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THE EARLY EMPIRE MILITARY ASSEMBLAGES FROM THE CRIMEAN PENINSULA AS TRACES OF ACTIVITY OF THE ROMAN ARMY

ABSTRACT. *This paper examines archaeological assemblages containing military artifacts left by the Roman army on the Crimean Peninsula. The analysis allows conclusions on the tasks performed by the Roman contingent. Based on the archaeological and epigraphic evidence, activities of the temporary Roman expeditions in the 1st c. AD are reconstructed. Furthermore, it is argued that in the 2nd c. Roman task forces (vexillationes) served only as a political demonstration intended to show that the allies in the area were not left alone by Rome.*

The Crimean Peninsula was a remote periphery of the ancient world.¹ Yet, in the Roman times the army of the empire temporarily intervened into local affairs and in some places stayed there for longer. It was active in the peninsula during the reign of Claudius, and probably, in the Neronian times.² From the end of Trajan's reign the Roman military presence in Crimea became more permanent. The Roman

army was also active in the area in the Antonine and Severan periods.³ Moreover, Roman soldiers from Crimean *vexillationes* were subjected to many withdrawals and comebacks, while responding to various tactical and strategic needs. Therefore, archaeological assemblages containing military artifacts left by the Roman soldiers deserve special attention as they can provide us an invariable window⁴ on activities of the army operating in the world of city states and vassal kingdoms. Moreover, like in the case of Dura Europos,⁵ the finds from Crimea can offer us a rare glimpse on the garrison life of the army based in eastern Hellenic cities. And unlike Dura Europos,⁶ Crimea yielded evidence of the Roman military presence from various periods. We can

¹ The authors of the present paper want to express their gratitude to Professor Tadeusz Sarnowski for his permission to use unpublished materials from the Kazacka hill post, as well as for his help, valuable comments and discussions. We are also grateful to Dr. Danilo Kostromičev for his help. The authors owe also a great amount of thanks to Dr. Aleksandr Lysenko for providing information about the unpublished Roman sword from Čatyrdag. It goes without saying that the authors take full responsibility for the theories outlined in the present paper. Some theories concerning Chersonesus deposits, described in the present paper, were outlined in a somewhat shortened form in R.A. GAWROŃSKI, R. KARASIEWICZ-SZCZYPIORSKI, *Voennye depozity s territorii Hersonesa tavrčeskogo kak svidetel'stvo aktivnosti rimskoj armii vremeni principata*, Hersonesskij sbornik (in print). We want to admit that by this we had no intention of supporting troublesome politics which is nowadays tearing apart southern regions of Ukraine.

² For an outline of the chronology of Roman military presence in the region, see T. SARNOWSKI, *Römisches Heer im Norden des Schwarzen Meeres*, *Archeologia* 38, 1987 (1989), 61–70 (for Claudian and Neronian times) and 70–97 (for later periods).

³ For the newest chronological outline of the Roman military presence on the Crimean soil in the Trajanic, Antonine and Severan periods, see IDEM, *Römische Militärziegel von der südwestlichen Krim. Probleme der Produktionstätigkeit und Produktionsorte*, *Archeologia* 56, 2005, 98; IDEM, *Rimska čerepica ũznogo Kryma*, *MAIET* 11, 2005, 126 (Abbreviations, see p. 60).

⁴ The term used by S. JAMES (*Excavations at Dura Europos 1928–1937: Final Report VII. The Arms and Armour and Other Military Equipment*, London 2004, 3) with reference to the assemblage from Dura Europos.

⁵ On the assemblage from Dura Europos, see JAMES, *op. cit.* (n. 4), *passim*.

⁶ *Ibidem*, 33.

therefore study changes in the Roman army activities and traces of different actions undertaken in response to changing strategic challenges.

The military finds are admittedly a modern sample of what survived from the past.⁷ Therefore, information about context, deposition and recovery processes must be taken into consideration. And as some artifacts come from old excavations and many valuable data have been lost, the assemblages are fraught with interpretation problems.

The first activity of the Roman army in Crimea should be connected with the civil war, which took place in the Bosporan Kingdom in AD 49. After the Roman intervention the former Bosporan king Mithridates VIII was dethroned and replaced by his brother Cotis. During the war Uspa, the capital of *Siraces*, Mithridates' Sarmatian speaking allies, was sacked.⁸ Yet, during the withdrawal the Roman fortune changed. According to Tacitus, "*sed in regressu dispar fortuna fuit, quia navium quasdam quae mari remeabant in litora Taurorum circumvenere barbari, praefecto cohortis et plerisque auxiliarum interfectis* – but during the way back the fortune reversed, some ships that were returning by sea were blown into the Taurian coasts and there [the survivors] were surrounded by barbarians, who killed a prefect of the cohort and many of the auxiliaries."⁹

On the mountain pass of Gurzuf, located in the mountains near the present-day cities of Ālta and Alušta, a multilayered votive offering site was discovered in the early 1980s.¹⁰ Among artifacts from different periods the assemblage contained many finds of Roman provenience. Apart from the "civilian" artifacts, such as bronze figurines of various Roman deities, like Jupiter or Cybele,¹¹ and bronze fibulae of the *Aucissa* type, the site provided many military objects, including arrow tips and catapult bolts, rectangular "*cingulum*" belt fittings and belt clasps, two iron elongated shield bosses of the "barley corn" type, scabbard fittings belonging to the Mainz type of *gladius*, some cheek pieces from the Weisenau type helmets, a rounded horse *phalera*, and two pairs of hook spurs.¹² There is no doubt that

these finds should be connected with the events described by Tacitus.¹³

There are also other finds from the territory of the Kingdom of Bosporus, which could have been lost during the Bosporan war. From Panticapaeum comes a rectangular belt buckle, obviously from Roman soldier's *cingulum*, decorated with a small, simple, hemispherical umbo design.¹⁴ The closest parallels for that particular find come from the Roman fort at Hod Hill in Wessex.¹⁵ The fort existed for two decades after AD 43.¹⁶

Remains of two Roman helmets have also been recovered from the territory of the Bosporan Kingdom. One of them, found at Sereginskaâ, was a transitional form belonging to the Buggenum type (with a flat neck guard typical of the later Hagenau type).¹⁷ As the analogies from Neuss may indicate,¹⁸ the helmet was clearly made during the Augustus' reign. The other bronze helmet of the Weisenau type, found at Soçi, dates also to the Augustean times.¹⁹

From the territory of the Bosporan Kingdom come several finds of *fibulae* belonging to the well known *Aucissa* type.²⁰ It has been suggested that such brooches were commonly used by Roman soldiers.²¹ They were generally connected with the invasion of Roman provincial Bithynian army of C. Julius Aquila, which formed part of the army operating during the Bosporan war of AD 49.²² It has been also claimed that the mapping of such finds can provide us some information about the invasion routes. Yet, it should be stressed that, according to the present knowledge, the *Aucissa fibulae* are a common find and they are traceable even in late Scythian grave assemblages.²³ Thus the *Aucissa fibulae* should no longer be connected with the presence of the Roman army. Such statement deprives also the find of

⁷ Such view on the complex analysis of military artifacts was very strictly formulated by JAMES, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 233.

⁸ Tac., *Ann.* 12. 15–18, see esp. 16 for the Uspa siege.

⁹ Tac., *Ann.* 12. 17 (trans. R. Gawroński).

¹⁰ See N. G. NOVIČENKOVA, *Ustrojstvo i obrádnost' svätılıšča u perevala Gurzufskoe sedlo*, Ālta 2002, 5–7.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, 41.

¹² See *ibidem*, 57 (for the *Aucissa* type), 79 (for the arrow tips and catapult bolts), 67 (for belt fittings and belt clasps), 79 (for shield bosses and cheek pieces), 139 (for the *phalera*), 78 (for scabbard fittings of the Mainz type sword), 85 (for spurs). For cheek pieces, see also M. TREISTER, *Roman Military Equipment in the Kingdom of Bosporus*, in: C. VON CARNAP-BORNHEIM

(ed.), *Beiträge zu römischer und barbarischer Bewaffnung in den ersten vier nachchristlichen Jahrhunderten*, Marburger Kolloquium 1994. Veröffentlichung des Vorgeschichtlichen Seminars Marburg, Sonderband 8b, Lublin–Marburg 1994, 97 fig. 3.

¹³ See TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 96.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, 91.

¹⁵ See *ibidem*, 92 note 13. Cf. also J. D. BRADFORD, *Hod Hill. 1. Antiquities from Hod Hill in the Durden Collection*, London 1962, 7–8, 4 (A118-21) fig. 5.

¹⁶ See *ibidem*.

¹⁷ TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 94.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 94–5 and H. KLUMBACH, *Römische Helme aus Niedergermanien*, Bonn 1974, no. 11.

¹⁹ TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 95–96.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, 98.

²¹ *Ibidem*, 92–93.

²² On the *fibulae*, see E. L. GOROHOVSKIJ, *Problemy issledovaniâ Ol'vii. Tezisy dokladov i soobščenij seminara*, Parutino 1985, 20–21. For a discussion about the presence of Bithynian troops, see TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 93.

²³ See A. E. PUZDROVSKIJ, *Krymskaâ Skifiâ II v. do n.è. – III v. n.è. Pogrebal'nye Pamâtniki*, Simferopol' 2007, 468.

two *Aucissa* brooches from the later Roman fort at Kadykovka (Balaklava) from all its military significance. On the other hand, it cannot be excluded that these *fibulae* were indeed left by the camping troops of Didius Gallus in AD 49.²⁴ Yet, such theory remains, according to the present state of research, a pure speculation.²⁵

According to Tacitus, the Roman troops used in the Bosporan war of AD 49 were composed mostly of infantry units, whereas the cavalry contingents were provided by the allied Sarmatian *Aorsi* tribe.²⁶ The purely random sample of finds clearly supports Tacitus' statement as only one *phalera* and four hook spurs from the Gurzuf pass could be connected with Roman cavalry.²⁷

Even a short glimpse on all these artifacts convinces us that nearly all items from these assemblages, such as helmets of the Buggenum and Weisenau types,²⁸ scabbard fittings, and especially, barley-corn shield bosses can be dated to the Augustean

period.²⁹ The only exceptions are the belt fittings and possibly the round *phalera* from the Gurzuf assemblage,³⁰ which have established chronology pointing at the middle of the first century.³¹ This striking feature of these assemblages indicates that the Roman army used these pieces of equipment as long as they were serviceable.

The second group of Roman military finds from the Crimean Peninsula can be dated to the second half of the first century or to the very beginning of the second century. In Russian and Ukrainian scholarly literature their appearance is commonly connected with the alleged expedition of Plautius Silvanus of AD 62³² and with the presence of Roman troops at Tauric Chersonesus.³³ The problem is that the goals and true achievements of that expedition have been a subject of the very hot debate and doubts were raised about the very presence of Roman troops at Chersonesus in that time.³⁴ Therefore, that small sample of finds deserves special attention.

