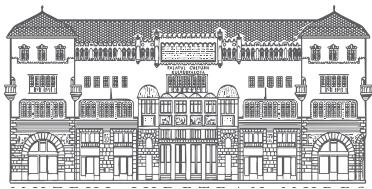


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A LATE BRONZE AGE SPEARHEAD FROM GORNEŞTI*

Botond REZI** – Sándor BERECKI***

The paper discusses a recently discovered spearhead from the vicinity of Gorneşti (Mureş County), which came to light in October 2022 during a survey with metal detector. Additional archaeological investigations were carried out, but no other items were recovered. Thus, the isolated discovery was analysed on typo-chronological grounds, and concluded that it can be dated roughly between the Ha A-Ha B1 periods. Its relation to a nearby Bronze Age settlement is presumable, but not provable.

Keywords: Late Bronze Age, spearhead, typo-chronology

Cuvinte-cheie: Epoca Bronzului Tânăr, vârf de lance, tipologie, cronologie

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has seen an exponential growth in the number of archaeological and historical finds in Mureş County. This is largely due to the increasing number of people who practice metal detecting in their spare time. One such artefact was discovered, left 'in situ' and then excavated by the archaeologists of the Mureş County Museum on the outskirts of Gorneşti (HU: Gernyeszeg, DE: Kertzing), Mureş County, on the edge of the Izsó Forest (the Romanian Ijeu is the phonetic translation of the Hungarian toponym). The forest is situated east of Gorneşti, in the eastern part of the wide valley of the Mureş River, along its middle course, on the northern slope of a hill, at an altitude of 375–380 m, south of the road leading to Pădureni, above the Izsó/Ijeu stream. (Fig. 1).

The piece was discovered in October 2022 by N.-G. Carțis from Ernei, who, after prospecting with a metal detector in the Ijeu Forest, reported

to the Mures County Museum the discovery of a bronze spearhead. Carțis identified it by digging a small hole that reached the upper part of the object. Following the report of the discovery, archaeologists from the Mures County Museum¹ went to the site to examine the piece. In order to uncover the area where the bronze spearhead had been identified and to record the hole dug by Carțis, a 1 × 1 m section was traced (Fig. 2). The spearhead was found in the brown earth, with a dark greyish hue, typical of the forests in this area of the Mures valley. Although the tip of the piece was oriented to the north, we consider the object to be a stray find as no deposition pit or other anthropic intervention, artefacts or ecofacts could be identified to indicate deliberate deposition.

* This paper was carried out in the framework of the János Bolyai Research Scholarship (2023–2026) of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences granted to Botond Rezi.

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¹ The research was carried out by Dr. Sándor Berecki, scientific coordinator, and Lehel Bara Balázs.

