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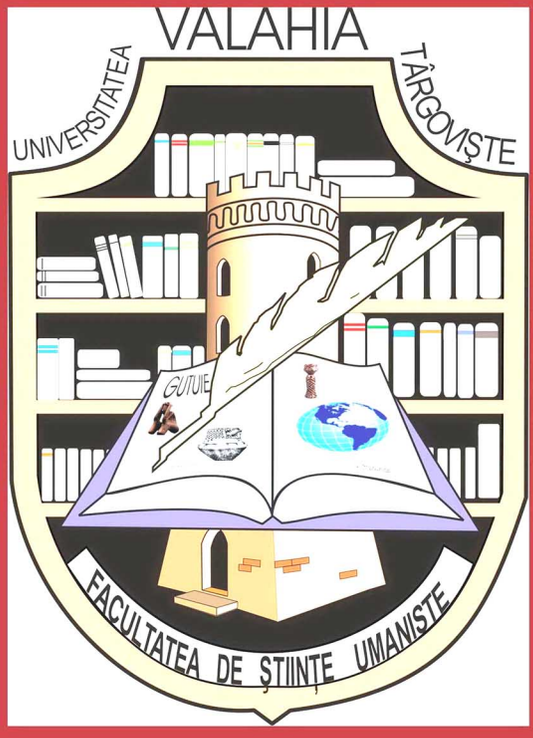

SECTION
d'Archéologie et d'Histoire
TOME XVIII
Numéro 2

Valahia University Press
Târgovişte
2016

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Valahia University Press
Târgovişte

https://biblioteca-digitala.ro

Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire publie des mémoires originaux, des nouvelles et des comptes-rendus dans le domaine de l'archéologie préhistorique, de l'histoire du moyen âge, de l'environnement de l'homme fossile, de l'archéologie interdisciplinaire et de patrimoine culturel.

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Revue indexée B+ par CNCSIS et B par CNCS - Roumanie

Indexée dans:

ELSEVIER

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ISSN: 1584-1855; ISSN (online): 2285–3669

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Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste,
Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire,
Tome XVIII, Numéro 2, 2016, p. 7- 24
ISSN: 1584-1855;
ISSN (online): 2285–3669

Some Observations on the Corporeality Reflected in Prehistoric Visual Culture

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Abstract: Without wishing to set out an exhaustive discussion of the subject, we mention that our approach envisages a brief analysis of some of the stances of body "lived" in prehistory, reflected through the visual culture and symbolic communication. The variety of human representations, expression of prehistoric mental forms in which divine feminine archetypes coexist with the male ones, illustrates the role played by the corporeal environment in asserting body-subject as a bridge between the physical and the metaphysical reality. Corporeality of anthropomorphic figurines contributed to the integration of the human body into a whole (common corporeality) and was the most effective means of communication of self, artistic representations becoming its substitutes or of a particular archetype that led to a symbolic thinking, specific to those times.

Keywords: Neolithic; visual culture; corporeality; symbolic communication; anthropomorphism.

Reconstitution of the mental universe of the prehistoric man represented a major challenge for those concerned with researching the early period of human history. The precariousness of the archaeological sources and, especially, their "opacity" requires a more thorough and more complex analysis of homo sapiens sapiens' symbolic thought, which in turn implies the diversification of the means of investigating and approaching related fields such as psychology anthropology, ethnography, sociology, semiotics etc.

Various formae mentis that governed the behavior of prehistoric communities correspond to a sacralized world, whose logic allows decrypting by means of obvious evidence, of artistic and religious order, peculiar to a symbolic thinking. Ability to express themselves in a symbolic manner was discerned ever since early Upper Paleolithic, artistic creations specific to this period, especially anthropomorphic figurines highlighted the possibility of homo sapiens sapiens to develop material systems with universal meanings objectifying their own metaphysical feelings.

Following the exploration of the environment, prehistoric human psyche has been marked by the assertion of the identity complex, which was reflected in the first attempts of symbolization of his own body. The anthropologizing vision on the world to which he belonged, allowed the prehistoric man to attribute a magical touch to the sculptural anthropomorphic representations , making them carriers of messages,whose semantic depth reflect a reality that hardly allows discerning.

Known in the specialized literature under various names –idols, figurines/ anthropomorphic representations, statuettes etc. (D. W. Bailey, 2005, p. 26), these artifacts entail nuanced discussion on the possibilities of interpreting them (P. J. Ucko, 1962; D. W. Bailey, 1994, p. 321-331; J. Marcus, 1996; P. F. Biehl, 1996, P. F. Biehl, 1997; S. Nanoglou, 2009; B. Watson, 2010; G. Naumov, 2010; A. Niculescu, 2011; C.-L. Rădoescu, 2014; *** *Anthropomorphism* 2014). Symbolic thinking, specific to groups of hunter-gatherers of the late Upper Paleolithic (E. Bánffy, 2005), revealed the

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need and ability of *homo sapiens sapiens* self-representation as a way to communicate and cooperate with fellow-men (R. Stănese, 2010); the fact that Paleolithic statuettes are considered feminine self-representations (Le Roy D. McDermott, 1996) and are associated with the idea of fertility (P. Mellars, 2009), proves that the body bears the mark of individual consciousness, becoming the messenger of a corporal identity. Through this type of figurative expression, the subject turns into an object, the identity becomes interchangeable, so that in a *corporeal* environment, the encoded language of the anthropomorphic statuettes reveal the cognitive evolution of the individuals (P. F. Biehl, 2006, p. 201), particularly the ability to create the symbolic image of the body: a landmark of the human being and a part of the community integrating it.

Thus, between the individual, society and the environment develops some form of dialogue, of symbolic touch, based on the continuous redistribution within the community of various communication units- signs, decorative items etc; according to this mechanism, the individuals defined and identified themselves in their communities precisely by those distinctive traits emphasizing the corporeal entity of the individual person.

Expressions of the biological and cultural nature of the body, various corporeal hypostases reflect the permanent relationship of *homo religiosus* with the profane and the sacred through ritual practices designed to *re-produce* primordial realities related to community life. Propensity to antroporfism, characteristic to prehistoric communities, was meant to "fix some ritual gestures" (R. Guénon, 1970) which explains the large number of anthropomorphic representations (as *corporealized* objects of a physical reality) in certain hypostases, capturing the gradual transformation of the body from *sign* into *symbol* (R. Stănese, 2010).

This form of identitary expression of the members of the community through such artifacts, which have been attributed magical-religious significance, denotes the qualities of *homo symbolicus* to accede to a transcendent reality through the very sacredness of feminine anthropomorphism. Used in household or community rituals, anthropomorphic representations, carriers of visual and plastic signs, transposed ideas and religious themes that provided identity and social cohesion.

Analysis of anthropomorphic figurines revelaled the fact that each anatomical part is associated symbols, rendered through a series of geometric motifs, arranged according to stylistic, well-defined canons. Considered effigies of divinity, but also exceptional features of characters in the community, the symbols may illustrate the existence of a maternal archaic pantheon, or may enhance the social status of individuals involved in processions carried on the occasion of celebrating certain events.

Configured ever since Upper Paleolithic, the religious archetype of the *Great Mother Goddess* (E. Neumann, 1974, p. 3-38; C. G. Jung, 2014, p. 69-170) reflects its continuity through the polyvalency of the hypostases identified in various Neo-Eneolithic cultures. If in the Upper Paleolithic, the symbols existing in figurative art emanated a strong magic message (J. Kozlowski, 1992; V. Chirica, I. Borziac, 2005, p. 76; M. Cârciumaru, 2006, p. 93), in the Neolithic, they will be attached to sacred femininity (A. Whittle, 1996).

The old system of values specific to the communities of Paleolithic hunters, relying on the "mystical solidarity between man and animal" will be abandoned, with the discovery of agriculture and adopting sedentary life in favor of another type of symbolic representation (T. Watkins, 2006, p. 82), linked to the fecundity and fertility of the Great Goddess. The old symbolic registers enrich their content and offer this time, new bases of rendering religious beliefs. Determined by the new social attitude, the process of standardizing religious and magical concepts and institutionalizing the sacred finds its confirmation in the existence of canons that homo symbolicus applied to the various categories of human thought.

The massive presence of female representation in neo-Eneolithic art until recently justified, obsessively,by the existence of a cult uniquely dominated by an almighty female divinity can be analyzed in terms of the social relationships implied by the woman's status (source of life) in a community with a matrilocal organization. The affirmation of female identity by recognizing maternal parentage is illustrated at the artistic level by the large number of representations of this kind, which is equivalent to a substitution of the male characters and a redistribution of the prestige within

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Fig. 1- Archetype of the *Think*er. Starčevo-Cris culture: 1-Şimnic (after C.-L. Rădoescu 2014, pl. III/3. Precucuteni culture: 2-Târpeşti (http://maecpn.muzeu-neamt.ro/galerie-foto.html). Gumelniţa Culture: 3-Vidra(http://www.cimec.ro/arheologie/gumelnita/cd/default.htm) *Mythical hero* archetype. Cucuteni culture: 4-Dumesti (edu.nbu.bg/pluginfile.php/586999/mod_resource/content/1/Anthony%20et%20al%20ed_2010_The%20Lost%20World%20of%20Old%20Europe%20Catalogue.pdf). Vinča culture: 5a, b-Zorlenţu Mare (after Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2014, p. 139, fig. 75).

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the group.

Fertility rites and ceremonies of initiation, along with those dedicated to the worship of ancestors, updates a mythical past, scattered with model characters that legitimate a new social order in which the status of woman becomes prevailing (R. Caillois, 2006, p. 131-133). Nubile women, those in state maternity matrons etc., all strictly fulfilled their role within a standardized social system, structured according to an interior behavior imposed by the "revolution of symbols" (J. Cauvin, 1997).

Expressing the social, spiritual and, not least, the biological status of the woman in different stages of life, the archetype of the Great Goddess may suggest the existence of maternal deities, with a well defined hierarchy in a polytheistic pantheon which did not exclude, however, the presence of male archetypes. Whether they performed roles related to the regeneration of vegetation, protection of the animal world, these deities had apotropaic, psychopomp etc attributes, with implications on the life of human communities; according to age, status or gender/sex, the goddesses exercised their prerogatives through *replicas* (modeling clay), who were used in various rites of passage related to birth, marriage, death (D. Boghian, 2015).

The variety of positions and gestures illustrated by the anthropomorphic feminine representations, discovered in the Carpathian-Balkan space, highlights a certain kind of symbolic visual communication. Shaped usually in clay ,miniature representations embodying divine traits, illustrated young characters on the verge of marriage, women with well shaped plumpness of body, displaying qualities of *Mater Genitrix, kourotrophoi* (nannies), matrons, ancestry; all these hypostases related to the feminine biological cycles,a reflex of divine sexuality and effigies of the Great Goddess, gave a diffuse sacredness to the body transposed in clay, further emphasizing the social status of each embodied character.

Instead, the male representations, whose scanty number does not necessarily mean the existence of a lower status of the man in the community, credit the archetype of *Thinker*, identified in the case of the representations from Şimnic (Cârcea III) (M. Nica, 1998, fig. 1/1a-1b) (Fig. 1/1) Slatina (Vădastra II) (M. Nica, 1998, fig. 1/2a-2b), those belonging to Gumelniţa culture –Glina (R.-R. Andreescu, 2002, pl. 7/7), Căscioarele (R.-R. Andreescu, 2002, pl. 31/2) Vidra (R.-R. Andreescu, 2002, pl. 37/5) (Fig. 1/3), Sultana (S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, B. Ionescu, 1967, pl. IX-X; R.-R. Andreescu, 2002, Pl. VI/4) etc., Precucuteni –Târpeşti (S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1974, fig. 73/7) (Fig. 1/2), Cucuteni -Drăguşeni-Suceava (D. Monah, 2007, fig. 169/3), Hamangia (D. Berciu, 1966, fig. 1), but also the mythical hero, personified by belted and diagonalled idols such as those identified in the culture of Vinca at Zorlenţu Mare (Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2014, p. 139, fig. 71-75, Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2014a, p. 226, fig. 71-75) (Fig. 1/5a, b) in the precucutenian area in Târgu Frumos (N. Ursulescu, D. Boghian, V. Cotiugă, 2014, p. 377-414), or in Cucuteni culture, at Scânetia, Berești, Petricani, Dumești (D. Monah, 1997, fig. 38/1, 2, 4, 5; 40/1-3) (Fig. 1/4), Costești-Cier (D. Boghian, S.-C. Enea, S. Ignătescu, L. Bejenaru, S. M. Stanc, 2014, p. 83-85, pl. C-CIX) and so on.

Through these two archetypes, deeply rooted in the mind of Neolithic and Eneolithic communities (D. Boghian, 2015a), the individuals were able to manifest their own identity within the community; male statuettes, concrete representations of multidimensional psychic identity, "equipped" with such accessories (diagonals, belts, weapons), reflected an obvious corporeality and defined the social status of the (re) presented one.

The emergence of male idols implies, on the one hand, the genesis of a differentiated society,in which the role of man becomes predominant, and spiritually, imposing a new Uranian cult. The presence of figurines and masculine statuettes in some ritual ceremonies as phalloiis or small cones proves once again the application of the *pars pro toto* principle, whereby male divinity male makes its presence felt through a representative element (Fig. 2/1, 5). Appearance of the phallic cults is a consequence of the transformations in the collective subconscious, caused by the increased role and importance of the male element in the community (E. Neumann, 1974). *Phalloii*, symbols of regenerating power, were widely spread in neo-Eneolithic cultures from the North and South of the Danube, and their association with female divinity sanctioned the sacredness of procreation.

Although the vast majority of figurines are modeled in clay and represent characters with feminine traits, the sexual characteristics are not always explicit and, because of this, the

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interpretation of artifacts by gender or sex must take into account a number of social parameters, such as age, status, representativeness, cultural level, etc. Bisexual representations identified at Tărtăria- Gura Luncii (S.-A. Luca, 2016, p. 189, fig. 147, foto 213), Zorlenţu Mare (Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2014, Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2014a, fig. 76) (Fig. 2/3), the two-headed statue from Rast (Vl. Dumitrescu, 1974, fig. 193) (Fig. 2/4) "Lovers" from Gumelniţa (R.-R. Andreescu, 2002, p. 50-53, pl. IV, V/11-12) (Fig. 2/2), the idol of Mihoveni (N. Ursulescu, V. Batariuc, 1987, p. 309-312.) etc., attesting the existence androgynous cult in the Neolithic, implying the idea of perfection and "continuing tendency of the individual to approach this plenitude through rites or mystical techniques of reintegration" (M. Eliade, 1995, p. 101).

Fig. 2- Phallic representations. Vădastra culture: 1-Hotarani (after C.-L. Rădoescu 2014, pl. XXVI/2); Gumelniţa culture: 5-Drăgăneşti-Olt (after C.-L. Rădoescu 2014, pl. XLVII/3). Androgynous representations. Gumelniţa culture: 2-Sultana http://www.cimec.ro/arheologie/gumelnita/cd/default.htm); Vinca culture B: 3-Zorlenţul Mare (after Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici 2014, p. 140, fig. 76/1); Vinca C culture: 4-Rast (after Vl. Dumitrescu, 1974, fig. 193).

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The presence of "divine couples" in different poses, represents the consequence of the personification of the attributes of a primordial androgynous deity, whose creative power reveals originary totality where all the possibilities are to be found in perfect harmony (M. Eliade, 1995). Using bisexual statuettes as accessories/cultic *paraphernalia,* in rituals re-enacting Androgynity makes possible, reversal of participants' behaviors in a certain time of the procession and transposition in a state that preceded their particular situation. There is a transcending of its own condition and a reintegration in the initial plenitude, in primary totality, after which world periodically (re) creates and time regenerates (M. Eliade, 1991, M. Eliade, 1992, M. Eliade, 1995).

Fig. 3 - Anthropomorphic representations. Vădastra Culture: 1, 5, 6 -Hotărani; 2- Museum of Oltenia Collection, Craiova; 3, 4 -Fărcaşu de Jos (after C.-L. Rădoescu 2014, pl. XXI/1, 4, 5; XXIII /1, 4, 5).

Handled in the key moments of magic and religious rituals, according to the degree of representativeness, anthropomorphic figurines, besides the protective role they assumed by virtue of " mythicalized higher powers belonging to inaccessibility and the unexpressing" (C. Rivière, 2000, p. 26) illustrate at the same time the aesthetic concerns of Neo-Eneolitic creators who modelled

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and decorated certain areas of the body depending on certain socio-cultural requirements (S. Archambault de Beaune, 2000). The symbolic nature of these ornamental elements confer plastic creations not only a religious value, but also an artistic one, the act of representation being the consequence of extracting from the social process the kind of information (M. Conkey, 2001) that ultimately is conceptualized and structured on semantic categories (G. Durand, 2000).

Sculptural representations value the system of symbols and transpose it through an artistic synthetic language, in immutable, eternal forms, which are transmitted over time, which reconfirms the use of the same stylistic canons (S. Hansen, 2004). The Semantics of gestures, especially the institutalized ones that are practiced ritually and in cults represents an important direction of researching the spirituality of prehistoric communities given the role images and symbols play in defining the mentality of a group. The existence of cultural codes, storing real stocks of information, to which members of a social group resort to for communication and on whose interpretation the stability of community (L. Caillet, 1997) depends also requires a corresponding gestural activity in which the movement has a specific verbal meaning (B. Bril, 1997).

