

GAMES AND GAMERS IN DACIA

BY

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Abstract

The necropoleis of Braniște and Gura Secului, both found in the village of Nemțișor (Vânători-Neamț commune, Neamț County, Romania), and of Târzia (Brusturi-Drăgănești com., Neamț Co.) produced several small lenticular artefacts made of glass, which were interpreted as counters, pieces used in tabletop games (Germ. Spielsteine).

Similar items have been found especially in forts (castra) inside the Empire, particularly along the Rhine, but also in the province of Dacia. Furthermore, such objects have also been recorded in sites from the Barbaricum, which confirms the wide spreading of such games in the Europe of that time.

Besides certain links, more extensive than generally agreed, between lands inside the Empire and those outside of the limes, the aforementioned discoveries also signal the adoption of specifically Roman customs, a phenomenon that had profound implications in changing mindsets inside the barbarian world.

Keywords: *Dacia, Moesia, tabletop games, gamers, counters, draughts, dice, draught boards.*

Not too long ago, I became particularly intrigued by an article in which the contribution of my colleague and friend Ion Ioniță was essential¹. In this regard, it is pertinent to point out that this theme was previously treated in two other studies, concerning Roman Dacia² and Moesia Inferior³, with Ion Ioniță dwelling on this occasion also upon similar discoveries from the *Barbaricum*.

At first sight, the aforementioned contribution tackled a topic (i.e. the ancient games) that is unattractive for most specialists, on account of both an apparent insignificance of the results, and of the hurdles faced during research⁴. I foremost have in mind a certain deficit of accuracy, given both by the size of the objects that constitute the topic of the present paper, and by their shape and colour, which make them easily blend in with the soil. I stress this aspect, since in the case of the cremation tombs, the artefacts passed through the funerary pyre often get deteriorated (cracks, deformations, melting), which makes their identification so much more difficult.

The investigation reported in these pages aims to better understand gaming, a manifestation that has accompanied mankind since its dawn⁵. For this reason I have focused on the objects that attest gaming in its various aspects, having as backdrop my own excavations that produced artefacts which constituted clear evidence in this sense. In point of fact, the discussions held back then with Professor Ion Ioniță only furthered my conviction that I had had correctly identified the respective materials.

I mention that initially my general research objective was constituted by the necropolis is from the sites of Braniște and Gura Secului in the villages of Nemțișor (Vânători-Neamț commune, Neamț County) and Târzia (village, Brusturi-Drăgănești commune, Neamț County), which belong to the Carpathian Tumuli

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¹ IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 145-150.

² PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 149-161.

³ NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 145-156.

⁴ NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 145.

⁵ HUIZINGA 1977: 30-32 and 269-297.

Culture and date mostly from the 4th century AD⁶. A rich archaeological material was unearthed on this occasion, from among which I mention several glass counters (Fr. *jeton*, Germ. *Spielsteine*)⁷ and on which I will dwell upon in the following lines.

Tumulus no. 32 from Braniște-Nemțișor produced three black counters (Pl. I/1, 3) from pit no. 4; a fourth, white counter, probably made of chalcedony (Pl. I/2, 4) was recovered from the surface of the funerary pyre (*bustum*). In the necropolis at Gura Secului-Nemțișor, tumulus no. 5 produced, also from the pyre, a translucent glass counter, white in colour (Pl. I/5, 6). Similarly, in the third cemetery, at Târzia, the bustum of tumulus no. 5 produced another translucent glass counter, this time yellow in colour (Pl. I/7).

For elucidating the problems raised by such discoveries I have extended the study both chronologically and topically, so as to include all the territories part of pre-Roman, Roman Dacia, Free Dacia, and Moesia Inferior. The identification of the various objects that could attest to activities specific to tabletop gaming is not easy and, accordingly, even their registering was difficult. The specialized literature mentions a vast array of such discoveries, though they can essentially be divided into just a few large categories: mobile pieces used on game surfaces, dice, and surfaces used for playing the games.

A wide array of materials was used to produce these objects: ceramics, stone, bone, horn, ivory, amber, glass, wood, metal, etc. This variety bears testimony, on the one hand, to human ingenuity in using raw materials, and, on the other, to man's unsurpassed capacity to transform into a game any of his own activities, at the same time correlated with the reverse of this process⁸.

The analysis of the various materials from which objects used in games were fashioned lead not only to establishing their nature, but also to a certain uncertainty regarding their use for this process. Nevertheless, this study is, as already mentioned, chronologically and spatially confined, which limits both the range of substances used, and the forms took by the corresponding objects. Accordingly, I found it adequate to use a different terminology, suited to the nature of each object listed in the *Catalogue of discoveries* accompanying this study.

Starting particularly from the shape, size and colouring, I have employed the term *round* to designate the mobile ceramic counters. Generally speaking, these items seem to have been used foremost before the Roman conquest. The rounds were flat and circular, varied in colour (particularly in the case of those made from pot walls), which hampered their use during gaming, and likewise varied markedly in diameter, from 10 to 69 mm (most were between 30 and 50 mm). I doubt that the round pieces with diameters of almost 70 mm were used for games⁹; their use remains to be ascertained in the future, and for this reason it is justified to use the term *round*, for which we find a more encompassing meaning.

The distribution of rounds in pre-Roman Dacia concentrates mostly around the Dacian fortresses, while in the Province of Dacia they are rarer and mostly cluster around the forts (Pl. IV/A and V/A).

The pieces made of bone or horn have shapes similar to those of the rounds, that is they are circular and flat, with the observation that there are also specimens that have circular perforations, the diameters of which precludes their use as whorls. In what concerns the size of these items, in this case too their diameters range quite a bit, from 14 to 85 mm (!), which raises some doubt on the use of all the items as counters. Most of them range in diameter from 14 to 26 mm, which, as we shall see, is not meaningless.

In the case of the small central circular perforations, a hypothesis was advanced that the items with such features were kept on a thread¹⁰, though I believe that we shouldn't exclude the possibility that they were used for separating the pieces (perforated or not) of the two gamers, just as by their colouring. Therefore, all the above-mentioned characteristics suggests the possibility that there were at least two ways in which the respective pieces were used, which warrants the use of the term *disk* for the counters made of bone or horn.

⁶ MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 1980: 180-207; MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 1997a: 833-878; MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 1997b: 307-341; MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 1999: 313-332.

⁷ Romanian too uses the term *piatră* = 'stone' to refer to the mobile pieces used in dominoes and rummikub.

⁸ HUIZINGA 1977: 33-69.

⁹ The rounds could have been used in calculations or as ballots (According to VULPE 1966: 35).

¹⁰ ALICU, NEMEȘ 1982: 349.

The most numerous discoveries of bone or horn disks date from the Roman age of Dacia, in the same areas of the forts, as in the case of the rounds (Pl. IV/B and V/B).

The third category of mobile pieces discussed in this paper meets most of the characteristics specific to gaming: they were made of a glass paste of black, green, blue (in various hues) and other colours, contrasting with others of a white or yellow (in various hues) colouring. These items are circular, but with hemispheric, cylindrical and flat or conical profiles. The diameters range between tighter values than in the case of rounds and disks, specifically between 11 and 28 mm.

The uniformity of diameters in the case of the glass counters (most ranging between 15 and 25 mm) constitute one last argument for designating them by the term *draughts*. Their inclusion into the class of mobile game counters is unquestionable.

Draughts (Lat. *calculus* – *calculi*) have been found in a limited number of settlements of pre-Roman Dacia, but are widespread in Moesia Inferior and also in Roman and free Dacia (Pl. III/6–9). Free Dacia leads surprisingly the top with 37 items discovered, followed by Moesia Inferior with 36 items recovered, and by Roman Dacia, with at least 19 items discovered.

The spread of this type of mobile pieces is noticed particularly in the forts of Roman Dacia and Moesia Inferior, but their concentration in the central area of present-day Moldavia is conspicuous. Notwithstanding a possible research lacuna, this situation could hold a particular meaning, to which we shall return below (Pl. V/C).

A second type of mobile pieces used for games were dice, fashioned from various materials (bone, horn, horse teeth, tusks, metal, stone, faience, clay, etc.), and which were most often cubical, more seldom rod-like (casting sticks) in shape¹¹. Ancient dice, similar to the modern ones, were shaken in a horn (*fritillus*) and determined the advancement of the game on the basis of the numbers marked on their surface by engraving, impressing, painting, etc. dots, circles, impressions etc.

No dice have been found in pre-Roman Dacia, but they are abundant in the Province, solely in cubic form, numbering 15 items discovered in eight forts and settlements (Pl. II/1). In Moesia Inferior, dice, likewise only cubic shaped, were found in ten sites (Pl. III/1–5), totalling 13 items made of bone, marble and ceramics (Pl. V/D).

An unexpected discovery came from the area of free Dacia, from Botoșani – “Groapa lui Ichim” (Pl. I/8), where “discardable” (casting sticks) were found, in the form of bone lamella (fragmentary) onto which the points of the game system were marked by concentric circles. Since they are very fragile, such dice were found in the Barbaricum only in another site (Masłomecz)¹², and even inside the Empire they are rather rare¹³.

A game involves not just the use of dice, but also their combined use alongside counters (rounds, disks, and draughts) that were deployed on fixed surfaces (drawn, incised, painted, etc.). This warrants further attention to this last category of objects found in the study area. In this case, the range of materials from which the game boards (*alveus* or *abacus*) were made is more limited than in the case of draughts and dice: wood, stone and, foremost, fired clay (bricks, tiles)¹⁴.

They are present in seven settlements (with 11 items) from Roman Dacia (Pl. II/2, 4) and in just one from Moesia Inferior (Pl. III/10), predominantly in forts (Pl. V/E); at the same time, we should note their absence in pre-Roman and free Dacia.

