

Some considerations about an anthropo-zoomorphic figurine discovered at Măriuța-*La Movilă* (Southeastern Romania)

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Abstract: *The aim of this article is to present a very interesting anthropo-zoomorphic figurine from Măriuța-*La Movilă* site, Călărași County (Southeastern Romania). The figurine, made of clay, represents a bird with human head and was discovered by chance in 2005, in one of the sections dug in the area of the Eneolithic cemetery. From chronological and cultural point of view this artefact belongs to the Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI cultural complex. From typological point of view in the area occupied by these Eneolithic communities there are known a few figures with mixed attributes bird – man (around 2 or 3 cases), but none of them is identical to the one found in our site. This confirms the relative rarity of this type of anthropo-zoomorphic figurine in the area of the Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI cultural complex.*

Rezumat: *Scopul acestui articol este acela de a prezenta o foarte interesantă figurină antropo-zoomorfă găsită în situl Măriuța-*La Movilă*, jud. Călărași (sud-estul României). Figurina, realizată din lut, reprezintă o pasăre cu cap de om și a fost descoperită întâmplător în 2005, într-una dintre secțiunile realizate în perimetrul cimitirului eneolitic. Din punct de vedere crono-cultural acest artefact aparține complexului cultural Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI. Din perspectivă tipologică în aria de răspândire a acestor comunități eneolitice se mai cunosc câteva figurine cu atribute mixte pasăre – om (în jur de 2 sau 3 cazuri), dar nici una dintre acestea nu este identică cu cea descoperită în situl nostru. Aceasta confirmă relativa raritate a acestui tip de figurină antropo-zoomorfă în aria de răspândire a complexului cultural Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI.*

Key words: *Eneolithic, Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI, Romania, anthropo-zoomorphic figurine.*

Cuvinte cheie: *eneolitic, Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI, Romania, figurină antropo-zoomorfă.*

◆ The diversity of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines of the Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI cultural complex is very well known by the archaeologists. Beyond typological and technological aspects, some of these figurines represent without doubt true masterpieces of the prehistoric art (V. Dumitrescu 1968, 1974; S. Marinescu-Bîlcu 1977; R. Andreescu 2001, 2002a).

A special category of figurines is represented by figurines that combine anthropomorphic and zoomorphic elements. Unfortunately, excepting a few articles (R. Andreescu 2002a, p. 78-80; 2002b, p. 107-111), this type of discovery was less analyzed and studied by archaeologists. Generally, these articles were focused on anthropo-zoomorphic pots and lids rather than on figurines with mixed characteristics.

The aim of this article is to present an anthropo-zoomorphic figurine discovered at Măriuța-*La Movilă* in 2005 and, on the other hand, to study the problems of this category of figurines belonging to the Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI cultural complex.

The prehistoric site Măriuța-*La Movilă* is situated on the right bank of the old Mostiștea River (currently several artificial lakes), at 200 m North-West of Măriuța village in the Călărași County, Southeastern Romania. It is laid ca. 31 km North-North-East of the town of Bucharest, and less than 56 km North of the Danube River (fig. 1) (D. Șerbănescu, G. Trohani 1978; V. Parnic, D. Chiriac 2001).

The prehistoric site consists of a *tell* settlement and a necropolis and belongs to the Eneolithic period, dated in the second half of the fifth millennium B.C. (ca. 4550-3900 B.C.). The site belongs to the Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI culture, one of the most important prehistoric civilizations in Southeastern Europe (V. Parnic, D. Chiriac 2001; C. Lazăr, V. Parnic 2007).

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The figurine in question was discovered on the archaeological site of Măriuța-*La Movilă*, in the area of the Eneolithic cemetery. The cemetery is situated on the high terrace of the former Mostișteea river, ca. 200 m East-North-East of the *tell* settlement, as well as on the slopes of the terrace.

