## GRAPHIC REPRESENTATIONS IN ROMANIAN ARCHAE-OLOGY. AN OVERVIEW REGARDING LATE IRON AGE DWELLINGS<sup>1</sup>

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Archaeological representation is considered a field which focuses on the ways through which archaeologists provide knowledge about the past by referring to the different modes of presenting their findings. They were ultimately classified in academic and non-academic manners, and the first category was mostly related to writing and less to "imaging". Visual representations were associated with non-academic discourses and in this manner the subject of archaeological representation was considered by most archaeologists as outside the domain of their professional responsibility (Moser 2001, 262).

Nowadays, the importance of representations in archaeology is being mentioned more often and defined as a way of communication between archaeologists. The representation is considered the production of meaning through a visual language of communicating about the past. Of course, the notion of representation includes palette of various discussions: about photography, about arts and representing arts, about archaeological excavation technique (Llobera 2010, 195), about cultural influences in archaeology (Moser, Smiles 2005), about cultural heritage and so on.

But referring to representation, we refer to visualization. Visualization has been defined as the transformation of data or any sort of information into a representation that can be perceived (Llobera 2010, 195).

This paper tries to briefly discuss about how information regarding habitation structures researched in various Late Iron Age settlements from Muntenia were transformed into representations and to what extent these representations could be considered as part of a visual communication about the Late Iron Age in southern Romania. The intention is not to classify the types of

dwellings encountered in the Getic-Dacian settlements from this geographical area, but to make a few remarks regarding the way in which these were represented.

The technical literature mentions the following settlements in which dwellings were documented: Alexandria-Pădurea Vedea, Bălăceanca Ecluză, Bălteni (Buzău), Bărcănești, Bila "La Fântână", Borduşani, Bragadiru, Bucureşti "Aleea Scroviștea", București "Băneasa Lac", București "Cățelu Nou", București Grivița, Buzău "La SE de FUM", Căscioarele "Suvița Horatului", Căscioarele "Cătălui", Căscioarele "La E de Valea Coșarului", Căscioarele "Coinea I", Căscioarele "Suharna", Căscioarele "Coinea II", Cătunu "Viișoara", Cârlomănești, Cetățeni, Chirnogi, Ciolăneștii din Deal, Crăsanii de Jos, Grerăseni, Giurgeni, Grădiștea "Movila Crestată", Greaca "Valea Fântânilor", Greaca "La Slom", Iedera de Jos, Milcov, Mironești "Coastă", Mironești "Conacul lui Palade", Olteni Teleorman, Pietrosu Costești, Pietroșani (Teleorman), Popești, Prundu "La Stână", Radovanu "Gorgana a doua", Radovanu "Gorgana întâi", Sărulești, Schitu "Gaura Despei", Schitu "La Conac", Sibiciu de Sus, Sprâncenata, Tânganu, Târcov, Tinosu, Valea Lupului, Vlădiceasca "Ochiul lui Velicu", Vlădiceasca "Ghergălăul Mare" Zimnicea and Zlata (fig. 1). From among these, only few were researched through systematic excavations and even fewer were published.

Apparently, the data base for making an analysis over the habitation structures is sufficient and comprehensive, as we are talking about over 50 settlements in which dwellings are mentioned to have been discovered. But what we have to take into consideration first is that all the above mentioned settlements were researched differently and this seriously influenced the state of the information which we rely on. For this reason, all typologies made will not be considered in this paper.

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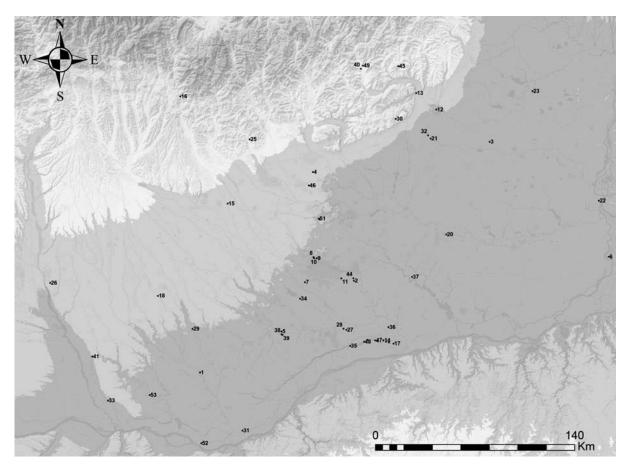


