Železnodobni stolp na Ostrem vrhu
in severne kraške zapore

The Iron Age tower atop Ostri vrh
and the barriers of the northern Kras (Karst)

Biba TERŽAN, Peter TURK

Izvleček

Niz kamnitih gomil na severnem kraškem robu je C. Marchesetti v začetku 20. stoletja razložil kot bronastodobne grobne gomile. S. Gabrovec jih je vključil v kaštelirsko kulturo srednje bronaste dobe in jih primerjal s podobnimi is- trskimi grobnimi gomilami.

Zaščitna izkopavanja gomile na Ostrem vrhu so l. 1992 razkrila ovalno zgradbo premera 11 m, grajeno v suhozidni tehniki. Obodni zid je bil širok med 1,5 in 2,5 m, v višino pa je bil ohranjen do 1,9 m. V zidu so se ohranile zunanj nihle in notranje niše za nosilne lesene tramove, kar kaže na leseno nadgradnjo kamnite zgradbe, verjetno stolpa. Jama za nosilni tram v osrednjem delu stolpa dokazuje, da je bil tudi nadstrešen. Niz radiokarbonskih datacij kaže na mlajšehalštatsko starost izgradnje in uporabe stolpa.

Verjetno je bila vzdolž severnega kraškega roba zgrajena vrsta stolpov, ki so bili skupaj z nizom manjših, močno utrjenih gradišč namenjeni nadzoru dostopa in obrambi območja centralnih gradišč kraske kulturne skupine med 6. in 4. st. pr. n. št.

Ključne besede: Kras; gomile; železna doba; utrdbe

Abstract

Carlo Marchesetti was the first to document a series of stone mounds along the north edge of the Kras (Karst) plateau early in the 20th century, which he understood as Bronze Age burial mounds. Stane Gabrovec considered them integral parts of the Middle Bronze Age Castellieri Culture and linked them to the similar tumuli in Istria.

The 1992 rescue excavations of such a mound upon Ostri vrh revealed an oval drywall structure measuring 11 m in diameter. Its wall was between 1.5 and 2.5 m thick and survived up to 1.9 m high. It had a series of exterior and interior niches for wooden posts that indicate a wooden construction, most probably forming a tower, as well as a posthole in the centre that presumably supported a roof. Radiocarbon dates show that the tower was constructed and used in the Late Hallstatt period.

It presumably functioned as one of a series of stone towers built along the north edge of the Kras (Karst) plateau that, together with small, well-protected hillforts, controlled and defended the territory of the major hillforts of the Kras cultural group between the 6th and 4th centuries BC.

Keywords: Kras (Karst); stone mounds; Iron Age; fortifications
KAMNITE GOMILE NA SEVERNEM KRAŠKEM ROBU

Ostri vrh je sestavni del hribovite verige kraškega roba, ki deli apnenčasto kraško planoto na jugu od flišne in aluvialne Vipavske doline na severu. Najvišji vrhovi te verige dosegajo do 600 m nadmorske višine. Ostri vrh predstavlja s svojim 301 m nadmorske višine enega skrajnih severnih obronkov te verige (prim. sl. 13). Prvič je bil v arheoloških virih omenjen leta 1903, ko je Carlo Marchesetti na njem zabeležil kamnito gomilo.1 Omenja relativno majhno, domnevno nepoškodovano gomilo premera 25 m in višine 2 m. Sodi v skupino šestih gomil, ki se pojavljajo na vrhovih gričev in hribov med Ostrim vrhom pri Štanjelu na vzhodu in Ovčnjakom nad Škrbino na zahodu. Marchesetti je na podlagi podatka, da je bil v največji med njimi, Rabotnici nad Branikom, odkrit skeletni pokop v kamniti skrinji, sklepal, da gre za bronastodobne grobne gomile. Odlomki keramične posode so bili pri tem grobu edini sporočeni pridatki. Kaže omeniti, da je ta podatek Marchesetti izvedel iz druge roke in da do raziskav na Ostrem vrhu niso bila izvedena arheološka izkopavanja nobene od teh gomil.

Stane Gabrovec je gomile na severnem kraškem robu pripisal sklopu srednjebronastodobne kaštelirske kulture in jih primerjal s podobnimi istrskimi.2 Tudi on je poudaril, da na teh gomilah še niso bile izvedene sodobne arheološke raziskave, da pa lahko sklepmo na podobnost med kraškimi ter številnejšimi in bolje raziskanimi istrskimi gomilami. Analogija je prav tako omejena le na podatek o grobu v kamniti skrinji na Rabotnici. Tak način pokopa je namreč primerljiv z gomilnimi pokopi v Istri od zgodnje bronaste dobe dalje.3

OSTRI VRH

Leta 1992 so sodelavci Oddelka za arheologijo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani izvedli zaščitna izkopavanja kamnite gomile na Ostrem vrhu zaradi širjenja kamnoloma na zahodnem pobočju vzpetine.4 Rezultati teh izkopavanj so presenetljivi, saj v gomili ni bilo pričakovanega groba niti kakršnihkoli drugih grobnih ostankov. Pač pa se je že ob začetku izkopavanj razkrila osrednja ovalna kamnita zgradba, ki jo je obdajala obhodna terasa (sl. 1–3).5 Kamnita zgradba je bila ovalne oblike in je v premeru merila 11 metrov. Obodni zid je bil širok med 1,5 in 2,5 m, ohranjen pa do višine 1,9 m. Iz preseka vzhodnega dela obodnega zida in terase je razvidna čvrstost njegove gradnje (sl. 3.3). Zid je bil na notranjem in zunanjem licu zgrajen iz skrbno izbranih večjih kamnov. Največja širina je imela na tem mestu merila preko 2 m. Notranjost zida je bila zapolnjena z tekočimi ali zemljišči.

Ostanki zunanje obhodne terase so bili dobro ohranjeni vzhodnega in severnega dela obodnega zida. Zgradili so jo z vrsto obličjih grubišč, ki se razlikujejo v višino in širino. Osnovno je bila ovalne oblike in je v premeru merila 11 metrov. Obodni zid je bil širok med 1,5 in 2,5 m, ohranjen pa do višine 1,9 m. Iz preseka vzhodnega dela obodnega zida je bila v eni do dveh legah kamnov ohranjena podporna zidica (sl. 2.1: E). Zanju sklepamo, da sta na bolj strmem severnem in južnem pobočju Ostrega vrha služila dodatni podpori obodnega zida.

V notranjosti obodnega zida je bila v mlajši fazi čvrsta hodna površina, ki je nastala s kalcinacijo prvotne gruščnate hodne površine (sl. 2.1: D; 2.2).6 Temnejši sledovi na tej kalcinirani kamniški površini so nakazovali obstoj ognjišč (sl. 2.1: C). Analiza magnetne susceptibilnosti je na tem mestu sledove ognjišča potrdila.7 Rezultati vzorca z ostanki kalcinirane površine namreč dokazujejo, da je bil nekoč v preteklosti podvržen ekstremnim temperaturnim razlikam. Le na tej kamniti plošči je bila ohranila nekaj skromnih odlomkov natančneje nedoločljive prazgodovinske keramike in razlomljenih ožganih kosti drobnice.8

Nadaljnja izkopavanja so razkrila nekatere dodatne gradbene elemente. Najbolj presenetljiv je bil niz odprtin za navpične lesene tramove, odkritih pri tamni severni strani obodnega zida v novi zidini (sl. 2.1–2).9 Zgodovinska keramika in razlomljeni ožgani kosti drobnice  

---

1 Marchesetti 1903, 50 s; ANSI 1975, 141.
2 Gabrovec 1983, 48 s.
3 Čović 1983, 48 s. Ob izkopavanjih kamnine gomile on Malovanu v južni Istri v petdesetih letih 20. stoletja so bili odkriti ostanki srednjebronastodobne kupolaste grubine konstrukcije (Baćić 1960; Hänsel, Teržan 1999; Hänsel, Teržan 2000).
4 Zaščitno izkopavanje je odredila Nada Osmuk, arheologinja konservatorka na spomeniškovarstvenem zavodu v Novi Gorici, ki je vodila tudi nadzor.
5 Rezultati teh izkopavanj so pretretinostno predstavljeni v dveh člankih (Teržan, Turk 2005; Teržan, Turk 2014), poleg tega pa tudi v nekaj krajših pokladiskih (Turk 1992; Teržan, Turk 2006; Turk, Jereb 2006, 12–14).
6 Čović 1983, 118 s, 124 s. Ob izkopavanjih kamnine gomile on Malovanu v južni Istri v petdesetih letih 20. stoletja so bili odkriti ostanki srednjebronastodobne kupolaste grubine konstrukcije (Baćić 1960; Hänsel, Teržan 2000).
7 Mušič, Dinc 1994, 41 s, sl. 5–8.
8 Kosti je določila Cornelia Becker (Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie, Freie Universität Berlin).
Železnodobni stolp na Ostrem vrhu in severne kraške zapore

v notranjih in zunanjih licih obodnega zidu, ki so bile razporejene v bolj ali manj enakomernih intervalih z razmikom od 1,2 do 2 m (sl. 4–5). Očitno so bila v teh nišah prvotno nameščena močna lesena bruna, ki so služila za učvrstitev obodnega zidu in morebiti tudi kot oporniki domnevne lesene nadgradnje.9

Niše za lesene tramove dokazujejo, da je bil obodni zid zgrajen v več korakih: najprej so bili tramovi postavljeni v izkopane stojne jame (sl. 4.3–4.6; 5.3–5.10), sledila je gradnja obodnega zidu z njegovim notranjim in zunanjim licem. Tramovi so bili v nišah z zunanje strani v nekaj primerih zagozdeni z večjim kamnom ali nekaj manjšimi kamni (sl. 4.2; 5.1; 5.2; 5.5).

