

THE MYCENAEANS AND THE BLACK SEA

Did the Mycenaeans know the Black Sea, and was there a Mycenaean presence on and around it?

The idea that prehistoric Greeks travelled as far as Colchis, i.e. the region on the Northwest coast of the Black Sea, is by no means a new one. At least Greek poets of the classical period who equated it to the mythological land of Aia shared this view. But modern philology concluded that the identification of legendary Aia with Colchis came only as a consequence of Milesian colonization ¹.

On the other hand, the question why Troy became such important a site during the Bronze Age has been frequently explained by its geocommercial position controlling access to the Black Sea. One of the first scholars who hold this view was W. Leaf in his book on "Homeric Geography" which was published in 1912. Since then it has been supported by several scholars - most recently by M. Korfmann who particularly emphasizes Troy's rôle as an anchorage of ships waiting for favourable meteorological conditions in order to pass the Dardanelles ².

If this conclusion is correct, ships coming from and going to the Black Sea should have stopped at Troy from the time, at latest, when the town was founded somewhen in the early 3rd millennium B.C., and they should, in increasing numbers, have continued to do so until prehistoric Troy was destroyed in the later 12th century B.C. It would be very strange if no Mycenaean ships would have been amongst them since, as is well known, a considerable quantity of Mycenaean pottery was found in the ruins of Troy VI, and Mycenaean vases were still imitated by potteries of Troy VII ³.

Although pottery by itself cannot prove the nationality of merchants who brought it, hardly anyone would deny that Mycenaeans are the first to be credited to have gone there. Far less confident, however, many scholars will be as to the conclusion that Troy was important for

- 1 On the literary tradition of the land of Aia cf., a.o. K. MEULI, *Odysee und Argonautika* (1921); A. LESKY, "Aia", *Wiener Studien* 63 (1948), p. 22-68; cf. also M. F. VIAN, "Poésie et géographie : les retours des Argonautes", *CRAIInscr* 87 (1987), p. 248-266. Skeptical remained only Demetrios of Skepsis who hold the opinion that the Argonauts did not come further than into the Propontis (ap. Strabo 1.45).
- 2 Cf. W. LEAF, *Troy, A Study in Homeric Geography* (1912), p. 26; M.P. NILSSON, *Homer and Mycenae* (1933), p. 25f; B. HROUDA, *Anadolu Arastirmalari (Jahrbuch für Kleinnasiatische Forschungen)* 10 (1986), p. 201f; E.F. BLOEDOW, "The Trojan War and LH III C", *PZ* 63 (1988), p. 45, 51; M. KORFMANN, "Troy. Topography and Navigation", in *Troy and the Trojan war. A Symposium Held at Bryn Mawr College, October 1984* (1986), p. 1-16; "Ausgrabungen an der Bucht vor Troia", *Tübinger Blätter* 1988, p. 47-52; "Seefahrt zwischen Schwarzem Meer und Ägäis im 2. und 3. Jahrtausend v.u.Z.?", *Papers read at the VIth International Congress of Aegean Prehistory, Athen 1987* (in print); cf. also J. LATACZ, "Neues von Troja", *Gymnasium* 95 (1988), p. 391, 410.
- 3 For a summary on the Mycenaean pottery found at Troy cf. E. FRENCH, "Ceramic Relations between Troy and Mycenae in the LB A", *Papers read at the IVth Intern. Colloquium on Aegean Prehistory, Sheffield 1977* (unpublished); C.B. MEE, "Aegean Trade and Settlement in the Second Millennium B.C.", *Anatolian Studies* 23 (1978), p. 121-156, esp. 146f.

Mycenaeans not so much as being a terminal of Aegean traffic but rather as an intermediary port on their way to the Black Sea. Here we come about the crucial point. When looking for firm evidence of Mycenaeans penetrating into the Black Sea, it has to be admitted that this is comparatively sparse. But it may be added that it has increased during the last years - and although more questions may be raised hereby than can be answered so far, it may be worthwhile to attempt to summarize our present state of knowledge. As the following remarks may show, at least a vague contour is beginning to emerge out of a still foggy ambiente.

Imports of Mycenaean pottery are still extremely rare around the Black Sea; so far there is only one site from which it has been reported. This is Maşat where, together with Hittite vessels (and also some Cypriote imports), five Mycenaean flasks and one stirrup jar were found (Pl. LIV, a-c); some more fragments of Mycenaean vases are mentioned ⁴. The problem is how they reached this site: Maşat lies about 130 km off the Southern Black Sea coast; but, no doubt, access to it from the Black Sea coast was possible. In any case it should have been more easy to carry pottery from the coast than to have it imported via an inland route. Since Mycenaean pottery is, at least until now, totally absent, within the central part of Asia Minor, Hattusa included ⁵, there is indeed a reasonable chance that the Maşat vessels came via the Black Sea.

Unfortunately Mycenaean sherds from Akalan which were mentioned by Fimmen in 1924 have not been confirmed and were possibly misidentified as such ⁶; likewise the meaning of a clay ram statuette which is reported to have been found at Samsun and to bear an Aegean inscription remains doubtful ⁷. No further Aegean finds - the still unpublished Sarköy hoard from the Northwest coast of the Sea of Marmara apart ⁸ - are reported from the region south of the Black Sea.

A different situation is encountered at the West Coast. So far no single sherd of Mycenaean pottery has been found to the North of the Rhodope range. There are, however, some rapiers, spear heads and double axes, which, being either imports or, mainly, local imitations of Aegean prototypes, prove Late Bronze Age contacts between Thracia and the Aegean ⁹. But most of them come from inland sites - a fact which does not support the presence

4 For the Mycenaean pottery at Maşat cf. T. ÖZGÜZ, *Maşat Hüyük* (1978), colour pl. D, pl. 83f; L. RE, "Presence micenee in anatolia", in *Traffici Micenei nel Mediterraneo, Atti del Congresso di Palermo 1984*, ed. by M. Marazzi, S. Tusa and L. Vagnetti (1986), p. 349, 353 with note 28 where "cinque frammenti micenei appartenenti ad una pisside triansata di fabbrica fine" are mentioned. D.H. FRENCH, "Mycenaeans in the Black Sea?", *Thracia Pontica* 1 (1982), p. 21ff, who finds that the Maşat material "may be signposting a direction in which our thoughts could go". Likewise for its importation via the Black Sea argues K. BITTEL, "Das zweite vorchristliche Jahrtausend im östlichen Mittelmeer und im Vorderen Orient, Anatolien und Ägäis", *Gymnasium* 85 (1976), p. 528f; a contrary view is held by J.T. HOOKER, "Ilios and Iliad", *Wiener Studien* NF 13 (1979), p. 9 with n. 12.

