



INSTITUTE OF ARCHEOLOGY
AND ART HISTORY OF ROMANIAN
ACADEMY CLUJ-NAPOCA



UNIVERSITATEA TEHNICĂ
DIN CLUJ-NAPOCA

JAHA
JOURNAL OF ANCIENT HISTORY
AND ARCHAEOLOGY

editura
MEGA

Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology



Scopus[®]



Clarivate
Analytics



Central and Eastern European Online Library

EBSCO



Google
scholar

ERIH PLUS
EUROPEAN REFERENCE INDEX FOR THE
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DOAJ
DIRECTORY OF
OPEN ACCESS
JOURNALS

No. 12-2/2025

CONTENTS

STUDIES

ANCIENT HISTORY

- Vasileios SPANOS**
DELINEATION OF THE EARTH'S BEST SON..... 3
- John Brendan KNIGHT**
POWER, POSITION, AND PRACTICE. MILESIA ELITES ON THE MOVE.....17
- Stephen DeCASIEN**
NAVAL RAM PORTRAYALS IN ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME.....38
- Kublay KOCAK**
THE ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF ANATOLIA IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE: TRADE, AGRICULTURE, AND URBAN CENTERS..... 53

ARCHAEOLOGY

- Yusuf POLAT**
TRACES OF RITUAL: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROCK-CUT SANCTUARY AT ESKİŞEHİR YAZILIKAYA/MIDAS FORTRESS..... 60
- Boaz ZISSU, Amos KLONER**
THE FINAL DWELLING: FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE AND BURIAL CUSTOMS AT HELLENISTIC-PERIOD MARESHA..... 72
- Eugen S. TEODOR, Daniela CRISTEA-STAN**
A CONSTRUCTION FORTLET AT BĂNEASA..... 130

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL

- Cristian Ioan POPA, Alin TODERESCU**
ON PREHISTORIC PATHS AND MOUNTAIN ROUTES: METAL ARTEFACTS FROM THE HILLS AND MOUNTAINS OF CUGIR.....151
- Gayane POGHOSYAN**
SYMBOLIC INTERPRETATION OF THE RITUAL SCENE ON THE GOLD MEDALLION FROM TOPRAK-KALE.....185
- Ünal DEMİRER**
METAL LAMPS FROM ANTALYA MUSEUM..... 190

ARCHAEOOMETRY

- Beatrice CIUTĂ**
FOOD DIET AND RITUAL PRACTICES AT APULUM. A COMPARATIVE ARCHAEOBOTANICAL STUDY.....203

DIGITAL AND VIRTUAL ARCHAEOLOGY

- Radu-Alexandru BRUNCHI, Andrei ASĂNDULESEI, Felix-Adrian TENCARIU**
CUCUTENI UNEARTHED: A 3D JOURNEY THROUGH TIME.....215

NUMISMATICS

- Ergün KARACA, Ömer TATAR**
PROVENANCED LATE CLASSICAL AND HELLENISTIC PERIOD ROYAL COINS FROM EASTERN THRACE..... 225
- Sergiu MATVEEV, Vlad VORNIC, Lazari DERMENJI**
THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ROMAN REPUBLICAN COINS WITHIN THE PRUT-DNISTER AREA. THE CASE OF THE DENARIUS RECENT DISCOVERY IN CAJBA..... 244
- Cristian GĂZDAC, Adrian-Daniel STAN**
"PAY THE TROOPS, FORGET THE REST!" PATTERNS OF HOARDING: MILITARY VS. CIVILIAN ENVIRONMENTS IN THE MID-3RD CENTURY AD..... 251
- Cristian GĂZDAC, Vitalie BĂRCĂ, Cristian FLORESCU**
PARS PRO TOTO IN AN INTERPRETATIO SARMATICA OCCIDENTALIS. THE ROMAN COINS IN SARMATIAN GRAVES FROM THE NECROPOLIS TIMIȘOARA – HLADIK 1 (ROMANIA).....262

IN MEMORIAM

- Csaba SZABÓ**
MANFRED CLAUSS AND THE STUDY OF ROMAN MITHRAS IN THE 21ST CENTURY..... 287

REVIEWS

- Matthew G. MARSH**
Alexios G.C. Savvides. *The Cross and the Sacred Fire: Byzantium and the Sassanids (4th-7th Centuries) – An Overview of Relations between the Eastern Graeco-Roman Empire and Pre-Islamic Persia*, Athens, Hērodotos, 2022, 270p.+xlii, ISBN 978-960-485-422-6..... 291

ISSN 2360 266x
ISSN-L 2360 266x

Design & layout: Francisc Baja



EDITURA MEGA | www.edituramega.ro
e-mail: mega@edituramega.ro

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL

ON PREHISTORIC PATHS AND MOUNTAIN ROUTES: METAL ARTEFACTS FROM THE HILLS AND MOUNTAINS OF CUGIR

Cristian Ioan POPA

“1 Decembrie 1918” University of Alba Iulia, Romania
cristian.popa@uab.ro

Alin TODERESCU

“David Prodan” Cugir National College, Romania
teodorescua@yahoo.com

Abstract: This study examines five prehistoric metal artefacts recently discovered using a metal detector in the pre-mountainous and mountainous areas of Cugir. The oldest piece is a fragmentary flat copper axe discovered at Mugești-Dealul Hodinilor (found at 635 m), associated possibly with the Coțofeni culture. On the Cugir-Piatra Pleșii rock (550 m altitude), a fragment of a socketed axe (debitage) was found, alongside a ceramic fragment, likely of the Noua type. Two bronze artefacts come from Cugir-Vârful Brădetului, a knife (*Griffzungmesser*) and a socketed axe (found at 538 and 631 m altitude respectively). Another bronze knife (*Griffplattenmesser*) was found isolated in Bucuru-Creasta Văiții (630 m). The piece found at the highest altitude is a sickle fragment discovered at Goasele, on Sasu mountain (1060 m), in the vicinity of a spring, not far from a salting area. The bronze artefacts indicate two stages of the Late Bronze Age (Ha A₁ and Ha A₂/Ha B₁, respectively). One of the objectives of the study was to overlay the site of the discovery of the metal pieces over the oldest historical maps. The result was either the discovery of their presence on ancient mountain ridges or on hard-to-reach crests, which helps to trace prehistoric pathways that were previously unknown. The authors' approach opens the subject of defining the concepts of prehistoric paths and plains, where archaeology is still deficient.

Keywords: *Eneolithic and Bronze Age, bronze axes, bronze knife, bronze sickle, paths of Prehistory.*

INTRODUCTION

As the main direction of knowledge of human wanderings and activities in the high lands, it is (still) with difficulty that mountain archaeology is developing in Romania, despite all the admirable efforts of various colleagues¹. The explanations are quite simple. Besides the scarcity of certain projects, which, inevitably, given the difficulties of accessibility, can only focus on micro-regions, we also note a certain profile of the archaeologist², who is typically not much inclined to conduct surveys in an environment that is not particularly promising. However, recently, an opportunity that was hard to anticipate a few decades ago has arisen thanks to amateurs with metal detectors. Used legally, modern equipment is painting a new archaeological map of Romania, from Prehistory to the recent era, upon which vast blank

¹ See the issues summarized in BOBÎNĂ 2015; DRAGOMAN *et alii* 2018 and the studies in PELISIAK/NOWAK/ASTALOȘ 2018; SÎRBU/ȘTEFAN/ȘTEFAN 2022; GOGĂLTAN/DEMJÉN 2025.

² CRANDELL/POPA 2015; POPA 2020.

spots are gradually being filled with an increasing number of points. The main gain is clearly provided by the significantly greater number of historical conclusions that can be drawn from the geography of the areas where the artefacts originate. Ultimately, these conclusions can help reconstruct the dynamics of human migrations, activities, or settlements in the regions of hills and mountains. A new chapter is undoubtedly opening for Romanian archaeology.

The high hill area, on the other hand, has received much greater attention, with individual or team projects, which the Carpathian archaeology has never lacked. If we were to narrow the discussion to the southwestern region of Transylvania, we would notice that most specialists have dedicated their research to the Apuseni Mountains and very little to the Southern Carpathians, whether in terms of investigating settlements and cemeteries or exploring



Fig. 1. Location of the discovery of the prehistoric knife from Bucuru-Creasta Văiții (processing on Google Earth).

resources. We also note that they cover, with few exceptions, the Bronze Age³.

The pretext for the present discussion is provided by several recently discovered metal artifacts found with a metal detector in the high area of Cugir, located in the northern foothills of the Șurianu Mountains⁴. Cugir, which does not limit its territory to the city itself, extends to over 350 square kilometres to include the hamlets of the highlands, hills, and mountains (Boçitura, Bucuru, Călene, Fețe, Goasele, Mugești) which occupy the majority of its borders⁵. Although all the finds belong, from an administrative point of view, to the city of Cugir, it is correct, where appropriate, to record them in connection with those mountain hamlets, so little known in the archaeological or historical literature.

³ See, for example, ANDRIȚOIU 1992; CIUGUDEAN 1996; RIȘCUȚA/POPA/FERENCZ 2009; CIUGUDEAN 2011; POPA 2012; GERLING/CIUGUDEAN 2013; QUINN/CIUGUDEAN 2018; QUINN/CIUGUDEAN/BECK 2020; BECK/CIUGUDEAN/QUINN 2021; RIȘCUȚA/MARC/BARBU/BĂRBAT 2023.

⁴ The artefacts were discovered by Prof. Alin Toderescu, eng. Mihai Rus and eng. Andrei Borsa at Cugir, during 2025.

⁵ BADEA/GEORGESCU 1993, 7.

1. BUCURU-CREASTA VĂIȚII

Between the Bucurei Valley and the Frasin Valley, on the left side of the Râul Mare⁶, there is a rocky ridge with a narrow edge and steep slope that rises leading up to the highest peak of the area (*Vârful Bucuru*, 961 m) (Fig. 1; 12/2–3). On the lower half of this ridge, at an approximate elevation of 615 m, under a rocky area, a prehistoric bronze knife was discovered with a metal detector (Fig. 11/1–2; 12/1).

The bronze knife, with a short and flat handle, belongs to the *Griffplattenmesser* category. The blade of the knife is slightly arched, wider towards the handle, with the tip bevelled at an angle, rounded at the bottom, where a perforation was made for fastening in a handle. Dimensions: length = 10.5 cm; maximum width = 1.75 cm; maximum thickness = 0.3 cm; weight = 17.28 g (Fig. 11/3; 14).

The shape of the knife can be found as early as Bz D, in the Ulmi hoard, in the Risești-Băleni series in Moldova, in a Noua culture settlement⁷. The system of securing the blade in the socket through a tongue with a single perforation is most commonly encountered in Ha A, in the Cincu-Suseni series, at Caransebeș⁸, Moldova Veche I⁹ and Șpălnaca II¹⁰, where we also find a flat-tipped knife¹¹. A model somewhat closer to the Bucuru example is known from the great hoard at Uioara de Sus¹², where we find a similar fragment, the fixing rivet being still conserved in the perforation¹³. In the Mureș Valley, similar tips appear on knives from the Ha A-period hoard at Rapoltu Mare¹⁴. Moreover, an identical knife fragment comes from Cugir, specifically from the Cugir

⁶ In a straight line, the place of discovery is 4 km upstream from the confluence of the Râul Mare with the Râul Mic, the valleys that form the Cugir River.

⁷ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 77, Pl. 88/8.

⁸ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 87, Pl. 125/7.

⁹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 99, Pl. 164/8, 12.

¹⁰ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 108, Pl. 200/3.

¹¹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 108, Pl. 200/10.

¹² PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, Pl. 213/17, 22.

¹³ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, Pl. 213/24.

¹⁴ BASSA 1968, 38, no. 19–20.

II hoard, located in the Gugului Valley¹⁵. In the typology established by J. Říhovský, analogies to the Cugir artefact can be observed in the Central European area, in the Blučina type (Haidach)¹⁶.

2. CUGIR-PIATRA PLEȘII

Piatra Pleșii represents one of the last elevations of the ridges descending from the mountains towards the lowland area, gradually fading into the border with the villages of Vinerea and Săliște. The elevation, with its altitude of 549 m, dominates the right bank of the Cugir River (between Pleșii Valley and Ghișagului Valley), being distinguished in the surrounding landscape by its bare appearance surmounted by limestone cliffs¹⁷.



Fig. 2. Location of the finds of the socketed axe at Cugir-Piatra Pleșii (processing on Google Earth).

The fragment of a prehistoric bronze piece was found on the southern summit of *Piatra Pleșii*, which forms a very tight loop that branches northwards (Fig. 2) and follows with the peak *Cioaca Bălințeasa* (on the left bank of the Ghișagului Valley). The object appeared at a shallow depth of approx. 15 cm (Fig. 9/2) and wears a dark green patina, well preserved only on the sides. The artefact, with an ovoid section, shows traces of being moulded in a pattern, visible on the narrow edges. Viewed frontally, a broadening is observed, suggesting continuation with a blade. These clues lead us to believe that the artefact represents a remnant of the blade of a bronze socketed axe. The slightly arched profile and the deformed surface of the artefact suggest that we most likely have before us a scrap resulting from an unsuccessful casting. Dimensions: height = 2.9 cm; width = 2.9 cm; thickness = 1.29 cm; weight = 49 g (Fig. 10/1–2).

The Cugir-Piatra Pleșii site has been known for three decades due to the Coțofeni III discoveries that we mentioned on the summit, but also on *Pleașa Mare*, a northern branch, and on *Cioaca Bălințeasa*, a small height branching also from

Piatra Pleșii, alongside mounds of possible archaeological interest on one of the branches¹⁸. Traces of Bronze Age habitation were only vaguely suggested by the ceramic fragment attributed to the Early Bronze on *Cioaca Bălințeasa*¹⁹. In such a situation, an Evolved Bronze presence is novel.

A few metres away from the bronze piece, a roughly worked ceramic fragment was also found, belonging to a sack-shaped vessel with a straight rim, beneath which a horizontally applied, alveolate band and a detached gripping projection were present (Fig. 10/3). Judging by its aspect, shape, and decorative elements, the fragment dates to the Late Bronze Age. The nearest settlement with similar ceramic material to that found on *Piatra Pleșii* is the one from Cugir-Gura Luncilor-ob.2, with Noua type elements²⁰, located on the first terrace of the Cugir River, not far from

the confluence with the Ghișagului Valley, a stream flowing east of the limestone elevation *Piatra Pleșii*.

3. CUGIR-VÂRFUL BRĂDETULUI

On the course of Râul Mic, more than 2 km upstream from its confluence with the Râul Mare, on the left side, rises the elevation called *Vârful Brădetului*. It presents itself as a long ridge that descends from the mountain, its northeastern slopes watered by Râul Mic. To the north, the hill is bordered by the Brădetului Valley, and to the south by the Prihodiștii Valley. Access to the summit can be made from the valley by climbing the ridge, on this imaginary route being discovered, in two different places, two prehistoric metal artefacts, along a distance of just over 300 m (Fig. 3).

¹⁵ POPA 2011, 252, Pl. 130/23.

