

## **BURIALS AS IDENTITY STATEMENTS. SOME REMARKS ABOUT NORTH-THRACIAN FUNERARY PHENOMENON IN THE 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> CENTURIES BC**

### **Introduction**

*Due to their inventory, one may consider the burials from Agighiol, Peretu and Mogilanskata Mogila - Vratsa as some of the most spectacular examples within the Thracian area. We believe though, that their individualizing features, as for example, the variety of the funerary furnishing and a complementary lack of complex funerary architecture, may be understood in a larger phenomenological context dated in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and in the first half of the next, in the northern periphery of the Thracian territory. In this study, the authors plan to interpret these archaeological contexts as identity statements of individuals or social groups and to decode the particular conditions, which triggered authority and prestige manifestations in similar expressions on large spaces. In this way, the study will particularly include the discoveries from Cucuteni-Gosan and Băiceni-Laiu as necessary elements in the description of the North-Thracian cultural space.*

### **Methods of analysis**

Considering the material culture as more than the result of human interaction with the environment, but agent of significances and instrument for communication, we will regard

the burials (the mound burials especially) as amazing archaeological resources capable to reveal facts about the identity of the dead and the people who buried them. Thus, the analysis will start with the presentation of three particular cases, the graves from Agighiol-Tulcea (Andrieșescu, 1934; Berciu, 1969a-b; 1969b), Peretu-Teleorman (Moscalu, 1986: 59-70; 1989: 129-190, pl. 41-64), Mogilanskata Mogila – Vratsa (Torbov, 2005; Theodossiev, 2000: 144-147; Venedikov, Gerasimov, 1979), as archaeological contexts<sup>1</sup>. We will take into account the following criteria: a) localization, b) funerary architecture, c) inventory composition (in terms of diversity, quality and item's association) and d) artifacts' iconography as symbols of sacred and prestige. Because the mentioned graves were published in detail, we are going to mention only several of their main characteristics, necessary in our argumentation. Further, a statistic study will describe the funerary context to which these burials belong, in order to evaluate their amount of distinctiveness and originality. Finally, the authors will integrate the results of the archaeological and statistical analyses in an attempt to interpret the social and cultural significances of the observed phenomena.

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<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, all the three funerary complexes were deranged by modern, unauthorized interventions, finally representing the object of rescue excavations. This is the reason why certain details regarding associated rituals will not be fully explainable. We refer here to Agighiol and Tombs no. 2 and no. 3 from Vratsa – *Mogilanskata Mogila*, cases for which there can be expressed doubts concerning the associations between deposited funerary inventory items of «masculine» and «feminine» type and the identity of the buried individuals.

### Burials as archaeological contexts

In **Agighiol** – *Movila lui Uță*, under the same embankment (Diameter = 32 m), there were identified, in 1931, two different architectural unities with different entrances (Fig. 05). In the centre of the mound there was found a tomb, built out of polished stone blocks, composed from two rectangular chambers (3 x 3 m and 3 x 1,80 m) and a *dromos* built out of ashlar, orientated towards west (2,40 x 0,80 m), tomb in which deranged human bones were discovered<sup>2</sup>. Another separate chamber was built towards east from the main tomb. It was rectangular shaped (2,60 x 2,40 m), built out of ashlar and had a *dromos* opened towards east. It contained three complete horse skeletons, discovered in correct anatomical order. Because the bones of one horse contained several bronze arrowheads and more such artifacts were scattered inside the room, we may presume that the horses were killed on the spot. They were decorated with lavish harness, containing more than 30 items, crafted in silver, gold and bronze, some ornamented with zoomorphic motifs. The harness items were found in their functional position. The gear contained 8 frontal pieces (seven bears and a wild cat with a rabbit head in its' claws), 7 appliquéés with two or three arms decorated with zoomorphic representations (five horses in whirlpool, two sided deer) and 6 round, undecorated silver appliquéés; 3 bits (two iron ones and a silver bit), various rings and chain links. The funerary furniture<sup>3</sup> contained the following ceremonial items: weapons (100 bronze arrowheads, several spear heads), armor (helmet, two greaves, all three items crafted in silver with gilded parts and decorated with specific motifs), *symposium* vessels (five *phialae*, two decorated goblets, all crafted in silver), adornments (a necklace made of silver beads, glass beads, two silver pendants)

and ceramic vessels – recipients for liquids, oils and food offerings (Thassos amphora, Attic ceramic<sup>4</sup> with red figures) (Fig. 08).

In the case of **Peretu** grave, the funerary setting up was entirely modest (Fig. 06). The 30 m in diameter mound was erected in successive soil layers. It covered up a previously burnt area (approximately 6 m in diameter) on the ancient soil level, burnt area above which they deposited the buried dead and some bones (long bones and head) of a horse. There were some personal items around the dead individual, scattered on the burnt area: a spearhead, a knife, both bended, a buckle. A pit dug in the burnt soil contained the metallic remains of a funerary cart. In Peretu mound, the dead individual was accompanied by three hounds, deposited complete, two side by side in the northern part of the mound, at 5 m distance from the dead, and a third one, at 5,5 m southeast of him, together with bones from a different animal. Local ceramic fragments were also discovered, among which we mention half of a hand-made mug deposited in the nearby of one of the dogs' heads with the other half of the mug found near the tail of another dog (the case of the two dogs deposited in the northern side of the mound). At 7,5 m northeast of the buried human, in a level with 40 cm above the level on which the dead laid, the excavator found the rest of the funerary furniture, deposited inside a bronze container and covered with a bronze tray. This treasure included: harness gear (bridle, frontal head piece, 30 whirlpool appliquéés with two, three or four horse heads, 19 simple appliquéés, round shaped, all these crafted in silver), ceremonial equipment (armor – silver helmet and *symposium* vessels – three *phialae*, a strainer, an *aryballos*, a tube, all crafted in silver) and

<sup>2</sup> Since the tomb was badly deranged, without doubts in 1931 and very probable even from ancient times, and no anthropological analyses were made, the number and gender of the deceased individuals represent an unsolved issue. Because Berciu (1969a: 36-37) found deranged bones in both rooms of the tomb, he interpreted this situation as the result of the deposition of two distinct individuals.

<sup>3</sup> Only few funerary items were discovered in situ (the harness gear) and almost sure, the artifacts published by Berciu in 1969 do not represent the totality of the original inventory. Some think that the goblet from the Metropolitan Museum and the Detroit helmet were initially looted in 1931 from Agighiol tomb (Taylor, 1982: 55; Berciu, 1969a: 90).

<sup>4</sup> Considering the ceramic with red figures, Berciu (1969a: 76, note 22) dated Agighiol around 400 BC. Alexandrescu (1971: 660-662) proposed a more reliable chronology using analogies with the Otchët group (Beazley, 1963: 1496-1499), datable between 370-340 BC; then in 1983 he found more similarities with the Fat Boy Painter (Beazley, 1963: 1484-1495), datable at 350 BC.

also a silver bead necklace (Moscalu 1986, p. 59-70; 1989, p. 129-190, pl. 41-64) (Fig. 09).

A very special case is the *Mogilanskata Mound* from the town of *Vratsa* (Torbov, 2005; Theodossiev, 2000: 144-147) built probably, along a 50 or 70 years period. This mound developed around a first nucleus, dated in the second quarter – the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Later, during two different, successive moments, the mound was completed with distinct funerary structures (chambers built from ashlar and wood), the covering embankment being in every case rebuilt and enlarged. Finally, the entire structure was surrounded with stonewall built in steps, resembling a possible dynastic mausoleum (Fig. 07B). Tomb no. 1 was built from ashlar, like a primitive structure resembling the shape of a *tholos* with *nartex* (Fig. 07A), covering a dismembered skeleton of an individual, together with two dogs and local ceramic vessels and fragments from a Greek *skyphos*. The construction had walls, 2 or 3m high and 1m thick, with no substructure. The embankment, raised simultaneously with the tomb's walls, sustained the walls. Tomb no. 2, dated approximately between 350-320 BC, contained the skeletal remains of two humans and three horses deposited in a rectangular construction with two chambers (Fig. 07C). One of the deceased had a spear and a fibula and was found in the nearby of three horses, a funerary cart and the lavish harness of the riding horse, in one side of the tomb. The second individual lay separately along a consistent quantity of inventory items (Fig. 10). This individual wore on his head a golden wreath and golden earrings, glass beads around the neck, golden appliques and a fibula on the dress. At some distance from the dead, in the nearby of

its left shoulder, was a silver greave with gilded ornaments, a bronze Chalkidic type helmet in the nearby of its feet, two iron knives, an iron scabbard, 88 bronze arrowheads. Further away, the excavator found two distinct groups of *symposium* vessels made of bronze, silver and gold: four *phiale*, two *situlae*, *hydria*, *oenochoe*, jugs, *rhyton*, *candelabrum*, *podanipter*. The dead individual<sup>5</sup> had its left hand raised, holding a bronze mirror. Around its skull, there were scattered more than 50 clay miniature figurines. In the last quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, another tomb was added. This one was a two-chamber structure, built of ashlar and wood beams, with rectangular, oblong shape. Inside it, two persons were buried, each one with its own funerary furniture. One of them had adornments, dress accessories, ceramic recipients, and the other one, weapons, *symposium* vessels, clay figurines, Greek imported ceramic, dress accessories and a horse with harness gear.

### Burials as affirmation of identity

A simple survey of the main ritual and construction attributes, in the case of Agighiol, Peretu and Vratsa – *Mogilanskata Mogila*, highlights their belonging to the same cultural phenomenon typical for large geographic spaces in the beginning of the second Iron Age, of representing the social persona/identity of a powerful warrior and aristocratic elite, throughout the funerary behavior. The three graves represent perhaps the most aggressive (ostentatious) outline of using this cultural model in the north Thracian space. All three of them were tumuli graves, which did not contain elaborated elements of funerary architecture. In the case of Peretu mound, the dead

<sup>5</sup> Many interpretations proposed a whole scheme of scenarios meant to explain this situation. The individual that lay next to the horses was considered the horse keeper, sacrificed together with the animals or even the dead dynast himself. The second individual, due to personal adornments (among which a pair of luxurious golden earrings) was considered the wife of the dynast sacrificed at his death, or even the dynast himself. Theodossiev (2000) interprets the unnatural position of the skeleton (laying on its bailey, with spread legs and the left hand raised) as well as the presence of the mirror, golden wreath as a connection to the orphic attributes of the priest dynast. The items wore by the deceased were indeed feminine (adornments, dress accessories and mirror - association which occurred in other graves also). The armor, weapons and *symposium* vessels were found at some distance from the deceased and cannot be directly connected with it. As the results from the recent publication of the monument (Torbov, 2005) indicates, the excavation report is not entirely clear and the association between artifacts is not elucidated without doubts. Torbov proposes an even more refined interpretation: the second individual, the one adorned with golden wreath, could have been the sacrificed wife of the deceased, a dynast who, dying far from home, was symbolically buried in this mound by depositing his armor, weapons and *symposium* set. His burial was necessary for his successors to claim legitimately his authority.