Fig. 1. The map with all the places where dwellings were found, mentioned or documented: 1. Alexandria; 2. Bălăceanca; 3. Bălteni; 4. Bărcăneşti; 5. Bila; 6. Borduşani; 7. Bragadiru; 8. Bucureşti - Lacul Griviţa; 9. Bucureşti - Băneasa Lac; 10. Bucureşti - Aleea Scroviştea; 11. Bucureşti - Căţelu; 12. Buzău; 13. Cârlomăneşti; 14. Cătălui; 15. Cătunu; 16. Cetăţeni; 17. Chirnogi; 18. Ciolăneştii din Deal; 19. Coinea; 20. Crăsani; 21. Gherăseni; 22. Giurgeni; 23. Grădiştea; 24. Greaca "La Slom"; 25. Iedera; 26. Milcov; 27. Mironeşti "Conacul lui Palade"; 28. Mironeşti Coastă; 29. Olteni; 30. Pietroasa Mică; 31. Pietroşani; 32. Pietrosu - Costeşti; 33. Pleaşov; 34. Popeşti; 35. Prundu; 36. Radovanu "Gorgana întâi", "Gorgana a doua"; 37. Săruleşti; 38. Schitu Gaura Despei; 39. Schitu "La Conac"; 40. Sibiciu de Sus; 41. Sprâncenata; 42. Suharna; 43. Şuviţa Hotarului; 44. Tânganu; 45. Târcov; 46. Tinosu; 47. Valea Coşarului; 48. Valea Fântânilor; 49. Valea Lupului; 50. Vlădiceasca "Ochiul lui Velicu"; 51. Vlădiceasca "Ghergălăul Mare"; 52. Zimnicea "Cetate"; 53. Zlata;

The way in which habitation structures are found by archaeologists is very different from their original form, for this reason being more difficult to identify them. The excavation method is rather a decisive factor in their identification and documentation. Most of the finds consist of lenses or yellow clay leveling traces, burnt adobe or stone agglomerations, which are, in many cases, pierced by pits or later complexes. In such context, the partial research of these complexes doesn't come as a shock among the archaeological literature. Finding a habitation complex is considered enough and their illustration not a necessity.

Looking at all dwelling discoveries made in south-eastern Romania's area (Muntenia), one must specify that very few are illustrated. Representations consist mainly of sketches of some limits observed during the excavations. Rare are the cases in which the illustrations offer a certain visual perspective of the respective limits found in the ground.

#### Systematic excavations

Generally, the settlements will be grouped depending on the research type. Those sites in which systematic excavations have been made are, usually the large Getic-Dacian settlements from southern Romania, which are considered, in historical and archaeological terms the concrete manifestation of the phase traditionally known as "classical period of the Getic-Dacian civilization"

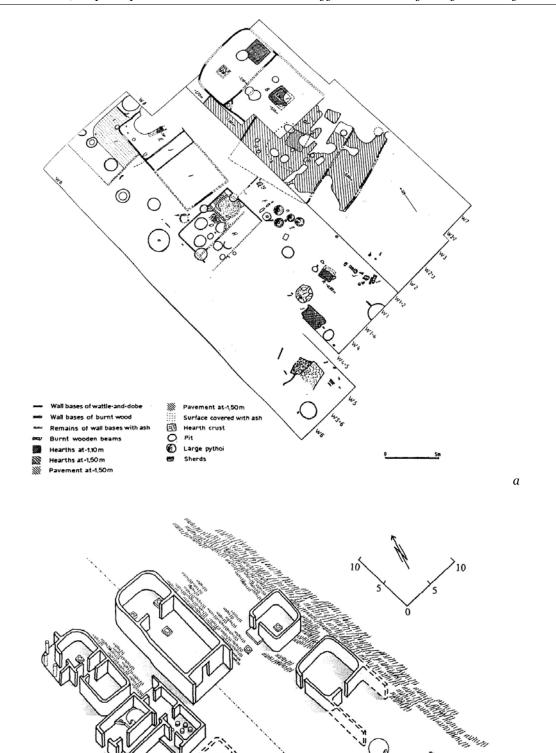


Fig. 2. The elite residential quarter from Popești: a - Sector "W" (after Vulpe 2004-2005, 25, fig. 3); b - Reconstruction made by D. Antonescu in 1978 (after Vulpe 2004-2005, 29, fig. 7).

