

CRUX DISSIMULATA - SWASTICA

R. PETROVIĆ

Balkanic Institute, S. Glavaša 12, 11000 Belgrade, Yugoslavia

The Appearance of Sirius, close to 19 th of July, in the zodiac sign of Leo signified in ancient Greece the beginning of the second part of the calendar year, which consisted of two parts (Grevs 1969). Actually, the zoomorphical presentation of the Lion was a sign for the second part, from July to December. Sirius was called in the antique times - the Gerion watch dog; in that mythological constellation he represented the father of the lion (Grevs 1969). One metal attache, found in Orašje, near Požarevac, shows the father and son, the and lion, in the form of Siamese Twins (Milenković 1996). The essential thing is, however, now the ancient mythological calendar practise, at that time a sort of primitive astronomy, understood the summer solsticium on 22 nd of June, the calendar mid-year, the moment of the strongest power of the sun, and at the same time, the moment when this power begins to wane (Beker 1992). The triple storage of the sun in the sky, in the time of the summer solsticium on 22 nd of June was understood as a death of the first part of the year and the birth of the second one. This was indentified with the dying of the dog star Sirius, the ancient Gerion's dog, Ortro. We mentioned before that Ortro's son was a lion, the second part of the Athenian year (Grevs 1969) the dying of a dog star Sirius was, according to the ancient Greek's belief, a temporary trip to underworld, /on the 22 nd of June/ and return on the 19 th of July. In that calendar - mythological constellation, the key moment was the 22 nd of June, when the sun revolved three times in the opposite way, from it's normal journey from east to west.

That phenomena, the summer solsticium was marked in the spiritual life of prehistorical people, from the begining of agriculture in the early Stone Age, Neolithicum, as a sign of the Swastica - crux dissimulata (Ribakov 1981, Badurina 1992).

Special significance was dedicated to the graphical presentation of the swastica in the prehistorical cultures of Europe and Asia, connecting it closely to the attempt to stop the tremendous power of the sun, on 22 nd of June. For those ancient dwellers, the swastica was, in the first place the graphical, sign for a secret shiphre to open the skies and get the blessings in form of a rain.

But the problem of stopping the sun on 22 nd of June was not that simple, as it might appear. The ruler of the first part of a year was Otro's daughter - snake (Grevs 1969); and she had to die so that her brother - the lion - the second part of the year, could be born. Still, someone had to go down to the underworld and liberate the waters needed by the thyrsty fields (Ribakov 1967, Ribakov 1971) above - that was the role of dog star Sirius, who personally Sank into the underworld on 22 nd of June to be triumphally back on the 19 th of July, with enough rain and waters to keep

