
THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF SARMATIANS IN WALLACHIA¹

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Started a few years ago, our research regarding the Sarmatians in Wallachia aims at going beyond the deadlock represented by synthesis studies / re-dating some finds, which some prestige scholars (Bichir 1971a, 135-145; Bichir 1971b, 275-285; Bichir 1972, 137-176; Bichir 1977, 167-197; Bichir 1985, 1164-1177; Bichir 1996, 297-312; Diaconu 1963, 323-345; Diaconu 1965, 19-29; Diaconu 1980, 275-285; Harhoiu 1993, 41-51; Harțuche 1980, 191-251; Morintz, Ionescu 1968, 95-128; Morintz, Ionescu 1970, 37-54; Niculescu 2003, 177-205) have imposed with their authority, but which seems to have reached an impasse. The finds attributed to the Sarmatians in Wallachia are much more than simple data contributing to statistics on the traits of funerary ritual. They are, in fact, the manifestations of strategies (J.P. Vernant even speaks about a 'death policy'² for any social group), governed by certain rules³. A correlation of the groups that define themselves in terms of funerary practices with other aspects of the social behaviour must be, first and foremost, explained, and not internalized straightaway (Jones 1993, 250), for there are various links between the individuals (family, profession, friendship (Luis 2003, 44), age, sex or religion) (Jones 1993, 250). One must stress from the beginning the impediment represented by the lack of settle-

ments and the fact that the graves are only testimonies that allow for decoding, though incompletely, the existence of the Sarmatian communities in Wallachia. Nevertheless, we believe that they should not represent insurmountable obstacles in the way of a new approach to funerary finds attributed to Sarmatians in the aforementioned region. After taking all precautions, the study of the Sarmatian graves in Wallachia could provide significant details on the age ratio inside a certain group and on the manner in which one constructs graves as being 'feminine' or 'masculine' (Oța, Sîrbu, Matei 2013, 325-352), on the structure of imports, be they from the Roman Empire or from the areas of other cultures (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, 145-183; 2012, 125-163; Sîrbu et al. 2014, 101-119), and on the role attributed to them in the funerary ritual⁴ and even on the relations between the Roman Empire and the Sarmatian communities in Wallachia (Oța 2007, 51-55).

This study aims to analyse the finds that can be connected to what we defined as being the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, 178-196; Oța, Sîrbu 2010, 191-201; Oța, Sîrbu 2013, 292-293; Sîrbu et al. 2014, 122-133). The purpose is not to insist on the date of the arrival, which was debated on several occasions (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, 178-196; Oța, Sîrbu 2010, 191-201; Oța, Sîrbu 2013, 292-293; Sîrbu et al. 2014, 122-133), for it would mean to contradict ourselves and restart a possibly endless argument on dating funerary features⁵. Instead, the purpose

¹This study is an extended version of the article *Prima etapă de pătrundere a sarmaților în Muntenia* by L. Oța, V. Sîrbu, which was published in *Acta Musei Tutovens. Istorie veche și Arheologie*, XII/2. In *Honorem Ion Ioniță Octogenarii*, 2016, p. 147-167.

²Vernant 1995, 206 (*apud* Mustakallio 2005, 180, note 4).

³'...social groupings are defined in terms of those individuals who follow certain cultural rules. Rules of funerary behaviour can fit well into this pattern – so that people who share the same set of funerary rules define themselves as a community – at least in funerary terms.' (Jones 1993, 250).

⁴Sîrbu et al. 2014, 115-119; Oța 2015a (forthcoming).

⁵Bărcă 2015, who, although plans to 're-interpret' some Sarmatian finds in the Wallachia Plains, does not provide any new meanings for the Sarmatian finds in the area in question (as he was supposed to, based on the definition of 'to interpret'). He merely adopts opinions already expressed in previously published literature, adding analogies to them, and, in some cases, slightly changing their chronology. V. Bărcă (2013, 253) has expressed before the opinion that Sarmatians could not settle down in Wallachia before the rule of Hadrian, but has not argued it, and he does the same in the article in 2015.

is to detail, as far as the funerary finds allow us to do so, the image of the Sarmatian communities that the Romans allowed to settle close to the *limes* of Moesia Inferior.

The funerary finds that can be attributed to the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia, fitting in the time span that starts with the last decade of the first century AD and extends throughout the second century consist of both isolated graves and clusters of graves (fig. 9). The clusters contain varying numbers of tombs, ranging from a minimum of three to a maximum of sixteen, as follows: Râmnicelu (sixteen graves)⁶, Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* (twelve graves)⁷, Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* (six funerary features)⁸, Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă* (three interments)⁹, Jugureanu (also three graves)¹⁰. The inventory of three, or perhaps even four of the five graves found in Ulmeni (G. 1-2, G. 4, possibly G. 5 as well) and some of the items with unclear circumstances regarding their finding (the bronze casserole and the glass *unguentarium*)¹¹ also point to a dating that begins with the end of the first century AD and extends throughout the next century¹². Save for one case, the so-called 'Buzău treasure'¹³, the isolated graves are also concentrated in north-eastern (Mohreanu¹⁴, possibly also Racovița¹⁵ or Roșiori)¹⁶ or southern Wallachia (G. 2 from Măriuța¹⁷, Hagieni¹⁸, Lehliu¹⁹,

Oltenița-*Fundeneanu*²⁰, Vitănești²¹, perhaps also Vlădeni)²².

There are four important conclusions that one can draw, based solely on the simple enumeration just made. First of all, there are relatively few finds, at least up until now, that can be connected to the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia: fifty-three / fifty-four (if we also take into account the graves that cannot be dated for sure in Racovița, Roșiori and Vlădeni).

Secondly, the grave clusters (six of them, containing forty-three – forty-four structures) dominate over the isolated graves (seven which are certain, plus three where there are doubts). To classify G. 2 in Măriuța as an isolated grave, given that we know of at least another funerary structure in that site, seems like a mistake only at first. Cpl. 2/2009²³ from Măriuța can be dated, at the earliest, to the second half of the second century AD, and a later dating, after the middle of that century, cannot be ruled out. Because questions on the chronological differences within groups such as Ulmeni, Măriuța or Păuleasca are still waiting for a definite answer (Sirbu et al. 2014, 127-129) – at least in the current stage of research – we only took into account G. 2 from the group in Măriuța as belonging to the first stage.

Thirdly, given the example in Măriuța, a tomb might have been isolated at first, but other burials were added afterwards.

Lastly, the graves that can be dated to the first stage (fig. 9) are concentrated mostly in north-eastern, eastern and southern Wallachia.

Simply by comparing their numbers and discovery contexts (isolated or in clusters), the graves generate interesting details. Most of the finds (forty-one, possibly forty-three) are concentrated in north-eastern Wallachia, and less so in the south (eight – ten), which could mean that, in the first stage, the Sarmatian communities occupied mostly the Brăila Plains. In fact, this makes sense, given the direction that the Sarmatians came from. The number differences between north-

⁶ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 52-63, cat. no. VIII A 31-38, 113-115, cat. no. IX A 49-52, 130-132, no. 16 (with the previous bibliography).

⁷ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 45-47, cat. no. VI B 25-26, 111-113, cat. no. VII C 42-47, 126-129, no. 13 (with the previous bibliography).

⁸ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 39-45, cat. no. VI A 21-24, 109-110, cat. no. VII A 36-40, 124-126, no. 11 (with the previous bibliography).

⁹ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 110-111, cat. no. VII B 41, 126, no. 12 (with the previous bibliography).

¹⁰ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 108-109, cat. no. VI A 33-35, 123-124, no. 10 (with the previous bibliography).

¹¹ Sirbu et al. 2014, 76-84, cat. no. 41 (with the previous bibliography).

¹² Sirbu et al. 2014, 127-128.

¹³ Harhoiu 1993, 41-51; L. Oța, S. Oța 2015, 537-576 (with the previous bibliography).

¹⁴ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 48-52, cat. no. VII A 28-30, 129, no. 14 (with the previous bibliography).

¹⁵ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 113, cat. no. VIII A 48, 129, no. 15 (with the previous bibliography).

¹⁶ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 132-133, no. 17 (with the previous bibliography).

¹⁷ Sirbu et al. 2014, 54-55, cat. no. 24, 129 (with the previous bibliography).

¹⁸ Sirbu et al. 2014, 52-53, cat. no. 21, 131 (with the previous bibliography).

¹⁹ Sirbu et al. 2014, 53-54, cat. no. 23, 132 (with the previous bibliography).

²⁰ Sirbu et al. 2014, 59, cat. no. 28-34 B, 131-132 (with the previous bibliography).

²¹ Sirbu et al. 2014, 85-89, cat. no. 47, 131 (with the previous bibliography).

²² Sirbu et al. 2014, 90, cat. no. 49, 132 (with the previous bibliography).

²³ Sirbu et al. 2014, 55-57, cat. no. 24, 129 (with the previous bibliography).

