

Archaeology: making of and practice.
Studies in honor of Mircea Babeș at his 70th anniversary

Edited by Despina Măgureanu, Dragoș Măndescu, Sebastian Matei



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THE CINDERELLA'S BOUQUET OF PRINCE OF SILVER.
ON THE SILVER OF THE THRACIAN SCHEME FIBULAE:
A DIFFERENT PATTERN REVEALED BY THE PERIPHERY

DRAGOȘ MĂNDESCU (Pitești)

Despre argintul fibulelor de schemă tracică: un model diferit oferit de periferie. Rezumat.

Problema materiei prime și în special a argintului pieselor de port și podoabă traco-gete rămâne una delicată și provocatoare în același timp. Articolul discută un procent relativ mic (11%) din totalul celor 472 fibule de schemă tracică, și anume cele 53 fibulele din argint. Prezentarea statistică din prima parte a articolului intenționează să demonstreze faptul că în cazul fibulelor de schemă tracică argintul, ca materie primă, a fost „direcționat” predilect către două forme: tipul II în general (cu piciorul în formă de trunchi de con cu baza în sus) și varianta III 3b (o fibulă “baroc”, cu piciorul îndoit în formă de S, cu buton terminal de mari dimensiuni și arcul puternic îngroșat și fațetat). Cele două forme au o răspândire bine definită spațial: tipul II preponderent în nord-vestul teritoriului actual al Bulgariei, iar varianta III 3b în spațiul dintre Carpați și Prut, la periferia nord-estică a arealului de răspândire a acestei clase de piese de port și podoabă. O atenție sporită este acordată elementelor atestate tocmai în această periferie (Bunești, Epureni) ce par a susține existența unui costum ceremonial, în care fibulele de schemă tracică din argint aveau o poziție bine stabilită. Fibulele de schemă tracică (în definitiv, o categorie mărunță de piese și aparent neînsemnată, neglijabilă atunci când este raportată la scara marilor tezaure de vase și podoabe din metale prețioase descoperite în ținuturile trace) sugerează posibilitatea existenței a cel puțin două “modele” culturale și tehnologice în privința surselor de procurare a argintului necesar ca materie primă în producerea lor. Exploatarea resurselor locale (“modelul” clasic, evidențiat prin situația fibulei de tip II) nu ar trebui să rămână unicul răspuns la chestiunea sursei argintului. Varianta utilizării argintului provenit din monede (sugerată atât de tipul II, dar mai ales de fibulele variantei III 3b) merită să fie și ea luată în calcul; un program coerent și bine ținut de analize și măsurători metalografice ar putea-o transforma dintr-o ipoteză de lucru într-o certitudine.

Cuvinte cheie: argint, materie primă, fibule de schemă tracică, costum ceremonial, monede Huși-Vovriești, sec. IV-III a.Chr.

Despite the title, this paper is not at all an attempt to return to our childhood, but a challenge to suggest that a ‘Cinderella’ as Thracian scheme fibula, through its few special exemplars, can provide viable hypothesis and clues of the existence of technological patterns and cultural models specific for the margin areas. So, let's see when and how our ‘Cinderella’ may sometimes become... *Hyacera*.

The most recent general count of the Thracian scheme fibulae (performed however more than two decades ago)¹ together with the later additions² yielded an amount of 472 exemplars coming from 143 places. Beginning from the 5th century BC to the half of the 3rd century BC, so for two centuries and a half, these fibulae were spread in the Thracian area of the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula.

From the first studies involving the Thracian fibulae³ to the most recent ones⁴, the trend (just a few exception were recorded) was to range these pieces according to the type of their foot: type I – vertical foot; type II – vertical foot thickened to the finial (cone or pyramid shape, upside-down base); type III – S like foot. The most of the samples (over one third) belong to type III (163 fibulae). Type I

¹ ZIRRA 1996-1998, 29 and footnote *

² MĂNDESCU 2000a, 78; MĂNDESCU 2010, 339-357, fig. 65-68.

³ VULPE 1930, 58-62, fig. 2/2-4; MIKOV 1930-1931, 171 sqq., fig. 149; NESTOR 1933, 158-160; BERCIU 1943, 283-294, fig. 6.

⁴ ZIRRA 1996-1998, 29-30, 33; MĂNDESCU 2000a, 72-81, fig. 3.

follows (129 fibulae, i.e. little more than a quarter). The less, 49 samples (about 10%), belong to type II that we could consider to be a regional type, characteristic for the middle basin of Isker River⁵. The 131 remaining fibulae (a rather big quantity representing a little more than a third from the total amount) are fragmentary, without foot, and they could not be included in any of the three types (fig. 1a).

