

PONTICA ET MEDITERRANEA VIII

Advances in Ancient Black Sea Studies: Historiography, Archaeology and Religion



Editors:
Victor Cojocaru, Ligia Ruscu,
Thibaut Castelli and
Annamária-Izabella Pázsint



**ADVANCES IN ANCIENT BLACK SEA STUDIES:
HISTORIOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND RELIGION**

PONTICA ET MEDITERRANEA

Vol. VIII

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Preface

The volume 'Advances in Ancient Black Sea Studies' is in line with our efforts in recent years to bridge the large gap between two scholarly traditions, conjoining the research traditions of scholars educated in the West with those of scholars educated in the East in order to absorb, interpret and integrate the constant flow of new information about the Black Sea region into mainstream western classical scholarship.

The 'Advances' conference brought together 61 scholars from 12 European countries, ready to discuss key advance of recent years in ancient Black Sea studies, in Greek, Roman and Byzantine times, with a focus on scholarly traditions, archaeology, religion and the preservation of cultural heritage. Of the 44 papers presented in Constanța, 24 have been included in this volume; two more (by V.P. Yaylenko and N.V. Zavoykina) were added, being very suitable contributions to the subjects of colonization and identity, and entailing new discoveries. The subsequent collection of papers has been organized into four main categories based on research fields and chronological criteria. Their content can be easily explored through the abstracts available in all of the three languages of the conference. Taking into account the large number of contributions and the topics approached, we decided that the papers on the preservation of cultural heritage should be published in a separate volume (ed. by S. Musteață). In what follows, we intend to provide a more systematic overview of the selected studies, based on the way in which the main themes of this volume were addressed.

a) Several contributions deal with the study of the Black Sea between colonization and identity. THIBAUT CASTELLI focuses on the navigational conditions of sailing ships in different seasons, by using the nautical sources of the last two centuries (sailing directions, travel stories, etc.), as well as ancient literary sources. MADALINA DANA specifically examines a certain exoticism visible in the manner of speaking, dressing and behaving among Greeks in the Black Sea, where they are surrounded by 'Barbarians'. The author ponders the ways in which the Euxine was perceived by

other Greeks, as a place of cultural innovations, but also with respect to the traditions and cultural heritage which the inhabitants of the Pontus themselves tried to conserve and bring to the fore. The overall intention of DAVID BRAUND is to bring together literary traditions on colonial settlement and ancient ethical considerations on related matters, – touching on aspects such as the primary relationships between colony and mother-city, and the importance of religion in the process of overseas settlement. VALERY P. YAYLENKO rejects the correction proposed by F.V. Shelov-Kovedyaev regarding Diodorus' Ἀρχαίανακτίδαι (ἀρχαὶ ἀνακτισταί), arguing that the ending -αι of Ἀρχαί- is a Lesbian phonetic feature, which supports the correctness of Diodorus' form. Moreover, the author reveals new evidence concerning the Aeolians on the Taman peninsula. Disagreeing with previous scholarship, MICHAEL A. SPEIDEL argues that the pattern that emerges from the surviving evidence suggests that the expression *natione Ponticus* was rooted in the Roman naval force's administrative practices. Its use, nevertheless, remained ambiguous and prone to 'misunderstandings'. DAN RUSCU describes the image of the Black Sea in the historical writings of Late Antiquity, thus offering valuable information not only on the contemporary knowledge of the region, but also on the way this information was articulated and transmitted.

b) A second cluster of articles concentrates on the Greeks and non-Greeks between scholarly traditions and acculturation. VICTOR COJOCARU explains the reason why the bibliography project *Bibliographia classica orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini* was set in place, presenting its general structure as well as its innovative elements compared to other bibliographical works. This is followed by further reflection on the contribution of the Russian, Soviet and post-Soviet schools in the study of North Pontic antiquities. VALENTINA MORDVINTSEVA discusses the expressions 'Late Scythian culture' and 'Crimean Scythia' as two modern concepts. According to the predominant point of view, the Late Scythian culture of the Crimea was constantly transforming in the course of the 'Sarmatization' process. This position seems to the author unsustainable. Some migrations to the Crimea from the North Pontic steppe or the Caucasus could well have occurred, but newcomers certainly had much less effect on the functioning of the social networks and the economic and cultural appearance of 'Crimean Scythia' than the proximity of the ancient centres and geopolitical aspirations of the great hegemonic powers from outside the region. LAVINIA GRUMEZA focuses on the issue of recent research on funerary archaeology in ancient Crimea. The author summarizes some of the most important publications of the last 10 years or so, on topics such as: cemeteries (graves – inventory – rituals); external influences on beliefs and on the selection of inventories; evidence of cultural contacts based on

