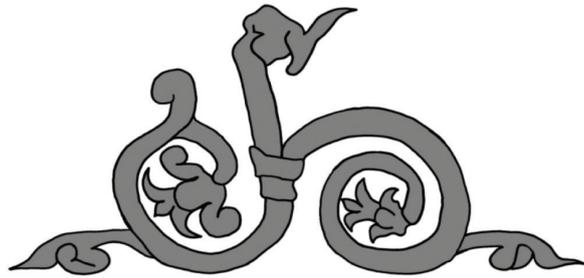


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From the History of Archaeological Researches in Crișana: Dr. Ernest Andrassy (I) *

Călin Ghemiș

“Personally, I wish for an exhibition that fills a void, an exhibition that raises the interest of specialists as well, and not a collection of boring old things that fits into a pattern.”
(Ernest Andrassy, 1957)

Abstract: Among the personalities from Bihor from the first decades of the twentieth century, Ernest Andrassy holds a special position foremost through his work in the archaeological research of Valea Ierului.

His most important discoveries are undoubtedly the settlements from Otomani and Sălacea, belonging to the Bronze Age. He also performed more restricted archaeological researches in Valea lui Mihai, Șimian, Vășad, Curtuiușeni, Galoșpetreu etc., covering all eras between the Paleolithic and the Middle Ages.

The discovered materials were included in the exhibition of the museum that bore his name, opened in 1952. The museum covered not only the archaeology of the area, but also the fauna and ethnography of Ier Valley.

Unfortunately, due to the climate in Romania after the moment Budapest 1956, doctor Andrassy was arrested in 1958, suspected of having connections to the Anticomunist revolutionaries and of having conspired against the Communist Regime. He was freed in 1964 but died in 1968 and was buried in Valea lui Mihai.

Through the inheritance left by Ernest Andrassy to posterity, he can be considered one of the fathers of archaeology in Crișana and elsewhere.

Keywords: memorials, archaeology, history of archaeology, Inter-War Period, Communist Period.

Among the representative personalities of Transylvanian archaeology from the first decades of the twentieth century, Ernest Andrassy (1894- 1968) holds a special place and can undoubtedly be considered one of the fathers of the Transylvanian science of archaeology¹.

He was born in Sălacea, on April 10th 1894, in a family with roots in the area of Ciuc. He completed gymnasium in Satu-Mare and then, following his father's profession, he registered at the Medicine Faculty in Budapest and graduated in 1918; the following year he obtained his doctoral diploma in Debrecen. During the same year he was appointed doctor in Valea lui Mihai². Throughout his life, Andrassy was passionate about numismatics, taxidermy, zoology, ethnography, but, as I shall stress below, he dealt with archaeology “with real passion and the greatest enthusiasm”.

Andrassy was a respected doctor among the local community; he was president of the Valea lui Mihai branch of the Hungarian Party, thus occupying a well defined position in the society of the local elites³.

The political developments after 1945 did not prevent Andrassy, already at the age of maturity, to sustain an intense activity of archaeological research, even if not systematical, especially prodigious and important to the scientific inheritance left for posterity.

A special moment for the scholarly doctor was the opening, in 1952, of the “Dr. Ernest Andrassy” Museum in Valea lui Mihai that functioned until its founder was arrested in 1958. Besides the important

* English translation: Ana M. Gruia.

¹ This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of National Education, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-ID-PCE-2012-4-0020.

² A first and succinct bibliography of Andrassy in Feher 1937, 629.

³ According to the 1937 biography, Andrassy held this position, contrary to the statements in Nemeti 2011–2012, 7–38, according to which Andrassy was not politically involved.

archaeological materials recovered by Andrassy over time, the museum also hosted the important collection of eggs, ethnographic materials and documents related to the history of Ier Valley.

Though he managed to escape the cleansings of the first period of installation of the Communist Period⁴, doctor Andrassy was arrested after the events in Budapest in 1956⁵.

Thus, he spent the final part of his life under the terrible stigmata of political prisoners, arrested together with the “group from Valea lui Mihai”⁶, accused of treason and condemned to forced labor in 1958, he was freed in 1964.



Fig. 1. Dr. Ernest Andrasy in 1937.



Fig. 2. August 1954, among the “Friends of the Museum”. From left to right: Erno Jakab, Nandor Olah, Ferencz Szasz, Dr. Ernest Andrasy, Dr. Lajos Cozac.

⁴ The case of Vladimir Dumitrescu is famous among Romanian archaeologists, see Dumitrescu 1994, *passim*; and Opreș 2004, *passim* or more recently Opreș 2009.

⁵ For the 1956 moment see Vătăman 2012, 23–34.

⁶ From Valea lui Mihai 20 persons were arrested and condemned to between 10 and 25 years in prison, five persons from Olosig were condemned to 25 years in prison and seven persons from Vaida were condemned to between 20 and 25 years in prison. Ernest Andrassy was condemned to 25 years in prison. The main person envisaged by these arrests was Reformed pastor Sass Kalman and the Communist authorities employed his older connections to Maletér Pal (one of the leaders of the Hungarian anti-Soviet Revolution) as a pretext to arrest the “Group from Valea lui Mihai”; Sass Kalman was also executed without a trial. *cf.* Tofalvi, 2001, 49 *sq.*

Marked by the years of imprisonment, with all his goods confiscated, including the collections created through work, sacrifice and self denial, socially marginalized by all he had helped more than once, especially in his capacity as a doctor⁷, Ernest Andrassy died in 1968, at the age of 74, six years of which he had spent in the Communist prisons.

Despite all these, Ernest Andrassy remained one of the personalities to whom all researches of the Bronze Age in Crișana have taken as a point of reference⁸ but about whom the contemporaries have chosen to keep an obsessive silence⁹.

My aim is to subsequently present his archeological contributions by valorizing a manuscript containing some of his field observations, field-walking researches and observations made during “rescue” excavations. The manuscript is preserved in the archives of Criș County Museum in Oradea.

Besides this manuscript, I shall present here four documents that represent a tiny fraction of Andrassy’s correspondence with Kornel Sablyar, one of the founders of Ier Valley Museum in Săcueni¹⁰. These letters are a substantial contribution to the recreation of his personality as both a passionate archaeologist and a museographer.

All these documents were written in Hungarian¹¹ in the time span between 1957 and 1958.

As one well knows from archaeological literature and especially from the latest monographic contributions dedicated to the doctor-archaeologist, European archaeology is indebted to this passionate self-taught man, among other things, for the discovery of the eponym settlement of the Otomani Culture¹² but also other extremely important sites from Ierului Valley¹³.

For now one cannot know with certainty Andrassy’s archaeological “beginnings”. He was interested since a young age in collecting coins. It is possible that in the environment he grew up, young Andrassy saw some “archaeological working sites” opened in Crișana. What is certain is that, according to his own confession, his meeting with Marton Roska made him love and practice archaeology.

Thus, the summer of 1924 was a decisive moment in Andrassy’s “career” of self-taught archaeologist. Then he met Marton Roska, arrived to Valea lui Mihai, probably at the suggestion of canon-archaeologist Dr. Karacsony Janos, to see the doctor’s collection.

The two were since then united by a strong friendship and Andrassy admired the reputed archaeologist from Cluj, as one can see in the first pages of the “Introduction”.

The materialization of this friendship, besides Roska’s frequent visits to Valea Ierului¹⁴, consisted in his actual participation in some of Andrassy’s excavations, is reflected in the few of Roska’s publications regarding the archaeology of this micro-region¹⁵, but also in the entries of the well-known “Repertory” in which Roska thanks Andrassy in particular in the paragraphs of the “Introduction”¹⁶ at the book.

Documentary material

The documentary material of this study was mainly selected from what archaeological literature defines as the “Manuscript of the collection from Valea Lui Mihai”¹⁷, in fact a first-hand document

⁷ During his years of activity as doctor, he delivered more than 2500 babies.

⁸ A more substantial bibliographic work (Nanasi 2003, 95) valorizes a more consistent documentary font of the author, but also document preserved in the archive of the Andrassy family.

⁹ Contemporary history literature in Romanian only briefly records the episode of the arrests made in Valea lui Mihai in 1958 around which a series of contemporary legends were created, especially dealing with the presumed foundation of the “Republic from Valea lui Mihai”. For a general overview of the “Group from Valea lui Mihai” see Tofalvi 2001, 6–59.

¹⁰ Nanasi 1972, 133–137; probably for fear of the “agents” Nanasi mentions nothing on doctor Andrassy’s essential contribution to the foundation and especially the development of this museum, as indicated by the letter addressed by the director of the museum in Săcueni at that time, Reformed pastor Kornel Sablyar, published here.

¹¹ I hereby thank my colleague Ronald Hoचाuser for his kindness and swiftness in translating these documents.