5 This is also stressed by H.-G. BUCHHOLZ, "Doppeläxte und die Frage der Balkanbeziehungen des ägäischen Kulturkreises", in *Ancient Bulgaria, Papers Presented at the International Symposium on the Ancient History and Archaeology of Bulgaria, University of Nottingham 1981*, ed. by A.G. Poulter (1983), Part I, p. 43-134, esp. p. 54f, who argues that the finds from Maşat "lassen sich in ihrer exponierten Fundlage durch die Schwarzmeer-Seefahrt erklären, zumal der Überlandweg durch das anatolische Hochland, wäre er wirklich zum Transport der erwähnten Objekte benutzt worden, auch Bogazköy hätte berühren und dort entsprechend stärkere Spuren hinterlassen müssen. In Wirklichkeit sind mykenische und kyprische Funde in der Hethiterhauptstadt überraschend gering an Zahl".

6 Cf. MEE, *op. cit.* (n. 3), p. 24.

7 H.T. BOSSERT, *Alt-Kreta* (1937²), nr. 532; W.C. BRICE, *Inscriptions in the Minoan Linear Script of Class A* (1961), p. 23 V 3, pl. 29; BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 129 n. 148.

8 Cf. AJA 89 (1985), p. 558.

9 On these see J. PANAYOTOV, "Bronze Rapiers, Swords and Double Axes from Bulgaria", *Thracia* 5 (1980), p. 173-198; "More about the Thracian-Aegean Contacts in the Late Bronze Age Metal Types", *Pulpudeva* 5 (1986), p. 148-150; J. BOUZEK, *The Aegean, Anatolia and Europe: Cultural Interrelations in*

of Mycenaean ships sailing along the coast and visiting nearby located settlements. Only a single double axe found at Bulgarovo near Burgas ¹⁰ has a fair chance to have come there by sea - to a lesser degree possibly also a further double axe with an oval shaft-hole which was brought to light at Rojak in Varna District (Pl. LIV, d) ¹¹.

Against this mainly negative evidence stands the weight of some 150 stone anchors which have been detected mainly at Cape Kaliakra, Nessebar and Sozopol, but also other places ¹². By their shape and functional device they resemble those which are known from many coasts of the Mediterranean, the Aegean included. Generally they are considered to date from the Late Bronze Age - but also a later date cannot be safely excluded ¹³. Apart from that their provenience remains an open question. Perhaps scientific analysis of the stones used can help here in future. For the present however, we have to contend ourselves by stating that shape and use of these anchors clearly betrays a Mediterranean or, more strictly, an Aegean impact; this however, does not mean that all these anchors were lost by ships coming from South. Simple and cheap in production as they were, they may have been locally imitated immediately after they had been imported by foreign ships for the first time.

There is yet one more point of evidence in favour for an Aegean presence at the Bulgarian part of the Black Sea coast. This is provided by two (or more ?) oxhide ingots which were found some years ago at Cape Kaliakra (Pl. LV, a) and at Čerkovo near Karnobat (Burgas, Pl. LV, b) ¹⁴, the former along with stone anchors having the characteristic triple perforation; the one from Cape Kaliakra is said to consist of 50 % of copper, 32 % of gold and 18 % of silver; it weights about 1,5 kg. The ingot from Čerkovo - it seems to be of copper - bears an incised

the Second Millennium B.C. (1985), p. 30ff (swords), 41ff (spears, double axes); A.F. HARDING, *The Mycenaeans and Europe* (1948), p. 127f (axes), 152ff (swords), 240f (Mycenaean objects from Bulgaria), 262 (generally).

10 HARDING, *op. cit.*, p. 238, fig. 54 and p. 241; E.N. CERNYCH, *Gornoe delo i metallurgia v drevnejšej Bulgarii* (1978), p. 204, fig. 41.7.

11 PANAYOTOV, *op. cit.*, p. 189 map. 3; BOUZÉK, *op. cit.*, p. 44 nr. 11 (Hermones type); BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.*, p. 79 nr. 54, fig. 21f.

12 There is, as to my knowledge, so far no comprehensive study on these anchors; they are, however, mentioned by several authors, e. g. by M. LAZAROV, *Thracia* 3 (1974), p. 107-113; G. TONCEVA, *Lekove* (1973), p. 3ff; "Thracia Pontica à l'âge du bronze récent et ses rapports avec le monde Egéen et l'Asie Mineure", *Papers read at the 5th Intern. Colloquium on Aegean Prehistory, Sheffield 1980* (unpublished); cf. *Thracia Pontica* 1 (1979), p. 176-188; K. POROGEANOV, "Navigation et commerce de la population du littoral européen de la Mer Noire de la Thrace ancienne avec les peuples de la Méditerranée Orientale (XVI-XII s. av. n. è.)", in *Dritter Internationaler Thakologischer Kongress, Wien 1980* (1984), II, p. 69-72; D.C. SAMSARIS, "Les influences mycéniennes sur les Thraces", in *Thracians and Mycenaeans, Proceedings of the fourth International Congress of Thracology, Rotterdam 1984*, ed. J.G.P. Best and N.M.G. de Vries (1989), p. 167-173; K. POROJANOV, "Les ancres en pierre du littoral Bulgare de la Mer Noire", *Papers read at the VIth International Congress of Aegean prehistory, Athens 1987* (in print).

13 Cf. a.o.H. FROST, "Stone Anchors as Indicators of Early Trade Routes", in *Sociétés et compagnies de commerce en Orient et dans l'Océan Indien, Actes du huitième colloque international d'histoire maritime*, ed. by M. Molloy, Paris 1970, p. 55-61; *Under the Mediterranean* (London 1963); "Stone anchors as clues to Bronze Age Trade routes", in *Thracia Pontica* 1, 1979 (1982), p. 280-289; there (p. 280) H. Frost states as to the Bulgarian anchors that their weight "coupled with the indigenous shapes indicates a flourishing sea-trade based on Thracian ships, probably during the Bronze Age. The period is, however, less certain, unless we accept that stones anchors in the Black Sea were contemporaneous with stone anchors in the Mediterranean - an assumption that invites both consideration and testing". Cf. also D.E. McCASLIN, *Stone Anchors in Antiquity: Coastal Settlements and Maritime Trade-Routes in the Eastern Mediterranean ca 1600 - 1050 B.C.* (1980).

