

The necropolis of the prehistoric Baley settlement (preliminary note on the results from the 2013 investigations)

Stefan Alexandrov ^a, Georgi Ivanov ^{b*}, Tania Hristova ^c, Nikolai Kazashki ^d

^aDepartment of Thracian Archaeology, National Institute of Archaeology with Museum in Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2 Saborna Str, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria; stefanalexandrov@abv.bg

^bDepartment of Thracian Archaeology, National Institute of Archaeology with Museum in Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2 Saborna Str, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria; ivanov.georgi@yahoo.com

^cDepartment of Thracian Archaeology, National Institute of Archaeology with Museum in Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2 Saborna Str, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria; tnaidenova@abv.bg

^dRegional Museum of History in Vidin, 13 Tsar Simeon Veliki, 3700 Vidin, nsnsnsn@abv.bg

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

The article presents four burial complexes studied in 2013, representative of the Baley-Orsoia (or Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare), Bistreț-Ișalnița and Vârtop chronological phases. In addition to these, the investigations of the Baley necropolis revealed also graves of earlier date, synchronous to the Verbicioara III phase. The brief review of the associated inventory and the burial practices suggests that at the Baley necropolis the Late Bronze Age and the beginning of the Early Iron Age are represented by reasonably certain sealed complexes. During 2013 investigations we encountered a new for the site custom – placement of the cremated remains in a dish, with a large number of vessels, including biconical jars arranged in proximity with it.

KEYWORDS

Baley, Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare, Bistreț-Ișalnița, Vârtop, urnfield necropolis, cremation burial practices, Late Bronze Age, Early Iron Age

Introduction

Excavations on the necropolis of the prehistoric Baley settlement are part of collaboration between the National Institute of Archaeology with Museum in Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NIAM-BAS) and the Regional Museum of History in Vidin (RHM-Vidin). The two institutions continue the studies of the Bronze and Early Iron Age history of the region, launched and carried on over the course of more than three decades by Rumen Katincharov (NIAM-BAS) and Ana Yotsova (RHM-Vidin).

In 2009, during excavation works, locals stumble across significant volumes of pottery artefacts, **correctly appreciate their value, and report to the Vidin museum. The 2010 excavations on the site revealed a necropolis, partially overlapped by the modern day village of Baley (Bregovo Municipality, Vidin District) and removed about 500 m from the attendant prehistoric settlement site (Alexandrov *et al.* 2011, 127). The first archaeological campaign of 2010 charted the chronology of the burial features and the nature of the burial practices – cremated human remains placed in jars of various sizes (with two or four handles; biconical jars with tongue-shaped lugs) (Alexandrov *et al.* 2011, 129; Христова *et al.* 2011, 132-134).**

The 2011 campaign corroborated the conjecture (formulated on the basis of the surface scatter) for the substantial size of the necropolis site (Христова *et al.* 2012, 119-121). The burial practices and the pottery assemblage found in the Baley necropolis find parallels in, and are synchronous to, the Verbicioara III, Baley-Orsoia (or Dubovac-Žuto Brdo, Cîrna-Gârla Mare), Bistreț-Ișalnița, and Vârtop phenomena (Alexandrov *et al.* 2011; Христова *et al.* 2011; 2012). **In this short report we present four burial complexes studied during the 2013 archaeological campaign, as well as a brief overview of the chronology of the cultures of the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age.**

Features revealed during the 2013 excavation campaign

In 2010, 2011 and 2013 a total of 27 archaeological features were studied, out of them 24 are considered graves based on the presence of cremated bone remains. The recognition of the individual features accounts for the clustering of pottery vessels within a limited area and the mandatory presence of cremated human bones, placed within one or several of those vessels. These precisely clusters are construed as reasonably certain sealed assemblages. The sandy matrix (the necropolis develops on top of sandy dunes) precludes positive identification of the burial pits, within which the vessels were arranged. Some of the vessels are found in proximity with a more considerable pottery cluster (interpreted as grave) and in all likelihood are associated with it.

