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Museum of Gorj County  
(Târgu Jiu)



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(Bucharest)

Council of Gorj County

National Archaeological Institute  
with Museum (Sofia)

Institute of Archaeology  
(Belgrade)

# ***1st Symposium of Balkan Prehistory (4th-2nd Millennium BCE)***

14th-18th May 2024  
Târgu Jiu, Romania





**ALEXANDRU ȘTEFULESCU  
MUSEUM OF GORJ COUNTY  
(TÂRGU JIU)**



**VASILE PÂRVAN  
INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY  
(BUCHAREST)**



**COUNCIL OF GORJ COUNTY**



**NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
INSTITUTE WITH MUSEUM  
(SOFIA)**



**INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY  
(BELGRADE)**

***1<sup>ST</sup> SYMPOSIUM OF BALKAN PREHISTORY  
(4<sup>TH</sup>-2<sup>ND</sup> MILLENNIA BCE)***

**14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024  
TÂRGU JIU, ROMANIA**

## Organising Committee

**Dumitru Hortopan**

*Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of  
Gorj County (Tg. Jiu, Romania)

**Radu Băjenaru**

*Vasile Pârvan* Institute of Archaeology  
(Bucharest, Romania)

**Stefan Alexandrov**

National Archaeological Institute  
with Museum (Sofia, Bulgaria)

**Aleksandar Bulatović**

Institute of Archaeology  
(Belgrade, Serbia),

## Main Program

### Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> May

**12.00 - 19.00**

*Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of Gorj County

- Arrival and Register

Hotel *Europa*

- Accommodation

**19.00 - 22.00**

Hotel *Europa*

- Dinner

### Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> May

**7.00 - 8.40**

Hotel *Europa*

- Breakfast

**9.00 - 9.30**

*Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of Gorj County

- Official opening of the Symposium

**9.30 - 12.00**

*Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of Gorj County

- Presentations

**12.20 - 13.40**

Hotel *Europa*

- Lunch

**14.00 - 18.00**

*Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of Gorj County

- Presentations

**19.00 - 22.00**

Hotel *Europa*

- Dinner

**1<sup>ST</sup> SYMPOSIUM OF BALKAN PREHISTORY (14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024, TÂRGU JIU, ROMANIA)****Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> May****7.00 - 8.40**Hotel *Europa*

- Breakfast

**9.00 - 12.00***Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of Gorj County

- Presentations

**12.20 - 13.40**Hotel *Europa*

- Lunch

**14.00 - 16.30***Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of Gorj County

- Presentations and concluding discussion

**16.30 - 18.30**

- Visit the Museum Exhibition

**19.00 - 22.00**Hotel *Europa*

- Dinner

**Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> May****7.00 - 10.00**Hotel *Europa*

- Breakfast

**10.00 - 17.00**

- Fieldtrip (Tismana Monastery, Memorial House of Constantin Brâncuși in Hobița, Village Museum in Curtișoara)

**18.00 - 22.00**

- Dinner

**Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> May****7.00 - 10.00**Hotel *Europa*

- Breakfast

**10.00** - Departure

## List of Contributors / Participants (in alphabetical order)

**SORIN-CRISTIAN AILINCĂI** (*Gavrilă Simion Eco-Museum Research Institute, Tulcea, Romania*)

**STEFAN ALEXANDROV** (National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria)

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**UMUT M. DOĞAN** (Edirne Archeology and Ethnography Museum, Turkey)

**ANA DROB** (*Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Arheoinvest Centre, Romania*)

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**ALEXANDRA GĂVAN** (University of Cologne, Department of Prehistoric Archaeology, Köln, Germany)

**FLORIN GOGÂLTAN** (Institute of Archaeology and Art History, Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, Romania)

1<sup>ST</sup> SYMPOSIUM OF BALKAN PREHISTORY (14<sup>TH</sup>-18<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024, TÂRGU JIU, ROMANIA)

**DANICA GRUJIĆ** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

**Constantin HAITĂ** (National Museum of Romanian History, Bucharest, Romania)

**Dumitru HORTOPAN** (*Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of Gorj County, Târgu Jiu, Romania)

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**GEORGI IVANOV** (National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria)

**ALEKSANDAR KAPURAN** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

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**ROXANA MUNTEANU** (Buzău County Museum, Romania)

**IVAN NINČIĆ** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

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## Detailed Program of Presentations

Alexandru Ștefulescu Museum of Gorj County

### Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> May

#### 9.00-9.30 – Official opening of the Symposium

- Dr. Dumitru Hortopan, Director of *Alexandru Ștefulescu* Museum of Gorj County
- Gheorghe Nichifor, Vice-President of Gorj County Council
- Dr. Radu Băjenaru, *Vasile Pârvan* Institute of Archaeology, Bucharest
- Dr. Stefan Alexandrov, Deputy Director of National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Sofia
- Dr. Aleksandar Bulatović, Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade

#### 9.30-12.00 – Presentations. Chairing session: Stefan Alexandrov

##### 9.30-10.00 – Cristian Schuster (Bucharest)

*Were the relief forms and hydrographic network, obstacles for the dissemination of the communities during the Bronze Age of Southern Romania?*

##### 10.00-10.30 – Aleksandar Bulatović, Ognjen Mladenović (Belgrade)

*Changes in material Culture between the Late Neolithic and the Early Eneolithic in the Central Balkans: A Case Study of Marjansko Brdo*

#### 10.30-11.00 – Coffee break

##### 11.00-11.30 – Adina Boroneanț, Oana Calancea, Corina Simion, Daniela Stan (Bucharest)

*Revisiting the Coțofeni occupation from Cuina Turcului Rockshelter (Iron Gates, Romania)*

##### 11.30-12.00 – Georgi Ivanov (Sofia)

*The Early Bronze Age in Northern Bulgaria. New sites and studies*

#### 12.00-14.00 – Lunch

#### 14.00-18.00 – Presentations. Chairing session: Cristian Schuster

##### 14.00-14.30 – Aleksandar Kapuran (Belgrade), Mario Gavranović (Vienna), Petar Milojević (Belgrade)

*Banjska Stena hill-fort: Three decades after the first excavations*



1<sup>ST</sup> SYMPOSIUM OF BALKAN PREHISTORY (14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024, TÂRGU JIU, ROMANIA)

**14.30-15.00 – Petar Milojević, Aleksandar Kapuran (Belgrade)**

*Archaeological excavations at Popovica, a multi-layered prehistoric hillfort near Sokobanja (Central Balkans)*

**15.00-15.30 – Roxana Munteanu (Buzău)**

*Early and Middle Bronze Age at Pietroasa Mică-Gruiu Dării*

**15.30-16.00 – Ognjen Mladenović, Aleksandar Bulatović, Danica Grujić (Belgrade)**

*Mogila-Cigansko Brdo: Middle Bronze Age horizon. A contribution to the study of chronology and distribution of the Vatin group*

**16.00-16.30 – Coffee break**

**16.30-17.00 – Alexandra Găvan (Cologne), Marian Adrian Lie (Iași), Tobias L. Kienlin (Cologne)**

*Toboliu Project: A framework for the study of Bronze Age tells in south-eastern Europe*

**17.00-17.30 – Danica Grujić, Ivan Ninčić, Vojislav Filipović (Belgrade)**

*Late Bronze Age eponymic site on the Danube: insights from the faunal remains and archaeological features at Žuto brdo site*

**17.30-18.00 – Sorin-Cristian Ailincăi (Tulcea), Paul Ciobotaru (Tecuci), Adrian Bălășescu (Bucharest), Ana Drob (Iași), Corina Simion, Cristian Mănăilescu, Constantin Haită (Bucharest)**

*About the end of the Bronze Age in Southern Moldova. The archaeological excavations carried out in the site of the Noua culture at Tecuci*

**Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> May**

**9.00-12.00 – Presentations. Chairing session: Florin Gogâltan**

**9.00-9.30 – Umut M. Doğan (Edirne)**

*The end of the Bronze Age: What do the findings in Turkish Thrace tell us?*

**9.30-10.00 – Ivan Ninčić, Danica Grujić, Vojislav Filipović (Belgrade)**

*Marjansko brdo: La Tène period horizon*

**10.00-10.30 – Stefan Alexandrov (Sofia)**

*Mortuary practices during the Late Bronze Age in North-West Bulgaria*

**10.30-11.00 – Coffee break**

1<sup>ST</sup> SYMPOSIUM OF BALKAN PREHISTORY (14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024, TÂRGU JIU, ROMANIA)

**11.00-11.30 – Martin Hristov (Sofia)**

*Main types of gold objects and their distribution in ritual structures near the village of Dabene, Karlovo region in South Bulgaria*

**11.30-12.00 – Lyuben Leshtakov (Sofia)**

*Bronze Age Metal Ingots from the Eastern Balkans*

**12.00-14.00 – Lunch**

**14.00-16.30 – Presentations. Chairing session: Aleksandar Bulatović**

**14.00-14.30 – Christos N. Kleitsas (Ioannina)**

*On Early Bronze Age hoards and axes from Greece: The current state of the debate*

**14.30-15.00 – Florin Gogâltan (Cluj-Napoca)**

*Early Bronze Age Axes between Transylvania and the Balkans*

**15.00-15.30 – Radu Băjenaru (Bucharest)**

*The Veselinovo-type of axes in the context of the early Bronze Age metallurgy in north-eastern Balkan Peninsula*

