

ONCE MORE ABOUT THE SCYTHIAN PROBLEM IN TRANSYLVANIA

I. H. CRIȘAN

Our present study has been suggested by Dorin Popescu's article on the Scythians in Transylvania, recently published in the pages of this journal.¹

Dorin Popescu presents the various opinions of the scholars who dealt with the Scythian problem in Transylvania, and thus exonerates us from the task of enumerating them again; for the present we just want to emphasize that in connection with this problem a unanimously accepted opinion does not exist as yet. There are three main theories around which the researchers of the problem are grouped: the first admits the effective presence of Scythians in Transylvania; the second, an intermediary one, sees in the Scythian burial places the graves both of the autochthonous and of the foreign population; and the third, called by Dorin Popescu the Soviet theory, explains the presence of Scythian objects in Transylvanian graves as a result of cultural influence and, denying their effective presence, considers the graves with Scythian finds as being totally autochthonous.

The Scythian problem in Transylvania as a whole presents many difficulties and of course it cannot be exhausted within the present study. Therefore, our aim confines only to the analysis of some of its aspects, without repeating what had been said by others or by us,² as they are well known facts.

In our opinion, the final solution of this problem will be possible only when excavations will have been carried out on contemporary settlements with the Scythian necropolises and when a monograph analysing in detail all uncovered finds will have been elaborated.

In spite of this, we consider useful the publishing of some information and the revision of some already expressed points of view. One of the arguments put forward by those who deny the presence of the Scythians in Transylvania, to which Dorin Popescu rallied himself in the last time, is the following: « On ne connaît pas en Transylvanie d'autres monuments susceptibles d'être attribués à la population locale, que l'on ne peut identifier dans le meilleur des cas, qu'en combinaison avec les soi-disant Scythes ».³

A careful analysis of the existing materials in the different museums of Transylvania as well as in the older literature, however, proves the existence of some isolated graves and necropolises contemporary with the Scythian but totally differing from them both in funeral rite and goods, which can be attributed with enough certainty to the autochthonous population.

It is known that the Scythian graves in Transylvania are inhumed interments, substantially differing both from the other contemporary necropolises uncovered in our country — such as those

¹ Dorin Popescu, *Autour de la question des Scythes en Transylvanie*, in « Dacia », N. S., VI, 1962, pp. 443–457.

² I. H. Crișan, *Mormintul scitic de la Soroș-Sonde*, in *Din activitatea științifică a Muzeului raional Mediaș*, 3, 1955–1956, pp. 53–69; Idem. *Un akinakes inedit din Muzeul*

Făgăraș, in *Omagiu lui C. Daicoviciu*, Bucharest, 1960, pp. 117–129. See also our opinion expressed on the occasion of the discussions about the first volume of the *Istoria României*, in « Studii », XIII, 1960, 3, p. 28.

³ Dorin Popescu, *op. cit.*, p. 455.

at Bîrsești and Ferigile which are incineration interments — and from those uncovered on the territory of Hungary with incineration interment predominant, and from the Kuștanovice group where the incineration interment is exclusive.

From over 100 known Scythian graves very few in number are incineration interments so that we cannot speak about biritualism in Transylvania. The Scythian graves of inhumed interment are plane or tumular, with relatively poor funeral goods, 3—4 clay vessels, metal pieces of Scythian style as: akinakeses, arrow-heads, axes, mirrors, pieces of ornament, etc. In almost all carefully examined graves, the presence of horse could be stated, either entirely or partially by parts of the body, or in a symbolic way by harness pieces.

Within the Scythian necropolises only few graves constitute an exception from the inhumation rite. In the Ciumbrud necropolis, two graves of incineration interment were uncovered, one belonging to a suckling found under a skeleton's arm in grave III, and the second, grave XIII, of the same size as those of inhumation interment, dug at the same depth.⁴ All these make us suppose that the two graves at Ciumbrud are not an exception from the general rite of inhumed interment, but rather represent the transition toward the autochthonous incineration rite.

In favour of this assumption pleads also the fact that the Scythian necropolis of Ciumbrud is part of the later necropolis group, what we shall try to prove later on. The two mentioned incineration graves seem to point to the process of assimilation of the new-comers with the native mass.

Besides these Ciumbrud graves, within the Scythian necropolis at Teiuș three incineration graves were discovered, but K. Horedt, their discoverer, was right in including them into a pre-Scythian period.⁵ They have nothing in common with the incineration graves from Szentes-Vekerzug as M. Párducz considers.⁶

Besides the Ciumbrud graves, another incineration grave must be mentioned which was discovered by K. Horedt in a feudal cemetery at Blindiana, Orăștie district, Hunedoara region.⁷ The grave from Blindiana differs totally both in funeral rite and goods from the Scythian graves in Transylvania, a fact which determined the discoverer to suppose a penetration from the middle Danube basin in the 5th century B. C., time of grave dating and in which analogies both for rite and goods are to be found.

Besides the three incineration graves which are to be attributed to a foreign population, there are incineration graves in Transylvania dating back to the 6th—5th centuries B. C. which might be considered autochthonous. Without entering into details and descriptions, we give below the list of those graves which, with more or less accuracy, may be attributed to the natives and which are, partially or entirely contemporary with the Scythian ones.

1. *Chendul Mare*, Singiorgiul de Pădure district, Mureș Magyar-Autonomous region.

In the summer of 1962 an incineration grave was found, containing a bitruncated conical urn with handles, two dishes with their lips everted to the inside, a vase with almost straight walls, ornamented with buttons in relief, a single raised-handle cup and a second big, bitruncated conical vase. The funeral goods of the grave from Chendul Mare are to be found in the museum at Tg. Mureș and will be published by their discoverer A. Zrinyi.⁸ They are dated in Hallstatt C—D and have close analogies with the incineration grave from Ciurelu-Bucharest published by D. V. Rosetti⁹ and dated by

⁴ St. Ferenczi, in «Materiale», VII, 1961, pp. 192 and 197; Idem, in *Probleme de Muzeografie*, Cluj, 1960, pp. 238—239.

⁵ See K. Horedt, in «Materiale», I, 1953, pp. 800—804 and 811—812.

⁶ M. Párducz, *Le cimetière hallstattien de Szentes-Vekerzug*, II, in *Acta Arch-Budapest*, IV, 1954, p. 59. M.

Párducz says (*op. cit.*, p. 58) that in Aiud at Örhegy a Scythian incinerated grave would have been discovered but it belongs to the Latène epoch.