The 2013 campaign recovered considerable numbers and significant variety of artifacts: more than 50 vessels undergoing restoration; fragments of two stone axes; a bronze needle and two ceramic spindle whorls placed as burial gifts in one of the urns; a top and a bottom half of two different anthropomorphic figurines. All ceramic vessels are poorly baked. Some urns contained molten at the funeral pyre shapeless bronze objects, probably items of adornment. Around the urns, below the topsoil rich in modern-day refuse, were discovered several iron objects. **Since it is impossible to identify the burial pits, the relationship of those items to the burial complexes remains unclear.**

Most 2013 graves exhibit the typical to the necropolis burial practices; two, however, are different. **The burned bones of those are placed in a dish, next to which other vessels, including bi-conical jars without cremated bones, were arranged.** Occasionally the bi-conical jars are squashed under the weight of the soil, suggesting perhaps they were either empty, or contained liquids.

Feature no. 27 (fig. 1)

The feature produced a four-handled jar (fig. 1.7) and a two-handled jar with two protuberances on the body (fig. 1.6); a two-handled pot (*kantharos*, fig. 1.2) and two small two-handled pots (*kantharoi*, fig. 1.3-4), all three with rectangular cross-section; as well as the upper body of an anthropomorphic figurine (fig. 1.5). The two large jars were employed as urns; in and around them were found the cremated remains of one individual (*Adultus*, a 20-30 year old female) (fig. 1.1).

Incised and white-encrusted ornament decorates the four-handled jar: stamped, filled with white paste circles on the neck, parallel wavy lines joined to spirals, solar symbols, etc. Four handles with white-encrusted incised linear ornament are attached to the widest part of the body (fig. 1.7). The decoration on the larger *kantharos* is executed with shallow flutes, developing vertically on the neck and at the maximum body diameter, and organized into conjoined suspended arcs (festoons) on the lower body (fig. 1.2). Polished parallel lines,



Fig. 1. Feature no. 27 from Baley. Photo: Authors
Обр. 1. Гробен комплекс No. 27 от Балей. Снимки:
авторите

closely resembling shallow vertical flutes, decorate three vessels. The two-handled jar features two rectangular knobs upon the maximum body diameter and two parallel vertical polished lines on the neck (fig. 1.6). The two two-handle pots display vertical polished strips on the neck (fig. 1.3-4). The poor quality of the baking makes difficult to distinguish the decoration on all three vessels.

The four-handled jar (fig. 1.7), particularly its decoration, along with the anthropomorphic figurine (fig. 1.5), point to a typical Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare burial complex. The



Fig. 2. Feature no. 26 from Baley. Photo: Authors

Обр. 2. Гробен комплекс No. 26 от Балей. Снимки: авторите.

motive under question is popular in the III-II construction phase of the attendant settlement. The other two-handled jar and the three two-handled pots (kantharoi) find close comparanda in the Orsoya necropolis (fig. 1.6: Филипов 1976, pl. XIV; fig. 1.2-4: Филипов 1976, pl. LXIII, LXVI.b).

Of import here are the vessels with decoration of flutes and shallow polished strips. The decoration of shallow flutes is attested at Orsoya, on jars with prominent bi-conical form (Филипов 1976, Pl. IX, X, XI) with pronounced necks (Филипов 1976, Pl. XXI, XXXI), and on pots and bowls alike (Филипов 1976, Pl. XLVII.b; Șandor-Chicideanu 2003, Pl. 98.4). Hänsel (1976, 101-103) draws attention to the long history of the fluted decoration within the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare culture. The fluted decoration is common at the attendant Baley settlement site, **where a number of motives are rendered through incisions and encrustation, and through flutes; upon some vessels both techniques of incision and fluting are combined.** Decoration of shallow horizontal or tilted flutes and arcs (festoons) is featured on a four-handled jar and on a bowl, both artifacts found in 2009 within the Baley necropolis (Alexandrov *et al.* 2011, fig. 5).

