

THE CUCUTENI A3 SITE FROM DOBROVĂȚ – PĂDUREA BUDA. 2019 RESEARCH

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Abstract:

The A3 Cucuteni site from Dobrovăț – Pădurea Buda/Buda Forest was discovered in 2016, by local Cornel Iascu and Alexandru Berzovan. In 2017 a magnetic prospection of the site (Carsten Mischka), which together with the LIDAR exploration offered information regarding the real dimensions of the site and of the constructions that are present in the investigated zone (9 constructions, one defense moat, palisade and other constructions with undetermined functions). In 2019, the first explorations to determine the magnetic anomalies were conducted. The research targeted two housing units, L3 and L4. The L4 was partially researched, resulting several rooms and interior amenities (altar, bed attached to the corridor separating two rooms) and annexes. The structures of walls and floors of L4 were investigated, as well as part of the pits related to the structure of resistance of the house. Between the two houses were found debris from another house, L10. At the same time, ceramics were analyzed statistically, as were the faunal remains discovered. Along with the typical ceramics for Cucuteni A3, ceramic fragments of the type Cucuteni C and Precucuteni III were also discovered. The study represents the current state of research.

Keywords: *Cucuteni culture; A3 phase; Dobrovăț-Pădurea Buda; houses; structure of the architecture.*

RESEARCH HISTORY

In the territory of Dobrovăț commune, formed by several villages, today merged under the name of Dobrovăț (Ruși-Monastery area, Alexești, Moldoveni, Pahomia), several archaeological points have been reported in the Iași County Archeological repertoire, out of which 18 have been mapped and two others that were not mapped.¹ Of these, four are from the Copper Age, from all the phases of Cucuteni culture (Fig. 1a).

A first marked settlement is located at the point *La Islaz – Nisipărie*, located in the part of the village named during old times Moldoveni, from where the road to Bârnova starts on the Nastea Valley, being near the intersection of the two or three streams (Pietrosu – today Dobrovăț, with Poiana Lungă and Nastea Valley). Following excavation work to extract sand and gravel, a fragmentary bowl was found with traces of charred wheat, ceramic fragments and anthropomorphic idols that were attributed to Cucuteni culture, phase A.²

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¹ CHIRICA, TANASACHI 1984, vol. 1: 124-128, Fig. XXIII.

² CHIRICA, TANASACHI 1984, vol. 1: 124.

Also a Cucuteni settlement, with ceramics with traces of painting and deep decoration, pieces of silex, is located to the south edge of the village, between the Dobrovăț stream and the road to Codăești, near the stream of Burdulea, in the garden of Miron A. Dumitru. The place also appears with the toponymal *Tarlaua Jitaria*, and the aforementioned ceramics were attributed to Cucuteni A or Horodișteea-Erbiceni, attributions that must be verified. In the same place, early Hallstattian ceramics was discovered linked to an intense dwelling that overlaps the prehistoric level.³

At Postelnici, on the right bank of the Burdulea stream, on a plateau above *Șipotul lui Droană*, was discovered ceramics that was mapped with some further questions in the Cucuteni B phase.⁴ In the outskirts of the former Moldoveni village, in the south-eastern part of the cemetery, near the road to Schitul Duca were found prehistoric ceramic fragments, and further south, at the point "*După Grădină / After the Garden*", in the lot of Iordache N. Ion, the discovered ceramic fragments have were attributed to the Cucuteni culture.⁵ In the area there are several resorts, four near the border of the commune of Dobrovăț, and those in which larger research are carried out are Scânteia located in the airline at 11.5 km distance, respectively Tăcuta, which is only 5 km away.

In the *Pădurea Buda / Buda Forest*, south-east of the village of Dobrovăț (formerly, known as Ruși), was discovered in 1973, when planting the forest,⁶ a large flint knife, but nothing reminiscent of ceramics.

In this forest, located on *Dealul Buda / Buda Hill*, a Cucuteni settlement was identified, which was assigned to A3 phase based on the painted ceramics. The painted pottery was discovered in 2016 by Iascu C. Cornel, a local from Dobrovăț, an enthusiast of archaeological discoveries. He took the pottery to the Iași Institute of Archeology, to our colleague Alexandru Berzovan, who together with Iascu checked the place of discovery in 2016, on the edge of numerous landslides that stretch along the entire settlement in the meadow on the northeast edge of the settlement. Apparently, it is a high steep wall, which ensures that the slope is untouchable, but also assures a fine view over the Dobrovăț Valley.

We believe that the presence of this natural wall was one of the reasons for choosing the place of settlement (thus offering a possibility of natural defense), to which are probably added the sources of fresh water from the base of that steep (Fig. 2.b, brown marks). Today, there is only one powerful spring (Fig. 1.a), to which the sheep from two neighboring sheepfolds drink, but near the steepness, the paved country road of today has crossed an older creek bed.

The land in the valley is called *Tarlaua Velnița*.⁷ Professor Nicolae Ursulescu brought to our attention the term *velnița*, which most probably by studying the map of the village connected the supposed creek with the *velnița* (boiler of pumice or spirit that needed cold running water for the boiler). Most likely, at some point in the past this alleged creek was such an installation. We must also check the Dobrovăț Valley, in the area being mentioned by the villagers a ruin, possibly from that distillery factory mentioned in the commune's repertoire as functioning somewhere between the XVII-XVIII centuries.⁸

Taking advantage of the checks made at the end of March 2017 by Al. Berzovan and Gh. Lazarovici, it was found that it is a large settlement (based on the ceramic fragments and the crumbling of agricultural works south-side the forest), which went from the edge of the forest to the south and almost 200 m north (Fig. 3). Al. Berzovan located the resort on the LIDAR maps, together with the source used as the main source of drinking water by the inhabitants of Cucuteni settlement (Fig. 2.b, brown marking). Moreover, a number of roads and furrows appear on the LIDAR prospecting (Fig. 2.a). In the south-western area of Iași, around the forests of Bârnova, there are numerous discoveries from the Copper Age, culturally attributed from Cucuteni A to Horodișteea-Erbiceni periods.

Magnetometric prospects (Figs. 2.b – 3)

The first field surveys were performed by Al. Berzovan, who discovered the resort together with Cornel Iascu. From the LIDAR surveys (Fig. 2.b), one can observe the geological format of the Pădurea Buda, due to numerous landslides that happened because of the erosion of an old slope.

³ CHIRICA, TANASACHI 1984, vol. 1: 125.

⁴ CHIRICA, TANASACHI 1984, vol. 1: 126.

⁵ CHIRICA, TANASACHI 1984, vol. 1: 126.

⁶ CHIRICA, TANASACHI 1984, vol. 1: 126, probably attributed to the period from the Eneolithic to the Bronze Age.

⁷ Under the name of *Velnița* is mentioned a former spirit factory in Deleni: CHIRICA, TANASACHI 1984, vol. 1: 123.

⁸ CHIRICA, TANASACHI 1984, vol. 1: 123, point 6 – *Tarlaua Velnița*, located under Buda Forest, with traces of habitation from the IV and XVI-XVII centuries; fragments of tiles from the water supply are mentioned, commonly used on a sailboat. We have not yet researched the area nor the other archaeological points reported in the repertoire.

That cuesta provided a natural protection for the resort on the east side. On its outskirts were numerous old roads passing by the spring rising to the plateau between *Pădurea Buda* and *Dumasca*. A similar situation was also at the Dacian fortress at *Cetățuie*, where there was also a high cliff towards the Dobrovăț Valley, which thus provided a naturally protected side to the Dacian fortress.

Magneto-metric prospecting

At our request, in April of 2017, colleague Carsten Mischka, known for his expertise on Cucuteni⁹ sites and also for other eras, performed magnetic prospecting at the *Pădurea Buda* site.¹⁰ The surveys were carried out only outside the *Pădurea Buda*, because inside the forest the distance between the trees did not allow a uniform scan, and the vegetation prevented a direct and constant connection with the satellites. An area of approx. 2 ha with a length of 300 m long and 50-80 m wide was prospected.

Nine complexes were identified, a ditch and a palisade inside the settlement, for defensive purposes, as well as some anomalies (ovens, fireplaces). Carsten Mischka marked the complexes – nine surface dwellings, possible fortification systems, as well as the perimeter of the resort (Fig. 3).

Our collaboration with colleagues from the University of Erlangen, coordinated by the Doris Mischka and Carsten Mischka, lasted for several years and first materialized at Scânteia. After the new prospecting of this site we researched together two houses, L14 and L15, which led to the discovery of the pits from their resistance structure, as well as other pits, with different functionalities, resulting in an interesting archaeological material, we are still processing.¹¹

Similarly, in Dobrovăț, after the topographic surveys and inspections of 2017, in 2019 Carsten Mischka and Doris Mischka took drone photographs during the excavations, providing new data and images on the ongoing research, which confirmed the prospects (Fig. 3).

From the images in Fig. 4-5 you can see how wide the settlement is, the marking of the dwellings, details about the size and sometimes the annexes (at L1-L2, Fig. 4.c), and the defense trench, which is not that intense being sloping south, was eroded by agricultural works. Another line of defense can be observed, a palisade closer to this group of dwellings, which belong to the Dobrovăț II stage, most likely raised after the firing of the Dobrovăț I stage. The complexes in the Dobrovăț I level are not observed, they are over 1 m deep, but there are numerous “shadows” outside the fence or palisade in the Dobrovăț II level. But these “shadows” can also be ceramic burners, barges or debris from other complexes of the same period or from other epochs (in some parts of the excavations or on the surface appeared fragments from the Bronze Age and rarely early medieval).

Based on the prospects, a grid system with blocks of 20 x 20 m and 2 x 2 m square was created, and for the dismantling and reconstruction of the wall structure, 1 x 1 m square.

From the study of prospecting and aero-photograms one can observe the large complexes (Fig. 3-5), and sometimes older annexes or complexes and a newer dwelling (L10).

For the opening of a surface, two of the complexes were selected (Fig. 5): a large dwelling, marked by us as House 3 (shortened L3: the numbering started from the south to the north); and House 4 (L4), a smaller complex. At L3 we left the possibility of maintaining a stratigraphic profile at half the width of the complex. Between the two houses L3-L4 were found several pits, and at -0.30 – -0.35 m materials from a later complex, later marked as L10 (Fig. 5).