b

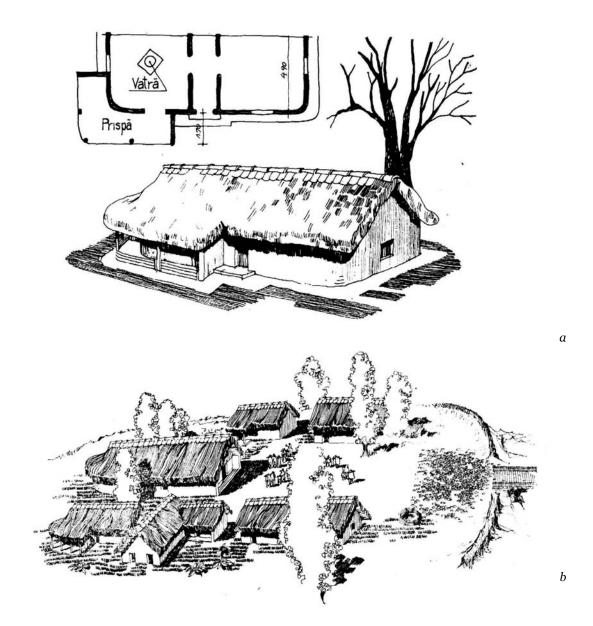


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(Babeş 2010a, 520). The settlements which can be chronologically framed in the period between the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C and the 1<sup>st</sup> Century A.D represent large territorial structures whose central places were considered the Dava types (also referred as the acropolises), centers of political and commercial life, of craft productions and religious activities (Babeş 2010, 130).

The existence within these large settlements of certain monumental structures of impressive sizes with special characteristics (apse, association with decorated hearths), put into slightly obscurity all those other constructions of modest characteristics and dimensions. Thus, one can find among the various representations of the discoveries made in the main Getic-Dacian settlements from Muntenia only images of the special areas or places within the respective sites.

Along these lines, the case of Popeşti settlement is exemplary: even if the authors of the researches mention a large number of rectangular constructions which contained hearths, with adjacent cellars which have been discovered and documented during the excavation campaigns, the focus of the publications regarding this site was made on the presentation and illustration of the so-called

elite residential quarter. The total number of these buildings was not yet published and there are no mentions in the archaeological literature which could lead to the estimation of the habitation structures encountered on the acropolis at Popeşti "Nucet", or on the other sectors. The referrals were only made in several excavation reports, without any graphic representations (Palincas 1997; Trohani 1997; Vulpe 1997).

The images that are, however, associated with the settlement from Popesti, and finally, with the Getae-Dacians from the Muntenia's area are the ones that outline the residential assemble from the "W" sector on the acropolis (Vulpe 1959; Vulpe 1960). Within this entire complex (fig. 2), a special place is attributed, in the habitation structures context, to the "porch house", a large house with two rooms separated by a corridor, which was considered very similar to the plan of a modern peasant house (Vulpe 2004-2005, 29). This structure benefited of several graphic reconstructions (fig. 3a) which became representative for Getic-Dacian household images in Muntenia area (Antonescu 1984, 183; Babeş 1996, 323, fig. 158; Vulpe 2005-2005, 29)

At Cârlomăneşti Dava type settlement, the presence of habitation structures is mentioned through, indeed, through hardly perceptible remains or traces, due to the perforation of the pits belonging to later levels. Built on the ground surface, they were often dismantled and leveled or destroyed by subsequent interventions (Babeş 2010b, 128).

In terms of illustration, both from the old and recent excavations only the structures with impressive dimensions and features were emphasized (Babeş 2010b, 139, pl 2; Matei, Măgureanu 2014, 230-240; Măgureanu 2014, 254). Regarding the surfaces excavated in the 1970's, two stone structures were identified, firstly described as edifice B by the author of the excavations, a rectangular building with an apse, and a quadrilateral edifice with 5×5 rows of pole pits. The representation of the last one is made in connection with excavation details which makes possible its larger visualization, underlying a unique structure in the area from outside the Carpathians (fig. 4a).

