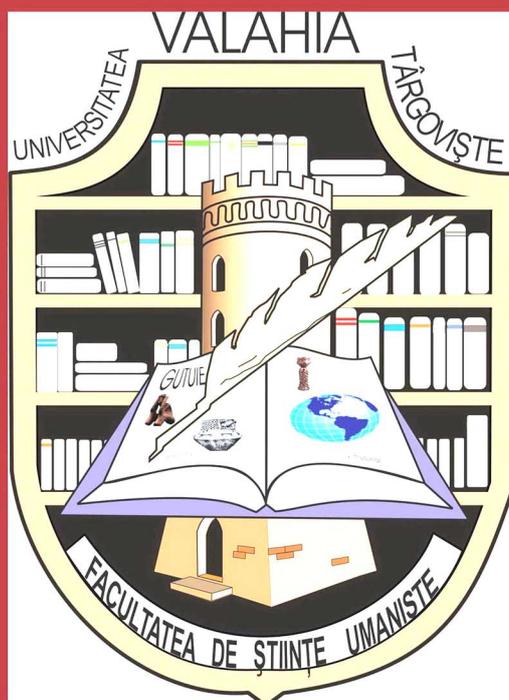


Ministère de l'Education Nationale  
L'Université Valahia Târgoviște  
Faculté de Sciences Humaines

# ANNALES

## D'Université "Valahia" Târgoviște



SECTION  
d'Archéologie et d'Histoire  
TOME XX

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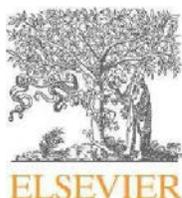
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## The micromorphology of the Gravettian occupation sequence from Poiana Cireșului (Piatra Neamț, Romania)

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**Abstract:** In this paper, we present the first results of the micromorphological study of the anthropic sequence from the Upper Paleolithic site of Poiana Cireșului (Neamț County). The stratigraphic succession of the layers attributed to the Gravettian occupation was studied on the Western, Northern and Eastern profiles, in Section V. After the resin impregnation and the subsequent induration, the samples were processed in order to obtain the thin sections for the optic microscopy study. Thin sections were analysed using a polarising petrographic microscope (Olympus BX 60). The stratigraphic units were systematically described and interpreted, and the identification of the sedimentary facies was achieved at magnifications between x100 and x600, using standard methods. The study was centred on the characterization of the sedimentary matrix, and of the anthropogenic features, in order to identify the units corresponding to anthropic and natural forming processes, and to characterize from this point of view the studied occupational sequence from Poiana Cireșului.

**Keywords:** Paleolithic, Gravettian, anthropic sequence, micromorphology, fish bones.

### 1. Introduction. General background of the archaeological site

The archaeological Upper Paleolithic site of Poiana Cireșului is located in north-eastern Romania, in the zone of eastern Carpathians, on the Bistrița Valley (Cârciumaru et al., 2010). The more accurate position is 4 km East from Piatra Neamț (Neamț County), at the confluence with the small tributary, on the right side, – Doamna River. Poiana Cireșului settlement is situated in a dominant position, on the geomorphological unit equivalent to the middle terrace of Bistrița River, at approximately 400 m absolute altitude (Cârciumaru et al., 2010).

The geological stratigraphy of the settlement consist of five main units, down to 3.50 m in depth (Cârciumaru et al., 2010; Cârciumaru et al., 2016): (1) Holocene pale brown (*Cambisol*) soil horizon; (2) Late Glacial yellow loess, without carbonates; (3) compact, decalcified light reddish brown soil

*Gelistagnic cambisol* (*Tundragley*); (4) carbonated clay-loessic, light olive layer, and (5) calcic, sandy-loessic olive layer.

During the 2004 campaign, a series of 17 core tests were achieved, in order to verify the limits of the site and to obtain information on the lower parts of the geological sequence which reaches 7 m in depth from the actual surface, in the eastern area of the plateau (Cârciumaru et al., 2010). This long and well preserved sequence is attributed to the last Würm Pleniglacial and to the Tardiglacial. Four layers are attributed to the Epigravettian (1) and Gravettian (3). At least two more layers were documented through the coring tests mentioned above.

The stratigraphy of the Paleolithic sequence could be presented as following (Cârciumaru et al., 2018; Nițu et al., 2019):

- An Epigravettian layer, at the upper part, with more than 1500 lithic pieces;

- Gravettian layer I, 170-210 cm depth, dated to between  $19,320 \pm 80$  uncal. BP (OxA-36785) (22-23 ka cal. BP) and  $20,154 \pm 97$  uncal. B.P. (ER 12.163) (23-24 ka cal. BP);
- Gravettian layer II, 290-310 cm depth, dated to around 24,500 uncal. BP. (28-29 ka cal. BP);
- Gravettian layer III, 375-415 cm depth, dated to around 26,000 uncal. BP (30-31 ka cal BP).

The Epigravettian layer is developed in the upper part of the sequence, corresponding to the geological unit (2) (Cârciumaru et al., 2016). Gravettian I is the richest cultural layer, it yielded over 15,000 lithic objects, numerous osteologic remains and important organic material industry and mobiliary and art pieces. In this layer, distinct activity areas were identified, including those attributed to butchering, antler processing, knapping, hearths and ochre areas (Cârciumaru et al., 2016). It is considered to be contemporary with the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM).

The cultural layers are separated by thick sterile units, preserving very well the Paleolithic habitations.

## **2. Micromorphological sampling and microstratigraphic context**

The stratigraphic succession of the layers attributed to the Gravettian occupation was studied on the western, northern and eastern profiles in Section V and a synthesis is presented below. For the present study, six micromorphological samples were chosen (tab. 1), from the western, eastern and northern profiles.

### **The microstratigraphical description of the sedimentary succession**

#### **Section V; B - C (western profile)**

##### **Layer 1: 0 - 40/50 cm**

Organic soil horizon, clay with silt and fine sand, moderately sorted, light - medium brown, with fine aggregated structure, and weakly developed prismatic structure, slightly heterogeneous, compact. Gradual, wavy lower limit, over 10 cm.

##### **Layer 2: 40/50 - 85 cm**

Clay with silt, well sorted, yellowish brown, well developed prismatic structure, with aggregates of 5-10 cm, homogenous, very compact soil horizon. Gradual, wavy lower limit, over 5 cm.

##### **Layer 3: 85 - 90 cm**

Very thin burnt daub layer, clay with silt, well sorted, reddish and dark brown, with prismatic and

granular structure, containing frequent fragments, few cm large, of burnt daub material and charcoal, heterogeneous, very compact. Includes pottery fragments attributed to Neolithic – Criș culture. Sharp, smooth lower limit.

##### **Layer 4: 90 - 110 cm**

Transition layer, clay with silt, well sorted, yellowish brown - reddish brown, with prismatic structure well developed, with aggregates 20-30 cm large, slightly heterogeneous, very compact, with distinct, smooth lower limit.

##### **Layer 5: 110 - 150 cm**

Clay and silt with fine sand, moderately sorted, yellowish brown, with frequent, few mm large, carbonate concretions, homogeneous, compact. Distinct, slightly irregular lower limit.

##### **Layer 6: 150 - 185 cm**

Silty clay with fine sand, moderately sorted, yellowish brown, with frequent burnt bones, lithic material, and charcoals, heterogeneous, compact. Includes three thin reddish brown units (the upper one including grains of ochre), separated by thin, yellowish brown, silty units. Distinct, slightly irregular lower limit.

Layer N I of Gravettian occupation.

##### **Layer 7: 185 - 265 cm**

Clay with silt, well sorted, yellowish brown - brownish yellow, homogeneous, compact, with rare and fine carbonate concretions. Diffuse, irregular lower limit.

##### **Layer 8: 265 - 275 cm**

Clay with silt, well sorted, yellowish brown - brownish yellow, with frequent bones and lithic material, heterogeneous, compact. Diffuse, irregular lower limit.

Layer N II of Gravettian occupation.

##### **Layer 9: 275 - 300 cm**

Clay with silt, well sorted, yellowish brown - brownish yellow, homogeneous, compact with rare and fine carbonate concretions (similar to layer 7). Gradual, wavy lower limit, over 10-15 cm.

##### **Layer 10: 300 - 340 cm**

Silt with fine sand, well sorted, yellowish brown, homogeneous, compact, with fine and rare carbonate concretions. Gradual, wavy lower limit over 10-15 cm.

Transition between layers N II and N III of Gravettian occupation.

##### **Layer 11: 340 - 350 cm**

Silt with fine sand, well sorted, yellowish brown, compact, with frequent burning areas, with charcoal

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<b>Sample</b>	<b>Profile</b>	<b>Depth interval (cm)</b>	<b>Stratigraphy</b>
S1	Western profile Layer 8	265 - 270	Gravettian occupation, Layer II.
S2	Western profile Layer 10	305 - 310	Transition between Gravettian Layer II and Layer III.
S3 top	Eastern profile	178 - 183	Upper occupation layer (N I). Equivalent of S5 top, southern side.
S3 bottom	Eastern profile	184 - 189	Upper occupation layer (N I) / Virgin soil. Equivalent of S5 bottom, southern side.
S4	Eastern profile	185 - 190	Burned structure, occupation layer N I / Virgin soil.
S5 top	Eastern profile	178 - 183	Upper occupation layer (N I). Equivalent of S3 top, northern side.
S5 bottom	Eastern profile	184 - 189	Upper occupation layer (N I) / Virgin soil. Equivalent of S3 bottom, northern side.
S6	Northern profile	265 - 270	Gravettian occupation, Layer II.

Tab. 1 - Section II; B - C. The location of the analyzed micromorphological samples.

and concentration of lithics. Layer N III of Gravettian occupation.

After the resin impregnation and the subsequent induration, the samples were processed in order to achieve the thin sections for the optic microscopy study. The sections were systematically described and interpreted using the standard methods (P. Bullock et al., 1985; M.-A. Courty et al., 1989; P. Goldberg, R. Macphail, 2007). Thin sections were analyzed using a polarising petrographic microscope (Olympus BX 60) under plane polarized light (PPL) and crossed polarized light (XPL) at magnifications between x100 and x600. The description of the microstratigraphy and the identifications of sedimentary facies were performed at magnifications between x1 and x100 with the purpose to understand the sequence of occupation. The study was centered on the characterization of the sedimentary matrix, and of the anthropogenic features (C. Haită, 2003; C. Haită, 2012), in order to identify the anthropic and natural units and to describe at the microscope scale the studied sequence from the Poiana Cireșului settlement.

### **3. Micromorphological description and interpretation**

The description of the micromorphological samples is presented from the bottom up.

#### **Sample 2 – Western profile, transition between N II and N III, 305-310 cm**

Silt with fine sand, well sorted, 30-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, feldspar and calcite, yellowish brown, homogeneous, with massive structure, and frequent 3-5 mm burrows and very fine root channels, compact; vesicular voids, channels and frequent fine fissures 0.4-1 mm, total void space 15-25%; coarse/fine (c/f) limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 60:40%; porphyric birefringence fabric; very few fine charcoal (decayed fragments of vegetales), mixed by burrowing.

Interpreted as soil horizon with no evidence of occupation.

#### **Sample 1 – Western profile, layer N II, 265-270 cm**

##### Lower unit, 3.1 cm thick

Silt with fine sand, well sorted, 30-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar, yellowish brown, homogeneous, with massive

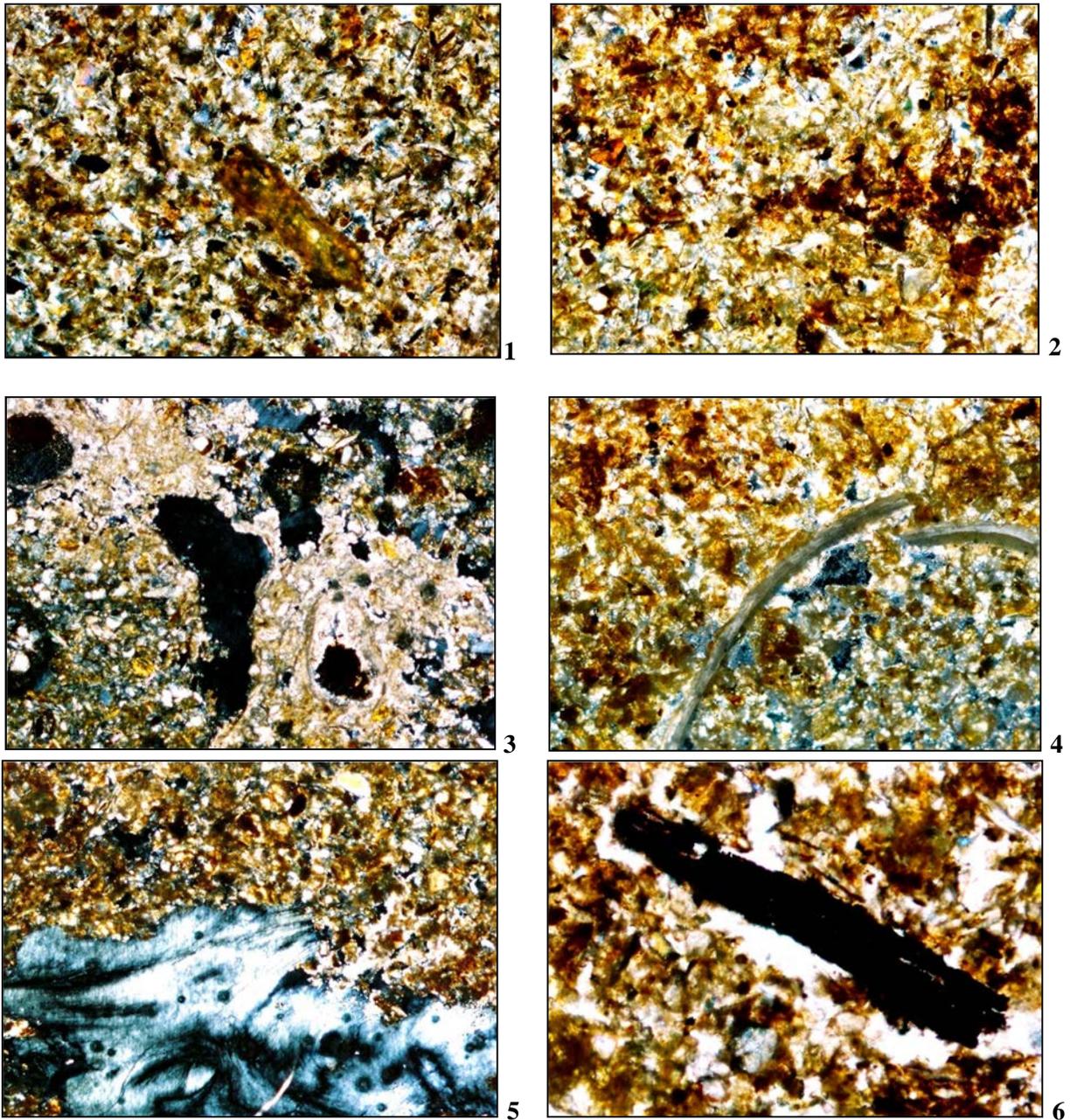


Fig. 1 - **1.** Sample 1, upper unit. Silty soil fragment. Cross polarized light (XPL), frame width (f. w.) 2 mm. **2.** Sample 1. Limit between units. XPL, f. w. 2 mm. **3.** Sample 6, upper unit. Calcitic hypocoatings and phosphatic stains. XPL, f. w. 2 mm. **4.** Sample 6, upper unit. Shell fragment. XPL, f. w. 2 mm. **5.** Sample 6, upper unit. Bone (fish?) fragment. XPL, f. w. 2 mm. **6.** Sample 6, upper unit. Charcoal fragment. Plane polarized light (PPL), f. w. 1 mm.

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structure, and frequent fine burrows and roots channels, and compact; isolated voids, channels and few fine chambers, <0.5 mm, total void space 15-20%; *c/f* limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 55:45%; porphyric birefringence fabric; Frequent fine calcitic (micrite) hypocoatings on voids, <1 mm.

Interpreted as soil horizon with no evidence of occupation.

Upper unit, 1.9 cm thick

Silt with fine sand, well sorted, 25-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; yellowish - medium brown, heterogeneous, with massive structure, few burrows and root channels, more compact; isolated voids, channels and areas with spongy microstructure, total void space 5-10 %; *c/f* limit at 25 μm, ratio *ca.* 50:50%; porphyric birefringence fabric and dotted fabric, with opaque fine charcoal (decayed vegetales); few calcitic crystalline pedofeatures and rare zones with frequent fine charcoal, associated with iron staining and few aggregates of silty clay soil (Fig. 1/1); distinct lower boundary marked by the distribution and orientation of fine charcoal (Fig. 1/2).

Interpreted as soil horizon with evidence of trampling / compaction and charcoal secondary accumulation (dispersion).

**Sample 6 – Northern profile, layer N II, 265-270 cm**

Lower unit, 2.1 cm thick

Silt with fine sand, well sorted, 30-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite, and feldspar; yellowish brown, homogeneous, with massive structure, few burrows and roots channels; moderately compact; isolated voids, and few channels and chambers, *ca.* 2 mm, and zones with vughy and spongy microstructure, originating in older burrows, total void space 10-30%; *c/f* limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 60:40%; porphyric birefringence fabric; fine calcitic (micrite) hypocoatings on voids, 1-2 mm.

Interpreted as soil horizon with no evidence of occupation.

Upper unit, 2.9 cm thick

Silt with fine sand, well sorted, 30-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; yellowish - medium brown; heterogeneous, with massive structure, few burrows and root channels;

compact; isolated voids, channels and areas with spongy microstructure, total void space 10-20%; *c/f* limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 45:55%; porphyric birefringence fabric and dotted fabric, with opaque grains of fine charcoal; few calcitic crystalline pedofeatures (Fig. 1/3); zones with frequent fine charcoal associated with iron staining; contains frequent inclusions: *ca.* 3 mm shell fragment (Fig. 1/4), 2 mm fish (?) bone (Fig. 1/5), few mm bone fragments, *ca.* 1 mm charcoal grain (Fig. 1/6), few aggregates of silty clay soil, few phosphatic grains; distinct lower boundary marked by the orientation of the fine charcoal.

Interpreted as soil horizon with evidence of trampling / compaction and anthropic constituent's secondary accumulation (dispersion).

Similar succession with sample 1.

**Sample 3 bottom – Eastern profile, southern area, layer N I, 184-189 cm**

Lower unit, 1.3 cm thick

Silt with fine sand, well sorted, 30-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; yellow, homogeneous, with massive structure and compact; isolated voids: vughs, fine chambers and few fine channels, total void space 10-25%; *c/f* limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 65:35%; porphyric birefringence fabric; no anthropic inclusions; frequent fine and few larger calcitic hypocoatings on voids.

Interpreted as loess unit with no evidence of occupation.

Upper unit, 3.7 cm thick

Abundant ashes and fine charcoal, few grains of charcoal with identifiable wood structure, frequent fragments of burned and unburned bones (few with very fine laminated structure, with fine voids, probably fish bones; Fig. 2/1.2), 1 bone fragment of 5 mm, 2 mm fragments of flint (Fig. 2/3), and few fragments of reddish burned silty clay soil (Fig. 2/4); sharp lower boundary, resulted by excavation of soil layer for the fitting out of a combustion structure.

Accumulation *in situ* in the combustion structure.

**Sample 3 top – Eastern profile, southern area, layer N I, 178-183 cm**

Lower unit, 2.4 cm

Clay with silt and fine sand, poorly sorted, 30-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite, and feldspar; medium brown; very heterogeneous, with massive structure; compact; isolated voids, with frequent channels, 1-2 mm, few larger chambers and

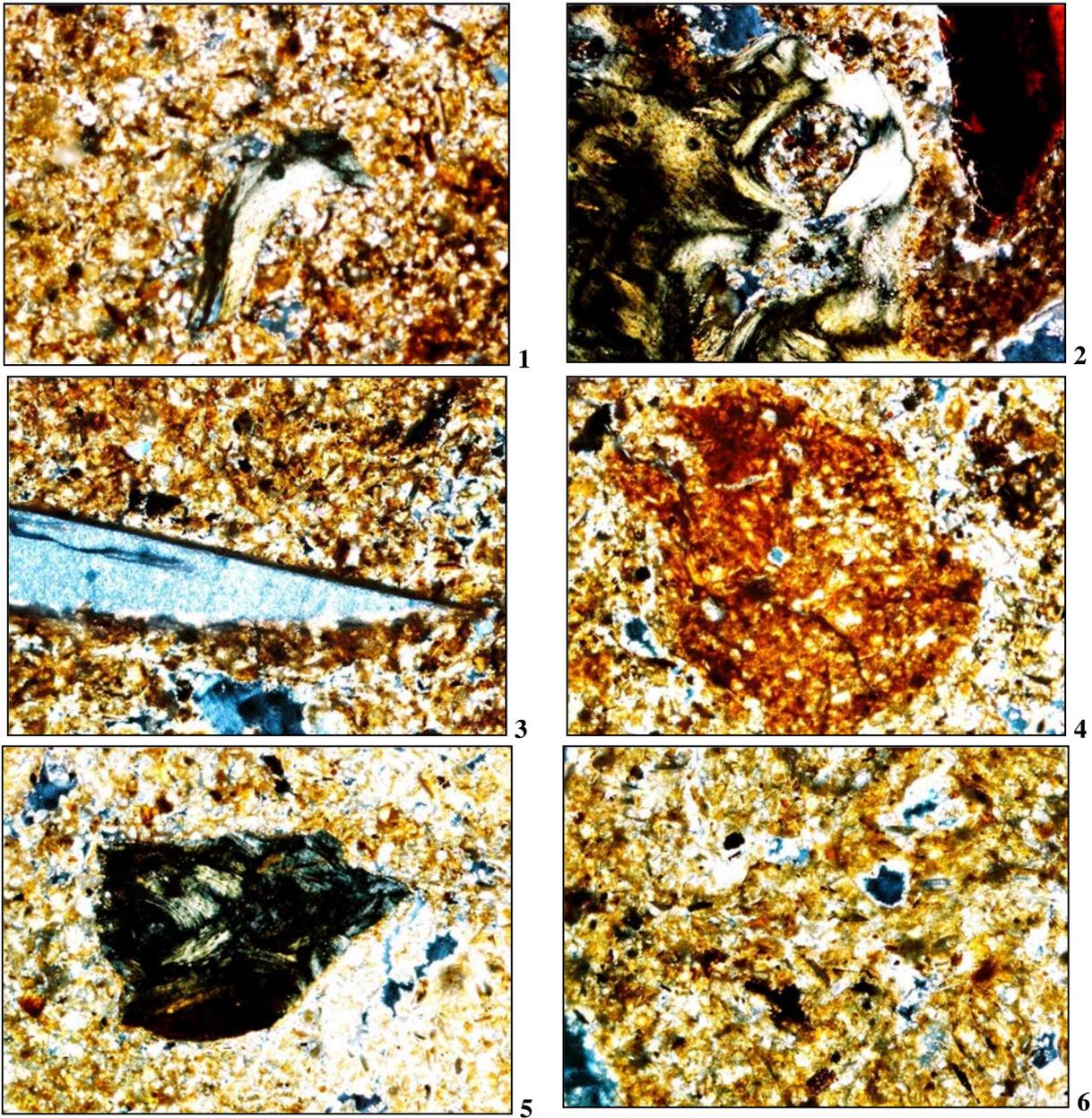


Fig. 2 - **1.** Sample 3 bottom, upper unit. Bone (fish?) fragment. XPL, f. l. 2 mm. **2.** Sample 3 bottom, upper unit. Fish bone (left) and burnt bone fragment. XPL, f. l. 2 mm. **3.** Sample 3 bottom, upper unit. Flint (microcrystalline) fragment. XPL, f. l. 2 mm. **4.** Sample 3 bottom, upper unit. Reddish burnt soil fragment. XPL, f. l. 2 mm. **5.** Sample 3 top, lower unit. Fish bone fragment. XPL, f. l. 2 mm. **6.** Sample 3 top. Limit between the two units. XPL, f. l. 2 mm.

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channels, and zones with spongy microstructure, total void space 10-30%; *c/f* limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 25:75%; porphyric birefringence fabric, very dotted and speckled; abundant ashes and fine charcoals, few grains of charcoal with identifiable wood structure, few fragments of burned and unburned bones (1 fishbone; Fig. 2/5), and few fragments of reddish burned silty clay soil.

Accumulation in a combustion structure.

Upper unit, 2.6 cm

Silt with clay and fine sand, moderately sorted, 30-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; yellowish brown; homogeneous, with massive structure, and burrows and root channels, compact; isolated voids and few fine channels, total void space 10-20%; *c/f* limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 25:75%; porphyric birefringence fabric; very few anthropic inclusions, fine charcoal and soils fragments; distinct lower boundary (Fig. 2/6).

Soil horizon with accumulation / dispersion of anthropic constituents.

**Sample 4 – Eastern profile, central area, layer N I, 185-190 cm**

Lower unit, 0 - 3.5 cm thick

Silty clay with fine sand, well sorted, 20-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; yellowish, homogeneous, with massive structure, and few burrows and channel roots, very compact; isolated voids and frequent fine channels, total void space 10-20%; *c/f* limit at 20 μm, ratio *ca.* 45:55%; porphyric birefringence fabric; no anthropic inclusions.

Loess unit with no evidence of occupation.

Upper unit, 1.5-5 cm thick

Clay with silt and fine sand, moderately sorted, 15-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; medium brown, reddish and dark brown; very heterogeneous, with massive structure, and few burrows; very compact; fine isolated voids and channels, total void space 10-15%; *c/f* limit at 15 μm, ratio *ca.* 10:90%; porphyric birefringence fabric, very dotted and speckled; frequent ashes and charcoal, few larger and concentrated fragments of wood charcoal (Fig. 3/1), fine fragments of reddish burned soil (Fig. 3/2); sharp, oblique, lower

boundary resulted probably by the excavation for the fitting out of the combustion structure.

Accumulation inside the combustion structure. At the top, few fragments of reddish burned clay soil with finely laminated microstructure (Fig. 3/2), probably originating in a clay element (fitting out?) of the combustion structure.

**Sample 5 bottom – Eastern profile, northern area, layer N I, 184-189 cm**

Lower unit, 2 cm

Silty clay with fine sand, moderately sorted, 25-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; yellow, homogeneous, with massive structure, and few burrows and channel roots; very compact; isolated voids and frequent fine channels, total void space 10-20%; *c/f* limit at 25 μm, ratio *ca.* 50:50%; porphyric birefringence fabric; no anthropic inclusions; fine calcitic hypocoatings.

Loess unit with no evidence of occupation. Upper unit, 3 cm

Silt with clay and fine sand, moderately sorted, 30-100 μm and 100-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; medium brown; very heterogeneous, with massive structure, and few burrows, compact; isolated voids and frequent fine channels and areas with spongy microstructure, total void space 15-25%; *c/f* limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 20:80%; porphyric birefringence fabric, dotted and speckled; frequent ashes and fine charcoal, few fragments of wood charcoal, rare fragments of burned and unburned bones (few fish bones?), few fragments of reddish burned clay soil (Fig. 3/3); distinct lower boundary (Fig. 3/4), few burrows mixing up the two units.

Accumulation (secondary) of anthropic constituents, probably in the proximity of the combustion structure.

**Sample 5 top – Eastern profile, northern area, layer N I, 178-183 cm**

Lower unit, 1 cm thick

Silt with clay and fine sand, poorly sorted, 30-200 μm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; medium brown, very heterogeneous, with massive structure, and few burrows and channels; compact, with isolated voids and frequent fine channels, and areas with spongy microstructure, total void space 20-35%; *c/f* limit at 30 μm, ratio *ca.* 10/30:90/70%; porphyric birefringence fabric, dotted and speckled; frequent ashes and fine charcoal (Fig. 3/5), few

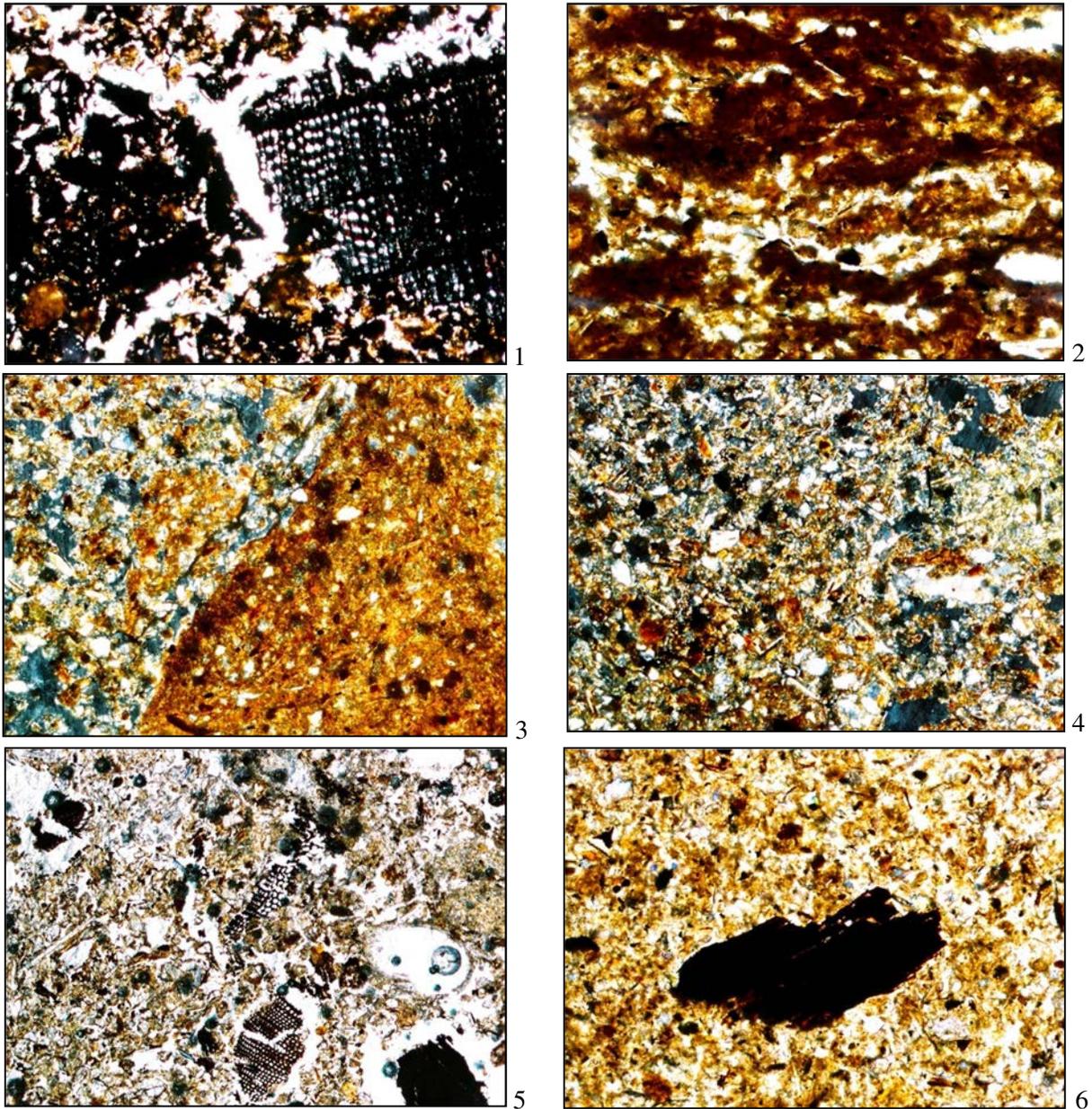


Fig. 3 - **1.** Sample 4, upper unit. Concentration of charcoal and ash. PPL, f. l. 2 mm. **2.** Sample 4, upper unit. Burnt clay soil fragmented *in situ*. PPL, f. l. 2 mm. **3.** Sample 5 bottom, upper unit. Burnt soil fragment. XPL, f. l. 2 mm. **4.** Sample 5 bottom. Limit between the two units. XPL, f. l. 2 mm. **5.** Sample 5 top, lower unit. Ash and fine charcoal. PPL, f. l. 2 mm. **6.** Sample 5 top, upper unit. Charcoal fragment. XPL, f. l. 2 mm.

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fragments of wood charcoal, few fragments of bones, 1 rock fragment, frequent silty soil fragments; fine calcitic hypocoatings.

Secondary accumulation of anthropic constituents, with different degree of transformation by fire, probably in the proximity of the combustion structure.

Upper unit, 4 cm thick

Silt with clay and fine sand, moderately sorted, 30-100 µm and 100-200 µm grains of quartz, mica, calcite and feldspar; yellowish brown; slightly heterogeneous, with massive structure, and burrows and root channels, compact; isolated voids and few fine channels, total void space 10-20%; *c/f* limit at 30 µm, ratio *ca.* 45:55%; porphyric birefringence fabric; few anthropic inclusions, fine charcoal (Fig. 3/6), 2 flint fragments and few soil aggregates; fine calcitic hypocoatings; distinct lower boundary.

Occupation in an area of dispersion of anthropic constituents.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The micromorphological analysis of the anthropogenic sequence from the Poiana Cireşului Upper Paleolithic site revealed the natural units of paleosol and loess deposits, as well as the levels of habitation, especially the upper and the intermediate ones.

The observed sedimentary and pedological characteristics are specific to soils formed on loess deposits, characterized by the activity of fauna and remobilization of some compounds, especially calcium carbonate. The microstructure of sediments and soils did not provide relevant information in this case for the interpretation of paleoenvironmental conditions.