**15.30-16.00 – Neculai Bolohan (Iași)**

*Assimilation and transfer of metal goods during Middle Bronze Age at the Eastern fringe of the Carpathians. Seven years after*

**16.00-16.30 – Concluding remarks**

## Abstracts

***Were the relief forms and hydrographic network, obstacles for the dissemination of the communities during the Bronze Age of Southern Romania?***

**Cristian Schuster** (Vasile Pârvan Institute of Archaeology, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania)

When we take a look at the map of Southern Romania, namely from West to East, to Oltenia and Muntenia, we could easily notice that they were delimited to the North and West by the Meridional Carpathians, to the South by the Danube, while to the East by the Sireth River and its tributaries. If this latter river one was easily crossed in some

specific moments, the Danube and Carpathians could have been serious obstacles for the movement of the human communities. The results of the archaeological investigations in the two mentioned historical provinces, but also in their neighboring regions, had demonstrated the connections existing between the mentioned spaces, proofs in this sense being some cultural manifestations which were present on both banks of the large river and on both sides of the mountains, similar customs (funerary, ritual/religious and domestic ones), as well as imported goods. Our communication would bring forward to discussion such kind of proofs, which could certify the movements of the human groups as well as the circulation by exchanges (or gifts) of some materials items.

### ***Changes in material Culture between the Late Neolithic and the Early Eneolithic in the Central Balkans: A Case Study of Marjansko Brdo***

**Aleksandar Bulatović, Ognjen Mladenović** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

During the spring of 2023, the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade excavated the site of Marjansko brdo in the village of Majilovac near Veliko Gradište, on the Danubes' terrace. This multilayered site was continuously settled from the Neolithic to the Roman time. Besides Early Vinča Neolithic houses, several pits dated between the 47th and the 44th century calBCA were recorded. The ceramic inventory of the pits represents the evolution of the Late Neolithic pottery into the Early Eneolithic pottery. Interestingly, traces of malachite, azurite, and copper finds, as well as traces of metallurgy, were discovered in almost all of the discussed structures.

The analysis of pottery from the Late Neolithic and the Early Eneolithic structures indicates that no significant changes in pottery forms and ornamentation occurred within the given period of circa 350 years.

### ***Revisiting the Coțofeni occupation from Cuina Turcului Rockshelter (Iron Gates, Romania)***

**Adina Boroneanț** (Vasile Pârvan Institute of Archaeology, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania), **Oana Calancea, Corina Simion, Daniela Stan** (Horia Hulubei National Institute for R&D in Physics and Nuclear Engineering, Măgurele, Romania)

The rock shelter at Cuina Turcului was investigated prior to the construction of the Iron Gates I hydro-electric power station and dam. The site had a multi-layered stratigraphy, ranging from the Epipaleolithic to the modern age. Early prehistoric occupations (Epipaleolithic and Early Neolithic) were the focus of several publications but little importance was given to the Early Bronze Age occupation (Coțofeni) at the site. Our presentation briefly reviews the biography of the site while adding substantial new data on the chronology of the Early Bronze

Age occupation. Computed tomography studies on the Coțofeni pottery from the site provide further insights in the life of the Early Bronze Age community in the Iron Gates area.

### ***The Early Bronze Age in Northern Bulgaria. New sites and studies***

**Georgi Ivanov** (National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria)

The text presents new sites and finds from the Early Bronze Age in Central Northern Bulgaria. The area of research includes the drainage basin area of the rivers Ogosta, Iskar, Vit and Osam. Studies of the Early Bronze Age in the region develop in several stages. The earliest studies are by H. Todorova (1968) and P. Roman (1976). Later S. Alexandrov (1992) outlines the urban characteristics of the Orlea-Sadovec culture, the beginning of the Cotofeni culture in northern Bulgaria. Bulgarian-Danish studies were conducted in several places in the vicinity of the village of Sadovec in early 21st century. Those studies were able to provide new information about habitation in the earliest stages of the Bronze Age.

In 2011, 2012 and 2014, searches were conducted along three routes of a gas pipeline and along a highway route. Thanks to them, new sites from the period were registered near the towns of Kozloduy, Oryahovo, Mizia, Dolni Dabnik, Pleven and Lovech. Later, during the construction of the gas pipeline and the highway, other objects, structures and materials from the period were revealed.

