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# PETREȘTI CULTURE

Phd Thesis Abstract

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## The name of the culture

Along the time this archaeological culture has been known under different names. During the first half of the twentieth century several names were used, such as: “*the west Romanian painted pottery culture*”<sup>1</sup>, “the central Transylvanian culture” (mittlesiebenbürgische bemalte Keramik)<sup>2</sup>, “the civilization *with painted pottery from the western Dacian circle*”<sup>3</sup> and “*the central Transylvanian circle with painted pottery*”<sup>4</sup>.

In their 1949 study D. and I. Berciu propose replacing all these terms with “*Petrești-type painted pottery*”<sup>5</sup>; their argument was that “the civilization with painted pottery from the western Dacian circle” did not entirely correspond to the historic-geographical notion of western Dacian circle; “the central Transylvanian circle with painted pottery” was no longer actual since its spreading area was well over the boundaries of Transylvania; the archaeological site Petrești – *Groapa Galbenă* was considered at the moment the most representative for the culture; it is where the most numerous pottery shards came from, as well as the most varied in terms of in shape, technique and decor<sup>6</sup>.

All these arguments made the scientists embrace the name of the culture, a fact which later on will lead to the generalization of the expression “*Petrești culture*”<sup>7</sup>. At the same time we notice in some specialty papers titles such as “*the Petrești culture of the central Transylvanian painted pottery*”<sup>8</sup>, which illustrates the transition from the old terminology to the definitive one – “*Petrești culture*”<sup>9</sup>. The term “culture” was later

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<sup>1</sup> Paul 1992, 7; Drașovean 1999, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Horedt 1949, 47.

<sup>3</sup> Berciu-Berciu 1946, 53; Paul 1992, 7; Drașovean 1999, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Berciu-Berciu 1949, 41; Vlăssă 1967, 420; Paul 1992, 7; Drașovean 1999, 5; Nițu 2006, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Berciu-Berciu 1949, 41; Drașovean 1999, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Berciu-Berciu 1949, 41.

<sup>7</sup> Istoria României 1960, 70; Berciu 1961, 15; Paul 1992.

<sup>8</sup> Dumitrescu 1974a, 74; Nițu 2006, 15.

<sup>9</sup> Nițu 2006, 15.

criticized by N. Vlassa, who thought that the expression to be used was “*the Petrești cultural complex*”<sup>10</sup>.

### **The origins of the culture**

The opinions expressed along the time about this aspect of the Petrești culture might be grouped in two categories: **autochthonous** (which consider that the basis of this culture is represented by older local elements) and **migratory** (according to which the origins of the culture must be in the southern areas of the Balkans).

The **autochthonous** opinions were formulated by D. Berciu, who saw the origins of Petrești culture within the cultural complex Starčevo-Criș, which transmitted the technique of applying the paint before firing the vessel, by way of Vinča and Turdaș groups<sup>11</sup> and also by N. Vlassa, who considers “a more logical and prudent hypothesis an organic development from the Turdaș culture, through its evolutive stages Tărtăria - Tăualăș and Lumea – Nouă”<sup>12</sup>.

The first migratory theory was expressed by H. Schroller in the thirties. He proposed a Dimini migration in Transylvania, based exclusively on typological and stylistic criteria. Fr. Schachermeyr also supports the migratory theory, trying to prove that the “Dimini migration” started north of the Danube from an area of the Bükk, Tisa and west-Romanian painted pottery cultures. Both these theories were combated by Vl. Dumitrescu in the seventies<sup>13</sup>. He later attributes a “certain part” in the birth of the Petrești culture to some aspects of painted pottery torn off the Tisa culture<sup>14</sup>.

Also supporting the migratory theory was S. Marinescu-Bâlcu, who proposes that the migratory itinerary of the bearers of the southern group was “through Oltenia”, an identical itinerary to the one of the Neolithic early Starčevo-Criș communities.

Ruth Tringham comes up with a totally different theory. She sees influences of the Herpaly group within the décor of the Petrești culture, but she did not exclude the rather different eventuality: Petrești influencing the Herpaly group’s pottery<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Vlassa 1967, 413.

<sup>11</sup> Berciu 1967, 189; Paul 1977, 24; 1992, p. 119; Luca et alii. 2004, 111; Nițu 2006, 15-16.

<sup>12</sup> Vlassa 1967, 419-420; Paul 1992, 119; Luca et alii. 2004, 111.

