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### Log book

Bálint László Tóth. Small Masks on Migration Period Jewellery.

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## Reviewer 1, Kent Andersson

I think that the work by Balint is very thorough and that he gets many very interesting results. Since he also knows the Roman material, he is able to draw interesting conclusions. In some cases, however, I do not completely agree with his results, e.g. regarding the background of the “Embossing technique”. Here, I think a more thorough study of Nordic work would provide another result. It is also my opinion that he undervalues the presence of specialised work that has almost been produced in an industrial manner, albeit without the help of machines. We know that a centralised production of textiles, combs, ceramics, jewellery etc occurred already in the Early Iron Age.

There is a need for editing the language as well as the terminology. This concerns the terms for the chronological periods (Roman Iron Age, Migration Period etc) as well as the name for Statens historiska museum. SHM should be called Statens historiska museum rather than Historiska museet, while the English name is the Swedish History Museum. In one place in the text, the gold collars are termed “necklace”, which should be replaced by the correct term, “collar”.

A minor comment is that I miss the works by Morten Axboe on the gold horns both in the text and reference list. In the discussion of the horn, the reference is to Almgren 1914, which seems a bit archaic.

On the whole, it is a very thorough and interesting paper that is well deserving of publication. It is particularly gratifying that he has included the new publication on the gold collars.

## Reviewer 2, Nancy Wicker

Peer review of Balint Laszlo Toth, “Small masks on Migration Age jewellery. Replication traditions of Germanic, Roman, Etruscan, and Greek goldsmiths,”  
for the *Journal of Archaeology and Ancient History*

Toth’s well-argued paper is an important original contribution to understanding how the tiny humanoid masks on the Ålleberg collar, a few bracteates, and some other objects were made.

In this work, Toth examines the replication techniques of small masks—especially those that were applied to a single object—and then he identifies two different methods used to produce the small masks. Finally, he compares the methods that he discerns on the Scandinavian material to Greco-Etruscan and Roman examples.

He begins with an analysis of how multiple masks on the Ålleberg collar and bracteates from Ravlunda, Dödevi, and Gerete were made. His explanations are accompanied by numerous excellent illustrations that are critical for the reader to understand his line of reasoning. From this close analysis, he is able to distinguish two different types of small masks—solid and hollow—and then proceeds to propose possible methods used to produce them. He traces the method of embossing gold sheet to make hollow masks back to Greco-Etruscan techniques, and methods of making solid miniature masks to Roman techniques.

The overall structure of the paper is satisfactory; however, the reader should not have to wait until page 7 to find “In this article I wish to . . . .” Otherwise, the manuscript flows well following an intuitive organization, but the use of headings and sub-headings to organize the material as a “roadmap” for the reader to follow the argumentation would be useful.

The manuscript will need close copy-editing to correct and standardize the English language use. I have tried to disregard language issues for the most part, but I will point out a few word choices that are confusing to the extent that they affect understanding.

On p. 2, he states that “they learned new techniques such as *carving* gold. . . .” The use of the word “carving” is not typical for describing techniques for working with gold; *embossing*, *chasing*, and *engraving* are terms that are used for various methods of working on gold. On p. 44, he states that the grooves on the Gerete bracteate masks were made “by *carving* or more probably by *chasing* them.” A search in Toth’s manuscript for the use of the words “carving” and “carved” reveals that in most instances (pp. 23, 24, 30, 34, 40, 47, 52) he states that the *gold* was not carved—instead the *model* (matrice or patrice) was carved. It is misleading to use the word “carved” at the beginning of the paper without referring to the production of the model and/or to work on the surface after casting.

I must point out one serious contradiction in Toth's manuscript: on p. 6, in reference to Armbruster's proposal, Toth insists that the tiny gold masks on the Ålleberg collar *were not cast*. However, on p. 21 (fig. 14), Toth proposes that "melted gold was poured on the mould. . . ." If that is not *casting*, what is it? He can certainly object to Armbruster's proposal of the use of a lost-wax technique, but it appears that he suggests a simple one-piece *casting* technique in place of the lost-wax method. Then, in my language, I would say that the tiny cast masks were worked (chased) on the surface after casting. On p. 64, Toth clearly refers to the Roman "*casting* replication technique" for making very small masks, and states that "the Ålleberg collar and probably the Åsum and Tornes bracteates . . . are the only testimony" that some Germanic goldsmiths learned this Roman technique of replication. Thus, his statement on p. 6 that the Ålleberg masks were *not cast* contradicts the argument of the rest of his paper.