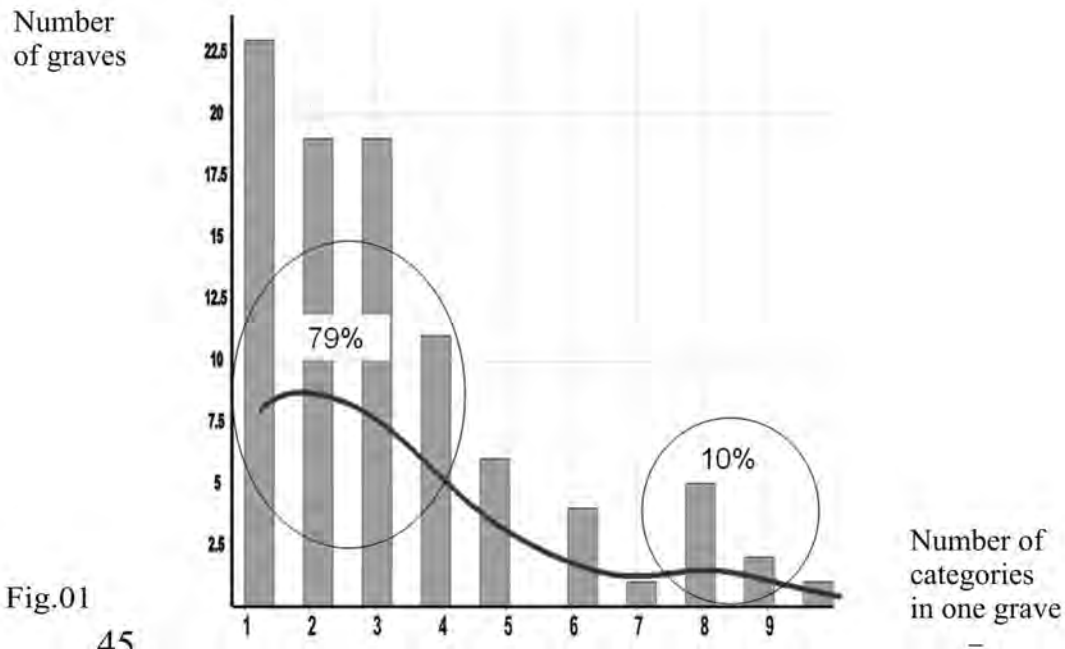


Fig.01

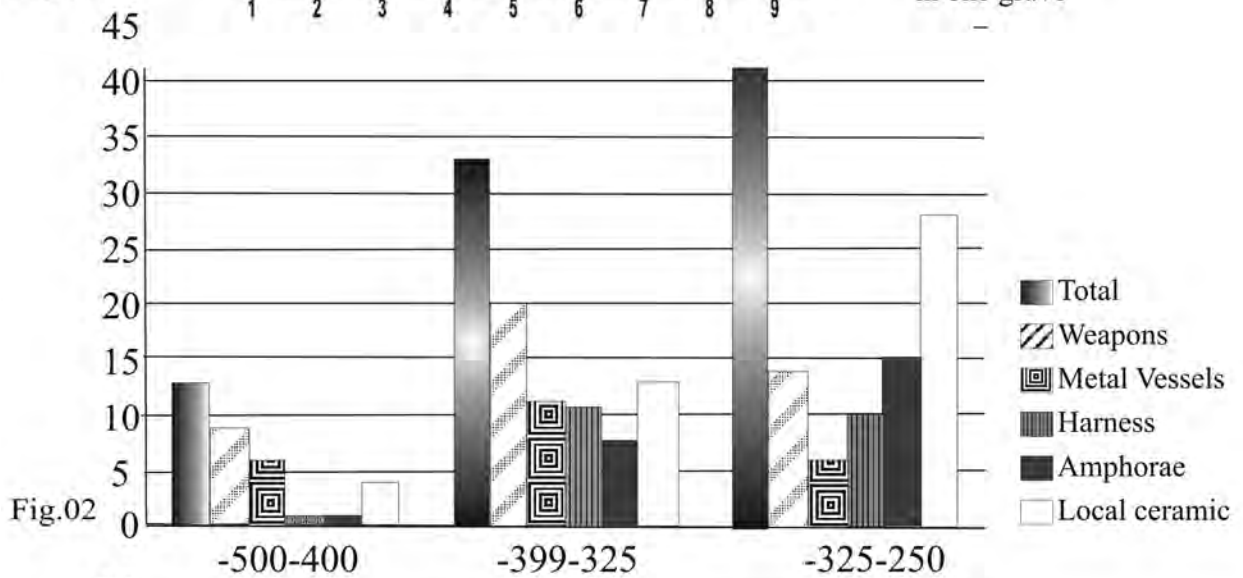


Fig.02

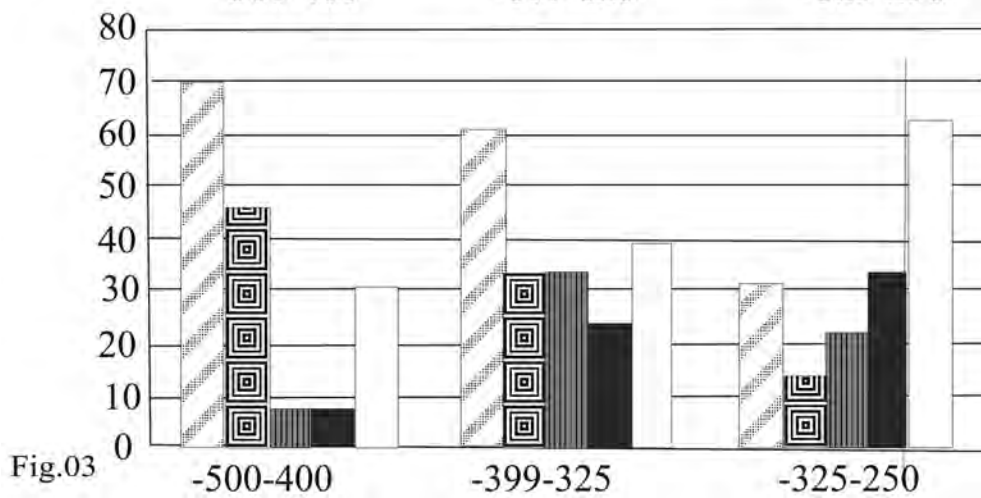


Fig.03

Fig. 01. The Kernel Density Estimation representing the variation of statistical analyzed graves after the number of contained inventory categories.

Fig. 02/03. The variation of inventory categories according to chronology (The Y axes represents the number (fig. 02) of graves or the percentage (Fig. 03) of graves containing the mentioned category in comparison with the total number of graves statistically analyzed for that period).

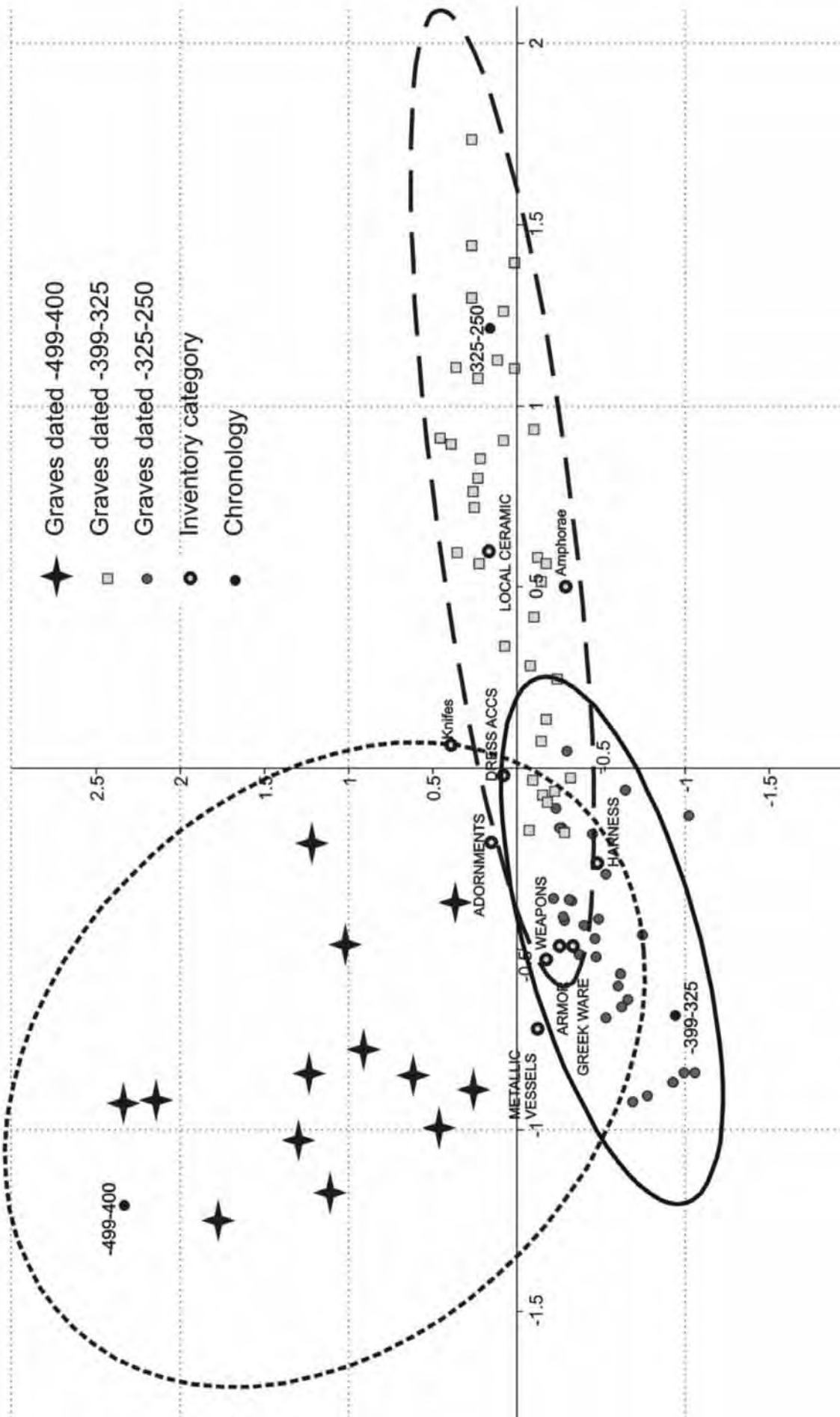


Fig. 04. The Correspondence Analysis Graphic representing the relations between chronology, inventory categories and the statistical analyzed graves.

human laid directly on the ancient soil under the soil embankment.

Even if at Agighiol and Vratsa, stone constructions were built, they did not resemble the architectural monuments from Southern Thrace, like those found in the Valley of the Kings from Kazanluk (*Kitov, 1999: 1-20; Kitov, 2005; Kitov, Agre, 2002*) or those from Sboryanovo – Sveshtari area like *Ginina Mogila* and *Mounds 12 and 13* (*Gergova, 1996: 13-44*). We do not disregard, of course, the fact that in Agighiol, Greek letters were found on polished stone blocks, suggesting the participation of Greek craftsmen in the construction, and that, in Vratsa case, the 50m in diameter *Mogilanskata Mound* must have been an impressive monument erected during several generations. We notice however, a clear distinction between the material resources exhibited by these communities and their choices/tastes for different types of funerary structures.

