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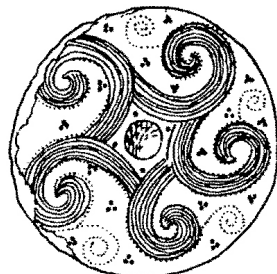
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LATE IRON AGE BROOCHES PRESUMABLY DISCOVERED IN THE DACIAN FORTRESS FROM TILIȘÇA (SIBIU COUNTY)¹

Nica Ciubotaru²

Abstract: *The aim of this article is to present some Late Iron Age brooches that were discovered by the means of illegal metal detecting somewhere in Southern/South-Western Transylvania. According to available data, the brooches, along with other artefacts, may have been looted from the Dacian fortress on the Cățânaș hill from Tilișça, Sibiu county. Given that the brooches have been decontextualised, an interpretation of this assemblage could not be proposed. Still, the typological analysis of the brooches allowed me to extract new information and to formulate some observations regarding the brooches and dress style of pre-Roman Dacia from the second half of the 2nd c. BC until the beginning of the 2nd c. AD. Since the chronology and nature of the assemblage of the looted brooches correspond to that of the fibulae discovered during the archaeological research of the Dacian site from Tilișça, I have analysed the latter as well. However, because a direct connection with the Dacian fortress from Tilișça cannot be asserted, the brooches from the assemblage could not be interpreted together with the ones found with certainty on the site.*

Keywords: *brooches, typology, Late Iron Age, Dacian brooches, Central European brooches, Germanic brooches.*

Introduction

The present study focuses on twenty Late Iron Age brooches discovered by illegal metal detection in one or more archaeological site(s) from Southern/South-Western Transylvania. Since the police investigation is still ongoing, the context of discovery is uncertain as the culprits have not yet been identified. The person who has brought the brooches, along with other types of contemporary artefacts to The National Union Museum Alba Iulia³, said that they were found in the Dacian fortress from Tilișça, Sibiu county, but has disclaimed responsibility for the discovery.

The aim of this study is to analyse the brooches by establishing their type, area of origin and distribution, and chronology. Given that the objects have been decontextualised, little else can be said about their significance for the individuals that possessed them, their production and use, or about the site(s) where they have been found. As such, an interpretation of the finds could not be proposed.

For the reason that there is a strong possibility that they were found in the Dacian fortress of Tilișça, I have also looked at the brooches discovered through archaeological excavations

¹ This paper is based on the masters thesis I have defended at the Babeș-Bolyai University in June, 2022. I want to thank my coordinators, Dr. Liliana Mateescu-Suciu (Babeș-Bolyai University) and Dr. Aurel Rustoiu (Institute of Archaeology and Art History, Romanian Academy Cluj Branch), for having helped me throughout the entire process of learning about the Late Iron Age.

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³ I would like to thank Dr. Gabriel Tiberiu Rustoiu, the director of the The National Union Museum Alba Iulia, for granting me access to the artefacts.

of the site and they do share the same characteristics (such as chronology or area of origin). However, using this to confirm the place of origin of the looted brooches is problematic, especially because most of them are typical artefacts for Dacia between the second half of the 2nd BC and the 1st c. AD, meaning that they may be representative for any other similar site with the one from Tilișca. It is also possible that this assemblage comprises brooches found on more than one site, mainly because twenty is a huge number if one looks at the published brooches from Tilișca, which are twenty-two in total. Additionally, I refrain from saying explicitly that these brooches belong to the said Dacian fortress, because I have not analysed the other types of artefacts from the assemblage. Hopefully, once the results of the inquiry will be definitive, the rest of the artefacts will be published and the shortcomings caused by the lack of context will be diminished.

La Tène C scheme brooches

There are three La Tène C scheme brooches in the assemblage. The first two form a pair (**nos. 1–2**⁴), a fact indicated by the chain segments still attached to the superior chords of the brooches and the presence in the assemblage of other three identical chain segments (**no. 3**). Their morphology (the bilateral spring with a superior chord and the reverted foot clasped to the upper bow and decorated in the middle with a knob) brings to mind the “Mötschwil” type, specific in the LT C2 phase in Europe⁵. The absence on brooches **nos. 1–2** of the moulded decoration on the reverted foot in the area of the catchplate (omnipresent, with few exceptions, on “Mötschwil” type variants and its derivatives) or, perhaps, the width of the upper bow (much more similar to that of “Jarak” type *fibulae*, for example), indicate that the items in question are more likely “Mötschwil” derivatives.

Aurel Rustoiu⁶ identified some brooches on the territory of Romania that seem to represent such derivatives (Rustoiu 2b1/“Corlate” type). These were found exclusively in funerary contexts belonging to the so-called Padea-Panaghjurski Kolonii group (South of the Carpathians) or in the area of the Poieniști-Lucașeuca culture (East of the Carpathians), where they are dated in the LT D1 phase. However, the brooches **nos. 1–2** have a slightly different morphology from that of the “Corlate” type *fibulae*. Closer analogies are to be found at Zimnicea, but unfortunately the brooches in question were not discovered *in situ* either⁷.

This being the case, a precise dating of such brooches cannot be proposed. The “Corlate” type *fibulae* were dated in the second half of the 2nd and the first half of the 1st c. BC based on the fact that they derive from the “Mötschwil” type and because one such brooch was found with a Dyrhachian drachm in a ritual context at Conțești – “Lacul lui Bârcă” (Argeș county)⁸. Given the similarities between the brooches **nos. 1–2** with those of “Corlate” type, they can be dated loosely in the LT D1 phase.

The third La Tène C scheme brooch (**nos. 4**) is of “Gura Padinii”/Rustoiu 2b2/Spânu 1.3/Zirra 41 type⁹. These *fibulae* are usually found in funerary contexts belonging to the Padea-Panaghjurski Kolonii group, in the regions of Oltenia and North-Western Bulgaria (at Desa, Căciulătești, Gura Padinii, and Sofronievo, Pleven, Altimir, Pavolce respectively), to which we

⁴ The brooches (from the assemblage) are referred to in the text and in the Plates I–IV by their catalogue number.

⁵ MÁRTON 2004, 289–291.

⁶ RUSTOIU 1997, 34–35; RUSTOIU 1997a, 152–153.

⁷ SPÂNU 2014, 114–115, Pl. 18/1, 5.

⁸ RUSTOIU 1997, 35; VULPE/POPESCU 1976, 219, Fig. 5/1, Fig. 7.

⁹ RUSTOIU 1997, 34–36; SPÂNU 2012, 42; ZIRRA 2017, 68.

can add a brooch supposedly discovered in Transylvania, which is kept in the collection of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* from Vienna¹⁰.

The morphology of this type and, especially, the decoration of the reverted foot with three mouldings (consisting, usually, of a central knob with a collar on each side), led D. Spânu to believe that “Gura Padinii” and the aforementioned “Corlate” types comprise a regional group of brooches he called “Corlate-Gura Padinii”, which is derived from the “morphological family Mötschwil-Kostrzewski B”¹¹. According to the author, the prototypes for this regional group are the “Kastav” and “Picugi” types from the Northern Adriatic and Dinaric areas, which made their way to the Lower Danube Basin through Central Europe. The specimens from the latter region, despite being few in number, do seem to be closer morphologically to the “Corlate-Gura Padinii” group¹².

A. Rustoiu dated the “Gura Padinii” brooches in the second half of the 2nd and the first half of the 1st c. BC, as is the case of the chronology of the “Corlate” presented earlier¹³. The *fibula* of this type from Căciulătești (Dolj county) was found together with a possible “Nauheim” brooch, which may confirm the prolonging of the dating to the 1st c. BC¹⁴. The LT D1 dating is also confirmed by the bronze “Gura Padinii” brooch from a settlement from Budapest¹⁵.

Unfortunately, it cannot be determined whether brooch **no. 4** was found in a funerary context associated with the Padea-Panaghjurski Kolonii group, or in the Dacian environment. The brooch may have been imported from the area South of the Carpathians, or it may have been produced in a Dacian workshop by a craftsman familiar with this meridional style.

La Tène D scheme brooches

The majority of the brooches from the assemblage are of La Tène D scheme. The brooch **no. 5** is of “Nauheim” type. I believe it can be attributed to the Striwe I1.1 or I1.2 subtype, as the specimen in question is also made of iron and has a rather wide bow¹⁶. The iron “Nauheim” brooches are specific for the Eastern Celts, being well documented in *oppida* such as those from Stradonice and Staré Hradisko, but they are also widespread in the Przeworsk culture area¹⁷.

A glass bead has remained fixed to the pin of the brooch, a fact that is not unusual, since other adornments with attached glass beads have been found in Late Iron Age Dacia. One example is the hoard from Sângeru de Pădure (Ernei, Mureș county), which contains, besides other objects, a nail pendant (type Rustoiu 2¹⁸) with an attached glass bead (identical to the one on the **no. 5** brooch pin)¹⁹. The presence of ten other nail pendants and an equal number of glass beads in the hoard indicates the possibility that all of the pendants were adorned with beads²⁰. Additionally, from the no. 1 hoard from Tilișca – “Progadia Veche” comes another glass bead, which remained stuck in the link of a chain with nail pendants²¹.

