

INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN THRACIANS AND GREEKS IN INNER THRACE DURING THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

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From several written reports, most notably from Xenophon's *Anabasis*, we are informed about the social system of the Odrysian empire, but less has been known as yet about the archaeological traces of structure of interrelations in interior Thrace. The project of excavations in the site of Adjijska Vodenitsa near Vetren concentrated mainly in the excavations of the Greek emporion, known by its inscription, fortifications and the hoard of nearly 600 coins of Lysimachus and other diadochs, included also examination of the broader area. The complex project investigated various kinds of evidence - of local and imported pottery, coins, inscriptions and graffiti, metal objects and architecture as well (esp. Bouzek, Domaradzki, Archibald 1997; Bouzek, Domaradzka, Archibald 2002).

The site lies on the Maritsa river and with all probability it was apparently the last river harbour for small boats, before entering the point, when the Haemus ridge and the Rhodopes close the westernmost end of the Thracian plain, at the westernmost border of the Odrysian territory (Fig. 1). While the heavier Greek goods came where? apparently the river for heavy loads ends? and the paths across the Rhodopes were rather for pack animals, traces of wheels of carts at the eastern gate of the city show that even this kind of transport was common. The position of Pistiros enabled also trade links with the kingdom of the Triballoi (cf. esp. Domaradzki 2000).

Even more important than trade with fine Greek goods, however, were metal ores: iron, copper and gold were available in the vicinity of Pistiros. Crucibles, tuyères, moulds, punches and even miscast objects found in the emporion attest local production of metal objects; Pistiros was apparently one of the places in which even Thracian toreutics were made.

The well-known Vetren tomb is one of the earliest Thracian tombs in dressed hard stone and it displays traces of working technique identical with that of the Pistiros city wall. Maybe a friendly paradynast invited Greek settlers here, as did king Hyblon the settlers of Megara Hyblaea in Sicily. The leading emporitai were Greeks, but many Thracians lived there, as shown by the clay altars well known e.g. from Seuthopolis, and by the Thracian type of loom-weights made by local women and by Thracian names on graffiti (Fig. 6).

The fortification of Pistiros, much resembling those of Thasos and Samothrace, was built in the third quarter of the 5th century B.C in a place apparently known before, as we have some finds of Greek pottery here dating from the first half of the 5th century B.C. (Fig. 3). The foundation of the emporion dates shortly after the defeat of Thasos by the Athenians, so it may be a project of refugees, but fragments of Panathenaic amphorae from mid 5th century, with interesting graffiti (Fig. 6), show that even this class of pottery was available here. The city has the usual plan with division into *kleroi*, streets and blocks of houses, much resembling those of Olynthus (Fig. 3, detail of paving of porticus; Fig. 4, fortification cf. Bouzek et alii 2002).

The city was first destroyed in the 80's – 70's of the 4th century, probably by Kotys; then the fortification of the emporion was partly dismantled and a treaty between the emporitai and the Thracian king was closed for mutual benefit. Its copy on stone has been found reused (as many other stones from Pistiros) in the Roman road station Bona Mansio a few kilometres away. The second minor destruction of fortifications was connected with Philip II conquest of Thrace in early forties, but the floruit of the emporion continued, only during the last quarter of the 4th century the city impoverished, probably due to the change of commercial network system under Lysimachus. The great destruction by fire around 300 B.C. was probably caused by the Celts already, and certainly the final one in 279 B.C., well dated by the hoard including the last issues of Lysimachus (Fig. 9), and also by Celtic weapons and by a fibula of late Duchcov type, just characteristic for the time of the Balkan migrations of the Celts (Fig. 10). Later only modest village with metal smelting activity persisted here until the large flooding in the 2nd century B.C., when the place was finally abandoned.

