

ABOUT TWO HOARDS DISCOVERED IN THE 1980s – 1990s OF THE 20TH CENTURY IN THE AREA OF THE PRE-ROMAN SETTLEMENTS AT FLORIILE (ALIMAN COMMUNE, CONSTANȚA COUNTY)

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ABSTRACT

A series of works carried out by the Romanian communist state for the development of the national irrigation system in the central and southwestern area of Dobruđja, during the 80`s and early 90`s of the 20th century, led to the discovery of numerous pre-Roman archaeological remains. Among them are two coin hoards found near Floriile, in the area of the open and fortified settlements of Adâncata I and II points, composed first of 11 drachms and tetradrachms of the Alexander III type (of which 9 drachms that were minted between 323/319 – 300/295 BC were saved), respectively the second of at least six posthumous staters of the Lysimachos type minted at the beginning of the 1st century BC. Although the discoveries remained fortuitous, we note their occurrence near a fortified centre and an immediate open settlement covering tens of hectares, which belonged to the local elite, possibly Getic or Thracian, employed as mercenaries. We believe, without currently having arguments to support our idea that these discoveries might also originate from nearby necropolises, the respective tombs being irreparably destroyed by the implementation of the socialist Romanian state's development plans within the national irrigation system in Dobruđja.

Keywords: drachms; staters; Dobruđja; Floriile; type Alexander III; type posthumous Lysimachos; the end of the 4th century and the beginning of the 3rd century BC; the beginning of the 1st century BC; mercenary; local elite.

INTRODUCTION

In the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea, with the completion of the transfer of arable land from private owners to the Romanian

communist state in the 1970s – 1980s (process called collectivization), a national irrigation system necessary for achieving superior results in modern communist agriculture was constructed. The works intended for the development of the national irrigation system in Dobrudja were carried out by the Constanța Trust for Construction and Land Improvements without the presence of archaeologists from Constanța or Bucharest. The area affected in terms of national archaeological cultural heritage was the southern and southwestern part of the Istro-Pontic territory (see in this regard the Rasova-Vederoasa terrace). All these interventions literally disturbed many of the known and lesser-known archaeological areas at that time.

Unfortunately, most of the requests for archaeological intervention from local authorities came late (when they did exist), after a considerable period of time from the beginning of the works, such as digging trenches necessary for the installation of large-diameter pipes, creating channels, and constructing pumping stations. The significant delay between mechanised interventions and the actual arrival of archaeologists (if they did arrive) exposed the respective sites (settlements, necropolises, or simply unknown archaeological areas) to irreparable destruction. Thus, the premises were created for the alienation of discoveries whose traces were lost, which were not reported to archaeologists or other competent authorities. It should be noted that, unlike present times, the legislation back then did not require prior research of the area that was to be affected by excavations, and announcements by central political and industrial authorities were not mandatory.

Even though there was hope that the most important ancient relics would still find their way into state collections (through donations, confiscations, direct sales to authorised museums), some pieces probably became “souvenirs” for the workers and engineers involved in their activities. For example, it was a common practice at the time for personalities of the Constanța intellectuals “to preserve for posterity a relatively small number of monuments from the funerary fields of the city of Tomis” (according to Chera 1999, 7 – 8), a practice that also occurred at Kallatis (Canarache 1969, 28). Subsequently, these cultural goods inevitably were inherited by the respective families upon the death of those initially involved, “circulating” from one person to another¹. Today, we publish the situation of two such fortuitous discoveries, resulting from land improvement works in the Floriile area, which were initially declared to have been discovered in the 1990s².

¹ The intention to sell these discoveries to specialised state institutions gave us the chance, through serendipity, to recover a few important sequences from a distinct page of pre-Roman monetary history in the western Pontic area.

² Components of the two hoards came to the attention of the numismatic cabinet of the Constanța museum during the period 1994-1999 (at the request of the institution's director at the time, professor Adrian Rădulescu, and later professor Mihai Irimia, the owners of the

Archaeological information regarding the Floriile area

The first archaeological information from the area is known from 1972 – 1973, when materials specific to the pre-Roman period were discovered. Thus, an amphora produced by the workshops of Heraclea Pontica between the end of the 5th century and the end of the first quarter of the 4th century BC is published as a result of a chance find, which may have come from the funerary inventory of a tomb located in the heart of a now extinct village called Adâncata (Irimia 1983, 9192, no. 1). The first coins from the fortified settlement corresponding to the point “Adâncata I” were published in 1994 (Talmaçhi 1994, 231 – 233).

What is known about Floriile (general point “Adâncata”) from the perspective of scholarly interest through the lenses of archaeology? We can answer this question by adding up some of the pieces of information that have been recorded based on a series of observations made on the field survey, in close correlation with the local relief. The primary conclusion was that the area represents the largest centre of the particular Getic population inhabiting the Pontic territory, together with important traces of Greek communities settled here for various reasons. The group of settlements has been chronologically categorised as it follows: the autochthonous fortified Getic settlement called “Adâncata I” (Irimia 2007, 150) and a second open settlement of the same population, parallel in evolution with the first, called “Adâncata II” (Irimia 2007, 150 – 151).

