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ORIGINAL RESEARCH
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The *lunula* pendants from the cemetery of Frontovoe 3 from the Late Roman Period in the South-Western Crimea

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ABSTRACT

The flat cemetery of Frontovoe 3 was discovered in 2018 by a team of the Institute of Archaeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the Nakhimovskii district of modern Sevastopol, in the south-western area of the Crimean Peninsula. The site comprising 328 graves was excavated completely. The cemetery appeared *ca.* late first century AD and ceased to exist in the late fourth or early fifth century AD. The cemetery showed expressive spatial structure and contained eloquent assemblages with abundant grave goods allowing us to determine its chronological zones. This paper addresses the finds of silver crescent-moon-shaped pendants from graves 13 and 94. Similar ornaments occurred in burial assemblages in the Crimea and the northern Dagestan, Kalmykia, Lower Don area, and also in Sarmatian graves in the Great Hungarian Plain. The *lunula* pendants in question form a chronological reference point for the Pontic-Danubian antiquities in the Late Roman Period.

KEYWORDS

south-western Crimea, cemetery, first to fifth century, chronology, *lunula* pendants

The flat cemetery called Frontovoe 3 (Russian *Фронтвое 3*, also Latinised as *Frontovoye 3*) comprising 328 graves dated from the last decades of the first to the early fifth centuries was discovered in 2018 on the left bank of the river Bel'bek, in the Nakhimovskii district of the present-day city of Sevastopol (Fig. 1). The site has been excavated completely.¹ The cemetery showed expressive spatial structure (Fig. 2) and contained eloquent assemblages with abundant grave goods allowing us to determine its chronological zones coinciding with the finds of more than 40 coins. This paper discusses the finds of silver crescent-moon-shaped (*lunula*) pendants in graves 13 and 94. These ornaments meet with parallels within a large territory from the North Caucasus to Carpathian Depression and could form chronological reference points for the Pontic-Danubian antiquities of the Late Roman Period.

DESCRIPTION OF GRAVES 13 AND 94

Grave 13 (Fig. 3) was a two-chambered tomb with the entrance to undercut chambers covered with stone barrier. In the **northern undercut** (125 × 68 cm), the skeleton of the dead person did not survive, though the most part of the grave goods formed accumulation in the central area. In the southern zone of this accumulation there were several flat bronze lozenge artefacts, plausibly the parts of an object such as necklace (Fig. 4.16). To the east of them there were a silver earring with narrow oval panel (Fig. 4.8), a carnelian gem inset (Fig. 4.4), a silver finger-ring with wide hoop and ornamented flat bezel (Fig. 4.14), and scattered amber beads and seed beads of transparent blue glass (Fig. 4.1). In the northern zone of the

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¹YAZIKOV *et al.* 2019; SVIRIDOV–YAZIKOV 2019; GAVRITUKHIN *et al.* 2020a; GAVRITUKHIN *et al.* 2020b.

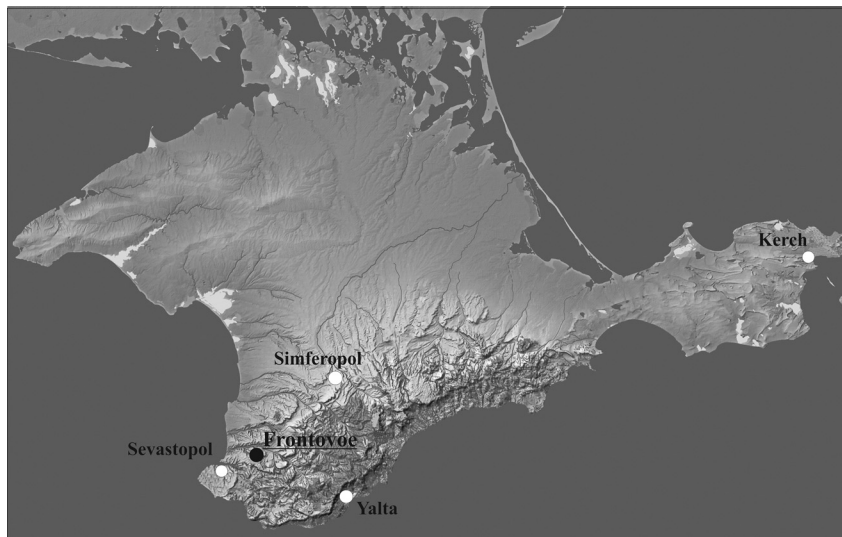


Fig. 1. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3 on the map of the Crimean Peninsula

accumulation there were a silver bracelet with widened ends going beyond each other (Fig. 4.11), a bone pendant in the form of stylized vessel (Fig. 4.2), and a silver *lunula* pendant (Fig. 4.18). Nearby, to the west, there was a fragmented glass cup (Fig. 5.1), and 2–3 cm far to the north of it there were a silver finger-ring with wide hoop (Fig. 4.15) and two glass hemispherical insets with silver frame fragments (Fig. 4.5, 6). Three to five centimeter to the west of the cup there were another silver *lunula* pendant (Fig. 4.17), a fine silver brooch with wide spring (Fig. 4.12), a fragmented iron knife with the traces of bronze clip lying along north–south axis (Fig. 5.2), and beads scattered to the south of the knife: an eyed piece and the ones of opaque light-blue and white glass (Fig. 4.3). In the south area of this accumulation there appeared a silver bracelet with widened and unclosed ends (Fig. 4.10). In the southern corner of the undercut there was a bronze bow-shaped brooch with returned foot lying along north–south axis, with the pin to the north (Fig. 4.7). Five centimeter to the south of it there was a silver earring with a narrow oval panel (Fig. 4.9). In the eastern corner of the undercut there was a silver finger-ring with wide flat hoop (Fig. 4.13); not far to the north-east from it there was an iron tanged knife lying along north-east–south-west axis (Fig. 5.3).

