

## ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE BRONZE AGE IN SOUTHERN ROMANIA

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**Rezumat.** Cu privire la așezările epocii bronzului în sudul României, ne referim la centrul și vestul Munteniei și Oltenia, aparent se cunosc multe. Aceasta se datorează numărului mare de situri din Bronzul Timpuriu, dar și cel Mijlociu și Târziu, identificate până în prezent. Dacă ținem seama că, numai pentru cultura Glina din Bronzul Timpuriu au fost reperate 400 de situri, la care se adaugă culturile Tei și Verbicioara, din Bronzul Mijlociu și Târziu, cu un număr mai restrâns de puncte descoperite, setul de informații și date cu privire la habitat ar trebui să fie semnificativ. Dar, cu toate acestea, ceea ce știm despre construcțiile amintitelor manifestări culturale, sunt limitate, lacunare și uneori pot duce la concluzii false. În prezenta intervenție încercăm să desțelinim informațiile avute la dispoziție, dorind să extragem esența lucrurilor și, acolo unde se poate, să avansăm câteva concluzii.

**Keywords:** sudul României, cultura Glina, Tei și Verbicioara, construcții.

Apparently, rather many things are known about the settlements of the Bronze Age in Southern Romania, especially when considering the Western and Central Muntenia and Oltenia. This fact is determined by the discovery of a large number of sites, both for the Early, as well as those for the Middle and Late Bronze Age. If we refer to the most important and exponential cultural manifestation, we could observe that for the Glina culture, their sample could reach a figure of over 400 settlements. The number of those belonging to the Tei and Verbicioara cultures is smaller, an aspect that is obviously conditioned by the more restrained range of the respective manifestations<sup>1</sup>.

### 1. The dwellings (constructions) of the Glina culture

Dealing most often with the traces of the Glina culture, Petre Roman has insisted upon the fact that relatively few things could be discussed about the

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<sup>1</sup> Regarding the distribution range of the cultures: for Glina (Schuster, 1994a; Schuster, 1997a, p. 83 ff.; Schuster, 1999; Schuster, 2000a; Schuster, 2000b; Schuster, 2003a; Schuster-Fântâneau, 2003; Schuster-Fântâneau, 2005, p. 46 ff.; Schuster-Popa, 2009a); for Tei (Leahu, 1966, p. 22 ff.; Leahu, 2003, p. 29 ff.; Schuster, 1994b; Schuster, 2003b; Schuster, 2005, p. 107 ff.; Schuster-Popa, 2007); for Verbicioara (Crăciunescu, 1996; Crăciunescu, 2004, p. 15 ff.; Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 154 ff.; Ridiche, 1999; Ridiche, 2000).

dwellings of this manifestation belonging to the Early Bronze Age<sup>2</sup>. To the same conclusion have also reached other specialists, among which we could mention Jan Machnik, Eugen Comşa, Cristian Schuster, Cristinel Fântâneau and Ion Tuţulescu<sup>3</sup>. In the opinion of Alexandru Vulpe, “*The dwellings were mostly made of wattle and daub walls, above the soil surface. Still, pit houses are also known ... In the hilly region semi-deepened dwellings could be identified, dug into the slope of the hill ...*”<sup>4</sup>.

### 1.1. Deepened dwellings

In 1932, at Bucureşti-Bucureştii Noi, Dinu V. Rosetti had the occasion to investigate a pit house comprising two “cells”, that took the shape of the figure “8”<sup>5</sup>. The same specialist would excavate another pit house (with an oval shape, and the long axis of about 2.00 m) at Bucureşti-Ciurel, with a North-South orientation, meaning perpendicular on the Dâmboviţa Valley<sup>6</sup>. Such a pit house has been also mentioned in the case of the site from Bucureşti-Mihai Vodă<sup>7</sup>. Unfortunately, the data that we have for those constructions are not too clear. More consistent information would result from the research from Roşu, carried out in 1958. On that spot there were two complexes, considered to have been “*pit houses, that ended their existence in a fire*”, both with a North-South orientation. The first, *A*, had a diameter of 2.10/1.70 m, and the second one, *B*, was smaller, with a diameter of 1.70/1.25 m<sup>8</sup>. The distance between those two constructions was of about 5 m.

Another pit house (“*semi-pit house*”<sup>9</sup>) was investigated in 1960 at Bucureşti-Căţelu Nou by Valeriu Leahu. Despite the fact that he mentioned that “*the outline of the complex was clearly emphasized in the grundriss*”<sup>10</sup>, it was given no information about its dimensions and no plan has been published<sup>11</sup>. In 1963, another pit house has been identified, that comprised two compartments-pits, out of which the Southern one had a diameter of 1.26 m (and the depth of 0.82 m), while the Northern one had a diameter of 2.35 m (and a depth of 1.12 m)<sup>12</sup>. In the opinion of its finder “*such a dwelling was not used for being inhabited by people but rather for keeping the provisions and other objects*”.

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<sup>2</sup> Roman, 1976, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Machnik, 1991, p. 14; Comşa, 1991, 21 f.; Schuster, 1997a, p. 33 f.; Schuster-Fântâneau, 2003, p. 8 f.; Schuster-Fântâneau, 2005, p. 58 f.

<sup>4</sup> Vulpe, 2001a, p. 236.

<sup>5</sup> Rosetti, 1932, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Rosetti, 1932, p. 175, fig. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Morintz-Rosetti, 1959, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Constantiniu-Panait, 1963, p. 302, fig. 1; Schuster, 1997a, p. 34, fig. 17/1.

<sup>9</sup> We would like to stress here that it was not always made a clear distinction between the “*pit houses*” and the “*semi-pit houses*”. Among the causes of this fact we could mention the excavation type, its accuracy, the natural factors (the soil erosion, for instance) and, not at the least, “*the subjectivity of the archaeologist in the interpretation of the research results*”, cf. Schuster, 1997a, p. 88, footnote 58.

<sup>10</sup> Leahu, 1963a, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> Schuster, 1997a, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup> Leahu, 1965, p. 25, fig. 9; Schuster, 1997a, p. 35, fig. 11/2.

The archaeological research undertaken by Dumitru Berciu at Crivăț has resulted in the discovery of two “*semi-pit houses*”, both belonging to the *Level I*<sup>13</sup>. The author of the investigations, when publishing the dimensions of the first complex, of an oval shape, had mentioned those of 3.00 × 2.40 m. Tiberiu Nica, based upon the excavation documentations (plans, notebooks), has realized that, in fact, the *Dwelling no. 1* had a maximal length of 4.00 m and a maximal width of 3.40 m<sup>14</sup>. The construction had a floor made of battered earth, with a hearth bearing traces of two reconstructions.

The second semi-pit house (*Dwelling no. 2*) was approximately rounded, with a diameter of 2.00 m<sup>15</sup>, which, in its turn, had an oval hearth (maximal diameter = 0.60 m; thickness of the burning = 0.06 m)<sup>16</sup>.

Also the excavation documentation has demonstrated that during the different archaeological campaigns at Crivăț several pit houses were investigated<sup>17</sup>. We mainly refer to the *Pit house no. 3*, belonging to the *Glina I level* of the settlement, having an oval shape (dim. 3.00 × 2.60 m), which contained a pit dub with two steps. The complex communicated with a pit (*Pit no. 8*). The next pit houses (*no. 1, 5-7, 11, 13, 15-16, 18*) have been identified in the *Glina II level*. *Pit house no. 5*, with its walls obliquely sloped towards their inner part, had a rectangular shape (dim. 4.20 × 2.80 m; with rounded corners), and in its Southern part, two steps had been dug. According to its founder<sup>18</sup>, in the middle of the complex there was a pit “with the depth of -1.00 m, forming two benches with a depth of 0.80-0.85 m”<sup>19</sup>.