⁷ K. Horedt, in «Dacia», N.S., X, 1966 (in press).

⁸ I thank in this way A. Zrinyi for the kind information and for the permission of referring to this discovery.

⁹ D. V. Rosetti, in *PMMB*, II, 1935, pp. 53—57.

A. Vulpe in the 7th — 6th centuries B. C.¹⁰ Most of the vessels forming the funeral goods of the grave at Chendul Mare have very close analogies in the Scythian necropolis at Tg. Mureș, remarked also by D. V. Rosetti in the grave at Ciurelu-Bucharest, a fact which induces us to suppose that the grave from Chendul Mare is contemporary with the Scythian necropolises.

2. Cluj, Cluj region.

In 1911, on the occasion of St. Kovács and B. Léty's excavations in the prefeudal cemetery found in Dostoievsky street, at a relatively small depth an incineration grave was discovered which is still unpublished. It was only mentioned in the report on the activity for the year 1911¹¹ of the archaeological and numismatical section of the Transylvanian Museum. From this short presentation we find that the grave in discussion was part of a cemetery partially destroyed by the pits of the prefeudal graves and the rest remained not investigated. Its funeral goods preserved in the Museum in Cluj (inv. no. IV, 9749—9755) consist of a bitruncated conical urn with remnants of incinerated human and animal bones.¹² Besides the urn, the grave contains also four hand-made vessels: a middle-sized reddish jug covered with brown slip (inv. no. IV, 9750), fig. 1/10; another reddish small vase (inv. no. IV, 9750), fig. 1/8; a grey-reddish single raised-handled cup (inv. no. IV, 9753); a grey-black dish with lip everted to the inside, partially preserved (inv. no. IV, 9753). In the inventory register is mentioned, according to B. Léty's report, that in the urn was found also a piece of bronze ornament which was lost and did not enter the collection of the Cluj Museum.

3. Dobolii de Jos, Ilieni village, Sf. Gheorghe district, Brașov region.

In 1869 B. Orbán wrote that he found incineration graves on the bank of the Olt river at «Buskemező» on the territory of Dobolii de Jos village, detached by the river. From these graves some clay vessels, bones, iron tools were selected and two of the vessels were drawn by Orbán.¹³ From his summary drawings it can be stated that we have here a big bitruncated-conical vase with raised-handles similar to those which are usual in Scythian graves and a jug with a large lip of the type that had been found in the grave at Cluj. The closest analogy to this form was found in the necropolis at Ferigile.¹⁴

Referring to the pottery of the incineration graves at Dobolii de Jos, B. Orbán states that it is reddish and considers its special feature the breadth of its walls.

From the above assertions, we may assume with enough certainty the existence of some incineration graves contemporary with the Scythian ones. In connection with these graves we have to discuss the well-known iron sword ornamented in zoomorphic style, discovered at Dobolii de Jos. It was first published by Géza Nagy in 1886.¹⁵ As to the conditions of its discovery, all that we know is that it was offered to the Museum at Sf. Gheorghe in 1880 by a peasant who had found it in the Olt river bed on the territory of Dobolii de Jos village. If we keep in mind B. Orbán's information on the incineration graves detached by the Olt river on the territory of this locality, we may suppose that the sword too had been a piece of archaeological finds discovered in such a grave. The analysis of the sword itself seems to support his hypothesis. All those who studied it thoroughly¹⁶ noticed the difference between it and the Scythian arms. V. Pârvan considered this

¹⁰ Al. Vulpe, in «Materiale», VIII, 1962, p. 367, note 4.

¹¹ B. Pósta, in ErdMuzÉvk, 1912, p. 43.

¹² The urn (inv. No. IV, 9749—9755) could not be identified in the magazine of the Museum in Cluj. From the description in the inventory register it seems evident that it was of great dimensions and disposed with raised-handles similar with those in the Scythian graves.

¹³ B. Orbán, *A székelyföld leírása*, Pest, 1859, p. 36. The information was then reproduced by C. Gooss, in *Chronik*, 1876, p. 209 and in AVSL, XIV, 1877, and by

M. Roska, «Repertorium», p. 15, no. 18.

¹⁴ See Al. Vulpe, in «Materiale», V, 1959, p. 365, fig. 2/4.

¹⁵ AÉ, VI, 1886, pp. 234—238.

¹⁶ For the sword from Dobolii de Jos see: N. Fettich, in PZ, XIX, 1928, p. 160; *Idem*, in *Emlékkönyv a Székely Nemzeti Múzeum ötvenes jubileumára*, Sf. Gheorghe, 1929, pp. 351—360; *Idem*, in ArchHung, XV, 1934, pp. 31—32; W. Ginters, *Das Schwert der Skythen und Sarmaten in Südrussland*, Berlin — Leipzig, 1929, p. 42.

sword to be a product of Getic culture and dated it about 500 B. C.¹⁷ A. I. Meliukova took it as being a local Hallstattian weapon, thought its hilt had been wrought in Scythian style.¹⁸ Being an arm that belonged to the natives, it seems natural to us to put it in connection with the incineration graves which according to B. Orbán were detached by the Olt river. From such a grave the sword easily could have fallen to the bottom of the river.

4. Iernut, Luduș district, Mureș Magyar-Autonomous region.

In the spring of 1961, at the place called « Bedee » an incineration grave was accidentally discovered out of which only an urn containing human incinerated bones could be saved.¹⁹ The other vessels were lost. The urn (Fig. 1/12), preserved in the Cluj Museum, is of a brown-yellowish colour with polished slip and resembles a vase discovered in a grave at Chendul Mare. Vases of the same shape and ornament are known at Ciurelu-Bucharest, Bîrsești, Ferigile, which allows us to suppose that the grave from Iernut belongs to the Scythian period.

5. Oradea, Crișana region.

In the « Salca-Ghețarie » quarter of the Oradea town, at different periods, incineration graves were discovered by accident. From this necropolis whole pots and potsherds are preserved in the Oradea Museum and at the Secondary School no. 1 Museum, founded by professor Titus Roșu.

In order to verify the incineration necropolis at Oradea, excavations were carried out in 1959 by M. Rusu. On this occasion a grave was found, containing an urn with incineration rests covered by a dish; very close to it a jug with a handle²⁰ was found which undoubtedly was part of the same grave.

These urns (Figs. 1/11, 13) find perfect analogies in the Scythian necropolises of Transylvania. It is sufficient to mention the necropolis at Tg. Mureș.²¹ Besides the urns, in the necropolis at Oradea there were discovered single raised-handled cups (Fig. 1/1) also characteristic for Scythian necropolises.

