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Photo on the cover: gold earring from Zimnicea cemetery

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FAUNAL REMAINS FROM „PIATRA CRAIVII” FORTRESS (CRICĂU COMMUNE, ALBA COUNTY). CAMPAIGN 2008

GEORGETA EL SUSI

Keywords: Dacian fortress, Piatra Craivii, sanctuary, mammals management, kill-off patterns.

Abstract: The article deals with two faunal samples from the points “*Terasa Bănuțului*” and “*La Stână*”, collected in the 2008 campaign. 656 bones from the first location are distributed in proportion of 41.7 % to pig, 33.3 % to cattle and 19.9 % to small ruminants. 56 bones were collected from the second location, the majority of them belonging to cattle (65.8 %), followed by ovicaprids (18.4 %), pig (8 %), horse (2.6 %), dog (2.6 %) and beaver (2.6 %). The proportion of species and interspecific relationships significantly differ from the sanctuary, meaning the prevalence of cattle bones, basic species in supplying and utility (especially), in addition, new elements appear as horse and the dog. In fact, the sample from dwelling is typical of a settlement, with all the five domestic mammals, even if the sample is small. As in the first case, the game is insignificant in relation to food, the beaver hunting was done for fur.

Cuvinte-cheie: Fortăreața dacică, Piatra Craivii, sanctuar, exploatarea mamiferelor, vârste de sacrificare.

Rezumat: Resturi de faună din fortificația de la “*Piatra Craivii*” (comuna Cricău, județul Alba). Din campania anului 2008 au fost analizate două eșantioane faunistice, din punctele “*Terasa Bănuțului*” și “*La Stână*”. Din prima locație au fost determinate 656 oase, repartizate porcinelor în proporție de 41,7 %, urmate de bovine cu 33,3 % și ovicaprine cu 19,9 %. Distribuția oaselor pe regiuni anatomice, în cazul suinelor indică un procent de 36,8 % elemente din scheletul craniului, 30,6 % din cel apendicular (centuri și extremități proximale ale membrilor - părțile cărnose), 14 % din extremități distale ale membrilor-părțile seci, fără carne și 18,6 % din coloană. Ca vârste de sacrificare, până la un an, s-a tăiat un procent de 36,8 %, între 1-2 ani 28,9 %, între 2-3 ani 34,2 %. De fapt există două vârfuli de tăiere, până la un an și în jur de 2-2,5 ani. Repartiția oaselor de vită pe regiuni scheletice indică un procent de 16,2 % elemente craniene, 22,1 % părți cărnose ale membrilor, 18,2 % părți seci ale membrilor și 43,5 % elemente din scheletul axial. Ca vârste de tăiere, până la 1,5 ani s-au sacrificat patru indivizi (33,3 %), între 1,5-2 ani un exemplar (8,3 %), între 2-3 ani, cinci indivizi (41,8 %), iar peste 5 ani, două animale (16,6 %). Evident, din rațiuni economice, în cazul mamiferelor de talie mare, în speță bovine, s-au sacrificat fie animale mature, cu randament economic diminuat, fie exemplare sub-adulte (masculi în primul rând). De la ovicaprine s-au determinat 92 oase, provenind de la 3 capre și 5 oi, restul de 7 exemplare nu au fost identificate ca specie. În privința vârstoare de tăiere se constată un procent de 50 % animale sacrificate până la 18 luni, cu un „vârf” al tăierilor sub 3 luni (cel mai probabil începutul primăverii); un alt “vârf” de tăiere, pe la 21-24 luni. Puținele dimensiuni sugerează exemplare de talie mică și conformație gracilă, printre exemplarele femele identificându-se unul provenind de la un exemplar acornut. Proporția oaselor de mamifere vâdate este mică, înregistrându-se 5,1 % (pe resturi) și 9,7 % (pe NMI). S-au identificat oase de la cerb, căprior și mistreț. Din punctul “*La Stână*” s-au determinat 56 oase, în procent majoritar aparținând vitelor (65,8 %), ovicaprinelor (18,4 %), porcinelor (8 %), cabalinelor (2,6 %), canidelor (2,6%) și castorului (2,6 %). Proporția speciilor și raporturile interspecifice diferă major față de situația din sanctuar, în sensul prevalenței oaselor de vită, specie de bază sub raport alimentar și utilitar (mai ales) în epocă; în plus, apar ca elemente noi față de sanctuar calul și câinele. De fapt spectrul faunistic din locuință este cel tipic unei așezări, toate cele 5 mamifere domestice fiind prezente, chiar dacă eșantionul este mic. În cazul bovinelor s-a estimat o înălțime la greabăn de 101 cm (femelă); probabil în zona înaltă de la Piatra Craivii erau gospodărite un tip de bovine, de “*munte*” reduse ca înălțime, adaptate mediului respectiv. Ca și în primul caz, fauna sălbatică este nesemnificativă sub raport alimentar, vânarea castorului făcându-se pentru blană.

