

## RING POMMELED SWORDS FROM AMORIUM



### AMORIUM'DA BULUNAN HALKALI KILIÇLAR

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#### **ABSTRACT**

During the excavations in the byzantine city of Amorium, which are conducted from the year of 1988 systematically, two iron swords were recovered from the Trench XA of the Enclosure, which is located in the Lower City and from the Trench A4 of the Lower City Church respectively. The sword from the Trench XA of the Enclosure is saved integral while the sword from the Trench A4 of the Lower City Church is in fragmentary condition. Both swords have been dated in the Middle Byzantine Period and belong to the wide typology of the *ring pommeled swords*, judging from the shape of theirommel. Examining the hilt of the sword from the Trench A4 of the Lower City Church a cross-guard that belongs to the wider typology of the so-called ‘*sleeved or cuffed type guard*’ has been detected. Apart from the typological examination, the ring pommeled swords from Amorium raise useful conclusions about the characterization of the locations which these swords were found and together with the evaluation of the rest of the archaeological findings could contribute to this direction. To conclude, the swords from Amorium are considered rare and unique because a combination of different typological features is being observed, something which distinguishes them from the ring pommeled swords of the nearby civilizations. Thus, we can suggest a new typology of a *byzantine ring pommeled sword with a sleeved cross-guard*.

**Keywords:** *Amorium, Roman, Byzantine, Excavation, Sword*

#### **ÖZ**

Antik Çağda Frigya olarak bilinen bölgede yer alan Amorium, Türkiye’de Afyonkarahisar ilinin Emirdağ ilçesinde bulunan bir Bizans kentidir. Alandaki sistematik kazılar, Bizans kentinin 5-11. yüzyıllar arasında varlık gösterdiğini kanıtlamıştır. Kentin önemi Karanlık Çağlardaki varlığı ve Amoriumlular olarak bilinen Bizans imparatorluk hanedanının memleketi olması ile dikkati çekmektedir. Yukarı Şehir ve Aşağı Şehir olarak iki başlık altında değerlendirilen Amorium, MÖ 2000’li yıllardan itibaren Hitit,

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Phryg, Pers, Hellenistik, Roma, Bizans, Selçuklu ve Osmanlı dönemlerinde de yerleşim görmüştür. Makalenin konusunu oluşturan bir kılıç ve bir kılıç parçası Amorium Aşağı Şehir'de bulunan Büyük Mekan XA Açması ve Aşağı Şehir Kilise A'da A4 Açmasında ele geçmiştir. Büyük Mekan, Aşağı Şehir merkezine yakın, Yukarı Şehir Höyük alanında güneyinde, modern Hisarköy'ün merkezinin doğusunda yer almaktadır. Büyük Mekan'da 6. yüzyılın ortalarında inşa edilen bir Bizans hamamı, çevresinde 7-9. Yüzyıllara tarihlenen endüstriyel işlevli yapılar ve 10-11. yüzyıllara tarihlenen Orta Bizans yapı bakiyeleri tespit edilmiştir. Aşağı şehirde bulunan A Kilisesi ise Büyük Mekan kompleksinin yaklaşık olarak 50-70 m. güneybatısında yer almaktadır. MS 11.yüzyıl sonuna kadar kullanılmış olduğu anlaşılan kilisenin ilk evresi MS.5.-6.yüzyıla tarihlenmektedir ve bir bazilikadır. Yapının ikinci evresi ise MS 9. yüzyılın sonu, 10. yüzyılın başını işaret eder ve kubbeli bazilikadır.

Makalenin konusunu oluşturan kılıçlar ele geçtikleri konteks bağlamında 10.-11. yüzyıla tarihlendirilmektedir. Orta Bizans Dönemine tarihlendirilen her iki kılıç da kulp şekillerine bakılırsa, geniş bir tipolojiye sahip halkalı dövülmüş kılıçları temsil etmektedir. Halka kulplu kılıçların, Çin ve Kore uygarlığı, İskitler, Sarmatlar ve Sasani İmparatorluğu gibi yüzyıllar boyunca çok çeşitli kültürlerde kullanılmış olduğu bilinmektedir. Bizans geleneğiyle ilişkilendirilen bu tür halka kulplu kılıçlar, Bizans ikonografik kaynaklarında nadiren tasvir edilmiştir. Bizans İmparatorluğu'nu oluşturan topraklarda arkeolojik olarak da izlenmemiş olan halka kulplu dövülmüş kılıçlar Amorium kazılarında ele geçen önemli buluntular arasında yer almaktadır.