Stratigraphy

- 0 – -0.35 m reddish yellow arable soil with shredded adobes, Cucuteni ceramic fragments, including one of 9 century;
- -0.35 – -0.45 m light brown soil with ridges raised in the housing area, with grouped ceramic fragments and stones between the two dwellings;
- -0.45 – -0.55 / 0.65 m brown soil, clayey, with small adobes at the base of the dwellings (it appears in many of the pillar pits at the top of the pits);
- -0.65 – -0.85 m yellowish sandier soil, with good quality Cucuteni A3 ceramics, marked as Dobrovăț I, little adobes, little ceramics in each square;

⁹ MISCHKA 2008; MISCHKA 2009; MISCHKA 2010; MISCHKA 2016; MISCHKA *et al.* 2016; MISCHKA *et al.* 2019.

¹⁰ BERZOVAN, MISCHKA 2017.

¹¹ LAZAROVICI, MISCHKA 2016; LAZAROVICI C.-M *et al.* 2016; LAZAROVICI C.-M *et al.* 2017; LAZAROVICI C.-M *et al.* 2018; LAZAROVICI C.-M *et al.* 2019; LAZAROVICI GH *et al.* 2018; LAZAROVICI GH *et al.* 2019; DRUMER *et al.* 2019A; DRUMER *et al.* 2019B.

- -0.85 – -1.05 m yellowish soil, sometimes sandy (below L3), appear complexes from the Dobrovăț I level (L3a and L3b);
- -1.05 – -1.20 / 1.30 m layers of slightly cemented rock, 2-3 cm thick. In Block D3, lanes a9 -d9 alternating layers of sand and rock continue in depth - the rock is getting thicker (and coming from different geological periods).

ROMANIAN-CHINESE COLLABORATION

After we published studies in a volume dedicated to the Cucuteni culture, where we made references to its relations with other older civilizations in eastern European areas, in particular Cucuteni and western China, with Yangshao¹² culture groups and an open exhibition in Beijing, followed by a symposium,¹³ our Chinese partners expressed their intention to collaborate on these topics to find arguments for the existence of an older ethno-cultural way of ancient silk roads. Following bilateral discussions, we chose as a research area the site from Dobrovăț – Pădurea Buda (No. 5, Fig. 4), where we had prospects of German colleagues, willing to collaborate and help us start these researches, for them being a verification of the magneto-metric surveys previously carried out.

From July to September, an area of 24 x 16 m was opened in which there were the two mentioned complexes, L3 and L4. The research focused mainly on L4, where an altar and an interior division of the building were discovered, as well as some household annexes.¹⁴

HOUSING

House 4/L4

The house had dimensions of approx. 8 x 7 m (the western side has not been investigated), with an area of about 56 sqm, thus entering the category of medium dwellings, group K from the Balkans, between 50-60 sqm.¹⁵ Adobe deposits from the floor and walls in some areas overlapped, being over 40 cm thick.

The house had three rooms, an interior corridor and three annexes. The entrance was noticed on the southeast side, where architectural elements from the entrance door were found. In the vicinity of the house, on the south, west and north sides were the annexes, about 1.5 m wide, which were approximated after some pits on the south and north sides.

On the west side, the research is not completed, and the area with the altar will be studied especially during future research, the altar requiring restoration and preservation for museum display purposes.

We do not know yet if it is an ordinary dwelling or it is a cult building, because in the central room, which had a partially suspended floor there were remains of an altar.

As House 3/L3 is larger, the research will be completed in future campaigns.

Moreover, in this campaign Gh. Lazarovici trained the Romanian and the Chinese team for researching the architecture of the complexes, as was done at Scânteia with the Romanian and German colleagues, members of the research teams.¹⁶ This method of investigating the architecture, of recomposing the structure of the walls and the wooden floor covered with clay was experimented by Gh. Lazarovici in the study of several sites and dwellings from the Neolithic to the Copper Age. After the experience from Scânteia, the training of a field restorer who observes and preserves at the site some important architectural elements during the works and not later, when important elements are lost or the experience of the restoring colleagues, is extremely necessary.¹⁷

¹² LAZAROVICI C.-M. *et al.* 2009.

¹³ LAZAROVICI, STRATULAT 2018.

¹⁴ We have also noticed the annexes at Scânteia in L14 where the large pottery for storing grains and other foods were kept: LAZAROVICI C.-M. *et al.* 2018.

¹⁵ In our databases there are 35 homes out of the 1030 registrations, in the K group of 50-60 sqm., of which 6 from the Cucuteni culture, phases A and B. The last registered is 10 years ago. Today there are more.

¹⁶ LAZAROVICI C.-M. *et al.* 2016; LAZAROVICI C.-M. *et al.* 2017; LAZAROVICI C.-M. *et al.* 2018; LAZAROVICI GH. 2018; LAZAROVICI GH. 2019.

¹⁷ During the research there were many situations that show the presence of a conservator / restaurateur in the field is extremely necessary. We are referring to several architectural elements, the corners of entrances found at the entrance on the south-east side, which were not stuck together, being noticed only after they were mirrored, some being in different trusses when collapsing and leveling the walls. On the other hand, even the fragments of the pottery that could be whole were not separated in the course of cleaning, or decalcification, as there was no restoration specialist at our working base in Dobrovăț. There were wall and floor structures that deserved to be preserved for some real

We will not insist too much on all the details recorded, the research being ongoing, we will reconstruct only some architectural structures, for which we will give only a few examples.

Central room

Viewed from the west one can see three interior walls that separate the central room from the one on the south and the one situated in the northern part. In some situations, some pits can also be seen in squares from the partitions or from the central structure of the roof. These will be more precise only after the preparation of the entire adobe. Even on the north side from where we look (Fig. 6), round entrances from the pillars of the north wall can be seen in the ridges, but additional checks must be made after dismantling (Fig. 6).

The Entries

One of the entrances was on the southeast side (in fact, the slope of the hill is inclined to the east and does not allow rainwater to enter the house), but there was an entrance / exit to the western annex (Fig. 7.a). The two pillars at the entrance were slightly more retracted. One of them was that burnt clay tin, which was pushed inside with the east wall. After the structure of the walls turned and reconstituted identically, we could see that the east and west walls had vertical beams with horizontal structures, and outside the structure were attached two rows of vertical poles at a short distance (under one meter), alternating on one side, and on the other side of the wall, allowing the construction of a network on which clay was applied. The loam was applied only to the outside in both situations. On the south and the north sides the glued beams were horizontal.

On the east side we had redone some details of network structures on the wall (Fig. 8.a), but also from the corners at the southeast entrance (Fig. 8.b-c). In various other sites from different prehistoric cultures there were also such sheets from the entrances or windows, but being small pieces we could not always determine the place of origin (in Gornea, for example). In fact, edges or windowsills were found in several Cucuteni settlements:¹⁸ in Hăbășești – *Holm*,¹⁹ in Mărgineni – *Cetățuia*,²⁰ in Trușești – *Țuguieța*,²¹ but also in Dumești – *Între Pâraie*.²² Fragments of door frames are mentioned in several homes from Trușești – *Țuguieța* (L9, L14, L17), Ariușd,²³ but also in Hlăpești (L1) or Ghelăiești – *Nedeia* (L3).²⁴

The second entry / exit to the western annex (Fig. 7.a), after the amount of pottery discovered, seems to have been used more intensively (see statistics in tables 21-22).

Looking at the structure of the east wall fully investigated, we will return to the commentary of the pits from its original structure (Fig. 11.c).

The altar (Fig. 6-7, 9)

It was 1.55 m long, was arranged on a suspended platform as in the neighboring resort of Tăcuta (about 5 km in airline), where colleagues from the University of Suceava dig.²⁵ We will return to the altar after it has been dismantled and its structure restored. At the same time, we also consider its museum use.

The corridor (Fig. 6-7)

Research is ongoing, so we will not comment on the situation now. The presence of this corridor is also a novelty for us, as we have not encountered such situations in other researches of ours, from sites of different cultures (the culture of Banat, Zau, Ariușd-Cucuteni, Cucuteni). Being a building with a high altar located next to another large building (L3) we think it is a family sanctuary (the house of the priestess).²⁶ But such corridors appeared in constructions near the

reconstructions in the museum (see the museums in Piatra Neamț, Bacău and others) or in future archaeological parks. We will try to address this shortcoming starting the 2020 campaign.

¹⁸ LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2007: 206-207.

¹⁹ DUMITRESCU 1967: 16.

²⁰ MONAH *et al.* 2004: 42.

²¹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA *et al.* 1954: 9; PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA *et al.* 1999: 188, rectangular frames from the doors in L9, L14, L17.

²² ALAIBA 1998: 54.

²³ LÁSZLÓ 1914.

²⁴ CUCOȘ 1999: 43-45.

²⁵ Because of the kindness of Professor Boghian we visited with our Chinese colleagues, we saw a similar situation, excepting the upper part of the altar's edge that was decorated.

²⁶ See our comments and examples from Scânteia: LAZAROVICI C.-M. *et al.* 2018; LAZAROVICI C.-M. *et al.* 2019; LAZAROVICI GH. 2018; LAZAROVICI GH. 2019.

temple, Sanctuary 1 in Parța (P8, P4).²⁷ Also, in Zorlențu Mare, in the Vinča B1 culture, a ceramic firing workshop was such a corridor,²⁸ and in Banjica-Belgrade, also in Vinča B, there was another workshop that had three ovens in three rooms.²⁹ In Gorzsa, in the Tisza culture, there is another such corridor, which allowed access to several rooms. This kind of housing with three rooms and an interior corridor also appears in the Copper Age, in Bulgaria, in Poljanica, on level VII,³⁰ belonging to the Karanovo VI – Kođadžermen culture, related to Gumelnița.

The South Room (Fig. 6-7)

One-third of the walls were documented. As with the east wall, the wall structure consisted of two rows of pits that supported the wall, and this burnt wall was bonded with two layers of clay, both inside and out. The exterior structure was prepared by M. Oancă and A. Kovács. The wall burned and parts of its upper side fell around it, but the pits were still visible (Fig. 10). The outer part of the wall, turned in a mirror fashion, allowed us to analyze the profile and dimensions of the outer beams bonded with clay. Comparing with the structure of the pits with double columns and the vertical columns, we reconstructed in Fig. 11.c the structure of the walls based on the impress from the adobes.