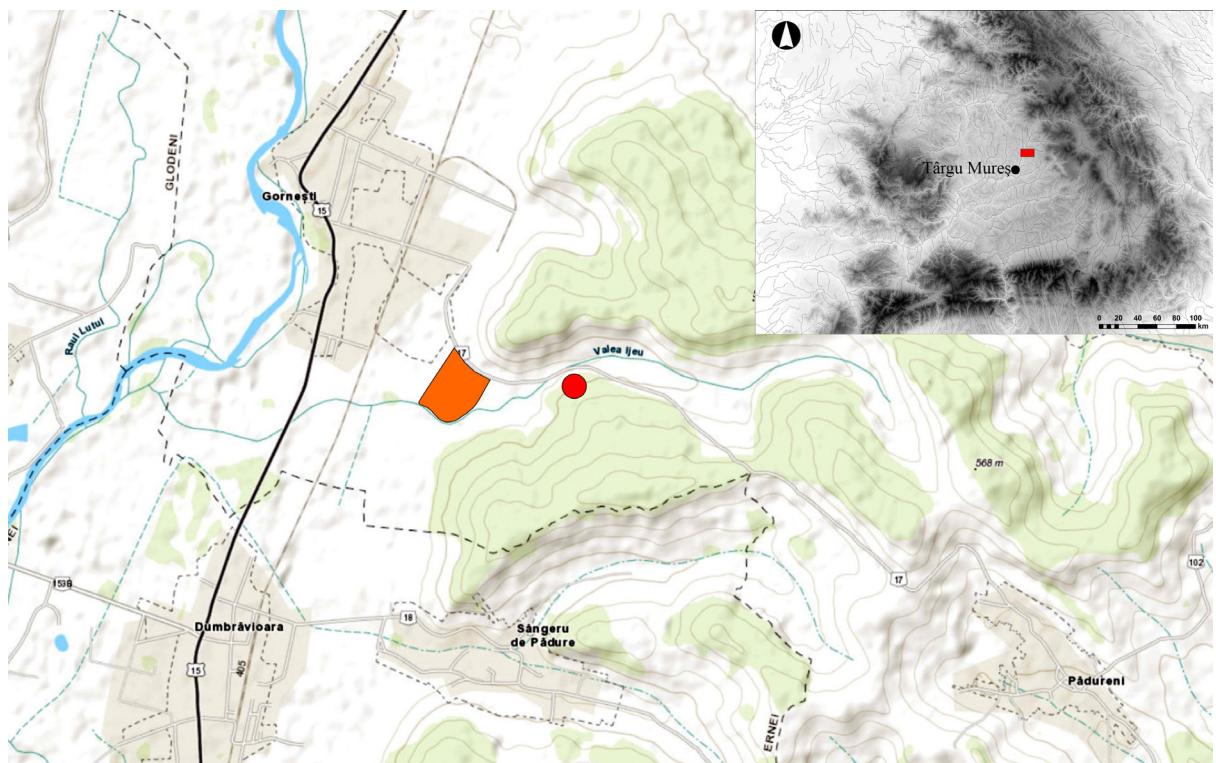


Fig. 1. The location of the spearhead (red) and the archaeological site *Cserépcsűr / Šura Hârburilor* (orange).



Fig. 2. Archaeological excavation of the Late Bronze Age spearhead.

DESCRIPTION AND TECHNOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The flat blade of the spearhead widens gradually towards the lower third and has a pro-

was grinded (Fig. 4/1–2). Unfortunately, due to advanced corrosion during burial, the cutting edges of the blade are poorly preserved, thus no hammering or sharpening traces can be observed (Fig. 4/3–5). As a result, no use-wear