If about the *Pit house no. 1*, overlapped by the *Dwelling no. 2*, we have no detail, in turn, we know that the *Pit house no. 6* was also an oval one, with its walls sloped towards inside, and had an alveolated base. Next to the pit house, that was partly overlapped by the *Dwelling no. 1*, *Pit no. 6* has been detected, that most probably was contemporary with it, being registered as the storage pit of the deepened complex<sup>20</sup>.

An oval shape had also the *Pit houses no. 13* (dim. 3.80 × 3.40 m), with three pits in its southern, Eastern and Northern side (with depths that varied between 1.06/1.15 m), *no. 14* (dim. 3.00 × 3.60 m), *no. 16* (dim. 3.00 × 2.05 m) and most probably, *no. 18*. The *Complex no. 15* had a rectangular shape (dim. 4.00 × 2.80 m; with clearly rounded corners), while *Pit house no. 7* had an irregular, elongated shape (maximal dim. 4.20 × 2.80 m).

The inventory of the deepened complexes from Crivăț, comprised pottery (in most of the cases a fragmentary one, different other items made of burnt clay,

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<sup>13</sup> Berciu, 1966, p. 531.

<sup>14</sup> Nica, 2010, p. 56.

<sup>15</sup> Berciu, 1966, p. 531.

<sup>16</sup> Nica, 2010, p. 57.

<sup>17</sup> Nica, 2010, p. 57.

<sup>18</sup> Nica, 2010, p. 57.

<sup>19</sup> Nica, 2010, p. 57.

<sup>20</sup> Nica, 2010, p. 57.

lithic, bone and horn materials, adobe and ash). Of course, the ash has pointed out the action of two fires. Some other traces to support this hypothesis have been identified in the *Pit house no. 18*, whose pottery and two wheels from a chariot displayed a strong secondary burning<sup>21</sup>.

Two oval pit houses (noted by the author of the find as *Pit no. 1* and *Pit. 2*) of more modest dimensions ( $2.05 \times 1.70$  m) have been discovered in the *Dudești* neighborhood of București<sup>22</sup>. Most probably these complexes have also ceased their existence as result of a fire.

Very probable of rectangular shape (with the long side of 3.09 m) was the pit house that was partly investigated by Gheorghe Bichir at Udeni<sup>23</sup>. From the preserved part of the complex, ceramic fragments and animal bones have been recovered and pieces of adobe, charcoal and ash have been identified. The presence of the later ones, as well as the traces of secondary burning found on the pottery are indicative for the fact that the pit house has been destroyed by fire.

The research undertaken between 1978-1979 in the site from București-*Militari-Câmpul Boja* has resulted in the investigation of a pit house<sup>24</sup>. This had also an oval shape (maximal dim.  $2.10 \times 1.80$  m), while its inventory confirmed the idea that it was burnt. In 1992, Mioara Turcu has published part of her investigations undertaken in the campaign since 1982, in the Sector *B* of the site from București-*Militari Câmpul Boja*. On this occasion, she had mentioned a rectangular pit house (with rounded corners, the same like the previous cases; dim.  $2.50 \times 1.80$  m), with no interior fitting<sup>25</sup>.

A deepened construction with dimensions that resemble those of the big pit houses from Crivăț have been excavated also in the range of Bucharest (1988-1989), but on the left terrace of the Dâmbovița river, on the spot *Lunca Bârzești*<sup>26</sup>. The inventory of the oval pit house (dim.  $3.50 \times 4.00$  m) was generally poor, most of the remains (adobe, fragmentary pottery) being detected in its Western side.

The pit house from Căscioarele-*Cotul Cătălui* was just partly investigated<sup>27</sup>. It had a rectangular shape, with rounded corners, its smaller side measuring about 3.10 m. The inventory of this complex was not too rich, comprising adobe, ceramic fragments, and lithic tools.

Resuming of the research from București-*Ciurel* (1994) made possible the discovery of a pit house with a rectangular shape and slightly rounded corners, with dimensions of  $3.68 \times 2.80$  m<sup>28</sup>. It had an East-West orientation. Inside it two pits for domestic use could be found, one for refuse and the second as a fire place. In the

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<sup>21</sup> Nica, 2010, p. 57, pl. I/32, 34.

<sup>22</sup> Turcu, 1976, p. 41 f.; Schuster, 1997a, p. 34 f., fig. 16/2.

<sup>23</sup> Bichir, 1983, p. 58; Schuster, 1997a, p. 35.

<sup>24</sup> Turcu-Lancuzov, 1979, p. 77; Turcu, 1981, p. 226 f.

<sup>25</sup> Turcu, 1992, p. 145, fig. 1; Schuster, 1997a, p. 35; Schuster, 2000c, p. 15.

<sup>26</sup> Sandu, 1992, p. 165; Schuster, 1997a, p. 35.

<sup>27</sup> Nanu, 1989, p. 37, pl. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Negru, 1995, p. 15; Negru-Schuster, 1997, p. 12, fig. 1; Schuster, 1997a, p. 35, fig. 14/1-2.

profile of the pit house three levels of the floor reconstruction could be noticed, being made with clear clay, without any impurity.

At a certain moment, it was advanced the hypothesis that the pit houses / semi-pit houses were typical for the initial phases of the Glina culture<sup>29</sup>. As it could be inferred from the previous examples, the archaeological investigations from Muntenia and Oltenia have contradicted this assumption<sup>30</sup>. The shape of the deepened complexes was not a unitary one, as we could notice that even in the same settlement (see Crivăț), dwellings of oval, circular, rounded, cylindrical, but also rectangular (with rounded corners), or with the shape of the figure “8” have been discovered. The dimensions of some of the pit houses were very small, others were considerable (Crivăț, București-Lunca Bârzești), fact that enables us to make speculations regarding the functionality of those complexes (for habitation; household annexes) and their duration of functioning. As we could see, some of the pit houses had fittings inside, possible “benches”, hearths, pits/alveoli for storage of the provisions or of different materials for domestic use, as well as for fire places. Few pit houses had annexes in their immediate proximity (storage or refuse pits, or exterior hearths).

## 1.2. Above ground constructions

Specific to the Glina milieu there are also some above ground constructions, discovered on the entire range of the manifestation<sup>31</sup>. For this discussion we will give the most interesting examples in this sense. It is certain that this kind of complex was in use the entire duration time of the culture. Of course, to give a verdict regarding the functionality of the above ground constructions is rather difficult. Most of them seem to have been used as dwellings.

Traces of some above ground constructions have been discovered even beginning with the first archaeological campaigns from București-Ciurel. In *Trench no. II/1956*, on a distance of 4.60 m the traces of an above ground dwelling could be documented<sup>32</sup>. We mention here some adobe lumps burnt to red and some other materials, among which the ceramic fragments rank the first. Some processed items have been also identified (a spindle whorl made of burnt clay), flint and animal bones. The remains of an above ground dwelling, scattered on a distance of 5.00 m, have been found also in the *Level Ia* of the *Trench no. XI*<sup>33</sup>. Another construction, belonging to the *Level Ib*, has been identified in the western side of the *Trench no. VII* (with a length in the profile of 3.20 m).

*Dwellings no. 3, 4* and *5*<sup>34</sup> from Crivăț have belonged to the *Level no. I*. All those complexes have been destroyed by fire. If the *Dwelling no. 3* (dim. 2.35 × 1.67 m) had a rectangular shape, for the other constructions their shape could not be esta-

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<sup>29</sup> Comșa, 1991, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup> Schuster-Fântâneau, 2005, p. 59.

<sup>31</sup> Schuster, 1997a, p. 38 ff.; Schuster-Fântâneau, 2005, p. 58 ff.