<sup>13</sup> Dumitrescu 1960, 189-200; Paul 1992, 7.

<sup>14</sup> Dumitrescu 1974a, 76.

<sup>15</sup> Tringham 1971, 188-189.

A similar affirmation was made by S.A. Luca, who also claims that the origins of the Petrești culture must be searched within the Herpaly culture<sup>16</sup>.

In reference to the origin problem, in his monograph dedicated to the culture, I. Paul does not finish the discussion, but inclines toward a local development based on southern, older elements. The similarity between certain categories of the early painted Petrești pottery from Păuca and Daia Română with the ones in phase IA1 from Kum-Tepe, continuing with the ones from Otzaki and Dimini with phases A-B and B of the Petrești culture are considered as “convergence phenomena that are generated in different places and periods, by the common Anatolian-Micro Asian origin of the Balkan-Danubian Neo-Eneolithic as well as numerous contacts and interferences between several groups and complexes in different areas”<sup>17</sup>. Concluding, the author claims “*without fear of failing*” that “it [the Petrești culture] *was born on a general Neolithic background, originating in the Aegean-Anatolian-Micro Asian area*”<sup>18</sup>, but at the same time it is the result of “*independent and original development*” but also of “*continuous and complex influences*”, with cultural manifestations in neighboring areas. Also the author does not exclude some further away influences due to the exchanges, direct cultural contributions or some migrations<sup>19</sup>.

A. Agotha, K. Germann and Fr. Resch have excavated in 1968 some surfaces in the settlement of Parța – tell 2 (west part of Parța). They discovered some pottery shards that they have attributed at the moment to the Petrești culture<sup>20</sup>. Later on several other pottery fragments were uncovered in other sites in Banat: Foeni–*The Orthodox cemetery*<sup>21</sup>, Chișoda Veche<sup>22</sup>, Parța<sup>23</sup>, Unip<sup>24</sup>, etc. they were initially considered as imports inside the Vința area and were framed within phase A-B of the Petrești culture.

As a result of the researches in Banat, which have defined “the shock” Vința C, the scientists emitted the hypothesis that the Petrești culture has more common elements

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<sup>16</sup> Luca 1999, 16.

<sup>17</sup> Paul 1992, 123.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, 124.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, 125.

<sup>20</sup> Lazarovici 1976, 1/5-7; 1979, 166-167; Drașovean 1999, 5.

<sup>21</sup> Medeleț, Bugilan 1987, 132, note 71; Drașovean 1999, 5.

<sup>22</sup> Drașovean 1999, 6.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, 10-11.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, 12-13.

with the Neolithic civilizations in Macedonia, Thessalia and Thrace și Tracia than with the local ones<sup>25</sup>. But the lack of solid arguments supporting these theories has led to their rejection.

The archaeological research in Foeni – *The Orthodox cemetery* (a Petrești settlement without any Vinča C elements<sup>26</sup>) had separated the unpainted and without any Banat specific shapes Petrești pottery from phase C of the Vinča culture<sup>27</sup>. Until that moment all these ceramic materials were considered belonging to the Vinča culture while only the painted shards were treated as Petrești imports into the environment<sup>28</sup>.

Of course, when the unpainted pottery proved to belong to the Petrești culture, the scientists have tried to frame the materials into one of its evolution phases. Initially the materials were framed in phase A<sup>29</sup>, but later on this kind of pottery was considered as belonging to a separate cultural group, which was called either Petrești A / Foeni<sup>30</sup>, Foeni - Mintia<sup>31</sup>, “Foeni cultural aspect”<sup>32</sup>, or, simply Foeni<sup>33</sup>. The Lazarovici family think that in Banat the evolution of the culture is not toward a classic phase A of the Petrești culture, or toward phases AB and B for that matter, the more appropriate denomination would be group Foeni – Petrești A, or rather just *the Foeni group*, because the movement is from Foeni to Petrești. They also reject the name Mintia – Foeni because “although there are clear observations, they do not appear to explain the phenomenon and the excavations are on a very small area”<sup>34</sup>. My opinion is that the cultural manifestations named Foeni (Foeni-Mintia) represent a cultural group with southern origins, which is connected to the Petrești culture through genetics (the Foeni group represents the main genetic element of the Petrești culture). I consider that the association Petrești A/ the Foeni is only necessary in the current stage of research, as the separation between the Foeni pottery and the Early Petrești one is just being done.