Next we turn our attention to the two-handled pot with spherical body, cylindrical neck and shallow fluted decoration (fig. 1.2) which is decisive in the assignment of the date of the complex. Similar vessel is found in the Vajuga-Pesak necropolis, where it occurs together with Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare style pottery (Premk *et al.* 1984, 112-113, Sl. 101.6). Similar pot has been discovered in the Zimnicea necropolis from the end of the LBA (Alexandrescu 1973, Pl. XI.3). It's form and decoration is characteristic of the final Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare stage (Schuster 2003, Abb. 13.7) and are close to the kantharoi with prominent bi-conical form and shallow fluted decoration characteristic for the Bistreț-Ișalnița group. Subsequently the suspended arcs (festoons) ornament, such as the ones featured on the two-handled pot, becomes one of the distinctive Vârtoș traits (Hänsel 1976, Taf. III). The origin of this motif can be traced back to the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare pottery assemblage, where it is rendered through incised and encrustation lines (Dumitrescu 1961, Pl.X.1, XIX.b, XXVIII.a; Филипов 1976, Pl. XXIV, LXX) and through flutes (Филипов 1976, Pl. LXI, XLIII). According to the cited comparanda, the date of grave 27 should be towards the end of the LBA (HaA1).

Feature no. 26 (fig. 2)

Feature no. 26 consists of two stacked two-handled pots (kantharoi) with vertical handles and decoration of shallow flutes (fig. 2.3). The bottom pot contained the cremated human remains of a child less than six months old (*Infans I*).

Both pots are rectangular in cross section, the rim is concave, with raised tips (fig.



Fig. 3. Feature no. 22 from Baley. Photo: Authors
Обр. 3. Гробен комплекс No. 22 от Балей. Снимки: авторите.

2.1-2) and decoration of shallow flutes. Similar two-handled pots with decoration of shallow vertical flutes, prominent bi-conical form, and rectangular cross-section are typical to the Bistreț-Ișalnița group (Hänsel 1976, 164, Taf.40.1-3; Schuster 2002, Abb. 14.2, 17.1-2; Șandor-Chicideanu 2003, Pl. 171.4). The form and the handle of the other two-handled pot are more characteristic of the pottery with incised and encrusted decoration from the III-II construction phase of the Baley settlement.

Feature 22 (fig. 3).

The inventory of grave 22 consists of a bi-conical jar, preserving cremated human remains and covered by a bowl. The bi-conical jar has four groups of tongue-shaped lugs upon its maximum diameter, but no additional ornaments (fig. 3.2). The bowl has two small vertical handles, convex rim with out- and down-turned lip, and incised white encrusted decoration (fig. 3.1).

The form of the bi-conical jar is indicative of the Vârtop type ceramic assemblage; however the Baley specimen lacks ornamentation. Many of the bi-conical jars recovered to-date from the Baley necropolis have similar form; some are undecorated, other feature fluted decoration.

The incised white-filled ornament on a bowl is organized in bold hatches and motives filling in the entire surface, demonstrating expertly drawn broad and deep parallel lines and spirals. The ornament is done in the typical of the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare technique, but the motives and the style are not that common. An exact comparanda the vessel finds in the Hinova (Davidescu, Vulpe 2010, 45, figs. 2. 1.1; 3 1.2; 15.1) and Balta Verde (Berciu, Comșa 1956, fig. 47.2) necropolises, where the bowls with incised decoration likewise serve as lids for bi-conical jars with fluted decoration. According to parallels with Hinova and Balta Verde we synchronise grave 22 with early Vârtop phase (Gumă 1995, 108, Pl. X).

Feature 24. (fig. 4)

The inventory of this feature consists of a large dish (fig. 4.2), housing the remains of the cremated individual (a fully grown *Adultus*, perhaps female, 20-40 years old; fig. 4.1);



Fig. 4. Feature no. 24 from Baley. Photo: Autors
 Обр. 4. Гробен комплекс No. 24 от Балей. Снимки авторите.

two bi-conical jars (fig. 4.8-9); two small dishes (fig. 4.3-4); a bowl with two high handles raised above the rim (fig. 4.5); a double-vessel (fig. 4.6); fragment of a bowl with small vertical handles attached to the body (fig. 4.7). On the whole the pottery from this burial complex finds parallels in the first construction phase of the attendant Baley settlement.