V notranjem licu zidu je bilo odkritih 12 niš. Pod večino so bile stojne jame za lesene opornike. Ob tem je bila še ena jama odkrita v poškodovanem delu notranjega lica zidu (jama za stojko 11 – sl. 4.1), tako da je bilo na notranji strani skupaj postavljenih 13 navpičnih lesenih tramov (sl. 3.1). Vzdolž zunanjega lica obodnega zidu je bilo odkritih 20 niš za tramove, tudi večino teh so spremljale stojne jame. V nekaterih med njimi je bila velika količina oglja. V južnem delu obodnega zidu, tik nad strmino pobočja, je bilo zunanjše lice ohranjeno le v eni legi kamnov, tamkajšnje jame za tramove (jame št. 18, 19, 20 in 25) pa so bile vklasene v živo skalo (sl. 5.6–5.9). Nasprotno je bilo zunanjše lice obodnega zidu na skrajnem zahodu zgradbe, kjer je hrib bolj položen, ohranjeno v višini do polprtega metra, niši za tram št. 26 in 33 pa sta imeli le nekoliko razmaknjene kamne v licu zidu (sl. 4.1 in 5.10). Skalno-gruščnato polnilo obhodne terase (sl. 1; 2.1: B; 3.2–3.3) je služilo tudi kot dodatna učvrstitev navpičnih tramov in spodnjih leg kamnitega lica zidu na zunanjmi strani zgradbe.

Skupno 33 odkritih ležišč za lesene tramove priča o leseni konstrukciji kot opori kamnitni zgradbi in verjetno tudi leseni nadgradnji ter njeni strehi. V središču obzidanega prostora je bila namreč odkrita jama za večji nosilni steber, kar kaže, da je bila zgradba v celoti nadstrešena (sl. 6.1–2). Drugače od niš v obodnem zidu, ki so bile premera do 25 cm, je imela osrednja jama premera do 50 cm (sl. 4.1: A). Ta podatek kaže, da je osrednji lesen steber podpiral težko lesen...
Sl. 2: Ostri vrh. 1 – Tloris mlajše faze najdišča. A: ovalni obodni zid; B: obhodna terasa; C: ostanki ognjišča; D: ostanki kalcinirane kamnine površine; E: kamnita podporna zidova; pI-pII: presek (prim. sl. 3.3). 2 – Mlajša faza najdišča med izkopavanjem.

Fig. 2: Ostri vrh. 1 – Plan of the late phase of the site. A: oval wall; B: terrace; C: remains of a fireplace; D: remains of the calcinated stone floor; E: two stone buttresses; pI-pII: cross-section (cf. Fig. 3.3). 2 – Late phase of the site.
Železnodobni stolp na Ostrem vrhu in severne kraške zapore

Sl. 3: Ostri vrh. 1 – Obodni zid z nišami za tramove ob zaključku izkopavanj, pogled od zgoraj. 2 – Vzhodna obhodna terasa stolpa po odstranitvi gruščnate hodne površine, pogled od zgoraj. 3 – Presek (p\textsuperscript{1}–p\textsuperscript{3}) vzhodnega dela kamnine zgradbe in terase (prim. sl. 2.1).

Fig. 3: Ostri vrh. 1 – Wall with visible niches for wooden posts at the end of the excavation, view from above. 2 – Terrace in the east after the removal of the rubble paving, view from above. 3 – Cross-section (p\textsuperscript{1}–p\textsuperscript{3}) across the east part of the building and terrace (cf. Fig. 2.1).
Sl. 4: Ostri vrh. 1 – Tloris stolpa ob zaključku izkopavanj. A: osrednja jama za stojko; B: ognjišči; 1–33: zunanj in notranj niše za stojke. 2 – Zunanj niše 14, 13 in 12, pogled proti severozahodu. 3 – Notranja niša 1, stranski pogled. 4 – Notranja niša 1, pogled od zgoraj. 5 – Notranja niša 23, stranski pogled. 6 – Notranja niša 23, pogled od zgoraj.

Fig. 4: Ostri vrh. 1 – Plan of the tower at the end of the excavation. A: central posthole; B: two fireplaces; 1–33: exterior and interior niches for wooden posts. 2 – Exterior Niches 14, 13 and 12, view to the northwest. 3 – Interior Niche 1, side view. 4 – Interior Niche 1, view from above. 5 – Interior Niche 23, side view. 6 – Interior Niche 23, view from above.
Železnodobni stolp na Ostrem vrhu in severne kraške zapore

strešno konstrukcijo. Na skalni osnovi v notranjosti obodnega zidu so bili odkriti tudi ostanki dveh ognjišč z velikimi količinami oglja, ki označujejo čas gradnje in starejšo fazo rabe stolpa (sl. 4.1: B). V njuni bližini je bilo nekaj odlomkov kosti drobnice. Celotna notranjost obodnega zidu je bila zapolnjena s skalno-gruščnatim polnilom do višine 60–70 cm, ki je služilo kot dodatna učvrstitev navpičnih tramov in spodnjih leg kamnitega lica zidu v notranjosti zgradbe.

Glede na opisane elemente raziskane zgradbe sklepamo, da gre za opazovalni oz. obrambni stolp. Ob le nekaj odkritih neznačilnih prazgodovinskih keramičnih odlokmih stolp datiramo s pomočjo radiokarbonskih analiz.\textsuperscript{10} Datirano je bilo oglje iz dveh stojnih jam za tramove, ki pripadata nišama 2 (1 analiza) in 11 (2 analizi), pa tudi oglje iz osrednjega ognjišča starejše faze stolpa (sl. 7). Rezultati radiokarbonskih analiz so medsebojno skladni: vsi datirajo stolp v starejšo železno dobo (8.–5. st. pr. n. št.) v razponu $1 \sigma$ (tj. v razponu ene standardne deviacije oz. 68 \% verjetnosti). Znana težava z izravnanim odsekom na $^{14}$C kalibracijski
Fig. 6: Ostri vrh. 1 – Interior of the tower with the arrow marking the central posthole. 2 – Central posthole, side view.

Fig. 7: Radiocarbon dates for the charcoal samples from Ostri vrh. (Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit of the Oxford University)
krivulji, t. i. halštatski plato, prav za to obdobje onemogoča natančnejše datiranje (sl. 7).

Vseeno pa se kot pomemljivo pokazuje dejstvo, da ima osrednje ognjišče iz starejše faze znotraj razpona 1 Σ nekoliko zgodnjejo datacijo (ta ni mlajša od 520 pr. n. št.). Nadalje se pri vzorcih oglja iz dveh jam za bruna znotraj podobnega razpona vendarle nakazujejo nekoliko mlajše datacije: več kot 50 % verjetna je njihova datacija v čas med 550 in 400 pr. n. št. Če bi lahko na osnovi teh datiranj domnevali morebitna občasna preoblikovanja lesene konstrukcije stolpa, bi lahko z veliko verjetnostjo sklepali, da je bil stolp zgrajen v določenem času pred certoškim horizontom in da je bil v uporabi predvsem v času med koncem 6. in v razponu celotnega 5. st. pr. n. št. Kaže pa, da ni bil več obnavljan v mlajših obdobjih.

Pomenljivo je, da je mesto jame za osrednji nosilni steber v notranjosti zgradbe v mlajšem času njenega obstoja delno prekrila kalcinirana kamnitna plošča, kot hodna površina v mlajši plastni zgradbi (prim. sl. 2.2 in 6.1). Verjetno je, da je ta kalcinacija posledica požara ob uničenju lesene strešne konstrukcije stolpa. Kalcinacija na mestu jame za osrednji nosilni steber pa bi lahko tudi pomenila, da je bilo to mesto namenjeno opazovanju in prižiganju signalnih ognjev tudi v času, ko ga ni več prekrivala strešna konstrukcija.