At the end of the presentation of the archaeological evidence for games played in Dacia and Moesia Inferior, I will briefly touch on the topic of how the games were actually played. The penury of written sources, sculptural monuments and graphical representations means that we have little understanding of what the

¹¹ Stabwürfel or Casting sticks are characteristic to Celtic and Germanic populations (cf. KRÜGER 1982: 220; WIDURA 2015: 65 and 86).

¹² RUSIN 1998: 189-209.

¹³ KRÜGER 1982: 220; WIDURA 2015: 65 and note 93, 83 (they appear in Celtic oppida as even during the early imperial period).

¹⁴ HASSEL 1978: 456-457 and Tf. 39/a.

games consisted of and how they were played¹⁵. As such, I found it necessary to have a cursory look on their evolution, obviously excluding the cultic, initiatory and sport games, which fall outside of the present topic. Accordingly, pursuant to their classification, we will refer only to *gamble, skill* and *mind games*¹⁶.

From a very wide area, from the earliest history of the East, we have information concerning games: at Mohenjo-daro (Harappan or Indus Valley culture, 2500–1900 BC) there were discovered game boards and various types of dice (made from fired clay, faience, terracotta, marble, bone, etc.)¹⁷; in Mesopotamia, at Ur (the early dynasty) and Shahr-i Sokhta (Iran), dated to the 3rd millennium BC, there were discovered game surfaces (draught boards) with 20 fields¹⁸. In Egypt, as early as the 3rd dynasty (3rd millennium BC), the games *Mehen* and *Senet* were already known¹⁹. More recent are the game boards and dice from the Syrian-Palestinian area (Megiddo)²⁰.

Later on, as we shall see, games gradually spread across the entire Eastern Mediterranean area, ample evidence being available in this sense: from the discoveries of the Minoan Kingdom (Knossos, Naxos, Phaistos, Vasiliki, etc.), to the habitual presence in Greek cities of streets and squares on which game boards were marked, particularly those for the *XII scripta* (the temple of Apollo at Didyma, in Delos, Eleusis, Ephesus, Miletus, Hierapolis, Sagalassos, etc.)²¹.

The spread of different types of games continued during the Hellenistic period, during which the inhabitants of Seleucid and Ptolemaic cities played “odd or even” *petteia* (a game similar to backgammon), dice (*kubos*), etc²². Some of the games, probably the simplest, were also borrowed by the populations of continental Europe, as I assume was the case with the rounds (Băiceni – Siliște, Bănița, Botoșana, Ciurea, Cucorăni – Medeleni, Lozna, Ocnîța, Pecica, Piatra Craivii, Piatra Neamț – Bâta Doamnei, Piatra Roșie, Piscul Crășani, Poiana, Popești, Sighișoara), disks (Poiana) or draughts (Brad, Poiana) from pre-Roman Dacia²³.

Nevertheless, the widest spread of games such as the ones mentioned above occurred during in the Roman period, an era that in fact also provides the most numerous references in this regard. From the information available, it can now be said that the entire Roman society “was playing”, from children using for this purpose nuts (*nuces*)²⁴ —as they still do today —, to all categories of aristocrats, led by the emperors (Augustus, Caligula, Claudius, Nero and others)²⁵, who entertain themselves with *ludus latruncolorum/milites* (Ger. *Soldatenspiel*), a game derived from the Hellenistic *petteia*, with *XII scripta* (*duodecima scripta*), “mills”²⁶ (also known as “morris”, “nine men's morris” or “penny morris” and still played today), etc. Just like the Greek cities, Rome's pavements preserve markings of various games, such as the one found in the Basilica Julia of the Forum²⁷.

The corruption of Roman society, also fomented by gaming (especially gambling), lead to their banning as early as the republican era through a law that by the time of Augustus was ignored²⁸. Archaeological discoveries demonstrate the pervasive presence of games across the entire Roman Empire — naturally at various degrees of intensity —, both in funerary monuments (Köln, Bonn, Mainz, Trier, Krefeld-Gellep)²⁹ and

¹⁵ CAPELLE 1978: 458.

¹⁶ FLINDERS PETRIE 1927: 51.

¹⁷ WIDURA 2015: 84-86.

¹⁸ WIDURA 2015: 58 and 107.

¹⁹ WIDURA 2015: 70 and 105.

²⁰ HÜBNER 1992: 61-85; WIDURA 2015: 109-110.

²¹ WIDURA 2015: 73-111.

²² FLACELIÈRE 1970: 304-306; HOLLIGER, HOLLIGER 1983: 5-7.

²³ The bibliography of the discoveries from Dacia and Moesia Inferior can be found in the Catalogue of game pieces discovered in Dacia and Moesia Inferior.

²⁴ RE², VI (Sparta bis Stluppi), Spiele, col. 1762-1768; PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 149-150.

²⁵ NIKOPOLOUS 2004: 101-102.

²⁶ Spiele, in RE², col. 1766-1768; HASSEL 1978: 456; NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 147.

²⁷ NIKOPOLOUS 2004: 101-102 and Fig. 337/c-d, 338; WIDURA 2015: 93-95.

²⁸ PURCELL 1995, 6-17; WIDURA 2015: 116.

²⁹ WIDURA 2015: 12.

cities (Rome³⁰, Pompei³¹, Perugia³²), and foremost in the military milieu (Corbridge, Richborough, Winchester³³, Velsen I and II³⁴, Oberstimm (ten glass draughts, of white, black and blue colour, with diameters of 12–17 mm)³⁵, Brugg, Dühren, Vindonissa, Kalkstein³⁶, Haltern, Valkenburg, Hoffenheim, Xanten, Mainz³⁷, Köln³⁸, Oberesch³⁹, Gerulata⁴⁰, Dorsten – Holsterhausen⁴¹, Sopianae (Pécs)⁴², etc. The most eloquent testimony of the generalisation of the gaming phenomenon comes from the military camps along the Red Sea *limes*, such as Abu Sha'ar (terracotta draughts from the 4th–7th century AD), where there was a room specifically designated for gaming, with twenty game surfaces identified⁴³.

The unprecedented diffusion of games in the military milieu is demonstrated not only by the diversity, but foremost by the large quantity of specific artefacts found during the archaeological investigations carried out in the forts along the Rhine⁴⁴, for instance at Valkenburg from where there were recovered 36 draughts made of glass paste of various colours (19 white, ten black, green, two bluish-grey, yellow, with a ratio of 2:1 between the number of white and black pieces)⁴⁵, or at Velsen I (59 opaque-white, 44 black and 5 of other colours)⁴⁶. Similarly impressive is the quantity of glass draughts unearthed in the *castrum* of Vindonissa (Windisch, Switzerland), numbering 750 pieces (from 800 items)⁴⁷, but also those mentioned above, from Brugg, Dühren or Winchester⁴⁸.

The draughts found in major *castra*, which provided the largest number of such counters made of glass paste, have diameters ranging between 7 mm and 26 mm: Oberstimm (18–26 mm)⁴⁹, Vindonissa (9–24 mm)⁵⁰, Valkenburg (13–22 mm)⁵¹, and Velsen (7–20 mm)⁵².

Besides remarks on the colour of the draughts, mostly white and black (in approximately equal shares), we can also put forward some considerations especially concerning the rather standardised sizes of these items, an observation to which we shall return.

Roman Dacia too, particularly the *castra*, witnessed the discovery of rounds (Buciumi, Cioroiu Nou, Gherla, Limesul Meseşan, Porolissum, Praetorium, Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa), disks (Apulum, Buciumi, Romita, Cristeşti, Cvmidava, Gherla, Ilişua, Odorheiu Secuiesc, Praetorium, Porolissum, Potaissa, Tibiscvm, Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, Veşel), draughts (Apulum, Buciumi, Bumbuşti Jiu, Feldioara, Limesul Meseşan, Napoca, Tibiscum), dice (Apulum, Cristeşti, Drobeta, Feldioara, Porolissum, Potaissa, Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa), and game boards (Buciumi, Cumidava, Drobeta, Porolissum, Potaissa, Samvm, Ulpia Traiana

³⁰ HASSEL 1978: 456.

³¹ DELL'ORTO, CONTICELLO 1994: 303.

³² HOLLIGER, HOLLIGER 1983: 12.

³³ VAN LITH 1978-1979: 131.

³⁴ VAN LITH 1977: 1-61; VAN LITH 1978-1979: 131-132.

³⁵ BÖHME 1978: 285-289.

³⁶ HOLLIGER, HOLLIGER 1983: 5-24.

³⁷ VAN LITH 1978-1979: 131.

³⁸ HASSEL 1978: 456-457.

³⁹ HARNECKER 2011, 28-29 and Tf. 9/2186-2189:

⁴⁰ PICHLEROVÁ 1981: 148-149.

⁴¹ EBEL-ZEPENZAUER et al. 2009: 83.

⁴² BORODZIEJ, KOKOWSKI, MAZUREK 1989: 375; others counters and dices of Pannonia, see BIRÓ 1994: 108-119.

⁴³ WIDURA 2015: 96.

⁴⁴ HASSEL 1978: 456.

⁴⁵ van LITH 1978-1979: 131.

⁴⁶ van LITH 1977: 50-57; IONIŢĂ, ŞOVAN 2014: 146.

⁴⁷ HOLLIGER, HOLLIGER 1983: 5-7; WIDURA 2015: 98.

⁴⁸ HOLLIGER, HOLLIGER 1983: 12-14.

⁴⁹ BÖHME 1978: 286.

⁵⁰ HOLLIGER, HOLLIGER 1983: 5-7; WIDURA 2015: 98.

⁵¹ VAN LITH 1978-1979: 128-130.

⁵² VAN LITH 1977: 51-53.

