



Vinkovci

Laced with gold

CITY OF VINKOVCI
TOURIST BOARD

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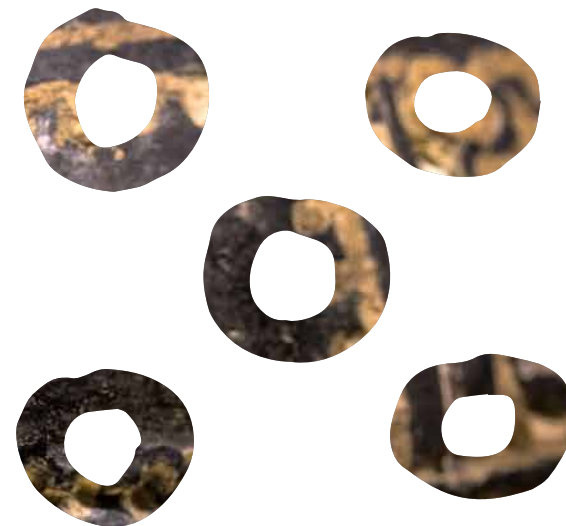
PHOTO Darko Puharić



PHOTO Darko Puharić



PHOTO Mario Romulić



ORION

THE OLDEST INDO-EUROPEAN CALENDAR

The right bank of the Danube River in Eastern Croatia was inhabited by the population of **Vučedol culture** at the beginning of the third millennium BC. It was the time of the **Sumerian period in Mesopotamia, the Old Kingdom in Egypt and the early Troy**. During that period the oldest **Indo-European calendar**, known as **“Orion”**, was created.

The whole range of ornaments on Vučedol vessels is based on the Sun and astral symbolism as well as Venus and Mars. The carved ornament on the vessel **found on the Vučedol layer in Vinkovci and dating back to 2600 BC. presents the most complete Indo-European calendar based on astral symbolism** with relevant constellations for all four seasons. Although it was created at the same time as the Sumerian and Egyptian calendars, it does not represent their replica because it is **based on the 45th parallel north**. The climate conditions corresponding to that latitude result in four seasons.

The constellations symbolizing individual seasons are presented at dusk as the first features in the evening sky (**Orion, Pleiades, Gemini, Pisces, Cassiopeia, Swan**). The usual representation of the Sun, without any representation of the Moon, confirms the complete absence of lunar symbolism, which is precisely the Indo-European characteristic.

In Vučedol culture, the year used to begin with the spring equinox, when the Sun symbolically took the place of the most important winter constellation - Orion. On that night the Orion Belt (three stars) would briefly appear for the last time in the winter sky, before disappearing for several months. This coincidence, **the disappearance of Orion on the spring equinox**, which today occurs 50 days later due to altered precession, was **recorded by the inhabitants of Vučedol culture**. It helped them to determine the first day of their year, with the actual number of days of the Earth’s annual revolution around the Sun.

According to Professor Alexander Durman, who was leading the excavations at the time, today’s depiction of the Orion vessel in the pedestrian zone in the centre of Vinkovci has a symbolic meaning:

“Here, in the centre of Vinkovci, the oldest European city, stand together symbols of the universe, time and civilization:

- 1. the building of Matija Antun Reljković Grammar School, right behind us, represents knowledge,**
- 2. on the opposite side, in front of us, there is the building of the Town Museum Vinkovci, signifying tradition,**
- 3. on the right, the Church of St. Eusebius and Polion, symbolises eternity,**
- 4. on the left, the most significant town road Bana J. Jelačića, represents life.**



PHOTO Dražen Bata

The people of Vinkovci have reason to be proud of the prehistory of their town and their Bosut River - the European Euphrates and the Nile - on whose right bend European civilization was emerging and developing!

ARCHAEOLOGISTS FOUND THIS VESSEL ON 21 MARCH 1978 ON THE LOCATION OF PRESENT-DAY HOTEL “SLAVONIJA”. TWENTY YEARS LATER IT WAS ESTABLISHED THAT CARVED ORNAMENTS REPRESENT CONSTELLATIONS DOMINATING IN THE NIGHT SKY OVER VINKOVCI, THOSE BEING:

1. SPRING



2. SUMMER



3. AUTUMN



4. WINTER