In all the cases, they inhumed the deceased and accompanied them by horses and hounds. More obscure may be regarded the Tomb no. 2 and no. 3 from Vratsa and possibly Agighiol, where several individuals were discovered. As long as clear anthropological determinations lack, the gender and role of these individuals is rather difficult to interpret (for example their connection with the possible sacrifice of the Thracian dynast's wife, after a ritual mentioned by *Herodotus V, 5* and later compiled by *Pomponius Mela II, 2, 19-21* and *Solinus 10. 1-6*).

The composition of funerary inventory fabricates the representation of the deceased as warriors (equipped with spears, knives and armor), equestrians (as the sacrificed horses point up), perhaps as hunters (as the presence of sacrificed dogs and use of arrowheads may suggest). The special indicators of their social roles are the *symposium* vessels. These status signs are typical for the entire Thracian world (as iconography and grave goods attest). In particular, these three funerary complexes stand up throughout their amazing variety<sup>6</sup>, quantity and quality of the deposited categories and glamorous use of craft material and decoration of items. Moreover, we notice a specific phenomenon of personalization of ceremonial property through

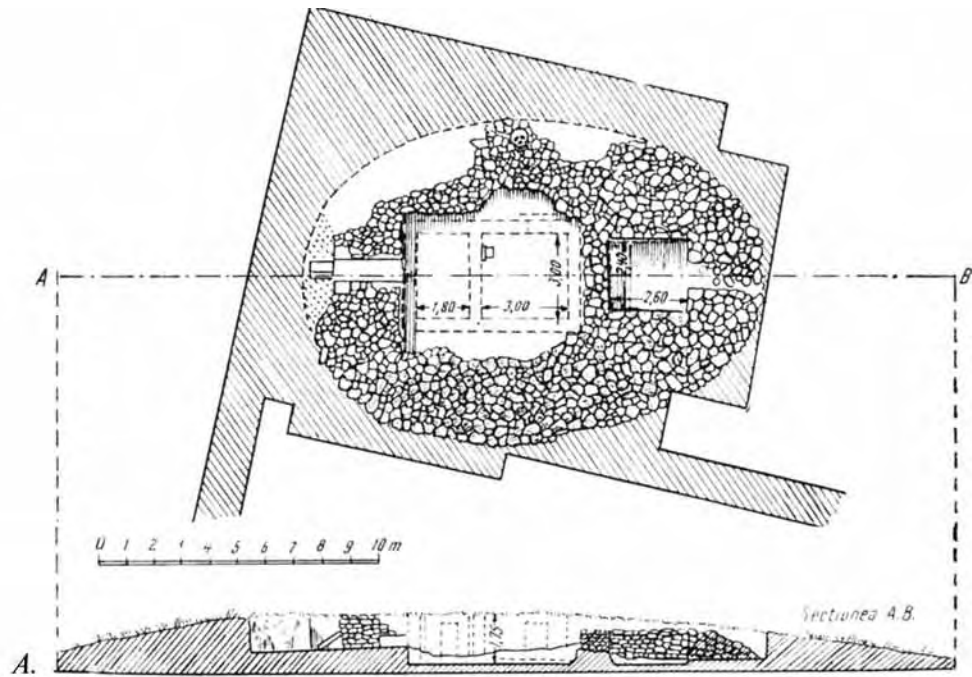
decoration used as identity statements. The ideological message communicated through time by the funerary furniture, both the selection and associations of items, and the artistic composition of depicted scenes as well stand for the main similarity between the three burials. These symbolic scenes (fighting equestrians, fantastic animals, exophthalmic eyes, human faces) appear on the items, which express the status of the dead: parade armor (helmets and greaves – Fig 11), drinking vessels (goblets) and the harness appliquéés or bridle bits. They carry, in the same time, the significance of symbolic messages as the homogenous scenes are linked in a coherent ideological system, but also offer to archaeologists images of the ancient people, as they represented themselves, using the dress items and objects discovered in the funerary inventories.

The burials from Agighiol, Peretu and Vratsa – *Mogilanskata Mogila*, are among the most spectacular funerary structures from the North-Thracian area, particularly noticeably as having a various symbolic decorated inventory and less spectacular funerary architecture. Do they represent **particular occurrences** or should they be included in a **more general** cultural and social **phenomenon**? In addition, we further raise the issue of their **originality as identity statements** in comparison with the **cultural models** of expressing high status in the contemporaneous societies around the Black Sea area. In order to answer these questions it was necessary an overview of the general context of North-Thracian elite burials dated in the 5<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.

### **Models of artifacts' selection in tumuli graves during the 5<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC. Statistical evaluation**

Taking into consideration the tumuli burials as signs of high status, we used the results of a statistical analysis run over a sample of 91 mound burials from the time and space already mentioned (*Duțescu, Ștefan, 2009*). The aim of this analysis was to identify cultural models, commonly used in multiethnic spaces. One could link such largely embraced cultural model with the representation of aristocratic identities

<sup>6</sup> This variety remains impressive even if we try to confine the inventory to the items, which can be associated with a single individual.



B.

C.



Fig. 05. The funerary mound «Movila lui Uță» Agighiol – Tulcea county, Romania.

The funerary structure.

A. Plan and profile of the tombs (Bercia, 1969: 35, fig. 7).

B. Image of the horses chamber in forefront – view towards east with the entrance in background.

C. View of the main tomb's entrance (after Andieșescu, 1934, pl. XXII 2 and pl. XIX 2).

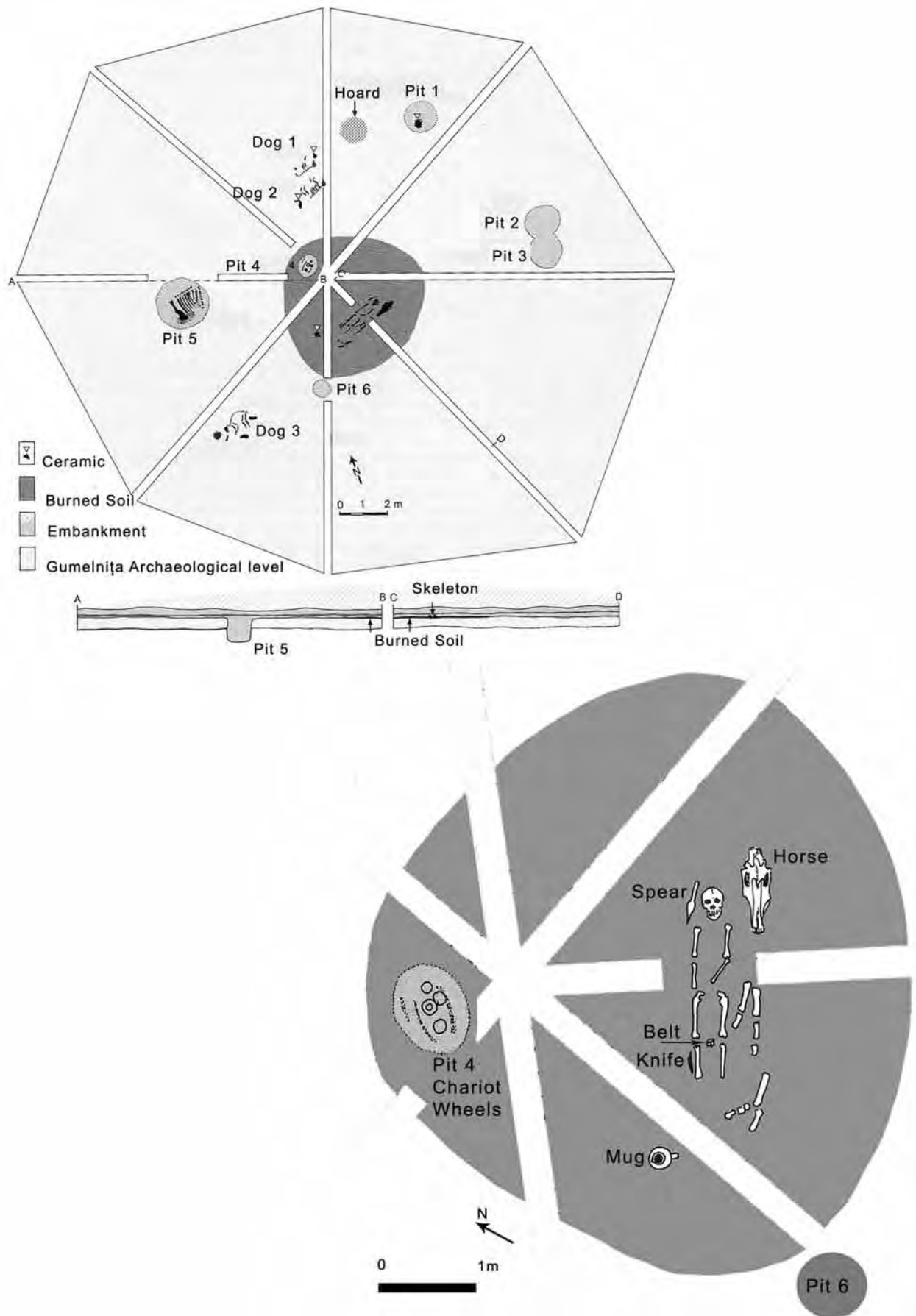


Fig. 06. The funerary mound of Peretu – Teleorman county, Romania.  
Funerary structure (after Moscalu, 1989: 134-6, abb. 2/3).



in burials. In this case, we will regard identity as the sum of individual choices expressed in the composition and selection of funerary inventories.

The statistical analysis (Correspondence Analysis and Kernel Density Estimation) which regarded the functional categories<sup>7</sup> of deposited items<sup>8</sup> pointed up that, for the 5<sup>th</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC, there might be identifiable in the funerary manifestations, certain models of social representation generally valid for the North-Thracian tumuli. The prevailing model of assembling the funerary goods was represented by the preponderance of the military equipments (weapons, armor and harness gear), completed in different forms, with *symposium* metallic vessels and Greek imported ware, or with adornments and dress accessories (47 graves contained military equipment items out of the 91 analyzed ones). In addition to this model, the analysis highlighted the existence of a «non-military» group composed out on one hand, of typical «feminine» items: adornments, dress accessories, mirrors (7 graves) and, on the other hand, composed out of less «rich» inventories: knives, local ceramic vessels, amphorae (34 graves).

