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Fax ++385(0)1 60 55 806
e-mail: urednistvo.prilozi@iarh.hr
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The elusive early medieval glass: remarks on vessels from the Nin – Ždrijac cemetery, Croatia

Izmikajoče se zgodnj srednjeveško steklo: komentar k posodam z grobišča Nin – Ždrijac, Hrvaška

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TINA MILAVEC
Department of Archaeology
Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana
Aškerčeva 2
SI-1000 Ljubljana
Slovenija
tina.milavec@ff.uni-lj.si

In graves 322 and 310 of the early medieval Nin – Ždrijac cemetery three glass vessels, two stemmed goblets and one bottle were found. They have been interpreted as remains of Late Antique glass production, but a closer look brings further information. The best comparisons for the goblets come from the North Adriatic area while the bottle is most probably of early Islamic production. Interesting possibilities of interpretation arise with the graves being furnished with glass products of such different origin at a time when local secondary glass production seems to have been absent.

Key words: glass vessels, goblets, bottles, early Middle Ages, Umayyads, Nin – Ždrijac

V grobovih 322 in 310 na zgodnj srednjeveškem grobišču Nin – Ždrijac so bile najdene tri steklene posode, dva kozarca na visoki nogi in ena steklenica. Bile so interpretirane kot ostanek poznoantične proizvodnje, a natančnejši pogled prinaša nove podatke. Najboljše primerjave za kozarca na nogi prihajajo iz severnojadranskega prostora, steklenica pa je najverjetneje zgodnjeislamske proizvodnje. Oprema grobov s predmeti tako različnega izvora prinaša zanimive možnosti interpretacije v času, ko lokalna sekundarna proizvodnja steklenega posodja ni delovala.

Ključne besede: stekleno posodje, kozarci na visoki nogi, steklenice, zgodnji srednji vek, Umajjadi, Nin – Ždrijac

Between 1969 and 1977, 337 graves were excavated by J. Belošević (Archaeological Museum Zadar) at Ždrijac, a sandy ridge outside the important early medieval settlement of Nin on the Croatian Dalmatian coast. The necropolis is dated to the 8th and first half of the 9th century (Belošević 1980a; 1980b; 2007; Petrinc 2009: 23).

In two of the graves, 322 and 310, three glass vessels were discovered (Figs. 1–3). They represent the only glass finds at the cemetery, apart from beads and a small pile of broken Roman glass (Belošević 2007: graves 76 and 99). Glass vessels from the early Middle Ages are very uncommon finds in Dalmatia and nothing is yet known of glass vessel production between Late Antiquity and the 14th century (Topić et al. 2016; Topić 2017).

Med leti 1969 in 1977 so na peščenem jeziku zunaj pomembne zgodnj srednjeveške naselbine Nin na dalmatinski obali pod vodstvom J. Beloševića (Arheološki muzej v Zadru) izkopali 337 grobov. Grobišče je datirano v 8. in prvo polovico 9. st. (Belošević 1980a; 1980b; 2007; Petrinc 2009: 23).

V dveh grobovih, 322 in 310, so odkrili tri steklene posode (sl. 1–3). Predstavljajo edine steklene najdbe na grobišču, razen steklenih jagod in kosov črepinj rimskega stekla (Belošević 2007: grobova 76 in 99). V zgodnjem srednjem veku v Dalmaciji so steklene posode zelo nenavadne najdbe, do sedaj tudi ni znanega nič o proizvodnji steklenih posod med antiko in 14. st. (Topić et al. 2016; Topić 2017).

THE VESSELS (Figs. 1–3)

The three glass vessels were published by J. Belošević (Belošević 1980: Pl. XXVI: 34; Pl. XXXIV: 80; 2007: 415–417) and later by Š. Perović (2010). Perović assumed all three pieces were remnants of Late Antique production, but recognized the eastern Mediterranean connections for the bottle (Perović 2010: 42–44, 49). Looking at the three glass vessels again, especially the goblets, some new possibilities appear which will be discussed below.

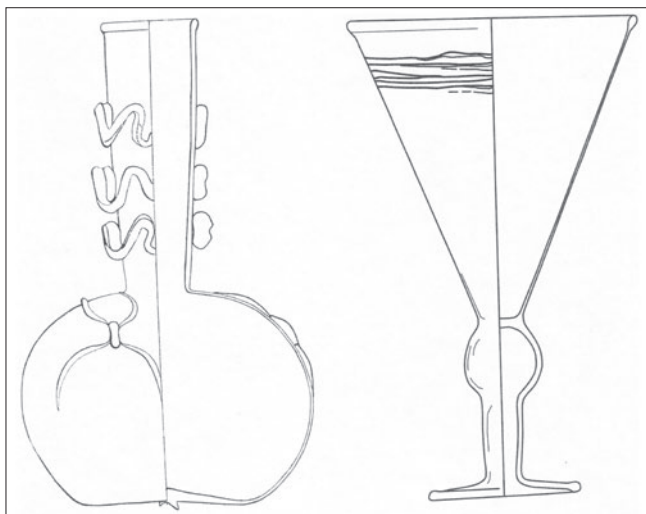


Fig. 1 Glass vessels from Nin – Ždrijac grave 322 (after: Perović 2010: Fig. 1)

Sl. 1 Stakleni posodi iz groba 322 s grobišča Nin – Ždrijac (po: Perović 2010: sl. 1)

The goblets

Both goblets reach 15.5 cm in height and were made of two pieces, as the hollow stemmed foot was added separately to the recipient. The conical recipient of the goblet from grave 322 was mould-blown, since the surface is slightly ribbed. Both goblets are made of blue-green glass. The goblet from grave 322 has a yellow trail decoration on the rim, while the trail on the one from grave 310 is the same colour as the vessel (Belošević 2007: Pl. CLXXXVI–CLXXXVII; Perović 2010: 41).

The best analogies for the goblets are the ones from Koper, Slovenia (Fig. 4: 3), more precisely the fourth Koper group from the Kapucinski vrt excavations with conical recipients and hollow stems with a globular knob (Cunja 1996: 73–74, 77–78). They were dated by the excavator to the 9th century following the Nin analogies discussed here, while the stratigraphy of these excavations remains unpublished, so a more detailed understanding and dating of the early medieval settlement phase is not possible. The settlement remains consist of stone-built houses with clay floors and hearths. The houses were built on earlier, Late Antique foundations, yet not precisely following the previous ground plans. The most apparent difference between the phases is the lack of imported pottery in the early medieval layers. Therefore, the dating also remains wide, between the 7th–9th century. Interestingly, two of the Koper group 4 goblets seem to have been found on or very close to hearths in these early medieval buildings (Cunja 1996: 43–44, cat. no. 69,

POSODE (sl. 1–3)

Vse tri steklene posode sta objavila J. Belošević (Belošević 1980: T. XXVI: 34; T. XXXIV: 80; 2007: 415–417) in kasneje Š. Perović. Perović (2010) je predvideval da so vsi trije kosi ostanki poznoantične produkcije, a je prepoznal povezave z vzhodnim Sredozemljem za steklenico (Perović 2010: 42–44, 49). Novi pogledi na te posode, predvsem za oba kozarca, nudijo nove možnosti interpretacije o katerih bomo pisali v tem prispevku.



