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The Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex – between the West and the East

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Ключевые слова: Прекукутень–Кукутень/Триполье, линейно-ленточная керамика, Ленгель, Тиса, Тисаполгар, Бодрогкерестур, Баден, Малице, Люблин–Волынь, влияния, аккультурация

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The Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex – between the West and the East

In this paper the authors highlight the ties that were established during the Eneolithic period between the communities of the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex and the “western” ones from the northern part of the Middle Danube Plain and from the western, northern and north-eastern Carpathian Basin (Stichbandkeramik, Lengyel, Tisza, Tiszapolgár, Bodrogkeresztúr, Baden, Malice, Lublin–Volhynia etc.). We attempt to reconstruct the complex “Danubian” and “west Carpathian” ethno-cultural processes that caused the various population movements from the West to the East of the Carpathians, defining the archaeological indicators, especially the ceramic ones, on the basis of which the influences and interferences between the various communities of the Neolithic and Eneolithic can be defined and the historical data can be obtained, which will allow a better reconstruction of the acculturations of the period. The authors found that, although these influences existed, on account of having been exerted in different ways and at different intensities from stage to stage, even involving the demographic presence of alien elements, they did not lead to the “Lengyelization”, “Polgárisation” or “Badenisation” of the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex, which retained its individuality in its general lines, and that they only marked the differentiation processes of the regional aspects/variants of development, as a result of phenomena specific to protohistorical and historical acculturations.

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Complexul cultural Precucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye – între Vest și Est

În prezenta lucrare, autorii evidențiază legăturile care au avut loc, pe parcursul eneoliticului, între comunitățile complexului cultural Precucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye și cele „vestice”, din partea nordică a Câmpiei Dunării mijlocii și din Bazinul Carpatic de vest, nord și nord-est (Stichbandkeramik, Lengyel, Tisza, Tiszapolgár, Bodrogkeresztúr, Baden, Malice, Lublin–Volhynia etc.). Se încearcă reconstituirea complexelor procese etno-culturale „danubiene” și „vest carpatice” care au determinat diferitele deplasări de populație de la vest la est de Carpați, definirea indicatorilor arheologici, în special cei ceramici, pe baza cărora pot fi definite influențele și interferențele dintre diferitele comunități neolitice și eneolitice și obținerea unor date de natură istorică, care să permită mai buna reconstituire a aculturațiilor din epocă. Autorii au constatat că deși există, aceste influențe exercitându-se în modalități și cu intensități diferite, de la etapă la etapă, presupunând chiar prezența elementelor demografice alogene, acestea nu au condus la „Lengyelizarea”, „Polgarizarea” și „Badenizarea” complexului cultural Precucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye care, în ansamblul său, și-a păstrat individualitate culturală, ci au marcat doar procesele de diferențiere a aspectelor/variantelor regionale de dezvoltare, ca urmare a fenomenelor specifice aculturațiilor protoistorice și istorice.

Д. Богда, С.-К. Еня

Культурный комплекс Прекукутень–Кукутень/Триполье – между Западом и Востоком

Авторы статьи подчеркивают связи, которые существовали на протяжении энеолитической эпохи между общностями культурного комплекса Прекукутень–Кукутень/Триполье и «западными», локализованными в северной части низменности Среднего Дуная и в западном, северном и северо-восточном Карпатском бассейне (носители культур линейно-ленточной керамики, Ленгель, Тиса, Тисаполгар, Бодрогкерестур, Баден, Малице, Люблин–Волынь и др.). Предпринимается попытка воссоздания сложных «данубийских» и «западнокарпатских» этнокультурных процессов, которые привели к различным передвижениям населения с запада

к востоку от Карпат, а также идентификации археологических индикаторов, в особенности керамических, на основании которых могут определиться влияния и взаимодействия между разными неолитическими и энеолитическими общностями. Таким образом, авторы надеются получить данные исторического плана, которые позволили бы точнее воссоздать картину культурных процессов эпохи. Сделан вывод, что хотя эти влияния существовали, они действовали в разной степени на разных этапах, подразумевая даже присутствие чужих демографических элементов, но не привели к «ленгелизации», «полгаризации» и «баденизации» культурного комплекса Прекукутень–Кукутень/Триполье, который, в целом, сохранил свою культурную индивидуальность. Эти влияния лишь придали определенный оттенок различия региональным вариантам развития, в результате специфических протоисторических и исторических процессов аккультурации.

I. Introduction

The archaeological research conducted during the post-war period has outlined quite clearly the broad lines of development of the European human communities and the links between them in the highly dynamic and complex Neolithic and Eneolithic world. In this respect, the issue of the Near Eastern and Anatolian-Balkan origin of the Carpathian-Danubian Neolithic and Eneolithic was elucidated, in close relationship with the general processes taking place on the continent, involving, mainly, the action on the local backgrounds of the two main Anatolian-Aegean currents (Sesklo-Starčevo and Vinča) (Perlès 2004; Whittle, Cummings 2007; Davison *et alii* 2009: 10–18), to which we should probably add the Impresso-Cardial one (Гаскевич 2010: 213–251), in a multitude of historical scenarios. Subsequent contacts between the Neolithic communities, taking place in all directions, including the West-East one, caused multiple “secondary” processes of migration, acculturation and cultural transformation, through which the late Neolithic and Eneolithic archaeological cultures were born, with obvious phenomena of continuity and discontinuity.

Observed at a spatial and temporal macro-scale, these processes are configured on a series of fundamental directions of ethno-cultural and historical interaction, among which the East-West and the West-East movements were the topic of numerous particular researches. Thus, the settling (the Neolithisation) of the East-Carpathian area was done by Starčevo-Criş communities coming from Transylvania and Wallachia (Ursulescu 1984; Popuşoi 2005), which interfered with the late Mesolithic and the Bug-Dniester human groups, the last especially in the Dniester River area (Маркевич 1974; Larina 2010: 177–218; Marinescu-Bîlcu 1993: 191–241).

At the same time, conditioned by the effects of the population movement caused by the Vinča waves, the displacement of the Western Linear Pottery communities towards South and Central Poland, Western Ukraine and the East-Carpathian area (understood in its entirety – Romania and the Rep. of Moldova) has

been highlighted (Dergachev, Sherratt, Larina 1991: 1–16; Larina 1994a; 1994b: 51–68; 2009: 50–70; Larina, Kuzminova 1994: 225–240; Ларина 1999: 10–140; Ларина *et alii* 1997: 62–110; Pyzel 2009: 71–79; Ursulescu 1990: 188–224) and the effective participation, together with the bearers of Boian-Giuleşti phase, to the genesis of the cultural complex Pre-Cucuteni-Tripolye A (Marinescu-Bîlcu 1974: 109–121; 1993: 191–241).

As such, in this paper we intend to track and highlight the way in which, throughout its millenary existence, the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex interfered with other peoples and cultures and received countless Western influences, specifically from the communities of the Middle Danube and the Western Carpathian Basin.

