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Hoard of Serbian and Venetian Coins from Usje (14th century)

ABSTRACT: *The article deals with the richest hoard evidence of dinars de cruce of king Milutin, found, at the village of Usje near Skopje in 1991. The find consists of 96 specimens: 2 matapans of I. Contarini, 3 of G. Dandolo, 7 of P. Gradenigo, 1 dinar of king Dragutin and 83 of king Milutin. Using the methodological approaches, the author attempts to answer the questions related to the problem of value of dinars 'de curce of king Milutin and the problems of dating of dinars de cruce issued by king Dragutin.*

SOMMAIRE: *Dans cet article est traitée la découverte la plus riche jusqu'à présent des dinars à la croix du roi Milutin, faite en 1991 dans le village Usje, près de Skopje. Cette collection contient 96 exemplaires: 2 matapans de J. Contarini, 3 de G. Dandolo, 7 de P. Gradenigo, 1 dinar du roi Dragutin et 83 dinars du roi Milutin. L'auteur, en appliquant des principes méthodologiques, répond aux certains problèmes tel qu'est celui de la valeur des dinars à la croix du roi Milutin aussi bien qu'au problème de la datation du dinar à la croix du roi Dragutin.*

In the last several decades many hoards of Serbian medieval coins have been irreversibly lost for the researches. In this way many conclusions related to the problems of the coin issues, circulation, mints and mint organization, metrology and quantity of the issues of the Serbian mediaeval coinage have remained a matter of uncertainty. The number of the hoards that reached museum collections in their original number, or of those having been documented before their dispersion in the private collections, is still very low. The reconstruction was usually hypothetical and caused even more confusion due to the omission of the place of origin, incomplete descriptions or subsequent adding of new issues, whose presence should always be accepted with suspicion. The clue for the number of unsolved problems actually lies in a thorough analysis of the hoards and in change of the extant approach to this unique evidence of the past, if a step forward in the researches is to be made.

Due to the attentiveness of both the finder of the hoard, and the City Museum of Skopje, a hoard of 96 Serbian and Venetian coins and 2 silver earrings discovered at Usje near Skopje in the spring 1991 was purchased for the Museum collection in its original number.¹ This very important hoard is so far the richest find of Serbian dinars *de cruce* issued by king Milutin. The hoard consists of 2 *grossi* of J. Contarini (1275-1280), 3 of G. Dandolo (1280-1289), 7 of P. Gradenigo (1282-1321) and 1 dinar of king Dragutin (1276-82/1316) and 83 specimens of king Milutin (1282-1321). Two silver earrings of 17 and 17,56 g weight have been deposited in addition to the coins in a small clay pot.

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Abbreviations: HAD Historijski arhiv Dubrovnik; S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, S. Ljubić, *Opis judoslavenskih novaca*, Zagreb 1875; R. MARIĆ, *Studije*, R. Marić, *Studije iz srpske numizmatike*, Beograd 1956; M. PETERKOVIĆ, *Ispisi*, M. Peterković, *Ispisi Dubrovačkog arhiva*, Istoriski Institut Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti.

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to the City Museum of Skopje with whose kind permission this material has its very first publishing.

A homogeneous find is in question including values of 1 *perperum* of Venetian coins (12 *grossi*) and 7 *perperi* of Serbian coins (84 dinars). The Serbian part of the hoard consists exclusively of dinars *de cruce* type: 1 of king Dragutin² and 83 of king Milutin,³ the later making the hoard a really outstanding find. All the hoards known so far included some other issues, either earlier or latter, in addition to these emissions. The Usje hoard contains the first issues of dinars *de cruce* put into circulation at the beginning of 1310s, thus enabling us closer identification of this extremely important type of coins.

Table 1: *The coin hoards with dinars 'de cruce' of king Milutin (only the issues of the Serbian coinage are given).*

Ruler	Type	Hoards					
		a	b	c	d	e	f
Dragutin	<i>de cruce</i> -1st emission Ljubić T.V.6-7.			1			
Dragutin	<i>de bandera</i> Ljubić T.V.15,1718.	24	4	94		48	
Milutin	<i>de bandera</i> Ljubić T.IV.8-18	670	261	90			
Dragutin	<i>de bandera</i> -counterfeit			40			
Milutin	<i>de bandera</i> - counterfeit	1	1				
Dragutin	<i>de cruce</i> -2nd emission				1		
Milutin	<i>de cruce</i> Ljubić T.IV.4-7.	7	12	2	83	6?	17
Milutin	<i>de cruce</i> - counterfeit			1			
Milutin	<i>de cruce</i> crowned king Ljubić T.IV.19-20.		1?				
Stefan of Dečani	<i>de cruce</i> Ljubić T.IV.24 and V.1.					1	109
Dušan	<i>de cruce</i> Ljubić T.V.8-14.					1	287
Dušan	with helmet Ljubić T.VII.5-8.						20

² S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Nova serija novih vrsta spskog srednjevekovnog novca III, *Starinar* XVIII, 1967(1968), 119-121, fig.1-2.

³ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Uroš I, type I-II and VI. 33, T.IV.1-7 and V. 2; R. MARIĆ, *Studije*, Milutin, type I/2 and 3, T. XIII.12/13-14; The type with one cross mentioned by Ljubić and Marić does not exist. Due to the incomplete striking, the second upper limb of the cross failed to be minted or was rubbed by latter clipping of the coin.

Hoards: a: *Postenje* (1310/5): Museum "Ras", Novi Pazar; National Museum of Belgrade; Museum of 25th of May; b: *Dobrište* (1310/5): R. MARIĆ, *Studije*, 169-233; c: *Tiševica* (1320/30); V. PENČEV, Kolektivna monetna nahodka (14 th century) ot s. Tiševica Vračanski okrug, *Numizmatika* 2, 1983, 15-41; id, *Numizmatika* 3, 1983, 27-41; d: *Usje* (1315/20); e: *Nemački Čanad* (1330/5); I. BERKESZI, *Délmagyarország éremleletei, Csanád-egyházmegyei könyvnyomda*, Temišvar 1907, 49; S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Ostave srpskog srednjovekovnog novca na severu od Dunava, *Istorijski časopis* 20, 1973, 94-95, he has added 5 dinars *de cruce* of king Milutin to this hoard. Although we should accept this data with suspicion, we have included these coins in the survey, since it is obvious that they belong to some hoard find; f: *Prilužje* (1340/5); S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Ostave koje sadrže srpski srednjovekovni novac iz perioda do 1371. godine, *Spomenik Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti* 122, 1981, 8-9.