From the recent excavations, only three constructions considered "habitation structures" from the recent excavation were emphasized, namely Edifice no. 1, Edifice no. 17 and Edifice no. 18. Located in the central area of the plateau from Cîrlomănești, these are the remains of three buildings of impressive sizes, with decorated fireplaces inside, which are believed to have had a public/cultic role within this Dava settlement. Also, edifice no. 17 had an assumed annex, structure no. 25, with an unknown functionality (Matei, Măgureanu 2014). All structures were represented in surface plan and in chronological sequence, in a useful manner (fig. 4b) for the interested viewers, leaving the possibility of interpretation from various perspectives. Adding colors to the plans successfully makes the findings even more perceivable, by presenting in the same image the different complexes attributed to different moments, which could be related to different functionalities. This type of illustration can be significant in talking about the landscape and internal organization of the entire settlement, as it outlines through perceivable means, concepts such private space, public space or sacred space. In this way, the fact that certain areas of the "Cetățuia" plateau can be designated as special becomes an obvious one.

The exquisite visual presentations of the large structures found on the plateau contrasts with the lack of any representations concerning the modest buildings which have been mentioned among the discoveries. The proper understanding of the entire settlement, which is ultimately considered a Dava type one, depends on the publication of all habitation structures that have been found over the recent and older excavation campaigns, as Cârlomăneşti being an ideal case of research in such type of site.

The site from Grădiștea "Movila Crestată" is one of the few ones that benefited of a wide publication. The general plan of the excavations made on "Movila Crestată" show a slightly alignment of the habitation structures on the plateau's margins (Sîrbu 1996a, 111), which could indicate a certain delimitation between public and private areas. Regarding the habitation complexes, this site brings significant details for the understanding of the huts, which in this case have distinctive characteristics: access steps and earth benches. The representation of such complexes in a three-dimensional perspective makes possible the visualization of an elaborate structure which could be not perceived by other means of illustration,

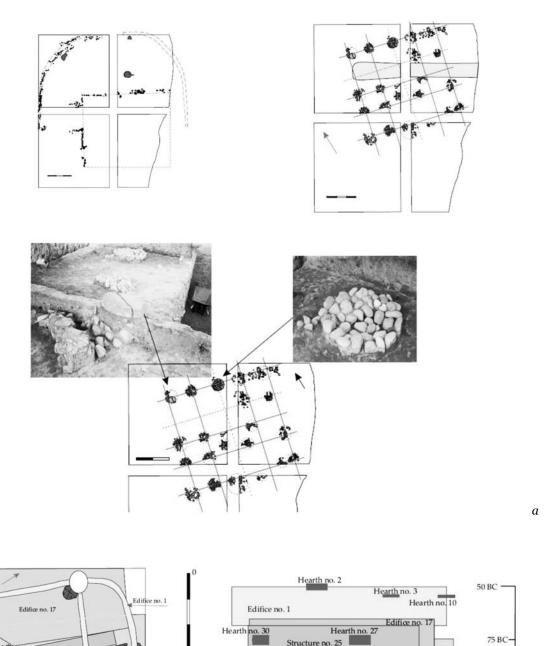


Fig. 4. Cârlomănești "Cetățuia": a - representations of the structures documented in 1972-1973 (after Măgureanu 2014, 254-257, fig. 4-7); b - Representations of the edifices found in the recent excavations (after Matei, Măgureanu 2014, 240, fig. 12).

Hearth no. 47 A - 47 B

not even through pictures. Considering the fact that this type of habitation structure is a common one for the "Movila Crestată" settlement, the huts representations became iconic (fig. 5).

The settlement at Borduşani was also published, although the researched part represents only an

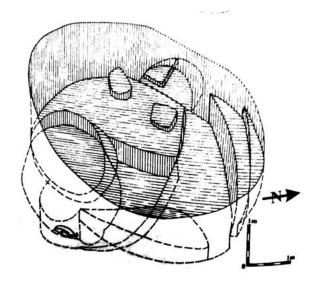
estimated 4% of the entire site (Trohani 2006, 91). The habitation structures investigated in the northern part of the settlement, 13 in number, were believed to have been structured among an incipient urbanization plan, indicated by their rows disposal (Trohani 2006, 91). Unfor-