Fig. 2 Glass vessels from Nin – Ždrijac grave 322 (after: Belošević 2007: Pls. CLXXXV–CLXXXVI)

Sl. 2 Stakleni posodi iz groba 322 z grobišča Nin – Ždrijac (po: Belošević 2007: T. CLXXXV–CLXXXVI)



Fig. 3 Glass goblet from Nin – Ždrijac grave 310 (after: Belošević 2007: Pl. CLXXXVII)

Sl. 3 Stakleni kozarec iz groba 310 z grobišča Nin – Ždrijac (po: Belošević 2007: T. CLXXXVII)

71; App. 2). Also worth mentioning is the fact that Kapucinski vrt settlement contexts appear in no way luxurious – in fact, glass vessels of both the Late Antique and early medieval phases are a part of relatively average assemblages. On the other hand, recent excavations in other parts of Koper showed that in both Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages many recovered structures were built of wood (Guštin 2011). Therefore, stone-built houses may indicate that the inhabitants were reasonably well off. As mentioned above, there are hardly any pottery imports in the early medieval phase in Koper (Cunja 1996: 116), so we can reasonably assume the glass vessels did not travel very far either.

Kozarca na nogi

Oba kozarca sta visoka 15,5 cm in izdelana iz dveh kosov. Votla visoka noga je bila naknadno dodana na recipient. Konični recipient kozarca iz groba 322 je pihan v kalup, površina je rahlo narebrena. Oba kozarca sta narejena iz modro-zelenega stekla. Tisti iz groba 322 ima okras natančne rumene steklene niti na ustju, drugi iz groba 310 pa ima okras niti iste barve kot posoda sama (Belošević 2007: T. CLXXXVI–CLXXXVII; Perović 2010: 41).

Najboljše primerjave za kozarca so tiste iz Kopra, Slovenija (sl. 4: 3), natančneje kopska četrta skupina steklenih

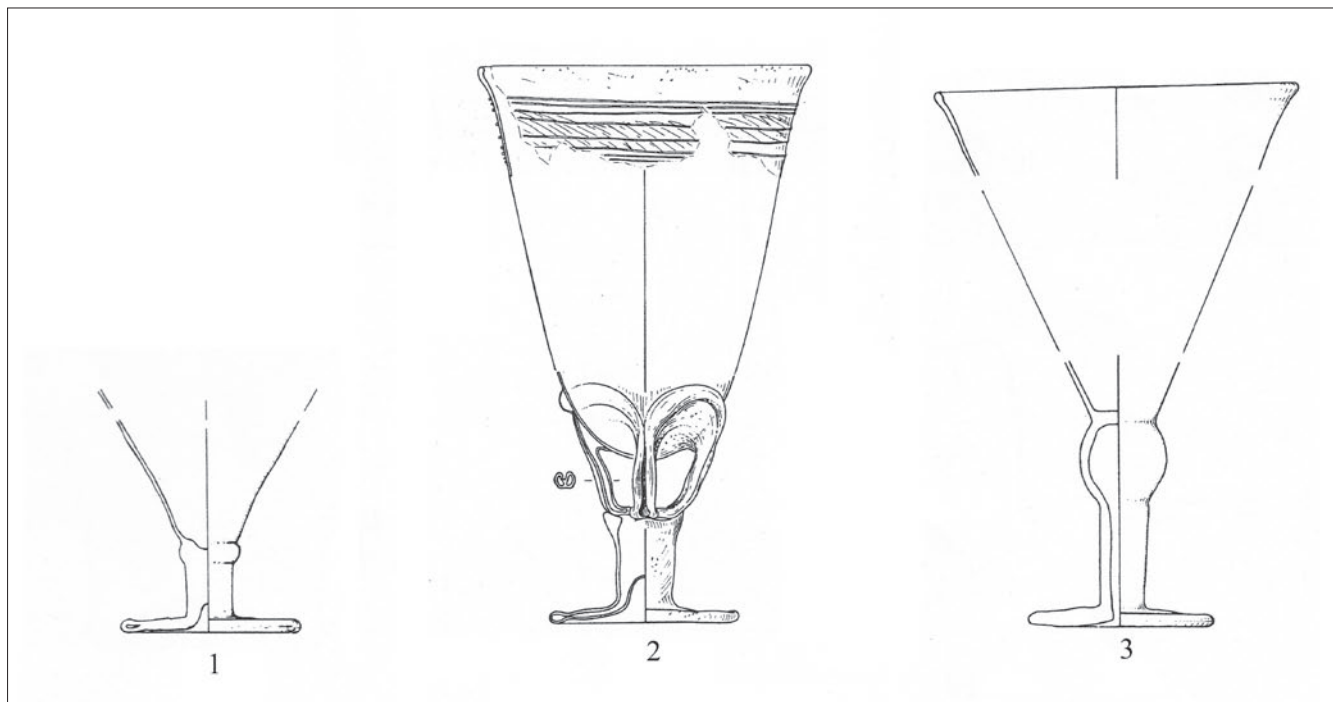


Fig. 4 Koper glass goblets, groups 2, 3 and 4 (after: Cunja 1996: Pl. 4)
Sl. 4 Skupine steklenih kozarcev 2, 3 in 4 iz Kopra (po: Cunja 1996: T. 4)

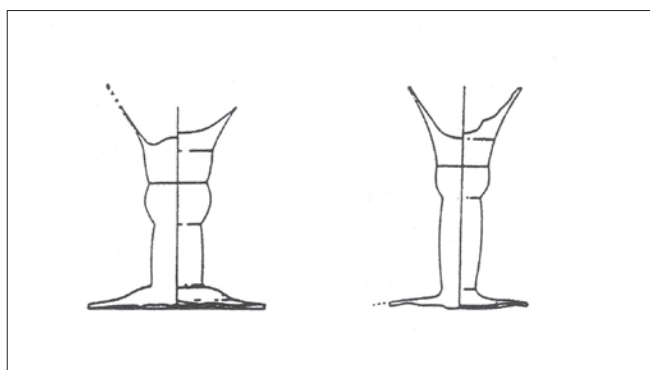


Fig. 5 Goblets from Rome, Forum of Nerva (after: Del Vecchio 2005: Fig. 1: 2–3)
Sl. 5 Kozarca iz Rima, forum Nerve (po: Del Vecchio 2005: sl. 1: 2–3)

The glass goblets from the so-called 'house with portico' at the Forum of Nerva in Rome (Fig. 5) (Del Vecchio 2005) could be seen as a tentative confirmation for the early medieval dating of Koper goblet groups 2 and 4 (Fig. 4: 1, 3). The stems are similar in shape with blobs and a flattened base of

kozarcev z izkopavanj na Kapucinskem vrtu, ki ima konični recipient in votle visoke noge s krožno odebelitvijo na vrhu (Cunja 1996: 73–74, 77–78). Izkopavalec jih je datiral v 9. st. po tu obravnavanih primerjavah iz Nina. Stratigrafija Kapucinskega vrta pa ostaja neobjavljena, tako da natančnejše razumevanje in datiranje zgodnjersrednjeveške naselbinske faze ni mogoče. Naselbinske ostanke predstavljajo kamnite stavbe s tlemi iz teptane gline in ognjišči. Postavljene so na starejše poznoantične osnove predhodne faze, vendar ne sledijo povsem prejšnjim tlorisom. Najočitnejša razlika med fazama je odsotnost uvožene keramike v zgodnjersrednjeveških plasteh. Tako tudi datiranje ostaja široko med 7. – 9. st. Zanimivo je, da sta dva od kozarcev kopske četrte skupine najdena na ali tik ob zgodnjersrednjeveških ognjiščih (Cunja 1996: 43–44, kat. 69, 71; Priloga 2). Vredno omembe je tudi to, da ti konteksti ne dajejo vtisa razkošja. Steklena posodje poznoantične in zgodnjersrednjeveške faze je del povsem povprečnih sestavov najdb. Po drugi strani so nedavna izkopavanja v drugih delih Kopra pokazala, da je bilo tako v pozni antiki kot v zgodnjem srednjem veku mnogo stavb zgrajenih iz lesa (Guštin 2011). Tako kamnite hiše ven-