<sup>32</sup> Morintz-Cantacuzino, 1959, p. 633, fig. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Morintz, 1959, p. 767.

<sup>34</sup> Nica, 2010, p. 56.

blished. In *Dwelling no. 5* an oval hearth made of earth (maximal dim. 1.10 × 0.60 m) has been detected.

Not far from the pit house from Căscioarele-Cotul Cătălui, at about 2.80 m, in the same *Trench 3*, the remains of an above ground dwelling with a hearth could be identified<sup>35</sup>. This one (noted as *Dwelling no. 1*), affected by the erosion of the North-Eastern side, could be identified on a surface of 4.00 × 2.00 m. The materials scattered there comprised ceramics and some massif pieces of adobe (with imprints of straw and twigs), an aspect which made the finder to believe that “reluctantly, we could name it a dwelling, as no traces of the poles and floor could be detected”<sup>36</sup>

It is interesting to note that Dan Basarab Nanu has also mentioned the case of the *Trench 1* and *Cassette 1*, with another deposition surface of archaeological material (maximal dim. 14.00 × 2.50 m), “comprising ceramic fragments, animal bones, the remains of a portable hearth with traces of suspension on poles”, in whose center an inhumation burial has been identified, with a skeleton flexed on its left<sup>37</sup>. In the opinion of the finder, the archaeological materials seem to have been the remnants of the funerary banquet. Several times we have expressed our doubts regarding this interpretation, considering that, in fact, the funerary complex is subsequent to the materials that are typical for the remains of a construction (dwelling) and penetrating it<sup>38</sup>.

In *Trench 2* from Căscioarele-Cotul Cătălui, in its Western side, the partial remnants of another construction have been detected, situated at the depth of -0.20 m, the same like those of the *Dwelling no. 1* and of the complex disturbed by the burial<sup>39</sup>.

Our investigations from Mihăilești-Tufa have enabled us to research some other above ground constructions<sup>40</sup>. *Dwelling no. 1*, with the archaeological material spread on an area of 3.06 × 4.81 m, was discovered in *Trench no. 2* and *Cassette no. 1*. Remains of a hearth have been identified approximately in the centre of the complex. *Dwelling no. 2*, from *Trench no. 3* and *Cassette no. 2* had the archaeological material dispersed on an almost rectangular area of 2.98 × 3.02 m. *Dwelling no. 3* was identified in *Trench no. 4* and *Cassette no. 3* and the remains were preserved on an area of 2.10 × 3.56 m. The preserved surface of *Dwelling no. 4* was of 2.43 × 2.86 m and it was discovered in *Trench no. 5* and *Cassette no. 4*. It is very probable that, before burning down, all complexes had a rectangular structure, possibly with slightly rounded corners. The archaeological material recovered from the area of the dwellings was quite rich in construction debris: wattle and daub pieces (some of them with imprint of poles – the maximum width for these was 0.17 m – and twigs knitting) and fragmentary pottery.

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<sup>35</sup> Nanu, 1989, p. 37, pl. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Nanu 1989, p. 37.

<sup>37</sup> Nanu, 1989, p. 38, figs. 1-4.

<sup>38</sup> Schuster, 1997a, p. 47 f.; Schuster, 2003c, p. 112; Schuster-Fântâneau, 2005, p. 74 f.

<sup>39</sup> Nanu, 1989, pl. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Schuster, 1992, p. 35; Schuster, 1997a, p. 196; Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 36; Schuster-Popa-Barbu, 2012, p. 53.

The investigations from Schitu-*La Conac* enabled us to research the remains belonging to four Glina dwellings (marked *Dwellings nos. 3-6*)<sup>41</sup>. A common characteristic was that their real dimensions could not be precisely established. The dimensions indicated by us refer to the perimeter on which the archaeological materials were distributed. It is possible that the dwellings had a rectangular form, with slightly rounded corners. No pole pits could be identified. These complexes have been found at a depth which varied between 0.35-0.55 m. The apparent orientation of the dwellings was towards Northwest-Southeast. Besides the hearths from *Dwellings nos. 4 and 5*, no other interior fittings could be identified. *Dwelling no. 3* was situated in *Trench no. II* and *Cassette no. 2*; the archaeological material was spread on a surface of approximately  $2.43 \times 3.14$  m; the complex was identified at  $-0.51$  m<sup>42</sup>. *Dwelling no. 4* was located in *no. IV* and *Cassette no. 7*, at  $-0.46$  m; the archaeological material (pieces of wattle and daub, fragmented pottery, lithic pieces, animal bones) was spread on a surface of approximately  $2.35 \times 3.34$  m<sup>43</sup>. A *hearth* has been discovered in the South-Eastern part of the complex, together with fragments of a bag-vessel, two fragmentary miniature ones and a fragment of a zoomorphic idol. *Dwelling no. 5* has been found in *Trench no. IV* and *Cassette no. 8*, having a hearth inside it<sup>44</sup>. The archaeological material has been documented on a surface of approximately  $2.02 \times 1.74$  m. *Dwelling no. 6* was found in *Trench no. III*, □ 3-4 and *Cassettes nos. 4 and 5*. The wattle and daub, the pottery and the animal bones were spread on a surface of approximately  $1.82 \times 1.56$  m. This material was agglomerated in the South-Eastern part of the complex<sup>45</sup>.

At Schitu-*Gaura Despei* several above ground dwellings have been investigated. *Dwelling no. 3* was discovered in the *Trench no. II* and *Cassette no. 2*, at a depth of  $-0.47$  m. The archaeological material, composed of pottery and wattle and daub, was dispersed on  $2.74 \times 1.98$  m<sup>46</sup>. *Dwelling no. 4* was identified in *Trench no. III*, at a depth of  $-0.49$  m. The complex was strongly affected by destruction<sup>47</sup>; the archaeological material was preserved on an area of only  $0.58 \times 0.69$  m. *Dwelling no. 6*, identified in *Trench no. IV*, at a depth of  $-0.54$  m, was also strongly deteriorated<sup>48</sup>; the archaeological material was preserved on a surface of  $0.63 \times 0.43$  m. *House no. 5* from *Trench no. IV* and *Cassette no. 6*,  $-0.52$  m was larger ( $1.34 \times 1.07$  m)<sup>49</sup>. *Dwelling no. 7* was situated in *Trench no. III* and *Cassettes nos. 3 and 4*, at  $-0.53$  m. This complex had the preserved dimensions of  $4.01 \times 2.32$  m<sup>50</sup>. A pit that might

<sup>41</sup> Schuster, 1997a, p. 206; Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 23; Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 37, pl. XVII/1.

<sup>42</sup> Schuster, 1997a, fig. 22/1; Schuster, 1997b, fig. 6/1; Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 23, pl. VIII/1.

<sup>43</sup> Schuster, 1997a, fig. 20/1; Schuster, 1997b, fig. 9/2; Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 23, pl. VII/1.

<sup>44</sup> Schuster, 1997a, fig. 22/2; Schuster, 1997b, fig. 6/1; Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 23, pl. VIII/2.

<sup>45</sup> Schuster, 1997a, fig. 20/2; Schuster, 1997b, fig. 11/2; Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 23, pl. VII/2.

<sup>46</sup> Schuster, 1997a, fig. 21/1; Schuster, 1997b, fig. 10/1; Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 30, pl. XIV/1.

<sup>47</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 30.

<sup>48</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 30.

<sup>49</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 30.

<sup>50</sup> Schuster, 1997a, fig. 21/2; Schuster, 1997b, fig. 10/2; Schuster-Popa, 2009b, 30 f., pl. XIV/2.

have initially been a storage one was identified in its corner but on discovery was filled with garbage (animal bones, ashes, coals, fragmented pottery and small pieces of wattle and daub). A Getic pit cut *Dwelling no. 8* that was located in *Trench no. V* and *Cassette no. 7*, at a depth of -0.50 m. Its dimensions were of  $1.73 \times 0.86$  m<sup>51</sup>.