GOMILE IN GRADIŠČA SEVERNEGA KRASA

Postavlja se vprašanje, ali so kraške "gomile", o katerih je govor pri Marchesettiju in Gabrovcu, resnično grobne gomile iz bronaste dobe ali pa so morda podobne stolpi, odkritem na Ostrem vrhu. V zvezi s tem kaže najprej opozorniti na nekaj topografskih posebnosti Ostrega vrha. Na prvi pogled bi se lahko zdelo vprašljivo, ali strateška lega Ostrega vrha dovoljuje razlago raziskane zgradbe kot opazovalnega stolpa. Hribovita veriga vzdož severnega kraškega roba namreč praviloma presega 400 m nadmorske višine. Ostri vrh po drugi strani komaj presega 300 m nadmorske višine. Dejansko hribovit severni kraški rob onemogoča razgled v zahod, namreč nadzor ne le nad bližnjijo dolino Brane, temveč nad širokim območjem zahodnega dela Vipavske doline in vse do Furlanske nizine. Razgled proti severu omogoča tudi dober nadzor nad flišnatim gričevjem Vrh na Vipavsko dolino ter vse do Trnovskega gozda. Razgled proti vzhodu označuje dober pregled z Olga vrha proti velikemu gradišču Sv. Pavel nad Planinom, najpomembnejšemu gradišču vzhodne Vipavske doline. Lega Ostrega vrha (prim. sl. 13) je pomembna tudi, ker s severne strani

11 Prim. Teržan, Črešnar 2014, 703–704.
12 ANSI 1975, 121.
nadzira suho dolino, ki je danes ena poglavitnih pristopnih poti iz Braniške in Vipavske doline na Kras. Najverjetneje je bilo tako tudi v prazgodovinski preteklosti. Z južne strani to dolino zapira gomila na Škratljevici.

V preteklosti je bilo opravljeni premalo terenskih raziskav za natančno opredelitev, katera gradišča in "gomile" – stolpi so na severnem Krasu v mlajšem halštatskem obdobju obstajali sočasno. Zelo je verjetno, da so bila največja, centralna gradišča 13 na tem območju – Tomaj, 14 Martinišče pri Svetem 15 in Sv. Pavel nad Planino 16 – poseljena v mlajšem halštatskem obdobju. Zanesljivo časovno uvrstitve v mlajši halštatski čas dajejo rezultati zaščitnih raziskav Ostremu vrhu najbližjega centralnega gradišča v Štanjelu. 17 Številne površinske keramične najdbe omogočajo zanesljivo datacijo

---

13 Za razmerje med centralnimi in perifernimi gradišči prim. Slapšak 1995, 79 s, sl. 69–70.
14 Krajši notici v Bratina 2007 in 2008; v obširnejšem članku o tomajskih raziskavah so natančneje obravnavane le najdbe iz plasti s prehoda iz bronaste v železno dobo: Bratina 2014; glej še tu Bratina.
15 Marchesetti 1903, 47 s; ANSl 1975, 137. Iz pripadajočega grobišča objavila Marchesetti dvozankasto polmesečasto fibulo, bronast kotlič z dvojnimi križnimi atasami, bronasto narebreno zapestnico in železen nož s trnastim nastavkom ročaja (glej ib., 200 s, t. 16: 17, 17: 6,13,21) omenja pa tudi bronaste večglave igle.
16 ANSl 1975, 121.
17 Marchesetti 1903, 49 s; ANSl 1975, 141. Raziskave zadnjih desetletij kažejo na kontinuirano poselitev Štanjela v zadnjem tisočletju pr. n. št. (Bratina 2019, 50–57). Na območju gradu na zahodu štanjelskega naselja so l. 2010 raziskali ruševine železnodobne hiše, ki je z najdbami in radiokarbonskimi daticijami dobro datirana v mlajšehalštatski čas (Fabec, Vinazza 2014; glej še tu Vinazza; Bratina).
v mlajšehalštatski čas tudi pri nižinskem gradišču Debela griža pri Volčjem gradu.\textsuperscript{18} Datacijo v razpon druge polovice 5. oz. v 4. st. pr. n. št. potrjuje tamkajšnja površinska najdba loka certoške fibule vrste Xb ali Xc po B. Teržan (sl. 14: 6).\textsuperscript{19} Morda sodi v mlajšehalštatsko obdobje tudi slabše ohražljeno gradišče pri Kobjeglavi.\textsuperscript{20}

Od naštetih večjih gradišč je le Štanjel postavljen na strateško lego na kraškem robu, z dobrim pregledom tako nad kraško planoto proti jugu kot nad Vipavsko dolino proti severu. Kako je z ostalimi gradišči in “gomilami” – stolpi na grebenu severnega kraškega roba? Najvzhodnejšo gradišče v tej verigi – Gradišče nad Kobdiljem – je dvojno gradišče na vzpetini z dvema vrhovoma (sl. 8.1–8.2).\textsuperscript{21} Obzidje, ki obdaja severni vrh, obsega približno 360 m ter zaobjema površino približno 0,75 ha in s tem nakazuje gradišče manjše velikosti. Na južnem vrhu je zelo majhno in izjemno močno utrjeno gradišče v obsegu le 116 m. Obzidji na jugozahodu in severovzhodu spaja manj izrazito povezovalno obzidje. Nadalje je v notranjosti severnega gradišča majhna kamnita gomila premera približno 15 m, ki je C. Marchesetti ne omenja.\textsuperscript{22} Ostatku vrhu najbližja je gomila na Lukovski Škratljevici (sl. 9.1–9.2). V premeru ima dobrih 20 m in je postavljena na najvišjem grebenu kraškega roba. Od Ostrega vrha jo deli suha dolina, v kateri je še danes poglavitvena prometna povezava med Vipavsko dolino in Krasom. Škratljevica v topografskih značilnostih izkazuje podobnosti s stolpom z Ostrega vrha. V osrednjem delu gomile je namreč opazna poglobitev, danes zaraščena, a je obzidana na zahodni strani. C. Marchesetti je to poglobitev razumel kot možne ostanke starih nestrokovnih izkopavanj.\textsuperscript{24}

V navezavi na rezultate raziskav na Ostrem vrhu se nakazuje možnost, da tudi Lukovska Škratljevica predstavlja ostanke nadzornega stolpa, oblikovana podobno, kot je tisti z bližnjega Ostrega vrha. Nadaljnja podobnost med obema konstrukcijama je v obhodni terasi (morda celo dveh), ki ju nakazuje obzidana terasa pri Škratljevici v obliki nekdanje stolpove. Obe obsegoma, kot Ostrij v premeru in južno na terasah, torej delujejo kot funkcionalni par nadzornih stolpov nad komunikacijo, ki s

\textsuperscript{18} Vinazza 2012, 40–46, sl. 4.
\textsuperscript{19} Prva objava Vinazza 2012, 45 s, sl. 5; certoške fibule vrste Xb–c sodijo v svetolucijski horizont IIc oz. v negovski horizont dolenijske kulturne skupine (Teržan 1976, 331 s, 364–368, sl. 4 in 35).
\textsuperscript{20} Nedavno je železnodobne grobove, ki jih je C. Marchesetti odkril “pri Štanjelu”; ponovno ovrednotila M. Vinazza (2018). Odkrila je, da sta bila najmanj dva grobova iz 5. oz. 4. st. pr. n. št. dejansko izkopana v Tupelčah, dobre 3 km zahodno od Štanjela in približno 2 km severno od gradišča pri Kobjeglavi (Marchesetti 1903, 46; ANSI 1975, 141; za natančno lokacijo prim. Slapšak 1974, 187 s).
\textsuperscript{21} Marchesetti 1903, 49, T. IV: 5; ANSI 1975, 141.
\textsuperscript{22} Gomila je označena na sl. 13. Vzdolž severnega kraškega roba je skupaj dokumentiranih sedem kamnitih gomil.
\textsuperscript{23} Marchesetti 1903, 50; ANSI 1975, 141. Lokalno izročilo za gomile Škratljevico vzhodno in Rabotnico zahodno od Lukovca (včasih imenovano tudi Škratovec) navaja zgodbo o dveh vtežkah na vsaki od gomil, ki sta se obmetavala s kamenjo (Slapšak 1974, 188).
\textsuperscript{24} Danes je poglobitev zaraščena, a je obzidan na način, ki kaže, da je bila v 20. stoletju uporabljena tudi kot mitralješko gnezdo.
severozahoda, iz Vipavske doline v Štanjel kot lokalno najpomembnejše gradišče. S tega vidika deluje kobdilsko gradišče kot jugovzhodni štanjelski branik (prim. sl. 8.2 in 13).

Drugče je z Rabotnico kot naslednjo gomilo v nizu severnokraškega roba (sl. 10.1). Ob starem podatku o izkopanem grobu25 lidarski posnetek Rabotnice (sl. 10.2) ne kaže teras, kakršne so na Škratljevici. Nadalje topografija neposredne okolice te sicer s preko 25 metri premera in preko 5 metri ohranjene višine še danes izjemno mogoče gomile izkazuje manj ugodno strateško lego, saj ni postavljena na izpostavljenem, temveč na zelo položnem vrhu. Za Rabotnico torej sklepamo, da je dejansko bronastodobna grobna gomila in da njena funkcija ni enaka funkciji nadzornih zgradb, kakršni sta na Ostrem vrhu in Škratljevici.