These dishes (Fig. 1/5) differ from the usual ones found in the burial places in Transylvania because they have on their shoulders grooves which indicate that they are older than those found in Scythian necropolises which have seldom grooves and even in this case they are somehow shaded away. On the other hand, in the necropolis at Ferigile, dishes of the same shape and technique as those at Oradea were discovered having prominent grooves.²² The existence of dishes with grooves in the necropolis at Ferigile enables us to suppose that Oradian dishes are contemporaneous with the Scythian ones. Besides, the shape and technique of the urns present many analogies with those found in the Scythian necropolises. The single-handled jug (Fig. 1/9) does not turn up in the Scythian necropolises of Transylvania, but it is present in the necropolis at Bîrsești.²³

Thus the form of the vessels used as urns, the single-handled-raised cups, the dishes and the jug discovered by M. Rusu have analogies in the Scythian graves of Transylvania or in their contemporaries outside the Carpathian range, which allow us to consider them as being of the same epoch.

6. Tg. Mureș, Mureș Magyar-Autonomous region.

In the place called « Dimbul Pietros » on the territory of the Tg. Mureș town, an incineration grave containing three vessels was discovered in 1951. Of them, a single pot, used as a funeral urn, was preserved intact; it contained remains of human incinerated bones. The urn is bitruncated-conical with handles of the well-known type in Scythian graves²⁴ which makes us consider them as being contemporary.

¹⁷ V. Pârvan, *Getica. O protoistorie a Daciei*, Bucharest, 1926, p. 388.

¹⁸ A. I. Meliukova, in SA, XXII, 1955, p. 240. See also D. Berciu, in SCIV, X, 1959, 1, p. 33.

¹⁹ For the information I am much indebted to N. Vlăsa and I thank him in this way.

²⁰ M. Rusu and co-workers, in « Materiale », VIII, 1962, p. 163, fig. 7.

²¹ See St. Kovács, in DolgCluj, VI, 1915, p. 259, fig. 26/1; 31/1, 35/1, etc.

²² Al. Vulpe, in « Materiale », V, 1959, fig. 3/1.

²³ See S. Morintz, in « Dacia », N. S., I., p. 122, fig. 22/6.

²⁴ N. Vlăsa, *Cercetări arheologice în regiunile Mureș-Autonomă Maghiară, Brașov și Cluj* (unpublished). Thanks to my colleague N. Vlăsa for the kindness of putting the manuscript at my disposal.

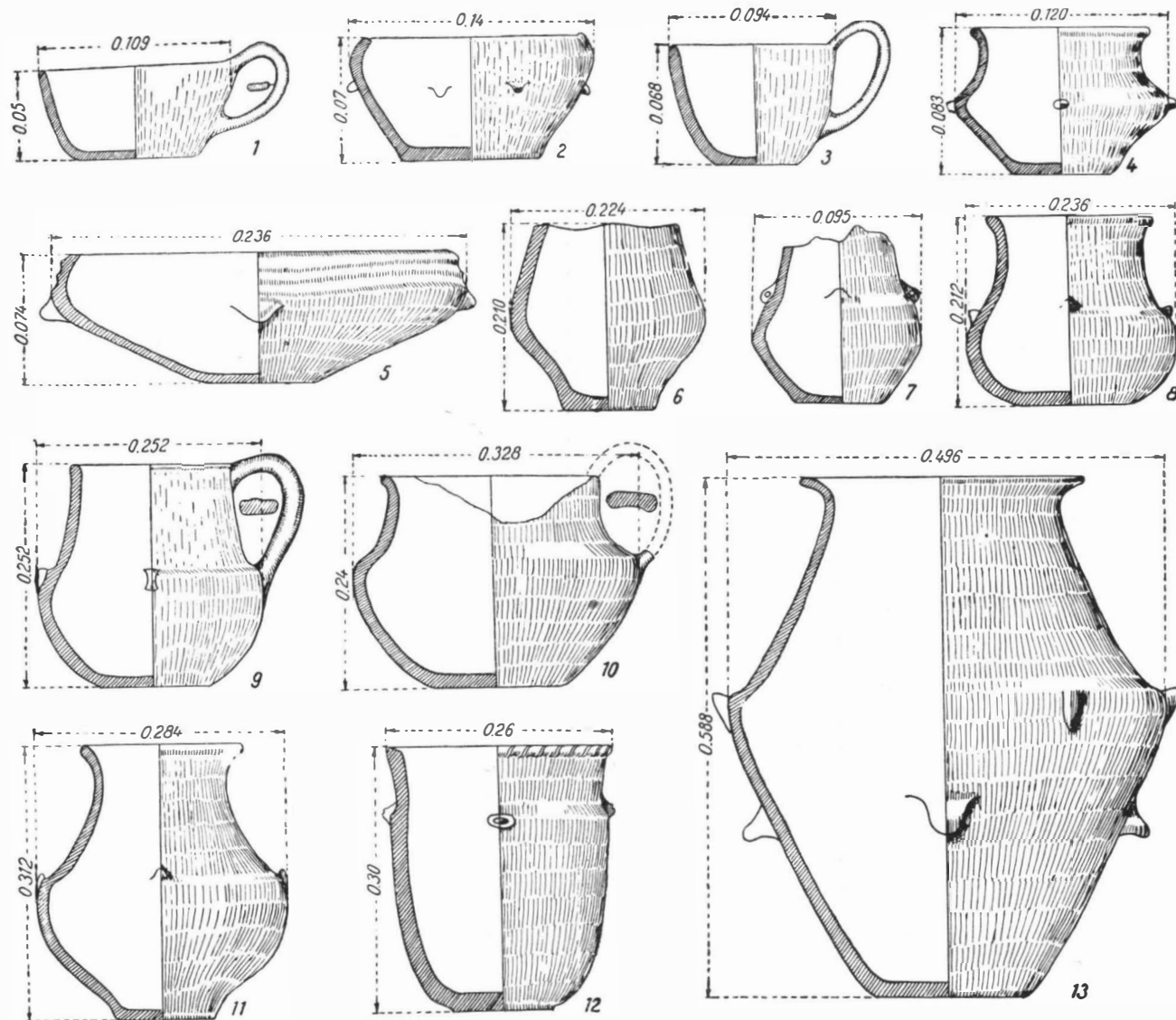


Fig. 1. — Ceramics found in Transylvania in graves of incineration and inhumation interment 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, Oradea; 2—4, 7, Uioara de Sus; 8, 10, Cluj; 12, Iernut.

