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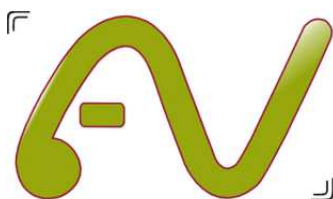
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MONUMENTAL: ARCHITECTONIC FEATURES AND INVENTORY FROM EUROPEAN NEOLITHIC AND COPPER AGE SANCTUARIES

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Abstract. În toate civilizațiile există statui monumentale. În general acestea reprezintă zei, personaje din panteonul diverselor religii, conducători, eroi sau strămoși. Termenul “monumental” se aplică în arhitectură, în arheologie și în istoria artei pentru a descrie obiecte supra-dimensionate sau clădiri precum templele, palatele sau sanctuarele. Termenul *monumental* se referă și la o arhitectură care a fost construită prin efortul colectiv a mai multor oameni. Templul 2 de la Parța este unul dintre cele mai bine publicate clădiri de cult din perioada pre-istorică europeană. Cea mai spectaculoasă piesă descoperită în Templul 2 este statuia dublă monumentală amplasată pe un soclu. Deocamdată este o descoperire unică în cadrul neoliticului de pe teritoriul României și cea mai timpurie descoperire de acest tip de pe teritoriul european. Statuia monumentală dublă reprezintă un cuplu divin format din două personaje deosebit de importante pentru religia neolitică europeană în general: Marea Mamă și Zeul Taur. Aceste două imagini sunt unele dintre cele mai puternice din zona mediteraneană, anatoliană și balcanică. Pornind de la această statuie am căutat și alte exemple de statui monumentale, cu accentul pus pe clădirile de cult documentate în neoliticul european. Elementele asociate cu statuile dezvăluie amenajări prealabile ale spațiilor comunitare religioase precum și începuturile unei adevărate noologii.

Keywords: Architectonic features, inventory, monumental, sanctuaries, Neolithic, Copper Age, Europe.

Three key terms such as monument, monumental and monumentality are used extensively by many disciplines, such as archaeology, architecture and art history in particular¹. We took a brief look at the types of monumental statues in several places and cultures, in order to get a complete picture. We noted some preferred places for monumental statues, like Ancient Egypt or Ancient Greece.²

For Greece and Egypt are common chryselephantine statues made of ivory and gold. Often these are religious figures, placed inside temples, like the statue of Minerva from Acropolis in Athens, made by Phidias, 12 meters high. Another example is the statue of Zeus from Olympia Temple of 13.7 m height³. Several categories

¹ Osborne, 2014, p. 3.

² Kipfer, 2000, p. 287.

³ Kipfer, 2000, p. 68.

of monumental sculptural art are recognized in Ancient Greece and Rome.

Megaliths are framed also in the category of monumental sculptures. The term is referring to any structure consisting of a tall statue. In Ireland and the South-West of England there are several examples which mark tombstones dating from the Neolithic and Middle or Late Bronze Age⁴. The term stela-menhir is also used for the same type of statue⁵. In Mesoamerican area a type of statue in natural size, made of stone was found, at the entrance in the temples⁶.

The monumental statues are generally associated with worship places. Connecting the statues found during archaeological researches with certain items from the same context, like large or medium altar boxes, tables, stelas, fireplaces etc., larger than the ones found in the same settlement, should be noted, as they may be an indicator for domestic or public sanctuaries⁷.

The term “monumental” is applied in architecture to describe buildings like temples, palaces and pyramids, clearly identifiable in the archaeological remains. It also refers to an architectural monument which was built through the collective efforts of many people⁸. Dan Monah, based on observation of a consistent group of statues, defines the following categories of anthropomorphic plastic representations: small (3–8 cm); medium (8–25 cm); large (25–50 cm); very high-over 50 cm in height⁹. Thus, those over 50 cm can be classified as monumental. Natural sized or oversized statues are not made in order to be moved, but to be kept inside the buildings and be presented to more people, like a family, clan, tribe, community¹⁰. Thus, the importance of monumental statues in prehistoric times derives from the fact that these cannot be moved or only with difficulty, so it is necessary to have a dedicated space for housing, presentation and for possible activities around it.

The monumental statues are generally considered to represent gods, characters from various pantheons, imperial leaders, heroes or ancestors¹¹. Monumental statues are of three categories: small-scale – smaller than natural representations; life sized – representations in natural size; and statues that exceed the proportions of the human body. The term monumental in Neolithic Age is applied also for some internal features from temples. We know that prehistoric religious display contained a number of elements related to a specific architecture, miniature ritual elements (small altars, figurines) and monumental religious elements, which often define the community buildings or the priest's house¹².

⁴ Kipfer, 2000, p. 302.

⁵ Kipfer, 2000, p. 302.

⁶ Kipfer, 2000, p. 61.

⁷ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2011, p. 113.

⁸ www.archeologywordsmith.com

⁹ Monah, 1997, p. 67.

¹⁰ Dietrich *et alii*, 2012, p. 46.

¹¹ Kipfer, 2000, p. 302.

¹² Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 304.

This study is based only on the analysis of monumental statues discovered in Neolithic and Copper Age from Near East and Europe. In this study we propose an overview on monumental idols and generally anthropomorphic representations, during the Neolithic and Copper Age. The idea of this study came from observing the monumental elements, particularly interesting, discovered in the Temple 2 from Parța, excavated and published by our famous and acclaimed Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici.

The place of worship is of various types and differently organized, depending on space and time, the degree of development of the community that builds an edifice for higher forces. The temple stands out in a settlement by its size and monumental inventory, unusual in a dwelling, as well as various facilities that are used for ritual. Also, the lack of typical household inventory of such buildings is a marker for a community building¹³.

From the functional point of view, the statues are classified into several types. Apotropaic statues are those that are assumed to have a positive influence on owners, removing bad luck or evil spirits¹⁴. A worship statue is presenting an image of a deity and it is housed in a temple. There is a wide range of materials from which the statues are made: wood, stone, ceramic, faience, and bronze. Some statues may have had garments, today lost, like textile clothing, jewelry or accessories¹⁵.

1. A short glimpse over Temple 2 from Parța

The temples from Parța were placed in the central area of the settlement¹⁶. Temple 2 from Parța is one of the best worship buildings published in Neolithic Europe. We do not want to reproduce what Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici already published on this subject¹⁷.

We intend only to synthesize information from previous publications and to draw attention to some essential elements of the Temple 2 building. Temple 2 was built on a consecrated place already established, i.e. Temple 1 (Fig. 1). The first building, more modest in terms of worship elements, had three distinct altars. The entry into the Temple 1 was framed by two massive pillars. Near them a large vessel with a human face was guarding the door¹⁸. In front of the entrance were found the remains of an unburned column, made of clay¹⁹.

Distinctive for Temple 1 are the three altars (Fig. 1). Altar table A was partially reused for the same purpose, and its function was preserved in Temple 2²⁰. The

¹³ Kovács, 2010, p. 80; Kovács, 2012, p. 34; Nikolov, 2001, p. 133.

¹⁴ Kipfer, 2000, p. 13.

¹⁵ Kipfer, 2000, p. 88.

¹⁶ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2007, p. 303.

¹⁷ Lazarovici Gh., 1989; Lazarovici Gh., 1988a; Lazarovici Gh., 1986; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006b; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2008; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 1985; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 1994; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2002; Rus, Lazarovici Gh., 1991.

¹⁸ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 211, p. 213.

¹⁹ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 309.

²⁰ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, I.2, pl. 82, 89/1, p. 91.

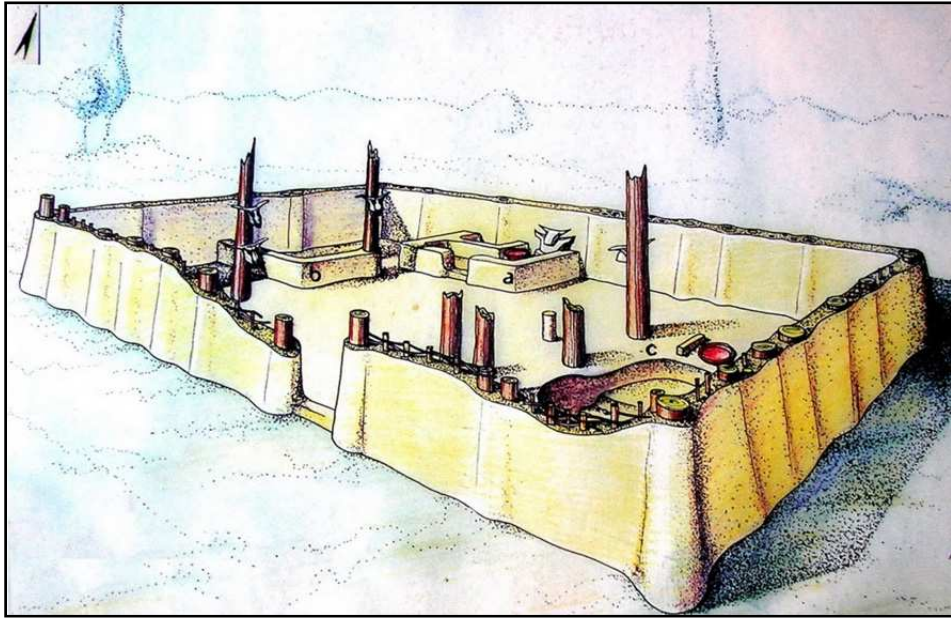


Fig. 1. Temple 1 from Parța²¹.

defining elements are: a hearth for burning the offerings, a pedestal supporting the monumental bust idol, a pedestal behind it where were placed deposits of ash from burning offerings, offerings deposit box, portable hearth broken in two, only half of it preserved²².

The culmination of religious life from Parța is reached during the use of Temple 2 (Fig. 2). It presents very spectacular elements, which are distinguished both by cultic function and monumental dimensions. This temple offers special information regarding the possibilities of reconstructing the rituals developed in worship spaces. Temple 2 has a rectangular shape, long axis on E-W axis. The dimensions are relatively large: $11,5 \times 6 \text{ m}^{23}$. The temple was divided into two compartments – the eastern and western one, separated by a wall built of poles and reed, supported by the central altar table. The wall separating the two rooms had a circular aperture with a diameter of 30 cm, covered later on with clay²⁴. In the central part of the building, on both sides of the wall, altar tables were set, on a length of 2,5 m, having a raised margin of 20–30 cm above the floor²⁵.

