

**VASILE CHIRICA, CRISTIAN ICHIM (eds),**  
***Les Gravettiene. Leur creation materielle et***  
***spirituelle. Actes du colloque international de Iași***  
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As the title shows, the volume edited by Dr. V. Chirica and C. Ichim represents the proceedings of an international colloquium organized in Iași between the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2017 and it is dedicated to the memory of Ilie Borzic, a personality which profoundly marked the Palaeolithic research of the Eastern European region. This scientific event, which gained value through the participation of renowned European specialists, is in fact the natural follow-up of another colloquium held in Iași the previous year (January 2016) and dedicated, as one might expect, to the material and cultural creations of the Aurignacian communities.

The volume discussed here, printed in Iași by the Pim publishing house, gathered five studies of various lengths, focused on themes ranging from typological analyses of lithic artefacts to zoological studies, all connected to issues pertaining to Gravettian manifestations.

The volume is opened by the editor, briefly reviewing some of the current issues of the Romanian and European Upper Palaeolithic research.

The first study is signed by V. Chirica and V. C. Chirica (*Survivance Aurignaciene dans le milieu Gravettiene*) and brings into debate the potential survival of Aurignacian elements (or displaying more archaic features) into the Gravettian medium. These occurrences were noticed through an extensive examination of the lithic artefacts recovered at *Mitoc-Malu Galben*, but observed as well in other sites located in the eastern Carpathian area. The subject clearly deserves further attention.

The second study (*The Upper Palaeolithic in the eastern Carpathian area: insights from the Bistricioara Lutărie III settlement - Ceahlău Basin*), signed by M. Anghelinu and his collaborators (L. Niță, C. Schmidt, D. Vereș, U. Hambach, M. Molnar, G. Murătoareanu, M. Mărgărit, and V. Dumitrașcu) presents the results of the archaeological investigations conducted in the site Bistricioara Lutărie III starting with 2008. This research is part of the effort conducted by this team in order to clear some of the aspects regarding the UP evolutions in the Bistrița Valley, since the older publications are, in many instances, vague or obviously outdated. Even if the stratigraphy of the settlement is not ideal, as it rarely happens in the case of Palaeolithic sites, it managed nevertheless to offer new insights in regards to the chronology of UP habitations in the area. As well, some

stratigraphical situations described in the older literature could be reinterpreted based on the new finds.

The third contribution, submitted by Timothee Libois, George Bodi, Philip Nigst and Pierre Noiret (*Mitoc-Malu Galben-Roumanie: Quelques aspects de la technologie litique Gravettiene*), is dedicated to aspects regarding the lithic technology employed by the Gravettian communities from *Mitoc-Malu Galben*. The study is based on a lot of 1529 pieces recovered during the recent investigations conducted between 2013 and 2016 and assigned to the Gravettian II layer. The analysis combines the *chaîne opératoire* approach with the model proposed by Philip Nigst (attribute examination). Besides capturing the main steps of production and the technological trends which characterize the Gravettian II ensemble, the study has the merit of raising several important questions in regards to the relation between technological choices and the quality of the raw material.

The article signed by Marjolein Bosch, Philip Nigst, Florian Fladerer and Walpurga Antl-Weiser (*The megafauna bone accumulation of Grub-Kranawetberg, Austria*) is a welcomed variation, focusing on a bone accumulation associated with the Gravettian site in Grub-Kranawetberg (Austria). Such features, usually composed of osteological remains attributed to extinct megafauna, are known from other Central European sites. Nevertheless, the role of human activity and other processes which led to their formation were debated in many instances. In the case of Grub-Kranawetberg the authors made good use of taphonomical, zoological, and meticulous spatial analyses in order to understand the site and the bone accumulation, the latter dominated by remains assigned to five wholly mammoths. The results point towards a relatively rapid accumulation. The traces of human activity suggest that the site was used as source of raw material (bones, ivory) and, furthermore, its function as a waste disposal area should not be excluded.

The last contribution, submitted by Marcel Otte (*La Moldavie, le Gravettien et Vasile*), evokes the role of Moldavian Palaeolithic research into the wider European context. His original and rather *sentimental* approach amplifies the value of the long term research conducted in *Mitoc-Malu Galben* and other Moldavian sites.

Even if the volume does not entirely reflect the topics discussed within the Iași colloquium, the five published contributions deal with interesting and diverse aspects related to the Eastern and Central European Gravettian. However, beyond its actual content, the volume also tells a rather unfortunate story about the state of Romanian Palaeolithic research, concentrated only on a few sites and

areas. Nevertheless, considering the limited number of specialist and funds, the situation is explicable. Therefore, the role of such international colloquiums and volumes is even greater in promoting the positive results obtained so far, with the hope that in the future a wider picture will be possible.

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