14 Also for these a thorough publication is obviously lacking, cf. PANAYOTOV, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 90 n. 13; HARDING *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 49, 52, 241; BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 54, 128 n. 47, p. 104, fig. 11; G. TONCEVA, *Thracia Pontica* 1, 1979 (1982), p. 176 with n. 11 and 12.

mark comparable to Aegean Linear signs (Pl. LV, b). Like stone-anchors also metal ingots have appeared all around the Aegean¹⁵; their centre of gravity clearly lies within the Aegean and most of them were found not far off-shore. Thus both the knowledge of stone anchors and of the shape of oxhide ingots should have reached the West Pontic area via the sea route; superfluous to say that the only one existing is that from the Aegean through the Marmara Sea, - which, however, does not necessarily mean that the existing ox-hide ingots from Cape Kaliakra and Čerkovo are imports. As A.F. Harding has observed, the Bulgarian ingots could also indicate the transport of Balkan ore to the (East) Mediterranean; in any case the region around Burgas is metalliferous¹⁶. And the so-called "Aegean" sign stamped on the Čerkovo ingot does not need indicate anything else but that Aegeans were involved in their manufacture at some stage¹⁷. No materials reflecting an Aegean connection have, as to my knowledge, so far been reported from the Roumanian and Russian part of the Black Sea West coast. This picture changes, however, when we come to the North where two main areas of Mycenaean impact can be distinguished - a Western one comprising the mouth and hinterlands of the rivers of Dnjestr, Bug, Dnjepr and Donec, including the Krim peninsula. Double axes of basically Aegean shapes have been found at Kozorezovo¹⁸ in the Ukraine (Pl. LV, c) and at Kerč¹⁹ on the Krim peninsula, the former of which belongs to the so-called Kilindir type, whereas the latter is of the Hermones variant. The production centre of the Kilindir and Hermones axes is still under discussion; Northern Greece²⁰ as well as the lower Danube area²¹ have been supposed; if the second suggestion is correct, the Hermones type axe from Kerč can be regarded only as an indication of an indirect Aegean influence. Both types, which have more or less the same distribution, appear to belong to the Late Bronze Age.

Apart from these objects there are roughly ten more double axes of the normal Aegean variety, Type B, which has an oval shaft hole; six of them were found at Sčetkovo, two at Kozorezovo (Pl. LV, c) and one at Berezan and Jekaterinoslav respectively²². As to these specimens C.F.C. Hawkes in his still valuable article published in 1936/7 remarked that "in South Russia double axes appear in Bronze Age hoards directly recalling 'Treasure P' from the sixth city of Troy"²³. From Troy itself four double axes and one mould of corresponding shape are reported, yet only two of which have been published (Pl. LV, d-e)²⁴. Troy obviously took an active part in the production of and the commerce with these tools. The same

15 H.-G. BUCHHOLZ, "Keftiubarren und Erzhandel im zweiten vorchristlichen Jahrtausend", *PZ* 37 (1959), p. 1-40; T. STECH-WHEELER, R. MADDIN, J.D. MUHLY, "Ingots and the Bronze Age Copper Trade in the Mediterranean: A Progress Report", *Expedition* 17 (1975), 31-39; "The Cape Gelidonia Shipwreck and the Bronze Age Metals Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean", *Journal of Field Archaeology* 4 (1977), p. 353-363; "The Copper Oxhide Ingots and the Bronze Age Metals Trade", *Iraq* 39 (1977), p. 73-82; "Mediterranean Trade in Copper and Tin in the Late Bronze Age", *Annali. Istituto Italiano di Numismatica* 26 (1979), p. 139-152; HARDING, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 49ff; N.H. GALE and Z.A. STOS GALE, "Oxhide Copper Ingots in Crete and Cyprus and the Bronze Age Metals Trade", *BSA* 81 (1986), p. 81-100.

16 HARDING, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 45, fig. 7; for the distribution of metal ores in the Burgas region, *op. cit.*, p. 52, cf. also p. 261.

17 HARDING, *op. cit.* p. 52.

18 BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 94 nr. 30; BOUZÉK, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 44. n. 16.

19 BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 90 nr. 17; BOUZÉK, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 45 nr. 12.

20 HARDING, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 192, 242 with n. 67: "in Bulgaria and Macedonia Kilindir-type axes were being produced."

21 BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.*, (n. 5), p. 42.

22 According to HARDING, "Mycenaean Greece and Europe: The Evidence of Bronze Tools and Implements", *PPS* 41 (1975), p. 183-202, esp. p. 193; BOUZÉK, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 46, nr. 5-14.

23 C.F. HAWKES, "The Double Axe in Prehistoric Europe", *BSA* 37 (1936), p. 141-159, esp. 158.

24 Cf. BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 78 nr. 41-45, where the older literature is referred to.

may be concluded from a celt mould which comes from Troy VII (Pl. LV, f) ²⁵. It is of some interest here since celts were very popular in the North Pontic area as well as in the Balkan region whereas in Greece only few examples of that type of tool have been discovered ²⁶.

Another group of implements which is found in Greece and the Northern Pontic area is represented by harnessing accessories. Here two pairs of bone cheek pieces from the Shaft Graves at Mycenae are paralleled by morphologically and structurally identical pieces from Trachtemirov near Kiev (Pl. LVI, a); this was recognized first by A. Leskov who also identified them as parts of horse-bits ²⁷. The criticism raised against Leskov's interpretation by J. Crouwel and M.A. Littauer ²⁸ has been convincingly refuted by H.-G. Hüttel who also discussed the problem of the relation between the Greek and the Ukrainian examples ²⁹. Since, as he thinks, the chariot as a mean of warfare was not really essential for the steppe tribes to whom horse-riding was more adequate, the knowledge of this type of equipment reached the Ukraine from somewhere else; although a Near Eastern source is possible the close relationship between the Mycenaean and the Trachtemirov bits strongly recommends Mycenae as mediator ³⁰.

This view is supported by a bone disc from Iljičevka (Krasnolimansk, Donec area) the ornament of which is closely related to that of a Mycenaean gold disc (Pl. LVI, b) ³¹. The higher quality of the Mycenaean piece points again to Mycenaean Greece as supplying the model. In this connection the spiral ornament on the pin-head from the Borodino Treasure ³² (found near Odessa) may be mentioned: it can be compared to similar designs on brooches from Mycenae (Pl. LVI, c); yet descent from a broader Balkan background remains no less possible; apart from that, no unanimity has been achieved so far among the experts as to the date of the hoard ³³. That South Russia was reached by influences from the Balkan area carrying 'Mycenaean' elements with them is demonstrated by a "Stangen-Knebel" from Belz (Pl. LVI, d) near Sokal (Ukraine) ³⁴ which exhibits the wide-spread circle- and loop ornament, the main

25 W. DÖRPFELD, *Troja und Ilion* (1902), p. 405; H. MÜLLER-KARPE, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte*, Bd. IV (1980), pl. 182. 45.

26 For celts in the Northern Pontic Area cf. V.S. BOČKAREV and A.M. LESKOV, *Jung- und spätbronzezeitliche Gußformen im nördlichen Schwarzmeergebiet, Prähistorische Bronzefunde XIX.1* (1980), p. 51ff; T. SULIMIRSKI, "Aegean Trade with Eastern Europe and its Consequences", in *Mélanges de préhistoire, d'archéocivilisation et d'ethnologie offerts à André Varagnac* (1971), p. 707ff, 723 fig. 6. For Greece see BOUZÉK *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 46 fig. 15, nr. 6-8, p. 150 fig. 175 and p. 151 section 4.2.3, where also the Trojan mould is discussed and Balkan parallels are listed.

