

THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE SARMATIAN FINDS FROM THE ROMANIAN PLAIN (I)¹

Vitalie Bârcă

Institute of Archaeology and Art History of
Cluj-Napoca
vitalie_barca@yahoo.com

Abstract: Within the pages of this study, the first in the series we aim to accomplish, we analyse a few of the Sarmatian finds in the Romanian Plain (Lehliu, Buzău, Oltenița-Ulmeni, Vitănești), which have arisen or still arise debates and for which several chronological frameworks have been suggested. Moreover, the author resumes the discussion of certain aspects related to the Sarmatian presence in the Romanian Plain.

Following the analysis of the items in the damaged grave at Lehliu, it was noted that the brooch belongs to a variant dating to the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD. Concerning the pendant, it was concluded that the appearance of the rendered character, his sitting position, anthropological type, dress and hairstyle are indicative of the features specific to the eastern populations of Central Asia, including those nomad Iranian. Analogies with the individual's appearance, sitting position, hairstyle and dress on a series of items, including from the Sarmatian environment, point to a dating in the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD. Based on such notes, it was reached the conclusion that the two items at Lehliu belonged to an individual in the Sarmatian group arriving from the east into the Danube mouths area, sometime in the second half of the 1st c. AD.

Based on the examination of the items in the “hoard” at Buzău, the author concluded they are a very small part of the funerary inventory of a very rich woman's grave, part of the aristocratic graves of the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD from the north-west Pontic area. Furthermore, it was concluded that the grave including these items is from somewhere in the north-west Pontic territory (most likely from the Prut-Dniester interfluve) and by no means from the territory of Buzău county. Last but not least, it was concluded that the items belonged to a woman in the affluent stratum of the Sarmatian society, part of the group of Sarmatians arriving in the north-western area from territories east of Don starting with mid 1st c. AD. In what the dating of this find is concerned, the author pleads for a chronological framing in the second half/last quarter of the 1st c. AD, without yet excluding the end of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD.

Regarding the casserole, *unguentarium* and cup at Oltenița-Ulmeni, the author concludes based on the find circumstances, however also on the nearby presence of well datable Sarmatian graves, that very likely, the three items come from one of the damaged graves in 1957. From a chronological point of view, the author argues they were deposited in the grave/graves sometime by mid/ third quarter of the 2nd c. AD, maybe even in the chronological interval comprised between AD 140/150-180, nonetheless, by no means in the second half of the 2nd c. AD or the first decades of the 2nd c. AD. The dating of the casserole, *unguentarium* and cup in this period is also supported by the dating of the objects in G 1 and G 3 in the second half of the 2nd c. AD. According to the author, it is hard to believe that among the graves identified in 1960

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and those damaged of 1957, to which most likely belong the mentioned artifacts, there are greater chronological differences, being rather, as suggested by the items' dating, a contemporary group.

Another grave under analysis is that at Vitănești (T 2 G 2) dated in the specialty literature by the end of the 3rd c. AD, end of the 2nd c. – early 3rd c. AD or in the period previous Trajan's reign. Upon its analysis, it was concluded that a series of elements and features of the funerary rite and ritual (main burial, large funerary pit, hiding-niche, flat circular ditch surrounding the grave) show that beside the preserved funerary inventory it belongs to the group of graves belonging to the Sarmatian elite in the north and north-west of the Black Sea. This date to the chronological comprised between the second half of the 1st c. AD and the first half of the 2nd c. Concerning the chronological framing of the grave at Vitănești, the author maintains it most likely dates sometime in the first half of the 2nd c. AD. The analysis of the few Sarmatian finds showed they date to a period other than that usually considered. Except for the new dating propositions, the performed analysis also evidenced that some of them (Lehliu, Buzău, Vitănești) are part of a larger group of Sarmatian finds from the north and north-west Pontic area, radically different from the rest of the Sarmatian graves in the same geographical area. Within the graves of this group, a series of elements and features were carried to this area by the novel Sarmatian tribes arriving from the east starting with mid 1st c. AD.

Keywords: *Sarmatians, brooches, earrings, appliqués, pendants, graves, enclosures, Romanian Plain, the Roman empire, the north-west and north-Pontic area*

Over the time, in the Romanian specialty literature were drafted many works publishing the Sarmatian remains identified in the Romanian Plain. They are supplemented a series of synthesis studies approaching various aspects related to the Sarmatians' arrival and inhabitancy of this geographical area². Nevertheless, currently, even though it would seem curious, there is no consensus among the scholars concerning the dating of several Sarmatian finds in the Romanian Plain. Besides, one of the major issues still rising debates in the scientific environment of Romania is connected to the starting date of the arrival and effective settlement of the Sarmatians in this geographical environment. On the same line, it also concerns the dating and assignment of Sarmatian finds to the starting period of the Sarmatians presence in the vast plain by the Lower Danube.

Unfortunately, contradictory discussions are even today in good part based on the same archaeological finds, which are assigned, from an author to another, different chronological framings, often entirely erroneous. Most often, unfortunately, such errors are the result of the use of antiquated bibliography and unfamiliarity with the historical and archaeological realities of the Sarmatian world. Occasionally, certain statements and dates were maintained without taking into consideration also a series of aspects specific to the Sarmatian environment from a certain chronological interval. The unfamiliarity and failure to take into account the above resulted, in our view, into assignments and conclusions establishing a deformed image of the entrance and effective

² See to this effect BICHIR 1971, 135-145; BICHIR 1971a, 275-286; BICHIR 1972, 137-173; OȚA 1999, 885-894; OȚA 2007, 51-55; NICULESCU 2003, 177-205; OȚA/SÎRBU 2009.

settlement of the Sarmatians in the vast plain by the Lower Danube and in the territory west of Prut.

In connection to the time of the Sarmatians' settlement in the Romanian Plain, the views expressed by various scholars oscillate between placing this moment between the second half of the 1st c. AD and the period of the Marcomannic Wars. An entirely out of ordinary exception for the Romanian historiography is the view expressed by E. Condurachi suggesting, based on the theories expressed by A. Alföldi and J. Harmatta, an effective Sarmatian presence in Muntenia as early as the end of the 1st c. BC – early decades of the 1st c. AD³. This point of view is not scientifically grounded and is infirmed by the realities evidenced by the archaeological and the classical written sources. They indicate the 1st c. BC, for the Sarmatian inhabitancy of mainly the north-Pontic area up to the Dnieper and for the first half of the 1st c. AD the western border being the Prut and the territories left the Danube mouths⁴.

For instance, Gh. Bichir believed this process occurred after the abandonment in AD 117-118 by the Romans of large part of the Romanian Plain (Muntenia and south Moldova)⁵, territory which had belonged to the date, to the province of Moesia Inferior. A dating post AD 117-118 was more recently accepted also by C. H. Opreanu⁶ and C. C. Petolescu⁷.

A later dating compared to that proposed by Gh. Bichir was also supported by Gh. Diaconu⁸ and I. Bogdan-Cătănciu⁹, who believe this process took place during the Marcomannic Wars.

V. I. Grosu considered that the entrance of the Sarmatians in Muntenia occurred after AD 102¹⁰, and I. Ioniță tends to believe that the Sarmatians' entrance and settlement of Muntenia happened only after the conquest of Dacia¹¹.

In the last two decades, following the re-assessment of the same archaeological data and of those supplied by the ancient written sources, the arrival of the Sarmatians in the Romanian Plain was placed by R. Harhoiu¹² and M. Babeș¹³ in the second half of the 1st c. AD. This view was later agreed with by also Gh. Niculescu¹⁴ and C. C. Petolescu¹⁵.

A different view is that expressed in few lines by L. Oța, who believes that the arrival of the Sarmatians in the Romanian Plain was a lengthy process. It took place over

³ CONDURACHI 1958, 122-123.

⁴ See for the inhabitance limit of the Sarmatians to this effect SYMONENKO 1991, 17-28; SYMONENKO 1994, 32-48; SIMONENKO 1994, 99-134; SIMONENKO 2004, 135-140; POLIN/SIMONENKO 1990, 76-95; BÂRCĂ 2002; BÂRCĂ 2002a; BÂRCĂ 2006; BÂRCĂ 2006a; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, BÂRCĂ 2013.

⁵ BICHIR 1971, 142-143; BICHIR 1971a, 283; BICHIR 1977, 191; BICHIR 1996, 304.

⁶ OPREANU 1998, 63-64; OPREANU 1998a, 73-74.

⁷ PETOLESCU 2000, 323-324.

⁸ DIACONU 1980, 284.

⁹ BOGDAN-CĂTĂNCIU 1997, 140, 142

¹⁰ GROSU 1996, 252.

¹¹ IONIȚĂ 2010, 792, 793.

¹² HARHOIU 1993, 46-50. In his study dedicated to the "hoard at Buzău", R. Harhoiu attempted to re-evaluate the dating of several graves in Muntenia (HARHOIU 1993) however, this chronological re-framing was rejected by Gh. Bichir (BICHIR 1996, 297-312).

¹³ BABEȘ 1999, 234-236. Within his ample study of 1999 M. Babeș lowered the date of certain Sarmatian graves from south Moldova and Muntenia from the first half of the 2nd c. AD to the second half of the 1st c. AD.

¹⁴ NICULESCU 2003, 184-186.

¹⁵ PETOLESCU 2006, 124.

a period comprised between the end of the 1st c. AD and early 2nd c. AD¹⁶ or the last decade of the 1st c. AD and the first decades of the following century¹⁷. Other times of the entrance and settlement of novel Sarmatian groups in the plain by the Lower Plain are placed by the same author in the second¹⁸ or end 2nd c. AD¹⁹ and in the 3rd c. AD²⁰. Without insisting or analysing the means and criteria according to which these stages were established, we wish to mention that the Sarmatian graves in the Romanian Plain from the second half of the 2nd – mid 3rd c. AD can be easily identified. The reason is the presence within many of those of certain artifacts (mirrors, brooches, amphorae, luxury wares, etc.) which are good dating elements, some of which being Roman imports. At first glance, one may also note the existence of certain graves with a certain dating to the first half of the 2nd c. AD.

We believe though, as suggested on other occasions²¹, that some of the Sarmatian vestiges in the Romanian Plain might date sometime in the second half of the 1st c. AD. Subsequent to thorough and ample analysis, like for instance the case of the “Buzău hoard”²², obviously, if it comes from the territory of Buzău County²³, or as noted in the case of several Sarmatian graves in the east-Carpathian area²⁴. Moreover, we suggest that the entrance of the Sarmatians in both the east-Carpathian areas as well as the Romanian Plain should not be regarded as a massive and violent entrance, but rather as a slow and gradual process.

In addition, we consider that currently, it is often difficult to separate the graves by the end of the 1st c. AD from those by the early 2nd c. AD and that one cannot speak about an effective inhabitancy of the Sarmatians in the Romanian Plain in the second half of the 1st c. AD²⁵.

By way of parenthesis, we wish to mention that often in the establishment of the arrival date of the Sarmatians in the Lower Danube plain, the poor inventory of the graves and the lack of the dating elements (small number of Roman imports identified in the Sarmatian graves from Muntenia)²⁶ are invoked as hindrances. Although, often, a series of elements and features specific to the Sarmatian environment from a certain chronological interval are omitted. There are also Sarmatian finds whose chronological framings show methodological deficiencies like unfamiliarity with the archaeological material and the realities of the Sarmatian world from the enormous space they inhabited over several centuries.

At a simple glance over the import artifacts in some of the Sarmatian graves, there may be noted occasional circumstances when a series of objects, significant chronological markers, have reached the area later than their

production date or were in use for a longer period. Such situations are found not once in the Barbarian world where sometimes goods no longer circulating were purchased and used. Additionally, in order to explain some aspects of absolute chronology, the use of the import products, especially gold and silver-made, as well as certain bronze object categories (for instance, bronze vessels) and chronological landmarks for the Sarmatian environment must be used with extreme caution. At the same time, they must be connected with all elements specific to the archaeological features and all archaeological and historical realities. Therefore, the use of certain precious metal objects, but not only, in dating the Sarmatian graves requires great caution. Due to the above stated, we believe that dating some graves in a very restricted chronological interval (for instance the end of the 1st c. AD, the last decade of the 1st c. AD, early 2nd c. AD or end of the 2nd c. AD etc.), except for certain very clear circumstances, is hazardous.

The lack or extreme rarity of 1st c. AD Sarmatian finds in the Romanian Plain seems rather surprising if keeping in mind that the plain area is familiar to these nomads of the steppes and corresponded to the needs of the their pastoral economy, place from where they could also carry plundering expeditions to the right of the Danube²⁷. Should we take into consideration the archaeological realities and the information supplied by the ancient literary sources, it may be noted that the western limit of the space inhabited by the Sarmatians in the first half of the 1st c. AD is located in the area east of Prut and north the Danube mouths²⁸. Moreover, one should also take into account the fact that by the early of the 1st c. AD, the Romans laid the bases for the preventive system of the “security space” applied yet combined with the diplomatic treaties concluded between the Roman empire and various dynasts. This policy, as noted²⁹, was aimed at diminishing the threats of the neighbouring Barbarian world and consisted in the establishment of a very large distance between the Danube and the potential adversaries. The result of this policy should have been the significant reduction of the frequency of the Barbarian attacks from the neighbouring territories.

It is deemed that the policy of the “security space” enforced by the Lower Danube resulted in the cessation of inhabitancy in large part of the known Getae settlements in the region.³⁰ However, it was likely, also a secondary cause hindering for a period the settlement of groups of Sarmatians in the Romanian plain, especially since they represented for some time, as also resulted from the classical authors’ accounts³¹, a danger for the Roman possessions.

During the second half of the 1st c. AD, the Roman position in the Lower Danube area is substantially reinforced, while the policy of the north-Danubian “security space” was consolidated, and very likely, broadened by the actions of Tiberius Plautius Silvanus Aelianus, as legate of the province

¹⁶ OȚA 1999, 887; OȚA 2007, 51. This moment of the entrance of the Sarmatians in the Romanian Plain is related by the author to the wars waged by Domitian and Trajan with the Dacians.

¹⁷ OȚA/SÎRBU 2009, 180-181.

¹⁸ OȚA 1999, 887; OȚA 2007, 51. The author related this moment to the Marcomannic Wars.

¹⁹ OȚA/SÎRBU 2009, 182.

²⁰ OȚA/SÎRBU 2009, 183.

²¹ SÎRBU/BÂRCĂ 1999, 93-94; SÎRBU/BÂRCĂ 2000, 261; BÂRCĂ 2002, 111, 119; BÂRCĂ 2002a, 65, 81.

²² HARHOIU 1993, 41-51.

²³ See to this effect Gh. BICIR's view (BICIR 1996, 301-304).

²⁴ Cf. BÂRCĂ 2006.

²⁵ SÎRBU/BÂRCĂ 1999, 93-94; SÎRBU/BÂRCĂ 2000, 261; BÂRCĂ 2002, 111, 119; BÂRCĂ 2002a, 65, 81.

²⁶ OȚA 2007, 51.

²⁷ SÎRBU 1986, 193.

²⁸ Cf. BÂRCĂ 2006; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009.

²⁹ OPREANU 1998, 32.

³⁰ VULPE 1961, 366, 367; VULPE 1966, 16; PIPPIDI 1967, 303-318; CONOVICI 1985, 71-87; PETOLESCU 2000, 28, 36-37, 60-61.

³¹ See to this effect CASSIUS DIO LIV, 20, 3; LV, 30, 4; FLORUS, *Bellum Sarmaticum*, II, 29, 20, *apud* FHD P, I, 527; OVIDIUS, *Tristia*, I, 5, 62, I, 8, 40, II, 198, III, 3, 6, III, 3, 63, III, 10, 5, III, 10, 34, IV, 1, 94, IV, 8, 15-16, IV, 10, 109-110, V, 1, 13, V, 7, 13, V, 7, 56, V, 12, 58; OVIDIUS, *Ex Ponto*, I, 2, 45, I, 2, 58, I, 2, 77, I, 2, 112, I, 3, 59-60, I, 5, 49-50, II, 7, 72; OVIDIUS, *Ibis*, 637; SUETONIUS, *Tiberius*, 41.

of Moesia between AD 57/60 - 67³². Actions carried out by Plautius Silvanus Aelianus had not been yet accompanied by the placement of military garrisons along the Danube, in the part east Novae, neither by the elimination of the Dacian and Sarmatian danger by the Lower Danube, which was confirmed by the ancient authors.³³ This account, occasionally in detail, on the Sarmatian incursions in the Roman possessions and the conflicts between the Sarmatians and the Romans in the years subsequent to the remarkable governorship of Tiberius Plautius Silvanus Aelianus. In fact, the increase of the Sarmatian activities around the Roman possessions is not due only to the outdated methods of the "security space" policy and the insufficient military organisation of the Danube limes, but also to the cause of the entrance and settlement in the north-west are of the Black Sea. It started with mid 1st c. AD due to the novel Sarmatian groups arriving from the steppes past the Don river as a result of the Sarmatian tribes movement westwards during the 1st half of the 1st c. AD. This fact is confirmed by both the archaeological finds as well as by the accounts of the ancient written sources³⁴ based on which one may note that including the Alans – the main cause of this process – reached the Danube mouths in the third quarter of the 1st c. AD.

Even the subsequent actions of the Flavian emperors whose main objective was the reorganisation of the defensive system of the Danube frontier by changing the disposition of the legions.³⁵ On the same line, the entire strategic conceptions, however did not lead to the much-desired tranquillity in the region, even though there was a more clear delimiting line set on the Danube, between the Roman Empire and the barbarian world.

Past the measures taken within the "security space" policy was preserved in the Lower Danube area. During this period were very likely regulated also the political and diplomatic relations between the Romans and the barbarians by the Middle and Lower Danube, amongst which also counted the Sarmatians. Taken measures were followed by a period of tranquillity by the Danube border of the Empire. This period lasted until AD 85, when the Dacians attacked the province of Moesia³⁶, thus proving both the inefficiency of the "security space" policy as well as the insufficiency of the military reinforcement of the right Danube bank³⁷. The changes imposed by Domitian by the Lower Danube by the administrative and military reorganisation of the Moesian defensive front, the military campaign enterprise by the Romans against the kingdom of Decebalus as well as the political

³² PÂRVAN 1926, 103; STEIN 1940, 28-31; CONDURACHI 1958, 119-130; PIPPIDI 1967, 287-301; SUCEVEANU 1971, 112-120; SUCEVEANU 1977, 20-22; VOGEL-WEIDEMANN 1982, 407; CONOLE, MILNS 1983, 186; GOSTAR/LICA 1984, 44-49; KARYSHKOVSKI/KLEIMAN 1985, 91; ZUBAR 1988, 20; ZUBAR' 1994, 26-27; LESCHHORN 1993, 76.

³³ TACITUS, *Historiae* I, 79, III, 46, 2; JOSEPHUS FLAVIUS, *De bello Iudaico*, VII, 4, 3.

³⁴ Cf. BÂRCĂ 2006, 244-262; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 348-364; BÂRCĂ 2006b; BÂRCĂ 2013.

³⁵ These measures would lead to an army composed of four legions in Moesia (ARICESCU 1977, 32-45), while the beginning of the construction of the new forts by the Danube belong to governor Rubrius Gallus (MÓCSY 1974, 42). Still under the Flavians, the Danube fleet would be set up *Classis Flavia Moesica* (See for *classis Flavia Moesica* MATEI-POPESCU 2010, 245-258) and the first auxiliary military units would be brought to Dobrugea (Cf. SUCEVEANU 1977, 22-23; STROBEL 1989, 11-18. For the Roman auxiliary troops in Moesia Inferior see MATEI-POPESCU 2001-2002; MATEI-POPESCU 2010, 167-244.

³⁶ TACITUS, *Agricola*, 41.

³⁷ OPREANU 1998, 35.

and military situation by the Mid Danube finally led to a period of calm.

The Sarmatians were not involved in these conflicts between the Romans and the Dacians. There are no records of conflicts between the Sarmatians in the north and north-west of the Black Sea and the Romans in the following years either. Very likely, the Sarmatians in this area had closed "treaties" with the empire from which they received subsidies.

The amassment of a large number of troops starting with Domitian's reign in Pannonia and Moesia and Trajan's travel along the Mid and Lower Danube in the winter of AD 98/99³⁸, chiefly aimed at inspecting the troops and forts as well as the initiation of construction works of forts and connection roads.³⁹ These aspects suggest an increasing concern of Rome for this region by the end of the 1st c. AD and that the focus point of the empire defence had been moved from the Rhine to the Danube.

Therefore, one may note that the "security space" policy did not primarily and supremely aim at eliminating the danger for the Roman territories located south the Danube, but only its reduction. Moreover, we believe that such policy did not lead a firm control of possible infiltrations of certain Sarmatian groups in the Romanian plain either. In fact, it is not excluded that occasional small Sarmatian groups entered these territories for short periods precisely with the agreement and under strict Roman control.

Concerning the Sarmatian presence in the Romanian plain, we believe that for the second half of the 1st c. AD, one may not yet speak of an effective inhabitancy of the area as for the period of the 2nd – 3rd centuries AD. In the current state of knowledge, one may at most accept the presence of individuals or small groups who reached this area for a short period, following certain trade exchanges, or following the episodic entrances during incursions carried out on the Roman possession for plunder reasons or in occasion of military events involving them as well.

Evidence to the fact that in the second half of the 1st c. AD the Sarmatians did not effectively live in the Roman Plain comes from the archaeological finds and literary and epigraphic sources. They record for the second half of the 1st c. AD an intense inhabitancy of the Sarmatians in the north and north-west Pontic area⁴⁰ and by no means in Muntenia.

