

In search of the lost Celts
(Research on the Celtic and imitative coinage in Romania,
Bulgaria and the Rep. of Moldova in 2008-2013)

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Two years ago I received the invitation from the International Numismatic Council to contribute to the elaboration of a sub-report on the topic of this very article¹.

Every six years, the above-mentioned higher forum organises a world congress, scrupulously organised and, among others, preceded by a massive tome containing the most notable research in the field, critically illustrating particularly its trends. In this sense it is relevant to mention that the volume of the next congress (Messina/Taormina, September 2015) is expected to reach approximately 800 pages!

Accordingly, the purpose of my endeavour to objectively examine the most important specialised investigations in the aforementioned geographic area. Before delving into the issue at hand, for the complete edification of the readers, I found it necessary to provide these brief explanations.

Firstly, consulting the corresponding bibliography, it was easy to observe that the discoveries of Celtic and imitative coins have not been too numerous, nor distributed evenly in the mentioned area and timespan.

Nonetheless, several coins from private and official collections, as well as isolated finds, have been published, but none of any major significance². To these we should add the small hoards from Măldărești (Vâlcea County), comprised of six tetradrachmas (three of the Larissa type, two of the Prundu-Jiblea type, and an unidentified one)³, and from Motoci (Dolj County), comprised of ten items of the

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¹ The letter of Dr Bernward Ziehaus (Archäologische Staatssammlung München) from 9.01.2012 and that from 17.01.2012 of Prof. Dr Carmen Arnold-Biucchi (Harvard University) and Prof. Dr Maria Caccamo Caltabiano (Messina University), general editors of the volume entitled *Survey of Numismatic Research 2008-2013*.

² R. Ardevan, *Monedele antice din colecția Episcopiei greco-catolice de Lugoj*, in S.A. Luca (ed.), *Monedă și comerț în sud-estul Europei. Studia in Memoriam Magistri Olga Dudău*, IV, Bibliotheca Brukenthal, LVII, Sibiu, 2012, pp. 63-78; V. Mihailescu-Bîrliba, *Botoșani – département. Dacie*, in V.M. Butnariu (ed.), *Monnaies et parures du Musée départemental de Botoșani*, Gura Humorului, 2010, p. 104; E. Petac, *Monedele grecești*, in I. Haiduc, P.I. Otiman (eds.), *Tezaurul Academiei Române, III/I (Colecția Ing. C. Orghidan.*

Monedele de aur grecești și romane), Ed. Academiei Române, București, 2012, pp. 11-20; idem, *Catalog. Monedele celtice*, in I. Haiduc, P.I. Otiman (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66; idem, *Catalog. Monedele grecești*, in I. Haiduc, P.I. Otiman (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 67-96; E. Petac, Șt. Vasiliță, *Falsuri moderne*, in I. Haiduc, P.I. Otiman (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 280-291; T. Rădulescu, *Colecția Alexandru și Aristia Aman. Catalog numismatic. I. Monede antice de aur și argint*, Ed. Sim Art Craiova, Craiova, 2008, pp. 84-88; G.V. Natea, V. Palaghie, S.A. Luca, *Monede descoperite în urma cercetărilor arheologice efectuate pe traseul autostrăzii Sibiu-Orăștie, lot III*, in S. A. Luca (ed.), *Monedă și comerț în sud-estul Europei*, V, Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, Sibiu, 2013, pp. 27-30.

³ I.S. Purece, *Tezaurul dacic de la Măldărești, județul Vâlcea*, in S.A. Luca (ed.), *Monedă și comerț în sud-estul Europei*, V, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-26.

Aninoasa-Dobrești type⁴. The editors of both discoveries state that they represent the remains of consistent accumulations today lost for the most part⁵.

These years also witnessed the resuming of the research on the hoard from Murta-Dobrești (Dolj County), comprised of 327 late imitations of Phillip II's tetradrachmas, which had on the obverse the over-stylised head of Zeus, faced to the right, and on the reverse the well-known horseman, likewise towards the right. The aforementioned coins were attributed to the **a** (Aninoasa) group of the Aninoasa-Dobrești (*Entenschnabel*) monetary type⁶, dated between the second half of the 2nd century and the beginning of the 1st century BC, and encountered particularly in Oltenia and south of the Danube⁷.

As it has been justly stated, "During this period (the 3rd-2nd centuries BC – *author's note*) in the area of the Lower Danube, it is unwarranted to speak about the existence of a population that, within an established space, issues and uses a certain coin, but there is a **non-homogenous and hardly static demographic complex** (*author's emphasis*) that employs, at different moments and for different reasons, various monetary categories"⁸. For that matter, I readily add that the accuracy of this characterisation can be easily extended also for the 1st century BC.

On the other hand, as it is quasi-unanimously known, the Celtic migration and its specific cultural manifestations had also affected the Dacian world⁹. It can thus be explained why some monetary categories were, more or less, considered Celtic creations, as it is the case with the Prundu-Jiblea coinage¹⁰.

Thus, even though the archaeological vestiges of the Padea-Panagjuriski-Kolonii cultural complex, as well as the written sources seem to attest the intrusion of another La Tène wave in the second half of the 2nd century and the beginning of the 1st century BC, concurrently in southern Oltenia and north-western Bulgaria¹¹, it is assumed that the imitative issues of the Aninoasa-Dobrești type cannot be products of Celtic artisans¹².

Truly remarkable is the publication of the hoard recovered from the *dava* from Cârломănești during the archaeological investigations from 1973-1974. It contains 124 tetradrachmas of the Vârteju-București (*Sattelkopffferd*) type¹³, from which 71 items were produced by casting and only 54

⁴ T. Rădulescu, *Un fragment de tezaur cu monedă dacică descoperit la Motoci, județul Dolj*, in S.A. Luca (ed.), *Monedă și comerț în Sud-Estul Europei*, IV, Ed. Muzeului Național Brukenthal, Sibiu, 2012, pp. 45-52.

⁵ S.I. Purece, *op. cit.*, p. 25; T. Rădulescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

⁶ T. Rădulescu, *Colecția Alexandru și Aristia Aman*, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-27, 89-107 and 253-277.

