

TWO STONE OBJECTS DISCOVERED IN NORTHERN DOBRUDJA

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Abstract: *This article presents two stone objects, an axe and a cudgel, discovered in Baia, Tulcea County. The artifacts, which have been donated to the History and Ethnography Museum in Tg. Neamț can be dated to the Bronze Age.*

Rezumat: *Nota de față prezintă două obiecte din piatră, un topor și o măciucă, descoperite pe teritoriul comunei Baia, jud. Tulcea. Artefactele, aflate în colecția Muzeului de Istorie și Etnografie din Tg. Neamț, ca urmare a unei donații, pot fi datate în perioada epocii bronzului.*

Key words: *Baia, Dobrudja, stone objects, Bronze Age.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Baia, Dobrogea, obiecte din piatră, epoca bronzului.*

In 2006, on the territory of Baia commune (Tulcea County), two stone object were accidentally discovered: an axe and a spherical cudgel¹. The two artefacts were recuperated from an agricultural field, and, according to the finder's information, there were no other archaeological materials in that place.

We shall present the two lithic objects and then we shall specify some things concerning their functionality and chronology.

1. Axe. The artefact is made out of a local rock, grey-green, with a granular structure, probably a quartz micro conglomerate, which could come from local geological sediment, like the one on Maden-Bair Hill². The axe was well ground, but in certain areas there are still kept splinters, traces of the previous technical process. The body of the artefact is ship-shaped, with right profile, the shoulders are evident, the edge is quasi-cylindrical, plano-convex, and the cut edge is a little bent. The hole for fixing the fang, taper and very well ground, is placed a little laterally from the longitudinal ax of the axe.

Typologically, this artefact can be categorized as a cylindrical edge fight axe, which was widely used in Eneolithic, but especially in Bronze Age³.

Dimensions: length – 19.5 cm; width – 11 cm; diameter of the hole for fixing the fang – 2.5 cm.

The closest analogies for this artefact are found also in Dobrudja, but in Moldavian Republic as well, especially within the catacombs culture⁴.

2. Cudgel. The piece was made out of green rock, with big hardness. The cudgel is spherical, a little flattened, and on its inferior side it presents a little cylindrical muff. Still in fabrication stage, the cudgel has an ungrounded surface and presents the traces of the anterior technological process, and the muff keeps the beginning of a hole in which a wood fang was

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² Lăzurcă 1984, table 1.

³ Comșa 1972, 260.

⁴ Dergačev 1994, fig. 6/5.

going to be fixed. Analysing this artefact, we can suppose that it was not made by cutting splinters but by successive strikes with a sharp object which allowed creating the spherical shape and which left a lot of punctiform asperities on its surface.

Dimensions: maximum diameter – 8.5 cm; height – 7 cm.

Analogies for this piece can be found in the tombs or in the settlements from Bronze Age in Tăutești⁵, Holboca⁶, Brăilița⁷, Târpești⁸, Ghigoești⁹, Poiana¹⁰, but also in the catacombs culture in Basarabia¹¹. Although some researchers believe that such pieces were used only as simple weapons, we subscribe for the opinion of most archaeologists who affirm that these artefacts had a symbolic value accomplishing the function of social sceptres-symbols¹².

Concerning the destination of the above-mentioned objects, if we take into account the typological features, but also the fact that in the respective place there were not discovered other archaeological materials, we can suppose that the two lithic artefacts come from a tomb's inventory, maybe a warrior's one. In this case, the two pieces could represent symbols of the social statute of the deceased.

Due to the fact that the objects come from an accidental discovery, any attempt of placing them chronologically and culturally is hypothetical. Still, from the analogies with some artefacts discovered in Dobrudja or in neighbour territories, we can place the two pieces in a wide chronological interval, between final Eneolithic and Middle Bronze.

We considered necessary to signal these artefacts in order to enrich the repertory of discoveries in North Dobrudja, which contain lithic pieces, following that the next researches should bring supplementary information concerning the archaeological context in which the two stone objects were discovered.