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Piatra Craivii (the Rock of Craiva) is a limestone massif (1,083 m altitude), located on the south-east side of the Apuseni Mountains (sub-unit Trascău), in the NW part of Craiva village and at about 20 km to north of Alba Iulia town. The place offers a good visibility over a large part of Mureș Valley, along the route of access to the gold mines from the Apuseni Mountains. The settlement and the Dacian fortress from “Piatra Craivii” were identified as the residence of the Dacian tribe – Apuli and the “oppidan” centre – Apulon. “*The archaeological site has distinguished, during three centuries of Dacian existence, as a settlement built on eleven artificial terraces dug in the native rock, than as an individual*

fortification... it was important also as spiritual, religious center”¹. Archaeological research performed in 2008 on “*Terasa Bănuțului / Bănuțului Terrace*” (located above the other ones) have revealed five temples rectangular plinth of limestone, characteristic of the Dacian kingdom, with a rich archaeological inventory consisting of pottery fragments, metal pieces and faunal remains².

Species distribution

656 bones were determined from “*Terasa Bănuțului*”, all collected from the trenches S VII-S VII

¹ Moga 2004, 79.

² Moga et al. 2008, 106-108.

Table 1. Distribution of species at Piatra Craivii-Terasa Bănuțului.

Taxa	0.32-0.66 m				0.66 m	
	NISP	%	MNI	%	NISP	%
<i>Sus scrofa domesticus</i>	193	41.7	38	52.8	43	51.8
<i>Bos taurus</i>	154	33.3	12	16.7	15	18.07
Ovis/Capra	92	19.9	15	20.8	23	27.71
Domestic mammals	439	94.9	65	90.3	81	97.59
<i>Cervus elaphus</i>	15	3.2	3	4.2	1	1.2
<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	7	1.5	3	4.2	1	1.2
<i>Sus scrofa ferrus</i>	2	0.4	1	1.3		
Wild mammals	24	5.1	7	9.7	2	2.41
Determined bones	463	100	72	100	83	100
Small species splinters	91				20	
Splinters	101				24	
Fish	1					
Total sample	656				127	

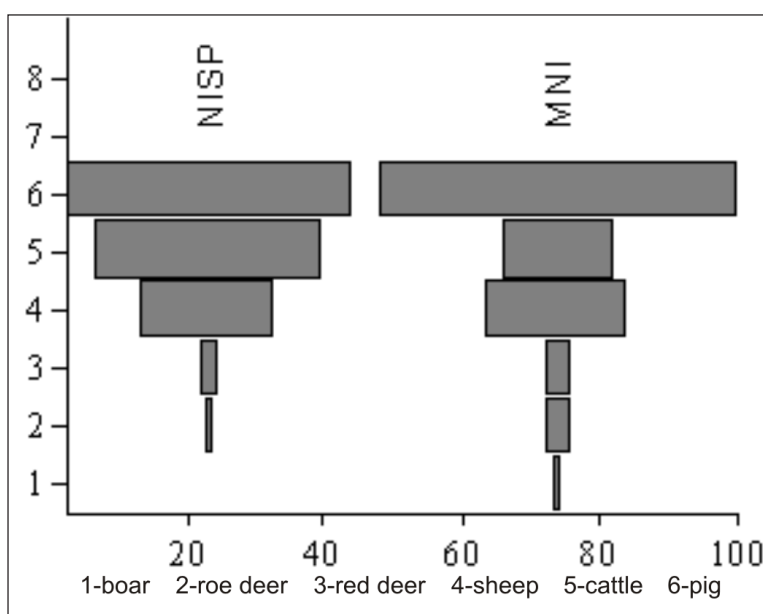


Fig. 1. Species distribution at "Terasa Bănuțului".