⁷ C. Preda, *Monedele geto-dacilor*, Ed. Academiei R.S. România, București, 1973, pp. 287-288.

⁸ Th. Isvoranu, *Emisiuni și circulație monetară*, in M. Petrescu-Dîmbovița, A. Vulpe (eds.), *Istoria Românilor*², Ed. Enciclopedică, București, 2010, p. 796.

⁹ V. Zirra, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des keltischen Latène in Rumänien, Dacia*, N.S., 15, 1971, pp. 171-238; idem, *Stand der Forschung der keltischen Spätlatènezeit in Rumänien*, ArchRozhl, 23, 1971, 5 (*Keltische Oppida, Symposium 1970, III*), pp. 529-547 and 603; idem, *Le problème des Celtes dans l'espace du Bas-Danube, Thra-co-Dacica*, I, 1976, pp. 175-182; M. Babeș, *Les Celtes et la région de la mer Noire*, in M. Szabó (ed.), *Les Civilisés et les Barbares du V^e au II^e siècle avant J.-C.*, Actes de la table ronde de la Budapest 17-18 juin 2005, Collection Bibracte,

1213, Glux-en-Glenne, 2006, pp. 125-128; idem, *Celții în spațiul carpato-dunărean*, in M. Petrescu-Dîmbovița, A. Vulpe (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 530-541.

¹⁰ K. Pink, *Die Münzprägung der Ostkelten und ihrer Nachbarn*, in *Dissertationes Pannonicae*, II, 15, Budapest, 1939, p. 77; C. Preda, *op. cit.*, p. 158; Th. Isvoranu, *Emisiunile monetare*, in M. Petrescu-Dîmbovița, A. Vulpe (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 553.

¹¹ Z. Woźniak, *Wschodnie pogranicze kultury lateńskiej*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk, 1974, pp. 70-138; V. Zirra, *op. cit.*, pp. 178-181; D. Bondoc, *Descoperirile de epocă La Tène de la Padea, jud. Gorj*, SCIVA, 59-60, 2008-2009, pp. 137-163.

¹² C. Preda, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-288.

¹³ Th. Isvoranu, M. Babeș, E.-M. Constantinescu, *Tezaurul monetar geto-dacic din așezarea de la Cârломănești*, in SCN, s.n., 1 (13), 2010 (2011), pp. 7-34; Th. Isvoranu, *Monede din perioada geto-dacică clasică descoperite în dava de la Cârломănești*, in D. Măgureanu, D. Măndescu, S. Matei (eds.), *Archaeology: making of and practice. Studies in honor of Mircea Babeș at his 70th anniversary*, Pitești, 2011, pp. 381-387.

were struck. The cast coins are heavier, have a higher silver content in the alloy, and are more carefully worked than the struck ones¹⁴.

The Vârteju-București coins used as prototypes the Prundu-Jiblea issues (the first main phase of development)¹⁵, assigned more or less to Celtic coinage, from which the subsequent Adâncata-Mănăstirea, Vârteju-București and Inotești-Răcoasa series were derived¹⁶.

The gradual stylistic and ponderal degradation, accompanied by the piecemeal decrease in fineness (from 96% for the Prundu-Jiblea series, 90% for the Adâncata-Mănăstirea, 85% for the Vârteju-București, and even down to 50% for the Inotești-Răcoasa series) can also be ascertained by the examination of the coins belonging to the aforementioned types¹⁷. At the same time, I should remind that the Vârteju-București type had a longer period of existence, spanning from the middle 2nd century to the beginning of the 1st century BC¹⁸.

In this context, it must be stressed that south of the Danube too there have been several discoveries of imitative coinage, identical to those known from north of the Danube, as it is the case with the Aninoasa-Dobrești issues, which have also been found in the Vratsa area, but also of other monetary types¹⁹, as I've previously mentioned.

Other Celtic imitations can be mentioned in this sense, for instance those from the pre-Roman level from the castrum of Novae²⁰, but foremost the discoveries from Rousse (Sexaginta Prista) are particularly interesting. This last site produced, during the 1939 construction works in the town square, a hoard with Vârteju-București (eleven items) and Adâncata-Mănăstirea (four items) coins dated to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st century BC, another hoard ("Rousse-Sredna kula") with 64 Vârteju-București and Adâncata-Mănăstirea tetradrachmas, alongside 3 imitations of drachmas issued by Alexander III, and a third one, likewise with Vârteju-București (three items) and Adâncata-Mănăstirea (two items) coins²¹; to these were added several imitative coins collected from a complex of pits unearthed on the eminence corresponding to the centre of the ancient city (Vârteju-București, Inotești-Răcoasa and Alexander III-Phillip III Arrhidaios)²², and, somewhat notably, a mould for casting Vârteju-București coins, discovered somewhere within the site²³.

The agglomeration of monetary discoveries of the Vârteju-București type is entirely remarkable particularly in north-eastern Bulgaria²⁴. To these we must add the spread of Rasa-type imitations on both

¹⁴ Th. Isvoranu, V. Cojocaru, *A Geto-Dacian Coin Hoard from the 1st Century BC in the Light of their X-ray Fluorescence Analysis*, in E. Papuci-Władika, M. Vickers, J. Boudzek, D. Braund (eds.), *Pontika 2008: Recent Research on the Northern and Eastern Black Sea in Ancient Times. Proceedings of the International Conference, 21st-26th April 2008, Kraków, BAR, I.S., 2240, Oxford, 2011, pp. 97-113.*

¹⁵ C. Preda, *op. cit.*, p. 158; Th. Isvoranu, M. Babeș, E.-M. Constantinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 27.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 26-27.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 32.

¹⁹ G. Dzanev, I. Prokopov, *Numismatic Collection of the Historical Museum Razgrad (Anc. Abritus)*, Coin Collection and Coin Hoards from Bulgaria (CCCHBulg), 1, 2nd part, Sofia, 2007.