¹⁰ RUSTOIU 1997, 34–36, Fig. 20; SPÂNU 2020, 104–108, Fig. 11.

¹¹ SPÂNU 2020, 104–108.

¹² SPÂNU 2020, Fig. 12/1–4.

¹³ RUSTOIU 1997, 35.

¹⁴ RUSTOIU 1997, 35; SPÂNU 2020, 104.

¹⁵ HANNY 2017, 73–74, Fig. 14/3.

¹⁶ STRIEWE 1996, 67–68.

¹⁷ STRIEWE 1996, 68–70.

¹⁸ RUSTOIU 1996, 122–123.

¹⁹ My thanks go to Dr. Daniel Cioată (County Museum Mureș) for having provided me with this information.

²⁰ A similar hoard was recently discovered in Maramureș county, which also contains nail pendants and glass beads, although none of them were joined in the same manner (<https://adevarul.ro/stiri-locale/baia-mare/tezaur-dacic-din-argint-descoperit-in-maramures-2170843.html>; accessed on the 1st of December 2022).

²¹ SPÂNU 2012, 247, Pl. 153/4.

Given these examples, I tend to believe that the Dacian communities from Transylvania shared a preference for such type of jewellery in the LT D1 phase, when the aforementioned hoards and the “Nauheim” brooch in question are dated²². The fact that this habit of attaching glass beads to various types of body ornaments is not limited to silver hoards, which represent a very particular cultural phenomenon, but can be found on objects such as an iron brooch, may suggest a more widespread practice/fashion taste among the Dacians. Additionally, the presence of a glass bead on an object which is most probably an import from Central Europe, may suggest that the individual who owned it, adapted it to his/her preference or according to the local dress style. However, until more such finds (with a well documented context!) are analysed and published, this remains only a supposition.

Two other brooches from the assemblage (**nos. 6–7**) seem to represent different derivatives of the “Nauheim” type, a fact indicated by the bilateral spring of four turns with an inferior chord and the bow that tapers towards the foot. Similar brooches (each with a slightly different appearance) were discovered all over Dacia, such as those included by V.V. Zirra in the subtype 46d and 46e²³. Various Dacian *fibulae* identified by Aurel Rustoiu as local “Nauheim” variants were dated by the author starting with the second half of the 1st c. BC and the beginning of the 1st c. AD, based on the contexts in which such finds were discovered in the fortresses from Divici and Căpâlna²⁴.

Although it is plausible that the brooches **nos. 6–7** are “Nauheim” derivatives, it cannot be asserted without a doubt, since they have such particular appearances, for which no exact analogies can be provided. The heterogeneity of what Zirra calls subtypes 46d-e or Rustoiu’s “Nauheim”/“Nauheim” derivatives, poses a problem which may be solved only through a refined typological analysis of these *fibulae*. Such a study may help identify different subtypes, information which may indicate regional variances and answer the question regarding their connection with the “Nauheim” type.

No. 8 is another *fibula* typical for the LT D1 phase in Central Europe. The fact that it is a one-piece brooch and its oval “spoon-bow” head hides the spring denotes that it belongs to the “Kostrzewski J” type (subtype 2). According to M. Karwowski, this type is the equivalent of the bronze *Schüsselfibeln* (subtype I in the typology of Demetz) from the Alpine region²⁵. The “Kostrzewski J” type is the most widespread dress accessory in the so-called “Boii coinage zone”, term that refers to the dominant monetary system in Central Europe during the LT D1 phase²⁶. As such, the sites with the highest concentrations of “spoon-bow” *fibulae* are the *oppida* from Oberleiserberg, Stradonice and Staré Hradisko²⁷. These brooches can be found in other areas as well, but they are most numerous in the funerary contexts belonging to Oksywie and Przeworsk cultures (and it appears that they were more popular in the Oksywie area)²⁸.

If *Schüsselfibeln* “Kostrzewski J” brooches are scarce on the territory of Late Iron Age Dacia (type Rustoiu 14)²⁹, “spoon-bow” *fibulae* are more than well-represented through the regional variant called “spoon-brooches” (type Rustoiu 16/Spânu 2.2/Zirra 50)³⁰. The latter imitate the Western and Central European specimens, as they are made of two metal pieces, hence

²² See RUSTOIU 2020 for the chronology of Dacian silver hoards.

²³ ZIRRA 2017, 77–78, 230–231. However, the author includes in this category some brooches of a different type, namely the ones with a rhomboid bow (type Rustoiu 11) – see RUSTOIU 1997, 44–45.

²⁴ RUSTOIU 1997, 13.

²⁵ KARWOWSKI 2020, 329–333; DEMETZ 1999, 65–67.

²⁶ KARWOWSKI 2020, 327; KARWOWSKI/MILITKÝ 2016, 51–54.

²⁷ KARWOWSKI 2020, 327–331.

²⁸ KARWOWSKI 2020, 331–333; MACIAŁOWICZ 2017, 72.

²⁹ RUSTOIU 1997, 46–47.

³⁰ RUSTOIU 1997, 48–50; SPÂNU 2009, 72–77; SPÂNU 2012, 47–49; ZIRRA 2017, 82–86.

they are dated much later (somewhere between the end of the 1st c. BC and the third quarter of the 1st c. AD). The “spoon-bow” *fibulae* are dated in the LT D1b phase in Central Europe (the second quarter of the 1st c. BC), marking the last phase of existence of the *oppida*, while in the areas of the Oksywie-Przeworsk cultures they appear in contexts of which many are dated later, in the second half of the 1st c. BC³¹. As such, I believe the imported “spoon-bow” *fibulae* on the Dacian territory (brooch **no. 8** included) can be dated from the second quarter/the half of the 1st c. BC until the local counterparts took over, at the end of the century or, perhaps, the beginning of the next one³².

Brooches **no. 9** and **no. 10** are rather difficult to determine, but they do seem to be two different distant variants of “Kostrzewski K” *fibulae* (or *geknickte Fibeln*). The brooches of this type usually have a bilateral spring of four-six turns with a superior chord, a bow that is angled twice (once near the head and once in the middle) and the catchplate is usually open³³. Michael Meyer³⁴ identified a large group (with many local subgroups) specific for the southern Scandinavian area and many other regional variants at the south-western periphery of the main area of distribution. Therefore, these *fibulae* are typical for the final part of the pre-Roman phase of the Przeworsk, Oksywie and Jastorf cultures³⁵. In the area occupied by the Celtic tribes, south of the main distribution area of “Kostrzewski K” brooches, the latter are rarer, which is why initially they have been considered local variants that had appeared under the Germanic influence. As such, “Kostrzewski K” *fibulae* and their Central European derivatives, of Almgren 18a1 type, have been found in some *oppida* from Moravia, Bohemia and Bavaria³⁶.

No brooches from pre-Roman Dacia can be ascribed with precision to this type. On the other hand, one “Kostrzewski K” *fibula* was identified by Daniel Spânu at Bălănești (Gorj county), in the area of the Padea-Panaghjurski Kolonii group³⁷. The author believes that this brooch might have appeared there as a result of interactions with the Germanic population (the Poieniști-Lucașeuca culture) East of the Carpathians, since one such object was found in a Poieniști-Lucașeuca settlement from Kruglik³⁸.

Nonetheless, I believe that some brooches from Dacia may represent distant “Kostrzewski K” variants, such as the two brooches from the assemblage discussed here. For instance, the **no. 9** brooch has precise analogies in the Dacian environment, namely at the settlement from Tipia Ormenișului (Brașov county)³⁹. The **no. 10** *fibula*, which resembles the “Kostrzewski K” brooches even less than the previous one⁴⁰, has some analogies at Cernat (Covasna county)⁴¹, Deva (Hunedoara County)⁴², Sighișoara-Wietenberg (Mureș county)⁴³, the Șimian Island (Mehedinți county)⁴⁴. The latter brooches are furthest from the Germanic

³¹ KARWOWSKI 2020, 333–335; KYSELA 2020, 52–54, 64; ŁUCZKIEWICZ 2020, 247–251.

³² RUSTOIU 1997, p. 47. It is also worth noting that the imported “spoon-bow” brooches spotted in Dacia are made of bronze, whilst brooch **no. 8** is made of iron, which is a specificity of this type in Central Europe (see DEMETZ 1999, 72).

³³ VÖLLING 2005, 105.

³⁴ MEYER 2001.

³⁵ MEYER 2001, 161–165; SPÂNU 2018, 242.

³⁶ DEMETZ 1999, 117, 195; KYSELA 2020, 59; SPÂNU 2018, 242.

