



Gold Items from southern Bulgaria and western Anatolia in the Early Bronze Age: An attempt for comparison. Preliminary observations and notes in the context of gold finds from Dabene

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ABSTRACT

This text examines the gold objects found in southern Bulgaria, with an emphasis on those from the ritual structures near Dabene, Karlovo and similar ones from Troy, Poliochny and Eskiapar in Anatolia.

An attempt is made to make a general typological comparison between them, and attention is also paid to the technology of manufacture. The level of likeness of the objects is pointed out, as well as the similarities and variations in the technology of production as far as it is known.

On this basis, the similarities and differences in the complex materials in the two regions compared in the text, southern Bulgaria and western Anatolia, are assessed. It is assumed that the territory of southern Bulgaria has a special place in the production and use of gold objects and complex ornaments. These are typologically different from those known in western Anatolia.

KEYWORDS

Gold finds, Early Bronze Age, Dabene, Troy, Poliochny, Eskiapar

Introduction

The shapes and decoration of ceramics, which are obviously most sensitive chronologically, are accepted as markers in late Prehistory. However, the significant quantity of metal finds, for example, shaft axes, hollow bronze axes, sickles, etc., also indicates well manifested tendencies in certain processes, and not only chronological and cultural developments.

This article is an attempt to show both similarities and differences between the known Early Bronze Age (EBA) gold objects from the territory of south Bulgaria and those from west Anatolia, with emphasis on the third stage of this period, according to the existing periodization in Bulgaria. For completeness, items of the kind discussed in the text below but made of copper, copper alloys and silver are pointed out but left outside the scope of the article due to their different material.

Due to the features of the finds, we will draw attention mainly to adornments and single ornaments as these constitute a major part of the artefacts from the time and space considered here. Single objects that are extremely rare or even unique and cannot be considered significant are also excluded from this humble attempt for such a study.



Fig. 1. Map with the sites mentioned in the text: 1. Dabene; 2. Yunatsite; 3. Galabovo; 4. Troyanovo; 5. Polski Gradets; 6. Popovo; 7. Kamen; 8. Venets; 9. Rupite; 10. Kraishite; 11. Malomirovo; 12. Pchela; 13. Primorsko; 14. Svoboda; 15. Gradina, Vovvodina; 16. Baram; 17. Velika Vrbitsa; 18. Devin; 19. Troy; 20. Polyochni; 21. Eskiapar (map by N. Kecheva)



Fig. 2. Gold pendant from Yunatsite (a, photo R. Mitkova); Gold artefacts found in Roupite (b); Gold pendant from Shekerdha tumulus (c); Gold pendant from Kamenna tumulus (d) (b–d, photo K. Georgiev)



Fig. 3. Gold spirals from Chernyova tumulus (a); Gold spirals from Malomirovo (b); Gold spiral from Pchela (c) (a–c, photo K. Georgiev); Gold pendant from Polski Gtadets (d, photo K. Nikov)



Fig. 4. Gold spiral from Popovo (a, photo S. Kamenov); Gold finds from Venets (b, photo K. Georgiev); Gold pendants from Primorsko (c, photo D. Pantov); Gold spiral from Ovcharts (d, photo K. Georgiev), Gold spiral from Galabovo (e, photo S. Kamenov)

Gold finds found in south Bulgaria (fig. 1).

- A pendant with unclear stratigraphic data came from Yunatsite settlement mound (fig. 2a). It has overlapping ends, thickened and slightly pointed mid part (Mikov 1940, fig. 14; Mitkova 2011, fig. 2.1). It is classified as a Levkas type (Vasileva 2017, 4);
- Gold artefacts were found in Roupite, Petrich Region (fig. 2b). The find comprises two rivets with round heads, three fragments from a diadem and 175 biconical and cylindrical beads dating to EBA III. According to the existent information they came from a grave (Katincharov, Avramova 1994; Avramova 2002, 95–96; Alexandrov 2017b; Alexandrov, Hristov 2018);
- A gold pendant of one and a half loops came from Grave no. 4 of Shekerdhza Tumulus, Sliven Region (fig. 2c). According to the publication, it dates to the Middle Bronze Age (MBA) (Dimitrova 2012a, 38; 2012b, 43 and 43 down-left; Dimitrova et al. 2012, 110);
- One gold pendant (spiral) of one and a half loops from Kamenna tumulus (fig. 2d) located near



Fig. 5. Gold finds from Kraishte (photo Z. Tsintsov)

- Troyanovo, Stara Zagora Region. The find was found in Grave no. 2 in (Buyukliev 1964, 64);
- Two gold spirals come from Chernyova tumulus (fig. 3a) located near Troyanovo, Stara Zagora Region. The spirals were found in grave no. 6 (Alexandrov 2018).
 - Two gold spirals derive from Malomirovo, Pamukli bair (fig. 3b), dated to the Early Yamna Period from grave no. 23 (Alexandrov et al. 2024, fig. 53; Alexandrov, Agre 2024, 167–169);
 - One stray find of gold spiral from Pchela (fig. 3c), Elhovo region, is dated to the MBA (Agre 2018);
 - One pendant from structure 1 in Vetata Maya site near the village of Polski Gradets and dated to the late EBA – early MBA (fig. 3d) and is interpreted as evidence for interactions between Southern Thrace and Anatolia (Nikov 2024).
 - One gold spiral from Golyamata tumulus near Popovo (fig. 4a), Yambol region is dated to the EBA. The spiral was found in grave no. 30 (Agre 2007, 75; Iliev 2011, 388);
 - Two gold spirals and one gold ring from Tonchova tumulus (fig. 4b) near Venets, Karnobat Region are dated to the EBA. They are Levkas type and were found in grave no. 3 (Georgieva et al. 2008; 2018, fig. 2; Vasileva 2017, 4);
 - Two pendants type Levkas from grave no. 1 in Silihyar tumulus no. 4 near Primorsko (fig. 4c), Burgas region are dated in EBA II–III (Balabanov, Pantov 2019, 108; 2022, 57);
 - A hair-ring came from Ovchartsii Tumulus, Radnevo Region (fig. 4d). According to the publication, it dates to the MBA and was found in Grave no. 7 (Alexandrov 2007);
 - A gold pendant of one loop and backward curve came from Galabovo tell, Sliven Region (fig. 4e). According to the publication, it dates to the MBA (Leshtakov 1996, 11–14);
 - One gold ring type Levkas from settlement context near Svoboda, Chirpan Region