Aşağı Şehir Kilisesi A4 Açması'nda bulunan kılıcın kabzası incelendiğinde, "kollu ya da kelepçeli "olarak adlandırılan bir korumaya sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu tür kabzalar Suudi Arabistan, Macaristan, Bulgaristan, Tauric Chersonese (Sivastopal), Orta Doğu ve Balkanlar gibi geniş bir coğrafyaya dağılmış, hem Bizans hem de İslam sanatında geniş bir kronolojik çerçevede tasvir edilmiştir. İkonografik ve arkeolojik kanıtlara göre, bu kabzalar genellikle *spatha* tipinde olduğundan üzerinde iki kenarı da keskin uzun kılıç yer alırdı. Ancak Aşağı Şehir Kilisesi'ndeki örnekte bu görülmemektedir. *Spatha* tipinin standartlarını karşılamayan kabza bölümüne rağmen kılıcın uzunluğuna bakıldığında, Aşağı Şehir Kilisesi kılıcı da aynı boyutlara sahip olmalıydı. Tipolojik inceleme dışında, Amorium'daki bulunmuş halka kulplu kılıçlar, ele geçtikleri yerlerin karakterizasyonu hakkında yararlı sonuçlar ortaya koymakta ve arkeolojik bulguların geri kalanının değerlendirilmesi yönünde de katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Sonuç olarak, Amorium kılıçlarının nadir ve benzersiz olduğu düşünülmektedir, çünkü farklı tipolojik özellikleri onları çağdaş medeniyetlerin halka kulplu kılıçlarından ayırmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmada çapraz kollu bir Bizans halka kulplu kılıcın yeni bir tipolojisi önerilmektedir. Sonuç olarak hibrit bir Bizans halka kulplu kılıç tipolojisi önerilmektedir. Amorium kazılarında bulunan iki kılıcın da aynı tipoloji içinde yer alması, kentte bu tür kılıçları üreten bir cephaneliği işaret edebileceği gibi bir tesadüf de olabilir. Bizans'ın önemli bir kalesi ve imparatorluğun önemli şehirlerinden bir olan Amorium kazılarında ele geçen söz konusu özel tipteki kılıç buluntuları Bizans arkeolojisinde silah ve zırh araştırmaları açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Amorium, Roma, Bizans, Kazı, Kılıç

## **Introduction**

Amorium<sup>1</sup> was the crossroad which was connected from the north with Nicaea and Constantinople, from the south-east with Iconium and from the north-east with Ancyra, forming a triangle and finally from the west with the Aegean coast.

It is undoubtedly that the city became a place of major strategic importance when it was chosen to be the headquarters of the Army of the theme of *Anatolikon* in the mid-seventh century, after the withdrawal of *the magister militum per Orientem* from northern Syria, Mesopotamia and Southern Central Anatolia.<sup>2</sup> The instability that characterizes the seventh and ninth centuries, such as the numerous invasions in the borders of the Byzantine Empire, led Amorium to become a stronghold which consisted of the first defense line against the Arab invasions. Hence, Amorium does not have a single fortification system. The city has a defense system consisting of walls belonging to 3 different phases: the Lower City walls, the Upper City walls and the Inner Wall located at the corner where the Lower and Upper City walls meet in the south-west of the Upper City walls (fig.1).

The topography favors the development of a strong defensive system around the city. Watch towers had been built in the hills surrounding the city. Moreover, the mountains of Emir served as a refuge for the city's inhabitants. Major changes occurred during the fifth and sixth centuries. The expansion of the city led to public buildings to be built. For instance, we observe the construction of the Lower Church and later the bath complex. In addition, we have the extension of the fortifications, engulfing the Lower City and increasing simultaneously its size.<sup>3</sup>

The development of large public places, the street network and the churches during the late antiquity together with the new buildings that had been constructed or maybe the abandonment of previous ones during the transitional period of the seventh and ninth centuries are visible in the spatial plan of Amorium. Similar transitions are being observed in all major cities of the Empire, such as in Thessaloniki and Nicaea. It is a fact that medieval cities are being divided in an upper and a lower sector, something that occurred also in Amorium.<sup>4</sup>

## **Sword finds from Amorium**

A sword and a piece of a sword were recovered at Enclosure Trench XA in the Lower City and at the Trench A4 they were recovered at the Lower City Church. These swords are dated in the tenth and eleventh centuries according to the context in which

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1 The first excavations in Amorium took place in 1988. The studies, which started under the direction of Prof. Dr. Martin Harrison, were carried out under the direction of Chris Lightfoot. Excavation have been continuing since 2014 under the chairmanship Prof. Dr. Zeliha Demirel Gökalp. Amorium excavations are supported by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Anadolu University Scientific Research Projects Commission (Project No.1805E219, 1705E115, 1508E579, 1501E011, 2001E004) and the Turkish Historical Society.

2 Haldon, 1999, 73-77.

3 Ivison, 2007, 36.

4 Ibid., 38-39, 43.

they have been excavated and could be classified in the general typology of *ring pommel swords*, judging from the shape of their pommel.

Before continuing the further study of these two specimens, it is vital to briefly mention some typological features of this type and the transformations that have occurred through the centuries.