We briefly studied the interior. In the room, next to the wall from the corridor to the east was a bed (Fig. 12.a) made of beams with a semi-round section, profiled, 1.8 m long and 60-65 cm wide. Such beds were researched in Țaga, during the evolved phases of Zau culture.³¹ But benches, podiums with bed function or other uses are mentioned in other Cucuteni settlements, from different phases: at Trușești – Țuguieța, at Drăgușeni – *Ostrov*, at Poduri – *Dealul Ghindaru*, at Vărvăreuca III, their dimensions being generally 2 / 2.30 m long x 1 / 1.50 m wide.³²

The South Annex (Fig. 12.b-c)

This was the first one studied. Its structure was made of wooden material only, no remains of adobes were found. The pits were spaced, for this reason we believe it may also have been a wider eave, about 1.8 m after the distance between the wall and the southern pits. This seems to cover only about two thirds of the entire length of the house, but only three pits have been found and there are still some questions to be answered. We recall that annexes were discovered in many of the Cucuteni settlements and we refer here to the larger researches in Trușești – Țuguieța, where 62 of the 93 Cucuteni A houses contained annexes.³³ In contrast, in Cucuteni – *Cetățuia*, only three houses from the Cucuteni B phase had annexes (3-6 m).³⁴ In other settlements from the Cucuteni A phase, annexes were reported, but in a much smaller number.³⁵ Attachments are also on the sites of Yangshao culture, such as the Dahecun L1-4 site in China.³⁶

The Western room or annex (Fig. 13)

It is the most interesting annex. On the one hand there are numerous ceramic materials, but also architectural elements, the traces of adobes on the squares (beams that were initially upright), could come from the north wall or from another wall that would form a room with an important role in the household. An attempt to reconstruct the structure does not bring much clarification at this stage. The surface should be extended with 2 to 4 m north for clarification.

There are large pieces of adobes with massive beam structures that mark profiles of house walls, and not the annex type (Fig. 13). In the ceramics from the middle depths and from the top, the most common finding is the semi-fine (SF) and fine (F) categories, and at the lower level the semi-fine (SF) and usual (UC) ceramics. From this annex only three pits were prepared, and some adobes were scattered, probably from the wall of the L4 dwelling. However, it could also be a larger eave than in the south, but it contained more material than the southern annex. The analogy for the plan is found in Poljanica VII (Fig. 14), in the KKG (Karanovo VI – Kođadžermen – Gumelnița), where three-room buildings were surfaced, alongside a corridor and an area with double beds and pillars.

The North Room

²⁷ LAZAROVICI GH. *et al.* 2001: 215, Fig. 175.

²⁸ LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2003: 457, Fig. 48; LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2006: 186, Fig. IIIa.67.

²⁹ LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2003: 457, Fig. 45.

³⁰ Poljanica VII, n. 1a-c, TODOROVA 1973: Abb. 17. L 12; TODOROVA 1986: 173, Fig. 30.

³¹ LAZAROVICI GH. *et al.* 2009: 239-243, 251, Fig. 7.26,30,37-38 in L45 și L46.

³² LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2007: 217 and bibl.

³³ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA *et al.* 1999: 190; LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2007: 220.

³⁴ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA, VĂLEANU 2004: 112; LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2007: 220.

³⁵ Scânteia, L7; Drăgușeni – *Ostrov*, L14; Preutești – *Haltă*, L1: LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2007: 221 and bibl.

³⁶ SHI XINBANG *et al.* 1982: 26, Fig. 15.3, 17.3.

Some of the beam structures were oriented east-west, so they were upright, while the north ones were horizontal (Fig. 13). In the drawings depicting the beams we observed the traces of roundabouts that we have provisionally identified with interior pillars.

A similar situation we have noticed on the corridor. If it happened in the basic structure of the home, then the observations are correct, but for now we have to be careful.

The North Room and the Annex

At the northern room, our Chinese colleagues dismantled the last rubble on the stepping level they were trying to find. There was no glued floor, and underneath the cracks was another layer of 6-7 cm with small scraps of brown adobes. They did not scratch the floor but still two or three ledges were observed.

We believe that these basins are from some pillar pits, but they can be seen more clearly only after we reach the yellow clay. In the brown layer it is not noticeable because the filling of the pits is most often in the brown upper part. In the northern room, in the lower part there was little ceramic and the semi-fine and usual categories predominate only a fragment being from the fine category.

In the middle part predominates the fine ceramics, the usual and the semi-fine ones being in equal proportions. At the top, there were few ceramic fragments. On the other hand, in the northern annex there was a lot of pottery and below at all levels of research the semi-fine and fine categories predominate. From this we conclude that the northern annex was used for household purposes. The upper levels are grouped at the top in the building blocks, with the late stage, Dobrovăț III, as in the vicinity of House 10 (former L3-L4). These observations are noticeable in all the ceramic characteristics (category, invoice). Of course, after finishing the research, when all the materials will be analyzed, we will have more concluding results.

The Archaeological material

The rarity of the tools and of the whole pottery shows us that when the houses were lit, the inhabitants of the southern edge of the settlement still had time to take their main goods, to save them from fire. According to the way we found the walls, they remained standing after the fire, being then pushed inside, so that the rubble would occupy as little space as possible. That is why we believe that House L10 was built in the space between two ruins. It is not necessary to come with many details right now, but these things are clear from the study of how the rubble on the walls are above each other. The bonding of the materials from the upper level of rubble with the materials of House L10 is showing that it is the same large period of time with the same distinctive characteristics defined by us in Dobrovăț III. We do not know the situation outside the burned complexes further south, but maybe we will have some answers in the future.

Carved tools

Although the study of the sites was done with a palette knife and the vacuum cleaner, and we periodically passed through the sieve the material from the vacuum cleaner, no micro-tools or small ornaments (beads) were to be found. Prut flint (Fig. 15.1-6), but also from other raw materials (Fig. 15.10), opal (Fig. 15.8) or local sandstone (Fig. 15.9,12,16) were carved blades (Fig. 15.1-2), gratings (Fig. 15.3-5,16), tips or fragments of knives (Fig. 15.6) and perhaps a spear tip (Fig. 15.12). More interesting is a fragment of a polished axe, carved before finishing (Fig. 15.14).

Tools made out of polished stone

From the local rocks, some axes and chisels were made. Most are broken and abandoned or reused as rubbing tools after piercing, the edges of the hole being carved to serve as rubbing tools. Even the rocks from which they were made were not of great quality, some cleaved on natural cracks (Fig. 16.2,7), others broke their cut to use (Fig. 16.1-3). After the ruptures, some were used as chippers (Fig. 16.3). There is also an axe / chisel being processed (Fig. 16.6), abandoned, most likely due to the inadequate rock or used as a log.

Bone tools

In general, very few bones were preserved due to the acid soil, being near the forest and over time, the whole hill was forested. A detailed study on zoo-archaeological remains is attached to this article by C. Oprean, which gives us more data on the exploitation of animals in the settlement from Dobrovăț – Pădurea Buda, as well as the role of hunting in the whole settlement. All the bone artifacts were discovered near the House L10 area, in the pit in which a wild boar skull was deposited, and in the basements in its vicinity, somewhere in the center of the dwelling (Fig. 17a). These are two piercings (Fig. 17a.1-2), an astragal with one side sharpened (Fig. 17a.3), a bone fragment with traces of cuttings (Fig. 17a.4) and a tip or maybe a break-hole (Fig. 17a.5).

Clay objects

Among the few clay objects we can mention is an oven plug (Fig. 17b.1), a perforated lip (Fig. 17b.2), toy balls (Fig. 17b.3-7), as well as an adobe fragment with an impression (Fig. 17b.9).

Plastic art

The plastic art discovered so far is quite poor if we compare it to the one from the settlement of Scânteia for example. Among the pieces from Dobrovăț we have both female anthropomorphic idols (Fig. 18.6,9,11), masculine ones (Fig. 18.4,7), but also some that due to their fragmentary status cannot be included in the first or second category (Fig. 18.3,5).

A more special piece, in fact a flat bust, more than 10 cm high, broken from the middle according to size, looks like a piece of a domestic altar found in the north room – North annex of the L4 House (Fig. 18.7).

This reminds us of a similar theme from the Early Neolithic from Gura Baciului, where a stone star from a house altar of the Great Mother had the breasts drilled to invoke the divine milk.³⁷ But in this case, the preserved bust may also belong to a male idol. Also the head of Fig. 18.3 (sex impossible to determine), seems to belong to a large idol.

A smaller bust (Fig. 18.4), similar to the one described above, may be male (because female idols in this period are decorated mostly with incisions and less often with painting), 5 cm high comes from the profile on the outside, from the southeast of the site. As for two other fragmentary anthropomorphic idols, one is part of a character's torso (Fig. 19.1), and the other decorated with incisions (Fig. 19.3) comes from the hip and foot of a female idol.

Here we can add some fragments of zoomorphic idols (Fig. 18.8), as well as a bucranium protome from a bowl, similar to the one from Poienesti.³⁸

The mentioned bucranium comes from a bowl with good quality interior and exterior painting, and was discovered in L3 (Fig. 18.10). It is possible that after cleaning the aforementioned house from the Dobrovăț I level we can find fragments of this vessel. Such representations often appear on objects of the Cucuteni – Trypillia culture.³⁹ But this is one of the most elegant pieces from Dobrovăț (Fig. 18.10).

Of course, there are often fragments of clay horns from bulls, one of the themes commonly encountered not only in the Cucuteni culture, but also in closer or distant related civilizations, as is the case with the Yangshao culture and its sub-groups.⁴⁰

From the few zoomorphic idols, we deduce that the main theme was the bull, with several horn or stone horn fragments being discovered. Unfortunately, not one was entirely preserved. From one specimen only the torso was found (Fig. 18.8). The topic of the *divine bull* as a symbol of fertility we have debated in several articles, representing a symbol often found in the plastic art of Cucuteni culture and beyond.⁴¹

We will not comment on the ceramic fragment with bird's eye (Fig. 19.6), in the hope that we will find fragments from the same container, which will allow us a proper interpretation.

Most anthropomorphic idols (Fig. 18.1-3,5-6,9,11; Fig. 19.1,3), as well as zoomorphic ones (Fig. 18.8; Fig. 19.2,4-5) are characteristic of the Cucuteni culture, and their deliberate breakdown has already been discussed in several articles, studies, synthesis papers, the conclusion being their desecration after use in specific rituals.⁴²

Ceramics

The pottery from L10 (Fig. 20.a), a complex from the Dobrovăț III phase, due to the arson of the complex is burned secondarily, changing its original hue and colors. In the series, L10 is placed in the middle or at the bottom of table 21.

