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Márton Roska* (1880–1961) and the archaeological research of the 10th and 11th centuries

Motto:

Carpathian Basin is an intermediate macro-region between East and West (Béla Pósta)

Márton Roska's name is organically intertwined with the archaeological school of Cluj that started in the same time with the founding of the archaeological department within the university in 1872. Later on, in 1898 the department developed into a professional institution under the leadership of Béla Pósta. As one of the leading figures of this school, archaeologist and ethnographer, Márton Roska, has not only conducted excavations and published important works regarding the Prehistoric and Migration periods, but fundamental publications and excavations concerning the archaeology of the 10th and 11th centuries in Transylvania are connected to his name. This paper discusses Márton Roska's contribution to the specific phenomena of this historical period through his research and interpretation of data gathered in Gâmbaş, Hunedoara and Moldovenești cemeteries and the role he played in the development of different theories concerning the incursion of the "conquering Magyars" in Transylvania.

The dualist age and its post perception

Probably there has not been another state, in the whole history, which, after its disappearance has been more condemned as the Austro-Hungarian Empire¹.

* Márton Roska's entire work cannot be resumed in just a few pages especially by a scholar who is mainly interested in the early medieval period. That is why in the following pages I will refer only to Roska's research of the tenth and eleventh centuries and not to his extended activity in its whole. I hope that other researchers with interests in the Pre- and Protohistoric period will continue our initiative to analyze Márton Roska's prodigious activity. Also, I express my special thanks to Mihai Rotea, archaeologist at the National Museum of Transylvanian History, who kindly gave me the portrait of Márton Roska.

¹ For the most recent analysis regarding the dualist monarchy: Somogyi 2007, 109–122; Deák 2000, 59–80; Helczmanovszki 1979, 27–79; Eddie 2004, 202–218; Hanák 1988; 1999. About the Habsburg myth: Magris 1963; Karlsson 1997, 10; Gusfield 1997, 16–18.

Its multi-faceted problems resulted from the fact that in the beginning of the nineteenth century, the cosmopolitan philosophical ideas of the Enlightenment were replaced by the concepts of the Herderian Nationalism² that ultimately fuelled strong nationalist feelings³. At the same time, in opposition to this phenomenon, there existed the multinational empires, amongst which the most liberal was the Austro-Hungarian Empire (beginning with the second half of the nineteenth century⁴), that resembled in a way, through its characteristics (organization, trade and movement of people, multicultural and multi-ethnic facet) the European Union. The multicultural character was best illustrated by the existence of two capital cities (Wien and Budapest), true emblems of the ethno-cultural diversity specific to Central Europe, where many different nationalities and religious movements coexisted⁵. For example, in 1900, in the second capital city of the empire, Budapest⁶, there were 37.873 Slovaks; while the number of Germans and Jews, which formed 23.60% of the population was equally important. Amongst Germans, only 27% were born in Budapest while 42% came from other parts of the empire and the remaining 31% came from abroad.

The economic boom encouraged the migration of people from all over the empire towards the capital cities⁷. It cannot be proved that the empire led an active denationalization policy, of which it was later to be accused of. The identity loss

² The so-called *nation building theories* are first and foremost linked with the name of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, which he developed in his main work (Fichte 1808). These are later completed by an erroneous interpretation of Johann Gottlieb Herder's theses in his work (Herder 1784–1791), by supporters of the already existing national ideas which also make vague references to Fichte's work.

³ The main problem with historiography is that it started at a time when modern nations and their ideologies were being defined based most often on made up facts with the sole purpose of justifying political interests.

⁴ National movements from all across the Empire developed differently in this period than the ones from France, Spain and Russia. In support of this idea, one should not forget that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy admitted the existence of a Croatian parliament with an extended autonomy (Gratz 1934, Vol. I, 57; Ress 2011, 54–56). We think it is necessary to point out: for the first time in the history of Europe, the Hungarian Kingdom's Parliament passed the *statute of nationalities* in 1868 (http://www.hhrf.org/kisebbszegkutataskk_1999_01/cikk.php?id=20; <http://nemzetisegek.hu/repertorium/2003/05/Bar02.pdf>). That is why one cannot talk about the empire as a classic form of a national state as Lucian Boia suggested it (see: Boia 2005, 63).

⁵ Adolf Hitler, born in a small Austro-Hungarian town, lived during his youth in Vienna, but hated the capital city, not, just because of the many hardships in his personal life but also because of the city's multiculturalism, as we learn today from his letters (Lukács 1997, 63–87, 189–213).