In particular, the present study points up to a third group of clustering **graves with varied inventory** (more than six contained inventory categories). Graves with more than six categories fit into a different model, as the analysis of Kernel Density Estimation suggested (Fig. 01). In this group we included the Tombs no. 2 and no. 3 from *Mogilanskata Mound* – Vratsa, Agighiol, Peretu, Kjolmen G1 TIV, Kjolmen G1 T1 (*Dremsizova-Nelčinova, 1970: 207-229*), Branichevo G1 TX (*Dremsizova, 1962: 165-186*), Koprivets (*Stančev, 1994: 173-178*), Vurbitsa (*Filow, 1937: 1-116*), Telița – main grave (*Simion, Cantacuzino, 1962: 373-382*). Except for Telița, all these graves contained pieces of military equipment. We avoid regarding these inventories as implicitly rich, considering significant in this situation, their variety as a defining element of high status. We recognize in this group, the well-known graves interpreted in

the literature (*Archibald, 1998; Marazov, 1998; 2005; Sîrbu, 2000: 183-211; 2002: 374-393; 2006: 117-127; 2009*) as princely graves. We noticed that they could be dated after the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, especially in its last quarter and beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. Exception to this is the Koprivets grave, dated earlier, in the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. In addition, we notice that, except for Peretu, all these graves may be associated with distinct funerary structures (primitive stone chambers, cists), however none of them used elaborate elements of funerary architecture.

Quite representative is the case of Branichevo Grave 1 from Mound X. This was the main grave of the largest mound in a cemetery of small in urn incineration tumuli. The funerary structure was represented by a primitive rectangular stone construction (4 x 3 m), resembling a large cist (*Dremsizova, 1962: 173, fig. 10*). It contained an amphora with cremated bones. The inventory was represented by weapons armor, harness appliqué, gold pendant and a drinking set (silver *phiale*, bronze *situla*, amphora, *kantharos*, ceramic bowl) (*Dremsizova, 1962: 174-176, fig. 11-16*). This grave exhibited the high status of the dead inside its community through the difference in the funerary architecture and selection of grave goods.

On these grounds, we may assert that the «princely» graves represent only a division of a larger group of warrior elites, as they can be associated with heterogeneous identities that combine attributes of prestige and representation belonging to all the other groups.

Nevertheless, we cannot conclude with certainty that the graves without imposing construction had instead richer funerary furniture than the tumuli under which there were found real masonry constructions. Among these exquisite tombs, some resembled temples decorated with marble parts and sliding doors or with walls richly covered with paintings and bas-reliefs like the tombs from the region of Sboryanovo-Sveshtari (*Gergova, 1996*) or Kazanluk (*Kitov, 1999: 1-20; 2005*). These tombs

<sup>7</sup> The regarded categories included: weapons, armor, harness gear, metallic vessels for *symposium* activities, Greek imported ceramic (not amphorae), amphorae, local ceramic, adornments, dress accessories. The relation of these categories with bronze bells, knives, mirrors, breastplates and clay miniatures was also explored.

<sup>8</sup> For description of sample and method of analysis see *Duțescu, Ștefan, 2009*.

covered with tumuli served, after the deposition of the deceased, for various rituals, fact attested by the markings left on the floors by the sliding doors. On these events, the remains of the deceased, their funerary furniture and offerings were handled in various ways; moreover, in the same process, some mounds were demolished and rebuilt (*Gergova, 1996*). Perhaps with these occasions, the funerary furniture was taken and relocated. In this way, it is possible to interpret some hoards, as the outcome of relocating funerary inventories during certain rituals. The functional composition of some hoards (like *Băiceni* for example) is similar to that of funerary furniture. Of course, in some cases one must consider the possibility of actual looting of these monuments when their protection could not be ensured any longer.

### Chronological framework

Quite interesting, following further the statistical analysis, this group of exceptional burials, corresponds to a delimited chronological framework, datable after the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The graphics in Fig. 02, 03 and 04 suggest that, even if for a long time, the number of graves with weapons and metallic vessels grew (with a maximum point in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC), the general tendency of occurrence of warrior graves in the general funerary tumuli phenomenon decreased.

### Building group identity through networks of significance. Symbolic Iconography

Resuming their main characteristics, we note that the burials from *Agighiol*, *Peretu* and *Vratsa – Mogilanskata Mogila* match the pattern of a larger group of high status graves datable in a certain moment in time. They ostentatiously

exhibit the individual identity of certain males through an impressive display of prestige attributes. Significant aspects of their identities are highlighted by the symbolic decorations of their items. The impressive ideological homogeneity expressed in the use of similar scenes and symbols in the decorations on objects found at great distances from one another, points out to a group identity with which the deceased associated. Thus, we underline the definition of individual identity through a special reference to a group identity expressed as a network of significance (*Thomas, 1996: 159*) made of iconographical symbols circulated on large distances.

The assemblage of discoveries from **Băiceni–Cucuteni–Cotnari** is an interesting example as how cultural models of expressing prestige identity circulate on large distances. In the nowadays Northern Moldova<sup>9</sup>, 400 km from the Danube, the archaeologists found close to one another, a hoard, a tumuli necropolis and a fortification with stone walls, remains which document the existence in the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC of a North-Thracian authority center. The hoard from **Băiceni–Laiu** (*Petrescu-Dâmbovița, 1966; Petrescu-Dâmbovița, Dinu, 1975; Berciu, 1969: 150-151; Petrescu-Dâmbovița, 1995*) contained 70 entire or fragmentary gold objects, more than 2 kg in weight (Fig. 13). The hoard included a parade helmet decorated with specific representations (a man sitting on a throne and holding in his hands a *rhyton* and a *phiale*/bird; a scene representing a *bucranium* surrounded by serpents; winged griffons), a spiraled bracelet with the final parts representing horse skulls with ram horns, fragments of a necklace and harness appliqués decorated with zoomorphic motifs<sup>10</sup>. The symbolic scenes and motifs, the general artistic style in which the pieces were

<sup>9</sup> This region is characterized during this time by a material culture very similar with the discoveries from the Lower Danube. The statistical analysis did not consider the funerary discoveries belonging to this space.

<sup>10</sup> The hoard was discovered in 1959. Subsequent excavations (*M. P. Dâmbovița and M. Dinu in 1961*) indicated that the hoard was an isolated discovery, which could not be associated with any grave or settlement structure. Taylor (*1986: 50*) interpreted the hoard's structure and items' iconography as signs that the artifacts belonged originally to the funerary inventory set of a rich burial, possible destroyed by modern interventions or looted from a rich grave in ancient times and reburied. Taylor chronologically situated it after 350 BC (*Taylor, 1986: 50*); Berciu (*1969: 151*) considered it an earlier lot (like the *Poiana Coțofenești* golden helmet) belonging to the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. Petrescu-Dâmbovița and Dinu (*1975: 105-123*) established the chronology of the *Băiceni* hoard around the year 400 BC. However, Alexandrescu (*1988: 117*), considering some details of decoration style and motifs (*bucranium* superposed by a garland on the left chick covering – Fig. 13.3 and *palmette* on the neck covering), offered a considerably later chronology, around the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC by drawing attention to Greek analogies. In our opinion, the hoard can be dated sometimes after the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.

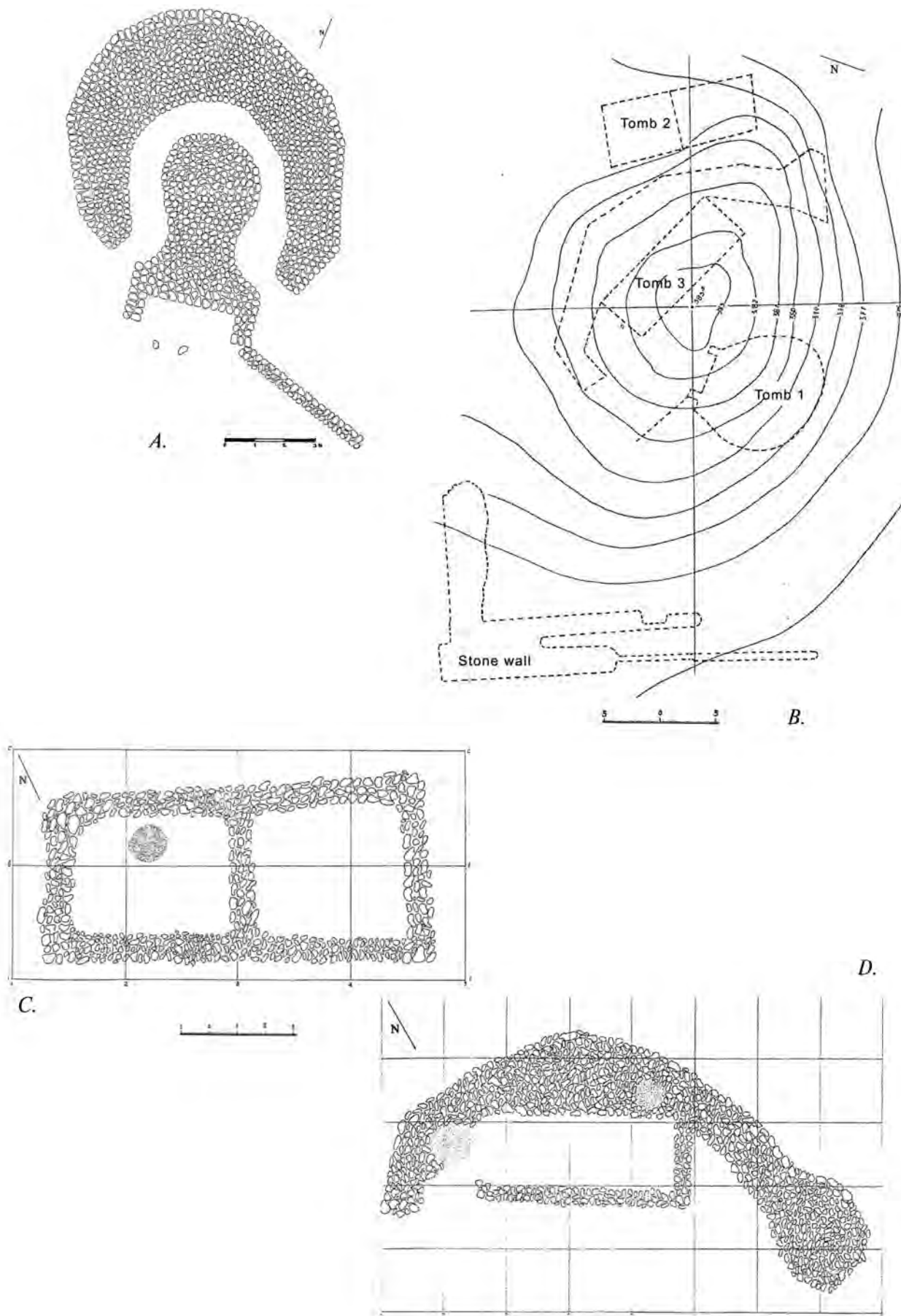
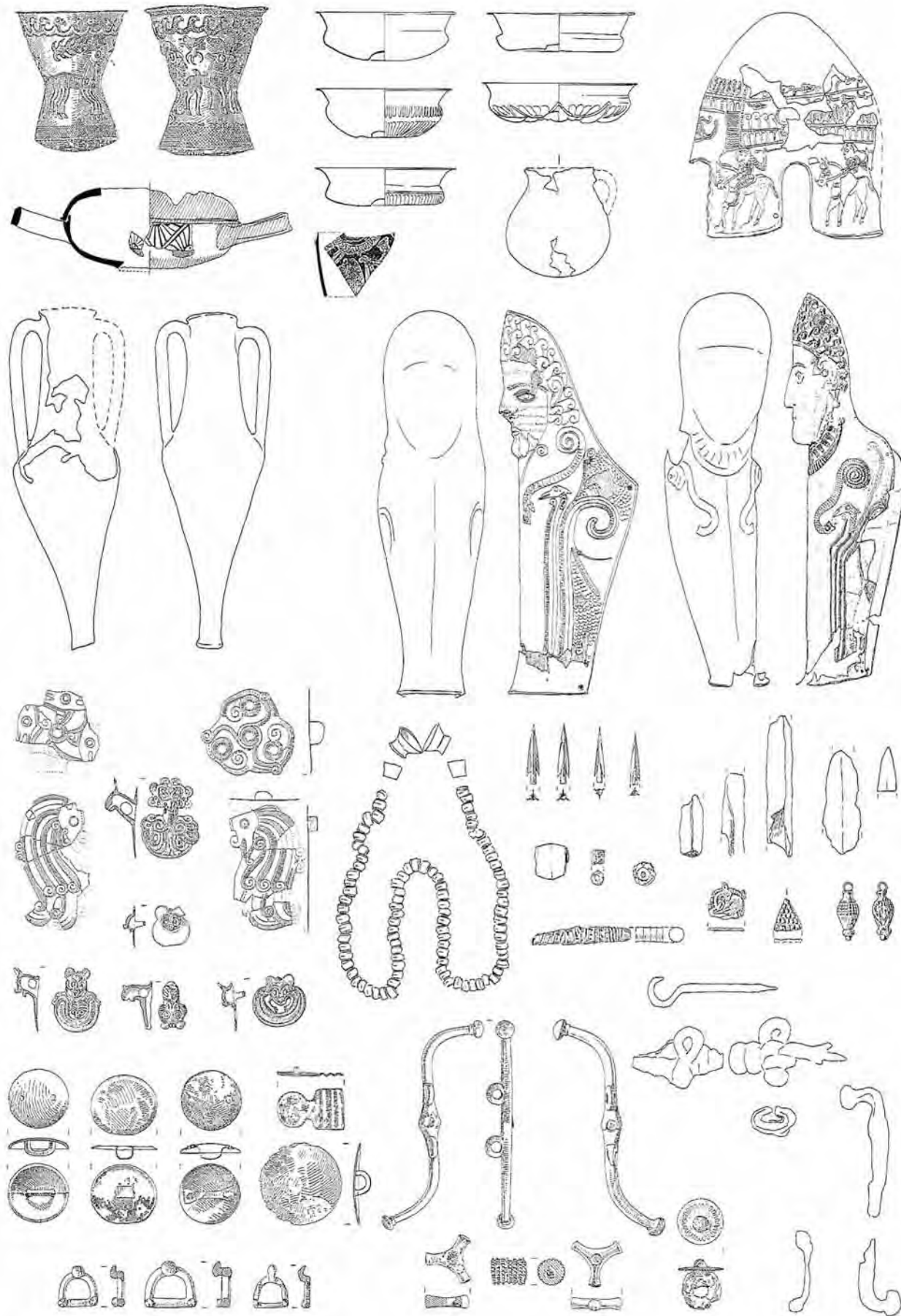