In the **southern undercut** (175 × 73 cm) where the dead person's remains also did not survive the grave goods concentrated mostly in the central undercut area. The filling of the undercut contained a cylindrical bead of opaque turquoise glass (Fig. 6.2) and a silver frame of drop-shaped inset (Fig. 6.12). In the southern corner of the undercut there was a hand-made pitcher standing vertically, neck upwards and covered with a lid of flat piece of sandstone (Fig. 7.2). Twenty-five centimeter to the west-north-west of it there was a red-slip pitcher standing vertically, neck upwards (Fig. 7.1). Twenty centimeter to the north-west of it there was an accumulation of compactly placed artefacts. In the southern zone of this accumulation there was a fragment of silver

finger-ring with figured hoop (Fig. 6.13). To the north-west of it there was a polychrome glass bead of opaque black glass with applied wavy patterns (Fig. 6.3). Nearby, to the west of it, there was an accumulation of disc-shaped amber beads (Fig. 6.5), and a little more to the west, elongated cylindrical jet beads (Fig. 6.6), glass, amber, and jet beads (Fig. 6.1), and a circular bead of opaque light blue glass (Fig. 6.4). Among these beads there were a silver finger-ring with flat wide hoop (Fig. 6.14), two silver earrings with big drop-shaped panels and carnelian insets (Fig. 6.8, 9), and a silver *lunula* pendant (Fig. 6.11). In the south-western zone of the assemblage in question there was a silver bracelet with widened and unclosed ends (Fig. 6.10). In the north-western zone of the accumulation there were fragments of a glass cup (Fig. 7.5). On the west, the accumulation touched a red-slip bowl (Fig. 7.3). Twenty centimeter to the north-west of it there was a fine red-clay cup (Fig. 7.4). During the collection of the finds near the accumulation in the central undercut area, we found a bronze bow-shaped brooch with returned foot (Fig. 6.7).

Grave 94 also was a two-chambered tomb with the entrance to undercuts covered by stone barrier (Fig. 8). Its **northern undercut** was a chamber (240 × 75 cm) containing an inhumation burial of man 30–39-years-old² (individuum 1) with the head oriented to the east-south-east. Between the legs of the dead there was a poorly preserved skeleton of child 3–4-year-old (individuum 2), with the skull located between the adult's thigh-bones. There was a fine red-slip pitcher right up the dead man's lower jaw, to the west of it (Fig. 9.3). On the right clavicle there was a big globular bead (Fig. 10.11). Ten centimeter to the west from

²The determination of sex and age of the dead persons provided hereinafter has been made by Mariia Vsevolodovna Dobrovol'skaia and Nataliia Gennad'evna Svirkina (Institute of Archeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow).

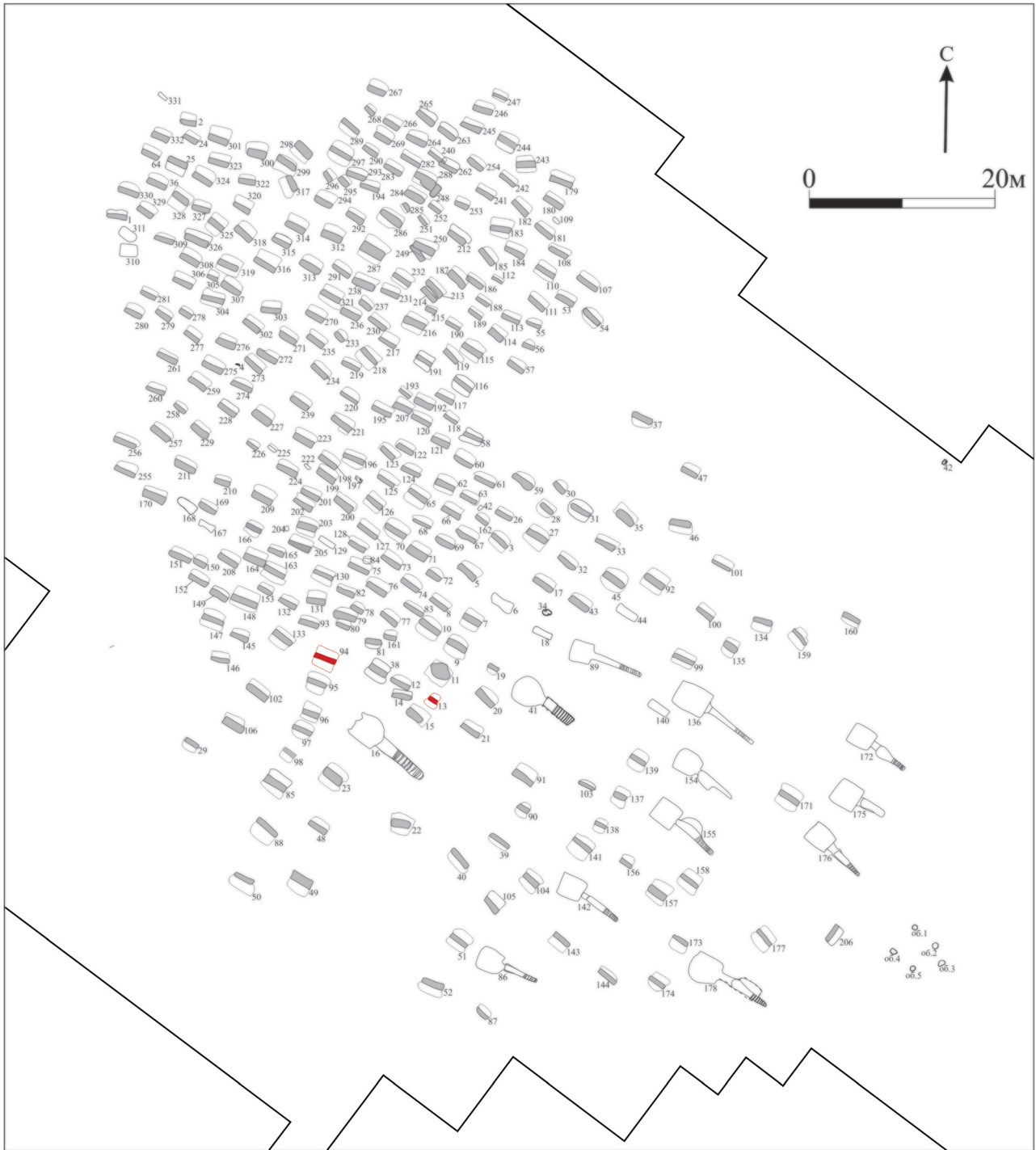


Fig. 2. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3: its ground plan indicating the location of graves 13 and 94

these artefacts there was a bronze brooch with curved arched bow and wide spring, lying with the pin to the north-north-west (Fig. 10.8). At the inner side of the humeral bone there was a bead (Fig. 10.12). On the right forearm bones there was a silver bracelet with widened and unclosed ends (Fig. 10.13). Two centimetres south of it there was a bronze buckle with oval frame and flat tongue oriented to the north (Fig. 10.2). To the north of the right hip joint, near the right feast there was a fragmented glass cup. Amidst these

fragments there was a bronze finger-ring with wide flat hoop and hemispherical glass inset (Fig. 10.10).