⁶ Poet and politician Octavian Goga, renowned for his nationalistic and anti-Semitic beliefs, used to describe Budapest at the beginning of the twentieth century as a Babylon without Hungarian traits but only Jewish ones. According to Miskolczi (2005, 164, 170), Goga's nationalism and anti-Semitism is fairly reflected in his remaining manuscripts: *Încă o dată Alba Iulia*, Biblioteca Academiei Române, București, ms. R. 4090, 31.

⁷ During this period Budapest had become the second largest grain processing centre in the world after Minnesota and Vienna the most important fashion centre of Europe. The population of Budapest had reached at the beginning of the twentieth century 880.371 inhabitants, from an earlier 275.000 registered in 1868 (L. Marjanucz, *Magyarország ipartörténetének összefoglalása az I. világháborúig*, www.magyarorszag.hu/orszaginfo/adatok/gazdasag/gazdasagtortenet/gazdasagtortenet_1).

is a process closely linked to the cultural environment; therefore the assimilation of nationalities must be linked in this case – like elsewhere in the world – with the individual need of social integration⁸, a natural action in the process of social evolution⁹.

The same multinational, multicultural issues (due to merchandise and population movement) were common in cities all over the Transylvanian basin¹⁰, the Banat, the Crişana, Valea Ierului and lower Someş region (Upper Partium), areas where, at the beginning of the twentieth century, different ethnic groups from all across Central and Eastern Europe were living together.

In such a multinational, multicultural and colourful background was Márton Roska born, at the beginning of the twentieth century in the town of Gherla (G.: Neuschloss; H.: Szamosújvár)¹¹. The young Armenian, who later became one of the most important Transylvanian archaeologists, studied in a setting marked by political rivalries between the political elites of the empire¹² and during a period of unprecedented economical development.

html; Djuvara 2007, 112; Márkus, *Budapest építési és népesedési fejlődése 1880–1940 között*, <http://www.omikk.bme.hu/mee/web/fajlok/1944-109-111.pdf>; Kövér 2007, 44–73).

⁸ The best example comes from the construction industry: in 1880 40% of masons were Germans, 9% Slovaks and 51% Hungarians. Among the glass-workers, 24% were Germans, 15% were Slovak and 61% Hungarians, half of the later being of Mosaic religion. A German domination can be noted in the following working fields: bakers 55%, coffee sellers 30%, and restaurant owners 42%. In the commercial and banking sector, alongside the old bourgeoisie that was mostly German, in the dualist period one can find Romanians, Germans, Hungarians and a percentage of 66% Jewish merchants (Kövé 2007, 44–73).

⁹ As an example from my own family I can mention a similar phenomenon, which took place in Bucharest: my great-grandfather's sister (a Roman-Catholic Hungarian) emigrated in the kingdom of Romania at the beginning of the twentieth century and married a Romanian citizen of Greek origin, who originally emigrated from Greece. After a few years she was baptized in the Orthodox religion and assumed a Romanian cultural and religious identity.

¹⁰ I refer here to the Transylvania (*Ultrasilvana Terra* from the 10th–12th century, with the newer form of Transylvania appearing in 1462), from which the later province took its name. In the last decades, there has been a widespread misconception that Transylvania means the land situated at the eastern border that is nowadays between Romania and Hungary (the Niread, Ier, Crisana, Banat, and the Transylvanian basin areas) (Benkő 1994, 188–192).

¹¹ Gherla, alongside Gheorgheni (G.: Niklasmarkt; H.: Gyergyószentmiklós), Frumuşeni (H.: Csik-szépvíz) and Dumbrăveni (G.: Elisabetsdorf; H.: Erzsébetváros) was one of the main headquarters of the Armenian minority in Transylvania that was colonized beginning with 1637 up to the middle of the eighteenth century (Ávedik 1896, 124–130; Szongott 1902; Kölönte 1910; Tarisznyás 1994).

¹² For the most significant moments of the Romanian nationalist movement is the “Memorandum” from 1892 and the publishing of A.C. Popovici's book, where one can find a combination of Herderian nationalism with Fichte's theories and the racist phantasms of the twentieth century (Branişte 1972, 188; Jancsó 1920, 135–152; Popovici 1906). At the beginning of the twentieth century the leading figures of the Romanian nationalist movement for independence and who, also remained involved in the political activities after 1920, were Iuliu Maniu and Alexandru Vaida-Voievod. At the beginning of the century, Alexandru Vaida-Voievod had become a confidant of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was planning the abolishment of the dualist system and the suppression of Hungarian independence within the monarchy (Vaida-Voievod 1998, 60; 1994, 116). The political conflicts denounced later by Romanians as “the Magyarization policy” evolved around Albert Apponyi's