The fortified “Adâncata I” settlement was located about 3.5 km east of Floriile and 1.5 km south-west of the former village of Adâncata (Irimia 2004, 178 – 179; Irimia 2005, 320), identified at “Dealul Cişmelei”, on the northern plateau of “Dedibal Hill” and it benefits from numerous archaeological finds. This settlement was considered an important residential centre, fortified with earthen fortifications (*vallum* – preserved until nowadays usually at a low height of less than 1 m) and adjacent ditches, which underwent several stages of evolution and development. The upper part of the settlement area, given its arrangement in relation to the terrain, coincides with a possible *acropolis* located in the south-western part of the plateau, with quadrangular sides of 150 x 150 m (Irimia 2004, 178 – 179; Irimia 2007, 150; Irimia 2010, 94 – 95). This upper enclosure was also for-

pieces came for verification by the members of the numismatic cabinet). Regarding many “discoveries” which seemed uncertain from the reports, we maintained the necessary reservation. Those considered genuine were measured, weighed, and photographed. As it was later found out, although initially their discovery was declared to be in the period 1994 – 1999, the hoards were actually discovered in the 1980s, in the context of opening construction sites that ensured the development of the irrigation system in Dobrudja (see also Talmaçhi 2023a, 66, 103). The hoard composed of silver pieces was not entirely seen by us, only nine drachms being examined, while one more drachm and possibly two tetradrachms were not brought for reevaluation. Moreover, the acquisition of these was missed in the late 1990s by the Museum of National History and Archaeology Constanța due to the lack of substantial funds in the budget. It is very possible that the pieces were sold to other private individuals in Constanța and Bucharest, and later ended up on the antiques market in West Europe.

tified by the construction of a substantial stone wall, which surrounded the entire perimeter, today preserved only by a simple bump about 1 m high. But archaeological remains can be found within a radius of about 1 km from a point considered by us central. For this first settlement, “Adâncata I”, it has been proposed to date it either between the end of the 6th and beginning of the 5th century BC and the 1st century BC – 1st century AD (Irimia 2007, 152), or between the end of the 6th century BC and the 2nd or 1st century BC (Irimia 2010, 96), possibly also in the 1st century AD (Irimia 2010, 108). Two cremation tombs have been discovered near the settlement and their inventory is thought to belong to the 4th century BC (Chiriac, Iconomu 2005, 209 – 217). We also note that its west-northwest and south-southeast sides are naturally fortified by the existence of steep gullies, which probably relieved the natives of further fortification. At the base of these deep gullies, in the proximity of the sole spring in the area where nowadays there is a water fountain arrangement probably made in the late Ottoman period, the remains of stone constructions and archaeological material, mainly dating to the Hellenistic period, are visible on the soil surface. I emphasise once again that this is the only existing water source within an extensive radius, hence it is very likely it covered the water needs of the pre-Roman settlement complex in the area of the mentioned points. A rich archaeological material has been collected from its surface: pottery (of Getic origin, hand-worked, wheel-worked, luxury Greek shreds, Greek-Hellenistic amphorae from Chios, Thasos, Heraclea Pontica, Mendos, Sinope, Samos, pseudo-Cos, Rhodos, stamped amphorae torches from Thasos, Sinope, Rhodos, Cos); several tools are worth mentioning, such as a coulter, a flat winged axe and a pewter (Irimia 2000, 102 – 103, nos. 1 – 3; Irimia 2004, 178 – 180; Irimia 2005, 339; Irimia 2007, 151 – 152); ornaments – a bronze fibula with a Thracian pattern (Irimia 2005, 339); weapons – four battle arrowheads and a spearhead (Irimia 2005, 339); other miscellaneous pieces – a bronze bell et varia (Irimia 2005, 340). Getic pottery includes several subcategories, such as bell-shaped vessels with handles, bag type vessels with knobs, deep bowls, bowls, cups and mugs, fruit bowls, pots, imitations of some Greek types such as *kraters*, *lekanai*, bowls and *pythoi*. The luxury Greek ceramics included mugs, bowls, *kantharoi*, *amphorae* and others (Irimia 2007, 151). Furthermore, there were other pieces of pottery (two deep bowls, one of which is of Greek workmanship), ornaments and clothing accessories (four rings from the 4th century BC, a fibula from the mid-4th century BC, a fragmentary ring from the 4th century BC, a glass paste bead with three human masks, which is thought to originate during the 4th or 3rd centuries BC) from the inventories of two Getic tombs found in the vicinity of the fortified settlement, possibly dated in the 4th century BC. To these pieces coming “from the area around the fortress”, there can be added a bronze link, considered to be part of the category of belts or pendants, for which the context of its discovery is not

known and which has been dated, as the latest period of circulation, to the 1st century BC – 1st century AD, although their production began in the 3rd century BC (Chiriac, Iconomu 2005, 212). This necropolis could belong both to the fortified settlement and to the open one from the “Adâncata II” point. The settlement is delimited to the northwest by three tumuli and to the southeast by two other tumuli.

The open “Adâncata II” settlement is located about 2 km away from the former village, to the southeast, on a plateau with a certain slope and is delimited by two tumuli about 800 m apart. It is unfortified and organised in many *insulae*, each arranged about 500 x 250 m (Irimia 2005, 341; Irimia 2007, 150 – 151; Irimia 2010, 96 – 97). It is positioned about 2.5 km away in a straight line from the fortified settlement mentioned above. No traces of fortification of the settlement are visible on the surface. The archaeological and numismatic material is rather similar to that in the area of the “Adâncata I” point, with minor differences. That is to say, here too are known the hand-worked Getic pottery, wheel-worked pottery, Greek luxury pottery, Hellenistic amphorae (from the same centres mentioned in the finds from the “Adâncata I” settlement, spindle whorls, etc.). The end of this settlement is proposed for the 2nd century BC (Irimia 2005, 358), citing the lack of indigenous and Hellenistic pottery specific to the 1st century BC. Moreover, the author who published the ceramic material gathered from the surface surveys and donations later limits the dating to the 3rd century BC (Irimia 2010, 97). We still consider these statements to be hasty, given the quantitative limitation of the available ceramic lot when compared to the size of the settlement, and especially by the lack of minimal correlation with the numerous coin evidences. The latter point to a later date within the Hellenistic era, up to the 1st century BC. However, the autochthonous fortified settlement from the “Adâncata I” point and the open settlement from the “Adâncata II” appear to have evolved synchronously from the 5th century and especially from the 4th century BC onwards. The same situation is noted for the north of the Danube, in Moldova, for similar chronological/archaeological contexts (Teodor 1999, 15 – 27).