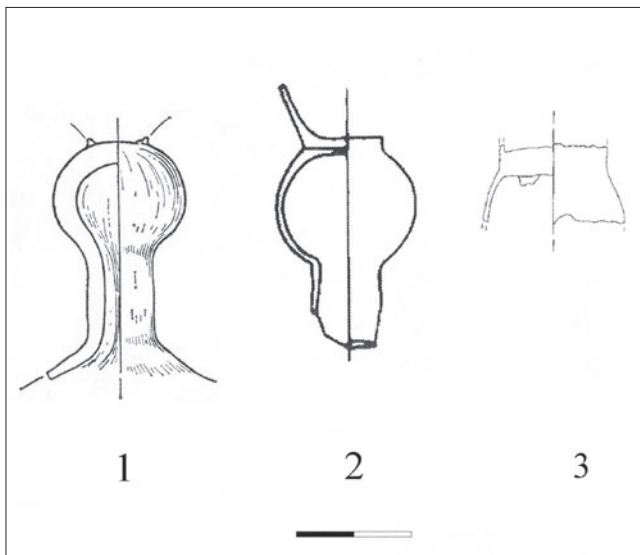


Fig. 6 Goblet stems: 1: Sv. Pavel above Vrtovin; 2: Grado, Campo Patriarca Elia; 3: Pellio Intelvi (after: Svoltjšak 1985: Pl. 2: 38; Marcante 2005: Fig. 2: 14; Arslan et al. 2001: T. III: 19)

Sl. 6 *Deli nog kozarcev: 1: Sv. Pavel nad Vrtovinom; 2: Gradež, Campo Patriarca Elia; 3: Pellio Intelvi* (po: Svoltjšak 1985: T. 2: 38; Marcante 2005: sl. 2: 14; Arslan et al. 2001: T. III: 19)

the recipient at the point of contact with the stem, but the difference is that they are full, not hollow like Nin and Koper ones. In fact, they are roughly similar to Koper 2 group with full stems, where the blob is not pronounced but more of a coil (Fig. 4: 1). All three stem-types are much thicker and taller than common late antique stems. The stems from the Roman 'portico house' are well dated to the 9th–10th century by stratigraphy and represent a good parallel to the discussed vessels. The house apparently belonged to the élites of the early medieval Roman society.

A fragment of a hollow goblet stem and part of foot belonging to a vessel similar to Nin and Koper group 4 goblets was found at Sv. Pavel above Vrtovin (Fig. 6: 1) (Svoltjšak 1985: Pl. 2: 38, turned upside down), a hilltop site in Vipava Valley in south western Slovenia that was occupied in Late Antiquity and in the early Middle Ages, at least until the 9th century. The stem was discovered in a layer of black cultural soil (SU 06) in trench no. 5. Into this layer, a grave of a man was dug, with an awl and an arrow as grave goods, both typically early medieval. The grave was radiocarbon dated to the second half of the 8th and to the 9th century. The grave and the layer were covered by destruction layers and burnt layers (Svoltjšak 1985: 204–205, Figs. 6–8). The site had only been excavated on a small scale and the actual structure of the settlement is not known, but several very interesting uncontextualized finds were discovered later, such as late 8th century Arab dirhams and parts of Carolingian belt sets and horse equestrian fittings (Bitenc, Knific 2015: Figs. 2–7), which point to its occupation and even prominent role in the early Middle Ages. The glass stem is made of viscous and bubbly blue-green glass with few impurities. It has a hollow blob and a relatively short hollow stem, which continues into a foot, which would have apparently been less



Fig. 7 Goblets from Rome (after: Arena et al. 2004: cat. no. V.I.9, I.4.73)

Sl. 7 *Kozarca iz Rima* (po: Arena et al. 2004: kat. V.I.9, I.4.73)

darle lahko nakazujejo premožnejše prebivalce. Kot zgoraj omenjeno, v zgodnj srednjeveških kontekstih v Kopru skoraj ni uvožene keramike (Cunja 1996: 116), kar kaže da tudi stekleno posodje ni potovalo daleč.

Steklene kozarce iz tako imenovane hiše s portikom na forumu Nerve v Rimu (sl. 5) (Del Vecchio 2005) bi lahko videli kot previdno potrditev zgodnj srednjeveške datacije koprskih druge in četrte skupine kozarcev (sl. 4: 1, 3). Visoke noge so podobne oblike, z odebelitvami in sploščenim dnom recipienta, kjer se stika z nogo. Razlika pa je v tem, da so noge polne, ne votle kot ninske in koprške. Dejansko so v grobem podobne tudi koprski drugi skupini s polnimi visokimi nogami, kjer pa odebelitev ni izrazita in je bolj svitkasta kot kroglasta (sl. 4: 1). Vsi trije tipi visokih nog so precej debelejši in višji kot običajne poznoantične visoke noge kozarcev. Noge kozarcev iz rimske hiše s portikom so dobro datirane s stratigrafijo v 9. in 10. st. in predstavljajo dobro primerjavo obravnavanim posodam. Stavba je očitno pripadala predstavnikom višjega razreda rimske zgodnj srednjeveške družbe.

Odlomek votle visoke noge kozarca, ki je pripadal podobni posodi kot primerki iz Nina in koprške četrte skupine, je bil najden na Sv. Pavlu nad Vrtovinom (sl. 6: 1) (Svoltjšak 1985: T. 2: 38, obrnjen narobe), višinski naselbini v Vipavski dolini v jugozahodni Sloveniji, ki je bila poseljena v pozni antiki in zgodnjem srednjem veku, vsaj do 9. st. Noga je bila najdena v plasti črne kulturne prsti (SE 06) v sondi 5. V to plast je bil vkopan moški grob s pridanimi šilom in puščico, oboje je značilno za zgodnji srednji vek. Grob je bil radiokarbonsko datiran v drugo polovico 8. in 9. st. Grob in plast sta bila prekrita s plastmi ruševine in žganine (Svoltjšak 1985: 204–205, sl. 6–8). Najdišče je bilo le malo raziskano, vendar so bile kasneje najdene zanimive najdbe brez konteksta, na primer arabski novci poznega 8. st. in deli karolinške pasne opreme (Bitenc, Knific 2015: sl. 2–7), ki kažejo na uporabo in izrazito vlogo naselbine v zgodnjem srednjem veku. Noga je narejena iz viskozne modro-zelenega stekla z me-

flat than the Nin ones, but is not preserved. In the shortness of the stem and in this detail it seems to differ slightly from other analogies. On top of the blob, the part where the recipient was attached is visible, but the blob is not flattened out to receive it as drawn for the Koper and Nin vessels.

Two fragments of most probably very similar goblets were discovered in Grado (Italy) during the excavations on the Campo Patriarca Elia (Fig. 6: 2). From what we can judge from the publication, they were found in the layers of reuse of the Episcopal Palace, from when a secondary glass workshop functioned there. The workshop is very broadly dated to the 'early Middle Ages' (Lopreato 1998; Marcante 2007: fn. 33, Fig. 2: 14). A very small fragment of a stem which reminds us of the discussed group was also found at the fortified site of Pellio Intelvi near Lake Como, dated to the 10th–11th century (Fig. 6: 3) (Arslan et al. 2001: T. III: 19).