In the central area of House L10, where there was a river bed, there were numerous remains of coal and ash, which shows once again that the life of the Cucuteni communities was not very quiet and peaceful as some archaeologists still suppose today. This assumption is demonstrated on the other hand by the numerous magneto-metric surveys, which show that most of the prospected sites (both from the Cucuteni area and from the Trypillia area) had more defense ditches and palisades⁴³ that need to be further researched.

³⁷ LAZAROVICI GH. *et al.* 1995: 111, Fig. 21.7 din P24a dates from the Starčevo-Criș IIIB-IVA.

³⁸ LAZAROVICI 2013; LAZAROVICI, BABEȘ 2015: 112, Fig. II.54.

³⁹ OTTE, DELNOÏ 2018; LAZAROVICI GH. *et al.* 2009: Fig. 12.1; *** CUCUTENI – TRYPIILLIA 2008: R19, R31, R33, R181 R182 and so on.

⁴⁰ LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2019.

⁴¹ LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2014; 2015; LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2016; LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2017.

⁴² MONAH 2012: 231; CHAPMAN 2000; LAZAROVICI GH. *et al.* 2011: 136-141; LAZAROVICI C.-M. 2016.

⁴³ LAZAROVICI C.-M. *et al.* 2005; MISCHKA 2008; MISCHKA 2009; MISCHKA 2010; MISCHKA 2016; MICLE *et al.* 2010; MISCHKA *et al.* 2016; MISCHKA *et al.* 2019; ASÂNDULESEI 2012; ASÂNDULESEI 2015: 198-200, 205, 207-211, 214 and bibl.; ASÂNDULESEI 2017; ASÂNDULESEI *et al.* 2012; LAZAROVICI C.-M. 2014A; LAZAROVICI C.-M. 2014B; 2015; LAZAROVICI,

It is possible that the settlements in the north-eastern part of the village of Dobrovăț, in the valley area (Fig. 4.1-4) may be some seasonal ones, related to agriculture, fishing, harvesting, etc.

One analysis on the ceramic categories shows that the fine ceramics are placed between the semi-fine and the usual ones. When doing a series we notice that we have a cultural series, but the chronological correlations are not sustainable. Another correlation is observed at L3 above with L10, having the same proportions and large number of ceramic fragments.

Painted pottery

Of the 3000 ceramic fragments registered in Dobrovăț – *Pădurea Buda*, one third are painted, and over 61% of them have combinations of several influences. The most common fragments painted are in the Western Annex, 15.4%, followed by L4 down (10.8%) and others from the layer (46.1%). In L3a and L3b the painted ceramic fragments represent only 4% each.

The research carried out on two complexes, which were not yet been fully investigated, do not require further comments, in our opinion. From a qualitative point of view, the ceramics from the lower levels are of better quality, as is the adobe (mixed with chaff), and in L3 and L4 the ceramics have a sand binder and organic residues (grass, hay).

The soils at the top are more acidic due to the forest, which settled for centuries after abandoning the settlement.

In addition, the limestone deposits from the upper levels also affected the painting on the vessels, being necessary the washing and the descaling with citric acids, followed by its stabilization.

Regarding the painted ceramics, we notice that at the one found in the lower levels the colors are better preserved compared to the one at the top. The reason is the one mentioned above, the action of the brown soil, more acidic types, known as soils A and B. All the ceramic fragments, however, are from Cucuteni phase A3.

Precucuteni pottery

Precucuteni ceramic materials were found in the upper layer, in the Cucuteni A3 complexes, under the adobes, in the adobes and over the adobes.

Some colleagues are still skeptical about accepting the contemporaneity between Precucuteni III and Cucuteni A3 suggested for a long time, even after the radiocarbon results.⁴⁴

Correlations between the Precucuteni engraved pottery and the painted Cucuteni pottery

Using the databases, information and the codes used by our colleague Z. Maxim for the analysis of pottery from Trușești – Țuguieța, we have checked the houses and some pits here to see what the correlations are between the two civilizations. We were interested to check this data because some colleagues defined the pottery decorated with incisions from some Cucuteni settlements as with Trușești *aspect*, and others considered that it would be Precucuteni motifs on Cucuteni material. The latter assumption is not verified because the paste / mixture, the combustion, the color differs between the two civilizations, without any doubt.

In Trușești both incisions and painting appear in complexes L59, L13, L39, L3, L5, L39, L39, L5, L23. It follows that when painted ceramics and engraving meet, the association is doubled for other decorative motifs. We did not comment on the shapes of the pottery, because the ones from Dobrovăț are still fragmented while in Trușești numerous pottery elements were redone.

These observations show a contemporaneity between the horizons of Cucuteni A3 and Precucuteni III. In other cases, some civilizations have slower processes, with the initial communities coexisting with newcomers, usually with another technology, that allows us to clearly define one or another of the civilizations. In House L4, where the research was almost completed, Precucuteni III fragments were found in the rubble (Fig. 25.1-6), under the rubble (Fig. 25.7-10) and on the rubble, but the latter could have been touched before, hence we do not discuss them as their stratigraphic position is uncertain. The conclusion that emerges, and the theory we have stated before, is a synchronism between Cucuteni A3 and Precucuteni III. Some fragments contain traces of yellow painting (Fig. 25.2).

Moreover, the C14 data speak of a contemporaneity between Cucuteni and late-Precucuteni III (Fig. 26.a). Thus, the data for Rusești Noi and Târpești place Precucuteni III later, between 4250 and 4150 BC. The Cucuteni phase

MISCHKA 2016; CHAPMAN *et al.* 2014A; CHAPMAN *et al.* 2014B; CHAPMAN *et al.* 2016; MÜLLER *et al.* 2014; RASSMANN *et al.* 2014; OHLRAU, RUD' 2019; VIDEIKO 2019 a.s.o.

⁴⁴ MANTU 1998; LAZAROVICI C.-M. 2010; LAZAROVICI GH. 2016; LAZAROVICI GH. 2016A; LAZAROVICI, LAZAROVICI 2016.

A3, one of the most dynamic phases that has the most discoveries, starts somewhere near 4280 BC and holds until 4210 BC (Fig. 26.b), which represents a short period of time for the dynamism of this phase, even for Dobrovăț.

Presence of late-Precucuteni III or IIIR (retarded) materials, as we defined the period (in Fig. 26.a) it seems natural and acceptable, especially since it is not the only case, but here we have undeniable stratigraphic data regarding the Precucuteni materials inside the Cucuteni A3 complexes.

Moreover, nowadays it is a trend for some archaeologists to include the Precucuteni culture in the Cucuteni period, which from a cultural point of view is not possible. For example: D. Monah (and the team) in the monography Poduri, but also in other catalogues, defines some late Precucuteni III pottery as being Cucuteni A1.⁴⁵

The Burial of the pig head and the jaw fragments (Fig. 27)

Since the research is not done, many problems will be explained later. A pig skull facing the ground was deposited at one of the pillars at L10 (Block C1, square f6, -0.60 m, pit B). A fragment of the lower jaw was also deposited in the pit. According to the investigations made by our colleague Cristian Oprean, the skull belongs to the species *Sus domesticus*, “palustris” type, approximately two and a half years old. Towards the center of the house was a segment of dark soil mixed with charcoal and ash, which unfortunately was dug like a pit.⁴⁶

The “burial of the adobe” in the E-Pit or the northwestern one (Fig. 28)

At the northwest corner was another posthole (Fig. 28.a, Gr. D). On the level of walking there were groups of ceramic fragments and stones, with some adobes here and there (Fig. 28.b).

Supposing that the pillar was intentionally removed or burnt (in this case it could be a “column”) and in the remaining pit fell the crease on it, none of the adobe fragments appeared to be from the “column” (Fig. 28.c). In the pit, after the pillar was removed or burned, it was filled with remains of adobes or other materials (Fig. 28.b-d). Note that the structure was only made of beams, otherwise we do not see the purpose of the adobe in the pit, and we could not reconstruct the profile from the pillar/column. No traces of painting were to be found on the adobes.

Moreover, we have wooden columns covered in clay at the sanctuary from Căscioarele – *Ostrovel*.⁴⁷

The archaeological material, especially the ceramics, is restored in the laboratory in Iași, so it will take some time until we make broader references regarding the vessels that have been redone.

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⁴⁵ MONAH *et al.* 2003, cat. 77, 90, 94; *** *Primul muzeu Cucuteni...* 2011, Precucuteni III pots from Trușești cat. 31, resumed at 39 are declared Cucuteni A3, although the material, the decorations are Precucuteni.

⁴⁶ The excavations of our team when we were in Scânteia with the German colleagues who completed the research.

⁴⁷ DUMITRESCU 1974: 478; LAZAROVICI GH. *et al.* 2001, vol. I.1: 246, 286, 292.

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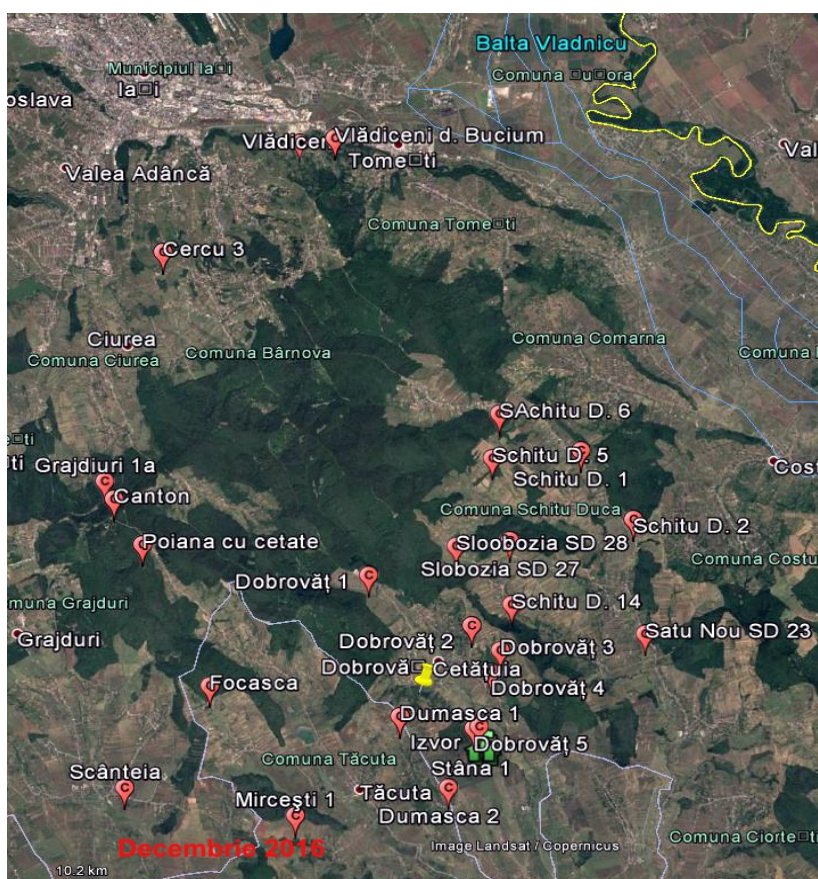
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a



b

Fig. 1. Cucuteni sites: a. from Dobrovăț; b. from the area.