The entrance in room A of the temple was on the eastern side and at the top had a niche. Inside it was placed a monumental bust idol, a bull's head with horns. Another opening was probably used for some special occasions, having a form of

²¹ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 205, fig. 166

²² Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 305.

²³ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 207.

²⁴ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 210.

²⁵ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 211.



Fig. 2. Temple 2 from Parța²⁶.

window right in front of the monumental statue²⁷.

The most spectacular object discovered in the Temple 2 is the double monumental statue placed on a pedestal (Fig. 2). The monumental statue was inside room A facing east, at the middle of the space between altar table D and the eastern wall, slightly south from the longitudinal line, in front of the main door²⁸. The statue shows impressive measurements: height: 1,75 m; socket: 1,35 × 0,70 × 0,55 m; Double statue: 1 × 1 × 0,40 m²⁹.

The pedestal was made of clay mixed with sand and chaff. The body was also assembled from sand and wrapped in a cloth, then pasted with two layers of clay, fine smoothed on the surface³⁰. The pedestal was made in a unique technique. The decoration also highlights the object. On the edge it had a waist relief which ended the offerings trays placed on the sides of the statue. The northern and southern ends of the socket show a meander-shaped incised decoration and incrustated with white chalk powder, then painted with red ochre (Fig. 5). It is possible they represent stylized human figures³¹. Viewed from the side, the images would be figures in invocation position apparently supporting the trays with the arms.

²⁶ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, 1st cover.

²⁷ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 313.

²⁸ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 233.

²⁹ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, P1.2 pl. 8/1-6; 9/6, 11/3; 47/1-3, 48/1-3, 49/3-4; 50/3-4; 52/1-4; 53/1-4.

³⁰ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, I.2, pl. 49/2.

³¹ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 220.



Fig. 3. Temple 2 from Parța³².

The double statue represents two bodies. These were geometrically stylized and separated in the shoulder area. The two heads of clay were mounted in natural position. The right head was intentionally destroyed, but supposedly it was a woman, because in the anatomical position there is attached a womb of clay (Fig. 3). An attached belly and a repair of the statue were made after its manufacture (Fig. 4).

On the right shoulder of the statue are wavy zigzag lines, made with fingers in the soft clay. Such lines could present symbolically the smoke that rises from the burning offerings on the pedestal-tray, smoke connected with the Mother Goddess' shoulder, and then rising towards the sky³³. From the Bull God statue were discovered fragments of the ear, pieces of the forehead and the nose, as well as the right horn, so it is a secure reconstruction³⁴. The double monumental statue that was interpreted as a divine couple comprised of two characters very common in European Neolithic imaging in general: the Great Mother and the Bull God³⁵ (Fig. 4).

The reconstruction of the area in front of the monumental statue was possible by the discovery, in the immediate vicinity, of two fragments of a bull's head with remains of the horns. These were placed on columns that framed the eastern entrance³⁶. The meander decoration, incised and incrustated, with space between the

³² Lazarovici C. M. *et alii*, 2009, p. 56, fig. 1.

³³ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 233; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 223; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 1985, p. 39.

³⁴ Lazarovici Gh., 1988, p. 32.

³⁵ Suciu *et alii*, 2006, p. 16; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 233.

³⁶ Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 85.



Fig. 4. Double statue from Temple 2, reconstruction in Banat Museum, Timișoara (photo Gheorghe Lazarovici).

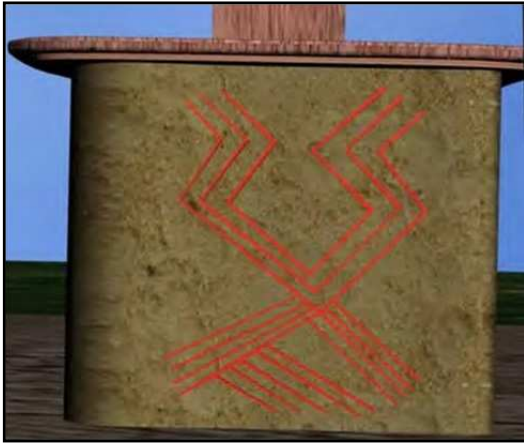


Fig. 5 The virtual reconstruction of the double statue's pedestal with the red paint incision³⁷.



Fig. 6 Column with bucrania in front of double statue (photo Gh. Lazarovici).

lines painted in red, is linked to a specific symbolism of the sacrificed bull³⁸.

The main entrance, the eastern one, was accompanied by a special window in front of the statue, having special role, like an opening for presenting the statue at special events or celebrations (Fig. 2). This window was framed by two columns placed inside. The tops of the columns were decorated with bull's heads made of clay, inside which had been incorporated original bull's horns. On the forehead and muzzle were incised bands encrusted with yellow color; the spaces formed were filled with red painting. The southern column presented above its' forehead an attached prominence of clay³⁹ (Fig. 6). This could be associated with the Sun, daylight and heat. The northern column might be representing the moon as a symbol of the night⁴⁰.

The eastern room comprises a series of proofs for ritual activities: a table – altar on which an unburned adobe goblet was placed, a fireplace in the shape of a large tray placed on supports, and another smaller altar near the entrance, on the north wall⁴¹. The blood goblet, one of the largest objects, was destroyed through combustion⁴².

A second room, the western one, had a special entrance on the western wall. A cult assembly for rituals was placed inside the wall, next to the entrance. A clay Moon was modelled near a circular hole in the wall, a possible representation of the Sun, which allowed light into the sanctuary⁴³. Under the Moon was a wall socket with

³⁷ Suciú *et alii*, 2006, p. 17, fig. 3.e.

³⁸ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 233.

³⁹ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 236.

⁴⁰ Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 85.

⁴¹ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 324; Monah, 1997, p. 32.

⁴² Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 326.

⁴³ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 336; Fig. IIIb.163.

a grinder, fragmented. Also, inside the wall two vessels were deposited⁴⁴.

The idol-bust staying at the entrance to altar “A” had been placed on a socket, destroyed, near a portable hearth⁴⁵. A double row of alveolus located on the idol-bust might suggest beads. In the idol there was a pierce (D. 2,5 cm) where a bull skull or a mobile head may have been inserted⁴⁶.

The destruction of Temple 2 is proven to be dramatic. The entire settlement from level 6 was set on fire, as a result of conflicts or long-time wars. Temple 2 and other buildings were destroyed with sling balls. The statue was intentionally broken. Elements were scattered around and the head of the Great Mother was transported and never recovered⁴⁷. Several cult elements inside the temple were intentionally destroyed and transported.

The buildings from Parța are intriguing through their features, vessels, anthropomorphic or zoomorphic altars, complete or fragmented, as well as their artworks in clay and bone. All these elements are adding compounds at the image of a complex worship place, with various rituals.

2. Magnificent statues at the beginning of Neolithic

Anthropomorphic monumental statues are known since the dawn of the Neolithic Aceramic (Pre Pottery Neolithic – PPN) in the Anatolian area.

The earliest human-scale representation is a statue discovered in Balikli Gol, near Sanilurfa, in Turkey. The statue is a man, carved in limestone, with black obsidian eyes, with an age of 12,000 years. There are not carved clothes or other accessories, except a possible V-shaped necklace. The hand’s position indicates that he holds a phallus (Fig. 7). The legs were not rendered. Under the body is a tapered block, which would allow its’ fixation in the ground in upright position⁴⁸.

Some sites are remarkable for monumental type representations. The earliest examples are found at Göbekli Tepe, Nevali Çori, ’Ain Ghazal, Tell Aswad, Jericho.

At Göbekli Tepe oversized statues are actually columns of stone shaped like the letter “T”, over five meters tall. They surround the stone walls of structures assigned chronologically around 9000 BC⁴⁹. Monumental columns inside the buildings belong to the third occupational level⁵⁰. There were published detailed research reports on this site⁵¹. Klaus Schmidt suggested that the site was a meeting place of several hunter-gatherers communities, a space where rituals were held, probably under the coordination of shamans. In the absence of evidence of some household activity one can hypothesize that this site served for regular gatherings. Going forward with the

⁴⁴ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 337, Fig. IIIb.165a.

⁴⁵ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, I.2, pl. 65/2-3.

⁴⁶ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, I.2, pl. 65/4.

⁴⁷ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 270.

⁴⁸ Hansen, 2006, p. 194.

⁴⁹ Schmidt, 2001, p. 49.

⁵⁰ Schmidt, 2007a, p. 84.

⁵¹ Schmidt, 2001; Schmidt, 2007a; Özdoğan, 2007; Katalog, 2007; Hauptmann-Schmidt, 2007; Dietrich *et alii*, 2012; Dietrich *et alii*, 2014.

idea, Brian Hayden believes it is a center where some regional elite was performing their rituals⁵².

Monumental, monolithic, columns are ornamented with bas-reliefs and repetitive themes derived one from the other, forming possible allegories⁵³. We note here the presence of several special architectural structures⁵⁴. Each building contains at least 10, but usually 14 or more columns⁵⁵.



Fig. 7. Statue found at Balikli Gol, near Sanilurfa, Turkey.



Fig. 8. Column with animal carvings from Göbekli Tepe.

⁵² Hayden, 2003, p. 206.

⁵³ Özdoğan, 2007, p. 63.

⁵⁴ Özdoğan, 2007, p. 63.

⁵⁵ Schmidt, 2007a, p. 84.

The arms and hands sometimes represented in relief on “T” columns seem like stylized anthropomorphic beings. The predominant images show dangerous wild animals that open their mouths with sharp teeth⁵⁶. The T-shaped columns were interpreted as supernatural beings or pictures of ancestors, characters protected by carved wild animals. After their use, the buildings were intentionally buried and filled with earth and gravel⁵⁷.

By 2010 around 20 monumental structures were estimated with about 38 columns (possibly anthropomorphic) with at least 48 different symbols, zoomorphic and abstract, in different combinations. All these elements suggest that the buildings at Göbekli Tepe were part of a symbolic, ritual, or a “universal” religion, a possible regional worship center for hunters⁵⁸.