Two centimeter south of the child's skull fragments (individuum 2) there was a fine cylindric bead made of opaque white glass (Fig. 10.16). A hand-made bowl touched the skull at the south (Fig. 9.1). To the north-west of it, partially below the child's skull there was a bronze buckle with oval frame and flat tongue (Fig. 10.1). Ten centimeter to the north-west of the child's skull, on the left-hand bones,

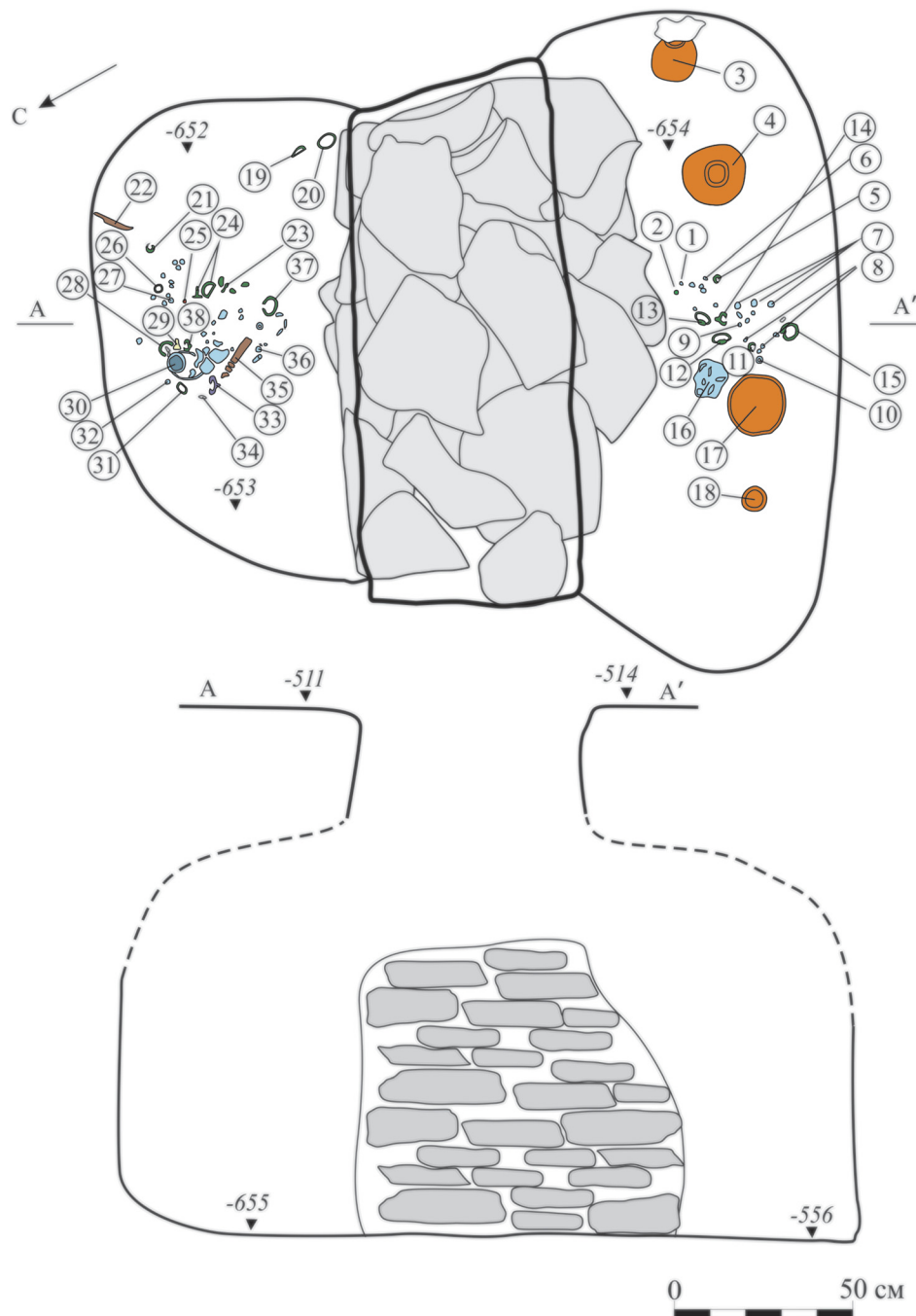


Fig. 3. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 13, its ground plan and cross-section. 1, 6, 10, 27, 36: glass beads and seed beads; 2: silver earring fragment; 3: hand-made pitcher; 4: red-slip pitcher; 5, 11, 21, 26, 31: silver finger-ring; 7: amber beads; 8: jet beads; 9: glass and jet beads; 12, 13: bronze earring with inset; 14, 33, 38: silver *lunula* pendant; 15, 28, 37: silver bracelet; 16, 30: glass vessel; 17: red-slip bowl; 18: red-clay cup; 19: bronze brooch; 20, 24: silver earring; 22: iron knife; 23: fragmented necklace; 25: carnelian gem inset; 29: bone pendant; 32: glass insets; 34: silver brooch; 35: iron knife

near the wrist there was a small bronze bracelet with widened ends going beyond each other (Fig. 10.14). The second bracelet of the type was on the right-hand bones (Fig. 10.15). On the inner side of the man's right thigh-bone, to the right of the child's skull there were fragments of a bronze finger-ring with glass gem inset (Fig. 10.7). Between the legs of individuum 1, near his knee joints, at place of

almost not preserved child's pelvic bones there were a cast bronze pine-cone-shaped pendant (Fig. 10.9), a line of amber beads to the east, and scattered beads of black and brown opaque glass (Fig. 10.17). The goods described above most likely were parts of a small necklace placed either on the belly or on the pelvis of the child. On the man's left ankle bone there was a bronze buckle with the frame to the north-



Fig. 4. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 13, northern undercut: the finds

west (Fig. 10.3). Eight centimeter to the south-west of it there was a fine bronze strap-end (Fig. 10.4). At the junction of the shin-bone and the right leg's heel there were a similar buckle (Fig. 10.5) and a strap-end (Fig. 10.6). At the dead person's feet, 8 cm far from the ashes there was a sacrificial animal's bone located along south-north axis. Above it there was an iron knife with remains of scabbard (bronze plate) (Fig. 9.2).