This is not a completely new line of investigation, since these ties were discussed before, albeit in an elusive and sequential manner, to the point of exposing, most prominently, certain Vinča influences (Ursulescu, Dergachev 1991: 157–172; 2000: 207–220; Marinescu-Bîlcu 1974: 132–134) and the mutual ties established with the communities of the Petreşti culture (Marinescu-Bîlcu 1974: 133–134; Paul 1992; Gligor 2009: 233–246) or with the Danubian, Western and Central Carpathian ones (Збенович 1989: 141; Sorochin 1991: 213–217; 1992: 69–87; Burdo 2001: 5–38; 2001–2002: 141–163; 2011: 357–371).

At the same time, we take note of a number of more recent contributions concerning the contacts between Tripolyans and their western neighbours, that leave grounds for assuming that successive processes of “Polgárisation” and “Badenisation” took place, which mainly triggered changes in the cultural profile of the Cucuteni-Tripolye tribes (Videjko 2000: 13–68; Tkachuk 2000: 69–85; Tsvek 2000: 111–132; 1996: 89–113; Movsha 2000: 133–167). We also cannot overlook the contributions that focused on the presence of eastern elements (Manzura, Sava 1994: 143–192; Дергачев 1999: 169–221) in the Cucuteni-Tripolye milieu, increasingly visible in the second developmental stage of the cultural complex, during a historical continuum, especially since they sought, explicitly or impliedly, consciously and/or unintentionally, to

plead for certain theories of Indo-Europeanization (the *kurgan* waves hypothesis) (Gimbutas 1989: 197–262; Rachtel 1987: 51–63; Anthony 2007).

II. Objectives

Our endeavour aims to address, in a manner as complete and dynamic as possible, most of the archaeological indicators of these contacts and western influences, as well to highlight their contribution to the formation of some regional aspects and to the transformation of the ethno-cultural ensemble, in order to see to what extent were the cultural changes due to the internal evolution of the cultural complex, and/or to the influences received over time. Unfortunately, the differently coverage of systematic excavations and the uneven publishing of the findings hindered our analysis and forced from us a certain dose of subjectivity in shaping the conclusions, albethey provisory.

Therefore, without neglecting or underestimating the importance of any of the influences observable on the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye communities, in this paper we will insist on the ties with the Stroked Band Pottery (*Stichbandkeramik*), Lengyel and Epi-Lengyel, Tisza, Tiszapolgár and Bodrogkeresztúr, Malice, Lublin–Volhynia and, last but not least, the Baden communities.

III. Chronological framework

Regardless of the periodization and chronology schemes employed, we can notice that, in its entirety, the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural

complex (including the final cultures/groups, considering the elements of continuity) had an existence spanning for more than a millennium and a half to two millennia, between the 50 and 30 centuries cal BC, being contemporary with the Lengyel and Epi-Lengyel, Tisza and Tiszapolgár-Bodrogkeresztúr, Lengyel–Polgár, Malice and Lublin–Volhynia civilizations (Table I) (Stadler 1995: 102–105, 210–224; Lenneis, Stadler, Windl 1996: 97–116; Dolukhanov *et alii* 2005: 1441–1458; Maran 1998: 497–525; 2001: 733–748; Wild *et alii* 2001: 1057–1064; Burdo 2005: 75–84; Kovalyukh, Skripkin, Videiko 2007: 71–78; Lazarovici 2010: 91–114).

It is therefore natural that the cultural phenomena to which we refer to were complex and diverse, from stage to stage, observing the multiple processes of interference, acculturation and cultural transformation.

IV. The geographic setting and the diffusion routes for the influences

The Neolithic and Eneolithic civilizations and cultural complexes of the Carpathian and peri-Carpathian sub-basins flourished in complex and complementary ecosystems, determined by the positioning along some major watercourses (the Middle Danube and the Tisza in the West; the Dniester, Prut and Siret in the East; the Oder, Vistula and San in the North) and their tributaries, at the meeting place of several major landforms units: plains (the Pannonian, Tisza and Bodrog plains); plateaus/hills (the North-West Hungar-

Table I. Cultural-chronological synchronisms in the Neolithic and Eneolithic of the North Carpathian Basin and the adjacent areas

PERIOD	CAL C14 DATA	REGIONS											
		MIDDLE DANUBE TRANSDANUBIA	TISZA PLAIN	TRANSYLVANIAN TABLELAND	KRAKOW	SANDOMIERZ	RZESZÓW	LUBLIN-VOLHYNIA	MOLDOVA ROMANIA	REPUBLICA MOLDOVA	UKRAINA		
AENEOLITHIC	LATE	3000	BELL BEAKER VUČEDOL	VUČEDOL	POST-COTOFENI GROUPS	SCHNURKERAMIK				YAMNAYA CULTURE			
		3250	BADEN II / BOLERÁZ II	BADEN II	COTOFENI II, III	Lublin-Volhynia IIIB	Funnel Beaker Culture I / II Globular Amphora Culture / Late Tripolye Lublin-Volhynia IIIB			HORODIȘTEA ERBICENI II	GORDINEȘTI	SEREZLIEV ZHIVOTILOV GORODSK	
	MIDDLE	3500	BADEN I / BOLERÁZ LAŽNANY	BADEN I HUNYADIHALOM	COTOFENI I CHEILE TURZII	Zlotniki	Funnel Beaker Culture I Lublin-Volhynia IIIA Polgár influences			HORODIȘTEA ERBICENI I	GORDINEȘTI VYHVATINTSI BRANZENI	GORODSK USATOVO	
		3750	BALATON-LASINJA	BODROGKERESZTÚR A, B	BODROGKERESZTÚR A, B DECEA MUREȘULUI	Węzów	Lublin-Volhynia II	MALICE IIB Rzeszów phase	Lublin-Volhynia II Polgár infl.	CUCUTENI B - TRIPOLYE-BII / CI-YI			
		4000	LENGYEL III	TISZAPOLGÁR A, B CSONGRAD	TISZAPOLGÁR A, B DECEA MUREȘULUI	Lengyel Culture Modlnica Group	MALICE CULTURE IIA phase (Rzeszów phases)		Lublin-Volhynia I Polgár infl.	CUCUTENI A-B - TRIPOLYE BI-BII			
4250	LENGYEL III	PROTO-TISZAPOLGÁR	PROTO-TISZAPOLGÁR ARIUȘD	Lengyel Culture Pleszów Group	MALICE CULTURE IC phase Lengyel-Polgár influences			CUCUTENI A - TRIPOLYE BI Lengyel-Polgár / Eastern influences					
LATE NEOLITHIC	EARLY	4500	LENGYEL II	TISZA III / CSŐSZ-HALOM (BORIN) TISZA II	ICLOD PETREȘTI A-B, B	MALICE CULTURE IB phase (classic) Stroked Pottery culture influences				PRE-CUCUTENI III - TRIPOLYE A2 PRECUCUTENI II - TRIPOLYE A1 Malice culture influences			
		4750	LENGYEL I SOPOT-BICSKE II	TISZA / HERPÁLY I / II	PETREȘTI A, LUMEA NOUĂ FOENI	Lengyel Culture (LC) (SAMBORZEC-OPATÓW GROUP) Krakow, Sandomierz subgroups	MALICE CULTURE IA phase Stroked Pottery culture influences		PRE-CUCUTENI I BOIAN II penetration		MALICE IA SPC ? Želízovce IIC		
LATE NEOLITHIC	5000	SOPOT-BICSKE I	SZAKÁLHÁT / ESZTÁR	TURDAȘ	LBPC Želízovce IIB phase LBPC Želízovce IIA phase Linear Band Pottery culture - <i>Notenkopf</i> phase								

ian and the East-Slovak plateaus); and mountains, of average elevations, not greater than 3000 metres (the Western Carpathians, the North-Eastern Carpathians, the Beskids, and all the related piedmontan chains), each with its own natural resources (Birkenmajer 1974: 127–157; Geografia României 1987: vol. III; Pop 2006: Dunăre 1984: [http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/pages/C/A/Carpathian Mountains. htm](http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/pages/C/A/Carpathian%20Mountains.htm)).

