

**Cercetări arheologice în așezarea eneolitică de la Mălăieștii de Jos (jud. Prahova), campaniile 2002–2010**

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North of the Mălăieștii de Jos village (Prahova county), on the edge of a high terrace (295 m altitude), an Eneolithic settlement was noted. To the north and south the site is naturally bordered by deep gullies and ravines, and to the east by the river valley. A rather easy way of access, probably manmade, exists on its west side. The settlement is located in the hilly area at the northern limit of a microzone characterized by relatively high and extensive terraces, at 3.3 km north from the confluence of the Vărbilău and Teleajen rivers. Despite the fact that the southern part of the Mornel terrace covers a large area where the settlement could have been conveniently located, the Eneolithic community preferred this remote edge of the terrace because of its natural protection from three sides, and probably cut an access path to ensure its isolation. 2002 saw the beginning of the systematic archaeological research, within a project focusing on the dynamics and evolution of the Neo-Eneolithic communities in the northern Wallachia. The excavation system employed aimed to completely expose the habitation features, not only for the observing the internal organization of the settlement, but also for obtaining detailed information on the house building techniques and strategies, distribution of household items, etc. An important part of the research focused on the areas outside the living quarters, in an attempt to improve our understanding of the vertical internal development of the settlement, as well as the horizontal stratigraphic relationships between the various features uncovered. In this respect, among other things, it was sought not to isolate the houses from the rest of the archaeological context. In order to obtain such information, the excavation was carried out by simultaneous opening and excavation of large areas. The settlement had one archaeological layer, with several habitation phases. These do not necessarily signify a discontinuity in the evolution of the site, but it rather mirrors the internal evolution of the settlement. These phases could be observed both in the superposition of the archaeological features, various building facilities and leveling, and the variable thickness of the archaeological layer in different areas of the site. There are places where the cultural layer thickness does not exceed 0.20 m, while in others it reached lower than 0.60–0.80 m. Several superpositions and intersections of the archaeological features are the markers of the important internal dynamics of this settlement. We were able to identify and observe not only accumulative stratigraphic evolution, but also the disturbances of the natural and anthropic deposits, as the land was reshuffled in various stages. While excavating we noticed an increased activity in the modeling of the living space. The occupied perimeter was, naturally restricted and rugged at the same time, and thus various changes were required in order to create additional space, but also to „isolate” the community. This community reached creative solutions in

modeling a restricted space, building homes tailored to the topography. The archaeological research revealed traces of artificial terraces. The settlement covered approx. 4000 sqm, and counted no more than 6 to 8 houses, most likely not all contemporaneous. The dwellings were relatively small, with one or two rooms. It is worth noting the richness of the archaeological finds, especially refitting pottery fragments. Flint and stone tools occurred mainly outside the living areas and in waste dumps. Mammal bones were both very rare and poorly preserved. The archaeological materials discovered indicate the presence of an Eneolithic community with cultural affinities in the Stoicani-Aldeni cultural aspect.