¹⁶ ŘÍHOVSKÝ 1972, 22–23, Pl. 5/56.

¹⁷ POPA 2011, 100, Fig. 25, Pl. 33.

¹⁸ POPA 2011, 99–100, 103, 105, 147–148, 154, 686, Pl. 58–60, 61/1–6, 8, 67/1–4.

¹⁹ POPA 1998, 48, Pl. I/2; POPA 2011, 156, 678–679, Pl. 71/2.

²⁰ POPA 2011, 226, 263, 684, Pl. 115.



Fig. 3. Location of prehistoric bronze finds from Cugir-Vârful Brădetului (processing on Google Earth).

3.1. Knife (*Griffzungmesser*)

In the upper third of the ascent path from the valley, towards the first small peak of the ridge, at an altitude of 529 m (45°48'08"N 23°21'52"E), a bronze knife was discovered. It lies at a shallow depth of about 0.15 m from the current treading level, under the roots of a tree, in the yellow forest humus (Fig. 15).

The knife belongs to the category of those with a tongue at the handle (*Griffzungmesser*). Although preserved fragmentarily, missing a small portion of the tip and about half of the handle, the knife preserves elements from all its component parts. The blade is relatively straight, but with a slight arching visible at the tip and edge level. The thickened edge shows a ridge with an angular-rounded profile. The blade has serrations resulting from use. The blade widens where it comes into contact with the handle, but the artefact narrows again through the tongue of the handle. The latter has wide grooves on both sides, in the middle of which were made rivet holes, two such holes being preserved. The handle is bent sideways. The surface of the knife preserves a dark green, well-kept patina. Dimensions: length = 16 cm; blade length = 9.7 cm; handle length = 6.3 cm; maximum width = 1.67 cm; maximum thickness = 0.3 cm; weight = 22.9 g (Fig. 16).

Transylvanian analogies date back to Ha A (Gușterița II²¹, Șpálnaca II²², Uioara de Sus²³), but in the Crișanea area also appear in Ha B₁ (Tăuteu²⁴). In the typology established by J. Říhovský the knife has its analogies in BZ D-ha A, in variant A of the Baierdorf type, similar to a specimen with a wider blade from Stein Im Jauntal²⁵, but the shape continues in the Malhostovice type, with the blade more supple, but more arched, the handle of which is identical (shape, section, types of rivet-perforations, grooves), known from the

Luleč and Marefy discoveries²⁶. A Baierdorf knife, variant A, was discovered in complex 187 at the Turdaș site (Hunedoara County), not far from Cugir. The artefact appeared in a Late Bronze-Age settlement, with complexes belonging to the Cugir-Aiud and Susani-Simeria groups, at the contact area between the two cultural environments. A sample from this settlement indicates a 2-sigma calibrated dating in the range 1193–1016 calBC²⁷.

3.2. Transylvanian type socketed axe

At a distance of approx. 300 m on the ascent from the place where the knife was found, on the same ridge, at an altitude of 613 m (45°47'59"N 23°21'45"E) a bronze socketed axe was discovered. The place lies immediately to the north of the rather prominent, mound-looking *Vârful Brădetului*, on a relatively smooth spot. The yellow soil deposited on and inside the socketed axe indicates its deposition in the yellow forest humus (Fig. 17).

The socketed axe has a slender body, arched outward at the two extremities. The edge of the mouth is flared, and under it are made two horizontal ribs, in line with the ear. Beneath the ribs, at the level of the blade, two curved grooves deepen towards the edges, becoming deeper towards the area of junction between the two halves. The widened edge, due to use, has the corners missing. The artefact has a well-preserved patina of a dark green colour. Dimensions: total length = 9.8 cm; maximum width of the cutting edge = 3.35 cm; diameter of the clamping mouth, on the outside = 2.6 cm; diameter of the clamping mouth, on the inside = 1.98 cm; depth of the clamping hole = 5 cm; weight = 100 g (Fig. 18).

The Cugir socketed axe can be classified, in the typology established by Mircea Rusu²⁸, in variant A of Transylvanian socketed axes. Its analogies, especially in relation to the decoration with horizontal ribs beneath the rim, can be traced

²¹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 95, Pl. 154/13.

²² PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 108, Pl. 200/4, 11.

²³ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 115, Pl. 243/19, 23, 26.

²⁴ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 137, Pl. 330/11.

²⁵ ŘÍHOVSKÝ 1972, 24–25, Pl. 6/71.

²⁶ ŘÍHOVSKÝ 1972, 29–30, Pl. 8/88, 90.

²⁷ CIUGUDEAN *et alii* 2019, 98–99, 103, Pl. XIV/4.

²⁸ RUSU 1966, 24–25, Fig. 1.

in the composition of hoards from Ha A₁ (Aluniș²⁹, Rapoltu Mare³⁰, Suseni³¹, Șpălnaca II³², Tășad³³, Uioara de Sus³⁴) or isolated discoveries (Măgura-Toplița³⁵), in hoards from the Jupalnic-Turia series, in Ha A₂ (Dezmir³⁶), and in Ha B₁, such as in hoards from Cornești³⁷, Jucu de Mijloc³⁸, Moigrad I³⁹, Groșii Țibleșului⁴⁰, Pânăde I⁴¹, Săcueni⁴², Șpălnaca I⁴³, and Crasna Vișeuului⁴⁴.

Two socketed axes decorated under the mouth with horizontal ribs were found fortuitously at Blandiana, near Cugirul Valley⁴⁵. A similar specimen comes even from Cugir, unfortunately without knowing its exact discovery location, with the best analogies resulting from the association of shape and other ornaments in Ha B₁⁴⁶. A discussion on the socketed axes decorated with three horizontal ribs under the rim, combined with vertical ribs, starting from a socketed axe found in the Gușterița II hoard, revealed their presence beginning with the Cincu-Suseni hoards (Ha A₁) and ending with the Sângiorgiu de Pădure – Fizeșu Gherlii series (Ha B₂). However, their highest prevalence was shown to be primarily in Ha B₁, in the Moigrad-Tăuteu series⁴⁷.

²⁹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 82, Pl. 114/2.

³⁰ BASSA 1968, 32, Fig. 2; PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 103, Pl. 180/3.

³¹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 107, Pl. 188/4–5.

³² PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 108, Pl. 194/2, 6, 18–19; 195/2.

³³ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 112, Pl. 213/2.

³⁴ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 115, Pl. 217/13; 218/3; 219/15.

³⁵ ANDRIȚOIU 1992, 123, Pl. 71/9.

³⁶ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 122, Pl. 288/13–14.

³⁷ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 128, Pl. 305/3, 5.

³⁸ KACSÓ 1994, 6, 9, Fig. 2/1.

³⁹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 131, Pl. 310/8.

⁴⁰ KACSÓ 1994, 5–6, Fig. 1/1–3.

⁴¹ POPA 2022, 28–31, Pl. II. Another socketed axe from Pânăde, found isolated “Sub Furci”, has a similar decoration (CIUGUDEAN 1999, 98, Fig. 2/1).

⁴² PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 133, Pl. 315/7.

⁴³ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977, 135, Pl. 325/7–9; 326/1–3.

⁴⁴ KACSÓ 1996, 250–251, Fig. 2–3.

⁴⁵ ALDEA/CIUGUDEAN 1988, 73–74, Pl. II/3; III/2.

⁴⁶ CIUGUDEAN/LUCA 1997, 51, Fig. 1/6; POPA 2011, 271, Pl. 134/1.

⁴⁷ CIUGUDEAN/LUCA/GEORGESCU 2008, 14, 16, Pl. I/2.

4. GOASELE-SASU

The Goasele hamlet is located on the ridge between the two rivers that form the Cugir River. Compared to this main ridge, it is located eccentrically, dominating the branch that descends towards the west, leading to the Râul Mare, about 9 km upstream from the confluence with the Râul Mic. At the edge of the ridge leading to the hamlet of Boșitura, the source of the Obrejdii Valley is located, one of the tributaries of the Sasului Valley, the stream providing access from the confluence with the Râul Mare (45°50'54"N 23°25'09"E). At approx. 200 m from the strong spring of the Obrejdii Valley on the left side, along the slope descending to the creek, not far from its bank, a bronze piece was found isolated. The place is at an altitude of about 1056 m (Fig. 4; 19).

The artefact was found at a depth of 20–25 cm, under the

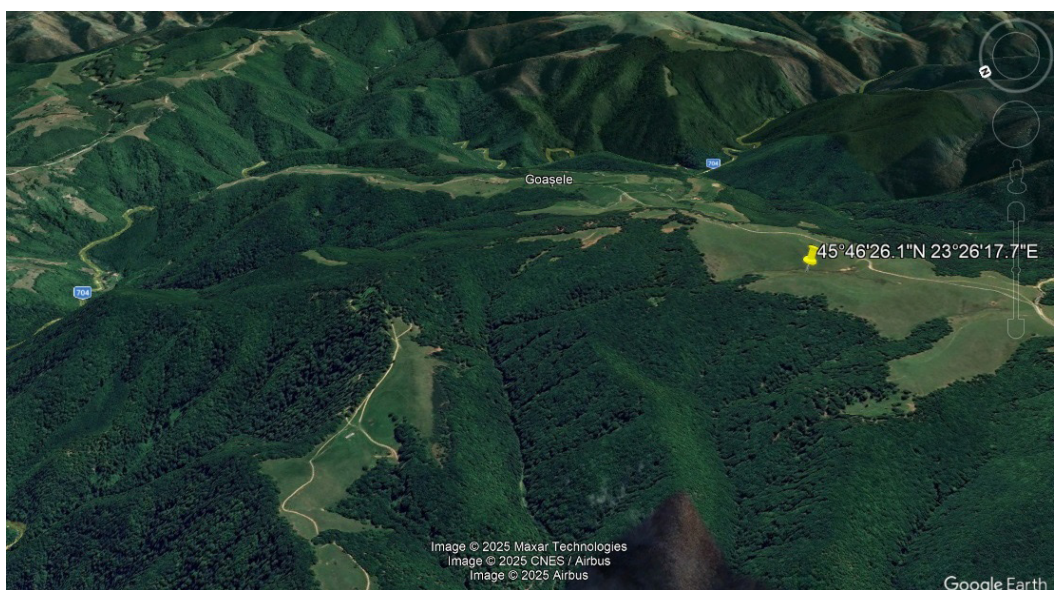


Fig. 4. Goasele – the site of the discovery of the bronze sickle (1) and detail with the archaeological landscape of the area (2) – Google Earth images.

soil. It is a fragmentary sickle with tongue at the handle, of which only a small part of the blade is preserved, and the handle decorated with three simple ribs that also continue on the blade, parallel to the edges. Between the blade and the handle, the casting sprue of the piece is preserved. A patina

of green colour, relatively well preserved, is retained on its surface. The sickle fragment is deformed from prehistory in the blade area. Dimensions: total length = 4.9 cm; handle length = 1.2–2.6 cm; blade width = 2.6 cm; blade length = 2–2.5 cm; weight = 26.83 g (Fig. 20).

The piece belongs to a common type of sickle, wide-spread at the end of the Bronze Age in the Carpathian region⁴⁸, as evidenced by discoveries from Band⁴⁹, Bogdan-Vodă⁵⁰, Dipșa⁵¹, Gușterița II⁵², Șpălnaca II⁵³, and Uioara de Sus⁵⁴. Mircea Petrescu-Dâmbovița grouped these sickles in Uioara 3A variants, typical for Transylvania, belonging to the so-called *Jungbronzezeit*⁵⁵. The fragmentary state of the piece does not exclude its belonging to a different variant, with the ribs crossing the blade obliquely, as in the case of sickles from the Dipșa hoard⁵⁶.

5. MUGEȘTI-DEALUL HODINILOR

The Mugești hamlet lies on the right side of the Râul Mare, south of the Călene hamlet. Parallel to the Grușerii Valley, from *Dealul Hodinilor*, whose peak is located near

lower half, that of the blade, broken. It is roughly rectangular in shape, with short sides rounded at the corners. The piece belongs to the type with slightly raised, asymmetrical edges, one of the edges being more pronounced. The surface is covered with light green oxides, leaving visible, especially on the edges, the yellowish-reddish metal from which it was manufactured. Dimensions: length = 5.62 cm; maximum width = 3.75 cm; width of the upper part = 2.6 cm; height of the edges = 0.9/1.2 cm; weight = 101 g (Fig. 7).

In the typology set out by Al. Vulpe, the Mugești axe belongs to its *flat axes* (*Flachbeile*), and it can be assigned to the *Petrești variant*, specific to the end of the Eneolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age⁵⁷. The manufacturing of our piece from copper shifts the discussion regarding its typological and chronological classification towards the earliest examples, significantly simplifying the strictly typological analysis. First and foremost, the type specimen from Petrești should be mentioned here, especially due to its geographical proximity along the Sebeș Valley. The Mugești⁵⁸ artefact shares many characteristics with the aforementioned axe, both in shape and in the asymmetry of the edges, which, in



Fig. 5. Mugești-Dealul Hodinilor – the site of the discovery of the Eneolithic copper axe.

the houses of the hamlet, a long ridge branching off to the northwest, fading into the confluence area of the valley with the Râul Mare. The last summit of this ridge, now completely wooded, dominates the confluence area. Below this peak, at an elevation of 618 metres, on the side facing the Râul Mare (Fig. 5–6), in the forest humus at a depth of 0.20 metres, a fragment of a flat copper axe was found.

The copper axe is flat, preserved fragmentarily, with the

the case of the Petrești piece, is absent on one side. At the southeastern foothills of the Apuseni Mountains, in Cetea, another axe with similar features is known, at least in terms of its slightly raised edges, a detail also noted by Al. Vulpe who faced difficulties when classifying it, cautiously placing it among flat axes with a broad blade and raised edges⁵⁹; Ioan Andrițoiu, however, assigned it to the Bronze Age and associated it with the Wietenberg culture⁶⁰. Unfortunately, both axes invoked as analogies, both the one from Petrești

⁴⁸ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978.

⁴⁹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, Taf. 80B/10.

⁵⁰ KACSÓ 2010, 20, Pl. 8/7.

⁵¹ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, Taf. 96/82.

⁵² PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, Taf. 108/131–134.

⁵³ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, Taf. 146/232.

⁵⁴ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, Taf. 175/342; 177/367, 369.

⁵⁵ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, 33–34, Taf. 5B/790, 792.

⁵⁶ PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978, Taf. 95/68–69; 96/89.

⁵⁷ See VULPE 1975, 60–61.

⁵⁸ VULPE 1975, 60, Taf. 34/298. Being kept at the “Vasile Pârvan” Institute of Archaeology in Bucharest, it should originate from the systematic research conducted by the brothers Dumitru and Ion Berciu; unfortunately, no further data is available, although it would have been important to correlate them with the stratigraphy of the eponymous site at *Groapa Galbenă*.

⁵⁹ VULPE 1975, 61, Taf. 34/302.