As for the anthropic units, elements of a combustion / hearth structure have been highlighted, consisting of both an excavation, possibly with the leveling of the soil, but also a clay slab that could be placed inside the hearth. The accumulation units within this structure contain common constituents, but the detail of the information at microscope scale allows for a better understanding of the complexity of anthropogenic activities. Along with fine charcoals (burned plant residues), wood charcoal, bones and flint chips, fish bones have been observed in several levels. The presence of these food remains is an element if not surprising, at least interesting,

especially as it is observed at both studied levels. It would be interesting to keep track of this, both in terms of his presence in Gravettian III layer, but also of frequency and distribution.

Even if it was initiated as an evaluation of the possibility of analyzing the Paleolithic occupation sequences, being the first such analysis for our country, the present study confirmed the microstratigraphy, allowed a systematic description of the component sedimentary units and revealed the capacity of obtaining some detailed information on the investigated anthropic sequence.

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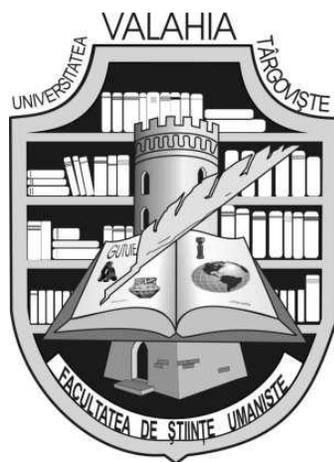
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# ANNALES



## D'UNIVERSITÉ VALAHIA TÂRGOVIȘTE

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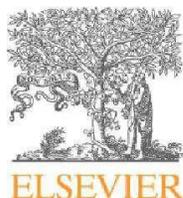
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## Technical observations on the first Palaeolithic surface collection from Izvorul Alb (Bicaz, Romania)

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**Abstract.** Among the many Palaeolithic discoveries in the Bistriței Valley, an impressive collection of lithic materials (almost 3,000 pieces) have been collected, over the years, from Izvorul Alb-Bicaz (north-eastern Romania). Most of the items come from surface recoveries and at this moment no site has been accurately located. We present an analysis of the first collection of lithic materials found at Izvorul Alb in 1977 and 1978, recovered from two distinct places, Baicu and Piciorul Gol. Our observations point to several differences between the items collected in the two places. Generally, some of the items come from a late Palaeolithic level, Epigravettian or even Epipalaeolithic, and the rest of lithic materials may belong to Gravettian traditions *sensu lato*.

**Key words:** Upper Palaeolithic, surface collection, lithic materials, Izvorul Alb-Bicaz, north-eastern Romania.

### Introduction

The Bistrița valley is the area with the largest density of Palaeolithic sites in Romania (over 20 settlements) and with great archaeological potential. Except for Poiana Cireșului, which has been systematically researched ever since 1998 (Cârciumar et al., 2006, 2007-2008, 2010) and is currently the most representative Palaeolithic site in the Bistrița valley, all the other settlements have been unevenly investigated over time. In fact, it is the only settlement which has a coherent chronology and where most of the art objects from the Palaeolithic in Romania have been found (Cârciumar et al. 2018, Cârciumar, Nițu, 2018). The importance of finds has been emphasized in several recent studies, for it is as yet the only site that has substantially contributed to the description

of the Upper Palaeolithic in this area, particularly through the evidence regarding the origin and evolution of the Gravettian in the Eastern Carpathians (Nițu et al., 2019).

Most of the sites, located in the Ceahlău basin, were investigated during the 1960 rescue excavations, when extensive arrangements works of Izvorul Muntelui Dam were undertaken (Nicolăescu-Plopșor et al., 1966; Păunescu 1998). They were not continued later and only brief surveys have been conducted lately (Cârciumar et al., 2010; Steguweit et al. 2009), but without providing convincing results. Furthermore, recent excavations at Buda and Lespezi, two settlements located in the lower course of the Bistrița valley, have been carried out on a very small scale

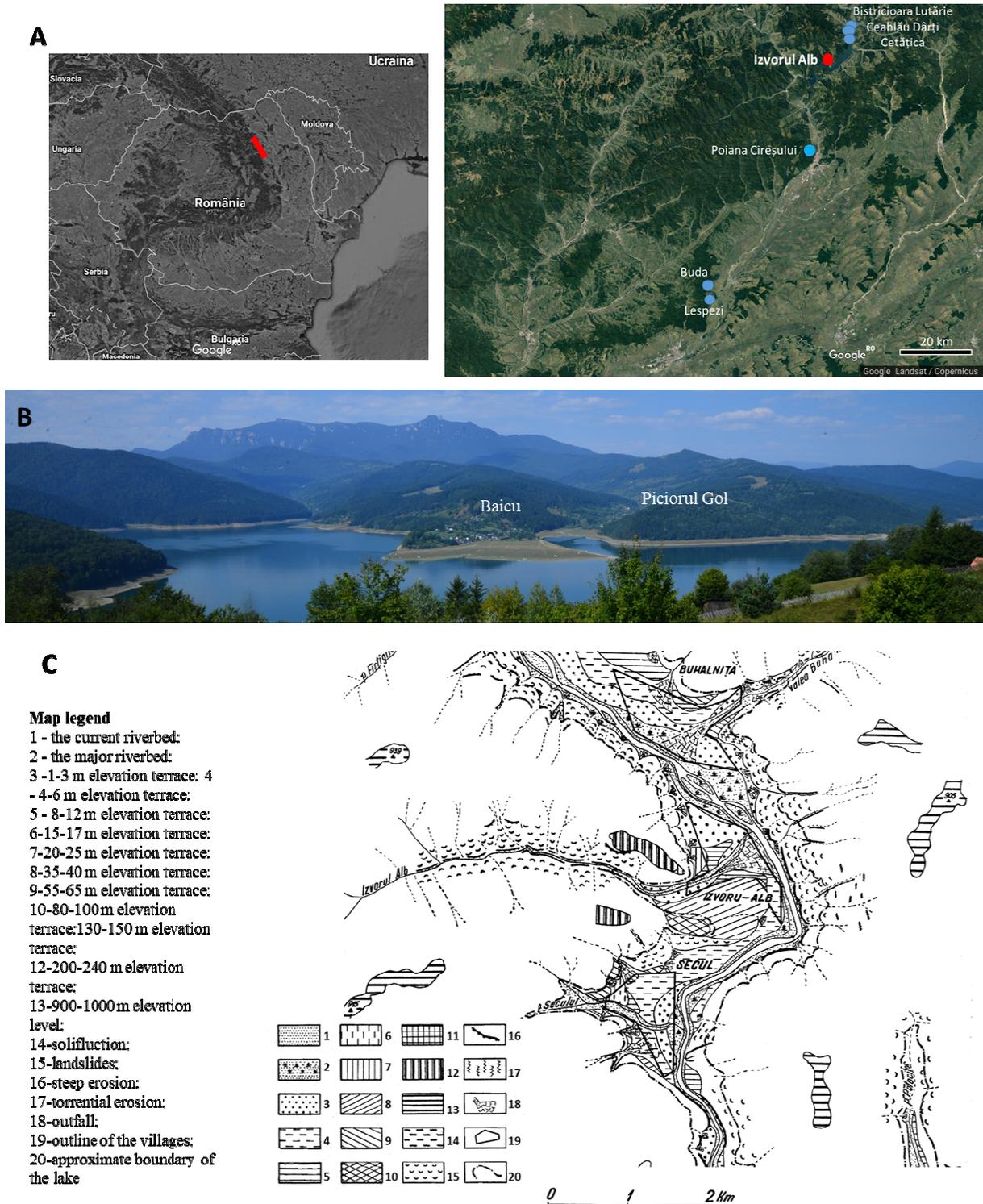


Fig. 1 – Izvorul Alb settlement location (A), the places where the materials were collected (B) and the geomorphology of the Bistrița Valley in the Izvorul Alb area (C).

## Technical observations on the first Palaeolithic surface collection from Izvorul Alb (Bicaz, Romania)

(Tufreau et al., 2018). Therefore, investigations have not been resumed in a significant number of sites found a long time ago. Among these, Izvorul Alb-Bicaz is a special case because, at this moment, no site has been accurately located although, over the years, an impressive number of lithic materials (almost 3,000 items) have been collected here. Published articles mention two distinct places, Baicu and Piciorul Gol, situated on the left and right bank of the Izvorul Alb river, at its confluence with the Bistrița valley (Fig. 1). Most of the items come from surface recoveries, an insignificant portion being found in a few surveys conducted between 1979 and 1982 (F. Mogoșanu, M. Matei, 1981, 1983).

As part of our project on the analysis of Palaeolithic sites in the Bistrița valley, a few short field investigations were made at Izvorul Alb, as well as a brief assessment of materials deposited at the Bicaz History Museum and the Piatra Neamț Museum of Natural Sciences. On this occasion, we noticed that the lithic assemblage, though collected from the surface, has some coherence (for example, a partial refitting was made from materials gathered at Baicu, stored at the Bicaz museum). For these reasons, we will present an analysis of the first collection of lithic materials found at Izvorul Alb by one of the authors of this article, Mihai Matei, who actually took part in the investigations carried out in 1979-1982. According to the markings on the items, the materials were found in 1977 and 1978, hence before the onset of investigations coordinated by F. Mogoșanu. This collection was not included in previously published articles (F. Mogoșanu, M. Matei, 1981, 1983; A. Păunescu, 1998).

The study is a first stage of research that is to be conducted at Izvorul Alb in the next phase. It will involve the analysis of all materials discovered over time and identification of areas with coherent stratigraphy and *in-situ* materials.

### **A short geomorphological characterization of the Bistrița valley in the Izvorul Alb sector**

Izvorul Alb is a locality which is part of the town of Bicaz and is located on the right side of the Bistrița valley, in the Eastern Carpathians flysch zone (Fig. 1/A, B), characterized by numerous overthrust lines and the significant occurrence of the arenaceous conglomerate, the Hangu layers etc. (I. Ichim et al., 1987). The

presence of shale triggered intense landslides (Fig. 1/C). There is a great variety of landslide types, from isolated landslides along a torrential valley, landslides on large areas, displacements of packages of layers, which sometimes entailed the formation of deluvio-colluvial subsidence on terrace tread. The largest landslides and degradations occurred on the southern slopes due to more extensive deforestations (L. Badea, Gh. Popa, 1961), as happens on the slopes of the Izvorul Alb brook. Even recent landslides, influenced by the emergence of the storage basin, have been described; they have occurred mainly on the right versant of the brook in the form of mass displacements which have caused the sealing of the valley in its middle third (C. Brânduș et al., 2006).

The first important particular feature of the Bistrița valley is the alternation of sectors where the valley widens, separated by gorges (M. David, 1933; N. Pop, 1942; V. Mihăilescu, 1944), due to the geological structure and the influence of confluences with other rivers flowing into the Bistrița, which favoured the emergence of small basins as a result of the pressure exerted by the alluvial cones generated. Another feature of the Bistrița is the fact that the rivers it receives on the right have stronger mountainous traits, deeper and narrower valleys, with a very steep slope as compared to the left rivers which have a broad thalweg with often slightly rolled boulders (L. Badea, Gh. Popa, 1961).

The narrowing of the Bistrița valley after the confluence with the Secu brook, at the entrance to the sandstones of Tarcău, may have influenced the upstream accumulations and hence the development of terraces in the Izvorul Alb area. To the right of the Izvorul Alb, I. Donisă (1968) mentions a terrace level in the shape of an inclined wide step (at an altitude of 30 m relative to the Izvorul Alb thalweg), which advances towards the former course and ends in a terrace riser 35 m above the Bistrița. Also on the right side of the Izvorul Alb there is a terrace with a narrow tread, located at an altitude of 70 m relative to the thalweg of this river, perpendicular to the Bistrița valley. The configuration of terraces in the area of confluence of the Izvorul Alb and Bistrița rivers was reconstituted by L. Badea și Gh. Popa (1961) (Fig. 1). Before the formation of the storage basin, some constriction once occurred at the point where

the Izvorul Alb flows into the Bistrița, due to the fact that a spur used to penetrate rather far into the Bistrița riverbed at the level of lower terraces.

The complexity of the Bistrița valley and its tributaries entailed a variation of relative altitudes of terraces along the longitudinal profile, which resulted in the emergence and disappearance of intermediate and local levels, with higher terraces alternating with lower ones in confluence areas and larger alluvial cones being severed in intermediate steps (L. Badea, Gh. Popa, 1961).

A number of assumptions on the origin of loessic/clays deposits on the river terraces in general and of the Bistrița in particular have been formulated but unfortunately they do not rely on serious interdisciplinary studies and hence we believe that for the most part they cannot be taken into account. However, we have retained the supposition of L. Badea and Gh. Popa (1961), who acknowledge the alluvial, proluvial and deluvio-colluvial origin of clays on the terraces of the Bistrița. They think that most of the loessic material on Bistrița terraces comes from slope washouts, resulting in rock decay and alteration, especially in the case of sandy marls and sandstones. It means that the origin of loessic deposits is based on a process of eluvium remoulding. C. S. Nicolăescu-Plopșor's assumption (1958) is more balanced, as it highlights the role of deflation in the formation of these deposits without completely ruling out, in certain stages, some intakes from rain waters flowing down the slopes.

#### Description of lithic materials

##### *Raw material and post-depositional surface modifications of items (chemical and mechanical alteration)*

The collection of lithic materials comprises a total of 262 items, 216 of which having been collected from Baicu and 46 from Piciorul Gol.

The lithic material gathered at Piciorul Gol is largely composed of translucent smoky flint (84%) and most of the items have a bluish or white patina (Fig. 2/1-4). There is a wider variety of raw material at Baicu, even in the case of the same type of rock: several flint types (translucent smoky, translucent white, brown etc.), chert/menilite, Audia black shale, siliceous sandstone, jasper and even limestone (only two items) are used. The prevalent raw material in the entire lithic

assemblage in this place is chert/menilite, which is also to be noticed in the collections analyzed in previous studies (F. Mogoșanu, M. Matei, 1981, 1983; A. Păunescu, 1998). However, the proportion of raw material differs depending on the general technical categories: most of the flakes are made from flint, whereas the laminar products (blade, bladelets) and cores are largely knapped in chert/menilite.

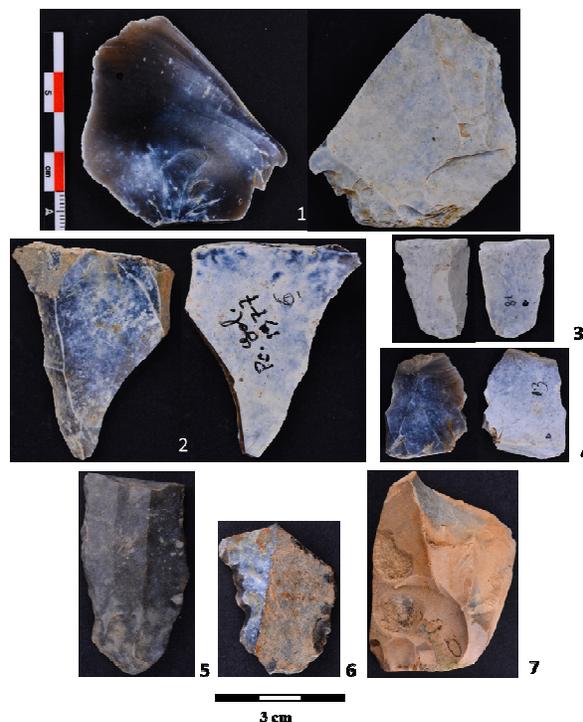


Fig. 2 - Post-depositional surface modifications of lithic materials: patina on flint flakes (1-4, 6); rubbing, abrasion, gloss on retouched blade fragment (5); abrasion, gloss and edge damage (6); gelifraction (7); 1-4 items from Izvorul Alb-Piciorul Gol, 5-7 items from Izvorul Alb-Baicu.

The patina is specific to most of the flint items. This post-depositional modification is complex and may be due to several factors, such as the alkaline composition of the deposit in which they lay, the dehydration produced after the extraction of the material from the sediment or sun exposure (D. Stapert, 1976; A. L. Van Gijn, 1989). The items from Piciorul Gol as well as those from Baicu have various patina degrees (Fig. 2), in most cases the patina being uneven. There are instances of patina only on one face of the items, the other

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having a very fresh surface (Fig. 2/1). Most likely, with this collection, the patina formation process on item surface is due to sun exposure. It appears that the stages of evolution of the patina involve, in a first phase, the formation of a blue film which later turns into white patina (D. Stapert, 1976). The presence of a blue patina is more frequent on the materials from Baicu, while the Piciorul Gol items are more intensely patinated, having a blue-whitish or white film.

In addition to the patina, the following post-depositional modifications have also been noted: rubbing, abrasion, gloss, trampling (edge damage), less gelifraction (Fig. 2/5-7). Only three items from Piciorul Gol display such marks, while at Baicu about 10% of the entire assemblage is post-depositionally affected. Considering that the materials were collected on the shore of the storage basin during periods of low water levels, the

proportion of post-depositionally affected items is not very high. Most likely, the items come from layers found in the terrace located at a relative altitude of 30-35 m, which were gradually, recurrently eroded by the oscillation of the water levels.

*The lithic material from Piciorul Gol*

The lithic assemblage comprises three cores, 26 flakes (of which 5 are micro-flakes < 25 mm), 10 blades, two bladelets (one of which is a burin spall) and five debris. The cores are made of flint (2) and menilite (1). The two flint cores were produced for the same purpose, namely to obtain bladelets, but through different methods: the first is a double-platform core with one debitage surface (bidirectional scars) (Fig. 3/1) and the second a narrow-fronted single-platform core (unidirectional scars) (Fig. 3/2). The menilite core is laminar, with double-platform and one debitage surface.

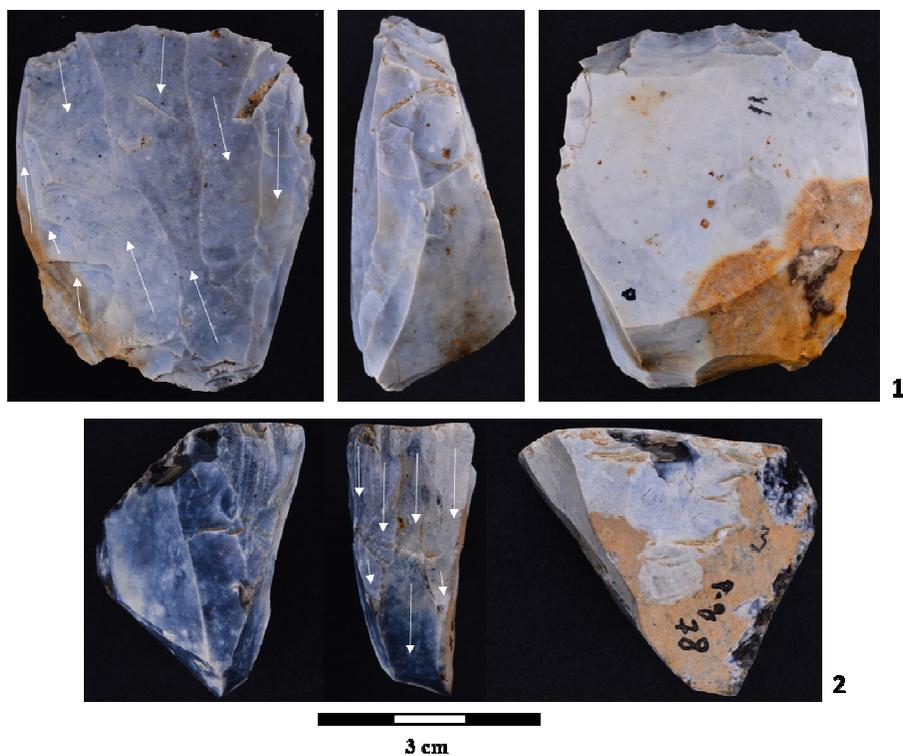


Fig. 3 – Cores collected from Izvorul Alb-Piciorul Gol.

There is a small number of cortical products and of technical items resulted from the core preparation and maintenance: a few flakes and blades (4 items) of rejuvenation of debitage surface or core edges, a crested flake, a *débordant* flake

and a partial crested blade. Only one blade, namely a conjoining of two fragments, is complete, the rest are fragmented. Similarly, the two bladelets are fragmented. In terms of size, almost all flakes are 30-55 mm long (but there are also micro-flakes ≤

20 mm). Several flakes have bladelets scars. In the case of blades, due to fragmentation, only the width could be measured, ranging between 20 and 25 mm. The technique used varies according to products: hard percussion was used for flakes and partially blades, whereas soft percussion was noted in the case of blades and bladelets. Two items exhibit knapping accidents: a flake with popout fracture (A. Tsirk, 2014), an accident similar to what is called *nacelle inferieur* in French literature (M.-L. Inizan et al. 1995), and a blade with blunt termination.

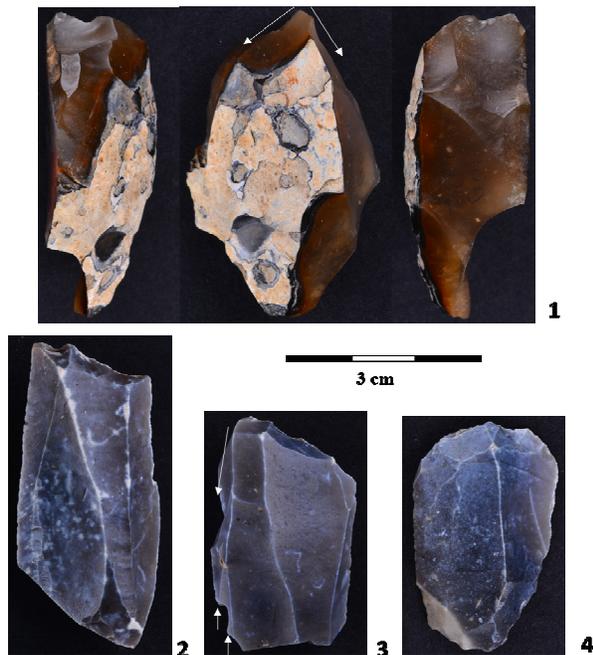


Fig. 4 – Selected tools: carenated burins (1, note the thermal alteration); truncated blade (2); burin on truncation (3); endscraper (4).

Typologically, three burins, dihedral, carenated (Fig. 4/1) and on oblique truncation (Fig. 4/3), two blades with oblique truncation (Fig. 2/2), a retouched blade and an end-scraper on retouched flake (Fig. 4/4) have been identified.

#### **The lithic material from Baicu**

The collection comprises 9 cores, 87 flakes, 68 blades, 18 bladelets and 33 debris.

Most cores were intended for the production of blades and bladelets (8 items), often in alternation from the same core. Only with one core the last scars are very small flakes but it is

exhausted and the purpose of initial production may have been different. The reduction sequences reflect a volumetric exploitation of cores by several methods: frontal reduction, single platform cores, unipolar scars (Fig. 5/1, 5, 6); frontal reduction, double platform cores (Fig. 5/2); semi-tournante reduction, single or double platform cores, with one or two debitage surface and unipolar scars (Fig. 5/4); tournante reduction, double platform cores, bipolar scars (Fig. 5/3). Except for a single core of Audia black shale (Fig. 5/1), which was abandoned due to step and hinge scar terminations and which has a good maintenance of the debitage surface convexity, the rest of the items are exhausted. Most of them have a maximum length of 40 to 50 mm, while the last scars are bladelets or microlithic blanks (short blades and small flakes). Microlithism is also exhibited with the other technical categories of the collection (flakes, blades).

Laminar products account for a half of the collection, but the degree of fragmentation is very high. Almost 70% of blades are fragmented. The most commonly used technique is hard percussion (only 20% of the blades are knapped by soft percussion). Some fragments have marks from knapping accidents (especially bending breaks). Half of the blades are produced by core preparation and maintenance (Fig. 6/1,5), such as the crested blades and secondary blanks from rejuvenation of the core debitage surfaces. Dorsal scars are mainly unipolar (60%). In terms of dimensions, the small width of blanks (13-20 mm) is to be noted. The longest items (80 mm) are two sandstone blades, while the rest of products are 30 to 60 mm long.

The same degree of fragmentarity is also noticeable in the case of bladelets (Fig. 6/7,8,10,11). A few large blades are burin spall detachments and result from the transformation of some flakes into cores (Fig. 6/6). The use of flakes as blanks for cores was also noticed in the collection of materials stored at the Museum of Natural Sciences from Piatra Neamț. This method of production of bladelets may be a particularity of the lithic assemblage from Baicu.

Most of the flakes are small, 70% of them less than 40 mm long, and of these a large part has been included in the category of micro-flakes ( $\leq 20$  mm). Technically, the flakes resulted from the

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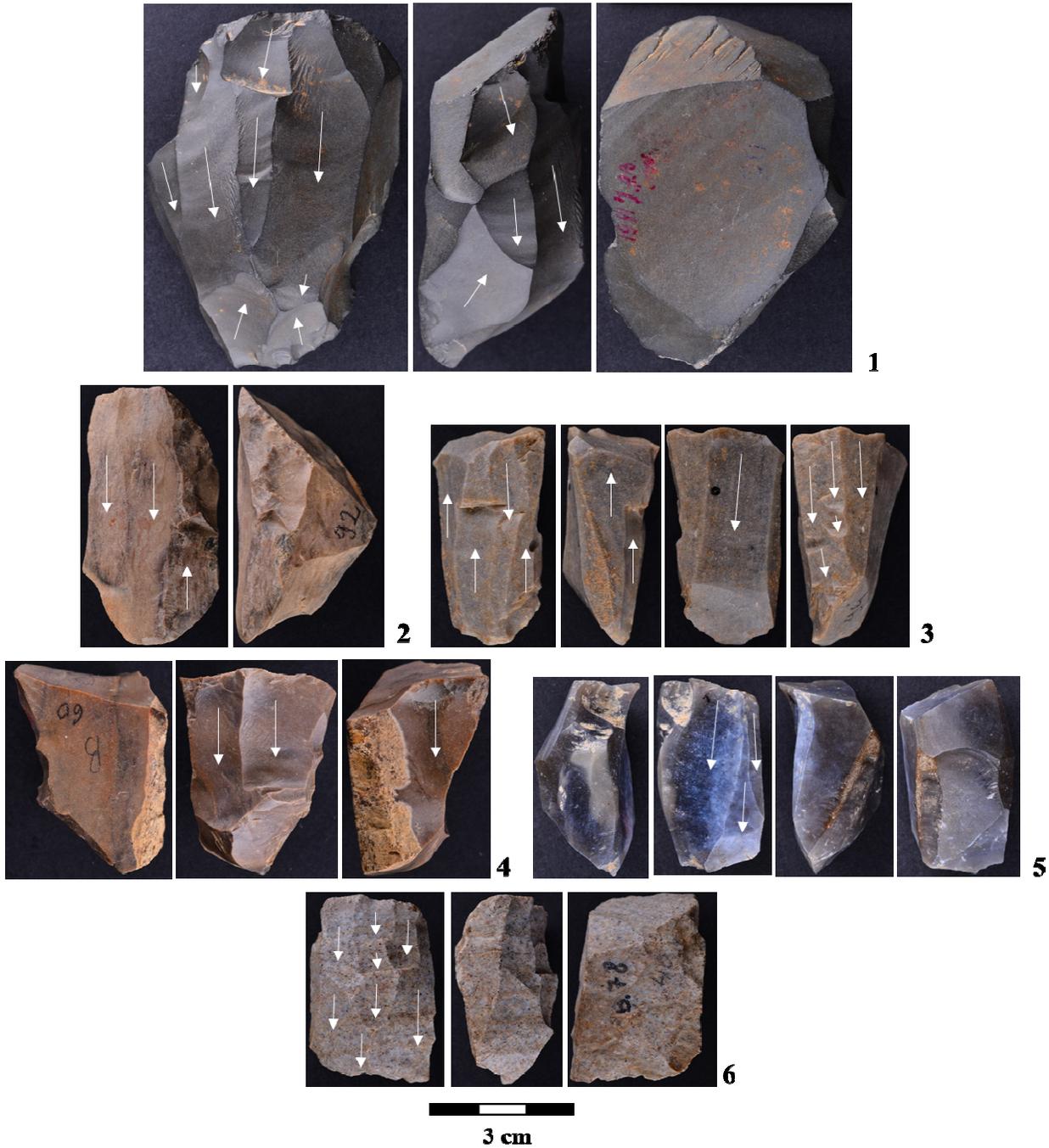


Fig. 5 – Diverse cores.



Fig. 6 – Laminar products: blades (1-5) and bladelets (6-11).

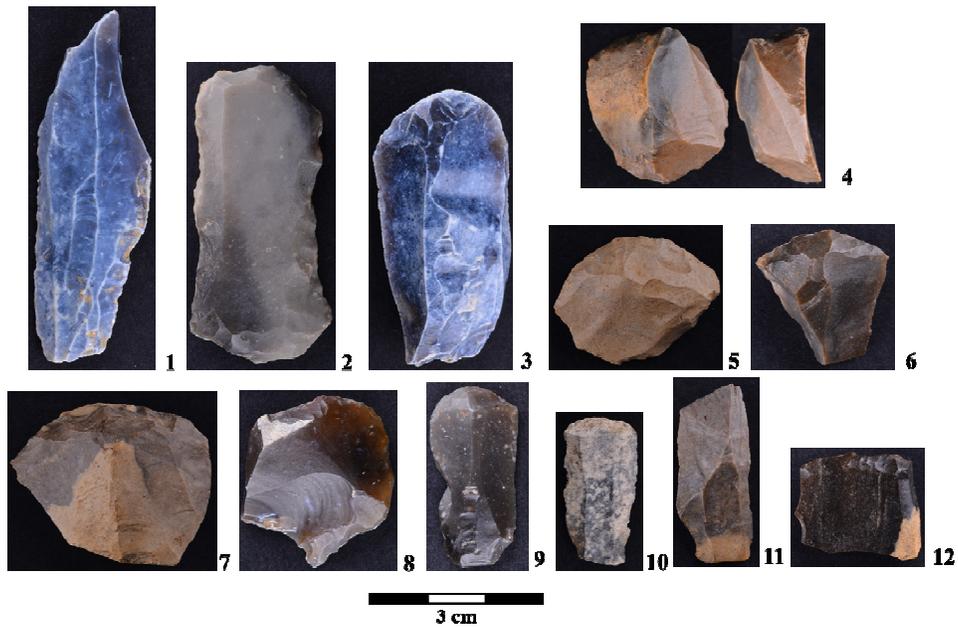


Fig. 7 - Selected tools: burin on truncated blade (1); enscrapers (2-10); truncated blades (11,12).

**Technical observations on the first Palaeolithic surface collection from Izvorul Alb  
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preparation and maintenance of laminar cores (debitage surfaces, platforms or cores edges), but cortical products resulted either from cortex removal or from the extension of debitage surfaces are also present. Dorsal scars are largely unipolar and many of them are laminar. The technique used was mostly direct hard percussion, but there are some items with soft percussion marks as well.

The analysis of items highlights a main production of blades and bladelets, often in alternation from the same core type. Furthermore, it is also noted that some blades were obtained through debitage by exploiting the thickness of some flakes, including large ones.

In terms of typology, the end-scrapers are the largest category (9 items), most of which are microlithic (double end-scrapers, circular end-scrapers and thumbnails) (Fig. 7/2-10). For the most part, they were prepared on small flakes. In addition to these, two fragments of truncated blades (microlithic items) (Fig. 7/11,12), a burin on truncated blade (Fig. 7/1) and a *perçoir* on bladelet have also been identified.

Generally, the material collected on the beach in the Baicu area is not as homogeneous as that from Piciorul Gol. Most likely, the lake waters eroded several different occupational sequences (at least two), one of which is very late and characterized by a microlithic component of tools. In fact, some microlithic tools are to be noted in previous publications as well (Al. Păunescu, 1998). Although no backed tool has been identified in the analyzed assemblage, they are present in the collections recovered during the 1979-1982 period, as we have seen among the items stored at the Bicaz Museum and in older publications. At least some of the materials gathered in this place may belong to a Late Epigravettian or even Epipalaeolithic occupation.

### **Conclusions**

The analysis of this small collection, correlated with our brief observations made on some of the materials recovered in 1979-1982, points to several differences between the items collected in the two places from Izvorul Alb. In addition to the different proportion of raw material, which is also highlighted in the first articles, the technical characteristics and the general composition of debitage products are distinctive elements as well.

The bluish or white patinated flint, present in all settlements in the Bistrița valley, is generally assumed to have been brought from the Prut valley, more than 200 km away. Even though it forms the same type of patina as that in the Prut valley, the flint used at Izvorul Alb is different, at least macroscopically. The occurrence of various technical categories from this raw material, including products resulting from cortex removal and cores, suggests a local manufacturing and probably a supply from areas near the settlements. Moreover, the earliest levels in the Bistrița valley (24-27 ka uncal. B.P.) have a proportion of flint higher than other raw material sources. This has been thought to be an argument in favour of the assumption that the Piciorul Gol items are older than those found at Baicu (F. Mogoșanu, M. Matei, 1981, 1983). Undoubtedly, the proportion of raw material cannot be a chronological argument. We believe rather that the presence of microlithic tools at Baicu and their absence from the Piciorul Gol materials may indicate that the items discovered in the latter place are older.

Without a clear stratigraphic context and any dating, it is difficult to classify materials chronologically. Generally, some of the items found on the Baicu beach come from a rather late Palaeolithic level, Epigravettian or even Epipalaeolithic. The rest of materials may belong to Gravettian traditions *sensu lato*, especially as there are a few backed bladelets and la Gravette points in some collections.

Given the large number of lithic materials gathered over time, the identification of deposits preserving possible Palaeolithic habitations is a necessity at Izvorul Alb. Of course, the approach is complicated due to the very difficult geomorphology of the land, characterized by slides on large surfaces and possibly the destruction of deposits with Palaeolithic occupations. On the other hand, at least one settlement, which stands out through the large number of items collected on the lake shore at Baicu, is lost beyond retrieval because of the erosion resulted from the oscillating water levels. However, the Izvorul Alb area has potential for possible Palaeolithic finds, which might make a connection between the settlements located in the Ceahlău basin and the site from Poiana Cireșului-Piatra Neamț.