The southern undercut (230 × 85 cm) contained a skeleton of 20–29-years-old human (the sex remains undetermined due to the bad preservation of bones), supine, with the head to the east-south-east. In the southern corner of the undercut there was a light-clay narrow-neck amphora placed vertically, neck upwards (Fig. 11.1). Fifteen centimeter to the north-north-east of it, along north-west to south-east axis there was a long animal's bone. Above it there was a tanged



Fig. 5. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 13, northern undercut: the finds

iron knife placed along the same axis as the bone (Fig. 12.12). Amidst the ashes of bones at the dead person's skull there were scattered beads of various types (Fig. 12.1). On the east, the skull touched a fragmented glass pitcher (Fig. 11.5). To the west of the skull there was a small red-slip table amphora lying on the side with the neck to the north-west and the handle up (Fig. 11.4). Three centimeter to the north-west of the skull there were a silver bow-shaped brooch with returned foot, which pin was oriented to the north-east (Fig. 12.5), circular glass beads with polychrome dotted design (Fig. 12.2–4), and a silver *lunula* pendant (Fig. 12.11). Most likely, the beads and the *lunula* pendant formed a necklace. In the central undercut area, plausibly at the dead person's pelvis there was a bronze buckle with the tongue oriented to the north (Fig. 12.10). Two centimeter to the north of it there were a silver hinged bracelet with big carnelian inset (Fig. 12.9) and, above it, another silver bracelet with widened and unclosed ends (Fig. 12.7). Ten centimeter to the north-west of the bracelet there were a glass cup (Fig. 11.3), standing vertically with the neck upwards, and, to the east of it, fragments of a silver finger-ring with wide flat hoop (Fig. 12.6). Seven centimeter to the west of the cup, in between of the femurs there was a deep hand-made bowl with a broken-off handle of circular cross-section (Fig. 11.2).

From the aggregate of the grave goods, there are reasons to date both graves, 13 and 94, to the middle or the second half of the third century AD. This chronology is based primarily on the flat hinged polychrome bracelet with panel decorated with framed carnelian inset discovered in the southern undercut of grave 94 (Fig. 12.9). Such bracelets were especially popular from the late third to fourth century, particularly in the cemeteries of Neizats, Druzhnoe, and so on.³ The big earrings from the southern undercut of grave

13 (Fig. 6.8–9) featuring the same “Roman” polychrome style as the above-mentioned bracelets are traditionally dated to the late third and early fourth century.⁴

This chronology does not contradict to other artefacts discovered in the graves under analysis. The ceramic complex of grave 13 contained a red-slip bowl which could be reference point for the chronology (Fig. 7.3); it belongs to the second variant of the typology of the cemetery of Sovkhoz-10⁵ with a wide chronology from the first or second to the fourth or fifth centuries; the most part of the vessels under discussion were uncovered from third-century graves.⁶ In grave 94 there was a light-clay narrow-neck late Heracleian amphora of S. Yu. Vnukov's variant C IVD (Fig. 11.1), which most probable date was the first half of the third century.⁷ Silver and bronze bracelets with widened and unclosed ends from graves 13 and 94 (Figs 4.10–11, 6.10, 10.13–15, 12.7) meet with a wide circle of analogies in the sites in the Crimea and neighbouring areas dated from the late second to mid-third century.⁸ The buckles from grave 94 comprise two types: the buckles with oval panel and circular frame (Fig. 10.1–2) and the buckles with elongated rectangular panel, oval frame, and straight tongue going round the frame a little farther than its middle (Fig. 10.3.5). In the Sarmatian context both types of buckles are usually dated from the mid- to late third century.⁹ Similar buckles often occur in synchronous cemeteries in the sub-mountainous and south-western Crimea.¹⁰ Apart from the already

⁴KHRAPUNOV 2011b, 42; AIBABIN–KHAIREIDINOVA 2017, 54, 55.

⁵STRZHELETSKII *et al.* 2003–2004, Pl. XIV.

⁶STRZHELETSKII *et al.* 2003–2004, 83.

⁷VNUKOV 2016, 43.

⁸KHRAPUNOV–MASIAKIN 1997, Fig. 4.3, 6; PUZDROVSKII–TRUFANOV 2016, 34, Fig. 55.6.

⁹MALASHEV 2000.

¹⁰KHRAPUNOV 2011b, 28.

³KHRAPUNOV 2011b, 42; AIBABIN–KHAIREIDINOVA 2017, 55, Fig. 52.



Fig. 6. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 13, southern undercut: the finds

mentioned earrings featuring the polychrome style, grave 13 contained silver earrings with small panels, traditionally dated from the third century (Fig. 4.8–9).¹¹ Two-piece bow-shaped brooches from graves 13 and 94 (Figs 4.7, 12.5) belong to A. K. Ambroz's series 3 of group 15 distributed from the late second to the first half of the third century and the brooch with curved arched bow and returned foot from grave 94 (Fig. 10.8) possibly belonged to series 1 of group 16 of the brooches with curved arched bow (P-shaped) and returned foot, of the Cherniakhov culture type; it possibly dates to the second half of the third century.¹² Finally, the finger-rings uncovered in the assemblages under present discussion feature several types (Figs 4.13–15, 6.13–14,

10.10), generally dateable from the third to fourth century.¹³ The rest of the categories of artefacts does not contradict to the above-stated chronology. At the same time, according to the big flat earrings uncovered in combination with the polychrome bead the southern undercut of grave 13 was most likely a little later than the northern.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE *LUNULA* PENDANTS FROM GRAVES 13 AND 94, THEIR DISTRIBUTION AND PARALLELS

There are similar *lunula* pendants discovered in the Crimea, North Caucasus, Kalmykia, and the Lower Don area. It is

¹¹KHRAPUNOV 2011b, 44; STRZHELETSKII *et al.* 2003–2004, 151.

¹²AMBROZ 1966, 52–54, 57–59.

¹³AIBABIN–KHAIREDIKOVA 2017, 56, Fig. 15–17.



Fig. 7. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 13, southern undercut: the finds

important to remark that totally identical artefacts are absent: all the *lunula* pendants differed in this or that way. The *lunula* pendants from graves 13 and 94 could be divided into three variants according to the shapes of their ends.

VARIANT 1. Silver flat crescent-moon-shaped *lunula* pendant from the northern undercut of grave 13 measuring 23 × 14 mm; ends are curved in and twisted into one coil; loop of corrugated plate folded in half and fastened with rivet (Figs 4.18, 13.1).

