
THE FIRE AND THE WORLD OF THE LIVING IN THE BRONZE AGE AND THE HALLSTATT PERIOD OF ROMANIA

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The present contribution is conceived as an introduction to the issues mentioned in the title; this is why this topic can certainly demand completions, developments, and discussions. There are just few examples mentioned in the text. Yet, the archaeological investigations have brought to light more than few proofs. As concerns the Bronze Age in Romania, we insist upon it on some other occasions¹.

It is evident that the relief, the hydrographical network, climate, soils, flora and fauna have played an overwhelming role in all moments of the human presence on the territory of recent Romania. This conclusion is also valid for the Bronze Age and Hallstatt Period, when, it seems, as shown by the specialized studies, the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic lands have undergone climate changes, possibly even dramatic ones, to which some natural catastrophe have been added, putting their fingerprint upon the life of the human communities. This has also influenced the reports between people and fire.

The fire has met and still meets in certain milieus some different states: the solar fire, the atmospheric (lightening) or astral one, the fire inner to the organisms and matter, the living fire². For the Bronze Age and the Hallstatt period in Romania, the only *documents* that prove the relation fire-community are those archaeologically identified. We ought to say even from the beginning, that in the correct decoding of this relation, there are objective impediments – insufficient archaeological vestiges – as well as subjective ones, the latter being determined especially by archaeologists, by their investigation methods, by their power to entirely and without alteration register what the digging provides, by their decoding formula to decipher and interpret the results of the investigations.

The connection human being-environment must be always seen according with the former necessities: his necessity of survival in compliance with his food

¹ C. Schuster, *Unele aprecieri cu privire la instalațiile de foc din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in Istros, X, 2000, p. 71-92; C. Schuster, Tr. Popa, *The Fire and the World of the Living in the Romanian Bronze Age*, in C.F. Schuster, Al. Comșa, Tr. Popa, *The Archaeology of Fire in the Bronze Age of Romania*, BMG, II, Giurgiu, 2001, p. 31-41.

² For all these fire forms see V. Kernbach, *Dicționar de mitologie generală*, București, 1995, p. 200 sqq.

resources, with his protection while facing the nature's hostilities, the animals, or other human communities. But, as it was often pointed out, *this place might receive also a supernatural legitimacy and a consecration*³. Three components are playing a significant role in the socialization of these places: its election (the space might have topographic properties, signs of a hierophany), its cutting out (a space symbolically conceived as an absolute reference point), its construction (the addition of some artificial elements)⁴. For the Romanian Bronze Age and Hallstatt period, as regards the settlements, dwellings, ovens, hearths etc. is extremely difficult to distinguish the mentioned moments. In the following lines, we will try to do that.

The fire and the agriculture

In order to obtain larger agricultural terrains, given that the majority of the Romanian regions were forested at the time, it was often used the slash-and-burn technique (a similar technique was employed for the settlements establishing). We quote here as an example the site from Cârloamănești, in the Monteoru cultural environment. Between the IC₄ and IC₃ phases a deforestation process occurred, most probably by burning the forest – comprising particularly deciduous trees (out of which the elm detained 10.1%, the oak 7%, the hornbeam 4.8%)⁵. The aim of the process seems to be the extension of the ground for vegetables cultivation, as the analysis for this level are showing that the curve for *Chenopodiaceae* is progressively ascending, (represented by orrach⁶ – *Atriplex* sp.; spinach – *Chenopodium* sp.; beet – *Beta* sp.)⁷. Also, at Carei-Bobald between the layer of the Early Bronze Age (Nir II-Sanislău) and the one that overlapped it, a burning and an ash deposition could be observed, that indicated the setting on fire of the vegetation at that level⁸. It is possible that the mentioned remains could be connected with a fire initiated in order to obtain new terrains for agriculture.

The fire and the settlements

Unfortified settlements

The largest number of BA settlements on the territory of Romania, unearthed and studied (by systematic, rescue or surface surveys) is of open type – not fortified by any human intervention. (For the various BA manifestations see: the Copăceni group⁹;

³ J.-J. Wunenburger, *Sacrul*, Cluj-Napoca 2000, p. 62.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 62-64.

⁵ A. Borza, *Dicționar etnobotanic cuprinzând denumirile populare românești și în alte limbi ale plantelor din România*, București, 1968, p. 41.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 27.

⁷ M. Cărciumaru, *Paleoetnobotanica*, Iași, 1996, p. 72.

⁸ I. Némethi, *Descoperirile arheologice de la Carei-Bobald (jud. Satu Mare) în anul 1994*, in CAANT, II, 1997, p. 124.

⁹ M. Rotea, *Contribuții privind bronzul timpuriu în centrul Transilvaniei*, in TD, XIV, 1-2, 1993, p. 65-86; H. Ciugudean, *Epoca timpurie a bronzului în centrul și sud-vestul Transilvaniei*, *BiblThr*, XIII, București, 1996.

the Glina culture¹⁰; the Iernut group; the Livezile group¹¹; the Otomani culture¹²; the Schneckenberg culture¹³; the Suciul de Sus culture¹⁴; the Șoimuș group¹⁵; the Tei culture¹⁶; the Wietenberg culture¹⁷).

The unfortified settlements detain the most significant weight in the Hallstatt period. For instance, a single fortified one was found out of the 21 settlements¹⁸ belonging to the Grănicești group.

Fortification elements / fortified settlements

1. BA fortified settlements

Despite that both the opened and the fortified settlements are proper to the Romanian BA, the latter being actually in a lower percentage than the former, the data concerning the role of the fire in the construction of some fortification elements are rather lacunars and uncertain.

At Șerbănești¹⁹, the bearers of the Glina culture have raised a wall that had its inner surface hardened with a pebble pavement, the outer being covered with boulders and the core containing a mass of burnt earth mixed with charcoals. The wall of the settlement belonging to the Ciomortan culture at Păuleni (formerly known as Ciomortan)²⁰ seems to have been equipped with a wooden tower, which was set to fire.

¹⁰ P. Roman, *Die Glina III-Kultur*, in *PZ*, 51, 1, 1976, p. 26-42; C. Schuster, *Einführung in das Siedlungs- und Bauwesen der Glina-Kultur*, in *Memorie del Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Verona* (IIa serie), Sezione Scienze dell'Uomo, 4, 1995, p. 129-132; Idem, *Considerații privind așezările culturii Glina*, in *Drobeta*, VII, 1996, p. 12-17; Idem, *Perioada timpurie a epocii bronzului în bazinele Argeșului și Ialomiței Superioare*, *BibIThr*, XX, București, 1997; Idem, *Despre locuințele culturii Glina*, in *MemAntiq*, XXI, 1997, p. 85-114.

¹¹ H. Ciugudean, *Epoca timpurie a bronzului în centrul și sud-vestul Transilvaniei*.

¹² T. Bader, *Epoca bronzului în vestul Transilvaniei. Cultura pretracică și tracică*, București, 1978.

¹³ Zs. Székely, *Perioada timpurie și începutul celei mijlocii a epocii bronzului în sud-estul Transilvaniei*, *BibIThr*, XXI, București, 1997.

¹⁴ T. Bader, *op. cit.*

¹⁵ H. Ciugudean, *Epoca timpurie a bronzului în centrul și sud-vestul Transilvaniei*.

¹⁶ V. Leahu, *Cultura Tei*, București, 1966; C. Schuster, T. Popa, *op. cit.*

¹⁷ N. Boroffka, *Die Wietenberg-Kultur. Ein Beitrag zur Erforschung der Bronzezeit in Südosteuropa*, Teil I-II, UPA, Bonn, 1994.

¹⁸ A. László, *Începuturile epocii fierului la est de Carpați*, *BibIThr*, VI, București, 1994, p. 51 sq.

¹⁹ T. Cioflan, R. Maschio, *Săpăturile arheologice de salvare de la Șerbănești, județul Argeș*, in *Argessis*, IX, 2000, p. 10.

²⁰ As regards the tower (or gate?) see M. Rotea, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Faße I der Kultur Wietenberg. Die Bewohnung von Păuleni (Ciomortan)*, *Kreis Harghita*, in *AMN*, 37, I, 2000, p. 29; V. Căvruc, Gh. Dumitroaia, *Descoperirile aparținând aspectului cultural Ciomortan de la Păuleni (campaniile 1999-2000)*, in *Angustia*, V, 2000, p. 131 sq., pl. II, IV; V. Căvruc, *Noi cercetări la Păuleni. Raport preliminar. Prezentare generală*, in *Angustia*, V, 2000, p. 93-102; V. Căvruc, *Sat Păuleni, com. Păuleni, jud. Harghita*, in V. Căvruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *Cultura Costișa în contextul epocii bronzului din România / The Costișa Culture within the Romanian Bronze Age Cultural Context*, Piatra-Neamț, 2001, p. 59 sq.

The wall made of stone stuck with clay of the Wietenberg fortress at Turia had some red-burnt stones²¹. Also, the wall at Coldău, which was made out of wooden cassettes filled with stones and earth, was burnt on its northern part²². Obviously, the fire affected the wall after the construction was raised, but it is not certain if the set on fire was intentionally or not.

Much more interesting is the LBA fortification system at Popești²³. This consists in an earthen wall and a defensive ditch, both raised atop of the remnants of an older fortification. It was stated that the wall has girdled the settlement in its eastern, southern and western parts, while the ditch existed just in its southern part – meant to cut off the access from the promontory that protrudes in the Argeș riverbed. The wall covers a length of about 19 m at its base and is 2.80 m height. The structure of the wall consists of a burnt core overlapping a layer of stones and a pile of beams and stones, a red area comprising adobe fragments, broken clay lumps and portions of burnt wood, a yellow area and another greyish one. Evidently, the related fire occurred in the moment of the latter construction. The burnt core was probably meant to provide a special hardness and resistance to the wall.

The above mentioned examples prove that the fire was also used to strengthen some elements of fortification in the BA settlements.

2. Hallstatt fortified settlements (and fortresses)

In the Basarabi Culture, at Popești, above a wall made of earth and burnt earth lumps, a layer of stoned and treaded earth has been laid²⁴. Other possible discoveries of the same type are to be found at Orbeasca de Sus and Trivale-Moșteni²⁵.

At Preușești-Cetate (Grănicești group) a settlement with three fortification systems has been investigated. The researches pointed out that the fire has played an effective role in their construction. The first fortification, comprising a wall and an adjacent ditch, bears traces of charred poles on the wall (with a diameter of 0.04-0.08 m) – originating in a light palisade. The second fortification line, located at about 45 m north from the first one consists also of a wall and a ditch; in the wall was discovered a large quantity of charcoal, ash and some small pieces of adobe, most probably the remains of a palisade²⁶.

²¹ N. Boroffka, *op. cit.*, p. 87; Z. Székely, *The Wietenberg Culture Fortress from Turia (Covasna District)*, in *TD*, XX, 1-2, 1999, p. 109-126.

²² N. Boroffka, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

²³ N. Palincăș, *Scurtă prezentare a săpăturilor din sectorul Σ al aşezării de la Popești (jud. Giurgiu). Campaniile 1988-1993*, in *CA*, X, 1997, p. 175 sqq.

²⁴ Al. Vulpe, *Zur mittleren Hallstattzeit in Rumänien (Die Basarabi-Kultur)*, in *Dacia*, NS, IX, 1965, p. 106.