7. *Uioara de Sus*, belonging to Ocna Mureș, Aiud district, Cluj region.

On the territory of this town, S. Kovács dug out an incineration necropolis of the same epoch with the Scythian graves. Unfortunately, specifications concerning this discovery are lacking. Kovács mentions only that this necropolis belongs to the Scythian period, and is of incineration type; he promised to publish it, but never did it.²⁵

A part of the graves' inventory, consisting of pottery, is preserved in the Cluj Museum (see Figs. 1/2—4, 7). The absence of metal objects, which are as a rule present in the Scythian graves and their funeral rite, proves that this necropolis belongs to the autochthonous population.

Consequently we may state that in Transylvania there are necropolises and graves contemporary with the Scythian ones but differing thoroughly from them. Their first characteristic is the incineration rite with urns containing incinerated remains, and the absence of metal pieces peculiar for the Scythian such as: arrow-heads, akinakeses, mirrors, etc. Further, another characteristic of the inventory of these graves is the great number of pottery. We must also mention as a feature the absence of the horse, which is not represented — either by bones or by harness-pieces — in almost any of the systematically excavated Scythian graves. We must emphasize also that in the incineration graves which can be attributed to the natives, the pottery presents a richer variety of forms than in the Scythian graves, in which with few exceptions there were deposited at least one bitruncated-conical vase, a raised handled bowl and a dish. We must also notice that some pottery forms characteristic of the incineration graves do not occur in Scythian inhumed interment graves, but are present in the contemporary necropolis discovered outside the Carpathian arch. The incineration rite with urns containing bone remains is well known in Transylvania since the bronze age.²⁶

There is another fact of utmost importance we like to deal with, namely, the area of the incineration graves attributed to the natives. It is known that the Scythian inhumed interments are found mainly along the Mureș valley and its tributaries, a territory corresponding with that mentioned in Herodotus information about the Agathyrsi. This fact is an argument for those who consider the inhumed interments as being of Scythian origin. In 1958, Dorin Popescu²⁷ brought against this theory the observation that from archaeological point of view the above mentioned territory is the best known and in his article referred to by us he affirms that there are no graves in Transylvania which can be attributed to the autochthonous population and yet, if there occur some, they always turn up with the so-called Scythian graves. However, there are graves which are contemporary with the Scythian ones and can be attributed to the local population spread both in the Scythian area and much beyond it, covering almost all the territory of Transylvania (see Fig. 2).

It may be argued that the autochthonous graves are less numerous than the Scythian. We think it may be explained by the fact that in the case of accidental discoveries graves of inhumed interment and especially if they have rich funeral goods call one's attention easier than those of incineration containing clay vessels. To the above we must add that most of the discoveries referring to Scythian graves in Transylvania are accidental while the graves of incineration were studied by systematic excavations. We are convinced that by future researches the number of autochthonous incineration graves will be increased.



In connection with the Scythian antiquities in Transylvania we want to discuss some pieces which, though published, were little studied by specialists. They can be dated with certainty. We

²⁵ St. Kovács, in *Dolgi Cluj*, VI, 1915, p. 257, note 1. p. 19.

²⁶ I. H. Crișan, *Contribuție la înțelegerea ritului de incinerare în Transilvania*, in *Probleme de muzeografie*, Cluj, 1960,

²⁷ D. Popescu, in *SCIV*, IX, 1958, 1, p. 32.