At Nevalı Çori (Turkey), a site from PPNB (8600–8000 BC), two cult buildings were discovered so far⁵⁹. One was located on the outskirts of the town and partially buried. This building is distinguished by the fact that it has a central pole and pits, probably from other columns that were probably removed⁶⁰. Building 13 has a spectacular interior, showing 15 monolithic columns, with T-shape and impressive dimensions, made in the same style as those from Göbekli Tepe⁶¹.

The features from PPN sanctuaries are particularly impressive, considering the age when they were made, like monumental columns, altars, stone slabs used as stelae, painted floors and hearths sometimes painted red⁶².

Anthropomorphic clay sculptures, sometimes modelled over an existing bone structure, were discovered at 'Ain Ghazal (Jordan), Jericho (Israel), Tell Aswad (Syria), Beidha, Nahal Hemar, Yiftahel, and Kfar HaHoresh⁶³. We noticed proofs for several common funeral practices, including the use, depositing into special pits and removing anthropomorphic statues and statuettes, secondary burial practices, the removal of skulls and modelling over them⁶⁴. Human skulls were separated from bodies and given a new face by applying plaster on physiognomy.

Modelled and painted skulls from Jericho, Tell Aswad, and Kfar HaHoresh have captured the imagination and interest of the general public, as well as that of archaeologists. Keeping them in caches, the vertical standing position, being anchored to the floor, suggests that these were part of a complex of rituals, possibly repetitive. It is assumed that the statues were presented on special occasions⁶⁵. It is possible they were transported from one community to another as part of regular festivities⁶⁶. Clay

⁵⁶ Schmidt, 2007, p. 75.

⁵⁷ Verhoeven, 2010, p. 16.

⁵⁸ Verhoeven, 2010, p. 17; Hansen, 2006, p. 195.

⁵⁹ Mellink, 1984, p. 449.

⁶⁰ Özdoğan, 2007, p. 61.

⁶¹ Hauptmann 2007, p. 86; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 29.

⁶² Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 31.

⁶³ Kuijt, 2000, p. 151.

⁶⁴ Dietrich *et alii*, 2012, p. 46; Kuijt, 2008b, p. 172.

⁶⁵ Rollefson 2002, p. 172.

⁶⁶ Kuijt, 2008b, p. 183.

statues from 'Ain Ghazal produced a strong impression on the viewer, especially through the smoothness of face details. The statues are almost one meter high⁶⁷. During 1983 and 1985 campaigns 32 statues were discovered: busts and complete bodies in special deposits, cut into the dwelling's floor⁶⁸. At least two of these could be interpreted as being associated with the birth or fertility⁶⁹.



Fig. 9. Ain Ghazal plastered statues.

The statues were made on a structure of twigs and plant fibers bonded with clay, hollow on the inside. Over the structure was applied another layer of finer clay⁷⁰. Faces, hands and feet were modelled with artistic expression. Sometimes details of clothing or decoration were presented by painting (Fig. 9). The eyes are made from of a mixture of bitumen and copper ore⁷¹. The realism of the representations led to the conclusion that they might be real individuals rather than stylized figures⁷². The same embodiment is used in the case of the Jericho site. It is assumed that the skulls had wigs or other head decor items, as some skulls present traces of bitumen in bands, probably in order to have hair applied, like the skulls from Nehal Namar⁷³. In 'Ain Ghazal and Jericho sites some special statues were made, equipped with six fingers on hands and feet, lines painted on some faces, flattened bodies with highly stylized physiognomy, mouth puckered, small noses. In some modern cultures the genetic anomalies resulting in extra fingers are a means of identification of witches or certain individuals gifted with supernatural powers, which would explain their

⁶⁷ Kuijt, 2000, p. 151.

⁶⁸ Hole, 2002, p. 204.

⁶⁹ Rollefson, 2002, p. 171.

⁷⁰ Rollefson, 1983; Kingery *et alii*, 1988, p. 233; Kuijt, 2008b, p. 172.

⁷¹ Kuijt, 2008b, p. 182.

⁷² Banning, 1998, p. 197.

⁷³ Banning, 1998, p. 205.

representation in the art of PPNB⁷⁴. Smaller busts, with a height of 35–45 cm, have the same facial features as the statues, with great attention to the eyes⁷⁵.

Denise Schmandt-Besserat noted that the statues are developing in dimensions over time and this aspect could mean a change of the rite, from a household rite to a public ceremony⁷⁶. However these statues must be seen in the context of the sites where they originate. The local communities were very focused on a possible cult of the head. The attention to the making of physiognomies, the removal of the heads of small idols, the cutting and moving of human skulls after the interment, all are part of a deeper religious system⁷⁷. The number and the relatively large size of anthropomorphic representations could be related to the change in the way the body, the past and the social background were identified in agricultural communities⁷⁸. These, like the religious buildings, indicate a religious organization, with ceremonies that were probably coordinated by worship administrators⁷⁹.

Kathleen Kenyon⁸⁰ discusses the possibility that the skulls modelled with clay are representations of the ancestors. Angela Schuster interpreted the statues as spirits⁸¹, an idea supported by Schmandt-Besserat⁸². In the event that the statues would be images of the ancestors, they could have been used in rituals of exorcism and subsequently deposited to stop them from causing harm. Spirits are used in rituals of necromancy by transferring the evil from the person to a substitute⁸³. Gary Rollefson interprets double statues as representing a duality in the community that would reflect a cosmology or a union of two distinct groups, tribes, or clans. Zejdan Kafafi⁸⁴ suggests that the statues may represent mythical figures that protected the lives and fertility of the community members.

3. Idol for eternity: stone-made statues

We do not want to insist too much on stone idols, but they are important because of their size, and also because of the material used. Besides the large stele-columns from the temples, at Göbekli Tepe were discovered natural-sized anthropomorphic heads made of limestone. They show cracks in the neck, so it is likely they were much larger, or they might have been attached to a body (Fig. 10). Some of the heads were found in the filling of the structures, intentionally placed under the central pillar during filling and burial of the buildings⁸⁵.

⁷⁴ Schmandt-Besserat, 1998.

⁷⁵ Rollefson, 2002, p. 185.

⁷⁶ Banning, 1998, p. 227.

⁷⁷ Kuijt, 2000, p. 151.

⁷⁸ Kuijt, 2008b, p. 182.

⁷⁹ Cauvin, 2002, p. 246.

⁸⁰ Kenyon, 1957, p. 85.

⁸¹ Banning, 1998, p. 227.

⁸² Schmandt-Besserat, 1998.

⁸³ Banning, 1998, p. 227.

⁸⁴ Kafafi, 2005.

⁸⁵ Dietrich *et alii*, 2012, p. 45.

Some of the earliest monumental stone sculptures placed in the building of worship, appear at Nevalı Çori⁸⁶. All the monumental sculptures from this site, with one exception, occurred during digging the eastern bench of the Building 13. There were discovered 11 fragments with large and complex original representations. The sculptures are made of limestone polished with flint⁸⁷.

In the wall behind the niche in the eastern wall of Building 13 was discovered a fragment of a limestone human head, oversized; the preserved length – only the head – is 37 cm. The back is in the form of a bare skull with ears away from the head and there is visible in relief the representation of a snake⁸⁸ (Fig. 11). The monumental totemic pole of stone represents female figures or heads held with the claws by raptor birds⁸⁹.



Fig. 10. Heads from statues made in stone found at Göbekli Tepe⁹⁰.

The small stone statues repeat in miniature the themes of the monumental art and they give the impression that they were in fact models for reproducing images in a larger format⁹¹. Representations of people and animals on the massive stone blocks are uniform which shows either an artist with an articulated design, or that behind these monuments is a mythology and a certain vision of the world⁹².

On the European territory the site of Lepenski Vir, Serbia, still raises questions about the statues and their role in the trapezoidal houses discovered here. A number of buildings with monumental sculptures have attracted attention and can be considered, based on their interior arrangement and inventory, as sanctuaries⁹³.

⁸⁶ Hansen, 2006, p. 194.

⁸⁷ Hauptmann, Schmidt, 2007, p. 67.

⁸⁸ Hauptmann, Schmidt, 2007, p. 70.

⁸⁹ Hauptmann, 2007, p. 87; Hauptmann, Schmidt, 2007, p. 68; Marler, Haarmann, 2007, p. 53.

⁹⁰ Dietrich *et alii*, 2012, p. 45.

⁹¹ Hauptmann, Schmidt, 2007, p. 79.

⁹² Özdoğan, 2007, p. 63.

⁹³ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 36, p. 38, p. 42-43.

Inside L.54 a large carved boulder could be a small-scale representation of the column, which is an element that connects heaven and earth⁹⁴. Two painted stone sculptures were placed in front of the hearth, and beyond the stone sculptures were placed two children's graves⁹⁵. Both sculptures of stone, oval in shape have a meandering decor, probably a representation of water, originating element of life⁹⁶. In “the sanctuary under the rock” (L. 28) monumental stone sculptures that could serve to highlight the altar table or a flat slab of stone were placed inside⁹⁷.



Fig. 11. Antropomorphous head with snake from Building 13 at Nevali Çori⁹⁸.



Fig. 12. Monumental statue representing Mother Goddess from Lepenski Vir, Serbia

The religious manifestations are diverse, probably related to the worship of water and fish, as demonstrated by the unique fish sculptures, which are actually one of the first examples of monumental art on the European territory⁹⁹. These stone heads have anthropomorphic features and features related to fish anatomy, like mouth, scales, and eggs¹⁰⁰. The most numerous monumental statues are in the Ic level, with seven buildings containing large sculptures¹⁰¹. For example Mother Genetrix has 38 cm height¹⁰² (Fig. 12).

Although there are numerous publications referring to the settlements of the Lepenski Vir culture, it is still not totally clear whether the settlement on the right bank of the Danube is an ordinary one or it has a special character and therefore the

⁹⁴ Eliade, 2005, p. 381.

⁹⁵ Budja, 2006, p. 191.

⁹⁶ Gimbutas, 1989, p. 79.

⁹⁷ Budja, 2006, p. 192.

⁹⁸ Katalog 2007, fig. 96.

⁹⁹ Bonsall *et alii*, 1996, p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ Vlassa, 1972, p. 20.

¹⁰¹ Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2010a, p. 111-112.

¹⁰² Gimbutas, 1989a, p. 260, fig. 407.

buildings were used solely for the conduct of rituals¹⁰³. Nicolae Vlăsa stressed the similarities between stone heads from Gura Baciului and those on the Danube bank¹⁰⁴.