Dinars *de cruce* of king Milutin

As a coin type, dinars *de cruce* appeared after dinars *de bandera*. Due to the long time of their striking, from the 1270s to 1310s, the last issues of the later have lost much of the value and reputation, which was in fact the reason why they were withdrawn from circulation and a new type of coin was introduced. Our first analysis of dinars *de bandera* from the large hoard from Postenje near Novi Pazar containing 24 dinars *de bandera* of King Dragutin and 670 of king Milutin, as well as the analysis of some other finds, have shown substantial differences in the weights of this type, which resulted in losing the confidence of those who used these coins as means of payment. If we add to this the decline in their fineness, it becomes obvious that the dinars *de bandera* lost much of their original value, so that they differed considerably from the model used for their minting - the Venetian grosso of a stable value and fineness. The average weight of the first dinars *de bandera* issues was approximately 2,15 g to 2,00 g, falling to 2,00-1,81g in the following period.⁴ This decline shows explicitly the abandoning of the intrinsic standard based on the Venetian grosso, whereas the variable weight of the issues points to a monetary system followed by considerable devaluation. Taking into consideration both the value of the Serbian dinars, and their distribution, the Venetian Great Council resorted to taking a whole range of measures against their circulation starting from 1380s.⁵ The bans were obviously based on the lower and particularly unstable value of the Serbian dinar. The analysis of the dinars *de bandera* has shown that the first issues contained over 95% silver, the percentage of the precious metal gradually declining to 81% and occasionally even below that. A

⁴ V. IVANIŠEVIĆ, Le début du monnayage des gros serbes, *Actes du XIe Congrès International de Numismatique*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1993, 203-7.

⁵ F. C. LANE and R. C. MUELLER, *Money and Banking in Medieval and Renaissance Venice, I: Coins and Moneys of Account*, Baltimore 1985, 262-8; R. ČUK, *Srbija i Venecija u XIII i XIV veku*, Beograd 1986.

specimen of dinar *de bandera* of king Dragutin has shown a silver content of only 57%,⁶ whereas the fineness of the Venetian issues was 0,965.⁷

The introduction of the new coin type - dinars *de cruce*, was necessarily followed by reorganization of the mint production in medieval Serbia, which now included systematic sigla marking of the issues. All the dinars *de cruce* were marked with letters on both the obverse, and the reverse. Similarly to the previous types, the letters were sometimes followed by smaller signs: circles, dots, asterisks, etc. The marking was introduced for the purpose of more efficient control of both the issues, and the renter of the mint.

The beginning of striking the dinars *de cruce* of king Milutin could be precisely identified on the basis of the preserved written documents.⁸ Their first mention is in the public notary dated to 1311, which says that a customer was obliged to pay 410 perperi in *grossi de cruce* till Christmas.⁹ The second one from 1312 refers to a sale of grain paid in *cruce sterlin*.¹⁰ This source also provides information on the fineness of the first issue of dinars *de cruce*, stating that they were made upon a sterling standard. The fineness of the sterling silver was 0.925. Another document from the same year includes additional evidence mentioning the *grossi de Brescoua de la cruce*¹¹ and *grossi de Brescouanis de la cruce*¹², and indicating the place of their minting. On the basis of the preserved documents, we could with certainty date the striking of dinars *de cruce* around 1311. In addition, they provide evidence for the fineness of 0.925 of the first issues and mention Brskovo as a place of their striking.

A point should also be made to other two types of dinars *de cruce* earlier in date. The first one is of king Dragutin,¹³ and the second of king Milutin of the *crowned king* type,¹⁴ both of them differing in style from our type and being minted in the 13th century.¹⁵

The sequence of dinars *de cruce* of king Milutin

Due to the fact that the Usje hoard has completely been preserved and documented, we are able closely to examine dinars *de cruce* of Milutin and to distinguish some of the basic chronological groups. They have been classified on the basis of their stylistic features, siglas, the metrology and the analysis of

⁶ A. GORDIUS and D. M. METCALF, The Metal Content of the Early Serbian Coinage, *Revue belge de numismatique* 115, 1969, 63-77, n° 2-7.

⁷ F. C. LANE and R. C. MUELLER, *Op. cit.*, 112-3.

⁸ M. DINIĆ, Krstasti groševi, *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 1, 1952, 86-112.

⁹ HAD, *Diversa Notariae* I, f. 189, (22nd of May 1311); M. PETERKOVIĆ, *Ispisi*, 4.

¹⁰ HAD, *Diversa Notariae* I, f. 92, (22 May 1321); M. PETERKOVIĆ, *Ispisi*, 4.

¹¹ HAD, *Aptagi* I, f. 40 (24th of July 1312); M. DINIĆ, *Op. cit.*, p. 87.

¹² HAD, *Aptagi* I, f. 12-second pagination (5 November 1312); M. DINIĆ, *Op. cit.*, 87.

¹³ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Dragutin, type I-II, T. V. 6-7.

¹⁴ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Uroš I, type VI.44, T. V. 3.

¹⁵ S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Novčane emisije kralja Dragutina, Vladislava II i kralja Milutina, *Stari nar* XXVII, 1977, 128, 140.

the coin hoards. The first group could most clearly be singled out. The other two include a number of issues that could not distinctly be divided chronologically and we had to consider them in a whole, due to the absence of certain parameters.

The first issue of dinars *de cruce* was marked with the sigla R on the obverse, and most frequently with V on the reverse. The style of this coin emission and its separate occurrence in many hoards, distinguish these coins very clearly from the other coin types. The depiction of Christ on the obverse, and the ruler and the saint represented on the reverse are by the same hand, showing the highest artistic quality within this type of coins. The style of the die-cutter could be seen only on this issue of dinars *de cruce*. The aforesaid die-cutter must have worked on the previous issues of dinars *de bandera* marked with the same siglas as our first issue. A specimen of these coins has been discovered in the Dobrište hoard.¹⁶ Another dinar *de bandera* with identical elaboration from the Kovačević Collection n° 166, has been struck with the same obverse-die as our specimen n° 21 of the dinars *de cruce*,¹⁷ which shows explicitly the sequence of the types of coins and issues. The third specimen of dinars *de bandera* with the same siglas also comes from the Kovačević Collection n° 165.¹⁸ The two specimens of dinars *de bandera* from the collection bear the same mint mark on the reverse -V, as well as O, above the head of the saint. The later sign on the reverse can also be seen on the dinar *de cruce* from Usje hoard (n° 13), with the notion that the Dragutin's specimen is different in style.

The assumption that the dinars *de cruce* with the siglas R/V were actually their first issue, has also been confirmed by some other hoard-evidence. The two big hoards of dinars *de bandera* from Postenje (670 dinars) and Dobrište (261) include dinars *de cruce* only of the first issue (7 specimens in the former and 12 in the later). The same is true for the hoard from Tiševica (Tab. 2).