Similar *lunula* pendants are well-known in the Crimean context of the Late Roman Period. One artefact was excavated from burial vault 306 of the cemetery of Neizats (Fig. 13.2) located in the Belogorsk region, sub-mountainous Crimea, which contained 13 inhumations dated to the third and fourth century.¹⁴ The *lunula* pendant was uncovered from the lower tier of the burials,¹⁵ i.e. it belonged to the early period of the funerals in this vault. Plundered grave 313 of the same cemetery contained another *lunula* pendant of the type under discussion.¹⁶ Three silver *lunula* pendants were excavated from the northern undercut II of grave 20 in the cemetery of Druzhnoe (Fig. 13.3) located in the Simferopol region,

sub-mountainous Crimea, where a child was buried.¹⁷ According to I. N. Khrapunov, the aggregate of the goods discovered in this undercut dates the burial in question to the second half of the third century, with the early-fourth century also possible. The southern undercut I of this grave where a coin of Emperor Gallienus (253–268 AD) was found dates to the second half of the third century.¹⁸ The excavation of burial vault 39 in the same cemetery dated to the second half of the third century discovered a bronze *lunula* pendant with ends curved in (one of its ends was broken off) and loop fastened with a nail.¹⁹

Similar *lunula* pendants are also known outside the Crimea, for example, in the barrow cemetery of the Late Sarmatian culture called Three Brothers and located near modern city of Elista in Kalmykia,²⁰ in barrow 14 (group II), in a woman's grave, where they formed a part of a necklace.²¹ In M. G. Moshkova's opinion, barrow 14 possibly dates from the second half of the third to the turn of the third and fourth centuries.²² A. S. Skripkin has attributed

¹⁴KHRAPUNOV 2011a, 22.

¹⁵KHRAPUNOV 2011a, 7, Fig. 6.230; Fig. 16.1.

¹⁶STOIANOVA 2016, 136, Fig. 4.8.

¹⁷KHRAPUNOV–MASIAKIN 1997, 171, Fig. 7.23–26; KHRAPUNOV 2002, 19, 20, Fig. 97.23–25.

¹⁸KHRAPUNOV 2002, 68.

¹⁹KHRAPUNOV 2002, 24, 69, Fig. 123.1.

²⁰RYKOV 1936; MOSHKOVA 2008a, 2008b.

²¹MOSHKOVA 2008b, 247, Fig. 5.1; 5.8.

²²MOSHKOVA 2008a, 548.

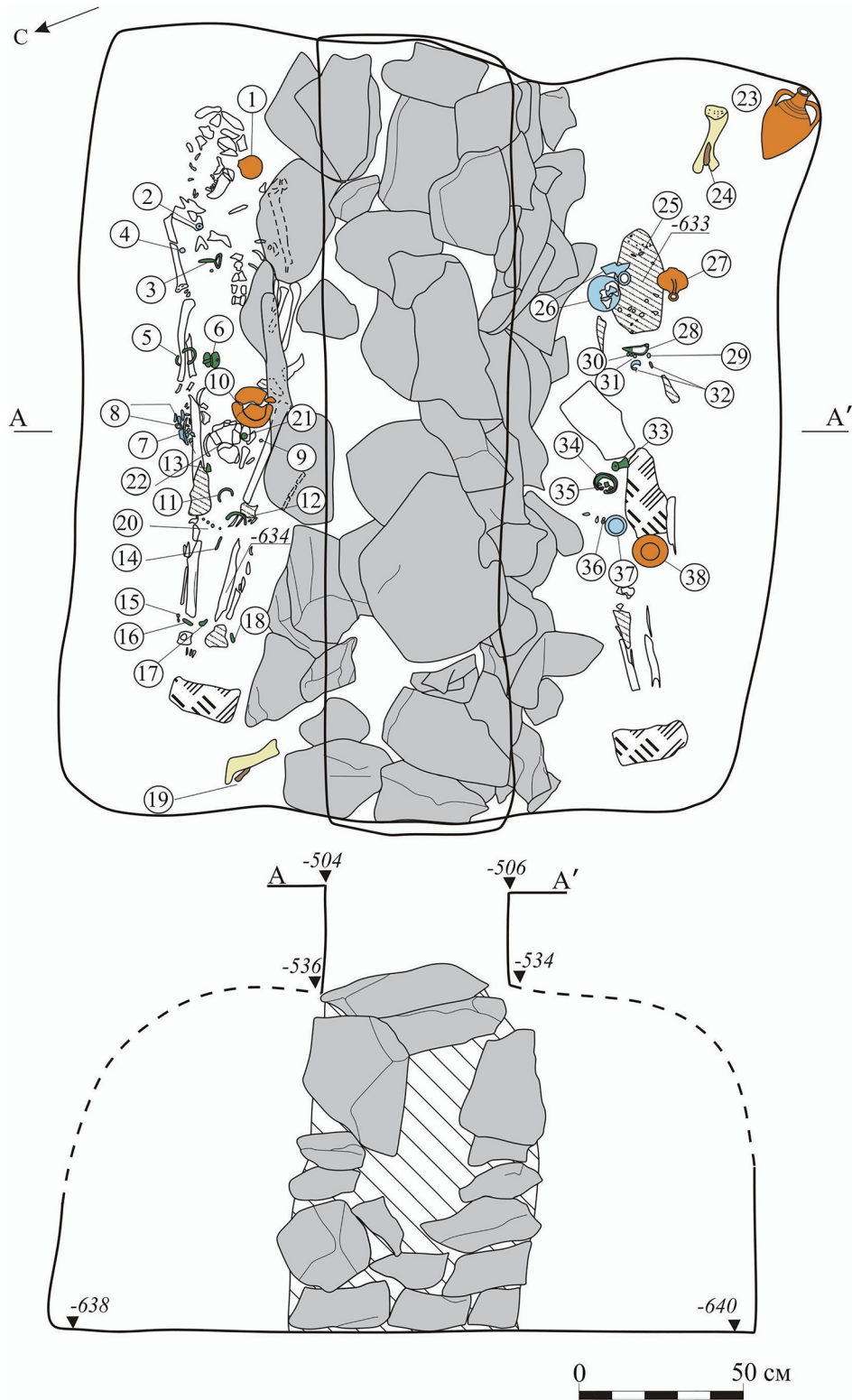


Fig. 8. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 94, its plan and cross-section. 1: red-slip pitcher; 2, 4, 9, 20, 22, 25, 29–31: glass beads; 3: bronze brooch; 5, 35: silver bracelet; 6, 15, 17, 21: silver buckle; 7: fragmented glass vessel; 8, 13: silver finger-ring with inset; 10: red-slip bowl; 11, 12: bronze bracelet; 14: bronze pendant; 16, 18: silver strap-end; 19, 24: iron knife; 23: light-clay amphora; 26: glass pitcher; 27: red-slip table amphora; 28: silver brooch; 32: silver *lunula* pendant; 33: bronze buckle; 34: silver bracelet with inset; 36: silver finger-ring; 37: glass vessel; 38: hand-made bowl



Fig. 9. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 94, northern undercut: the finds

these *lunula* pendants to the third chronological group of the artefacts from the Lower Don area dating from the second half of the third and fourth century.²³