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<sup>25</sup> Lazarovici 1987, 33- 55.

<sup>26</sup> Drașovean 1996, 85.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*; 12.

<sup>28</sup> Lazarovici 1979, 166; Drașovean 1996, 85; 1999, p. 11.

<sup>29</sup> Drașovean 1999, 14.

<sup>30</sup> Drașovean 1996, 86; Luca 2001, 44; Luca et alii. 2004, 113.

<sup>31</sup> Luca 1999, 14-16; 2001, 144; 2003, 221-223; Luca et alii. 2004, 89; Roman, Diaconescu 2004, 68.

<sup>32</sup> Maxim 1999, 103.

<sup>33</sup> Drașovean 1996, 86; Luca 1996, 25- 26; 1997, 74- 75; Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2003, 409; Roman, Diaconescu 2004, 68.

<sup>34</sup> Lazarovici-Lazarovici 2007, 40.

### **The spread of the culture**

Once the researches became familiarized with the pottery of the Foeni group (Foeni-Mintia) and once they reanalyzed the archaeological materials from older excavations, they were able to trace the itinerary of these communities in Transylvania, as well as understanding their part in the genesis of the Petrești culture and of Ariușd group. Discoveries attributed to this group were found in Banat and Transylvania, from Brănișca and Mintia on the Mureș Valley, all the way to the northern province in Archiud<sup>35</sup>.

The Petrești settlements are found exclusively in Transylvania, on the Mureș, Târnava, Someșul Mic Valleys and their tributaries, reaching south, to the Olt river.

### **The evolution**

Following the researches in Alba Iulia-*Lumea Nouă* the evolution of the Foeni group in three phases: I, II and III. With phase Foeni III<sup>36</sup>, it is clear that these communities have their own evolution, which is influenced by the cultural realities of Transylvania and is radically different than phases I and II. The major differences between the pottery technology of the last phase, in comparison with the first ones, and the similarities between phase III of Foeni and the Petrești pottery, determine me to consider this moment as the one marking the birth of the Petrești culture rather than a third phase in the evolution of the Foeni group.

The Petrești culture was divided into three evolutionary phases (A, A-B and B), similar with the Cucuteni culture<sup>37</sup>. The new archaeological realities of Transylvania and Banat have determined a significant shortening of the first phase (A) in the Petrești evolution. We consider that the first manifestations of the Petrești culture appear once some typical Foeni group decors have disappeared and a series of changes in pottery technologies appeared. Another important element that marks this moment is the appearance of the tri-chromic painted pottery.

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<sup>35</sup> Gligor 2010.

<sup>36</sup> Gligor 2009, 139.

<sup>37</sup> Paul 1992



### **Cultural synchronisms**

Based on imports from other cultural areas inside the Petrești culture, based on Petrești imports into other cultures but also on C14 data<sup>38</sup>, I propose the following synchronisms:

***Foeni** – Early/ classic Herpaly – classic Tisa (III) – Precucuteni I/II – Vinča C2-C3.*

***Petrești A** – Final Herpaly – Cucuteni A1 – Gumelnița A1- Sălcuța I - Vinča D1.*

***Petrești AB (final)-B (beginning)** - Tiszapolgár A - Cucuteni A2 - Gumelnița A2 - Sălcuța Ila-b – Vinča D1(final)-D2 (beginning).*

***Petrești B** - Tiszapolgár B - Cucuteni A3 – Gumelnița A2-B1 (început) - Sălcuța IIC-III (beginning) – Vinča D2.*

***Petrești B (final)(?)** - Decea Mureșului – Early Bodrokersztur - Cucuteni A4-AB1 (beginning)? – Gumelnița B1 – Sălcuța III.*

### **The settlements**

Based on the discoveries repertoire 233 points with discoveries from this culture and the Foeni group have been identified, but also finds belonging to synthesis with the Iclod group and Tiszapolgár culture. From a geographical point of view it easily noticeable that the bearers of the Petrești culture have settled the Mureș Valley, the Transylvanian Plateau and Field.