Fig. 07. The funerary mound *Mogilanskata Mogila* – Vratsa, Bulgaria. Funerary structure. A. Tomb 1. B. Mound plan. C. Tomb 2. D. Tomb 3 (after Torbov, 2005: 21, 23, 19, 15, fig. 3, 5, 1, 2).



438 Fig. 08. Agighiol. Grave goods (after Kull, 1997: 246, abb. 24).



crafted, the functional type of items, which were included in this hoard, link them implicitly with the North-Thracian art and aristocratic ideology. However, the hoard reflects in the same time, influences of the Scythian animal style or even the importation of genuine Scythian items (for example the rectangular shaped appliqué – Fig. 13.4).

What gives significance to these isolated items is the documentation in the area of the hoard, of the funerary behavior typical for the North-Thracians living on the northern slopes of the Balkans and around the Danube. At 1,5 km south of the hoard's discovery point, a tumuli necropolis was researched, on top of **Gosan Hill** (*Dinu, 1995: 103-126*) in the nearby of **Cucuteni** village, Iassy County). The largest mound had 3,3 m in height and 35 m in diameter. It was located in the highest point of the necropolis hill. The mound embankment is made of stone slabs, which covered an inner construction made of ashlar<sup>11</sup>, rectangular, with rounded corners, 10 x 6,5 m (measured inside) with an opening in the southeastern side similar to a *dromos* 1,6 m wide and 2 m long (Fig. 12). The walls measured 1-2 m in width and 3,5 m in height. The structure was erected directly on the natural stone covering of the hill, after a previously leveling. Stone slabs covered the floor. Inside the construction, there were discovered four incineration graves. In one case, the cremation remains lay in a central rectangular large pit and in three other cases, on stone platforms, above the stone covering of the first grave. The graves were furnished with silver pendants, glass beads and ceramic shards, some of Greek provenience. One could date the pendants in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, general chronology suggested by the discovered Thasian amphorae fragments.

The symbolic iconography, the composition of the hoard and moreover, the funerary rituals documented in the area (stone constructions kept open under tumuli, in which multiple funerary depositions occurred during a certain period of time), suggest that the ruling elite members from **Băiceni–Cucuteni–Cotnari** used to represent themselves through cultural models similar to those documented in **Vratsa, Agighiol** or **Sveshtari**. In this particular case, the source of cultural reflection should be however, approached gradually as the presence of Scythian influences cannot be excluded<sup>12</sup>.

The until now-made presentation of the mound graves from **Agighiol, Peretu** and **Vratsa – Mogilanskata Mogila** and their integration in a cultural and historical context describe a complex picture of the barbarian space between Balkans and Carpathians, in the 4<sup>th</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC. The composition of this picture defines itself through refined mechanisms of expressing social identity inside a stratified society, which experiences change and evolution towards archaic forms of pre-state organization. We approached the social persona of the deceased, through the lens of funerary archaeology, considering the tumuli graves as the most visible expression of a marked social identity (*Wells, 1998*). We described the North-Thracian mound grave phenomenon from the beginning of the second Iron Age with the help of a statistical analysis. Thus, we noticed the existence of a preeminent identity group, whose main attribute gravitates around the prestige military image. The analysis indicated us further a chronological evolution<sup>13</sup> of the archaeological expression of this social identity in tumuli graves. Inside this warriors' group we succeeded to individualize a sub-group of persons, which stand out through their excessive use of

<sup>11</sup> Even if the author of the excavations considered it an «enclosure», we regard it as a construction covered with a wooden roof, a primitive funerary chamber, type well known in the North-Thracian world. As the multiple discovered cremation graves suggest, the chamber was kept open for a while, time during which several individuals were deposited inside at different moments.

<sup>12</sup> Regarding the subject of cultural interferences and decorated items, an interesting case to mention, is that of the craftsman's moulds, found in the district of **Varna** (*Minchev, 2004: 53-90*). One of them represents decorative motifs specific to Scythian art style (*Minchev, 2004: 76, fig. 15-16*) (a rapacious bird's leg or a griffin's head) datable in the 6<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC in the regions of southern Russia and Ukraine.

<sup>13</sup> Taking into consideration the important historical events, which took place in the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC in the Balkan Peninsula, the temptation to associate the social changes with them is rather great. As the complexity of the imposed methodological approach in this case would require, the authors express their intention to deal with this subject in a further study.

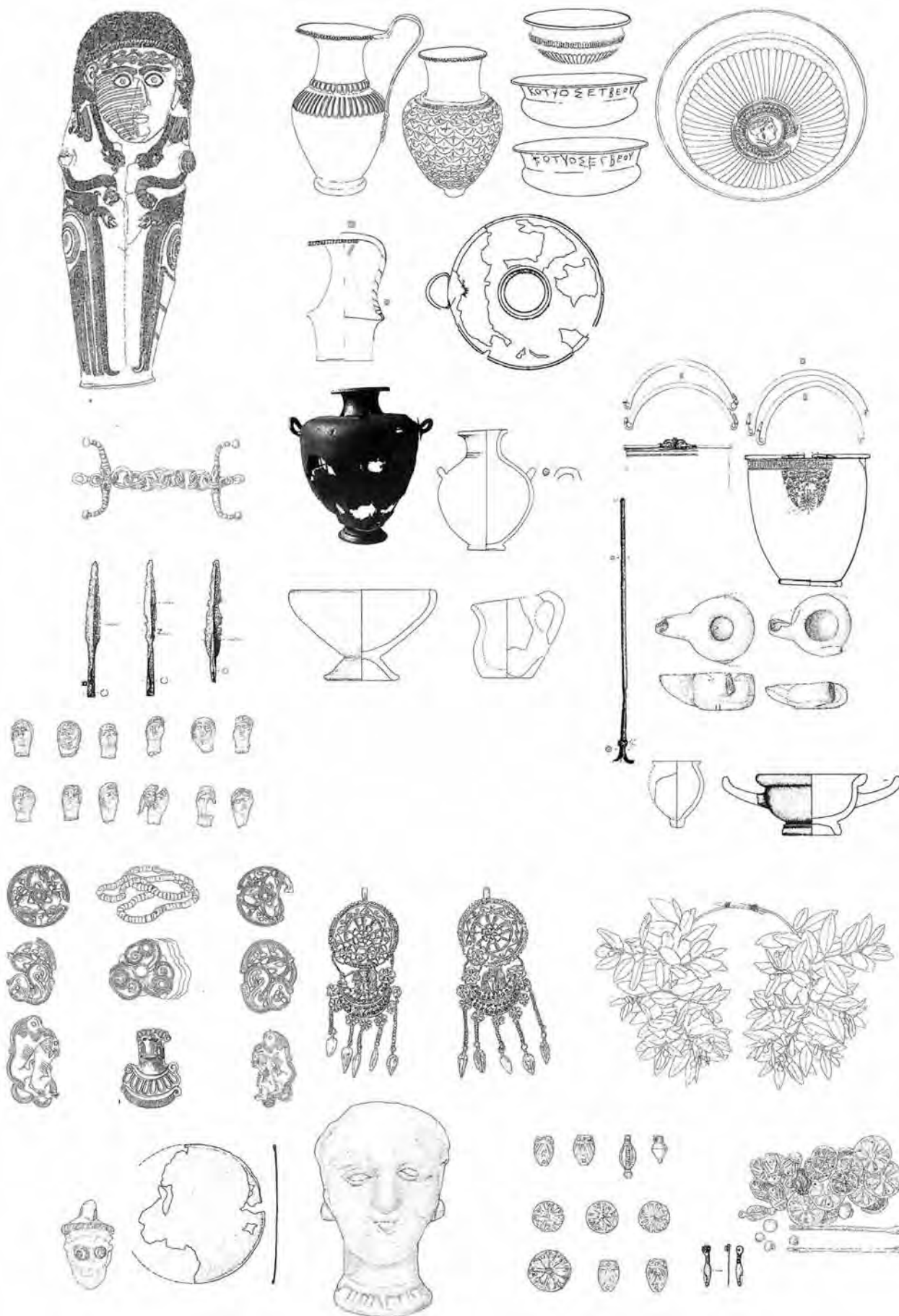


Fig. 10. *Mogilanskata Mogila* – Vratsa, Tomb 2. Grave goods (after Kull, 1997: 249-251, abb. 27a, b, c).

