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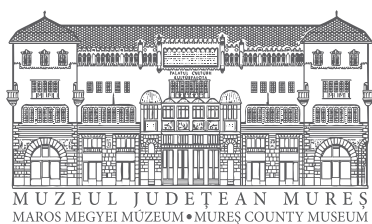
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2

Târgu Mureș
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NEOLITHIC ARCHAEOZOOLOGY AT TÂRGU MUREȘ

Imola KELEMEN*

The small number of animal remains (60 fragments) discovered at the Neolithic site of Târgu Mureș have a kitchen midden aspect and except for one pig vertebra all come from wild and domestic individuals of Bos sp. (cattle and aurochs). The material outlines a population with a balanced maintenance based on both hunting and animal husbandry, possibly in the midst of domestication.

Keywords: archaeozoology, animal remains, Neolithic, Criș culture, aurochs

Cuvinte cheie: arheozoologie, resturi animale, neolitic, cultura Criș, bour

The animal bones identified at the Neolithic site in the courtyard of the former Petru Maior University in Târgu Mureș have all come from a single feature interpreted as a natural ditch. 60 animal remains were collected, all of them being in a strongly weathered and fragmented state. With only one exception, an atlas belonging to a pig (*Sus scrofa*), all were identified as from the *Bos* genus, either the *taurus* (domestic cattle) or the *primigenius* (aurochs) species. Separating the two of them on the anatomical level is very difficult in general, and particularly in this period when domesticating is in its full progress. In some cases we were able to differentiate them, the rest on the other hand were handled in the common group of *Bos sp.* The animal remains have the aspect of kitchen middens: several cutmarks were visible on one of them and a cattle's *humerus* was clearly broken up for the marrow in it. None of the bones have visibly gone through boiling or burning processes.

Bostaurus/primigenius (cattle and aurochs). Separating the bones of aurochs from those of the domesticated individuals is a difficult task in all periods, but especially in materials from

the Neolithic, since this is exactly the time of the cattle's domestication. The two species' anatomical characteristics and in particular the morphology of their bones have not yet changed enough to classify them as *taurus* or *primigenius*.¹ Domesticated males can have the same proportions as wild females, or adult domestic individuals the same as not fully grown wild ones. To avoid any confusion, those remains that could not have been classified in neither of the species (see metrical data in Table 3) would be managed in the common group *Bos sp.*

Among the cattle, a minimal number of five individuals have been identified: an infant, a juvenile, two subadults and an adult. On the other hand, only one adult aurochs has been denoted in the lot. On one cattle bone, a *tibia*, some cut marks were visible, and another, a *humerus*, has clearly been broken for the marrow in it. These, along with others are obvious remains of food.

Sus scrofa (pig). Only one bone remain has been identified as coming from this species, an incomplete atlas. In determining wild boar bones from the Neolithic, we find ourselves in front of

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¹ The separation of aurochs and domestic cattle bones has been done with the help of: KOBRYŃ-LASOTA-MOSKALEWSKA 1989; BÖKÖNYI 1972, BÖKÖNYI ET AL. 1964, ČERVENÝ 1990.

	NISP	%	%	MNI	%	%
<i>Bos taurus</i> (domestic cattle)	12	20	20.3	5	71.4	83.3
<i>Bos primigenius</i> (aurochs)	3	5	5.1	1	14.3	16.7
<i>Bos sp.</i> (cattle)	44	73.3	74.6	-	-	-
<i>Bos taurus/primigenius</i> (domestic cattle/aurochs)	59	98.3	100	6	85.7	100
<i>Sus scrofa</i> (pig)	1	1.7		1	14.3	
Total	60	100		7	100	

Table 1. The distribution of the animal bones at Târgu-Mureş.

Abbreviations: NISP = Number of Identified Specimens; MNI = the Minimal Number of Individuals.