The Petrești settlements were placed either along water courses, either close to streams. The environmental transformations allowed in time that these communities would occupy different relief forms<sup>39</sup>. During the early phases they preferred low and middle terraces along water courses, sometimes tributary valleys, sunny clearings on slightly high slopes, seldom flanked by ravines formed by torrents or streams<sup>40</sup>. As the population grew the habitation patterns change radically, by building new houses, gradually occupying the bigger part of the hill<sup>41</sup>. Long phase A-B this type of habitation has evolved to the shape of opened, large settlements which occupied both the low and

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<sup>38</sup> Baza Sibiu

<sup>39</sup> Paul 1992, 16.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, 17.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*.

middle terraces and the lower part of the slopes and hills<sup>42</sup>. The vast open space of these large terraces has allowed an “oscillation” of the settlement core. Along with this phenomenon another was documented: “swarming”, when a portion of the population tore itself away from the “mother” settlement and settles somewhere near it<sup>43</sup>. This led to an increase of the Petrești settlements’ density since the middle phases (A-B) and late phase (B) of the culture. During the final stage (B), there are also settlements on hills, like the one from Agârbiciu - *Pășunea din deal*. The settlement is 700 m above sea level, in a clearing reach in streams<sup>44</sup>.

### **Dwellings**

In Banat, in dwellings belonging to the Foeni group the type of habitation is the one with stepped access pits for planting the support pillars. This kind of housing system has analogies at Gomolava, within the Vinča C<sup>45</sup>. The bearers of this cultural group use above the ground dwellings, but also semi-buried houses<sup>46</sup>.

The Petrești culture communities preferred:

#### ***Dwellings with platforms set on wooden beams or stone slabs***

This kind of houses was documented at Ghirbom and Tărtăria. Each house discovered respectively in these two sites illustrates the use of the above mentioned housing system, but with a significant difference: the wooden and clay platforms were set on massive boulders or stone slabs<sup>47</sup>.

#### ***Dwellings with platforms set on wooden pillars***

This type of dwelling may be totally or partially suspended, according to the terrain. At Tărtăria N. Vlassa published a trench profile with a Petrești layer where one can notice a dwelling floor which was interrupted from place to place. Prof. Gh. Lazarovici

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, 18.

<sup>44</sup> Paul 1992, 20-21.

<sup>45</sup> Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2007, 43.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*.

thinks this is a suspended floor and the traces of the pillars have remained in the profile<sup>48</sup>. Another such big sized dwelling was documented at Mihalț – Măticuța<sup>49</sup>.

### ***Platform dwelling set on the ground***

This type of dwelling with a wooden beams floor, set directly on the ground, over which a layer of clay was set, was documented in settlements belonging to the latest phase of Petrești culture, such as Hălmeag-Valea Mâții<sup>50</sup> and Moșna-Pe tablă<sup>51</sup>.

Although the Petrești culture bearers preferred these kinds of housing systems, at Ampoița has been documented a ***semi-plunged dwelling*** (C. 3/2001)<sup>52</sup>, belonging to Petrești phase B, while at Lumea Nouă, the *Ampoițan* property the archaeologists uncovered a buried dwelling with archaeological materials belonging to phase A-B of the culture<sup>53</sup>.

By analyzing the image and description of the dwelling in Cașolț–Poiana în pisc, Prof. Gh. Lazarovici considers that the architectural elements the archaeologist has interpreted as the walls could actually belong to a floor of a second storey; this because the structure of the elements seems to be very compact. The adobe found outside may come from walls. The floor was made of well set it dirt, the same as in Zau, both in the Neolithic and the Petrești levels. As for the pit nearby the house, which was considered a buried house, he thinks I could very well be either a storage pit, or a buried house<sup>54</sup>.

Concluding, we can say that the Petrești communities have used a lot of dwelling types, starting with the surface ones with the floor set directly on the ground, or houses on platforms of stones, or on pillars, as well as semi-buried or buried houses. The most complex representatives of domestic architecture are the houses with two floors.

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>49</sup> Paul 1975, 15.

<sup>50</sup> Costea 2008, 12.

<sup>51</sup> Gonciar et alii 2007, 45.

<sup>52</sup> Ciugudean, Gligor 2002.

<sup>53</sup> Gligor et alii 2006.

<sup>54</sup> Lazarovici 2007, 45.

