

# New Finds of Roman Rings from a Rich Grave in Cemetery III, Rusovce-Gerulata

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## ABSTRACT

In 2014 a unique burial was unearthed in Gerulata cemetery III, containing an unusual number of rings. The buried woman aged 40–49 had two rings on each hand, one of which was a signet ring with a gem depicting the Egyptian deities Serapis and Isis. Another unusual item was a bracelet composed of seven disks with side openings for a string. Two glazed vessels have enlarged the number of known vessels of this type from this site to 13 pieces.

## KEYWORDS

Gerulata; Roman period; burial; finger ring; gem; Isis; Serapis; glazed vessels; anthropological analysis.

## INTRODUCTION

### FIND CIRCUMSTANCES

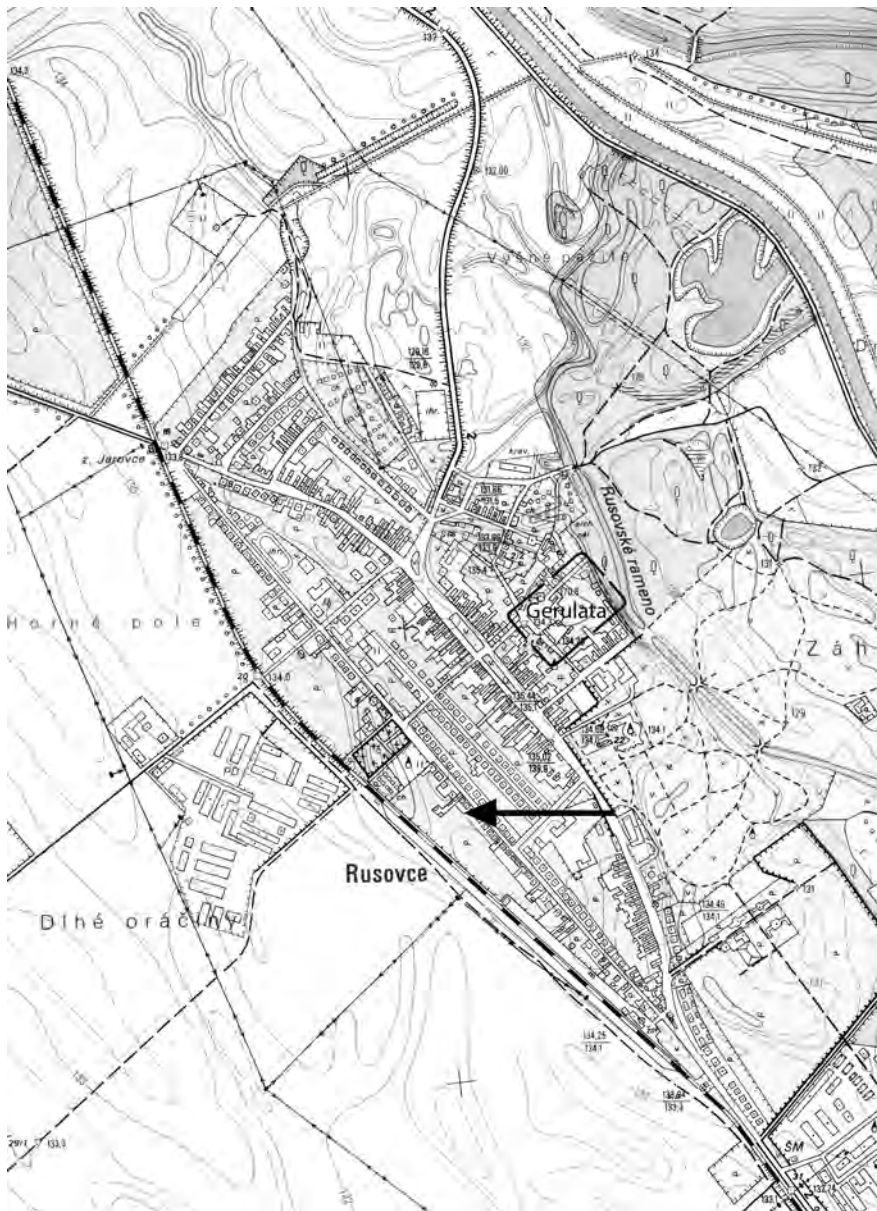
During the archaeological excavation at Rusovce in 2014, conducted by Bratislava City Museum on a house construction site, plot no. 743/1, we unearthed the continuation of cemetery III. Two structures were studied in a utility trench: a settlement structure situated almost in the back-yard of the plot, 27–28 m from the street; and an inhumation grave situated 8–9 m from the street (**Fig. 1–2**). The studied site is situated in the south-western part of Rusovce, on the Kováčsova Street, around 170 m from the overhead water tank (cemetery II) and today's cemetery in Rusovce, and south-west of the Gerulata fort (**Fig. 1**).

### HISTORY OF EXCAVATIONS

We know from previous excavations that Radnóti's site VI, where he examined nine cremation and inhumation graves, lay on today's plot 736, the former 'Acker Denk' or Mr. Denk's field (RADNÓTI – GABLER 1982, Figs. 2 and 8). In the north-eastern section of plot 741, Radnóti excavated a part of a Roman road, which was 2.8 m wide and had a 25 cm wide gutter on its southern side (RADNÓTI – GABLER 1982, Fig. 8).

In 1970 and 1971, Ľudmila Kraskovská excavated further nine inhumation graves dated to the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century on plots 738, 741 and 912 (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974b, 82, Fig. 1). She named the cemetery after its location as 'a former plot of the agricultural cooperative', and numbered it as Gerulata cemetery III.

During the excavation for gas mains in 1992 (VARSIK – KUZMOVÁ – SCHMIDTOVÁ 1996, 205–243) and the sewerage system in 1998 (SCHMIDTOVÁ – BAXA – JEZNÁ 2000, 147–148) two settlement structures dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD were unearthed, situated near the studied site.