Dve izmed ostalih treh gomil proti zahodu, 26 tista na vzpetini Šumka in ena od dveh na Ovčnjaku, sta danes po večini prekriti z vegetacijo, po velikosti pa sta primerljivi s stolpom z Ostrega vrha. Med kamnitimi gomilami na vzpetinah Šumka in Ovčnjak je na isti hriboviti verigi severnokraškega roba nenavadno gradišče nad zaselkom Mihali (sl. 11.1). Marchesetti ga je opisal kot najmanjše gradišče na Krasu: "… na enem najvišjih vrhov, na izkopanem grobu, je bilo zgrajeno najslažnejše miniaturno gradišče, ki je moralo služiti kot opazovalnica. Je najmanjše med doslej poznanimi gradišči, saj nima več kot 97 metrov obsega. Pa čeprav je njegova gradnja enaka ostalim in ima obzidje široko od 10 do 15 metrov in je visoko 1 meter. Odsotnost črnikaste zemlje in črebipinaka, ki so zaslika zgrajeno popolnoma okroglo miniaturno gradišče, ki je moralo služiti kot opazovalnica. Je najmanjše med doslej poznanimi gradišči, saj nima več kot 97 metrov obsega. Pa čeprav je njegova gradnja enaka ostalim in ima obzidje široko od 10 do 15 metrov in je visoko 1 meter. Odsotnost črnikaste zemlje in črebipinaka nakaže, da so ga naseljevali, ali bolje da ga je posadka nadzirala le v primeru vojne, saj je z njega omogočen neoviran razgled po celotni Vipavski dolini vse do predalpskih podnožij."27 Po velikosti ne več kot 0,1 ha in utrjenosti Gradišče nad Mihali spominja na južno kobdilsko gradišče, katerega obseg je ob močnem obzidju le do 100 metrov (prim. sl. 8.1–8.2). Spomniti kaže, da je obseg utrjene zgradbe na Ostrem vrhu 33 metrov (sl. 2.1; 4.1),

Omeniti je treba tudi izjemen razgled nad bližnjo in daljno okolico. Proti severu je z Ovčnjaka kot na dlani celotna Vipavsk dolina, proti jugu pa kraška planota in severna Istra vse do piranskega in savudrijskega polotoka. Dilemo, ali gre pri teh treh kamnitih gomilah za grobne gomile ali za nadzorne stolpe, lahko razrešijo le arheološka izkopavanja. Tako zaradi lege kot zaradi ravnega zidu na gomili vrh Ovčnjaka jim kot bolj verjetno pripisuje nadzorno vlogo, primerljivo s tisto na stolpu z Ostrega vrha.

Med kamnitimi gomilami na vzpetinah Šumka in Ovčnjak je na isti hrib osestveni terišni, ki ga razumemo kot grobno gomile na Ovčnjaku.

25 Marchesetti 1903, 50; ANSI 1975, 122.
26 Marchesetti 1903, 51; ANSI 1975, 137.
27 Marchesetti 1903, 51 (prevod P. Turk).
obseg kamnite gomile – najverjetneje prav tako nadzornega stolpa – na Lukovski Škratljevici pa približno 50 metrov (sl. 9.2).

Zračno lasersko skeniranje (sl. 11.2) nakazuje zid, ki se na zahodni strani naslanja na Gradisko nad Mihali in se po grebenu kraškega roba razteza še kakih 500 m v smeri Ovčnjaka. Terenski pregled kaže na slabo ohranjene sledove dober metro širokega zidu, ohranjenega v višini ene do dveh leg kamnov. Takemu zidu bi težko pripisali golo obrambno vlogo. V novejšem času so ob preučevanju rezultatov zračnega laserskega skeniranja na Krasu in Notranjskem odkrili nekaj primerov s podobnimi kamnitimi zidovi označenih zamejitev ozemelj večjih gradišč iz pozne bronaste in starejše železne dobe.28 Verjetno gre tudi pri zidu zahodno od Gradišča nad Mihali za ostanke prostorske zamejitve notranjega ozemlja ene od kraških železnodobnih skupnosti, verjetno tiste s središčem v Svetem (sl. 13).

Gradišče Lipovnik je proti zahodu zadnje nad prelazom Železna vrata med Komenskim Krasom in Vipavsko dolino.29 Gre za dvojno gradišče na dveh vzpetinah s povezovalnim obzidjem (sl. 12.1–12.2), ki je neke vrste zahodni pendant Gradišču nad Kobdiljem, saj je njegov vzhodni vrh obdan z obsežnejšim obzidjem, ki zaobljema približno 1 ha. Zahodni vrh, na katerem so ruševine cerkvice sv. Katarine, pa ima z majhnin in močnim obzidjem bolj kot gradišče izgled večje gomile. Zahodno od Železnih vrat se dviguje Trstelj, s 643 m n. v. najvišji hrib na severnem Krasu, na njegovem jugozahodnem pobočju pa je na osamcelu na 531 m n. v. Sv. Ambrož, manjše gradišče z masivnimi obzidnimi ruševinami.30 Gradišče ima z lego južno od grbeanega severnega kraškega roba dober pregled nad celotno kraško planoto, ne pa nad Vipavsko dolino proti severu. Podobno lego južno od kraškega roba ima manjše, močno utrjeno gradišče sv. Martin na osamcelu južno od Gradišča nad Mihali (sl. 13).31 S Sv. Martina izhaja gumb razmeroma velike certoške fibule (sl. 14: 7). Glede na njegovo profiliranost in narezlanost bi lahko šlo za različico e, g ali i X. vrste po B. Teržan, ki so datirane v čas med drugo polovico 5. in razpon 4. st. n. št.32

Ob naštetih gomilah in gradiščih se postavlja vprašanje, ali še držijasna definicija in razločitev med majhnimi, močno utrjenimi gradišči na eni in stolpi, kakršen je tisti na Ostrem vrhu, na drugi strani. Kaže, da je bila funkcija zgradb, kakršna je bila tista na Ostrem vrhu, podobna funkciji majhnih gradišč izjemno močnem obzidjem. Taka so Gradišče nad Mihali, južno kobdiljsko gradišče, sv. Katarina kot zahodni del gradišča Lipovnik, pa tudi gradišči sv. Ambrož in sv. Martin. Najina teza je, da je bil Ostri vrh skupaj s Škratljevico na severozahodu in kobdiljskim gradiščem na jugovzhodu

---

28 Gradišče nad Knežakom z nekaj km dolgim še ohranjenim zunanjim zidom, katerega sestavni del sta dva majhnja gradišča, breg pri Šembijah in Obroba nad Bačem, in ki zaobljema ozemlje približno 7 km² (Laharnar, Lozić, Stular 2019, 268 s, Fig. 2: d–f). Škocjan s približno 5 km dolgimi ostanki obodnega zidu, ki zaobljema podobno približno kot z obzidjem zaobljena ozemlje Gradišča nad Knežakom (Mlekuž 1999, 58 s, Fig. 4.2–4.3).
29 Marchesetti 1903, 51 s, T. 5: 2; ANSl 1975, 137; Slapšak 1974, 191 s.
30 Marchesetti 1903, 52 s, T. 5: 3; ANSl 1975, 125.
31 Marchesetti 1903, 50 s, T. 4: 6; ANSL 1975, 137; Slapšak 1974, 192. Površinske najdbe z gradišča sv. Martin sodijo v čas od zgodnje bronaste dobe (Turk, Turk 2019, 171, sl. 214) do pozne antike (Bitenc, Knific 2001, kat. št. 44).
32 Teržan 1976, 331 s, 364–368. Gumb certoške fibule s sv. Martina (P 27246) je bil v Narodnem muzeju Slovenije pridobljen leta 2001.
zgrajen kot nadzor in zapora ozemlju, ki ga je kot osrednje naselje obvladovalo štanjelsko gradišče (sl. 13). Podatki z izkopavanj so dovolj kvalitetni za datiranje tako osrednjega naselja v Štanjelu kot njegovih zapor v mlajšemhalštatsko obdobje, v čas med 6. in 4. st. pr. n. št. Gomila na Rabotnici zaradi podatkov o (verjetno) bronastodobnem grobu, a tudi zaradi topografskih posebnosti ni sestavni del teh zapor. Zahodni del severnokraških zapor tlorijo gomile – stolpi na Šumki in Ovčnjaku ter Gradišče nad Mihali in Lipovnik. Te zapore so na zahodnem delu severnokraškega roba skupaj z gradiščema Sv. Ambrož in Sv. Martin verjetno povezane z nadzorom in obrambo prostora, katerega osrednje naselje je Gradišče pri Sveti. Manjše gradišče Zagrajec je verjetno služilo obrambi in nadzoru ozemlja Gradišča pri Svetem na njegovi jugozahodni strani.33 Za natančno datacio teh zapor nimamo kvalitetnih podatkov34 in je njihova predpostavljena sočasnost z zaporami pri Štanjelu sicer verjetna, a še nedokazana. Zapore na severnem kraškem robu se torej kažejo kot ne-sklenjen nadzorno-obrambni sistem, ki je verjetno prvenstveno služil nadzoru nad (manj obsežnimi) območji posameznih centralnih gradišč na severu Krasa, kakršni sta Štanjel in Sveto, s tem pa varovanju celotnega ozemlja kraške kulturne skupine.

**KRAS V MLAJŠEM HALŠTATSKEM ČASU**

Predstavljeni rezultati kažejo, da je bilo gradišč v Štanjelu z robnimi nadzorno-obrambni postojankami močno utrjeno v mlajšem halštatskem času. Izbrane najdbe nakazujejo radikalne spremembe v...