### **Size of the dwellings**

There is a great variety of sizes, dictated by the needs as well as by the terrain. Iuliu Paul claims that during the first phase (A) of evolution the houses have medium sizes: 3 x 4 or 4 x 6 m<sup>55</sup>. For some dwellings, the information is unclear, since they were not sufficiently thoroughly described, or the details are actually missing. At La Alba Iulia – *Lumea Nouă*, on the Colda property, the house was NE-SV oriented, it belonged to phase AB and had a size of 8 m, that includes it in the big houses category<sup>56</sup>. At Ampoița, the surface dwelling was sized 4 x 2.5 m and the one at Cașolț, coded L2 is sized 8 x 4 m<sup>57</sup>. The biggest surface attributed to a Petrești dwelling is at Mihalț - *Mățicuța*. According to the author of the archaeological investigations the surface is 10 x 7-8 m, the house is E-V oriented and it was suspended on pillars<sup>58</sup>.

### **Decorative elements**

The author of the monograph dedicated to the Petrești culture remarked since 1967 the people of this culture's preoccupations for decorating the walls of their houses by smoothing them but also by applying relieved decors<sup>59</sup>.

In dwelling L<sub>2</sub>/1994-1996 from Turdaș/*Luncă* among other architectonic elements, the archaeologists uncovered the lintel of a door, above which a decorative element has been placed: a frieze with a bull's head flanked by circular applications.

### **Pantry, cellar, annexes**

Sometimes pits of regular or irregular shapes are discovered very close to the houses. The regularly shaped ones, by shape, depth, size or inventory, may have been pantries, cellars or supply pits. The biggest of them, with wall as high as 70 cm could have served as central pits for buried houses, an area where the inhabitants could stand; they were often mistaken as supply pits. Their functionality is actually hard to define and doesn't stay the same, changing according to needs and seasons. Often when they are deep, they need or have a "parlour" for access or to keep rain water from flooding in.

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<sup>55</sup> Paul 1992, 22-37.

<sup>56</sup> Gligor 2009, 36.

<sup>57</sup> Paul 1961, 100.

<sup>58</sup> Paul 1975, 15.

<sup>59</sup> Paul 1967, 12, 18.

At Lumea Nouă, next to complex 1 in trench SI/2002, there is a pit of immediate size, a fact which would assume the existence of a common roof. In this case the space could have functioned as a pantry. On the same site, on the *Moldovan* property the archaeologists mention an annex (G1 la B1/Sp III/2006)<sup>60</sup>.

These annexes were placed next to the houses as well (Fig. 72), as is the case at Cașolț– *Poiana în pisc*, according to Gh. and Magda Lazarovici. Their shape is that of a construction. The presence of a hearth does not mean that the site could be necessarily a house, as pantries often need hearths<sup>61</sup>.

### **Pits**

During the archaeological excavations in Neo-Eneolithic sites a significant percent of the researched complexes are represented by pits. Of course, the pits were dug for different reasons, fact which divides them into categories. As for the stages of such a complex, scientists agree on four of them: 1. digging, 2. using them for their purpose, 3. abandonment, 4. filling<sup>62</sup>. There are, of course, exceptions to the rule. Therefore, a pit for extracting clay never reaches stage 2, while the graves never reach stage three.

### **Fortifications**

In the past there never were documented any ditches or other defense systems<sup>63</sup>. The new excavations at Zau de Câmpie - *Grădiniță*, Alba Iulia - *Lumea Nouă* and Hunedoara - *Judecătorie*, have documented a series of defense ditches and palisade system. Prof. Gh. Lazarovici thinks that sometimes the settlements placed on small hills or terraces were very likely defended with palisades on the edges or where the slope was more accentuated<sup>64</sup>.

At Săsciori, Alba County, M. Blăjan mentions a Petrești settlement that was surrounded by a defensive ditch and vallum<sup>65</sup>. Considering that this research was a surface one, one must take reserve in believing this affirmation.

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<sup>60</sup> Gligor et alii 2007, 45.

<sup>61</sup> Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2007, 47.

<sup>62</sup> Diaconescu 2009, 156.

<sup>63</sup> Paul 1992, 21.

<sup>64</sup> Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2007, 40.

<sup>65</sup> Rep. Alba 1995, 165.

## **Material culture**

The most important part of the material culture is represented by pottery (123 shapes of vessels, divided into 32 types, 6 types of support vessels and 11 types of lids).

The main way of decorating the vessels was by painting them with different shades of red, but also, during the first phase with tri-chromatic shades, later on using different shades of brown and black. If during the first phase the main decorative motifs are geometrical (probably inherited from the Foeni group), starting with the second phase (AB) the main motifs that are generally used are spirals, meanders, rhombs and network.