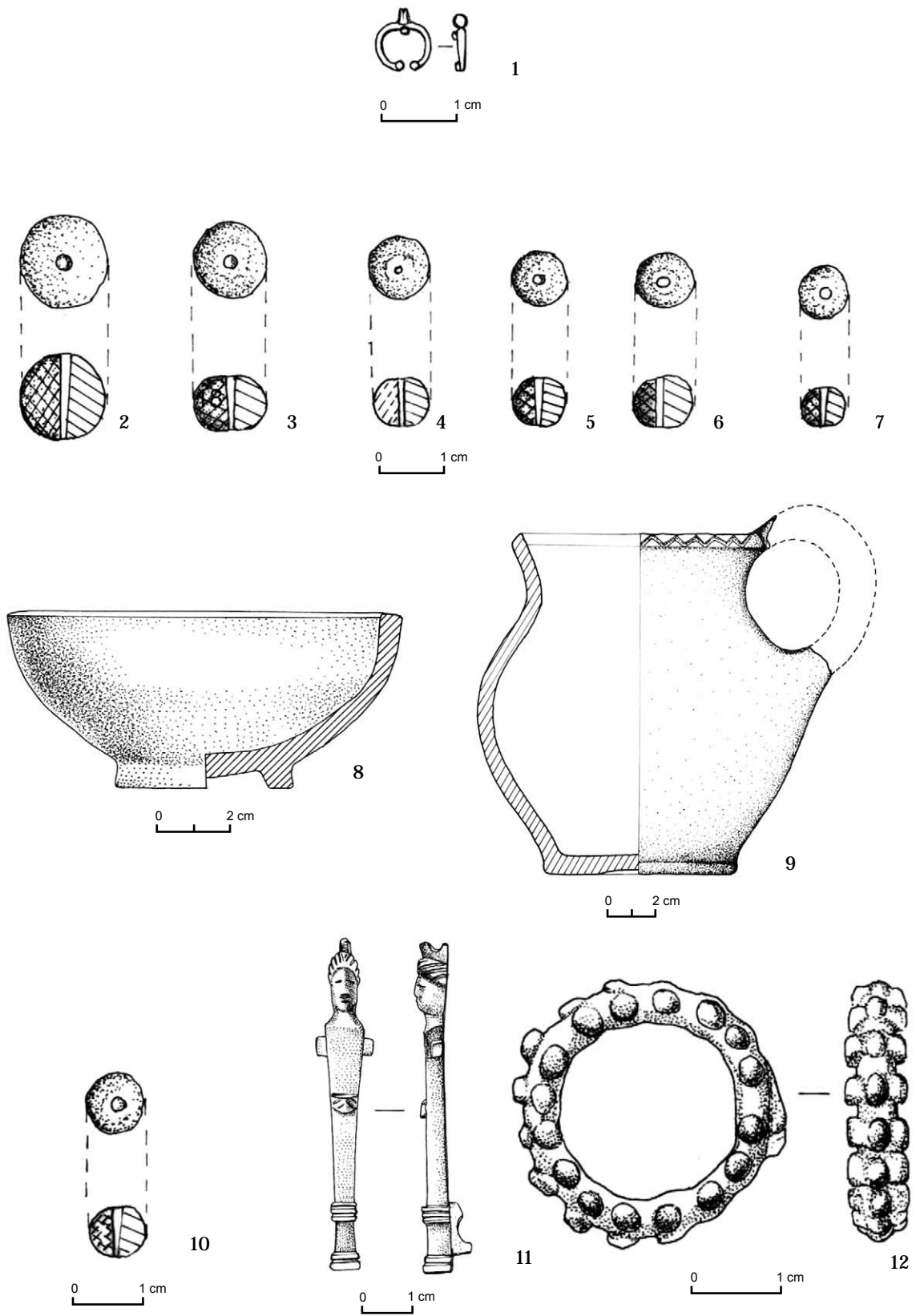


Fig. 1. 1-8 - Râmnicelu G. 14; 9 - Râmnicelu G.19; 10-12 - Mohreanu (after Oța, Sirbu 2009).

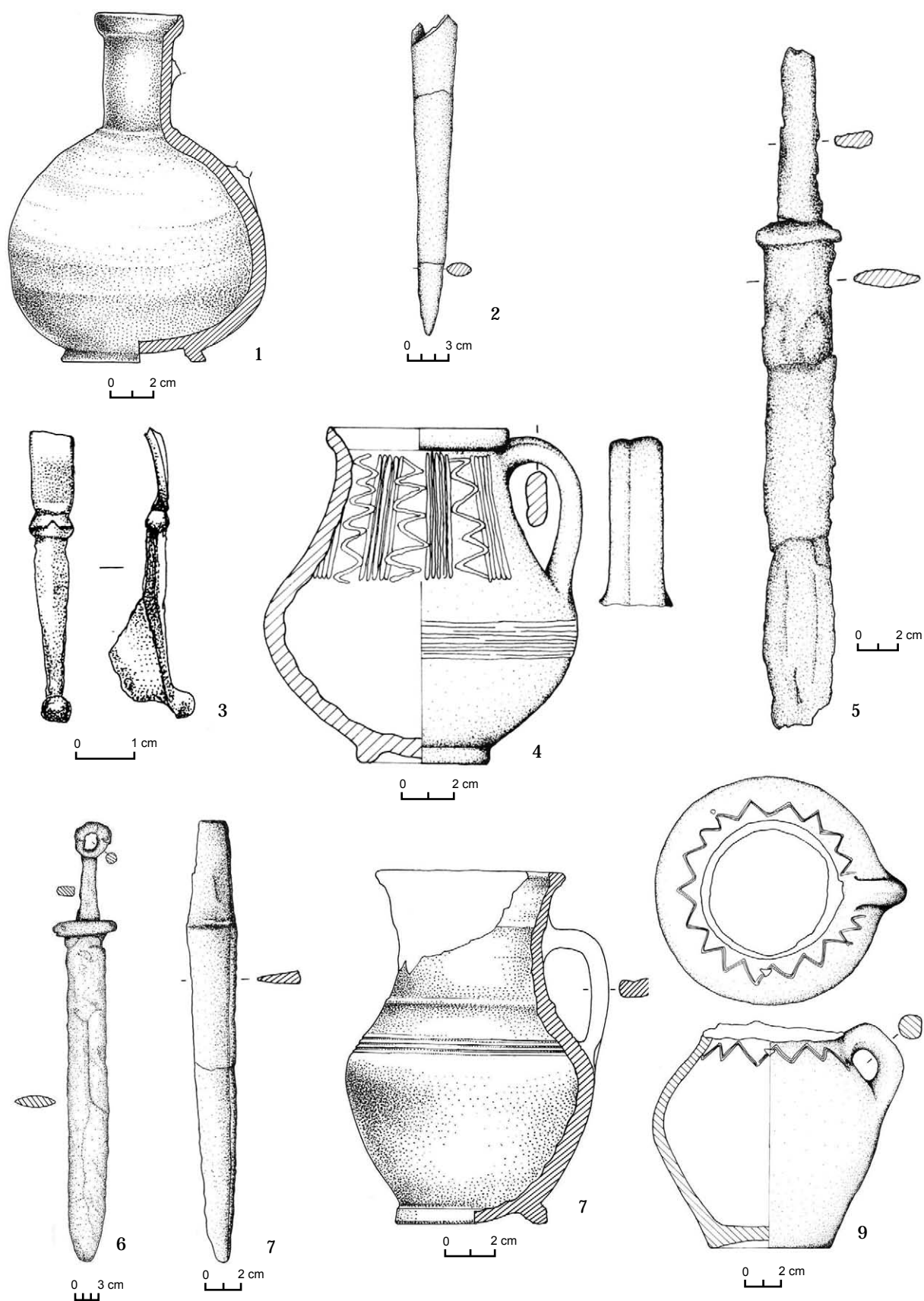


Fig. 2. 1-2 - Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon G. 1; 3-5 - Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon G. 7; 6, 8 - Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului G. 7; 7, 9 - Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului G. 17 (after Oța, Sirbu 2009).

eastern and southern Wallachia also applies to the discovery contexts. Whereas the grave clusters dominate in the Brăila Plains (forty funerary structures, in five clusters), some of which are the largest in Wallachia (Râmnicelu or Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*, with sixteen and twelve graves, respectively), the isolated burials are the ones that define the first stage in southern Wallachia (six of them).

Another feature of the burials in Wallachia, the dating of which starts with the last decade of the first century AD and the first decades of the following century, is the preference for interment in elevated terrain. Namely, thirty-seven graves were in tells (the clusters in Râmnicelu, Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*, Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* and Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă*) and one on a terrain 7-8 m above the Ialomița flood basin (Vlădeni). There are four tumular graves – three secondary ones in older tumuli (Mohreanu, Hagieni and Roșiori) and only one in a specially-erected mound (Vitănești). Eleven graves are flat: the clusters in Jugureanu and Ulmeni, the isolated structures in Măriuța, Lehliu, Oltenița-*Fundeanu*, Racovița.

Contrary to expectations, the preferred orientation is W-E, which applies to nineteen graves (ten in Râmnicelu, six in Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*, one in Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon*, Jugureanu and Ulmeni each). Sixteen structures were oriented N-S, eleven of which in the Brăila Plains (five graves in Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*, two in Râmnicelu, one in Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* and Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă*, Jugureanu and Mohreanu each) and five in southern Wallachia (Vitănești, Măriuța G. 2 and three graves in Ulmeni). Significantly less frequent are the NW-SE orientations (four structures – three in Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* and one in Jugureanu) or the E-W ones (also four graves – two in Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă* and one in Râmnicelu and Vlădeni each). G. 7 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* and the grave from Oltenița-*Fundeanu* were oriented NE-SW, and Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* G. 6 and Racovița along the S-N axis. A burial from Râmnicelu, G. 1, was oriented SW-NE. There is no known orientation for five interments (Râmnicelu G. 14 and G. 20, Roșiori, Lehliu and Hagieni).

What stands out is the contrast between the quasi-uniformity of the graves from the first stage in southern Wallachia – mostly N-S (five struc-

tures), with the NE-SW variation (one instance) and just two exceptions (Vlădeni, aligned E-W and Ulmeni G. 5, aligned W-E) compared to the heterogeneous nature of the orientations in the Brăila Plains (W-E – eighteen graves, N-S – eleven graves, NW-SE – four graves, E-W – three graves, S-N – one definite, another two which are possible, SW-NE – one case and NE-SW – one case).

Reviewing the orientation of the graves in each cluster bring some nuance, perhaps unexpectedly, to the previous observation. At the level of each cluster of graves there is, however, a certain orientation: N-S, with the NW-SE and NE-SW orientations, in Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* (five out of six graves), Jugureanu (two out of three graves) and Ulmeni (three out of four graves), W-E in Râmnicelu (ten out of sixteen structures), E-W in Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă* (two out of three cases). In Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* there are two frequent axes: W-E (six instances) and N-S (five instances). The exceptions, at the level of each cluster of graves, amount to four in Râmnicelu (two graves oriented N-S, one E-W and one SW-NE) and one for each other cluster (one interment oriented W-E in Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon*, Jugureanu and Ulmeni, one N-S in Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă* and one S-N in Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*).

What is the reason behind choosing a certain axis for most of the graves in a cluster, why is a certain orientation in a certain cluster but barely present in another cluster, what is the reasoning behind the exceptions and the diversity – these are all questions that do not have a definite answer, at least not yet. One possible explanation could come out of comparing the orientations of the graves attributed to the second and third stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia. In contrast to the diversity of orientations of the graves from the first stage, which we have just discussed, the funerary structures that come after that display the N-S orientation as either quasi-exclusive, for the Brăila Plains (17 burials, with the sole exception of the five-grave cluster in Brăila-*Hipodrom*, all of them oriented E-W), or predominant in southern Wallachia (forty-seven funerary structures oriented, with some variations, along the N-S axis; unfortunately, the orientation of thirty-six graves is unknown, and the exceptions amount to five, so far) (Sirbu et al. 2014, 96). The change can



Fig. 3. 1-21 - Vitănești (1 - after Sirbu et al. 2014; 2-21 - after Leahu, Trohani 1979).

be clearly seen in time, but the explanation is still incomplete, because the causes of this change are not yet visible.

At first, it seems that there is great diversity in the positions of interment for the Sarmatians in Wallachia. In fact, we can speak of an actual preference only for the position that we wrote down as number 1 (lying, with outstretched legs and arms) (Oța, Sirbu 2009, 141-143), observed in twenty-one instances (seven graves in Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului and Râmnicelu each, two in Jugureanu and only one in Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon and Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă each, possibly in Vitănești, Racovița and Roșiori). The total number of exceptions from position 1 is quite high – twenty-three, but only three positions were registered in more than one case: position 4, lying, with the palms on the pelvis (three instances – Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon G. 6, Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului G. 7, Vlădeni); position 11, with both arms stretched along the body, and the legs bent at the knees and fallen to the right-hand side (Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon G. 4 and Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă G. 6); position 14, with the right arm stretched, the left arm bent with the palm on the pelvis, and the legs bent at the knees and fallen to the right (Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului G. 3, Jugureanu G. 1, and possibly Măriuța G. 2). All the other positions, numbered 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22, were observed in only one case. For nine graves (Râmnicelu G. 14 and G. 20, all of the four structures from Ulmeni, dated to the first stage, Hagiieni, Lehliu and Oltenița-Fundeneanu), there is no data on the position of the dead. Insofar as the clusters are concerned, there are two situations that stand out: either extreme diversity of the positions of the dead (Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon and Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă, where absolutely each of the dead had a different position), or a predominant position, usually the one numbered 1 (seven funerary structures in Râmnicelu and Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului each, plus two in Jugureanu) and a smaller or larger number exceptions (seven in Râmnicelu, five in Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului and one in Jugureanu).