Two light green hollow stems and feet with a hollow blob on the stem, very similar to Nin ones, were also discovered in Rome (Fig. 7). They differ in the decoration of the recipients, which bear hanging arches of glass trails. One was found in the forum area and the other comes from the historical collections (Arenia et al. 2004: 562, cat. V.I.9; 194, cat. I.5.73). In the publication they are both dated to the 6th–7th century, but since neither piece was found in context, it is not impossible they are actually early medieval products.

The analogies remain relatively few but they point to Italy, perhaps the North Adriatic. Islamic fashion in drinking vessels favoured beakers and not stemmed glasses (Hadad 2005: 28, 46). There are also no similar goblets among the Carolingian glassware (Foy 1995: 211). Therefore I carefully propose to interpret them as western Mediterranean, even North Adriatic products. The production/distribution area may have been quite limited or there may be other reasons for their scarcity (see below). At least for the Grado goblets we could assume they were produced at the site, since it was a secondary glass workshop. Venice naturally jumps to mind immediately as a possible production site, where the first glassmaker in the written sources appears as early as 982 (Whitehouse 2014: 73). However, to my knowledge, no such goblets seem to have been published from the Torcello workshop, which was active in the 9th–10th century (Leciejewicz 2002; Marcante 2014; Saguì, Lepri 2015: 234). Any early production on Murano or Rivoalto (9th–10th century) is not known (Verità, Toninato 1990; Verità et al. 2002; Verità, Zecchin 2012; Whitehouse 2014). The workshops could have been situated on one of the smaller islands in the lagoon where monasteries were founded in the 9th century (Gasparetto 1988), but have not been reported so far. Alternatively, perhaps the early production continued somewhere else in the Venetian lagoon.

While it is a fact that stemmed goblets are the most widely distributed glass vessel between the late 5th and the 8th century in the entire Mediterranean, they were in large majority made of one piece, short in size, with a wide recipient, a relatively short hollow stem, and a small foot. The fact that the Nin goblets are made of two pieces may also speak for their dating into the early medieval period, as such examples appear after the 7th century (Foy 1995: 210–211; Ferri 2006: 189). Additionally, the flat foot is also most cha-

hurčki in malo nečistočami. Ima votlo kroglasto odebelitev, ki se nadaljuje v stojno ploskev in ki je bila verjetno manj ploska kot ninski, a ni ohranjena. V tem detajlu in v tem, da je kratka, se ta noga razlikuje od drugih analogij. Na vrhu odebelitve je viden del kjer je bil pritrjen recipient, vendar odebelitev ni sploščena kot pri primerkih iz Kopra in Nina.

Še dva odlomka najverjetneje podobnih kozarcev sta bila odkrita v Gradežu (Italija) med izkopavanju na Campo Patriarca Elia (sl. 6: 2). Kolikor lahko sodimo iz objave, sta bila najdena v plasteh ponovne porabe prostora škofijske palače, ko je tam delovala steklarska delavnica. Ta je zelo široko datirana v 'zgodnji srednji vek' (Lopreato 1998; Marcante 2007: op. 33, sl. 2: 14). Majhen odlomek noge, ki spominja na obravnavano skupino, je bil najden tudi v veliki stavbi na najdišču Pellio Intelvi pri jezeru Como, ki je sicer datirana v 10. in 11. st. (sl. 6: 3) (Arslan et al. 2001: T. III: 19).

Dve zeleni votli nogi z votlo kroglasto odebelitvijo, zelo podobni ninskima primerkoma, sta bili najdeni v Rimu (sl. 7). Razlikujeta se od obravnavanih v okrasu recipientov, ki nosijo viseče vence steklenih niti. En kos je bil najden na prostoru forumov, drugi pa prihaja iz historičnih zbirk (Arenia et al. 2004: 562, kat. V.I.9; 194, kat. I.5.73). V objavi sta oba kosa datirana v 6.–7. st., a ker noben nima konteksta, ni nemogoče, da sta dejansko zgodnjesrednjeveška izdelka.

Primerjav je še vedno relativno malo, vendar se zgoščajo v Italiji, morda na severnem Jadranu. V islamskem svetu so bili za pitje bolj modni kozarci brez noge (Hadad 2005: 28, 46), prav tako ni primerljivih posod v karolinškem steklarstvu (Foy 1995: 211). Zato previdno predlagam, da so obravnavani kozarci zahodnosredozemski, morda celo severnojadranski proizvodi. Proizvodnja/distribucija je bila lahko precej omejena, lahko obstajajo tudi drugi razlogi za njihovo redko pojavljanje (glej spodaj). Vsaj za Gradež lahko predvidevamo, da so bili izdelani na najdišču, saj gre za sekundarno steklarsko delavnico. Benetke se seveda takoj vrinejo v misli kot možno mesto izdelave, prvi steklarji se tam omenjajo že leta 982. (Whitehouse 2014: 73). Vendar s Torcella, kjer je steklarska delavnica delovala v 9. in 10. st., ni objavljenih prav takšnih kozarcev (Leciejewicz 2002; Marcante 2014; Saguì, Lepri 2015: 234). Zgodnja produkcija z Murana ali Rivoalta (9.–10. st.) ni poznana (Verità, Toninato 1990; Verità et al. 2002; Verità, Zecchin 2012; Whitehouse 2014). Delavnice bi lahko delovale na enem od manjših otokov v laguni, kjer so bili ustanovljeni samostani v 9. st. (Gasparetto 1988), vendar o njih ni nič znanega. Morda je zgodnja proizvodnja potekala kje drugje v beneški laguni.

Kozarci na nogi so res najpogostejša najdba steklenih posod med poznim 5. in 8. st. v celem Sredozemlju, a so v veliki večini bili izdelani iz enega kosa, s širokim recipientom, razmeroma kratko nogo in majhno stojno ploskvijo. To, da so ninski kozarci izdelani iz dveh kosov, tudi lahko poudarja njihovo časovno opredelitev v zgodnji srednji vek, saj se takšni primerki pojavljajo po 7. st. (Foy 1995: 210–211; Ferri 2006: 189). Dodatno je tudi ploska stojna ploskev bolj značilna za čas po 7. st. (Ferri 2006: 180).

Dejstvo, da je podobnih kozarcev odkritih malo, je očit-

racteristic for the period after the 7th century (Ferri 2006: 180).

The fact that similar goblets are rather difficult to find appears to be linked to their chronology too. There is a scarcity of 9th century contexts with glass finds in the wider discussed territory in general (Stiaffini 1991: 178–179). This could simply be the result of the fact the coarse pottery dating is very imprecise for northern Italy and Slovenia (and Croatia) in the early medieval period. Yet assemblages to up to the 8th century can be discerned at least in Italy and it is the 9th–10th century that represents a particular problem when glass vessels are concerned (Sternini 1995: 262; Mirti et al. 2001; Stiaffini 2006: 669–670; Ferri 2006; Maltoni et al. 2015). Another possible explanation for this absence could be the scarcity of fresh raw glass and the rising level of recycling in the 9th and 10th century (Saguì, Lepri 2015: 229). Some other contexts with slightly different 9th–10th century glass goblets come from San Vicenzo al Volturno (Stevenson 2001), Nogara (Silvestri, Marcante 2011) and Otranto (Gianotta 1992).¹

The contexts of the known goblets similar to the Nin ones are indeed very widely dated but taking into account the lack of similar pieces from 8th century contexts² in the same region, we could surmise the 9th century date for the goblets, though mostly on the strength of the *argumentum ex silentio*. An additional nudge in this direction could be the fact that, generally speaking, the goblet height and lengths of stems in Italy do increase considerably as we move towards the High Middle Ages, with the 11th century and later finds balancing on very thin and long stems (Arena et al. 2004: 562–563; Del Vecchio 2005: 45, Fig. 1: 7, 9; Silvestri, Marcante 2011). However, there are no reliable points for dating these goblets and this necessarily remains only an attempt.