Some events occurred on the Lower Danube in the first two decades of the 2nd c. AD which open a novel stage in the Roman empire's policy at the Lower Danube. These events were the Dacian-Roman wars; the incorporation of Muntenia and south Moldova in the province of Moesia Inferior; the events of AD 117-118 that resulted in the abandonment of the south Moldova and Muntenia and the reorganisation of Dacia.⁴¹ Furthermore, the policy of concluding diplomatic treaties like the one closed with the Roxolani around the second Daco-Roman war⁴², of which we know only the payment of stipends

³⁸ PATSCH 1937, 57; STROBEL 1984, 159-160.

³⁹ STROBEL 1984, 159-165.

⁴⁰ See to this effect KOSTENKO 1993; KOVPANENKO 1986; GROSU 1990; GROSU 1995; DZYGOVS'KYJ 1993; DZYGOVS'KYJ 2000; SIMONENKO 1993; SIMONENKO 2004; SIMONENKO 2008; SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991; SYMONENKO 1999; BÂRCĂ 2006; BÂRCĂ 2006b; BÂRCĂ 2013; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009.

⁴¹ Cf. PISO 1993, 32-35.

⁴² OPREANU 1994, 207. This treaty was aimed at ensuring neutrality, evidence to this effect being the fact that the Roxolani did not take part in the military confrontations of the second Daco-Roman war against the empire.

to the Roxolani.⁴³ Following negotiations Hadrian successfully turned the king of the Roxolani into *rex amicus populi Romani*⁴⁴, likely P. Aelius Rasparaganus *rex Roxolanorum*⁴⁵, whom was granted Roman citizenship, one of the greatest awards that a *rex amicus* could obtain for services rendered to the Roman empire⁴⁶, represent beside all the other measures taken under Domitian – Hadrian.

After the events of AD 117-118, but also based on the treaty entered with the Roxolani, very likely the Sarmatians were granted the permission to settle the Romanian Plain. Settlement of Sarmatian groups after this date in this territory was yet, most likely, well controlled by the Romans, which is also confirmed by the scarce archaeological finds, at least in the current state of research, until the final moment of the Marcomannic Wars. Upon a careful analysis of the Sarmatian remains in the territory of Muntenia and their corroboration with the data provided by the ancient written sources one may argue that the Sarmatian inhabitancy of this area was permanently under Roman supervision.⁴⁷ It is a similar situation to what happened for a good period in the case of the Sarmatian Iazyges in the Hungarian Plain. Under careful surveillance were kept starting with this period also part of the Sarmatian in the north and north-west Pontic area, evidence to this effect being the Roman military presence in the north and north-west of the Black Sea⁴⁸, aimed beside the protection of the Greek cities, also at surveilling the Sarmatians.

It is certain that following the conflicts by the end of Trajan's rule and the start of Hadrian's reign, the Sarmatian tribes in the territories around the empire were re-brought in the previously existent system of alliances, which ensured the Roman world by the Mid and Lower Danube a period of 50 years of tranquillity and peace. Nonetheless, it is certain that the Sarmatians represented during the 2nd c. AD, alike in the previous century, a major threat for the Roman empire. Evidence to the effect is the presence of the Sarmatians (Iazyges, Roxolani, and Alani) among the Barbarian peoples who conspired and attacked the empire under Marcus Aurelius⁴⁹, one of the greatest military conflicts of the Roman Empire during the first two centuries AD.

As noted, in the current state of research, there is a diversity of views related to the entrance and settlement of the Sarmatians in the Danube plain. Beside other issues arisen,

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that these diplomatic actions resulted also in the cessation of the attacks carried out by the Sarmatians from the north-west of the Black Sea over the Roman possessions by the Lower Danube until Trajan's death.

⁴³ HISTORIA AUGUSTA, *Hadrianus*, 6, 6–8.

⁴⁴ OPREANU 1994, 207; OPREANU 1998, 53.

⁴⁵ CIL V, 32.

⁴⁶ BRAUND 1984, 39; OPREANU 1998, 53; OPREANU 1998a, 62.

⁴⁷ This view was also expressed by other authors (BOGDAN-CĂTĂNICIU 1997, 140, 142; PETOLESCU 2000, 324; OȚA 1999, 887; OȚA 2007, 51–53).

⁴⁸ Cf. NICORESCU 1937, 219; NICORESCU 1944, 501–510; SARNOWSKI 1989, 71–75; KARYSHKOVSKIY 1959, 116–118, no. 7; KARYSHKOVSKIY/KLEJMAN 1985, 94–99; KARYSHKOVSKIY 1988; SON 1986, 60–68; SON 1993, 21–23, 31–35; IOSPE I2, no. 4; CIL III, 781; KADEEV 1981; SHELOV 1981, 52–63; BUJSKIKH 1991; KRAPIVINA 1993; ZUBAR' 1994; GUDEA/ZAHARIADE 1997. For the incorporation of the north-west Pontic Greek cities in the influence area of Rome see BÂRCĂ 1999; BÂRCĂ 2004 with complete bibliography.

⁴⁹ HISTORIA AUGUSTA, *Marcus Aurelius*, 22, 1.

the presence of the Sarmatian in the Romanian Plain this state of facts is based on the following causes:

- The small number of investigated graves compared to the opportunities provided by the hundreds of barrows from the Danube plain;

- The inappropriate research of certain graves and lack of record at the time of research of certain defining elements for the funerary rite and rituals;

- Omission when published of elements and traits specific to the Sarmatian environment of a certain chronological interval, either due to lack of knowledge or by neglect;

- The absence from the ancient written sources of clear references related to the entrance and settlement by the Sarmatians in the plain by the Lower Danube and, finally yet importantly, the disinterest for the research and study of the Sarmatian remains on the territory of Romania.

Obviously, the poor inventory or the small number of Roman imports found within graves may be invoked as argument. However, these are not the only dating elements within the funerary inventory of the Sarmatian graves. Indeed, such argument may be invoked in the case of an isolated grave, yet not when it is part of a group of graves, barrow, either flat or secondary in other period tumuli, where there are often also elements for a more accurate chronological framing.

Finally yet importantly, we wish to mention that although within the few synthesis studies published in the specialty literature in Romania, it was attempted to outline the main elements and specific traits of the Sarmatian graves on the territory of the Romanian Plain. On the same line, the issues related to the relations between the Roman Empire and the Sarmatians on the mentioned territory⁵⁰, there are still a series of aspects and features provided by Sarmatian funerary archaeological features previously ignored due to various reasons or which were approached rather seldom, and only sketchily.

In this study, the first in the series we proposed to accomplish, we wish to highlight certain chronological issues raised by some of the archaeological features and re-analyse a few of the Sarmatian finds in the Lower Danube plain (Lehliu, Buzău, Oltenița-Ulmeni, Vitănești) which have risen and still rise debates and for which were proposed several chronological framings.

A first find we shall examine is that at Lehliu (Călărași county), composed of an agate pendant-amulet (Fig. 1/1) and a bronze brooch with returned foot⁵¹ (Fig. 1/2). According to Gh. Bichir, the two items were discovered by a local inhabitant around 1963–1965, in an inhumation grave, found by chance. According to the Bucharest scholar, they reached via a student, professor D. Tudor, who received them in 1975, without yet details related to the discovery spot and the discoverer's name. Although the pendant-amulet is a rare and extremely interesting piece, within his ample study of 1977, Gh. Bichir published only the bronze brooch⁵² and mentioned nothing of the pendant-amulet. The bronze brooch was deemed by the same scholar as an artifact dating to the first decades of the 3rd c. AD.⁵³ Gh. Bichir maintains that the agate pendant-amulet rendering a man

⁵⁰ Cf. BICHIR 1972; BICHIR 1977; BICHIR 1996; NICULESCU 2003; OȚA 1999; OȚA 2007; OȚA/SÎRBU 2009.

⁵¹ BICHIR 1996, 307.

⁵² BICHIR 1977, 188, Pl. 22/1.

⁵³ BICHIR 1977, 188, Pl. 22/1; BICHIR 1996, 307, Fig. 2.

with eastern facial features sitting with legs crossed ("Turkish style") on an ornamented pedestal depicts Buddha. The same author argues that the item has no analogies in the north-Pontic steppes, while the closest depictions rendering Buddha in this position are found in Asia⁵⁴. Based on the presented analogies, but also especially of the dating proposed by the brooch, the pendant-amulet was dated in the first decades of the 3rd c. AD. Purely speculative seems to us the statement that the pendant-amulet at Lehliu shows that the deceased's belief was Buddhism and that this find suggest that some Sarmatians who entered the Geto-Dacian territory believed in Buddha⁵⁵.

Unfortunately, the chronological framing and the assignment of these two items is not precisely successful.

For instance, the brooch at Lehliu (Fig. 1/2) belongs to the brooch type very well represented in the north-Pontic area of the first centuries AD. Such brooches have a returned foot wound on the bow, being made of a single metal wire. Their spring is bilateral, formed of four coils and either inner or outer chord. The bow is curved, and the foot extended and returned is attached to it by winding, forming several coils. The great majority of the exemplars are made of bronze and iron, but silver exemplars are also found.

Brooches with returned foot wound to the bow belong to group 15 of brooches in A. K. Ambroz's classification⁵⁶ and to group 4 in that of V. V. Kropotov⁵⁷. Within the group, they were divided by A. K. Ambroz, based on certain morphological peculiarities, into four series (I, II, III, VI)⁵⁸, and within the series, into variants⁵⁹. The same applies for V. V. Kropotov, who assigns these brooches to group 4 divided into four series, and within the series in several variants⁶⁰.

All these brooches are mainly specific to the southern regions of Eastern Europe, where they were in fact produced. They represent the most investigated and spread brooch type from this immense geographical space, while according to recent information, the brooches in this group are represented in the southern part of Eastern Europe by approximately 2300 exemplars⁶¹, of which around 1700 belong to series I⁶².

The item at Lehliu is made of a single bronze wire, has a bilateral spring made of four coils and inner chord. The bow is downward and is not strongly curved, while the extended and returned foot is attached to it by winding, forming four coils. In the lower part, the foot is slightly widened than the rest of the body. The pin is preserved fragmentarily. The brooch length is 4.3 cm.

In A. K. Ambroz's classification, the brooch at Lehliu belongs to the second variant of the series I characterised by lowered bow and not very curved, and the slightly widened foot to the extremity compared to the rest of the body⁶³. The same author included within this series both outer chord brooches as well as with inner chord of which he argues that

only a part of the earlier exemplars were provided with inner chord⁶⁴. The brooches of the second variant were dated by A. K. Ambroz in the 1st c. AD, mainly in the second half of the 1st c. AD, however did not excluded the possibility of their use also by early 2nd c. AD⁶⁵.

The large number of such brooches made of a single metal wire with inner chord discovered in the last four decades, allowed V. V. Kropotov⁶⁶ to frame all the exemplars in series II of brooches with returned foot wound to the bow. Within the series, they were divided, based on certain peculiarities, in four variants. The brooch at Lehliu belongs to form 2 in the second variant of series II copying largely the exemplars of series I, second variant in both A. K. Ambroz's classification as well as in that of V. V. Kropotov⁶⁷. Chronologically, the brooches in this variant are dated to the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD, confirmation to this end being also the artifacts by which they were found within the archaeological features.

Such brooch finds mainly focus on the Lower Dnieper basin and Crimea, but also sporadically in the Kuban region and north Caucasus.

Within the Sarmatian environment, the brooches of this variant come from T 2 G 3 at Glubokoe⁶⁸, T 7 G 1 at Vladimirovka⁶⁹, T 2 G 1 at Novofilippovka⁷⁰, Konskie Razdory⁷¹, T 1 G 8 at Dneprovsk⁷², T 5 G 1, T 6 G 1, T 6 G 2, T 12 G 2, T 13 G 1, T 31 G 1, T 32 G 1, T 49 G 1 and T 71 G 1 at Ust'-Kamenka⁷³ etc.). In connection with the exemplars in the Sarmatian environment may be noted that more than half come from the Sarmatian barrow cemetery at Ust'-Kamenka⁷⁴, located on the right bank of the Dniپر⁷⁵, which belonged to the novel wave of Sarmatians arriving from the east starting with mid 1st c. AD⁷⁶.

In what the agate pendant is concerned (Fig. 1/1) one must say that in its case things are simpler than supposed.

For instance, the depictions of individuals sitting with legs crossed are found on a series of items in the second half of the 1st millennium BC in Central Asia⁷⁷. This position became yet a frequent iconographical depiction in this region only by the end of the 1st c. BC. Within the Sarmatian environment, the items rendering leg-crossed sitting individuals are represented

⁵⁴ BICHIR 1996, 307 with complete bibliography.

⁵⁵ BICHIR 1996, 308.

⁵⁶ AMBROZ 1966, 47-50.

⁵⁷ KROPOTOV 2010, 65-68.

⁵⁸ Within series IV and V, A. K. Ambroz included the Caucasian brooches dating to the 4th – 7th centuries AD (AMBROZ 1966, 54-55, Pl. 9/9, 21, 22/2, 4).

⁵⁹ AMBROZ 1966, 47-57.

⁶⁰ KROPOTOV 2010, 65-165.

⁶¹ Cf. KROPOTOV 2010, 65.

⁶² KROPOTOV 2010, 68.

⁶³ AMBROZ 1966, 49.

⁶⁴ AMBROZ 1966, 48-51.

⁶⁵ AMBROZ 1966, 49.

⁶⁶ KROPOTOV 2010, 129-150.

⁶⁷ KROPOTOV 2010, 72-74, Fig. 31-32.

⁶⁸ Cf. SHMAGLIJ/CHERNYAKOV 1970, 47-48, Fig. 65/13; GROSU 1990, 44-45; BÂRCĂ 2005, 127, Fig. 2/1; BÂRCĂ 2006, 126-127, 314, Fig. 58/6, 172/1; BÂRCĂ 2011, 12, Fig. 1/1; KROPOTOV 2010, 136.

⁶⁹ SIMONENKO 2008, 71, Pl. 88/5; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 158, Fig. 58/15; BÂRCĂ 2011, 12, Fig. 1/15; KROPOTOV 2010, 136, Fig. 40/11.

⁷⁰ SIMONENKO 2008, 80, Pl. 136/3; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 158, Fig. 58/14; BÂRCĂ 2011, 12, Fig. 1/14; KROPOTOV 2010, 137, Fig. 40/2.

⁷¹ BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 158, Fig. 58/13; BÂRCĂ 2011, 12, Fig. 1/13.

⁷² SIMONENKO 2008, 67, Pl. 67/1b; BÂRCĂ 2011, 13.

⁷³ MAHNO 1960, 29-30, Fig. 12/1, 5; SIMONENKO 2008, 63, 65, Pl. 42/3g, 43/5, 54/1a; KOSTENKO 1993, 15, 28, 30, 82, Fig. 4/5, 8/9, 9/10, 17/25, 26/15, 28/12, 41, 29/13, 20; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 158, Fig. 58/12; BÂRCĂ 2011, 12-13, Fig. 1/12; KROPOTOV 2010, 136-137, Fig. 40/4, 6-10, 12.

⁷⁴ Cf. KROPOTOV 2010, 131, 136-139, Fig. 41.

⁷⁵ Cf. KOSTENKO 1993.

⁷⁶ For the elements specific to the novel wave of Sarmatians arriving to the north-Pontic space from the east see SIMONENKO 2000; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 99-203.

⁷⁷ See to this effect MARTYNOV 1955, 153-154, Fig. 66/1-2; RUDENKO 1962, 15-16, 29, 36, Pl. VII/1, 7; ARTAMONOV 1973, 44, 146, Fig. 48, 189-190.

by the male figure-shaped mirror handle in the rich grave in the barrow at Sokolova Mogila⁷⁸ (Lower Bug region) (Fig. 1/3-4) and the collar/diadem in the barrow no. 10 in the cemetery at Kobjakovo⁷⁹ (near Rostov on Don) (Fig. 2/6-7) which renders in the central part a male character having on the knee a sword and in hands a vessel like the character of the mirror at Sokolova Mogila. The grave in the barrow at Sokolova Mogila dates to the second half of the 1st c. AD (likely the third quarter or even its last third)⁸⁰, while that in T 10 at Kobjakovo sometime in the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD⁸¹.

In crossed legs sitting position is rendered also one of the figurines on the lid of the Sarmatian cauldron at Kal'mius⁸² (Fig. 3/1). Alike the above cases, in this case also the character holds in his hands a vessel. In N. A. Bokovenko's typological classification, the given cauldron belongs to type I⁸³ and represents, beside other categories of items, one of the innovations of the mid Sarmatian period, brought, as believed, by the Alani⁸⁴. Hence, one should mention that in the cases where they were identified in graves, the last had a marked eastern character.

It was believed these cauldrons date within the limits of 1st c. BC – 1st c. AD⁸⁵. Such dating was established, yet, based on the chronological framing of the mid Sarmatian culture accepted for the period. On the Sarmatian territory, yet, there is no grave or archaeological feature composed of cauldrons of

this type dating with certainty in the 1st c. BC. Thus, their dating should be placed, as mentioned with other occasions as well⁸⁶, in the 1st c. (mainly in the second half) – early/first quarter of the 2nd c. AD, although in some cases it may be extended until mid 2nd c. AD.

In a position similar to that of the individual on the pendant at Lehliu is that of the gagate pendant in the rich Sarmatian grave at Alitub (T 26 G 1)⁸⁷, dating to the second/last quarter of the 1st c. AD⁸⁸.

In a sitting position with legs crossed are rendered also the characters of the two figurines of musicians in grave 2 in the cemetery at Tillya-tepe⁸⁹ (north Afghanistan) (Fig. 2/1-2). There are dated, most likely, sometime by early/first half of the 1st c. AD⁹⁰ and in the 2nd-3rd centuries AD. It helps to date the life size ceramic statue depicting a fighter sitting with legs crossed in the ossuary near Koj-Krylgan Kala⁹¹ (Uzbekistan). To this effect may be mentioned also the fragmentarily preserved statue rendering a male coming the ossuary of the cemetery near Burly Kala⁹² (the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan). The sitting position with legs crosses is also found on the coins of the Indo-Scythian kings of the 1st c. BC Maues and Azes I⁹³ (Fig. 2/8-9), however also on a funerary stela of the 1st c. AD at Phanagoria (Fig. 2/3), whose individual holds in his hands a rhyton⁹⁴.

From the north-west Pontic Sarmatian environment we wish to mention herein the two golden belt buckles from T 2 G 1 at Porogi⁹⁵ (left Mid Dniester) (Fig. 2/4-5), rendering each a male of mongoloid features (Fig. 2/4-5) alike on the pendant of Lehliu. To our knowledge, there is no analogy for the two belt buckles at Porogi. Technologically and typologically however, the two items are similar to those in some of graves at Tillya-tepe⁹⁶. A depiction close to that on the buckles is found on two golden pendants from G 2 at Tillya-tepe⁹⁷, to which also belong the two figurines rendering musicians sitting with legs crossed⁹⁸. However, given their production technique and similarities with the depictions on the items in the grave at Tillya-tepe, it is

⁷⁸ KOVPANENKO 1986, 66-72, Fig. 70-73; SIMONENKO 2003, 48, Fig. 2/3-4. The mirror type to which the exemplar at Sokolova Mogila also belongs is made of bronze and is in the shape of a disk with thick rim, conical projection in the centre and nail shaped handle. Their diameter varies between 10 and 16 cm, but larger diameter exemplars are also found. This type mirrors emerged in the Sarmatian environment by the end of the 1st c. BC and were intensely used over the 1st c. AD (Cf. HAZANOV 1963, 64-65; SKRIPKIN 1990, 152, 155; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 131; GLUKHOV 2003, 92-93; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 172-173). In the north-Pontic area, the entrance of this type mirrors is put in relation to the eastern impulse (Alanic) by mid 1st c. AD (SIMONENKO 1993, 112-117; SYMONENKO 1999, 11; SIMONENKO 2003, 49). Evidence for such statements are the mirrors of the type in the aristocratic graves, of marked eastern features, in the tumuli, at Sokolova Mogila (Cf. KOVPANENKO 1986), Kamova Mogila (Cf. SIMONENKO, Mel'nik 2004) or the grave at Troyany (Cf. SIMONENKO 2008, 71, Pl. 84/2, 85-87).

⁷⁹ GUGUEV 1990, 68-73; GUGUEV 1992, 121-123, Fig. 4-8; PROKHOROVA/GUGUEV 1992, 143-146, Fig. 5-6; MORDVINTSEVA 2003, 42-43, 89, cat. no. 69, Fig. 28; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 205-206, 211-212, II, 39, cat. no. A109.3; III, Fig. 39, 65.

⁸⁰ KOVPANENKO 1986, 127 dates the grave in the first half of the 1st c. AD.

⁸¹ Cf. PROKHOROVA/GUGUEV 1992, 159. In his work of 1990 V. K. GUGUEV dated the grave by the end of the 1st – early 2nd c. AD (GUGUEV 1990, 68), chronological framing also accepted by other authors (Cf. MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, II, 39).

⁸² Shtern 1911, 43, Pl. V; SIMONENKO 1999, 165-166, Fig. 28/1; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 184-185.

⁸³ BOKOVENKO 1977, 232-233, Fig. 3/II. Based on the aspects and certain constructional elements within the type may yet be identified several variants. For cauldron finds belonging to this type see SKRIPKIN 1970, 207, Fig. 2, 3; BOKOVENKO 1977, 232, Fig. 3/I; 4 with complete bibliography and finds known at that date; MORDVINTSEVA/SERGATSKOV 1995, 114-124, Fig. 3/1; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 111-112, Fig. 7/2, 49/7-9, 11; RAEV 1986, 47-48, 51-52, Pl. 39, 42/1; BESPALYJ 1985, 163, Fig. 2/2; BESPALYJ 1986, 77-78, Pl. 70/1; ILYUKOV 1986, 79-80, Pl. 71/1. For the cauldrons of the type in the Sarmatian environment between the Don river and Dniester see KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 208-209, 231-232, Fig. 14/4; SIMONENKO 1993, 62, Fig. 19/2; SIMONENKO 2008, Pl. 15/2a, 38/2a, 39/3, 67/2c, 75/1, 79/3, 84/2; KURCHATOV/TEL'NOV 2010, 139-140, Fig. 1-3; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 184-185, Fig. 68/2-5; BÂRCĂ 2011a, 45-46, Pl. I/5-8 with complete bibliography.

