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Correspondence, manuscripts and books should be sent to: Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Doctoral School in History, Bdul Victoriei nr. 5-7 550024 Sibiu, Romania.

**e-mail:** [ioan-marian.tiplic@ulbsibiu.ro](mailto:ioan-marian.tiplic@ulbsibiu.ro),

[anamaria.tudorie@ulbsibiu.ro](mailto:anamaria.tudorie@ulbsibiu.ro)



## Content

Sabin Adrian Luca, Florentin Perianu, <i>Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 preventive campaign, Sector B. Feature 341-2. A ritual pit? Turdaş culture, phase III</i> .....	5
Gheorghe Lazarovici, Cornelia-Magda Lazarovici, <i>Are there cities and fairs in the neolithic? Part I – from PPN to late Neolithic (Part II is refering to Copper Age)</i> .....	23
Sabin Adrian Luca, Tiberiu Bogdan Sava, Doru Păceşilă, Oana Gaza, Iuliana Stanciu, Gabriela Sava, Bianca Ştefan, Florentin Perianu, Raluca Teodorescu, <i>Radiocarbon data from the archaeological site of Turdaş-Luncă (preventive research of 2011)(IV)</i> .....	93
Marius Mihai Ciută, <i>Collectors and collections an unexpected case (I)</i> .....	113
Gheorghe Gelu Păcurar, <i>The Making of a Holy Nation: Pastoral Activity, Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Nationalism in Interwar Romanian Orthodoxy ...</i>	135

## Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 preventive campaign, Sector B. Feature 341-2. A ritual pit? Turdaş culture, phase III.

Sabin Adrian Luca  
Florentin Perianu

**Keywords:** *clay figurine, the birth scene, Turdaş culture III.*

**Abstract:** *During the 2011 preventive research campaign, a clay statuette representing a woman giving birth was discovered – in a pit of the chronological and cultural horizon of Turdaş III. Its complex analysis is done in the rows below.*



Photo 1. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. In the central area – at the bottom of the photograph is the area of Petreşti I dwelling (feature 341) and the pits on the horizon of Turdaş III (features 341-1 and 2; 1838).

The 2011 preventive researches were published – in the form of a report – in 2012 (Luca *et al* 2012). Before to these researches, we carried out other, systematic ones, between 1992-1998. They also saw the light of the pattern (Luca 2001; Luca 2018).

As can be seen in photo 1 and plans 1-3 we are in zone B, towards Kilometer 11+470 of the archaeologically investigated area. The Petreşti I dwelling was shaped at about -0,30 m depth. All the green (grassy) stains are

remains of Petrești surface dwellings (plan 1-2 – central area and 3). They are artificially raised against the level of ironing of the time by bringing around the remains of the Turdaș layer. This is precisely why it – the Turdaș layer – presents "veils" (Turdaș III layer). Often, the debris of the surface dwellings, with floor (Lazarovici *et alii* 2014), of his, are affected, not keeping the remains of the floor, when it burned and resulted in the adobe.



Plan 1. Turdaș-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. In the central area of the plan, surrounded by dwellings with floor, Turdaș III (preserved parts of them) and Petrești surface dwellings (in this case feature 341) is feature 341-2 (Turdaș III).

At the entrance of the Petrești I's house, with feature number 341, also kept the adobe head of an herbivorous animal (photo 5 – bos, dog or wolf?) that watched over the door. Remains of such animals – especially bull heads made of adobes or even stone – were also found in the site, at the large entrance from E (used in phases II/III and III) (Luca *et al* 2012, p. 37, reconstruction 3-5) and in area A on the shore of Mureș, systematically researched in the 9th decade of the XX century (Luca 2001, p. 89-90, fig. 6; Lazarovici *et alii* 1985; Lazarovici *et alii* 2001, p. 207, fig. 168; p. 208, fig. 168b; p. 226-230, fig. 184-186; p. 236, fig. 190; p. 237, fig. 192; p. 239, fig. 194; p. 241, fig. 196; p. 275-276; p. 277-278; p. 278-280; Luca 2018; Luca *et alii* 2012, p. 31-32, fig. 5.).

At plan 3 can very easily notice that Petrești dwelling has on the east side, at -0,40-0,45 m below it, around construction (with pillars pits called features 364-368, 380 and 387-388). Such a construction we also discovered

at Tărtăria-*Gura Luncii* in the preventive researches from 2014-2015 (Luca 2016, p. 77-78, fig. 50, feature XXXIX – house L.XXA; Pața: Lazarovici *et al* 2002, p. 248, fig. 208). It belongs to the Turdaș culture, third phase.

As can be seen in photo 2-4, feature 341-2 was discovered after removing the remains of the Petrești I dwelling, with number 341, at 0,40-0,45 m under its level (feature 341-2). This elevation is the result of the disturbing of the Turdaș layer in order to strengthen the base of Petrești dwelling-platform (Luca 2018, plan 10, 12).

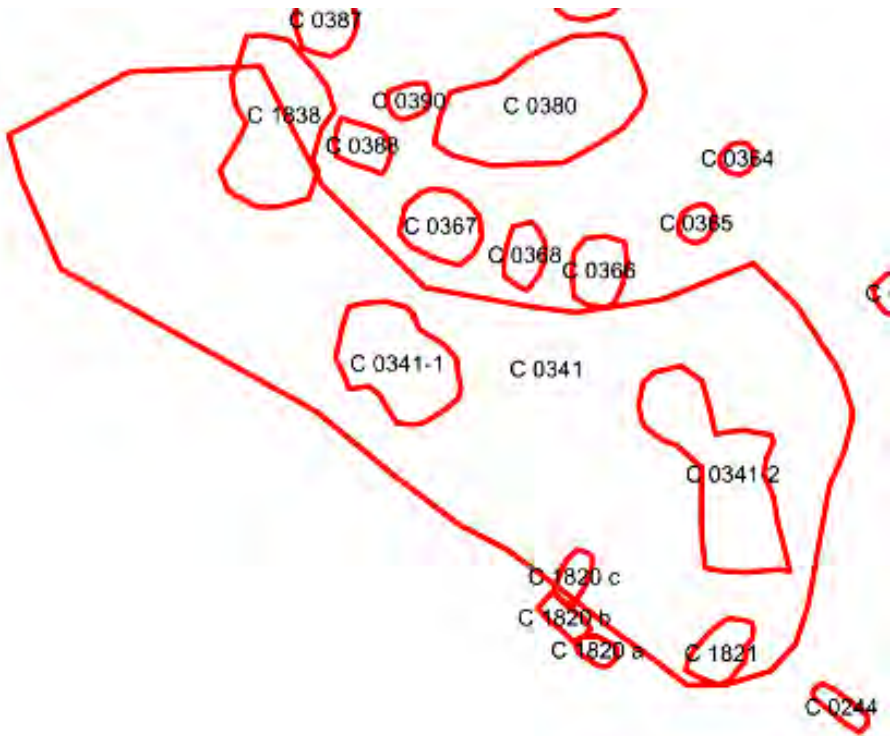
These pits, together with round construction, from the right of the plan 1 and 2, form a unit that can be integrated in phase III of the Turdaș culture.

One of the interesting pieces discovered at the dismantling of the Petrești remains is the herbivorous head made of clay (photo 5). It had been applied to the wall of the house. Such heads applied to the dwellings of the time are often found in the Danube area.

We will only mention a few, to see that such discoveries are a common good and do not have a clearly specified epoch of emergence. Examples are from Gorsza Horváth 1987, fig. 33/3; Lazarovici *et Lazarovici* 2016, p. 227, fig. 108a/2).

Feature 341-2 (photo 2-4) is in a series of hundreds of such pits, with well-burnt walls, placed behind the interior system (second row of palisades and fences) of fortifications (Luca *et alii* 2012, p. 33-45).

These pits (initially we defined them as ovens; the realities from the field oblige us to return to their definition, as pits for lighting by night fire the back of the palisades or pits of special character, but atypical so far) are – usually – rectangular, with rounded corners.



Plan 2. Turdaș-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. In the central area of the plan, surrounded by dwellings with floor, Turdaș III, (preserved parts of them) and Petrești surface dwellings (in this case feature 341) is feature 341-2 (Turdaș III).



Photo 2. Turdaș-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaș III.



Photo 3. Turdaș-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaș III.





Photo 4. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III.



C. 341

Photo 5. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341. Petreşti I. Adobe animal head (bos?, dog?, wolf?).



Photo 6. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.



Photo 7. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.





Photo 8. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.



Photo 9. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.



Photo 10. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.



Photo 11. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.

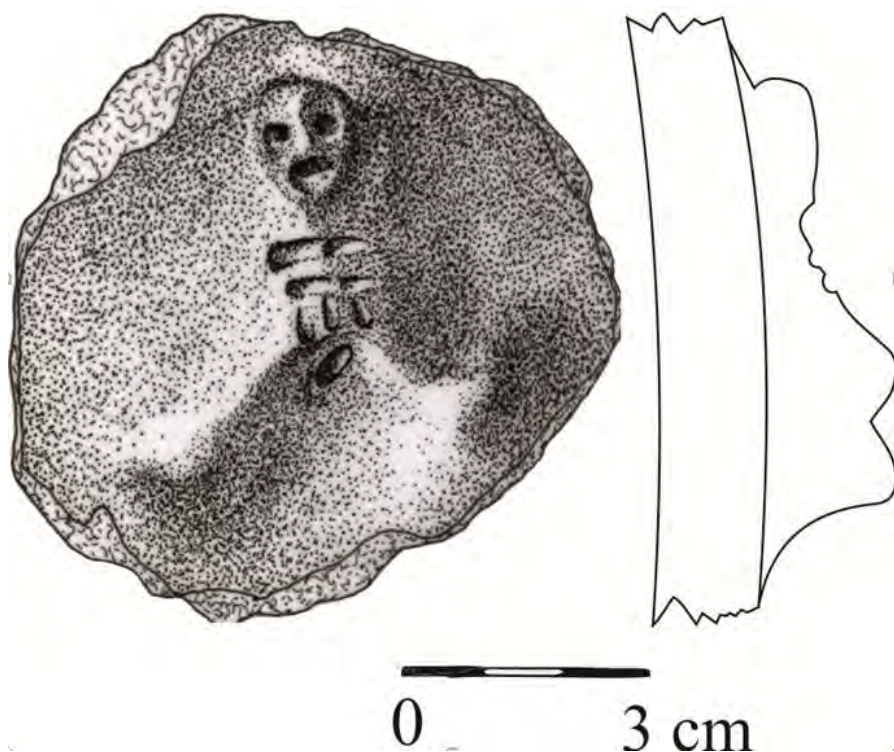
And the geometry of the 341-2 pit, when contoured, shows that we are in front of a special archaeological feature. As you can see (photo 2-4), it seems to have been built in a unique way, by twining two, quadrilateral geometrically parts that have an "entrance", at the twinning between them (the two quadrilateral bodies do not intersect at a right angle). As in all other cases of features of this kind, very well-burnt walls have a thickness of 2-3 cm, and on the bottom are remnants of black ash.

In the filling of the pits of this kind is found something (archaeological materials) very rarely. From here the inability to give them credible use, for the man of today. Some have some pottery fragments, others a bone or two. The case described now is unique. In the filling of the pit was discovered a piece made of burnt clay, unique.



Photo 12. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.

This is an anthropomorphic application (photo 6-12; drawing 1; fig. 1) made on a common use pot which – after the thickness of the wall – seems to be 50 cm high. The pot was, according to the angle and roundness of the preserved part, an amphorae, a rounded pot. The temper mixture contains pebbles with large grain, silt, a small amount of sand, rare mica and is dense. The color is yellowish-reddish on the outside and black on the inside. Burning is good.



Drawing 1. Turdaș-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaș III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.

Even if the usual temper is not the most suitable for such pieces – in the rest of the Neolithic and Eneolithic worlds – (but the usual temper for such pieces is – even – a rule, often found in the Turdaș plastic from the eponymous site), the expressiveness of the achievement shows us – from the beginning – a very developed artistic inclination of the modeler (usually the new – archaeologists – we refrain from observing that the plastic pieces are never made identically, they do not have the same features, and the similarities come only in groups of dimensions, depending on the direct use of the parts).

The statuette has the following dimensions: maximum height – 7,5 cm; maximum width – 7,6 cm and maximum thickness – 3,5 cm.

We want to draw attention – from the very beginning – to the fact that we are in front of a unique piece, which has no analogies or identities in the neolithic world in Europe, at least.

It represents, with amazing plasticity, a birth scene. The character sits on his back, with the middle tied with some straps and with her legs open, pulled to the side and knees up.

We have other information, which exemplifies the fact that this is a birth scene:

- the eyes are wide open, rendered disproportionately, a reflection of great astonishment or pain – an extremely rare thing found in neolithic statues (Schwarzberg 2011, Tafel 72/7; 105/3; 123/2-3; 126/1);

- his mouth is wide open, as if she were shouting – a thing rarely found in neolithic statues Schwarzberg 2011, Tafel 72/7; 105/ 3; 125/4-5; 126/1, 6);

- in the middle, the body is tightened with two straps;

- the character's hands are not visible and seem to be tied through those straps;

- below them (straps), are the fringes of a short skirt;

- the vulva is extremely expressive rendered, dilated;

- the legs are pulled sideways, with the knees up;

- between the legs and the vulva is suggested the existence of a deep container for collecting the fetus.

From the early neolithic there are characters applied, arranged on the vessels. These – female – seem to give life (Klindžić și Hršak 2014, p. 20, up).

All the attributes described above have no direct analogies. There are vessels that realistically reproduce the birth scene (Schwarzberg 2011, Tafel 1a). On the walls of the vessel, even from the early neolithic, there are applications, not very realistically made, called – usually – "dancers". One of them, the one from Donja Branjevina, seems to represent a birth scene (Becker 2011, Taf. 133/5).

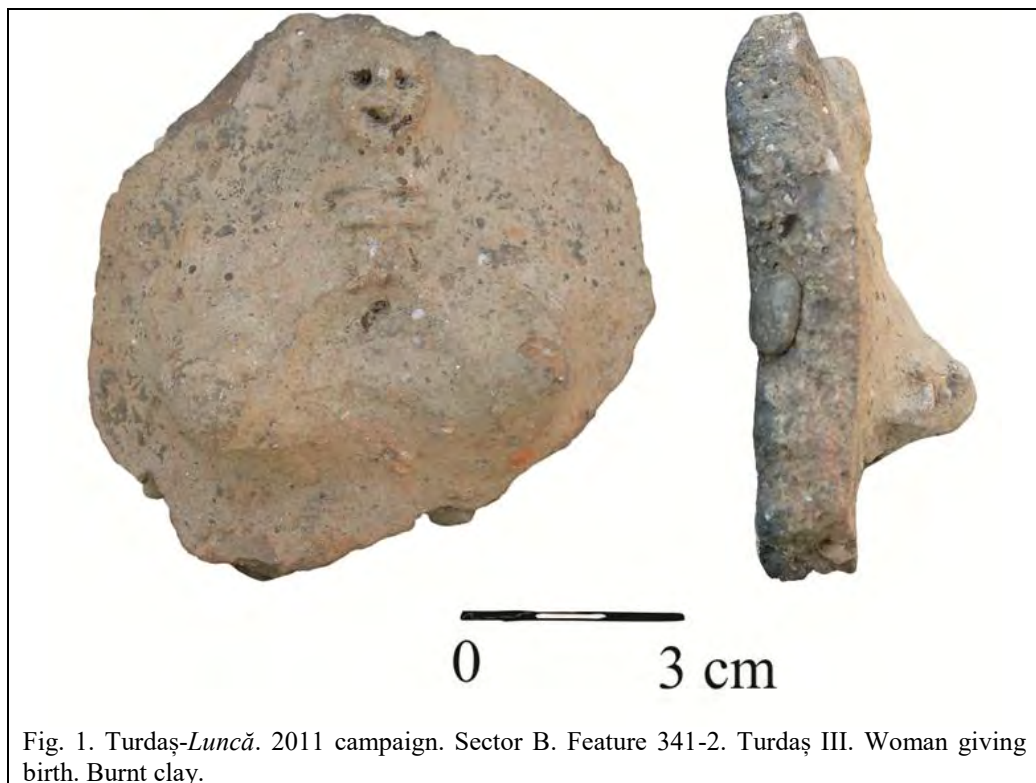


Fig. 1. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.

The other, from the Orient (Haçılar), seems to be – on a three dimensional piece, this time – identical to that of the modeling published by us (Hansen 2007, vol. 2: Taf. 62/2, 67/4 and 526/1). Another very significant statue for this moment is the one from Halaf (Joffe *et alii* 2001, p. 11).

Reproduced several times in the bibliography, a piece from Achileion, the Sesklo culture, is exceptional in terms of reproducing the birth scene (Dexter 2014, p. 150, Fig. 5). It is also another stylized statue of Greece (Ifantidis 2017, 2/3).

From here we can draw the conclusion and believe that the role of the "letter"/position M represents – much easier said – the way to represent *the birth of life*. To the same conclusion it seems to push and celebrate M. Gimbutas by publishing other statues from Achileion (Dexter 2014, p. 150, Fig. 5). In a similar way, another statuette from Greece (Ifantidis 2017, 2/3) is rendered, the position of the latter being very close to the statuette applied to the vessel which is the material of this article.



Analogies. Reproductions I.



1. The Hohle Fels cave, southwestern Germany (Dexter 2015, p. 297, Fig. 1).



2. Anatolia (Nikolov 2009, p. 143, Fig. 3.3).



3. Tell Halaf (Lazarovici et Lazarovici 2015, p. 37, fig. 152).

And in the cultures of the ceramic linear are other scenes on the vessels, with characters that seem to give life ((Becker 2011, Taf. 102/3-5, 8-9; 103/1-5; 104/1-4)). Such is the character published by S. Hansen (Hansen 2007, vol. 2: Taf. 503/6). Another such piece, applied and incised is on a vessel from Drassburg (Schwarzberg 2011, Tafel 112/2).

In the Eneolithic there are such representations at Krivodol (Biehl 2003, Fig. 24/666) or Pekijuk (Biehl, 2003, Fig. 31/428). Here we must point out that a lot of anthropomorphic pieces on the throne or chair can use it – in fact – for birts. As well as many of the statues that are rendered "tied", semi-seated, with the hand under the breasts and the lower part very pronounced (Hansen 2007, vol. 2 – și dăm doar câteva exemple: Taf. 14/4-21; 17/1-2; 18/10; 20-21; 25/4-5, 7-10; 26/1-2; 27/5; 28/1; 31/5, 10; 32/2-3; 33-35; 36/1-4; 37/3-4; 38/3-8; 39/4; 40/3; 41/6; 42; 43/5, 8; 44/3; 52/3; 66/3-4, 8; 67/1-3; 68/1-2; 69; 447/2; 457-458; 476; 479/3; 484/1-2; 485; 486/3; 509/2-3, 5) having a schematization of the gesture rendered in a unique way (Hansen 2007, vol. 2: Taf. 40/4).

These female characters can also be overweight. We have an example from Șoimuș-*La Avicola* (Fram 2) (Ștefan 2012, Fig. 3.), but the most representantative character is a feminine one, applied to the vessel during the birth, finishing the labor (Ștefan *et alii* 2013, p. 51-52, pl. IV/3a-b). It was appropriate to conclude these few lines with the piece from Șoimuș because it represents the end of the life-giving process.



4. Kolečovice (Lazarovici et Lazarovici 2015, p. 36, fig. 143)



5. Tell Azmak, Stara Zagora ((Nikolov 2009, p. 142, Fig. 2.4).



6. Kovačevo, Sandanski (Nikolov 2009, p. 142, Fig. 2.6).



7. Kovačevo, Sandanski (Nikolov 2009, p. 142, Fig. 2.7).



8. Golyam Porovets, Razgrad (Nikolov 2009, p. 142, Fig. 2.8).

Seeing the few analogies attached to this work, we see that genre scenes are still represented by the paleolithic (Analogies. Reproductions I/1 – the Hohle Fels cave). They also appear in the Orient from very ancient periods (Analogies. Reproductions I/2 – Anatolia or Analogies. Reproductions I/3 – Tell Halaf).

In Europe such reproductions appear – however stylized (Analogies. Reproductions I/5-8) – and significantly patterned or – even – incised (Analogies. Reproductions I/4).

We draw attention, once again, to the fact that the discovery from Turdaş, which is the material of this text, is unique in its realism as well as that of Şoimuş-*La Avicola* (Farm 2) (Ştefan 2012, Fig. 3).



## **Acknowledgement**

I must thank all those who have helped us with the smooth running of the Turdaş excavations over time (from 1992 to 2019) (note).

Finally, the ideas of dozens of colleagues in the country and abroad have led us, in my opinion to a balanced understanding of the discoveries made over time in Turdaş. Their list would be too long, but everyone who helped with the tips deserves thanks.

The students of the 29 successive years of study that we had in Sibiu, without realizing – sometimes – enormously in knowing and spreading these realities from archaeological sites all over the world. I thank them!

## Illustrations list

### Plans

- Plan 1. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. In the central area of the plan, surrounded by dwellings with floor, Turdaş III (preserved parts of them) and Petreşti surface dwellings (in this case feature 341) is feature 341-2 (Turdaş III).
- Plan 2. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. In the central area of the plan, surrounded by dwellings with floor, Turdaş III, (preserved parts of them) and Petreşti surface dwellings (in this case feature 341) is feature 341-2 (Turdaş III).

### Photos

- Photo 1. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. In the central area – at the bottom of the photograph is the area of Petreşti I dwelling (feature 341) and the pits on the horizon of Turdaş III (feature 341-1 and 2; 1838).
- Photo 2. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III.
- Photo 3. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III.
- Photo 4. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III.
- Photo 5. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341. Petreşti I. Adobe animal head (dog?, wolf?).
- Photo 6. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.
- Photo 7. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.
- Photo 8. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.
- Photo 9. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.
- Photo 10. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.
- Photo 11. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.
- Photo 12. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.

### Drawing

- Drawing 1. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.

### Figure

- Fig. 1. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. Sector B. Feature 341-2. Turdaş III. Woman giving birth. Burnt clay.

### Analogy. Reproductions I.

1. Hohle Fels cave, southwestern Germany; 2. Anatolia; 3. Tell Halaf; 4. Kolešovice; 5. Tell Azmak, Stara Zagora; 6-7. Kovačevo, Sandanski; 8. Golyam Porovets, Razgrad.

### List of bibliographic abbreviations

ActaTS	- <i>Acta Terrae Septemcastrensis</i> , Universitatea „Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu
AnB(SN)	- <i>Analele Banatului. Serie Nouă</i> , Muzeul Național a Banatului, Timișoara
Apulum	- <i>Apulum, Acta Musei Apulensis</i> , Muzeul Național al Unirii, Alba Iulia
BB	- <i>Bibliotheca Brukenthal</i> , Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu
BMA	- <i>Bibliotheca Musei Apulensis</i> , Muzeul Național al Unirii, Alba Iulia
BMN	- <i>Bibliotheca Musei Napocensis</i> , Cluj-Napoca
BrukAM	- <i>Brukenthal. Acta Musei</i> , Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu
BS	- <i>Bibliotheca Septemcastrensis</i> , Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu
MAF	- <i>Münchener Archäologische Forschungen</i> , München
NEA	- <i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
OPA	- <i>The Old Potter's Almanack</i>
SBA	- <i>Saarbrücher Beiträge zur Altertumskunden</i> , Bonn
SP	- <i>Studii de Preistorie</i> , București

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LUCIAN BLAGA UNIVERSITY OF SIBIU  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT OF  
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Correspondence, manuscripts and books should be sent to: Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Doctoral School in History, Bdul Victoriei nr. 5-7 550024 Sibiu, Romania.

**e-mail:** ioan-marian.tiplic@ulbsibiu.ro,

anamaria.tudorie@ulbsibiu.ro





## Content

Sabin Adrian Luca, Florentin Perianu, <i>Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 preventive campaign, Sector B. Feature 341-2. A ritual pit? Turdaş culture, phase III</i> .....	5
Gheorghe Lazarovici, Cornelia-Magda Lazarovici, <i>Are there cities and fairs in the neolithic? Part I – from PPN to late Neolithic (Part II is refering to Copper Age)</i> .....	23
Sabin Adrian Luca, Tiberiu Bogdan Sava, Doru Păceşilă, Oana Gaza, Iuliana Stanciu, Gabriela Sava, Bianca Ştefan, Florentin Perianu, Raluca Teodorescu, <i>Radiocarbon data from the archaeological site of Turdaş-Luncă (preventive research of 2011)(IV)</i> .....	93
Marius Mihai Ciută, <i>Collectors and collections an unexpected case (I)</i> .....	113
Gheorghe Gelu Păcurar, <i>The Making of a Holy Nation: Pastoral Activity, Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Nationalism in Interwar Romanian Orthodoxy ...</i>	135

**Are there cities and fairs in the neolithic?  
Part I – from PPN to late Neolithic  
(Part II is referring to Copper Age)**

Gheorghe Lazarovici  
Cornelia-Magda Lazarovici

**Keywords:** *fortifications, defensive ditches, palisades, fairs, proto-urban, bastions, temples, sanctuaries, conclaves*

**Abstract:** *In this study we have resumed the problem of Neolithic settlements with a complex architecture (defense systems with ditches, palisades, towers, bastions; residential buildings; cult constructions; social constructions) which support the idea of a proto-urban organization since the PPN. We have analyzed current definitions of cities and fairs, which mainly reflect situations from classical antiquity and the Middle Ages, but they cannot be applied to prehistoric realities, which, according to interdisciplinary research, offer another perspective. We also believe that religion too has played an important part in these sites, some of them being real centers of worship.*

We start our study with some definitions from Dexonline.

**CITY**, cities, 1. A complex form of human settlement, with multiple municipal facilities, usually with administrative, industrial, commercial, political and cultural functions.

An important human settlement with a large population, with businesses and institutions, which is an industrial, commercial, cultural, political and administrative center.

**City** (Hung. város, Bg. Serb. varoš, city; Turk. varoš, suburb, alb. varrôš, ngr. varósi). The association of a large number of houses and courtyards lined up along the streets.

**Fair**, 1. once city: villages and fairs.

From the above definitions, an important function has been forgotten, the religious function. We consider it important, because in Prehistory, and especially in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic (PPN), just as the first “cities” appeared, there were monumental temples and sanctuaries (Schmidt 1995; 2000; Hauptmann, Schmidt 2000; Schmidt K. WEB; \*\*\* 2007), and religious life played an important role in this period.

**Metropolis.** A city-residence of a metropolitan bishop, in accordance with *Micul dicționar academic* (*Micul dicționar academic*, ed. a II-a 2010: in this dictionary is mentioned that the word has an obsolete and rare meaning; Metropolis means also a state or large city of Antiquity, considered in relation to its colonies, or in our days a great city, capital of a country, regions, etc.). During Prehistory, temples and sanctuaries are more important than the economical buildings. In the PPN (Nevali Çori, Göbekli Tepe, etc.) and in the first settlements of the Ceramic Neolithic, judging by their architecture, we have to deal with cities (Çatal Hüyük and Hacilar: the center of power is religion (temples, columns, thrones, statues, altars), the communities being involved in other activities such as hunting, crafts (stone, marble, flint), pottery, etc. They serve several communities, being cultic centers.

In the Romanian literature there have been different opinions for and against the term proto-cities. It is not the case to analyze them, this is not our objective. But we want to give some examples: Dan Monah, a good connoisseur of the Cucuteni civilization, wrote an article with the title ***O stafie bântuie prin Europa proto-orașele neolitice*** (A Ghost Haunts Europe the Neolithic Proto-Cities), in *ArhMold*, XXVII, 2004, pp. 261-264 (the author is confined to the critique of the giant settlements in Ukraine, considered protorbane). However, one year before he had published the monography ***Poduri-Dealul Ghindaru. O Troie în Subcarpații Moldovei*** (Poduri-Dealul Ghindaru. A Troy in the Subcarpathians of Moldova), Piatra Neamț, 2003. It is known that Troy was a city with fortifications, temples, sanctuaries, with an impressive stratigraphy over time. According to the stratigraphy and the monumental architecture, a “similarity” between Poduri and Troy is plausible.

### **The first cultic cities**

Recent research and extraordinary discoveries at the PPN settlements in the Near East, in the so-called *Fertile Crescent* or *Golden triangle* (\*\*\* 2007: Hauptmann, Özdoğan M., p. 27), between the Taurus and Zagros mountains beginning in 10,000 BC, when there was an optimal climate, are no less important and impressive than many of the medieval towns.

Although D. Monah doubted that Jericho or Çatal Hüyük were cities, according to the conditions imposed by him in his analysis (Monah 2004, p. 264: collective life involved: sustainable housing, fortifications, artisans, military, priests a.s.o.), there were many impressive religious monuments and buildings with a gigantic architecture during the PPN (Göbekli Tepe, Nevali

Çori, Çayönü, Hallan Çemi, Cafer Höyücek, Jarmo, Mureybet, Abu Hureira, 'Ain Mallaha, Nahal Oren, Wadi en-Natuf, Jericho, Beidha – Kovács 2016, p. 45).

In many of these settlements there are sanctuaries with benches, columns (2, 4, 13, 13+2), hearths, stone statues and idols, stone vessels, columns with figures in bas-relief, some columns reach 3 m high and others:

- Jericho (the city mentioned in the Bible) Müller-Karpe 1968, Kat. 66, Taf. 105/20 (Jerichon: Eliade 1981, p. 46; Kovács 2016, p. 48-49);
- Göbekli Tepe, Löwenpfeilergebäude East, Anlage B (Schmidt 2007, p. 74-75, 84-85, kat. 2; Kovács 2016, p. 49-50);
- Nevali Çori, sanctuary 2 Building 13 has 3 phases (Hauptmann 1993; 2007, p. 86; Hauptmann, Schmidt 2007; Özdoğan A. 2007, p. 58, 61; Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici 2006, p. 29, fig. I.17; Kovács 2016);
- Çayönü (Özdoğan M. 2007; Hole 2002, p. 200; Kovács 2016, p. 51-53);
- 'Ain Ghazal sanctuaries, Yamukian (Rollefson 1998; Shaw, Jameson 1999, p. 322; Kovács 2016, p. 56-57);
- and others (Cafer H., Akarçay, Mezraa Teleilat, Quermez Dere – Kovács 2016, p. 46-48);
- Sanctuaries with T-shaped pillars: Göbekli Tepe II, *Löwenpfeilergebäude East*; III, Anlage B, Nevali çori, Anlage B, Nevali çori, sanctuary, 2 Building, 13 has 3 phases and others (Özdoğan A. 2007, p. 58; Hauptmann 1993; 1999; 2007, p. 86; Hauptmann, Schmidt 2007, p. 79; Schmidt 2007, p. 85, kat. 4, 27; Özdoğan A. 2007, p. 61; Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici 2006, p. 29, fig. I.17).

At this point, these seem to be the kind of city-state with a territory belonging to it, related to hunting according to some representations on the columns, but also with many other representations and symbols related to the serpent cult and many more.

In the PPNB period, but especially in the Ceramic Neolithic, there are genuine cities with surroundings, with several sanctuaries inside; some are community sanctuaries, others domestic, so that everyday life was closely interwoven with religion. The best example is from Çatal Hüyük (fig. 2),

where extensive research has been carried out and continues with new discoveries.



a.



b.

Fig. 1. Jericho, the wall with tower and stone constructions (b), but also with round huts, covered with animal skins (a): a, apud Religious Studies passim; b, apud Müller-Karpe 1968.

For these reasons too strict definitions are not in line with archaeological realities, which change as research, investigation and interpretation methods progress. The magnetometric prospects and the great rescue excavations from us also change the perception of prehistoric times. With fewer sources available, prehistoric archaeologists are more sensitive to novelties and modernization of research than classical archaeologists.

In PPN A and PPN B, the architecture and spiritual life reach the apogee (fig. 2). At Çatal Hüyük, the dynamism of architecture offers new possibilities for understanding the evolution of the Neolithic and, obviously, the Copper Age architecture with great periods of favorable weather.

The frescoes from Çatal Hüyük (fig. 3e-f) provide us with a lot of information about the costume, the weapons of the hunters (the bow, the quiver, the boomerang etc.), but also about the annual calendars related to the behavior of animals, reptiles and others. From the reconstructions, we have proof of the houses with upper floors (fig. 3a-d), way of life and defense.

The researches of Hacilar (Mellaart 1962; Mellaart 1975) are also particularly important, because we have models of fortified Neolithic cities, interior arrangements, spaces for the animals and activities (fig. 4a-b).

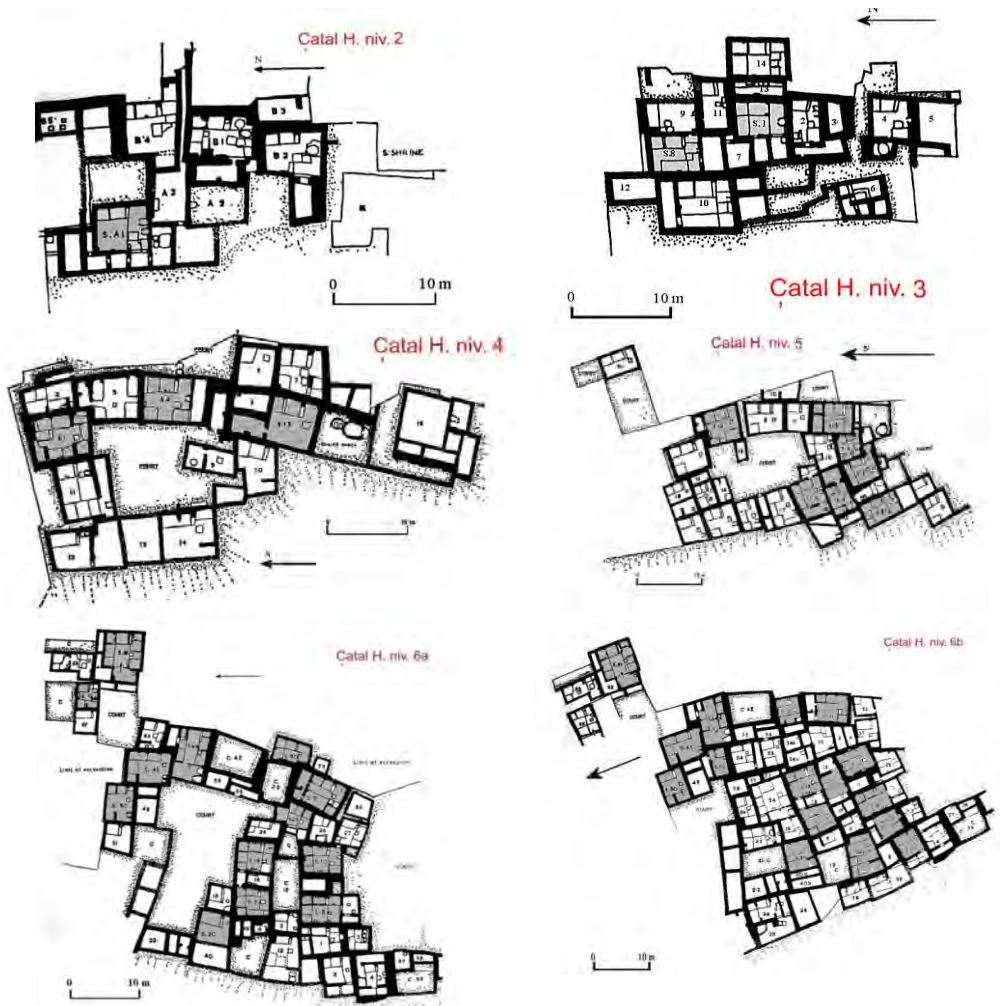
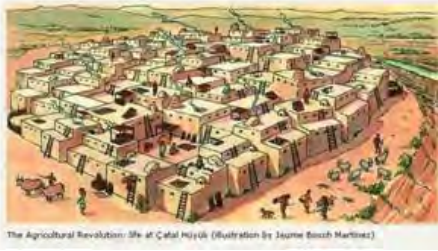


Fig. 2. Çatal Hüyük, plan with the sanctuaries on levels 2-6b, apud Mellaart 1967.

We do not want to insist too much on Anatolia, although the examples from Nevalı Çori (fig. 4a), with the four temples and numerous stone constructions, with monumental columns with incredible decorations made with flint, obsidian and stone tools show us the greatness of those civilizations.



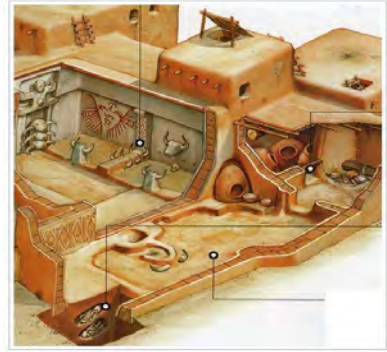
a.



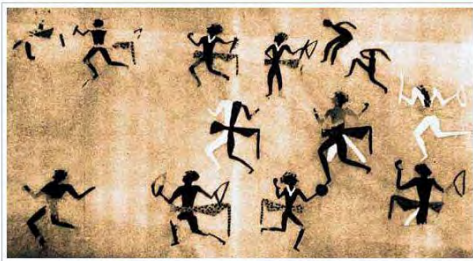
b.



c.



d.



e.



f.

Fig. 3. Çatal Hüyük, reconstructions, frescoes, way of life, occupations (apud [http://www.catalhoyuk.com/news/wall\\_paintings\\_2011.html](http://www.catalhoyuk.com/news/wall_paintings_2011.html)).

Without descending further south in the Plain of Mesopotamia, where superior cities and civilizations flourish, but also in other parts of the Near East (Hacilar fig. 4b-c), if we only mention some without insisting (Hassuna, fig 5b) (Mellaart 1962; Mellaart 1963; Mellaart 1964; Mellaart 1965; Mellaart 1966; Mellaart 1967; Mellaart 1975; \*\*\* 2007, Çatal Hüyük and bibl.) about that *Fruitful crescent* or *Golden triangle* (center-north and north of Mesopotamia, east of the Levant).



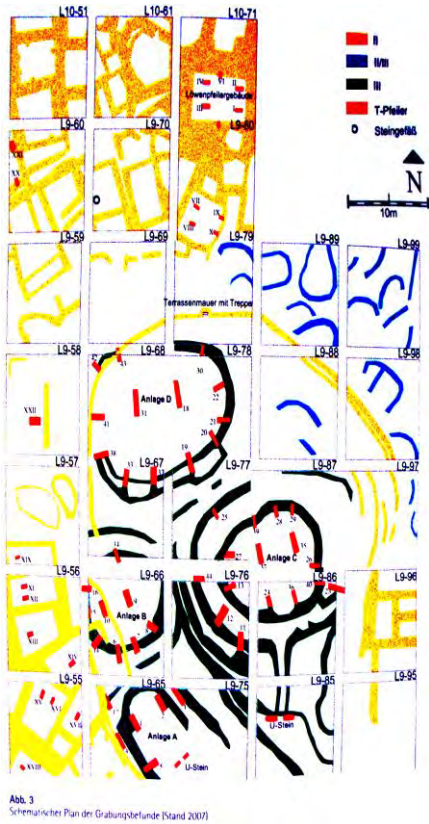
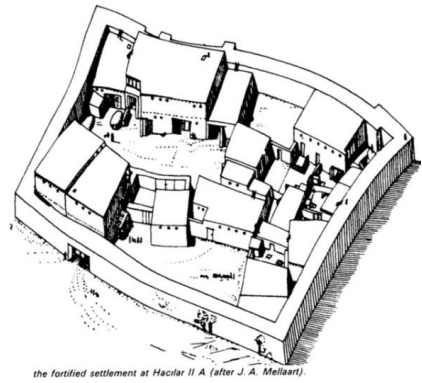
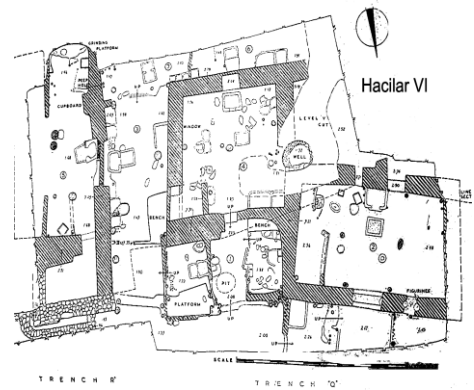


Abb. 3  
Schematischer Plan der Grabungstefunde (Stand 2007)



b.



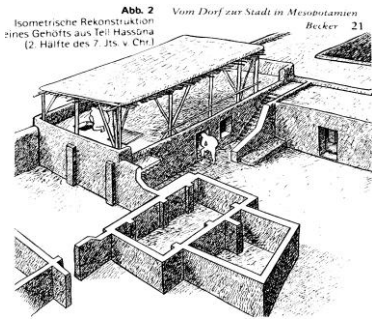
c.

a.  
Fig. 4. Nevalı Çori (apud Schmidt 2011, fig. 2); b, Hacilar II, 5200-5000 BC; c, Hacilar VI, approx. 5400 BC (apud Mellaart 1975).