Epigraphic evidence for the presence of Greeks in the 4th c. BC in Adzhiyska Vodenitsa locality is known since the end of the 19th century (Domaradzka 1993, 50-55; Domaradzka 1999, 347-358): two limestone slabs with inscriptions (Dionysios Diotrepheos and Apolloniates have been found by V. Dobruský. In 1990 an inscription was found, dated in the first half of the 4th c. BC., with preserved partonym [in genitive on the second line] Metrophon, known in 5th-4th c. BC Maroneia. Another inscription on granite stele was discovered 2 km south-west from Pistiros, in the Roman road station Lissae, later Bona mansio It contains an agreement of the emporitai with Kotys, confirmed by his successor, most probably Amadokos II (359 and 352 BC). From the text of the Pistiros inscription we know that merchants citizens of Maroneia, Thasos and Apollonia (the daughter city of Thasos or Apollonia Pontica ?) lived in Pistiros and formed a kind of political unit. A recently discovered inscription with text in 2 lines (a part of a Greek personal name), was found during the excavations in 2000. It was probably a grave stele dating from the 4th century BC.

The analysis of the epigraphic material from Pistiros shows the presence of Greeks from Apollonia (Dionysios Diotrepheos Apolloniates), from Maroneia "someone, son of Metrophon") as well as from Thasos, as known from the Pistiros inscription. The data provided by the graffiti (about 200) suggested Greek names as well as Thracian. Thirteen personal names on the graffiti found at the site can be identified as Greek: Athenagores, Antipatros, Delios Philippides, Dionysios, Euktes or Euktemon, Ekataios, Eorte or Eortios, Eroxeinos, Kerdon, Maron, Me(e)jidies, Prillos and five as Thracian: Ebryzelmis, Seuthes MII, Seuthes, Spokes, Tar(sas) or Tar(as) and Seu(thes), Teres. The only graffito inscribed in Doric dialect (Kora) comes from the extramural part of the site (Adjijyska Vodenitsa II), so perhaps the representants of the other Greek poleis (who are not 'syggeneis') had no right to settle down in Pistiros. The graffiti from Pistiros interpreted as dedication to deities relate to Apollo, Demeter, Kora, Hera, Heracles, probably of Magna Mater, the Dactyls and the Kabeiroi. The cult of Dionysos was the unifying element for the both communities, Greeks and Thracians (cf. esp. Domaradzka 2002).

As we know from the Duvanli cemetery and from the Vasil Levski manor house, covered by glazed tiles, presence of Greek traders and craftsmen in Central Thrace south of the Haemus mountains started already in late 6th century B.C., but they became more common in the area in late 5th and 4th century B.C., at the time of the main flourishing of Pistiros. Graves of Greeks and Thracians are known from the surroundings of Pistiros. The funeral inscriptions found at Pistiros suggest an existence of a necropolis used by Hellenic population, while the vaulted tomb near Pistiros and another near Belovo are of the Thracian nobility. The situation of the necropolis (14 mounds dated from the 5th to the 3rd c. BC) in the Ilovitzata locality near the village of Akandzhievo, situated 3 km from Pistiros (Fig. 2) is, however, more complicated; it shows elements characteristic for Greek and Thracian population as well (excavations carried out by N. Gizdova). Graffiti on imported and local wheel-made vessels and the presence of lekythoi in the tombs are unusual elements. Nine of the mounds are from the 5th-4th c. BC, five from the 4th-3rd c. BC; they are synchronous with the existence of Pistiros. Attic pottery is known also from several minor sites around Pistiros; it was apparently available even to small villages in the area.

Several Greek inscriptions and graffiti of 5th – 4th century B.C. are known from other sites in central Thrace; one has been found south of Pistiros at Batkun, the others – south of Plovdiv at Parvenetz and in the Cirpan region. In Parvenetz near Plovdiv a grave stele of Antiphanes, son of Herandros was found, dated to the late 5th - early 4th century B.C. These rare epichoric names, and particularly Herandros, suggest the presence of a citizen of Eretria on the island of Euboea. The latter name is documented only once on Eretria, in an epitaph dating from early 4th century B.C. (Bouzek, Domaradzka 2000; Domaradzka 2002).