the 'funerary' costume, ethnicity and multicultural societies. MARINA YU. VAKHTINA and MAYA T. KASHUBA present Nemirov and its special place among the gigantic early Scythian city-sites of the forest-steppe zone of the Northern Black Sea Coastal Region. A detailed survey of the local pottery complex of the site made possible a distinction between several components, among them the early nomadic or Early Scythian culture, the so-called Carpathian-Danubian Hallstatt cultures and perhaps the influences of the cultures of the Eastern-Hallstatt circle of Central Europe. FRANÇOIS DE CALLATAÏ aims to reconsider the question of the 'arrowheads' found *en masse* along the western shore of the Black Sea. Past literature on the topic has largely endorsed the idea that they were monetary objects (both standards of value and means of exchange). Put into perspective however, this idea does not fit well with the general framework: an area with a hinterland which remained poorly monetized up to the end of the Hellenistic period. AMIRAN and EMZAR KAKHIDZE make some observations concerning the acculturation in the Classical period of coastal Colchis on the basis of the Greek and Colchian cemeteries at Pichvnari. The ritual of burying the dead in a contracted position was widespread in the Bronze and Iron Age cultures of Georgia and of the Caucasus. The discoveries at Pichvnari suggest that Greeks no longer practised this custom by the 5th century BC, although it seems to have been in use for some time among the locals. MIKHAIL TREISTER discusses evidence which may lead to the interpretation of Greek, Macedonian and Roman bronze vessels found in Scythia and Sarmatia as 'second-hand' objects. The signs of repair on the vessels may in rare cases, when this type of repair is unusual for local metalwork and typical for that of Greek/Roman origin, give hints which suggest that the vessels found their way to the nomads in an already repaired format. JEAN COERT and TASSILO SCHMITT propose a re-dating (the middle of the 4th century AD) of the inscription on a silver bowl from the city of Mtskheta. Of importance in supporting this theory is the origin of the dish (Gaul). The artefact might be a political gift from Constantine I to a king Dades, who gave it to the *pitiax* Bersumas to ensure loyalty and good relations. The result has consequences for the understanding of the Christianization of Iberia.

c) A third section assembles those contributions which are dedicated to new discoveries and to prospective research directions. ULRIKE PETER presents the corresponding online catalogue for the Western Pontic shore, which is in the making and which is part of a larger international project for the cooperative registration of ancient Greek coin types. With the *Corpus Nummorum Thracorum* (www.corpus-nummorum.eu), an innovative Web portal for Thracian coins was established. This is a research database for collecting and categorizing, based on inventories, imports,

larger collections, into which external coins can be integrated. NATALIA V. ZAVOYKINA proposes a new dating and reading of a *graffito* from Phanagoria. This private letter, dated between the second half of the 5th and the beginning of the 4th century BC, adds to our knowledge of anthroponomy, private life, and the linguistic characteristics of the language used by the Phanagorians in the Classical period. DOREL PARASCHIV, MIHAELA IACOB and COSTEL CHIRIAC synthesize some results of the systematic archaeological research of the city of (L)Ibida, which began in 2001. Among other matters taken into account are the following: the evolution of the site during the Principate, the Roman building in the 'Curtain' sector, the stratigraphy of the Roman period, the ceramic finds as well as other categories of archaeological materials. ȘTEFAN HONCU and LUCIAN MUNTEANU present an iron shield umbo from a rural settlement of Ibida – 'Fântâna Seacă'. The artefact was (exceptionally) found in a civilian area, in a settlement with a dominant agricultural character, situated in the rural territory of a fortified town. The owner of the villa where the umbo was uncovered seems to have been a veteran with a role in the local administration or even an active soldier. DAN APARASCHIVEI makes a detailed presentation of 12 fibulae and fibula fragments used by the inhabitants of the fortress of Ibida, from the 5th century to the early 7th century AD. Along with the other previously published finds, the publication of this batch of fibulae allows the construction of a relevant picture for this site, which is representative for the province of Scythia, from the 2nd century until the beginning of the 7th century AD.

d) Finally, the fourth cluster of articles focuses on various religious aspects. JORGE TELLO BENEDICTO aims to present a selection of the Archaic literary and epigraphic evidence regarding Artemis and Apollo in Ionia and its colonial territories in the Black Sea. Such a study may contribute to the understanding of religious, social and political life in the Archaic Ionian world, its dynamics and its development from one Mediterranean shore to the other. Taking as a case study the so-called 'Borysthenes coins', the largest and most famous bronze series in the history of the Olbian coinage, VLADIMIR F. STOLBA explores the connotative meaning of coin imagery and its potential as a communication and marketing tool. An integrated approach that takes into account not only the metrological and chronological characteristics of the coins, but also the contextual typological analysis, along with the distribution of the finds within and beyond the polis territory, this approach gives the key to understanding a number of other coin types and iconographic motifs in the coinages of Olbia and other Greek centres of the region. LIVIA BUZOIANU and MARIA BĂRBULESCU select two categories of artefacts from the archaeological discoveries of Albești which found analogies or similarities over a large area in the Pontic and

Mediterranean Greek world: 1) ceramic altars with decorative registers on the four sides; 2) appliqués with representation of a female deity wearing a veil. Both categories are considered to be votive objects. The main area of their distribution is the Black Sea region, hence the hypothesis of their production in several local workshops. ANNAMÁRIA-IZABELLA PÁZSINT brings into focus the private cult associations from the Greek cities of the Black Sea. The paper provides a comparative outlook on the private cult associations from each of the Black Sea's shores, in order to understand the differences which distinguish them, as well as the aspects which bring them closer. Even though the area is not characterised by uniformity, the common Greek core of these cities – in which the associative phenomenon is a constitutive element – gives them a certain degree of coherence, despite their different political evolution and their economic specificities. The paper of GABRIEL TALMAȚCHI is dedicated to the Helios monetary type issued at Istros, considered until a few decades ago as insignificant both with respect to the number of pieces and to the role of the deity in the local religious life. In the non-numismatic bibliography on the cult of Helios at Istros, the most recent opinion denies its possible presence in this city. But, the reality of the monetary discoveries could point to another approach to the subject, in correlation with the finds from Olbia and other places. MARTA OLLER GUZMÁN addresses the inscriptions attesting the *strategoí* of Apollo *Prostatès* at Olbia, considering that such a study may offer valuable information for the better understanding of the political, social and religious life of the Pontic city in the Roman period. LIGIA RUSCU considers the coming of Rome as a turning point for the Black Sea poleis in many respects, including their religion and cults. Against the background of the impact of religious novelties on the traditional structure of the cults of the poleis, the paper examines the consequences of the evolution of some of the most ancient and venerable cults, as evinced by the place of priestly offices, especially eponymous priesthoods, within the careers of office-holders.