²⁰ An imitative Celtic tetradrachma and a hoard of Hellenistic drachmas; cf. K. Dimitrov, *Antični monetni ot rajona na Nove (Mizija) sečeni predi osnovavaneto na rimskija*

voenen lager V v. pr. Hr. – 41 g. sl. Hr.), in K. Rabadzhiev, A. Popov, M. Demjanov, V. Katsarova (eds.), *Sbornik v pамет na akademik Dimiter P. Dimitrov*, Sofia, 2013, pp. 712-765.

²¹ D. Dragoev, *Late Hellenistic Coin Hoard from Rousse*, in V. Varbanov (ed.), *Sexaginta Prista – Trakijski jamen complex 1*, Veliko Tarnovo, 2013, pp. 99-103.

²² *Idem*, *The Numismatic Material from the Pit Complex in Rousse*, in V. Varbanov (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 94-98.

²³ D. Draganov, *Matrica za izработvane na licevi monetni pečati za imitacii ot tipa "Sattelkopfsperd" (Vârteju-București)*, *Iz NarodMuzRuse*, 12, 2008, pp. 36-41.

²⁴ See also the latest appearance of several Vârteju-București items during the archaeological investigations from Bratya Daskalovi, cf. I. Prokopov, E. Paunova, S. Filipova, *Coins and Coin Hoard from the excavation of two burial mounds near the village of Bratya Daskalovi, Stara Zagora Region*, in M. Tonkova (ed.), *Thraco-Roman Dynastic Centre in the Chipran heights area*, Sofia, 2010, pp. 44-53.

banks of the Lower Danube (perhaps produced in the area of modern-day Silistra). In the case of all these discoveries, the Celtic contribution is equally obvious²⁵. Therefore, in my opinion, all evidence lead us to assume the existence during this time of an ethnic unity (perhaps also political) on both sides of the Lower Danube, which, as a matter of fact, is evidenced both by historical sources and by the archaeological monuments²⁶.

To continue, it is necessary to mention, without dwelling too much on them, the new studies on the hoards of the Huși-Vovriești (*unmittelbaren Nachprägungen*) type from Tabani and Huși, which clarified certain stylistic and chronological issues²⁷.

Noteworthy is the ample study on the monetary discoveries from the large *dava* of Poiana authored by the late Bucur Mitrea. As the author himself remarked, this site produced the greatest quantity of coins (1269 items) – including 27 imitative (27 items) Getae-Dacian (Vârteju-București, Inotești-Răcoasa and Adâncata-Mănăstirea) issues, alongside a Vârteju-București mould – of all the known Dacian settlements²⁸.

Among the last posthumous works of the late Constantin Preda are those treating the contribution of the numismatic document in illuminating the typological character of the Getae-Dacian settlements, specifically proto-urban (*oppidan*) or urban. In his argumentation, the author mentions 14 *davae* from outside of the Carpathian range in which a large number of imitative issues and several stamps (40 Vârteju-București items, 35 Inotești-Răcoasa items, 12 Alexander III-Phillip III items, and others), which eventually allowed him to claim that the majority of these settlements emerged in the first decades of the 1st century BC or, at most, the end of the previous one²⁹.

For a long time now, the historiography of the Ancient era has attempted to clarify the issues concerning the Celtic kingdom of Tylis: its location, chronology, material culture, external relationships with the Thracians and Greeks, and so forth. Here is that recently, our Bulgarian colleagues (archaeologists, numismatists, historians and linguists) published a praiseworthy volume on this very topic³⁰. Numismatic research occupies the greater part of this work, and this impels me to dwell on them for more.

²⁵ The new examination of the hoard from Rasa revealed the following: the coins of this type are imitations of Phillip III coins, which come in two variants, one with traces of a legend (older and more circulated) and one without a legend, produced south of the Danube; the first variant can be dated after 294 BC, while the legend-less one to ca. 270 – ca. 260 BC. Cf. A. Vilcu, M. Neagu, *Imitațiile după tetradrahmele macedonene de tip Filip II în lumina tezaurului de la Rasa (IGCH 460)*, *Pontica*, 45, 2012, pp. 603–616.

²⁶ D. Boteva, *The Ancient Historians on the Celtic Kingdom in South-Eastern Thrace*, in L. Vagalinski (ed.), *In Search of Celtic Tylis in Thrace (III C BC), Proceedings of the Interdisciplinary Colloquium Arranged by the National Archaeological Institute and Museum at Sofia and the Welsh Department, Aberystwyth University Held at the National Archaeological Institute and Museum Sofia, 8 May 2010*, Sofia, 2010, pp. 33-50; T. Stoyanov, *The Mal-Tepe Tomb at Mezek and the Problem of the Celtic Kingdom in South-Eastern Thrace*, in L. Vagalinski (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 105-113; V. Varbanov, *Pottery from the Thracian Pit Complex in Rousse*, in V. Varbanov (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 192-232; E. Paunov, *KOINE to ROMANITAS. The Numismatic Evidence for Roman Expansion and Settlement*

in Bulgaria in Antiquity (Moesia and Thrace, ca. 146 BC–98/117 AD), BAR, I.S., Oxford, 2014; B. Mac Congail, *Deux ex Machina — Celtic Hoards from Thrace*, online: balkancelts.wordpress.com (*Balkancelts, Journal of Celtic Studies in Eastern Europe and Asia Minor*); idem, *Celtic Coinage from Bulgaria*, online: balkancelts.wordpress.com/2012/10/17/little-metal-men-a-statistical-analysis-of-cultural-vandalism.

²⁷ A. Boldureanu, *Cronica descoperirilor monetare (I)*, *Tyragetia*, n.s., 1 (16), 1, Chișinău, 2007, pp. 351-360; L. Munteanu, *Descoperiri monetare din Moldova. V*, *ArhMold*, 36, 2013, pp. 191-198.

²⁸ B. Mitrea, *Monedele descoperite în cetățuia geto-dacă de la Poiana*, *ArhMold*, 34, 2011, pp. 187-219.

²⁹ C. Preda, *Note numismatice (I. Circulația monetară în așezările geto-dacice extracarpatice de tip dava)*, *SCIVA*, 59-60, 2008–2009, pp. 173-182.

