

UDC 903.2:737.14(3)(477.52)
DOI 10.24919/2519-058X.25.269571

Vasyl ORLYK

PhD hab. (History), Professor, Head of Department of History, Archeology, Informational and Archival Affairs at Central Ukrainian National Technical University, 8 Prospekt Universytetskyi, Kropyvnytskyi, Ukraine, postal code 25006 (v.m.orlik@gmail.com)

ORCID: 0000-0002-7947-9557

Researcher ID: C-1025-2019

Nataliia MEKH

PhD Hab. (Philology), Professor, Head of the Department of Screen-Stage Arts and Culture Studies Institute of Art History, Folklore and Ethnology. M. Rylsky National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine, postal code 01001 (mno_logos@ukr.net)

ORCID: 0000-0002-5846-505X

Researcher ID: GWZ-4695-2022

Василь ОРЛИК

доктор історичних наук, професор, завідувач кафедри історії, археології, інформаційної та архівної справи Центральноукраїнського національного технічного університету, пр. Університетський, 8, м. Кропивницький, Україна, індекс 25006 (v.m.orlik@gmail.com)

Наталія МЕХ

доктор філологічних наук, професор, завідувач відділу екранно-сценічних мистецтв та культурології Інституту мистецтвознавства, фольклористики та етнології ім. М. Рильського НАН України, м. Київ, Україна, індекс 01001 (mno_logos@ukr.net)

Bibliographic Description of the Article: Orlyk, V. & Mekh, N. (2022). The Hoard of Copper Coins of the Pontic State of Mithridates VI Eupator from Romny District of Sumy Region. *Skhidnoievropeiskyi Istorychnyi Visnyk [East European Historical Bulletin]*, 25, 8–20. doi: 10.24919/2519-058X.25.269571

THE HOARD OF COPPER COINS OF THE PONTIC STATE OF MITHRIDATES VI EUPATOR FROM ROMNY DISTRICT OF SUMY REGION

Abstract. The purpose and scientific novelty of the article. The article focuses on the analysis of coin complex that included 19 antique (bronze) coins of Mithridates VI Eupator times and was discovered near the Sula River, between the villages of Brodok, Zasullia and urban-type settlement Nedryhailiv, Romny district, Sumy region in the summer of 2022. **The Conclusion.** After including of Greek apoikias of the Northern Black Sea region to the Pontus state of Mithridates VI Eupator times there appeared a significant number of copper Pontic coins in their money circulation, resulted in their spread in the Pontic Steppe region, particularly in Steppe and Forrest-Steppe zones of modern Ukraine. The detailed study of this monetary complex allowed the authors to compile its catalogue and systematize the coins according to the issue centres and the chronology of their minting. It has been determined that all 19 coins of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator from the coin hoard, which were found in the summer of 2022 near urban-type settlement Nedryhailiv, Romny district, Sumy

region, constitute two consecutive groups of copper coins medium denomination **B**, minted in the cities of Amaseia, Amisos and Sinope.

It has been determined that coins of Ares/Sword type constitute 68,42% and coins of Aegina/Nika type comprise 31,58% in the hoard composition. Concerning the minting places of these coins, though coins from Amaseia account for 5,26%, Amisos amount 84,21% and Sinope comprise 10,53%.

The two classifications by F. Imhoof-Blumer and François de Callataj of the copper coins of Pontic State of times Mithridates VI Eupator have been analysed by the authors. It has been assumed, that Pontic coins of the medium denomination Ares/Sword type **B** were minted approximately in 110 – 100 BC, the type of Ares/Sword with letters **IB** were coined – in 100 – 90 BC, and the Aegis/Nika type were minted in 90 – 85 BC.

It has been proven that the find of this coin's hoard of the Pontic State of Mithridates VI Eupator times on the territory of the Left-Bank Forest-Steppe, particularly in Romny district, Sumy region fully corresponds to the archaeological content of this region specifically archaeological finds of the materials of Zarubintsy culture and numismatic sources, which are known to the authors: coins of Scythian King Skilurus, which were minted in Olbia in 130 – 120 BC and Pontic coins. It has been highlighted that the coin finds of the 3rd-1st centuries BC on the territory of Sumy region are recorded not only in the Sula River basin and in the basins of the Seym and the Psel rivers.

The monetary complex studied in the article is an important source not only of the history of the settlement of Posullia at the end of the 2nd – the beginning of the 1st century BC and the connections of the population of this region with the antique Black Sea region, but also of the history of coinage in the Pontic state during the times of Mithridates VI Eupator.

Keywords: Northern Black Sea region, Olbia, coin finds, Mithridates VI Eupator.