100 BC

125 BC

Edifice no. 18

Late Iron Age layer



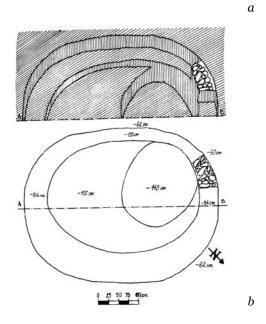


Fig. 5. Grădiștea "Movila Crestată": *a* - representation of hut no. 17 from (after Sîrbu 2004, 100, fig. 6); *b* - representation of hut no. 9 (after Sîrbu 1996, 1996, 162, fig. 6).

tunately, the illustrations do not value entirely the conclusions made regarding the habitation from Borduşani, as it is made entirely of sketches which do not offer a real perception of the structures within the space (fig. 6a).

In the settlement from Bragadiru, where over 20 habitation structures were identified, one situation is considered different and meant to be mentioned: the partial overlaying of a an oval hut by a quadrilateral surface dwelling (fig. 6b).

At Cetăţeni, even if the excavations have a long history (Măndescu 2006, 19-25), the only graphic representation of a habitation structure from the "open settlement" can be encountered among the documentation of the latest researches made between 2002 -2004. For this reason, surface dwelling no. 1, which is considered representative for the final stage of the habitation from Cetăţeni, becomes representative by itself (fig. 7).

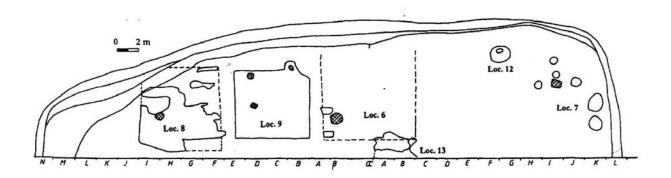
Regarding the Radovanu "Gorgana a doua" establishment, much has been said, but little has been shown. The habitations structures were presented in an ample recent study (Şerbănescu et al. 2012) which contains detailed specifications of all dwellings researched at Radovanu, including the ones from the "Gorgana întâi", but the only representations were some pictures capturing different phases of the excavations. In this way, there is no single plan of a dwelling or such habitation structure from Radovanu which could support the other impressive discoveries, like the decorated hearths.

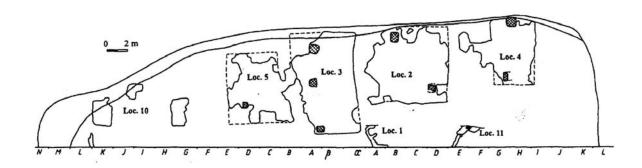
In terms of visualization of the habitation structures, settlements like Piscul Crasani, Pietroasa Mică or Târcov, which are in ongoing research, have the potential of changing substantially the entire perception of the Late Iron Age houses, by their mentioned discoveries. The proper representation of these discoveries can offer an understandable image which can lead to the covering of a less known aspect of this chronological phase in the area from outside the Carpathians.

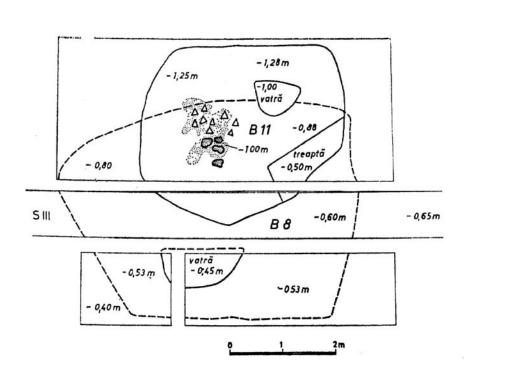
## Other types of excavations

At Chirnogi "Rudărie", from among 15 dwellings which have been documented, almost all were represented (Trohani 1975a). Unfortunately, these are extremely schematic (fig. 7) and make hard a proper interpretation, especially when a general plan of the excavations with the emplacement of the complexes is missing.

The same situation can be mentioned for the settlements at Vladiceasca, both "Ghergălăul Mare" and "Ochiul lui Velicu" (Trohani 1975b; Trohani 1976; Trohani 1983), Bucureşti "Aleea Scroviştea" (Alexandrescu et al. 2007), Bucureşti "Băneasa Lac" (Măgureanu, Bojică 2007), Bărcăneşti (Paveleţ, Anton 2010).