The proportion between the adult and the children graves is relatively balanced, even though it is affected by the twelve cases where the archaeologist could not even suppose the age (Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului G. 15, G. 23-24, Jugureanu G. 12,

Râmnicelu G. 14, Ulmeni G. 1-2, Hagiieni, Lehliu, Oltenița-Fundeneanu and Racovița). Adults were buried in twenty-four structures (seven in Râmnicelu, six in Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului, four in Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon, three in Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă, one in Jugureanu, Mohreanu, Roșiori and Vitănești each). Seventeen burials belong to children (eight in Râmnicelu, three in Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului, two in Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon and Ulmeni each, one in Măriuța and Vlădeni). Most of the clusters contained both adult and children graves, except for the group in Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă, where in all of the three graves were buried adults. The ratio between the two types of graves is quite balanced, even if children graves dominate in some cases (Râmnicelu) and the adult graves dominate in other situations (Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului and Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon). Namely, in Râmnicelu there are eight children graves, seven adult graves and one undetermined; in Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului there are six adult graves, three children graves and three undetermined; in Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon there are four adult graves and two children graves. The relatively high number of graves containing dead of undetermined age in Jugureanu (two, and only one adult grave) and in Ulmeni (also two, plus two children graves) does not allow for any definite conclusion. Although in four of the isolated graves were buried dead with undetermined age, the same balance between adults (three cases) and children (the remaining two) could be observed for the other five graves.

A genuine constant of the graves from the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia is the small number of inventory items, ranging from one to three, placed in each funerary structure. Higher number of items are characteristic of G. 1 and G. 4 in Ulmeni (four items each), but the real exception seems to be, at the current stage of research, just the burial in Vitănești, which has eight items. There may have been more, but were robbed later on. We cannot estimate the number of items in the inventories of the graves from Roșiori (one recovered fragments there, probably from a sword and a knife) and the 'Buzău treasure' (two earrings, one ring, pendants potentially from a necklace and dress appliqués in the collections of the National Museum of Antiquities – fig. 7). However, even against this uniform background, one can see some subtle differences.

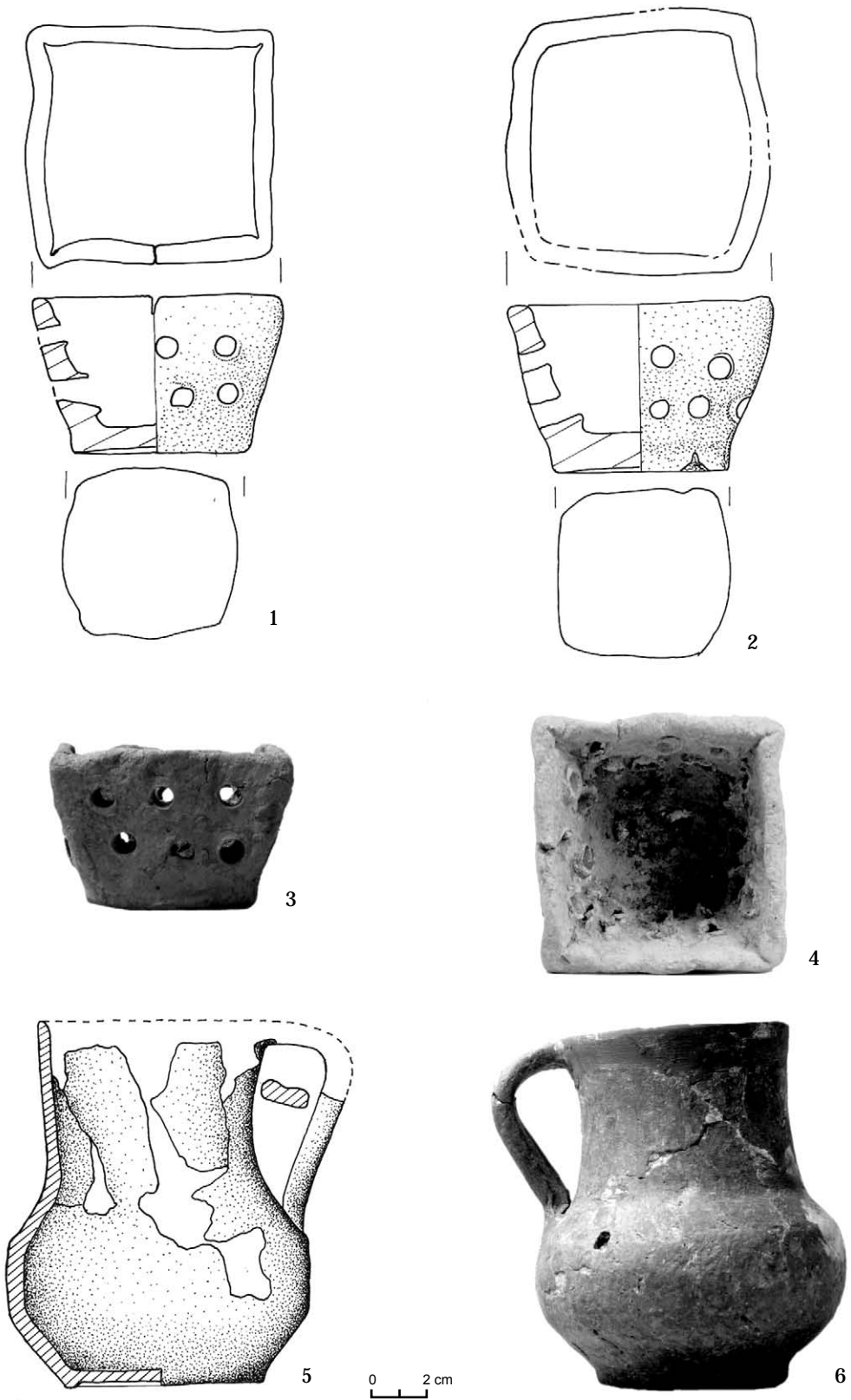


Fig. 4. 1-6 - Vitănești (after Sîrbu et al. 2014).

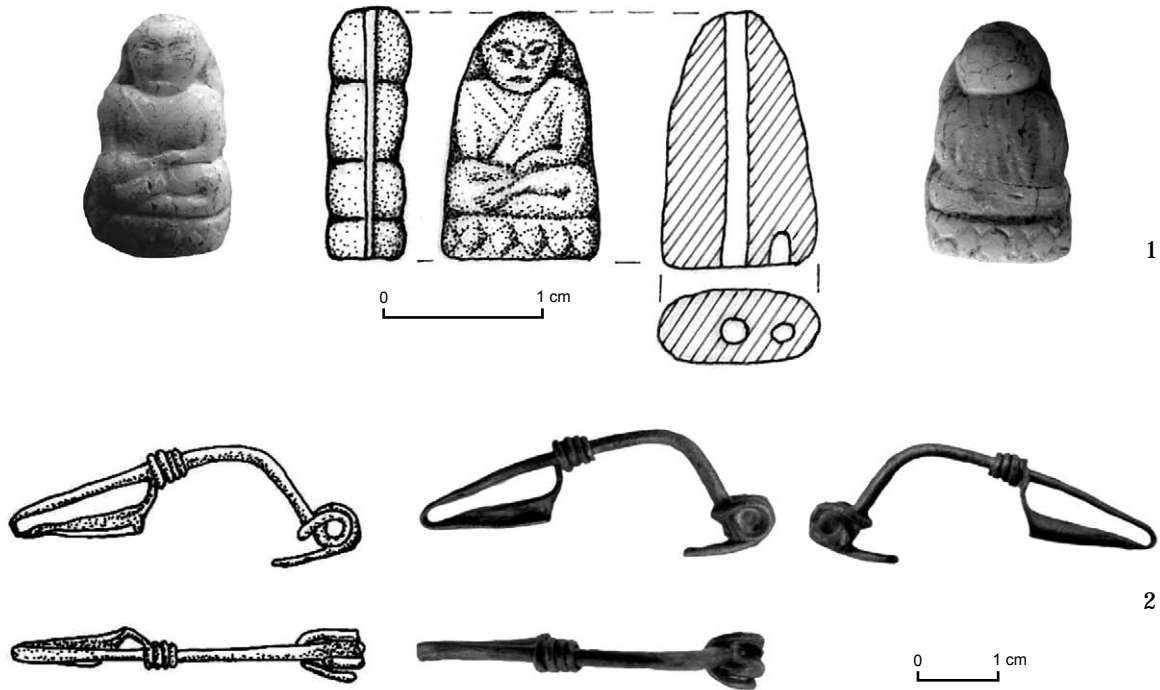


Fig. 5. 1-2 - Lehliu G1 (after Sirbu et al. 2014).

All of the four graves from Ulmeni connected to the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia have three or four inventory items. The grave clusters in the Brăila Plains, on the other hand, contain varying proportions of tombs without inventory (six out of the twelve in Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului, namely 50%, five out of sixteen in Râmnicelu, namely 31.25%, one out of six in Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon, namely 16.66%, one out of three in Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă and Jugureanu, namely 33.33%) and tombs with inventory. Six of the eleven graves with inventory from Râmnicelu contained only one item, which seems to place the cluster in question at the other end of the spectrum compared to Ulmeni. Even if half of the twelve graves in Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului did not have any inventory (six of them), and one of them had a single grave-good, there is one grave that stands out, G. 17, with three inventory items. What the six funerary structures from Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon reveal is more of a preference for placing items in graves (three in G. 1 and G. 7 each, two in G. 3 and one in G. 2 and G. 6) than for an absence of grave-goods (G. 4).

The categories of inventory items placed in the graves analysed in this study are not very diverse. Fourteen graves out of a total estimated to be no

more than 54 (which means 25.92%) did not have a funerary inventory. As for the rest of the graves, the inventory most frequently placed in them was pottery (in 18 burials).