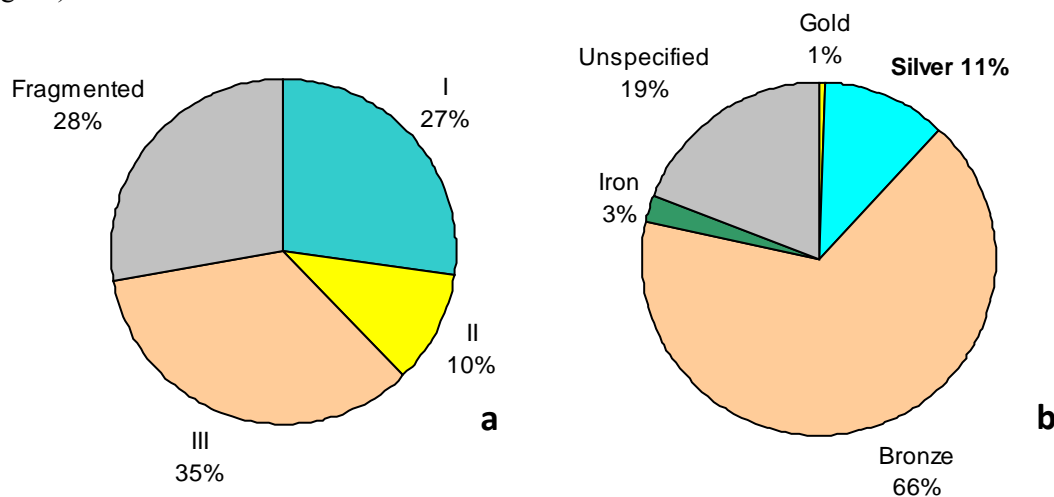


Fig. 1. The Thracian scheme fibulae group (a total of 472 exemplars) splitted according to type (a) and according to metal (b).

Bronze was the main metal used by the craftsmen of those times for making fibulae, a proper alloy for such elements of costume as well as attire ornaments or even adornments sometimes⁶. Due to this material the fibula has flexibility and a pleasant look. Two thirds of the total amount of the Thracian scheme fibulae (314 samples, representing 66%) were made of bronze (fig. 1b). Iron was more rigid and consequently not proper for fibula making; it was rarely used as a raw material: only for 12 samples of the total amount (3%). As expected, noble metals were also used as a raw material: gold was very rarely used (the three fibulae from Duvanlij⁷, representing only 1% of the total amount), silver much more: 53 fibulae (11%). It is true that for 90 of the published fibulae (19%) the literature did not mention the metal used as raw material, and this could influence the statistical results of the following discussion. But we think that their majority could be made of bronze which is the most common of the materials used; the authors would have certainly mentioned if the metal used was a precious one. Thus we could believe that the percentage of the bronze fibulae could be 85% from the total amount.

The most silver Thracian scheme fibulae (fig. 2) were found in tombs (27 pieces): ten fibulae at Zimnicea⁸, three at Laga⁹, three exemplars at Enisala¹⁰, two at Meždra¹¹, two at Šipka¹², another two exemplars at Staroselka¹³ and one fibula in each of the following places: Krävenik¹⁴, Skravena¹⁵,

⁵ MĂNDESCU 2004, 42-43, fig. 2.

⁶ DUBOS, PERNOT, GUILLAUMET 1988, 62-63, 67-71.

⁷ VELKOV 1930-1931, 27, pl. 10/2-4.

⁸ ALEXANDRESCU 1980, 20, 21, 23, 31, 34, 40, fig. 45/14, 18-19; 46/13-14, 20; 47/17-18; 48/6, 8.

⁹ MIKOV 1930-1931, 176, fig. 149/21; MIKOV 1933, 125.

¹⁰ SIMION 2004, 17-18 (T XVB-m2, M1-SXVI and M3-SII).

¹¹ TORBOV, PAUNOV 2001, 47-48, fig. 1/a-b.

¹² KITOV 1995, 54.

¹³ TAČEVA-HITOVA 1971, 47, fig. 15/a-b.

¹⁴ MILČEV, KOVAČEV 1971, 51, 57, fig. 7/g.

¹⁵ AGRE 1990, 18, fig. 2/a.

Lessura¹⁶, Vărbanovo (former know as Tzareva Livada)¹⁷ and also in a tomb situated near the tumulus 1 from Sboryanovo (Mumdžilar)¹⁸. Another two fibulae discovered at Svištov¹⁹, as well as the one from an unknown locality in Oltenia region²⁰ were probably originally deposited as grave goods in destroyed tombs. They are also presented in settlements but all these discoveries (20 fibulae) are only from the Eastern Carpathian area: 17 exemplars from Bunești, all of them being part of hoards and deposits discovered inside the site (the hoard discovered in 1979, the deposit no. 1/1980 and the little hoard discovered in the house no. 21)²¹, two fibulae from Poiana²² and one fibula from Răcățău²³. In a different context could be included the four fibulae from Epureni-Huși, they being part of a hoard accidentally discovered “in a mound”²⁴.