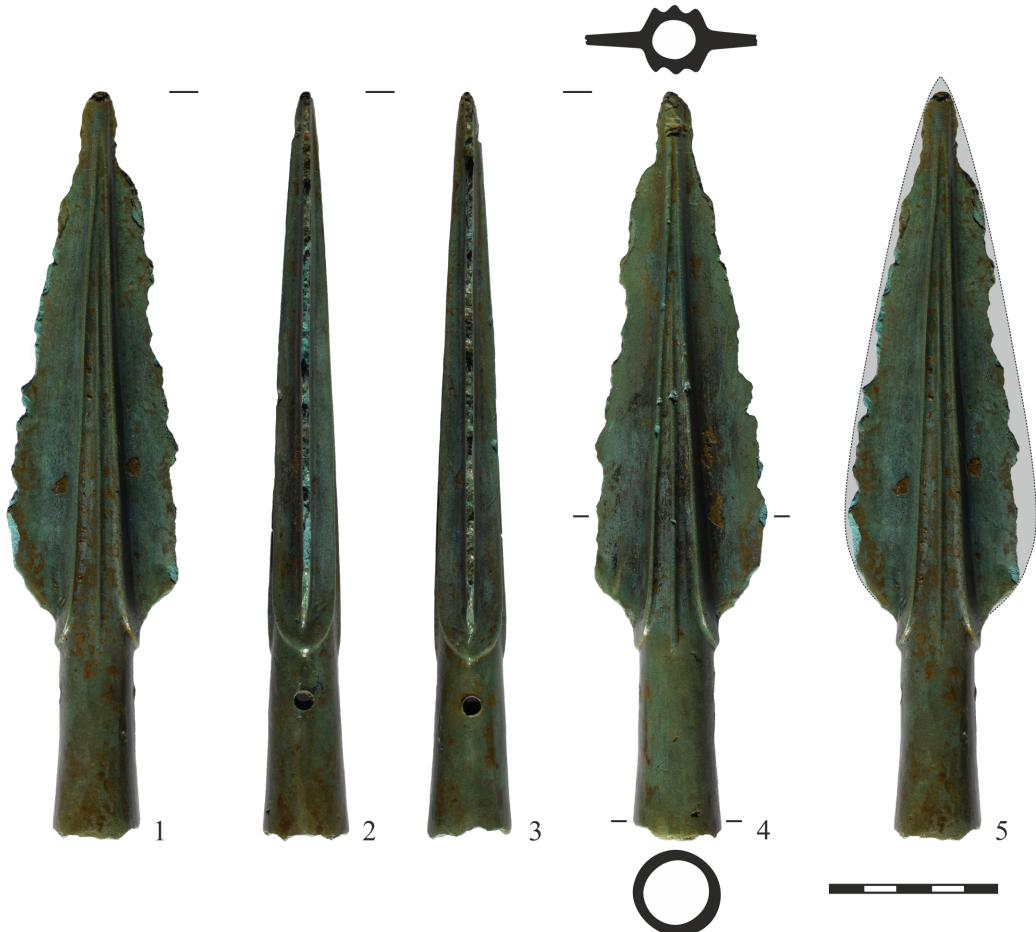


Fig. 3. The recently discovered spearhead from Gorneşti.

nounced middle strengthening rib with two parallel ribbings and a third thinner rib in-between, which fades away below the base of the blade. On both sides of the object the two marginal ribs unify under the base of the blade. It has a slightly long tubular socket, with two casted peg holes in line with the plane of the blade. The spearhead has a greyish-green patina on its entire surface (Fig. 3). Dimensions: total length: 22.2 cm; length of the blade: 16.2 cm; length of the socket: 6 cm; width of the blade: 5.1 cm; width of socket: 2.6 cm; weight: 209.5 g.

From technological point of view, the spear is a well-cast, finished product, without any visible casting defects. The casting seams have been removed, and the surface of the object

marks are identifiable on the blades. A large part of the blade is missing, having an asymmetrical outline (Fig. 3/5). Similar corrosion is visible on the tip as well. Moreover, the same degradation can be observed on the rim of the socket. Three parallel and a fourth blow mark are visible on the ribs, which are modern interventions (Fig. 4/6–7). Still, a few small dent marks visible on the ribbings are covered by patina, suggesting prehistoric treatment (Fig. 4/8–9). Fine cracks are visible on the lower third of the socket, which probably occurred during the lifetime of the object (Fig. 4/10–11). All in all, with some caution we can conclude, that the spearhead from Gorneşti was a well-casted and post treated, intact and lightly used object, with a