27 A.M. LESKOV, "Ancient circular cheek pieces from Trakhtimirova", *Sov. Arch.* 1964, p. 298ff; he was followed in this interpretation by T.G. MOVSHA, "Archaic round cheekpieces with studs", *Vovoe v Sovetskoi Arkheologii. Materialy i Issledovaniya po Arkheologii SSR* 130 (1965), p. 201ff.

28 M.A. LITTAUER, J. CROUWEL, "Evidence for Horse Bits from Shaft Grave VI at Mycenae, *PZ* 48 (1973), p. 207-213.

29 H.G. HÜTTEL, *Bronzezeitliche Trensens in Mittel- und Osteuropa, Grundzüge in ihrer Entwicklung, Prähistorische Bronzefunde XVI.2* (1981), p. 43ff.

30 HÜTTEL, *op. cit.*, p. 47f.

31 J. VLADAR, "Zur Problematik osteuropäischer und südöstlicher Einflüsse in der Kulturentwicklung der Älteren Bronzezeit im Gebiet der Slowakei", *Slov. Arch.* 29 (1981), p. 224, fig. 11; immediately comparable is a gold disc from Mycenae, H. SCHLIEMANN, *Mykenae* (1978) p. 303, fig. 405, 407, 412; G. KARO, *Die Schachtgräber von Mykenai* (1930), pl. LX, 320 and LXII, 685.

32 On the Borodino-Treasure cf. M. GIMBUTAS, *Bronze Age Cultures in Central and Eastern Europe* (1965), p. 65ff; HARDING, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 20ff; MÜLLER-KARPE, *op. cit.* (n. 25), 348ff, 533f, pl. 532; T. SULIMIRSKI, "Barrow Grave 6 at Komarow", *Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology* 4 (1964), p. 171f, esp. 182; HÜTTEL, *op. cit.* (n. 29), 28 n. 7a.

33 On the discussion cf. also BOUZÉK, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 84, The Spears, with note 4; HÜTTEL, *op. cit.* (n. 29), p. 29f.

34 HÜTTEL, *op. cit.* (n. 29), p. 83f, nr. 70; SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 707ff, 712 fig. 4.2; BOUZÉK, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 64, fig. 27.6.

concentration of which is in Transylvania and Hungary; nevertheless it should be regarded as being originally Mycenaean³⁵. Regarding its wider distribution we may speak of a "Myceno-Balkanian koine"³⁶. For comparison a similar bone object from the IVth shaft grave at Mycenae may be referred to, the concrete function of which is however enigmatic³⁷.

Into a broader horizon of cultural contacts, too, belongs the appearance of faience beads in South Russia as well as in the Caucasus area; J. Bouzek has called it a "marginal area of distribution"³⁸, leaving open, however, 'marginal' to which centre; a Near Eastern one should, at least in my opinion, not be excluded³⁹, whereas J. Sulimirski, who refers to 157 faience beads found at Troy VI ("in the layer of ca. 1425 B.C.") thinks that "faience beads were one of the commodities exported by the Trojans to Central Europe". And: "They attest well to the rôle of a Mycenaean agent played by the city and of the distributor of beads and other Mycenaean goods in the countries accessible by the Pontic route"⁴⁰. The question of the faience beads is, however, too vexed a problem as to be dealt within this connection.

Progressing further to the East we come to the Caucasus area, the last one to be briefly discussed. Here we encounter a situation different again from the preceding one. Relations with the Bronze Age Aegean are recognized primarily in two kinds of weapons: rapiers and spear heads; they come from tombs of the so-called Trialeti culture which spread throughout Georgia to the south of the Caucasus range⁴¹. At all nine swords (cf. Pl. LVII, a) have been listed by J. Bouzek who distinguishes between examples constituting one type (A) of long sword with pronounced central rib and long tang (5 examples: from Hovil, Vari, Khodja-Daoud, Samtavro and Lib), and another one (B) with triangular butt (4 specimens: from Miston, Chir-Dir 3, Samtavro, Andrukovskaja)⁴²; by their general shape they are relatives to Mycenaean type A rapiers respectively to their Balkan offspring. Since long swords are exceptional in the Caucasus region an ultimately Aegean ancestry is most likely. The same can be attested to some extraordinary spear heads with angular shoulders and a fine ridged midrib: they correspond to Aegean specimens of group G in O. Höckmann's classification system (cf. Pl. LVII, b)⁴³. As M. Gimbutas has seen many years ago there is a close relationship with two spear heads from Prosymna⁴⁴. But, as to my knowledge, no list assembling the existing specimens has been

35 On the origin of this wide-spread technique and its distribution cf. J. BOUZEK, "Zu den altbronzezeitlichen Goldfunden", *Jahresbericht des Instituts für Vorgeschichte der Univ. Frankfurt a.M.* 1977, p. 112ff.

36 HÜTTEL, *op. cit.* (n. 29), p. 87: "die im Karpato-mykenischen Stil verzierten Knebel von Belc und Budapest-Lágymanyos"; cf. also p. 75.

37 SCHLIEMANN, *op. cit.* (n. 31), p. 376; KARO, *op. cit.* (n. 31), p. 146, fig. 62.

38 BOUZEK, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 58.

39 This view is also held by HARDING, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 262; he remarks as to the Caucasus faience beads: "The faience industry was well established there, too, in the later second Millennium, but this probably reflects the industry of Mesopotamia rather than any connections with the Aegean".

40 SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 715 map 3, and p. 720, where faience beads are counted among 'Mycenaean' objects.

41 On the finds from the Trialeti culture regarded as related to Aegean objects cf. SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 720; O.M. JAPARIDZE, "The Trialeti culture in the light of the latest discoveries and its relation to Anterior Asia and the Aegean Sea", in *Actes du VIIIe Congrès International des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protohistoriques, Belgrade 1971* (1974), Vol. III, p. 39-43; GIMBUTAS, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 89ff; MÜLLER-KARPE, *op. cit.* (n. 25), p. 358f.

42 BOUZEK, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 35; I suppose that these nine swords are identical with those mentioned by J. LATACZ, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 410f.

43 O. HÖCKMANN, "Lanze und Speer im Spätminoischen und Mykenischen Griechenland", *JbRGZM* 27 (1980), p. 13-158, esp. p. 47ff.

44 GIMBUTAS, *op. cit.*, (n. 32), p. 93, fig. 51.

published and no closer analysis has been made⁴⁵. Judging merely from drawings the Trialeti pieces might be taken to be true imports⁴⁶. Mycenaean influence is also shown by an impressive, still unpublished silver vessel from Kirovakan in Armenia which represents a kind of over-dimensioned Vapheio cup⁴⁷.

In conclusion as to the material evidence a in many regards distinct picture arises: clay vessels belonging to the later Mycenaean period (LH III A/B) are found in the South; stone anchors, difficult to date, and metal ingots in the West, where also some double axes occur; more double axes, some of which are rather late (Kilindir and Hermones types) while others may be earlier, occur in the North West, along with cheek pieces of horse bits and related bone carvings which have Early Mycenaean parallels; and, finally, offensive weapons which again depend from Early Mycenaean models, in the North-East. That the finds from the South and West coast can reasonably be taken as indicative of a Late Bronze Age penetration of Mycenaeans into the Black Sea has been stated above; as a consequence it would be perverse to argue for a land route in the case of the Northern and Eastern objects which show an Aegean affection. This brings us back to the unquestionably most well-known ship which may ever have crossed the Black Sea and also to its crew: the ship Argo and the Argonauts.