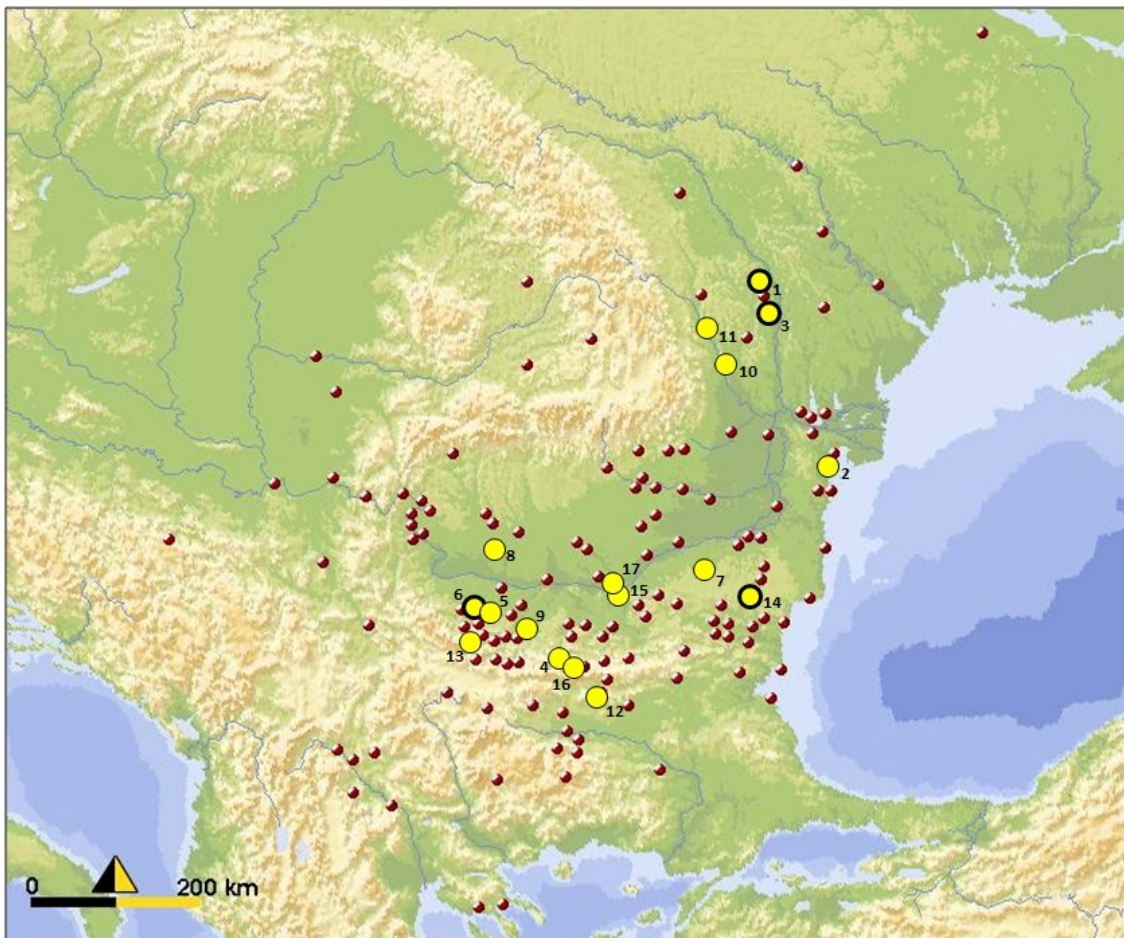


Fig. 2. The diffusion map of the Thracian scheme fibulae (red / white dots) superposed by the finding spots of the silver fibulae (yellow dots). The dots having heavy dark border line represents finds of pairs of Thracian siver fibulae in closed complexes (graves or hoards).

The numbers on the map follow the crt. no. from the fig. 3.

¹⁶ MIKOV 1930-1931, 176, fig. 149/22.

¹⁷ MIKOV 1930-1931, 176, fig. 149/23.

¹⁸ FEHER 1934, 107-108, fig. 88.

¹⁹ STEFANOV 1955, 50, fig. 2/v.

²⁰ POPESCU 1945-1947, 55-56, fig. 11/2; 13.

²¹ BAZARCIUC 1981, 564, fig. 1-2; BAZARCIUC 1983b, 266, fig. 22/3-4.

²² TEODOR, ȚAU 1996, 94, fig. 2/11, 14, cat. no. 20, 23.

²³ CĂPITANU 1984, 63, fig. 1/1.

²⁴ SEVEREANO 1935, 23, fig. 2-5.

