovative designs and forms, and became part of a recognizable local fashion. Comparative examples to this type of fibulae are numerous, especially in the Glasinac area, but they also appear widely in the adjacent region of Western Serbia (Figure 5). Bronze fibulae of this type can be found in female graves, such as Grave LXXXXIV/1 at Rusanovići. Fibulae of Rusanovići type occur both in pairs and individually as well as in association with other types of fibulae. The most common combination is with the so-called spectacle fibulae, double-looped bow fibulae with Boeotian shield plate and with a characteristic “V” ornament, double-looped bow fibulae with rectangular foot and two symmetrical holes, and different forms of single-looped bow fibulae with a trapezoidal foot.

The beginning of the use of this fibula at Glasinac is well documented from Rusanovići Grave LXXXXIV/1, which gave the object its name. According to B. Čović, these fibulae are one of the main characteristics of Glasinac Phase IVc-2. Their use was not just limited to the 6th century BC, but they also occurred during the first decades of the 5th century BC. At Donja Donjina, they were used during Phase 2b (6th century BC), along with other forms of boat-shaped fibulae. A fibula from Tolisa can be classified as a specific variant of fibulae with trapezoidal foot, according to the typology of N. Lucentini. The main characteristic of this variant is a prominent crest on the bow. Comparative examples can be found from graves at Gosinja (Grave XXIII/6), Plješevica (Grave III), and Okruglo (Grave III/1), all belonging to Glasinac Phase IVc-2. Fibulae of this type are often decorated with pendants and almost exclusively with three rings. Comparative examples can be found in assemblages from Plješevica (Tumulus III), Okruglo (Grave III/1), Brankovići (Grave II/3), Osovo (Grave XXIII), in the area of Glasinac, and furthermore from Karagač (Kosovo), Godljevo, Kriva Reka, and Kosjerić in Western Serbia. Individual finds of Rusanovići type fibulae from Donja Donjina in Posavina and Banoštov in Srem provide the limit of their distribution in the north, while finds from Ljubuški and Ljubomir in Herzegovina and Shtoj in Northern Albania.
represent their southern boundary of distribution in the Balkans.\textsuperscript{86}

Pećina pod lipom

One of the few objects that came from Glasinac in the last few decades is a fibula from the rock shelter site of Pećina pod lipom, near the site of Kadića brdo. Pećina pod lipom is primarily known as a complex Paleolithic site, with a thick cultural layer dating to the later Prehistoric and historical periods.\textsuperscript{87} The bronze fibula was found during archaeological excavation in 2015 in the part of the site named Abri II.\textsuperscript{88} The fibula belongs to the group of bronze crossbow Certosa type fibulae, variant XIII, according to B. Teržan.\textsuperscript{89} Construction of the preserved piece consists of a leaf-shaped bow, but it lacks a foot, one spiral coil and a part of a separate rectangular construction that is attached with its lateral ends to the ends of the spiral coil (Figure 6, 2). The closest analogy of the type XIII fibula has been documented at Ćavarine (tumuli II and IV) at Glasinac, dated to Glasinac Phase Va.\textsuperscript{90}

\textsuperscript{86} Vasić 1989, 104; 1999, 92; Gavranović 2011, 195.
\textsuperscript{87} Kujundžić-vejzagić 2001, 39.
\textsuperscript{88} Results of the archaeological research have not been published. Material is stored in the Regional Museum in Doboj.
\textsuperscript{89} Teržan 1976, 380; Vasić 1999, 101.
\textsuperscript{90} Fiala 1892, 412; Teržan 1976, 378; Ćović 1987b, 631, Pl LXIV, 13.
This type of fibulae demonstrates cultural links between the territories of Glasinac, Northern Bosnia, and Slavonia with the Eastern Alpine, Transdanubian, and Danubian cultural circles, undoubtedly along the so-called Posavina Corridor. These fibulae are more specific for the territory of Donja Dolina and Sanski Most cultural complex, where they were often discovered as part of grave goods of Phase 3b (the second half of the 5th century BC). At graveyards in Donja Dolina and Sanski Most, several varieties of Certosa type XIII have been found as products of local workshops, most probably inspired by foreign models. They became a recognizable element of fashion in the 5th and 4th century BC and were found mostly in female, but were also known from male, graves.

This is also confirmed by the discovery of numerous fibulae of the same type from the Szentlőrinc cemetery in Hungary, where various types of Certosa type XIII fibulae appeared in many female graves. Bronze fibulae of this type have also been recorded in the region of Syrmia, at sites such as Zemun, Adeševci, Sotin, Sremska Mitrovica, as well as in female graves from Indija and probably Noćaj. Two fibulae of the same type have also been found in the well-documented female grave G–2 at Beljnjača near Šid.

