

# “MIRROR, MIRROR... IN MY HAND”. ABOUT A TOILET ARTICLE OF THE GETO-DACIANS

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**Abstract:** Starting from the finds uncovered in the Getic *Dava* from Radovanu-Gorgana *a Doua* (moulds for casting mirrors, as well as fragmentary mirrors), we took an insight into the aspects connected with this adornment objects discovered on the territory inhabited by the Geto-Dacians. There are mentioned the most interesting older and more recent discoveries. There are also added some considerations regarding their production places, about the problem of the imported ware or local workshops and about their dating.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Situri arheologice geto-dacice, oglinzi de bronz, importuri, producții autohtone.

**Rezumat:** Pornind de la descoperirile făcute în *dava* getică de la Radovanu-Gorgana *a Doua* (tipare de turnat oglinzi și fragmente de oglinzi), se face o incursiune în problematica acestui tip de obiect de podoabă descoperit pe teritoriul ocupat de geto-daci. Sunt amintite cele mai interesante descoperiri, atât unele mai vechi cât și altele recente. Se fac aprecieri cu privire la locurile de producție, la problema importurilor sau atelierelor locale, la datarea oglinzilor.

79

The specialists are unanimous in considering that the mirrors occurred on the territory of Romania even beginning with the Late Hallstatt period<sup>1</sup>. Valentin Vasiliev identified three types for the space of Transylvania: A – “with a small central handle”<sup>2</sup>, B – “with channelled, elongated handle, with animal ornaments”<sup>3</sup>, C – “with a simple, elongated handle, made of iron and applied upon the disk, by rivets”<sup>4</sup>. Type A would have had a Scythian origin, Type B a Greek North-Pontic one, while Type C would have likely come from the nomads in Eastern Europe<sup>5</sup>.

The first mirrors of the Getic space are those

<sup>1</sup> Vasiliev 1980, 113-117 with lit.; Babeș 2000, 225; A. Vulpe 2001, 411. For the sites on the left side of the Pruth River, in the Republic of Moldavia, see, for instance, the Scythian mirror from the Thracian settlement from Saharna Mare (Niculiță *et alii* 2011, 199 with lit., fig. 5/13).

<sup>2</sup> Vasiliev 1980, 113, pl. 24/1-2: discoveries at Aiud, Cipău – fig. VI/3, Fântânele.

<sup>3</sup> Vasiliev 1980, 113, figs. 24/3-5, 25/1-2: Ghindari, Turda, Jacu – fig. VI/1, Păuca, Răscruci, Feiurdeni.

<sup>4</sup> Vasiliev 1980, 114, pls. 25/3-4, 26/1-3: Ciumbrud, Comorod – fig. VI/2, Fântânele, Copșa Mică.

<sup>5</sup> Vasiliev 1980, 114-117.

documented in the sites from Dobroudja. Thus, at Cernavodă-Coada Zăvoiului, in the cremation Burial no. 1 of the 5<sup>th</sup> c. BC, a “Greek mirror” was discovered, made entirely of bronze, being disk-shaped (diameter = 13.8 cm), and with an iron handle (Fig. 5/3)<sup>1</sup>. Dumitru Berciu did not exclude the possibility that this object could have been produced at Olbia. On the other side, it could not be also excluded the hypothesis that the item could have been a “Scythian” one, especially when considering that the original handle had been broken in the past and replaced with a new one, made of iron.

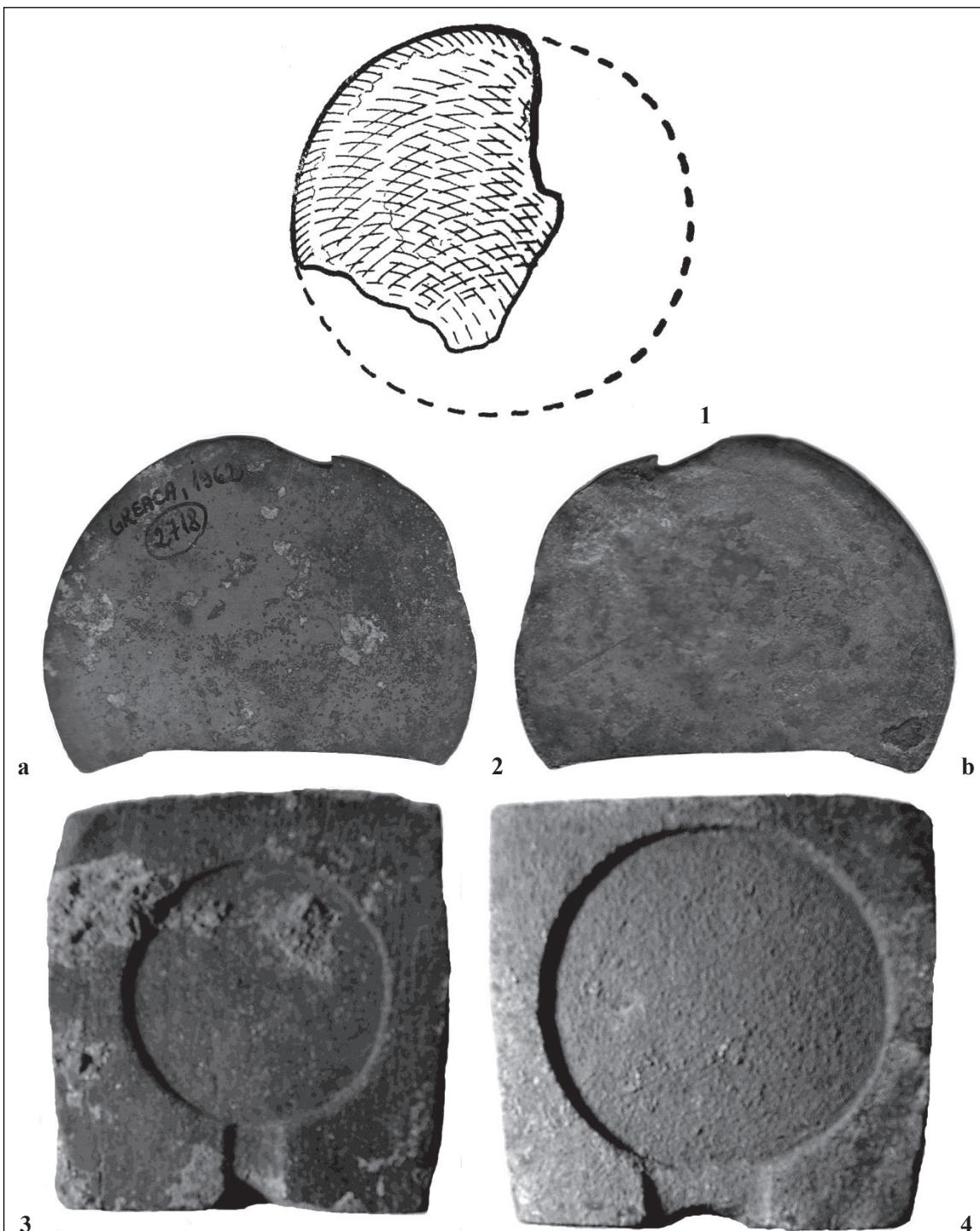
In the necropolis from Enisala, four mirrors were discovered<sup>2</sup>. One of them is a Greek one, with a bronze handle (Fig. 5/6)<sup>3</sup>; another one is of the same type, but with the disk decorated with dots and strongly fragmented<sup>4</sup>, being dated between

<sup>1</sup> Berciu 1957, 283-284, figs. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> Simion 1977, 55.

<sup>3</sup> Simion 1977, pl. XI/f; Simion 2003, 314 with fig. 14/4, 328 with pl. 2/7.

<sup>4</sup> Simion 1971, 118, fig. 31/e.



80

**Fig. 1** – Mirrors: 1 = Radovanu-Gorgana a Doua (after Şerbănescu 1998), 2 = Greaca-Părul (a, frontview; b, backside; foto Cristian Schuster); mirror moulds: 4-5 = Radovanu-Gorgana a Doua (foto Gheorghe Chelmeac). Different scales.

400-340 BC<sup>10</sup>. The third mirror had a complete disk, but part of the handle was missing (Fig. 5/2)<sup>11</sup>. Under the stone ring of the *Tumulus 3B*, it was unearthed *Burial no. 2*, with the cremated bones placed upon a gritstone, while above them it was put a bronze mirror (diameter = 14.5 cm), with its handle missing, but which had undergone “a reparation by perforation for the rivets of another

handle, the latter being not found” (Fig. 5/1)<sup>12</sup>.