Sarmizegetusa). The diameters of the glass draughts from Dacian *castra* (for which we have data) fall between 11 mm and 28 mm, values similar to the ones in the rest of the empire: Apulum (25 mm)⁵³, Buciumi (22–28 mm)⁵⁴, Bumbesti Jiu – Vârtope (11–16 mm)⁵⁵, Feldioara (24 mm)⁵⁶, and Tibiscum – Jupa (16–28 mm)⁵⁷.

Moving along the record of discoveries along the Rhine-Danube limes (including the Dacian one) come the finds from Moesia Inferior, similarly made predominantly in *castra*: disks (Argamum, Dinogetia, Odesos), draughts (Carsium, Dinogetia, Nicopolis ad Istrum, Novae, Odessos, Oescus, Telița Amza), dice (Beroe, Callatis, (L)Ibida, Nicopolis ad Istrum, Novae, Noviodunum, Odessos, Oescus, Tomis, Troesmis) and game boards (Noviodunum).

We notice that the draughts found in Moesia Inferior have diameters in the same range as their counterparts from Roman Dacia and the rest of the Empire, between 17 mm and 21 mm: Dinogetia (17–21 mm)⁵⁸ and Telița – Amza (18 mm)⁵⁹. This is why we should not exclude the hypothesis of a standardised production of glass draughts in the Roman Empire (perhaps matching the size of the boards?), which seems to have also been exported to the other side of the *limes*, to free Europe⁶⁰.

The large diffusion of games outside the borders of the Empire took place chiefly starting with the 1st century AD. The specific artefacts cluster only around certain geographical areas and during precise historical moments. Among the core areas with such discoveries, quite clearly defined, are *Germania Libera* (as of 1982 there were registered 196 glass draughts, 639 bone disks and 149 ceramic rounds)⁶¹, in the context of the Hassleben – Leuna tomb group, between the Elbe and the Ems rivers, in southern Scandinavia (Seeland and Fünen, C_{1b}–C₂), but also more eastwards, in Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Belarus, Ukraine (in most cases, a tomb contained between 30 and 60 items)⁶², and, as already shown, albeit sporadically, in free Dacia: Valløby – Møllehøj (with 106 draughts, of which 60 are white and black, placed to the right of the deceased's head, and 46, red and white, placed at the right hand)⁶³, Varpelev (42 bone disks)⁶⁴ and dating from C₃, at Brøndsager, Høje – Taastrup⁶⁵, all located in Zealand (Denmark), then Vimose (90 glass and amber draughts, two double game boards, dice)⁶⁶, Halberstadt (22 opaque-white draughts, 14 dark-green and 12 of other colours)⁶⁷, Gommern (3rd century, component parts of a board and 50 draughts made of white, black, dark grey, yellow, green, and blue glass)⁶⁸, Heiligenhafen (58 white and black draughts, with diameters of 17–19 mm)⁶⁹, Leuna (59 draughts, 27 opaque black and 30 opaque white, with diameters of 15–26 mm)⁷⁰, Neudorf – Bornstein (tomb no. 4 with a game board, 18 white and 24 black draughts)⁷¹, Nordrup (with 81 draughts in two tombs)⁷², Pflingsten bei Helmstedt (5 bone disks, one of

⁵³ PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 151 (note 16), 160.

⁵⁴ POP 1972: 91 and Pl. XCVII/13-15.

⁵⁵ MARINOIU 2004: 63 and Pl. VIII/1.

⁵⁶ GUDEA 2008: 229.

⁵⁷ BENEA 2004: 86, 214 and Fig. 36/3-4.

⁵⁸ NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 151.

⁵⁹ BAUMANN 1995: 81, 87 and Pls. XXIV/8, 12-13, XLVI/6-7.

⁶⁰ KRÜGER 1982: 184.

⁶¹ KRÜGER: 155-161; MENKE 2014: 107.

⁶² MENKE 2014: 108; WIDURA 2015: 66, 70, 81-82.

⁶³ WIDURA 2015: 68 and 199.

⁶⁴ WIDURA 2015: 200.

⁶⁵ WIDURA 2015: 59.

⁶⁶ CAPELLE 1978: 457; WIDURA 2015: 81-83.

⁶⁷ WIDURA 2015: 191.

⁶⁸ BECKER 2010: 477-480; WIDURA 2015: 192.

⁶⁹ WIDURA 2015: 193.

⁷⁰ WIDURA 2015: 194.

⁷¹ WIDURA 2015: 195.

⁷² WIDURA 2015: 196-197.

which of tusk)⁷³, Dewitz⁷⁴, Lilla Jored (Sweden)⁷⁵, then, in Poland, at Pielgrymowo, a black draught and a wooden board (Northern Masovia) and Zakrzow III (14 greenish-white and 15 black draughts)⁷⁶, Pełczysk (draughts with a diameters of 23–26 mm), Łęgu Piekarski, Dorotow – Wrocławie – Zakrzewie (Przeworsk culture/C₃ – D₃, 4th century)⁷⁷, Opatów⁷⁸, Sidlemínsk (dated to 275–325 AD; dice and draughts made of black, blue, white, brownish-red, and green glass, in the shape of a sphere segment, with diameters of 3–3.5 mm)⁷⁹, Masłomecz (C₃ phase, radiocarbon date 325 ± 40; bone and stone disks, a draught made of opaque-white glass, with a diameter of 23 mm; casting sticks)⁸⁰, Grochach Starych (46 green and white draughts)⁸¹, Rudka (Volhynia – Ukraine, with two blue-red draughts, with diameters of 15–16 mm)⁸², Pjatrovičy (Belarus, three glass draughts, Wielbark culture/C₁)⁸³, Gródek on the Western Bug River⁸⁴, Vojtenki (Ukraine; the grave no. 69: 30 white, gray, black and red counters with the diameters between 14 and 24 mm)⁸⁵ and others.

This manner of entertainment endured during the late Roman and early Byzantine periods, in the Byzantine fortifications, as evidenced by the dice found in the cemetery from Beroe (6th–7th century AD)⁸⁶. Gaming artefacts have also been registered in the tombs of the Vendel culture (Beelen, Valsgårde in Gotland, Gallhus, and Gamla-Uppsala, with bone disks and glass or amber draughts)⁸⁷, Anglo-Saxon tombs (Tuddenham and Taplow, with bone, horn and ivory disks, game boards of horse teeth, and dice)⁸⁸, Merovingian and even Viking tombs⁸⁹. However, in the case of the Vendel and Viking cultures, the shape of the draughts changes from the classical one, and the white one almost disappear⁹⁰.

I advance a number of final considerations stemming from the available data on games in the *Barbaricum*: 1. Glass and bone counters have been found in inhumation or cremation graves, including children's graves⁹¹. 2. The glass draughts appear particularly in inhumation graves, whereas the bone disks were found mainly in cremation ones. One exception comes from the Wielbark culture, where the two types of draughts were discovered in both types of burials. The incineration tombs mentioned in the beginning of this paper (Braniște and Gura Secului from the villages of Nemțișor and, respectively, Târzia) produced only glass draughts, a situation that contradicts the above⁹². 3. It is possible to advance considerations on the location of the draughts within the tombs only in the case of inhumation ones. The draughts were placed at the legs of the deceased (the Hassleben – Leuna group), at the right of the head and in the right hand (Valløby), or only at the right hand (Rudka)⁹³; in the bogs of Vimose, the draughts were found inside the “pockets” of the warriors'

⁷³ GAEDTKE-ECKARDT 1991: 112, 215 and 225.

⁷⁴ LASER et al. 1995: 34.

⁷⁵ WIDURA 2015: 194.

⁷⁶ WIDURA 2015: 197 and 201.

⁷⁷ RUDNICKI 2007: 106-107.

⁷⁸ MADYDA-LEGUTKO, ZAGÓRSKA-TELEGA 2000: 107-122.

⁷⁹ KARPIŃSKA 1926: 53, 55, 65, 155 and 159. I have previously highlighted the similarities between the Carpathian Tumuli culture and the Sidleminsk group (Cf. MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 1997b: 332; MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 1999: 328).

⁸⁰ BORODZIEJ, KOKOWSKI, MAZUREK 1989: 375.

⁸¹ RUSIN 1998: 190 and 196.

⁸² WIDURA 2015: 68 and 198.

⁸³ BELJAVEC 2009: 168.

⁸⁴ BORODZIEJ, KOKOWSKI, MAZUREK 1989: 375.

⁸⁵ LIUBICEV 2011, 77, 80 and figs. 6-7, 10.

⁸⁶ PETRE 1987: 69-70, 156 and Pl. 126/200j.

⁸⁷ CAPELLE 1978: 457; MENKE 2014: 116; WIDURA 2015: 59.

⁸⁸ WILSON 1978: 458.

⁸⁹ WIDURA 2015: 198.

⁹⁰ WIDURA 2015: 66.

⁹¹ CAPELLE 1978: 457; BELJAVEC 2009: 168-169 (tombs 1 and 59 from Pjatroviči); WIDURA 2015: 65.

⁹² WIDURA 2015: 65.

⁹³ WIDURA 2015: 68.

human offerings⁹⁴. According to some specialists, the objects meant for gaming are found particularly in “princely” tombs, i.e. those belonging to the elite, generally marking a certain social differentiation⁹⁵.

Bringing together the considerations advanced in these pages, we find that in the case of the counters, there are a number of common or closely related characteristics, as also shown by their appraisal in the present analysis: their association to a certain ethnographical-historical category, the provenance and way of diffusion in the area under scrutiny, their placement within the respective archaeological context, the species of games to which they belonged, to which we could add other particular features that are similarly important for building the whole picture (material, shape, size, etc.). Quite a few questions remain to be resolved.