²⁵ E. Moscalu, C. Beda, *Noi cetăți traco-getice*, in *CA*, III, 1979, p. 362 sq., 368 sq.; Al. Vulpe, *Zur Entstehung der proto-dakischen Zivilization. Die Basarabikultur*, in *Dacia*, NS XXX, 1-2, 1986, p. 51. About the fortified settlements (fortresses) with *Schlackenwälle* see E. Moscalu, *Probleme ale cetăților cu „val vitrificat”*, in *CA*, III, 1979, p. 339-351.

²⁶ D. Popovici, N. Ursulescu, *Șantierul arheologic Preușești Cetate, jud. Suceava, 1979. Raport preliminar*, in *CA*, IV, 1981, p. 54-57; Idem, *Șantierul arheologic Preușești Cetate, jud. Suceava*, in *CA*, V, 1982, p. 23-27; Idem, *Începuturile primei epoci a fierului în nord-*

The discovery of the fortified settlement at Căndești²⁷, proved us that, already in the Ha A of Moldova, namely in the Corlăteni group such monuments existed. Unfortunately, there are gaps in the information regarding the construction of the fortification system. It is not known whether the fire has played any role or not.

Initially, it was presumed that the wall at Ciceu-Corabia (Bistrița-Năsăud County) has been raised out of stones artificially burnt and stuck with charred earth but, the subsequent excavations have proven the lack of basis for this forwarded theory²⁸.

At Teleac, the burnt lenses found in all three moments (layer I from the Ha B1, layer II and III belonging to the Gáva culture) of construction and re-construction / completion of the wall, are proves for the existence of the burnt palisade and not for the presence of a *Schlackenwall*²⁹

The fortification at Subcetate³⁰ doesn't contain burnt cores, but burning remains of the palisade³¹. Sporadically, has been employed the refuge fortification at Dej³², assigned to the Ha C period, whose defending wall was not of a *Schlackenwall* type³³. The Ha B2-Ha D fortification at Bozna has the same kind of wall as those mentioned above³⁴. The same situation has been signalled for the Ha B-Ha C fortification at Șona³⁵.

In Transylvania, Crișana, Banat 26 Hallstatt period fortifications (fortified settlements) have been identified³⁶. As noticed before³⁷, along with the increasing number of the settlements during the Hallstatt period, the raised fortifications get also amplified, in most of the cases passing through several phases. This is how; the fortified settlements at Teleac and Ciceu-Corabia have reached to be some of the largest on our continent³⁸.

Moldovei în lumina cercetărilor de la Preușești (jud. Suceava), in Documente recent descoperite și informații arheologice, București, 1983, p. 25-32; A. László, op.cit., p. 50 sq.

²⁷ A.C. Florescu, *Aspecte ale civilizației traco-getice în zona de curbură a Carpaților Răsăriteni*, in SAA, I, 1983, p. 74 sq.; A. László, op.cit., p. 106.

²⁸ V. Vasiliev, in V. Vasiliev, I. Al. Aldea, H. Ciugudean, *Civilizația dacică timpurie în aria intracarpatică a României. Contribuții arheologice*, Cluj-Napoca, 1991, p. 20, 27; Idem, *Fortifications de refuge et établissements fortifiés du premier Age du Fer en Transylvanie, BiblThr*, XII, București, 1995, p. 91 sqq.

²⁹ Idem, in V. Vasiliev, I. Al. Aldea, H. Ciugudean, op. cit., p. 25 sqq.

³⁰ Idem, *Fortifications de refuge et établissements fortifiés du remier Age du Fer en Transylvanie*, p. 35-39.

³¹ Idem, in V. Vasiliev, I. Al. Aldea, H. Ciugudean, op. cit., p. 21.

³² Idem, *Fortifications de refuge et établissements fortifiés du premier Age du Fer en Transylvanie*, p. 11-31.

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 13 sq.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 62 sqq.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 125 sqq.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

³⁷ Idem, in V. Vasiliev, I. Al. Aldea, H. Ciugudean, op. cit., p. 19.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

Some of these fortifications can be considered as tribal centres³⁹ – Teleac⁴⁰, Mediaș, Șeica Mică –, some others have been conjecturally employed fortifications⁴¹: Subcetate, Sărățel⁴².

The hypothesis concerning the existence of some *Schlackenwälle*, at least for the fortifications / fortified settlements cannot be maintained⁴³.

A certain type of "settlement" – the zolniki / "cinderers" within the BA

In the Romanian archaeology, the cinderer is considered to be an elevation, a mound, which is flattened and contains remnants of surface dwellings, namely adobe fragments (some bearing traces of wickerwork's, pillars or reed), a lot of ash, owed charcoals etc⁴⁴. In the archaeological literature of Russian language such complexes are called *zolniki*.

This type of *settlement* is characteristic to the Noua culture⁴⁵, especially in eastern Romania and having a slight representation in Transylvania too⁴⁶, and Coslogeni culture⁴⁷, but they also appear in Tei⁴⁸ and Verbicioara milieus⁴⁹.

It is interesting to notice here the Noua find at Gârbovăț where, each out of the five cinderers consisted of other smaller cinderers⁵⁰.

Taking into account his own observations, E. Comșa⁵¹ has forwarded an interesting hypothesis regarding the cinderers. Thus, he considers them to be the result of some domestic deposits (out of fire hearths, ovens and dwellings) which appeared after a (ritual?) cleaning that took place in the settlement. This custom is still found today at the Turk rural population in Dobrudja. In time, the strata of their domestic deposits are raising a real mound, identical to those in the LBA of Noua and Coslogeni

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ Idem, *Fortifications de refuge et établissements fortifiés du premier Age du Fer en Transylvanie*, p. 151.

⁴⁴ I. Chicideanu, *Cenușar*, in C. Preda (coord.), *Enciclopedia Arheologiei și Istoriei Vechi a României* vol. I (A-C), București, 1994, p. 280.

⁴⁵ A.C. Florescu, *Repertoriul culturii Noua-Coslogeni din România*, in CCDJ, IX, *BiblThr*, I, Călărași, 1991, p. 24 sqq.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 100; I. Andrișoiu, V. Vasiliev, *Quelques considérations concernant la culture Noua en Transylvanie*, in CCB, X (CCDJ, X), 1993, p. 102; Ungheni.

⁴⁷ S. Morintz, *Contribuții arheologice la istoria tracilor timpurii I. Epoca bronzului în spațiul carpato-balcanic*, București, 1978, p. 122 sqq.; A.C. Florescu, *Repertoriul culturii Noua-Coslogeni din România*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 146-154.

⁴⁸ V. Leahu, *Cultura Tei*, București, 1966, p. 51: believes this was not a classical cinderer.

⁴⁹ G. Crăciunescu, *Tipuri de așezări în cadrul culturii Verbicioara*, in *Drobeta*, XI-XII, 2002, p. 67 sq.; Orod, Govodarna, Orevița Mare.

⁵⁰ A.C. Florescu, Șt. Rugină, D. Vicoveanu, *Așezarea din epoca bronzului târziu de la Gârbovăț (r. Tecuci, reg. Galați)*, in *Danubius*, I, 1967, p. 76.

⁵¹ E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 27 sq.

type. Therefore, it is possible that, what we consider the remnants of a settlement, could be simply the domestic garbage coming from the real settlement, located somewhere around and whose traces were not detected by the archaeologists.

The fire and the shelters

Many specialists have studied the dwellings of the Bronze Age and the Hallstatt period. Those studies mostly considered their construction mode, the shape and seldom their functionality. The dwellings didn't look much different than those in the neighbouring regions, or the way some dwellings in the rural Romanian milieu look even today (especially in Dobrudja, southern Muntenia and southern Oltenia) or some belonging to the ethnic group of the gypsies. It is notable that some miniature houses, like those in the Nir culture at Berea-Togul Sfântului Gheorghe and Ciumești-Bosănești, provide us information about the way the real constructions have looked like⁵² Probably, some of the constructions had decorated walls, as shown by some finds of adobe fragments⁵³

Complex approaches, meant to take into consideration the complete set of issues in their interconnection regarding the constructions – the places chosen for raising a dwelling, the role of a dwelling in the settlement, the type of dwelling, its shape, dimensions, raw materials employed, techniques for raising it, foundation rituals, demographic aspects etc. – do not exist by now. Another matter that has been just partly approached is the relation dwelling (construction) – fire. We don't refer here at the fire installations that we will deal with further, but to the role of the fire in the moment when the dwelling has been abandoned. Is it the fire the real cause for deserting the shelter or its set follows after the mentioned moment?

We know that, sometimes, the fire has been used even for raising dwellings. Such an example is the floor, which is brought to a superior resistance by using the fire, in a dwelling of the Otomani culture, at Carei-Bobald, and Noua culture, at Poșta Elan (Dwelling no. 2 in Section no. 3)⁵⁴ Also burnt by its builders was the floor of the surface Wietenberg dwelling with a rectangular shape, uncovered in the Section 2, at – 0.40-0.45 m, in the site at Sibișeni⁵⁵.

These examples, and possibly others too, are just exceptions, because most of the dwellings had no floors at all. Still, if they existed, they were made out of treaded earth in which there were seldom included limestone grains, small gravel, pounded ceramics. A small number of these floors have been burnt but, it seems to have been a secondary burning, due for instance to a fire that destroyed the shelter.

⁵² T. Bader, *op.cit.*, p. 27, pl. VII/3, 6.

⁵³ H. Ciugudean, *Betrachtungen zum Ende der Wietenberg-Kultur*, in N. Boroffka, T. Soroceanu (eds), *Transilvania. Archäologische Untersuchungen zur älteren Geschichte des südöstlichen Mitteleuropas. Gedenkschrift für Kurt Horedt, Internationale Archäologie, Studia honoraria*, Bd. 7, 1999, p. 116, fig. 12-14: Geoagiu de Sus.

⁵⁴ M. Mamalauca, *Așezarea aparținând culturii Noua de la Poșta Elan*, in *Istros*, VIII, 1997, p. 192.

⁵⁵ I. Paul, *Die Wietenberg-Nekropole und Siedlung von Sibișeni (Kreis Alba)*, in *VUS*, 1995, p. 195; I. Andrișoiu, *Sibișeni-„Deasupra Satului”*, in *CCA*, 1996, p. 109.

The floor of a pre-Basarabi dwelling at Popești (Giurgiu County) has been burnt⁵⁶. This is also the case of the Dwelling no. 1 belonging to the Vârtop aspect at Ghidici-Balta Țarovei (II) (Dolj County)⁵⁷

The immense majority of dwellings in the Bronze Age and the Hallstatt period found and investigated in Romania show us that a fire has destroyed them. Sometimes, this was so intense that the clay material (adobe) has become a vitreous mass. In these cases it is evident that the vegetal part, namely the wood of the pillars that made the dwelling skeleton, the wickerwork's, the roof made out of wood, reed, or other puddle plants could not feed such a devastating combustion. There is a possibility that the fire could have been intensified with some additional inflammable materials.

The fires could break out due to the negligence of the dwelling inhabitants or as a result of an enemy attack that intended to destroy the settlement by fire. But, what if the fire had a purifying role and implicitly its usage was meant in order to insure the hygiene of the dwelling whose inhabitants got ill or one of them has died?

In many dwellings, under the clay layer of the walls that felled down towards the inner part of the construction and under or in the ash resulted after the burning of the roof, could be identified special archaeological materials – ceramics, implements, weapons, adornments made of various materials – that, in the case of a peaceful deserting of the shelter would not have been abandoned, given their value for the community. And still, why they lie sometimes in a suspect arrangement, as they would not be placed into a house that would be meant to be deserted in a brutal way but, on the contrary, that would hospitable expect its inhabitants or guests?