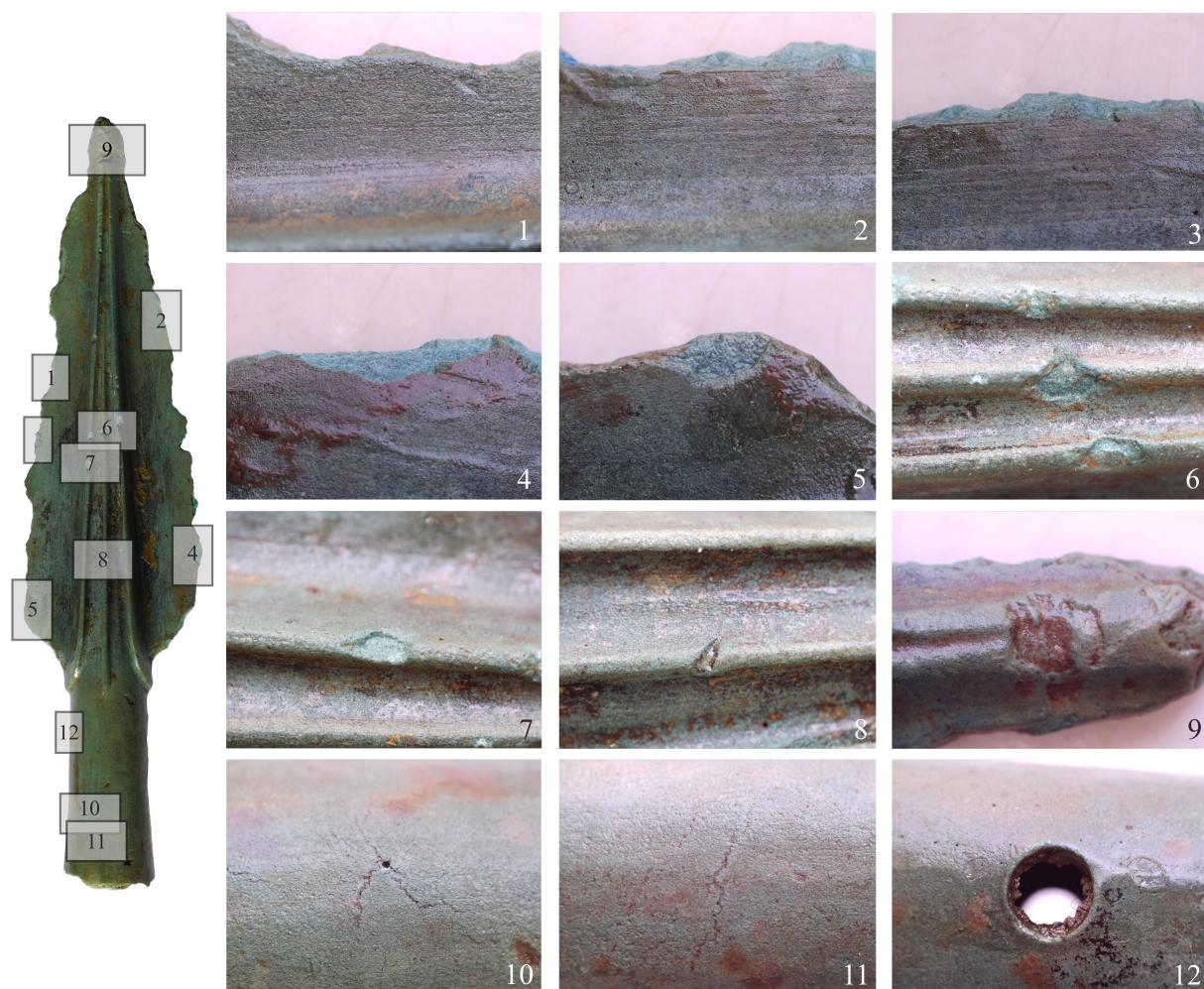


Fig. 4. Macroscopic observation on the artefact: 1–2. grinding marks on the blade; 3–5. damaged cutting edge; 6–7. modern blow marks on the ribs; 8–9. prehistoric use-marks on the ribs; 10–11. prehistoric crack on the socket; 12. Casted peg hole.

short biography, and went under the ground in a relatively short time.

In general, the longitudinal ribs on the socket are considered to have a strengthening purpose, which in some cases continues even under the blade.² This facilitated the weaponry function of the artefact, as stabs with the multiple angular ribs could have caused deeper and larger wounds. In addition, a function of the ribs as an aesthetic element can also be taken into consideration, mainly at specimens with accentuated and excessive ribbings.³

TYPO-CHRONOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since it is an isolated discovery, without any chronological reference from adjacent metal items or archaeological material, the dating of the spearhead from Gorneşti can be made exclusively on relative comparison based on analogue finds. The general form of the discovered spearhead was a widely distributed metal weapon during the Late Bronze Age of the East Central European Region, mainly in the north-eastern parts of the Carpathian Basin, namely the Upper Tisza Region with south-eastern Slovakia and Transcarpathia, respectively Transylvania. Outside this area it is present in smaller numbers in Slovakia, western Hungary, Croatia and Serbia, with isolated discoveries reaching as far as

² SOROCÉANU 1997, 393.