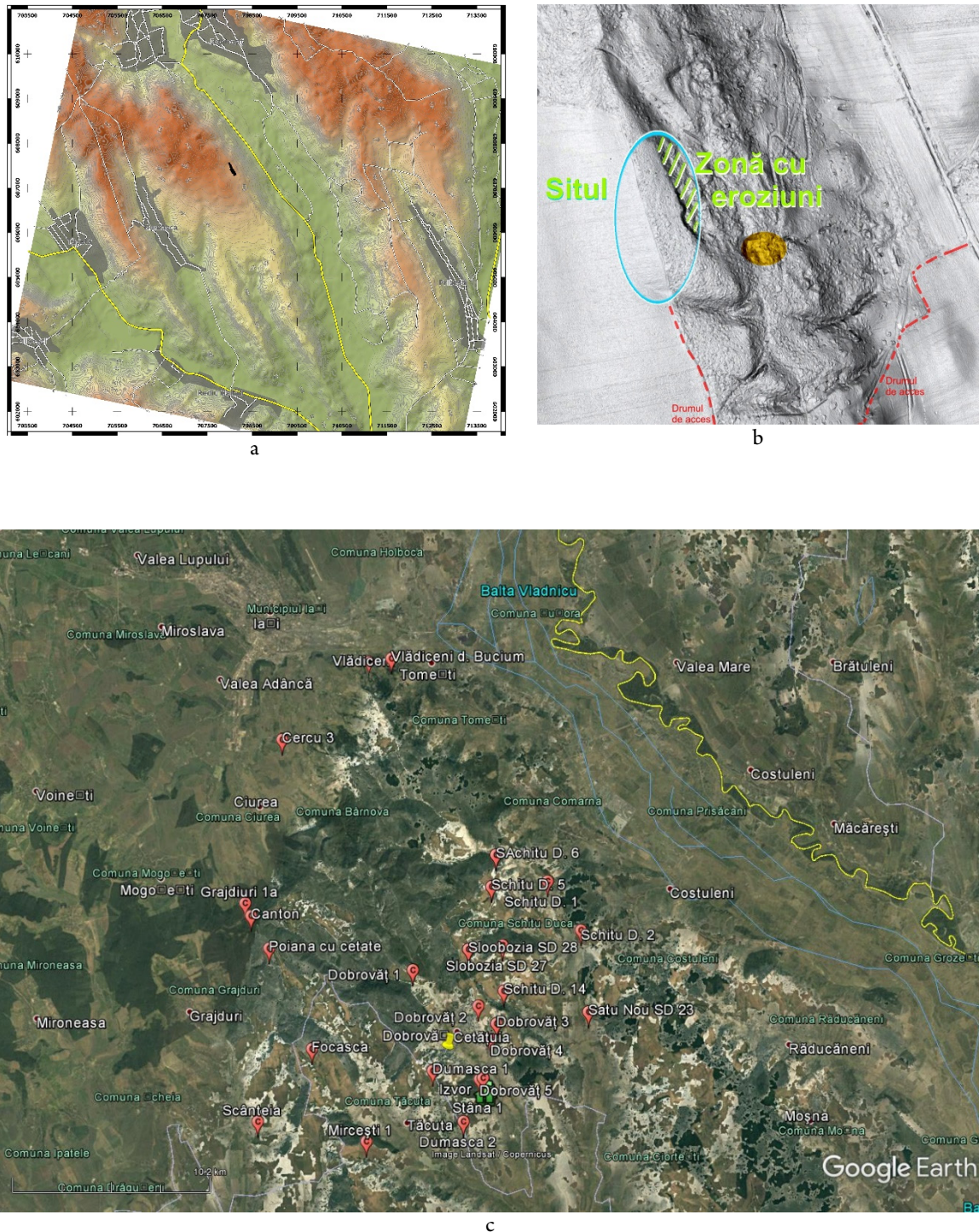


Fig. 2. a. Dobrovăț and the geographical area; b. Pădurea Buda, LIDAR prospecting (the spring is marked with brown); c. Sites marked on Google Earth map in winter (white marks represent snow).

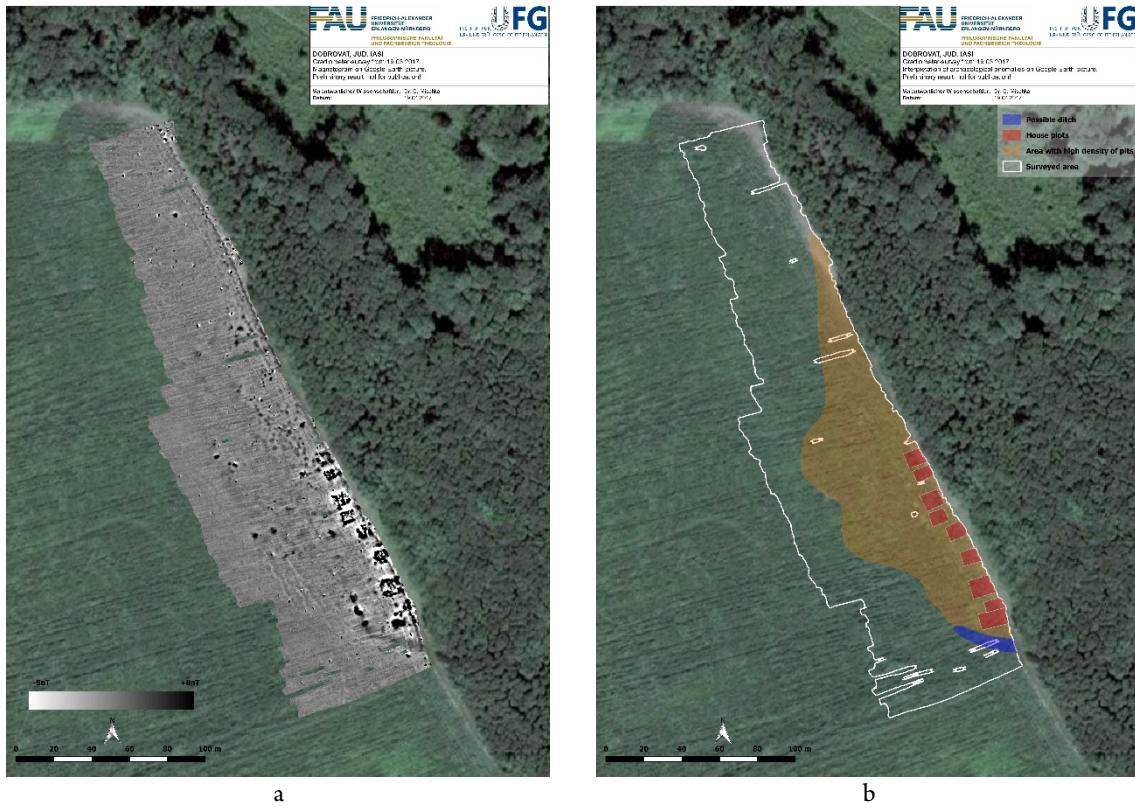


Fig. 3. *Pădurea Buda*: a. prospecting by Carsten Miska; b. marking the boundary of the settlement (yellow marking), the defense ditch (blue marking, transformed in time into a hole descending to the spring) and the nine constructions, processed by Carsten Mischka.