One possible interpretation of these extraordinary findings could be that they would show a cult of a stone head or human head in general, where prehistoric people located the spirit¹⁰⁵. Some researchers have noted the colors used in this site related to color red: red limestone on the floor, red ochre in the graves under the floors and hearths, the red painting or burn marks on monumental sculptures located inside buildings¹⁰⁶.

Monumental elements within Starčevo-Cris-Körös culture are not numerous. The stela from Gura Baciului (Cluj county, RO) could indicate a domestic sanctuary, being the only example of its kind in the whole site¹⁰⁷. The stela made of sandstone was found on the floor of house P24¹⁰⁸, associated with a cremation grave, over which was deposited a stone boulder. Researchers have interpreted the context as the manifestation of a ritual abandonment of the home of a “priestess” whose duties were related to fertility and fecundity¹⁰⁹. The stela shows particularly important traits related to female-male duality. A pair of breasts was carved on one surface. On the back one can see a phallus and possible drops (semen?) (Fig. 13).

The stela has holes with which it was suspended, two of them piercing the center of breasts¹¹⁰. Important to note is that at Gura Baciului were discovered a number of carved stones, anthropomorphic, deposited either in graves or in domestic contexts, on “trays” of stone¹¹¹.

At Orăștie it is a sanctuary with a monumental stone and foundation ritual in L.2, as well as other worship inventory in L.3, comprising several prestige and religious objects¹¹².

In Cucuteni culture, inside L1 from Scânteia was an impressive inventory: 75 anthropomorphic idols, of which 59 female, 10 male, six indeterminate, 30 zoomorphic idols, 7 zoomorphic protomes, one fragment from an anthropomorphic vessel, one copper needle, fragments from altar tables, a fragment of human skull, a large quantity of pottery and flint tools, along with a clay tablet with signs incised on one side¹¹³. An arrangement that stands out is the stone stela of 75 × 50 cm, with a relatively

¹⁰³ Gimbutas, 1991, p. 78; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2010a, p. 111-112.

¹⁰⁴ Vlăsa, 1972, p. 18; Lazarovici Gh., Maxim, 1995, p. 38; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M. 2010a, p. 111-112.

¹⁰⁵ Hayden, 2003, p. 253; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 44.

¹⁰⁶ Bogucki, Crabtree, 2004, p. 94.

¹⁰⁷ Lazarovici Gh., Maxim, 1995, p. 186, p. 400; Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 58.

¹⁰⁸ Lazarovici Gh., Maxim, 1995, p. 102.

¹⁰⁹ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 112.

¹¹⁰ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 113; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006a, p. 111-115; Lazarovici Gh., 2006.

¹¹¹ Lazarovici Gh., Maxim, 1995; Budja, 2006, p. 194.

¹¹² Luca, 1996; Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2011, p. 198.

¹¹³ Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii*, 2009, p. 63-64.

anthropomorphic form found in the interior, near the hearth¹¹⁴ (Fig. 14).

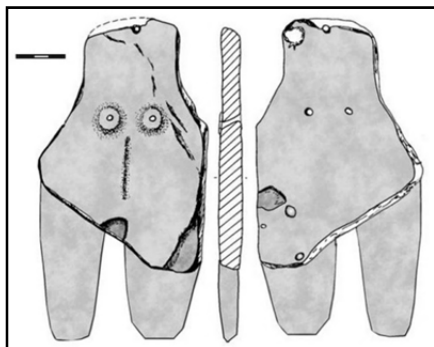


Fig. 13. Stela found at Gura Baciului in P 24¹¹⁵.



Fig. 14. Stela found at Scânteia¹¹⁶.

4. The goddess made in clay

Any study on monumental statues cannot exclude analysis on rich assemblies and mural art from Çatal Höyük. The Goddess of Anatolia was originally described by James Mellaart who coordinated researches between 1961 and 1965¹¹⁷.

The Woman and the Bull are meant to represent a divine couple, namely the Mother Goddess and the Bull God, being the most powerful images of the Middle East and Mediterranean area, starting in the early Neolithic¹¹⁸.

Mellaart documented over ten occupational levels with 32 buildings presenting monumental elements, such as benches, columns with bucrania, painted panels with various allegories and reliefs interpreted as goddesses in birth position. We note a stereotype (or pattern) on modelling, with hands raised as worship position with elevated legs as a birth position (Fig. 15). Mellaart published 12 female statues and one double relief with a female figure with breasts and one male (probably) (in building VII.1¹¹⁹).

From 1995 new researches started and the reliefs shows the same type of representations. Data are available online on the webpage of the project. Detailed reports from both old and new research clearly shows that social or religious organization is more advanced than in the previous periods¹²⁰.

The analysis of monumental reliefs on walls shows that goddesses' reliefs mainly occur on the eastern wall, the western wall is used with an average frequency

¹¹⁴ Chirica *et alii*, 1999, p. 13; Lazarovici C.-M., 2004, p. 51; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2007, p. 229, Fig. Vd.87.

¹¹⁵ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006a, p. 106, fig. 6.

¹¹⁶ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2007, p. 229, Fig. Vd.87.

¹¹⁷ Mellaart 1962, 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1975.

¹¹⁸ Cauvin, 2002, p. 238.

¹¹⁹ Mellaart, 1964, p. 56, fig. 14.

¹²⁰ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 73.

and only two cases are on the southern wall. The northern wall is not used for this type of element (Fig. 16).

Other fixed elements are oversized representations of bulls in frescoes and clay bucrania. We identified two main categories of bucrania: those showing a realistic bull head, by modelling made on animal skull and the bull's skull without clay deposited. Realistic bucrania is often placed on the walls. The eastern wall is usually used (Fig. 17).

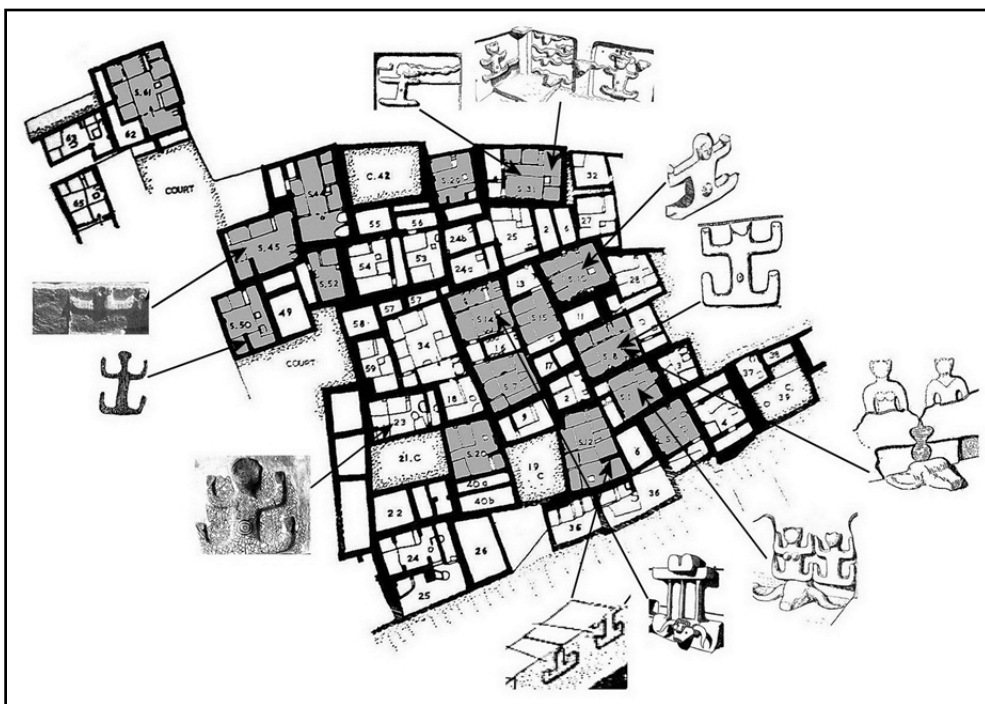


Fig. 15. Map of Çatal Höyük with Goddess reliefs in level 6 (based on Mellaart reports).

The largest individual clay statue from Çatal Höyük, 16,5 cm high (estimated 20 cm when complete), was discovered in a box for seeds in a small room from building A. II.1¹²¹. The statue is a woman with steatopygia which sits on a chair. The head was broken in ancient times. Between the legs is a child's head, showing the woman in the birth position. There are symbolic elements of visual impact, like the chair composed of two felines whose tails curl to the woman's shoulders. Her hands are on the felines' heads, presenting a position of power over the ferocious animals¹²². Most female statuettes found in this site had swollen abdomens, a possible indicator of pregnancy¹²³.

¹²¹ Mellaart, 1963, p. 93, p. 95, Fig. 31-32; Mellaart, 1967, p. 67-68, Pl. IX.

¹²² Mellaart, 1963, p. 46, Fig. 29-30, Pl. XXIIIb-d.

¹²³ Voigt, 2002, p. 281.