³ VASIĆ 2015, 48. The spearhead from Serbia, due to its multiple ribs and large size is considered a ceremonial weapon. See VASIĆ 2015, Taf. 9/122.

Poland, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Italy, Albania, northern Greece, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Banat Region, southern Romania and Moldavia.⁴ Due to their large number the typological division and chronological classification were repeatedly discussed.⁵ Common to the above quoted works is that the general shape of this type is assumed to have Middle Bronze Age antecedent,⁶ with one of the earliest exemplar being discovered at Nagyhangos-Kölesd and dated to the Koszider horizon.⁷ The first spearheads with ribbed socket appear during the evolved stages of the Late Bronze Age, with the dissemination of the Uriu-Ópályi type hoards (Reinecke Br D). They are present in a prominently high number in the upcoming period, namely the Cincu-Suseni-Kurd horizon (Ha A), often in a fragmented and manipulated state. The late spearheads with ribbed socket were hoarded during the Ha B1 and B2/3 stages.⁸

As a result of a fine typological trait, which is the presence of a third thinner rib between the two parallel ribbings along the blade, the spearhead from Gorneşti can be assigned to *Group C, variant e* in T. Bader's typological scheme.⁹ Based on a significant number of analogies this variant of the spearheads can be dated slightly later, dominating mainly the Ha A period, with frequent appearances in Ha B1.¹⁰ The latest occurrences have been recovered from the

hoard of Olešnik I, dated to Ha B2,¹¹ and Ghirişu Român, dated to Ha B3.¹² Thus, the presented spearhead had a long time span, appearing first in the Br D period, culminating in the Ha A, with isolated specimens being hoarded even in HaB2/3 period as well. As spearheads in general change little over time and suffer insignificant mutations during their typological evolution, an exact dating of an isolated discovery is not possible. Thus, we must be content with the above mentioned general timeframe for the recently discovered spearhead from Gorneşti, and take into consideration that it could have been buried over an extended period of time.

CONTEXT AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Two noticeable discoveries are mentioned from Gorneşti. The first are two fragmented Suciu de Sus vessels that were pieced together (Fig. 5/1–2), which initially were believed to be discovered in Gorneşti.¹³ It was shown that they have belonged to the former collection of Count Domokos Teleki of Gorneşti, and were not discovered at the edge of the settlement, but most probably at Suciu de Sus–Poduri pe coastă.¹⁴ The second discovery is a presumable bronze hoard from the same locality, but no data were recorded regarding its find circumstances, except that the bronze items were in the collection of the same Domokos Teleki (Fig. 5/3–7). As no mentions can be found in earlier literature regarding a hoard from Gorneşti, the location is probably based only on the collector's place of residence, thus the assemblage can be removed from the list of the Late Bronze Age hoards.¹⁵ Their exact

⁴ HANSEN 1994, Abb. 37; SOROCEANU 1997, Abb. 4 and Liste 4a; PABST 2013, Abb. 2; LESHTAKOV 2015, map 5; TARBay 2015, fig. 4, List 2; TARBay 2022b, fig. 2.1.

⁵ GARAŠANIN 1956, 15–17; JACOB-FRIESEN 1967, 200, 246; NOVOTNÁ 1970, 34; RUSU 1972, 227–228; MOZSOLICS 1973, 34; FURMÁNEK 1977, 270–271; BADER 1978, 96; ČERNIH 1978, 228–233, Tab. IV.12; VELIAČIK 1983, 44; MOZSOLICS 1985, 20–21; LOCHNER 1991, 210–211; HANSEN 1994, 67–70; ŘÍHOVSKÝ 1996, 64–67; SOROCEANU 1996, 251; KOBAL' 2000, 34–35; BADER 2006, 247–253; GEDL 2009, 71; BADER 2015, 384–387; LESHTAKOV 2015, 52–53, 232–233, Taf. 190; VASIĆ 2015, 45–50.