СКАРБ МІДНИХ МОНЕТ ПОНТІЙСЬКОЇ ДЕРЖАВИ МІТРИДАТА VI ЄВПАТОРА З РОМЕНСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ СУМСЬКОЇ ОБЛАСТІ

Анотація. Мета і наукова новизна статті. У статті досліджено монетний комплекс, виявлений влітку 2022 р. поблизу р. Сула між селами Бродок, Засулля та смт. Недригайлів Роменського району Сумської області, до складу якого входило 19 античних мідних (бронзових) монет Понтійської держави часів Мітрідата VI Євпатора. **Висновки.** Після входження грецьких апокій Північного Причорномор'я до складу Понтійської держави часів Мітрідата VI Євпатора в їхньому грошовому обігу з'явилася значна кількість мідних понтійських монет, що спричинило їхнє поширення в Надчорномор'ї, зокрема в Степовій та Лісостеповій зонах сучасної України. Детальне вивчення цього монетного комплексу дало змогу авторам скласти його каталог та систематизувати монети відповідно до емісійних центрів і хронології їхнього карбування. Встановлено, що усі 19 монет Понтійської держави Мітрідата VI Євпатора із монетного скарбу, знайденого влітку 2022 р. поблизу р. Сула між селами Бродок, Засулля та смт. Недригайлів Роменського району Сумської області, складають дві послідовні групи мідних монет середнього номіналу **B**, карбованих у містах Amaseia, Amisos та Sinope.

Визначено, що у складі скарбу 68,42 % складають монети типу Арес-меч, а монети типу Егіна-Ніка – 31,58 %. Стосовно місць карбування, то монети Amaseia складають 5,26 %, Amisos – 84,21 % та Sinope – 10,53 %

Авторами проаналізовано класифікації мідних монет Понтійської держави часів Мітрідата VI Євпатора, зокрема Ф. Імхоф-Блумера та Франсуа де Каллатая. Висловлено припущення, що понтійські мідні монети середнього номіналу **B** типу Ares-Sword карбувалися близько 110 – 100 рр. до РХ, типу Ares-Sword із літерами **IB** – близько 100 – 90 рр. до РХ, а типу Aegis-Nika близько 90 – 85 рр. до РХ.

Доведено, що знахідка названого скарбу монет Понтійської держави часів Мітрідата VI Євпатора на території Лівобережного Лісостепу, зокрема в Роменському районі Сумської області, цілком відповідає археологічному контенту цього регіону, зокрема археологічним знахідкам матеріалів зарубинецької культури та відомим авторам нумізматичним джерелам: монетам скіфського царя Скітура, карбованих в Ольвії в 130 – 120 рр. до РХ та понтійським монетам. Зазначено, що знахідки монет III–I ст. до РХ на території Сумської області фіксуються не лише в басейні р. Сула, а і в басейні р. Сейм та р. Псел.

Досліджений у статті грошовий комплекс є важливим джерелом не лише з історії заселеності Посулля наприкінці II – на початку I ст. до РХ та зв'язків населення цього регіону із античним Причорномор'ям, а й з історії монетного карбування в Понтіїській державі часів Мітрідата VI Євпатора.

Ключові слова: Причорномор'я, Ольвія, монетні знахідки, Мітрідат VI Євпатор.

The Problem Statement and Analysis of Recent Research. The scientific recording and analysis of hoards and other coin finds allow scholars not only to supplement and deepen the data on the history of coinage and money circulation, but also sometimes to change established concepts. Modern German researchers of the antique numismatic U. Peter and V. Stolba rightly assert that “after the known monograph of Mielczarek (1989), the question of the role of money in the local barbarian population ceased to be a subject of discussion, because before that there was a lack of data on the finds of Greek coins in the hinterland of Scythia, especially in the territory of the Ukrainian forest-steppe” (Peter & Stolba, 2022, p.190). However, unfortunately, for a long time the Ukrainian archaeologists and numismatists have been, and some are still, under the influence of the baseless claims of the Soviet historiography “about the absence of monetary circulation among the barbarian population surrounding the ancient Greek colonies” (Orlyk, 2021a, p.9). In the last decades there appeared a large body of works devoted to the finds of ancient Greek coins on the territory of the Northern Black Sea region, the Pontic Steppe region, particularly Steppe and Forest-Steppe zone of Ukraine (Mielczarek, 1989; Shestopal, 2007; Mielczarek, 2008; Skoryy & Zimovets, 2014; Kotsur, 2017; Mielczarek & Orlyk, 2019; Myzhin, Stepanenko & Sytyi, 2019; Orlyk, Kotsur, & Tsyganenko, 2019, Orlyk, 2020a; Orlyk & Orlyk, 2020; Orlyk, 2022), including coins of Mithridates VI Eupator times (Bulatovych, 2003; Komar, 2014; Orlyk, 2020b; Orlyk, 2021b; Orlyk, 2021c).

The purpose of publication is the study and including to scientific circulation the hoard of coins from the Pontic state of the Mithridates VI Eupator times, that was found in Romny district, Sumy region near the Sula River.