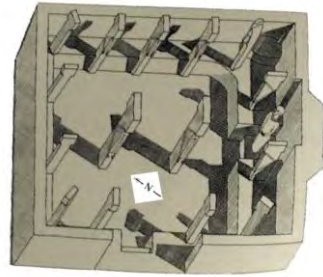
A feature of the first sanctuaries is the presence of massive T-shaped columns, sometimes beautifully decorated (fig. 5c-f). Such columns also appear at Serefen Tepe, Yeni Mahalle, Karahan Tepe, Hamzan Tepe, Çayönü – The Terrazzo building, Göbekli Tepe Löwenpfeilergebäude East (fig. 5a) (Özdoğan A. 2007, p. 59; Schmidt 2007, p. 84-85).



a.



b.



c.



d.



e.



f.

Fig. 5: a, d-f, Göbekli Tepe: a, Löwenpfeilergelände East, apud Schmidt 2000; b, Tell Hassuna, apud Becker 2009, fig. 21; c, Nevalı Çori, apud \*\*\* 2007.



a.



b.



c.



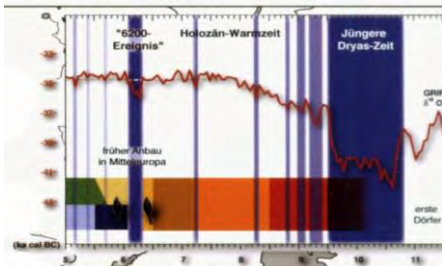
d.

Fig. 6: a-b, d, Nevali Çori, apud Hauptmann 1993; c, Göbekli Tepe, apud \*\*\* 2007.

Climate change in the south and glacier retraction towards north after the last cold period of approx. 200 years between 6.300-6.100 BCE (fig. 7a) determined the communities from some areas of Anatolia to move to the



Balkans, where, after 6,100 BC, a climate favorable to the development of human communities begins.



a.



b.



Dimini. A reconstruction.



c.

Fig. 7: a, Environment in Holocene with the “Ereignis” cold period, apud Daim, Neubauer 2005, Abb. 5b; b, the fortification of Sesklo (apud Theocharis 1973); c, Dimini (reconstructions WEB).

In Thessaly, during the Protosesklo culture, but especially later, during the Sesklo Culture, at Sesklo and Dimini, there is a stone architecture, not as monumental as in Anatolia, but here too real cities are built on natural hills where stone was available. Here, too, true stone fortifications were built, with stone buildings, with bastions at the gates or corners, with spaces between the defense systems for livestock, with squares, with some buildings with upper floor, with those large megaron buildings (Dimini:

<https://www.britannica.com/technology/megaron>: Kovács 2016, p. 16), that were supposedly sanctuaries. Now begins the development and role of tells in architecture (Rosenstock 2006).

To be honest, they started to appear during the Sesklo culture at Dimini (fig. 7c). Most of the buildings are made of stone wall (fig. 7b) (\*\* 1973, fig. 1-5).

### **The carpathian-danubian region**

After 6,100 BC, the Neolithic communities established in Greece, especially in the Thessaly region, in the neighborhoods of the Olympus Mountains, starting from the *Frühkeramik* or *Monochrome* Neolithic, started to evolve in Thessaly, Greek Macedonia, and from here they headed north to the Vardar Valley through the Republic of Macedonia, but also through Struma Valley, towards the Carpatho-Danubian region.

Towards the end of the Early Neolithic started to appear the first Neolithic fortifications with ditch and sometimes palisade. One cannot speak of cities yet. With the arrival of the bearers of the Vinča culture, both the Starčevo-Criș and Vinča communities began to fortify themselves.

We have called this period the Balkan-Anatolian Chalcolithic, because the first copper objects appear now, although small, but changes also take place in the behavior of the communities (Lazarovici Gh., Nica 1991; Lazarovici Gh. 1993). A new architecture develops, the dwellings are durable, the settlements begin to be fortified, there are some zonal centers in the neighborhood of which there are a series of secondary or seasonal settlements that gravitate around those fortified centers.

### **Vinča Culture (fig. 8-10)**

#### **Vinča-Belo Brdo**

The most famous settlement, *Vinča-Belo Brdo*, with a stratigraphy over 10 m thick, had a defensive ditch excavated by Vasić (fig. 8) (Vasić 1932a-c). Extensive excavations are still taking place here, with modern methods of processing and interpretation of materials started by Nikola Tasić and Bogdan Jovanović, taken over and developed by Nenad Tasić (Tasić *et alii* 2015 and bibl.). The architecture of the Vinča A3 phases in Vinča D has a proto-urban development.



Fig. 8. Vinča-Belo Brdo: a, photo M. M. Vasić; b, the stratigraphy of Vinča, photo Gh. Lazarovici.

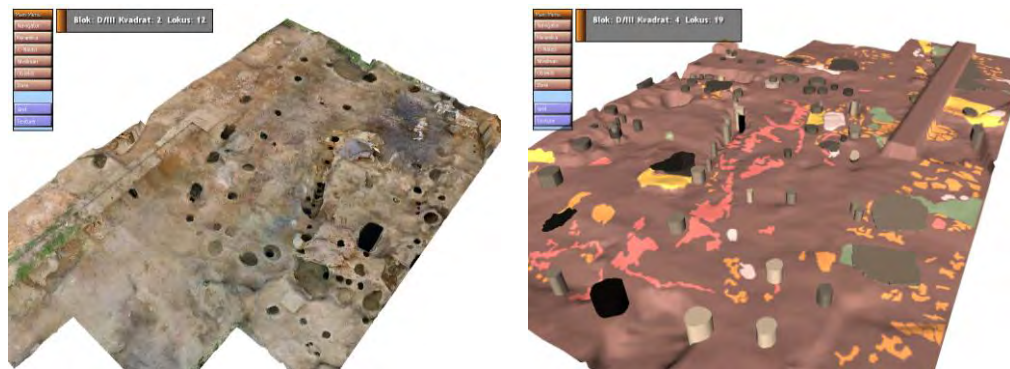


Fig. 9. The system of databases regarding the researches of Vinča-Belo Brdo, apud Tasić, Jevremović, ArheoPackPro!

Also there a large archaeological park was built there and is currently under development.

Future monographs will best show a proto-urban evolution with a special architecture, with the thickest stratigraphy from the Carpatho-Danubian region. For analysis and study, a relational database was created which allows the researcher to identify the archaeological contexts associated with information and details (fig. 9) on the content, descriptions, images,

reconstructions and many other details (Tasić, Jevremović, WEB *ArheoPackPro!*). A monograph would be necessary.

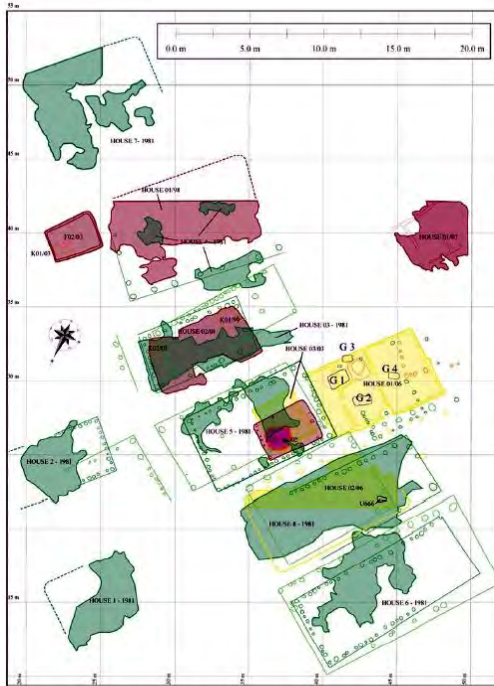
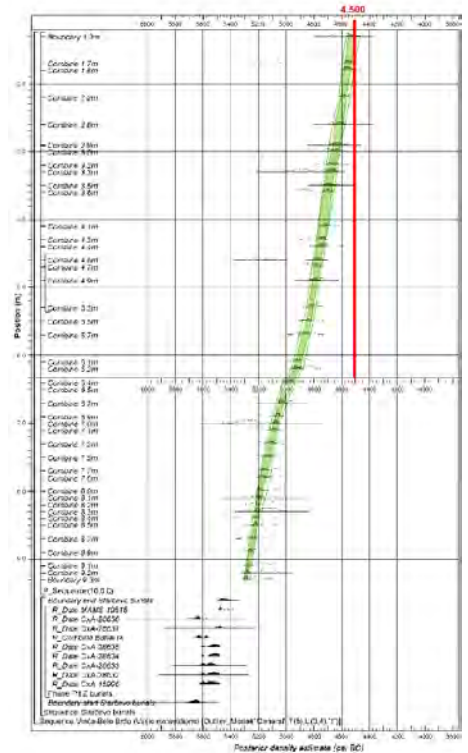


Figure 5. Plan of several houses excavated in sector II in 1978-1986 and 1998-2007; those in the lower burn structural horizon are shown in dark green; those in the unburnt horizon in light green; and those in the upper burn structural horizon in yellow. The unlabelled houses outlined in light green may constitute an uppermost unburnt final horizon of Vinča culture occupation; G = *Bodogheresztari* graves.

p.1069

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a.

b.

Fig. 10. Vinča-Belo Brdo: a, plan with the researched features 1978-1986 (Tasić Nikola, Jovanović B.) and Nenad Tasić 1998-2007; b, absolute chronology (apud Tasić *et alii* 2015, fig. 44-45); red, late Vinča.

From the plan one can see the layout of buildings with complex architecture, along streets.

Two rows of poles on the same construction plan suggest the possibility of buildings with upper floor, but also reconstructions on the same plane (fig. 10a). Future publications will provide details.

The architectural dynamics of Vinča and other parts of southern Central Europe (Banat culture, Zau Culture) are determined by climate change, too.

Corroborating the chronology, architectural, and climate change data, we notice that at Parța the transition from pit houses to massive wood



constructions at levels 7c (fig. 13 a-b) corresponds to a cold period. Also, the building of *dwelling-blocks* grouping together four dwellings, with suspended floors and ground floor, in some cases with clay walls only upstairs or from the suspended floors up, corresponds to a second cold period, with heavy rainfall, rain that may have affected the Banat Plain.

The correlated absolute chronology data provided by N. Tasić (Tasić *et alii* 2015, p. 44-45, table correlated after fig. 16-17) shows that the settlement of Vinča ceases its evolution around 4500 BC, period around which in other areas too (eastern Hungary, Banat, Transylvania) the civilizations of the Late Neolithic cease to evolve.

### **Zorlențu Mare**

There is such a center at Zorlențu Mare. Without prospecting, and the research being grouped only in the central area (pit houses, houses, ovens, sanctuaries: Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C-M. 2003, fig. 41, 48; Lazarovici Gh. 1991b; Lichter 1993, kat. 120, p. 145-146, pl. 71; Kovács 2016, p. 18), no fortification systems could be found. Deposits over 2 m thick indicate that such a defense system is possible.

Also in Zorlențu Mare there are pottery workshops with specialized craftsmen, with kilns (fig. 11c-d), as well as a special architecture (dwellings with suspended floor) (Lazarovici C-M., Lazarovici Gh. 2006, p. 185-186). The research here has led to the discovery of a particularly rich plastic art (Lazarovici Gh. 1979, pl. 20-23, s.v. Zorlenț).

Around Zorlențu gravitate a series of secondary, seasonal settlements (5-6 points around the main settlement), at Ohaba Mâtnic, Ruginosu, Copăcele, connected through ridge roads (Lazarovici Gh. 1979, p. 27, 61, 206, 209-210).

A similar situation occurs at Balta Sărată (two sites), around which several settlements gravitate on the territory of the town Caransebeș and in the neighboring areas (Jupa, Păltiniș, Zăguzeni, etc. – Lazarovici Gh. 1979, p. 185 and next., repertory no. 2-3. 15, 27, 45, 46, 61, 74, 96-97, 102, 104).

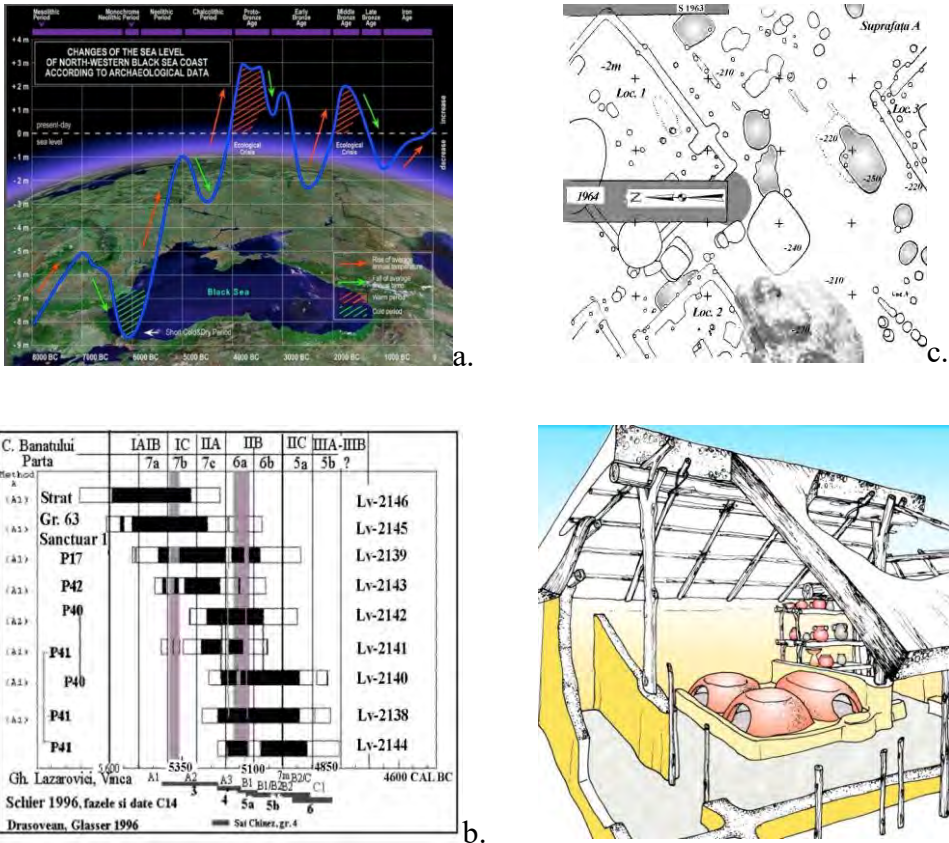


Fig. 11: a, climate evolution, apud Todorova, passim; b, evolution of the Banat culture, according to C14 data; c-d, Zorlențu Mare, Dwelling 1, level 7, ceramic workshop; b-d, apud Gh. Lazarovici.

Unfortunately, the lack of magnetometric prospects did not allow the identification of the fortification systems or of details regarding the density of dwelling on the entire surface of the site, over 7 ha. This kind of habitation tends towards a proto-urban habitation, but there are no arguments to prove it.

### Tărtăria

Among the Vinča settlements in Transylvania, this was the most intensely researched settlement. It was famous at first for the discovery of the tablets by N. Vlassa (Vlassa 1962; 1963; 1965; 1970; 1971; 1972; 1974). Extensive excavations (fig. 12b) were performed by S.A. Luca, who published a monograph (Luca 2016, see also his previous bibl.).

Large areas are still being investigated (fig. 12b), for these reasons it is not appropriate to gamble with assumptions about what has been investigated so far. The stratigraphy that reaches 2 m and even 3-4 m in some places (fig. 12a) shows the intensity of habitation. As in other parts, the most developed architecture is in the Vinča A3-B1 level, when there is an evolution towards a proto-urban architecture (dwellings with upper floor and cellars fig. 12c-d, fortification systems, graves nearby, etc.). A similar dwelling with upper floor, ground floor and cellar is located at Parța, in the block of dwellings P41-P43 (Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 2001, p. 126-143; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C-M. 2003, fig. 52-65, 67), but also at Turdaș (Luca 2016) (fig. 12d). The very large thickness of some deposits (fig. 12a) certainly indicates features with upper floor, like at Parța in the “*blocks of dwellings*”.

#### **Miercurea Sibiului (fig. 12e-f)**

At the Vinča level there is a palisade (fig. 12f) which diagonally crosses the surveyed surface. We believe it was encircling the large dwellings. The magnetometric prospects also showed other defense systems (fig. 12e). A survey confirmed the presence of the ditch and a gate, but the works have unfortunately stopped at this stage.

#### **Banat Culture**

In the Banat Plain, the archaeological investigations were more intense and they offer numerous examples of proto-urban organization. Surveys on large surfaces, magnetometric prospecting, field surveys in the area have allowed us to notice that at Parța there is an evolution towards a proto-urban habitation.

In the vicinity of the Parța settlement, between 500 m and 12-15 km, there are over 12 secondary or seasonal settlements (Surface research made by Fr. Resch, Andrei Agotha, Karol Germann, Adrian Fora, Gh. Lazarovici, Fl. Drașovean and other member of the team signaled those housing remains: Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C-M. 2003, fig. 27). The more than 2 m deep stratigraphy has seven large levels of habitation (fig. 13-14).



a.



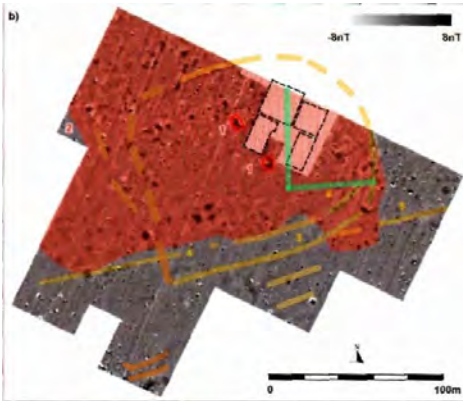
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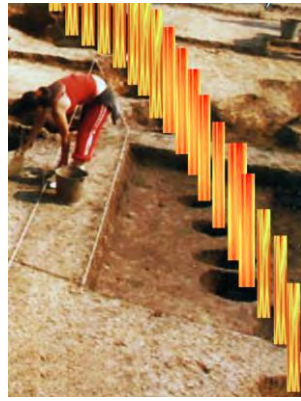
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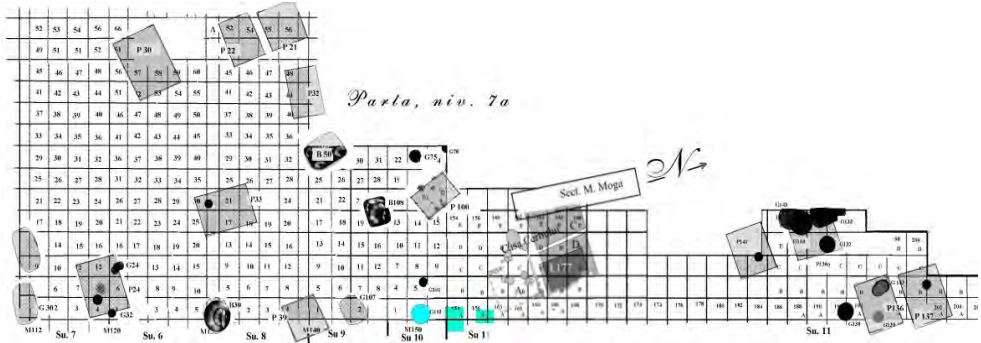
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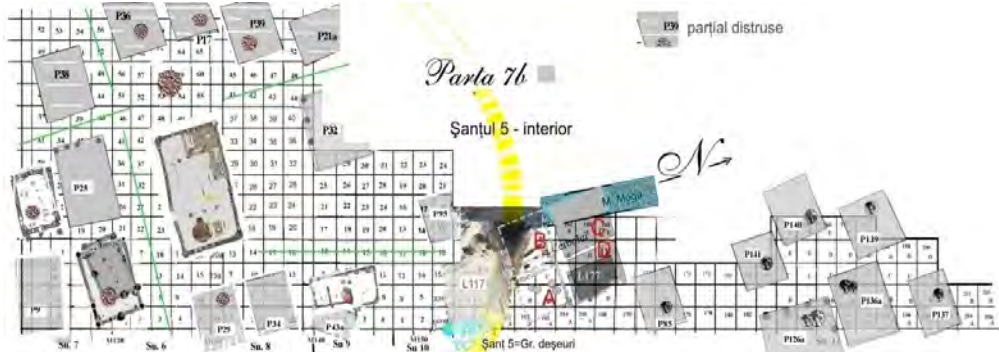
f.

Fig. 12: Tărtăria: a, stratigraphy; b, systematic excavation; c, rescue excavation L4 (apud Luca 2016); d, reconstruction Gh. Lazarovici; e-f, Miercurea Sibiului: e, apud Mischka 2012; e, f, processing Gh. Lazarovici.

From one level to another there is a special dynamics of the construction of the dwellings (fig. 13), resulting in *dwelling blocks* with upper floors (fig. 14), with a vertical development determined by the fortification system which on the north side had over 30 m of trench and palisade systems (fig. 15), consisting of three ditches and four palisades and a ditch and palisade system (fig. 15a), which surrounded the central area with temples and sanctuaries.

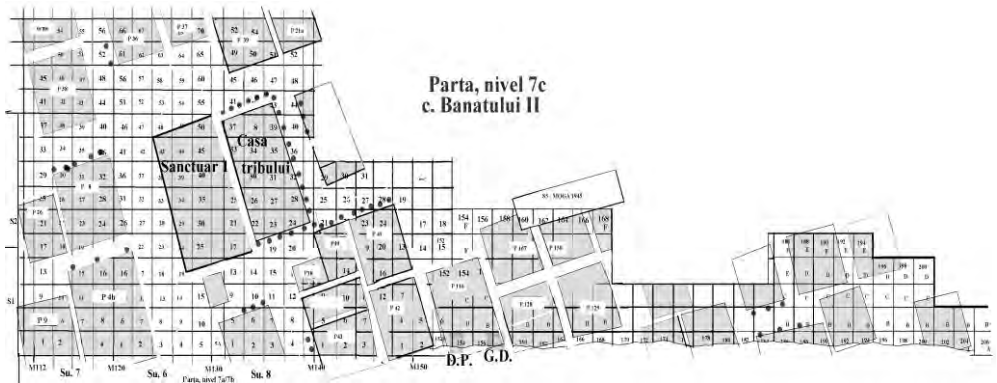


a.



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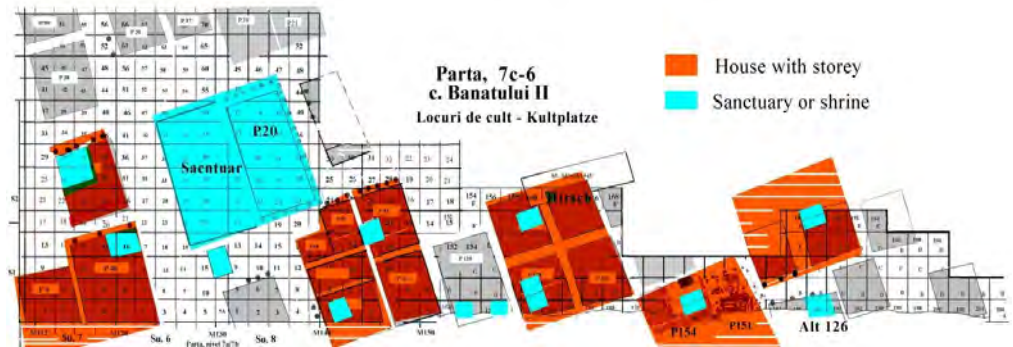


c.

Fig. 13. Plan of the Parța settlement with the features in levels 7 (apud Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 2001).



a.



b.



c.  
 Fig. 14. Parța: a-b, levels of dwellings and cultic constructions; c, dwelling blocks; d, House of the tribe.

The research extended to several cult buildings (temples in the center with monumental clay statues, fig. 17a-b), a social house (fig. 14d) (*House of the tribe* was near the *Sanctuary*), but did not have household items (cereal boxes, supplies vessels), tools.

Upstairs there was an altar and several sling balls, which, after weight, were for war not for hunting), communitarian or domestic sanctuaries (in the vicinity of the sanctuary and at various points of the settlement (in the center are related with sanctuaries and priestesses that care for sanctuaries; in other areas there are community sanctuaries of the various priestesses), four *blocks* of dwellings with upper floor rooms (fig. 14b, 18a).

One can notice the arrangement of the dwellings along streets with access to the gates (fig. 14b). Numerous kilns have been found, used to burn slingshot balls in situations of “war/battle”, but which could also serve for the burning of ceramics.

The large quantities of ceramics in some dwellings mark workshops (In the vicinity of the Sanctuary and the House of Tribe in a complex there were over 20 boxes of ceramics (cca. 12-15 kg one box).

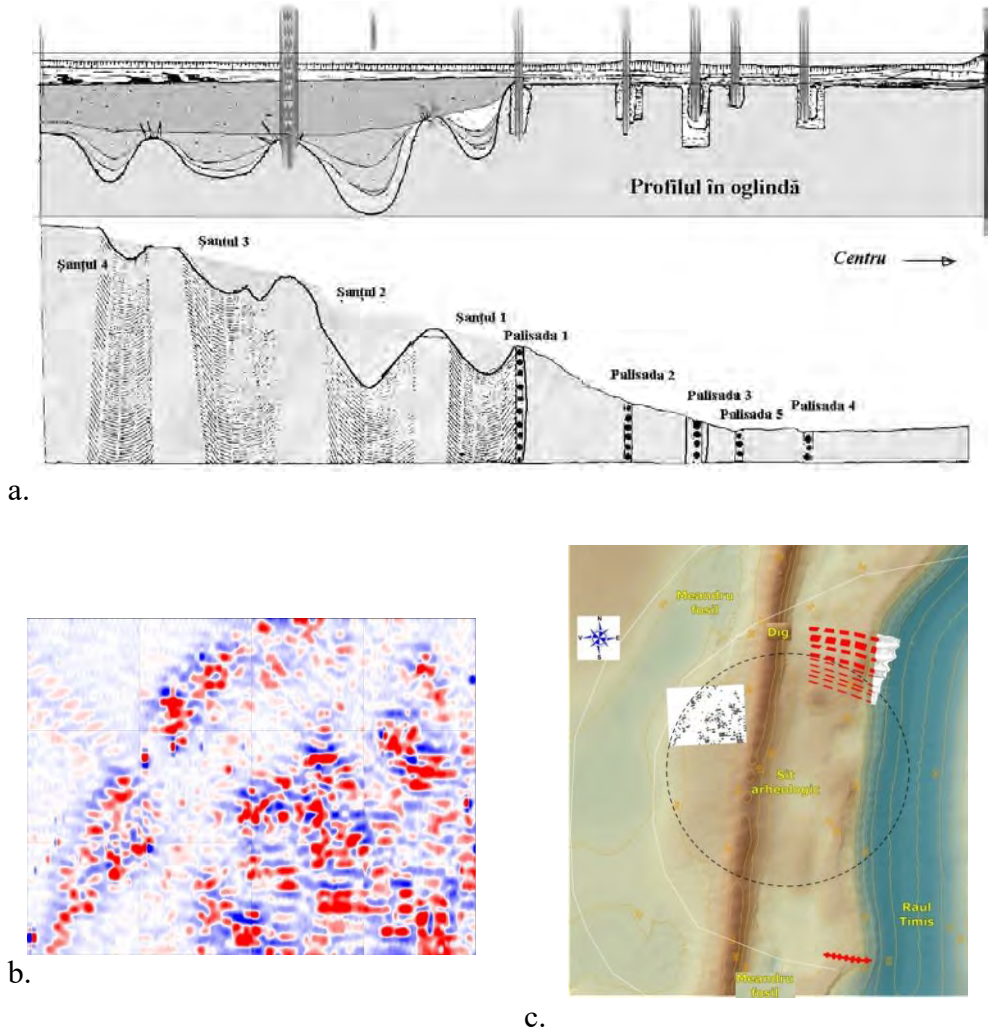
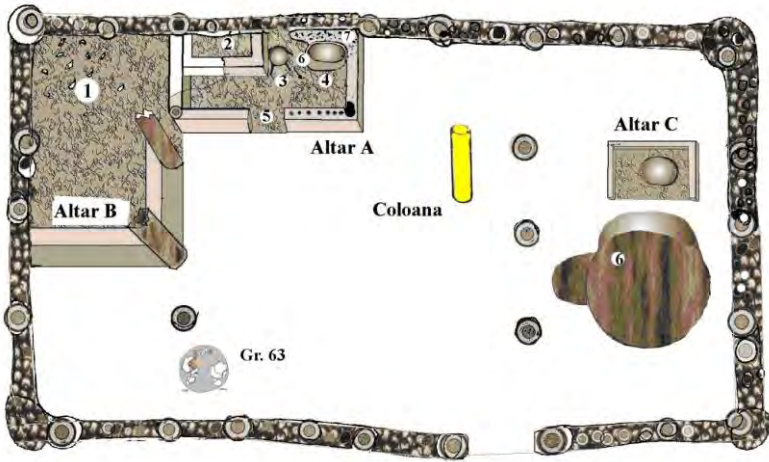


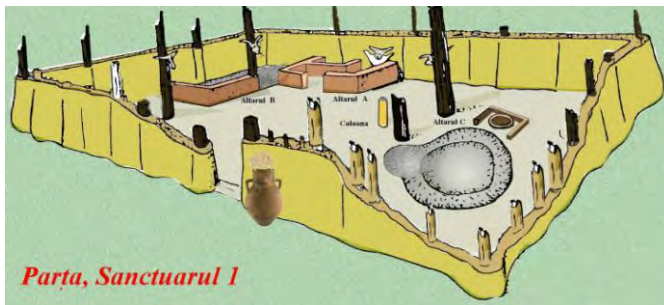
Fig. 15. Parța: a, the system of moats and palisades; b, the magnetometric surveys (L. Măruia, D. Micle); c, topographic survey of the site with the defense systems.

The *sanctuary 1* (fig. 16) had an altar located to the east for burning cereals and deposits in a pit of burnt spikes. In the center there was a small column of unburnt clay. In front of the entrance, there was Altar A with a place for depositing offerings (mark 2), a portable hearth for the burning offerings (meat and others, mark 3), a pedestal (mark 4) for a bust idol with a bull's skull (mark 6, item fig. 12c or a similar one) and a base for depositing the ash (mark 7).





a.



b.



c.

Fig. 16. Parța, Sanctuary 1: a, level 7, plan; b, reconstruction; c, some artifacts.

Researches at Sanctuary 1 allowed the study of what happens in a sanctuary during operation and abandonment.

Near the entrance on the southern side was discovered a large supply vessel with a face marked with symbols, the letter *M*, a specific decoration for the Szakálhát culture vessels too (Goldmann, Szenasky 2003).

Most likely, in the supply vessel with *M* were deposited spikes, as it happened in Sanctuary/Temple 2 on altar-table C. A hearth surrounded with a chime, forming a small altar, served for the regular ritual burning of some straw (successive layers of ash and charcoal have been found, which is repeated in Sanctuary 1 and 2 on altar A, fig. 16b, 17.8).

In the altar B were slaughtered animals (sheep, maybe lambs); the floor was made up of several layers of gravel and sand, on which large splinters of flint were found (no traces of wear).

Upon abandoning or construction of Sanctuary 2 a series of pots, some from painted amphorae with human face, were broken and laid in the pit on layers, along with fragments of unburnt vessels and loom-weights, as well as an oval, large clay object with holes.

These are rituals of foundation and abandonment, as they have also been discovered in other sites and cultures (Lazarovici C.-M. 2009; Lazarovici Gh. 2009b).

***Sanctuary 2.*** It was well preserved, which allowed it to be moved to the Banat Museum. The space being confined, the empty spaces (between the entrance and the statue, the statue and the altar D, the altars A-C and the west wall) were reduced to the maximum.

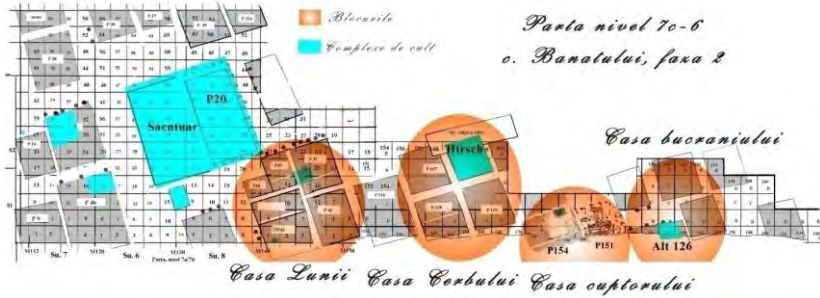
The monumental statue (1.70 x 1.30 m) represents the Great Mother and her partner, the Bull (mark m1). Next to them were portable hearths on which products were burned (No. 2, 13), a cassette and a pot for cereals (No. 4, 6 pot), a cup for blood (No. 3), vessels with offerings (No. 5, 7, 9, 14), the opening with Sun and Moon, the grinder (No. 9), the loom with seven weights (No. 10) and the orifice for the light (No. 15).

At a *block* of dwellings (marked as *the block of the Moon*: fig. 17a), from the four-five rooms (there were also porches) four had suspended floor and three had one upper floor each.

The arrangement of the space and the vertical development were determined by the fortification system, which had in some places four ditches and four palisades stretching over a 30 m area, with the purpose of protection against arson in intertribal battles.

Other dwellings had at least two rooms, and a total of over 15 had suspended floors. All this shows a high level of architecture, a beginning of urbanism.

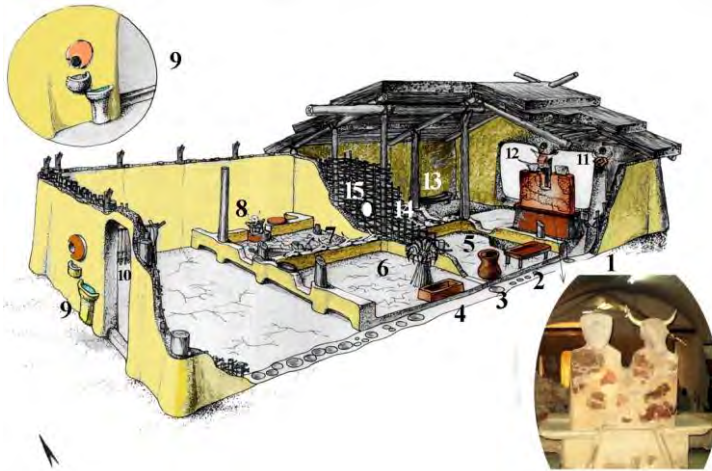
The evolution of urbanism, as well as the great natural changes, have affected the Neolithic communities.



a.

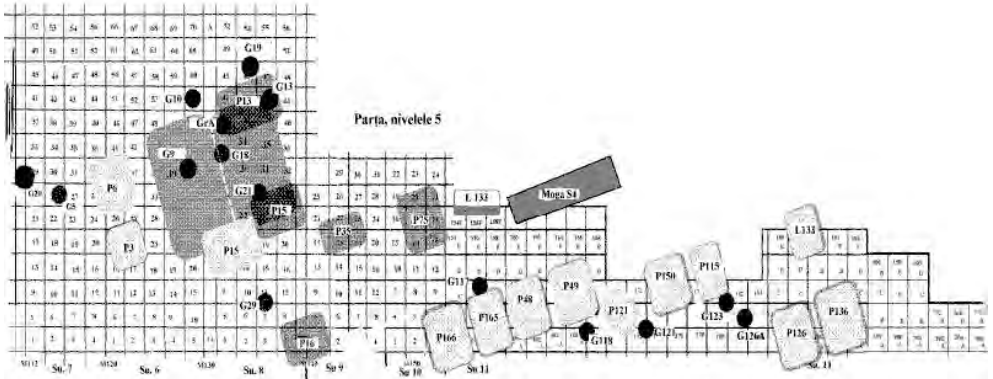
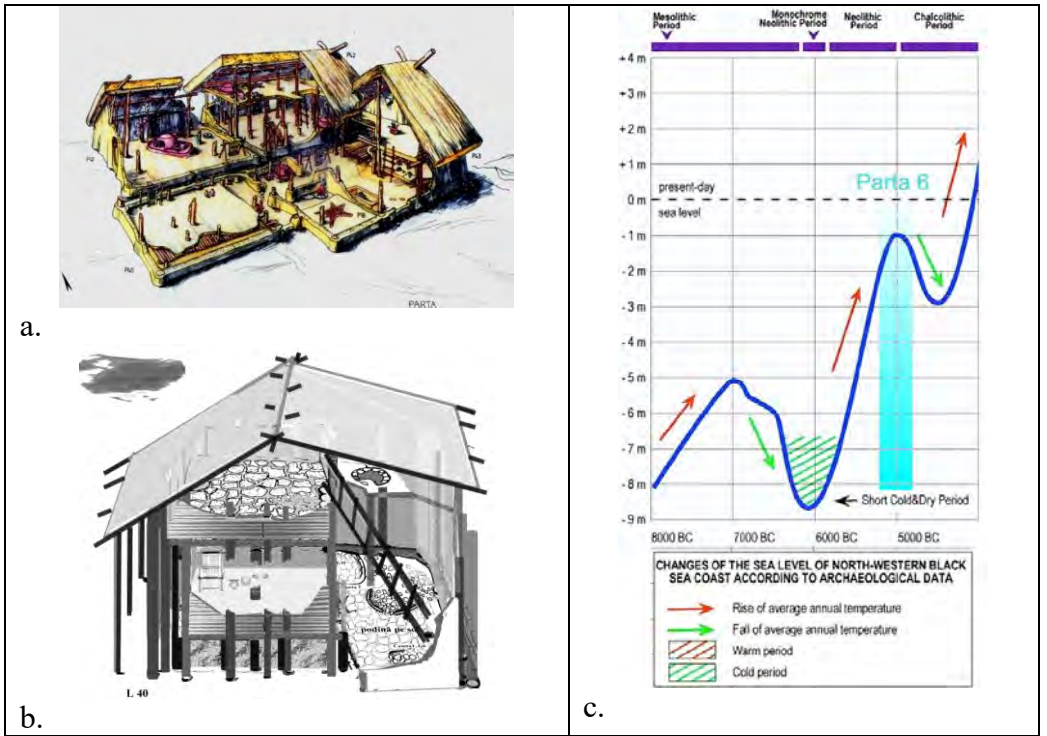


b.



c.

Fig. 17. Parța: a, “Blocks” of dwellings; b-c, level 7c-6, Sanctuary 2, plan and reconstruction.



level of more than 2 m after 5000 BC, during which time the civilizations of the Late Neolithic begin their evolution: these changes are also observed at Parța in level 6 (fig. 18c).

The presence of workshops for ceramics or for the perforation and processing of flint or stone tools, the large number of idols, small cultic altars, community sanctuaries (situations from Zorlențu Mare and Balta Sărată) leave the impression of some settlements with a territory of association. Besides, in the north of Banat there are a number of cultural differentiations, sometimes defined as groups, but there may be local centers around which some settlements gravitate, which have common developments in the style of ceramics, decorations, types of idols and others.

This is the situation in Bucovăț with things common with Parța, but also with some differences in the decoration styles or the ceramics manufacturing techniques.

A similar situation is at Sânanđrei, where there are differences in the ceramic decoration compared to Parța, but especially to Bucovăț. To the west and north there are similar situations, given the neighboring cultures, Vinča to the south and west, Szakálhát culture to the northwest.

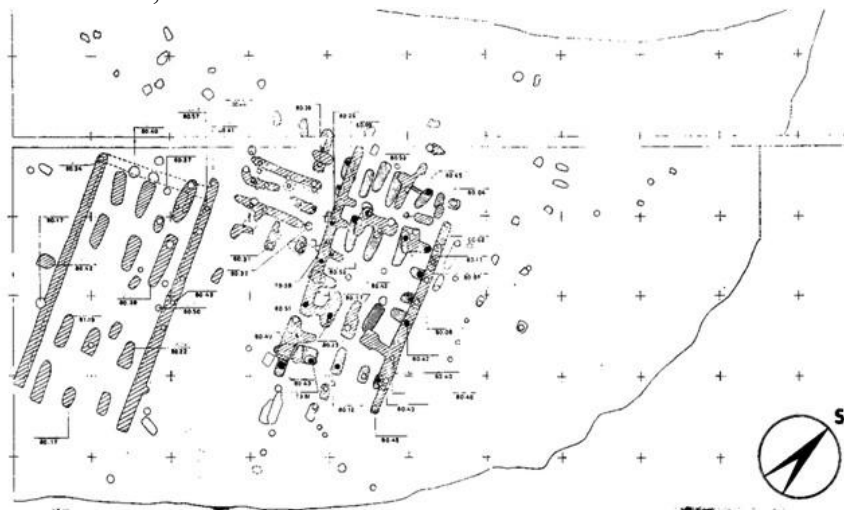


Fig. 19. Gomolava (apud Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2003, fig. 46, apud Brukner).