⁶ KEMENCZEI 1965, 128; MOZSOLICS 1967, 61; SOROCEANU 1996, 251; VASIĆ 2015, 48–49; TARBay 2022b, 34–35.

⁷ MOZSOLICS 1967, Taf. 31/3.

⁸ MOZSOLICS 1985, 20–21; ŘÍHOVSKÝ 1996, 65–67, Abb. 5; SOROCEANU 1997, 394; PABST 2013, 162; TARBay 2015, 313–314, fig. 15–16.

⁹ BADER 2015, 386, Tabelle. It is the latest and most complete typological analysis for the Romanian Bronze Age spearheads.

¹⁰ BADER 2015, 386; TARBay 2022a, 76–77.

¹¹ KOBAL' 2000, Taf. 87/C3.

¹² RUSU ET AL. 1977, pl. R 69a; PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, 151/272, Taf. 266/A18; KACSÓ 2007a, 69; BADER 2015, 386.

¹³ Archaeológiai Értesítő XX, 1900, 208 and 213.

¹⁴ In this regard, see KACSÓ 1987, footnote 55; KACSÓ 2008, 12–14.

¹⁵ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 156, Taf. 373/4; PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, 157, No. 341, Taf. 273D/1; ARDEU 1995–1996, 203, No. 90; LAZĂR 1995, 137, No. XXXIX.1f; LAZĂR 1999, 50; DIETRICH 2021, 550–551, no. 1964.



Fig. 5. Notable discoveries from the collection of Domokos Teleki from Gornești: 1–2. Suciu de Sus vessels; 3–7. ‘hoard’ from Gornești.

place of provenance remains unknown and no chronological or typological parallel is relevant with the recently discovered spearhead.

The archaeological literature mentions instead a Late Bronze Age settlement in the immediate vicinity of the spearhead. The site of *Cserépcsűr* is noticed for the first time in the archaeological repertory of M. Roska. Fragments of Bronze Age, Early Iron Age and La Tène pottery from this site were reported by Roska, which were at that time in the collection of Domokos Teleki of Gornesti.¹⁶ N. Vlassa illustrated some Bronze Age pottery fragments

as coming from this site,¹⁷ but apart from their identification in the field, he did not offer any illustration or description of their exact location. Among the illustrated fragments, some are specific to the Suciu de Sus culture,¹⁸ which is why C. Kacsó concluded that the settlement at *Cserépcsűr* (*Şura Hârburilor*) had most probably belonged to the bearers of the Wietenberg culture, and that the Suciu de Sus fragments found here, like others found in central and south-eastern Transylvania, were imported into the

¹⁶ ROSKA 1942, 97.

¹⁷ VLASSA 1965, 20, fig. 2. See also POPESCU ET AL. 1951, 283; LAZĂR 1992, 39, no. 13.

¹⁸ BADER 1972, 513, no. 16, fig. 2; BADER 1979, 27, no. 24.

Wietenberg environment.¹⁹ The surface research and archaeological excavations carried out by M. Petică and A. Zrinyi in 1996 established the stratigraphy and chronology of the large settlement, which, on the basis of the ceramic fragments and the excavated complexes, is dated to the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age (late Wietenberg and Gáva style pottery).²⁰

Given the very short distance between the site of the spearhead discovery and the contemporary archaeological site of *Cserépcsűr* (Fig. 1),²¹ it is very likely that the isolated piece belongs to the wider archaeological context of this site. Although a direct and

certain connection between the two sites cannot be established, and the isolated nature of the recently discovered spearhead does not help the archaeological interpretation, we can assume a certain contemporaneity with the Gáva pottery from the settlement. The Wietenberg and Suciu de Sus finds at the *Cserépcsűr* site are earlier and cannot be linked to the above-mentioned piece. There is, of course the possibility that the spear from Gorneşti was left or deposited by representatives of another community. A definite answer can only be given after thorough field research, which should focus on the wider archaeological context of the spearhead.