Would a dwelling that sheltered an epidemic, death or maybe a punishment generated by the breaking of the community rules have to be destroyed by the purifying fire so that it would not represent a potential danger any longer? Might have been possible that the entire, unaffected and still in use dwelling belonging to a deceased have been a temptation for him to return into the world of the living thus endangering the community? It is hard to know that! What we know is that some ethnological examples, both from Romania and elsewhere, seem to confirm those mentioned by us.

Examples of arsoned dwellings (we refer here at extremely powerful arsons):

1. Bronze Age:

– Glina culture: București-Roșu – deepened dwelling whose filling earth bore traces of an extremely strong fire⁵⁸;

– Schneckenberg culture: Sfântu Gheorghe-Örkö – due to an intense fire, the rectangular surface dwelling has been burnt and reddened⁵⁹;

⁵⁶ Al. Vulpe, *Zur mittleren Hallstattzeit in Rumänien (Die Basarabi-Kultur)*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 106.

⁵⁷ M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *Locuințe hallstattiene descoperite în așezările de la Ghidici, punctele „Baltă Țarovei I și II” (jud. Dolj)*, in *CAANT*, II, 1997, p. 90 sq.

⁵⁸ M. Constantiniu. P.I. Panait, *O așezare din epoca bronzului la Roșu*, in *CA*, I, 1963, p. 302, (Schuster, *Perioada timpurie a epocii bronzului în bazinele Argeșului și Ialomișii Superioare*, p. 34, fig. 17/1.

– Wietenberg culture: *Tâmpa-La Cazan* – the fire has melted a part of the surface dwelling inventory, transforming the adobe and the ceramics into a vitreous slag⁶⁰;

– Verbicioara culture: Verbicioara – as a result of burning the huts, remained a lot of cinder and charcoals almost at all⁶¹;

– Noua culture: *Dealul Morii* – in the cinderer have been identified the remnants of a surface dwelling burnt up to pulverization⁶²;

And the examples could continue. There is no culture in the Romanian BA where we would not find burnt shelters. In fact, we ought to be content that those fires existed because, paradoxically, they allowed the conservation of many archaeological materials.

2. Hallstatt period:

– Corlăteni group: Andrieșeni⁶³, Corlăteni⁶⁴, Trușești⁶⁵;

– Grănicești group: Grănicești – in deepened *Dwellings no. 1* and 2 there are massive depositions and burn traces resulted from an intense burning of the wooden structure of the walls and roof⁶⁶;

– intra-Carpathian area: Ciceu-Corabia – the remains of the Dwelling no. 1 have shown that it's been destroyed by an intense fire⁶⁷;

– Vârtop aspect (Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – Dwelling no. 1 has a large number of burnt adobe pieces that girdle on 1 m width, the margins of the bag-shaped complex⁶⁸).

The fire and exterior platforms

In some settlements, exterior platforms made of burnt clay have been unearthed. They had various locations, raising modes, forms and thickness, on their surface or / and around them sometimes being found a multitude of archaeological materials, some of them extremely interesting and significant.

Out of those platforms we mention:

– Monteoru culture: Năeni-Zănoaga – beneath the adobe fragment of a surface shelter in *Cetățuia I* site, a platform has been identified, being not entirely investigated and consisting in a thin crust of clay (0.03-0.05 m), burnt *in situ*, that

⁶⁰ Z. Székely, *Cercetările și săpăturile de salvare executate de Muzeul Regional din Sf. Gheorghe, în anul 1955*, in *MCA*, III, 1957, p. 157; E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 22.

⁶¹ B. Bassa, *O așezare de la sfârșitul epocii bronzului*, in *Sargetia*, V, 1968, p. 15.

⁶² D. Berciu, *Die Verbicioara-Kultur. Vorbericht über eine neue, in Rumänien entdeckte bronzezeitliche Kultur*, in *Dacia*, NS, V, 1961, p. 128.

⁶³ M. Florescu, V. Căpitanu, *Cercetările arheologice de la Dealul Morii*, in *Carpica*, II, 1969, p. 58.

⁶⁴ A.C. Florescu, *Săpăturile de salvare de la Andrieșeni*, in *MCA*, V, 1959, p. 329.

⁶⁵ I. Nestor, *Șantierul Jijiei*, in *SCIV*, 3, 1952, p. 91.

⁶⁶ A.C. Florescu, *Șantierul arheologic Trușești*, in *MCA*, III, 1957, p. 209.

⁶⁷ A. László, *op.cit.*, p. 53, fig. 2.

⁶⁸ V. Vasiliev, *Fortifications de refuge et établissements fortifiés du premier Age du Fer en Transylvanie*, p. 94, pl. I, fig. 4.

⁶⁹ M. Nica, *Câteva date despre necropola și locuințele din așezările hallstattiene timpurii de la Ghidici, punctul „Balta Țarova” (județul Dolj)*, in *CAANT*, I, 1995, p. 236, fig. 2/1.

covered two hearths – V20 and V24; between those two hearths there were two pits, filled with limestone boulders, adobe and ceramic fragments⁶⁹;

– Otomani culture: Carei-Bobald – in the square 7 of the Section VII/1994, at a depth of 1.45-1.40 m, a burnt clay platform has been identified, probably being an exterior one, with a maximal diameter of 1.50 m, with an oval shape; around the hearth it could be noticed a thicker deposition of cinder, ashes pigmented with charcoals and several pits in which some vases have been placed; according to J. Némethi, there is a possibility to face a cultic complex⁷⁰;

– Tei culture: Mogoșești – in Section no.13, north from the Pit nr. 4 and Dwelling no. 1 a platform made of burnt clay has been identified, being slightly convex, with a rectangular shape, the dimensions of 2.34 x 1.75 m, a non-uniform thickness of about 0.05 m, its maximal quotation being reached in its central zone – 0.08 m. Several rebuildings could be detected, especially in the eastern part. The orientation of the platform was north-north-west – south-south-east. It was raised directly on the ground. Its upper part has been found at - 0.45 m. The raw material out of which it was constructed was fine clay with slight impurities, consisting especially out of pebbles and tiny ceramic fragments. Each of the platform corners had a hearth. The platform had no border. On its entire surface, but mostly close to the hearths, burnt bones and just few shreds have been found⁷¹.

When considering the clay platform at Mogoșești, things seem to be clear but, in some other cases, it is hard to establish the functionality of such *constructions*. Even if it is tempting, we are convinced that not all could be connected with ritual practises.

Hearths

The fixed hearths

For an archaeologist, the hearth is *the place where the fire is being made*⁷² or, more exactly, *the uncovered installation included into a construction or located under the open sky, where the fire is being made*⁷³.

In our analysis with respect to the Romanian Bronze Age and Hallstatt period hearths, we will consider the following aspects:

I. Their location:

A. In the perimeter of the constructions:

a. Deepened dwellings:

⁶⁹ I. Motzoi-Chicideanu, M. Șandor-Chicideanu, *Ein bronzezeitliches Grab aus Năeni-Zănoaga*, in *Dacia*, NS, XXVIII-XIX, 1999, p. 68, fig. 7.

⁷⁰ I. Némethi, *Descoperirile arheologice de la Carei-Bobald (jud. Satu Mare) în anul 1994*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 124.

⁷¹ C. Schuster, T. Popa, *Mogoșești. Studiu monografic*, BMG, I, Giurgiu, 2000, p. 38, fig. 5, 7.

⁷² E. Comșa, Vatră, in D.M. Pippidi (coord.), *Dicționar de Istorie Veche a României*, București, 1976, p. 607.

⁷³ R. Florescu, Vatră, in R. Florescu, H. Daicoviciu, L. Roșu, *Dicționar Enciclopedic de Arhă Veche a României*, București, 1980, p. 356.

1. Bronze Age:

- Early Bronze Age from Bogdănești-Todoscanu – in each of the six shelters hearths have been found⁷⁴;
- Monteoru culture: Bogdănești – in two shelters a hearth has been found⁷⁵;
- Coroteni – Dwelling no. 1 several hearths have been found⁷⁶; Terchești⁷⁷, Vârteșcoiu – Dwelling no. 12 two overlapped hearths have been uncovered⁷⁸;
- Tei culture: Mogoșești – in the *apsidal* part of the Dwelling no. 2 a hearth has been identified, noted as Hearth no. 3bis⁷⁹;
- Wietenberg culture: Aiton⁸⁰; Eliseni – the hearth was located in the north-western corner of the dwelling⁸¹; Porumbenii Mari – the hearth was in the north-western corner of a dwelling⁸²;
- Balta Sărată group: Sacu-Țărinioara Lelcea – Dwelling no 1, at -0.70 m, it appeared a hearth in poor preservation condition⁸³;
- Cehăluț group: Cehei-Mesig⁸⁴;
- Noua culture: Nicoleni – one hearth⁸⁵; Peteni – in the first dwelling the hearth was found in its north-western corner, while in the second one it was located in the middle of the construction⁸⁶; Vânători – the hearth was identified under a complex of stones which was probably part of a shelter⁸⁷;

⁷⁴ Fl. Burtănescu, *Epoca timpurie a bronzului între Carpați și Prut. Cu unele contribuții la problemele perioadei premergătoare epocii bronzului în Moldova*, BiblThr, XXXVII, București, 2002, p. 191.

⁷⁵ M. Florescu, C. Buzdugan, *Săpăturile din așezarea din epoca bronzului (cultura Monteoru) de la Bogdănești*, in MCA, VIII, 1962, p. 303 sqq.; E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in loc.cit., p. 23.

⁷⁶ V. Bobi, A. Paragină, *Șantierul arheologic de la Vârteșcoiu. Cercetările din anii 1986-1988*, in Vrancea, VIII-X, 1991, p. 20, fig. 3.

⁷⁷ M. Florescu, Gh. Constantinescu, *Cercetări arheologice în așezarea din epoca bronzului (cultura Monteoru) de la Terchești (r. Focșani, reg. Galați)*, in SCIV, 18, 2, 1967, p. 290; E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in loc.cit., p. 23.

⁷⁸ V. Bobi, A. Paragină, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

⁷⁹ C. Schuster, T. Popa, *op. cit.*, p. 31, fig. 5, 12.

⁸⁰ M. Blăjan, T. Cerghi, *Cercetări arheologice la Aiton, Cluj-Napoca și Răchitele (jud. Cluj) (Partea I-a)*, in Sargetia, XIII, 1977, p. 135.

⁸¹ Z. Székely, *Conșiderații privind dezvoltarea culturii Wietenberg în sud-estul Transilvaniei*, in Aluta, XVII-XVIII (1985-1986), 1988, p. 154.

⁸² Zs. Székely, *Așezarea din epoca bronzului și datarea tezaurului dacic de la Peteni*, in Aluta, XVI, 1984, p. 16, fig. 3.

⁸³ P. Rogozea, V. Cedică, *Cercetările arheologice de la Sacu (jud. Caraș-Severin), din anii 1995-1996*, in CAANT, II, 1997, p. 54, fig. V/b.

⁸⁴ I. Bejinariu, *Late Bronze Age in the Depression of Șimleul Silvaniei*, in C. Kacsó (ed.), *Der nordkarpatische Raum in der Bronzezeit. Symposium Baia Mare, 7.-10. Oktober, 1998*, BM, I, Baia Mare, 2001, p. 159.

⁸⁵ Z. Székely, *Cultura Noua în valea Oltului și a Târnavei*, in Angustia, V, 2000, p. 177 sq.