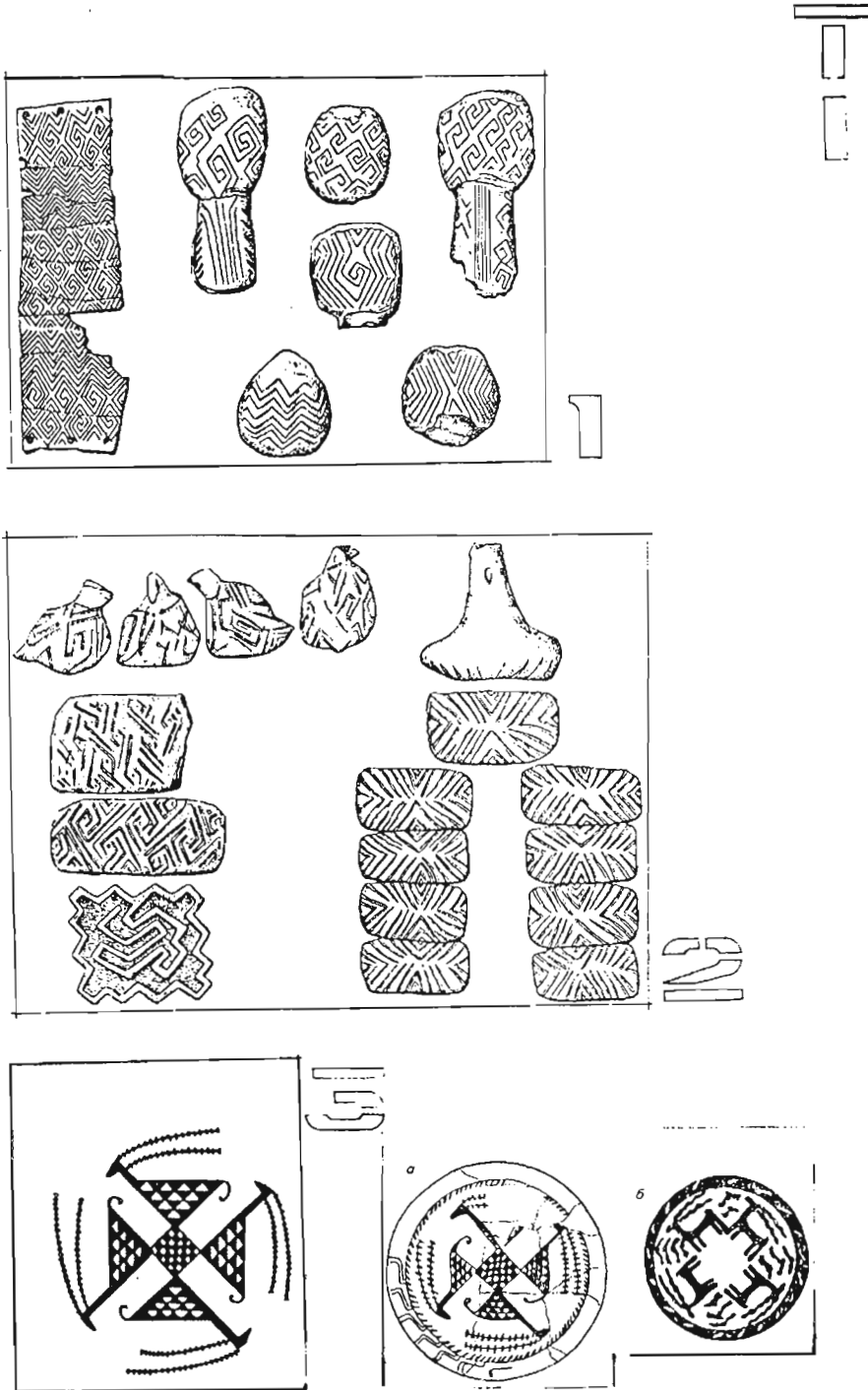


Fig. I: 1) Things with swastica from Paleolith (Ribakov 1981); 2) Things with the engraved swastica from Neolith (Ribakov 1981) 3) Things from Samara, Neolith 5000 years B.C. (Evsjukov 1988).