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¹⁹ KACSÓ 2007b 54–55; KACSÓ 2008, 13–14. See also POPA 1975, 14; KACSÓ 1987, 72; BOROFFKA 1994, 46–47, no. 215.

²⁰ PETICĂ-ZRÍNYI 2000, 333–334, 363–374.

²¹ cod RAN: 117186.03. The toponym is translated in the archaeological literature by VLASSA (1965, 20) as „Şura Hârburilor”, a form that does not exist in the cadastral documents and is unknown to the locals.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ActaAntHung</i>	Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest
<i>ActaArchHung</i>	Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest
<i>ActaMilMed</i>	Acta Militaria Mediaevalia
<i>ActaMN</i>	Acta Musei Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca
<i>ActaMP</i>	Acta Musei Porolissensis, Zalău
<i>ActaPraehistA</i>	Acta Praehistorica et Archaeologica
<i>AnB</i>	Analele Banatului
<i>Angustia</i>	Angustia. Muzeul Carpaților Răsăriteni, Sfântu Gheorghe
<i>Antiquity</i>	Antiquity. A Quarterly Review of Archaeology
<i>Apulum</i>	Apulum. Acta Musei Apulensis, Alba Iulia
<i>ArchÉrt</i>	Archaeologiai Értesítő, Budapest
<i>ArchKorr</i>	Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt, Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum Mainz
<i>ArhMold</i>	Arheologia Moldovei
<i>Banatica</i>	Banatica, Muzeul Banatului Montan, Reșița
<i>BAR (I.S./B.S.)</i>	British Archaeological Reports, International Series / British Series, Oxford
<i>BayVgBl</i>	Bayerische Vorgeschichtsblätter
<i>BerRGK</i>	Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission
<i>BHAUT</i>	Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Universitatis Timisiensis
<i>BMA</i>	Bibliotheca Musei Apulensis
<i>BMusBrux</i>	Bulletin des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Bruxelles
<i>CA</i>	Cercetări Arheologice
<i>CommArchHung</i>	Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae, Budapest
<i>Complutum</i>	Complutum. Publicaciones del Departamento de prehistoria de la Universidad complutense de Madrid
<i>Crisia</i>	Crisia. Muzeul Țării Crișurilor, Oradea
<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>EphemNap</i>	Ephemeris Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca
<i>EurAnt</i>	Eurasia Antiqua
<i>FI</i>	File de Istorie. Muzeul de Istorie al Județului Bistrița-Năsăud, Bistrița
<i>FolArch</i>	Folia Archaeologica, Budapest
<i>Germania</i>	Germania. Anzeiger der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts
<i>HOMÉ</i>	A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve, Miskolc
<i>JAHA</i>	Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology
<i>JAMÉ</i>	A Nyíregyházi Jósa András Múzeum Évkönyve, Nyíregyháza
<i>JASc</i>	Journal of Archaeological Science
<i>JbRGZM</i>	Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, Mainz
<i>JRA</i>	Journal of Roman Archaeology