¹² Nanasi 2003, 7; Nemeti, 2011–2012, 7–38.

¹³ Without erring I can say that Andrassy’s good knowledge of the archaeological realities in Ier Valley is mainly due to his activity and field researches. In fact, he knew this area better than all other geographic micro-regions located between the administrative borders of Bihor County.

¹⁴ August 1924, 1926, 1928, September 1934, October 1934.

¹⁵ Besides the entries in the “Repertoriu” for which Roska mentions the origin of the materials, one should also note: Roska 1924, 314–316; Roska 1926–1928a, 191; Roska 1926–1928b, 192–205; Roska 1930, 163–177; Roska 1928–1932, 73–80.

¹⁶ Roska 1942a, 8.

¹⁷ The manuscript is mentioned repeatedly by researchers who have dealt with the archaeology of this micro-region. Among

written by Andrassy connected to the archaeological excavations that he has performed in different settlements in Ier Vallley.

He must have written this document between 1950 and 1958, as the last entry from the second notebook is dated 22.02.1958 and some of the correspondence published here is dated one month later, in March 1958, the fatidic year when Andrassy was arrested.

The manuscript itself is also divided in two sections. The first includes the presentation of the archaeological materials and their origin and the second consists of two fragments of an excavation diary. I call these fragments as Andrassy states from the very beginning the fact that the entire documentation regarding the researches in Valea Ierului was lost during the Soviet occupation in Romania.

I have chosen these “fragments” since they are the most consistent and the richest in information, especially those related to the researches performed by Andrassy between 1920 and 1958 in Valea Ierului, envisaging various eras.

As an archaeologist, Andrassy never rose to the level of his mentor and friend Marton Roska, despite the fact that the passion and dedication with which he “practiced” field archaeology recommend him as the first archaeologist of Ier Valley. His contributions in the field of knowing the archaeology of this micro-region of Crișana are essential and indisputable.

From the perspective of museography, Andrassy restored and preserved, the best he could, according to the era’s norms, almost all of his discoveries, placing them on display in showcases that he designed himself.

If under the respect of his scientific research Andrassy is in the shadow of his master M. Roska, even if some of Andrassy’s datings and conclusions are no longer valid today, the fact that he published the discovered materials and signaled spots with fundamental discoveries for the prehistory of the area and beyond, i.e. the discovery of the Otomani and Sălăcea settlements, aid in determining the profile of this complex biography.

As a true specialist, Andrassy has collected absolutely all the materials that could contribute to the knowledge of the past of Ier micro-region, paying special attention to the historical and ethnographic materials.

One can say that special aspects connected to fishing, wine production and other crafts connected to the ethnography of this distinct micro-region are known due to his activity.

He gathered all these discoveries and ethnographic and historic materials and with them endowed an institution bearing his name, the “Dr. Ernest Andrassy Museum” in Valea lui Mihai. Unfortunately, the fate of this institution was marked by the destiny of its creator and his life’s achievements were intentionally destroyed by representatives of the “party apparatus” who scattered this special collection that was, in time, partially lost.

For the specialties foreign to him Andrassy performed self-taught researches, as he mentions in the introduction to this “Manuscript” and the results of his intense efforts did not fail to show. His activity was acknowledged by a series of researchers with whom he also collaborated. Besides M. Roska one should also mention: T. Jurcsak–paleontologist, T. Beczi–biologist, M. Rusu–archaeologist, M. Petrescu-Dâmbovița–archaeologist, I. Ordentlich–archaeologist, N. Chidioșan–archaeologist and others¹⁸.

The fact that new researches employ his activity beyond the required “state of the art” only confirms the value of the field discoveries performed by the doctor from Valea lui Mihai.

“My collection of antiquities” (ms., p. 1–8)

On 21.VIII 1920 I left for Otomani to hunt wild ducks in the company of my friend, landowner Szabo Gyula junior. We rowed along the Ier until the island called: “Cetatea de pământ”-Foldvar, while the other hunters positioned themselves along the Ier. On the island, crossing the recently plowed land, we found a small stone axe. The man plowing the field came to us and told us that many stones and shards can be found on the island, sometimes hindering the digging of the agricultural cultures.

them one should mention: Bader 1978, 15; Nemeti 2011–2012, 7–38; Nanasi 2003, 95; Ordentlich 1965, 181–197; Rusu 1963, 177–210; Petrescu-Dâmbovița 1977; more recently see Lakatos 2014, 215 *sq.*, 232, 235.

¹⁸ I shall return in the second part of the present study to a project of researching the Otomani Culture that involved Alexandrina Alexandrescu, Mircea Rusu and Kurt Horedt.

As we had time before the ducks flew by we started collecting the stones and shards from ground surface. In the meantime a local man recounted that similar pottery shards can be found in their vineyard as well, on “Dealul Cetăţii”-Varhegy.

Several days later I went to “Dealul Cetăţii” and dug a ditch. It has revealed tools, many shards, one handless axe and bones. Similar remains could also be seen on the surface. I took them all to Oradea to Mr. bishop Dr. Karacsony Janos, historian, who determined they were from the Stone Age. He also encouraged me to continue researching and gathering such materials as the museum in Oradea has no money for excavations.

I lent from my acquaintances books on the Stone Age, but the best I found in my personal library. I thus managed to become familiar with some elementary notions before starting subsequent researches.

I asked the inhabitants in every village if they found antiquities, shards etc. It turned out that they often found entire pots even, but they broke them due to their belief that whoever finds such items shall die the same year.

In the summer of 1924 I met Dr. Roska Marton Univ. Prof. from Cluj, renowned historian who excavated at Biharia. One day he came to Valea lui Mihai and Otomani to see my discoveries. He stayed often at my place and we went out together to: Sălacea, Curtuiuşeni, Cheşereu and Şimian.

He looked at my discoveries and performed test excavations in those places. Due to his wise advice, patience and explanations full of love I learned how to read the layers of the earth, as he trained me to become an amateur archaeologist. I also received from him many specialty books as gifts and I hereby thank him again for it.

I have been collecting old coins since the age of six and bird eggs since the age of 10. Naturally, I read a lot of specialized literature in order to gain knowledge on numismatics, ornithology, but with true passion and with the greatest enthusiasm I still practice archaeology.

Dr. Andrassy Erno

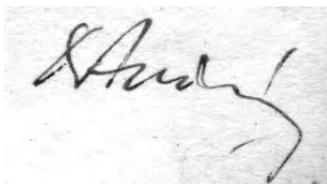


Fig. 3. Doctor Andrassy's signature on a photograph from Galoşpetreu.

Valea lui Mihai (ms., p. 13–27)

On 15. IV. 1921 Rathony Jozsef send word for me to go to his house on Forras-kut St. 58, as while carrying sand they found a skeleton and several pottery shards. Near the skull I found a bowl and several shards. The bowl contained lamb (?) bones, by the right hand there was a beaker and people told me they found shards and burnt soil during the previous days as well. I asked him to be very careful with the digging. The second day they found a large urn and inside it beads made of deer teeth and pieces of flint among the ashes.

On 29. VIII. 1924 I excavated there together with Professor Dr. Roska Marton and in 1931 he published “The prehistoric station in Valea lui Mihai” Ed. Univ. Cluj, 1931 related to these excavations. My discoveries are published in drawings and photographs. Tools from the end of the Neolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age were found subsequently at no. 56 and behind the garden in Kocsar Arpad St. 45.

Two settlements, one from the Neolithic and the other from the Bronze Age, were found at Dienes, on the Bethlen plot.

In the spring of 1933 I found an urn cemetery in the vineyard on Forras St. On the road towards Şimian (the Krizsan field) I found huts and tombs from the Migrations Period and at the end of Kiss St, at no. 77, Gothic tombs (the Museum in Cluj)¹⁹.

¹⁹ Roska 1932, 69–72, for the 1926 discovery; Andrassy 1944, 91–96, (for the discoveries on the spot “Krizsan's vineyard”).

Between the Bujanovics vineyard and the barrier, near the creek, [I also found] tombs from the Migrations Period and in the vineyard near the Gorove hamlet, urn tombs from the Neolithic and the Celtic Period.

Curtuiuşeni (ms., p. 29–32)

Landowner Kovacs Arpad came to me on 21.VIII.1931 [saying that] on the land from “Dealul Mănăstirii” people had found tombs and pieces of bricks. Together with my family I went immediately to the spot in question: series of tombs, circular hair pins [earrings, n.n., C.G.], denarii issued by king Salamon and Friesach denarii. The foundation of a small chapel. Iron nails, a lot of coal and ash. The entire territory of the hill is covered by an Arpadian Era cemetery.



Fig. 4. Curtuiuşeni (?) – glass photographic negative made by Andrassy.