The Results of the Research. After Mithridates VI Eupator came to power in the Pontic kingdom, almost all Greek cities of the Southern and Northern Black Sea coasts were united in his state. The establishment of political, economic, and military relations between different regions of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator had a positive effect on their economic life especially on the growth of trade turnover. As a consequence of “revival trade relations have been increasing the share of the of Mithridates VI Eupator’s state coins in the money circulation of the cities of the Northern Black Sea region, which had a significant deficit of the local coins” and in the “money market of the region copper coins of the cities of Pontus and Paphlagonia become important” (Orlyk, 2020b, p. 94). This is confirmed by the numerous finds of the Pontic coins recorded on the area of Greek apoikias of the Northern Black Sea region, particularly Olbia (Karyshkovskiy, 1988, pp. 102–103), Tyras (Bulatovych, 2003, p. 43), Chersonesus (Gilevich, 1968, p. 19), Feodosiia (Gavrilov, 2001; Gavrilov, 2010), Kerkinitis and Panticapaeum (Abramzon & Frolova, 2008) and beyond them (Dobrovols'kyi, 1952). As it is known, it was unified minting in the Pontic Kingdom of Mithridates VI Eupator times, and cities, settlements and fortresses of Pontus, Paphlagonia and possibly Bithynia became emission centres in the Northern Black Sea region, part of which even did not mint coins and did not have polis status earlier. In the Northern Black Sea region, coins were minted in small quantities in traditional emission centres: Olbia, Tyras, Chersonesus, Panticapaeum, Gorgippia, Phanagoria.

For the first time, a Swiss scholar F. Imhoof-Blumer managed to systematize the coins of issue centres in the Southern Black Sea region during the reign of Mithridates VI Eupator (Imhoof-Blumer, 1912). He “divided all bronze coins into seven groups, which reflect also the chronological sequence of issues” (Stolba, 2005, p. 29). However, this systematization is not perfect, which was noticed by many researchers of the coinage of the Pontic state during the time of Mithridates VI Eupator. A new, more well-argued classification of the copper coins of the Pontic State of the times of Mithridates VI Eupator was developed by the famous Belgian scholar Francois de Callatay. He suggested reducing the number of groups to 4, to decrease types of coins to 17 and to limit the time of their minting by the period of 110 – 85 BC (Callatay, 2007, p. 282). There are a lot of aspects in the concept of Callatay which is hard to disagree with.

In the modern Numismatics copper coins of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator times are divided according to their weight and diameter to 5 groups (denominations): **AA** (approx. 16 – 21 g), **A** (approx. 11 – 14 g), **B** (approx. 5 – 8 g), **C** (approx. 3 – 4.5 g), **D** (approx. 1.5 – 2.5 g), which in the historiography of researchers, following Imhoof-Blumer, define as obol (AA, A), Tetrachalkon (B), Dichalkon (C) and Chalkon (D) (Imhoof-Blumer, 1912).

The appearance of a significant number of copper coins of the Pontic state from the time of Mithridates VI Eupator in Greek apoikias of the Northern Black Sea region have contributed to dissemination of these coins in the Pontic Steppe region, particularly Steppe and Forrest-Steppe zones of the modern Ukraine. Since, “the economic life of the Greeks of the Northern Black Sea region was also closely connected with the life activities of the inhabitants of the neighbouring lands..., with whom the Hellenes of the Northern Black Sea region had trade relations” (Orlyk, 2020b, p. 95). Regarding the nature of these property or commodity-monetary ties, “not only the presence or absence of coin finds can prove or disprove the existence of commodity-monetary relations in this region. The character of such finds is of great importance, in particular the existence of money or commodity-money complexes, as well as the concentration of individual finds in a limited area” (Orlyk, 2020b, p. 95).

In July of 2022, a lot of 19 coins of the Pontic State of Mithridates VI Eupator was put up for sale on the Ukrainian Internet resource Violity (Coins Amis, Pont. Mitridat VI Yevpator). All the coins have been chemically treated, only a few have preserved fragments of patina. Having regard to the unsatisfactory condition of the majority of the coins, we present photos only part of the hoard (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1

We managed to get information about this find and get a detailed look at the coins that were part of this hoard. Thus, according to the testimony of the coins owners, they were found nearby the Sula River, between the villages of Brodok, Zasullia and urban-type settlement Nedryhailiv, Romny district, Sumy region. A detailed study of this coin complex allowed us to compile its catalogue (Table 1) and systematize the coins according to the emission centres and the chronology of their minting¹.

¹ During the research we used a stereoscopic microscope MBS-9.

Table 1

**The Catalogue of the Coins Hoard of Pontic State of Mithridates VI Eupator Times
Discovered between the Villages of Brodok, Zasullia and Urban-Type Settlement
Nedryhailiv, Romny district, Sumy Region in the Summer of 2022**

No.	Description	Catalogue	Chronology and place of coinage	Wt (g) / Diam. (mm)
1.	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΑΣ-ΣΕΙΑΣ	SNG BM Black Sea #1051	111–105 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amaseia	5,43 20
2	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1147–1150	111–105 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	6,45 20,4
3	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ, above l., star and crescent; above r., IB, below r. ☉	SNG BM Black Sea ##1159	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,73 21,2
4	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ, above l., star and crescent; above r., IB	SNG BM Black Sea ##1160–1161	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,08 18,8×19,9
5	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ, above l., star and crescent; above r., IB	SNG BM Black Sea ##1160–1161	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	6,06 19
6	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ, above l., star and crescent; above r., IB	SNG BM Black Sea ##1160–1161	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,07 18
7	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ, above l., star and crescent; above r., IB	SNG BM Black Sea #1161	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,24 17,6
8	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ, above l., star and crescent; above r., IB	можливо SNG BM Black Sea ##1165	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,97 18,4
9	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1147–1165	111–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,70 г. 17
10	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΑΜΙ-ΣΟΥ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1147–1165	111–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,68 г. 19