⁸⁴ SKRIPKIN 1990, 214.

⁸⁵ KAPOSHINA 1965, 50-51; BOKOVENKO 1977, 233; KOSYANENKO/FLEROV 1978, 203.

⁸⁶ BÂRCĂ 2006, 166-167; BÂRCĂ 2011a, 45-46; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 184-184.

⁸⁷ MAKSIMENKO 1998, 121, Fig. 57/24; YATSENKO 1992a, 200, Pl. 6/4, tab. 1, no. 23.

⁸⁸ See for this grave RAEV 1986, 42-44.

⁸⁹ SARIANIDI 1989, 66, Fig. 23.

⁹⁰ The Tillya-tepe graves were dated to the 1st c. BC – 1st c. AD (see to this effect SARIANIDI 1985, 54-55; SARIANIDI 1987, 268, 279; SARIANIDI 1989). However, recent coin finds and research have shown that Tillya-tepe dates to the 1st c. AD (Cf. CRIBB 1993, 107-134; ZEYMAL 1999, 239-244. See also Robert Bracey (<http://www.kushan.org/essays/sapadbizes/finds.htm>) and Sara Peterson (https://www.academia.edu/1485067/Parthian_Aspects_of_Objects_from_Grave_IV_Tillya_Tepe). We wish to thank this way as well Dr. Sara Peterson for the kindness of pointing out this dating of the cemetery to the 1st c. AD as well as for the mentioned bibliography.

⁹¹ RAPOPORT 1958, Fig. 3; RAPOPORT 1971, 70-73, Fig. 32-34.

⁹² RAPOPORT 1971, 70.

⁹³ Cf. GARDNER 1886, 71, 83, Pl. XVII/5, XIX/1. The coins bear the texts ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΜΑΥΟΥ and ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΖΟΥ. See the discussion on such coins in TARN 1984, 398-403.

⁹⁴ YATSENKO 1992a, 200, Pl. 6/3, tab. 1, no. 23.

⁹⁵ SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 19-21, Fig. 11/1-2, 12; SIMONENKO 2003, Fig. 5/3-4; SIMONENKO 2008, Pl. 131/14-15; BÂRCĂ 2006, 114, 351, Fig. 107/3-4; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 150, Fig. 56/20-21.

⁹⁶ SARIANIDI 1985, 111, 145, Pl. 50/83.

⁹⁷ SARIANIDI 1987a, 77, Fig. 4; SARIANIDI 1989, 59, Fig. 18; MORDVINTSEVA 2003, 82, cat. no. 2, Fig. 3.

⁹⁸ SARIANIDI 1989, 66, Fig. 23.

believed that those at Porogi have the same origin⁹⁹. According to S. A. Yatsenko, the mongoloid individual riding a panther rendered on the two belt buckles is the image of the Lord of the Animals in the Nart sagas existent event today with a series of peoples from north Caucasus¹⁰⁰.

The marked eastern facial features of the individual on the pendant at Lehliu are similar to those of the individual on the mirror handle at Sokolova Mogila¹⁰¹, the two musician figurines in G 2 at Tillya-tepe¹⁰² and the characters in the two plate-fasteners in the Siberian collection of Peter the Great¹⁰³ (Fig. 3/2-3).

The male individuals of mongoloid features on the mirror handle at Sokolova Mogila¹⁰⁴ (Fig. 1/3) and the plate-fasteners in the Siberian collection of Peter the Great (Fig. 3/2-3) are depicted with long moustaches, which is not specific to mongoloids. Neither is the beard worn by the individuals exhibited on the mirror handle at Sokolova Mogila and the collar/diadem at Kobyakovo (Fig. 2/6-7). Although beard wearing is not very specific to the Sarmatian environment, it is though recorded on a series of artifacts¹⁰⁵. In what moustaches are concerned, it is worth mentioning they were worn rather often by the Sarmatians as evidenced by representations¹⁰⁶.

In connection to the garment worn by the individual on the pendant at Lehliu, one may argue it seems not to exceed by much in length the waistband area and has a letter V-shaped neckline, decorated with stripes along the neckline cut. Unfortunately, in this case it is impossible to specify whether the coat was fastened or loose and tied with a band or belt in the waistband area. Fastened or loose, V-shaped neckline garments with a length that might reach to the knee, occasionally even lower, are a dress peculiarity specific to the immense territory inhabited by the Sarmatians in the chronological interval between the 4th/3rd c. BC and 4th c. AD¹⁰⁷.

Last but not least, it is worth mentioning that although the pendant at Lehliu has no identical analogy to our knowledge, we believe that the item is, in our view, of eastern origin. It is rather obvious from the rendered individual appearance. His sitting position and anthropological type, dress and hairstyle point to the fact its features are specific to the eastern populations from Central Asia, including those nomads Iranian.

Therefore, based on the above mentioned, one may conclude that the two items at Lehliu belonged to an individual within the Sarmatian group arriving from the east starting with mid 1st c. AD¹⁰⁸, reaching the Danube mouths

⁹⁹ SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 52; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 151.

¹⁰⁰ YATSENKO 1992, 71.

¹⁰¹ KOVPANENKO 1986, 66-72, Fig. 70-73; SIMONENKO 2003, 48, Fig. 2/3-4.

¹⁰² SARIANIDI 1989, 66, Fig. 23.

¹⁰³ RUDENKO 1962, 15-16, 29, 36, Pl. VII/1, 7.

¹⁰⁴ The mirror in the Sokolova Mogila barrow is deemed by some as a possible import from Bactria (SIMONENKO 2003, 49), and by others, based on a complex analysis of all aspects (hairstyle, dress, position with the vessel in hand etc.), as items reflecting realities of Sarmatia in the first two centuries AD (YATSENKO 2000, 179).

¹⁰⁵ Cf. YATSENKO 1992a, Pl. 6/5, 15/3; YATSENKO 2000a, Fig. 1/5.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. YATSENKO 1992a, Pl. 4/5; CICHORIUS 1896, Pl. XXXVII; TREJSTER 1994, Fig. 7-10; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, III, Fig. 10-11.

¹⁰⁷ For v-neckline garments (either fastened or loose) alike that of the individual on the pendant at Lehliu, collar/diadem at Kobyakovo, the belt buckles at Porogi or the plate-fasteners in the Siberian collection of Peter the Great see YATSENKO 1992a.

¹⁰⁸ The graves in this group have eastern features and are significantly different from the rest of the Sarmatian graves in the north and north-west of the Black Sea. A specific trait is the very rich funerary inventory composed

area sometime in the second half of this century¹⁰⁹.

Another find that may be assigned to an individual in the group of Sarmatians entering the Romanian Plain in the second half of the 1st c. AD is the so-called hoard at Buzău¹¹⁰, obviously if it comes from the territory of Buzău county¹¹¹. R. Harhoiu dated this find in the second half of the 1st c. AD, and Gh. Bichir in the first half of the 2nd c. AD¹¹². In what we are concerned, we wish to mention we chose to date this find in the second/last quarter of the 1st c. AD¹¹³. A dating in the second half of the 1st c. AD also chose M. Babeş¹¹⁴.

Defining for the dating this group of items at Buzău are the earrings¹¹⁵ (Fig. 4/1-2), although the other items¹¹⁶ (Fig. 4/3-18) are good dating elements and have analogies in the north and north-west-Pontic Sarmatian environment, including in T 2 G 2 at Porogi.

Earrings of this type were manufactured on a golden triangular plate adorned on the obverse with 3-4 large cabochons, in round, oval, teardrop or rhombic shape, with rims decorated by grains granule. Some of the exemplars also have 2-5 small cabochons, and the spaces between the cabochons are filled with of eastern nature items (adornments made in animal style paralleled in the Bactrian art, parade weapons, mirrors, including Chinese, precious metal wares, bronze cauldrons with zoomorphic handles etc.) (Cf. SIMONENKO 2003; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009; BÂRCĂ 2006; BÂRCĂ 2012; BÂRCĂ 2013 with complete bibliography). Among the specific elements are also the main burials in barrows, large rectangular or almost square pits with the dead placed along the walls or the square pits with the dead placed on diagonal (Cf. SIMONENKO 2000; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009). The niche graves, but also part of the common rectangular graves might have belong to them as well, being well spread over the entire history of the Sarmatians (Cf. to this effect RAEV 1989, 116-117; SKRIPKIN 1990, 207-209, 217-218). Including the tamga signs were mainly distributed by this novel wave of Sarmatians arriving from the east, they also being the major contributors in their distribution in the Eastern Europe steppes. Moreover, we wish to mention, alike other times (Cf. BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009; BÂRCĂ 2006; BÂRCĂ 2013), that in the current state of knowledge one may argue that the graves with obvious eastern features in the north and north-Pontic area, in the chronological interval comprised between the mid 1st c. AD – early 2nd c. AD are in great part Alanic. Furthermore, it is obvious that the Chinese and Central Asian origin items (Cf. SIMONENKO 2003, 45-65; YATSENKO 1993, 60-72) emerged with the Sarmatians, including those in the north and north-west Pontic area once with the arrival of the Alani who used them prior reaching these territories. For graves belonging to the early Alanic aristocracy in the north-west Pontic area like those at Kovalevka (Sokolova Mogila), Troyany, Kozyrka, Vesnyanoe, Hruşca, Mocra (T 2 G 2), Mihajlovka (T 3 G 3), Porogi, etc. see KOVPANENKO 1986, 66-72, 127, Fig. 70-73; GROSU 1990, 53, 92, Fig. 16D; SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIJ 1990a, 19-21, Fig. 15/10-16, 16/1-9; SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991; SIMONENKO 1997, 389-407; SIMONENKO 2008, 71, 73-76, 79, Pl. 85-87, 100-111, 118-119, 131-133; SIMONENKO/MEL'NIK 2004, 269-280, KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 200-213, 226-242, Fig. 8-9, 11-17; DZYGOS'KYJ 1993, 74-75, 201, Fig. 33, 36/4-5, 37/2, 6, 8, 38, 43/1-6; BÂRCĂ 2006, 319-320, 329-330, 331-334, 348-353, Fig. 65, 75-77, 79-81, 97-111; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009.

¹⁰⁹ For the entrance and settlement of new tribes in the north-west of the Black Sea, a moment noticeable very well in the ancient literary and epigraphic sources see BÂRCĂ 2006, 244-262; BÂRCĂ 2013; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 348-364.

¹¹⁰ HARHOIU 1993, 41-51, Fig. 1. We wish to thank to Miss Dr. Rodica Oanță-Marghitu with the National History Museum of Romania for her kindness to make us available for study and publication of the photos of the items in the Buzău "hoard".

¹¹¹ See to this effect Gh. Bichir's view (BICHIR 1996, 301-302).

¹¹² BICHIR 1996, 301-302.

¹¹³ BÂRCĂ 2006, 108; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 144.

¹¹⁴ BABEŞ 1999, 234.

¹¹⁵ HARHOIU 1993, 41, Fig. 1/1-2; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 144, Pl. 1/8; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 122-123; II, 115, cat. no. B2.2; III, Pl. 7, 50.

¹¹⁶ Cf. HARHOIU 1993, 41, Fig. 1/3-19.

filigree flower motifs. The triangular base is marked with some exemplars with one or two rows of twisted wire. The cabochons of these earrings are filled with glass of various colours. On the reverse, to the triangular base are attached 5-8 golden loops of which hand same metal chains with a hemisphere by the end, which in certain exemplars are filled with glass paste. In some exemplars, by the end of these chains is attached a bead. On the tip of the triangular plate is attached by soldering a loop, with a mobile loop inside.

Similar earrings with those at Buzău are represented in the north-Pontic space by three finds. The first pair of such earrings comes from T 2 G 2 at Porogi¹¹⁷ (Fig. 5/3-4), the second from a barrow grave at Olbia (Fig. 5/7) found in 1913 south-west the village at Parutino¹¹⁸, and the third was discovered in G 1 in tomb 620 in the late Scythian cemetery at Ust'-Al'ma (Crimea)¹¹⁹ (Fig. 5/1-2). All three graves where such earrings were identified date sometime during the second half of the 1st c. AD. V. Mordvintseva and M. Yu. Trejster assume the north-west Pontic exemplars were made at Olbia and for those at Ust'-Al'ma, their production by a Barbarian artisan working, likely, in the settlement at Ust'-Al'ma¹²⁰. Earrings with a similar structure also come from Anhialo (Bulgaria)¹²¹.

Much more numerous in the north-Pontic area are the earrings with triangular plate yet provided with two cabochons. They come from a series of Sarmatian graves left the Lower and Mid Don River¹²² dating mainly in the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD. V. Mordvintseva believes all these earrings in the Sarmatian graves in the Don area are, likely, products of the same production centre¹²³. Two earring pairs of the type come from tombs 775¹²⁴ and 820¹²⁵ in the cemetery at Ust'-Al'ma (Crimea).

¹¹⁷ SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 30-31, Fig. 19/1-2, photo 24; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 122-123; II, 74, cat. no. A235.2; III, Pl. 38; FLESS/TREJSTER 2007, 174, Fig. 6/2; BÂRCĂ 2006, 108, 353, Fig. 109/1-2; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 144, Fig. 52/1-2.

¹¹⁸ MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 122-123; II, 127, cat. no. B29.7; III, Pl. 55; FLESS/TREJSTER 2007, 174, Fig. 6/4.

¹¹⁹ MORDVITSEVA 2002, 347-352, Fig. 1/1; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 122-123; II, 92, cat. no. A297.2; III, Pl. 42; ZAJTSEV/MORDVINTSEVA 2004, 184, Fig. 10/3; PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 150, Fig. 113/1, Pl. 2/4; FLESS/TREJSTER 2007, 174, Fig. 6/13.

¹²⁰ MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 123. See also MORDVITSEVA 2002, 347-352.

¹²¹ MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 123 with the bibliography at note 588.

¹²² T 44 G 1 de la Krivoj Liman (MAKSIMENKO 1998, 122-123, Fig. 16/9, 58/23; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 43, cat. no. A117.1), T 26 G 1 at Alitub (RAEV 1986, 42-44 and the chart by the end of the book; MEDVEDEV 1981, 259, Fig. 5; SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, photo 34/1; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 122-123, Fig. 58/22; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 5, cat. no. A3.1; III, Pl. 21; FLESS/TREJSTER 2007, 174, Fig. 6/3), T 40 G 5 in the cemetery Chertovitsk I (MEDVEDEV 1981, 256-257, Fig. 3/20-21, 4; MEDVEDEV 1990, 38, Fig. 11/6-7; SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, photo 34/2; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 113, cat. no. A380.1; III, Pl. 49), T 2 G 8 at Berdiya (SERGATSKOV 2000, 75-76, Fig. 94/6; MORDVINTSEVA/KHABAROVA 2006, 85, cat. no. 40, Fig. 3/40; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 13, cat. no. A21.3; III, Pl. 13, 23, Fig. 23), T 2 G 1 at Oktyabr'skij II (MORDVINTSEVA/KHABAROVA 2006, 119, cat. no. 154, Fig. 3/154; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 55, cat. no. A162.1; III, Pl. 34, Fig. 23) and T 1 G 2 at Verbovskij III (MORDVINTSEVA/KHABAROVA 2006, 90, cat. no. 55, Fig. 4/55; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 17, cat. no. A31a.1; III, Fig. 24).

¹²³ MORDVINTSEVA/KHABAROVA 2006, 12.

¹²⁴ MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 94, cat. no. A303a.2; III, Pl. 44; PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 150, Fig. 116/1.

¹²⁵ MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 94, cat. no. A305.2; III, Pl. 10, 44; PUZDROVSKIJ 2004, 299 (drawing), 300; PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 150,

In the north-west Pontic area such earrings were discovered in the Sarmatian grave (T 1 G 3) at Severinovka¹²⁶ (Fig. 5/5-6), dating based on the rich inventory sometime in the second half of the 1st c. AD¹²⁷. A. E. Puzdrovskij holds that earrings of the type emerge in graves no earlier than mid 1st c. AD¹²⁸.

F. Fless and M. Trejster frames all these earrings with triangular plate into type 2 in the typology proposed and consider, based on the area of discovery, they are the expression of a relative local material culture and that they were likely produced in the same workshops¹²⁹. Furthermore, the authors argue they are visible especially within graves, which must be related to the elites of the nomad tribes or the population in centres like Olbia, Panticapaeum or Tomis¹³⁰.

Returning to the "hoard" at Buzău it must be said, that also the rest of the items within, some of them part of a collar, have analogies in several Sarmatian graves in the north and north-west Pontic area dating in the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD.

For instance, the prolonged oval shaped golden appliqué (teardrop shape) with concave body and provided each with an orifice by the end¹³¹ (Fig. 4/3-4) are known in T 2 G 2 at Mocra¹³², T 41 at Ust'-Labinsk ("Zolotoe kladbishche" cemetery, located on the right bank of river Kuban)¹³³, Novoherkask¹³⁴, Orlovets¹³⁵ etc. Such appliqué are also present in the graves from the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD in the cemetery at Ust'-Al'ma¹³⁶. Similar are also the exemplars in T 2 G 2 at Porogi¹³⁷. I. I. Marchenko assigns the appliqué of this type in the Sarmatian environment in the Kuban region to type 1 in group Z and dates them in the second half of the 1st c. AD and all over the 2nd c. AD¹³⁸.

The seven golden appliqué in the shape of a rosette with six petals with six orifices and the central part formed of a projecting and protruding spherical centre¹³⁹ (Fig. 4/12-18) have also many analogies in the north-Pontic environment. In I. I. Marchenko's classification, the golden appliqué in the shape of a rosette with six-eight petals made of golden leaf by punching with spherical central part and provided with two or several attachment orifices placed by the end of the petals are assigned to type 2.1 in group E and are dated in the 1st c. AD¹⁴⁰.

The exemplars at Buzău have identical analogies in T 7 G

Fig. 117/1-2, Pl. 13/5.

¹²⁶ MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 78, cat. no. A246.1; III, Pl. 39; SIMONENKO 2008, 78, Pl. 127/2; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, Fig. 52/6-7.

¹²⁷ For the funerary inventory of this grave see SIMONENKO 2008, 78, Pl. 127; SIMONENKO 2011, 241.

¹²⁸ PUZDROVSKIJ 2004, 303.

¹²⁹ FLESS/TREJSTER 2007, 174.

¹³⁰ FLESS/TREJSTER 2007, 174, 180-181.

¹³¹ HARHOIU 1993, 41, Fig. 1/16-17.

¹³² KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 211, Fig. 16/4, 7; BÂRCĂ 2006, 118, 332, Fig. 79/11; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 153, Fig. 57/42.

¹³³ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 427/6, Pl. 46/427, 6; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, 352, cat. no. 56, Pl. 87/1.

¹³⁴ MAKSIMENKO 1998, 120, Fig. 56/17.

¹³⁵ SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 53.

¹³⁶ Cf. PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 145-147, Fig. 109/8, 110/23, 117/12-13, 118/7, Pl. 15/8, 16/6.

¹³⁷ SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 31, Fig. 19/6; BÂRCĂ 2006, 118, 353, Fig. 109/6-6a, 179/39; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 153, Fig. 57/39.

¹³⁸ MARCHENKO 1996, 143, Fig. 9/79, 11/79.

¹³⁹ HARHOIU 1993, 41, Fig. 1/3-9.

¹⁴⁰ MARCHENKO 1996, 142, Fig. 9/52, 11/52.

2 at Bădragii Vechi¹⁴¹, T 2 G 2 at Porogi¹⁴², T 2 G 1 in the cemetery at Oktyab'skij II¹⁴³, several graves in the "Zolotoe kladbishche" cemetery (T 16 at Tiflisskaya, T 1 and T 4 at Nekrasovskaya)¹⁴⁴ and that at Novyj¹⁴⁵ etc. All these graves with such appliqué date mainly in the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD.

Identical appliqué with those at Buzău are known also in Sarmatian graves in the Hungarian Plain¹⁴⁶, dating, in our view, sometime in the last quarter of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD.

Small tubes made of thin golden leaf decorated with cross grooves (Fig. 4/5-7) part of a collar¹⁴⁷ have also many analogies in the north-Pontic area. In the north-west Pontic Sarmatian environment such items were discovered in T 2 G 1 and T 2 G 2 at Porogi¹⁴⁸, the Sokolova Mogila barrow¹⁴⁹, T 1 G 3 at Severinovka¹⁵⁰ etc. The 24 exemplars in T 2 G 2 at Porogi were components of the collar, while those at Sokolova Mogila had been sown on the coat sleeves of the deceased. Based on the rich inventory¹⁵¹, specific for the graves in the second half of the 1st c. AD, the grave in the barrow Sokolova Mogila dates, most likely, sometime in the second half of the 1st c. AD (likely the third quarter or even its last third)¹⁵². Such tubes are often found in Sarmatian graves all over the space they inhabited and were more complex collar parts or were sown to coats beside different types of golden dress appliqué¹⁵³. They are known both among the adornment objects from the Greek cities on the northern shore of the Black Sea as well as the Barbarian environment in the Volga and Don rivers area, the Kuban region, the north-Pontic area west of Don and Crimea¹⁵⁴.