To begin with, the origin of the ring-shaped pommel as a decorative or perhaps functional element in swords or daggers can be traced back to the Scythians and Huns and even further to the Chinese Han Dynasty from where it spread among the Central Asian steppe people.<sup>5</sup> During the Middle Sarmatian Period (1<sup>st</sup>-century B.C.-1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.) the majority of the short swords, with a length measured between 50-60 cm, have been excavated, bear a ring pommel (fig. 2). Ring pommel swords are also observed from north Caucasus to the Black Sea.<sup>6</sup>

The earliest representations of such weapons are traced on Crimean gravestones (fig. 3), dated back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. and in Sassanian silver plates. The Roman army adopted this type of sword through probably the Sarmatian mercenaries, who fought as allies in the Trajan's Dacian Wars for instance.<sup>7</sup>

The ring-shaped pommel (*Ringknaufschwerter*) is traced in Europe back in the second century AD, mostly in Roman Germania. This type has probably its origins in the Sarmatian ring pommel swords.<sup>8</sup> This type of sword is usually found in Roman fort sites. The length of the blade is approximately fifty centimetres. The sword has an iron tang, a cross-guard and a ring pommel.<sup>9</sup>

Romans, who adopted the ring pommelled sword type from the steppe people, as we have already mentioned, applied their own manufacture techniques giving a unique imprint in the type. More precisely, while Sarmatian swords were made as one-piece, Roman ring pommel swords on the other hand have their ring riveted to hilt. Moreover, Roman ring pommelled swords differ from Sarmatian ones in the shape of the ring, in which the ring is thickening towards its top and their cross-section is angled. Finally, inlay decorative motifs applied on the guard and damascening, typical features of the roman tradition (fig. 4).<sup>10</sup>

After the disappearance of the Sarmatians from the historical impact of the Eurasia in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the ring pommelled swords continued to be in use over a very vast territory from Korea to Iran, up to the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Such swords are traced in the Carpathian Basin during the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century and they are associated with the Avar military culture. Moreover, such ring pommelled swords were part of the armament of eastern roman soldiers who inherited the perennial imperial roman tradition.

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5 Seyrig ,1937, 30.

6 Trousdale, 1975, 104.

7 Bishop and Coulston, 1993, 112.

8 Feugère, 2002, 154.

9 Bishop and Coulston, 1993, 111.

10 Istvánovits and Kulcsár, 2008, 99-102.

However, ring pommel swords are extremely rare phenomenon to be depicted in Byzantine Art. In the richly illuminated manuscript of the so-called *Madrid Skylitzes*<sup>11</sup> (eleventh century), we can possibly trace some examples of this type (fig. 5). Especially, one of these ring pommel swords appears to fulfil the typical features of a roman ring pommel sword. It seems that the ring is thickening gradually towards the top and it has also an angled cross section. A similar example also comes from the iconographical sources. In the *Rome or David Casket* (ninth and tenth century), which is held in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome, a Philistine soldier, from the David and Goliath combat scene seems to carry a ring pommel sword with a triangular ring (fig. 6).

The whole scene of the ivory casket is assumed to depict Armenian infantry in Byzantine employ. Most of the Empire's military aristocracy was of Armenian ancestry and in the ninth and tenth centuries Armenians formed about 25% of the Empire's armed forces or possibly even more, according to some accounts.<sup>12</sup>

Taking into consideration the archaeological material, to my knowledge, there are not any sword finds of this specific type in the regions that formed the core of the Byzantine Empire or ring pommel swords that have been excavated in territories that could be related with the presence of the Byzantine army or ring pommel swords which could be associated with a possible byzantine origin. As a result, the two ring pommel swords that have been found in the excavations from Amorium, a clearly byzantine stronghold and the third most important city of the Empire, are of great importance for the study of byzantine arms and armour and for the archaeology of weapons in general. These two specimens can contribute to the most difficult task of the conduct of a typological catalog of the swords that have been used by the Byzantine Armies, something that has already been organized for the material of the West, such as the Petersen typology for the Viking Age swords and Oakeshott for the Sword in Medieval times.

### **Fragmentary Sword from Church A/Trench A21-Trench A4**

The Church A of the Lower City was built in two phases. In Phase I, we have the Basilica with the large ecclesiastical complex. In Phase II we have the reconstruction of the basilica as a domed basilica between the end of the ninth century and the beginning of the tenth century. The city suffered major destructions during the Arab conquest of Amorium in 838. This catastrophic event led to the abandonment of the city for at least a generation.<sup>13</sup> The reconstruction plan concerned the reconstruction of ruined churches like the Lower City Church, the construction of four massive defensive walls that frame the complex of the Enclosure and finally the fortification of the Upper City, forming the citadel.<sup>14</sup>

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11 Hoffmeyer, 1996.

12 Heath, 1979, 29.

13 Lightfoot, 1998, 66.

14 Ivison. 2007, 54 ; Ivison, 2012, 5.

In 1993, in Trench A4-context 58 (fig. 7), which dates back to the Middle Byzantine Period, a sword fragment was discovered (*SF2060*) along with a large number of ornamental nails used in furniture, door/window or a cabinet parts, hinge and double-spiked loops with rings (filise) and also an iron candlestick. According to the excavators, these objects can be parts of a winged closet, as well as parts of a wooden bench that is likely to be in the atrium. In 2006, metal accessories and door coverings (bronze slab) were found in a pile in the same contextual.<sup>15</sup>

The sword (fig. 8) is saved in fragmentary condition and it is deeply corroded. The hilt with the ring pommel and a part of the blade are what the sword consists. However, after a close examination of the hilt we can suggest some typological features that seem to characterize this sword and may allow us to conduct some useful conclusions.