³⁰ L.V. Vagalinski (ed.), *In search of Celtic Tylis in Thrace (III C BC). Proceedings of the interdisciplinary Colloquium arranged by the National Archaeological Institute and Museum at Sofia and the Welsh Department, Aberystwyth University held at the National Archaeological Institute and Museum, Sofia, 8 May 2010*, Sofia, 2010.

The greatest attention was paid to the issues by Kavaros (ca. 235-218 BC), the last king of Tylis, from which come five known silver monetary types: Herakles/Zeus Aetophoros; Apollo/Nike; Apollo/Celtic shield; Heracles/cornucopiae; Hermes/caduceus. Moreover, even bronze items (Zeus/horseman) have been discovered (figs. 1, 4, 5 and 6), made overwriting (overstriking) those of Skotokos, the Thracian king from Kabyle.

The monetary discoveries of this kind, as well as other La Tène (LB₂/LC₁) artefacts seem to concentrate around the locality of Arkunis/Arkovna, which – as it is presumed – can be identified with the legendary Tylis (fig. 2).

The animosity between the Thracian locals and the newcomers became common knowledge; this would explain the absence of the specific Thracian vestiges in the neighbouring area, from which the natives seem to have even be expelled. It is believed that around 218 BC the kingdom of Tylis (fig. 3) is attacked and destroyed by the Thracians, with only small groups of Celts being mentioned around Byzantium in 196–195 BC³¹.

It is assumed that, most probably, Kavaros' coins were struck in Kabyle, though the Greek cities on the coast should not be excluded; for that matter, it seems that it was around this city that the newcomers led by Comontorius first settled after the defeat from Greece (Delphi), shortly before moving their centre of power towards modern-day north-eastern Bulgaria, in the area of Varna, Kavarna, Shumen, Burgas and Sliven, which may have extended to Rousse, Veliko Tarnovo and the Yantra River. Therefore, the Celtic coins from the mentioned area seem to constitute a solid argument in favour of a more precise localisation of the Celtic kingdom of Tylis³².

The period I've focused my attention also witnessed the publication of an ample study on the imitative issues from Dobrudja, which I find particularly important, a reason for which we must dwell longer on it³³. Its author, Dr Gabriel Talmațchi, starting from the elaboration of a (so far) complete inventory of Getae-Dacian monetary discoveries on Dobrudja territory, raises a series of questions of great interest for numismatic research.

From the onset, one can notice that the documentary material at the basis of the discussions and interpretations is unexpectedly rich, contradicting the older opinions³⁴ that, in the absence of adequate discoveries, considered the area bounded by the Danube and the Black Sea as void of Getae-Dacian monetary manifestations and almost completely dominated by issues of Greek and Hellenistic origin, particularly by those of the coastal cities.

Seven hoards were registered, three of which are constituted by items of the Adâncata-Mănăstirea, Vârteju-București, Inotești-Răcoasa and Alexander III-Phillip III types (Kavarna, Hârșova and Somova), one with issues struck for Moskon (Somova), and three with items of the Măcin/Niculițel-Parcheș type (Niculițel, Parcheș and Somova)³⁵. To these are added no less than 33 points that produced isolated finds, in the case of which alongside the already-mentioned types there are also finds of the Dumbrăveni type (fig. 7)³⁶.

³¹ K. Dimitrov, *Celts, Greeks and Thracians during the Third Century B.C. Interactions in History and Culture*, in L.V. Vagalinski (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 50-60; M. Manov, *In Search of Tyle (Tylis). Problems of Localization*, in the same volume, pp. 89-96; L. Lazarov, *The Celtic Tylite in the Time of Cavarus*, in the same volume, pp. 97-113.

³² K. Dimitrov, *op. cit.*, pp. 58 and 61-62; M. Manov, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96; L. Lazarov, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

³³ G. Talmațchi, *Aspecte ale prezenței monedelor geto-dacice în teritoriul pontic prin prisma noilor descoperiri*,

Pontica, 41, 2008, pp. 473–532.

³⁴ C. Preda, *Monedele geto-dacilor*, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-182; idem, *De ce nu s-au emis monede geto-dacice în Dobrogea ?*, BSNR, 67-69 (1973–1975), 1975, pp. 63-68; idem, *Istoria monedei în Dacia preromană*, Ed. Enciclopedică, București, 1998, p. 175.

³⁵ For a certain editorial simplification, but also because they were designated as such by their identifier, I will only employ the term Măcin to designate this type.

³⁶ G. Talmațchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 496-499.

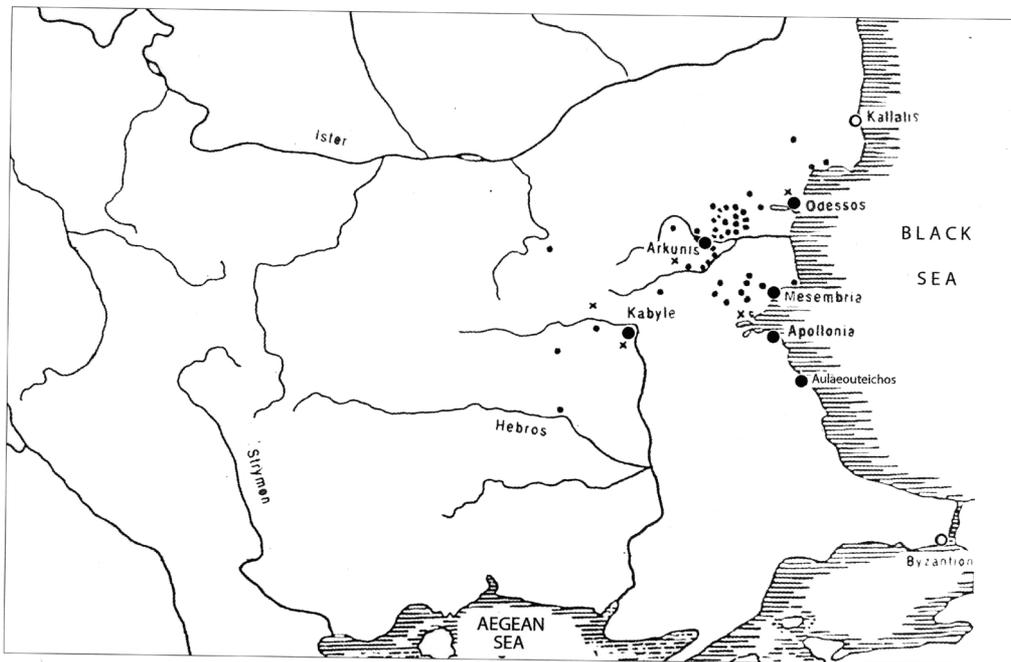


Fig. 1. Findspots of bronze coins of Cavarus (*apud* L. Lazarov).



