

Certain rare jewels and aristocratic insignia in 14th century

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Subject of this article is a rare type of jewelry dated to the 14th century AD: ornamented solid silver rings, 21 to 25 cm in diameter, usually found in hoards buried at the time of the Ottoman invasion in the late 14th century. A number of hypotheses were suggested for their function: belts for women's dress, diadems indicating a high rank and noble origin, etc. The discovery of the mural of the 14th century Bulgarian

noblewoman Areta in the St. Nicolas church, in the village of Stanichene, near Pirot, completely changed these views. These rings turned to be women's torques used by the Bulgarian noblewomen from this time as rank signs. The comparison between the finds from hoards and the portrait on the church wall reveals that these torques were worn together with other types of insignia: golden ear adornments, rings, etc.