The corporeality of anthropomorphic figurines contributed to the integration of the human body into a whole (common corporeality) and constituted the most effective means of communication of the self, the artistic representations becoming its substitutes or of a particular archetype that led to a symbolic thinking specific to those times. Identified, mostly in the interior of dwellings, the anthropomorphic representations appear as reflections of a way of thinking that illustrates the existence of new social structures that had been created and maintained precisely by strict observance of the established rules; religion, art, corporeal language etc., are just some of the elements of communication that revealed the existence of social statuses and roles existing in prehistoric societies.

Used during ritual processions, anthropomorphic representations undergo operations of consecration, and then, at the end of the ceremony they are destroyed. This habit, first attested in the Near East and Anatolia, has spread in the South-eastern Europe (J. Chapman, 2000, J. Chapman, 2001) and susequently, north of the Danube, with the first wave of neolitization (S. A. Luca, Fl. Marțiș, A. Tudorie, A. Luca, 2013, S. A. Luca, Fl. Marțiș, A. Tudorie, A. Luca, 2103a). Ritual destruction of artifacts means not only loss of the prestige that they initially had but also disruption of the ties with the celestial world,a way to ensure permanent effectiveness of the ritual (S. A. Luca, Fl. Marțiș, A. Tudorie, A. Luca, 2103a; R. Caillois, 2006). This everyday practice, in which the sacred and the profane are intertwined, is a means of communitary integration, related to the entire community participation to ritualistic leaving of the dwelling; depositing of figurines in well-defined frames, suggesting some cultic scenes (S. Hansen, 2007, p. 381), is another form of expression of corporeality through which the living by using these material fragments maintain contact with the world of the dead.

Thus, the practice of ritual fragmentation of the idols and objects of worship (Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2008) is found in the earliest communities Starčevo-Cris (stage IA) who appeared in Romania (the mask of clay found in "House of the Dead" from Cristian I, Sibiu county) (S. A. Luca, 2015, p. 201, 204-205), in the Vincian area (Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2014, p. 116), Tărtăria (Gh. Lazarovici, M. Merlini, 2005, p. 211-212, fig. 16a-d; S. A. Luca, 2016, p. 70; 78; 189, fig. 41/2; 52/2; 147), Zorlenţu Mare (Vinca B1) (Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2008, fig. 4, 5, p. 13), Gornea (Gh. Lazarovici, 1977; Gh. Lazarovici, C.-M. Lazarovici, 2008, fig. 3, p. 13), Liubcova (S. A. Luca, I. Dragomir, 1987; S. A. Luca, 1990, S. A. Luca, 1990a, S. A. Luca, 1991, S. A. Luca, 1998, S. A. Luca, 2001, S. A. Luca, 2002), Uivar (W. Schier, F. Draşovean, 2004) etc.; similar situations were found in Vădastra (M. Nica, 1980; C.-L. Rădoescu, 2014, Pl. XX/3a, b; XXI/1,4,5; XXII/3, 4; XXIII/1, 4, 5 and other) (Fig. 3/1-6), Gumelniţa (R.-R. Andreescu, 2002, p. 13, 19), Precucuteni (N. Ursulescu, F. A. Tencariu, 2006; I. Palaguta, M. Mitina, 2014), Cucuteni-Tripolie (D. Monah, 1997), Sălcuța (P. F. Biehl, 2003, p. 327) cultures. Through such an operation is performed not only an economic transfer, intra- and inter-community, but also one of symbolic nature, the fragments, loaded with a certain "dose" of sacredness, also carry the message to those who used them in rituals.

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Fig. 4 - Anthropomorphic representations. Vinca-Dudeşti cultural aspect: 1 -Cârcea "La Hanuri"; Dudeşti culture: 4a, b-Reșca, 5a, b -Drăgănești-Olt "Corboaica"; Vinca culture C: 6a, b, 7, 8- Rast; Vădastra culture: 2, 3 - Poiana Mare, Fărcașu de Sus (after C.-L. Rădoescu 2014, pl. XIII/3, 1a, b, 4a, b; XVI/4a, b 3; XXI/2; XXVI/3).

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Decoration of figurines with incised motifs or painting some parts in red suggests the tattoo (Vl. Dumitrescu, 1974, p. 87-88); the manner of disposing the decorative elements, depending on the specific of the anatomical region, reveals the existence of strict artistic rules, hard to decipher at this time, bearing in mind the symbolism of geometric figures, but also a possible form of communication between the individual and the community.

Thus, in the shoulder and back, but also in other parts of the body are represented the concentric circles (Fig. 4/2), the V-shaped incisions decorate the neck (Fig. 4/2, 3) tapes and angles listed on the thighs, buttocks, and legs (Fig. 4/1, 4a, b, 5a, b, 6a, b, 7, 8; 5/2, b, 5; 6/3a, b), the abdomen is marked using spirals (especially the lower part) and rhombs (Fig. 4/6a, 8; 5/2a, b), and the incised triangle always highlights the female sexual attribute (Fig. 3/2; 5/4, 7). The variety of decorative motifs, always ordered by the canons thar were used imposes a delimitation on stylistic categories, depending on the degree of representativeness: those which clearly indicate tattoo, respectively, those suggesting clothing pieces.

In anthropomorphic representations where the incisions and impressions were used in various combinations, the artistic effect demonstrates the creators' intention of rendering pieces of clothing (Fig. 4/1, 3, 8; 5/1, 3; 6/1a, b, 2a , b, 3a, b, 5) ornaments (Fig. 6/4) and hairstyles (Fig. 5/6) and the presence of traces of white red or black paint, gives artifacts a certain symbolic aura (P. T. Vucovič, 1972; S. Debois, M. Otte, 2005; S. Petru, 2006; L. N. Stutz, 2010; C.-L. Rădoescu, 2014).

Women's garment is illustrated primarily by tight waist dresses and models "en cloche", decorated with angular, meander, rhomboid, spiral motifs etc. (Fig. 4/1; 5/1), scarves worn at the neck, decorated with grooves or incised and painted diagonals. Even if the diagonal-belt combination occurs in the female and bisexual representations, too, it is generally considered a clothing attribute of masculinity, being associated with the emblem of the warrior, a character that differentiates in status from the rest of the community members.

Although the appearance of color and decorative patterns differentiated the representations of worship from the common ones, the scarcity of means of interpretation does not allow a comprehensive analysis of ritual clothing, knowing that divinity was endowed with a variety of symbols that did not always have the same meaning, but which were correctly interpreted by officials.

Body markings used during rites of passage, in addition to the fact that they temporarily or ultimately modify the social status or the natural state of the individual, reveal the existence of a set of symbolic values which, once learned, legitimize the identity and affiliation of the group, in all respects (D. Boghian, 2010). The custom of the Neanderthalians to paint their body during some magical-religious processions (F. Bordes, 1952; A. Leroi-Gourhan, 1990) was certified on Romanian territory at Mousterian level from Cioarei Boroşteni Cave (Gorj county), the containers for preparing the ochre, the oldest in the world, being a clear proof of the practice of corporal or facial tattoo (M. Cârciumaru, 2000, p. 157, fig. 57, M. Cârciumaru, 2006, p. 43, fig. 21; M. Cârciumaru, M. Ţuţuianu-Cârciumaru, 2009; M. Cârciumaru, E.-C. Nițu, A. Nicolae, F. I. Lupu, R. Dincă, 2015).

Anthropomorphic representation of Aurignacian man such as those from Hohle Fels (N. J. Conard, 2009; M. Mărgărit, 2010, p. 123; D. Boghian, 2010, Fig. II/1a, b) or Stratzing (J. Kozlowski, 1992; M. Cârciumaru, M. Mărgărit, 2002; M. Mărgărit, 2003) illustrate concerns about using the markings intended as a means of asserting gender identity and the anthropomorphic, zoomorphic figurine (*Löwenmensch*) from Hohleinstein-Stadel (J. Hahn, 1970; 1986; M. Mărgărit, 2003, p. 29-30; M. Cărciumaru, 2006, p. 94; *********Descoperiri arheologice din Germania,* 2011, p. 11, 12) has parallel lines engraved on the left arm, perhaps traces of a tattoo made during some magical -religious ceremonies linked to the mystical human-animal solidarity. The same symbolical attitude is signaled in gravetian art, parietal representations of hands from Gargas cave suggest potential amputations of fingers or of the entire hand in ritual operations (M. Cârciumaru, 2006, fig. 69).

In the Near East and Anatolia, once the "revolution of symbols", body markings will know a stylistic diversification, all these symbolic forms of expressing collective or individual identity, widespread in Neo-Eneolithic art (D. W. Baily, 2005; D. Boghian, 2010, Fig. III/ 1a-1c, 6, 7; IV/1-14, 19; V/1a-1b). Such cultural markers were reported in the Balkan-Danube area at Sofia-Slatina

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Fig. 5 - Anthropomorphic representations. Vădastra culture: 1- Hotărani, 2- Fărcașele, 3- Vlădilă, 5- Fărcașu de Sus; Gumelnița culture: 4- Drăgănești-Olt; Vinca C culture: 7 -Hotărani; Sălcuța culture: 6 - Sălcuța (after C.-L. Rădoescu 2014, pl. XXXIII/6, 4; XXVII/4a, b: 1; XLIV/1; XIX/5; XLI/6).

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(Karanovo I) (V. Nikolov, 2001, V. Nikolov, 2001a; S. Hansen, 2001), Durankulak (Hamangia III) (H. Todorova (Hrsg), T. Dimov, J. Bojadžiev, I. Vajsov, K. Dimitrov, M. Avramova, 2002, p. 54, 68, 72, 74, 77, fig. 77/18, 126/12, 138/11, 142/4, 161/3-4) Vinca (J. Chapman, 1981) which highlight the perennial nature of body marking practices due to the permanant contacts with neighboring populations.

The diversification of the set of body marking practices (ear, facial perforations, cranial deformations, etc.) encountered, especially in Gumelniţa (H. Todorova (Hrsg), T. Dimov, J. Bojadžiev, I. Vajsov, K. Dimitrov, M. Avramova, 2002; D. Boghian, 2011), Precucutenian (S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1974, fig. 83/2, S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1981, fig. 88/5) and Cucutian area (Vl. Dumitrescu, 1974, fig. 219, 220, 221, 222, 227, 228, Vl. Dumitrescu, 1979, fig. 160, 161, 164, 165, 176; A. P. Pogoševa, 1985, Abb. 549, 569, 570, 746, 795-802, 805-806, 906; R. Maxim-Alaiba, 1987, p. 272, fig. 1; D. Monah, 1997; C. Bem, 2007, fig. 418/1-4; C.-M. Lazarovici, Gh. Lazarovici, S. Ţurcanu, 2009, p. 244-347) show a change in mentality regarding the role of the individual within a hierarchical society, following the influx of new populations coming from the eastern Mediterranean area.

In the category of definitive markings, along with the deliberate distortion and mutilation of certain parts of the body, the tattoo has a specific role, well-defined in the process of personalization of the individual or the group with higher prestige.

The issue of the significance of the tattoo rendered by incisions was widely discussed (Vl. Dumitrescu, H. Dumitrescu, M. Petrescu-Dîmboviţa, N. Gostar, 1954; S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1974a, S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1981; E. Comșa, 1994-1995, E. Comșa, 1995, p. 107-110; S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, A. Bolomey, 2000), but the approach in terms of medical representation of anatomical cutaneous and subcutaneous (H. Dumitrescu, 1973) details can not be sustained in the absence of data justifying the psychological and cultural motivation of practicing this type of body marking. Given the continuing tendency of prehistoric man to imitate the divine model, the act by which women painted or tattooed some body parts considered the exemplary repetition of a primordial gesture committed *in illo tempore*, identification with the archetypal image of the Great Goddess, who holds attributes of fecundity and fertility.

North of the Danube, anthropomorphic representations depicting the tattoo were identified in Zorlenţu Mare (Vinca B1/B2) (Gh. Lazarovici, 1979, p. 211, fig. 39) in the final phase of the Boian culture (Dinu V. Rosetti, 1938, pl. 12/2; 14/3, 4, 5; 16/10; 17/1, 5, 8), in Gumelnita culture (R.-R. Andreescu, 2002, pl. 8/1, 5; 19/3; 26/8; 30/1; 40/4; 42/1; 43/2; 46/1,2, 6; 48/5-9; 49/1, 5, 8) and indicate female characters who usually have a number of three tiny recesses in the chin area (Fig.7/1, 2).

Analysis of Gumelniţa plastics proved that application of the tattoo was done only in the case of female figurines, the number of stings varying according to the age of the person (E. Comșa, 1995; S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1974a, S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1977, S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, 1977a). The fact that some statues indicated a tattoo, proves its magical-religious value , and the absence in some cases is linked to the belief that at a certain age, practising it no longer makes sense, since it lost its meaning (E. Comșa, 1995). The setting marked by sunken dots on clay statuettes and the flat Gumelniţa bone (E. Comșa, 1995; R.-R. Andreescu, 2002; D. Boghian, 2011) ones is found in Salcuta anthropomorphic plastics (C.-L. Rădoescu, 2014), a proof of the constant contact between the two cultures carriers, including the magical-religious domain.

Anthropomorphic and anthropomorphized vessels are also an expression of identity and its sacredness (C.-L. Rădoescu, 2012; D. Boghian, 2012) reflects the cognitive level of the community translated into a kind of public communication, based on signs and symbols, providing information on the manner of perception of the female body.

Illustrating, in particular, the attributes of femininity, especially, breasts, abdomen, omphalos, cteis, buttocks, thighs, etc., this type of cult representations reflects the symbolic interdependence between body and object, the means by which certain anatomical details were used as "metaphors" of visual communication that allowed access to archetypal corporeality. Possibility of visualizing and materializing the principal attribute of the *Mother Goddess* (autoprocreating that Divinity has assumed as guarantor of the prehistoric world) as allegorical vessels modeled in the shape of the human body or those decorated with human attributes, suggests the permanent trend of the prehistoric man to experience the sacred and to consider his own body

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Fig. 6 - Female anthropomorphic representations. Gumelniţa culture: 1-Drăgăneşti-Olt; Vădastra culture: 2a, b, 3a, b-Hotărani; Cucuteni culture: 4- Istrati-Capșa collection, Drobeta Turnu-Severin; Vădastra culture: 5- Fărcașu de Sus (after C.-L. Rădoescu 2014, pl. XLII /2a, b; XXIX/2a, b; XXX/3a, b; XXXI/1).

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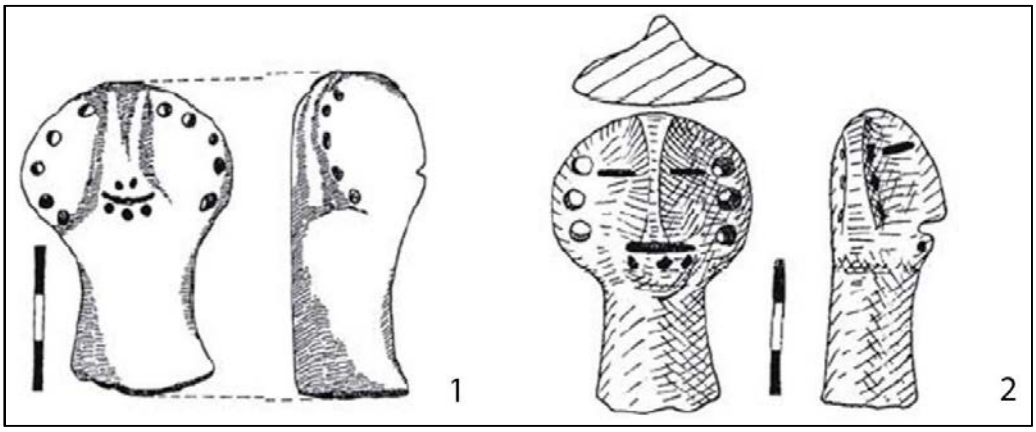

Fig. 7- Anthropomorphic figurines. Gumelnița culture (A2): 1-Lișcoteanca; 2- Ciolăneștii din Deal (after R.-R. Andreescu, 2002, Pl. 8/1, 5).

as a mediator between the real world and the divine.

This type of expression of personal and collective identity, which dominated the entire reality of prehistoric society, has influenced the Neo-Eneolithic visual creation, capturing, spectacularly, the metamorphosis of individuals and different groups of people.

The variety of human representations demonstrates that anthropomorphism led to the neo-Eneolithic creation and imposed corporeality as a visual agent to decrypt the symbolic processes that have implemented this way communication of self through body assembly.

Note: A translated version in French of this paper has been sent towards publication to the *Analele Universitatii din Oradea, Fascicula Istorie-Arheologie* journal.

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Ministère de l'Education Nationale
L'Université Valahia Târgovişte
Faculté de Sciences Humaines

ANNALES

D'UNIVERSITÉ VALAHIA TARGOVISTE

SECTION d'Archéologie et d'Histoire

TOME XVIII

Numéro 2
2016

Valahia University Press
Târgovişte

https://biblioteca-digitala.ro

Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire publie des mémoires originaux, des nouvelles et des comptes-rendus dans le domaine de l'archéologie préhistorique, de l'histoire du moyen âge, de l'environnement de l'homme fossile, de l'archéologie interdisciplinaire et de patrimoine culturel.