Firstly, we must elucidate how such objects reached the *Barbaricum*, since by their very use they cannot be explained only by trade, various types of gifts, bribes, ransoms, looting, etc. Where and under what circumstances did the populations from the aforementioned areas get accustomed to playing games? An answer to this dilemma was provided, as early as the 1970s, by J. Werner in the form of a hypothesis⁹⁶, entirely plausible in my view: the people who became accustomed to the games played in the Roman world could only have been those who lived in the Empire for a certain time, came into immediate contact with the objects specific to the games, the necessary time and money, then returned to their abodes — these elements point to the warriors enrolled into the Roman auxiliary forces⁹⁷, originating from among the “barbarians”. Developing on the logic behind the above logical abduction, we can raise the question if the concentration of discoveries of game-related objects could likewise allow us to infer that the exactly in those areas were the auxiliaries recruited, who later carried the artefacts back to their native land. For this reason, we can admit, save for the cases in which it represents lacunae in the research, that in certain areas of Free Germania (between the Elbe and the Ems rivers), of Southern Scandinavia, or of the Przeworsk, Wielbark, Chernyakhov – Sântana de Mureş and Carpathian tumuli cultures, there was constant recruiting of warriors for the Roman auxiliary forces⁹⁸.

One last question on which I will dwell concerns the sociological and historical aspects of gaming inside the “barbarian” world. As claimed, “human civilisation emerges and develops through games”, on account of which we can consider gaming as a germ of culture, which it preceded and in effect engendered⁹⁹. This is why, since its initial stage, gaming was closely tied to sacred practices, from which the concept of “feast” derived, accompanied by its natural consequences, namely rites and offerings¹⁰⁰. Considered by the Romans as only a form of leisure (*otium*), unlike that dedicated to work (*negotium*), gaming can be regarded as something devoid of utility, found outside the scope of reason, duty and truth¹⁰¹. However, these assertions cannot be defended, since, as I will argue, it has been shown that gaming nevertheless incorporates elements of utility and reason¹⁰². Moreover, from the analysis of human actions, the game–staidness opposition “is not definite”, with each of these two factors being able to unwind into their apparent opposite¹⁰³. For these general characteristics, gaming should be regarded as a free action, well defined in time and space, but which, at the same time, transforms the real (geographical) space into a virtual one. Accordingly, it resulted in the development of an abstract way of thinking, fecund at the same time, both for the individual and society¹⁰⁴. From this characteristic immediately proceeds

⁹⁴ WIDURA 2015: 81-82.

⁹⁵ MENKE 2014: 108; BELJAVEC 2009: 168; MEYER 2011: 129; MEYER 2013: 67-68; W WIDURA 2015: 66 (she is more nuanced, admitting the presence of these artefacts not only in elite graves).

⁹⁶ WERNER 1973: 1-30; WIDURA 2015: 66. About the mercenaries of *Barbaricum*, see STUPPNER 2012: 163-169.

⁹⁷ WELLS 1999: 225; MEYER 2011: 129; MEYER 2013: 68.

⁹⁸ See notes 1, 12-13 and 60-82.

⁹⁹ HUIZINGA 1977: 23, 30, 33 and 38; WIDURA 2015: 13 and 134.

¹⁰⁰ HUIZINGA 1977: 65; BENOIST 1995: 84, 89-94 and 113; WIDURA 2015: 143-146.

¹⁰¹ HUIZINGA 1977: 248.

¹⁰² “It wasn't hard to find, when all major forms of social life emerged, an extremely active and extremely prolific ludic factor.” (cf. HUIZINGA 1977: 269).

¹⁰³ HUIZINGA 1977: 39.

¹⁰⁴ WIDURA 2015: 53.

another distinctive feature of gaming, that of generalised strategic thinking, through which all human actions are substantiated, including, therefore, military campaigns, including the "barbarians" ones.

The conveyed effect of the above is the impossibility to elude another quality of gaming, namely that it is a specific form of communication (with individuals, teams, contests and ranks), by means of which abstract (strategic) thought materialises into an action plan (game) and situational tactical decision-making¹⁰⁵.

We see that, viewed across time, gaming was unable to be carried out without also assimilating (through repetition) its rules, from which order necessarily followed¹⁰⁶. In its turn, social stratification is likewise based on rules and hierarchy, so that ordering is ineluctable, and the similitude between the game and the social structures is self-evident¹⁰⁷. Finally, we must note that gaming order is inherent and absolute, voluntarily accepted by all participants, from which we can gather the individual and social qualities it enforces¹⁰⁸.

The research on the games played in Roman Dacia confirmed their similarity to those ascertained in other parts of the Empire, particularly those with significant military presence¹⁰⁹. Nevertheless, gaming in *Barbaricum* seems to not have been a general process (from the geographic and social point of view), since Roman expansion was, on the one hand, never stable or planned, and, on the other hand, always able to take new forms, that is to change according to the necessity to overcome the obstacles it faced¹¹⁰.

Archaeological discoveries have clearly demonstrated the local elite background of the warriors recruited into the Roman auxiliary units¹¹¹. Still, through the complex but uneven transfer of civilisation, this elite was not on the path to "becoming Roman", but rather "developing Germanic"¹¹² (or developing Barbarian?).

The infiltration of various elements of Roman civilisation into the *Barbaricum* — including games — does not mark an abandonment of the traditional, conservative way of life (see the sacrifices in the Vimose bogs), even though we should not lay aside the fact that they were able to contribute to the gradual transformation of the local societies.

CATALOGUE OF GAME PIECES DISCOVERED IN DACIA AND MOESIA INFERIOR¹¹³

PRE-ROMAN DACIA

Ceramic rounds.

1. **Băiceni – Siliște** (Băiceni village, Cucuteni commune, Iași County). Round (diam.= 20 mm). Cf. IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 147 and Fig. 1/6.
2. **Bănița** (Petroșani town, Hunedoara Co.). Round. Cf. MACREA *et al.* 1966: 20 and Fig. 8.
3. **Botoșana** (village, com., Suceava Co.). Rounds (Latène settlement). Cf. TEODOR 1999: 75 and 137.
4. **Ciurea** (village, com., Iași Co.). Rounds (3rd–2nd century BC). Cf. TEODOR 1999: 75 and 142.
5. **Cucorăni-Medeleni** (Cucorăni village, Mihai Eminescu com., Botoșani Co.). Round (3rd–2nd century BC). Cf. TEODOR 1999: 75, 147 and Fig. 51/6.
6. **Lozna** (village, Dersca com., Botoșani Co.). Rounds (Latène). Cf. TEODOR 1999: 75 and 161.
7. **Ocnița** (Ocnele Mari town, Vâlcea Co.). Round (1st cent. BC; diam. = 20 mm). Cf. BERCIU 1981: 115 and Pl. 91/10; IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 147 and Fig. 1/7.

¹⁰⁵ WIDURA 2015: 5 and 53.

¹⁰⁶ WIDURA 2015: 53 ("Das Spielbrett ist die einzige Materialisierung der Welt der Spielobjekte, jedoch kann jeder Spieler eine individuelle Imagination dieser Spielwelt erleben.")

¹⁰⁷ WIDURA 2015: 125, 134 and 141-146.

¹⁰⁸ HUIZINGA 1977: 45-46.

¹⁰⁹ PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 155.

¹¹⁰ MILLET 1994: 2 and 9.

¹¹¹ MILLET 1944: 59.

¹¹² MEYER 2011: 133; MEYER 2013: 121.

¹¹³ I am convinced that most of the evidence concerning the practice of games in Dacia and Moesia Inferior have been overlooked, to which are added those that will be found in the future so that a more complete set of discoveries will emerge, though, nevertheless, not compromise the crux of my conclusions.

8. **Pecica (Ziridava ?)** (village, com., Arad Co.). Perforated rounds. Cf. CRIȘAN 1978: 348–351.
9. **Piatra Craivii** (Craiva village, Cricău com., Alba Co.). Rounds. Cf. CRIȘAN 1969: CIV–25.
10. **Piatra Neamț – Bâta Doamnei** (Piatra Neamț city, Neamț Co.). Rounds (perforated or not), fashioned by hand or potter's wheel. Cf. BUZILĂ 1970: 248 and Fig. 32.
11. **Piatra Roșie** (Boșorod village, com., Hunedoara Co.). Five "tesserae" from a red paste. Cf. DAICOVICU 1954: 89 and Fig. XIV/5, 8–9, 12–13.
12. **Piscul Crăsani** (Crăsani village, Balaciu com., Ialomița Co.). Rounds. Cf. ANDRIEȘESCU 1924: 84 and Fig. 237.
13. **Poiana (Piroboridava ?)** (village, Nicorești com., Galați Co.). Rounds (diam. = 10–40 mm). Cf. VULPE, TEODOR 2003: 49; IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 147.
14. **Popești** (village, Mihăilești com., Ilfov Co.). Rounds. Cf. VULPE 1966: 35.
15. **Sighișoara** (town, Mureș Co.). Rounds. Cf. HOREDȚ, SERAPHIN 1971: Fig. 56/ 22–31.

Bone disks.

16. **Poiana (Piroboridava ?)** (village, Nicorești com., Galați Co.). Five bone disks from the 1st cent. AD. (diam. = 21–35 mm). Cf. VULPE, TEODOR 2003: 52 and Fig. 82/1–3, 5, 7; IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 147 and Fig. 1/14–17.

Glass draughts.

17. **Brad (Zargidava ?)** (village, Negri com., Bacău Co.). A draught fashioned from "the walls of a pot" (diam. = 17 mm). Cf. URSACHI 1995: 224 and Pls. 202/3, 325/2.
18. **Poiana (Piroboridava ?)** (village, Nicorești com., Galați Co.). Two draughts of blue, translucent glass (diam. = 13–14 mm). Second half of the 1st cent. AD. Cf. TEODOR, CHIRIAC 1994: 191, 205 and Pl. VIII/3–4; VULPE, TEODOR 2003: 99 and Fig. 255/3–4; IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 147 and Fig. 1/9–10.