Another item, of the handled mirrors type (diameter = 13.8 cm, handle length = 9.8 cm)<sup>13</sup>, “made of a single bronze plaque..., with the handle ended by a knob”<sup>14</sup>, was recovered from a burial of the necropolis from Nuntaşî (Fig. 5/4). This was dated in the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> c. BC, a fact that ena-

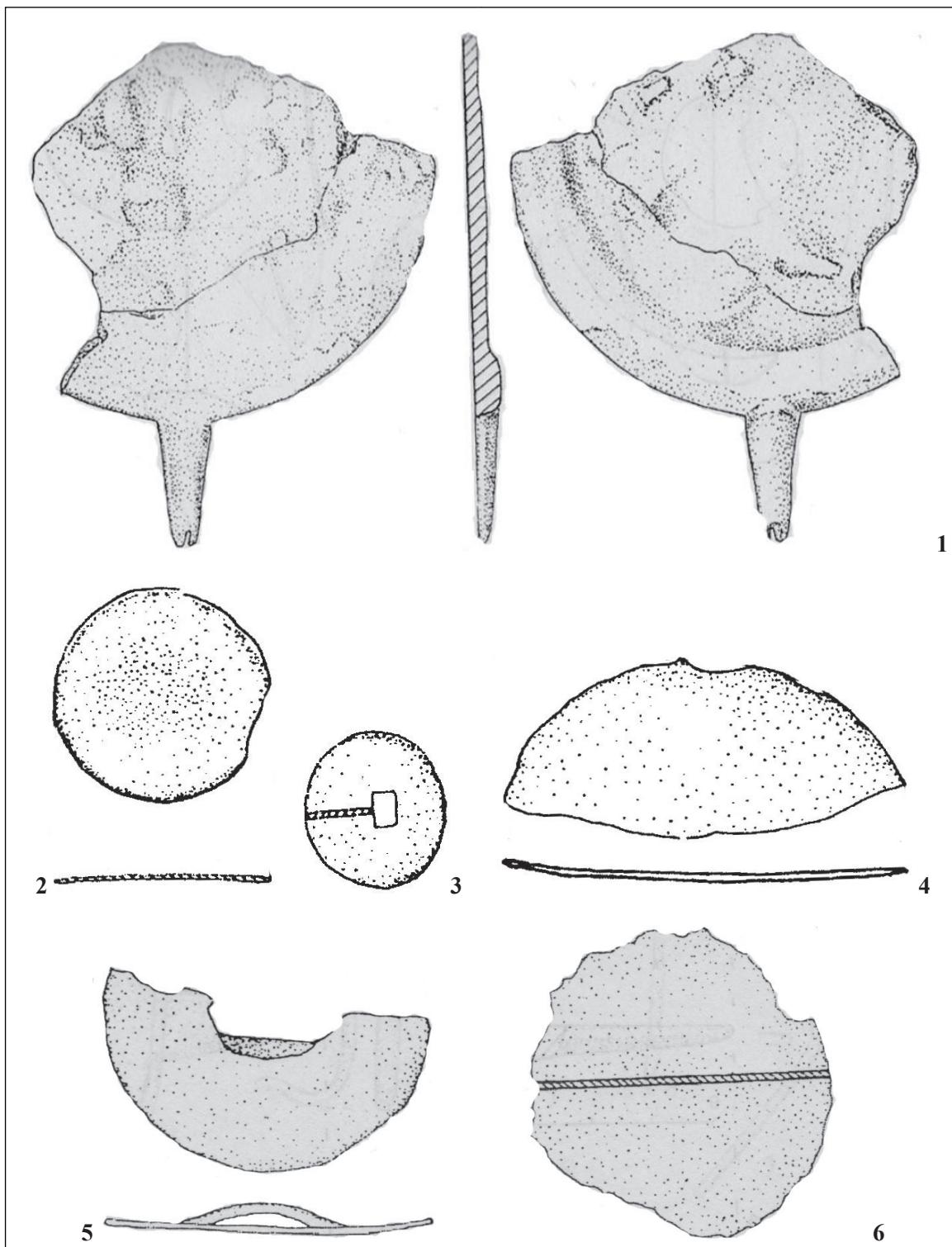
<sup>10</sup> Teleagă 2008, 457-458, Catalog no. 1063, pl. 139/3; Măndescu 2010, 284.

<sup>11</sup> Simion 1977, pl. XI/f; Simion 2003, fig. 14/4.

<sup>12</sup> Simion 1971, 110, fig. 27/b.

<sup>13</sup> Rădulescu 1961, 387-388, fig. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Teleagă 1999, 40, fig. 3.



**Fig. 2 – Mirrors: 1-6 = Poiana (Piroboridava)** (after Vulpe, Teodor 2003). Different scales.

bled us to say that the burials with complete mirrors from Enisala and Nuntaşî are unitary concerning their chronology<sup>15</sup>.

For the Geto-Dacian area on the left bank of the Danube, the oldest mirrors were documented in the necropolis from Zimnicea (Teleorman County)<sup>16</sup>. We refer here to objects made of bronze, of the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC, « avec des trous pour les rivets qui

le fixaient au manche, lequel s'est conservé (en fer) en un seul cas » (Fig. 4/1-2, 4)<sup>17</sup>. This type of item, with rather large dimensions (*Burial C7M4*: length = 21.5 cm, diameter = 13.3 cm<sup>18</sup>, Fig. 4/4; *Burial C10M74*: diameter = 9.2 cm<sup>19</sup>, Fig. 4/2; *Burial C20M1*: diameter = 8.7 cm<sup>20</sup>, Fig. 4/1),

<sup>17</sup> Alexandrescu 1980, 52.

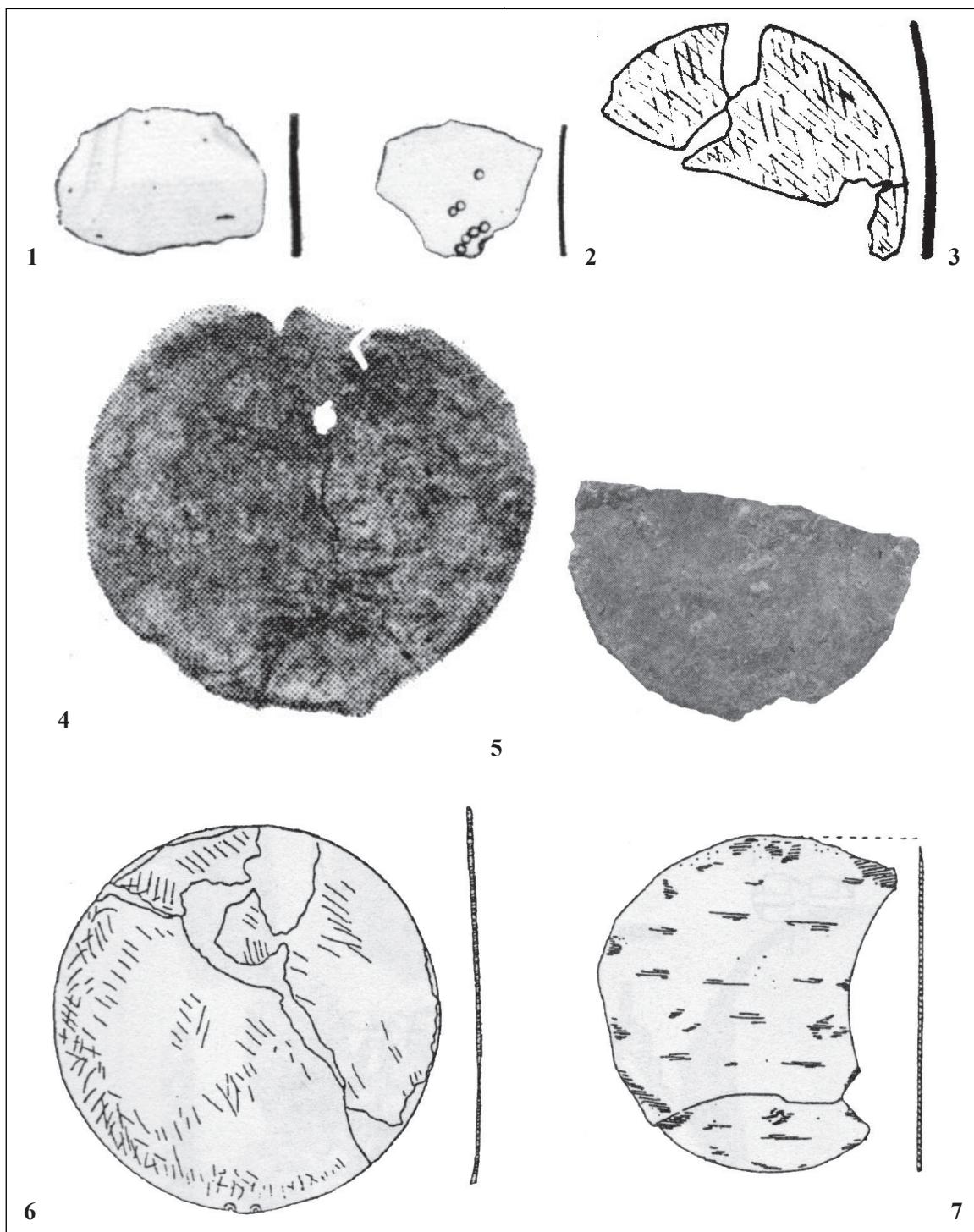
<sup>18</sup> Alexandrescu 1980, 24, fig. 44/6.