Can we, after all, find some points in favour of a Mycenaean origin of this legend - in analogy to M.P. Nilsson's basic book on the "Mycenaean Origin of Greek Mythology"? That there existed an early Argonaut poem is attested by the famous passage in the Odyssey where ship Argo is called "cared for by all", this being one of the earliest clearly intended quotations of Greek poetry within poetry⁴⁸. It can, moreover, be shown that the legendary land of Aia was, ever since, conceived as being located somewhere far-off in the East. Yet A. Lesky who has convincingly argued this was of the opinion that an at first still undefined and imaginary country far-off in the East was identified with Colchis only after Greek colonization had found a firm foot in the Black Sea area⁴⁹. But herein he ignores what M.P. Nilsson has impressively shown: Iolkos which is the starting place of the Argonauts has a clear geographical and historical setting. As he observed, "here the famous cycle of myths corresponds to the Mycenaean remains, for Iolkos was the northernmost Mycenaean town"⁵⁰. If there ever was a Mycenaean excursion comparable to that of the Argonauts, Iolkos was indeed the most convenient place to leave from. Apart from that, it has been suggested that Homer's knowledge

45 I know of three or four examples, but further ones may exist; the examples known to me are (a) Trialeti, barrow grave XV: GIMBUTAS, *op. cit.* (n. 32), p. 93 fig. 51. 2; MÜLLER-KARPE, *op. cit.* (n. 25), pl. 547. 15; SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 720 with n. 6; - (b) Kirovakan (Transkaukasien): SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 720 with n. 6; - (c) Pervomajskoe-Galaski near Grozny: SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 720 with n. 6; - (d) Meskheti: JAPARIDZE, *op. cit.* (n. 41), p. 43. As related may be regarded the spear heads from Amarat and Tachköprü, accessible to me only in the insufficient drawings of C.F.A. SCHAEFFER, *Stratigraphie comparée et chronologie de l'Asie Occidentale, IIIe et IIe millénaires* (1948), fig. 226.2 and 228, which also resemble Höckmann's Type F; comparable to Höckmann's type C is a further spear head, from Chir-Dir, SCHAEFFER, *op. cit.*, fig. 224 F.

46 As a warning against too great an optimism I may, however, refer to HARDING, *op. cit.* (n. 9), p. 262: "there is nothing in the Caucasus which can be taken as a Mycenaean product, and vice versa". Meanwhile, however, the Caucasian foot rings found at Troy (cf. AA 1986) may change this view.

47 Still unpublished as to my knowledge, cf. P. LEVEQUE, "La Colchide du VIIe au IVe siècle av. n. è.", *IV Symposium de Tsxoltubo, Géorgie*, RA 1986, p. 398f; cf. also M. MELLINK, "Archaeology in Asia Minor", *AJA* 92 (1988), p. 116: "excavated by B.B. Pietrowski in 1948. It dates to the 15th or 16th century B.C. and is a large two-handled vessel; but the Vapheio-type spool handles are small and serve for the attachment of a basket handle".

48 Cf. A. LESKY, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* (1957²), p. 60: "Die Anführung dieses Argonauten-Epos durch Kirke (Od. 12, 70) stellt sich als ein literar-historisch bedeutsames Zeugnis dar".

49 Cf. n. 1.

50 M.P. NILSSON, *The Mycenaean Origin of Greek Mythology* (1932) p. 137.

of the Propontis region which is contained in the so-called Catalogue of the Trojans may originally have belonged to an early Argonaut epos⁵¹.

But how early is it? We don't simply know. That it could go back to the Mycenaean period may be concluded from the fact that there is a striking correspondence between names in Mycenaean, above all Pylian, texts in Linear B. This is illustrated by the following list:

Aiaia (the island of Aia)	cf. a3-wa-ja : PY En 74 etc.
Aiates (the Lord of Aia)	cf. a3-wa-ta : KN Vc 7612
Athamas (father of Phrixos)	cf. a-ta-ma-ne-u : PY Cn 655
Kretheus (brother of Athamas)	cf. ke-re-te-u : Py Ea 59 etc.
Amythaon (son of Kretheus)	cf. a-mu-ta-wo : PY N 831; KN V 756; TH Ug 9
Iason (leader of Argonauts)	cf. i-wa-so : PY Cn 655
Mopsos (seer of Argonauts)	cf. mo-qo-so : KN Dc 1381
Lynkeus (spy of Argonauts)	cf. ru-ke-wo(-wo-wi-ja) : PY Nc 1053

These names (for some of which it has to be admitted that they can be transliterated also in other ways) cannot, of course, prove anything else but their mere existence already in the Mycenaean period. It could, however, be of some importance that for the greater part they are attested in the Pylos tablets. The Argonauts are traditionally regarded as Minyans who were at home in Southern Thessaly and Northern Boeotia; the same is true for the Pylian Neleides. As has been recognized long ago, there is a remarkable coincidence of river names both in Thessaly and in the Thessalian offspring of the Neleid dynasty⁵². For the same reason a clustering of heroic personal names, originally at home in Thessaly, could be expected to reappear in Mycenaean Pylos. That this is really the case, lends further confidence to the assumption of a Mycenaean origin of the Argonaut epos.

Whether, finally, the Mycenaean name ko-ki-da and its derivation ko-ki-de-jo represents Κολχίδας resp. Κολχιδεῖος has to be left open since other transcription cannot strictly be excluded - although Κολχίδας is by no means unlikely or impossible according to Mycenaean scribal rules⁵³.

The Pylos texts fall into the Late Mycenaean period. Within Greek mythology the Argonauts are placed before the Trojan war; that means that they should belong, according to ancient tradition, to an earlier chronological horizon. From the perspective of archeology Mycenaean contacts with the Black Sea reflect a broader range of time. There seems, however, to be some concentration in the earlier Mycenaean period into which the Ukrainian cheek pieces, the Trialeti weapons, and - possibly - the Borodino hoard fall. This is in a general correspondence to the overall picture of Mycenaean contacts with the North which were clearly stronger in the earlier rather than in the later Mycenaean period. In some way it seems that in the sixteenth century these relations were vice versa. Several authors felt that some steppe influence can be detected in the Early Mycenaean art, e.g. in the well known gold sheets from the Vth

51 T.W. ALLEN, *The Homeric Catalogue of Ships* (1921), p. 147ff; R. HOPE SIMPSON and J.F. LAZENBY, *The Catalogue of the Ships in Homer's Iliad* (1970), p. 181.