Hand-made pottery was found in 13 of the 18 graves, mostly just one vessel, save for four cases: G. 2 in Jugureanu and G. 1 in Ulmeni (two jars each – fig. 6/5-6), G. 2 in Vitănești (two perforated vessels) and G. 4 in Ulmeni (jar and bowl). In terms of typology, it is the jars that dominate, as they are present in eight graves. Most of the jars belong to subtype a.1 – tall and flared mouth, similar to the upper part of a funnel, rounded shoulder, a bi-truncated and elongated body and a flat bottom²⁴ (Ulmeni G. 1, G. 4, Jugureanu G. 1, G. 2). It is less often that one encounters sub-types a.2 – mouth slightly flared, the edge of the rim rounded or oblique towards the outside, rounded shoulder, bi-truncated and elongated body, flat bottom, sometimes very thick (Racovița, possibly Râmnicelu G. 16 as well) or a.3 – mouth slightly flared, short and cylindrical neck, rounded shoulder, bi-truncated body, with the lower part much taller (Vlădeni). The vessel in Râmnicelu G. 1 is

²⁴ For the typology of the Sarmatian pottery, see Oța 2015b (forthcoming), but also previous contributions – Oța, Sirbu 2009, 151-152 and Sirbu et al. 2014, 102-104.

fragmentary and cannot be fit in any particular subtype. It is much less frequent that we encounter hand-made mugs (three burials), with analogies either in the repertoire of Sarmatian pottery (Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* G. 17 – fig. 2/9), or in the Dacian pottery (Râmnicelu G. 19 – fig. 1/9 and Măriuța G. 2)²⁵. The other type of hand-made vessels are the bowls, which are difficult to attribute to any particular pottery tradition (Ulmeni G. 4, perhaps also the fragmentary vessel from G. 17 in Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*), the Sarmatian perforated vessels (two of them, both registered in Vitănești – fig. 4/1-4), the spherical vessel, also Sarmatian (Oltenița-*Fundeneanu*), and the lids, whose shape is imported from the repertoire of Dacian pottery (two, in G. 1 from Ulmeni – fig. 6/3-4).

The pottery imported from the Roman provinces was found in six graves, and their typology is very diverse: mugs (two graves, both of them in Ulmeni, G. 2 and G. 4), bowl (Râmnicelu G. 14 – fig. 1/8), pitcher (Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* G. 7 – fig. 2/8), jug (Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* G. 1 – Fig. 2/1), amphora (Vitănești).

On the other hand, most of the recipients from the Dacian environment are mugs – either wheel-made (Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* G. 7 – fig. 2/4, Ulmeni G. 2, Oltenița-*Fundeneanu* and Vitănești – fig. 4/5-6) or hand-made (the vessels listed previously under the general typology of hand-made pottery, from G. 19 in Râmnicelu and G. 2 in Măriuța). Although the general typology of the Dacian pottery found in graves belonging to the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia shows little diversity (as it basically contains two types of recipients – mugs and bowls), it is remarkable to see the subtle differences in their shapes. In fact, each of the aforementioned Dacian recipients belongs to a separate sub-type (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, 152-153; Oța, Sîrbu 2012, 133-136; Sîrbu et al. 2014, 104-106). The wheel-made mugs belong to subtypes a.2.1, with bi-truncated and globular bodies, shorter necks and everted mouths (Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* G. 7), a.2.2, with bi-truncated and globular bodies, but longer necks and slightly everted mouths (Vitănești) and a.6, with globular bodies, short cylindrical necks, small diameter, flared mouths and everted mouths (Ulmeni G. 2). Because it is neither illustrated, nor described in

detail, the mug in Oltenița-*Fundeneanu* cannot be attributed to any particular sub-type. Although there are only two Dacian hand-made mugs, they make up two sub-types: f.1, mug with bi-truncated body, rounded shoulder, slightly flared mouth and rim oblique towards the outside (Râmnicelu G. 19) and f.2, mug with a high and concave bottom, the body strongly bi-truncated, slightly flared mouth, rounded rim and a handle higher than the mouth (Măriuța G. 2). Even if they have the same functionality, and are placed in the same grave, the lids from G. 1 in Ulmeni illustrate, in their turn, two sub-types: g. 1, truncated lid, with concave button and g. 2, lid with flat button.

Regardless of the origin of the pottery – Roman, Sarmatian or Dacian – the recipients rarely associate with one another. Five graves contained two vessels each, either exclusively hand-made (two Sarmatian jars in G. 2 from Jugureanu; two Sarmatian jars and two hand-made lids, with analogies in the Dacian pottery, in G. 1 from Ulmeni; mug with analogies in the inventory of other Sarmatian graves and, possibly, a bowl, published without illustration, in G. 17 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*), either hand- or wheel-made (spherical recipient with analogies in the Sarmatian environment and Dacian wheel-made mug in Oltenița-*Fundeneanu*) or just wheel-made (Dacian mug and Roman mug in G. 2 from Ulmeni). In G. 4 from Ulmeni, the three vessels were a jar, a hand-made bowl (unfortunately, there is no description of the fabric it was made of) and a Roman mug, while the inventory of the funerary structure in Vitănești associated Sarmatian (perforated vessels), Dacian (a mug) and Roman (the amphora) pottery.

Eleven funerary structures contained a single vessel each, compared to the seven graves with several recipients. What dominates are the hand-made recipients, be they Sarmatian (jars in G. 1 and G. 16 from Râmnicelu, G. 1 from Jugureanu, Racovița and Vlădeni) or with analogies in the repertoire of Dacian pottery (mugs in G. 19 in Râmnicelu – fig. 1/9 and G. 2 from Măriuța). The only vessel in G. 7 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* was a Dacian mug (fig. 2/4), while another three graves contained a vessel produced in Roman workshops each (pitcher in G. 7 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* – fig. 2/8, jug in G. 1 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* – Fig. 2/1 and bowl in G. 14 from Râmnicelu – fig. 1/8).

²⁵ For the typology of the Dacian pottery found in graves attributed to Sarmatians in Wallachia, see Oța, Sîrbu 2012, 125-163.

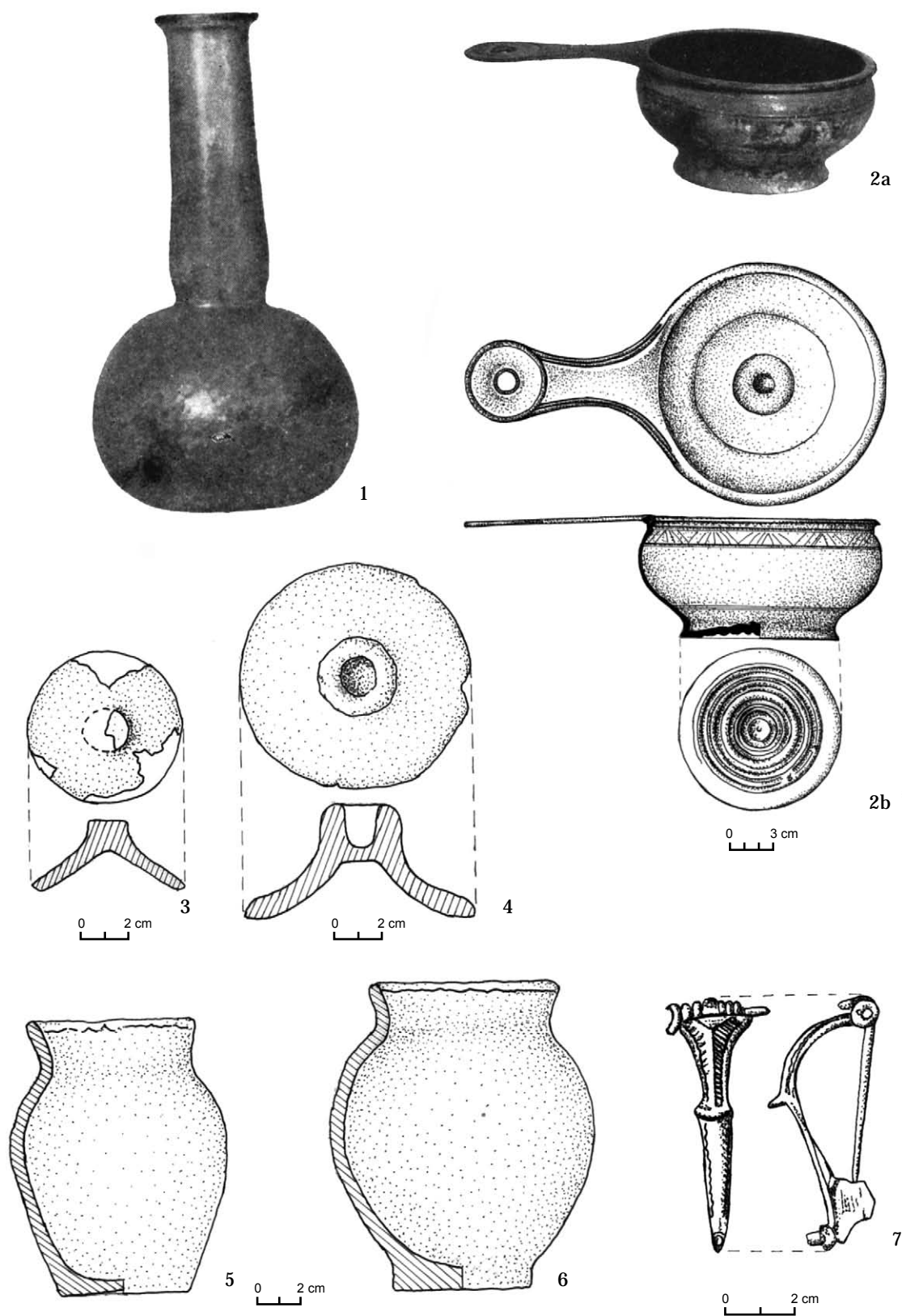


Fig. 6. 1-2 - Ulmeni – near G. 1-2 (after Morintz, Ionescu 1968; Bichir 1977); 3-7 - Ulmeni G. 1 (after Morintz, Ionescu 1970).

The positions of the vessels, regardless of their manufacture or the tradition behind them, follow the same habits. The preference seems to be for placing the vessels close to the head – eight cases in total, two of which do not mention other details (Racovița and all the three vessels in G. 4 in Ulmeni), four on the right-hand side (Râmnicelu G. 1, G. 16, G. 19,²⁶ Jugureanu G. 1) and another two on the left-hand side (both jars from G. 2 in Jugureanu and the Roman jug from G. 1 in Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon*). It is only in five graves that vessels were placed at the feet of the dead: the Roman pitcher in G. 7 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*, the Dacian wheel-made mug in G. 7 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon*, the Dacian hand-made mug from G. 2 in Măriuța, the Sarmatian mug in G. 17 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* and both Sarmatian jars from G. 1 in Ulmeni. For the time being, the positions of the jar in Vlădeni (next to the right-hand elbow) and of the truncated vessel in G. 17 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* (next to the left-hand shoulder) are unique. We do not know the position of the Dacian hand-made mug from G. 2 in Ulmeni, of the Roman bowl from G. 14 in Râmnicelu, of the spherical vessel and the Dacian wheel-made mug from Oltenița-*Fundeneanu*, and neither do we know the position of the four vessels in Vitănești, with the possible exception of the perforated vessels being placed on the left-hand side, close to the arm, if that is indeed the initial position in the tomb and not the result of displacements or robbery. The only exception from the grouped placing of vessels, either next to the head (Jugureanu G. 1, G. 2) or at the feet the dead (Ulmeni G. 1) is G. 17 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*, where the mug was placed at the feet and the truncated vessel was next to the shoulder.