The hill of “Egeto”, from where many antiquities ended up in my collection, is located between the village and the rail road, on the spot where the creek takes a turn. Widow Balasi Jozsefne’s servants also found there a Celtic funerary chariot etc²⁰.

I excavated there on 25.VII.1932, 04.05.1934 and 11.IX. 1936, the area was already inhabited during the Neolithic, later on during the second century B.C., by the Celts.

Reformed priest Kovacs Lajos and class master teacher Bene Andras preserve several pottery shards from “Egeto” Hill and pottery cups and also other antiquities.

Old tombs are also [located] around the Reformed church. According to tradition the sacrifice of the white horse was practiced on “dealul Deda”.

Şimian (ms., p. 34)

The old salt mine road from the railroad towards Tarcea is called “drumul sărat [the salty road]”, as during the past the salt from Sălăcea was transported along it to different places in the country (the road is also mentioned in the Arany Bulka / Golden Bull)²¹.

All the discoveries belonging to the Migration Period mentioned by Andrassy have been recently taken up again by Stanciu 2011, 365–370.

²⁰ The items were published in Roska 1942b, 81–84.

²¹ Borcea 2005, 53, the late researcher from Oradea stressed the fact that a salt customs point functioned in Sălăcea ever since the second half of the eleventh century and salt deposits existed in Sălăcea in 1222; coin finds consisting of Friesach-type denarii, from this area, are connected to this important route.

Here, on the side of the road, on the bank of Creek “Moha” was located the soil-searching pit that has revealed Neolithic pit-houses, Gothic tombs²² and shards [and] I excavated there on 17.VIII.1935.

On Kiss Street, under no. 98, in the garden, people found tombs from the Brass Age. Together with the neighboring gardens, there was an island, similar islands were found in Hajduszoboszló.

I found pottery shards on the Horvath Kalamán's plot. On the northern side of “Dealul Viilor” – the Beres vineyard I found three knife blades made of stone. There is a Neolithic settlement on the border line called Kerthely.

There are tombs in Szunyogh Rudolf's hamlet, on the peak of the hill, one small bowl in each.

I found a tomb down by the creek, in the reeds. Around the skeleton I found 96 white pearls – given to Szunyogh.

Large, uncut stones were once across a hill in the “Borosto” parts – in 1912 they were lost.

Kincse's hamlet was on the bank of River “Moha” and it was destroyed by the Tartar Invasion.

Tarcea (ms., p. 42)

“Dealul mare” and “Dealul mijlociu” rise west of the village, on the bank of the Ier. During vineyard works people often find there prehistoric settlements [materials nn. C.G.] and from the Brass Age, [they find] shards, pieces of stone tools. Frater Lorand's widow gave me as present an urn found there with the margin cut.

On 20.V.1941, Szilagy Daniel found, while plowing his land, shards and one pottery cup that contained 4700 coins, denarii, obols, gologans, from Matyas until Rudolf, Polish, Silesian and Prussian coins.

In “Also ret” (The Lower Clearing) I found a pickaxe similar to the pickaxe from Someşeni.

In the lower part of the village, on an artificial hill, the Duller counts have built a chapel in the sixteenth century.

North of the village, on the plateau, one can see the bed of a river from the Ice Age that once flowed into Creek “Forro- Fu”.

In “Buza-ret” I also found shards. The village on the spot of the “Tyukszer- apati” hamlet has disappeared during the Tartar Invasion.

Adoni (ms., p. 48)

On the edge of the village one of the secondary branches of the Ier forms an island that a narrow soil dam leads towards. A settlement stood there already during the Bronze Age, that was also inhabited during the Migration Period and then, during the sixteenth century, people built a small fortification on it; the bricks of this fortification were used for the construction of several houses in the village and the raw or cut stone blocks decorate the park of the Szilassy castle.

Tombs from the Migrations Period are to be found on the plots around the island. In the yard of the Greek-Catholic parish I found, some time ago, a small pot.

In the Szilassy vineyard, in a tomb, I found a bronze pickaxe of the Fatjanovo model from the Crimean Peninsula. The tomb also contained one bronze bracelet and one gold chainlet; Szilassy exchanged the gold chainlet for a gold watch.

Stray finds were made on the Pocsaros field, the Kortés island and the Wagner hamlet.

Cheşereu (ms., p. 52)

I found three tombs on the edge of the village, on Paksy Dezso's plot, during construction works. A woman's skeleton was found in the coffin from the first tomb.

I found tombs on Márton Sandor's plot, on the Forras hill, during the excavation of a ditch; I performed excavations there on 10.08.1934. Ten Dl. Prof. Roska came and on 22.IX we uncovered two tombs, from the Migrations Period, probably belonging to the Gepidae.

On “Insula mare” I excavated on 12.V.1936. I found dwellings from the Stone Age and the

²² Probably from the same cemetery where the inventories of two tombs were later published, see Bulzan, Ciorba, 2007, 77–95.

eleventh-thirteenth century, almost each island on River Ier had colonies (settlements) from the prehistoric period, there are often stone axes (shards) traces of hearths. On the contrary, if people excavated or made sewage systems in the pastures and hay fields, they found pottery shards or fragments of stone tools. Maybe water brought them here on the “Insulă”. I did not find constructions made of reed.

A settlement from the time of Ludovic the Great (1342–1383) is located on “Puspok” hill, surrounded by a ditch from the Stone Age; people erected there a stone construction around which burials were practiced.

A small cemetery from the Migrations Period is located outside the ditch, on the north-eastern part of the hill; a very beautiful discovery made of bronze found on the Borz Hill is preserved at the Deri Museum in Debrețin.

Șilindru (ms., p. 60)

In the clearing between the railroad and the gorge between the hills close to the “Puspok” Hill people found the tomb of a rider. The sword and the largest part of the tools have been lost. Prehistoric shards were found in many spots in the village during construction works.

By the crossroads of the Șilindru-Kenez routes [Voivozi, Chiniz, nn. C.G.], on the bank of Creek Fuzek, the plateau ends in the Promontory and there was once a prehistoric settlement and one during the Bronze Age.

On the small hill between the railroad and the creek prefect Lona Jenő found an urn cemetery, but I was unable to find the extracted urns.

Vășad (ms., p. 64)²³

A creek runs in the northern part of the village and it is intersected by the road leading towards Curtuiușeni. The Gypsy colony is on the bank of the creek. From the nearby hill the locals extract soil for mud bricks. On 2.V.1938 school teacher Mr. Pop Emil brought me a lot of shards found on that spot. People suspect that before time the Gypsies also found pots and hearths, even tombs. A beaker was found on the main street, during the excavation of a cellar.

A cemetery was once in use on the edge of the village, towards Kupac, in the schoolyard. Another cemetery was located around the church. Shards and processed stones were also found on the vineyards hill during works.

Galoșpetreu (ms., p. 68)

Frater’s forest is located near the branch of River Ier and from there and from the island nearby shepherd Vida Janos collected numerous carved stone tools (the Mousterian Culture), fragments of Gothic pots and five Roman coins in the spring of 1938.

On the opposite bank people found fragments of prehistoric and medieval pottery.

In Draveczy’s vineyard I found a stone axe and from the Frater forest and the clearing called “Moară” I received an axe from the medieval period.

There was once a “castle” on the road towards Tarcea and I saw its polished stone columns; in the sand quarry (sand exploitation) [I saw] mammoth bones and there are shards in Komlos’ garden.

Sălacea (ms., p. 74)

Vida Hill (also called Burga’s Crest), in fact a promontory, has a steep slope on the North-Western part and is surrounded by a wide and deep ditch on the south-eastern side, and this transforms this promontory into an earthen fortification. Shards appear on the surface and pit-houses, pots, stone items, pottery and kitchen remains [appear] in the lower strata. In the upper layer, besides the objects mentioned above, one also finds items made of bronze (gold earring in Cluj). I excavated there on 29 IV 1937 and with Mr. Professor Roska on 2 X 1934.

²³ The materials published from the borders of this settlement see Fazecaș, Marta 2005, 33–43.

There was once a church on the slope of “Dealul Vida”, currently disappeared (St. George) and around it several tombs.

On “Varboc” Hill [there are] tombs from the Migrations Period (tunnel?).

On “Szallas” Hill [there is] much obsidian and a tomb from the Migrations Period with a talisman with St. George²⁴.