²⁴ Didius Gallus was legate of Moesia, who took part in de-throning the Bosporan king Mithridates, see Tac., *Ann.* 12. 15 and TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 93.

²⁵ Kadykovka is a very convenient camping place, as it makes possible to control the Balaklava bay alongside with the access to fresh water resources. Not surprisingly, the British Light Brigade had chosen the place for its encampment during the Crimean war, although they had some communication problems generated by narrow roads, see D.S. RICHARDS, *Conflict in the Crimea. British Redcoats on the Russian Soil*, Barnsley, South Yorkshire 2006, 38–39; J. SWEETMAN, *Balaclava 1854. The Charge of the Light Brigade*, Oxford 1990, 24, 39, 52–3. Therefore, if the troopers of Didius Gallus were present at Balaklava, while seeking the most convenient and safe harbor on the Tauric coast, they should have chosen Kadykovka for their base. The Roman habit of using the same places of encampment for many times makes the hypothesis plausible. For example, such strange situation happened in 153 BC, during the campaign against the Numantines, when the Roman army led by Q. Fulvius Nobilior reused the sites which had been occupied earlier by forces of M. Porcius Cato in 197 BC, see R. TREVIÑO, *Rome's Enemies 4. Spanish Armies*, London 1995, 20. Yet, in the case of the Kadykovka fort we still have not enough archaeological finds to support such theory.

²⁶ See Tac., *Ann.* 12. 15.

²⁷ The hook spurs look quite similar to the one recovered from Corbridge, see K. R. DIXON, P. SOUTHERN, *The Roman Cavalry*, London 1992, 58. Yet, the spurs in question also resemble those made by the eastern Germanic tribes in the early Roman period, see B. KONTNY, *Uzbrojenie ludności kultury przeworskiej w okresie wpływów rzymskich i początkach okresu wędrówek ludów*, in: A. KOKOWSKI (ed.), *Wandalowie. Strażnicy bursztynowego szlaku*, Warszawa 2004, 144, 154. It is also noteworthy that in the late Scythian grave assemblages spurs occur only exceptionally, according to the nomadic traditions of the Scythians, see PUZDROVSKIJ, *op. cit.* (n. 23), 72, 316, 370.

²⁸ For a discussion about the chronology of helmet finds, see TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 94–97. Especially the piece of the Buggenum type from Sereginskaâ may have belonged to the troopers accompanying king Polemo I in his expedition against Phanagoria, see *ibidem*, 94.

²⁹ Such fittings and shield bosses are a common find in grave assemblages from the Rheinland area, see G. WAURICK, *Zur Rüstung von frühkaiserzeitlichen Hilfstruppen und Verbündeten der Römer*, in: VON CARNAP-BORNHEIM, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 7, 11, 22.

³⁰ NOVIČENKOVA, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 139. The closest analogy for its form comes from Ristissen, see M.C. BISHOP, *Cavalry Equipment of the Roman Army*, in: J.C. COULSTON (ed.), *Military Equipment and the Identity of the Roman Soldiers, Proceedings of the Fourth Roman Military Equipment Conference*, BAR International Series 394, Oxford 1988, 137, type 8a.

³¹ NOVIČENKOVA, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 70, 139; TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 92.

³² The career of Ti. Plautius Silvanus Aelianus is described in CIL XIV 3608 = ILS 986 from *Tibur*. The western historiography had taken a very cautious approach to the interpretation of that source. In general, it was widely accepted that much was achieved due to the diplomatic effort, see H. DESSAU, *Geschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit*, II/1, Berlin 1928, 211; J.G.C. ANDERSON, *The eastern frontier from Tiberius to Nero*, CAH vol. X, 775; L. HALKIN, *Tiberius Plautius Aelianus legat de Mésie sous Néron*, *L'Antiquité Classique* 3, 1934, 146; F. BELIN DE BALLU, *Olbia: Cité antique du littoral Nord de la Mer Noire*, Leiden 1972, 171; P. CONOLE, R.D. MILNS, *Neronian frontier policy in the Balkans. The career of T. Plautius Silvanus*, *Historia* 32, 1983, 187–188. Only T. ZAWADZKI, *La légation de T. Plautius Silvanus Aelianus en Mésie et la politique frumentaire de Néron*, PP 30, 1970, 64, represents a view that the expedition achieved its goals by military means. For a summary of these views, see T. SARNOWSKI, *Ti. Plautius Silvanus, Tauric Chersonesos and Classis Moesica*, *Dacia* 50, 2006, 85–89; IDEM, *Plavtjij Silvan i eskadra-prizrak na Černom more v I v. n.è.*, *VDI* 1 (255), 2006, 118.

³³ Such typical approach of the Ukrainian and Russian scholars is present in many works, e.g., V.M. ZUBAR', *Severnyj Pont i rimskaâ imperiâ*, Kiev 1998, 46–50, 176 and IDEM, *Tavrika i rimskaâ imperiâ*, Kiev 2004, 21–22. About the possible connections of the finds of Roman military gear with the expedition of Ti. Plautius Silvanus, see M. Ū. TREISTER, *K nahodkam metaličeskikh detalej rimskogo voennogo kostûma i konskoj sbrui v Severnom Pričernomor'e*, *RossArch.* 2, 2000, 158.

³⁴ For a different point of view on the expedition of Ti. Plautius Silvanus, see SARNOWSKI, *Ti. Plautius* (n. 32), 85–92.

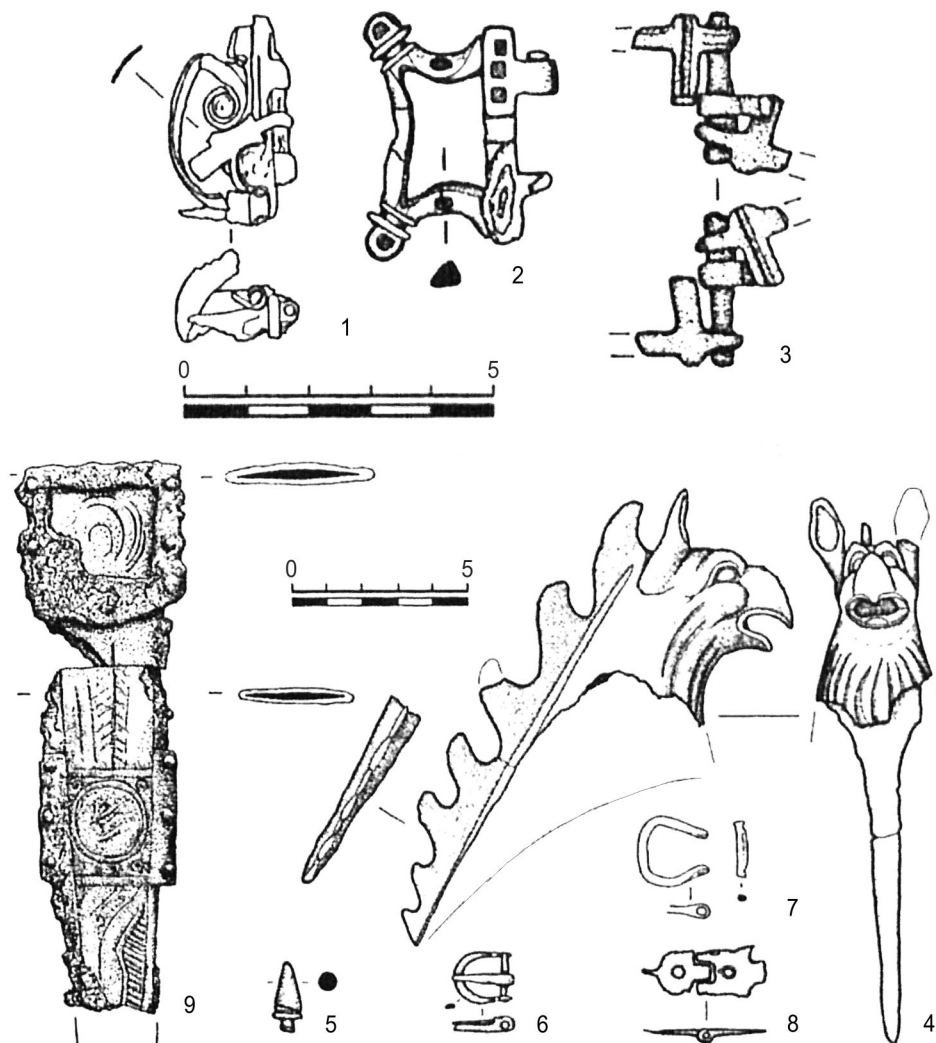


Fig. 1. Small military finds from Tauric Chersonesus, after KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (no. 35), 50, 58. 1-3 – belt buckles; 4-5 – helmet pieces; 6-8 – *loricae segmentatae* fittings; 9 – *pugio* scabbard

Only three fragments of *cingulum* belt buckles, one fragment of a metal inlaid *pugio* scabbard, three fragments of bronze fittings from the Corbridge type *lorica segmentata*, and six pieces from the horse furniture can belong to the Neronian, Flavian or even Trajanic periods. All these items come from the city of Tauric Chersonesus.³⁵ Due to their importance for the debate concerning the expedition of Plautius Silvanus, their chronology and context should be discussed in detail.

The isolated find of a *cingulum* belt buckle was recovered from the port region of the Tauric Chersonesus (Fig. 1:1). It should be dated to the middle of the first century.³⁶ The closest analogies come from

Augusta Raurica and have an established chronology pointing to the times of Julio-Claudian dynasty.³⁷ Therefore, it is quite possible that such an item could have found its way to the city of Chersonesus earlier, even during the war of AD 49. Moreover, a port is the place in which many vessels sought shelter, especially in such dangerous waters like these of the Black Sea; therefore, this item could have been lost in the port district by chance, without any connection with a large military expedition.

The second find, a trapezoidal belt buckle of unknown provenience, belongs clearly to the later period (Fig. 1:2). Numerous analogies from the Roman Empire and European Barbaricum suggest that

³⁵ D.A. KOSTROMIČEV, *Rimskoe voennoe prisutstvie v Heresonese v načale I – pervoj polovine V vv. (po dannym arheologii)*, Stratum+ 4, 2011, 50, 53-54 (*lorica* fittings), 50 (*pugio* scabbard), 57-58 (belt buckles), 106-108 (fragments of horse furniture).

³⁶ *Ibidem*, 57.

³⁷ Form A according to E. DESHLER-ERB, *Ad arma. Römisches Militär des 1. Jahrhunderts in Augusta Raurica*, Forschungen in August 28, 1999, 275-288, Pl. 16. Yet, it is possible that some pieces were still in use in the Flavian times, see also KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 57.

the piece in question should be dated to the very end of the first century.³⁸ Another fragment of a belt buckle, recovered from the Roman citadel of the city of Chersonesus, also belongs to the Flavian or Trajanic periods (Fig. 1:3).³⁹ It becomes clear that none of these items can be without doubt connected with the expedition of Plautius Silvanus.