	<i>Bos taurus</i> (domestic cattle)	<i>Bos primigenius</i> (aurochs)	<i>Bos sp.</i> (cattle/aurochs)	<i>Sus scrofa ferus</i> (wild boar)
Mandibula			4	
Dens			11	
Atlas				1
Scapula			3	
Humerus	2	1	2	
Radius	1		1	
Ulna	1			
Pelvis	2		1	
Tibia	2		4	
Calcaneus	3	1		
Ossa tarsi/carpi			1	
Metacarpus			6	
Metapodium			1	
Phalanx I.		1	1	
Phalanx II.	1			
Vertebra			1	
Long bone fragments			4	
Flat bone fragments			1	
Unidentified			3	
TOTAL	12	3	44	1

Table 2. The anatomical distribution of the animal bones at Târgu Mureş.

the same problem that cattle bones have caused. Separating the wild and domestic individuals of this species may seem easier today, especially if we can see and compare their fur colour, bristle length and body mass. But in the Neolithic the two subspecies did not have such different looks and on the level of bone morphology the two are very much alike. Measurements of whole skulls would help us in some way, but in archaeological excavations, usually only fragments of skulls are discovered, rarely complete ones.² Accordingly, the *Sus scrofa* atlas recovered from Târgu Mureş does not provide accurate information about the subspecies of wild boar. The measurements taken of it are listed in Table 3.

In conclusion, the relatively small archaeozoological material from Târgu Mureş suggests a Neolithic population for whom hunting seems to be an important occupation. In this moment, they may also very well have been in the middle of cattle and pig domestication process. This small batch of animal remains does certainly not reflect the full spectrum of animal husbandry at this site, but it may offer a taste of what the economy was built on. Accordingly, it projects a community relying mostly on middle and big sized mammals that provided food and other primary and secondary products for them. They most probably kept a batch of domestic or half-domestic animals that they would herd afeld, and which would thus still mix with wild individuals. The members of this community obviously practiced hunting too, hunting and husbandry assuring them a balanced maintenance.

² ALBARELLA ET AL. 2009, 104.

Atlas	GL	LAd	GLF	BFcr	BFcd
<i>Sus scrofa</i>	40,6	19,5	37,9	53,8	45,4
Humerus	SD	Bd	BT		
<i>Bos primigenius</i>		≈101			
<i>Bos taurus</i>	46,2				
<i>Bos taurus</i>		90,8	80,3		
Radius	Bp	BFp			
<i>Bos taurus</i>	86,2	77,8			
Tibia	Bd	BFd			
<i>Bos taurus</i>	≈74	52,4			
Ph. I.	GL	Bp	SD	Bd	
<i>Bos primigenius</i>	≈82,2	≈44,3	37,6	40,7	
Ph. II.	GL	Bp	SD	Bd	
<i>Bos taurus</i>	49	40,1	32,5	33,3	

Table 3. The metrical data of measurable *Sus scrofa* (pig), *Bos taurus* (cattle) and *Bos primigenius* (aurochs) bones (in mm) at Târgu-Mureş.³

The Criş culture is relatively well researched from the point of view of archaeozoology, several materials have been analysed from all over the country, especially from Banat, Oltenia⁴ and Transylvania.⁵ The animal bone discoveries of a few sites in Muntenia⁶ and Moldova have also been studied.⁷

Most of the archaeozoological analysis of the animal bones coming from sites in Transylvania belonging to the Criş culture in the Neolithic are collected in a well structured volume.⁸ In it, twelve sites are presented⁹ from which the nearest to Târgu Mureş are Iernut (Mureş County), Gura Baciului and Livada (Cluj County). At Iernut and Livada the materials – much like in our case – were not very considerable in number: there were only 76 pieces analyzed at Iernut and 110 at Livada. The site Gura Baciului, on the other hand served 522 animal bone fragments for study.

At Livada, remains of hunted animals occur, too, but the majority of the bones still come from domestic mammals. Among these, cattle are the most represented, with sheep/goats far behind them and pigs on the third place. In the group of wild animals, deer bones are the most numerous, but two aurochs individuals appear, too, both of them being adults over 4 years old.

At Iernut, the situation is very similar, with mostly domestic mammals' remains and a small percent of wild animals. Among the domestic ones cattle hold the first position again, but in this case (just like at Târgu Mureş) pigs follow. The third place is taken by sheep/goats and the fourth by dogs. The only wild mammal identified at the site is an *Equus*, considered as wild horse. Other wild species were determined also, e.g. moles, gophers, mallards or mollusks.

³ Measurements taken after DRIESCH 1976.

⁴ BOLOMEY 1973; 1976; 1980; 1986; TRÂNCĂ-EL SUSI 1986.

⁵ See BINDEA 2008 and footnote 9.

⁶ FRÎNCULEASA ET AL. 2015.

⁷ NECRASOV-ŞTIRBU 1978; 1980.