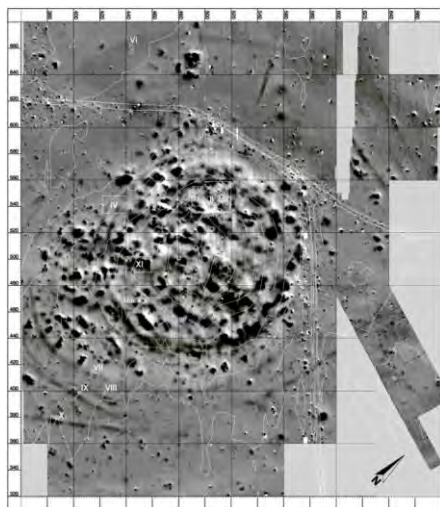
Climatic changes have affected the architecture of level 5a from Parța, in this period there are small dwellings arranged in two rows in the area investigated at NE (fig. 18d). These are most likely determined by the damage caused by the Vinča C phase bearers, who settle in Tell II. In some of the



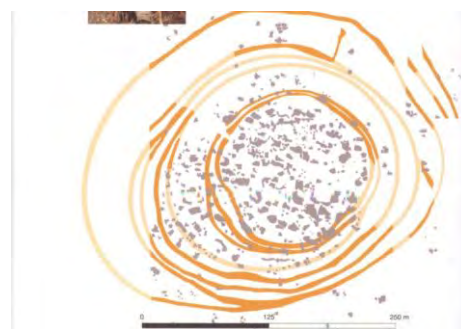
Banat culture dwellings in stage 5a there are also Vinča C materials. In Tell II, in the upper horizons and on the surface, there are numerous painted materials of the Foeni group. At Foeni (Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2003, p. 282, fig. 47), Gomolava (fig. 19), Zau level III (from Gomolava to Zau there are about 400 km) (Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2003, p. 457, fig. 46-47, p. 469, fig. 87) at Parța in Tell II, there are houses with long pits (Drașovean, Ciobotaru 2001; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2003, p. 382), sometimes in steps, like those from Turdaș from levels II and III (fig. 27b, f-g).



a.



b.



c.

Fig. 20. Uivar: a, reconstruction of the dwellings; b, magnetometric and topographic surveys (H. Becker); c, fortification systems and traces of the features and magnetometric anomalies (a, apud Schier 2006; b-c, apud Schier et alii 2004).

## Uivar (fig. 20-22)

During the German-Romanian researches in the Uivar project, complex research has been carried out with outstanding results: prospecting; analyzes of all kinds (pedological, palinological, anthracological, ceramic, etc.); complex studies; excavations on large surfaces; verification probings at different points of the open space to understand the evolution and development of the site; reconstruction; processing and recording of archaeological material in databases. Uivar is a natural mound on which the Neolithic communities settled (fig. 16a). There are several layers of culture with dwellings from the Banat culture, phase II – Vinča C, Tiszapolgár and others.

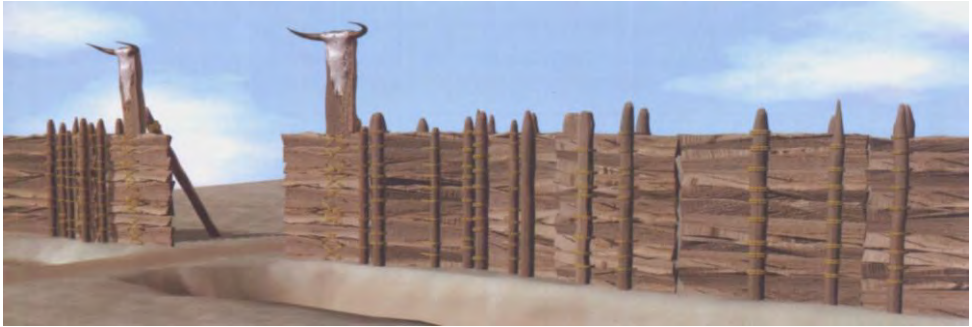
From the prospects one can see an acropolis (fig. 20b-c) surrounded by two, sometimes some three ditches of defense, some of them with a palisade on the inner edge. The dwellings in the vicinity of the palisades and ditches are organized circularly, so that the inhabitants in case of need are near the fortification systems. A monumental gate was investigated and reconstructed to the west (fig. 21a). Some ditches are restored, and in front of the gates there are obstacles that prevent a direct attack on the gate (fig. 21b).

The fortified area is wider, either for protection, or to accommodate/shelter members of neighboring, seasonal or secondary dwellings in case of battles. There are also protected places for livestock, fodder, etc.

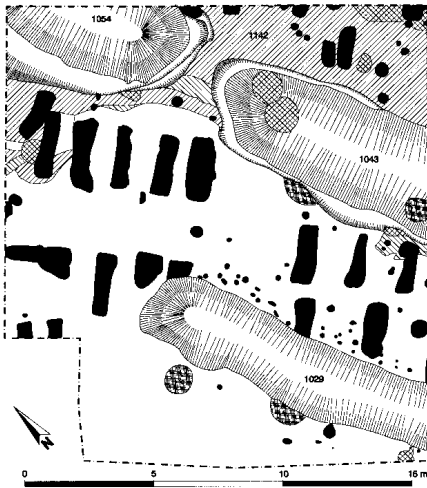
The dwellings have a superior architecture, similar to those from Parța, but also from other dwellings of this time (Zorlențu Mare, Vinča, Herpály, Polgár, etc.). The burning of early complexes belonging to the Banat II culture as well as level 6 from Parța, is determined by the Vinča C “shock”. The Vinča communities continue to develop the settlement. We believe that the fortification system was also restored and the habitation continues, while at Parța they moved to Tell II. The same thing happens in Zorlențu Mare, the main settlement is abandoned, and small, disparate settlements appear. It is the same at Balta Sărată. At Parța, the Foeni communities are in Tell II over the Vinča C dwelling and sporadically buildings appear over the debris of level 6.

The reconstructions at Uivar are correct and professional. *We have some observations regarding the reconstruction of the floor in fig. 22a.* Gh. Lazarovici was present at the preparation and turning of the floor. The reconstruction suggests that the beams were laid directly on the ground. From our experience the floor was suspended, which allowed the burning to be

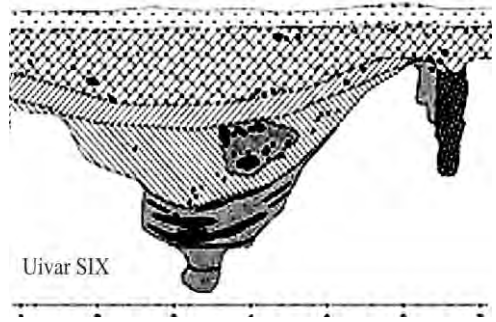
oxidizing, strong, with a lot of oxygen. Covering it with the two layers of clay would not have allowed such an oxidizing burning to occur on the entire surface. The same situation is at feature 191.



a.



b.



c.

Fig. 21. Uivar: a-c, details and reconstructions of the fortification systems apud Schier *et alii* 2004.



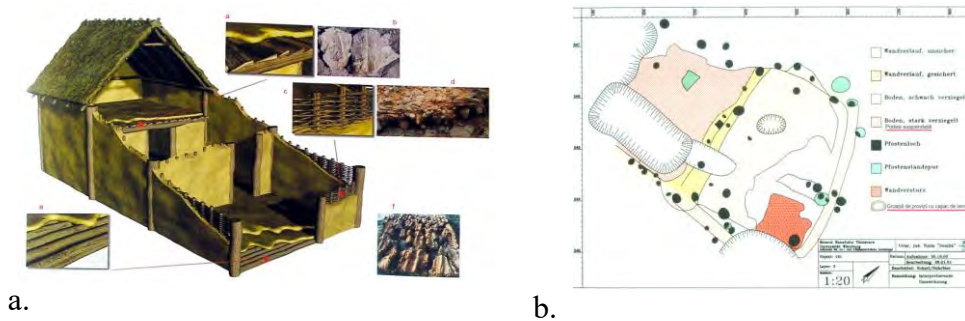


Fig. 22. Uivar: a, dwelling 373; b, feature 191; a-b, apud Schier *et alii* 2004.

With the permission of Prof. Wolfram Schier, Gh. Lazarovici completed the study of the floors in the two rooms of feature 191. In the NE room the floor was well smoothed. On it were small fragments of coal and ash from the roof. Gh. Lazarovici studied and emptied the pits on the NE side of the wall. In the center of the room there was a hole covered with a wooden lid whose remains were preserved. The NW room had suspended floors and allowed a strong burning (*stark verziegelt*). The floors that have a wooden structure and are mounted directly on the ground cannot be dismantled and no traces remain from the poles, because the burning without oxygen is poor, the wood is carbonized, the wood turns into charcoal, which was not the case here.

## Zau Culture

A civilization of the developed Neolithic, the Zau culture has the largest settlement right in the center of Cluj-Napoca. It is even larger than the fortifications of the medieval city. But, being under the city, the settlement could not be studied. Only hurried surveys have been carried out with great difficulty, the mayors hurrying to build their own buildings.

The stratigraphy of the settlement in the main area has over 3.5 m of dwelling layers in the center (Vlassa 1970; 1970a; Vlassa, Daicoviciu 1974; Lazarovici Gh. 1977a; 1977b; 1987; 2009a; Maxim 1999, s.v. Cluj ), and at the outskirts approx. 0.8-1.2 m (Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 1984). Its extent is between 30 and 60/70 ha, judging by the accidental ceramic discoveries at the constructions.

No feature has been studied entirely, only in the foundations of recent buildings, in the medieval or modern cellars, under the buildings of the Roman city of Napoca. A bad grade for the mayors of Cluj!

### **Zau de Câmpie (fig. 23a)**

The second settlement, as surface and stratigraphic deposits (over 3 m thick), was that of Zau de Câmpie with over 7 hectares (Lazarovici Gh., Alicu 1997; Maxim 1999, s.v. Zau; Colesniuc 2014) or even more, with satellite-settlements or annexes (cemetery, swarmings).

From the small surveys or researched areas (the largest had 80 m<sup>2</sup>), one can notice a special architecture, with large constructions, with a strong, double interior palisade (Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh. 2006, p. 431-436, fig. IIIe. 2731, 3; Lazarovici Gh. 2013, fig. 30a-c), with ceramic workshops (especially painted ceramics).

The settlement is destroyed by the Turdaş and later Foeni communities, which settle over the central dwelling, having the same architecture of the dwellings specific to the Middle and Late Neolithic, namely Vinča C and Turdaş (Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2003, p. 478, fig. 118-119).

### **Iclod (fig. 23b-24)**

It was the best researched settlement of the Zau culture. Originally attributed to a cultural group called Iclod (Lazarovici Gh. 1983; 1991a; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 1995; Lazarovici Gh., Kalmar 1982; 1986; 1986-1987; 1987; 1989; 1989-1993; 1990; Lazarovici Gh., Kalmar/Maxim 1993, a.s.o.), associated later with the discoveries from Cluj, Cheile Turzii and others, as research has evolved (CCTLNI or CCTLNIS Cluj-Cheile Turzii-Lumea Nouă-Iclod-Suplac – Lazarovici Gh., Alicu 1997; Lazarovici Gh. 2000; 2009a; Lazarovici Gh., Maxim 2014), after studying and publishing the first syntheses about Zau (Lazarovici Gh. 2014; Colesniuc 2014), it also received the name of Zau culture.

We remind that at Zau de Câmpie there were all phases of evolution, from the Developed Neolithic until the beginning of the Copper Age. After the 11 C14 dates, the chronological classification of the Iclod group is between 4900-4450 BC (Diaconescu *et alii* 2013).

The site has benefited from the first, rather experimental magnetometric prospects in Romania, due to some passionate specialists from Cluj-Napoca (Dărăban *et alii* 1988; Morariu *et alii* 1996; 2001).

Later followed the professional surveys of the colleagues from Kiel, led by C. Mischka (Mischka *et alii* 2010-2011; Mischka 2012, p. 153-166), with more advanced equipment, who continued to perform such researches in other

parts of the country, especially in Moldova, but also in Transylvania. The results obtained by Carsten Mischka are truly **revealing**.

The architecture of the dwellings did not offer too much data, but also the archaeological researches were done on trenches, not on surfaces, which is why the data about the dwellings were modest.

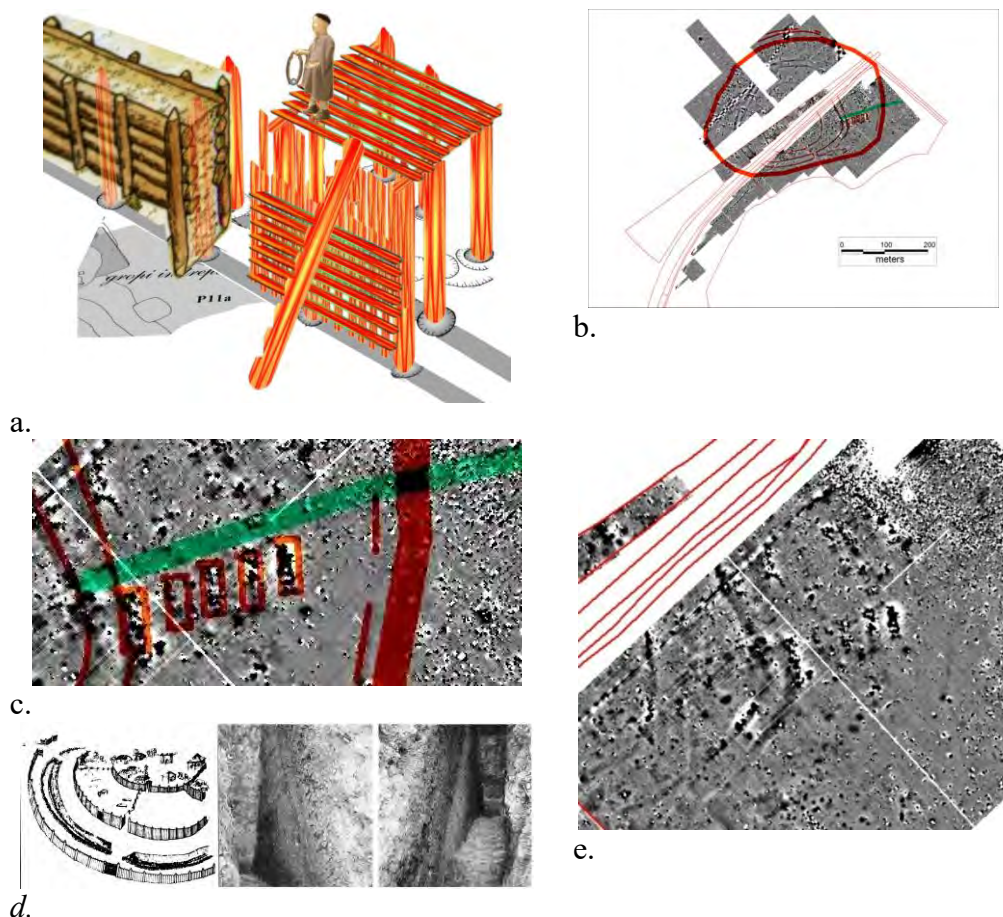


Fig. 23. Iclod, magnetometric surveys (Carsten Mischka) and reconstructions (Gh. Lazarovici).

The fortification systems, especially after C. Mischka's surveys (fig. 23) and the numerous trenches opened by us and our colleagues on the fortification systems, showed an evolution towards a fair, around which several secondary or seasonal settlements gravitated (Lazarovici Gh. 1983;

1991a; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 1995; Lazarovici Gh., Kalmar 1982; 1986; 1986-1987; 1987; 1989; 1989-1993; 1990; Lazarovici Gh., Kalmar/Maxim 1993, a.s.o.) (Livada, two points; Fundătura, fig. 24d; Gherla, etc.) (Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 1989-1993; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 1996).

The dwelling begins with a two-phase *rondel* settlement (fig. 24b, mark F1, F2); later it extends with a strong fortification, with a double moat (fig. 24b mark F3), and finally a large moat surrounds a surface of almost 7 hectares (fig. 23d, photo 20, marks 4a, 4b). In the last phase of fortification the dwellings are placed circularly along the defense systems (fig. 24b, purple). Eastward, at the eastern gate, several houses were aligned along a road, and some of the houses seemed outside the defense system, although elsewhere (NE) there were some more palisades.

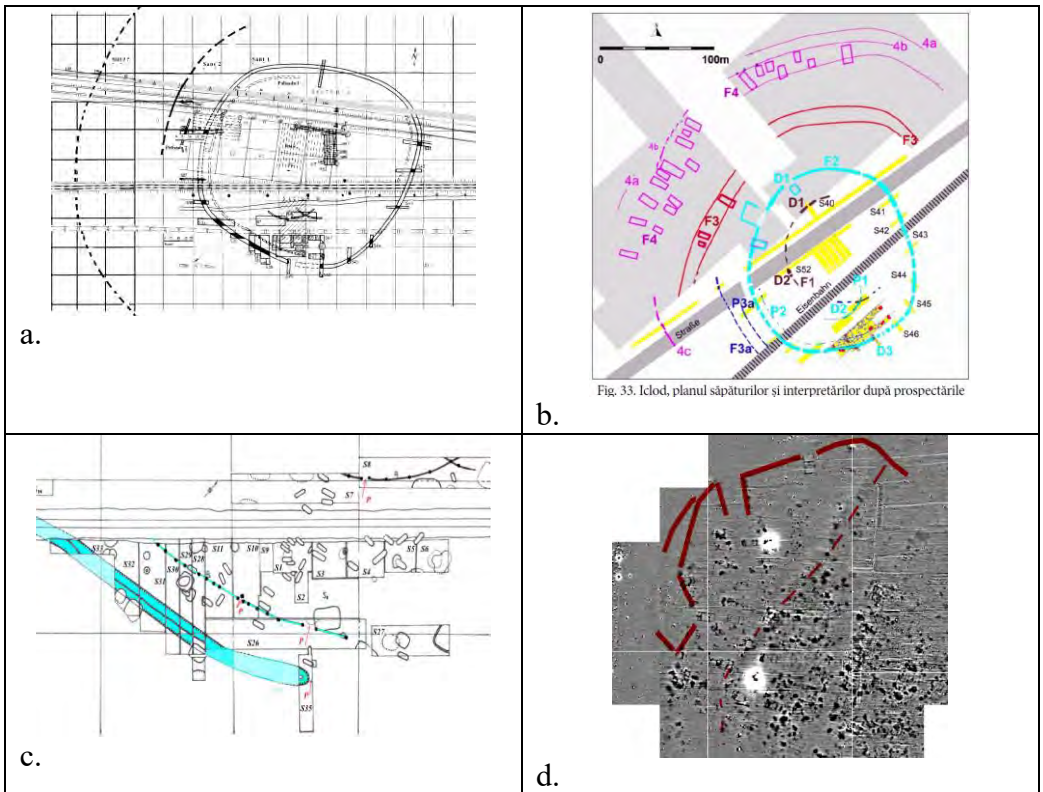
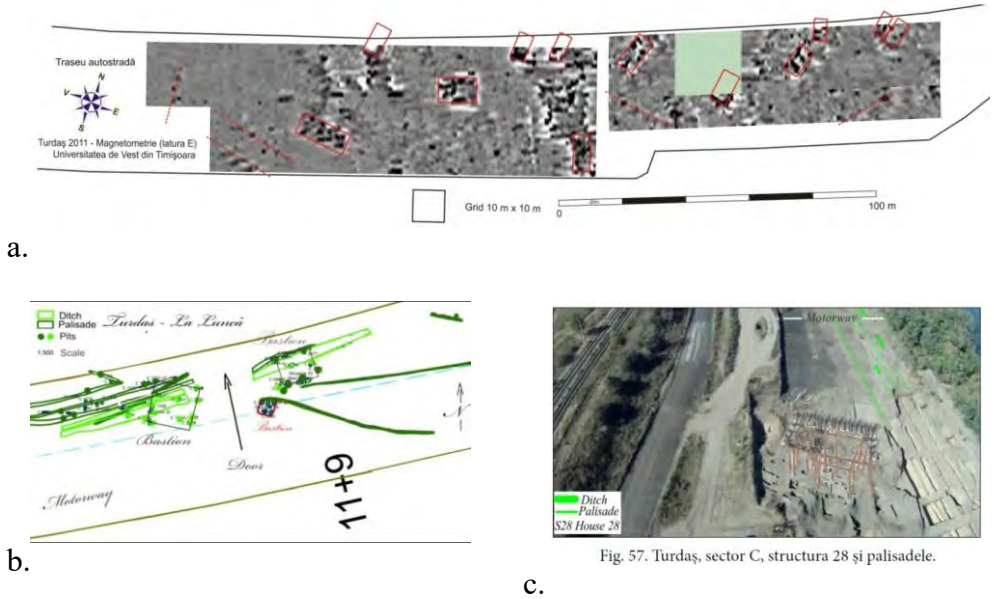
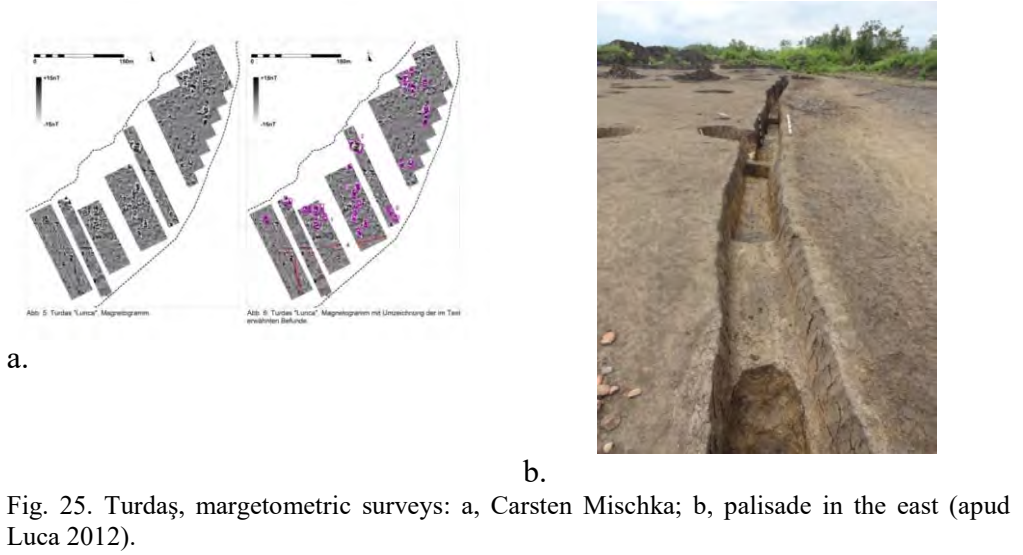


Fig. 24: a, c, Iclod, researches Gh. Lazarovici *et alii*; b, Iclod, surveys and excavations; d, Fundătura, surveys C. Mischka.





## Turdaș

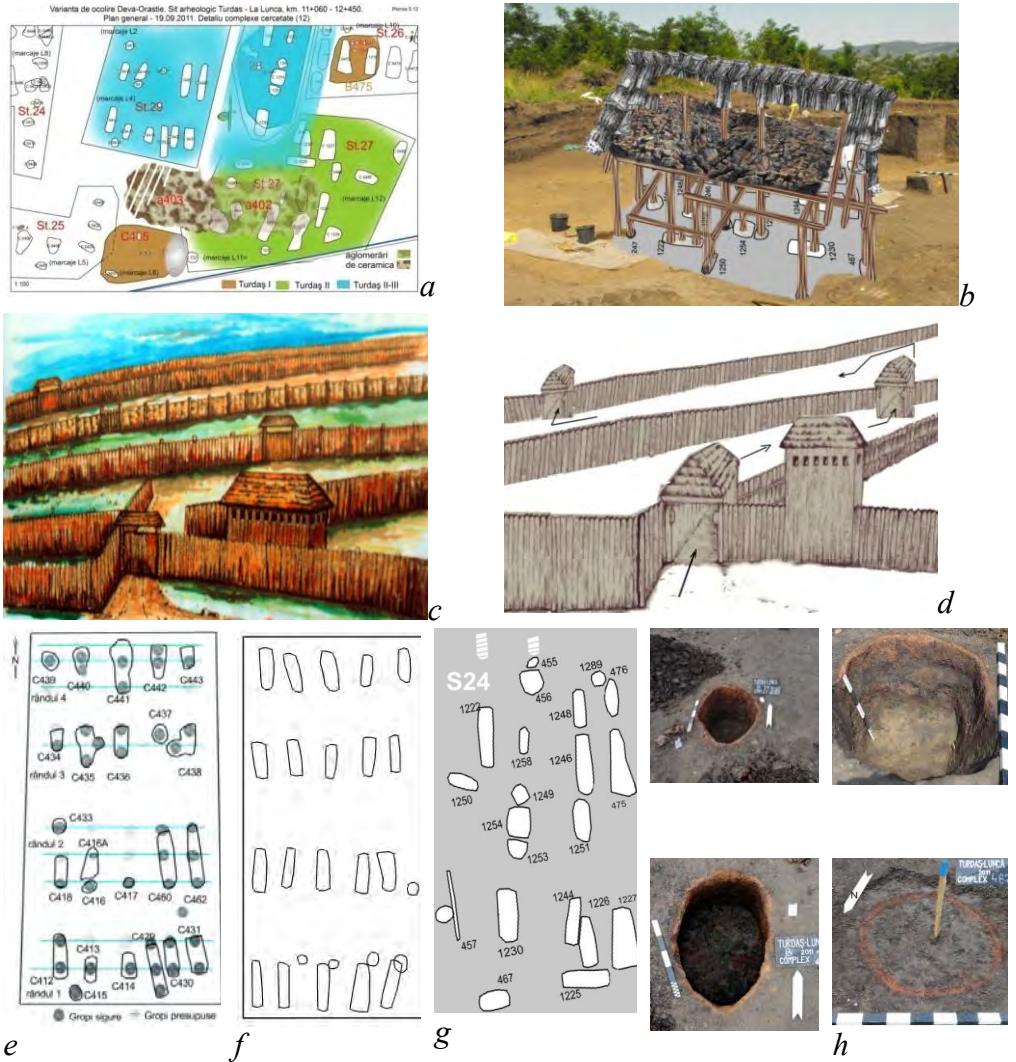


Fig. 27. Turdaș, area C: a-b, dwelling with upper floor (Str. 28 plan, reconstruction); palisades and bastions: c, south; d, east; e-g, Structure 28 and plans of similar dwellings; h, kilns for ceramics (233, 486, 234, 487); apud Luca 2012.

The settlement of Turdaş benefited, alongside that of Tărtăria, of large rescue excavations, coordinated by S.A. Luca. C. Mischka's surveys signaled some palisades to the south (fig. 25a), confirmed by the surveys of the colleagues from Timișoara (fig. 26a) and by excavations (fig. 26b, 27c-d).

The archaeological complexes were organized with the long side perpendicular to the palisades and moats (fig. 25a). A row of palisades surrounds the northern part, being covered with levels with Precucuteni I-Petrești materials, with small features (fig. 26c).

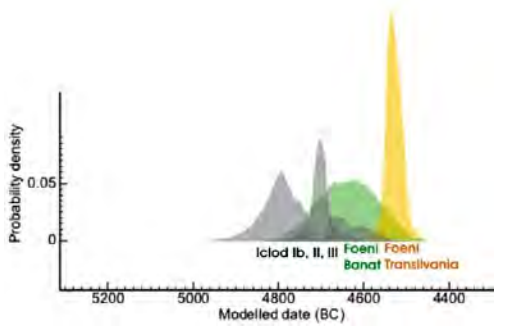
The dwellings of the Turdaş II and III phases are of large size, with prolonged pits, sometimes in steps, for 2-3 pillars (some from the floor, upper floor or structure, as the case may be, fig. 27e-g).

In the west, due to erosion and clogging over 0.80-0.90 m, a complex system of moats and palisades has not been discovered. However, the rescue excavations have highlighted them (fig. 25b one of the four palisades) and other complex defense systems with moats, palisades, bastions or gates, some obvious being reconstituted (fig. 27c -d), others being under analysis.

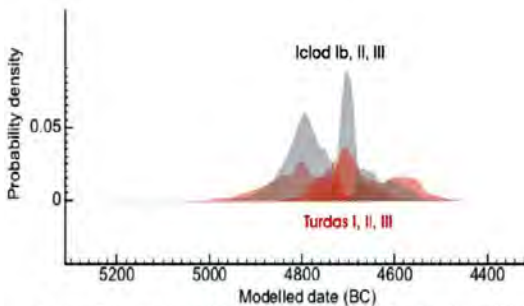
In the first phase of habitation there were a few pit houses, of which B6 (=C486 over which there was a Turdaş III dwelling) with Vinča B2/C and early Turdaş items, but in phases II and III there were palisades, moats, dwellings with upper floor (fig. 27b, Str. 38) and dwellings with suspended floor. The houses are organized along streets or depending on the defense systems. The amount of ceramics is huge (several hundreds of thousands of fragments), dozens of reconstructable vessels, ceramic burning kilns (fig. 27h), traces of metallurgy.

S.A. Luca was right to compare it to a city (Luca 2012). The evolution of the Turdaş dwelling was sometimes stopped or changed by the arrival of the Foeni group (4550 BC) in the area, which gave birth to the Petrești culture. The same thing happened at Zau de Câmpie, but also in the south in other cultures. The dynamics of dwelling in Turdaş are impressive. The amount of wood needed to build the houses and palisades is huge. Besides, the forest felling in the southern area had consequences: the torrents of water flooded the eastern area, which became a marsh. The southern area was eroded by a brook, which then moved west between areas B and C. Besides some palisades in the southern area many elongated pits with burned edges were discovered, where we believe the pots were burned.

C14 data for the Late Neolithic and Early Copper Age



Imaginea 7: sincronismele cronologice absolute dintre sumele mărginite ale etapelor grupul Iciod și sumele mărginite ale celor două etape Foeni



Imaginea 8: sincronismele cronologice absolute dintre sumele mărginite ale etapelor grupul Iciod și sumele mărginite ale celor trei etape Turdaș

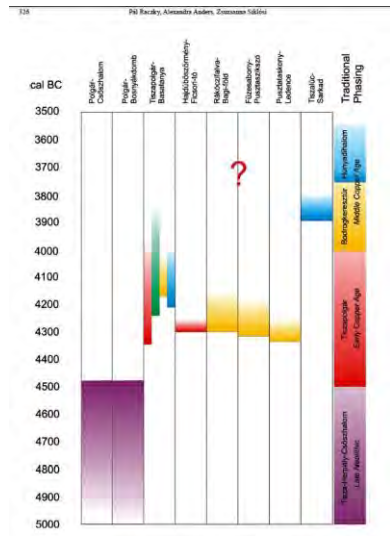


Fig. 9 Chronology chart based on the radiocarbon data presented in the study (after Raczký-Székely 2013, 170; Fig. 7)

Fig. 28. C14 data for Iclod, Turdaș and Foeni (apud Diaconescu *et alii* 2013 (a-b), Raczký *et alii* 2014 (c)).

From the C14 data, we notice that in both areas (Banat-Transylvania and NE Hungary) around 4500 BC the late Neolithic civilizations cease their evolution. They coincide with the period of maximum development of the Foeni aspect in Transylvania and the end of its evolution in Banat. Similarly, in Serbia the Vinča culture ended its evolution around 5000 BC (fig. 10b), earlier than the small *rondel* type settlements in Transylvania (Iclod IB started after 5000, fig. 28a-b; Turdaș I), and the the great ones cease around 4500 BC (fig. 28a-b), as well as the Late Neolithic in Hungary (fig. 28c). It is a time of hiatus in C14 data at Gomolava, a period known as *Enolithic humus*.

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In Hungary, the Late Neolithic settlements belong to several Tisza groups (Tisza, Tisza-Herpály, Tisza-Polgár), all starting with small *rondel* settlements, like at Iclod. At Turdaș we do not know which was the first enclosure that would have surrounded the early pit houses. The earliest from



those seen by us is Pit House 3 = C405, above which is a surface dwelling L3 from the period of the Turdaş II or III stages; *in-situ* materials were few, and those at the edge of the feature were mixed with others (At Turdaş in the zone C, where we have researched some complexes, we have found that in the dwellings there were always orders (only a few hundreds of ceramic fragments resulted from the dwelling and pits), and the broken vessels were stored between the large dwellings, the real crowds of materials thrown without any order. Similar situations we found in Scania in the L14 area in the 2016-2017 research; in L14 area were 2800 ceramic fragments, with those from the edge 3250, and in the household waste areas approx. 4,000 registered plus unprocessed, more than 2000 at a general appreciation. At Gura Baciului, about 5,000 fragments came from complexes and another 11,000 from outside or were found over abandoned dwellings as household waste. We also have other statistical data from Ruginoasa and Iclod, where the abandoned ditches were more shards than in dwellings).

### Herpály (fig. 29)

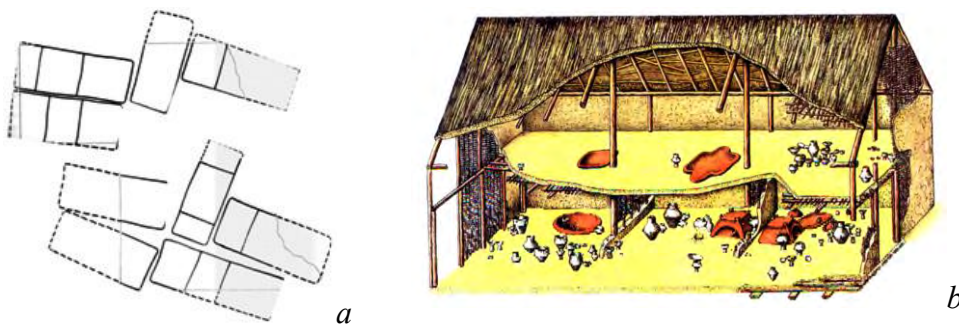
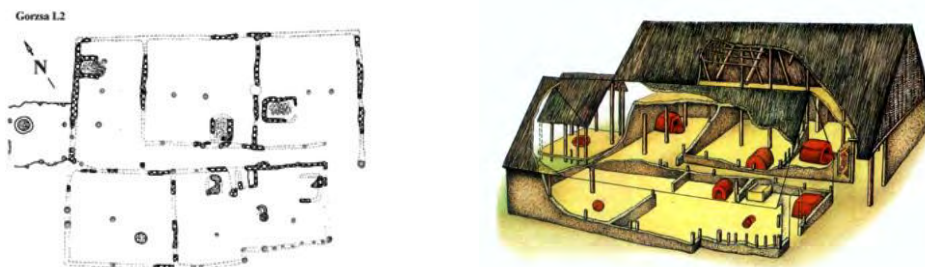


Fig. 29. Herpály, Tisza – Herpály culture, level 7-8, plan of the researched areas and reconstruction of one of them (L11), apud Kalicz, Raczki 1987, p. 110.

In the tell of Herpály, investigated by N. Kalicz and Pál Raczky with their teams (Korek, Pattay 1956; Kalicz 1982; Kalicz, Raczky 1987; Kalicz *et alii* 2010; Raczky 1988; Raczky 1990; Raczky 1991; Raczky 1992; Raczky 1992a; Raczky 1994; Raczky 1995; Raczky 1995a; Raczky 2002 a.s.o.), there is an area where large dwellings have been discovered, some with upper floor, with monumental pieces of architecture and art, with quality kilns, with hearths, and altars for sacrifices, with a very large number of pots (over 80). Worth noting is the architecture of the six levels of habitation (levels 5-10) (Kalicz *et alii* 2011, p. 14 and next ). Magnetometric prospects and surveys

showed the existence of defense ditches (Kalicz *et alii* 2011, p. 12). There are Petrești imports.

### Gorzsa (fig. 30)



a.

b.

Fig. 30. Gorzsa, L2, level 10, apud Horváth 1987, p. 38.

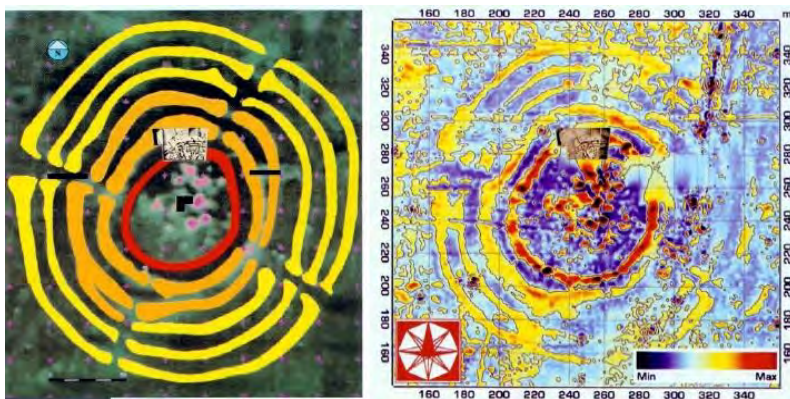
Another systematic excavation by Ferencz Horváth and his teams (Horváth 1982; 1987; 1989; 1991; 1992; 2000; Horváth, Paluch 2005 a.s.o.) is in Gorzsa and in the area, where the research studied fortification systems (ditches and palisades), a special architecture with *blocks* of dwellings, some with upper floor or suspended floor, community and household sanctuaries (idols on thrones, monumental altars) with hundreds of complete and reconstructable vessels, with many other objects (idols, tools, weapons).

The residential features are quite special. Often inside the *block* of dwellings there are corridors that allow access to several rooms, some of which have suspended floor, and in some cases they also have an arranged attic. The ovens are cylindrical and have a trapezoidal canopy (fig. 30). Sometimes there are also simple ovens. House 10 also had a porch at the entrance. All these elements are found with a different arrangement at Parța and sometimes in the Vinča culture, where there are very few reconstructions (Jovanović 1991). These characteristics confirm dynamic communities with a proturban evolution of the architecture.

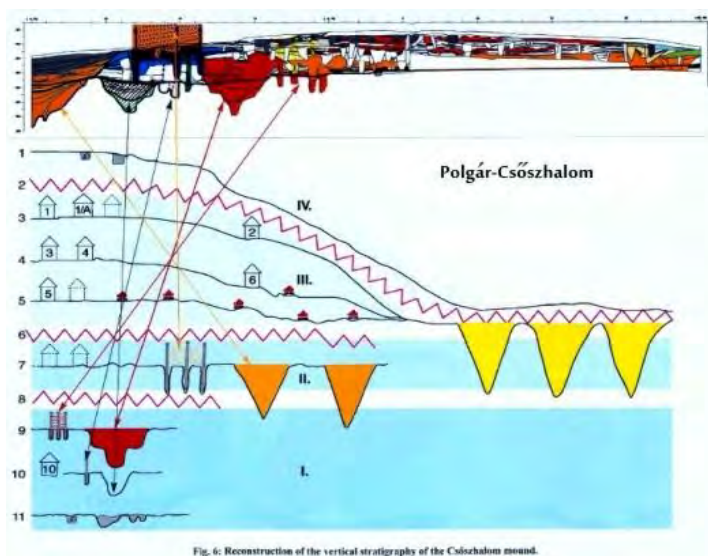
### Polgár-Csőszhalom (fig. 31)

The magnetometric prospects and rescue excavations at Polgár-Csőszhalom, as well as in the area, made by Pál Raczky with his teams and collaborators (Raczky 2002; Raczky, Anders 2009; Raczky *et alii* 2002; 2007; 2014; 2015), confirmed the existence of an acropolis and a vast settlement in the neighborhood. Within the acropolis, four major stages of

evolution with 11 levels were reported, of which three periods of hiatus (Nos. 2, 6, 8). Each of them has one or three large moats and 1 to 3 palisades (fig. 27, level 9 and 7 filled with dirt). We notice that the fortification is smaller, just like at Iclod, and in the next stages it is also of *rondel* type. But unlike at Iclod, here remains an acropolis, and in parallel there is a vast settlement outside.



a.



b.

Fig. 31. Polgár-Csőszhalom: a-b, surveys and reconstruction of the six defense systems; c, stratigraphy, apud Raczky *et alii* 2007, fig. 2, 6 and others.

Several fortification systems around the acropolis, the dwellings with special architecture, some with upper floor, likes at Herpály, show that in Hungary there is an evolution of architecture towards urbanism. C14 dates are between 5050 and approx. 4500 BC (Raczky *et alii* 2014, fig. 10), contemporary with Iclod IB-III (fig. 28).

Two other settlements from the late Neolithic (Polgár-*Cibo-hat*, -*Kigyós-domb*) (Raczky *et alii* 2014, fig. 3, no. 35, 37) gravitate around the settlement. The Vinča C and Foeni movement interrupts urban development bringing technology and interest in copper and then gold processing. In the south, in Vinča D and Sălcuța – Gumelnița, as well as in the southern groups (Kodžadermen-Karanovo VI) similar architectural and urbanistic developments occur. In many places acropolises appear, and around them large sites evolve. The appearance of an elite is evidenced by the discoveries of graves with gold in the Varna area.