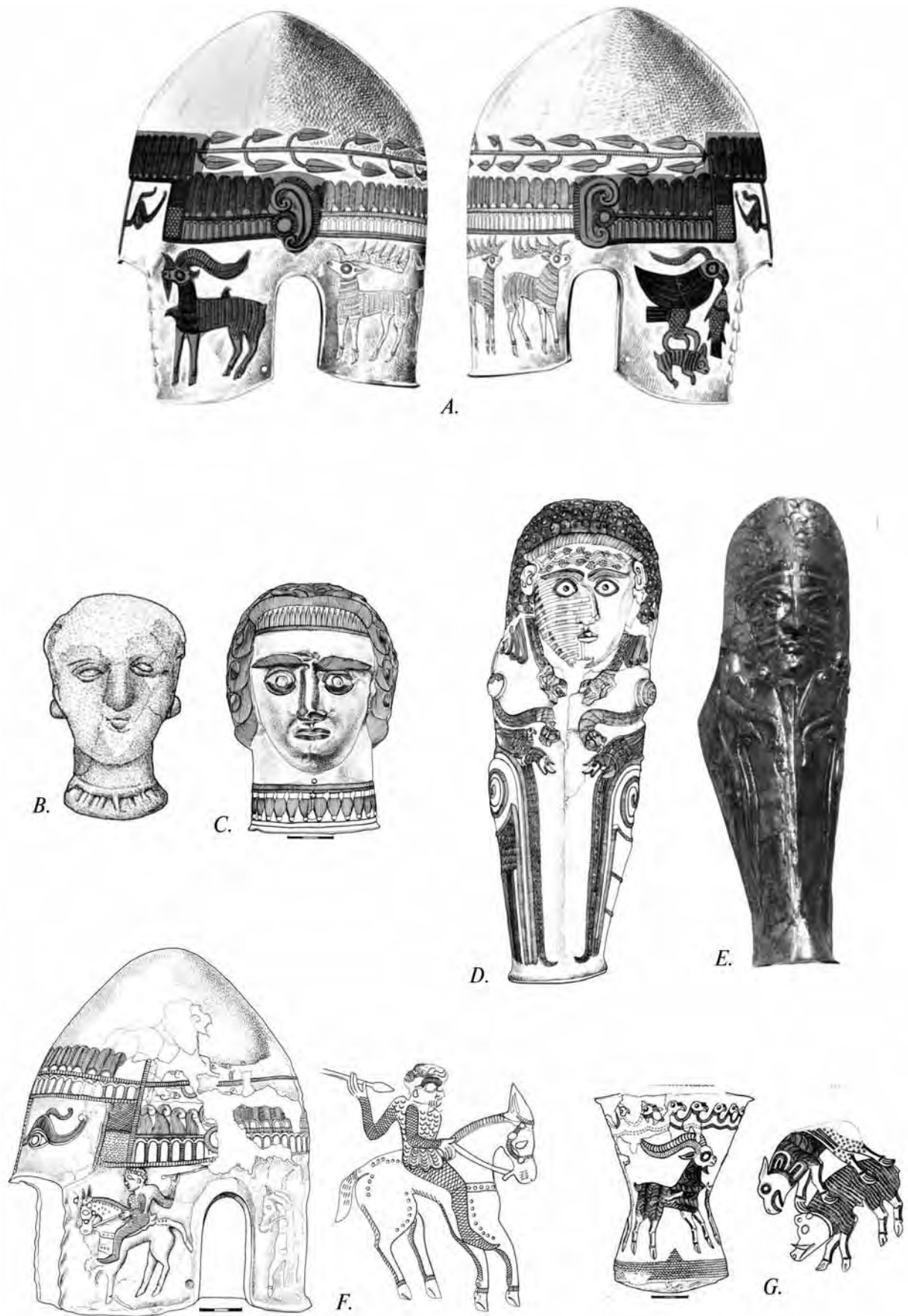


Fig. 11. Ceremonial equipment with examples of typical iconography.

A. Helmet from Peretu. B. Human head (ceramic) from Vratsa Tomb 2. C. Human head (silver) from Peretu. D. Greave from Vratsa Tomb 2. E. Greave from Agighiol. F. Helmet from Agighiol. G. Goblet from Agighiol.



identitary signs and prestige markers. Agighiol, Peretu and Vratsa represent the most striking examples of using this behavior.

### **What might be the conditions that triggered this phenomenon? Stratified societies: residential centers – tumuli – hoards**

The organization patterns displayed inside the North-Balkan societies, after the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, must have been based on a strong social stratification. Seen from an evolutionary perspective, this model of political organization – the stratified society, precedes the archaic stages of state structure, but defines more complex models than those typical for tribal societies or chiefdoms (Kristiansen, 2005: 237)<sup>14</sup>. This phenomenon is not exclusively an attribute of the presently analyzed space<sup>15</sup>. We may recognize the mark of the stratified societies in the exhibition of differences in status, population density in settlements, settlements hierarchies, and use of luxurious items. Consequently, we suppose that the identitary expressions of these societies should reflect great differences in status. Burials as identitary statements would represent a materialization of these social differences.

Beginning with the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, in the region between Balkans, Carpathians and the Black Sea, specific authority clusters appeared. We may consider them as a «meaningful trinity» displaying power and wealth: residential fortified centers, tumuli graves and rich hoards (Sîrbu, Trohani, 1997: 512-539). Examples are known in central and southern Oltenia, where there were discovered the strongholds from Coțofenii din Dos (Zirra et al. 1993: 79-157) and Bâzdâna (Tătulea, 1983: 218-221), the graves from Cernele and the «Craiova» hoard. In central and southern Walachia there were discovered the strongholds from Albești, Orbeasca de Sus (Moscalu, Beda, 1979: 368-370) and the graves from Peretu and Fântânele (Mateescu, Babeș, 1968: 283-291), also the fortified center from Căscioarele-D'aia parte (Sîrbu, 1994: 25-45) and the Chirnogi rich burial (Șerbănescu, 1999: 231-249). In northern Dobrogea there are known the

strongholds from Beștepe and Beidaud (Simion, 1977: 31-47; Simion, Lăzurcă, 1980: 37-54) and the Agighiol tomb, and in northern Moldova the fortress from Cotnari (Florescu, 1971: 110-116), Cucuteni tumuli and Băiceni hoard. The construction of fortification walls using bricks at Coțofenii din Dos and Bâzdâna, or polished stone blocks as in the case of Căscioarele-D'aia parte, points to the implementation of construction technologies typical to southern Mediterranean civilizations.

Certainly, the most impressive concentration of representative tombs is in the Sboryanovo-Sveshtari zone: a residential center (Hellenistic-type city, walls and buildings made of stone, streets, a rich and varied inventory and many southern imports), three necropolises, containing more than 100 tumuli (under some of them, there were buildings made of stone, with sliding doors, bas-reliefs and paintings, horse sacrifices) and cult places, such as at *Kamen Rid* and *Demir Baba Teke* (Stoyanov, Mihaylova, Nikov, Nikolaeva, Stoyanova, 2006; Gergova, 2004: 42-47). It is beyond any doubt that, between 350-275/250 BC, the most important power center of the Getae (between the Balkans and the Carpathian) functioned here and some of their dynasts have been buried in the same place. As far as their dimensions are concerned, the largest tumulus, *Goljamata Mogila* (Great Sveshtari Tumulus) has 60 m of diameter, on more than 3000 sqm of surface, 14 m of height and 16000 m<sup>3</sup> of volume.

### **Cultural models between center and peripheries**

Social stress situations demanding a higher competition for image, status and authority would lead to exceptional burials. Often, social stress situation is triggered by cultural change as the encountering between two cultures unequal in value may bring. This will lead to imitation of the more complex partner by the other. In this context, ostentatious burials tend to appear at the periphery of powerful cultural and political centers. In an economic-functionalist interpretation, the geographic space between

<sup>14</sup> This evolutionary perspective presents the social and political changes in the following theoretical schema: tribe -> chiefdom -> stratified society -> state.

<sup>15</sup> For Central Europe see Wells (1998), for Serbia Winter, Bankoff (2005: 163-176) and Vasić (1977); for the North-Pontus area see Tsetskhladze (1998).

the Balkans and Carpathian Mountains is a periphery integrated in a superregional system with centers in Greece and afterwards in Macedonia, centers that have the resources to organize an entire mechanism of semi-peripheries, which may in turn, act the role of centers for their own peripheries (*Rowlands, 2005: 214-235*). Acting simultaneous or successively, these semi-peripheries, either the Greek colonies or the Odrysian kingdom, transmit their own models of identity expression, which overlap these previously functional models. An enhancement and distortion of the original message accompany often the embracing in the peripheries of dominant models (*Kossack, 1998: 13-37*).

### Peering relations

Asymmetric relations specific to systems regionally integrated in relations center – semi-periphery – periphery, do not represent the single type of relations, which organize this space (*R. Chapman, 2003; T. C. Chapman, 2005*). With the same intensity must have had functioned peering relations inside societies with relatively equal status (*Binford, 1972: 208-251; Renfrew, 1986: 1-18; Babić, 2002: 70-88*). Nevertheless, these peering relations allowed the circulation on large distances, not only of items, gifts, but also of ideas and cultural models. In this way, they facilitated the mixture and interference of artistic ideas visible in the decoration and iconography of the artifacts deposited in graves<sup>16</sup>. Circulated cultural models included the representation of high status warriors in impressive burials.

We would like to illustrate succinctly this phenomenon by attempting a comparison of the main features characterizing the «princely» graves of the North-Thracians and North-Pontus Scythians, and thus to highlight equally, the similarities and differences between them<sup>17</sup>. One could date the most impressive graves of both Scythians and North-Thracian communities in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, especially in its second half (*Boltrik, Fialko, 1995*).