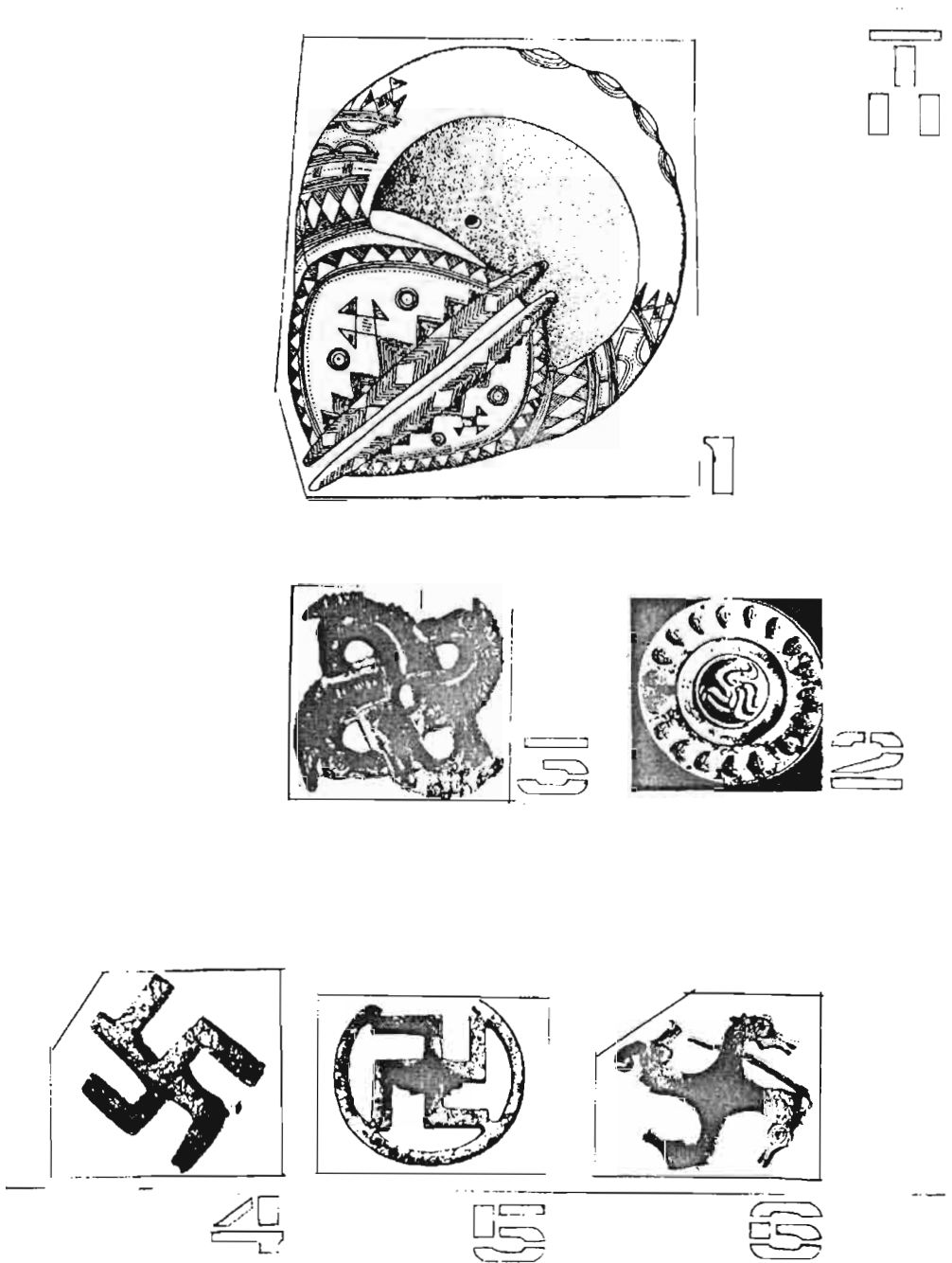


Fig. 2: 1) The bracelet from Drmno (Garašanin 1975); 2) The rosette from Manerbio sull Mella, Italy (Charkey 1989); 3) St. Martha at Magdalena Hills, Slovenia, V - VI Century B.C. (Petrović 1992). 4) - 6 Swastika - shaped Roman things (Krunić et al. 1997)

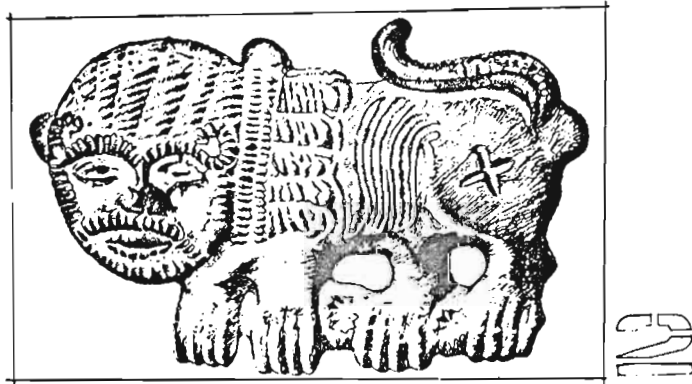
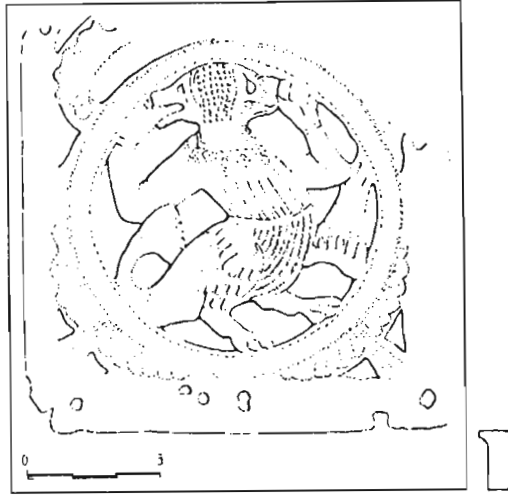
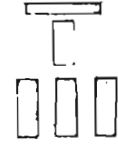


Fig. 3: 1) The Aplika from Orashie, Pozharevac (Milenković 1996); 2) The Fibula with a lion and swastica from Volos, Greece (Čausidis 1994).