The *lunula* pendants with ends twisted inside are known in L'vovskie cemeteries in northern Dagestan (the area between the Terek and the Sulak rivers). In barrow 41 of the cemetery of L'vovskii Pervyi-2 the artefact in question was a part of necklace.²⁴ Following A. S. Skripkin, the publishers have dated this *lunula* pendant to the second half of the third or fourth century.²⁵ Excavations of barrows 22 and 24 of the cemetery of L'vovskii Pervyi-4 uncovered buried persons (possibly a man in barrow 22 and a woman in barrow 24) who wore necklace with bronze *lunula* pendant with loop for hanging in the middle (Fig. 13.4).²⁶ According to the publishers, the materials of the cemetery of L'vovskii Pervyi-4 were undoubtedly close to those of the cemetery of L'vovskii Pervyi-2, dating from the late second to fourth century, with predominant materials from the second half of the third century.²⁷ V. Yu. Malashev has offered convincing arguments that the *lunula* pendants under study in the Late Sarmatian culture belong to the chronological markers of the second half of the third century.²⁸

Similar *lunula* pendants were discovered in three barrows (22, 25, and 27) in the barrow cemetery of Moskovskii I located on the left bank of the Sal river in modern Rostov oblast', in the Lower Don area. In barrow 22 there was a necklace which included four silver *lunula* pendants with the

ends twisted in and loops fastened with nails (Fig. 13.5).²⁹ Barrow 25 contained a burial of man 25–30-years-old: three bronze *lunula* pendants with loops fastened with nails appeared in the filling of the grave, not far from the sword's hilt. These *lunula* pendants were also accompanied with bronze spiral tubes and an amber 14-hedral bead.³⁰ Finally, in barrow 27 there was a necklace comprising a bronze *lunula* pendant (its loop was fastened with nail), bronze spiral tubes, and a yellow-glass 14-hedral bead, which was uncovered near the pelvic bones of a dead man 20–25-years-old.³¹ Taking the type of grave constructions (under-barrow catacombs) into account, T. A. Gabuev and V. Yu. Malashev have dated these barrows to the second half of the third and fourth century.³² In the cemetery of Tanais, there also was a find of similar *lunula* pendant. It was uncovered at a girl 5–6-year-old in a “family” vault of burial 1 in barrow 38. Below the child's jaw there was a silver *lunula* pendant with the ends twisted in, segment-shaped body (flat on the face side and convex on the back side), and corrugated loop fastened with rivet. It was a part of necklace of glass beads.³³ Most grave goods in this burial date from the first half of the third century.

Variant 2. Two silver flat crescent-moon-shaped *lunula* pendants; pointed ends are curved in; corrugated loops are soldered. The first find originates also from the northern undercut of grave 13 and measures 23 × 15 mm (Figs 4.17, 13.6), the second is from the southern undercut of grave 13 and measures 22 × 14 mm (Figs 6.11, 13.7).

Most part of the parallels to this variant of *lunula* pendants are documented in the Crimea. There is one bronze flat

²³SKRIPKIN 1984, 52, Fig. 14.62.

²⁴ABRAMOVA et al. 2000, 24, 25, Fig. 31.5.

²⁵SKRIPKIN 1984, 52, 53; ABRAMOVA et al. 2000, 65.

²⁶ABRAMOVA et al. 2001, 13, 14, 54, Fig. 31.1; 37.15.16.

²⁷ABRAMOVA et al. 2001, 55, 56.

²⁸MALASHEV 2016, 46, 47.

²⁹IL'UKOV 2018, 71; IL'UKOV 2019, 113, Fig. 1.1.

³⁰IL'UKOV 2019, 115, Fig. 1.2.

³¹IL'UKOV 2018, 72; IL'UKOV 2019, 116, Fig. 1.3.

³²GABUEV–MALASHEV 2009, 99; Appendix B.

³³GUGUEV 2019, 98, Fig. 5.6; 6.2; 8.5.



Fig. 10. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 94, northern undercut: the finds



Fig. 11. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 94, southern undercut: the finds

lunula pendant discovered from the Late Scythian cemetery of Balta-Chokrak in the Bakhchisarai region, south-western Crimea, in grave 14 from the late second or the first half of the third century. The excavators think it possible that there was totally decomposed child's burial.³⁴ Bronze *lunula* pendants with curved ends and loops fastened with nails were discovered in grave 15b of the cemetery of Pereval'noe (Fig. 13.8) in the Simferopol region, sub-mountainous Crimea, which dates from ca. mid-third century.³⁵ Two similar bronze *lunula* pendants were uncovered from grave 14 of the cemetery of Chatyr-Dag (Fig. 13.9) near present-day Alushta on the southern coast of the Crimea.³⁶ Most probably, grave 14 was made from the 240s to 300s.³⁷ In the cemetery of Sovkhoz-10 (also called Sovkhoz Sevastopol'skii) located in the valley of Inkerman in the south-western Crimea the *lunula* pendants of the type appeared in grave 11 from the second half of the third and fourth century, accompanied with a coin of Emperor Caracalla (211–217 AD),³⁸ and grave 148, undercut A, from the second half of the third century.³⁹

Outside the Crimea, silver *lunula* pendants of the variant in question appeared in barrow 13 of the already mentioned

barrow cemetery Three Brothers in Kalmykia (Fig. 13.10).⁴⁰ They laid under the buried lady's skull, though on her cervical vertebrae there was a necklace of varied beads.⁴¹ Barrow 13 dates from the second half of the third to the turn of the third and fourth centuries.⁴²

VARIANT 3. Silver crescent-moon-shaped *lunula* pendant; sub-triangular cross-section; relatively big size; poorly dihedral face side and flat back side; corrugated loop is soldered. It was discovered in the southern undercut of grave 94 (it measures 32 × 22 mm) (Figs 12.11, 13.11).

According to the data in possession, the distribution area of these *lunula* pendants basically covers the Crimea; there also are rare finds in the North Caucasus. Similar *lunula* pendants are documented in the cemetery of Neizats: in burial I of grave 300 dating from the third century, possibly its first half (Fig. 13.15),⁴³ in burial vault 222 from the first half of the third century, though its second half is also possible,⁴⁴ in woman's grave 29 from the late second and first quarter of the third century (this was 49 cm long and 42 cm high; accompanied with a coin from 161–180 AD)⁴⁵; in graves 495 and 509.⁴⁶ The materials of the cemetery of Opushki located in the Simferopol region, sub-mountainous Crimea also contain similar *lunula* pendants: from the

³⁴ZAITSEV *et al.* 2005, 173, Fig. 14.2.