ROMAN DACIA

Ceramic rounds.

19. **Buciumi – castrum** (village, com., Sălaj Co.). Thirty-four rounds (diam. = 15–58 mm). Cf. GUDEA 1972: 58–59.
20. **Cioroiu Nou** (village, Cioroiși com., Dolj Co.). Two rounds (diam. = 32–45 mm). Cf. BONDOR 2010: Pl. XXX/88a–b.
21. **Gherla** (town, Cluj Co.). Four rounds (diam. = 40–69 mm). Cf. PROTASE, GUDEA, ARDEVAN 2008: 101, 267 and Pl. LXXXV/1–4.
22. **Meseș limes** (Sălaj Co.). Rounds. Cf. GUDEA 1997: 31.
23. **Porolissum – castrum** (Moigrad village, Mirșid com., Sălaj Co.). Twenty-four rounds (diam. = 22–65 mm). Cf. GUDEA 1989: 510–512 and Pls. CVI, CVII/12–13.
24. **Porolissum – border point** (Moigrad village, Mirșid com., Sălaj Co.). Sixteen rounds (diam. = 34–57 mm) and others 11 items in the dwelling-house OL 6. Cf. GUDEA 1996: 226–227 and Pl. L; TAMBA 2005: Figs. 6.1.23.
25. **Praetorium – Mehadia, castrum** (Mehadia town, Caraș-Severin Co.). Three rounds (diam. = 30–49 mm). Cf. MACREA, GUDEA, MOȚU 1993: 36, 86 and Pl. VIII.
26. **Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa** (Sarmizegetusa village, com., Hunedoara Co.). Four rounds. Cf. PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 160.

Bone or horn disks.

27. **Apulum – Alba Iulia** (Alba Iulia city, Alba Co.). Eight disks. Cf. PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 160.
28. **Buciumi – castrum** (village, com., Sălaj Co.). Disks (diam. = 14–24 mm). Cf. ALICU, NEMEȘ 1982: 349 and figs. IV/8–9, 13 and V.
29. **Certiae – Romita** (Romita village, Românași com., Sălaj Co.). One disk. Cf. MATEI, BAJUSZ 1997: 120.
30. **Cristești** (Târgu Mureș city, Mureș Co.). Bone disks. Cf. HUSAR, MAN 1998: 61.
31. **Cvmidava – Râșnov** (Râșnov town, Brașov Co.). One disk (diam. = 85 mm). Cf. GUDEA, POP 1971: 59 and Fig. LVIII/4.
32. **Gherla** (town, Cluj Co.). One disk (diam. = 17 mm). Cf. PROTASE, GUDEA, ARDEVAN 2008: 93, 259 and Pl. LVI/6.
33. **Ilișua** (village, Uriu com., Bistrița-Năsăud Co.). Three disks. Cf. PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 160.
34. **Odorheiu Secuiesc** (town, Harghita Co.). One disk. Cf. PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 160.

35. **Praetorium – Mehadia, castrum** (Mehadia town, Caraş-Severin Co.). One disk (or “button” ?, diam. = 20 mm). Cf. MACREA, GUDEA, MOŢU 1993: 44, 113 and Pl. XXXI/3.
36. **Porolissum – castrum** (Moigrad village, Mirşid com., Sălaj Co.). Fourteen disks. Cf. GUDEA 1989: 829–830 and Pls. CCLXVI/1–11, CCLXVII/7–9.
37. **POROLISSUM – vicus**. Six disks in the dwelling-house OL 6. Cf. TAMBA 2005: Figs. 6.1.23.
38. **Potaissa – Turda** (Turda town, Cluj Co.). Two disks (the fort and Sândului Valley). Cf. BĂRBULESCU 1994: 140; BĂRBULESCU 1997: 44.
39. **Tibiscum – Jupa** (Jupa village, Caransebeş town, Caraş-Severin Co.). Three disks (diam. = 20–26 mm). Cf. POP 1997: 36–37, 78 (nr. 223–225).
40. **Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa** (Sarmizegetusa village, com., Hunedoara Co.). Twenty-four disks (diam. = 14–25 mm). Cf. ALICU, NEMEŞ 1982: 354–355; DAICOVICIU *et al.* 1989–1993: 419 and Pl. V/5; PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 160; ALICU *et al.* 1994: 65–66, 119–120 (nr. 848–868) and Pl. 58; ALICU, POPA, BOTA 1994: 503 and Pl. XI/9–11.
41. **Veţel** (village, com., Deva town, Hunedoara Co.). One disk. Cf. PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 160.

Glass draughts.

42. **Apulum – Alba Iulia** (Alba Iulia city – Partoş, Alba Co.). A black draught (diam. = 25 mm). Cf. PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 151 (nota 16) and 160.
43. **Buciumi – castrum** (Buciumi village, com., Sălaj Co.). Three draughts of white, blue and black glass (diam. = 22–28 mm). Cf. POP 1972: 91 and Pl. XCVII/13–15.
44. **Bumbeşti Jiu – Vârtoş, castrum and vicus** (Bumbeşti – Jiu village, com, Gorj Co.). Eight draughts found in the “workshop”, of which five were green, two black, and one white (diam. = 11–16 mm). Cf. MARINOIU 2004: 63 and Pl. VIII/1.
45. **Feldioara** (village, com., Braşov Co.). One draught (diam. = 24 mm). Cf. GUDEA 2008: 229.
46. **Meseş limes** (Sălaj Co.). Draughts (?). Cf. GUDEA 1997: 31.
47. **Napoca – Cluj-Napoca** (Cluj – Napoca city, Cluj Co.). One draught made of black glass. Cf. PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 158 and pl. III/8.
48. **Tibiscum – Jupa** (Jupa village, Caransebeş town, Caraş-Severin Co.). Two draughts made of dull white glass from workshop no. 1 (diam. = 16–28 mm). 2nd–3rd cent. AD. Cf. BENEA 2004: 86, 214 and Fig. 36/3–4.
49. **Transylvania**. One draught made of white glass (diam. = 26 mm). Cf. PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 161 and Pl. III/6.

Bone or horn dice.

50. **Apulum – Alba Iulia** (Alba Iulia city Alba Co.). Two dice. Cf., PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 155, 161 and Pl. III/2; TIMOC 2007: Fig. 9/6–7.
51. **Cristeşti** (Tg. Mureş city, Mureş Co.). One dice. Cf. HUSAR, MAN 1998: 61.
52. **Drobeta – Turnu Severin** (city, Mehedinţi Co.). One dice. Cf. PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 161.
53. **Feldioara** (village, com., Braşov Co.). Two dice (Pl. II/1). Cf. GUDEA 2008: 230 and Pl. LXXI/6–7.
54. **Porolissum – castrum** (Moigrad village, Mirşid com., Sălaj Co.). One dice. Cf. GUDEA 1989: 830 and Pl. CCLXVII/2; PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 155 and Pl. III/2.
55. **Porolissum – border point** (Moigrad village, Mirşid com., Sălaj Co.). Two dice of white and, respectively, yellowish-white colour. Cf. GUDEA 1996: 273 and Pl. LXXXII.
- 55bis. **Porolissum** (Moigrad village, Mirşid com., Sălaj Co.). Seven bone dices and one glass (?) item of Wesselényi – Teleki collection; others eight bone dices of the amphitheatre. Cf. VASS 2006, 648; VASS, PÁNCZÉL 2009, 561.
56. **Potaissa – Turda** (Turda town, Cluj Co.). Two dice (the fort and the Botár collection). Cf. PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 155, 161 and Pl. III/1; BĂRBULESCU 1994: 140 and Fig. 25/7; BĂRBULESCU 1997: 44 and Fig. 27/4.
- 56 bis. **Răcari** (Răcari village, jud. Dolj). One dice. Cf. BONDOC, GUDEA 2009, 276.
57. **Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa** (Sarmizegetusa village, com., Hunedoara Co.). Four dice (one forged?). Cf. ALICU, NEMEŞ 1982: 345; PAKI, COCIŞ 1993: 151 (note 16) and 155; ALICU *et al.* 1994: 118, no. 847.

Bronze dice (?).

58. **Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa** (Sarmizegetusa village, com., Hunedoara Co.). Bronze dice (?). Cf. ALICU, POPA, BOTA 1994: 504 and Pl. XII/3.

Game boards.

59. **Buciumi – castrum** (village, com., Sălaj Co.). Brick (*lacuntrularia tabla*). Cf. ALICU, NEMEȘ 1982: 349.
60. **Cumidava – Râșnov** (Râșnov town, Brașov Co.). Brick (*lacuntrularia tabla*). Cf. N. GUDEA, POP 1971: Pl. LII/3; PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 150 and Pl. VI/1.
61. **Drobeta – Turnu Severin** (city, Mehedinți Co.). Brick (*lacuntrularia tabla*) (Pl. II/2). Cf. PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 155 and Pl. IV/2.
62. **Porolissum – castrum** (Moigrad village, Mirșid com., Sălaj Co.). Brick (*lacuntrularia tabla*). Cf. CHIRILĂ *et al.* 1972: Pl. LVI/4; PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 150 and Pl. V/1.
63. **Potaissa – Turda** (Turda town, Cluj Co.). Two lineated bricks (the fort and the Sândului valley) (Pl. II/4). Cf. PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 161 and Pl. IV/1; BĂRBULESCU 1994: 140.
64. **Samum** (Cășeiu village, com., Cluj Co.). Brick (*lacuntrularia tabla*). Cf. ALICU, NEMEȘ 1982: 349.
65. **Ul pia Traiana Sarmizegetusa** (Sarmizegetusa village, com., Hunedoara Co.). Brick with the probable variant of the *latina gaudes* (*XII scripta*) game. Cf. PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 155 and Pls. VI/2 and VII/1–2.
66. **Ul pia Traiana Sarmizegetusa** (Sarmizegetusa village, com., Hunedoara Co.). Brick with the morris (“mills”) game. Cf. ALICU, NEMEȘ 1982 : 349; PAKI, COCIȘ 1993: 161.