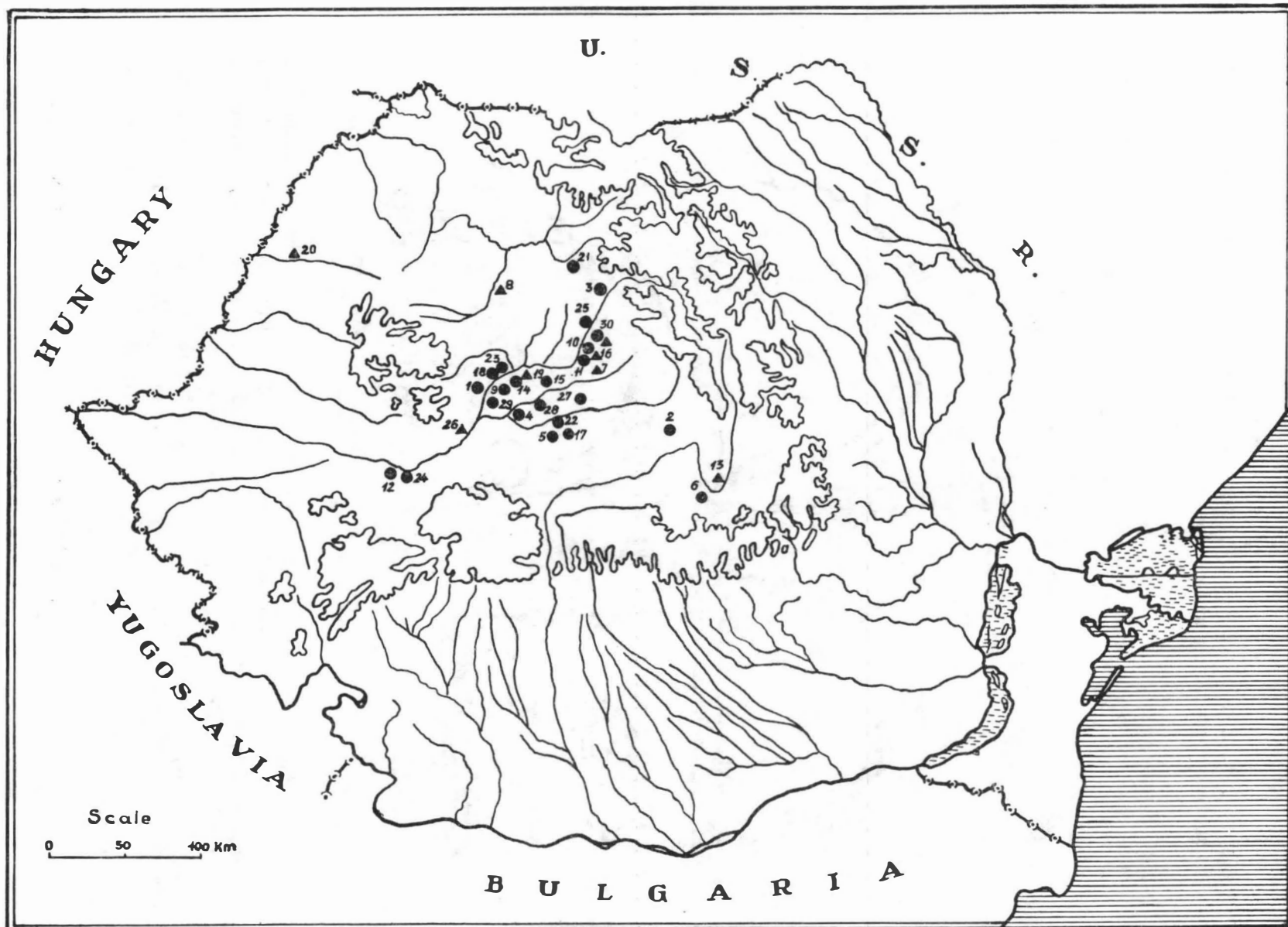


Fig. 2. — Necropolises and isolated graves from the 5th—6th centuries B. C. ▲ autochthonous incineration graves; ● Scythian inhumation graves. 1, Aiud; 2, Archita; 3, Batoș; 4, Blaj; 5, Bratei; 6, Brașov; 7, Chendul Mare; 8, Cluj; 9, Ciumbrud; 10, Cipău; 11, Cristești; 12, Deva; 13, Dobolii de Jos; 14, Gimbaș; 15, Herepea; 16, Iernut; 17, Ighișul Nou; 18, Mirăslău; 19, Uioara de Sus; 20, Oradea; 21, Posmuș; 22, Proștea Mică; 23, Râsboieni; 24, Simeria; 25, Sintana de Mureș; 26, Sintimbruș; 27, Sonea; 28, Sona; 29, Teiuș; 30, Tg. Mureș.

think of the fibulae. The fibulae are neither usual nor specific for Scythian graves in their native regions, but they were used in Transylvania, just as other elements of material culture did, and borrowed from the autochthonous population or from other populations the Scythian got into touch with.

The fibulae discovered in the Scythian graves in Transylvania are of North-West Balkan origin and most of them belong to the Glasinač type, being bow-shaped with a square or triangular foot-

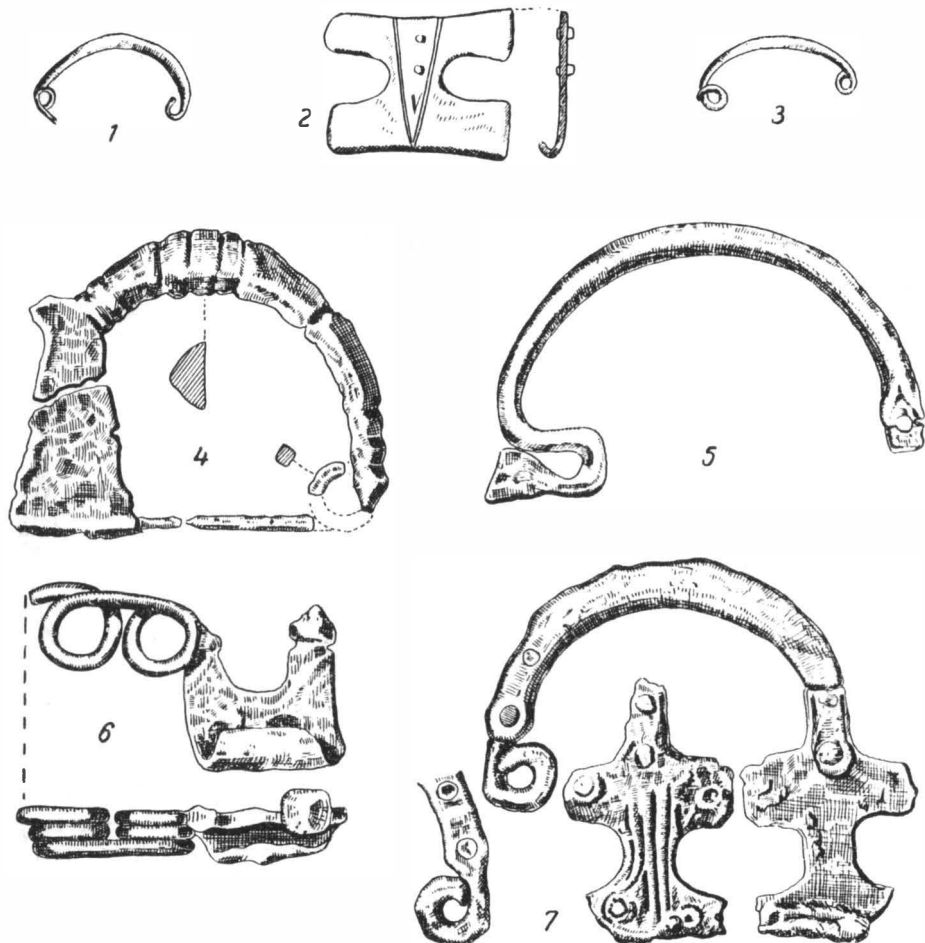


Fig. 3. — Fibulae found in the Scythian graves of inhumation interment. 1, Proștea Mică (1/2); 2, Cipău (1/1); 3, Sf. Gheorghe (1/2); 4, Gimbaș (1/2); 5, Gimbaș (1/1); 6, Simeria (1/1); 7, Tg. Mureș (1/1).

plaque. Such fibulae were widespread in our country in Hallstattian surroundings beginning with the 8th — 7th centuries B.C.²⁸ All fibulae with the exception of one have been published. In spite of this we think useful to present them again without a detailed description but referring to the studies in which they were published (see Fig. 3). Here we give their list:

1. *Cipău* (Fig. 3/2). A fragmentary bronze fibula of the Glasinač type with the so-called Beotic-shield published by N. Vlassa in *Acta Musei Apulensis*, IV, 1961, p. 28, figure 6, IV, 1.

2. *Gimbaș*. Two fibulae originating from M. Roska's excavations in 1913, discovered in Scythian inhumed interments.

²⁸ A list of these fibulae as well as the bibliography for analogies and their dating were given by M. Rusu, in «Dacia», N. S., VII, 1963, p. 201, note 65.

a) An unpublished bronze piece preserved in the Museum in Cluj (inv. no. III, 8905 *a-b*), discovered in grave 20. The fibula has a single spiral-spring and a massive triangular plaque. The body in section is semi-oval and presents ornaments of deepened lines which give the impression of some bundles (see Fig. 3/4).

b) A fragmentary bronze piece which typologically cannot be determined. It very probably belongs to the Glasinač type (Cluj Museum inv. no. 8840 — from grave 14) and it seems to be a local-featured variant.²⁹ The piece was published by M. Roska, in «Repertorium», Cluj, 1942, p. 161–162, no. 92, figure 195/28.

