

## A NEW SPECIAL DISCOVERY FROM TURDAȘ

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The 1992 season occasioned for us to reopen<sup>1</sup> the archaeological excavations in the neolithical site from Turdaș<sup>2</sup>. Right from the start we uncovered a surface placed on the Mureș bank, where in the break profile one can observe a very deep step dwelling<sup>3</sup>. We discovered six complete vessels on the bottom level and a clay object (fig. 1) in the ash of the dwelling by emptying of this one. According to stratigraphical situation, this pit rather took part of a granary, as we found in a vessel burnt remainders of some seeds (perhaps millet?).

In this article we treat the problems concerning the principal object from this archaeological site: incised amulet.

*Description of piece:* the amulet has a round form of 7.5 cm in diameter. It is made of clay carefully choiced. Degreasing substance is the

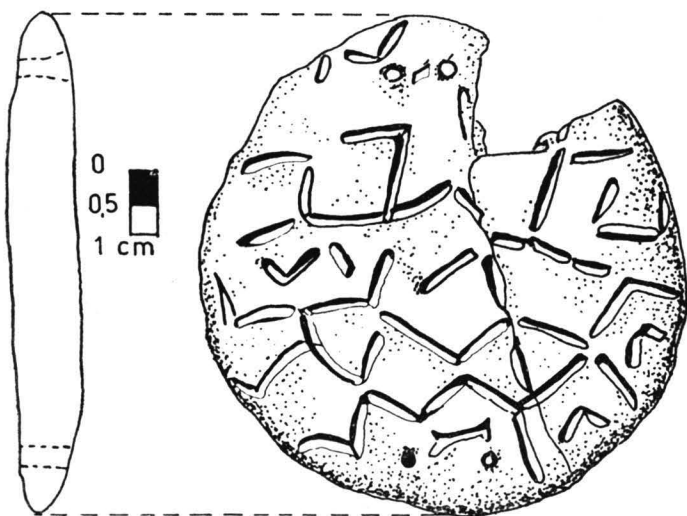


Fig. 1. Turdaș. Incised amulet.

sand mixed with little stones and mica spangles. The paste burning is very good and because of a new burning at the same time with the dwelling destruction. The amulet clay is brick-red coloured.

The objects has four orifices disposed two by two. Orifices of 0.3 cm in diameter and 0.5 cm distance between them, placed on the upper side. Those ones on the lower side have the same diameter and the distance between them being 1 cm. We mention the orifices of the upper

side have on the other side vertical ditches disposed towards the extremity. So-called „wearing“ ditches are not visible on the incised side. Perforations were realised, as it seems, from the incised face towards the back side.

The incisions were made as it strikes us by means of a small stick and they are about 0.15 cm in breadth (average). There are disposed on the whole surface of amulet „face“. To all appearances is not distinguishable in an obvious manner „messages“ or „speeches“. Nevertheless we can distinguish — on the upper part — on its left side a sledge<sup>1</sup>, with the necessary prudence. Under this one it is visible a human silhouette in a specific posture of dancers that appear, especially, applied on vessels during the early and middle neolithic (Starčevo-Cris and Vinča Cultures)<sup>5</sup>. Also it exists like the second slate from Tărtăria<sup>6</sup> incised signes in a sharp angle form, in our case these ones repet four times. The right side of amulet, as well as the central one are much more difficult to explain both — firstly — the absence of 10% out of it and excessive stylisation of a possible „message“.

As for the employment manner, at the bearer or in complex for protection against malefic spirits, we option for the second variant because the amulet was found approximately in the middle of the pit, with its face on the ground (maybe it was hung up?). We recall the whole vessels from the pit exclusively belong to usual category of ceramic having — certainly — a role in the nourishment preservation. All them were found around the amulet on the very brink of pit.

The amulet carries a clear message for the neolithical man, it seems to be an incontestable fact. It ensures a protective „halo“, benefactor for food, by its presence. Of this supposition till to assert that we are in the presence of a writing, we believe, it's a much longer way.

The amulet from Turdas is, in our opinion, an argument moreover for to certify the discovery from Tărtăria<sup>7</sup>, calling attention once more to the original character both Turdaş Culture as the expression possibilities of neolithical man.

## N O T E S

1 Systematic excavations on this place were initiated by: M. Roska; see *Stațiunea neolitică de la Turdaş*, in *Publicațiile Muzeului județean Hunedoara—Deva*, 1928. Archaeological finds that urged the research wish for the site by M. Roska belong to Szófia Torma's collection, that were published as a title *Die Sammlung Szófia von Torma*, Cluj, 1941. Diggins on a little surface were made by the dear departed prof. Vladimir Dumitrescu and prof. dr. Iuliu Paul. Shallow researches and soundings were performed ever since by Florin Brașoveanu and Tiberiu Mariș. We thank all them for information and suggestions offered to us.

2 This one was started like an archaeological saving site, for to clear out, in the first place, the complexes menaced with destruction by the collapse of river bank. The research staff was and is constituted by Sabin Adrian Luca (University from Sibiu) and Ioan Andrițoiu (Romanian Institute of Thracology). We thank in this way to Departmental Museum Hunedoara—Deva, especially to Mrs. warden Adriana Rusu for her aid as to university's leading from Sibiu that assured the money and logistics support.

- 3 We admit that we are being surprised by the similitude between this pit and that one described by N. Vlassa publishing the stratigraphy of Tărtăria: N. Vlassa, *Probleme ale cronologiei neoliticului mijlociu în lumina stratigrafiei de la Tărtăria*, in *Neoliticul Transilvaniei*, Cluj, 1976, fig. 2.
- 4 N. Vlassa, *Contribuții la problema racordării cronologiei relative a neoliticului Transilvaniei la cronologia absolută a Orientului Apropiat*, in *Neoliticul Transilvaniei*, Cluj, 1976, fig. 15/11 and fig. 11.
- 5 These are surprised either in a ritual dancing or represent characters that convey to us signs of well come.
- 6 N. Vlassa, *Probleme ale cronologiei neoliticului mijlociu în lumina stratigrafiei așezării de la Tărtăria*, in *Neoliticul Transilvaniei*, Cluj, 1976, the second slate, fig. 8/2.
- 7 We mention once again our discovery belongs to a closed complex, joined with Turdaș Culture, maybe in a later period than that one of N. Vlassa.