---

33 Marchesetti 1903, 46 s, t. 3: 12; ANSI 1975, 138; glej še tu Bratina.

34 Z izjemo omenjenega gumba certoške fibule, glej sl. 14: 7.
Železnodobni stolp na Ostrem vrhu in severne kraške zapore poselitveni podobi Krasa v tem času tudi južneje od severnega roba kraško-notranjske skupine.

V zgodnja devetdeseta leta 20. stoletja sodi detektorska najdba ženskega žganega groba s spiralnima zapestnicama, obročkom in votlo dolgonožno pijavkasto fibulo s prečnimi vrezi na prednjem in zadnjem delu loka s širšega območja gradišča Ajdovščina nad Rodikom (sl. 14: 1–5).35 Gre za najstarejše znane najdbe s tega strateško pomembnega gradišča na južnem Krasu oz. na zahodnem robu Brkinov.36 Spiralni zapestnici iz bronaste žice kvadratnega oz. pravokotnega preseka (sl. 14: 2–3) imata primerjave v najmlajših predmetih, odloženih v depo iz Mušje jamke, predvsem pa v zapestnicah s konca 8. in iz 7. st. pr. n. št. v Istri.37 Najboljše primerjave za bronasto dolgonožno pijavkasto fibulo (sl. 14: 1) so v svetolucijski skupini, kjer jih najdemo v grobovih iztekočega se 7. in iz 6. st. pr. n. št.38

Med zaščitnimi izkopavanji ob obnovi Gombačeve domačije v Škocjanu (danes sedež Parka Škocjan-37  teržan 2016a, 279 t. 33: 6; 65: 16–18; za podobne spiralne zapestnice z Ulake prim. tudi Laharnar, Murgelj v tem zvezku Arheološkega vestnika.

38 Prva objava Slapšak 1997, 25 s. 5; tovrstne fibule so v svetolucijski skupini uvrščene tako v stopnjo Ic2 kot Il2 (prim. Teržan, Trampuž 1973, 424 s. t. 7: 12; Teržan, Lo Schiavo, Trampuž Orel 1984–1985, t. 55: C2–3; 61: A1; 65: A5; 66: G1; 100: D; 103: B3; 138: B2; 159: C1–2; 214: A4; 227: A1; 231: F2; 232: A3; 241: D1; 248: D2; 254: D2; 263: E).
kame) sta bila leta 1996 odkrita železnodobna grobova, od katerih je bil eden ohranjen skoraj intaktno (sl. 15.1).\(^{39}\) Grobna jama je bila obložena s kamni, vanjo pa je bila položena žgana – rdeče žgana mlajšehalštatska keramična situla z vodoravnimi rebri in izmeničnim črnim slikanjem (sl. 15.2).\(^{40}\) Drugi grob je bil uničen. Ohranila se je le grobna jama, obložena s kamni, v njej pa je bilo nekaj drobnih sežganih kosti. V času 6. pr. n. št. so ohranjene grobne najdbe iz mlajšehalštatskega obdobja, kot so omenjene z Ajdovščine nad Rodikom (sl. 14: 1–5), Škocjana (sl. 15.1–15.2) in Tupelč na Krasu ter tudi iz okolice Ulake ob Loškem polju, Šmihela pod Nanosom bližu prelaza na Razdrtem in drugih notranjskih nadih.\(^{41}\) Čeprav imamo na razpolago še vedno le maloštevilne grobne najdbe iz mlajšehalštatskega obdobja, kot so omenjene z Ajdovščine nad Rodikom (sl. 14: 1–5), Škocjana (sl. 15.1–15.2) in Tupelč na Krasu ter tudi iz okolice Ulake ob Loškem polju, Šmihela pod Nanosom bližu prelaza na Razdrtem in drugih notranjskih nadih.\(^{42}\)

\(^{39}\) Turk 1998; Turk 2012, 111, sl. 9.

\(^{40}\) Keramično situlo hrani Pokrajinski muzej Koper pod inv. št. AŠD 1. Izdelana je na lončarskem vretenu in kvalitetno rdeča žgana. Sledovi črne poslikave so slabo ohranjene. V 24,2 cm, pr. ustja 16,4 cm, pr. noge 11 cm.\(^{43}\)

\(^{41}\) Ruaro Loseri et al. 1977, 40. Eden najmlajših predmetov z Brežca je prav keramična situla na nogi (ib., 122, T. 32: 6).\(^{44}\)

\(^{42}\) Dular 1982, 97, 137 s, sl. 7: 14; 25: 3; t. 19; Teržan, Trampuž 1973, 428 s, t. 10: 4,12; Teržan, Lo Schiavo, Trampuž Orel 1984–1985, t. 62: A12; 64: G6; 77: D3; 84: C5; 148: B2; 151: A10; 174: B2; 187: B6; 189: B4; 228: E2; 230: F6; 231: B4; 248: B9; Mihovilić 1995, 293 s, Abb. 13, T. 2: 1–5. V novejši analizi keramičnih situl S. Tecco Hvala situle, kakršna je skocjanska, uvršča v zahodno-slovenski tip IIb3 situl z nogo, značilen predvsem za svetolucijsko stopnjo IIa (Tecco Hvala 2014, 334–335, sl. 4: 13,14).

\(^{43}\) Turk 2016b, 415–424, 465–470.
ZAKLJUČEK

Glede na umestitev stolpa z Ostrega vrha v kronološki in geografski okvir lahko povzamemo, da so kraške skupnosti med 6. in 4. stoletjem pr. n. št. izvajale nadzor in obrambo svojih severnih mej proti Vipavskem dolini z nizom stolpov in manjših, a dobro utrjenih gradišč. Nadzorna in obrambna črta na severnu kraškem skupnosti robu ni bila povsem sklenjena, temveč jo delimo na vzhodni del, povezan z nadzorom dostopa do ozemlja osrednjevega gradišča v Štanjelu, in na zapadni del, ki ga je verjetno treba povezati z nadzorom doline. Prav iz smeri med sredozemskim svetom in notranjostjo evropske celine, med vzhodom in zahodom. Prav z meri te poglavitev nadregionalne transverzale je bilo tudi pričakovati morebitne zunanje grožnje in nevarnosti za kraško železnodobno skupino.

Nastanek opisanega nadzorno-obrambnega sistema, ki so ga zgradile kraške skupnosti, sočasne spremembe v svetolučijijski in dolenjski kulturni skupini – gradnja utrjenih gradišč vzdolž mej njunih ozemelj in orojje med grobnimi pridatki – odražajo nemirno obdobje tudi v širšem regionalnem in nadregionalnem smislu.50 Nekatere kasneje omembe v klasičnih virih – pa čeprav skromne in niti najmanj enozačne – bi lahko celo nakazovale preživetje nekaterih takih stolpov in utrb, ali vsaj njihovih konstrukcijskih elementov, vse do zgodnjermirskega obdobja.51

---

50 Svoljšak 1984; Tecco Hvala, Škvor Jernejčič 2017, 129 s., 169 s., sl. 99; Tečan 2020, 365–367, 384–386.

51 Sašel 1981. S tega vidika kaže opazovati tudi podatek o ognjiščni površini s konca mlajše faze stolpa z Ostrega vrha (prim. tu zgoraj, sl. 2.1–2.2), za katero je mogoče postulirati funkcijo signalnih ognjev v času, ko stolp ni bil več nadstrešen in je bil verjetno le še ruševina. 

ANSI = Arheološka najdišča Slovenije. Ljubljana, 1975.

BAČIĆ, B. 1960, Tomuli iz brončanog doba na Maklavunu i Žamnjaku u južnoj Istri. Jadranski zbornik 4, 200–204.

BITENČ, P., T. KNIFIC 2001 (ur. / eds.), Od Rimljanov do B. Teržan, M. Črešnar (ur. / eds.), Societa per la preistoria della Regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia. – Trieste (Reprint 1981: A. M. Radmili, D. Cannarella (ur. / eds.), Societa per la preistoria della Regione Friuli-Venezia Giulia 3).
The Iron Age tower atop Ostri vrh and the barriers of the northern Kras (Karst)

Translation

STONE MOUNDS ALONG THE NORTH EDGE OF THE KRAS PLATEAU

Ostri vrh forms part of a range of hills lining the north edge of the Kras plateau and separating the limestone karst plateau to the south from the flysch alluvial valley of the Vipava to the north. The highest peaks of this range reach up to 600 m above sea level. Ostri vrh is among the northernmost elevations in the range (cf. Fig. 13) and stands at 301 m asl. It first appeared in archaeological literature in 1903, when Carlo Marchesetti noted a stone mound on its summit. He mentioned a relatively small, presumably undamaged mound measuring 25 m in diameter and 2 m in height, and forming a group of six tumuli located on hilltops between Ostri vrh near Štanjel in the east and Ovčnjak above Škrbina in the west. Based on the information that an inhumation burial in a stone cist was found in the largest of them, on Rabotnica above Branik, Marchesetti supposed that all were Bronze Age tumuli. Fragments of a pottery vessel are the only reported goods from this grave. It is also worth mentioning that Marchesetti got this information second hand and that none of the recorded mounds were investigated prior to the excavations on Ostri vrh.