No.	Description	Catalogue	Chronology and place of coinage	Wt (g) / Diam. (mm)
11	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath AMI-ΣΟΥ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1147– 1165	111–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	2,34 14
12	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath ΣΙΝΩ-ΙΙΗΣ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1528– 1530	111–105 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ) Sinope	6,46 22×20
13	<i>Obv.</i> Head of Ares in Anttic helmet right. <i>Rev.</i> Sword in sheath	Not possible to classify	111–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 95–90 BC (Callataÿ)	2,74 15
14	<i>Obv.</i> Aegis with gorgoneion <i>Rev.</i> Nika advancing right AMI-ΣΟΥ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1177– 1191	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 90–85 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	4,97 22
15	<i>Obv.</i> Aegis with gorgoneion <i>Rev.</i> Nika advancing right AMI-ΣΟΥ below left monogram ΠΑ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1179	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 90–85 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,85 20×22
16	<i>Obv.</i> Aegis with gorgoneion <i>Rev.</i> Nika advancing right AMI-ΣΟΥ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1177– 1191	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 90–85 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,08 22×19
17	<i>Obv.</i> Aegis with gorgoneion <i>Rev.</i> Nika advancing right AMI-ΣΟΥ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1177– 1191	105-90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 90–85 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	5,85 20,6
18	<i>Obv.</i> Aegis with gorgoneion <i>Rev.</i> Nika advancing right AMI-ΣΟΥ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1177– 1191	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 90–85 BC (Callataÿ) Amisos	4,99 22
19	<i>Obv.</i> Aegis with gorgoneion <i>Rev.</i> Nika advancing right ΣΙΝΩ-ΙΙΗΣ	SNG BM Black Sea ##1536– 1540	105–90 BC (Imhoof-Blumer) 90–85 BC (Callataÿ) Sinope	4,99 21,5

We can conclude that all 19 coins of the Pontic state from the time of Mithridates VI Eupator is coins hoard found near the Sula River, between the of villages Brodok, Zasullia and urban-type settlement Nedryhailiv, Romny district, Sumy region in the summer of 2022, and these coins form consecutive groups of copper coins of medium denomination **B** minted in the cities of Amaseia, Amisos and Sinope. As we noted above, regarding the minting chronology of these coin types in numismatics, there are two main theories of classification of copper coins of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator times by Imhoof-Blumer and Francois de Callatay. According to the classification of F. Imhoof-Blumer, the coins of medium denomination of **B** type Ares-Sword were minted during the period of 111 – 105 BC, and coins of Ares-Sword with letters **IB** type and type Aegis-Nika were minted in 105 – 90 BC. All coins of Ares-Sword type were minted in 95 – 90 BC, and coins of Aegis-Nika type were

coined in 90 – 85 BC on the concept of Francois de Callatay. However, V. Stolba makes a persuasive argument from the excavations of Scythian Neapolis, when the coin of the medium denomination of **B** type Ares-Sword minted in Amisos was “discovered in the total destruction layer of the Southern Palace (layer D1)” (Stolba, 2005, p. 30), which was most likely destroyed in 108 BC “obviously during the second campaigns of Diophantus against Scythians” (Stolba, 2005, p. 30). Therefore, the issue of the medium denomination **B** type Ares-Sword coins should be categorized nonetheless under the earlier period of beginning their minting, i.e. they were coined in 108 BC, as predicted Imhoof-Blumer. In such way if the coins of the medium denomination **B** type Ares-Sword were minted in last decades of the 2-nd century BC, then the next coin’s group, to which belongs the medium denomination **B** type Ares-Sword coins with letters **IB** and Aegis-Nika type should have been minted at the beginning of the first century BC, i.e. their issue may have been started in 100 BC. Thus, when determining the chronology issues of these types of coins, it is necessary to take into account the fact that these are the most common copper coins of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator and the number of Aegis-Nika type coins known to modern researchers significantly exceeds the Ares-Sword coins type, which may indicate a much longer period of their minting than in the latter coins. Hence it can be assumed that the coins are of medium denomination **B** type Ares-Sword were minted approximately in 110 – 100 BC, Ares-Sword coins with **IB** letters type were coined approximately in 100 – 90 BC, and Aegis-Nika were minted approximately in 90 – 85 BC.

Regarding the distribution of hoard coins by types of coins and places of minting (Table 2), then 68,42% constitute coins of the Ares-Sword type, and coins of Aegis-Nika type account for 31,58%. The division types of coins evidence, that these coins came to the Northern Black Sea region and then to the Dnieper Forrest-Steppe at the beginning of minting coins of Aegis-Nika type, when they were in the money circulation in parallel with previous type Ares-Sword. Regarding minting places of these coins, then coins from Amaseia account for 26%, Amisos comprise 84,21% and Sinope constitute 10,53%, which may indicate that these coins did not reach the Northern Black Sea coast through representatives of Sinope, that was a powerful issue centre in the Pontic state at the time of Mithridates VI Eupator.