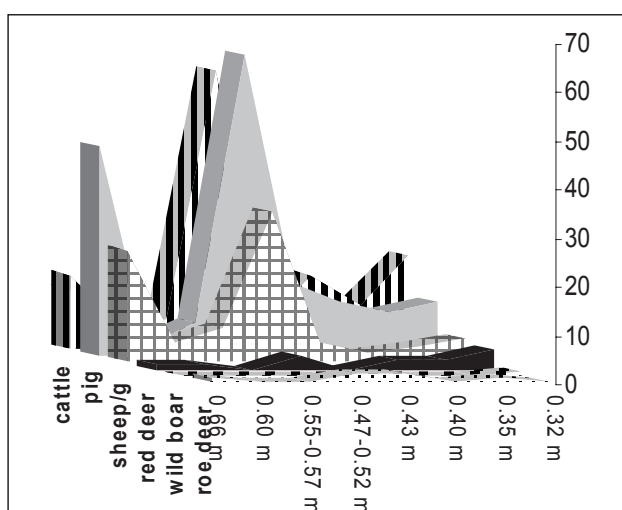


Fig. 2. Species distribution inside layer.

bis, from a depth of 0.32-0.66 m (the Dacian sanctuary perimeter). Of the total sample, 463 pieces are completely determined; the other 192 fragments are unidentifiable (91 of which belonging to small

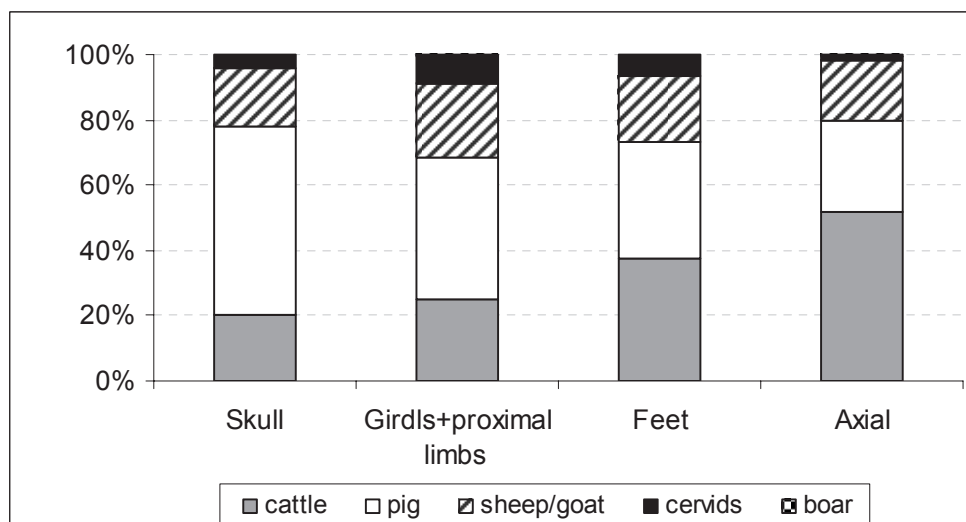
species, most likely ovicaprids/ pigs). A single fish bone, was determined – a freshwater species, a cyprinids. The sample consists only of fragmented bones, no whole pieces preserved, except for bovine phalanges, or astragali, calcanei of small ruminants and pig. The material is free from contact with fire; there is few evidence of butchery, just in two cases. It is about a proximal phalanx of cattle with fine incisions on the front, arising from the action of skinning. Also, a fragment of a cattle rib shows a cut trace, perpendicular on its length, as a result of the intention to dismember the carcass. Articulated bones were not identified, or having come from a larger region of the body. As a simple observation: the bones collected from the sanctuary area, are generally small-sized, whether they comes from small species (sheep, pig, goat), or represent small

portions of bones from large animals, e.g. cattle). Practically, mostly are the ribs, broken in small pieces. Osteological accumulation is reduced in taxa, so four domestic mammals (pig, sheep, goat, cattle) three wild animals (deer, wild boar, roe deer) and a fish taxon were identified. The dog and horse, common animals in Dacian settlements are missing from our list, suggesting a special character of the site. As to the distribution of bones, according to depths they were collected from, there are some remarks: a large accumulation of waste is observed at 0.47-0.52 m depth (about one third of the sample). Share cattle bones decreases from the surface (0.32 m) to 0.66 m. In contrast, the small ruminants, increase in number to 0.66 m, the hunted animals are more numerous by 0.43 m and then decrease (Fig. 2). For now, at this stage of research, we do not know if these findings have any relevance, however, it deserves to be mentioned. To note that, at 0.66 m depth a walking level was identified, dated in the second half of the first century BC³.