There are a few important conclusions on the funerary behaviour of the Sarmatian communities in Wallachia that can be drawn from the aforementioned statistics. The first conclusion is that the graves in question contained not just Sarmatian vessels (eleven burials), but also recipients made in Roman workshops (six cases) or ones that have analogies in the repertoire of Dacian pottery (another six cases). This shows that the Sarmatians in Wallachia established trade rela-

tions with both the Roman Empire and the Dacian communities. The early dating of the Roman pottery and the mugs with analogies in the Dacian environment seem to support the idea that not much time passed between the arrival of the Sarmatians in Wallachia and the establishment of the trade relations. Regardless of their origin, the pottery was placed by the same rules in the graves attributed to the Sarmatians in Wallachia – preferably a single vessel, either by itself or in association with few other inventory items, next to the head or the feet of the dead. Therefore, the meaning seems to be related to the *function* of the pottery, not to its lower or higher value, depending on how it was obtained (from local workshops or distant trade). The fact that the pottery from trade relations with other cultural environments was not treated in a different way is proven by the standard associations, either observed within the same group (in G. 1 and G. 7 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon*, the brooch and the dagger were combined with a single vessel, either Dacian or Roman; the dagger and short sword from G. 7 and G. 17 in Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* were associated with a Roman vessel or with two hand-made recipients) or observed in different groups (in Oltenița-*Fundeneanu* and Râmnicelu G. 16, the spindle-whorls were combined with a jar and with a spherical vessel and a Dacian wheel-made mug respectively; in G. 14 from Râmnicelu, G. 1, G. 2 and G. 4 from Ulmeni and G. 2 from Măriuța, the beads were associated, in the following order, with a Roman bowl; two Sarmatian jars with lids whose shape has analogies in the Dacian pottery; Dacian wheel-made mug and Roman mug; hand-made jar and bowl and a Roman vessel; Dacian hand-made mug). The only inventory of five graves was a vessel, either a jar (Râmnicelu G. 1, Jugureanu G. 1, G. 2, Racovița) or a Dacian hand-made mug (Râmnicelu G. 19).

The number of graves where adornments were found, apparently, is equal to the number of funerary structures that yielded pottery – eighteen. We say *apparently* because, as we also emphasized on a different occasion (Sirbu et al. 2014, 108-110), not all the beads constitute adornment items *per se*, because some of them may have been sewn on the clothes, thus qualifying as dress items. Therefore, we excluded from the category of adornments the beads in the grave from Vitănești, which were most likely sewn to the

²⁶ According to the description (Harțuche 1980, 222, 224), the vessel was found next to the occipital bone, and the skull was tilted to the left.

clothes. We also did not count the pearls from five other structures (Ulmeni G. 1, G. 2, G. 5, Mohreanu, Hagiieni), whose position in the grave is unknown. However, we did include in the analysis the beads from G. 14 in Râmnicelu (fig. 1/2-7), associated with a pendant (fig. 1/1), which supports the hypothesis that they made up a necklace.

As a result, the number of graves from the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia that contained adornments as inventory has dropped to fourteen. The most frequent adornments are the beads worn around the neck – eight graves (Râmnicelu G. 3, G. 9, probably also G. 14, Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului G. 13, Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon G. 3 and G. 6, Ulmeni G. 4, Măriuța G. 2). In decreasing order of frequency, the other adornments are the pendants (five structures – Râmnicelu G. 14, Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului G. 15, Ulmeni G. 4, Lehliu, probably also the 'Buzău treasure'), the bead bracelets (Râmnicelu G. 5), the iron chain-link found around the neck (Râmnicelu G. 9), the ring (the 'Buzău treasure' – fig. 7/1) and earrings ('the Buzău treasure' – fig. 7/7). What is important to point out is the total absence of genuine sets of adornments, such as those encountered in graves from the Roman Empire²⁷. The only exception, at least for now, is the 'Buzău treasure', where earrings, a ring and, most likely, a necklace (fig. 7/3, 6), were found together. Although pottery and adornments are the most frequent inventory items, they are associated only in surprisingly few cases – namely, four of them (Măriuța G. 2, Vitănești, Râmnicelu G. 14, Ulmeni G. 4).

Dress items were found in ten graves: appliqués (five cases – Râmnicelu G. 14, probably also G. 13, Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon G. 3, Vitănești – fig. 3/2-8, the 'Buzău treasure' – fig. 7/2, 4, 5), brooches (four cases - Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon G. 1 and G. 7 – fig. 2/3, Ulmeni G. 1 – fig. 6/7, Lehliu – fig. 5/2), buttons (Vitănești – fig. 3/13) and what could be a belt buckle (Râmnicelu G. 7). It is unclear whether the link with knobs from the tumulus burial in Mohreanu (Fig. 1/12) was an adornment or a dress item, since there is no information on the position in which it was found²⁸.

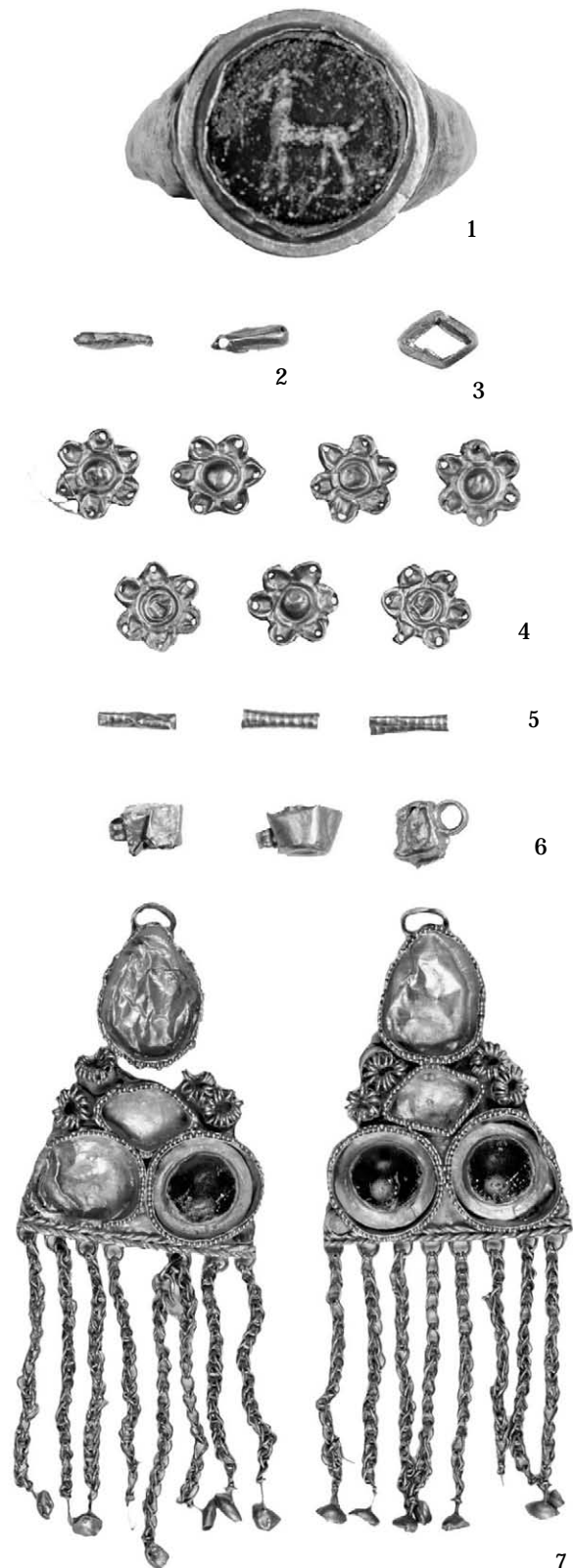


Fig. 7. 1-7. - "Treasure from Buzău"
(after Oța, Oța 2015).

²⁷ See, for instance, Oța 2013, 108-110, 127 (in regard to funerary structures from Moesia Inferior).

²⁸ Oța, Sirbu 2009, 50-51, cat. no. VII A 29.

II. Materiale și cercetări

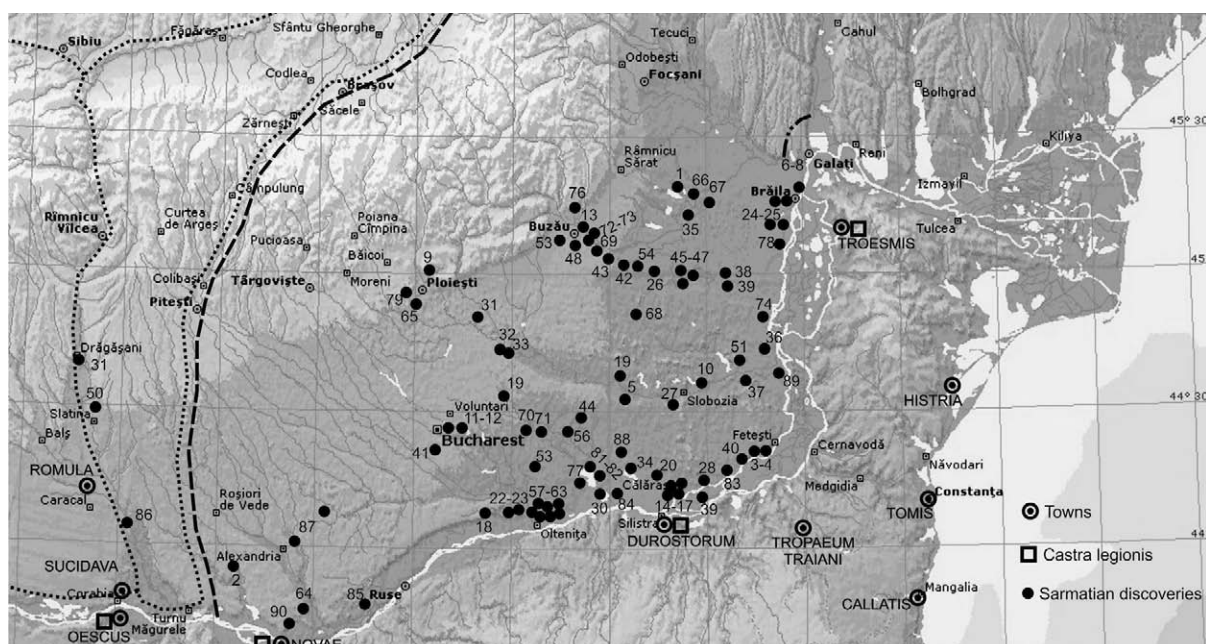


Fig. 8. Sarmatian discoveries in Wallachia

List of localities: 1 - Balta Albă; 2 - Bogdana; 3-4 - Borcea (former Pietroiu); 5 - Bordușelu; 6-7-8 - Brăila; 9 - Bucov; 10 - Bucu; 11-12 - București; 13 - Buzău; 14-15-16-17 - Călărași; 18 - Căscioarele; 19 - Căzănești; 20 - Ceacu; 21 - Cetatea Veche; 22-23 - Chirnoși; 24-25 - Chiscani; 26 - Cireșu; 27 - Ciulnița; 28 - Coslogeni; 29 - Grădiștea-Coslogeni; 30 - Dorobanțu; 31 - Drăgănești; 32-33 - Dridu; 34 - Gălățui; 35 - Grădiștea; 36 - Gura Ialomiței; 37 - Hagieni; 38-39 - Însurăței; 40 - Jegălia; 41 - Jilava; 42 - Jugureanu; 43 - Largu; 44 - Lehliu; 45-46-47 - Lișcoteanca; 48 - Luciu; 49 - Măriuța; 50 - Mărunței; 51 - Mihail Kogălniceanu; 52 - Mihăiești; 53 - Moisica; 54 - Mohreanu; 55 - Nana; 56 - Nicolae Bălcescu; 57-58-59-60-61-62-63 - Oltenița; 64 - Păuleasca; 65 - Ploiești-Triaj; 66 - Racovița; 67 - Râmnicele; 68 - Roșiori; 69 - Rușețu; 70 - Sărulești; 71 - Săndulița; 72-73 - Smeieni; 74 - Spiru Haret; 75 - Stejaru; 76 - Sudiți; 77 - Sultana; 78 - Tichilești; 79 - Târgșor; 80 - Ulmeni; 81-82 - Ulmu; 83 - Unirea; 84 - Vărăști; 85 - Vede; 86 - Viespești; 87 - Vitănești; 88 - Vlad Țepeș; 89 - Vlădeni; 90 - Zimnicea.