<i>JRomMilSt</i>	Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies
<i>JRS</i>	The Journal of Roman Studies
<i>KuBA</i>	Kölner und Bonner Archaeologica
<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>MFMÉ</i>	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve, Szeged
<i>Oltenia</i>	Oltenia. Studii și comunicări. Istorie-Arheologie
<i>OxfJA</i>	Oxford Journal of Archaeology
<i>PBF</i>	Prähistorische Bronzefunde, Stuttgart
<i>ProcPrehistSoc</i>	Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society
<i>PZ</i>	Praehistorische Zeitschrift
<i>RA</i>	Revue archéologique
<i>RadMV</i>	Rad vojvođanskih muzeja (1994- Rad Muzeja Vojvodine)
<i>ReiCretActa</i>	Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta, Tongeren
<i>RevBis</i>	Revista Bistriței, Complexul Județean Muzeal Bistrița-Năsăud
<i>SaalbJb</i>	Saalburg-Jahrbuch. Bericht des Saalburg-Museums
<i>Sargetia (S.N.)</i>	Sargetia. Acta Musei Devensis, Deva
<i>SCIV(A)</i>	Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie 1974–), București
<i>SlovArch</i>	Slovenská Archeológia, Bratislava
<i>SMIM</i>	Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie
<i>StComBrukenthal</i>	Studii și comunicări – Muzeul Brukenthal
<i>SUBB-Historia</i>	Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, series Historia, Cluj-Napoca
<i>Századok</i>	Századok, A Magyar Történelmi Társulat Folyóirata, Budapest
<i>Tibiscum</i>	Tibiscum. Studii și comunicări. Muzeul Județean Caransebeș
<i>Tisicum</i>	A Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Múzeumok Évkönyve
<i>Tyragetia</i>	Tyragetia. The National Museum of History of Moldova, Chișinău
<i>UPA</i>	Universitätsforschungen zur Prähistorischen Archäologie, Bonn
<i>Ziridava</i>	Ziridava (–2012 Studia Archaologica)
<i>ZMúz</i>	Zalai Múzeum. Közlemények Zala Megye Múzeumaiból
<i>ZPE</i>	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

MARISIA. ARCHAEOLOGIA, HISTORIA, PATRIMONIUM

With a publishing tradition since 1965, in 2019 the annual of the Mureş County Museum initiated a new series entitled: *Marisia. Archaeologia, Historia, Patrimonium*. The publication provides a panel for new research results in archeology, architecture and material heritage of the history of arts and culture. The studies mainly focus on the inner Transylvanian region that encompasses also Mureş County. Beyond local valuable contributions, the annual aims at a regional and global concern that is relevant for the whole of Transylvania. Among the annual's missions is to provide mutual interpretation of the research results produced by the Romanian and Hungarian scientific workshops. Therefore, the annual articles are mainly in English but based on the field of research and the approached topic studies in German, Romanian or Hungarian are also accepted.

Cu o tradiție din anul 1965, anuarul Muzeului Județean Mureș s-a relansat în 2019 sub titlul *Marisia. Archaeologia, Historia, Patrimonium*. Această publicație se descrie ca o platformă științifică care cuprinde rezultatele cercetărilor în domenii precum: arheologia, arhitectura și patrimoniul material din zona istoriei artelor și a culturii, studii localizate în regiunea centrală a Transilvaniei, din care face parte județul Mureș. In extenso, anuarul își propune să ofere un spațiu unitar contribuților științifice valoroase, relevante din perspectiva geografică a ceea ce înseamnă întreaga regiune a Transilvaniei. Una dintre misiunile publicației este aceea de a oferi tuturor celor interesanți spațiul de schimb pentru cele mai noi rezultate din atelierele științifice românești și maghiare. Articolele anuarului sunt scrise în general în limba engleză, existând totodată articole scrise în germană, română și maghiară, în funcție de specificul domeniului și a temei abordate.

A Maros Megyei Múzeum 1965 óta megjelenő évkönyvének 2019-ben útjára bocsátott új sorozata, a *Marisia. Archaeologia, Historia, Patrimonium* elsősorban a mai Maros megyét is magába foglaló belső-erdélyi régió régészeti, épített és tárgyi örökségére, nemkülönben az ezekhez kapcsolódó művészettörténeti, művelődéstörténeti kérdésekre vonatkozó újabb kutatások tudományos fóruma. A lokális perspektíván túl igyekszik kitekinteni a regionális és univerzális összefüggésekre, így a tágan értelmezett Erdély területére nézve is közöl kiemelkedő értékkal bíró tanulmányokat. Küldetésének tekinti a hazai román és magyar tudományos műhelyekben született eredmények kölcsönös tolmácsolását. A dolgozatok nyelve főként az angol, de szakterülettől és témától függően német, román vagy magyar nyelven is közöl írásokat.