FREE DACIA

Ceramic rounds.

67. **Izvoare** (village, Dumbrava Roșie com., Piatra Neamț town, Neamț Co.). Round from a reclaimed Neolithic pot, “probably in the 4th cent. AD.” Cf. VULPE 1957: 297 and Fig. 316/4.
68. **Săbăoani – the settlements from Islaz** (village, com., Neamț Co.). Four rounds from the 4th century AD. Cf. URSACHI 2007: 101 and Pls. 34/2, 37/1, 3–4.
69. **Săbăoani – the settlements from Izvoare-Nord** (village, com., Neamț Co.). One round (Pit no. 3, 2nd–3rd century AD). Cf. URSACHI 2007: 154 and Pl. 141/2.

Bone disks.

70. **Pietroasele** (village, com., jud. Buzău). One disk (?). Cf. DIACONU 1976: 1060; POPA 2001: 145 and Figs. 115/5, 118/4.

Glass draughts.

71. **Băiceni – Siliște** (Băiceni village, Cucuteni com., Iași Co.). Draught of greenish-black glass (diam. = 17 mm), found in dwelling no. 21, dated to the 3rd cent. AD. Cf. IONIȚĂ 1982: 62 and note 330; IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 145.
72. **Bârlad – Valea Seacă** (Bârlad town Vaslui Co.). From the large Sântana de Mureș necropolis there were recovered through excavations 18 semispheric glass draughts (transparent, grey and black), six each from no. 18 cremation grave, no. 304 and, respectively, no. 399 inhumation graves. Cf. PALADE 2004: 221 and Figs. 72/2–7, 84/2–3, 205/3.
73. **Botoșani – ”Groapa lui Ichim”** (Botoșani city, Botoșani Co.). The surface research carried out by N. Zaharia (1973) lead to the discovery of a draught of greenish-olive (diam. = ca. 13 mm). Dated to the 3rd cent. AD. Cf. IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 146 and Fig. 1/4.
74. **Branîște – Nemțisor** (Nemțisor village, Vânători-Neamț com., Neamț Co.). The necropolis from Branîște – Nemțisor (tumulus no. 32/1981, pit no. 4), belonging to the Carpathian tumuli culture (4th century AD), produced three draughts made of opaque black glass, slightly misshapened (ovaloid) by secondary fire (diam. = 11.5 × 14 mm; 12 × 13 mm; 12.5 mm) (Pl. I/1, 3). Piatra Neamț History Museum (Inv. no. 28217a). Unpublished.
The same tumulus (no. 32), from the funerary complex (*bustum*) produced another draught, of opaque white colour (chalcedony?), oval in shape and hemispheric in the profile, slightly burnished and cracked by a secondary fire (diam. = 14 × 15 mm) (Pl. I/2, 4). Piatra Neamț History Museum (Inv. no. 28217b). Unpublished.
75. **Cucorăni – Medeleni** (Cucorăni village, Mihai Eminescu com., Botoșani Co.). Draught (diam. = 18 mm) of greenish glass (2nd–3rd cent. AD). Cf. TEODOR 1975: 152 and Fig. 61/8; IONIȚĂ 1982: 62 and note 330; IONIȚĂ, ȘOVAN 2014: 145–146 and Fig. 1/3.

76. **Gura Secului – Nemțșor** (Nemțșor village, Vânători-Neamț com., Neamț Co.). From the necropolis investigated at this site (tumulus no. 5/1983, *bustum*), likewise belonging to the Carpathian tumuli culture (4th cent. AD), a glass draught was recovered, of translucent white colour, slightly concave in shape, with traces of secondary fire (diam. = 26 mm) (Pl. I/5, 6). Piatra Neamț History Museum (Nr. Inv. 21920a). Unpublished.
77. **Târzia** (village, Brusturi-Drăgănești com., Neamț Co.). The Carpathian tumuli necropolis (4th cent. AD) from this site witnessed the discovery in the *bustum* of a glass draught, of translucent yellow colour, deformed by secondary firing (diam. = 11 mm) (Pl. I/7). Piatra Neamț History Museum (Inv. no. 18445a). Unpublished.

Bone dice.

78. **Botoșani – “Groapa lui Ichim”** (Botoșani town, Botoșani Co.). In 1973, Nicolae Zaharia found 17 fragments from thin bone plates (from which it was possible to reconstruct four complete items), with rectangular shapes and rounded ends (*tali*)¹¹⁴, on which concentric circles were impressed (1–3). Dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD, they are, in my opinion, bone dice (casting sticks). In the papers of the various authors that presented them, they were not accompanied by a presentation of the discovery conditions or by a detailed (Pl. I/8) Cf. ȘADURSCHI, UNGUREANU, MIHĂILESCU 1994: Fig. 9/4; PĂUMESCU, ȘADURSCHI 1994: 43 and Fig. 9/4; ȘADURSCHI, UNGUREANU, MIHĂILESCU 1996: Fig. 9/4; ȘADURSCHI, UNGUREANU 1996: Fig. 6/4 (with the reconstruction of the pieces in question); ȘOVAN 2013: 63.

MOESIA INFERIOR

Bone or horn disks.

79. **Argamum – Orgame** (Doloșman Cape, Jurilovca village com., Tulcea Co.). One bone disk (diam. = 22 mm). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 151.
80. **Dinogetia – Bisericuța-Garvăn** (Garvăn village, Jijila com., Tulcea Co.). One bone disk (diam. = 21 mm) (Pl. III/6). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 151.
81. **Odessos** (Varna, Bulgaria). One bone disk. Cf. OȚA 2013: 249.

Glass draughts.

82. **Carsium** (Hîrșova town, Constanța Co.). Seventeen semispheric draughts. Cf. OȚA 2013: 248.
83. **Dinogetia – Bisericuța-Garvăn** (Garvăn village, Jijila com., Tulcea Co.). Two glass draughts, one green and the other bluish-black (diam. = 17–20 mm) (Pl. III/6–8). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 151.
84. **Nicopolis ad Istrum** (Nikyup, Bulgaria). Draughts (?). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 149.
85. **Novae** (Svishtov, Bulgaria). One glass counter (?). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 151.
86. **Odessos** (Varna, Bulgaria). Ten draughts. Cf. OȚA 2013: 249.
87. **Oescus** (Gigen, Bulgaria). One draught (?). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 149.
88. **Telița-Amza** (village, Frecăței com., Tulcea Co.). Three draughts, one of blue glass (3rd cent. AD; diam. = 18 mm), the second of “whitish” colour (3rd–4th cent. AD; diam. = 7 mm), and the third of burnished black stone (4th cent. AD; diam. 28 mm) (Pl. III/9). Cf. BAUMANN 1995: 81, 87 and Pls. XXIV/8, 12–13 (p. 125), XLVI/6–7 (p. 147).

Ceramic, bone or horn dice.

89. **Beroe** (Piatra village, formerly Piatra-Frecăței, Ostrov com., Tulcea Co.). Two bone dices found in tomb no. 45 (6th–7th cent. AD?). Cf. PETRE 1987: 69–70, 156 and Pl. 126/200j.
90. **Callatis** (Mangalia town, Constanța Co.). One bone dice found in tomb no. 260 (dated to the second half of the 4th century AD). Cf. PREDA 1980: 64 and Pl. XXIX, LXXVIII; OȚA 2013: 248.
91. **(L)Ibida** (Slava Rusă village, Slava Cercheză com., Tulcea Co.). One ceramic dice (Pl. III/1). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 150.
92. **Nicopolis ad Istrum** (Nikyup, Bulgaria). One bone dice (?). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 149.
93. **Novae** (Svishtov, Bulgaria). One dice of bone (?). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 151.
94. **Noviodunum** (Isaccea town, Tulcea Co.). Three bone dice (Pl. III/2–4). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 150; L. Oța, op. cit., p. 248.
95. **Odessos** (Varna, Bulgaria). One marble dice. Cf. OȚA 2013: 248.

¹¹⁴ CAPELLE 1978: 457; KRÜGER 1982: 220 (Stabwürfel).

96. **Oescus** (Gigen, Bulgaria). One bone dice (?). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 149.
 97. **Tomis** (Constanța). One bone dice. Cf. OȚA 2013: 249.
 98. **Troesmis** (Turcoaia com., Tulcea Co.). One ceramic dice (Pl. III/5). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 150.

Game boards

99. **Noviodunum** (Isacea town, Tulcea Co.). On a fragment of brick (*tabula lusoria*) (Pl. III/10). Cf. NUȚU, BOȚAN 2009: 151.

ADDENDA¹¹⁵

100. **Sagaidacul Nou** (com. Porumbeni, r. Cimișlia, R. Moldova). One counter (diam. = 16–17 mm; dark blue) found in Sântana de Mureș - Černjachow settlement. Cf. MATVEEV, VORNIC 2014: 102-103 and Fig. 9/1.
 101. **Hanska-Lutăria** (R. Moldova). One violet counter. Cf. NICULIȚĂ, RIKMAN 1973: 118 (tomb no. 14) and Fig. 49/3.
 102. **Dănceni** (R. Moldova). From Sântana de Mureș - Černjachow necropolis (tombs no. 62, 229 and 253) there were recovered through excavations three semispheric glass counters (blackish). Cf. RAFALOVICI 1986: 38-39, 78, 82 and Fig. XX/7.