Also worth mentioning are several other cast metal objects, discovered by chance, which were kept in the private collection of Ionel Matei in Bucharest, namely seven bronze plates in the shape of a stylised animal head, which were applied as ornaments on textile or leather materials. The zoomorphic motifs include a possible depiction of a stag, another in the form of a lion’s head (dated to the 6th – 5th centuries BC), a wild boar – a combination between a stag, a waterfowl and a pig (dated to the 5th century BC), a head of a horse (from the 4th century BC) and lastly an ornamental detail of an undetermined object (Iconomu, Chiriac 2007, 267 – 269).

Within the fortified settlement, a Greek community seems to have lived at some point (Talmăţchi 2005, 19; opinion shared later in Irimia 2004 – 2005, 357) and in our opinion their presence continued beyond the 2nd

century BC, possibly through its descendants even into the 1st century BC. This Greek community of the Classical and later Hellenistic periods was an active factor within the local community residing in the complex of settlements at Floriile, using mostly cast monetary signs for exchange, coins of precious or common metal, ornaments and other pieces of fashion wear, imported luxury pottery, and last but not least, contributing to the construction of the “Adâncata I” fortification. A possible source for all these influences that fueled the direction of the Greek trade for a good while was the Istros colony. However, the possibility of the settlement complex functioning in the early period, especially from the 5th century BC, as an *emporium* (Irimia 2005, 357) remains to be proved by the means of archaeological excavations. At this stage of the research, the claim can be designated as more of a logical speculation, bearing in mind that the presence of an *emporium* does not particularly require a harbour and has foremost a commercial function (Counillon 1993, 48 – 53).

All these considerations are based on the conclusions presented more than a decade ago in an extensive article dedicated to the problem of the Floriile fortifications, namely that many of the indigenous settlements discovered in the southwestern area of Dobrudja may have depended socially, politically and militarily on the large local centre identified in the area (Irimia 2010, 107 – 109). Tribal residences or political-administrative centres, such as the complex of Floriile settlements, seem to have represented places of refuge and safety in case of danger, beginning with the noble elite downwards. The two settlements together cover an area of several dozen hectares, extraordinary in terms of their size and concentrated archaeological and coin finds. I must underline again that these considerations, at this stage of the studies, are based only on surface field survey.

The following are the catalogues of the two hoards composed of drachms and possibly tetradrachms of Alexander the Great type, and posthumous staters of Lysimachos type.

Catalogue of the coin hoards discovered at Floriile (Aliman Commune, Constanța County)

Hoard 1

Type Alexander the Great, posthumous:

1. AR (drachm); 11h; 4.17 g; 17 x 16.5 mm (**Plate I.1**).
Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.
Reverse: Zeus Aëtophoros seated left on backless throne, right leg drawn back, feet on stool, eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; horizontal grain kernel under the throne, spear head upward in outer right field; legend vertically behind Zeus: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ.
Reference: Price 1991, p. 249, nr. 1750, Colophon, 323 – 319 BC.
2. AR (drachm); 3h; 4.13 g; 17 mm (**Plate I.2**).
Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.
Reverse: Zeus Aëtophoros seated left on backless throne, right leg drawn back, feet on stool, eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; possible horizontal grain kernel

under the throne (very worn out), spear head upward in outer right field; legend vertically behind Zeus: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

Reference: Price 1991, 249, no. 1750, Colophon, 323 – 319 BC.

3. AR (drachm); 11h; 4.17 g; 17 x 16 mm (**Plate I.3**).

Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.

Reverse: Zeus Aëtrophoros seated left on backless throne, right leg drawn back, feet on stool, eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; torch in left field, monogram under the throne; legend vertically behind Zeus: (Α)ΑΕΞΑ(ΝΔΡΟΥ).

Reference: Price 1991, 333, no. 2638, Sardis, 323 – 319 BC.

4. AR (drachm); 12h; 4.21 g; 17.5 x 16.5 mm (**Plate I.4**).

Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.

Reverse: Zeus Aëtrophoros seated left, holding eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; monogram before, Φ below throne; legend vertically behind Zeus: ΑΛΕ(Ξ)ΑΝΔΡΟΥ(Y).

Reference: Price 1991, 255, no. 1823, Colophon, 310 – 301 BC.

5. AR (drachm); 12h; 4.01 g; 17 mm (**Plate II.5**).

Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.

Reverse: Zeus Aëtrophoros seated left, holding eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; to left, Β and lion's head; below throne, Π; legend vertically behind Zeus: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ(Y).

Reference: Price 1991, 254, no. 1811, Colophon, 310 – 301 BC.

6. AR (drachm); 11h; 3.90 g; 16.5 mm (**Plate II.6**).

Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.

Reverse: Zeus Aëtrophoros seated left on backless throne, right leg drawn back, feet on stool, eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; monogram (I, Α and I in ligature) in left field; monogram (M and E in ligature) under the throne; legend vertically behind Zeus: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

Reference: Price 1991, 284, no. 2127, Miletus, 301 – 297 BC.

7. AR (drachm); 11h; 4.13 g; 17 x 16.5 mm (**Plate II.7**).

Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.

Reverse: Zeus Aëtrophoros seated left on backless throne, right leg drawn back, feet on stool, eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; lion head and Φ in left field; pentagram under the throne; legend vertically behind Zeus: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ(Y).

Reference: Price 1991, 257, no. 1836, Colophon, 301 – 297 BC.

8. AR (drachm); 11h; 4.24 g; 17.5 x 16.5 mm (**Plate II.8**).

Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.

Reverse: Zeus Aëtrophoros seated left on backless throne, right leg drawn back, feet on stool, eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; helmet-crest in left field, double-axe under the throne; legend vertically behind Zeus: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

Reference: Price 1991, 285, no. 2138, Miletus, 300 – 295 BC.