### **Țaga**

The settlement from Țaga belongs to the Late Neolithic, but its last level makes the transition to the Copper Age civilizations determined by the Iclod-Petrești synthesis. The settlement is important for the archaeological research in the Transylvanian Plain (fig. 30a), where several settlements belonging to the Zau culture are mentioned in the archaeological repertoires.

However, the cultural attributions are unreliable, as they are most often declared Neolithic dwellings based on ceramic fragments of red, yellowish, brown ceramics with simple shapes (bowls, pots, storage vessels), stone axes, and carved tools.

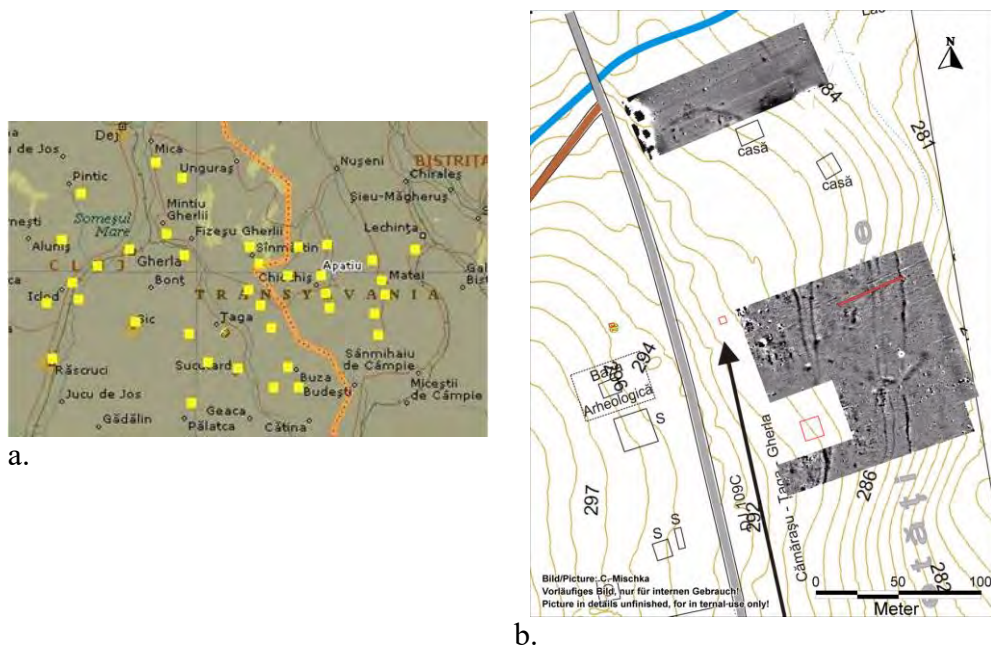


Fig. 32: a, Late Zau settlements in the High Plain of Transylvania; b, Țaga, magnetometric surveys (Mischka) on the eastern part of the site.

Based on these descriptions, they may belong to the Zau culture in different phases, especially since the materials are from fortuitous discoveries, rarely traces of painting are mentioned, but they are not described or published. Țaga is at the center of this area, Iclod at the western boundary, but from there begin other cultural groups related to Iclod (Suplac, Pericei, etc.).

The magnetometric prospects in the southern part of the settlement (limited due to gas wells) associated with surveys, systematic excavations on the surface, allowed the interpretation of some data about the defense systems. There were bastions or towers at the gates or along the walls, simple palisades, double palisades, palisades with round road. Some were verified through excavations.

Analyzing other surveys too, we have noticed similar situations at Iclod, Fundătura, Zau.  
On the north side





Fig. 33. Țaga: a, N and W, location of the moats; b, points with fortifications; c, the great moat – N.

The ditches 1-3 (fig. 33a, c-e) were observed and surveyed. Ditches 2-3 have been rebuilt, but they were smaller. Ditch 1 was deeper, it had a rebuilding phase (a gas pipe was on the way). The ditch continued north.

The east side

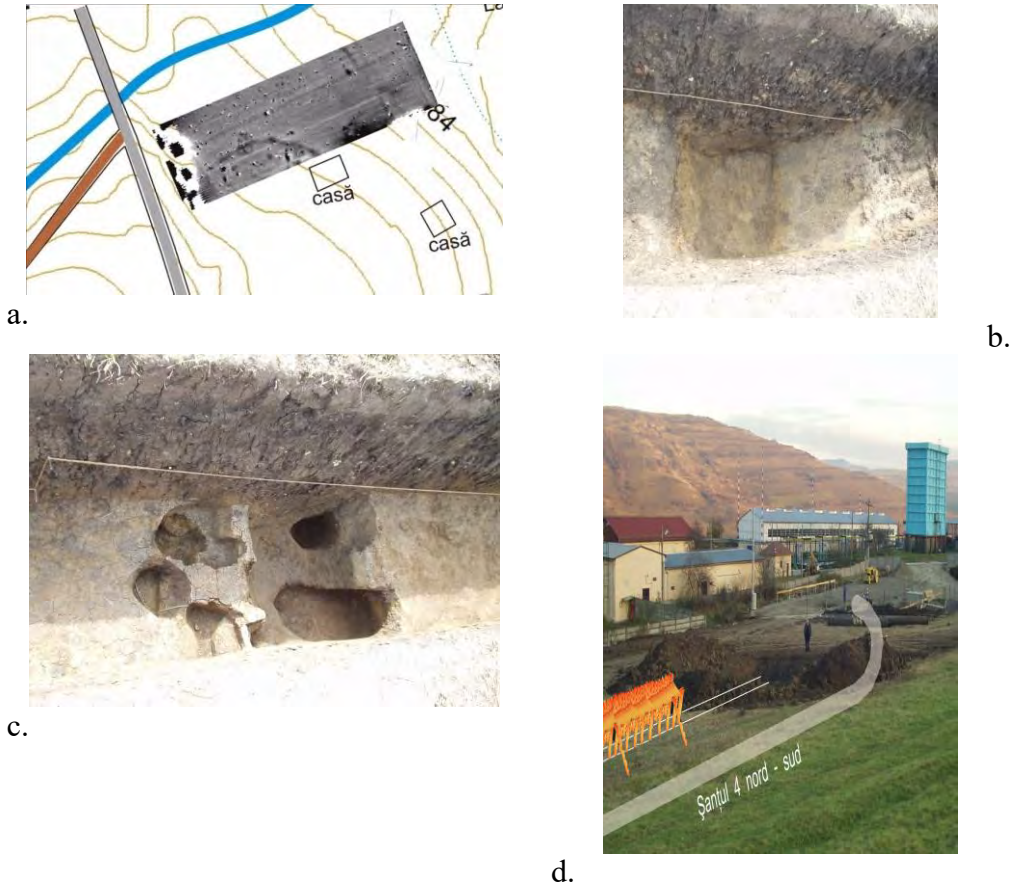


Fig. 34. Țaga, surveys by Carsten Mischka: a, route with the gate of moat 4(with tower); b, moat 1; c, palisade with round road along moat 4, centre-east area; d, palisade and route at centre-south.

On the east side there are two gates: one to the west, another to the south. The latter was investigated. In that area there were also the largest magnetometric anomalies, caused by pipelines and gas wells. Ditch 4 enclosed a smaller area, but wider in the N-S direction. Inside at approx. 6-7



m there was a double palisade. In the central area supporting pillars were found from a round road on the palisade (fig. 34b).

Ditches 2-3 most often double ditch 1. A ditch so large and obvious in the surveys was reported at Iclod (fig. 23a-b, e); there, too, in some places a double palisade was found.

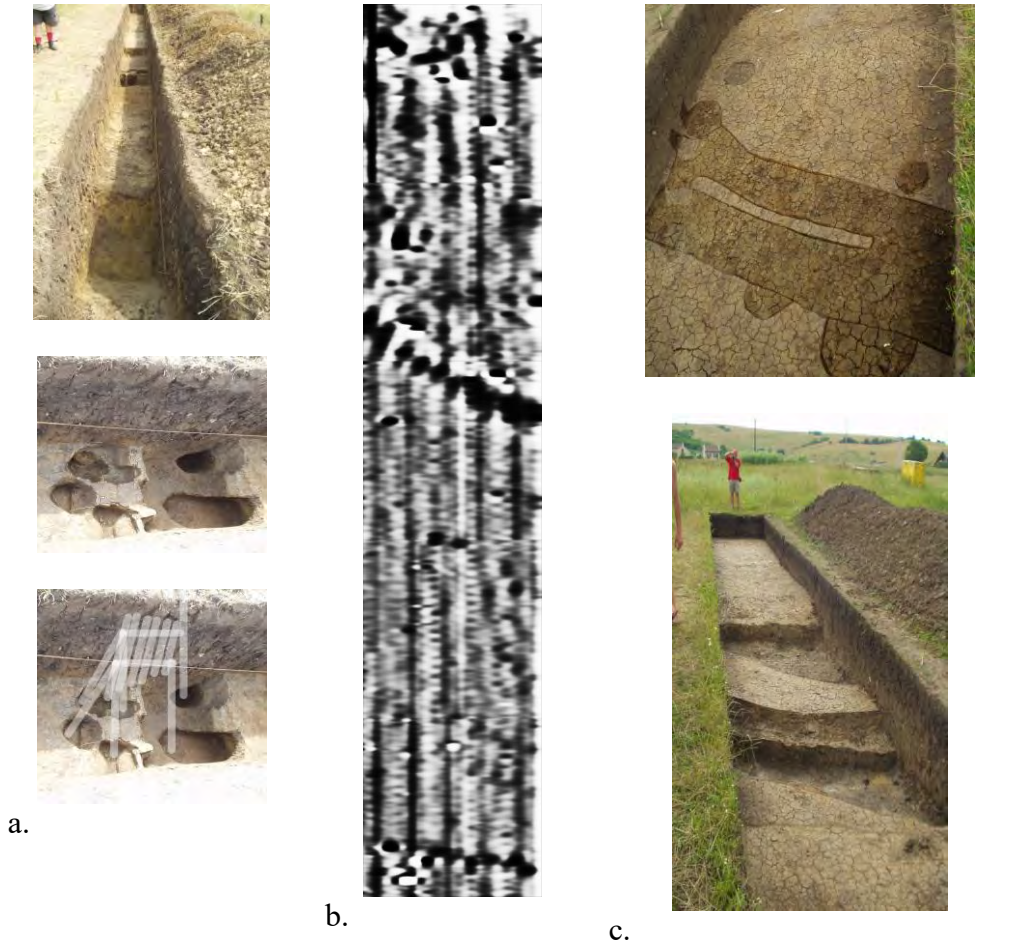


Fig. 35. Țaga: a, centre, moats and palisade with round road; b, survey with verification excavations: C1, Double palisade, C2, Moats 2-3.

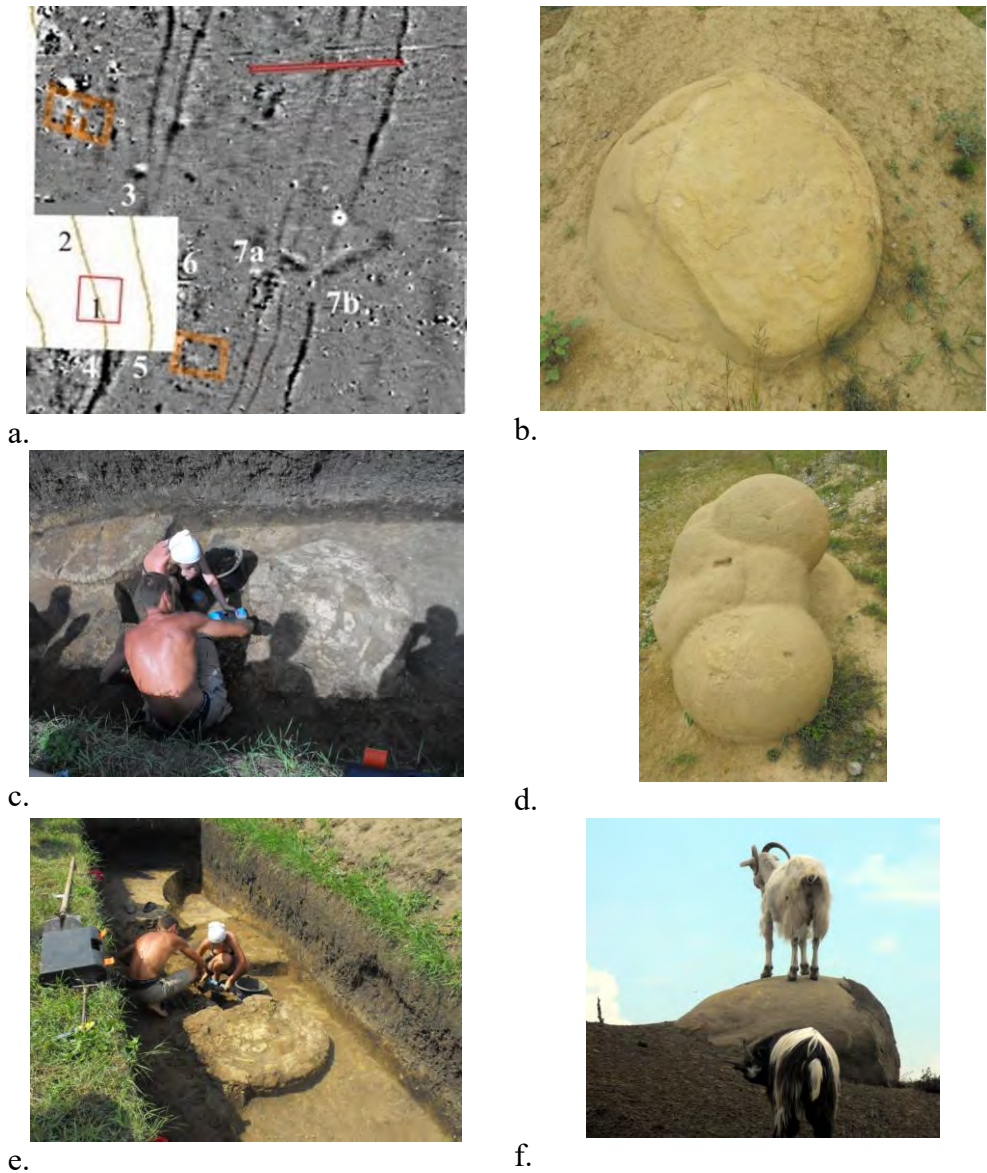


Fig. 36. ̦aga, The gate bastion.

The double palisade with round road was reported in three situations, two on the east side (fig. 35a) and one on the south side (fig. 37c). The most impressive discovery at ̦aga is a gate bastion (see the survey anomalies, fig. 36a, No. 7a), with stone foundations for groups of poles (fig. 36c, e). At the

base of a group of poles there were sections of boulders (36c, 36e), originating from nearby, from the NW of the site (fig. 36b, 36d).

On the west side, the ground was leveled to make several cooling and storage tanks for the gas. With that occasion in two places, a larger ditch (ditch 1) was investigated alongside two other (ditches 2 and 3, fig. 37a-b). The ditches were rebuilt three times, and in some cases the bottom of the ditch was moved (fig. 37b).

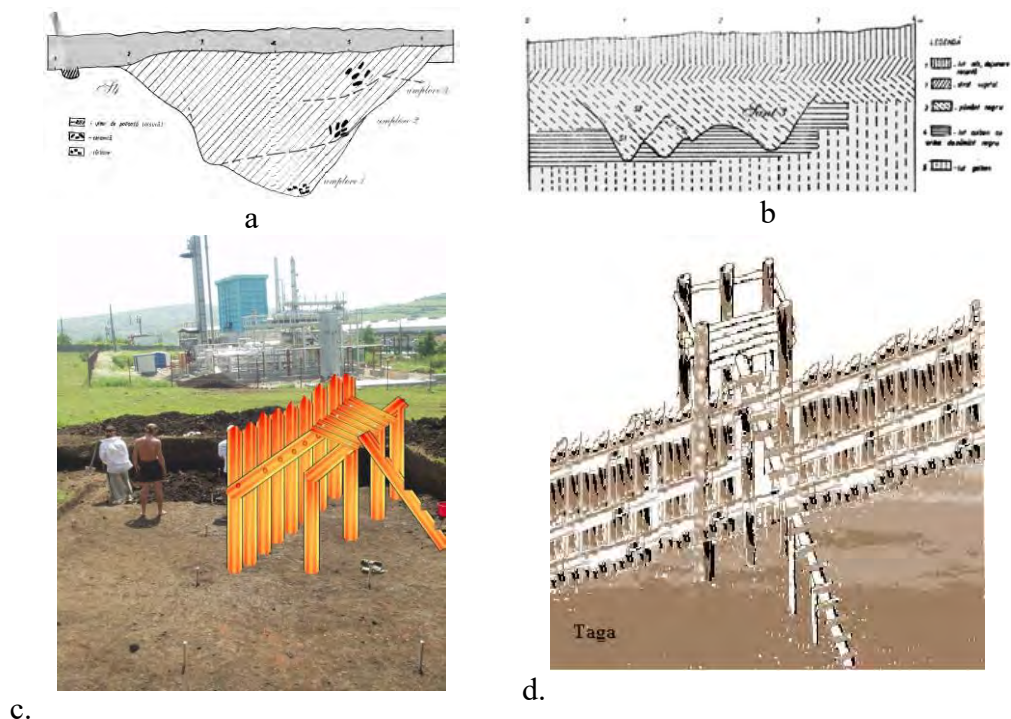


Fig. 37. Țaga, west side: a-b, moats; c, palisade near moat 4; d, palisade with the(reconstruction). Later, in that area, a pump house was built, on which occasion we found on a palisade six holes and we reconstructed a palisade tower (fig. 37d)

The rescue excavations caused by the construction of the gas installations at the neighboring station allowed the gathering of data on the route of the fortifications. The surveys allowed the verification of the information.

For Țaga we have a number of surveys, but we have no clear clues about the first fortification. There are some palisades that cut through later features, others could not be dated. We do not have C14 data for Țaga, the reports are just stratigraphy compared to Iclod and Zau de Câmpie. In the earliest features there is incised ceramic similar to Iclod IB (as it appears in Cemetery A, but also in some dwellings in Iclod II).

In Țaga III there are Petrești imports and an Iclod-Petrești synthesis or some features with Precucuteni I materials, as well as in Iclod and Fundătura. But for Precucuteni in Transylvania there are no C14 data, such materials are only in unreliable stratigraphic relationships with Turdaș II-III, Iclod II-III, with the Iclod-Petrești synthesis at Fundătura, and at Țaga.

### The dwellings

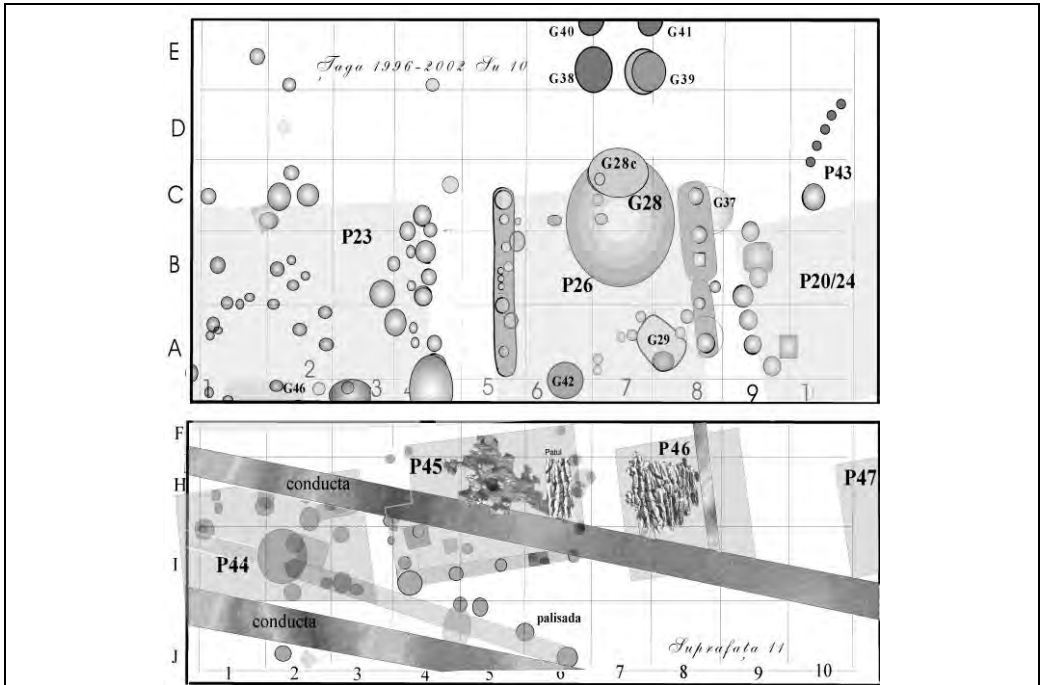


Fig. 38. Țaga, plan of the two researched areas, Su 10 and Su 11.

In the researched areas we found dwellings starting with pit houses (G28), dwellings with walls raised on ditches in which the poles were installed (fig. 38, P26), from daub and poles (fig. 38, P46) with beds inside



(fig. 38, P45), with a well-preserved structure that was reconstructed with the help of Dr. Ioan Cojocaru, first graphically (fig. 39b), then effectively, using the pits from the structures (When digging new pits for reconstruction, other postholes were found, unobserved during the excavations ) (fig. 39b, 39c below).

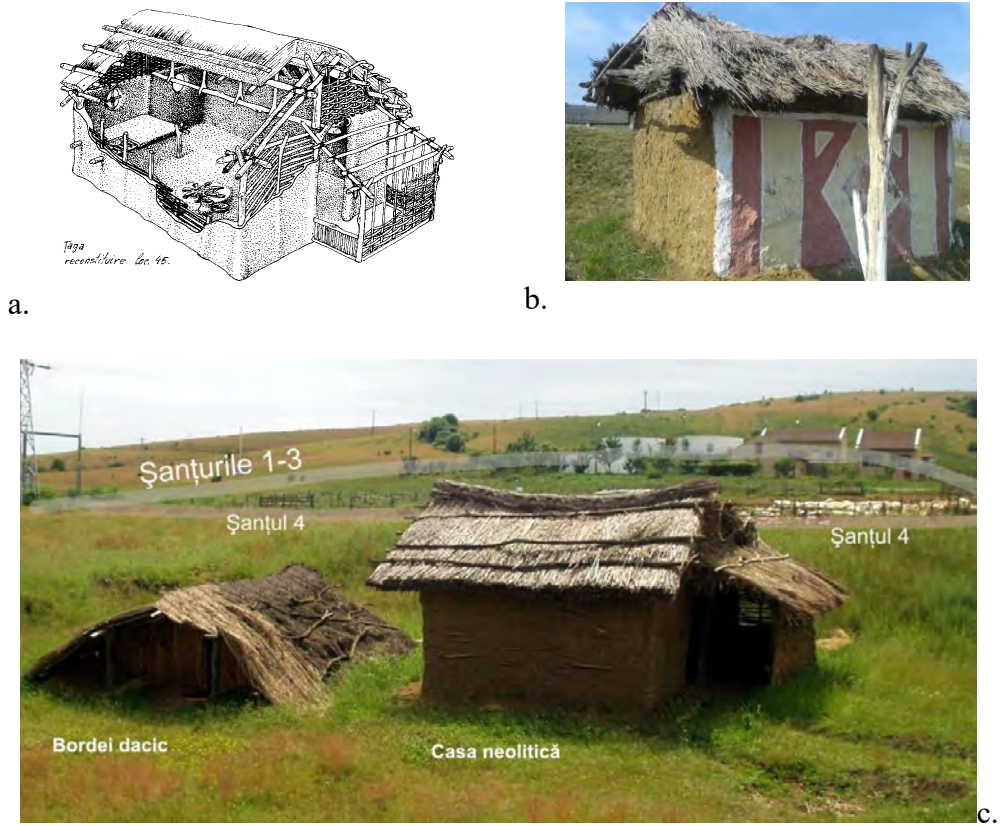


Fig. 39. Reconstructions in the Țaga archaeological park; Neolithic house and Dacian pit house (under Moat 4).

The prospecting shows the presence of large dwellings similar to those of Iclod, Fundătura and Turdaș, the ones from Țaga being from the late phase, from the time of the Iclod-Petrești synthesis. The dwellings with elongated, large, sometimes stepped pits occur in the Țaga II level. In the Țaga III level, the community efforts are linked to the fortification systems. They reflect the same situation as in Turdaș, the communities here being marked by several

southern migrations defined by Gh. Lazarovici as “*the Vinča C shock*”, consisting of three successive migrations: Turdaş, Vinča C, Foeni (see also fig. 28). After the destruction of the fortification system, at Țaga one can find the presence of pit houses outside the defense system, with poor quality ceramics, marking a retardation process. Such processes were also observed at Parța, Zorlențu Mare and Iclod, where we conducted statistical analyzes on archaeological materials.

Several complexes were investigated, in one of the campaigns in the area of house L15 a total of 2,474 fragments (26%) were recorded in the database out of a total of 10,220 fragments. In the categories predominates the semifine ceramic 67%, followed by the coarse 20% and the fine 13% (fig. 40). This shows a preoccupation of the community for functionality, luxury being of secondary importance. The vast amount of pottery reflects the dynamism of the community.

Fig. 40. Țaga, ceramics.	Fine	Coarse	Semifine	Sum	Percent
Sum	1335	2025	6860	10220	
Strat	803	1330	4569	6702	65.571
L15a	227	146	903	1276	12.484
P16	91	52	402	545	5.332
zL15	57	72	362	491	4.804
L15b	38	314	115	467	4.569
DITCH	69	35	345	450	4.403
L15	45	58	137	240	2.348
L2	5	18	24	47	0.46
Percent	13.061	19.812	67.117		100
Total L15, 2474 ceramic fragments, 26%					

## Conclusions

Definitions of urban settlements (from DEX or used by archaeologists) have been given according to the current concept of city. From our knowledge, people organized themselves over time as it fitted them best, and the community was ruled by elites, and such elites have always existed, since the Paleolithic.





Fig. 41. Ҙаға. East Bastion: a, in situ; b-c, reconstruction.

It is believed that at the base of the Neolithic way of life there were elements from the Epipaleolithic, eloquently illustrated by constructions such as the Tower and the monumental wall of Jericho (13<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> millennia BCE). The wall was designed to protect the inhabitants from the sandstorms, but at the same time it served to observe and defend against enemies. Of course, an evolution of two millennia, two millennia and a half occurred until Göbekli Tepe and Nevalı Çori in the PPNB (Hauptmann, Özdoğan M. 2007, p. 29) and two more millennia to the **Stone Age City** – Çatal Höyük, as J. Mellaart (1967) called it (Mellaart 1967, apud Hauptmann, Özdoğan M. 2007, p. 29). During these periods of the *Fertile Crescent*, in the area of the salt lakes of Cappadocia, in the Levant, in northern Mesopotamia, the process of neolithization with urban elements took place: residential districts, monumental constructions, cultic constructions, monumental art, workshops, social differences, hierarchical structures, prestige items made of obsidian, flint, pyrotechnic knowledge used to process copper jewelry, commercial exchanges (Anatolia, Levant, Cyprus), if we were to mention only some of the innovations, although they are much more numerous. These are the basis of the *Neolithic Revolution* (Hauptmann, Özdoğan M. 2007, p. 28-30), which, as one can see, lasted for millennia, benefiting from an optimal climate between approx. 8200-6200 BC.

In the Carpatho-Danubian region at that time there were cold periods, especially during the period of optimal climate in the *Fertile Cescent*. The end of the optimal climate in the aforementioned areas coincides with the last cold period in our areas (6200-6000 BC).

This is where the Anatolian Chalcolithic begins (Hauptmann, Özdoğan M. 2007, p. 28), and we specified new migrations defined as the Balkan-Anatolian Chalcolithic (Chalcolithic Balcano-Anatolian – CBA – Lazarovici Gh., Nica 1991; Lazarovici Gh. 1993; Lazarovici Gh., Székely 1990-1994, p. 6). At this time, the first fortifications appear in our regions, and with them an organization that evolves towards urbanism. We believe it was the spread of technological knowledge in architecture, art, tools in some centers, but doubled by an intensified exchange.

These fortifications need to be defended, which leads to a social organization. The gates, the towers, the walls must be guarded during the day and night for the safety of the community, otherwise fortification alone is not enough. At Parța, in a small square in front of the sanctuaries, there was a large hearth that served to maintain during night-time a fire for emergency situations. Once the fortifications were erected, the idea of pomposity, of impressing the enemy appears. For example, at Țaga a real wooden bastion was built, with bundles of trees lined up in rows at the edge of the gate, and above was the Gate Tower.

The construction of temples/sanctuaries supposes a religious organization based on rituals: at Balta Sărată (in Vinča B, L18) we excavated a construction belonging to the sanctuary of a priestess, with tasks related to grinding, water and rain cult (when lifting the construction, 7 grinders were placed under the floor, while abandoning other priestesses put 6 grinders face down over the grinder in the house: Lazarovici Gh., Petrescu 2001; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 2003; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh. 2006, p. 168-174, fig. IIIa.54-58; Lazarovici Gh. 2009b); at Parța we found temples, domestic and community sanctuaries, as well as in the Cucuteni culture, Gumelnița culture, and others (Dumitrescu 1970, p. 5-24; Dumitrescu 1974, p. 170-171, 474; Enea 2008; Berciu 1956, p. 506-511; Aldea 1974, p. 40-47, fig. 1-4; Paul 1992, p. 107-108; Monah 1997, p. 34, n. 49; Monah 2001, p. 181; Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii* 2009, p. 110, fig. 3b; Mateș 2010, p. 214-215, fig. 206, p. 242-243; Lazarovici C.-M. 2004; a.s.o.).

Increasingly numerous magnetometric surveys, with the most spectacular results, show that in almost all settlements where surveys were carried out, there were fortification systems.



Fig. 42. Cerkvine: a, magnetic surveys, with the sanctuary marked (red); b-c, cultic feature in situ with masked characters carrying axes and clubs (apud Crnobrnija *et alii* 2009).

In Crkvine, in the Late Neolithic, Vinča C-D (less than 50 km from the Vinča-Belo Brdo site), is a communitarian sanctuary located in the vicinity of the fortification system on the west of the site (fig. 47a, red mark). On an oven in a building were discovered characters with military emblems: weapons (all types of brass axes), scepters, maces (Crnobrnija 2011; Crnobrnija 2014). The characters that hold them have masked figures (with bird's or eagle's beak?), they are part of the same fellowship or rather confraternity. They are grouped around chiefs/commanders, related to the defence of the fortification, or other functions. The exact original number of these figurines is unknown, because the area was affected by a later gravepit. It is one of the most important discoveries about fellowships, conclaves.

In many situations, the dwellings are grouped on streets or around squares, with several fortification systems. In the present paper we have

presented only a few, they are much more numerous, and our interpretations are still early.



Fig. 43. Salt sources in Transylvania.

In the Neolithic settlements from our country, workshops have also been found, that are often specialized in the production of various goods:

- ceramics, Cârcea (Nica 1977, p. 30, fig. 14; Lazarovici Gh. 1990, p. 94, fig. 1-2; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh. 2006, p. 114, fig. II.66a; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii* 2018; Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii* 2018) ;
- perforated axes, Lipova, Rupea 7 (Luca 1987);
- flint tools, Mușat-Orlea, Cândești (Nicolaescu-Plopșor 1960; Bobi 1978);

- various crafts (Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh. 2007, p. 114, 127).

They produce objects and goods for other neighboring, secondary, seasonal settlements too, that revolve around the main settlement, often mentioned above.

The commercial exchanges throughout the Neolithic in the Carpathian-Danubian region were from the large settlements that had areas with raw material sources nearby. It is primarily the obsidian from northern Hungary and the SE of Slovakia that arrives in Transylvania, Banat through the Bük culture, but also earlier (Nandris 1975; Lazarovici Gh. 1979, pl. XI.C; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2015a; 2015b; Thorpe *et alii* 1984; Sălăgean *et alii* 1988; Biagi *et alii* 1995; Cârciumară *et alii* 2000-2001; Constantinescu *et alii* 2002; Constantinescu 2008; Simon *et alii* 2003 a.s.o.), most likely in exchange for salt that abounds in Transylvania (springs, lakes). Salt has played an important role in the neolithization of Oltenia, Transylvania, and later of Moldova and Crișana (\*\* 2006; \*\* 2008; Cavruc, Harding 2008; Monah 2008; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2018 and old bibl; 2018a ).

Our answer to the question in the title of this study is YES. It is an evolution towards fair, fair and territory, city, city and territory. But almost everywhere, migration has stopped these processes both in Anatolia and southern Europe.

We reconsider the definition of the city, although in our view the evolution of the analyzed sites is rather *proto-urban*:

### **1. Complex form of human settlement**

Following the descriptions in our study, with the examples we have given, those in Anatolia prove the existence of complex settlements. In Greece, at the time of the Sesklo culture, but especially at the level of the Dimini culture, the plans prove the complexity of the settlement. In the southern regions of Macedonia and Thrace, the tells prove the existence of complex settlements, although they are exhaustively researched only in Bulgaria (we will return to them in the second part – we did not insist here more about architectural problems because this subject was dedicated to more than one works: Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2003; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh. 2006). In a future study (Part II of the present) we will return to the issue of Protourban houses of the Copper Age). In the Vinča culture and the civilizations of the Developed Neolithic (the cultures of Banat, Zau, Dudești, Vinča, Vădastra, Szakálhát and others), by analyzing the discoveries from *Vinča-Belo Brdo* (with the most famous stratigraphy and architecture) as

well as Parța, Zau, Iclod, Turdaș, Gorzsa, Herpály, Polgár and others, we have proven the complex forms of human settlements.

## 2. **With multiple edilitary amenities**

We have insisted at every period on multiple public amenities, monumental architecture, imposing buildings (the Tower of Jericho), the stone constructions from the *Fertile Crescent* and Levant do not require comments. Of public interest are the megaron, the tribal house, the squares, the community sanctuaries (Kovács 2016, p. 60-61).

## 3. **Administrative function**

These definitions are vague in the Prehistory; during the Homeric period, there is plenty of evidence about settling the community's affairs through social organization, collective assemblies, debates in public squares, the needs of the community water, territory, imposed rules, customs imposed by the psychology of human communities through tradition and adaptation to the social needs of the community in its development. If we look at the Sumerian sources, we see how human communities were organized as early as that time (Krammer 1962: the first parliament, the first tax cuts, the first sentence of a court, the first school, the pharmacopoeia, the plow almanac, the curtains, etc. of the written ... but how many have remained unwritten....; Hole 2002).

## 4. **Industrial**

If we think of the efforts of carving huge columns with figures in bas-relief, with signs and symbols from PPN, of the huge quantities of stones, wood for fortifications, bastions, palisades, it is clear that specializations have developed and work has been divided according to collective needs; the workshops, the huge quantities of pottery, if we only think about Turdaș, Gorzsa, Polgár and others, as mentioned above, suggest the presence of specialized craftsmen; if we look at the Stubline-Crkvine prospecting plan, to give a single example, it illustrates the need to meet necessities (food, supplies, ceramics, tools, agricultural land, etc.).

## 5. **Commercial**

There is little evidence, but there are findings that indicate their presence: in some settlements, we saw many vessels carried on the back (for the transport of liquids over long distances, especially brine (Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2012), necessary for people and animals, for the preservation and keeping of products) or arrangements for the preparation of salt/brine for sale; the flint, the obsidian, later the copper, often defined by archaeologists as imports, may also be the result of exogamous marriages,



which we will soon know the broader senses through the results of DNA analysis.

## 6. Political

Regarding the Neolithic, we consider the meaning of attitude and activity (of a person, of a social group, etc.) in the field of internal and external affairs. A good example is the one related to the erection of fortification systems, involving lengthy, multi-stage work and even the presence of an elite.

## 7. Culture, learning (see Sumer)

The artistic masterpieces, countless in the Neolithic, appear as early as the PPN. Let us not forget the beautiful painted pottery of the Cucuteni culture, but no less important than the painted pottery of the Starčevo-Criș, Vinča, Zau, Turdaș, Dudești and Szakálhát groups, the Tisza culture groups (Herpály, Tisza, Polgár-Csőszhalom) etc., made by anonymous artists, who created true artistic masterpieces. But without craftsmen, apprentices, and craft schools, it was impossible for the Cucutenian painted spirals to surround the pot and fit into an artistic whole. We should not forget the signs, symbols, “religious script” that precede the writing of the first kingdoms and empires.

8. **Religious** we add (it is only defined for the metropolis). On religion, we insisted and insist by uncovering cultures with ancient traditions, from the painted sanctuaries of the French-Cantabric art, to the cave art loaded with signs, religious symbols, through which nuclei of myths and legends are transmitted, and no less to the *Danube Script*. This main theme and its various aspects have been debated by us in the seminars and symposia of ethno-religion (Nikolova 2003; \*\*\* 2004; Merlini 2005; Merlini 2009; \*\*\* 2008a; 2009; Lazarovici *et alii* 2011; \*\*\* 2014; \*\*\* 2015; \*\*\* 2016; \*\*\* 2017; \*\*\* 2018; Kovács 2016 a.s.o.).

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<i>ActaMP</i>	- <i>Acta Musei Porolisensis</i> , Muzeul de Istorie, Zalău
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LUCIAN BLAGA UNIVERSITY OF SIBIU  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT OF  
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Correspondence, manuscripts and books should be sent to: Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Doctoral School in History, Bdul Victoriei nr. 5-7 550024 Sibiu, Romania.

**e-mail:** [ioan-marian.tiplic@ulbsibiu.ro](mailto:ioan-marian.tiplic@ulbsibiu.ro),

[anamaria.tudorie@ulbsibiu.ro](mailto:anamaria.tudorie@ulbsibiu.ro)



## Content

Sabin Adrian Luca, Florentin Perianu, <i>Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 preventive campaign, Sector B. Feature 341-2. A ritual pit? Turdaş culture, phase III</i> .....	5
Gheorghe Lazarovici, Cornelia-Magda Lazarovici, <i>Are there cities and fairs in the neolithic? Part I – from PPN to late Neolithic (Part II is refering to Copper Age)</i> .....	23
Sabin Adrian Luca, Tiberiu Bogdan Sava, Doru Păceşilă, Oana Gaza, Iuliana Stanciu, Gabriela Sava, Bianca Ştefan, Florentin Perianu, Raluca Teodorescu, <i>Radiocarbon data from the archaeological site of Turdaş-Luncă (preventive research of 2011)(IV)</i> .....	93
Marius Mihai Ciută, <i>Collectors and collections an unexpected case (I)</i> .....	113
Gheorghe Gelu Păcurar, <i>The Making of a Holy Nation: Pastoral Activity, Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Nationalism in Interwar Romanian Orthodoxy ...</i>	135

## Radiocarbon data from the archaeological site of Turdaş-*Luncă* (preventive research of 2011)(IV)<sup>1</sup>

Sabin Adrian Luca  
Tiberiu Bogdan Sava, Maria Ilie, Andreea Dima,  
Daniela Pascal, Gabriela Sava, Cristian Mănăilescu  
Florentin Perianu  
Raluca Teodorescu

**Keywords:** *eneolithic and classic dacian period, radiocarbon dates, Turdaş-Luncă, preventive research campaign of 2011, Transylvania, Romania.*

**Abstract:** *The preventive archaeological researches of 2011 led to sensational discoveries. These include evidence for the extraction of radiocarbon data. We analyze new evidence from the periods: neolithic and eneolithic (Turdaş culture), eneolithic (Petreşti culture) and classical dacian period (1st century AD).*

Radiocarbon research of the Turdaş-*Luncă* archaeological site is the result of a collaboration between Brukenthal National Museum and „H. Hulubei” Institute of the Romanian Academy.

First direct collaboration between the two institutions was carried out in order to analyze a lot of archaeological materials collected from the site of Tărtăria-*Gura Luncii*<sup>2</sup> which came to light in the wake of preventive research from 2014<sup>3</sup>.

The good development of the collaboration, as well as the acuity and fineness of the obtained scientific results, made it necessary to continue the collaboration at an even faster pace.

Thus began the preprocessing of lots, much more numerous, from Turdaş-*Luncă*. Some of these (on absolute dating on some stratigraphic parts of the site) have been – already – published<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Articolul este realizat ca rezultat al proiectului *Primul oraş preistoric datat cu mijloace moderne din România*, cofinanţat de Administraţia Fondului Cultural Naţional (contract nr. PI 145/4.06.2019). Proiectul nu reprezintă în mod necesar poziţia Administraţiei Fondului Cultural Naţional. AFCN nu este responsabilă de conţinutul proiectului sau de modul în care rezultatele proiectului pot fi folosite. Acestea sunt în întregime responsabilitatea beneficiarului finanţării.