3. *Proștea Mică*. A bronze fibula having only the arch preserved, first published by P. Reinecke, in «AÉ», XVII, 1897, p. 16, figure 5*d*. It was discovered in a Scythian inhumed grave (Fig. 3/1).

4. *Tg. Mureș*. A bronze fibula with iron needle (Fig. 3/7) discovered in a Scythian necropolis and published by S. Kovács, in «DolgCluj», VI, 1915, p. 266, figure 30/15.

5. *Sf. Gheorghe* (Fig. 3/3). A fragmentary bronze fibula, from which only the spur has been preserved. It was discovered in a Scythian inhumed grave and published by Z. Székely, in «SCIV», XI, 2, 1960, p. 376, figure 5/1.

6. *Simeria* (Fig. 3/6). A fragmentary bronze fibula discovered in a Scythian grave and published by M. Roska in «DolgCluj», IV, 1913, p. 235, figure 2/3.

Thus in the Scythian necropolises of Transylvania up to now a number of seven fibulae were discovered, four of them (those from Proștea Mică, Sf. Gheorghe, Tg. Mureș and Cipău) belong to the Glasinač type with a double spiral-spring and a triangular or rectangular plaque hollowed out like a Beotic-shield.

In the Glasinač culture, the bronze fibula with Beotic-shield was classified by A. Benac and B. Čović into the IV *c* group and dated between 625 and 500 B. C.,³⁰ i.e. the last quarter of the 7th century and the whole 6th century B.C.

V. Miložić dated these fibulae in the 9th—8th centuries B. C.³¹ F. Maier³² challenges Miložić's dating, and basing on the discoveries at Donja-Dolina instead of these at Glasinač, considers that the fibulae cannot be earlier than the 7th century B. C., that is their date is later than that suggested by Miložić.

Fibulae of the Glasinač type with Beotic-shield and with double spiral-spring were discovered on the territory of our country in the necropolises at Balta Verde and Gogoșu. Similar fibulae were also discovered in the necropolis at Stoicani, on the settlement of Alexandria, and in the cemetery in Zimnicea.³³

At Balta Verde there were found fibulae with a rectangular slightly hollowed out plaque or on their other name, fibulae with lengthened Beotic-shield; they were dated by A. Benac and B. Čović between 750 and 625 B. C.³⁴ In this burial place the fibula with a usual Beotic-shield presented by F. Maier does not turn up.

²⁹ It is the determination of Draga and Miliutin Garašanin, to whom I express many thanks for their kind help.

³⁰ A. Benac-B. Čović, *Glasinač*, II, Sarajevo, 1957, pp. 118–119. For its connection with the Glasinač culture see M. Garašanin, *Chronologische und ethnische Probleme der Eisenzeit auf dem Balkan*, in *Atti del VI Congresso internazionale delle scienze preistoriche e protoistoriche*, Rome, 1962, pp. 179–195, which puts the group Glasinač IV *c* in Hallstatt D.

³¹ V. Miložić, in AA, I–IV, 1948–1949, pp. 13–35;

Idem, in «Jahrbuch d. Röm. Ger. Zentral Museums Mainz», 2, 1955, pp. 153–169.

³² F. Maier, *Zu einigen bosnisch-herzegowinischen Bronzen in Griechenland*, in «Germania», 34, 1956, 1–2, pp. 63–75. See also the review made by D. Berciu, in «Dacia», N. S., I, 1957, pp. 354–357. The author of the review states its agreement with F. Maier but places the date later in the second half of the 6th century B.C.

³³ D. Berciu, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

³⁴ A. Benac and B. Čović, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

The dating of the customary fibulae from Balta Verde make us suppose that this one is earlier and can be dated before the arrival of the Scythians in Transylvania and it is no more used about the year of 600 B. C.³⁵

In the necropolis at Gogoșu two bronze fibulae with rectangular hollowed plaque, in the form of a Beotic-shield were discovered. We must mention that the Glasinač-type fibulae are scarce at Gogoșu (2 from 27) and they were discovered in inhumed graves which are thought to be the oldest. For the necropolis at Gogoșu square plaque fibulae ending in a button are characteristic. The fibulae with a Beotic-shield from Gogoșu, even if we admit the chronology suggested by D. Berciu and E. Comșa, are dated about 550 B. C. Within this necropolis they represent in our opinion, a very late perpetuance.³⁶

Taking into consideration the above mentioned opinions referring to the dating of the Glasinač-type fibulae with Beotic-shield classified by Miložić in the third group, but challenged by F. Maier and thought by Berciu to belong to the group I,³⁷ we believe we are right in dating the fibulae from the Scythian graves of Transylvania in the first half of the 6th century B. C. as we take into account that they turn up at the periphery of their spreading-area, where they could have been brought later and maintained longer.

The fibula with a single spiral-spring and a massive triangular plaque discovered at Gîmbaș³⁸ pleads in favour of dating the Glasinač-type with Beotic-shield in the first half of the 6th century B. C. or rather at about 600 B. C.

The single spiral-springed fibulae with massive triangular plaque belong, according to A. Benac and B. Čović, to Hallstatt B,³⁹ but on the territory of the S.F.R. of Yugoslavia they occur even later, within Hallstatt C. The fibula discovered in the grave at Gîmbaș was dated by Draga and Miliutin Garašanin in Hallstatt C—D and has close analogies in the grave from Radanje in Macedonia.⁴⁰ The single spiral-springed fibula with a massive triangular plaque can in no case be dated beyond 600 B.C.

A fibula of this kind has been discovered at Poiana, on the territory of our country and was dated by R. Vulpe⁴¹ in the 7th century B. C. The fibula from Gîmbaș seems to be more developed and on this account we dated it between the end of the 7th century and the beginning of the 6th century B. C.

Now we have to discuss the fibulae from Proștea Mică and Sf. Gheorghe. Both are fragmentary, lacking their most important part, the plaque by which we could state more exactly their typology. On the basis of the two existing fragments it can be stated that the fibulae had a spiral-spring on both ends. Such bronze fibulae end either by a triangular plaque, as we think is the case with our two fibulae, or in a rectangular plaque having the form of a lengthened or customary Beotic-

³⁵ D. Berciu and E. Comșa, *op. cit.*, p. 307 and D. Berciu, in *Istoria României*, vol. I, pp. 152—153, date the necropolis at Balta Verde between 650 and 550. We believe, however, that on the ground of the Glasinač-type fibulae with lengthened Beotic-shield, which is very frequent at Balta Verde, the date of the burial place should be earlier. It begins in the second half of the 8th century and lasts till the end of the 7th. The fact that the necropolis at Balta Verde ends at the latest around the year 600 B. C. is proved by the absence of the fibulae with rectangular hollowed out plaque in the form of a true Beotic-shield.