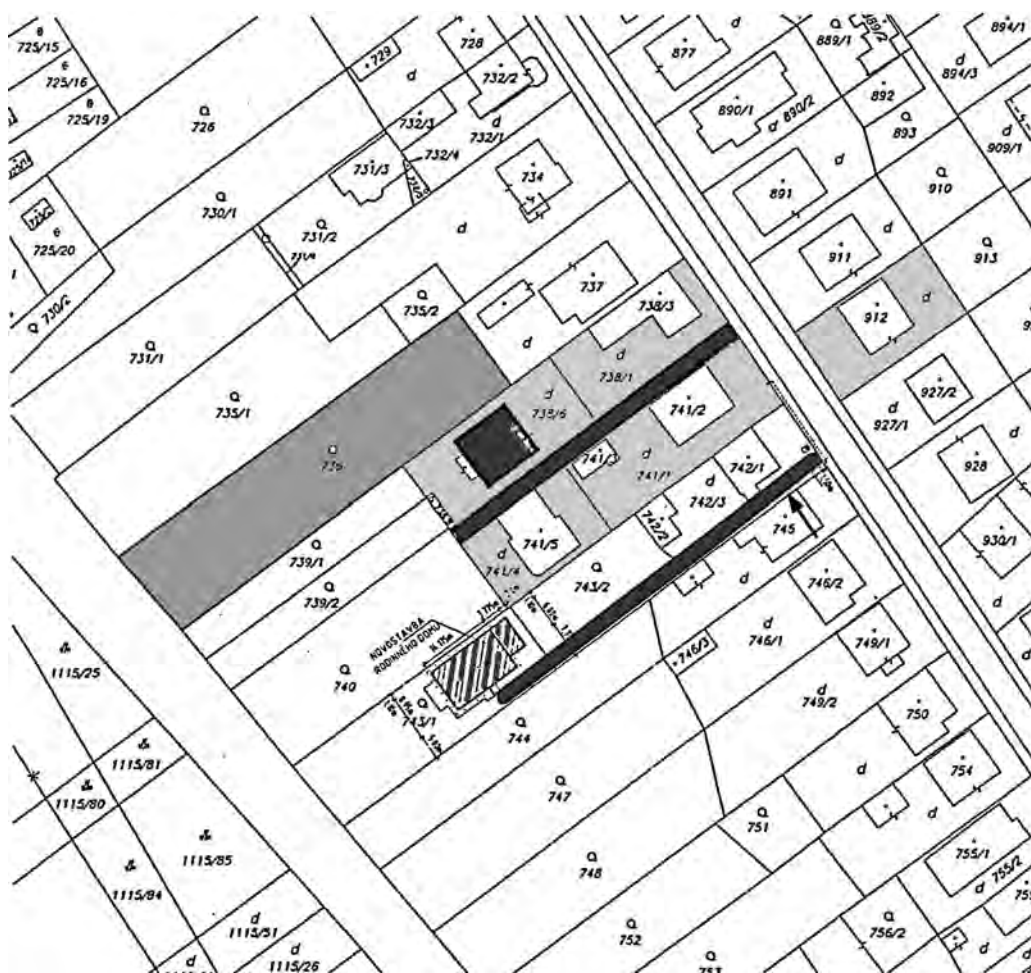


**Fig. 1: Map of Rusovce. The arrow indicates the studied site in Kováčsova Street, plot 743.**

In 2008, during a house construction, we excavated ten structures including three burials. Structure 3 is a double grave containing two child burials (SCHMIDTOVÁ 2010, 703; ŠEFČÁKOVÁ 2010, 711) (Fig. 2).

## DESCRIPTION OF THE BURIAL

The utility trench cut the burial pit above the feet of the buried woman, and her knees lay in the middle of the trench. It was a simple burial pit without any specific arrangement. The fill of the burial pit was visible on both profiles. We detected the contours at the depth of 70 cm, while the burial itself was at the depth of 170 cm. The upper part of the body lay in the north-



**Fig. 2:** Excavation by the National Museum (Hungary) in 1942 (middle grey), Slovak National Museum in 1970–1971 (light grey), and Bratislava City Museum in 2008 and 2014 (dark grey). The 2014 female grave is indicated with the arrow. Cadaster map. Original scale 1:1000.



**Fig. 3:** Inhumation grave excavated in 2014 (photo by M. Pros).

ern profile, the lower parts of the legs in the southern profile; the position of the torso was supine, the head in a NW–SE direction, leaned towards the shoulder, arms slightly bent and hands folded on the lap (**Fig. 3**).

#### LIST OF GRAVE GOODS

The buried woman had a bracelet consisting of seven black disks on the wrist of her right arm, and was holding a glazed cup in her folded hands. She might also have been holding a coin, which was found below the skeleton around her lap. She had four rings on her fingers (**Pl. 5/1**). An iron fragment was found near the left forearm, and another two iron fragments at the lower part of the spine. Other offerings were at her feet: a jug and a bowl of grey ware, a glazed vase (**Pl. 5/3**) and a glass flacon.

The complete list of grave goods was as follows:

1. Four rings.
  - Ring no. 1. A silver ring with the remains of a bezel setting, with an oval green gem, decorated with gold spheres attached to the hoop on either side of the bezel (acquisition no. 2014/2/13DP; **Pl. 5/7–9**).
  - Ring no. 2. A flat bronze closed ring with transverse cuts, and with the letter X on its top part (acquisition no. 2014/2/14DP; **Pl. 5/10**).
  - Ring no. 3. A fragment of a bronze ring, the hoop has hammered ends, the bezel is missing (acquisition no. 2014/2/15DP; **Pl. 5/11**).
  - Ring no. 4. A bronze ring with a gradually widening hoop; on its top part is an oval depression for a gemstone; the stone is missing (acquisition no. 2014/2/16DP; **Pl. 5/12**).
2. Bronze coin of Maximinus issued 309–313 AD (according to Anton Fiala).
  - Obverse: IMP MAXIMIANVS P F AVG, laureate head right;
  - Reverse: GENIO A-VGVSTI, Genius standing frontally, head left, holding a patera in the right hand and cornucopia in the left, modius on the head, crescent in the left field, Γ in the right field, SIS in exergue (acquisition no. 2014/2/12/DP; **Fig. 4**).