Our hope is that this volume reflects once again a tradition of fruitful collaboration between the Institute of Archaeology of Iași and many academic institutions from Romania and abroad. Among the participants, most have contributed to our previous initiatives, especially to the recent network conferences and volumes 'Interconnectivity in the Mediterranean and Pontic World during the Hellenistic and Roman Periods' (Constanța, 2013 – published in 2014), 'Mobility in Research on the Black Sea Region' (Iași, 2015 – published in 2016), and 'Advances in Ancient Black Sea Studies: Methodological Innovation, Interdisciplinary Perspectives and International Cooperation' (Iași, 2017 – some topics have been developed in this volume). Some of the authors joined our research network even earlier.

Preface

Such meetings helped to establish a permanent dialogue within a research group focused on the Black Sea region in the ancient world. And while the current gathering was based, to a certain extent, on our previous network conferences and volumes, we have moved forward and we took another successful step in the research of the Black Sea region in antiquity.

As editors of the present volume, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of the authors for their efficient cooperation during the editorial process as well as to our colleagues within the editorial board of the book series 'Pontica et Mediterranea', who were involved as reviewers and language editors. Last, but not least, we would like warmly to acknowledge yet again the collegial and very efficient collaboration with the Mega Publishing House.

June 2019

The editors

Scholarly Traditions in the Studies of the 'Late Scythian Culture of the Crimea' and 'Crimean Scythia'

Valentina Mordvintseva

The definitions 'Late Scythian Culture of the Crimea' and 'Crimean Scythia' refer to a circle of non-urban (usually called 'barbarian') archaeological sites, located in the piedmont and steppe Crimea, and dated to the Late Hellenistic and Roman periods. The history of their research can be divided into several periods, which differ in the dynamics of the excavation activities, in the combinations of the analytical approaches and the interpretation models.

I. 1st period. From the late 18th to the second third of the 19th century

Interest in the ancient history of the Crimea emerged in Russia soon after the proclamation of the Russian Empire by Peter I and the creation of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences.¹ The inclusion of the Crimea into the Russian Empire in 1783 entailed a comprehensive survey of this territory: historical (including ethnographic and archaeological surveys), physical-geographical, topographical, economic-statistical, etc. In the late 18th – early 19th century, the first voluminous historical descriptions of the Crimea and its population from the ancient to the modern times were compiled.² Academicians from the capital city of St. Petersburg, such as V.F. Zuev, K.I. Gablitz, P.S. Pallas, E.E. Köhler, P.I. Köppen et al., made detours and described the Crimean Peninsula, including its archaeological sites, which were then compared with the settlements mentioned in the classical literature. During these journeys, sketches of ruins were made and antique objects (coins, gems, marbles, etc.) were collected, most of which

¹ TUNKINA 2002: 27f.

² NARUSHEVICH 1788; SESTRENTSEVICH-BOGUSH 1806.

were presented to the Emperor and donated to the Imperial Hermitage, where its custodians developed principles of systematization, cataloguing, scientific processing and publication of the collections.³ The discovery in 1830 of unusually rich burials in the Kul-Oba barrow gave impetus to the beginning of systematic archaeological excavations in the southern provinces of the Russian Empire, which now were funded by the state.⁴ During this time, only 'high civilizations' were recognized as 'worthy' to be studied, while 'barbarian' cultures were not in the centre of the scientific problematic. It was the time of classicism, and most scholars as well as the public were interested in classical Greek and Roman antiquities. The main content of this period was the primary accumulation of archaeological material, and the development of methods for its cataloguing and systematization.

II. 2nd period. From the second third of the 19th century to the 1920s

During this period, the main focus of the archaeological research turned, to some extent, from classical antiquities towards prehistory. It was partly due to the rapid development of national identities in Europe. In Russia, it resulted in the first scholarly systematization of the archaeological material and the written sources concerning the 'barbarian' peoples inhabiting its vast territories in antiquity. In the Crimea, the main interest was paid to the Scythian barrows containing precious metalwork. The material dating to the later times was found sporadically during excavations in the western and central piedmont Crimea, but it did not attract much of the scholarly attention, because it was pretty poor in comparison with the earlier Scythian tombs. However, in this period some important archaeological sites were discovered, which belong to the culture known now as the 'Late Scythian': these are the settlements of Kermenchik (Neapolis Scythica),⁵ Zuya, Chayka, Belyaus, Kul'chuk and others.⁶ From an ethnic perspective these sites were interpreted differently: as Scythian,⁷ Tauro-Scythian,⁸ or even Greek.⁹

The first generalizations and synthesis of the different sources on the history of the South Russia's ancient peoples were undertaken in the late 19th century by count Ivan Tolstoy and Nikodim Kondakov. In their

³ TUNKINA 2002: 75.

⁴ TUNKINA 2002: 167.

⁵ TUNKINA 2002: 111.

⁶ DASHEVSKAYA 1991: 5.

⁷ MARKEVICH 1889: 114 & 115.

⁸ LATYSHEV 1887: 138 & 160.

⁹ UVAROV 1854: 525f.