### Acknowledgments

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# ANNALES



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## Two Statuettes Discovered at Tărtăria-Gura Luncii in the Campaign of Preventive Researches form 2014-2015 "The Goddess with the Snake" and "Janus"

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**Abstract:** *The preventive research campaign from 2014-2015 lead to the discovery of a depth archaeological feature (Petrești Culture) which dislocated the space between dwelling XII and XIII belonging to phase B of Vinča culture. Among the discovered pieces there can be noticed the Statuette (Goddess) with snake and the Statuette with incised signs (Janus – with incised signs forming a message).*

**Key words:** *Tărtăria-Gura Luncii, Aeneolithic, Petrești culture, Statuette (Goddess) with snake and Statuette with incised signs (Janus?).*

These preventive excavations were published, summary, recently, in a monographic study (S.A. Luca 2016). One of the large size pits – unnumbered, placed between dwellings XII (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 159-165) and XIII (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 179-181) (dated by us, the two dwellings, relatively, Vinča B; the level of deposits of their remains was noted with III, in our excavation; it was dated also with radiocarbon (S.A. Luca *et al* 2016)), led to a lot of Petrești culture special archeological materials (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 171, plan 13 – middle, the pit can be well observed in horizontal plan, being developed more on the opposite profile than the one is published; this is the one that cutes the adobe platform, called by us dwellings "XII and XIII" – that can be one and the same construction; additional details about dwelling XIII at p. 179-181; fig. 135-137; photo 202-203; details about the filling of Petrești culture pit at p. 181-186, fig. 138-143).

The level of Vinča surface dwellings from

level III is being affected – mainly – by the works undertaken for building of a former Romanian Railways (CFR) station (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 179).

In order to show, briefly, the chronological and cultural framing of the pit we shall mention once again the characteristics of the pottery from this archaeological feature.

In the pit (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 181-182, fig. 138) were discovered, among other things, two ceramic fragments from a careened bowl, with a slightly splayed rim, painted in dark colour, inside and outside, the register of the painting being triangular on the exterior side and groups by three-four parallel lines in the interior part. The pot is being covered, interior and exterior, with a brown (reddish-brown) angobe, excellently polished. Also, the firing was excellent. The paste is being tempered very fine sand, well chosen (fig. 1/1) (I. Paul 1992, pl. XXXVII/3 – on the side of the neck and shoulder; M. Gligor 2009, pl. CXLI/7 – for the exterior colour).

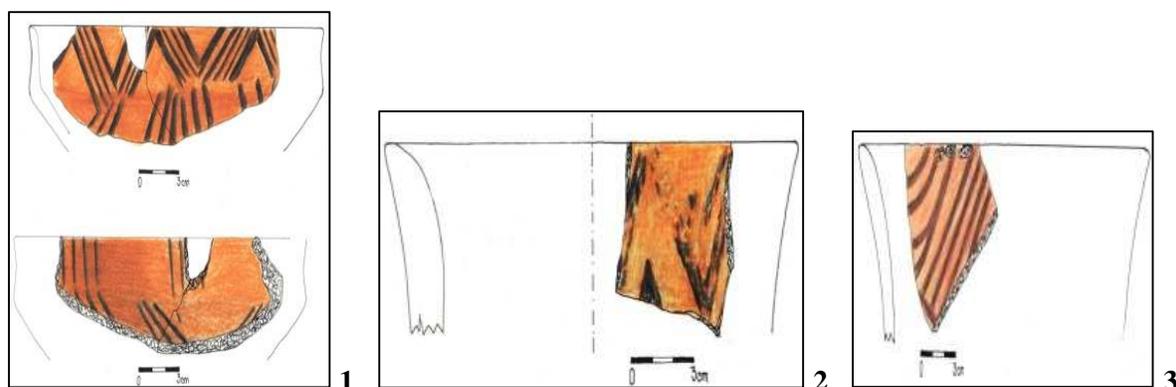


Fig. 1 - Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive research campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. Painted pottery.

A ceramic fragment, a bowls rim with careened belly, is being painted with dark colour on the exterior, has the register of the painting triangular. The pot is being covered, interior and exterior, with brown angobe, excellently polished (this can be a stand-feet for the pot). The paste is tempered with very fine sand, well chosen. The firing was excellent (fig. 1/2) (I. Paul 1992, pl. XXXI/4).

A ceramic fragment from a bowl with the splayed rim, painted with dark colour (brown dark) on the exterior was discovered in the same context.

The registers of the painting are difficult to describe, on the exterior part, because of the fragmentation (anyway, the case is of parallel lines, curved-linear, some of them intersected). On the interior part there is a spot painted on the recipient's rim. The pot is being covered, interior and exterior, with a brown (reddish-brown) angobe, excellently polished. The firing was also excellent. The paste is being tempered with very fine sand, well chosen (fig. 1/3) (I. Paul 1992, pl. XXXIV/10; XXXVII/1, 3).

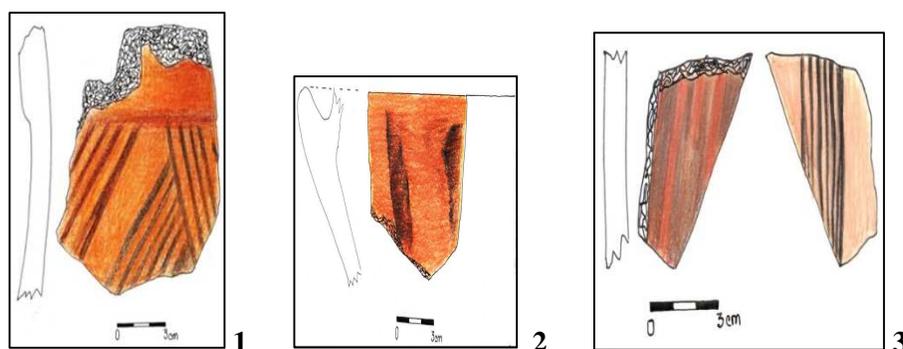


Fig. 2 - Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive research campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. Painted pottery.

In the same archaeological feature (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 182-183, fig. 139) a ceramic fragment coming from a stand for a pot with thick rim was discovered. Painted with dark colour, the registers of the painting are triangular. The paste is being tempered with very fine sand, well chosen. The pot is being covered, both interior and exterior with brick-like-reddish angobe, excellently polished. The firing is very good (fig. 2/1) (I. Paul 1992, pl.

XLVI/4; M. Gligor 2009, pl. CLVIII/8 – the Petrești shape shows, actually, that the painting belongs to Petrești culture; CLIX/1, 1.b).

Another ceramic fragment, from a careened bowl is painted with dark colour on the exterior. The painted register is being formed of two thick lines displayed on the inferior part of the pot. The pot is being covered, interior and exterior, with brown angobe, excellently polished. Also, the firing is very

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good. The paste is tempered with very fine sand, well chosen (fig. 2/2) (I. Paul 1992, pl. XL/4a, 6a; XLI/4b; the painting is, again, on a pot with typically Petrești shape, as we can see also at: M. Gligor 2009, pl. CLVIII/9).

The following pot fragment, on the same plate, is being painted both interior and exterior. The exterior colour of the fond is yellowish, and the interior one reddish. On the exterior, the painted motif is a stripe formed of parallel lines, frequent, black. On the interior the lines are also parallel, ticker and brown (fig. 2/3) (I. Paul 1992, pl. XLII/11 – the number is being printed very wan; M. Gligor 2009, pl. CLVIII/6).

Also, here (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 183, fig. 140) a ceramic fragment from a rounded pot (amphorae?) was discovered, painted with a dark colour, on the exterior. The painting is made under the shape of large geometric bodies, triangular (?), filled with colour. The pot is covered, interior and exterior, with a yellowish-brown angobe, excellently

polished. The paste is being tempered with very fine sand and well chosen. The firing was very good (fig. 3/1) (I. Paul 1992, pl. XXXVI/1a; XXXVIII/6, 7b; XL/4a, 6a; XLIV; XLIX/6a-b; M. Gligor 2009, pl. CLIX/1, 1a; CLXVIII/1; Gh. Lazarovici 2010, fig. 13a/1; 14a; Gh. Lazarovici 2012, fig. 13a/1; 14a).

Another ceramic fragment, from a rounded pot (amphorae?) painted with dark colour, brown, on the exterior is being exemplified next. The painting is being represented by a thick line, brown. The pot is being covered, on the exterior, with a yellowish-brown angobe, excellently polished (on the interior, the eventual processing of the pot's wall disappeared due to the detaching of the finished part of the pottery). The paste is being tempered with very fine and well-chosen sand. Also, the firing was good, resonant (fig. 3/2). (I. Paul 1992, pl. XXXVI/1c; XXXVIII/5b, 7a; XL/3a; XLI/4b, 5b, 8b; XLIV; XLVII/3c, 4c; XLVIII/6c; Gh. Lazarovici 2010, fig. 13a/1; 14a; Gh. Lazarovici 2012, fig. 13a/1; 14a).

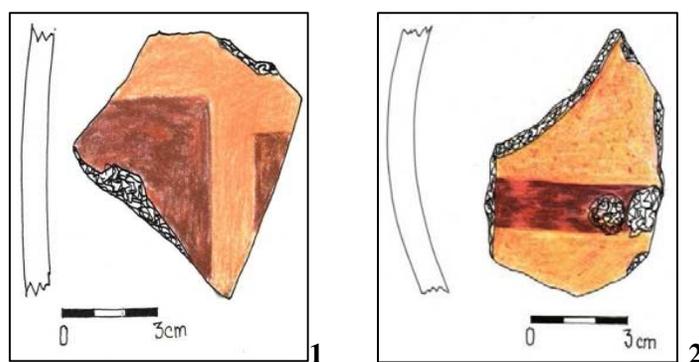


Fig. 3 - Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive research campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. Painted pottery.

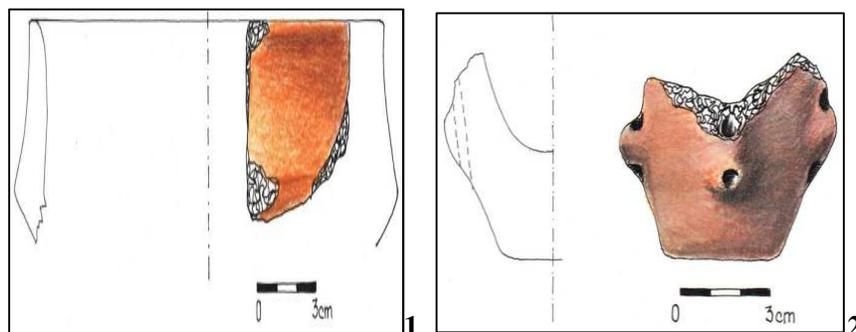


Fig. 4 - Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive research campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. Pottery.

In the same pit (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 183-184, fig. 141) was discovered a ceramic fragment from a bi-truncated pot, careened. The pot is covered, interior and exterior, with a yellowish-brown angobe, excellent polished. The paste is being tempered with very fine sand, well chosen. Also, the firing was very good, resonant (fig. 4/1).

In the end, in the same pit, was discovered a ceramic fragment from a rounded pot, with four handles vertically perforated, brick-like coloured. It has a very good polish. The paste is tempered with very fine sand, well chosen. The firing is very good (fig. 4/2).

All the fragments are framed – obviously – in Petrești culture. The quoted analogies are obvious. Any other discussion – even though they are new – do not deserve the researcher’s attention.

The pieces that draw the attention, by their inedited, are the statuettes discovered in the pit. One of them (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 184-185, fig. 142/1) was made of brick-like clay, tempered with fine sand, very well fired. It represents a handle for a lid and it is being covered with incised signs. We shall describe it in more detail in the second part of this article.

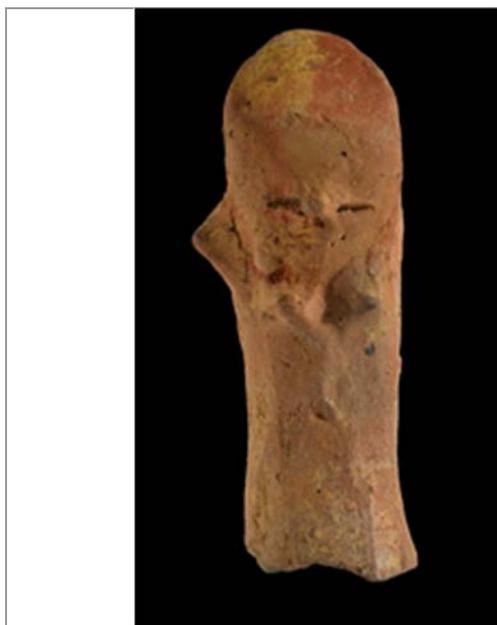


Photo 1. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "Goddess with the snake". Front view.



Photo 2. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "Goddess with the snake". Front view.

### "The Goddess with the Snake"

One first clay statuette from this archaeological feature (photo 1-8), we shall name it from now on "The Goddess with the Snake" (S.A. Luca 2016, p.184-185, fig. 142/2).

The statuette has a triangular mask (with a general form toward pentagonal), the nape is drawn towards back, the breasts (the left one has also some short incisions), hands modeled plastically (a hand detached naturally and was lost), and the buttocks are modeled precisely. At the middle point between the buttocks and nape there are three parallel

incisions which form a triangular field, as a shape, starting from the hands, with the point towards up (photo 3-4). At photo 3 there can be noticed clearly two parallel incisions, short, under the form of waves. At Photo 4, there can be noticed, under the buttocks, three parallel lines, fine, on the right side. These can exemplify the remains of the skirt’s folds, as is in the case of Liubcova Statuette (S.A. Luca and I. Dragomir 1987; S.A. Luca and I. Dragomir 1989).

What we haven’t observe, until later – due to the lack of clear and detailed photos in the moment of

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publication – is the presence of a snake, plastically modeled photo 1-2, 7-8 – with details), which is being oblique displayed on the statuette's body and it seems to execute an up going movement (this, is because it is bring represented winding, as it is

moving in the nature), towards the Goddess's face (photo 1, 2, 5-6). Today, we shall see this piece (statuette) as a "handle" of a lid. It can be clearly seen the fact that the snake was longer and connected with the support pot (photo 1-2, 5-6).



Photo 3. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "The Goddess with the snake". Lateral left view of the piece.



Photo 4. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "The Goddess with the snake". Back view of the piece.

Here we can allow also an observation regarding the possibility of making a "ritual destruction" of the entire piece and its main cult and ritual characteristics. The fact that "The Goddess with the snake" is a handle of a lit can be seen when

we analyze its inferior part (photo 1-6). At all photos it can be clearly seen that there is no stand, but an aggressive rupture of its connection with the base. So, there is a first clue of the "ritual destruction".



Photo 5. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "The Goddess with the snake". Front view of the piece – slightly twisted towards left.



Photo 6. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "The Goddess with the snake". Front view of the piece.

We were tempted to believe also that the left hand disappeared after a similar gesture. At photo 3-5 it can be seen clearly, though, that this break/detachment is newer and made, maybe, in the moment it was extracted from the archaeological layer (at photo 3 the observation is obvious). So, we have to let this idea go. We cannot give up – though – at the observation that the snake suffered and intentional break, with a precise hit, in order to detach the head from the rest of the body (at photo 1-2 and 5-8 it can be clearly seen how the snake passed over the right breast and it was intentionally broken – with a precise hit – during ancient times; we can notice that the right eye of the statuette was also affected – partially – by this hit; the details are

clear at photo 7-8 where in can be noticed also the fact that the mouth of the snake is being plastically suggested on its head). This reality can be noticed, very well, at photo 1-2, 5-6. Through the ritual of destruction of the piece was tried to annihilate the role of the snake over the divinity, but also the one of "The Goddess with the snake" over the cult assemblage from which is being a part.

In the end, another detail that needs to be mentioned is the fact that the statuette has plastically presented the belly, as a depth (photo 1-2, 5-7). In these photos it can be noticed that the plastic application through which the snake is represented goes – partially – over it.



Photo 7. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "The Goddess with the snake". Detail with the snake.



Photo 8. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "The Goddess with the snake". Detail with the snake (its head).

The tradition of typological-stylistic making of the statuette is from Vinča, but its general aspect, typological-stylistic, shows an evolution in Petrești culture. After our observations, the statuette wears obvious tracks of red and yellow painting on the nape (the yellow is on the left part and the red on the right part – when we look to the piece from the front)(photo 1-2, 5-6). Another observation which imposes the idea that "The Goddess with the snake" had a venerable age. We can say this because it is obvious the "slouch" of the character, the superior part of the character being obviously much bended

in front – a clear way to relief the old age (photo 3-5).

In Petrești culture we don't know any representations to emphasize a cult connected with the snake veneration. Such a cult can be seen, obviously, in Cucuteni culture world, connected with the one called Petrești (I. Paul 1992, p. 13). This can be reflected – especially – through the painting of snakes on the pots (D. Monah 1997, p. 500, fig. 248/3 – up; 249/2, 4 – left; C.-M. Lazarovici 2004, fig. 22-24; C.-M. Lazarovici *et al* 2009, p. 301, fig. 367; p. 302, fig. 370; p. 303, fig.

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368; p. 311, fig. 311; K.M. Hudson and S. Milisauskas 2015, fig. 8; E. Ovchinnikov 2015, fig. 4/4; O. Jakubenko and O. Kumlenko 2015, fig. 3/10; I. Szücs-Csillik and Z. Maxim 2016, p. 441, fig. 4-5).

Looking for direct analogies in other cultural environments we can see that they are very rare, but – mostly – very hard to find in their identity.

On some pieces there are applications that can be snakes at Nevali Çori, in Orient (S. Hansen 2007, p. 64, Abb. 23 (vol. I)), at Karanovo I, in Bulgaria (S. Hansen 2007, Abb. 73-74 (vol. I)) or Szakály-Réti, in Hungary (S. Hansen 2007, p. 300, Abb. 180/1). Excepting the first analogy, the other ones are not perfectly edifying, they might represent – as an idea – other things. Analogies in Vinča environment we can find at Stubline-Crkvine (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2014, p. 210, fig. 41/3), in Gumelnița culture phase B<sub>1</sub> (XXX 1995, p. 86, fig. 140) or others in the zone of Tripolye culture (Tripiilia) at Lenkivtsi (N. Burdo 2014, p. 149, fig. 7/6), Sabatynivka II (N. Burdo 2014, p. 149, fig. 8/11), Luka-Vrublivetska (N. Burdo 2014, p. 149, fig. 8/14) or at Lenkivtsi (N. Burdo 2014, p. 149, fig. 8/17), but also in Cucuteni culture. (XXX 1995, p. 85, fig. 184b; p. 86, fig. 186; D. Monah 1997, p. 271, fig. 19/7; p. 349, fig. 97).

In Turdaș culture – in the eponym site – there are many applications of this kind, analogues (M. Roska 1941). For example, at Abb. 1/2, the continuous line, incised under the rim (M. Roska 1941, p. 34, Abb. 1/2), can suggest the snake, in the same way as the cut plastic application with short lines (M. Roska 1941, p. 34, Abb. 1/8). Maybe one of the most significant example is the one from Taf. LXXXII/1 (M. Roska 1941, p. 208-209, Taf. LXXXII/1). Here are being incised three snakes – one under the rim and other two under the belly, parallel. We can consider also the incisions from Taf. LXXXIII/7 as snakes (M. Roska 1941, p. 210-211, Taf. LXXXIII/7). Other possible representation of incised snakes can be the ones from Taf. LXXXV/8 (M. Roska 1941, p. 214-215, Taf. LXXXV/8), XCIII/8 (M. Roska 1941, p. 230-231, Taf. XCIII/8), CVI/15 (M. Roska 1941, p. 256-257, Taf. CVI/15), CVII/7 (M. Roska 1941, p. 258-259, Taf. CVII/7), CXI/2-4, 8 (M. Roska 1941, p. 266-267, Taf. CXI/2-4, 8), CXIII/19 (M. Roska 1941, p. 270-271, Taf. CXIII/19), CXVII/4, 8 (M. Roska 1941, p. 278-279, Taf. CXVII/4, 8), CXXI/7 (M. Roska 1941, p. 286-287, Taf. CXXI/7),

CXXII/11 (M. Roska 1941, p. 288-289, Taf. CXXII/11), signs on the bottom of the pot (M. Roska 1941, p. 312-313, Taf. CXXXIV/17; p. 316-317, Taf. CXXXVI/21), the same as ones made by plastic application (M. Roska 1941, p. 268-269, Taf. CXII/10; p. 270-271, Taf. CXIII/2-3, 8; p. 302-303, Taf. CXXIX/10; p. 328-329, Taf. CXLII/8, 11-12). This kind of incisions are also on weights (M. Roska 1941, p. 298-299, Taf. CXXVI/16, 18; p. 300-301, Taf. CXXVIII/22).

The story connected with this symbol is much more obvious and developed in the archaeological sites from Turdaș-Luncă then in other sites or cultures. This thing can be seen also in the new discoveries from here, both in the monographic volume that was already published (Incised: S.A. Luca 2001, p. 83-84, fig. 5/1 – level I, Turdaș I culture; application on a pot ornamented with short cuts: S.A. Luca 2001, fig. 40/4, 43/2 – level III, Petrești culture), and in the one dedicated to the systematic researches which is in press (Incised: S.A. Luca 2018 – in press; fig. 53/9 – level II inferior, Turdaș II culture; 71/7; 80/7 – level III, Petrești culture; application on a pot ornamented with short cuts: fig. 70/3 – level II superior, Turdaș III culture; 76/4 – level III, Petrești culture).

There is also a series – short one this time – of possible analogies. On some statuettes there was made a possible snake, incised this time, and positioned under the triangular mask of the face, as it is in our case. Some of these achievements are the ones from the synthesis work made by V. Beeker (V. Beeker 2011, fig. 157/9 – Trestiana, Starčevo-Criș culture; fig. 173/3 – Vel'ké Raškovce, the culture of pots with linear ceramics ornamented in stripes).

They are not being irrelevant the synthesis which touched this problem, the role of the snake, in making some rituals or specific cultic expressions. One of this synthesis referred to the connection with agriculture (I. Szücs-Csillik and Z. Maxim 2016), and the second one is ampler and edifying (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 41-94).

In the paper work of C.-M. și Gh. Lazarovici we can notice this symbolistic, the one of the snake, it can be regarded as a symbol and sign (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 41), snake and divinity (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 42-43), cosmic snake (Gh. Lazarovici and C.M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 43-48), snake on tablets

with signs (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 48-56), snake on statuettes/idols (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 56-60), snake on small cult altars (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 60-64), snake on pots (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 64-71), snake on megaliths (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 72-77), snake on funerary steles, constructions and cult objects (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 77-85), snake on beads and stamps (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 85-88), snake and boats (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 88-91) and other representations (Gh. Lazarovici and C.-M. Lazarovici 2015, p. 91-94). The simple assignment of all these domains and attributes relieves us from looking for analogies.

In consequence, if the symbol of the snake seems to be a secondary one in prehistory it can be proved to be worth to be studied and regarded as a constituent element of the cult and believes from this period.

\*

**"Janus" ....and a "text" or prehistoric ritual?**

In the same archaeological feature it was discovered a second statuette, published on the same occasion and called by us today "Janus" (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 184-185, fig. 142/1). Janus is an old divinity of Ancient Rome pantheon, former king of Latium, always presented with two opposite faces, back-face, maybe to exemplify the analogy – rarely formulated but necessary – for the characters that have the power to express their attention at 360° (to "see everything", the clairvoyant of the whole world; all-seeing).



Photo 9. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "Janus". Back.



Fig. 5. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petrești culture. "Janus". Back.

The roman mythology, having also the written sources, communicated the presence of the

omnipotent character as observation spirit. In prehistory we can notice – by the following

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observation – that there are characters that can confirm the connection with this subject.

An anthropomorphic handle of a lid, with a slightly phallus shape (there are rarely any direct references to *phallus* in the Romanian Neolithic. So, *phallus* protection made of fired clay was discovered at Turdaş: S.A. Luca 2001, p. 85-86, fig. 77/2; a clay *phallus* was discovered in the same

station, unornamented: M. Roska 1941, Taf, CXXIX/24) gave us the opportunity to write the following lines. The handle-statuettes are being totally a-typical for the prehistoric periods, having suggested two anterior faces-sides, opposite to each other, making impossible to identify, actually, which is the real one. The dimensions of the piece are: 7.5 height and 2.8 maximal length.



Photo 10. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petreşti culture. "Janus". Face.



Fig. 6. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petreşti culture. "Janus". Face.

The most representative face – in our opinion – (fig. 6; photo 10) shows through incision, under the representation's nose, two registers. The superior one is being emphasized, in the superior part, with the eyes and the nose (incised) of the character. On the inferior emphasized part, firmly, by incision, with the end left barred with another incision (more clearly at fig. 6) perpendicular, there

is a character represented in a complex movement (or two characters?). Under the separating bar there is a symbol that can be, also, anthropomorphic, broken – unfortunately – in the ancient period.

On the statuettes nape there is another anthropomorphic character from which a part is missing, unfortunately (fig. 8; photo 12).

Under the second face (fig. 5; photo 9), depicted opposite to the first one, there is an incised man (or bird?). Formal analogies for this type of incised representation there is also at Turdaş (S.A. Luca 2001, p. 84-85, fig. 29/1; in this publishing I have considered that is the case of animals (stags?) in movement. In this moment we are more tempted to consider that the character published in that occasion (at least the one from the right side) are/is

a symbol with the same signification as the one from the face 2 from the present article).

All these representations are being represented through well, firm and clear incisions. The fact that are being represented two faces, representative for the same character, comes also after the observation of totally different ways of ornamentation, but also the fact they don't cross each other on the lateral of the piece (fig. 7; photo 11).



Photo 11. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petreşti culture. "Janus". Lateral right side.



Fig. 7. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petreşti culture. "Janus". Lateral right side.



Photo 12. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petreşti culture. "Janus". Nape.



Fig. 8. Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive campaign 2014-2015. Tell. The pit between dwellings L.XII and L.XIII. Petreşti culture. "Janus". Nape.

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I have to remind the fact that at abandonment the statuette was intentionally destroyed (the broken from the inferior part, lid), but also programmatic (the front side catches the mouth and the anthropomorphic character from the superior side doesn't have a side from the incisions; also, the character from the inferior side loses a half; the character from the nape also loses a part by chipping off the slip of the piece).

The pottery is greyish – with some brick-like spots – and it has been tempered with fine sand, well-chosen and fired. (I. Paul 1992, pl. LIII/11a-c – obvious analogies from signs at a, b, c and d; Limba – Ciută, Florescu 2010, fig. 9 – for the *phallus* shape.)

In the site from Tărtăria there is another statuette, belonging to Vinča culture this time, exemplifying the existence of a character, so frequently cited in these lines, with supernatural capacities (Janus). It has light-brown colour, with the paste that was tempered with silt and fine sand, well-chosen. The firing was of very good quality. The pieces seemed to have had two faces. In the

drawing from the left it can be notice the face positioned normally. In the right one (on the back of the piece) it seems to be depicted a pair of eyes and a mouth (fig. 9) (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 34, fig. 7/4. Analogies at: Balta Sărată – D. Bălănescu 1982, p. 118-119, pl. II/6; Gh. Lazarovici 1979, pl. XX/113).

The pot with two faces from Vinča-*Belo Brdo* (M.M. Vasić 1932, p. 54, Sl. 105, a=6,6 m) – the eponym site of the culture – shows the fact that the Vinča culture people were preoccupied by the theme of the personality with the super developed spirit of observation, bipolar (or multipolar). The characteristics of the lid with two faces from the same station (J. Chapman 2000, Fig. 3.8; XXX 2004, p. 40-41; H. Schwarzberg 2011, Taf. 130/5) indicates that this cult – of existence of characters with attributes of power much enlarged than the average man – is well emphasized and it has interrogatory valences towards the relation with the present community around.

If we synthesize the observations from the bibliography we can see the fact that there are several ways to express the "spirit of Janus".

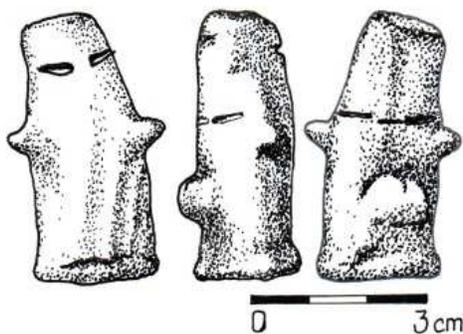


Fig. 9 - Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Preventive research campaign 2014-2015. Tell. L.III. Entire statuette (with two faces?).

First there can be notice the existence of two opposite faces pots. This type of pots were discovered in the area of linear ceramic (Biatorbágy-*Tyúkberek*: V. Beker 2011, vol. 2, Taf. 55/1; H. Schwarzberg 2011, Taf. 83/1; Budapest-*Békásmegyér*: S. Hansen 2007, vol. 2, Taf. 509/3; V. Beker 2011, vol. 2, Taf. 54/2; H. Schwarzberg 2011, Taf. 83/2 and *Zalaerzeg-Andráshida*: H. Schwarzberg 2011, Taf. 83/3) or at Ichstadt (V. Beker 2011, vol. 2, Taf. 77), Vinča-*Belo Brdo* (H. Schwarzberg 2011, fig. 76/1) and Pavlovac (?) (H.

Schwarzberg 2011, fig. 76/2 – it is an assumption, as the pot is being drowned).

In the archaeological cultures from eastern Europe there – very rarely, is true – statuettes with attributes of this kind (two faces) as are the ones from Balta Sărată (D. Bălănescu 1982, p. 118-119, pl. II/6; Gh. Lazarovici 1979, pl. XX/113), Tărtăria (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 34, fig. 7/4), Truşeşti (S. Hansen 2007, vol. 2, Taf. 469/9 – the two perforations actually simulated the fact that the face has a pendant) or Crnobuki (S. Hansen 2007, vol. 2,

<p><b>Variant 1 (fig. 10)</b>                  1 – sign from the face 2;                  2 – sign from the nape;                  3 – superior sign as display on face 1;                  4 – inferior as display on face 1.</p>	<p><b>Variant 2 (fig. 11)</b>                  2 – inferior as display sign on face 1;                  1 – superior as display sign on face 1.                  3 – sign on the nape;                  4 – sign on the face 2;</p>
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Taf. 478/1 – the representation of the face is similar on both sides, opposite, of the head).

It can be easily notice the fact the no matter the way we "read" the sequence of the signs, three of the characters are in movement (variant 1 - "characters" 1-3 or variant 2 - "characters" 1, 3-4). More! Their movement is in the same direction, left, as we are looking to the characters.



Fig. 10 - Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Janus. Variant 1 of "text" "reading".



Fig. 11 - Tărtăria-Gura Luncii. Janus. Variant 2 of "text" "reading".

The fact that the "character" from variant 1, number 4 or variant 2, number 2 can't be interpreted is because of the braking of a part of the incision from the inferior zone of the handle. So, we cannot imagine the character but only by a short sentence.

The succession of signs indicates an unprecedented way to "communicate" a ritual or – maybe – ideas. Today, it is very difficult to understand and interpret them. "The reading" of this succession of signs has some anterior attempts on pieces discovered by N. Vlassa at Tărtăria (N. Vlassa 1962; N. Vlassa 1963. For general opinions, presentations and discussions see: S.A. Luca 2016, notes 1-22, 103-121) or by the author at (S.A. Luca 2016, p. 55-61, photo 46-49, fig. 31) or Turdaş (S.A.

Luca 2001, p. 83-84, fig. 5/1. Other studies: S.A. Luca 1993; S.A. Luca *et al* 2009).

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## The specifics of archaeological complex of the site of Krounovka - 23

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**Abstract.** Krounovka - 23 can be considered as a unique site in Primorye region of the Russian Far East. This site belonged to Krounovskaya culture, and Soviet and Russian scholars believe that this culture played a significant role in development of the ancient and medieval Far East. Usually archaeologists considered the *kang* system and the different kinds of ceramics as high point of industry of this culture. However, results of the excavation of Krounovka - 23 demonstrated this view was not correct, and that Far Eastern specialists underestimated the industrial level of the Krounovskaya culture. In spite of this, Krounovka - 23 remains as little-known site in the East Asian region. The goal of this article is to discuss about significance of the Krounovka - 23 site and artifacts recovered from this site.

**Keywords:** Archaeology, history, East Asia, Far East, Krounovskaya culture.

The area of Krounovka River has a large number of the interesting archaeological sites from the different historical periods – from Neolithic settlements to towns of the Jurchen period. This territory is a part of Ussuriysk district of Primorye region (the south part of Russian Far East).

Archaeological studies in this region were started in the 1890s. F. F. Busse, the chairman of the Society for the Study of the Amur Region, was foremost among Russian specialists, who surveyed sites near Ussuriysk at the end of the nineteenth century. His expeditions found many sites from the Bohai and Jurchen periods in the modern Primorye region (F. F. Busse 1888; F. F. Busse, L. A. Kropotkin, 1908).