³⁷ SPÂNU 2018, 241–242.

³⁸ SPÂNU 2018, 241–242; IARMULSCHI/MUNTEANU 2020.

³⁹ COSTEA ET AL. 2006, 237; COSTEA ET AL. 2006a, Pl. CLIX/11–13.

⁴⁰ SPÂNU 2018, 241. See the discussion on the possibility that brooches with a similar morphology may be of “Kostrzewski K” type.

⁴¹ SZÉKELY 1983, 145, Fig. 3/1.

⁴² RUSTOIU 1997, 184, Fig. 28/3.

⁴³ RUSTOIU 1997, 186, Fig. 30/10.

⁴⁴ POPILIAN 1999, 61, Fig. 9/9; RUSTOIU 1997, Fig. 27/7.

type in question and it is possible that more *fibulae* from Dacia, with no relation to “Kostrzewski K” variants, may have more or less sharp angled bows and still represent other types. On the other hand, brooch **no. 9**, with the moulding that seems to decorate the bow, is much closer to the “prototypes” (although the term is rather improper, since this category of brooches is characterised by its heterogeneity). The locations of such brooches at Tipia Ormenişului and now possibly at Tilişca, may suggest that they were imported to Dacia from the Germanic population East of the Carpathians (the Poienişti-Lucaşeuca culture). If true, this could have happened in the LT D1 phase, when the brooch from Kruglik is dated, while the *fibula* from Bălăneşti is believed to have been imported around the middle of the 1st c. BC⁴⁵. In the Germanic environment from Northern Europe, the “Kostrzewski K” brooches were in use in the LT D1-LT D2 phases, while in Central Europe they seem to have appeared at the transition from LT D1a to LT D1b, remaining in use almost until the end of the 1st c. BC together with their derivatives, the Almgren 18a1 type⁴⁶.

The brooch **no. 11** may be attributed to type Feugère 4c1/Gebhard 26c⁴⁷. This specimen cannot be ascribed to any type from the existing typologies for the brooches from Dacia. Normally, the open catchplate would allow identifying the brooch as being of the types Rustoiu 6 or Zirra 49⁴⁸. However, subtype Rustoiu 6a refers to brooches with superior chords and 6b represents brooches with internal chords and decorated bows, while Zirra differentiates the subtypes based on the number of coils and the chord type: subtype 49a has a spring of more than ten turns and an inferior chord, while 49b (= Rustoiu 6a) has four to six coils and a superior chord. Brooch **no. 11** has a spring of four turns with an inferior chord and is rather small compared to the specimens identified by both authors as the “open catchplate brooches”. There are, however, similar brooches in Dacia⁴⁹, which may indicate, as in the case of “Nauheim” brooches discussed earlier, that the existing typologies could be refined.

The most precise analogies I could find up to this point are some brooches from Les Causses area from Occitania and the funerary contexts associated with the *oppidum* from Manching⁵⁰. Feugère argues that these represent typical protohistorical brooches that are to be found especially in sanctuaries from *oppida*, and which were in use between c. 80/60 and 20/10 BC⁵¹. Aurel Rustoiu noted that in Dacia, the brooches with an open catchplate were in use between the 1st c. BC and the beginning of the 2nd c. AD, while the bilateral spring with an inferior chord appeared somewhere around the middle of the 1st c. BC⁵², although this may have happened slightly earlier, since there is no way to be sure the “Nauheim” brooches (on which the author is basing this chronology) started coming in Dacia only after their popularity diminished in the rest of Europe. Therefore, the brooch **no. 11** may have appeared in Dacia starting with the LT D1b phase, although it is yet unclear whether it is imported or locally manufactured, since its morphology is rather simple and cannot be connected to a specific area of origin.

The specimen **no. 12** is the only bronze brooch from the assemblage. Once again, it cannot be ascribed to any type from the existing typologies for the brooches from Dacia or from other regions, for that matter. The cross-mouldings that decorate the highly arched bow

⁴⁵ IARMULSCHI/MUNTEANU 2020, 154.

⁴⁶ BRANDT 2001, 90–92; VÖLLING 2005, 107–110; DEMETZ 1999, p. 194–195; KYSELA 2020, 59.

⁴⁷ FEUGÈRE 1985, 200–203; GEBHARD 1991, 23, 87–91.

⁴⁸ RUSTOIU 1997, 39–40; ZIRRA 2017, 80–82.

⁴⁹ See, for example, ZIRRA 2017, Pl. 42/13 (brooch from Craiva, Alba county, included by the author in subtype 49b) or Pl. 106/8, 108/8 (brooches from Popeşti, Giurgiu county, included in subtype 49a and 49b respectively).

⁵⁰ See note 46.

⁵¹ FEUGÈRE 1985, 200–203.

⁵² RUSTOIU 1997, 11–12, Fig. 2–3.

bring to mind the Almgren 2a brooches⁵³, but they do not mark the same steep transition between bow and foot as is the case with said type. The brooch does not belong to the category of strongly profiled brooches either, since it lacks a hooked superior chord, and it cannot represent a local variant of this Roman type, since all the locally produced variants remained true to their prototype⁵⁴.

The only morphologically similar bronze brooch from Dacia was found in the *dava* from Poiana (on the Siret Valley), which does not have, unfortunately, a clear context of discovery⁵⁵. It may be possible that they were manufactured in a local workshop, but it cannot be pinpointed, and since the two brooches are not identical, they may have been produced by different craftsmen. The similarity cannot be disregarded, however, as it may indicate a new type of brooches specific for Late Iron Age Dacia. The brooch **no. 12** cannot be dated with precision, since it could have been in use anytime between the second third of the 1st c. BC and the beginning of the 2nd c. AD, based on the chronology of the bilateral spring of four turns, discussed earlier.

The rest of the specimens from the assemblage represent typical brooches for Dacia. *Fibulae nos. 13–14* belong to the type called “open catchplate brooches” (subtype Rustoiu 6a/Zirra 49b), discussed above. This type is characteristic for Late Iron Age Western and Central Europe and have a wide distribution range⁵⁶. East of Dacia, such brooches are found in contexts belonging to the Zarubineck culture, where they are dated starting with the second half of the 1st c. BC and ending, in some cases, with the beginning of the 1st c. AD⁵⁷. The brooches of this type are widespread in Dacia too, many of the specimens being made of iron, which made Aurel Rustoiu argue that many were produced in local workshops⁵⁸. Zirra noticed that these *fibulae* are usually found in settlements, the sites with the most numerous specimens being the ones from Popești and Poiana⁵⁹. They seem to have been used during the 1st c. BC, especially in its first half, as proven by the contexts of discovery at Cărlomănești (Buzău county), Satu Nou-“Valea lui Voicu” (Constanța county) or Brad (Bacău county)⁶⁰.

The *fibula no. 15* can be ascribed to what Aurel Rustoiu calls “military brooches”⁶¹. This term is rather confusing, since it refers to brooches that are similar, but considered to have different origins. The first subtype (Rustoiu 9a) is dedicated to local iron and bronze *fibulae*, dated from the middle of the 1st c. BC until the end of the 1st c. AD, while the second (Rustoiu 9b) refers to imported items, namely the “soldier brooches” (Riha 1.6), specific for the Roman military environment from the second half of the 1st c. AD until the end of the next century⁶².

Building on M. Babeș’s observations, Rustoiu argued that since subtype 9a brooches are found in 1st c. BC contexts in Dacia, while their Roman counterparts (Rustoiu 9b) appear during the second half of 1st c. AD in settlements such as those from Poiana or Craiva, the first served as prototypes for the latter, *i.e.* the Romans discovered the model when they reached the

⁵³ VÖLLING 1998, 39–42.

⁵⁴ See the strongly profiled brooches manufactured locally in settlements like Poiana (Galați county) or Malaja Kapanja (Ukraine) in RUSTOIU 1997, 52, 110 – List 19, Fig. 58–59.

⁵⁵ TEODOR/ȚAU 1996, 77, Fig. 11/1, cat. no. 114; the context of discovery is “section K, grid square 14”, but it was not specified in which of the two Late Iron Age levels it was found. The authors have dated it in the 1st c. BC, but no reason was given.

⁵⁶ RUSTOIU, 1997, 39, 66 (note 86).

⁵⁷ AMBROZ 1966, 22; PAČKOVA 2006, 82–84.

⁵⁸ RUSTOIU, 1997, 39.

⁵⁹ ZIRRA 2017, 81, 323–324.

⁶⁰ ZIRRA 2017, 81; BABEȘ 1975, 134–136; RUSTOIU 1997, 39.

⁶¹ RUSTOIU, 1997, 42.

⁶² RUSTOIU, 1997, 42; RIHA 1979, 59–61; ETTLINGER 1973, 41.