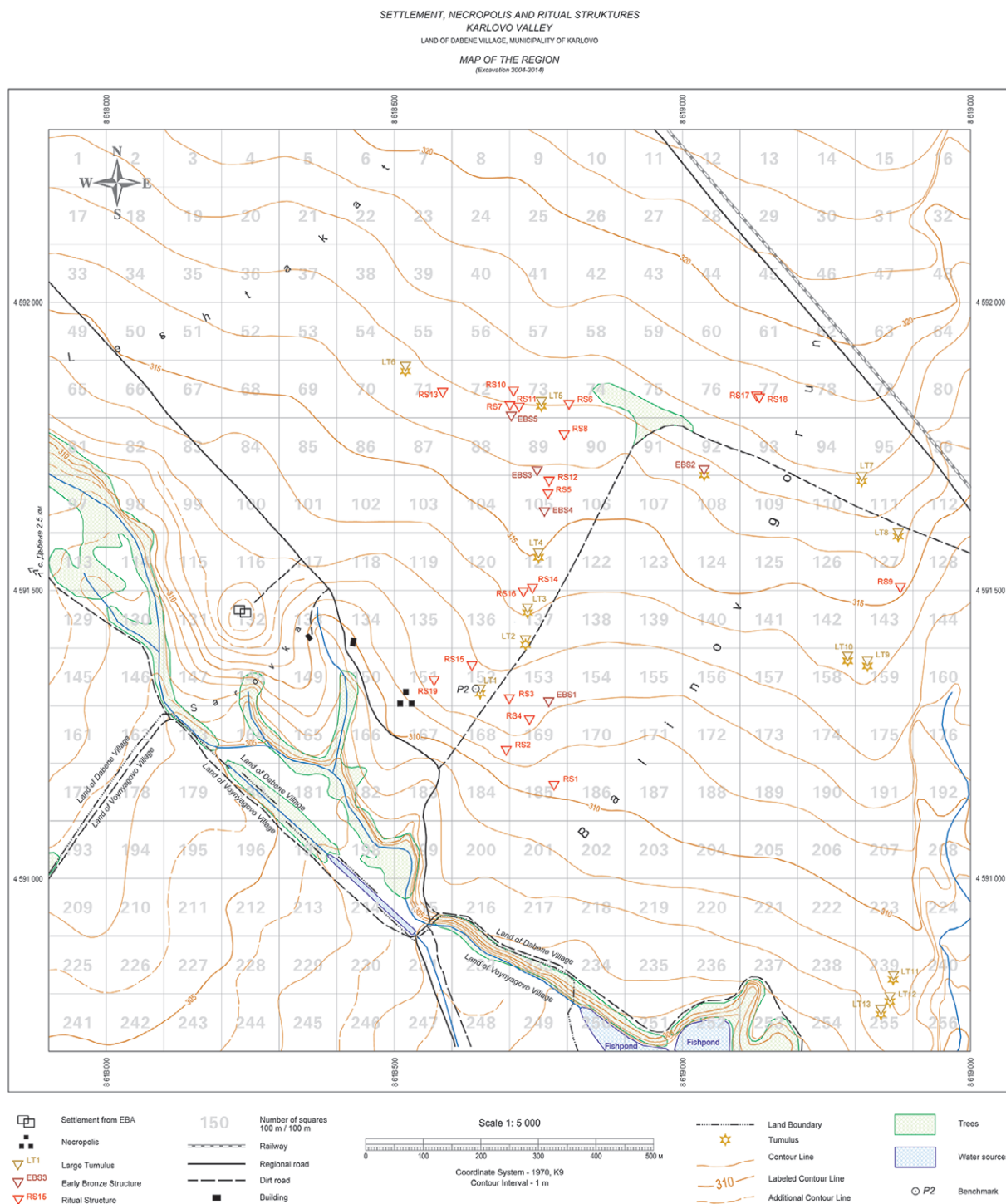


Fig. 6. General plan of ritual structures near Dabene (plan Kartproekt)

- 51) is dated to MBA¹;
- Some objects (gold beads and elements) were discovered in the process of sampling for alluvial gold in the area of Krayishte and in Upper Struma reaches (fig. 5), Kyustendil Region and part of them were dated, on the basis of precise typological parallels, to the EBA III (Tsintsov 1992; 1993; 2005; 2008; 2018; Christov 2008a).

1 The information was provided to me by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Krasimir Nikov (NAIM–BAS), to whom I sincerely thank.



Fig. 7. Gold spirals from Ritual Structure no. 4 at Dabene (photo M. Hristov)

- And lastly the ritual structures situated near the village of Dabene, Karlovo Region (fig. 6), yielded the greatest number of gold artefacts so far (Hristov 2010; 2015; 2016; 2017). Over twenty ritual structures were studied together with one of the largest mounds in the complex. Over 21000 gold objects or adornment elements were discovered in eight of them and in Large Tumulus no. 3. These structures were dated in EBA III. The artefacts were discovered in separate structures, most of which were also closed complexes. This also suggests certain differences at least in the dates of their deposition, as well as manufacture, but still within the EBA III. By mentioning a difference in the dates they had been deposited, I would like to stress that it relates to both the caching date and the difference in the quality of the objects, which is noted among the artefacts from ritual structures nos 1–8.

The objects from these structures are similar both as classes and types, and could be described as spirals of one and a half loops made of variably thick gold wire; spirals in which the wire is bent in a loop that is followed by one to nine backward curves (fig. 7) (Christov 2008b); round gold beads of various thickness and diameter between 1.5 and 4.3 mm, some of which with an incised ornament along the periphery of the front side; small lenticular beads also decorated with incisions along the periphery (fig. 8a); round beads of diameters from 2 to 2.5 mm and bulging sides like slightly flattened spheres; biconical beads (fig. 8b) made of gold foil; bi-pyramidal beads (fig. 8c) (Dabene type beads, unknown from other sites) of the same technology; prismatic beads of various lengths; round beads with diameter around 8 mm (fig. 9), as well as string separators (fig. 10a) that could be divided into two types – flat, elliptical with three, six, ten and eleven holes, and separators of complex construction that consist of three, five, six or fourteen tubes of gold foil, wrapped in the same kind of foil to make a compact object,



Fig. 8. Decorated gold beads from Ritual Structure no. 5 at Dabene (a); Biconical beads from the large Tumulus no. 3 at Dabene (b); Bipyramidal bead from Ritual Structure no. 4 at Dabene (c) (a–c, photo M. Hristov)

which gives the impression of being massive. There are also appliqués that could be divided into two types – round, semi-elliptical, with two or four sewing openings (fig. 10b), and round with ornament in relief and four openings (fig. 11) – as well as, a gold dagger (fig. 12a–b), a gold plate (fig. 12c), gold attachments for the handle of a knife decorated with flutes or of joined by their peaks hatched isosceles triangles (fig. 12d) that mimic the decoration of some ceramic vessels, a miniature gold nail and a prismatic object. Most of these were made by sintering.