³⁵PUZDROVSKII 2007, 152, Fig. 126.3,6.

³⁶MYTS *et al.* 2006, 14, 15, Pl. 18.2a,b.

³⁷MYTS *et al.* 2006, 174, Fig. 18.

³⁸ALEKSEVA 1982, 25, 26, Pl. 42.2; STRZHELETSKII *et al.* 2003–2004, Pl. 3.5; Appendix no. 3, 265.

³⁹ALEKSEVA 1982, 26, Pl. 42.4; STRZHELETSKII *et al.* 2003–2004, Pl. 20.12. In graves 75 and 78 of the cemetery of Sovkhoz 10 there also were *lunula* pendants with pointed and in-turned ends; however, these were not flat but made of round wire (type 276: ALEKSEVA 1982, 26, Pl. 42.3; STRZHELETSKII *et al.* 2003–2004, Pl. 11.36; 12.1). This paper will set aside this type of moon-shaped pendants.

⁴⁰RYKOV 1936; MOSHKOVA 2008a; MOSHKOVA 2008b.

⁴¹MOSHKOVA 2008b, 247; Fig. 4.1,2,3,6e.

⁴²MOSHKOVA 2008a, 548.

⁴³KHRAPUNOV 2011b, Fig. 35.12,15; KHRAPUNOV 2011c, 193, 200, Fig. 4.9,10.

⁴⁴KHRAPUNOV 2006, 114, Fig. 3.21.

⁴⁵KHRAPUNOV–MUL'D 2000, 507–513, Fig. 14.28; STOIANOVA 2004, 296, Pl. VII.21; KHRAPUNOV 2006, 110.

⁴⁶STOIANOVA 2016, 135, Fig. 4.9,10.



Fig. 12. The cemetery of Frontovoe 3, grave 94, southern undercut: the finds

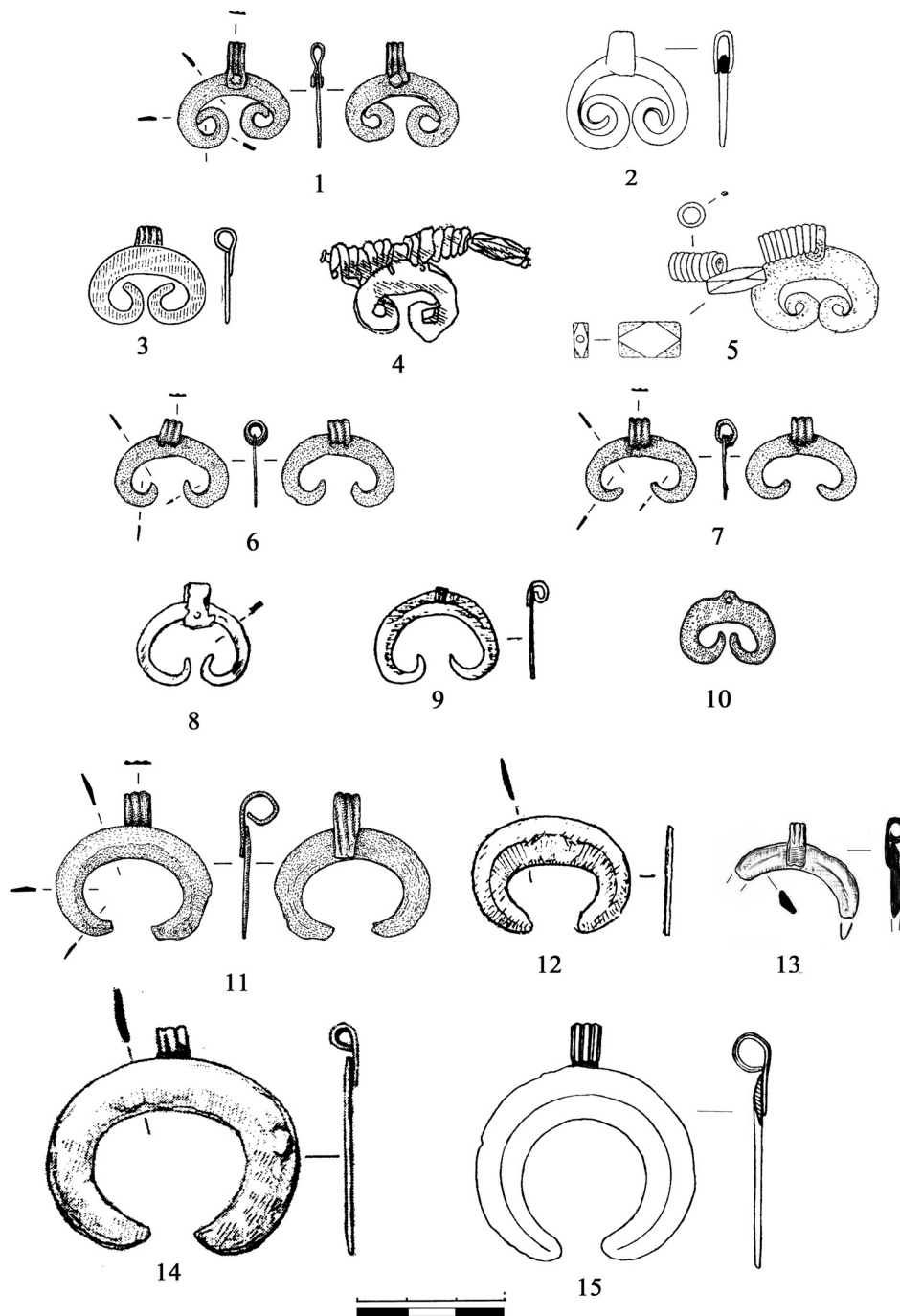


Fig. 13. Lunula pendants from the cemetery of Frontovoe 3 and their parallels.

Variant 1. 1: Frontovoe 3, grave 13; 2: Neizats, burial vault 306 (Khrapunov 2011a, Fig. 16: 1); 3: Druzhnoe, grave 20 (Khrapunov 2002, Fig. 97: 25); 4: L'vovskii Pervyi-4, barrow 24 (Malashev 2016, Fig. 75: 2); 5: Moskovskii I, barrow 22 (Il'ukov 2019, Fig. 1: 1).

Variant 2. 6, 7: Frontovoe 3, grave 13; 8: Pereval'noe, grave 15b (Puzdrovskii 2007, Fig. 126: 3); 9: Chatyr-Dag, grave 14 (Mytss et al. 2006, Pl. 18.12b); 10: Three Brothers, barrow 13 (Moshkova 2008b, Fig. 4: 3).