<sup>2</sup> Luca 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Luca *et alii* 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Luca *et alii* 2017b; Luca *et alii* 2017d; Luca *et alii* 2018.



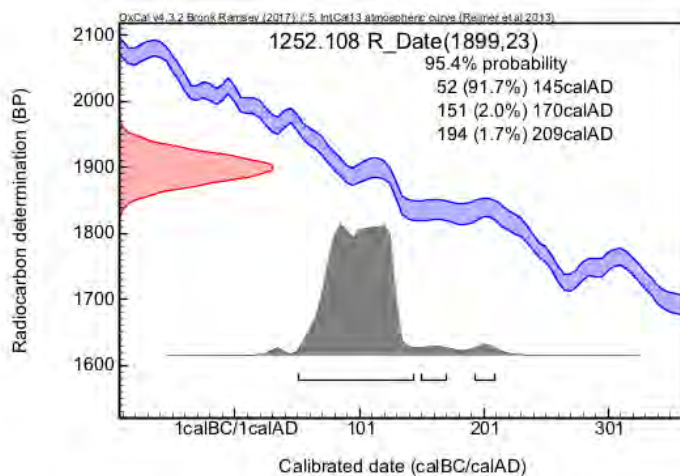


Fig. 1. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1052.108. Classic Dacian civilization.

## Classical dacian culture

Apart from the neolithic and eneolithic archaeological materials, other archaeological materials have been discovered on the site which is the occasion of these lines<sup>5</sup>. We knew this from the first synthesis made on the excavations of Zsófia Torma by the researcher M. Roska from Cluj<sup>6</sup>.

To our satisfaction, in the research area called A<sub>1</sub> a part of a ritual field of the dacians during the classical period of development of their civilization came to light<sup>7</sup>.

And in this part of the research we proceeded to extract coal from the archaeological feature 1003. As can be seen in Table I, the obtained date is within the time period relatively granted to the discovery (centuries I-II AD).

Table I. Turdaş. Absolute data for Classical Dacian civilization.

Number	Dating	BC Dating	Sector	Feature	Relative Dating	Dated material

<sup>5</sup> We have already reported this kind of discoveries, from all ages, in the synthesis work published immediately after the 2011 research: Luca *et alii* 2012. Other works have been carried out by 2019. Archaeological materials from roman or medieval times have always appeared and, rarely, from the Bronze Age or Hallstatt.

<sup>6</sup> Roska 1941.

<sup>7</sup> Luca (coord.) 2012, p. 119-130; Natea *et alii* 2012; Natea *et alii* 2013.

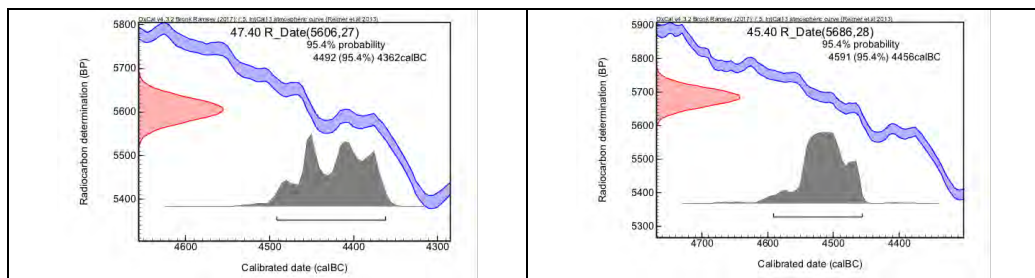
RoAMS-1052.108, fig. 1	1899±23	2σ (95,4% probability) - probability of 91.7% of the age being between 52-145 calAD - probability of 2.0% of the age being between 151-170 calAD - probability of 1.7% of the age being between 194-209 calAD	A <sub>1</sub>	1003	Classical Dacian epoch	Coal
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## Petrești culture

### Phase I

Archaeological materials taken from platforms (surface dwellings) and other types of deepened archaeological features have already been published (radiocarbon data). They belong – in our opinion – to an early horizon of culture with this name. However, the data show that it is not about a contemporaneity with the Turdaș culture here, in the eponymous site of the culture with this name<sup>8</sup>.

We have already published details about the cultural expression of the Petrești culture from Turdaș<sup>9</sup>.



<sup>8</sup> Luca *et alii* 2017d; Luca *et alii* 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Luca 2018a.

Fig. 2. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-47.40. Petreşti culture, phase I.	Fig. 3. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-45.40. Petreşti culture, phase I.
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Table II. Absolute dates for Petreşti culture, phase I.

Number	BP Dating	BC Dating	Sector	Feature	Relative Dating	Dated material
RoAMS-47.40, fig. 2	5606±2 7	2σ (95,4% probability) between 4492-4362 calBC	B	1878	Petreşti, phase I	Animal bone – 446.18 gr. with packaging
RoAMS-45.40, fig. 3	5686±2 8	2σ (95,4% probability) between 4591-4456 calBC	C	403	Petreşti, phase I	Animal bone – 325.27 gr. with packaging

### Turdaş culture Phase III

Unfortunately, so far we do not have radiocarbon data for the Turdaş III horizon (surface dwellings with floor). One of the reasons is the shortening of the dwelling time, but also the destruction of the ruins of the Turdaş III demolition infrastructure by the Petreşti culture to create the elevations, the platforms, on which they built their houses.

We have noticed that – at least after the composition of the forms of the house pillars and the way of their digging – there would be two forms of foundation architecture. In phase III the houses have a „classical” foundation form, and in phase II/III it is a mixed type of foundation. Some of the pillars are not buried in rectangular pits with rounded corners, but in „classic” round pits.

From this phase, III we have once, RoAMS-1251.108, which is about 5850 BP which is – after us – the one of the beginning of the phase III.

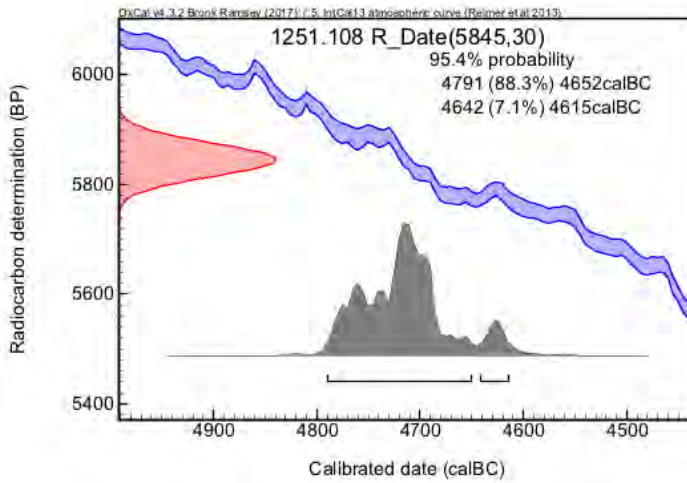


Fig. 4. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1251.108. Turdaş culture, phase III.

Table III. Absolute date for Turdaş culture, phase III.

Number	BP Dating	BC Dating	Sector	Feature	Relative Dating	Dated material
RoAMS-1251.108, fig. 4	5845±30	2σ (95,4% probability) - probability of 88.3% of the age being between 4791-4652 calBC - probability of 7.1% of the age being between 4642-4615 calBC	C	1512	Turdaş, phase III	Coal

## Turdaş culture

**Phase II.** 5850 represents, according to us, between the last years of phase II of the Transylvanian culture. Both typologico-stylistic and as absolute years, this phase lasts over 50 years BP.

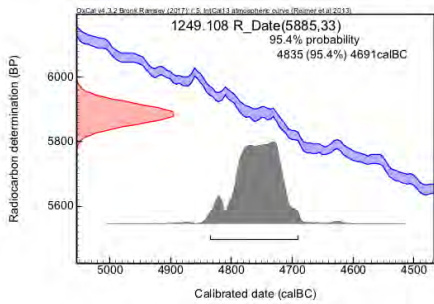


Fig. 5. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1249.108. Turdaş culture, phase II.

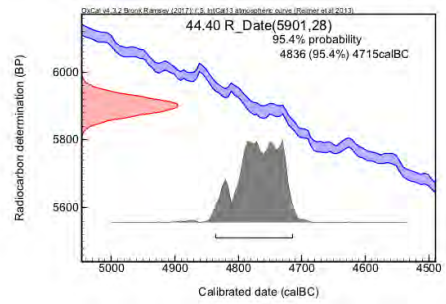


Fig. 6. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-44.40. Turdaş culture, phase II.

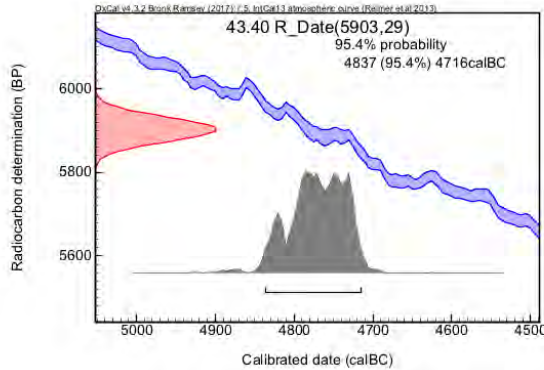


Fig. 7. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-43.40. Turdaş culture, phase II.

Table IV. Absolute date for Turdaş culture, phase II.

Number	BP Dating	BC Dating	Sector	Feature	Relative Dating	Dated material
RoAMS-1249.108, fig. 5	5885±3	2σ (95,4% probability) - 4835-4691 calBC	B	217	Turdaş, phase II	Coal
RoAMS-44.40, fig. 6	5901±2	2σ (95,4% probability) - 4836-4715 calBC	A (area A <sub>1</sub> )	1021A	Turdaş, phase II	Animal bone – 867.75 gr. with packaging
RoAMS-43.40, fig. 7	5903±2	2σ (95,4% probability) - between 4837-4716 calBC	B	1827	Turdaş, phase II	Animal bone – 427,25 gr. with packaging

## Turdaş culture

### Phase I/II

This phase of Turdaş culture has been defined by us in last years, in several articles<sup>10</sup>.

It draws attention to the painting of Tăualaş type, as a component part of the Turdaş culture, but also its use in at least two typological-stylistic phases, I/II and II. These two parts of the same time (II) are at least 100 years old BP.

From the point of view of architecture we notice the deepened houses, having several (two-three) pits used for living.

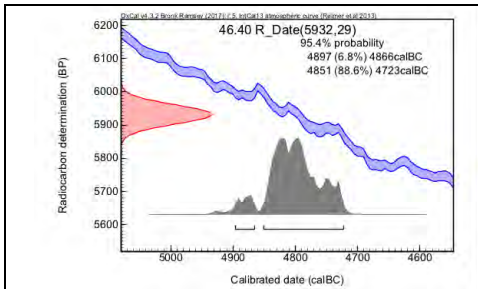


Fig. 8. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-46.40. Turdaş culture, phase I/II.

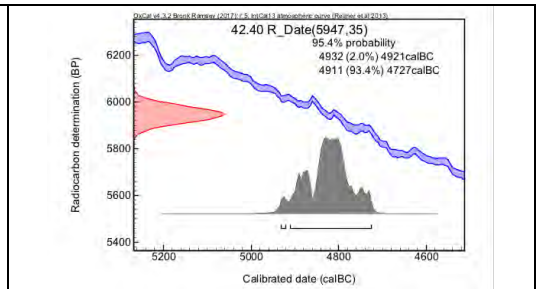


Fig. 9. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-42.40. Turdaş culture, phase I/II.

Table V. Absolute date for Turdaş culture, phase I/II.

Number	BP Dating	BC Dating	Sector	Feature	Relative Dating	Dated material
RoAMS-46.40, fig. 8	5932±29	2σ (95,4% probability): - probability of 6.8% of the age being between 4897-4866 calBC - probability of 88.6% of the age being between 4851-4723 calBC	A	23	Turdaş, phase I/II	Animal bone – 367.05 gr. with packaging
RoAMS-42.40, fig. 5	5947±35	2σ (95,4% probability):	A	33	Turdaş, phase I/II	Animal bone –

<sup>10</sup> Luca *et alii* 2017; Luca *et alii* 2017a; Luca *et alii* 2017c.



9		- probability of 2.0% of the age being between 4932-4921 calBC - probability of 93.4% of the age being between 4911-4727 calBC				322,43 gr. with packaging
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## Turdaş culture Phase I

This chronological and cultural horizon was one of the least known in terms of the beginning of the culture and the site. Absolute chronological data, but also the typological-stylistic approaches necessary to define the place of the beginning of the culture within the surrounding contexts, were missing.

More. The reports of this culture to the great neolithic and eneolithic culture in this part of Europe, Vinča, were not well known and led to groundless theories today<sup>11</sup>. The notions of Vinča -Turdaş and Turdaş- Vinča are undoubtedly outdated.

The following data undoubtedly shows an unexpected reality for many researchers. First, we see that this phase is also at least 100 years old BP.

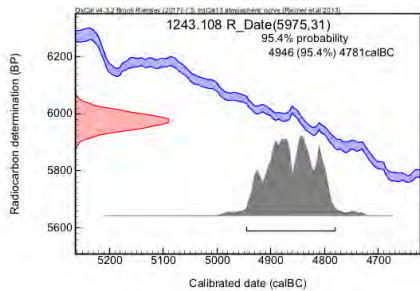


Fig. 10. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1243.108 Turdaş culture, phase I.

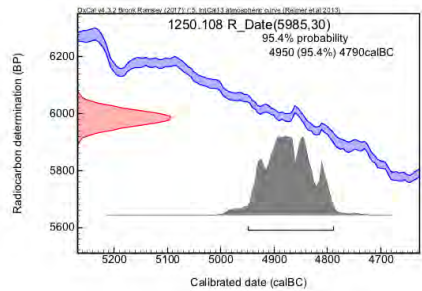


Fig. 11. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1250.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

<sup>11</sup> Our last position: Luca 2006.

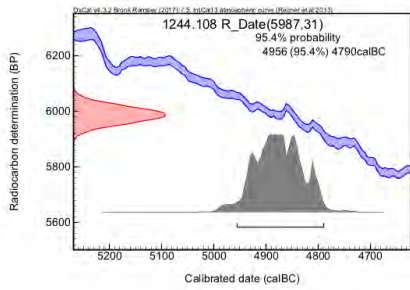


Fig. 12. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1244.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

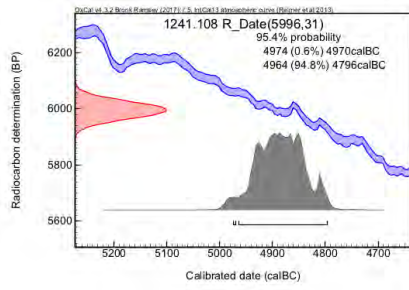


Fig. 13. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1241.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

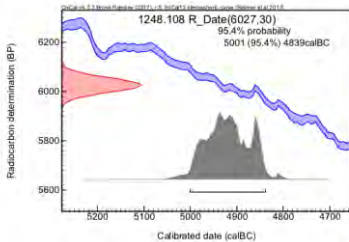


Fig. 14. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1248.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

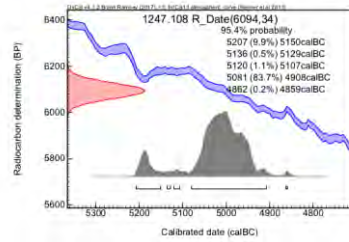


Fig. 15. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1247.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

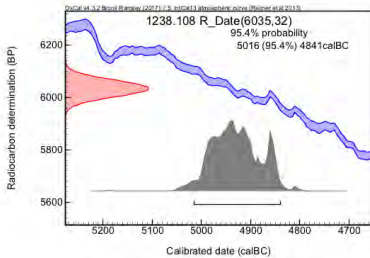


Fig. 16. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1238.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

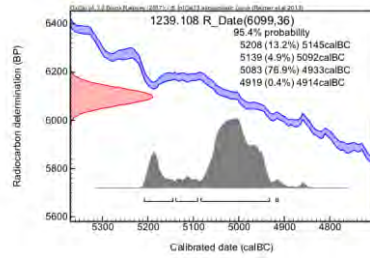


Fig. 17. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1239.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

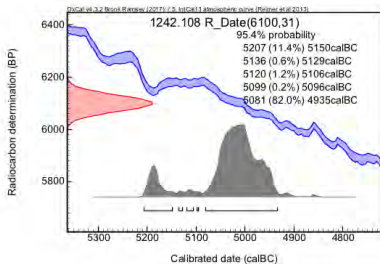


Fig. 18. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1242.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

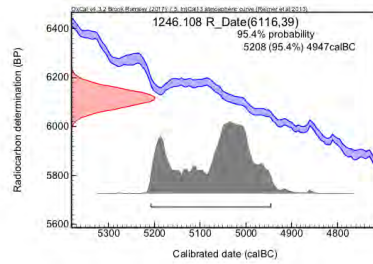


Fig. 19. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1246.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

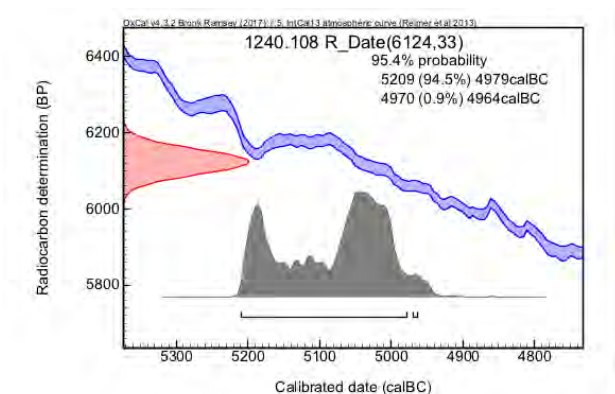


Fig. 20. Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1240,108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Secondly, we find an unexpected correlation between the fortifications discovered by us during the research<sup>12</sup> and the very old phases of the site.

Table VI. Absolute date for Turdaş culture, phase I.

Number	BP Dating	BC Dating	Sector	Feature	Relative Dating	Dated material
RoAMS-1243.108, fig. 10	5975±3 1	2σ (95,4% probability): - 4946-4781 calBC	B	351	Turdaş, phase I	Coal
RoAMS-1250.108, fig. 11	5985±3 0	2σ (95,4% probability): - 4950-4790 calBC	C	1673	Turdaş, phase I	Coal
RoAMS-1244.108, fig. 12	5987±3 1	2σ (95,4% probability): - 4956-4790 calBC	A	88	Turdaş, phase I	Coal
RoAMS-1241.108, fig. 13	5996±3 5	2σ (95,4% probability): - probability of 0.6% of the age being between 4974-4970 calBC - probability of 94.8% of the	B	238	Turdaş, phase I	Coal

<sup>12</sup> Luca (coord.) 2012, p. 33-45; Luca et Suciú 2014; Luca et Suciú 2015.

		age being between 4964-4796 calBC				
RoAMS-1248.108, fig. 14	6027±30	2σ (95,4% probability): - 5001-4839calBC	B	218	Turdaș, phase I	Coal
RoAMS-1238.108, fig. 16	6055±34	2σ (95,4% probability): - 5016-4841 calBC	A	146	Turdaș, phase I	Coal
RoAMS-1247.108, fig. 15	6094±34	2σ (95,4% probability): - probability of 9.9% of the age being between 5207-5150 calBC - probability of 0.5% of the age being between 5136-5129 calBC - probability of 1.1% of the age being between 5120-5107 calBC - probability of 83.7% of the age being between 5081-4908 calBC - probability of 0.2% of the age being between 4862-4859 calBC	B	194	Turdaș, phase I	Coal
RoAMS-1239.108, fig. 17	6099±36	2σ (95,4% probability): - probability of 13.2% of the age being between 5208-5145 calBC	B	267	Turdaș, phase I	Coal

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- probability of 4.9% of the age being between 5139-5092 calBC</li> <li>- probability of 76.9% of the age being between 5083-4933 calBC</li> <li>- probability of 0.4% of the age being between 4919-4914 calBC</li> </ul>				
RoAMS-1242.108, fig. 18	6100±31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2σ (95,4% probability):</li> <li>- probability of 11.4% of the age being between 5207-5150 calBC</li> <li>- probability of 0.6% of the age being between 5136-5129 calBC</li> <li>- probability of 1.2% of the age being between 5120-5106 calBC</li> <li>- probability of 0.2% of the age being between 5099-5096 calBC</li> <li>- probability of 82.0% of the age being between 5081-4935 calBC</li> </ul>	B	210	Turdaş, phase I	Coal
RoAMS-1246.108, fig. 19	6116±39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2σ (95,4% probability):</li> <li>- 5208-4947</li> </ul>	A	83	Turdaş, phase I	Coal

		calBC				
RoAMS-1240,108, fig. 20	6124±33	2σ (95,4% probability): - probability of 94.5% of the age being between 5209-4979 calBC - probability of 0.9% of the age being between 4970-4964 calBC	B	187	Turdaş, phase I	Coal

This batch of radiocarbon data is beginning to put order in the long-speculated chronological and cultural realities over time.

If we are to refer to the cultural realities of Hungary – which is often referred to – we see that, in Transylvania, Turdaş culture, phase I, is largely contemporary (according to the radiocarbon data in this article) with the old Tisa<sup>13</sup> culture, and phases I/II, II and II/III with the classic Tisa culture<sup>14</sup>.

These data could be seen, at large, and so far in the database created on <http://arheologie.ulbsibiu.ro><sup>15</sup>.

From Z. Torma<sup>16</sup> to M. Roska<sup>17</sup> or other authors<sup>18</sup>, over time, the Turdaş site has been more speculated – chronologically and culturally – than researched. And we, based much on the axisting literature, have speculated – without necessarily wanting to – the data of our own research<sup>19</sup>, but, always, have no solid basis. Today, however, we are getting closer and closer to the truth closest to reality, of these times, using intensely everything that current technology offer us.

We hope that the publication of the data extracted from the soil in the last period, as well as the research of new evidence by the radiocarbon

<sup>13</sup> Yerkes 2009, p. 1097-1098.

<sup>14</sup> Yerkes 2009, p. 1096-1097.

<sup>15</sup> Luca et Suciú 2007; Luca et Suciú 2007a.

<sup>16</sup> Luca 2001, p. 19-27; Luca 2012 (coord.), p. 11-15.

<sup>17</sup> Roska 1941, p. 7-15; Luca 2001, p. 27-29; Luca 2012 (coord.), p. 15-16.

<sup>18</sup> Luca 2001, p. 2929-32; Luca 2012 (coord.), p. 16-18.

<sup>19</sup> Lazarovici *et alii* 2014; Luca 1993; Luca 1996; Luca 1996a; Luca 1996b; Luca 1998; Luca 2001; Luca 2003; Luca 2010; Luca et Spânu 2001; Luca *et alii* 2009; Luca *et alii* 2009a; Luca *et alii* 2012.



method, will bring us closer to the known truth about a civilization so much scientifically speculated, that of the Turdaş culture.

### Acknowledgement

On this occasion, I have to thank, once again, to the team from the Institute „H. Hulubei”, but also to all those who worked in the field, to really get to know the Transylvanian culture Turdaş.

### Illustration list

#### Figures

Fig. 1. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1052.10. Dacian classic civilization.

Fig. 2. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-47.40. Petreşti culture, phase I.

Fig. 3. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-45.40. Petreşti culture, phase I.

Fig. 4. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1251.108. Turdaş culture, phase III.

Fig. 5. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1249.10. Turdaş culture, phase II.

Fig. 6. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-44.40. Turdaş culture, phase II.

Fig. 7. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-43.40. Turdaş culture, phase II.

Fig. 8. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-46.40. Turdaş culture, phase I/II.

Fig. 9. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-42.40. Turdaş culture, phase I/II.

Fig. 10. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1243.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 11. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1250.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 12. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1244.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 13. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1241.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 14. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1248.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 15. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1247.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 16. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1238.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 17. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1239.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 18. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1242.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 19. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1246.108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

Fig. 20. Turdaş-*Luncă*. 2011 campaign. RoAMS-1240,108. Turdaş culture, phase I.

### **Tables**

Table I. Absolute data for classical dacian civilization.

Table II. Absolute dates for Petreşti culture, phase I.

Table III. Absolute date for Turdaş culture, phase III.

Table IV. Absolute date for Turdaş culture, phase II.

Table V. Absolute date for Turdaş culture, phase I/II.

Table VI. Absolute date for Turdaş culture, phase I.

### Abbreviations

- ActaTS - *Acta Terrae Septemcastrensis*, Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu
- AnB(SN) - *Analele Banatului. Serie nouă*, Muzeul Banatului, Timișoara
- Apulum - *Apulum. Acta Musei Apulensis*, Muzeul Național al Unirii, Alba Iulia
- Banatica - *Banatica*, Muzeul Banatului Montan, Reșița
- BB - *Bibliotheca Brukenthal*, Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu
- BCMI - *Buletinul Comisiei Monumentelor Istorice*, București
- BMA - *Bibliotheca Musei Apulensis*, Muzeul Național al Unirii, Alba Iulia
- BrukAM - *Brukenthal. Acta Musei*, Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu
- BS - *Bibliotheca Septemcastrensis*, Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu
- ForVL - *Forschungen zur Volks- und Landeskunde*, Institutul de Științe Socio-Umane al Academiei Române, Sibiu
- SIC.SH - *Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis. Series Historia*, Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu

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## COLLECTORS AND COLLECTIONS AN UNEXPECTED CASE (I)

Marius-Mihai-Ciută<sup>20</sup>

**Keywords:** criminal investigation, collector, stolen artefacts, forgeries, counterfeits.

*Rezumat:* În perioada imediat următoare a evenimentelor din 1989, unii cetățeni români care au beneficiat de câștiguri financiare mai mult sau mai puțin neașteptate, au decis să investească/tezaurizeze fonduri considerabile din câștigurile lor în bunuri de patrimoniu cultural, punând bazele unor colecții particulare. Studiul de față dorește să surprindă o parte din mecanismele prin care au fost alcătuite unele din colecțiile de acest gen, de către persoane care nu aveau cunoștințe de specialitate în domeniu, ce au căzut victime traficantilor de antichități, care au pus în vânzare fie artefacte sustrate din situri arheologice fie falsuri, unele de foarte slabă calitate. Fenomenul a fost unul destul de răspândit, deoarece funcționa în conformitate cu mecanismul oricărei piețe: cerere-ofertă, într-o societate în care, dorința de a accede în "straturile înalte" printre altele și prin deținerea unor artefacte cu valoare deosebită, nu era completată de cunoașterea legislației de protejare a patrimoniului cultural și, din nefericire, nici de capacitatea de a distinge piesele autentice de cele contrafăcute.

During the judicial actions, generically known as the *Dacian Gold Files*, the investigators faced, very often, incredibly unusual situations, unexpected, even paradoxical, which accumulated aspects that showed the absurd and the ludicrous, but which, in the last instance, describe, in an inspired way, we can say, details of the structure of the individual and collective mind of those involved in trafficking the cultural assets, stolen from archaeological sites. The herby study wants to bring to the attention of the public interested in the issue of national cultural heritage that has been subject to financially motivated criminal acts (theft, trafficking), in particular the

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<sup>20</sup> Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, [mariusciuta@yahoo.com](mailto:mariusciuta@yahoo.com)

problem of “occasional”<sup>21</sup> collections and collectors which appeared in the Romanian landscape in early 2000’s, a unique case, located in Hunedoara County, atypical at first sight, but symptomatic for that period.

In 2003, on the archeological-school site of the University of Sibiu, situated in *Orăștie-Dealul Pemilor* (Hunedoara County), a somewhat *exotic* character<sup>22</sup> appeared, repeatedly. He was the owner of a gas station located at the entrance to the city, on DN 7 from Romos village, immediately under the second terrace of Mureș (the place where the archaeological excavations were carried out). As he was going through a period of significant financial profits, the character decided to invest and to treasure these profits in cultural heritage assets, as he heard of from various sources that do not lose value over the years<sup>23</sup>. In order to satisfy this wish, he got in touch with various individuals, part of the underworld of Hunedoara county (especially from Deva and Orăștie city), involved at that time in trafficking such objects, about which he did not know (or may have known, but took the risk!) that are involved in illegal activities of carrying out unauthorized surveys in archaeological sites, digging and stealing archaeological artifacts and their trafficking on the black market of antiques<sup>24</sup>. Once he purchased several object, the natural need of *quality confirmation* and money worth guarantee arose. This is why, in the year indicated above, relying on the common sense and the specialized knowledge of the archaeologists on the site, located in the immediate vicinity of his business, the man wanted to know their opinion on the recently acquired objects. If at first the archaeologists were willing to give him certain indications regarding the significance and value of the presented goods, perceived exclusively from the perspective of the curiosity and the good

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<sup>21</sup> Or "cardboard collectors". We will use this phrase designating those persons concerned with the realization of a collection of cultural assets, with which they try to optimize their image within the high-life society, who do not have the minimum training required for such an endeavor.

<sup>22</sup> For obvious reasons, we will not indicate in this article the name of that collector. However, it appears in the indictment of the criminal case of the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Alba Iulia Court of Appeal (initially the criminal case 172 / P / 2005, disjunctive in D.P. 151 / P / 2005, and later in D.P. 440 / P / 2008).

<sup>23</sup> The collection of objects of archaeological origin, preferably of rare metals and of the highest age, was a sign of good taste, frequently encountered in the environments of people recently enriched by activities within the limits of the law, in a county in which the old state-owned companies that exploited natural resources went bankrupt or struggled to survive. Other constant buyers of such objects, found in the agendas of traffickers, were also members of rich professional categories, par excellence: doctors, architects, lawyers, administrators of companies, politicians. It was enough that a representative member of these guilds to insist on the collection of cultural goods, so that the activity would become an attractive one, generating "good image", imitated by the other brethren.

<sup>24</sup> According to the *Indictment* from criminal file 151 / P / 2015 (also taken from file 400 / P / 2008): *in July 2003, the team Crișan-Sîmu and Corhan Călin, sold them to PN, at the West Oil gas station from Orăștie, 160 antique silver coins, priced at 2000 US dollars.*

natural belief of the scientific researcher<sup>25</sup>, later, seeing the reluctance with which the owner refuses to specify their provenance, noting that some pieces had specific features of recent removal from archaeological contexts (*in situ*), but also the fact that some pieces appeared to be recent forgeries, they made clear to him that they won't let him take advantage of their good will, since they cannot assess the pieces, as long as their source was hidden from them *on purpose*<sup>26</sup>.

Since July 2005, during the investigations in the file *The Dacian Gold*, reopened in the same year by the prosecutors of the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Alba Iulia Court of Appeal, a series of descriptions and home searches were started, especially in the city of Deva, but also in other cities of Hunedoara county and Alba county, in which the persons involved in the above-mentioned criminal activities were targeted. It was a moment intensely publicized in local and national mass-media, which caused very strong emotions and reactions, at different levels, given that the phenomenon of archeological poaching and trafficking with *antiquities* had been going on for many years already within the local society. Not just the Hunedoara society was involved at different levels in this phenomenon. Obviously, the strongest emotional impact struck the people who owned such objects.

That was the moment when the person above mentioned, who has been collecting cultural assets of archaeological origin for more than two years, being an *active and well known player* on this market, noticed the risks he was exposed to when buying objects from the people who were just investigated, charged, detained and even arrested. If initially he preferred to remain unknown, hoping that he would not be affected by the legal proceedings, slowly, but surely, the feeling of reason and guilt took effect, so that, on January 25, 2006, P.N. presented on his own initiative to the Prosecutor's Office of the Alba Iulia Court of Appeal, bringing and indicating to the judicial investigators a lot of objects, justifying that they are goods bought by him, as *a person of good faith*, from various persons. With

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<sup>25</sup> According to the same **Indictment**: *in order to be convinced that the coins were original, P.N. presented to witness P. S-I, professor at the Faculty of History and Heritage of the Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu, who found that the examined pieces were original, unclean, with the appearance of pieces discovered soon. In the autumn of the same year of May had an attempt to present a statue to the archaeologists, who informed them that they were circumspect about its authenticity.*

<sup>26</sup> The **Indictment** also shows that: *whereas the witness P.N. (suspicious, because he had found out that it was possible to buy fake pieces as well) he wanted to recover the money invested, the accused Corhan Calin took back 93 coins with the promise that he would return the money. Later, to his dismay, he led him to his home where he exchanged two silver Dacian necklaces (torques, one with a broken end), stolen by illegal excavations from the archaeological site of Sarmizegetusa Regia.*

undisguised pride, invoking *the large amounts of money* he invested, as well as his situation as a *victim*, the citizen presented a diplomatic briefcase, in which there was a heterogeneous collection of artifacts: statues, coins, jewelry, decorative elements etc. (fig. 1-6).

The investigators wanted to find out the source of the objects batch, therefore quite quickly, their illegal source became a certainty, as *the owner* mentioned that the *sellers* were part of the defendants from the file of looting in the Orăștie Mountains, and also their associates. Given the suspicions about its illicit provenance, the artifact batch was seized by prosecutors, and a series of issues related to its provenance, the identity of the sellers, the location of the sites/points from which they had been stolen had been clarified. Initially, P.N. wished to benefit from protection and a *hidden identity*<sup>27</sup>, as he feared some eventual unpleasant repercussions following his identification as *informant*<sup>28</sup>; thus, later, during the criminal investigation, he gave it up.

Firstly, the goods were presented to archeology specialists<sup>29</sup>, on which occasion two major categories emerged in the lot: **authentic pieces** (of certain archaeological origin and likely to belong to the national cultural heritage) and **fake pieces**, gross counterfeits, which they tried to render, without success, ancient artifacts with an iconography already known. Thus, a series of 5 statuettes, 2 round plates (phaleras?), a plate representing a noble Dacian's head and a zoomorphic statuette, all metallic, were obviously detached within the presented batch. The statuettes represented female characters (possibly Greek-Roman Gods?). The round plates, with two holes each, represented characters (female and male<sup>30</sup>) and a representation of a wolf riding a (?) *phallus*<sup>31</sup>. The "quality" of the patent of the pieces - which,

<sup>27</sup> With the name Nedelcu Ioan.

<sup>28</sup> The same **Indictment** showed that the *sellers* soon learned of P.N.'s gesture, from a telephone discussion between the two, that P.N. handed over the judicial investigators "and those stupid things" ... in other words, the fake pieces.

<sup>29</sup> First, the expert archeologist Horia Ioan Ciugudean from the National Museum of the Union of Alba Iulia was invited to rule on the batch of pieces, and then, about 2 hours later, the new officer of cultural heritage was invited, author of the herby study. It was practically verification of the artifacts but also of the skills. An aspect worth remembering is how the prosecutor perceived the situation in which the two archaeologists, without being aware of the fact that they were asked to rule on the same lot, "used the same expressions, words and terms to describes and characterizes the artifacts, the two versions coinciding in the finest details."

<sup>30</sup> The characteristics of the referred characters, lead to the conclusion it was an intention to imitate the female character from one of the treasures from Lupu (Alba County)(Aurul 2013, p. 83), and that the male character, imitated the one from the Bucharest-Herastrau Phalera (Aurul 2013, p. 84).

<sup>31</sup> It is a subject completely unknown to the Dacian iconography, of which the craftsman inspired, but it is possible to be inspired from a frequent theme in Scythian craft, in which wild animals appear in motion, with the mention of a complete lack of phallic representation, meaning it was a personal license of an uninspired manufacturer. Is possible

with all the efforts made by the designer and the patent work, was not all what it should have been - supplemented by the awkwardness of the artistic achievement, having a childlike character, which went so far as to be grotesque<sup>32</sup>, were the basis of their first evaluation. For a connoisseur of history, whether he is a non-specialist in ancient minor statues, it is difficult to conceive that one could believe that they could have been ancient objects, or even, representations of mythological characters, with aesthetic value, rarities or even one of a kind objects...

Later, these pieces were separated from the group of the authentic ones, treated separately, and for a complete and definitive certainty for the judicial inquiry - especially since at that time it was already fashionable to challenge the authenticity of some artifacts tracked / recovered - they were the subject of a metallographic analysis, that revealed that the alloy used in their manufacture had nothing to do with the one identified in ancient pieces<sup>33</sup>. The buyer was somewhat offended when, during the course of the criminal investigation, he was informed that some of his pieces are contemporary forgeries. Even when the results of the metallographic analyzes definitively confirmed the attribute as a *contemporary forgery*, P.N. proved to be dissatisfied, accusing even the judicial authorities of having replaced the pieces handed over to them - *which he spent large sums of money on, because they were presented to him as one of a kind objects - with fakes (?)*. The documents drawn up for the seizing of the pieces and especially the judicial photographs have removed any doubts related to this aspect.

By the *Resolution* of January 27, 2006, from the criminal file 172/P/2005, at the surrender of the complete lot of objects in the custody of the National Union Museum of Alba Iulia, a first expert report by the experts of the institution was imposed. The expert report was going to show the following aspects about the authentic pieces: *what the presented goods represent; whether they are likely to belong to the national cultural heritage; whether they can come from newly discovered archaeological contexts; what*

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that he had an catalogue which contain the representation of the roman zoomorphic fibula from Noviodunum-Isaccea from the 2-nd century (Aurul 2013, p. 122),

<sup>32</sup> If we were to use images to define the concept of anti-talent, these achievements could be successfully used to illustrate this "trait". They are produced without the slightest idea of harmony, symmetry, balance or aesthetics, and the person who "created" them only proved that he had a history manual at hand, from which he tried to reproduce, in an unfortunate way, some ancient artifacts that seemed to him to be more representative by the pictures. The intention of misleading is obvious, but the way he put it in practice was less than fortunate.

<sup>33</sup> The metallographic analysis, ordered by the Resolution of May 2006, was carried out at the Laboratory of metallographic analysis of the Mechanical Factory in Cugir. For comparison, a sample was taken from the head of the Artemis statue.

*is the circulation value of these objects?*<sup>34</sup>. The first evaluation was carried out by experts from the museum in Alba Iulia<sup>35</sup>, who concluded that the analyzed pieces (67 coins, 2 torques, 3 fibulae, 1 medallion (phalera), 1 miniature figurine head, 1 fragment of situla, 1 box handle, 4 rings, 1 bell fragment and 3 appliques), *are artifacts of a certain archaeological origin, which belong to the national cultural heritage*<sup>36</sup> (fig. 9-18).

On February 8, 2006, shortly after handing over the lot, the chance was that the investigators came in possession of some operative information, based on which a house search was carried out, at the domicile of Rusu Silviu, from the town of Merișor, Bănița commune, Hunedoara county. The "workshop" where these objects were made was identified. Inside, they found clay molds and plaster casts of statuettes and platelets (fallers), bought by the man *in good faith and a lot of money*. The investigators had at that time the certainty that P.N. was the victim of antique dealers. The typological and stylistic features of the models ceased from Rusu Silviu, showed that they were made by the same person (fig. 7-8). During the searches, molds, patterns, crucibles, metal plates etc. were discovered, proving that he practically performed, the entire chain of operation: from modeling in clay, casting the model from gypsum (plaster) and then casting the bronze in the molded form. A series of chisels and other tools found there showed that the process of decoration and retouching was done in the same workshop, for the *finished products*. All the ceased objects were deposited in the custody of the Museum of Alba Iulia, and by *the Resolution* of February 9, 2006, all the objects were subject of an expertise, in order to establish *if there was any connection between the objects delivered by P.N. and the tools seized from Rusu Silviu*. The result was, that there was an obvious connection between it. Moreover, the latter acknowledged his "creations", when presented to him during a judicial procedure for objects display, thus he denied having anything to do with their marketing. Most likely, those who offered for sale the objects, made by the "craftsman" from Bănița, were the same poachers of the archaeological sites, transformed in "dealers"

From the moment the pieces were handed over, on January 25, 2006, until the completion of the criminal prosecution, P.N. was a witness. In the

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<sup>34</sup> Extras of *Rezoluția PCAI* of 27. 01. 2006,

<sup>35</sup> Dr. Viorica Suciuc was designated to establish the identification and primary evaluation of the coins, and Dr. Vasile Moga was designated for the artifacts.

<sup>36</sup> The part of the collection composed of authentic pieces, will be the subject of a separate study, which is in progress.

*Indictment* of 05.08.2008 of the criminal file 151/P/2005, the prosecutors proposed not starting the criminal prosecution of P.N. Thus, because the goods he bought were the product of committing crimes (including fraud), the criminal prosecution was dissolved for the facts related to the way of discovery and trafficking of the original artifacts (in the criminal file 440/P/2008), and because the authentic goods, *bought in good faith*, however, were stolen from sites belonging to the Romanian State, according to the law, there was civil action that continued, about establishing the property, as the State claimed the rightful ownership over them. File 440/P/2008 was sent to court in 2010, and since then it is in the trial phase. On April 23, 2010, in the civil case, on trial at the Hunedoara Court (no. 5750/97/2008), the *Expertise Report* signed by the expert Dr. Ernest Oberländer-Târnoveanu was submitted, regarding exclusively the assets that may belong to the national cultural heritage. The result was an evaluation of a prejudice of 30.606 euro, claimed by the State of Romania through the Ministry Of Culture. Several objects delivered by P.N. proved to have an exceptional heritage value, as, for instance, the two silver torques<sup>37</sup>. The head of feminine statue (Artemis), the *situlae* fragment, the appliques, fibulae, silver phalera as well as antique coins (Greek & Roman) proved to be extremely valuable<sup>38</sup>.