Fig. 2. Arkovna (Arkunis) as the minting centre of the bronze coinage of Cavarus (*apud* L. Lazarov).



Fig. 3. Position of the Celtic Kingdom in Thrace (*apud* L. Lazarov).

Charting the monetary items unearthed from the Dobrudjan soil suggest an un-uniform spread of imitative coins, which elicits their sectorial analysis: they concentrate massively in the Dunăreni-Izvoarele area, around Hârșova (amplified by the deposit found here), and lastly in the area just south of the Danube Delta (maps from plates 2-7)³⁷; for the time being I will not make any reference to the Moskon and Măcin issues, since the problematics involved in their case requires a special treatment. If the diffusion of north-Danubian imitative coins into the adjoining areas of the river is clearly justified, their presence on the coast or near it is not as straightforward; in my opinion, the reduced number of isolated discoveries belonging to the north- and south-Danubian types on the coast or in its immediate vicinity is not a significant monetary phenomenon, since they can only be considered as residual manifestations within the currency circulation of the studied area.

Thus, excluding the Moskon and Măcin coins, the other monetary types that have so far appeared in Dobrudja are all of north- and south-Danubian origin, belonging to the second main phase of the Getae-Dacian coinage, dated to between the middle of the 2nd century and the first three decades of the 1st century BC³⁸ or, in my opinion, the entire 1st century BC³⁹.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 520-525.

³⁸ C. Preda, *Monedele geto-dacilor, op. cit.*, p. 404.

³⁹ V. Mihailescu-Bîrlița, *Dacia răsăriteană în seco-*

lele VI-I î.e.n. Economie și monedă, Ed. Junimea, Iași, 1990, pp. 76-82.



Fig. 4. 1. Silver tetradrachm of Kavaros (= Gerassimov 1958, plate XVI.4); 2-5. Bronze coins of Kavaros (= SNG BM, Nos 194, 197-199) (1-5, *apud* K. Dimitrov).

I return to the discussion on the Moskon and Măcin types (fig. 8). It is known that the publication of two didrachmas issued for the basileus Moskon first took place as early as 1964; later, further items were published, including a hemidrachma (fig. 9)⁴⁰.

The issues with the Moskon legend have, generally speaking, characteristics similar to those of the Hellenistic coinage: the obverse depicts a young man, and the reverse a galloping horseman accompanied

⁴⁰ C. Preda, *Monede de un tip necunoscut provenind din Dobrogea*, SCIV, 15, 1964, 3, pp. 401-410; R. Ocheșeanu, *Monedele basileului Moskon aflate în colecțiile Muzeului de arheologie Constanța*, Pontica, 3, 1970, pp. 125-129;

G. Talmațchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 479-482; idem, *Les monnaies autonomes d'Istros, Callatis et Tomis. Circulation et contexte*, Ed. Moneta, Wetteren, 2006, pp. 181-184.



Fig. 5. Plasters casts; 6. A tetradrachm of the Celtic ruler Cavarus struck in Cabyle; 7. A bronze coin of Cavarus; 8. An autonomus tetradrachm of the Alexander type struck in Cabyle (6-8, *apud* M. Manov).

by the legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΟΣΚΩΝΟΣ and, under the horse, the mark AV; the didrachmas weigh between 7.28 and 8.01 grams, and the hemidrachma 2.35 grams⁴¹.

Coins of this kind appeared in a restricted area from northern Dobrudja (fig. 8), on the southern bank of the Danube Delta (Somova, Revărsarea-Isaccea, Tulcea, and others), where, according to the first editor, it is believed they were manufactured between the “end of the 4th century until the middle 2nd

⁴¹ C. Preda, *Monedele geto-dacilor*, *op. cit.*, pp. 402-403; *idem*, *Istoria monedei în Dacia preromană*, *op. cit.*, pp. 176-177.