The coins found at Pistiros constitute one of the largest collections from systematic excavations in Bulgaria. Coins of all Odrysian rulers are well represented in Pistiros, but those of Greek cities are also common. During the site's earlier commercial history (first half of the fourth century BC), Thasian coins dominated exchanges at Pistiros, alongside those issued by the Thracian rulers. Later the coins from the Propontid they superseded the smaller Thasian denominations, as well as the Silenus and nymph issues. The broad range of contacts enjoyed by Pistiros during the period before and in the first years of Macedonian control over Thrace can be illustrated by examples of coins of Thasos, Parion, the Thracian Chersonese, Ainos, Maroneia, Mesambria Pontica, Kypsela, Sermyle, Damasteion, Kardia. Trade shifted in southeastly direction, towards the Propontid region. Parion was the centre of an active transit trade, while the Thracian Chersonese was a production centre. Its dockyards needed timber that could be supplied from Thrace. Among the coins of the second half of the 4th century BC the largest group consists of hemidrachms issued simultaneously by the Thracian Chersonese and Parion. Coins of the Thracian Chersonese and Parion were found in a good number of hoards concentrated mainly in the Thracian plain, around the middle and upper stream of the rivers Tundzha and Maritsa. This region corresponds to the territorial core of the Odrysian kingdom during the time of Kotys I and his successors. Later the coins of Philip and his successors took the lead, and in early 3rd century the mints of Lysimachus.

Among the trade amphorae, Thasian imports took the lead, but Mende, Ainos, Lesbos, Chios, some minor Aegean centres (Peparetos) and Sinope are also represented. Interesting are especially early Thasian stamps, including those with Satyr head. Fine pottery came mainly from Athens, the series starts in early 5th century, several fragments of Panathenaic amphorae date from mid 5th century (Fig. 6), while late 5th and the whole of the 4th century are well represented (Figs. 7-8). Several fragments of early West Slope came from the last city dating from the first quarter of the 3rd century B.C. Fine glazed pottery from several North Aegean centres came to Pistiros in late 4th and the first decades of the 3rd century, at the time when Attic pottery became less available.

But the trade with the western part of the Odrysian empire and the commercial links with the Tribaloï were not the only phenomena recorded in the materials from the Pistiros excavations. Among the documents of horse equipment there is especially one fragmentary cheek-piece of a bridle found in a 4th century B.C. context, but with earlier parallels, which points towards the north.

Several local schools of Thracian toreutics can be distinguished now; that of the Odrysian centres, of the Triballoï, of the southern and northern Geti, and also one flourishing in the SW corner of Thrace, in the Struma valley near Blagoevgrad (Bouzek, in print). But the decorative parts of horse's harness have much more general distribution, and nearly identical style is known from much larger territory, including most of northern Thrace in Bulgaria, eastern Romania, Moldova and the western Ukraine. One of those is the bronze cheek-piece of bridle, with ram's head, from Pistiros (Fig. 11). These items were apparently cheaper than metal vessels, ritual armour and the best jewellery, and their users were also middle-in-rank members of the military aristocracy, not only the kings and paradynasts. But even more important clue to why the style had such a general distribution seems to be the trade with horses. We know of many authors how good horses played a role of prestige. With Caesar and Diodorus there are notes on the importance of horse trade with the Celts, with Xenophon about the importance of possessing good horses with the Thracians, in other sources there are also records on this Geti and Scythians. Horse breeding was common to all these peoples and the best horses were apparently traded or transported as booty even to distant areas; this may explain also why horse trappings of nearly identical fashion are known from Bulgaria and Moldova as well.

The second parallel phenomenon joining central Thrace with its NE frontier is the Celtic impact. Our Pistiros was destroyed by the Celts in 279/8 B.C.: they left in the ruins several swords, spearheads and one fibula of the Late Duchcov type. A number of warrior graves of the 3rd century B.C. known from Thrace south of the Haemus resemble the situation known from Rumania, Moldavia and the western Ukraine (Arnaut 2003; Niculiță 2004).