The false pieces, subjected to a metallographic expertise, were returned to P.N. in December 2010, as they were not assets likely to belong to the national cultural heritage. He filed a criminal complaint regarding the *fraud*, for which he could have been compensated by the ones who sold him contemporary objects as antique ones. Although it cannot claim to be considered goods likely to belong to the cultural heritage, not even handicraft products with an aesthetic value, we think that it would be necessary to insist a little on the pieces that have been proven to be contemporary, knowingly sold.

In Romania, in the absence of a market for antiques, there were not, at least not recently, famous cases of counterfeiters of cultural goods, at least for

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<sup>37</sup> One of them, the complete one, was presented in the Catalog of the MNIR exhibition: *Gold and antique silver of Romania*, of Bucharest, 2013 (Aurul 2013, p. 393). The rods of its extremities, with a quadrilateral section and with the decoration in the form of circles with a point in the middle, drawn downwards towards the end, where the bar widens with a relatively spherical projection, which suggests the prominent muzzle of an animal, having two circles pointed on these extremities. The second one had two broken ends, more precisely the unstitched rods, with a quadrilateral section and with the outline decorated in the form of a running spiral, which narrows towards the end in the form of a vertical flattening, marked with two points on each side, suggesting a whole animal head. If one of the rods can be glued, having the entire body preserved, the second, shorter, lacks a limb.

<sup>38</sup> Oberländer-Târnoveanu 2010.



the ancient artifacts. For example, in Bulgaria from 2000-2010 the acquaintances of *Sofia I and Sofia II*, made coins of the highest quality, difficult to differentiate from the original ones, which invaded the markets. In Europe, a few cases are known of the famous counterfeiters, but the attention has fallen mainly on the works of art (paintings, sculptures, etc.), much better sold on the market. There was a problem in establishing the authenticity of some new artifacts. The experts were facing difficulties, as it was expected, one of the recent cases in establishing the authenticity of the Dacian spiral gold bracelets being still fresh on the subject<sup>39</sup>. On the same occasion, there was a rumor circulating that the artifacts were forged by a jeweler from Călan, (who, obviously died shortly after the criminal prosecution began) without any convincing arguments. The idea of using the gold resulting from melting of Koson coins had a real *boomerang effect*, seriously shaking the arguments of the opposite group. Another case of a so-called forged artifact was the sculpture of a young man's head, made in marble from Bucova, taken from a collector in Alba Iulia in 2006. One of the local dealers stated that it was his creation, obviously with the purpose to protect the collector, who was a public person.

There is recent information about the idea that coins from the collections of several national museums, were allegedly replaced with forgeries. This makes it hard to believe that inside persons are not involved. Until specific evaluations shall be conducted, regarding the numismatic collections, we hope the rumors will not be confirmed. Another phenomenon, that cannot be contested, is the reduced number (at least!) of the numismatic experts from the public institutions, with very good knowledge, who can prove to be at the same level of preparation as the numismatic experts of European or American auction houses. Sooner or later, a confrontation between them shall appear, inside the Romanian Courts, and, the perspective is not fortunate, from this point of view.

### **Epilogue**

What is the lesson learned from all of the above? A market base Law, even for the black antiques market (!) is that if there is no *claim*, there is no *offer*! There were situations when, due to greed- one of the seven major original sins- “the collectors” were facing situations when they asked for

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<sup>39</sup> I still find followers of the ideas of two great representatives of Romanian archeology of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, as were Alexandru Vulpe and Constantin Preda, who publicly expressed, during the criminal prosecution (!), a series of deductive statements, which put the question mark on the authenticity of the artifacts recently recovered at that time.

much more than the dealer could supply. The dealers depended on the poachers from the field (excepting the cases when they were the same person). Sometimes “*there was no merchandise*”. In such situations, someone had the great idea- it proved to be good, as it was very useful, on many occasions- to offer forgeries, counting on the fact that the rich collector has a great financial situation, and has no knowledge in identification of authentic items. The greed and competition, fed by ignorance and incompetence, started a phenomenon that gave a taste of their own medicine to the “cardboard collectors”. Our collector suffered from multiple prejudices: he lost his collection (according to his statement, he grew very attached to his collection), he lost the money he invested and he strongly believed that he was deceived and justice was not served. He did not have the chance to recover any of the prejudices, as his health was severely affected by this episode. However, he did a noble gesture: he made possible the recovery of great value property, which, otherwise, might have reached international collectors or at auction houses that did not care about the *uncertain* origin of the objects. The repeated sale would have made them legal, meaning through *artifact laundering*, a particular form of money laundering<sup>40</sup>.

Between 1990-2005, encouraged by the lack of reaction of authorities, many people considered a good idea to secure their financial earnings by investing in cultural objects, heritage objects, therefore creating an increased *claim* of such objects. The poachers took the role of the *claim* in this matter. The easiest sources were the archaeological sites, unsupervised, with material deposits that were not part of a previous inventory (data base, inventory, photography, publication, etc.), which could prove the theft.<sup>41</sup> They ignored the fact that there are other methods and means by which an artifact, recently extracted from the soil, can be identified as being stolen, with all the *laundering* efforts, both literally and figuratively, deposited by those involved in this traffic. The equation of this chain is synthesized inspired by a recent analysis by the experts in the cultural heritage field in Northern area: (*different thieves, one financial motivation!*) However, we cannot help but wonder, with the risk of appearing malicious, how many collections of this kind, held by rich people and vanities inversely proportional to their level of knowledge of the domain, do not contain fake pieces, *generously* offered by

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<sup>40</sup> Lazăr 2008; Lazăr 2009; Duțu et alii 2018; Deppert-Lippitz 2009.

<sup>41</sup> As I mentioned above, the source of public collections, museums, which have proved to be, as appropriate, another source quite easy for thieves should not be overlooked.

*dealer service* experts, self-taught experts, *white-collar* fraudsters, existing in most large cities or overlapping archaeological sites?

We also focus on an aspect frequently observed in the case of antique markets, namely on the so-called *gray market*. It is named the grey market because it is perceived as being between the black, obviously illegal and the white, legal market. The cultural assets, likely to belong to the cultural heritage, stolen from their original contexts, represent *new entries*, previously unknown to the experts, not taken into account in previous records or inventories. The interfaces through which they are sold are the gray market, illustrated in the table in figure 19. *The private collections*, designed in the turbulent years after 1989, not mentioned in the records of the public institutions (impossible due to their illegality), represent, today, *the intermediaries*, or *the vehicles*, between the black and the white markets.

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Fig. 1. Bronze statuettes and round plates, seized by prosecutors



Fig. 2. Coins, rings, bell fragment and appliques seized by prosecutors



Fig. 3. Silver and bronze coins (67), seized by prosecutors.



Fig. 4. Bronze statuettes and fragmentary statuettes, seized by prosecutors.





Fig. 5. Bronze statuettes with female representations seized by prosecutors





Fig. 6. Plate representing a noble Dacian's head (1), feminine statuett (2), round plates (phalerae) cu with "antique" characters (3-4)



Fig. 6. Zoomorphic statuette (phallic form).



a

b



Fig. 7. The "workshop" of the counterfeiter with molds and plaster casts seized at the domiciliary search



Fig. 8. The molds and patterns exposed at the Alba Iulia Museum



Fig. 9. Two dacian silver necklaces (*torques*), with zoomorphic extremities (II-I a. Chr century)





Fig. 10. Silver *phalera*, with vegetal and geometric ornaments (roman - I p. Chr century)



Fig. 11. Bronze fragmentary statuett, head of Artemis (hellenistical tradition, III-II a. Chr)



Fig. 12. Bronze *situla* fragment, head of aquatic bird (swan) (I p. Chr. century)

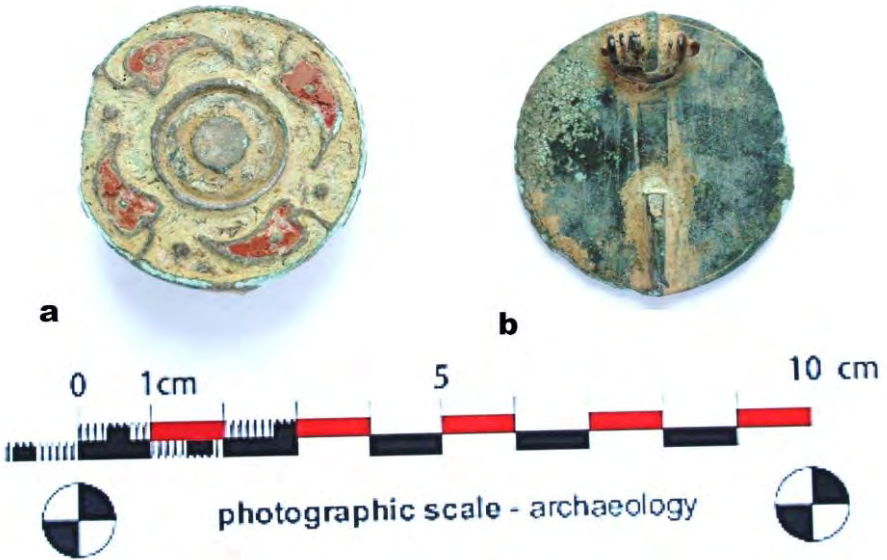


Fig. 13. Bronze fibula, with polychrome vegetal ornaments (II p. Chr. century).

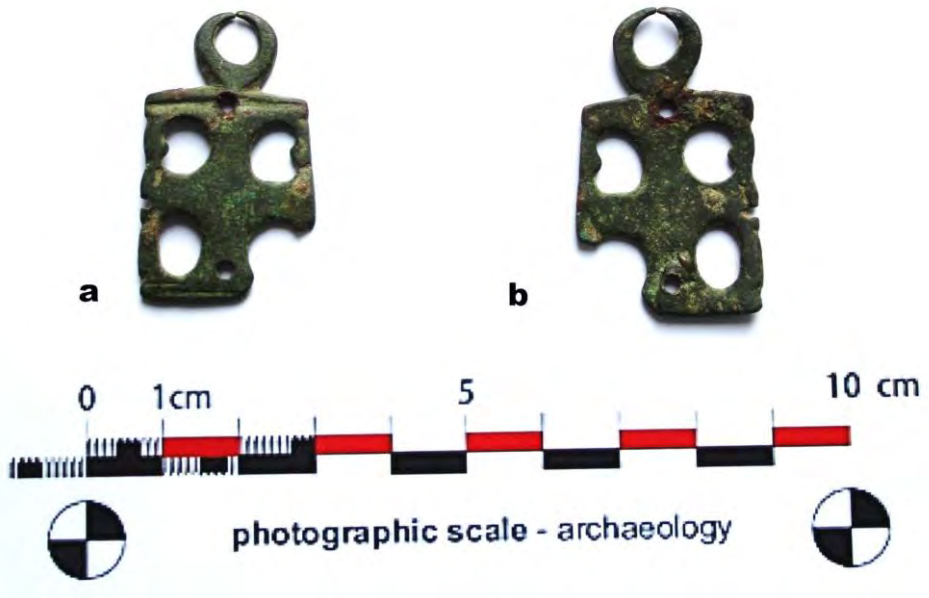


Fig. 14. Bronze belt applique (II-III p. Chr. century)



Fig. 15. Bronze applique (fibula?) with vegetal ornaments (III p. Chr. century)



Fig. 16. Silver belt applique with gold, vegetal stylized ornaments ( X-XI century)

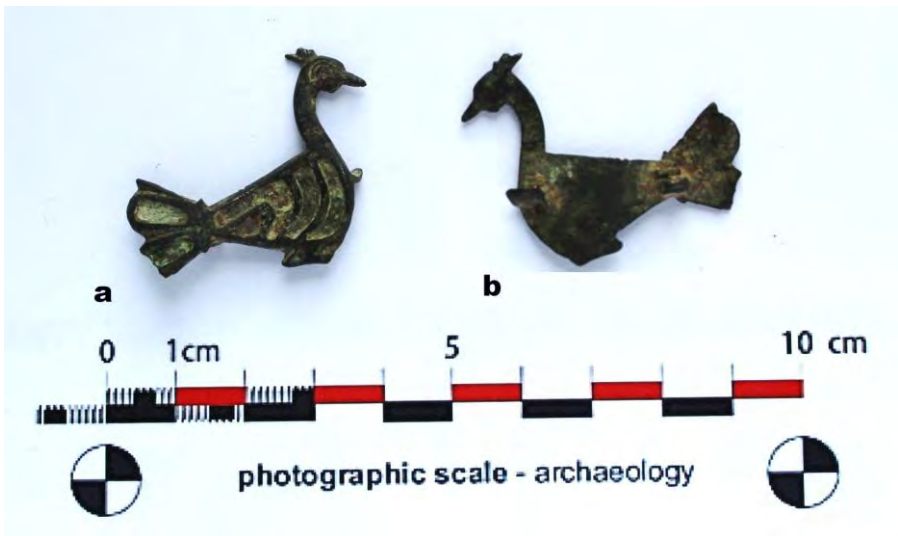


Fig. 17. Zoomorphic bronze fibula (peacock), with ornaments (II p. Chr. century)





Fig. 18. Medieval bronze and copper rings (XII-XV century)

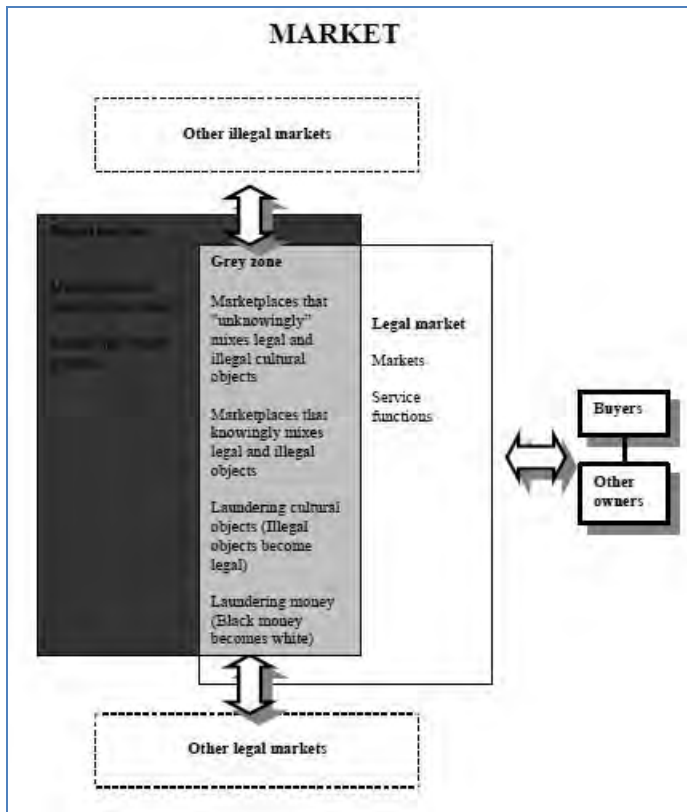


Fig. 19. The structure of antiques market and the relation with money laundering (after Cultural Heritage Crime 2006, p. 24)

## **The Making of a Holy Nation: Pastoral Activity, Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Nationalism in Interwar Romanian Orthodoxy**

Gheorghe Gelu Pacurar  
Indiana University, Bloomington, U.S.A.

### **Abstract**

After the end of World War I and the creation of Greater Romania, various actors tried to influence the official policy of the state by proposing political visions suitable to consolidate the Romanian identity and character of the country. The Orthodox Church, one of the most vocal of these actors, envisioned a variety of activities and programs with the goal of promoting the future development of the country alongside religious principles. In particular, in 1925 the Metropolitan of Ardeal organized the first “mass” pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the history of the Romanian people. Among the participants was Iosif Trifa, a close collaborator of the Metropolitan and the initiator and organizer of a widespread spiritual movement called the Army of the Lord. During the pilgrimage Trifa wrote notes that later constituted the basis of his travelogue *Pe urmele Mântuitorului* [In the Footsteps of the Savior], a book that, I will suggest, proposes a national – spiritual model for the building of the new political project inspired by the mythical image of the holy places. Trifa vested these pastoral concerns with political preoccupations that ultimately claimed the Holy Land as an ideal pattern for Greater Romania. Through a gradual literary process that morphed Palestine into the Christian Holy Land and reclaimed it for Orthodox Christians only, Trifa established a close connection between the holy sites and Romania by presenting the group of pilgrims and their itinerary as a symbol of the nation walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. A close reading of the narrative will show that Trifa aimed at using it as an exhortation to prompt Romanians’ commitment to Orthodoxy as the only successful solution to the national project.

### **Introduction**

As Alphonse Dupront suggests, pilgrimage is one of the intense temporal dimensions of the individual and collective experience that has characterized religiosity from ancient Abydos in Egypt to modern day Lourdes in France (Dupront 1547-1553). In Christianity and, in particular, in the Orthodox Church, pilgrimage has a longstanding tradition encompassing rituals and practices enacted by believers traveling to holy places as expressions of spiritual fervor. Although over the course of time there developed many pilgrimage sites both at local and regional levels, the geography associated with biblical events and especially with the life of Jesus, has made the Holy Land the favorite destination for pilgrims. Apart from ancient and medieval evidences of pious travelers to these places, modern Orthodox Christians

have continued to regard this practice as a desired religious achievement, as studies on contemporary Orthodoxy show<sup>42</sup>.

In his analysis of the practice of pilgrimage in post-communist Romania, Mirel Bănică indicates that the sacred journey is a complex phenomenon that percolates not only into the deep structures of society, but also into the political and institutional life of the country engaging tens of thousands of people<sup>43</sup>. It is also a fact that this period witnessed an increase in individual and organized pilgrimages to the Holy Land, given the liberalization of traveling outside the Romanian borders. At a first glance, the Communist atheism and isolationism that ruled over the Romanian people for almost half a century suggests that pilgrimage to the Holy Land is a new phenomenon that has sprouted only after 1989. Yet, a historical survey of modern Romania shows that the sacred journey to Jerusalem was a common practice among many individual locals, from the noble Elina Cantacuziono in 1682 to merchants, theologians, and clergymen in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, to organized groups in the 1920s and 1930s<sup>44</sup>.

As these examples show, Romanian pilgrimages to the Holy Land could be either individual or organized in larger groups. Several elements ascribe the 1925 pilgrimage a singular place in this history. It was the first mass pilgrimage encompassing common believers and clergy, well organized in advance, and publicized in newspapers. Furthermore, it was led by important hierarchs such as Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan, who were involved in current debates on national issues. And lastly, it included the central figure of the widespread interwar Orthodox revival movement called Oastea Domnului [the Army of the Lord], Father Iosif Trifa, who further advertised the event through notes sent to his newspaper *Lumina Satelor* [The Light of the Villages] and eventually published it in the book *Pe urmele Mântuitorului* [In the Footsteps of the Savior]<sup>45</sup>.

Given this complex constellation that characterized the 1925 pilgrimage to the Holy Land, it is arguable that an analysis of Trifa's travelogue could offer glimpses into the interface between religious experience and national ideals in interwar Romania. Studies of pilgrimage have pointed that this phenomenon could perform many functions simultaneously, from satisfying a personal need to setting the stage for cultural diffusion of new ideas<sup>46</sup>. A close reading of *Pe urmele Mântuitorului* will show that Trifa tried to limn the pilgrimage as a national event with important consequences for Romanian identity. Moving from the personal level of the narrator to the immediate context of the eyewitnesses that accompanied him to

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<sup>42</sup> Limor and Stroumsa; Stavrou; Trandafir.

<sup>43</sup> Bănică.

<sup>44</sup> Păcurariu; Trandafir.

<sup>45</sup> Gogan.

<sup>46</sup> Thayer 169ss.

the larger setting of the Romanian nation, the narrative endeavors to propose the ideal image of the Holy Land as the supreme model to be achieved by the new people of God, the Romanians, in the new promised land, Greater Romania. Accordingly, it could be demonstrated that Trifa presents himself as a religious mystagogue who pleads for the national appropriation of the Holy Land model as the only means to the spiritual renewal of the nation and the subsequent success of the new Romanian political project. As such, the focus on figures like Father Trifa encourages the study of the relationship between religion and nationalism in interwar Romania from new perspectives able to evade the beaten track of radical politics and extremist ideologies that characterizes much of current scholarship.

To this end, the text will be examined from two major perspectives. On one hand, the focus will center on the meanings of pilgrimage in order to uncover both the various planes of this phenomenon, in particular the dialectic between personal and social impact<sup>47</sup>, and the intertextuality between pilgrimage, narrator, readers, and historical, cultural, and ideological circumstances<sup>48</sup> (Coleman and Elsner 9-10). On the other hand, recent studies of the relationship between Orthodoxy and nationalism (Strickland) will inform the understanding of prescriptive ideas expressed by the text with reference to the national ideal. After a brief appraisal of the literary aspects of the narrative, the attention will first move to the exploration of religious themes as part of Trifa's pastoral concerns, then to the investigation of possible political tropes, in order to eventually conclude with an assessment of Trifa's national ideology.

### ***Pe urmele Mântuitorului as a pilgrimage narrative***

Scholars dealing with the phenomenon of pilgrimage have drawn increasing attention to pilgrimage narratives as a gateway to the mental universe that was shared by their authors and readers. In this sense, Trifa's travelogue is part of an "elaborate, intertextual discourse in which the journey to the Holy Land serves as an occasion" for conveying common concerns shared by both sides (Bowman 153-154).

As far as the narrator's mentality is concerned, one should employ what Victor Turner calls the "individual questions" suitable to reveal the primary motivation, reasons, intentions, and needs that prompted him to undertake such a long, dangerous, and costly task (Turner and Turner xiv-xv; Morinis 18). As noted above, Trifa published his pilgrimage experiences in successive articles in the weekly newspaper *Lumina Satelor* between 1925 and 1927, and a book, *Pe urmele Mântuitorului*. The latter, which appeared in two interwar editions in 1926 and 1928, was assessed by Trifa as a pastoral success (Trifa 6), a fact that was confirmed by its republication after 1989 with the blessing of the Metropolitan of Ardeal in a

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<sup>47</sup> Morinis 21-28.

<sup>48</sup> Coleman and Elsner 4-5.

significant gesture of Trifa's rehabilitation into the Orthodox Church and appreciation of his important activity.

The structure of the book is organized around two major tropes which ultimately share the same symbolic meaning. The physical journey, which begins with preparations, descriptions of the way to the Holy Land, and portrayal of Jerusalem, reaches its climax at the moment of entrance into the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. On the other hand, this temporal culmination leads the way to the apex of the spiritual pilgrimage that is embodied by the description of Jesus' passion story, a section that encompasses half of the entire narrative and as such constitutes its center. These two tropes that guide the narrative are interwoven with, on the one hand, descriptions of the travel, scientific information (climate, geography, history, and archaeology), details regarding the everyday life in Palestine, and curiosities, and, on the other hand, biblical pericopes and their interpretation, personal religious experiences, exhortations, and sermon-style passages, which form the bulk of the book. The particular combination of all these factors throughout the narrative indicates not only that Trifa envisioned the book as a polysemy of informative, religious, and political meanings, but also that he employed the informative passages only to shed light on religious, and possible, political issues, as the strong exhortative conclusion of the book shows.

Having illuminated these literary aspects, it could be stated that Trifa's goal in writing the book was foremost pastoral: the narrative appears as a parenthesis that urges the Romanian readers to engage in the spiritual pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem. This shows that for Trifa the physical pilgrimage and its narration constitute one process in which the retelling is at least as important as the actual trip because it makes available to the audience the same religious experience the author encountered at the holy sites. In this sense, the dialogical level that connects the author with his readers is further clarified by Trifa's commitment to the pastoral cause as his ultimate mission in life<sup>49</sup>.

### **The pastor and his flock**

The connection between the immediate situation of Trifa's individual experience and the cultural context of the readers is made possible by the image of the narrator as an "ideal type" of pilgrim whose travel is an act of worship that engages the audience in a religious ceremonial<sup>50</sup>. To this end, Trifa employs two main pastoral mechanisms.

In a first place, it should be mentioned that Trifa does not understand his role of narrator in passive terms, but actively, as a mystagogue who initiates the reader

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<sup>49</sup> Gogan 14-16.

<sup>50</sup> Coleman and Elsner 12.

into a spiritual journey to the heavenly Jerusalem<sup>51</sup>. Given the multiplicity of literary forms and meanings interwoven in the narrative, this process entails a complex fabric that reveals different layers of knowledge. While geographical and historical information aided by numerous maps and pictures restages for the reader the physical background of the *Heilsgeschichte*, and the detailed description of the holy sites serves as a guide through the Christian tradition, the plethora of biblical texts, hagiographies, and exhortations provide moral teaching and mediate spiritual experience. This is made possible by the fact that Trifa claims credibility<sup>52</sup> both for himself and the Bible through first person accounts (direct witness), modern expertise (archaeology, maps), biblical and post-biblical traditions, and an intimate knowledge of the Scriptures whose accounts are proven to be entirely valid throughout the narrative<sup>53</sup>. Thus, in an ontological-epistemological movement that recalls the patristic tradition, the reader is guided through a progression that advances from physical landscape to loci of divine presence to the pure spiritual realm<sup>54</sup>, which taken together form a cosmic unity that is specific to Orthodox Christianity.

Having created this sacred space that resembles so much the Orthodox notion of the church<sup>55</sup>, Trifa employs a second pastoral mechanism, that of presenting his narrative as a liturgical act<sup>56</sup>. This requires a further sublimation of physicality through the construction of a Christian mythscape<sup>57</sup> that reveals Trifa's ultimate religious beliefs<sup>58</sup>. First and foremost, the narrator tries to subsume geographical differences to the familiarity of religious texts. Though he enters a very different geography punctuated by a new climate, deserts, or strange flora<sup>59</sup>, the dense presence of the Bible in the landscape he encounters metamorphoses Palestine into the familiar Holy Land: "The mapping of sacred places is still the same today [as it was in the time of Jesus Christ], only the political configuration has changed"<sup>60</sup>. This translucent geography is made possible by a sort of amnesiac approach that enables Trifa to recall the things he has already seen in the Bible while in Romania. Indeed, the Holy Land becomes a "realistic icon"<sup>61</sup> and coming to Jerusalem is, in a way, coming home<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Williams.

<sup>52</sup> Williams 28.

<sup>53</sup> Trifa 84.

<sup>54</sup> Trifa 53-54, 57.

<sup>55</sup> Stăniloae.

<sup>56</sup> Williams 20.

<sup>57</sup> Bowman 153.

<sup>58</sup> Cohen-Hattab and Shoval 10-11.

<sup>59</sup> Trifa 16, 24, 343-344.

<sup>60</sup> Trifa 24.

<sup>61</sup> Bowman "Christian Ideology" 110.

<sup>62</sup> Trifa 29-30.

The liturgical display of geographical data is further emphasized by the physical and spiritual presence of erstwhile and present saintly figures. In particular, the venerable image of Jerusalem's Patriarch Damianos, who is depicted as a living saint and apostle, the presence of holy sites such as St. Sabbas Monastery where saints of the church lived before, and the very places that witnessed the presence of biblical figures, denote that the Holy Land is like a church where continuous worship is given to God<sup>63</sup>.

This celebration is joined by the group of Romanian pilgrims whose journey actually displays strong liturgical goals. The entire program of the pilgrimage is devised to follow Christ's itinerary to Jerusalem, from Bethlehem to Jericho to the Via Dolorosa and up to Golgotha, as it is related in the Gospels<sup>64</sup>. As the text records, the pilgrims worshiped at key points on their route, while Trifa himself raised personal prayers, prayers for the readers of *Lumina Satelor*, and described intense mystical experiences, particularly at the site of the Holy Sepulcher where his life underwent a turning point<sup>65</sup>. As a result, the entire journey appears as a worship that takes place in a sacred space and Trifa can use the physical act of the pilgrimage as a paradigm for holiness and piety capable of inspiring the readers<sup>66</sup>. The narrative, on the other hand, could be employed as the interpretation of this act that conveys both the true meaning of physical gestures<sup>67</sup> and the spiritual importance of words<sup>68</sup>, in the same way that Orthodox priests combine symbolic acts and their hermeneutic utterances during the liturgy.

### Imagining the Orient

A close reading of Trifa's travelogue reveals, however, the existence of a polemical thrust throughout the narrative that vests the pastoral concerns with a politicized dimension. Trifa's understanding of religious experience along the lines of the fundamental interdependence between Orthodoxy and Romanianness eventually narrows his Christian construction of the Holy Land to national concerns. The process is, nevertheless, complex. To begin with, the literary mechanisms harnessed in subsuming differences to religious familiarity have a negative side as well. Whereas, as it has been previously pointed out, the intimacy with the Sacred Scriptures allowed Trifa to see geographical otherness as something familiar, the encounter with the human other became less embracing. It could be seen that the

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<sup>63</sup> Trifa 87-90.

<sup>64</sup> Trifa 71.

<sup>65</sup> Trifa 6.

<sup>66</sup> Coleman and Elsner *Pilgrimage* 91; Preston 41.

<sup>67</sup> Trifa 132.

<sup>68</sup> Wuthnow 316.



figures of the Arabs, Africans, and Jews raised serious questions for Trifa's perception of the Holy Land with the result of reclaiming it for Christians only.

In this encounter with the other Trifa employs "forms of definition and classification which elevated the western model of society and religion"<sup>69</sup>. More specifically, two methods seem to guide the narrator's perception of alterity. On one hand, characterology determines Trifa to conclude that "different peoples exhibit essentially different characters"<sup>70</sup>. The first encounter with black people in the port of Jaffa is quite memorable for the major part of the pilgrims:

Many of us see black people for the first time. We look at them and wonder and, unwillingly, start laughing at them (and they wonder and laugh at us). Some of them are so black that they shine as if they were polished with shoe cream. In particular, a black with flattened face draws our attention. If people from our villages were to see him neither one nor the other they would chase him with pitchforks as if he were the devil ('bată-l crucea')<sup>71</sup>.

The image of the Arabs is more nuanced. While some of them are indeed Christian<sup>72</sup>, Muslim Arabs generally seem to be sympathetic toward Christians<sup>73</sup> and to profess many beliefs that support Christian teachings about Abraham and the Day of Resurrection<sup>74</sup>. Yet, more important, their presence is extremely helpful to the understanding of biblical customs and manners: "People mounted on donkeys and camels move hastily. Almost everyone wears long coats. Only now we begin to understand the vestments from the time of our Savior that we can see in icons"<sup>75</sup>. Indeed, this biblical outfit emphasizes the spiritual state of these people, as was the case with the Christian women of Bethlehem: "Women living here have an appearance of great religious beauty and this beauty is amplified by their beautiful vestment. They wear long coats, from top to bottom and on their head a veil like Virgin Mary has"<sup>76</sup>. Trifa nevertheless sometimes accuses the Muslim Arabs for being fanatics<sup>77</sup> or unbelievers that irreverently sit as "pagan" guards at the gate of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher<sup>78</sup>.

As regards the Bedouins, Trifa compares them with the gypsies in Romania: they are dirty, unwashed, lazy, and unreligious.

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<sup>69</sup> Coleman and Elsner *Pilgrimage* 75.

<sup>70</sup> Coleman and Elsner *Pilgrimage* 76.

<sup>71</sup> Trifa 22-23.

<sup>72</sup> Trifa 63, 79.

<sup>73</sup> Trifa 24.

<sup>74</sup> Trifa 308-310, 367.

<sup>75</sup> Trifa 23.

<sup>76</sup> Trifa 79.

<sup>77</sup> Trifa 36.

<sup>78</sup> Trifa 242.

This Bedouins are different from the Arabs. They are a sort of ancestors of the gypsies, having many similar things in common, among them laziness, idleness. Many of them are nomads, that is, tent travelers, like gypsies. As regards religion, they are Mohammedans, like the Arabs, but they do not bother themselves with it (123).

A particular place in the narrative is devoted to descriptions of the Jews. While in most instances Trifa uses the terms “Jew” and “Hebrews” and the post-communist editions (the editions of 2002, 2010) employ only these two terms, the first edition of the book used the disparaging terms “jidan” and “jidov” as well (the edition of 1926: 13, 107, 196). In any case, strong anti-Jewish stances punctuate the narrative in many places. From the very first day after landing in Jaffa, Trifa presents the Jews as a people despised by the Arabs. Most commonly, the image of the Jew is depicted from a religious standpoint as anti-Christian: they are the murderers of Jesus and of Christian martyrs, live in spiritual blindness lacking true knowledge, and continue their existence under God’s curse<sup>79</sup>. Yet, this theological anti-Judaism is complemented by anti-Semitic myths, some of them deriving from medieval polemics. In the central part of the book where he discusses Jesus’ passion, in what is intended to be a sensitive moment of mnemonic representation of suffering, Trifa recalls the story of Ahasverus, the impious Jew (“jidov”) who persecuted Jesus without mercy:

O, how anguished and painful our Lord looks! Yet, the Jews are not moved by his suffering; they continue to beat him ruthlessly and mercilessly. As I was proceeding on this place I remembered the story of the Jew Ahasverus (a beautiful religious novel) who, while staying in front of his house, saw the Lord going to Golgotha in great anguish and pain, but, instead of showing mercy, he kicked the Lord with his foot shouting with a hateful grin: ‘Go on, Jesus!’ (186).

In the same context of the passion story Trifa condemns the Jews for attempting to bribe Pilate to spread the lie that Jesus did not resurrect from the dead. According to the author, the Jews tried to do then the same thing they try to do today, that is, to control and distort the truth with money. He thus concludes that “Since those times it seems that corruption, bribery were in the nature of some of those who are part of the Hebrew people”<sup>80</sup>.

Apart from these myths inspired by ancient stories, Trifa describes the modern conspiracy of the Jews as it could be seen in the actions of the Bolsheviks. Although he admires Jews’ enduring love for Zion and the preservation of their identity in the Diaspora, he nevertheless criticizes them for tainting this God-given

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<sup>79</sup> Trifa 170, 230, 316-320.

<sup>80</sup> Trifa 231.

ideal by “religious and national chauvinism”<sup>81</sup>. More precisely, the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem unites the Jews in a global anti-Christian conspiracy as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion clearly show<sup>82</sup>. One of the most compelling evidence of the Zionist conspiracy is, in Trifa’s eyes, Bolshevism with its emphasis on “internationalism, revolution, anarchy, atheism”<sup>83</sup>. Indeed, the Jews are so much more dangerous as they control the world finances, the press, and the alcohol industry, which they use to harm “the soul of Christendom”<sup>84</sup>.

The spiritual and political blindness of the Jews materializes in the disfigured appearance of their bodies. This could be seen in their worship in front of the Wall, where they “pray, cry, and lament” loudly and with their back hunched<sup>85</sup>. Trifa even distinguishes several types of Jews according to their physical appearance:

Here is the Jew of Galicia, the ugliest type, hunched and with curls over his ears; here is the Jew of Turkey, the one from Asia, the one from Russia together with the one from Romania, the one from Hungary with the one from Poland, Germany, etc. . . . Their appearance, however, is the same: ugly and repellent. As if the sentence and punishment they bear are written on their faces (315-316).

On the other hand, Trifa’s encounter with the Orient is modulated by theology with the aim of appropriating its foundational religious traditions for the cause of Christianity. It has been previously shown that the familiarity with the Bible helped Trifa transfigure the geography of the Holy Land into a mythscape. He nevertheless goes further and tries to reclaim for Christianity the sacred time as well. Given the chasm that separates the Old Testament history from the spiritual blindness of the Jews, the author concludes that the Hebrew Scriptures belong to the religion inaugurated by Christ: “Prophet Isaiah belongs to Christianity. He was the prophet chosen by God to predict the life of the Savior to the smallest detail”<sup>86</sup>. Thus, the orientaling gaze that first reifies the figure of the other eventually elevates Christianity to the position of the sole religious model that is entitled to define the Holy Land.

### **The Christian Orthodox Holy Land**

Although Trifa imagines the Holy Land as a site that is essentially Christian, he nevertheless claims it entirely for the Orthodox tradition. The ideological

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<sup>81</sup> Trifa 320.

<sup>82</sup> Trifa 320-321.

<sup>83</sup> Trifa 321.

<sup>84</sup> Trifa 321.

<sup>85</sup> Trifa 314.

<sup>86</sup> Trifa 282.

underpinnings of the narrative show that Orthodox exclusivism is an active factor that influences Trifa's view of Christianity, religious leadership, and pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Indeed, the author challenges the reader to view Eastern Christianity as the true spiritual inheritor of the holy sites and traditions that stands against the false pretensions of a degenerate western civilization.

First and foremost, Trifa emphasizes the privileged role of Orthodoxy in the development of Christian traditions of the Holy Land. In a veritable spirit of Orthodox theological understanding, he underlines the continuity between biblical and post-biblical traditions that actually developed into an organic unity. Sainly figures highly appreciated in Eastern Christianity, such as Helen and her son, emperor Constantine, are credited by Trifa with a special care for the rediscovery and introduction of the Palestinian holy sites into the circuit of Christian spirituality through their divinely inspired patronage. Thus, the narrator apportions large sections of the text to descriptions of the erection of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher<sup>87</sup>, the miracle of the finding of Jesus' cross<sup>88</sup>, the building of the Monastery of the Holy Cross near Jerusalem<sup>89</sup>, the construction of the Church of Nativity on the spot of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem<sup>90</sup>, or the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher of Virgin Mary, which, as the author proudly remarks, "entirely belongs to the Greek Orthodox Church"<sup>91</sup>. It should be noted that all these accounts connect the biblical time of revelation with the early church, a period of special importance for the formation of Orthodox tradition, by means of miracle stories that attest the divinely ordained continuity between them. Although in a few cases Trifa acknowledges the presence of other Christian confessions in the Holy Land, overall he nevertheless extols the superiority of Orthodoxy.

To remove any trace of doubt regarding the eminence of Orthodoxy, Trifa contends that Christian Orthodox possess the best churches and oldest monasteries among the holy sites in Palestine. Hence, the Greek Orthodox Church within the architectural ensemble of the Holy Sepulcher is "the largest and prettiest church"<sup>92</sup>. The different Orthodox churches also are the custodians of the Monastery of the Holy Cross built on the original site of the tree out of which the cross was carved<sup>93</sup>, the monastery on the site of Elijah's cave<sup>94</sup>, the Monastery of St. John the Baptist near the river Jordan<sup>95</sup>, the church built on the place where St Stephen, the first

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<sup>87</sup> Trifa 46-47.

<sup>88</sup> Trifa 65-66.

<sup>89</sup> Trifa 73.

<sup>90</sup> Trifa 81-82.

<sup>91</sup> Trifa 269.

<sup>92</sup> Trifa 61.

<sup>93</sup> Trifa 73.

<sup>94</sup> Trifa 74.

<sup>95</sup> Trifa 112.

martyr, had died<sup>96</sup>, or the St. Sabbas Monastery, “a nest of Orthodoxy”<sup>97</sup>, which the tradition linked to anti-heretical figures such as St. Sabbas, St. Theodosius, and St. John of Damascus<sup>98</sup>. On the most holy site of the cross the Orthodox erected an altar with the help of Russia’s tsars<sup>99</sup>. Yet, the Orthodox know how to administer these places as true Christians, as the case of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher of Virgin Mary shows, since they “proved to be here as well highly tolerable with other confessions”<sup>100</sup>. Apart from these examples, most likely one of the major illustrations of the divine legitimacy of Orthodoxy comes from the miracle of the sacred light at the Easter. Though Trifa did not visit the Holy Land during that period of the year, he nevertheless describes the liturgy that takes place in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher at Easter and the light that miraculously springs out of the Tomb and does not extinguish for a whole year.

Second, the Holy land belongs to Orthodoxy because the western civilization betrayed its Christian legacy. At the sight of English policemen who behave irreverently in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher<sup>101</sup> or contrasting the holy biblical women with modern women that show no interest in pious life<sup>102</sup>, Trifa reiterates a trope commonly used in his exhortations in *Lumina Satelor*. However, the most important evidence of the fraying of the western social fabric lies in the nature of its major religious vector, the Catholic Church. The critique of Catholicism is built in contrast with the commendation of Orthodoxy. More precisely, the former is depicted as a heresy anchored in the Pope’s pretention of being the representative of Christ. Its rupture with the biblical teaching is evident in the fact that while Peter repented of his haughtiness, this sickness continues to be present today in the one who calls himself the heir of Peter, in the Pope of Rome . . . This aberration (rătăcire) and this illness of haughtiness went so far that the Pope of Rome started to call himself: ‘the vicar (substitute) of Christ on earth’ (o, what an aberration!)<sup>103</sup>.