6-volumes' work,¹⁰ the authors advanced the idea about the decisive historical role of the population of the Southern Russian steppes (predominantly Iranian in culture), in forming the oriental, so-called 'Greco-Barbarian' aspect of the Greek culture of the North Pontic region and the later Byzantium. The same concerned even the future forming of the mediaeval European culture. Their ideas were developed by Mikhail Rostovtseff into a historical concept, which still remains prevailing in academic circles.¹¹ However, apart from the detailed description of the Scythian kingdom ruled by king Skiluros, in this broad historical picture there was no place for an explicit characteristic of the non-urban culture of the Crimea in the period from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD. Rostovtseff has markedly pointed out only one cultural process connected with the 'barbarians'. He suggested that the material culture of the whole North Pontic region underwent changes in the course of the regular migration waves of Iranian peoples from the East.¹² He labelled this process as 'barbarization', 'Iranicization', or 'Sarmaticization'.¹³ Accordingly, he saw the causes of transformation of the material culture in the ethnic changes. The direct association of some special kinds of archaeological materials with an ethnic attribute gave him a starting point to look for the directions of migrations.

The historical concept developed by M. Rostovtseff, with its thorough analysis of different kinds of sources, was quite convincing and non-contradictory for that period, and it influenced the main streams in the history and archaeology of the North Pontic region for a long time.

III. 3rd period. 1924–1945

For a certain period of time after October 1917, the organization and the scientific discourse in the new Soviet state remained at the previous level, despite the changes in structure of the scientific institutions and the departure of many prominent scholars, like M.I. Rostovtseff who escaped abroad. However, by the mid-1920-s the ideology, which was reflected including in the field of archaeology, was totally monopolized by Marxism, often in the most vulgar form. In the Academy of material culture, the so-called 'theory of stages' was developed.¹⁴ According to this theory, all human societies underwent certain stages in their evolution, the 'revolutionary jumps' from one stage to another being accompanied by economic, social and ideological structural changes. These revolutionary changes

¹⁰ TOLSTOY – KONDAKOV 1889–1899; KONDAKOV [et al.] 1891.

¹¹ ROSTOVITSEFF 1922; 1929; ROSTOWZEW 1931; see also MORDVINTSEVA 2017a.

¹² ROSTOVITSEFF 1929: 42 & 66.

¹³ MORDVINTSEVA 2017a: 238–244.

¹⁴ LEBEDEV 1992: 42.

were caused by the internal development of the societies. Any external influence, as an explanatory tool, was excluded. Those who had a different point of view were persecuted. Rostovtseff's migration concept was forbidden, being considered as an anti-scientific racist theory.

At the same time, despite the tendency to oversimplify the concept, the sociological trend was brought forward in the Soviet archaeology, and new research methods were being developed. This period coincided with the 'discoveries' of archaeological cultures. For the North Pontic region, in Hellenistic and Roman times, the Sarmatian culture was proclaimed as the earliest, followed by the Maeotian culture. Particular attention was paid to the mass material, in contrast to the previous period, when the conclusions were based, as a rule, on the study of ostentatious burial complexes associated with the social elite. This led to extensive excavations and a replenishment of the source base, also in the Crimea. Already in the second half of the 1920s, the systematic survey of the archaeological sites began here.¹⁵ In particular, in the piedmont Crimea, "an extensive system of Scythian fortifications" was discovered.¹⁶ Based on the research of the fortified settlement Kermenchik, which was associated with Strabo's Neapolis Scythica, N. Ernst singled out the 'Neapolis Culture' of the Crimea, which was characterized by "a mixture of elements of the Greek, Roman and local origin; among the latter – a mixture of the steppe and mountain inhabitants, i.e. Scythian and Taurian".¹⁷ This culture also included other sites of the piedmont Crimea, typologically similar to Neapolis, and historically linked to the formation of the powerful 'Tauro-Scythian state' under the rule of King Skiluros and his sons.¹⁸ The term 'Neapolis culture', however, did not take root, because it did not fit into the recently formed official 'stage theory'. N. Ernst was repressed in 1938 on charges of espionage and 'Germanophile propaganda'.¹⁹

This period is characterized by a combination of innovative approaches at a relatively high level of generalization, but with the archaeological sources not going through a critical filter regarding the processing and comparative analysis of the field data. The actual prohibition of the detailed work at the 'processing level' led to the fact that the explicit proofs were not required if the scheme did not contradict the Marxists's 'stage theory'. As a result, most of the studies turned into schematic, uncritical essays from which the specific content was emasculated.

¹⁵ ERNST 1927; 1931; 1937; ERNST – MARKEVICH 1928a; 1928b; 1929; SHULTS 1937; 1941.

¹⁶ ERNST 1937: 241.

¹⁷ ERNST 1927: 27.

¹⁸ ERNST 1927: 28.

¹⁹ CHIZHOVA 2012: 164.

IV. 4th period. 1945–1980-s. 'The Late Scythian Culture'

Just before the end of the Second World War, in the summer of 1945, in the Crimea, a special academic archaeological expedition was organised under the direction of P. Shults. This expedition explicitly searched for remains of the Scythian statehood in the Crimea, in order to connect it with the 'autochthonous peoples', such as Taurians, Scythians, Sarmatians, and Slavs, thus excluding any possible trace of other peoples, particularly of German origin. This political task was directly formulated in the summary of the scientific session of the Department of History and Philosophy of the Crimean Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences, session which was held in 1952;²⁰ its echoes can be found in the archaeological literature up to the present time. This trend is reflected even in the denomination of the expedition – 'Tauro-Scythian'.