The majority of these elements facilitate the reconstruction of three complex adornments (figs 13–15). Three derive from structures that were intact and were discovered in closed complexes, while at least two other came from structures that were almost entirely or partially destroyed by looters. However, the presence of string separators and small beads indicate their existence.

Dating of gold finds

Reliable absolute dating of the Dabene ritual structures is available only from seven, out of nine samples (Table 1, fig. 19). The dates for ritual structure no. 5 (fig. 16) (3963 ± 23 BP; 4117 ± 23 BP;



Fig. 9. Round beads from Ritual Structure no. 2 at Dabene (photo M. Hristov)

4039±25 BP)² comes from burnt wood. The situation is similar for levels VI–III at the tell Yunatsite (Bojadzhiew 2007, 217–221) with a date from level IV (wood; 3957±50 BP) that is practically identical to the one from Dabene. The second date comes from bone material from the ritual structure no. 16 (fig. 17) (3676±37 BP). It falls at the very end of the 3rd millennium BC and probably is to be connected to the end of EBA III. So far, there are no other similar dates from Bulgaria. Both dates fit very well into the timeframe of EBA III, i.e. between 2500/2450 BC and 2100/2000 BC (Leshtakov 2006, 151 f.). The dates from Big tumulus no. 6 is later than the date from ritual structure no. 14 and they are in the transitional period between III and II millennium BC (fig. 19) (3672±26 BP; 3614±25 BP). The date for ritual structure no. 14 is later, entering the first half of the 2nd millennium BC (fig. 18) (3414±35 BP). It is well synchronised with the dates from the round enclosure near Bikovo, Sliven region³ indicating that at Dabene the building of ritual structures also continued in the MBA. Despite the small number of dates (only seven) their time-span (2500/2300–1620 cal BC) indicates that the place was used for ritual practices over a long period, as well as that the nearby settlement should have MBA levels(?).

Generally speaking, the structures from Dabene are synchronous with the second half of the Troy II period to the middle of Troy V. On the basis of the first two dates, parallels in pottery, gold objects, and other materials the ritual structures can be dated to the EBA III, as this is the date of the ritual structures and the possibility that the gold objects were produced earlier is not to be underestimated; except for the

² Finds from the same structure are completely wrongly identified as belonging to the MBA in very recently published articles, which strongly contradict both the absolute dates and the ceramic material from it (Krauß 2017, katre 1 – 34 and abb. 3 – 15-18; 2018, map 1 and fig. 3 – 15-18; Krauß, Pernicka 2023, fig. 2.6). The material of these three dates is charcoal derived from perennial plant, in this case a reed leaf or wood, which reduces the risk of old-wood effect.

³ Thanks for the information to Dr. T. Hristova (NAIM–BAS).



Fig. 10. Gold separator from Ritual Structure no. 2 at Dabene (a); Gold appliqués from Ritual Structure no. 2 at Dabene (b) (a–b, photo M. Hristov)



Fig. 11. Gold appliqués from Ritual Structure no. 2 at Dabene (photo M. Hristov)

structure no. 14 which belongs to the MBA.

In terms of pottery, the relative chronology of the structures is the same as outlined above. Important here is that gold finds appear only in structures before the second millennium BC.

The dates from ritual structure 14 – middle-beginning of third quarter of the 3rd millennium BC (Table 1), could also be a reference point for the dating of some treasures from Troy, whose chronology is quite wide (for example: Trejster 1996, 250; 2013, 147–151; Sazci 2006, 247; 2007, 133; Sazci, Trejster 2006, 151; Avilova 2018, 57–58). From this point of view, the dating proposed by M. Treister (Trejster 1996, 250; 2013, 151) to the middle and third quarter of the 3rd millennium BC seems most likely.

Gold finds from west Anatolia and such of identical characteristics

The gold adornments in west Anatolia came mostly from the treasures of Troy (Tolstikov et al. 1996; Sazci 2007), the finds from Polyochni (Bernabò-Brea 1976, tav. CCXLVII–CCL, CCLII), the treasure hoard from Eskiapar (Özgüç, Temizer 1993, 613–628) and from two other finds – one originates from Troad and is kept in the Museum of Pennsylvania (Bass 1966; 1970), and the other is in the museum of adornments in Pfortzhaim, where they appear in some numbers (Easton 2003). The typological and chronological similarity between these is great and will be presented together.

Noteworthy among these materials are the spirals of loop and a half and thickening of the wire