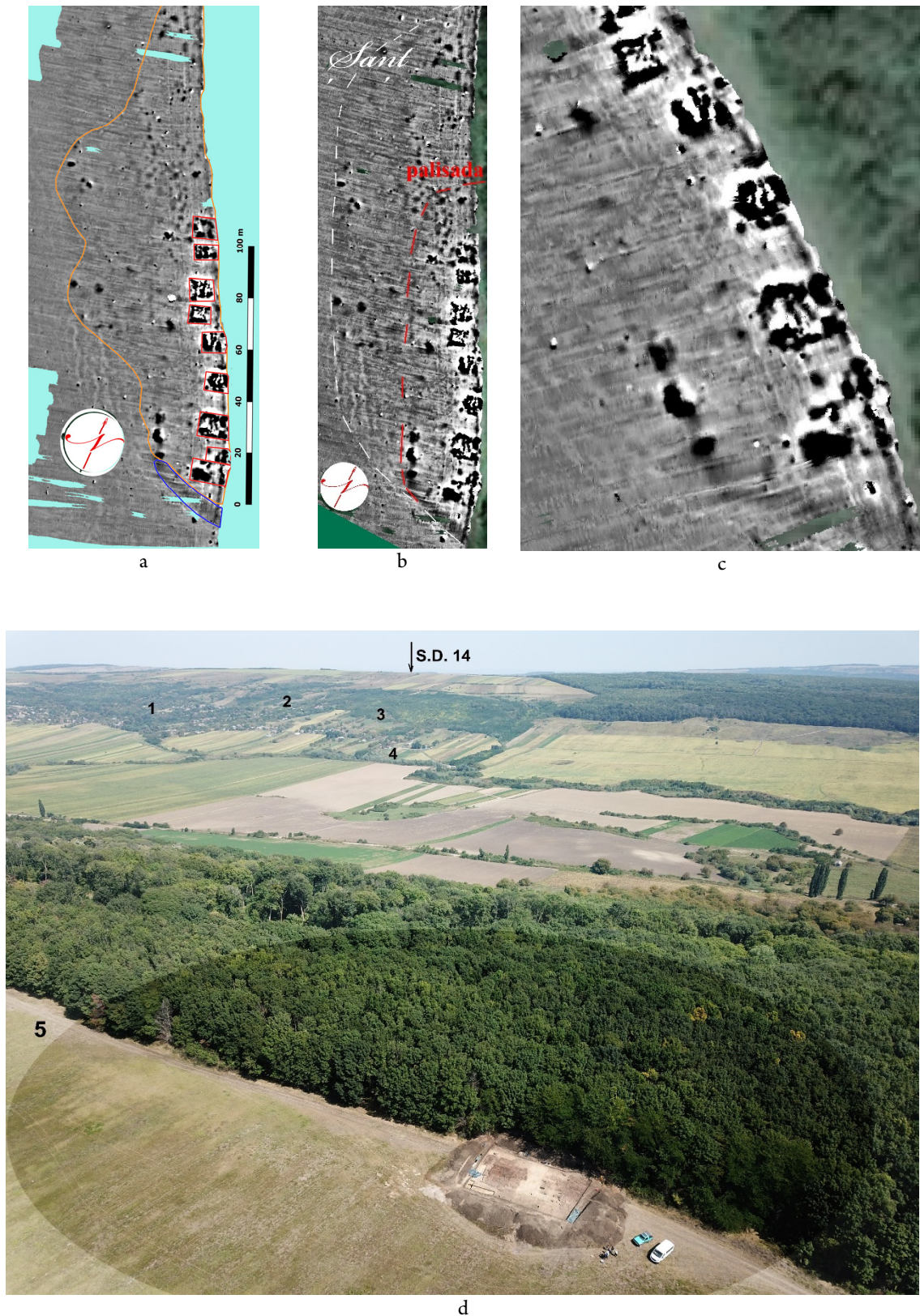


Fig. 4. Dobrovăț – Pădurea Buda: a-c. complexes, details after Carsten Mischka; d. aerial view from Pădurea Buda to the village (*apud* Carsten Mischka, August 2019): 1-4. sites with Cucuteni ceramics from Dobrovăț and Schitu Duca (SD) Objective 14 (according to Replăși 1984), processing Gheorghe Lazarovici.



Fig. 5. Dobrovăț – Pădurea Buda, houses L3, L4 with their annexes and L10 (processing *apud* Carsten Mischka, 14 August 2019).



Fig. 6. Pădurea Buda, L 4 with rooms, west wall and pillar profiles.

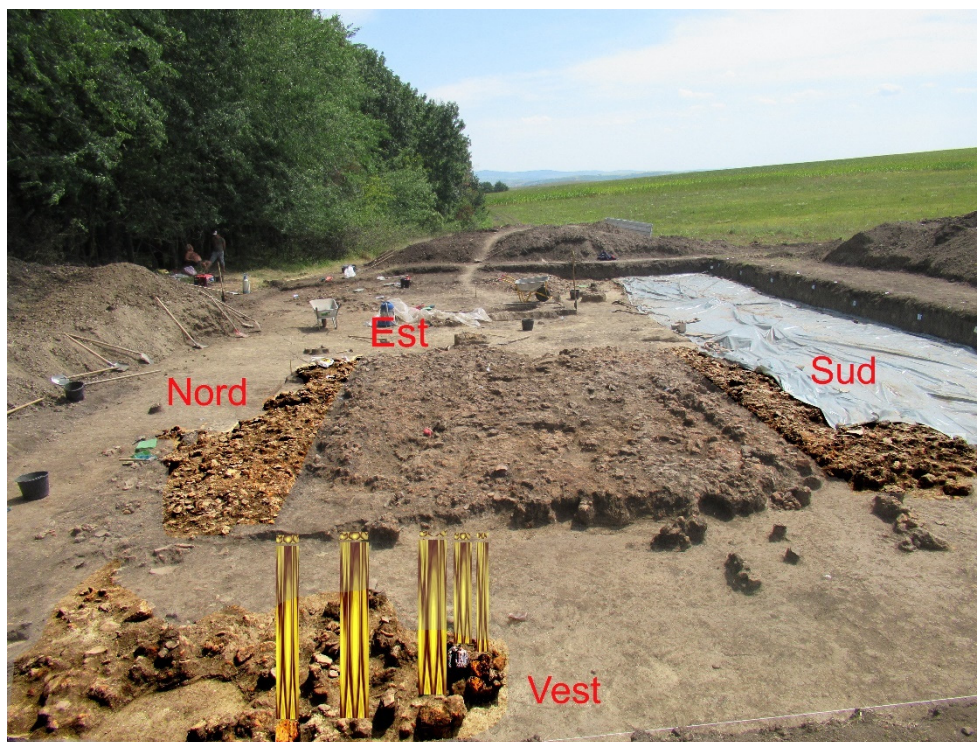


Fig. 7. *Pădurea Buda*, House 4, the central room and the annexes at different stages of study: a. after cleaning the debris; b. after the dismantling of some parts, with the marking of the pits, the area of the bed, the corridor, the altar, the area with the suspended bridge (red marking) and the entrance from the west.

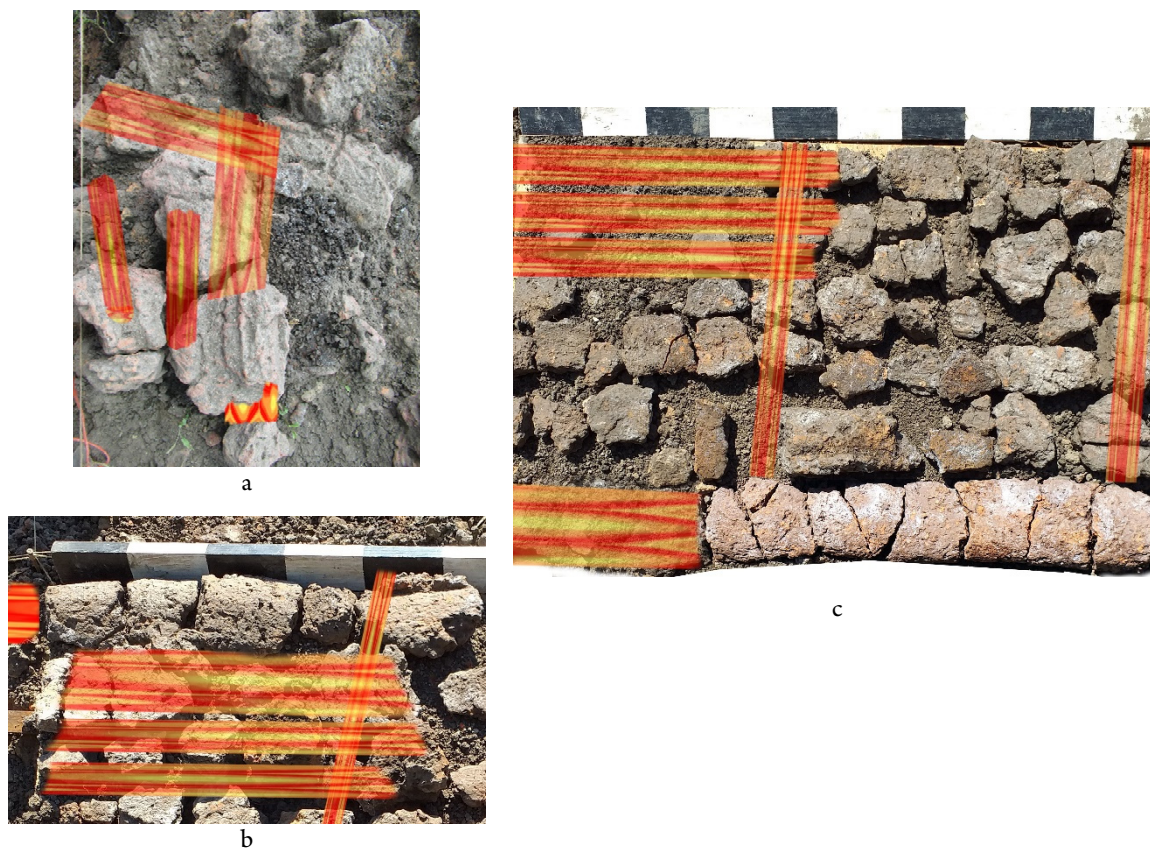


Fig. 8. *Pădurea Buda*, L4, east wall, network structures: a. wall; b. the north entrance door; c. the south leaf.



a



b

Fig. 9. Pădurea Buda, L4: a. the altar; b. detail from its conservation.



a

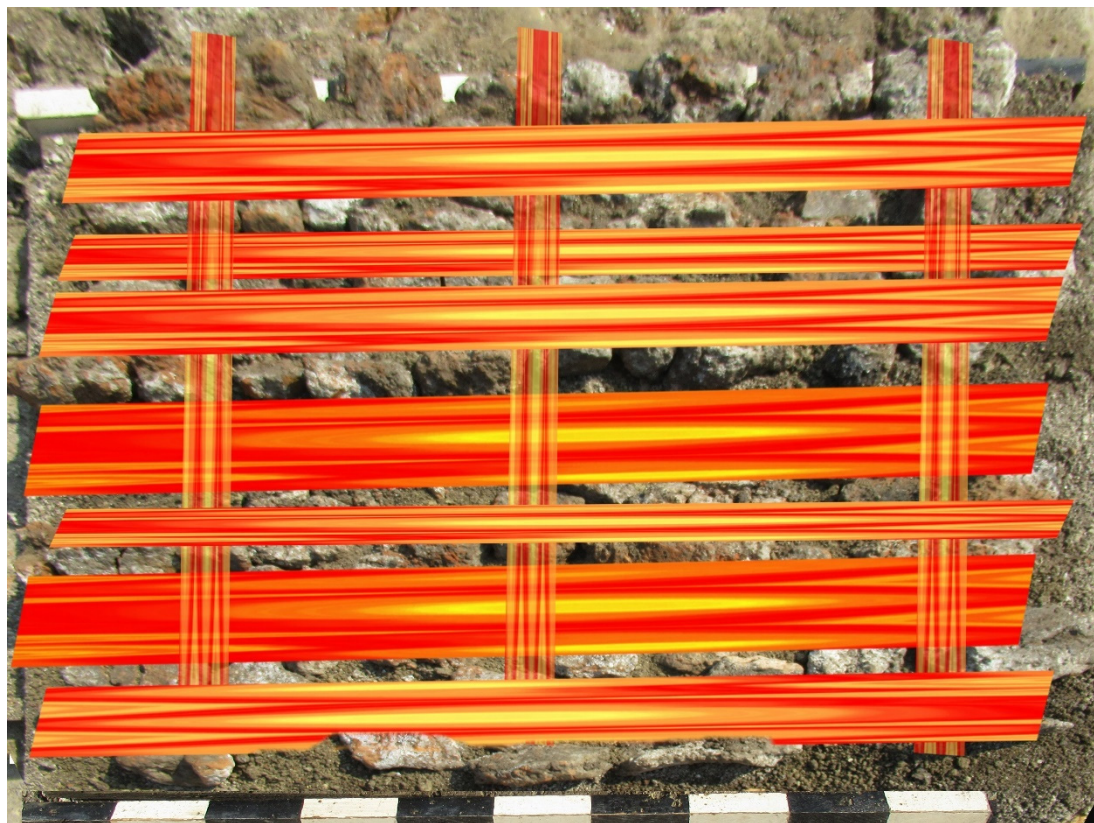


b



c

Fig. 10. *Pădurea Buda*, L4: a. base of the south wall with postholes; b-c. South wall, block D: b, square a6; c, square a8.



a



b

Fig. 11. *Pădurea Buda*, L4: a-b. details from the reconstruction of the south and north wall structure with the bed structure.