The primary and secondary hydrographical network crossed the Western and North-Eastern Carpathians and the Beskids, creating numerous lowlands and valleys, where man founded settlements as early as the Palaeolithic.

At the same time, major transmontane passing routes formed by the tracts of lands linking the sources of the various larger or smaller rivers, emerged as facilitators of population movements from one side (NW, NE and SE ones) of

the mountains to the other and to adjacent areas, constituting real corridors during all the pre-historical and historical periods, while the “local”, intra-Carpathian passages favoured internal movements between the various depressions and ethnographic areas: Dukla (between the Bodrog-Ondava and Wislok, 502 m), Lupkow (between Laborec and Wislok/San, 640 m), Už (between Už and San, Dniester and Stryi, 889 m), Verecke (between Latorytsia and Stryi Valleys, 841 m), Bereger/Volovec (1014 m) and Torunsky/Vyshkivsky (between Tisza tributaries, Dniester and Galician Bystritsa valleys, 930, 6 m), Jablunetsky/Tatar (between the Black Tisza and the Prut valley, 931 m), Prislop (the Maramureş Depression – the Dorna Depression, 1416 m), Prislop (1413) and Rotunda (1284 m) between Maramureş and Bucovina, Tihuţa–Bârgău (Dorna Depression – East-Transylvanian Bistriţa valley, 1201 m), Tulgheş

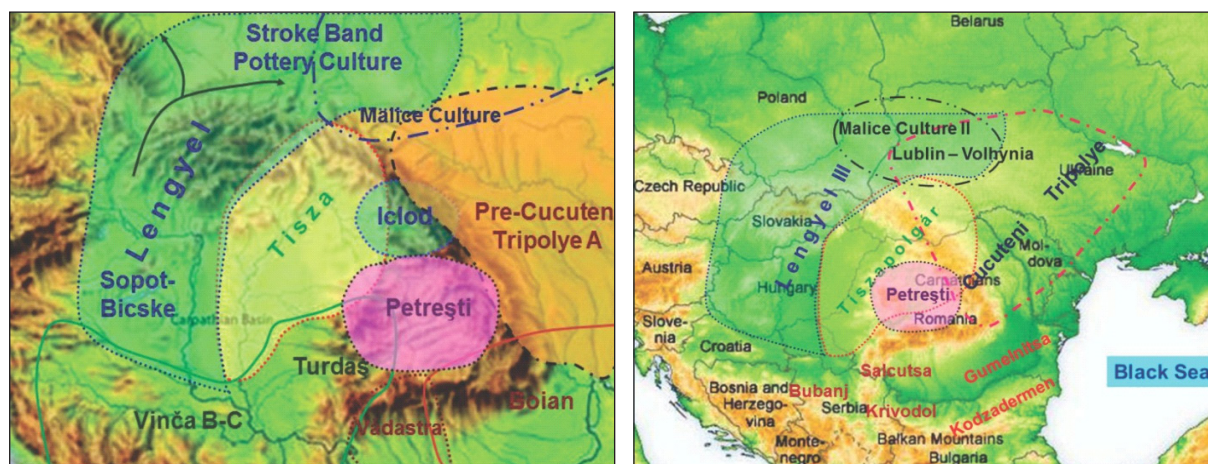


Fig. 1. The geographic setting and the reference cultural framework (*processed ap.* William Parkinson www.anthro.fsu.edu/research/koros/overview/arch_background/arch_background.html).

(between Giurgeu/Harghita and Hangu/Neamţ Depressions, 1025 m), Ghimeş–Făget–Palanca (between the Western/Ciucurilor and Covasna depressions and those of the Eastern Carpathian/Moineşti–Comăneşti–Dărmăneşti Depression, on the valley of the Trotuş River, 1155 m, with a branch across the Uz Pass, 1085 m), Oituz (between the same depressions, in the valley of Oituz River, 635 m) (fig. 2) (Bader 2001: 15–39). In this regard, it can be noticed that a third of the major passes of the Carpathians lie in the north–western, northern and north–eastern sections. On these routes, people, ideas, technologies and products circulated during different ages.

Far from being a cul-de-sac, the Middle Danube Plain, the North-western, North-eastern and Eastern Carpathians, with all their adjacent ter-

ritories, constitute a major area of convergence, a space of individualities and of multiculturalism, a melting pot of prehistoric, protohistoric and historic syntheses. The Neolithic and Eneolithic populations that inhabited these macro- and micro-areas and cultural and ecological niches interacted throughout time, at different intensities from period to period and from case to case.

The movements of the prehistorical, proto-historical and historical human communities, for different distances and on various directions/vectors, from the primary/original areas, to secondary and tertiary areas of habitation, took place either following major natural (climatic and geographical) changes, either as a result of cultural and historical events (political-military events – the change of the balance and the centres of power,

war and conquest; colonization currents; economic specificities; the displacement of the managed/built space; “end of the world” ideas: a new beginning in another time and space; etc.), either in search of new resources needed for living: sub/quasi-autochthonous and allochthonous (lands for tillage and pasture, mineral resources, rocks, salt, oxides, ores, etc.), which, depending on the technology of the era, were exploited, processed, consumed and/or meant for short to long distance

trade (Turq 2000: 106–107; http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/pal_1145-3370_2000_sup_2_1_1266; Mester, Rácz 2010: 30–31; Sandu *et alii* 2010: 225–256; Boghian, Niculică, Budui 2012: 272–291).

After tracing diachronically the Neolithic and Eneolithic population movements on a macro-scale, we ascertained several ways of intrusion for western elements and influences to the East of the Carpathians, each with its specificity and im-