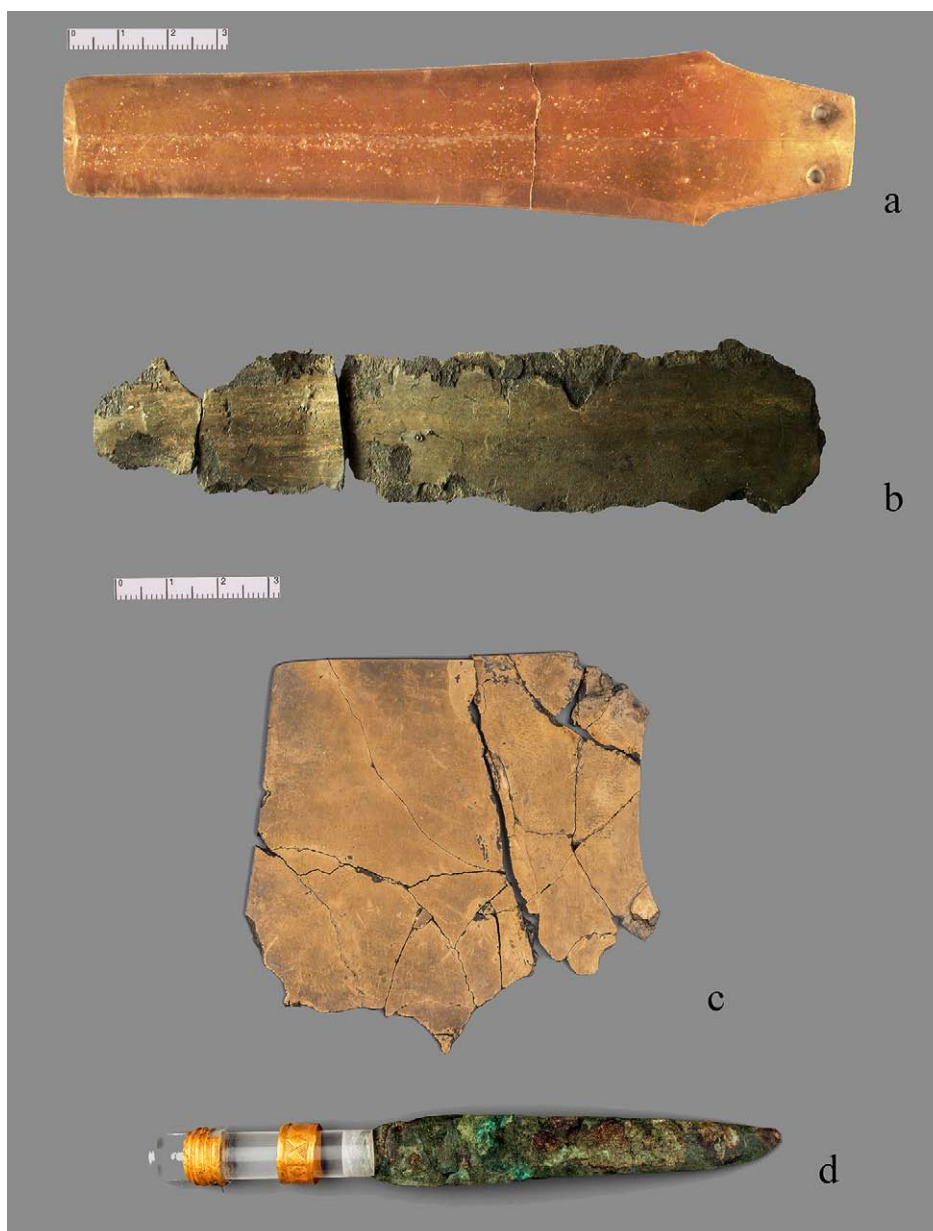


Fig. 12. Gold dagger from Ritual Structure no. 5 at Dabene (a, photo R. Kolev); Gold dagger from Ritual Structure no. 5 at Dabene (b, photo M. Hristov); Gold plate from Ritual Structure no. 5 at Dabene (c); Gold fittings for knife handle from Ritual Structure no. 5 at Dabene (d) (c–d, photo T. Dimitrov)

in their mid-part; the beads of various diameters, some of which with incisions along the periphery; the beads shaped as slightly flattened spheres or with an ornament along the periphery; square beads; hexagonal beads; the pendant-beads with a thread opening that merges into a cylinder and a biconical or a drop-like end; the flat oval beads with an opening along their length; the spirally coiled elements with a hole for hanging; the highly elongated and shorter biconical beads made of gold leaf; the conical or hemispherical appliquéés with a hoop on the back; the almost circular beads; the pendants with a hole in their upper part and decorated with notches cylindrical body; the pendants with round lower part the centre of which is spherical and the periphery is covered with notches; the bracelets made of bent wire with circular or square cross-section, some of which have biconical ends; the bracelets made of flat lamella and the surface is decorated with pine-tree like ornament; the nails with hemispherical heads; the ear-rings with three or more branches, some of which are granulated; the ear-rings that carry



Fig. 13. Gold necklace from Ritual Structure no. 3 at Dabene (photo T. Dimitrov)

strings of drop-shaped or rhomboid elements ending with pendants, some of which with soldered-on spirally coiled ornaments or granules; the pins with upper ends terminating in richly decorated plates resembling miniature vessels, the zoomorphic images also showing granulation or soldered single elements; the diadems; the diadems with various number of chains with hanging rhomboid bead ending with pendants; the elements shaped as pairs of symmetrical spirals; the flat elliptical string separators with various number of openings that were interpreted as elements for bead production; the elongated objects of oval cross-section and notches along their lengths; the four string separators each with four openings; the gold vessels of various shapes, etc.

Preliminary observations on the kind and typology of the gold objects from the two regions: similarities and differences

Some preliminary observations might be drawn by a brief overview of the present kind and types of objects and elements.

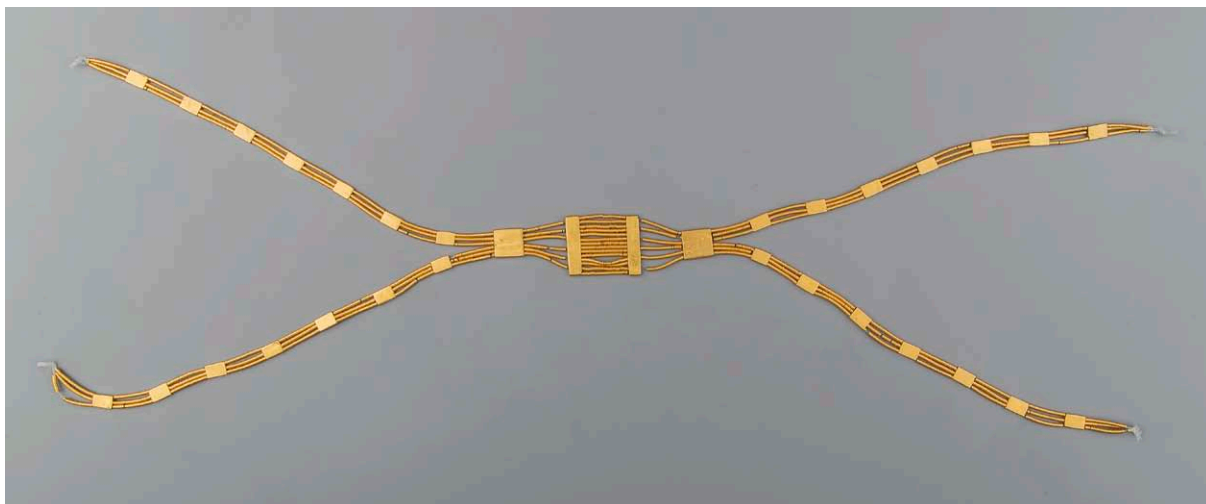


Fig. 14. Gold necklace from Ritual Structure no. 3 at Dabene (photo T. Dimitrov)