The Celts disappeared later from Dacia, and the Bastarnoi were later considered being a Germanic tribe, but their 3rd – 2nd century B.C. material culture was similar to those of the more western Celtic world. Volkoi - Tectosagoi lived, according to Caesar, at the northern fringes of the Hercynian forest and were near in their habits to Germanic tribes. They participated in the foundation of Galatia, and may well have been involved also in other invasion directed more to the north; this would also explain why ancient authors were hesitating whether the Bastarnoi were Celtic or East Germanic tribe.

There were, however, also similar kind of Greek merchants and artisans penetrating in the hinterland in the NW corner of the Black Sea from their colonies and emporia, of which Tyras and Nikonion were close to the territory of the present Republic of Moldova. As Prof. Nikulița and other specialist have shown, this hinterland was also influenced by Greek civilisation in a way well comparable with Greek penetration into the central part of the Thrace south of the Haemus Mountains.

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Fig. 1. Map in Thrace, showing the position of Pistiros, and distribution of graffiti.

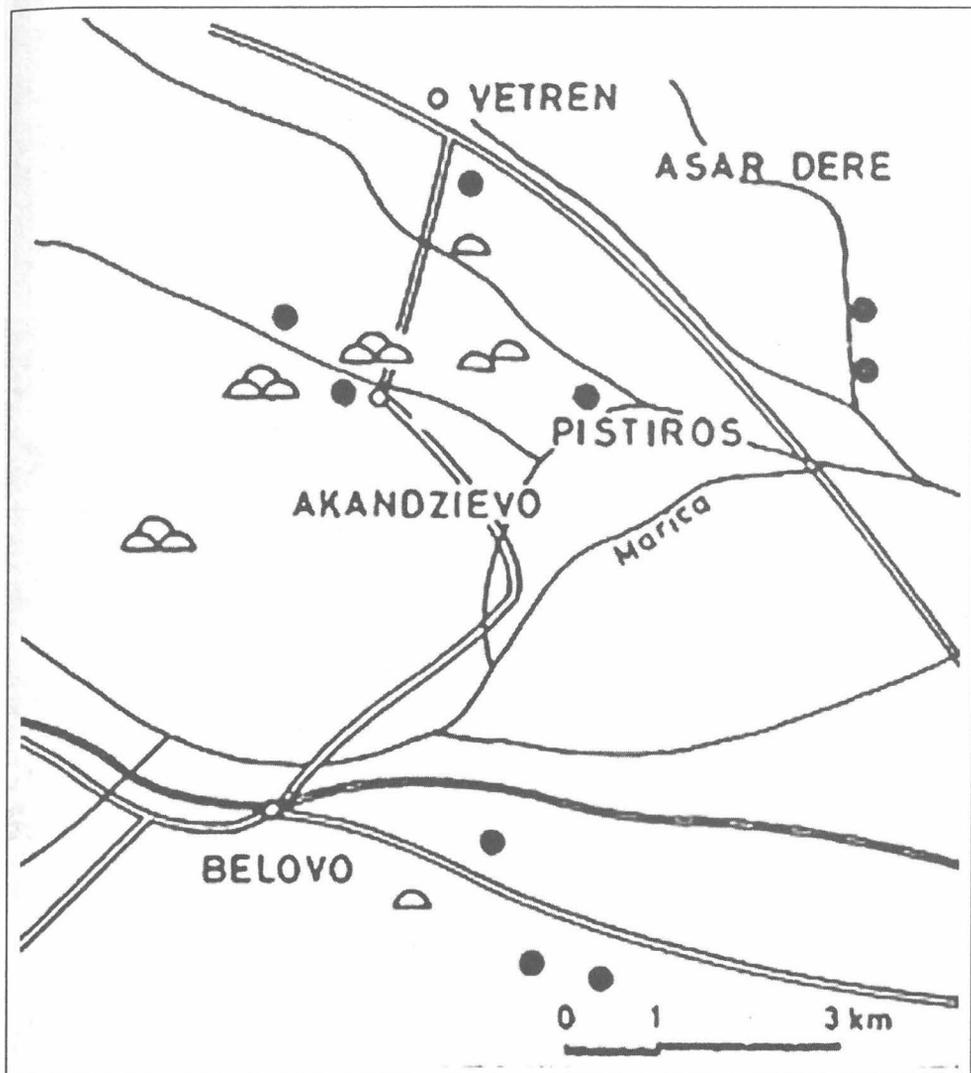


Fig. 2. The area of Pistiros, with the cemetery of Akandjievo and other sites.

