New Facts Regarding the Repertoire of Coţofeni Archaeological Sites on the Hunedoara Side of the Poiana Ruscă Mountains

Abstract:

Of late, the general consensus on the evolution and chronology of Coțofeni culture has changed, thanks to new excavations, published materials and more absolute carbon 14 (C14) dating. In the light of these new perspectives, this article presents an updated view of Coțofeni discoveries from the Hunedora side of the Poiana Ruscă Mountains. The first topic it deals with relates to the situation of repertoire discoveries (34 sites), mostly concentrated in the eastern part of the Poiana Ruscă Mountains. The analytical model works upon 6 criteria: locality, actual toponym, geographical coordinates, elevation, landform and type of research. A total of 56% of the Coțofeni sites from this geographical area are known through field research, and a balance has been reported between the outdoor habitations and cave habitations. Based on materials and contexts from the systematic excavations at Cerișor-Peștera Cauce, Peștera nr. 1 and CiulpăzPeștera Bulgărelu, the chronological and material heritage landmarks of Coțofeni communities in the Poiana Ruscă Mountains can be established. Etnoarchaeological analysis of the results clearly indicates the mobility of these communities. Based on ceramic materials found in stratigraphic contexts, a cultural and chronological ordering of the ornaments was obtained by seriation. Unfortunately, we do not have any C14 data for the analysed sites, but there is such data from the late Coțofeni site at Silvașu de Jos-Dealul Țapului, positioned between Poiana Ruscă Mountains and Hațeg County. As a result considerable differences regarding both the quality and the number of elements can be observed.

Keywords: *Coțofeni culture, Poiana Ruscă Mountains, repertoire, caves, seriation.*