⁸ BINDEA 2008.

⁹ Gura Baciului (HU: Bácsi-torok), near Cluj Napoca, Cluj county; Leţ (HU: Lécfalva), Covasna county; Zăuan (HU: Szilágyzovány), Sălaj county; Ocna Sibiului (HU: Vizakna), Sibiu county; Tăşnad (HU: Tasnád), Satu Mare county; Tărtăria (HU: Tatárlaka), Alba county; Livada (HU: Dengeleg), Cluj county; Turia (HU: Torja), Covasna county; Şeuşa (HU: Sósptak), Alba county; Lesiana Cave, near Şuncuiuş, Bihor county; Iernut (HU: Radnót), Mureş county; Suplacu de Barcău (HU: Berettyószéplak), Bihor county.

The majority (91.55 %) of the remains at Gura Baciului belong to domestic animals in the following order: cattle (51.44 %), sheep/goats (39.37 %) and pigs (0.72 %). Among the wild ones (8.45 %) there is a large variety of species, the most fragments belonging to red and roe deer. Aurochs occupy only the third place, along with wild boar, beaver and European brown hare, all of them showing a single bone fragment. Interestingly, bird bones occur, too, most of them coming from chickens, but there is also woodcock, jackdaw, crane and goose.

Taking into consideration the small number of animal bone remains found at Târgu Mureş, no precise conclusions about the economy or the animal breeding of the community can be drawn. Still, the species identified at the site represent the most common ones of the Neolithic, when the domestication process occurs in the Carpathian Basin. In south-west Asia, when the first domesticated animals appear, small ruminants (sheep and goats) are preferred the most, long before cattle or pigs. But when the process reaches the Carpathian Basin, the communities are not always able to satisfy all their needs in alimentation and at the same time, increase the animal supply only by imported, ready domesticated individuals, so

they are forced to domesticate the wild species that existed in their own environment, in this case aurochs and wild boars. Soon, the tamed version of these species, cattle and domestic pigs, take over the primal positions of the small ruminants.¹⁰ The animal bone material presently analysed, however poor, may reflect this very situation. On the other hand, though we were able to positively identify only a few bone fragments belonging to aurochs, the individual's age (adult) tells us exactly a fragment of the domestication story. Accordingly, those who want to tame an animal, take the young individuals, which are exclusively the ones that can be domesticated, a process during which they are forced to bring down the adults that protect the young.¹¹

At the same time, the age groups of the domestic cattle reflect a type of animal breeding that is not characteristic to the beginning of domestication anymore, when the animals were merely kept for their meat. The detection of subadult and adult individuals in the archaeozoological material tells us that the communities are beginning to discover the other uses of this animal besides alimentation, such as providing milk or their utility in fieldworks and transportation.

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¹¹ BÖKÖNYI 1977, 10.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AARGNews</i>	Aerial Archaeology Research Group Newsletter
<i>Acta</i>	Acta. Muzeul Național Secuiesc, Sfântu Gheorghe
<i>ActaArchHung</i>	Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest
<i>ActaMB</i>	Bruckenthal. Acta Musei, Sibiu/Hermannstadt
<i>ActaMN</i>	Acta Musei Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca
<i>ActaMoldMer</i>	Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis. Anuarul Muzeului Județean Vaslui
<i>ActaMP</i>	Acta Musei Porolissensis, Zalău
<i>ActaMT</i>	Acta Materialia Transylvanica. Technical Sciences Department of the Transylvanian Museum Society, Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár
<i>ActaPraehistA</i>	Acta Praehistorica et Archaeologica
<i>ActaSic</i>	Acta Siculica, Sf. Gheorghe/Sepsiszentgyörgy
<i>ActaTS</i>	Acta Terrae Septemcastrensis, Sibiu
<i>AISC</i>	Anuarul Institutului de Studii Clasice Cluj
<i>AJA</i>	American Journal of Archaeology
<i>Aluta</i>	Aluta. Studii și cercetări
<i>AmJPhysAnthropol</i>	American Journal of Physical Anthropology
<i>AnatRec</i>	Anatomical Record. American Association of Anatomists
<i>Angustia</i>	Angustia. Muzeul Carpaților Răsăriteni, Sfântu Gheorghe
<i>AnMuzOlt</i>	Anuarul Muzeului Olteniei
<i>AnnForRes</i>	Annals of Forest Research
<i>AnnHN</i>	Annales Historico-Naturales Musei Nationalis Hungarici, Budapest
<i>ANsachs</i>	Archäologie in Niedersachsen
<i>AnthrK</i>	Anthropológiai Közlemények, Budapest
<i>Antiquity</i>	Antiquity. A Quarterly Review of Archaeology
<i>Apulum</i>	Apulum. Acta Musei Apulensis, Alba Iulia
<i>ArchAust</i>	Archaeologia Austriaca
<i>ArchBulg</i>	Archaeologia Bulgarica, Sofia
<i>ArchÉrt</i>	Archaeologiai Értesítő, Budapest
<i>ArchHist</i>	Archaeologia Historica, Brno
<i>ArchHung</i>	Archaeologia Hungarica, Budapest
<i>ArchKorr</i>	Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt, Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum Mainz
<i>ArchPol</i>	Archaeologia Polona,
<i>Areopolisz</i>	Areopolisz. Történelmi és társadalomtudományi tanulmányok, Székelyudvarhely
<i>Argesis</i>	Argesis. Studii și comunicări, Pitești
<i>ASz</i>	Agrártörténeti Szemle
<i>AusgrFuWestf</i>	Ausgrabungen und Funde in Westfalen-Lippe