Even though the main decors were painted, we must not exclude the decorations with incisions, imprints, applications, perforations and decorations using a spatula. It is remarkable that the Petrești culture pottery does not have any polished decors, one of the main attributes of the Foeni group.

Other artifacts must be placed next to pottery inside the material culture: bone/antler tools (piercers, spatulas, spoons), clay tools (weights for the loom or fishing nets, spindles, buttons and tools for finishing the pottery), stone tools (weights for the loom, pendants, blades and an entire typology of axes) and metal tools (different copper tools, the most technologically advanced of them being the Pločnik type axes. The discovery of a golden tube at Moșna-*Tablă* proves that this metal was used during the late phases A-B and B of the Petrești culture).

## **Economics**

### ***Plant cultivation***

The analyses on archaeobotanical remains from Cheile Turzii-*Peștera Ungurească* and Alba Iulia-*Lumea Nouă* are extremely important.

From the complexes in *Lumea Nouă* belonging to the Foeni group and the Petrești culture several archaeobotanical remains were preserved: from the Foeni complexes the following species were identified: *Cerealia*, *Chenopodium album*, *Spergula arvensis*, *Vicia ervilia*. From the Petrești complexes the *Cerealia* și *Triticum dicoccum*<sup>66</sup> were

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<sup>66</sup> Ciută 2009, 87.

identified. The cultivation of cereals was documented by the imprints on a vessel base discovered at *Lumea Nouă*<sup>67</sup>.

Another category of plants, just as important as the cereals are various vegetables. At *Lumea Nouă*, these are represented by *Vicia ervilia*, bitter lathyrus<sup>68</sup>. *Chenopodium album* is another largely used species. Each plant produces a large quantity of seeds, which makes it highly important<sup>69</sup>.

### ***Animal husbandry***

The studies on archaeozoological remains at Foeni, Zau de Câmpie, Lumea Nouă, Miercurea Sibiului, Tărtăria etc. documented the presence of the next species: cattle, sheep or goats, pigs and dogs. Their percent differs from one site to another, according to the area, the preferences of the respective communities or the amplexness of the archaeological research etc.

### ***The hunt***

This represented an important component for the Petrești communities. The presence and intensity of this activity is quantified according to the remains of wild species. The ones documented in Tărtăria and Turdaș are: the stag, the buffalo, the boar and the deer.

## **Spiritual life**

### ***Burials***

Archaeologists never uncovered cemeteries of groups of graves belonging to the Petrești culture. Until recently the same was for the Foeni group, with just two graves discovered: at Parța II and Foeni - *Cimitirul Ortodox*<sup>70</sup>. The discovery at Lumea Nouă of some common grave pits/ ossuaries could explain the lack of graves.

Seven graves belonging to the Petrești culture have been discovered: 1 at Tărtăria-*Gura Luncii*, 1 at *Daia Română-Părăuț*, 1 at *Ocna Sibiului* and 4 at *Noșlac*. The

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<sup>67</sup> Gligor 2009, Pl. CLXII.

<sup>68</sup> Ciută 2009, 85.

<sup>69</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>70</sup> Drașovean 2004, 129-131.

anthropological data offer this: 1 belongs to a child, 1 to an adolescent, 1 to an approximately 50 years old individual, while the others are unprocessed.

At La Alba Iulia - *Lumea Nouă*, in trench Sp. VI/2005- the Sobaru property, in ditch Șt.2/2005, documented in trench S I, at the depth of – 1.7 m, one set of human remains have been discovered. The archaeologist dated them “*at the latest in the Petrești culture*”<sup>71</sup>. The situation documented here was not joined with the Petrești funerals because the position of the skeleton more likely suggest it was rather thrown into the ditch and not placed according to some funerary ritual<sup>72</sup>. We can say the same thing about the individual discovered at Moșna-*Tablă*, whose bones were scattered on a 2 m<sup>2</sup> radius.

### ***Cultic complexes***

Such arrangements were discovered in three Petrești settlements: Pianu de Jos-*Podei*, Ghirbom - *În față* și Uioara de Jos<sup>73</sup>.

### ***Foundation and abandonment rituals***

In the Foeni group levels, rituals connected to the foundation of a site could be the animal deposits at Zau de Câmpie, *pit 4*, *pit 19* (bull trophies)<sup>74</sup>. Also, in complex G1 in trench Sp. I/2006, compartment A2, at a depth of -1.7 m the archaeologists uncovered a stones and bull antlers concourse, while in compartment A3 they discovered a bull skull and antlers<sup>75</sup>.