From 1911 to 1928, another member of the Society for the Study of the Amur Region, the Russian officer A. Z. Fyodorov, excavated a large number of archaeological sites near Ussuriysk (A. Z. Fyodorov 1916); however, his research was not widely circulated. In the period from Stalin's rise to

the Second World War, Russian specialists did not research archaeological sites in modern Primorye region. Fyodorov was executed during the Stalinist purges of the 1930s. Many specialists from Primorye region were arrested and stayed in prisons during for many years or were executed. Political pressure in this period did not allow Soviet scholars to intensively research the distant past of the Far Eastern region. This situation continued until the period 1950 – 1990s. From this time many Soviet and Russian archaeologists (A. M. Kuznetsov, V. E. Medvedev, A. P. Okladnikov, E. V. Shavkunov, V. I. Boldin, A. L. Mezentsev etc.) surveyed and excavated many archaeological sites near Ussuriysk (T. A. Vasil'eva 1989, 1990; A. Kim 2013). The results of their field works were very important for understanding the past of the region. Specialists found a large group of sites from Krounovka archaeological culture to the modern (twentieth century) period. There are many different kinds of sites in this group, from cemeteries to large towns

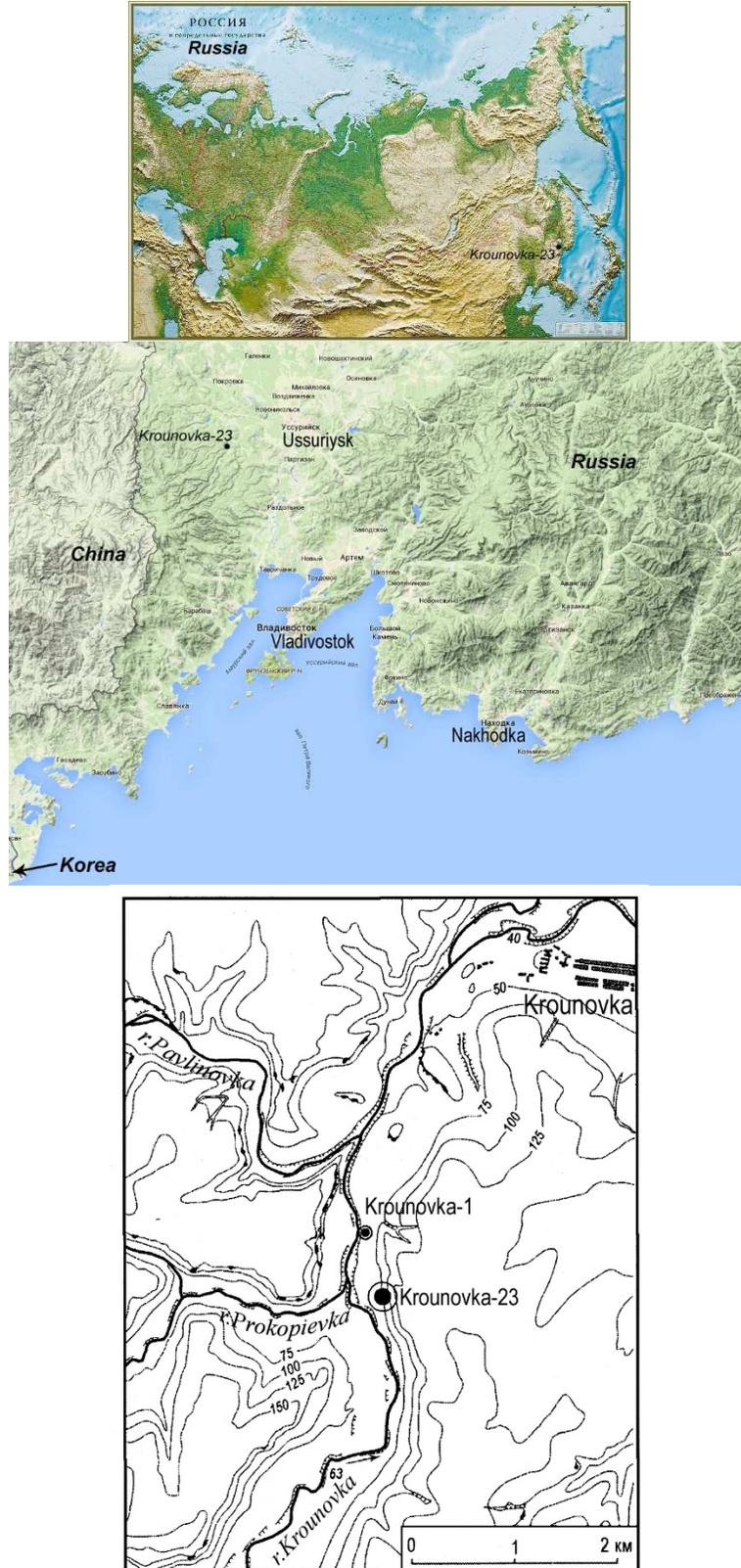


Fig. 1 – Location of Krounovka -23 site

such as the Krasnoiarovskoe and Zapadno-Ussuriyskoe sites (Jurchen period) and temples of Krounovka (Bohai period).

It is clear that the Ussuriysk district is an interesting and important place for research from an archaeological and historical point of the view.

Soviet specialists began to study group of Krounovka sites from 1956 - when archaeologists found site Krounovka - 1 and temple Kopyto. Field expeditions actively researched many sites of this group over a long period of time. At the present time, Russian scholars have discovered nearly 50 sites in what is called the Krounovka group; the sites vary from ancient to medieval periods.

Clearly, many sites from them are very interesting, but Krounovka - 23 can be considered as the unique settlement for ancient period in this district. Russian scholars believe that this site can be considered as the most interesting geo-archaeological complex too. Krounovka -23 was excavated by Russian specialists in 1990 – 2000s.

Krounovka - 23 is situated near Krounovka River, 300 meters from Krounovka - 1 site in southeastern direction (Fig. 1, 2). This site is located in two places: in the 13 - meters and 5 - meters terraces of the plateau slope, which is situated on the right side of the valley of the Krounovka River. The height of plateau is nearly 10 meters.

This site was found by inhabitants of Krounovka village in the 1990s, when they wanted to use land for private purposes. They paid attention to the lowered air temperature amongst the rock and found ceramic artifacts. After this, specialists from the Russian Academy of Sciences arrived in Krounovka and identified this place as a potential archaeological site. Thereafter, one of co-chairs of 'Rezerv' (club of young archaeologists from Ussuriysk city), Dmitriy Vital'evich Brovko (Дмитрий Витальевич Бровко), with group of the students from high schools from the same city began to excavate the site. In the process of the excavation of Krounovka - 23, Russian archaeologists invited different specialists from other, non-archaeological fields, for scientific expertise because artifacts and information from this site needed to be subjected to analysis by specialists of the some kinds of the natural science. This will be considered in more detail below.

In the 13 - meters terrace the Russian archaeologists found hollow of the sub squared

form, which had dimensions of 1, 3 m by 2, 2 m, and a depth of 0, 4 m (Fig. 3). In the process of field research of this place, scholars found a small number of artifacts, which can be considered as materials from the Yankovskaya and Krounovskaya cultures. So, as we can see, the Krounovka - 23 site can be considered as place for two cultures at this time. Therefore, we believe that must give some information about these archaeological cultures.

Yankovskaya culture existed for around four centuries, during the period of 9 - 5th centuries BC (A. P. Okladnikov, 1959; A. P. Okladnikov, A. P. Derevianko, 1973). Sites of this culture were found only in the south areas of modern Primorye region of the Russian Far East. As a rule, Yankovskaya settlements were located near the sea coast or big rivers. This culture was named by M. I. Yankovskij - Russian scholar, who was the first person, interested to study of past of Primorye region and found first site of this culture. According to information retrieved from excavated archaeological sources, people from the Yankovskaya culture lived in semi-dugout dwellings. Russian scholars have contrasting opinions regarding the specifics of this culture - some specialists believe that Yankovskaya culture belonged to the Bronze Age, but other scholars to the Iron Age. On the one hand, persons from this culture used some iron tools, and were familiar with agriculture and cattle-breeding. On the other hand, Yankovskaya settlement material culture was dominated by stone tools, and inhabitants paid more attention to hunting and other similar kinds of human activity. Russian archaeologists found a number of the bronze artifacts in these sites, but these tools are few and came from other regions. Many stone tools from the sites were imitations of bronze instruments - probably, persons of Yankovskaya culture did not have bronze (the same situation can be observed in recent days in Primorye region - Russian scholars could not find bronze), but valued such goods very highly.

Inhabitants of Yankovskaya settlements very actively produced some kinds of ceramics. Russian archaeologists found in the sites of this culture a number of artifacts composed of bone materials. Near some settlements of this culture, located on the sea coast, Russian specialists found a large number of remains from shell mollusks. Therefore, Yankovskaya culture was subsequently dubbed a

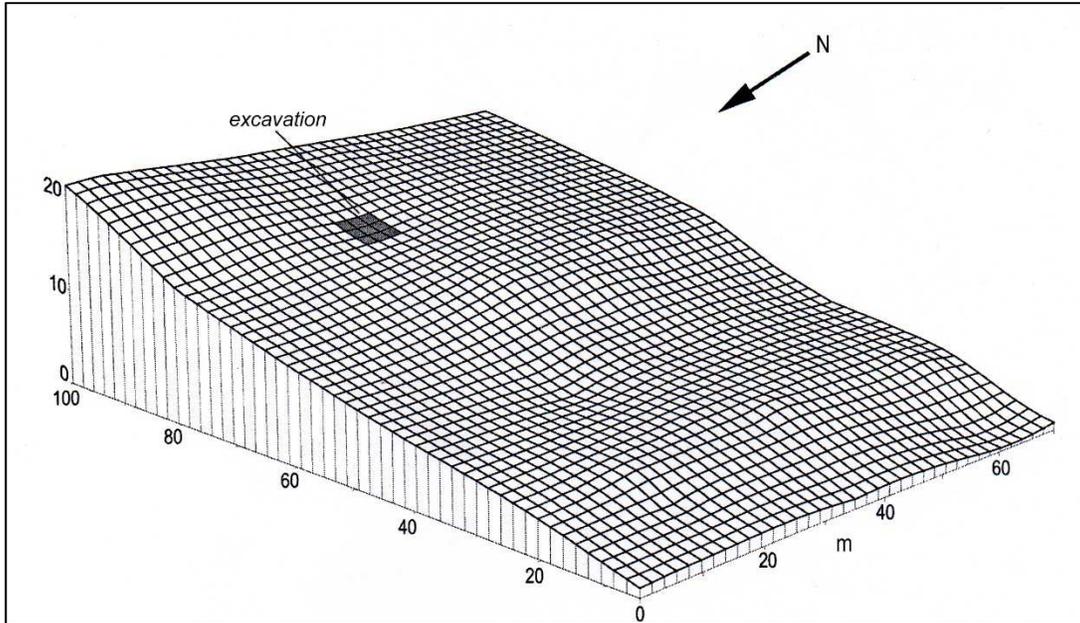


Fig. 2 - Krounovka -23 site: location in the site of the excavation and the surface of the ancient settlement

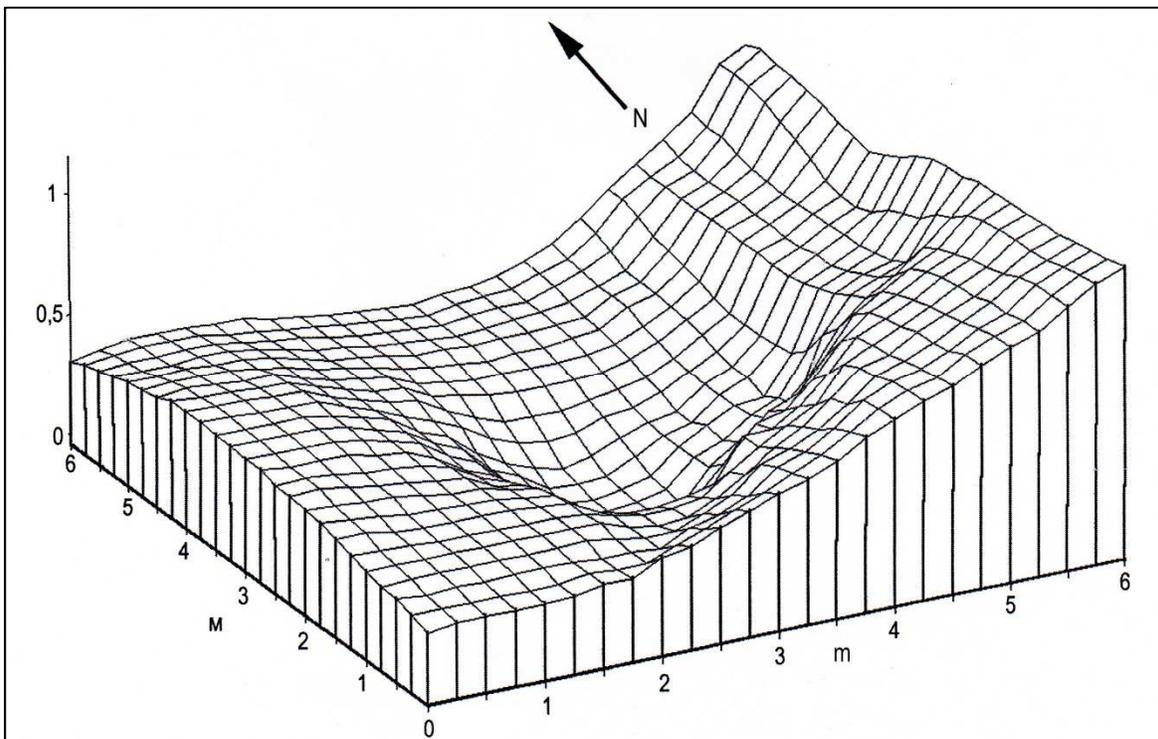


Fig. 3 - Fig. 2 - Krounovka -23 site: location in the site of excavation

“culture of shell heaps”. Some Russian scholars believe that people of this culture could have been known in Chinese annals as the Sushen people (in Korean – 숙신, in Chinese - 肅慎, in Russian - Сусэни) or Поу (D. L. Brodianskij 1987).

Krounovskaya culture existed in the south part of the Russian Far East from the 8th century BC until the 3rd century AD (Z. A. Kovaleva, S. V. Plohih 2002; A. P. Okladnikov 1959; A. P. Okladnikov, A. P. Derevianko 1973). This culture was named by the village of Krounovka, Ussuriysk district, Primorye region. Soviet archaeologists

found the first site of this culture near Krounovka village. Russian scholars do not have one opinion about the origins of this culture. Discussion about this culture continues to the present day. Some scholars believe that people from Krounovskaya culture had their origins in Yankovskaya settlements. Other specialists think that these people arrived in Primorye region from other areas. However, other Russian archaeologists content that the Krounovskaya culture was established near Hanka Lake and had domestic origins.

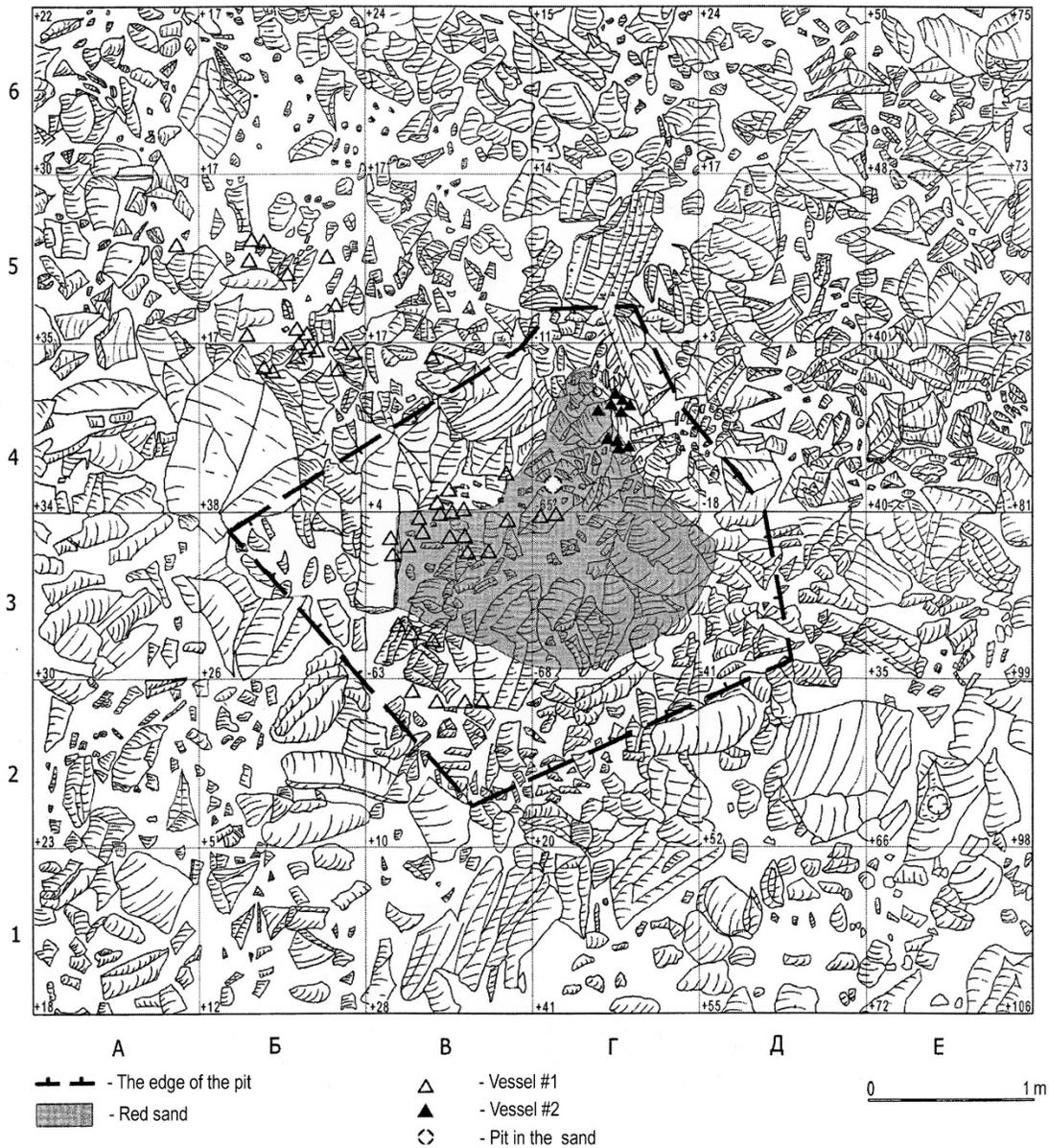


Fig. 4 - Plan of excavation at Krounovka-23 site.

This culture had settlements not only in Russian territory (the south part of Russian Far East), but in areas of what is now North Korea and Northeastern China as well. People from this culture started to use *kang*, a heating system, which is located under the floor. The *Kang* system is very popular in the East Asia and is still used. Russian archaeologists found in the sites of Krounovskaya culture a small number of bronze tools, but we can see that Krounovka people used iron tools more than inhabitants from Yankovskaya culture. Moreover, they used bone tools, but these artifacts were better than Yankovskaya bone artifacts. Krounovskaya people produced a large number of the different kinds of the ceramics. Agriculture and cattle-breeding played an important role in this society.

Scholars from Russia, China and Korea have discussed about the ethnic origin of people from Krounovskaya culture. Some specialists believe that these people were called as Woju (in Chinese - 沃沮, in Korean - 옥저, in Russian - Воцзюй); probably, Woju from Primorye region belonged to North Woju. As is known, Woju divided in Eastern Woju and North Woju) in Chinese annals. But other scholars speculate that the people of Krounovskoe culture belonged to another ethnic group, known in the Chinese annals as Ilou (in Chinese - 挹婁, in Korean - 음루, in Russian - илоу (A. P. Okladnikov 1959; A. P. Okladnikov, A. P. Derevianko 1973).

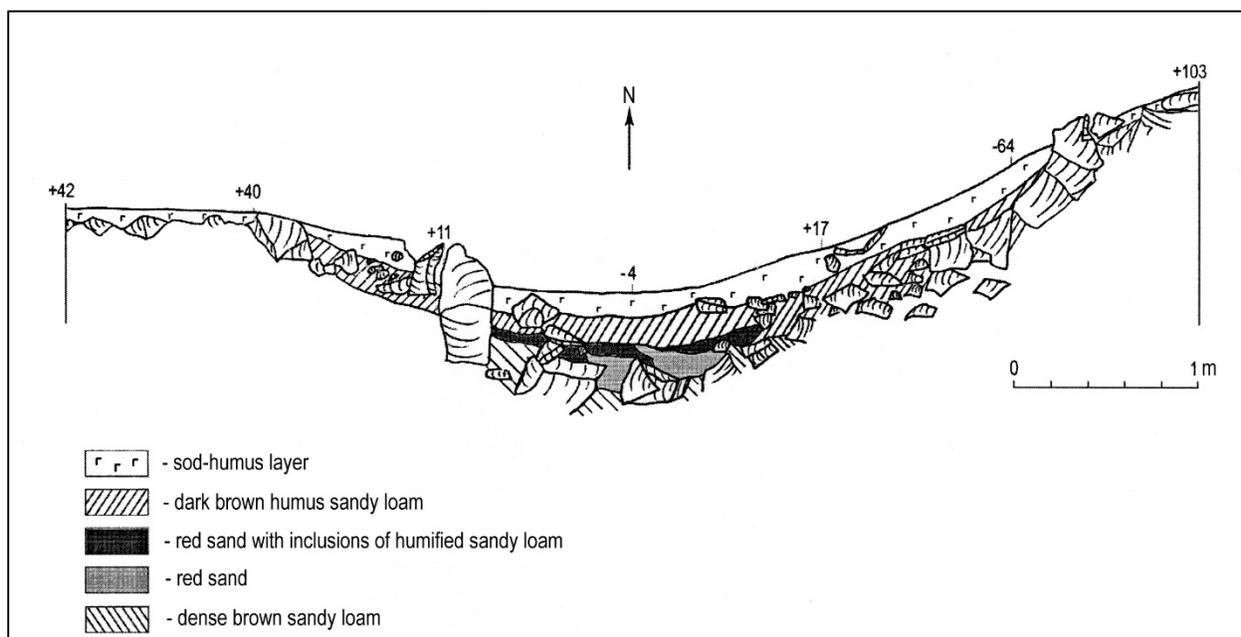


Fig. 5 - Stratigraphic section along line 4-A-E of excavation at Krounovka-23

People from this culture did not have towns, an administrative system, organized industry or army. A large number of the settlements have been excavated, and the results suggest that these people lived in tribes or relative clans in settlements.

Russian specialists very actively excavated area of hollow and neighboring places in Krounovka - 23. As result of fieldwork, we received following pictures (Fig. 4, 5). We pay attention to interesting construction, which indicated in the figures.

The ditch of the construction has a stone base.

Clearly, borders of the ditch were limited by big stones. A part of this stone construction was built by human - probably, inhabitants of the site. In the process of fieldwork, the Russian scholars excavated five layers of stone in the ditch. The stones from high and middle layers in this place indicated as items, which located in ditch after the built of construction and without of activity by human (probably, after destruction of the settlement). It had traces of the corrosion and exfoliation. However, stones of the floor of the construction did not have the same traces. Clearly,

these stones received some processing from human. However, we can see in this floor some places with sand, sometimes with trace of the soot and small fragments of charcoal. Probably, it was the result of fire. However, there are no traces of construction of the hearth or *kang*. Thus, it seems that the fire caused the destruction of this complex and settlement.

Usually, Russian archaeologists have found a large number of the artifacts in settlements of Krounovskaya culture. However, in Krounovka - 23

a number of tools of the ancient inhabitants were also excavated. Russian specialists found fragments of two vessels (Fig. 6). It is not clear when these vessels were made, but the method of the production of the both vessels was very similar to ceramics, which were produced by people from Krounovka culture. Moreover, we can see analogs to ceramics from this culture. According to the identification of the ceramic materials, we can consider Krounovka - 23 as a site of Krounovka culture.

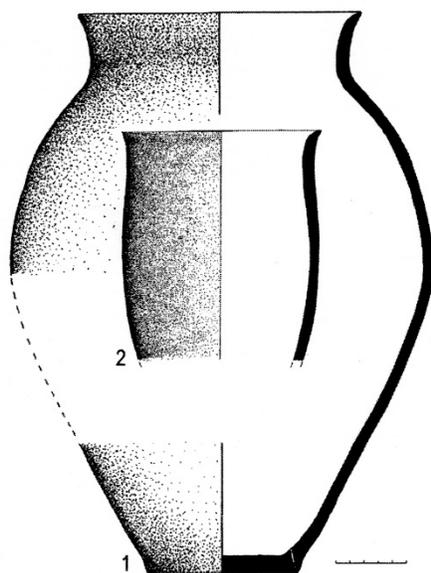


Fig. 6 - The two vessels discovered in site.

In process of the reconstruction, we can surmise that this construction had depth minimum of 0,7 - 1 meter, square of the ditch was minimum of 4 square meters. All corners of this construction were directed to four sides - north, west, east and south. The entrance in construction was from north direction. The floor was covered by yellow materials; according to results of the chemical analysis of this place, probably, it was a mix of the river silt with sand.

In the process of consideration of the materials on the floor of stone construction, the large number of organic traces and fragments of the charcoal in the corners were found. Analysis of the charcoal gave information that part of the construction was built from wood. Probably, roof and parts of the walls were wooden. Organic traces belonged to kinds of the food – meat, fish and products of the agriculture. Therefore, it can be surmised that this

place was a food storehouse. However, the most interesting results were received from analysis of the temperature's situation in this object\*. In the process of excavation of Krounovka - 23 in 1999 temperature in the floor of this construction was checked every day four times (morning, afternoon, evening and the night) in June and July. However, temperature was stable  $\pm 2$  Celsius degrees. This phenomenon is most interesting and was mirrored by checks of temperature in this place during 3 months – from June to August at period of 2000 - 2004. So, temperature's regime was considered during every summer of the each six years of the observation in situations when weather in the district was not stable. In spite of this, temperature in the floor of construction does not changed  $\pm 2$  Celsius degrees. Thus, as we can see, temperature remained stable in the hot summer months. Moreover, temperature in the construction did not

changed in rainy and cold periods of the summer. Accordingly, we can consider useful of this construction for ancient people - in spite of the destruction of the wooden part of the complex, stone base holds cold temperature during summer period of the 2000 years.

Of course, we cannot check temperature in this complex in the winter, because we did not have possibility for this monitoring, but we believe that it was not important for understanding of the functions of this construction; certainly, in the winter periods ancient people did not need in this place for preservation of the food. Clearly, we cannot estimate the temperatures in this place 2000 years ago. Mr. Brovko considered temperature regime + 2 degree as most probable temperature for this complex at the time of existing of Krounovka - 23. However, we must considered another situation - as we can see, in this complex were found a large number of the traces of the wood. Certainly, part of the construction was wooden. Clearly, it was influenced the circulation of the air and changed temperatures inside the complex. Moreover, + 2 degrees is not enough for the preservation of food for extended periods of time. In addition, according to archaeological information from this site, the place appears to have been used for the storage and preservation of food.

Clearly, the inhabitants of this settlement very effectively used some geographical specifics of area.

During four years, we intensive researched of the specifics of this construction and can surmise about geographic conditions of the site. This site situated in the place, which has interesting geomorphological conditions. We found base of stone talus (width near 30 - 40 meters). Probably, this talus blocked by *kurumnik* (scattering of big stones, it was origin from Pleistocene period) and finally changed morphology of the second terrace of the site. As results of the analysis of the micro-relief (Fig. 2) and additional research, we can see the traces of *kurumnik* in the lower 5 - meters terrace. The trace of *kurumnik* in this site was near 10 meters in width, it is located directly under excavated complex. The some cavities remained among big stones and in these places water and air can be located during a long time. After fall rains water moved in the depth of these cavities and can be frozen in late fall period at short period. Moreover, flood of the water was blocked by stones and other

natural materials. Clearly, this water thawing very slowly it's gave influence to air. In the stones of talus we can see traces of the ice. As result, this place contained a cold temperature during summer. We can guess that wooden part of the complex gave important influence for this situation and stopped process of the warming. Clearly, on the base of results of the current research, we can see that stone construction can preserve cold temperature and it was enough for food. Clearly, wooden construction had functions for support cold condition in this place.

In the process of research of this site we have another question about situation with this settlement. Clearly, this settlement was not large, but inhabitants of this place used this stone-wooden construction for food. Therefore, we consider two variants for understanding this settlement. First - it was inhabited place for people from Krounovskaya culture. But we cannot understand how a small number of people can build so complicated complex. Second - it was temporal settlement of the ancient human only for summer period. However, this ancient refrigerator-like storage facility was too small to be used by a large number of users. Probably, it was only one of many places for the preservation of food, but we can't find other similar refrigerators. Of course, they could have been destroyed by human or natural conditions. But we believe that field research of neighboring areas can be useful for understanding of the local type of Krounovskaya culture because we can find further information.

So, as we can see, inhabitants (or users) of Krounovka - 23 well knew the specifics of this place and made use of them. Moreover, they improved construction and built the some wooden parts of the complex, probably, for control the circulation of the air and further maintain of the cold temperature. Therefore, this construction became ancient analog of the refrigerator. We do not have exact information about the time the complex's construction nor when it was used. Nevertheless, we can consider this refrigerator as very useful construction for inhabitants of the Krounovskaya settlement. However, traditions of the using geographical specifics of the relief for establishment natural refrigerators did not used by other people from same culture - Russian scholars excavated many sites of the Krounovskaya culture in Primorye region, but could not find other similar complexes.

Moreover, this tradition did not leave traces in cultures of the medieval period of the Primorye region, i.e. the Mohe, Bohai and Jurchen.

\* Authors thanks to drs. A. M. Korotkiy and G. P. Skryl'nik for discussion and advices in process of the analysis this problem.

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# ANNALES



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## The Conservation of the Byzantine Icon from Georgios Church, Jordan

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**Abstract.** In this paper we will emphasize the physical, chemical and biological investigations as well as a detail the process of restoration. Before establishing any treatment or maintenance procedures, it was necessary to obtain complete information about the components of the icon and its condition. Keeping in mind the original aesthetic aspect of the Icon. In this effort an integrated analytical approach was used. In order to evaluate the icon's components and degree of degradation, surface and bulk techniques were used. X-ray fluorescence using a Philips Minipal PW4025 spectrometer was used to identify the elemental composition of the preparation layer and background. For the chemical analysis X-ray diffraction (XRD) was conducted using a Shimadzu 6000 Spectrofluorophotometer. The Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) technique was also used to identify the media (bonding material) used in the application of the icon layers, either with the preparation layer or the gilding layer, as well as the type of varnish used to insulate the icon using a Bruker-Tensor 27 device. The cleaning process is a key point in the conservation process although it is one of the most important aspects for an artwork and is considering a series of deteriorations and degradations. XRF results of the preparation layer sample revealed it consisted of Gypsum ( $\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ), since it contains calcium (Ca) and Sulfate, analysis of red pigments showed that it was comprised of red-lead ( $\text{Pb}_3\text{O}_4$ ). The overall efficiency of all conservation process including cleaning seems to be effective.

**Keywords:** Conservation, Icon, Christianity, SEM-EDX, Byzantine, Animal glue.

### 1. Introduction

The word icon, comes from the Greek word "εικων" and means a religious image, and derived from the verb eikonito (to look like), then became a term used in the Byzantine period for paintings on wood. Usually these paintings represent Christian religious themes, including images of Jesus, the Apostles, the Virgin Mary, martyrs, saints, and other Christian religious subjects that have been mentioned in the Torah, the Bible, and in Church history (J. Tadros, 1995). Icons emerged as a tool to help the believers of the new faith (Christianity) to

elucidate and simplify religious concepts and principles for the public (J. Shepard, 2009).

Museums, churches and monasteries around the world, abound with thousands of icons of different types. The icons date back to different periods, from the fourth century to the end of the nineteenth century AD. Icons signify a vital aspect of art in general and in particular Byzantine art. They emphasize religious, artistic, historical and educational values (Z. Skalova, 1995). Icons are also considered one of the most important

components of worship in the Eastern Church, used in the interpretation and explanation of Bible teaching, as well as an educational medium. Icons are considered as an aid to prayer, supplication and glorification to Jesus Christ (C. Mango, 2002).

Jordan is rich in Christian legacy, especially historical churches and monasteries. The Greek Orthodox Church of Saint Georgios in Ajloun is one of the most important historical churches in Jordan, dating back to the late 19th century (1873-1880 (Fig. 1). This church, and other churches, contain dozens of Byzantine icons, which were painted on wood in different styles and techniques. They symbolize a variety of different values and concepts. Icons are considered a type of photography that is closely related to Christianity. It is of a great interest for people at the official and individual levels. The church contains many icons

of different sizes and shapes. Among these, is an icon with a very common theme: Saint James the brother of the Lord (Fig. 2). It was chosen because of its historical importance and the necessity of its treatment and restoration. The Byzantine icons are characterized by a variety of preparation methods, some of which are painted directly on wood and some with and without a preparation background. Others include a fabric layer (typically linen), as a preparation layer and then a layer of paint. There are many other types of icons produced in different techniques, in which a portrait was painted over a colored background. Very often, the painting was done over a gold background. This one of the most important features of Byzantine icons. The Byzantines excelled in decorating gilt backgrounds in different forms of distinctive Christian decorations (A. H. Hossam Eddin, 1984).



Fig.1 - Image showing the templon of Georgios church.

Icons are typically painted on a wooden panel with animal glue or egg tempera paint, over a layer of gypsum and glue (preparation layer). Sometimes, canvas is present between the wood and the preparation layer. Indeed, the prevailing environmental conditions as well as the chemical properties, which are exhibited by the wide spectrum of different varnishes, may lead to a self-destructive process. The damage caused to these layers can be attributed either to internal or external factors. The external factors include, fluctuation in temperature and humidity, other factors include lighting, air pollution, storage, and handling

(D. Burges, 1990).