³ Information C. Plantos, thankworthy for materials and relevant suggestions.

Table 2. Distribution of body elements.

Element	cattle	pig	sheep/g	red deer	roe deer	wild boar
Horn cores			3			
Skull	5	25	3	1		
Maxila	7	24	2	2		
Mandibula	13	24	14	3		
Atlas	2		1			
Axis	3		1			
Scapula	1	6	8			
Humerus	5	6	3			
Radius	6	9	6	1	4	
Ulna	4	5		1	1	
Metacarpus	2	10	6	2		
Pelvis	7	15	3			
Sacrum		1				
Femur	7	7	4	1		
Fibula		1				
Tibia	4	9	7	1	1	1
Astragalus		1	1			
Calcaneus		4	1			
Metatarsus	3	7	7	1		
Centroquartal	1					
Phalanx I	11	1		1		
Phalanx II	6	1		1		
Phalanx III	5	1				
Ribs	38	27	13			1
Vertebra	24	9	9		1	
TOTAL	154	193	92	15	7	2


Fig. 3. Body parts distribution.

About 127 fragments, accounting for 19.35%, have been collected from that level. Species percentages differ somewhat from the overall statistics, meaning larger share of the pig remains, an 18% decrease in the rate of cattle, in parallel with an increase in the sheep, at 27 % (Table 1, Fig. 1).

Remains distribution on species and anatomical parts highlights the following issues: a quota of 36.8 % correspond to cephalic elements, 30.6 % girdles and limb proximal extremity – the fleshy parts and 14 %, the distal ends of limbs – no meaty parts, in

case of the pig. 18.6 % is the representation of spine elements, as vertebrae and ribs (Table 2, Fig. 3).

In contrast, the bones distribution of cattle points out the prevalence of axial skeleton elements (43.5 %), the cranial bones totaling no more than 16.2 %, the fleshy parts of limbs 22.1 % and 18.2 % the dry parts of limbs. The sheep/goat repartition proposes the following values: cephalic fragments – 24 %, axial skeleton – 26.1 %, proximal limbs – 33.7 % and distal ends of limbs – 16.3 %. Overall, except for feet bones, which total no more than 16 %, the rest of the

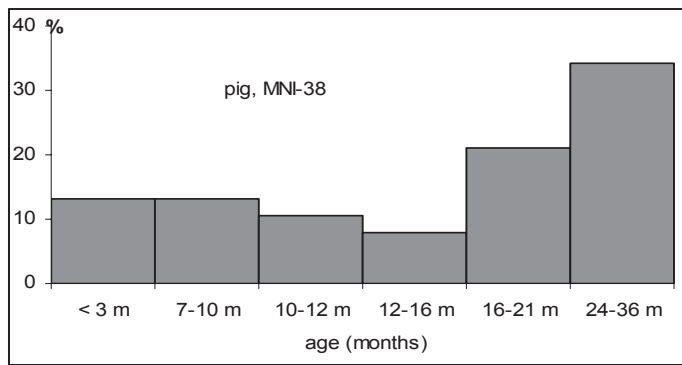


Fig. 4. Kill-off patterns of pig.

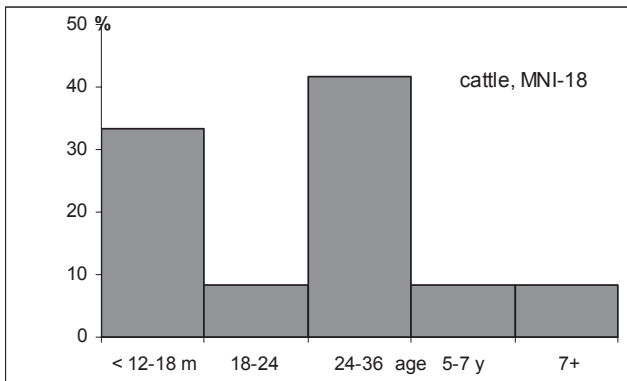


Fig. 5. Kill-off patterns of cattle.