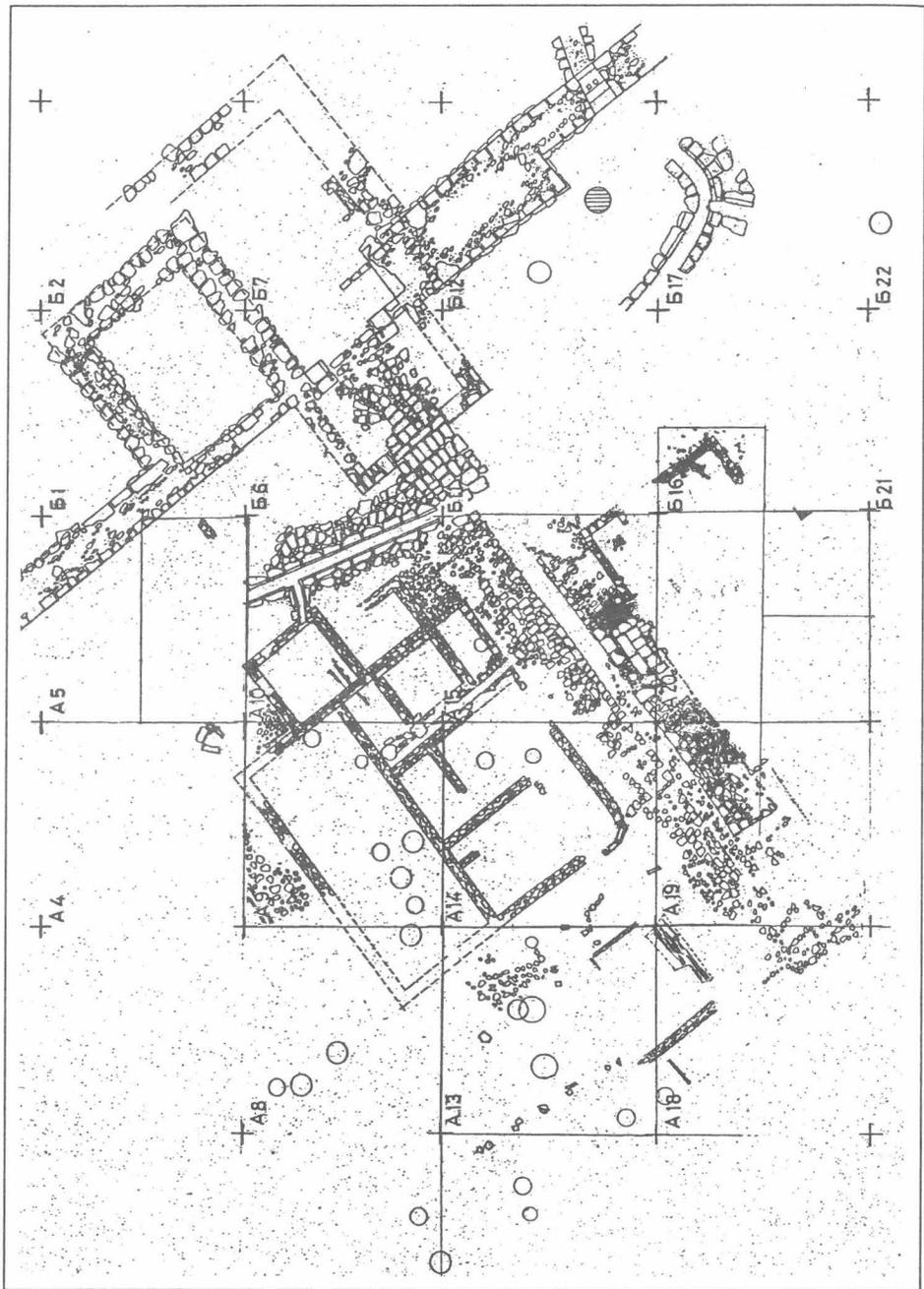


Fig. 3. Plan of the central part of empорий Pistiros.