Icon deterioration could be attributed to the aging of materials, tangential carving of the board of which the panel is made up, the aging of the glue as well as unintentional human damage. No icon escapes the process of aging, which over time leads to a change in its appearance. This phenomenon of degradation affects the whole structure of the painting. Due to their delicate components, icons are frequently subjected to damage. The most common problem damaging Byzantine icons is the appearance of cracks on their surface. Varnish oxidation is another phenomenon that can seriously

## The Conservation of the Byzantine Icon from Georgios Church, Jordan

degrade their overall appearance (S. Abdul Aziz, 2011). Dirt, and smoke as well as other degradations, deteriorate their appearance even more. The end result is that, colors fade and the paint appears brown or black. This is particularly true for icons or church murals, where candle smoke degrades icon colors. In many cases, this degradation can affect the artistic value of a

painting. Also, it is known that when two factors of damage are combined, the alteration of organic materials occurs more rapidly. The rate of material damage depends largely on the chemical makeup of the icons components, their reactions and the surrounding environmental conditions (O. Faki, 2004).



Fig. 2 - The Byzantine Icon of Saint James.

For discovering the proper solutions for the damaged icon, a precise knowledge is required in order to recognize and respond appropriately to the issues; choosing either preventive measures or restoration techniques. The employment of non-destructive analytical methods makes it possible to identify the painting techniques, including the approach to drawing, the choice of materials, and their technique of application. This also makes it possible to determine the extent of damage. Simultaneously, these data provide crucial material for conservators involved in the restoration and cleaning process.

Visual inspection, combined with transmission or penetration techniques (X-ray fluorescence, SEM,

FTIR, X-ray diffraction etc.) provide data on the structure of the icon's components. In order to identify the features of the icon that had been damaged, SEM was used to uncover the changes in the structure of the painting layers as well as in other components. Exceptional attention was given to obtaining a descriptive sampling of the icon under consideration and to avoiding further irreversible damage. The cleaning system and the intervention methods were selected taking into consideration the chemical and physical nature of the materials as well as the delicate components of the icon (M. Abdel-Ghani et al., 2008, 2009; D. Ajo et al., 2004; S. Colinart, 2001; N. Eastaugh et al., 2004; R. Gale et al., 2000).

## 2. Icon Description

The icon's dimensions are as follows: length 121 cm., width 73 cm. and thickness 2.5 cm. The icon is made up of three panels and the subject is an image of Saint James (brother of the Lord).

A portrait of Saint James shows him standing in a priest's ceremonial clothes, pointing with his right hand with the sign of blessing (beginning and end) and carrying in his left hand the Bible with colorful decorations of the four gospel writers, with the cover bearing a scene of resurrection (Fig. 2). The head is surrounded by a Holiness Halo. In the upper part of the icon above the plaster layer circles carved filled with a rose in shape of a cross. The icon has a gold background and on the upper part of the icon inscriptions in Greek "Saint James" and in the upper left part "brother of the Lord".

## 3. Experimental

Before establishing any treatment or maintenance procedures, it was necessary to obtain complete information about the components of the icon and its condition. In this effort, an integrated analytical approach was used. In order to evaluate the icon's components and degree of degradation, surface and bulk techniques were used. X-ray fluorescence using a Philips Minipal PW4025

spectrometer was used to identify the elemental composition of the preparation layer and background. For the chemical analysis X-ray diffraction (XRD) was conducted using a Shimadzu 6000 Spectrofluorophotometer. The Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) technique was also used to identify the media (bonding material) used in the application of the icon layers, either with the preparation layer or the gilding layer, as well as the type of varnish applied to insulate the icon using a Bruker-Tensor 27 device. All analyses were conducted in the laboratories of the Faculty of Archeology and Anthropology at Yarmouk University, Jordan. The Minipal PW4025 was operated at 30 kV, 30 mA, 60 s, air and a Kapton filter. The Shimadzu 6000 operated at a wavelength of  $\text{CuK}\alpha$  equal to  $1.5418 \text{ \AA}$ , 30 kV and 30 mA. For the FTIR technique, the powder sample was mixed with potassium bromide and the homogeneous mixture disk analysis was done with the Bruker-Tensor 27 in the IR spectrum between 500 and 4000  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  at 4  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  and 32 scan. The analyzed sample pattern was compared with standard samples of animal glue, yolk and Arabic gum in order to identify the coloring medium.



Fig. 3 - Images shows the damage feature of the varnish layer (a, b).

## 4. Icon Diagnosis

After a thorough diagnosis of the studied icon's damaged features, it was determined which factors should be addressed. The damage was attributed to,

in addition to the inappropriate restoration process previously used: aging of materials, accidents, liturgical use and the surrounding environmental conditions. All these factors have led to the warping

of the wood panel, cracking due to age, gaps in the paint layers, wearing of the color layer, aging and darkening of the varnish, with dirt and wax deposits.

#### 4.1. Varnish Layer

The icon was in an environment where it was exposed to high temperatures, and the varnish had aged significantly. This led to dryness and shrinkage in the varnish layer. The occurrence of superficial surface cracks was also noted. This was observed especially in places with a thick varnish layer. There the varnish layer had become fragile and weak and

turned a dark yellow color, losing its transparency and turning into a dark layer (Fig. 3a, b).

#### 4.2. Color Layer

Color medium is the main constituent of the color layer, this could be made of either gum, glue or albumin, these materials are at high risk and become damaged when temperature and humidity are high. This causes the layer to lose its adhesive property with reduction in its strength of cohesion and bonding. The results: wearing of the color and darkening (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4 - Image showing the darkening and cracking of color layer.

#### 4.3. Gilding Layer

Many cracks, flakes and scratches are also seen in the bearing layer above which the coloring layer and the gilding layer are applied, especially in the carved parts on the preparation layer (Fig. 5).

#### 4.4. Preparation Layer

The application of the preparation layer is a very crucial step in preventing the wood panel from absorbing the color layer. It provides a suitable background for the paints, and enables a smooth movement for the brush throughout the painting process. Due to its liturgical use, and the heat emitted by candles, the icon developed cracks and breaks in the preparation layer. A serious weakening of the paint layers, general wearing of the color and flaking in the paint layer can be seen (Fig. 6). The high temperature inside the church led to severe

dehydration, loss of elasticity, increasing the layer's hardness with some breakage occurring. The expansion and shrinkage of the linen holder caused cracks and gaps in the preparation layer.

#### 4.5. Wood Panel

The wooden panel of the icon is an organic material characterized by hygroscopic properties (i.e., the ability to absorb and lose water due to the fluctuation of the surrounding relative humidity). As a consequence of this desiccation, the wood lost its mechanical properties which led to bending, cracking and curving (Fig. 7a, b). The separation of large-sized wooden knots can be observed because of relative humidity fluctuations. This confirms that these knots were not processed during preparation phase (Fig. 7c, d).



Fig. 5 - Image shows the cracks and damage in the gilding background.



Fig. 6 - Images shows flaking of the preparation layer (a), wearing and fading of colors (b).



Fig. 7. Images showing bending, curving (a) cracking of the icon (b) and the separation of large-sized wooden knots (c, d).

4.6. Previous Intervention

Inspection made it clear that the icon had been improperly restored, and colors were added. During the previous restoration, workers used a black color for the outer frame, which is not in tune with the original color scheme or in terms of chemical composition. The frame is decorated with random gilt styles using bronze powder which is evidence of

a restorer's attempts to stabilize it (Fig. 8 a). They used a modern white coating for the posterior side of the icon that was not in harmony with proper archeological restoration. In addition to the completion of the preparation layer, coloring was completed in an inappropriate manner and done without cleaning or removal of dirt and candle droppings (Fig. 8 b).



Fig. 8 - Images showing the previous restoration (a) and improper coloring (b).

retal	9912300000		
D 10	<Standard 9000		
C S	20.70650 %	S	141.9545 9000
C Ca	57.48506 %	Ca	785.2401 9000
C Fe	1.59412 %	Fe	67.5032 9000
C Co	0.02713 %	Co	1.3730 9000
C Cu	0.40028 %	Cu	27.0630 9000
C Zn	0.11816 %	Zn	9.0854 9000
C Sr	0.65180 %	Sr	38.3870 9000
C Pd	6.04907 %	Pd	23.1617 9000
C Te	2.75618 %	Te	19.7070 9000
CAu	10.21169 %	Au	441.

Tab. 1 - XRF analysis of the preparation and the gilding layer.

5. Results and Discussion

Representative samples taken from the preparation layer, gilding layer and from the red pigments were analyzed using Philips Minipal 2 PW4025 spectrometer. In order to insure the ongoing examinations were in line with conservation ethics and aesthetics, our analysis was restricted to damaged and separated parts. XRF results of the preparation layer sample revealed it consisted of gypsum (CaSO4.2H2O), since it contains calcium (Ca) and Sulfate (S) (Tab. 1, Fig.

9). The XRF pattern of the gilding layer sample, shows the presence of gold (Au) with a percentage of copper (Cu). This indicates the use of high quality gold in the gilding of the preparation layer. The presence of high zinc content (Zn) was added to the preparation layer to obtain a smooth background for the base gilding layer. The presence of Fe content refers to the presence of Hematite (Fe2O3) which was used to improve the properties of the preparation layer, this was consistent with period icon gliding methods.

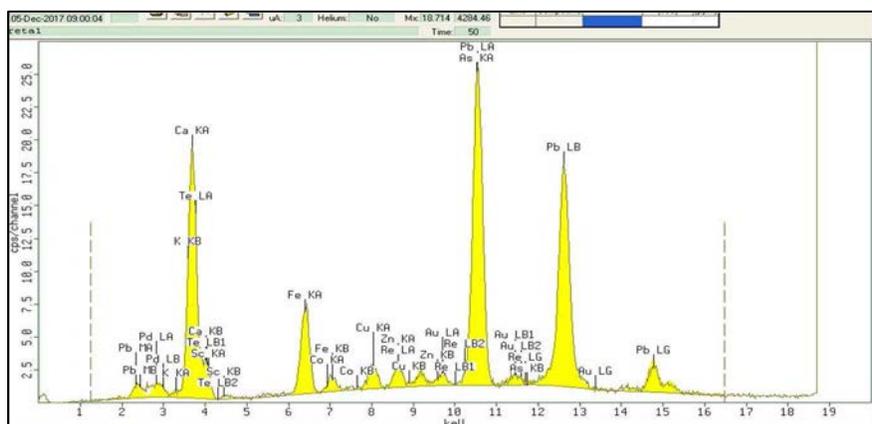


Fig. 9 - XRF patterns for the preparation and the gilding layer.

D 13 <Standard 9000				
C K	1.10532 %	K	5.6934	9000
C Ca	49.28591 %	Ca	319.9489	9000
C Sc	0.47837 %	Sc	2.8347	9000
C Fe	5.17448 %	Fe	118.4832	9000
C Co	0.12094 %	Co	3.2967	9000
C Cu	0.96343 %	Cu	33.5760	9000
C Zn	0.66162 %	Zn	26.1058	9000
C As	1.05612 %	As	43.5671	9000
C Pd	10.84057 %	Pd	22.6308	9000
C Te	2.00645 %	Te	6.6982	9000
C Re	0.08230 %	Re	1.6185	9000
C Au	0.82971 %	Au	17.5160	9000
C Pb	27.39478 %	Pb	586.3795	9000

Tab. 2 - XRF analysis of the red pigments

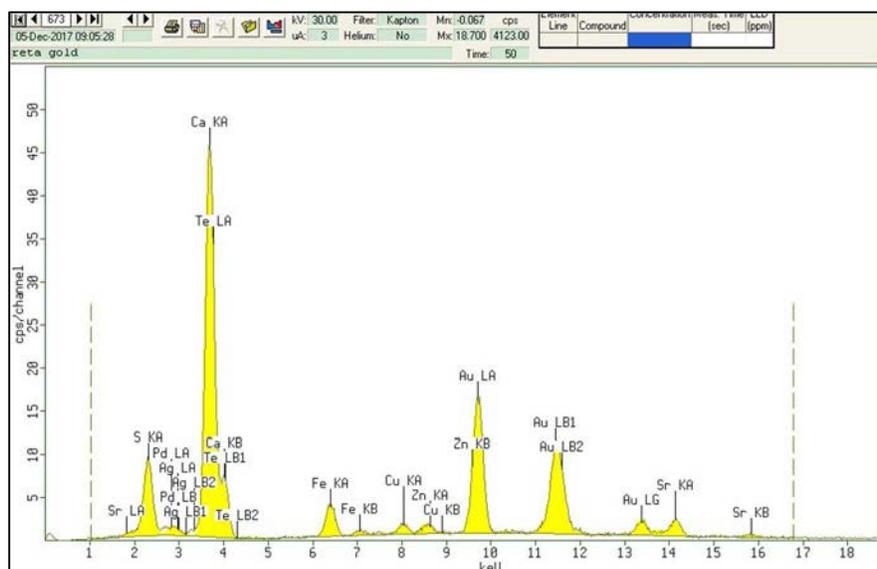


Fig. 10 - XRF patterns for the red pigments

## The Conservation of the Byzantine Icon from Georgios Church, Jordan

XRF analysis of red pigments showed that it was comprised of red-lead ( $Pb_3O_4$ ). It is characterized by its vitality, strong coloring and smooth texture (A. Lucas, J. R. Harris, 1962)]. Red-lead was a main component in the sample in

addition to the white zinc which gives the shiny appearance (Tab. 2, Fig. 10).

X-Ray Diffraction spectrum of the icon's preparation layer can be seen in Fig. 11. The preparation layer consisted of Gypsum ( $CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O$ ).

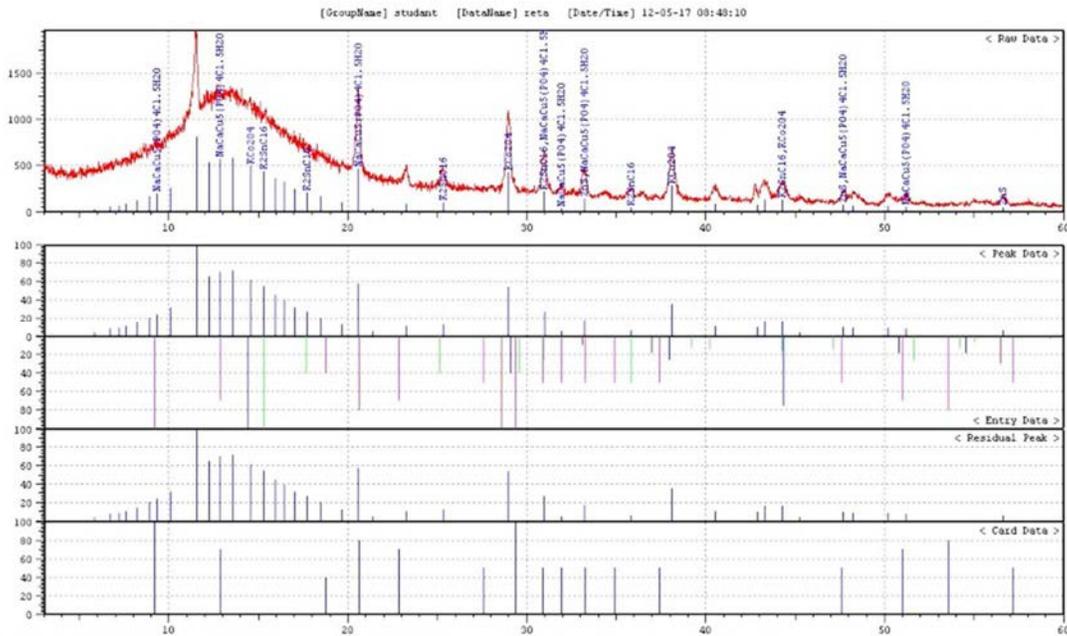


Fig. 11 - XRD patterns for the preparation layer sample

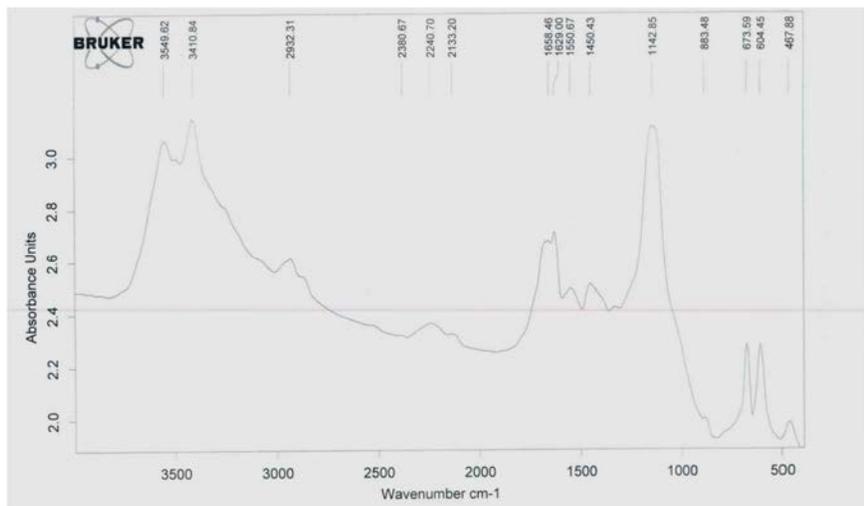


Fig. 12. FTIR spectrum for the preparation layer sample.

Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) is one of the most important methods for the analysis of color bonding materials. It was used to identify the material applied to the preparation

layer. After comparing the spectrum with standard samples it seems they used animal glue. From the FTIR spectrum, absorption occur at  $604\text{ cm}^{-1}$  which is characteristic of bone, indicating that the adhesive

protein contains animal glue (Fig. 12). For the varnish sample, the FTIR spectrum showed that the varnish used was mastic varnish, after comparing the results with a mastic standard sample. These methods and techniques were widely spread in Greece, the Baltic countries and Russia (C. Azemard et al., 2014, p1. 43). FTIR spectrum

for the varnish sample (Fig. 13) shows the increase in the hydroxyl group's O-H absorption intensity at 3404 cm<sup>-1</sup>, stretching and the expansion of the carbonyl group at 1714 cm<sup>-1</sup>, 2936 cm<sup>-1</sup> and at 1181 cm<sup>-1</sup> these wave numbers are distinctive features for mastic varnish.

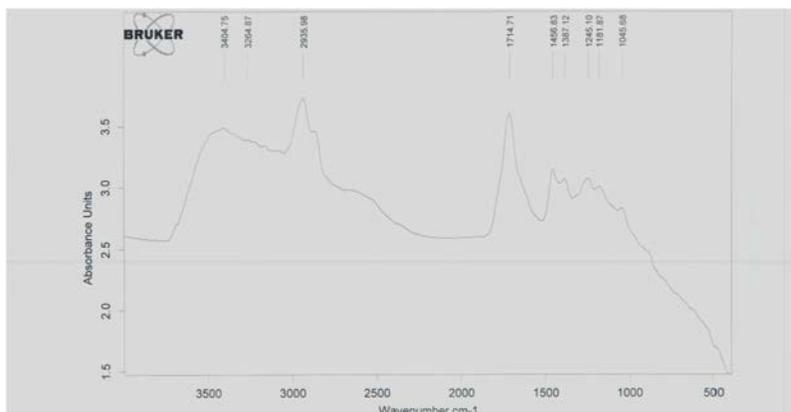


Fig. 13 - FTIR spectrum for the varnish sample

### 5.1. Linen canvas

A sample was taken from the flaking formed on the damaged background, where the weave of the canvas could be seen even by the naked eye. The analysis through SEM revealed the textile used to be a flax, as illustrated in Fig. 14 a.

### 5.2. Ultraviolet Imaging

Through UV and visible reflectography, both the front and the back of the icons were analyzed. A

series of evolutionary deteriorations and degradations of the painting, polychrome layer, and of the support were identified. Traces of mechanical impacts, multiple small gaps and fly holes were observed. These discoveries help identify new interventions that could be undertaken that could not be detected by the naked eye (Fig. 15 a, b). The panel was examined through ultraviolet radiation, bulb with a wave length of 254 nm.

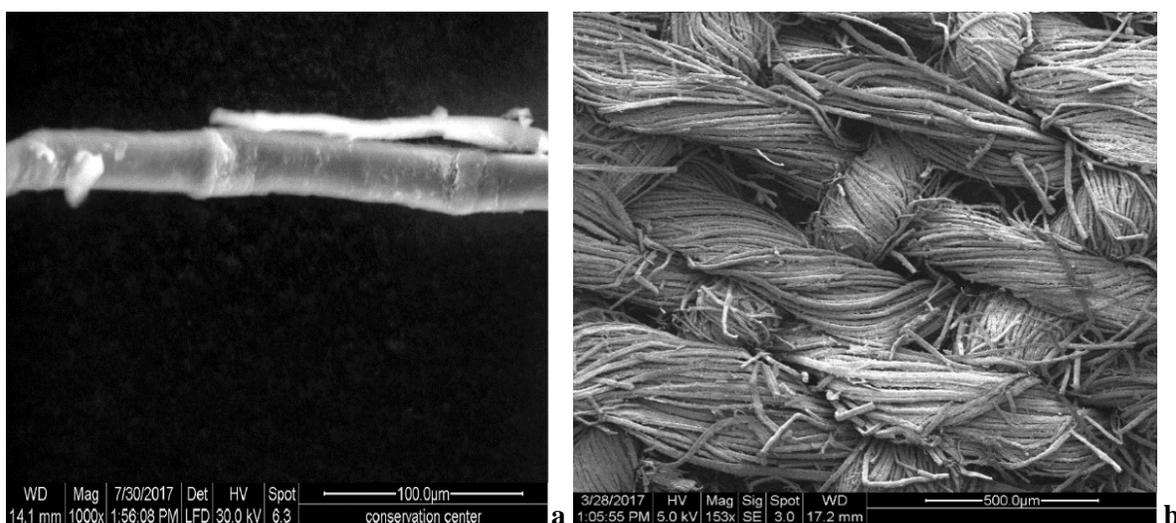


Fig. 14. SEM image (a); Linin textile (b).

## 6. Conservation and Cleaning

Restoration is an important and necessary process for preserving and refurbishing damaged icons. This requires careful attention to avoid irreversible errors. The cleaning products to be used must be tested, because inappropriate cleaning products can affect the integrity of the noble patina and degrade the polychrome layers, which can be easily washed away (R. Mayer, 1978). It was necessary to conduct a comprehensive analysis for

ascertaining a full understanding of the icon's components and the complete certainty that the materials applied would result in a successful conservation. The mechanical cleaning of the accumulated dust was done using soft brushes, scalpels, hand tools, and with more abrasive brushes, removing the existing dirt. Each piece, all cleaning and every intervention process was monitored and documented.

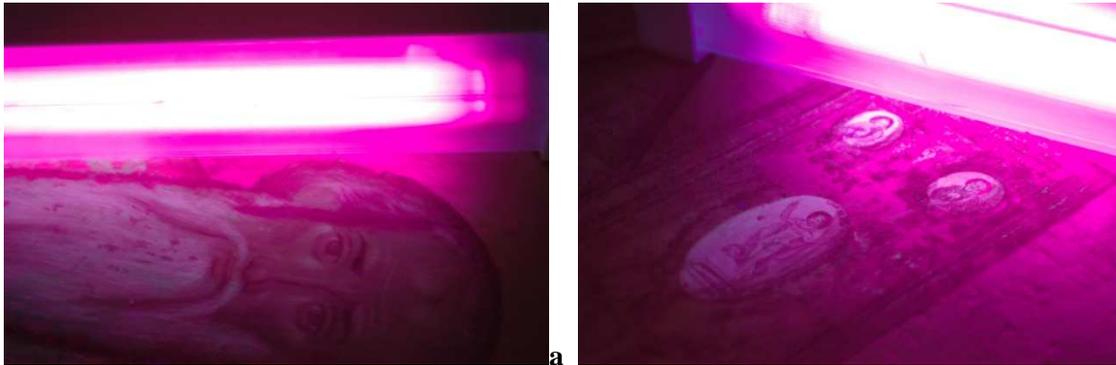


Fig. 15 - U.V. inspection images (a, b).

### 6.1. Treatments of the Reverse Side

Cleaning the reverse side has been carried out through physicochemical methods, with compatible substances, established after cleaning and solubility tests. Paints were removed from the back using DMF- Dimethyl formamide (C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>7</sub>No) with solvent pads and cotton. Care was taken to make sure no excess use of the solvent would leak through the cracks and joints between the wooden panels, or seep through the joints to the pictorial layer.

### 6.2. Straightening the Curvature

One of the main reasons for the curvature of the wood panel was the removal of the rear reinforcing bars, which caused the tearing and cracking and separation of wood panels. The wooden panel was flattened by pressing using a bench vise. Before starting the flattening process, the wood panel was wetted with an 80% ethyl alcohol solution to restore the internal water content to assist in flexing under pressure (Fig. 16 a). The pressed panel was left for one week with the increase of the pressure ratio gradually until it became straight. The back side was then coated with a 10% diluted solution of alcohol and shellac resin to fill the pores of the panel and to prevent future curvature. After fully adjusting the wooden panel, a

bench vise was used, as well as using polyvinyl alcohol as adhesive to fix the split in the wood panel (Fig. 16 b). The rear surface was consolidate using 5% paraloid 72% to prevent future dust and moisture interaction.

### 6.3. Pictorial Layer Treatments

Initial tests of cleaning solvents, effectiveness and sensitivity should be conducted prior any interventions (S. Lowendgard, 2007). The process of cleaning the pictorial layer started by removing dust and staining, using soft brushes and a vacuum, and then simple or mixed cleaning solutions were used to remove the dirt. The adherent deposits on the pictorial layer were removed quite easily, with 10 ml acetone, turpentine, 20 ml n-butyl alcohol and 5 ml ethylene glycol-based solutions giving good results. The residue of candle soot was removed using ethyl alcohol and turpentine (2:1) in a safe and effective manner.

### 6.4. Removing Old Varnish

Removing varnish is one of the most complicated processes in the treatment of oil paintings. All agreed that it was necessary to remove the old varnish, due to the agglomerations and its disturbing brownish appearance. The removal process was done by using a mixture of ethyl alco-



Fig. 16. Images showing the straightening the curvature in the icon (a, b) and showing the treatment of the revers side (c, d).



Fig. 17 - Images showing a soaked pads of dimethyl were used to remove old varnish (a); using medical scalpels in cleaning (b); gilding layer after cleaning (c) and before cleaning (d).

hol and turpentine (1:3) on a cotton swap which gave good results (T. Aldridge, 1984). For sensitive and delicate places, soaked pads of dimethyl was used, as well as medical scalpels (N. Knut, 1999). Toluene (methyl benzene C<sub>6</sub> H<sub>5</sub> CH<sub>3</sub>) was also used in some places and gave good results (Fig. 17a, b).



Fig. 18 - Image showing removing the color from the previous intervention (a, b).

#### **6.6. Removal of the Added Embossed Black Color on the Outer Frame**

The icon had been recently restored using new colors. Those added colors were not compatible with the original color, in terms of chemical structure, and appearance. That added color was removed by using soaked pads of Dimethyl formamide (DMF C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>7</sub>NO) solvent as well with a medical scalpel. It was safely removed, the original colors of the frame appeared, golden and red separated with fine white line (Fig. 18 a, b).

#### **6.7. Filling Gaps and Holes in the Preparation Layer**

A mixture of calcium sulfate, gypsum (in accordance with the results of the analysis of the original substrate) and polyvinyl alcohol (PVAL) was prepared in the form of a light-textured paste with the addition of a sodium fungicide (Sodium-Fluoride) and using knives for dental filler to fill the small holes and micro-cracks completely (J. Mandelstam, 1982). The large gaps on the lower and upper sides of the icon, as well as the joints between the wooden knots and the holder, were reinforced by using yarns of raw linen fabric with animal glue to help increase the cohesion of the preparation

#### **6.5. Clean the Gilding Layer**

The most efficient and simple method of cleaning the gilded layer was to use pure ethyl alcohol in proportion which gave satisfactory results. This method eliminates the gold layer components from oxidation and chemical reactions (Fig. 18 a, b).

layer (Fig. 19). The wood panel was coated with 5% of PVC glue to be a base for the preparation layer to insure the cohesion of the next layers, taking into consideration the thickness of the original preparation layer. The first layer was applied using (coarse gypsum): with (10%) of Concentrate PVC Vinyl Adhesive, after a complete drying, a second layer of fine gypsum consisting of a lower emulsion from the previous texture with 5% of PVC (Vinyl Acetate) was placed. The finished layers were kept in a clean room at room temperature for 48 hours, later after a complete drying the surface was smoothed using glass paper and readied for coloring.

#### **6.8. Re-gilding the Background**

The missing parts of the gilded background and frame were replaced with new gold leaf. After preparing and finishing, the preparation layer was coated with three layers of 10% Shellac resin solution dissolved in alcohol. A thin layer of masonry resin was applied and before drying, gold foil was glued and polished with cotton pads (Fig. 20 a,b). Finally, to protect it, the gilding layer was coated with two layers of 10% shellac resin solution in alcohol and shellac varnish lacquer.



Fig. 19 - Images showing fixing the cracks (a, b) and installing the preparation layer (c, d).



Fig. 20 - Restoring Gold leaf and re coloring the missing color.

### 6.9. Recoloring the Missing Parts

The icon chromatic integration was done with respect to the original uniform appearance. Recoloring was restricted only to the places with cracks, each color is lighter than the original color (G. Emile, 1976). When the painting was done the icon was set aside and allowed to dry completely in a clean room. The icon was opened in horizontal position, with quick moves, with a soft hair brush, in a room equipped with an exhaust system. After a complete drying, the pictorial layer was coated with a new varnish layer. The icon was laid flat, and the varnish poured over it in a thick coat. Throughout

the day, the varnish was absorbed by the paint, as it thickened, and formed a film on the surface of the paint. The varnish also deepened and enhanced the colors. When all was done and well dried out, the final work began-applying the 3% of Poly Metha Crylate that was used to ensure that the painted surface will “lock together” and have a protective surface. From a preservation viewpoint, it is essential to protect the Icon from surrounding atmospheric conditions. Icon was completely isolated from within and outside using 5% Palaroid B72 dissolved in xylene. We must be sure, during the isolation process, that all material surfaces are

The Conservation of the Byzantine Icon from Georgios Church, Jordan

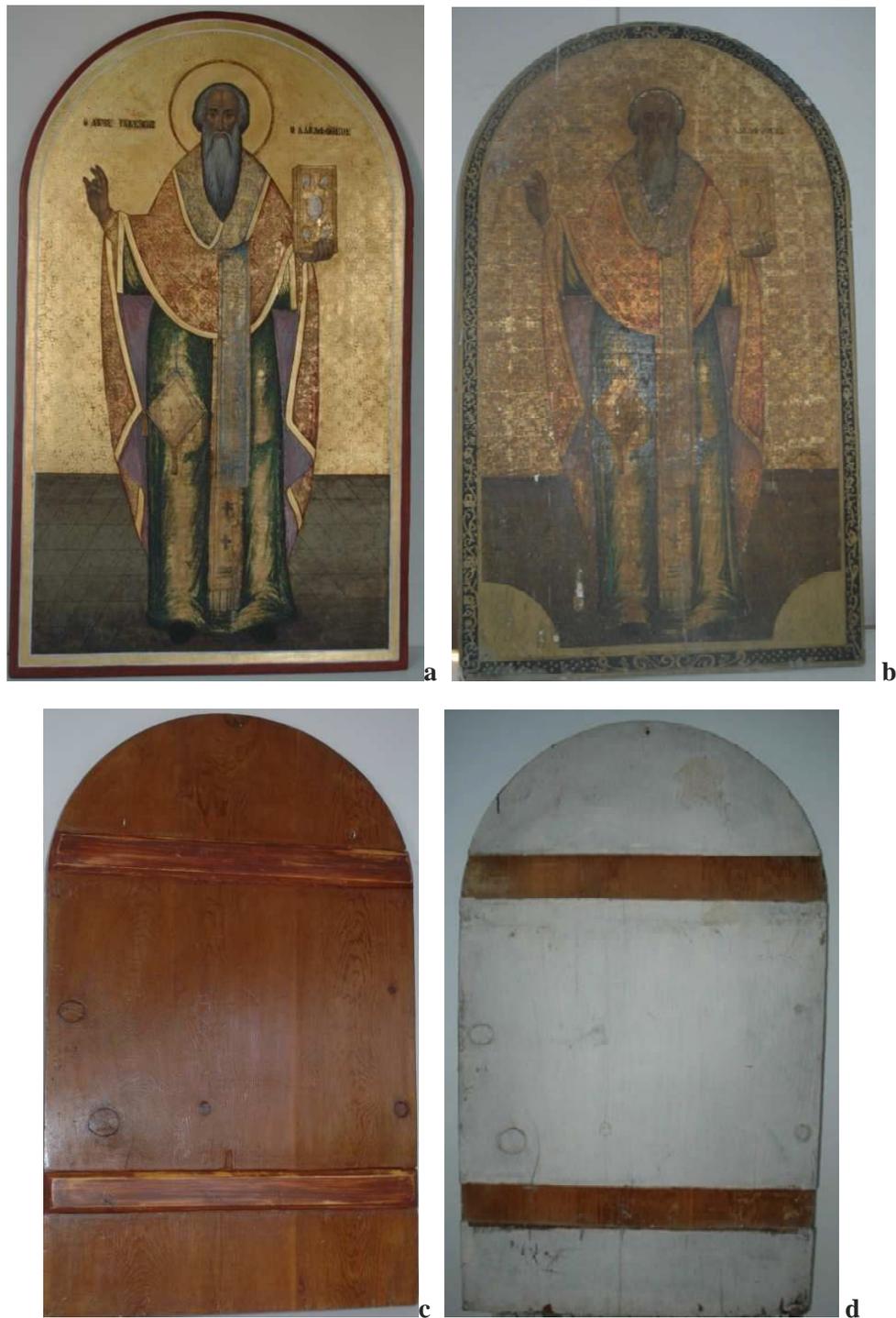


Fig. 21 - Images showing the icon after conservation, b the icon before conservation c back side of the icon after conservation, d back side before conservation.

completely dry and clean. The Icon after conservation is shown in the Fig. 21.