During the archeological campaign in the year 2011, the excavations from *Mironești-Conacul Mironescu* have allowed us to investigate the remains of two above ground constructions<sup>52</sup>. Therefore, in *Trench no. 3*, on an oval surface (maximal diam.  $1.20 \times 1.03$  m) an agglomeration of materials has been identified, consisting of adobe, ceramic fragments, animal bones, ash and two miniature vessels. In *Trench no. 4*, on an irregular surface, with a North-South orientation, with a maximal length of about 4 m and a maximal width of 1.49 m, some scattered archaeological materials could be detected, whose purpose could be interpreted also as an above ground construction.

Crossing the Olt river to the West, it could be observed that there the above ground constructions are of the same type like those in the Western and Central Muntenia. Still, for many of them the form could hardly be established: *Govora Sat-Runcuri*, *Copăcelu*, *Ocnița-Aval Baraj*, *Ocele Mari*, *Ionești-Canton*, *Fișcălia*, *Ostrovul Corbului*<sup>53</sup>.

As it could be noticed, the dimensions of the above ground constructions are generally modest. Exception is one of the complexes from *Căscioarele-Cotul Cătălui* as well as others from *Braneț*. The shape of the constructions, where this could be established, was a rectangular one, with rounded corners (*Greci*, *Mihăilești-Tufa*, *Crivăț*, *Schitu-La Conac* and *Gaura Despei*, *Drăgănești Olt-Corboaica*, *Govora Sat-Runcuri*, *Ostrovul Corbului etc.*), square (*Braneț*) and oval ones (*Căscioarele*). Their majority lacked the inner fittings; others had floors made of battered clay (*Odaia Turcului*, *Crivăț*), hearths (*Greci*, *Căscioarele-Cotul Cătălui*, *Mihăilești-Tufa*, *Schitu-La Conac* and *Gaura Despei*, *Drăgănești Olt-Corboaica*, *Morărești*, *Braneț*), domestic ovens (*Glina* and *Drăgănești Olt-Corboaica*), pits, or dependings (*Schitu-Gaura Despei*, *Braneț*).

Regarding the construction mode of the above ground complexes, we should point out there that for neither of them any clear pole pit could be detected. The constructions have been exclusively identified based on the distribution of the archaeological material (adobe, ash, charcoal, ceramic fragments, animal bones, lithic objects). The field observations have permitted to draw the conclusion that the walls of the complexes, in most of the cases have been done from wattle and adobe, which frequently had chaff and herbs in its composition, while their roof had been done of earth mixed with grass or, more often, and even more probable, with water plants.

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<sup>51</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2009b, p. 31.

<sup>52</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2012, p. 11.

<sup>53</sup> Roman, 1985, p. 280; Roman, 2011, p. 16; Schuster, 1997b, p. 97; Fântâneau, 2007, p. 22; Tuțulescu, 2007, p. 11; Tuțulescu-Binder, 2011, p. 86.

The most frequently used type of above ground dwelling was the hut, with thin walls, easy to construct. The complexes of adobe and sun-dried bricks type, with relatively thick walls, made of twigs with a bigger diameter and a large quantity of adobe, are rather rare. They could be investigated, as we already mentioned above, at Branet.

## 2. The dwellings (constructions) of the Tei culture

In 1966, Valeriu Leahu has reached the conclusion that *“It is sure that the bearers of the Tei culture have used, as dwellings types, the pit house, the hut, as well as the above ground dwelling”*<sup>54</sup>. After 37 years the same specialist has pointed out that: *“Regarding the dwellings of the culture’s bearers the information is slightly satisfactory ... The Tei populations have used as dwellings types – in their evolution and probably, in their entire range – the pit house, the hut and the above ground dwelling”*<sup>55</sup>. Regarding the same issue, the author of these lines together with Traian Popa has noted: *“About the shelters of this culture, even in this research stage, it is generally less known”*<sup>56</sup>. Subsequently it was mentioned *“Das ist, ... , dem Charakter der Ausgrabungen, meistens Rettungsgrabungen, der bronzezeitlichen Bautechnik und den benützten Materialien zu verdanken”*<sup>57</sup>. According with Alexandru Vulpe, *“The constructions are mostly above ground ones (the pit houses are also known), with the walls made of twigs with clay”*<sup>58</sup>.

Therefore, all those who have dealt more intensely with this manifestation of the Middle and Late Bronze Age (to which we could add some others, like Nona Palincaș, Ion Motzoi-Chicideanu, Vasilica Sandu-Cuculea, Radu Băjenaru, Elena Gavrilă) have insisted upon the scarcity of the information regarding the Tei constructions. Despite that, we believe that even within this sample of lacunary data, we could find some interesting aspects. In our endeavor, we rely upon our own observations, as well as on the valorification and re-valorification of the older ones.

### 2.1. Deepened constructions

At București-Cățelu Nou a pit house of the phase II of the culture has been investigated<sup>59</sup>. It had an *“irregular-rectangular shape, with its corners slightly rounded”*, had large dimensions (maximal length = 12.50 m, maximal width = 9.80 m). In the opinion of Valeriu Leahu it was *“a collective dwelling, most probably of a group of cattle breeders (judging by the numerous animal remains discovered in the filling of the pit)”*<sup>60</sup>.

Some deepened/semi-deepened dwellings have been also investigated in the Giurgiu County. Two huts have been discovered at Mihăilești-Pod II. According to Mioara Turcu, *“The pit of hut 1 contains dark humus and brown forest humus. The*

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<sup>54</sup> Leahu, 1966, p. 54.

<sup>55</sup> Leahu, 2003, p. 63 f.

<sup>56</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2000, p. 23

<sup>57</sup> Schuster, 2005, p. 114.

<sup>58</sup> Vulpe, 2001b, p. 269.

<sup>59</sup> Leahu, 1965, p. 41.

<sup>60</sup> Leahu, 2003, p. 64.

pit had a depth of 0.95 m measured from where it was excavated. The length of the hut observed on the northern profile of section II was of 3.20 m. The entire surface of this hut was beyond surface II and this was the reason why a cassette was opened and a width of 1.95 m was established as well as the rectangular shape of the hut, with rounded corners". Hut no. 2 was "cut through the dark grey humus and was at a depth of 0.80 m from where its pit was excavated. Its length in the profile of the section was 3.80 m. The room's width was 1.83 m and its shape was rectangular"<sup>61</sup>.

Another hut was investigated at Mogoșești<sup>62</sup>. It was identified in Trench no. 10 and Cassettes nos. 1 and 2. It was oriented Northwest-Southeast and had an almost rectangular shape (maximal length = 8.23 m, maximal width = 5.12 m). Towards its Northwestern part the hut was getting narrower, ending with an apse.

In the site from București-Cățelu Nou, during the research carried out in 1960, another type of deepened construction could be detected. There were two complexes (no. 1 with a maximal diameter of 1.22 m and no. 2, with a maximal diameter of 1.15 m), which, in the opinion of Valeriu Leahu, were "arranged constructions", which "could not be interpreted as human dwellings but rather as arranged shelters for keeping the clay vessels and other objects"<sup>63</sup>.

## 2.2. Above ground constructions

Regarding the above ground constructions, it is clear that the most intensely used ones were the huts. Most of these were small sized. In this sense, relevant are those investigated by us in the basin of the Lower Argeș, at Adunații-Copăceni-Dăneasca, Mogoșești and Mironești. In the first mentioned site, a hut could be investigated (*Dwelling no. 1*). Its orientation was a Northwest-Southeastern one, as shown by the distribution of the archaeological material on the possible perimeter (3.25 × 2.50 m)<sup>64</sup>.