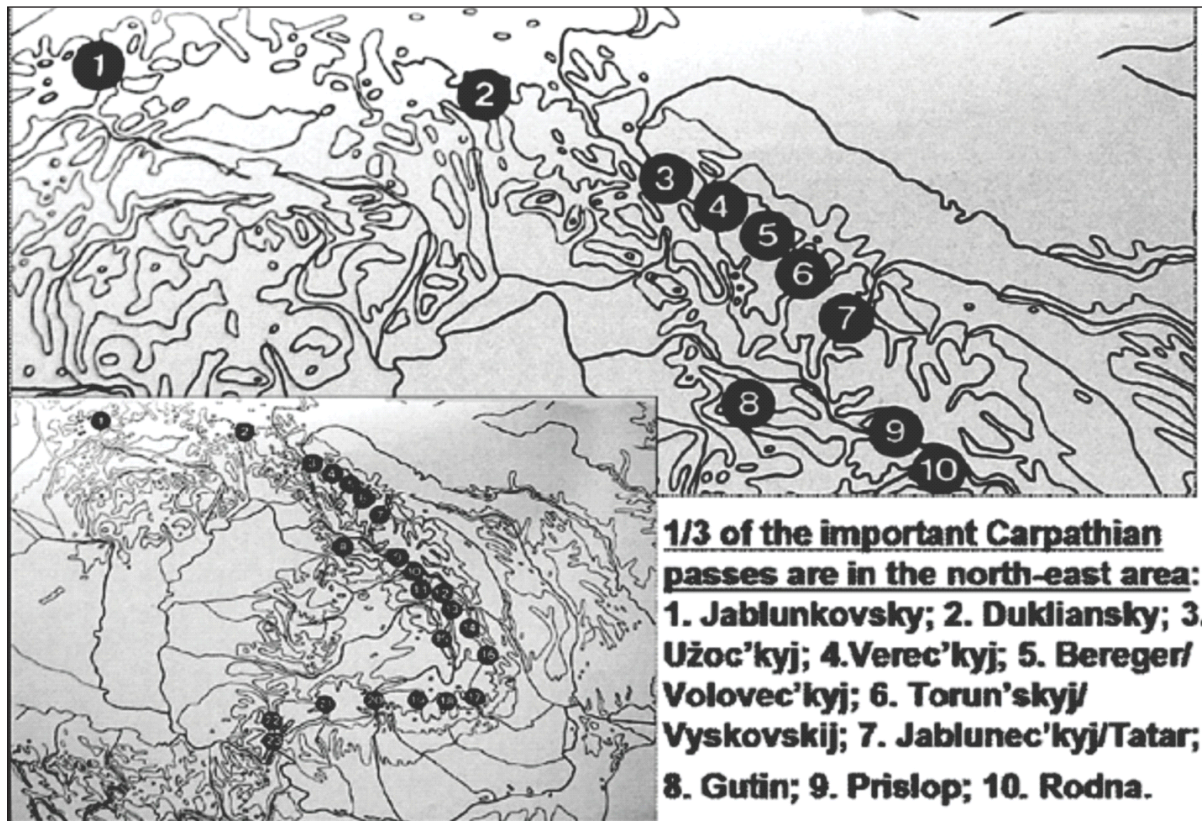


Fig. 2. The mountain passes of the Northern and Eastern Carpathians (*ap.* T. Bader 2001).

portance: **the Transylvanian route** – often considered as the default and less emphasized in the dedicated literature; **the route of the North Carpathian passes** (direct, between the upper basins of the Tisza, Dniester and Prut rivers); **the Middle Danube–Southern Poland route** (indirect, from the upper and middle basins of the Vistula and San rivers) – the so called Danubian cultural communities of Southern and South-eastern Poland and the Lublin–Volhynia ones.

V. The archaeological indicators of the West–East influences

Much data can be brought forward to attest the presence of western and north–western ele-

ments in the settlements of the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex. To begin with, influences are observed in some ceramic categories, forms and decorations (including the plastic applications and the horn-shaped and multiple handles), the archaeological marker most sensitive to cultural changes, according to the chronological–cultural parallels. In most cases, the technological and compositional changes of the paste and of the decoration can constitute cultural–demographic indicators (Parsons 2012: 458–466) of the presence of some allogeneous population(s), infiltrated as small groups and for short time periods, and elements of direct influence (see also the much-discussed *Cucuteni C* pottery), and not

just replicas and/or imports (Biehl, Rassamakin 2008), although the coexistence of artefacts of various origins should not be excluded.

In the case of the movements/colonisations of consistent human groups, we can notice strong influences and sudden and massive changes, as evinced by the ceramics, plastic arts and other artefacts, cultic constructions and elements etc., in terms of regional aspects/varieties of the cultural chronological entities, of acculturations and cultural transformations, which implicitly had ethno-cultural expressions, in many cases impossible to be verified by archaeological means. Unfortunately, the selective publishing of the ceramic lots, particularly of the known materials, hindered our enterprise.

For this reason, alongside various ceramic categories, useful as markers of influences are also other indicators such as: chipped and/or polished and perforated lithic artefacts manufactured from raw materials and following alien technological processes (obsidian, Vistula “chocolate” flint, Volhynian flint, Prut-Dniester flint, volcanic rocks etc., native copper and from ores etc.), some types of bone and antler tools (the so-called “polishers” on artiodactyl metapodials), adornments from non-autochthonous materials (copper, gold, shells – *Spondylus*, *Glycymeris*, *Cardium*, *Dentalium*, etc.), as well as the types of dwellings, fortifications and building methods, cult pieces – anthropomorphic and zoomorphic plastic art etc., some of which were possibly distributed by trade or reproduced using another raw materials (see the skeuomorphic clay disks imitating the original gold and silver ones), others suggesting the immediate presence of the allogeneous individuals and communities that created the respective goods and technologies.

At the same time, considering the criteria of cultural anthropology, not a single human culture, which expressed itself or not from an archaeological, ethnological or historical point of view, was a passive receiver of external influences, but engaged in reciprocal cultural exchanges. In this sense, important are the influences exerted throughout time by the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye communities on the creators of the neighbouring cultures/cultural complexes. Similarly, we must remember the fact that in their movements from their original “homelands” to their secondary or tertiary ones, the Neolithic and Eneolithic communities suffered natural transformations and gradually assimilated various influences. This phenomenon can be observed in the case of the Stroked Band Pottery Culture (*Stichbandkeramik*) Lengyel, Tisza and Lengyel–Polgár communities that colonised the different micro-re-

gions from Southern Poland, giving rise to other cultural entities: mainly the Malice and Lublin–Volhynia cultures. We also must not ignore the fact that the Danubian Neolithic milieu (the Lengyel and Tisza cultures) was penetrated by other central, northern and western European communities, as to imbue the former with a certain ethno-cultural heterogeneity/cosmopolitanism, also observable in the associated influences, which contain various elements.

VI. Western influences in the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex

VI.1. The Pre-Cucuteni-Tripolye A culture (49/48 – 46/45 cent. cal BC)

Formed from the merger of Boian–Giulești communities with late Linear Pottery ones, in an area encompassing south-eastern Transylvania and south-western Moldavia, the Pre-Cucuteni-Tripolye culture extended north-eastwards and eastwards, and exerted and received in its turn, during its semi-millenary existence throughout the three phases, at various intensities, cultural influences (southern: Boian and Hamangia cultures; western: Vinča–Turdaș and Vinča C, Petrești, Lengyel, Tisza, Stroked Band Pottery (*Stichbandkeramik*), and Malice cultures; eastern: Bug-Dniester culture) (Marinescu-Bîlcu 1974: 109–141; Збенович 1989: 171–196; Garvăn, Buzea, Frânculeasa 2009: 23–27) that were assimilated while preserving its distinctiveness in the larger ensemble of contemporaneous cultures.