Firstly, it is vital to mention few words about the process of categorizing a sword into a certain or into multiple typological categories. The microanalysis study sees the weapon as the structure of the blade, the decoration or non-decoration of the hilt construction and the scabbard assembled for a specific purpose, fight or war. The comparison also with other sword types has an auxiliary role. Macro analysis sees the sword as a moving object through a series of communities within a political-social context, finally leaving the community in a burial or water sacrifice or any archaeological context. From its first travels to its final place, the sword enhances the position of the owner as a statement of wealth, favor and finally power.

More precisely, under the thick crust of the corroded metal, a structure that reminds us a cross-guard is observed. This clue is very important because it allows us to conduct our typological interpretation. It is a fact that the study of the cross-guards, together with the pommels, leads us to identify the typology of the entire swords. The cross-guard of the fragmentary sword seems to belong to the wider typology of the so-called “*sleeved or cuffed type guards*”. Also, it seems to bear a cylindrical collar in the upper section, overrunning part of the handle. This type of sword guards has usually a high sleeve collar, cylindrical in shape in the upper section and a sleeve collar with an ellipsoid shaped in the bottom section, which engulfs part of the blade. Sometimes, the latter sleeve collar has a double ellipsoidal shape, but in the case of Amorium sword, it is difficult to identify this design. As a result, the sword guard structure of the fragmentary sword from Church A of Amorium seems to fulfill the above features which have been mentioned above.

Such guards, usually of copper alloy, are distributed in a vast geographical area such as in Saudi Arabia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Tauric Chersonese, Middle East and in Balkans and are also depicted in the art, both Byzantine and Islamic, during a wide chronological frame (fig. 9).<sup>16</sup> These guards, judging from their dimensions, decorate double-edged long swords, which resemble the type of *spatha*, which is being described

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15 Lightfoot et. al. 2008, 443-447.

16 Nicolle, 1991, 312, Fig. 3-a; Yotov, 2011, 117-119; Baranov, 2018, 34-36; Rabovyanov, 2011 73-86; Dymydjuk, 2019a, 7-29.

thoroughly in the byzantine military treatises of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, such as the *Sylloge Tacticorum* and *Praecepta militaria*. In contrast, it is observed for the first time such a cross-guard in a ring pommel sword, which is a fact that makes this specimen unique.

It is difficult to define these guards strictly as “Byzantine”, “Armenian” or “Islamic”. The example from the Carpathian Basin in Hungary is considered enlightening. The sword was discovered in a destroyed grave together with a couple of stirrups, two earrings and two silver coins of the Byzantine Emperors Romanos I Lakapenos and Constantinos VII Porphyrogenetos (931–944), leading the excavators to date the grave in the first half of the tenth century. Moreover, researchers have pointed out that this sword is peculiar to the sword typologies of the Carpathian basin cultures and has been identified as Byzantine.<sup>17</sup>

The Byzantine Empire and the Abbasid & Fatimid caliphates in the regions of Iraq, Syria, Anatolia, the Fertile Crescent and Southern Italy fought a series of battles for supremacy in the Eastern Mediterranean. Byzantine and Islamic civilizations seem to have been particularly adaptable in military manners, either recruiting foreign mercenaries or copying effective weapons and tactics, aiming to the domination over the opponent. This almost enabled Byzantium to survive for so long, surrounded by numerous opponents.

As stated in the archaeological report, the sword was discovered in the atrium of the Church A along with some other objects, such as a candlestick, stored in this area of the Lower City Church. At first, it is considered bizarre for a sword to be stored in a place that is related to a church complex, because Christianity did not alter the custom of laying up weapons in holy places. However, it is known from the sources that weapons have been deposited as votive offerings in churches. Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos in his work “*On themes*” mentions that St Theodore Teron’s shield was hung as a relic under the dome of the church dedicated in his honor at Dalisandos in Seleucia, in the Isauria region. These weapons are usually associated with holy relics connected with the warrior saints.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, we have the deposit of armament in Mount Athos monasteries, such as a chain mail shirt that is stored in Iveron Monastery.<sup>19</sup> So, this sword could have a votive character, offered by its owner to the church along with other objects perhaps.

### **Sword SF4246 from the Enclosure/Trench XA-01**

The Enclosure is close to the City Center of the Lower City, located in the South area of Upper City and to the east of the center of modern Hisarköy (fig. 10). Many significant structures have been identified, which once formed the Enclosure complex, such as an early dated Byzantine Bathhouse, industrial functional structures and houses that were built between the seventh and ninth centuries and also buildings that date back to the tenth and eleventh century.<sup>20</sup>

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17 Kiss, 1997, 200; Bálint, 1991, 110.