Table 2

The distribution of coins from the coins hoard of Mithridates VI Eupator times, found near the Sula River in Romny district, Sumy region according to the types and places of minting

Type of coins	Issuer (city)			
	Amaseia	Amisos	Sinope	In total
Ares-Sword	1	11	1	13
Aegis-Nika	-	5	1	6
In total	1	16	1	19

As it is known, monetary hoards are an important source in determining the population of a particular area in a specific historical era. Accordingly, we can assume that the Sula River, population, which lived in the Sula River basin of Romny district, Sumy region, had economic ties with the Northern Black Sea region. Maybe these ties were indirect. Although, this population was aware of the Pontic coins, which were used not only in trade operations, but also as a means of accumulation. The famous British numismatist Grierson P. notes that “the essential feature of a coin hoard is that the coins composing in should have been brought

together at the time when it was concealed” (Grierson, 1975, p. 130). Considering that the earliest coins of the hoard are coins of Aegis-Nika type, probably it is their first issues, as these coins constitute less than a third part of the hoard and more 2/3 of the hoard consists of the coins from the previous issue, specifically the coins of Aegis-Nika type, we might suppose that thesauration of the hoard took place in the 90s BC.

The find of this coins hoard of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator times on the territory of Left-Bank Forest-Steppe fully corresponds to the archaeological content of this region. It is known that in “Scythian times, almost the entire territory of Posullia was inhabited by agricultural and pastoral tribes” (Nimenko, 2007, p. 3). That is known Basivske hillfort which is located in Romny district and “existed during the Scythian period from the sixth to the second centuries BC” (Illins'ka, 1965, p. 58). Archeological finds, particularly materials of Zarubintsy culture (Bilyns'kyi, 2013, p. 30) indicate that Basivske hillfort was used by “the local population that remained after the crisis of the end of the first third of the 3rd century BC to the end of the 3rd – 1st centuries BC” (Hrechko, 2021, p. 370).

Except those mentioned archeological data, the fact of settlement on the territory of the modern Sumy region in the Sula River basin at the end of the 3rd-1st centuries BC is also confirmed by numismatic sources. This is, enabled by the treasure of the Pontic coins analyzed in the article and the single coin finds of the 3rd-1st centuries BC known to the authors. The Ukrainian archeologists S. Skoryi and R. Zymovets pointed out, that it was a find of about 26 antique coins, the information about 21 coins is reliable, on the territory of Basivske hillfort during the years of 2001 – 2011. It is noteworthy that 20 from the confirmed 21 coins found is Olbian “borysthenes” of different groups, from early to late, i.e. the issues of the last third of the 4th-3rd centuries BC (Skoryi & Zimovets, 2014, p. 150). Only one coin, from the found belonged to the issue of Panticapeum of the first fourth of the 3rd century BC (Skoryi & Zimovets, 2014, p. 150). It is also known to the authors about the find of Panticapeum Tetrachalk of the first fourth of the 3rd century BC and Olbian “borysthenes” (Fig. 2) of last groups, i.e. the issues of the second half of the third century BC, besides coins of the 4th-3d centuries BC found in the Sula River basin and investigated by S. Skoryi and R. Zimovets.



Fig. 2

Coins of the second century BC are also found in this region. We are aware of the finds of coins of Scythian king Skilurus which were minted in Olbia in 130–120 BC and were found in a wooded area near the villages of Basivka and Pshínchyne in Romny district, Sumy region. According to information from one of Sumy’s local historians there were found 7 coins in a limited area that indicates identity of these coins to the one hoard. Regarding these coins types, unfortunately the respondent did not have photos of all the coins. The photos of 3 coins provided to us indicate, that these are the coins of two denominations

(Anokhin, 2011, p. 94 No 561, 583): medium denomination with depiction of Head of Demeter in veil on the obverse and two horses carriage to the left (approx. 4 g) (Fig. 3) and small denomination with picture of Hermes head on the obverse and caduceus on the obverse (approx. 2.5 g). Concerning the coin found near the village of Pshinchyne it is the coin of the above-mentioned Demetra/carriage type.



Fig. 3

It should be noted that coin finds of the 3rd-1st centuries BC on the area of Sumy region are recorded not only in the Sula River basin, but also in the Seym River basin, specifically on the territory of the former Buryn, Putyvl and Bilopillia districts and the Psel River of Sumy district. Thus, there were found 2 Olbian “borysthenes” coins of the first groups, namely the issue of the last third of the 4th century BC on the bank of the Seym River near the city of Buryn in 2014 (Nikolaev, 2019; Nikolaev, 2020; Nikolaev, 2021), and then the counterfeit coin of silver drachma of the 2nd-1st centuries BC Dyrrhachium, Illyria. And in the suburbs of Putyvl town in a limited area near old bed of the Seym River in 2019 there were found 7 Pontic coins of the medium denomination **B** type Ares/Sword and Aegis/Nika (Fig. 4), minted in Amisos.



Fig. 4

Unfortunately, exact number of each of these coin’s types is unknown to us, but coins of two successive groups are found in the hoard from Romny district, as well as in the vicinity of Putyvl. Concentration of 7 coins in a limited area, which at certain time simultaneously were in the coin circulation indicates that they belong to one complex of coins. Coins of large denomination **AA** type Athena-Perseus were found on the bank of the Seym River near former Bilopillia district.