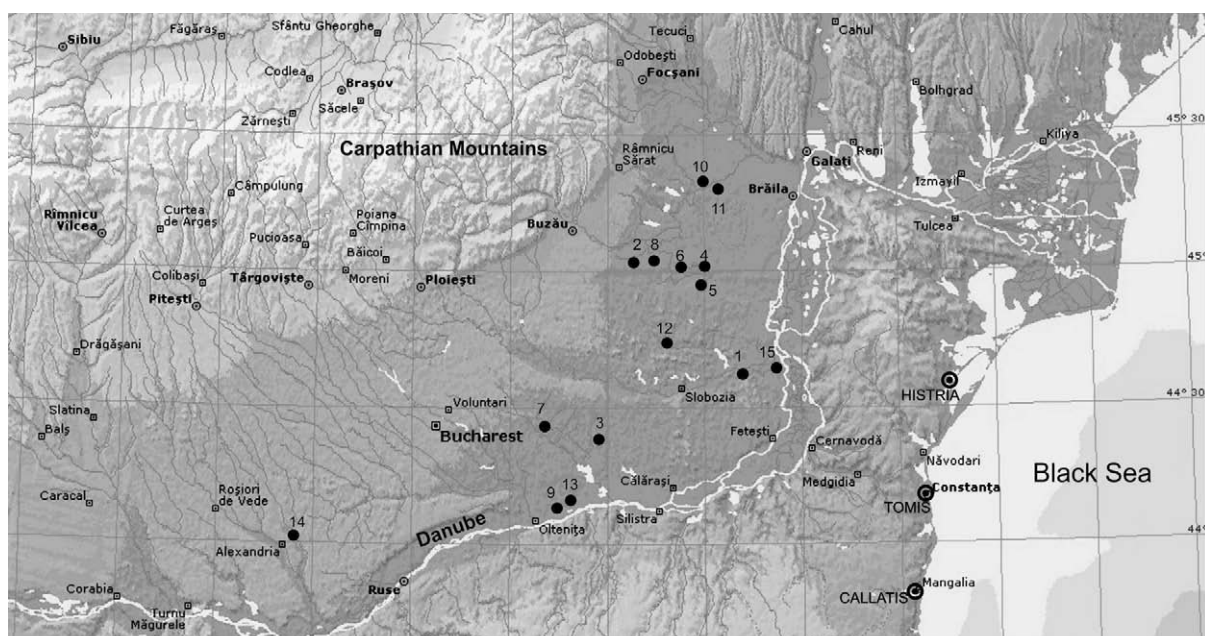


Fig. 9. The early settlement of Sarmatians in Wallachia.

List of localities: 1 - Hagieni; 2 - Jugureanu; 3 - Lehliu; 4 - Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon; 5 - Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă; 6 - Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului; 7 - Măriuța; 8 - Mohreanu; 9 - Oltenița-Fundeneanu; 10 - Racovița; 11 - Râmnicele; 12 - Roșiori; 13 - Ulmeni; 14 - Vitănești; 15 - Vlădeni.

Although their percentage is not actually that large (18.51%), weapons play an important part among grave-goods in the first-stage Sarmatian graves, particularly when taking into account the low numbers of items in the inventory in general, as well as the reduced typological diversity of the items deposited with the dead. In regard to the analysis of the graves with weapons, we will highlight, from the beginning, some aspects which are not definite. The funerary structure in Roșiori, where the sword fragments were recovered, is not, in fact, clearly belonging to the first wave of Sarmatian finds in Wallachia. Other three graves (*Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă* G. 6, *Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* G. 15 and G. 8) have yielded arrowheads. The deposition of just one arrowhead in each of these three graves raises some questions whether those items are meant as weapons. However, the placing of very few arrowheads (one or two) was noticed also in burials from North-Pontic area (Simonenko 2001, 197; СИМОНЕНКО 2015, 111-112), but more so for funerary structures from the Carpathian Basin, where the total number of finds is very low (Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2001, 153; Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2014, 143-144, 148). If we take into account the structure in Roșiori and the two graves with arrowheads (*Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă* G. 6 and *Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* G. 15), but rule out G. 8 in *Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* (the arrowhead was found between the ribs, which could indicate the cause of death, and not necessarily an intentional placement), then the number of graves where weapons were deposited goes up to ten. Except for the aforementioned arrowheads, daggers were placed in five graves, particularly on the right-hand side (*Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon* G. 1 – fig. 2/2, G. 2, G. 7 – fig. 2/5, *Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* G. 17 – fig. 2/7), and more rarely on the left-hand side (*Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* G. 3), swords, in two cases (*Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* G. 7 – fig. 2/6, found next to the right leg, and, probably, in Roșiori) and spearhead (in G. 17 from Râmnicelu, next to the right arm). An essential conclusion can be drawn from this list – placing weapons is not a custom that is present everywhere and in a uniform manner in the case of first-stage Sarmatian graves.

The absence of any type of weapons in the early Sarmatian graves from southern Wallachia is quite visible, as is the concentration of all the funerary structures with weapons in the Brăila

Plains. Even here, we see the difference between the cluster from *Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon* (50% of the graves had weapons as grave-goods, and three out of four adults were buried with daggers) and the cluster of sixteen graves from Râmnicelu (a single grave with a spearhead). Although close to Râmnicelu in terms of the number of graves, the cluster from *Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* is more similar, insofar as weapons are concerned, to the cluster from *Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon* (out of twelve funerary structures, four had weapons as inventory – two daggers, a short sword, an arrowhead, and to these we might add the ambiguous arrowhead from G. 8, which would raise the number of graves with weapons to five).

Another interesting observation is that only one type of weapon was found in a grave – dagger, sword, spearhead or arrowhead because, so far, one has not found combinations between types of weapons or placing more than one weapon in a grave. Finally, we see some standardization in the associations of inventory items in the case of graves with weapons. The combinations of grave-goods are weapon + pottery, either hand-made (*Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* G. 17 – fig. 2/7, 9) or wheel-made, of Roman origin (*Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* G. 7 – fig. 2/6, 8). In the *Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon* cluster, the aforementioned combination is supplemented by brooches in G. 1 (together with the weapon and a Roman vessel – fig. 2/1-2) and G. 7 (together with a weapon and a Dacian wheel-made vessel – fig. 2/3-5). The weapon + knife association is registered in three cases: *Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului* G. 3 (plus the animal bones), *Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă* G. 6 and Roșiori, all of the three weapons being of different types. Having the weapon as the sole grave-good characterizes only G. 17 in Râmnicelu and G. 2 from *Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon*, perhaps also G. 8 in *Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului*. The only unusual inventory is observed in G. 15 from *Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului*, where the arrowhead was associated with a stone pendant and a bronze item, somewhat similar to a bead (Oța, Sirbu 2009, 128).

The association, in three instances, between knives and weapons could justify classifying them as weapons themselves. However, in another two graves, (*Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon* G. 3 and *Lișcoteanca-Movila din Baltă* G. 3), the knives were found together with beads next to

the neck, or together with a shell, which questions classifying them as weapons. The position of the possible sword and the knife in Roșiori is unknown, but the position of the inventory items in G. 3 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* shows an interesting disconnection between the dagger, whose placement on the left-hand side of the dead is abnormal (given the other four examples in the Brăila Plains) and the knife placed on the right-hand side, same as the weapons in the aforementioned four cases. The animal bones were also found on the right-hand side, same as the knife, which could point to a tight connection between the animal sacrificed and the knife, as the possible implement for the sacrifice. In G. 6 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă*, both the arrowhead and the knife were found on the left-hand side, next to the *humerus* and the ribs. Placing the knife on the left-hand side seems to be a custom of the community that buried its dead in Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă* (G. 6 and G. 3). Placing the knife on the right-hand side is attested in G. 3 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* (next to the palm) and in G. 3 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* (next to the elbow).

The spindle-whorls come from two graves – Oltenița-*Fundeanu* and Râmnicelu G. 16, and in each case they were associated with hand-made pottery (spherical vessel and jar, respectively).

Rarely seen in the inventory of graves from the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia are shells (three instances – two in Râmnicelu, one in Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă*), chalk (two graves – Râmnicelu G. 3 and G. 6, each time associated with shells), animal bones (two funerary structures – Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* G. 3 and Vlădeni), charcoal (Râmnicelu G. 9), harness items (Vitănești – fig. 3/17, 19-21) and casket clasp (Mohreanu – fig. 1/11).

The Roman imports play a significant role in the inventory of the graves hereby analysed. Roman pottery, whose extremely diverse typology was presented in detail before, was found in six graves (Râmnicelu G. 14 – fig. 1/8, Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* G. 7 – fig. 2/8, Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* G. 1 – fig. 2/1, Ulmeni G. 2, G. 4, Vitănești). Other important items are the brooch in G. 1 from Ulmeni (fig. 6/7), the gold pendant from G. 14 in Râmnicelu (Fig. 1/1), the casket clasp from Mohreanu (fig. 1/11), perhaps also the link with knobs from

the same structure (fig. 1/12) and the bronze appliqué from G. 3 in Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon*²⁹.