On “Sf. Ioan” Hill [there are] traces of buildings and an iron cross. In 1904 in our vineyard from Kossuth St. people found two urns, but I do not know to whom my father gave them as present. “Ertolgy” Forest (Stejărișul Ierului) belongs to the municipality of Sălacea and there was once a village also called “Ertolgy” mentioned by a papal document issued in 1238. On “Templom Suruje” Hill I found remains from a church destroyed by the Tartar Invasion, with tombs under the floor. “Harangos kut” is located in the proximity. In 1900 near the doctor’s dwelling my father built two rooms and during the excavation of the foundation they found towards the street thick oak planks (bridge?) and a perforated animal shank bone that my grandfather, Kovacs Janos, donated to the Museum of the Reformed College in Debrețin. Besides, he had founded this museum and Andrassy Peter was also one of the founders of the Transylvanian Museum in Cluj.

“Însemnările mele de la Săpături” [My notes during Excavations] (ms., p. 101)

The photographs related to performed excavations and my notes on the excavations in Sălacea and Otomani were all lost during the Russian occupation. For this reason the stratification of the objects is with lacunae, possibly erroneous, made only based on memories.

Valea lui Mihai (ms., p. 101–119)

On “Forraskut” St. 58, on Ratony’s plot, at the depth of 110 cm, direction West-East, people found a skeleton with highly fragile bones, bent at the knees, lying on the right side, with a pottery jar on the right side (no. 231), that contained sheep (deer?) bones and a beaker by the left hand. At the depth of 60–80 cm there were the first traces of pit-houses and urns. Numerous shards. On “Forraskut” St. 56, in the garden, among the fruit trees, I excavated a small place on 14.III.1936, I discovered a dwelling (the North-Western side) with compacted soil floor, at the depth of 90 cm I found the lateral sides of the hearth that measured 20 cm in height, the chimney (?) made of burnt clay, in the ashes small shards.

Inside the dwelling [there were] only broken jars, one bronze awl and a chisel with sheath, broken. Jakab Mihaly, dance teacher, lived in the garden at Arpad St. 4, corner with. “Forraskut” St. 56–58. At my request he dug his garden and at the depth of 130 cm he found urns covered with dishes and beakers, inside they contained ashes and bones and in one of them I found a jewelry item made of bronze. A culture layer above, at 60 cm²⁵.

Mester St. 65, at the end of the plot, during the excavation of a limestone pit, at the depth of 70 cm, people found bronze items. Among the constructors they were lost together with a large bronze chisel and a bronze lump.

Kiss St. 77, at the end of the house during the excavation of a clay pit people found two tombs that Dr. Roska examined on site and published in 1931.

Gencsi St. 18, in front of the garden, during the excavation of the pit for mud bricks, people found shards and a skeleton. They called for me. At the depth of 30 cm and with a thickness of 30–40 cm, a culture layer. I saw a hearth, ashes with shards and animal bones. At the depth of 100 cm, in the West-East direction, with the upper part destroyed, a skeleton from the Migration Period (?).

In the sand border between Creek “Fuzeti” and the “Somogy” Clearing there is a small hill that people called “Janos’ land”. According to legend, this was a village destroyed by the Tartars, I excavated on the plot owned by Vajda Zsigmond on 10.VII.1948, in four places. At 40–50 cm I found untouched soil. On the surface many small shards, a piece of grinding stone, on the highest point on the hills, at

²⁴ Biro 1943, 54, the author suggests that the item should be dated to a wider interval, between the tenth and the twelfth century, while Vătășianu 2001, 171 suggests a narrower dating, during the eleventh-twelfth centuries, stressing the item’s Byzantine character.

²⁵ Other discoveries on *Forraskut* St. (currently Izvorului St.) see Ghemiș 2014, 155–160.

the depth of 40 cm I found a lot of coal and ash but no hearth. Further researches should be performed in order to determine where the village's cemetery was located.

On 5.IX.1954, Szabo Sandor living on Kisujvaros St. announced me that he found shards on his limestone hill [and] I went on site and excavated two pits measuring 1 × 2.00 m. At the depth of 60 cm I found untouched sand with coal and ash, bones, burnt rocks and shards decorated with straight or wavy scratch marks.

In Valea lui Mihai, inside the “Groapa nouă cu lut” [New pit with clay] on 28.VI.1950 people found a huge pottery jar. Since they thought it contained inside a large treasure, the Krizsans wanted to take it out themselves. But the bank excavated below collapsed and the pot broke. Then they notified me. The second day I went to the site with my friend attorney Dr. Jakab Erno. There we could see a great part of the pot's place [imprint nn. C.G.], part of the pot was at the depth of 50 cm, and the base in the old times at 80–90 cm., excavated in the riverbed by ca. 20 cm. The Krizsans took the pieces of the pot to their garden, in a cover, and then I transported them home. Since it rained throughout the entire night the pot was wet and with mud. I dried it for almost a week. Then I kept drying it for two more weeks. It was broken into 114 fragments. My nephew Banner Zoli arrived from Satu Mare in the beginning of August and with him I started matching the fragments and gluing them together. We used film melted into acetone. It held after a long time, but it held well. Until September we only finished 2/3 from the base, but the pot could not rest on its sole. Then we asked carpenter Hadhazy to make a special support on which he placed the sole and we replaced the missing parts with gypsum.



Fig. 5. “The pot deposit” – in the Andrassy Museum (1954).

On 02.01.1954 in the morning the steep wall of the old clay pit collapsed in one place due to the great cold and the daughter of windos Heszlegy Lajosne who lived there noticed that there were many shards, several cups and a jug in the collapsed soil. In the evening she brought them to me. I bought them. The next day, on 03.01.1954, I went there and we continued excavating where the soil and collapsed. The work was difficult as in the evening there were already around – 10⁰ C. Above the yellow soil we found a 150 cm thick layer of black soil. The pots were at 140 cm from the surface. In total we found one five-liter cooking pot, 23 jugs [cups nn. C.G.] small and large, with one handle, two dishes with small deteriorations or none. We found nothing in the soil between the pots or inside them. We were unable to dig some of the collapsed soil due to the frost and darkness. Then it started to snow. A very thick layer of snow covered the place and melted after a very long time. Then [when the snow melted nn. C.G.] I had no time to perform excavations. On April 10th I excavated again and found two cups, one broken bowl and many shards²⁶. For this material, found here, we made a special display case.

On 30.IV.1951, two of Krizsan's children, in a wheelbarrow brought me a black pottery jar broken into 97 fragments, they told me that they find it on the left of the “huge” pot from last year, at a

²⁶ Ordentlich 1965, 181–197. Recently the issue of the “pot depositions” has been taken up again by Gogăltan 2014, 35–83, with the older bibliography on this topic.

distance of 5–6 meters and a depth of two shovels. That is why it broke and people hurried to take it out. Only on 3.V. I managed to go on site. On the edge between the old pit and the urn, a 120 cm thick culture layer. There was the large pot, I excavated further. Workers carried the largest part of the pit-house. There was only the North-Eastern corner, the compacted floor and one wall. Near the wall a raw stone L: 48 cm, l: 28 cm, thickness: 7 cm, I also found another pot and several shards and animal bones. I restored the large pot on 4.VIII, together with Szasz Ferencz, Dr. Jakab Erno and myself. Size: height: 68 cm, width: 47 cm.

On 13.VIII. 1951, on the same spot, 10 steps to the right, a tomb was revealed. The skeleton was very poorly preserved, it had a reddish cup, a black cup completely broken and an iron blade measuring 10 cm in length; the latter two objects did not end up in my possession.

On 13.VII.1953 I looked again at the “Old clay pit” and at the new one. The contour of a pit-house is visible in the middle of the wall in the new pit. Unfortunately, only 1/3 of it was left and the other parts together with the soil were carried by the workers. At 150 cm in depth a layer of humus measuring 150 cm in length and 40 cm in thickness. Many shards and pots, it seems like a garbage it. I managed to reconstruct a small pot. On the bottom of the old pit, at the depth of 70 cm I found the cut base of a large pot [and] I found many shards until I finished excavating. I also found three pots in the culture layer, above (?) pelvic bones, shards, ribs and teeth of ruminants. I excavated these on 20 and 28.VIII, Krizsan Geza is my smartest “antiquities hunter”.

13.IV.1954, in the steep wall of the “old pit” around the middle there are two earthen pit-houses well visible (I took photos of them). The small one: depth 110 cm, width 130 cm on the floor burnt soil, a bit of ash and several shards. The large one, depth 230 cm base semicircular in shape, down 140 cm, up 160 cm on the floor, burnt compacted soil measuring 6 cm in thickness. On top of 30–70 cm of ash, among pieces of coal, numerous bones, among which two were burnt. Above 90 cm in depth remains from two broken pottery jars.

04.VII.1955 at the “new pit with yellow soil” towards the abattoir, ca. 80 cm there was a pot [that] they brought to me in pieces. On the same occasion they brought me several shards from the “old clay pit”. I selected some of them.