**Fig. 4: Coin, bronze, obverse and reverse. Maximinus AD 309–313 (photo by R. Schmidt).**

3. Bracelet from a coal substance (jet?) consisting of seven disks (acquisition no. 2014/2/4–11DP; **Pl. 5/2**).
4. Iron item; very corroded, in three parts, composed of two bars. Length of the preserved part is 7 cm (acquisition no. 2014/2/17–18/DP).
5. Glazed goblet; an egg-shaped body on a low foot merges with a conical neck with a reinforced rim. The body of the vessel is separated from the neck by two relief strips. Material: self-coloured pottery, brown coating, decorated with relief ornament. The relief decoration consists of vertical rows of small

dots, which divide the upper part of the body into four fields. In each of the fields there is a four-leaf clover or a rosette formed from crescent shapes. There are more crescents in the lower part of the body. Height 20.2 cm, mouth diameter 7.6 cm, maximum width 14 cm, bottom diameter 6.8 cm (acquisition no. 2014/2/8/Ke; **Pl. 5/4**).

6. Glazed cup; an egg-shaped body on a low foot merges with a conical neck with a slightly widened mouth. Material: self-coloured pottery, fine-grained surface with brown polished coating, a green two-leaf clover in the lower part (acquisition no. 2014/2/5/Ke; **Pl. 5/5**). Height 9.1 cm, mouth diameter 5 cm, maximum width 6.4 cm, bottom diameter 3.6 cm.
7. Pitcher with a handle; a bi-conical body on a narrow foot, body divided from a narrowing neck by a flute, a funnel-shaped neck with a widened mouth and a relief strip, a presumably striped handle is missing, dark grey colour, coarse-grained surface with a high proportion of mica. Height 10.8 cm, mouth diameter 6.6 cm, maximum body diameter 9.2 cm, foot diameter 3.7 cm (acquisition no. 2014/2/7/Ke; **Pl. 5/3 top left**).
8. Bowl with recurved rim, conical shape, grey colour, coarse-grained surface, with a high proportion of mica and tiny white stones. Height 3.8 cm, mouth diameter 17.6 cm, bottom diameter 10.7 cm (acquisition no. 2014/2/6/Ke; **Pl. 5/3 bottom left**).
9. Folded flacon of green transparent glass, tall neck, asymmetrically widened mouth, square bottom with the middle pressed inwards. Height 10.9 cm, mouth diameter 2.7 cm, maximum width 3 cm, bottom 3 × 3 cm (acquisition no. 2014/2/19/DP; **Pl. 5/6**).

## RINGS AND GEM ANALYSIS

### RING NO. 1

Silver ring (**Pl. 5/7–9**; acquisition no. 2014/2/13/DP) with an evenly thick hoop, circular in section, and remains of a bezel on the top part. A pair of spheres on either side. It corresponds with the type Guiraud 4c (GUIRAUD 1989). An oval, turquoise green gem wrought of glass was found next to the ring (maximum dimensions 13 × 14.3 mm). The gem narrows towards the backside; the motif is depicted on its wider side.

The gem shows a pair of antithetically turned heads (**Pl. 5/9**) – on the left there is a bust of a bearded man with a hint of rich hair. He has a modius on his head, which identifies him as Serapis. The details of the face and other elements cannot be clearly identified from the surface of the gem. Opposite is a bust of a woman with a marked drapery of clothes, a pearl necklace, details of the face, and hair arranged beside her head. Her hairstyle includes a headdress with three projections rising above her head, and with two strips on the backside indicating that the headdress is tied up behind the head. A similar element occurs on the Late Roman coins of Valentinian II, Theodosius and Arcadius. The projections above the headdress identify the depicted figure as the goddess Isis with a crown.<sup>1</sup> The cult of Isis appears in Pannonia in centres along the Amber Road from the first century AD. The cult of Serapis first appeared in Pannonia with the Severan dynasty in the late second century AD. The closest known shrine of Isis (and Serapis) in the vicinity of Gerulata lay in the *canabae* of Carnuntum (KREMER 2010, 2). The tradition of associating these deities with healing, recovery and protection against evil forces continued into the Late Antiquity. Both deities are often depicted on the so-called magical gems, along with magical symbols, animals or accompanied by another god, most often Harpocrates or Anubis.

1 For analogies see for instance: Anonymous Coin Issue for the Festival of Isis, AE4, 4<sup>th</sup> century, Rome. Source: <http://www.beastcoins.com/RomanImperial/IsisFestival/IsisFestival.htm>.

Gems with similar depictions of Isis and Serapis are known from Carnuntum (DEMBSKI 2005, 124, Cat. n° 709) and from the collections of the National Archaeological Museum of Umbria (VITELLOZZI 2010, 32, Cat. N° G9). While the gem from Perugia is made of heliotrope, the item from Carnuntum is from glass with a green tint (as is the gem from the burial in Gerulata). Based on the colour of material, Günther Dembski regards it as an imitation of heliotrope (DEMBSKI 2005, 124, Cat. 709). In antiquity, heliotrope was seen as a stone with healing powers, and according to Damigeron it was associated with the Sun and had favourable effects on blood (Damigeron, *DL*, 166.3–6).

A gem with a depiction had a special meaning to its bearer. It served practical purposes (the sealing of documents, letters and goods) and guaranteed that the content was not violated. Gems were sometimes given more importance than they deserved; Seneca, for instance, complained that one seal receives more trust than one man (Seneca, *De Beneficiis* III, 15). The use of the gem as a seal was of particular importance. When its bearer died, the seal was broken by the bereaved; Petronius also broke his seal before he committed suicide (Tacitus, *Annales* XVI, 19).