## 7. Conclusion

Control of environmental conditions appears to have been particularly poor and had a high negative impact on the icon's quality. The use of cleaning tests is obligatory, because the cleaning process can affect the integrity of the icon and cause damage rather than conserve it.

The study confirmed the danger of liturgical use (lighting candles, incense, writing names, launching Nero oil) inside the churches. The use of organic solvents was very successful and had a positive impact on the icon components. Curvature and torsion caused by the improper hanging and placing the icon on the walls directly. The complementary employment of XRD and XRF contributed and resolved the identity of icon components. The XRF technique revealed the identity of the white background that was composed of CaSO<sub>4</sub>.2H<sub>2</sub>O and the red color was composed of hematite. While red color of the preparation layer beneath the gilding layer consisted of red-lead (Pb<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub>). The gilding layer consisted of high-grade gold metal.

One can conclude through FTIR analysis that the binding material of the golden leaf and the calcium sulfate used in the preparation layer was animal glue. The same technology showed that the varnish used for color isolation was mastic varnish.

Linen was the main constituent in the textile layer which was used as a support for the wooden panels. The study also highlighted the importance of removing the worn varnish layer and re-applying another lacquer layer to restore the colors to their original luster and brilliance.

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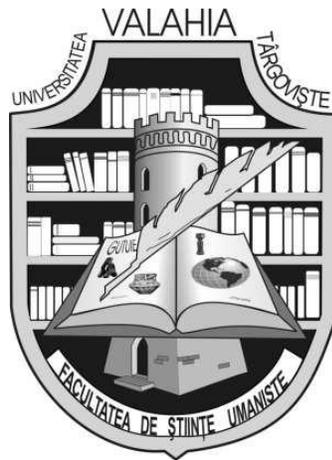
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L'Université Valahia Târgoviște  
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# ANNALES



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## Târgoviște and the metamorphoses brought by its decline at the end of the Mediaeval Age and the beginning of Modern Times

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**Abstract:** Târgoviște, the capital of Wallachia for many centuries, would undergo, towards the end of the Middle Ages, a vast process of economic and political transformations. Bucharest having taken over its role as capital hastened the decline of the city, which had been abandoned by the important noblemen of the country; the administrative authority also fell and with it its autonomy; its fairs, emblems of the foreign trade, were dissolved or moved and the population was decimated by the numerous military conflicts of the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. All this was fragmentarily recorded by documents, which is why another original source to identify the realities mentioned above is represented by the testimonials left by foreign travellers whose accounts became ampler and more accurate as we were approaching the modern times.

**Key-words:** princely court, foreign travellers, fair, demographic decline, city estate, revolt.

At the threshold of a new era, between the mediaeval and the modern age, the former great capital of Wallachia was in a very delicate situation. The centre of gravity had moved to Bucharest and Târgoviște was only being supported by its past energies. The rule of Brancoveanu had revived some of its glory of yore but, together with his tragic end, the veil of forgetfulness was to envelop the residence of voivodes. One of the eloquent examples is the German booklet of the last years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in which Târgoviște appears as the second city of the country, where the prince sometimes had his court and residence.\* Another world was coming instead, a world oriented towards modernity, which was breaking off from the past, a world in which Târgoviște appeared to no longer find its place.

The lack of concrete information about the changes the former seat was going through, in the long transition to modernity, has prompted the Romanian researchers to look for answers in the accounts of foreign travellers, many of whom lingered in these lands or even settled down in the Romanian Principalities and thus provided vast and documented descriptions. They focused on administrative, commercial, demographic and political aspects and offered the necessary fragments to recompose such a complex process.

With regard to the administration, documents reveal that during the reign of Matei Basarab the city autonomy was greatly diminished. Apparently it was then that the office of *judet* (‘governor’ or ‘judge’), regularly mentioned in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, disappeared. Alongside of the 12 *pângari*

(‘councillors’), he would confirm the sale and purchase agreements, judge various contentions among the inhabitants or represent the city in the relations with the leadership (Lia Lehr, 1972). The office reappeared towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but it was significantly reduced by the establishment of the office of *ispravnic*. The best known figure in documents is *jupan* Radu, the *vel județul ot Târgoviște*, who died in 1791 and was buried at Biserica Albă, the foundation of which he had contributed to (R. Gioglovan, M. Oproiu, 1975).

The position of *ispravnic* of Târgoviște is mentioned in various documents of the first part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century\*\* and towards the end of it, except the period of Matei Basarab’s reign, when the rule returned to the citadel by the Ialomița river. It was replaced by the office of *vornic* of Târgoviște, which was to grow in Brâncoveanu’s age, when it emerged in the form of *vel vornic*, but gradually lost its importance towards the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, in 1764, Prince Ștefan Racoviță would still give orders to the *vornic* of Târgoviște (G. Potra, 1972).

However, a note of the German Frederick Wilhelm von Bauer reveals that the office of *vornic* of Târgoviște was no longer permanent, at least starting with 1761, during the last reign of Constantin Mavrocordat. He appointed a *vornic* of Țara de Sus (the ‘Upper Land’) and a *vornic* of Țara de Jos (the ‘Lower Land’). The former would exert his authority over the counties of Olt, Argeș, Teleorman, Vlașca, Ilfov and over Dâmbovița as well, when there was no *vornic* at Târgoviște\*\*\*.

All these changes that occurred in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries broke the administrative power of the city. This decline of the administration may have prompted, in 1791, the visit of the secretary of Prince Nicolae Mavrogheni, who came to Târgoviște in order to see if the decisions and the territorial-administrative division of Dâmbovița County were still correctly put into practice (C. Manolescu, M. Oproiu, 1970).

During the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the decline in the administrative authority had a negative impact on the autonomy of the city as well. It was seriously violated during the rule of Ioan Gheorghe Caragea, who put boyar Isaac Ralet in possession of a piece of land, inside the Princely Court, to build a house and also tried in 1813, unsuccessfully, to appropriate the estate of the city of Târgoviște. The event was to re-occur in 1820, with much deeper repercussions, when Prince

Alexandros Soutzos tried to give the city estate to his daughter, as a dowry.

The economy of Târgoviște and particularly trade, the heart of it, seriously suffered in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Documents reveal that, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the city had been one of the most important centres of Wallachia. According to the accounts of the missionary Bonaventura from Campofranco, who for several weeks lived at the Franciscan convent of Târgoviște, in the autumn of 1650, there was a great mixture of people: Hungarians, Venetians, Saxons, Bulgarians, Germans and Poles\*\*\*\*, living in the city, which was the capital and prince’s residence. It is sensible to assume that this note should have referred to the merchants who, at his arrival, were living in the city and not to stable ethnic groups. That would also explain the description made by the pastor Conrad Jacob Hildebrandt, a lawyer with important missions, who travelled through the Wallachian country along with the retinue of England’s ambassador in Constantinople. He stated that, in 1657, under the rule of Constantin Șerban, Târgoviște had become a commercial city, with no surrounding walls, crowded by a great many tradespeople. \*\*\*\*\*

Moving the capital to Bucharest, after 1660, was a sign of the city’s commercial decline. The devastation of Târgoviște by the Turks under the rule of Mihnea III, who had withdrawn here to defend himself, contributed to the weakening of trade relations. In his short reign, the new prince, Gheorghe Ghica, was ordered to tear down the houses of Târgoviște so there should be no seat for the reign (R. Gioglovan, 1973). One thus may conclude that the political and military events aggravated the economic downfall.

Once Bucharest had permanently taken over the role as capital of the country, the commercial route that had dominated the Wallachian Middle ages, Bran-Târgoviște-Brâila, was deserted. The beginnings of its removal from the commercial use can be traced further back, as the Patriarch Macarius of Antioch noted in 1653 that it had become a mere path, hardly fitted to ride a horse; nevertheless, we believe that it was gradually replaced, over the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, by the Brașov-Bucharest route, through Predeal, along the Prahova river (G. M. Petrescu-Sava, 1937). This entailed the development of the borough of Ploiești and the weakening of trade in Târgoviște.

A certain revival, not of the magnitude of the

## Târgoviște and the metamorphoses brought by its decline at the end of the Mediaeval Age and the beginning of Modern Times

former one, occurred during the reign of Constantin Brâncoveanu. Cellars and shops were being sold in Târgoviște, which was a sign that an improvement in the commercial activity was expected. Through *vornic* Pascale, one of his worthiest boyars, the prince purchased cellars, building plots and shops from the locals Gheorghe Cupeț and Marica, daughter of Pan the *postelnic* (G. Potra, 1972). The boyars followed the prince's example, as there are several transactions which point to the fact that they bought house-building plots from merchants in Târgoviște (G. Potra, 1972). Documents reveal that most of the land transactions were made by *vornic* Pascale who, at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, became one of the greatest landowners, having the centre of his estates located in and around the city (G. Potra, 1972).

The revival of land price did not entail an intensification of foreign exchanges. The increase in the domestic trade points to the regress that the city, lying until then strategically at the intersection of the great roads which crossed Wallachia, was going through.

As regards foreign trade, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century there were two great fairs which sources mention as Târgul de Sus ('Upper Fair') and Târgul de Jos ('Lower Fair').\*\*\*\*\* Târgul de Sus is attested in two documents, of 1603 and 1616, the second being related to Târgul de Jos.\*\*\*\*\* In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, Târgul de Sus, apparently located on the road to Brașov, disappeared. An idea was formulated in the specialised literature, namely that this disappearance was only in toponymic terms, as the former name was replaced, towards the beginning of Brâncoveanu's age, with that of slum, of smaller sizes, that appears in documents. Its relocation outside the town, on the old Câmpulung route, seems more logical to us, as it thus acquired a periodic character.

Târgul de Jos seems to be of particular importance due its position in the vicinity of the Princely Court. During the reign of Constantin Brâncoveanu, many cellars and shops are mentioned in the area stretching as far as Stelea Church and this remains the most natural location. Its existence was suddenly brought to an end following the 1713 fire. The chronicler Radu Greceanu states that: "*după ce s-au întâmplat de s-au ars târgul și arzând și casele...au rămas locul*"\*\*\*\*\* (which translates as 'after the fair burnt down and the houses were also destroyed by

the fire... only the place remained'). A document issued by Constantin Brâncoveanu in the last year of his rule confirms this event. It is an act dated 7 January 1714 issued for Hurezi Monastery, which mentioned the fire that had seized Târgoviște and the fact that all the houses and shops had burnt to ashes and the entire place had been left barren: "*Pe care pimniță și locuri, după ce le-am cumpărat domnia mea de la vânzătorii ce se-au zis mai sus, am făcut case și prăvălii, de au fost cătăva vreme. Iar când au fost, întâmplându-se de au ars și acele case și prăvălii ce făcusem domnia mea și au rămas peste tot, loc sterp.*"(G. Potra, 1972) ('Having bought the cellars and places from the abovementioned sellers, we built houses and shops there. But when the fire started, those houses and shops were destroyed and all that was left was wasteland'). Unfortunately, the political events, Brâncoveanu's banishment, seem to favour the assumption that it no longer functioned after that moment. It was replaced by Târgul din Lăuntru (i.e. 'Inside Fair'), mentioned by documents in the second part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and Târgul din Afară ('Outside Fair'), which probably took the place of Târgul de Jos. Both lost a lot of the amount of the foreign exchanges.

The lack of economic power led to the withdrawal from the city, all throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, of the most important boyar families brought by Brâncoveanu's reign. Their place was taken by the small nobility and townspeople. This is illustrated by the 1829 census which mentioned, at Târgoviște, only the boyars who had emerged in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and who had not taken part in the country government (I. C. Filitti, 1929).

Demographically, the analyses are incomplete due to the lack of data. Following the logical thread of history, it is difficult to assert that Târgoviște exceeded 10,000 inhabitants until the reign of Matei Basarab. In 1581, the Franciscan monk Ieronim Arsengo would mention 1,022 houses in Târgoviște, which meant a little over 5,000 citizens.\*\*\*\*\* The demographic peak seems to have been reached towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century with all the exaggeration of the Bishop of Gallipoli, Bogdan Petru Bakiș, who would see 4,000 houses and around 20,000 inhabitants in Târgoviște (M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca-Bulgaru, 1976).

The demographic progress continued and it was stopped only by the destruction of Târgoviște by the Turks during Mihnea III. Evliya Çelebi, the

great Turkish traveller, informs us that at the time of the siege only the women and the children were in the city because the men had left for Mihnea's camp\*\*\*\*\*. The damages caused now seemed irremediable. *Relația anonimă latină despre Țara Românească*, dated prior to 1688, mentions that Târgoviște could house 5,000 soldiers before, which was no longer possible after the destruction of the large buildings\*\*\*\*\*. Only about 500 houses were still standing and not even Constantin Brâncoveanu's coming into power could produce the demographic revival desired, as the population numbered around 5,000 inhabitants, a constant value over the next century.

Once Târgoviște was replaced by Bucharest as the capital of the country, a large population decline occurred all throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Without any exact information in this respect, we can only assume that the destruction of the city in 1737, during the Russo-Austrian-Turkish war, and the earthquake of the following year contributed to the demographic fall (G. Mihaescu, E. Fruchter, 1977). In 1744, the *Vel Ban* Grigore Greceanu had the fountain located two kilometres from Târgoviște restored in order to supply the travellers, as mentioned by the inscription (R. Giglovan, M. Oproiu, 1975), not as a result of the population growth, as erroneously stated (G. Coandă, 2017). Its location on one of the commercial routes that passed by the city seems more appropriate.

According to William Wilkinson, a broad-minded diplomat, Târgoviște, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, had merely become a larger village, being slowly abandoned by its inhabitants, with all the old and important buildings ending up in ruins (William Wilkinson, 1936). This is confirmed by the 1810 census which recorded 570 houses and roughly 2,100 inhabitants in Târgoviște (Al. Popescu-Runcu, 1936).

Count Louis de Langeron, a French emigrant who had become a general in the Russian army, left us a number of notes dating from the 1806-1812 war, when he was in the Danubian principalities. He stated that only Bucharest could be considered a city. Other towns, among which he included Târgoviște as well, would be but some larger boroughs in France or Germany\*\*\*\*\*. The number of residents weighed much in making this statement.

The political context was complex. The establishment of the Phanariot regime shortly led to

a conflict between the prince and the native nobility, which drew the lines of domestic politics for more than a century. The conflict should not be understood in ethnic terms, between Greek nobles and Romanian boyars, but in political ones. While the Greek party was loyal to the sultan, the native boyars had to settle into an anti-Phanariot position, the only that could guarantee, at some moment, access to power (Vlad Georgescu, 1995). In this game of interests, Târgoviște positioned on the native boyars' side, as the few noble families that had remained here in the 18<sup>th</sup> century were Romanian, such as the Greceanu or Bărbătescu families, who were living alongside of enriched merchants, as Șerban and Negoită Fusea. Secondly, the Russo-Austrian-Turkish wars involved Târgoviște in various military actions which entailed an intensification of the crisis the city was going through at all levels.

In the year of the death of Constantin Brâncoveanu, the last ruler who had had his residence at Târgoviște, the Frenchman Aubry de la Motraye would pass through the citadel for the second time, leaving an eloquent description of the transformations of the former Wallachian capital. The Frenchman knew how old the city was and, in his short stay, he became aware that it had been much larger, considering the traces of the walls. The princely court was not to Aubry de la Motraye's liking: "...are un castel clădit după moda veche și nu este făcut să placă, afară doar de niște apartamente clădite de ultimul voievod-care se retrăgea aici din când în când..."\* ('it has a castle built after the old fashion and is not made for one to enjoy, except some apartments built by the last voivode who used to retire here once in a while').

Târgoviște was seen as a place of refuge by the Austrian captain Stephan Dettine during the second Russo-Austrian-Turkish war. When he arrived at Târgoviște in April 1716, he thought about possible fortification works in the city (Al. A. Vasilescu, 1929). The moat and bulwark of the city, restored perhaps during Brâncoveanu's reign, were certainly still in good condition and offered the former princely residence the ability to repulse a large-scale attack. All these ideas were abandoned in the face of the Turkish-Tatar army that was rapidly gathering under the city walls. As reported by the chronicle of Mitrofan Grigoraș, the Austrian captain withdrew at Mărgineni Monastery, leaving the city without defence (D. Russo, 1939; C. Erbiceanu,

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1888).

In 1735, the most imposing building in Târgoviște, the Princely Court, was in a state of ruin and Prince Grigore Ghica II decided to roof the church and the houses (N. Iorga, 1905-1908). This is shown by the inscription preserved fragmentarily on the wall that separates the narthex of the Great Church from the nave. We do not know if this restoration actually took place. However, it is certain that, only a few years later, during another Russo-Austrian-Turkish war, the commander Chesarie Daponte would find the great court deserted and the impressive princely garden full of thorns and bushes. At the same time, he deplored the condition of the metropolitan church, "*măreața și prea-frumoasa ctitorie*" (N. Iorga, 1933) ('the great and splendid sanctuary'). The Austrians' retreat to Câmpulung brought about the Turks' burning and ransacking the town and the residence of the former princes seems not to have escaped the invaders' havoc. Almost a century after these events, the secretary of Prince Ion Gheorghe Caragea, François Recordon, knew about the palace of Târgoviște that had been destroyed by fire\*\*\*\*\*.

The impressions that a Turkish dignitary, who held various offices at Hotin, had about Târgoviște, gathered during his journey through Wallachia, prior to 1740, indicate, at first glance, a revival of the city. The closeness in time to the 1736-1739 war, which seriously affected Târgoviște, raises a number of questions. The anonymous Turk is concerned rather with the natural riches, the food resources and scarcely mentions the monuments and towns south of the Carpathians. Maybe this is the reason why the description of Târgoviște is idyllic: houses were beautiful, well built, there were baths and market houses, while vineyards and vegetable gardens were widespread all throughout the suburbs and the surroundings\*\*\*\*\*.

In 1761-1763, during the last reign of Constantin Mavrocordat, the Turks destroyed all the city ramparts, most likely in order to avoid the situations during the wars with the Austrians, when it had been easy to organise the defence (D.P. Condurățeanu, 1886). However, it is hard to accept that the city's system of fortifications was pulled down, since Franz Joseph Sulzer would find it, almost two decades later, in 1781, in a very good condition that allowed for a restoration with minimum efforts. On the other hand, Sulzer deplored the state of the Princely Court and of the

towers that had fallen into ruin (Franz Sulzer, 1781), which makes us assert that the last Turkish destruction had rather affected the princely ensemble and perhaps some of the civilian constructions.

A confirmation of Sulzer's information came four years later, in 1785, when the state of decay of the Princely Court drew the attention of the ruling bodies in Bucharest. The efforts of boyar Ianache Vacarescu are worth mentioning. He appealed to Prince Michael Soutzos, who agreed to send some people that restored and repainted Biserica Mare (the 'Great Church'), at his own expense (N. Iorga, 1905-1908).

All seemed ephemeral, as in 1802 a powerful earthquake damaged the Princely Court so severely that the people of Târgoviște asked Prince Constantine Ypsilanti to have the Princely Great Church redone. The lord offered 500 thalers and the remaining 1,000 was supposed to be collected from those who were feeding off the princely estate and from a few of the slum-dwellers. *Ban* Scarlat Ghica was in charge of the church restoration (V.A.Urechia, 1897). Not even in this case do we have the certainty that repairing was done, if we consider the 1813 complaint received by Logothete Istratie Slătineanu from the ecclesiarch of the Great Church about the condition of princely churches, which were in such a state of decay that urgent help was needed to prevent their complete destruction.

One of the immediate consequences was a fall in land price and, under such circumstances, the large properties, among which the Princely Court, became tempting for wealthier boyars (M. Iancu, 1973).

The moral regress of the aulic assemblage of Târgoviște was at its worst in 1813, when Prince Ioan Gheorghe Caragea agreed to boyar Isaac Ralet's building a house inside the Princely Court, where all that was left were the ruins of some useless walls in which wild birds had made their nests. In his request to the prince, he mentioned that he wanted to build a garden and a house for him to retire in case of need \*\*\*\*\*. His appeal was supported by a number of important boyars, of the highest ranks: the *vistier* ('treasurer') Constantin Filipescu, *ban* Radu Golescu, the *vornic* Barbu Văcărescu and logothete Grigore Băleanu

The opposition of the townspeople who had raised their shops here led to a complaint addressed to Prince Caragea, who sent his *ispravnic* in 1814 in

order to bound the princely estate\*\*\*\*\*  
which was divided between boyar Isaac Ralet and Dealu Monastery. Nothing was built on this land, which is most likely due to people's protests, a pressure that was constantly exerted also upon the heirs, who decided to cede it to the Princely Great Church in 1827\*\*\*\*\*.

This may be the first proof that the inhabitants of Târgoviște respected their history and gave honour to this place that was slowly acquiring the value of a monument. But it is not excluded that the people's pressure may have had something to do with the attempt of Prince Caragea to seize the city estate comprising the villages of Teiș, Priseaca, Colanul and Ulmi, and the action against boyar Ralet was merely a pretext to put pressure on the ruler.

Whatever the reason, on 31 March 1813 the townspeople vowed that they should fight for their rights. It was a sign the city was sitting on a powder keg and it only needed a spark to explode.

Events would take such a turn sooner than expected, in 1820, when the estate of Târgoviște was traded by Prince Alexandros Soutzos, who offered it, as dowry, at the wedding of his daughter Catinca to boyar Manolache Băleanu. The city estate also comprised the villages of Ulmi, Colanu and Priseaca, which depended on the townspeople only administratively. Ever since the beginnings of Târgoviște, most of the inhabitants, be they craftsmen or merchants, had been engaged in agriculture and that is why they had vegetable gardens, orchards and vineyards around the city, alongside of pastures. Over the centuries, some of these lands were received through donations or were appropriated with the consent of local administrative bodies (R. Gioglovan, 1957).

It was the people of Târgoviște themselves who attracted the prince's attention by complaining, in 1818-1819, that many foreigners had seized these places and taken more than they needed. Most likely, these accusations were levelled at Greek families, such as Hioții, Dimitrii, Papazoglu (R. Gioglovan, 1957).

Based on the ruler's property right over the cities, Alexandros Soutzos decided to appropriate the estate. The citizens revolted, tolled the church bells and a delegation of 300 people was sent to Bucharest. This large number made the prince fear an uprising in the capital; hence they were stopped just outside of town in exchange for the promise that

a delegation of only 120 would be received by the ruler on 20 October 1820. The complainants claimed that, although the estate was princely, Alexandros Soutzos had no longer the right to remove them from a land they had had in their possession for hundreds of years (R. Gioglovan, 1957).

Coerced by the prince and threatened to be removed from their offices, the Divan boyars signed the confiscation act and the delegates were either imprisoned or fined, finally accepting to put down their signatures.

Alexandros Soutzos' death by poisoning, in January 1821, reignited the movement. The context was favourable to the people of Târgoviște; on 23 January, the uprising of Tudor Vladimirescu broke out and Wallachia was boiling. Taking advantage of the situation, a new delegation of citizens was sent in February to claim back the signatures which had been taken in spite of their will ("ce în silă ni le-au luat") (V.A.Urechia, 1897). They were also bringing two charters from Mater Basarab and Constantin Brâncoveanu. Ignatius Yakovenko, an official of the Russian consulate in Wallachia and a scholar, would emphasise that the charters were indispensable for the reopening of the trial (Gheorghe G. Bezviconi, 1947), which raises the issue of their veracity. They got the annulment of the decision from the widow Eufrosina Soutzos, who, on 18 February 1821, forced by the revolutionary movement in Oltenia, was eager to resolve this conflict.

Tudor Vladimirescu involved in the Târgoviște citizens' movement and urged the Divan to burn the former prince's charter and the boyars' report. Moreover, in order to be able to recruit people from Dâmbovița at the head of the county, the *Paharnic* Drugănescu became *ispavnic*. He provided Vladimirescu with a small army, approximately 1,000 men.

With Russia disavowing both the Eterist movement and the Romanian uprising, Ypsilanti withdrew from Bucharest to Târgoviște in early 1821. We can only assume why he chose Târgoviște. Most likely, he had been informed of the potential of this urban centre, of the fortifications surrounding the city, which meant building a resistance with minimum efforts. Furthermore, he had even told Tudor about his decision to stay fortified in a city in the mountainous parts of Wallachia\*\*\*\*\*. The vicinity to

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Bucharest was another significant reason and he had hopes that, from Târgoviște, he would be able to establish control over the north-east part of the Principality. Regardless of motivation, the long gone political glory seemed to revive in the former capital. All delegations arrived here and it is also from here that dispatches left for Bucharest and other cities. Under the Greek occupation, Târgoviște appeared to be the real capital of Wallachia.

What Alexander Ypsilanti did not take into account was that here he was in conflict with the natives who did not want to replace the Phanariot rule with the Eteria. Therefore, the city population was not at all willing to give him the assistance he was wishing. Târgoviște, controlled by the prince's son, was dreaming, at least declaratively, about its bygone glory, being again the "capital of Dacia" (M. Oproiu, P. Dobrin, 2001).

The Eterists' measures proved inefficient. At Nucet, Ypsilanti was seeking to organise the first centre of resistance, expecting an attack from Bucharest. Supplies were being gathered, but the locals did not agree to this, which showed that Târgoviște was preparing for a long siege, the last of its tumultuous existence.

The French F.G. Laurecon, a teacher of Latin and French in Bucharest, left us a few data about the Eterists' headquarters in Târgoviște. According to him, the city that had been the residence of *Hospodars* before Bucharest was small. The only nice-looking houses in the city were those of Ypsilanti and his adjutants, while Târgoviște was crowded by soldiers dressed in black who were pretending to strengthen the city by digging ditches one could easily leap over or raising two-three badly-made earth ramparts where there was no artillery \*\*\*\*\*. These military measures were confirmed almost a decade later by the Russian General Ivan Petrovič Liprandi, who would write from Bucharest in the year 1830: "*Sosind la începutul lui aprilie, la Târgoviște, eteriștii au încartiruit o mare parte din oamenii lor în acest oraș...De asemenea ei au început să întărească Târgoviștea și au înălțat trei bastioane spre sud, așezate însă fără a se observa vreo regulă de apărare. Șanțul și valul nu aveau nicaieri adâncimea și înălțimea cuvenită, așa încât omul putea sări foarte ușor peste ele..\*\*\*\*\**" ('When the Eterists arrived at Târgoviște in early April, they lodged many of their men in this city... At the same time, they started to reinforce

Târgoviște and built three bastions to the south, placed without any rule of defence. The moat and bulwark did not have the appropriate depth and length, so that a man could easily leap over'). The testimonies confirm the poor work done by Eterists, who did not even try to trench the old ditches of the city, built by Matei Basarab, or to restore some of the former bastions but preferred only to destroy the lead roof of the Metropolitan Church in order to make bullets.

However, they caused major destruction at Târgoviște, robbing the houses and the surrounding villages, despite Ypsilanti's opposition. Even the *ispavnic* Geartoglu, appointed by the Greek commander himself, was often leading the plunderers, given that his house lodged the Eterists' headquarters\*\*\*\*\*.

Tudor Vladimirescu's assassination inside the Metropolitan Church (R. Gioglovan, 1972) was a desecration that weighed heavily on the shoulders of the doers, of Neagoe Basarab's establishment, which never found its peace again, and ultimately on the shoulders of the city of Târgoviște that would not regain its past glory.

Cehaya Bey, just like other Turkish commanders, had had designs on this place that had been a centre of resistance for centuries. His troop, numbering about 2,000 Turks, caused the hasty retreat of Alexander Ypsilanti to Transylvania, crossing the Rucăr pass, and of his commanders Ianache and Farmache to Olt. The city remained defenceless once the Arnauti had come over to the Turks' side.

The disaster of Târgoviște is confirmed by the sources of the age. The townspeople deserted their homes and withdrew to safer places at Viforâta, Gorgota. Everything was left to the Turks. A note dated 24 November 1826 from a homily printed in Bucharest in 1742 details these dreadful moments. It even mentions the Turkish attack on Viforâta Monastery, which sheltered "bajănăriți mulți dăn Târgoviște" (i.e. 'many refugees from Târgoviște') (R. Gioglovan, M. Oproiu, 1975).

The Turkish occupation lasted a month and few were the places that remained undamaged. A *molitvenic* (i.e. an Orthodox ritual book) of 1821 records the casualties of Târgoviște: "*Să se știe de când au venit slugeru Tudor aici la București și au șazut vara jumătate și apoi au venit turcii frunză și iarbă și mulți oameni s-au tăiat în venirea lor...*" (which roughly translates as 'It should be known

that the *sluger* Tudor came from Bucharest and spent half of the summer here; and then a sea of Turks followed and many people were slaughtered at their arrival...') (R. Gioglovan, M. Oproiu, 1975). Ignatius Iakovenko would mention in a letter sent from Braşov, on 29 June 1821, that: "În Târgovişte, pentru cea mai mică bănuială (de a fi găzduit de pildă pe volintirii greci), oameni nevinovaţi au fost spânzuraţi, ucişi altfel şi traşi în țeapă." ('At Târgovişte, on the slightest suspicion – for example, of having sheltered Greek volunteers – innocent people were hanged, killed in some other way or impaled') (G. Bezviconi, 1947).

The Turks' arrival at Târgovişte would mark the last great disaster of the former princely residence which occurred at the transition from one age to another. After this moment, Târgovişte would no longer be able to overcome its status of small urban centre lying in the vicinity of Bucharest. The population growth and certain administrative measures taken starting with the 1830's would improve the situation, but would fail to raise the city to the level of a great urban centre of Wallachia. The ruins of Târgovişte, as evoked by such poets as Vasile Cârlova and Grigore Alexandrescu, or the appeal to history during the age of Prince Gheorghe Bibescu would lighten the turmoil of this capital of Romanian history, incapable of rising out from obscurity. The account of the French Eugene Stanislas Bellanger, a decade after the revolutionary events initiated by the pandour Tudor, is revealing and stands out as a conclusion: "...acest oraş a fost mult timp sediul permanent al puterii...Străzi mari, metezeze înalte şi largi, clădiri mari şi vechi, sumbrul şi impozantul palat domnesc, toate lăsate în voia sorţii, mărturisesc singure despre timpurile de odinioară." ('...for a long time, this city was the permanent seat of power... Large streets, high thick ramparts, big old buildings, the bleak superb princely palace, all left to chance, bear witness to the times of yore').\*\*\*\*\*

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# ANNALES



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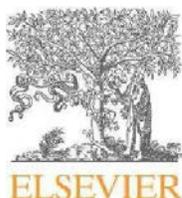
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## Neagoe Săcuianu, un grand dignitaire de Dâmbovița de la deuxième moitié du XVIIe siècle. Repères généalogiques et *cursus honorum*

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**Résumé:** Dans ces quelques pages, nous avons essayé d'esquisser deux aspects importants de la biographie d'un important boyard valaque du XVIIe siècle, originaire du département de Dâmbovița, promu aux fonctions des plus hauts dignitaires par le prince Constantin Serban: sa généalogie et sa carrière politique.

Neagoe Săcuianu a été fidèle au fils illégitime de Radu Serban l'accompagnant dans l'exile, après la perte du trône, probablement jusqu'aux premiers mois de 1664, en Hongrie et en Pologne, allant même jusqu'à Moscou, en tant qu'ambassadeur, ce qui nous permet de supposer qu'il parlait plusieurs langues étrangères. Pour le remercier de ses services, l'ancien prince valaque lui avait fait don du village de Bărbătești en Teleorman, pour la possession duquel le dignitaire entra en conflit direct avec Șerban Cantacuzino, chef du parti des Cantacuzènes. Celui-ci avait revendiqué cette propriété, se considérant autorisé, en raison de ses relations familiales avec Constantin Serban, par sa mère, Elina, épouse du *postelnic* (sénéchal) Constantin Cantacuzino et fille légitime de Radu Serban. Cet aspect a certainement constitué un des facteurs déterminants de la position de Neagoe Săcuianu dans le groupe adverse des boyards, celui des Băleanu–Leurdeanu, mais il n'en était pas le seul, la parenté avec les importantes familles de Băleanu et Bucșanu de Dambovita – dans ce dernier cas, l'alliance entre les deux familles étant obtenue par le mariage de Bălașa, fille unique de Neagoe Săcuianu, arrivée à la maturité – avec le *clucer* (intendant) Badea Bucșanu - ayant également compté.

Non dernièrement, ses qualités personnelles, telles que la constance, la loyauté, la persuasion, la justesse de ses raisonnements, qui lui ont été reconnues par les princes régnants de l'époque, nous le présentent comme un redoutable homme politique, un militaire de grande valeur et un diplomate habile, et expliquent son ascension dans les dignités jusqu'au plus haut niveau, celui de „grand *ban*”.

Enfin, nous sommes maintenant en mesure de mieux comprendre, à la fin de cette étude, pourquoi Neagoe Săcuianu a été préféré par le groupe de boyards au nom duquel avait agi et s'était porté comme candidat au trône, sous le règne d'Antoine de Popești, témérité pour laquelle il avait payé par sa destitution du divan (conseil) princier après le 9 juin 1669, par la privation temporaire de liberté et par la coupure du nez.

**Mots-clés:** Neagoe Săcuianu, grand dignitaire, Dâmbovița, Valachie, XVIIe siècle

Neagoe Săcuianu, boyard de Dambovita, s'est situé dans la première ligne de la politique de la Valachie, pendant plus de 23 ans, entre 1656 et 1679, aussi bien grâce aux grandes dignités qu'il avait occupées que par son engagement personnel dans le conflit ouvert contre la partie adverse des Cantacuzènes, en tant que membre marquant du parti des Băleanu-Leurdeanu, auprès de Gheorghe

Băleanu, Stroe Leurdeanu, Ivașco (II) Băleanu, Hrizea Karydi ou Staico Bucșanu. Son positionnement du côté et à la tête du groupe des boyards Valaques mentionnés ci-dessus allait lui marquer, d'ailleurs, inexorablement, le destin.