⁶⁰ ANDRIȚOIU 1992, 77, Pl. 71/12.

and the one from Cetea, have no known contexts. The Călnic axe, which we re-illustrated two decades ago, also provides a close analogy in terms of profile, with only slightly raised edges. However, the two specimens differ in the width of the axe, with the one from Mugești being significantly wider, while the one from Călnic has a slender body and a noticeably sharper upper part. But perhaps we are wrong when we consider the latter more evolved and date it to the end of the Early Bronze Age⁶¹. South of the Carpathians, in northern Oltenia was found the blade of an axe of the same type, in the levels Glina III from Căzănești (Vâlcea County)⁶², and in the same cultural environment, at Glina was discovered a pattern for casting flat axes with a wide blade⁶³. In north-western Romania, a specimen of this type, dated to the transition period to the Bronze Age, was found at Sarasău (Maramureș County)⁶⁴.

Shifting the discussion towards cultural attribution, it must be noted that the association of this type with the Coțofeni⁶⁵ culture has been questioned. However, the connection between flat axes and the Coțofeni cultural environment remains highly probable. It is true, on the other hand, that the absence of stratified specimens in Coțofeni settlements prevents indisputable correlations. A flat axe⁶⁶ was discovered in the Coțofeni Bocșa Montană–Colțan settlement, even if of a different type, and other similar axes were discovered both at Șincai⁶⁷ and at Călnic, two large Coțofeni settlements that could be linked to this cultural environment⁶⁸. Two other specimens, from accidental finds in northwestern Bulgaria, at Vidbol and Gradeșnica, have also been discussed as possibly being used by the late Coțofeni communities south of the Danube⁶⁹. The moulds for casting such pieces are presently known only in settlements datable to the Early Bronze Age: at Leliceni, in the cultural environment of Jigodin⁷⁰ and at Glina (București)⁷¹. Opinions regarding the functionality of the piece oscillate between them being considered a tool and a weapon; the first variant is worth considering⁷².

Axes with raised edges will develop from flat axes with wide edges, which will evolve as a type specific to Central Europe, where they appear in high numbers compared to the South-East European area⁷³. Al. Vulpe admits that the use of axes with raised edges also by Coțofeni communities is not excluded⁷⁴. A specimen from the settlement Bretea Mureșeană–Măgura Sârbilor, made of copper, with raised edges and a widened blade, could be attributed to the Coțofeni culture. The axe, however, was found by chance on the surface of the settlement. The presence here of both Coțofeni-settlement traces and those definitely of the Early

Bronze Age, raises the issue of the exact chronological and cultural affiliation. In turn, the *Randleistenbeil*-type axe has been attributed either to the Coțofeni culture⁷⁵ or to the Early Bronze Age⁷⁶. Typologically, the piece from Bretea Mureșeană resembles a similar copy from Alba Iulia classified by I. Andrițoiu among the Wietenberg discoveries⁷⁷. Since it is a fragmentary and improperly published artefact, I intentionally left out the discovery from Cuptoare–Piatra Ilișovii. Only the blade of the axe, of trapezoidal shape, has been preserved, but we do not know the section and profile of the tool, so a typological classification can hardly be attempted, though H. Ciugudean included the axe fragment among the *Flachbeile* type⁷⁸. The discovery is extremely important in the context of axe discoveries in the Coțofeni cultural area, as it comes from a piece of systematic research and the piece belongs to the Coțofeni III phase⁷⁹.

The recent publications of *Randleistenbeil*-type copper axes from Sălicea (Cluj county)⁸⁰ and Petrești (Alba county)⁸¹ brought into question the possible belonging of the artefacts, such as the axe from Tohani (Prahova county)⁸², to the Coțofeni culture, and raised the discussion of finding such axes in an environment with tumuli, contemporary to the Coțofeni culture, such as those found in the burial mounds from Ploiești, Aricești, and Păulești⁸³. It remains to be seen in the future how this topic of late copper metallurgy will be clarified.

DISCUSSIONS: A POSSIBLE MODEL FOR IDENTIFYING PREHISTORIC PATHS AND MOUNTAIN TRAILS

Following the presentation, analysis, and classification of the metal pieces, some assessments are needed regarding the significance of their presence in the Cugir highlands, and finally, some cultural remarks

From an archaeological perspective, we must acknowledge that some of the locations where the bronze artefacts were discovered would not have been visited or considered for archaeological field research. In our case, these are the points at Bucuru–Creasta Văiții and Cugir–Vârful Brădetului. At most, we would have traversed them, but not to stop there, but rather to reach the areas where we would expect to find traces of habitation or burial mounds. Therefore, what does the field archaeologist omit in field surveys in alpine areas? The access paths to the heights. Since they are not scattered with prehistoric ceramic discoveries, the most common and visible on the surface of some access ridges, we often ignore them for their archaeological value. That is precisely why their research with the metal detector has proven

⁶¹ POPA 1999–2001, 79, Pl. VIII/1.

⁶² PETRE 1976, 11, Fig. 3/3.

⁶³ VULPE 1975, 62, Taf. 35/321A.

⁶⁴ VULPE 1975, 62; KACSÓ 1977, 135, 150, Fig. 1/7.

⁶⁵ CIUGUDEAN 2000, 35–36; CIUGUDEAN 2002, 98.

⁶⁶ GOGĂLTAN 1999–2000, 230–231, Pl. 1/5.

⁶⁷ LAZĂR 1995, 250, Pl. LVIII/11.

⁶⁸ CIUGUDEAN 2000, 35.

⁶⁹ ALEXANDROV 1990, 21, Pl. 1/1–2.

⁷⁰ VULPE 1974, 246.

⁷¹ VULPE 1974, 246.

⁷² See ANDRIȚOIU 1993, 95.

⁷³ VULPE 1974, 246, 250.

⁷⁴ VULPE 2001, 231.

⁷⁵ ANDRIȚOIU 1993, 95; ROTEA 1993, 66, 84, Pl. VI/17; WITTENBERGER/ROTEA 2015, 21.

⁷⁶ ANDRIȚOIU 1992, 77, Pl. 68/1; CIUGUDEAN 1996, 40, 122, Fig. 1/4; 87/4.

⁷⁷ ANDRIȚOIU 1993, 95, Pl. VII/13, artefact with a more elongated body.

⁷⁸ CIUGUDEAN 2002, 98, Pl. 1/6.

⁷⁹ KALMAR/BAGOZKI/LAZAROVICI 1987, 68; KALMAR-MAXIM 1993, 13.

⁸⁰ WITTENBERGER/ROTEA 2015, 20–21, Pl. I.

⁸¹ CIUTĂ/TOTOIANU 2020, 65–72, fig. 6.

⁸² PREDA-BĂLĂNICĂ *et alii* 2019, 323–326, Pl. 2/1.

⁸³ FRÎNCULEASA *et alii* 2023, 1–64, Fig. 3/A.

essential in capturing what we can now call “missing links” in the knowledge chain of bridges to high-altitude human habitats.

The paths and access roads to the plateau areas⁸⁴, the oldest and most travelled routes in the high areas with rugged terrain, the last true “highways” of the mountains, may only be suspected by archaeologists, historians, and even ethnologists, in the absence of concrete material evidence. Thus, most specialists either discussed only the latest mountain plateaus to have been circulated and engrained in the archaic tradition of the communities or turned to the oldest military maps, in the case of Transylvania from the middle of the 18th century, on which these roads are marked. However, even modern cartographic sources do not mark all human paths, access routes that often overlap with those of wild animals. Therefore, the paths of prehistory are, with certainty, extremely difficult to identify, reconstruct, and map. In the future, this will be a challenge, especially for alpine archaeology.

A possible case of using a prehistoric access route, which is also indicated on the Josephine map from the 18th century, is that of *Dealul Hodinilor* in Mugești. From the confluence area between the valleys that form the Cugir River, the road ascended to the right of the Râul Mare, which, after crossing the Valea Grușerii, continued on the mentioned hill and joined the main plateau in the Mugești hamlet area. We can see that the secondary route ascends *Dealul Hodinilor* exactly on the area where the copper flat axe was discovered, which can be dated to the end of the Eneolithic / beginning of the Bronze Age. After the climb to the summit of *Dealul Hodinilor*, the road on this ridge makes a junction with the main plateau, which starts from the Mureș Valley, through *Dumbravă*, parallel to the Cugirului Valley and continues into the mountain, through *Măgurele* and *Recea*. The plateau also served as a connection point via the path that passed over the peak of *Drăgana Hill* for those who frequented the Coțofeni settlements at Cugir-*Cioaca Bălințeasa*, Cugir-*Piatra Pleșii*, and *Călene-Cioaca lui Fornea*. Therefore, the copper axe from Mugești illustrates a possible prehistoric route, overlapped in modern times by the route recorded by the Josephine map.

The proximity to a mountain plateau is also found in the case of the sickle found in Goasele, on *Sasu* Mountain. The bronze piece appeared in the area of the Sasului Valley springs, near one of the secondary roads marked on the Josephine map from the 18th century. It is important to note that this access path did not descend towards the Râul Mare, probably because of the steep slopes, but was winding away from the main plateau that came from the *Vârful Bucuru* and climbed the mountain to *Răchita* and *Moliviș*. This detail suggests that the access of the person who transported the

fragmentary sickle from Goasele was from the mentioned mountain plateau towards the branch now called *Sasu*. Two components of the surrounding archaeological landscape also draw attention in the end. The first relates to the proximity of the sickle to a spring with a rich and constant flow, today arranged for man and animals. The second is related to the toponym of the nearby slope, beyond the ridge: *Sărătura* (*Salted*), a toponym recorded in the 18th century. If we take into account the two details, namely the presence of a spring with high flow and a salt zone, we may also have the answer to the searches of the one who ventured into the mountain at over 1000 m altitude.

Naturally, the discovery of an isolated artefact, also in a fragmentary state, raises questions of interpretation. The sickle’s multifunctionality – as well as its intended uses – becomes evident when contextualized within the Roman world: harvesting cereals (*falx mesoria*), cutting hay (*falx foenaria*), reaping reeds and rushes, or pruning orchards (*falx scirpicula*, *falx silvatica*). Beyond its utilitarian role, the sickle could also carry a sacred function, the most well-known instance being its ritual use by Celtic druids in cutting mistletoe with a golden sickle⁸⁵. Although a depositional interpretation – potentially linked to nearby resource-rich zones – cannot be entirely dismissed, we are not inclined to pursue this hypothesis. Rather, we see the fragmentary tool as being used in the state in which it was preserved. A piece of metal with a small handle and a short blade was able to serve prehistoric man for many purposes. The bending of the blade also indicates the use of the sickle even after it had been fragmented. On the other hand, knowing the beliefs and superstitions of the local people 150 years ago can also inspire us in finding other interpretations. In 1885, Cugir inhabitants answered B. P. Hasdeu’s questionnaire that in order to cure animals of worms, they threatened three times a week the plant called “boz” (dwarf elder) while holding a sickle in their hands. The remedy would have come after three days, by healing the animals⁸⁶, thus reflecting the apotropaic function of the sickle in archaic beliefs.

The entrance from the Râul Mare to Sasului Valley, through the once famous recreational area called *Mistrețu*, leads us towards *Creasta Văiții*. Climbing the ridge is difficult: the slope is steep. It is the type of path that is followed only in search of a shortcut or for procuring food. However, after exiting the ridge area, the *Bucuru* Peak follows, from which a mountain path starts that connects to the one leading to *Sasu*, where the bronze sickle was discovered. This ridge, today rich in blueberry bushes, could be crossed either for picking blueberries or for picking mushrooms. In both cases, the use of a knife – such as the one recently discovered – would have been practical, and here too we lean towards a profane rather than a ritual function⁸⁷.

A similar situation is reflected in the context of the archaeological landscape of the two bronzes found at Cugir-*Vârful Brădetului*, on the Râul Mic course. The altitudes where the discoveries were made vary between 540 m (the knife) and 633 m (the socketed axe). The distribution of bronzes on the

⁸⁴ By ridge/plateau areas (*plai*) we understand the meaning given to the term by Lucia Apolzan: “In the notion of plateau/*plai*, we include complex elements related to geographical form, its economic functionality, and demographic persistence. Plateau ridges (*plaiuri*) can only emerge in platform areas, where they represent: a) a surface in the shape of a platform ridge with a gently undulating slope ascending toward the mountain; b) a complex of axes of these platforms, crest lines used for transport in pastoral activities, especially local grazing, but also as routes leading to high-altitude pastures. Through these networks, the platforms have been continuously exploited and inhabited” (APOLZAN 1981, 463).

⁸⁵ RUSU 1981, 7–8; see and LAZĂR 2023, 23.

⁸⁶ POPA/TODERESCU 2023, 121, 211.

⁸⁷ For the sacred function of knives, see a discussion in LAZĂR 2023, 24–25.

ridge of this peak, as well as the proximity to the Râul Mare, indicates the use of a path that, this time, climbs from this valley, which is still quite wide at this point. If we continue the imaginary climb, the route reaches the *Vârful Prihodiște*, at 740 m elevation. Certainly, in this case, we are between two mountain paths: the western one, on the watershed between the Cugir and Romos basins, which climbs from *Câmpul Pâinii*, and the well-known mountain road *Prihodiște*, which starts its ascent from the Prihodiște Valley and continues on the watershed, through *Tomnățicel*, up to *Vârful Plăvaia*, from where it bifurcates through *Prislop* towards the Anineș basin, and can continue through the mountains leading to *Godeanu*⁸⁸. On this route we discover two Romanian toponyms of Slavic origin that refer to an old plateau road (*Prihodiște*) and a pass (*Prislop*)⁸⁹.

The Cugir-*Piatra Pleșii* discovery was located at approx. 555 m altitude. The presence of the bronze piece, a fragment from a discarded socketed axe, seems to represent, at least on this side of the hills, a terminus of a path that connected the rocky ridge with the floodplain of the Cugir River. As mentioned above, we suspect with high probability a direct connection with the Bronze Age settlement (Noua culture) on the terrace called *Gura Luncilor-ob. 2* (approx. 280 m altitude). We suspect that the connecting artery between these points was given by the course of Valea Pleșii, whose springs are under *Piatra Pleșii*, and its discharge into the Cugir River. Upon crossing the terrace, the valley passes just past the Bronze Age site of *Gura Luncilor-ob. 2*. It is also the only proposal we make for reconstructing a route through the lowland. We believe that the course of the valley significantly increases the probability of such a route, greatly reducing the risk of such a methodological approach.

A decade ago, we made the effort to position the Coțofeni artifacts found in the pre-mountainous and mountainous areas of the Sebeș Valley along certain routes used in prehistory, either illustrating old ridges⁹⁰ (such as *Plaiul Lomanului*) or secondary paths. Another prehistoric ridge likely functioned during the Bronze Age in the Cibin Mountains, at Orlat (Sibiu County). There, on a ridge, between the 1220–1400 elevations, several gold loop rings, attributed to the Wietenberg culture, were discovered, but also finds from other eras (Roman and medieval)⁹¹. Mapping some of the known discoveries, with the overlay of the metal artefacts found using metal detectors, which have been found in very

large numbers in recent years, may in the future provide a relevant basis for discussion for drawing up “maps” of the prehistory of the Carpathian Mountains.