<sup>19</sup> Alexandrescu 1980, 29, fig. 44/7.

<sup>20</sup> Alexandrescu 1980, 41, fig. 44/8.

<sup>15</sup> Măndescu 2010, 284.

<sup>16</sup> Alexandrescu 1980, 24, 26, 29, 41; Babeş *et alii* 2009, 232.



82

**Fig. 3 – Mirrors:** 1-6 = Ocnita (Buridava): (1-2, 4-6 after Berciu 1981, 3 after Berciu et alii 1988), 6 = Tilișca, 7 = Pečica (both after Rustoiu 1996). Different scales.

comes from the Greek cultural milieus across the Danube<sup>21</sup>. Recent investigations resulted in the recovery of another bronze item of the same kind<sup>22</sup>.

Also, to the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC belonged a “Greek-Scythian” mirror (Fig. 5/5)<sup>23</sup> recovered in 1989 by Constantin Hălcescu from the zone of Oltenița-

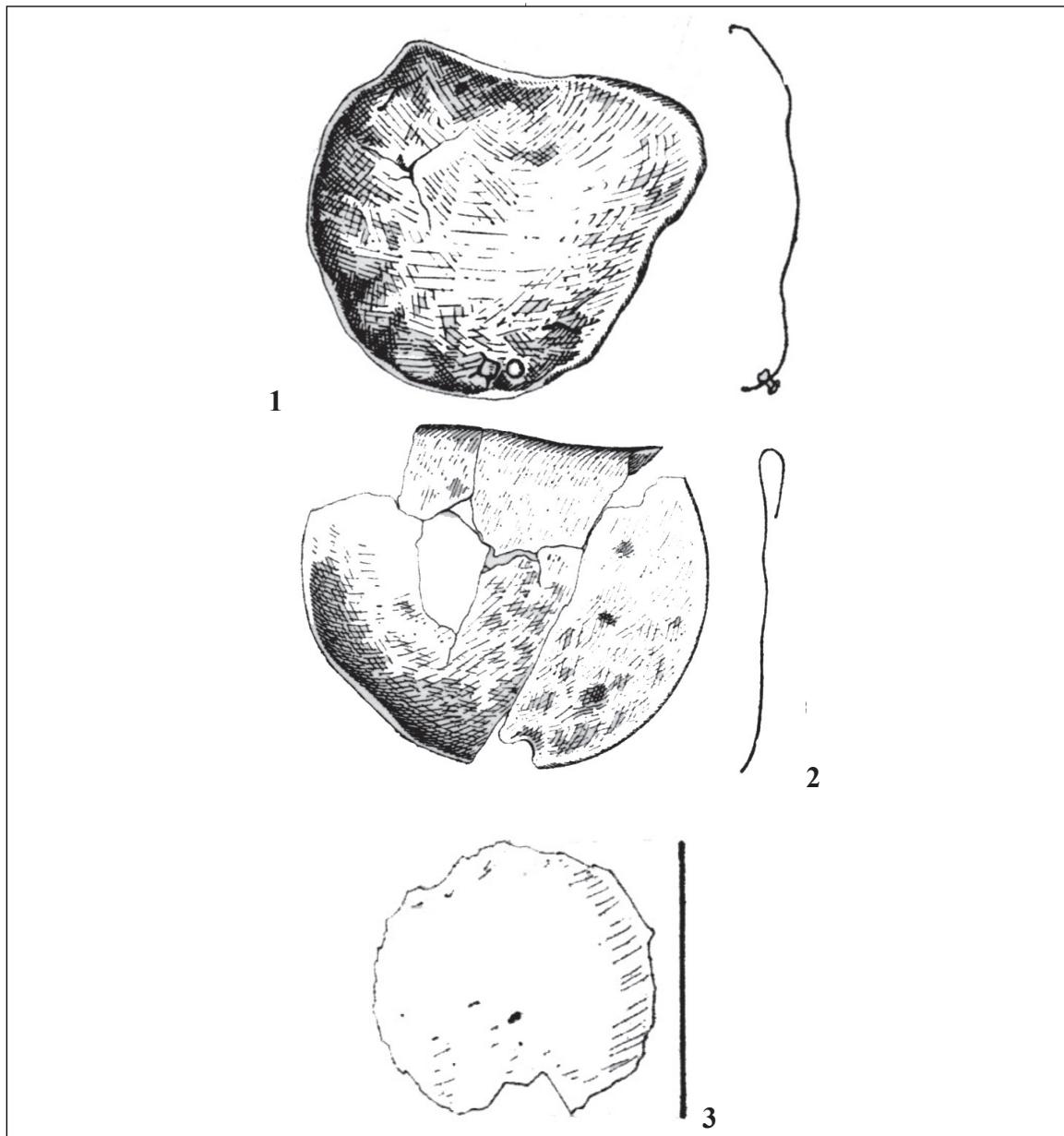
Valea Mare/Puțul de Cărămidă, where, very probably, the works undertaken for the București-Dunăre Channel had resulted in the destroying of a tumular necropolis. The item was complete, made of bronze, had a total length of 22.5 cm including the handle and a diameter of 15 cm.

About mirrors of the 3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC it could be also discussed in the case of the settlement from Cucorani (Botoșani County) while the archaeological investigations also resulted in the discovery of a bronze mirror, of considerable dimensions, with

<sup>21</sup> Babeș 2000, 225.

<sup>22</sup> Babeș et alii 2009, 232. More information was offered to us by Anca Ganciu, to whom we express our gratitude, on this occasion.

<sup>23</sup> Șerbanescu 1998, 259, figs. 174/1 = 177/2.



38

**Fig. 4 – Mirrors: 1-4 = Zimnicea (after Alexandrescu 1980). Different scales.**

handle (Fig. 5/7)<sup>24</sup>, “of a Hellenistic type, which could have been an import from the north-Pontic regions..., but it could have also been made in some of the local workshops”<sup>25</sup>. This latter statement we consider to be a very interesting one.

The number of mirrors from the Geto-Dacian settlements increased in the time span between the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC. - 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD. This fact has been confirmed by a series of finds made in the extra-, but also intra-Carpathian regions. Among these, we could include the older investigations in the *Dava* from Radovanu-Gorgana a Doua. There, three mirror fragments had been discovered. Two of them had extremely small dimensions. In turn, in the *Dwelling no. 13*, besides pottery and objects made of bone and metal, a big mirror fragment could be

<sup>24</sup> Teodor 1975, fig. 30/1.

<sup>25</sup> Teodor 1999, 85.