In addition, gems and intaglios in rings often served other purposes – they might have been signs of social or religious status, or a proof of a given task. They were attributed with different powers: they could protect their bearers and grant them certain abilities (in line with the depicted motif and the chosen stone), or they might have helped treat ailments. The most common stones used for healing were hematite, various kinds of agate, and heliotrope, which is known from the gems found in Carnuntum, among which Günther Dembski identified 15 intaglios made of heliotrope and 18 items of greenish or brown-green glass, which he described as an imitation of heliotrope (DEMBSKI 2005, 29).

#### RING NO. 2

A flat closed ring from a thin bronze sheet (**Pl. 5/10**; acquisition no. 2014/2/14/DP), which widens slightly towards the top part (dimension 18 × 20 mm; w. 2–3 mm). The hoop of the ring has four transverse cuts on the surface. In the middle of the top section is incised an X sign, which has no analogy in H. Guiraud's catalogue. The motif of the letter or number (?) X also appears on another ring from Gerulata, found in a child burial on a finger of the deceased's left hand (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974a, 62–63, Grave 102.4; DAŇOVÁ 2016). The X sign appears for instance on the flat bezel of a similar ring from Lazer in southern Gaul, published by H. Guiraud (1989, 189, Fig. 28). She calls this motif, supplemented with dots above and below the X sign, cautiously a 'christogram (?)'. The finds from Gerulata, however, probably have a different source of inspiration, which has not been confirmed yet. The division of the flat of the ring into five sections corresponds with the simple, stylized decoration of late Roman jewellery.

#### RING NO. 3

A fragment of a bronze ring (**Pl. 5/11**; acquisition no. 2014/2/15/DP) with an evenly thick hoop, circular in section, with hammered ends; the bezel is missing. It can be classified as type Guiraud 4 without closer identification.

#### RING NO. 4

A bronze ring with a gradually widening hoop (**Pl. 5/12**; acquisition no. 2014/2/16/DP), and an oval depression for the stone in the middle of its top part (dimensions 18 × 20 mm). Type

Guiraud 2a. The depression on the top has the dimensions 9 × 12 mm, the stone is missing and was not found during the excavation. The edges for setting the stone in are clear, without fragments of other materials. It is unclear from the find circumstances whether the stone had been set into the ring during the burial, or if the ring was without a stone at that time.

H. Guiraud's classification (GUIRAUD 1989) shows that rings of type 2 are clearly older than the grave in which this item was found. Guiraud dates its occurrence between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, with only some of the forms occurring sporadically in the later period (variant 2d). This is also confirmed by I. Popović, who dates this type between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD for Pannonia Inferior and Moesia (POPOVIĆ 1992, 62). It can therefore be regarded as the oldest ring in the studied burial, and it confirms I. Popović's theory that in the Roman period the rings would be used even for two generations, i.e. for 50 to 70 years (POPOVIĆ 1992, 61).

## POTTERY AND SMALL FINDS

Grey ware, mainly bowls, represents the most numerous group among the Roman pottery in Gerulata (KREKOVIČ 1998, 30). Pitcher no. 7 (**Pl. 5/3 top left**) is classified as a low pitcher with a wide mouth and a handle. While cremation graves contained small cups, inhumation graves contained a small pitcher with a handle and a rim decorated with a relief ring (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974a, 141, Fig. 78:7–11). Among 12 pieces from the cemetery, L. Kraskovská notes several piri-form (burials 18, 21, 36, 52) and bi-conical (burial 8) vessels. In cemetery III, a jar was found in burial 2 (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974b, 84–85, Fig. 15:5). It is the latter vessel that bears the closest resemblance to the studied pitcher in both shape and dimensions.

The most numerous finds in inhumation graves were flat, simple grey bowls of conical shapes with recurved rim (**Pl. 5/3 top left**). They differed in size, but not in shape. The closest analogy to the bowl from the studied grave is a vessel from cemetery III, burial 4 (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974b, 85, Fig. 11:1).

The technique of glazing applied on the vessel surface had already been known in Ancient Egypt. Roman glazed vessels draw on Hellenistic models and date to two periods: the first century AD; and the third to fourth centuries AD with an impact into the fifth century (PÓCZY 1957, 77). Excavations by Slovenian researchers attest the production of glazed pottery in the south Pannonian towns of Emona, Poetovio and Nevioudunum as early as in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century (KREKOVIČ 1981, 345). Workshops producing glazed pottery in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries have been recorded in Gorsium and Savaria. Glazed pottery is known from three locations in Gerulata – cemeteries I and III and the military camp. Most of the finds come from burials, in total 11 vessels. Nine pieces were found in cemetery I, burials 1, 11, 18, 21, 29, 36, 55, 102 and 167 (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974a). Two glazed vessels (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974b, 103) were found in cemetery III, burials 5 and 7, and are among the most beautiful pieces. Each of the 11 vessels represents a different type (KREKOVIČ 1995, 95). The studied assemblage enlarged this variegated typological spectrum with another two different forms: a small goblet with brown coating and a green painted two-leaf clover (**Pl. 5/4**), and a vase decorated with crescents arranged as a rosette (**Pl. 5/5**). A small brown glazed cup also comes from the collections of the Xantus János Museum from an unpublished cemetery Mosonszentmiklós-Jánosháza, burial 32 (KOVÁCS 1992, 86/221). Another cup with an egg-shaped body, small base and slightly widening mouth was found in burial 89 in Keszthely – Dobogó (SÁGI 1981, 55, Abb. 36:4) and another one in burial 111 in Keszthely – Dobogó. The two cups differ in the colour of the coating – their glaze is yellow (NÁDORFI 1992, 50–51).

Identical vases with rosettes are known only from three sites – Lauriacum (RUPRECHTSBERGER 1980, 37, Abb. 9), Arrabona (SZÖNYI 1979, 32, Tab. VI:2) and Höflein (Museum Carnuntinum, Inv. 7819). On other analogies from Gerulata, Intercisa and Aquincum, the crescents are arranged into vertical rows (PÓCZY 1957, Abb. 39:34a; BÓNIS 1980, Abb. 66:20). Based on the accompanying finds, particularly coins, E. Krekovič assumes that the glazed, vase-like vessels with crescents in relief were produced in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century (KREKOVIČ 1995, 95). He assumes that these vase-like vessels with glaze ranging from yellow to brown, and with crescents in relief arranged in certain patterns or rows, form one group which spread from a production centre in north-western Pannonia.