Glass beads, which cannot be attributed exclusively to Roman workshops, were found in twelve structures: Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* G. 3 and G. 6, Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* G. 13, Râmnicelu G. 3, G. 5, G. 9, G. 14 – fig. 1/2-7, Mohreanu – fig. 1/10, Ulmeni G. 1-2, G. 4-5, Vitănești (fig. 3/1). Whether we take the glass beads into account or not, there are not many early Sarmatian graves with inventory items of Roman origin – eight / nine or twenty-one / twenty-two (a percentage of no more than 16.66%, which would go up to 40.74% if we take the glass beads into account). Given their proximity to the *limes*, which would be an area very favourable to trade, this rather low percentage is surprising. However, we must be cautious when assessing the relations between the Roman Empire and the Sarmatians in Wallachia based solely on the finds – we only know the tombs, not the settlements of the Sarmatians in this region. In fact, the graves might offer just a narrow view, limited to the funerary use, of the Roman imports, which might not necessarily correspond with what would be revealed by studying some settlements, even seasonal ones. Even if they are selected for inclusion in funerary inventories (and, therefore, are removed from the 'everyday service') (Forest 1998, 247), the Roman objects found in the first-stage Sarmatian graves can shed some light, partial though it may be, on the image of the Sarmatian communities established in Wallachia beginning with the first century AD, an image which still has many unknowns. Six graves contained a single item of Roman origin – pottery (Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* G. 7, Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* G. 1), perhaps some glass beads (Râmnicelu G. 3, G. 5, G. 9, Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* G. 13). When we also take into account the beads and uncertain Roman items (the link with knobs from Mohreanu and the appliqué in G. 3 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon*), the number of graves with more than one Roman item nears the number of funerary structures with a single import item – seven of them. The associations between the Roman items are pottery + beads (Ulmeni G. 2, G. 4, Vitănești, Râm-

²⁹ An omega-shaped appliqué was also found near the left-hand elbow of the dead (same as the item in Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon*) in a tomb (G. 70) from the necropolis of the city of Odessos (for the re-numbering of the grave and previous bibliography, see Oța 2013, 116).

nicelu G. 14, the latter also containing an imported pendant), beads + brooch (Ulmeni G. 1), beads + appliqué (Lișcoteanca-Moș *Filon* G. 3), casket clasp + link with knobs (Mohreanu). The fact that the tomb in Vitănești is covered by a specially-erected mound, and that the one in Mohreanu was arranged in the mantle of a tumulus, support the idea that these are interments for the elite, where it is very likely that the grave-goods also played an important role in marking the status of the dead, particularly in Vitănești (fig. 3-4). The fact that the pendant in Râmnicelu G. 14 (fig. 1/1) is the only import item made out of gold that is placed in a grave³⁰, but also one of the few gold items found in the Sarmatian environment from Wallachia, unlike other areas (Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2013, 202), and the fact that it is associated with a Roman bowl (fig. 1/8), perhaps also beads (fig. 1/2-7), could show a privileged access to Roman items, a possible indicator of a status above the other members of the community in question. The combination of Roman pottery with weapons in another two graves (Lișcoteanca-Movila *Olarului* G. 7 – fig. 2/6, 8, and Lișcoteanca-Moș *Filon* G. 1 – fig. 2/1-2) also suggest privileged access to Roman items, which first passed through the hands of the leaders (or, in any case, of the elite) (Bloemers 1990, 114; Mráv 2005, 333; Przybyła 2011, 236) and were redistributed, eventually, to the warriors in the suite (Krekovič 2011, 83). Except for G. 2 and G. 4 in Ulmeni, the Roman pottery thus appears to be related to a particular status, which it helped to emphasize. Unlike the Roman recipients, the Dacian pottery do not seem to have always played an analogous role of emphasising the status, with the possible exception of the mug (fig. 2/4) from G. 7 in Lișcoteanca-Moș *Filon* (associated with a dagger and brooch – fig. 2/3-5), perhaps also the mug (fig. 4/5-6) in Vitănești (but not simply because of its presence, in the latter case, but rather as part of a larger inventory – fig. 3/1-21, 4/1-6). There are two more Roman items that join the finds from graves – the glass *unguentarium* and the bronze casserole from Ulmeni (fig. 6/1-2). However, their origin from funerary structures is not definite³¹. The dating of the two items is not exactly circumscribed to the end of the first century AD and the first decades of the following cen-

tury, because of some details. The stamp on the bronze casserole (fig. 6/2) was erased, which could indicate long use (Oța, Sirbu 2010, 192). The dating of the 'candlestick' *unguentaria* covers a rather large period, from the end of the first century AD until the beginning of the third century AD³². However, analogies with the glass *unguentaria* from nearby regions can considerably reduce this period. The analysis of the glass vessels found in Tomis led M. Bucovală to conclude that the semi-spherical 'candlestick' *unguentaria*, with a tall cylindrical neck, thinner or thicker, date to the first – second centuries AD (Bucovală 1968, 146). The massive proportions of the glass vessel in Ulmeni (fig. 6/1) are not an argument in favour of dating it to the beginning of the third century AD, because of certain detail differences from the Tomis *unguentaria* with a similar dating, who have their bodies squashed in the maximum diameter area and their necks stretched out at the bottom³³. *Unguentaria* very similar to the one from Ulmeni are found in the Bosphorus region, namely the necropolis from Panticapaeum, where they were dated somewhere between the middle of the first century AD and the middle of the following century³⁴. In the case of some imported items, still unique in the Sarmatian environment of Wallachia, the emphasis must not be placed solely on seeking analogies, but also on the meaning of such finds and on the reason such recipients were brought into the area. The presence of the bronze vessel and the glass *unguentarium* in the Sarmatian environment of Wallachia can be explained easier in the context of the first stage, when the Roman goods were playing an essential role for the elite 'self-representation' (Brather 2008, 219, 238), rather than in the context of the second stage, when such products disappear, revealing a change in the manner of displaying the privileged status (Sirbu *et al.* 2014, 119). The bronze casserole can be classified as 'luxury good' (Pitts 1989, 55), common in the graves of the elite (Magomedov 1995, 133), while the glass *unguentarium* was probably meaningful because of its contents (perfume or scented oil) (Krekovič 2011, 83), as the recipient itself was no more than packaging. Although it concerns main-

³⁰ J. Pearce (2000) considers the gold jewelry to be a considerable 'energy investment' in a grave.

³¹ Oța, Sirbu 2010, 192; Sirbu *et al.* 2014, 83, no. cat. 41. 2-3.

³² Isings 1957, 97-98, type 82A1; Bucovală 1968, 97, no. 176, type XLV a.

³³ Bucovală 1968, 120, no. 246, type XLVI; 1991, 198-199, pl. 15 a-b.

³⁴ Кунина, Сорокина 1972, 165, type II, 1, рис. 5/7, 15 and 10/3, 6, 9.

ly the two aforementioned vessels from Ulmeni, the following observation can also apply to all the types of Roman imports. It is true that the products from the Roman Empire do not always provide a precise dating of the archaeological context in which they were found, probably because the barbarian markets, less demanding than the Roman ones, also accepted out-of-fashion goods, particularly in the later period (Vaday 1982-1983, 168). However, much too often one overlooks the essential fact that some time must elapse between the moment a certain group arrives in a region and the moment it establishes commercial relations with the Roman Empire. Even in territories integrated in the Empire, the Roman items appear in the native settlements after a period of about a generation (Jones 1990, 106). All the more so, for the territories outside the Roman borders, one must take into account a certain period of time, difficult to establish, between the first time a population settles in a particular region and the first graves appear, on the one hand, and the time the group includes Roman items in the daily life or the funerary ritual, on the other. If the import items from a funerary structure are dated to a later period, this does not automatically mean that the *entire* cluster of graves should be dated to that later period as well, because it would be absurd to assume that all the tombs were arranged at the same time, particularly in the case of larger clusters. Thus, funerary structures from the same cluster can mark different moments in the evolution of a community, namely before and after the establishment of trade relations with the Romans. Another distinction is required regarding Roman items, namely between the items obtained by trade in the recently settled region, on the one hand, and the Roman goods that the Sarmatians brought from their areas of origin (particularly the production of north-Pontic workshops, which may have already been under Roman control), on the other³⁵. At least insofar as Wallachia is concerned, the structure and analogies of the Roman imports (particularly pottery, perhaps beads, a few dress and adornment items, which are not particularly valuable) from the east, north-east and south of the aforementioned region, indicate that those goods were obtained mostly via local trade across the border (Oța, Sîr-

bu 2009, 177; Sîrbu et al. 2014, 116, 118-119). However, we believe is essential that we make a distinction between the time a population moves to another region, before they arrange any funerary structures, and the dating of the graves of said community, very likely after some time has elapsed, although that time period must be determined on a case-by-case basis³⁶. A Roman item dated to the second century AD or even later can, indeed, require that the structure in which it was found be dated somewhere in that period, but it does not automatically indicate the time that the Sarmatians started entering Wallachia, exactly because of the time that should be assumed as elapsed between different moments, most likely in a succeeding fashion, in the history of the community in question – first comes the arrival in a region (itself a long-term process), followed by the first graves and the establishment of trade relations with the Roman Empire or the Dacian communities.

It is exactly because of this misunderstanding of the way in which events took place in time that some early graves attributed to the Sarmatians (Lehliu, for instance³⁷), were linked to a short-term diffusion (the result of trade or of Sarmatian attacks against the south-Danubian territories), supposed to have taken place before the actual, long-term inhabitation of said population in Wallachia, which would have happened only during the rule of Emperor Hadrian. Besides the major aforementioned flaw of mistaking the time of arrival in a region with the time the funerary structures were arranged, such a hypothesis also disregards the overall picture of the Sarmatian finds in Wallachia. The assumption of a temporary diffusion might be supported by the very small number of finds dated to the end of the first century AD and the first decades of the following century, but that is not the case (it is only in the Brăila Plains, for instance, that 56.61% of all the Sarmatian finds can be attributed to the first stage of diffusion).

Glass beads also appear in the inventory of graves which represent exceptions in terms of the orientation within the clusters (see *supra*): Râmnicelu G. 3, G. 9, Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon G. 6, Ulmeni G.

³⁵ Petolescu 2010, 89 is of the opinion that, starting as early as the second half of the first century AD, the Roman control extended over some parts of the north-Pontic coast.

³⁶ Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2006, 236, emphasises the discrepancy between archaeological material and the literary sources regarding the settling of the Iazygians in Pannonia.

³⁷ Bărcă 2013, 246; 2015, 38.

5. Another two burials with orientations different from the majority, Râmnicelu G. 1 and Jugureanu G. 1, have as inventories a single vessel (a jar), in G. 7 in Râmnicelu was found a belt buckle and G. 6 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* and G. 5 from Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă* did not have grave-goods. In terms of the items placed in tombs, the aforementioned structures do not therefore stand out in any way within their clusters. A possible explanation of these exceptions could be sought in the age differences – four of the eight cases of different orientations are children graves. Even if credible, such a hypothesis explains only partially the choice of a different orientation of the funerary structure, given that all the other four graves belong to adults (Râmnicelu G. 1, G. 7, Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* G. 6, Lișcoteanca-*Movila din Baltă* G. 5), but also that there are five children interments in Râmnicelu and two in Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului* and Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* each that follow the majority orientation rule. As observed previously, when talking about the orientation of the graves, we do not yet have a good explanation for these exceptions. Hypotheses concerning an inferior status or different ethnical origin (Kulcsár 1998, 22, 110) continue to lack viable arguments in the case of the Sarmatian communities in Wallachia.

Another observation on the graves from the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia was also stressed on previously (Oța, Sîrbu 2010, 193) – the presence of the elite burials, with the status displayed by the presence of jewels and clothes richly decorated with gold appliqués (the ‘Buzău treasure’), erecting a mound, depositing a large inventory, including a Roman amphora and clothes decorated with gold appliqués (Vitănești), interments arranged in older tumuli, the presence of weapons decorated with gold sheet, perhaps also of re-purposed Roman items (Roșiori and Mohreanu), possibly also by an inventory that cumulated several items produced in the Roman Empire (Râmnicelu G. 14).