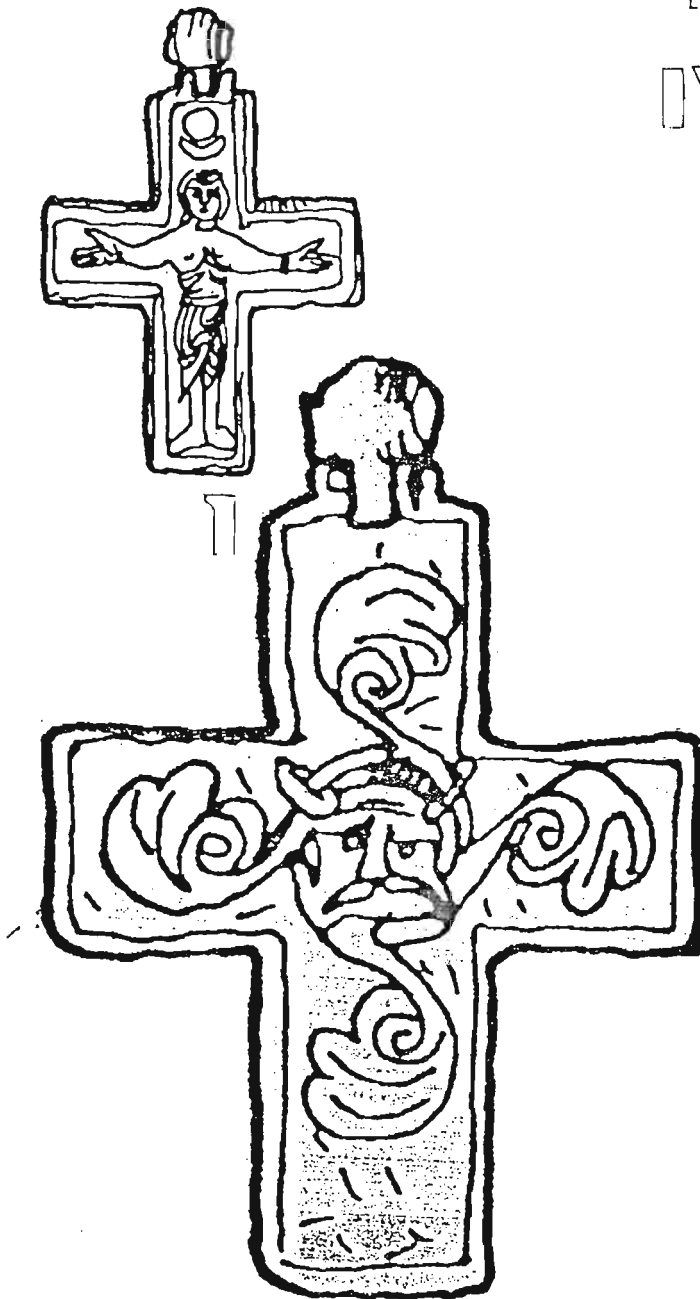


Fig. 4 The cross with swastica and a lion's head, XI - XII Century, Podebradi - Opochinec, Czech Republic (Nehvatal 1978).

the nature alive ¹.

Since it wasn't easy for the prehistorical man to depict the whole methafora, dying of a dog star, the sun stopage, Ortro and his rebirth, the salvatiom of the nature and the whole mankind was presented in a simbolic form od swastica.²

Apotropical powers of crux dissimulata meant in the same time a spiritual victory of a man, because it gave him all his vital powers. That's why for more than 10 000 years, man carved, painted, and modeled the Swastica on clay vessels, in methaphorical scenes, on jewelry, mosaics, and fresco decorations.

Crux dissimulata appeared also other things connected with everday life, sometimes even on those dedicated to the burial procession of the deciesed and his afterlife ³ Following this logic, the appereance of the Holy Cross of Jesus Christ has also developed from the prehistorical crux dissimulata - swastica but in this case, the idea of it is more sofisticated. The triple stopage of the sun is here identified with Christ's three day stay in grave, from Good Friday to Easter, wich enabled him and the whole mankind to redeem the sins on the way to the future salvation. ⁴

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¹ Even in ancient antic Athens the new year was taken to begin with appearance of the dog - star, Sirius (Grevs 1969)

² that idea of the swastica as the driver of the /flow of time/ is best seen in Kelt's mythology where it is identical to the triple - branch lightning - "triskelon" which, by its stroke, enables the nature to start flowing (Cherkey 1989).

³ the swastica or the artistic presentation of the Sun has been made eqval to the idea of the creator of life. So, a man's birth at the Earth is equivalent to the birth of the Sun and a man's death is taken eqval to death of the Sun.

⁴ in the christian eshatology even more simbolic imortance has been given to the cross by identification of Jesus Christ and wood of the cross - the place of his punishment, and to the cross as a means of forgiveness of sins. In thenotion of Christ's deat the possibility of human dying as wellas the redeem of the Adam's and Eve's primordial sin have been cancelled.