If we compare this picture (fig. 2) to that of the usage of silver in the northern Balkan area for the Early and Middle Latène scheme fibulae (but not the Late Latène – it is a completely special case, when a lot of samples could be found in the Dacian silver hoards²⁵), we find a bleak image: only Early Latène scheme fibulae (one found by chance at Costâna²⁶, another one from the tumulus 23 in Sveštari²⁷ necropolis, the last one belonging to grave goods of the tumulus 2 from Platoneşti²⁸), except only one Middle Latène scheme fibula (found in the cave from Ohaba Ponor, together with some Late Iron Age potsherds²⁹). Thus, the silver was rarely used for the making of the Early and Middle Latène scheme fibulae that follow the Thracian scheme fibula in the North of the Balkans. The situation will be completely changed in the Late Iron Age (the 1st century BC – the 1st century AD) when the Dacian silver hoards will become spectacular³⁰.

| | I 1 | I 3 | II 1 | II 2 | III 1 | III 2 | III 3a | III 3b | III 4b | Frg. | Total |
|----------------|--------------|----------|----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 Buneşti | | | | | | 3 | 1 | 13 | | | 17 |
| 2 Enisala | | | 1 | | | | | | | 2 | 3 |
| 3 Epureni-Huşi | | | | | | | | 4 | | | 4 |
| 4 Laga | | | | 1 | | | | | | 2 | 3 |
| 5 Lessura | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| 6 Meždra | | | 2 | | | | | | | | 2 |
| 7 Sveštari | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| 8 Oltenia | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| 9 Krăvenik | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| 10 Poiana | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | 2 |
| 11 Răcătău | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| 12 Şipka | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 2 |
| 13 Skravena | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| 14 Staroselka | 2 | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| 15 Svištov | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| 16 Varbanovo | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| 17 Zimnicea | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | 4 | 10 |
| Total | 2 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 18 | 1 | 11 | 53 |
| | I = 3 | | II = 10 | | III = 29 | | | | | | |

Fig. 3. Table showing repartition of the silver Thracian scheme fibulae according to types and variants.

A repartition of the silver Thracian scheme fibulae according to variants is presented in the table from fig. 3 and then synthesized in the graphic from fig. 4. A poor affinity between silver and type I, as well as the domination of type III could be noticed. In the same time, the 11 fragmentary pieces (an important quantity, 21% from the total amount) reveal an uncertain situation from a statistical viewpoint and a certain fragility of the conclusion.

²⁵ RUSTOIU 1997, 31-33, 44-45, 48-50, fig. 13-18, 42-46; SPĂNU 2006, 190.

²⁶ TEODOR 1988, 49, fig. 5/1

²⁷ RADEV 2000, 155, fig. 4.

²⁸ RENŢA et alii 2007, 273.

²⁹ NICOLĂESCU-PLOPŞOR 1957, 47, fig. 5/6.

³⁰ SPĂNU 2006.

Although, even a sharp looking at the percentage (11%), i.e. the 53 silver samples, clearly shows that they are uneven spread and that only two types are preponderant: type II (ten samples) and type III (29 samples). It could also be noticed that silver is very important in this context. Thus, from the 49 type II fibulae, ten samples (20 %) are made of silver. Regarding the type III the situation is clearer: from the total of 163 fibulae, 29 are made of silver (18%), but the percentage increases inside the type III with bold and faceted bow (sub-type III 3): from the 69 fibulae, 22 are made of silver (about one third - 32%). And in case we refer only to the variant III 3b (strongly thickened and faceted bow, thin foot bent S like completed with an oversized finial) we have an even more suggestive situation: from the 19 pieces of this variant, 18 (95%) are made of silver. At the opposite side, silver is rarely used for the type I: only three pieces (2%) of the total of 129 fibulae are made of silver.

We have insisted upon this statistical representation in order to demonstrate that silver as a raw material for the making of the Thracian scheme fibula was “directed” mainly to two forms: type II in generally (fig. 5) and variant III 3b (fig. 7).

The origin of the silver used for the type II fibulae (fig. 5) seems more easily to be mentioned. The area of the North-East of the actual Bulgaria, especially in two main regions, Vraca and Etropole, has always been rich in metal ores, especially copper and silver³¹. There is another important centre in region: Lovec³². The reality that the main place where the silver adornments were found was the Etropole area suggests the presence of a workshop in this land rich in raw material³³. The map from the fig. 6 clearly shows how the rich in silver triangle Vraca – Lovec – Etropole, covers the nucleus of the spreading area of type II fibula.