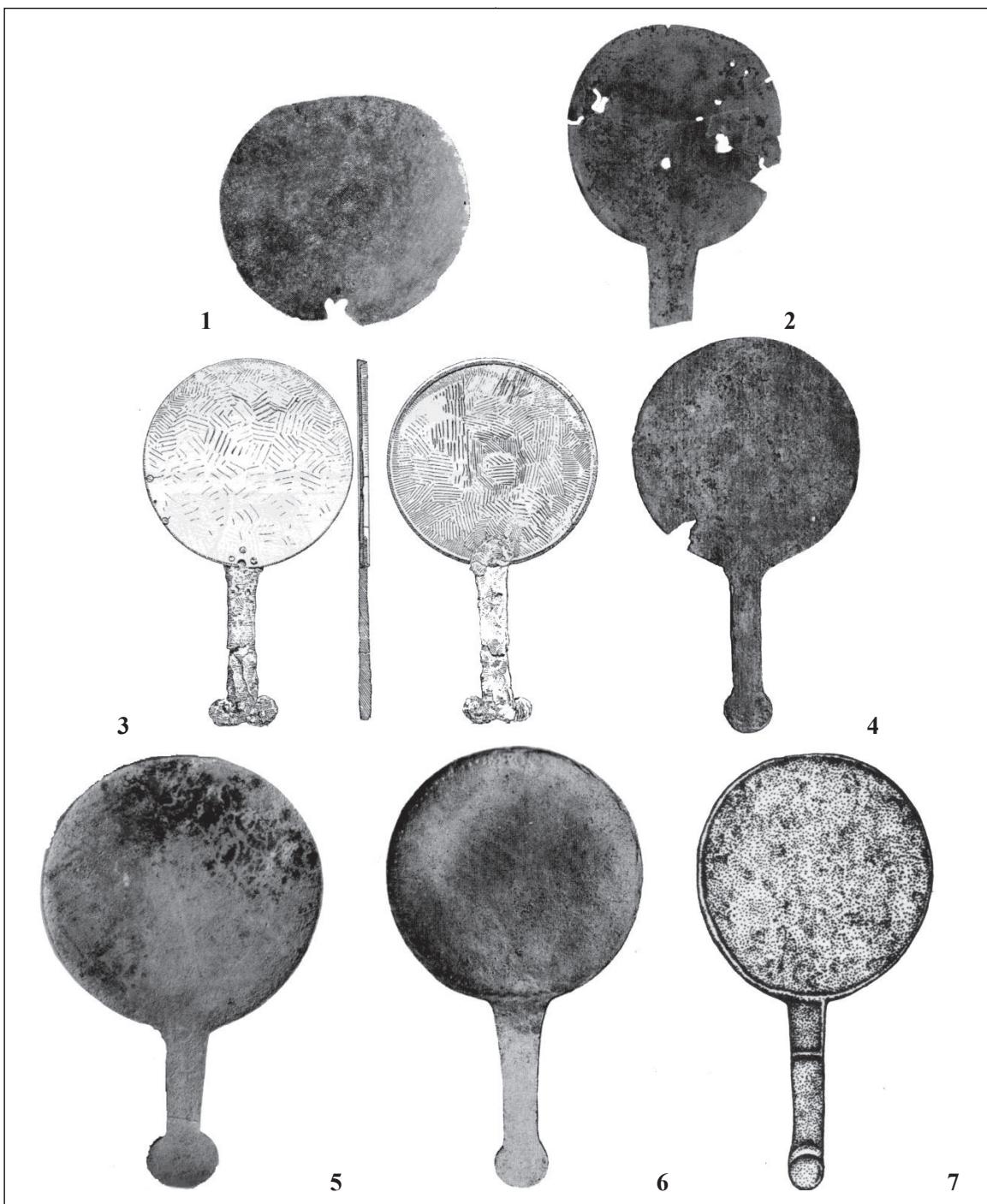
also recovered. This proofs that the respective object was a disk-shaped one (diameter of about 6 cm), and was made of a “white metal” (Fig. 1/1)<sup>26</sup>.

The new research had permitted us to recover from the *Annexe construction no. 1* at the North end of the *Trench no. XXII*<sup>27</sup>, three moulding valves for making mirrors<sup>28</sup>. We had considered the construction as an annexe, because it was different by the small amount of the construction materials remains (adobe), as well as other archaeological

<sup>26</sup> řerbănescu 2008, 181, fig. 116/3.

<sup>27</sup> řerbănescu et alii 2012a, 105. The trench had been placed in the south-eastern side of the site. Right there, in the □ 8-9, it was discovered the *House no. 24*, inside which, *in situ*, it could be observed a part of a storage vessel. Other two such recipients had been identified in □ 2-3 and 12, see řerbănescu et alii 2012b, 69, figs. I-VI.

<sup>28</sup> řerbănescu et alii 2005, 287.



84

**Fig. 5** – Greek mirrors: 1-2, 6 = Enisala (after Simion 1971 & Simion 1977), 3 = Cernavodă (after Berciu 1957), 4 = Nuntaş (after Rădulescu 1961), 5 = Olteniţa (after Şerbănescu 1998), 7 = Cucorăni (after Teodor 1975). Different scales.

traits, compared with the dwellings that could be studied along the years within the *Dava*<sup>29</sup>.

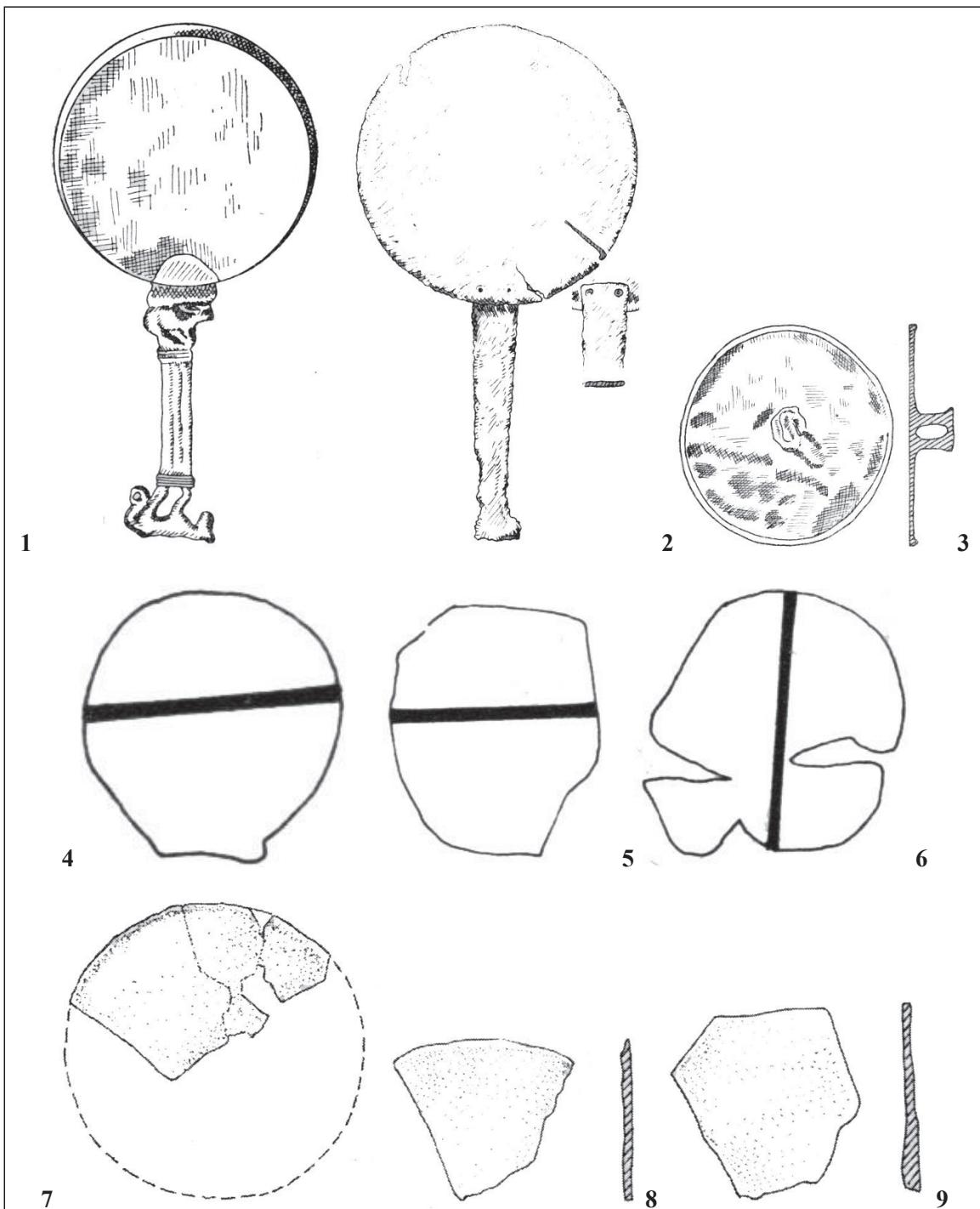
The first of the valves was made of a reddish gritstone, with big quartz grains in its composition, being brittle, with a trapezium shape, a height of 10.25 cm, and its two sides of 8.08 and 7.18 cm. The thickness of the valve is of 1.71 cm. The shape inside which the moulded metal had been poured had a circular shape, with a height 2 mm, and a diameter of 7.32 cm (Fig 1/4). On its small side, the valve had a pouring mouth. On its back

side, it was very well polished.