**Fig. 18 “Red-haired Goddess”
from Donja Branjevina,
Vojvodina¹³⁰.**



**Fig. 19. Life-sized statues from
Topolnica (photo Cornelia
Magda Lazarovici)**

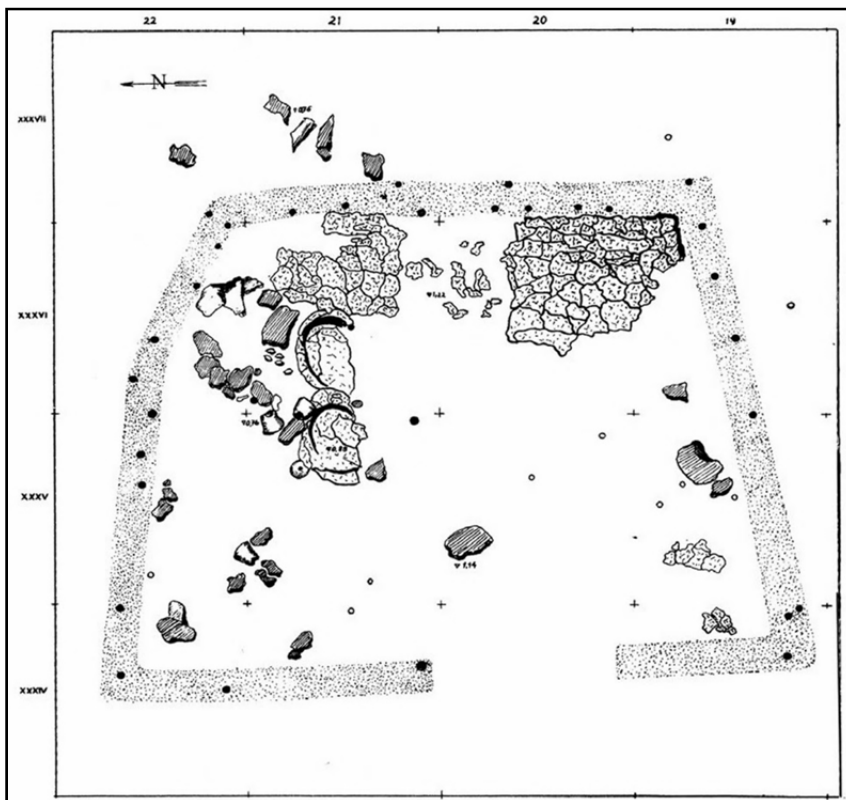


Fig. 20. The plan of the sanctuary found at Tumba Madžari¹³¹.

¹³⁰ Balj, 2008, p. 10.

¹³¹ Naumov, 2011, p. 13, pl. 1.a.

In Macedonia are published two religious buildings with unusual inventory: Tumba Madžari, near Skopje (Proto-Sesklo culture, Veluška-Porodin group)¹³² and Vrbjanska Čuka¹³³.



Fig. 21. Monumental idol found inside the sanctuary from Tumba Madžari¹³⁴.

House 1 (Fig. 20) had the walls covered with different designs, suggested by the colored pieces found¹³⁵. The exterior walls were decorated with fingers forming spirals that end with simple curls. The interior space was divided by a panel¹³⁶. The inventory includes askos vessels, goblets and pythos vessels. As features, there is a bench and an oven¹³⁷. The vessels and goblets were mainly put near walls, and they were meant probably to collect and preserve the blood sacrifice of slaughtered animals, later deposited as offering on the bench¹³⁸. The bench was incised on surfaces with zigzag patterns¹³⁹.

The altar used for sacrifices had 1 m². Near the altar a large number of small statues (about 15 cm preserved height) were found¹⁴⁰.

One of the most important discoveries is a monumental head, with a stylized triangular mask¹⁴¹. Considering a preservation height of 29 cm, it was probably higher (Fig. 21). Tridimensional images were located in the buildings corners where podiums for conducting rituals, pedestals for the altar, altar-tables were fixed¹⁴².

¹³² Sanev, 1988, p. 9; Kitanovski *et alii*, 1990, p. 107-112, fig. 1-7; Leuven, 1981, p. 12; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 112.

¹³³ *Cultura Macedonia*, 2008, p. 36-37; Angeleski, 2008, p. 20; Naumov, 2011.

¹³⁴ Šemrov, Turk 2009, p. 145, fig 41.

¹³⁵ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 76.

¹³⁶ Mitrevski, 2006, p. 22.

¹³⁷ Angeleski, 2008, p. 20.

¹³⁸ Sanev, 2006, p. 173.

¹³⁹ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001; Naumov, 2011, p. 16, fig. 2B.

¹⁴⁰ Zdravkovski, 2009, p. 45.

¹⁴¹ Lichardus-Itten, 1993, p. 102.

¹⁴² Mitrevski, 2006, p. 21; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 76.

Another remarkable temple is the one from Vrbjanska Čuka (MK), which currently is reconstructed in Prilep Museum (Fig. 23). Monumental statues and altars are like those found at Parța. Cult objects were discovered among the debris¹⁴³. In the eastern part of the building were two small altars of clay like tables with four legs, and on the south side was a higher one like a house¹⁴⁴.

A monumental altar was on the north-western wall of the building, in a designed area of 2 × 2 m. A special attention is drawn by the massive relief image on the north-eastern wall which extends diagonally up on it. This relief has the corners made of triangular zigzags towards the middle of the wall surface¹⁴⁵ (Fig. 22). A similar decoration in relief starts from the base of the wall façade, the south-eastern part of the sanctuary, and had a garland surrounding the entrance¹⁴⁶.

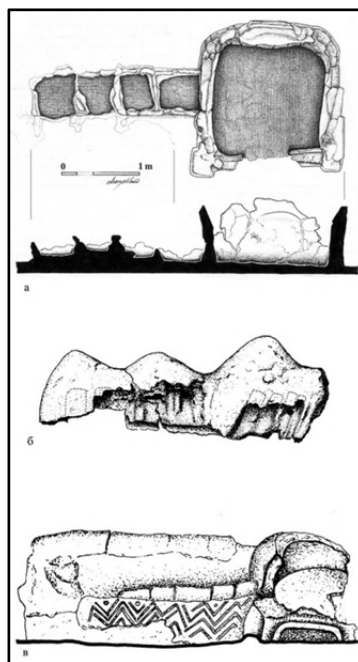


Fig. 22. The sanctuary from Vrbjanska Čuka: plan and section through the monumental altars¹⁴⁷.



Fig. 21. The sanctuary from Vrbjanska Čuka: the reconstructed altars¹⁴⁸.

Several monumental idols, discovered at Tumba Madžari, are important to mention, considering their height. An idol discovered in 1984 (Anzabegovo-Vršnik III culture) with a height of 29 cm, from which only the head was preserved, was

¹⁴³ *Cultura Macedonia*, 2008, p. 36-37.

¹⁴⁴ Naumov, 2011.

¹⁴⁵ Jovanović, 1991, p. 109.

¹⁴⁶ *Cultura Macedonia*, 2008, p. 36-37.

¹⁴⁷ Naumov 2008, p. 16, pl. 2.

¹⁴⁸ *Cultura Macedonia*, 2008, p. 37.

formed around a column of clay¹⁴⁹. Its' facial features are not prominent, the nose is small, the eyebrows are not highlighted. It is assumed that the head was separated from a totemic statue¹⁵⁰. Another cylindrical idol has a height of 18 cm.

It was the upper area of a specific lamp-altar, representing the Great Mother. The physiognomy shows closed eyes, carved in low relief. The coiffure presents a complex hairdressing¹⁵¹.

Another cylinder idol was found at the same site and was modelled also on wooden support. From the original lamp-altar only the head was preserved and is 14 cm in height. It has almond-shaped eyes and the eyebrows slightly raised are joined by a small nose. The mouth is a small circle. The body has small breasts, the arms are broken. The hairstyle is one that presents possible curls or afro style. The upper end of the head has a circular perforation¹⁵². A clay head, of impressive dimensions, a possible hybrid between anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representation was documented in the Vasilika area, Central Macedonia. The cultic context of discovery is complex, with multiple inventory items¹⁵³.

In Temple 2 from Parța has been documented a bust idol who was at the entrance to the Altar A and it had been placed on a pedestal near the portable hearth, now destroyed¹⁵⁴. The double row of alveolus located on the bust idol might suggest beads. In the bust there was an aperture (D. 2,5 cm) in which might have been introduced a bull head or a removable skull¹⁵⁵. Some analogies for this idol are found in the Balkan area.

At Elemir, near Zrenjanin, RS, was discovered a monumental idol decorated with a double row of alveolus on the chest¹⁵⁶. The preserved height is 18,3 cm, the width 16,2 cm, thickness: 10,5 cm, weight: 1,6 kg (Fig. 24). The physiognomy gives the overall impression of a bird-like face. On the back, on the neck and extending into the V-shaped front there is a double band of 3–3,5 cm wide alveolus¹⁵⁷. Based on iconographic analysis, the idol of Elemir was placed in the final phase of the Vinča culture¹⁵⁸.

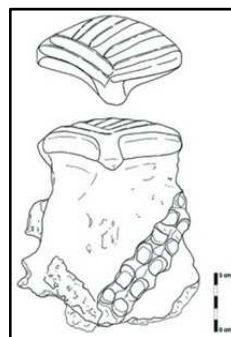


Fig. 22. The statue from Elemir¹⁵⁹.

¹⁴⁹ Nasteva, 2007, p. 57.

¹⁵⁰ Šemrov, Turk, 2009, p. 144.

¹⁵¹ Nasteva, 2007, p. 54.

¹⁵² Nasteva, 2007, 55; Šemrov, Turk, 2009, p. 164.

¹⁵³ Marangou, Grammenos, 2005, p. 22.

¹⁵⁴ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, I.2, pl. 65/2-3.

¹⁵⁵ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, I.2, pl. 65/4.

¹⁵⁶ Medović, 2009, p. 35.

¹⁵⁷ Medović, 2009, p. 37.

¹⁵⁸ Medović, 2009, p. 38.

¹⁵⁹ Medović, 2009, p. 40, fig. 5.

In the same style is the large idol found in Zau culture, with three signs of “V” incised or a “V” with another double V, a possible representation of consecration of the idol on its’ neck¹⁶⁰. Another case of monumental idol (about 16 cm height) from a special building was found at Zorlențu Mare¹⁶¹. In the lower layers of the building was found an altar¹⁶². The statue had been fixed on the wall and was found close to a ritual pit with a bull head¹⁶³. On its face were traces of red ochre painting¹⁶⁴.

Very good analogies for the cultic contexts from Parța can be found in the site from Kormadin (Vinča culture). The two sanctuaries from Kormadin, a site near Jakovo, require more attention due to the analogy of the elements placed inside to those from Parța.

In the first sanctuary (House 1 = L.1) the column plays a central role. The decorations placed on the central column of building 1, zigzags and the bucranium on its body, suggest that this column had not a purely functional role, but it became an element of worship (Fig. 25).