Excavations have been carried out at several sites. Popska Mogila has been studied the longest through regular excavations of a small area, from 2012 to 2018. The excavations show the picture of habitation, provide information on the nature of the residential and other structures from the Early Bronze Age. There are 20 radiocarbon dates from this site, of which 13 fall into EBA, approximately divided into two groups - 3350-3100 and 3100-2850 calBC. In 2021, rescue studies began in the village of Bohot. From there, dug structures were uncovered. Ceramics are characteristic of EBA 3. Information from 4 radiocarbon dates indicates that the habitat was short (2450-2300 calBC). The excavations of a settlement near the village of Vladinia outline the picture of the habitation from the end of EBA and the beginning of the MBA, according to the received radiocarbon dates.

### ***Banjska Stena hill-fort: Three decades after the first excavations***

**Aleksandar Kapuran** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia), **Mario Gavranović** (Austrian Archaeological Institute, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria), **Petar Milojević** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

The Banjska Stena hill-fort represents an important site for the research of pre-historic communities that settled North Eastern Serbia and especially the Timok River

Basin between the Copper Age and the Roman conquest. The initial research was conducted by Dragoslav Srejšović during the nineties of the last century, and the results were published only in the form of short excavation reports. Following a three-decade-long break, the Serbian and Austrian Archaeological Institutes carried out a revision excavation intending to obtain absolute dates from different phases of the prehistoric settlement at Banjska Stena hill-fort. Thanks to the international cooperation on the project "Bronze Age in Northeastern Serbia - Metallurgy, Settlements and Necropolises", the acquired absolute dates provided us with new data for modeling the occupation of the areas settled by the Copper and Bronze Age communities during the 3rd and 2nd millennium BC.

### ***Archaeological excavations at Popovica, a multi-layered prehistoric hillfort near Sokobanja (Central Balkans)***

**Petar Milojević, Aleksandar Kapuran** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

During the years 2022. and 2023, two archaeological campaigns were carried out at the hillfort of Popovica, near Sokobanja, in eastern Serbia. In addition to archaeological excavations, the research at Popovica included geomagnetic surveys that almost completely recorded the highest plateau of the site. Research was carried out as part of the project „Archaeological research of sites from the Early Iron Age in the territory of the municipality of Sokobanja“, organised by the Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade. In five trenches were documented 7,010 mobile archaeological findings, namely, ceramic fragments, animal bones, flint, worked stone and daub. Most of the findings are ceramics fragments, 5,891 in total, out of which 778 specimens were selected as indicative of chronological and cultural characterisation. Almost no material from the historical phases of the past was recorded in the researched layers, therefore, on the basis of the research conducted so far, it can be concluded that Popovica was an exclusively prehistoric site. Three settlement phases were clearly established at the hillfort, identified on the basis of stratigraphic units and stylistic-typological traits of the ceramic material. Horizons from the Early Iron Age, Middle/Late Bronze Age and Late Eneolithic were singled out, which, according to the dominant cultural manifestations, can be linked to the Gornea-Kalakača, Bubanj-Hum IV and Coşofeni-Kostolac cultures. Additionally, pottery pieces with elements of the Vučedol, Gamzigrad, Paraćin, Gáva, Pšeničevo-Babadag and Basarabi cultures were found sporadically, with the presence of surface findings of Late La Tène ceramics made on potter's wheel. The mentioned research also revealed remnants of a drywall, which were probably the remains of prehistoric fortification architecture. The drywall most likely had two construction phases, considering the fact that two of its elements with different extension direction and different techniques of stacking stones were registered.

***Early and Middle Bronze Age at Pietroasa Mică-Gruiu Dării*****Roxana Munteanu** (Buzău County Museum, Buzău, Romania)

Among the numerous occupational sequences documented in this site located on the contact zone between the Curvature Subcarpathians and the Romanian Plain, the layers corresponding to the Eneolithic and Bronze Age are of particular importance. The consistent anthropic deposit pertaining to the Early and Middle Bronze Age sequences reaches over one meter thickness in some places. Numerous features – numerous pits, light wattle and daub buildings, various earthworks - properly document these habitations. Ongoing excavations on the north side of the main plateau have shown that the richest phase of this site corresponds to the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age. This well-established settlement from the very beginning of the Middle Bronze Age is substantiated by earlier habitation, as the first major changes in the topography of the site occur during the 3rd millennium BC.

The corroboration of data about this site with those referring to other human presences in the neighboring territory reveals the central role of the Gruiu Dării settlement in the cultural context of the III-II millennia BC.

The presentation integrates the results of recent excavations and absolute chronology data to support the relevance of the research from Pietroasa Mică for understanding the cultural and chronological context from the Early and Middle Bronze Age in north-eastern Wallachia.