The second moulding valve was made from the same rock type like the previous one, with a height of 10.43, a width of 8 cm and a small side of 7.48 cm. The thickness of the valve was of 1.58 cm. The form proper for pouring the mirror had a diameter of 5.26 cm (Fig 1/3), while its depth was of 0.22 cm.

The last one of the valves was made in good quality sandy gritstone and had pouring mouths on both sides. The valve has the following dimensions: the height of 9.30 cm, the sides of 9.53 cm

<sup>29</sup> Şerbănescu *et alii* 2012a, 107-109 with lit.



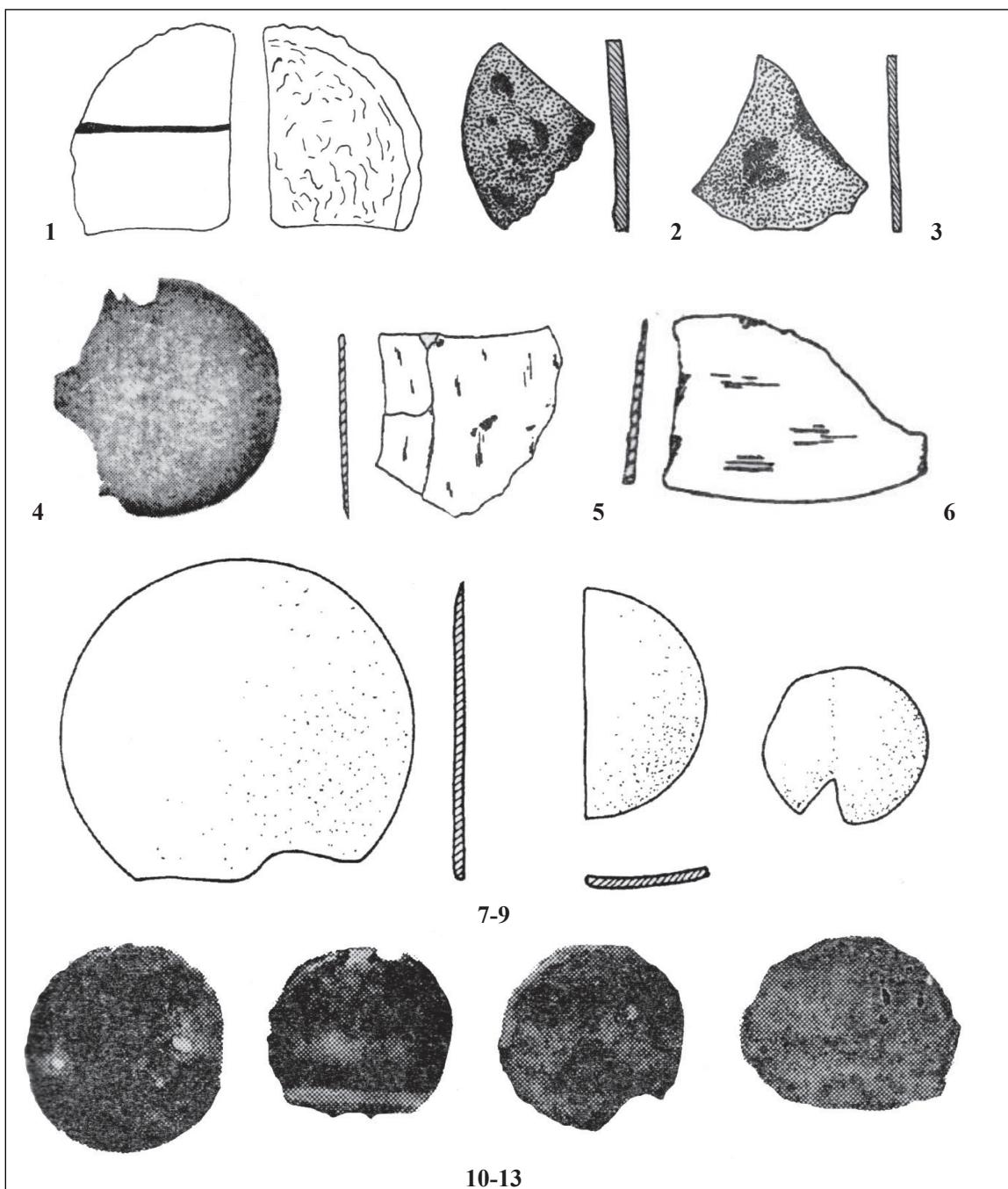
**Fig. 6** – Mirrors: 1 = Jacu, 2 = Cipău, 3 = Comlod (all three after Vasiliev), 4-6 = Brad (after Ursachi 1980), 7-9 = Pietroasa Mică-Gruiu Dării (after Sîrbu, Rustoiu 2005). Different scales.

and 8.60 cm, while its thickness reached 3.45 cm. Both on its front and back sides there were forms in which mirrors could be moulded. On the front side, the diameter of the form reached 7.50 cm, with a depth of 2.3 mm, while that on the back side had a diameter of 5.7 cm and a depth of 2.05 mm. As on both sides of the valve there were places for moulding, this is a hint which shows that the mould for mirrors was a bivalve one.

A study exclusively dedicated to the mirrors in the territories of the Getic and Dacian populations has not been published until now. Still, this topic

was approached more intensely for the first time by Ioan Glodariu, when he discussed about “*The commercial relations of Dacia with the Hellenistic and Roman world*”. He conceived a catalogue of the finds, showing that most of the mirrors from the Geto-Dacian space could be assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC – 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD<sup>30</sup>. This type of toilet object

<sup>30</sup> Glodariu 1974, 84-85, 249-250, with lit.: he enlisted the finds from Bârca Doamnei (Neamț County), Brașov (Brașov County), Costești, Grădiștea Muncelului, Pecica (Arad County; fig III/7), Piatra Șoimului/Calu (Neamț County), Poiana, Popești-Nucet (Giurgiu County), Sărățel (Bistrița Năsăud County), Târgu Ocna (Bacău County),



**Fig. 7 – Mirrors:** 1 = Popeşti-Tumulus no. 2 (after Vulpe A. 1976), 2-3 = Grădiştea (after Sîrbu 1996), 4 = Cândeşti (after Bobi 1999), 5-6 = Tilişca (after Rustoiu 1996), 7-9 = Mereşti (after Crişan 2000), 10-13 = Răcătău (after Căpitanu 1989). Different scales.

also caught the attention of Aurel Rustoiu<sup>31</sup> and Constantin Augustus Bărbaulescu<sup>32</sup>. In the opinion of the first specialist, “Chronologically speaking, the mirrors from Dacia occurred at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. and would have been used during the entire period between the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. and the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. Morphologically speaking, the mirrors of Dacia had small dimensions, sometimes being endowed with handles... Concerning

Tinosu (Ialomiţa County), Zimnicea (Teleorman County).

<sup>31</sup> Rustoiu 1996, 169.