The distribution of Certosa type XIII fibulae south of the Posavina region can be traced in the

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91 Teržan 1976, 380.
92 Čović 1987a, 262; Jašarević 2017, 11–12.
93 The best example is the emergence of Certosa XIIIh type (Fiala 1896, 236. 261; Truhelka 1902, 263–264. 520; Teržan 1976, 380; Čović 1987a, 262; Dizdar 2015, 47).
94 At Čarakovo cemetery, a fibula type XIII was found in a male warrior Grave 3 (Čović 1956, 188).
95 Jerem 1968, 184–189.
96 Vasić 1999, 101–102; Dizdar 2015, 46–47.
valley of the River Bosna, a well-known prehistoric communication corridor (Figure 7). This is testified by the finds from the Vratnica tumulus near Visoko in Bosna Basin between Visoko and Sarajevo.98

Certosa fibulae with a crossbow construction begin to appear during the second half of the 5th century and continue in the 4th century BC.99 Certosa fibula from Pećina pod lipom can most likely be associated with a nearby hilltop settlement of Kadića brdo with a documented Late Iron Age occupation.100

Conclusion

After more than a century since the discovery of Glasinac and the initial suggestion that it is some kind of a sacrum Illyricum, many generations of archaeologists have worked on the deconstruction of the myth of Glasinac as an exclusive place of death. The number of known tumuli is actually not as great as initially thought, and all the necropolises can be linked to nearby hillforts.101 Still, the number of investigated tumuli, 1234 in total, is impressive. It has provided a large database of materials from different prehistoric periods, which ultimately resulted in the
definition of the Glasinac cultural complex. The study of the material culture from the tumuli has always been the focus of research at Glasinac ever since the first basic systematisation of materials by A. Benac and B. Ćović in 1956–1957. In the end, this has created a problem how to link the places of the living with the places of the burials. Chronological and cultural sequence of settlements in the Glasinac area is poorly documented, and we have not been able to compare periodisation based on grave finds with the material remains from the hillforts. Primarily, this issue refers to pottery, which is usually the most common find, and which gives us the most information about the way of life, traditions, influences, and innovation.

Finds of fibulae from Čajniče and Pećina pod lipom are both chance finds lacking stratigraphic context, but they nonetheless provide some information about the influences that reached Glasinac especially during the final stages of the Early Iron Age. Archaeologically most visible innovations in Glasinac come from the Early Iron Age, when foreign elements were adopted and either integrated into the prevailing local cultural code or transformed and adjusted to fit local needs.

The ceramic finds from Gradac in Sokolac provide a little insight into the ceramic spectrum in Glasinac. Typologically most sensitive finds link this spectrum to assemblages from hillforts around the Sarajevo plain, such as Debelo Brdo, Fortica, and Kotorac. In fact, this is not too surprising. If we look at the metal finds, especially ornaments (for example, belts of the Mramorac type) from the tumuli in Glasinac and the finds from the abovementioned hillforts, we can see a connection that was active throughout the Early Iron Age. The similarities in the ceramic repertoire needs. The ceramic finds from Gradac in Sokolac provide a little insight into the ceramic spectrum in Glasinac. Typologically most sensitive finds link this spectrum to assemblages from hillforts around the Sarajevo plain, such as Debelo Brdo, Fortica, and Kotorac. In fact, this is not too surprising. If we look at the metal finds, especially ornaments (for example, belts of the Mramorac type) from the tumuli in Glasinac and the finds from the abovementioned hillforts, we can see a connection that was active throughout the Early Iron Age. The similarities in the ceramic repertoire are also evident in assemblages from the hillforts at Gradina in Sovići and Gradina in Kreće, which show a rather uniform tradition that was not only characteristic of the inner circle of Glasinac hillforts, but of a broader cultural area.

Na engleski jezik preveo Aleksandar Jašarević

Rezime / Sažetak

Važnost malih arheoloških nalaza sa Glasinca


Skupina dijagnostičkih posuda sa visokom okruglom, krestastom, ručkom potvrđuje naseljavanje tokom kasnog bronznog doba. Osnovni hronološki okvir za većinu praistorijskih razdoblja u različitim dijelovima Bosne najviše se temelji samo na razvoju keramikih stilova. Posebno u područjima gdje nema metalnih nalaza ili gdje metalni nalazi nisu dobro očuvani. Keramika, kao najčešća kategorija nalaza, služi kao primarni izvor informacija. Cjelokupan keramski material sa Glasinca i okoline, međutim, donosi prvenstveno sa ranih iskopavanja bez preciznih stratigrafskih detalja i odnosa sa metalnim nalazima. B. Čović raspravljao je o ovom problemu u svojoj doktorskoj disertaciji i predložio kako definirati dijagno-

\[102\] Ćović 1987b, 579–580.
\[103\] Benac / Ćović 1956; 1957; Heilmann 2016, 20–21.
\[104\] Govedarica 1985.
\[105\] Heilmann 2016, 21.
\[106\] Fiala 1894, 120.
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Table I: Pottery fragments from Gradac, Sokolac

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Table II: Pottery fragments from Gradac, Sokolac
Table III: Pottery fragments from Gradac, Sokolac