³⁶ As regards the dating of the necropolis at Gogoșu we likewise believe that its beginning must be put somehow earlier, before the end of the 6th century namely on

the ground of this fibula which cannot be dated so late.

³⁷ Until now a classification of the fibulae of Glasinač-type into different classes does not exist. A short and unfounded classification had been proposed by D. Berciu, in «Dacia», N.S., I, 1957, pp. 355—357.

³⁸ Chr. Blinkenberg, *Fibules grecques et orientales*, Copenhagen, 1926, p. 80, pl. III/4a.

³⁹ A. Benac and B. Čović, *Glasinač*, I, Sarajevo, 1956, pp. 71—73, pl. XLII/3, XLIV/5, XLVI/2 and XLVII/5.

⁴⁰ The personal information of Draga and Miliutin Garašanin.

⁴¹ R. Vulpe and co-workers, in SCIV, II, 1951, 1, p. 188, fig. 9/3.

shield. Such fibulae belong to the Glasinač type and have the same development and spreading area as those from group I.; D. Berciu put them into his group II.⁴²

On the territory of our country fibulae of this kind were discovered in the necropolis at Gogoșu, in graves belonging to the same level as those with Beotic-shield.⁴³ It is worth mentioning that within the necropolis at Gogoșu, fibulae of the Glasinač-type II are rather numerous (six).

A fibula of the same type was discovered at Tariverde together with Attic pottery from the 6th century B. C.⁴⁴ Besides the two mentioned localities in the north of the Danube other copies were discovered among which one has been found⁴⁵ by A. I. Meliukova during her excavations in the incinerations necropolis at Soldănești and this one was dated in the 7th — 6th centuries B. C.⁴⁶

On the basis of the above considerations we think that the Glasinač-type fibulae, group II, can be dated as those with Beotic-shield, in the first half of the 6th century B.C.

We wish to discuss the fibula discovered in grave I at Simeria too, included by D. Berciu in his group III. The author takes it as being of Donja-Dolina type. It is widespread, together with its variants, within the Balkans.⁴⁷ This type of fibulae are met also in the necropolis at Szentes-Vekerzug where a copy was discovered in grave 61 and a second, fragmentary one was found in an isolated discovery.⁴⁸

Fibulae of this type were discovered in great number on the territory of our country, for instance in the necropolis at Gogoșu where their number is the greatest (8 entire pieces) but also in some other regions.⁴⁹

From the chronological point of view, the fibulae of group III are dated in the second half of the 6th century and in the 5th century B. C. This was the date established for the fibulae discovered in the Balkans,⁵⁰ at Vekerzug as well as in the necropolis at Gogoșu.

In conclusion we can say that on the ground of the fibulae discovered in the Scythian graves, these can be divided into two groups: in the first enter the necropolises at Tg. Mureș, Cipău, Gîmbaș, Proștea Mică, Sf. Gheorghe, etc., dated in the first half of the 6th century B. C., and in the second group the necropolis at Simeria dated in the second half of the 6th century or rather in the first part of the 5th century. This chronological difference can be established also by the typological analysis of the pottery. Thus, for instance, the bitruncated-conical vase type II, established by us, corresponds to group I, and type III⁵¹ corresponds to group II.

Besides the necropolis at Simeria, also the Ciumbrud and Teiuș necropolises, where bitruncated-conical pottery of type III was discovered must be included into the second group. Apart from the criterion deduced from the evolution of the bitruncated-conical pottery, in support of this classification we must add the cross-shaped embellishment in Scythian zoomorphic style, found in the necropolis at Teiuș with close analogies at Volkovtzy, Ukraine, and dated in the 5th — 4th centuries B. C.⁵²

The second group of Scythian necropolises of Transylvania is contemporary with the Tisa necropolises and with those at Bîrsești, Ferigile and Gogoșu. For the moment on the territory of our

⁴² Both types of fibulae were discovered in the same grave on the territory of P.R. of Bulgaria and dated by A. Milčev in the 7th — 6th centuries B. C. See A. Milčev in *SlovArch*, VI, 1, 1958, pp. 99 — 107.

⁴³ D. Berciu and E. Comșa, *op. cit.*, p. 406, fig. 145/5; 147/2; 151/1; 159/2.

⁴⁴ Em. Condurachi and co-workers, in « *Materiale* », IV, 1957, pp. 80 — 81, fig. 61/1. D. Berciu, « *Dacia* », N.S., I, 1957 states, without mentioning the ground, that the fibula might be dated in the second half of the 6th century without entering in the 5th century B. C.

⁴⁵ See D. Berciu, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

⁴⁶ The kind information of A. I. Meliukova and many

thanks for them in this way.

⁴⁷ See D. Garašanin, in « *Starinar* », XI, 1960, p. 92, fig. 5; M. Djuknić-B. Jovanović, in « *Bulletin de l'Académie serbe des sciences et des arts* », XXVIII, N. S., 8, 1961.

⁴⁸ M. Párducz, in *ActaArch-Budapest*, IV, 1954, p. 63, pl. VII/3; pl. XXIX/17.

⁴⁹ See D. Berciu, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

⁵⁰ A. Benac and B. Čović, *Glasinač*, II, Sarajevo, 1957.

⁵¹ I. H. Crișan, *Ceramica daco-getică, Cu specială privire la Transilvania* (Unpublished).

⁵² K. Horedt, in « *Materiale* », I, 1953, pp. 811 — 812.

country, except Transylvania, we do not know necropolises contemporary with those of the first group dated in the first half of the 6th century B. C. The necropolis at Balta Verde, in our opinion, ends before the beginning of the 6th century B. C. Likewise the necropolises at Stoicani and Zimnicea⁵³ are earlier.

The existence of the two groups suggests two successive Scythian waves. On the other hand we cannot deny the existence of a single Scythian wave arriving into Transylvania at the beginning of the 6th century and the subsequent evolution of the Scythian material culture as being the result of the local development, connected with and under the direct influence of the natives.

The first Scythian wave could not reach Transylvania later than the beginning of the 6th century, fact which seems to be proved by the single-springed fibula with massive triangular plaque discovered in the necropolis at Gimbaș, because this one in any case cannot be dated later.