10.IX.1955, they brought me a soled pot (of a kind I had not seen before). On 12.IX, I went there and found bones. I spoke to the Gypsies there. I found two pit-houses, one jug [a handled cup, n. C.G.] bowls, cups, sharpening stones, stone amulets, very numerous shards and a pot for fire with sole [probably a portable hearth nn. C.G.], I am trying to glue them.

20.XI.1953, left bank of Creek Fuzek, on the “Dienes” Hills²⁷. School teacher Orosz Miklos (Bethelen St. 60) came to me and showed by several flint and obsidian blades and other fragments that he found on their land from “Dienes”, right on the surface. We thus went on site and performed test excavations, due to the fact that it was cold and the waters were frozen I was able to go to the island. Nothing on the surface. I excavated several pits measuring 120 × 80 cm and deep enough so that I see the stratification.

I found nothing in it 1, neither on the surface nor in depth. In pit 2: on the surface several prehistoric shards, in the humus layer as well. The second layer included many arm-thick, rotten roots (the forest was cut down in 1890) underneath yellow sand, at the depth of 90 cm a prehistoric shard, a bit upper a bone, lower the hard soil bed.

In pit 3 a handful of mica in the humus. In the lower layers prehistoric shards. Around pit 4 many shards from the eleventh-twelfth centuries. I also found several flint and obsidian blades in the humus layer and below it. The stratigraphy below is interesting, as this place was twice flooded by Creek “Fuzek”. Right above the layer of silt there were several prehistoric shards and bones (shoulder blade and ribs).

Pit 5 oriented along the East-West direction, in the upper layer [there were] shards from the Arpadian Era, below a 40-cm-thick layer containing no materials, while yellow sand featured 30 cm below the latter. There I found one [piece of] obsidian and several pottery shards, one pot dirty with silt, with relief decoration. The prehistoric shards were coarse, partially burnt, lacking ornaments. As

²⁷ In July 2007 I checked this spot together with Karoly Toroczka and Carmen Zima museographer. On the surface there are numerous silex flakes and items, those collected, are preserved in the collection of the new “Dr. Ernest Andrassy” Museum in Valea lui Mihai.

an exception, in pit 2, at 90 cm in depth I found one fragment from a bowl with incised decoration. The later shards are ornamented with shallow incisions, straight, but most are lacking decoration.

Entering by “Forraskut” on “Băncii” St. on the right one sees Petofi St., at no. 8 Somogy Laszlo’s plot. In the middle of the garden, right of the sour cherry tree, I found a skeleton. I excavated there an area of 4 × 4 m on the surface there were a flint flake, a few shards from pots made on the potters’ wheel and a small bronze coin from the time of Emperor Aurelius. Everywhere [there were] many shards and animal bones. The skeleton oriented along the East-West direction was missing its head, the upper part of the thorax and the foot (collected by Somogy?). The body had been placed lying on the back at 70 cm in depth. There were many shards in one place and coal at the depth of 60–80 cm and the soil matrix at the depth of 110 cm.

Curtuiușeni (ms., p. 103–104)

I performed test excavations on “Kapolna” Hill on 20.VIII.1931, in the afternoon. Unfortunately, almost all tombs were destroyed when the acacia saplings were planted on Kovacs’ plot. The tombs are at the depth of two shovels, sometimes so close than one could consider this a single pit. For example one contained five skeletons one near the other, older and younger, probably a family as the incisors looked similar. They were placed with the head towards the top of the hill and with the feet downhill, lying on the back or on one side. I examined 14 tombs out of which only four remained untouched.

1. Tombs, depth 30 cm, a woman’s skeleton, lying on one side. At the ears small earrings made of silver wire, at the neck glass pearls.

2. Tombs, identical to the one at number 1.

3. Skeleton lying on its back. The tomb had been disturbed at the head. Under the back of the head one hair ring and one wire ring with one S-shaped end.

4. Tomb, the skeleton lying on its back, under the back of the head two brass hair rings.

On the spot of “Capela” [The Chapel] there were pieces of brick and a lot of ash and coal, with cast iron nails in the ash, one piece of knife blade, one iron file and three iron ornaments. Researches should be performed on the spot near the “Capelă”. The tombs there are untouched. On the “Egeto” Hill, during a school trip director Bene Andras and school teacher Toth Anna, together with the pupils, played in the sand. They found tombs and three skeletons, but the children destroyed almost all [of the features]. Only seven cups were preserved, four or five were broken. They took the glass pearls and the bronze items. This happened on 14.IV.1946. When I excavated on 4.V.1934 on that part of the “Egeto” Hill that was has been excavated since then, at the depth of 40 cm I found a disturbed tomb. The skeleton was missing the lower part, from the pelvis, and the face part. The bones of the arm were partially burnt. There were pieces of bronze, obsidian and shards between the ribs, thus on the thorax.

Cheșereu (ms., p. 105–109)

On 15.VIII.1931. Paksy Dezso announced me that he found two tombs in his yard, near the water well, while excavating the limestone pit. This piece of land was once Marton’s and the road towards Cherechiu turns there. A tomb was found there earlier near the dwelling built on the spot of the barn.

1. Tomb, at 80 cm, direction East-West a man’s skeleton. An iron dagger (28 cm), poorly reserved, by the left hand. In the middle it had an iron ring that had turned into pieces.

2. Tombs, partially opened by me, at 110 cm in depth, along the East-West direction, a woman’s skeleton. On top of the skeleton there were remains of rotten timbers. The skull had been broken before in old times. Out of the glass pearls people gave me 13 pieces, greenish-white, four blue and three hanging jewelry items of the „water drop” type. On both arms the body had bronze bracelets and on the left ankle a bronze ring. This is a Sarmatian tomb from the third-fourth centuries A.D. and such a tomb has also been found in Csongrad, Szeged in Hungary. Dolgozatok, Szeged, XVIII, 1942.

On “Dealul Izvorului” land owner Marton Sandor dug a drainage ditch in the beginning of August 1934, 120 cm along the East-West direction he found a skeleton lying on its back. By the left arm there was a straight iron sword, a rusty scabbard attached to the blade, the handle had 10 cm, the hilt eight cm, on the right side of the pelvis people found the tip of a bronze belt. A stone axe (?) by the left shoulder. Maybe there were other objects as well, but when I got there the tombs were scattered.

Tomb 1. On 10.VIII.1934 I excavated alone but on 22.IX.1935 I excavated together with Dr. Marton Roska.

Tomb 2. Depth 120 cm, a woman's skeleton oriented along the East-West direction, lying on the back, a bronze brooch on the right side of the pelvic bone with the iron pin missing.

Tomb 3. Depth 100 cm, skeleton lying on its back, oriented East-West, a pottery shard to the left of the forehead. Under the right hand, an iron dagger inside a wooden sheath length: 25 cm on the left of the pelvis a bronze brooch with the pin made of iron. By the feet, above the angle and diagonally, the bones of a dog measuring ca. 25 cm in length that wore around the neck a finger-thick belt. It was clearly visible but when I touched it broke into pieces. At the end of the belt, under the jaw, a bronze plaque, entirely preserved, decorated with knots.

Tomb 4. Depth 150 cm, the skeleton oriented along the East-West direction, at the right hand an iron dagger with a wooden sheath, length: 16 cm, by the waist a small iron brooch, under the pelvis to the right a larger iron brooch..

Tomb 5. Depth 120 cm, a woman's skeleton, without objects.

Tomb 6. Depth 100 cm, a skeleton without objects.

Tomb 7. Depth 60 cm, the skull and skeleton of a very old woman, without objects.

Tomb 8. Depth 90 cm the skeleton oriented East-West, by the right hand an iron knife measuring 17 cm in lengths, between the bones of the pelvis an iron brooch.

Tomb 9. Depth 100 cm the skeleton oriented East-West, by the right hand an iron knife measuring 14 cm in length (in very poor condition). Left of the waist a small bronze brooch with the pin made of bronze. The entire hill is a cemetery, [and the people using it] probably lived around the spring.

7.VI.1934. Ujvari Gyula found on the island three stone axes and an urn (that has been lost), after a few days I went out on the island and I excavated in three places test ditches measuring 40–60 cm in length, humus layer, I did not find anything.

Stone tools were often found near Cheşereu on "Insula Mare". On 12.V.1936 I excavated on the island in the North-Western side where there were several large pits. I found a kitchen dug into the soil (pit-house?), probably a cow-house or a sheepfold. At the second shovel I found the floor of a room measuring four steps across, three steps wide, having a wall made of wattle and daub. Under the floor of the second dwelling I found many shards from the Middle Ages. The dwelling was largely plowed. In the corner from the northern side of the dwelling there once was, according to the traces, a pottery stove, across it there was a beam, horizontally placed in the wall, probably the threshold. In the proximity an iron spit.