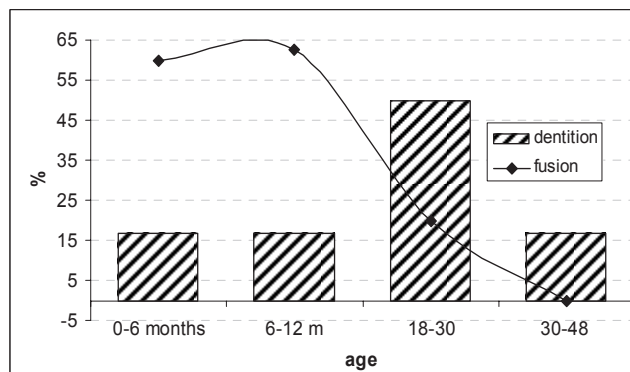


Fig. 6. Kill-off patterns of ovicaprids.

material represents only body parts with gastronomic value. Remains of skull do not amount more than 27 %, of which about half comes from pig. Accordingly, the share of pig as MNI (minimum number individuals) is very high, over 50 % of identified individuals belonging to them. With similar value the spine remnants are quoted, half of them belonging to the cattle. And finally, the last category-the proximal parts of limbs-is accounted for nearly 30 % of the total, with a slight predominance of the pig bones. As a conclusion, the dominant rate of elements belonging to regions with food value is another feature of this accumulation from sanctuary.

In the order of species prevalence, pig is the most numerous, with 193 bones (41.7 %) from 38 individuals (52.8 %). Cattle account for 154 bones (33.3 %), from 12 presumed individuals (16.7 %). The ovicaprids total 92 specimens (19.9 %) from 15 individuals (20.8 %), placing before or after cattle, according to calculation method. The share of hunted species is reduced to 5 % as remainders, and 10 % as number of individuals. Red deer is rated with 3.2 %, followed by

roe deer with 1.5 % and wild boar with 0.4 %.

Ages of death

The numerous maxillary fragments from pig have allowed good assessments of slaughter age and their detailed analysis. So, about 36.8 % was slaughtered up to one year, 28.9 % between 1-2 years and 34.2 % between 2-3 years (Fig. 4). Concretely, we have five piglets up to three months (M1 not erupted), afterward a pause in slaughtering and eleven exemplars between 7-12 months (M2 in different stages of eruption). Only three animals are identified between 12-16 months and eight animals (M3 in an early stage of eruption) between 16-21 months. A maximum rate of 34.2 % (13 exemplars) is supposed between 2-3 years (begins the wear of M3). Perhaps there was certain regularity in pig slaughtering, depending on productivity and its prolificacy per year, community needs, or some economic considerations. It seems that the proportion of males is slightly higher among culled pigs, a normal situation in terms of preserving the females for breeding. Regarding cattle, the shortage of dentition, allowed accurate assessment only for classes 18-36 months and 5-7 years. As for the animals slaughtered until 18 months, the estimates were made based on evidence provided by sutures of long bones. As said by statistics, four exemplars (33.3 %) were sacrificed up to 1.5 years, one animal (8.3 %) between 1.5-2 years, five individuals (41.8 %) between 2-3 years, and two animals over five years (16.6 %). So, a cutting peak has been recorded at juvenile specimens and another one at sub-adult animals (Fig. 5). Few slaughtering of mature animals were found, their percentage is about 16 %. Obviously, economic considerations have dictated the choice for culling, be it mature specimens decreased as economic performance, or immature males.

Regarding the small ruminants, 92 bones were determined, originating in three goats and six sheep, remaining six individuals not specifically assigned to taxon. According to epiphyses fusion, there is a prevalence of young animals and sub-adult, thus have been identified remains of two goats culled up to six months; three sheep and a goat were killed starting with 6-12 months (but not more than 18 months), finally, two exemplars of 18-30 months old were also presumed (Fig. 6). Basically, the survival rate is highest (60 %) up to a year, sharply decreasing towards 18-30 months to 20 %. Three goats and six sheep are presumed according to this criterion. On the basis of dentition, a rate of 16.67 % slaughtering up to six months was established, as up to one year; the maximum rate of 50 % refers to animals culled between 18-24 months and only 16.67 % between 3-3.5 years. All specimens recognized by dentition, are sheep. Therefore, the report sheep/goat, with a value of 6/3 suggest that goat is quite often used as an object of slaughter, or to replace the sheep and to preserve them from economic reasons, either, there is a certain abundance in flocks of small ruminants. In addition, the fact that small ruminants were

Table 3. Distribution of species at Piatra Craivii-La Stână.