Compared to this heretical attitude, Orthodoxy appears as the true faith because it is anchored in the Holy Land and Jesus. This privileged state is further confirmed by the contrast between the Orthodox monks who, devoting themselves to spiritual fervor, were acclaimed even by Catholic scholars as representatives of “the spirit of the true monastic life,” and the Catholic monks who live in gaiety and

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<sup>96</sup> Trifa 327.

<sup>97</sup> Trifa 332.

<sup>98</sup> Trifa 330.

<sup>99</sup> Trifa 269.

<sup>100</sup> Trifa 269.

<sup>101</sup> Trifa 64.

<sup>102</sup> Trifa 352.

<sup>103</sup> Trifa 141-142.

wealth<sup>104</sup>, on one hand, and by the disparity between Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem, an apostle figure-like characterized by profound spirituality, love, zeal, and wisdom, and the Pope who, “carried by diabolical haughtiness” pretends to be Christ’s vicar and entitled to receive worship from Orthodox patriarchs<sup>105</sup>.

### **The Making of Holy Romania**

Seen against this background of pastoral, orientalist, and sectarian concerns, the dialogical level that permeates the whole narrative becomes much more complicated. It is hard to trace clear borders between these lines of thought. Indeed, they form an intricate web of relations that support and reinforce each other and consequently should be approached globally. Yet, this raises further questions regarding the relationship between the narrative and the primal pastoral concern which, as it has been pointed out, constitutes the reason for writing this travelogue. How did, in this situation, Trifa envision the impact of his narrative on the Romanian readers back home? And did he find a unifying principle to sensitize the readers to his message?

To answer these questions, it should be recalled that for Trifa the physical act of pilgrimage to Jerusalem is not only a symbol of the more important spiritual pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem, but also a motivation and help in this journey. Because of this, he wrote the book to be an aid for the reader and, to this end, he continually engaged the people back home through countless exhortations. A close look at the narrative shows that while these rhetorical devices often targeted individuals who needed spiritual regeneration, they ultimately aimed at a collective audience that could be identified with the Romanian nation.

More specifically, the pilgrimage is presented as an official mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church. In several notes regarding the organization of the pilgrimage published by Trifa in 1925, he reveals that initially the journey was planned as part of a larger ecclesiastical project regarding the organization of an ecumenical council of Orthodox churches in Jerusalem. By the beginning of 1925 the news of the pilgrimage was widespread at least due to Trifa’s newspaper. Because the council was postponed for a future date and the materialization of the pilgrimage was jeopardized, Trifa informs the readers in the summer of 1925 that the trip will still take place under the leadership of Metropolitan Bălan (Trifa “La Ierusalim, la mormântul Domnului;” Trifa “Vom merge la Ierusalim, la locurile sfinte – costul și durata.”).

It should be noted that the beginning of the same year marked an epochal event for the Romanian Orthodox Church by the establishment of the Patriarchate, which paralleled, from a religious standpoint, the achievement of political ideal.

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<sup>104</sup> Trifa 332.

<sup>105</sup> Trifa 235-237.

Moreover, the 1925 pilgrimage was followed by the visit of the newly Patriarch Miron Cristea (1927) and the mass pilgrimage led by Metropolitan Nectarie of Bucovina (1930) to Jerusalem<sup>106</sup>. The delegation led by Metropolitan Bălan could be seen as an effort of affirmation of Romanian Orthodoxy's preeminence in the context of its elevation to the status of the most populous free Orthodox Church after the demise of the Russian Church in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution<sup>107</sup>.

This official dimension of the pilgrimage is stressed by Trifa throughout the narrative by the description of the organizational details of the travel and the meetings of Romanian delegation with important religious figures such as the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Metropolitan Basil<sup>108</sup>. The speeches addressed by Metropolitan Bălan with the occasion of these meetings show the consciousness of living a historical and national event. Thus, at the meeting with Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem, he states that "we were prompted here to Jerusalem by the gratitude of an entire nation (neam) that gives thanks to our good God for helping it to see its national ideal fulfilled. We came to Jerusalem to express our appreciation for all that the Lord has done for us"<sup>109</sup>. Apart from this, Romanian Orthodox also aimed at enhancing the Romanian presence in the Holy Land. As Trifa indicates in one of the articles published in 1926, Metropolitan Bălan had plans to build a Romanian church at the site of Jacob's well, "a church that would be ours and would allow us to drink grace (dar) and power from the very source of the well" (Trifa "O biserică românească la fântâna lui Iacob").

Having presented the character of the pilgrimage as an epochal event in the history of his nation, Trifa points to the role of the Orthodox Church in the construction of Greater Romania. For him, the entire phenomenon of this pilgrimage, the religious leaders, the common people, the itinerary, and the practices performed throughout the journey and particularly in the Holy Land, have a symbolic function that signals that the church is the only institution capable of providing the ideological and cultural cohesion needed by the country to succeed in its new political project.

In particular, the initiative of the church in organizing the pilgrimage is seen as an occasion for symbolically uniting all Romanians into a religious endeavor. A glimpse into Trifa's appreciation of the group of pilgrims shows that he sees it as the Romanian society *in nuce*: apart from the clergy (prelates, priests, monks), there are professors, intellectuals, and common people, men and women, from both urban and rural areas from different parts of the country<sup>110</sup>. This perception was shared by the leader of the pilgrimage when Metropolitan Bălan is presented stating before

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<sup>106</sup> Păcurariu 337.

<sup>107</sup> Ioniță.

<sup>108</sup> Trifa 16, 23, 38, 70.

<sup>109</sup> Trifa 70.

<sup>110</sup> Trifa 12.



Patriarch Damianos that “he brought to Jerusalem the soul of an entire people . . . to worship and give thanks for all that God has done for us”<sup>111</sup>. Hence, the “worshipping Romanians,” as they were called according to the official program of the pilgrimage<sup>112</sup>, are seen as the embodiment of the nation going to worship God to Jerusalem. In other words, he identifies the church with the nation and Orthodox identity with the quality of being Romanian.

This liturgical image of the nation is better grasped in the context of Trifa’s pastoral concerns that morphed Palestinian geography into a biblical – Christian mythscape. This perspective indicates that Trifa introduces a new clarification in his narrative appropriation of the Holy Land: while he orientalized it in order to make it Christian, and made it Christian to underline its Orthodox legacy, he further claims the holy sites for the Romanian nation. Accordingly, Trifa specifies that the group of pilgrims followed in the steps of Jesus<sup>113</sup> and worshipped at key sites and in key moments, appropriating thus the sacred space and time as a foundational basis for the destiny of Greater Romania. In particular, the author describes liturgical scenes as if “a whole nation (neam) seems to walk and sing with us”<sup>114</sup> or the Romanian language is for the first time heard to bring praise to God.

It has to be mentioned that Trifa believes that he has to play an active role in this religious – national project. If the unifying principle capable to touch Romanians’ hearts could be located at the interface between a resolute imitation of Jesus, in the way the group of pilgrims did, and a strong belief in the bright future of the nation, the author identifies the means to shape Romanians’ national self-consciousness with the Orthodox Church’s action of backing the pastoral – missionary activity of the Army of the Lord. Accordingly, Trifa conceives his account of the pilgrimage as a relic that has the power to impart the sacred to those at home<sup>115</sup>. The urgency of sending informative and exhortative notes to his journal *Lumina Satelor* while on journey<sup>116</sup> and his explicit goal of writing the book as to describe “all that I felt and sensed in Jerusalem”<sup>117</sup> in order to prompt others to follow Jesus reveal Trifa’s sense of responsibility toward his nation:

I always feel overwhelmed by the great responsibility I have in regards with the grace (darul) showed to me by God to see the holy places. I always think that I have to repay this grace by writing in detail all things seen and experienced at the holy places as a means to spiritually bring others in the footsteps of the Savior (Trifa 37).

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<sup>111</sup> Trifa 38.

<sup>112</sup> Trifa 38.

<sup>113</sup> Trifa 70.

<sup>114</sup> Trifa 80.

<sup>115</sup> Williams 27-28; Preston 41.

<sup>116</sup> Trifa 37.

<sup>117</sup> Trifa 369.

Trifa himself confesses at the beginning of the book that the pilgrimage represents for him a “turning point” (“răspântie de hotar”) in life that prompted him to renew his decision to serve God (Trifa 5). The activity during the trip, his prayers for the Army of the Lord, the innumerable exhortations for the readers, and the sustained implication in renewing people’s commitment to Orthodoxy after returning home, all show that for Trifa the national project of Greater Romania cannot be conceived as successful without the spiritual model of a pious life in the Holy Land. Eventually, by means of a veritable *translatio religionis*, Trifa prompts his readers to look at themselves as the new chosen people and to their country as the new earthly Canaan:

When we saw for the first time these barren and poor places, all of 160 pilgrims exclaimed in unison: ‘Lord, what a rich land is our country Romania!... What a blessed country!... The Canaan is ours!... We do not know how to value the blessings we have in our own country...’

Indeed, what a blessed land is our country! Canaan moved here, to us, and we are the chosen people that God said: ‘I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be their slaves no more, breaking the bars of your yoke and making you walk erect’ (Leviticus 26.13). . .

We, however, forgot this covenant and do not know how to value the Canaan given to us by God (347-348).

How could this appropriation of the Holy Land be interpreted in respect to modern nationalism? If this concept is defined as the affirmation of a socio-political communitarian organization that excludes or attributes religion a secondary place (Anderson, Hobsbawm), then Trifa’s national model does not fit into it. Trifa’s formation and concerns do not envisage a secular type of nation. On the contrary, he identifies the nation with the church. If, however, nationalism entails only the ideas of common ethnicity, territory, language, culture, and religion that develop within a polity (Hobsbawm), then Trifa could be categorized as a nationalist. It should, however, be stressed that he interpreted Romanian identity in terms of religious ethnogenesis, by stressing the Orthodox character of this people. This allowed him to equate the nation (“neam”) with the Orthodox Church and is most likely the reason for the strong critique of Catholics and Jews who, given their large numbers within the Romanian borders, represented a threat. On the other hand, when Trifa was pressed by Metropolitan Bălan to associate with Father Ion Moța’s radical nationalist newspaper, he hesitantly followed his superior’s directives and eventually separated from politicizing too much his pastoral-missionary activity in the name of Christian universalism. Thus, Trifa’s national model resembles more with the religious-based patriotism proposed by Strickland (Strickland xviii), though it is hard to define it without any reference to post-Enlightenment nationalist ideologies.

## Conclusion

In the context of the development of the new political project of Greater Romania, when many contending views competed for monopolizing the trajectory of the country, Father Iosif Trifa emerged as an advocate of a Christian Orthodox vision of the nation. The pilgrimage to the Holy Land that took place in 1925 was seen as an occasion to encourage people to embrace this religious ideal as the exclusive approach to the national issue. By identifying the nation with the Orthodox Church and equating Romanianness with Orthodoxy, Trifa posited himself in an active role in this project, according to his pastoral-missionary activity embodied by the Army of the Lord movement. Trifa's national model eventually indicates that he was part of a larger ideological trend that encompassed many nationalists of interwar Romania, though his subsequent activity shows that he avoided engaging in radical politics.

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LUCIAN BLAGA UNIVERSITY OF SIBIU  
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Correspondence, manuscripts and books should be sent to: Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Doctoral School in History, Bdul Victoriei nr. 5-7 550024 Sibiu, Romania.

**e-mail:** ioan-marian.tiplic@ulbsibiu.ro,

anamaria.tudorie@ulbsibiu.ro





## Content

Sabin Adrian Luca, Florentin Perianu, <i>Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 preventive campaign, Sector B. Feature 341-2. A ritual pit? Turdaş culture, phase III</i> .....	5
Gheorghe Lazarovici, Cornelia-Magda Lazarovici, <i>Are there cities and fairs in the neolithic? Part I – from PPN to late Neolithic (Part II is refering to Copper Age)</i> .....	23
Sabin Adrian Luca, Tiberiu Bogdan Sava, Doru Păceşilă, Oana Gaza, Iuliana Stanciu, Gabriela Sava, Bianca Ştefan, Florentin Perianu, Raluca Teodorescu, <i>Radiocarbon data from the archaeological site of Turdaş-Luncă (preventive research of 2011)(IV)</i> .....	93
Marius Mihai Ciută, <i>Collectors and collections an unexpected case (I)</i> .....	113
Gheorghe Gelu Păcurar, <i>The Making of a Holy Nation: Pastoral Activity, Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Nationalism in Interwar Romanian Orthodoxy ...</i>	135

## COLLECTORS AND COLLECTIONS AN UNEXPECTED CASE (I)

Marius-Mihai-Ciută<sup>20</sup>

**Keywords:** criminal investigation, collector, stolen artefacts, forgeries, counterfeits.

*Rezumat:* În perioada imediat următoare a evenimentelor din 1989, unii cetățeni români care au beneficiat de câștiguri financiare mai mult sau mai puțin neașteptate, au decis să investească/tezaurizeze fonduri considerabile din câștigurile lor în bunuri de patrimoniu cultural, punând bazele unor colecții particulare. Studiul de față dorește să surprindă o parte din mecanismele prin care au fost alcătuite unele din colecțiile de acest gen, de către persoane care nu aveau cunoștințe de specialitate în domeniu, ce au căzut victime traficantilor de antichități, care au pus în vânzare fie artefacte sustrate din situri arheologice fie falsuri, unele de foarte slabă calitate. Fenomenul a fost unul destul de răspândit, deoarece funcționa în conformitate cu mecanismul oricărei piețe: cerere-ofertă, într-o societate în care, dorința de a accede în "straturile înalte" printre altele și prin deținerea unor artefacte cu valoare deosebită, nu era completată de cunoașterea legislației de protejare a patrimoniului cultural și, din nefericire, nici de capacitatea de a distinge piesele autentice de cele contrafăcute.

During the judicial actions, generically known as the *Dacian Gold Files*, the investigators faced, very often, incredibly unusual situations, unexpected, even paradoxical, which accumulated aspects that showed the absurd and the ludicrous, but which, in the last instance, describe, in an inspired way, we can say, details of the structure of the individual and collective mind of those involved in trafficking the cultural assets, stolen from archaeological sites. The herby study wants to bring to the attention of the public interested in the issue of national cultural heritage that has been subject to financially motivated criminal acts (theft, trafficking), in particular the

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<sup>20</sup> Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, [mariusciuta@yahoo.com](mailto:mariusciuta@yahoo.com)

problem of “occasional”<sup>21</sup> collections and collectors which appeared in the Romanian landscape in early 2000’s, a unique case, located in Hunedoara County, atypical at first sight, but symptomatic for that period.

In 2003, on the archeological-school site of the University of Sibiu, situated in *Orăștie-Dealul Pemilor* (Hunedoara County), a somewhat *exotic* character<sup>22</sup> appeared, repeatedly. He was the owner of a gas station located at the entrance to the city, on DN 7 from Romos village, immediately under the second terrace of Mureș (the place where the archaeological excavations were carried out). As he was going through a period of significant financial profits, the character decided to invest and to treasure these profits in cultural heritage assets, as he heard of from various sources that do not lose value over the years<sup>23</sup>. In order to satisfy this wish, he got in touch with various individuals, part of the underworld of Hunedoara county (especially from Deva and Orăștie city), involved at that time in trafficking such objects, about which he did not know (or may have known, but took the risk!) that are involved in illegal activities of carrying out unauthorized surveys in archaeological sites, digging and stealing archaeological artifacts and their trafficking on the black market of antiques<sup>24</sup>. Once he purchased several object, the natural need of *quality confirmation* and money worth guarantee arose. This is why, in the year indicated above, relying on the common sense and the specialized knowledge of the archaeologists on the site, located in the immediate vicinity of his business, the man wanted to know their opinion on the recently acquired objects. If at first the archaeologists were willing to give him certain indications regarding the significance and value of the presented goods, perceived exclusively from the perspective of the curiosity and the good

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<sup>21</sup> Or "cardboard collectors". We will use this phrase designating those persons concerned with the realization of a collection of cultural assets, with which they try to optimize their image within the high-life society, who do not have the minimum training required for such an endeavor.

<sup>22</sup> For obvious reasons, we will not indicate in this article the name of that collector. However, it appears in the indictment of the criminal case of the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Alba Iulia Court of Appeal (initially the criminal case 172 / P / 2005, disjunctive in D.P. 151 / P / 2005, and later in D.P. 440 / P / 2008).

<sup>23</sup> The collection of objects of archaeological origin, preferably of rare metals and of the highest age, was a sign of good taste, frequently encountered in the environments of people recently enriched by activities within the limits of the law, in a county in which the old state-owned companies that exploited natural resources went bankrupt or struggled to survive. Other constant buyers of such objects, found in the agendas of traffickers, were also members of rich professional categories, par excellence: doctors, architects, lawyers, administrators of companies, politicians. It was enough that a representative member of these guilds to insist on the collection of cultural goods, so that the activity would become an attractive one, generating "good image", imitated by the other brethren.

<sup>24</sup> According to the *Indictment* from criminal file 151 / P / 2015 (also taken from file 400 / P / 2008): *in July 2003, the team Crișan-Sîmu and Corhan Călin, sold them to PN, at the West Oil gas station from Orăștie, 160 antique silver coins, priced at 2000 US dollars.*

natural belief of the scientific researcher<sup>25</sup>, later, seeing the reluctance with which the owner refuses to specify their provenance, noting that some pieces had specific features of recent removal from archaeological contexts (*in situ*), but also the fact that some pieces appeared to be recent forgeries, they made clear to him that they won't let him take advantage of their good will, since they cannot assess the pieces, as long as their source was hidden from them *on purpose*<sup>26</sup>.

Since July 2005, during the investigations in the file *The Dacian Gold*, reopened in the same year by the prosecutors of the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Alba Iulia Court of Appeal, a series of descriptions and home searches were started, especially in the city of Deva, but also in other cities of Hunedoara county and Alba county, in which the persons involved in the above-mentioned criminal activities were targeted. It was a moment intensely publicized in local and national mass-media, which caused very strong emotions and reactions, at different levels, given that the phenomenon of archeological poaching and trafficking with *antiquities* had been going on for many years already within the local society. Not just the Hunedoara society was involved at different levels in this phenomenon. Obviously, the strongest emotional impact struck the people who owned such objects.

That was the moment when the person above mentioned, who has been collecting cultural assets of archaeological origin for more than two years, being an *active and well known player* on this market, noticed the risks he was exposed to when buying objects from the people who were just investigated, charged, detained and even arrested. If initially he preferred to remain unknown, hoping that he would not be affected by the legal proceedings, slowly, but surely, the feeling of reason and guilt took effect, so that, on January 25, 2006, P.N. presented on his own initiative to the Prosecutor's Office of the Alba Iulia Court of Appeal, bringing and indicating to the judicial investigators a lot of objects, justifying that they are goods bought by him, as *a person of good faith*, from various persons. With

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<sup>25</sup> According to the same **Indictment**: *in order to be convinced that the coins were original, P.N. presented to witness P. S-I, professor at the Faculty of History and Heritage of the Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu, who found that the examined pieces were original, unclean, with the appearance of pieces discovered soon. In the autumn of the same year of May had an attempt to present a statue to the archaeologists, who informed them that they were circumspect about its authenticity.*

<sup>26</sup> The **Indictment** also shows that: *whereas the witness P.N. (suspicious, because he had found out that it was possible to buy fake pieces as well) he wanted to recover the money invested, the accused Corhan Calin took back 93 coins with the promise that he would return the money. Later, to his dismay, he led him to his home where he exchanged two silver Dacian necklaces (torques, one with a broken end), stolen by illegal excavations from the archaeological site of Sarmizegetusa Regia.*

undisguised pride, invoking *the large amounts of money* he invested, as well as his situation as a *victim*, the citizen presented a diplomatic briefcase, in which there was a heterogeneous collection of artifacts: statues, coins, jewelry, decorative elements etc. (fig. 1-6).

The investigators wanted to find out the source of the objects batch, therefore quite quickly, their illegal source became a certainty, as *the owner* mentioned that the *sellers* were part of the defendants from the file of looting in the Orăștie Mountains, and also their associates. Given the suspicions about its illicit provenance, the artifact batch was seized by prosecutors, and a series of issues related to its provenance, the identity of the sellers, the location of the sites/points from which they had been stolen had been clarified. Initially, P.N. wished to benefit from protection and a *hidden identity*<sup>27</sup>, as he feared some eventual unpleasant repercussions following his identification as *informant*<sup>28</sup>; thus, later, during the criminal investigation, he gave it up.

Firstly, the goods were presented to archeology specialists<sup>29</sup>, on which occasion two major categories emerged in the lot: **authentic pieces** (of certain archaeological origin and likely to belong to the national cultural heritage) and **fake pieces**, gross counterfeits, which they tried to render, without success, ancient artifacts with an iconography already known. Thus, a series of 5 statuettes, 2 round plates (phaleras?), a plate representing a noble Dacian's head and a zoomorphic statuette, all metallic, were obviously detached within the presented batch. The statuettes represented female characters (possibly Greek-Roman Gods?). The round plates, with two holes each, represented characters (female and male<sup>30</sup>) and a representation of a wolf riding a (?) *phallus*<sup>31</sup>. The "quality" of the patent of the pieces - which,

<sup>27</sup> With the name Nedelcu Ioan.

<sup>28</sup> The same **Indictment** showed that the *sellers* soon learned of P.N.'s gesture, from a telephone discussion between the two, that P.N. handed over the judicial investigators "and those stupid things" ... in other words, the fake pieces.

<sup>29</sup> First, the expert archeologist Horia Ioan Ciugudean from the National Museum of the Union of Alba Iulia was invited to rule on the batch of pieces, and then, about 2 hours later, the new officer of cultural heritage was invited, author of the herby study. It was practically verification of the artifacts but also of the skills. An aspect worth remembering is how the prosecutor perceived the situation in which the two archaeologists, without being aware of the fact that they were asked to rule on the same lot, "used the same expressions, words and terms to describes and characterizes the artifacts, the two versions coinciding in the finest details."

<sup>30</sup> The characteristics of the referred characters, lead to the conclusion it was an intention to imitate the female character from one of the treasures from Lupu (Alba County)(Aurul 2013, p. 83), and that the male character, imitated the one from the Bucharest-Herastrau Phalera (Aurul 2013, p. 84).

<sup>31</sup> It is a subject completely unknown to the Dacian iconography, of which the craftsman inspired, but it is possible to be inspired from a frequent theme in Scythian craft, in which wild animals appear in motion, with the mention of a complete lack of phallic representation, meaning it was a personal license of an uninspired manufacturer. Is possible

with all the efforts made by the designer and the patent work, was not all what it should have been - supplemented by the awkwardness of the artistic achievement, having a childlike character, which went so far as to be grotesque<sup>32</sup>, were the basis of their first evaluation. For a connoisseur of history, whether he is a non-specialist in ancient minor statues, it is difficult to conceive that one could believe that they could have been ancient objects, or even, representations of mythological characters, with aesthetic value, rarities or even one of a kind objects...

Later, these pieces were separated from the group of the authentic ones, treated separately, and for a complete and definitive certainty for the judicial inquiry - especially since at that time it was already fashionable to challenge the authenticity of some artifacts tracked / recovered - they were the subject of a metallographic analysis, that revealed that the alloy used in their manufacture had nothing to do with the one identified in ancient pieces<sup>33</sup>. The buyer was somewhat offended when, during the course of the criminal investigation, he was informed that some of his pieces are contemporary forgeries. Even when the results of the metallographic analyzes definitively confirmed the attribute as a *contemporary forgery*, P.N. proved to be dissatisfied, accusing even the judicial authorities of having replaced the pieces handed over to them - *which he spent large sums of money on, because they were presented to him as one of a kind objects - with fakes (?)*. The documents drawn up for the seizing of the pieces and especially the judicial photographs have removed any doubts related to this aspect.

By the *Resolution* of January 27, 2006, from the criminal file 172/P/2005, at the surrender of the complete lot of objects in the custody of the National Union Museum of Alba Iulia, a first expert report by the experts of the institution was imposed. The expert report was going to show the following aspects about the authentic pieces: *what the presented goods represent; whether they are likely to belong to the national cultural heritage; whether they can come from newly discovered archaeological contexts; what*

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that he had an catalogue which contain the representation of the roman zoomorphic fibula from Noviodunum-Isaccea from the 2-nd century (Aurul 2013, p. 122),

<sup>32</sup> If we were to use images to define the concept of anti-talent, these achievements could be successfully used to illustrate this "trait". They are produced without the slightest idea of harmony, symmetry, balance or aesthetics, and the person who "created" them only proved that he had a history manual at hand, from which he tried to reproduce, in an unfortunate way, some ancient artifacts that seemed to him to be more representative by the pictures. The intention of misleading is obvious, but the way he put it in practice was less than fortunate.

<sup>33</sup> The metallographic analysis, ordered by the Resolution of May 2006, was carried out at the Laboratory of metallographic analysis of the Mechanical Factory in Cugir. For comparison, a sample was taken from the head of the Artemis statue.

*is the circulation value of these objects?*<sup>34</sup>. The first evaluation was carried out by experts from the museum in Alba Iulia<sup>35</sup>, who concluded that the analyzed pieces (67 coins, 2 torques, 3 fibulae, 1 medallion (phalera), 1 miniature figurine head, 1 fragment of situla, 1 box handle, 4 rings, 1 bell fragment and 3 appliques), *are artifacts of a certain archaeological origin, which belong to the national cultural heritage*<sup>36</sup> (fig. 9-18).

On February 8, 2006, shortly after handing over the lot, the chance was that the investigators came in possession of some operative information, based on which a house search was carried out, at the domicile of Rusu Silviu, from the town of Merișor, Bănița commune, Hunedoara county. The "workshop" where these objects were made was identified. Inside, they found clay molds and plaster casts of statuettes and platelets (fallers), bought by the man *in good faith and a lot of money*. The investigators had at that time the certainty that P.N. was the victim of antique dealers. The typological and stylistic features of the models ceased from Rusu Silviu, showed that they were made by the same person (fig. 7-8). During the searches, molds, patterns, crucibles, metal plates etc. were discovered, proving that he practically performed, the entire chain of operation: from modeling in clay, casting the model from gypsum (plaster) and then casting the bronze in the molded form. A series of chisels and other tools found there showed that the process of decoration and retouching was done in the same workshop, for the *finished products*. All the ceased objects were deposited in the custody of the Museum of Alba Iulia, and by *the Resolution* of February 9, 2006, all the objects were subject of an expertise, in order to establish *if there was any connection between the objects delivered by P.N. and the tools seized from Rusu Silviu*. The result was, that there was an obvious connection between it. Moreover, the latter acknowledged his "creations", when presented to him during a judicial procedure for objects display, thus he denied having anything to do with their marketing. Most likely, those who offered for sale the objects, made by the "craftsman" from Bănița, were the same poachers of the archaeological sites, transformed in "dealers"

From the moment the pieces were handed over, on January 25, 2006, until the completion of the criminal prosecution, P.N. was a witness. In the

<sup>34</sup> Extras of *Rezoluția PCAI* of 27. 01. 2006,

<sup>35</sup> Dr. Viorica Suciuc was designated to establish the identification and primary evaluation of the coins, and Dr. Vasile Moga was designated for the artifacts.

<sup>36</sup> The part of the collection composed of authentic pieces, will be the subject of a separate study, which is in progress.



*Indictment* of 05.08.2008 of the criminal file 151/P/2005, the prosecutors proposed not starting the criminal prosecution of P.N. Thus, because the goods he bought were the product of committing crimes (including fraud), the criminal prosecution was dissolved for the facts related to the way of discovery and trafficking of the original artifacts (in the criminal file 440/P/2008), and because the authentic goods, *bought in good faith*, however, were stolen from sites belonging to the Romanian State, according to the law, there was civil action that continued, about establishing the property, as the State claimed the rightful ownership over them. File 440/P/2008 was sent to court in 2010, and since then it is in the trial phase. On April 23, 2010, in the civil case, on trial at the Hunedoara Court (no. 5750/97/2008), the *Expertise Report* signed by the expert Dr. Ernest Oberländer-Târnoveanu was submitted, regarding exclusively the assets that may belong to the national cultural heritage. The result was an evaluation of a prejudice of 30.606 euro, claimed by the State of Romania through the Ministry Of Culture. Several objects delivered by P.N. proved to have an exceptional heritage value, as, for instance, the two silver torques<sup>37</sup>. The head of feminine statue (Artemis), the *situlae* fragment, the appliques, fibulae, silver phalera as well as antique coins (Greek & Roman) proved to be extremely valuable<sup>38</sup>.

The false pieces, subjected to a metallographic expertise, were returned to P.N. in December 2010, as they were not assets likely to belong to the national cultural heritage. He filed a criminal complaint regarding the *fraud*, for which he could have been compensated by the ones who sold him contemporary objects as antique ones. Although it cannot claim to be considered goods likely to belong to the cultural heritage, not even handicraft products with an aesthetic value, we think that it would be necessary to insist a little on the pieces that have been proven to be contemporary, knowingly sold.

In Romania, in the absence of a market for antiques, there were not, at least not recently, famous cases of counterfeiters of cultural goods, at least for

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<sup>37</sup> One of them, the complete one, was presented in the Catalog of the MNIR exhibition: *Gold and antique silver of Romania*, of Bucharest, 2013 (Aurul 2013, p. 393). The rods of its extremities, with a quadrilateral section and with the decoration in the form of circles with a point in the middle, drawn downwards towards the end, where the bar widens with a relatively spherical projection, which suggests the prominent muzzle of an animal, having two circles pointed on these extremities. The second one had two broken ends, more precisely the unstitched rods, with a quadrilateral section and with the outline decorated in the form of a running spiral, which narrows towards the end in the form of a vertical flattening, marked with two points on each side, suggesting a whole animal head. If one of the rods can be glued, having the entire body preserved, the second, shorter, lacks a limb.

<sup>38</sup> Oberländer-Târnoveanu 2010.

the ancient artifacts. For example, in Bulgaria from 2000-2010 the acquaintances of *Sofia I and Sofia II*, made coins of the highest quality, difficult to differentiate from the original ones, which invaded the markets. In Europe, a few cases are known of the famous counterfeiters, but the attention has fallen mainly on the works of art (paintings, sculptures, etc.), much better sold on the market. There was a problem in establishing the authenticity of some new artifacts. The experts were facing difficulties, as it was expected, one of the recent cases in establishing the authenticity of the Dacian spiral gold bracelets being still fresh on the subject<sup>39</sup>. On the same occasion, there was a rumor circulating that the artifacts were forged by a jeweler from Călan, (who, obviously died shortly after the criminal prosecution began) without any convincing arguments. The idea of using the gold resulting from melting of Koson coins had a real *boomerang effect*, seriously shaking the arguments of the opposite group. Another case of a so-called forged artifact was the sculpture of a young man's head, made in marble from Bucova, taken from a collector in Alba Iulia in 2006. One of the local dealers stated that it was his creation, obviously with the purpose to protect the collector, who was a public person.

There is recent information about the idea that coins from the collections of several national museums, were allegedly replaced with forgeries. This makes it hard to believe that inside persons are not involved. Until specific evaluations shall be conducted, regarding the numismatic collections, we hope the rumors will not be confirmed. Another phenomenon, that cannot be contested, is the reduced number (at least!) of the numismatic experts from the public institutions, with very good knowledge, who can prove to be at the same level of preparation as the numismatic experts of European or American auction houses. Sooner or later, a confrontation between them shall appear, inside the Romanian Courts, and, the perspective is not fortunate, from this point of view.

### **Epilogue**

What is the lesson learned from all of the above? A market base Law, even for the black antiques market (!) is that if there is no *claim*, there is no *offer*! There were situations when, due to greed- one of the seven major original sins- “the collectors” were facing situations when they asked for

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<sup>39</sup> I still find followers of the ideas of two great representatives of Romanian archeology of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, as were Alexandru Vulpe and Constantin Preda, who publicly expressed, during the criminal prosecution (!), a series of deductive statements, which put the question mark on the authenticity of the artifacts recently recovered at that time.

much more than the dealer could supply. The dealers depended on the poachers from the field (excepting the cases when they were the same person). Sometimes “*there was no merchandise*”. In such situations, someone had the great idea- it proved to be good, as it was very useful, on many occasions- to offer forgeries, counting on the fact that the rich collector has a great financial situation, and has no knowledge in identification of authentic items. The greed and competition, fed by ignorance and incompetence, started a phenomenon that gave a taste of their own medicine to the “cardboard collectors”. Our collector suffered from multiple prejudices: he lost his collection (according to his statement, he grew very attached to his collection), he lost the money he invested and he strongly believed that he was deceived and justice was not served. He did not have the chance to recover any of the prejudices, as his health was severely affected by this episode. However, he did a noble gesture: he made possible the recovery of great value property, which, otherwise, might have reached international collectors or at auction houses that did not care about the *uncertain* origin of the objects. The repeated sale would have made them legal, meaning through *artifact laundering*, a particular form of money laundering<sup>40</sup>.

Between 1990-2005, encouraged by the lack of reaction of authorities, many people considered a good idea to secure their financial earnings by investing in cultural objects, heritage objects, therefore creating an increased *claim* of such objects. The poachers took the role of the *claim* in this matter. The easiest sources were the archaeological sites, unsupervised, with material deposits that were not part of a previous inventory (data base, inventory, photography, publication, etc.), which could prove the theft.<sup>41</sup> They ignored the fact that there are other methods and means by which an artifact, recently extracted from the soil, can be identified as being stolen, with all the *laundering* efforts, both literally and figuratively, deposited by those involved in this traffic. The equation of this chain is synthesized inspired by a recent analysis by the experts in the cultural heritage field in Northern area: (*different thieves, one financial motivation!*) However, we cannot help but wonder, with the risk of appearing malicious, how many collections of this kind, held by rich people and vanities inversely proportional to their level of knowledge of the domain, do not contain fake pieces, *generously* offered by

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<sup>40</sup> Lazăr 2008; Lazăr 2009; Duțu et alii 2018; Deppert-Lippitz 2009.

<sup>41</sup> As I mentioned above, the source of public collections, museums, which have proved to be, as appropriate, another source quite easy for thieves should not be overlooked.

*dealer service* experts, self-taught experts, *white-collar* fraudsters, existing in most large cities or overlapping archaeological sites?

We also focus on an aspect frequently observed in the case of antique markets, namely on the so-called *gray market*. It is named the grey market because it is perceived as being between the black, obviously illegal and the white, legal market. The cultural assets, likely to belong to the cultural heritage, stolen from their original contexts, represent *new entries*, previously unknown to the experts, not taken into account in previous records or inventories. The interfaces through which they are sold are the gray market, illustrated in the table in figure 19. *The private collections*, designed in the turbulent years after 1989, not mentioned in the records of the public institutions (impossible due to their illegality), represent, today, *the intermediaries*, or *the vehicles*, between the black and the white markets.

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Fig. 1. Bronze statuettes and round plates, seized by prosecutors



Fig. 2. Coins, rings, bell fragment and appliques seized by prosecutors



Fig. 3. Silver and bronze coins (67), seized by prosecutors.



Fig. 4. Bronze statuettes and fragmentary statuettes, seized by prosecutors.





Fig. 5. Bronze statuettes with female representations seized by prosecutors



Fig. 6. Plate representing a noble Dacian's head (1), feminine statuett (2), round plates (phalerae) cu with "antique" characters (3-4)



Fig. 6. Zoomorphic statuette (phallic form).



a

b



Fig. 7. The "workshop" of the counterfeiter with molds and plaster casts seized at the domiciliary search





Fig. 8. The molds and patterns exposed at the Alba Iulia Museum



Fig. 9. Two dacian silver necklaces (*torques*), with zoomorphic extremities (II-I a. Chr century)



Fig. 10. Silver *phalera*, with vegetal and geometric ornaments (roman - I p. Chr century)



Fig. 11. Bronze fragmentary statuett, head of Artemis (hellenistical tradition, III-II a. Chr)



Fig. 12. Bronze *situla* fragment, head of aquatic bird (swan) (I p. Chr. century)

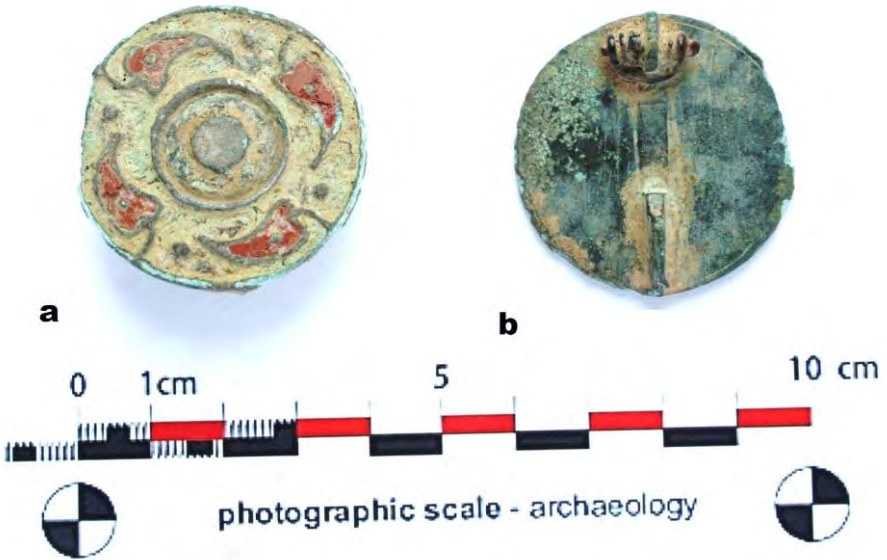


Fig. 13. Bronze fibula, with polychrome vegetal ornaments (II p. Chr. century).



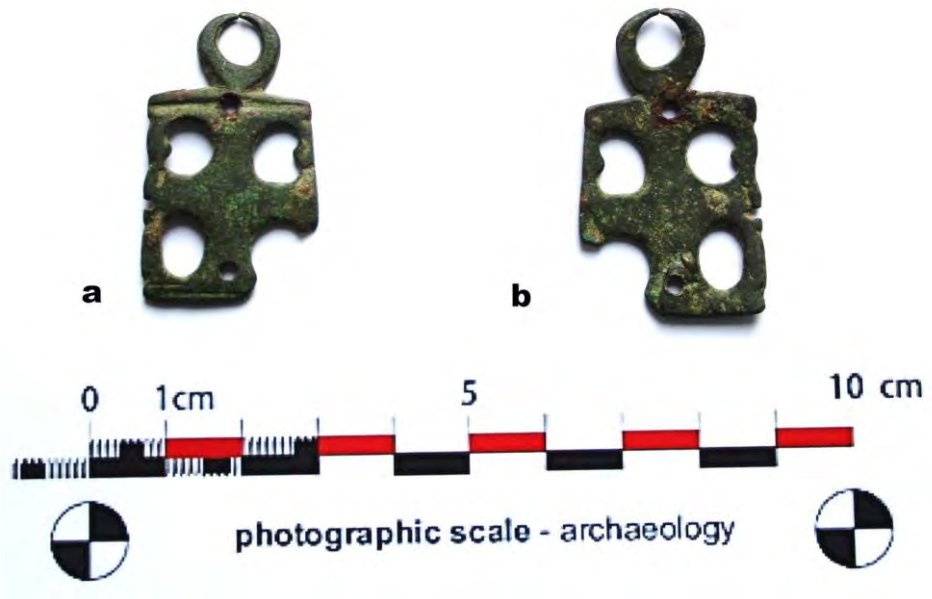


Fig. 14. Bronze belt applique (II-III p. Chr. century)



Fig. 15. Bronze applique (fibula?) with vegetal ornaments (III p. Chr. century)





Fig. 16. Silver belt applique with gold, vegetal stylized ornaments ( X-XI century)

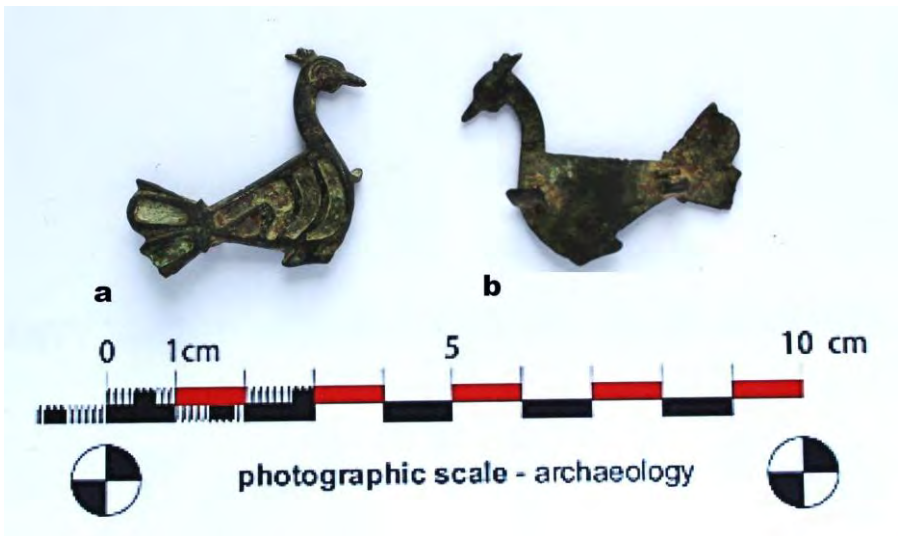


Fig. 17. Zoomorphic bronze fibula (peacock), with ornaments (II p. Chr. century)



Fig. 18. Medieval bronze and copper rings (XII-XV century)

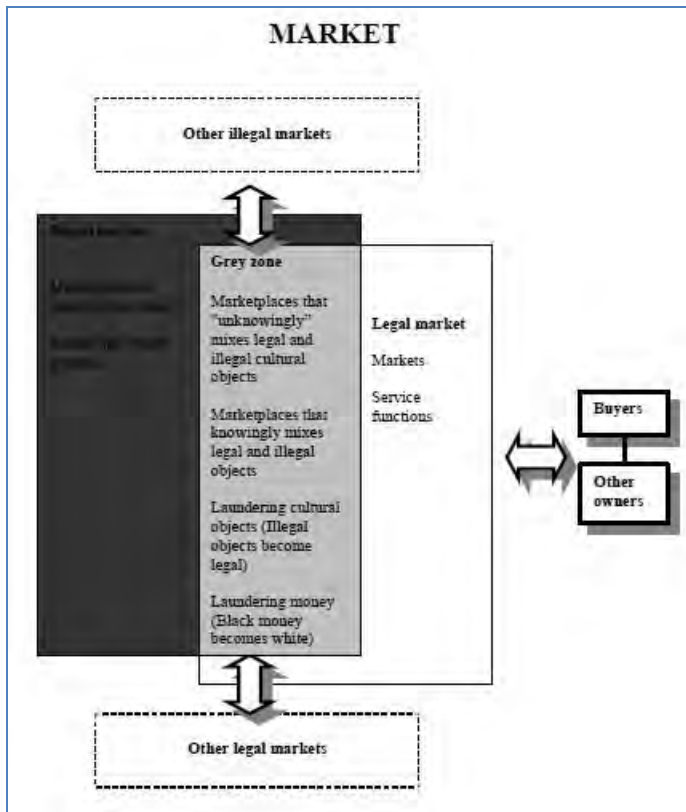


Fig. 19. The structure of antiques market and the relation with money laundering (after Cultural Heritage Crime 2006, p. 24)

LUCIAN BLAGA UNIVERSITY OF SIBIU  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT OF  
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**ACTA TERRAE SEPTEMCASTRENSIS**

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Correspondence, manuscripts and books should be sent to: Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Doctoral School in History, Bdul Victoriei nr. 5-7 550024 Sibiu, Romania.