52 For Thessalian geographical names in the Western Peloponnesos cf. S. HILLER, *Studien zur Geographie des Reiches um Pylos nach den mykenischen und homerischen Texten* (1972), p. 186ff, with earlier bibliography.

53 The interpretation as Κολχίδας has been proposed by O. LANDAU, *Mykenisch-Griechische Personennamen* (1958), p. 72; M. GUIDI, "Osservazioni su moduli formulari della serie F di Cnossos", *Aevum* 61 (1987), p. 63; other interpretations which have been proposed are Γοργίδας and Κογχίδας. For ko-ki-de-jo as being derived from ko-ki-da cf. J.T. KILLEN, "Mycenean Possessive Adjectives in -e-jo", *Transactions of the Philological Society* 1983, p.73.

Shaft Grave showing wild animals in repoussée technique ⁵⁴. This reminds us of the suggestion that also the boar tusks helmet is supposed to have originated in South Russia as it may be concluded from corresponding finds in several graves at Mariupol ⁵⁵. Likewise the so-called arrow smootheners which appear in Greece for the first time during the later middle Helladic period have been referred to parallels in the Pontic area ⁵⁶. This is also the case for horse burials; as S. Foltiny has pointed out, a characteristic feature of the cultures in the Volga-Ural area is the double burial of horses which is also known from Mycenaean Greece ⁵⁷. In this relation special attention should be paid to an unusual kind of spiral ornament which is common to both a spear head from Cjurupinsk near Herson (Ukraine) and several shaft grave implements (Pl. LVII, c) ⁵⁸. This ornament which is a newcomer to the Shaft Grave period has no immediate Aegean descent; could it have come from the region under discussion? I think there is no need to go as far as J. Muhly who argued in favour of an immigration of steppe people to Greece at the beginning of the Shaft Grave period ⁵⁹. But after all, it might be legal to wonder, as also J. Mulhy does ⁶⁰, whether the gold from the Shaft Graves does not have really something to do with early Mycenaean contacts to the Pontic area which is well-known to be rich in gold; this is to be kept in consideration when a possible clue is looked for as to the legendary Golden Fleece ⁶¹.

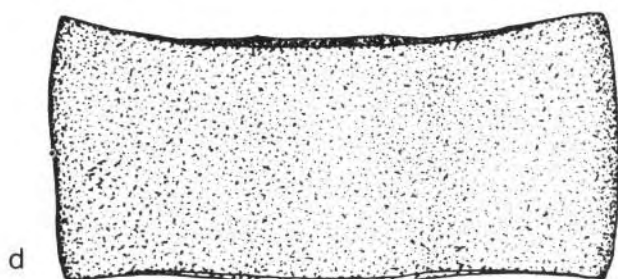
Stefan HILLER

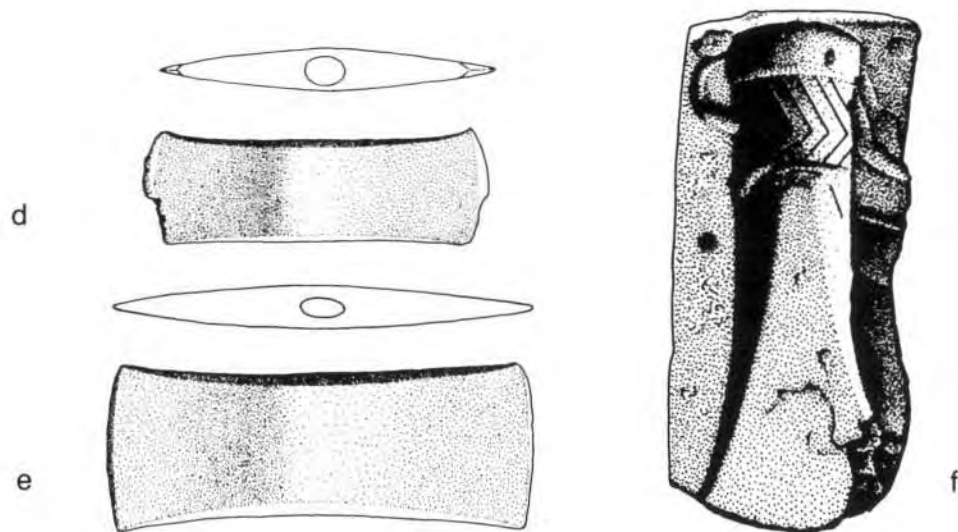
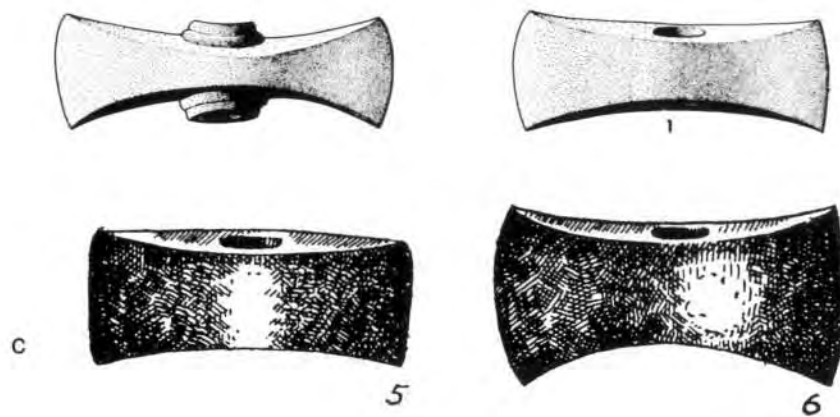
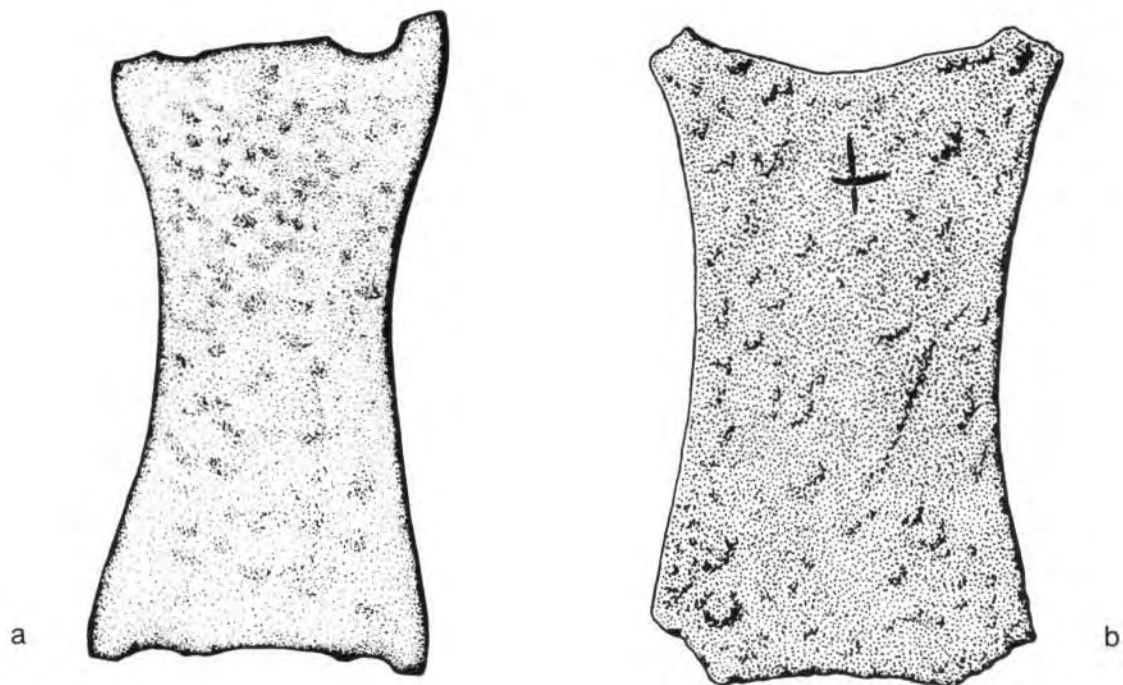
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- 54 E.T. VERMEULE, *The Art of the Shaft Graves of Mycenae* (1975), p. 23f, J.D. MUHLY, "On the Shaft Graves at Mycenae", *Studies in Honor of T.B. Jones*, ed. by M.A. Powell and R.H. Sack (AOAT 203 [1973]), p. 311-323, esp. p. 321.
- 55 Cf. J. BORCHHARDT, *Homerische Helme* (1972), p. 28; in note 153 he relates this phenomenon to the spreading of the war-chariot at about 1650/1550 B.C.: "Die Richtung der feststellbaren Einzelbewegungen zeigt wohl an, daß die Völker aus den östlichen Gebieten des Schwarzen und Kaspischen Meeres kamen".
- 56 H.-G. BUCHHOLZ, "Der Pfeilglätter aus dem VI. Schachtgrab von Mykene und die helladischen Pfeilspitzen", *Jdl* 77 (1962), p. 1-58, esp. p. 20; SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 713 who, however, supposes the opposite direction: "Furthermore, locally made on the Aegean model might have been the many 'arrow-straighteners' or 'arrow-shaft smoothers', found in the remains (mainly graves) of several East European cultures in almost all parts of the country, i. e. in the North Caucasian, the Catacomb and Middle Dnepr cultures of the Ukraine, the Fatjanovo Culture of Central Russia, and the Gorbunovo culture in the Middle Urals". It is, however, this wide-spread distribution which may indicate a transfer of those implements from the Russian steppe area to the South-West.
- 57 S. FOLTINY, "The Ivory Horse Bits of Homer and the Bone Horse Bits of Reality", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 67 (1987), p. 11-37, esp. p. 34.
- 58 The Cjurupinsk spear head is illustrated in SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 712 fig. 2.1 and 1a; MÜLLER-KARPE, *op. cit.* (n. 25), pl. LXXIII, 634/5.
- 59 MUHLY, *op. cit.* (n. 54), p. 319.
- 60 MUHLY, *op. cit.* (n. 54), p. 321f.
- 61 On the problem of the provenience of the shaft grave gold cf., a.o. G.S. KORRES, "Τὸ πρόβλημα τοῦ χρυσοῦ κατὰ τοὺς πρωιμωτάτους πρωτομυκηναϊκοὺς χρόνους", *PraktArchEt* 1976, p. 501ff; J.D. MUHLY, "Metals and Metallurgy in Crete and the Aegean at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age", *Temple University Aegean Symposium* 5 (1980), p. 25-36; more general O.T.P.K. DICKINSON, *The Origins of Mycenaean Civilisation* (1977), p. 53f.