Concerning the three items with the appearance of a ring made of golden leaf and provided with circular handles attached

by soldering¹⁵⁵ (Fig. 4/9-11) it must be mentioned they are pendant parts, whose central part was formed of a glass or semiprecious bead in the prolonged oval shape or barrel-shaped. Two of these ring like items still preserved one of the parts plated with golden leaf, which makes them resemble a small lid. These items were dressed on the bead or semiprecious stone ends. Pendants with similar structure are known, alike the earrings' case, dress appliqué and golden leaf tubes, in several Sarmatian graves of the 1st c. – early half 2nd c. AD¹⁵⁶, although their origin seems to be from the late Hellenistic period¹⁵⁷. Alike the case at Buzău, there are circumstances when the central part of these pendant-amulets was missing or was found elsewhere in the grave. Such pendants are also present in the late Scythian cemetery at Ust'-Al'ma¹⁵⁸. A large number of such pendants come from hoard 1 in the collection of J. Paul Getty Museum (USA), which supposedly come from the northwestern regions of Iran and date in the 1st c. BC – 1st c. AD¹⁵⁹.

Among the items at Buzău also counts a golden ring (Fig. 4/19). It was made of a single metal wire and is characterised by a unitary appearance. The loop and upper part form a whole. In the round bezel a dark green gem was fit, on which a goat is engraved. The gem fit into the bezel slightly exceeds the upper line of the ring.

This ring is similar to both type 1c and type 2a in Hélène Guiraud's typological classification¹⁶⁰. Guiraud 1c type rings develop vertically and have the bezel incorporated into the loop, while the stone exceeds the upper line. The bezel is, mainly, ellipsoid or round in shape. In what rings of Guiraud 2a type are concerned, they develop horizontally and have an oval or round bezel incorporated into the loop, which has a vertical profile widening towards the upper part and convex shoulders. The bezel where the decorative element is fit forms, alike the rings in type Guiraud 1c, a whole with the loop.

Rings of type Guiraud 1c are Hellenistic in origin and were used included in the 1st c. AD.¹⁶¹ The items of type Guiraud 2a, which are characterised by a fine and balanced form, are dated to the Roman environment mainly by the end of the 1st c. – first half of the 2nd c. AD.¹⁶² Although the commencement of the production and use must be placed in an earlier period, evidence to this end being the many analogies with the 1st c. AD.

Similar or very close typologically rings with that at Buzău are known for a large geographical area, and their emergence placed sometime prior the mid 1st c. AD¹⁶³. Identical items with that at Buzău come also from a few graves in the second half of the 1st c. AD in the cemetery at Ust'-Al'ma (Crimea)¹⁶⁴, whose

¹⁴¹ BĂRCĂ 2006, 119, 276, Fig. 5/7, 179/4; BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 154, Fig. 57/4.

¹⁴² SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 31, Fig. 19/4-4b; BĂRCĂ 2006, 119, 353, Fig. 109/4-4b, 179/31-32; BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 154, Fig. 57/28-29.

¹⁴³ MORDVINTSEVA/KHABAROVA 2006, 120, cat. no. 157; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 121; II, 55, cat. no. A162.1; III, Pl. 34, Fig. 23.

¹⁴⁴ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 285, 503/2, 517/1, Pl. 31/285, 52/503, 2, 52/517/1; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, 353, cat. no. 62, Pl. 91/3.

¹⁴⁵ IL'YUKOV/VLASKIN 1992, 52, 248, Fig. 10/14.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. FARKAS 1998, Fig. 6, Pl. I/3; HAVASSY 1998, cat. no. 11; ISHTVANOVICH/KULCHAR 2005, 336, Fig. 1/1; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2006, Fig. 1.

¹⁴⁷ HARHOIU 1993, 41, Fig. 1/13-15.

¹⁴⁸ SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 26, 31, Fig. 14/7, 19/3-4, 4v; BĂRCĂ 2006, 120, 350, 353, Fig. 106/3, 109/3-4, 179/35-36; BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 154, Fig. 57/35-37.

¹⁴⁹ KOVPANENKO 1986, 43, Fig. 39/2-3.

¹⁵⁰ BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 154, Fig. 57/24; SIMONENKO 2008, 78, Pl. 127/5; SIMONENKO 2011, 241.

¹⁵¹ Cf. KOVPANENKO 1986.

¹⁵² KOVPANENKO 1986, 127 dated the grave in the first half of the 1st c. AD.

¹⁵³ See to this effect RAEV 1986, Pl. 42/5; MIROSHINA/DERZHAVIN 1988, 152, Fig. 5/27-29; IL'YUKOV 1986, 80, Pl. 71/5; IL'YUKOV/VLASKIN 1992, 52, 248, Fig. 10/13; GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 51, 112, 228, 263/3, 292, 311, 396, 442, 481, 504, 509, Pl. 5/51, 12/112, 24/228, 27/263, 3, 31/292, 33/311, 45/396, 48/442, 50/481, 52/504, 509; MARCHENKO 1996, Fig. 44/7, 73/18, 106/10, 111/5, FARKAS 1998, Pl. II/4; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 119-120, Fig. 56/1-2, 5-6, 9, 16-17, 19; ISHTVANOVICH/KULCHAR 2005, 336, Fig. 1/3; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2006, Fig. 1; KÖHEGYI 1984; MORDVINTSEVA/KHABAROVA 2006, 17, note 40, cat. no. 36, 37, 84, 87, 102, 107, 111, 155, 227; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, Pl. 43/7, 57/8, 68/6, 73/6, 74/1, 75/2, 80/1.

¹⁵⁴ PYATYSHEVA 1956, Pl. XIII/8-11, 14, 18, 20; BOGDANOVA 1963, 104, Fig. 5/12; SHELOV 1961, 29, Pl. XXXVI/3; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 78-80; PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 145-147, Fig. 110/12, 19, 111/15, 113/2-3, 115/9, 116/7, 117/11, 118/4, 119/9, Pl. 14/1, 16/5.

¹⁵⁵ HARHOIU 1993, 41, Fig. 1/10-12.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA, 64, cat. no. 355, 39/355; SERGATSKOV 2000, 22, 26, 142, Fig. 17/43, 23/14; MORDVINTSEVA/KHABAROVA 2006, 17, cat. no. 11, 15, 54, Fig. 6/11, 15, 54, Pl. 12/54, 14/11, 15; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 67-68; II, 11, cat. no. A9.2, A11.1, 17, cat. no. A31.3; III, Pl. 34, Fig. 23.

¹⁵⁷ See to this effect MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 67-68 with complete bibliography and mentioned finds.

¹⁵⁸ PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, Pl. 15/7.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. PFROMMER 1993, 44-45, 167-176, no. 40-60.

¹⁶⁰ GUIRAUD 1989, 180, 181-185.

¹⁶¹ GUIRAUD 1989, 180; POPOVIĆ 1992, 10, 62 (type I), cat. no. 5, 67, 68, 95, 97-98, 100-102.

¹⁶² POPOVIĆ 1992, 10, 62 (tip II).

¹⁶³ Cf. MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 157 with complete bibliography and mentioned finds.

¹⁶⁴ PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 148-149, Fig. 114/2, 117/3-4; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 157; II, 93, cat. no. A300.3, 95, cat. no. A305.4, 141, cat. no.

inventories also comprised other categories of items also found in the “hoard” at Buzău. The ring at Buzău is very close also to the exemplars in the Sarmatian graves at Mikhajlovka (T 3 G 3)¹⁶⁵ and Zapruđe¹⁶⁶, which are of type Guiraud 2a¹⁶⁷ and Popović II¹⁶⁸. The grave at Mikhajlovka dates in the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD¹⁶⁹ and that at Zapruđe in the 1st c. AD, most likely in its second half¹⁷⁰.

Given the types of items in the “hoard” at Buzău we are convinced they are a very small part of the funerary inventory of the rich woman grave¹⁷¹ part of the group of aristocratic graves of the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD in the north-west Pontic area. Furthermore, we believe that the grave to which these items belong is from somewhere in the north-west Pontic area (likely the Prut-Dniester interfluvium) and by no means from the territory of Buzău County. Last but not least, one may conclude that the items had belonged to a representative of the wealthy in the Sarmatian society, part of the group of Sarmatians arriving to the north-west Pontic area from territories east of Don river starting with mid 1st c. AD.

Concerning the dating of this find, we wish to mention that although we chose to frame it chronologically in the second half/last quarter of the 1st c. AD¹⁷², one cannot exclude a dating by the end of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD¹⁷³.

Another find rising recent debates is the bronze casserole (Fig. 6/7) at Oltenița-Ulmeni¹⁷⁴. It belongs to a type of metal vessel found both in the Roman Empire as well as in the *Barbaricum*. Such vessels are framed in H. J. Eggers's typology in type 144¹⁷⁵, also known in the specialty literature under the name of “Gödåker” type casseroles. H. J. Eggers dates this casserole type in stages B1 (AD 10-70) and B2 (AD 70-150/160), mainly in the latter¹⁷⁶.

Casseroles of the type are rarely found in the eastern and central parts of Europe¹⁷⁷, however are well represented in the west and north¹⁷⁸. Additionally, it was noted they were

C10.6, III, Pl. 11, 43, 44, 67.

¹⁶⁵ SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY 1990a, 21, Fig. 15/16; SIMONENKO 2008, 76, Pl. 119/1; BÂRCĂ 2006, 109, 329, Fig. 75/12, 177/1; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 146, Fig. 53/1. The ring at Mikhajlovka is of bronze and has faience fit in the bezel with the depiction of a grape bunch in relief.

¹⁶⁶ ROMANYUK/SYMONENKO 2001, 22, Fig. 7/4; SIMONENKO 2008, Pl. 76/22; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 145, Fig. 53/15.

¹⁶⁷ GUIRAUD 1989, 181-182, Fig. 11/a, 12/a.

¹⁶⁸ POPOVIĆ 1992, 10, 62.

¹⁶⁹ See for the inventory and dating of this grave SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY 1990a, 19-21, Fig. 15/10-16, 16/1-9; BÂRCĂ 2006, 329-330, Fig. 75-77; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009.

¹⁷⁰ For the funerary inventory of the grave at Zapruđe Cf. ROMANYUK/SYMONENKO 2001, 19-28; SIMONENKO 2008, 68-69, Pl. 73-76.

¹⁷¹ The view that the items come from a woman's grave was also expressed by R. HARHOIU (HARHOIU 1993, 45) and Gh. BICHIR (BICHIR 1996, 301-302).

¹⁷² BÂRCĂ 2006, 108; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 144.

¹⁷³ V. Mordvintseva and M. Trejster date the items at Buzău by mid and third quarter of the 1st c. AD (MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, II, 115-116).

¹⁷⁴ MORINTZ/IONESCU 1968, 109, Fig. 12/1, 13; BICHIR 1972, Pl. XVII; BICHIR 1977, 177, 192, Pl. 25/2.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. EGGERS 1951, 172-173, Pl. 12/144.

¹⁷⁶ EGGERS 1951, 172-173, Pl. 12/144.

¹⁷⁷ RADNÓTI 1938, 59-60, Pl. XXIV/3; KROPOTKIN 1970, 94, cat. no. 810, Fig. 61/3-4, 97, cat. no. 842, Fig. 62/5, 7; KRASKOVSKÁ 1978, 13, Fig. 5/1; SANIE 1981, 177, Pl. 49/5a-b; WIELOWIEJSKI 1985, 291, cat. no. 219, Pl. 16; RAEV 1986, 30.

¹⁷⁸ EGGERS 1951, 172-173, map 41; EGGERS 1968, cat. no. 19, 45, 66, 75, 77, 87, Fig. 15, 16/d, 26/b, 62, 65; BOESTERD 1956, cat. no. 25-29, Pl. II/27-29; LUND HANSEN 1987, 46-47, map 55; TASSINARI 1975, 29 cat.13-18, Pl. III-V; BARATTE, BONNAMOUR/GUILLAUMET/TASSINARI 1984, 75-76,

not identified at Pompeii and in general were not discovered in Italy, and in Germania, the type imposed rather with difficulty¹⁷⁹.

Concerning the period when they were produced, B. A. Raev believes that the start of their production should be placed by mid 1st c. AD, ceasing sometime by the end of the 1st c. AD¹⁸⁰. U. Lund Hansen considers they started to be produced in few numbers in Campania, from around mid 1st c. AD, followed by a large scale production in the Gaul workshops¹⁸¹. Moreover, it was noted that most vessels from Europe date in stage B2, but there are exemplars coming from features dating to the 3rd c. AD¹⁸².

The analysis of all casserole finds allowed R. Petrovsky to divide them, according to shape and decoration, in three distinct groups. The author notices that vessels in **group a** are not decorated and few, being found in Sweden, Denmark, Britain, France, to which add a specimen at *Intercisa* (Hungary), Parutino (Ukraine) and Osiek (Poland)¹⁸³. **Group b**, discovered in much larger numbers, have their shoulders decorated with a strip decorated with palisade-shaped motifs, while those in **group c** have an extended foot and the shoulder decorated with a stripe decorated with stylised vegetal motifs¹⁸⁴.

Following the analysis of all casserole finds, but also of the archaeological features where they were identified, R. Petrovsky concludes that vessels in **groups a-b** started production in AD 55/60, while those in **group c** in AD 60/70¹⁸⁵. The same author succeeded to establish the production cease shortly after early 2nd c. AD (**groups a-b** AD 90/120, and **group c** in AD 100/120)¹⁸⁶. Nevertheless, there are cases when such casseroles were in use much after the production ceases, being discovered even in the 3rd c. AD¹⁸⁷.

Beside the specimen at Oltenița-Ulmeni, in the Sarmatian graves in the north-Pontic area, such casseroles are represented by the specimens in T 3 G 1 at Cuconești Vechi¹⁸⁸, T 2 G 1 at Chuguno-Krepinka¹⁸⁹ and the barrow grave 1 at Kobyakovo (cemetery located east of Rostov-on-Don)¹⁹⁰. The Chuguno-Krepinka casserole is stamped with letters **PICVSF** *Picus F(ecit)* or **[Al]picus F(ecit)**, artisan who produced in Gaul under the Flavians (AD 69-96)¹⁹¹.

The Cuconești Vechi casserole belongs to **group b**, and the grave to which it is part dates, based on the entire inventory¹⁹², most likely in the last quarter of the 1st c. AD –

cat. no. 100-101, Pl. XXXV; PETROVSKY 1993, 214, 218, 255, 257-258, 269, 271, 279, 322.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. LUND HANSEN 1987, 47; PETROVSKY 1993, 84.

¹⁸⁰ RAEV 1986, 29-31.

¹⁸¹ LUND HANSEN 1987, 46-47.

¹⁸² RAEV/NAUMENKO 1993, 155.

¹⁸³ PETROVSKY 1993, 79-80.

¹⁸⁴ PETROVSKY 1993, 80-83.

¹⁸⁵ PETROVSKY 1993, 82.

¹⁸⁶ PETROVSKY 1993, 82.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. SANIE 1981, 177; PETROVSKY 1993, 80, 82.

¹⁸⁸ DERGACHEV 1982, 27-29, Fig. 7/2-7; GROSU 1990, 51, Fig. 19V; GROSU 1995, Fig. 8A/3; BÂRCĂ 2001, 350, Fig. 3; BÂRCĂ 2006, 172-174, 306, Fig. 48/4, 189/3; BÂRCĂ 2009, 101, 105-106, Fig. 6/3; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 187, 189-190, Fig. 69/3.

¹⁸⁹ SIMONENKO 2008, 17, 66, Pl. 61; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 187, 189, Fig. 69/5.

¹⁹⁰ GUGUEV 1986, 71, 72, Pl. 45/2.

¹⁹¹ PETROVSKY 1993, 174, Y.32.

¹⁹² For the inventory of this grave see DERGACHEV 1982, 27-28, Fig. 7; GROSU 1982, 10-11, Fig. 2/9-12; GROSU 1990, 51, Fig. 19V; BÂRCĂ 2006, 306, Fig. 48.

early/first quarter of the 2nd c. AD. The Chuguno-Krepinka and Kobyakovo casseroles belong to **group c** alike that at Oltenița-Ulmeni. The grave at Čuguno-Krepinka dates based on the rich inventory¹⁹³ in the first quarter of the 2nd c. AD and that at Kobyakovo sometime in the first half of the 2nd c. AD¹⁹⁴.

Finally yet importantly, we wish to mention that all casseroles in types Eggers 137-144 in the Sarmatian environment come mainly from graves dated to the second half of the 1st c. – third quarter of the 2nd c. AD¹⁹⁵.

Referring to the production place of Eggers 144 casseroles, most of the scholars agree that the main production centre was in south Gaul¹⁹⁶.

Functionally, the casseroles analysed above were used as mixing wares among the drinking wares, but also as eating and measuring wares.

The vessel at Oltenița-Ulmeni poses questions related to its find spot and conditions.

The bronze casserole was found by chance, beside a cup and an *unguentarium* (Fig. 6/6), in 1960 following rescue archaeological excavations required by the destruction in 1957 of several inhumation graves in occasion of irrigation works. The archaeological investigations yielded a few Sarmatian graves¹⁹⁷. One of them (G 1) had an inventory comprising pottery, beads and a bronze brooch¹⁹⁸ (Fig. 6/1). Another (G 3) presents a rectangular disk mirror with perforated side handle, decorated in relief on the exterior part (Fig. 6/3), a wheelthrown cup made of red fabric (Fig. 6/4), loom weights, a small bell (Fig. 6/2) and a bronze bracelet with crossed ends and coiled¹⁹⁹ (Fig. 6/5).

Gh. Bichir dated the casserole in the first half of the 2nd c. AD²⁰⁰. Based on the consideration that the bronze vessel is part of the same grave with the brooch R. Harhoiu dated the casserole in the second half of the 1st c. AD²⁰¹, although the authors of the research clearly state it was found scattered and it cannot be said with certainty that it comes from a damaged grave. Regardless, it is certain that the bronze vessel was not part of the inventory of grave 1 as argued by R. Harhoiu²⁰².

The brooch (Fig. 6/1) in G 1 at Oltenița-Ulmeni²⁰³, which R. Harhoiu uses to date the casserole, was dated by the excavators to the 2nd c. AD and early 3rd c. AD²⁰⁴, and in the first half of the 2nd c. AD by Gh. Bichir²⁰⁵. The item belongs to type Almgren 84, broadly used in both the Roman

Empire²⁰⁶ as well as the Barbarian environment²⁰⁷. Within the Roman Empire, the provinces where many specimens of such brooch were identified are Noricum, Pannonia, Moesia and Dacia²⁰⁸. In S. Cocis's typological classification for the 173 brooch specimens of Almgren 84 type (Cocis type 8b2) in Dacia, the specimen at Oltenița-Ulmeni belongs to type 8b2b1²⁰⁹. Concerning the dating of the brooches of the type, it was noted that in the province of Dacia, where there were workshops manufacturing such brooch type (Napoca, Porolissum), their maximum use period was in the interval between early 2nd c. AD and the third quarter of the same century²¹⁰. In connection to the chronological framing of such brooches, one should mention that there are also other dating propositions: first half of the 2nd c. AD²¹¹; last quarter of the 1st c. – second half of the 2nd c.,²¹² Hadrian's reign – early 3rd c. AD;²¹³ the 2nd c. – early 3rd c. AD²¹⁴ or the second half of the 2nd c. – early 3rd c. AD²¹⁵. For the brooches of the type in Eastern Europe it was noted that based on the items they were discovered beside within graves, their use in the second half of the 2nd c. – early half of the 3rd c. AD²¹⁶. An example to this effect is the brooch in the Sarmatian grave 10 in the cemetery at Bocani²¹⁷ (Republic of Moldova), dating based on the rich funerary inventory²¹⁸ in the second half of the 2nd c. – early 3rd c. AD²¹⁹.

Given the above mentioned we believe that also grave G 1 at Oltenița-Ulmeni may be dated in the second half of the 2nd c. AD, which is supported, as we shall see below, also by the dating of the items in G 3.

The bracelet (Fig. 6/5) in G 3²²⁰ belongs to the type of bracelets with crossed and coiled ends. Items of the type are in the shape of simple loops, made of bronze, silver and rarely gold wire or bars, round or rectangular in section, closed by the overlap and then coiling of the two ends on the loop. The diameter of these bracelets is comprised between 5 and 8-9 cm. Items of the type were broadly spread for a long period of time. They were intensively used in pre-Roman Dacia, where they were discovered in both settlements as well as a series of hoards²²¹, but

¹⁹³ See for the rich inventory of this grave SIMONENKO 2008, 65-66, Pl. 56-66.

¹⁹⁴ GUGUEV 1986, 72.

¹⁹⁵ RAEV 1986, 29-30; RAEV/NAUMENKO 1993, 155, 157; BÂRCĂ 2006, 170-174; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 187-190; SIMONENKO 2008, 17-18.

¹⁹⁶ RADNÓTI 1938, 50; KROPOTKIN 1970, 25; RAEV 1986, 30 with all views and bibliography; LUND HANSEN 1987, 47; PETROVSZKY 1993, 82.

¹⁹⁷ MORINTZ/IONESCU 1968, 109-110.

¹⁹⁸ MORINTZ/IONESCU 1968, 110, 111; MORINTZ/IONESCU 1970, 40, 44, Fig. 3/1; BICHIR 1977, 187, Pl. 22/2.

¹⁹⁹ MORINTZ/IONESCU 1968, 110, Fig. 14/1-3; BICHIR 1972, Pl. XVI/2, 4, 8; BICHIR 1977, Pl. 22/5, 8, 10, 25/4.

²⁰⁰ BICHIR 1996, 300.

²⁰¹ HARHOIU 1993, 46.

²⁰² HARHOIU 1993, 46.

²⁰³ MORINTZ/IONESCU 1970, 40, 44, Fig. 3/1; BICHIR 1977, 187, Pl. 22/2.

²⁰⁴ MORINTZ/IONESCU 1970, 44.

²⁰⁵ BICHIR 1972, 167; BICHIR 1977, 187; BICHIR 1996, 300.