The same can be said about the three fragments of buckles and fittings belonging to the plate armor, the so-called *lorica segmentata* of the Corbridge type (Fig. 1:6–8).⁴⁰ We should bear in mind that the defense armors of that type were commonly used by the Roman army during the first century. Yet, the eponymical example from Corbridge clearly belongs to the very beginning of the second century.⁴¹ Therefore, it is impossible to establish a firm date for the items in question. They could have made their way to Chersonesus during the Julio-Claudian, Flavian or even Trajanic periods.⁴²

From the citadel of Tauric Chersonesus comes a metal inlaid iron cover of a *pugio* scabbard (Fig. 1:9).⁴³ That particular find belongs to the so-called *Vindonissa* type⁴⁴ and can be dated to the second part of the first century.⁴⁵ However, we should bear in mind that the item was recovered from the so-called citadel, where the presence of the Roman troops is attested only from the Trajanic period onwards.⁴⁶ Therefore it is quite possible that the find in question was used for a longer period and made its way into the ground during the reign of Trajan or later.

³⁸ Cf. *ibidem*, 57; for analogies, see also DESHLER-ERB, *op. cit.* (n. 37), 41; R. MADYDA-LEGUTKO, *Importe von metallenen Gürtelteilen des römischen Heeres im mitteleuropäischen Barbaricum*, *Archeologia* 42, 1991, 99, 101.

³⁹ See KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 57; IDEM, *Detali oružia i voenogo kostüma iz cytadeli Hersonesa*, *MAIET* 14, 2008, 42–55.

⁴⁰ KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 50, 53–54.

⁴¹ See M. C. BISHOP, J. C. N. COULSTON, *Roman Military Equipment*, London 1993, 35–36, 85.

⁴² KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 54.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, 50.

⁴⁴ Cf. J. OBMANN, *Studien zu römischen Dolchscheiden des I. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. Archäologische Zeugnisse und bildliche Überlieferung*, *Kölner Studien zur Archäologie der römischen Provinzen* 4, 2000, 8.

⁴⁵ See KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 50–51.

⁴⁶ The earliest firmly datable evidence for the presence of the Roman army on the citadel of Tauric Chersonesus comes in the form of two stamps. Both of them show the signature of the *leg(io) V Mac(edonica)*. Such stamps were used from AD 101/106 until AD 168, see SARNOWSKI, *Römische Militärziegel* (n. 3), 95; IDEM, *Rimskaya čerepica* (n. 3), 123. The author suggests that the stamps in question had come to the citadel of Chersonesus as a part of ship's ballast. Also the earliest datable Roman army inscription from Chersonesus area, a tombstone of a tribune's physician slave killed by the Taurians, comes from the times of Trajan, see IOSPE I² 562 = AE 2000, 1280;

From the territory of Tauric Chersonesus we know also seven items belonging to the period in question, which can be described as parts of the horse furniture. The find of the most uncertain chronology and origins comes from the city itself. It is the bronze part of a Roman hackamore, the so-called *psalion* (Fig. 2:8).⁴⁷ Analogies from Novae may indicate that the item in question belongs to the late second century, yet the other finds suggest a somewhat earlier date.⁴⁸

The now lost *phalera* pendant was found in the city's necropolis in 1908 (Fig. 2:1).⁴⁹ Such pendants were popular during the reign of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and peak of their production can be firmly dated to the reign of Claudius.⁵⁰ Therefore, as in the case of the above mentioned belt buckle, the item could have been brought to the city of Chersonesus earlier, even during the war of AD 49. Some scholars are convinced that the above mentioned pendant is somehow connected with the expedition of Plautius Silvanus.⁵¹ Others prefer a wider chronology.⁵²

Another pendant type, of an openwork *pelta*-form design (Fig. 2:3),⁵³ has analogies among Doorwerth finds⁵⁴ and can be firmly dated to the late Neronian times or to the very beginning of the Flavian

cf. also SARNOWSKI, *Ti. Plautius* (n. 32), 92. However, the presence of other military objects at the site enables an assumption that the Roman soldiers appeared there somewhat earlier. The subject warrants further investigation.

⁴⁷ See KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 108.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*. For the Novae analogy, see E. GENČEVA, *Metallowe części wyposażenia żołnierskiego z Novae*, *Novensia* 12, 2000, 62, fig. III:14. Yet, the find from Haltern may indicate that ornamented *psalia* with such wide noseband were used from the beginning of the first century, see M. JUNKELMANN, *Die Reiter Roms. Teil III: Zubehör, Reitweise, Bewaffnung*, Mainz 1992, 27. Wide noseband *psalia* are also known from the sanctuary of Hercules Magusanus at Empel on the territory of the ancient *civitas Batavorum* (near the present-day Nijmegen). The items in question almost certainly belong to the first century, see C. VAN DRIEL-MURRAY, *Wapentuig voor Hercules*, in: N. ROYMANS, T. DERKS, *De tempel van Empel. Ein Hercules Heiligdom in het woongebied van de Bataven*, s'-Hertogenbosch 1994, 100. The later, second century *psalia* have nosebands of openwork design, see JUNKELMANN, *op. cit.*, 33. Therefore, the first century chronology for the Chersonesus hackamore seems to be more probable.

⁴⁹ TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 33), 157–159; KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 106.

⁵⁰ P. CONNOLLY, *Greece and Rome at War*, London 1998, 236; BISHOP, *op. cit.* (n. 30), 96–97, 145; DESHLER-ERB, *op. cit.* (n. 37), 53–54, Pl. 26.

⁵¹ See TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 33), 158.

⁵² Ū. P. KALAŠNIK, *Chersoneskaâ falera. Problemy issledovaniâ antičnogo i srednevekovogo Hersonesa 1888–1988 gg. Tezisy dokladov nauč. konf.*, Sevastopol' 1988, 55–56; KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 106.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, 107.

⁵⁴ BISHOP, *op. cit.* (n. 30), 96, 145 fig. 44 no. 3c.

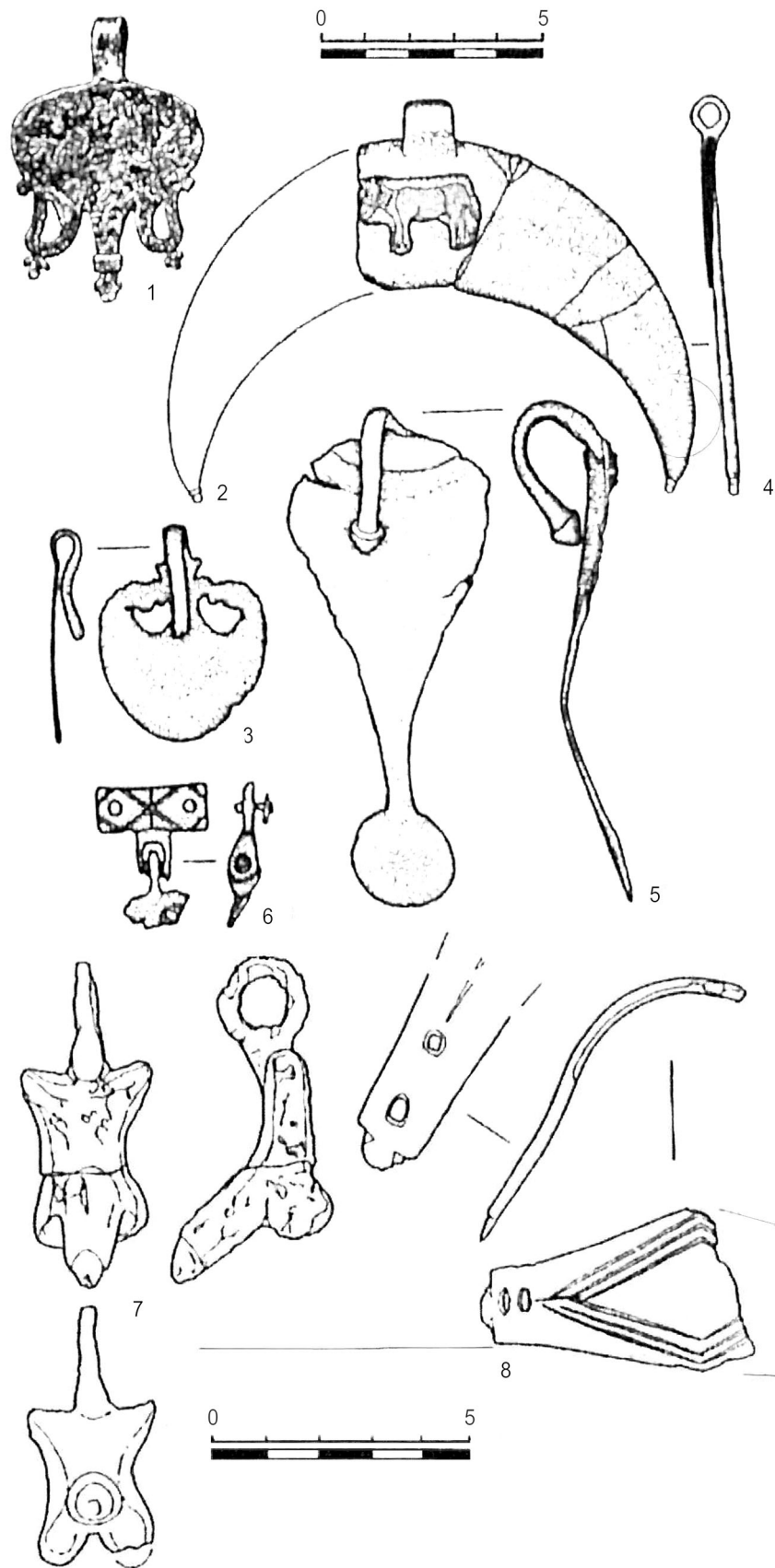


Fig. 2. Horse furniture elements and pendants from Tauric Chersonesus, after KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (no. 35), 106, 108.
1-7 – pendants; 8 – *psalion*

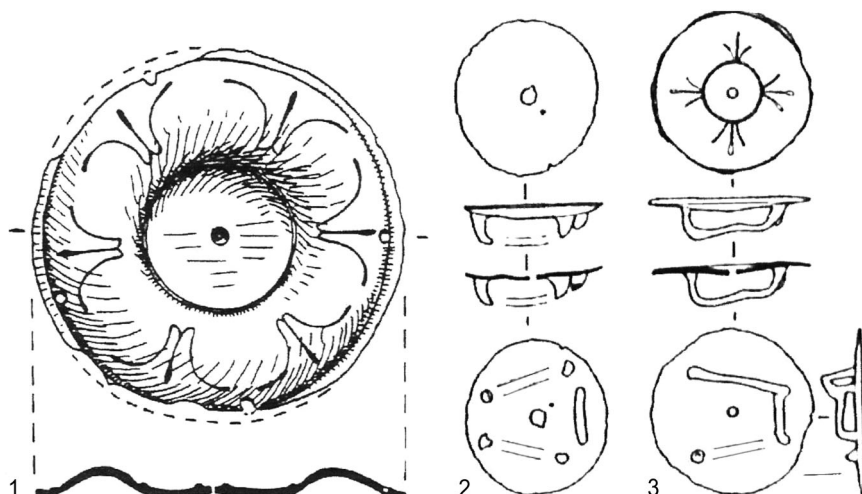


Fig. 3. 1 – Ocnîța *phalera*, after PETULESCU, *op. cit.* (n. 62), 77 (not to scale); 2–3 – *phalerae* from Chersonesus, after KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (no. 35), 108 (not to scale)

period, perhaps between the 60s and the 70s.⁵⁵ In comparison to the Doorwerth finds, the piece from Chersonesus is much simplified. It is probably a lower quality version⁵⁶ of the type, which was made for officer's use.