The glass vessels from inhumation graves in Rusovce can be divided into two groups according to their function. On the one hand there are drinking vessels, on the other hand there are the so-called unguentaria of the eastern type which were used as containers for perfumes and aromatic oils. In Rusovce, globular bottles with tall necks used for storing oil were found in second century cremation graves, and continued to be used into the 4<sup>th</sup> century, as is attested by finds from Pannonia (RADNÓTI 1957, 144, Tab. XXVI:3; Tab. XXVII:1,3). The folded flacon (Pl. 5/6) is the second vessel of this type in cemetery III (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974b, 102). Another flacon comes from cemetery II, burial 5 (PICHLEROVÁ 1981, 87–89, Tab. XLVI:3).

The bracelet composed of seven disks was probably made of jet. Disk no. 7 (acquisition nos. 2014/2/9–10/DP) was found split in two pieces. On the inner side of each piece there were two grooves, which looked like two openings when the pieces were attached to one another (Pl. 5/2). By closer examination we discovered the same openings on all the disks, which means that on a string they might have served as a bracelet. Maximum length 2 cm, maximum height 0.6 cm. A bracelet of a similar construction made of black glass is known for instance from Carnuntum (HUMER 2009, 355, Nr. 1382).

## ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Almost the whole of the adult skeleton, slightly damaged, was subjected to the analysis.

### MORPHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

#### Skull

Gracile and postmortally deformed *cranium* with medium muscle relief and damaged base.

*Norma frontalis*: face tapering, *tubera frontalia* big, *arcus superciliares* indicated a transient *margo supraorbitalis*, more enclosed orbits are slightly rectangular (form 2 on the Kurýr scale), *margo inferior aperturæ piriformis* of anthropine form, nasal bones divergent; *fossæ caninae* shallow, *sutura metopica* persistent between the orbits (12 mm). *Norma lateralis*: medium face relief, glabella slightly marked, *os frontale* slightly arched, the profile of nasal bones in the lower part convex, the nose marked, *spina nasalis anterior* small, *sutura sphenoparietalis* narrow, *arcus zygomatici* thin, *os zygomaticum* very low and smooth, *processus zygomaticus* rather low and thin, *processus retromarginalis* small, occiput elongated, *protuberantia occipitalis externa* indicated.

*Norma verticalis*: pentagonoid, *tubera parietalia* big, bilateral *foramina parietalia*, osteoma (diameter 4 mm) on the caudal part of the left parietal bone.

*Norma occipitalis*: medium high arch with tapering walls, base rather straight, surface of the occipital bone with slightly arched nuchal lines and occipital cross, *processus mastoidei* very small, *crista supramastoidea* weak.



*Norma basalis*: *foramen magnum* defective, indicated *torus palatinus*, *sutura palatina transversa* projecting forward with the opposite, middle tip. *Sutura coronalis* and *sutura lambdoidea* are open, *pars verticis sutura sagittalis* – 2<sup>nd</sup> degree of obliteration, other parts degree 1.

Mandible defective, gracile, with medium muscle relief, chin prominent in lateral view, with a broad edge in inferior view, *planum alveolare* and *mentum* visible in superior view. Bilaterally simple *foramina mentalia* below P<sub>2</sub>, *spina mentalis* spine-shaped, mandibular angles slightly everted, *trigonum mentale* – bilateral *protuberantia*, *corpus mandibulae* in the area of M<sub>2</sub> medium thick, mandibular angles with slight eminences, *processus articularis mandibulae* medium.

Dental arch of the maxilla is rather U-shaped, dental arch of the mandible parabolic, maxillary teeth show 4<sup>th</sup> degree of abrasion, mandibular teeth degree 3. Upper teeth are heavily worn, almost to the neck. Anterior teeth are crowded (I<sup>1</sup> – C), left C (23) leans inwards and shows little tooth wear. Molars except left 1<sup>st</sup> M are lost premortem; of the mandibular molars only M<sub>2</sub> is preserved, the right one being carious. Caries are also present on the right premolars of both jaws. M<sub>3</sub> do not seem to be erupted. Of the 28 permanent teeth, six are lost premortem and three postmortem. Calculus is present mainly in the maxilla, traces of hypoplasia are seen in the mandibular teeth. The teeth display partial gingival recession. The degree of sexualisation of the skull is –0.65 (feminine character).

#### Axial skeleton

A damaged *os sacrum* is broad and low, poorly developed coalesced *linea transversae*, *facies auricularis* occupies S<sub>3</sub>, *os coccygis* unsynostosed and missing. On the left side of *basis ossis sacri* (promontory) *spondylosis deformans* of the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree (5 mm). Damaged *os sternum* with medium big, narrow and loose manubrium, medium long and narrow *corpus*, *processus ensiformis* is loose and missing. The slightly damaged ribs are gracile.

Marked degenerative changes in the spine: defective gracile and small vertebrae with *spondylosis deformans* – 2<sup>nd</sup> degree in the cervical and thoracic vertebrae, 3<sup>rd</sup> degree in the lumbar vertebrae. In particular, the thoracic vertebrae display *chondrosis* to *osteochondrosis*, in L5 *spondylolysis*.

#### Upper limbs

Undamaged gracile clavicles with medium muscle relief are moderately arched, the left one being longer. Damaged, gracile, medium broad scapulae; slightly damaged gracile humeri with medium to robust muscle relief, with the circumference of the epiphysis of the left humerus 120 mm (feminine character), medullary cavity in the proximal epiphysis extends over the ossification line, in *tuberculum majus* are cavities of the size of peas (V). Slightly damaged gracile radii and ulnae with medium muscle relief. Developed *crista supinatoria* and *tuberositas supinatorii* on the ulnae.