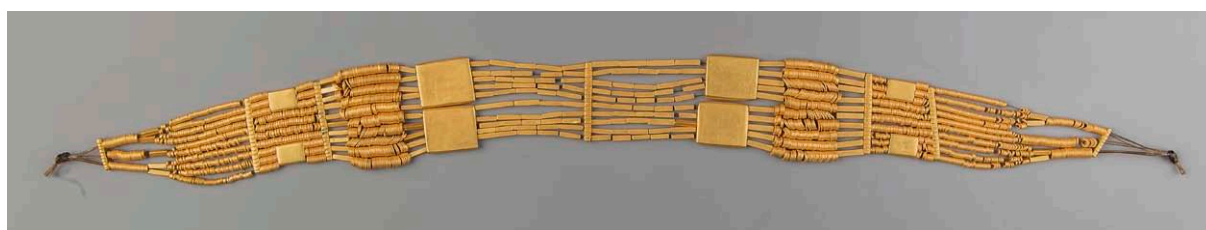


Fig. 15. Gold necklace from Ritual Structure no. 5 at Dabene (photo T. Dimitrov)

First are the common elements and shapes. The small flat beads of various diameters, some of which with notches along the periphery, as well as the decorated lenticular beads, stand out. Reviewing these elements in a broader geographical aspect, we may say that in the discussed chronological period, they are distributed and most numerous not only in the areas outlined above but also across the entire Anatolia.

The second common elements are the string separators. They are almost identical in shapes, but if the solid and elliptical ones from Troy are no more than ten and there is only one among the finds from Polychoini, those only from south Bulgaria are twelve. The string separators made of tubes wrapped in gold foil present another common element for these regions. Four such elements are known so far from Anatolia and fifty-three from present-day Thrace.

The gold spirals are the next common element but most of them are rather different in shape. Similar are only those that are known by the formal description of being “made by loop and a half”.

The next important observation concerns the elements that are missing in any of the regions. The bi-pyramidal beads are missing in West Anatolia but are known from South Bulgaria, as well as the spirals of one loop followed by various in number backward curves, which are fifty-two from Dabene and the stray find from Gradina, Voyvodina (Christov 2008b; Medović 2006, sl. 77.c; Kavur, Mitrović 2023, 49–64), although those from Gradina show some difference. Formally, the spirals with reverse curves from Dabene may be a separate type (Vasileva 2025, 76), with their latest presence being found in materials from the settlement mound Galabovo (fig. 4e) dated to the Middle Bronze Age (Leshtakov 1996, fig. 11.4).

The two kinds of string separators may also be pointed out as characteristic for the second region, at least from statistical point of view. It should be noted here that the solid string separators continued

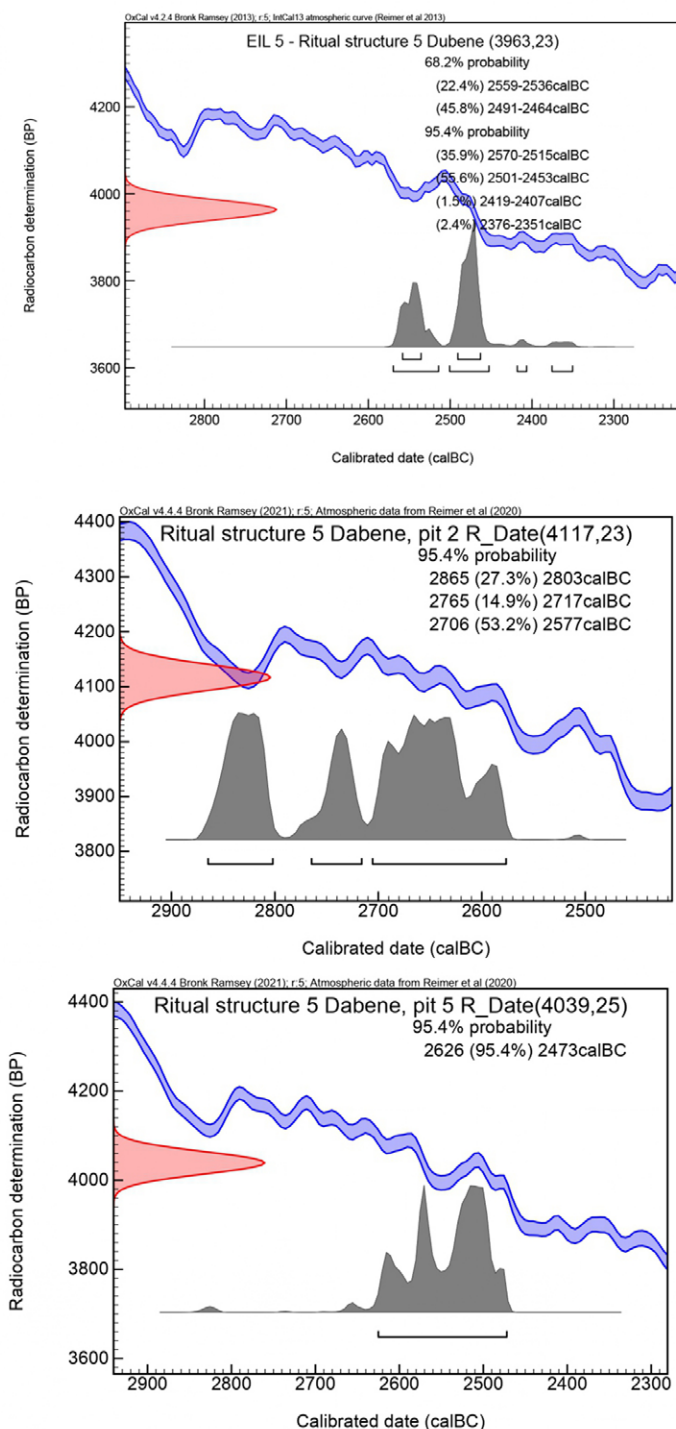
Gold Items from southern Bulgaria and western Anatolia in the Early Bronze Age: ...