**Repères généalogiques.** Sur la lignée paternelle, le grand-père de Neagoe Săcuianu, originaire de Săcuiani, département de Dâmbovița, était „Staico

*postelnic* (sénéchal) de Săcuiani, fils de Staico – sn”, mentionné dans les documents le 22 et le 23 mai 1579\*, le 2 mai 1617\*, le 2 mai 1617\*, mais aussi plus tard, le 26 avril 1646\*\*, lorsqu'il n'était plus en vie depuis longtemps.

Le père du futur grand *ban* (gouverneur) était *logofăt* (le chancelier) Stefan (Stepan), mentionné pour la première fois, à notre connaissance, dans un document du 2 mai 1617, ce qui constitue également la première information que nous ayons sur l'existence de Neagoe. Dans le document, Neagoe et son père Stepan apparaissent en tant que propriétaires terriens dans leur village natal, Săcueni\*\*.

Nous pouvons donc apprécier, conformément au document ci-dessus, que le *ban* Neagoe Săcuianu avait presque le même âge que les principaux dirigeants du groupe des Băleanu – Gheorghe Băleanu et Stroe Leurdeanu – si on admet qu'il était né peu après 1600, ayant vers 80 ans au moment du décès.

L'attestation documentaire de ce boyard serait alors de presque 24 ans plus ancienne que celle consignée par Nicolae Stoicescu (1971) qui indique un document du 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1641, sans en mentionner la source. À ce moment-là, Neagoe Săcuianu apparaissait, pour la première fois, avec le titre de *postelnic* (sénéchal).

La mère de Neagoe, telle qu'elle apparaît peinte dans le portrait votif de l'église de la famille de Săcueni, s'appelait Stana.

À première vue, les parents de Neagoe, le *logofăt* (chancelier) Stefan et Stana semblent avoir été des petits boyards modestes de Săcueni, dans le département de Dambovița. Le fait que le village de Săcueni n'était pas entièrement possédé par sa famille, Neagoe s'efforçant de l'acquérir totalement à l'époque de Radu Leon (1664-1669) et avec encore plus d'insistance, sous le second règne de Grégoire Ghica (1672-1673) pourrait également conduire à cette conclusion. Mais ce n'est pas une certitude, car la puissante famille des Băleanu, également issue de Dâmbovița, ne possédait pas non plus le village de Băleni, dans la première moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle.

Bien que les parents de Neagoe Săcuianu ne semblent pas avoir possédé beaucoup de propriétés, l'origine de ce dignitaire n'est pas du tout modeste, vu qu'un de ses oncles était Mihai de Lazuri. Au contraire, la parenté avec les boyards de Lazuri et,

par conséquent, avec les Băleanu, nous prouve qu'il provenait des vieux boyards du pays.

Neagoe Săcuianu a eu un autre frère, Neagul, avec lequel il est mentionné dans deux documents écrits par lui-même, le 26 avril 1643. En fait, les deux documents ont un contenu presque identique, la seule différence étant que dans l'un d'entre eux Neagul, le frère de Neagoe, apparaît comme vendeur et dans le second, les deux frères sont vendeurs. Les deux frères vendaient alors leur partie de „ocina” (terres héritées) de Săcueni, avec trois „siliște” (parcelles de terre non cultivées) et demie sur l'emplacement du village, des terres dans le champ, des lopins de terre dans la forêt et dans l'eau, pour 8 000 argent comptant\*\*\* confond Neagoe avec son frère, Neagul, car il n'a probablement consulté qu'un des deux documents.

Neagoe avait épousé Zamfira (Sanfira), fille d'Oprea *logofăt* (chancelier) de Săteni\*\*\*. Il semblerait qu'elle était plus riche que son mari. C'est la seule épouse connue du grand *ban* et qui lui a survécu.

La splendide peinture de l'église de Săcueni, que le haut dignitaire a fait „bâti et élever depuis la fondation”\*\*\*\* conserve des détails concernant l'histoire de cette famille, que d'autres sources historiques n'offrent pas, au moins pour le moment. Ainsi, selon le tableau votif, à part Bălașa – la seule enregistrée dans les documents et dont le nom apparaît gravé dans l'église de la famille – le couple a eu encore quatre enfants plus jeunes (l'ordre de la taille représentant généralement l'âge: fille, garçon, garçon, fille), qui sont probablement décédés en bas âge et c'est pourquoi les documents n'ont pas enregistré, malheureusement, leurs noms. En plus, les inscriptions à leur droite, sur le mur sud de la nef, sont effacées depuis longtemps (I. Mihail, 1926; C. Petrescu-Dragoe, 1926).

Comme Neagoe Săcuianu apparaît dans l'inscription du tableau votif de l'église Săcueni comme „*biv vel vornic*” (ancien grand gouverneur), et sachant qu'il est consigné dans les documents en qualité de grand „*vornic*” (gouverneur), initialement, entre 22 avril et 9 juin 1669 (N. Stoicescu, 1971; I. Ionașcu, 1966), qui croit, à juste titre, que Neagoe Săcuianu a été nommé „probablement même depuis le 10/20 avril”, quand „on a accordé des dignités aux boyards chacun à son tour”(R. Popescu, 1963), il n'est pas exclu que la peinture de l'église, commencée probablement en

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1667 (I. Mihail, 1926; M. Oproiu, E. Samoilă, 2009), eut été achevée au cours de la première année du règne d'Antonie Vodă de Popești, après la destitution du boyard de Dambovita (I. Ionașcu, 1966).

En tout cas, ces quatre frères de Bălașa étaient décédés entre 1669 et le 30 juillet 1673, la date finale de l'intervalle représentant le moment où le grand *vornic* (gouverneur) faisait son testament à Hotin, dans le camp des Valaques – dirigés par Gregoire Ghica – participants à la campagne des Ottomans contre les Polonais, dont le commandant était Jan Sobieski. Dans ce document\*\*\*, on ne mentionne aucun autre enfant du *vornic* (gouverneur), à l'exception de Bălașa, ce qui nous permet d'affirmer avec certitude que, le 30 juillet 1673, les quatre frères plus jeunes n'étaient plus en vie.

Le dernier acte connu par nous, écrit et signé par Neagoe Săcuianu, est le document du 12 février 1680, par lequel l'ancien grand *ban* donnait à Bălașa et à son mari, le *clucer* (l'intendant) Badea Bucșanu, le village de Stănești, contre une dette de 280 thalers, que ceux-ci avaient payée en son nom\*\*\*\*. En moins de deux mois après la signature de ce document, le 6 avril 1680, il allait quitter ce monde (Quellen zur geschichte von Brasó, 1903). Sa fille, Bălașa et son épouse, Zamfira, lui ont survécu; la dernière, probablement jusqu'à la fin de 1690 – le début de 1691, et l'autre, bien plus encore. On peut déduire que Zamfira était morte au cours de cette période, du contenu de l'acte du 8 mars 1691, quand, selon la volonté testamentaire de ban Neagoe, Bălașa – et non pas sa mère – consacre au métropolitain Théodose et à la Métropolie de Târgoviște „le village Săcuianii du sud de Dâmbovița, qui était le fief de mes parents (expression qui montre sans aucun doute qu'ils étaient décédés tous les deux – n.n.), partout, tant qu'il y aura, d'un bout à l'autre, avec les maisons et l'église ainsi que le domaine de Cetățea, et avec d'autres domaines, tant qu'il y aura, qu'ils soient tous propriétés de la sainte métropolie: y compris les tziganes, et vignobles et tout ce qui resterait après nous”\*\*\*\*.

Balașa, à laquelle nous avons dédié une étude séparée à une autre occasion, a été mariée avec Badea Bucșanu, deuxième *clucer* (intendant); elle n'a pas eu d'enfants et a été enterrée, après le 28 juillet 1708, tout comme ses parents, dans l'église de Săcueni, qu'elle avait consacrée à l'église

métropolitaine de Târgoviște (M. Păduraru, 2013), par le testament fait le 12 juin 1708.

**L'ascension politique de Neagoe Săcuianu.** Sans avoir eu une ascendance brillante, comme d'autres membres de la faction dont il a partagé le destin, comme Gheorghe Băleanu ou Stroe Leurdeanu, par exemple, Neagoe Săcuianu a connu pourtant un *cursus honorum* (parcours d'honneurs) remarquable, grâce aux bonnes relations qu'il avait avec Constantin Serban, prince qui l'a propulsé à la dignité de grand *postelnic* (sénéchal, maréchal de la cour) (1656). Par la suite, il accédera aux dignités de grand *clucer* (intendant) (1665-1666, 1668-1669) et grand *vornic* (gouverneur) (1669, 1672-1673), sa carrière politique culminant avec la dignité de grand *ban* (1678-1679) (N. Stoicescu, 1971). Très probablement, en 1669, pendant le règne du prince Antonie (Antoine) de Popești, il a été candidat au règne de la part du parti des Băleanu, ce qui expliquerait pourquoi ce prince, instigué bien sûr par les Cantacuzènes, avait ordonné qu'on lui coupe le nez (R. Popescu, 1963).

La carrière politique de ce dignitaire débute par le titre de *postelnic* (sénéchal); on ne peut préciser s'il doit ce titre au droit des fils de boyards par naissance ou si celui-ci représente une dignité, consignée le 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1641 (N. Stoicescu, 1971), et continue avec celui de *logofăt* (chancelier) à la chancellerie princière (1643 avril 26 – 1654 déc. 10)\*\*\*\*\* (N. Stoicescu, 1971), qualité dans laquelle il avait comme principale responsabilité la rédaction des documents, dont certains se sont conservés jusqu'à nos jours.

Chronologiquement, les deux premiers actes dans lesquels nous avons retrouvé le nom de Neagoe Săcuianu, écrites, d'ailleurs, par lui-même, l'un d'entre eux étant aussi signé par lui-même, portent la même date: le 26 avril 1643. Nous en apprenons que Neagoe avait un frère, peut-être son aîné, appelé Neagu (Neagul), qui signe sans avoir une dignité bien précisée. Cependant, il n'est pas exclu qu'il ait eu, lui aussi, un petit titre nobiliaire, Neagoe signant lui-même sans mentionner la qualité de *logofăt* (chancelier), qu'il avait certainement à l'époque, vu qu'il le rappelle à la fin de ces deux actes: „Et j'ai écrit moi-même, Neagoe Stepanovici *logofăt* (chancelier) de Săcuiani”\*\*\*\*. Le premier acte était également connu par N. Stoicescu, mais il confond Neagoe avec son frère, Neagu (N. Stoicescu, 1971). Selon le texte du premier document auquel nous avons fait référence, Neagu, le petit fils de Staico

*postelnic* (sénéchal) de Săcueni, avait vendu à Stancu *postelnic* (sénéchal) de la même localité et à son oncle, Mihai (Michel) de Lazuri, sa part de la hoirie de Săcueni, avec trois „*siliști*” (parcelles de terre non cultivé) et demie sur l’emplacement du village, les terres dans le champ, „*funii*” (des lopins de terre) dans la forêt et dans l’eau, avec 8 000 „argent comptant”\*\*\*\*.

Le deuxième acte est, en fait, une reprise du texte du premier, à la différence que cette fois-ci, les deux frères, Neagu et Neagoe, ont vendu à Stancu *postelnic* (sénéchal) de Săcueni et à leur oncle Mihai (Michel) de Lazuri, leur partie de la *hoirie* de Săcueni, „avec 3 <<*siliști*>> (parcelles de terre non cultivé) et demie sur l’emplacement du village” pour 8 000 „argent comptant”\*\*\*\*. Nous retenons de ce document du début de la carrière de Neagoe Săcuianu, le seul témoignage écrit qui montre que le futur grand dignitaire vendait un domaine à Săcueni. Tous les autres documents concernant Săcueni le présentent en permanence uniquement en tant qu’acheteur des propriétés, ce qui indique l’augmentation de son pouvoir financier, suite également à son ascension politique, évidemment.

L’année suivante, le 9 février, il écrivait le texte de l’acte par lequel Sima *cămăraș* (chambellan) et sa dame, Maria, fille du *logofăt* (chancelier) Coadă, fils du prêtre Stanciul Drăncescul de Târgoviște, vendaient à Radu, petit fils de Nifon de Targoviste, vignobles et verger sur la colline de Târgoviște pour 15.000 argent comptant, notant à la fin: „Écrit par Neagoe Stepanovici *logofăt* (chancelier) de Săcoiani”\*\*\*\*\*.

Après une pause de sept ans au cours de laquelle les documents qui le concernent manquent complètement, le 24 décembre 1651, il écrit un nouvel acte par lequel „Pătrașco *peharnic* (échanson), fils de Pătrașco *postelnic* (sénéchal) de Bocșani” – nul autre que Pătrașco Bucșanu (Urziceanu), le frère de son futur gendre, Badea Bucșanu – achetait „une partie du domaine d’Urziceni, dénommée Bârsești au sud de Ialomița”. L’acte, dans lequel Neagoe signe également à titre de témoin, se termine par la formule: „I napisah az (Și am scris eu – n.n. écrit par moi-même), Neagoe *logofăt* (chancelier) de Săcoiani”\*\*\*\*\*.

Plus tard, le 31 mars 1652, il participe, avec 23 autres boyards, à la délimitation d’une propriété foncière, signant „Neagul, *logofăt* (chancelier) de Săcoiani”\*\*\*\*\*. La même année, le 20 décembre, son nom figure dans l’acte par lequel Draghici le

porte-drapeau et ses frères, Neculcea et Ianiu, vendaient à Vlad *stolnic* (écuyer du prince) de Săteni un vignoble situé sur la colline de Săteni, où il possédait également une propriété pareille, provenant probablement de la dot de sa femme, Zamfira, car il est mentionné entre les voisins „d’en-dessus et d’en-dessous”\*\*\*\*\*.

Le 10 mars 1653, il signe l’acte par lequel Radu, fils du prêtre Atanasie *clisiar* (sacristain), de Târgoviște, avec son frère, Dima, copiste, vendaient au grand *cămăraș* (chambellan) Udriște, leurs vignobles de Bărbătești, pour 333 ughi (monnaies d’or hongroises) \*\*\*\*\*. L’année suivante, il a la même qualité de *logofăt* (chancelier), et son nom est rencontré toujours une seule fois, le 10 décembre, lorsqu’il acquiert le domaine du même Udriște, désormais appelé „ancien *cămăraș* (chambellan)” \*\*\*\*\*.

En 1655, probablement sur le fond des événements déclenchés par la révolte des mercenaires (*revolta slujitorilor*), il arrive dans l’entourage de Constantin Șerban, qu’il connaissait depuis l’époque où le prince était un simple boyard, signant pour la première fois, le 15 juillet 1655, comme témoin, toujours en tant que *logofăt* (chancelier), probablement à la trésorerie, parmi les „boyards du *divan* (conseil), grands et petits”, dans l’acte par lequel l’ancien *agha* (préfet de police) Vasile Poenaru, qui avait commis „une grave faute” à l’égard du prince, vendait au grand trésorier Pârveu Vlădescu sa partie du village. de Muscel, Boteni\*\*\*\*\*.

Il est mentionné en qualité certaine de *logofăt* (*chancelier de trésorerie*) le 11 août 1655, lorsqu’il achète une part du domaine de Cucuieți appartenant à Badea capitaine de Ruși\*\*\*\*\*.

**Grand postelnic** (*grand sénéchal, maréchal de la cour*). Selon Nicolae Stoicescu (1971), Neagoe Săcuianu a exercé initialement cette dignité entre le 11 août 1656 et le 4 avril 1658, étant propulsé dans la catégorie des hauts fonctionnaires par Constantin Șerban, dont il était l’homme de confiance. Neagoe a conservé, certainement, ce titre jusqu’à la fin du règne de Constantin Șerban, étant succédé par Iordache Pârșoveanu Trufanda, mentionné comme *mare postelnic* (grand sénéchal, maréchal de la cour) dans le premier *divan* (conseil) connu de Mihnea III Radu, du 22 avril 1658 (L. Lehr, 1973).

Mihnea III Radu le reconfirme dans la dignité de grand chambellan, après le passage dans cette

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dignité de grande confiance d'autres trois grands boyards: Istrate Leurdeanu, Alexandre Alexeanu et Danciu Pârâianu. Le premier et seul acte interne connu dans lequel il figure parmi les membres du divan (conseil) avec cette dignité est l'acte du 30 août 1659, par lequel le Prince réaffirmait à Sima, *cămăraș* (chambellan) de Bărbătești, la possession des propriétés à Târgoviște (G.-M. Răfăilă, 2009). Nous ne pouvons pas préciser, d'après les documents connus jusqu'à présent, s'il avait accompagné Constantin Șerban en exil, entre Avril 1658 – Août 1659, ou s'il avait été, tout simplement, éloigné par Radu III Mihnea, celui-ci le considérant fidèle au fils de Radu Șerban. Sa nomination en tant que *mare postelnic* (grand sénéchal, maréchal de la cour) par Mihnea III Radu a eu lieu après l'assassinat de Danciu Pârâianu (Juillet 1659) cela représentant, probablement, une garantie de l'amélioration des relations avec Constantin Șerban, qui allait bientôt reconnaître à Mihnea, par le traité signé avec le prince de la Transylvanie (Bran, le 2 octobre 1659), la renonciation à ses prétentions sur la Valachie, en échange d'une aide militaire pour l'obtention du trône de la Moldavie.

En tout cas, Neagoe avait conservé sa dignité de *mare postelnic* (grand sénéchal, maréchal de la cour), y compris le 15 octobre 1659, lorsqu'il se trouvait à Rucăr, avec Radu Mihnea et d'autres grands boyards, signant dans l'acte de confédération adressé au prince Rákóczy (A. Veress, 1938). Il est probable que l'exile de Neagoe, à côté de Constantin Șerban, ait eu lieu dans l'intervalle mai 1660 (lorsque Constantin Șerban réoccupe temporairement la Valachie) et le printemps de 1664. Quoi qu'il en fût, le dignitaire de Dâmbovița rentre dans le pays pendant la dernière année du premier règne de Grigore Ghica, lorsque les documents le mentionnent, en tant qu'ancien *mare postelnic* (grand sénéchal, maréchal de la cour) et *postelnic* (sénéchal), entre 26 avril - 7 septembre 1664. Bien qu'il ne lui accorde aucune dignité, ce prince reconferme pourtant son droit de possession sur le domaine de Cucuiași, du département de Teleorman, le 7 septembre 1664\*\*\*\*\* et permet, le même jour, au métropolitain Stefan d'informer les villageois de Bărbătești et de Blotori, du même département, qu'ils se trouvent sous l'autorité du *postelnic* (sénéchal) Neagoe Săcuianu auquel ils doivent de l'obéissance\*\*\*\*\*.

Il entretient de bonnes relations avec Radu Leon, qui, au début de son règne, lui accorde le titre

de *mare clucer* (grand intendant/grand sommelier) 30 janvier 1665 (G.-M. Răfăilă, 2010) – 20 septembre 1666 (N. Stoicescu, 1971), mais qui va le marginaliser à un moment donné, sous la pression des Cantacuzènes, de sorte qu'il est donc démis de sa dignité, signant, le 22 avril 1667, comme ancien *mare clucer* (grand sommelier). Il reprendra sa fonction de *mare clucer* (grand sommelier) après la confirmation du règne du prince (31 janvier 1668 – 24 février 1669) (N. Stoicescu, 1971).

Sans oublier qu'il devait son accès au trône à la faction des Băleanu aussi, le prince Antonie de Popești demande aux deux groupes adverses de se réconcilier, le dimanche de Pâques (11 avril 1669), à la sortie de l'église, obligeant tous les boyards de lui jurer la fidélité et la cessation de toute hostilité entre eux. Dans ces circonstances, Neagoe Săcuianu dévient grand *vornic* (gouverneur) (22 avril – 9 juin 1669) (N. Stoicescu, 1971). Cependant, sous l'influence et à la pression des Cantacuzènes, le vieux prince a dû accepter le jugement de Stroe Leurdeanu devant le divan (conseil).

Après l'élimination temporaire de Stroe Leurdeanu de la vie politique (son procès du 18 juin 1669 étant suivi par l'obligation de l'inculpé de se retirer comme moine dans le monastère de Snagov), Neagoe Săcuianu tombe lui-aussi en disgrâce, victime de ses ennemis: „Pendant ce temps-là, on avait aussi enfermé Neagoe *postelnic* (sénéchal) Săcuianul et on a lui avait fait couper le nez; pour quelle raison, nous ne le savons pas, ses délateurs pourraient connaître le pourquoi et le comment”(R. Popescu, 1963) , comme le dit Radu Popescu, lui aussi membre de la faction des Băleanu, affirmation qui indique clairement qu'il savait très bien de quoi il s'agissait.

Vers la fin du règne du prince Antoine de Popești, en 1671, avant le départ du prince vers Andrinople afin de renouveler son règne, „Neagoe Săcuianu, avec le nez coupé et d'autres se sont enfuis du pays. Ils sont allés à la Sublime Porte et, se tenant auprès de Panaiotache, ils ont porté plainte” (R. Popescu, 1963). Par le même Panaiotache, la Sublime Porte avait pardonné à Grigore Ghica, arrivé à ce moment-là à Tarigrad, après son exile vénitien; à la suite de ces événements, Grégoire Ghica le reconferme, lors de son second règne, dans la dignité de grand *vornic* (gouverneur) (16 mars 1672 - août 1673) et apprécie ses qualités en lui remettant, le 30 janvier 1673, un

document dans lequel il s'adressait avec la formule „au fidèle boyard de mon règne”\*\*\*.

En tant que **grand vornic** (gouverneur) il va avec le prince à Hotin, où il écrit son premier testament, le 30 juillet 1673, en faveur de son épouse Samfira et de sa fille, Bălașa, avec l'obligation de celles-ci de faire élever l'église de Cetățea et d'entretenir l'église que sa famille avait fait construire à Săcueni”\*\*\*.

Après la défaite de Hotin, en décembre 1673, Grégoire Ghica est remplacé par Gheorghe Duca. À peine rentré dans le pays, où son parti détenait les rênes du pouvoir, à la confirmation de la nouvelle de l'arrivée de Gheorghe Duca en tant que prince régnant de la Valachie, Neagoe Săcuianu et d'autres membres du parti des Băleanu, Gheorghe Băleanu, Stroe Leurdeanu, Ivașco *logofăt* (chancelier), Hrizea Karydi, Ilie *armaș* (responsable des prisons), Pârvu Fărăcășanu, Hrisoscul *vătaf* (chargé de la surveillance), auxquels s'ajoute une partie des boyards de Mehedinti, passent en Transylvanie, à Sibiu (R. Popescu, 1963).

Il reste prudemment plus longtemps en Transylvanie, bien que le nouveau prince régnant lui demande, à lui et aux autres boyards, de rentrer, garantissant pour leur vie et même bien plus: le réinvestissement dans leurs dignités. Nous n'avons trouvé aucun document prouvant qu'il soit rentré au pays en même temps que le *ban* Gheorghe Băleanu, en 1674 après le 1<sup>er</sup> septembre et avant le 1<sup>er</sup> décembre\*\*\*, ou à la fin du 1675 – le début du 1676. La mention de son nom dans les documents, entre le 17 janvier 1676 – 9 juin 1677, en tant qu'ancien *mare vornic* (grand gouverneur) et *vornic* (gouverneur), plaiderait plutôt pour la dernière variante (N. Stoicescu, 1971).

A l'approche de son départ pour Cehrin, Neagoe Săcuianu, déterminé par les nouvelles réalités, dresse encore une fois son testament (25 juin 1677), cette fois-ci, spécifiant qu'il n'avait pas eu le temps nécessaire pour élever l'église de Cetățea, il demande à sa fille, Bălașa, qu'il soit enterré dans son église de Săcueni, Dambovită, qui devait être consacrée à l'église métropolitaine de Târgoviște\*\*\*.

Les relations entre Duca et les Cantacuzènes se détériorant, Neagoe Săcuianu va acquérir la dignité de grand *ban* (boyard du plus haut rang en Valachie) (3 janvier 1678 - 11 décembre 1679) (N. Stoicescu, 1971, G. Potra, 1961), ce qui représente le point culminant de sa carrière politique. À ce titre, il

accompagne Gheorghe Duca en Ukraine, dans la campagne pour la conquête de la forteresse cosaque de Cehrin (15 août 1678).

Fidèle et reconnaissant à Gheorghe Duca, il fait partie de la délégation envoyée à Andrinople, l'automne de 1678, pour empêcher la nomination de Serban Cantacuzino comme prince régnant (R. Popescu, 1963 ; Istoria Țării Românești, 1960). Bénéficiant de l'appui du grand vizir Kara-Mustafa pacha, Serban gagne le trône, par conséquent Neagoe Săcuianu doit accepter la situation, étant toujours maintenu comme grand *ban* (25 déc. 1678 – ante le 11 déc.1679) \*\*\*\*\*, daté, suite à une erreur de calcul, le 25 avril 1679, au lieu du 25 avril 1680, quand Radu Năsturel était, effectivement, grand *ban*).

Neagoe Săcuianu est destitué de ses fonctions, sur un fond de persécutions contre les anciens opposants politiques des Cantacuzènes, avant le 11 décembre 1679, date à laquelle Radu Năsturel est mentionné dans le divan (conseil) comme grand *ban* (G. Potra, 1961).

Pendant la dernière année de sa vie, 1680, il apparaît comme ancien grand *ban* (11 janvier – 12 février) (N. Stoicescu, 1971). Il est mort, comme nous l'avons indiqué, le 6 avril 1680, la date de son décès étant connue à Sibiu, trois jours plus tard (Quellen zur geschichte von Brasó, 1903).

Sa mort naturelle lui avait épargné une exécution humiliante que l'impitoyable prince Serban Cantacuzino lui préparait, probablement, comme il l'avait fait pour d'autres nombreux membres du groupe qui avaient été ses ennemis lorsqu'il était un simple boyard.

**Conclusions.** Dans ces quelques pages, nous avons essayé d'esquisser deux aspects importants de la biographie d'un important boyard valaque du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, originaire du département de Dâmbovița, promu aux fonctions des plus hauts dignitaires par le prince Constantin Serban: sa généalogie et sa carrière politique.

Neagoe Săcuianu a été fidèle au fils illégitime de Radu Serban l'accompagnant dans l'exile, après la perte du trône, probablement jusqu'aux premiers mois de 1664, en Hongrie et en Pologne, allant même jusqu'à Moscou, en tant qu'ambassadeur, ce qui nous permet de supposer qu'il parlait plusieurs langues étrangères. Pour le remercier de ses services, l'ancien prince valaque lui avait fait don du village de Bărbătești en Teleorman, pour la possession duquel le dignitaire entra en conflit

**Neogoe Săcuianu, un grand dignitaire de Dâmbovița de la deuxième moitié du XVIIe siècle.  
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direct avec Șerban Cantacuzino, chef du parti des Cantacuzènes. Celui-ci avait revendiqué cette propriété, se considérant autorisé, en raison de ses relations familiales avec Constantin Serban, par sa mère, Elina, épouse du *postelnic* (sénéchal) Constantin Cantacuzino et fille légitime de Radu Serban. Cet aspect a certainement constitué un des facteurs déterminants de la position de Neogoe Săcuianu dans le groupe adverse des boyards, celui des Băleanu–Leurdeanu, mais il n'en était pas le seul, la parenté avec les importantes familles de Băleanu et Bucșanu de Dambovița – dans ce dernier cas, l'alliance entre les deux familles étant obtenue par le mariage de Bălașa, fille unique de Neogoe Săcuianu, arrivée à la maturité – avec le *clucer* (intendant) Badea Bucșanu - ayant également compté.

Non dernièrement, ses qualités personnelles, telles que la constance, la loyauté, la persuasion, la justesse de ses raisonnements, qui lui ont été reconnues par les princes régnants de l'époque, nous le présentent comme un redoutable homme politique, un militaire de grande valeur et un diplomate habile, et expliquent son ascension dans les dignités jusqu'au plus haut niveau, celui de „grand ban”.

Enfin, nous sommes maintenant en mesure de mieux comprendre, à la fin de cette étude, pourquoi Neogoe Săcuianu a été préféré par le groupe de boyards au nom duquel avait agi et s'était porté comme candidat au trône, sous le règne d'Antoine de Popești, témérité pour laquelle il avait payé par sa destitution du divan (conseil) princier après le 9 juin 1669, par la privation temporaire de liberté et par la coupure du nez.

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# ANNALES



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## Merchants and craftsmen in Târgoviște (16th-17th centuries)

*Claudiu Neagoie\**

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**Abstract:** *Enjoying a special attention from Wallachian princes, Târgoviște became a prosperous trade fair during the first decades of the 15th century. A century later, during 1532-1534, an Italian traveller, Francesco della Valle of Padua, noted that Târgoviște had really raised a town profile. A few years later, another traveller, Anton Veranciscs would point out that, at that time, Târgoviște was the most important town in Wallachia, the more so as the princes of the country had their main residence there. If around 1581 the town counted 1022 homes and about 5000 inhabitants, by the mid of the 17th century it reached about 4000 houses and 20000 inhabitants. In the first half of the 16th century, the town of Târgoviște gained a growing economic and commercial importance, which will be highlighted in the present study.*

**Key-words:** *Wallachia, Târgoviște, merchants, craftsmen, guilds.*

In the first half of the 16th century, Târgoviște town was described by the ragusan Felix Petančić as "the Wallachians' capital" (*Metropolis Valachorum*) and the main residence of the Walachian princes\*. The town did not bear any resemblance to a Western city, as it did not have a fortified enclosure. Apparently, the townspeople did not have the economic and political power to get involved in building fortified walls (L. Rădvan, 2004, p. 313).

However, the residence of the Wallachian prince in Târgoviște was inaccessible "through ditches, walls and ramparts reinforced on the outside with pointed props", being placed "among marshes that close it with muddy forests and ponds"\*. From Francesco della Valle' accounts, the Princely Court of Târgoviște had been surrounded by "very thick oak props"\* since the reign of Vlad Înecatul (1530-1532).

A century later, prince Matei Basarab (1632-1654) would surround the Princely Court with a "stone wall"\*\*\* and the town with a "wooden enclosure and an earth ditch"\*\*. Unfortunately, in 1660, on the orders of the Ottoman sultan Mehmed IV, prince Gheorghe Ghica had to destroy the walls of the Princely Court from Târgoviște and move his residence to Bucharest\*\*\*.

As we learn from the travel reports of the Englishman Edmund Chisull, it was not until the end of the seventeenth century that the Ottomans allowed Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) to rebuild the residence of Târgoviște, "provided he did not build ramparts"\*\*\*\*.

Târgoviște had a "linear" evolution: there was a main street (*Ulița Mare*) and a large square with the church and the Princely Court as its main buildings. The centre of the urban settlement also played an economic, commercial, political and social role (T. O. Gheorghiu, R. Radoslav, 1993, p. 154-172). On his arrival in Târgoviște, February 1584, the Italian Franco Sivori, the secretary of Prince Petru Cercel (1583-1585), would record that the town had "much better and more beautiful homes" and a "more beautiful and pleasant settlement"\*\*\*\*\* compared to Bucharest.

Having intended to move his residence from Bucharest to Târgoviște, the prince ordered the works of extending and embellishing the palace\*\*\*\*\*. Following the prince's example, the great dignitaries of the country and rich merchants left Bucharest and settled in Târgoviște\*\*\*\*\*. Very soon, the town

would become the most important urban and demographic centre of Wallachia.

With the second reign of Prince Mihnea II (1585-1591), the official residence of Wallachia was resettled in Bucharest, and thus recovered the demographic disadvantage in only ten years (1585-1595), due to the growing number of "foreign" Christians, Jews and Turks coming from the south of the Danube (C. Neagoe, 2006, p. 215-217; 2013, p. 128; 2014, p. 28).

In the 17th century, Târgoviște continued to be a large and important urban centre of Wallachia, and in the period 1623-1655 it numbered over 20.000 inhabitants, although some specialists mentioned 40.000 inhabitants (G. Mihăescu, E. Fruchter, 1977, p. 190).

In the middle of the same century, three events marked the decline of Târgoviște in terms of demography, economics and politics: the revolt of the most important military troops, the trabants and seymens, during 1653-1656 (C. Neagoe, 2017, p. 135-188), the Ottoman and Tartar invasion of Wallachia in 1658 (V. Cădea, 1970, p. 692), and the anti-Ottoman revolt of Prince Radu-Mihnea III in 1659\*\*\*\*\*.

Since the beginning of the 16th century, Târgoviște was directly involved in trade with Brașov city, from Transylvania. According to the customs records in 1503, Târgoviște was ranked third (R. Manolescu, 1957, p. 185), after Câmpulung and Târgșor regarding the importance of trade with Brașov City (Kronstadt). In 1503, 39 merchants from Târgoviște were active in the market in Brașov, out of which 7 large and 32 little and medium ones, who made a total of 70 transports (export, import and transport of goods) worth 511.311 Turkish silver coins (*akçe, aspri*) (R. Manolescu, 1957, p. 196, Appendix 1 & p. 197, Appendix 2).

The customs records of Brașov in the first half of the 16th century were followed by 12 merchants from Târgoviște in 1530, 35 merchants in 1542 and 59 merchants in 1545 (R. Manolescu, 1957, p. 201, Appendix 5). Most of them brought cattle, wax and fish to Brașov and returned to Târgoviște with fine cloths, footwear, weapons and various tools (L. Rădvan, 2004, p. 491).