The bottle

In grave 322 in Nin – Ždrijac, a bottle with a globular recipient, a long, almost straight narrow neck, and trailed decoration was also found (Figs. 1–2). The bottle is 16.5 cm high and made of yellowish-green glass with dark blue and yellow applied wavy trails (ruffles, frills) on the neck and pinched decoration on the body (Perović 2010: 41).

In Italy bottles seem to have become rare in the 9th century (Stevenson 2001: 223–231; Stiaffini 2006: 669). This type of bottles with applied and pinched decoration was widely used in the Late Byzantine and Early Islamic period (7th–8th century) in the Eastern Mediterranean, mostly Syria and Palestine (Meyer 1988: 206–207; Hadad 2005; Gorin-Rosen 2010; Jackson-Tal 2012; 2016).³ Good analogies come from early Umayyad contexts from Bet'Shean or Ramla (Figs. 8–9) (Hadad 2005: 24–25, Pl. 13: 262–268; Gorin-Rosen 2010: 224, Pl. 10.2: 8, 12; Jackson-Tal 2016: 49–50). The forms of glass vessels did not change quickly after the Umayyad conquest

no povezano tudi z njihovo datacijo. Kontekstov 9. st. s steklenimi najdbami je malo na širšem obravnavanem prostoru (Stiaffini 1991: 178–179). To je lahko preprosto posledica dejstva da je datiranje grobe keramike za severno Italijo in Slovenijo (in Hrvaško) v zgodnjem srednjem veku zelo neprecizno. Vendar sestavi najdb s steklom do 8. st. vsaj v Italiji obstajajo in šele 9. in 10. st. predstavljata poseben problem (Sternini 1995: 262; Mirti et al. 2001; Stiaffini 2006: 669–670; Ferri 2006; Maltoni et al. 2015). Druga možna razlaga je lahko pomanjkanje svežega surovega stekla in posledično naraščajoče recikliranje stekla v 9. in 10. st. (Saguì, Lepri 2015: 229). Nekaj kontekstov s steklenimi kozarci z nogami malo drugačnih oblik lahko najdemo na primer še v San Vicenzu v Volturnu (Stevenson 2001), Nogari (Silvestri, Marcante 2011) in Otrantu (Gianotta 1992).¹

Konteksti ninskim primerljivih kozarcev so res široko časovno opredeljeni, a če upoštevamo pomanjkanje takšnih kosov v kontekstih 8. st.² v istem prostoru, lahko predvidimo datacijo v 9. st. za obravnavane kozarce, čeprav resda opiraje se na *argumentum ex silentio*. Dodaten namig v to smer je lahko tudi dejstvo, da načeloma višine nog in samih kozarcev v Italiji opazno naraščajo bolj kot se premikamo proti visokemu srednjemu veku. V 11. st. in kasneje se recipienti znajdejo na izrazito dolgih in tankih pecljih (Arena et al. 2004: 562–563; Del Vecchio 2005: 45, Fig. 1: 7, 9; Silvestri, Marcante 2011). Vseeno pa za časovno opredelitev obravnavanih kozarcev ni res zanesljivih opornih točk in to ostaja le poskus.

Steklenica

V grobu 322 na Ždrijcu pri Ninu je bila najdena steklenica s kroglastim recipientom, dolgim, skoraj ravnim ozkim vratom in okrasom nataljenih trakov stekla (sl. 1–2). Visoka je 16,5 cm in izdelana iz rumenega stekla s temno modrima in enim rumenim trakom stekla na vratu ter ščipanim okrasom na recipientu (Perović 2010: 41).

V Italiji in zahodnem Sredozemlju so steklenice očitno v 9. st. postale redke (Stevenson 2001: 223–231; Stiaffini 2006: 669). Steklenice z nataljenim in ščipanim okrasom so bile široko v uporabi v poznobizantinskem in zgodnjem islamskem obdobju (7.–8. st.) v vzhodnem Sredozemlju, predvsem v Siriji in Palestini (Meyer 1988: 206–207; Hadad 2005; Gorin-Rosen 2010; Jackson-Tal 2012; 2016).³ Dobre primerjave prihajajo iz zgodnjeumajadskih kontekstov iz Bet'Sheana ali Ramle (sl. 8–9) (Hadad 2005: 24–25, T. 13: 262–268; Gorin-Rosen 2010: 224, T. 10.2: 8, 12; Jackson-Tal 2016: 49–50). Oblike steklenih posod se niso hitro spreminjale po zavzetju Umajadov (661–749) in šele v abasidskem obdobju (po 750)

1 In M. Ferri's contribution on early medieval glass (Gelichi et al. 2017) she also mentions goblets from Piadena and Sant' Angela Bolognese, but those publications were unfortunately unavailable to me.

2 Only ordinary Isings 111 type goblets, e.g. Crypta Balbi in Rome (Mirti et al. 2001).

3 Connections with Umayyad region have theoretically been indicated by F. Curta (2010: 273).

1 V prispevku M. Ferri o zgodnjem srednjeveškem steklu v Gelichi et al. 2017 omenja tudi kozarce iz Piadene in Sant' Angele Bolognese, vendar mi objave žal niso bile dostopne.