Because the Pre-Cucuteni I materials are little known and published, the question of eventual influences received by the respective communities is at this moment unapproachable. For the Pre-Cucuteni II–Tripolye A1 phase, V.S. Titov (Titov, Erdely 1980: 231; Збенович 1989: 141) cited the vessel decorated with thin white incised and inlaid lines unearthed at Rogojeni I, Republic of Moldova, as an example of an import from during the final phase of the Bükk culture, while S.N. Bibikov mentioned for Luka Vrublevetskaja (Pre-Cucuteni III–Tripolye A2) Tisza influences (mainly reticular impressed motifs) (Bibikov 1953: 155–156, fig. 61, tab. 65–a, b, 66–b, v, g, d, j, 67–v, e; Збенович 1989: 141, fig. 81/1; Makkay 2004: fig. 4–6, 9, 16–18, 21–25), but these elements seem, at this stage of research, to have been much more numerous (fragments of scale–model dwellings, of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic vessels, the appearance of pyriform vessel similar to those from the Lengyel area, including the tradition of raw red painting, also specific to the Tisza culture).

For the moment, it is difficult to speak of specific traditions and influences in the genesis and evolution of the Pre-Cucuteni-Tripolye A communities on the basis of the coarse ceramics decorated with “pinched” and fingernail-impressed motifs in/on the clay slip layer, considered to be a Criș tradition (Burdo 2011: 259), because this ceramic species was likewise produced and used by the Linear Pottery communities, from which the Pre-Cucutenians-Tripolyans inherited and kept it, almost unchanged, up to the end of the Pre-Cucuteni III phase.

Nonetheless, after reanalysing the domestic ceramic ware from Luka Vrublevetskaja and Kormani (Pre-Cucuteni III-Tripolye A2), N. B. Burdo highlights a series of similarities between the shapes and decorations of this species and the vessels specific to the Lengyel and Tisza communities from the Tisza and Pannonian Danube plains and from southern Poland, which alongside the similarities in the lithic industries and in certain architectural elements, would bespeak of connections between the respective communities, and even of the involvement of the Danubian component to the genesis of Bernashevka and Kormani-Luka Vrublevetskaja type settlements (Burdo 2001: 5–38; 2007: 273–276, fig. 2–4). However, we stress the necessity to establish these similarities of larger sets of ceramic materials and associations of ceramic categories, resulting even from more recent research, because domestic ceramics display, in the case of the post-Linear Pottery communities, a remarkable uniformity generated both by the parental background, and by the same functionalities within quasi-similar economies.

As expected, the archaeological investigations conducted in the upper basin of the Dniester River and in the Volhynian Plateau brought to light new evidence that complete the wider picture of the Neolithic habitation in the area of the Upper Dniester, and the influences that occurred between the different communities.

Thus, after the Music-note Linear Pottery and Želizovce habitations (Lenartovych 2009: 226–261), in the northern part of the region, at Zalisky, there was discovered an inhabitation level dated to the classical phase of the Malice culture (48–46 cent. cal BC) (Bandrivskij, Krushelnycka 2002: 441–452). For this reason, it is normal for the Pre-Cucuteni II-III-Tripolye A1-2 settlements from this area to find materials typical to the Malice culture, including ones influenced by the Stroked Band Pottery culture (*Stichbandkeramik*) (Tkachuk, Kochkin 2012: 308–312), and not only as “imports” and “imitations”. Recently, ceramic materials have been dis-

covered in the Pre-Cucuteni III/Tripolye A2 settlement from Kozyna-Solovche and Holyshiv, which display conspicuous Malice I B and proto-Tiszapolgár (Tiszapolgár A) influences (Tkachuk *et alii* 2010: 219–238; Pozikhovskij 2010: 28–39).

On account of this fact, taking it as a working hypothesis, we hold the opinion that the technique for producing the early Pre-Cucuteni-Tripolye motifs with notched-dot stripes (with a denticulate instrument, comb?), inlaid or not with white, could have been received, at least in the northern part of the cultural complex, also through Malice mediation (phase I A and B, with *Stichbandkeramik* influences), and not only following the contacts with the Hamangia culture bearers (Marinescu-Bîlcu 1972: 35–36; 1974: 125).

In point of fact, the Malice culture, the heirs of the post-Linear traditions in southern and western Poland (as a local variant of the Stroked Band Pottery/*Stichbandkeramik* culture, even though it is almost identical to the one from the Czech Republic) (Zápotocká 1998: 31–140, taf. 32–160), received important Lengyel and Tisza influences (via the groups located in southern Poland, particularly the Samborzec-Opatów one) in the early phases, and Tiszapolgár influences, during the late phases (Dombay 1960; Novotný 1962; Tálas, Raczky 1987; Kalicz 1970; 1985; Kadrow, Zakościelna 2000: 194–206; Kadrow 2006: 63–64), spreading to the Lublin Plateau and the northern part of the Podolian-Volhynian Plateau, and playing an important role in the Neolithisation of the area in question. As such, we believe that the investigation of the relationships between the Pre-Cucuteni-Cucuteni/Tripolye and the Malice communities represents an important research direction for the future.

At the same time, the multiple Lengyel and Tisza (phases I-III) penetrations in southern Poland can provide suggestions for also tracking these phenomena in the North-Eastern Carpathian area (the northern part of the Pre-Cucuteni-Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex).

In what concerns the influences received by the Pre-Cucuteni-Tripolye A communities from the contemporary civilisations in Transylvania (Vinča-Turdaș II, Petrești and Iclod), or the Pre-Cucuteni elements present in the intra-Carpathian area, these issues, as shown above, have been already addressed in the dedicated literature (Paul 1992: 54–55, 100, pl. XXII: 1–2, 4–6, 8–9, 12–13; Lazarovici 1991; Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2006: 544–545, fig. IVd1).

Thus, besides the shapes and decorations with grooves, pleats, bands of alveoli etc., considered of a Vinča B2-Turdaș and Vinča C influence,

which can just as well represent legacies from the Dudești–Boian background, the discussion mentions the unmediated presence of Pre–Cucuteni elements in Transylvania. This presence (Pre-Cucuteni I-II), at first put into connection with “Pre-Cucutenian impulses in the Turdaș” (II) and Petrești (A) milieus (Marinescu-Bîlcu 1974: 127, 131–134), has been documented in many Transylvanian sites, being considered contemporary with the late Vinča (C1–C2) culture (Drașovean 1996: 92–100; 2003: 39–58; Maxim 1999: 98–100).

Except the south-eastern, these elements not formed a distinct cultural level in Transylvania. This is perhaps the reason why they were assigned differently, some specialists considering them belonging either to some Boian-*Bolintineanu* and *Giulești* and Pre-Cucuteni influences (Luca 1998: 169–173, abb. 1–2), either to an initial cultural background that suffered transformations (Gligor 2009: 233–246). In our opinion, the greatest part of the putative Pre-Cucutenian artefacts (I-II phases) from Transylvania actually represent Boian-*Giulești* ceramic materials that appeared concurrently with the northward expansion of these communities, which in south-eastern Transylvania and south-eastern Moldavia mixed with Linear Pottery ones and gave rise to Pre-Cucuteni culture. In fact, subsequent influences from the later phases of the Boian culture, present in the Foeni-Petrești cultural milieus, and others, similarly cannot be excluded.

For the moment, no materials specific to the Petrești culture have been found in Pre-Cucuteni phases I and II in the settlements east of the Carpathians. These influences are manifested in the Pre-Cucuteni III phase, being particularly noticeable towards the end of the phase, particularly within the Ariușd cultural aspect (Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2010: 27–108), as well as east of the Carpathians (Târpești) (Marinescu-Bîlcu 1981: 60, 64, fig. 155: 3, 163: 7, 10–12, 164: 5, 173: 1, 174: 2–3, 182: 5), including through the changes occurring in the techniques of ceramic decoration through painting before firing.