⁸⁶ Z. Székely, Zs. Székely, *Așezarea din epoca bronzului de la Peteni*, in MCA, 1979, p. 71; Zs. Székely, *Așezarea din epoca bronzului și datarea tezaurului dacic de la Peteni*, in loc.cit.,

2. Hallstatt period:

- Early Hallstatt Period from Epureni – Hearth no. 14/2000 in Dwelling 20⁸⁸;
- Grănicești group: Grănicești – in the Dwelling no. 1 a fragmentary hearth lying in secondary position has been uncovered⁸⁹;
- Basarabi culture: Aiud⁹⁰.

b. Surface dwellings:

1. Bronze Age:

- Livezile group: Livezile-Baia – dwellings with two hearths⁹¹;
- Costișa / Ciomortan culture: Borlești-Dealul Runcu – in a rectangular dwelling a hearth has been uncovered⁹²; Siliștea⁹³;
- Mureș culture: Periam – in a rectangular dwelling a hearth has been identified⁹⁴;
- Wietenberg culture: Păuleni⁹⁵;
- Otomani culture: Carei-Bobald – in the dwelling from Section III/1988 a hearth has been uncovered (the same in Sections IV-V/1988 but, this time, it was located in the centre of the dwelling; another hearth has been identified in Section IV/1988 but, on the western side of the dwelling)⁹⁶; Pir-Cetate – possible hearths inside some dwellings, which marked various habitation layers⁹⁷; Crasna⁹⁸;

p. 7, fig. 4/1. For more data concerning the site at Peteni see Zs. Székely, *Perioada timpurie și începutul celei mijlocii a epocii bronzului în sud-estul Transilvaniei*, *BibThr*, XXI, București, 1997, p. 80 with the older bibliography.

⁸⁷ Gh. Dumitroaia, *Sondajul arheologic de la Vinători-Neamț*, in *MemAntiq*, XII-XIV, 1986, p. 17.

⁸⁸ E. Safta, *Epureni, com. Epureni, jud. Vaslui, Punct: Capu Dealului*, in *CCAR. Campania 2001*, 2002, p. 130.

⁸⁹ A. László, *op.cit.*, p. 53, fig. 2.

⁹⁰ Al. Vulpe, *Zur Entstehung der proto-dakischen Zivilization. Die Basarabikultur*, in *Dacia*, NS, XXX, 1-2, 1986, p. 51.

⁹¹ H. Ciugudean, *Epoca timpurie a bronzului în centrul și sud-vestul Transilvaniei*, p. 53, fig. 3/A.

⁹² M. Florescu, *Problemes de la civilisation de Costișa à la lumière du sondage de Borlești*, in *Dacia*, NS, XIV, 1970, p. 53; E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 22 sq.; Gh. Dumitroaia, *Comunități preistorice din nord-estul României. De la cultura Cucuteni până în bronzul mijlociu*, *BMA*, VII, Piatra-Neamț, 2000, p. 131; Idem, *Sat Borlești, com. Borlești, jud. Neamț*, in V. Cavruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 23.

⁹³ N. Bolohan, E.-R. Munteanu, *Siliștea, com. Români, jud. Neamț*, in V. Cavruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 45 sq.

⁹⁴ D. Popescu, *Asupra începuturilor epocii bronzului în România (Partea IV-a)*, in *SCIV*, 17, 1, 1966, p. 159; E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 22.

⁹⁵ V. Cavruc, *Sat Păuleni, com. Păuleni, jud. Harghita*, in V. Cavruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 62.

⁹⁶ P. Roman, I. Némethi, *Date preliminare asupra cercetărilor arheologice de la Carei-„Bobald”*, in *TD*, XI, 1-2, 1990, p. 40sq.

⁹⁷ J. Némethi, *Repertoriul arheologic al zonei Carei*, *BibThr*, XXVIII, București, 1999, p. 30.

⁹⁸ I. Bejinariu, *op.cit.*, p. 159.

- Verbicioara culture: Dobra - in dwelling from Section I/1991⁹⁹;
- Noua culture: Poșta Elan – in the Dwelling no. 1¹⁰⁰; Ozun-Lisnău¹⁰¹;
- Cehăluț group: Suplacu de Barcău-Lapiș – in a rectangular dwelling a hearth has been found¹⁰²;
- Coslogeni culture: Coslogeni Grădiștea – Hearth no. 9 comes from a possible dwelling¹⁰³

2. Hallstatt period:

- Grănicești group: Grănicești – in just one dwelling remains of a hearth smoothening¹⁰⁴;
- Corlăteni group: Andrieșeni – a partly destroyed hearth¹⁰⁵ with a preserved surface of about 0.75 m²; Lozna – hearth remnants in Dwelling no. 5¹⁰⁶; Trușești – two close hearths have been discovered¹⁰⁷, one of them with a surface of 0.90-1.00 m²;
- Babadag culture: Babadag – five of the 13 dwellings investigated in 1991-1992 have hearths¹⁰⁷; Siliștea-Nazâr – a hearth in Dwelling no. 3¹⁰⁸;
- intra-Carpathian area: Subcetate – in Dwelling no. 3 a hearth has been found¹⁰⁹; Ciceu-Corabia – hearths in the Dwellings no. 1, 2¹¹⁰;
- Vârtop aspect: Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – Dwellings no.1 and 7¹¹¹;
- pre-Basarabi horizon: Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – Hearth no. 1 in Dwelling no. 12¹¹²; Popești – in the possible perimeter of a surface dwelling few hearths have been identified¹¹³;
- Basarabi Culture: Popești – dwelling with several hearths in the first layer; fire place in a dwelling of the second layer¹¹⁴; Poiana (?)¹¹⁵.

⁹⁹ G. Crăciunescu, *Tipuri de așezări în cadrul culturii Verbicioara*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 79.

¹⁰⁰ M. Mamalaucă, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

¹⁰¹ Z. Székely, *Cultura Noua în valea Oltului și a Târnavei*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 176.

¹⁰² C. Kacsó, *Faza finală a culturii Otomani și evoluția culturală ulterioară acestora în nord-vestul României*, in *SC Satu Mare*, XIV, 1997, p. 86.

¹⁰³ M. Neagu, D.B. Nanu, *Considerații preliminare asupra așezării de la Grădiștea Coslogeni, județul Călărași*, in *CCDJ*, II, 1986, p. 104, fig. 13/b.

¹⁰⁴ A. László, *op.cit.*, p. 54 sq., fig. 6.

¹⁰⁵ A.C. Florescu, *Săpăturile de salvare de la Andrieșeni*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 329 sq.

¹⁰⁶ S. Teodor, P. Șadurschi, *Descoperirile arheologice de la Lozna, com. Dersca, jud. Botoșani. Așezarea hallstattiană*, in *MCA*, 1979, p. 81 sq.

¹⁰⁷ A.C. Florescu, *Șantierul arheologic Trușești*, in *loc.cit.*, fig. 3.

¹⁰⁸ S. Morintz, G. Jugănar, M. Munteanu, *Așezarea din prima epocă a fierului de la Babadag*, in *CAANT*, I, 1995, p. 222.

¹⁰⁹ N. Harțușe, O. Silvestru, *Considerații asupra cercetărilor din așezarea Babadag de la Siliștea-Nazâr, județul Brăila*, in *Istros*, VI, 1992, p. 18.

¹¹⁰ V. Vasiliev, *Fortifications de refuge et établissements fortifiés du premier Age du Fer en Transylvanie*, p. 40.

¹¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 94 sq., pl. I, fig. 4.

¹¹² M. Nica, *op.cit.*, p. 236 sq, fig. 2/1, 2.

¹¹³ M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op.cit.*, p. 89, fig. 2/2.

¹¹⁴ Al. Vulpe, *Zur mittleren Hallstattzeit in Rumänien (Die Basarabi-Kultur)*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 106.

B. Exterior hearths:

1. Bronze Age:

- Early Bronze Age from Bogdănești-Todoscanu – six hearths¹¹⁶;
- Costișa / Ciomortan culture: Borlești¹¹⁷;
- Nyrség culture: Foieni-Sutesz tag – two hearths¹¹⁸;
- Nir culture: Carei-Bobald – in S. IX/1995, at the depth of 1.45-1.40 m an exterior hearth has been discovered¹¹⁹;
- Verbicioara culture: Vierșani-Jupănești – near a dwelling¹²⁰;
- Gârla Mare culture: Ostrovul Corbului-Cliuci – in the three dwellings investigated in 1980-1983 hearths have been also found¹²¹;
- Noua Culture: Epureni – Hearth no. 10¹²²;
- Igrița group: Deva-Viile Noi – two hearths¹²³;
- Cehăluț group: Suplacu de Barcău-Lapiș – two exterior hearths¹²⁴.

2. Hallstatt period:

- Corlăteni group: Lozna – hearth remnants in the dwellings¹²⁵; the Early Hallstatt period from Bancu-Repaș¹²⁶;
- Grănicești group: Grănicești – about 3 m away from the south-western side of the *Dwellings no. 1* and 2 a hearth has been uncovered, being probably an appendix to them¹²⁷; Mihoveni¹²⁸;
- Vârtoș aspect: Bistreț-La nea Vasile Feraru (?)¹²⁹

¹¹⁴ *Ibidem*.¹¹⁵ Idem, *Zur Entstehung der proto-dakischen Zivilization. Die Basarabikultur*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 61.¹¹⁶ Fl. Burtănescu, *op. cit.*, p. 189.¹¹⁷ Gh. Dumitroaia, *Sat Borlești, com. Borlești, jud. Neamț*, in V. Căvruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 23.¹¹⁸ J. Németh, *Foieni, com. Foieni, jud. Satu Mare, Punct: Sutesz tag*, in CCAR. *Campania 2001, 2002*, p. 136.¹¹⁹ I. Németh, *Carei-Bobald*, in CCA, 1996, p. 22.¹²⁰ Gh. Calotoiu, *Cercetările arheologice de la Vierșani-Jupănești, județul Gorj*, in *Drobeta*, VII, 1996, p. 49.¹²¹ E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 25.¹²² E. Safta, *op.cit.*, p. 130.¹²³ I. Andrișoiu, *Considerații asupra unor materiale arheologice aparținând bronzului târziu descoperite în împrejurimile Devei*, in *Sargetia*, XVI-XVII, 1982-1983, p. 126.¹²⁴ C. Kacsó, *op. cit.*, p. 86.¹²⁵ S. Teodor, P. Șadurschi, *op.cit.*, p. 81 sq.¹²⁶ V. Căvruc (red.), *Repertoriul arheologic al județului Harghita, SMA*, III, Sfântul Gheorghe, 2000, p. 84.¹²⁷ A. László, *op.cit.*, p. 53 sq., fig. 4.¹²⁸ N. Ursulescu, P.V. Bătarciuc, *Cercetările arheologice de la Mihoveni (Suceava)*, 1973, in Suceava, V, 1978, p. 90 sq., fig. 2; A. László, *op. cit.*, p. 56.¹²⁹ I. Motzoi-Chicideanu, *Ein neuer Fund vom Beginn der Hallstattzeit aus der Kleinen Walachei*, in *Dacia*, NS, XLIII-XLIV, 1999-2001, p. 1999.

C. Hearths in the caves:

- Roşia group: Călăţea – a hearth situated close to the entrance¹³⁰;
- Tei culture: Braşov-*Peştera Gura Cheii*;
- Igrîta group: Igrîta – since LBA, in the *Niche III* animal bones (bovid, goat, deer boar, bear) have been uncovered, together with vases, bronze objects passed through the fire, two figurines made of burnt clay, ash;
- LBA: Izbuclu Topliţei.