а

b

Fig. 6. a - The inferior and superior levels of habitation from Borduşani "Popină" (after Trohani 2005, pl. 5); b - dwellings no. 8 and 11 from Bragadiru (after Turcu 1979, fig. 8).

A different situation can be encountered in the case of the settlements from Căscioarele-Greaca-Prundu area, which benefited of an ample publication with consistent illustration of the complexes (Sîrbu et al. 1996). In this area several settlements were researched, considered as integrated part of a larger area of discoveries. All researches were illustrated in spatial context of the entire surface considered to be attributed to the respective settlement. The only disputable aspect can be considered the use of certain conventional signs, which lead to an excessive load of the images, resulting in an ambiguous image of the complexes (fig. 8b).

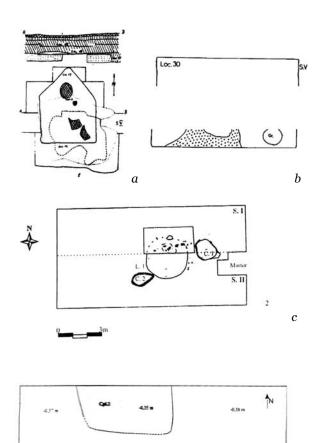


Fig. 7. Different representations of habitation structures: a - Chirnogi (after Trohani 1975a, 131, fig. 5); b - Vlădiceasca (after Trohani 1976, fig. 2), c - București "Aleea Scroviștea" (after Alexandrescu et al. 2007, pl. 4), d - București "Băneasa Lac" (after Măgureanu, Bojică 2007, fig. 3).

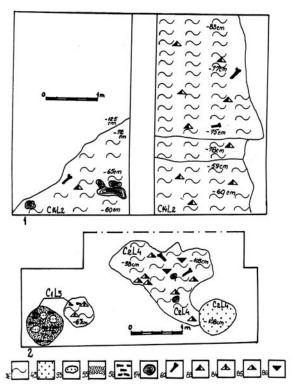


Fig. 8. Representation of several dwellings from Căscioarele "Valea Coșarului" (after Sîrbu et al. 1996, 257, fig. 80).

## **Concluding remarks**

d

The impact of a representation.

To what extent did all these representations did transmit knowledge? In the general referrals about the Getic-Dacian dwellings, the main recurrent images are the ones depicting the structures within the so-called residential quarter found at Popești "Nucet" in sector "W". This situation is not a random one, and outlines a certain fact related to the different ways of converting archaeological information in visual ways of communication. In the same respect, attempts of experimental archaeology which had as purpose the reconstruction of several ancient houses representative for Muntenia area, dating from the second Iron Age, were inspired also by the situations encountered at Popești site, and not others, even if it is not a singular case (Ganciu 2013).

Other representations, even if constituted arguments for the elaboration of different typologies (which only regard the general form of the habitation structures), have not had an impact that could be compared to Popesti site.

Do all these habitation complexes really look alike? Surely that the houses constructed on several Late Iron Age settlements from this area were not identical. They must have been specific to the different environment characteristics and surroundings, and in concordance with a certain set of unidentifiable rules of social order and display, aspects which cannot be perceived within actual excavations.

What can be done in the actual state of the researches regarding the habitation structures is a focus on the types of visual dissemination of the results, in the way made in case of the Cârlomănești settlement, with the mention that it is worth emphasizing not only the monumental and special discoveries, but also the "common" ones.

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## Reprezentări grafice în arheologia românească. O schiță asupra structurilor de locuire din cea de-a doua epocă a fierului

#### Rezumat

Lucrarea de față încearcă să sintetizeze dimensiunea importanței reprezentărilor grafice, făcând referire la situația structurilor de locuire găsite și documentate în așezările din zona Munteniei, care pot fi încadrate în perioada secolelor II a. Chr. - I p. Chr. Fără intenția de a clasifica sau a încadra în vreo tipologie complexele sau așezările menționate, lucrarea ia în considerare felul în care au fost ilustrate complexele de locuire caracteristice celei de-a doua epoci a fierului și modalitatea în care respectivele reprezentări sunt relevante pentru înțelegerea complexelor de locuire din perioada menționată.