9. AR (drachm); 11h; 4.34 g; 17.5 mm (**Plate II.9**).

Obverse: Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress.

Reverse: Zeus Aëtrophoros seated left on backless throne, right leg drawn back, feet on stool, eagle in right hand, sceptre in left; helmet-crest in left field, double-axe under the throne; legend vertically behind Zeus: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ(Y).

Reference: Price 1991, 285, no. 2138, Miletus, 300 – 295 BC.

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Comment of hoard 1

As originating from the complex of settlements in the “Adâncata” area, we publish today a hoard composed of twelve silver pieces in the category of drachms (and possibly two tetradrachms), of the Alexander the Great type, to which initially an Istros drachm (according to Pick 1898, 163,

no. 426) and an old-style Athenian tetradrachm (Athena/owl type, dated approx. 454 – 404 or approx. 420 – 405 BC) (Talmațchi 2018, 10, pl. III, no. 30 – 31) would have been associated. Although the discovery was announced as belonging to the years 1997 – 1998, it was discovered in the early 1990s, with the destruction of the irrigation system in the Urluia-Hățeg-Floriile area³. No other information was known regarding a possible context or a more precise location, etc. It is certain that the 12 Macedonian pieces were discovered separately from the two specimens from Istros and Athens, but what is certain is that they were discovered in the same area or zone. The specimens were mixed and incorrectly associated with the hoard by the initial occasional discoverers, who were very little familiar with the rigour and accuracy of discovery and recording conditions.

The catalogue includes only nine drachms of the Alexander III type, which were the ones that could be studied in a very short time. Another drachm and two additional tetradrachms, although reported to be part of the same hoard with the same general iconographic descriptions of obverse and reverse, were supposed to be studied later, which never happened. The nine posthumous drachms belong to several mints such as Colophon (and possibly “Colophon”), Miletus, and Sardis in western Asia Minor. The five drachms from Colophon (and possibly “Colophon”) were minted between 323 – 319 BC and 310 – 301 BC, the specimen from Sardis between 323 – 319 BC, and the three from Miletus between 301 – 297 BC and 300 – 295 BC. In general, the pieces are preserved in fairly good conditions, which would indicate a inconspicuous circulation of them before they were buried.

When referring to Macedonian coin hoards discovered in the Istro-Pontic area, it must be mentioned from the start the rarity of those composed of gold and silver coins, with the presence of bronze coins of Macedonian kings being a characteristic of the local central and southwestern Dobrudjan and Greek coastal patterns. Nevertheless, several discoveries of hoards composed of silver coins (Macedonian-type tetradrachms and drachms) are noteworthy.

In 1956, a hoard consisting of 20 tetradrachms, of which 10 or 12 are posthumous of Alexander III (from the end of the 4th century BC?), was discovered approximately 30 km from the city of Silistra (IGCH, 110 – 111, no. 837; Bacvarov 1986, 85 – 89; Dimitrov 1999, 183, no. 10 (LXIV).

From the vicinity of the same city of Silistra (Bulgaria) originates a hoard composed of 17 drachms of Alexander III type, issued at Amphipolis (1 specimen), Lampsacus (2 specimens), Abydos (1 specimen), Colophon

³ At that time, the infrastructure for water intake and distribution, from pumping stations to water transport pipes, was destroyed. In addition to the physical and moral wear of the basic components, large-scale thefts of iron and steel components were added, which were then sold as scrap metal for financial gain.

(6 specimens), Magnesia (1 specimen), Sardis (1 specimen), Miletus (1 specimen), Mylasa (1 specimen), and one uncertain mint (3 specimens), dating to the years 285 – 280 BC (Dimitrov 1988, 91; Dimitrov 1990, 47 – 65; Dimitrov 1999, 184, no. 13 (LXXXIII); Rousseva 1990, 32, 23, note 34; Meadows, Wartenberg 2002, 19, no. 187).

In 1907, at Slava Rusă (Slava Cercheză commune, Tulcea County), a hoard composed of several hundred (?) drachms of Lysimachos type, dated around 280 BC or around 250 BC, was found (Moisil 1916, 42, no. 63; Moisil 1928, 11; IGCH, 112, no. 851).

At Satu Nou (Oltina commune, Constanța County), a Hellenistic coin hoard was discovered in a clay vessel at the “At Fortress” site in the years 1943 – 1945, composed of Macedonian tetradrachms, namely 28 specimens of the Alexander III type, two of the Philip III type, two of Lysimachos type, and six of Seleukos type (this hoard’s deposition was attributed by Constantin Moisil to the actions of Lysimachos in his movement towards the Getae in the Wallachian Plain, see Moisil 1950, 57, 62 – 65).

Also, at Satu Nou, in the fortified Getic settlement with an earthen rampart and defensive ditch, a coin hoard composed of two tetradrachms and three drachms of the Alexander the Great type was discovered during the 1989 archaeological research in the “Voicu Valley” site. The tetradrachms were issued at Odessos, while the drachms originate from the mints of Magnesia (Meandrum), Lampsacus (Mysia), and Colophon (Ionia). All are posthumous issues, the earliest being the drachms minted in 323 – 319, 319 – 305, and 310 – 301 BC, and the latest being the tetradrachms minted in the interval 280 – 230 BC (Talmațchi 2013, 7 – 18).

Finally, in 1977 – 1978, from the Istros-Bridge site (Istria commune, Constanța County), a small coin hoard was accidentally discovered in a Greek lekythos (broken at the top in antiquity), composed of 11 Macedonian drachms of Alexander III type, minted in various mints in western Asia Minor: from Miletus (2 specimens), Colophon (4 specimens), Sardis (1 specimen), and Lampsacus (2 specimens). They are chronologically structured in the interval 325 – 301 BC, being, except for the first two, posthumous specimens (Talmațchi 2023c, 83 – 95).