D. Hearths in pits:

1. Bronze Age:

- Tei culture: Mogoşesti – in Dwelling 2 a small pit with ash, possibly used as a fire place, has been found¹³¹;
- Wietenberg culture: Bădeni¹³²; Cluj-Napoca – hearth fragments in a ritual pit¹³³; Cluj-Becaş – in Pit 3, Section II, the traces of a hearth with border have been found, which was raised directly on the soil and could be reconstructed. Pit 5 also contained the remains of a possible hearth with border¹³⁴; Fântânele-Dâmbul Popii¹³⁵.

2. Hallstatt period:

- Corlăteni group: Lozna – under the Dwelling no. 6 a pit with a depth of 0.50 m has been discovered, containing as a firing hearth remains, ash and charcoals, adobe fragments. Pit no.1, between dwellings, contained two fragmented pots, charcoals, burning and large river stones¹³⁶;
- Grăniceşti group: Grăniceşti – Dwelling no. 1, deepening probably employed as fire places have been discovered. Pit no. 8 – the remnants of a fire installation has been detected¹³⁷;
- in the fortress from Teleac: Pit no. 2 under the Dwelling no. 5¹³⁸;
- Basarabi culture: Hunedoara-Grădina Castelului – Pit GC1/1998 from the Section no. 2 seen as a deposit place of a metallurgic oven (?)¹³⁹

¹³⁰ P. Roman, I. Némethi, *Descoperiri din perioada timpurie (Pre-Otomani) a epocii bronzului în nord-vestul României*, in *SCIIVA*, 37, 3, 1986, p. 221.

¹³¹ C. Schuster, T. Popa, *op. cit.*, p. 31, fig. 5, 12.

¹³² N. Boroffka, *op. cit.*, p. 103, fig. 6.

¹³³ M. Rotea, M. Wittenberger, *The ritual complex of the Wietenberg Culture, Cluj-Napoca (Transylvania)*, in *AMN*, 36, I, 1999 p. 9, pl. I, II.

¹³⁴ F. Gogăltan, S. Cociş, A. Paki, *Săpături de salvare la Cluj-Becaş – 1989*, in *EN*, II, 1992, p. 7 sq., pl. IV/3a-c; 4a; 5.

¹³⁵ N. Boroffka, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

¹³⁶ S. Teodor, P. Şadurschi, *op. cit.*, p. 81 sq.

¹³⁷ A. László, *op. cit.*, p. 53, 56 sq.

¹³⁸ V. Vasiliu, I. Al. Aldea, H. Ciugudean, *Civilizaţia dacică timpurie în aria intracarpatică a României. Contribuţii arheologice: aşezarea fortificată de la Teleac*, Cluj-Napoca, 1991, p. 152.

¹³⁹ C. Roman, D. Diaconescu, *Un complex aparţinând culturii Basarabi, descoperit la Hunedoara-Grădina Castelului*, in *ATS*, I, 2002, p. 55-68.

II. The shape of hearths:

A. Circular (round):

1. Bronze Age:

- Schneckenberg culture: Cuculata-*Pleşia Pietroasă* (upper layer) – rounded hearth with a diameter of 0.90 m¹⁴⁰;
- Glina culture: Braneţ, Căscioarele, Mihăileşti-*Tufa*, Schitu-*La Conac*¹⁴¹;
- Monteoru culture: Bogdăneşti – a semicircle-shaped hearth has been discovered in the Dwelling no. 2¹⁴²;
- Wietenberg culture: Aiton – diam. 0.40 m¹⁴³; Bădeni¹⁴⁴; Boiu-*Măgulicea* – diam. 0.60 m¹⁴⁵; Porumbenii Mici¹⁴⁶;
- Noua culture: Ozun-Lisnău; Nicoleni¹⁴⁷, Peteni¹⁴⁸, Turia-*Judeţ*¹⁴⁹, Vânători¹⁵⁰;
- Cehăluţ group: Cehei-Mesig – diam. 1 m¹⁵¹.

2. Hallstatt period:

- Early Hallstatt Period from Bancu-*Repaş*¹⁵²;
 - Early Hallstatt Period from Epureni – Hearth no. 14/2000¹⁵³;
 - Grăniceşti group: Mihoveni – rose upon ceramic fragments and flanked by grit stones¹⁵⁴;
 - Babadag culture: Babadag – hearths identified in 1991-1992¹⁵⁵;
 - Vârtop aspect: Ghidici-*Balta Ţarovei* – the hearth in the Dwelling no. 7¹⁵⁶;
- Bistreţ-*La nea Vasile Feraru*¹⁵⁷

¹⁴⁰ E. Comşa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuinţe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 22, fig. 3.

¹⁴¹ C. Schuster, *Perioada timpurie a epocii bronzului în bazinele Argeşului şi Ialomişei Superioare*, p. 43.

¹⁴² M. Florescu, C. Buzdugan, *op.cit.*, p. 303 sqq.; E. Comşa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuinţe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁴³ M. Blăjan, T. Cerghi, *op.cit.*, p. 135.

¹⁴⁴ N. Boroffka, *op. cit.*, p. 103, fig. 6.

¹⁴⁵ I. Andrişoiu, *Contribuţii la cunoaşterea culturii Wietenberg în sud-vestul Transilvaniei (I)*, in *Sargetia*, XX, 1986-1987, p. 54.

¹⁴⁶ Zs. Székely, *Aşezarea din epoca bronzului şi datarea tezaurului dacic de la Peteni*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 16, fig. 3; N. Boroffka, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

¹⁴⁷ Z. Székely, *Cultura Noua în valea Oltului şi a Târnavei*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 177 sq.

¹⁴⁸ Z. Székely, Zs. Székely, *Aşezarea din epoca bronzului de la Peteni*, in *loc.cit.*, p.71; Zs. Székely, *Aşezarea din epoca bronzului şi datarea tezaurului dacic de la Peteni*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 7, fig. 4/1.

¹⁴⁹ Zs. Székely, *Unele probleme ale epocii bronzului târziu în sud-estul Transilvaniei*, in *Acta*, 1997/I, 1998, p. 174, fig. 1.

¹⁵⁰ Gh. Dumitroaia, *Sondajul arheologic de la Vinători-Neamţ*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 17.

¹⁵¹ I. Bejinariu, *op.cit.*, p. 159.

¹⁵² V. Căvruc (red.), *Repertoriul arheologic al judeţului Harghita*, p. 84.

¹⁵³ E. Safta, *op.cit.*, p. 130.

¹⁵⁴ N. Ursulescu, P.V. Batariuc, *op.cit.*, p. 90 sq., fig. 2; A. László, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

¹⁵⁵ S. Morintz, G. Jugănar, M. Munteanu, *op.cit.*, p. 222.

B. Oval:

1. Bronze Age:

- Early Bronze Age from Bogdănești-Todoscanu¹⁵⁸;
- Schneckenberg culture: Cuciulata-Pleșița Pietroasă (lower layer) – with a maximal diameter of 0.83 m¹⁵⁹
- Nir culture: Carei-Bobald – oval, with maximal diameter of 1.50 m¹⁶⁰;
- Costișa / Ciomortan culture: Borlești¹⁶¹; Costișa¹⁶²;
- Monteoru culture: Costișa¹⁶³;
- Igrița group: Deva-Viile Noi – the first hearth has the maximal diameter of 0.58 m, while the second of 0.62 m¹⁶⁴; Simeria – maximal diam. 0.60 m¹⁶⁵;
- Cehăluț group: Suplacu de Barcău-Lapiș¹⁶⁶.

2. Hallstatt period:

- Pre-Basarabi horizon: Ghidici-Balta Tarovei – Hearth no. 1 in Dwelling no. 12 had a maximal diameter of 1 m¹⁶⁷

C. Rectangular:

This kind of hearths has a squared or rectangular shape, most of the time with rounded corners. Their dimensions vary from one case to another, being not proportional with the dimensions of the construction when those in the perimeter of the dwellings are considered,

1. Bronze Age:

- Costișa / Ciomortan culture: Borlești-Dealul Runcu – in a dwelling of rectangular shape a rectangular hearth has been uncovered¹⁶⁸;

¹⁵⁶ M. Nica, *op.cit.*, p. 236 sq., fig. 2/2.

¹⁵⁷ I. Motzoi-Chicidăanu, *op.cit.*, p. 199, fig. 2.

¹⁵⁸ Fl. Burtănescu, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

¹⁵⁹ E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 22.

¹⁶⁰ I. Némethi, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

¹⁶¹ Gh. Dumitroaia, *Sat Borlești, com. Borlești, jud. Neamț*, in V. Căvruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁶² A. Popescu, *Sat Costișa, com. Costișa, jud. Neamț*, in V. Căvruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 25 (with lit.).

¹⁶³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶⁴ I. Andrișoiu, *Considerații asupra unor materiale arheologice aparținând bronzului târziu descoperite în împrejurimile Devei*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 126.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶⁶ C. Kacsó, *op.cit.*, p. 86.

¹⁶⁷ M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op.cit.*, p. 89, fig. 2/2.

¹⁶⁸ Gh. Dumitroaia, *Comunități preistorice din nord-estul României. De la cultura Cucuteni până în bronzul mijlociu*, p. 131; Idem, *Sat Borlești, com. Borlești, jud. Neamț*, in V. Căvruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 23.

- Monteoru culture: Pufești – the hearth in Dwelling no. 3 in Mound no. 2¹⁶⁹;
- Tei culture: București-Chitila-Cărămidărie – with rounded corners¹⁷⁰;
- Verbicioara culture: Orevița Mare – with the dimensions of 1.10 x 1.70 m¹⁷¹; Vierșani-Jupânești¹⁷²; Dobra – in dwelling from Section I/1991¹⁷³;
- the Noua culture: Cavadinesti-Râpa Glodului – two exterior hearths with a diameter of 1.00 x 1.80 m¹⁷⁴.

2. Hallstatt period:

- Corlăteni group: Trușești¹⁷⁵;
- Grănicești group: Grănicești – an exterior hearth which was preserved on a surface of 2 x 1 m and another one, in a surface dwelling was preserved on a surface of 0.25 x 0.25 m¹⁷⁶;
- pre-Basarabi horizon: Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – the hearth in Section I/1994 had the dimensions of 0.80 x 0.70 m¹⁷⁷;
- Vârtop aspect: Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – the hearth in the Dwelling no. 1 has the dimensions of 1 x 1.5 m and the Hearth no. 3 in the Dwelling no. 10 had the dimensions of 0.70 x 0.65 m¹⁷⁸.

III. Construction mode:

A. Made exclusively out of clay, directly on the ground:

The hearth has been directly raised upon the level of the surface dwellings and of the settlement (in the case of the exterior ones) or on the bottom of the deepened dwellings (sometimes upon the floor made of treaded ground).

1. Bronze Age:

- Early Bronze Age from Bogdănești-Todoscanu¹⁷⁹;

¹⁶⁹ M. Florescu, M. Nicu, Gh. Rădulescu, *Câteva date referitoare la fazele timpurii ale culturii Monteoru în lumina cercetărilor de la Pufești*, in *MemAntiq*, III, 1971, p. 165.

¹⁷⁰ V. Boroneanț, *Cercetările arheologice privind cultura Tei de la Chitila-Cărămidărie*, in *CA*, III, 1981, p. 197.

¹⁷¹ G. Crăciunescu, *La station archéologique Orevița Mare (dép. Mehedinți)*, in P. Roman (ed.), *The Thracian World at the Crossroads of Civilizations*, II, București, 1998, p. 497-505.