Quite interesting is coin find of Pergamon of the second part of the 2nd century BC near the village of Nova Sloboda, Konotop district, Sumy region (Fig. 5). This coin corresponding to coin’s weight characteristics of the medium denomination **B** of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator times and most likely came to the Seym River basin in the 1st century BC, along with a mass of Pontic coins.



Fig. 5

It has been discovered a coin of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator times of large module **AA** Zeus type with an eagle without monogram, minted in fortress Taulara (Fig. 6) and discovered on suburbs of the village of Bytytsia, Sumy region, the Psel River basin.



Fig. 6

Therefore, numismatic sources, in particular coin finds, confirm the data of archaeological sources that the river basin of the Sula, the Seym and the Psel on the territory of modern Sumy region in the 3rd-1st centuries BC was populated, and its inhabitants had economic ties with the Northern Black Sea region. Perhaps these connections were indirect, but this population was familiar with the coins of the Greek apoikias in the Northern Black Sea region, as well as with the coins of the Pontic state of Mithridates VI Eupator times, which were used not only in trade operations, but also as a means of accumulation.

The inhabitants of the Basivske hillfort and the smaller settlements of Posullia together with the Seym River basin's population could use both the waterway of the Dnipro River and the land route, in particular a branch of the Muravsky Trail, known in the Middle Ages for trade with the Greek Black Sea coast. The connections of these regions with the Northern Black Sea region during the Scythian-Sarmatian period are indicated by finds of coins of the 4th-2nd centuries BC.

Monetary complex studied by us is an important source not only for the history of settlement of Posullia at the end of the 2nd – the beginning of the 1st BC and the connections of the population of this region with the ancient Black Sea region, as well as the history of coinage in the Pontic state during the times of Mithridates VI Eupator. After all, coins are one of the main numismatic sources. Rather interesting from the standpoint of Numismatics is the presence of medium denominations **B** type Ares/Sword coin and weight characteristics of which meet a smaller **C** denomination (approx. 3–4,5 g). Unfortunately, the state of the coins' preservation does not allow us to clearly determine whether they were minted on a coin blank that did not correspond to the average **B** denomination and this was a defect in the technological process of minting, or perhaps the coin was clipped in the process of monetary circulation to transfer it to a smaller denomination series.

The Conclusion. The conducted study of the coins finds of the 4th – the 1st BC in the basins of the Sula, the Seym and the Psel rivers confirm the archeological data concerning settlement of this area in the specified period, which allows us to expand the idea about the population at that time and to validate its connections with the ancient Black Sea region, specifically with Olbia, which coins finds of the 3d – the 2nd centuries BC prevail findings of other issuers. Considering the above mentioned, it can be assumed that the Greek apoikia of Olbia was the main trading partner of population from the basins of the Sula, the Seym and the Psel rivers in the 4th – the 2nd centuries BC. It's quite possible that the Pontic coins also entered the territory of modern Sumy region from Olbia in the next first century BC.

Acknowledgement. The authors express their gratitude to the respondents who, on condition of anonymity, provided detailed information about the finds of hoards and single coins analyzed in the article, to the reviewers and editors of the “East European Historical Bulletin” for their help in preparing the article for publication and friendly advice.

Funding. The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abramzon, M. G. & Frolova, N. A. (2008). *Korpus Bosporiskikh kladov antichnykh monet* [Corpus of Bosporan Hoards of Antique Coins]. Vol. 1. Kyiv: ADEF-Ukraina. [in Russian]

Anokhin, V. A. (2011). *Antichnyye monety Severnogo Prichernomor'ya: Katalog* [Antique Coins of the Northern Black Sea Coastal Region: Catalogue]. Kyiv: Stilos. [in Russian]

Bilyns'kyi, O. O. (2013). Novi materialy z Basivs'koho horodyshcha na Posulli [New Materials from Basiv Settlement in Posullia]. *Magisterium. Arkheolohichni studiyi*, (53), 28–31. [in Ukrainian]

Bulatovych, S. A. (2003). Pontyis'ki monety v Tyri [The Pontic Coins at Tyra]. *Zapysky istorychnoho fakul'tetu*, (14), 39–44. [in Ukrainian]

Callataÿ, F. (de) (2007). La révision de la chronologie des bronzes de Mithridate Eupator et ses conséquences sur la datation des monnayages et des sites du Bosphore Cimmérien. *Une coinè Pontique cités grecques, sociétés indigènes et empires mondiaux sur le littoral nord de la Mer noire (VII^e s. a.C. – III^e s. p.C.)*. 271–308. [in French]

Dobrovol's'kyi, A. V. (1952). Materialy do arkheolohichnoyi karty Dniprovs'koho Nadporizhzhya v mezhakh Zaporiz'koyi oblasti (Za materialamy Dniprohesivs'koyi ekspedytsiyi) [Materials for Archaeological Map of the Dnieper Nadporizhe within the Boundaries of Zaporizhzhia Region (Based on the materials of the Dniprohesiv expedition)]. *Arkheolohiya*, (7), 75–88. [in Ukrainian]