It should be pointed out that, according to Ljubić, there are also dinars *de bandera* bearing some other siglas, such as T- and T-V on the obverse, and T-R on the reverse, the marks corresponding to the later issues of our dinars *de cruce*. Their weight of 1,81g and 1,61g is an argument in favor of this statement.¹⁹

The further sequence of dinars *de cruce* issues, deduced mainly from the specimens of the Usje hoard, is not easy to define. All of the coins are very close in style and they could be distinguished only by their weight and mint mark combinations. Since one die-sinker or more of them close in style seem to be in question here, we have placed them in one chronological group, including a number of issues. Two subgroups could be distinguished in the second chronological group according to their mint mark combinations. The first one includes both the coins void of sigla, and the ones bearing T, A-N and **yp-ou** on the obverse, all of them having been found mainly in combination with the

¹⁶ R. MARIĆ, *Studije*, 169-233, n° 158, TXXXVIII/XXXIX.12, weight 1.72 g.

¹⁷ V. RADIĆ, *Osam vekova srpskog dinara-srednjovekovni novac*, Beograd 1994, 20, n° 1, weight 1.75 g.

¹⁸ V. RADIĆ, *Op. cit.*, 35, n° 2, weight 2.07.

¹⁹ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Uroš I, type III.VII. 2-3, T. IV. 10.

same T-R, N-O and A marks on the reverse, whereas the second group consists of dinars with marks B- and N- on the obverse, the former being combined with the letter C and occasionally A on the reverse, the later only with the sigla O. The later issue is among the lightest in the Usje hoard. These subgroups are very close in style.

The third chronological group, which also includes a large number of issues, has been distinguished on the basis of comparative analysis of the hoards from this period. In the first place, issues of the recent finds have been placed in this group. In the hoard from Prilužje near Kosovo Polje, deposited rather later than the hoard from Usje, dinars *de cruce* occurred with siglas different from the ones in the hoards of Postenje, Dobrište and Tiševica, although the same mint marks occurs occasionally on the coins from Usje. The same sigla could be perceived on a group of coins, which are said to come from the Nemački Čanad hoard, and also on the coins from the Padina hoard, both with later dates of deposition. The last group includes dinars with the following marks on the obverse and reverse: B-/E-, G-, NP and -P, P-/N-O, M-A/N-O and T-V/N-O, and T-R (Tab. 2). Certain confirmation of the assumption that the coins in question are the earliest issues of dinars *de cruce* of king Milutin is found in the sigla T-V/T-R that appears on the later dinars *de cruce* of king Stefan of Dečani from the Prilužje hoard.²⁰ The hoards from Nemački Čanad and Prilužje include rather scanty descriptions and have no photographs. We are, consequently, not in a position to say something more about the style of the last group that includes a large number of issues.

Table 2: Scheme of the mint marks found on the hoard evidence of dinars *de cruce* issued by king Milutin.

Siglas		Hoards							
Obv.	Rev.	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
z	V-	1	1						
R-	-		1		1				
R-	V-	6	2		5				
R-	-V		8	2	14				
R-	(?)-(?)				1				
-	T-R				7				
T-	T-R				3				
-T	-				1				
-T	T-R				9				
-T	(?)-T				1				
A-N	A-				3				
A-N	N-O				3				

²⁰ S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Ostave koje sadrže srpski srednjevekovni novac iz perioda do 1371 godine, *Spomenik Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti* 122, 1981, 8, n° 16.

HOARD OF SERBIAN AND VENETIAN COINS FROM USJE (14TH CENTURY)

A-N	T-R				3				
N-A	A-				2				
yp-ош	A-				1				
yp-ош	N-O				6			1	
yp-ош	N?-O				1				
yp-ош	T-R				2				
yp-ош	(?)-V?				1				
B-	A-				2			2	
B-	C-				11				
B-	C?-				1				
N-	O-				4				
-N	(?)-				1				
P-E	P-O					1			
B-	E-							2	
B-	G-							3	
B-	NP						1		
B-	-P							1	
P-	N-O						1	1	
M-A	I-O						1	1	
M-A	H-O						1		
T-V	N-O						2	1	
T-V	T-R							2	1
?	?							3	
Counterfeits				1					
Total:		7	12	3	83	1	6	17	1

Hoards: a: *Postenje* (1310/5): Museum "Ras", Novi Pazar; National Museum of Belgrade; Museum of 25th of May; b: *Dobrište* (1310/5); R. MARIĆ, *Studije*, 169-233; c: *Tiševice* (1320/30); V. PENČEV, Kolektivna monetna nahodka (14 v.) ot s. Tiševice Vratzanski okrug, *Numizmatika* 2, 1983, 15-41; id, *Numizmatika* 3, 1983, 27-41; d: *Usje* (1315/20); e: *Kragujevac* (1316/20); G. ČREMOŠNIK, *Razvoj srpskog novčarstva do kralja Milutina*, Beograd 1933, 20-21; R. MARIĆ, *Studije*, 151-167; f: *Nemački Čanad* (1330/5); I. BERKESZI, *Délmagyarország éremleletei, Csanad-egyhazmegyei könyvnyomda*, Temesvar 1907, 49; S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Ostave srpskog srednjovekovnog novca na severu od Dunava, *Istorijski časopis* 20, 1973, 94-95, he has added to this hoard 5 dinars 'de cruce' of king Milutin. Although accepting this data with suspicion, we have included these coins into the analysis, since it is obvious that they belong to some hoard evidence; g: *Priluzje* (1340/5); S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Ostave koje sadrže srpski srednjovekovni novac iz perioda do 1371. godine, *Spomenik Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti* 122, 1981, 8-9; h: *Padina* (1370/5); S. DUŠANIĆ, Nalaz srednjovekovnog novca u Djerdapu, *Starinar* XXI, 1970 (1972), 81-112.

The specimen from the Kragujevac hoard with mint marks P-E/ Π-O, seems to belong to a separate issue.