Present are small *carpalia*: R – 5, L – 7; rather medium big *metacarpalia*: R – 4, L – 5 and phalanges: R – first row 5, second row 3, third row 1; L – first row 5, second row 5, third row 1.

#### Lower limbs

Gracile, damaged pelvic bones with medium muscle relief. The pelvis as a whole is low – broad, *fossa iliaca* low and broad, *aditus pelvis* broad – oval, *foramen obturatum* intermediate, *incisura ischiadica major*, A – C distance 28 mm (feminine character). *Sulcus praeauricularis* is broad but not very deep, two depressions are visible, divided by septum (consequence of a childbirth?). Another proof of childbirth may be the extension of *tuberculum pubicum*, but this part is damaged on both sides. *Arc composé* is formed by two intersecting arches, the lower edge of

the ischio-pubic ramus is slightly and fluently everted, *ramus superior ossis pubis* in the shape of a prism, *facies auricularis* forms an obtuse angle with constriction, *tuberculum musculi piri-formis* slightly indicated, relief of *symphysis ossis pubis* degree III.

Damaged, gracile femurs with medium muscle relief, *trochanter tertius* in the form of *crista hypotrochanterica*, *linea aspera* medium – bilaterally marked, vertical diameter of *caput femoris* 41 mm on the right and 40 mm on the left (feminine character), medullary cavity in the proximal epiphysis reached the lower edge of *trochanter minor* (II.). Tibiae and fibulae are damaged, gracile, with medium muscle relief. Left patella is slightly bigger than the right one, there is a slight tibial retroversion, distal patellar facet, and the form of the section of the middle corresponds to degree V. The degree of sexualisation of the postcranial skeleton is  $-0.56$  (feminine character).

#### METRIC CHARACTERISTICS

On the basis of the measurements (see **Tab. 1** and **2**) and a comparison with the international database (ALEKSEEV – DEBETS 1964) the skull can be characterized as long and narrow, with small facial height and medium facial breadth, small occipital breadth, small longitudinal arch and medium long horizontal circumference. According to indices, the skull is dolichocranic, prognathic (with a prominent profile in the lateral view), with medium large orbits and a broad nose.

According to the robusticity indices, the long bones of the upper extremities and femurs are in the medium category. In the lower extremities, there is a slight asymmetry. The left femur is slightly longer than the right one, and has a slight pilaster (elevation of *linea aspera*); it is eurymeric (rounder in section), while the right femur is platymeric (anterioposteriorly flattened). The left tibia is mesoknem and the right one is euryknem. The forearm is of medium length; the intermembral index (interlimb proportions) corresponds to the Europoid population.

#### DEVIATIONS AND PATHOLOGICAL CHANGES

On the left orbit, in the craniometric point mf, there is a small eminence (*tuberculum*) in *sutura fronto-maxillaris*; an osteoma (diameter 4 mm) in the caudal part of the left *os parietale*; six teeth were lost pre-mortem; the anterior teeth on the maxilla are crowded; traces of hypoplasia on the teeth. Degenerative changes (*spondylosis deformans*, *chondrosis* to *osteochondrosis*) in the spine; *spondylolysis* in L5. More developed *crista supinatoria* or *tuberositas supinatorii* on the ulnae.

#### CONCLUSION OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Judging from the degree of sexualisation of the skull ( $-0.65$ ), of the postcranial skeleton ( $-0.56$ ), and from the skeleton structure, the examined individual was a female; based on the measures of both *os coxae*, the skeleton was a female with a 1.00 probability (HOUEŤ – BRŮŽEK – MURAIL 1999), i.e. 100%.

The woman was of tiny stature, 155 cm tall (medium height). She died at the age of maturus I (40–49 years); judging from certain signs on the pelvis she might have undergone childbirth. Her teeth were considerably worn; traces of hypoplasia on the teeth of the mandible may indicate a slight diagenetic stress. She had marked degenerative changes on the spine.

The skull is dolichocranic, with a pronounced profile, the face short and of medium width, the size of the orbits medium and the nose flat. The long bones of the arms, as well as the femurs are medium according to the robusticity index. The forearm is of medium length;

the intermembral index corresponds to the Europoid population. The robust muscle relief on the shoulder bones may attest to intensive physical work; the developed *crista supinatoria* on the ulnae is probably a consequence of a frequent circular movement of the forearm.

The morphology of the medium length phalanges and their green colour indicate that the woman probably had two rings on each hand. On the right hand, she had rings on fingers II (ring no. 2) and IV (ring no. 4) and on the left hand on fingers II (ring no. 3) and III (ring no. 1).

## SUMMARY

As mentioned in the introduction, the studied female grave was not isolated in this area. In 1970, the employees of the Slovak National Museum initiated excavations on the plot of the agricultural cooperative (no. 386), following the finds of human bones, pottery and Roman roof tiles. The cemetery is marked as cemetery III. Although the unearthed terrain was more or less at one level, the depth of the graves ranged from 115 to 160 and even 200 cm (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974b, 95). The lengths of the grave pits varied from 170 to 230 cm. The cemetery contained two double graves (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974b, 85, burials 5 and 6; SCHMIDTOVÁ 2010, 703–706; ŠEFČÁKOVÁ 2010, 711).

Ludmila Kraskovská notes the rich equipment and rare, new types of jewellery made of gold, amber, jet and lignite. The jet beads from cemetery III are the first find of this kind in the territory of Slovakia. Alföldi considers jet pearls to be typical Rhineland products worn by women and children (ALFÖLDI 1957, 441). Fülep mentions jet bracelets from Pécs (FÜLEP 1969, Fig. 42:2,5). The woman in the studied burial had a bracelet from seven disks, probably also made of jet. The number of bracelets in cemetery III deserves attention. While 20 bracelets come from 176 burials in cemetery I, in cemetery III there are 26 bracelets from 13 burials (KRASKOVSKÁ 1974b, 107; SCHMIDTOVÁ 2010, 707). Also the high number of beads is extraordinary. L. Kraskovská notes that 200 pieces of beads were found in nine burials. The total number of beads found in nine burials in cemetery III is 500, of which 316 pieces come from the excavation conducted by Bratislava City Museum in 2008.