North-Pontic and Lower Danube region and then reproduced it on a large scale⁶³. An additional argument would be that the first subtype is embodied by iron and bronze brooches, while the second one is represented exclusively by bronze specimens⁶⁴. However, in the Roman world the “soldier” brooches were manufactured from iron too, although less frequently (*e.g.* at Vindonissa or Baden), specimens that were not too different from the bronze ones⁶⁵.

Although the theory is appealing, both subtypes may have appeared independently of each other, since their configuration is of La Tène tradition⁶⁶, the simplicity and practicality of which can be the reason for their vast distribution both in the Roman world and *Barbaricum*⁶⁷.

The fibulae nos. 16–17 can belong to the type Rustoiu 10 (“brooches with a chord wrapped around the bow”)⁶⁸. Brooches of subtype 10a have an open catchplate, 10b *fibulae* have tall rectangular or triangular catchplates, while the 10c subtype is characterised by a decorated foot and the reduced size. I believe that the two items might have formed a pair, despite the lack of a pairing chain and the slight morphological differences, because both seem to have two cross-mouldings on their feet⁶⁹. Therefore, the brooches belong to the latter subtype. The problem with such an identification is the fact that while the Rustoiu 10a-b brooches are widespread all over Dacia, subtype 10c is found only East of the Carpathians, in the *davae* from Brad and Răcăţu (Bacău county) on the Siret Valley and in the settlement from Dumbrava (Iaşi county)⁷⁰. Therefore, the absence of 10c brooches in Transylvania may suggest either that I have identified them erroneously, or that they do represent imported object from outside the Carpathian range.

Rustoiu 10a-b brooches have been dated between the end of the 1st c. BC and the middle/the third quarter of 1st c. AD, while 10c brooches appeared outside the Carpathians in the last quarter of the 1st c. AD and remained in use until the wars with the Romans. Brooches that are similar to the pre-Roman 10c subtype have been discovered both in Roman Dacia and in contemporary contexts from *Barbaricum*⁷¹. The presence of the latter in such contexts (dated sometime at the beginning of the 2nd c. AD) may indicate the perpetuation of a pre-Roman dress style in the area.

Objects **nos. 18–21** are fragments belonging to brooches. The bow **no. 18** could have belonged to a brooch of type Rustoiu 7a or 9a, while **no. 19** could have been a brooch of types Rustoiu 6a/7a/9a/10a-b. All these types of *fibulae* can be dated loosely between the 1st c. BC and the beginning of the 2nd c. AD⁷². The spring **no. 20** could have belonged to any type of brooch dated between the second half of the 2nd c. BC and the beginning of the 2nd c. AD⁷³. The item **no. 21** could have been an open catchplate (datable between the 1st c. BC

⁶³ BABEŞ 1975, 134; RUSTOIU, 1997, 42.

⁶⁴ See, for example, the brooches from Craiva, Orlea, Piatra Neamţ-Bâtca Doamnei or Poiana in RUSTOIU 1997, 42, 103–104 (notes 7, 17, 19), Fig. 37/12–14; TEODOR/ȚAU 1996, Fig. 15/3, 67; 16/2; 27/3.

⁶⁵ ETTLINGER 1973, 41.

⁶⁶ RIHA 1979, 55.

⁶⁷ Brooches which could be ascribed to subtype Rustoiu 9a that have been found in early Sarmatian graves, late Scythian cemeteries from Crimea, as well as in the areas of the Zarubineck, Przeworsk and Oksywie cultures. The *fibulae* from the Zarubineck culture are dated between the middle of the 1st c. BC until the beginning of the 1st c. AD; see AMBROZ 1966, 23–25; KASPAROVA 1976, 139; BÂRCĂ 2005, 124–125; BÂRCĂ 2011, 9–10.

⁶⁸ RUSTOIU 1997, 43–44.

⁶⁹ The protuberances that seem to be decorative mouldings may have been caused by corrosion (which has affected the springs too). However, the presence of two protuberances on each brooch is too much of a coincidence to be overlooked.

⁷⁰ RUSTOIU 1997, 43, 105 – List 10, Fig. 38, 40/9–11.

⁷¹ COCIŞ 2004, 41–42, Pl. II/13–18.

⁷² RUSTOIU 1997, 39–44.

⁷³ RUSTOIU 1997, 11, 158 – Fig. 2.

and the beginning of the 2nd c. AD) or a catchplate with a reverted foot (which went out of fashion in the middle of the 1st c. BC)⁷⁴.

Concluding remarks

The brooches from the assemblage were clearly discovered in one or more Dacian site(s) dated between the second half of the 2nd BC and the 1st c. AD. Most of them mirror the brooch types that are typical for Late Iron Age Dacia, while the exceptions permit the identification of new local types, whether they are variants of widespread Late La Tène brooches or original local products.

The LaTène C scheme *fibulae* (**nos. 1–2, 4**), dated in the LT D1 phase, represent interesting specimens. The “Mötschwil” derivatives **nos. 1–2** form a chained (**no. 3**) pair, which is special by itself, since paired brooches are to be found mainly in silver hoards⁷⁵. Since these *fibulae* do not have exact analogies in Dacia, with two possible exceptions, a new subtype of local “Mötschwil” derivatives can be defined. Unfortunately, since they do not have a context of discovery (similarly to the analogous brooches from Zimnicea), there is no way of bringing new data to the table regarding their chronology.

The lack of context is most unfortunate in the case of the “Gura Padinii” brooch (**no. 4**). This type of *fibulae* is usually found in funerary contexts of the Padea-Panagjurski Kolonii group, which is why it would have been relevant to see whether such finds appear in contexts from Dacian settlements and, if they do, when exactly does that happen and what artefacts are associated with them. It would have been equally important if it were found in a Padea-Panagjurski Kolonii group context, as it could have enriched the repertory of this type of discoveries in South-Western Transylvania⁷⁶. However, the latter seems less plausible at the moment, because, to my knowledge, none of the other artefacts that were brought to the museum along with the brooches are related to the Padea-Panagjurski Kolonii group.

The LaTène D scheme *fibulae* from the assemblage are the most numerous. At least two of the brooches dated in the LT D1 phase, namely **nos. 5** and **8** (of “Nauheim” and “Kostrzewski J”/Schüsselfibel types), are Central European imports. A bead has remained fixed to the pin of the “Nauheim” brooch, which is not news, since this practice of attaching glass beads to adornments is encountered in other Dacian contexts (such as silver hoards) dating in the same chronological phase. This detail opens a window into the dress style of the Dacians, allowing us to see how both local and foreign objects are being adapted to serve individual/collective cultural preferences.

Two of the items from the assemblage (**nos. 9–10**) show that “foreign” brooches did not appear in Dacia only from the West in the final phase of LT D1. At least one (**no. 9**), if not both, is a *fibula* of a Germanic origin, namely of the “Kostrzewski K” type. I think that at least the brooch **no. 9** was imported from the Germanic peoples settled East of the Carpathians, namely the Poieniști-Lucașeuca culture, where one *fibula* of this type was identified. If my interpretation of the brooch(es) was correct, it appears that a new *fibula* type can be added to the existing typologies for Dacia. Additionally, if the **nos. 9–10** (and other brooches from Dacia I considered to be analogous) do originate from the Poieniști-Lucașeuca area, we could start to look at the interactions between the Dacians from inside the Carpathian range with the *Bastarnae* from the East in a new light.

The bronze brooch (**no. 12**) and its counterpart discovered in the settlement from Poiana on the Siret Valley indicate another new type for Late Iron Age Dacia. Until analogies

⁷⁴ RUSTOIU 1997, 12, 159 – Fig. 3.

⁷⁵ RUSTOIU 1997, 80–82, Table 1.

⁷⁶ RUSTOIU 2005.

in other parts of Europe will be found, I believe that these brooches can be considered original local products.

The rest of the items from the assemblage represent typical brooches for Dacia and can be dated from the 1st c. BC onwards. In some instances, I have insisted on the necessity of refining the existing brooch typologies, however little new information it may provide. This need became poignant when I tried to discuss the “Nauheim” derivatives (**nos. 13–14**), or the items that are considered to be pre-Roman “soldier” brooches (a category to which I have assigned the brooch **no. 15**), or the *fibula* **no. 11**, for which I could not find a suitable type in the literature regarding Dacia, even though its morphology is nothing but common in the Late Iron Age Europe. The in-depth analysis of the aforementioned brooches would not change the existing typologies and chronology, but they might provide more data regarding local/regional identities.

If the discovery contexts of these brooches were known, much more information could have been obtained by studying them. To interpret these objects as if they were definitely found in the Dacian fortress from Tilișca would be to falsely contextualise them, at least until the truth regarding their origin will come to light. Of course, as mentioned in the introduction, the chronology and nature of the brooches presented here correspond to those of the brooches discovered during the archaeological research of the site from Tilișca⁷⁷.