As can be seen from the enumeration above, no hoards have yet been discovered that present associations with coins of different metals or of the same metal but minted, for example, at Callatis (Heracles type) or Istros (Apollo/two inverted heads type). Also, with few exceptions, they appear to be hoards accumulated in southern Thrace, which then reached the northeastern extremity of Thrace by various means (in a military, commercial context, or perhaps even as plunder reaching local environments).

To capture the moment when this hoard entered the area of the “Adâncata I” and “Adâncata II” settlements near the village of Floriile, we can either refer to the last issuance date of the final drachm presented

in the catalogue, namely the year 295 BC (with caution since there were three other pieces that did not come to our attention), or to a series of political-military events that took place in the western Pontos Euxeinos in the first half of the 3rd century BC.

Thus, after the premature death of Alexander III (323 BC) and the division of his vast empire, the Dobrujan area became part of the Kingdom of Thrace led by Lysimachos, where the Danube was considered the northeastern border. As a result, the entire western coast of the Black Sea in northeastern Thrace was militarily occupied, and the colonies were forced to accept military garrisons (Pippidi 1967, 155). This could be the moment when this small hoard reached the western coast of the Black Sea, along with the military units stationed in the area, with direct consequences on the local populations in southern and southwestern Dobrudja. The economic-military policy pursued by Lysimachos towards the Greek colonies and the settlements of local populations in the Isthmo-Pontic territory created the conditions for triggering a revolt against him in 313 BC, which ended after a few years with the success of the diadoch (Alexandrescu 1968, 272; Lund 1992, 33 – 36). Consequently, in addition to the arrival of Lysimachos' Thracian army troops in the area, we can also consider the ephemeral reorientation of local trade towards Thracian and Macedonian spaces as a source for the hoard's arrival in the area, which involved the penetration of merchants from the mentioned geographic areas. The disappearance of Lysimachos marked the end of the diadoch era in this part of the ancient world and opened a new chapter in the history of the Hellenistic period, creating a power vacuum that, under favourable conditions, was soon replaced by other militaristic communities (see the Celtic invasion and the establishment of the Celtic kingdom at Tylis). This moment implies a collapse of Macedonia and a retreat of its influence from the northeastern extremity of Thracian space.

Thus, the penetration of the coin hoard could correspond to the specific period of the first two decades of the 3rd century BC, more precisely the years after 295 to 281 BC, up to the death of Lysimachos. We do not know to what extent its discovery may be related to commercial factors, plunder, or mercenary activity. However, the recruitment of local Dobrudjan warriors into the Macedonian world by the western Pontic Greek *poleis* is a fact attested during the time of Alexander III, for example at Callatis (Suceveanu 1966, 339 – 346; on the spectacular increase in the rate of issuance and profile issues around 325 BC at the mints of Asia Minor to pay mercenaries for the military campaigns of Alexander III, see De Callataş 1994, 31). This hoard, discovered near a strongly fortified local settlement, like others discovered in the southwestern part of the Pontic territory, may signify payment for military service in the context of engaging mercenaries specific to the local elite. It is possible that the Thracian troops involved on the side of the Greek colonies against Lysimachos came from the south-

western area of the Istro-Pontic space (Ruscu 2002, 283, 292). Such a hypothesis is not easy to prove, but it cannot be excluded either.

All the analysis carried out above regarding the chronology of the hoard and the context of its arrival in the area remains valid in the context in which, possibly, the last drachm and the two tetradrachms that would have been part of the same hoard, would still be dated to 280 BC. If the tetradrachms came from the west of the Black Sea, the dating of the hoard would go to the second half of the 3rd century and the considerations would acquire other connotations.

Hoard 2

Istros Mint

1. AV (stater); 12h; 8.30 g; 20 mm (**Plate III.1**).

Obverse: Diademed head of Alexander the Great, seen in profile, facing right; wearing a diadem adorned with the horns of the god Amun.

Reverse: The goddess Pallas Athena seated on a throne, facing left; on her head she wears a Corinthian helmet; in her right hand she holds an open-winged Nike displaying a wreath; with her left hand she supports a shield leaning against the throne; behind the goddess appears a spear placed obliquely; she is clothed in a himation; in exergue appears a trident between two dolphins, recumbent, facing left; below Athena's outstretched arm, on the left side of the coin field, the initials of the coin magistrate ΔΙ; below the throne ΙΣ; legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ΑΥΣΙΜΑΧΟΥ (description taken from De Callataÿ 1997, 139).

Reference: Müller 1858, pl. VI, no. 285; Pick 1898, 170, no. 482; De Callataÿ 1995b, 39 – 40; De Callataÿ 1997, 139; Preda, Petac 2006, 37, no. 134 – 135.

2. AV (stater); 12h; 8.23 g; 19,7 x 18,9 mm (**Plate III.2**).

Obverse: Diademed head of Alexander the Great, seen in profile, facing right; wearing a diadem adorned with the horns of the god Amun.

Reverse: The goddess Pallas Athena seated on a throne, facing left; on her head she wears a Corinthian helmet; in her right hand she holds an open-winged Nike displaying a wreath; with her left hand she supports a shield leaning against the throne; behind the goddess appears a spear placed obliquely; she is clothed in a himation; in exergue appears a trident between two dolphins, recumbent, facing left; below Athena's outstretched arm, on the left side of the coin field, the initials of the coin magistrate ΔΙ; below the throne ΙΣ; legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ΑΥΣΙΜΑΧΟΥ (description taken from De Callataÿ 1997, 139).

Reference: Müller 1858, pl. VI, no. 285; Pick 1898, 170, no. 482; De Callataÿ 1995b, 39 – 40; De Callataÿ 1997, 139; Preda, Petac 2006, 37, no. 134 – 135.