CONCLUSIONS

Chronologically, the metal pieces presented illustrate two great stages in the wandering of people of prehistory in the hills and mountains of Cugir. The first stage corresponds to the end of the Eneolithic/beginning of the Bronze Age, and the second stage corresponds to the end of the Bronze Age. The most common altitudes of finds are between 529 and 618 m. The mountain exception proper is at 1056 m.

Culturally, the first period giving rise to metal objects in the highland area can be identified with the final phase of the Coțofeni culture. From the initial observations regarding the discoveries of this culture in the Cugir Valley region, made three decades ago, it was highlighted that the first “conquest” of the mountain was carried out by these highly dynamic communities, particularly at the end of the Coțofeni II phase, but especially during the Coțofeni III phase⁹². The copper axe from Mugești was found in the highlands. The other Transylvanian discoveries of such artifacts, regardless of their more or less developed typologies discussed earlier, were also found at lower elevations: Bretea Mureșeană-*Măgura Sârbilor*, *Sălicea-Făgetul Sălicii*, and *Petrești-Dealul Netotu*. The presence of the axe in relation to an old road that ascends from Valea Sebeșului on a mountain trail was also mentioned by the authors of the publication of the artefact from *Petrești*⁹³. Logically, we must consider the same scenario in the case presented by us, which is why we have advocated for the existence of a prehistoric route through *Dealul Hodinilor*.

The Bucuru bronze knife was found on a ridge going towards the high area, frequented in prehistory even before the Bronze Age. Not far away is the most prominent peak of the area, *Vârful Bucuru* (961 m), below which is found *Cioaca lui Bolândău*, where we identified a few decades ago a Coțofeni culture habitation⁹⁴. On the same ridge, at a lower elevation of 739 metres, traces of the Coțofeni and Wietenberg cultures have been found at Cugir-*Chiciura*⁹⁵. These findings are further proof that the mountain was not only transited in prehistory, but that also temporary dwellings were probably arranged here. On Mount *Donea*⁹⁶, located on the same ridge towards the mountain, the discovery of a serpentine chisel, possibly contemporary with the aforementioned prehistoric finds, is reported in the old specialized literature. Our analysis of the Sebeș Valley, located to the east of the Cugir hydrological basin, has led to similar findings, with settlement hearths located in the valley, seasonal dwellings in the hillside area, followed towards the mountain by a zone for raw material procurement, documented exclusively through

⁸⁸ This refers to the mountain path across Mount *Bătrâna* (see APOLZAN 1977, Pl. III). By understanding these mountainous routes, which open toward the alpine zone, we can better interpret certain somewhat isolated prehistoric finds, such as those from *Grădiștea de Munte* (Hunedoara County), which belong to the final Eneolithic and steppe traditions (e.g., a quadrilobed stone macehead – SCHROLLER 1933, 65, 76, Taf. 54/11; GOGĂLTAN/IGNAT 2011, 13, 24, 26, Fig. 3/2). Regarding the so-called “early Hallstatt” ceramic discoveries on the *Titianu* massif (*Titiana*), at an altitude of 1727 m – described as such by S. A. Luca, likely based solely on the chromatic traces of firing (LUCA 2005, 75), it must be noted that even after reviewing the sources cited by the author, such a conclusion is not supported. Even if there are doubts concerning their classification as Dacian, this dating is not entirely ruled out either (DAICOVICIU/DAICOVICIU/ FERENCZI/VLASSA 1962, 473; DAICOVICIU 1964, 122; DAICOVICIU/ FERENCZI/ GLODARIU 1989, 216).

⁸⁹ POPA 2011, 478, 627–628, 635, 644.

⁹⁰ POPA 2012, 124, 128–129, 189–190, 208–209, Fig. 18, 26.

⁹¹ MUNTEANU 2016, 35; MUNTEANU 2018, 129–132; POPA/PLANTOS 2024, 94.

⁹² POPA 1995, 57; POPA 1997–1998, 71; POPA 2011, 152.

⁹³ CIUTĂ/TOTOIANU 2020, 66–67, Fig. 2–5.

⁹⁴ POPA 1997–1998, 52–55, 64, 71, Pl. I / 4; II; III/5–8; POPA 2004, 89; POPA 2011, 44, 99, 103–104, 148–149, 152, 666, 676, Fig. 33/2; Pl. 51; 52/5–8; 152/2.

⁹⁵ POPA 1995, 41, Fig. 2; POPA 2011, 148, 169, 174, 678, Fig. 33; Pl. 86/1.

⁹⁶ TÉGLAS 1902, 17; POPA 2011, 41, 654, 666, 683, Fig. 52/1.

stone axes, and an advanced area for hunting evidenced by a piece intended for hunting⁹⁷.

Road junctions were also formed in the mountainous areas. On the peaks of the mountains human groups from different valleys could have met, arriving from great distances, and here they could trade in finished or raw products. Also places of worship could function in these high areas, frequented on the occasion of certain holidays, by the lowland or mountain communities⁹⁸. Certainly, these scenarios suggested by the activities of modern humans, who synthesized many of these practices in the old mountain fairs⁹⁹, can primarily be seen as a source of inspiration for market meetings, games, gatherings of young people, competitions, and the resolution of disputes, rather than necessarily as an identical model of group or individual behaviour for pre-historic times. Such fairs were held in ancient times on the high mountains of Cugir – *Bătrâna*, *Vârful lui Pătru* – bringing together people from across wide areas (the Sebeș, Sibiu, Platforma Luncanilor, and northern Oltenia regions)¹⁰⁰. However, we should consider the existence of similar needs, a landscape archaeologically comparable to that of today (barely altered by modernity), and an identical potential in terms of sources of raw materials (wood for construction, wood for fuel, pastures, berries, medicinal plants, mushrooms, etc.).

The map of the bronze socketed axes is supplemented by two artefacts, both decorated, found by chance, without us knowing their place of origin. The first of them, dated in Ha A is of Transylvanian type, with a double zigzag decoration¹⁰¹ (Fig. 21/A, 2). The second socketed axe is more recent and has been dated to Ha B₁ (Fig. 21/1).

If we add to the metal artifacts from the hilly and mountainous area the hoards discovered at Cugir, along the Gugului Valley and Dăii Valley, we get an image of a widespread distribution and use of metal objects during the Bronze Age, at least in the territory of today's Cugir town. The gold pieces from the Cugir II hoard also illustrate an accumulation component for traders and elites, which does not exclude the capitalization of local resources in the region¹⁰². On the other hand, the inclusion of the Gugului Valley hoard (Cugir II) among those defined as "workshop hoards"¹⁰³, as well as the existence of the stone mould for casting Transylvanian-type socketed axes discovered at *Vinerea-Centru*, in the plain area of Cugir Valley, indicates that such pieces were made right on the spot¹⁰⁴. In an area rich in wood, the isolated presence or in warehouses justifies itself. If we were to discuss strictly the newly discovered pieces, regarding their usefulness, the socketed axe from *Cugir-Vârful Brădetului* can be included towards the upper limit of those considered by M. Rusu as "miniature" socketed axes (weighing between 60 and 100 g),

used for carving, which would be used in the carving and finishing of wood¹⁰⁵.

Statistics of bronzes in the Cugir area illustrate the following situation: two hoards (one hoard of adornments – *Cugir-Valea Dăii* – and a hoard-workshop – *Cugir-Valea Gugului*), four isolated finds (*Cugir-Piatra Pleșii*, and *Vârful Brădetului*, *Bucuru*, and *Goasele*), and a mould for casting socketed axes (*Vinerea-Centru*), to which we added two isolated bronzes, without a specified place of discovery.

From a cultural point of view, bronze accumulations or isolated pieces belong to the cultural groups that define the evolution of the Late Bronze Age in this southwestern part of Transylvania. The bracelets forming the hoard at *Cugir-Valea Dăii* can be related to a later phase of the Wietenberg culture, mixed with elements of eastern and western foreign influences, as documented in the settlement on *Dealul Cetății*. Meanwhile, the hoard at *Cugir-Valea Gugului* and the fragmentary sickle from *Șibot*¹⁰⁶ can be attributed to the Cugir-Band group, being associated with specific pottery¹⁰⁷. Through analogies, some of the recently found isolated pieces can be dated to the Ha A period and most likely attributed also to the Cugir-Band group. A good example is the knife from *Cugir-Vârful Brădetului*, with analogies in an artefact from the *Turdaș* settlement; a sample taken here indicates a dating calibrated with 2-sigma in the range 1193–1016 calBC¹⁰⁸. A different cultural affiliation can be invoked in the case of the socketed axe found at Cugir, on *Vârful Brădetului*, which most likely belongs to the Ha B₁ period and, accordingly, it must be attributed to the Gáva culture. The scarcity of Gáva-type finds in the Cugir area is well-known; the only certain habitation is at *Vinerea-Capul Satului*¹⁰⁹.

The chances of not only discovering the metal artifacts presented by us but also conducting a survey in those specific areas would be slim for an archaeologist, even one with exceptional intuition, professionally trained to identify sites, especially in a landscape that is much more accessible. The few who climbed the mountain from prehistory to the Middle Ages, on less-travelled paths, have their few seekers also in the archaeological guild. Moreover, it may not even be wise to generate an archaeological "invasion" of the mountain. For now.

REFERENCES

- ALDEA/CIUGUDEAN 1988
Aldea, I. Al./Ciugudean, H., Obiecte din cupru și bronz recent descoperite în județul Alba, *Apulum* XXV, 71–82.
- ALEXANDROV 1990
Alexandrov, Al., *Cultura Coșofeni în Bulgaria* (PhD thesis, coord. D. Berciu, București, 1990 (mss.)).
- ANDRIȚOIU 1970
Andrițoiu, I., Două culturi din colecția Muzeului din Deva, *SCIV* 21, 4, 633–637.
- 105 RUSU 1981, 8.
106 This refers to the tip of a sickle found within the perimeter of a settlement at the *La Baltă*-ob. 2, which we dated to the Bz D-Ha A interval (POPA 2011, 259, Fig. 29).
107 POPA 2011, 260, 264–265.
108 CIUGUDEAN *et alii* 2019, 98–99, 103, Pl. XIV/4.
109 POPA 2011, 268, 271, Pl. 135/1–2, 4.

⁹⁷ POPA 2012, 190, 203–205.

⁹⁸ POPA 2012, 208.

⁹⁹ See APOLZAN 1981, 478–489.

¹⁰⁰ APOLZAN 1977, 492, 506.

¹⁰¹ ROSKA 1942a, 40, no. 98; ROSKA 1942b, 144, no. 332; ANDRIȚOIU 1970, 633–637; ANDRIȚOIU 1993, Pl. I, no. 19; POPA/TOTOIANU 2010, 218, Fig. 12; POPA 2011, 241, Pl. 134/2.

¹⁰² CIUGUDEAN 2010, 27–36, Fig. 2, 4–5, Pl. I–II; POPA 2011, 251–252, 258–259, Pl. 127–128.

¹⁰³ IMC 1974, 10; CIUGUDEAN/ALDEA 1997, 120; POPA 2011, 260.

¹⁰⁴ POPA 2011, 260.

- ANDRIȚOIU 1992
Andrițoiu, I., *Civilizația tracilor din epoca bronzului în sud-vestul Transilvaniei*, Bibliotheca Thracologica II (București: Institutul Român de Tracologie).
- ANDRIȚOIU 1993
Andrițoiu, I., Metalurgia bronzului în sud-vestul Transilvaniei. Epoca bronzului (I), *Analele Banatului* II, 85–117.
- APOLZAN 1977
Apolzan, L., Platforma Luncanilor. Aspecte ale vechimii și continuității așezărilor, *Sargetia* XIII, 487–508.
- APOLZAN 1981
Apolzan, L., Aspecte etnografice de pe platforma Luncanilor – complex cu caracter unitar, *Sargetia* XV, 435–491.
- BADEA/GEORGESCU 1993
Badea, G./Georgescu, C., Caracteristici fizico-geografice ale teritoriului orașului Cugir. In: Szapponyos, E./Voicu, A. (ed.), *Cugir–500* (Sibiu: Polsib), 7–21.
- BASSA 1968
Bassa, B., Depozitul de obiecte de bronz de la Rapoltu, *Sargetia* V, 31–47.
- BECK/CIUGUDEAN/QUINN 2021
Beck, J./Ciugudean, H./Quinn, C. P., Bioarchaeology and Mountain Landscapes in Transylvania's Golden Quadrangle, *Bioarchaeology International* 4, 2, 89–110.
- BOBÎNĂ 2015
Bobină, B. Mountain Archaeology in Romania: The Status of Research, *Terra Sebus* 7, 149–164.
- CIUGUDEAN 1996
Ciugudean, H. *Epoca timpurie a bronzului în centrul și sud-vestul Transilvaniei*, Bibliotheca Thracologica XIII (București: Institutul Român de Tracologie).
- CIUGUDEAN 1999
Ciugudean, H., Depozite și obiecte izolate de bronz descoperite pe teritoriul județului Alba, *Apulum* XXXVI, p. 97–106.
- CIUGUDEAN 2000
Ciugudean, H., *Eneoliticul final în Transilvania și Banat: cultura Coțofeni*, Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Banatica XXVI (Timișoara: Mirton).
- CIUGUDEAN 2002
Ciugudean, H., The Copper Metallurgy in the Coțofeni Culture (Transylvania and Banat), *Apulum* XXXIX, 95–106.
- CIUGUDEAN 2010
Ciugudean, H., Piese de aur din depozitul Cugir I și relația lor cu sistemele metrologice din Bronzul târziu, *Apulum* XLVII, 23–40.
- CIUGUDEAN 2011
Ciugudean, H., *Mounds and Mountains: Burial Rituals in Early Bronze Age Transylvania*. In: Berecki, S./Németh, R. E./Rezi, B. (ed.), *Bronze age rites and rituals in the Carpathian Basin: Proceedings of the international colloquium from Târgu Mureș, 8 – 10 October 2010* (Târgu Mureș: Mega), 21–57.
- CIUGUDEAN/ALDEA 1997
Ciugudean, H./Aldea, I. Al., *Depozitul de la Cugir și raporturile sale cu manifestările culturale ale bronzului târziu transilvănean*. In: Ciugudean, H., *Cercetări privind epoca bronzului și prima vârstă a fierului în Transilvania*, Biblioteca Musei Apulensis VII (Alba Iulia: Altip), 99–134.
- CIUGUDEAN/LUCA 1997
Ciugudean, H./Luca, S. A., Noi descoperiri de obiecte din cupru și bronz în județele Alba și Sibiu, *Apulum* XXXIV, 49–54.
- CIUGUDEAN/LUCA/GEORGESCU 2008
Ciugudean, H./Luca, S.A./Georgescu, A., *Depozite de bronzuri preistorice din colecția Brukenenthal / Prehistoric Bronze Hoards in the Brukenenthal Collection (I)* (Sibiu: Altip).
- CIUGUDEAN *et alii* 2019
Ciugudean, H./Uhner, C./Quinn, C./Bălan, G./Oargă O. M./Bolog, A. C./Balteș, G., După 25 de ani: grupul Cugir-Band în lumina noilor cercetări, *Apulum* LVI, 89–130.
- CIUTĂ/TOTOIANU 2020
Ciută, M.-M./Totoianu, R., A Flanged-Axe discovered at Petrești-Dealul Netotu (Alba County) and Some Remarques about the Detectorists, *Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology* 7.3, 64–73.
- CRANDELL/POPA 2015
Crandell, O. N./Popa, C. I., The Chert Quarrying and Processing Industry at the Piatra Tomii Site, Romania, *Journal of Lithic Studies* 2/1, 45–63.
- DAICOVICIU 1964
Daicoviciu, H., Addenda la „așezările dacice din Munții Orăștiei”, *Acta Musei Napocensis* I, 111–124.
- DAICOVICIU/DAICOVICIU/FERENCZI/VLASSA 1962
Daicoviciu, C./Daicoviciu, H./Ferenczi Ș./Vlassa N., Șantierul arheologic Grădiștea Muncelului, *Materiale și cercetări arheologice*, VIII, 463–476.
- DAICOVICIU/FERENCZI/GLODARIU 1989
Daicoviciu, H./Ferenczi, Șt./Glodariu, I., *Cetăți și așezări dacice din sud-vestul Transilvaniei, I* (București: Științifică și Enciclopedică).
- DRAGOMAN *et alii* 2018
Dragoman, R. A., Pop, Al. D., Bobină, B., Ardeleanu, M., Șuteu, C., Astaloș, C., *An Archaeology of the Mountains in Maramureș, Romania: the beginning of a Long-Term Project*. In: Pelisiak, A., Nowak, M., Astaloș, C. (ed.), *People in the Mountains. Current Approaches to the Archaeology of Mountainous Landscapes* (Oxford: Archaeopress Archaeology), 61–78.
- KACSÓ 1977
Kacsó, C., Contribuții la cunoașterea metalurgiei cuprului și bronzului în nord-vestul României, *Apulum* XV, 131–154.
- KACSÓ 1994
Kacsó, C., Frühhallstattzeitliche Bronzefunde in Transsilvanien, *Ephemeris Napocensis* IV, 5–15.
- KACSÓ 1996
Kacsó, C., *Der Bronzefund von Crasna Vișeuului*. In: Kovács, T. (ed.), *Studien zur Metallindustrie im Karpatenbecken und den benachbarten Regionen. Festschrift für Amália Mozsolics zum 85. Geburtstag* (Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum), 249–263.
- KACSÓ 2010
Kacsó, C., Noi date cu privire la depozitul de bronzuri de la Bogdan Vodă (I), *Crisia* XL, 13–45.
- KALMAR/BAGOZKI/LAZAROVICI 1987
Kalmar, Z./Bagozki, Cl./Lazarovici, Gh., Cercetări etno-arheologice și sondaje în Munții Banatului (1986), *Banatica* 9, 65–85.
- KALMAR-MAXIM 1993
Kalmar-Maxim, Z., Prelucrarea datelor arheologice de la Piatra Ilișoara cu ajutorul calculatorului, *Ziridava* XVIII, 11–20.
- FRÎNCULEASA *et alii* 2023
Frînculeasa, A./Preda-Bălănică, B./Negrea, O./Garvăn, D./Soficar, A.-D./Simalcsik, A./Cristea-Stan, D./Sava, G./Mănăilescu, C., Securi plate cu margini ridicate în morminte tumulare preistorice cercetate în nordul Munteniei (date arheologice și investigații științifice), *Ziridava, Studia Archaeologica* 37, 1–64.
- GERLING/CIUGUDEAN 2013
Gerling, C./Ciugudean, H., *Insights into the Transylvanian Early Bronze Age Using Strontium and Oxygen Isotope Analyses: A Pilot Study*. In: Heyd, V./Kulcsár, G./Szeverényi, V. (ed.), *Transitions to the Bronze Age. Interregional Interaction and Socio-Cultural Change in the Third Millennium BC Carpathian*