In the second half of the 1940s and in the 1950s the main attention was paid to the field works on the Kermenchik site, which in the 19th century was already interpreted by many researchers as Neapolis Scythica – one of the three Scythian fortresses mentioned by Strabo.²¹ Numerous publications were devoted to this settlement and its necropoleis.²² In the very first years of excavations, a stone mausoleum with burials of the 'barbarian' elite²³ was discovered, including the one which is believed to be of king Skiluros.²⁴ At the same time, field works continued in the central piedmont of Crimea and its north-western coastal area. It was concluded that there were differences between the 'barbarian' settlements in the piedmont area and the remnants of settlements, strongholds and harbours belonging to Tauric Chersonesus in western Crimea.²⁵

Since the late 1950s, the main focus of archaeological work has moved to the western coast of the peninsula. Several expeditions excavated simultaneously the fortifications and necropoleis of north-western (Chayka, Tarkhankut, Belyaus) and south-western Crimea (Alma-Kermen, Ust'-Alma', Bel'bek-IV, etc.). The region of south-western Crimea was mainly investigated along the banks of the Al'ma, Bel'bek, and Kacha rivers, where, in addition to excavations, a visual survey of the ancient sites, their mapping, topographical survey and small-scale diggings were carried out. As a result, virtually all currently known settlements and graveyards of the Late Scythian culture (in this part of the peninsula) were identified and

²⁰ AYBABIN [et al.] 1993: 211.

²¹ Str. 7.4.7.

²² KARASEV 1950; SHULTS 1953; BABENCHIKOV 1957; POGREBOVA 1961; SOLOMONIK 1962; VYSOTSKAYA 1979; SYMONOVICH 1983; RAEVSKIY 1971a, 1971b, 1976; etc.

²³ SHULTS 1952.

²⁴ ZAYTSEV 2001.

²⁵ ARTAMONOV 1948: 59.

recorded. Barrow mounds with burials of the same chronological horizons were also investigated.²⁶

The accumulated material allowed the identification of the main types of settlements and necropoleis of the Late Scythian culture, describing grave goods in some detail, building the relative and absolute chronology of the sites. The results of these works are presented in dissertations, articles and monographs.²⁷ In 1991, a summarized version of O. Dashevskaya's work was published,²⁸ which became a kind of handbook for the next almost thirty years.

By this time, the regular research of the 'barbarian' material culture of the Crimea had started. In contrast to the term proposed by N. Ernst, this culture was consciously called 'Late Scythian', which in many ways influenced its further study. The name of the culture did not concern the specificity of the archaeological remains that make it up. It was named according to the ethno-chronological principle, denoting the material culture of the 'Scythians' supposedly superseded by the 'Sarmatians' in the 3rd century BC. It was assumed that these 'late Scythians' formed two enclaves – the first in the Crimea and Lower Dnieper region, and the second in Thracia,²⁹ both connected with the 'Scythia Minor' of Strabo.³⁰ According to P. Shults, "the territory of the distribution of the archaeological Late Scythian culture was clearly defined already by Strabo".³¹ Thus, the term 'Late Scythian Culture' denoted not a totality of similar archaeological sites and assemblages, but any material remain that belonged to a particular period and was found on a certain territory. At the same time, from the very beginning, the Late Scythian culture was associated mainly with the first Crimean-Dnieper enclave, in which the 'Crimean' and 'Lower Dnieper' variants later began to be singled out.³²

Unlike the classical Scythian culture, represented mainly by barrow mounds and rare settlements, the Late Scythian culture includes fortified settlements surrounded by unfortified villages and flat necropoleis. This phenomenon was interpreted as a consequence of the settling of the impoverished nomads in the traditional winter locations, while the top of the Scythian society continued to wander the steppes of Taurica, dividing the Crimean and Lower Dnieper areas.³³ Under the influence of the

²⁶ VYSOTSKAYA 1987: 42f.

²⁷ VYSOTSKAYA 1972; 1994; LOBOVA 1956; GUSHCHINA 1982; BOGDANOVA 1963; 1989; DASHEVSKAYA 1971; SHCHEGLOV 1970; 1978; SYMONOVICH 1983; YATSENKO 1970; 1974.

²⁸ DASHEVSKAYA 1991.

²⁹ GRAKOV 1947: 86; ARTAMONOV 1948: 58; SHULTS 1971.

³⁰ Str. 7.4.5.

³¹ SHULTS 1971: 129.

³² SHULTS 1971.

³³ ARTAMONOV 1948: 65–67.

'stage theory', especially emphasized were the similarities of the Late-Scythian culture with the previous culture of the steppe Scythians, as well as with the later cultures of the Slavic circle, thus, making a bridge linking the Scythians, Slavs and, at the very end, Russians. Articles devoted to the 'Late Scythian' monuments often have references to Slavic art and folklore.³⁴

Obvious discrepancies in the material expression of the culture of 'classical' and 'late' Scythians were explained as differences in the social structure that existed among them.³⁵ However, in the material appearance of the Late Scythian culture, traits belonging to other cultures – Greek, Taurian, Celtic, Thracian (Geto-Dacian) were also noted.³⁶ Of crucial importance were, however, the traits of the Sarmatians, to whom any new or unknown feature of the material culture was ascribed. All changes in the material culture of the non-urban inhabitants of the North Pontic region were explained as a result of 'Sarmaticization' following the 'gradual penetration' of the Sarmatians into Crimea and the Lower Dnieper.³⁷