The unusual burial custom attested in this feature (interring the cremated remains in a dish, with a dishes, jars, and a double vessel of smaller size arranged nearby) finds very similar counterpart in the Ghidici necropolis of the Vârtop phase (Nica 1997, fig. 13). The form of the vessel fits entirely with the typical for the Vârtop type ceramic assemblage. The decoration is of two types – shallow flutes and a twist placed on the rim or the body. Shallow flutes are applied on five vessels. Two of the small dishes – with identical proportions (figs. 4.3-4), each with four tongue-shaped lugs attached below the rim, preserve several shallow parallel suspended arcs (festoons) on the interior and exterior surface. The fragments of the large bowl (or dish) feature several parallel shallow arcs and flutes on the body (fig. 4.7). The two bi-conical jars have identical proportions, four groups of tongue-shaped lugs attached at the maximum body diameter alternating with horizontal flutes, shallow parallel flutes upon the upper body (chevron stripes, chevrons joined with a circle, joined suspended arcs (festoons) (figs. 4.8-9).

Twist ornament is found on three vessels. The large dish has four small tongue-shaped lugs below the rim. The rim itself is decorated with a turban-type twist (*turban-dish*: fig. 4.2). The twist-ornament featured on the double-vessel (fig. 4.6) and the bowl with two high handles (fig. 4.5) is located on the maximum body diameter. In all three vessels the twist is carelessly executed.

The pottery is distinctive of the Vârtop group. According to Hänsel (1976, 103) the form and decoration of Vârtop vessels distinguish them clearly from the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare assemblage. Particularly indicative elements of the Vârtop assemblages are the *turban-dish*, the twist-ornament (found on the body or the handles) and the shallow flutes arranged in specific motives (parallel lines, chevrons, festoons); jars with markedly bi-conical form and four groups of tongue-shaped lugs (Чичикова 1968, 18-19, обр. 9), and, especially, the peculiar two-handled bowls, with handles raised high above the rim. The turban-dishes are distributed over a broad territory – from the Danube River (Динчев, *in press*) to North Greece (Булатовић 2009, map 2-3). The twist-ornament is attested on many Balkan sites and marks the beginning of the Iron Age (Иванов 2007, 253-255). At tomba Assiros and at Kastanas this type of ornament appears from the Early Iron Age strata onwards (Hochstetter 1984, Abb. 22.8 a-b, 23, Taf. 76.1, 78.2; 82.7; Wardle *et al.* 2007, 486, fig. 3). The two-handled bowl (fig. 4.5) from grave 24, though without exact parallels, undoubtedly points towards a relationship with the typical to the Early Iron Age of the Eastern Balkans two-handled bowls with two high handles (Стоянов 1997, 51-59, table I-IV, XXI). The twist ornament is inexpertly applied; distinct broad flutes are absent. Grave 24 should perhaps be dated to the beginning of the Early Iron Age (HaA2). During this time, or a bit later, perhaps is introduced the decoration of broad deep flutes, such as the one attested at the Baley necropolis and other sites from the Vârtop phase (Premk *et al.* 1984, 112, Sl. 85, 98-99).

Discussion

The inventory of graves 24 and 27 finds comparanda within different parts of the Balkans region and can be dated fairly securely: grave 24 in Vârtop phase (beginning of the Early Iron Age); grave 27 in the final of the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare (end of the Late Bronze

Age).

The two-handled pots (kantharoi) from grave 26 finds comparanda in the Bistreț-Ișalnița group. This distinctive ceramics type is characterized by a narrow geographical and chronological **range**. **The prototypes of the decorated with flutes Bistreț-Ișalnița type pottery** forms are identified within the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare type assemblage (Schuster 2002, 129; Șandor-Chicideanu 2003, Pl. 51.1), or in the least – the Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare supplies the prototypes of certain principal forms and ornaments. However, not all specimens can be linked to Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare models, substantiating the emancipation of the group and its assignment to a synchronous to the final **Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare or immediately subsequent** stage (Gumă 1995, 101).

The link between Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare and Vârtop phases is evident in grave 22. The feature with a considerable degree of certainty can be assigned to the beginning of the Vârtop phase, based on the presence of the indicative of Vârtop bi-conical jar and of a bowl with Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare-derivative ornament. The bridge between the late Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare and the early Vârtop, besides at Baley, is also attested at the above mentioned Hinova and Balta Verde necropolises, where elements descriptive of both stages were found within the same features.