The merchants of Târgoviște were also actively involved in the trade with another big city in Transylvania, Sibiu (Hermannstadt). According to the research carried out by Mária Pakucs-Willcocs, Sibiu customs recorded the names of several merchants from Târgoviște during 1540-1597: Mihail, Ivan, Ghergie/Gherghina, Ghinea, Proca and Ioan (1540-1541), Sima and Ștefan (1542), Stanciu and Mihai

(1547), Tudor and Andrei (1550), Gheorghe (1578-1579), Radu, Bucur and Stanciu (1594), Harta and Dumitru (1597) (M. Pakucs-Willcocs, 2007, p. 22, 25, 28-29, 32, 34, 36-40, 75, 109, 112, 115, 117-118, 130, 158-159, 163-164; 2009, p. 22, Table 3).

As far as the craftsmen of Târgoviște are concerned, they began to be mentioned in the fourth decade of the 16th century: in 1534, Hans, the Transylvanian saxon was mentioned (N. Iorga, 1926, doc. n° 1, p. 1). In the second half of the sixteenth century, there were mentioned Necula the painter (1571)\*\*\*\*\*, Andrei the locksmith, Iane the furrier (1585)\*\*\*\*\* and Mina the painter (1597)\*\*\*\*\*.

The intensification of commercial life produced important changes in the economic and social structure of Târgoviște town (C. Șerban, 1964, p. 31) with the emergence of a known permanent market in the second half of the 16th century under the Turkish name of "bazaar" (*pazar*) (L. Șăineanu, vol. II, 1900, p. 287).

From the Italian Franco Sivori we learn that during the reign of Petru Cercel (1583-1585), the commercial activities in *Târgoviște* were the exclusive privilege of the Ragusans, Jewish, Greek and Turkish merchants\*. Towards the end of the 16th century, the number of these foreign merchants increased significantly (C. Neagoe, 2006, 2014). However, during the reign of Mihai Viteazul (1593-1601), their number diminished sharply as a result of the anti-Ottoman revolt initiated by this prince in the autumn of 1594, in collaboration with Báthory Zsigmond, the prince of Transylvania, and Aron the Tyrant, the prince of Moldavia.

The foreign merchants would reappear in Târgoviște starting with the second and third decades of the 17th century (C. Neagoe, 2012, p. 437-445). For example, as early as 1624, the merchant Ghinea Mustachi was mentioned in Târgoviște (C. Neagoe, 2012, p. 443). On April 20, 1628, the Greek merchant Iannis Papichi\*\*\*\*\* was mentioned in Târgoviște, and on 18 July, the same year, the Greek merchant Isar\*\*\*\*\*.

From an official document issued in Prince Leon Tomșa's office on July 27, 1630, we found out that grains and cattle were mainly sold in the "bazaar" of Târgoviște\*\*\*\*\*.

In the same year, some internal documents confirmed the presence of the Greek merchants Stanciul Pustiul, Apostolos and Ghioca (C. Neagoe, 2012, p. 447). A foreign traveler, Petru Bogdan Bakšić recorded the existence of 2 inns and 50 stalls in Târgoviște in 1640\*\*\*\*\*. The internal

**Merchants and craftsmen in Târgoviște  
(16th-17th centuries)**

documents from the time of Prince Matei Basarab (*cupeți*) and 12 craftsmen: (1632-1654) confirmed the names of 47 merchants

**List of merchants and craftsmen in Târgoviște  
during 1639-1654**

Year	Names of merchants	Names of craftsmen
1639	Nica, Ghiorma	-
1640	Isar cel Bătrân, Iane, Panait	-
1643	Simie, Ianachi, Pahonie	-
1644	Dima, Defta, Constantin <i>chiurcibașa</i>	-
1645	Ghinea, Anghel, Gheorghe, Tatul, Ghinea, Parasco, Nica, Ghiorma, Chera, Pano Pepano, Dima Muztachi	-
1646	Radu, Iane	Tănasie - shoemaker
1647	Manta, Iane	-
1649	Stoica	Ghinea – furrier, Oprea, Șerban, Nan & Șerbu - carpenters
1650	Ștefu, Ștefan, Iane, Tudor, Sima, Neagul, Marco, Stan	Stanciu - shoemaker
1651	Andrei, Ghioca, Ghinea	-
1652	Pano Palimaris and his son Zotis, Mano, Dumitru, Cârstea, Vasilie	-
1653	Mihai, Dima	Dumitru and Petriman - furriers, Limber - saddler, Drăghia - barber
1654	-	Iorga, Costea, Pană – furriers, Iane - painter,

Sources: George Potra, 1972, doc. n° 342, p. 201-202, doc. n° 447, p. 287; *CDȚR*, vol. V (1640-1644), doc. n° 15, p. 30, doc. n° 18, p. 31, doc. n° 78, p. 51, doc. n° 80, p. 52, doc. n° 1070, p. 453; *DRH*, B, vol. XXX (1645), doc. n° 23, p. 27, doc. n° 24, p. 29, doc. n° 26, p. 31, doc. n° 33, p. 43, doc. n° 173, p. 213, doc. n° 236, p. 285, doc. n° 298, p. 336, doc. n° 347, p. 380; *DRH*, B, vol. XXXI (1646), doc. n° 28, p. 19; doc. n° 221, p. 248; *DRH*, B, vol. XXXII (1647), doc. n° 117, p. 126; *DRH*, B, vol. XXXIV (1649), doc. n° 127, p. 116, doc. n° 196, p. 171-172; *DRH*, B, vol. XXXV (1650), doc. n° 79, p. 99, doc. n° 143, p. 167, doc. n° 187, p. 211, doc. n° 191, p. 217, doc. n° 323, p. 342; *DRH*, B, vol. XXXVI (1651), doc. n° 16, p. 14, doc. n° 60, p. 62; *DRH*, B, vol. XXXVII (1652), doc. n° 70, p. 62, doc. n° 129, p. 106, doc. n° 302, p. 275; *DRH*, B, vol. XXXVIII (1653), doc. n° 53, p. 65, doc. n° 55, p. 70, doc. n° 175, p. 187, doc. n° 184, p. 193; *DRH*, B, vol. XXXIX (1654), doc. n° 225, p. 273, doc. n° 292, p. 352.

In the early years of the 17th century, the tailors from Târgoviște had organized a guild, documented in 1605, when "Radu the head of tailors" was mentioned\*\*\*\*\*. In the second half of the 17th century, the merchants constituted a guild, led by a "guildmaster". Tudor Chircea was the first guildmaster attested on 16 May 1675\*\*\*\*\*.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the saddlers formed a professional association on February 20, 1705 headed by "Preda" (G.-M. Rafailă, 2008, doc. n° 305, p. 322). Several years later, on 16 February 1713, the butchers also formed a guild, led by Ion the head of the butchers\*\*\*\*\*.

The guild was an association or a socio-professional corporation set up to help its members, to

obtain raw materials, regulate production, and to solve conflicts between guild members and competition from foreigners.

Following the events in the sixth decade of the 17th century (revolt of the trabants and seymens between 1653-1656, the Turkish-Tatar invasion in 1658-1659), Târgoviște began to experience a slow but obvious regress, especially in political terms (M.

Oproiu, 1999, p. 97-99), despite the efforts of the prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) to support the town in all its aspects (M. Georgescu, 1969, p. 162-164). However, the town will continue to be considered one of the greatest and most important Wallachian centres, following Bucharest. 14 merchants and 40 craftsmen were mentioned in Târgoviște during 1660-1714.

**List of merchants and craftsmen in Târgoviște during 1660-1714**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Names of merchants</b>	<b>Names of craftsmen</b>
1660	Fota	-
1661	Radu	-
1662	Ghiță	-
1665	-	Defda - tailor
1666	Iorga, Măinea	-
1668	-	Andrei, Cârstea - tailors
1675	-	Stamate – shoemaker ( <i>cavaș</i> )
1679	-	Stoica – quilted coat seller
1681	Iane	Manta - furrier
1683	-	Radu - weaver
1685	Defta	Ion – quilted coat seller
1686	-	Stan - saddler
1690	Manu, Defta	Vasile & Neagu - weavers
1691	-	Ion - tailor
1693	Tudor	Constantin - tailor
1695	Gheorghe	Lupu - barber, Dumitru furrier, Drăgoi - furrier, Stoica - weaver
1696	-	Ion - tailor, Drăgoi - furrier
1698	-	Tudor - furrier
1701	Ianiu	Jipa - innkeeper
1702	-	Stan - carpenter, Datco – furrier
1703	Neacșu, Defta	Necula tailor, Radu, Marco & Scarlat – quilted coat seller, Micu – tailor
1706	-	Moga tailor
1707	-	Radu – candler
1708	Iane – head of merchants	Stoica – quilted coat seller, Tudor Caraciomag – weaver, Radu, Mihăilă, Iordache – quilted coat sellers Chirco, Dediul – shoemakers
1711	-	Radu – furrier
1712	-	Stoica – baker
1713	-	Ion – head of butchers

Sources: George Potra, 1972, doc. n° 486 - n° 487, p. 323; doc. n° 497, p. 332, doc. n° 524, p. 353, doc. n° 608, p. 429, doc. n° 654, p. 475, doc. n° 660, p. 482, doc. n° 667, p. 491, doc. n° 676, p. 499, doc. n° 700, p. 526, doc. n° 727, p. 552, doc. n° 735, p. 562, doc. n° 750, p. 577, doc. n° 762, p. 590; *Colecția achiziții noi. Indice cronologic Nr. 25*, vol. I (sf. Sec. XIII-1685), n° 2262, p. 169, n° 2894, p. 216, n° 2972, p. 222, n° 3050, p. 228, n° 3839, p. 329, n° 4062, p.

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347; *ibid.*, vol. II (1686-1760), n° 4, p. 1; Rafailă Grina-Mihaela, 2008, doc. n° 17, p. 74, doc. n° 32, p. 86, doc. n° 90, p. 132, doc. n° 163, p. 197, doc. n° 238, p. 266, doc. n° 305, p. 322, doc. n° 333, p. 347, doc. n° 339, p. 353.

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# ANNALES



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## Towards the end of the Romanian Middle Ages: The instauration of the Phanariote regime in Moldavia and Wallachia (1711/1716)

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**Abstract:** For more than one hundred years (1711/1716-1821), the history of Moldavia and Wallachia was deeply marked by the realities generated through the installation and evolution of the Phanariote regime. This new political regime instituted in the Romanian Principalities (1711/1716) was actually the answer and the solution adopted by the Ottoman Empire to the new political situation emerged at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and especially at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the area of Central and South-East Europe. The Phanariote solution practically represented a compromise between the older suzerainty of the Romanian Principalities and the institution of a direct Ottoman dominion.

**Key-words:** The instauration of the Phanariote regime, 1711/1716, new political regime, Moldavia, Wallachia, international context, 1683-1711/1716, Phanariotes

*„For over 100 years, the history of Moldavia and Wallachia has been profoundly marked by the realities generated by the installation and the evolution of the Phanariote regime” (I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004).*

This new political regime instituted by the Ottoman Empire was inaugurated in the year 1711 in Moldavia (after the betrayal of the reigning prince Dimitrie Cantemir by his alliance with the Russian Empire), by a first reign of Nicolae Mavrocordat (26 Sept.1711-25 Dec.1715), and in the year 1716 in Wallachia (by the removal from the throne of the last local reigning prince, Stefan Cantacuzino, 1714-1716), by a second reign of the same ruler, Nicolae Mavrocordat (25 Dec.1715-14 Nov. 1716), and came to an end in the year 1821, by the reign of Mihai Șuțu in Moldova (12 June 1819-29 March 1821) and Alexandru Șuțu (3 Nov. 1818-19 Jan. 1821), in Wallachia (C. Bălan, 2002; C. C. Giurescu, 1944; C. Neagoe, 2008; S. L. Damean, I. Oncescu, 2015).

Thus, since the years 1711/1716 and until the year 1821 (when in Wallachia broke the movement

for national and social awakening led by Tudor Vladimirescu), Moldavia and Wallachia were governed by princes recruited by the Ottoman Empire who were part of important Greek families (Callimachi, Caragea, Ghica, Hangerli, Ipsilanti, Mavrocordat, Mavrogheni, Moruzi, Racoviță, Giani-Ruset and Șuțu) living in the neighborhood called Phanar of Constantinople (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998; P. Cernovodeanu, 2002; C. Neagoe, 2008; D. Berindei, 1991). Associated to the administration of the Ottoman Empire (had held the position of *great logothetes - mari dragomani* - namely interpreters or translators of the Ottoman Porte), *the Phanariotes* became the instruments by which the suzerain power controlled Wallachia and Moldavia yet without formally abolishing their internal *autonomy* (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998). This new political regime instituted in the Romanian Principalities was actually the answer and the solution adopted by the Ottoman Empire to the new political situation emerged at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and especially at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup>

century in the area of Central and South-East Europe (M. Bărbulescu et al., 1998; P. Cernovodeanu, 2002; C. Dinulescu, 2012; N. Edroiu, 2002; I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004).

The Ottomans' recession had also set into motion the movement of liberation from under the Ottoman tutorship, especially by the attempts of the Romanian Countries helped by the great powers to leave the Ottoman system. This new situation emerged (as was for instance the alliance of the Moldavian ruler Dimitrie Cantemir with Russia in the anti-Ottoman fight in the year 1711), practically threatened the Ottoman Empire with Moldavia and Wallachia's escape from under its dominion and even with the loss of the entire Balkan region, especially since Russia had declared itself the supporter of the liberation fight in the name of the Orthodoxy. *Phanariotism* has not been connected in a special manner to the Romanian Principalities, having a more general character, based on an older tradition of functioning of the „*Turkish-Phanariote pact*” (M. Bărbulescu, et al., 1998; I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004). In the case of Moldavia and Wallachia, the Ottoman Empire introduced this new regime for them to continue to remain under its dominion, in the new international context of the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Phanariote solution practically represented a *compromise* between the older suzerainty of the Romanian Principalities and the institution of a direct Ottoman dominion (F. Constantiniu, 2002; I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004).

Yet, to understand how this *compromise* was reached, it is necessary to take a glimpse at the history but also at the evolution of the international status of the Romanian Countries and of their foreign politics, since the 15<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In order not to become pashaliks (eyalets) of the Ottoman Empire and in order to keep their internal autonomy, the Moldavians but also the Wallachians paid *tribute* to the Ottomans even since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, after a long period during which the Romanian voivodes had fought against Turkey (in the year 1417, the Wallachians paid tribute for the first time, and in the year 1456, the Moldavians). The anti-Ottoman fight continued, however, during the next century – the 16<sup>th</sup> – as well, under the leadership of rulers such as Despot Vodă (1561-1563), Ioan Vodă cel Viteaz (1572-1574), Aron Vodă (1591-1595), Mihai Viteazul (1593-1601), even though Wallachia and Moldavia passed from the status of *countries paying tribute* to that of *vassal countries*. A

hard blow was received by the Romanians when, after the year 1540, Hungary became a Turkish pashalik. We can remind here that even since the foundation of Moldavia (1359) and Wallachia (1330), they considered themselves defenders of the Christian world, a stronghold of the fight against the Ottoman Empire, which was threatening to destroy Europe. With all the Romanian voivodes, such as Vlaicu Vodă (1364-1377), Mircea the Old (Mircea cel Bătrân) (1384-1418), Stephen the Great (Ștefan cel Mare) (1457-1504), the Romanian Principalities appear as a gate of the Christian world, which, if it was to fall, all the Christian world was in danger. After the anti-Ottoman war led by Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul) starting with the year 1595 and the temporary union of the Romanian Countries in 1600, the anti-Ottoman rhetoric continues to appear in the documents of those times, yet it was expressed more rarely directly by the Romanian rulers. Practically, the latter no longer manifested except privately the joy of the defeat of the Ottoman Empire by the Christians at the same time showing Europe their powerlessness for fighting alone against the Turks, especially that now they no longer had a strong army (the army of each Principality being by mid-17<sup>th</sup> century of around 35. 000 - 40. 000 fighters) (V. Georgescu, 1995).

Until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Romanians won, in the course of time, a series of victories against the Ottoman Empire (1394-Rovine, 1462-Târgoviște, 1475-Vaslui, 1595-Călugăreni) but winning these battles did not mean that they won the war against the Ottomans. This is why one could feel a growing need of allies to defeat the Turks, practically the need of joining an alliance system. The Romanians helped their Balkan neighbors in the battle of Cirmen (1371), in the crusade of Nicopolis (1396) and established treaties and vassalage relations with Hungary (1426, 1455, 1507, 1511, 1517), but also alliances with Poland (1389, 1411). The fall of Hungary, in the year 1526, under the attacks of the Ottoman Empire meant a heavy blow for the Romanian princes as well, depriving them of their main ally in the anti-Ottoman war, in a context in which Poland pursued in the 16<sup>th</sup> century a politics close to that of Turkey. Attempts of alliance were made by the Romanians with the Habsburg Empire as well, as it happened in 1535 and 1572 (Moldavia) and in the year 1598 (Wallachia). The international conditions, quite unfavorable to the Romanians, made them practically be surrounded in the year 1672

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by the Ottoman Empire without the possibility to rely on external support (V. Georgescu, 1995).

Under these circumstances, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a system of alliances was attempted between Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania, practiced successfully during the time of Iancu of Hunedoara (Iancu de Hunedoara) and Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul), yet this system did not yield the results hoped for. Practically, *the international juridical status of the Romanian Principalities „was the result of the relations between the politics of the diplomatic partners, the objectives of the Romanian external politics and the means they had at hand to implement their objectives and counterbalance the politics of their neighboring States”*(V. Georgescu, 1995).

The international status of Moldavia and Wallachia was defined even since the 14<sup>th</sup> century in relation with the great Christian powers situated to the west, north and east, but also with the Ottoman power coming from the south. Yet this status was not determined, in the 14<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, by the evolution of the realities regarding the Christian powers, but by the evolution of the relations with the Ottoman Porte (V. Georgescu, 1995).

„When one talks in general about the status of the Romanian Countries in relation to the Porte, one understands by this a set of rights and obligations of one <<partner >> to the other” (M. Maxim, 2003). More concretely, the juridical status of these countries in relation to the Ottoman Empire, as it results from the Islamic law. Yet, what was truly the status of the Romanian Countries in relation to the Porte? Since the years 1530-1540 and until 1878, the Romanian Countries (Transylvania until 1688/1689) ceased being subjects of international law, being instead in a state of dependence to the Porte, in a regime of tributary protection. This status of belonging to the Ottoman Empire was not always or did not mean a unilateral status, at the mercy of the Ottoman Empire. There has also been a bilateral status: in the period 1595-1623, when Moldavia's status was influenced by Poland; in 1774-1856, this bilateral system operated by the cohabitation of the Ottoman suzerainty with the Russian protectorate (the case of Moldavia and Wallachia); in 1856-1878, Ottoman suzerainty and collective protection of the great European powers, also in the case of Moldavia and Wallachia /the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia/ Romania. This status practically varied depending on the relation of

forces between the Ottoman Empire and the great European powers.

In the period previous to the instauration of the Phanariote regime and of the Habsburg regime, 1601-1711/1715, Moldavia and Wallachia (Transylvania until 1688/1689) were under the exclusive, unilateral protection of the High Porte, and their juridical status was imposed by the Islamic law. Often a question emerged, namely whether this “ideal” status was preserved according to the letter of the law (*ad literam*), yet it is difficult to make a clear distinction between the legal status (*de jure*) and the real one (*de facto*) especially when the sources represent the Padishah's rulings and acts. As head of the Islamic Community (*Umma*), he is a source of Islamic law; as sovereign of the Romanian Countries (this being the official term during the modern period) he is again a source of law. His acts and rulings having a character of law for the Romanians, they were free to drift away from the provisions of the classical status, all the more so when it comes to those of the first commitments (*adh, ahdame* - book of covenant). After the year 1526, practically after the battle of Mohacs, the status of the Romanian Countries was imposed, not agreed upon. There was no global act for the status of the Romanian Countries as a whole, as it happened for example in the case of Leopold's Diploma of 1691 concluded between the Habsburg Empire and Transylvania. The juridical sources of this status were multiple: (*ahd* - covenants; *ahdname* - books of covenant; *berat* - diplomas of designation; *hatt-i sherif* - illustrious books; *hukun* - orders, *buyuruldu* - commands, *ferman* - decisions emitted in the name of the emperor/sultan (M. Maxim, 2003).

From a juridical perspective, the status of the Romanian Countries in relation to the Porte was, from the juridical perspective of the Islamic law, including for the 16<sup>th</sup> century, one of *tributary protection (ahd-ad-dhima)*. The Islamic (Arab) term *dhima*, in Turkish *zimet*, had the sense of contract of mutual rights and obligations. In other words, the sultan was obliged to protect the tribute-payer and the latter had to fulfill a series of obligations. During the period 1601-1711/1715, Moldavia and Wallachia (Transylvania until 1688/1689), as we have mentioned, were under a tributary protection regime and had to bear the consequences of the Ottoman system with its

features of eastern despotism. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the status of the Romanian Countries had to bear as well the consequences of the Ottoman decline. The statute of tributary protection (*ahd-ad-dhima*), granted by the Islamic law to some State entities (such as the Romanian Countries, the Crimean Khanate, Ragusa, some kingdoms and principalities of Georgia, temporarily Lebanon) situated in the frontier areas (East and South-East Europe, Caucasus, Orient), between the Islam and the great non-Muslim countries and preserved to the benefit of both parties, as buffer States was substantiated in the case of the Romanian Countries by a series of rights and obligations (M. Maxim, 2003).

In this sense, regarding their rights, the Romanian Countries were keeping their individuality, administering themselves by means of Christian rulers, according to the country's laws and customs (rights that were often infringed) and regarding the obligations of the parties, the Ottoman Empire took upon itself to defend them in exchange for the Romanian Countries' main obligation of paying tribute (*haraç*), beside a series of other obligations (gifts – formal: *peshkesh* and informal: *rusfet*). Just like other obligations to the Ottoman Empire (just as in the case of other tributary States), the Romanian Countries were no longer able to have their own foreign politics, having at the same time, beside military obligations, other economic obligations (from selling with priority to the Ottoman Porte, a trade monopoly will be reached (because the tributary States were not allowed to sell certain items to the Islam's *enemies*), the payment of certain taxes at the frontier of the Ottoman Empire, but also other obligations (M. Maxim, 2003). One must not mistakenly take the status of the Romanian Countries for the status of these countries' rulers, a serious error made by a series of European diplomats that knew neither the Islamic law, nor the realities of the ground north and south of the Danube (M. Maxim, 2003).

The Romanian Principalities, considered territory of the covenant (*dar-al-ahd*), an intermediate category between war territory (*dar-al-hard*) and peace territory (*dar-al-islam*) ransomed their *peace* by paying their tribute to the Ottoman Empire, as we have mentioned, even since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, thus maintaining their political structure independent in relation to the Ottoman Empire, with the obligation not to undertake hostile actions against

the Muslims. After the year 1526 (the battle of Mohacs), when the situation of forces changes in Central and South-East Europe, but especially after the year 1541, when Hungary became Turkish pashalik and when Transylvania was an autonomous principality, yet under Ottoman suzerainty, the international status of the Romanian Principalities will change as well, since they become now *vassals* of the Ottoman Empire. Practically, *the vassalage regime* dramatically narrowed the State's functions by the usurpation of certain rights by the Ottoman Empire, by the doubling of the political dominion by an economic dominion. For the moment, the internal autonomy of Moldavia and Wallachia was preserved, yet their external politics became subordinated to the Ottoman Empire, the Principalities' troops being obliged to accompany the Ottoman ones in their campaigns, while the rulers who were still elected for a certain period of time by the country had to be confirmed by the sultan. In the meantime, the sultan will give up consulting the boyars in the Romanian Principalities when choosing reigning princes, and they will be appointed directly by him. The duration of a reign will also go down from 7-8 years during the period 1359-1538 to 2-6 years during the period 1538-1711. Moreover, the defense power of the Romanian Principalities decreased now, the rulers being surrounded only by Ottoman guards, the cities being demolished, the capitals of Moldavia and Wallachia being moved (from Suceava to Iași and from Târgoviște to Bucharest) in plain areas easy to conquer and in the vicinity of the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, in order to be easy to control. The political dominion was now doubled by the economic one, as we have mentioned, by the payment of the *tribute* and of the *peshkash* (gifts under the form of goods and money), of obligations under the form of goods and work but also by the institution of the *Ottoman trade monopoly*. They practically constituted ways of exploitation drying up the resources of the Romanian Principalities for purposes that were foreign to their interests. We shall remind here that the level of the tribute (*haraç*) had grown from 3000 guldens in the year 1456, paid by Moldova, to 155.000 guldens in Wallachia in the year 1593. Certainly, there were also periods of fluctuation of the level of the tribute paid by the Romanian Principalities in the course of time: in the year 1601, Wallachia was paying 32.000 guldens, while Moldova was paying 26.000 guldens at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Transylvania also paid a tribute,

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after 1540, namely 10.000 gulden and it had become, in the year 1699 (when the province was included in the Habsburg Empire), 40.000 gulden.

The tribute (*haraç*) was, nevertheless, not the hardest obligation paid by the Romanian Countries until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the *peshkash* (gifts under the form of goods and money) paid to the various clerks of the Ottoman Empire to win their benevolence (viziers, central dignitaries, Ottoman pashas designated at the Danube – practically all the Ottoman dignities the reigning prince came in touch with). Other sums were spent by the Romanian rulers to buy the reign, as it happened for instance in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (from the payment of sums of 100.000 gulden to 1.000.000 gulden in the case of certain rulers). In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, one more tax emerges, confirming the reign at various periods of time (every year or every three years) called *the little mukarar* and *the great mukarar*. Practically, these obligations of buying and confirming the reign were really impoverishing the Romanians in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, beside other duties under the form of money and goods to the Ottoman Empire. Evidently, during these centuries, the Ottoman economic dominion did not have the same intensity, its intensity varying from epoch to epoch, the degree of intensity being determined as well by the evolution of the Romanian-Ottoman political relations. The economic pressure on the Romanian Principalities emerged, therefore, later than the political one, after the tribute-based regime was changed into a vassalage regime, being aggravated especially at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and then, after a period of decrease, it increased again at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (V. Georgescu, 1995).

The Romanians did try to modify this regime of Ottoman dominion often, especially after the introduction of the vassalage regime, as it happened during the time of Ioan Vodă cel Viteaz (John Voivode the Brave) (1572-1574), Gaspar Graziani (1620), Dimitrie Cantemir (1710-1711) in Moldavia or of Michael the Brave (1593-1601), Mihnea III (1658-1659) in Wallachia (V. Georgescu, 1995). As they did not succeed in changing their international status by military means, at the end of 17<sup>th</sup> century the Romanians tried to turn to the use of diplomatic means in the context of the defeat of the Ottomans under the walls of Vienna (1683) concluding alliances with the Habsburg Empire and with the Russian Empire (V. Georgescu, 1995).

The short reign of Dimitrie Cantemir in

Moldavia between the years 1710 and 1711 was another attempt of changing the international juridical status by military means with the help of Russia. Yet, the fact that the Moldavians and the Russians lost the battle of Stănilești on the Prut River in the year 1711, won by the Turkish-Tartar forces, ruined any hope of change of the international status of the Romanian Principalities, soon the Ottoman Empire turning to the instauration of the Phanariote regime (V. Georgescu, 1995).

The international context that had led to the instauration of the Phanariote regime in Moldavia and Wallachia (1711/1716) was closely connected to the campaigns lost by the Ottoman Empire against Poland, of the years 1672-1676, and to the major failure recorded against the Habsburg Empire, a failure that had reached its climax at the siege of Vienna, in the year 1683 (C. Neagoe, 2008; I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004).

The Turks' defeat at Vienna (1683) meant a visible military withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire, at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Taking advantage of this military weakness of the Turks, the Austrian armies occupied, after a series of victories, Hungary, Transylvania and other territories in the Middle Danube region (M. Bărbulescu, et al., 1998; N. Edroiu, 2002; C. Rezachevici, 2003).

*The Anti-Ottoman League* (including the Habsburg Empire, the Papal State, Poland, Venice) had also been joined, in the year 1686, by the Russia led by Peter the Great, who had initiated a campaign intending to conquer the northern Black Sea coast. In this context, caught in these tongs of the Christian Empires (Habsburg and Russian), empires that had now grown in force and were on their way towards modernization, Turkey concluded, at the beginning of the year 1699, the peace of Karlowitz, on the one hand with Austria, and on the other hand with Poland and Venice (I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004). By signing the peace treaty with the Ottomans, the Austrians were occupying the Principality of Transylvania and making it part of the Habsburg Empire, along with the territories of the former Kingdom of Hungary and the county of Bacská (the Ottoman Porte now still had, out of the territories they had once mastered in the region north of the Danube, only the Banat of Timișoara, but were obliged, for the safety of the Habsburg borders, to pull down the fortifications of Lugoj, Caransebeș, Lipova, Cenad). The Turks were ceding, at the same time, by the same peace treaty, in favor of Poland, the conquests made by them in the year 1672 (Kamenica,

Podolia and the regions of western Ukraine), while the Poles were evacuating the cities conquered in northern Moldavia. Venice was receiving under its dominion the Morean Peninsula, the Leukas Island, the cities of Knin, Risan, Vrgorac in Dalmatia, being at the same time exempted from the payment of the tribute for Zante (or Zakynthos) Island. In exchange for these possessions, the Venetians were to withdraw from Lepanto and destroy the fortifications around the Gulf of Corinth (N. Ciachir, Gh. Bercan, 1984). By accepting an international mediation during the peace negotiations from Karlowitz in the year 1699 (by the representatives of England and Holland), the Ottoman Empire admitted, for the first time in its history, the principle of the right of intervention of the Western powers, which later led to the interference of the European powers in its internal problems. It was evident, under these circumstances, that the old balance of forces between the Ottomans and the Christian powers (previously favorable to the first), was now changed in favor of the latter, and the periodical reopening, from now on throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, of some „*Eastern crises*” clearly showed the tendency of extension of the Austrian and Russian Empires to the detriment of the Ottoman one, now undergoing an irreversible decline (N. Ciachir, Gh. Bercan, 1984; I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004).

Faced with this visibly changing international context, the reigning princes of Moldavia and Wallachia were preoccupied as much as possible, at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, by a reorientation of their foreign politics. They would have liked, in this new context, an emancipation from under the Ottoman dominion with the help of the Christian powers (Austria, Russia), which were now in a visible offensive. In the year 1711, as we mentioned previously, in the context related to the development of Peter the Great's campaign at Prut, the ruler of Moldavia, Dimitrie Cantemir, had opted for an alliance with Russia (P. Cernovodeanu, 2002; N. Edroiu, 2002; I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004). In Wallachia, this policy of alliances with the Habsburg Empire and with the Russian one, to escape from under the Ottoman tutelage had been manifested even earlier than in Moldavia, since the time of the reigns of Șerban Cantacuzino (1685-1688) and Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) (F. Constantiniu, 2002; N. Ciachir, Gh. Bercan, 1984).

Thus, the ruler Șerban Cantacuzino oscillated in the attempt of changing the international political status of Wallachia between concluding alliances with

Austria and Russia. Beside these objectives of breaking free from under the Ottoman yoke, Șerban Cantacuzino even tried to initiate some revolts of the Bulgarians and Serbians to accomplish his political plans. Since these plans of revolt had not succeeded regarding the Habsburg Empire, Șerban Cantacuzino was ready to accept even the suzerainty of Austria, yet accentuating the idea of Wallachia's independence in relation with the suzerain, the absolute internal authority, religious freedom, respect for the ancient customs of the country and the return of the rayas situated in the vicinity of the Danube that belonged to the Ottoman Empire. His sudden death, in the year 1688, gave the possibility, as we have shown, to another ruler of Wallachia, to deal with the Austrians and with the Russians. Under these circumstances, the ruler of Wallachia, Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714), had tried, in his turn, in order to escape the Ottoman tutorship, to form an alliance with the Habsburg Empire but also with the Russian Empire. In the context of the Austrian victories after the year 1697, Constantin Brâncoveanu was gaining more and more ground in his alliance with Russia, to which, in the year 1698, he had even proposed a common war against Turkey. Similarly to the Wallachian rulers, the Moldavian reigning princes that ruled before Dimitrie Cantemir (1710-1711) in Moldavia, led the same policy of constitution of alliances with Russia and Austria, in order to break free from the dominion of the Ottoman Empire. The rulers of Moldavia took the following actions: Constantin Cantemir (1685-1693) concluded a treaty of alliance with Austria in the year 1691, but his follower at the throne Antioh Cantemir (1695-1700; 1705-1707) headed more and more towards an alliance with Peter I's Russia, a policy followed as well by the other Moldavian rulers, Constantin Duca (1693-1695), and Mihai Racoviță (1703-1705; 1707-1709) (M. Bărbulescu, et al., 1998; F. Constantiniu, 2002).

The reign of Dimitrie Cantemir (1710-1711) in Moldavia wanted the emancipation of the Moldavians from under the tutorship of the Ottoman Empire and the continuation of the policy of the previous rulers, yet it had a markedly anti-Ottoman character. Some Moldavian boyars approved the ruler's plan of escaping the Ottoman dominion by means of an alliance with Russia. Thus, Moldavia concluded a convention with Russia at Luck on 13 April 1711 and the ratification of this convention on 28 June the same year was followed by the arrival of the Russian

troops in Moldavia and according to the conception of Dimitrie Cantemir, who actually knew very well the Ottoman Empire and its policy, was legitimated by the abuses undertaken by Turkey and by the conclusion of the treaties between the Romanians and the Turks during the Middle Ages. The victory of the Turks against the Russians at Stănilești, on Prut River (18-22 July 1711), and the latter's retreat, for the moment, from the area of Moldavia, offered, under those conditions, to the Ottomans, the time they needed to consolidate their positions in the Romanian Principalities and to rapidly establish the Phanariote regime (M. Bărbulescu, et al., 1998; N. Ciachir, Gh. Bercan, 1984; F. Constantiniu, 2002; C. Rezachevici, 2003; I. Stanciu, I. Oncescu, 2004).

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# ANNALES



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