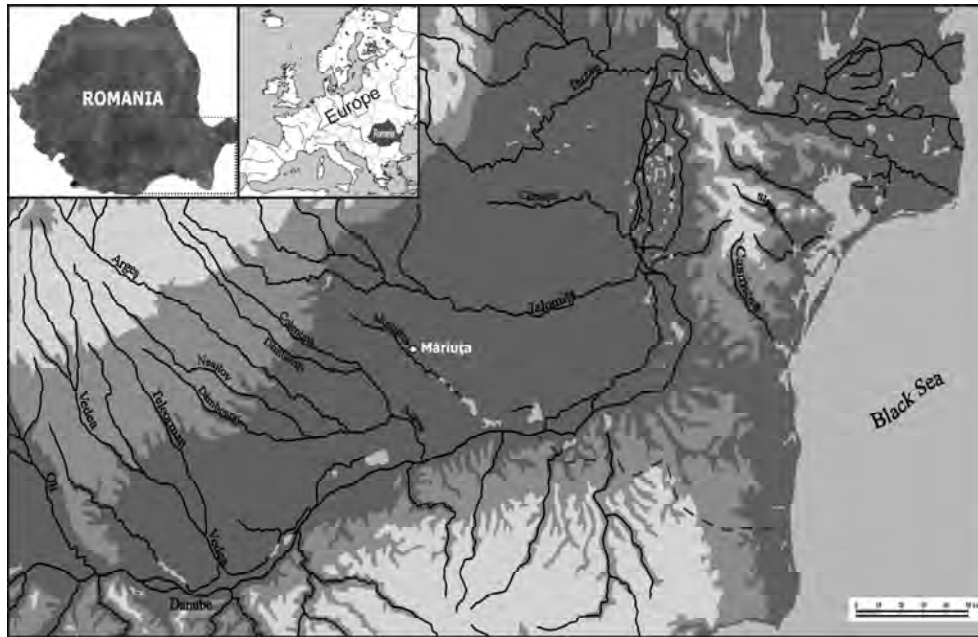


Fig. 1. Location of Măriuța-*La Movilă* archaeological site.
Localizarea sitului arheologic Măriuța-*La Movilă*.

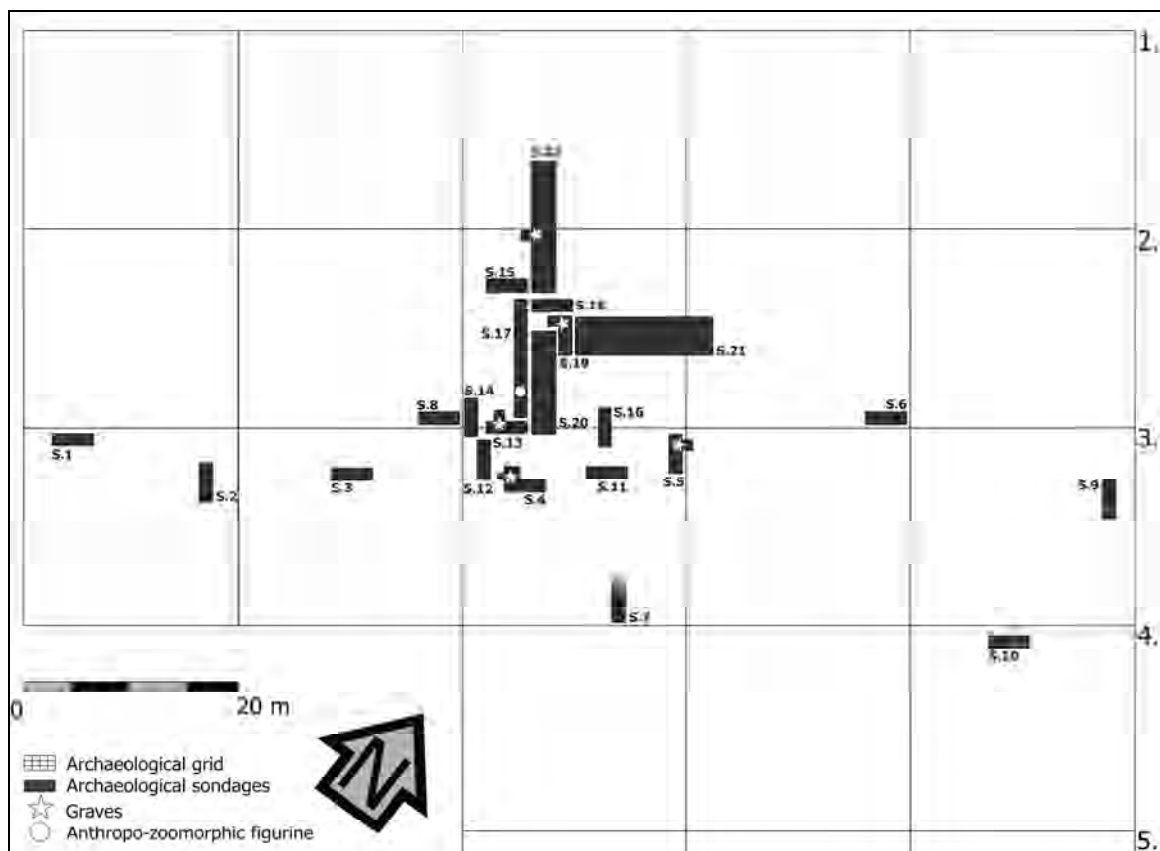


Fig. 2. Plan of the archaeological excavations from Măriuța-*La Movilă* necropolis.
Planul săpăturilor arheologice din necropola de la Măriuța-*La Movilă*.