The link between Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare and Vârtop, besides through pottery, can also be demonstrated through the specific burial rite of placing the cremated remains in dishes, as this was registered in grave 24. At Vajuga-Pesak (grave 2) the cremated bones are interred in a dish (Premk *et al.* 1984, 112, Sl. 87, 100), with burial inventory typical of the final Žuto Brdo-Gârla Mare stage (Premk *et al.* 1984, 114). This is an argument collaborating the chronological and cultural affinity between the two stages. Grave 27 produced also an upper half of an anthropomorphic figurine. Previous excavation campaigns also yielded several upper halves of anthropomorphic figurines but no complete figurines to-date. This might be a bias of the sample, or reflection of a specific burial practice, attested also in other LBA and EIA necropolises (Balta Verde: Berciu, Comșa 1956; Korbovo-Pesak: Radojčić 1986, 136, Sl. 3.10-11, 5.a-b; Hinova: Davidescu, Vulpe 2010, fig. 5-7.4).

The brief overview of the burial complexes supplies relatively secure grounds for their chronological and cultural attribution. Analysis of the entire collection from the sealed complexes of the Baley necropolis, a task awaiting the conclusion of the excavations on the burial site, will facilitate the dating of the structures from the Baley settlement

Acknowledgments

The Ministry of Culture of Republic Bulgaria provided financial support for the 2013 investigations **on the necropolis, as a result of successful application approved by a committee of experts**. The recovered artifacts are being restored by Ekaterina Ilieva (RHM-Vidin). The anthropological analysis of the cremated human remains is contributed by Nadezhda Athanasova-Timeva and Borislava Galabova from the Institute of **Experimental Morphology, Pathology and Anthropology** with Museum in Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The text is translated into English by Valeria Bineva. We would like to express our gratitude to all of them.

References

- Alexandrescu, A.D., 1973. La nécropole du bronze récente de Zimnicea (dep. de Teleorman). *Dacia* XVII, 77-97.
- Alexandrov, S., Ivanov, G., Hristova, T. 2011. Baley: New Discoveries. *Be-JA*, 1, 2011, 127-136.
- Berciu, D., Comşa, E. 1956. Săpăturile de la Balta Verde şi Gogoşu (1949-1950). *Materiale şi Cercetări Arheologice*, 2, 307-320.
- Davidescu, M., Vulpe, A. 2010. The Urnfield in Hinova, Mehedinţi county (Roumania). *Dacia* LIV, 43-96
- Dumitrescu, V. 1961. *Necropola de incinerare din epoca bronzului de la Cîrna* (Biblioteca de Arheologie 5). Bucureşti.
- Gumă, M. 1995. The end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age in south-western Romania, western Serbia and north-western Bulgaria. *Thraco-Dacica* XVI.1-2, 99-137
- Hänsel, B. 1976. *Beiträge zur Regionalen und Chronologischen Gliederung der Älteren Hallstattzeit an der Unteren Donau*. Bonn: Rudolf Habelt
- Hochstetter, A. 1984. *Kastanas. Die handgemachte Keramik. Schichten 19 bis 1. Ausgrabungen in einem Siedlungshügel der Bronze- und Eisenzeit Makedoniens 1975-1979* (Prähistorische Archäologie in Südosteuropa Band 3). Berlin: Spiess
- Nica, M. 1997. Date noi cu privire la sfârşitul epocii bronzului şi începutul epocii fierului pe teritoriul Olteniei. In Simion, G. (ed.). *Prima epocă a fierului la Gurile Dunării şi în zonele circumpontice* (Biblioteca Istro-Pontica. Seria Arheologie, 2). Tulcea, 19-41.
- Premk, A., Popović, P., Bjelajac, Lj., 1984. Vajuga-Pesak, izveštaj o sondažnim radovima, 1980. In *Đerdapske sveske / Cahiers des Portes de Fer*, II, Beograd, 111-117.
- Radojčić, N. 1986. Les fouilles du site Pesak á Korbovo en 1981. In *Đerdapske sveske / Cahiers des Portes de Fer*, III, Beograd, 133-142
- Şandor-Chicideanu, M. 2003. *Cultura Źuto Brdo-Gârla Mare. Contribuţii la cunoaşterea epocii bronzului la Dunărea Mijlocie şi Inferioară*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Nereamia Napocae.
- Schuster, C. 2003. Zur Bestattungsweise in Südrumänien in der Bronzezeit. In Vasić, R. (ed.) *Sahranjivanje u Bronzani i Gvozdeno Doba, Simpozijum, Čačak, 4-8 Septembar 2002 / Burial Customs in the Bronze and Iron Age. Symposium, Čačak, 4-8 September 2002*, Čačak, 109-138
- Wardle, K.A., Newton, M., Kuniholm, P.I. 2007. Troy VIIB2 Revisited: The Date of the Transition from Bronze to Iron Age in the Northern Aegean. In Todorova, H. et al. (eds.). *The Struma/Strymon River Valley in Prehistory* (In the Steps of James Harvey Gaul 2). Sofia, 483-499.
- Булатовић, А., 2010. Порекло и дистрибуција благобиконичних здела увученог фасетираног или канелованог обода са краја бронзаног и почетка гвозденог доба на Балканском полуострву, *Старинар*, н. с. LIX, 89-108.
- Динчев, В. in press. Обекти и находки от желязната епоха от района на гр. Козлодуй. In Александров, С. et al. (ed.) *In honorem professoris Иван Панайотов* (ИНАИ XLII)
- Иванов, Г., 2007. Относно хронологията на некрополите на култура Брница в Централните Балкани. In Stefanovich, M., Angelova, Ch. (eds.). *PRAE. In Honorem Henrieta Todorova*, Sofia: NIAM-BAS, 249-258
- Стоянов, Т., 1997. *Могилен некропол от ранножелязната епоха (Сборяново I)*, София.