18 Walter, 2003, 49.

19 To be published by the author

20 Ivison, 2012, 5.

The sword (fig. 11) was found in the Trench XA-01 back in 2001, which is located outside and southwest of the wide east-west wall that borders the south of the Great Enclosure. Trench XA-01 is defined as two areas: Area 1 and Area 2. The areas in subject carry traces of the siege that Amorium had been through in the year 838. The section named as 'Area 1' is thought to be once an area of a pile of rubbish. Area 2, where sword number SF4246 is located, has a rectangular plan scheme that extends to the northwest and southeast. The area which is thought to be two stories have been demolished starting from the second floor. In today's contemporary Hisarköy architecture, arrangements for such two-story residential architecture are encountered. The first floor is used as a pantry or corral and the second floor is used as a place of living.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, a similar two-floored structure (E5) has been excavated in Sardis and it is dated back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. In this building a blade of an axe, a sword, iron objects and pottery have been recovered. It has been suggested that this building was a workshop, which served also as an armoury.<sup>22</sup> This parallelization could lead us to seek to identify structures with military and administrative uses in Amorium.

In this area, the mines that were found such as small findings like ceramics and especially the ground of compressed soil where coins were found evaluating them to be dated back between the tenth and eleventh century. The coins include 1 Anonymous Follis A2 (976?-ca.1030/35) and 2 Constantine X and Eudocia coins (AD 1059-1067).<sup>23</sup>

The iron sword corresponds to the general typology of the ring pommeled swords, as the previous example from the Lower City Church. The length of the blade is sixty-one centimetres and the handle is fourteen centimetres long and the width is 2,3 centimetres. The sword has a double-edged blade tapering slightly towards to a pointy end.<sup>24</sup> The ring is not rivetted to the handle, like the previous mentioned examples from the Roman period. In contrast, it has been attached separately to the handle, unlike the Sarmatian ring-pommeled swords, reminding us the shape of a loophole. This structure also seems to be visible in the ring-pommeled sword from the Lower City Church. The corrosion does not allow us to identify any other typological elements, such as the cross-guard but it seems to bear a central ridge that runs the whole blade. Maybe, it could have a similar sleeved guard as the sword from the atrium of the Church A. All in all, it seems that these two specimens complement each other, concerning their different parts which are missing.

A very close parallel to the ring-pommeled swords from Amorium comes from the Islamic art and is related to the sword that carries a cavalryman, who is depicted in a 10<sup>th</sup> century Bowl with luster-painted decoration from the 'Abbāsīd period (fig. 12). The ceramic bowl belongs to The Keir Collection of Islamic Art, which has loaned it to the

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21 Lightfoot and Arbel, 2003, 523-524.

22 Harris, 2004, 99-100.

23 Katsari et al. 2012: Cat. No. 348,447-448.

24 Kurt, 2018, 35.



Dallas Museum of Art. More specifically, the scene shows an apparently unarmoured cavalryman wielding a sword of a ring-pommel typology, but with a wide non tapered blade, unlike the ring-pommelled swords from Amorium. The ring creates the impression that is attached to the grip of the sword in a similar way to the rings of the examined swords. Moreover, the ring encircles a leaf shaped motif. As a result, we can conduct the assumption that the ring-pommelled swords from Amorium could bear a similar pattern, which though is not saved.

Finally, except for the motif, a wrist strap or a tassel might be hanged from the rings. The tassel had multiple functions, as we are informed from their use in the Chinese swords. First of all, tassels were military insignia. The different colors indicated that the wearer of the sword belonged to a particular unit. In addition, apart from the demonstrative purpose, the tassel enhanced the performance of the fencer by adjusting the sword's weight, improving the wielder's balance or simply making the handling easier.<sup>25</sup> In the art of the Middle Byzantine Period, such tassels are also being observed, hanging from the pommels of the swords (fig. 13).

### **Conclusion**

The swords from Amorium are considered unique and rare specimens. Examining thoroughly the ring pommelled swords that have been used in other cultures (Sarmatian, Sassanian, Avar, Korean and Chinese), we observe that hardly any type could be parallelized with these two swords. In addition, their typological features could not be ascertained on swords from the Middle Byzantine Period. Especially, the sword from the Church A combines two different typological classes. As result, we could suggest a new typology of a *hybrid byzantine ring pommelled sword*.

Moreover, the dimensions of the sword which was found in the Enclosure trench indicate that it could have an auxiliary role in the armament of a soldier served in the Byzantine Army. According to the *Sylloge Tacticorum*, the cataphracts had a variety of weapons in their arsenal, such as the *spathion*, the *paramerion*, which has been interpreted as a secondary optional sword and several *siderorabdia* (iron maces) fastened to the saddle.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, it is very interesting that both swords that have been discovered during the Amorium excavations are of the same typology. This fact might indicate that there was a specific armory in the city that manufactured this certain type of ring pommelled swords, or it is just maybe a coincidence. To conclude, it is very difficult to attribute these ring pommelled swords with a certain ethnicity of a mercenary regiment for example serving the Imperial Army that was stationed in the stronghold of Amorium. In any case, the study of the sword typologies in the byzantine army in general constitutes an attractive field of further research.