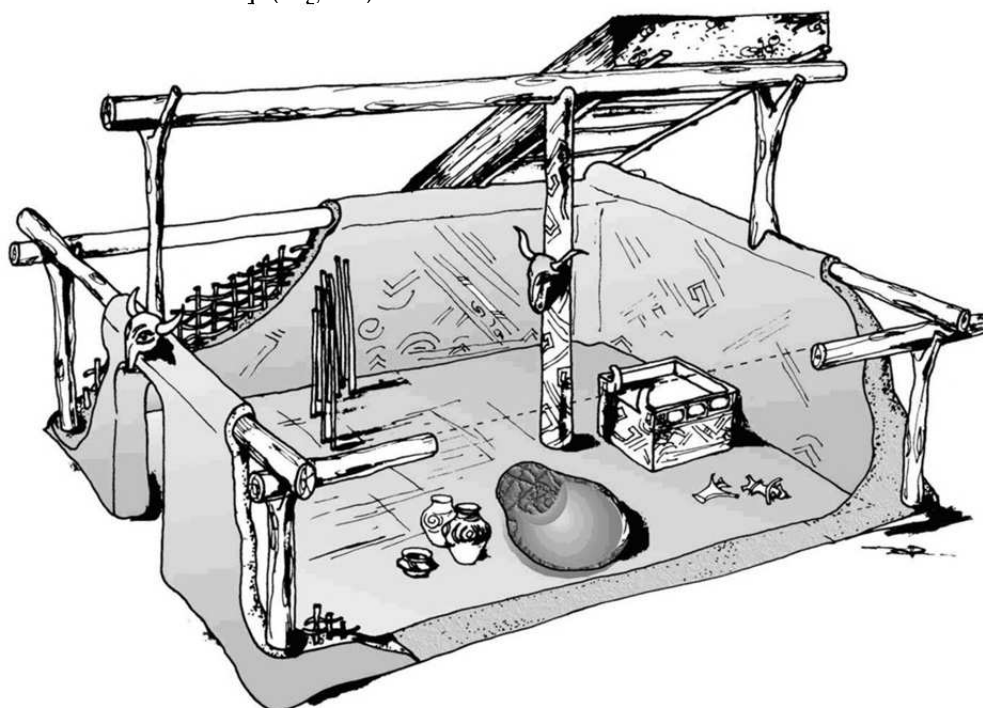


Fig. 23. Sanctuary 1 from Kormadin¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶⁰ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2011, p. 114.

¹⁶¹ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 137.

¹⁶² Radu, 2014, p. 164.

¹⁶³ Radu, 2014, p. 177.

¹⁶⁴ Radu, 2014, p. 178.

¹⁶⁵ Jovanović, 1991, p. 121, fig. 1.

The decorated walls, the hearth, associated with the seed box, also decorated with horns in relief, highlight the cultic activities related to the cult of the bull¹⁶⁶. The bench was destined to deposit offerings, transformed through burning¹⁶⁷.

Sanctuary 2 (House 2 = L.2) highlights other important elements, such as the two parallel columns flanking the altar table with a bucranium supported on it (Fig. 26). The oven and the hearth are placed in front of this altar. The central location of the altar, the double column gives the appearance of monumentality of this building¹⁶⁸. The sanctuaries from Kormadin are some of the most impressive Neolithic sanctuaries in the Balkan area¹⁶⁹.

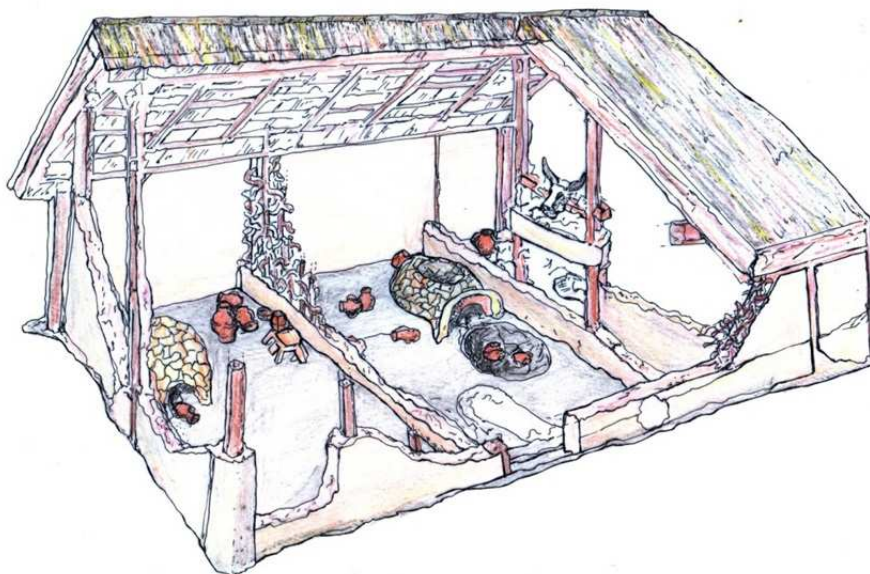


Fig. 24. Sanctuary 2 from Kormadin¹⁷⁰.

Many other statues between 20 to 30 cm in size are found in the Balkans. We do not have many data about the context of origin. The statue from Predionica, near Priština, framed in the late Vinča culture, is 18,5 cm high, seated on the throne, hands on hips. The physiognomy may be masked-type, because it has an oversized nose, big eyes and the mouth is missing. On the body the clothes are rendered by incisions and a medallion around the neck¹⁷¹. Another idol from the same area, Bariljevo, from which only the upper half is preserved, is 25 cm tall to the waist¹⁷². At Tărtăria are mentioned several fragments of monumental idols found by Iuliu

¹⁶⁶ Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 196.

¹⁶⁷ Jovanović, 1991, p. 120.

¹⁶⁸ Jovanović, Glisić, 1961; Jovanović, 1991, p. 122.

¹⁶⁹ Bulatović *et alii*, 2010.

¹⁷⁰ Jovanović, 1991, p. 122, fig. 2 (redrawn by Delczeg Eva).

¹⁷¹ Gimbutas, 1989a, p. 27.

¹⁷² Gimbutas, 1989a, pl. 2.

Paul, along with ceramic shards¹⁷³. In trench E, excavated by Kurt Horedt, was discovered a fragmentary foot of a large statue, over 25–30 cm. It is also mentioned a second piece of this kind from trench B without further details, a fragment that could belong either to an altar-table or to a vessel with legs. The third piece comes from the collection of Petru Balosin and it is part of a large statue if we consider that the sole is about 10 cm long. Only the right foot of the statue has been preserved and it must have been over 50–60 cm tall. The edges are ornate with dots¹⁷⁴. The context of discovery of these statues is very important. Unfortunately, for most of them we do not find details on the exact place of discovery.

In the area of the Gumelnița culture there are several interesting cases. At Tangâru, Giurgiu County, was discovered a monumental statue in Building L2¹⁷⁵. Inside were a bench of clay and a column of clay on the southern side of the building. Next to the column were fragments, leg and bust, from the monumental statue of over 1 m height¹⁷⁶. It is possible that the idol has been put on the bench, next to the column, and was an element of worship, representing a female deity¹⁷⁷.

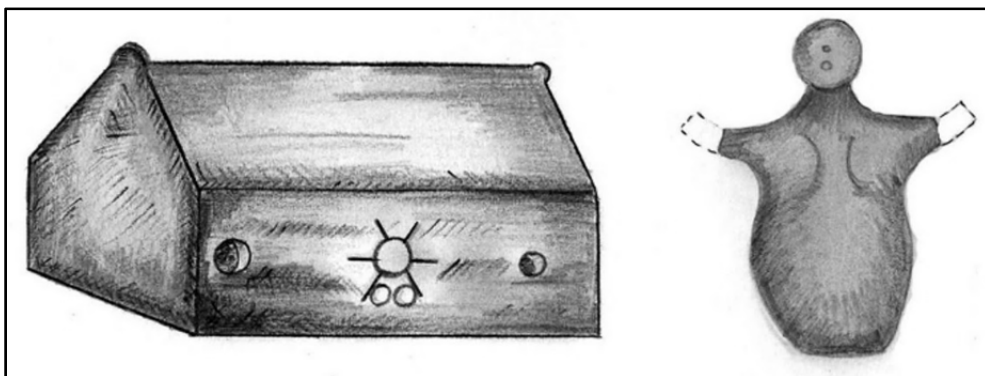


Fig. 25. Graphic reconstruction of the cult building from Teiu, tell 1 and the reconstruction of the great idol¹⁷⁸.

In the settlement from Teiu (Argeș County) were discovered two special buildings. There are mentions of a hearth, a table with rounded corners and semicircles cut in the edges and a bust idol on a pedestal (Fig. 27). The pedestal was a massive lump of clay and it held the monumental bust of a figurine with arms crossed on the chest¹⁷⁹. In the southern part of the settlement was discovered an interesting building with solar decor and a large flat idol with hands slightly rose. The chest revealed two

¹⁷³ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2011, p. 63, note 111.

¹⁷⁴ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2011, , p. 112.

¹⁷⁵ Berciu, 1961, p. 420-421.

¹⁷⁶ Berciu, 1961, p. 421; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 87.

¹⁷⁷ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2007, p. 136.

¹⁷⁸ Neagu, Măndescu, 2011, p. 84, pl. 4.1.

¹⁷⁹ Nania, 1967, p. 14; Andreescu, 2002, p. 15.

semicircular lines, curved outwards¹⁸⁰. At Hârşova (Gumelniţa A2) is mentioned a large anthropomorphic idol from which only the 50 cm high head is preserved, from a building equipped with two altars, among other elements of worship. The statue has been fixed on a pedestal¹⁸¹. From site Târguşor-*Sitorman* from Hamangia culture comes a foot from a large statue of clay (over 20 cm). The piece is shaped like a truncated cone and the foot is pronounced¹⁸².

Cucuteni Culture provides a number of examples in terms of various expressions of spiritual life, as well as proofs for deliberate cultic arrangement of space through foundation offerings and various rituals for abandonment of worship buildings.

Several fragments of monumental statues are known. From the site Izvoarele is known an anthropomorphic torso of a statue (Cucuteni Culture, Phase A)¹⁸³. The preserved height shows that it might have had, when it was complete, a height of 1 meter¹⁸⁴. At Hăbăşeşti there is a massive statue with geometrical decoration, a series of painted diamonds¹⁸⁵.

Monumental constructions and their inner structure show some similarities over remote geographical areas. Common elements of several cultures indicate a common origin of these communities and the circulation of myths related to religion or beliefs¹⁸⁶.