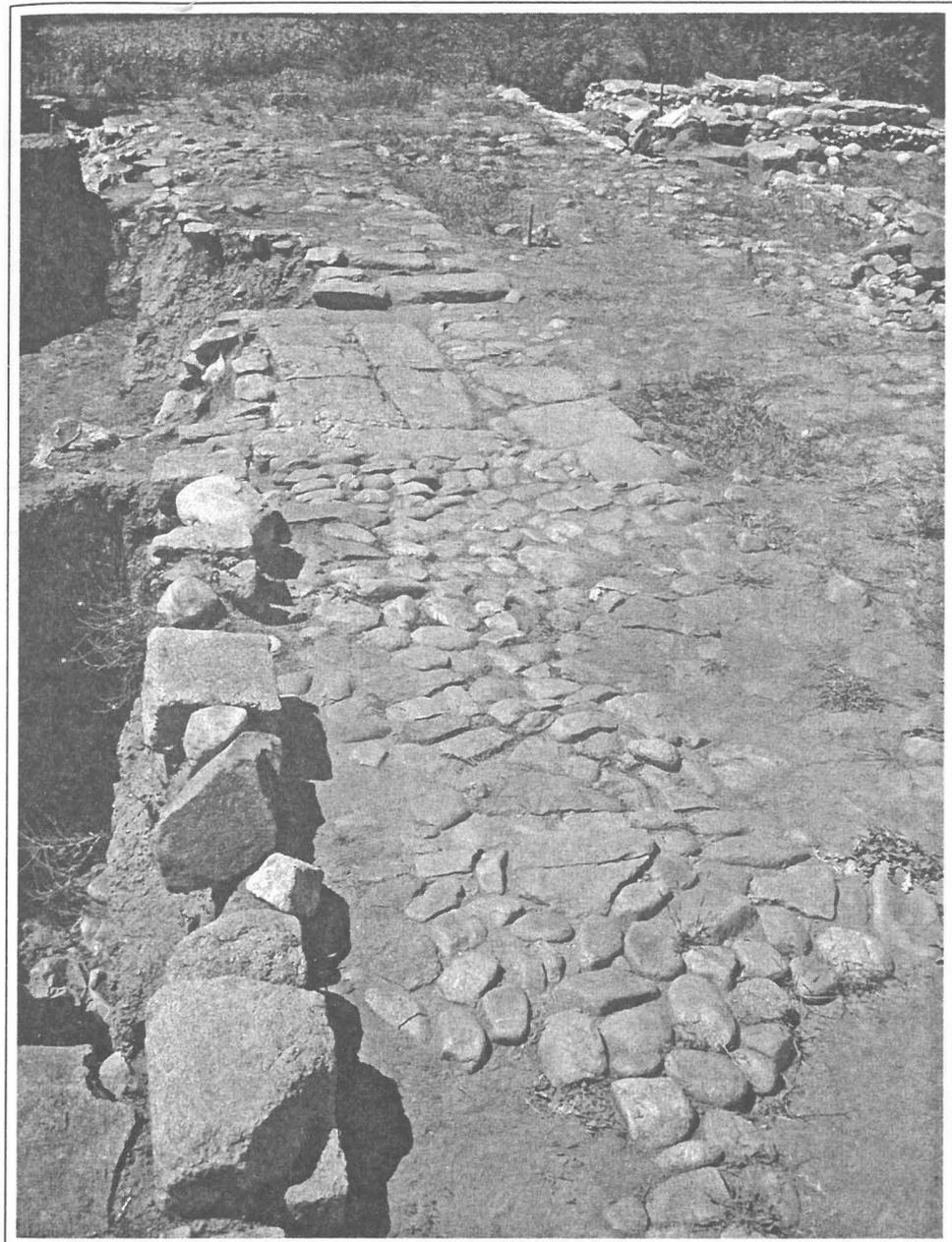


Fig. 4. Paving in front of House 3.