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25 Zhang, 1998, 38-39.

26 McGeer, 1995, 216f.

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▶◀ No potential conflict of interest was declared by the authors. ▶◀

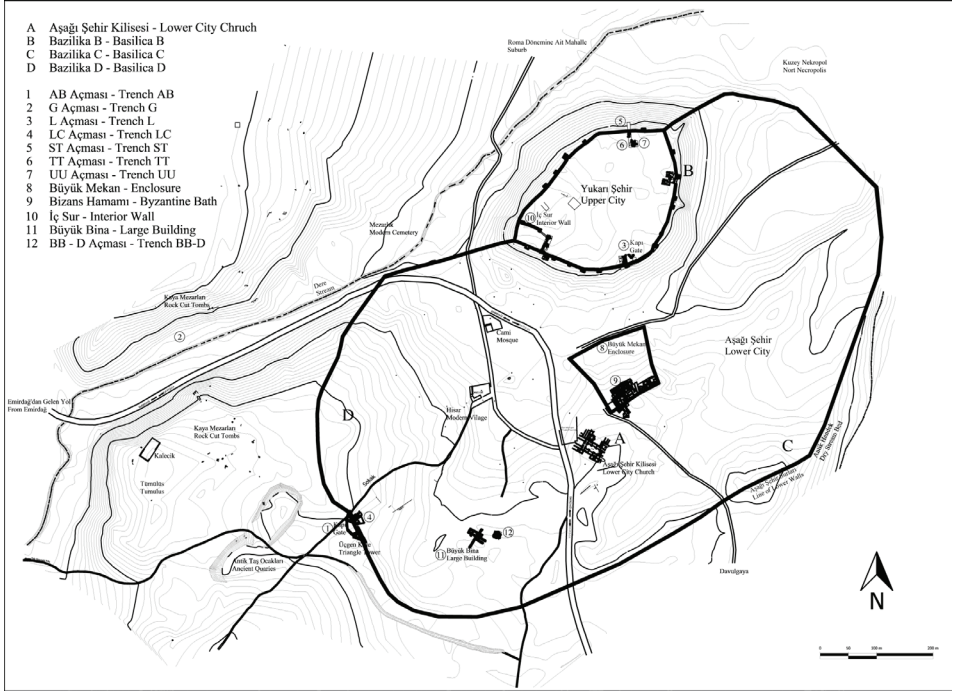


Fig. 1: Amorium City Plan

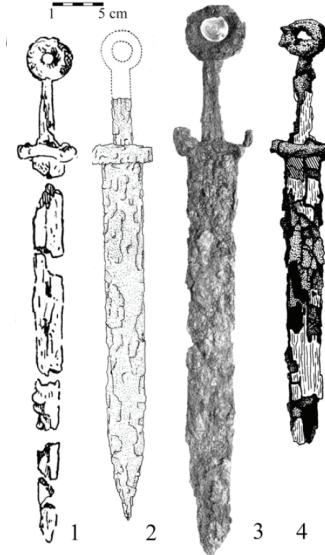


Fig.2:  
Sarmatian Ring  
Pommeled Swords.  
(Istvánovits and Kulcsár  
2008, 98, Fig.7)

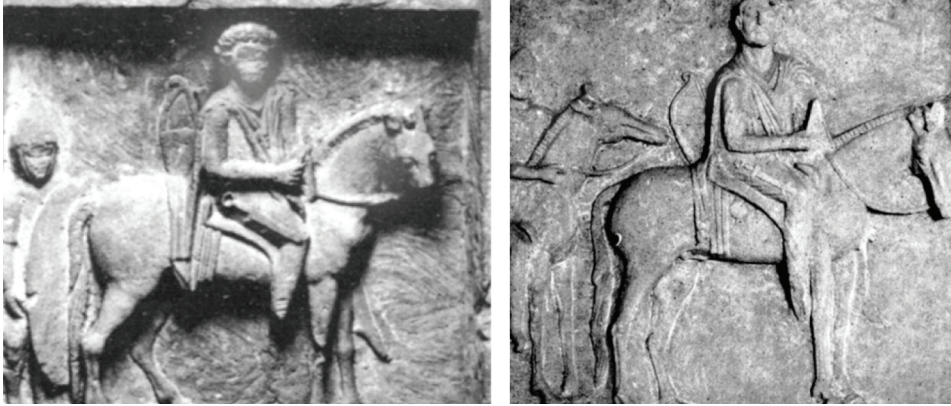


Fig. 3: Ring-pommeled Swords on Bosphoran Grave- Stones. (Istvánovits and Kulcsár 2008, 96, Fig.4)