From the city of Chersonesus comes also another, phallic-shaped pendant (Fig. 2:7). The item, obviously used as a part of the horse furniture and apothropaic amulet, belongs probably to the first century.⁵⁷

A further pendant, found in the port district, was made in the tear-drop shape (Fig. 2:5). The form clearly belongs to the first century.⁵⁸ Another pendant was found in the north-eastern part of the city in 1977. This lunate pendant was made from silver and decorated with an engraved representation of a bull (Fig. 2:2, 4).⁵⁹ Lunate pendants were extremely popular in the first and in the very beginning of the second century, therefore it is very difficult to establish a firm date for the find.⁶⁰

That cannot be said about another group of finds. The pre-revolution excavations yielded two round bronze *phalerae* (Fig. 3:2–3). One of them is seriously damaged, yet the other one is quite well preserved. The *phalera* in question is covered with silver and bears traces of engraving,⁶¹ probably of a niello inlay. The almost identical silvered and niello engraved *phalera* was recovered from the native Dacian hill fort at Ocnîța (Fig. 3:1).⁶² It was found in a votive pit together with other elements of the horse harness. The Ocnîța example looks even as if it belonged to the same set as the one from Sevastopol. It is slightly bigger and its niello decoration is a bit more sophisticated. However, that feature is natural for the horse trappings composed from bigger and smaller *phalerae*.⁶³

⁵⁵ The richly decorated (silvered and niello-inlaid) parts of the deposit from Doorwerth, now kept in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden at Leiden, clearly belonged to several different horse harnesses. These elements were intentionally stored during the Batavian uprising of AD 69–70, see JUNKELMANN, *op. cit.* (n. 48), 78.

⁵⁶ KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 107.

⁵⁷ See *ibidem*, 107–108. Yet, the closest analogy from Nijmegen can belong to AD 12–120, see J. A. W. NICOLAY, *Gewapende Bata-ven. Gebruik en betekenis van wapen- en paardentuig uit niet-militaire contexten in de Rijndelta (50 voor tot 450 na Chr.)*, Amsterdam 2005, 65–67, 347. Therefore, it is very difficult to establish a firm date for the find.

⁵⁸ KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35); see also BISHOP, *op. cit.* (n. 30), 96; DESHLER-ERB, *op. cit.* (n. 37), 57, Pl. 26: 538; 31: 607.

⁵⁹ See KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 107.

⁶⁰ BISHOP, *op. cit.* (n. 30), 98; C. UNZ, E. DESHLER-ERB, *Katalog der Militaria aus Vindonissa: Militärische Funde, Pferdegeschirr und Jochteile*. Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft pro

Vindonissa 14, 1997, Pl. 48:1312–1328; BISHOP, COULSTON, *op. cit.* (n. 41), 106, fig. 65:3; KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 107, prefers dating to the second half of the first or the beginning of the second century.

⁶¹ KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 108.

⁶² Cf. L. PETULESCU, *Roman military equipment in the Dacian hill-fort at Ocnîța*, in: VON CARNAP-BORNHEIM, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 69, 77.

⁶³ As it was the case of the set from Xanten, see I. JENKINS, *A Group of Silvered-Bronze Horse Trappings from Xanten (Castrum Vetera)*, Britannia 16, 1985, 141–164. The Xanten set was used clearly for forty years before deposition, as one of its *phalerae* bears an inscription *punctim: PLINIO PRAEFEC(TO)*, see *ibidem*, 154. From a letter of his nephew (PLINY THE YOUNGER, *ep.* 3.5) we know for certain that the Elder Pliny certainly served as *praefectus alae* on the Rhine frontier during the reign of Claudius, see F. MÜNZER, *Die Quelle des Tacitus für die Germanenkriege*, BJ 104, 1899, 67–85; see also R. GAWROŃSKI, *Bella Germaniae libri XX i De iaculatione equestri Pliniusza Starszego a sposób walki kawalerii Germanów. Próba interpretacji przekazu Tacyty (Germania 6)*, Eos 85, 1998, 36. Yet, the horse trappings in question were buried during the Batavian uprising about AD 70.

Such *phalerae* were certainly commonly used during the reign of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, starting from the times of emperor Tiberius. The closing date of their use seems to be AD 70⁶⁴ as none of the items has been found to date at the newly created upper German and Raetian limes sites or in the province of Dacia. The niello-engraved *phalerae* belonged to a certain type of Gallo-Roman harness. Such trappings were certainly produced in Gaul⁶⁵ and they rapidly went out of fashion as their centers of production collapsed in the turmoil created by the Batavian uprising.

As we can see, the most logical explanation for the presence of such *phalerae* at Tauric Chersonesus, and perhaps of the other parts of the horse furniture mentioned above, is the coming of some Roman cavalry detachments during the late Neronian or early Flavian periods. That perfectly fits to the expedition of Plautius Silvanus. The most convincing argument in favor of this hypothesis is the Ocnîța *phalera*, which was found in Dacia alongside the supposed route of the expedition⁶⁶ and looks as if it belonged to the same set as the one found at Sevastopol. Yet, that argument must be treated with great caution.⁶⁷ We should remember that even now some people

still use old McClellan saddles produced in the early 1920s. The same could have happened with the Roman horse trappings. For this reason it is very difficult to establish a firm deposition date for the *phalerae* from Ocnîța and Sevastopol.⁶⁸

Actually, there is another possibility of chronological interpretation of these finds. Josephus puts into king Agrippa's mouth a speech in which he quotes information about the activity of the Roman forces on the Crimean peninsula.⁶⁹ That can be an obvious rhetorical exaggeration. Yet, the passage in Josephus may refer to some real military activity which occurred in late Claudian times. Moreover, there are some traces of fire and fighting, detectable at various late Scythian sites, which can be dated, with a ten years accuracy, to the middle of the first century. Some scholars connect these traces with the *bellum Bosporanum* and the expedition of Didius Gallus of AD 49, others with the expedition of Plautius Silvanus.⁷⁰ The traces in question should be connected with the activities mentioned by Josephus. The same can be said about Sevastopol cavalry finds, which typologically perfectly fit to the earlier period and possibly could have been lost during the events of AD 49. The problem is that Tacitus, while speaking about the Bosporan war, explicitly refers

⁶⁴ PETULESCU, *op. cit.* (n. 62), 69, correctly points out that the harnesses from Xanten (see note 63) and Doorwerth remained in use for a long period, before they were buried during the events of AD 69–70 (see also M. BROUWER, *Römische Phalerae und anderer Lederbeschlag aus dem Rhein*, Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden 63, 1982, 165 note 33). According to Petulescu, the last niello-engraved *phalerae* were manufactured about that date.

⁶⁵ Cf. E. RABIESEN, *La production d'équipement de cavalerie au 1^{er} s. après J.C. à Alesia*, JRMES 1, 1990, 71–95. The production center at Alesia was working for twenty years, starting from about AD 60. Rabiesen established a closing date for the trappings production at about AD 80 (see *ibidem*, 85), but that is based on a relative chronology of finds from British and German frontiers. The Batavian uprising seems to be a more logical explanation for the rapid collapse of production centers. The uprising turmoil and subsequent massive transfer of many auxiliary units certainly disturbed the buying markets. That factor had dire consequences for the production of luxurious silvered horse trappings.

⁶⁶ Of course, no one would say that the expedition was traveling in the vicinity of the Ocnîța fort. It could simply make its way into the Dacian hands during the expedition and then after years it could have been deposited at the Ocnîța fort.

⁶⁷ The chronology of the Ocnîța find is based on the comparison with the material from other Roman sites. The circulation of Roman coins ceases at Ocnîța around the 80s, see PETULESCU, *op. cit.* (n. 62), 70. The expedition of Plautius Silvanus is a convincing and convenient explanation for the parts of Roman harness coming into the Dacian hands. We should also bear in mind that the Tibur inscription (CIL XVI 3608 = ILS 986) describes some Romano-Dacian interaction during the expedition of Plautius Silvanus, see SARNOWSKI, *Ti. Plautius* (n. 32), 85. Yet, this interpretation of the Ocnîța find is still a pure speculation.

⁶⁸ From a Sarmatian grave assembly in the Kuban' region comes a lunate pendant which was made in the first century and was certainly deposited in the beginning of the third century, see TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 33), 157–158.

⁶⁹ Ios., *Bell. Iud.* 2, 336–7: “τί χρῆ λέγειν Ἡνιόχος τε καὶ Κόλχος καὶ τὰ τῶν Ταύρων φύλον. Βοσπορανοὺς τε καὶ τὰ περίοκα τοῦ Πόντου καὶ τῆς Μαιώτιδος ἕθνη; παρ' οἷς πρὶν μὲν οὐδ' οἰκεῖος ἐγινώσκετο δε σπότης, νῦν δὲ τρισχιλίους ὀπλίταις ὑποτάσσεται, καὶ τεσσαράκοντα ναῦς μακρὰν τὴν πρὶν ἄπλωτον καὶ ἀγρίαν εἰρηνεύουσι θάλασσαν – Do I need to mention Heniochi or Colchi, and the Tauri tribe, inhabitants of the Bosphorus and the people dwelling around the Pontus and lake Maeotis, who formerly knew no lord of their own, and now they are obedient to three thousands of heavily armoured men, and forty warships safeguard the wild and yet avoided by sailors sea” – trans. R. Gawroński. The text, full of rhetorical exaggeration, probably refers to the events of AD 49. There was an old theory about the Ravenna fleet supervision over the Tauric coasts, forged by M.I. ROSTOWZEW, *Römische Besatzungen in der Krim und das Kastell Charax*, *Klio* 2, 1900, 80–95. Now the theory about the presence of the Ravennate fleet on the Black Sea is very difficult to sustain. The absence of any traces of the fleet activity in the period was stressed by T. SARNOWSKI, *The Phantom Squadron of the Ravennate Fleet on the Black Sea in the 1st Century AD*, *ZPE* 157, 2006, 256–260, esp. 260, and IDEM, *Plavtij Silvan* (n. 32), 117–131.