The figurine was found in the section no. 17, C2 square, at 1,50 m depth (fig. 2). Unfortunately, this artifact was discovered by chance, in an animal burrow, without a clear archaeological context.

Taking into account that, despite numerous investigations conducted on the terrace next to the *tell* settlement, no secondary settlements connected with Măriuța-*La Movilă tell*-settlement have been identified, we consider that the figurine may be related hypothetically to a probable funerary context.

The anthropo-zoomorphic figurine represents a bird with human head. Its height is 9,1 cm and it is 5,5 cm wide. The figurine is complete and is in a good preservation state (fig. 3).

From morphological point of view, the head of the figurine is typical for the anthropomorphic figurines with discoid shape, consisting of three lobes, well illustrated, of which the ears are lateral and the nose is central positioned. The eyes are represented by incisions. The ear lobes present a series of perforations, typical for the Gumelnița figurines. The mouth is represented by an incision in the shape of "V". Just as with other anthropomorphic figurines, we can observe a tendency towards a schematic representation (fig. 3).



Fig. 3. The anthropo-zoomorphic figurine from Măriuța-*La Movilă*.
Figurina antro-zoomorfă de la Măriuța-*La Movilă*.

The body of the figurine is reproducing a bird in standing position. It has an elongated shape. The body exhibits a prominence in the front side, on the chest, which is an attribute specific for anthropomorphic representations. The posterior part of the body is elongated, suggesting a bird's tail. The legs are not represented. The lower part of the figurine is a cylindrical extension of the body, forming a pedestal. The base of the pedestal is enlarged with petal shaped extensions, to allow the steadiness of the figurine on different surfaces. The figurine does not have elements of sexual identification and it is undecorated (fig. 3).

From typological point of view, the figurine has no analogues in the group of specific figurines belonging to the Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI cultural complex. But if we analyze separately the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic elements we can find many similarities. So, the human head is represented as in the case of the most anthropomorphic figurines (S. Marinescu-Bîlcu, B. Ionescu 1967; E. Comșa 1995; E. Paveleț 2000; S. Marinescu-Bîlcu 2001; R. Andreescu 2001, 2002a; V. Parnic, C. Lazăr 2005 etc.). The bird body has good parallels in some ornithomorphic representations (e.g., Borilovo, Chatalka dam, Devetaki cave, Drama, Gherăseni, Lișcoteanca-*Movila Olarului*, Yunasite, etc.) from the Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI cultural complex (V. Mikov, D. Dzhambazov 1960, p. 75; S. Terzijska-Ignatova 2004, p. 383-386; P. Kalčev 2005, p. 51).

So, at the Yunatsite *tell* settlement (Bulgaria) was discovered a figurine representing a bird with human head, in flying position (pers. comm. Y. Boyadžiev and S. Terzijska-Ignatova). Also in the *tell* settlement of Vitănești (Romania) a fragment from a figurine with mixed elements (bird and human) was founded (pers. comm. R. Andreescu). These examples represent the only analogies that we have identified for the Kodjadermen-Gumelnița-Karanovo VI cultural complex.

Here we conclude our short paper about this unique discovery from Măriuța-*La Movilă*. Without any doubt, it does not resolve and do not respond to all questions that arise in connection with this anthropo-zoomorphic figurine. We hope that this presentation may help in the future to a better understanding of this type of figurines.

◆ Acknowledgements

We thank Ciprian Astaloș (University College London) for improving the English translation. Also, for information and explanations about some figurines from Bulgaria and Romania, we would like to thank our colleagues: Radian Andreescu (National History Museum of Romania), Yavor Boyadžiev (Bulgarian Archaeological Institute), Dimitar Chernakov (Rousse History Museum), Alexander Chohadzhiev (Archaeological Museum Veliko Tarnovo), Pavel Mirea (Teleorman County Museum) and Stoilka Terzijska-Ignatova (Pazardzhik History Museum).

This work was supported by CNCSIS-UEFISCSU, project number 2/03.08.2010 PN II-RU code 16/2010.

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