At the current state of research, even though not numerous, the western influences in the Pre-Cucuteni-Tripolye communities are a fact; the problematics of adequately highlighting them remains an important research direction. We do not dismiss the hypothesis according to which the gradual movement of the Pre–Cucuteni-Tripolye communities from the Carpathian region towards the other areas of the Moldavian–Volhynian–Podolian Plateau occurred not only as a consequence of a local demographic increase, but also of successive southern and west-north-western “pressures”.

VI.2. The Cucuteni A–Tripolye BI culture (46/45 – 43/42 cent. cal BC)

The most numerous discoveries attributed to this phase, including the investigation and quasiexhaustive publishing of some sites (Hăbășești, Trușești, Târpești) (Dumitrescu *et alii* 1954; Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Florescu, Florescu 1999; Marinescu-Bîlcu 1981), as well as the investigations conducted in other settlements, have led to the accumulation of various archaeological materials, which allow for a more thorough assessment of the western influences exerted on the Cucuteni-Tripolye communities.

Thus, in the north-western part of the cultural complex, these influences are linked with the northward and north-eastward advancing of the Lengyel II–III communities and of the associated *Kultura s moravskou malovanou keramikou/Mährisch-Ostösterreichischen Gruppe (MMK/MOG)* and Tisza II-III/Proto-Tiszapolgár variants, following the ethno-cultural restructurings taking place in Central Europe (the Middle Danube valley) (Pleiner 1978: 212–214, fig. 47; Pavúk, Šiška 1980: 140–142, 147–148; Podborský 1993: 108–145; Neugebauer-Maresh 1995: 57–107), which led to the formation, in southern Poland, of the Pleszów and subsequently Modlnica group (Kaczanowska 2006: 37–52), and/or as certain influences visible in the Malice culture (phase IC/IIA) (Kadrow 2006: 71–72), and, later, in the Lublin–Volhynia culture (Kadrow, Zakościelna 2000: 208–241; Zakościelna 2006: 77–94; 2007: 297–303, fig. 12–18).

Without delving into the discussion concerning the beginnings of the Cucuteni A (A1 and A2)/Tripolye BI (1-2) phase in the northern part of Moldavia, the Republic of Moldova and Subcarpathian Ukraine, we can show that the area witnessed the development, during the Cucuteni A3/Tripolye BI/3 stage, of the so-called Horodnitsa–Trușești–Cuconești Vechi regional aspect (Boghian 2001: 97–99), in which certain ceramic shapes and decorations seem to be have been influenced by Lengyel III/proto-Tiszapolgár/Tiszapolgár A and B communities.

Thus, at Trușești, as part of the ceramics with deepened, incised and grooved decoration, associated or not with crude (raw) white or red colouring, but also with that painted before firing, a series of vessels, particularly decorated with angular, rhomboid and reticular (“textile decoration”) motifs and the anthropomorphic vessels present similarities with those from the Lengyel III/final Tisza/proto-Tiszapolgár milieu (beakers, “amphorettes” with four handles placed symmetrically under the lips

ware, support vessels, lids with horn-shaped lugs, craters) (Iercoşan 2002: 163–186; Diaconescu 2009; Petrescu-Dîmboviţa, Florescu, Florescu 1999: fig. 163: 15, 167: 7, 169: 9, 170: 11, 172: 3, 173: 4, 175: 5, 186: 1–2, 198: 4, 204: 11, 225: 4, 231: 6, 237: 6, 245: 4, 8, 259: 3, 265: 7, 268: 1–2, 276: 5; Boghian 1997: 63–74). To these, we can add certain shapes of domestic ceramics, with multiple handles, with inset lugs modelled as alveolated buttons, and plastic representations (Petrescu-Dîmboviţa, Florescu, Florescu 1999: fig. 313: 7–8, 314: 6, 9–10, 316: 1–2, 317–317a, 318: 1–2, 9–10, 331: 1–4, 10, 335: 4–6, 337: 16).

Such influences can be noticed in the case of other Cucuteni A3 settlements, in the sites of Hăbăşeşti (Dumitrescu *et alii* 1954: pl. LXV: 3, LXVII: 4, LXIX: 5–6, LXXII: 1–3, LXXXVI: 2, CIII: 1, 15, CXI: 38, XVI: 1–4, CXVII: 1, CXX: 1–2), Preteşti (Ursulescu, Ignătescu 2003: 150–151, nr. 109, 112–113), Scânteia (Chirica, Mantu, Ţurcanu 1999: 49–nr. 156, 51–nr. 180, 118–nr. 244), Scânteia (Chirica, Mantu, Ţurcanu 1999: 49–nr. 156, 51–nr. 180, 118–nr. 244), Târpeşti (Marinescu-Bîlcu 1981: 169: 9, 170: 8–9, 171: 9, 10, 173: 4, 178: 7), some possibly mediated by bearers of the late phases of the Petreşti culture and Ariuşd aspect (Maxim 1999: 100–119). Furthermore, similar influences have been observed in the Tripolye B I settlements from Nezvisko, Polivanov Jar III, Krasnostavka, Ruseştii Noi, Cuconeştii Vechi etc. (Sorochin 1997: 21, 27, fig. 7: 3, 6–8, 13, 9: 1, 5, 10 (Jora de Sus); 10: 10 (Ruseştii Noi); 14: 7 (Brânzeni IV); 34: 4, 7, 16 (Berezovkaja GES); 37: 5 (Kudrintsy); Burdo 2007: 280–283, fig. 5–8; Popova 2003: 41–42, fig. 21–22, 71, fig. 38).

The relations between the bearers of the Tiszapolgár B/Bodrogkeresztúr culture and those of the Cucuteni-Tripolye culture also continued during the A4/B I/4 stage, visible in the Drăguşeni-Jura aspect either as Lengyel-Polgár-type horn-shaped lugs, some beakers, vessels with tiered bodies, lids, storage pots with multiple handles, short pedestal/support vessels, “textile” painted decoration, the beginning of vessel modelling on textile “supports” and on nettings etc. (Crăşmaru 1977: 16: 1, 17: 1, 21: 7, 33: 7, 10, 35: 2, 37: 1, 48–48; Marinescu-Bîlcu, Bolomey 2000: 184, fig. 90: 1, 91: 2, 103: 4, 6, 104: 1–2, 105: 2, 7, 9, 110: 12, 121: 4, 130: 1, 136: 3, 141: 2, 5, 145: 5, 150: 1, 7, 9). Such influences can be also noticed in the case of the sites from Jura, Duruitoarea Nouă şi Duruitoarea Veche, Cuconeştii Vechi, Putineşti III, Druţa I, Vasilievka (Sorochin 2002: fig. 60: 4, 11, 79: 7–10, 99: 4, 107: 3, 108: 7 (Jura); 62: 6, 63: 5, 65: 4, 73: 3, 74: 2, 5, 75: 3, 6, 77: 1 (Cuconeştii Vechi);

78: 3, 6 (Duruitoarea Nouă); 91: 8, 98: 5, 7 (Putineşti III); 112: 2, 3 (Druţa I); 114: 1 (Duruitoarea Veche); 140: 5, 21 (Vasilievka) or in the settlements of the southern aspect, such as Dumeşti (Alaiba 2007: pl. 21, 23, 26, 47).