Taxa	NISP	%	MNI	
<i>Sus scrofa domesticus</i>	3	8	1	10
<i>Bos taurus</i>	25	65.8	4	40
Ovis/Capra	8	18.4	2	20
<i>Canis familiaris</i>	1	2.6	1	10
<i>Equus caballus</i>	1	2.6	1	10
Domestic mammals	38	97.4	9	90
<i>Castor fiber</i>	1	2.6	1	10
Wild mammals	1	2.6	1	10
Determined bones	39		10	100
Splinters	17			
Total sample	56			

slaughtered in a large numbers in immature stages pleads for assigning a particular character to analyzed sample (or at least part of it). Most ovicaprids were killed during spring and few in cold season.

On the subject of red deer bones, 15 fragments originate from at least three individuals killed as it follows: one exemplar shortly after 27-30 months (definitive premolars just erupted⁴), another one over 2.5 years and the last one at a juvenile stage (according morphological observations). Let's note that, in case of this taxon, all body regions are represented, even the skull, suggesting that animals were entirely brought into the site after hunting and dismembered. Few comments on roe deer, the seven bones belong to three animals. There is no evidence provided by teeth, the assessments were made solely on sutures of the long bones. In this context, it seems that all the remainders come from animals aged than 15 months. It worth mentioning the abundance of radii, so four of the seven bones are radii, one is completely with the length of 184 mm. A single splinter of a proximal tibia, from an adult boar was identified.

Size and type of animals

Few anatomical measurements of the domestic livestock were made, because of excessive fragmentation of the bones. As at the other Dacian sites from Transylvania, the cattle appear to have been of small-medium sized type, but we do not dispose complete bones for evaluations of withers' heights. The few dimensions suggests the prevalence of low values, some but larger, probably belonging to males. In pigs, the data are more numerous, with assessments of height at withers. Thus, the size of pig varies 67.6-76.99 cm, with an average of 70.87 cm. They fall within the size ranges of the Dacian values recorded in some site from Transylvania as it follows: Merești, 66.7-74.2 cm (average 70.2), Covasna, 66.7-74.2 cm (71.7 cm)⁵, Sighișoara, 68.9-79.8 (74.1 cm)⁶ and Șimleul Silvaniei, 63.5-78.9 cm (72 cm)⁷. The small number of measurements from sheep and goat are not conclusive, for appreciations of their size. Just

⁴ Azorit *et al.* 2002, 111 and table 4.

⁵ Bindea 2008, 163.

⁶ El Susi 1996, 515.

⁷ El Susi 2008, 164.