A significant and unusual find are two vessels of Germanic origin in two burials (SCHMIDTOVÁ 2010, 707), which presumably indicate the ethnicity of the buried. The burials in question may represent those inhabitants of Pannonia whose origins or ancestors should be searched for north of the Danube.

The 2014 burial also contains noteworthy inventory. The morphoscopic and metric traits suggest that the buried was a female who died at the age of 40–49. She was of tiny stature and approximately 155 cm tall. She had considerably worn teeth, visible degenerative changes in the spine, and she might have undergone childbirth. The skull is long, with a pronounced side profile. Facial height is small, width medium, orbits medium and the nose broad. The long bones of the upper extremities and femurs are of gracile to medium robustness, but the shoulder bones have robust muscle relief. The forearm is of medium length. The intermembral index corresponds to the Europoid population.

<b>MARTIN - SALLER 1957; BRÄUER 1988</b>	<b>Measurements and indices definitions</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Charakteristic (ALEKSEEV - DEBETS 1964; and others)</b>
<b>M 1.</b>	g-op	177?	large
<b>M 1c.</b>	m-op	177?	
<b>M 1d.</b>	n-op	175	
<b>M 3.</b>	g-l	171	
<b>M 8.</b>	eu-eu	127	very small
<b>M 9.</b>	ft-ft	94	medium
<b>M 10.</b>	co-co	112	medium
<b>M 12.</b>	ast-ast	98?	small
<b>M 23.</b>	g-op-g	495?	medium
<b>M 25.</b>	n.o	347	small
<b>M 26.</b>	n.b	126	large
<b>M 27.</b>	b.l	117	small
<b>M 28.</b>	l.o	104	small
<b>M 29.</b>	n-b	109	medium
<b>M 30.</b>	b-l	106	medium
<b>M 31.</b>	l-o	90	small
<b>M 43.</b>	fmt-fmt	99	
<b>M 43(1).</b>	fmo-fmo	94	
<b>M 44.</b>	ek-ek	95	
<b>M 45.</b>	zy-zy	116	narrow
<b>M 46.</b>	zm-zm	92	medium
<b>M 47.</b>	n-gn	103?	small
<b>M 48.</b>	n-pr	60	medium
<b>M 49a.</b>	Naso-dacryal chord	23	large
<b>M 49b.</b>	Naso-dacryal subtense	12	very large
<b>M 50.</b>	mf-mf	23	
<b>M 51.</b>	mf-ek right	39	small
<b>M 52.</b>	spa-sbk	31	very small
<b>M 54.</b>	apt-apt	23	small
<b>M 55.</b>	n-ns	44	very small
<b>M 57.</b>	Simotic chord	8	medium
<b>M 57a.</b>	Simotic subtense	4	large
<b>M 62.</b>	ol-sta	40	
<b>M 65.</b>	kdl-kdl	116	large
<b>M 66.</b>	go-go	90	small
<b>M 67.</b>	biment. breadth	41	
<b>M 69.</b>	id-gn	26	small
<b>M 70.</b>	Ascending ramus height	58	large
<b>M 71.</b>	Ascending ramus breadth	35	
<b>M 72.</b>	n-pr-OAE	78	prognathic
<b>M 73.</b>	n-ns-OAE	77	hyperprognathic
<b>M 74.</b>	ns-pr-OAE	81	orthognathic
<b>M 75.</b>	n-rhi-OAE	58	
<b>M 75 (1).</b>	72.-75.	20	medium
<b>M 77.</b>	fmo-n-fmo	137	

<b>MARTIN - SALLER 1957; BRÄUER 1988</b>	<b>Measurements and indices definitions</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Charakteristic (ALEKSEEV - DEBETS 1964; and others)</b>
<b>M 78.</b>	Orbital entrance angle	86	
<b>M 79.</b>	Mandibular angle	124	medium
<b>M 80a.</b>	Mandible dental arch length	38	
<b>M 80(1).</b>	External dental arch width	58	
<b>N</b>	fmo-fmo height	19	
<b>N</b>	P1-M2 max.	31	
<b>N</b>	zm' - ss - zm'	128	moderate flater
<b>N</b>	zm' - zm'	89	
<b>I 1.</b>	8 : 1	71.8	dolichocranic
<b>I 12.</b>	9 : 10	83.9	medium
<b>I 13.</b>	9 : 8	74.0	eurymetopic
<b>I 14.</b>	12 : 8	77.1	medium
<b>I 16.</b>	27 : 26	92.8	small
<b>I 17.</b>	28 : 26	82.5	small
<b>I 18.</b>	28 : 27	88.8	medium
<b>I 19.</b>	26 : 25	36.3	
<b>I 20.</b>	27 : 25	33.7	
<b>I 21.</b>	28 : 25	29.9	
<b>I 22.</b>	29 : 26	86.5	medium
<b>I 24.</b>	30 : 27	90.6	large
<b>I 25.</b>	31 : 28	86.5	large
<b>I 29.</b>	31 : 12	91.8	large
<b>I 38.</b>	47 : 45	88.7	mesoprosopic
<b>I 39.</b>	48 : 45	51.7	mesen
<b>I 40.</b>	66 : 45	77.5	large
<b>I 41.</b>	46 : 45	79.3	
<b>I 41(5) dakr.</b>	49b : 49a	52.1	large
<b>I 42.</b>	52 : 51	79.4	mesoconch
<b>I 42(1).</b>	51 : 45	33.6	
<b>I 42(2).</b>	52 : 48	51.6	
<b>I 46.</b>	50 : 44	24.2	
<b>I 48.</b>	54 : 55	52.2	chamaerrhine
<b>I 51(1).</b>	54 : 45	19.8	
<b>I 52(1a) sim.</b>	57a : 57	50.0	very large
<b>I 61.</b>	(40+45+47) : 3	73.0	
<b>I 63.</b>	71 : 70	60.3	
<b>I 64.</b>	66 : 65	77.5	small
<b>I 67mand.</b>	80(1) : 80	152.6	
<b>I 71.</b>	45 : 8	91.3	medium
<b>I 72.</b>	9 : 43	94.9	
<b>I 73a.</b>	9 : 45	81.0	very large
<b>I frmand.</b>	66 : 45	95.7	