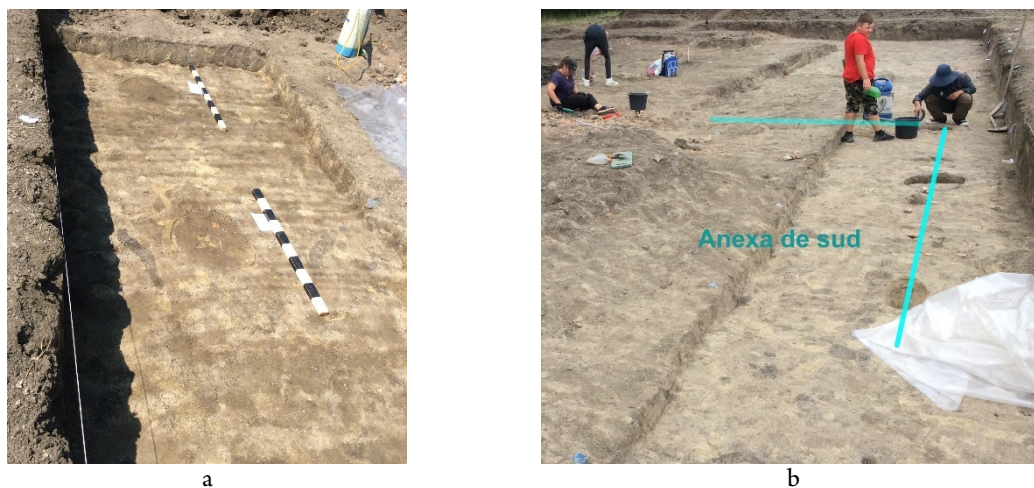


Fig. 12. Pădurea Buda, L4: a-b. southern annex with pits from the wide eaves.

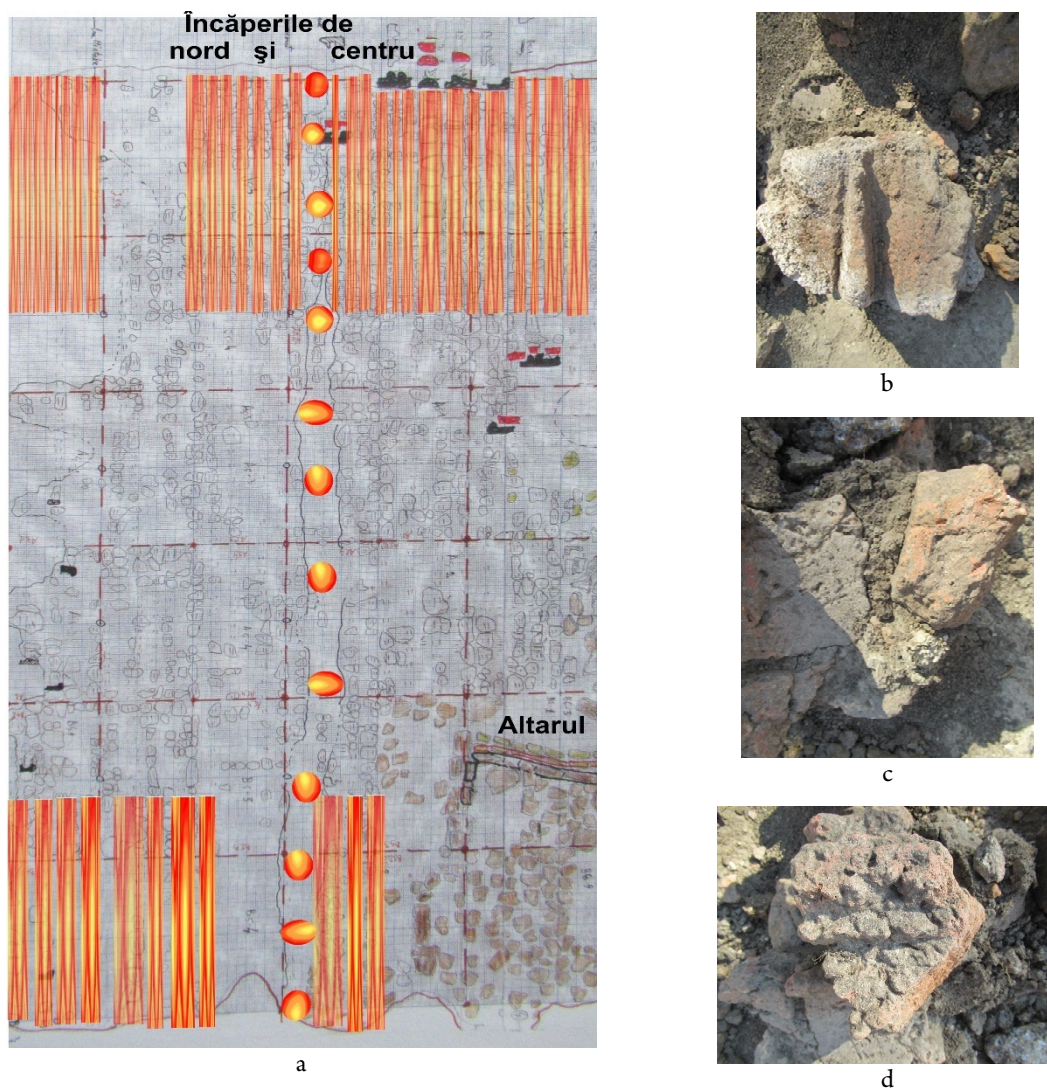


Fig. 13. Pădurea Buda, L4: a. structure of the east, north and west wall in the north half; b-d. beam profiles on squares.

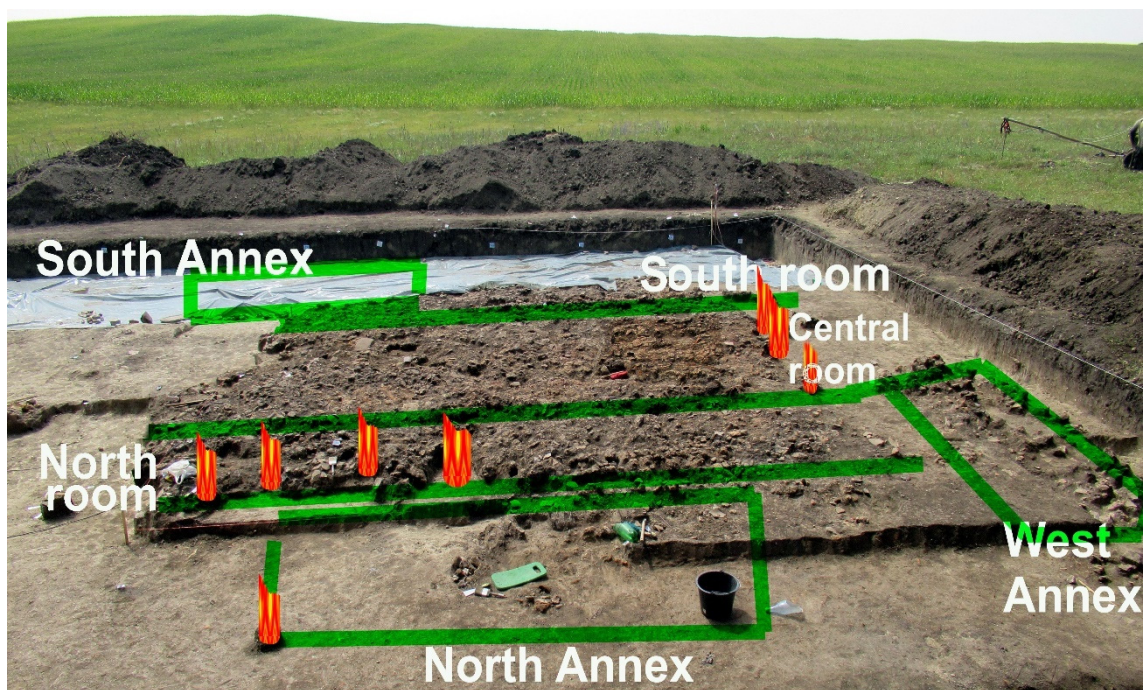
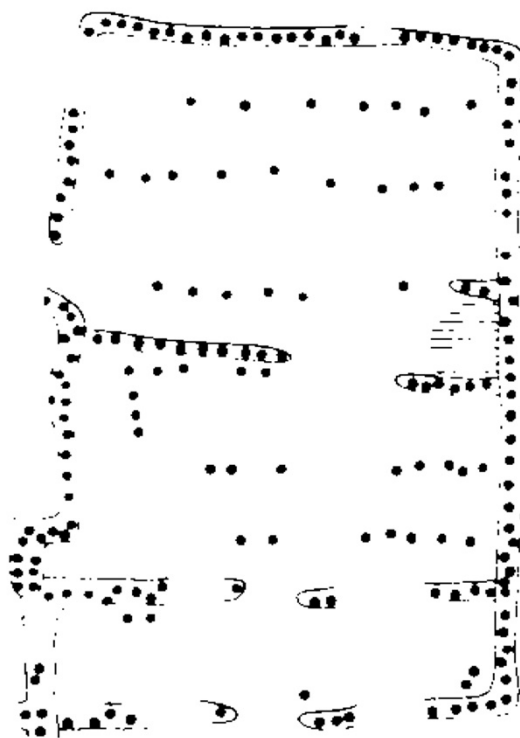


Fig. 13e. *Pădurea Buda*, L4, annex / western room: orange, sticks placed in open pits.