At Tilișca, the La Tène C scheme is represented by an iron brooch of Rustoiu 2c type (Pl. V/1), which was imported from the Poieniști-Lucașeuca area and is dated in the LT D1 phase⁷⁸. Three other brooches, this time in silver (type Rustoiu 1c-d), belong to the no. 1 hoard from “Progadia Veche”, at the base of the Cățanaș hill on which the fortress is situated, dated in the same phase⁷⁹.

However, these brooches are not the earliest ones found in or near the site. The item in question is a very unusual bronze specimen with a bow with two mouldings in the shape of spherical knobs with a collar on each side; each knob is decorated with two intersecting wavy lines (Pl. V/2)⁸⁰. This brooch is still a puzzle, since it has no exact analogies and cannot be dated based on the context of discovery⁸¹. The ornamentation on the knobs resembles (but is definitely not identical to) the motifs from some Middle La Tène C Scordiscan dress accessories, brooches included⁸².

The previously discussed brooch may not necessarily be of Scordiscan origin, but the next item may be so, at least based on the objects with which it was associated (a fragment from the handle of a bronze *simpulum* of “Pescate” type with analogies at Mala Vrbica, a bronze bracelet with analogies in the Scordiscan environment and some fragments from glass bracelets, all of which allowed a dating from the end of the 2nd c. BC and the first half of the 1st c. AD⁸³). The brooch in question (Pl. V/10) is of La Tène D scheme. Its bow is composed of two oval, leaf-like, riveted metal sheets with two volutes at each of their extremities. The only analogous brooch in pre-Roman Dacia was found in the *dava* from Poiana⁸⁴.

The La Tène D scheme brooches are the most numerous ones at Tilișca. The majority represent Dacian brooches that can be attributed either to the Rustoiu 6a type (Pl. V/3–4),

⁷⁷ LUPU 1989; NATEA 2008.

⁷⁸ LUPU 1989, 42–43, Pl. 27/39; RUSTOIU 1997, 34–36. There are three other brooches, this time in silver, which belong to the no. 1 hoard

⁷⁹ LUPU 1981; LUPU 1989, 33–35.

⁸⁰ LUPU 1989, 39–40, Pl. 27/29.

⁸¹ MĂNDESCU 2000, 65; MĂNDESCU 2013, 122–123; SPĂNU 2012, 248.

⁸² DIZDAR 2022.

⁸³ LUPU 1989, 31–32, 85, Pl. 27/35; RUSTOIU 1994, 231–234.

⁸⁴ TEODOR/ȚAU 1996, Fig. 3/7, cat. no. 30.

dated in the 1st c. BC⁸⁵, or to the Rustoiu 7a2 type (Pl. V/5–6), dated between 75 and 25 BC⁸⁶, or to the type Rustoiu 9a (Pl. V/11, VI/10) dated from the middle of the 1st c. BC onwards⁸⁷. Some other brooches could be ascribed to any of the aforementioned types (Pl. V/8, VI/1–9)⁸⁸, since they are too poorly preserved to be identified with precision.

Some La Tène D types are represented by one specimen each. One silver brooch with a decorated rhomboid bow (Pl. V/7) is of type Rustoiu 11 (which is derived from the “Orlea Maglavit” brooches that are associated with the Padea-Panagjurski Kolonii group), dated in the second half of the 1st c. BC⁸⁹. There is one “spoon-brooch” of Rustoiu 16c type (Pl. V/9), which was dated, based on the objects it was associated with, from the second half of the 1st c. BC onwards⁹⁰. The last specimen is the only Roman brooch from the site (Pl. VI/11). It was identified as an “Alesia”/Rustoiu 28a/Feugère 21a3 type brooch as it is hinged, but its morphology differentiates it from the other brooches of this type found in Dacia⁹¹. If this type is dated especially in the second half of the 1st c. BC in Gaul or in the last quarter of the same century in the western Balkanian region, in Dacia an “Alesia” brooch was found in a context dated at the beginning of the 2nd c. AD in the Dacian fortress of Căpâlna⁹².

This short summary regarding the brooches found by scientific means in the Dacian fortress from Tilișca shows that they share the same chronology and characteristics with the looted ones. However, that does not necessarily prove that all of the brooches from the assemblage have been detected on this site, especially since they fit well in the existing typologies of brooches from Late Iron Age Dacia in general. Additionally, some of the artefacts may have been found on other sites as well. Since it is impossible to assert a direct connection with the Dacian fortress from Tilișca, the brooches from the assemblage cannot be interpreted together with the ones found during the archaeological research of the site, at least not until the discovery context of the looted artefacts can be confirmed.

CATALOGUE⁹³

No. 1 (Pl. I/1)

Iron. L = 59,5 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of six turns and a superior chord to which a link from the chain (**no. 3**) has remained attached. The arched, flat-sectioned bow tapers towards the foot, which then bends backwards to be clasped to the bow. The segment of the reverted foot between the point where it bends and the cylindrical knob that decorates it is missing. This brooch formed a pair with the next one (**no. 2**).

No. 2 (Pl. I/2)

Iron. L = 65 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of which only three coils remained (from a total of six). A chain segment (belonging to the chain **no. 3**) of six links is still attached to the preserved half of the superior chord. The arched, flat-sectioned bow tapers towards the foot, which then bends backwards and is clasped to the bow. The reverted foot is decorated with a biconical knob. The pin is missing. This brooch formed a pair with the previous one (**no. 1**).

⁸⁵ LUPU 1989, 40–41, Pl. 27/30, 37; RUSTOIU 1997, 39.

⁸⁶ LUPU 1989, 41–42, Pl. 26/18, 27/36; RUSTOIU 1997, 40.

⁸⁷ LUPU 1989, 53–54, Pl. 26/1; NATEA 2008, 104, Pl. 3/8; RUSTOIU 1997, 42.

⁸⁸ LUPU 1989, 39–40, Pl. 26/15; NATEA 2008, Pl. 2/1–3, 4–6, 3/6–9.

⁸⁹ LUPU 1989, 41, Pl. 26/14; RUSTOIU 1997, 44.

⁹⁰ LUPU 1989, 53, Pl. 26/16; RUSTOIU 1997, 50.

⁹¹ NATEA 2008, 104, Pl. 3/9.

⁹² RUSTOIU 1997, 59–60.

⁹³ Abbreviations: L = length; the width (W) and diameter (D) were given only in the case of fragmentary brooches. The brooches' museum inventory numbers are not given, because they have not yet been inventoried.

No. 3 (Pl. I/3)

Iron. L = 220+140+30 mm.

The chain belonging to the brooch pair (no. 1–2) is composed of simple links. Three segments of the chain have been preserved: the first one is 220 mm long and is composed of sixty links, the second one is 140 mm long and has thirty-eight links and the last one is 30 mm long and has seven links. As mentioned before, some links (one and six, respectively) belonging to the chain have remained attached to the superior chords of the brooches **no. 1–2**.

No. 4 (Pl. II/4)

Iron. L = 86 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of six turns and a superior chord, the latter being slightly damaged. Near the catchplate, the reverted foot is girdled by a moulded decoration consisting of a central, biconical knob with a collar on each side. The clamp – a biconical knob – that encircles the upper bow, thus marking the termination of the foot, is preceded by another cross-moulding, this time covering only the front and the sides of the foot. The part of the upper bow between the clamp and the spring is decorated on the front and sides with three cross-mouldings. The bow has a sharp angle at the head (marked by the clamp) and its cross-section is rhomboid, while that of the reverted foot is triangular. The segment between the bending point and the moulded decoration near the catchplate is the only missing part of the brooch.

No. 5 (Pl. II/5)

Iron. L = 56 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns and an inferior chord. The flat-sectioned bow has not been entirely preserved. The catchplate is also missing. An opaque glass bead has remained attached to the pin.

No. 6 (Pl. II/6)

Iron. L = 72,5 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns (of which only two were preserved) and an inferior chord. The slightly curved and flat-sectioned bow tapers towards the foot, which has an almost square cross-section. The catchplate and the pin are missing.

No. 7 (Pl. II/7)

Iron. L = 60 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns (of which only one is broken) and an inferior chord. The arched bow has a polygonal cross-section, while the foot has a rhomboid one. The catchplate is incomplete and the pin is missing.

No. 8 (Pl. II/8)

Iron. L = 93,5 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns and an inferior chord, which are hidden under an oval “spoon-bow” head. The bow is slightly arched, flat-sectioned, tapering, and is decorated with two marginal grooves, which are visible only on its upper part and on the head of the brooch.

No. 9 (Pl. III/9)

Iron. L = 69 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of six turns and a superior chord. The bow of square section is angled twice, near the head and in the middle, where there seems to be a knob (the uncertainty is caused by the fact that the object is very corroded). The catchplate is broken, but the pin has been entirely preserved.

No. 10 (Pl. III/10)

Iron. L = 56,5 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns (of which only two coils have been preserved) and a superior chord. The bow of square section is angled twice, near the head and in the middle. The catchplate and the pin are missing.