In point of fact, the existence of multiple ceramic traditions within the Horodnitsa–Truşeşti–Cuconeştii Vechi and Drăguşeni-Jura cultural aspects reveals, directly or indirectly, the possible presence of communities that were different also from an ethno-cultural point of view, in a contact geographical area, with an important resource for the life of the Neolithic and Eneolithic people–flint, with its different varieties (Prut, Dniester, Volhynian–Podolian, from southern Poland/Krakow, Świętokrzyskie etc.), which was exploited, was the object of short and long distance trade, having being found in Danubian Neolithic and Eneolithic sites, and was the object of intense contentions (Zakościelna 1996: 77–109; Biró 1998: 97–98; Boghian 2008: 39–70; Kovács 2013: 392–394).

Without dismissing eastern influences, we do not exclude the possibility that in these movements of Danubian Eneolithic populations during the second half of the 5th millennium BC have been involved and mixed the late Lengyel III/early Lengyel IV/early Jordanow, early Ludanice, Balaton–Lasinja ethno-cultural elements and TRBK groups (phase A, the Sarnowo groups and the Schleswig–Holstein/Rosenhof phase), which are reflected at the level of the Draguseni–Jura regional aspect, considered to be early elements of the Cucuteni ‘type C’ ceramic ware, but different in terms of shapes and decorations (crater vessels, with or without handles, decorated with linear angular bands and rhomboid motifs, tall frustoconical bowl with straight lips, “festoon” decorations composed of concentric semi-circles accompanied by rows of impressed dots) from the vessels of the Skeljanskaja (Srednii Stog) phase/culture (Marinescu-Bîlcu, Bolomey 2000: fig. 113: 1, 3, 114: 9, 151: 1, 7, 153: 10 (Drăguşeni); Sorochin 2002: fig. 60: 10 (Jura); Dumitrescu 1955: 917–922; Minichreiter, Marković 2011: 333–335; Neustupný 2008: 38–59; Midgley 1992: 47–60, 79–88, fig. 11: 1–4, 21:1, 6, 395–396; Kotova 2006: 74–92, 108–118, 127–131; Kovaleva 2012: 3–11). However, this issue requires an in-depth consideration.

VI.3. The Cucuteni A-B–Tripolye B I-B II culture (43/42 – 40 cent. cal BC)

For the Cucuteni A-B1/Tripolye BI-BII/1 phase, in the north-western part of the cultural complex, we can define the regional aspect enti-

tled Zaleshchik (Vinogradova 1972: 36–56; 1983) or, following the new research, Vorniceni-Zaleshchik. Unfortunately, the archaeological materials originating from the settlements of this phase were published unequally and selectively, and no monographic work is available so far (Boghian 2006: 163–180). This deprives us of the possibility to perform a factological analysis of the western influences during this time period, when it is assumed that final Lengyel III(?) and IV, Tiszapolgár B/Bodrogkeresztúr A communities penetrated the north-eastern Carpathian area, and the Lublin–Volhynia culture emerged, which also triggered changes in the Malice culture (phase II A) (Kaczanowska 2006: 37–52; Kadrow 2006: 71–74; Kadrow, Zakościelna 2000: 208–241; Zakościelna 2006: 77–94; 2007: 289–314; Czekał–Zastawny, Kabaciński, Terberger 2011: 55–88).

It is generally assumed that in the archaeological materials of the Cucuteni A-B/Tripolye B I/B II phase, the western (Lengyel–Polgár) influences are constituted by the presence of semi-spherical shapes (bowl, lids, and quasi-spherical beakers, some frustoconical bowls with multiple handles, reticular (“textile”) and meander decoration, anthropomorphic statuettes with column feet, those with rounded heads or facial features rendered naturalistically, some polished stone tools etc.).

Thus, in the case of the Zaleshchik aspect, a series of discoveries (ceramics and plastics) from the eponymous settlement (Videjko 2000: 14–15, fig. 2–3) and from Polivanov Jar II/1-2 (Popova 2003: fig. 54, 62: 5, 79: 3a–b; Bem 2007: fig. 193) are brought forward. These artefacts display Lengyel–Polgár influences, which are also found, manifested similarly or differently, in the sites from the Middle Dniester belonging to the so-called Solonceni aspect [Orheiul Vechi, Solonceni II/2, Florești–Zagotzerno (Videjko 2000: fig. 5, 6: 1, 9–10, 14), Mârzești, Alexandrovka II, Gura Căinarului (Sorochin 2004: fig. 7: 14 (Mârzești), 8: 2, 7 (Alexandrovka II), 13: 6 (Orheiul Vechi), 15: 1 (Gura Căinarului)] and in the settlements of the Southern Bug and Middle Dnieper area (Klishchiv, Veselyi Kut, Veremye etc.) that are part of the so-called “Eastern Tripolye Culture” (Zaets, Ryzhov 1992: 115–117, 161; Gusev 1995: 91–105; Videjko 2000: 14–25, fig. 6: 2–8, 11–13, 7; Tsvetkov 2000: 111–132, fig. 3, 5; 2012: 225–245; Movsha 2000: 133–141, fig. 1–4), which drive us to the conclusion that we are these are communities with various cultural traditions interacting at different moments and intensities.

The ceramic artefacts of Bodrogkeresztúr influence (Luca 1999: fig. 1–35) were also dis-

covered in the southern area of the Cucuteni A-B phase, as exemplified by the four-lobed vessels painted polychromic with meanders (*cucutenian interpretatio*) from Calu-Piatra Șoimului (Dumitrescu 1979: fig. 125), the ceramic materials with textile decoration from Traian–Dealul Fântânilor [Bem 2007: fig. 73: 1, 91: 4, 109: 3, 110, 158, 172, 196: 2, 203, 252–254 (domestic ceramics), 292 (button handles), 396: 7 (spiralled pendant end)], Rădulenii Vechi (Bem 2007: fig. 181), Huși (Bem 2007: fig. 205: 3), as well as a number of discoveries attributed to the so-called *Horizon of the vessels with button handles (handles with discoid attachments)* (Herculane II/III–Pecica–Cheile Turzii–Hunyadi–Halom) (Bartók 1997a: 155–162; 1997b, 163–172; László, Sztáncsuj 2010: 171–194) etc.

In the same train of ideas, we ask whether the “Cucutenian” crouched inhumations that appear at the level of the A-B phase at Doboșeni, Orheiul Vechi and Traian–Dealul Fântânilor (Dumitrescu 1954: 400–409; 1957: 97–116; 1958: 407–423; Szekely 1957: 149–152; Vinogradova, Beilekchi, Bârnea 1974: 70), are not evidence of the intrusion of western (Bodrogkeresztúr) or north-western (Lublin–Volhynia I) communities (Zakościelna 2010; Enea 2011: 86–92), groups for which necropoleis are well attested.