⁷⁰ O. E. PUZDROVSKIJ, *Krims'ka Skifâ v kinci II st. do n.è. – perš. pol. III st. n.è.*, *Archeologiâ* 2, 1992, 129–130. Yet, other scholars prefer to connect these traces with the expedition of Plautius Silvanus. For a critical view of such approach, see SARNOWSKI, *Plavtij Silvan* (n. 32), 128; IDEM, *Ti. Plautius* (n. 32), 87 note 14.

to the lack of cavalry among the Roman forces.⁷¹ There is even a bigger interpretational problem: according to Tacitus, the *bellum Bosporanum* of AD 49 was fought on the territory of the Bosporan kingdom and the Scythians were probably not involved in the conflict. Therefore, the traces of burning should be connected with some other event.

On the other hand, during the year AD 62, the city of Chersonesus probably had problems with its Scythian neighbors.⁷² These Scythians were not nomads as their forefathers, but they were certainly fighting as horse archers.⁷³ Only the cavalry could fight effectively with such foe. And the mounted troops offered a perfect solution to the problem, as a rescue force could move very fast even in the broken terrain. The course of events probably looked as follows: in AD 62 the Moesian army, operating in the borders of Dacia, received news about Chersonesus' turmoil. There was no time for logistic preparations,⁷⁴ so Plautius Silvanus dispatched a cavalry relief force to solve the problem. The relief force traveled quickly alongside the Black sea coasts and in a few days reached Scythian lands.⁷⁵ The cavalymen scattered and started pillaging and burning to

divert Scythian attention from the troubled city of Chersonesus. If that was the case, the presence of the Roman cavalry lasted for a very short time⁷⁶ and the Scythian king soon came to terms with the city of Chersonesus.⁷⁷ Such hypothetical reconstruction of events would explain the distribution of military finds at Chersonesus. It is noteworthy that the finds, which can be connected with infantry, came mostly from the citadel and should be dated to the Trajanic period. The majority of cavalry finds are of uncertain origins, but these with the known provenience have nothing in common with the citadel and infantry finds.⁷⁸ They have established chronology pointing to the middle of the first century. Therefore, it is quite possible that the infantry and cavalry finds belong to two different chronological periods: Neronian and Trajanic.

Earlier, some doubts were raised about the presence of Roman troops on the Crimean soil during the so-called expedition of Plautius Silvanus⁷⁹ and at that time the detailed analysis of finds connected with the cavalry presence was unpublished.⁸⁰ Nowadays, due to the Očnița find, we can suspect that the Roman cavalry was present in the city of Chersonesus during the events. Moreover, if the Roman

⁷¹ Tac., *Ann.* 12. 15: "equestribus proeliis Eumones certaret, obsidian urbium Romani capesserent". Yet, the Gurzuf pass finds mentioned above may indicate that the cavalry took part in the fighting.

⁷² The Tibur inscription CIL XIV 3608 = ILS 986 in lines 23 and 24 refers to the siege of Chersonesus; about the veracity of that source, see SARNOWSKI, *Plavtij Silvan* (n. 32), 129. Sarnowski correctly points out that the spelling *Cherronensis* may indicate that the people from the entourage of Plautius Silvanus, involved in the Tibur inscription text preparations, were unfamiliar with the geographical names from the Black Sea region. Their lack of knowledge may be indirect proof of the fact that no one from the entourage of Plautius Silvanus, including the governor itself, had even a chance to learn the geography of the area, see IDEM, *Ti. Plautius* (n. 32), 86–88. Therefore it is quite possible that the rescue forces were led by a minor officer, a subordinate of Plautius Silvanus.

⁷³ The horse bits, trilobate arrow tips and bow parts are quite common in the late Scythian grave assemblages, see PUZDROVSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 23), 67–68, 72–74, 135–138, 141–145, 290, 364–368, 374–382.

⁷⁴ Dispatching the seaborne relief force required many logistical preparations, such as gathering transport vessels, etc. It was also time consuming and complicated; compare the relation in *Peloponnesian War* about the Athenian fleet departure on the eve of the Sicilian expedition, see *Thuc.* 6, 30–32. Dispatching cavalry force was cheaper and quicker. If the fleet had been sent to relief the city, we would have traces of infantry involvement on the Crimean soil. And so far we have not found any traces of such activities, the belt buckle from the port area (see above, note 36) could belong to an earlier period. We should also bear in mind that the infantrymen are better suited for fleet transport and can be carried in greater numbers.

⁷⁵ During the Soviet-Polish war in 1920 the Soviet first cavalry army was reported to make daily about 120 km, see N. DAVIES, *Orzeł biały, czerwona gwiazda*, Kraków 2009, 148–149.

There is no doubt that the Soviet army could maintain such amazing marching speed for days. The Philippi tombstone (AE 1969/70, 583) of Ti. Claudius Maximus depicts the member of the elite mobile cavalry unit who captured Dacian king Decebalus. Maximus is depicted lightly armed, bearing only shield, sword and a pair of javelins, see M. JUNKELMANN, *Die Reiter Roms. Teil I: Reise, Jagd, Triumph und Circusrennen*, Mainz 1990, 174–175. On Ti. Claudius Maximus, see also M. P. SPEIDEL, *The Captor of Decebalus. A new inscription from Philippi*, *JRS* 60, 1970, 142–153. There is no doubt that such lightly armed riders could travel very fast. A ride from the Danube estuary to the city of Chersonesus probably lasted about five days.

⁷⁶ As Neronian or early Flavian coins are virtually absent in the city of Tauric Chersonesus, see R. KARASIEWICZ-SZCZYPIORSKI, *The Roman Army in Chersonesos and in the Municipal Cemeteries*, *Światowit* 10 (51), fasc. A, 2012, 67. The lack of traces of any Roman building activities from the period in question also may indicate that the Roman army never stayed there for longer. Yet, KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 114, points out that Roman cavalry certainly was present at Tauric Chersonesus in the Neronian, Flavian or Trajanic times.

⁷⁷ IOSPE I² 369; see also V.N. D'ÁKOV, *Okkupaciâ Tavriki Rimom v I v. n.è.*, *VDI* (1), 1941, 91–92; E.I. SOLOMONIK, *Graffiti s hory Hersoneses*, Kiev 1984, 10; V.A. KUTAJSOV, *Severo-zapadnyj Krim i Hersoneses v I v. do n.è. – seredine I v. n.è.*, *Bahčisarajskij istoriko-arheologičeskij sbornik* 2, 2001, 100.

⁷⁸ KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 107–108, 154.

⁷⁹ See SARNOWSKI, *Ti. Plautius* (n. 32), 88. The inscription from Mangup (AE 1996, 1357) would indicate that the Romans reached only Olbia, see *ibidem*, 89. Yet, the Očnița find makes such interpretation less probable. It is quite possible that some cavalry detachments were sent further to save the city of Chersonesus. It should be stressed once more that the Roman cavalry detachments certainly traveled rapidly by land.

⁸⁰ Made by KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 106–109.

cavalry troopers stayed only for a very short time, they simply failed to produce more traces of their presence. We should remember that such a cavalry relief raid required high mobility. Imagine, how many traces would produce a unit composed from several *turmae*, billeted for two or three weeks in remote farmhouses! That clearly corresponds with the amount of available information which survived to our times.

The general conclusion is that during the first century the Roman army was present on the Crimean soil only temporally, reacting to the particular threats and withdrawing when the Roman interests were secured. Only the assemblage from the Chersonesus citadel, most probably belonging to the Trajanic period, can be treated as evidence of the permanent stay of Roman troops. Yet, a small number of the recovered artifacts may suggest that the citadel garrison was kept under strength.⁸¹

The picture changes rapidly during the second century. In the Antonine and Severan times many Crimean sites, like Chersonesus citadel and Charax and Kadykovka forts, were permanently garrisoned.⁸² Many Roman soldiers lived, served and certainly died in Crimea. That factor reshaped the very nature of the military assemblages.

Belt clasps, buckles and belt fittings belong to the most common finds from the period. Several belt fittings were recovered from the Roman fort at Charax near Ālta. Unfortunately, that assemblage is still unpublished and the artifacts can only be seen in the Ālta Museum. Yet, their openwork design suggests Antonine or Severan date. Similar artifacts were found also in Scythian native grave assemblages at Zavetnoe, evidently re-used, recovered from female or children graves.⁸³ That says something about the acculturation processes happening inside the local community. It is also noteworthy that at the nearby Alma-Kermen site some buildings had roofs made from tiles stamped with the mark of *legio XI Claudia*.⁸⁴ The local population developed close relations

with the Roman army, yet the very nature of that relationship still remains a mystery. We should remember that the finds from Alma-Kermen and Zavetnoe are quite exceptional as we have no recorded traces of settlements (*vici*) connected with the Roman military sites. There are some isolated finds, like the rectangular openwork belt plate from Kerč, decorated with the hunting scene,⁸⁵ yet these artifacts never came to light in such numbers.

Many more belt fittings were found at Sevastopol, in the city of Tauric Chersonesus, and in the graveyards located nearby. Isolated finds were even recovered from the remains of the watch tower at Kazacka hill, on the so-called Sapun ridge near Inkermann, in the suburbs of the present day Sevastopol city. All these find can be connected directly with the activity of the Roman army.

From the outside of the Chersonesus walls came four cremation grave assemblages dated to the late Antonine or Severan times. Despite the fact that these graves were unearthed during the pre-revolution excavations, nearly all items survived till now.⁸⁶ The grave assemblages contained four belt sets. One of them, of perhaps Gallic or Germanic origin,⁸⁷ was richly adorned with round or hexagonal copper-alloy plates. The other two were made from common rectangular, copper-alloy plates of openwork design and hinged teardrop pendants.⁸⁸ These assemblages yielded also a set of hobnails, clearly from the boots or sandals belonging to one of the deceased.⁸⁹ That from grave no. 93 deserves special attention. It was made from rectangular plates and one of them was ended with a pelta-shaped buckle. It also contained *pugio* scabbard fittings and an adornment in the shape of a *beneficiarius* spearhead. And indeed it could have belonged to a *beneficiarius*.⁹⁰ From Tauric Chersonesus come fourteen pelta-shaped belt buckles, another two buckles of openwork design,⁹¹ as well as numerous belt studs, openwork belt adornments and hinged teardrop pendants.⁹²

⁸¹ As it was the case of the *Cohors I Tungrorum*, which garrisoned the *Vindolanda* fort close to AD 90 or 100, where of recorded 751 men only 270 were, in fact, present at the fort, see R. BIRLEY, *Roman records from Vindolanda on Hadrian's wall*, Carvoran 1999, 56–57.