²⁰⁶ Cf. PATEK 1942, 21-27; KOVRIG 1937, 16; JOBST 1975, 40; KOŠČEVIĆ 1980, 22; BOJOVIĆ 1983, 43, Pl. XVI/141; HATTATT 1985, 67, Fig. 28/335; SEDLMAYER 1995, 29; COCIȘ 2004, 65-66.

²⁰⁷ ALMGREN 1923, 43; FEDOROV 1960, Pl. 43/6; AMBROZ 1966, 38-39, group 10, subgroup 2, Pl. 7/13; PEŠKAR 1972, 80; GROSU 1990, Fig. 21G/1; DĄBROWSKA 1992, 101-109; DĄBROWSKA 1995, 8, Fig. 1; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 241, Fig. 97/13; KROPOTOV 2010, 260, 263, group 12, form 5, Fig. 73/7.

²⁰⁸ Cf. COCIȘ 2004, 65-66.

²⁰⁹ Cf. COCIȘ 2004, 65, type 8b2b1, Pl. XXIX-XXXIII.

²¹⁰ Cf. COCIȘ 2004, 65-66.

²¹¹ PEŠKAR 1980, 80.

²¹² RIHA 1979, 80.

²¹³ SEDLMAYER 1995, 29-30.

²¹⁴ AMBROZ 1966, 38.

²¹⁵ JOBST 1975, 4; DĄBROWSKA 1992, 106.

²¹⁶ KROPOTOV 2010, 260.

²¹⁷ FEDOROV 1960, Pl. 43/6; AMBROZ 1966, 38; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 241; KROPOTOV 2010, 263.

²¹⁸ Within the funerary inventory of the grave counts a wheelthrown small cup of orange fabric, handmade pottery, a loom weight, a bracelet with crossed and coiled ends, a bronze small bell, several glass beads, a rectangular disk mirror with perforated side handle, decorated in relief on the outer part, a glass *aryballos* (Isings 61) etc. Cf. FEDOROV 1960, Pl. 43; GROSU 1990, 66.

²¹⁹ BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 255.

²²⁰ BICHIR 1977, Pl. 22/10.

²²¹ Cf. HOREDIT 1973, 139, types D3a D3b; URSACHI 1995, Pl. 206/7, 14, 17, 207/1, 3, 5, 11, 13; RUSTOIU 1996, 94-95, 192-196, Fig. 41, 42/1-3;

also in the Bastarnae environment²²². They are also frequently found in the Roman environment of the first centuries AD²²³, but also the cemeteries of the north-Pontic cities in the first centuries AD²²⁴. Bracelets of the type are also present in the graves in the Bosporan cemeteries²²⁵ or late Schythian²²⁶, and the Sarmatian graves all over the space they inhabited²²⁷.

Related to the mirror (Fig. 6/3) in G 3²²⁸ it must be said it belongs to the type of mirrors disk with thickened rim and side handle, in rectangular, perforated shape. The outer part of these mirrors is decorated in relief with the representation of the various motifs; most often, solar symbols or tamga type sings²²⁹. Among the specimens of this mirror type are found specimens with a conical projection in the central part.

A. M. Khazanov dated such mirror in the 2nd – 3rd c. AD²³⁰, while A. S. Skripkin noted that the peak period of their use in the Sarmatian world in the Lower Volga area was the second half of the 2nd c. – mid 3rd c. AD²³¹. M. P. Abramova dated the mirror of the type with decoration in relief on the outer part from the north-Caucasian territories to the 2nd – 3rd c. AD, specifying yet that they emerge as early as the end of the 1st c. AD²³². Upon the analysis of such mirrors in the Kuban region, I. I. Marchenko noticed that they are found there in archaeological features only beside brooches of the 2nd c. AD²³³. in the Sarmatian environment of the north-Pontic area, the great majority of the mirror of the type come from graves dated to the second half of the 2nd c. – first half of the 3rd c. AD²³⁴. Confirmation to this effect is the fact that in most cases, they belong to the funerary furniture of graves comprising also a series of artifacts representing good dating elements. Some mirrors of the type are rarely found in graves dating to the mid and second half of the 3rd c. AD²³⁵.

Concerning the wheelthrown cup (Fig. 6/4) made of

red fabric in the same grave²³⁶ we wish to mention it is similar to the specimen discovered in the barrow cemetery at Histria dated to the 1st – 2nd c. AD and assigned to type XLVI in Al. Suceveanu typology²³⁷.

In the same chronological interval is also placed the green glass *unguentarium* (Fig. 6/6) found isolated beside the casserole and cup.

This shape of *unguentarium* may be rather considered with a quasi-globular body with concave base and cylinder neck with a narrowing by the base. According to the typology of C. Isings, as also framed by I. Glodariu²³⁸, it may be deemed form 82A1 *candlestick unguentarium*²³⁹. Noticeably, this form (at Oltenița-Ulmeni) is slightly different from form Isings 82 A1 precisely by the almost globular shape of the body. The narrow part by the neck base would be an element that would orient to a dating in the 1st – 2nd c. AD, however is not a compulsory element as it appears often also in the 3rd – 4th c. AD.

At Panticapaeum, it appears in graves from the second half of the 1st c. – early half of the 2nd c. AD often together with other glass and pottery vessels. There, such *unguentaria* is framed in type II, group 1 of researchers N. Kunina and N. Sorokina²⁴⁰. In J. Hayes, the form appears as a Syro-Palestinian product and dated towards the half of the 1st c. AD²⁴¹, although similar forms are presented by the same author as datable to the first half of the 2nd c. AD²⁴². At Augusta Rauricorum, B. Rütli frames this recipient, very similar to that at Oltenița-Ulmeni, in form 143²⁴³, where it appears together with coins from Faustina (unspecified). The form is dated to the last part of the 2nd c. AD until the 4th c. AD²⁴⁴. In Greece (Macedonia), in a 1st c. AD grave were identified five similar items, of which three have a narrow portion at the neck base²⁴⁵. Among previous specimens of the form, and better dated, count those at Herculaneum (*antequam* AD 79). The items identified there are bluish, cylinder neck and shape in a bulb form, being believed by the editor as north Italian²⁴⁶. A similar shape *unguentarium*, deemed east-Mediterranean product, counts in the collections of the Art Gallery of the Yale University being dated to the 2nd c. AD²⁴⁷. still in east Mediterranean in the collection of the Museum of Jerusalem counts an analogue item, colourless, with air bubbles and green colour, inverted rim and the neck slightly widened by the base, where it is also narrowed joining it with the globular body and flat base. The item is dated to the 1st – 2nd c. AD and

TEODOR/NICU/ȚAU 1999, Fig. 4/3-4, 7, 5/3, 6.

²²² SMIRNOVA 1981, 195, Fig. 3/1-2; BABEȘ 1993, Pl. 47/2c-d.

²²³ BECKMANN 1969, Pl. 1/3-6, 2/1-5; BECKMANN 1981, 10, 12, types I3a and I3b; MARSHALL 1969, 329, Pl. LXVI/2809; POPILIAN 1980, Pl. XXX/2; ALICU/COCIȘ 1988, Pl. VIII/68, 70; GUDEA 1989, 719, no. 10, Pl. CCXLVI/10; RIHA 1990, Pl. 24/600-610; COCIȘ 1994, 55, no.40, Pl. XIV/40; ISAC 1999, 760, no.15, Pl. II/15; BAJUSZ/ISAC 2001, no.15, Pl. II/15.

²²⁴ ZUBAR' 1982, 94, Fig. 61/1-7.

²²⁵ KOPUSOVA 1983, Pl. XXVII/16.

²²⁶ SYMONOVICH 1983, Pl. XXXI/37, 38, 42-51, XXXVII/1-12; DASHEVSKAYA 1991, 39, Pl. 71/3; PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, Fig. 114/5. Two bracelets of the type come also from a grave and settlement at Mologa II (GUDKOVA/FOKEEV 1982, 80, 99, Fig. 15/13).

²²⁷ FEDOROV 1960, Pl. 37/18-19; BOGDANOVA 1963, Fig. 4/1; BOGDANOVA/GUSHCHINA/LOBODA 1976, Fig. 4/45, 6/51, 8/20, 10/41; DERGACHEV 1982, Fig. 40/12; ARKHEOLOGIYA SSSR 1989, Pl. 82/9; VADAY 1989, Pl. 100/10; GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 146, 370, Pl. 15/146, 41/370; FARKAS 1998, Pl. II/6; BUBULICH/HAHEU 2002, Fig. 6/A2; BÂRCĂ 2006, 104, Fig. 30/2, 176/2; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 140, 234-235, Fig. 50/9, 93/6.

²²⁸ BICHIR 1972, Pl. XVI/2; BICHIR 1977, Pl.11/1, 22/8.

²²⁹ The signs in relief on the mirrors represent, according to the researcher, both property signs, decorations, but also religious signs, while the mirrors themselves with tamga sings had beside a primary function also a magical-apotropaic significance.

²³⁰ KHAZANOV 1963, 65-66. Within his typological classification, A. M. Khazanov frames these mirrors in type IX.

²³¹ SKRIPKIN 1981, 80-81, Pl. 2; SKRIPKIN 1984, 47.

²³² ABRAMOVA 1971, 129-131.

²³³ MARCHENKO 1996, 24. In I. I. Marchenko's typology, decorated mirrors belong to variant 2 of type IX.

²³⁴ SIMONENKO 2004, 152; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 246-249.

²³⁵ Cf. SIMONENKO 2004, 152; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 247.

²³⁶ MORINTZ/IONESCU 1968, 110, Fig. 14/1; MORINTZ/IONESCU 1970, 41, Fig. 4/2, 5/2; BICHIR 1972, Pl. XVI/8; BICHIR 1977, Fig. 12/5, 25/4.

²³⁷ SUCEVEANU 2000, 152, Pl. 71/8.

²³⁸ GLODARIU 1974, 248, cat. no. 15, Pl. XLIX/S15.

²³⁹ ISINGS 1957, 97-98.

²⁴⁰ KUNINA/SOROKINA 1972, 164-167, Fig. 1, 10, no.2, 3, 6, 9.

²⁴¹ HAYES 1975, 70, no. 222, Fig. 8.

²⁴² HAYES 1975, 72, no. 238 and 74, no. 254-255 (of possible Cypriot production).

²⁴³ RÜTTI 1991, 98, 299, cat. no. 2415, Pl. 103, 213.

²⁴⁴ RÜTTI 1991, cat. no. 2415, Pl. 103, 213 (the item is ca. 17 cm high).

²⁴⁵ WEINBERG 1992, 115, Fig. 79 (the items are 13-15 cm high).

²⁴⁶ SCATOZZA HÖRICH 1995, 57, no. 128-129, Pl. XXXV. These items are much smaller (ca. 10 cm) and are assigned to form Isings 6. The author mentions similar finds at Vindonissa, Trier, Hedderheim and Köln in contexts of the end of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD.

²⁴⁷ MATHESON 1980, 62-63, no. 152 (16.7 cm high), the author assigning it to form Isings 28b.

is deemed an east-Mediterranean product²⁴⁸. In the Adriatic Sea area are known similar specimens in the 2nd – 3rd c. cemeteries at Bakar (Croatia)²⁴⁹ and Pocradec (Albania)²⁵⁰. A similar *unguentarium*, yet without narrowing by the neck base, deemed as a product of the Eastern Mediterranean is housed with the collections of the Museum of Berlin being dated to the 1st – 2nd c. AD²⁵¹.

Similar *unguentaria* are known in a series of graves at Tomis. They were dated to the 2nd – 3rd c. AD and framed by M. Bucovăla in type XLVI. One of them (no. 246), beside other glass items, lay beside a coin dated under Probus²⁵². From Odessos comes another specimen (*candlestick*) dated by Al. Minčev in the 1st – 2nd c. AD and deemed a micro-Asian product²⁵³. Similar *Unguentaria* to that at Oltenița-Ulmeni were discovered at Chersonesus (Crimea). They were framed by V. M. Zubar' to type 5 in his typological classification, mentioning they were spread in the period comprised between the end of the 1st c. AD and the first half of the 3rd c. AD²⁵⁴.

A green glass *unguentarium* with globular body and slightly concave base and cylinder neck with a narrowing by the base is part of the inventory of the Sarmatian grave in T 18 at Tiflisskaya²⁵⁵ ("Zolotoe kladbishche" cemetery). It is dated to the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD.²⁵⁶ It must be specified that this specimen at Tiflisskaya has the body height equal to that of the neck and its total height is smaller than that of the specimen at Oltenița-Ulmeni, with the quasi-globular body and the neck height represents almost two thirds of the total height.

Noticeably, dating and typological framings are rather elastic and cover a considerable geographical area.

Given the globular form of the body, neck base narrowing, eventual rim eversion, concave base, air bubbles in the composition and green colour we believe that the assignment of the item in the 2nd c. AD is most plausible. Should we yet consider the find conditions and spot and the dating of the items in G 1 and G 3, then the dating of this *unguentarium* may be nuanced.

Given the find spot and conditions of the casserole, *unguentarium* and cup as well as the presence nearby of some well datable Sarmatian graves, is very likely that the three items come from one of the damaged graves in 1957, view expressed four decades ago by Gh. Bichir²⁵⁷. Related to the chronological framing of the above items we believe they were deposited in grave/graves sometime by mid/third quarter of

the 2nd c. AD. Maybe, even sometime in the chronological interval comprised between AD 140/150-180, at any rate in no case in the second half of the 1st c. AD or the first decades of the 2nd c. AD.

A dating of the casserole, *unguentarium* and cup in this period is reinforced in our view also by the dating of the objects in the researched graves in 1960. In fact, it is hard to believe that the graves discovered in 1960 and those damaged in 1957, in which they originate, most likely the mentioned artifacts are great chronological differences, they being rather, as shown by the items' dating, a contemporary group. Another argument in favour of the proposed dating is also the fact that the producer's stamp on the casserole handle is erased²⁵⁸, which points to a long use of the object. This is indicative of the fact that the moment when it was deposited in the grave has nothing to do with the date when it was produced or reached the Lower Danube area. Even though the artisan stamp would have been preserved, we are not able to argue, for the lack of other more accurate dating elements, for a framing of the casserole and implicitly, of the grave it was part in the chronological interval when such vessels were made.

It is certain that in the current state one may conclude that the graves at Oltenița-Ulmeni seem to have belonged to a group of Sarmatians entering the Romanian Plain sometime by mid 2nd c. AD.

Another interesting find worthy of mention is the grave at Vitănești (T 2 G 2)²⁵⁹. It is a main burial in a Sarmatian barrow which at the time of the archaeological investigation was 15 m in diameter, 0.3 m height from the surface level and 0.85 m height from the constructive level (Fig. 7/1). Following the research, in sections I and III was noted the existence of a flat circular ditch, truncated cone in profile surrounding the grave (Fig. 7/1). Due to the partial research of this circular ditch, its diameter could not be established. The grave was central to the barrow. Since it was plundered, the pit shape at the research time was irregular. Nevertheless, one may argue it was rectangular. The pit of large sizes and was provided with steps but also with a small niche on the southern side (Fig. 7/2). The pit bottom was at 2.95 m below the current surface level. Due to the fact the grave was plundered, the bones (the anthropological analysis determined the dead was an adult woman 35 of age when buried) were found scattered all over the pit surface at various depths. The anatomical position of the left lower limb and part of the right indicate the dead was oriented with the head northwards. In the rest of the grave were identified, at various depths, fragments of basin bones, clavicle, humerus ribs, cubitus and right femur.

Among the inventory objects found in the grave and published by the excavators count glass beads; three tubes made of thin golden leaf with smooth surface (Fig. 8/1-2); 17 golden circular appliques with spherical central part decorated on the rims with transversal grooves and provided with attachment orifices (Fig. 8/6); a hexagonal golden applique decorated with seven circular projections surrounded by transversal grooves (Fig. 8/7); nine approximately rectangular golden appliques with grooves by the ends, rhomboid decoration in their central part and four attachment orifices (Fig. 8/3-4); two rosette

²⁴⁸ ISRAELI/BARAG/BROSH 2003, 212, no. 253.

²⁴⁹ GREGL/LAZAR/LJUBIĆ 2008, 151, no. 89, Pl. 20, no. 1.

²⁵⁰ TARTARI 2005, form 05 A, 77, no. 108-109 and Pl. V, no. 104-105 deemed Italian items (28).

²⁵¹ PLATZ-HORSTER 1976, no. 127 (14 cm high).

²⁵² BUCOVĂLA 1968, 119-120, type XLVI, Fig. X/a, b (no. 245, 17.2 cm high).

²⁵³ MINCHEV 2007, 338, Fig. 10.

²⁵⁴ ZUBAR' 1982, 87, Fig. 56/9-10.

²⁵⁵ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 299, Pl. 31/299; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, 349-350, cat. no. 51, Pl. 78/3.

²⁵⁶ BĂRCĂ 2012, 198, note 61; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, 303, 383 (is assigned to type Isings 6). I. I. Gushchina and I. P. Zasetskaya include this grave in the grave group in the "Zolotoe kladbishche" cemetery dating to the second half of the 1st c. – 2nd c. AD, with the note that many of these graves have a dating that does not exceed mid 2nd c. AD (GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, 37). V. Mordvintseva and M. Trejster date this grave in the second half of the 1st c. – first half of the 2nd c. AD (MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, II, 88).

²⁵⁷ BICHIR 1972, 166; BICHIR 1977, 191.

²⁵⁸ Cf. GLODARIU 1974, 241, no. 34, Pl. XXXII; GLODARIU 1976, 202, note 34.

²⁵⁹ LEAHU/TROHANI 1979, 133, 134, 138-139, Fig. 5-7.

shape golden appliques (Fig. 8/5), two semi-spherical bronze buttons (Fig. 8/12-13); iron nails (Fig. 8/8-11); rectangular bronze plates provided with one orifice each by the ends (Fig. 8/14-18); iron bits and items (Fig. 8/19-22); two censers (Fig. 8/23-24); a wheelthrown red fabric cup (Fig. 8/25), fragments of an yellowish-redish amphora (Fig. 8/26) and a few galas vessels fragments²⁶⁰.

The excavators dated the grave based on the remaining funerary inventory by the end of the 3rd c. AD²⁶¹. The chronological framing of the barrow grave at Vitănești is yet far from being a resolved issue as long as no careful analysis is carried for the artifacts and some of the existent aspects providing clues for a more accurate dating. Even the most recent dating propositions are contradictory and are based only on the analysis of certain elements or aspects within the grave. Thus, without making an analysis of the grave, Gh. Bichir proposed a dating by the end of the 2nd c. – early 3rd c. AD.²⁶² M. Babeș chose, based on the golden objects and analogies with T 2 G 2 at Porogi and the Sokolova Mogila barrow, in favour of a dating of the grave at Vitănești in the period prior to Trajan's reign²⁶³.

Yet, in order to find the place of the grave at Vitănești among the Sarmatian antiquities by the Lower Danube, analysis should be performed for all the elements providing more accurate information for a chronological framing.

The analysis of the funerary rite and ritual in the north-Pontic Sarmatian environment west of Don river from the 1st c. – mid 2nd c. AD indicates that similarly to the previous period (the 2nd c. – 1st c. BC) predominant are secondary burials in barrows of previous periods²⁶⁴. In the second half of the 2nd c. – 4th c. AD, in the same region yet predominate main burials in Sarmatian barrows and not secondary burials in previous periods barrows²⁶⁵.

Main burials for which the barrows were built emerge yet in the north-Pontic area west of Don River by mid 1st c. AD²⁶⁶. All these main burials from the mid Sarmatian period (1st c. – mid 2nd c. AD) are mainly in individual barrows. In the late Sarmatian period, the second half of the 2nd c. – 4th c. AD, the vast majority of the Sarmatian barrows with main burials west the north-Pontic area are part of larger cemeteries (Cuconești Vechi I – 33, Cuconești Vechi II – 49, Petrești – 42, Holmskoe – 22, Alkaliya – 18, Vasil'evka – 13, Diviziya – 10, Kubej – 10) or smaller (Bădragii Noi – 7, Aliyaga – 6, Hadzhider II – 6, Feștelița – 6, Gradeshka – 4). Yet are rarely found in individual Sarmatian barrows. In the east of the north-Pontic area up to Don River, the large part of the main burials were within individual barrows. Cuurently, are known only two small cemeteries (Shevchenko – 7, Brilevka – 8)²⁶⁷.

²⁶⁰ LEAHU/TROHANI 1979, 134, 138, Fig. 5-7.

²⁶¹ LEAHU/TROHANI 1979, 138.

²⁶² BICHIR 1996, 302.

²⁶³ BABEȘ 1999, 234.

²⁶⁴ Cf. ARKHEOLOGIYA USSR 1986, 190-194; ARKHEOLOGIYA SSSR 1989, 177-178; SIMONENKO 1993, 75; SIMONENKO 2000, 134; SIMONENKO 2004, 140-141; SYMONENKO 1999, 9; BÂRCĂ 2006, 37-39; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 99-100.

²⁶⁵ Cf. SIMONENKO 2004, 149-150; SYMONENKO 1999, 12-13; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 205.

²⁶⁶ Cf. ARKHEOLOGIYA USSR 1986, 190-196; ARKHEOLOGIYA SSSR 1989, 177-178; SIMONENKO 1993, 75; SIMONENKO 2000, 134; SIMONENKO 2004, 141-142; SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 35-36; BÂRCĂ 2006, 38-39; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 100.

²⁶⁷ Cf. SIMONENKO 2004, 149; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 205.

Commonly, main burials below the barrows were at their centre. There are cases when they were found farther from the mound centre.