Labno. MAMS	Sample name	C14 age	±	δ13C [‰]	68,2% probability	95,4% probability	C:N	C [%]	Collagen [%]
23529	EIL 5 – Ritual structure 5 Dabene (charcoal)	3963	23	-26,7	(22,4%) 2559-2536 calBC (45,8%) 2491-2464 calBC	(35,9%) 2570-2515 calBC (55,6%) 2501-2453 calBC (1,5%) 2419-2407 calBC (2,4%) 2376-2351 calBC			
23532	EIL 8 – Ritual structure 16 Dabene (bone)	3676	37	-18,2	(37,2%) 2135-2070 calBC (25,7%) 2065-2019 cal BC (5,3%) 1994-1982 cal BC	(3,0%) 2195-2176 cal BC (92,4%) 2145-1948 calBC			3,1
23531	EIL 7 – Ritual structure 14 Dabene (bone)	3414	35	-20,5	(68,2%) 1752-1662 calBC	(5,7%) 1872-1844 calBC (1,6%) 1813-1801 calBC (88,2%) 1778-1625 calBC	3,5	7,1	0,4
Labno. JAPAN		yrBP±1σ				Cal BC 95,4 %			
PLD-39390	Big tumuli 6 – Dabene (bone)	3672	26			2139-1966 cal BC (95,4 %)			
PLD-39391	Big tumuli 6 – Dabene (bone)	3614	25			2033-1900 cal BC (95,4 %)			
Labno. SUERC					68,3% probability	95,4% probability			
133854	Ritual structure 5 Dabene, pit No. 2 (charcoal)	4117	23	-25,8	2849 (21,9%) 2811 calBC 2745 (8,2%) 2728 calBC 2696 (38,2%) 2625 calBC	2865 (27,3%) 2803 calBC 2765 (14,9%) 2717 calBC 2706 (53,2%) 2557 calBC			
133853	Ritual structure 5 Dabene, pit No. 5 (charcoal)	4039	25	-26.1	2618 (4,6%) 2609 calBC 2581 (17,7%) 2559 calBC 2540 (45,9%) 2491 calBC	2626 (95,4%) 2473 calBC			

Table 1. C^{14} dates from Dabene

to be in use during the Late Bronze Age (LBA), too, for example, those from Velika Vrbitsa in Serbia (Garašanin 1954, 10, T. II; Garašanin 1983, 522, T. LXXXVI–9, 13). They are made of bone during the entire period from the EBA III to the LBA (Popescu 2003; Hristov, Karatsanova 2009). The two kinds of appliqués that are known from south Bulgaria – the spherical ones and those with the concentric circles – might be defined identically, because they remain so far unknown in West Anatolia but are again present among the finds from Gradina (Medović 2006, sl. 77.c; Kavur, Mitrović 2023, 49–64) and the second kind has its parallels in the grave find from Devin in the Rhodopes, but both dated to the LBA (Leshtakov 2008, fig. 9).

Unknown, both in shape and technology, also remain the gold daggers (Hristov 2022). The only

Fig. 16. C^{14} dates from ritual structure no. 5

common element with the Anatolian examples is the shape of the upper end. Unparalleled is also the gold plate that is astonishing both as an object and as manufacturing technology.

At the same time, a number of elements that were common in Anatolia remained unknown in south Bulgaria. Such are: the diadems made of one lamella; the diadems with hanging flat beads ending with pendants; the ear-rings with plates; the flat beads with a hole in the middle; the pendants with a hole in the upper part and variously shaped bodies; the square and hexagonal beads; the conical or hemispherical appliques with a hoop on the back; the almost spherical beads; the bracelets made of bent wire with circular or square cross-section, some of which with biconical ends, or the bracelets made of flat lamella the surface of which is covered with pine-tree like ornament; the ear-rings with three or more