Some of the less problematic but still confusing use of language are as follows:

p. 37: Regarding bracteates, Toth refers to "the tubular suspension loop decorated with two *beads* with filigree between them." The word "beads" here must mean "bulbs" or "bulges." The word "beads" leads the reader to expect a discussion of granulation.

p. 58 and footnote 70: *Ethnies* is not an English word—perhaps he means "ethnicities" or "ethnic groups."

There are several puzzling uses of English words, including:

p. 4: punctually

p. 16: dissimulates

p. 58: permeable

p. 64: espouse

Toth builds on the work of Lindqvist and Holmqvist. He mentions (p. 6) Per Olof Bohlin's unpublished work of 1981 but states that he could not find it. Although it was not published, it was distributed fairly widely and even appears in WorldCat. Bohlin's work could be very important to Toth, and he should try again to get access to it. I could disassemble the pages of my copy to scan it if he can't get a copy in Sweden.

Toth uses Lamm's 1991 nomenclature of parts of the Ålleberg collar, which will soon be superseded by Pesch's 2015 system. Personally, I prefer Lamm's, but we can't fight "progress." This very recent German monograph will become the standard work on the gold collars and will supersede the contribution of Lamm in *Fornvännen* 1991.

[Language note for p. 6: Pesch's work is the *latest* work on the collars, but it certainly won't be the "*last*" work on the subject!] It would be time-consuming for Toth to add Pesch's nomenclature to refer to specific sections of the Ålleberg collar, but I think that it would add to the longevity of this as an article. Toth refers to Armbruster's contribution in Pesch 2015, so he clearly has consulted this work before finishing this manuscript.

Besides the very careful, close analysis and excellent photographic documentation of the individual masks on the Ålleberg collar and bracteates, Toth's greatest original contribution is his comparison of these masks with Greco-Etruscan and Roman material. He brings to light many objects that readers familiar with the Scandinavian gold collars and bracteates will not have not known previously.

The Greco-Etruscan masks are embossed, hollow pieces, whereas the Roman masks are solid (cast?) like the ones on the Ålleberg collar and probably the Åsum and Tornes bracteates. A few of the Greco-Etruscan and Roman examples could be shown more clearly to illustrate Toth's points. On p. 62, he writes that the pair of brooches from Orvieto "present eight replicated masks," but from the photo it is not clear how there are eight—are there two on each side of each piece? On the vessel from Kul-Oba (p. 63), I see the Gorgon masks and "Scythian" masks, but where are the wild boars and bees—are they supposed to be visible in the photo? In addition, the details he mentions in figure 38 are barely visible—perhaps due to a lack of value contrast in the photograph.

I am curious about one detail that is illustrated but not explained: Toth shows that the separate pieces for the Ålleberg masks (fig. 14) were cut out of the (cast) gold (which had been poured into the moulds) at an angle, whereas the masks on the Kranjski Rak brooches (fig. 23) are illustrated as if cut from a vertical position. Is the different angle of cutting significant? Are both figures necessary?

This manuscript fully deserves to be published after careful editing of the English and attention to the few discrepancies and issues that I have pointed out. The finished article will make significant original contributions.

## Author's comments

I am pleased that two eminent scholars on Scandinavian gold objects were selected as peer reviewers for my study. I would like to thank them for their comments which were very useful for correcting my paper and in most of the cases I have followed their suggestions.

The writing was not clear enough in some parts, which lead to some misunderstandings. For example on p.6: I did not write that the tiny gold masks on the Ålleberg collar were not cast. I wrote that the figurines were not. Indeed I try to show in a great part of the paper how these small masks were cast (although I do not believe in casting them in a close mould). But this is still a problem of my writing: it is obviously not clear enough that I make a difference between the figurines (animals, geometrical forms) of the collars and the masks. Mrs Armbuster's proposal of a same technique for the manufacture of the figurines and for the masks is a new idea. I still believe that the figurines and the masks were made by totally different techniques. Perhaps it will be clearer in the short article which I have written on the carving technique used to make the figurines of the Swedish gold collars, which is soon to be published.

It is also mainly the figurines of the gold collars and related objects that I have in mind when I speak of 'carving gold' in the introduction, and I really mean that the gold material was carved and not a model as for the masks in this article. Sune Lindqvist is the one who described this technique and the objects made by it in Swedish. 'Carving' maybe an unusual term in the working of gold, but this is because the technique itself is unusual, and I believe that 'engraving' is better suited for making linear patterns than what we have on the figurines. 'Carving gold' is a very common technique used on Late Roman gold objects and I believe that the Germanic goldsmiths learned it from the Romans in the Migration Age.