***Mogila-Cigansko Brdo: Middle Bronze Age horizon. A contribution to the study of chronology and distribution of the Vatin group*****Ognjen Mladenović, Aleksandar Bulatović, Danica Grujić** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

During the rescue archaeological excavations connected with the construction of the Požarevac-Golubac Motorway, the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade conducted archaeological excavations on sixteen archaeological sites in the period between 2022 and 2024. The site of Mogila-Cigansko Brdo, located in the outskirts of the present-day city of Požarevac in Northeastern Serbia was excavated in late 2022 and spring of 2023. The vertical stratigraphy at the site indicated that the site was settled during the Middle Bronze Age (Vatin group), Late Bronze Age (Žuto Brdo group), and the Early Roman Period. Additionally, several burials attributed to the Late Antique Period were recorded within the eastern periphery of the site. Of particular importance are Middle and Late Bronze Age features which yielded suitable materials for both the stylistic and typological analyses, archaeozoological analyses, and the absolute dating. Two features, a semi-

sunken dwelling and a single burial from the Middle Bronze Age are of particular importance, since those allow for new interpretations of the territorial and chronological position of the Vatin group in the territory of Northeastern Serbia.

### ***Toboliu Project: A framework for the study of Bronze Age tells in south-eastern Europe***

**Alexandra Găvan** (University of Cologne, Department of Prehistoric Archaeology, Köln, Germany), **Marian Adrian Lie** (Institute of Archaeology, Romanian Academy, Iași Branch, Romania), **Tobias L. Kienlin** (University of Cologne, Department of Prehistoric Archaeology, Köln, Germany)

Toboliu is a multi-component Bronze Age settlement located in western Romania. The site consists of a tell enclosed by two concentric ditches and an extensive outer settlement. Excavations on the tell between 2014 and 2017 uncovered its complete stratigraphic sequence, consisting of seven successive occupation phases in approximately 4 m of anthropic deposits. Significant new insights into the extent, chronology, and internal layout of the entire site were provided by non-invasive investigations (topographic surveys, systematic fieldwalking, aerial photography, geophysical survey and core drilling) carried out between 2015 and 2022, which have revealed that the tell was only a small component of a much larger and more complex settlement. Through these methods, we could establish the existence of a large outer settlement surrounding the tell, covering an area of approximately 84 hectares. In order to gain insights into the architecture, chronology, and subsistence practices of the outer settlement of the Toboliu tell, we carried out targeted excavations in this part of the site between 2019 and 2023.

This presentation will discuss the main results of all these investigations and provide an overview of the methodological framework employed for the Toboliu Project. This framework was developed in order to fully explore and reconstruct the diachronic spatial, chronological, and socio-economic trajectories of a tell-based settlement complex of the 2nd millennium BC. It is argued that the methodology employed in the Toboliu Project can be applied to other Bronze Age multistratified sites in south-eastern Europe in order to significantly improve our knowledge of these settlements and contribute to the current knowledge on the development of complex sites in the region.

### ***Late Bronze Age eponymic site on the Danube: insights from the faunal remains and archaeological features at Žuto brdo site***

**Danica Grujić, Ivan Ninčić, Vojislav Filipović** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

Archaeological site Žuto brdo is located around the confluence of the Tumanska river with the Danube, in eastern Serbia, just before the Iron Gates. The first archaeological excavations of Žuto brdo site took place at the very beginning of the 20th century,



and later the site was excavated several times. During 2022, due to the construction of the motor road Požarevac - Veliko Gradište - Golubac, protective archaeological investigations were conducted by the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade. During these excavations, a larger number of archaeological finds from the period of Late Bronze Age (Žuto brdo group) were discovered, as well as several finds from the period of Roman domination. The distribution and degree of fragmentation of the faunal and ceramic material indicated that the investigated area of the Žuto brdo archaeological site served as a garbage dump just beside a potential settlement.

The results of the archaeozoological analysis indicated that the most represented were remains of domestic animals, that is, the remains of domestic cattle, caprines, domestic pigs and dogs. Wild mammals were represented with red deer, roe deer, wild boar, European hare and auroch. Other archaeological material provided lot of fragmented pots ornamented with typical rich decoration with white incrustation. Several anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines was found, as well as LBA amulets. Specific finds were presented by mold for typical lunular LBA pendants and, so far unique find of paleontological shell of the *potamides bidentatus* which could be first confirmation of fossil use, because shell tip is obviously used and numbed.