In connection to the main burials, it must be said that in the early Sarmatian period, in both the north-Pontic area west of Don river as well as the vast space inhabited by the Sarmatians east of Don and Volga, their numbers is rather small²⁶⁸. Starting though with the 1st c. AD, numbers increase significantly compared to the previous period, especially in certain regions the Sarmatian inhabited. Thus in the Volga – Don interfluvium, they represent 78.9% and east of Volga, 78.7%, and in the region south the Ural Mountains, 94.7%²⁶⁹. Instead, in the Kuban region, territory inhabited by the Syracian Sarmatians, secondary burials in barrows of previous periods continue to be preponderant²⁷⁰ similarly to the north-Pontic area west of Don. Concerning the main burials in the north-Pontic area, one must say that most of them cluster in certain regions: the area near the Sea of Azov, South Donbas, and the space between rivers Orel' and Samara, the Dniپر basin and the north-west Pontic area²⁷¹. Most frequently, they group in smaller barrow cemeteries (Novo-Podkryazh, Vinogradnoe, Primorsk, Boguslav, Verbki, Turlaki, Primorskoe, Beloles'e) or larger (Molchansk, Podgorodnoe, Ust'-Kamenka). The number of Sarmatian barrows within these cemeteries varies from 3–5 (Beloles'e, Boguslav, Verbki or Vinogradnoe) to 71 (Ust'-Kamenka)²⁷².

Commonly, the Sarmatian barrows are flat circular and they were raised by a single technique. Their diameter varies on the entire space inhabited by the Sarmatian, being found both 10-15 m diameter barrows as well as barrows whose diameter exceeds a few tens of meters. The height from the ancient surface level of the barrows varies between 0.3–0.4 m and 3 m.

Based on the shape of the pits of the main burials it was noted the existence of several funerary construction types: rectangular; rectangular with side steps; niched; square and in catacomb²⁷³. Another note worth mentioning is that funerary pits of the main burials are often larger than those secondary in tumuli of previous periods²⁷⁴, which may be noted also in the case of the grave at Vitănești.

In the north-Pontic area west of Don in the 1st c. – mid 2nd c. AD, the rectangular pits of the Sarmatian graves are most numerous, compared with their much smaller ratio in the Sarmatian environment east of Don and Volga²⁷⁵. They are dominant in the north-Pontic area west of Don also in the first stage of the late period (the second half of the 2nd c. – early

²⁶⁸ See to this effect SIMONENKO 1993, 20, 26; SIMONENKO 2004, 135; BÂRCĂ 2006, 38, 206; BÂRCĂ 2006a, 31; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 41; SKRIPKIN 1990, 181-183, tab. 16. The number of main burials in barrows erected by the Sarmatians is small also with the Syracian Sarmatians in the Kuban region steppes (Cf. ARKHEOLOGIYA SSSR 1989, 250; MARCHENKO 1996, 95).

²⁶⁹ SKRIPKIN 1990, 185.

²⁷⁰ Cf. ARKHEOLOGIYA SSSR 1989, 250; MARCHENKO 1996, 95.

²⁷¹ Cf. ARKHEOLOGIYA USSR 1986, 190-195; SIMONENKO 2000, 134, Fig. 4/1; SIMONENKO 2004, 141; BÂRCĂ 2006, 38, Fig. 222/2; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 100.

²⁷² Cf. SIMONENKO 2000, 134; SIMONENKO 2004, 141; BÂRCĂ 2006, 39; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 100.

²⁷³ Cf. SIMONENKO 2000, 134-136; SIMONENKO 2004, 141-142; BÂRCĂ 2006, 40-46; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 101-105.

²⁷⁴ Cf. SIMONENKO 2000, 134-136; BÂRCĂ 2006, 40-46; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 101-105, 206-213.

²⁷⁵ Cf. SIMONENKO 1999, 113; SIMONENKO 2004, 140-141; BÂRCĂ 2006, 40-41; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 101.

half of the 3rd c. AD).²⁷⁶ This proves that we are dealing with both the preservation of the ancient traditions as well with the kinship of the ideological representations of the Sarmatian from the late period with those in the previous period.

In the second stage of the late Sarmatian period (the second half of the 3rd c. – 4th c. AD) the rectangular funerary pits are not anymore found, their place being occupied by those of other types. In the north-Pontic area, such pit types are known only in a few cases (Balki T 12 G 1, Bogorad). In fact, in the region east of Don, rectangular funerary pits are rarely found.

In relation to the niche-hidden place in the southern wall of the grave at Vitănești, we must argue that they are frequently found in large funerary pits of the rich Sarmatian graves of the mid period²⁷⁷.

Therefore, judging after the inventory of the graves with large funerary pits, even though in large part were plundered, precisely like the case at Vitănești, one may argue that they belonged to the representations of the wealthy part of the Sarmatian populations.

Another significant element also in the case of T 2 G 2 at Vitănești, omitted mention and analysed by all researchers, is the flat circular ditch surrounding the grave.

Enclosures with various flat shaped ditches, with or without graves inside, identified below individual Sarmatian barrows or within barrow or flat cemeteries started to be known also in certain territories inhabited by the Sarmatians (mainly in the Prut-Dniester interfluvium, the Lower and Mid Don area and the Pannonian Plain) only a few decades²⁷⁸.

For the enclosures of the type in the north and north-west Pontic area was proposed²⁷⁹ the following classification:

1. Square with access from one of the sides and without graves inside;
2. Rectangular without access and graves inside;
3. Rectangular with and without access and graves inside;
4. Trapezoid with access and graves inside;
5. Circular with and without access inside yet with graves placed mainly in the central area.

At the first sight, the current state of research indicates that most part of the circular ditched enclosures below barrows are from the first stage of the late Sarmatian period (the second half of the 2nd c. – early half of the 3rd c. AD).²⁸⁰ It was noted that similarly to those in flat square shape the enclosures emerged in the Sarmatian environment, beside a series of ritual acts and novel elements in the funerary rite and material culture²⁸¹ as early as the mid Sarmatian period (1st

²⁷⁶ Cf. SIMONENKO 2004, 150; SYMONENKO 1999, 13-15; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 207-208.

²⁷⁷ Cf. SHILOV 1983, 178, 185-187, Fig. 2-3, 8/1-3, 6, 10; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 91, Fig. 15/2-3, 5-6, 16/1.

²⁷⁸ For enclosures with various flat shapes, with or without graves inside see BÂRCĂ 2014 with bibliography.

²⁷⁹ SIMONENKO 1991, 212-213; SIMONENKO 1993, 118-119; KURCHATOV/SYMONENKO/CHYRKOV 1995, 118-119.

²⁸⁰ BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁸¹ See to this effect MUKHOPAD 1986, 136-142; RAEV 1986, 44-46, 47-48, 51-52, 53; RAEV 1989, 116-117; SKRIPKIN 1990, 207-209, 217-218, BESPALYJ 1985, 163-172; BESPALYJ 1992, 175-191; KOSTENKO 1993, 90-92; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 90; SIMONENKO 1999, 122; SIMONENKO 2000, 134; BÂRCĂ 2006, 54-55; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 107-108. Innovations and novel elements emerging in the eastern Sarmatian environment are strictly connected to the changes occurring by early 1st c. AD in the steppes of

c. – first half of the 2nd c. AD)²⁸². Evidence to this effect are the enclosures below barrows with main burials at Cazacalia (T 10)²⁸³, Obileni (T 5)²⁸⁴, Verbki²⁸⁵, Mar'ina Roshcha²⁸⁶ and Krivoj Liman (T 41, T 48)²⁸⁷ dating based on the funerary furniture in the chronological interval comprised between the second half of the 1st c. AD and early 2nd c. AD.

Enclosures with flat circular ditch have always graves inside, and when they are provided with access, it is placed on the southern side, south-west or southeast. The diameter of the ditched circular enclosures below barrows varies from case to case alike their width and depth²⁸⁸.

The graves inside the circular enclosures below barrows have mainly funerary pits of rectangular shape, of rectangular shape with side steps along the long sides or with niche below the western wall²⁸⁹. There are a few cases when inside the circular enclosure are found catacomb graves²⁹⁰. In parenthesis, we wish to mention that the conditions below T 2 at Vitănești is found below T 41 and T 48 in the cemetery at Krivoj Liman where the rectangular funerary pits of these graves are provided with niche-hiding and are surrounded with flat circular shaped ditches²⁹¹.

In connection to the flat square, rectangular, trapezoid and circular ditched enclosures in the north and north-west Pontic area, we must mention that they emerge as early as the 1st c. AD²⁹² despite their provenance from cemeteries or individual barrows dating mainly in the second half of the 2nd c. – early/first half of the 3rd c. AD²⁹³. In the same geographical area, the latest are the circular enclosures in the Kubej and Kurchi cemeteries dating to the second half of the 3rd–early 4th c. AD. Similar circumstances were noted also for the Don River basin. Although, currently, the enclosures that belong to the period comprised between mid 3rd c. AD and early/first half of the 4th c. AD are still the most numerous, the number of those dating in earlier chronological intervals is on the rise²⁹⁴ (for instance Chertovitsk II, Pisarevka, Krivoj Liman (left Don river), Cazacalia, Obileni (Prut-Dniester interfluvium)).

Enclosures with variously shaped flat ditches are present also in the Sarmatian environment of the Pannonian

Eastern Europe (SKRIPKIN 1990, 214). These novel elements serve, according to A. S. SKRIPKIN, to distinguish the mid Sarmatian culture, which, basically, was Alanic (SKRIPKIN 1990, 214). Starting with mid 1st c. AD, when in the north and north-west Pontic area enter new Sarmatian waves, emerge also those novel elements and innovations, specific to groups of Sarmatians from territories east of the Don and Volga.

²⁸² BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁸³ AGULNICOV/BUBULICI 1999, 287, Fig. 2A; AGUL'NIKOV/BUBULICI 1999, 10, Fig. 1/2; BÂRCĂ 2006, 300-302; BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁸⁴ LEVIŢKI/MANZURA/DEMCENKO 1996, 55-56, Fig. 46; BÂRCĂ 2006, 55, 336-337, tab. 3/10; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 108; BÂRCĂ 2014, Fig. 5.

²⁸⁵ KOSTENKO 1986, 56; SIMONENKO 1993, 118, 119; KURCHATOV/SYMONENKO/CHYRKOV 1995, 119; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 108; BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁸⁶ KURCHATOV/SYMONENKO/CHYRKOV 1995, 119; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 108; BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁸⁷ MAKSIMENKO 1998, 90, Fig. 15/1, 4; BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁸⁸ Cf. BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁸⁹ Cf. BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁹⁰ BEZUGLOV/ZAKHAROV 1988, 10, 11, Fig. 1/5; AGULNICOV/BUBULICI 1999, 287, Fig. 2A; AGUL'NIKOV/BUBULICI 1999, 10, Fig. 1/2; BÂRCĂ 2006, 300-302; BÂRCĂ 2014, Fig. 7.2.

²⁹¹ Cf. MAKSIMENKO 1998, 91, Fig. 15/2-3, 5-6.

²⁹² BÂRCĂ 2014.

²⁹³ These are considered good chronological markers for the first stage of the late Sarmatian culture (BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 217).

²⁹⁴ BÂRCĂ 2014.

Plain²⁹⁵, where by 2003, were known 50 sites with grave finds placed inside ditched enclosures²⁹⁶. Rescue archaeological research carried out in the last decade on the Hungarian territory revealed other new cemeteries with graves surrounded by ditches²⁹⁷. Most of these ditched enclosures in the Iazyges Sarmatian environment are flat circular, however oval, square, hexagonal or octagonal are also found. Access inside the ditched enclosures in the Sarmatian environment of the Pannonian Plain is placed, alike those in the north and north-west of the Black Sea, most often on the southern, southeastern and southwestern sides²⁹⁸.

Finally yet importantly, we wish to mention that the two Sarmatian graves with large funerary pits surrounded by flat circular ditches discovered following the rescue archaeological excavations on the Nădlac-Sibiu motorway, Nădlac-Pecica section, in 2011²⁹⁹.

The custom of ditch-surrounding the graves was brought, beside other novel elements and features (for instance the barrow graves with eastern elements), in the Sarmatian environment of the Pannonian Plain following the displacement to this area of a group of Sarmatians arriving from the north-west of the Black Sea sometime after the Marcomannic Wars.³⁰⁰ It would be used until the Sarmatian disappear from the historical background of the Carpathian Basin³⁰¹.

Related to the graves inside the ditched enclosures, we should also argue that predominate simple rectangular funerary pits followed by those with side steps on the long sides, often larger, and those rectangular with niche below the western wall. In addition, it was noted that enclosures below small or flattened barrows are also much smaller than the large barrows. The dead in the graves inside ditched enclosures are placed on the back with hands and feet straight and oriented with the head exclusively northwards, northwestwards or northeastwards.

Another note is that the enclosures below large barrows, beside the funerary banquets and other ritual actions below or in their mantle, are specific mainly to the aristocratic graves and those who belonged to the wealthy layer of the Sarmatian society. To this effect pleads also the funerary inventory within these graves, even though in many cases they were plundered.

Finally yet importantly, we wish to mention that for the north and north-west Pontic territory one may conclude that most often, the any shape ditched enclosures, with or without graves inside, were closely connected to the barrows, although often, the shape of the enclosures is independent from the barrow mound. Thus, we may argue that the ditched

enclosures in this area are mainly an attribute of the barrow funerary ritual, though there are cases when they are also present in flat cemeteries.

In connection with the ditched enclosures with graves inside, we believe that their ditches very likely served for separating the dead from the outside world³⁰², and the enclosures surface was the background of ritualistic acts occurring after the burial of the dead³⁰³. The ditches of these enclosures also likely served to protect the ritualistic acts performed within, from the influence of the evil spirits. Thus, it is very likely that ditched enclosures with or without graves inside functioned as backgrounds for ritualistic acts related to the funerary banquet and other elements of the cult of the dead³⁰⁴.

Given all the above, we believe that the grave at Vitănești belonged to a person in the Sarmatian elite of the region. Such statement is supported in our view by both the fact we are dealing with a main barrow burial in a large funerary pit with niche-hiding place on the southern part as well as the flat circular ditch that surrounded the grave. To this effect pleads also part of the preserved funerary furniture, which is to some extent similar to that in graves belonging to the Sarmatian elite in the north-Pontic steppes of the second half of the 1st c. – first half of the 2nd c. AD.

For instance, the golden appliques in the grave at Vitănești, which were definitely much more numerous and varied as types, are part of the category of adornment and luxury dress objects, which in the Sarmatian environment belonged mainly to the fashion of the first two centuries AD. Furthermore, these luxury objects either decorating garments or parts of adornment objects, are also good chronological markers.

The small tubes made of thin golden leaf with smooth surface from Vitănești (Fig. 8/1-2) were either part of a collar or decorated the clothes of the dead. Similar to the tubes with crossed grooved-decorated surface, those with the smooth surface have also many analogies. In the north-west Pontic environment, such items were discovered in a series of graves like those at Beloleșe (T 9 G 1)³⁰⁵ or the Sokolova Mogila barrow³⁰⁶ etc.

Such smooth tubes made of gold are often found in the Sarmatian graves all over the space they inhabited³⁰⁷ and were

²⁹⁵ For the first time, information related to them were synthesised by the Hungarian scholar G. Vörös (VÖRÖS 1982-1983, 157), and a pertinent analysis was made by V. KULCSÁR (KULCHAR 1997, 126-133; KULCSÁR 1998, 35-40, 95-96, 111).

²⁹⁶ ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2003, 273. The current state of research points to the presence of the enclosures in almost every major Sarmatian cemetery on the current territory of Hungary.

²⁹⁷ See to this effect BATIZI et alii 2006, 42-48; GULYÁS 2006, 89; RAJNA/DINNYÉS/KOVÁCS 2006, 104-105; GULYÁS 2011; HULLÁM 2012. We want to thank this way Mrs. Valeria Kulcsár for the information related to most recent finds of such enclosures in the Sarmatian environment of the Pannonian Plain.

²⁹⁸ Cf. KULCSÁR 1998, Fig. 18-24, 26a, 26b, 27, 31-32.

²⁹⁹ Cf. COCIȘ et alii 2013, 220-221; BĂRCĂ/COCIȘ 2013.

³⁰⁰ BĂRCĂ 2014; BĂRCĂ/COCIȘ 2013, 40. Evidence to this end is the dating of the graves inside the ditched enclosures from the Pannonian Plain.

³⁰¹ KULCHAR 1997, 131.

³⁰² KULCHAR 1997, 129-131; KULCSÁR 1998, 36-40.

³⁰³ Flat square or rectangular ditched enclosures provided with access on the southern side, without graves inside played most likely a ritual role within the cemeteries but also in the isolated graves (either barrow or flat) found nearby. The presence on their surface as well as the delimiting ditch fillings, of traces of funerary banquets (animal bones especially, horse skulls, amphorae and broken wares, burnt charcoal etc.) evidenced the ritual acts carried out there after the burial of the dead in the graves around. Enclosures without graves inside might have served, likely, as sacred places where ritual acts related to the ancestors cult or other religious ceremonies were performed (see for ditched enclosures without graves inside BĂRCĂ 2014).

³⁰⁴ KULCHAR 1997, 131; KULCSÁR 1998, 39, 96, 111.

³⁰⁵ SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY 1990a, 17, Fig. 13/12-13; BĂRCĂ 2006, 120, 292, Fig. 27/14-15, 179/12-13; SIMONENKO 2008, 77, cat. no. 108, Pl. 120/6; BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 154, Fig. 57/12-13.

³⁰⁶ KOVPANENKO 1986, 43, Fig. 39/1. The 83 smooth exemplars with a surface decorated with cross grooves in the Sokolova Mogila barrow were sown to the coat sleeves of the dead.

³⁰⁷ See to this effect IL'YUKOV/VLASKIN 1992, 85, 248, Fig. 21/6; BESPALYJ 1992, 178; GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, Pl. 24/228, 27/263, 3, 45/396; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 119-120, Fig. 56/5, 7, 9, 15; MORDVINTSEVA/KHABAROVA 2006, 17, cat. no. 6, 30, 51, 57, 100, 197, 225; MARČENKO/

either part of more complex collars or were sown on coats beside other types of gold dress appliques. They are known both among the adornment objects in the Greek cities on the northern shore of the Black Sea as well as the Barbarian environment in the Volga and Don River, Kuban region, the north-Pontic area west of Don and Crimea³⁰⁸.

The 17 circular golden appliques with spherical central part decorated on the rims with grooves and provided with attachment orifices (Fig. 8/6) are part of the category of dress appliques sown to the clothing in a certain order, thus forming ornamental compositions³⁰⁹. In I. I. Marchenko's classification, such appliques may be framed in type 1.4.3 in group A or type 2 in the same group³¹⁰.

Circular appliques with spherical central part and projecting rim decorated with grooves were discovered in a series of Sarmatian graves like those at Belolesë (T 9 G 1)³¹¹, Severinovka (T 1 G 3)³¹², Tsvetna³¹³, Turlaki (T 7 G 1)³¹⁴ dating to the second half of the 1st c. AD. Similar to the specimens at Vitănești are those in T 2 G 2 at Mocra³¹⁵ dating, likely sometime in the interval between the end of the 1st c. AD and the first quarter of the 2nd c. AD³¹⁶.

Within the Sarmatian environment, such appliques were also identified beside other types of golden dress appliques and in a series of graves of the 1st c. – first half of the 2nd c. AD in the Sarmatian cemetery at “Zolotoe kladbishche” (T 37 at Ust'-Labinsk³¹⁷, T 18 and T 20 at Tiflisskaya³¹⁸, T 2 at Kazanskaya³¹⁹). Appliques of type 1.4.3 in the Sarmatian graves in the Kuban region are dated by I. I. Marchenko in the second half of the 1st BC – 2nd c. AD, and those of type 2 in the second half of the 1st c. AD – 2nd c. AD³²⁰. Such type of dress appliques are also present in the cemetery at Ust'-Alma³²¹.

Although at first sight, it seems rather surprising the presence in this grave of iron bits and objects (Fig. 8/19-22),

it is worth mentioning that the harness items in the grave at Vitănești are not the single find of the type in the Sarmatian environment of the first centuries AD. Even though the bits and hackamores are rarely found in the Sarmatian environment, they are still recorded in a series of graves in the north and north-west Pontic area in the second half of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD. Alike those at Boguslav T 2 G 1 (group 4)³²², Cazaclia (T 10 G 1)³²³ or Ust'-Kamenka (T 3 G 1, T 24 G 1, T 38 G 1, T 66 G 1)³²⁴. Bits of two iron bars with round bent ends and loops by the extremities come also come from the Sarmatian grave at Konstantinovka (Crimea)³²⁵, dating, most likely, in the second quarter of the 2nd c. AD³²⁶. Bits and hackamores were discovered also in a few graves of the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD in the Kuban region (G 9 at Cemdolina³²⁷, T 44 and T 46 located between Kazanskaya and Tiflisskaya³²⁸, T 6, T 14 and T 17 at Kazanskaya³²⁹, T 31 and T 32 at Ust'-Labinskaya³³⁰ and T 6 (researched in 1908) at Tiflisskaya³³¹). A series of Sarmatian graves in the chronological interval between the second half of the 1st c. AD and the second half of the 2nd c. AD in the Don river basin also present such artefacts³³².

Beside the above mentioned, one should mention that

³²² Simonenko 2008, p. 61-62, cat. no. 46, pl. 35/2. The grave goods also include two fragmentary amphorae of B type in D. B. Shelov's typology (SHELOV 1978, 18, Fig. 4) or C IVB in that of S. Yu. Vnukov (VNUKOV 2006, 166, 167, Fig. 1/8, 10). Amphorae of the type are dated to the second third of the 1st c. – mid 2nd c. AD (SHELOV 1978, 18; OPAIT 1980, 301, type VIA) or AD 75/80-130/140 (VNUKOV 2003, 202; 2006, 166, 167, fig. 10).