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- Pl. LIV, d : Double axe from Rojak near Varna (after BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.* [n. 5], fig. 21f).
- Pl. LV, a-b : Ingot from Cape Kaliakra (after BUCHHOLZ, *op. cit.* [n. 5], fig. 11) and from Čerkovo (near Karnobat/Burgas; after *Istorija na Bulgaria I* [1979]).
- Pl. LV, c : Double axes from Kozorezovo and Sčetkovo (after MÜLLER-KARPE, *op. cit.* [n. 25], vol. IV.3, pl. 537 B [a, b] and GIMBUTAS, *op. cit.* [n. 32], p. 91, fig. 49).
- Pl. LV, d-f : Double axes and mould of a celt from Troy (after H.-G. BUCHHOLZ, *Zur Herkunft der kretischen Doppelaxt* [1959], pl. 11 d, e. and Müller-Karpe).
- Pl. LVI, a : Bone cheek pieces from Trachtimirov and Mycenae (after HÜTTEL, *op. cit.* [n. 29], pl. 2. 14, 15; 43. B).
- Pl. LVI, b : Bone disk from Iljičevka and gold plate from Mycenae (after VLADAR, *op. cit.* [n. 31], p. 224, fig. 11, and SCHLIEMANN, *op. cit.* [n. 31], p. 303, fig. 405).
- Pl. LVI, c : Silver pin from the Borodino-hoard and gold plate from Mycenae (after MÜLLER-KARPE, *op. cit.* [n. 25], vol. IV.3, pl. 532. A. 1, and SCHLIEMANN, *op. cit.* [n. 31], p. 298, fig. 378).
- Pl. LVI, d : Bone cheek piece from Belz and bone object from Mycenae (after SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* [n. 26], p. 712, fig. 2. 4, and SCHLIEMANN, *op. cit.* [n. 31] p. 376, fig. 525).
- Pl. LVII, a : Rapiers from Mycenae, Sarntavro and Khodja-Daoud-Köprü (after DICKINSON, *op. cit.* [n. 61], p. 69, fig. 8, SCHAEFFER, *op. cit.* [n. 45], fig. 222 and GIMBUTAS, *op. cit.* [n. 32], p. 95, fig. 1).
- Pl. LVII, b : Spear heads from Trialeti, Meskheta, Amarat, Tach Köprü, Prosymna, Mycenae and Chir-Dir (after GIMBUTAS, *op. cit.* [n. 32], p. 94, fig. 52. 7; JAPARIDZE, *op. cit.* [n. 41], p. 43; SCHAEFFER, *op. cit.* [n. 45], pl. 224, 226, 228, and HÖCKMANN, *op. cit.* [n. 43], p. 20, fig. 2. 9. and p. 48, fig. 9. 7).
- Pl. LVII, c : Spear head from Cjurupinsk, sword-hilt from Mycenae (after SULIMIRSKI, *op. cit.* [n. 26], p. 712, fig. 2. 1., and MÜLLER-KARPE, *op. cit.* [n. 25], vol. IV.2, pl. 225. 5).
- Pl. LVIII : Map showing distribution of finds

* The drawings for Pl. LIV, a-c, LV, a (right), LV, c (left) and LVIII were produced by Dr. C. Reinhold (Rom), to whom I feel deeply indebted for his generous help.