- Филипов, Т. 1976. *Некропол от късната бронзова епоха при с. Орсоя, Ломско*. София: ДИ Септември.
- Христова, Т., Иванов, Г., Казашки, Н. 2012. Балеј-некрополът. Археологически проучвания през 2011 г. In *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2011 г.* София, 119-121.
- Христова, Т., Иванов, Г., Филипова, Ф. 2011. Балеј-некрополът. Археологически проучвания през 2010 г. In *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2010 г.* София, 132-134.
- Чичикова, М. 1968. Керамика от старата желязна епоха в Тракия. *Археология* X.4, 15-27

Некрополът на праисторическото селище Балеј. (предварително съобщение за резултатите от проучванията през 2013 г.)

Стефан Александров, Георги Иванов, Таня Христова, Николай Казашки
(резюме)

В материала са представени накратко предварителните резултати от разкопките на некропола на Балеј през 2013 г. Разгледани са 4 гробни комплекса, представителни за различни хронологическите етапи – Балеј-Орсоя (или Жуто Бърдо-Гърла Маре), Бистрец-Ишалница, Въртоп. Освен тях, в некропола са проучени и по-ранни гробове, синхронни на етапа Вербичоара III, които не са представени в настоящия текст.

Керамиката от гроб 24 е характерна за фаза Въртоп от началото на желязната епоха. Тук се срещат специфичните за периода *turban-dish*, украса от усуквания (върху тялото или върху дръжките), плитките канелюри, които образуват специфични мотиви (успоредни линии, зиг-заг, гирлянди); дълбоки съдове с ясно изразена биконичност и 4 групи езичести дръжки и особено специфичните купи с две високо издадени над устието дръжки.

Инвентарът от гроб 27 е характерен за Жуто Бърдо-Гърла Маре, особено украсените с връзване и инкрустиране съдове и антропоморфна статуетка. В гроба е открито и гърне с две дръжки (кантарос), със сферично тяло и цилиндрична шия, украсен с плитки канелюри. Подобни съдове се откриват заедно с керамика тип Жуто Бърдо-Гърла Маре, като един образец е познат и от некропола Зимнич. Тези съдове имат близко сходство с кантаросите с ясна биконичност от етапа Бистрец-Ишалница, засвидетелствани в гроб 26.

Връзката между Жуто Бърдо-Гърла Маре и Въртоп можем да се проследи при керамиката от гроб 22, където се смесват две керамични традиции. Освен при керамиката, връзка може да се види и при варианта на погребалния обичай, когато кремираните кости са полагани в паници. Това е свидетелство за хронологическа и културна близост между тези два етапа.

Краткият преглед на гробните комплекси ни дава относително сигурна основа за хронологическата и културната им принадлежност. Анализът на целия материал от затворените комплекси от некропола на Балеј ще помогне при датирането на структурите от селището Балеј, което ще стане при завършването на проучването на некропола.