Belonging to the Petrești culture, at Turdaș - *Luncă*, the archaeologists researched a foundation complex of house L2/1994-1995. Its central piece consisted of a sandstone object, interpreted as a human head<sup>76</sup>.

Two ritual pits (pits 7 and 8) are mentioned in the settlement at Moșna-*Tablă*<sup>77</sup>, attributed to the phases A-B of the Petrești culture. The presence of complete vessels on the bottom of these pits supports the possibility that these pits are actually part of a foundation ritual.

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<sup>71</sup> Gligor 2009, 40.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>73</sup> Gligor 2007, 67; Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2007, 6.

<sup>74</sup> Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2002, fig. 86; Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2007, 58.

<sup>75</sup> Gligor 2009, 43.

<sup>76</sup> Luca 2001, 47.

<sup>77</sup> Gonciar et alii , 44.



### ***Plastic art***

Prof. I. Paul has attempted a periodization of the plastic art, based on stratigraphic criteria and the association with the painted pottery. The discovery at Brănișca-*Pe Hotar* of some anthropomorphic statuettes decorated in a manner specific to the late phase (B) of the Petrești culture which is not documented within the respective settlement might represent a stage of research, but at the same time it is very possible that this type of décor with pricks and small incised arcades that imitate clothing, is present on statuettes belonging to the earliest phase, as pottery shards belonging to this phase together with materials belonging to the Foeni group were discovered<sup>78</sup>. In conclusion, I. Paul's division of the anthropological representations within the Petrești culture must be treated prudently.

### **Absolute chronology**

Unfortunately, no C<sub>14</sub> data were done for the Petrești culture. The specimens from Daia Română-*Părăuț*, along with the fact that are almost useless, come from contexts that were chronologically attributed to the Foeni group, or even to the Turdaș culture. According to data from the area of the Foeni group, and neighboring cultures that came into contact with it, I prudently consider that its evolution ranges between 4600/4500 and 4100/4000 CAL. B.C<sup>79</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> Tincu 2011 to be published.

<sup>79</sup> I have estimated as upper limit the C14 data for the toarte pastilate level in din Cheile Turzii-*Peștera Ungurească*: GrN-29102: 5120±40BP = 3980BC (28.9%) 3930BC- 3880BC (39.3%) 3810BC. (apud Buzea Dan, PhD thesis: *Așezarea de la Păuleni Ciuc – Ciomortan. Rolul și locul ei în cadrul eneoliticului din Carpații Răsăriteni*, p. 414, annex 16.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ActaMN	Acta Musei Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca.
ActaMP	Acta Musei Porolissensis, Zalău.
Angustia	Angustia, Sfântu Gheorghe.
AnB	Analele Banatului, Timisoara.
ArchErt	Archaeologiai Ertesito, Budapest.
AUA	Annales Universitatis Apulensis.
Antaeus	Antaeus, Budapest.
Apulum	Acta Musei Apulensis, Alba Iulia.
AR	Archeologické rozhledy, Praga.
ArchErt	Archaeologiai Értesítő, Budapest.
BAR	British Archaeological Reports.
BCSS	Buletunul Cercurilor Stiinșifice Studentești, Alba Iulia.
BHAB	Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Banatica, Timisoara.
BMA	Bibliotheca Musei Apulensis, Alba Iulia.
BB	Bibliotheca Brukenthal, Sibiu.
BS	Septemcastrensis, Sibiu.
Corviniana	Corviniana. Acta Musei Corvinensis, Hunedoara.
EJA	European Journal of Archeology, Oxford.
ITSR	Istorie si traditie in spatiul romanesc, Sibiu
JAMÉ	A Jósa András Múzeum Évkönyve, Nyíregyhá.
MemA	Memoria Antiquitatis, Piatra Neamt.
Tibiscum	Tibiscum, Caransebes.
Tibiscus	Tibiscus. Timisoara
PBF	Prähistorische Bronzefunde, München.
PZ	Prähistorische Zeitschrift, Berlin-Leipzig.
SCIV(A)	Studii și Comunicări de Istorie Veche și Arheologie, București.
StComCar	Studii și Comunicări de etnografie-istorie, Caransebes.
Swiatowit	Swiatowit, Varsovie.
<i>RepAlba</i>	Repertoriul arheologic al județului Alba, 1995.

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