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Revue indexée B+ par CNCSIS et B par CNCS - Roumanie

Indexée dans:

ELSEVIER

This title is indexed in SciVerse Scopus

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INDEX COPERNICUS INTERNATIONAL

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ISSN: 1584-1855; ISSN (online): 2285–3669

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Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste,
Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire,
Tome XVIII, Numéro 2, 2016, p. 25-31
ISSN: 1584-1855;
ISSN (online): 2285 - 3669

Chronology and Numismatic Inferences of the first *Muşatin* Stone Fortresses

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Abstract: The paper aims at reviving and bringing into a new focus the highly complex issues raised by the chronology of the first *Muşatin* stone fortresses (the Şcheia, Suceava and Neamţ fortresses). While a throughout analysis of the context these fortresses were raised reveals determining factors and conjectural political consequences, some details, brought into light both by archaeological researches undertaken on these fortifications and some related logical connections, raise significant doubts on the chronological succesion of the first Moldavian monetary emissions. The paper starts from the excursus published in our study on the genesis of outer Carpathian medieval towns, later unfolded in a presentation at the national symposium *The Monument – tradition and future*, in Iaşi.

Keywords: Moldavia, Suceava, Şcheia, Neamţ, Peter the Ist, fortresses.

Our paper aims at reviving the particulary complex topic of the first *Muşatin* stone fortresses, for both historians as well as all those interested in the Moldavia's historical beginnings.

At first view, such an attempt might appear superfluous, given its rather unfruitful reccurence in specialized studies; nevertheless, a throughout analysis of all available written and archaeolgical sources on the matter offers several solid insights capable of settling, perhaps for good, the controversies surrounding the chronology of the succesive building of Şcheia, Suceava, and Neamţ fortresses, under the rule of Peter the Ist (1375-1391). Moreover, archaeological derived data seriously question the chronology of the first Moldavian monetary emissions' succesion, namely the silver grossi conclusively attributed to Peter the Ist; through their clear stratigraphical context, they turned out to be an essential element in dating the above mentioned fortresses.

Older and newer studies inspired by the historical vision of the renowned scholar N. Iorga (1928) have repeatedly stated that the monetary emission constitutes, first of all, an economic fact issued from necessities which, in Moldavia's case, would be linked to the opening of the international commercial road from Lvov to the Black Sea, through Cetatea Albă. As Şt. S. Gorovei, the relentless researcher of the eastern Carpathian medieval state' beginnings, put it, "I think the link between the first Moldavian monetary emission and the opening of the Moldavian commercial road is worth remembering" (Şt. S. Gorovei, 2014a, p. 208).

Moreover, any specialist had to admit that, according to the medieval practice, monetary emission represented a sovereign right, exceptionally granted to politically high-ranked vassals. In the outer Carpathians medieval context, such were the solidly documented cases of rulers Dan the IInd and Vlad Dracul, to whom Sigismund of Luxembourg, acting under the late crusade's constraints, *volens nolens* granted such rights as meaningful and bounding privileges (A. Veress, 1931).

Linking the aforementioned, otherwise

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unavoidable practice with the particular case of the Muşatin Moldavia, Şt. S. Gorovei (2014a) heatedly and repeatedly argued that Peter the I[st] benefited from this fundamental right, which was essential to the full development of his country, only after becoming a vassal for the Polish crown and King Vladislav Jagiello, in the fall of 1387.

We fully accept both the ideea of Peter the I[st] receiving the monetary emission right from a sovereign political power, as well as its strict necessity, given the opening of the commercial road from Poland to the Dniestr, on a route controlled by the Moldavian state. As far as the chronology goes, all those circumstances characterized *the first years* of Peter the I[st] rule, whose dominion over Cetatea Albă was established since the final stage of his uncle's (Laţcu) reign (1367-1375). Without going over details of an already published demonstration (D. Căprăroiu, 2013; D. Căprăroiu, 2014a; D. Căprăroiu, 2014b), we will only state that written documents of the time, inadequately interpreted and correlated by previous researchers, put forward several conclusions, briefly presented in the following.

Over the last years of his reign, Laţcu faced the dominant tendencies of Louis of Anjou in Moldavia, coupled with an ineffective protection from the Pope (Ş. Papacostea, 1999a), which compelled him to renounce his previously established allegiance to the Catholic Church (C. Auner, 1913) and to return to the Orthodox faith, as proven through his burial in the Rădăuţi necropolis (L. Bătrâna, A. Bătrâna, 2012). As Ş. Papacostea (1999a, p. 129) stated, "Laţcu's action during those years was part of the orthodox reaction started in Bizanţ, and supported, among other important political figures, by Vlaicu of Valachia.".

Given this political context, the following document, largely ignored by researchers, holds a special significance. On October the 13th, 1374, the royal Hungarian magistrate Jacob of Scepus decides to delay a trial, due to the fact that one of the suitors enrolled "in the army set against the Moldavians"/"eo quod idem unacum domino Ladizlao duce Oppuliensi ad exercitum contra Maldvanenses habitum esset profecturus" (ap. Ş. Papacostea, 1999a, p.128). The military intervention was certainly due to Laţcu's advancement – at the same time as Vladislav Vlaicu entered the Milcov Archbishopy territories (Ş. Papacostea, 1999a; S. Iosipescu, 2003) – in south-eastern Moldavia, which put an end to the Angevine Kingdom's control in the area, taking over Cetatea Albă, supposedly through a condominium with the presumptive Genovese colony already in place (Şt. Andreescu, 2000). Although documentary information clearly reflects this course of events, most researchers missed their accurate interpretation.

First, there are the dates in the Patriarchy letters from 1401, confirming the ordaining of Iosif as "archbishop of Moldovlahia" by the Halici metropolitan „kir Antonie", on the *Asprokastron* episcopal seat, "in Moldovlahia and not elsewhere" (*FHDR*, 1982, p. 273-275). Actually, Antonie ruled over the Ruthenian orthodox metropolitan church between 1371-1375; afterwards, the church was liquidated and he was forced to leave the residence, due to the founding of a Catholic archbishopy in Halici (Şt. Andreescu, 1998). Thus, Iosif's ordaining at *Asprokastron*/*Cetatea Albă*, "in Moldovlahia and not elsewhere" could have taken place only during this timeframe; the documents thus eliminate any doubts on the whereabouts and the disputed appurtenance of the episcopal seat (V. Spinei, 1992; Şt. Andreescu, 1998; L. Pilat, 2012).

Secondly, the Pope's correspondence of October the 13[th] 1374 with the archbishops of Strigoniu and Calocea, as well as with Louis of Anjou, brought up the acclaimed mass converting of Romanians (*multitudinis nacionis Wlachorum*) at the Hungarian borders, neighbouring the Mongols, in a region lacking an archbishopy or even a simple church. The Pope decides to appoint the Franciscan Anton of Spoleto – "which is told to speak the language of the aforementioned people" as archbishop "to rule the aforementioned crowd" (*DRH*, 2002, p. 492-496). Through a combination of these dates and the ones from the Pope's letter of September the 16th, 1371, regarding the assignement of the "venerable brother Nicholas" as archbishop of *Milcov*, who was "ready to proceed shortly towards his said church" (*DRH*, 2002, p. 76-77), we can infer that the Romanians located at the Mongol borders in 1374 **cannot** be located inside the limits of the Milcov archbishopy, which was fully organized by then (*DRH*, 2002, p. 554); rather, they were to be found beyond the Siret, in south-eastern Moldavia. Starting with the fall of 1374, all information on Anton de Spoleto or on the success of the Catholic mission among *those*

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Romanians disappear altogether, which can be easily viewed as a consequence of Laţcu's extended rule towards the Dniestr, which, in turn, enabled Iosif's ordaining as archbishop at Cetatea Albă, as well as the military action of Ladislau of Oppeln, documented in a trivial juristic prorogation act.

Given the considerable political pressure Louis the Great exerted on Moldavia ever since the final stage of Laţcu's reign, Peter the Ist manifested his obedience to the king through accepting the Catholic influence, via the Galician way, not only in his own, surely conjectural, conversion, but in that of his mother, *Lady Margareta* (Ş. Papacostea, 1965; *Călători*, 1968, p. 69), under the religious authority of the Dominican **Fratres Peregrinantes** Society, between 1376 and 1377 (Gh. Moisescu, 1942; C. Auner, 1913).

Lady Margareta's conversion to the Catholic faith under the authority of the **Fratres Peregrinantes**'s general vicariate, while seemingly insignificant, has a special meaning. Unlike Laţcu, whose adherence to the Catholic faith was meant to gain the Pope's protection against the Angevine aggression, Peter and Margareta faced increasing challenges. For one, the Apostolic Seat didn't manifest, over the years, the capacity and the availability of providing the necessary support; furthermore, Louis the Great acted towards strengthening the Angevine domination in the Galician region, creating the circumstances of Moldavia's permanent retrieval.

One of the king's versatile measures was to bring under his influence the general vicariate of the **Fratres Peregrinantes**, the new Eastern Europe spiritual authority endorsed by the Pope. Respected and supported by Ladislau of Oppeln, the king's delegate in Ruthenia, the Dominican missionaries sustained the king's plans of permanently subsuming the Galician region to the Hungarian Kingdom (Gh. Moisescu, 1942; P. Engel, 2006).

Thus, unable to avoid manifesting obedience towards the Angevine, Peter the Ist chose prudence, awaiting a favorable outcome. Moreover, on the long run, accepting the vassalage would have ensured a series of advantages – among others, the possibility of keeping the previously conquered territories, the right to monetary emissions, and the well-known heraldic hatchment, the divided shield with lilies, part of the *Muşatin*'s dynastic coat of arms (D. Cernovodeanu, 2005).

While in the summer of 1378 (*DRH*, 2006, p. 469) the full Angevine sovereignty over Moldavia was in place, its acceptance was probably made official by Peter the Ist's participation at the 1377 campaign of Louis of Anjou against the Lithuanians, concluded with the conquest of the Belz and Chelm strongholds (P. Engel, 2006). Our interpretation could thus enlighten an important controversy on the failed Lithuanian military expedition against Moldavia, unfolded in December, 1377, which could have been intended as a punitive action against Hungary's allies (C. Cihodaru, 1968). In this view, the information about the Siret martyrdom of the Franciscans Luca and Valentin by the pagan Lithuanians "ab infidelibus qui arborem adorant" (ap. Gh. Moisescu, 1942, p. 94-95; Ş. Papacostea, 1999b) gains importance; moreover a 1377 monetary treasure was discovered in 1912 at Siret (O. Iliescu, 1970), which could have been buried because of the Lithuanian expedition.

Pointing out the paganism of the Lithuanian attackers helps eliminate the hypothesis that the attack was orchestrated by the Koriatovici brothers, rulers of Podolia, set to avenge the death of their older brother, the famous Iurie, killed by the Moldavians (G. Popovici, 1905; Şt. S. Gorovei, 1997b). On the contrary, written sources, as well as data derived from the first Moldavian and Podolian monetary emission, indicate that both Peter the Ist and the (by then) fully-Christianized Koriatovici brothers were vassals of the Angevine crown, starting from 1376/1377, up until the death of their sovereign, Louis of Anjou, in 1382. Luckily, the written evidence for the September 29th, 1377 vassalage of the Podolian dukes is still available – Louis of Anjou granted them the Podolian duchy, "duces Podolie…ducatum Podolie receperunt in feudum a corona dicti regni" (ap. Ş. Papacostea, 1999b, p. 66).

The full chronological concordance between Pope Gregory the XIth's letters to both *Lady Margareta* and the duke Alexander Koriatovici is more than significant – the Pontiff allowed their confessors to grant them absolution "in articulo mortis" (ap. Ş. Papacostea, 1999b, p. 67). Additionaly, the throughout analysis of the first Moldavian and Podolian monetary emissions

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revealed astounding analogies between the denomination and the metric standard, both emissions representing local variants of the type used in Ruthenia, during Ladislau of Oppeln's (1372-1377/8) and Louis of Anjou's (1378-1382) reigns (E. Oberländer-Târnoveanu, K. Pârvan, 2007). Furthermore, as a compelling argument for our assertions, both monetary types present a somehow common coat of arms of the two princiary families, based on *the divided shield with lilies*, obviously representing a concession from the Angevine royalty which, in the case of the Koriatovici family can be documentally proven.

Given the historical context and the written data, one could logically link the opening of the Moldavian commercial road, deriving from taking over Cetatea Albă, and the granting by Louis the Great of monetary emission rights to the first Muşatin ruler. Therefore, the considerable advantages involved in this combination of factors must have been compelling reasons for Peter the Ist's decision of accepting the Angevine sovereignty.

All these circumstances aside, once the king was dead (1382), the moment seemed right to abandon the Hungarian sovereignty, especially since the kingdom would be plagued with internal power struggles, which led to the lack of a coherent foreign policy for more than a decade (P. Engel, 2006; P. P. Panaitescu, 2000). Peter the Ist would seize the opportunity for political emancipation, initiating the construction of stone fortresses, precisely within this timeframe (M. D. Matei, 2004): Şcheia, Suceava Seat Fortress, Neamţ; apart from establishing the backbone of the Moldavian defensive system, he also abandoned the Catholic milieu in Siret, moving the capital to Suceava (M. D. Matei, 1989). On the diplomatic front, the new political options of the *Muşatin* ruler involved his fealty pledge to King Vladislav Jagello and Queen Hedviga, in 1378 (*Documentele moldoveneşti*, 1932, p. 599-601). Thus, the fundamental element of Moldavia's foreign policy would, from then on, be a firm and consistent alliance with its powerful neighbor to the north (Ş. Papacostea, 1999c).

A view over the documents issued on this occasion allows the highlight of several fundamental aspects, fully validated through archaeological researches, pertaining to the relative chronology of the *Muşatin* stone fortresses, namely those in Suceava.

In the vassalage document signed on September 26th, 1378, in Lemberg, Peter the Ist clearly stated that "we give homage, along with our people and country, Moldova's strongholds [*Valachie castra*], and all others domains…"; the same wording was used by the Moldavian high nobility in corroborating the vassal's fealty to the new sovereign (*Documentele moldoveneşti*, 1932, p. 601-602), which proved the existence in Moldavia of at least two fortresses at that time. Therefore, we should ask which of the strongholds credited to Peter the Ist (Şcheia, Suceava Seat Fortress, Neamţ, Ţeţina, Hmielov, or the Roman wooden stronghold) was already in place in the fall of 1387?

It is undoubtedly tempting to assume that all of those fortresses were already in place at that time, but the written or archaeological sources only establish the existence of two stone fortresses in Suceava, and maybe of the one in Neamţ. Within the *Costăchescu* collection, the aforementioned document is followed by another, in the form of a letter from Peter the Ist, in which the ruler stated he had trusted the Warsaw *pan*/duke with the greatest part of the loan of 3000 francs, promised to his sovereign; the letter was signed in *the Suceava fortress*, at **February 10th, 1388** (*Documentele moldoveneşti*, 1932, p. 604).

It wouldn't be too farfetched to assume that if the Suceava fortress was a fully functional edifice in February 1388, in which the ruler resided and from which he sent his correspondence, then it must have been equally functional in September, 1387; otherwise, we would have to accept that the construction was in full speed during the winter of 1387/8, which is rather implausible.

We must underline that the Cyrillic document was written in the very **fortress** (*gorod*) of Suceava, *which is not to be mistaken* for the **market town** (*miasto*) of Suceava, as it was contentiously done by some Romanian researchers. Şt. S. Gorovei (2008) pertinently proved this point, also stating that almost all written sources of the time clearly differentiate between *fortress* and *town;* the two terms were not used lightly, as literary effects or to alternately designate the same reality. Anyway, in the summer of 1388, the same year in which the Suceava fortress was attested,

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another meaningful, yet largely ignored document, mentioned, although slightly distorting, the town of Suceava (*Ciciov*), when listing the towns placed under the Armenian archbishop of Lvov's jurisdiction, the Catholicos Theodoros the II[nd].

Going back to the plural expression *our fortresses*, we still have to establish which was the second Muşatin fortress mentioned in the document for the fall of 1387. Without a specific written testimony, information comes only from archaeological sources. During excavation campaigns on the Şeptilici hill, in the north-west part of Suceava, remains of the Muşatin stone fortress of Şcheia were uncovered. Since it was only 2 km away from the center of the town and, consequently, from the Seat Fortress, it would be reasonable to assume that it was built before the latter. Luckily, archaeological researches conducted within the fortress (Gh. Diaconu, N. Constantinescu, 1960) offered enough evidence towards this particular chronological sequence, even for those scholars ridden by a defective reasoning.

Without approaching further details, already presented elsewhere (M. D. Matei, 2004), suffice is to say that the architectural elements of the Şcheia fortress make it seem more like a failed experiment – an attempt at implementing a quadrangular fortification in a hilly environment. Archaeologists proved that its numerous constructive faults made it unusable, leading to its abandonment while still unfinished (M. D. Matei, 2004). The constructive effort was then aimed towards the Seat Fortress, which benefited from both better strategic planning, as well as increased constructive knowledge, as was the case, several years later, with the almost flawless constructive work employed in building the Neamţ fortress (M. D. Matei, 2004).