Callatis Mint

3. AV (stater); 12h; 8.22 g; 19.1 x 18.2 mm (**Plate III.3**).

Obverse: Diademed head of Alexander the Great, seen in profile, facing right; wearing a diadem adorned with the horns of the god Amun.

Reverse: The goddess Pallas Athena seated on a throne, facing left; on her head she wears a Corinthian helmet; in her right hand she holds an open-winged Nike displaying a wreath; with her left hand she supports a shield leaning against the throne; behind the goddess appears a spear placed obliquely; she is clothed in a himation; in exergue appears a trident between two dolphins, recumbent, facing left; below Athena's outstretched arm, on the left side of the coin field, the initials of the coin magistrate H and P in ligature and A (HPA); below the throne ΚΑΛ; legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ΑΥΣΙΜΑΧΟΥ (description taken from De Callataÿ 1997, 139).

Reference: Müller 1858, pl. VI, no. 267; Pick 1898, 106, no. 259; De Callataÿ 1995b, 42; De Callataÿ 1997, 140.

4. AV (stater); 12h; 8.25 g; 19.9 x 19.4 mm (**Plate III.4**).

Obverse: Diademed head of Alexander the Great, seen in profile, facing right; wearing a diadem adorned with the horns of the god Amun.

Reverse: The goddess Pallas Athena seated on a throne, facing left; on her head she wears a Corinthian helmet; in her right hand she holds an open-winged Nike displaying a wreath; with her left hand she supports a shield leaning against the throne; behind the goddess appears a spear placed obliquely; she is clothed in a himation; in exergue appears a trident between two dolphins, recumbent, facing left; below Athena's outstretched arm, on the left side of the coin field, the initials of the coin magistrate Cω; below the throne KAA; legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ΑΥΣΙΜΑΧΟΥ (description taken from De Callataÿ 1997, 139).

Reference: Müller 1858, pl. VI, no. 263; Pick 1898, 106, no. 260; De Callataÿ 1995b, 42; De Callataÿ 1997, 140; Stancomb 2000, pl. V, no. 103 – 104.

Tomis Mint

5. AV (stater); 12h; 8.18 g; 20 x 19.7 mm (**Plate III.5**).

Obverse: Diademed head of Alexander the Great, seen in profile, facing right; wearing a diadem adorned with the horns of the god Amun.

Reverse: The goddess Pallas Athena seated on a throne, facing left; on her head she wears a Corinthian helmet; in her right hand she holds an open-winged Nike displaying a wreath; with her left hand she supports a shield leaning against the throne; behind the goddess appears a spear placed obliquely; she is clothed in a himation; in exergue appears a trident between two dolphins, recumbent, facing left; below Athena's outstretched arm, on the left side of the coin field, the initials of the coin magistrate ΘEM; below the throne TO; legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ΑΥΣΙΜΑΧΟΥ (description taken from Regling 1910, 605 – 606, 649 – 653, no. 2471 – 2486; De Callataÿ 1997, 139, 141; Preda 1998, 112).

Reference: Müller 1858, pl. VI, no. 273; Regling 1910, 651 – 652, nr. 2480; De Callataÿ 1995b, 40 – 41; De Callataÿ 1997, 141 – 142; Preda, Petac 2006, 37, no. 134 – 135; Vilcu et alii 2006, 75, nr. 119 (for abbreviation name monetary magistrate).

6. AV (stater); 12h; 8.19 g; 20 x 19.8 mm (**Plate III.6**).

Obverse: Diademed head of Alexander the Great, seen in profile, facing right; wearing a diadem adorned with the horns of the god Amun.

Reverse: The goddess Pallas Athena seated on a throne, facing left; on her head she wears a Corinthian helmet; in her right hand she holds an open-winged Nike displaying a wreath; with her left hand she supports a shield leaning against the throne; behind the goddess appears a spear placed obliquely; she is clothed in a himation; in exergue appears a trident between two dolphins, recumbent, facing left; below Athena's outstretched arm, on the left side of the coin field, the initials of the coin magistrate ΘEM; below the throne TO; legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩ(Σ)/ΑΥΣΙΜΑΧΟ(Y) (description taken from Regling 1910, 605 – 606, 649 – 653, no. 2471 – 2486; De Callataÿ 1997, 139, 141; Preda 1998, 112).

Reference: Müller 1858, pl. VI, nr. 273; Regling 1910, 651 – 652, no. 2480; De Callataÿ 1995b, 40 – 41; De Callataÿ 1997, 141; Preda, Petac 2006, 37, no. 134 – 135; Vilcu et alii 2006, 75, no. 119 (for the abbreviation of the name of the coin magistrate).

*

Comment of hoard 2

The second hoard consists of at least six staters discovered by chance at Floriile, not far from the settlement complex (fortified and open from the “Adâncata I” and “Adâncata II” sites), which present in abbreviated

form on the reverse the names of the colonies Istros (2 specimens), Tomis (2 specimens), and Callatis (2 specimens). The discovery of posthumous Lysimachos-type staters is a rarity for the monetary situation in the 2nd – 1st centuries BC in Dobrudja, according to the specialised bibliography. In this regard, we mention a unique hoard known to date as being discovered in Dobrudja in the 1990s, mentioned either near Tomis, north of Mangalia, or at Cumpăna (Constanța County) (Custurea, Talmațchi 2011, 188, no. 35, 396 – 397, no. XVII; Talmațchi 2023b, 670).

The six staters presented in the catalogue were minted at Istros, Callatis, and Tomis on the Western coast of the Black Sea, against the backdrop of the war efforts supported by the king of Pontus, Mithridates VI Eupator. This is the period when all the western Pontic cities were under the authority of the king of Pontus (Pippidi 1971, 137 – 145; Avram, Bounegru 1997, 155 – 165).