We think this analysis cleared up that the oldest Scythian necropolises in Transylvania belong chronologically to the first half of the 6th century B.C., to about 600 or very close to this date.

In analysing the Scythian finds in Transylvania V. Pârvan makes no restrictive chronological remarks concerning the different discoveries. He speaks only about the so-called Scythian period placing it in broad lines into the 7th—4th centuries B.C.⁵⁴

G. Childe agrees with Pârvan's opinion but questions the date of the Scythian arrival into Transylvania. He supposes they had come in the 6th century B.C.,⁵⁵ date that we correct to the beginning of the century.

I. Nestor puts the Scythian antiquities from Transylvania at the end of the 6th century B.C. as the earliest possible date and some of them, among which those from Simeria to the 5th—4th centuries B.C.⁵⁶ Accepting his view, most of the archaeologists who studied the problem recently dated the Scythian antiquities of Transylvania at the second half of the 6th century and the beginning of the 5th century B.C., which is true only to some extent, because only part of them, namely group II, dated at the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 5th century B.C. We have shown that in Transylvania an older Scythian group dated in the first half of the 6th century. As regards the 4th century B.C., we think we cannot speak any more about Scythians, because they had already been assimilated and dissolved in the mass of the natives. The discoveries belonging to the 4th century have no more the features which would plead for their ascribing to a Scythian population.

Concerning the dating of the Scythian antiquities in Transylvania and the question how they arrived here, M. Párducz presumes the existence of a migratory wave arrived at about 600 B. C.⁵⁷ This first wave stopped here. According to this author a second wave also occurred, dated in the second half of the 6th century, which passed through Transylvania towards the Hungarian lowland where it settled. This opinion seems not probable as the arrival of the Scythians to the Hungarian lowland must have taken place through the Wooded Carpathians, a theory set up first by prof. C. Daicoviciu.⁵⁸ The Scythians in Transylvania could have arrived here through the Carpathian passes across the territory of Moldova.⁵⁹



Concerning the Scythian antiquities we have one more problem to discuss. By analysing the spreading of the bronze in Transylvania from the end of Bronze age up to the Hallstatt, M. Rusu

⁵³ M. Petrescu-Dimbovița, in «Materiale», I, 1953, p. 198.

⁵⁴ V. Pârvan, *op. cit.*, pp. 6—7.

⁵⁵ G. Childe, *The Danube in Prehistory*, Oxford, 1929, p. 394.

⁵⁶ I. Nestor, *Der Stand der Vorgeschichtsforschung in*

Rumänien, in 22 BerRGK, 1932, p. 141.

⁵⁷ M. Párducz, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

⁵⁸ C. Daicoviciu, in «Steaua», 5, 1956, p. 113.

⁵⁹ See for that A. Nițu, in «Materiale», I, 1953, pp. 3—11.

arrives to the conclusion that in Transylvania there are no bronze deposits in the Hallstatt D.⁶⁰ M. Rusu is right in explaining this absence by the penetration of the Scythians at the beginning of the 6th century B.C., the same date we arrived at on the ground of other criteria. The replacing of the bronze objects by iron ones was accelerated by the penetration of the Scythians who brought innovations both in the exploitation and in manufacturing of iron, thus contributing to the acceleration of the social and economic development.

Concerning the Scythian antiquities of Transylvania we think necessary to quote M. Rusu's conclusions: «Die zahlreichen Metallfunde skythischer Machart, die auf dem Gebiete Transsilvaniens, so gut wie ausschliesslich in Gräbern gefunden wurden, konnten aber nicht nur im Wege des Tauschverkehrs, durch kulturelle Einwirkungen oder durch kriegerische Unternehmungen hierher gelangt sei, sondern es muss auch die tatsächliche und länger währende Anwesenheit der Skythen in diesem Gebiet angenommen werden, selbst wenn es zahlenmässig nicht zu viele waren».⁶¹

Before concluding our study we have to mention that at the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 6th century B.C., there existed in Transylvania a rather numerous foreign population settled mainly along the middle terraces of the Mureş river and along its affluences. This population is characterized by inhumation in plane necropolises using also tumular graves. Their funeral goods are rather poor: ceramics, metal objects (mainly iron) of Scythian type, to which the presence of horse in different forms must be added. Their graves are totally different from the autochthonous population's which are first and foremost of incineration type, lacking Scythian metal objects.

The territory this population came from is the forest-steppe of the Soviet Union inhabited at that period by Scythian tribes. The discoveries in Transylvania have here their most numerous analogies both in funeral rite and funeral goods. The Transylvanian group separated first from the forest-steppe territory of the Soviet Union. This explains the substantial differences between this first and the later separated groups settled on the territories of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The chronological difference we mentioned, can be proved among others, as M. Rusu believes, by the fact that on the territories of Hungary and Czechoslovakia bronze-deposits characteristic to Hallstatt D continue to exist and they will have an end or will be hidden only at the end of this period, very probably when some Scythian groups penetrate through the Wooded Carpathians.

From ethnical point of view it is difficult for the moment to determine exactly the Transylvanian group, because the Soviet archaeologists have not arrived yet to a definitive, unanimously accepted conclusion concerning inhabitants of the forest-steppe territories of the Soviet Union, whether they were Scythians or a Scythoid population bearing only the Scythian material culture.⁶²

Taking into account Herodotus' description of Transylvania, which agrees with the archaeological discoveries, we can suppose that the inhumed interments along the Mureş valley belong to the Agathyrsi population, about whom, however, we do not know in what degree they were ethnically Scythians. In any case, the graves which till recently were unanimously attributed to Scythians, did never belong to the autochthonous Geto-Dacians. It is still to be settled whether ethnically, this is a Scythian population or not. It seems to us to be a heterogeneous population but not pure Iranian and, very probably, with some Scythian elements in it. But it is undoubtedly a foreign population coming from the forest-steppe region of the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 6th century B.C. As for terminology, we think that for the time being the generical Scythian term should be maintained, even if the population in question from an ethnical point of view is not homogeneous or totally Iranian.

⁶⁰ M. Rusu, *Die Verbreitung der Bronzezeit in Transilvanien von Ende der Bronzezeit bis in die Mittlere Hallstattzeit*, in «Dacia», N.S., VII, 1963, p. 204, note 72.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

⁶² See, for instance, the discussions at the 1952 Congress consecrated to this problem: N. N. Pogrebova, in *Вопросы скифо-сарматской археологии*, 1954.