Todorova H. 1986, p. 173, fig. 30
Poljanica VII nr. 1 a-c, Todorova 1973 Abb. 12

Fig. 14. House from Poljanica, level VII (*apud* TODOROVA 1973, Abb. 12), analogy for L4 from Dobrovăț.



Fig. 15. Pădurea Buda, carved and polished stone tools (14, burnt ax fragment).

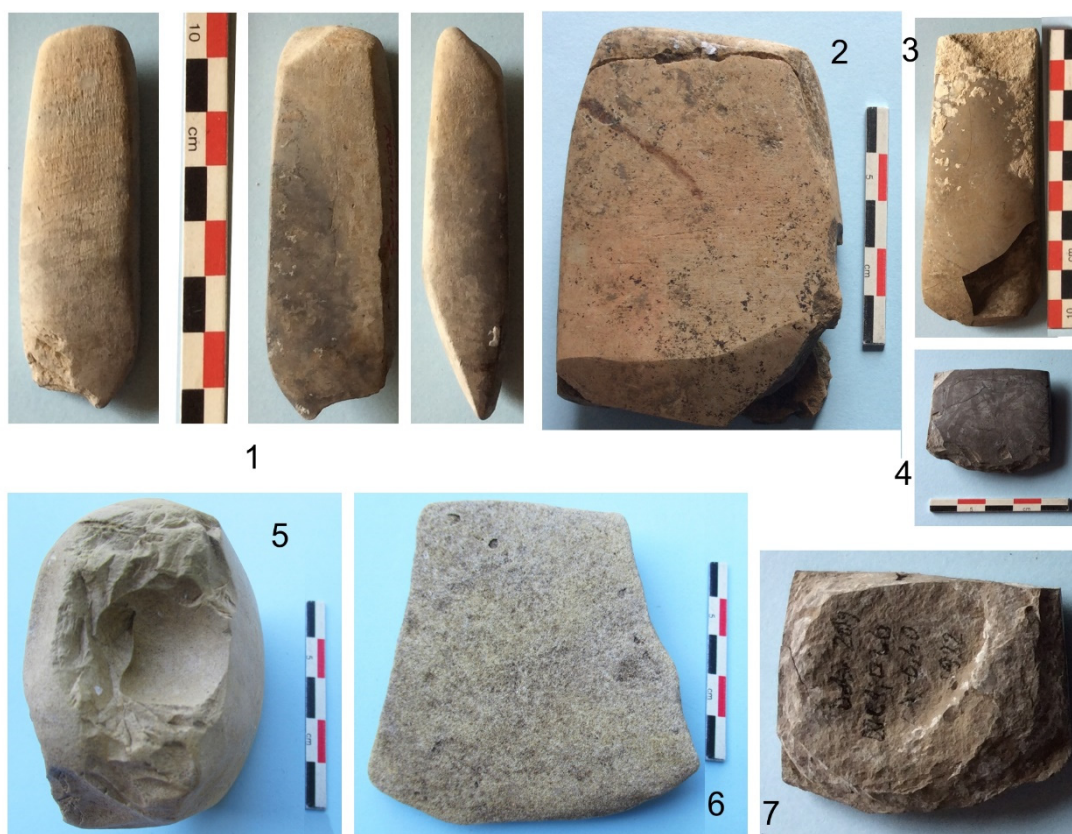


Fig. 16. Pădurea Buda, polished stone tools.



Fig. 17. *Pădurea Buda*: a. tools and bone objects from L10; b. clay objects: 1. oven cap, 2. perforated lip, 3-7. toy balls, 8. design on adobe.



Fig. 18. *Pădurea Buda*, anthropomorphic idols (1-7, 9, 11), zoomorphs (8) and protom (10): 1. from L3; 2. from C1 j3, -0.80 m; 3. from L4, C1 i6, -0.75 m; 4. from the SE area of the site, from the profile; 5. from C1 g3, -0.30 m; 6. from D1 b3, -0.30 m; 7. from the north room of the northern Annex of L4; 8. from L4, Northern Annex, northern room; 9. of L4 Annex of N, C1 j3, -0.80 m; 10. from L3a; 11. from D1 a8, under the platform of L4.



Fig. 19. *Pădurea Buda*, plastic art: 1, 3. anthropomorphic idols (3, foot); 2. zoomorphic idol (sheep?); 4-5. bull horns; 6. ceramic fragment with bird's claw.



a



b

Fig. 20. *Pădurea Buda*, House 10: a. image with part of the complex; b. painted pottery, secondary burned in area L10, Cucuteni A3.

Table 21. Pădurea Buda, ceramic categories. Good L10 in the center of the series	SF	F	UC
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex W j	86	19	24
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex N m	64	32	8
DOBROVĂȚ L4 m	111	26	36
DOBROVĂȚ L4 j	168	57	43
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex S	46	10	16
DOBROVĂȚ L4 south room	6	2	2
DOBROVĂȚ L4 s	98	47	29
DOBROVĂȚ L4 north room	12	1	7
DOBROVĂȚ l	29	14	10
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex W m	89	60	20
DOBROVĂȚ L3b	31	22	7
DOBROVĂȚ L3 j	77	44	29
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex W s	43	33	14
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex N	34	29	13
DOBROVĂȚ L3 m	31	15	19
DOBROVĂȚ L3a	89	80	33
DOBROVĂȚ L4 main room s	73	56	41
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex N s	37	27	22
DOBROVĂȚ L3 s	156	124	97
DOBROVĂȚ L10	121	74	96
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex N j	33	31	22
DOBROVAT L4 i center j	9	6	8
DOBROVĂȚ L4 south room j	62	47	61
DOBROVĂȚ L4 j corridor	8	6	8
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex S s	13	12	12
DOBROVĂȚ L4 N room m	11	15	11
DOBROVĂȚ L3 j L3b	6	6	11
DOBROVĂȚ L4 central room j		1	3

Table 22. Pădurea Buda, décor types.	Pressing	Painted	P1e	P5	P9	Sum	%
DOBROVĂȚ		334	51	8	57	456	46.1
DOBROVĂȚ L3b		47			1	53	5.4
DOBROVĂȚ L3a		49				52	5.24
DOBROVĂȚ L4 Annex W	41	68	10	9	19	152	15.4
DOBROVĂȚ L4 j		1	39	1	63	107	10.8
DOBROVĂȚ L4 s		36			7	44	4.4
DOBROVĂȚ L4 m		7	12	17	10	46	4.6
Sum	41	609	117	35	163	989	
%	4.1	61.6	11.8	3.5	16.5		100



Fig. 23. *Pădurea Buda*, ceramics: a-b. Dobrovăț I level; c-d. level Dobrovăț II.



Fig. 24. Cucuteni C type pottery from Dobrovăț II level.



Fig. 25. *Pădurea Buda*, Precucuteni fragments from L4: 1-9. in ruins; 7-10. under the rubble on the floor.

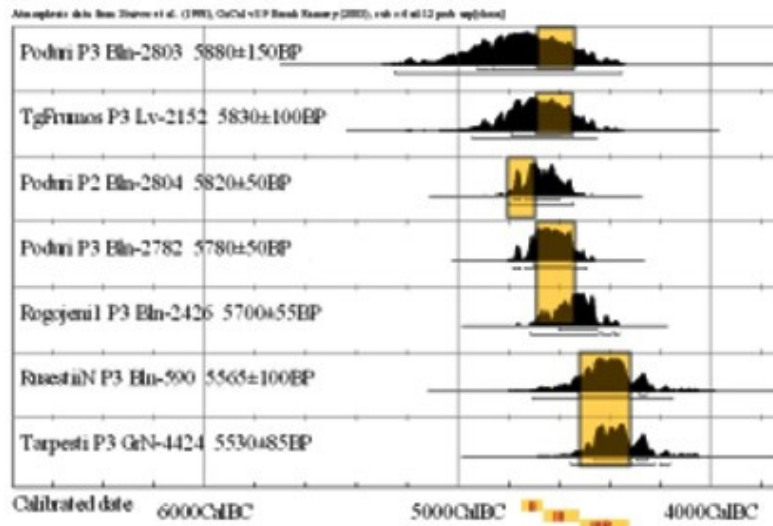


Fig. 26. C14 data for Precucuteni-Cucuteni: a. calibration by Gh. Lazarovici; b. *apud* Diaconescu 2014, Fig. 11.

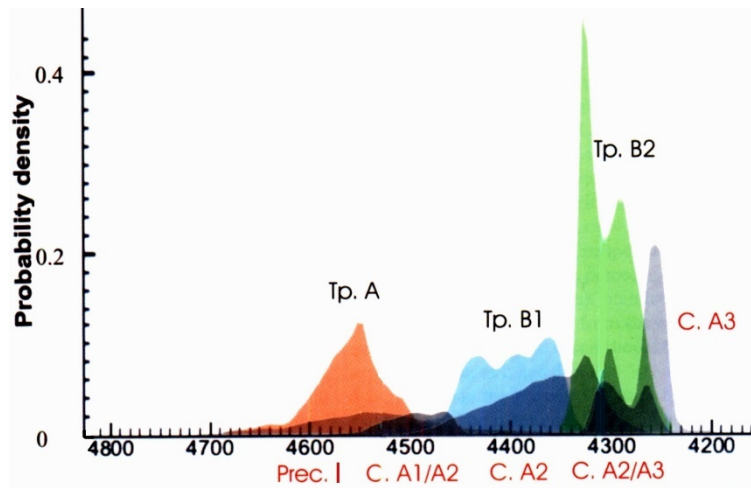


Fig. 11. The comparison of the bounded sums for the ¹⁴C dates of Precucuteni III, Cucuteni A1/A2, A2, A2/A3 and A3 phases to the dates belonging to Tiszapolgár culture's A, B1 and B2 phases.



a



b

Fig. 27. Pădurea Buda, L10: a. ritual grave with pig head; b. stepping stones on the level of the L10.



Fig. 28. *Pădurea Buda*, area L10: a. northern pits D and E; b-d. pit E, layout and content.