The «princely» Scythian tumuli graves are grouped on both banks of the Lower Dnieper, in the nearby of a crossing point. This was likewise the location of the strategic fortified settlement from Kamenka (*Grakov, 1954*). North to it, there were found among others, the impressive tumuli from Alexandropol' (*Drevnosti gerodotovoi Skifii, 1866*), Chertomlyk (*Alexeev, Murzin, Rolle, 1991*), Tolstaya Moghila (*Mozolevskiy, 1979*), and, in its southern parts, the tumuli from Soloha (*Mancevič, 1987*), Melitopol (*Terenožkin, Mozolevskiy, 1988*), Deev (*Alekseev, 1992*) and Oguz (*Boltrik, Fialko, 1991: 178-180; Fialko, 1994: 122-144*). A specific chronology could be established for some tumuli, on the grounds of the contained Greek amphorae stamps: Soloha (390-375 BC), Chertomlyk (335-325 BC), Kozel (340-320 BC), Deev (around 330 BC), Oguz (340-330 BC), Alexandropol (340-330 BC). Although earth, vegetal and wood served commonly as raw construction materials, the resulting structures were quite impressive. They contained: catacombs, dromoi, funerary chambers and annexes, surrounding ditches and stone rings, embankments measuring huge volumes as in the cases of Kozel – 33000m<sup>3</sup>, Alexandropol – 42000m<sup>3</sup>, Soloha 52000m<sup>3</sup>, Chertomlyk – 82000m<sup>3</sup> and Oguz – 117000m<sup>3</sup> (*Boltryk, Fialko, 1994: 49-52*). The typical feminine inventory included dress accessories (frequently appliqués), adornments (earrings, bracelets, pendants, and torques), toilet sets, utensils (needles, spindles), bells, luxurious vessels, funerary charts. The male graves were furnished with offensive weapons (arrowheads and quiver, spearheads, *akinakai*, knives), defensive weapons (helmets, greaves), ceremonial items (breastplates), luxurious vessels (*Meljukova, 1979; Stepi evropejskoj časti SSSR... 1989; Stepnaja polosa Aziatskoj časti SSSR... 1992*). In the majority of the cases, the significant furniture was not discovered alongside the deceased, but deposited in distinct rooms, sometimes in hidden niches.

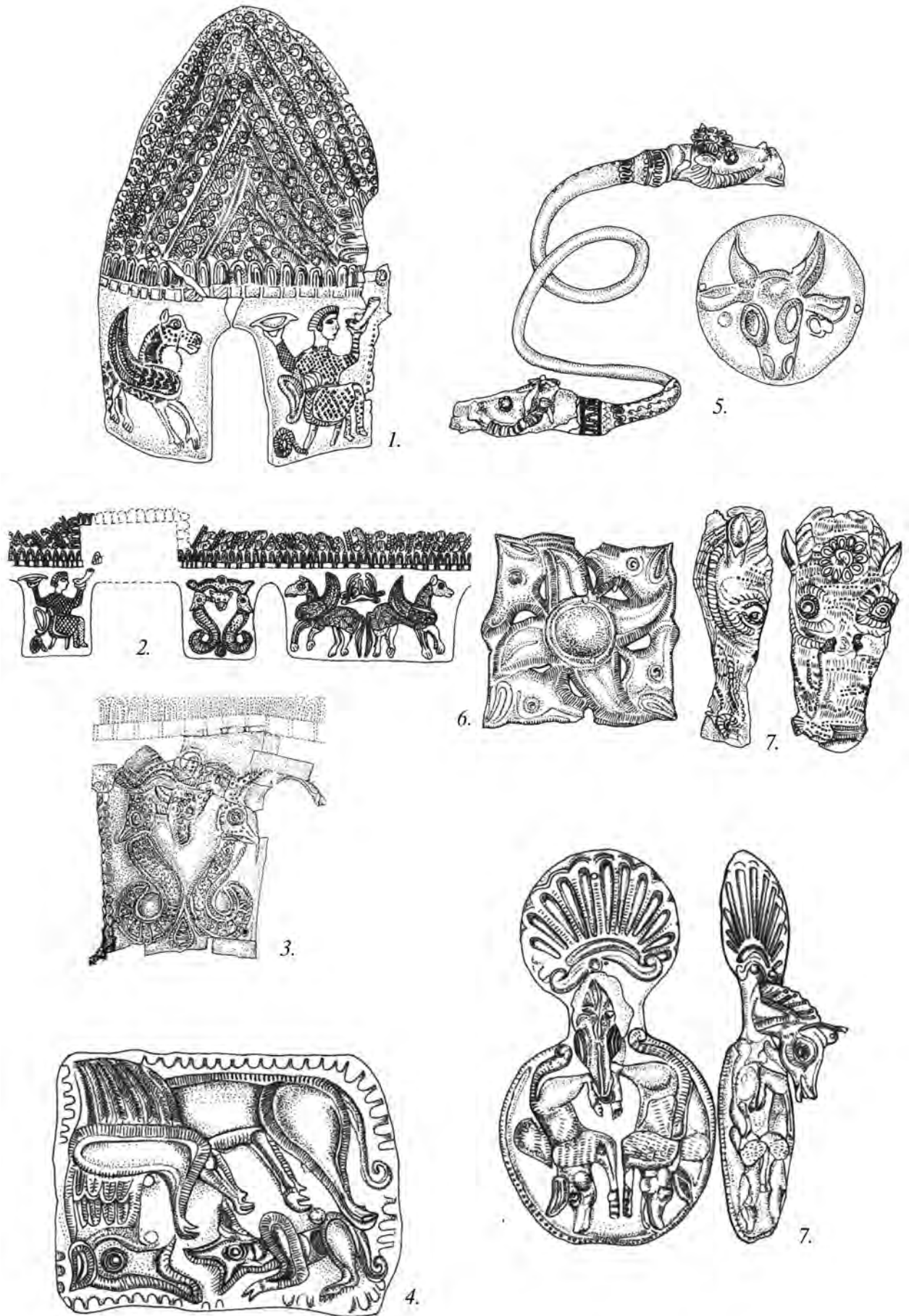
One may see a similar concentration of tumuli in the North-Thracian space in the region

<sup>16</sup> An interesting observation is made by Alexandrescu (*1988: 113-114*) who noted that the helmet's artisan, when representing the Greek model of *bucranium* with garlands, because he did not know what was the real functionality of the garlands during the Greek customs of decorating the bulls taken to sacrificing, created the garlands as arches not like falling dawn pieces of cloth.

<sup>17</sup> We are going to publish later an extensive study regarding this subject.



Fig. 12. The stone construction from Cucuteni–Gosan, Tumulus 3. A. Drawing after Dinu, 1995: 121, fig. 2. B. Photograph of the actual state of preservation of the tomb, inside a museum.



446 Fig. 13. Items from the Băiceni Hoard (after *Petrescu-Dâmbovița*, 1995: 179-184, fig. 1-6).

of Sbornyanovo—Sveshtari, on the banks of the river Krapinetz. In this place, there are more than 100 tumuli grouped in three necropolises, among which 20 were excavated, providing essential information regarding the funerary practices and mentalities of the Getae aristocracy (Gergova, 1996). The Getae dynasts and aristocrats probably began the building of their funerary monuments during their lives. The elaborate architecture, sculptures and paintings were impossible to realize in the short period between the death and deposition of the individuals. Certainly, the most magnificent construction is at *Ginina Mogila* (Fol, Chichikova, Ivanov, Teofilov, 1986). The presence of uncovered facades and sliding doors confirm the repeated entrances in the tomb. In addition, the discovery of merely parts of skeletons, sometimes mixed with animal bones or with funerary items, suggest the practicing of complex rituals implying sacrifices and repeated exposing of the deceased in open air (Gergova, 1996: 129-140). The fact that in some graves there were multiple skeletons (for example six individuals in *Ginina Mogila*) may imply their use as family tombs for some ruling families. The anthropological structure of the group of dead humans and horses (gender, age and state of preservation) which could not be solely the result of a sacrifice sustains this possibility.

Differences between the dimensions of tumuli and funerary chambers, the presence of painted or sculptured scenes, the quality and quantity of the grave goods, indicate differences in social and political status between the deceased. These graves may represent the burial place of court elite.

The typical items for the Scythian elite were the pole-tops surmounted with sculptured heads, double axes, *akinakai*, mirrors, combs, breastplates and spherical vessels. Those typical for the Thracian elite were helmets, greaves, rings, goblets, *rhyta*, *phialae* and jugs.

Differences appear in the iconography as well. Scythian iconography included hunting scenes, combat scenes, everyday life scenes, honoring deities' scenes. They appeared on pectorals, *gorytoi*, *akinakai* scabbards, *torques*, combs and spherical vessels. The main North-Thracian iconography subjects were the hunting scenes, the horsemen, enthroned men, libation scenes, apotropaic eyes, the animals

procession, scenes in which a female character greets a horseman (Berciu, 1969; Alexandrescu, 1983: 45-66; 1984: 85-97; Kull, 1997: 200-466; Marazov, 2005; Sirbu, Florea, 2000; Sirbu, 2006: 87-114). These representations appeared usually on helmets, greaves, goblets, harness appliquéés, *rhyta* and jugs.

The Scythian bestiary included traditional animals (the panther surrounded by a circle, the sitting deer, the boar, the head of a rapacious bird) and fantastic animals (sphinx or gryphon, results of influences from Central Asia) (Grakov, 1971; *Scythian Art*, 1986; Raevskyi, 1993; Schiltz, 1994). The tumulus from Kelermes, dated in the 6<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> BC, is one of the significant monuments of the early Scythian art (Galanina, 1997). The art of these nomads favored fluidity against static images, thus expressing the will to open the shape of the surrounding immensity, instead of protecting it, as the sedentary people usually did.

The presence of Scythians in the Lower Danube area in the 6<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC resulted undoubtedly in reciprocal influences and exchanges with the local populations, especially at the level of elite members. This is the case of the Ciulnița grave equipped with an interesting wood construction, dated in the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC (Marinescu-Bâlcu, Rența, Matei, 2000: 149-165) and as well, of the tumuli graves from Scorțaru Vechi (Pârvan, 1926: 9-11) and Chiscani (Sirbu, 1983: 25-29), datable in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. All these graves were discovered in the Danube Plain signifying a possible Scythian ethnic presence in the region (Sirbu, 1983: 11-41). Moreover, the emblem-sword from Medgidia (Berciu, 1969a: 18-32) or the moulds from Gărcinovo or Varna (Minchev, 2004) attest the presence of items decorated in an animal style since the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. Thracian items circulated in the North-Pontus Scythian environment as well: for example, the harness pieces from Oguz (Fialko, 1995: 133-147) and the *rhyton* from Merdjani (Marazov, 1975: 214-224).

As we presented here, one may identify significant differences in the funerary phenomenon between Scythians and North-Thracians, regarding architecture, inventory and iconography, due to their distinct historical and mythological evolution. In the same time, the use of similar cultural models, concerning warrior status becomes obvious.

## Historical Context

Stratified societies, political centers reflecting cultural models circulated through peering relations, all this may represent merely the general conditions, which could generate a distinct funerary expression of the aristocratic elite. However, as noted in different regions and for different historical epochs, the exhibition of status in burial practice does not coincide chronologically with the period of domination of one social group or community (Kossack, 1998). This may signify that, only in certain circumstances, the elite chose to represent themselves, in an exacerbating manner. In fact, this assumption corresponds with the statistical analysis, which pointed up to a rather smaller chronological framework to which the lavish burials belonged. In addition, the statistical analysis indicated that the stratified society existed all along in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (the consistent warrior burials sample suggests the manifestation of a clearly defined aristocratic social group<sup>18</sup>).