- Basin and Neighbouring Regions*, *Archaeolingua* 30 (Budapest: Archaeolingua Kiadó), 181–202.
- GOGÂLTAN 1999–2000
Gogâltan, Fl., Über die Frühbronzezeitlichen Beile und Äxte im Banat, *Analele Banatului*, s. n. VII–VIII, 229–251.
- GOGÂLTAN/IGNAT 2011
Gogâltan, F./Ignat, A., Transilvania și spațiul Nord-Pontic. Primele contacte (cca 4500–3500 a. Chr.), *Tyragetia*, s.n. V [XX], no. 1, 7–38.
- GOGÂLTAN/DEMJÉN 2025
Gogâltan, F./Demjén, A., Pentru o arheologie a epocii moderne. In: Bărbulescu, C./Cârja, I./Eppel, M./Fehér, A./Popovici, V./Sima, A. V./Turcu, L. (ed.), *Națiuni, naționalism și perspective interetnice în Transilvania. In honorem Sorin Mitu la 60 de ani* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega Publishing House), 167–179.
- IMC 1974
Întreprinderea mecanică Cugir la 175-a aniversare 1799–1974 (Sibiu: Polsib).
- LAZĂR 1995
Lazăr, V., *Repertoriul arheologic al județului Mureș* (Târgu Mureș: Casa de Editură “Mureș”).
- LAZĂR 2023
Lazăr, S., Tools from the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age in Oltenia, between Practical and Symbolic use, *Anuarul Institutului de Cercetări Socio-Umane „C.S. Nicolăescu-Plopșor* XXIV, 21–35.
- LUCA 2005
Luca, S. A., *Repertoriul arheologic al județului Hunedoara*, Bibliotheca Septemcastrensis XIV (Alba Iulia: Altip).
- MUNTEANU 2016
Munteanu, C. I., Contribuții la repertoriul arheologic al județului Sibiu (II), *Acta Terrae Fogarasiensis* V, 127–138.
- MUNTEANU 2018
Munteanu, C. I., *Contribuții la repertoriul arheologic al județului Sibiu* (Sibiu: Armanis).
- PELISIAK/NOWAK/ASTALOȘ 2018
Pelisiak, A., Nowak, M., Astaloș, C. (ed.), *People in the Mountains. Current Approaches to the Archaeology of Mountainous Landscapes* (Oxford: Archaeopress Archaeology).
- PETRE 1976
Petre, Gh., Începuturile epocii bronzului în nord-estul Olteniei, *Buridava* II, 7–33.
- PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1977
Petrescu-Dîmbovița, M., *Depozitele de bronzuri din Romania* (București: Editura Academiei R.S.R.).
- PETRESCU-DÎMBOVIȚA 1978
Petrescu-Dîmbovița, M., *Die Sicheln in Rumänien*, PBF XVIII/1 (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung).
- POPA 1995
Popa, C. I., Contribuții la cunoașterea perioadei de tranziție de la eneolitic la epoca bronzului pe valea Cugirului (jud. Alba), *Apulum* XXXII, 33–58.
- POPA 1997–1998
Popa, C. I., Contribuții la cunoașterea perioadei de tranziție spre epoca bronzului în bazinul Cugirului (II), *Sargetia* XXVII/1, 51–101.
- POPA 1998
Popa, C. I., Noi descoperiri aparținând bronzului timpuriu în bazinul mijlociu al Mureșului și câteva considerații privind etapa finală a acestei perioade în Transilvania, *Apulum* XXV, 47–85.
- POPA 1999–2001
Popa, C. I., Materiale aparținând bronzului timpuriu și debutului bronzului mijlociu din colecțiile Muzeului „Ioan Raica”-Sebeș, *Sargetia* XXVIII–XXX, 79–98.
- POPA 2004
Popa, C. I., *Descoperiri dacice pe Valea Cugirului*. In: Pescaru, A./Ferencz, I. V. (ed.), *Daco-geții. 80 de ani de cercetări arheologice sistematice la cetățile dacice din Munții Orăștiei* (Deva: Muzeul Civilizației Dacice și Romane), 83–166.
- POPA 2011
Popa, C. I., *Valea Cugirului din preistorie până în zorii epocii moderne. Monumenta Archaeologica et Historica* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega).
- POPA 2012
Popa, C. I., *Contribuții la preistoria Văii Sebeșului. Locuiri Coțofeni din zona deluroasă* (Cluj-Napoca – Alba Iulia: Mega – Altip).
- POPA 2020
Popa, C. I., The Coțofeni Discoveries on the Jidovu Mountain (Zlatna): Domestic or Ritual Context?, *Ephemeris Napocensis* XXX, 217–244.
- POPA 2022
Popa, C. I., Two Bronze Socketed Axes Discovered in Alba and their Contexts, *Sargetia*, s.n. XIII, 27–42.
- POPA/PLANTOS 2024
Popa, C. I./Plantos, C., *O incursiune în patrimoniul arheologic al comunei Gura Râului, județul Sibiu (II)*, *Transilvania* 9, 84–96.
- POPA/TODERESCU 2023
Popa, C. I./Toderescu, A. P., *Cugirul la 1885. Răspunsurile la chestionarul lui B. P. Hasdeu* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega).
- POPA/TOTOIANU 2010
Popa, C. I./Totoianu, R., *Aspecte ale epocii bronzului în Transilvania (între vechile și noile cercetări)*, Biblioteca Muzei Sabesiensis I (Sebeș: Altip).
- PREDA-BĂLĂNICĂ et alii 2019
Preda-Bălănică, B./Frînculeasa, A./Garvăn, D./Constantinescu, B./Stan, D., *Unfortuitous Accidents – Prehistoric metal artefacts recently detected in Northern Muntenia (Prahova County, Romania)*. In: Sirbu, V./Comșa, Al./Hortopan, D. (ed.), *Digging in the Past of Old Europe: Studies in Honor of Cristian Schuster at his 60th Anniversary* (Târgu Jiu – Brăila: Istros), 321–339.
- RIȘCUȚA/POPA/FERENCZ 2009
Rișcuța, N. C./Popa, C. I./Ferencz, I. V., Cercetări arheologice la Balșa și Mada (jud. Hunedoara) și câteva observații privind necropolele tumulare din Munții Apuseni, *Apulum* XLVI, 257–286.
- RIȘCUȚA/MARC/BARBU/BĂRBAT 2023
Rișcuța, N. C./Marc, A. T./Barbu, I. L./Bărbat, I. Al., Lumea privită de sus. Locuirea Coțofeni de la Șesuri-Dealul Păstaia (com. București, jud. Hunedoara), *Acta Musei Porolisenssis* XLV, p. 147–168.
- ROSKA 1942a
Roska, M., *Erdély régészeti repertórium, I. Öskor, Thesaurus Antiquitatum Transilvanicarum. I, Praehistorica* (Cluj: Nagy Jenő és Fia könyvny).
- ROSKA 1942b
Roska, M., *A rézcsákányok, Közlemények az Erdély Nemzeti Múzeum Érem-és régiségtárából* II/1, 15–77.
- ROTEA 1993
Rotea, M., Contribuții privind bronzul timpuriu în centrul Transilvaniei, *Thraco-Dacica* XIV/1–2, 65–86.
- RUSU 1981
Rusu, M., *Rolul funcțional și tipologia uneltelor din epoca bronzului și Hallstatt*. In: Bucur, C. et alii: *Studii și comunicări de istorie a civilizației populare din România* 2 (Sibiu: Academia RSR), 7–12.
- QUINN/CIUGUDEAN 2018
Quinn, C. P./Ciugudean, H., Settlement placement and socio-economic priorities: Dynamic landscapes in Bronze Age Transylvania, *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 19, 936–940.

QUINN/CIUGUDEAN/BECK 2020

Quinn, C. P./Ciugudean, H., Beck, J., The politics of placing the dead in Bronze Age Transylvania, in *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 34, 1–14.

ŘÍHOVSKÝ 1972

Říhovský, J. *Die Messer in Mähren und dem Ostalpengebiet*, PBF VII/1 (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung).

RUSU 1966

Rusu, M., Depozitul de bronzuri de la Balșa, *Sargetia* IV, 17–40.

SCHROLLER 1933

Schroller, H., *Die Stein- und Kupferzeit Siebenbürgens* (Berlin: de Gruyter).

SÎRBU/ȘTEFAN/ȘTEFAN 2022

Sîrbu, V./Ștefan, D./Ștefan, M.-M. (ed.), *Hidden Landscapes. The Lost Roads, Borders and Battlefields of the South-Eastern Carpathians* (Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun).

TÉGLÁS 1902

Téglás, G., *Hunyadvármegye története* (Budapest: Athenaeum Irodalmi és Nyomdai Rt.).

VULPE 1974

Vulpe, Al., Probleme actuale privind metalurgia aramei și a bronzului în epoca bronzului în România, *Revista de Istorie* 27/2, 243–255.

VULPE 1975

Vulpe, A., *Die Äxte und Beile in Rumänien* II, Prähistorische Bronzefunde IX/5 (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung).

VULPE 2001

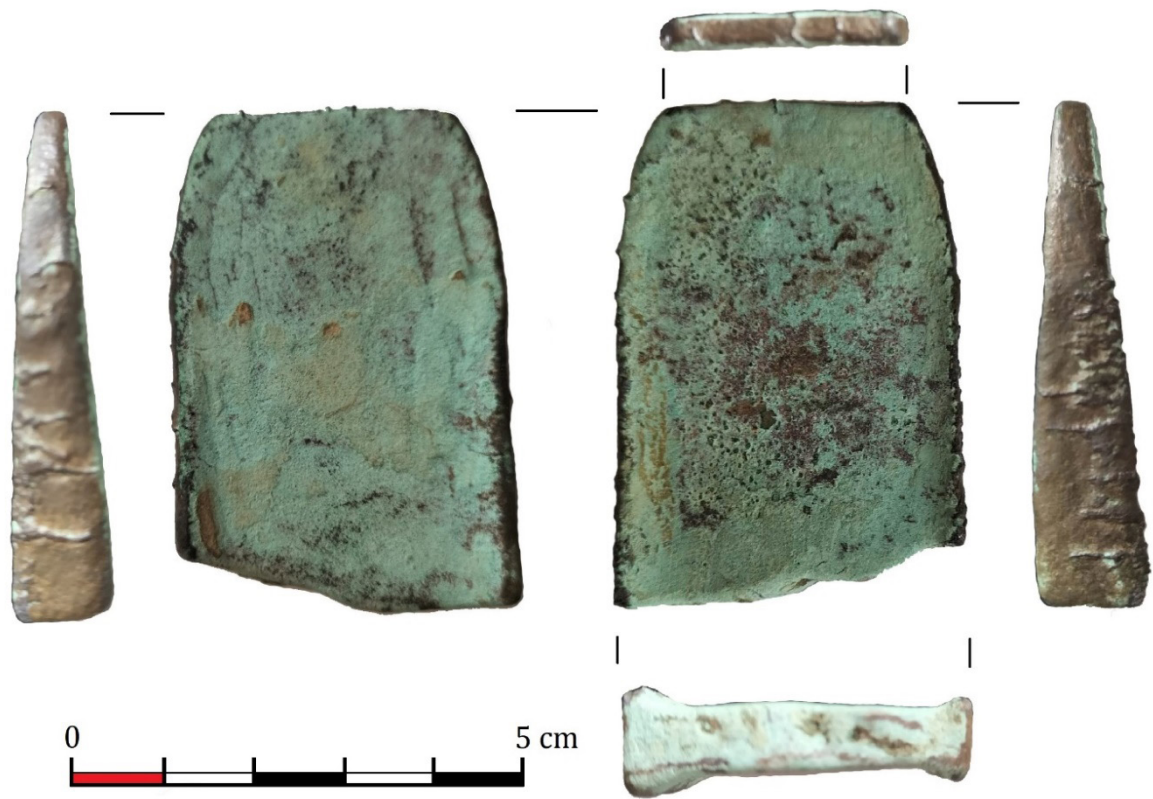
Vulpe, Al., *Epoca bronzului. Bronzul timpuriu*. In: Petrescu-Dîmbovița, M./Vulpe, Al., *Istoria Românilor* I (București: Enciclopedică): 225–237.