The western half of the North of the actual Bulgaria has always represented an area often reached by the Macedonian silver coins hoards, in the context of the many political and military conflicts or alliances of the time³⁴. The density of the coins hoards in this space, which generally represents the core of the spreading of the type II fibula, is impressive. The chronology of these hoards also corresponds to the accepted dating of type II fibula – the second half of the 4th century and the first half of the 3rd century BC³⁵. There are hoards that include coins from Philip II of Macedon (Bălgarski Izvor, Vlasatica – more than one thousand tetradrachms)³⁶, posthumous Philip II issues (Mecica, Krusovica)³⁷, Alexander the Great emissions (Baikal, Cerpaev, Devetaki, Kranovo, Lomec, Musina, Ruse, Tarnak)³⁸, Philip III Arrhidaeus (Glatatci)³⁹ or mixed hoards, from Philippe II coins to emissions of the Diadochi (Slana Bara)⁴⁰. If we overlap this impressive number of silver coins on the map of the well known Thracian silver hoards, ones of them true treasures, buried in the area between

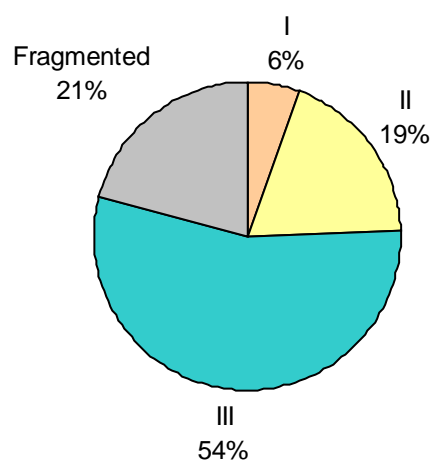


Fig. 4. The total amount of 53 silver Thracian scheme fibulae ranged according to the type.

³¹ ZLATKOVSKAJA, ŠELOV 1971, 51, rys. 1.

³² ARCHIBALD 1998, p. 24, fig. 9.

³³ TONKOVA 1994, 186.

³⁴ DANOV 1976, 387-393.

³⁵ ZIRRA 1996-1998, 38, 41, Abb. 14; MĂNDESCU 2000a, 86-87; MĂNDESCU 2010, 343.

³⁶ GUŠTERAKLIEV 1994, 138; THEODOSSIEV 2000, 143, cat. no. 245.

³⁷ PREDÁ 1973, 29, 32; GERASIMOV 1963, 267.

³⁸ THEODOSSIEV 2000, 107, 139, 224, cat. no. 9; GERASIMOV 1959, 364, 366; GERASIMOV 1964, 245; GUŠTERAKLIEV 1994, 139, 141.

³⁹ THEODOSSIEV 2000, 115, cat. no. 75.

⁴⁰ THEODOSSIEV 2000, 136, cat. no. 208.

the 5th and the 3rd centuries BC (i.e. Mizia-Bukjovtisi, Vraca, Rogozen, Lukovit, Alexandrovo, Lovec, Letnica, Vladinja, Stoyanovo-Radjuven), we will have a complete display upon another source of precious metals used for the making the silver fibulae of type II, i.e. the Odrysian silver and, later, the Macedonian one.

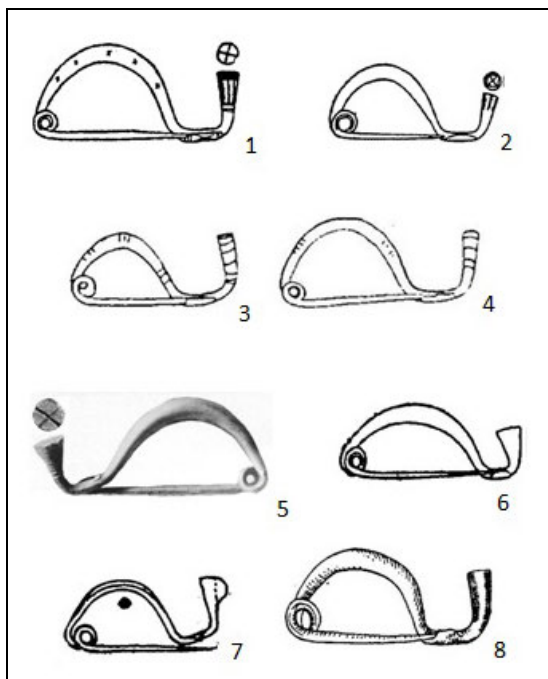


Fig. 5. The silver Thracian scheme fibulae of type II. 1 Laga; 2 Lessura; 3-4 Meždra; 5 Skravena; 6 Varbanovo. Various scales. According to: V. Mikov, N. Torbov and E. Paunov, D. Agre, A. D. Alexandrescu.