Greek and Balkan armor pieces had appeared north of the Danube since the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (Gumă, 1991: 85-103; Medeleț, Cediciă, 2004: 97-100), increasing in number in the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC – see the cases of Zimnicea (Alexandrescu, 1980: 20, fig. 65), Făcău (Constantiniu, Leahu, 1968: 195-209) or Găvani (Șirbu, Harțuche 2000: 139-140, fig. 2, 8/a). This archaeological reality corresponds to the political situation known from written sources. The extension of the Macedonian Kingdom includes in its system of relations, more and more communities and social-ethnic groups from the Balkan region. Involved in diplomatic exchanges or military campaigns, due to alliances or as mercenaries, a growing number of individuals had access to special items and familiarized themselves with the identity models of elite representation. In the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, changes in the funerary practices took place (probably because of certain transformations in the political and religious domain). Among these, we noticed a diminishing of using the model of

prestige enhancement or a retrenchment of access to the items that expressed the prestige. At the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and later, we date the ostentatious complexes from Agighiol, Vratsa and Branichevo TX M01, Vurbitsa, and the less spectacular graves from Găvani (Harțuche, 1985: 25-70; Șirbu, Harțuche, 2000: 139-153) and Telița. Perhaps the wealth (and implicitly, the authority and prestige attributes) was gathered again in the hands of local princes, who were fewer and located further away from each other; on the other hand, one may assume, for the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, an enlargement of warrior elite's group, inside which, the status differences were not so significant. Furthermore, beginning with the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, we date the tombs, north of the Balkans (built from polished stones with funerary elaborated architecture) which can be associated with funerary rituals that do not produce deceased and grave goods in a classic fashion: Sveshtari (Gergova, 1996), Borovo (Stančev, 1994: 173-178), Yankovo (Dremiszova, 1955: 61-83). Instead, they reveal the enhancement the cult of the dynast took in that time (the association with a *heros*), possible indicating the same phenomenon of change emergent in the political and religious structures<sup>19</sup>.

## Conclusions

The ostentatious burials from Agighiol, Peretu and Vratsa – *Mogilanskata Mogila* do not represent accidental occurrences in the North-Thracian funerary phenomenon of the 5<sup>th</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC. Instead, they can be associated with the pattern of a group of graves, dated after the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, characterized by a variety of deposited grave goods and representative (but not elaborate) architecture. These graves appeared on a general background of decline of the funerary warrior status in the northern periphery of the important political and cultural centers of the day.

They stand for a high degree of stratification inside North-Thracian societies (Getae or

<sup>18</sup> In addition, we mention the large flat necropolises excavated in the Lower Danube area Zimnicea (Alexandrescu 1980: 19-126), Stelnică (Conovici, Matei 1999: 99-144), Enisala (Simion 1971: 63-129) and the fortifications from Căscioarele, Albești and others, which indicate the existence of a stratified society, open to southern influences.

<sup>19</sup> The Sboryanovo case sustains even more the idea of a political capital of that time as the fortified city with Hellenistic type walls surrounded by several tumuli necropolises suggest.

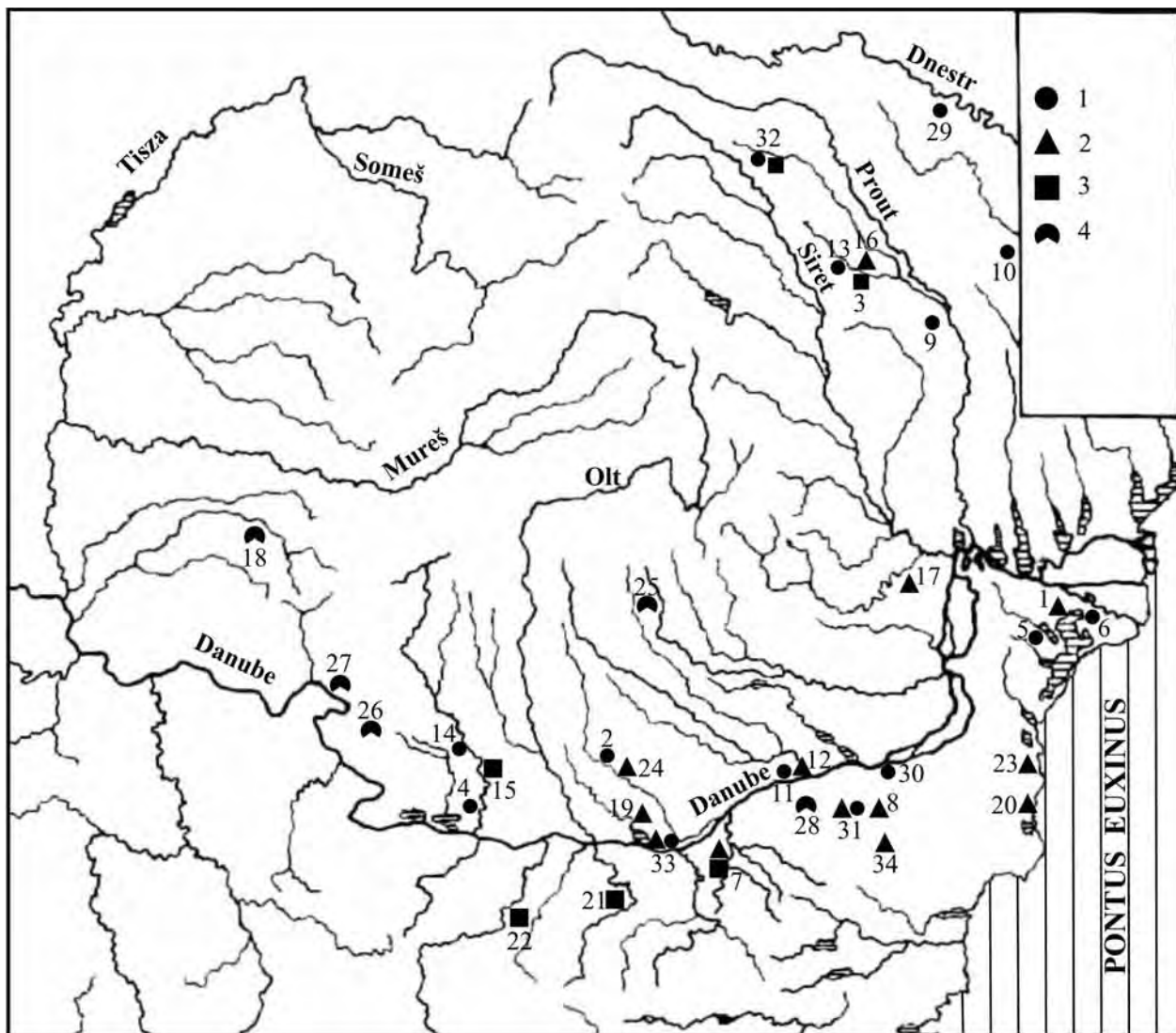


Fig. 14. Main residential centers, tombs and treasures from the Getic world (4<sup>th</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC).

Legend: 1 – residential centers, 2 – tumular tombs, 3 – treasures, 4 – isolated figurative items.

List of localities: 1 – Agighiol, 2 – Albești, 3 – Băiceni, 4 – Bâzdâna, 5 – Beidaud, 6 – Beștepe, 7 – Borovo, 8 – Branicevo, 9 – Bunești-Averești, 10 – Butuceni, 11 – Căscioarele, 12 – Chirnogi, 13 – Cotnari, 14 – Coțofenii din Dos, 15 – Craiova, 16 – Cucuteni, 17 – Găvani, 18 – Găvojdia, 19 – Fântânele, 20 – Kavarna, 21 – Letnica, 22 – Lukovit, 23 – Mangalia, 24 – Peretu, 25 – Poiana-Coțofenești, 26 – Poroina, 27 – «Porțile de Fier», 28 – Razgrad, 29 – Saharna, 30 – Satu Nou, 31 – Sboryanovo–Sveshtari, 32 – Stănțești, 33 – Zimnicea, 34 – Zlokucene.

Triballoi) and may be the reflection of a certain moment in time, when the social stress grew as caused by deep cultural-political change.

The expression of individual identity as inferred in the funerary assemblages of Agighiol, Peretu and Vratsa – *Mogilanskata Mogila* was defined in the limit of cultural models of high status exhibition, common in vast spaces of the *oikumena* (males represented as warriors, hunters, members of *symposia* rituals, owners of luxurious, imported items). The imitation of models took place with distortions and particular reinterpretations of values.

However, the symbolic iconography used in the decoration of individual property of the dead, emphasizes the ideological implications of elite identities in the North-Thracian area, and therefore, points up to a high degree of originality in the interpretation of the multiple foreign influences. The homogeneity of this symbolic decoration found on items located at considerable distances from one another, designates during a certain period, the intensification of peering relations between communities and the development of a network of significance between their high status members.

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### Abbreviations

- Analele Banatului – Analele Banatului. Serie Nouă, Arheologie – Istorie, Muzeul Banatului, Timișoara.
- Archaeologia Bulgarica – Archaeologia Bulgarica, Sofia
- ArheologijaSofia – Arheologija na Muzeite i Institut Arheologij, Sofia
- ArhMold – Arheologia Moldovei, Institutul de Arheologie, Iași
- BAR – British Archaeological Reports, Oxford
- BerRGK – Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission der Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Frankfurt am Main
- BulletinVarna – Bulletin du Musée de Varna

- Cercetări Arheologice – Cercetări Arheologice, Muzeul Național de Istorie a României, București
- CercetIst – Cercetări Istorice, Muzeul Național al Moldovei, Iași
- Dacia – Dacia. (Nouvelle Série). Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne, Institutul de Arheologie «V. Pârvan», Bucurest
- EJA – European Journal of Archaeology, Norfolk, United Kingdom
- EphNap – Ephemeris Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca
- Istros – Istros, Muzeul Brăilei, Brăila
- IzvestijaSofia – Izvestija na Arheologhičeski Institut, Sofia.
- MCA – Materiale și cercetări arheologice, București
- Mortality – Mortality, Boston, USA
- OxfJournArchaeology – Oxford Journal of Archaeology, Oxford
- Peuce – Peuce, Institutul de Cercetări Eco-Muzeale, Tulcea
- Pontica – Pontica, Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie, Constanța
- Pulpudeva – Académie Bulgare des Sciences – Institut de Thracologie, Sofia
- Revista Bistriței – Revista Bistriței, Muzeul Județean Bistrița-Năsăud, Bistrița
- Rossiskaja Arheologija – Rossiskaja Archeologija, Moskva
- RPAN – Revista de Preistorie și Antichități Naționale, București
- SCIV(A) – Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie), Institutul de Arheologie «V. Pârvan», București.
- Starini – Starini. Journal of Balkan Archaeology, Sofia
- Studia Thracia – Studia Thracia, Institute of Thracology, Sofia
- StAntArchaeologica – Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica, Universitatea «Al. I. Cuza», Iași
- Thraco-Dacica – Thraco-Dacica. Institutul Român de Tracologie, București