2 Le navadni kozarci na nogi tipa Isings 111, npr. Crypta Balbi v Rimu (Mirti et al. 2001).

3 Povezavo z umajadskim ozemljem je teoretično nakazal F. Curta (2010: 273).

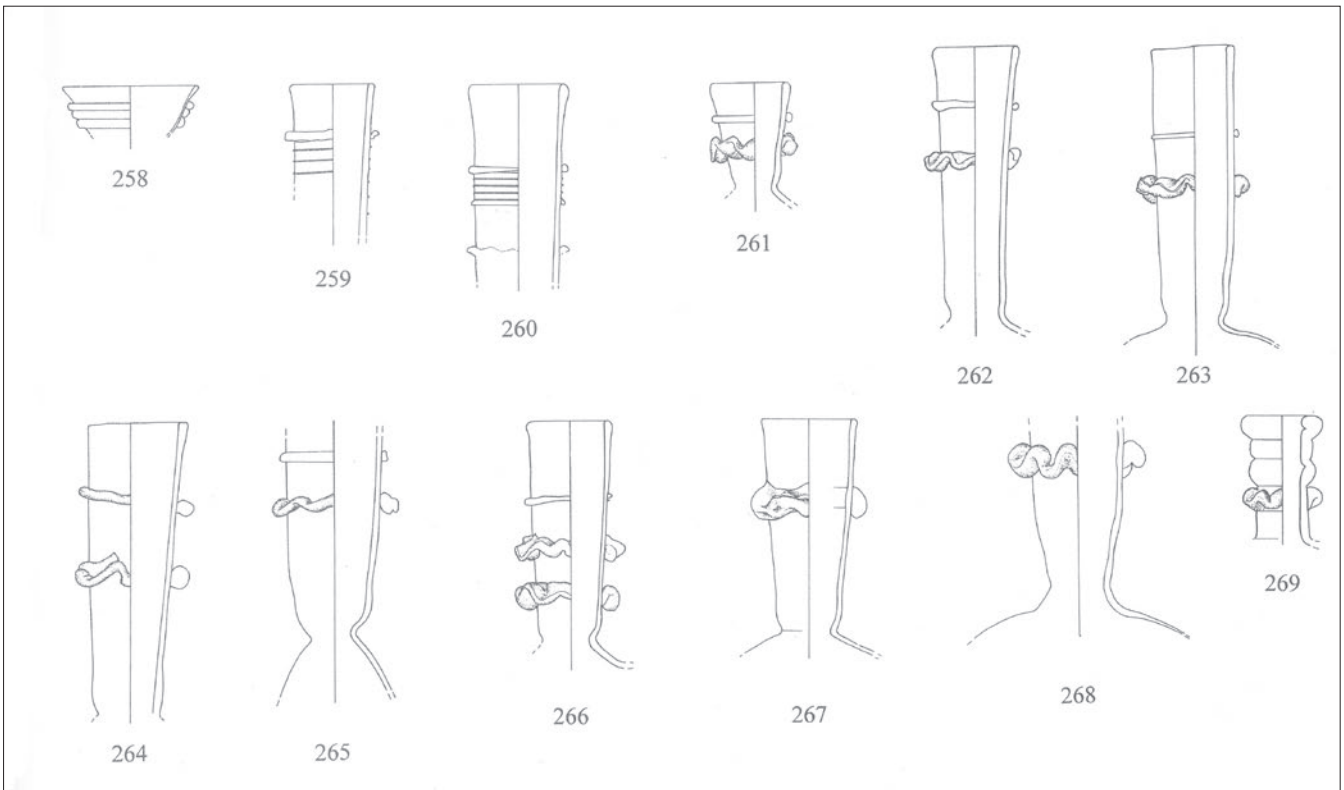


Fig. 8 Late Byzantine / early Umayyad glass vessels from Bet Shean (after: Hadad 2005: Pl. 13)

Sl. 8 Poznobizantinsko in zgodnjemajadsko stekleno posodje iz Bet Sheana (po: Hadad 2005: T. 13)

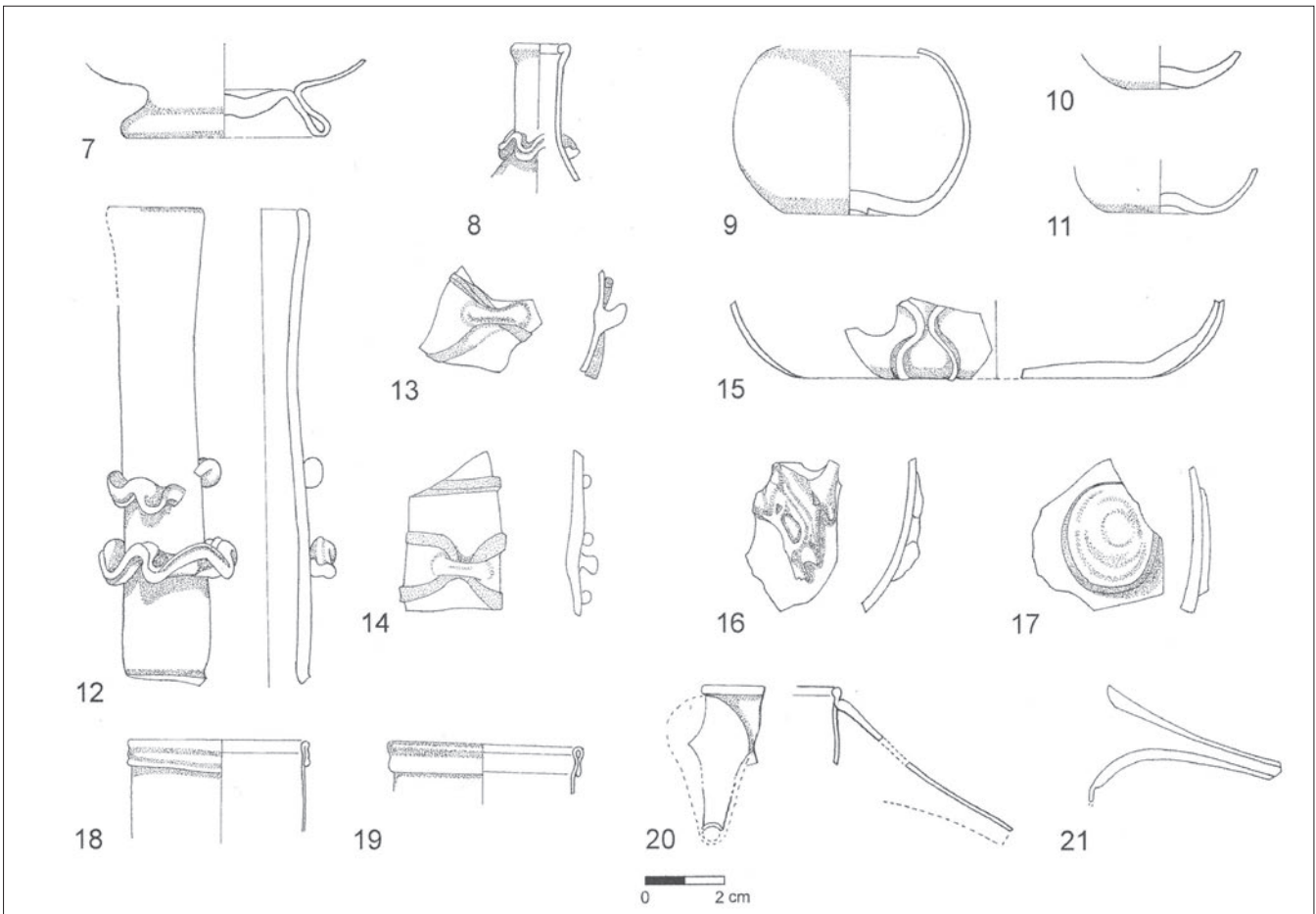


Fig. 9 Late Byzantine/early Umayyad glass vessels from Ramla (after: Gorin-Rosen 2010: Pl. 10: 2)

Sl. 9 Poznobizantinsko in zgodnjemajadsko stekleno posodje iz Ramle (po: Gorin-Rosen 2010: T. 10: 2)