The influence of the Sarmatian culture was believed to be manifested in the "distribution of the specific forms of weapons, horse trappings, clothing and its necessary accessories", as well as in the transfer of some features of the burial rite: certain types of funerary structures (like niche-graves), and features of the burial rite (such as the crossing of legs, cases of southern and northern orientation of the body, the habit of breaking mirrors).³⁸ All this was, however, not consequentially argued. The 'Sarmatian origin' of certain types of funerary structures and features of the burial rite was explained through the presence of similar features in the funerary complexes on the "primordial territory of the Sarmatian tribes", in the steppes of the Volga and Ural.³⁹

At that time, a certain algorithm in studying the material remains of funerary complexes was established. Using elements of the statistical analysis, the funeral rite was reconstructed not as a single entity (as a model), but was presented as a set of individual elements, its percentage was patiently calculated, bringing analogies from the material culture which is closer or further away both in time and typology. Due to the

³⁴ SHULTS 1957; BABENCHIKOV 1957.

³⁵ The social structure of the 'late Scythian society' was not among the preferred studies during this period. It was elucidated in accordance with general ideas about the development of social relations, and not based on the research of the archaeological material. An exception is the attempt of D. Raevskiy who analysed the type of family structure of the 'late Scythians' (RAEVSKIY 1971b).

³⁶ SHULTS 1971: 130, 136 & 139.

³⁷ SHULTS 1971: 140.

³⁸ LOBOVA 1956: 33 & 143.

³⁹ LOBOVA 1956: 15.

incompleteness of the publications of field materials, the obtained results as well as the conclusions cannot be verified.

V. 5th period. Late 1980s–2014

In the late 1980s, serious political changes took place in the USSR. As a result of the 'glasnost' policy, an informational explosion occurred, which led to the disclosure of the truth about the persecutions of the Soviet time, including against archaeologists. At that time, a pluralism of opinions became acceptable. In conjunction with new opportunities for scholarships in Western countries and relatively free travel abroad, it led to the rapid exchange of information, raising of new questions and development of new approaches. However, it also ended with the collapse of the USSR and the emergence of independent states instead of its constituent republics. In 1991, the autonomy of the Crimean Republic was re-established in the Ukrainian SSR, and in 1992, an attempt was made to create a sovereign state of the Republic of the Crimea with its constitution and a president, which was abolished in 1995. At this time, several specialized academic institutions were created (or reorganized from the already existing ones) in the Crimea, institutions in which the local scientific personnel were the mainly ones employed.

Namely in these years the term 'Crimean Scythia' appeared in the academic literature referring to the Crimean part of Strabo's Scythia Minor.⁴⁰ Questions regarding its chronology and periodization, social organization, ethno-cultural attribution and political history, as well as the specificities of this culture and its place among the synchronous antiquities, have come to the fore.

Since the 'Late Scythian Culture' was initially considered as directly originating from the 'classical' Scythian culture, the 3rd century BC was traditionally considered as the period of its formation. However, by the beginning of the 1990s, the absence of archaeological complexes coming from this timeframe, and from the geographical area represented by the Northern Black Sea, lead to the development of the so-called 'lacuna of the 3rd century BC' concept.⁴¹ This was due to the complexity or even impossibility of dating the monuments in this timeframe. It gave rise to the opinion according to which there is a chronological gap between the 'classical Scythian' sites and the 'Late Scythian' antiquities.

The Crimean monuments of the Late Scythian Culture with reliable

⁴⁰ VYSOTSKAYA 1987; OL'KHOVSKIY – KHRAPUNOV 1990; KOLTUKHOV 1991; 1999; PUZDROV'SKIY 1992.

⁴¹ POLIN 1992; ZUEV 1999.

chronological features (such as amphora stamps, imported fine pottery) were dated not earlier than the mid-2nd century BC. The construction of the largest and the best studied fortress of Neapolis Scythica was dated by Yu. Zaytsev to the third quarter of the 2nd century BC,⁴² in contrast to the previous date, the late 4th century BC.⁴³ Based on the stratigraphic study of the cultural layers, Zaytsev developed a detailed periodization of this settlement, which he has synchronized with the functioning stages of its necropoleis.⁴⁴ The horizon F designated the cultural layers which were dated to the turn of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC, and was associated with the Kizil-Koba archaeological culture, which is believed to be associated with the ancient Taurians. After a period of time, this place was inhabited by the Scythians: horizon E 'pre-fortress' (periods E1–3: 175–135/131 BC); horizon D 'fortress – palace' (periods D1–4: 135/131–112/108 BC); horizon C 'fortress – proto-urban' (periods C1–4: turn of the 2nd and 1st centuries BC – mid-1st century AD), horizon B (periods B1–3: second half of the 1st – third quarter of the 2nd century AD); horizon A 'post-fortress' (periods A1–2: last quarter of the 2nd – second quarter of the 3rd century AD).⁴⁵ In the case of the 'Late Scythian culture of the Crimea' necropoleis, A. Puzdrovskiy singled out two main periods in their chronology: the early one (from the first half of the 2nd century BC to the first half of the 1st century AD) and the later one (from the second half of the 1st to the 3rd century AD).⁴⁶ He noted that the well-documented burials of the first half of the 2nd century BC (his A1 period) are absent.⁴⁷

The position according to which there is a chronological gap of more than a century between the sites of the 'classical Scythian' and the 'Late Scythian' cultures led to a discussion about the causes of the disappearance of Great Scythia and the emergence, on its territory, of cultures of a 'new type', including that of the Crimea.