³²³ AGULNICOV/BUBULICI 1999, 288, Fig. 3/11-12; BÂRCĂ 2006, 216, 302; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 201. The rich inventory also included a bronze cauldron (AGULNICOV/BUBULICI 1999, 288, Fig. 5/4-5; AGULNICOV/BUBULICI 1999, 12, Fig. 2/4-5; BÂRCĂ 2006, 174, 302, fig. 43/1; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 190-191, Fig. 70/1) of Eggers 70 type (Řepov type) but also a yellow-light fabric amphora with a profiled rim, vertical neck, elongated conical body, short foot and profiled handles (AGULNICOV/BUBULICI 1999, 288, Fig. 5/6; AGULNICOV/BUBULICI 1999, 12, Fig. 2/6; BÂRCĂ 2006, 90, 302, Fig. 43/2; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 130, Fig. 45/2) of B type and D. B. Shelov's typology (SHELOV 1978, 18, fig. 4) or C IVB in that of S. Yu. Vnukov (VNUKOV 2006, 166, 167, Fig. 1/8, 10).

³²⁴ KOSTENKO 1993, 20, 41, 74, 110-111, Fig. 6/21-22, 24-26, 13/8, 16, 22/20, 23, 28/9-11; SIMONENKO 2008, 64, cat. no. 62, Pl. 47/5.

³²⁵ ORLOV/SKORYJ 1989, 70-71, Fig. 1/7; SIMONENKO 2008, 72-73, cat. no. 95, Pl. 98/4.

³²⁶ SIMONENKO 2011, 145. Among the inventory of the grave counts an Eggers 100 bowl, a bronze cup in the “Straldzha” group and two amphorae. The first belongs to type C in D. B. Shelov's typological classification (SHELOV 1978, 18, Fig. 6) and C IVC in that more recent of S. Yu. Vnukov (VNUKOV 2003, 202; VNUKOV 2006, 166, 167, Fig. 1/9; 10). D. B. Shelov dated them in the 2nd c. AD. Following an analysis of the archaeological features and find contexts, S. Yu. VNUKOV noted they date in the chronological interval between the second quarter of the 2nd c. AD and end of the 2nd c. AD. The second amphora is an intermediary shape between type A and B in D. B. Shelov's typology (SHELOV 1978, 18, Fig. 5) or C IVA2 in that of S. Yu. Vnukov (VNUKOV 2006, 158, 167, Fig. 1/7). Amphorae of the type are dated in the period between the 60's and end of the 1st c. AD (VNUKOV 2003, 202; VNUKOV 2006, 158, 167, Fig. 10).

³²⁷ MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, 345, cat. no. 32, Pl. 59/4.

³²⁸ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, 49, 50, cat. no. 126, 136, Pl. 14/136; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, 347, cat. no. 40, Pl. 69/4.

³²⁹ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, 43, 45, cat. no. 44, 66, 73, Pl. 6/66, 73, 7/44.

³³⁰ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, 65, 66, cat. no. 367-368, 385, Pl. 40/367-368, 43/385.

³³¹ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, 77, cat. no. 555, Pl. 56/555.

³³² Cf. MEDVEDEV 1990, 41, 42, 47, 52, 55, 107, 109, 111, 117, 118, 127, 133, 137, 139, 141, 152, Fig. 12/4, 13/13, 18/2; 21/2, 22/9, 31/17, 32/8, 33/6, 34/16, 35/11, 40/2, 42/4, 44/7, 45/4, 46/5-6, 10; GUGUEV/BEZUGLOV 1990, 172, Fig. 2/19; IL'YUKOV/VLASKIN 1992, 244-245, Fig. 3/15, 20/7, 25/7, 29/13, 16; BESPALYJ 1992, 180, Fig. 4; PROKHOROVA/GUGUEV 1992, 156, Fig. 8/45; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 136-137, Fig. 78/1-4.

LIMBERIS 2008, Pl. 57/8, 73/6, 63/2, 75/2.

³⁰⁸ MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 67-68, 78-80; PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 146, Fig. 114/3-4, Pl. 5/1.

³⁰⁹ Commonly, in graves are found a few appliqué types, which at their turn are represented by a certain number of specimens. An eloquent example to this effect is the grave in the Sokolova Mogila barrow where were identified 1218 appliques in geometric and zoomorphic shapes representing ten types (Cf. KOVPANENKO 1986, 39-42, 112-125, Fig. 39, 119-122, 127-133). In hiding T 1 G 1 at Dachi (left Lower Don river) were discovered 15207 appliques representing eight types (Cf. BESPALYJ 1992, 178).

³¹⁰ MARCHENKO 1996, 140, Fig. 7, 11/8, 13.

³¹¹ SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY 1990a, 16-18, Fig. 13/9-11; DZYGOVSKIY 1993, Fig. 41/5; BÂRCĂ 2006, 116, 292, Fig. 27/11-13, 179/14-16; SIMONENKO 2008, 77, cat. no. 108, Pl. 120/5; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 152, Fig. 57/14-16.

³¹² SIMONENKO 2008, 78, cat. no. 116, Pl. 127/4; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 152, Fig. 57/22-23.

³¹³ SIMONENKO 2008, 69, cat. no. 87, Pl. 81/14.

³¹⁴ DZYGOVSKIY 1993, Fig. 39/7; BÂRCĂ 2006, 116, 366, Fig. 130/5, 179/19; SIMONENKO 2008, 77, cat. no. 109, Pl. 121/7; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 152, Fig. 57/19.

³¹⁵ SHCHERBAKOVA/KASHUBA 1993; KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 210, Fig. 16/3a-3b; BÂRCĂ 2006, 117, 332, Fig. 79/12; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 153, Fig. 57/41.

³¹⁶ Cf. BÂRCĂ 2006, 174, 331-334 (early 2nd c. AD); KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 242 (first quarter of the 2nd c. AD).

³¹⁷ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 406, Pl. 45/406;

³¹⁸ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 290.4, 310.5, Pl. 31/3, 33/310, 5; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, Pl. 80/1.

³¹⁹ GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 6, Pl. 1/6, 3.

³²⁰ MARCHENKO 1996, Fig. 11/8, 13.

³²¹ PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, Fig. 111/7.

another significant element for the chronological framing of the grave at Vitănești are the two handmade censers (Fig. 8/23-24).

The first (Fig. 8/23) seems to be in a pyramid trunk shape, approximately square, walls slightly tilted outwards, rim cut straight, flat base and perforated walls. Censers in the shape of a pyramid trunk shape, approximately rectangular or square emerged as early as the early Sarmatian period³³³. Such censers are found in both the graves in the mid period as well as the late stage of the Sarmatian culture all over the entire territory they inhabited³³⁴. In the typological classification of these artifacts from Asia, they belong to type XII³³⁵. In the Sarmatian graves in the north and north-west Pontic such censers come from a series of graves like those at Turlaki (T 7 G 1)³³⁶, Mocra (T 2 G 2)³³⁷, Beloeșe (T 9 G 1)³³⁸, Bădragii Vechi (T 29 G 1)³³⁹, Ust'-Kamenka (T 38 G 1)³⁴⁰ etc.

The second censer (Fig. 8/24) is in the shape of a bowl with slightly inverted rim and cut straight with flat base and perforated walls³⁴¹. Items of the type are small and were identified, commonly, placed inside other larger vessels. Such censers are often found also in the mid period graves from the entire territory the Sarmatians inhabited. A censer similar to the specimen at Vitănești comes from T 2 G 2 at Mocra³⁴² and very close specimens from T 24 G 1 and T 45 G 1 in the cemetery at Ust'-Kamenka³⁴³ etc.

It is worth mentioning that in the same grave, two censers, sometimes put one in the other, are a chronological and cultural indicator of the mid Sarmatian period³⁴⁴. Although rare, there are cases when two censers are found also in the early Sarmatian period³⁴⁵ however also in the late period as well³⁴⁶. For the 1st c. – early 2nd c. AD, S. Skripkin mentions 47 such finds in graves from Asian Sarmatia³⁴⁷. Within the Sarmatian graves of the north and north-west Pontic area, this innovative custom

emerges around mid 1st c. AD, being mainly found in a series of graves and cemeteries from the second half of the 1st c. – early/first half of the 2nd c. AD. An example to this effect are the graves at Porogi T 2 G 2³⁴⁸, Turlaki T 7 G 1³⁴⁹, Severinovka T 1 G 3³⁵⁰, Mocra T 2 G 2³⁵¹, Bashtechki T 19 G 1³⁵², Bogdanovka T 8 G 1³⁵³, Vaslui G 1³⁵⁴ but also those in the barrow cemeteries at Ust'-Kamenka (eg. T 21 G 1, T 22 G 1, T 38 G 1, T 45 G 1, T 50 G 1)³⁵⁵, Molchansk or Podgorodnoe³⁵⁶. In T 9 G 1 at Beloeșe were deposited three censers³⁵⁷, and in T 2 G 2 at Mocra, the two censers were placed in a three-legged ritual vessel³⁵⁸.

Such custom, as well as some censer types, was brought to the north and north-west Pontic by the novel Sarmatian tribes arriving from the east – the Aorsians or the Alans. In fact, it is not by chance that the finds in the north and north-west of the Black Sea come from graves with definite eastern features.

Concerning the amphora (Fig. 8/26), we believe that its reconstruction was not particularly successful and that we might not even deal with an amphora as depicted by the drawing. In fact, even its classification to type IV in Gh. Popilian's classification³⁵⁹ is erroneous. Unfortunately yet, the fragments based on which the graphical reconstruction was made could not be found in the deposit of the National Museum of Romanian History³⁶⁰.

Although in the Sarmatian environment of the first centuries AD, amphorae are rather scarce within graves³⁶¹, it is noteworthy that amphorae or their fragments were also discovered in several enclosures surrounded by a flat ditch of various forms, with or without graves inside, identified below individual Sarmatian tumuli or in certain barrow or flat cemeteries³⁶². Based on the amphora's types, description

³³³ SKRIPKIN 1990, Fig. 37/3.

³³⁴ Cf. to this effect Smirnov 1973, Fig. 1-3, tipul XII; ARKHEOLOGIYA SSSR 1989, Pl. 80/32, 34; SKRIPKIN 1990, Fig. 37/16; PROKHOROVA/GUGUEV 1992, Fig. 3/10; KOSTENKO 1993, Fig. 13/9; DZYGOS'KYJ 1993, Fig. 25/2-6; GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, cat. no. 308, Pl. 32/308.

³³⁵ SMIRNOV 1973, Fig. 1-3.

³³⁶ GROSU 1995, Fig. 29/4; DZYGOS'KYJ 1993, 69-70, Fig. 39/4; BÂRCĂ 2006, 75, 366, Fig. 130/8, 166/1; SIMONENKO 2008, 77, cat. no. 109, Pl. 121/10; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 117, Fig. 35/6.

³³⁷ SHCHERBAKOVA/KASHUBA 1993; KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 208, Fig. 14/1; BÂRCĂ 2006, 75, 334, Fig. 79/4; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 117.

³³⁸ SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY 1990a, 16, Fig. 14/3; SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY, Ostroverkhov 1998, 101, Fig. 39/3; BÂRCĂ 2006, 75, 292, Fig. 28/3; SIMONENKO 2008, Pl. 120/13.

³³⁹ YAROVJ/CHIRKOV/BUBULICI 1990, 29, Fig. XVIII/3.

³⁴⁰ KOSTENKO 1993, 40, Fig. 13/9; SIMONENKO 2008, 64, cat. no. 62, Pl. 48/2c-d.

³⁴¹ Usually, such items are of coarse yellow-greyish fabric, dark brown or black, fired unevenly and preserve, like the rest of the censers, strong fire burns on the inside.

³⁴² SHCHERBAKOVA/KASHUBA 1993; KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 208, Fig. 14/3; BÂRCĂ 2006, 76, 334, Fig. 79/3; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 117, Fig. 35/13.

³⁴³ KOSTENKO 1993, 20, 49, Fig. 6/14, 16/20.

³⁴⁴ SKRIPKIN 1990, 99.

³⁴⁵ Cf. SKRIPKIN 1990, 99, 186, Fig. 37/1-5; SMIRNOV 1984, 107, Fig. 49/9-10.

³⁴⁶ SKRIPKIN 1990, 99.

³⁴⁷ Cf. SKRIPKIN 1990, 99, Fig. 37/6-16. For such finds, see also MEDVEDEV 1990, 50, 57, 68, Fig. 19/2-3, 24/4-5, 28/3-4; MEDVEDEV/YEFIMOV 1986, 84, Pl. 78/2-3; IL'YUKOV/VLASKIN 1992, 109, 198, Fig. 28/13-14; PROKHOROVA/GUGUEV 1992, Fig. 3/10, 13.

³⁴⁸ SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991, 34, Fig. 23/1-2; BÂRCĂ 2006, 353, Fig. 111/1-2, 164/1, 167/4; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 116, 117, Fig. 35/1, 11.

³⁴⁹ GROSU 1995, Fig. 29/4-5; DZYGOS'KYJ 1993, 69-70, Fig. 39/4-5; BÂRCĂ 2006, 75, 366, Fig. 130/8-9, 166/1, 3; SIMONENKO 2008, 77, cat. no. 109, Pl. 121/9-10; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 117, Fig. 35/6, 8.

³⁵⁰ BÂRCĂ 2006, 357; SIMONENKO 2008, 78, cat. no. 116, Pl. 127/11-12.

³⁵¹ SHCHERBAKOVA/KASHUBA 1993; KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 208, Fig. 14/1, 3; BÂRCĂ 2006, 75, 76, 334, Fig. 79/3-4; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 117.

³⁵² ARTEMENKO/LEVCHENKO 1983, 145, Fig. 1/6-7, 2/1, 4; SIMONENKO 2008, 57, cat. no. 16, Pl. 16/3-4.

³⁵³ SIMONENKO 2008, 61, cat. no. 44, Pl. 33/4-5.

³⁵⁴ BICHIR 1993, 149, Fig. 8/2, 3a-3b; BÂRCĂ 2006, 75, 76, 369, Fig. 134/2, 8, 165/1, 167/3.

³⁵⁵ Cf. KOSTENKO 1993, 15, 18, 40, 49, 54, Fig. 4/10, 12, 5a/1, 4, 13/9, 12, 16/17, 20, 18/11, 14.

³⁵⁶ Cf. KOSTENKO 1986

³⁵⁷ SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY 1990a, 16, Fig. 14/1-3; SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY/OSTROVERKHOV 1998, 101, Fig. 39/1-3; BÂRCĂ 2006, 75, 292, Fig. 28/1-3; SIMONENKO 2008, 77, cat. no. 108, Pl. 120/12-14.

³⁵⁸ SHCHERBAKOVA/KASHUBA 1993; KASHUBA/KURCHATOV/SHCHERBAKOVA 2001-2002, 208, Fig. 14/1-3; BÂRCĂ 2006, 75, 76, 77, 334, Fig. 79/2-4; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 117, Fig. 35/13.

³⁵⁹ LEAHU/TROHANI 1979, 138. For amphorae of the type to which the item at Vitănești was assigned as well see POPILIAN 1974, p. 141-142, Pl. I/8).

³⁶⁰ We thank as well Dr. George Trohani and our friend Ovidiu Țentea for the kindness to search for this amphora fragments.

³⁶¹ For amphora finds in the Sarmatian environment of the first centuries AD see RAEV 1986, 52, Pl. 37/1; BESPALYJ 1992, 175, Fig. 1/12; GUSHCHINA/ZASETSKAYA 1994, 46, cat. no. 76, Pl. 6/76; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, 347, cat. no. 36, Pl. 66/7; MAKSIMENKO 1998, 108-109, Fig. 48; SIMONENKO 2008, 29, Pl. 36/3-4, 98/2-3, 116/2, 132/1-2; 138/1a, 142/2, 154/12, 156/2, 159/9, 161/14; SIMONENKO 2011, 142-148, Fig. 86-89; BÂRCĂ 2006, 90-91, Fig. 43/2, 74/2, 99/1-2, 163/1-2; BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 129-130, 229-231, Fig. 45, 90.

³⁶² See to this effect BÂRCĂ/COCIȘ 2013, 33-40; BÂRCĂ 2014 with all finds and bibliography.

and dating during the first three centuries AD in the north and north-west Pontic Sarmatian graves, it is possible that the amphora from Vitănești belonged to type C in D. B. Shelov's typology³⁶³ and to C IVC in that more recent of S.Yu. Vnukov³⁶⁴. D. B. Shelov dated these amphorae to the 2nd c. AD³⁶⁵, while S. Yu. Vnukov noted, following the analysis of the archaeological features and the find contexts, that they date to the chronological interval comprised between the second quarter of the 2nd c. AD and the end of the 2nd c. AD³⁶⁶.

Following the analysis of the grave at Vitănești, it can be concluded that a series of elements and features of the funerary rite and ritual³⁶⁷ prove – beside the preserved funerary inventory – that it was part of the group of graves belonging to the Sarmatian elite from the north and north-west of the Black Sea. They can be chronologically framed between the second half of the 1st c. AD and the first half of the 2nd c. AD.

In our opinion, the grave at Vitănești dates, most likely, sometime in the first half of the 2nd c. AD.

It is certain that following the analysis of the few Sarmatian finds, it was noted they date to a different period. Except these recent date propositions, the analysis also evidenced that some of the finds belong to a larger group of Sarmatian finds in the north and north-west Pontic area radically different from the rest of the Sarmatian graves in the same geographical area. Among the graves in this group are present a series of elements and features brought to this area by the novel Sarmatian tribes arriving from the east starting with mid 1st c. AD³⁶⁸.

Other aspects outlined following the re-analysis of the Sarmatian remains in the Romanian plain are those related to the effective presence of the Sarmatians in this region and the relations with the Roman Empire, which were more complex than commonly believed.

Concerning the early Sarmatian presence in the Romanian plain, we believe that for the second half of the 1st c. AD, one cannot speak of an effective inhabitancy of the space, which is the case of the period of the 2nd-3rd c. AD. Recent dating of certain Sarmatian finds on the territory of Brăila County between the end of the 1st c. AD and early 2nd c. AD are slightly forced. On the same line, to date to later chronological segment earlier graves based only on some artefacts (even, made of gold) is a lacking grounds enterprise if other artefacts and aspects of the funerary rite and ritual are ignored (e.g. the display of graves; the funerary pit type and its arrangement; the orientation of the skeleton). An example to this effect are also the graves at Oltenița-Ulmeni framed by some of the researchers, as mentioned, in the mid Sarmatian period. A similar scenario was also applied in the case of the Sarmatian finds on the current territory of Brăila county³⁶⁹, but also for the barrow grave at Galați-Seromgal³⁷⁰. Obviously,

there are cases when graves with an accurate chronological framing were dated later, while items with definite cultural assignment within certain graves were assigned or dated erroneously (eg. Chiscani-sat, Lișcoteanca Moș Filon G 7). All of this though will be discussed in the second part of this study.

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³⁶³ SHELOV 1978, 18, Fig. 6.

³⁶⁴ VNUKOV 2003, 202; VNUKOV 2006, 166, 167, Fig. 1/9; 10.

³⁶⁵ SHELOV 1978, 18.

³⁶⁶ VNUKOV 2003, 202; VNUKOV 2006, 166, 167, Fig. 10.

³⁶⁷ E.g.: main burial, large funerary pit, hiding-niche, ditch in flat circular shape surrounding the grave.

³⁶⁸ A specific trait is the very rich funerary inventory composed of eastern character items but also the main burials from barrows, large rectangular pits with the dead placed along the wall or the square pits with the dead placed diagonally etc. See to this effect BÂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009.

³⁶⁹ Cf. OȚA/SÎRBU 2009, 178, 184-190.

³⁷⁰ BABEȘ 1999, 234.

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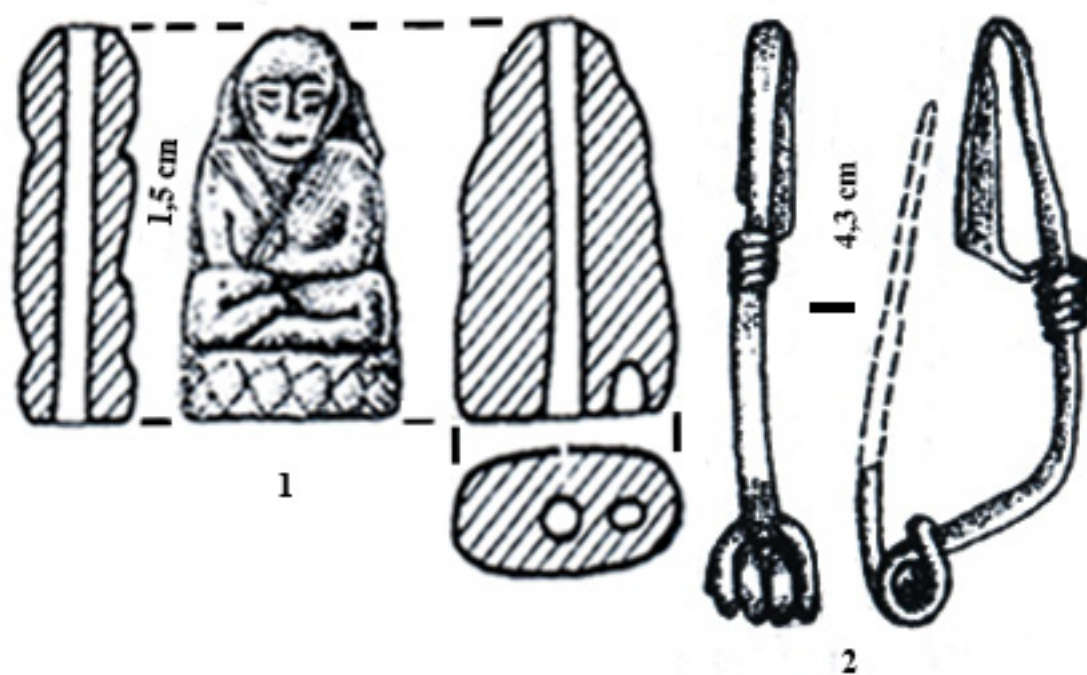
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3



4

Fig. 1. Pendant (1) and brooch (2) of Lehliu (after BICIR 1996); 3-4. Mirror in the barrow at Sokolova Mogila (after KOVPANENKO 1986).