**e-mail:** [ioan-marian.tiplic@ulbsibiu.ro](mailto:ioan-marian.tiplic@ulbsibiu.ro),

[anamaria.tudorie@ulbsibiu.ro](mailto:anamaria.tudorie@ulbsibiu.ro)



## Content

Sabin Adrian Luca, Florentin Perianu, <i>Turdaş-Luncă. 2011 preventive campaign, Sector B. Feature 341-2. A ritual pit? Turdaş culture, phase III</i> .....	5
Gheorghe Lazarovici, Cornelia-Magda Lazarovici, <i>Are there cities and fairs in the neolithic? Part I – from PPN to late Neolithic (Part II is refering to Copper Age)</i> .....	23
Sabin Adrian Luca, Tiberiu Bogdan Sava, Doru Păceşilă, Oana Gaza, Iuliana Stanciu, Gabriela Sava, Bianca Ştefan, Florentin Perianu, Raluca Teodorescu, <i>Radiocarbon data from the archaeological site of Turdaş-Luncă (preventive research of 2011)(IV)</i> .....	93
Marius Mihai Ciută, <i>Collectors and collections an unexpected case (I)</i> .....	113
Gheorghe Gelu Păcurar, <i>The Making of a Holy Nation: Pastoral Activity, Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Nationalism in Interwar Romanian Orthodoxy ...</i>	135

## **The Making of a Holy Nation: Pastoral Activity, Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Nationalism in Interwar Romanian Orthodoxy**

Gheorghe Gelu Pacurar  
Indiana University, Bloomington, U.S.A.

### **Abstract**

After the end of World War I and the creation of Greater Romania, various actors tried to influence the official policy of the state by proposing political visions suitable to consolidate the Romanian identity and character of the country. The Orthodox Church, one of the most vocal of these actors, envisioned a variety of activities and programs with the goal of promoting the future development of the country alongside religious principles. In particular, in 1925 the Metropolitan of Ardeal organized the first “mass” pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the history of the Romanian people. Among the participants was Iosif Trifa, a close collaborator of the Metropolitan and the initiator and organizer of a widespread spiritual movement called the Army of the Lord. During the pilgrimage Trifa wrote notes that later constituted the basis of his travelogue *Pe urmele Mântuitorului* [In the Footsteps of the Savior], a book that, I will suggest, proposes a national – spiritual model for the building of the new political project inspired by the mythical image of the holy places. Trifa vested these pastoral concerns with political preoccupations that ultimately claimed the Holy Land as an ideal pattern for Greater Romania. Through a gradual literary process that morphed Palestine into the Christian Holy Land and reclaimed it for Orthodox Christians only, Trifa established a close connection between the holy sites and Romania by presenting the group of pilgrims and their itinerary as a symbol of the nation walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. A close reading of the narrative will show that Trifa aimed at using it as an exhortation to prompt Romanians’ commitment to Orthodoxy as the only successful solution to the national project.

### **Introduction**

As Alphonse Dupront suggests, pilgrimage is one of the intense temporal dimensions of the individual and collective experience that has characterized religiosity from ancient Abydos in Egypt to modern day Lourdes in France (Dupront 1547-1553). In Christianity and, in particular, in the Orthodox Church, pilgrimage has a longstanding tradition encompassing rituals and practices enacted by believers traveling to holy places as expressions of spiritual fervor. Although over the course of time there developed many pilgrimage sites both at local and regional levels, the geography associated with biblical events and especially with the life of Jesus, has made the Holy Land the favorite destination for pilgrims. Apart from ancient and medieval evidences of pious travelers to these places, modern Orthodox Christians

have continued to regard this practice as a desired religious achievement, as studies on contemporary Orthodoxy show<sup>42</sup>.

In his analysis of the practice of pilgrimage in post-communist Romania, Mirel Bănică indicates that the sacred journey is a complex phenomenon that percolates not only into the deep structures of society, but also into the political and institutional life of the country engaging tens of thousands of people<sup>43</sup>. It is also a fact that this period witnessed an increase in individual and organized pilgrimages to the Holy Land, given the liberalization of traveling outside the Romanian borders. At a first glance, the Communist atheism and isolationism that ruled over the Romanian people for almost half a century suggests that pilgrimage to the Holy Land is a new phenomenon that has sprouted only after 1989. Yet, a historical survey of modern Romania shows that the sacred journey to Jerusalem was a common practice among many individual locals, from the noble Elina Cantacuziono in 1682 to merchants, theologians, and clergymen in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, to organized groups in the 1920s and 1930s<sup>44</sup>.

As these examples show, Romanian pilgrimages to the Holy Land could be either individual or organized in larger groups. Several elements ascribe the 1925 pilgrimage a singular place in this history. It was the first mass pilgrimage encompassing common believers and clergy, well organized in advance, and publicized in newspapers. Furthermore, it was led by important hierarchs such as Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan, who were involved in current debates on national issues. And lastly, it included the central figure of the widespread interwar Orthodox revival movement called Oastea Domnului [the Army of the Lord], Father Iosif Trifa, who further advertised the event through notes sent to his newspaper *Lumina Satelor* [The Light of the Villages] and eventually published it in the book *Pe urmele Mântuitorului* [In the Footsteps of the Savior]<sup>45</sup>.

Given this complex constellation that characterized the 1925 pilgrimage to the Holy Land, it is arguable that an analysis of Trifa's travelogue could offer glimpses into the interface between religious experience and national ideals in interwar Romania. Studies of pilgrimage have pointed that this phenomenon could perform many functions simultaneously, from satisfying a personal need to setting the stage for cultural diffusion of new ideas<sup>46</sup>. A close reading of *Pe urmele Mântuitorului* will show that Trifa tried to limn the pilgrimage as a national event with important consequences for Romanian identity. Moving from the personal level of the narrator to the immediate context of the eyewitnesses that accompanied him to

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<sup>42</sup> Limor and Stroumsa; Stavrou; Trandafir.

<sup>43</sup> Bănică.

<sup>44</sup> Păcurariu; Trandafir.

<sup>45</sup> Gogan.

<sup>46</sup> Thayer 169ss.



the larger setting of the Romanian nation, the narrative endeavors to propose the ideal image of the Holy Land as the supreme model to be achieved by the new people of God, the Romanians, in the new promised land, Greater Romania. Accordingly, it could be demonstrated that Trifa presents himself as a religious mystagogue who pleads for the national appropriation of the Holy Land model as the only means to the spiritual renewal of the nation and the subsequent success of the new Romanian political project. As such, the focus on figures like Father Trifa encourages the study of the relationship between religion and nationalism in interwar Romania from new perspectives able to evade the beaten track of radical politics and extremist ideologies that characterizes much of current scholarship.

To this end, the text will be examined from two major perspectives. On one hand, the focus will center on the meanings of pilgrimage in order to uncover both the various planes of this phenomenon, in particular the dialectic between personal and social impact<sup>47</sup>, and the intertextuality between pilgrimage, narrator, readers, and historical, cultural, and ideological circumstances<sup>48</sup> (Coleman and Elsner 9-10). On the other hand, recent studies of the relationship between Orthodoxy and nationalism (Strickland) will inform the understanding of prescriptive ideas expressed by the text with reference to the national ideal. After a brief appraisal of the literary aspects of the narrative, the attention will first move to the exploration of religious themes as part of Trifa's pastoral concerns, then to the investigation of possible political tropes, in order to eventually conclude with an assessment of Trifa's national ideology.

### ***Pe urmele Mântuitorului as a pilgrimage narrative***

Scholars dealing with the phenomenon of pilgrimage have drawn increasing attention to pilgrimage narratives as a gateway to the mental universe that was shared by their authors and readers. In this sense, Trifa's travelogue is part of an "elaborate, intertextual discourse in which the journey to the Holy Land serves as an occasion" for conveying common concerns shared by both sides (Bowman 153-154).

As far as the narrator's mentality is concerned, one should employ what Victor Turner calls the "individual questions" suitable to reveal the primary motivation, reasons, intentions, and needs that prompted him to undertake such a long, dangerous, and costly task (Turner and Turner xiv-xv; Morinis 18). As noted above, Trifa published his pilgrimage experiences in successive articles in the weekly newspaper *Lumina Satelor* between 1925 and 1927, and a book, *Pe urmele Mântuitorului*. The latter, which appeared in two interwar editions in 1926 and 1928, was assessed by Trifa as a pastoral success (Trifa 6), a fact that was confirmed by its republication after 1989 with the blessing of the Metropolitan of Ardeal in a

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<sup>47</sup> Morinis 21-28.

<sup>48</sup> Coleman and Elsner 4-5.

significant gesture of Trifa's rehabilitation into the Orthodox Church and appreciation of his important activity.

The structure of the book is organized around two major tropes which ultimately share the same symbolic meaning. The physical journey, which begins with preparations, descriptions of the way to the Holy Land, and portrayal of Jerusalem, reaches its climax at the moment of entrance into the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. On the other hand, this temporal culmination leads the way to the apex of the spiritual pilgrimage that is embodied by the description of Jesus' passion story, a section that encompasses half of the entire narrative and as such constitutes its center. These two tropes that guide the narrative are interwoven with, on the one hand, descriptions of the travel, scientific information (climate, geography, history, and archaeology), details regarding the everyday life in Palestine, and curiosities, and, on the other hand, biblical pericopes and their interpretation, personal religious experiences, exhortations, and sermon-style passages, which form the bulk of the book. The particular combination of all these factors throughout the narrative indicates not only that Trifa envisioned the book as a polysemy of informative, religious, and political meanings, but also that he employed the informative passages only to shed light on religious, and possible, political issues, as the strong exhortative conclusion of the book shows.

Having illuminated these literary aspects, it could be stated that Trifa's goal in writing the book was foremost pastoral: the narrative appears as a parenthesis that urges the Romanian readers to engage in the spiritual pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem. This shows that for Trifa the physical pilgrimage and its narration constitute one process in which the retelling is at least as important as the actual trip because it makes available to the audience the same religious experience the author encountered at the holy sites. In this sense, the dialogical level that connects the author with his readers is further clarified by Trifa's commitment to the pastoral cause as his ultimate mission in life<sup>49</sup>.

### **The pastor and his flock**

The connection between the immediate situation of Trifa's individual experience and the cultural context of the readers is made possible by the image of the narrator as an "ideal type" of pilgrim whose travel is an act of worship that engages the audience in a religious ceremonial<sup>50</sup>. To this end, Trifa employs two main pastoral mechanisms.

In a first place, it should be mentioned that Trifa does not understand his role of narrator in passive terms, but actively, as a mystagogue who initiates the reader

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<sup>49</sup> Gogan 14-16.

<sup>50</sup> Coleman and Elsner 12.

into a spiritual journey to the heavenly Jerusalem<sup>51</sup>. Given the multiplicity of literary forms and meanings interwoven in the narrative, this process entails a complex fabric that reveals different layers of knowledge. While geographical and historical information aided by numerous maps and pictures restages for the reader the physical background of the *Heilsgeschichte*, and the detailed description of the holy sites serves as a guide through the Christian tradition, the plethora of biblical texts, hagiographies, and exhortations provide moral teaching and mediate spiritual experience. This is made possible by the fact that Trifa claims credibility<sup>52</sup> both for himself and the Bible through first person accounts (direct witness), modern expertise (archaeology, maps), biblical and post-biblical traditions, and an intimate knowledge of the Scriptures whose accounts are proven to be entirely valid throughout the narrative<sup>53</sup>. Thus, in an ontological-epistemological movement that recalls the patristic tradition, the reader is guided through a progression that advances from physical landscape to loci of divine presence to the pure spiritual realm<sup>54</sup>, which taken together form a cosmic unity that is specific to Orthodox Christianity.

Having created this sacred space that resembles so much the Orthodox notion of the church<sup>55</sup>, Trifa employs a second pastoral mechanism, that of presenting his narrative as a liturgical act<sup>56</sup>. This requires a further sublimation of physicality through the construction of a Christian mythscape<sup>57</sup> that reveals Trifa's ultimate religious beliefs<sup>58</sup>. First and foremost, the narrator tries to subsume geographical differences to the familiarity of religious texts. Though he enters a very different geography punctuated by a new climate, deserts, or strange flora<sup>59</sup>, the dense presence of the Bible in the landscape he encounters metamorphoses Palestine into the familiar Holy Land: "The mapping of sacred places is still the same today [as it was in the time of Jesus Christ], only the political configuration has changed"<sup>60</sup>. This translucent geography is made possible by a sort of amnesiac approach that enables Trifa to recall the things he has already seen in the Bible while in Romania. Indeed, the Holy Land becomes a "realistic icon"<sup>61</sup> and coming to Jerusalem is, in a way, coming home<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Williams.

<sup>52</sup> Williams 28.

<sup>53</sup> Trifa 84.

<sup>54</sup> Trifa 53-54, 57.

<sup>55</sup> Stăniloae.

<sup>56</sup> Williams 20.

<sup>57</sup> Bowman 153.

<sup>58</sup> Cohen-Hattab and Shoval 10-11.

<sup>59</sup> Trifa 16, 24, 343-344.

<sup>60</sup> Trifa 24.

<sup>61</sup> Bowman "Christian Ideology" 110.

<sup>62</sup> Trifa 29-30.

The liturgical display of geographical data is further emphasized by the physical and spiritual presence of erstwhile and present saintly figures. In particular, the venerable image of Jerusalem's Patriarch Damianos, who is depicted as a living saint and apostle, the presence of holy sites such as St. Sabbas Monastery where saints of the church lived before, and the very places that witnessed the presence of biblical figures, denote that the Holy Land is like a church where continuous worship is given to God<sup>63</sup>.

This celebration is joined by the group of Romanian pilgrims whose journey actually displays strong liturgical goals. The entire program of the pilgrimage is devised to follow Christ's itinerary to Jerusalem, from Bethlehem to Jericho to the Via Dolorosa and up to Golgotha, as it is related in the Gospels<sup>64</sup>. As the text records, the pilgrims worshiped at key points on their route, while Trifa himself raised personal prayers, prayers for the readers of *Lumina Satelor*, and described intense mystical experiences, particularly at the site of the Holy Sepulcher where his life underwent a turning point<sup>65</sup>. As a result, the entire journey appears as a worship that takes place in a sacred space and Trifa can use the physical act of the pilgrimage as a paradigm for holiness and piety capable of inspiring the readers<sup>66</sup>. The narrative, on the other hand, could be employed as the interpretation of this act that conveys both the true meaning of physical gestures<sup>67</sup> and the spiritual importance of words<sup>68</sup>, in the same way that Orthodox priests combine symbolic acts and their hermeneutic utterances during the liturgy.

### Imagining the Orient

A close reading of Trifa's travelogue reveals, however, the existence of a polemical thrust throughout the narrative that vests the pastoral concerns with a politicized dimension. Trifa's understanding of religious experience along the lines of the fundamental interdependence between Orthodoxy and Romanianness eventually narrows his Christian construction of the Holy Land to national concerns. The process is, nevertheless, complex. To begin with, the literary mechanisms harnessed in subsuming differences to religious familiarity have a negative side as well. Whereas, as it has been previously pointed out, the intimacy with the Sacred Scriptures allowed Trifa to see geographical otherness as something familiar, the encounter with the human other became less embracing. It could be seen that the

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<sup>63</sup> Trifa 87-90.

<sup>64</sup> Trifa 71.

<sup>65</sup> Trifa 6.

<sup>66</sup> Coleman and Elsner *Pilgrimage* 91; Preston 41.

<sup>67</sup> Trifa 132.

<sup>68</sup> Wuthnow 316.

figures of the Arabs, Africans, and Jews raised serious questions for Trifa's perception of the Holy Land with the result of reclaiming it for Christians only.

In this encounter with the other Trifa employs "forms of definition and classification which elevated the western model of society and religion"<sup>69</sup>. More specifically, two methods seem to guide the narrator's perception of alterity. On one hand, characterology determines Trifa to conclude that "different peoples exhibit essentially different characters"<sup>70</sup>. The first encounter with black people in the port of Jaffa is quite memorable for the major part of the pilgrims:

Many of us see black people for the first time. We look at them and wonder and, unwillingly, start laughing at them (and they wonder and laugh at us). Some of them are so black that they shine as if they were polished with shoe cream. In particular, a black with flattened face draws our attention. If people from our villages were to see him neither one nor the other they would chase him with pitchforks as if he were the devil ('bată-l crucea')<sup>71</sup>.

The image of the Arabs is more nuanced. While some of them are indeed Christian<sup>72</sup>, Muslim Arabs generally seem to be sympathetic toward Christians<sup>73</sup> and to profess many beliefs that support Christian teachings about Abraham and the Day of Resurrection<sup>74</sup>. Yet, more important, their presence is extremely helpful to the understanding of biblical customs and manners: "People mounted on donkeys and camels move hastily. Almost everyone wears long coats. Only now we begin to understand the vestments from the time of our Savior that we can see in icons"<sup>75</sup>. Indeed, this biblical outfit emphasizes the spiritual state of these people, as was the case with the Christian women of Bethlehem: "Women living here have an appearance of great religious beauty and this beauty is amplified by their beautiful vestment. They wear long coats, from top to bottom and on their head a veil like Virgin Mary has"<sup>76</sup>. Trifa nevertheless sometimes accuses the Muslim Arabs for being fanatics<sup>77</sup> or unbelievers that irreverently sit as "pagan" guards at the gate of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher<sup>78</sup>.

As regards the Bedouins, Trifa compares them with the gypsies in Romania: they are dirty, unwashed, lazy, and unreligious.

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<sup>69</sup> Coleman and Elsner *Pilgrimage* 75.

<sup>70</sup> Coleman and Elsner *Pilgrimage* 76.

<sup>71</sup> Trifa 22-23.

<sup>72</sup> Trifa 63, 79.

<sup>73</sup> Trifa 24.

<sup>74</sup> Trifa 308-310, 367.

<sup>75</sup> Trifa 23.

<sup>76</sup> Trifa 79.

<sup>77</sup> Trifa 36.

<sup>78</sup> Trifa 242.

This Bedouins are different from the Arabs. They are a sort of ancestors of the gypsies, having many similar things in common, among them laziness, idleness. Many of them are nomads, that is, tent travelers, like gypsies. As regards religion, they are Mohammedans, like the Arabs, but they do not bother themselves with it (123).

A particular place in the narrative is devoted to descriptions of the Jews. While in most instances Trifa uses the terms “Jew” and “Hebrews” and the post-communist editions (the editions of 2002, 2010) employ only these two terms, the first edition of the book used the disparaging terms “jidan” and “jidov” as well (the edition of 1926: 13, 107, 196). In any case, strong anti-Jewish stances punctuate the narrative in many places. From the very first day after landing in Jaffa, Trifa presents the Jews as a people despised by the Arabs. Most commonly, the image of the Jew is depicted from a religious standpoint as anti-Christian: they are the murderers of Jesus and of Christian martyrs, live in spiritual blindness lacking true knowledge, and continue their existence under God’s curse<sup>79</sup>. Yet, this theological anti-Judaism is complemented by anti-Semitic myths, some of them deriving from medieval polemics. In the central part of the book where he discusses Jesus’ passion, in what is intended to be a sensitive moment of mnemonic representation of suffering, Trifa recalls the story of Ahasverus, the impious Jew (“jidov”) who persecuted Jesus without mercy:

O, how anguished and painful our Lord looks! Yet, the Jews are not moved by his suffering; they continue to beat him ruthlessly and mercilessly. As I was proceeding on this place I remembered the story of the Jew Ahasverus (a beautiful religious novel) who, while staying in front of his house, saw the Lord going to Golgotha in great anguish and pain, but, instead of showing mercy, he kicked the Lord with his foot shouting with a hateful grin: ‘Go on, Jesus!’ (186).

In the same context of the passion story Trifa condemns the Jews for attempting to bribe Pilate to spread the lie that Jesus did not resurrect from the dead. According to the author, the Jews tried to do then the same thing they try to do today, that is, to control and distort the truth with money. He thus concludes that “Since those times it seems that corruption, bribery were in the nature of some of those who are part of the Hebrew people”<sup>80</sup>.

Apart from these myths inspired by ancient stories, Trifa describes the modern conspiracy of the Jews as it could be seen in the actions of the Bolsheviks. Although he admires Jews’ enduring love for Zion and the preservation of their identity in the Diaspora, he nevertheless criticizes them for tainting this God-given

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<sup>79</sup> Trifa 170, 230, 316-320.

<sup>80</sup> Trifa 231.

ideal by “religious and national chauvinism”<sup>81</sup>. More precisely, the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem unites the Jews in a global anti-Christian conspiracy as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion clearly show<sup>82</sup>. One of the most compelling evidence of the Zionist conspiracy is, in Trifa’s eyes, Bolshevism with its emphasis on “internationalism, revolution, anarchy, atheism”<sup>83</sup>. Indeed, the Jews are so much more dangerous as they control the world finances, the press, and the alcohol industry, which they use to harm “the soul of Christendom”<sup>84</sup>.

The spiritual and political blindness of the Jews materializes in the disfigured appearance of their bodies. This could be seen in their worship in front of the Wall, where they “pray, cry, and lament” loudly and with their back hunched<sup>85</sup>. Trifa even distinguishes several types of Jews according to their physical appearance:

Here is the Jew of Galicia, the ugliest type, hunched and with curls over his ears; here is the Jew of Turkey, the one from Asia, the one from Russia together with the one from Romania, the one from Hungary with the one from Poland, Germany, etc. . . . Their appearance, however, is the same: ugly and repellent. As if the sentence and punishment they bear are written on their faces (315-316).

On the other hand, Trifa’s encounter with the Orient is modulated by theology with the aim of appropriating its foundational religious traditions for the cause of Christianity. It has been previously shown that the familiarity with the Bible helped Trifa transfigure the geography of the Holy Land into a mythscape. He nevertheless goes further and tries to reclaim for Christianity the sacred time as well. Given the chasm that separates the Old Testament history from the spiritual blindness of the Jews, the author concludes that the Hebrew Scriptures belong to the religion inaugurated by Christ: “Prophet Isaiah belongs to Christianity. He was the prophet chosen by God to predict the life of the Savior to the smallest detail”<sup>86</sup>. Thus, the orientaling gaze that first reifies the figure of the other eventually elevates Christianity to the position of the sole religious model that is entitled to define the Holy Land.

### **The Christian Orthodox Holy Land**

Although Trifa imagines the Holy Land as a site that is essentially Christian, he nevertheless claims it entirely for the Orthodox tradition. The ideological

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<sup>81</sup> Trifa 320.

<sup>82</sup> Trifa 320-321.

<sup>83</sup> Trifa 321.

<sup>84</sup> Trifa 321.

<sup>85</sup> Trifa 314.

<sup>86</sup> Trifa 282.



underpinnings of the narrative show that Orthodox exclusivism is an active factor that influences Trifa's view of Christianity, religious leadership, and pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Indeed, the author challenges the reader to view Eastern Christianity as the true spiritual inheritor of the holy sites and traditions that stands against the false pretensions of a degenerate western civilization.

First and foremost, Trifa emphasizes the privileged role of Orthodoxy in the development of Christian traditions of the Holy Land. In a veritable spirit of Orthodox theological understanding, he underlines the continuity between biblical and post-biblical traditions that actually developed into an organic unity. Sainly figures highly appreciated in Eastern Christianity, such as Helen and her son, emperor Constantine, are credited by Trifa with a special care for the rediscovery and introduction of the Palestinian holy sites into the circuit of Christian spirituality through their divinely inspired patronage. Thus, the narrator apportions large sections of the text to descriptions of the erection of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher<sup>87</sup>, the miracle of the finding of Jesus' cross<sup>88</sup>, the building of the Monastery of the Holy Cross near Jerusalem<sup>89</sup>, the construction of the Church of Nativity on the spot of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem<sup>90</sup>, or the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher of Virgin Mary, which, as the author proudly remarks, "entirely belongs to the Greek Orthodox Church"<sup>91</sup>. It should be noted that all these accounts connect the biblical time of revelation with the early church, a period of special importance for the formation of Orthodox tradition, by means of miracle stories that attest the divinely ordained continuity between them. Although in a few cases Trifa acknowledges the presence of other Christian confessions in the Holy Land, overall he nevertheless extols the superiority of Orthodoxy.

To remove any trace of doubt regarding the eminence of Orthodoxy, Trifa contends that Christian Orthodox possess the best churches and oldest monasteries among the holy sites in Palestine. Hence, the Greek Orthodox Church within the architectural ensemble of the Holy Sepulcher is "the largest and prettiest church"<sup>92</sup>. The different Orthodox churches also are the custodians of the Monastery of the Holy Cross built on the original site of the tree out of which the cross was carved<sup>93</sup>, the monastery on the site of Elijah's cave<sup>94</sup>, the Monastery of St. John the Baptist near the river Jordan<sup>95</sup>, the church built on the place where St Stephen, the first

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<sup>87</sup> Trifa 46-47.

<sup>88</sup> Trifa 65-66.

<sup>89</sup> Trifa 73.

<sup>90</sup> Trifa 81-82.

<sup>91</sup> Trifa 269.

<sup>92</sup> Trifa 61.

<sup>93</sup> Trifa 73.

<sup>94</sup> Trifa 74.

<sup>95</sup> Trifa 112.

martyr, had died<sup>96</sup>, or the St. Sabbas Monastery, “a nest of Orthodoxy”<sup>97</sup>, which the tradition linked to anti-heretical figures such as St. Sabbas, St. Theodosius, and St. John of Damascus<sup>98</sup>. On the most holy site of the cross the Orthodox erected an altar with the help of Russia’s tsars<sup>99</sup>. Yet, the Orthodox know how to administer these places as true Christians, as the case of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher of Virgin Mary shows, since they “proved to be here as well highly tolerable with other confessions”<sup>100</sup>. Apart from these examples, most likely one of the major illustrations of the divine legitimacy of Orthodoxy comes from the miracle of the sacred light at the Easter. Though Trifa did not visit the Holy Land during that period of the year, he nevertheless describes the liturgy that takes place in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher at Easter and the light that miraculously springs out of the Tomb and does not extinguish for a whole year.

Second, the Holy land belongs to Orthodoxy because the western civilization betrayed its Christian legacy. At the sight of English policemen who behave irreverently in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher<sup>101</sup> or contrasting the holy biblical women with modern women that show no interest in pious life<sup>102</sup>, Trifa reiterates a trope commonly used in his exhortations in *Lumina Satelor*. However, the most important evidence of the fraying of the western social fabric lies in the nature of its major religious vector, the Catholic Church. The critique of Catholicism is built in contrast with the commendation of Orthodoxy. More precisely, the former is depicted as a heresy anchored in the Pope’s pretention of being the representative of Christ. Its rupture with the biblical teaching is evident in the fact that while Peter repented of his haughtiness, this sickness continues to be present today in the one who calls himself the heir of Peter, in the Pope of Rome . . . This aberration (rătăcire) and this illness of haughtiness went so far that the Pope of Rome started to call himself: ‘the vicar (substitute) of Christ on earth’ (o, what an aberration!)<sup>103</sup>.

Compared to this heretical attitude, Orthodoxy appears as the true faith because it is anchored in the Holy Land and Jesus. This privileged state is further confirmed by the contrast between the Orthodox monks who, devoting themselves to spiritual fervor, were acclaimed even by Catholic scholars as representatives of “the spirit of the true monastic life,” and the Catholic monks who live in gaiety and

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<sup>96</sup> Trifa 327.

<sup>97</sup> Trifa 332.

<sup>98</sup> Trifa 330.

<sup>99</sup> Trifa 269.

<sup>100</sup> Trifa 269.

<sup>101</sup> Trifa 64.

<sup>102</sup> Trifa 352.

<sup>103</sup> Trifa 141-142.

wealth<sup>104</sup>, on one hand, and by the disparity between Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem, an apostle figure-like characterized by profound spirituality, love, zeal, and wisdom, and the Pope who, “carried by diabolical haughtiness” pretends to be Christ’s vicar and entitled to receive worship from Orthodox patriarchs<sup>105</sup>.

### **The Making of Holy Romania**

Seen against this background of pastoral, orientalist, and sectarian concerns, the dialogical level that permeates the whole narrative becomes much more complicated. It is hard to trace clear borders between these lines of thought. Indeed, they form an intricate web of relations that support and reinforce each other and consequently should be approached globally. Yet, this raises further questions regarding the relationship between the narrative and the primal pastoral concern which, as it has been pointed out, constitutes the reason for writing this travelogue. How did, in this situation, Trifa envision the impact of his narrative on the Romanian readers back home? And did he find a unifying principle to sensitize the readers to his message?

To answer these questions, it should be recalled that for Trifa the physical act of pilgrimage to Jerusalem is not only a symbol of the more important spiritual pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem, but also a motivation and help in this journey. Because of this, he wrote the book to be an aid for the reader and, to this end, he continually engaged the people back home through countless exhortations. A close look at the narrative shows that while these rhetorical devices often targeted individuals who needed spiritual regeneration, they ultimately aimed at a collective audience that could be identified with the Romanian nation.

More specifically, the pilgrimage is presented as an official mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church. In several notes regarding the organization of the pilgrimage published by Trifa in 1925, he reveals that initially the journey was planned as part of a larger ecclesiastical project regarding the organization of an ecumenical council of Orthodox churches in Jerusalem. By the beginning of 1925 the news of the pilgrimage was widespread at least due to Trifa’s newspaper. Because the council was postponed for a future date and the materialization of the pilgrimage was jeopardized, Trifa informs the readers in the summer of 1925 that the trip will still take place under the leadership of Metropolitan Bălan (Trifa “La Ierusalim, la mormântul Domnului;” Trifa “Vom merge la Ierusalim, la locurile sfinte – costul și durata.”).

It should be noted that the beginning of the same year marked an epochal event for the Romanian Orthodox Church by the establishment of the Patriarchate, which paralleled, from a religious standpoint, the achievement of political ideal.

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<sup>104</sup> Trifa 332.

<sup>105</sup> Trifa 235-237.

Moreover, the 1925 pilgrimage was followed by the visit of the newly Patriarch Miron Cristea (1927) and the mass pilgrimage led by Metropolitan Nectarie of Bucovina (1930) to Jerusalem<sup>106</sup>. The delegation led by Metropolitan Bălan could be seen as an effort of affirmation of Romanian Orthodoxy's preeminence in the context of its elevation to the status of the most populous free Orthodox Church after the demise of the Russian Church in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution<sup>107</sup>.

This official dimension of the pilgrimage is stressed by Trifa throughout the narrative by the description of the organizational details of the travel and the meetings of Romanian delegation with important religious figures such as the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Metropolitan Basil<sup>108</sup>. The speeches addressed by Metropolitan Bălan with the occasion of these meetings show the consciousness of living a historical and national event. Thus, at the meeting with Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem, he states that "we were prompted here to Jerusalem by the gratitude of an entire nation (neam) that gives thanks to our good God for helping it to see its national ideal fulfilled. We came to Jerusalem to express our appreciation for all that the Lord has done for us"<sup>109</sup>. Apart from this, Romanian Orthodox also aimed at enhancing the Romanian presence in the Holy Land. As Trifa indicates in one of the articles published in 1926, Metropolitan Bălan had plans to build a Romanian church at the site of Jacob's well, "a church that would be ours and would allow us to drink grace (dar) and power from the very source of the well" (Trifa "O biserică românească la fântâna lui Iacob").

Having presented the character of the pilgrimage as an epochal event in the history of his nation, Trifa points to the role of the Orthodox Church in the construction of Greater Romania. For him, the entire phenomenon of this pilgrimage, the religious leaders, the common people, the itinerary, and the practices performed throughout the journey and particularly in the Holy Land, have a symbolic function that signals that the church is the only institution capable of providing the ideological and cultural cohesion needed by the country to succeed in its new political project.

In particular, the initiative of the church in organizing the pilgrimage is seen as an occasion for symbolically uniting all Romanians into a religious endeavor. A glimpse into Trifa's appreciation of the group of pilgrims shows that he sees it as the Romanian society *in nuce*: apart from the clergy (prelates, priests, monks), there are professors, intellectuals, and common people, men and women, from both urban and rural areas from different parts of the country<sup>110</sup>. This perception was shared by the leader of the pilgrimage when Metropolitan Bălan is presented stating before

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<sup>106</sup> Păcurariu 337.

<sup>107</sup> Ioniță.

<sup>108</sup> Trifa 16, 23, 38, 70.

<sup>109</sup> Trifa 70.

<sup>110</sup> Trifa 12.

Patriarch Damianos that “he brought to Jerusalem the soul of an entire people . . . to worship and give thanks for all that God has done for us”<sup>111</sup>. Hence, the “worshipping Romanians,” as they were called according to the official program of the pilgrimage<sup>112</sup>, are seen as the embodiment of the nation going to worship God to Jerusalem. In other words, he identifies the church with the nation and Orthodox identity with the quality of being Romanian.

This liturgical image of the nation is better grasped in the context of Trifa’s pastoral concerns that morphed Palestinian geography into a biblical – Christian mythscape. This perspective indicates that Trifa introduces a new clarification in his narrative appropriation of the Holy Land: while he orientalized it in order to make it Christian, and made it Christian to underline its Orthodox legacy, he further claims the holy sites for the Romanian nation. Accordingly, Trifa specifies that the group of pilgrims followed in the steps of Jesus<sup>113</sup> and worshipped at key sites and in key moments, appropriating thus the sacred space and time as a foundational basis for the destiny of Greater Romania. In particular, the author describes liturgical scenes as if “a whole nation (neam) seems to walk and sing with us”<sup>114</sup> or the Romanian language is for the first time heard to bring praise to God.

It has to be mentioned that Trifa believes that he has to play an active role in this religious – national project. If the unifying principle capable to touch Romanians’ hearts could be located at the interface between a resolute imitation of Jesus, in the way the group of pilgrims did, and a strong belief in the bright future of the nation, the author identifies the means to shape Romanians’ national self-consciousness with the Orthodox Church’s action of backing the pastoral – missionary activity of the Army of the Lord. Accordingly, Trifa conceives his account of the pilgrimage as a relic that has the power to impart the sacred to those at home<sup>115</sup>. The urgency of sending informative and exhortative notes to his journal *Lumina Satelor* while on journey<sup>116</sup> and his explicit goal of writing the book as to describe “all that I felt and sensed in Jerusalem”<sup>117</sup> in order to prompt others to follow Jesus reveal Trifa’s sense of responsibility toward his nation:

I always feel overwhelmed by the great responsibility I have in regards with the grace (darul) showed to me by God to see the holy places. I always think that I have to repay this grace by writing in detail all things seen and experienced at the holy places as a means to spiritually bring others in the footsteps of the Savior (Trifa 37).

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<sup>111</sup> Trifa 38.

<sup>112</sup> Trifa 38.

<sup>113</sup> Trifa 70.

<sup>114</sup> Trifa 80.

<sup>115</sup> Williams 27-28; Preston 41.

<sup>116</sup> Trifa 37.

<sup>117</sup> Trifa 369.

Trifa himself confesses at the beginning of the book that the pilgrimage represents for him a “turning point” (“răspântie de hotar”) in life that prompted him to renew his decision to serve God (Trifa 5). The activity during the trip, his prayers for the Army of the Lord, the innumerable exhortations for the readers, and the sustained implication in renewing people’s commitment to Orthodoxy after returning home, all show that for Trifa the national project of Greater Romania cannot be conceived as successful without the spiritual model of a pious life in the Holy Land. Eventually, by means of a veritable *translatio religionis*, Trifa prompts his readers to look at themselves as the new chosen people and to their country as the new earthly Canaan:

When we saw for the first time these barren and poor places, all of 160 pilgrims exclaimed in unison: ‘Lord, what a rich land is our country Romania!... What a blessed country!... The Canaan is ours!... We do not know how to value the blessings we have in our own country...’

Indeed, what a blessed land is our country! Canaan moved here, to us, and we are the chosen people that God said: ‘I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be their slaves no more, breaking the bars of your yoke and making you walk erect’ (Leviticus 26.13). . .

We, however, forgot this covenant and do not know how to value the Canaan given to us by God (347-348).

How could this appropriation of the Holy Land be interpreted in respect to modern nationalism? If this concept is defined as the affirmation of a socio-political communitarian organization that excludes or attributes religion a secondary place (Anderson, Hobsbawm), then Trifa’s national model does not fit into it. Trifa’s formation and concerns do not envisage a secular type of nation. On the contrary, he identifies the nation with the church. If, however, nationalism entails only the ideas of common ethnicity, territory, language, culture, and religion that develop within a polity (Hobsbawm), then Trifa could be categorized as a nationalist. It should, however, be stressed that he interpreted Romanian identity in terms of religious ethnogenesis, by stressing the Orthodox character of this people. This allowed him to equate the nation (“neam”) with the Orthodox Church and is most likely the reason for the strong critique of Catholics and Jews who, given their large numbers within the Romanian borders, represented a threat. On the other hand, when Trifa was pressed by Metropolitan Bălan to associate with Father Ion Moța’s radical nationalist newspaper, he hesitantly followed his superior’s directives and eventually separated from politicizing too much his pastoral-missionary activity in the name of Christian universalism. Thus, Trifa’s national model resembles more with the religious-based patriotism proposed by Strickland (Strickland xviii), though it is hard to define it without any reference to post-Enlightenment nationalist ideologies.

## Conclusion

In the context of the development of the new political project of Greater Romania, when many contending views competed for monopolizing the trajectory of the country, Father Iosif Trifa emerged as an advocate of a Christian Orthodox vision of the nation. The pilgrimage to the Holy Land that took place in 1925 was seen as an occasion to encourage people to embrace this religious ideal as the exclusive approach to the national issue. By identifying the nation with the Orthodox Church and equating Romanianness with Orthodoxy, Trifa posited himself in an active role in this project, according to his pastoral-missionary activity embodied by the Army of the Lord movement. Trifa's national model eventually indicates that he was part of a larger ideological trend that encompassed many nationalists of interwar Romania, though his subsequent activity shows that he avoided engaging in radical politics.

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