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¹¹⁵ Many thanks to dr. V. Vornic who drew our attention about the glass counters discovered in Republic of Moldavia.

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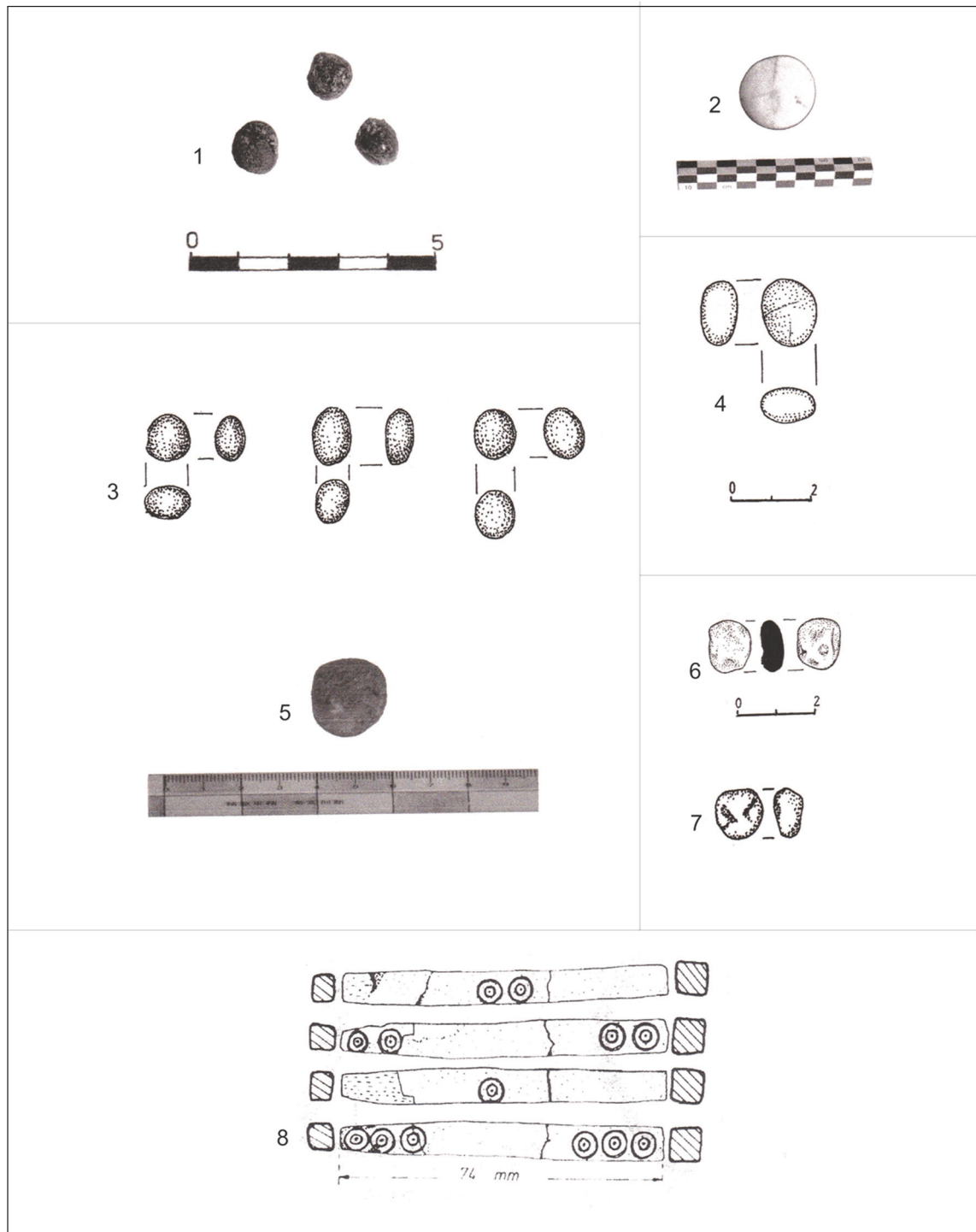
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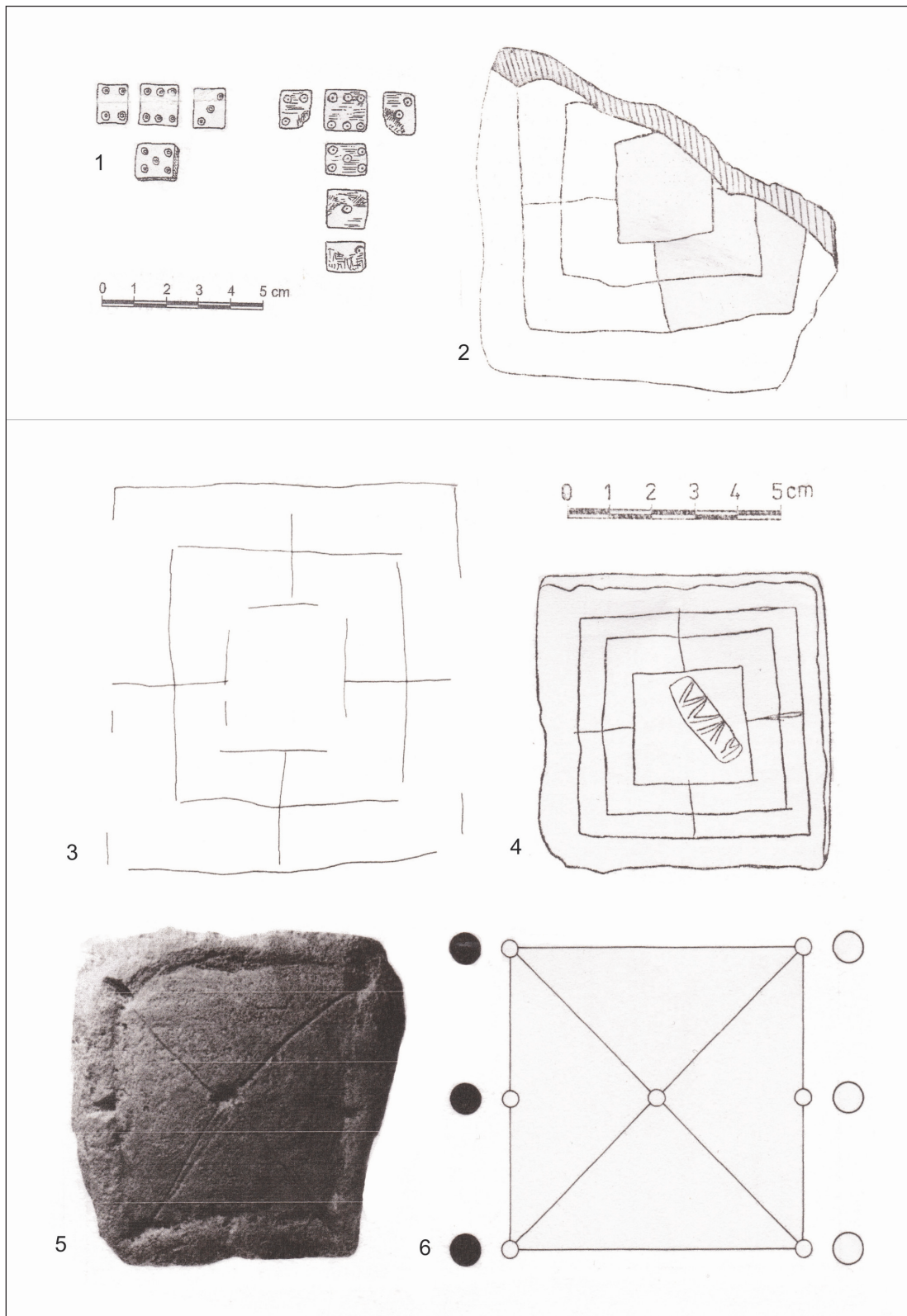
