

HELLENISTIC FIBULAE AND POTTERY IN EASTERN GALATIA

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Abstract: This paper focuses on the identification of three fibulae of the Middle La Tène scheme, and three vessels curated at the local museum in Çorum in eastern central Türkiye, which were published by Resul İbiş in 2021 in a museum report. To clarify the assignment of these vessels to eastern Galatia, we first summarised what was previously known and what was described by recent studies on so-called “Galatian ware”. In the next chapter, we grouped 14 fibulae of the Middle and Late La Tène schemes from Türkiye into two typological groups and contextualised the Çorum fibulae among other Hellenistic examples from Asia Minor. In conclusion, one can see that the number of such finds connecting eastern Galatia to some contemporary material in continental Europe is increasing.

Cuvinte-cheie: La Tène fibulae, obiecte din Galatia, Muzeul de arheologie din Çorum, estul Anatoliei centrale, Galatia, perioadă celtică, perioadă elenistică, Asia Mică, Turcia, studii muzeale, arheologie clasică

Rezumat: În această lucrare, accentul este pus pe identificarea a trei fibule din schema La Tène Mijlocie, precum și a trei vase conservate la muzeul local din Çorum, în zona central-estică a Turciei, publicate de Resul İbiş în 2021 într-un raport al muzeului. Pentru a clarifica atribuirea acestor vase Galatiei de Est, am rezumat mai întâi ceea ce se știa anterior și era descris de studii recente asupra așa-numitei „ceramici galatice”. În capitoul următor, am grupat 14 fibule din schemele La Tène Mijlocie și Târzie din Turcia în două grupuri tipologice și am contextualizat fibulele din Çorum printre alte fibule elenistice din Asia Mică. În concluzie, se poate observa că numărul unor astfel de descoperiri care leagă Galatia de estul țării cu unele materiale contemporane din Europa continentală este în creștere.

1. INTRODUCTION: FIBULAE OF THE MIDDLE LA TÈNE SCHEME IN ASIA MINOR

In a recent paper, Resul İbiş presented numerous formerly unpublished artefacts preserved in the Archaeological Museum of Çorum in the eastern part of central modern-day Türkiye¹ (Map 1). Among the illustrated objects, we consider the fibulae of the Middle La Tène scheme, attributed to the Galatians and three contemporary ceramic vessels.

La Tène metalwork in bronze, iron and gold, generally believed to have developed technologically out of Hallstatt culture, is also stylistically characterized by elaborate clasps, i.e., fibulae, and, according to certain scholars, some of these fibulae are associated with Celts. It was believed that the Galatians were a Celtic people dwelling in Galatia, a region of central Anatolia surrounding Ankara during the Hellenistic period. However, neither the Hallstatt culture nor the La Tène culture can be equated with the definition

of “Celts”². Only a few such objects have so far been found in Asia Minor, which have commonly been understood as indicative of Galatian presence in central Anatolia, and at times even of continued cultural exchange with the Celts from Europe. Since the 19th century, the history of the Celts in Asia Minor has been studied numerous times, beginning

² For the complex subject of Celts, their archaeology in Galatia and archaeological finds of Galatia during the Hellenistic period, cf., among others, Batman 2024; e.g. Çoşkun 2014 and 2022; Parachaud 2018 and 2020; Xie 2016; Ökse 2021; Norton 2013; Campbell 2009; Yörükan 2009; Ulusoy 2006; e.g. Strobel 1996, 2002, 2007a, 2007b, 2009; Bockius 1991; Müller-Karpe 1988, 2006; Nixon 1977. As focused in our present paper, La Tène artefacts in Hellenistic Asia Minor as a problematic criterion for determining the ethnic identity(ies) of the Galatians have already been addressed by Altay Çoşkun in 2014 both historically and archaeologically (Çoşkun 2014). This paper argues that not a single La Tène fibula can be attributed to an individual bearer among the three major Galatian tribes; geographical and chronological implications rather point to mercenaries recruited from eastern Europe by Attalus I (ca. 240–197 BC) or later Hellenistic kings (p. 138–139). Cf. also Strobel 2009, p. 118, note 5; Müller-Karpe 1988, p. 192–195 with a map of findspots of the La Tène fibulae and gems in Anatolia; Darbyshire *et alii* 2000, p. 83.

¹ İbiş 2021. The museum was inaugurated on 13th of October 1968.