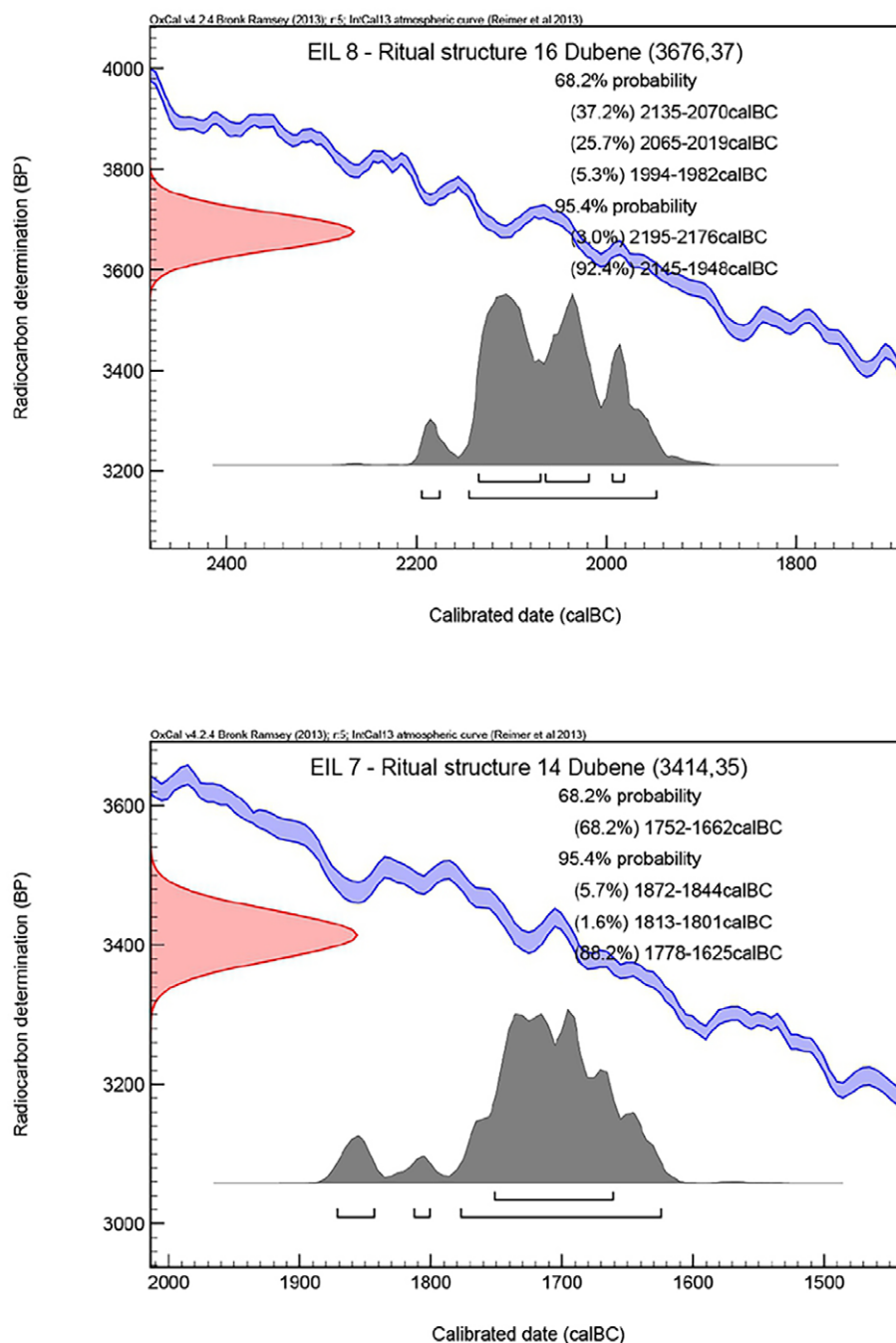


Fig. 17. C^{14} dates from ritual structures nos 16 and 14

branches; the ear-rings that carry separate strings of drop-like or rhomboidal elements that end with pendants; the crescent-shaped ear-rings; the pins the upper part of which terminate in richly adorned plates; the elements shaped as symmetrical two pairs of spirals; the elongated objects with oval cross-section and notches along their length; the gold vessels of various shapes, etc. Some of these elements are known from the west Balkans – Tumulus no. 1 near Baram in Serbia (Srejović 1976, 122, Sl. 2, T. IV–3, 4) – but having in mind the finds from Mala Grouda, they should be considered there as an import or a result of an indirect influence (Primas 1996).

The technology of granulation remains so far unknown in south Bulgaria but it held an enviable position in the ornamentation of gold objects in Anatolia and Asia Minor more broadly (Maxwell-Hys-

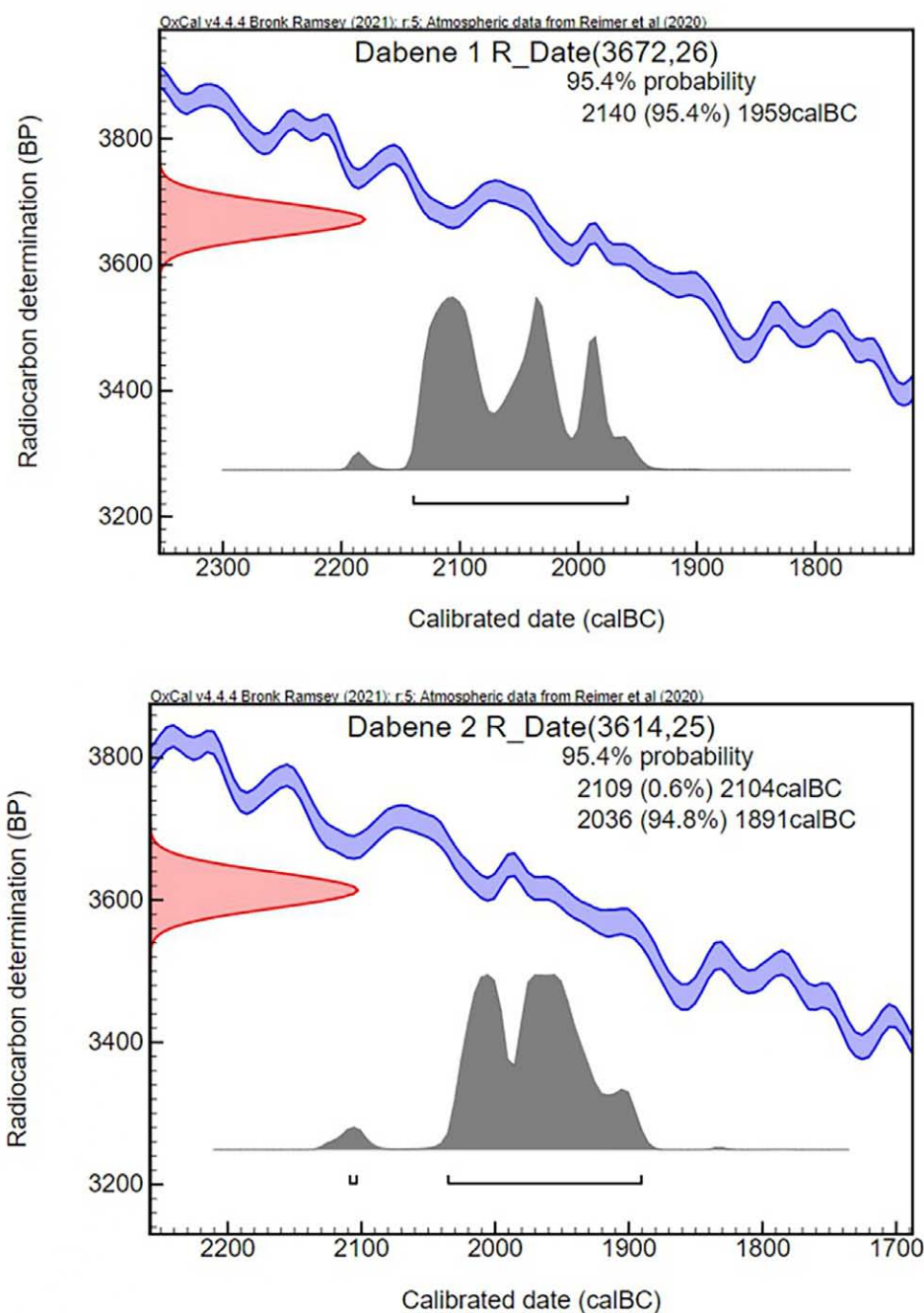


Fig. 18. C^{14} dates from big tumulus no. 6

lop 1971, 7, 19, 36–37, 43, 49, 55, 59, 61, 65, 70, 75, 83–84; Wolters 1981; Lilyquist 1993; Betancourt 2006; Born et al. 2009). This also stands for the various methods of soldering. At the same time, the analyses of the objects from Dabene show the broad usage of sintering on alluvial gold in the production of the majority of the objects (Tsintsov et al. 2009; Tsaneva et al. 2011a; 2011b; Hristov 2011, 146–147). It is quite possible that a similar technology had been used in the production of the finds from Anatolia (Hristov 2011, 147).