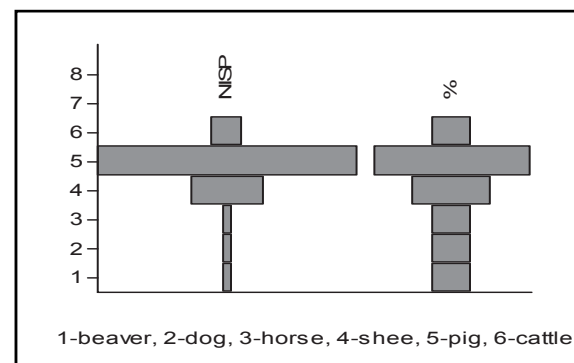
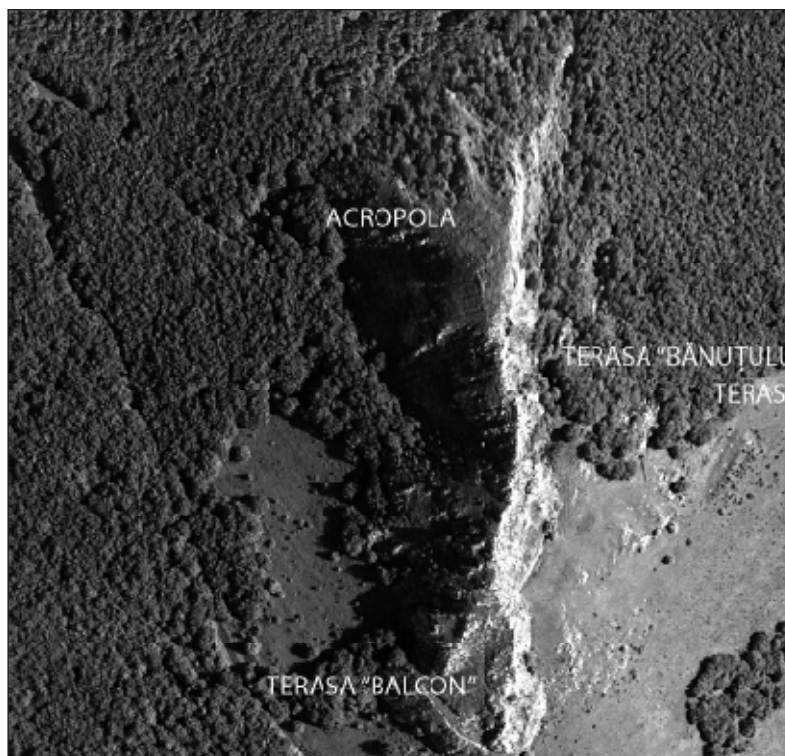


Fig. 7. Species distribution at "La Stână."

to mention, it was revealed a frontal from a hornless ewe; instead of horns, two small protuberances were found. Horns of this type are a rarity in the Dacian epoch.

The archaeological investigations on the terrace named "La Stână" brought to light remainders of a Dacian house with its components (hearth fire, waste pits) and diverse archaeological materials, together with 56 bones, all largely dated between the first century BC - beginning of the first century AD⁸. From the point "La Stână" were determined 56 bones, mostly belonging to cattle (25 bones - 65.8 %), followed by small ruminants (8 bones - 18.4 %), pig (3 bones - 8 %), dog and horse (one piece for each other - 2.6 %). Beaver is the only wild mammal found in the site. Beaver hunting probably will be made for fur. The proportion of taxa differs from that of the sanctuary, as expressed by prevalence of bovine bones, the main species, in food supplying and utility, in addition new elements appear the horse and dog (Table 3, Fig. 7). In fact, the association of taxa from that house is characteristic for a Dacian settlement, all five domestic mammals (cattle, sheep, goat, horse, and dog) are present, even if the sample is small. When cattle, a height at withers of 101 cm (female) was estimated; probably in the high area of "Piatra Craivii", the "mountain" type of cattle, reduced in height, well adapted to the environmental conditions was widespread. It is a very small size, even for cattle from Dacian contexts, similar values reported at Covasna

⁸ Moga *et al.* 2008, 106-108.



Instead of conclusions, some observations imposed by submitted data. Even if we are dealing with limited samples (mainly in the second case), however some patterns seem to take shape. Some differences arise from the faunal composition and species frequencies: concrete cattle bones prevail in the accumulation from dwelling (more than 60 %), unlike the sanctuary (33 %). From economic reasons, the cattle were less used as offering, although it seems, the community dealt with cattle breeding. Another finding, the small sized-species (pig, sheep, goat), easy to feed and breeding prevail in the deposit of the sanctuary. The pig, taxon with higher prolificacy and short reproductive cycle, will be easier to feed in the surrounding, so there were no problems with renewal pig herds, even in condition of excessive

Fig. 8. "Piatra Craivii" orthophotoplan, (cf. Plantos 2009, plate 1).

(105 cm)⁹, Piatra Detunată (105.6 cm¹⁰), Racoș-Tipa Ormenișului (107.3 cm)¹¹, mostly in settlements located in the mountainous regions. Bovine bones originate in at least four individuals, one culled at 2-2.5 years, another one until three years and another two over four years. Of eight bones attributable to small ruminants, five come from a sheep, cut in six months and one remainder from an immature goat. Three pig bones originate from an individual slaughtered just after two years. From a horse, a piece of talus, and from a dog, a portion of upper jaw with a premolar fallen, were identified.