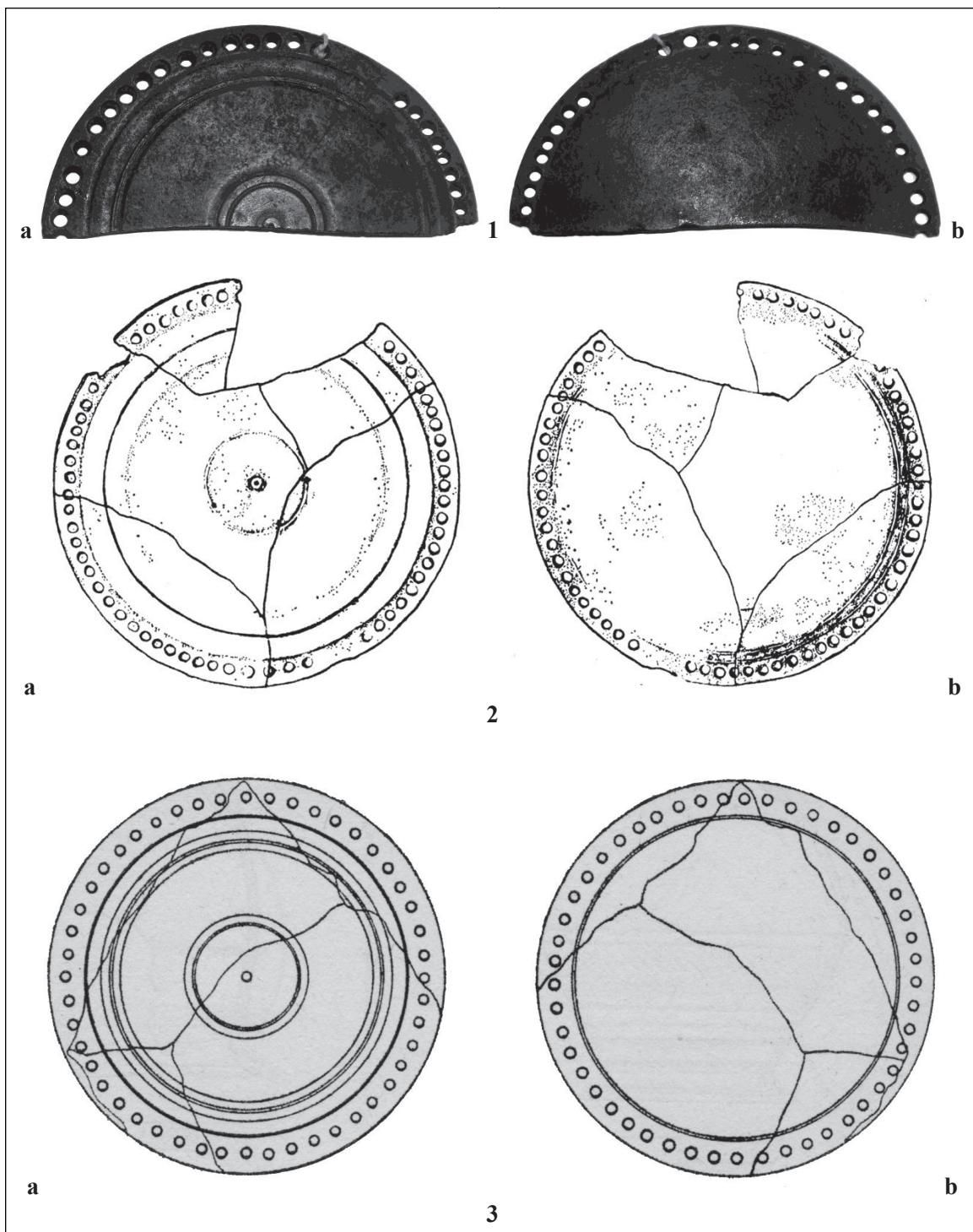
<sup>32</sup> Bărbaulescu 2014, 71, Annexe 10 and pls. XLIX, LXIV, LXVIII.

the metal they were made of, the mirrors had been considered in the specialized literature as being made of “bronze” or “white metal”<sup>33</sup>. Bărbaulescu considered that “the mirrors are present in a relatively small number on the territory of the Meridional Dacia”, as they “were products of the Italic and Oriental workshops”<sup>34</sup>.

Without going into details about all the mirrors found in the Geto-Dacian milieu, we would insist upon some of them, which we consider to be more significant. Therefore, about 60 km upstream from

<sup>33</sup> Rustoiu 1996, 169.

<sup>34</sup> Bărbaulescu 2014, 71.



**Fig. 8 – Roman mirrors:** 1a-b = Ocnita (photo I. Tuțulescu, 2015), 2 = Popești-Nucet (after Turcu 1979), 3 = Locusteni (after Popilian 1980). Different scales.

Radovanu-Gorgana a Doua, also on the right bank of the Argeș River, on a foothill which strongly protrudes into the river valley, we could find the important *Dava* from Popești-Nucet. The older investigations resulted in the discovery of some complete and fragmentary disk-shaped mirrors by the collective coordinated by Radu Vulpe<sup>35</sup>. We should also emphasize here that, during the archaeolog-

ical campaigns of the '30s-'40s of the past century, Dinu V. Rosetti found another mirror. Unfortunately, the information about the exact place of this find is missing<sup>36</sup>. The respective item is to be found today in the *Collection of the Bucharest City Museum*. The mirror, made of bronze, is almost entirely preserved and, according to Mircea Negru, "it has a circular body with 92 millimetres in diameter and perforations on the rim. On its face there are two incised circles, on the back, four in relief

<sup>35</sup> Vulpe R. 1959, 314; Vulpe R. 1966, 36. Unfortunately, there were not provided too many details and illustration. It was only mentioned that the complete mirror had a diameter of 6.3 cm.

<sup>36</sup> Turcu 1979, 101, fig. 14; Tezaur 1998, 12, no. 109.

or incised concentric circles and a little thickness. It has a gray silver surface because it contains tin or is tinned" (Fig. 8/2)<sup>37</sup>. According to Mioara Turcu, this mirror<sup>38</sup>, as well as other objects made of bronze, considered as being imports, would have been dated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC. Negru in his turn<sup>39</sup>, based upon the analogies with Roman mirrors from Dacia (like, for instance, Locusteni-Burial no. 220<sup>40</sup>; Fig. 8/3), Pannonia, Thracia and Dalmatia, considered that the respective object should be assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD. In fact, this is also plausible for Popeşti-Nucet, if we take into account that the respective *Dava* had been used until the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.

It is also significant that, in the tumular necropolis from Popeşti, more exactly from the *Tumulus no. 2*, it could be recovered a fragment « *d'un miroir en bronze* » (Fig. 7/1)<sup>41</sup>. The tumulus had belonged, as established by Alexandru Vulpe, to the 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC. This find attested that some of the Getic people from Popeşti, probably the rich ones, had used the mirrors in their quotidian life, as well as grave goods.

South-west from Radovanu, during the terrace making from Greaca since 1962, on the spot "Părul", resulted in the discovery of a Getic settlement<sup>42</sup>. Unfortunately, some interventions destroyed this site. Barbu Ionescu, at that time Director of the Museum from Olteniţa, managed to recover, among others, a mirror fragment. In his opinion, based upon a written note in the museum's book, this item should be assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> c. AD. His datation is obviously an erroneous one, while the disk-shaped mirror made of bronze (diameter = 5.4 cm; Fig. 1/1), with the front side well polished and the back side wearing the irregular traces of the mould for pouring the metal (Fig. 1/1b) should be included amongst the items of the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC.

West from Radovanu, Popeşti and Greaca, at Zimnicea, in burials of the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC, disk-shaped mirrors of small dimensions compared to those of the 4<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC were discovered. Such an item, « *miroir en métal blanc* » (Fig. 4/3)<sup>43</sup>, was

<sup>37</sup> Negru 2004, 279, fig. 1.

<sup>38</sup> Turcu 1979, 104.

<sup>39</sup> Mirrors of Riha variant B, see Negru 2004, 280 with lit.

<sup>40</sup> Popilian 1980, 96, pl. XXX/5.

<sup>41</sup> Vulpe A. 1976, 198, fig. 6/25.

<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, at that time, an entire line of archaeological sites had been completely, or strongly affected. The subsequent excavations (see Sîrbu *et alii* 1996), as well as our field and archive investigations could not result in an exact localisation of the spot "Părul".

<sup>43</sup> Alexandrescu 1980, 26, figs. 44/9 = 76/17.

part of the grave goods of *Burial C10M21*.

In eastern Muntenia, in the *Dava* from Grădiştea (Brăila County), "fragments of at least 5 objects, all of them made of bronze and having small dimensions" were identified<sup>44</sup>. Two of the fragments were discovered in the *Pit no. 72* (Fig. 7/2-3)<sup>45</sup>, both coming from mirrors moulded in the shape of circular bronze foils. Other fragments were documented in the *Pit no. 160*<sup>46</sup>.

In the fortified enclosure from Pietroasa Mică-*Gruiu Dării* (Buzău County), during the different archaeological campaigns, several mirror fragments were discovered. The older investigations had resulted in the recovery of four fragments, some of them in *Trench no. 2*<sup>47</sup>, *Complex no. 1-Deposition no. 1*, dated at the middle/second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD<sup>48</sup>. More recently, in the *Complex no. 18*, which was dated in the 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC, a mirror portion was discovered (Fig. 6/7)<sup>49</sup>. One such fragment (Fig. 6/8-9) was also recovered in each of two other complexes (namely nos. 2 and 35), yet, assigned to the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD<sup>50</sup>. All the items were of the type of the disk-shaped objects, of small dimensions and with diameters of about 4.5-6 cm<sup>51</sup>.