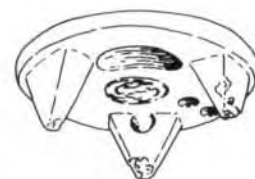
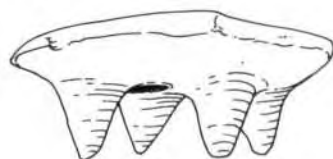
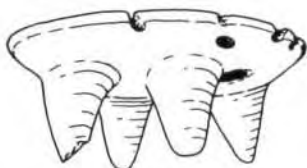




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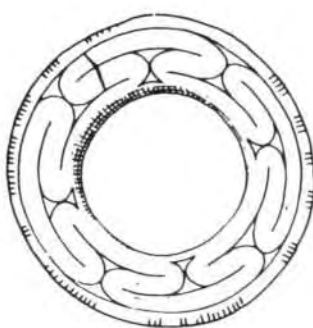
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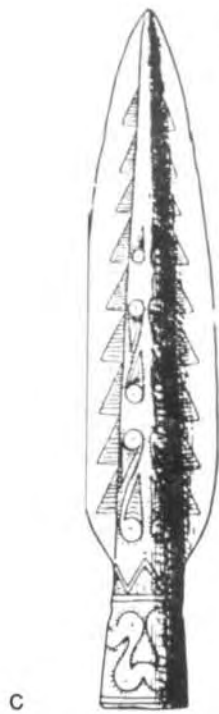
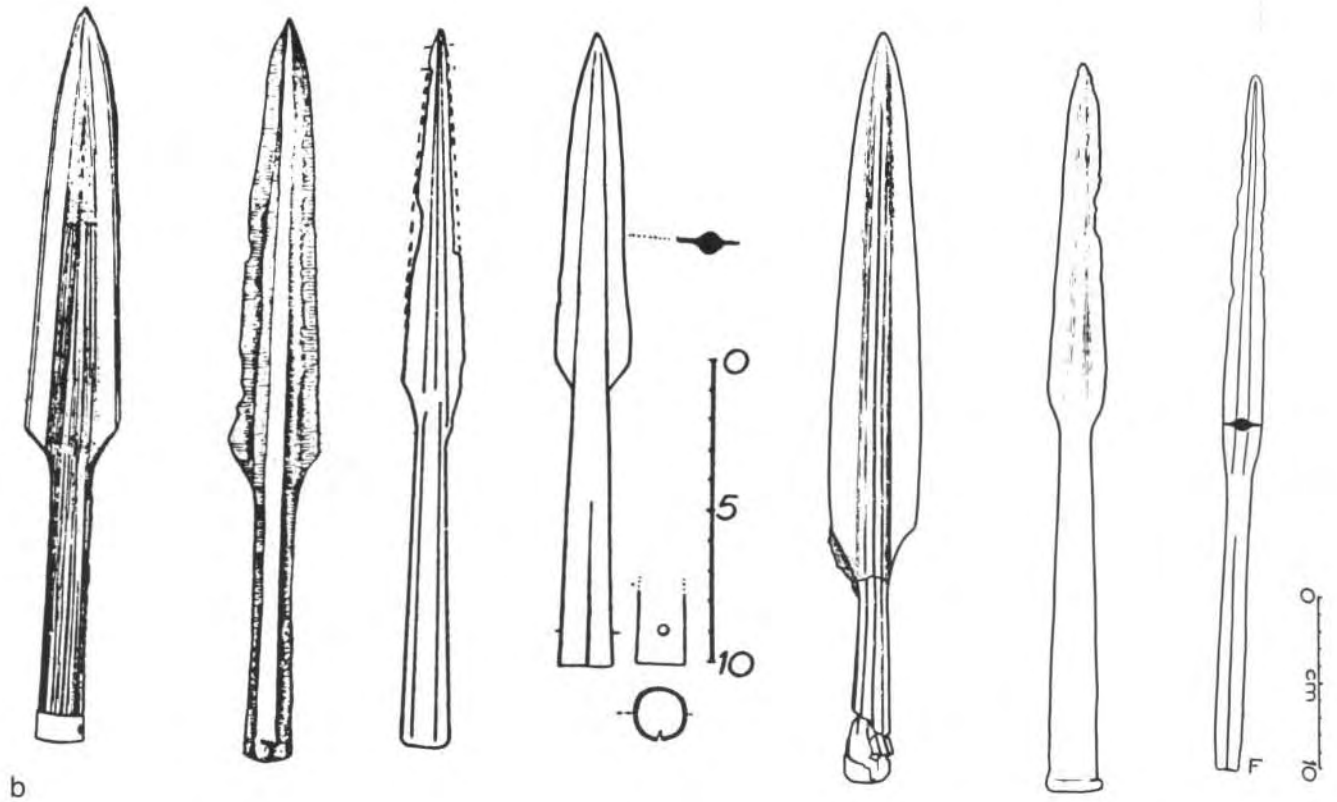
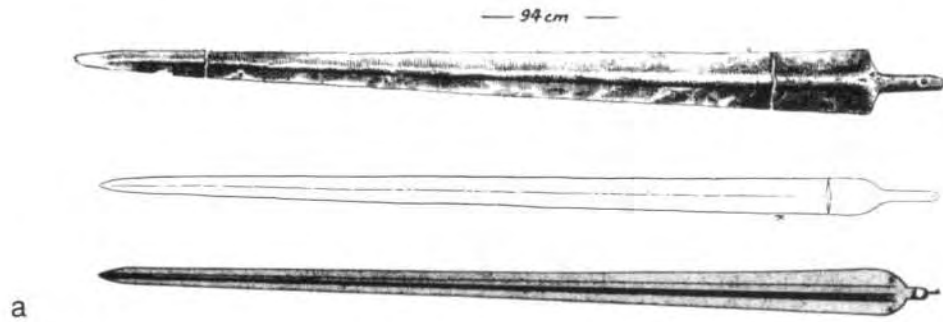
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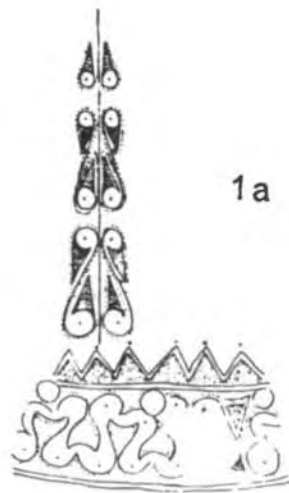
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- 1 MASAT
- 2 TROJA
- 3 BULGAROVO
- 4 TSCHERKOVO
- 5 ROJAK
- 6 KALIAKRA
- 7 BORODIN
- 8 BELZ
- 9 TRACHTIMIROV
- 10 KOZOREZOVO
- 11 CJURUPINSK
- 12 ILJICEVKA
- 13 KERTSCH
- 14 TRIALETI

- ◆ Doppelaxt
- ▼ Barren
- ▲ Keramik
- ▼ Beingerät
- ▲ Waffen