Stane Gabrovec ascribed the mounds on the north edge of the Kras plateau to the Middle Bronze Age Castellieri culture and paralleled them with similar burial mounds in Istria. Noting that none had been investigated archaeologically, he used the burial on Robotnica as the sole piece of evidence to infer on a resemblance between those in the Kras and the more numerous and better investigated tumuli in Istria. The rite of this burial, namely inhumation in a stone cist is one similar to the tumulus burials practised in Istria all from the Early Bronze Age onwards.

OSTRI VRH

The expansion of the quarry on the west slope of Ostri vrh brought about rescue excavations of the stone mound located on the hilltop that a team of archaeologists and students from the department of archaeology at the Filozofska fakulteta, Univerza v Ljubljani, conducted in 1992. The results of the excavations were surprising, revealing neither a grave, as expected, nor any other mortuary remains, but an oval stone building surrounded by a terrace (Fig. 1–3).

The building was oval in plan and measured roughly eleven metres in maximum diameter. Its wall was 1.5–2.5 m thick and preserved up to 1.9 m high. The section across the eastern part of the wall and terrace revealed a solid construction (Fig. 3.3). The wall had the interior and exterior faces built of carefully laid large stones, while the core was filled with stones of different sizes; the eastern part of the wall was more than two metres thick.

The remains of the terrace survived best along the eastern and northern parts of the wall. It was paved with select large stones forming the outer edge (Fig. 3.2) and with rubble in the centre (Fig. 3.3). Surviving one or two courses high on the northwest and southeast sides are two buttresses (Fig. 2.1: B; 3.3). We can infer from their location that they served as added support of the wall on the steep north and south slopes of Ostri vrh.

In the late phase, the interior had a compact floor of calcinated rubble (Fig. 2.1: D; 2.2). The dark patches on this hard calcinated surface indicate a fireplace (Fig. 2.1: C). The magnetic susceptibility analysis has confirmed the existence of a fireplace in this spot, revealing that the sample

---

1 Marchesetti 1903, 50 f; ANSl 1975, 141.
2 Gabrovec 1983, 48 f.
3 Čović 1983, 118 f, 124 f. The 1950s excavations of a stone mound at Maklavun, southern Istria, revealed the remains of a domed burial chamber from the Middle Bronze Age (Bačić 1960; Hänsel, Teržan 1999; Hänsel, Teržan 2000).
4 Nada Osmuk, conservator at the heritage protection office in Nova Gorica, ordered and also oversaw the rescue excavation.
5 The results of these excavations have been briefly published in two papers (Teržan, Turk 2005; Teržan, Turk 2014), as well as several short popular overviews (Turk 1992; Teržan, Turk 2006; Türk, Jereb 2006, 12–14).
6 Teržan, Turk 2005, 340, Fig. 5.
7 Mušič, Dimc 1994, 41 f, Fig. 5–8.
of the calcinated ground was subjected to extreme
differences in temperature at some point in the
past. The only small finds at the site came to light
on this surface, consisting of few fragments of
undiagnostic prehistoric pottery as well as broken
and burnt bones of sheep/goats.\(^8\)

Further excavations revealed several other con-
struction elements. The most surprising was a
series of niches for wooden posts set at more or
less regular intervals (1.2–2 m) in the exterior and
interior faces of the wall (Fig. 4–5). These niches
originally held thick wooden posts that served to
strengthen the wall and possibly to carry a wooden
superstructure.\(^9\)

The niches also show that the wall was constructed
in several stages: first the posts were positioned into
their respective holes in the ground (Fig. 4.3–4.6;
5.3–5.10), after which the wall was constructed with
both interior and exterior faces incorporating the
posts. In some places on the exterior, the posts were
fixed into place with one large or several smaller
stones (Fig. 4.2; 5.1; 5.2; 5.5).

The interior face had twelve niches, almost all of
which had corresponding postholes in the ground.
One more posthole was unearthed at the damaged
part of the wall (Posthole 11 – Fig. 4.1), suggesting
the existence of altogether thirteen wooden posts
(Fig. 3.1). The exterior face had twenty niches, most
also recorded with respective postholes. Some of the
holes held a considerable amount of charcoal. In the
south part of the wall, just above the steep southern
slope, the exterior face only survived one course of
stones high and the postholes there (Postholes 18, 19,
20 and 25) were hewn into the bedrock (Fig. 5.6–5.9).
In contrast, the exterior face in the west, where the
slope is gentler, survived to the height of a metre and
a half and the niches for Posts 26 and 33 showed only
slight disturbance of the stones (Fig. 4.1 and 5.10).

The features described above indicate that the
building functioned as a watch or defence tower.
With the scarce and undiagnostic prehistoric sherds,
the dating of the tower rests on the results of the
radiocarbon analyses.\(^10\) Charcoal samples were
taken from the postholes associated with Niches
2 (one analysis) and 11 (two analyses), and from
the central fireplace of the tower’s early phase (Fig.
7). The results all date the tower to the Early Iron
Age (8th–5th century BC) in the 1 Σ range (i.e. one
standard deviation or 68% probability). The flat
section of the \(^{14}\)C calibration curve, also known as
the Hallstatt plateau,\(^11\) prevents precise dating for
this specific period (Fig. 7).

What nevertheless seems significant is the sli-
gantly earlier dating within the 1 Σ range (not later
than 520 BC) of the central fireplace of the early
phase. Moreover, the charcoal samples from two
postholes point to slightly later dates within the
same span: their dating between 550 and 400 BC
is more than 50% likely. If this indicates occasional
repairs of the tower’s wooden construction, we
may presume that the tower was erected in a time
before the Certosa phase and was in use mainly in
the late 6th and throughout the 5th century BC. It
appears not to have been repaired in later times.

The hole for the central post in the tower in-
terior was partially covered with the calcinated
stone surface of the later phase ground (cf. Fig.
2.2 and 6.1). The calcination is probably the result
of a fire that destroyed the roofing of the tower.
On the other hand, it could also signify that the
central spot was used for observation and for li-
ghting signal fires in a time when the tower was
no longer roofed.

---

\(^8\) Cornelia Becker (Institut für Prähistorische Archäo-
logie, Freie Universität Berlin) analysed the bone finds.

\(^9\) For the appearance of the tower with a wooden
superstructure, see Turk, Jereb 2006, Fig. 4.

\(^10\) Conducted at the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator
Unit (analysis Nos. OxA-4081, 4082, 4083, 4090); cf. Ter-
žan, Turk 2005, 347, Fig. 13; Teržan, Turk 2014, 608–610.

\(^11\) Cf. Teržan, Črešnar 2014, 703–704.
MOUNDS AND HILLFORTS OF THE NORTHERN KRAS

The tower on Ostri vrh opens the question of whether the mounds in the Kras really are burial mounds from the Bronze Age as proposed by Marchesetti and Gabrovec or rather buildings similar to the tower on Ostri vrh. We should begin the discussion with certain topographic features of Ostri vrh. The hill’s location is not one of an outstanding strategic importance, which would support the hypothesis of the building serving as a watch tower. The chain of hills along the north edge of the Kras largely surpasses 400 m of altitude, while Ostri vrh lies at barely 300 m asl and does not afford a view to the south. It is highly likely that the largest, mounds – towers along the north edge of the Kras? The easternmost in this chain – Gradišče above Kobilj – is a double hillfort on an elevation with two peaks (Fig. 8.1–8.2). The rampart on the north peak measures roughly 360 m in circumference and encloses a roughly 0.75 ha large surface that indicates a small hillfort. The south peak hosts a very small, but heavily fortified hillfort only measuring 116 m in circumference. The two hillforts are connected via an inconspicuous wall. The interior of the north hillfort holds a small stone mound measuring some 15 m across, which is not mentioned by Marchesetti.

The rescue investigations at Štanjel, the central hillfort geographically closest to Ostri Vrh, have offered reliable evidence of a Late Hallstatt dating. Numerous surface finds of pottery sherds also reveal a Late Hallstatt date for the lowland fortified settlement at Debela griža near Volčji grad; the bow of a Certosa fibula of Type Xb or Xc after Teržan that was found there as a surface find supports the dating to the second half of the 5th and the 4th century BC (Fig. 14: 6). The less well-preserved hillfort at Kobjeglava may also date to the Late Hallstatt period.

Of the enumerated major hillforts, only Štanjel boasts a strategic location on the edge of the Kras plateau, with an unimpeded view of both the plateau to the south and the Vipava Valley to the north. What about the other hillforts and mounds – towers along the north edge of the Kras? The easternmost in this chain – Gradišče above Kobilj – is a double hillfort on an elevation with two peaks (Fig. 8.1–8.2). The rampart on the north peak measures roughly 360 m in circumference and encloses a roughly 0.75 ha large surface that indicates a small hillfort. The south peak hosts a very small, but heavily fortified hillfort only measuring 116 m in circumference. The two hillforts are connected via an inconspicuous wall. The interior of the north hillfort holds a small stone mound measuring some 15 m across, which is not mentioned by Marchesetti.