⁸² See L. A. KOVALEVSKAĀ, T. SARNOWSKI, *O zaščite Heroneskogo gosudarstva sojuznym Rimskim voennym kontingentom*, *RossArch.* 2, 2004, 40, 50. For Charax, see also SARNOWSKI, *The Phantom Squadron* (n. 69), 260.

⁸³ Like in the necropolis from Zavetnoe, see V. V. MASĀKIN, *Rimskije fibuly i detali remennoj garnitury iz nekropoli Zavetnoe*, in: Ū. P. ZAJCEV, V. I. MORDINCEVA, *DrevnâĀ Tavrika*, *Simferopol'* 2007, 131–133, 135–138.

⁸⁴ See KOVALEVSKAĀ, SARNOWSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 82), 44. That feature is not unusual in western parts of the Roman Empire, for example, a "native Batavian villa" from Mook-Plasmolen near Nijmegen had roof made from stamped military tiles, see

N. ROYMANS, *The Sword or the Plough. Regional Dynamics in the Romanization of Belgic Gaul and the Rhineland Area*, in: N. ROYMANS (ed.), *From the Sword to the Plough*, Amsterdam 1996, 76 note 168.

⁸⁵ TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 98.

⁸⁶ See D. A. KOSTROMIČEV, *Tri pogrebeniâ rimskih soldat iz nekropolâ Hersonesa*, *MAIET* 11, 2005, 94–117; IDEM, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 54–57.

⁸⁷ TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 33), 160. Yet, KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 55, stresses the fact that such items also could have come from other provinces, including Moesia.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, 56.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, 106.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, 57; see also KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 86), 104–105.

⁹¹ IDEM, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 57–60.

⁹² *Ibidem*, 61–72.

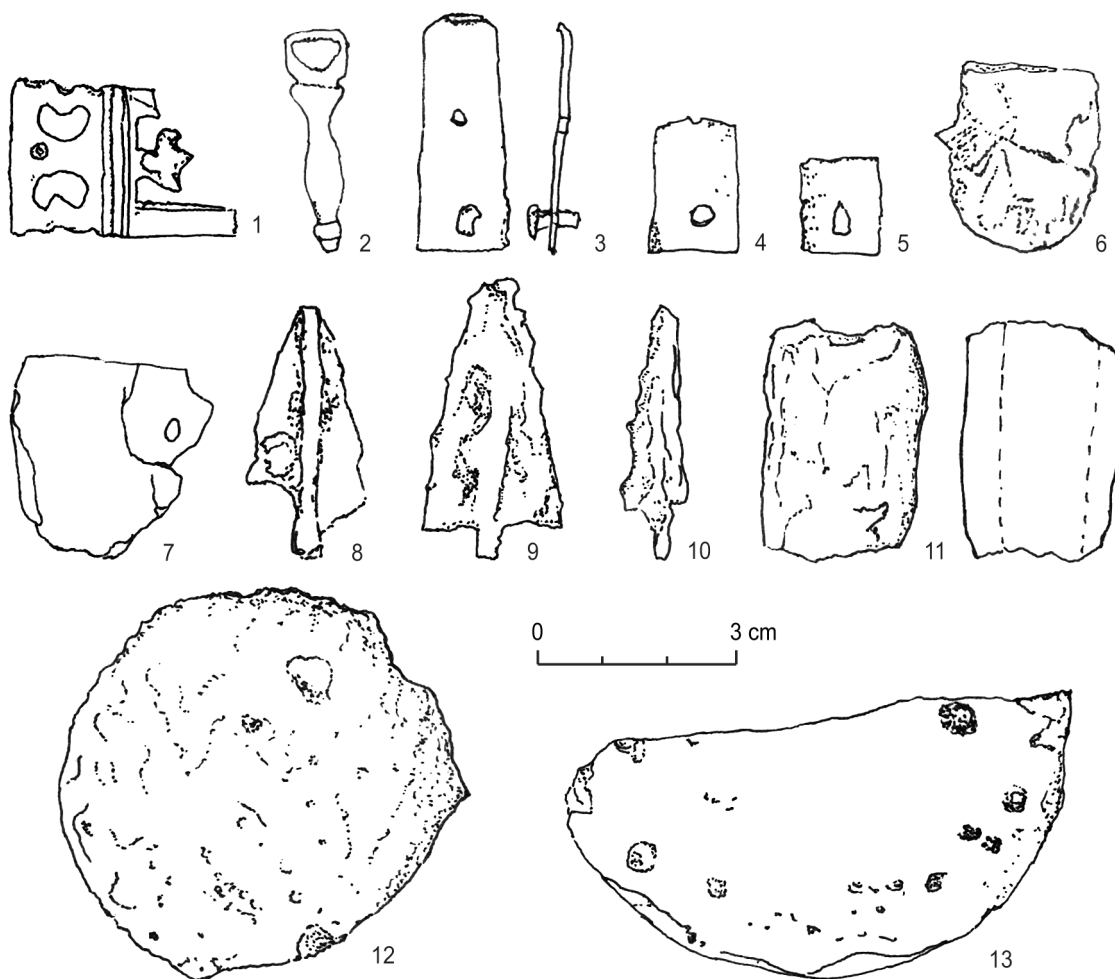


Fig. 4. Finds from Kazackaâ watch tower (drawing R. Gawroński). 1–2 – belt fittings; 3–5 – *lorica segmentata* fittings; 6–7 – armor scales; 8–10 – arrow tips; 11 – spearhead socket; 12–13 – ballista shots

Other elements of soldier's costume are found less frequently. Two circular *balteus* plates were found in the city of Chersonesus, the bigger one being decorated in the *opus interasile* technique.⁹³ Furthermore, several Pannonian *fibulae* of the Almgren 247 type, plate openwork and swastika brooches and crossbow brooches occurred on the territory of Tauric Chersonesus.⁹⁴ The Pannonian *fibulae* were widely used by Roman soldiers during the Marcomannic wars,⁹⁵ the early crossbow brooches should be dated to the Severan period.⁹⁶

⁹³ See *ibidem*, 74.
⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, 74–76 (Pannonian *fibulae*), 76–78 (plate brooches), 79–81 (crossbow brooches).
⁹⁵ See M. GŁADYSZ-JUŚCIŃSKA, *Niecodzienne odkrycie fibul pannońskich na Lubelszczyźnie*, in: A. BURSCH, R. CIOŁEK (eds.), *Antyk i barbarzyńcy. Księga dedykowana profesorowi Jerzemu Kolendo*, Warszawa 2003, 194.

⁹⁶ KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 79–81. As the analogies from Dura Europos may suggest, such *fibulae* were used in the eastern part of the Roman Empire in the first half of the third century, see JAMES, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 55.

From the Sapun ridge watch tower at Kazackaâ hill comes an isolated find in the form of a fragment of the rectangular belt plate (Fig. 4:1). The state of preservation of the artifact prevents categorical statements, yet the closest analogies can be found at Straubing.⁹⁷ Also a single hinged teardrop pendant (Fig. 4:2) was recovered from the site, very similar to the one known from the above mentioned grave no. 93 from Chersonesus.

In contrast to the belt fittings, other categories of finds are represented very poorly. At the same site in Kazackaâ hill two damaged *lorica squamata* scales were found (Fig. 4:6–7). These scales belong to the sets of armor typical of the late Antonine or

⁹⁷ MADYDA-LEGUTKO, *op. cit.* (n. 38), 88, Pl. 1, 11; KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 86), 112; see also J. OLDENSTEIN, *Zur Ausrüstung römischer Auxiliareinheiten. Studien zu Beschlägen und Zierat an der Ausrüstung des obergermanisch-raetischen Limesgebietes aus dem zweiten und dritten Jahrhundert n. Chr.*, Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission 57, 1977, 193, Pl. 62:780, 782, 783, 788, 789.

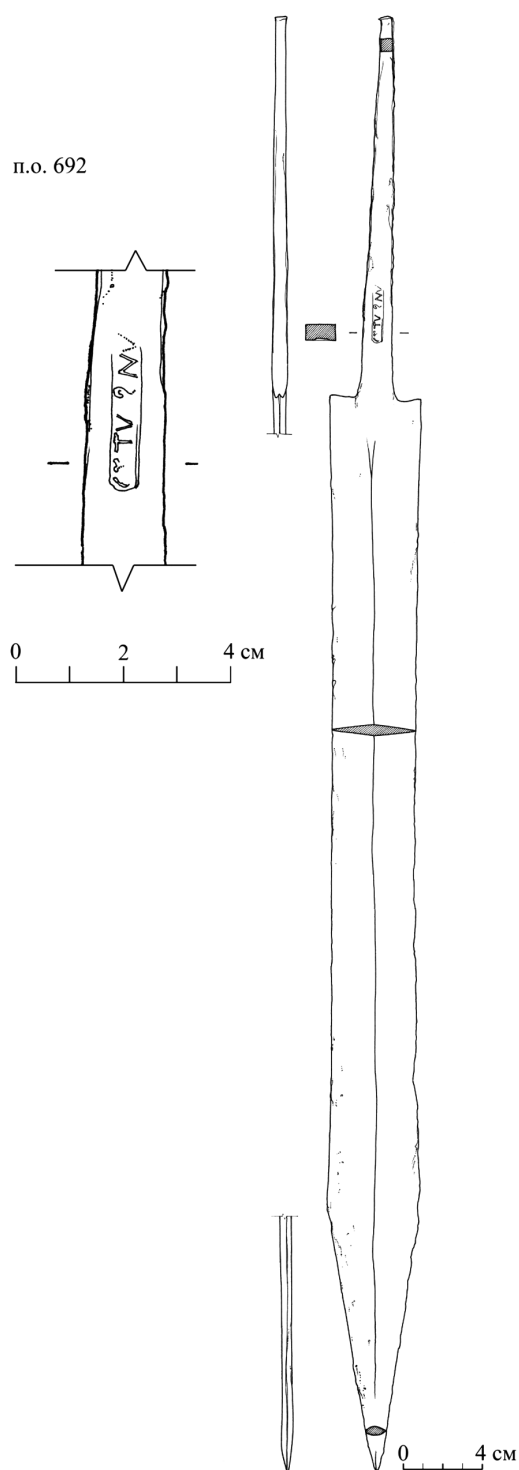


Fig. 5. Sword from Čatyrdag, courtesy A. Lysenko (drawing S. Sëmin)

Severan periods, made from long and narrow scales and fastened under the neck by two flat ornamented closers.⁹⁸ One broken piece certainly belonged to the cuirass composed of long and narrow scales, as it has no traces of holes which should have been drilled

in its damaged upper part.⁹⁹ On the contrary, the other piece could have been very wide and long. Such large scales were not only used in human armor, but also were fastened to the horse bardings, as analogies from Dura Europos may indicate.¹⁰⁰ Three small fragments of bronze fittings, perhaps from hooks, clearly belonging to the Newstead type *lorica segmentata*, were also recovered from the site (Fig. 4:3–5).¹⁰¹ Among other small finds from Kazackâ hill there were three trilobate, tanged, triangular arrow tips (Fig. 4:8–10) and a fragment of an iron socket, clearly belonging to a spearhead (Fig. 4:11).¹⁰² Spherical ballista stone balls and throwing stone fragments were also recovered from the site (Fig. 4:12–13).¹⁰³

It should be stressed that remains of the offensive weapons from the Antonine or Severan period are extremely rare at the Crimean Roman sites. From the necropolis of Tauric Chersonesus comes one bronze pelta-form scabbard chape. Another ivory rectangular scabbard chape is known from the Chersonesus citadel.¹⁰⁴ An unpublished isolated find of a Canterbury type sword from the Čatyrdag area (now in private collection) has reportedly producer's mark stamped on its handle (Fig. 5).¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ As it was the case of the cuirass known from Newstead, see *ibidem*, 116.