### ***About the end of the Bronze Age in Southern Moldova. The archaeological excavations carried out in the site of the Noua culture at Tecuci***

**Sorin-Cristian Ailincăi** (*Gavrilă Simion* Eco-Museum Research Institute, Tulcea, Romania), **Paul Ciobotaru** (*Teodor Cincu* Museum, Tecuci, Romania), **Adrian Bălăşescu** (*Vasile Pârvan* Institute of Archaeology, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania), **Ana Drob** (*Alexandru Ioan Cuza* University of Iaşi, Arheoinvest Centre, Romania), **Corina Simion**, **Cristian Mănăilescu** (*Horia Hulubei* National Institute for R&D in Physics and Nuclear Engineering, Măgurele, Romania), **Constantin Haită** (National Museum of Romanian History, Bucharest, Romania)

One of the most representative cultures for the end of the Bronze Age is the Noua culture, documented over a very large area that included most of Transylvania, Moldova to both banks of the Middle Dniester, Subcarpathian Ukraine, while the southern limit can be established towards the Brăila Plain and Northern Dobrogea. Noua "cultural package" are quite homogeneous despite the large spread area. In this sense, we can mention the use of a certain type of habitat known as "ashmounds", as well as the predominant use of inhumation as a funeral rite, as can be seen in the cemeteries researched especially in Transylvania and Moldova. The ceramic forms are also quite homogeneous, although some differences can be observed in the southern and northern areas, mainly due to the influences from the neighboring cultural areas.

Although there is a large amount of research carried out in sites attributed to this culture, only a small part of it has been properly published. In these conditions, recent research can bring important new information. Our presentation will refer to the results of research carried out in 2013 near Tecuci. On this occasion, a new "ashmound" and also



numerous other habitat structures (mainly pits) were investigated. Data processing gives us the opportunity to bring important new information about the habitat, material culture and chronology of these communities.

### ***The end of the Bronze Age: What do the findings in Turkish Thrace tell us?***

**Umut M. Doğan** (Edirne Archeology and Ethnography Museum, Turkey)

In the part of Eastern Thrace within Turkey, the 2nd Millennium BC data do not show a standard geographical distribution. This period is strongly represented in the Maydos Kilisetepe Mound on the Gallipoli (Gelibolu) Peninsula at the southern end of the region. The surface of Keşan Mound in the north of the Gallipoli Peninsula is also recorded to have yielded Troy VI pottery. The excavations at the ancient city of Bathonea on the eastern edge of Thrace yielded Middle/Late Bronze Age material related to Central Anatolia and Cyprus.

Nevertheless, no finds dating to the Middle Bronze Age and the first phase of the Late Bronze Age were found in the central part of Turkish Thrace. At the Menekşe Çatağı Mound on the Marmara Sea coast and Aşağıpınar on the southern slopes of the Strandja Mountains, the settlement levels are interrupted from the end of the 3rd Millennium BC until the beginning of the Iron Age.

This cultural interruption in the central part of the region is a difficult phenomenon to analyze. Can this interruption, which lasted for several centuries, be explained by a pastoral life with a low cultural level, born out of a climatic crisis? If this suggestion is correct, why did the same crisis not affect the peripheral parts of the region?

Some political structures mentioned in Hittite texts are localized to Northwestern Anatolia. While some scholars argue that the Ahhiyawa Country covered the southern shores of today's Marmara Sea and the islands, a much more widespread view accepts the existence of a powerful Assuwa Kingdom in Northwestern Anatolia.

The 2nd Millennium BC kingdom in northwestern Anatolia, Thrace's overseas neighbor to the south, may have created a large buffer zone in Turkish Thrace against attacks from the interior of the Balkans. This buffer zone, where a low standard of living was allowed, would have been reinforced by the creation of garrison settlements protecting trade routes along the Keşan Plain - Gallipoli Peninsula line on the western side of the buffer zone and around the Bosphorus. Some archaeological data found in the immediate vicinity of the Keşan Plain reveal the importance of the Keşan Plain especially during the Bronze Age.

It is known that in different phases of history, buffer zones with such evacuated living spaces were established. On the other hand, it is also known that the threats of the Northern Peoples towards Anatolia led to measures being taken in many periods of history.

In the last quarter of the 2nd millennium BC, cultural mobility suddenly increases in Turkish Thrace. The traces of the 12th Century Crisis that engulfed the entire Eastern Mediterranean are also evident here. Many archaeological sites such as Taşlıcabayır

Tumulus, Arpalık Dolmeni, Beşiktepe fortress settlement are traces of this mobility. The fact that this new period emerged almost simultaneously with the disappearance of strong political structures in Anatolia strengthens our theory.

### ***Marjansko brdo: La Tène period horizon***

**Ivan Ninčić, Danica Grujić, Vojislav Filipović** (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, Serbia)

The site of Marjansko brdo is located 16 km northwest from the city of Požarevac, halfway between the villages of Majilovac and Kurjače. During the rescue excavation campaign of 2022-2023, on the route of the future Požarevac-Veliko Gradište-Golubac motorway, conducted by the Institute of Archaeology from Belgrade, Marjansko brdo was investigated among 14 other potential archeological site locations. The downside of such excavations was the limited exploration zone of the expropriated land for the plotted road-to-be, that rarely exceeded 65-75 m, with some wider stretches, especially on the eastern part, where an intersection was planned. Archeological remains from the Marjansko brdo site were detected on a section almost 500 m long, that was divided into three sectors, separated naturally by two land depressions approximately 75 m long.