Fig. 5. Graffiti with Thracian names from Pistiros (Spokes, etc.)

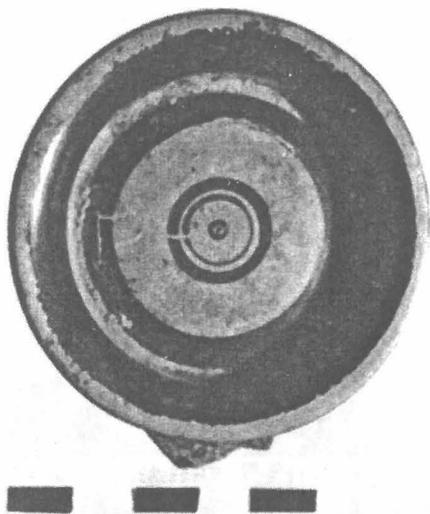


Fig. 6. Fragment of Panathenaic amphora, with graffito Ekataios DI.



Fig. 7. Fragmentary Attic Red-Figured cup, with athletes, late 5th century B.C.



Fig. 8. Fragmentary Attic Red-Figured krater with Dionysiac scene, late 5th century B.C.



Fig. 9. Coin hoard, 279 B.C.

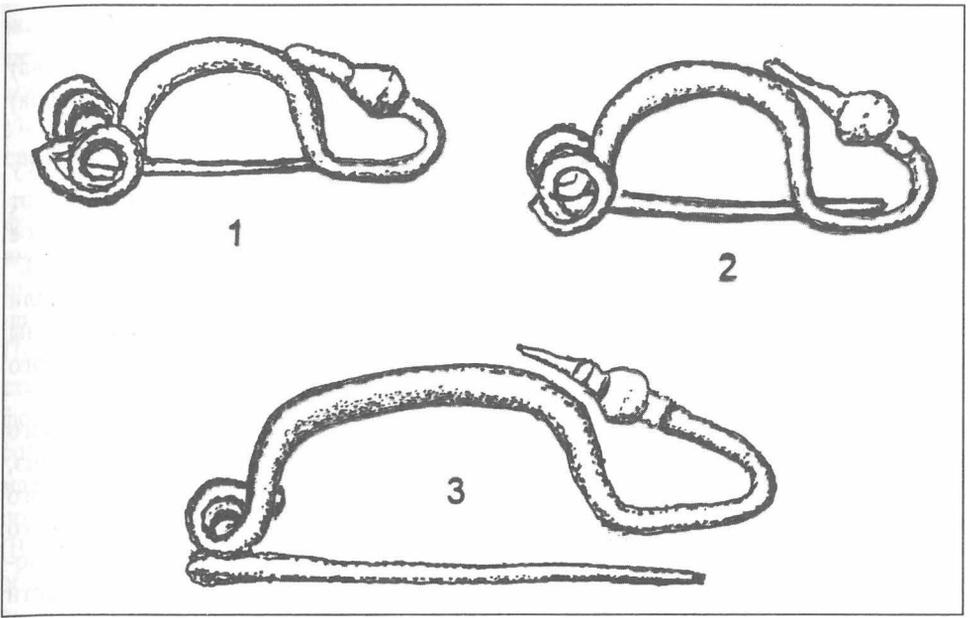


Fig. 10. Celtic fibula of the Duchcov type, from Pistiros (1), with parallels from Serbia



Fig. 11. Fragmentary cheek-piece of bridle, with ram head.