Closing in on our contribution, we have to recap some archaeological data which question the general chronology of the *Muşatin* monetary emissions, especially the *two lilies* type (K. Pârvan, 1997); numismatists invariably and arbitrarily place the latter *after* 1387. In the construction level of the Şcheia fortress, archaeologists discovered several Muşatin coins, out of which two belonged to this very monetary emission. Their discovery *within the site* makes them a valuable *terminus post quem* dating element: one was found under a wall's foundation, while the other was found in the temporary settlement nearby the furnaces, underneath the sandstone slab of the first load of furnace I (Gh. Diaconu, N. Constantinescu, 1960).

Thus, placing this monetary release after 1387 proves to be *impossible*, for two reasons: first, the completion of the Şcheia fortress precedes the building of the Suceava Seat Fortress, which was already in use in 1387, thus making it unreasoning to assume the walls were erected over an coin not yet emitted; second, even without those dating facts, historical reasoning should have rejected the notion that, after 1387, the ruler would have opted for building a surveillance fortress on the road coming from the protective state of Poland, as opposed to placing it on the road coming from the adverse state of Hungary, the one linking Gura Humorului and Suceava, through the future Vornic Oană's Tulova.

To conclude: all historical data available, from written to archaeological sources, indicate that building up the *Muşatin* stone fortresses over the course of several years could not have begun considerably later than the death of King Louis the Great (1382), whose dissapearing enabled such an endeavor. Taking into account the undisputable succesive chronology of erecting Şcheia, Suceava and Neamţ fortresses, which precedeed the act of fealty to the Polish crown, then, the beginning of the considerable constructive effort is to be found in the 1382/3 timeframe, when the *two-lilies* coins were already in use.

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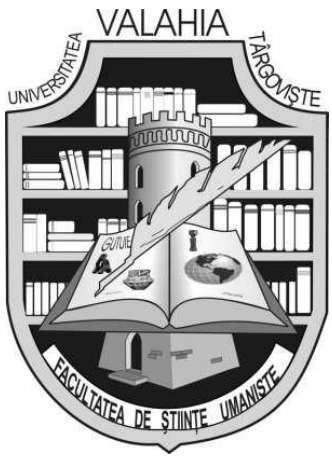

D'UNIVERSITÉ VALAHIA TARGOVISTE

SECTION d'Archéologie et d'Histoire

TOME XVIII

Numéro 2
2016

Valahia University Press
Târgovişte

https://biblioteca-digitala.ro

Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire publie des mémoires originaux, des nouvelles et des comptes-rendus dans le domaine de l'archéologie préhistorique, de l'histoire du moyen âge, de l'environnement de l'homme fossile, de l'archéologie interdisciplinaire et de patrimoine culturel.

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Revue indexée B+ par CNCSIS et B par CNCS - Roumanie

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ISSN: 1584-1855; ISSN (online): 2285–3669

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Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste,
Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire,
Tome XVIII, Numéro 2, 2016, p. 33-50
ISSN: 1584-1855;
ISSN (online): 2285–3669

This title is indexed in SciVerse Scopus
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The International Dimension of the Romanians Anti-Ottoman Fight between the 15th and the 18th Century

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Abstract: The aim of our present paper, underwent several important historical stages, between the 15th and the 18th century, and ended up with the maintaining of the autonomy and territorial integrity of the Romanian Countries. We will also underline the main political moments to which these states took part during the centuries mentioned above, highlighting their place and role in the international relations from these times and the influence these relations had on their political situation. The expansion of the Ottoman Empire towards Central Europe was stopped by the isolated or coalesced resistance of the Romanian Countries. The Danube becoming the main European front for the Ottoman Empire during this period. The Romanians fought fiercely for the defense of their countries. Their anti-Ottoman fight, between the 15th and the 18th centuries, caused numerous defeats to the Ottoman armies, triggering important consequences for the state of the European continent.

Key words: Romanian Countries, Ottoman Empire, Danube, anti-Ottoman fight, XVth-XVIIIth centuries

The evolutions of the Romanian area have been influenced, to a large extent, by external factors, by closer of farther states, whose interests crossed in this extremely important geographical zone of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Between the 15th and the 18th centuries, the Romanian area has been submitted to military, political and economic pressures, from all sides.

The international dimension of the Romanians' anti-Ottoman fight, during this period, the object of our present paper, underwent several important historical stages and ended up with the maintaining of the autonomy and territorial integrity of the Romanian Countries. We will also underline the main political moments to which these states took part during the centuries mentioned above, highlighting their place and role in the international relations from these times and the influence these relations had on their political situation.

In north, the pressure on the Romanian area came from Poland, though this country, towards the middle of the 15th century, will transfer the focus of its external politics towards the area of the Black Sea and of the Baltic Sea. From west, the menace was Hungary, and after its fall, the Habsburg Empire. From east, the Tartars exerted a permanent pressure on the Romanian area, to which we can add the arrival of the Cossacks, during the last quarter of the 16th century. From south stood out the Ottoman Empire, at the time in expansion, representing the greatest menace for the Romanians. From east, the main threat were the Tartars of the Great Horde, situated on the Volga River, and those from the Crimean Khanate, first of all menacing Moldavia and then representing a danger for Wallachia and Transylvania as well. Especially after 1475, when the politico-military alliance between the Tartars and the Turks began to function, and the Crimean Tartars became subordinated to the Ottoman Porte, they menaced the entire Romanian area, especially Moldavia, with attacks from two fronts – from south and east. The Turkish-Tartar alliance functioned efficiently in 1476, 1484, 1538, and 1574 and on other occasions, when Moldova suffered defeats

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and important territorial losses. Without being a direct menace for the international status of the Romanian Countries, the Tatars from the region of the Volga River and from Crimea could give a decisive support to the Ottoman Turks in their attempt to subordinate as much as possible the Romanian area (Ș. Papacostea, 1974, p. 448-449; 1978, p. 477; P.P. Panaitescu, 1958, p. 95; E. Denize, 2003, p. 5-7).

The biggest threat came from south, from the Ottoman Empire. From a simple Turkish Emirate, as many other from Anatolia, towards the end of the Byzantine Empire, the Ottomans managed to create, in less than a century, a strong empire, which represented a serious threat for the Christian Europe, forcing it to re-discuss an entire series of projects of crusades. The rapid Ottoman expansion in Anatolia and in the Balkan Peninsula reached the Danube at the end of the 14th century, becoming a direct menace for the Romanian area. The Ottoman threat was radically different than the ones exerted by the Christian kingdoms, by Hungary and Poland, as it was not a menace against a state, but against a different culture and civilization. If Turkey had conquered the Romanian Countries, and if it had set up a pashalik, the Romanian political, economic, military and cultural elites would have been destroyed. The Islam would have replaced the Christianism and the being of the Romanian people itself would have been in danger of disappearing (E. Denize, 2003, p. 20).

The fact that the Turks made a direct contact with the Romanian Countries and with Hungary, during the reign of the sultan Baiazid I (1389-1402), as well as the Ottoman Empire's tendency of expansion in the north of the Danube, opened a long period of fights between the Romanians and the Ottoman power, for a century and a half. The expansion of the Ottoman Empire towards Central Europe was stopped by the isolated or coalesced resistance of the Romanian Countries, the Danube becoming the main European front for the Ottoman Empire during this period.

The analysis of the historical processes and evolutions that occurred during the second half of the 15th century, concerning the Christian states from the European continent shows that they were quite similar everywhere, from the Atlantic Ocean almost to the Ural Mountains. Obviously, given the specific socio-economic, political, cultural and geographic conditions, the historical evolutions from this period advantaged more the Occidental states, like Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, the Italian and German States, and less the states from the central, eastern and south-eastern area of the continent. However all Europe was going in the same direction, towards a capitalist economy (E. Denize, 2004, p. 9-14; P. H. Beik, Laurence Lafore, 1959, p. 20; B. Chevalier Bernard; R.R. Palmer, J. Colton, 1974; N. J. G. Pounds, 1974; P. Léon, 1977; I. Wallerstein, 1980; S. Ozment, 1980; J. Delumeau, 1984).

The economic, social and political changes, to which we can add the appearing of the Ottoman Turks in South-Eastern Europe and in the Oriental Mediterranean area, determined in the 15th century the beginning of the process of shifting of the main continental commercial axis from the Mediterranean and Baltic area towards the Atlantic Ocean. The most eloquent example in this sense is Genoa, which transfers its interests from the Black Sea area towards the Iberian Peninsula and enjoys, therefore, until the second half of the 17th century, a new glamour and prosperity (J. Delumeau, 1984).

Politically, the transformations of the economic and social life had a tremendous importance for the accomplishment of the processes of territorial unification and political centralization, and for the appearing of the modern territorial states, led in their internal and external actions by « *raisons d'Etat* » (A. Oțetea, 1939a, p. 7-28; 1968, p. 147-148; E. Denize, 2004, p. 14). The Renaissance marked, from this perspective, the final end of the ideal of crusade, of the imperial messianism and of the unity of the Christian world.

The monarchy put an end to the feudal anarchy, abolished most of the political rights and privileges of the nobles, to the town's autonomy and to the clergy's privileges (E. Denize, 2004, p. 14-16). The Parliament's control over the monarchy's fiscal and general policy becomes more and more obvious, even in England, while in France and Spain, the General Assemblies and the Cortes are rather the allies than the opponents of the monarchy.

Such states appeared in Henry VII Tudor's England (1485-1509), who put an end to the War of the Two Roses, in the France of Charles VII and of Louis XI (1422-1461 and 1461-1483), who decisively reduced the nobility's impetus, in the Spain of the Catholic kings, Isabella de Castilla (1474-1504) and Ferdinand of Aragon (1479-1516), who united the state and completed the regaining of

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the territories under Muslim domination, by means of the occupation of Granada's Emirate, after the war between 1481-1492, in the Portugal of Alfons V (1438-1481), of Joao II (1481-1495) and of Manuel I the Great (1495-1521), who prepared the great geographic discoveries and the great maritime journeys and who changed the world's image.

But the modern states did not appear only in the Occident. They appeared under specific conditions and circumstances in the central and southeast Europe as well. The same unification and centralization process can be encountered in Poland, during the reign of Cazimir IV Jagiello (1445-1492), in Ivan III's Russia (1462-1505), in Mathias Corvin's Hungary (1458-1490) in the Wallachia of Vlad Ţepeş (1448, 1456-1462, 1476) and in the Moldavia of Ştefan cel Mare (1457-1504). But here, the great influence of the nobles and of the boyards as well as the Ottoman invasion delayed the normal evolution of these countries towards the modern state, hindered this evolution and condemned the entire region to a process of stagnation and regress, to a process of late re-feudalization.

The disappearing of the crusade ideals, of unity of the Christian world and of the universality of the imperial power led, in the political European world, not to their replacement by other ideals, but to a reality that imposed itself and was recognized as such, in the spirit of the pragmatism of the Renaissance, together with the system of the European States and of the balance of powers. The principle of the balance of powers, applied first in Italy, by means of the Peace or League from Lodi, from 1454, was adopted European-wide as a means of defense against the expansion of a power that menaced to destroy the report of forces established among the competing powers. Within this system, the main role belonged to the sovereign states. Each state represented a community and a power. There was no more international community led by a central power, the international institutions, even the newly created ones, no longer had direct authority over the states. Because religion, in general, and especially the Papacy, had lost the authority they had had during the previous centuries, this new system of the European states included the Ottoman Empire as well, as one of its main factors. Although Europe was afraid of the Turks, although the crusade rhetoric and the projects of sending them away were largely present throughout the continent, however the Ottoman Empire was introduced in the political system of the European states, thus becoming one of the most powerful states of the continent. The first Christians who negotiated with the Turks were the Italians, especially those from Genoa and from Venice, but also those from Florence, Milan and even the Papacy, during Alexander VI. Then followed Hungary, Poland and the Great Principality of Moscow, France, the German Empire, Spain and all the other European states, the Ottoman Turks becoming a natural component of the European political system, of the balance of powers on our continent (A. Oţetea, 1939b, p. 3-20; 1968, p. 157-158; V. Grecu, 1953, p. 55-81; E. Denize, 2004, p. 19).

This status reached by the Ottoman Empire during the 16th century was won by the Ottomans thanks to the conquests they had made during the 15th century and at the beginning of the following century. After conquering Constantinople under the leadership of the sultan Mehmed II (1451-1481), they continued their victories, defeating Moreea (1458-1460), Serbia (1459), Sinope and Trapezunt (1461), Lesbos (1462), Bosnia (1463), Karamania (1468), Negroponte (1470), Eastern Anatolia (1473), Caffa (1475), Albania (1478), Chilia and Cetatea Albă (1480). The Black Sea was transformed in a closed Ottoman Lake. The conquests of Selim I the Terrible and of Soliman I the Magnificent, from the first half of the 16th century, turned the Ottoman Empire into a power covering three continents, with possessions in Europe, Asia and Africa. After the beginning of the Great Geographic Discoveries, the great commercial roads linking the Extreme Orient to the countries of the European West either went by the Ottoman Empire, or the latter did not know how to use them. Under these circumstances, the transformation of the Black Sea into an Ottoman Lake (A. Afetinan, 1976, p. 7; M. Berza, 1941, p. 409-435; Gh. I. Brătianu, 1944, p. 36-69; 1969, p. 327-328; E. Denize, 2004, p. 20-21) the principle of its closure for the navigation of foreign ships becoming a fundamental rule of the public law in the Ottoman Empire, excluded this region from the great circuits of the international commerce and turned it into one of Constantinople's main sources of provisioning, lacking the Romanian Countries, Poland and Hungary of important sources of revenues resulted from the Black Sea commerce. This was one of the main reasons of the re-

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feudalization of this country's society, of the transformation of Hungary into an anarchy to the point of its being wiped away from the map, of the weakening of the central power in Poland and of the deepening of the gap in the relations between the Romanian Countries and the Ottoman Porte in the 16th century. This entire geographic area missed the process of modernization and was condemned to remain behind from all the points of view in comparison with the states from Western Europe.

The Romanians fought fiercely struggling to defend their countries' autonomy and territorial integrity. This fights had, during the 15th century, several principal moments during the reigns of Mircea cel Bătrân, Iancu de Hunedoara, Vlad Tepeş and Stefan cel Mare, and during the 16th century, during the reigns of Radu de la Afumaţi, Petru Rareş, Ioan Vodă cel Cumplit and Mihai Viteazul. These princes' fights resulted in numerous defeats of the Ottoman army, had a strong echo in Europe and preserved the Romanian internal autonomy and the states' existence. In order to defend themselves against the great menace that was visible south of the Danube, the Romanian leaders did not use only the military force, but also the arms of diplomacy. They set up a vast network of international relations, trying to face the Ottoman Porte by means of international coalitions, of holy anti-Ottoman leagues to which as many Christian countries as possible were called to take part.

The appearing of the Ottoman Turks in Europe, around 1354, when they managed to conquer the Gallipoli Peninsula, marked the beginning of a new and significant historical epoch for the southeast and central areas of our continent. The Ottoman Turks brought with them a culture and civilization different from those of the Balkan and European peoples, in general, which caused a permanent state of conflict and tension. At the same time, with the appearing of the Ottoman Turks in Europe, an important historical problem was born, known as "*the Oriental issue*", which had two main stages: a defensive one for the Christian states, which is the same as the Epoch of the Late Crusade, which lasts until the siege of Vienna, from 1683, and an offensive stage, for the same states, which ends with the disappearing of the Ottoman Empire and the appearing of modern Turkey, immediately after the First World War (E. Denize, 2003, p. 24).

From their location in the south-east of the Balkan Peninsula, the Ottomans organized their offensive on three main directions (H. Inalcik, 1966, p. 12; A. Ghiaţă, 1971, p. 59): towards the center, westward, advancing on the road that linked Constantinople to Central Europe – Adrianopol (Edirne) – Plovdiv – Sofia, to the left, westward and south-westward, starting from Ipsela to Seres and to Albania, and in the south, to Greece, to the right, towards north and north-west, in the direction Stara Zagora-Karnobat-Dobrogea-Silistra. Acting in these directions, the Ottoman attack was successful, reaching the Danube by the end of the 14th century. Once the fortresses and the straights of the Balkan Mountains (Rodopi and Rîla) occupied, the Ottomans started the offensive in order to conquer the Bulgarian territories from beyond the mountains, up to the Danube. After the battle from Cirmen, from 1371, on the right, in the north, between 1371 and 1375, the Ottoman Turks conquer Yambol, Karnobat and other towns south of the Bulgarian czardom of Ioan Şişman. To the center and to the west, the Ottoman offensive evolved against the czardom of Vidin, of Ioan Stracimir, against Serbia and Bosnia, and, a few years later, the Turks continue on the rivers Morava and Nişava, where the locality Niş is occupied in 1368.

In 1369, the Turks are defeated at Plocinik, by the prince of Serbia, Lazarus, helped by the Bosnians, which delays the conquest of Serbia and Bosnia. In 1388, the Ottoman offensive turned against the north and northeast of Bulgaria.

The beginnings of the conflict between Wallachia and the Ottoman power started with the intervention of the prince Mircea cel Bătrân (1386-1418) south of the Danube, in 1388, contribution to the withdrawal of the troops commanded by Ali Pacha (A. Ghiaţă, 1971, p. 60-63; M. Guboglu, 1966, p. 48).