Gavrilov, A. V. (2001). Novyye nakhodki antichnykh monet v Yugo-Vostochnom Krymu. [New Finds of Ancient Coins in the South-Eastern Crimea]. *Bosproskiye issledovaniya*, (1), 185–206. [in Russian]

Gavrilov, A. V. (2010). Numizmaticheskiy material selishcha Kuru Bash (lager') i nekotoryye voprosy istorii Feodosii kontsa II–I vv. do n.e. [Numismatic Material from the Settlement of Kuru Bash (camp) and some Questions of the History of Feodosia at the End of the 2nd – the 1st Centuries BC]. *Stratum plus*, (6), 141–157. [in Russian]

Gilevich, A. M. (1968). Antichnyye inogorodniye monety iz raskopok Khersonesa. [Antique Nonresident Coins from the Excavations of Chersonese]. *NiS*, (3), 3–62. [in Russian]

Grierson, P. (1975). *Numismatics*. Oxford: University Press. [in English]

Hrechko, D. S. (2021). *Etnokul'turna istoriya naseleennya Dniprovs'koho lisostepovoho Livoberezhzhya skifs'koho chasu* [Ethnocultural History of the Population of the Dnieper Forest-Steppe Left Bank of the Scythian period]. (Doctor's thesis). Kyiv. [in Ukrainian]

Illins'ka, V. A. (1965). Basivs'ke horodyshche [Basiv Settlement]. *Arkheolohiya*, (XVIII), 48–76. [in Ukrainian]

Imhoof-Blumer, F. (1912). Die Kupferprägungen des mithradatischen Reiches und andere Münzen des Pontus und Paphlagoniens. *Numismatische Zeitschrift*, (45), 169–192. [in German]

Karyshkovskiy, P. O. (1988). *Monety Ol'vii. Ocherk denezhnogo obrashcheniya Severo-Zapadnogo Prichernomor'ya v antichnyuyu epokhu* [Coins of Olbia. An Outline of the Monetary Circulation of the North-Western Black Sea Region in Ancient Times]. Kyiv: Naukova dumka. [in Russian]

Komar, A.V. (2014). *Mechi Dneprostroya (k istorii nakhodki 1928 g.)* [Swords of Dneprostroy (on the History of the 1928 Find)]. *Rus' v IX – XII vekakh: obshchestvo, gosudarstvo, kul'tura*, (pp. 47–61). Moskva; Vologda: Drevnosti Severa. [in Russian]

Kotsur, V. (2017). *Istoriografiya ukraïns'koho skarboznavstva* [Historiography of the Ukrainian Treasurology]. *The Ukrainian Numismatic Annual*, (1), 15–32. [in Ukrainian]

Mielczarek, M. (1989). *Ancient Greek Coins Found in Central, Eastern and Northern Europe*. Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk-Łódź: Ossolineum. [in English]

Mielczarek, M. (2008). *On Greek Coin Finds from the Central European Barbaricum. Roman Coins outside the Empire. Ways and Phases, Contexts and Functions. Proceedings of the ESF/SCH Exploratory Workshop Radziwiłł Palace, Nieborów (Poland) 3 – 6 September 2005*, (pp. 11–34). Wetteren: Moneta. [in English]

Mielczarek, M. & Orlyk, V. (2019). *New Find of Olbian Coins. Tarashcha district, Kyiv region, Ukraine. Skhidnoievropeïskiy Istorychniy Visnyk – East European Historical Bulletin*, 13, 33–39. [in English]

Monety Amis, Pont. Mitridat VI Yevpator. URL: <https://violity.com/111026768-monety-g-amis-pont-mitridat-vi-evpator>

Myzhin, K., Stepanenko, S. & Sytiy, Yu. (2019). *Pro znakhidku pantikapeys'koho obolu na rann'oseredn'ovichnomu Shestovyts'komu horodyshchi* [On the Finding of the Pantikapaion Obol on the Early Medieval Hillfort of Shestovytsya]. *The Ukrainian Numismatic Annual*, (2), 15–26. [in Ukrainian]

Nikolaev, M. (2019). *Onomastyka ta prosopohrafiya u vidnovlenni monetnykh monohram (na prykladi Ol'viyi IV st. do n. e.)* [Onomastics and Protopography in Restoration of Coin Monograms (On the Example of Olbia IV Century B.C.)]. *The Ukrainian Numismatic Annual*, (3), 5–27. [in Ukrainian]

Nikolaev, M. (2020). *Khronolohiya ol'viys'kykh "Borysfeniv"* [The Chronology of Olbian 'Borysthenes']. *The Ukrainian Numismatic Annual*, (4), 14–42. [in Ukrainian]

Nikolayev, N. I. (2021). *Yeshcho odin shag k zaversheniyu diskussii o khronologii dekreta v chest' Protogena* [One More Step to the Completion of the Discussion on the Chronology of the Decree in Honour of Protogenes]. *Stratum plus*, (6), 169–181. [in Russian]

Nimenko, N. A. (2007). *Z istoriyi arkeolohichnykh doslidzhen' u Seredn'omu Posulli*. [From the History of Archaeological Research in Middle Posullia]. *Aktual'ni pytannya istoriyi, kul'turolohiyi ta kraïeznavstva: Materialy nauko- teoretychnoyi konferentsiyi vykladachiv, aspirantiv ta studentiv (23–24 kvitnya 2007 r.)*, (II, pp. 3–12). Sumy: SumDU. [in Ukrainian]