The investigations from Oltenia, at Ocnita (*Burdava*; Vâlcea County) enabled the scientists to recover several mirror fragments, all of them being "Roman or Hellenistic-Roman imports", made of "white metal", which rendered the "disk-shaped mirror type" and belonged to the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC – 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD<sup>52</sup>. They were found both in the archaeological layer, as well as in different complexes (dwellings and pits). The mirrors are normally of small dimensions, of up to 5-6 cm in diameter (Fig. 3/1-2, 4-5)<sup>53</sup>. Two of these items had been decorated with incised circles (Fig. 3/2, 4)<sup>54</sup>. On the other hand, it was also discovered a mirror with a large diameter,

<sup>44</sup> Sîrbu 1996, 36.

<sup>45</sup> Sîrbu, Anastasiu 1983, 172, fig. 14/3; Sîrbu 1996, 100, pl. 122/14-15.

<sup>46</sup> Sîrbu 1992, 37; Sîrbu 1996, 41.

<sup>47</sup> Dupoi, Sîrbu 2001, fig. 27.

<sup>48</sup> Dupoi, Sîrbu 2001, 21, fig. 127.

<sup>49</sup> Sîrbu, Rustoiu 2005, 41, 71, fig. 61/3: *Complex no. 18 = 50-1 B.C.*

<sup>50</sup> Sîrbu, Rustoiu 2005, 41, 66, figs. 50/10, 68/5: *Complex no. 2 = 10-40 AD, Complex no. 35 = 25-100 AD.*

<sup>51</sup> Dupoi, Sîrbu 2001, 40; Sîrbu, Rustoiu 2005, 71.

<sup>52</sup> Berciu 1981a, 50-51; Berciu 1981b, 56.

<sup>53</sup> Berciu 1981a, fig. 22/3, pls. 36/24, 38/6, 48/3.

<sup>54</sup> Berciu 1981a, 51, pl. 36/25; Berciu *et alii* 1988, 174, fig. 3/7: from *Dwelling no. 9/1987*, that belonged to the *Level IIb*, dated at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC – beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD.

of 8 cm, in *Burial no. 381* (Fig. 8/1a-b)<sup>55</sup>. This object strongly resembles with the mirror decorated with a concentric circle made of smaller circles on its edge, as well as the incised circles on its back side discovered at Popeşti-Nucet.

In Moldova, in the *Dava* from Răcătău (Bacău County), until 1976, had been discovered 13 "bronze mirrors covered with a foil of white metal. They were disk-shaped and had no diameter over 4 cm"<sup>56</sup>. The subsequent investigations enriched the number of complete or fragmentary items, "made of common metal or bronze, with a rounded shape" getting in 1989 at more than 20 (Fig. 7/10-13)<sup>57</sup>.

Mirrors, which numbered more than 30 complete items, but mostly fragmentary ones, "with a rounded shape, and endowed on the lower part with a small extension, probably introduced into a wooden or bone support, represented by the handle", were found both in the *Dava* and in the open settlement, being either dwellings, pits or the archaeological layer from Brad (Bacău County)<sup>58</sup>. These had been moulded from a "whitish material, silver or bronze", having the dimensions between 3.2 and 5.3 cm, with a thickness of 0,01-0,02 cm (Fig. 6/4-6)<sup>59</sup>. They both belonged to Dacian levels, being dated in the 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC – 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD.

The research undertaken in the *Dava* from Poiana (*Piroboridava*; Galați County) resulted in the discovery of mirrors in a "relatively large number in the last Geto-Dacian level" (2<sup>nd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC). According to Radu Vulpe and Silvia Teodor, these could be parted into two categories. The first one is represented by the mirrors which are "small and thin, made of bronze, covered with a pellicle of white metal, the respective material being very brittle the fragments have small dimensions"<sup>60</sup>. They are disk-shaped, with a diameter of 2-5.5 cm (Fig. 2/2-4, 6), a single item having a handle on its back (Fig. 2/5)<sup>61</sup>.

The second type had larger dimensions (diameters between 9-16 cm) and was thicker, being endowed with an "appendix for fixing the handle"<sup>62</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> Berciu 1981a, fig. 22/3.

<sup>56</sup> Căpitanu 1976, 65.

<sup>57</sup> Căpitanu 1989, 103, fig. 11/1-5.

<sup>58</sup> Ursachi 1995, 243.

<sup>59</sup> Ursachi 1995, pls. 209/27-32, 34-37, 332/27-30

<sup>60</sup> Teodor *et alii* 1999, 30-31, figs. 17/1-18, 18/1-9, 19; Vulpe R., Teodor 2003, 67, figs. 133/1, 3-18, 134/1-5, 7-9.

<sup>61</sup> Vulpe R., Teodor 2003, 67, fig. 134/2.

<sup>62</sup> Vulpe R., Teodor 2003, 67, figs. 134/6. The existence of the handle had been proven by the presence, towards the edge, at equal distances, of three fixing perforations (see

One of these mirrors dated in the 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD, made of bronze, but plated with silver, "had on its back a decoration rendering two personages within a circular frame" (Fig. 2/1)<sup>63</sup>. The handle had a truncated shape and had been pierced<sup>64</sup>.

From a "white metal" it was also made the disk-shaped mirror (in a fragmentary condition), assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC, discovered at Cândeşti (Vrancea County) (Fig. 7/4)<sup>65</sup>. A mirror handle, with a length of 14,8 cm and moulded in bronze, belonging to the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC, was found at Cârlomăneşti (Buzău County)<sup>66</sup>.

Mirrors of smaller dimensions, which belonged to the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC, were also found in the Getic sites from Dobroudja. Such an example could be the site from Satu Nou-Valea lui Voicu (Constanța County), where, from the Level II it was recovered a fragment of a mirror<sup>67</sup>, showing that the item had a diameter of about 4.5 cm.

Another mirror, strongly affected by fire, was discovered by Gavrilă Simion in the Getic cremation burial from *Tumulus no. I* at Murighiol (Tulcea County), being assigned "towards the second decade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C., if not towards the end of the first quarter of that century"<sup>68</sup>. This object made of bronze, which most probably had a diameter of 13 cm, had been "introduced into a bronze frame and endowed with an iron handle rounded in cross-section and fixed on the plaque by two rivets. This detail could show the possibility of passing this mirror through a reparation workshop"<sup>69</sup>.

In Transylvania, besides the objects mentioned by Ioan Glodariu, there are also to be mentioned those from Tilişca (Sibiu County; Fig. 3/6, 7/5-6)<sup>70</sup>, Șimleul Silvaniei (Sălaj County)<sup>71</sup>, or Grădiștea Muncelului-Valea Largă<sup>72</sup>. If the other items, the same like other mirrors discovered in the region of Grădiștea Muncelului, are of small dimensions, the one on the spot "Valea Largă" had a diameter of 15 cm and a thickness of 2 mm, being part, according to Gelu Florea, of the Group B established

Vulpe R., Teodor 2003, 246, *Catalogul descoperirilor. Obiecte vestimentare și podoabe no. 675*.

<sup>63</sup> Vulpe R., Teodor 2003, 67, fig. 135.

<sup>64</sup> Vulpe R., Teodor 2003, 247, *Catalogul descoperirilor. Obiecte vestimentare și podoabe no. 680*.

<sup>65</sup> Bobi 1999, 183, pls. CV/11 = CVI/11.

<sup>66</sup> Bobi 1999, 183, pls. CVII/1 = CVI/14.

<sup>67</sup> Irimia, Conovici 1989, 148, fig. 31/15; Irimia 2007, 166.

<sup>68</sup> Simion 2003, 351.

<sup>69</sup> Simion 1995, 268, fig. 3b; Simion 2003, 330, fig. 3b.

<sup>70</sup> Lupu 1989, pl. 27/14-17; Rustoiu 1996, 169, fig. 107/1-3.

<sup>71</sup> Rustoiu 1996, 169; Pop 2013, 231.

<sup>72</sup> Florea 1993, 175, fig. 1/2.

by Lloyd-Morgan<sup>73</sup>. In the east of the province, mirrors of small dimensions had been documented, without handles, which were used between the 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC – 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD, like the items from Merești (Harghita County; Fig. 7/7-9)<sup>74</sup>, or those from Sighișoara-Wietenberg<sup>75</sup>.