12 ANSL 1975, 121.
13 For the relationship between central and minor hillforts, cf. Slapšak 1995, 79 f, Fig. 69–70.
14 Brief notes in Bratina 2007 and 2008; the more comprehensive contribution on the investigations at Tomaj only focuses on the finds from the layers attributed to the transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age: Bratina 2014; also see Bratina in this volume.
15 Marchesetti 1903, 47 f; ANSL 1975, 137. Originating in the associated cemetery, Marchesetti noted a two-looped crescent-shaped fibula, a small bronze cauldron with double-cross attachments, a bronze ribbed bracelet and a tanged iron knife (see ib., 200 f, Pl. 16: 17; 17: 6,13,21); he also mentions multi-knobbed bronze pins.
16 ANSL 1975, 121.
The mound closest to Ostri vrh is on Lukovska Škratjevica (Fig. 9.1–9.2).\(^{23}\) It measures just over 20 m in diameter and is located on the highest ridge of the Kras edge. A dry valley separates it from Ostri vrh, which serves as the main communication line between the Vipava Valley and the Kras to this day. Škratjevica shows certain commonalities in topography with the tower on Ostri vrh. The central part of the mound has a depression, now filled with vegetation. Marchesetti interpreted this depression as possible remains of unprofessional excavations.\(^{24}\) In view of the findings at nearby Ostri vrh, however, the mound on Lukovska Škratjevica may also represent the remains of a similar watch tower. Another commonality is the terrace (possibly even two) round the central building, discernible on the LiDAR image of Škratjevica (Fig. 9.2). Similarly as on Ostri vrh, the terrace is more pronounced on the east side. The two buildings, on Ostri vrh and Škratjevica, would thus function as a pair of watch towers overlooking the communication line approaching the hillfort on Šnajel as a local centre from the northwest, from the Vipava Valley, while the Kobdilj hillfort would guard it in the southeast (cf. Fig. 8.2 and 13).

Rabotnica as the next mound in the series lining the north edge of the Kras is different (Fig. 10.1). There is old information on a grave excavated here,\(^{25}\) while the LiDAR image of the elevation (Fig. 10.2) shows no terraces such as those on Škratjevica. Furthermore, the topography around the impressive mound, measuring over 25 m in diameter and over 5 m in surviving height, reveals a strategically less advantageous site, not located on an exposed spot, but rather on a very gentle peak. The mound is therefore more likely to have been a burial mound from the Bronze Age rather than a building with a control function similar to those on Ostri vrh and Škratjevica.

Two of the other three mounds to the west,\(^{26}\) one on Šumka and one of the two on Ovčnjak, are today largely covered with vegetation and comparable in size to the tower on Ostri vrh. Standing out among the three in size (over 30 m across) and exposed location at 575 m asl is the large mound on Ovčnjak. Neither this nor the other two revealed terraces similar to the one on Škratjevica on the LiDAR images. Southeast of the large mound, there are possible traces of a straight wall in the length of just over 10 m, which is a feature comparable with the terrace on Ostri vrh and Škratjevica and one that would speak against a funerary function. We should also mention a clear view of the surroundings near and far. The view northward from Ovčnjak opens to the entire Vipava Valley, southward to the Kras plateau and northern Istria all to the Piran and Savudrija Peninsulas. The question of whether the three stone mounds are burial mounds or watch towers can only definitively be answered by archaeological excavations, though their location and the straight wall associated with the mound atop Ovčnjak suggest that an observation function is more likely, comparable with that of the tower on Ostri vrh.

Located among the stone mounds on Šumka and Ovčnjak, on the same chain of hills that constitute the north edge of the Kras is an unusual hillfort above the Mihali hamlet (Fig. 11.1). Marchesetti described it as a “perfectly round miniature hillfort on one of the highest peaks of the Kras that must have served as an observation point. It is the smallest of the known hillforts, measuring no more than 97 metres in circumference. Its construction is the same as all others and its rampart is 10 to 15 metres thick and 1 meter high. The absence of blackish soil and sherds indicates it was only inhabited, more precisely that a garrison only controlled it in the times of war, as it offered an unobstructed view across the whole of the Vipava Valley all to the foothills of the Alps.”\(^{27}\) In its size of no more than 0.1 ha and its fortification features, the hillfort above Mihali is similar to the south hillfort at Kobdilj, the circumference of which only measures roughly 100 metres and also boasts a thick rampart (cf. Fig. 8.1–8.2). For comparison, the fortification on Ostri vrh measures 33 m in circumference (Fig. 2.1; 4.1) and the stone mound – most likely also a watch tower – on Lukovska Škratjevica roughly 50 m (Fig. 9.2).

The results of the airborne laser scanning at Mihali (Fig. 11.2) indicate a wall leaning onto the hillfort in the west and continuing some 500 m along the Kras edge in the direction of Ovčnjak. Field surveys have revealed poorly preserved traces

---

\(^{23}\) Marchesetti 1903, 50; ANSl 1975, 141. In connection with the mounds on Škratjevica to the east and Rabotnica to the west of Lukovec (sometimes called as Škratlovec), the local tradition relates a story of two gnomes on each of the two mounds that threw stones at each other (Slapšak 1974, 188).

\(^{24}\) The depression is overgrown with vegetation, but with masonry features showing it was used as a machine gun nest in the 20th century.

\(^{25}\) Marchesetti 1903, 50; ANSl 1975, 122.

\(^{26}\) Marchesetti 1903, 51; ANSl 1975, 137.

\(^{27}\) Marchesetti 1903, 51.
of just over a metre wide wall surviving one or two courses high. Such a wall cannot be seen as a purely defensive feature. In connection with that, recent airborne laser scanning campaigns in the Kras and Notranjska regions have revealed several examples of stone boundary walls delimiting the territories of large hillforts from the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages. The wall west of Gradišče above Mihali may also be the remains of such a boundary, associated with one of the Iron Age communities living in the Kras, probably the one with the centre at Sveto (Fig. 13).

Lipovnik hosts the westernmost hillfort on the north edge of the Kras, located above the pass of Železna vrata (Iron gates in translation) between Komenski Kras and Vipavská dolina. It is a double hillfort on two peaks connected with a wall (Fig. 12.1–12.2). It is a sort of a westward pendant to Gradišče above Kobdilj, with its east peak boasting a substantial rampart enclosing roughly a hectare large area and the west peak, which now holds the ruins of the church of St Catherine, hosting a small but thick rampart that rather resembles a large mound than the remains of a hillfort. Rising west of Železna vrata is Trstelj, with 643 m asl the large mound than the remains of a hillfort. Rising a small but thick rampart that rather resembles a similar location, south of the ridge, is the smaller, not northward over the Vipava Valley. Sharing a similar setting, south of the ridge, is the smaller, but heavily protected hillfort on Sv. Ambrož rising 531 m asl. The hillfort is located south of the ridge of the Kras’ north edge and has a good view south over the Kras plateau, but not northward over the Vipava Valley. Sharing a similar location, south of the ridge, is the smaller, but heavily protected hillfort on Sv. Martin, on an isolated hill south of Gradišče above Mihali (Fig. 13). Unearthed at Sv. Martin was the knob of a Certosa fibula (Fig. 14: 7); its moulding and incised decoration suggest Types Xe, g or i after Teržan that date to the second half of the 5th and the 4th centuries BC.

The mounds and hillforts mentioned above raise the question of whether it is possible to clearly identify and distinguish between small, heavily fortified hillforts, on one side, and towers such as the one on Ostri vrh, on the other. It would appear that the function of the buildings such as the one on Ostri vrh was similar to that of the small hillforts boasting an impressive rampart; such are the hillforts at Gradišče above Mihali, the south hillfort at Kobdilj, Sv. Katarina as the west part of the Lipovnik hillfort, as well as Sv. Ambrož and Sv. Martin. The hypothesis proposed here is that Ostri vrh was constructed in relation to Škratljevica in the northwest and the Kobdilj hillfort in the northeast to function as a control point and a barrier protecting the territory belonging to the hillfort in Štanjel (Fig. 13). The excavation records reveal that the central hillfort in Štanjel and its barriers can be attributed to the Late Hallstatt period, i.e. between the 6th and the 4th century BC. The data on the (probable) Bronze Age burial and topographic features suggest that the mound on Rabotnica was not part of these barriers. In the west part of the northern Kras, barriers consist of the mounds – towers on Šumka and Ovčnjak, as well as the hillforts at Gradišče above Mihali and Lipovnik. These barriers in association with the hillforts at Sv. Ambrož and Sv. Martin probably served to control and defend the territory of the central settlement at Gradišče near Sveto. The smaller hillfort of Zagrajec probably served to defend and control the south-western access to the territory of Gradišče near Sveto. Available evidence is not compelling enough to allow a more precise dating of the barriers and their contemporaneity with the barriers near Štanjel is likely, but as yet unproven. The barriers along the north edge of the Kras appear to have been a surveillance and defence system that primarily served to control areas associated with individual central hillforts of the northern Kras, for example those at Štanjel and Sveto, and in this way to protect the area of the Kras cultural group as a whole.