On "Dealul Episcopului" I excavated on 12.V.1936, Dr. Marton Roska saw the spot ever since 1928. There is an artificial island at the South-Western end of the plateau and on the surface there are prehistoric and medieval shards, in the middle of the mound shards and a tomb. One also finds brick fragments, a layer or mortar but there was no connecting wall. It is rather like the spot of a stone construction had been leveled.

A tomb [was found] at 120 cm in depth. Pieces of the coffin made of thick oak timbers were preserved in several places, up (?) an iron plaque, in total three coffin nails under a completely destroyed skeleton a small bronze ring. At the left ear a bronze ring with S-shaped end. On the right I found Ludovic the Great's "black man's head" denarius.

Tomb 2, in the part towards the village I found three coffin nails. Nothing else but a bladder stone between the bones of the pelvis. In the part towards the village I found numerous human bones thrown into a pit.

Şimian (ms., p. 110–111)

Kiss St. 98, the land plot and the garden, the neighboring garden long ago formed an island. From there [people] carried yellow soil. On 23.IV.1932 Csany Jozsef found pottery jars, stone and bone tools while digging the yellow soil. The next day I performed rescue excavations. I did not find anything. Then, on 9.IX.1933, a tomb without objects (inventory) was found towards the east. Beyond the rail station, on the right side of the "salt mine road" there is a pit for carrying soil away near the "Gypsy colony".

[People] have been gathering old objects from there for years. The prehistoric village had pit-houses,

they found shards, a fishing net weight, a bronze ring. On 12.III.1927, at 160 cm in depth [there was] a Gothic tomb, the skeleton was lying on its back, along the East-West direction. On the skull I saw the place of a healed hemorrhage, in the right hand the body had an iron knife, under the waist an iron brooch. I did not find any more tombs. A long time ago I found three large urns on an island on a small spot called “Loc de grădină”.

On 18.III.1935 I excavated in two places down to the matrix soil, in the upper culture layer there were pieces of coal and shards from large pots from the Brass Era.

Sălacea (ms., p. 111)

“Pădurea de stejar” [the oak forest] (Ertolgy) is located in the border of the municipality and there I searched for the lost village of “Ertolgy” that has disappeared during the Tartar Invasion and that is mentioned in a 1238 papal document as being a large village with a church. There is a church, “Templom Suruje”, in the valley called “Bauler” near the edge of the forest. There are several pits and brick fragments and mortar on the surface. On 30.VII.1935 I went out there with my family and excavated with day laborers.

I lost the dimensions of the church and chapel, respectively. I performed excavations closet o the door, near the South-Western wall. At 120 cm, a layer of mortar measuring 5–16 cm in thickness into which the wall was stuck. The church was paved. Under the rotten floors I found, one near the other, three tombs. In the third tomb I found three skeletons, one of a child’s and two belonging to women (?). The bones were brittle. It was interesting that the skulls’ sockets were covered with one pottery shard each.

Galoșpetreu (ms., p. 112)



Fig. 6. October 1954 Galoșpetreu
“Homokbanya/Nisipărie”.

Fele Sandor received a pasture in the “Kiss” land and water covered this pasture most of the time, on 04.XI.1953, Fele together with his son plowed the land. The plow hit something hard. They tried to take [the object] out with the handle of the whip, but it broke. Eventually, with two nails, they managed to take out a bronze torsaded spiral. Young Fele ran hope to bring a shovel. They dug down to 30–40 cm in depth, about a square meter. They found 57 pieces of bronze objects. They divided the items between them and kept their mouths shut. This summer I hear there were some objects in Petreu, I asked Draveczy Iozsef’s wife to find out. That’s how they found the two Fele who then brought the objects. I bought the objects from them²⁸. They promised me they will keep digging and they will also bring me the prehistoric shards.

In 1942 Cservid Gyula excavated a cellar near the Reformed church, found four tombs, one containing several objects and a bronze chainlet that were lost.

On 06.IX.1957 in the morning we went to Galoșpetreu, the school teacher, the president of the council and the secretary helped us to excavated, the part of the sand mine where the mammoth bone was found last year had collapsed. Above we dug the first pit, at the depth of 30 cm we found a silex, then only sand, at 220 cm a “reddish layer”, under it at 40 cm nothing.

We excavated the other pit towards the West, did not stop until the depth of 360 cm and we found nine layers.

²⁸ The archive of the museum in Oradea preserves one typed manuscript by I. Ordentlich related to the deposit from Galoșpetreu, eventually the deposit was published by Chidioșan, Soroceanu 1995, 169–186.

Top down: -15 cm. humus.
-50 cm white sand.
-60 cm yellowish soil.
-30 cm sand.
-60 cm reddish sand.
-15 cm grey sand.
-10 cm reddish sand with small bone flakes.
-15 cm grey clay.
below moist, aired sand.

The dimensions of the pit were 250 × 400 cm. Up on the hill we excavated a pit measuring 200 × 200 cm and 60 cm in depth, at the first shovel three obsidian flakes and below prehistoric shards, Gothic shards and burnt bones, at 45 cm a section of burnt/compacted soil that measures 5 cm in thickness.

Pișcolt (ms., p. 120)

On 23.IV.1955, in a truck with my son Erno, we went to perform some test excavations. The plot behind the Reformed church was set and several tombs were found. The Regional Cultural Committee asked me to perform excavations there. At 130 cm, until which depth the plantation works reached, the following were found:

1. no trace inside the tombs, 40 cm below a woman's skeleton, lying on its back along the West-East direction, without a coffin, in the upper part, in the ground, a small bronze coin. Since time was short, we did not excavate more tombs.

2. the tombs were very narrow, we excavated in front of a building's door, at 100 cm in depth the soil had been already carried, by the peasants.

Another pit 220 × 150 depth 140 cm, in the North-Western part we found three fragments from a beam measuring 120 cm, several grey shards and bones, in the Eastern side of the pit, at 50 cm, compacted burnt soil, on it pieces of coal.

3. eight steps away we dug a pit measuring 200 × 200 and 200 cm in depth. At a couple of centimeters in depth [we found] burnt iron slag, probably a former kiln. Many slag lumps as large as a fist, with greenish and bluish-mauve enamel (?) covering them. in front of the "kiln" pieces of coal and a lot of ash. In the ash a silver denarius issued by Ferdinand in 1542. Black and gray shards with wavy ornament from the twelfth-fifteenth centuries, several pieces of iron and several jaws and teeth from cows and pigs. In the Eastern corner of the pit the soil was soft and we dug 80 cm downwards. We found red, green, yellowish shards, fragments from two ornamented dishes from the seventeenth-eighteenth century.

4. We excavate on the spot called "Morii uscate" bricks that were of normal size, but very frail. Some had numbers on them. On one brick the inscription "PIS", on another "18...", "12....", in the schoolyard we found a large boar tooth, two fangs and animal bones.

Otomani (ms., p. 121)

12.IV.1957, Nagy Daniel, Reformed pastor who has been of help to me for decades in my excavations, called me that while carrying stones for the road near the castle gate people found four tombs. I went there with the 4 o'clock bus. Eight teachers came with me. The bus of the collective waited for us at the curve of the road and took us to the site. People said they found three tombs, without traces, under the woman's skull one silver ring. At 1,50 cm we found a tunnel, shards from the seventeenth century and several shards with enamel and the skeleton of a small dog.

Instead of conclusions

Representative of a generation for which archaeology meant more than the collection of exotic objects, Andrassy Ernest has incontestable merits in the archaeological research of Ier Valley²⁹.

²⁹ The micro-region of Valea Ierului is extremely rich, among the more recent contributions see Fazecaș, Marta 2004, 35–45.

Besides other members of the local elite, such as Dr. Penkert Mihaly from Săcueni, who in his turn owned an important collection that included Roman materials from Savaria but also materials discovered in the area of the settlement of Săcueni, such as the famous gold phalerae that have recently and definitively become included the patrimony of the National Museum for the History of Romania or professor Halasz Jozsef mainly interested in the ethnography of Valea Ierului, Andrassy developed an intense activity not only as a collector but also as a scholar scientist.

In this first part of the “contributions” related to the beginnings of archaeological research and museography in north-western Romania I have attempted to sketch a complex personality, a man of its time and age, the second part will also include other data on the activity of professor Andrassy and of other personalities the activity of whom is connected to the archaeological research of the western and north-western area of Romania³⁰.

The recognition of doctor Andrassy’s activity, must be regarded, beyond petty political options of old or actual, as a necessity mainly from the perspective of the history of the archaeological science in this area, and one must assume the past in a decent and objective manner.

Annex 1. Ernest Andrassy to Kornel Sablyar, four typed pages

1. To Mister Szablya (r) Kornél, Reformed dean, Săcueni

My dear friend!