#### Lista ilustrațiilor:

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- Fig. 2. "Cartierul rezidențial" de la Popești: a Sectorul "W" (după Vulpe 2004-2005, 25, fig. 3); b reconstituire făcută de D. Antonescu în 1978 (după Vulpe 2004-2005, 29, fig. 7).
- Fig. 3. "Cartierul rezidențial" de la Popești: a reconstituirea casei cu prispă (după Antonescu 1984, 26, fig. 12); b reconstituire a întregului sector (după Antonescu 1984, 183, fig. 103).
- Fig. 4. Cârlomănești "Cetățuia": a reprezentări ale structurilor documentate în campaniile 1972-1973 (după Măgureanu 2014, 254-257, fig. 4-7); b reprezentări ale edificiilor identificate în urma săpăturilor recente (după Matei, Măgureanu 2014, 240, fig. 12).
- Fig. 5. Grădiștea "Movila Crestată": a reprezentarea bordeiului nr. 17 (după Sîrbu 2004, 100, fig. 6); b reprezentarea bordeiului nr. 9 (după Sîrbu 1996, 1996, 162, fig. 6).
- Fig. 6. a Nivelul inferior și superior de locuire de la Bordușani "Popină" (după Trohani 2005, pl. 5); b locuințele nr. 8 și 11 de la Bragadiru (după Turcu 1979, fig. 8).
- Fig. 7. Diferite reprezentări de structuri de locuire: a Chirnogi (după Trohani 1975a, 131, fig. 5); b Vlădiceasca (după Trohani 1976, fig. 2); c București "Aleea Scroviștea" (după Alexandrescu et al. 2007, pl. 4); d București "Băneasa Lac" (după Măgureanu, Bojică 2007, fig. 3).
- Fig. 8. Reprezentări de structuri de locuire de la Căscioarele "Valea Coșarului" (după Sîrbu et al. 1996, 257, fig. 80).

# Графические изображения в румынской археологии. Обзор жилищ позднего железного века

#### Резюме

В данной статье сделана попытка продемонстрировать значимость графических изображений на основе обзора жилищ, обнаруженных в Мунтении на поселениях II века до н.э. - I века н.э.

Не углубляясь в классификацию или типологизацию данных комплексов или поселений, автор статьи рассматривает, каким образом были проиллюстрированы жилищные комплексы позднего железного века, и выявляет значение рассмотренных иллюстраций для понимания этих памятников.

#### Список иллюстраций:

Рис. 1. Карта с указанием мест, где были обнаружены, идентифицированы или задокументированы жилищные структуры.

- Рис. 2. «Элитный» жилищный комплекс в Попешть: а участок «W» (по Vulpe 2004-2005, 25, fig. 3); b реконструкция, сделанная Д. Антонеску в 1978 г. (по Vulpe 2004-2005, 29, fig. 7).
- Рис. 3. «Элитный» жилищный комплекс в Попешть: а реконструкция «дома с крыльцом» (по Antonescu 1984, 26, fig. 12); b реконструкция всего участка (по Antonescu 1984, 183, рис. 103).
- Рис. 4. Кырломэнэшть «Четэцуя»: а изображения памятников, найденных в 1972-1973 гг. (по Măgureanu 2014, 254-257, fig. 4-7); b изображения сооружений, найденных во время недавних раскопк (по Matei, Măgureanu 2014, 240, fig. 12).
- Рис. 5. Грэдиштя «Мовила Крестатэ»: а изображение помещения  $N^0$  17 (по Sîrbu 2004, 100, fig. 6); b изображение помещения  $N^0$  9 (по Sîrbu 1996, 162, fig. 6).
- Рис. 6. а Нижний и верхний жилые слои в Бордушань «Попина» (по Trohani 2005, pl. 5); b жилища № 1 в и 11 из Брагадиру (по Turcu 1979, fig. 8).
- Рис. 7. Различные изображения жилищных структур: а Кирноджи (по Trohani 1975a, 131, fig. 5); b Влэдичаска (по Trohani 1976, fig. 2); с Бухарест «Алея Скровиштя» (по Alexandrescu et al. 2007, pl. 4); d Бухарест «Бэняса Лак» (по Măgureanu, Bojică 2007, fig. 3).
- Рис. 8. Изображения жилищных структур из Кэсчиоареле «Валя Кошарулуй» (по Sîrbu et al. 1996, 257, fig. 80).

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