No. 11 (Pl. III/11)

Iron. L = 52,5 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns and an inferior chord. The rod bow is of a square section. Only half of the open catchplate remains, while the pin is broken near the spring.

No. 12 (Pl. III/12)

Bronze. L = 81,5 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns and an inferior chord. The bow is strongly angled and thicker near the head, round in section, and decorated in the middle with five cross-mouldings. The catchplate and the pin are partly preserved.

No. 13 (Pl. III/13)

Iron. L = 80 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns and a superior chord. The coils are of triangular section. The faceted and highly arched bow is ribbon-like, slightly trapezoidal in section and tapered. The pin thins towards the open catchplate.

No. 14 (Pl. III/14)

Iron. L = 82 mm.

One-piece brooch with a highly arched bow of rectangular section and an open catchplate. The spring and the pin are missing.

No. 15 (Pl. IV/15)

Iron. L = 58 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of four turns and an inferior chord. The bow is highly arched, rectangular in section, and tapered. The catchplate is trapezoidal, while the pin is broken near the spring.

No. 16 (Pl. IV/16)

Iron. L = 34 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of nineteen turns (out of twenty) and an incomplete inferior chord which is wrapped around the bow. The strongly curved bow of square section is thinner near the head and thickest in the middle. The foot seems to be decorated with two cross-mouldings (which could be, however, the result of the corrosion). The catchplate is missing, while the pin is broken near the spring. This brooch may have formed a pair with the next one (**no. 17**).

No. 17 (Pl. IV/17)

Iron. L = 31 mm.

One-piece brooch with a bilateral spring of about twenty turns (the exact number could not be determined because of corrosion) and an incomplete inferior chord which is wrapped around the bow. The strongly curved bow is of square section and is only slightly curved. The foot seems to be decorated with two cross-mouldings (which could be, as in the previous case, the result of the corrosion). The catchplate is missing, while the pin is broken near the spring. This brooch may have formed a pair with the previous one (**no. 16**).

No. 18. (Pl. IV/18)

Iron. L = 56 mm.

Strongly arched and square in section bow. The slightly damaged catchplate is trapezoidal, while the spring and the pin of the brooch are missing.

No. 19. (Pl. IV/19)

Iron. L = 52 mm.

Strongly curved and round in section bow. The spring, pin and catchplate of the brooch are missing.

No. 20. (Pl. IV/20)

Iron. W = 36 mm; D = 7 mm.

Bilateral brooch spring of twenty-two turns and a superior chord of which only half is preserved. The pin is broken near the spring, while the bow of the brooch is missing.

No. 21 (Pl. IV/21)

Iron. L = 32 mm.

The strongly corroded brooch fragment is either an open catchplate or a catchplate with a reverted foot. The terminal segment of the pin has remained fixed in the catchplate. The latter seems to have some cross-grooves on the exterior, that may be the marks left by a metal wire which was wrapped around it, although a more plausible cause is corrosion.

