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Sergiu Popovici, <i>Cultura Usatovo. Arheologia funerară a unei societăți din epoca bronzului/The Usatovo culture. Funeral archaeology of a Bronze Age society</i> , Cetatea de Scaun Publishing House, Târgoviște, 2023, 475 pagini, 242 planșe, ISBN: 978-606-537-623-6 ( <i>Adina Boroneanț</i> ) .....	275
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**Sergiu Popovici, *Cultura Usatovo. Arheologia funerară a unei societăți din epoca bronzului/The Usatovo culture. Funeral archaeology of a Bronze Age society*, Cetatea de Scaun Publishing House, Târgoviște, 2023, 475 pagini, 242 planșe, ISBN: 978-606-537-623-6**

With the growing interest raised by new paleogenetic research and absolute chronologies, the present volume is a welcomed addition to the discussion and re-interpretation of old archaeological excavations within the freshly re-discussed background of North Pontic region communities. The work is the result of the author's PhD research within the Faculty of History and Geography of the "Ștefan cel Mare" University in Suceava.

The volume opens with an *Introduction* followed by five main chapters (*History of research of the Usatovo culture and historiographical issue sites and Cemeteries of the Usatovo culture; Types of grave goods; Periodization and chronology of the Usatovo culture; Cultural-chronological interferences in north-west of the Black Sea (the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium – the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC), followed by Final considerations*, a catalogue of the Usatovo funerary sites and two annexes, one offering information on the shape of the graves and the position/orientation of the skeletons and the second on various aspects of the funerary ritual and the grave goods. The volume also features an *Editor's note* signed by Romanian archaeologist Alin Frînculeasa. The book is published in Romanian language, but has English Contents, an English summary and a list of illustrations (not very carefully translated). The work is based both on published information but it also incorporates new data from various personal and institutional archives.

The first chapter is a detailed presentation of all previous research and finds that were attributed to the Usatovo culture, which the author divides in four main stages. They seem to mirror the advances in the excavation techniques rather than the main interpretative ideas of the cultural development. The sub-chapter is complemented though by a discussion of the origins and development of the culture as stemming from the history of the research, as well as by the main typologies regarding the architecture of the sites and the pottery shapes, as seen in the main existing publications.

The following chapter deals with the organization of the Usatovo burial sites (cemeteries = *necropole plane* in Romanian and barrows), the types of barrows, the position of skeletons in the graves, presence of cenotaphs and cult pits, as well as other types of funerary features. Well documented although not interpretative, it is a synthesis of what we know of Usatovo funerary architecture.

Chapter III presents the main types of graves goods (pottery, figurines, metal, lithics, osseous artefacts and adornments – made of all types of raw materials), again in a rather descriptive but very meticulous manner.

Chapter four discusses both the relative chronology of the culture (as resulted from the stratigraphic sequences of various barrows) and the absolute one, as indicated by older or more recent <sup>14</sup>C dates. The declared aim of the chapter was ultimately to establish the development phases of the Usatovo culture. Unfortunately, there is no discussion of some striking <sup>14</sup>C dates from certain sites (such as Mayaki), some ridiculous, unless a freshwater reservoir effect is considered. Such a discussion would have opened further talks on the subsistence of these communities, or at least that of certain individuals.

The last chapter sets the Usatovo finds within the wider late-prehistoric context of the region, analysing, in a rather historical-traditional manner the possible influences exerted by other cultures.

The *Final considerations* brings together all the previously presented data offering a general extremely comprehensive view of the existing body of evidence.

The catalogue summarizes the existing information on 42 well documented and investigated burial sites, as well as three sites considered insufficiently documented. All individual burials are listed, with full description of graves and radiocarbon dates (where available). No paleogenetic information is incorporated into the study though.

The illustration is one of the most helpful parts of the work – all old plans and drawings (some published here for the first time) were carefully re-drawn by the author, and together with the photos, ease the understanding of some old interpretations of the Usatovo sites.

The author had gained access to personal and institutional archives and significantly contributed to the increase of the available information. To the Romanian researchers (and the Romanian-speaking researchers) this volume makes for the first time available such a large well-organized body of data.

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## ABREVIERI / ABRÉVIATIONS / ABBREVIATIONS