¹⁰⁰ The scale in question is preserved fragmentarily, yet in its original size it was at least 5 cm wide and 7 cm long, judging from the position of the drilled holes. It is very difficult to determine the exact function of the armor made from such big scales. Big scales are known from the contemporary Iža find from Slovakia, see J. TEJRAL, *Römische und germanische Militärausrüstungen der antoninischen Periode im Licht norddanubischer Funde*, in: VON CARNAP-BORNHEIM, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 38, and from the Het Valkhof Museum, Nijmegen, see R. D'AMATO, G. SUMNER, *Arms and Armour of the Roman Imperial Soldier*, London 2009, 125. For the horse barding scales, see JAMES, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 129–134; BISHOP, COULSTON, *op. cit.* (n. 41), 158.

¹⁰¹ For a reconstruction of the cuirass, see M. C. BISHOP, *Lorica Segmentata*, vol. 1, Chirnside 2002, *passim*. The closest analogies come from Vindonissa, see D'AMATO, SUMNER, *op. cit.* (n. 100), 133.

¹⁰² Trilobate arrow tips are common in native Scythian graves (see above, note 58), and such arrows were also used by the Roman army. The closest analogies come from Slovakian sites connected with the Marcomannic wars, see TEJRAL, *op. cit.* (n. 100), 34–35. The state of preservation of the spearhead socket prevents any statements about supposed analogies.

¹⁰³ The bigger ones were clearly made for ballista use. The other ones were probably intended for hand throwing, like these carried by some soldiers shown on Trajan's column, see A. WILKINS, *Roman Artillery*, Princes Risborough 2003, 17, 63, 65; cf. also G. SUMNER, *Roman Military Clothing (1) 100 BC – AD 200*, Oxford 2002, 45.

¹⁰⁴ According to KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 49, both finds have numerous analogies in various parts of the Roman Empire, therefore it is quite difficult to determine their place of production.

¹⁰⁵ The authors of the present paper obtained a drawing of the unpublished find from Dr. A. Lysenko. Actually, the sword is a hybrid example, showing some features of the August and

⁹⁸ See BISHOP, COULSTON, *op. cit.* (n. 41), 117.

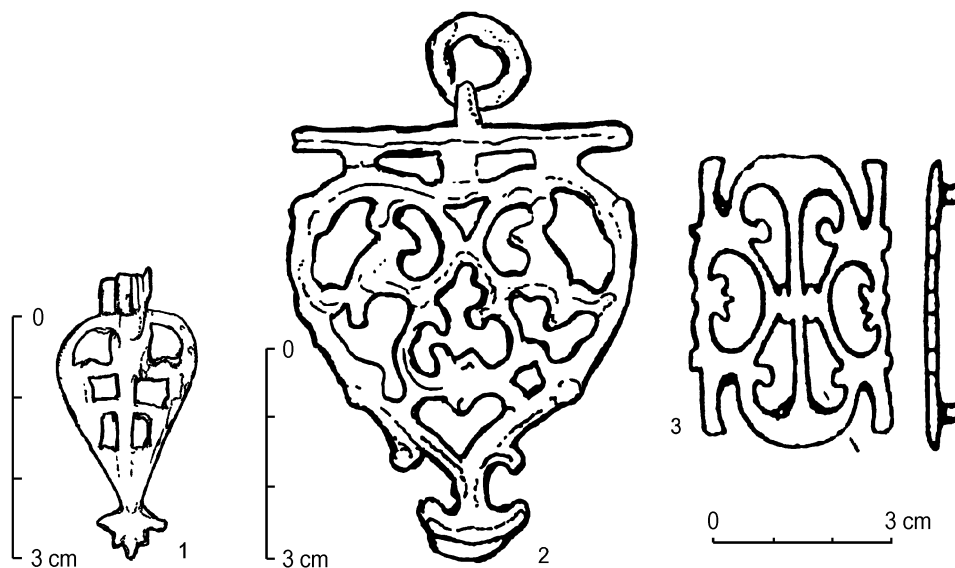


Fig. 6. Cavalry pendants. 1 – from Kadykovka (drawing R. Gawroński); 2 – from Kerč (redrawn by R. Gawroński after TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 33), 161); 3 – part of horse furniture from Sevastopol, after KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (no. 35), 108

Also the pieces of horse furniture are very badly represented in the assemblages from the Antonine and Severan periods. A copper alloy plate of an openwork design from the old, pre-revolution excavations is shaped in the form of two symmetrical pelta-type ornaments (Fig. 6:3). The item was clearly part of a decorated horse furniture.¹⁰⁶ Also an openwork leaf-shaped pendant was recovered from the Kadykovka-Balaklava fort (Fig. 6:1). Analogies from Celles-les-Waremme in Belgium¹⁰⁷ may indicate that

such pendants adorned horse trappings, hanging from breast or crupper straps. A similar, but bigger and slightly differently decorated pendant is known from Kerč (Fig. 6:2).¹⁰⁸ A small pendant from the city of Chersonesus¹⁰⁹ can also belong to the second century (Fig. 2:6).

The bronze head of a gryphon from Tauric Chersonesus (Fig. 1:4) was most probably part of a parade cavalry helmet or a decorative element of a gladiatorial helmet. Despite the fact that the gryphon's head is somewhat connected with the goddess Nemesis, analogies from other parts of the Roman Empire suggest that it was used as cavalry parade equipment and could have been used during typical Roman *hippika gymnasia* performances.¹¹⁰ From

Cantebury types, see P. KACZANOWSKI, *Importy broni rzymskiej na obszarze europejskiego Barbaricum*, Kraków 1992, 30–31, 123 fig. 1, 9–11, but it resembles more closely the well known *Lauriacum* type. For a similar sword from Axel Guttman's collection, see M. JUNKELMANN, *Römische Helme. Bd. VIII: Sammlung Axel Guttman*, Mainz 2000, 155–156. The stamp has no analogies in M. BIBORSKI, J. KOLENDO, *Die Buchstabenstempelabdrücke auf römischen Schwertern*, *Archeologia* 59, 2008, 35–50. The stamp mark can be restored as follows: C(aius) ITULNU[S] or ITUSNU[S]. Yet, the lack of any data about the context of the find makes any speculations about its informational significance impossible.

¹⁰⁶ See KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 108–109. For the closest South Shields analogies, see L. ALLASON-JONES, R. MIKET, *The Catalogue of Small Finds from South Shields Roman Fort. The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne*, Newcastle 1984, 225, no. 784.

¹⁰⁷ At Celles-les-Waremme, parts of two sets of the horse furniture were found, see Saalburg Jahrbuch 5, 1911/3 (1924). The sets clearly belong to the end of the second century, see M. JUNKELMANN, *Reiter wie Statuen aus Erz*, Mainz 1996, 85. On the photographs reproduced in Saalburg Jahrbuch (1924) the openwork leaf-shaped pendants are clearly visible between two breast *phalerae*. Openwork leaf-shaped pendants are also known from other Roman sites, like Carnuntum, see JUNKELMANN, *op. cit.*, 84. For further analogies, see M. SCHLEIERMACHER, *Römisches Pferdegeschirr aus den Kastellen Saalburg, Zugmantel und Feldberg*, Saalburg Jahrbuch 50, 2000, 187.

¹⁰⁸ See TREISTER, *op. cit.* (n. 33), 161. That loose find can be connected with the Bosporean war, which began in the early years of the reign of Septimius Severus after the Bosporean king Sauromates II had chosen the wrong side during the civil war after the death of Commodus. The course of events was reconstructed on the basis of information provided by the Preslav inscription, see AE 1991, 1378 and T. SARNOWSKI, *Bosporskaâ vojna perioda pravleniâ Septimiâ Severa v Rime i Savromata II na Bospore. Problema s nižnemezijskoj perspektivoj*, *ET* 20, 2005, 236–246. The Bosporean elites certainly copied Roman military fashions, see M. TREISTER, *Local Imitations of the Details of Roman Military Costume in the Bosporean Kingdom*, *Köln Jahrbuch* 33, 2000, 363–373. Yet, it seems that the pendant from Kerč is of Roman origin.

¹⁰⁹ See KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 106. On the photographs reproduced in Saalburg Jahrbuch (1924) the elements of the horse furniture look somewhat different, but the practice of adorning breast and haunch straps with such narrow and long fittings with small pendants was typical of the second century.

¹¹⁰ D.A. KOSTROMIČEV, *Bronzovyy grifon iz Hersonesa*, *MAIET* 15, 2009, 3–14. Kostromičev correctly points out that numerous analogies, like those from Nydam, make the cavalry

Chersonesus comes also an isolated find of a decorative rivet from a second century Hedderheim¹¹¹ type helmet (Fig. 1:5).

Two bone plates from the citadel and the port area of Tauric Chersonesus were used perhaps by the Roman army as labels for leather bags or purses.¹¹² They can be connected with common commercial or financial activity.

The majority of the finds from Antonine or Severan times came into the ground due to accidental loss. The items recovered from graves or graveyards are in a minority in that sample. With the possible exception of the above mentioned sword from Čatyrdag we have also no traces of native votive offerings, typical of the earlier period. The distribution and deposition of all these finds would suggest rather a peaceful activity. It means that the Romans were probably hardly disturbed by serious problems or threats, and that factor influenced largely the very nature and composition of the military assemblages from the period.

We should bear in mind that around the ancient city of Chersonesus there existed a highly developed system of defensive structures, located alongside the so-called Sapun ridge, where the Romans had erected a chain of watch towers. The Sapun ridge forms a natural barrier which divides the Heracleian peninsula, on which the rural territory of the city of Tauric Chersonesus was located, from the distant eastern

Inkermann and Balaklava valleys and from the lands inhabited by the “barbarians”. From the towering ridge the borderland area could have been easily observed and any hostile activity could have been sufficiently early detected. More numerous Roman garrisons occupied the citadel of Chersonesus and the Kadykovka fort, located in the Balaklava valley on the important route to the Balaklava bay.¹¹³ The above mentioned composition of military assemblages may suggest that the defensive system worked quite well.