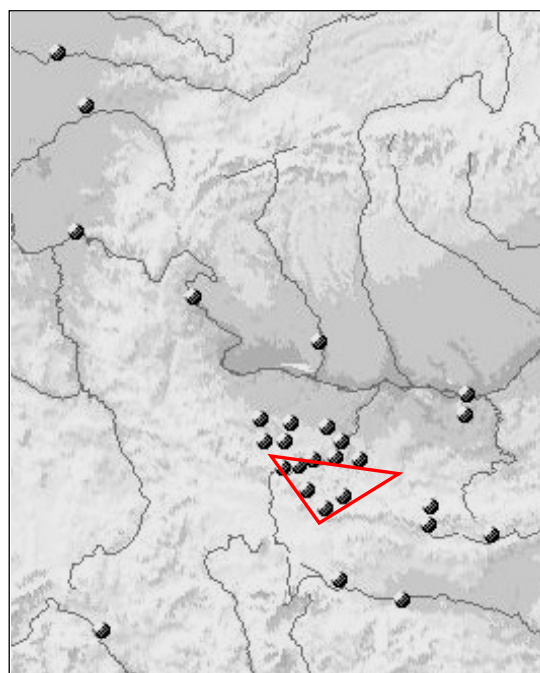


Fig. 6. The rich-in-silver triangle Vraca-Lovec-Etropole superimposed the diffusion map of the Thracian scheme fibulae of type II.

Regarding the variant III 3b we could say that it is an East-Carpathian form. The fibulae of this variant came from only four places: Bârlad (the only piece made of bronze and not of silver)⁴¹, Poiana⁴², Epureni⁴³ and Buneşti⁴⁴; thus a clear main spreading area is marked: the Central Moldavian Plateau⁴⁵, at the periphery of the Thracian scheme fibula's diffusion space.

The "baroque" aspect of these pieces, the extremely thickened bow and the ending prominent finial that permitted generous decorative patterns are obvious witnesses for the quantity of silver as a raw material needed for the making of such a fibula, a much bigger quantity used for the other forms and variants. It is important to be mentioned that the only attestations of the existence of a kind of possible ceremonial attire for which the Thracian scheme fibula played a main role could be found in the Central Moldavian Plateau. These elements of ceremonial are the 14 fibulae (most of them, 12 pieces, are included in the variant III 3b) of the hoard discovered in 1979 in Buneşti (the other jewels completing the respective attire were: two rings, temple links with cone like endings, two small necklaces, two massive bracelets, a spiral bracelet with snake like endings and an identical bronze bracelet – fig. 7/1)⁴⁶, the four fibulae of the hoard discovered by chance at Epureni in 1922 (the jewels

⁴¹ MĂNDESCU 2000a, 81.

⁴² TEODOR, ȚAU 1996, 94, fig. 2/14.

⁴³ SEVEREANO 1935, 23, fig. 2-5.

⁴⁴ BAZARCIUC 1981, 546, fig. 1/4-10; BAZARCIUC 1983b, 288, fig. 22/3-4.

⁴⁵ MĂNDESCU 2004, 43, fig. 1/7-9; 2.

⁴⁶ BAZARCIUC 1980, 169-170, fig. 10; 12/2.

garniture also included two massive silver bracelets with zoomorphous endings – fig. 7/3)⁴⁷, as well as the two fibulae of the hoard discovered in 1981 in the same settlement from Bunești, inside the house no. 21 (the fibulae were associated with two multi-spiral silver bracelets with zoomorphous endings – fig. 7/2)⁴⁸.

It is without any doubt that these fibulae belonging to the hoards from Bunești and Epureni were intended from very beginning as parts of unitary jewelry adornments. The fact that they were symmetrically placed in the ensemble of the adornments is attested by the existence of the even pairs samples (12 in Bunești – in the hoard found in 1979, four in Epureni, two in Bunești – in the hoard found in 1981). The disposing of the fibulae in pairs is also suggested by the position of the catch plate and that of the spring on the one and on the other side respectively, so that the entire image of the position of the fibula on the attire must have been symmetrical with one half “mirroring” into the other⁴⁹. Although it seems to be an insignificant detail, the way the fibula’s catch plate and the spring were placed in relation to the bow’s one side or the other must be carefully analyzed. A sharp look upon the entire lot of Thracian scheme fibulae discovered till now reveals a morphological standardization regarding the position of the catch plate and the spring (almost always on the left side of the fibula), fact that implies a certain uniformity of the way the attire was worn (probably with the fibula on the right side of the chest or on the right shoulder)⁵⁰. Even when more ordinary bronze Thracian scheme fibula were part of the same closed ensemble (for example, five fibulae in every one of the following graves: Vlaško Selo⁵¹, Dobrina⁵², C6 and C15 M54 from Zimnicea⁵³, as well as in the deposit discovered in 1952 in the settlement at Poiana⁵⁴, seven fibulae in a tomb at Zlokučen⁵⁵ and ten fibulae in a barrow grave at Iablanica⁵⁶), all of them had the spring and also the catch plate on the left side of the piece, none on the right side – it is obvious that in these cases we could not talk neither about unitary accessories set of attire nor about pieces made by the same master in the same period of time. Regarding the sets of silver fibulae belonging to the hoards from Bunești and Epureni, the standardization proper to the ordinary Thracian fibulae could not be seen, as long as the catch plates are placed on the both sides of the pieces (on the right side of the bow for a half from the fibulae and on the left side for the other half) – there are the only situations of this kind for the whole spreading area of the Thracian scheme fibula where the very feature, i.e. the unitary placement, could be clearly seen. The others two known pairs of silver Thracian fibulae (fig. 2) belonged to the grave goods of the tombs from Staroselka (type I 1) and Meždra (type II 1 – fig. 5/3-4), but in these cases both of the fibulae forming the pair had the spring and also the catch plate on the left side of the piece – the common and regular feature of the ordinary Thracian shape fibulae.

