Other Bone Objects - possible or claimed examples of bone rules

William A. Johnson

I list here items in the literature that are dubious or without sufficient information to include in the catalogue.

Possible examples that are roughed out works-in-progress from an ancient workshop:

- II-IV CE. "La Perte" Cuperly, Marne, France. Prevot 2010; cf. Prevot 2009. Seven examples with lengths ranging from 101 to 142 mm, with an average of 123; widths ranging from 18 to 26 mm with five of the seven under 20 mm. Unfinished but rectilinear or slightly tapering.

Mentioned in the literature but too fragmentary to be evidential:

- Davis 2016, 9, nr. 7 is claimed as an example but is too chipped and fragmentary to know.
- The partial possible bone rules found alongside II.A.02 and III.A.03 (q.v.) are too fragmentary to ascertain whether a bone rule.

Objects claimed as examples, or closely associated with items in the catalogue, that may not or do not accommodate to the three basic styles catalogued here:

- Künzl 1982, 114-115, n. 7, pl. 90 nr. 7 from the Museum Carolino-Augusteum Salzburg; cf. Fünfschilling 2012, 174 and fig. 10. Found in the grave of an adult male in a cemetery in the Bürglstein district, along with a ceramic beaker, a glass bottle, a rubbing stone, spoon probe, a possible wax spatula (identified by Künzl as a knife), and an inkwell. Catalogued as probable medical instruments by Künzl; Fünfschilling identifies this as a writing set. The irregularities of lines and shape make this a dubious example in my view; Eckardt also expresses doubt (see remarks in Eckardt 2017, nr. 133). Dated to III CE from the shape of the glass bottle among the grave goods.
- Obmann 1997, p. 127, and 251, fig. 39 nrr. 1479-1480 (inv. X 17573 and X 3200 Archäologisches Museum, Frankfurt am Main) are both c. 5 to 5.5 mm thick and thus not likely bone rules; Obmann identifies as a label. Dated to I-III CE. from the history of the site of Nida.
- Associated by Obmann 1997, 127 nr. 1478 with Type III are: (1) Biro 1987, 39 Abb. 17,136 .137, from Gorsium, but the serrated head is differently styled; and in any case very partial. (2) Chirila 1972, 87 and pl. 126 nr. 2, from Buciumi (Dacia); the head while unperforated is styled like the perforated types but the whole is very small (length 57 mm, width 15-17 mm).
- Associated by Obmann 1997, 127 nr. 1481 with the rectangular type, from Numantia, is Paulsen 1930, 271, pl. 43B but there is no perforated hole and, though no dimensions are given, it appears very small. Not enough data to know.
- Beal 1983, p. 375, nr. 1332, pl. 63 (inv. 448, Lugdunum Musée [Musée Gallo-Romain de Fourvière], Lyon) is a rectangular, polished, double-convex object 77.2 mm long, 15.2 mm wide, and 3.5 mm thick. The thickness and roundedness on all edges and corners suggests some other implement. From the necropolis at Trion, but unknown whether from a grave context (see Beal 1983, p. 9).

- Greep 1998 under nr. 190 claims that the polished bone fragment is "probably from an object similar to" nr. 189, included here, but it has less straight and well-defined edges.
- Deschler-Erb 1998 cat. nr. 1969 is claimed as a writing implement by Bertrand 2008, 116, but that fragment tapers on both sides towards the head.
- Claimed at Artefacts.mom.fr (accessed 5/18/21) under type RGL-4006, is inv. D.2011.1.66.123 Musée Gallo-Romain, Biesheim, France (Roman site of Oedenburg), but that has a very different look to the blade, with a rounded foot and only roughly linear sides.
- The V -shaped groove on the side indicates a different object for items like Trumm et al. 2013 and Davis 2016, nr. 13, as Davis recognizes (p. 6); cf. discussion at Božič-Feugère 2004, 40.
- Claimed as a "bone 'ruler'" in Eckardt (Eckardt 2017, nr. 85) and published in Mercando 1974, nr. 12 and 120 pl. 41c is an object with parallel sides that at first looks like a rough form of our type III; but it is 55 mm long and only 7 mm width and 5 mm thick with a hole pierced through the thickness side of the head. Excepting the lack of inscription, these dimensions and features match exactly the *tesserae nummulariae* from Magdalensberg (see Gostenčnik 2001, 385 and fig. 5, 20-21).

Mentioned but unpublished and without further information:

- Von Boeselager 1989, 227 and n. 29 mentions an oral communication in 1988 by H.U. Nuber of an example excavated at Hofheim.
- An additional example of the tapering type is mentioned by Obmann 1997, 127 nr. 1478, from Kongen, Streufund Vicus, unpublished; and another in Aime, citing Gimard 1968, 21 Taf. 15.6, which however Obmann's bibliography notes as a typed manuscript—I have not been able to locate a publication of this work. (Obmann identifies these objects as labels.)
- Greep 1998, 283 lists without further detail possible unpublished British examples from London (Museum of London), Watts Wells (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), and Silchester (Reading Museum), the latter two at least not captured in the catalogue here.