We should also remember that the Crimean Antonine and Severan military assemblages provided virtually no information about the offensive weapons used in the area. The only exceptions come from the Chersonesus citadel and from the Kazackaâ hill watch tower. Yet still, the amount of recovered artifacts is not impressive. That stands in clear contrast to the assemblages known from the other parts of the empire. For example, the well known Vindolanda fort (now Chesterholm in Great Britain) yielded nearly two hundred slingshots, arrowheads and spearheads.¹¹⁴ Even the contemporary military assemblages from Slovakia provided more information about Roman offensive weapons.¹¹⁵ One may speculate that the majority of information concerning Crimean Roman army assemblages comes from the old, pre-revolution excavations, during which the corroded, unattractive artifacts could have been simply overlooked or cast away. However, the Kazackaâ hill fort was researched very methodically and the result was, as it was said, not impressive.¹¹⁶

In fact, in its composition the Kazackaâ hill assembly resembles more closely eastern military sites, like Dura Europos. The size of the Dura Europos assembly and the amount of artifacts recovered from the site were obviously different and the circumstances leading to the deposition of the military

interpretation plausible. Yet, the Nydam find was reported to be attached to a wooden pole that disintegrated just after discovery. That suggests its secondary use as a standard, see T. GRANE, *The Roman Empire and Southern Scandinavia – a Northern Connection. A re-evaluation of military-political relations between the Roman Empire and the Barbaricum in the first three centuries AD with the special emphasis on southern Scandinavia*, Copenhagen 2007, 237. Gryphon’s or eagle’s heads were certainly used as parts of cavalry helmets, see JUNKELMANN, *op. cit.* (n. 107), 48–49. Such helmets also appear in Roman triumphal art from the first century onwards. An example of such a helmet can be seen on the trophy relief from Turin, kept in the Museo di Antichità, see D’AMATO, SUMNER, *op. cit.* (n. 100), 104. The presence of the *hippika gymnasia* performances at Chersonesus, during which these elaborate parade helmets were used, is not well attested by other archeological finds. So far, only one cavalry training ground has been found on the Heracleian peninsula, which may have been used in the times of Diocletian, see L. A. KOVALEVSKAĀ, T. SARNOWSKI, *O hozājstvennom uklade odnoj iz heroneskich usadeb v pozdnerimskoe vremā*, VDI 3, 2002, 89–90. Yet, the date for the recovered structure was based on stamped *tegulae* used during its construction. Therefore, it should be approximately hundred years later than the recovered gryphon’s head provided the substructures under the Diocletianic *tegulae* were not built earlier.

¹¹¹ See KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 50, 53. Such helmets were very popular in the second and third centuries, see JAMES, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 102.

¹¹² KOSTROMIČEV, *op. cit.* (n. 35), 109.

¹¹³ For a short summary of tasks performed by the defensive system, see R. KARASIEWICZ-SZCZYPIORSKI, O. Ā. SAVELĀ, R. A. GAWROŃSKI, *The Remains of the Roman Fort at Kadykovka (Balaklava) in the Crimean Peninsula*, in: Acts of the 22nd International Limes Congress 2012, Ruse, Bulgaria (forthcoming). It seems that the place for the Balaklava-Kadykovka fort was chosen to secure the access to the Balaklava bay port, see KOVALEVSKAĀ, SARNOWSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 82), 47.

¹¹⁴ For the Vindolanda military deposit, see R. BIRLEY, *Vindolanda Research Reports. New Series. Vol. IV: The Small Finds. Fasc. 1. The Weapons*, The Vindolanda Trust 1996, *passim*. It is true that the great majority of the recovered artifacts belongs to the Trajanic period, see *ibidem*, 9.

¹¹⁵ See E. KREKOVIČ, *Military Equipment on the Territory of Slovakia*, JRMES 5, 1995, 211–25; TEJRAL, *op. cit.* (n. 100), *passim*.

¹¹⁶ T. SARNOWSKI, O. Ā. SAVELĀ, R. KARASIEWICZ-SZCZYPIORSKI, *Roman Military Sentry Posts in the Border Zone of Crimean Chersonesos*, *Archeologia* 58, 2007, 57–67.

equipment were quite exceptional,¹¹⁷ but still there are some similarities. At Dura Europos, arrowheads and boltheads were frequently found.¹¹⁸ That cannot be said about spears and swords, of which some were deposited and preserved in very special conditions when tower no. 19 collapsed over a Persian mine, while the others were stored inside the city houses.¹¹⁹ The Dura Europos garrison also preferred the scale armor.¹²⁰ The presence of arrowheads and scale armor at Kazackâ hill attests similar preferences. Yet, these unusual similarities between the two assemblies can be easily explained: in both cases the defenders had to cope with the bow armed infantry and cavalry, mostly lightly armed and fast moving. And the composite bows and rigid but drafty and flexible scale cuirasses perfectly fitted to the task. On the contrary, in the humid climate of western and northern Europe javelins and slingshots became more popular, as they were not so easily damaged by wet or rain. As we can see, the offensive weapons used by the Romans on the Crimean peninsula were well adapted to the local climate conditions and local threats.

On the other hand, there are some “western” features traceable at the Kazackâ site. The presence of the Newstead type *lorica segmentata* parts may indicate that some elements typical of the western and northern frontiers were also used in Crimea.¹²¹ However, there is another unusual feature in the Kazackâ assembly. The stone ballista shots, recovered from the site, could well have been an adaptation to local conditions, as raw materials for ballista shots were available practically everywhere in southern Crimea.¹²² The presence of the ballista on the Kazackâ watch tower is not a coincidence. On the other side of the Inkermann valley, at the site known as Sovhoz 10, a necropolis from the Roman times existed. The necropolis probably belonged to a thriving local trading community of mixed, Greek and

“barbarian”, origins.¹²³ The community probably needed constant surveillance. The stone throwing ballista was not an effective weapon against quickly moving and agile barbarians. Yet, it was perfectly designed to make an impression on potentially rebellious neighbors dwelling in small temporary huts.¹²⁴ It seems that the Roman fortification on the Kazackâ hill was intended more for show than for real defense. On the other hand, the cavalry find from Balaklava-Kadykovka may indicate that the slopes of the Sapun ridge needed constant patrolling.¹²⁵ The conclusion is that the defensive system worked quite well, as we have no traces of violence in the place.

Anyone familiar with the Roman military equipment knows that the great majority of finds comes from the first century. Artifacts from the period were very frequently deposited, due to the unit movements and intentional storing. Many half-Romanized native tribes still practiced rituals connected with the deposition of weapons.¹²⁶ A lot of items were lost in rivers. Even the damaged pieces of equipment were frequently cast away, as there were no real raw material shortages. The picture completely changes in the Antonine and Severan periods, when the establishment of permanent frontiers prevented frequent unit movement and massive deposition processes. The majority of the finds from the period came to light due to accidental loss and grave deposition. In these respects, the Crimean military assemblages resemble general patterns. The majority of finds comes from the period of turmoil, when the Roman army stationed on the Crimean soil only temporarily. On the contrary, the military deposits from the later periods are not so numerous, which suggests a rather peaceful, undisturbed existence while guarding the empire’s interests.

The very specific sample of finds coming from the Antonine and Severan periods may be also a consequence of the very nature of the Roman contingent. The majority of finds came from three places: the city of Chersonesus itself, Charax and

¹¹⁷ See JAMES, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 30–31, 238.

¹¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 199–230.

¹¹⁹ See *ibidem*, 145–149.

¹²⁰ Although some chainmail fragments were also recovered from Dura Europos, see *ibidem*, 116–139.

¹²¹ The picture can be somewhat misleading, as the majority of *lorica segmentata* finds comes from the methodically researched “western” or “northern” sites, see BISHOP, COULSTON, *op. cit.* (n. 41), 85, 117, 206; D’AMATO, SUMNER, *op. cit.* (n. 100), 130–134. In the East, the military assemblages are less frequently represented and, as a consequence, such armor pieces rarely come to light. That would not necessarily mean that the *loricae segmentatae* were more frequently used on the western or northern frontiers. Yet, the lack of such finds at Dura Europos may be an argument in favor of this hypothesis.

¹²² As it is the case of the Nubian site Qasr Ibrim, where sandstone shots were used alongside with the iron bolts, see WILKINS, *op. cit.* (n. 103), 33, 63.

¹²³ On the Sovhoz 10 community, see S.F. STRZELECKI, T.N. VYSOCKAÂ, L.A. RYŽOVA, G.I. ŽESTKOVA, *Naselenie okrugî Hersonesa v pervoj polovine I tysäčelietâ novoj èry (po materâlam nekropolâ Sovhoz no. 10)*, *Stratum+* 4, 2003–2004, 27–254.

¹²⁴ Yet, no traces of such installations have come to light yet. Moreover, the traces of the temporary buildings could have been easily overlooked.

¹²⁵ Actually, we have other traces of a cavalry unit based at Balaklava-Kadykovka, as from the nearby graveyard comes a tombstone of a trooper from the *Ala Atectorigiana*, decorated with an image of a Thracian rider, see ZUBAR’, *Tavrika* (n. 33), 98.

¹²⁶ ROYMANS, *op. cit.* (n. 84), 29–30.

the Kazacka hill post.¹²⁷ It seems that only these places, and perhaps also the Kavkaz Bair post and Balaklava-Kadykovka fort,¹²⁸ were used by the Roman army for a longer period.¹²⁹ The list of these sites looks not so impressive. The general conclusion is that the Roman Crimean *vexillatio* was largely

kept under strength and guarded only basic interests of the distant Roman Empire. Only during the reign of Septimius Severus the situation could have been different.¹³⁰ Therefore, the Roman garrison served only as a political demonstration intended to show that the Roman allies in the area were not left alone.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AE – L'Année épigraphique
BAR – British Archaeological Reports
BJ – Bonner Jahrbücher
CAH – Cambridge Ancient History
CIL – Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
ILS – Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae

IOSPE I² – V. LATYŠEV, *Inscriptiones antiquae Orae Septentrionalis Ponti Euxini Graecae et Latinae*, Sankt-Petersburg 1916
JRMES – Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies
MAIET – Materiały po Archeologii i Etnografii Tawriki
PP – Parola del Passato

¹²⁷ It is worth adding that another Roman Sapun ridge tower post, located at the place called Kavkaz Bair, see SARNOWSKI, SAVELÁ, KARASIEWICZ-SZCZYPIORSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 116), 65–67, failed to produce a sample comparable with that from Kazacka hill. This is probably due to the state of preservation of the site, which was badly damaged during the World War II and the later land reclamation process.

¹²⁸ The small amount of artifacts recovered from the site may be explained by the long period of stability and by the fact that only a small part of the fort was, as yet, unearthed.

¹²⁹ Such a view was also expressed by KOVALEVSKAÁ, SARNOWSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 82), 47.

¹³⁰ See above, note 108.