Fig. 2. 1-2. Musician figurines in grave 2 at Tillya-tepe (after SARIANIDI 1989); 3. Funerary monument at Phanagoria (after YATSENKO 1992a); 4-5. Belt buckles in T 2 M 1 at Porogi (after SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991); 7-8. Depiction on the collar/diadem in barrow 10 at Kobyakovo (after MORDVITSEVA 2003); 8-9. Coins of the Indo-Scythian kings from the 1st c. BC, Azes I (8) Maues (9) (after <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:AzesI.JPG>; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:MauesBuddhaCoin.JPG>).



1



2



3

0 3 cm

Fig. 3. 1. The cauldron at Kal'mius (after SHTERN 1911);
2-3. Plate-fasteners in the Siberian collection of Peter
the Great (after RUDENKO 1962).

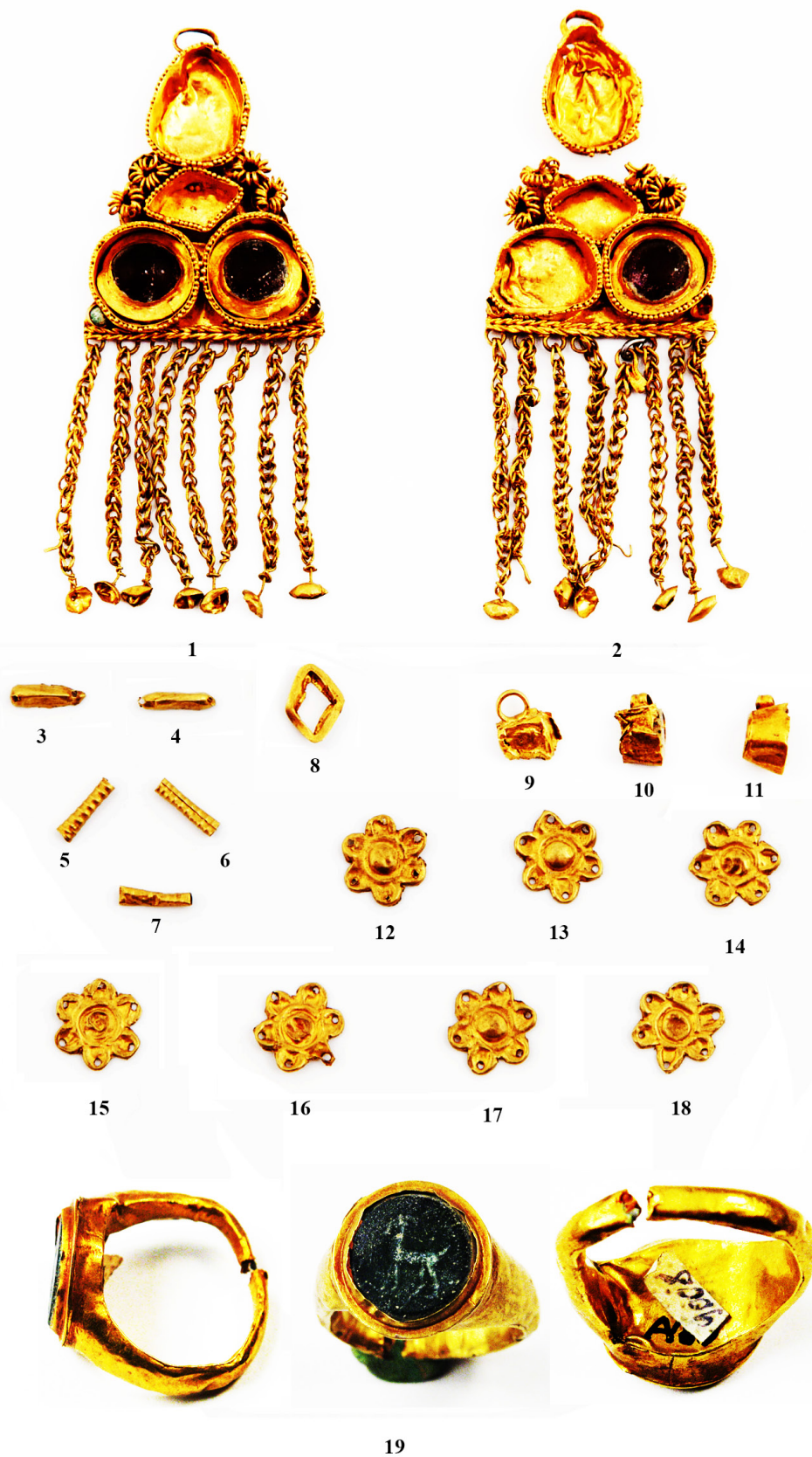


Fig. 4. The items in the “hoard” at Buzău. 1-2. Earrings (after MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007); 3-4. Oval extended appliques; 5-7. Tubes; 9-11. Ring items provided with circular handles attached by soldering; 12-18. Appliques in a rosette shape with six petals; 19. Ring. 1-19 – gold.

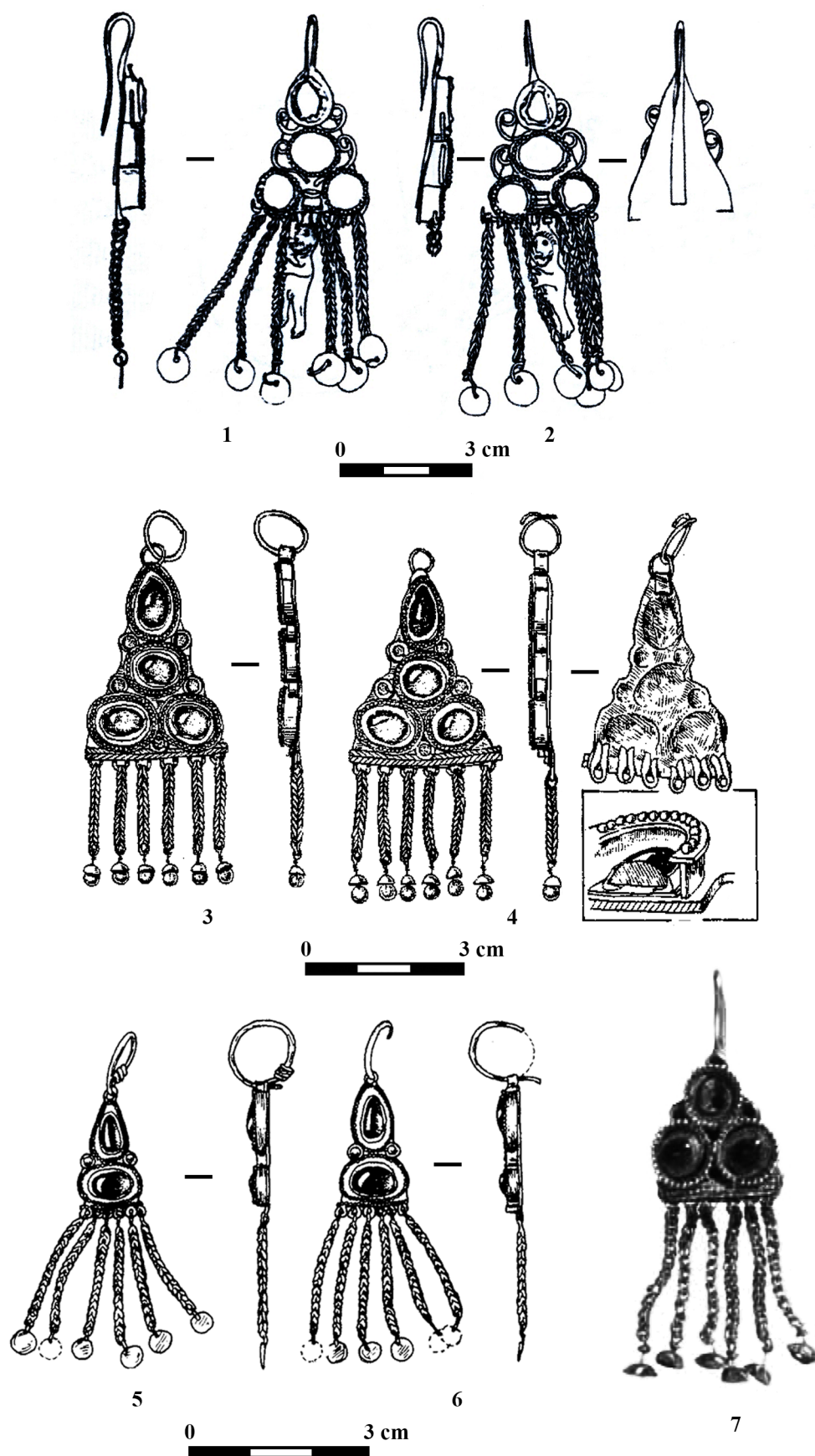


Fig. 5. Gold earrings. 1-2. Ust'-Al'ma G 1 tomb 620 (after PUZDROVSKIJ 2007); 3-4. Porogi T 2 G 2 (after SIMONENKO/LOBAJ 1991); 5-6. Severinovka T 1 G 3 (after SIMONENKO 2008); 7. Olbia (after FLESS/TREJSTER 2007).

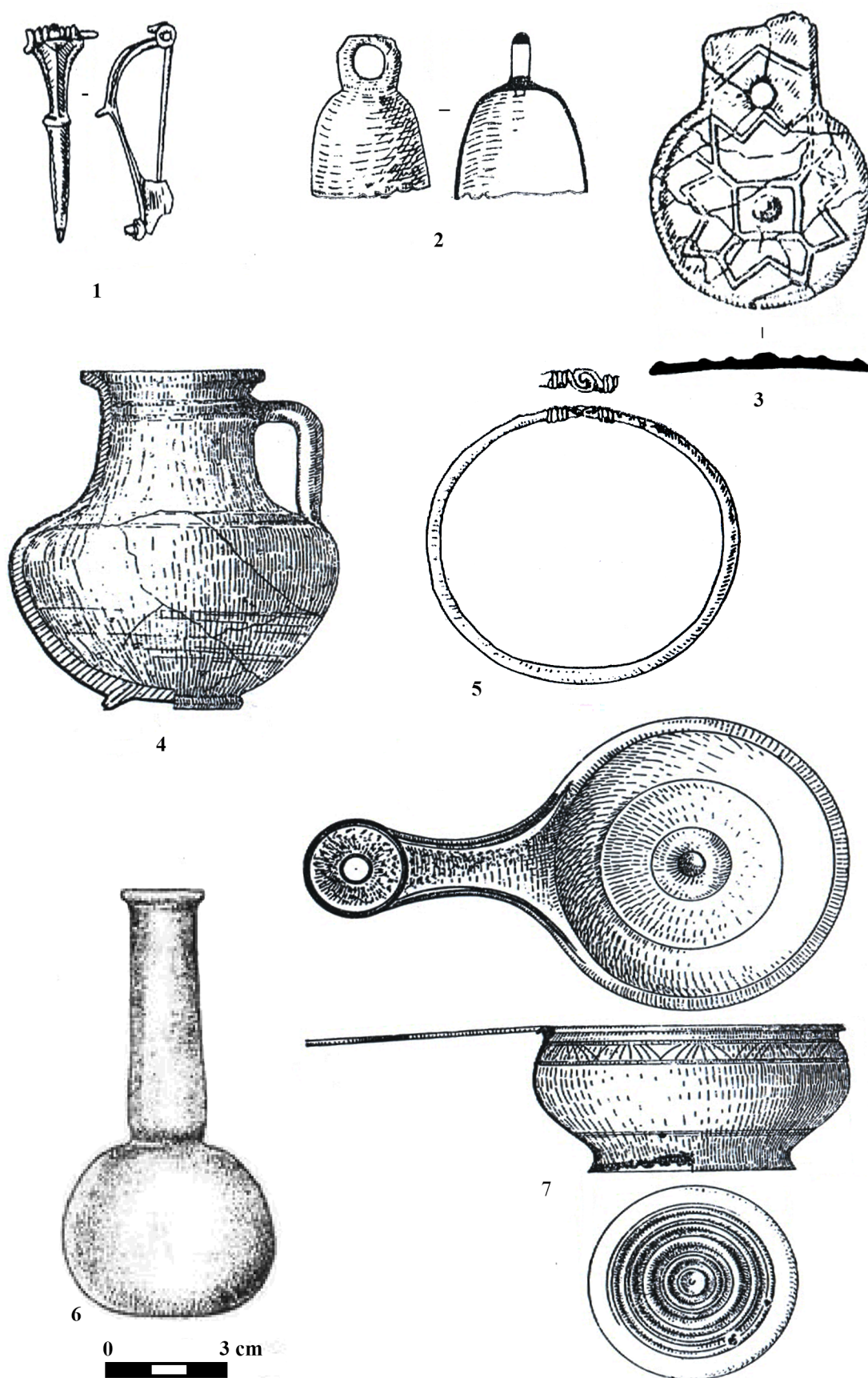


Fig. 6. The items in the Sarmatian graves at Oltenița-Ulmeni. 1. Brooch (G 1); 2. Small bell (G 3); 3. Mirror (G 3); 4. Cup (G 3); 5. Bracelet (G 3); 6. Unguentarium; 7. Casserole (after BICHI 1977). 1-3, 5, 7 – bronze, 4 – pottery, 6 – glass.

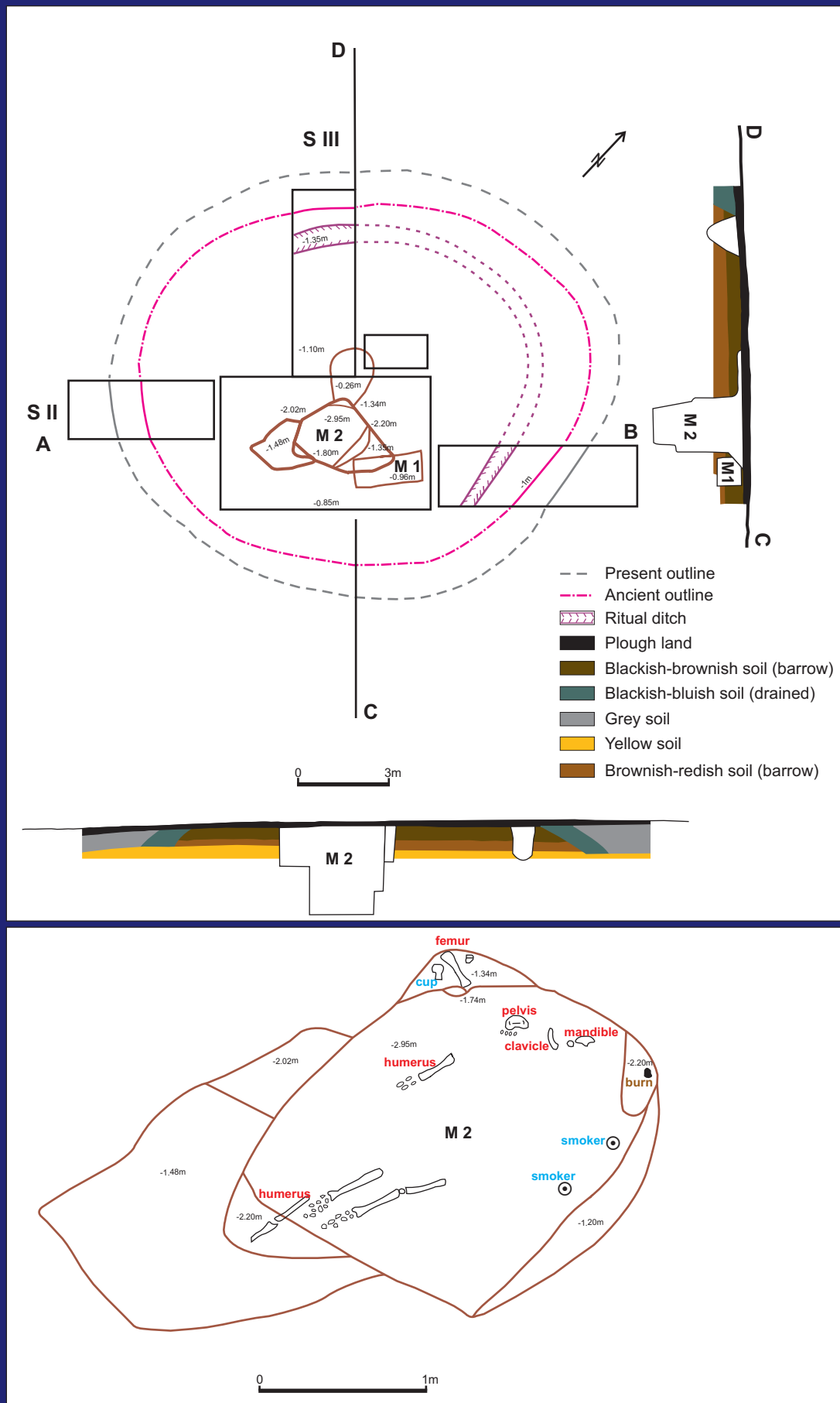


Fig. 7. 1. Layout of the barrow, sections and profiles of T 2 at Vitănești;
2. Layout of grave 2 in the barrow 2 at Vitănești (after LEAHU/TROHANI 1979).

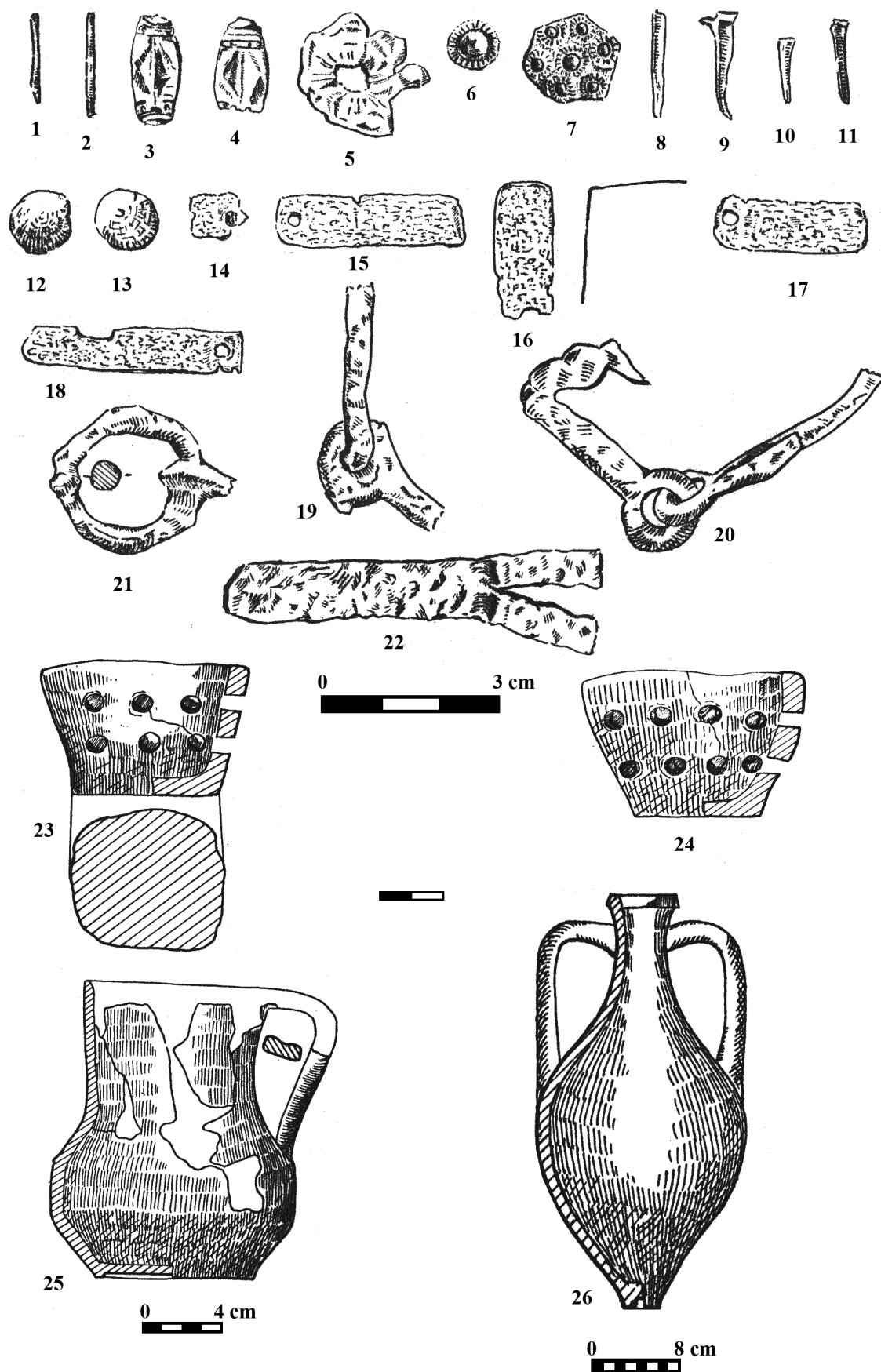


Fig. 8. The items in T 2 G 2 at Vitănești. 1-2. Smooth surface tubes; 3-4. Approximately rectangular appliques; 5. Rosette shaped applique; 6. Circular appliques; 7. Hexagonal applique; 8-11. Nails; 12-13. Semispherical knobs; 14-18. Rectangular plates; 19-22. Bits and iron pieces; 23-24. Censers; 25. Wheelthrown cup; 26. Amphora (?) (after LEAHU/TROHANI 1979). 1-7 – gold, 12-18 – bronze, 8-11, 19-22 – iron. 23-26 – pottery.