The site yielded rich archaeological remains ranging from Neolithic, through Eneolithic, Bronze and Early Iron Age, to the late La Tène period, despite the fact that the excavated area within the expropriated zone only covered a possible periphery of the settlement, that could have been further north, where the land elevation is at its highest. Both vertical and horizontal stratigraphy were documented, with most of the finds in the western (Sector 1) and central sector (Sector 2).

La Tène period on the site included at least 20 buried archaeological features, out of 75 documented on Marjansko brdo, and a cultural stratum spread sporadically across the western and central sector. Most of these features were pits filled with pottery, and animal bones to a lesser extent, that sometimes disturbed earlier horizons, most notably Vinča period houses. Movable finds included pottery fragments and metal objects that proposed late La Tène period dating. This paper will present finds of this horizon on the site as a contribution to the understanding of the period in the Eastern Serbia.

### ***Mortuary practices during the Late Bronze Age in North-West Bulgaria***

**Stefan Alexandrov** (National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria)

In the report, several Late Bronze Age necropolises investigated in the last 15 years in North-West Bulgaria are discussed. These are Baley, Kula and Gramada (Vidin

region), Glozene and Miziya (Vratsa district). Although with different numbers of graves explored, the newly discovered sites confirm the affirmation that the main method of disposal during the Late Bronze Age in the region was cremation. Only Glozene necropolis revealed bi-ritualism, with two inhumation graves discovered there as well. With the already known sites from the region considered, the total number of the Late Bronze Age necropolises in North-West Bulgaria would reach fifteen.

Considering the radiocarbon dates obtained for some features from the newly discovered necropolises, the Late Bronze Age grave structures from North-West Bulgaria would cover, generally, the 1500 – 1100 calBC period. Related to the mortuary practices, three different cultural areas could be distinguished: the Danube River one related to the Encrusted Pottery phenomenon; inland territories related to Late Verbicioara and, the southwestern areas that show close analogies to Gamzigrad sites.

Some chronological problems and questions related to the relations between North-West Bulgaria and the adjacent region are discussed as well.

### ***Main types of gold objects and their distribution in ritual structures near the village of Dabene, Karlovo region in South Bulgaria***

**Martin Hristov** (National Museum of History, Sofia, Bulgaria)

The ritual structures discovered 15 years ago near village of Dabene, Karlovo region in Southern Bulgaria belong to several types - circular with two types and elliptical. They have revealed different types of objects - gold ornaments, their elements, silver, bronze, glass and ceramic objects.

Among the gold objects, several large groups stand out, which make it possible to analyze their distribution by shapes and types of structures. This, and on the basis of the known absolute dates, also makes it possible to assume the chronological proximity of the structures themselves.

### ***Bronze Age Metal Ingots from the Eastern Balkans***

**Lyuben Leshtakov** (National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria)

The metal ingots are often referred to when one discusses long-distance trade and contacts. There are numerous archaeological studies focused on the oxhide and bun ingots found in modern Bulgaria. They are often interpreted as a proof for the intensive contacts between the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean. The analysis of the artifacts found to this day shows that there are several other types of metal ingots and moulds for their production which were in use in various activities during the Bronze Age. The present article is focused on their typology, chronology, production and use. The analysis of

their dissemination across Southeastern Europe and Anatolia shows that the Balkans were part of the long-distance trade networks but also shows the common artisan techniques used for their production. During the Early Bronze Age some ingot types were influenced by the more advanced centers in Anatolia. With the beginning of the Late Bronze Age new types emerge with analogies in Central and Southeastern Europe. This supplemented by the use of other common artefacts clearly shows the existence of common metallurgical traditions which was already suggested by E. Chernykh, B. Molloy and M. Mödlinger. The existence of common types used in various archaeological cultures also suggests common weight system used in metal trade.

### ***On Early Bronze Age hoards and axes from Greece: The current state of the debate***

**Christos N. Kleitsas** (Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Ephorate of Antiquities of Ioannina, Archaeological Museum of Ioannina, Greece)

The Early Bronze Age roughly coincides with the third millennium BCE in the Helladic area. Significant changes are observed both in the various fields of social organization and technological traditions. Following older opinions of archaeologists or other researchers, the rapid development of metallurgy and metalworking in the Aegean is characterized as Metall-Shock (Schachermeyr 1955, 182) or as Metallurgy Explosion (Branigan 1974, 105-114). At the same time, new types of copper-based tools or weapons appear, while sets of them are hidden with the main goal of storage, recycling or offering to the supernatural. The material culture of the region receives significant influence from the Balkans immediately to the north.