Between 1388 and 1389, the Turks occupy north Albania, a part of Epir, and in 1392 they conquer Skoplje, after having managed to conquer in 1389 Kossovo, Kossovopolje, a historical battle that determined the fate of the Slavic Balkan countries, through the victory of the Turks against a Balkan coalition led by the Serbian prince Lazarus (M. Georgescu, 2005, p. 314-315). In 1391, the Turks, led by Firuz-bei, attack Vidin and undertake a raid in Wallachia, which provoked the reaction of the Wallachian prince, who attacked south of the Danube, going up to the Balkan Mountains, at the end of 1390 or the beginning of 1391 (N. Pienaru, 1996, p. 495, cited by E. Denize, 2003, p. 25). The

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Ottoman conquests progressed in the north of the Balkan Peninsula. The year 1393 brought the final submission of the Bulgarian Czardom of Şişman whose capital was at Târnovo (M. Georgescu, 2005, p. 316).

The main episode of the fight between the Wallachian prince and the sultan Baiazid, whose army also included the troops of his Balkan vassals was the bloody fight from Rovine, a place that remained unidentified, probably situated in the alpine region of Wallachia, on October 10, 1394, where the Turks suffered a heavy defeat. While waiting for a new Turkish attack, Mircea concluded an alliance with King Sigismund (Braşov, March 7, 1395). In May 1395, Baiazid I came back with a strong army and defeated the allied Romanian and Hungarian troops, yet his victory was won with heavy losses (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 185). Among the Turks' vassals there were the Serbian princes Stefan Lazarovici, son and successor of the prince of Kossovo, Marko, son of Vucaşin, who owned a territory near Prilep, and Constantin Dejanovici, his grandson, who reigned over the Oriental Macedonia (M. Georgescu, 2005, p. 316-317). The Ottomans' above-mentioned successes would make a huge impression in Occidental Europe.

The project that led to the anti-Ottoman crusade ended with the disaster from Nicopole, on September 15, 1396. The call of the Hungarian king Sigismund de Luxemburg, to which Europe answered, resulted in support for the coalition from Venice, which sent a small fleet in the Dardanelle, made up of 30 small ships (P. P. Panaitescu, 2000, p. 329; 2001, p. 286). The promising action failed completely. In the battle from Nicopole, the strong, but too scattered army, was defeated by the Turks, because of the inefficient cohesion between the Hungarian and the French forces.

The disaster of the crusaders from Nicopole faced the Byzantine Empire, and especially Constantinople, with a very difficult situation. The sultan Baiazid I attempted to conquer the empire's capital by means of a real blockade. Under these circumstances, Venice managed to provide the necessary supplies to Constantinople between 1396-1403, to gather with the Genovese fleets, defended the free circulation through the straits connecting the Black see to the Mediterranean Sea and, before 1402, managed to make a maritime anti-Ottoman alliance together with Genoa, with Byzantium's emperor, Manuel II, with the Duke of Naxos and the hospitable knights from Rhodes (J.W. Barker, 1969, p. 234, cited by E. Denize, 2003, p. 26).

The terrible defeat of the sultan Baiazid I, on July 28, 1402, at Angora (Ankara) (Marie-Mathilde Alexandrescu-Dersca, 1942, cited by E. Denize, 2003, p. 27; E. Werner, 1978), by Timur-Lenk, the great Mongolian Khan, resulted in the separation of the Ottoman Empire into two parts, the territories from Asia going to Mehmed I, and those from Europe, to Soliman, and then to Musa, until 1413, when the reunification is achieved by Mehmed I (1413-1421).

As for the European territories, mastered by Soliman I, they were doubly threatened. On the one hand, a maritime coalition had been formed around Venice, and on the other hand, a continental coalition was becoming possible as well, centered on the alliance between Sigismund of Luxemburg and Mircea cel Bătrân. Collaboration between the two coalitions would have finally meant a great danger for the Ottomans (Ș. Papacostea, 1986, p. 24).

If Mircea cel Bătrân was determined to do his best to keep the Turks as far away from the Wallachian frontiers as possible, Venice was however less reluctant to reach a compromise with the sultan. Such a compromise would have ensured its commercial, political and military interests. Thus, beginning with April 1402, Mircea cel Bătrân, with the help of Sigismund of Luxemburg, Hungary's king, won a few battles at the Lower Danube, where he conquered the main fords (N. Iorga, 1937, p. 6). This offensive of the Romanian prince hurried the decision of the sultan Soliman I of opening negotiations with Venice, in order to conclude a peace treaty. The sultan's determination was prompted by the Wallachian's prince who was really following a program of destruction of the Ottoman force by means of attacks against the basic elements of the Ottoman political construction (T. Gemil, 1987, p. 353; P. Șt. Năsturel, 1978, p. 50; 1966, p. 63-65; Ș. Papacostea, 1986, p. 26).

In 1403 and 1404, Mircea cel Bătrân, following the same line, won a few battles and conquered Silistra and the entire Dobrogea. The main purpose of the military and political initiatives of the Romanian prince was to prevent the Ottoman Empire to reunite again. Supporting, in collaboration with other powers, different claimers to the succession of Baiazid I, Mircea tried to keep

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the Ottoman danger away from his country.

At the beginning of 1417, a large Turkish army invades Wallachia, conquers Dobrogea and imposes the payment of a tribute to the Romanian prince. At the same time, the Turks occupy some strategic areas on the northern bank of the Danube – Turnu and Giurgiu -, from where they could initiate devastating raids inside the country. The control over these areas facilitated the setting up of the Turkish hegemony in Wallachia.

Continuing their offensive, the Turks launch a massive attack at the Lower Danube, in 1420, trying to take over the control of the entire river, from Porţile de Fier to its mouths at the Black Sea. During this action the son and successor of Mircea, Mihail, disappeared (1418-1420). Though the attempt failed, though with the help of Sigismund of Luxemburg, Wallachia managed to get rid of the unbearable type of domination the Turks had imposed in 1420, however, the Ottoman presence becomes increasingly significant in this region during the reigns of: Dan II (1421-1431), Radu Praznaglava (1421-1427), Alexandru Aldea (1431-1436), Vlad Dracul (1436-1447), whose reigns were repeatedly interrupted by dark political and military events, while the country oscillated between the alliance with the Hungarian king and the acceptance of the Ottoman peace. The Turks initiate a series of devastating raids in Transylvania, of which the best known are those that took place in 1421, 1432 and 1438, this territory being directly menaced by the Ottoman power (**Istoria Românilor*…., p. 306-315).

In Transylvania as well, the efforts of consolidating the central power were closely connected with the fight against the Ottoman expansion. Tendencies in this sense are noted as well in some measures of Sigismund of Luxemburg, the Hungarian king, meant to ensure a larger participation in the army, but they were developed to the maximum by the politics of Iancu de Hunedoara, whose name is connected to the last significant attempts of chasing away the Turks from Europe.

Iancu de Hunedoara (1441-1446) held a significant role in the anti-Ottoman war at the Lower Danube, his political and military activity being dominated by the effort of organizing the resistance against the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, Transylvania being situated on the main front against the extending Ottoman power. He came from a family of not very rich Romanian nobles from Haţeg, who, together with the nobles from Banat, provided a great number of soldiers for the wars of the Hungarian Empire against the Ottoman Empire. Iancu de Hunedoara secured the highest rank in the Hungarian Kingdom, being ban of Severin (1438-1441), prince of Transylvania (1441-1446), governor (1446-1453) and general captain of the kingdom (1453-1456) (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 181, 186-187).

The anti-Ottoman fight of Iancu de Hunedoara took place as part of the effort to organize a new crusade, this effort having been prepared by the Union achieved in 1439 between Florence, the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, a posthumous result of the politics of Sigismund of Luxemburg, who tried to support a common European action against the Ottomans.

The first stage of the anti-Ottoman action of Iancu of Hunedoara took place within the framework created by the Union from Florence, which seemed to ensure favorable conditions for a new European action meant to chase away the Turks from Europe, and for the achievement in 1440 of the personal union between the Hungarian king and the Polish king, namely Vladislav Jagiello, the prelude of the coalition of all the regional forces directly menaced by the Turks.

Understanding the sense of the general European evolution, the sultan Murad II started new military actions at the Lower Danube, in 1440-1441, in Serbia, in order to conquer Belgrade. The sultan organizes, under the leadership of Mezid, bey of Vidin, a significant military action in Transylvania (March 22, 1442). After a first success, the Turks were heavily defeated by the troops of Iancu de Hunedoara, in the south of the country. Exploiting his victory, the Transylvanian prince crossed the Carpathians and arrived in Wallachia, where he enthroned a prince that was favorable to the Christian cause. The Turks' attempt to annihilate this success brought Iancu de Hunedoara once again in Wallachia, where he defeated and destroyed the Ottoman army, who was led by the beglerbeg of Rumelia, in the battle that took place on the upper course of Ialomiţa River in September 1442.

His greatest success came the following year, when the Transylvanian prince adopted an offensive tactics.In the context of serious negotiations for the organization of a new crusade, supported by Rome, but not by the other Western powers, Iancu prepares

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and leads, in the autumn of 1443, a significant military action inside the Balkan Peninsula, to which king Vladislav Jagiello participated as well. Defeating the Turks, the princely army occupies the towns Niş and Sofia, but the coming of the winter and the Turks' resistance in the crossings of the Carpathian Mountains forced it to withdraw.

"*The long campaign*", one of the most brilliant military achievements of those times, led by the Transylvanian prince south of the Danube at the end of 1443 and the beginning of 1444, certainly contributed to the starting of the anti-Ottoman revolt of the Albanian people, led by Skanderbeg, and of other anti-Ottoman uprisings in the Balkans. At the same time, his victories stimulated as well the anti-Ottoman actions in the Turkish-Muslim Anatolia and turned him into a real hero of the Christian world (*propugnaculum christianitas*) (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 188; T. Nicolau, 1925, p. 41; C. Mureşan, 1968, p. 73; E. Denize , 2003, p. 47) .

But, before the disaster from Varna, as a consequence of the great victories of Iancu de Hunedoara in "The Long Campaign", in the south-east of Europe was created a strategic and political situation that was especially favorable to the Christian forces, a situation that, in order to bring about a decisive defeat of the Turks, needed a period of consolidation that only the negotiation of a peace with the sultan could have offered. Aware of this thing, he managed to convince Vladislav I to accept the propositions made by the Turks, so that, on June 12, a peace treaty for the following ten years was concluded in Adrianopol. The treaty, which was profitable for the Christians, was ratified in July, at Seghedin (Fr. Pall, 1941, p. 144-148; C. Mureşan, 1968, p. 97; 1979, p. 337-379; **Istoria Românilor*…., p. 342-348).

The fast victories of Iancu of Hunedoara led to the beginning of a new expedition in the Balkan Peninsula, in 1445, which would have been enough to send the Turks away from Europe, among its organizers being Vladislav I of Hungary, the papal representative Giulio Cesarini, the duke of Bourgogne, Alphonse V of Aragon and of Venice.

Venice had accepted to send a fleet to make it impossible for the Turkish armies to cross the straits, as they were, most of them, in Minor Asia with the sultan. Begun during the autumn, with few troops, in the hope that it would be an easy action that would destroy the Turkish domination over Europe, the expedition of king Vladislav I ended in a great disaster. Fearing the setting up of their Venetian rivals in the straits, the Genovese from Pera transported to Europe, on their ships, the troops of the sultan Murad II. Taken aback by the presence of a Turkish army much larger than his own army, the king's army was destroyed at Varna (November 10, 1444) and king Vladislav I himself died on the battlefield. At Varna, it was not only the Christian army that was destroyed, but also the last great hope of saving Byzantium and of sending the Turks away from Europe. Iancu de Hunedoara's new attempt of starting the offensive in the Balkans, in collaboration with Skanderbeg, the hero of Albania's anti-Ottoman uprising, ended in a new defeat with heavy losses at Kossovo, in October 1448. Iancu de Hunedoara, who represented the interests of the entire Romanian area, to which he had given a feudal state unity, focused his entire political, diplomatic and military action on the fight against the Ottoman menace. This fight, given the fact that the Christian Western states – especially those whose interests were as well directly menaced by the Ottoman expansion – sent no significant help, had no chance to succeed. But even if the attempt of sending the Turks away from Europe failed, Iancu de Hunedoara managed to prevent their progress towards the center of Europe. Mehmed II's attempt to conquer Belgrade, under the favorable conditions created by the occupation of Constantinople, was stopped under Belgrade's walls, fiercely defended by Iancu in July 1446 (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 188).

The following stage of the Romanian resistance against the Ottoman Empire was illustrated by Vlad Ţepeş (1448, 1456-1462, 1476), prince of Wallachia (N. Stoicescu, 1976, p. 21; Ş. Andreescu, 1998, p. 66; **Istoria Românilor*…., p. 314-316, 349-363). In 1459, Pope Pius II tried to relaunch, at the Congress from Mantua, the crusade against the Turks. The Pope's initiative resulted in a revolt of the Greeks in Pelopones, which was soon repressed by Mehmed II, who consequently gave an impetus to the actions of the powers from Asia Minor, led by Uzun Hasan, the Turkman Khan of the tribe union known as Akkoyunlu. On the European side, to the action participated Vlad Ţepeş, the Wallachian prince, in collaboration with Matias Corvin, the king of Hungary.

Ceasing to pay the tribute to the Porte, Vlad Ţepeş opened the war with the Ottoman Porte. In

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the winter of 1461-1462, at a moment when the sultan was trying to gather together his armies, after the hard fights from the campaign from Asia Minor against Uzun Hasa and his allies, the Wallachian prince attacks and destroys the entire Ottoman war machine from the Lower Danube, in an attempt of making it difficult for the sultan to assail his country.

The Ottoman assault initiated by Mehmed II, in a new strategy characterized by the combination of terrestrial and naval operations, began in June 1462, when the sultan, who had taken over the command of his troops, entered Wallachia. At the same time, Vlad Ţepeş had to deal as well with the attempt of Ştefan cel Mare of conquering Chilia. The great army led by the sultan, of over 100.000 soldiers, continued to advance in Wallachia, through a territory devastated at the order of the Romanian prince, who continuously harassed the Turks. During one of these actions, Vlad Ţepeş personally entered at night in the Turkish camp, leading a small group of soldiers, an operation that became notorious all over Europe.

After advancing up to Târgovişte, the country's capital, which he found empty, the sultan decided the retreat without having been able to engage in any decisive battle with the Romanian army. But Mehmed II transformed the failure into a political success, thanks to the agreement he concluded with the Wallachian boyards. Vlad Ţepeş withdrew to Transylvania, hoping to return with military help from Matias Corvin. Yet, the latter, preoccupied by his confrontation with Frederic III of Habsburg, arrested Vlad Ţepeş and took him with him to Buda, and Wallachia began again to pay tribute to the Ottoman Empire.

Vlad Ţepeş enjoyed a significant European fame, which gave birth to an abundant literary production, spread beginning with the second half of the 15th century throughout Central and Eastern Europe. A strong and complex personality, become famous since his existence, Vlad Ţepeş faced the Ottoman power and managed to defeat Mahomed II el Fatih, one of the greatest sultans, the reformer of the Sublime Porte, the conqueror of Constantinople and of the Byzantine Empire. His anti-Ottoman action delayed the establishment of the Ottoman domination over the Romanian Countries, allowing the Central and Eastern Europe to turn to good account the fruits of the Humanism and of the Renaissance.

In a fluid and complex international context, during his long reign, Ştefan cel Mare (1457-1504) managed to keep the stability of the relations with the Ottoman Empire, and even to eliminate the asymmetry appeared in these relations with the payment of the tribute by Moldavia, between 1455-1456 (Ş. Papacostea, 1981, p. 899-918; cited by E. Denize, 2004, p. 22-23; P. Syke, 1930, p. 140-162; V. Minorsky, 1933, p. 1-23; R. Furon, 1938, p. 132-133) . In order to attain this objective, he set in motion a large network of international relations spread from Italy to Persia, the traditional Asian enemy of the Ottoman Turks. The fight against the Ottoman Empire was imposed to Ştefan cel Mare as a true historical need, because Moldova, with its important economic, political and military power could not accept to assist passively to its subordination by the sultans from Constantinople. His fight ended with a success in point of the stability of the Moldavian-Ottoman relations, yet with a failure concerning the setting up of the Ottoman domination over the entire Black Sea Basin. But, though he was unable to prevent the Ottoman expansion, Ştefan cel Mare managed to delay it, just like his predecessors Mircea cel Bătrân, Iancu de Hunedoara and Vlad Ţepeş. Thus they gave the states of Central Europe, and especially the Habsburg Empire, the necessary time to find solutions and to gather the capacity to stop the Turkish expansion.

If the Turks were stopped in front of Vienna in 1529, this was also due to the fierce resistance of the Romanians, who prevented the transformation of their states into Ottoman pashaliks and caused heavy losses to the sultan's armies. Defending themselves, the Romanians also defended Central Europe, gaining a well-deserved role in the history of the European continent during the 15th and 16th centuries.

Externally, Moldova had to face three major threats: Poland, Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, which wanted to draw Moldova in their sphere of influence and even to extend their direct domination over it. Important parts of the country were under foreign domination: Hotin, a walled city occupied by Poland, and Chilia, another fortified city occupied by Hungary. If Poland and Hungary already represented traditional menaces that often annihilated each other, on the other hand the Ottoman Empire represented the menace of a power

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with a politics of expansion in the geographic area of the Danube and of the Black Sea.