WITTENBERGER/ROTEA 2015

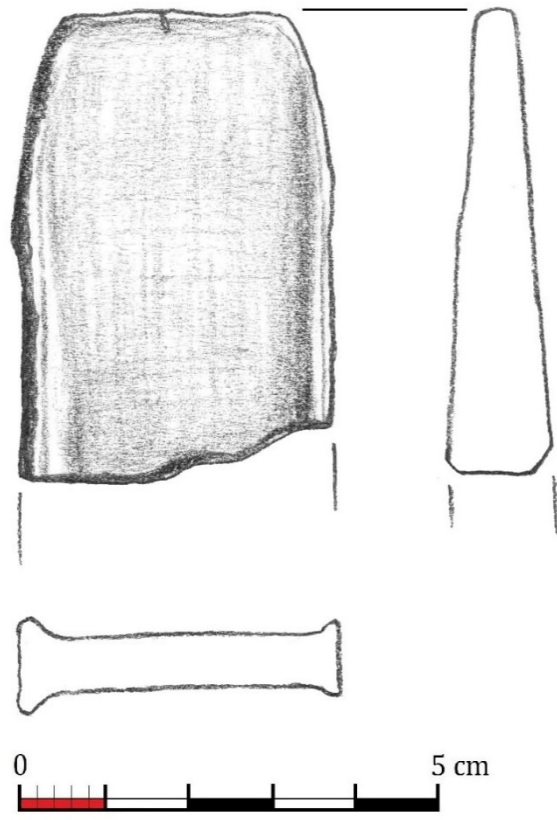
Wittenberger, M./Rotea, M., Un topor cu marginile ridicate descoperit la Sălicea, jud. Cluj, *Revista Bistriței* XXIX, 20–22.



Fig. 6. Mugești-Dealul Hodinilor – view from the Călene Monastery (1), in the foreground, the location where the Eneolithic copper axe was discovered (2) (photo: Alin Toderescu)



1



2

Fig. 7. Copper axe with raised edges from Mugești-Dealul Hodinilor (photo and drawing: C. I. Popa).

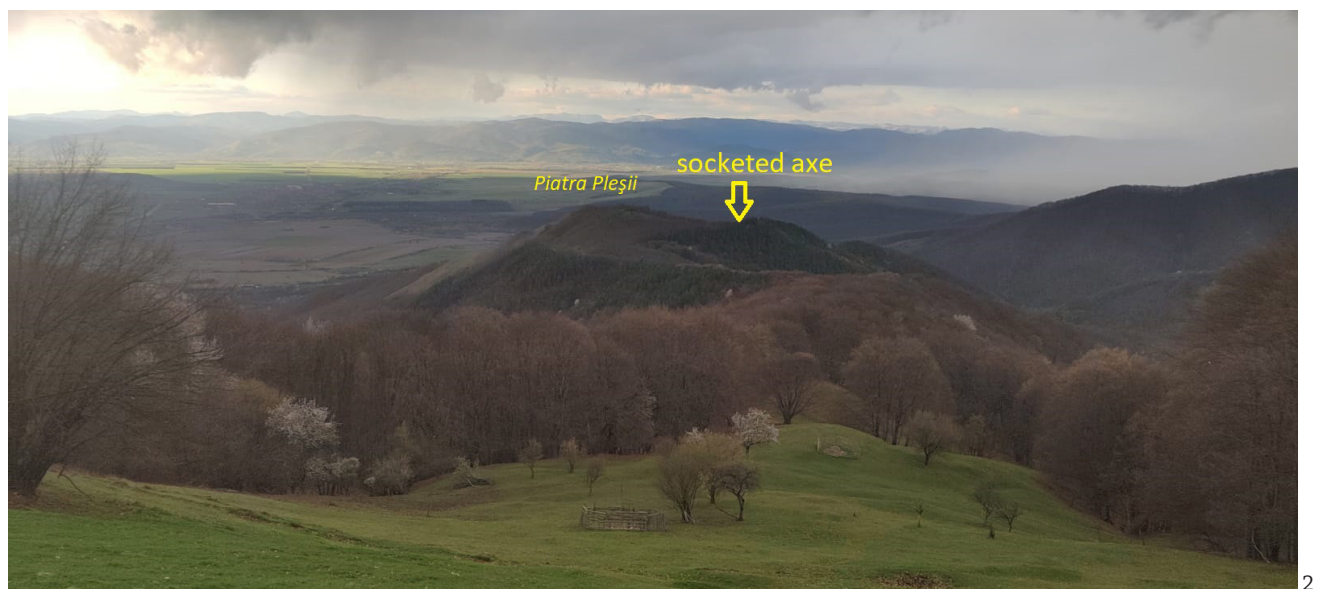


Fig. 8. Cugir-Piatra Pleșii – the site of the socketed axe fragment: view from the west (1) and from the south, Călene-Cioaca lui Fornea (2) (photo: Mihai Rus – 1; Alin Toderescu – 2).

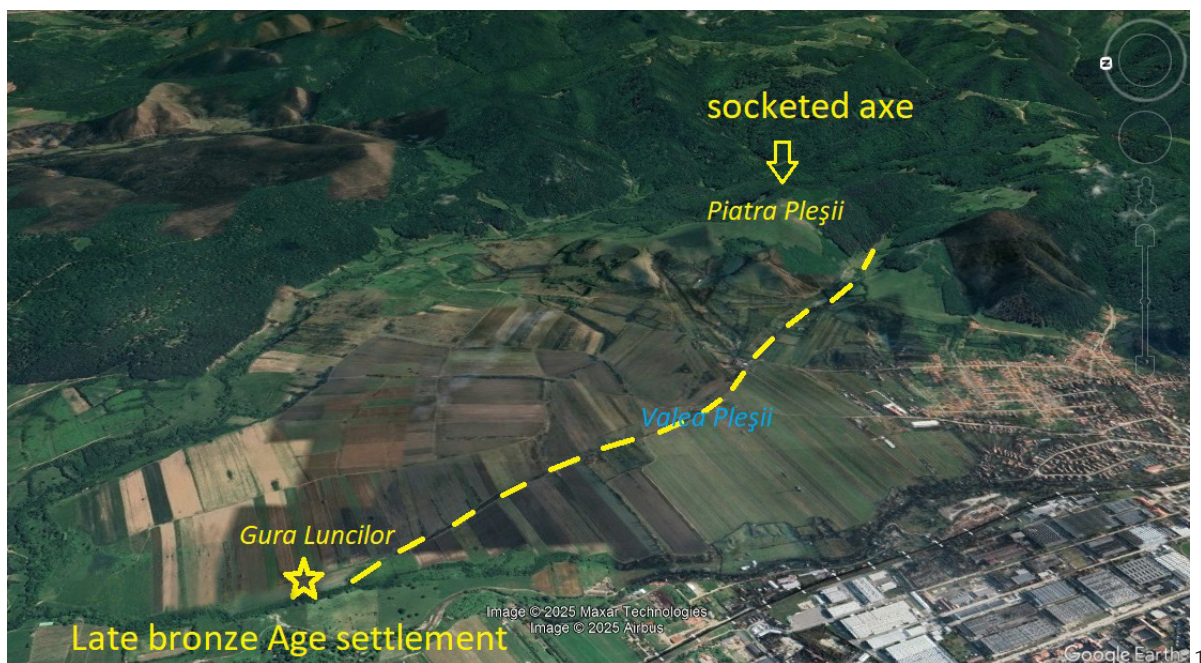


Fig. 9. The possible route linking the sites of Cugir-Gura Luncilor-ob. 2 and Cugir-Piatra Pleșii, along the Pleșii Valley (1); Cugir-Piatra Pleșii – fragment of a socketed axe *in situ* (2) and area with prehistoric pottery finds (3) (photo: Andrei Borsa).



Fig. 10. Cugir-Piatra Pleșii. Bronze socketed-axe – scrapped piece (1-2) and ceramic fragment from the Late Bronze Age (2) (photo and drawing: C. I. Popa).



Fig. 11. Bucuru-Creasta Văiții. The discovery site of the bronze knife, in situ (1), the context (2), and the piece immediately after its discovery (3) (photo: A. Toderescu).



Fig. 12. Bucuru-Creasta Văiții. The ridge with the discovery site (1) and the continuation of the ridge (2) towards the slope with Vârful Bucuru (3) (photo: A. Toderescu).

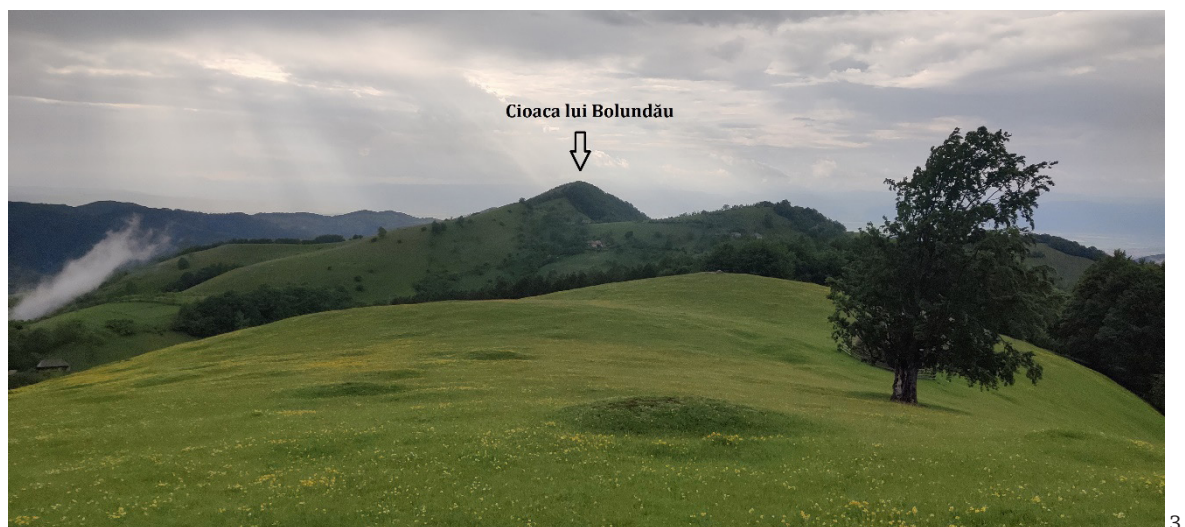


Fig. 13. Bucuru. View of the surrounding landscape: towards the parallel ridge (1), towards Mugești (2) and towards the Coțofeni site on *Cioaca lui Bolundău* (3) (photo: A. Toderescu).

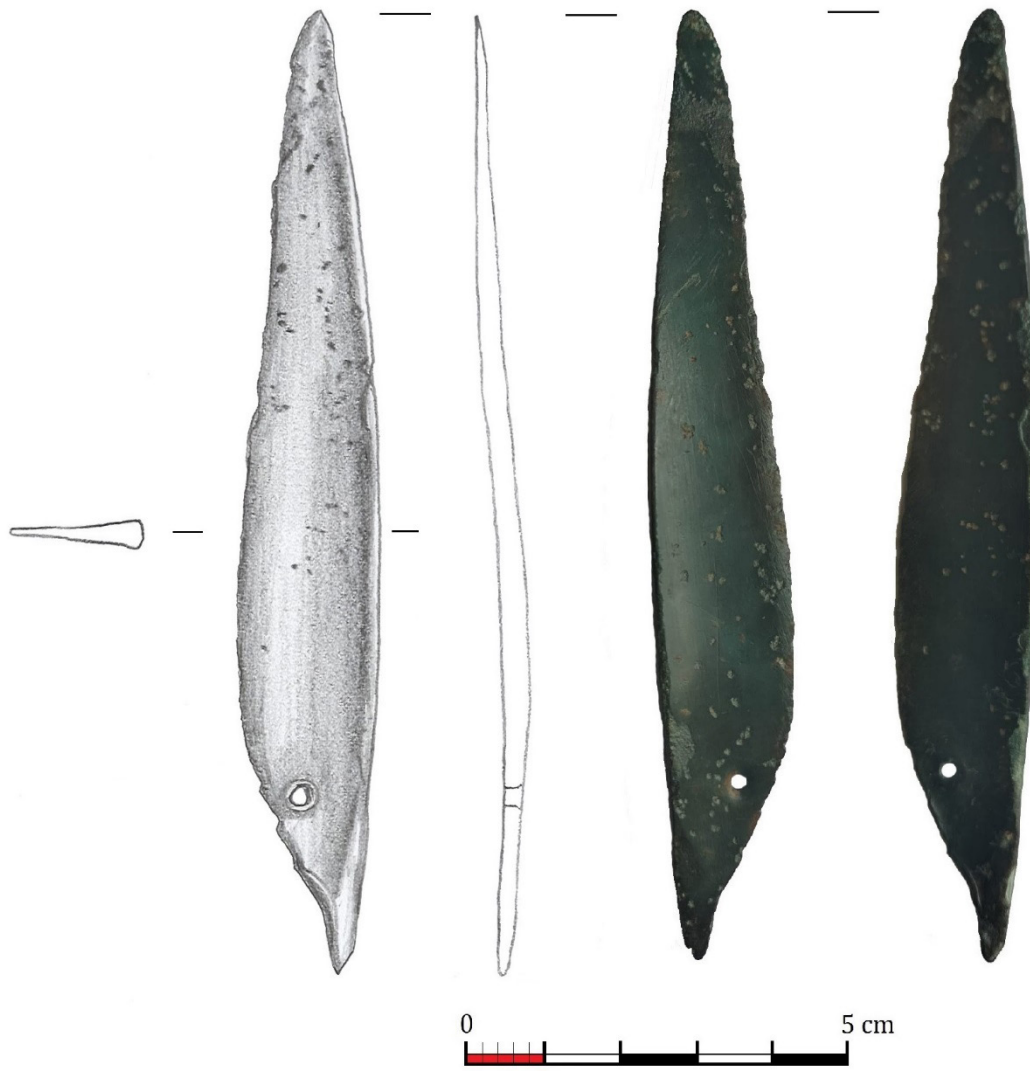


Fig. 14. Bucuru-Creasta Văiții. Late Bronze Age bronze knife (drawing and photo: C. I. Popa).



Fig. 15. Bronze knife discovered at Cugir-Vârful Brădetului: the piece in situ (1) and after its removal (2) (photo: A. Toderescu).