⁵ Zaharia, Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Zaharia 1970, 221, fig. 113/19; 190/12.

⁶ Comșa 1985, 155-158.

⁷ Harțuche, Anastasiu 1976, 153, no. 308.

⁸ Marinescu-Bâlcu 1981, fig. 1/13.

⁹ Dumitroaia 2000, 124, fig. 83/1.

¹⁰ Teodor, Nicu, Țau 1994, 209, fig. 1/4.

¹¹ Dergačev 1994a, fig. 6/6; Dergačev 1994b, 33, fig. 11; Manzura, Sava 1994, fig. 13/12.

¹² Dumitroaia 2000, 124.

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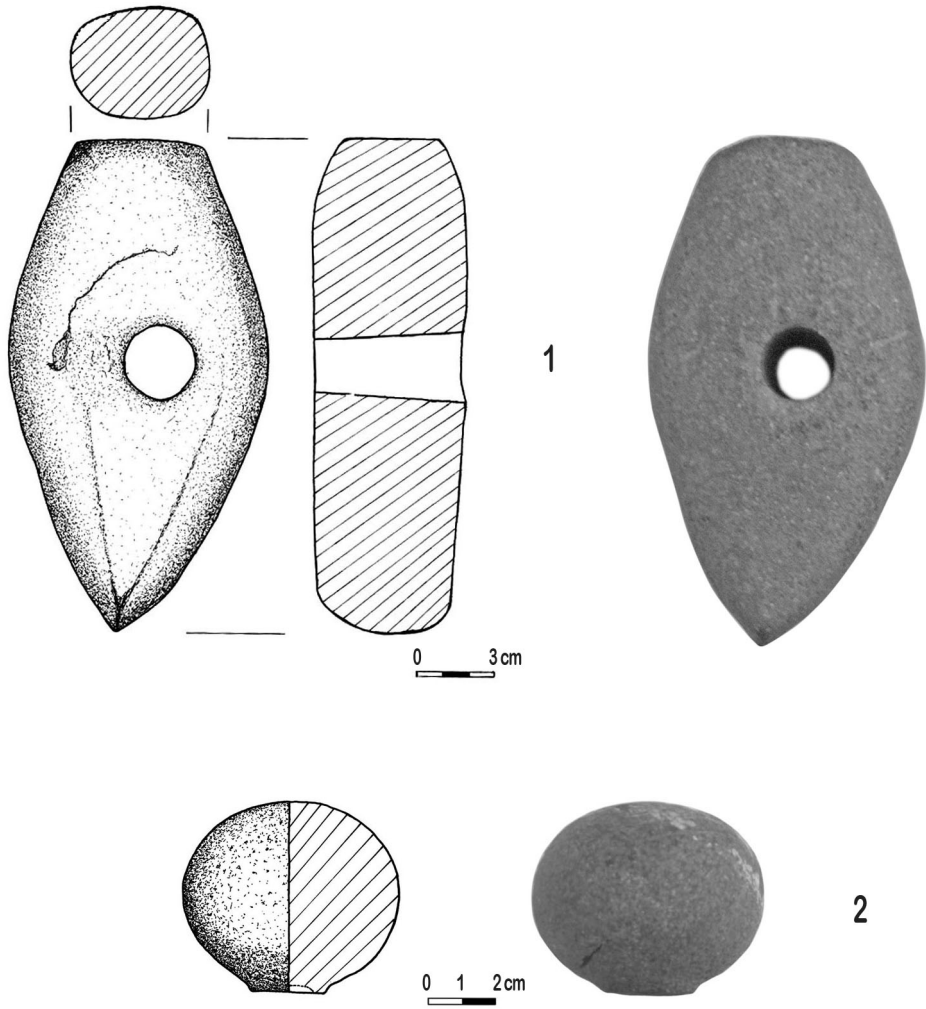


Fig. 1. The stone objects discovered in Northern Dobrudja