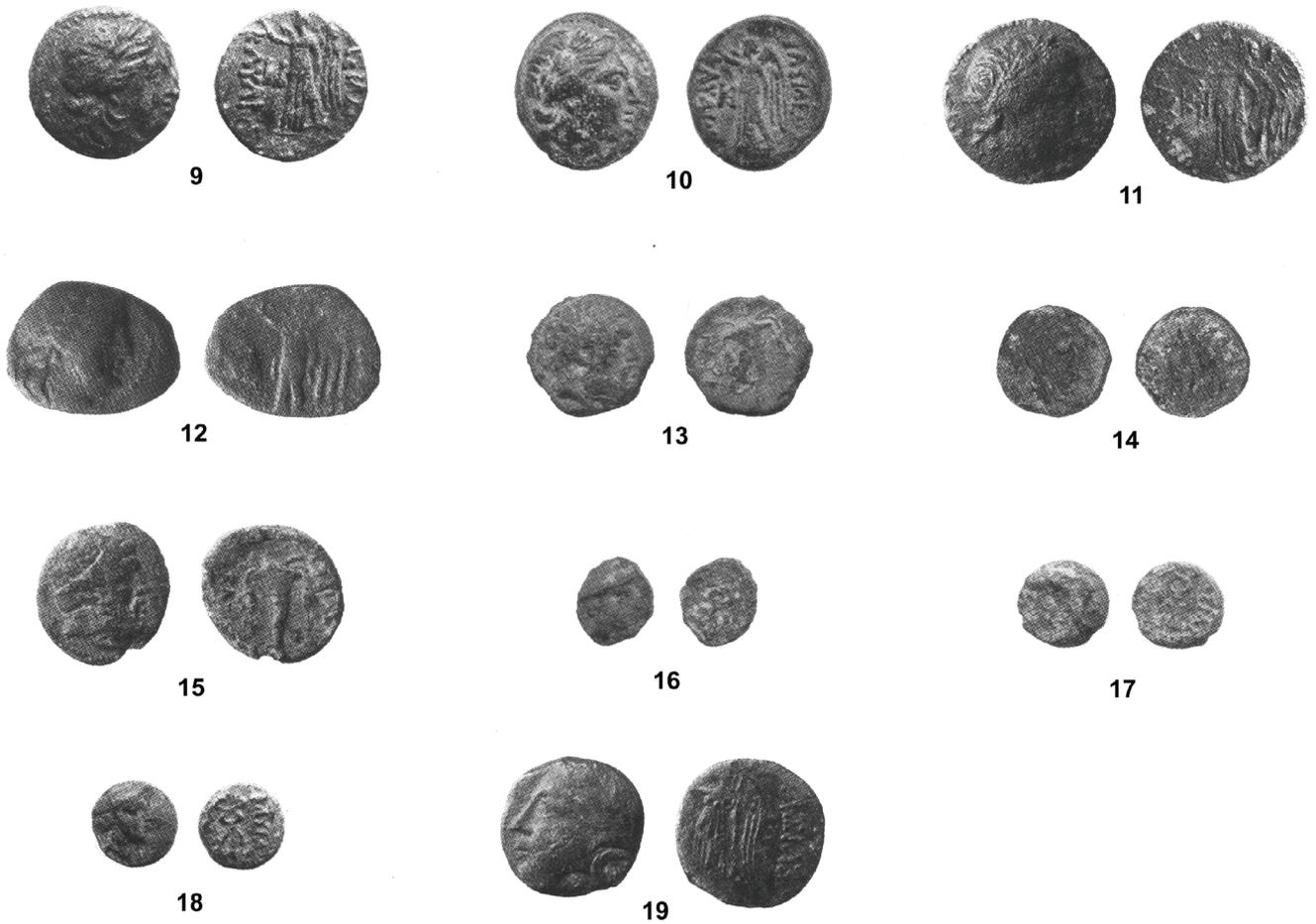


Fig. 6. Bronze coins of Cavarus (220s-210s BC). Type I (“head of Apollo/Nike”): 9–11. Archaeological complex of Arkovna; 12. Zlataritsa, Veliko Tarnovo region; type II (“head of Heracles/cornucopia”): 13-18. Archaeological complex of Arkovna (14. type III – “head of Hermes/caduceus”); 19. New type of Cavarus (?) (“head of Apollo to the left/Nike”, private collection) (*apud* L. Lazarov).

century BC⁴², or, according to later opinions, during the entire 3rd century⁴³, in the first half of the 3rd century⁴⁴, or even in the 2nd century BC⁴⁵.

Nonetheless, from the stylistic point of view, they can be attributed to an early phase of the imitative coinage, rather closer to the Prundu-Jiblea type⁴⁶, which, noteworthy, has been dated to “the first main phase of development” of Getae-Dacian coinage, namely “around 200 BC” (the last two decades of the 3rd century and the early decades of the 2nd century BC)⁴⁷. A careful examination of the Moskon issues also

⁴² Idem, *Monedele geto-dacilor*, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

⁴³ Idem, *Istoria monedei în Dacia preromană*, *op. cit.*, p. 177; Gh. Poenaru-Bordea, *Izvoare numismatice*, in M. Petrescu-Dîmbovița, A. Vulpe (eds.), *Istoria românilor*, Ed. Enciclopedică, I, București, 2001, p. 59; M. Babeș, *Geto-dacii de la Dromichaites la Burebista*, in the same volume, p. 511.

⁴⁴ R. Ocheșeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 126 and 128.

⁴⁵ Gh. Poenaru Bordea, *Viața economică în Pontul Stîng*

în epoca elenistică în lumina izvoarelor arheologice și numismatice, rezumatul tezei de doctorat, București, 1978; E. Oberländer-Târnoveanu, *Emisiuni monetare ale geților din nordul Dobrogei – monedele de tip Măcin*, Peuce, 8 (1977-1978), 1980, p. 176; G. Talmățchi, *op. cit.*, p. 482.

⁴⁶ C. Preda, *Monedele geto-dacilor*, *op. cit.*, pp. 149 et sqq., 516 (pl. XXXII) and 519 (pl. XXXV).

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 158.