- AA – Archäologischer Anzeiger. Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Darmstadt, München, Tübingen–Berlin  
AAAS – Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes, Siria  
AAC – Acta Archaeologica Carpatica, Kraków  
ActaMM – Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis, Vaslui  
ActaMN – Acta Musei Napocensis, Cluj  
ActaMP – Acta Musei Porolissensis, Zalău  
ActaMT – Acta Musei Tutovens, Bârlad  
AIIAC – Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie, Cluj-Napoca  
AIPCP – American Institute of Physics Conference Proceedings, Maryland  
AJA – American Journal of Archaeology, Boston  
AJN – American Journal of Numismatics, New York  
AJPA – American Journal of Physical Anthropology  
Alba Regia – Alba Regia. Annales Musei Stephani regis, Székesferhérvár  
Anatolia – Anatolia. Revue annuelle de l'Institut d'Archéologie de l'Université d'Ankara  
Anatolia Antiqua – Anatolia Antiqua. Revue internationale d'archéologie anatolienne. Institut Français d'Etudes anatoliennes d'Istanbul  
AnB – Analele Banatului, Muzeul Banatului, Timișoara  
AncNearEastSt – Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Leuven, Belgia  
Annls hist.-nat. Mus. natn. hung. – Annales Historico-Naturales Musei Nationalis Hungarici, Budapest  
AnSt – Anatolian Studies. British Institute of Ankara  
Anthropologie (Brno) – Anthropologie. International Journal of Human Diversity and Evolution, Brno  
l'Anthropologie (Paris) – l'Anthropologie, Paris  
AnUVT – Annales d'Université «Valahia» Târgoviște, Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire  
Apulum – Acta Musei Apulensis. Muzeul Național al Unirii, Alba Iulia  
ARA – The Association for Roman Archaeology, UK  
ArchBulg – Archaeologia Bulgarica, Sofia  
Argesis – Argesis. Muzeul Județean Argeș, Pitești  
ArheologijaSofia – Arheologija. Organ na Archeologičeskija Institut i Muzej, Sofia  
Arheovest – Arheovest – Asociația Arheo Vest, Timișoara  
ArhMold – Arheologia Moldovei, Iași  
ArhVest – Arheološki Vestnik, Ljubljana  
AST – Eski Eserler ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü, I. Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı, İstanbul 23–26 Mayıs, 1983 [General Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Museums, first Turkish annual meeting for the results of archaeological field surveys, İstanbul, 23–26 May, 1983] (1984–)  
BAI – Bibliotheca Archaeologica Iassensis, Iași  
Banatica – Banatica, Muzeul Banatului Montan, Reșița  
BARBrSer – British Archaeological Reports. British Series, Oxford  
BARIntSer – British Archaeological Reports. International Series, Oxford  
BASOR – Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, University of Chicago  
BCH – Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, Athènes-Paris  
BCMI – Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice  
BerRGK – Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Frankfurt am Main  
BiAMA – Bibliothèque méditerranéenne et africaine. Centre Camille Jullian, Aix-en-Provence  
BibIstroPontica-A – Biblioteca Istro-Pontica. Seria Arheologie, Tulcea  
BibIMusAp – Bibliotheca Musei Apulensis, Alba-Iulia  
BibIThrac – Bibliotheca Thracologica, București  
Bioarchaeol Int – Bioarchaeology International, US  
BMJT – Buletinul Muzeului Județean Teleorman, Alexandria  
BMMN – Buletinul Muzeului Militar Național Regele Ferdinand I, București  
BMSAP – Bulletins et Mémoires de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris  
BOR – Biserica Ortodoxă Română  
BSA – British School at Athens, Athens  
BSPF – Bulletin de la Société Préhistorique Française, Paris

- CA – Cercetări Arheologice, București
- CAB – Cercetări arheologice în București
- Caiete ARA - Caietele ARA, Revistă de Arhitectură, Restaurare și Arheologie, Asociația ARA, București
- Carpica – Carpica. Complexul Muzeal „Iulian Antonescu” Bacău
- CCA – Cronica Cercetărilor Arheologice din România, București
- CCDJ – Cultură și Civilizație la Dunărea de Jos, Călărași
- CICSA – Centrul de Istorie Comparată a Societăților Antice, Facultatea de Istorie, Universitatea din București
- CN – Cercetări numismatice, București
- Cumidava – Cumidava. Culegere de studii și cercetări. Muzeul de Istorie Brașov
- Current Anthropology – Current Anthropology. University of California, Merced
- Dacia – Dacia (Nouvelle Série). Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne. Académie Roumaine. Institut d'archéologie « V. Pârvan », Bucarest
- DHA – Dialogues d'histoire ancienne, Institut des Sciences et Techniques de l'Antiquité
- EJA – European Journal of Archaeology
- ERAUL – Études et Recherches archéologiques de l'Université de Liège
- ÉtThas – Études thasiennes, École Française d'Athènes, Athènes-Paris
- EtTrav – Etudes et travaux. Studia i prace. Travaux du Centre d'archéologie méditerranéenne de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences
- EurAnt – Eurasia Antiqua. Deutsche Archäologisches Institut, Berlin
- FolArch – Folia Archaeologica. A Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Évkönyve. Annales Musei Nationalis Hungarici, Budapest
- FSI – Forensic Science International
- Germania – Germania. Anzeiger der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Frankfurt
- Glasul Bisericii – Glasul Bisericii, Mitropolia Munteniei și Dobrogei, București
- Hesperia – Hesperia. Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Cambridge
- HOMO – HOMO. Journal of Comparative Human Biology, Stuttgart
- Ialomița – Ialomița. Studii de cercetări de arheologie, istorie, etnografie și muzeologie, Slobozia
- IJLS – The International Journal of Levant Studies, Bucharest
- IJO – International Journal of Osteoarchaeology
- Istros – Istros. Muzeul Brăilei, Brăila
- IzvestijaSofia – Izvestija na Archeologiceskii Institut, Sofia
- JAS – Journal of Archaeological Science
- JAS: Reports – Journal of Archaeological Sciences: Reports
- JFA – Journal of Field Archaeology
- JFS – Journal of Forensic Sciences
- JHE – Journal of Human Evolution
- JRGZM – Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz, Mainz
- JWorld Prehist – Journal of world Prehistory
- KST – T. C. Kültür Bakanlığı, Eski Eserler ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü, I. Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı, Ankara, Mayıs 1979 [Republic of Turkey, General Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Museums, first Turkish annual meeting for the results of excavations, Ankara, May 1979] (1979–2020).
- LAAA – Liverpool Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology
- MAN – MAN. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institut, London
- MarNero – Il Mar Nero. Annali di archeologia e storia
- MCA – Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice, București
- MÇKKS – 12. Müze Çalışmaları ve Kurtarma Kazıları Sempozyumu, 25–27 Nisan 2001, Kuşadası, T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, Anıtlar ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü [12th Turkish annual symposium for the museum studies and results of rescue excavations, 25–27 April 2001, Kuşadası, Republic of Turkey, General Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Museums], (2002–2016)
- MemAnt – Memoria Antiquitatis, Piatra Neamț
- MIA – Materialy i issledovaniya po arheologii SSSR, Moscova-Leningrad (St. Petersburg)
- MISLR – Monumente istorice. Studii și lucrări de restaurare, București
- MKKS – I. Müze Kurtarma Kazıları Semineri, 19–20 Nisan 1990, Ankara, T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, Anıtlar ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü [First Turkish annual seminar for the results of rescue excavations undertaken by the local museums, 19–20 April 1990, Ankara, Republic of Turkey, General Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Museums], (1990–2000, 2017–)
- Mousaios – Mousaios. Buletinul Științific al Muzeului Județean Buzău