The mint at Istros struck a relatively small number of posthumous Lysimachos-type gold pieces, although we know from epigraphic evidence the presence of a *strategos* of Mithridates VI Eupator in the city with the corresponding military garrison (Poenaru Bordea 1999, 158 – 159). The mint at Callatis issued posthumous Lysimachos type pieces in two series (the first of good style, the second of inferior style), being capable of producing coins of good artistic quality, an activity that integrates into a general monetary phenomenon (Seyrig 1958, 615). However, its activity was considered marginal (Newell 1919, 126). Finally, the Tomis mint is viewed as the most important issuer of posthumous Lysimachos type staters on the western coast of the Pontos Euxeinos (Poenaru Bordea 1975, 20; Talmațchi 2004, 182), in terms of volume and quality (Poenaru Bordea 1974, 124; Poenaru Bordea 1997, 63). For these staters, we know two distinct categories in terms of style, the order of classification being chronological as follows: the first presents a good style, much closer to that used on the tetradrachms and staters of Byzantion (with the trident flanked by two dolphins) (Marinescu 2004, 131), and the second presents an inferior style (De Callataÿ 1995b, 44 – 45), with some specimens even being barbarised, without specific attributes (Iliescu 1979, 6, no. III).

From a chronological perspective, we find several similar proposals in the bibliography. Octavian Iliescu proposed the years 130 – 55 BC for the issuance of posthumous Lysimachos-type staters (Iliescu 2002, 52 – 53). More precisely, the issues that present a refined style were minted around 130 – 110 BC, and those with an inferior style were minted around 90 – 55 BC (Iliescu 1979, 6 – 7; Iliescu 1998, 158; Iliescu 2000, 385). Gh. Poenaru Bordea considered the possibility of establishing two groups for the same posthumous issues: an earlier one (dated around 90 – 80 BC) and a later one (dated between 80 – 72 BC) (Poenaru Bordea 1979, 48). Additionally, this researcher was not a proponent of the minting of western Pontic Lysimachus type staters after the year 71 BC (Poenaru Bordea 2000, 85). Constantin Preda places the majority of posthumous Lysimachos type sta-

ters in the period 90 – 72 BC, with the possibility that a small part might have been issued in the 2nd century BC (Preda 1998, 113). Today, there are specialists who support the possibility of these staters being minted even after 71 BC (Vîlcu et alii 2006, 9), possibly up to the time of Burebista's expedition (Iliescu 2000, 385).

François de Callataÿ, who has extensively studied this category of coins, considers the issuance of posthumous Lysimachos type staters as having a compact character, being produced over a short period of time, as the reverse dies are characterised by a pronounced stylistic homogeneity (De Callataÿ 1995b, 44). He considers the first phase of issuing posthumous Lysimachos type staters to belong to the 2nd century BC, perhaps around 150 BC (based on style, weight and circulation), and the second phase to belong to the beginning of the 1st century BC (De Callataÿ 1995b, 44). He also notes the existence of an impressive quantity of staters in discoveries, their number being connected to the increased need for recruiting mercenaries to support Mithridates' military campaigns. Consequently, he considers these staters as "mercenary coins" (De Callataÿ 1995a, 55 – 58).

Their production was due to a vast monetary process, and the adoption and continuation of the type even after the death of Lysimachos is, on the one hand, the expression of a possible economic rationale (Seyrig 1958, 618). Equally true is the fact that the issuance can be mainly attributed to the need to recruit and pay local mercenaries from each Greek centre, necessary for Mithridates VI Eupator in the military campaigns against Rome (Avram 2003, 316). It is worth noting the production rate of the mints in the Kingdom of Pontus, which proved to be ascending with military conflicts, more precisely with their preparatory stages and onset, in the context of future expenses (De Callataÿ 1987, 60; De Callataÿ 1997, 409; De Callataÿ 2000, 358 – 359).

Regarding the recruitment of mercenaries from local populations in the first half of the 1st century BC, documentary sources are entirely lacking. The last information concerning "our areas" is due to the participation of the Bastarnae as mercenaries hired by the Macedonian Kingdom (during Philip V and Perseus) in conflicts with the Dardanians and Republican Rome (Ruscu 2002, 229; 324), with infantry and cavalry (Babeş 2010, 542). For example, the hiring of the Bastarnae by the Macedonian king Perseus involved granting a participation bonus of five staters for each infantryman and ten staters for each cavalryman, with payments continuing based on their involvement in the respective military events (De Callataÿ 1997, 150).

A predominantly military and aggressive population in their mode of operation, the Bastarnae, once settled in the northern mouths of the Danube and in the Delta (Pippidi 1967, 38 – 42), represented a constant source of pressure on the Greek colonies. They also physically approached the geographical areas where numerous military conflicts took place dur-

ing the Hellenistic period, which opened up opportunities for them to obtain rich resources through intensive mercenary activity. The pressure was exerted not only on the coastal area, but also manifested in the Central Southern Danube Region of the Getic communities, as evidenced by the attack on the fortified settlement at Satu Nou, archaeologically attested (Conovici 1992, 3 – 14; Irimia, Conovici 1989, 144).

The posthumous Lysimachos type staters discovered in the Floriile area reflect the movement of local warriors (probably Getae) as mercenaries to the conflicts of the King of Pontus, Mithridates VI Eupator, at the call of the western Pontic cities, intermediaries of the agreed terms. These mercenaries probably belonged to the “Thracian tribes living near the Ister...” (Rustoiu 2000, 281; according to Appian, *Mithr.* 15). Their possible wages discovered at Floriile (to which we add those still unpublished from Coslugăa (Lipnița commune, Constanța county), Dunăreni (Alimna commune, Constanța County), and Hațeg (Adamclisi commune, Constanța County), near other fortified settlements, are evidence that some representatives of the local military elite returned safely from the conflicts. However, as noted in the Carpatho-Dniester area, the discovery of staters confirms the existence of local power centres in the southwestern Istro-Pontic area during this period (Munteanu 2005, 253).