¹⁷² Gh. Calotoiu, *op.cit.*, p. 49 sq.

¹⁷³ G. Crăciunescu, *Stațiunea din epoca bronzului de la Dobra, județul Mehedinți*, in *Drobeta*, XI-XII, 2002, p. 79.

¹⁷⁴ I.T. Dragomir, *Săpăturile arheologice de la Cavadinesti (r. Berești, reg. Galați)*, in *MCA*, VII, 1961, p. 152.

¹⁷⁵ A.C. Florescu, *Șantierul arheologic Trușești*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 209, fig. 3.

¹⁷⁶ A. László, *op.cit.*, p. 53 sqq., fig. 4, 6.

¹⁷⁷ M. Nica, P. Rogozea, *Șantierul arheologic Ghidici, punctul „Balta Țarovei”, campania 1994*, in *CAANT*, I, 1995, p. 201, fig. 5/1.

¹⁷⁸ M. Nica, *op.cit.*, p. 236, fig. 2/1; M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op.cit.*, p. 90 sq. – it could be stated that the hearth in the Dwelling no. 1 could be initially rounded –, fig. 2/2.

¹⁷⁹ Fl. Burtănescu, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

- Glina culture: Branet; Greci; Morărești; Odaia Turcului; Schitu-*La Conac*; Schitu-*Gaura Despei*; Șerbănești¹⁸⁰;
- Schneckenberg culture: Cuciulata-*Pleșița Pietroasă* (lower layer) – with a maximal diameter of about 0.83 m¹⁸¹;
- Monteoru culture: Dealul Morii¹⁸²; Mănăstioara-Fitionești¹⁸³;
- Costișa / Ciomortan culture: Borlești-*Dealul Runcu*¹⁸⁴; Costișa¹⁸⁵;
- Verbicioara culture: Vierșani-Jupânești¹⁸⁶; Cârcea¹⁸⁷;
- Balta Sărată group: Balta Sărată¹⁸⁸;
- Igrîța group: Deva-*Viile Noi*; Simeria¹⁸⁹;
- Cehăluț group: Suplacu de Barcău-*Lapiș*¹⁹⁰; Cehei-Mesig¹⁹¹.

2. Hallstatt period:

- Corlăteni group: Andrieșeni¹⁹²; Trușești¹⁹³;
- Grănicești group: Grănicești – the hearth appended to the deepened Dwellings no. 1 and 2 was raised directly on the ground, just its south-eastern corner, because of the terrain inclination, leaned itself on a trapezium-shaped platform made of flat stones; the hearth in the surface dwelling¹⁹⁴;
- Babadag culture: Siliștea-Nazâr – a hearth in Dwelling no. 3¹⁹⁵;
- Vârtope aspect: Ghidici-*Balta Țarovei* – the hearth in Dwelling no. 7 and those no. 2 and 3 in the Dwelling no. 10¹⁹⁶; Bistreț-*La nea Vasile Feraru*¹⁹⁷

¹⁸⁰ C. Schuster, *Perioada timpurie a epocii bronzului în bazinele Argeșului și Ialomiței Superioare*, p. 44; T. Cioflan, R. Maschio, *op.cit.*, p. 8.

¹⁸¹ E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 22.

¹⁸² M. Florescu, V. Căpitanu, *Cercetările arheologice de la Dealul Morii*, in *Carpica*, II, 1969, p. 57.

¹⁸³ M. Florescu, Gh. Constantinescu, *Așezarea din epoca bronzului de la Mănăstioara-Fitionești*, in *Danubius*, I, 1967, p. 63.

¹⁸⁴ Gh. Dumitroaia, *Comunități preistorice din nord-estul României. De la cultura Cucuteni până în bronzul mijlociu*, p. 131; Idem, *Sat Borlești, com. Borlești, jud. Neamț*, in V. Cavruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁸⁵ A. Popescu, *op.cit.*, in V. Cavruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 25 (with lit.).

¹⁸⁶ Gh. Calotiu, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁸⁷ M. Nica et alii, *Cârcea, com. Coșoveni, jud. Dolj, Punct: La Hanuri*, in CCAR. *Campania 2001, 2002*, p. 97.

¹⁸⁸ Gh. Lazarovici, S. Petrescu, *Balta Sărată (Caransebeș), jud. Caraș-Severin, Punct: Câmpul lui Poșta*, in CCAR. *Campania 2001, 2002*, p. 48 sq.

¹⁸⁹ I. Andrișoiu, *Considerații asupra unor materiale arheologice aparținând bronzului târziu descoperite în împrejurimile Devei*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 126.

¹⁹⁰ C. Kacsó, *op.cit.*, p. 86.

¹⁹¹ I. Bejinariu, *op.cit.*, p. 159.

¹⁹² A.C. Florescu, *Săpăturile de salvare de la Andrieșeni*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 329 sq.

¹⁹³ Idem, *Șantierul arheologic Trușești*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 209.

¹⁹⁴ A. László, *op. cit.*, p. 53-55, fig. 4, 6.

¹⁹⁵ N. Harțușche, O. Silvestru, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

¹⁹⁶ M. Nica, *op. cit.*, p. 236 sq., fig. 2/2; M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op. cit.*, p. 90, fig. 2/2.

¹⁹⁷ I. Motzoi-Chicideanu, *op.cit.*, p. 199, fig. 2.

1. Bronze Age:

– Costișa / Ciomortan culture: Borlești-Dealul Runcu – near a dwelling with rectangular shape a hearth has been containing in its sticking plaster ceramic fragments and some stone implements²¹⁹;

– Monteoru culture: Coștișa²²⁰;

– Wietenberg culture: Derșida²²¹.

2. Hallstatt period:

– intra-Carpathian area: Ciceu-Corabia – the clay-made hearths in the Dwellings no. 1 and 2²²².

IV. Hearths types:

A. Simple, with smoothened surface or margins:

Frequent discoveries, this type of hearth has the surface and sometimes the margins smoothened.

1. Bronze Age:

– Otomani culture: Carei-Bobald²²³;

– Verbicioara culture: Vierșani-Jupânești²²⁴;

– Igrîța group: Deva-Viile Noi; Simeria²²⁵.

2. Hallstatt period:

– pre-Basarabi horizon: Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – the hearth in the Section 1/1994²²⁶;

– Vârtoș aspect: Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – Hearth no. 3 in the Dwelling no. 10²²⁷

B. With border:

The border had both the role of keeping the burnt residues and the one of thermic isolation, resulting in a better regulation and maintenance of the temperature.

1. Bronze Age:

– Early Bronze Age from Bogdănești-Todoscanu²²⁸;

²¹⁹ Gh. Dumitroaia, *Comunități preistorice din nord-estul României. De la cultura Cucuteni până în bronzul mijlociu*, p. 131; Idem, *Sat Borlești, com. Borlești, jud. Neamț*, in V. Căvruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 23.

²²⁰ A. Popescu, *op.cit.*, in V. Căvruc, Gh. Dumitroaia (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 26 (with lit.).

²²¹ N. Boroffka, *op.cit.*, p. 103.

²²² V. Vasiliev, *Fortifications de refuge et établissements fortifiés du premier Age du Fer en Transylvanie*, p. 94 sq., pl. I, fig. 4.

²²³ P. Roman, I. Némethi, *Date preliminare asupra cercetărilor arheologice de la Carei-„Bobald”*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 40 sq.

²²⁴ Gh. Calotiu, *op.cit.*, p. 49 sq.

²²⁵ I. Andrișoiu, *Considerații asupra unor materiale arheologice aparținând bronzului târziu descoperite în împrejurimile Devei*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 126.

²²⁶ M. Nica, P. Rogozea, *op. cit.*, p. 201, fig. 5/1.

²²⁷ M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op. cit.*, p. 90, fig. 2/2.

- Monteoru culture: Bogdănești – the exterior hearth had a border made of middle-sized stones²²⁹; Terchești²³⁰;
- Wietenberg culture: Cluj-Becaș²³¹;
- Cehăluț group: Suplacu de Barcău-Lapiș – one of the exterior hearths had a border²³².

2. Hallstatt period:

- Early Hallstatt period from Epureni – Hearth no. 14/2000²³³;
- Babadag culture: Siliștea-Nazăru – a hearth in Dwelling no. 3²³⁴;
- the fortress from Teleac – in the Pit no. 2 under the Dwelling no. 5²³⁵;
- Vârtop aspect: Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – the hearth in the Dwelling no. 1 had a border made of ash hardened with sand and clay, with a thickness of 0.50 m; the hearth in the Dwelling no. 7 had a border with a height of 0.06 m; the Hearth no. 2 in the Dwelling no. 10 had a border with a width of 0.18/0.20 m and height of 0.10 m²³⁶.

V. Usage duration:

A. Long time span:

On the case of the hearths with a thick layer of burnt clay, with multiple rebuildings, we assume an intense use, possibly in a long time span.

1. Bronze Age:

- Glina culture: Braneț; Drăgănești-Olt; Morărești; Schitu-La Conac²³⁷;
- Noua culture: Bărboasa-Podu Morii – with its sticking plasters twice renovate²³⁸;
- Igrița group: Deva-Viile Noi – the upper part appeared like a cemented crust, while in depth the ground has changed its colour, running from brick-red up to yellow-brownish²³⁹

2. Hallstatt period:

- Grănicești group: Grănicești – the hearth appended to the Dwellings no. 1 and 2 was rebuilt three successive times²⁴⁰;

²²⁸ Fl. Burtănescu, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

²²⁹ M. Florescu, C. Buzdugan, *op. cit.*, p. 302 sq.; E. Comșa, *Unele date despre tipurile de locuințe din epoca bronzului de pe teritoriul României*, in *loc. cit.*, p. 23.

²³⁰ M. Florescu, Gh. Constantinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 290.

²³¹ F. Gogâltan, S. Cociș, A. Păci, *op. cit.*, p. 7 sq., pl. IV/3a-c.

²³² C. Kacsó, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

²³³ E. Safta, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

²³⁴ N. Harțușche, O. Silvestru, *op. cit.*, p. 18, pl. VIII/3.

²³⁵ V. Vasiliev, I. Al. Aldea, H. Ciugudean, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

²³⁶ M. Nica, *op. cit.*, p. 236 sq., fig. 2/1, 2; M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op. cit.*, p. 90, fig. 2/2.

²³⁷ C. Schuster, *Perioada timpurie a epocii bronzului în bazinele Argeșului și Ialomișei Superioare*, p. 44.

²³⁸ M. Florescu, V. Căpitanu, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

²³⁹ I. Andrișoiu, *Considerații asupra unor materiale arheologice aparținând bronzului târziu descoperite în împrejurimile Devei*, in *loc. cit.*, p. 126.

- pre-Basarabi horizon: Ghidici-Balta *Țarovei* – the Hearth no. 1 in the Dwelling no. 12²⁴¹;
- Vârtop aspect: Ghidici-Balta *Țarovei* – the hearth with the oven in the Dwellings no. 7 and 8²⁴².

B. Short time span:

Many unearthed hearths had a slightly burnt clay layer, and the fire also affected the surface around it. Those hearths, bearing no renewal traces, sometimes being just *patched up*, were used for a relatively short time.

1. Bronze Age:

- Glina culture: Braneț; Mihăilești-*Tufa*; Schitu-*La Conac*; Schitu-*Gaura Despei*²⁴³;
- Wietenberg culture: Boiu-*Măgulicea* – slightly burnt hearth²⁴⁴; Cluj-Becaș²⁴⁵;

2. Hallstatt period:

- Grănicești group: Grănicești – in the Section no. 4 a spot of 0.55 x 0.30 m consisting of burn, ash and charcoals, thick of about 0.05/0.06 m, coming from a temporarily used hearth²⁴⁶;
- Basarabi culture: Popești – fire place in a dwelling of the second layer²⁴⁷.

