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»Plavž svete Heme«**Livarna železa pri Nomenju v Bohinju****IZVLEČEK**

Vzhodno od Bohinjske Bistrice, nasproti vasi Nomenj, ležijo ob potoku Plavžarica razvaline metalurškega obrata. Kraj je ustno izročilo nekdanje imenovalo »pri sveti Hemi«, razvaline pa še danes poznamo kot »plavž svete Heme« ali »Hemin plavž«. V nasprotju z ustnim izročilom zgodovinski viri pričajo, da gre za livarno železa iz 17. stoletja, povezano z rudnikom živega srebra v Idriji. Delovala je le kratek čas, nato sta njen obstoj in lega zašla v pozabo. Zanj so se ponovno zanimali arheologi in raziskovalci tehniške dediščine v 20. stoletju, ki so tudi izkopali ostaline stavb livarne.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

Bohinj, železarstvo, livarna železa, 17. stoletje, Konrad Widerholt/Wiederholdt von Weidenhofen, arheološke raziskave, sveta Hema, ustno izročilo

ABSTRACT**'ST. HEMMA BLAST FURNACE'. IRON FOUNDRY AT NOMENJ IN BOHINJ**

East from Bohinjska Bistrica and across the Nomenj village, there lie the ruins of a metallurgical plant by the brook called Plavžarica. In the oral tradition, the place used to be known as 'St. Hemma's' and the ruins are still called 'St. Hemma Blast Furnace'. Contrary to the oral tradition, historical sources prove that this is a 17th century iron foundry which only operated briefly, and then its existence and location were soon forgotten. In the 20th century, the foundry aroused the interest of the archaeologists and researchers of the technical heritage again. They also excavated the remains of the foundry buildings.

KEY WORDS

Bohinj, iron industry, iron foundry, 17th century, Konrad Widerholt/Wiederholdt von Weidenhofen, archaeological research, St. Hemma, oral tradition

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S U M M A R Y

'St. Hemma Blast Furnace'. Iron Foundry at Nomenj in Bohinj

East from Bohinjska Bistrica and across the Nomenj village, there lie the ruins of a metallurgical plant by the brook called Plavžarica. In the oral tradition, the place used to be known as 'St. Hemma's' and the ruins are still called 'St. Hemma Blast Furnace'.

The long-time Carniola land doctor from Ljubljana Dr Konrad Widerholt/Wiederholdt von Weidenhofen had the Nomenj iron foundry built in the middle of the 17th century (1647) in order to cast iron retorts for burning the mercury ore, 'army instruments' (presumably cannonballs and cannon barrels), iron stoves, mortars, etc. A whole new method of mercury extraction by distillation in diagonal cast-iron retorts was invented by Dr Widerholt and his apothecary assistant Augustin Petraeus and imple-

mented in the Idrija Mine in the middle of the 17th century. Although the foundry at Nomenj was built precisely because of the increased demand for cast-iron retorts, they lacked the required quality and the Mine ordered them elsewhere.

Valvasor mentions the iron foundry from Bohinj in *The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola* (1689) two times, giving no precise denomination and location of the foundry. He named the owner of the foundry 'Mister Locatelli'. When exactly did the Nomenj foundry cease to function, remains unknown. It certainly no longer existed at the end of the 18th century. This was the second oldest iron foundry in Carniola.

In the beginning of the 20th century, the archaeologist Alfons Müllner identified the Nomenj ruins. There was an archaeological excavation carried out in 1938 by the archaeologist Walter Schmid. Walter Schmid's excavation was documented also by the amateur photographer Slavko Smolej who published some articles on it. The main building of the foundry was excavated again in 1972 by a team from the Jesenice Ironworks Technical Museum.

The foundry complex at Nomenj consists of three buildings: a residential house (3), a charcoal storage (2) and a foundry building (1). The foundry building was partly hidden inside the ground of a hill, where the walls are still preserved almost up to three meters high. It consisted of 5 rooms (marked A, B, C, D and E). The building was solidly built from stones and lime mortar, only the room E was made of wood. The rooms C and D were only added later to the primary core of the building. The well-constructed residential house included three rooms. A solid constructed wall is the only preserved part of the charcoal storage.

Veneration of St. Hemma (Hemma of Gurk, a Bavarian noblewoman, born at the end of the 10th century, died presumably in 1045) was probably started in Bohinj, particularly at Nemški Rovt and Bitnje, in the Middle Ages by the German-speaking settlers from Carinthia. According to the oral tradition, Hemma of Gurk owned mines and iron smelters (the so called St. Hemma Blast Furnaces) in Bohinj. Contrary to the oral tradition, historical sources prove that Hemma of Gurk could not have owned the mines and lands in Bohinj or resided there occasionally.