On the way home I was thinking that you should not collect stamps (as signs!) for me. On the one hand let us not deteriorate the documents by removing the stamps, on the other hand these documents represent written memoirs. The collection, preservation and display of all document, stamp marks, old maps and newspapers should be one of the museum’s tasks. Become a specialist in this field as well! I was never interested in it! And if from now onwards objects belonging to the mentioned field shall reach me, I shall feel obliged to send them to you.

It is desirable that in time the material be divided according to each of our “fields of interest”. Naturally, in the beginning collect everything you can in order to generate the public’s interest to as many fields of study as possible.

Allow me to give you some advice that has been omitted last time due to the brevity of our meeting.

Photographs should be covered with glass panes, as they can be stolen [by some impulsive visitor – referring to children n.Trad.].

Similarly, the pistol/double barrel gun should be tied to the table.

I remember about photographs that you should try and gather old clothes (referring here to folk costumes!) from old houses. Head covers worn by older women. Then, from priest, [collect] pipe supports and pipes. Slowly, these also run out of fashion and will go well with the furniture that you own. Everything, everything must be preserved! Such objects shall no longer be produced/manufactured. Thus, everything is of value.

Slowly, gradually, take the minerals out of the exhibition. These are not museum exhibits. I suggest that you exhibit in their place samples of soil from the area of Săcueni, placed into jars: gray humus, black soil, silt, sand, yellow and red soil. Further more, there is iron ore (limonite) under places with reeds. From the perspective of agriculture, these are instructive.

Also start collecting cultural goods related to wine production: cellar keys, cups, small barrels, if possible a press made of old timber³¹.

I spoke to Számadó. He agrees to collect for you fishing items/implements. First of all a «propelled» boat, as it is called in those parts. Namely the propulsion was ensured by a wooden pole. Water infiltrated into the boat was eliminated with a handled pot. Along the same line of thought, during winter we should also collect the fishing items/implements! Others priest could help you with this, after your prior moral insurance. But certainly, it is of foremost importance that you benefit from material support/money. To this end, try to set up a font from the Council. Otherwise you shall not succeed. No fisherman will part with the working tools that ensure his daily living only on the basis of good words, no matter what informative activity derives from it. Still, you will also find people ready to make this effort for culture. But these phenomena are rare.

³⁰ I refer here to the Penkert Collection in Săcueni, the collection of priest Kovacs Lajos, the Frederic Ardos collection, that of teacher Halasz Jozsef but also others as well.

³¹ This was not a wine press but a hand mill. After numerous negotiations with the Town Hall of Săcueni, I managed to have it transferred to the patrimony of the Archaeology and History Museum of Ier Valley, the press is dated 1869, is made of a single tree trunk, has the mobile stone and the sides made of iron and is a relatively good state of preservation. Until 2004 it has been used as an “ashtray” by the employees of the Town Hall.

I also ask you that in the cases of larger and more beautiful items you should display their place of discovery (ex.: fishing net weight. Valea lui Mihai). Where is that marble plate that recorded the fact that Franz Iosif stopped in Săcueni in 1894? It would be a pity if it got lost. Even if you do not exhibit it in a main spot in the museum, it must be preserved!

I no longer recall if I wrote about this or not, but you should have a ledger to record all the letters you receive regarding the museum. The answers to these letters should be written with indigo paper so that you may keep copies to preserve/archive. Force things a bit, in the sense that the post marks from the municipalities end up in your possession! These must be collected: the old ones exhibited, the more recent ones stored.

Ask Gönczy Sándor to draw for you the map of the administrative unit; on it he should mark both the places of origin of the cultural goods in the collection and the goods themselves; I shall provide all of these data.

Please do not take this long litany the wrong way. I personally wish for an exhibition that will fill a void, that will raise the interest of specialists as well and not a collection of boring old things that fits a pattern.

Thus: the ethnography of fishing and evidence of folk life over the past century.

I embrace you with affection, you and Jóska, wishing you happy holidays!

28 December 1957

Annex to the previous letter

Laboratory activities in the "Dr. Andrassy" Archaeology Museum, for the conservation of cultural goods [text typed on normal paper sheet, signed in the right corner: Andrassy]

1. Washing shards. They are left in water for several hours, then washed simply. Then the layer deposited on them is removed thus:

One prepares a solution of hydrochloric acid (HCl) – 10 grams of HCl concentrated to 1 liter of water. The shards are placed in this solution and left for 1–2 days. After they are taken out, they are rinsed with much water so that the acid does not affect our hands. The shards are scrubbed under water with a nail brush. In case the deposition has not been removed, the procedure is repeated and one increases, in addition, the concentration of the solution.

2. Adhesive for gluing shards and bones.

a) One degreases with hot water the surfaces of an old film. One then cuts it in small squares, places them in acetone and leaves them there for a while. The solution will be good for gluing when it becomes glue-like. The surfaces that need to be glued are washed with water or acid. After having dried them, one smears them with a thin layer of adhesive, puts them together and presses them until they fit. The goods thus glued are set in vertical position in a small box with sand.

b) another type of adhesive: one mixes well equal quantities of fresh cottage cheese and quick lime (not slaked). The mix is good for gluing when it looks like a pulp and stretches. In case the cheese is not fresh, one adds a somewhat larger quantity. Gluing is performed like at point a). Attention! One should not prepare a larger quantity, as the mix dries fast.

3) Fine adhesive for gluing pottery. The breakage is smeared with soluble glass and the parts are fixed together. Leave to dry until the next day. Soluble glass is mixed with zinc oxide until its density is identical to that of sour cream.

4) The reconstruction of dislocated parts. With gypsum, but this procedure requires experience.

5) Protecting wooden objects from decay. With a thin layer of colorless varnish or shellac.

6) Old iron objects. They can also be protected with a thin layer of varnish or black iron varnish. Other types of plastic products and methyl methacrylate are equally good.

Numbering the items

After it was recorded in the Inventory Ledger, each object receives a number. On a small part of one of the object's cleaner surfaces one places a layer of shellac. After it dries, the number is written on it in white ink. As white ink is almost unavailable anymore, one uses white tempera in water solution prepared on a small piece of glass (the solution is good when it runs like ink). On white objects (e.g. bones) one writes the number in ink or Indian ink.

To small or thin items (e.g. bronze pins), where the inventory number cannot be written, one attaches a label with this number. On soft objects such as dress items or bird nests I apply the above mentioned solution or attach the label with the inventory number through gluing.

Head of the Inventory Ledger table

| No. crt. | Data when the object was found/ identified | Name | Place of finding/ identification | Observation / dating/ |
|----------|--|------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
|----------|--|------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|

Besides this, one must also keep another ledger that mentions in detail: when, who and what was brought? Where was the object found? Settlement? What else was there (referring to objects)? How was the skeleton positioned? To which cardinal point was its head oriented? The same ledger must contain the museum's archaeological campaigns, their exact description, and corresponding photographs: from the site and of the found objects.

The third ledger: Cash book (entries and payments)/contains exclusively quantities in the value of 1 leu.

Small notebook: Record of old coins. Description of the coin (in general). Who donated or brought the coin? Where was it found? Date when it was presented to us. If there are several coins: Description of the conditions in which it was found: where they found in a cup?

Visitor book. All visitors are recorded in this ledger. It is not only a statistical method, but also a nice memory.

I wish to mention that in the back side of the Inventory ledger, separately from ancient pieces, one must records the objects from the inner design of the museum or the posters on the walls etc.

Eventually, for the photographs one can create/introduce a separate ledge. In my collection, the photographs are recorded on a sheet glued to the last folio of the Inventory ledger together with the inventory number of the photographer objects.

Annex 2. Ernest Andrassy to Jozsef Halasz, classical format postcard

2. Classical format postcard, typed

My dear friend!

I ask you to draw Kazinczy Ferenc's native house for the museum's inner use. I wish to display this work, framed and under glass, on the corridor of the museum. I wish to order a photograph of the statue, another with Fráter's native house and another that shows his tomb.

I wish to immortalize the great personalities from Valea Ierului.

What is the state of your collection of cultural goods from the museum?

Thanking you in advance for your effort.

Cordial regards,

Valea lui Mihai, 7 March 1958.

Annex 3. Ernest Andrassy to Kornel Sablyar, classical format postcard

3. Letter with the heading "Dr. Andrassy – Museum of Archaeology", Valea lui Mihai

To Mr. Szabljár Kornél, Reformed dean, Săcueni

You gave me great joy by sending me the stamps. They are interesting. Among them I found several versions. I will try to draw several of them, on an enlarged scale.

Encouraged by it, I will also write to the Catholic parishes (Roman-Catholic and Greek-Catholic) from the territory of Valea Ierului. I hope to obtain the same thing from them.