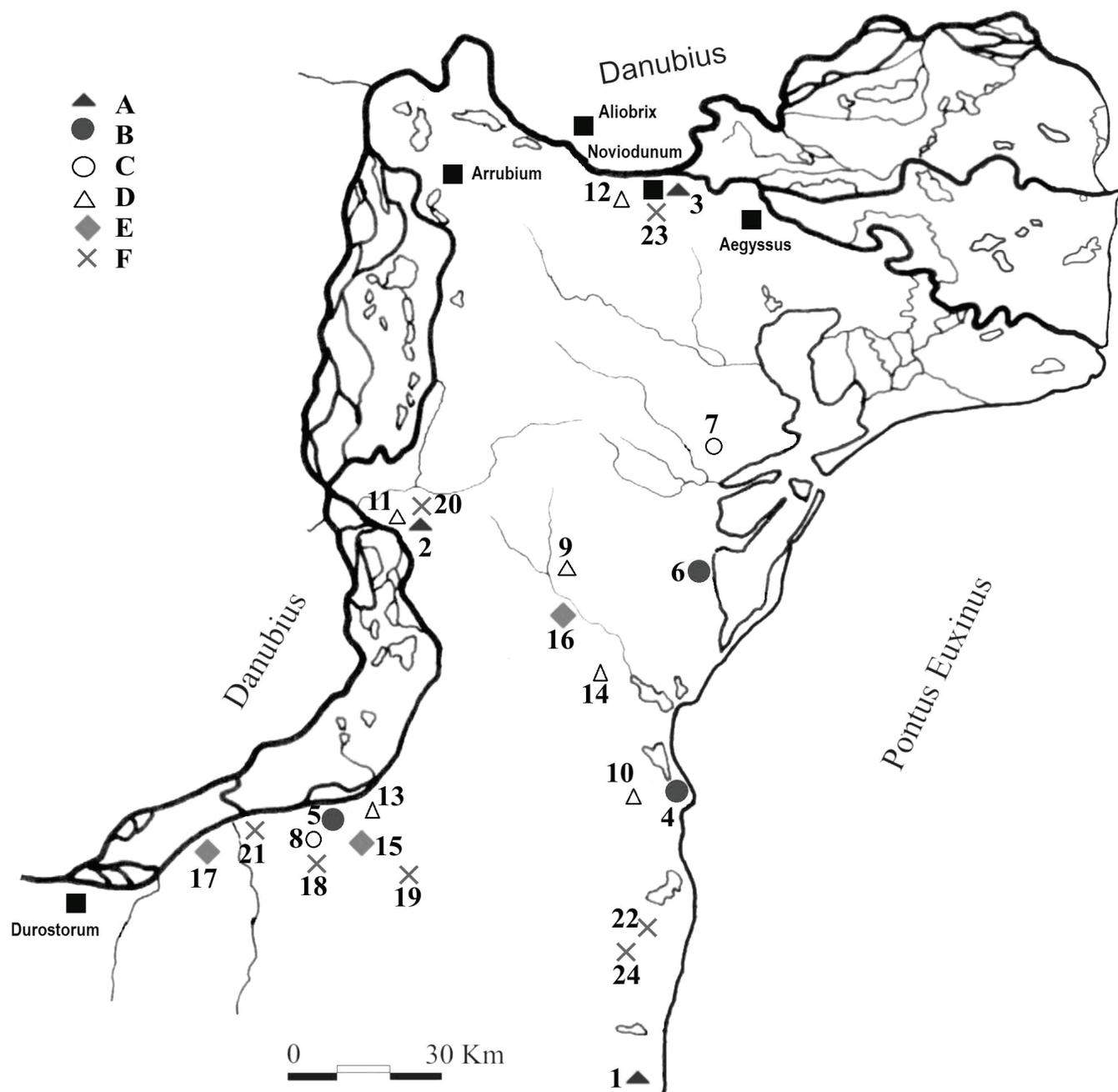


Fig. 7. The map of the Celtic coin imitations found in Dobruđa: **A.** Coin hoards of Adâncata-Mănăstirea, Vârteju-București, Inotești-Răcoasa and Alexander III-Phillip III types: 1. Cavarna (Bulgaria); 2. Hârșova; 3. Somova. **B.** Isolated finds of Dumbrăveni type: 4. Constanța; 5. Dunăreni; 6. Histria; **C.** Isolated finds of Adâncata-Mănăstirea type: 7. Ceamurlia de Jos; 8. Dunăreni; **D.** Isolated finds of Vârteju-București type: 9. Cheia; 10. Constanța; 11. Hârșova; 12. Isaccea; 13. Izvoarele; 14. Sibioara; **E.** Isolated finds of Inotești-Răcoasa type: 15. Dunăreni; 16. Pantelimon; 17. Păciul lui Soare; **F.** Isolated finds of Alexander III-Phillip III type: 18. Dunăreni; 19. Floriile-Adâncata; 20. Hârșova; 21. Izvoarele; 22. Moșneni; 23. Parcheș; 24. Pecineaga.



Fig. 8. The map of the Celtic coin imitations found in Dobruđa: **A. Coin hoards of Măcin type:** 1. Niculițel; 2. Parcheș; 3. Somova; **B. Isolated finds of Măcin type:** 4. Mahmudia; 5. Măcin; 6. Poiana Teilor; 7. Telița; **C. Isolated finds of Moskon type:** 8. Somova; 9. Mihai Viteazul; 10. Revărsarea; 11. Tulcea; **D. Coin Hoard of Moskon type:** 12, Somova.

shows that the aforementioned representations have strong analogies with the Alexander III-Phillip III combined type, which, in its turn, followed the original examples of Alexander III, dated to “around 200 BC”⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 327–328 and pl. LXX/3-7 (p. 554).



Fig. 9. Coins of Moskon type found in Dobrudja (1-2. didrachmas; 3. obol).

At the same time, analogies between the representations on the coins of the basileus Moskon and those found on Kavaros's bronze issues, such as the Apollo type apparently struck in Mesambria⁴⁹, should not be excluded. So, to conclude, I believe that the coins of the basileus Moskon belong to the first series of imitations of original examples, frequently found in the areas south of the Danube; they should be dated, most likely, to the second half of the 3rd century BC, produced in one of the Greek coastal cities, perhaps Histria, in accord with the mark on the reverse⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ K. Dimitrov, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57; L. Lazarov, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-104 and fig. 1/1-3.

⁵⁰ C. Preda, *op. cit.*, SCIV, 15, 1964, 3, p. 406.



Fig. 10. Coins of Măcin type found in Dobrudja (didrachmas).

Besides the Moskon issues, I've also mentioned the type known as Măcin/Niculițel-Parcheș, which can be briefly described as follows: the obverse depicts a bearded human head (Zeus?), and the reverse as horse and a horseman wearing a helmet (fig. 10).

In terms of weight, the respective coins belong to didrachmas (between 7.10 g and 7.92 g) and are considered local, Getae-Dacian productions (Phillip II type?), dated not later than the middle and the end of the 2nd century BC, or even until the beginning of the 1st century BC. The discoveries made so far concentrate approximately in the same area as that which produced the Moskon coins, namely northern Dobrudja, in Măcin, Mahmudia, Niculițel, Parcheș, Telița and Somova (fig. 8).

As early as the first editor, their belonging to the **a** and **b** adjacent series of the Prundu-Jiblea type has been specified⁵¹, but in what concerns the issuer, even if it is assumed that they can only be of local origin, some reserves have nonetheless been advanced: “We believe that it is not unnoteworthy that the area of circulation of these coins coincides with the areas of Dobrudja where Celtic toponyms such as Arrubium, Noviodunum, Aegyssus are found, even if at the current state of research it is difficult to establish a relation between the two phenomena”⁵².