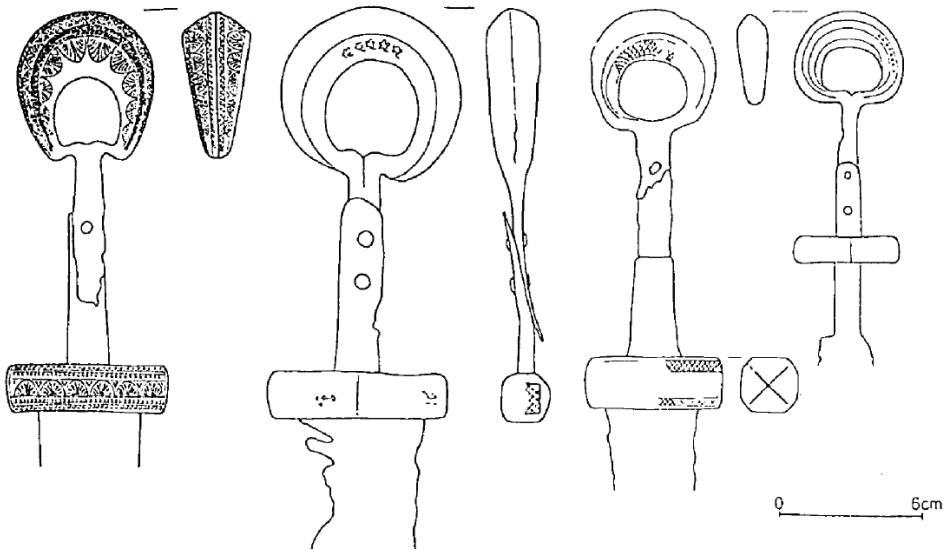


Fig. 4: Roman ring pommeled swords (Istvánovits and Kulcsár 2008, 100, Fig.10)



**Fig. 5:** Ring-pommeled swords depicted in folios in Madrid Skylitzes illuminated manuscript (<https://www.wdl.org/en/item/10625/view/1/35/>, <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/10625/view/1/91/>)



**Fig. 6 a:** Rome or David Casket (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century) (Dymydjuk, 2019, Ryc.61); **b:** Detail from Rome or David Casket ([http://warfare.6te.net/6-10/Rome\\_or\\_David\\_Casket-Philistines.htm](http://warfare.6te.net/6-10/Rome_or_David_Casket-Philistines.htm))

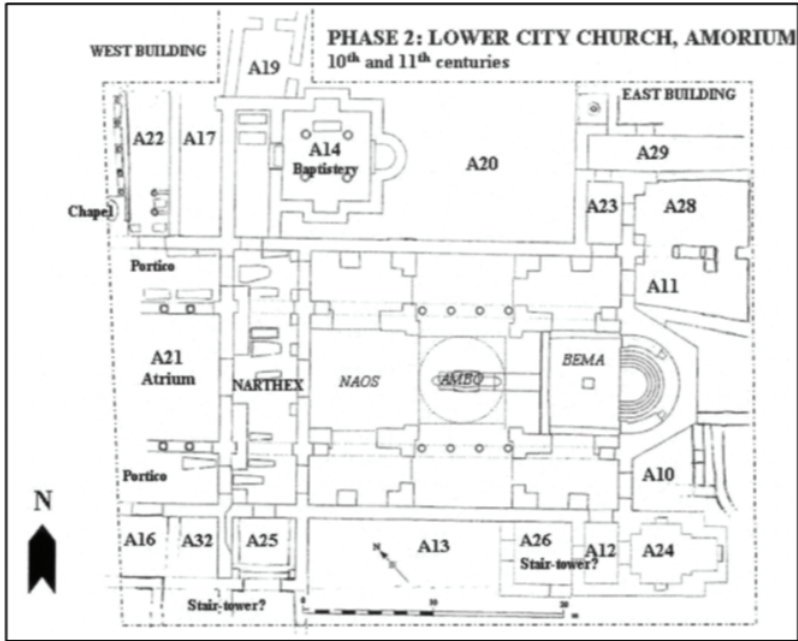
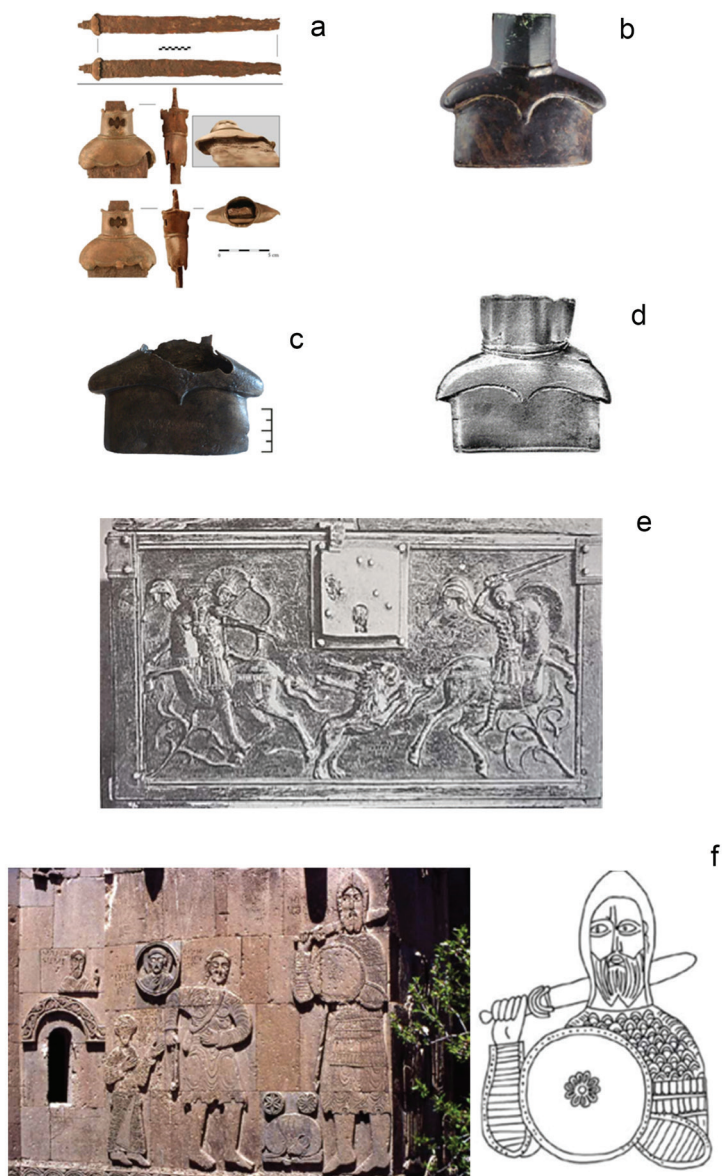