In the Tei II settlement from Mogoșești-Point 1, to this construction type the *Dwellings nos. 3-8* had belonged<sup>65</sup>. Still, we should mention even from the beginning that, the real dimensions of the dwellings could not be established. What it could be measured, but most probably doesn't indicate the real dimensions of the dwellings, were the archaeological remains scattered on different surfaces (*Dwelling no. 3* = 2.20 × 1.93 m; *Dwelling no. 4* = 2.26 × 1.40 m; *Dwelling no. 5* = 4.00 × 2.00 m; *Dwelling no. 7* = 2.43 × 1.87 m; *Dwelling no. 8* = 2.80 × 2.00 m. For the *Dwelling no. 6*, no measurement could be done, as the complex was strongly affected by the land slides. In our opinion, the dwellings were probably rectangular, maybe with rounded corners. It is certain that inside them it was no hearth or other

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<sup>61</sup> Turcu, 1992, p. 271 f.

<sup>62</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2000, p. 31, fig. 5, 12.

<sup>63</sup> Leahu, 1963a, p. 23.

<sup>64</sup> Schuster-Popa-Barbu, 2012, p. 66.

<sup>65</sup> Schuster-Popa, 1997, p. 64; Schuster-Popa, 2000 p. 23 f., fig. 5, 7-10; Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 39; Popa, 1998, p. 130, fig. 3-4; Popa-Schuster, 2002, p. 114, fig. 4; Schuster, 2005, 116 f., pl. 14-15, 21.

special fittings. An exception is represented by a storage pit which was discovered in the northwestern corner of the *Dwelling no. 3*.

Also at Mogoșești, but on another spot (*Point 2*), two Tei II-dwellings have been investigated. The archaeological materials of the *Dwelling no. 1* were scattered on a surface of  $3.00 \times 2.00$  and those of the *Dwelling no. 2* on a surface of  $2.50 \times 2.00$  m<sup>66</sup>. These constructions had probably a rectangular shape as well.

It is interesting that all the dwellings from the *Point 1* were orientated Northeast-Southwest, while those in *Point 2* North-South<sup>67</sup>. It is obvious that their arrangement in the field was determined by the prehistoric configuration of the terrain, but also by the direction of the wind. Even if we cannot identify the entrances in the huts, we believe that they could be situated on the short side of their Southwestern part, respectively their Southern one. Also today, even during the cold seasons, the strongest wind blows from Northeast/North.

At Mironești-*Coastă* the rescue excavations carried out on a restrained surface have resulted in the discovery of a single Tei III hut<sup>68</sup>. Unfortunately, the possible dimensions of the complex could not be detected. The subsequent anthropic interventions have expanded the construction remains on a larger surface ( $3.41 \times 2.87$  m). Most probably the orientation of the hut was North-South. Inside the complex, a group of six middle sized stones and two almost entire recipients have been identified.

All three Tei III constructions investigated at Mironești-*La Panait* were Northeast-Southwest orientated. This conclusion is based upon the field distribution of the dwelling remains. The same like in the other case of this type from Mogoșești, we could not precisely determine the real dimensions of the dwellings. *Dwelling no. 1* had the archaeological material scattered on a rectangular surface of about  $1.97 \times 1.36$  m, while *Dwellings nos. 2 and 3* on oval surfaces, with the dimensions of  $1.46 \times 0.97$  m, respectively of  $1.21 \times 0.76$  m<sup>69</sup>.

All complexes had a hearth of oval shape (*Hearth no. 1* =  $0.54 \times 0.31$  m, *Hearth no. 2* =  $0.63 \times 0.44$  m, *Hearth no. 3* =  $0.52 \times 0.42$  m). They have been raised right on the ground surface, without any bed made of pebbles or ceramic fragments and having no reconstructions<sup>70</sup>. We should also point out in the case of these dwellings the same like in the site from Mogoșești, that their arrangement had taken into consideration the wind direction, so that the short side in the Northeast part was orientated against it.

The investigations carried out in the Tei III settlement from București-*Militari-Câmpul Boja* resulted in the discovery of the traces belonging to a dwelling (*Complex no. 41*), which were scattered on an approximately oval surface, of  $2.10 \times$

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<sup>66</sup> Popa-Schuster, 2002, p. 114, fig. 3; Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 39.

<sup>67</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 39.

<sup>68</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2008, p. 25, pl. II/C2L2; Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 39 f., pl. XVIII/2.

<sup>69</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2008, p. 27 f., pl. IV/L1-L3; Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 40.

<sup>70</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2008, p. 28.

1.37 m<sup>71</sup>. Without being certain, but taking into account the analogies, we believe that the dwelling had a rectangular outline, with rather rounded corners. In the probable perimeter of the complex, no traces of a special fitting were detected.

The Tei above ground dwellings (huts) excavated by us, showed that their construction technique was a relatively simple one<sup>72</sup>. This was identical to the one described before for the Early Bronze Age Glina culture. The walls were made of a trellis (wickerwork), which was woven on a wood frame, made of not too thick poles (from 0.04-0.12 m thick) whose traces, however, could not be detected in the soil as pole pits, but only in the adobe lumps<sup>73</sup>. Later the walls were covered with a layer of clay – up to 0.05/0.06 m thick, in which plant debris, like chaff and dung, have been mixed. In rare cases, such dwellings of this type have been provided with well-battered yellow clay floors<sup>74</sup>, and the roof was made, most likely, of reeds and other marsh plants, as documented by layers of ash resulting from the burned complexes<sup>75</sup>.

In our opinion, the most likely functionality of such constructions, even if the probable dimensions of some of them are very small, was that of a dwelling. This is true even if in some others there were fittings (hearths) that “consumed” part of the space. Generally, the above-ground dwellings of this type, functioning like temporary shelters, and being employed for a short period of time, were not solidly raised<sup>76</sup>. The fact that the dwellings from *Mironești-La Panait* had a hearth, while the others investigated by us at *Mogoșești-Point 1 and 2*, *Mironești-Coastă* and *București-Militari-Câmpul Boja* had not, could possibly be a hint that the former have been used just during the cold periods of the year.

An exception from the rule concerning its functionality could be the *Dwelling no. 4* from *Mogoșești-Point 1*, which apparently was a “shed”<sup>77</sup>. The inventory of the *Dwelling no. 1* from *Mironești-La Panait* comprised a significant amount of complete lithic artifacts (made of flint) finite, others being still processed, cores and debitage debris, fact which made us consider that there it functioned a stone craftsman workshop<sup>78</sup>.

In our attempt to a better valorification of the information regarding the Tei settlements and their constructions<sup>79</sup>, we have also used the results of older investigations, carried out especially on the territory of the Bucharest City. Therefore, at *București-Fundenii Doamnei*, the research undertaken between 1957-1958 in the Tei V settlement, have resulted in the discovery of a number of four above ground huts.

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<sup>71</sup> Schuster, 2005, p. 116; Schuster-Negru, 2006, p. 46.

<sup>72</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 41.

<sup>73</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2000, p. 24; Schuster-Popa, 2008, p. 25, 27 f.; Schuster-Negru 2006, p. 46.

<sup>74</sup> Schuster-Popa-Barbu, 2012, p. 66.

<sup>75</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 41.

<sup>76</sup> Schuster-Negru, 2006, p. 46 f.

<sup>77</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2000, p. 23 f.; Schuster, 2005, p. 117.

<sup>78</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2008, p. 27, pl. IV/L1.

<sup>79</sup> Schuster, 2012, p. 396 f.

At that time, Valeriu Leahu has mentioned that “*their shape and dimensions could not be detected*”, due to their preservation state<sup>80</sup>. Still, it is interesting that the constructions “*had inside, in one of the corners, open hearths, of rounded or oval shape*”.