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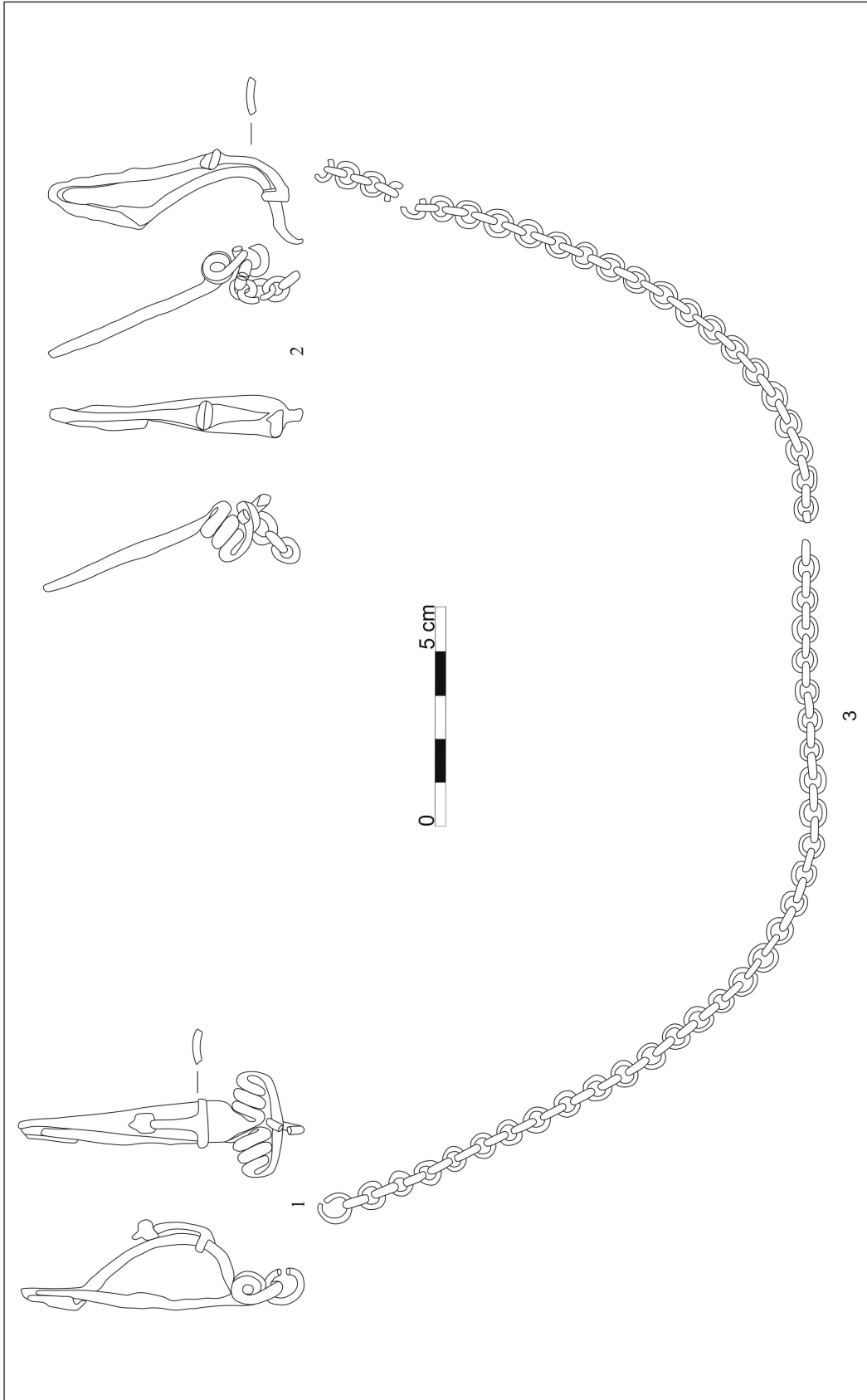
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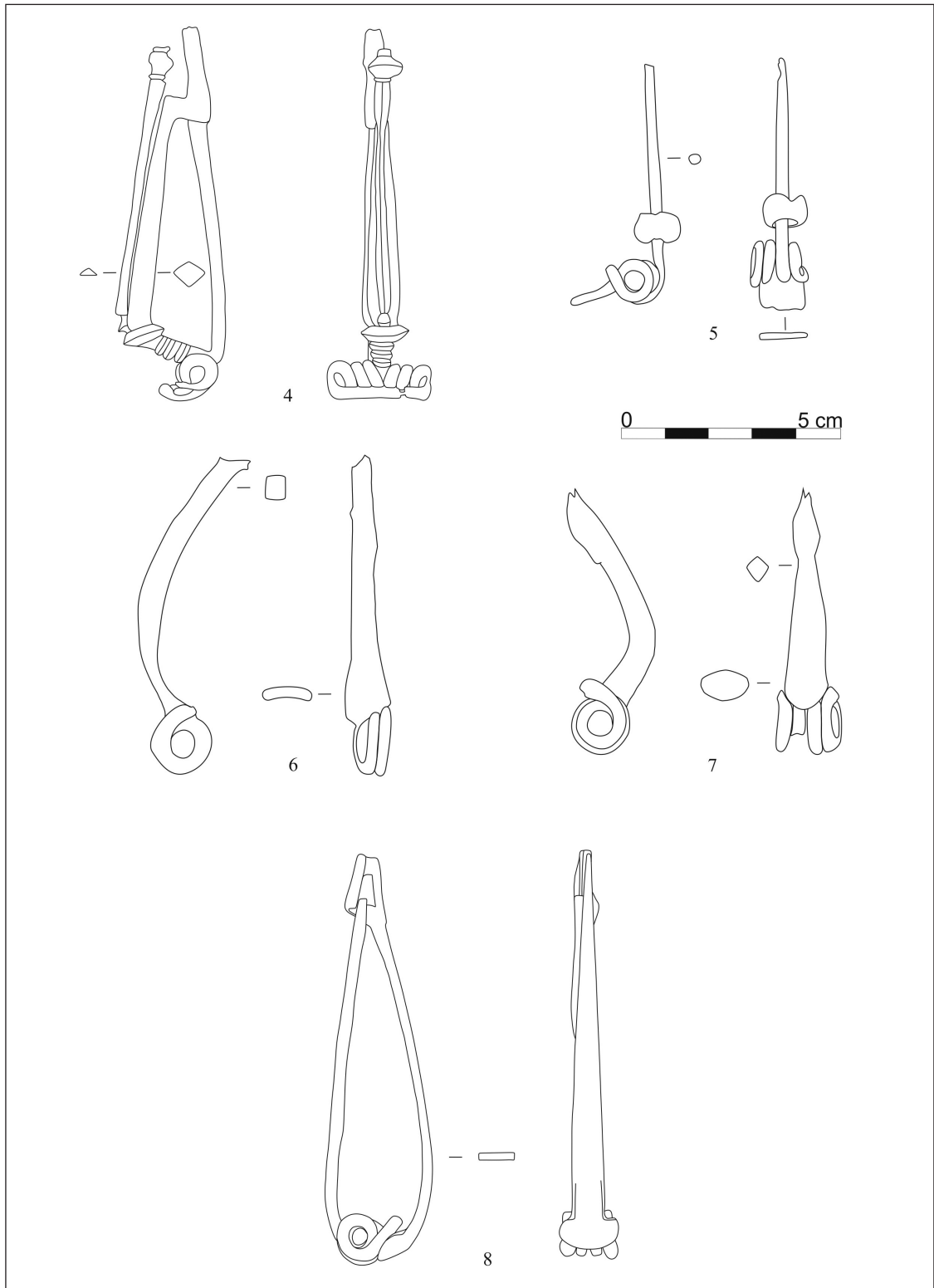
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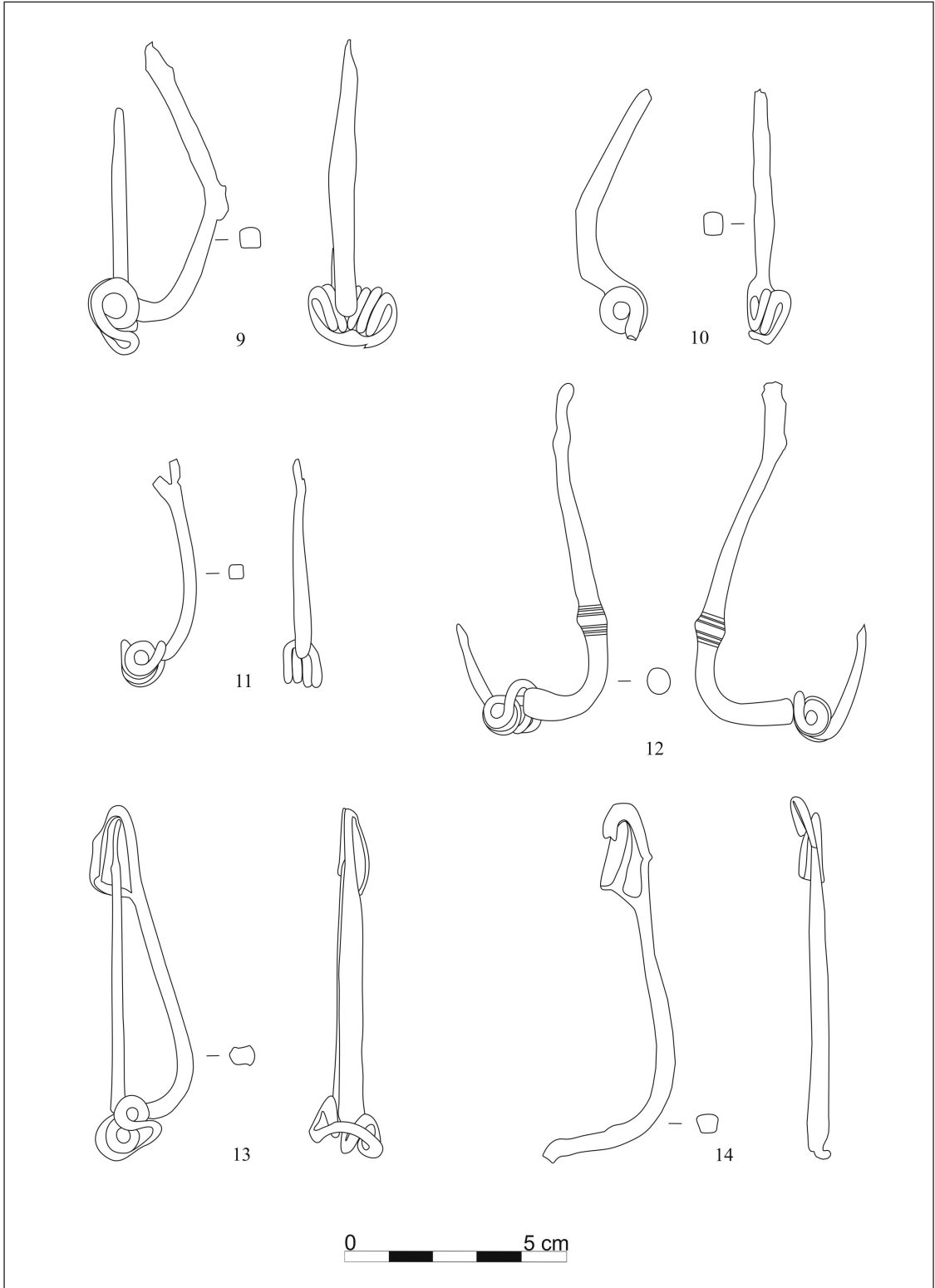
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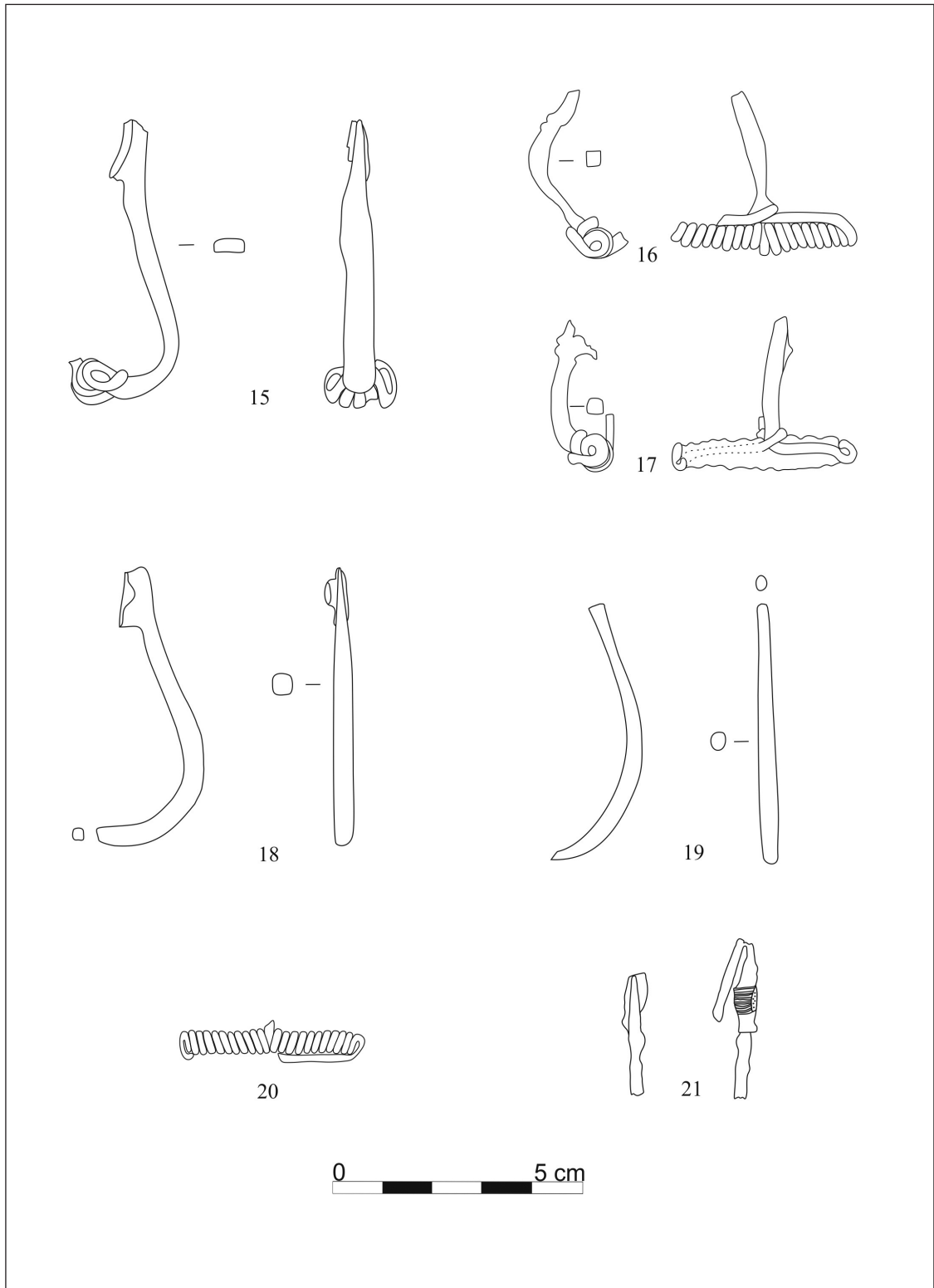
Pl I. Chained brooch pair from the assemblage (cat. nos. 1-3)