The assembling of issues within a hoard does not necessarily have to be determined merely by the chronological sequence of their minting, but it could also be caused by the distribution of coins produced in the local mints. The fact that the find spots of the most important of the considered hoards Postenje (Novi Pazar), Dobrište (Tetovo), Usje (Skopje) and Priluzje (Kosovo Polje) - are located rather close to each other, is an argument in favor of the former factor. Whether specimens of dinars *de cruce* have also been struck in some other mints apart from that in Brskovo mentioned in the sources, it is difficult to say on the basis of the available evidence. As far as the silver ore is concerned, in Raška it was exploited in several mines in that period: Rudnik, Trepča, Janjevo, Lipik and Novo Brdo.²¹

The fineness of the earliest issues of dinars *de cruce* was 0.925 according to a document from 1312, in which grossi *de cruce sterlin* are mentioned.²² The analysis of a specimen with mark T-R on the reverse has shown 78,9% ± 0,6 silver, whereas another coin with sigla N-O on the obverse was found to contain 77,7% ± 1,1 silver.²³

Dinar *de cruce* of king Dragutin

Only one specimen of dinars *de cruce* of king Dragutin has been found in Usje, which is a rare issue - actually a variant of this type. The style of the obverse is very close to the Dragutin's dinar that bears a depiction of the king seated on a throne, holding a scepter in his right hand with the sword laid over his knees.²⁴ We infer that they have been done by the same hand. The obverse of our specimen bears the same sigla (two dots, each below every elbow) as the one on a dinar of a 'sword' type, which has its reference at S. Ljubić.²⁵ The stylistic analogy of these two types of Dragutin's coins and their metrological correspondence shed a new light on the problem of dating the dinars of a 'sword' type issued by Dragutin, which could now chronologically be attributed to the first decades of the 14th century, opposite to the opinion of S. Dimitrijević.²⁶ A confirmation of this suggestion could be found in the written records from this period, where dinars *de macia* are also mentioned in addition to the dinars *de cruce*. The first notion of coins *de la maca* is from 1312.²⁷ The second refer-

²¹ *Istorija srpskog naroda* I, 1981, 465-6.

²² HAD, *Diversa Notariae* I, f. 92, (22 May 1312); M. PETERKOVIĆ, *Ispisi*, 4.

²³ A. GORDIUS and D. M. METCALF, *Op. cit.*, 63-78, n° 10 and 11.

²⁴ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Dragutin, type V, T. V., 19-22; R. MARIĆ, *Studije*, type III, T. XIII., 8/10.

²⁵ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Dragutin type Va. 2. T. V. 19.

²⁶ S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Problemi srpske numizmatike I, *Istorijski glasnik* 1-2, 1957, 98-99;

S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, Novčane emisije kralja Dragutina, Vladislava II i kralja Milutina, *Starinar* XXVII, 1977, 128.

²⁷ HAD, *Aptagi* I, f. 5 (5 September 1312); M. PETERKOVIĆ, *Ispisi*, 2.

ence is in the will of a Blasius a goldsmith from the following year recorded in Dubrovnik, which says that his inheritance included the same type of coins in different values: *grossi de la maça* and *boni grossi de la maça*.²⁸

It should be emphasized that the dinar of a 'sword' type of king Dragutin has been dated to 1281 on the basis of another source - the notary document of Maria de Chau, the sister of the Serbian queen, which certifies receiving of 200 solidi of Brescovian grossi : 130 *denarii de cruce et de lilio* and 30 *denarii de macia*.²⁹ Such an early dating of the dinars *de macia* of king Dragutin is opposed, not only on the evidence of style and metrology references, but also by their complete absence of the hoards that have the 13th century as date of deposition. This type of coins has been found only in two hoards, both deposited in the 14th century. From the dispersed hoard from Klewak in Srem, only three dinars have reached us:³⁰ two of them are of king Dragutin, one of a 'sword' type and the other of the 'standing king type',³¹ and the third one is of king Vladislav II.³² In addition to the many different types of coins, the Obad hoard deposited in 1346³³ includes also Serbian coins: a dinar *de bandera* of king Dragutin,³⁴ 9 dinars *de macia* of the same king and two dinars of the emperor Dušan.³⁵

No reference of the fineness of the dinars *de macia* of king Dragutin could be found in the written sources. The analysis of one specimen has shown that it contains 84,1% \pm 1 silver.³⁶

Metrology

The substantial number of coins in this hoard enables us to briefly consider the metrology.

Complying with the Venetian monetary system, the Venetian matapans from Usje are of a rather stable weight, with a slight differentiation from the standard one. Their average weight ranges, according to the specimens of this hoard, from 2,12 to 2,14 g (table 3 and graph 1). The theoretical weight of the

²⁸ HAD, *Diversae Cancellariae* V, f. 74, (11 September 1313); G. ČREMOŠNIK, *Razvoj srpskog novčarstva do kralja Milutina*, Beograd 1933, 57-58.

²⁹ HAD, *Debita Notariae* I, f. 42, (27 February 1281); G. ČREMOŠNIK, *Kancelariski i notarski spisi 1278-1301*, Beograd 1932, 44-45, n° 68; S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, *Problemi srpske numizmatike I*, *Istorijski glasnik* 1-2, 1957: 98-99; S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, *Novčane emisije kralja Dragutina, Vladislava II i kralja Milutina*, *Starinar* XXVII, 1977, 128.

³⁰ S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, *Ostave koje sadrže srpski srednjovekovni novac iz perioda do 1371 godine*, *Spomenik Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti* 122, 1981, 17; he has mentioned the discussed coins as chance stray finds. The same place of origin and coherence of the coins suggest that it was a dispersed coin hoard.

³¹ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Vladislav I, type I, T. III, 13-19.

³² S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Vladislav I, type II, T. III, 20-22.

³³ S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, *Ostave srpskog srednjovekovnog novca na severu od Dunava*, *Istorijski časopis* 20, 1973, 98-99, with earlier numismatic references.

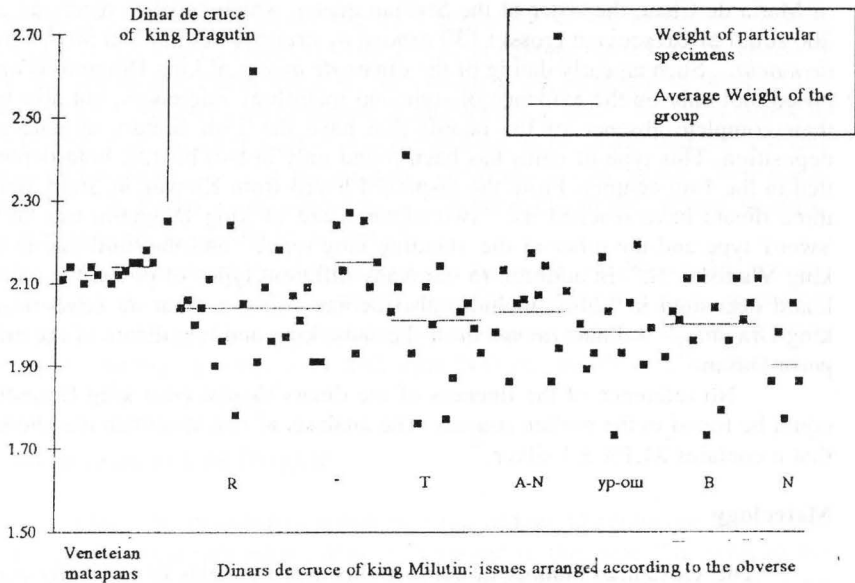
³⁴ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Dragutin, type IV, T. V, 15, 17-18.

³⁵ S. LJUBIĆ, *Opis*, Dušan, type A III, T. VII, 16-18.

³⁶ A. GORDIUS and D. M. METCALF, *Op. cit.*, 63-77, n° 8.

Venetian grosso was 2,19 g, which would imply that with the fineness of 0,965, it contained 2,11 g. pure silver.³⁷

Graph 1: *Usje hoard* -- weights



By contrast, the Serbian coins show larger weight disproportion, so that their average weight ranges from 2,15 for the variant without sigla, to only 1,90 g for the last issues bearing letter N as a mint mark. This large weight disproportion is apparent for all the coin emissions, the differences ranging from 0,28 g to even 0,83 g, for our earliest issue, being restricted to 0,08 g within the Venetian grossi (table 3 and graph 1). The considerable metrological differences of the Serbian coins are probably due to the absence of strict control over the weight of the flans prepared for minting, which would mean that their weights were not equalized. The issues were doubtless stroke *al marco*, the weight having been controlled merely for a group of coins and not for each piece separately.

³⁷ F. C. LANE and R.C. MUELLER, *Op. cit.*, 112-3.

Table 3: *The Usje hoard -- weights*

Ruler	Issue	number of coins	Average	Median	Max. weight	Min. weight	Differen.	Stand. deviation	Variance
J. Contarini		2	2.13	2.13	2.14	2.11	0.03	0.021	0.000
G. Dandolo		3	2.12	2.12	2.14	2.10	0.04	0.020	0.000
P. Gradenigo		7	2.14	2.15	2.18	2.10	0.08	0.026	0.001
Dragutin		1	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25			
Milutin	R	21	2.04	2.04	2.61	1.78	0.83	0.166	0.028
Milutin	-	7	2.15	2.15	2.27	1.93	0.34	0.119	0.014
Milutin	T	14	2.01	2.02	2.41	1.76	0.65	0.163	0.027
Milutin	A-N	11	2.03	2.06	2.17	1.86	0.31	0.107	0.012
Milutin	yp-om	11	1.98	1.99	2.19	1.73	0.46	0.129	0.017
Milutin	B	14	2.00	2.02	2.11	1.73	0.38	0.118	0.014
Milutin	N	5	1.90	1.86	2.05	1.77	0.28	0.111	0.012
Total:		96	2.04	2.05	2.61	1.73	0.88	0.142	0.020

The volume of output of *denari de cruce* of king Milutin

In spite of the absence of written sources for the mints in mediaeval Serbia, there are still few notions we could say about the volume of output of particular emissions of *dinars de cruce* issued by king Milutin. On the basis of the number of obverse and reverse dies and their combinations, the number of dies used for minting of a separate emission has been estimated theoretically (table 4). No detailed consideration of the volume of each issue of *dinars de cruce* of king Milutin in the Usje hoard is needed for the observation that a substantial number of obverse (more than 100) and reverse dies, which is even larger, must have been used in the minting process. It was possible to use one obverse die for striking 30.000 pieces, the number depending greatly on the quality of the die itself and on the hardness of the coin alloy.³⁸ Bearing this in mind, we could suppose that approximately 3.000 000 *dinars de cruce* were issued in the span of several years.

³⁸ I D. M. METCALF, *Coinage in South-Eastern Europe 820-1396*, London 1979, 11; B. H. I. H. STEWART, *Medieval die-output: two calculations for English mints in the fourteenth century*, *Numismatic Chronicle* III 7, 1963, 97-106; B. H. I. H. STEWART, *Second thoughts on medieval die-output*, *Numismatic Chronicle* IV 7, 1964, 293-303; M. MATE, *Coin dies under Edward I and II*, *Numismatic Chronicle* IX 7, 1969, 207-218.

Table 4: Estimation of the total number of dies for a particular emission of dinars 'de cruce' of king Milutin on the basis of the coins found in Usje hoard by use of different methods: a: Brown; b: Good; c: Guilbaud - Carcassonne; d: Carter; e: Mora Mas. (the program for PC-Numstat 1.0 was used for calculation).

Issue	n° of coins	n° of dies		Estimation of the die numbers according to methods:				
				a	b	c	d	e
- i T	21	Av.	7	4	9	-	9 ±1	-
		Rv.	9	16	13	-	13±2	-
R	21	Av.	16	35	37	35	53±19	34 (19-70)
		Rv.	15	21	35	28	42±14	23 (17-31)
A-N	11	Av.	8	14	18	15	23±11	14 (8-27)
		Rv.	8	14	18	15	23±11	14 (8-27)
yp-om	11	Av.	8	14	18	15	23±11	14 (8-27)
		Rv.	10	55	55	52	79±71	49 (16-210)
B	14	Av.	12	45	42	41	64±39	38 (17-118)
		Rv.	12	45	42	41	64±39	38 (17-118)
N	5	Av.	4	10	10	-	-	8 (4-38)
		Rv.	5	-	-	-	-	-

Analyzing the number of dies, we have noticed a detail that points to distinguishing separate coin emissions. Namely, the striking of the first issue of dinars *de cruce* that bear the siglas R/V was obviously differently organized. Here the number of dies with depiction of Christ is larger than the number of dies bearing the king and St. Stefan instead, which might indicate a change of the places of depictions. The same conclusion could be drawn from the specimens of this emission found in the hoard from Postenje. It is obvious that a separate issue is in question.

Conclusion

The main type of dinars *de cruce* of king Milutin appeared somewhere around 1311, being minted until the end of the reign of king Milutin in 1321. They were introduced as a substitute for the old dinars *de bandera*, which lost much of their original value by the constant decline in weight and fineness, having been minted for a long period of time. Systematic marking of the issues with letter signs was introduced with the appearance of the dinars *de cruce* for the purpose of more precise and simplified administrative control of the coin production. The weight of the first issues ranges from 2,15 to 1,90 g, whereas the fineness was 0,925, according to the written sources. Similarly to dinars *de bandera*, the issuing agents continued to depreciate the value of dinars *de cruce* in the years-long minting by gradual debasement of their weight and fineness.

An analyzed specimen from the later emissions contained, for example, only 77,7% of silver. The policy of coin devaluation was rather common in the Middle Ages. In the periods of crisis the state often changed, either the weight, or the fineness of the coins, or even both of them. This kind of mutation was used for supplying the state budget or for covering some urgent expenditures. While ordinary minting was bringing minimal revenues, the minting of coins of lower value was increasing the profits.

Among the important questions concerning dinars *de cruce* is certainly their value, for which there is no reference in the written sources from that period. Only the values of the later emissions of dinars *de cruce* are known to us - the ones of king Stefan of Dečani. A document from 1330 gives the ratio of dinars *de cruce* and Venetian grossi as 17:12.³⁹ Another source from 1331 gives the same ratio: *grossi XVII de cruce pro XII de Venecis*.⁴⁰ The value of dinars *de cruce* could approximately be estimated by use of their weight and fineness. Since no chemical analysis of the coins from the Usje hoard has been carried out, we are compelled to indicate merely the frames of their value. In doing so, we have taken the average weight of the first emission of dinars *de cruce* of king Milutin from the Usje hoard, which is 2,04 g, and the fineness of 0,925 mentioned in the sources from 1312. The average weight of the pure silver in the coins from the first emission would be around 1,8 g, whereas the value of the Venetian grosso amounts to 2,11 g (the total weight of the grosso is 2,19 g with fineness of 0,965), which would indicate a ratio of 1,1:1. This rate has, according to the above mentioned documents from 1330 and 1331, declined to 1,4:1, which shows explicitly the continual decline of value of dinars in the period to follow.

The analysis of the dies used for minting of dinars *de cruce* from Usje has provided us with data about the quantity of certain issues of this type. The estimated quantity of some 3.000.000 pieces is only a part of the dinars *de cruce* coinage and only the consideration of all the issues of dinars *de cruce* of king Milutin would give more precise estimation of the quantity of his coinage, complemented with the analysis of the other types of coins of this ruler. If we could succeed in providing the exact dating of all mentioned emissions and in identifying their weights and fineness, than we would be able to interpret some aspects of the monetary policy, as well as the matters related to the coin circulation.

The reason for depositing the Usje hoard is not easy to discover for the time being, since we are not able to date precisely the largest group of coins included in this hoard.

The Usje hoard has provided us important data concerning a certain period of the minting activity of the medieval Serbian kings Milutin and Dra-

³⁹ HAD, *Aptagi* II, f. 31 (15 November 1330), M. PETERKOVIĆ, *Ispisi*, 2.

⁴⁰ HAD, *Aptagi* II, f. 63 (14 April 1331), M. DINIĆ, *Op. cit.*, 99.

gutin. An increased number of hoards considered by use of methodological principles would clearly give many answers to the questions related to the medieval Serbian coinage, from identifying of the emissions and their dating, to any specific aspect and problem related to them. Additional efforts are, therefore, necessary for preserving, if not the actual coin hoard, than at least the data on it, which would enable a proper reconstruction of the history of the coinage in the Balkan lands.

CATALOGUE

J. Contarini 1275-1280

IC-XC

Christ, facing, nimbate, wears tunic and collobion, seated on the throne. Right hand raised in benediction, in the left holds Gospels.

IA.QTARIN D/V/X S.M.VENETI

Standing figures, facing; the Doge left and St. Mark right, handing him the banner. The king holds a scroll in his left hand. St. Mark is nimbate, holds Gospels in his left hand.

n°	Obverse	Weight	Inv.
1	/o - o/	2.11	1
2	/o -	2.14	2

G. Dandolo 1280-1289

IC-XC

Christ, facing, nimbate, wears tunic and collobion, seated on the throne. Right hand raised in benediction, in the left holds Gospels.

IO.DANDVL D/V/X S.M.VENETI

Standing figures, facing; the Doge left and St. Mark right, handing him the banner. The king holds a scroll in his left hand. St. Mark is nimbate, holding Gospels in his left hand.

n°	Obverse	Weight	Inv.
3	- */	2.10	3
4	/' -	2.14	4
5	- o/	2.12	5

P. Gradenigo 1289-1311

IC-XC

Christ facing, nimbate with collobion and tunic, seated on the throne. Right hand raised in benediction, in the left holds Gospels.

PE GRADONICO D/V/X S.M.VENETI

Standing figures, facing; the Doge left and St. Mark right, handing him the banner. The king holds a scroll in the left hand. St. Mark is nimbate, holding Gospels in the left hand.

n°	Obverse	Weight	Inv. n°
6	- o/	2.10	6
7	- o/	2.12	7
8	- o/	2.13	8
9	- o/	2.15	9
10	- o/	2.15	10
11	/o -	2.18	11
12	/o -	2.15	12

Stefan Dragutin 1276-1282/1316

IC-XC

Christ facing, nimbate with collobion and tunic, seated on the throne. Right hand raised in benediction, in the left holds Gospels.

STEFAN R/E/X S.STEFAN

Standing figures, facing; the king left and St. Stefan right, handing him the banner. The king holds a scroll in his left hand. St. Stefan is nimbate, holds Gospels in his left hand.

S. Dimitrijević, Nova serija novih vrsta srpskog srednjovekovnog novca III, *Starinar* XVIII, 1967 (1968), 119-121, fig.1-2.

n°	Obverse	Reverse	Weight	Inv. n°
13	./- ./	-o/	2.25	96

Stefan Uroš II Milutin 1282-1321

IC-XC

Christ facing, nimbate with collobion and tunic, seated on the throne. Right hand raised in benediction, holding Gospels the left one.

VROSIVS R/E/X S.STEFAN

Standing figures, facing; the king left and St. Stefan right, handing him the banner. The king holds a scroll in his left hand. St. Stefan is nimbate, holding Gospels in his left hand.

S. Ljubić, *Opis*, Uroš I, type I-II and VI 33, T.IV.1-7 and V.2; R. Marić, *Studije*, Milutin, type I/2-3, T.XIII.12/13-14.

Inscriptions

- A VROSIVS R/E/X/ S STEFAN
- B VROSIVS R/E/X/ S STEFAN
- C VROSIVS R/E/X/ S STEFAN'
- D VROSIVS R/E/X/ S STEFAN
- E VROSIVS R/E/X/ S STEFAN

F	VROSIVS:· R/E/X/ S STEFAN'
G	·VROSIVS R/E/X/ S STEFAN
H	·VROSIVS R/E/X/ ·S STEFAN·
I	·VROSIVS· R/E/X/ S STEFAN·
J	·VROSIVS· R/E/X/ S· STEFAN
K	·VROSIVS· R/E/X/ ·S STEFAN·
L	·VROSIVS· R/E/X/ ·S STEFAN'·
M	·:VROSIVS· R/E/X/ ·S· STEFAN·
N	·:VROSIVS R/E/X/ ·S STEFAN·
O	VROSIS R/E/X/ S STEFAN'

n°	Obverse	Reverse	Leg.	Weight	Die adjustment	Reverse die adjusment	Inv.
14	R -	V -	H	2.04	14	14	59
15	R -		C	2.06	15-16	15-18	13
16	R -	V -	C	2.00	15-16	15-18	58
17	R - - o/	V -	C	2.04	17-18	15-18	56
18	R - - o/	V -	C	2.11	17-18	15-18	57
19	R - - o/	V -	K	1.90	19	19	60
20	R -	- V	G	1.96	20	20	72
21	R -	- V	A	2.24	21	21	70
22	R -	- V	K	1.78	22-24	22-23	65
23	R -	- V	K	2.05	22-24	22-23	64
24	R -	? - ?	K?	2.61	22-24	24	93
25	R -	- V	E	1.91	25-26	25	73
26	R -	- V	M	2.09	25-26	26-28	61
27	R - - o/	- V	M	1.96	27	26-28	62
28	R - - o/	- V	M	2.18	28	26-28	63
29	R - - o/	- V	J	1.97	29	29	68
30	R - - o/	- V	I	2.07	30	30	69
31	R - - o/	- V	I	2.01	31	31	71
32	R - (o) o/	- V	N	2.09	32	32	66
33	R - (o) o/	- V	A	1.91	33	33	67
34	R - (o) o/	- V	I	1.91	34	34	74
35		T - R	C	2.24	35-41	35-36	26
36		T - R	C	2.13	35-41	35-36	27
37		T - R	C	2.27	35-41	37-38	30
38		T - R	C	1.93	35-41	37-38	31
39		T - R	C	2.25	35-41	39-49	23
40		T - R	C	2.09	35-41	39-49	24
41		T - R	C	2.15	35-41	39-49	25
42	- T - :/	T - R	C	2.03	42-49	39-49	15
43	- T - :/	T - R	C	2.09	42-49	39-49	16
44	- T - :/	T - R	C	2.41	42-49	39-49	17

45	- T	- :/	T - R	C	1.93	42-49	39-49	18
46	- T	- :/	T - R	C	1.76	42-49	39-49	19
47	- T	- :/	T - R	C	2.09	42-49	39-49	20
48	- T	- :/	T - R	C	2.00	42-49	39-49	21
49	- T	- :/	T - R	C	2.14	42-49	39-49	22
50	- T	o/ -	T - R	?	1.77	50	50	36
51	- T			L	1.87	51-52	51	14
52	- T		? - T	K	2.03	51-52	52	39
53	T -		T - R	A?	2.05	53	53	35
54	T -		T - R	C	1.99	54	54	37
55	T -	- :/	T - R	C	1.93	55	55	32
56	A - N		T - R	F	1.98	56	56	33
57	A - N		T - R	C	2.13	57	57	34
58	A - N	- o/	T - R	C	1.86	58	58	38
59	A - N		N - O	A	2.05	59-61	59-61	75
60	A - N		N - O	A	2.06	59-61	59-61	77
61	A - N		N - O	A	2.17	59-61	59-61	76
62	A - N		A -	A	2.07	62-63	62-63	85
63	A - N		A -	A	2.14	62-63	62-63	86
64	A - N		A -	A?	1.86	64	64	90
65	N - A		A -	C?	1.94	65	65	88
66	N - A		A -	A	2.08	66	66	91
67	yp - oIII		T - R	A	2.00	67-68	67-68	28
68	yp - oIII		T - R	A	1.89	67-68	67-68	29
69	yp - oIII		N - O	A?	1.93	69-71	69	78
70	yp - oIII		N - O	A	2.16	69-71	70	80
71	yp - oIII		N - O	D	2.03	69-71	71	82
72	yp - oIII		N - O	A	1.73	72	72	79
73	yp - oIII		N - O	A	1.93	73	73	81
74	yp - oIII	- o/	N - O	A	2.05	74	74	83
75	yp - oIII		N? - O	G	2.19	75	75	48
76	yp - oIII		A -	A	1.90	76	76	89
77	yp - oIII	nimb .	? - V?	A	1.99	77	77	95
78	B -		A -	C	1.92	78	78	84
79	B -		A -	A	2.03	79	79	87
80	B -		C -	C	2.01	80-81	80-81	49
81	B -		C -	C	2.11	80-81	80-81	50
82	B -		C -	A	1.96	82	82	52
83	B -		C -	O	2.11	83	83	53
84	B -		C -	A	1.73	84	84	54
85	B -		C -	C	2.04	85	85	55
86	B -	x/ -	C -	C	1.79	86-87	86-87	40
87	B -	x/ -	C -	C	1.96	86-87	86-87	41
88	B -	- :/	C -	C	2.11	88	88	51
89	B -	o/ - o/	C -	C	2.01	89	89	47

HOARD OF SERBIAN AND VENETIAN COINS FROM USJE (14TH CENTURY)

90	B -	o/ - o/	C -	C	2.05	90	90	46
91	B -		C? -	A	2.11	91	91	92
92	N -		O -	A	1.86	92-93	92	45
93	N -		O -	B	1.98	92-93	93	42
94	N -		O -	A	1.77	94	94	44
95	N -		O -	A	2.05	95	95	43
96	- N		? -	A	1.86	96	96	94

Вујадин ИВАНИШЕВИЌ

Колективен нумизматички наод со српски и венецијански монети од с. Усје (XIV век)

Резиме

Во овој труд е обработен досега најголемиот колективен наод со крстести динари од кралот Милутин, откриен во с. Усје кај Скопје во 1991 година. Наодот ги содржи следните пари: два матапани од Ј. Контарини (1276-1280), три од Џ. Дандоло (1280-1289), седум од П. Градениго (1282-1321), еден динар од кралот Драгутин (1276-1282/1316) и 83 од кралот Милутин (1282-1321). Покрај парите во наодот се наоѓале и две наушници со тежина од 17 и 17,56 г. Сето тоа било закопано во еден мал керамички сад.

Врз основа на овој колективен наод, како и на други групни наоди и стилските особености на парите, сиглите и метрологијата, издвоени се три главни хронолошки групи со бројни емисии на крстести динари (табела 2).

Освен тоа, ковањето на овие важни емисии на српски средновековни пари можеме да го определиме врз основа на изворите од околу 1311 година до 1321, односно до крајот на владеењето на кралот Милутин. Причина за нивното воведување секако претставува замената на динарот со знаме и долга низа децении биле ковани во бројни емисии, при што во голема мера изгубиле од својата првобитна вредност со константно опаѓање на нивната тежина и финост.

Со појавата на крстести динари, во средновековна Србија е воведено систематско обележување на емисиите на пари со буквени знаци, заради поедноставна и попрецизна административна контрола. Тежината на првите емисии крстести динари се движела рамковно од околу 2,15 г до 1,90 г, додека финоста на почетните емисии, според изворите, изнесувала 0,925. Монетарната власт и за време на ковањето на крстести динари, слично како и со динарите со знаме, продолжила со депресијација на парите со постепено намалување на тежината и финоста. Така, еден анализиран примерок од подоцнежните емисии содржел 77,7% сребро.

Едно од поважните прашања на кое се обидовме да одговориме е проблемот на вредноста на крстестите динари, но за периодот што не интересира, изворите не наведуваат ништо.

Познати ни се вредностите на подоцнежните емисии на крстестите динари на кралот Стефан Дечански. Во еден документ од 1330 година даден е само меѓусебниот однос на крстести динари и венецијански грошеви од 17:12. Вредноста на крстести динари на

кралот Милутин ја пресметавме приближно, врз основа на тежината и финоста на емисиите. Како репер ја земавме средната тежина на првата емисија крстести динари од кралот Милутин, од нашиот колективен наод, од 2,04 г и финост од 0,925 г, од изворите од 1312 година. Средната тежина на чисто сребро во првата емисија на крстести динари би се движела околу 1,8 г, додека кај венецијанските грошеви теориската вредност изнесува 2,11 г, што претставува однос од околу 1,1:1. Овој паритет, подоцна, за време на кралот Стефан Дечански, паднал на 1,4:1, што сосема јасно укажува на континуирано обезвреднување на крстестиот динар.

Анализата на калапите на крстестите динари на наодот од Усје ни даде податоци за обемот на некои емисии од овој тип. Пресметаното количество од околу 3.000.000 примероци претставува само дел од ова ковање и дури по обработката на сите емисии крстести динари од кралот Милутин, но и другите типови од овој владетел, би дале попрецизна големина на емисиите. Доколку би успеале сите споменати емисии да ги датираме со едновременно определување на нивните тежини и финост, би биле во можност да протолкуваме и некои аспекти на монетарната политика на кралот Милутин, како и прашањето на оптекот на парите.

Во колективниот нумизматички наод од Усје најден е само еден крстест динар од кралот Драгутин, кој претставува ретка емисија - варијанта на овој тип. Благодарейќи на овој примерок, кој стилски е многу близок на Драгутиновиот динар со меч, ние сме во можност оваа последна емисија попрецизно да ја определиме. Стилската аналогичност на овие два вида динари од кралот Драгутин, која укажува дека ги работел ист мајстор на калапи, како и метролошката блискост, фрлаат нова светлина на датирањето на динарите со меч, ковани од кралот Драгутин. Оваа емисија би можеле временски да ја определиме, спротивно на мислењето на С. Димитриевиќ, во првата деценија на XIV век.

Потврда на ова датирање наоѓаме во изворите во кои токму во ова време, првпат во 1312 година, паралелно со крстестите динари, се споменуваат и динари со меч. Ваквото датирање го потврдуваат и колективните наоди со пари. Динарите со меч, ковани од кралот Драгутин, отсутнуваат од колективните наоди закопани во XIII век, додека пак, од друга страна, ги среќаваме во наодите од XIV век, како во наодите од Кленак од Срем и Обад, закопани во 1346 година.

Причината за закопување на наодот од Усје тешко можеме да ја определиме, заради неможноста најголемиот дел од парите во наодот попрецизно временски да ги определиме.

Наодот од Усје ни даде важни податоци за еден период на ковањето на кралевите Милутин и Драгутин. Поголем број колективни нумизматички наоди, обработен според современите методолошки принципи, секако би дал одговори на многу непознати од ковањето на парите во средновековна Србија, почнувајќи од основните прашања: определување на емисиите, датирање и друго, па сè до поединечни проблеми.



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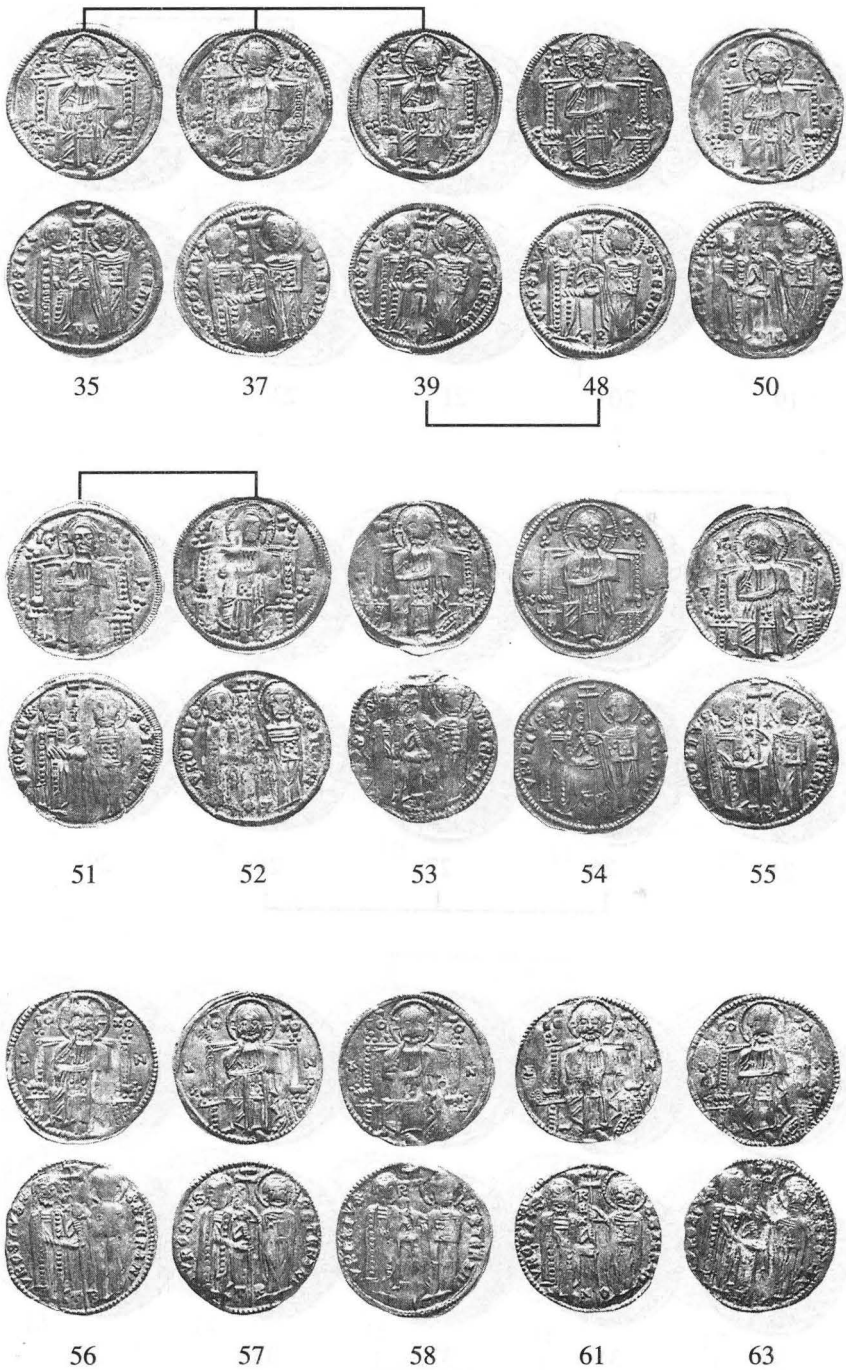
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T. II





T. IV



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