

ARCHAEOZOLOGICAL NOTE CONCERNING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPLEX FROM FETEȘTI, SUCEAVA COUNTY

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Abstract. The present note includes the preliminary results concerning the faunal remains found in the archaeological complex from Fetești (Suceava County). The archaeozoological assemblage representing different cultures is described in comparative terms of the remains quantification based on the number of identified specimens. The animals discussed are mainly mammal species, both domestic and wild.

Keywords: Archaeozoology, Fetești, Domestic Mammals, Wild mammals, Cucuteni Culture, Horodiștea–Erbiceni Culture, La Tène Culture.

Rezumat. Notă arheozoologică privind complexul arheologic de la Fetești, județul Suceava. Prezenta notă include rezultatele preliminare privind resturile faunistice descoperite în complexul arheologic de la Fetești (județul Suceava). Eșantionul arheozoologic este descris pe baza cuantificării resturilor prin numărul de identificări specifice. Animalele identificate sunt în principal specii de mamifere, deopotrivă domestice și sălbatice.

Cuvinte cheie: arheozoologie, Fetești, mamifere domestice, mamifere sălbatice, cultura Cucuteni, cultura Horodiștea-Erbiceni, cultura La Tène.

Introduction

Fetești settlement (La Schit Point) is situated in the East of the Suceava County, at 15 km North-East from the Suceava City, on the Dradomirna Plateau (sub-unit of the Suceava Plateau), at right of the Grigorești River, affluent of Siret. Geographical coordinates of the archaeological site are: 47°42'41" northern latitude and 26°22'6" eastern longitude.

Archaeological research, having a rescue character, was achieved in consecutive five campaigns (2000-2004), under the coordination of archaeologist Dumitru Boghian (Boghian *et al.*, 2002; Boghian *et al.*, 2003; Boghian *et al.*, 2004; Boghian *et al.*, 2005a).

A surface of 355 m² has been excavated and divided in seven sectors. Many dwelling structures (fireplaces, furnaces, defence grooves etc.) were discovered in the site, they belonging to different historical levels: Chalcolithic (represented by the Cucuteni Culture), Bronze Age (represented by the Horodistea-Erbiceni Culture), La Tène and Middle Ages. A plenty of artefacts, including the animal remains, was found in the archaeological excavations (Boghian, 2005).

Material and Methods

Faunal assemblages analysed in the present note proceed from the consecutive five archaeological campaigns (2000-2004) in the Fetești site. Dating of the samples, according to the pottery patterns, was offered to us by the archaeologist Sorin Ignatescu, “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, Faculty of History, as followed: A₃-A₄ Cucuteni sample – 3500-3200 b.c./4350-4050 CAL. B.C. (after Mantu, 1998); B₁-B₂ Cucuteni sample – 3600-3200 b.c./3850-3500 CAL. B.C. (after Mantu, 1998); Horodiștea–Erbiceni sample – 2600-2300 b.c./3500-3150 CAL. B.C. (after Mantu, 1998); and La Tène sample – 450-300 B.C. (after Petrescu-Dîmbovița *et al.*, 1995). The

archaeozoological study was achieved in the Laboratory of Animal Morphology, Faculty of Biology. The study methodology has mainly consisted of anatomical, taxonomical and taphonomical identifications, encoding and quantification of data (Udrescu *et al.*, 1999). Animal species are described in this paper in terms of the number of identified bone specimens (NISP). The important number of small and taxonomically non-identifiable remains is the result of the high fragmentation that has been principally caused by the precarious conservation. The small fragments could be even underrepresented due to hand-collection.

Results and Discussion

Archaeozoological sample corresponding to phase A (A₃-A₄) of the Cucuteni Culture includes 240 faunal remains: 2 of molluscs (0.83%) and the rest of mammals (99.17%). Only 103 mammal remains were specific identified, because of them precarious conservation. As Table 1 shows, the domestic animals represent 76.70% remains, while the wild animals the 23.30%.

Phase B (B₁-B₂) of the Cucuteni Culture is represented by an archaeozoological material that is more rich (1126 remains) and various, but presents a high fragmentation because of the precarious conservation. This assemblage consists of molluscs (19.63%), birds (0.18%) and mammals (80.19%). Only 269 mammal remains were specific identified (from a total of 903 mammal remains): 221 of domestic species and 48 of wild species.

A number of 247 mammal remains corresponds to Horodișteea-Erbiceni Culture. Specific determination was made only for 76 remains: 78.95% of domestic mammals and 21.05% of wild mammals.

260 mammal remains represent the La Tène assemblage. The specific identified remains are only 109, as followed: 87 of domestic mammals and 22 of wild mammals.

Table 1. Chronological and taxonomical distribution of mammal remains.