It seems, there were favorable conditions also, for small ruminants feeding, especially goats. The dog and the horse were not the subject of offerings. Hunting was occasionally practiced. A low rate of hunting is found in both locations. A somewhat elevated rate of roe deer (the same as the deer, as MNI) may suggest a landscape with many forest glades. In the sanctuary were found only remains from species used in supplying, including fish. Repeat that, the age slaughter profiles emphasized, especially young and sub-adulte exemplars. And the most interesting aspect, a layer of only 34 cm thickness, has provided many bones belonging to 72 individuals (the bones were collected between depths of 0.32 to 0.66 m). It is necessary that future research clarify some issues.

⁹ Bindea 2008, 137.

¹⁰ Personal data.

¹¹ El Susi 2006, 272.

Measurements

Maxilla

Context	Taxon	P2-M3	M1-M3	LM3	Age
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	sheep	74.5	49.1	19.7	3-4 y
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	pig		63.1	30.6	24-30 m
SVII bis/C3b/-0.48 m	pig		58.7	26.1	24-30 m
SVII bis/C4a/-0.47 m	cattle		71.5	22.8	24-36 m
SVII bis/C2b/-0.35 m	cattle			28.9	36 m

Mandibula

Context	Taxon	M3		Age
SVII bis/C3b/-0.48 m	sheep	21.2		36-48 m
SVII Abis/C1a/-0.32 m	cattle	34.5		36-42 m
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	cattle	40.4		5-7 y
SVII bis/C2b/-0.35 m	pig	30.4		24-30 m

Scapula

Context	Taxon	SLC	GLP	LG	Age
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	sheep		37.6	27.4	
SVII bis/C4b/-0.52 m	sheep	19.5	34.4	27.2	
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	pig	21	33	27	
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	pig	20.8	30.5	27.8	
SVII bis/C4a/-0.55 m	pig	22.1			Subadult

Humerus

Context	Taxon	BT	Bd	Dd	Age
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	pig	29			
SVII, profil	pig	31.4	38	36.9	24-30 m

Radius

Context	Taxon	GL	BFP	Bp	Dp
SVIIbis/C2a/-0.43 m	goat		29.1	30.4	15.6
SVII bis/C2b/-0.35 m	roe deer	184		26.9	16.2
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	sheep		25.8	27.3	13.6
SVII/C5/-0.60 m	cattle		66.1	34.4	
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	pig			28.4	19.7
SVII Abis/C1a/-0.32 m	pig			32.2	19.2
SVIIbis/C2a/-0.43 m	pig			29.2	19.6
SVII bis/C4b/-0.48 m	pig			27.7	18.4

Metacarpus

Context	Taxon	GL/Mc4	BP	Dp	Age
SVII bis/C2b/-0.51 m	goat		24.1	17.1	< 18 m
SVII/C5/-0.60 m	goat		27.2	18.4	
SVII Abis/C1a/-0.32 m	sheep		24	17.6	< 18 m
SVII bis/C4a/-0.47 m	sheep		24.1	18.2	
SVII bis/C2a/-0.43 m	cattle		55.3	35	
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	pig	67			
SVII bis/C5a/-0.66 m	pig	69.5			
SVII bis/C4b/-0.52 m	pig	67.8			
Context	Taxon	Bd	Dd	GL/Mc. 3	
SVII Abis/C1a/-0.32 m	red deer	46.3	30		
SVII bis/C4a/-0.55 m	sheep	28	15.5		
SVII bis/C4a/-0.47 m	pig			74.5	

Phalanx I	Context	Taxon	GL	Bp	Age
	SVII bis/C4a/-0.55 m	pig	36.4	16.4	24-30 m
	SVII Abis/C1a/-0.32 m	cattle	50		12-18 m
	SVII Abis/C1a/-0.32 m	cattle	51.6		
	SVII Abis/C1a/-0.32 m	cattle	62.2	32.5	
	SVII bis/C4a/-0.47 m	cattle	52.3	28.4	
	SVII bis/C4b/-0.52 m	cattle	58	29	
Talus	SVII bis/C3b/-0.48 m	red deer	63.7		
	Context	Taxon	GLI	GLm	Bd
	SVIIbis/C2a/-0.43 m	pig	38.5	34	22.6
Pelvis	Context	Taxon	LA		
	SVIIbis/C5a/-0.66 m	pig	31		
	SVII Abis/C1a/-0.32 m	pig	32.8		
	SVIIbis/C2a/-0.43 m	pig	29.2		

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