The last observation regarding the graves from the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia takes into consideration the chronological differences between the burials. Not all of the funerary structures analysed here have identical chronologies. The fifty-three or fifty-four graves are stretched out over time, and there are differences between them, ranging from very short to

one or two decades. Within the same stage, which does not contain just one moment, but spreads out over decades, one can see significant differences in the funerary inventory, particularly in the clothes worn by the various dead. These differences may not be connected at all to the chronological stages of a culture (Vaday, Istvánovits, Kulcsár 1989, 110), but instead reflect the age differences between various individuals in a community³⁸. Even within the same chronological stage there must have been changes in the material vestiges because of the kind of events that leave their mark on a community – the gradual loss of certain features of the funerary ritual or of items characteristic of the area of origin, the appearance of new items placed in graves, taken over either from the Dacians or from the Romans. The fact that a funerary structure has an inventory consisting solely of items with analogies in the north-Pontic Sarmatian environment, while another grave also contained Dacian or Roman pottery, does not mean at all that the two interments mark two completely different chronological stages. Rather, they show the evolution and changes that can take place, within the same stage, in the material culture and mentality of a community. The ‘Buzău treasure’ (fig. 7) is, at least at this stage of the research, the earliest Sarmatian burial in Wallachia, a hypothesis also supported by the jewels with analogies in the north-Pontic areas and by the absence of any Roman or Dacian imports (Oța, Oța 2015, 549, 565-566). Although she follows the same dressing fashion, the dead in Vitănești (fig. 3-4) seems to have been buried after the ‘Buzău treasure’, judging by the Dacian mug placed there (Sîrbu et al. 2014, 131). Another early-dating structure from the first stage is G. 14 in Râmnicelu (fig. 1/1-8) (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, 187). The high degree of wear on the pendant from Lehliu (fig. 5/1) suggests a somewhat later dating for that interment, sometime in the first half of the second century AD (Sîrbu et al. 2014, 132). What is certain is that G. 7 from Lișcoteanca-*Moș Filon* (fig. 2/3-5) is one of the latest structures from the first stage of Sarmatian diffusion in Wallachia (Oța, Sîrbu 2009, 188-189).

The similar general features (concentration in the plains, the absence of settlements, the practice

³⁸ See, for instance, Gáll, Gergely 2004-2007, 27, in reference to the Hungarian communities belonging to the first generation settled in the Carpathian Basin.

of inhumation, placing hand-made pottery and weapons of a particular type, the presence of female elite graves with analogies in a vast space) (Istvánovits, Kulcsár 2011, 201; Mordvintseva 2012, 260-262; Mordvintseva 2014, 50-65), which have justified grouping the inhumation graves appearing in Wallachia beginning with the last decade of the first century AD and attributing them to the Sarmatians, are only a part of the aforementioned phenomenon of Sarmatian diffusion in area around the *limes* of Moesia Inferior (fig. 8). However, the similar features are accompanied by differences in the details, which confer their

own personality not only on the different regions concentrating those finds, but also on the clusters from a certain area. These emphasize the changes that took place in time in the funerary behaviour of the Sarmatian communities from Wallachia. Without being an area of high cultural diversity similar to the north-Pontic space (Mordvintseva 2013, 216), the Wallachia of the first three centuries AD appears to be a region of complex interactions between various political forces, some of which are present constantly, which certainly does not mean that their archaeological traces are unchanged over time and rigidly monolithic.

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Situri sarmatice timpurii în Muntenia

Cuvinte-cheie: sarmatii, Muntenia, Imperiul Roman, morminte, inventar funerar, importuri romane, ceramică, piese de podoabă, arme.

Rezumat: Studiul de față își propune să analizeze descoperirile care pot fi puse în legătură cu ceea ce am definit drept prima etapă de pătrundere a sarmatilor în Muntenia, datată în intervalul care începe în ultima decadă a seco-

lului I p. Chr. și se extinde și pe parcursul secolului al II-lea. Descoperirile (53/54 complexe funerare), concentrate cu precădere în sudul, estul și nord-estul Munteniei, sunt reprezentate atât de morminte izolate, cât și de grupuri de morminte. Doar 11 morminte sunt plane. Majoritatea complexelor funerare sunt orientate V-E (19 morminte) și doar 11 sunt orientate N-S. Majoritatea decedaților au fost depuși în poziția întins pe spate, cu brațele și picioarele întinse (21 cazuri). Balanța dintre mormintele aparținând unor adulți (24) și cele ale copiilor (17) este relativ echilibrată. O adevărată constantă a mormintelor din prima etapă de pătrundere a sarmaților în Muntenia este reprezentată de numărul mic (între una și trei piese) de obiecte depuse în fiecare complex. Categoriile pieselor de inventar depuse nu sunt foarte diverse. 14 morminte nu au avut nici un fel de inventar.

Produsele din Imperiul Roman nu pot întodeauna oferi o datare precisă a contextului arheologic în care au fost descoperite. Este normal de presupus un decalaj între momente diferite, foarte probabil succesive în timp, din istoria comunităților respective – mai întâi pătrunderea într-o regiune (la rândul ei un proces de durată), apoi amenajarea primelor morminte și stabilirea relațiilor comerciale cu Imperiul Roman sau cu comunitățile dacice.

Cele 53 sau 54 de morminte se eșalonează în timp, iar între ele există diferențe, fie foarte mici, fie mergând până la unul sau două decenii. În cadrul aceleiași etape, care nu cuprinde doar un singur moment, ci se desfășoară pe o durată de câteva decenii, se pot surprinde deosebiri semnificative în ceea ce privește inventarul funerar.

Trăsăturile generale asemănătoare (concentrare teritorială în zona de câmpie, absența așezărilor, practicarea inhumatei, depunerea vaselor lucrate cu mâna și a armelor de un tip specific, prezența unor morminte feminine de elită cu analogii într-un spațiu vast) care au justificat gruparea laolaltă a mormintelor de inhumate apărute în Muntenia începând cu ultima decadă a secolului I p. Chr. și atribuirea lor sarmaților nu sunt decât o componentă a fenomenului amintit de pătrundere a sarmaților în zona *limes*-ului Moesiei Inferior. Caracteristicile similare sunt însă dublate prin deosebiri de detaliu, care dau o personalitate proprie nu numai diferitelor regiuni unde se concentrează descoperirile amintite, ci și grupurilor dintr-un anume areal, și care fac perceptibile semnificative schimbări în timp în comportamentul funerar al comunităților sarmatice din Muntenia.

Lista ilustrațiilor:

Fig. 1. 1-8 - Râmnicelu M.14; 9 - Râmnicelu M. 19; 10-12 - Mohreanu (după Oța, Sîrbu 2009).

Fig. 2. 1-2 - Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon M. 1; 3-5 - Lișcoteanca-Moș Filon M. 7; 6, 8 - Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului M. 7; 7, 9 - Lișcoteanca-Movila Olarului M. 17 (după Oța, Sîrbu 2009).

Fig. 3. 1-21 - Vitănești (1 - după Sîrbu et al. 2014; 2-21 - după Leahu, Trohani 1979)

Fig. 4. 1-6 - Vitănești (după Sîrbu et al. 2014).

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Fig. 6. 1-2 - Ulmeni – lângă M. 1-2 - (after Morintz, Ionescu 1968; Bichir 1977); 3-7 - Ulmeni M. 1 (după Morintz, Ionescu 1970).

Fig. 7. 1-7 - „Tezaurul de la Buzău” (după Oța, Oța 2015).

Fig. 8. Descoperiri sarmatice din Muntenia.

Fig. 9. Cele mai vechi morminte sarmatice din Muntenia.

Раннесарматские памятники Мунтении

Ключевые слова: сарматы, Мунтения, Римская империя, захоронения, погребальный инвентарь, римский импорт, керамика, украшения, оружие.

Резюме: Данное исследование посвящено анализу находок, относящихся к периоду последнего десятилетия I века н.э. и II века н.э., который мы определили как первый этап проникновения сарматов в Мунтению. Находки (53/54 погребальных комплексов), сосредоточенные в основном в южной, восточной и северо-восточной части Мунтении, представлены как единичными захоронениями, так и группами захоронений. Только 11 захоронений являются бескурганскими. Большая часть погребальных комплексов ориентированы по линии З-В (19 погребений), и только 11 ориентированы по линии С-Ю. Большинство погребенных лежат на спине, руки и ноги вытянуты (21 случай). Количество захоронений взрослых (24) и детей (17) относительно сбалансировано. Захоронения, относящиеся к первому этапу проникновения сарматов в Мунтению, представлены небольшим количеством (от одного до трех) предметов, заложенных в каждый комплекс. Инвентарь не отличается разнообразием. 14 погребений являются безынвентарными.

Римские изделия не всегда обеспечивают точную датировку археологического контекста, в котором они были обнаружены. Естественно предположить разрыв между разными периодами в истории этих общин, вполне возможно, последовательными во времени – сначала проникновение в регион (в свою очередь, длительный процесс), затем устройство первых захоронений и установление торговых отношений с Римской империей или дакийскими общинами.

Рассматриваемые 53 или 54 захоронения относятся к разному времени, и разница между ними либо очень мала, либо составляет одно-два десятилетия. В пределах этого периода могут быть отмечены значительные различия в отношении погребального инвентаря.

Общие сходные черты (территориальная концентрация в равнинной зоне, отсутствие поселений, погребения по обряду ингумации, наличие лепных сосудов и оружия определенного типа, наличие «элитных» женских захоронений с аналогиями на обширном пространстве), объединяющие ингумационные захоронения, появившиеся на территории Мунтении с последнего десятилетия I века н.э., и позволяющие отнести их к сарматским, являются частью феномена проникновения сарматов в зону лимеса Нижней Мезии. Однако сходные характеристики дополняются различиями в деталях, которые придают индивидуальность не только разным регионам, где сконцентрированы упомянутые находки, но и группам в пределах определенного ареала, и указывают на значительные изменения, происходившие с течением времени в погребальной практике сарматских общин на территории Мунтении.

Список иллюстраций:

Рис. 1. 1-8 - Рымничелу П.14; 9 - Рымничелу П. 19; 10-12 - Мохряну (по Oța, Sîrbu 2009).

Рис. 2. 1-2 - Лишкотьянка-Мош Филон П. 1; 3-5 - Лишкотьянка-Мош Филон П. 7; 6, 8 - Лишкотьянка-Мовила Оларулуй П. 7; 7, 9 - Лишкотьянка-Мовила Оларулуй П. 17 (по Oța, Sîrbu 2009).

Рис. 3. 1-21 - Витэнешть (1 - по Sîrbu et al. 2014; 2-21 - по Leahu, Trohani 1979)

Рис. 4. 1-6 - Витэнешть (по Sîrbu et al. 2014).

Рис. 5. 1-2 - Лехлиу П. 1 (по Sîrbu et al. 2014).

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Рис. 7. 1-7 – «Клад из Бузэу» (по Oța, Oța 2015).

Рис. 8. Сарматские находки в Мунтении.

Рис. 9. Древнейшие сарматские погребения в Мунтении.

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