Species	Culture		Cucuteni A		Cucuteni B		Horodișteea -Erbiceni		La Tène	
	NISP	%	NISP	%	NISP	%	NISP	%	NISP	%
<i>Bos taurus</i>	24	23.301	79	29.368	34	44.737	31	28.44		
<i>Sus scrofa domesticus</i>	26	25.243	73	27.138	14	18.421	28	25.69		
<i>Ovis aries/Capra hircus</i>	25	24.272	65	24.164	11	14.474	14	12.84		
<i>Canis familiaris</i>	4	3.8835	4	1.487	1	1.3158	5	4.587		
<i>Equus caballus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	8.257		
Domestic mammals	79	76.699	221	82.156	60	78.947	87	79.82		
<i>Sus scrofa ferus</i>	10	9.7087	17	6.3197	9	11.842	3	2.752		
<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	9	8.7379	12	4.461	4	5.2632	5	4.587		
<i>Cervus elaphus</i>	2	1.9417	13	4.8327	3	3.9474	13	11.93		
<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	2	1.9417	5	1.8587	-	-	-	-		
<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	1	0.9709	-	-	-	-	1	0.917		
<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	-	-	1	0.3717	-	-	-	-		
Wild mammals	24	23.29	48	17.844	16	21.053	22	20.18		
Total	103		269		76		109			

Domestic mammals

In the A Cucuteni level, the proportions of the three main domestic species (*Sus scrofa domesticus* – pig, *Ovis aries/Capra hircus* – sheep/goat and *Bos taurus* – cattle) are practically equal considering the smallness of the sample. The dog (*Canis familiaris*) remains are less frequent representing about 4% (Table 1).

As domestic species, in the B Cucuteni sample cattle dominate very slowly with 29%. Pig and sheep/goat come very close on the second and third place (27% and 24%). The dog remains represent only about 1%.

In the Horodișteea–Erbiceni assemblage, the cattle remains are obvious dominant with a higher frequency (about 45%), followed by pig and sheep/goat with less frequencies (18% and 13%). The dog has only one rest representing about 1% (Table 1).

The La Tène archaeozoological sample contains more of cattle (28%) and pig (25%) remains. The sheep/goat remains represent 12%, horse 8% and dog only 4%.

The analysis of frequencies of the skeletal elements generally shows a representation of all body-parts, without a specific selection.

Wild mammals

In the A Cucuteni assemblage, among the wild mammal remains wild boar (*Sus scrofa ferus*) is better represented having about 10% from the total number of the identified mammal remains. Roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) is on the second place as hunted species with about 9%, and other wild species have frequencies below 2% (Table 1).

Wild boar dominates the assemblage of the wild mammal remains recovered in the B Cucuteni level (6%). About 5% and respectively 4% remains represent red deer and roe deer here, while the two other species, hare (*Lepus europaeus*) and squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*) have about 2%, respectively 0.4% (Table 1).

The Horodișteea–Erbiceni level present a higher frequency of the wild boar remains (about 12%), being followed by roe deer (5%) and red deer (4%) (Table 1).

Concerning the La Tène archaeological level, we remark the larger number of the red deer remains (12%), followed by those of the roe deer (5%), wild boar (3%) and fox (1%).

Similar to the case of the domestic mammals, the analysis of frequencies of the skeletal elements generally shows a representation of all body-parts, without a specific selection.

From the ecological point of view, the list of hunted mammals suggests the exploitation of a certain biotope. Identified wild mammals were grouped using the NISP, according to ecological characteristics, as followed: forest species (*Cervus elaphus*, *Sus scrofa* and *Sciurus vulgaris*), skirt (transitional zone between forest and open field) species (*Capreolus capreolus* and *Lepus europaeus*), open field (*Equus caballus*), and eurytopic species (*Vulpes vulpes*). As Figure 1 shows, forest species are predominant in the B Cucuteni, Horodișteea–Erbiceni and La Tène assemblages, while in the A Cucuteni sample the frequency of the skirt animals has a more important value. That result could suggest an extensive open field area in the first phase of the Cucuteni period.

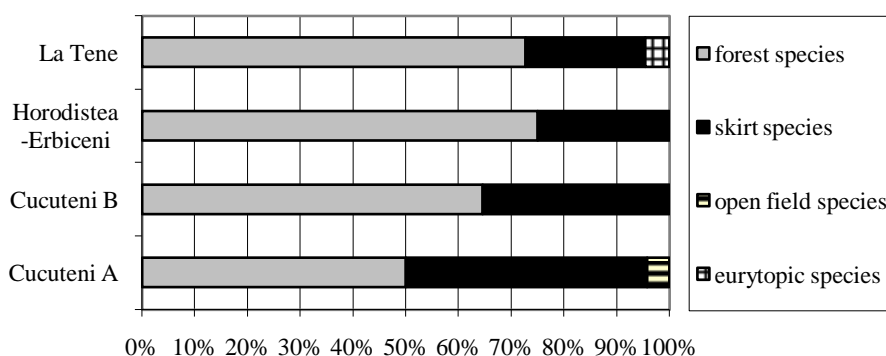


Figure 1. Distribution of wild mammal remains according to the ecological characteristics of the species.

Conclusions

Archaeozoological assemblages from Fetești archaeological complex present an important depreciation mainly because of precarious conservation.

In all of the four analysed assemblages, the frequencies obtained for the domestic species present high values, animal husbandry being of great importance during the periods of the Cucuteni, Horodistea-Erbiceni and La Tène Cultures. A relative equilibrate proportion of pig, cattle and sheep/goat appear in the livestock of the Cucuteni communities, while in the Horodistea-Erbiceni settlement cattle seem to be the most frequent domestic species.

Six wild mammal species were archaeozoologically identified for the A Cucuteni level, five in the B Cucuteni level and only three for Horodistea-Erbiceni and four in the La Tène level. Wild boar was the most frequent wild species in the Calcholithic and Bronze Age assemblages, followed in general by roe and reed deer. In the La Tène assemblage reed deer dominates as hunted mammal.

The dominance of the forest species, even the skirt ones, suggests the present of large forest especially in the proximity of the B Cucuteni, Horodistea-Erbiceni and La Tène settlements.

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