MuzNaț – Muzeul Național, București  
 NAC – Numismatica e Antichità Classiche, Lugano-Pregassona  
 Obesity – Obesity. A Research Journal, The Obesity Society, USA  
 OJA – Oxford Journal of Archaeology  
 Olba – Mersin University Publications of the Research Center of Cilician Archaeology, Mersin, Turkey  
 Pallas – Pallas. Revue d'Études Antiques, Toulouse  
 PamArch – Památky Archeologické, Praha  
 PBF – Prähistorische Bronzefunde, Münster  
 Peuce – Peuce. Studii și cercetări de istorie și arheologie. Institutul de Cercetări Eco-Muzeale, Tulcea  
 Pontica – Pontica. Studii și materiale de istorie, arheologie și muzeografie. Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie Constanța  
 PZ – Prähistorische Zeitschrift, Berlin-Mainz  
 QuadCRV – Quaderni della Casa Romena di Venezia, Institutul Cultural Român, Venezia  
 Quaternary International – Quaternary International. The Journal of the International Union for Quaternary Research  
 RA – Revue Archéologique, Paris  
 RAASI – Revista de Arheologie, Antropologie și Studii Interdisciplinare. Institutul de Cercetări Bioarheologice și Etnoculturale, Republica Moldova  
 RACF – Revue Archéologique du Centre de la France, Lyon-Tours  
 Radiocarbon – An International Journal of Cosmogenic Isotope Research, Cambridge  
 RCAN – Revista de Cercetări Arheologice și Numismatice, Muzeul Municipiului București  
 RÉL – Revue des Études Latines, Paris  
 RI – Revista de Istorie  
 RMM.MIA – Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor, seria Monumente Istorice și de Artă, București  
 RPRP – Reports of Prehistoric Research Projects, Sofia  
 SAA – Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica, Iași  
 SAI – Studii și articole de istorie  
 SAMAI – Studia Antiquitatis et Medii Aevi Incohantis  
 Sargetia – Sargetia. Acta Musei Devensis, Buletinul Muzeului județean Hunedoara, Deva  
 SCA – Studii și Cercetări de Antropologie, București  
 Sci Rep – Scientific Reports  
 SCIV(A) – Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie), București  
 SCN – Studii și Cercetări de Numismatică, București  
 SMIM – Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie, Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga”, București  
 SP – Studii de Preistorie, București  
 StCl – Studii Clasice, București  
 StComPitești – Studii și Comunicări, Seria Istorie, Muzeul Județean Argeș, Pitești  
 StratumPlus – Stratum Plus. Școala Superioară de Antropologie, Chișinău, St Petersburg, București  
 StTroica – Studia Troica, Mainz-am-Rhein  
 Studia Praehistorica – National Archaeological Institute with Museum of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences  
 SUBB – Studia Universitatis „Babeș-Bolyai”, Historia, Cluj-Napoca  
 Syria – Syria. Archéologie, art et histoire. Institut Français du Proche-Orient  
 Terra Sebus – Terra Sebus. Acta Musei Sabesiensis, Anuarul Muzeului Municipal „Ioan Raica”, Sebeș  
 Th-D – Thraco-Dacica, București  
 UPA – Universitätsforschungen zur Prähistorischen Archäologie, Bonn  
 WVD OG – Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft