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Celtic lyres on a Celtic *kylix*? A further note on the copy of an Attic red figure two-handled cup from Plzeň-Roudná

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Since its discovery in 1978 during excavation of structure 520 of the Ha D3/LT A settlement located at Plzeň-Roudná, okr. Plzeň, the red, white and black painted imitation of an Attic red figure *kylix* (Západočeské muzeum Plzeň, inv. no. RP14/2004; *figs. 1, 2*) has been several times discussed – and exhibited – following its initial publication (*Bašta – Baštová – Bouzek 1989*, esp. 473–475; see also *Drda – Rybová 1998*, 65–66 and *fig.*; *Waldhauser 2001*, 386–387; *Chytráček 2002*, 126, *Abb. 7: 4*; *Kruta 2004*, *fig.* on p. 40; *Kruta et al. 2006*, cat. no. 4/10). The wheel-turned cup, with an original diameter of c. 185 mm, has been discussed in the context of Central European finds of imported black- and red-figure by Bouzek and Chytráček, both having not only drawn attention to the presence at the same location of the foot of a second imitation cup but also to sherds of actual Attic cups from another south-western Bohemian site, Droužkovice, distr. Chomutov (*Bouzek – Smrž 1994*), particularly interesting for the discovery of a cast bronze mount, possibly the lid-handle of an early La Tène spouted flagon (*Megaw – Megaw 2002*).

It is, however, the decoration, applied to both the inner and outer surface, which is our particular concern. The inner surface comprises two variations of the meander or ‘Greek key’ design, a frequent ornament in Classical vase painting but here reduced in the outer frieze to a series of flattened S’s, which, though found in late Hallstatt decorative motifs, is not uncommon in the repertoire of early La Tène art, notably on the Basse-Yutz (Moselle) flagons (compare *Jacobsthal 1944*, PP; *Megaw – Megaw 1990*, 22–24, pls. VII–VIII). *Chytráček (2007)* has published a very close parallel to this element of the decoration of Plzeň-Roudná. This is to be found in the recent discovery in another LT A settlement at Chržín, distr. Kladno, with evidence of on-site iron smelting and metal working of a fragment of a second local imitation of a red-figure bowl painted black on red (*fig. 3*). As Chytráček has observed, the meander motif occurs on red-figure pottery found north of the Alps.

Of equal significance however, is the series of much larger S motifs on the external body of the cup and below the remaining stubs of the handles. Bouzek points to similarities in technique to the late Hallstatt painted pottery of south-western Germany and Switzerland and more relevantly cites both Attic and Etruscan examples of palmettes as offering a prototype for the simple double S-lyre – indeed he suggests this general area as the source of manufacture of the Plzeň-Roudná *kylix* although, even in the absence of detailed fabric analysis, the argument for a local provenance provided by the Chržín sherd seems to be irrefutable. Recently we have reviewed the development of this simple motif in early La Tène art especially as it appears on LT B1 stamped pottery (*Megaw – Megaw 2006*). Briefly, we point out that while on the one hand *Jacobsthal (1944, 84)* stated that: “It is unlikely that the Celts drew their inspiration from [Italo-Greek] vases”, *Kruta (1975, 34–35)* while regarding the lyre motif as largely foreign to Bohemia, noted its existence early in the western La Tène zone; thirdly, *Frey (1985, 185–187; 2002a, 181–191)*, has taken the development of the lyre motif from its putative Classical prototypes into the full Waldalgesheim or ‘Vegetal’ style of LT B1. Finally, we have suggested that the simple double S is the antecedent to the well-known series of ‘dragon-pair’ decorated sword scabbards and that, like the dragon-pairs, they are likely to have had a significant symbolic meaning.

While certainly it is difficult to find simple La Tène versions of the lyre motif as early as the presumed 5th-century BC date of our *kylix* it is instructive to compare the painted motif with those that appear on later pottery and metal examples (*fig. 5*). Additionally, and of similar LT A date, is another unique piece, the painted omphalos bowl found with a range of other wheel-turned pottery (*fig. 4*) in structure 345 of the settlement at Radovesice, okr. Teplice (*Megaw – Megaw 1993; 2001, 93–95*). Though much of the bowl as here illustrated is reconstructed, the design, executed in red on the brown-black fabric, clearly incorporates single S motifs in between the three stylised figures of swans

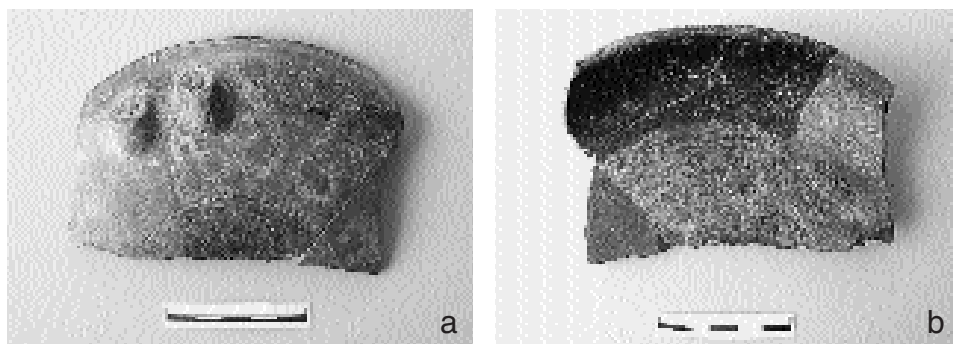


Fig. 1. Plzeň-Roudná (west Bohemia), structure 520. Fragmentary painted and wheel-turned imitation *kylix*: (a) external and (b) internal view. Photos: Západočeské muzeum Plzeň.

Obr. 1. Plzeň-Roudná, obj. 520. Fragment malované a na kruhu točené napodobeniny kyliku: (a) vnější a (b) vnitřní pohled. Foto Západočeské muzeum Plzeň.

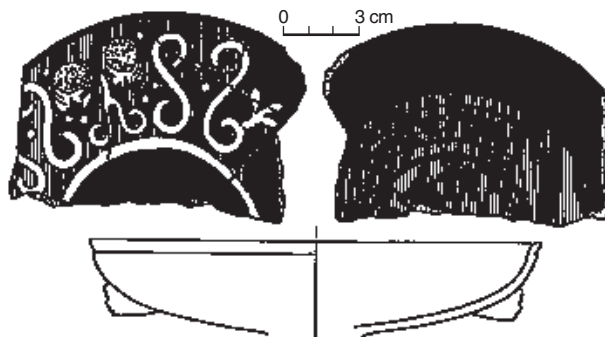


Fig. 2. Plzeň-Roudná, structure 520. Fragmentary painted and wheel-turned imitation *kylix*. Max. diameter c. 185 mm. Drawing: after Kruta *et al.* 2006.

Obr. 2. Plzeň-Roudná, obj. 520. Fragment malované a na kruhu točené napodobeniny kyliku. Max. průměr 185 mm. Podle Kruta *et al.* 2006.

– in other words, similar both in technique and in motif to elements of the design of the Plzeň-Roudná and Chržín bowls.

We have mentioned already that we are not convinced by Bouzek's suggestion as to an external source for the Plzeň-Roudná *kylix*, a proposal made all the more unlikely by the discovery of the Chržín sherd and, as far as the use of applied colour is concerned, also the bowl from Radovesice. Equally, the suggestion that Plzeň-Roudná was an importation 'de la périphérie méridionale du massif alpin' may be dismissed (Kruta *et al.* 2006, cat. no. 4/10). Both Bouzek himself (Bašta – Baštová – Bouzek 1989, 474) and Chytráček (2002, 126–127) have discussed one of the most problematic areas in reconstructing the early stages of the development of early Celtic art – the identification of pieces which may be reasonably regarded as immediate classical prototypes of Iron Age artefacts. We have frequently drawn attention to the close similarity between elements of the decoration of some imported Etruscan *stamnoi* and La Tène metalwork (e.g. Megaw – Megaw 1990, 53–54 and fig. 21) preceded only slightly in date by the well-known Ha D fragment of a locally made mould for a copy of an Etruscan flagon handle mount regarded by von Hase (2000) as a key piece in examining the evolution of early La Tène art from Mediterranean prototypes (Megaw 1985, 168, fig. 9: 2).

There are some other hints as to the beginning of the evolution of early Celtic art during Krausse's (2006) proto-La Tène phase. Apart the Heuneburg Ha D mould fragment copying the basal head of an Etruscan Schnabelkanne handle there is from Eberdingen-Hochdorf the third lion on a cauldron imported from Magna Graecia. This may be a very poor looking beast — after all lions must have been rare in south-western Germany in the 6th century but it was cast locally from a copper-tin alloy

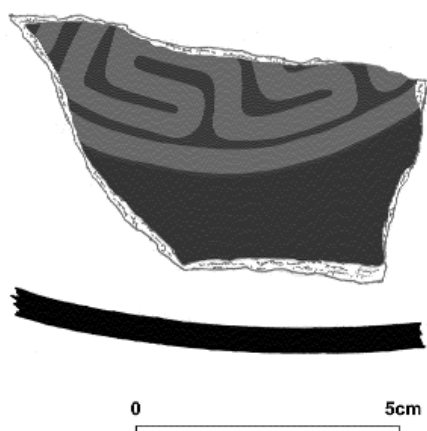


Fig. 3. Chržín, okr. Kladno, central Bohemia. Polychrome painted sherd from cup. Max. width c. 80 mm (courtesy M. Chytráček).

Obr. 3. Chržín, okr. Kladno. Polychromně malovaný střep z poháru. Max. šíře ca 80 mm.



Fig. 4. Radovesice, okr. Teplice, obj. 345. Wheel-turned omphalos bowl with painted decoration. Diameter 275 mm. Photo J. V. S. Megaw.

Obr. 4. Radovesice, okr. Teplice, obj. 345. Na kruhu vytáčená mísa s omfalem a malovanou výzdobou. Průměr 275 mm.

superior to that used by the original Greek bronze-smiths. The contemporary life-size Hirschlanden grave-marker which, like the only slightly later Glauberg statuette, strongly suggests the influence of the Piceno and pieces such as the Capestrano warrior while other aspects of human depiction amongst the Glauberg finds point to links with the native sanctuaries of the South of France (Baitinger – Pinsker 2002, Kat. Nr. 3, 130; Frey 2002b; Rapin 2002). For many years Frey has been emphasising the link between the Atestine region and the early – if rare – figural elements in Celtic art. Occasionally such links seem indisputable as between the stamped sherd, alas now lost, from Libkovice near Most (NW Bohemia) and details as found on ‘situla’ art as in the Fondo Capodaglio, grave 38 at Este (Frey 2007, esp. Abb. 3 – the most recent of several citations of this comparison). Personally, we see no problem in accepting as a local product influenced by Este the military procession engraved on the bronze sword-scabbard from Hallstatt grave 994 (Megaw 1985, 169; Baitinger – Pinsker 2002, Kat. Nr. 106; Barth – Urban 2007). ‘Local’, however, we would regard here as more likely to denote a source not in Hallstatt itself but to indicate rather its possible manufacture in the Dürrenberg-bei-Hallein complex. In this connection, the extraordinary boar’s hunt bowl from Dürrenberg grave 137 recently studied by Alexandrine Eibner could, like the Matzhausen *Linsenflasche*, provide material for a further examination of trans-Alpine influences on early Celtic art (Eibner 2001).

This is no place to discuss further the manner in which Greek – and Etruscan – imports may have had a direct influence on the development of the early stages of La Tène art (for a brief summary see Megaw – Megaw 2001, 55–59). There have been a number of detailed studies which, in one way or another, have examined the import of Greek pottery in particular both in LT A and Ha D (e.g. Pape 2000; Wehgartner et al. 1995). In a period of what Dirk Krausse (2004) has described as ‘Mediterraneanisation’, it would seem only logical that, north of the Alps, certain luxury goods, notably those associated with the Celtic version of the Mediterranean *symposium* and particularly those in short supply should have inspired local – but nonetheless prized – copies. The most northerly of such evidence comes from the south of Britain where recent re-examination of old finds from the River Thames – possibly associated with ritual deposition in water – has identified an Attic kylix as coming from a genuine archaeological context. This cup, attributed to the Pithos Painter of c. 500 BC,

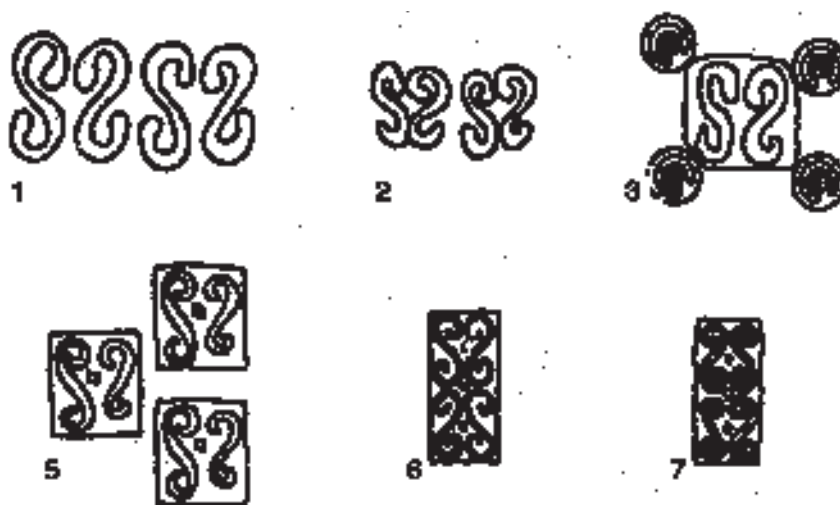


Fig. 5. Examples of early La Tène double S or lyre motifs; 1–2 details of sword scabbards: 1 Jenišův Újezd, distr. Teplice, grave 115; 2 Bussy-le-Chateau, ‘Les Gouats’, Marne; 3–8 details of stamped pottery: 3 Komjatice, distr. Nové Zámky; 4 Bököny, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg m.; 5 Dürrnberg-bei-Hallein, ‘Putzenkopf’, Ld. Salzburg, grave 111; 6 Rädergewann, Kr. Worms; 7 Guntramsdorf, VB Wiener Neustadt, grave 16; 8 Žitavce, distr. Vráble. Various scales. Drawing: after Megaw – Megaw 2006.

Obr. 5. Příklady časně laténské výzdoby v podobě motivů dvojitého S a lyry; 1–2 detaily z pochev mečů. 1 Jenišův Újezd, okr. Teplice, hrob 115; 2 Bussy-le-Chateau, ‘Les Gouats’, Marne; 3–8 detaily kolků na keramice: 3 Komjatice, okr. Nové Zámky; 4 Bököny, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg m.; 5 Dürrnberg bei Hallein, ‘Putzenkopf’, Ld. Salzburg, hrob 111; 6 Rädergewann, Kr. Worms; 7 Guntramsdorf, VB Wiener Neustadt, hrob 16; 8 Žitavce, okr. Vráble. Různá měřítká. Kresba podle Megaw – Megaw 2006.

is certainly amongst the porrest in quality ever found. More importantly it may well be an example of an ‘export only’ form intended for the barbarian market (Bradley – Smith 2007); the Attic black burnished cup from Dürrnberg bei Hallein, Ld. Salzburg, gr. 44/2 is also a type – dated between 480–450 BC – whose distribution is in the main outside the Greek mainland (Pauli 1978, 227–228). Reconsideration of the Etruscan bronze *olpe* found in the famous Obří pramen at Lahošř near Duchcov (NW Bohemia), indicates as in the case of the Thames find, that exotic finds may also have formed part of a widespread ritual deposition in warery contexts (Cvrková – Jančo 2002). However this may be, what is worth emphasising is relatively how many Attic sherds, let alone ‘copies’, should have come to light in Bohemia in otherwise nondescript local settlements, in contrast with the evidence from further west and south.

We have already mentioned the existence of good parallels for the meander motif on our local cups on imported red-figure *kylikes* while, in connection with the Heuneburg, Pape’s analysis of the finds of earlier Attic and other Greek pottery north of the Alps has offered several hints as to possible models – we may note here in particular the occurrence of *Palmettenschalen* of the late 6th and early 5th century BC (Pape 2000, esp. 110–111, List 20.3). Indeed, one wonders not only why the rest of the bowls from Plzeň-Roudná and Chržín do not seem to have survived but also how many more of what we have termed here ‘local copies’ remain to be found – or recognised. While the *kylix* from Plzeň-Roudná must be seen as evidence for the transformation of classical motifs into the La Tène repertoire, it also should give food for thought concerning not only what contemporary meanings may have been assigned to individual motifs but also as to the validity of what has now become the conventional view of the aristocratic nature of La Tène art (for which see also Echt 2004) – not to mention the nature of the aristocracy which is supposed to have been its main *raison d’être*.

Our thanks are due first of all to François Maresse, Directeur, Musée royal de Mariemont, Morlanwelz who kindly afforded one of us (JVSM) the opportunity in 2006 to study the fragmentary cup when it was temporarily in his charge, thereby giving the impetus for this note. Milan Metlička, Západočeské muzeum Plzeň, supplied information and the photographs of the cup published here, and Miloslav Chytráček, Institute of Archaeology Prague, discussed it further with us.

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Keltské lyry na keltském kyliku? Znovu k imitaci attické červenofigurové keramiky z Plzně-Roudné

Studie znovu upozorňuje na známý příklad imitace attického kyliku, nalezeného v Plzni-Roudné r. 1978 v objektu řazeném do Ha D3/LT A, a zvláště na použití stylizovaného motivu lyry, klíčového pro výzdobu raně laténské keramiky. Autoři nevidí důvod – mj. s přihlédnutím k nedávno publikovanému, velmi podobnému zlomku poháru z Chržína – pro hledání původu nádoby z Plzně-Roudné jinde než v místním prostředí. Závěrečné poznámky zvažují úlohu dobových importů ze Středomoří.

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