The origin of the silver used for making the East-Carpathian fibulae belonging to the form III 3b still remain uncertain, although there are some clues regarding it. We can certainly exclude the possibility that local raw materials were used. The Central Moldavian Plateau does not offer such resources and no possibility of extraction and processing of the local ores in the 4th-3rd centuries BC have not been documented till now. It is probable that the silver was brought from some other places as coins; then, the coins were transformed in the fibulae known today as Thracian fibulae III 3b.

The overlapping of the spreading area of the silver fibula III 3b over that of the Huși-Vovriești type coins (an area whose nucleus is the eastern of the Carpathians) must be, in our opinion, more carefully evaluated. The most recent statistic shows that about 420 of the 500 known

⁴⁷ SEVEREANO 1935, 17-36.

⁴⁸ BAZARCIUC 1983b, 262, 266, fig. 22,

⁴⁹ MĂNDESCU 2000b, 217; MĂNDESCU 2001-2003, 23-24.

⁵⁰ MĂNDESCU 2000b, 215-216.

⁵¹ POPOV 1923-1924, 128, fig. 60.

⁵² MIRČEV 1965, 50, fig. 14/48.

⁵³ ALEXANDRESCU 1980, 23, fig. 45/1-2, 4, 6, 8 (C6); 33, fig. 45/20; 46/1 47/20-21; 48/14 (C15 M54).

⁵⁴ VULPE 1952, 202, fig. 24; TEODOR, ȚAU 1996, 94, fig. 1/2-3, 6, 8-9.

⁵⁵ MIKOV 1957, 302, fig. 4.

⁵⁶ BOŽKOVA, AGRE 1995, 34-35, fig. 3.

pieces belonging to Huși-Vovriești type coins (a huge percentage, about 84%) result from the discoveries made in the central Moldavia⁵⁷.

The late dating of these coins (the 2nd century BC) and the fact they were related to the migration of the Bastarnae in Moldavia⁵⁸ may not be sustained anymore. The strongest argument for an early dating of the Huși-Vovriești type coins, since at the end of the 4th century BC, is the fact that they are related to the hoard from Stolniceni, which also includes perfectly preserved drachmas minted by Istros⁵⁹.