Orlyk, V. (2021a). *Do pytannya isnuvannya hroshovoho obihu v naseleennyi lisostepovoyi zony Pravoberezhnoyi Naddniproianshchyny v V–I st. do n.e.* [On the Question of the Existence of Monetary Circulation among the Population of the Forest-steppe Zone of the Right-Bank Naddniproianshchyna region in the Vth – the Ist Centuries BC]. *Problemy i perspektyvy numizmatyky Antychnoyi ta Ryms'koyi doby na terenakh Pivdenno-Skhidnoyi Yevropy: tezy dopovidey I Mizhnarodnoho fakhovoho seminaru, prysvyachenoho pam'yati V. O. Anokhina, 26 veresnya 2019 roku*, (pp. 9–11). Medzhybizh-Zhytomyr. [in Ukrainian]

Orlyk, V. M. (2021b). *Znakhidky antychnykh monet VI–I st. do n. e. v baseyni r. Tyasmyn* [The Find of Ancient Coins in the Tiasmyn River Basin from the VI to the Ist Century BC]. *The Ukrainian Numismatic Annual*, (5), 5–44. [in Ukrainian]

Orlyk, V. & Orlyk, S. (2020). *The New Find of a Bronze Coin of Kerkititis in the Middle Dnieper Ukraine (Horodysche District, Cherkasy Region, Ukraine)*. *Danubius*, (XXXVIII), 9–23. [in English]

Orlyk, V. (2020a). *Znakhidky v baseyni r. Tyasmynu midnykh monet Ol'viyi z Demetroyu ta "istriys'kym" variantom mis'koyi emblemy* [The Finds in the River Basin of Tiasmyn Copper Coins of Olbia with the Demeter and "Istrian" Variant of the City Emblem]. *The Ukrainian Numismatic Annual*, (4), 5–13. [in Ukrainian]

Orlyk, V. (2020b). *Znakhidky monet Pontiy's'koyi derzhavy Mitridata Yevpatora na terytoriyi Dniprov's'koho Pravoberezhnoho Lisostepu* [Finds of Coins of Kingdom of Pontus of Mithridates

Eupator on the Territory of the Dnipro Right-Bank Forest-Steppe]. *Ukrainian Historical Journal*, (6), 93–103. [in Ukrainian]

Orlyk, V. (2022). Skarb dribnykh monet Pantikapeyu ta Hermonassy kintsya VI – pochatku V st. do RKH z Pivnichno-Skhidnoyi Kirovohradshchyny [The Hoard of the Small Coins of Panticapaeum and Hermonassa of the End of the Sixth – the Beginning of the Fifth Centuries BC from the Northern-Eastern Kirovohrad Region]. *Sotsium. Dokument. Komunikatsiya*, 15, 106–121. [in Ukrainian]

Orlyk, V., Kotsur, V. & Tsyganenko, L. (2019). Klad ol'viyskikh monet "borisfenov", naydenny v Gorodishchenskom rayone Cherkasskoy oblasti vesnoy 2018 goda [Hoard of Olbian Coins of 'Borysthenes' Type Found in Spring of 2018 in the Region of Gorodishche Town, Oblast Cherkassy, Ukraine]. *Acta Archaeologica Lodziensia*, (65), 37–48. [in Russian]

Orlyk, V. M. (2021c). Novyy tip ol'viyskoy mednoy monety vremen Mitridata Yevpatora. [The New Type of the Olbian Copper Coin from the Time of Mithridates Eupator]. *Stratum plus*, (6), 87–92. [in Russian]

Peter, U. & Stolba, V. F. (2022). Balkanraum und nördliches Schwarzmeergebiet. in: International Numismatic Council. *SuRevey of Numismatic Research 2014–2020, I & II*, 188–251. [in German]

Shestopal, A. V. (2007). *Skarby Cherkashchyny* [Hoards of Cherkasy Region]. Cherkasy: Vyd. Androshchuk P.S., 120 p. [in Ukrainian]

Skoryy, S. & Zimovets, R. (2014). K probleme tovarno-denezhnykh otnosheniy u naseleniya Vostochnoyevropeyskoy Lesostepi v skifskuyu epokhu [On the Problem of Commodity-Money Relations among the Population of the East European Forest-Steppe in the Scythian Era]. *Naukovi zapysky Kirovohrads'koho derzhavnoho pedahohichnoho universytetu imeni Volodymyra Vynnychenka. Seriya: Istorychni nauky*, 21, 141–156 [in Russian]

Stolba, V. F. (2005). Bronzovyy chekan Mitridata VI Yevpatora: neskol'ko zamechaniy otnositel'no novoy khronologii [Bronze Coinage of Mithridates VI Eupator: a Few Remarks on the New Chronology]. *Trinadtsataya vserossiyskaya numizmaticheskaya konferentsiya. Tezisy dokladov i soobshcheniy*, (pp. 29–31). [in Russian]

*The article was received September 03, 2022.
Article recommended for publishing 23/11/2022.*