

## **Mediaeval Diadem-*Prochelnik* of the National Archaeological Museum - Sofia**

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The paper aims at publishing a diadem-*prochelnik* (an adornment worn on the forehead) kept in the collection of the National Archaeological Museum. It is a chance find - it was found in a grave together with other pieces of jewelry (a necklace, consisting of triple spheres and several earrings) by treasure hunters in Southwest Bulgaria.

The following elements of the diadem are preserved from the diadem - nine square plates 2.45 - 2.45 cm and eighteen plates shaped as isosceles triangles having 2.9 cm long base and 2.3 cm long side. The plates are decorated with heart-shaped palmettes. The ornament was made with a die - it is convex at the averse and concave - at the reverse. The graphic reconstruction of the diadem reveals that it consisted of 3 rows; its total length was 28-30 cm, the width - 4 cm and the width together with the pendants - ca. 7.5-8 cm (fig. 1).

Two more identical diadems are kept in the National Archaeological Museum, Sofia, both of

them also found in Southwest Bulgaria. A similar diadem was found *in situ* on the skull of a young woman in a grave from Krstevi necropolis (Republic of Macedonia). A similar type of a golden diadem was also found during archaeological excavations near the village of Sveti Peter, Vidin region.

The presented analogies put the studied diadem from the National Archaeological Museum in a group of head adornments found in Southwest Bulgaria and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The finds from the closed assemblages are dated to the 11th century. According to the data from the Krstevi necropolis, this type of adornment was part of the female wedding costume in which the deceased was buried. It is probable that the diadem-*prochelnik* from the National Archaeological Museum had the same function and the rest of the jewelry from the grave were parts of a wedding set of jewelry.