To date, we know of only ten hoards of copper-based artefacts from mainland Greece and the Aegean islands, half from a settlement area and the other half from an open-air site. These are usually small assemblages, which mainly include a few types of tools. The objects consist both of pure copper or copper-based alloys (arsenic or tin). Of particular interest are copper-based single-edged shaft-hole axes, which are found inside or outside hoards, mainly located in the northernmost Helladic area. They duplicate more northern Balkan forms, although local production of some types can be traced. Relevant data are discussed in the context of this specific time and place.

### ***Early Bronze Age Axes between Transylvania and the Balkans***

**Florin Gogâltan** (Institute of Archaeology and Art History, Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, Romania)

Over wide areas, including Transylvania and the Balkans, various types of shaft-hole axes (such as Baniabic, Corbasca, Fajsz, Kozarac, Dumbrăvioara, Veselinovo,

Izvoarele, Pătulele, etc.) represent a metallurgical innovation of the 3rd millennium BC. Several issues remain open to scientific debate, such as the dating of such artifacts, aspects related to their production, their distribution area, the cultural context in which they circulated, etc.

On this occasion, two discoveries will be presented that contribute to both the dating of shaft-hole axes like the Dumbrăvioara and Pătulele series and the identification of some technological innovations. This involves a Dumbrăvioara-type axe discovered in the Izbucl Topliței de Vida cave in western Transylvania, and a Pătulele-type axe found isolated at the end of the 19th century in Fibiș, southwestern Romania.

The available absolute data thus far suggests that the shaft-hole axes of the Dumbrăvioara type may have been utilized between 2600-2300 BC, appearing to be relatively contemporaneous with those of the Pătulele type. If the Dumbrăvioara-type shaft-hole axes are indeed copper axes cast in bivalve molds open at the upper edge of the axe, the Fibiș axe indicates a significantly more sophisticated technology. Both microscopic photographs and various metallographic analyses indicate that the axe was crafted from copper and subsequently dipped in a gold bath with a high concentration of silver, indicating the local origin of the gold. The axe exhibits heavy signs of use and clearly wasn't involved in routine activities. Evidently, such an artifact possessed symbolic significance, akin to the silver axe at Mala Gruda or the axe made from granite with a staff sheathed in gold foil from Podgorica-Gruda Boljevića, also in Montenegro.

### ***The Veselinovo-type of axes in the context of the early Bronze Age metallurgy in north-eastern Balkan Peninsula***

**Radu Băjenaru** (*Vasile Pârvan* Institute of Archaeology, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania)

The emergence and production of shaft-hole axes in the Balkan Peninsula in the 4th-3rd millennia BC is a topic that is always under debate and involves the appeal to two main traditions: the North-Pontic and the Anatolian ones. After a period in which the circulation of similar types of axes to those of the Caucasian and North-Pontic area is evident (mainly Baniabic and Corbasca types), towards the end of the 4th millennium BC the first clear indications of a local production of such items appear. This phenomenon can be linked to the emergence of tell-type settlements in Thrace, and Veselinovo axes are the most eloquent example of this.

The author discusses the context of Veselinovo axes in the overall production of metal axes in the Balkan Peninsula, as well as several related topics such as the origin, typology, technology and chronology of these axes. They are also an important link with the Aegean-Anatolian area.

***Assimilation and transfer of metal goods during Middle Bronze Age at the Eastern fringe of the Carpathians. Seven years after***

**Neculai Bolohan** (*Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Faculty of History, Romania*)

The interest and quantity of metals discovered and integrated into the archaeological adventure grew exponentially. For both archaeologists and detectorists! The results of the latter are rewarded with 30% of the value of the discovery and the archaeologists are trying to give historical meaning to a pile of metals. Often, without having minimal data on the content of an archaeological context. The story here begins from such a happening generated by a discovery of special metal objects made with the detector in a place with a promising toponymy at the foothill of the Eastern Carpathians. The preliminary data stated will be evaluated in the context of a scientific evaluation proposed seven years ago in Târgu Jiu. The questions regarding technology, assimilation, transfer, exchanges... launched then will now find some possible answers.



*1<sup>ST</sup> SYMPOSIUM OF BALKAN PREHISTORY (14<sup>TH</sup>-18<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024, TÂRGU JIU, ROMANIA)*

**NOTES**





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**NOTES**



Hotel Europa, Calea Eroilor 22, Târgu Jiu

Muzeul Județean Gorj, Strada Geneva 8

Adăugați o destinație

OPȚIUNI

Trimiteți indicații de orientare pe telefon

prîn Calea Eroilor și Strada Geneva

În general suprafață plană

**DETALII**

**3 min**

270 m