To the above we should add the hypothesis of the Moskon – Măcin succession; as a matter of fact, both monetary types are found within the same area, which cannot be separated from the placenames recorded in ancient sources, of definite Celtic origin (Noviodunum, Aegyssus, Arrubium, Aliobrix and others) and which are not fully explained (fig. 8)⁵³.

Let’s attempt now a succinct review of the data available on the Moskon and Măcin types: (1) Both are part of the “main phase of development of Getae-Dacian coinage”, being strongly related to the Prundu-Jiblea type and its adjacent series; (2) They make use of the monetary standards, alphabet and perhaps even representations specific to the Greek world⁵⁴; (3) As most of the research on them has shown, these issues date from the 3rd century BC; (4) The respective monetary finds are limited in time (several decades) and space, being concentrated in a narrow area of northern Dobrudja, where ancient authors mentioned the Celtic placenames.

More than two decades ago, as part of the discussion on the coins of the Huși-Vovriești type, I contended that they are of Celtic origin, bringing forward as arguments a series of discoveries that, even though they appear disparate, can reveal a more complex picture than the one presented so far⁵⁵. The information available at that moment attested a Celtic presence as early as the 3rd century BC even in the western and northern Pontic area, both through literary sources and archaeological ones: I mentioned the decree of Protogenes in which it is shown how the Galatai allied with the Sciri – as part of the Bastarnian coalition – threatened Olbia⁵⁶, but also the existence of Celtic mercenaries in the Bosphoran Kingdom⁵⁷, or even in Tyras⁵⁸.

Throughout the years following this moment, archaeological information on the Celts from the area east of the Carpathians and from the Lower Danube has increased considerably, being attributed particularly to the 3rd century BC and the subsequent one (La Tène B and C)⁵⁹. We should nonetheless

⁵¹ E. Oberländer-Târnoaveanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-148; also see C. Preda, *Istoria monedei în Dacia preromană, op. cit.*, pp. 175-176.

⁵² E. Oberländer-Târnoaveanu, *op. cit.*, p. 149, note 11.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 147; G. Talmațchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 482 and 509.

⁵⁴ According to the first editor, the name of the basileus in the nominative would have been Μόσχων, which, for the moment, has been found in a close form (Μόσχος – calf, Μόσχίον – she-calf, Μόσκος or Moskhion) only in the Greek world, including in northern and western Pontic area, in Histria, Olbia, Panticapaion, Nymphaion, Gorgippia, Hermonassa, etc. (C. Preda, *op. cit.*, SCIV, 15, 1964, 3, p. 403; ISMI 191, 1, 12, 15, 33, 44; V. Cojocaru, *Populația zonei nordice și nord-vestice a Pontului Euxin în secolele VI-I a. Chr. pe baza izvoarelor epigrafice*, Ed. Universității „Al. I. Cuza” Iași, Iași, 2004, pp. 274-275).

⁵⁵ V. Mihailescu-Bîrliiba, *Dacia răsăriteană în secolele VI-I î.e.n. Economie și monedă, op. cit.*, pp. 70-74.

⁵⁶ IPE, I², 32B; V. Pârvan, *Histria IV. Inscriptii găsite în 1914 și 1915*, in ARMSI, 38, 1916, pp. 544-545; D.M. Pippidi, *Contribuții la istoria veche a României*², Ed. Academiei, București, 1967, pp. 32-67.

⁵⁷ V.P. Tolstikov, *Nadgrobie vojna s. Ahtanizovskogo limana*, VDI, 1, 1976, pp. 80-90.

⁵⁸ I.B. Klejman, *Izobraženie vojna na fragmente rel’efa iz Tiry*, NIASP, Kiev, 1987, pp. 47-51.

⁵⁹ Z. Woźniak, *Wschodnie pogranicze kultury laténskiej*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk, 1974, pp. 139-165; D. Berciu, *Băștinașii*, in D. M. Pippidi, D. Berciu (eds.), *Din istoria Dobrogei*, I, Ed. Academiei, București, 1965, p. 135; M. Babeș, *Die Poienești-Luka-ševka-Kultur. Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte im Raum östlich der Karpaten in den Jahrhunderten vor Christi*

recall that some researchers consider that the presence of Celtic artefacts in the aforementioned area can only be explained by relations established with the Celts from the Middle Danube, especially the Scordisci, or by the arrival in the Bosporan Kingdom of Celtic mercenaries from Asia Minor⁶⁰.

The aforementioned placenames⁶¹, the mention by ancient sources of the ethnonym Britogali/Britolagi or even the Peucini (Celts mixed with Bastarns?)⁶², to which now a possible imitative coinage has been attributed, can lead us to an eventual reopening of the dossier on the Celtic presence in Dobrudja.

Geburt, Bonn, 1993, p. 53; idem, *The brooch from Horodnica: Dacian, Celtic or Germanic*, in H. Dobrzańska, V. Megauw, P. Poleska (eds.), *Celts on the Margin. Studies in European Cultural Interaction 7th Century BC – 1st Century A.D. Dedicated to Zenon Woźniak*, Kraków, 2005, pp. 123-129; S. Teodor, *Regiunile est-carpătice ale României în secolele V-II î. d. Hr. Considerații generale și repertoriu arheologic*, Bibliotheca Thracologica XXVII, București, 1999, pp. 101-116; A. Rustoiu, *Celto-Pontica. Connections of the Celts from Transilvania with the Black Sea*, Pontica, 44, 2011, pp. 100-101.

⁶⁰ M. Babeș, *Les Celtes et la région de la mer Noire*, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-126.

⁶¹ A. Falileyev, *Celtic Dacia. Personal names, place-names and ethnic names of Celtic origin in Dacia and Scythia Minor*, CMCS, Aberystwyth, 2007.

⁶² E. Polaschek, *Peucini, -eni, enni*, in RE, XIX, 2, Verlag J.B. Metzler, Stuttgart-Weimar, 1938 (2001), col. 1391-1392; R. Wenskus, *Bastarnen (Ethnische Zuordnung)*, in *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, II, 1976, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin-New York, p. 89; M. Babeș, *Peuce-Peucini*, *Peuce*, 6, 1977, pp. 79-85.