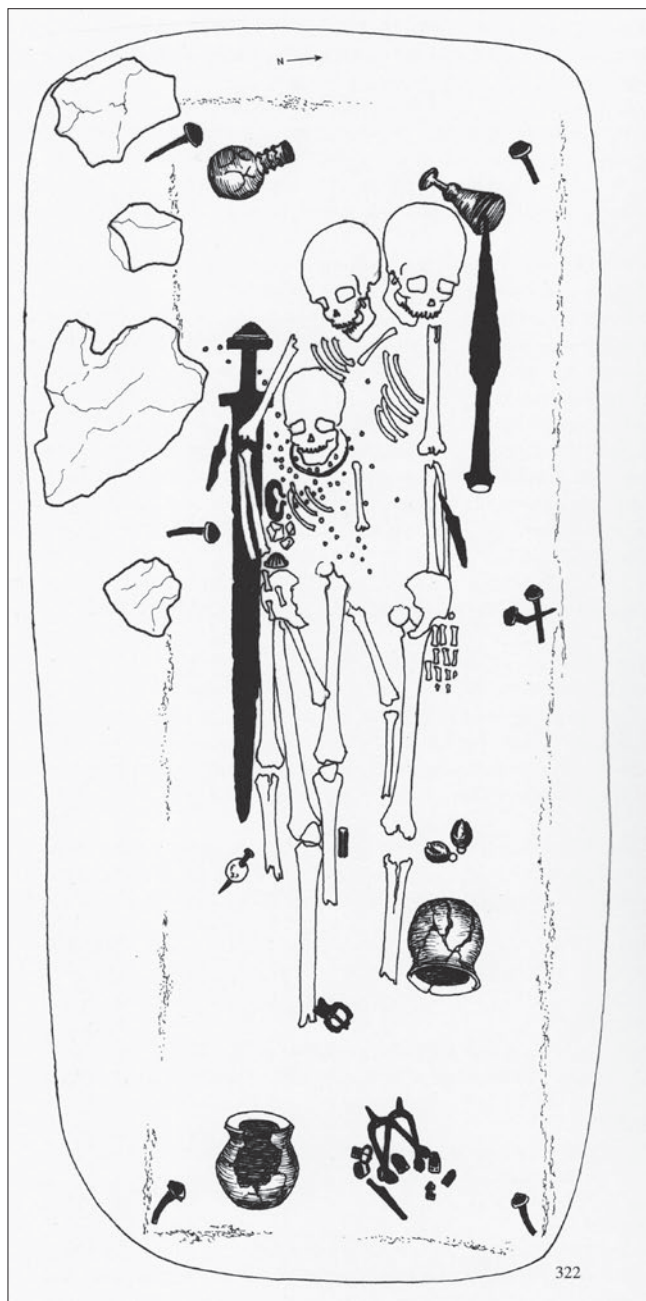


Fig. 10 Nin – Ždrijac grave 322 (after: Belošević 2007: Pl. XLIV)
Sl. 10 Nin – Ždrijac, grob 322 (po: Belošević 2007: T. XLIV)

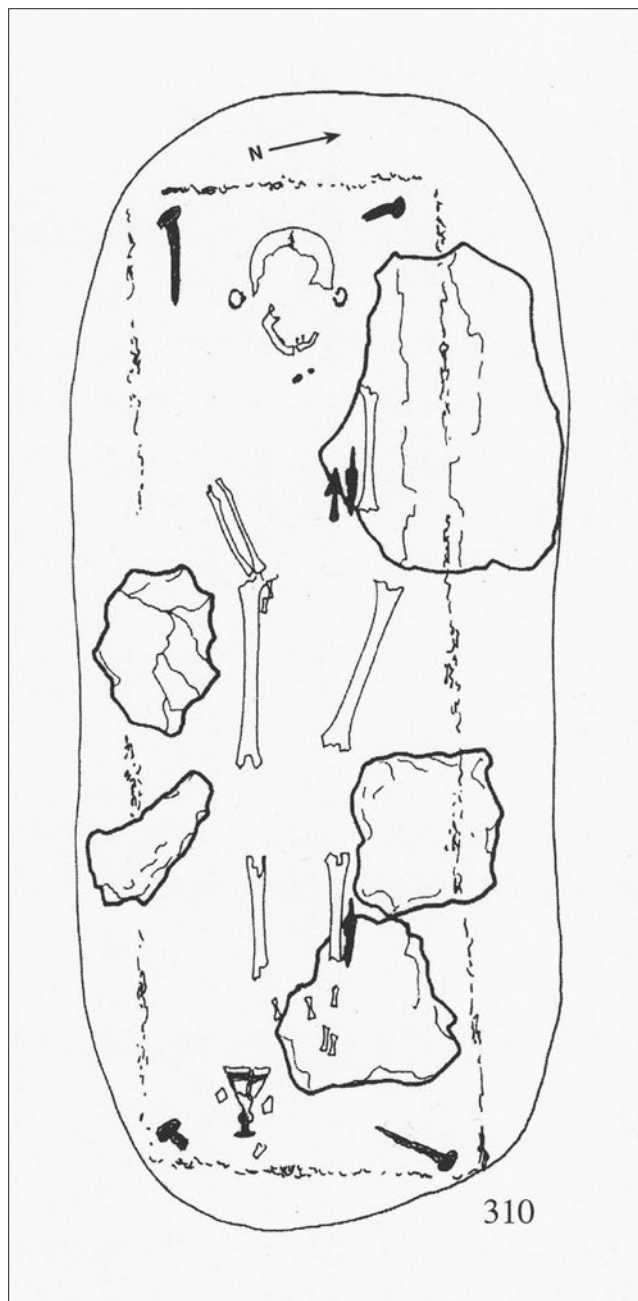


Fig. 11 Nin – Ždrijac grave 310 (after: Belošević 2007: Pl. XLII: 310)
Sl. 11 Nin – Ždrijac, grob 310 (po: Belošević 2007: T. XLII: 310)

and rule (AD 661–749). It was only in the Abbasid period (after AD 750) that a more individual Islamic production began to show (Gorin-Rosen 2016: 41). It is therefore difficult or almost impossible to differentiate between the Byzantine or Umayyad periods for the bottle from Nin, but at least in some cases pinched decoration is more typical of the latter (Pollak 2001: 165, for Caesarea).

In 2010 another grave with a glass bottle was discovered in Vačani near Skradin in Croatia, which underlines the special role of glass vessels as early medieval grave goods in the area. It is yet unpublished and only very basic information is available. A sarcophagus was discovered with two male

se začne kazati bolj individualna islamska proizvodnja (Gorin-Rosen 2016: 41). Zato je težko ali skoraj nemogoče ločiti med bizantinsko ali umajjadsko proizvodnjo za ninsko steklenico, a v nekaj primerih je vsaj ščipan okras bolj značilen za umajjadski čas (Pollak 2001: 165, za Cezarejo).

Leta 2010 je bil odkrit še en grob s stekleno steklenico v Vačanih pri Skradinu na Hrvaškem ki poudarja posebno vlogo steklenih posod kot zgodnesrednjeveških grobnih pridatkov na tem prostoru. Najdba je še neobjavljena in dosegljivi so le najosnovnejši podatki. Odkrit je bil sarkofag z dvema moškima okostjema, mečem tipa K in stekleno steklenico za katero izkopavalca predvidevata izvor z Bližnjega

skeletons, a K type sword and a glass bottle for which the excavators assume a Near Eastern origin (Fabijanić, Krnčević 2016). It is a very exciting discovery and more information on the vessel will hopefully be available shortly.

CONTEXTS

Let us look at the graves the Nin – Ždrijac vessels were found in. The richly furnished grave 322 contained the skeletons of a man, a woman, and a child, and is interpreted as the grave of a high-ranking family, usually believed to be the family of a Croat nobleman (Fig. 10). Without going into this interpretation, the fact remains that it is the richest grave in the cemetery, and the presence of a bottle and glass (wine glass?) is therefore not surprising. In the time around AD 800, when the grave was made, glass vessels must have represented a relative rarity or even luxury, at least as long-distance goods, since the regional secondary glass production does not seem to have been active until the 14th century (Dubrovnik) (Topić et al. 2016). The bottle in particular apparently travelled from far away (even though it was perceived as an everyday object at the point of origin) and from another cultural sphere than the goblet. The most direct interpretation therefore indicates a person who could afford a drinking set, always a favourite among the higher ranks (see below), and was able to procure one consisting of two distinguished objects, one from the West, and the other from the East.

Grave 310 is a grave of an adult woman with a pair of simple hoop silver wire earrings, two glass beads, two knives and an arrowhead as grave goods (Belošević 2007: 219–220). The goblet, conspicuously the most unusual and foreign object in the grave, but also the earrings, which are not very common in the cemetery (in 20 graves out of 337), and the only arrowhead in a female grave, indicate that this could have been a person with an elevated position in society.

