

ABOUT THE SINUOUS FIBULAE (*GESCHWEIFTE FIBELN*) IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: The German name "*geschweifte Fibeln*" refers to a certain "typological family" of fibulae of the Late La Tène scheme, widespread in Central, North-Central and Eastern Europe. Sinuous fibulae became the guiding fossil of the post-Manching phase, respectively the LT D2 phase, interposed between the final occupation stage of the Manching oppidum (LT D1) and the Roman conquest of the north-alpine regions. Despite their relative rarity, the sinuous fibulae discovered in Romania are of particular importance for the periodization of the Late La Tène period at the Lower Danube and in Transylvania.

Cuvinte-cheie: fibule Kostrzewski M și N, fibule Almgren 2 și 18, România, La Tène târziu, epocă romană timpurie

Rezumat: Denumirea germană „*geschweifte Fibeln*” se referă la o anumită „familie tipologică” de fibule de schemă La Tène târziu, răspândită în Europa Centrală, Nord-Centrală și de Est. Fibulele sinuoase au devenit fosila directoare a fazei post-Manching, respectiv a fazei LT D2, interpusă între etapa finală a locuirii oppidumului de la Manching (LT D1) și cucerirea romană a regiunilor nord-alpine. În ciuda rarității lor relative, fibulele sinuoase descoperite în România au o importanță deosebită pentru periodizarea La Tène-ului târziu la Dunărea de Jos și în Transilvania.

SINUOUS FIBULAE IN CENTRAL AND NORTH-CENTRAL EUROPE

The German name *geschweifte Fibeln*¹ refers to a certain "typological family" of fibulae of the Late La Tène construction, widespread in Central, North-Central and Eastern Europe. The bow is strongly curved outwards while the foot is slightly curved inwards. Thus, the body's trajectory is sinuous². The transition from the foot to the bow may be smooth or broken and may or may not be marked by a protrusion. This family includes the Kostrzewski M and N, Almgren 2 and 18 types³. Most of the specimens were made of bronze, but there are also examples of iron or, rarely, of silver and gold. The high frequency of bronze specimens should be seen in connection with the improvement and intensification of the techniques of manufacture by casting fibulae in the Late La Tène period.

Like the chronological and cultural framing of the Nauheim fibulae, that of the sinuous fibulae was

closely related to the concerns for the periodization of the Central European Late La Tène. The first typological and chronological clarifications were formulated at the beginning of the twentieth century⁴. The particular expressiveness of sinuous fibulae for the periodization of North-Central Europe and Scandinavia (especially of the Jastorf Culture), as well as some regional-chronological differences, have been insightfully revealed by Rolf Hachmann⁵. They were perceived as forms specific to the later stage of the recent phase of the pre-Roman Iron Age in Central and Northern Germany⁶. The absence of sinuous arch fibulae from the Manching settlement and their frequency in cremation tombs in southwestern Bavaria allowed Werner Krämer to propose a bipartite periodization of the Late La Tène⁷. The sinuous fibulae became the guiding fossil of the post-Manching phase, respectively the LT D2 phase, interposed between the

⁴ Schwantes 1909, p. 156; cf. Hachmann 1960, p. 14.

⁵ Hachmann 1960, p. 81–82: „Wesentlich jünger als die Spätlatènefibeln Var. K und die Mittellatènefibeln Var. D/E, F und G/H sind die Spätlatènefibeln Var. J, die Nauheimer Fibel und deren drahtförmige Variante. Zugleich sind diese Fibeln im östlichen Mitteleuropa zweifellos älter als die verschiedenen Varianten der geschweiften Spätlatènefibeln. (...) Spätlatènefibeln der Varianten M-O bezeichnen den jüngsten Abschnitt der jüngeren vorrömischen Eisenzeit im Osten Mitteleuropas, den Abschnitt D.“

⁶ Hachmann 1960, p. 102. The late phase of the necropolis at Großromstedt was to be equated in later research with the "Großromstedt B Horizon" (Peschel 1999, p. 91–92; Peschel 2005, p. 214; cf. Völling 1995, p. 78–80; Hüssen 2001, p. 280–281; Döhlert 2009, p. 422–423); cf. Döhlert-Albani 2014, p. 239–240.

⁷ Krämer 1962. More recently, Hüssen 2001 plenarily debates the links between the LT D2 phase in Bavaria and the Großromstedt horizon in central Germany; cf. Rieckhoff 2008, p. 5.

¹ Expressions such as "*Form (...) mit leichter Schweifung*" (form with a slight sinuosity) or "*Fibeln mit (...) geschweiftem Bügel*" (sinuous body fibula) were used by Beltz 1911, p. 688–689 to describe the fibulae in figs. 56 (type L) and 61 (a specimen from Gurina) respectively. The term "*geschweifte Fibeln*" was consecrated by Krämer 1962, p. 308 by distinguishing the La Tène D2 horizon in Bavaria, explicitly referred to as "*Horizont der geschweiften Fibeln (D2)*". Košćević 1980, p. 12 translates "*fibulae with a smooth bow*"; Božić 2008, p. 49 and 96 uses a less suggestive English term: "*the arched fibula*" (Slovak: "*usločeni fibul*").

² Suggestive formulations at Hachmann 1960, p. 238 („*Spätlatènefibeln (...) mit harfenförmiger Schweifung*") or Döhlert-Albani 2014, p. 226 („*S-förmig geschweifte Fibeln*").

³ Kostrzewski 1919, p. 37–39, figs. 23–25; Almgren 1923, p. 4. On the insight, but also the limitations of Oscar Algren's vision: Völling 1998, p. 39.