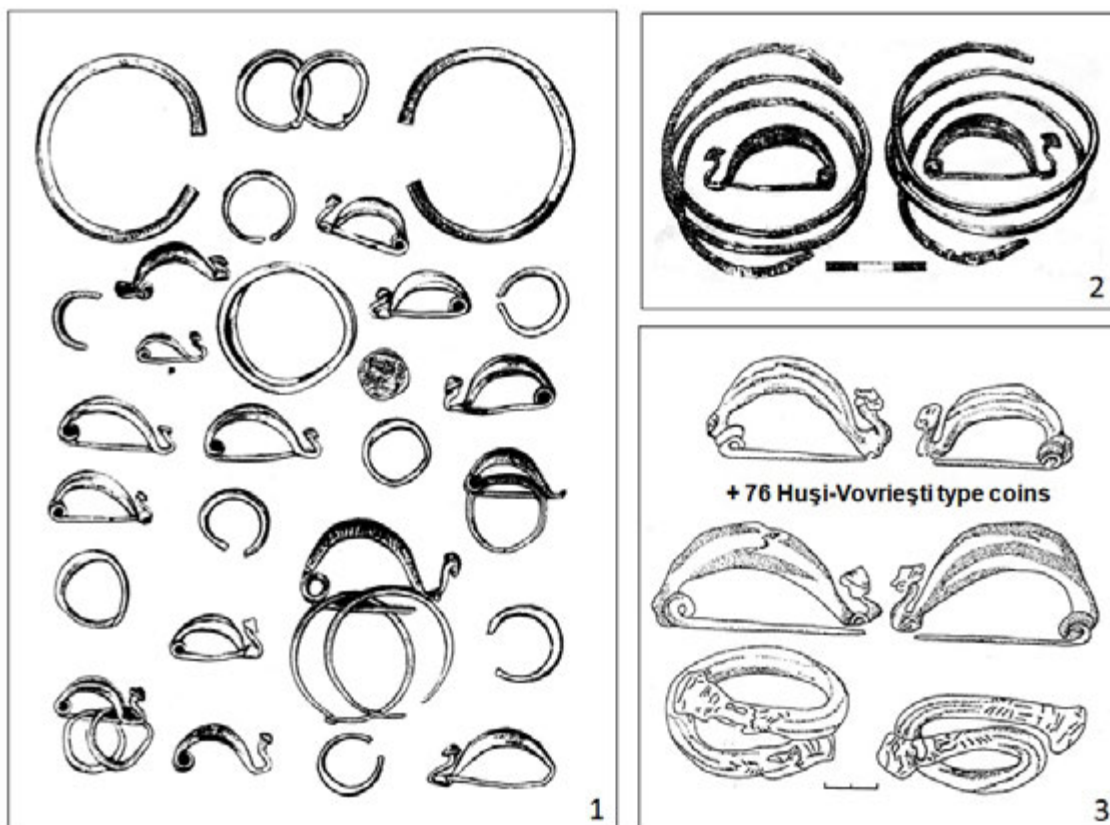


Fig. 7. Silver Thracian scheme of variant III 3b in association with other adornments and silver coins. 1 Bunești - the hoard discovered in 1979; 2 Bunești – the hoard discovered in 1981; 3 Epureni-Huși. Various scales. According to: V. V. Bazarciuc and S. Teodor

Excepting the discovery from Bârlad (where the fibulae are made of bronze) all the other three sites where III 3b Thracian scheme fibulae (made of silver) were found also included silver Huși-Vovriești type coins, and not only in the same archaeological layer with the fibulae but even associated in some closed ensembles. In the Huși-Vovriești monetary type eponymous discovery, at Epureni-Huși, the silver coins were associated with silver fibulae III 3b. Huși-Vovriești coins have also been discovered in settlement at Poiana, and mainly at Bunești, a site that ceased to exist very probably at the end of the 3rd century, where were discovered 14 such coins⁶⁰ in the same layer with the fibulae, but also they were associated to a fibula III 3b in the deposit no. 1 brought to light in 1980 archaeological campaign⁶¹.

⁵⁷ ARNĂUT 2003, 153, fig. 80.

⁵⁸ PREDĂ 1973, 126; MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 1990, 71-72; PREDĂ 1998, 159-164.

⁵⁹ LEVINSCHI 1994-1995; LEVINSCHI 1999; ARNĂUT 2003, 281, cat. no. Ba19, fig. 182.

⁶⁰ BAZARCIUC 1983-1984, 171; MĂNDESCU 2010, 92.

⁶¹ BAZARCIUC 1980, 168, fig. 13/1-2; BAZARCIUC 1983a, 211, 213, fig. 3.

We dare to affirm that it is not impossible that the sudden emerging of this form at the east of the Carpathians (corroborated to the relative short period of existence – middle 3rd century BC, maybe its end, too⁶²) to be caused by the afflux of the Huși-Vovriești coins in that area.

We are still far away from having detailed determinations and metallographic analyses that could clarify some of the issues. Although, there are some clues which suggest that the silver of coins was used as raw material for making jewelries and ornaments of attire, at least in certain circumstances. For a later period (pre-roman Dacia), the example of the hoard from Stăncuța⁶³ is the best known, but similar situation could also be met in a period when the Thracian scheme fibula was in fashion, as the hoard discovered at Bunești in 1979 suggests. Probably it is not accidental that the silver of the jewels and of the drachma minted by Istros associated into this closed ensemble had the same title (916‰)⁶⁴. There are also possibilities of study regarding the gold used for making jewels in the East of the Carpathians between the 4th and the 3rd centuries BC: the analyze of the Macedonian staters (the last minting date - 305 BC) as well as that of the gold necklaces associated in the hoard from Lărguța, placed also in a gold vessel⁶⁵, could lead to relevant results in this perspective.

The issue of the raw material, especially silver, used for making the Thracian-Getic adornments and pieces of attire remains a delicate and challenging one. The Thracian scheme fibula (a small and apparently unimportant category of artifacts, insignificant by comparison to the hoards and treasures of vessels and precious metal jewelry discovered in the Thracian area) suggests the possibility of existence of at least two cultural and cultural “patterns” regarding the sources of getting the silver used as a raw material for making them. The exploitation of the local resources (the classic “pattern”, stressed by the presence of the type II fibulae) it should not remain the only answer to this matter. The variant of the usage of the silver previously used for the coin making (suggested by both the type II and, especially, by the variant III 3b fibula) deserves to be taken into consideration; a coherent metallographic analyzing and measurements program could transform this hypothesis in a fact.

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⁶² ZIRRA 1996-1998, 46-47, Abb. 6/7-8, 10, 12-13; MĂNDESCU 2000a, 81, 88-90; MĂNDESCU 2010, 342.

⁶³ PREDĂ 1957.

⁶⁴ BAZARCIUC 1980, 169-170, fig. 10, 12/2; MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 1990, 129, cat. no. 34.

⁶⁵ NUDEL'MAN 1969; ARNĂUT 2003, 230, cat. no. 266.

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