Variant 3. 11: Frontovoe 3, grave 94; 12: Ust'-Al'ma, grave 914 (Trufanov 2007, Fig. 2.5); 13: Opushki, burial vault 133 (Khrapunov 2020, fig. 7.4); 14: Ust'-Al'ma, grave 631 (Trufanov 2010, Fig. 3.7); 15: Neizats, grave 300 (Khrapunov 2011b, Fig. 35.15)

undercut of burial vault 124 from the third to fourth or early fourth century⁴⁷ and child's burial IV in vault 133 from the second half of the third to early fourth century (Fig. 13.13).⁴⁸ It is worth mentioning also the finds from graves 11 and 20 in the cemetery near Kurskoe village in the Belogorsk region, sub-mountainous Crimea dated to the third century.⁴⁹ Similar *lunula* pendants also occur in the materials of Ust'-Al'ma cemetery located in the Bakhchisarai region, south-western Crimea: in grave 631 from the mid-third century (Fig. 13.14)⁵⁰; in grave 914 dated to the first half of the third century, though the third quarter of this century is still possible (Fig. 13.12)⁵¹; in child's grave 942 from the second half of the second to early third century⁵²; in grave 1018 from the first half of the third century, accompanied with a coin of Emperor Caracalla (207 AD).⁵³ Similar *lunula* pendants have been documented in grave 56 of Chernorechenskii cemetery in the valley of Inkerman, south-western Crimea⁵⁴ and in the already mentioned cemetery of Sovkhoz-10 (Sovkhoz Sevastopol'skii), grave 20, accompanied with a coin of Emperor Gordian III (238–244 AD).⁵⁵ Generally, the context of the Crimean finds of this variant of *lunula* pendants allows us to date it from the late second to early fourth century. Outside the Crimea, the *lunula* pendants of the kind were uncovered from barrow 13 of the cemetery of Kishpek in Kabardino-Balkaria,⁵⁶ dated from the early fourth century,⁵⁷ and also in grave 6 of the cemetery of Naran-Kala in Derbent,⁵⁸ dated from the second to fourth century.

CONCLUSION

Thus, we have analysed four *lunula* pendants from two graves, 13 and 94, of the cemetery of Frontovoe 3. From the parallels to flat *lunula* pendants with the ends twisted into one coil (variant 1; Figs 4.18, 13.1) and the *lunula* pendants with the pointed ends curved in (variant 2; Figs 4.17, 13.6, 6.11, 13.7) from grave 13 there is good reason to infer that in the most cases such pendants occur in funeral assemblages from the second half of the third century in the Crimea, northern Dagestan, Kalmykia, and the Lower Don area. We have to agree with A. A. Stoianova who has interpreted the *lunula* pendants in question in the Crimea as a

chronological marker of the second half of the third century.⁵⁹ It is demonstrative that the finds of the *lunula* pendants under study in the North Caucasus have been also attributed to the chronological markers of the second half of the third century.⁶⁰ Although A. S. Skripkin has included the pendants in question into the third chronological group, which lower date is the second half of the third century and upper date the fourth century,⁶¹ we do not know any reliable closed assemblage from the fourth century which contained the *lunula* pendants in question.

The chronology of the *lunula* pendants suggested in this paper as the second half of the third century does not contradict to the grave goods from grave 13. It is worth noticing that the function of such *lunula* pendants in the funeral attire in the northern Dagestan, Kalmykia, and the Lower Don area differed from their use in the Crimea. In the area between the Don, the Volga, and the Caucasian ridge the *lunula* pendants of the first and second variants appeared within rather standard necklace, in combination with bronze spiral tubes holding 14-hedral beads, as a rule of carnelian, on their ends (Fig. 13.4, 5). In return, no such necklace is found in Crimean burials.

Regarding the flat *lunula* pendant from grave 94 (variant 3; Figs 12.11, 13.11), its analogies in possession supply evidence that the pendants of the kind were most typical of the first half of the third century, though there still were artefacts with a later date, like those from the burial vaults of the cemetery of Opushki in the Crimea from the second half of the third to early fourth century,⁶² or the above-mentioned grave in Kishpek.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that flat *lunula* pendants are also known from the Sarmatian graves of the Great Hungarian Plain.⁶³ Examples could be the finds in the Sarmatian cemetery of Madaras-Halmok from ca. 200 to ca. 400 AD,⁶⁴ in the second- and third-century Sarmatian graves from the cemetery of Bükkábrány-Bánya XI/A,⁶⁵ and in the cemeteries of Rákóczifalva-Kastélydomb and Tiszaföldvár-Téglagyár.⁶⁶ Although the *lunula* pendants from the above-mentioned sites are morphologically similar to the finds from the cemetery of Frontovoe 3, the pendants from the Danube area were manufactured in a different way.

⁴⁷KHRAPUNOV 2018, 140, 143, 144, Fig. 8.5.

⁴⁸KHRAPUNOV 2020, 249, Fig. 7.4.

⁴⁹TRUFANOV 2003–2004, 497, 510, Fig. 2.4; 9.7.

⁵⁰PUZDROVSKII 2007, 152, fig. 126.1; TRUFANOV 2010, 146, 150, 152, Fig. 3.7.

⁵¹TRUFANOV 2007, 229, 230, Fig. 2.5; TRUFANOV 2010, 191, 192, Fig. 35.4.

⁵²PUZDROVSKII–TRUFANOV 2017, 85, Fig. 186.4.

⁵³PUZDROVSKII–TRUFANOV 2016, 53, Fig. 101.2.

⁵⁴BABENCHIKOV 1963, Pl. XIV.7.

⁵⁵STRZHELETSKII *et al.* 2003–2004, Pl. 4.39; Appendix no 3, 265.

⁵⁶BETROZOV 1987, Fig. V.3.

⁵⁷KAZANSKI 1995, 189, 190.

⁵⁸KUDRIAVTSEV–GADZHIEV 1991, 107, Fig. 17.65.

⁵⁹STOIANOVA 2016, 136.

⁶⁰MALASHEV 2016, 46, 47.

⁶¹SKRIPKIN 1984, 52, 53.

⁶²KHRAPUNOV 2018; KHRAPUNOV 2020.

⁶³We are much grateful to Valéria Kulcsár (University of Szeged, Hungary) who kindly consulted us and provided with rare publications.

⁶⁴KÓHEGYI–VÖRÖS 2011, Pl. 25.23, 24; 38.1; 114.15; 127.20.

⁶⁵TUTKOVICS 2015, 8, Pl. 2; 14, Pl. 3.

⁶⁶VADAY 1989, Pl. 88.1; 107.11.

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