

# The early Bronze Age sword from the Wreta in Östergötland compared to the Nebra Hoard in Germany

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At the end of the 17th century an early Bronze Age sword was found in Wreta Kloster, Östergötland in Sweden. The sword is unique from a Swedish point of view. The discovery of the famous Nebra find in Germany has raised new questions concerning the technique of the Swedish sword.

The blade on the Wreta sword got two chased parallel ornamental lines near every edge, respectively on both sides with an inlay of a red-brown material. This inlay was declared as a “residuum of encrusted resin” (e.g. Montelius 1900, 325; Oldenberg 1974, 296). The type of sword is identical to the both swords found with the sky disc from Nebra in Saxony-Anhalt (Germany) and particularly the surface decoration appears to resemble. Indeed the inlays of the swords from the Nebra hoard has been identified to be of copper (Pernicka, Wunderlich 2002, 28). Additional to the swords from the Nebra hoard exist three famous European early Bronze Age finds with bimetallic surface decoration. The golden metal foils of the famous wagon from Trundholm are considered to be fixed with damascened copper strings (Brøndsted 1962, 86) and the golden inlays of the so-called axe from Thun-Renzenbühl in Switzerland are proposed to be damascened into a copper strip (Strahm 1972, 100). A marvellous work of an early Bronze Age artisan is the sword from “Marais de Nantes”, which is also declared to have damascened golden wires within copper strips (Schauer 1984, 175). The analysis of the authors could prove that the strips really consist of copper (forthcoming).

Therefore it would be very likely that the green and red-brown colour of the inlay originated from the corrosion of a copper strip and not from a pseudomorphic replacement of organic material by the copper corrosion products from the blade.

To find out the bulk composition of the inlay of the sword we plan to X-ray the sword and to make a fluorescence analysis of a fragment following the procedure of Lutz and Pernicka (1996).

## References

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