S. Polin proposed a hypothesis according to which a natural catastrophe caused a crisis of the nomadic cattle breeding and a complete reorientation of the nomadic economy, its transition to agriculture and a settled way of life.⁴⁸ Thus, the theory of the downfall of Great Scythia as a result of the invasion of the Sarmatians from the east, and the Celts from the west, ceased to be the only one. Among the conditions which led to the 'crisis of the 3rd century BC', of reference are: the internal socio-economic

⁴² ZAYTSEV 2003: 46; 2004.

⁴³ VYSOTS'KA 1992: 140.

⁴⁴ ZAYTSEV 2004.

⁴⁵ ZAYTSEV 2004.

⁴⁶ PUZDROVSKIY 2007.

⁴⁷ PUZDROVSKIY 2007: 15.

⁴⁸ POLIN 1992: 102–104; for a critical view of this concept see: BRUYAKO 1999; 2009.

transformations, the climatic changes and the decrease of natural resources,⁴⁹ economic causes connected to the world grain market,⁵⁰ but also to the reorientation of political networks which followed the creation of a new world system after the fall of Alexander's Empire.⁵¹

Along with the discussion about the causes of the fall of Great Scythia, the concept of the Scythian kingdom in the Crimea also underwent a revision. Its succession from Great Scythia was questioned, and its formation was attributed to the impact of the emergence of new ethnic groups in the Crimea, primarily the Sarmatians.⁵² It was also considered as unlikely that the Lower Dnieper and the Crimean Scythians were part of the same state,⁵³ since the two 'enclaves' were separated by "wide steppe territories inhabited by the Sarmatians"⁵⁴ rather than being connected by them, as M. Artamonov believed.⁵⁵ In this sense, the term 'Crimean Scythia' conveys the idea of a new independent state of the Scythians confined by the territory of Crimea, which, in fact, corresponds to the historical concept of the 'Late Scythian culture of the Crimea'.

Within the framework of this approach, it *a priori* means that the historical phenomenon of 'Great Scythia', which was if not a proper state, then apparently an independent political unit, was directly associated with specific types of archaeological monuments. The sharp change in the spatial distribution and qualitative content of the archaeological sites associated with Great Scythia, was interpreted as the 'downfall' of the political unit. It means that the similarity of certain features of the archaeological cultures is used as an argument for justifying the inclusion of their bearers into one state and/or ethnic union, while the difference in some features of the archaeological monuments is interpreted as their belonging to different political subjects and/or ethnics. This led to the search for the roots of the Late Scythian culture of the Crimea in other cultures, where similar features were found – Greek or Greco-Bosporan,⁵⁶ Sarmatian,⁵⁷ and Celto-Thracian.⁵⁸ No attempt was made to understand which processes could stand behind the appearance of one or the other feature in societies of different levels of complexity, scale and culture. The formal similarity between the individual, singled out through the context elements of the

⁴⁹ POLIN 1992: 102–104; GAVRILYUK 1999: 306.

⁵⁰ BRUYAKO 1999: 88–91.

⁵¹ MORDVINTSEVA 2017b.

⁵² OL'KHOVS'KIY 1990: 33; PUZDROVS'KIY 1992: 127.

⁵³ OL'KHOVS'KIY 1992: 138; KHRAPUNOV 1992: 90.

⁵⁴ KHRAPUNOV 1992: 90.

⁵⁵ ARTAMONOV 1948.

⁵⁶ ZAYTSEV 1990; 1994; POPOVA 2011.

⁵⁷ ZAYTSEV 1999.

⁵⁸ ZAYTSEV – KOLTUKHOV 2004; ZAYTSEV 2005.

material culture, remains the most commonly used archaeological argument. The general consistent models have not been constructed; ethnological parallels have not been entailed in the explanation. Despite the principal possibility of a mismatch of realities, reconstructed by historians and archaeologists, the historical stereotypes formulated already in the first half of the 20th century continue to be used, which often leads to a simulation of the analysis of the archaeological material.

Epilogue

At present, the key problem in the study of the Late Scythian culture of the Crimea consists in the causes and factors of its emergence and further development. Recently, some archaeological sites were found which definitely came from the turn of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC and which functioned during the entire 3rd century BC and onwards. One of them is the Ak-Kaya fortress in the Eastern piedmont Crimea, excavated by Yu. Zaytsev; the archaeologist suggests that it was the first capital of the Crimean Scythians, preceding Neapolis Scythica.⁵⁹ New discoveries led also to making distinctions between some kinds of archaeological monuments ascribed to the Crimean Barbarians. Even a brief comparison of the non-urban sites of the Crimea revealed their differences, which led to the identification of local variants in the frame of the Late Scythian culture such as those of 'Neapolis Scythica' and 'Ak-kaya',⁶⁰ 'Taraktash',⁶¹ 'Ozerno-Inkerman',⁶² 'Luchistoe-2',⁶³ and the 'North-Western Crimean' monuments.⁶⁴

This problem cannot be solved without considering general theoretical issues related to the phenomenon of archaeological culture and its change in the course of cultural transformations. Until now, the mechanisms of cultural transformations have not been clarified, their material manifestations and the diversity of transformations have not been studied. The study of the networking system of various social groups shows the inconclusive nature of ethnic labels applied to certain types of archaeological objects such as, for example, the 'Sarmatian mirror', the 'Scythian arrow-head', etc. The concept of a 'network' does not provide the information about the direction of influence, but it can indicate the area of communication and its social basis.

⁵⁹ ZAYTSEV 2017.