The discovery of individual elements with a more widespread distribution and origin from areas to the south of Bulgaria should come as no surprise. They are evidence of integration of some regions

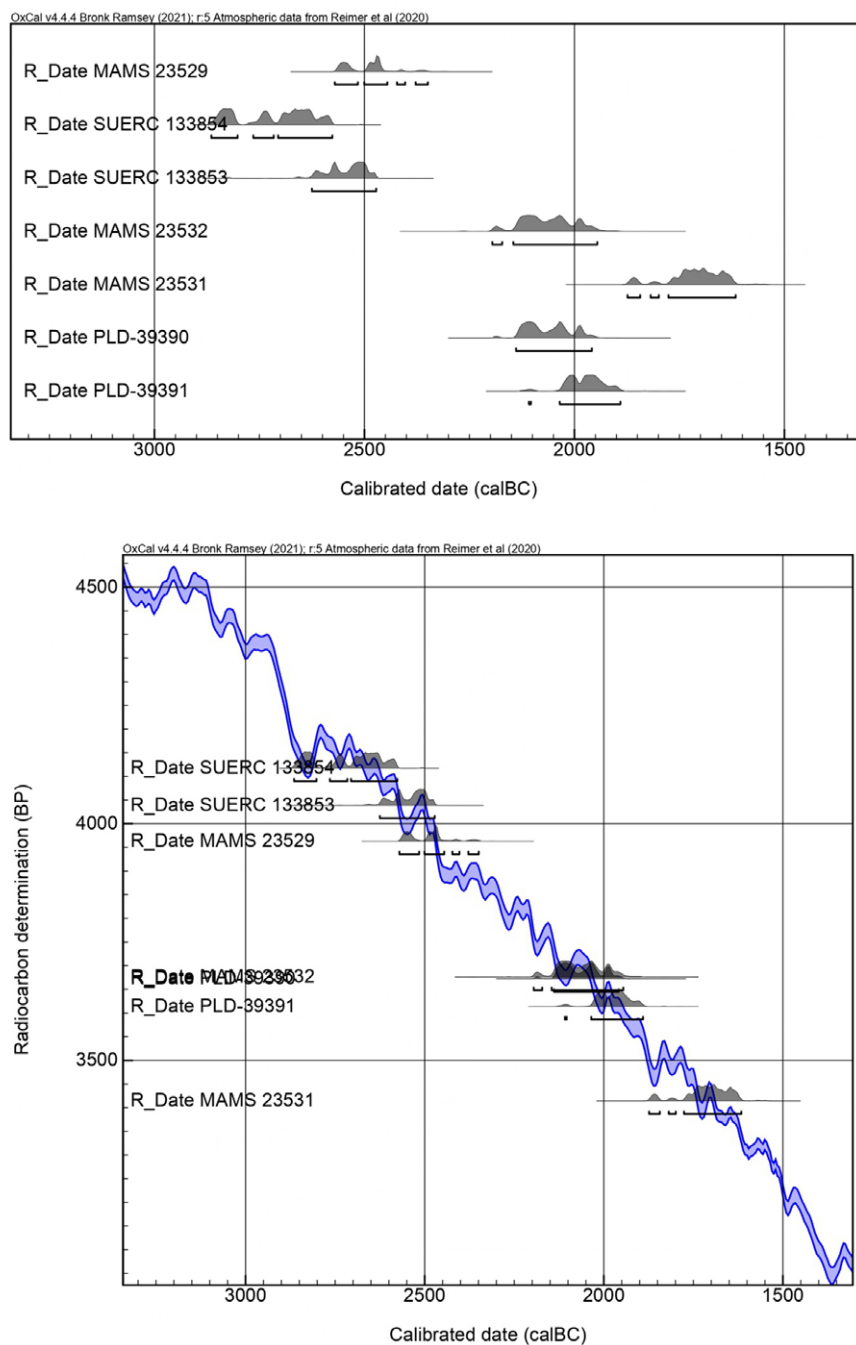


Fig. 19. C^{14} dates from Dabene

of Thrace into the Aegean-Anatolian cultural and economic systems as well as the existence of Aegean-Anatolian colonies here (Heyd et al. 2016, 191–194; Alexandrov 2020, 254; Popescu 2020, 232–239), and jewellery probably had been transmitted to Central Europe (Hristov 2015; 2016). Some of the individual types of objects, such as the Levkas-type pendants, are assumed in recent studies to be of Carpatho-Balkan (North Balkan) origin with dating in EBA II – EBA III (Maran 2007; Alexandrov 2017a, 219; Vasileva 2017, 10; 2025, 86). According to recent finds, Levkas-type pendants are also found in the MBA, with the question remaining open whether individual examples survived to this era or whether their production continued during this period.

The designation of a new production centre “Dabene” is rather hypothetical given the concentration of only finished products (Hristov 2005, 134; 2010, 292–293; 2015, 491), something admitted by other authors (Vasileva 2025, 29) and supported by the lack of tools needed for this purpose.

Conclusions

The following conclusions might be drawn:

1. South Bulgaria, and probably part of the Central Balkans, had their place in the common circle of production and use of gold adornments during the EBA, and in particular, during its third stage. This circle included the Central Balkans, Anatolia and the other parts of the Asia Minor.
2. Some of the objects are characteristic and are, for the time being, to be found only in South Bulgaria, and sporadically in the Central Balkans.
3. Other finds are distributed only in west Anatolia.
4. The geographic distribution of the objects shows obvious differences in the use of kinds and types of objects that again underline the two zones – one in south Bulgaria (at least, according to the gathered information so far and the concentration of finds) and one in west Anatolia.
5. The various kinds and types of objects suggest that some of them had been produced in south Bulgaria from local raw materials. The same stands for west Anatolia, too, as far as the other part of the objects are concerned, with the reservation that the origin of the raw material was probably connected with the Balkans (Yakar 1985, 28–29; Leshtakov 2006, 169; Bachmann 2006, 74).
6. It is therefore possible to conclude, although with caution, that the territory of south Bulgaria probably had a specific place in the production and use of gold objects and complex adornments. They differ from the ones known in west Anatolia. This suggests the existence of different fashions in the two regions, which depended on local preferences. The existence of common elements, however, does not exclude influences which run in both directions.
7. Obscure remains the answer concerning the appearance of such quantities of gold objects in the study areas. The possibility of an influence from Asia Minor, and mostly from Anatolia, on the Balkans should not be ignored as it is noted in a number of other imports found in the present-day Thrace. The opposite process is also evidenced by finds of ceramics and bronze in the south and southeast.

Acknowledgements

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