<i>AVes</i>	Arheološki vestnik, Ljubljana
<i>BÁMÉ</i>	A Béri Balogh Ádám Múzeum Évkönyve, Szekszárd
<i>Banatica</i>	Banatica, Muzeul Banatului Montan, Reșița
<i>BAR (I.S./B.S.)</i>	British Archaeological Reports, International Series / British Series, Oxford
<i>BerRGK</i>	Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission
<i>BMI</i>	Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice, București
<i>BMJT (S.A.)</i>	Buletinul Muzeului Județean Teleorman (Seria Arheologie), Alexandria
<i>BuletinCIVA</i>	Buletinul Cercului de Istorie Veche și Arheologie „Vladimir Dumitrescu”, Sibiu
<i>BulletinPeabody</i>	Bulletin of the Peabody Museum of Natural History
<i>CA</i>	Cercetări Arheologice
<i>CCAR</i>	Cronica Cercetărilor Arheologice din România
<i>CommArchHung</i>	Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae, Budapest
<i>Cumania</i>	Cumania. A Bács-Kiskun Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei, Kecskemét
<i>CurrSweda</i>	Current Swedish Archaeology
<i>CsSzMÉ</i>	Csíki Székely Múzeum Évkönyve, Csíkszereda
<i>Dacia (N. S.)</i>	Dacia. Recherches et découvertes archéologiques en Roumanie, I–XII (1924–1948), București; Nouvelle série (N. S.): Dacia. Revue d’archéologie et d’histoire ancienne, București
<i>DissArch</i>	Dissertationes Archaeologicae ex Instituto Archaeologico Universitatis de Rolando Eötvös Nominatae, Budapest
<i>DolgKolozsvar (Ú.S.)</i>	Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Érem- és Régiségtárából, (új sorozat, 2006–), Kolozsvár
<i>DolgSzeged</i>	Dolgozatok a Szegedi Tudományegyetem Régiségtudományi Intézetéből, Szeged
<i>Drobeta</i>	
<i>EJA</i>	European Journal of Archaeology
<i>EphemNap</i>	Ephemeris Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca
<i>FI</i>	File de Istorie. Muzeul de Istorie al Județului Bistrița-Năsăud, Bistrița
<i>FolAnt</i>	Folia Anthropologica, Szombathely
<i>FolArch</i>	Folia Archaeologica, Budapest
<i>Gallia</i>	Gallia. Fouilles et monuments archéologiques en France métropolitaine
<i>Georeview</i>	Georeview. Scientific Annals of Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Geography Series
<i>Germania</i>	Germania. Anzeiger der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts
<i>Hierasus</i>	Hierasus. Muzeul Județean Botoșani
<i>HOMÉ</i>	A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve, Miskolc
<i>HTRTE</i>	A Hunyadmegyei Történelmi és Régészeti Társulat Évkönyve, Déva
<i>HZ</i>	Historische Zeitschrift
<i>IJOsteo</i>	International Journal of Osteoarchaeology
<i>Istros</i>	Istros. Muzeul Brăilei
<i>JAHA</i>	Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology

<i>JAMÉ</i>	A Nyíregyházi Jósza András Múzeum Évkönyve, Nyíregyháza
<i>JASc</i>	Journal of Archaeological Science
<i>JAT</i>	Journal of Ancient Topography – Rivista di Topografia Antica
<i>JbAS</i>	Jahrbuch Archäologie Schweiz
<i>JbRGZM</i>	Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, Mainz
<i>JCerEnvD</i>	Journal of Ceramics and Environmental Design
<i>JHumEvol</i>	Journal of Human Evolution
<i>JNES</i>	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
<i>JOM</i>	JOM. The Journal of The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society
<i>JRA</i>	Journal of Roman Archaeology
<i>JRomPotSt</i>	Journal of Roman Pottery Studies
<i>JSchrVgHalle</i>	Jahresschrift für Mitteldeutsche Vorgeschichte Halle (Saale)
<i>KJb</i>	Kölner Jahrbuch für Vor- und Frühgeschichte
<i>KM</i>	Keresztény Magvető. Az Erdélyi Unitárius Egyház Folyóirata, Kolozsvár
<i>KRRMK</i>	A Kaposvári Rippl-Rónai Múzeum Közleményei
<i>KuBA</i>	Kölner und Bonner Archaeologica
<i>Levant</i>	Levant. Journal of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History
<i>MacActaA</i>	Macedoniae Acta Archaeologica, Prilep
<i>Marisia</i>	Marisia (V–), Studii și Materiale, Târgu Mureș
<i>Marisia-AHP</i>	Marisia: Archaeologia, Historia, Patrimonium, Târgu Mureș
<i>MCA</i>	Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice, București
<i>MFME</i>	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve, Szeged
<i>MMMK</i>	A Magyar Mezőgazdasági Múzeum Közleményei
<i>MTAK (II)</i>	A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia II. Társadalmi-Történeti Tudományok Osztályának Közleményei (1950–1966), A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia II. Filozófiai és Történettudományi Osztályának Közleményei (1966–1981)
<i>NMMÉ</i>	Nógrád Megyei Múzeumok Évkönyve, Salgótarján
<i>OxfJA</i>	Oxford Journal of Archaeology
<i>PBF</i>	Prähistorische Bronzefunde, Stuttgart
<i>ProblemeKfsNsg</i>	Probleme der Küstenforschung im südlichen Nordseegebiet
<i>ProcPrehistSoc</i>	Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society
<i>PZ</i>	Praehistorische Zeitschrift
<i>RCRFA</i>	Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta, Tongeren
<i>RevBis</i>	Revista Bistriței, Complexul Județean Muzeal Bistrița-Năsăud
<i>Sargetia (S.N.)</i>	Sargetia. Acta Musei Devensis, Deva
<i>SCA</i>	Studii și Cercetări Antropologice
<i>SCIV(A)</i>	Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie 1974–), București
<i>SlovArch</i>	Slovenská Archeológia, Bratislava
<i>SMMK</i>	A Somogy Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei, Kaposvár
<i>StAntArch</i>	Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica, Iași
<i>Starinar</i>	Starinar. Arheološki Institut Beograd

<i>StCercNum</i>	Studii și cercetări de numismatică, București
<i>StComSM</i>	Studii și Comunicări Satu Mare
<i>StComVrancea</i>	Vrancea. Studii și comunicări, Focșani
<i>StudiaAA</i>	Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica, Iași
<i>SUBB-Historia</i>	Studia Universitatis Babeș–Bolyai, series Historia, Cluj-Napoca
<i>Századok</i>	Századok, A Magyar Történelmi Társulat Folyóírata, Budapest
<i>Terra Sebus</i>	Terra Sebus, Acta Musei Sabesiensis, Sebeș
<i>Thraco-Dacica</i>	Thraco-Dacica. Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan” Centrul de Tracologie, București
<i>Tyragetia</i>	Tyragetia. The National Museum of History of Moldova, Chișinău
<i>UPA</i>	Universitätsforschungen zur Prähistorischen Archäologie, Bonn
<i>VAH</i>	Varia Archaeologica Hungarica, Budapest
<i>VMMK</i>	A Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei, Veszprém
<i>WMMÉ</i>	A Wosinsky Mór Múzeum Évkönyve, Szekszárd
<i>ZBf</i>	Zeitschrift für Balkanforschung