I am happy to hear that your museum grows every day. You have received many items over the last period. It would be of great importance to start creating the collection of fishing objects/implements.

Thanking you again for the gifts, I send warm regards. Valea lui Mihai, 18 March 1958

Annex 4. Jozsef Halasz to Ernest Andrassy, classical format postcard

4. The Ethnographic Museum of the administrative unit of Săcueni 19/1958

Dr. Andrassy doctor-director of the "r. Andrassy" Archaeology Museum, Valea lui Mihai

My dear Ernő!

I am sorry for writing so late, after two written requests from your part received for some time. I shall

personally recount what were the reasons for this delay. I finished the requested drawing and also managed to obtain roof tiles. I am waiting for fair weather to carry them, I lack the courage to travel on this cold weather.

Our modest collection multiplies day by day. The exhibition room has become small. I am grateful for your description of the avifauna from the region. With your subsequent approval, we send one copy to each school in the administrative unit in order that this topic becomes known patrimony in general.

I thank you for your kindness of having helped me and I apologize for the delay of the answer to your letter. Warm regards.... Săcueni, 24 March 1958

Călin Ghemis

“Țara Crișurilor” Museum, Oradea
Oradea, ROU
ereshu@yahoo.com

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Abbreviations

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| Acta Ant et Arch Suppl | Acta Antiqua et Archaeologica Supplementum. Szeged. |
| AAC | Acta Archaeologica Carpathica. Krakow. |
| ACMIT | Anuarul Comisiunii monumentelor istorice. Secția pentru Transilvania. Cluj. |
| ActaArchHung | ActaArchHung Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Budapest. |
| AEM | Archäologische Epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn. |
| AIIA Cluj | Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie. Cluj. |
| AMP | Acta Musei Porolissensis. Zaláu. |
| ATF | Acta Terrae Fogarasiensis. Făgăraș. |
| ATS | Acta Terrae Septemcastrensens. Sibiu. |
| Agria | Agria. Annales Musei <i>Agriensis</i> . Az egri Dobó István Vármúzeum évkönyve. Eger. |
| AnB S.N. | Analele Banatului. Timișoara. |
| ArchÉrt | Archaeologiai Értesítő. A Magyar Régészeti és Művészettörténeti Társulat tudományos folyóirata. Budapest. |
| ArchJug | Archaeologia Iugoslavica |
| Arh. Pregled | Arheološki Pregled. Arheološko Društvo Jugoslavije. Beograd. |
| AM | Arheologia Moldovei. Iași. |
| AMN | Acta Musei Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca. |
| ArchRozhl | Archeologické Rozhledy. Praga. |
| ASMB | Arheologia Satului Medieval din Banat. Reșița 1996. |
| BAM | Brvkenthal Acta Mvsei. Sibiu. |
| BAR Int. Ser. | British Archaeological Reports. International Series. Oxford. |
| BCMI | Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice. |
| BerRGK | Bericht der RömischGermanischen Kommission, Frankfurt a. Main. |
| BHAB | Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Banatica. Timișoara. |
| BMB. SH | Biblioteca Muzeului Bistrița. Seria Historica. Bistrița Năsăud. |
| BMÉ | Bihari Múzeum Évkönyve |
| BMI | Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice, București. |
| BMN | Bibliotheca Musei Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca. |
| BMMK | A Békés Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei. Békéscsaba. |
| BMMN | Buletinul Muzeului Militar Național, București. |
| BThr | Bibliotheca Thracologica. Institutul Român de Tracologie, București. |
| CAH | Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae. Budapest. |
| Carpica | Carpica. Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Arheologie Bacău. Bacău. |
| CAMNI | Cercetări Arheologice. Muzeul de Istorie al R. S. România/Muzeul Național de Istorie. București. |
| CCA | <i>Cronica cercetărilor arheologice (din România)</i> , 1983–1992 <i>sqq.</i> (și în variantă electronică pe http://www.cimec.ro/scripts/arh/cronica/cercetariarh.asp). |
| CRSCRCR | Coins from Roman sites and collections of Roman coins from Romania. Cluj-Napoca. |
| Dacia N.S. | Dacia. Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne. Nouvelle serie. București. |
| Danubius | Danubius – Revista Muzeului de Istorie Galati. Galați. |
| DDME | A Debreceni Déri Múzeum Évkönyve. Debrecen. |
| DolgCluj | Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Érem- és Régiségtárából, Klozsvár (Cluj). |
| DolgSzeg | Dolgozatok. Arbeiten des Archäologischen Instituts der Universität. Szeged. |
| EphNap | Ephemeris Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca. |
| FADDP/GMADP | Führer zu archäologischen Denkmälern in Dacia Porolissensis/Ghid al monumentelor arheologice din Dacia Porolissensis. |

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| FolArch | Folia Archaeologica. Budapest. |
| Forsch. u. Ber. z. Vor- u. Frühgesch. BW | Forschungen und Berichte zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte in Baden-Württemberg. |
| GPSKV | Gradja za proučavanje spomenika kulture Vojvodine. Novi Sad. |
| GSAD | Glasnik Srpskog Arheološkog Društva. Beograd. |
| HOMÉ | A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve. Miskolc. |
| HTRTÉ | Hunyadvármegye Történelmi és Régészeti Társulat Évkönyve |
| JAMÉ | A nyíregyházi Jósa András Múzeum Évkönyve. Nyíregyháza. |
| JahrbuchRGZM | Jahrbuch des RömischGermanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz. |
| Lohanul | Lohanul. Revistă culturală științifică. Huși. |
| MCA | Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice. București. |
| MCA-S.N. | Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice-Serie Nouă. București. |
| MA | Memoria Antiquitatis. Complexul Muzeal Județean Neamț. Piatra Neamț. |
| MFMÉ | A Móra Ferenc Múz. Évkönyve. Szeged. |
| MFMÉ StudArch | A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve, Studia Archaeologica. Szeged. |
| MN | Muzeul Național. București. |
| Opuscula Hungarica | Opuscula Hungarica. Budapest. |
| OTÉ | Orvos- Természettudományi Értesítő, a Kolozsvári Orvos-Természettudományi Társulat és az Erdélyi Múzeum-Egylet Természettudományi Szakosztálya. |
| Palaeohistorica | Acta et Communicationes Instituti Archaeologici Universitatis Groninganae. |
| PamArch | Památky Archeologické. Praha. |
| Past and Present | Past and Present. Oxford. |
| PIKS/PISC | Die Publikationen des Institutes für klassische Studien/ Publicațiile Institutului de studii clasice. Cluj-Napoca. |
| PBF | Praehistorische Bronzefunde. Berlin. |
| PMÉ | Acta Musei Papensis – Pápai Múzeumi Értesítő. |
| PZ | Prähistorische Zeitschrift. Berlin. |
| Rev. Muz. | Revista Muzeelor, București. |
| RIR | Revista Istorică Română. |
| RMM-MIA | Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor. seria Monumente istorice și de artă. București. |
| RMMN | Revista Muzeului Militar Național. București. |
| Ruralia | Ruralia. Památky Archeologické – Supplementum. Praha. |
| RVM | Rad Vojvodjanskih Muzeja, Novi Sad. |
| SCIV(A) | Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche. București. |
| SCN | Studii și Cercetări Numismatice. București. |
| SlovArch | Slovenská Archeológia. Nitra. |
| SIA | Studii de Istoria Artei. Cluj Napoca. |
| SIB | Studii de istorie a Banatului. Timișoara. |
| SKMÉ | A Szántó Kovács János Múzeum Évkönyve, Orosháza. |
| SMIM | Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie. București. |
| SMMA | Szolnok Megyei Múzeumi Adattár. Szolnok. |
| SMMIM | Studii și Materiale de Muzeografie și Istorie Militară. București. |
| Starinar | Starinar. Arheološki Institut. Beograd. |
| StCl | Studii Clasice, București. |
| StComBrukenthal | Studii și comunicări. Sibiu. |
| StudArch | Studia Archaeologica. Budapest. |
| StudCom | Studia Comitatus. Szentendre. |
| StudUnivCib | Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis. Sibiu. |
| StudCom – Vrancea | Studii și Comunicări. Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Etnografie Vrancea. Focșani. |
| StudŽvest | Študijne Zvesti Arheologického Ústavu Slovenskej Akadémie Vied. Nitra. |
| Symp. Thrac. | Symposia Thracologica. București. |
| Tempora Obscura | Tempora Obscura. Békéscsaba 2012. |
| Tibiscus | Tibiscus. Timișoara. |
| VAH | Varia Archaeologica Hungarica. Budapest. |

VMÉ
Ziridava
ZM
ZSA

A Vas megyei Múzeumok Értesítője
Ziridava. Arad.
A Vas megyei Múzeumok Értesítője
Ziridava Studia Archaeologica. Arad.