Short conclusions

The lack of systematic archaeological research in the fortified settlements located not far from the locality of Floriile (Aliman Commune, Constanța County) is partially affecting the correct interpretation of the field information, the hitherto published finds, as well as the working hypotheses and sometimes the chronology established for the respective sites. Also, the use of the coin finds as a main argument for the in-depth research of the presence and diffusion of pre-Roman coinage in these settlements in particular and in the indigenous territory of Dobrudja in general, is the phenomenon of circulation and penetration in local environments – inside and outside the *chora* – during the pre-Roman times, runs into some inherent methodological limitations. There are multiple reasons for this: everything that has been published so far does not have a very clear find spot, many findings are not yet known to the few specialists working on the topic and the pieces of information in regards to the location of the unpublished coins is sometimes far from satisfactory. However, at this stage of research the coinage surpasses all the other finds, even the ceramic material, being relevant for establishing a preliminary chronology and also for determining the economic and commercial importance of the local centre, including its political status in the area.

The first hoard composed of the Alexander III type silver coins, significant within the overall known monetary relations in the Istro-Pontic context of the 4th – 3rd centuries BC, adds to those already known

in the scholarly bibliography, contributing new information regarding similar fortuitous discoveries. However, in the absence of correlating the monetary document with the archaeological one, in-depth considerations lose much of their substance. Nevertheless, such discoveries can express economic and commercial relations, as well as military ones, with the Macedonian world, extending even to western Asia Minor. The hoard was brought from the Thracian space (if not from further afield), ready constituted, probably reflecting a narrow composition of the monetary flow present in the mentioned geographical area, including monetary material from Ionia, Lydia, etc. This monetary flow had a certain central structure, with specific monetary categories, characteristic of the end of the 4th century and the beginning of the 3rd century BC.

As in the situation of the pieces from the previously presented hoard, the staters from this second hoard are preserved in very good condition, a fact that would indicate a discreet circulation of them before being buried. Very possibly, among several possibilities, we would opt for its arrival in the local environment in the southwest of the Dobrudjan territory as payments made by Mithridates VI Eupator, through the colonies on the western shore of the Black Sea, to the military elite of the Getae or Bastarnae.

The discovery of coins from the two hoards was not made inside the mentioned settlements, but somewhere outside them (the trenches for modern irrigation pipes did not follow the high slopes along the Pollucii valley near the village of Floriile). We believe, without currently having arguments to support our idea that these discoveries might also originate from nearby necropolises, the respective tombs being irreparably destroyed by the implementation of the socialist Romanian state's development plans within the national irrigation system in Dobrudja.

In the same vein, the few known details about these two discoveries prevent us from making further considerations. Moreover, correlating the few known details directly with old archaeological discoveries in the area is practically impossible. Additionally, the absence of all the component specimens may affect the precise establishment of the specific chronologies of the two hoards. We hope that, during our activities in the field, as archaeological research in local population centres in Dobrudja amplifies, we will have the opportunity to publish such discoveries, but in clear archaeological contexts and not merely suspected ones. Perhaps, ultimately, the best form of protecting the national cultural heritage and preventing its destruction or alienation, on the part of the Romanian state, would be a substantial long-term financial investment (and not at the brink of collapse as currently) in supporting high-quality archaeological research in Romania. What could be the final goal? On the one hand, the salvation of national and European historical-archaeological cultural heritage, and on the other, the discovery of hoards in controllable archaeological contexts, with consequences of particular importance in terms of correlating them with the relevant archaeological context.

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- Plate I:** Alexander III type drachms from the hoard discovered at Floriile (no. 1 – 4).
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ЗА ДВЕ МОНЕТНИ СЪКРОВИЩА, ОТКРИТИ ПРЕЗ 80-ТЕ – 90-ТЕ ГОДИНИ НА ХХ В. В РАЙОНА НА ПРЕДРИМСКИТЕ СЕЛИЩА КРАЙ ФЛОРИЛЕ (ОБЩИНА АЛИМАН, ОКРЪГ КОНСТАНЦА)

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РЕЗЮМЕ

През 80-те и началото на 90-те години на ХХ в. румънската комунистическа държава извършва поредица от дейности, свързани с развитието на националната напоителна система в централната и югозападната част на Добруджа. Тази дейност довежда до откриването на многобройни предримски археологически останки. Сред тях са две монетни съкровища, открити край Флориле, в района на откритите и укрепени селища на обектите Адънката I и II. Първо от тях е съставено от II драхми и тетрадрахми с типове на Александър III, от които са запазени 9 драхми, сечени между 323/319 – 300/295 г. пр. Хр. Второто съкровище е от поне шест постумни статера от типа на Лизимах, сечени в началото на I в. пр. Хр. Въпреки че откритията са случайни, за отбелязване е факта, че съкровищата са допонирани в съседство до укрепен център и в непосредствена близост до открито селище, обхващащо десетки хектари. Тази територия е принадлежала на местния елит, вероятно гетски или тракийски, на чиито представители се е заплащало като наемници. Смятаме, без засега да разполагаме с аргументи в подкрепа на идеята ни, че тези находки могат да произхождат и от близките некрополи, като съответните гробници са били непоправимо разрушени при изпълнението на плановете за развитие на социалистическата румънска държава в рамките на националната напоителна система в Добруджа.



Plate I: Alexander III type drachms from the hoard discovered at Floriile (no. 1-4)
Табло I: Драхми с типовете на Александър III от съкровището, открито във
 Флориле (№ 1-4)



Plate II: Alexander III type drachms from the hoard discovered at Floriile (no. 5-9)
Табло II: Драхми с типовете на Александър III от съкровището, открито във
 Флориле (№ 5-9)



Plate III: Posthumous staters of the Lysimachos type from the hoard discovered at Floriile (no. 1-6)

Табло III: Постумни статери от типовете на Лизимах от съкровището, открито във Флориле (№ 1-6)