VI. Functionality:

A. Domestic:

With rare exceptions, all hearths served to domestic necessities.

B. Cultic:

- Wietenberg culture: Albești²⁴⁸; Geoagiu – possible cultic destination²⁴⁹;
- Sighișoara-*Dealul Turcului* – C. Seraphin has discovered two decorated hearths, unearthed at a depth of about 0.60 m and at a distance of 7.50 m one from another. The first, better preserved, round in shape, about 1.50-1.60 m, has been raised directly on the virgin soil²⁵⁰. It was decorated with concentrically circles, the central area being

²⁴⁰ A. László, *op.cit.*, p. 53 sq., fig. 4.

²⁴¹ M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op. cit.*, p. 90, fig. 2/2.

²⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 89, fig. 1/1; M. Nica, *op. cit.*, p. 236 sq., fig. 2/2.

²⁴³ C. Schuster, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

²⁴⁴ I. Andrișoiu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea culturii Wietenberg în sud-vestul Transilvaniei (I)*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 54.

²⁴⁵ F. Gogăltan, S. Cociș, A. Paki, *op. cit.*, p. 7 sq., pl. IV/3a-c.

²⁴⁶ A. László, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

²⁴⁷ Al. Vulpe, *Zur mittleren Hallstattzeit in Rumänien (Die Basarabi-Kultur)*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 106.

²⁴⁸ Gh. Baltag, N. Boroffka, *Materiale arheologice preistorice de la Albești, jud. Mureș*, in *SCIVA*, 47, 4, 1996, p. 390, fig. 10/2.

²⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 390.

²⁵⁰ N. Boroffka, *op. cit.*, p. 103 sq.; I. Andrișoiu, in I. Andrișoiu, A. Rustoiu, *Sighișoara Wietenberg. Descoperirile preistorice și așezarea dacică, BiblThr*, XXIII, București, 1997, p. 16, fig. 26.

delimited by an ornamentation consisting of a stamped zigzagged band. Towards the outer part there are two bands decorated with incised, linked spirals, made of 4, respectively 5 lines of incisions. These are delimited by three concentric circles and separated by a free space. The inner circle consists of 13 smaller linked spirals, while the outer one, affected by time, is considered to have had initially 10-11 spirals. Hearth no. 2, with a diameter of about 1.00 m, has been precariously preserved²⁵¹. The central part was delimited by a circular band that contains triangles having their point towards the centre and filled with incised lines, parallel with one of their sides. It was also preserved a hearth fragment with two spiral loops made of a band with four slightly relieved lines.

1. Fixed-shrines:

– Monteoru culture:

– Cârdești-Cetățuia Nacu – in the south-eastern area of the site, belonging to the Monteoru IIA-IIB phase, approximately 5 m away from the last shelter, a layer of gravel has been laid, followed by one consisting of sand and thin sledge stones of grit-stones. The assembly creating a rectangular platform with a diameter of 2.50x1.50 m, had an altar-hearth with a diameter of 1.00 m in its centre, raised upon the fragments of a cup, of a jar-vase and of a bowl, covered with a clay sticking plaster. Also about 10 m far from the last construction of the settlement a shrine has existed²⁵².

– Cârdești-Coasta Banului – in a pit with a diameter of 1.80 m and a depth of up to 0.60 m a layer of sand has been laid, overlapped by a hearth with a diameter of 1.00 m; around it have been uncovered four receptacles, arranged two by two, out of which two cups with their mouth downwards²⁵³.

– Mănăstioara-Fitionești – a shrine consisting in a rectangular-shaped hearth with a diameter of 1.00 x 1.50 m, built 3 m away from the last hut, made of grit-stone sledge stones, with a border made of conglomerate sledge stones, upon which a clay layer has been applied; as a result of an intense burning, the hearth has been renewed by breaking a jar-shaped vase, whose fragments have been covered with a new layer of clay. Right beside this hearth, on a stone platform of small dimensions, covered with a layer of clay, a grinder with rubber, a miniature bovid horn made of burnt clay, a hoe made of buck antler, several animal bones have been found, all arranged in a semicircle²⁵⁴.

– Mândrișca – upon a pit inside which the frontal bearing the horns of a ram have been put, a square-shaped altar-hearth has been set, having the dimensions of 1.75 x 1.75 m, initially being worked out of clay and subsequently alternated with a layer of gravel stuck with clay²⁵⁵.

– Năstăseni – on a surface of 6 sqm, about 30 m far from the last group of shelters; a layer of 0.10 m thick consisting in gravels has been spread, being covered with another clay one. In the middle of this rounded surface an altar-hearth has been

²⁵¹ I. Andrișoiu, in I. Andrișoiu, A. Rustoiu, *op.cit.*, p. 16 sq.

²⁵² M. Florescu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea concepțiilor despre lume și viață a comunităților tribale montene, in Carpica*, XI, 1979, p. 69 sq., fig. 4.

²⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 70, 72, fig. 5.

²⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 64 sq., fig. 1.

²⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 66 sq.; Gh. Bichir, *Săpăturile de la Mândrișca*, in *MCA*, IX, 1970, p. 117.

raised upon a layer of gravel stuck with clay; the altar and the vessels around underwent an intense burning²⁵⁶.

– Sărata Monteoru-*Cetățuia* – in the western part, where the fortress on the terrace, upon the fittings for steps made here, two altars have been identified; first of them consisted of two offering vessels, fragments of some cups and of a storage pot, a small cultic table, ash and bones. The second altar comprised an offering vase, flanked on a side by a buck antler and on the other by a charred wooden bough, another offering receptacle, a storage pot, four cups, a small cultic table, a clay disk, charcoals, bones and ash. These remnants, also suffered an intense burning²⁵⁷.

– *Otomani culture*:

– Zăuan-*Dălma Cimitirului* – the inventory of a pit consisted of four Otomani III cups, Wietenberg vases and fragments of an altar with an intensely burnt surface, decorated with deep flutings, in groups of three or four and creating curved-linear motifs, as well as relieved conical prominences on its border²⁵⁸.

– Suci de Sus culture:

– Culciu Mare – in an uncertain context within the settlement pieces ornamented with spirals coming from possible shrines were unearthed. Also, a pit with an inventory consisting of a small clay column decorated with two lines of prominences has been investigated²⁵⁹.

2. Ritual pits:

– Monteoru Culture:

– Pufești – a pit with the diameter of 1.00 m and a depth of 0.60 m has been excavated into the north-western edge of the Mound no. 1. Its walls were three times successively covered with clay layers: the last sticking plaster bore traces of intense burning, resulted from an intentional setting of fire inside it. In the centre of the pit a jar-shaped vessel, also secondarily burnt, filled with ovicaprine bones, wheat grains, chaff (all not burnt) and charcoal was found²⁶⁰.

– Coslogeni Culture:

– Căscioarele-*Valea Coșarului* – in the nearly circular shape Pit no. 1, out of which just the lower part has been preserved; complete and fragmentary vessels, fragments of a portable hearth-vessel, four complete or fragmentary anthropomorphic figurines have

²⁵⁶ M. Florescu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea concepțiilor despre lume și viață a comunităților tribale monteorene*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 68, fig. 3.

²⁵⁷ I. Nestor, Al. Alexandrescu, Eug. Petrescu, V. Zirra, *Șantierul Sărata Monteoru*, in *SCIV*, 1-2, 1953, p. 72.

²⁵⁸ E. Lako, *Piese de cult din așezarea neolitică de la Zăuan (Sălaș)*, in *AMP*, I, 1977, p. 91, pl. XV/7; XVI/1-3.

²⁵⁹ T. Bader, *op.cit.*, p. 67, pl. LVIII/4.

²⁶⁰ M. Florescu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea concepțiilor despre lume și viață a comunităților tribale monteorene*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 73.

been unearthed. The filling of the pit had a blackish colour and contained in a relatively large number hearth fragments, charcoal pigments, several small animal bones and stones²⁶¹

– Bucu²⁶².

Other fire installations (in connection with the everyday life)

Ovens

The ovens are installations for heating and baking which, in the technology of fire have meant the main practical application of fire discovery and usage, among which it is also the one of transforming materials out of the nature²⁶³. Even if, as we will see, some domestic ovens have been identified, some authors are questioning their existence²⁶⁴. Such complexes have been identified in the following cultural milieus:

1. Bronze Age:

– Monteoru culture:

– Vârteșcoiu – in Dwelling no.17, in its south-eastern side, a domestic oven could be investigated, having a hearth of 0.70 x 0.40 m and with a vault having a height of 0.40 m. Another oven (and we believe that this time it belonged to a pottery maker), has been discovered between the Dwellings no. 5 and 6. It had an oval shape, with a diameter of 1.30 x 1.00 m, having a central pillar in order to sustain the vault; it was made out of river stones, ceramic fragments and clay²⁶⁵.

– Wietenberg culture:

– Coșeni – according to the author of the find, it is an oven that possibly has belonged to a pottery maker. It had a vault with a base of 1.20 m and the maximal height of 0.54 m; in our opinion this was a domestic oven²⁶⁶.

– Tâmpa-La Cazan – pieces of clay have been found, modelled with flutings made with the fingers, above which a thin layer of whitewash has been laid and these might be parts of an oven²⁶⁷

– Verbicioara culture:

– Dobra – in dwelling from Section I/1991²⁶⁸;

– Cârcea – with stone structure²⁶⁹.

²⁶¹ V. Sîrbu, P. Damian, *O așezare de la începutul culturii Tei, descoperită la Căscioarele, jud. Călărași*, in *Istros*, VI, 1992, p. 12, fig. I, II.

²⁶² E. Rențea, *Bucu, com. Bucu, jud. Ialomița*, in *CCAR. Campania 2001, 2002*, p. 71.

²⁶³ Eug. Zaharia, *Cuptor*, in C. Preda (coord.), *Enciclopedia Arheologiei și Istoriei Vechi a României*, vol. I (A-C), București, 1994, p. 392 sq.

²⁶⁴ M. Rotea, *op.cit.*, p. 25.

²⁶⁵ V. Bobi, A. Paragină, *op.cit.*, p. 45, fig. 12.

²⁶⁶ Z. Székely, *Săpăturile executate de Muzeul Regional din Sf. Gheorghe (Reg. Autonomă Maghiară)*, in *MCA*, VII, 1960, p. 182, pl. 2/4.

²⁶⁷ B. Bassa, *op.cit.*, p. 17.

²⁶⁸ G. Crăciunescu, *Stațiunea din epoca bronzului de la Dobra, județul Mehedinți*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 79.

– Coslogeni culture:

– Grădiştea-Coslogeni – several ovens have been identified: Oven no. 1 is a simple one, having a calotte, an approximately round shape, with the lateral elongated opening orientated towards south-east, being situated in a layer of spared clay; the oven had a hearth with 1 m in diameter. Oven no. 2 has been dug into spared clay, under the shape of a vaulting with a diameter of 0.7 m, having the hearth with a length of 1.22 m, surpassing the extremity of the access opening orientated towards north-west-south-east 310. The inside walls have been intensely burnt, this fact being noticed on a thickness of about 6 cm. In front of the oven, at the level of the hearth, on a surface of 2.30/2 m an agglomeration of intensely burnt stones has been found. Oven no. 3 had a hearth with an opening of 0.90 m and was ended in its south-western side with a slightly over raised up step. Oven no. 4 has been also dug into the spared clay, having its burning opening orientated towards east-north-east; its calotte has a hemispherical shape, with a diameter of 0.60 m and a height of 0.50 m. Oven no. 5 had a semicircular calotte, with its opening orientated towards north-east; the oven had a maximal diameter of 1 m, its walls being unevenly burnt; on a side of the hearth a pillar hole has been detected, being probably part of a protection assembly; on its centre, the calotte had an airing orifice. Oven no. 10 had an approximately rounded hearth, with a diameter of 0.95 m and it had several strata of clay. Remains of the calotte represented oven no. 11²⁷⁰.