Truşeşti site is special because there were discovered a number of anthropomorphic stelae made in clay and large idols placed on columns. The sanctuaries within this site were classified based on their general characteristics into two categories¹⁸⁷: one room (L.24, L.38, L.40, L.60) and two rooms, equal or unequal (L.61 for the first stage of settlement and L.84 for the second stage)¹⁸⁸.

The religious buildings and the mobile inventory were presented on several occasions¹⁸⁹. The most famous statue from Truşeşti is a double one, found in building L. 24¹⁹⁰. Cornelia Magda Lazarovici made a first reconstruction of the context described in reports by placing the objects in the areas shown by the original plans¹⁹¹. The monumental altar presents two anthropomorphic characters, stylized, and united in the thorax area¹⁹². There are few analogies of this object with the statue found at

¹⁸⁰ Neagu, Măndescu, 2011, p. 84, Pl. 4; Nania, 1967, p. 15.

¹⁸¹ Haşotti, 1997, p. 80-81; Andreescu, 2002, p. 15.

¹⁸² Haşotti, Wiśoşenski, 1984, p. 45; Haşotti, 1986, p. 32, pl.2/8.

¹⁸³ Vulpe, 1957, p. 230, 230/231; Monah, 1997, p. 39, 10/1; n. 86.

¹⁸⁴ Vulpe, 1957, fig. 230-231.

¹⁸⁵ Chirica, Văleanu, 2008, p. 89.

¹⁸⁶ Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii*, 2009, p. 56.

¹⁸⁷ Lazarovici C.-M., 2004, p. 53.

¹⁸⁸ Petrescu-Dîmboviţa *et alii*, 1999, p. 121, fig. 88; p. 160, fig. 116, 147/5, 165/8, 170/14, 175/2, 313/4; Maxim-Kalmar, Tarcea, 1999, p. 670.

¹⁸⁹ Gimbutas, 1984, p. 77, fig. 43; Monah, Cucuş, 1985, p. 156; Sandars, 1985, p. 201; Lazarovici C.-M., 2004, p. 47, 49, fig. 1; Monah, 1997, p. 37-38, n. 72.

¹⁹⁰ Monah, 1997, p. 37, n. 72.

¹⁹¹ Lazarovici C.-M., 2004, p. 47.

¹⁹² Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii*, 2009, p. 57.

Parța. First is the womb, which in this case presents pregnancy¹⁹³. The three small columns on the womb may be related to the first three months of pregnancy, and the next six columns added would form the nine months of gestation¹⁹⁴.

Near the statue from Parța there was a large vessel for collecting blood. The statue from Trușești has the heads as two hollowed chalices¹⁹⁵. The englopions are representing a possible sign of distinction. The discoverer's opinion is that it was a "temple facade"¹⁹⁶, a divine couple¹⁹⁷, later seen as a pair of goddesses¹⁹⁸. Researchers Cornelia Magda Lazarovici and Gheorghe Lazarovici consider that the altar is a divine pair, presenting Mother Goddess and her acolyte, and they relate the statue with fertility and fecundity represented by the attached womb¹⁹⁹. Another building, L.60 displays a hollow monumental idol, 60 cm high, associated with the hearth. It may have been modelled directly on a column of clay²⁰⁰. Other items found here are: the hearth, a large flat axe, a bowl with incised decoration and ten fragmented vessels²⁰¹. Eleven different items were found in building L.60²⁰². The inner stela found had orante shape facing towards east²⁰³. It could also display a trinity, three similar figures, or maybe three protector gods. Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița interpreted it as a worship position due to raised arms²⁰⁴, idea shared by other researchers of prehistoric religion²⁰⁵. A stela made of clay, carefully decorated was found in L.38. The anthropomorphic representation is 55 cm high and 34,2 cm wide. It is a human silhouette decorated with grooves. The upper part was broken²⁰⁶. The entire inventory shows that this building had a social role, possibly the house of a cult leader or a ritual coordinator²⁰⁷.

A communitarian building is L.61²⁰⁸ where two altar tables were documented²⁰⁹. The two circular idols with hollowed chalices were located at a certain

¹⁹³ Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 89.

¹⁹⁴ Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 90; Lazarovici C.-M., 2004, p. 47; Lazarovici C.-M. et alii, 2009, p. 58.

¹⁹⁵ Lazarovici C.-M. et alii, 2009, p. 58.

¹⁹⁶ Petrescu-Dîmbovița et alii, 1999, p. 529.

¹⁹⁷ Dumitrescu Vl., 1974, p. 78-79.

¹⁹⁸ Monah, 1997, p. 212.

¹⁹⁹ Lazarovici C.-M. et alii, 2009, p. 58.

²⁰⁰ Lazarovici C.-M. et alii, 2009, p. 59.

²⁰¹ Petrescu-Dîmbovița et alii, 1999, p. 117-121.

²⁰² Lazarovici C.-M. et alii, 2009, p. 59.

²⁰³ Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 89.

²⁰⁴ Petrescu-Dîmbovița et alii, 1999, p. 88-89, fig. 67.

²⁰⁵ Monah, 1997, p. 38, fig. 9/1; Lazarovici C.-M., 2004, p. 47, fig. 1; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2007, p. 234-235, fig. Vd.97.

²⁰⁶ Dumitrescu Vl., 1979, p. 105, fig. 167; Gimbutas, 1987, p. 106; Monah, 1997, p. 38, fig. 9/6.

²⁰⁷ Lazarovici C.-M. et alii, 2009, p. 60.

²⁰⁸ Petrescu-Dîmbovița et alii, 1999, p. 121, fig. 88.

²⁰⁹ Maxim-Kalmar, Tarcea, 1999, p. 670.

distance from the ground if it were placed on poles. Breasts are modelled only on one of the idols, which could suggest a male-female couple²¹⁰.

All three cylindrical monumental idols discovered in L. 60 and L. 61, with a height of about 60 cm, was placed on poles, being hollowed on the inside. The alveolus heads are like those of figurines on the altar from L. 24²¹¹. This arrangement was preferred for a column from Greaca and the head from a furnace from Mărgineni-Cetățuia²¹². The origin of these representations may be in the Balkans, an idol of this kind is known at Danilo²¹³. The cup-like heads were interpreted as being related primarily to offerings deposit or fluid retention²¹⁴.

The area of Hungary brings new data on large statues. Interesting for us is the sanctuary from Vésztő-Mágor tell (Szakálhát culture). In total, the building contained about 40 special, worship items, demonstrating ceremonial activities, such as: grain offerings, sacred decorations, animal sacrifice, libations, and fumigations²¹⁵. The walls of the building were built between plank structures and the interior has traces of red paint²¹⁶. One of the rooms was oriented towards east and contained bone tools, stone polishers, loom weights, burnt and unburnt clay cones. According to the findings, this room was used to manufacture various tools and prepare the rituals²¹⁷.

The statue as the main object of worship is located in the western room. It is possible that the statue may have been intentionally destroyed, because the legs, its face and arm were found scattered²¹⁸. The clay sculpture was seated on a throne, and the limbs are richly decorated with incisions, excisions and red painting with white inlay (Fig. 28). The decorations of the two legs differ. The right arm was bent at the elbow and the hand probably covered the breasts. On the wrist there is a relief that could indicate a bracelet²¹⁹. The statue is one of several unusual items, such as a large rectangular box with incised meander motifs, highlighted with red and white paint. In the box were polishers, chisels, bone tools, clay cones, and loom weights.

Behind the statue was a table with four legs, 10–12 cm tall. The table was shaped like a container, its rim being higher than the surface. On the table in a rectangular vessel was ash from antlers. Other items placed on the table demonstrate its unusual function: a decorated jug with a bird-like lid. On the ground around the table were several large pots, a rectangular container for offerings with three legs, and a pair of consecration horns with a flat base. A circular container was in the middle of the room, near the hearth. On the rim of the container were modelled two small cups and two pairs of horns. Inside it contained a pot, a clay disc, a blade of

²¹⁰ Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii*, 2009, p. 63.

²¹¹ Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii*, 2009, p. 59.

²¹² Monah, 1997, p. 36.

²¹³ Todorova, Vajsov, 1993, p. 81, fig. 73/1a-1b.

²¹⁴ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 598; Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii*, 2009, p. 63.

²¹⁵ Gimbutas, 1999, p. 81.

²¹⁶ Hegedűs, Makkay, 1987, p. 93.

²¹⁷ Gimbutas, 1999, p. 80.

²¹⁸ Hegedűs, Makkay, 1987, p. 97.

²¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 99.

flint, stone chisels, burnt animal bones and a bird head made of clay similar to that found on the cover²²⁰. All these elements, through their location and the decoration they present, demonstrate symbolic or cultic properties²²¹.

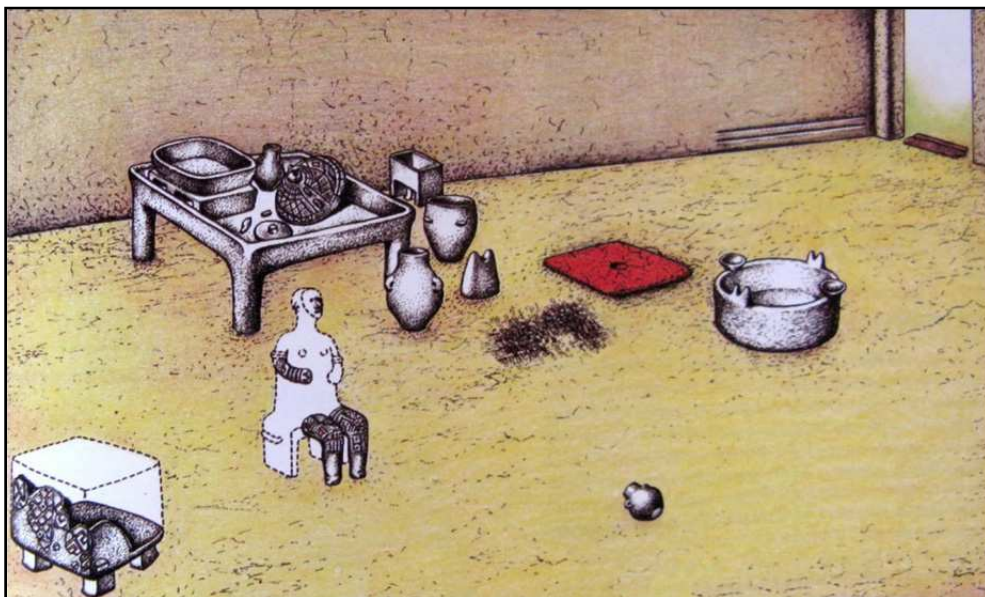


Fig. 26. Graphic reconstruction of the sanctuary from Vésztő-Mágor²²².