Also, in 1958, some archaeological investigations had been carried out in the Tei IV site from București-Giulești Sârbi. On that occasion, from *Trench no. IV* have been recovered adobe pieces, scattered on a surface of 5.40 × 2.00 m, which, very probably, attested the existence of a dwelling “*raised above ground surface and constructed of a structure made of wattle and daub, covered with with clay*”<sup>81</sup>.

Even if we do not have any information about the dimensions of those three Tei I dwellings, or about the archaeological material resulted after the burning and falling down of the walls, as discovered at București-Cățelu Nou (archaeological campaigns 1961, 1963-1964)<sup>82</sup>, we know that they were “*in a completely precarious condition*”, being “*constructed on a wattle and daub structure, covered with a thick layer of clay mixed with straw*”<sup>83</sup>.

Several complexes have been discovered at Popești-Nucet in the various investigated areas, among them some dwellings being also detected<sup>84</sup>. George Tohani has mentioned four dwellings for the Bronze Age II and III layer from *Surface II*, without mentioning the cultural manifestation to which they have belonged. We do not have any additional data for the *Dwellings nos. 12 and 13*. We were told that *House no. 3* “*was identified in the Southeastern side of the section, through the presence of a compact wattle and daub mass containing also pebbles, on a surface of 1.50 × 1.10 m. On the profile it was visible as a pit, with a length of 1.20 m and a depth of 0.12 m, starting from the Br. I (Glina) level*”<sup>85</sup>. The complex also contained a hearth.

The archaeological research at Frătești-Dealul Lagărului<sup>86</sup> showed that the community living in this place had built an above ground dwelling, which “*was discovered in a precarious state of conservation. Its shape could not be either determined, or guessed, and its dimensions could not be estimated*”<sup>87</sup>. The remains of the complex were distributed on a surface of 6.40 × 3.00 m. This could suggest that “*the identified dwelling was not found in the place where it was raised, but its remains were carried away, as they slipped in time on the sloppy terrain*”. The pieces of wattle and daub with imprints suggest that the construction “*was raised on a wooden skeleton consisting of thick poles placed most certainly in the corners and maybe in some other places also; that the skeleton of the walls had also included twigs that*

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<sup>80</sup> Leahu, 1963b, p. 340.

<sup>81</sup> Leahu, 1963c, p. 221.

<sup>82</sup> The investigations of the year 1960 did not resulted in the descovery of any Tei constructions; see Leahu, 1963a, p. 23 ff.

<sup>83</sup> Leahu, 1965, p. 28, fig. 12.

<sup>84</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 40.

<sup>85</sup> Trohani, 1997, p. 196.

<sup>86</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 40.

<sup>87</sup> Leahu, 1979, p. 44.

formed a net (not knitted, but made by their adjoining, or overlapping); that the thickness of the walls measured sometimes 0.056 m”.

At Novaci<sup>88</sup>, two wattle and daub platforms have been identified, of an almost rectangular shape. The first of them had the dimensions of 4.50 × 2.00 m. In the central area of the ash-type settlement from Daia, “at the basis of the ashy soil, several massive burned wattle and daub remains have been found in association with pottery fragments. These remains represent the sole documentation of a platform from the Tei IV habitation from Daia, of some huts raised on a wooden skeleton covered with clay and straws. It was also noticed that the discovered remains were altered, as proven by the lack of any connection between the pieces of wattle and daub and by the fact that the soil did not have any traces of burning”<sup>89</sup>.

The archaeological research undertaken in the Tei IV settlement from Valea Stâinii-Vărzăria, even if not very extended, had permitted the identification of an above ground construction, whose clearly detected unique side had a length of 3.70 m length<sup>90</sup>. It is also interesting that two supporting pole holes have been detected. Traces of a second construction have been also identified, but its dimensions could not be established. This one contained a hearth, as well as a domestic pit.

Valeriu Leahu<sup>91</sup> had considered that the hut type dwellings of the Tei milieu had a surface that generally varied between 7 and 12 m<sup>2</sup>. Our investigations carried out on the Argeş river and also at Bucureşti-Militari-Câmpul Boja determined us to diminish the lower limit at 3/4 m<sup>2</sup> (Adunaţii-Copăceni-Dăneasca, Dwelling no. 1 = 8.13 m<sup>2</sup>; Mogoşesti-Point 1: Dwelling no. 3 = 4.25 m<sup>2</sup>, Dwelling no. 4 = 3.17 m<sup>2</sup>, Dwelling no. 5 = 8 m<sup>2</sup>, Dwelling no. 7 = 4.55 m<sup>2</sup>, Dwelling no. 8 = 5.60 m<sup>2</sup>; Mogoşesti-Point 2: Dwelling no. 1 = 6 m<sup>2</sup>, Dwelling no. 2 = 5 m<sup>2</sup>; Mironesti-Coastă: Dwelling no. 1 = 9.79 m<sup>2</sup>; Mironesti-La Panait: Dwelling no. 1 = about 3 m<sup>2</sup>, Dwelling no. 2 and 3 = about 2 m<sup>2</sup>; Bucureşti-Militari-Câmpul Boja = about 3 m<sup>2</sup>). We also share the opinion of Leahu, that the upper limit should be decreased from 12 m<sup>2</sup>, to about 8/9 m<sup>2</sup>. Everything that goes beyond this limit should be included in the category of the above ground dwellings and middle-large dimensions.

The most likely functionality of such dwellings was that of habitation place. Perhaps, at Mogoşesti and Mironesti-La Panait, one exception would be Dwelling no. 4 used as a “shed”, and Dwelling no. 1, used as “stone craftsman workshop”. This type of Tei above ground dwellings has shown that their construction technique was a relatively simple one, which was a very common one during Prehistory. It was identical to the previously described one for the Early Bronze Age Glina culture. The walls were made of a trellis, which was “woven” on a wood frame, made of not too thick poles (at Mogoşesti, at the small dwellings, with a thickness that varied between 0.05 -0.09 m) whose traces, however, could not be detected in the soil (as

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<sup>88</sup> Vulpe-Veselovschi-Buşilă, 1967, p. 87, 91, fig. 3. Schuster-Popa, 2010, p. 40 f.

<sup>89</sup> Leahu, 1979, p. 31.

<sup>90</sup> Dumitrescu-Miroiu, 2008, p. 23, pl. II, V/3.

<sup>91</sup> Leahu, 2003, p. 66.

pole pits), but only in the adobe lumps<sup>92</sup>. Later, the walls were covered with a layer of clay (up to the thickness of 0.06 m), in which plant debris were introduced (chaff, dung). In some cases, the dwellings have been provided with well-battered yellow clay floors (with maximal thickness = 0.04 m), and the roof was made, most likely, of reeds and other marsh plants, as attested by layers of ash resulting from the burned complexes.

The archaeological investigations undertaken in the 7<sup>th</sup> decade of the past century at București-*Văcărești*, enabled Cristian Țico to make a research regarding the remains of a Tei III construction of considerable dimensions (noted *B5*). The distribution of the archaeological material, the same as the presence of eight pole pits (with a diameter of 0.10 m, which deepened with 0.20-0.40 m from the antique level), positioned in the shape of the letter “L”, shows that this complex had a rectangular form, with dimensions of about 6.20 × 3.30 m, covering a surface of 20.50 square meters<sup>93</sup>.

Quite large has been proved to be the construction investigated by Dinu V. Rosetti at București-*Băneasa*<sup>94</sup>. Following the measurements of the archaeological material distribution, it was estimated that its sides had 6.50 × 3.50 m.