As it results from the above lines, the majority of the specialists consider the mirrors from the Geto-Dacian milieu of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC – 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD as being imported products. Radu Vulpe and Silvia Teodor pointed out that the mirrors had been “documented in Geto-Dacian settlements and necropolis in an area in the proximity of Dacia, especially in the North-Pontic regions”<sup>76</sup>. The same specialists considered that the mirrors “are imported objects from the Mediterranean zone, most of them being of Hellenistic origin”<sup>77</sup>. Viorica Crișan<sup>78</sup> showed that the mirrors are “imported, probably, from the Greek or Roman centres situated in the vicinity of Dacia, where it is assumed that they could have been produced”. “The mirrors are part of the numerous Roman imports that become more intense in the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., especially in its second half”, was the opinion of Dumitru Berciu<sup>79</sup>. He “assumed that the mirrors from Ocnîța were products of the Italic workshops”<sup>80</sup>. Ioan Glodariu had considered that the mirrors were “produced in different centres of the Classical world”<sup>81</sup>. Mircea Babeș showed that “Their production centres might have been situated in the Greek world, in the Balkan Peninsula and the Pont, but it is not excluded their Italic origin”<sup>82</sup>. Gavrilă Simion, when discussing about the items revealed by the sites of Dobroudja<sup>83</sup>, especially that of Enisala, pointed out that « *la liste des objets grecs d'importation doit inclure aussi... les miroirs de bronze de différentes tailles* ». Valeriu Sîrbu and Aurel Rustoiu emphasized that “the bronze mirror of small dimensions, of the type discovered also at Gruiu Dării”, had come “from the Greek or Roman milieu”<sup>84</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> Florea 1993, 175: “this type of mirror had been mostly used in the Hellenistic époque until towards the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.”.

<sup>74</sup> Crișan, Ferenzi 1994, 387, pls. V/12, 16, VIII/7-8; Rustoiu 1996, 169, fig. 107/5-7; Crișan 2000, 141, pl. 111/16-18; Chirilă, Crișan 2000, 141, pl. 40/16-18..

<sup>75</sup> Horedt, Seraphin 1971, fig. 64/2-4; Rustoiu 1997, 43.

<sup>76</sup> Vulpe R., Teodor 2003, 67.

<sup>77</sup> Vulpe R., Teodor 2003, 67.

<sup>78</sup> Crișan 2000, 141.

<sup>79</sup> Berciu 1981b, 51.

<sup>80</sup> Berciu 1981b, 95.

<sup>81</sup> Glodariu 1974, 249.

<sup>82</sup> Babeș 2000, 225.

<sup>83</sup> Simion 1985, 278; Simion 2003, 325.

<sup>84</sup> Sîrbu, Rustoiu 2005, 41.

A dissonant note among archaeologists was Silvia Teodor, who, when discussing about the object from Cucorăni, admitted, as shown above, that this might have been done in a local workshop. Unfortunately, the mirror from this site is obviously of a Greek origin, possibly created in one of the North-Pontic workshops (Olbia?). But, the statement of Silvia Teodor offered us the possibility to make an interesting discussion that we will present in the following lines.

The finds from Radovanu-Gorgana a Doua, the presence of the moulds for mirrors of small dimensions in the Dava, there are proofs that a workshop had functioned, which had produced such toilet items. That an intense metallurgical activity existent in this settlement between the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC could be also documented by other finds. Therefore, the inventory and the fittings (two hearths) inside Construction No. 1/1971 (with the dimensions of 8.5x6 m), documented in Trenches no. II, VI, X and F, had showed us that this was a jeweller workshop<sup>85</sup>. Besides, two pits, nos. 33 and 34, situated near the central hearth in the workshop, by their content, enabled us to speak about annexes of a construction of metal processing<sup>86</sup>.

When considering the spot where the mirror moulds have been found, an area without other traces of metallurgical activity, the same as the location of the jeweller workshop, namely the south-eastern part, respectively the north-western perimeter of the dava, with a distance of about 55 m between them, it is hard to say that the moulds were part of the utensils kit of the jeweller.

As in the case of making other bronze or silver objects, the mirror moulding, even if this was a “specialized” work, could be also performed by local Getic/Dacian craftsmen. At the same time, it cannot be abandoned the idea that these craftsmen could have been itinerant ones, coming from South of the Danube, from the Greek and/or Roman milieu. We should not forget that the fortification system from Radovanu, comprising those two dava on the “Gorgana a Doua” and “Gorgana Întâl”, was situated close to the river, therefore easily accessible to the itinerant craftsmen coming from the south.

Thus, in the recent stage of the research about this issue, we could reveal several periods related to the origin of this toilet item for the population in Dacia:

- Imports from the Scythian and Greek work-

<sup>85</sup> Șerbănescu 1985, 22; Șerbănescu 1998, 107-113; Șerbănescu *et alii* 2012a, 109.

<sup>86</sup> Șerbănescu 1998, 127-128.

- shops, especially those in the north-Pontic region – 5<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC;
- Imports from the Hellenistic and Roman milieu – 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC – 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD – both mirrors with large and small diameters;
  - Local products are also possible, these being the result of the metallurgical activity of itinerant craftsmen, coming from the Geto-Dacian space, but also of other local ones 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC – 1<sup>st</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup>?) c. AD.
  - Also, we should emphasize that, at the beginning of the presence of the mirrors in the Geto-Dacian space, they were predominantly present as part of the funerary goods. Subsequently, they could be also recovered from the settlements, both in the complexes (constructions, pits) and in the archaeological layer. Mirrors were found, as well, in special complexes, like the fortified enclosure from Pietroasa Mică-Gruiu Dării.

The tradition of using the mirrors had been continued by the Geto-Dacians from Muntenia during the Roman period (2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> c. AD). Gheorghe Bichir had noted that “*the alchemists of the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D. had surpassed their predecessors from the Latène period, concerning their technological knowledge*”<sup>87</sup>. This fact has been proven, in his opinion, by the existence of some “*workshops for mirror moulding*”, like the one from Bucureşti-Militari-Câmpul Boja, where “*people specialized in this field had existed*”. There, it was discovered a bivalve mould for Sarmatian type mirrors, made of clayish stone, with a *tamga* inscription, as well as fragments from other three such objects<sup>88</sup>. In the opinion of the mentioned specialist, here had been moulded “*mirrors of Sarmatian-Carpic type*”. The craftsmen, who worked in the workshops, could be “*either Sarmatians, or Dacians*”<sup>89</sup>. The fact that at Bucureşti-Militari-Câmpul Boja had been done items of this category, had been confirmed during the archaeological campaign of 1996 by the discovery of a mirror fragment that “fits” into the complete mould<sup>90</sup>. According to Mircea Negru, “*The presence of this mould, associated with that of some Sarmatian vessels and of (a) flower-shaped appliqué*”, had enabled him to consider that “*for the bronze processing in this site Sarmatian craftsmen had been specialized*”<sup>91</sup>. Mirrors had been

<sup>87</sup> Bichir 1984, 25.

<sup>88</sup> Bichir 1973, 109; Bichir 1984, 21, pl. LIV/1.

<sup>89</sup> Bichir 1973, 109.

<sup>90</sup> Negru 2000, 120, pl. 102:4.

<sup>91</sup> Negru 2000, 120.

also found in other Daco-Roman settlements, or Chilia-Militari, like those from Bucureşti-Străuleşti, Mătăsaru, Târgşor<sup>92</sup> and Gropşani-Zona puşului<sup>93</sup>.

Therefore, the “dilemma” about the origin of those who had worked the mirrors in the sites from North of the Danube, cannot be applied just for the Geto-Dacians in the period between the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC – 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD, but even subsequently. Still, for the Daco-Roman period from Muntenia things seem to be more clear: the moulding of such a toilet object had been done by the Sarmatian craftsmen. We should not forget that they had often included them among the grave goods of their burials. Recent studies had shown that such toilet objects had been documented in several sites<sup>94</sup>. Of course, mirrors had been also recovered from other regions of Romania<sup>95</sup>. Most probably, the mirrors are “*an indicator of the female sex*”<sup>96</sup>.

Could this toilet item had been also used by the female sex in the case of the Geto-Dacians, or they were part of the unisex category? For the moment it is hard to give a certain answer to this question.

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