The most spectacular and impressive late Neolithic figurines are those showing male and female statues on thrones and the anthropomorphic vessels more or less stylized, with or without a human face. These representations are mainly focused on the territory of the Tisza culture²²³. On the European territory there are several types of representations on thrones, either joint, like the statuettes from the Vinča culture, or separate from the throne, like the conclaves of goddesses of the Cucuteni culture²²⁴.

The statues on throne appear as a projection of earthly life and a reflection of reality, but through the re-creation of another world where the forces of nature were anthropomorphized. Thus was possible a gradual development of a system of symbols and representations of gods²²⁵.

The monumental thrones represented in natural size are known from the Middle Neolithic at Vésztő-Mágor, Szakálhát culture (Hungary) and from Cucuteni-Trypillia culture. In Sabatinovka (Trypillia A) sanctuary a large throne near a

²²⁰ Gimbutas, 1999, p. 81.

²²¹ Hegedűs, Makkay, 1987, p. 101; Renfrew, 1985, p. 23.

²²² Hegedűs-Makkay, 1987, p. 87, fig. 4.

²²³ Kalicz, Ráczky, 1987, p. 22.

²²⁴ Monah, 1982.

²²⁵ Kalicz, 1970, p. 16.

presentation bench with idols was found inside a temple²²⁶. The throne found at Lipcani is very resembling to the miniature thrones of the Vounas model²²⁷.

Most of the figurines placed on a throne present certain jewellery, either on the hand or on the arm and often by a belt at the waist. The bracelets and the belt are represented by incising sacred signs and symbols; the jewels and the throne highlight the signs of distinction²²⁸. It is interesting that these statues were modelled carefully, richly ornamented, but found in refuse pits, while statues modelled carelessly, belonging to a coarse category, were found among certain ritualistic objects from homes²²⁹.

The most sophisticated statues were discovered at Szegvár-*Tűzköves* (Tisza culture). Five idols seated on throne originate from this place. One of them, called “The God with sickle” is a male figure, and two other are definitely feminine statuettes. Two other statues have characteristics both feminine (breasts) and male (penis)²³⁰.

“The God with sickle” from Szegvár-*Tűzköves* is so far unique and it is 25,6 cm tall²³¹. The face of the statue is flat and has a triangular shape. The mouth and eyes are represented by holes²³². The overall look of the statue’s face reminds of the vinčian figurines, who often wear a mask on the face²³³.

“The God with axe” is a statue discovered in the collapsed wall of a silo-type storage pit for grain. The statue represents a man with his arms, head and right leg below the knee missing. The throne and the body of the statue were painted red. The headless statue was 24,6 cm tall. It has an axe on the right shoulder²³⁴.

The interpretations on the male figurines from Szegvár-*Tűzköves* are varied. One view is that the statue is the portrait of a simple peasant, adorned with a belt and a bracelet and his eyes turned towards the sky. The look up could be a prayer for rich crops or a thanksgiving for the harvest²³⁵. Another view is that it would be one of the earliest representations of a male god like Kronos or Enlil²³⁶. The presence of male statues in the Tisza culture is considered to show that the man begins to have a privileged position in the community, so that the male representation is merely a reflection of changes in values. This position would be reflected in beliefs by representing gods. Makkay János considers that the gods were fashioned in the image of the local elite, perhaps a judge or a ruler²³⁷.

²²⁶ Gimbutas, 1991, p. 261, fig. 7.59 a-b; Monah, 1997, p. 35; Monah, 1997, p. 255, fig 3-1.

²²⁷ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2011, p. 169.

²²⁸ Lazarovici Gh., 2003, p. 77.

²²⁹ Bánffy, Goldman, 2003, p. 113.

²³⁰ Bánffy, Goldman, 2003, p. 113.

²³¹ Gimbutas, 1989a, pl. 12.

²³² Hansen, 2005, fig. 19.

²³³ Schier, Draşovean, 2004-2005, p. 44.

²³⁴ Makkay, 2005, p. 96.

²³⁵ Müller-Karpe, 1968, p. 395.

²³⁶ Makkay, 1964, p. 55.

²³⁷ Makkay, 2005, p. 94.

Of great importance are the statues of Malta, although the temples are from a later period (ca. 3000–2500 BC). A huge statue with pronounced steatopygia was discovered at Tarxien, along with a table altar with traces of a feast²³⁸. The statue would have been about 2 m tall if it were complete²³⁹.

In later periods we find some outstanding examples. For the Early Bronze Age there are statues from Early Cycladic II (2700–2300 BC) which seldom reach 1,5 m in height. In Post-Palatial Crete (1450–1050 BC – Late Bronze Age) are identified in sanctuaries painted clay statues, some 80 cm high, rendering women with arms raised. Sometimes they are found in groups which led to the conclusion that this suggests the multiplicity of deities that are worshiped²⁴⁰.

Emblematic for the Bronze Age of Turkey remain the temples of Beycesultan, which are equipped inside with all the elements of a temple from the Greco-Roman Antiquity, in evolved and highly refined forms²⁴¹. Even if it is later, in the seventh century BC, we mention the discovery from Monte Prama, in Sardinia, of 25 life-size statues in a necropolis²⁴².

5. Some conclusions

Most monumental statues show signs of intentional breakage, suggesting that the objects were considered intangible, made to worship. Their positioning either in temples or in a dedicated cultic corner demonstrates that these objects were used in ritual activities or they were regularly produced for specific occasions. There are some cases that after fulfilling their purpose, the statues were disposed of, being broken and buried, sometimes parts of the same object in different pits²⁴³.

We cannot be certain that the members of the community destroyed their own goddesses, which is quite unlikely. Generally the researchers agree that the systematic destruction of monumental pieces of several temples or shrines is related to the amputation of the supernatural powers of these divine representations.

The double monumental statue of Parța was systematically destroyed probably by the tribe that occupied the settlement²⁴⁴, but it is not a singular case. Another case is the systematic destruction of the altar from Târgu Frumos. The painted monumental altar was installed on a wooden structure that was not preserved, and the idol which was probably on the top has been transported after the destruction²⁴⁵. Particularly important is that at Trușești no element of L. 24 was found complete, which demonstrates a breaking or destruction²⁴⁶.

²³⁸ Malone *et alii*, 2005, p. 17.

²³⁹ Blake, Knapp, 2005, p. 159.

²⁴⁰ Goodison, Morris, 1999, p. 130-131.

²⁴¹ Lloyd, 1960; Mellaart, 1975.

²⁴² Blake, Knapp, 2005, p. 108.

²⁴³ Bánffy, Goldman, 2003, p. 114.

²⁴⁴ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 91.

²⁴⁵ Ursulescu, Cotiugă, 2000; Lazarovici Gh., Lazarovici C.-M., 2006, p. 89.

²⁴⁶ Lazarovici C.-M. *et alii*, 2009, p. 58.

The large statues are not just rare, but also unique from the shape point of view, modelling style, representation. Similarities can be achieved only on the basis of some ideas that the statues are carrying.

In the case of Parța temples, there is an obsession for reduplicating two characters in various forms: the Great Mother and the Bull God. The cult of the bull is visible in multiple situations all over Temple 2, but also in many other contexts from Parța²⁴⁷. We will not insist on the bull representation on this occasion, mentioning this time that all over Anatolia and the Balkans there are these very powerful images²⁴⁸. The bull cult and display deserves a special discussion.

The methods of manufacturing the double statue from Parța are still unique. The fact that a belly was attached later is not a common practice in statuettes' modelling. We found only one case in the literature where the statue was modelled and then a womb was attached (there may be more?) at Gritille in SE Turkey (7000 BC–5500 BC). When the statue was found, its' belly came off, showing the manner of execution. This statue might present the state before and after insemination²⁴⁹.

Regarding the possible rituals performed inside or outside the temples, it is difficult to reconstruct them, since we do not know if rituals were public or restrictive²⁵⁰. At Çatal Höyük it is possible there was a restriction in the presentation of certain statues. For example, in building E VI 31, on the western wall is a statue with holes above the head of the goddess. This indicates that there was a support for hanging a canvas in order to cover the face or the statue of the goddess²⁵¹. Also, at Parța the double monumental statue was presented only on festivities or on certain celebrations, for this purpose being built a window. So it may be that even in community temples access was restricted.

Idols and statues from many Neolithic sites, especially those from Gomo-lava, Kormadin and Parța, prove the existence of separate deities with certain roles well established²⁵². Multiple monumental objects, of which we analyzed only large idols on this occasion, are elements showing an organized religious life, being related to a specific architecture²⁵³.

Monumental statues, blood goblets, grains deposited in boxes, grinders on pedestals, vessels, representations of the Sun and Moon on the temple walls are directly linked to a vast mythology connected to Mother Earth, related to the germination force of seeds, the light and heat of the Sun and the phases of the Moon²⁵⁴. It is clear, moreover, that the Neolithic people were watching the sky and noticed the

²⁴⁷ Lazarovici Gh. *et alii*, 2001, p. 147; Suciú *et alii*, 2006, p. 16.

²⁴⁸ Cauvin, 2002, p. 238.

²⁴⁹ Voigt, 2002, p. 269; *Idem*, 1985, p. 17.

²⁵⁰ Kuijt, 2008b, p. 183.

²⁵¹ Mellaart, 1964, p. 47.

²⁵² Jovanović, 1991, p. 123.

²⁵³ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 306.

²⁵⁴ Lazarovici *et alii*, 2001, p. 148; Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 339.

movement of the stars; in this regard there is evidence related to the Cassiopeia²⁵⁵ and Orion constellations²⁵⁶.

The temples from Parța are truly unique, but they must be integrated into the cultural and religious context of their era. In a perspective image, it can be inferred that the elements are composing the image of a true naology since Middle Neolithic²⁵⁷.

²⁵⁵ Lazarovici Gh., 2001.

²⁵⁶ Durman, 1999-2000.

²⁵⁷ Lazarovici C.-M., Lazarovici Gh., 2006, p. 306.

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