**Tab. 1. Cranial measurements (mm, degrees) and indices of the female from Bratislava-Rusovce, grave excavated in 2014.**

<b>Humerus</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>
1.	285		277	
2.	283		276	
5.	21		20	
6.	17		17	
7.	58		57	
8.	119			
6. : 5.	81.0	eurybrachial	85.0	eurybrachial
7. : 1.	20.4	medium	20.6	medium
<b>Radius</b>	<b>R</b>		<b>L</b>	
1.	217		217	
1b.	214		214	
2.	207		207	
3.	35		36	
4.	14		14	
5.	11		11	
3. : 2.	16.9	medium	17.4	medium
5. : 4.	78.6		78.6	
<b>Ulna</b>	<b>R</b>		<b>L</b>	
1.	237		237	
2.	213		213	
3.	33		33	
11.	11		12	
12.	15		14	
3. : 2.	15.5		15.5	
11. : 12.	73.3		85.7	
<b>Os coxae</b>	<b>R</b>		<b>L</b>	
1. DCOX	200		204	
2. SCOX	145		149	
3. HOAC	51		51	
4. PUM	77		78	
5. SPU	24		23	
6. IIMT			52	
7. ISMM	102		102	
8. AB			53	
<b>Femur</b>	<b>R</b>		<b>L</b>	
1.	399		407	
2.	395		403	
6.	23		26	
7.	25		26	
8.	77		80	
9.	30		29	
10.	25		26	
18.	42		41	

19.	40?		40?	
8. : 2.	19.5		19.9	
(6. + 7.) : 2.	12.2		12.9	
6. : 7.	92.0	no pilaster	100.0	weak pilaster
10. : 9.	83.3	platymeria	89.7	eurymeria
19. : 18.	95.2		97.6	
(19. + 18.) : 2.	20.8		20.1	
<b>Tibia</b>	<b>R</b>		<b>L</b>	
1.	326		330?	
1a.	334		338	
1b.	325		328	
8.	28		28	
8a.	30		31	
9.	20		19	
9a.	21		20	
10b.	68		68	
9. : 8.	71.4		67.9	
9a. : 8a.	70.0	euryknem	64.5	mesoknem
10b. : 1.	20.9		20.6	
<b>Fibula</b>	<b>R</b>		<b>L</b>	
2.	13			
3.	10			
4a.	26			
3. : 2.	76.9			
Proportional indices				
R1. : H2	76.7	mesoceric	78.6	mesoceric
T1b. : F2	82.3		81.4	
(H2+R1):(F2+T1b)	69.4		67.4	

**Tab. 2. Postcranial measurements (mm) and indices (MARTIN – SALLER 1957; BRÄUER 1988; HOUËT – BRŮŽEK – MURAIL 1999) of female from Bratislava-Rusovce, grave excavated in 2014.**

Besides the bracelet of a coal substance (jet?) and atypical form, composed of seven disks, the buried woman had four rings on her fingers. The morphology of the phalanges and their green colour indicate that she probably had two rings on each hand: on the second and fourth fingers of the right hand, and on the second and third fingers of the left hand. Not only is their number unusual, but also the fact that no earrings were found. The gem ring depicts the Egyptian deities Serapis and Isis, which makes it the second artefact in Gerulata connected with these deities. The other one, a fragment of an altar with a votive inscription, dedicated to Isis and Serapis, was found in the walls of a of Late Antique fort (HOŠEK 1985, 19B, 52–53). The hoop of the flat bronze ring (no. 2) is divided by transverse cuts into five sections with the sign X incised in the middle of the top section, which corresponds with the simple, stylized decoration of the Late Roman jewellery. Ring no. 3 has been preserved as a fragment. Bronze ring no. 4 is older than the grave in which it was found, which confirms I. Popović's theory that rings were used in the Roman period even for two generations, i.e. for 50 to 70 years.

The items presented in this article come from the same chronological and cultural horizon as the offerings from previous burials from 1970 and 2008. Grave goods confirm that the Late Roman Gerulata was inhabited by relatively rich people, who buried the deceased with items of everyday use (usually pottery and tools) but also with jewellery and coins. The signet ring and the other three rings on the fingers of the deceased woman attest to an extraordinary grave inventory and imply that rich and important members of society were buried in cemetery III.

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**Pl. 5/1: Rusovce-Gerulata, 2014 female burial. Detail of folded hands (photo by M. Pros).**



**Pl. 5/2: Rusovce-Gerulata, 2014 female burial. Bracelet from coal substance (jet?) composed of seven disks with perforations (photo by R. Schmidt).**



Pl. 5/3: Rusovce-Gerulata, 2014 female burial. Pottery assemblage (photo by R. Schmidt).



Pl. 5/4: Glazed vase with relief decoration of crescents arranged as a rosette (photo by R. Schmidt).



**Pl. 5/5: Glazed cup, detail of a twig (photo by R. Schmidt).**



**Pl. 5/6: Glass flacon (photo by R. Schmidt).**



**Pl. 5/7: Rusovce-Gerulata, 2014 female burial. Ring no. 1 (photo by L. Mišurová).**



**Pl. 5/8: Rusovce-Gerulata, 2014 female burial. Ring no. 1 (photo by L. Mišurová).**



**Pl. 5/9. Ring no. 1, gem depicting Isis and Serapis (photo by L. Mišurová).**



**Pl. 5/10: Rusovce-Gerulata, 2014 female burial. Ring no. 2 (photo by L. Mišurová).**



**Pl. 5/11: Rusovce-Gerulata, 2014 female burial. Ring no. 3 (photo by L. Mišurová).**



**Pl. 5/12: Rusovce-Gerulata, 2014 female burial. Ring no. 4 (photo by L. Mišurová).**