---

28 Gradišče above Knežak with a several-kilometres long wall incorporating two small hillforts, namely at Breg near Šembije and Obrobra above Bač, and enclosing a roughly 7 km² large area (Laharnar, Lozić, Šular 2019, 268 f, Fig. 2: d–f); Škocjan with some 5 km long remains of the boundary wall that encloses an area similar to that of Gradišče above Knežak (Mlekuž 2019, 58 f, Fig. 4.2–4.3).

29 Marchesetti 1903, 51 f, Pl. 5: 2; ANSI 1975, 137; Slapšak 1974, 191 f.

30 Marchesetti 1903, 52 f, Pl. 5: 3; ANSI 1975, 125.

31 Marchesetti 1903, 50 f, Pl. 4: 6; ANSI 1975, 137; Slapšak 1974, 192. The surface finds from the hillfort on Sv. Martin date from the Early Bronze Age (Turk, Turk 2021, 171, Fig. 214) to Late Antiquity (Bitenc, Knific 2001, Cat. No. 44).

32 Teržan 1976, 331 f, 364–368. The Narodni muzej Slovenije obtained the knob of a Certosa fibula from Sv. Martin (P 27246) in 2001.

33 Marchesetti 1903, 46 f, Pl. 3: 12; ANSI 1975, 138; also see Bratina in this volume.

34 With the exception of the knob of a Certosa fibula, see Fig. 14: 7.
THE KRAS IN THE LATE HALLSTATT PERIOD

The discussion above shows that the hillfort in Štanjel with its surveillance and defence posts was well-protected in the Late Hallstatt period. Select finds also indicate radical changes taking place in the contemporary settlement pattern of the Kras even in the southern parts of the Kras-Notranjska cultural group.

A female cremation burial came to light in the early 1990s in the wider area of the hillfort on Ajdovščina above Rodik, with the help of a metal detector. It was found to contain a pair of spiral bracelets, a ring and a long-footed sanguisuga fibula with transverse incisions on the front and rear parts of the bow (Fig. 14: 1–5). These are the earliest known finds from this strategically important hillfort in the southern Kras, i.e. the west edge of the Brkini Hills. The spiral bracelets of square- or rectangular-sectioned bronze wire (Fig. 14: 2–3) have parallels in the last of the items deposited in the Mušja jama hoard, but even more in the bracelets from the late 8th and 7th centuries BC unearthed in Istra. The closest parallels for the bronze long-footed sanguisuga fibula (Fig. 14: 1) come from the Sveta Lucija group, where they occur in the graves of between the late 7th and 6th centuries BC. The rescue excavations that took place in 1996 in advance of renovating Gombačeva domačija (Gombač farmstead) in Škocjan (building now well-protected in the Late Hallstatt period) have revealed two Iron Age graves. One of them was almost intact (Fig. 15.1), its pit lined with stones and containing a red fired Late Hallstatt ceramic pedestal situla with

cordons and bands of black paint, which served as the urn (Fig. 15.2). The other grave was largely destroyed, only the stone-lined pit survived with a few bits of cremated bones. They show that, in the 6th century BC, this part of the Škocjan hillfort interior was not used for habitation, but rather as burial grounds. Particularly significant is the fact that the beginning of the Late Hallstatt period coincides with the end of burial on the nearby cemetery at Brežec. The closest parallels for the ceramic pedestal situla come from Istria, as well as the Venetic and Sveta Lucija areas, suggesting changes in the direction of the cultural and exchange contacts that befell the Škocjan community at this time.

Although the funerary evidence from the Late Hallstatt period is scant, we can nevertheless infer from the finds such as those from Ajdovščina above Rodik (Fig. 14: 1–5), Škocjan (Fig. 15.1–15.2) and Tupelče in the Kras, as well as those from the surroundings of Ulaka above Loško polje, Šmihel pod Nanosom close to the Razdrto Pass and several other sites in the Notranjska region, that the Notranjska-Kras cultural group witnessed a rise in the very time when the surveillance and defence system was established along the north edge of the Kras plateau that included the tower on Ostri vrh (Fig. 7: 13), i.e. in the Notranjska IV–V phase. This was also a time when the neighbou-

---

35 The Narodni muzej Slovenije obtained the finds in 1996. They were inventoried under Inv. Nos. P 19307–19308 (bronze spiral bracelets), P 19309 (bronze fibula), P 19310 (bronze ring), P 19311 (four fragments of cremated human bones) and P 19312 (ten fragments of a ceramic vessel).
36 Slapšak 1985.
37 Teržan 2016a, 279 f, Pl. 33: 6; 65: 16–18; for similar spiral bracelets from Ulaka, also cf. Laharnar, Murgelj in this volume.
38 The first publication in Slapšak 1997, 25 f, Fig. 5; such fibulae within the Sveta Lucija group date to both the Ic2 and Ila phases (cf. Teržan, Trampuž 1973, 424 f, Pl. 7: 12; Teržan, Lo Schiavo, Trampuž Orel 1984–1985, Pl. 55: C2–3; 61: A1; 65: A5; 66: G1; 100: D; 103: B3; 138: B2; 159: C1–2; 214: A4; 227: A1; 231: F2; 232: A3; 241: D1; 248: D2; 254: D2; 263: E).
39 Turk 1998; Turk 2012, 111, Fig. 9.
40 The ceramic situla is kept in the Pokrajinski muzej Koper under Inv. No. AŠD 1. It is wheel-thrown and shows quality red firing with poorly surviving traces of black paint. H. 24.2 cm, rim diam. 16.4 cm, pedestal diam. 11 cm.
41 Ruaro Loseri et al. 1977, 40. One of the items of the latest date from Brežec is the ceramic pedestal situla with cordons similar to the one on Fig. 15.2 (ib., 122, Pl. 32: 6).
42 Dular 1982, 97, 137 f, Fig. 7: 14; 25: 3; Pl. 19; Teržan, Trampuž 1973, 428 f, Pl. 10: 4, 12; Teržan, Lo Schiavo, Trampuž Orel 1984–1985, Pl. 62: A12; 64: G6; 77: D3; 84: C5; 148: B2; 151: A10; 174: B2; 187: B6; 189: B4; 228: E2; 230: F6; 231: B4; 248: B9; Mihovilič 1995, 293 f, Fig. 13, Pl. 2: 1–5. In her recent study of ceramic situlae, Sneža Tecco Hvala identifies the situlae such as the example from Škocjan to west Slovenian Type IIB3 of pedestal situlae that is primarily characteristic of the Sw. Lucija Ila phase (Tecco Hvala 2014, 334–335, Fig. 4: 13,14).
43 Teržan 2016b, 415–424, 465–470.
44 See Fn. 20.
45 Also see Laharnar, Murgelj in this volume.
46 Guštin 1979, Pl. 3: 5,6 al(Cepna); 4: 8 (Gradišče near Knežak); 5: 3 (Ulaka); 6: 1–8 (Storje); 12: 2–4 (Trnovo); 19–20 (Tržišče); 50–58 and 62–64 (Šmihel – Mackovec and za Polšno) and others.
47 Guštin 1973, 476–478, Fig. 2; Gabrovček 1987, 159–161, Fig. 10.
The Iron Age tower atop Ostri vrh and the barriers of the northern Kras (Karst) 477
ring Sveta Lucija group witnessed a militarisation of society observable in weapons (axes and spears) being offered in the graves, which was a practice almost tabooed in earlier times within the group all to the Sv. Lucija II b–c phase. At the same time, grave goods also reveal the contemporary society in the Dolenjska group as one of a markedly military character and hierarchy.

CONCLUSION

Our research of the chronological and geographic attribution of the tower on Ostri vrh has revealed that the communities living in the Kras between the 6th and 4th centuries BC controlled and defended their north frontier towards the Vipava Valley with a series of towers and smaller, but well-protected hillforts. This line of surveillance and defence along the north edge of the Kras plateau was not an uninterrupted one, but can be divided into the eastern and western parts. The former controlled the access to the territory of the central hillfort in Štanjel, while the western part can probably be seen in association with the territory of Gradišče near Sveto. In this way, both main ways of access to the Kras plateau from the north, that is from the Vipava valley, were protected. The Vipava valley itself hosted the routes that led from the plains of Veneto and Friuli across the Razdrto Pass, through the Postojna Gates and onwards, and represented the main line of communication between the Mediterranean world and the inland of the European continent, between East and West. This supraregional route was also the direction from which potential exterior threats for the Iron Age community in the Kras could have been anticipated.

The beginning of the surveillance and defence system constructed by the Kras communities, the contemporary changes in the Sveta Lucija and Dolenjska groups visible in the appearance of fortified posts along their external borders and weapons as grave goods all reflect a tumultuous period on a wider regional and supraregional scale. Certain later notes in ancient written sources – albeit scant and ambiguous – could even indicate the continuation of such towers and forts, or at least the use of some of them, all to the Early Roman period.

Translation: Andreja Maver

50 Svoljšak 1984; Tecco Hvala, Škvor Jernejčič 2017, 129 ff; 169 ff, Fig. 99; Teržan 2020, 365–367, 384–386.
51 Šašel 1981. This should also be kept in mind when attempting to interpret the fireplace surface from the end of the late phase of the tower on Ostri vrh (cf. here above, Fig. 2.1–2.2), which may have held a signalling fire in the time when the tower no longer had a roof and was probably in a ruinous state.