At Chitila-*Cărămidărie*, in *Level II*, the remains of a Tei II dwelling with the surface of scattering the archaeological materials of about 5.00 × 4.20 m<sup>95</sup> has been investigated. The complex, with a surface of about 21 m<sup>2</sup>, had also contained a hearth, being considered by its finder as being a portable one<sup>96</sup>.

In our own excavations, we had the occasion to investigate at Mogoșești an above ground construction with considerable dimensions. In 1989, by the use of several trenches (*nos. 2-7, 9*), a large surface dwelling has been studied (*Dwelling no. 1*)<sup>97</sup>. Its dimensions were subsequently proven, in 1993 and 1995, by the discovery of six pole pits (three on the Southwestern side, with the following diameters: *Postpit no. 1* of the Southwestern corner = 0.11m, *Postpit no. 2* = 0.13 m, *Postpit no. 3* = 0.15 m; two on the Northeastern side, with the diameters of *Postpit no. 4* of the Northeastern corner = 0.13 m, *Postpit no. 5* = 0.12 m; one in the central part of the complex: *Postpit no. 6* = 0.18 m), were 14.50 m on the long Northeastern side, 14.30 m on the long Southwestern side, 10.24 m on the short Northern side, and 10.46 m on the short Southern side. The distance between *Postpit no. 1* and *Postpit no. 2* was 2.04 m, between *Postpit no. 2* and *Postpit no. 3* it was 7.62 m, and between *Postpit no. 4* and *Postpit no. 5* it reached 21.32 m.

As interior fittings of the house, we mention three hearths (*nos. 1-3*), arranged in a triangle, in the center of the complex, two in the area of the long sides and the third, making the tip of the triangle, located near the Eastern side. Several patches of

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<sup>92</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2000, p. 24.

<sup>93</sup> Țico, 1981, p. 250.

<sup>94</sup> Rosetti, 1932, p. 11 f.

<sup>95</sup> Boroneanț, 1981, p. 201.

<sup>96</sup> Boroneanț, 1981, p. 197.

<sup>97</sup> Schuster-Popa, 2000, p. 27 f., fig. 5, 11.

rammed clay from intensive walking could be noticed, especially around the hearths. These patches were not part of the floors.

The inventory of the dwelling was quite rich in pottery, tens of small vessels, burned clay objects, metal, bone, horn, and pieces of wattle and daub, some of them of considerable sizes (up to 0.25 m in diameter) with traces of twigs and poles (with sizes up 0.17 m in diameter). The fire that destroyed the dwelling made the roof (constructed of reed and other water plants) to collapse towards the interior of the complex, creating an impressive layer of ashes (0.15 m thick). The walls also collapsed towards the interior, over this layer. Around the hearths, the quantity of ashes was larger than in other parts of the house, reaching 0.24 m near *Hearth no. 3*. This perimeter of ashes contained splinters of burned wood and mostly pieces of small animal bones.

*Dwelling no. 1* had a massif wood skeleton, with the sustaining poles arranged probably on three rows, two on the sides (for walls) and a central one. The distance between the poles of these rows was of about 2.00 m. It is difficult for us to say how the component parts of the structure were connected among them. It is certain that a net of twigs was made between the lateral poles, which were afterwards covered with clay mixed with chaff. Considering the shape of some wattle and daub pieces we can estimate the thickness of the walls at approximately 0.10/0.18 m. We do not know if the walls were whitewashed or painted. Only one fragment of wattle and daub had traces of a white matter. By its position of discovery, we assume it came from the exterior side of the wall.

The roof was double sloped and considering the uniform layer of ashes on the entire perimeter of the building it was most probably made of reed and other water plants. Even if it was high, as we consider, it is possible that it had some “holes” in it to evacuate the smoke produced by the three hearths.

In the first published excavation report we mentioned that “we can advance the hypothesis of a space dedicated to the cult, maybe to men’s or warriors’ gatherings”<sup>98</sup>. This assertion was subsequently strengthened when a “Clay platform”, slightly convex, of rectangular shape (2.33 × 1.75 m), with an uneven thickness of approximately 0.05 m, and a maximum quota of 0.88 m in the central area, has been discovered in front of the Northeastern side of the complex, with hearths at each of its four corners. “The Platform” was identified in *Trench no. 13*, north of *Pit no. 4* and *Dwelling no. 4* and east of *Dwelling no. 1*. Several repairs could be noticed, mostly performed in the Western side. The orientation of the “Platform” was North-Northwest-South-Southeast. It was built directly on the ground. Each of its corners was sided by a hearth. “The Platform” did not have an edge. Important piles of animal bones and few pottery fragments have been found on its entire surface, but mostly near the hearths. Many of the bones were burned. They were not found in anatomic connection. The material of the “Platform” was made of a good quality clay with rare impurities, mostly consisting in pebbles and minuscule pottery fragments.

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<sup>98</sup> Schuster-Popa, 1995, p. 148.

### 3. The dwellings (constructions) of the Verbicioara culture

The information regarding the constructions of this manifestation of the Middle and Late Bronze Age are rather lacunars and not conclusive, despite the rather numerous identified settlements<sup>99</sup>, out of which just a small number could be investigated. In 1961, Dumitru Berciu had written: “Über die Formen der Wohnbauten sind die Untersuchungen für die Verbicioara-Kultur noch im Gange und es liegen bis jetzt darüber nur unvollständige Angaben vor”<sup>100</sup>. Unfortunately, even after 50 years that followed this assertion, the knowledge about the dwellings could not be improved.

Discussing about the constructions, which have been generally considered as being dwellings, Gabriel Crăciunescu has showed that “diese hatten keine planmäßige Anordnung, sondern lagen verstreut im Gelände”<sup>101</sup>. In his opinion, “the dwellings (either above ground or deepened, our note) had their structure made of tree logs that were bond with thinner or thicker twigs. Upon this wooden structure it was applied a layer of clay mixed with chaff”<sup>102</sup>. He had also considered that “all the dwellings consisted of a single chamber”.

#### 3.1. Deepened constructions

In the Verbicioara IV site from Vierșand-Jupânești-Poarta Luncii (Gorj County), in *Trench no. 1* a pit house, with a rounded hearth (diam. 0.65 m) inside of it has been identified<sup>103</sup>.

#### 3.2. Above ground constructions

Even at Verbicioara, the eponymous site of the culture, during the different archaeological campaigns, have been detected remains “coming from the burnt huts and which must have been done with a large quantity of wood and reef”<sup>104</sup>. Unfortunately, their dimensions could not be established, as in the field they looked like irregular agglomerations of archaeological materials<sup>105</sup>.

At Dobra (Mehedinți County), in the Verbicioara I/II settlement, the remains of an above ground construction could be detected but, unfortunately, it could be just partially investigated<sup>106</sup>. This is the reason why it is not known too much about it. In the South-Western corner of the complex, a hearth with oven could be detected, as well as few pole pits<sup>107</sup>.

The archaeological investigations carried out at Rogova-La Cazărmi (Mehedinți County) have resulted in the identification of several above ground construc-

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<sup>99</sup> Crăciunescu, 1996; Crăciunescu, 2004, p. 15 ff; Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 133 ff.; Ridiche, 1999; Ridiche, 2000.

<sup>100</sup> Berciu, 1961a, p. 128.

<sup>101</sup> Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 161.

<sup>102</sup> Crăciunescu, 2004, p. 69.

<sup>103</sup> Calotoiu, 1994, p. 7; Calotoiu, 2009, p. 75.

<sup>104</sup> Colectivul, 1952, p. 150, fig. 8.

<sup>105</sup> Colectivul, 1952, fig. 8.

<sup>106</sup> Crăciunescu, 2002b, p. 79, pl. II.