Ştefan cel Mare returned to the traditional orientation of the external politics of Moldova, namely the alliance with Poland. The Moldavian prince concluded, in April 1459, a convention with king Cazimir, by which he recognized him as sovereign. The renewal of the relation with Poland implicitly meant the drawing away from Hungary and Wallachia. The early indicators of this evolution turned into a direct opposition in 1462, under the favorable conditions created by the attack of Mehmed II against Vlad Ţepeş, when Ştefan cel Mare tried to conquer Chilia, but did not succeed. Yet in 1465, the Moldavian prince managed to conquer the walled city from the mouths of the Danube, seriously undermining the commercial interests of Hungary and Wallachia.

In order to reestablish the former order, Matias Corvin entered the campaign at the end of 1467, advancing at the lead of a large army towards Suceava, Moldova's capital, where he hoped to enthrone his contender for the throne. At Baia, an urban center and the headquarters of the Catholic bishopric of the country, where the king had stopped in order to prepare his final attack, Ştefan cel Mare launched his counterattack. The result of the fight was not definite, but the impetus of the royal army was stopped. Unable to continue his advance, Mathias Corvin left Moldova without attaining his objective.

Hungary's last attempt to impose its domination over Moldova by means of arms and to create a direct connection with the Black Sea ended with a failure. Trying to do the same thing, namely to conquer Moldova's Chilia, the Wallachian prince, Radu cel Frumos (1462- 1474) begins, in his turn, his hostilities against Ştefan cel Mare (1470).

The war against Wallachia was but the prelude of the great confrontation with the Ottoman Empire started by Ştefan cel Mare in 1473, when he enthroned a new prince, faithful to him, in the neighboring country, which he had saved from the Ottoman domination. The immediate purpose of the action of the Moldavian prince was to ensure his control over the mouths of the Danube and to remove the danger of their re-becoming Ottoman possessions. But the war begun by Ştefan cel Mare in 1473 was part of a much larger effort to slow down the Ottoman expansion. To this effort participated, from 1463, Venice, menaced to lose its possessions from the Aegean Sea, Hungary and other powers. Ştefan cel Mare's war against the Turks coincided with the last attempt of the adversaries of the Porte to restore the freedom of the Black Sea.

The loss of Wallachia and the remake of an anti-Ottoman front at the Danube represented a serious danger for the Ottoman domination in the Balkan Peninsula. Mehmed II organized, in order to get Moldova out of the fight, at the beginning of 1475, a great expedition under the command of the beglerbeg of Rumelia, Soliman. The prince's attempt to set up his camp south of Vaslui, at Podul Înalt, in a narrow place, was meant to make up for the great number of soldiers in the Ottoman army. Ştefan cel Mare destroyed the great army sent by Mehmed against him (January 10, 1475). The news of the victory spread all over Europe witnessing the unexpected power that Moldova had (E. Denize, 2004, p. 73; N. Iorga, 1897, p. 93; I. Bogdan, 1913, p. 319-329; **Istoria Românilor*…., p. 378-379).

Understanding that a new Ottoman offensive was unavoidable, Ştefan cel Mare began, immediately after the victory, to prepare a new stage of the fight. Envoys sent to Poland and Hungary, to Venice and Rome, to the khanat of Crimea and to Caffa, tried to enlarge the anti-Ottoman coalition in order to give Moldova the possibility to face under better conditions the new attack of the sultan Mehmed II.

In July 1475, putting an end to their conflict, Ştefan cel Mare and Matias Corvin negotiated a treaty of anti-Ottoman alliance, which set new bases for the relations between the two countries. In order to give more chances of success to the new confrontation under way with Moldova, the sultan organized a great expedition in Crimea, after which Caffa and the entire system of colonies of Genoa come under Ottoman domination in June 1475. The Tartar Khanat of Crimea submits to the sultan, becoming a vassal state of the Ottoman Porte. Consequently, Moldova is caught in the tongs of the Turkish-Tartar coalition.

In June 1476, Mehmed II enters Moldova with an immense army of more than 100 000 people. His arrival had been preceded by devastating raids of the Tartars from Crimea, sent away by Ştefan cel Mare at the cost of the scattering of his army. The prince's attempt to stop the sultan's march toward Suceava was made by means of the setting up of the Moldavian camp on a high plateau, on the Valley of

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Pârâul Alb, a tributary of Moldova River, at a place called Războieni or Valea Albă. His attempt failed, the capital of the country being conquered by invaders. But the intense resistance of the walled cities prevented the sultan from obtaining political gains out of his victory. As in the meantime a Transylvanian army was moving to Moldova, endangering the sultan's connection with his provisions, and as Ştefan cel Mare began to gather a new army, Mehmed II started to withdraw, in August 1476. The second great campaign against Moldova ended therefore with a huge failure.

Lacking dynamism, the anti-Ottoman coalition did not exploit the unfavorable moment the Ottoman Empire was going through. Following the example of Venice, Ştefan cel Mare signed a peace with the sultan, returning to the former conditions (1479-1480). Baiazid II (1481-1512), the successor of Mehmed II, used the favorable conditions created by the peace concluded with Hungary in 1483 in order to start a great expedition against Ştefan cel Mare in order to conquer the Moldavian fortified cities from the Black Sea, Chilia and Cetatea Albă. In July 1484, the sultan's terrestrial army and fleet arrived at the mouths of the Danube, supported by the army of the Wallachian prince Vlad Călugărul (1481-1495) and joining the Tartars from Crimea. Under siege by land and by water, and with no perspective of help, the two fortified cities were defeated. This put an end to the existence of the last free emporia from the Basin of the Black Sea, and this is how the Black Sea became a Turkish lake (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 192-193; **Istoria Românilor*…., p. 385-387).

Ştefan cel Mare tried to re-conquer his fortified cities, helped by Poland, which was seriously menaced by the possible setting up of the Turks north of the Black Sea Basin. In order to obtain Poland's help, Ştefan cel Mare became, at Colomea, the vassal of the king Cazimir, in September 1485. But the Polish military help proved insufficient for the attainment of Ştefan cel Mare's goal, because Poland concluded, a few years later, a peace with the Turks, and Ştefan cel Mare had to negotiate again his own peace with the Turks, starting again to pay a tribute in 1489 (**Istoria Românilor*…., p. 389-390).

The situations created by the presence of the Ottoman power south of Moldova affected once again Ştefan cel Mare's external politics. After becoming king of Poland in 1492, Ioan Albert began intense diplomatic and military preparations for an expedition meant to chase away the Turks from Chilia and Cetatea Albă. But the Polish king's program had in view, as a stage preceding the anti-Ottoman action, the setting up of the Polish control over Moldova, through the removal of Ştefan cel Mare, who, beginning with 1489, had returned to the alliance with Hungary, obtaining from Matias Corvin the Transylvanian fortified cities Ciceu and Cetatea de Baltă with their estates, in compensation for the loss of the two walled cities from the Black Sea.

The great Polish expedition from 1497, whose official proclaimed purpose was to get back Chilia and Cetatea Albă, was actually directed against Suceava. But the city's durable resistance and the danger of the intervention of other forces in the fight, especially of Hungary, forced the Polish king to stop the siege and to start to withdraw. On his way back, at Codrii Cosminului, most of the Polish army was surprised and destroyed by Ştefan cel Mare (1497). During the last two years of his reign, Ştefan cel Mare initiated several expeditions in Poland, meant to repress it, but also with the secret hope of gaining Pocuţia.

The capacity and wisdom of Ştefan cel Mare served well the external politics of Moldova, and his diplomatic talent and his military qualities turned him into a well-known and respected European personality. Though Ştefan cel Mare did not manage to stop the expansionist politics of the Turkish Empire, he managed to delay it considerably, and thus, when the Turks reach the center of our continent, during the sultan Soliman the Magnificent, their capacity of expansion was almost exhausted, and the Christian powers were able to find the necessary solutions to stop the Ottoman offensive. Losing the chance of modernization during the second half of the 15th century and during the 16th century, because of the permanent Ottoman threat and of its effects, the Romanians, by their heroic fight, allowed other European states to enjoy its benefic results.

The 16th century represents an extremely complex period in point of the international relations on the European continent. The balance of powers achieved during the previous periods tends to be broken apart by two huge politico-military blocks, the Habsburg Empire and the Ottoman Empire, arrived at the peak of their power and territorial extension. At the center of this political

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construction, with a medieval imperial ideology was Spain, due to king Carol Quint's politics, whose main guideline was the fight against the Islamism, an ideal inherited from the Catholic kings and from the tradition of more than seven centuries of the Spanish Reconquista and which he tried to put into practice, especially by means of naval actions in the Mediterranean Sea and, to a lesser degree, by means of terrestrial actions in Central Europe.

Under these circumstances, the actions of world hegemony undertaken by the Habsburgs, began by Carol Quint and continued by Philip II (1556-1598) led to a vivid reaction of the European states, especially of France, who tried to redress the balance of forces by involving the Ottoman Empire in the European political system, as an element to counter-balance the Habsburg politics.

The Ottoman Empire as well, the main power in the S-E Europe and in the Middle East, reached the climax of its power in the 16th century. During the reign of Selim I (1512-1520), the Turks conquered Georgia, Armenia (1514), Syria (1516) and Egypt (1517), setting up their supremacy in the Near East, while the sultan Soliman the Magnificent (1520-1566), continuing the war tradition of his predecessors, not only pushed to the max the territorial dimensions of the Ottoman Empire, but also opened the perspectives of a universally-wide active politics. The Ottoman Empire included in the sphere of its political influence any significant problem, both in its quality of protector of the Muslim world, and as a participant in the political system of the European states.

The ever-increasing antagonisms of the Christian world, especially the Franco-Habsburg rivalry, were not only factors that generated a lot of turbulence in the entire political structure of the European relations, but also factors that made it easier for the Porte to break in and become a main element of the European balance system. Thus, it is well known that the sultan began his expedition against Belgrade in 1521, the moment when the Franco-Habsburg war began, that the great victory from Mohács, from 1526 was obtained after the conclusion of the Turkish-Polish peace treaty, under the circumstances of the French defeat from Pavia (1525) and after an express demand addressed by the French court to the sultan, as the king of France, Francisc I (1515-1547) considered, in 1532, that the Ottoman Empire was the only power able to warrant the existence of the European states against the politics of domination of the Habsburgs (E. Denize, 2003, p. 129-131; H. Hantsch, 1959, p. 55; M. A. Mehmed, 1976, p. 46; T. Gökbilgin, 1970, p. 627-637; I. Ursu, 1908, p. 23, 28-29, 31-40).

The decisive success obtained by the sultan at Mohács established the main line of the Ottoman offensive on the direction Belgrade-Buda-Vienna. At the same time, other Ottoman fronts were opened in the Mediterranean Sea, against the Spanish Habsburgs, while the fights between the Ottoman fleet and the Portuguese in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean can also be considered anti-Habsburg actions, if we consider the connections and interests of the House of Austria in Portugal.

In the conception of the Ottoman power, the Habsburg power was the representative power of the Christian world, and its tendencies of universal domination were not only rivaling those of the Porte, but could even endanger the Ottoman positions in Europe, in the Mediterranean and in the Indian Ocean. This explains why the relations with the Habsburgs represented a landmark of the entire Ottoman political edifice from Europe, beginning with Soliman the Magnificent and ending with the appearing of the Tsarist Russia as great power (E. Denize, 2003, p. 132).

The political and military evolutions from Europe, and especially those from its southeast and central parts, brought important changes in the political, military and strategic situation of the Romanian Countries (E. Denize, 2003, p. 132-134).

The defeat of Hungary, at Mohács, in 1526, and then its falling into pieces in 1541 made the Romanian Countries lose their most important ally in the anti-Ottoman fight. The Romanians' potential allies were farther away, especially Venice and the Habsburgs, and the neighbors, like Poland, were not interested in the anti-Ottoman war, or were allied to the Turks, like the Crimean Khanat.

Of all the three Romanian Countries, the most difficult situation was that of Wallachia. It had been caught, beginning with 1451-1452, in a Hungarian-Ottoman system of co-suzerainty, but Hungary's fall led to a considerable increase in the Porte's influence. The attempts of going against this evolution, though meant to fail, however managed to stop the Turks' attempts of transforming the country in pashalik or to limit its internal autonomy. Moldova, having a better situation after the death of Ştefan cel Mare, managed to resist better to the attempts of interfering with its internal problems,

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manifested by the Turks, or to the continuous raids of the Tatars from Crimea, who were the sultan's vassals.

As for Transylvania, it practically got separated from Hungary after 1526, and beginning with 1541, when Soliman the Magnificent conquered Buda and formally put an end to the Hungarian kingdom, it became an autonomous principality under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Porte, enjoying a superior status in comparison to that of Wallachia and of Moldova.

If in the southeast and central Europe the international political relations were dominated by the Ottoman expansion and menace, in Western Europe, the main factor of the international relations was the fight for supremacy in Italy and, along with it, the fight for dominance or hegemony in this entire geographic area (E. Denize, 2003). The wars for conquering Italy, which took place between 1494 and 1559 and opposed mainly Spain and France, had negative consequences for the states from the peninsula and politically subordinated the entire region to Spain, the victorious power, except Venice and the Papacy.

An important moment in the anti-Ottoman system of alliances is constituted by the creation of the Holy Anti-Ottoman League, on February 8 1538, in Rome, with the participation of Venice, of king Carol Quint and of Pope Paul III, followed by the treaty of peace and collaboration from Oradea, signed by Ioan Zápolya and by Ferdinand of Austria, on February 24, the same year (E. Denize, 2003, p. 140), which automatically included Moldova, by virtue of its alliance with Ferdinand, which determined the beginning of the politico-military campaign of Soliman the Magnificent, aimed at all the zones of interest for the Ottoman Empire: Europe, the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean (E. Denize, 2003, p. 141-142; T. Gemil, 1978, p. 306) .

The events of the year 1538 situated Moldova and Wallachia into a more accentuated state of dependence on the Ottoman Empire. Under an ever-growing Ottoman pressure, the Romanian Countries lose, by the middle of the 16th century, Brăila and Buceag, and at the same time Banat with Timişoara. In this context, the politics of the Romanian princes of establishing new contacts during this period with the Habsburg Empire seems natural. But the main disadvantage for the Romanian Countries, resulting from these relations, was the Habsburgs' expansionist tendency, as they wanted to conquer, first of all, Transylvania, which they considered as part of their hereditary patrimony, and the other two Romanian Countries, in order to reach the mouths of the Danube and the Black Sea coasts.

The occupation of Transylvania, between 1551 and 1556, as well as the Habsburg intervention in Moldova and Wallachia demonstrated that the Romanians, relying too much on the Habsburgs, would have risked changing a domination, the Ottoman one, with another one, that of the House of Austria. In this situation, the Romanian princes turned their attention towards other potential allies, like Spain and Venice, which could have benefited of the possible diversions and military actions from the Lower Danube. However, during this period, Venice avoided a conflict with the Porte, during the second half of the 16th century being registered only one Turkish-Venitian war, with Spanish participation, the one from 1570-1573, caused by the conquering of Cyprus by the Turks (E. Denize, 2003, p. 149-150; A. Decei, 1978, p. 194-195; C. Feneşan-Bulgaru, 1977, p. 223-238).

The battle from Lepanto, of October 7, 1571, actually the age of the battle from Lepanto, marked an important moment in the long series of anti-Ottoman wars supported by the Romanian Countries. Profiting of the tension marking the relations between the Habsburgs, the Spanish and the Turks and of the creation of a Holy League, in September 1570 and May 1571, with the participation of Spain, Venice and the Papacy, and of the beginning of the war between the latter and the Ottoman Porte, the Romanian Countries tried once again to balance their relations with the Ottoman Empire.

The 7th and 8th decades of the 16th century had a huge importance concerning the Habsburgs' relations with the Ottoman Porte, especially in point of the Turkish-Spanish conflict from the Mediterranean Sea, a conflict that had consequences on the Romanian area as well. The deaths of Carol Quint and of Mary Tudor, both occurred in 1558, and the Peace from Chateau Cambrésis of 1559 shifted the main axis of Philip II's Empire from north to south, towards the Mediterranean Sea (E Denize, 2003; F. Brudel, 1966, p. 265). In Correr Museum from Venice, in room no. 12, "The Venitian Civilisation", are presented two oil paintings on canvas, of large dimensions, made by Italian painters of the 16th

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century, entitled "The Battle from Lepanto" (1571), which present the battle figuratively; one of these works presents down the painting the inscription: "LA MEGRAVIOSA F.C.I.N. VITTORIA, DATA DI DIO A CHRISTIANI CONTRA TURCHI ALLI SCOGLI CVRZORARI L'ANO 1571 A 1700"; in room no. 13, "The Arsenal", is presented a xylograph by Cristoforo Guerra, entitled "The Battle from Lepanto".

Between 1560 and 1574, Spain, delivered temporarily and partially by the pressures from other areas of Europe, was able to concentrate its attention and efforts on the Mediterranean Sea and on the fight against the Turks.

The battles between the naval forces of the Holy League and those of the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean Sea, though not directly involving the Romanian Countries, had, however, a quite important influence on them, just as their situation somehow influenced the development of the hostilities.