⁶⁰ ZAYTSEV 2013.

⁶¹ MYTS – LYSENKO 2001.

⁶² KOLTUKHOV – YUROCHKIN 2004: 179.

⁶³ MORDVINTSEVA – LYSENKO 2016.

⁶⁴ ПОПОВА 2011; 2012; АНТОНОВ 2016; 2017.

In this framework, the phenomenon of the ‘Late Scythian culture of the Crimea’, in the traditional meaning of this term, may reflect the economic and cultural development of the Crimean Peninsula in the context of its involvement in a world-system with two geopolitical centres – Rome and Parthian Iran,⁶⁵ which became the world political leaders since the mid-2nd century BC, and divided the oikumene along the river Euphrates in the 1st BC. Their weakening or destruction in the 3rd century AD led to the rupture and reorientation of the majority of networks – ideological, military, trade and economic. Having this in mind, the idea of the transformation of the Late Scythian culture in the course of the ‘Sarmaticization’ process seems unsustainable. In fact, some migrations to the Crimea from the North Pontic steppe or the Caucasus could have likely occurred, which can be confirmed by the data of physical anthropology.⁶⁶ However, the newcomers (‘Sarmatians’?) certainly had a much lesser effect on the functioning of social networks and the economic and cultural appearance of ‘Crimean Scythia’ than the proximity of the ancient centres and geopolitical aspirations of the world hegemonic powers.

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⁶⁵ OVERTOOM 2016: 139f.

⁶⁶ KAZARNITSKIY 2017.

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Abstract. The expressions 'Late Scythian culture' and 'Crimean Scythia' are modern concepts. The first term appeared soon after 1946, and it was intended to designate the material culture of the Scythians, supposedly superseded by the Sarmatians in the 3rd century BC and later replaced by the Slavs, thus making a direct historical bridge from Scythians to Russians. The Late Scythian culture consisted of two enclaves, the Crimean-Dnieper and the Thracian one. The Crimean-Dnieper enclave was represented by two slightly different variants located in the Crimea and in the Lower Dnieper region. The term 'Crimean Scythia' was invented in late 1980s – early 1990s, and reflects the idea of the formation of a new separate Scythian statehood in the Crimea. According to the predominant point of

view, the Late Scythian culture of the Crimea was constantly transforming in the course of the 'Sarmaticization' process. This position seems to be unsustainable. In fact, some migrations to the Crimea from the North Pontic steppe or the Caucasus could have likely occurred. However, the newcomers ('Sarmatians'?) certainly had a much lesser effect on the functioning of the social networks and the economic and cultural appearance of the 'Crimean Scythia' than the proximity of the ancient centres and geopolitical aspirations of the world hegemonic powers.

Zusammenfassung: Die Ausdrücke „Spätskythische-Kultur“ und „Krim-Scythien“ sind moderne Konzepte. Die erste Wendung erschien kurz nach 1946 und sollte die materielle Kultur der Skythen bezeichnen, die angeblich im 3. Jahrhundert v. Chr. von den Sarmaten verdrängt und später von den Slawen abgelöst wurden, wodurch eine direkte historische Brücke zwischen den Skythen und den Russen entstand. Die Kultur der Spätskythen bestand aus zwei Enklaven, eine im Krim- und Dnjeprgebiet und andere in der Dobrudscha. Der Begriff „Krim-Scythien“ wurde Ende der 1980er – Anfang der 1990er Jahre erfunden und spiegelt die Idee der Bildung einer neuen eigenständigen skythischen Staatlichkeit in der Krim wider. Nach der vorherrschenden Ansicht hat sich die Kultur der Spätskythen im Zuge des Sarmatisierungsprozesses ständig verändert. Diese Position erscheint nicht nachhaltig. In der Tat hätten wahrscheinlich einige Migrationen aus der nordpontischen Steppe oder dem Kaukasus in die Krim stattgefunden. Die Neuankömmlinge („Sarmaten“?) hatten jedoch zweifellos einen wesentlich geringeren Einfluss auf das Funktionieren der sozialen Netzwerke und das wirtschaftliche und kulturelle Erscheinungsbild „Krim-Scythiens“ als die Nähe der antiken Zentren und die geopolitischen Bestrebungen der Weltherrschaftsmächte.

Résumé: Les expressions «culture scythe tardive» et «Scythie de Crimée» sont des concepts modernes. Le premier terme apparut peu après 1946 et visait à désigner la culture matérielle des Scythes, supposée être remplacée par les Sarmates au III^e s. av. J.-C. puis remplacée par les Slaves, créant ainsi un pont historique direct entre Scythes et Russes. La culture scythe tardive consistait en deux enclaves, l'une en Crimée et dans le Bas-Dniepr et l'autre en Dobroudja. Le terme «Scythie de Crimée» a été inventé à la fin des années 1980 et au début des années 1990 et reflète l'idée de la formation d'un nouvel État scythe indépendant en Crimée. Selon le point de vue prédominant, la culture de la Crimée de la fin de la période scythe se transformait constamment au cours du processus de «sarmatisation». Cette position semble insoutenable. En fait, certaines migrations en Crimée en provenance de la steppe pontique septentrionale ou du Caucase auraient probablement eu lieu. Cependant, les nouveaux arrivants («Sarmates»?) ont certainement eu un effet beaucoup moins important sur le fonctionnement des réseaux sociaux et sur l'aspect économique et culturelle de la

«Scythie de Crimée» que la proximité des centres antiques et des aspirations géopolitiques des puissances hégémoniques du monde.