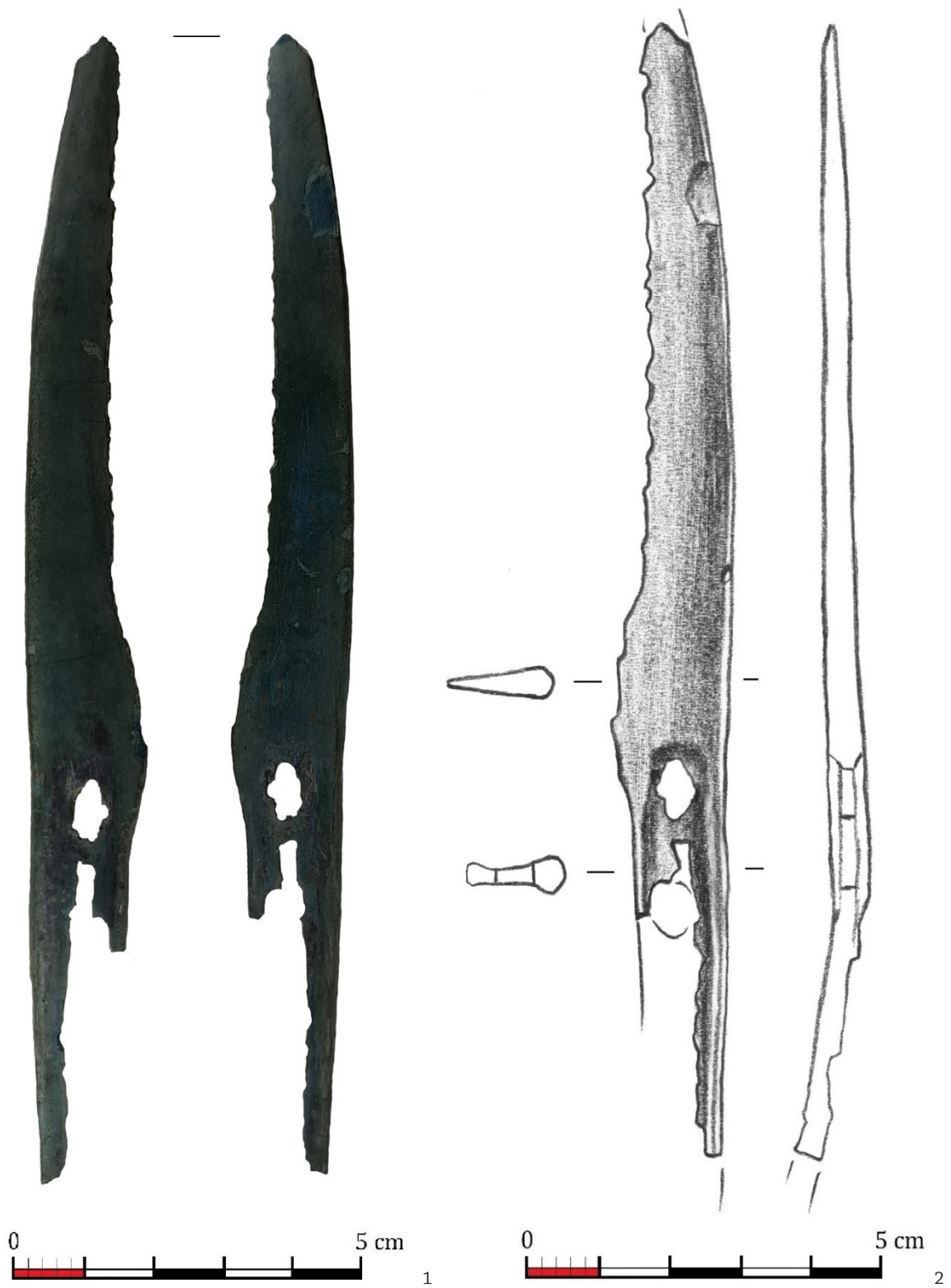


Fig. 16. Cugir-Vârful Brădetului. Bronze knife (photo and drawing: C. I. Popa).



Fig. 17. Bronze socketed axe discovered at Cugir-Vârful Brădetului: the artefact in situ (1) and after its removal (2) (photo: A. Toderescu).

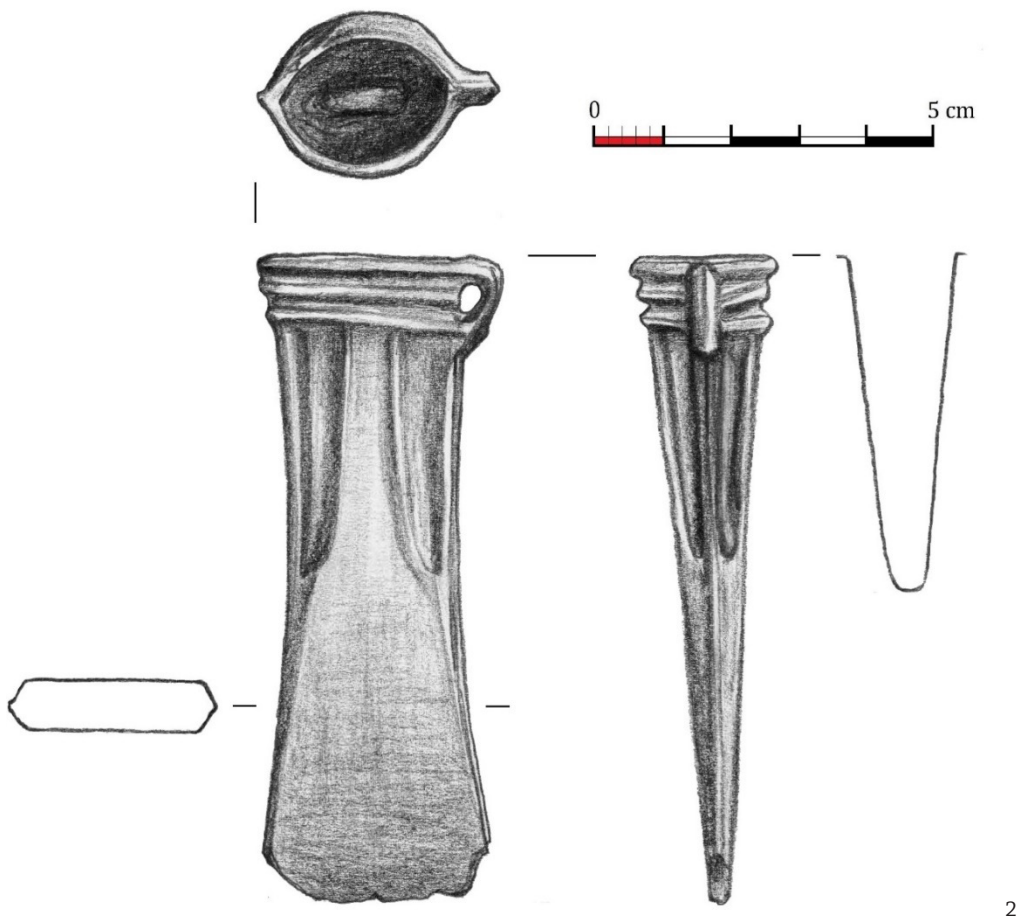


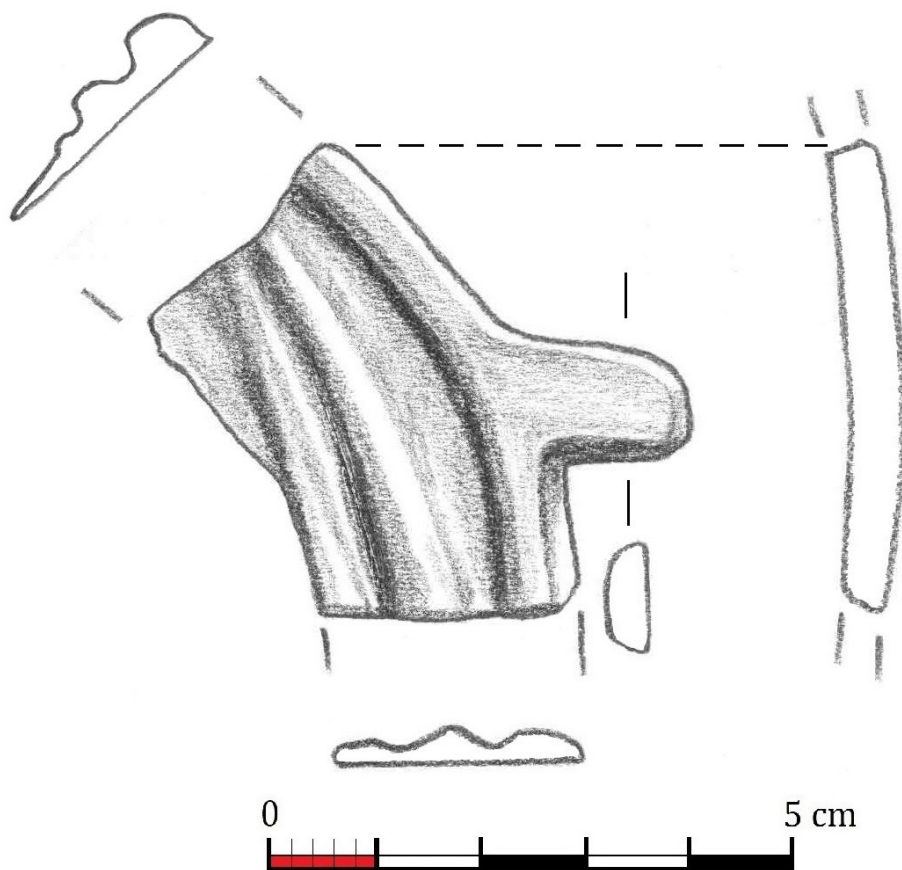
Fig. 18. Bronze socketed axe discovered at Cugir-Vârful Brădetului (photo and drawing: C. I. Popa).



Fig. 19. Goasele-*Sasu* – the discovery place of the bronze sickle (photo: Alin Toderescu).



1



2

Fig. 20. Goasele-Sasu. Fragmentary bronze sickle (photo and drawing: C. I. Popa).

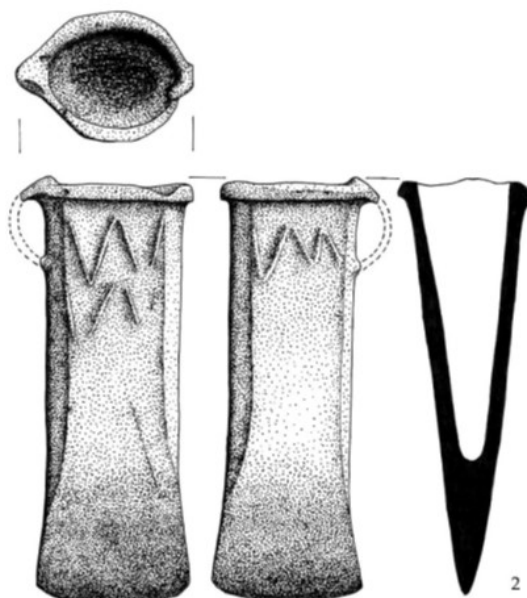
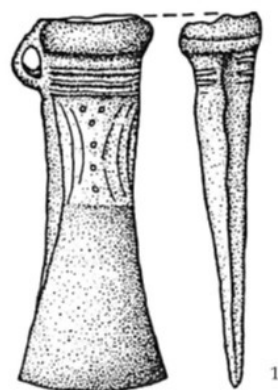


Fig. 21. Bronze socketed axe from Ha A (A, 2) and Ha B (1): Cugir-unknown places (after POPA 2011 – A; CIUGUDEAN/LUCA 1997 – 1; POPA/TOTOIANU 2010 – 2).

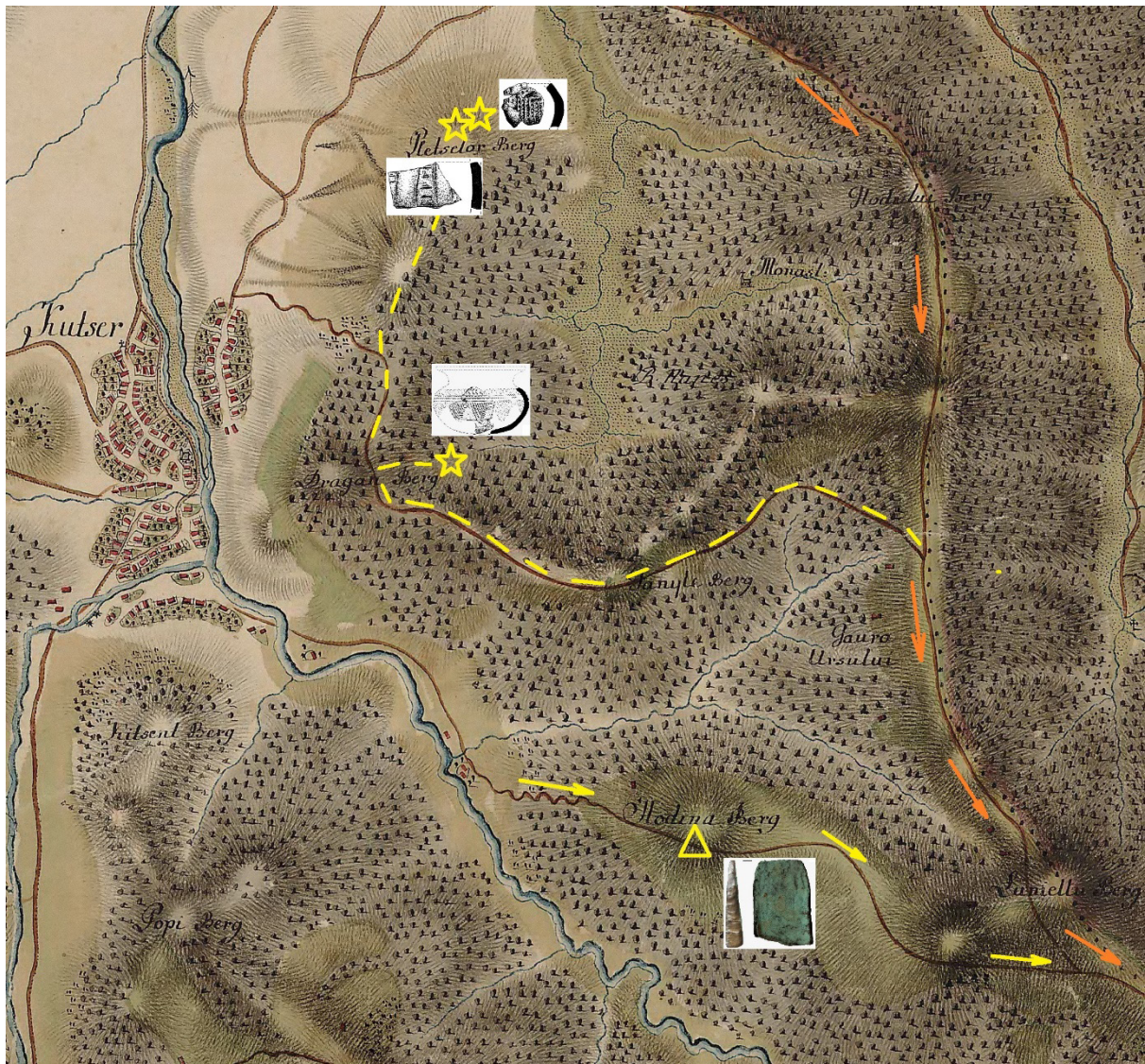


Fig. 22. Localization of the discovery of the copper axe from Mugești-Dealul Hodinilor (△) and the Coțofeni settlements (☆) of Cugir-Piatra Pleșii (1), Cugir-Cioaca Bălințeasa (2) and Călene-Cioaca lui Fornea (3): → - plain road; → - access road to the plain; - - - - - possible connecting paths in the Coțofeni culture (support: Josephine map, 1769-1773).

