

# SOUTHERN CONNECTIONS. METAMORPHOSIS OF A PARTICULAR TYPE OF ANTHROPOMORPHIC VESSELS IN THE AREA OF THE CUCUTENI CIVILIZATION

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**Keywords:** anthropomorphic vessels, Gumelnița, Stoicani-Aldeni, Cucuteni, rhombic sole

**Abstract:** The paper presents four fragmentary anthropomorphic vessels discovered ca. 60 years ago on the territory of Botoșani County, at Cervicești – La Morișcă (Mihai Eminescu commune) and Drăgușeni – Ostrov (Drăgușeni commune), left unpublished in the collections of the Botoșani County Museum.

Starting from the presentation of these artefacts and integrating similar discoveries from the Gumelnița, Stoicani-Aldeni and Cucuteni cultural areas, the work analyses the metamorphoses of a particular type of anthropomorphic vessel in the area of the Cucuteni civilization. More precisely, the paper follows typologically the transformation of the base of the vessels from the anthropomorphic silhouette naturalistically figured, with the anatomical profile correctly rendered, with the soles and feet clearly indicated, to the intermediate rhomboidal sole and then to the ovoid or circular base.

Confirming the hypothesis of Gumelnița influences penetrating the Cucuteni environment, the analysis of the new materials and the typological connections illustrate and highlight the role of a transmission vector and intermediary between the North and the South that the Stoicani-Aldeni cultural environment played for contemporary or immediately subsequent Eneolithic communities during the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** vase antropomorfe, Gumelnița, Stoicani-Aldeni, Cucuteni, picior romboidal

**Rezumat:** Lucrarea introduce în circuitul științific patru vase antropomorfe fragmentare descoperite acum aproximativ 60 de ani pe teritoriul județului Botoșani, la Cervicești – La Morișcă (comuna Mihai Eminescu) și Drăgușeni – Ostrov (comuna Drăgușeni), și rămase inedite în colecțiile Muzeului Județean Botoșani.

Plecând de la prezentarea acestor piese și integrând descoperiri similare din arealele culturale Gumelnița, Stoicani-Aldeni și Cucuteni, lucrarea analizează metamorfozele unui tip particular de vase antropomorfe în arealul civilizației Cucuteni. Mai precis, este urmărită tipologic transformarea bazei vaselor care redau silueta antropomorfă figurată naturalist, cu profilul anatomic corect redat, cu tălpile și labele picioarelor evident indicate, în intermediarul postament romboidal și, mai apoi, către soclul ovoidal sau circular.

Confirmând ipoteza unor influențe gumelnițene pătrunse în mediul cucutenian, analiza noilor materiale și conexiunile tipologice realizate ilustrează și subliniază rolul de vector de transmitere și de intermediar între nord și sud pe care mediul cultural Stoicani-Aldeni l-a jucat pentru comunitățile eneolitice contemporane sau imediat subsecvente, în a doua jumătate a mileniului V BC.

## PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Any museum collection holds archaeological materials that are insufficiently exploited. The fact that the activity of sorting and selecting archaeological materials yet unrecorded is time-consuming, sometimes sprinkled with frustrations triggered by the lack of adequate documentation, is a truism for all archaeologists. Sometimes, however, this work can also offer rewards, as is the case with the materials that are the topic of this paper.

The objects we present on this occasion were practically discovered twice.

The first time, the artefacts were the result of archaeological excavations and were removed from the contexts where they were discovered in the sixth decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, by the authors of the Cervicești Deal – La Morișcă and Drăgușeni – Ostrov excavations. The materials were washed, cleaned of carbonate crust,

marked and stored in spaces specially designed for storing unrecorded finds in the Botoșani County Museum – The History Museum.

The sorting and washing of these materials in 2019, more than half a century later, highlighted the presence of certain ceramic fragments, parts of a special type of anthropomorphic vessels, with a rather rare frequency in the Cucuteni cultural environment.

The purpose of our study is, first of all, to publish these artefacts. Secondly, we aim, as much as possible, to follow the lineage and transformations that characterize the evolution of a specific category of anthropomorphic vessels in the Cucuteni cultural area.

The category of anthropomorphic vessels which we refer to are representations with no hands or head rendering the human silhouette from the waist down. They represent the abdomen (rarely the entire torso), hips and legs of a female figure. The legs are rendered joined,