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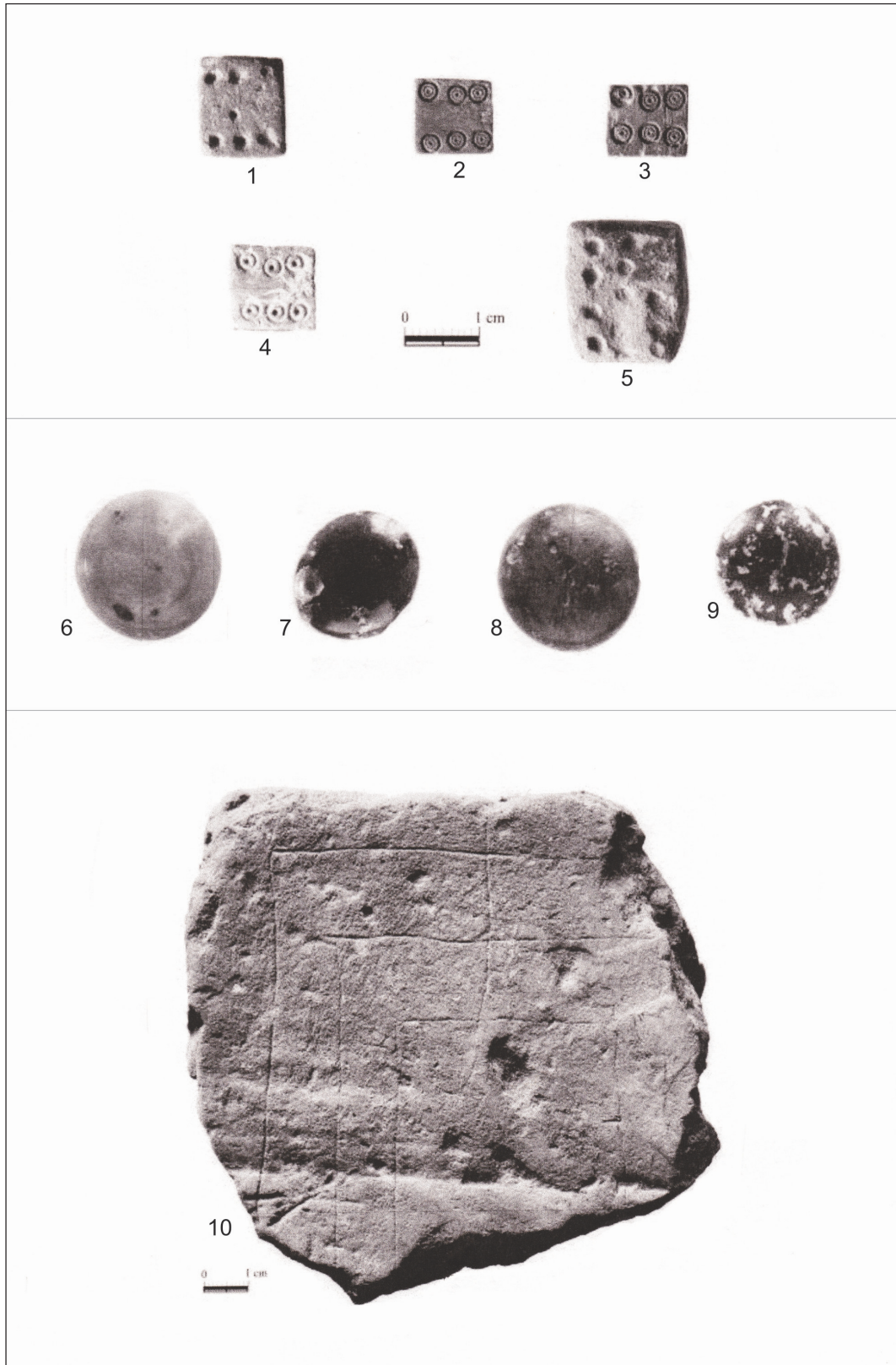
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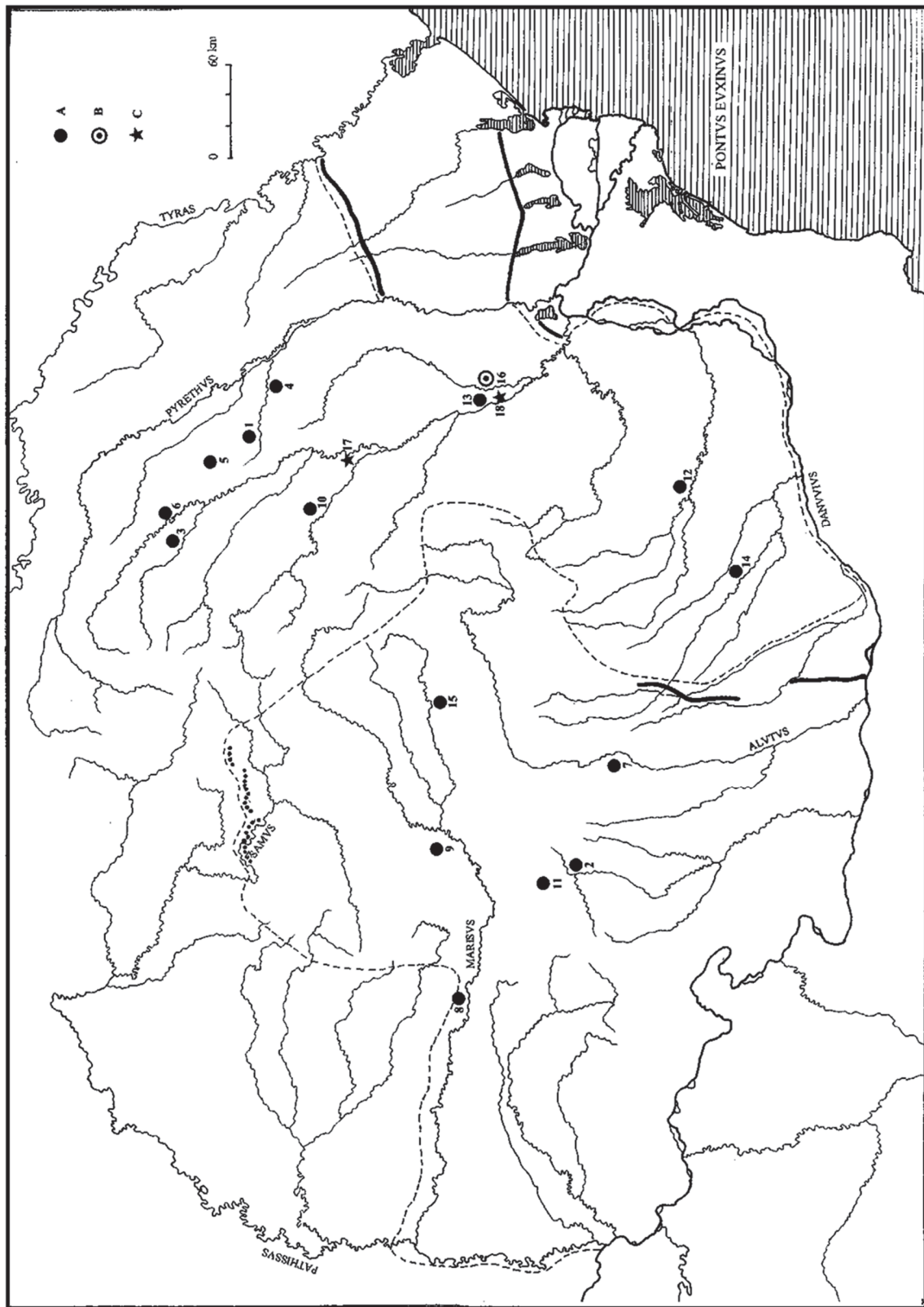
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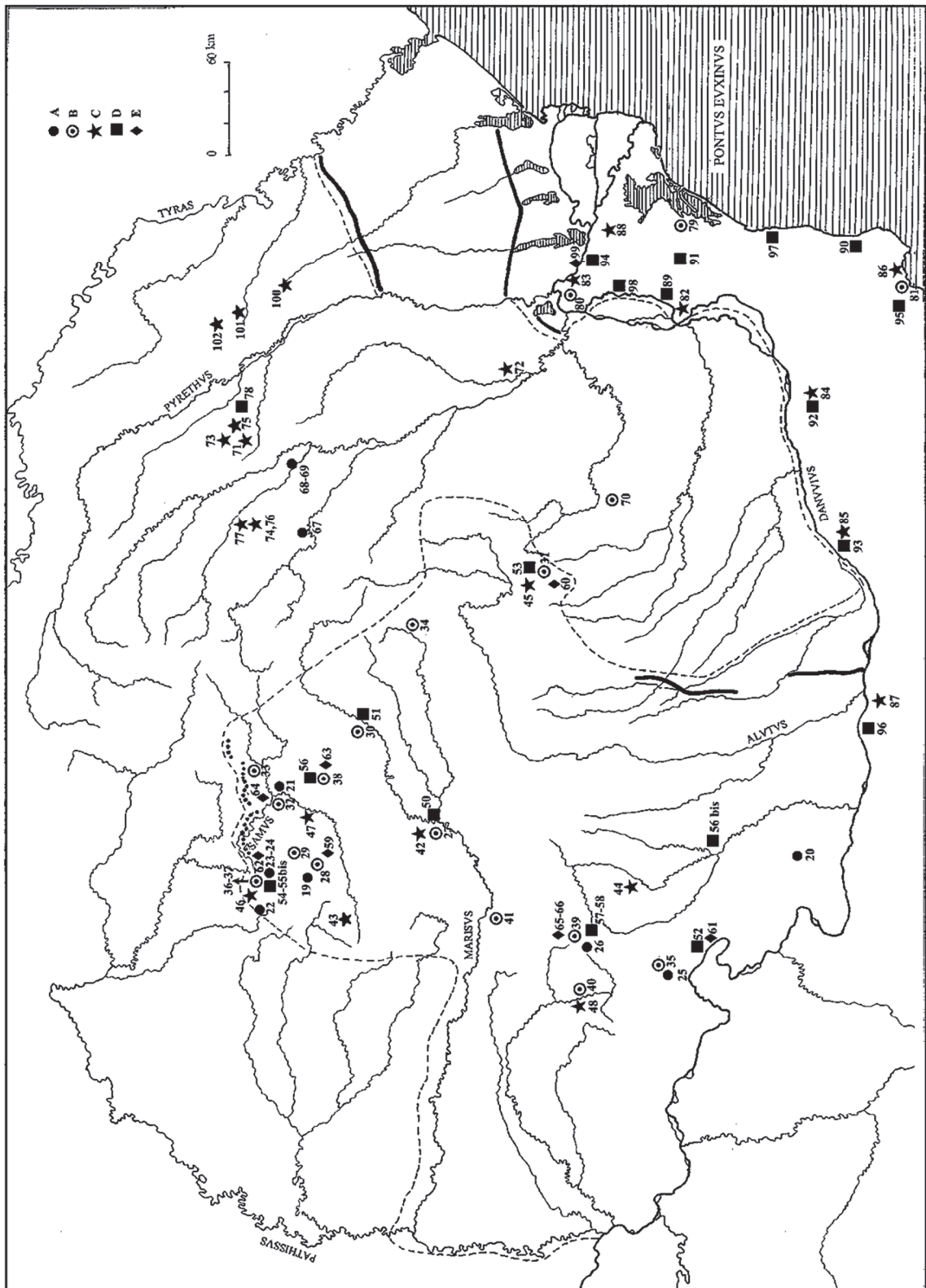
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