The most important internal effort of sending away the Ottoman domination during the second half of the 16th century, came from Moldova, during Ioan Vodă (1572-1574). After his defeat, the situation of the Romanian Countries was characterized by an intensification of the Ottoman domination. The Romanians chose to fight, in order not to lose their state, and, finding the necessary personality in Mihai Viteazul, they started an anti-Ottoman revolt that made them once again known all over Europe, during the years that ended the 16th and started the 17th century.

The reign of Mihai Viteazul (1593-1601) coincided with the re-launch, by the Pope Clement VIII (1592-1605) of an alliance to which participated the Papal State, Spain, Austria, the Dukes of Toscana, Mantova and Ferrara, but not Poland and England (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 230-231; **Istoria Românilor…*, p. 596-639). A special place in the anti-Ottoman plans had to be held by the Romanian Countries, which, because of their position, were interested in the action of the Holy League. To this league adheres the Transylvanian Principality, with Sigismund Báthory, considered a key element in the drawing in of Wallachia and of Moldova. The action directed by the Papal See and the Habsburgs manages to attract the Moldavian prince, Aron Vodă, who concludes a treaty with the emperor on September 16, 1594. Wallachia's adhesion was due to the initiative of the prince who had the accord of the Assemblies, in which the Buzescu boyards held a central position.

The integration of the Romanian Countries in the Christian alliance led to the anti-Ottoman revolt which started on November 13, 1594, in Bucharest, with the killing of the creditors from Levant and of the Ottoman garrison. The conquering of the fortified cities situated along the Danube started the hostilities with the Ottoman Empire and made Wallachia enter the war that had been started a year before between the Habsburgs and the Turks.

Under these circumstances, as the Ottoman reaction was predictable, Mihai Viteazul concludes at Alba Iulia, with the consent of the delegation of the Assemblies, on May 20, 1595, a treaty with Sigismund Báthory, by means of which the Assemblies subordinate Wallachia to the Transylvanian prince, who thus becomes a supreme authority, and submits the prince to the almightiness of the boyards.

Aron Vodă of Moldova concluded a similar treaty, at the beginning of June, and so Sigismund becomes the suzerain of the two countries, in the spirit of a medieval tradition, thus accomplishing the unification under the form of the suzerano-vassalic relations in view of the confrontation with the Ottoman Empire. The suzerainty of Sigismund Báthory over Moldova and Wallahia meant as well that a political and military organism, able to face the Ottoman Empire, was necessary.

The political desires of Sigismund were opposed to the Habsburg intentions, the latter seeing in the Transylvanian prince nothing else but a vassal of the House of Austria. A treaty of alliance signed in Prague, on January 28, 1595, with the emperor, established the reports between Transylvania and the empire.

After the anti-Ottoman revolt, the history of the end of the 16th century is marked by an epoch of military confrontations between the Romanian Countries and the Ottoman Empire. They are initiated by the Wallachian prince along the Danube, through attacks directed against the Turkish fortified cities. The Ottoman reply in Wallachia has as preface the victories of Mihai Viteazul, who occupies the important port of Brăila and continues with actions beyond the Danube. The decisive confrontation prepared by the Turks took place at Călugăreni, on August 13/23, 1595, and then the army of the prince, overwhelmed by the

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numeric superiority of the Ottoman army, withdrew in the north, waiting for the Transylvanian intervention (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 231). The campaign, under the leadership of Sinan Pasha, attempted to transform the Principalities into pashaliks. After Călugăreni, the Turks begin to organize a pachalik at Bucharest and Târgovişte, introducing garrisons and transforming the churches into mosques. The military actions of the three Principalities, begun at the beginning of October, re-conquered Târgovişte and chased away the Turks, beyond the Danube, through Giurgiu. Thus, the Ottoman campaign, started with the intention of transforming the Romanian countries into pashaliks, ended in failure, its echoes reaching the west of Europe.

However, the Ottoman Porte relaunches its offensive in Hungary, where it obtains a victory at Keresztes, defeating the Habsburgs (October 26, 1596). Under these circumstances, Mihai Viteazul opens negotiations with the Turks, which end with a peace, at the end of the year, the prince's reign being recognized in exchange for the payment of a tribute. Mihai Viteazul also negotiates with the Habsburgs and signs a treaty oriented against the Ottomans in 1598. By this double suzerainty, both Ottoman and imperial, he emancipates himself from the consequences of the treaty of May 20, 1595, by which the country entered under Transylvania's guardianship.

In the autumn of 1599, he enters Transylvania and defeats the Transylvanian army at Şelimbăr (October 18, 1599). After the victory, the Wallachian prince comes to Alba Iulia on November 4, 1599. Refusing to take into account the Habsburg's reticence about his plans, Mihai becomes the master of Transylvania, as the Dieta (the Assembly) acknowledges him as *locum tenens*, as the Latin diplomas mention. He awards himself the title of Wallachian and Transylvanian prince in the Slavonic documents, which proves his own interpretation of his mastership over the Principalities.

The leaning towards Transylvania was an option in concurrence with the Balkan plan. It came true because of the opportunities appeared after the falling apart of the Christian alliance and thanks to the boyards' decision, who saw in the orientation towards Transylvania the fulfillment of their political and constitutional desires under the form of a regime of Assemblies, and a guarantee against the Turks.

The politics of Mihai Viteazul, after the conquest of Transylvania, was adapted to the plans of the Habsburgs who were following their dream of including the Principality in their Empire. At the same time, his politics followed his own objectives, which involved the mastering of the country for himself, and the boyerds' options, who wanted to be integrated in the social, economic and political structures of the Principality. To these grounds we can add the "*party*" that was favorable to the continuation of the anti-Ottoman war and the completion of the project of liberating the Balkans (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 232; P. P. Panaitescu, 1936, p. 13-15).

The fact that he was master over Transylvania and the musts of the anti-Ottoman war led him from the beginning of his reign to try to attract Moldova in the common fight (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 232-233). Between 1595 and 1597, Mihai Viteazu tried, by means of diplomatic politics, to maintain good relations with Moldova.

The decision of invading Moldova was rushed by Sigimund Báthory's plans of entering Transylvania. In May 1600, Mihai conquers Moldova, invoking as ground the alliance between Ieremia Movilă and the Turks and Tartars. He asked the emperor to acknowledge his mastership *in perpetuum* over Transylvania, Moldova and Wallachia, for him and his son. It is obvious that by conquering Transylvania Mihai Viteazul consolidated his reign over this Principality; and, by conquering Moldova he remade the anti-Ottoman front. The organization of the Romanian area under the terms required by the prince, as a hereditary reign, was a step towards the creation of a unitary political organism under the same leadership. The official documents and inscriptions on seals of "*Prince of Wallachia and Transylvania and Moldova*" show the intentions Mihai Viteazul nourished. Although the Principalities remained separated administratively and politically, though not the idea of the national union was foremost at the unification, but the idea of the Christian solidarity, however seen from the perspective of time, the creation of a moment's union meant a precedent that turned into a durable ideal.

The achievement of the union *manu military* did not last, the political creation crumbled, because of the powerful competitors who could not give up their own desires. The Ottoman Empire wished once

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again the setting up of its suzerainty, Poland wanted, in competition with the Habsburgs, its own hegemony, while the Austrian Empire tended to set its hands on the Hungarian heritage, in virtue of its engagements dating since the preceding century.

Consequently, the nobles from Transylvania, hostile to a Romanian supremacy, joined the general Basta and defeated Mihai Viteazul at Mirăslău (September 18, 1600). The Court asks for the help of Mihai Viteazul, who, together with general Basta defeats Sigismund's army in August 1601, at Gurăslău. But the Habsburgs, who had their own precise and durable objectives in the area of the Principalities, get rid of Mihai Viteazul by means of an assassinate.

The end of the Wallachian prince put an end to the reconstruction of the military organism of the League, which in fact Mihai Viteazul created and which he tried to subordinate to the anti-Ottoman crusade (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 234).

Mihai Viteazul represented at the end of the Late Crusade a chapter of Europe's history, through the entrance in the Holy League and the military successes that determined a state creation under the supremacy of the Wallachian prince.

The unity accomplished out of reasons that converged with the reestablishment of the League's unity of action led, after a while, to the creation of a political organism interposed in between the desires of the great powers. This unification actually knew two stages: one during the reign of Sigismund Báthory, and the second, starting from Wallachia, directed by Mihai Viteazul.

Once accomplished, the unification under Mihai Viteazul, being a leadership superposed over state particular features, triggered latent historical processes that sprung out of the evolution of the 16th century, which in the central-European area is marked by an affirmation of the ethnic conscience.

The 17th century represents a special period in the history of the Romanian Countries, set between two historical boundaries: the reign of Mihai Viteazul and the setting up of new political regimes, the *Habsburg* one in Transylvania and the *Phanariot* regime in Moldova and Walachia (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 235-237). The history of these more than 100 years was situated under the sign of the heritage of Mihai Viteazul, the hero of the Late Crusade who regained Wallachia's independence and created, for a moment, the Principalities' union under a single leadership. It was, at the same time, a period of consolidation of the civilization, of improvement of the human potential, of slow progresses in the domain of the economy and of modifications in the social structure, of consolidation of the feudal monarchy in the environment of the classic Europe. Between 1601 and 1711, the political direction set by Mihai Viteazul, of union of Wallachia and Moldova to Transylvania, under the form of interdependent relations materialized in a system of alliance becomes more and more obvious. The 17th century registers, after 1683, in the context of the Ottoman recession, a significant evolution towards the politics of liberation from the Ottoman domination.

The siege of Vienna (1683), a result of the relaunch of the anti-Habsburg war by Kara Mustafa, as a solution for the straightening out of the Ottoman power, brings the princes of the three Romanian countries together under the walls of the imperial capital. The defeat of the Turks, at Kahlemberg, by the Austrian-Polish armies, and the victory of the coalition represented, by their consequences, political mutations in Central and Eastern Europe. They will trigger, however, a significant evolution in the internal political life of the Romanian Countries, faced, after the successes from Hungary, with the competition between the three powers: the Habsburg Empire, Poland and Russia.

The victory of the Austrian-Polish coalition determined the creation of a new line, created through the participation of the Papal State, of Austria, of Poland and Venice, joined by Russia. The Austrian Empire, winning several victories in Hungary, regained, by means of the battles from Buda (September 2, 1686) and Mohács (August 12, 1687), the territories that had been, for more than a century and a half, under Ottoman domination. The Empire's politics wanted to achieve, helped by the counter-reformation, significant projects of conquest in the southeast of Europe, at the expense of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks' withdrawal south of the Danube (1688) consolidated the hope for a durable success in the southeast of Europe.

The Turks' defeat at Vienna, in 1683, opens a new page in the history of the Romanian area. The triumph of the Holy League, the reconquering of Hungary and the setting up of the Habsburg domination in Transylvania, in the context of the Ottoman withdrawal, determines, at the level of the political forces, a trend favorable to the exit of the

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orbit of domination of the Porte. The Reconquista contributed to the opening of the Oriental crisis, because of the change in the ratio of forces in the east of Europe. In the new background created by the redimensioning of the continent, by the metamorphosis of the European political geography, there appear indications that show possible successes for a generalized anti-Ottoman action.

After the Peace from Karlowitz (1699), in the political history of the Romanian States, the relations with Russia intensify, as the role of Russia grows in the politics of East Europe, after the victory against the Swedes from Poltava (1709).

The introduction of the *Phanariot regime* (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998, p. 239-243, 268-270) in Moldova and Walachia, at the beginning of the 18th century, was the Porte's reply to the international situation appeared at the end of the 17th century, through the chasing away of the Ottoman Empire from Central Europe. The inclusion of Transylvania in the Austrian Empire and its acknowledgement by means of the Peace from Karlowitz (1699) transformed the Principalities in its most endangered outposts. Thus, under the conditions created by the Peace from Karlowitz, which maintained Moldova and Wallachia under the Ottoman suzerainty, the sultans' empire decides the introduction of a new political regime. In 1711 in Moldova and in 1716 in Wallachia, Nicolae Mavrocordat (1711-1715, 1719-1730), was called to set up the new Phanariot era. The change was not just a replacement of a reign by another, but a change in the political regime, which, by bringing modifications to the juridical statute of the Romanian Countries, expressed the consequences of the foreign domination during the new period and the new phenomena appeared in the European society.

The Phanariot solution was determined by the new political configuration from Central and South-Eastern Europe, where the Ottoman recession triggered the liberation movement, by means of the Romanian Countries' attempts of setting themselves free of the Ottoman Empire, with the help of the great Christian powers.

In the history of the Phanariot century, the Russian-Turkish war caused an interruption of the regime and, consequently, a replacement of the Phanariot administration with a Russian one. The war between 1768 and 1774 opened, at the international level, by means of a series of regulations, *a Romanian issue*, as part of the *Oriental issue*. The treaty from Kuciuk-Kainargi (1774), reconfirmed the Principalities' autonomy in the Ottoman Empire and at the same time opened a new stage in the process of liberation from the Turkish-Phanariot domination.

The re-establishment of the Phanariot regime, which followed the Peace, was the result of the international political relations, an image of the *Oriental issue*, which would not allow the suppression of the Ottoman suzerainty and its substitution by Russia's suzerainty.

The political history of the Phanariot regime registers as well important territorial losses. In 1713, the Porte transforms Hotin into a *raia* (area occupied and administered by the Turkish armies), and after the Peace from Passarowitz (1718), Wallachia loses Oltenia, which becomes an Austrian possession, while in 1775 the Habsburg Empire annexes the north of Moldova. After the Peace from Kuciuk-Kainargi, which marked even more insistently the Ottoman decline and the Russian ascent in eastern and southeastern Europe, the Phanariot regime presents obvious signs of disintegration.

The variations of the *oriental issue*, the progresses triggered by the French Revolution and the spreading of the revolutionary spirit in southeastern Europe also affect the political situation of the Romanian Countries.

By the end of the 18th century, in the climate of the continental international problems, in the southeast of Europe appears a new climate, favorable to political and territorial mutations.

The Romanians' anti-Ottoman fight, between the 15th and the 18th century, had international dimensions, triggering important consequences for the states of our continent.

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Ministère de l'Education Nationale
L'Université Valahia Târgovişte
Faculté de Sciences Humaines

ANNALES

D'UNIVERSITÉ VALAHIA TARGOVISTE

SECTION d'Archéologie et d'Histoire

TOME XVIII

Numéro 2
2016

Valahia University Press
Târgovişte

https://biblioteca-digitala.ro

Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire publie des mémoires originaux, des nouvelles et des comptes-rendus dans le domaine de l'archéologie préhistorique, de l'histoire du moyen âge, de l'environnement de l'homme fossile, de l'archéologie interdisciplinaire et de patrimoine culturel.

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Revue indexée B+ par CNCSIS et B par CNCS - Roumanie

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ELSEVIER

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INDEX COPERNICUS INTERNATIONAL

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ISSN: 1584-1855; ISSN (online): 2285–3669

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Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste,
Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire,
Tome XVIII, Numéro 2, 2016, p. 53-59
ISSN: 1584-1855;
ISSN (online): 2285 - 3669

Theories and Ideas ahead of their Time: Márton Roska and the Paleolithic Archeology in Romania

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Abstract. The beginnings of the systematic Paleolithic research in Transylvania were represented by the complex activity of the researcher Márton Roska. This paper is the result of some preliminary observations of Marton Roska's work on the archeology of the Paleolithic period. In this respect, we analyze several aspects, such as archeological diggings, stratigraphic identifications, observations on the lithic material, so to create an image of the first decennia of the 20th century archeology in Romania.

Keywords: Paleolithic archaeology, historiography, Romania, Márton Roska research

Introduction

The Romanian archeological historiography unanimously acknowledges the fact that the beginnings of the systematic Paleolithic research in Transylvania were represented by the complex activity of the researcher Márton Roska. Although his activity has always been noticed whenever there has been a description of the archeological research in Transylvania, so far there has been no coherent analysis on his discoveries and theories, and, moreover, some of them have been contested by the Romanian researchers.

More than half a century has passed since the great researcher's demise (1880-1961) and over 100 years have gone to his early research and publications. Since then, the majority of the Paleolithic discoveries in Transylvania have remained unchanged, their existence being due to the research work of Márton Roska. Because a detailed analysis of his activity on the archeology of the Paleolithic in Romania was carried out recently by one of the author (B. Tihamer, 2013), in this study we will relieve only some aspects of his activity.

The researcher Márton Roska was born in 1880 in Cubleşu Someşan (Cluj County). Between 1900 and 1904 he is a student of the Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and History in Cluj, becoming after the first year the Béla Pósta's assistant. After his graduation, he was appointed assistant professor at the Chair of Archeology. In 1908, he defends his doctoral thesis on the influence of the Mediterranean regions on the funeral rituals of the Neolithic period in the Carpathian basin, and in 1913 he is promoted in point of position. During this period, he benefited of several scholarships abroad, took part in international conferences etc. (E. Gáll 2010; for more details, see B. Tihamer, 2013).

The particular political situation of Transylvania had a negative bearing on Márton Roska's career as well, so that after the Second World War, in 1944, he is obliged to take refuge in Hungary. His most intense activity can be

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associated to the period 1920-1929 when D. M Theodorescu is appointed head of the Institute (E. Gáll 2010). As a whole, Márton Roska has had a decisive influence on several historical periods, starting with the Paleolithic until the Middle Ages and on several domains (archeology, ethnography, paleogeography etc.).