CONCLUSIONS

After this brief survey of the available data for the three Nin – Ždrijac glass vessels, what can we conclude? The goblets in the Nin graves are possibly of North Adriatic production and the bottle most probably arrived from the Levant, where such objects were in fact most ubiquitous a little earlier (late 7th–first half of the 8th century) than the presumed deposition of the Nin grave (beginning of the 9th century). At the time when these glass objects were deposited in graves, glass vessels were not common in the region and could have represented a rare luxury and status symbol. It seems drinking sets of glass goblets and bottles or individual vessels were popular with certain social groups within communities in the regions where glass was not commonly used in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Individual vessels or sets can be found in moderately richly furnished graves in Pannonia (e.g. goblets from the Mediterranean: Menis 1990: cat. no. I.14; Tejral 2008: Fig. 9; Hegewisch 2008: cat. no. 75, 92; or even beakers from Gaul: Vida 2016: Fig. 87) and in the Merovingian lands (Keim 2007: 120–124, Map 28). In the more eastern cultures in the Carpathian Basin, gold and silver vessel sets, and also drinking vessels, were popular among the very highest members of society (Vida 2016).

vzhoda (Fabijanić, Krnčević 2016). Gre za zelo razburljivo najdbo in upamo, da bo kmalu znanega več.

KONTEKSTI

Poglejmo na kratko grobova, v katerih so bile najdene posode z Ždrijca. Bogato opremljeni grob 322 je vseboval okostja moškega, ženske in otroka in je interpretiran kot grob družine visokega statusa, največkrat kot družina hrvaškega veljaka (sl. 10). Ne da bi se spuščali v to opredelitev, dejstvo ostaja da gre za najbogatejši grob na grobišču in da prisotnost steklenice in (vinskega?) kozarca ni presenetljiva. V času okrog leta 800, ko je grob nastal, sta stekleni posodi morali predstavljati razmeroma redka ali celo razkošna predmeta, vsaj blago na dolge razdalje, saj lokalna produkcija očitno ni bila dejavna vse do 14. st. (Dubrovnik) (Topić et al. 2016). Še posebno steklenica je očitno potovala od daleč (čeprav je bila doma povsem vsakodneven predmet) in iz drugega kulturnega okolja kot kozarec. Najbolj neposredna interpretacija torej kaže na osebo, ki si je lahko privoščila set pivskega posodja, pogosto priljubljenega pri višjih slojih (glej spodaj) in si je lahko priskrbela takšnega, ki je bil sestavljen iz dveh izjemnih predmetov, enega z zahoda in drugega z vzhoda.

Grob 310 je pripadal odrasli ženski s parom preprostih srebrnih uhanov, dvema steklenima jagodama, dvema nožema in puščično ostjo (Belošević 2007: 219–220). Kozarec je izrazito najbolj nenavaden in tuj predmet v grobu, a tudi uhani, ki niso zelo pogosti na tem grobišču (v 20 od 337 grobovih) in edina puščična ost v ženskem grobu, kažejo da je lahko šlo za osebno z višjim položajem v družbi.

ZAKLJUČKI

Po tem kratkem pregledu dostopnih podatkov za tri posode z Ždrijca v Ninu, kaj lahko zaključimo? Kozarca v grobovih sta lahko severnojadranske proizvodnje, steklenica pa je prispela iz Levanta kjer so bili tovrstni predmeti pogosti nekoliko bolj zgodaj (pozno 7.–prva polovica 8. st.) kot predviden zakop ninskega groba (začetek 9. st.). V času, ko so bili ti predmeti položeni v grobova, steklene najdbe niso bile vsakdanji predmeti v okolici in so lahko predstavljale redek luksuz in statusni simbol. Videti je, da so pivski seti kozarcev in steklenic ali le posameznih posod bili priljubljeni pri nekaterih družbenih skupinah v skupnostih na prostoru, kjer stekleno posodje ni bilo v vsakodnevni uporabi v pozni antiki in zgodnjem srednjem veku. Posamezne posode ali seti se lahko najdejo v razmeroma bogato opremljenih grobovih v Panoniji (npr. sredozemski kozarci: Menis 1990: kat. I.14; Tejral 2008: sl. 9; Hegewisch 2008: kat. 75, 92; ali celo frankovsko posodje: Vida 2016: sl. 87) in na merovinškem področju (Keim 2007: 120–124, karta 28). Pri bolj vzhodnih kulturah Karpatskega bazena so bili pri najvišjih članih družbe priljubljeni kompleti zlatega in srebrnega posodja, tudi pivskega (Vida 2016).

Zgodnje obdobje benečanskega steklarstva ni dovolj

The early period of Venetian glassmaking is insufficiently understood, so it is not possible to say whether the goblets could have arrived from there. After the Late Antique boom, the use of stemmed goblets continued through the Early Middle Ages, but it is poorly documented until at least the 13th century (Foy, Sennequier 1989: 199–221; Silvestri, Marcante 2011).

In the entire region, early Medieval glass vessels are rare and incompletely evaluated, especially their potential ties to the East. Even in the East, the middle Byzantine glass in Asia Minor is relatively rare (Stern 2010). An interesting case is the shipwreck cargo from near the island of Mljet, where Islamic glass vessels with typical Abbasid-Fatimid tongued and frilled decoration (cf. Hadad 2005: 35–58; Gorin-Rosen 2010: 228–252) were discovered together with a cargo of Byzantine amphorae (Kisić 1988: Fig. 9; Zmaić Kralj et al. 2016). The ship was probably headed to Italy, perhaps Comacchio, Ravenna or Venice? But the Islamic glass from Italy is even less known than other early medieval glass.

How did the drinking set reach Nin? Were the goblets once a pair, only separated in the burials? Were they originally the property of the family(?) in grave 322? Commercial relations between Dalmatia and the Byzantines must have existed, since the Byzantines were competing with the Franks for the influence over the Dalmatian population, and traces of both cultural presences are well visible in their territory. Dalmatian towns could have been at least the seats of the middle-men for these glass objects, or perhaps they arrived as a consequence of diplomatic or even direct contacts of the Nin elite with Italy and far off places, even Syro-Palestine and Egypt.

Acknowledgement

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dobro poznano da bi sklepali, ali sta kozarca lahko prispela od tam. Po poznoantičnem razmahu se je uporaba steklenih kozarcev na nogi nadaljevala tekom zgodnjega srednjega veka, a je slabo dokumentirana do vsaj 13. st. (Foy, Sennequier 1989: 199–221; Silvestri, Marcante 2011).

V celem zahodnem Sredozemlju so zgodnjersrednjeveške steklene posode redke in ne do konca ovrednotene, še posebno njihove možne vezi z vzhodom. Tudi na vzhodu je sicer steklo srednjebizantinskega obdobja v Mali Aziji razmeroma redko (Stern 2010). Zanimiv primer je del tovora brodoloma pri otoku Mljetu (Kisić 1988: Fig. 9; Zmaić Kralj et al. 2016), kjer so bile skupaj z bizantinskimi amforami odkrite steklene posode z vtisnjenim in nataljenim okrasom značilnim za proizvodnjo abasidsko-fatimidskega obdobja (prim. Hadad 2005: 35–58; Gorin-Rosen 2010: 228–252). Ladjica je bila verjetno namenjena v severno Italijo, morda v Comacchio, Raveno ali Benetke? A zgodnje islamsko steklo iz Italije je še slabše poznano kot drugo zgodnjersrednjeveško.

Kako je pivski komplet dosegel Nin? Sta bila kozarca najprej par in šele kasneje ločena v pokopih? Sta bila last družine(?) v grobu 322? Trgovske vezi med Dalmacijo in Bizantinci so obstajale. Bizantinci so tekmovali s Franki za vpliv nad dalmatinskim prebivalstvom in sledi obeh kulturnih prisotnosti so vidne v prostoru. Dalmatinska mesta so bila lahko vsaj sedeži posrednikov za tovrstne predmete, morda pa so prispeli kot posledica diplomatskih ali kar neposrednih stikov med elito Nina z Italijo in daljnimi kraji, celo Sirijo, Palestino in Egiptom.

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