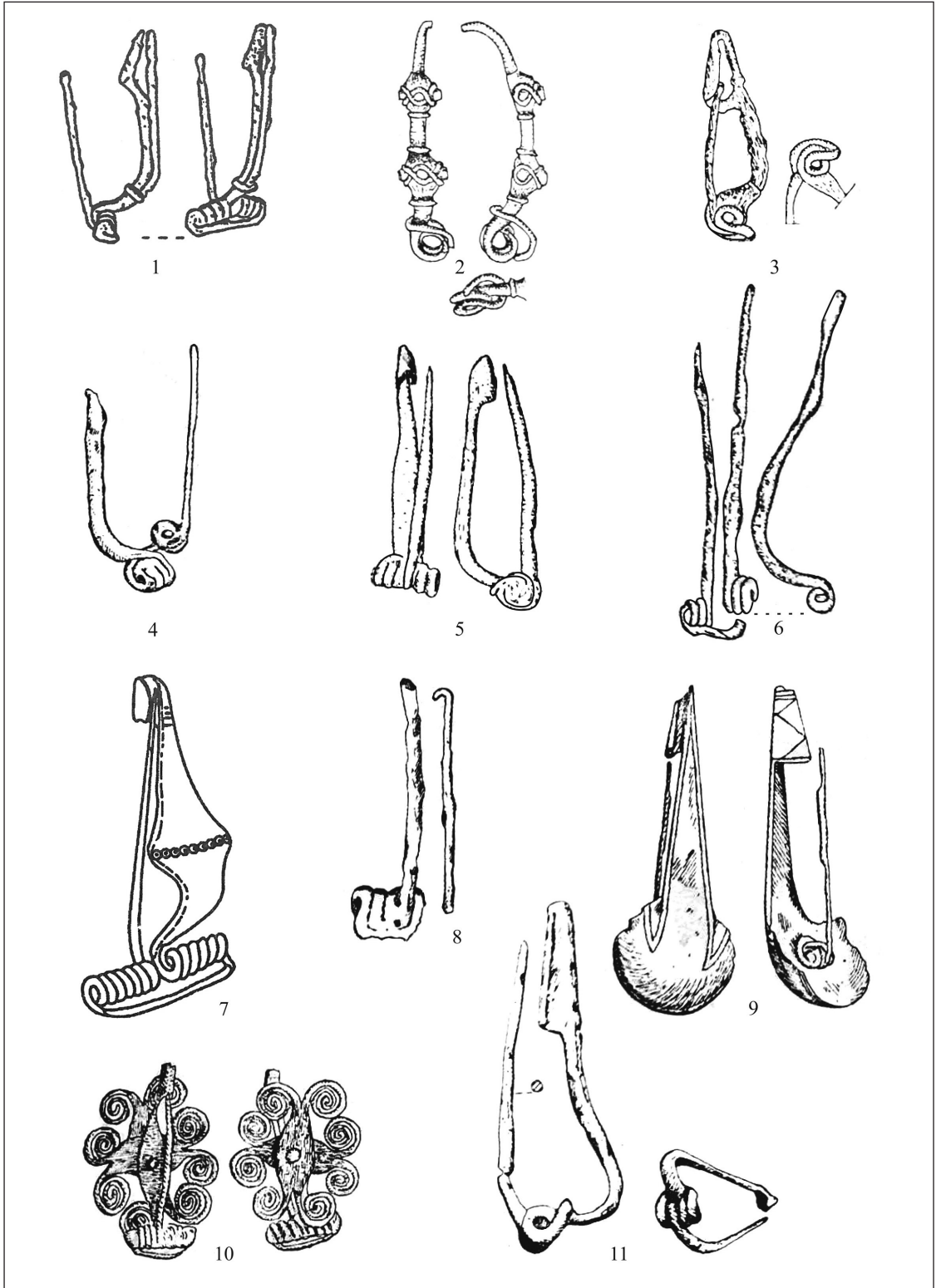
Pl. II. Brooches from the assemblage (cat. nos. 4–8)



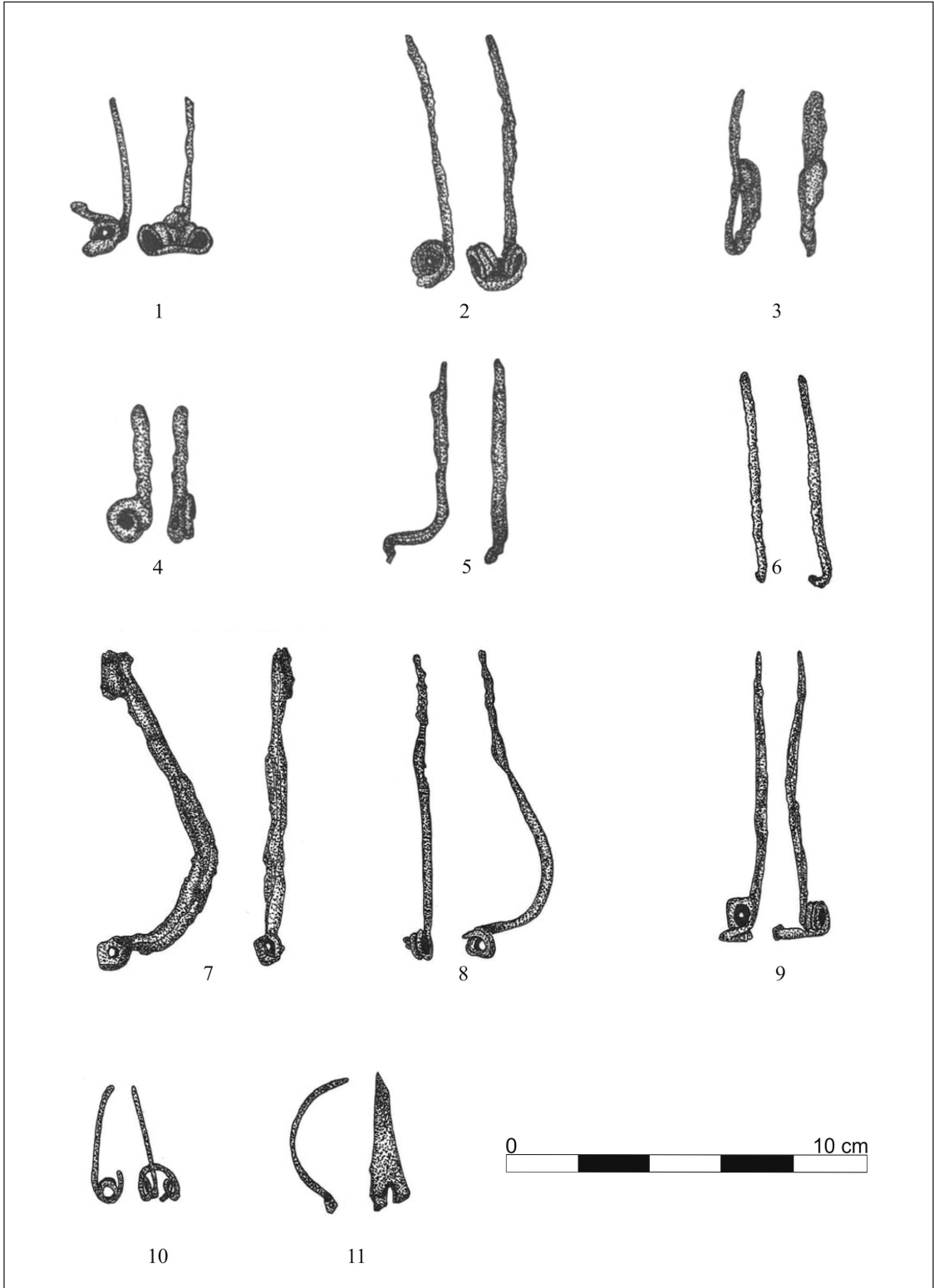
Pl. III. Brooches from the assemblage (cat. nos. 9–14)



Pl. IV. Brooches from the assemblage (cat. nos. 15–21)



Pl. V. Brooches discovered in the Dacian fortress from Tilișca (after LUPU 1989)



Pl. VI. Brooches discovered in the Dacian fortress from Tilișca (after NATEA 2008)