Fig. 7: Amorium. Plan of the Lower City Church.



Fig. 8:  
Sword piece from Church  
A/Trench A21-Trench A4,  
Middle Byzantine Period





**Fig. 9:** Various Sleeved or Cuffed sword guards

a. Sword-guard from Kunagota grave, Hungary, 10<sup>th</sup> century (Biro 2014, 536); b. Sword-guard from Pliska, Bulgaria, 11<sup>th</sup> century (Yotov 2011, 123); c. Sword-guard from in the southwestern part of the citadel of Tauric Chersonesos (modern Sevastopol, on the Crimean Peninsula, 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century (Baranov 2018, 40); d. Sword guard from Saudi Arabia, dated in the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century according to Nicolle (1991, 312). Baranov (2018, 36) dates it in 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century (Yotov 2011, 123); e. Troyes casket, 11<sup>th</sup> century (Goldschmidt 1979 vol.5, fig. 122); f. Goliath's sword on a relief carving in in the Armenian church of Gagik, Aght'amar, Lake Van, early 10<sup>th</sup> century (Nicolle 1999, 373, fig. 116a).



Fig. 10: Plan of the Enclosure

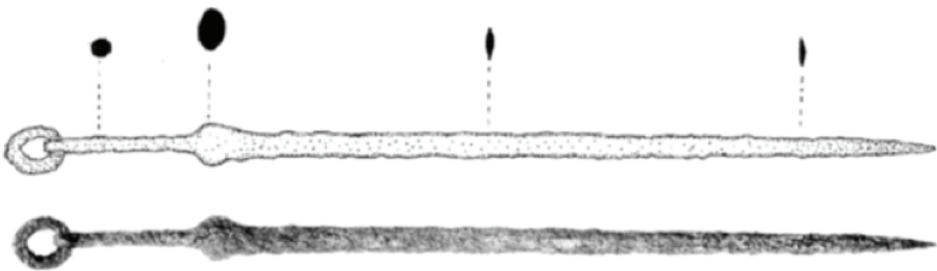


Fig. 11: Sword SF4246 from Trench XA-01, 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century



**Fig. 12:** Abbāsīd Bowl with Arab Cavalryman, 10<sup>th</sup> Century, Iraq, Keir Collection 37, Dallas Museum of Art (<https://collections.dma.org/artwork/5341456>)



**Fig. 13:** Tassels hanging from swords

**a.** Menologion of Basil II, 11<sup>th</sup> century, Vat. gr. 1613, f. 316, Slaying of the Holy Fathers on Sinai, ([https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613));

**b.** Bristol Psalter, 11<sup>th</sup> century, Add MS 40731 British Library ([http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_40731](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_40731));

**c.** Menologion of Basil II, 11<sup>th</sup> century, Vat. gr. 1613, f. 363 ([https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1613](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613))

Ege Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi | Ege University, Faculty of Letters  
**Sanat Tarihi Dergisi** | **Journal of Art History**  
ISSN 1300-5707 | e-ISSN 2636-8064  
Cilt: 30, Sayı: 2, Ekim 2021 | Volume: 30, Issue: 2, October 2021

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*Journal of Art History is a peer-reviewed, scholarly, periodical journal published biannually, in April and October.*

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