– Noua culture:

– Gârbovăţ – in Cinderers-zolniki no. I, IV and V ovens have been unearthed, having a diameter of 0.60/1.20 x 0.50/1.00 m and the lenses-shaped, flat-convex cross-section²⁷¹;

– Zoltan – a part of the cinderer uncovered here has been overlapped by an agglomeration consisting, among others, out of burnt clay pieces, probably coming from a vaulted oven²⁷².

2. Hallstatt period:

– Corlăteni group:

– Corlăteni – near a destroyed hearth the probable remnants of an oven have been uncovered, namely an adobe construction, out of which a rectangular plaque have been recovered)²⁷³

– Grăniceşti group:

– Grăniceşti – the hearth of the deepened Dwelling no.1 preserved in three places vertical smoothening up to a height of about 0.03 m, thick of about 0.02 m,

²⁶⁹ M. Nica *et alii*, *op.cit.*, p. 97.

²⁷⁰ M. Neagu, D.B. Nanu, *op.cit.*, p. 107 sqq., fig. 5 sqq.

²⁷¹ A.C. Florescu, Şt. Rugină, D. Vicoveanu, *op.cit.*, p. 76, fig. 1, 2.

²⁷² V. Vasiliev, V. Cavruc, Zoltan, in V. Cavruc (red.), *Repertoriul arheologic al judeţului Covasna, SMA, I, Sfântu Gheorghe*, 1998, p. 89.

²⁷³ I. Nestor, *op.cit.*, p. 92 sq.

which indicate the traces of the basis of an oven vault & the possible remnants of an oven have been discovered in a surface dwelling)²⁷⁴.

– Vârtope aspect:

– Ghidici-Balta *Țarovei* – Dwelling no. 8 contained an oven with hearth, which was located in the northern corner, close to the western wall and was horse-shoe-shaped – 0.80 x 0.80 m, whose vault was preserved on a height of 0.20 m. Also, the Hearth no. 3 in the Dwelling no. 10 could have belonged to an oven²⁷⁵

Kilns

1. Bronze Age:

– Wietenberg culture: Stupini (?)²⁷⁶.

2. Hallstatt period:

– Babadag culture: Babadag – during the excavation in 1991-1992 an oven for ceramics burning has been identified²⁷⁷

Certain pits

Some pits, of various shapes, which are considered by specialists to be complexes for provisions keeping, have undergone a burning of their bottom or walls, sometimes being only partial, in order to become impermeable for liquids.

1. Bronze Age:

– Monteoru culture: Căndești-Coasta *Banului* – a pit with the diameter of 1.80 m and a depth of 1.10 m with its walls well covered with clay, having an inventory consisting in a dish with burnt wheat grains, being surrounded by charcoals and ash;

– Tei culture: București-*Chitila-Cărmidărie* – near the surface dwelling in *Level no. 1*, a bell-shaped pit has been uncovered, with a diameter of 2.20 m and a mouth of 1.25 m²⁷⁸;

– Otomani culture: Carei-*Bobald* – for instance *Pit no. 2* and *5/1989*²⁷⁹

2. Hallstatt period:

– the fortress from Teleac (Pits no. 1 and 4)²⁸⁰;

²⁷⁴ A. László, *op.cit.*, p. 53-55, fig. 4.

²⁷⁵ M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op.cit.*, p. 89 sq., fig. 1.

²⁷⁶ C. Gaiu, *Sat Stupini, com. Sânmihailu de Câmpie, jud. Bistrița-Năsăud, Punct: Fânațele Archiudului*, in CCAR. *Campania 2001, 2002*, p. 301.

²⁷⁷ S. Morintz, G. Jugănar, M. Munteanu, *op.cit.*, p. 223, fig. VII.

²⁷⁸ V. Boronean, *op.cit.*, p. 197, fig. 3.

²⁷⁹ P. Roman, I. Némethi, *Date preliminare asupra cercetărilor arheologice de la Carei-„Bobald”*, in *loc.cit.*, p. 41.

– Vârtop aspect: Ghidici-Balta Țarovei – near the hearth in the Dwelling no. 1 a pit with a diameter of 0.20 m has been detected, being smoothened with clay and probably secondarily burnt²⁸¹.

Some conclusions

Taking into account that, excepting the south-eastern part and partly the south-western region of Romania the remaining territory was forested, it is evident that the people of the Bronze Age and the Hallstatt period, once lacking a clearing in the major vegetation both for establishing their settlements and to enlarge the space they needed for the practising of agriculture, they used to deforest some perimeters, either by cutting down the trees, an operation which is rather difficult, or, more often, by using the fire. Of course, there is not too much information regarding this type of cleaning the area that was destined for fixing a settlement. Still, some situations that have been registered in the archaeological record in the sites at Carei-Bobald and Cârloamănești are eloquent examples.

Once the place has been cleaned of vegetation, some foundation rituals used to be performed, that unfortunately, could not be clearly identified by the archaeological studies. Specific rituals must have been done also on the occasion of founding some constructions, no matter if they were dwellings or shelters. Some finds, especially animal remains, seem to converge towards this hypothesis. We have to mention that in the Otomani milieu, in order to assure a good resistance of the constructions in time some rituals existed, being practised by the entire community and sometimes including even human sacrifices²⁸². Thus, in the close neighbouring of the entrance in the megaron temple at Sălacea, a child skeleton has been discovered. At Otomani, near a dwelling, a woman has been placed in an unusual position, her legs being tied. Anthropologically speaking, it could be inferred that her age at the moment she deceased was around 55 years (*maturus II*) and phenotypically resembled the individuals in the quadruple burial at Sălacea. Close to the woman, another skeleton has been unearthed, probably belonging to an adult, being buried together with a dog skull.

As we could see, the fire installations (hearths, ovens, some pits) have been located both in the perimeter of the constructions and outside them. Evidently, those installations had certain functionality. First, we have to mention the domestic one, the hearths and the ovens being employed for the food preparation. Also, they were used as a source for heating and lighting. Some hearths had also a cultic role, upon them being cooked the foods used in some magical-religious ceremonies.

Evidently, the hearth types of the Bronze Age and the Hallstatt period have been maintained in the Romanian space along all periods, reaching up to the 19th-20th centuries of the 2nd millennium A.D. Of course, the weight of a certain type or another has

²⁸⁰ V. Vasiliev, I. Al. Aldea, H. Ciugudean, *op. cit.*, p. 43. See also A. Ursuțiu, *Cu privire la caracterul unor descoperiri aparținând primei vârste a fierului din Transilvania*, in *Istros*, X, 2000, p. 105 sqq.

²⁸¹ M. Nica, P. Rogozea, *op.cit.*, p. 201, fig. 5/1; M. Nica, S. Lazăr, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

²⁸² Al. Comșa, C. Schuster, *Unele aspecte ale practicării sacrificiului uman în prima perioadă a epocii metalelor, pe teritoriul României*, in *AMN*, 32, I, 1995, p. 282 sq.

varied in time: for some has increased, for others, on the contrary, has decreased. In some cases, the simple stove or the one with oven have taken the place of the open hearth.

The data regarding the hearth of the Bronze Age and the Hallstatt period as a factor around which an entire family, group of families or the whole community gravitates are almost inexistent. The location, often chaotic of the houses and implicitly of the hearths (fact which is also valid for the domestic and storage pits), doesn't provide us clear information in the sense of the above mentioned issue. Evidently, the hearth inside the dwelling served to a single family. The exterior ones were probably used in common by several families or by larger family comprising families-generations.

Unfortunately, the presence of the hearths in the settlements, doesn't offer us a picture of the inner structure of the habitat, the social organization of the community and the number of its members. We have already found the presumption about the inner single hearths. Yet, the presence of several hearths in a larger construction gives complications to the demographic calculations. To all these, the existence of the exterior hearths can be added, which, as we mentioned, several families could employ.

Regarding the decorated cultic hearths from Sighișoara-Dealul Turcului, a fear debate has existed. N. Boroffka²⁸³ has questioned the belonging of these hearths to the Wietenberg culture. Subsequently, as a decorated fragment of a hearth has been found in a cultic pit at Albești, he changed his opinion²⁸⁴

The fire has made possible the food preparation. The meat and plants have been transformed by fire, thus, making more accessible and diversified the nutrition of man. Some vegetables have been boiled, the same like a part of the meat. The meat could be also fried or roasted. The seeds, especially the cereal ones, after being grinded, have been also boiled, thus being obtained mashies or have been baked, thus being made small breads.

Not only for the food has been transformed the raw material by using the fire. Some other categories of raw materials were the ores and clay that underwent the same process.

In the MBA, but especially in the LBA and the Hallstatt period a more intense metallurgical activity has been detected, especially in Transylvania and less intensely in Banat. The other historical provinces have also accounts for the metal processing, only that, due to the lack of raw material has been less intensely performed by the communities in Oltenia, Muntenia, Dobrogea and Moldova. Notably, the moulding elements, metal objects, moulding remnants have been discovered both in the settlements, burials but also in the deposits. In the latter case, the metal objects have become prestige goods.

The fire has received a primary role in developing some objects categories that became indispensable to the every day life, but also to the magical-religious practices, as it was the pottery. The multitude of vase types, of other burnt clay objects, that could entirely be recovered or just in fragments, in large quantities in the settlements but also in necropolises or isolated burials are proves in this sense. A

²⁸³ N. Boroffka, *op.cit.*, p. 104.

²⁸⁴ Gh. Baltag, N. Boroffka, *op.cit.*, p. 380, 390, fig. 10/2.
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significant part of pottery has been used in the households for keeping, preparing or consuming the foods and liquids. Some of the recipients were rather ruffly made, some others being done more carefully and with better quality clay. Their burning, being either intense, by using various wood essences for combustion has created the possibility to obtain other kinds of recipients too.

Among other burnt clay pieces – (out of which we have chosen just few: idols, cultic tables, altars, hearths, *Fußschalen*, fuming vases, *Feuerböcke*) out of their large line – have been employed in the every day life, while others in the cultic ones. Not few are those with double utility and we consider here some vases – the cups for instance are found both in the settlements and in the burials, also the miniature houses etc. Interestingly, in the LBA, according to Al. Vulpe²⁸⁵, it seems that the importance of the prestige goods has been replaced by the value of the metal. In his opinion, the presence of the fragmentary pieces symbolizes on one hand their primary function and on the other hand their value in metal, a process that seem to point to a laicisation of the sacred significance, the sacred value being replaced by the metal quantity that still maintains a sacred significance.

²⁸⁵ Al. Vulpe, *Deponierungen, Opferstätten und Symbolgut im Karpatengebiet*, in P. Schuster (ed.), *Archäologische Forschungen zum Kultgeschehen in der jüngeren Bronzezeit und frühen Eisenzeit Alteuropas, Regensburger Beiträge zur Prähistorischen Archäologie*, Bd. 2., 1996, p. 520, 522.