Out of the many sites and paleolithic areas he researched, the most important are related to the researches of Bordul Mare Cave and Cioclovina Cave. Certainly, Bordul Mare Cave can boast with the richest Mousterian lithic industry of all the cave settlements in Romania. Due to the impressive number of toolkits discovered in time (about 7.000), it represents a main pillar when one tries to highlight the peculiarities of the Mousterian culture in the Carpathian Caves. Bordul Mare Cave was noticed for the first time from an archeological viewpoint in 1918 by J. Mallász (I. Gaál, 1928). The archeological diggings from this settlement began only in 1923 under Márton Roska's guidance. The research continued in 1924 as well, along with J. Mallász. In 1925, M. Roska continues to dig together with M. Moldovan, and between 1926 and 1929, he carries out archeological diggings in this cave by himself (M. Roska 1924, 1925a, 1925b, 1930, 1933, 1943). The research work carried out by M. Roska in Bordul Mare Cave are quite ample and complex for the respective period, so we will try to realize a more detailed description of it. Actually, as we were about to note, the richest archeological material from this site was discovered during this period. Cioclovina Cave owes its international recognition to the discovery of the *Homo sapiens* skull (K. Harvati et al., 2007; A. Soficaru et al., 2007; E. Trinkaus et al., 2009). Even though this discovery happened by accident in 1941 (F. Rainer, I. Simionescu, 1942), Márton Roska remains the first archeologist who carried out research works in this cave.

It is regrettable that in the last synthesis on the evolution of the Romanian archeology (M. Anghelinu 2003), this stage occupies a marginal place, and Márton Roska's activity has been summed up in just a few paragraphs. For this reason, in the following pages we will try to highlight a few aspects which are necessary for a correct presentation of the level of the Paleolithic archeology in Romania at the beginning of the 20th century.

The accuracy of the stratigraphic identifications

Even since the first study on the archaeological excavations from Bordul Mare Cave, M. Roska identifies six levels from a stratigraphic viewpoint, this succession being kept until the end of the campaigns of archeological researches. Out of the six levels described, the researcher numbers just five, the first one being post-Paleolithic. By the end of the archeological diggings, four Mousterian levels have been highlighted, the last level being identified after the diggings of the year 1928.

The archeological diggings of this settlement were resumed later on by a team led by C. S. Nicolăescu-Plopsor (C. S. Nicolăescu-Plopsor et al., 1955). Although there is no mention of this fact, there is an obvious adoption of the Mousterian levels established by M. Roska. Unfortunately, the four Mousterian levels were counted from top to bottom, contrary to the numbering determined by M. Roska, this thing having serious implications on the understanding of the stratigraphy in Bordul Mare Cave (M. Cârciumaru, E.-C. Niţu 2008; E.-C. Nițu, 2012). So, there appeared a conceptual discrepancy between M. Roska's 1-5 levels (1925; 1930; 1933), counted from top to bottom, by means of which the 1st level was attributed to the Aurignacian and the levels 2-5 to the Mousterian, and the Mousterian I, II, III, IV defined by C. S. Nicolăescu-Plopşor et al. (1955) as culture layers recorded from bottom to top. The confusion was created because between these two numbering systems, only one level coincided in point of number (M. Roska's layer no. 3 = Mousterian III for C. S. Nicolăescu-Plopşor), while for the others the differences were huge, as one can see in Table 1. At the same time, those coming in touch with the archeological material are put to the test as on the toolkits resulted from Marton Roska's diggings, the layer is indicated only by Roman ciphers, without any other mention, while for those provided by the research work of C. S. Nicolăescu-Plopşor *et al.* (1955) it appears for the Mousterian layers M I, M II, M III, M IV (Tab. 1).

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Definition of levels and their cultural content after M. Roska (1925, 1930, 1933, 1943)	Levels name after C. S. Nicolăescu-Plopşor *et el*. 1955
Layer I (Aurignacian industry)	Upper Paleolithic
Layer II (Mousterian industry)	Mousterian IV
Layer III (Mousterian industry)	Mousterian III
Layer IV (Mousterian industry)	Mousterian II
Layer V (Mousterian industry)	Mousterian I

Tab. 1 – The discrepancy between the two numbering systems of cultural layers from Bordul Mare Cave (after M. Cârciumaru, E.-C. Niţu 2008)

Yet, the problem of the inverse numbering of the strata would not have been so serious unless, later on, trying to describe the levels established by M. Roska, Al. Păunescu (2001) renumbered once again the cultural layers, this time from top to bottom. In this sense, he makes the following description: 1. Post-Paleolithic layer; 2. Lower Aurignacian layer; 3. Mousterian I layer; 4. Mousterian II layer, considered as representing the richest stratum; 5. Mousterian III layer; 6. Mousterian IV layer. This turns the richest inhabited level, namely layer 3 for M. Roska, into layer 4 and Mousterian II according to Al. Păunescu's misinterpretation (M. Cârciumaru, E.-C. Niţu, 2008; E.-C. Niţu, 2012). The explanation of the way in which this stratigraphic amalgam was attained is that M. Roska does not count the "alluvial" layer, starting his numbering from the Paleolithic levels, while Al. Păunescu (2001) counts the post-Paleolithic level as well, so that the order of the strata identified by M. Roska was shifted.

Much later on, M. Cârciumaru (1973) publishes a synthesis under the form of a paper on the climatic oscillations of the Upper Pleistocene in south-western Transylvania, in which he includes the Bordul Mare Cave as well. The above-mentioned researcher carries out pollinic analyses in the cave's deposit and provides the first detailed stratigraphic description by means of which six geological layers are highlighted, so the same number as the levels count established long before by Marton Roska.

Generally, as far as the archeological materials discovered in older diggings are concerned, there are problems related to their stratigraphic attribution. Actually, M. Roska's material has been neglected in time for the very suspicions of this kind. So, for instance, in his synthesis on the Transylvanian Paleolithic, Al. Păunescu (2001) claims that the toolkits discovered by M. Roska in Bordul Mare Cave are not distributed according to the archeological levels in which they were recovered, and so they are irretrievable for a techno-typological analysis. Maybe this was the reason why the material discovered by M. Roska was no longer taken into account by any study undertaken regarding this cave.

Analyzing the extremely rigorous documentation left by M. Roska along with the lithic material in different Romanian museums as well as the inventory registers filled in by him, we can notice that each item is described and attributed only stratigraphically. Even though no depths or eventual squares are mentioned, a recent analysis of the lithic material discovered by Marton Roska has demonstrated that the fact that the toolkits were collected on strata did not represent an impediment in their study and, although we were tempted to believe that some items could have been incorrectly attributed to a certain level, no disturbances was identified in this sense (E. C. Niţu, 2012). Moreover, some debitage products of a certain layer had the possibility of being refitted with the lithic material discovered by C. S. Nicolăescu-Plopşor in the same layer. Each item benefits of a detailed description realized by M. Roska himself, in which the cultural level it comes from is mentioned as well. This fact can be easily noticed in the old inventory registers of the museums, or in the activity reports made to justify the sums spent. The rigorous recording realized by M. Roska can be checked for the items that are part of the collections of the Museums from Deva, Arad, Oradea and for a part of the collection from Cluj (E. C. Niţu, 2012).

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Taking into account the numerical correspondence between the levels identified by M. Roska and those described using modern means by M. Cârciumaru (1973) later on, as well as the rigorous recordings of the Mousterian materials according to the four levels discovered, we consider that M. Roska managed to determine the stratigraphy of the deposit in Bordul Mare Cave quite well for the respective time.

The methodology of archeological excavations

The first detailed observations on the excavations at Bordul Mare Cave were published by M. Roska in 1930. In the report realized for the diggings of 1928, the author sketches the cave's first plan, mentions the dug areas and realizes the longitudinal profile of the cave's "terrace" which, according to the plan, was 9 m long. At the same time, on the sketch he realized one can see that the digging continued inside the cave as well, only at the entrance, along a 4 meter length (M. Roska 1930). The same plan of the diggings is published as well in the synthesis paper dedicated to Bordul Mare Cave. The section from the entrance in the cave was not totally dug. Only the third stratum was researched thoroughly; the fourth stratum was researched on a length of about 2 meters, so only half of the previous length, while the fifth stratum was not dug at all (M. Roska 1943). Unfortunately, from the plan that was published one cannot distinguish the width of the section inside the cave clearly; yet, if we eliminate the lateral parts of the deposit, left for future checkouts, the section's width must have been of around 2 m. In general, M. Roska's diggings during the period 1923-1929, actually the most extended campaign realized in Bordul Mare Cave can be summed up as: the digging of the "terrace" in front of the cave, which, according to the descriptions, was 9 m long, and the digging of a small section of about 8 m^2 inside the cave (E.-C. Niţu 2012).

Sure, it is hard to approximate with accuracy the dimensions of the excavated area, yet we would like to highlight a few aspects. From the analysis realized on the lithic series (E. C. Niţu, 2012), the largest part of the materials discovered in this cave comes from M. Roska's campaigns. Out of a total of about 7.000 debitage products, around 5000 were discovered by him. Certainly, we do not know the total number of the items for sure and it is possible for it to be even larger. The area excavated later on, during the 1954 and 1955 campaigns, inside the cave, is much larger than the one dug by M. Roska, yet the lithic material is much less numerous. The significant duration of the archeological diggings (6 years) doubtlessly involved a more important rigor as well. The existence of a more evolved technique for the archeological diggings is reflected in composition of the lithic material. The very large quantity of debris is impressive; it actually reflects the integral recovery of the material, although it is obvious that at the beginning of the 20th century the selection of the materials was common practice. Another fact that we noticed about the material discovered by M. Roska is the surprisingly small dimension of some debitage products that did not undergo fragmentation after their depositing, which is sometimes of the order of just a few millimeters. Moreover, we noted that even the very small pebble naturally present in the cave's deposit were subject to recovery. The large number of debris, fragmented pebble, micro-flakes, prompts us to believe that M. Roska worked extremely seriously and probably recovered a very large proportion of the material. Some written information on the digging methods used by M. Roska has been highlighted recently (B. Tihamer, 2013). Nevertheless, we need to take into account the stage during which these campaigns took place, namely a period when the Paleolithic archeology was not extremely developed, not even in the Western Europe. The participation to the recent excavations of this settlement by one of the authors (E. C. N.), were we could note the extreme difficulty of recovering the material because of the sediment and of the existence of a large number of limestones, makes us believe that the lithic and fauna series discovered by M. Roska could only be recovered by means of a sieving system (certainly, this hypothesis should be taken into account and demonstrated in the future by means of archive documents).

Openness to interdisciplinary studies

The Bordul Mare Cave is known especially as the only settlement in Romania in which fossil remains of Neanderthals have been found. It is the merit of Márton Roska who, through his openness to interdisciplinary studies, offered the fauna he had discovered for analysis to Istvan Gaál, an important paleontologist of this epoch. He identified in the third layer, among the fauna remains, three phalanxes that he attributed to the

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Neanderthal man.

I. Gaál (1928), studying the fauna remains discovered in the years 1923 or 1924, mentions the data concerning the presence of a phalanx from the second toe of a *Homo primigenius neanderthalensis* Schwalbe's foot, this being the first discovery of this kind at that time in Romania. Later on, I. Gaál (1943) publishes an ample synthesis in which he presents the discovery of two more phalanxes from the hand (one from the forefinger, very long and quite thick, the other from the annular, longer and more arched) yielded by the research of the deposit from the Bordul Mare Cave in the year 1929. They all belong to the third Mousterian layer.

Although Bordul Mare Cave is frequently mentioned in the archeological literature through the discovery of these fossil remains of Romania, we should highlight the fact that except I. Gaál no other researcher has ever analyzed these phalanxes, although there has been quite a long time since their discovery. The Romanian and foreign archeology simply took over the information, without improving it in any way. Moreover, Dardu Nicolăescu-Plopşor (1968) doubts the fact that the respective fossil remains might belong to the Neanderthal man, considering that we could be rather dealing with a *Homo sapiens* in a Mousterian environment, just as in the Muierii Cave; yet, he provides no further explanations in this sense. So, the existence of some human remains belonging to the Neanderthal man in the Romanian Paleolithic is due to the study of the faunal remains from the Bordul Mare Cave by I. Gaál and to M. Roska's openness to interdisciplinary studies, which made him provide the fauna material for analysis to the great paleontologist.

Techno-functional observations on the lithic material and cultural determinations

During a period when the studies on lithic materials contented themselves with summary typological determinations and in which the specialized terminology was extremely poor and non-uniform, M. Roska manages to make interesting descriptions on the functionality of the Paleolithic tools. To exemplify, we will provide a few considerations made in 1912 on the items discovered during the first archeological campaign from the Cioclovina Cave in 1911:

„Instrument servant à racler ou à couper en forme de demi-cercle... Matière: jaspe. Il este brisé comme par un coup sec à la hauteur du noyau. La partie antérieure et les dos montrent un travail grossier. La partie postérieure n'est pas travaillée. Sur le tranchant circulaire il y a des traces d'usage de main d'œuvre.

L'instrument est adapté pour l'usage de la main gauche. Dans la main droite ils ne pouvaient se servir que de la partie droite du tranchant.

Manié d'une autre façon, il peut aussi avoir servi de perçoir. La partie indiquée par la direction de la flèche, est spécialement travaillée dans ce but.

Exemplaire massif et épais." (Roska 1912: 241).

The first aspect that should be noticed is the fact that the tool is not considered to belong strictly to a certain typological category, which represented the general tendency in the Paleolithic archeology during that period and which still happens today, unfortunately. As one can notice from the above-mentioned example, for each tool he described, M. Roska presents his suppositions concerning the action that the respective tool may have been used for: cutting, scraping or drilling. At the same time, he notices that a tool could have been used for more than one action, depending on the retouched area. This concept of multifunctionality of the Paleolithic tools appeared much later on in the archeology of the Paleolithic. Moreover, he tries to explain the way the tools may have been held; in the example presented above he supposes that for a total use, it is only in the left hand that it could have been held, because holding it in the right hand would have implied only the use of the right side. The same approach is applied to each tool in turn.

Innovative for that period are the M. Roska's explanations concerning some retouched Aurignacian tools from the Cioclovina Cave, published in 1923. He remarks that not all the retouches were made in strict relation to the use of the tool; some may have facilitated an eventual hafting as well. In this category he includes some blade from which the butt was removed and which have their proximal retouched area.

It is an advanced conception on the Paleolithic cultures that can be noticed, among other things, in the studies on the Cioclovina Cave. Even since 1912, M. Roska debated the term of transition when he tried to explain the attribution to a certain period of the items discovered in this settlement. He describes toolkits as being composed of

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Mousterian tools and of materials specific to the Upper Paleolithic. Doubtlessly, he is the first researcher in Romania who uses the term of transition from the Middle to the Upper Paleolithic. The continuation of the excavations in the Cioclovina Cave makes M. Roska (1923) appreciate that the tools belonged to the Aurignacian. Remarkable are his explanations on the difficulty of determining precisely the cultural period of the Paleolithic to which the lithic materials of this cave belonged. He realizes that it is very hard to comply with the Western Europe chronological division and it is hard to clearly highlight a certain culture in the Cioclovina Cave. He explains this thing by the fact that Cioclovina Cave is situated too far from Western Europe and there is a possibility that the cultural phases may not correspond exactly to those of Western Europe (M. Roska, 1923). The conception presented above is very advanced for the respective period, as, in general, even at present, most Paleolithic settlements are attributed to the classical Paleolithic cultures determined mainly in the French settlements. It is only recently that the individualization of certain areas with different peculiarities than those of the classical *facies* has become obvious.

*

This paper is the result of some preliminary observations; in the future, we intend to carry out an ampler analysis of Marton Roska's work on the archeology of the Paleolithic period. The rigor of his archeological excavations, reflected both in composition of the lithic material collections and in the stratigraphic determinations which continue to be valid to this day, encourage us to believe that Marton Roska used a quite evolved digging method for the respective period. The analysis of the archeological materials and the advanced ideas on their cultural determinations turn Marton Roska into a forerunner of some modern theories. So, the archeology of the Paleolithic in Romania during the first decades of the 20th century underwent a special evolution due to the complex research work undertaken by the great archeologist Marton Roska.

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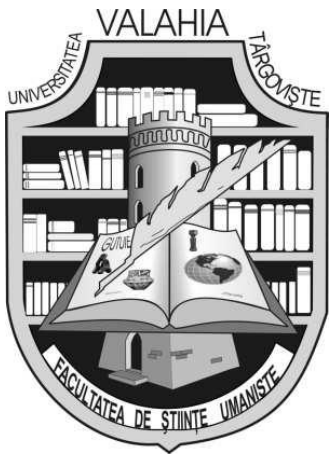

D'UNIVERSITÉ VALAHIA TARGOVISTE

SECTION d'Archéologie et d'Histoire

TOME XVIII

Numéro 2
2016

Valahia University Press
Târgovişte

https://biblioteca-digitala.ro

Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire publie des mémoires originaux, des nouvelles et des comptes-rendus dans le domaine de l'archéologie préhistorique, de l'histoire du moyen âge, de l'environnement de l'homme fossile, de l'archéologie interdisciplinaire et de patrimoine culturel.

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ISSN: 1584-1855; ISSN (online): 2285–3669

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