We discuss only in passing the gold and copper artefacts discovered in the A and A-B phases of the Cucuteni (Tripolye BI and BI-BII) culture, which display a clear western contribution (Tiszapolgár and Bodrogkeresztúr), fashioned from western, north-eastern and eastern Carpathian or even Volhynian sources [axes of various types and sub-variants (Pločnik, Vidra, Ariușd, Drăgușeni), pluri-spiralled bracelets, *en-violon* and “eyeglass” pendants, bead strings etc.], discovered isolated and/or in deposits/treasures, and which we can consider important evidence of the West–East interferences occurring during the Classical and the beginning of the Late Eneolithic (Dumitrescu 1961: 65–93; Makkay 1989; Mareș 2002; 2012; Pavúk 2010: 229–241; Klochko 1995: 235–242; Klochko *et alii* 2000: 168–186; Virág 2003: 129–132; Łęczycycki 2010: 205–240; Enea 2008; 2009).

VI.4. The Cucuteni B–Tripolye BII-CI/γ I culture (40 – 37/36 cent. cal BC)

During this time span, the mobility of the Cucutenian communities was, apparently, greater than during the previous period, having occupied the entire area of the culture at its maximum extent; simultaneously, we can observe the coalescence of the different groups and regional variants of the culture

(Markevich 1981; Gusev 1995: 106–132; Cucuș 1999: 141–156, fig. 23–24, 59: 1, 3, 6; Kruts, Ryzhov 2000: 86–110; Tkachuk, Sevchuk 2007: 14–40), and a more noticeable cultural uniformisation.

To these, we should add certain eastern (steppe) and the western and north-western influences, the latter originating from Epi-Lengyel (Balaton–Lasinja, Ludanice), Bodrogkeresztúr B, post-Polgár/Herculane II/III–Pecica–Cheile Turzii–Hunyadi–halom, Baden and Lublin–Volhynia II (Kalicz 2003: 7–47; Tünde 2009: 101–149; Zakościelna 2006: 77–94).

In Cucuteni B1/Tripolye BII/1 settlements, materials attributed to the *Horizon of the vessels with button handles* (*handles with discoid attachments*) continue to exist (Herculane II/III–Pecica–Cheile Turzii–Hunyadi–Halom) (Bartók 1997a: 155–162; 1997b: 163–172; László, Sztáncuj 2010: 171–194), as observable in certain settlements from the Carpathian piedmont: Văleni and Răucești (Cucuș 1999: fig. 59: 1, 3). At the same time, western imports and influences have been attested for the Tripolye BII–CI sites from the area of the Southern Bug and middle courses of the Dnieper (Epi–Lengyel, Bodrogkeresztúr and TRBK (FBC) II elements: architectural – the raising of large buildings; the scale models of dwellings; the shapes and decorations of some vessels) (Videiko 2000: 24–31, fig. 9–13; Tsvek 2000: 121–132, fig. 6; Movsha 2000: 141–158, fig. 6–9).

In this context, we ask to what degree the appearance of large and very large settlements (“protocities”) in the Tripolye area (Videiko 2002), genuine architectural and social mega-structures, as early as the BI–BII phase, could represent the continuation of the Neolithic and Eneolithic traditions of human habitat founding (complex settlements with *rondels* and *tells*) from the Middle Danube area (Lengyel and Tisza legacies) in a region where such communities settled, in the contact area between “Old Europe” and the steppe communities.

Similarly interesting were the processes of interaction and ethno-cultural fusion from the area of the Upper Dniester, where the cohabitation alongside communities of the Cucutenian variant Șipeniț/Shypintsy (Cucuteni A–B2/B / Tripolye BI–BII/BII) and the Lublin–Volhynia II and III A were arguably strong, as evidenced by the later Koshilovtsy (Koshylivtsy) regional aspect (the final Tripolye phase) (Tkachuk 2000: 69–85), which developed during several stages (I. Werteba II–Bilshivtsy V, the formation period, with strong Brânzei influences and possible Lublin–Volhynia contributions; II. Blyshanka, strong influences

exerted by the late Shipentsy aspect; III. Koshylivtsy–Tabory, simplification of the paining; IV. Kudrynci, Kozyna, continued simplification of the decoration) (Tkachuk 2005: 87–130).

These mixings of populations and traditions seem to be confirmed by the genetic analyses of osteological remains originating from various sites, including Werteba Cave (Sokhatsky, Kovalukh, Videiko 2010: 9–18), but they must be conducted on sample lots that are much more relevant in terms of quantity and quality.

The fusing of the local Cucuteni–Tripolye traditions with other eastern (Yamnaya), north-western (TRBK I/II/Funnel Beaker I/II, Globular Amphora, Lublin–Volhynia III A–B) and western (Baden) influences (Videiko 2008: 289–298) contributed to the individualisation of the post-Cucutenian cultures and cultural groups (Horodiștea–Erbiceni, Brânzei, Gordinești, Vyhvatintsi) and late Tripolye (Koshilovtsy, Trojanov, Gorodsk, Usatovo, Serezlievsk, Lukashchevsk, Sofievka) (Zbenovich 1974; Dergachev 1978; 1980; Dergachev, Manzura 1991; Dumitroaia 2000: 22–126), which developed in the course of multiple phases and which played a paramount role in generating the ethno-cultural and archaeological realities of the Early Bronze Age in the Eastern Carpathian area and afield.

VII. Conclusions

From the analysis of the available archaeological discoveries, according to the proposed indicators, we discover that even though there were western and north-western influences, which were exerted in different manners and at different intensities, from stage to stage, involving even the presence of allogeneous demographic elements, they did not lead to the “Lengyelisation”, “Polgárisation” or “Badenisation” of the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex, which, in its general lines, preserved its cultural individuality. The same situation is also observed in the case of the southern and eastern infiltrations/interferences and influences, manifested in a particular fashion from area to area, and from one period to another.

At the same time, the study of these links and interferences will remain a difficult task, producing most often relative results, at least until new data will be gathered, obviously from new archaeological excavations and by publishing as much as possible of the existing materials, both the older and the recent ones, which will certify the former, as well as by widening the comparison spectrum and by discriminating more accurately between the similarities rooted in common ethno-

cultural traditions of certain communities on the one hand, and the influences received from related entities throughout time, on the other. This is why any attempt to shed light on these interferences, at the current level of research, will yield more questions than provide answers.

The cultural transformations that occurred in time in the Pre-Cucuteni–Cucuteni/Tripolye cultural complex were driven by complex processes of internal development, combined with external influences, including western ones, which in certain stages had catalysed the development of local communities by introducing novel technologies and elements and by fusing traditions, and marked the processes of differentiation of the regional aspects/variants, following the phenomena specific to historical and protohistorical acculturations that run through all the processual stages (sporadic and continued contacts;

colonisations of human groups; conquests; mutual borrowings; cultural interpretations/reinterpretations; syncretism and full cultural transformations, visible in the changes of the ethno–linguistic profiles of the groups that came into contact). Normally, in some areas of the cultural complex, these phenomena were accompanied by periods of continuity and discontinuity, visible to a smaller or larger degree in the archaeological record.

It remains the task for future research to continue the investigation of the West–East links in the Carpathian and Danubian areas, both for the Neolithic and the Eneolithic, as well as for the subsequent periods, which could model and more fully reconstruct the interferences between the civilisations developed by the populations that occupied the near/neighbouring and/or more distant areas.

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