<sup>107</sup> Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 161.

tions, whose purpose was considered to have been the habitation one (dwellings). In 2005, in *Trench no. XXVI*, such a complex was found on a length of 3.95 m and just on 1.15 m in width (the rest of it being not possible to be investigated)<sup>108</sup>. It was “served” by two domestic pits, discovered in its proximity. During the previous campaigns some above ground habitation complexes could be found. As some of them have been slightly deepened, the phenomenon was connected to the ambient factor, mostly with the soil and with the hydrographic regime of the zone. All of those dwellings had a rectangular shape (with slightly rounded corners) and with a width around 2 m<sup>109</sup>. It is certain that each of the complexes from Rogova had a pit with a diameter of about 0.60 m, “which had the purpose of collecting the humidity excess”<sup>110</sup>.

In the Verbicioara III settlement from *Ceplea-Valea Satului* (Gorj County), in *Trench no. 3*, in 2004 it was investigated an above ground construction with dimensions of 2.20 × 1.80 m, which had a hearth of considerable dimensions (1.05 × 0.98 m) in its South-Eastern part<sup>111</sup>. Other possible above ground constructions, but highly deteriorated, have been also discovered during the campaign of the year 2002-2003<sup>112</sup>. The excavations undertaken in 2008, had resulted in the research of an above ground dwelling, of small dimensions (1.40 × 1.65 m), with an outside hearth, situated nearby<sup>113</sup>.

Also for the phase IV of the culture, some above ground constructions could be found. We will mention here the investigations from *Vierşand-Jupâneşti-Poarta Luncii*, where, in *Trench no. 1* a possible dwelling has been detected, but its dimensions could not be established<sup>114</sup>. Yet, it is certain that it had a rectangular hearth (0.45 × 0.57 m). Another above ground complex could be found in *Trenches nos. 2-4*, but its real dimensions could not be measured<sup>115</sup>. More relevant information has been provided by the construction discovered in the *Cassette no. 1*<sup>116</sup>. The surface of material distribution had an oval shape, with maximal diameters of 3.65 m North-South, and of 2.95 m West-East.

In the opened surface from *Roşia de Amaradia-Coasta Burduharului* (Gorj County) the remains of a construction have been detected scattered on an almost rectangular surface, of 2.45 × 2.30 m<sup>117</sup>.

At *Oreviţa Mare*, one of the above ground dwellings, whose dimensions unfortunately could not be established, had a hearth which measured 1.00 × 0.80 m<sup>118</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup> Manea-Pădurean, 2005, p. 48, pl. II, fig. 1.

<sup>109</sup> Crăciunescu, 2000, pl. II-III.

<sup>110</sup> Crăciunescu, 2002a, p. 69.

<sup>111</sup> Calotoiu-Mărgineanu, 2006, p. 15 f., pl. II/1; Calotoiu, 2007, p. 37, pl. VII/1; Calotoiu, 2009, p. 74; Calotoiu, 2010a, p. 74; Calotoiu, 2010b, p. 62.

<sup>112</sup> Calotoiu, 2007, p. 37; Calotoiu-Mărgineanu, 2004, p. 20.

<sup>113</sup> Calotoiu, 2008, p. 67.

<sup>114</sup> Calotoiu, 1994, p. 8; Calotoiu, 1996, p. 50; Calotoiu, 2009, p. 75 f.; Calotoiu, 2010b, p. 62.

<sup>115</sup> Calotoiu, 2009, p. 76.

<sup>116</sup> Calotoiu, 1994, p. 8; Calotoiu, 2009, p. 76, pl. XIII.

<sup>117</sup> Calotoiu, 2008, p. 69, pl. XX; Calotoiu, 2010b, p. 61.

In the same site, in the case of another above ground construction, two pole pits could be found.

An interesting one was the construction from Cârcea-*Hanuri*<sup>119</sup>, which, due to its four hearths identified in its perimeter (the dimensions of the complex could not be established) most probably had another functionality than the one of a dwelling.

Most probable above ground constructions, have also existed in many other Verbicioara sites from Oltenia and Western Muntenia. There, by excavations, or only by surface surveys, some adobe lumps which came from the dwelling walls have been discovered<sup>120</sup>, some of them bearing traces of white color, meaning that they were part of walls painted with a white matter<sup>121</sup>. This aspect, in the opinion of some authors<sup>122</sup>, would “*meet the demands of some esthetic or sanitary necessities*”.

The upper part of the dwellings had a roof made “*of wood, upon which grass or water plants were put, while the floor, in some cases, was arranged by applying a layer of sand, or pebbles*”<sup>123</sup>. The floor was made of battered soil or, as in the case of the dwelling from Copăcelu, of stone slabs, of various dimensions (0.20 × 0.30 × 0.10 m; 0.25 × 0.30 × 0.15 m) on a length of about 2.45 m.

Regarding the shape of the constructions, most of the specialists consider it to have been a rectangular one<sup>124</sup>. Still, others were also mentioned, with rounded shape, like those from Copăcelu<sup>125</sup>.

We should emphasize here that, in the case of the Verbicioara culture it was also discussed about the ash-mounds (*zolniki*)<sup>126</sup>, specific to the late phases of the manifestation and identified, for instance at Orodell, Govodara and Orevița Mare. It is mostly possible that they could have represented the remains of above ground constructions<sup>127</sup>, “*gathered*” purposely in a certain place, that, in time, created those ash-mounds, or, like in the case of Orevița Mare, to have been in fact the ash resulted “*durch wiederholtes Abbrennen von Pflanzenresten*”<sup>128</sup>.

#### 4. Some brief conclusions

As we already mentioned at the beginning of this article, about the Glina, Verbicioara and Tei it was written a lot, especially in the past 15 years. Most of the information referred to the material culture, the aspects about the habitation being

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<sup>118</sup> Crăciunescu, 2003, p. 69; Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 161.

<sup>119</sup> Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 161.

<sup>120</sup> Berciu *et alii*, 1951, p. 242; Colectivul, 1952, p. 162; Schuster-Nica, 1995, p. 115; Crăciunescu, 1996, p. 37 f., 41; Crăciunescu, 1999, p. 8; Crăciunescu, 2000, p. 12; Crăciunescu, 2002b, p. 79; Neagoe-Neagoe, 2006, p. 165.

<sup>121</sup> i.e. Rogova: Crăciunescu, 2004, p. 69.

<sup>122</sup> Nălbitoru-Mărăcine, 2009, p. 35.

<sup>123</sup> Crăciunescu, 2004, p. 69.

<sup>124</sup> Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 161.

<sup>125</sup> Berciu, 1961a, p. 128; Berciu, 1976; Crăciunescu, 2004, p. 69; Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 161.

<sup>126</sup> Berciu, 1961b, p. 231; Crăciunescu, 2004, p. 67; Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 160.

<sup>127</sup> Petrescu-Dîmbovița, 2001, p. 283.

<sup>128</sup> Crăciunescu, 2005, p. 160.

not neglected, but having a smaller weight in some approaches. If about the settlement types it was previously discussed, the constructions were in a secondary position. This aspect was determined, as I said before, by the paucity of the data, which is determined by the research type, in most of the cases being surface surveys, or rescue/preventive excavations, by the extension of the excavations, by the way the materials were used and the dwellings constructed.

The dwellings remains, in the case that they were destroyed by fire, are insufficient for drawing relevant conclusions about all the aspects. Yet, some data about the construction type – above ground or deepened – their construction mode, the used materials are missing.

In turn, the information about the dwellings arrangement in the settlement, their dimensions, their inner fittings, their duration, their functionality has gaps and permitted just some speculations which, in fact, might not correspond to the reality of those times.

It was our wish to gather as much information as possible about the constructions of the Bronze Age in Oltenia, in Western and Central Muntenia. Our synthesis is based upon our personal investigations, but also upon the published documentation. Unfortunately, the later one was not always very clear.

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