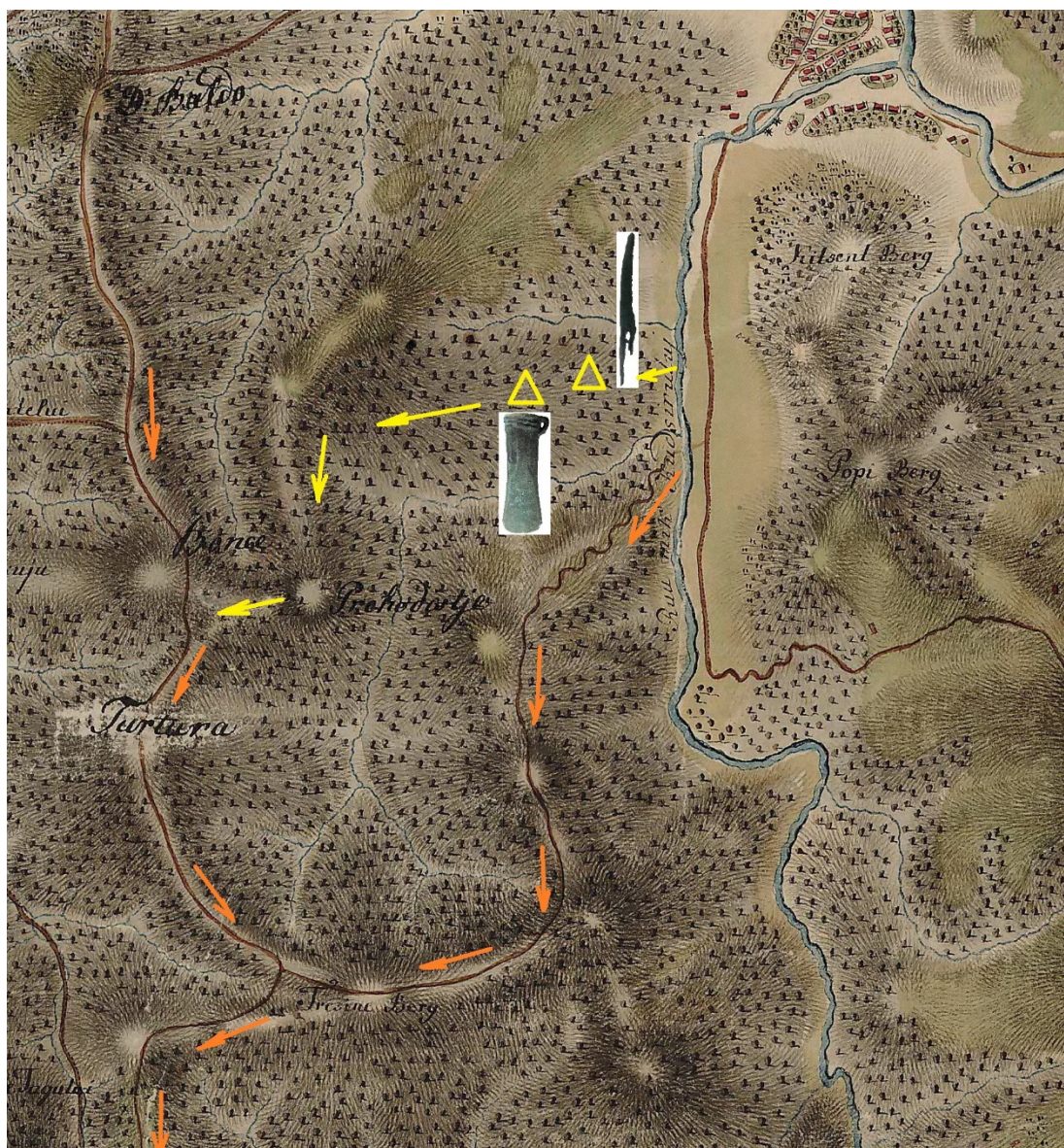


Fig. 23. Localization of the prehistoric bronze artifacts from Cugir-Vârful Brădetului (\triangle): \rightarrow – plain road; \rightarrow – access road to the plain (support: Josephine map, 1769–1773).

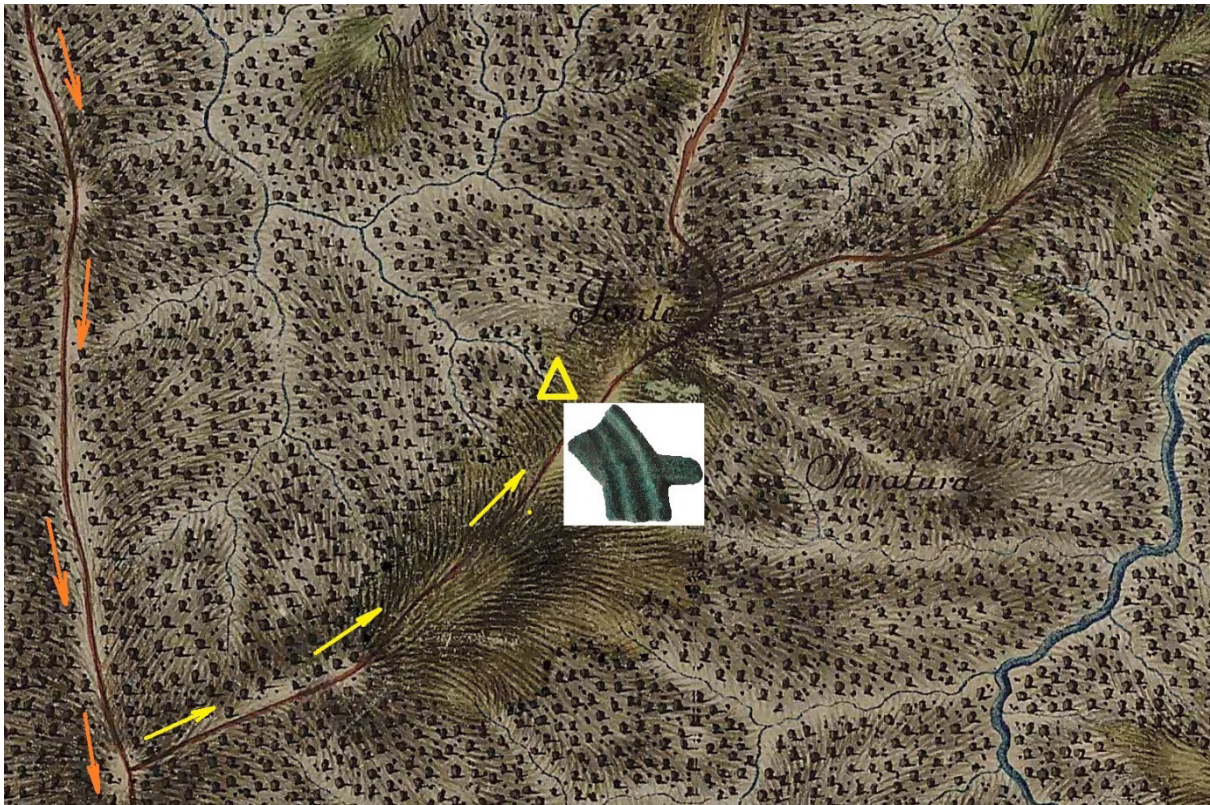


Fig. 24. Localization of bronze sickles from Goasele-Sasu (Δ): \rightarrow – plain road; \rightarrow – secondary access road (support: Josephine map, 1769–1773) (1); the path Bucuru-Creasta Văiții $-\cdot-\cdot-$ and the plain leading to the Sasu mountain \rightarrow (2).

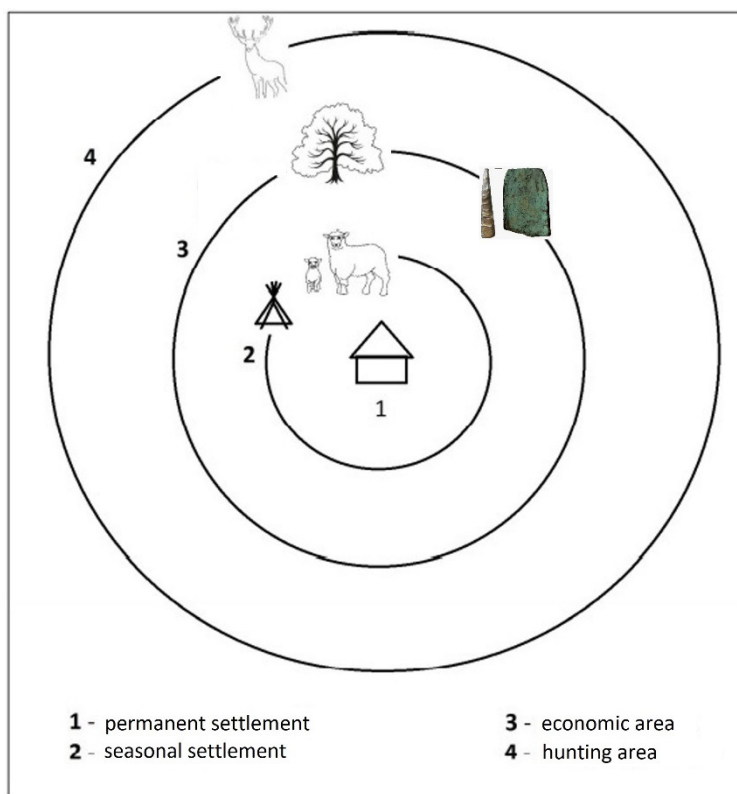


Fig. 25. Living and economic areas of the Coțofeni settlements in the Cugir valley, expressed by concentric circles

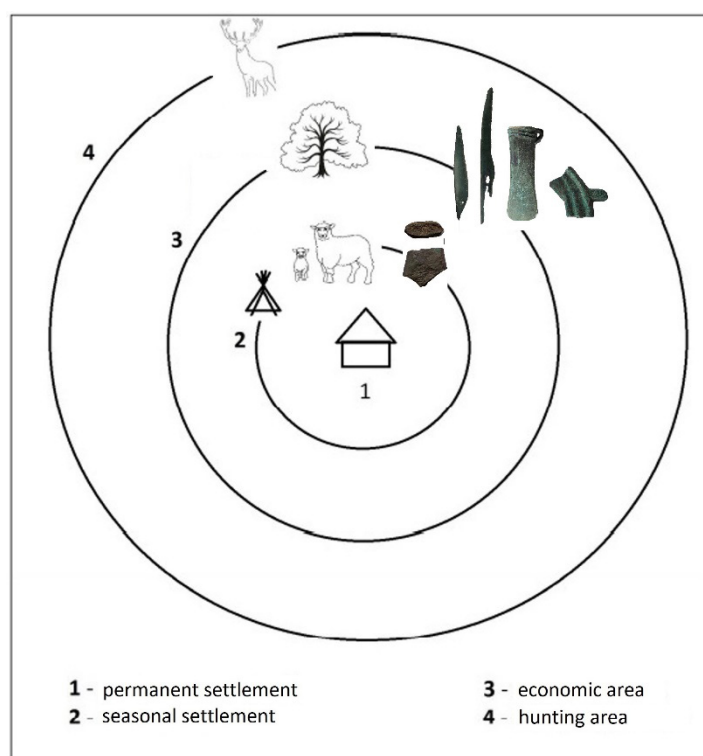


Fig. 26. Late Bronze Age metal artifacts from the Cugir valley, expressed by concentric circles.

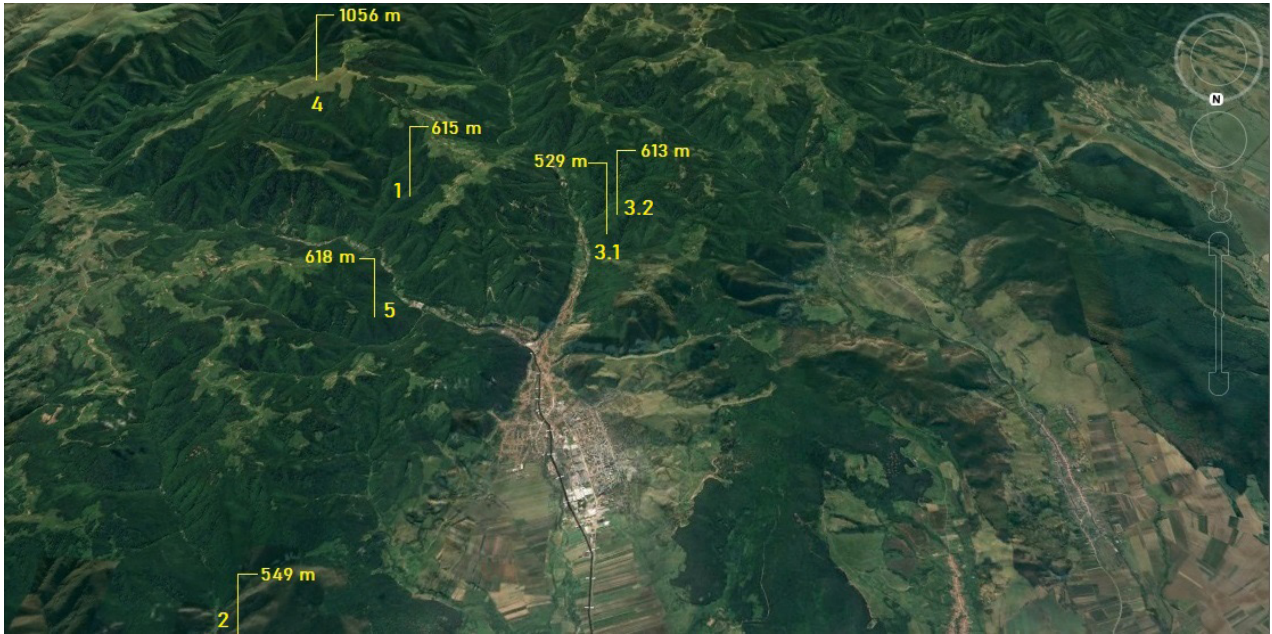


Fig. 27. Map with the altitude and distribution of the metal pieces discussed in the text discovered in the hill and mountain area of Cugir: Bucuru-Creasta Văiții (1), Cugir-Piatra Pleșii (2), Cugir-Vârful Brădetului (3.1, 3.2), Goasele-Sasu (4), Mugești-Dealul Hodinilor (5).