The School of Archaeology of Cluj and its leading figure, Pósta Béla¹³

The field of archaeological research made a considerable breakthrough when, in 1859, the Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület/Societatea Muzeului Ardelean (Transylvanian Museum Association) was created under the influence of the Transylvanian Saxons, who in 1840 initiated the *Verein für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* (Szabó 1942; Egyed 2005, 233–241). The association had varied interests, ranging from history to natural sciences and under the leadership of Brassai Sámuel its annual journal enjoyed a wide distribution. Archaeology as a science reached a more professional level (at least in theory) once the emperor; Franz Josef signed on the 12th of October 1872 a decree, establishing the Franz Josef University in Cluj (Szabó 1942, 12). As a consequence the association handed over all its documentary collections to the newly founded university; from this point on the association's activity was intertwined with that of the university's, maintaining at the same time a certain degree of independence. Once the unification of the two institutions was completed, towards the end of the nineteenth century, Cluj became an academic city of strong macro-regional importance, where 30% of the population was made up of teachers and students.

The archaeology chair within the university was created following the German – Austrian system, thus guaranteeing considerable autonomy¹⁴. The library and the documentary collections handed over by the Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, as well as, a research institute named “The National Transylvanian Museum of Archaeology and Numismatics”, also belonged to the Department of Archaeology. After a period of almost two decades of stagnation, the activity of the Department of Archaeology received an impulse from Béla Pósta, one of the greatest figures

school legislation also known as “Lex Appony” voted in 1907, which stipulated the raising of salaries for school teachers. Since most of the time, the Romanian schools were under the patronage of the Greek-Catholic or Orthodox churches they had no financial means of implementing the legislation so they had to turn to the Hungarian officials for help. In return the Hungarian government claimed its right to interfere with the curricula: they demanded that the Hungarian language be taught and if the percentage of students in those particular schools was over 50%, the Hungarian language became mandatory, but only in those particular classes (Jancsó 1920, 285–289; Miskolczy 2005, 163). On the other hand, the relations between nationalist Romanians from Transylvania and those from the Romanian Kingdom were far from perfect. V. Braniște wrote in his memoirs: “This past year we have demoralized ourselves more than the Hungarian government did in the last 50 years.” (Braniște 1972, 187). Regarding the political thinking of the Romanian leaders from Transylvania here it must be underlined that after the 1st of December 1918, when the unification of all Romanians from Banat, Hungarian Land (Partium) and Transylvania with the Romanian Kingdom was decreed, the “Consiliul Dirigent” led by Iuliu Maniu introduced the 1868 nationality's legislation (this time the other way around): a sign that the “*peoples prison*” veiled with so much passion later on was not so inhumane, not even regarding the legislation of national minorities. Actually, in Andrew Vincent's opinion, in our day the *national states* are the “*peoples prison*” (Maniu 2001, 16; Vincent 2002, 48).

¹³ For details on the Béla Pósta's academic activity and the archaeological school led by him, see: <http://postabela.ro>

¹⁴ In the Romanian educational system “an academic chair” corresponds to a faculty department.

of the Hungarian archaeology at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the following century (on the Béla Pósta's school of archaeology, see: Buday 1925, 5–17; Banner 1961, 44–47; Banner 1963, 17–28; Csorba 1969–1970, 117–146; Ferenczi 1999, 56–63; Vincze 2003, 640–657; Vincze 2004, 2004, 58–73; Langó 2007, 99–104). He was an archaeologist, who traveled to Russia only to identify analogies for Hungarian artefacts¹⁵. Pósta was named chairman of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cluj in 1898 by the emperor himself. After Henric Finaly's mediocre organizational activity, Béla Pósta created professional structures, which eventually led to the development of an exceptional generation of young archaeologists¹⁶.

From the beginning of his activity as chairman Béla Pósta emphasized the usage of elementary archaeological documentation methods such as site description and topographic plans but also burial documentation with drawings and photography. He also pointed out in 1907 that archaeological excavation in sections was a mistake (Vincze 2002, 43). During his courses he used to explain to his students the importance of the Carpathian Basin, which he considered to be an intermediate macro-region between East and West (Vincze 2002, 34–39). Every summer he used to organize courses for museum staff from small provincial museums (Csorba 1969–70, 122–126).

Learning from his experience Béla Pósta tried to establish a research institute in Kazan, intended to research Magyar artefacts prior to the “conquest/settlement of the Magyars” (honfoglalás kora) (Buday 1925, 12); furthermore he tried to create an Institute for Oriental Studies in Constantinople (Pallag 2003, 117–134). In view of the completion of this important project, he sent Balázs Létay to Paris and London on a scholarship that would help him specialize in oriental studies. Unfortunately the beginning of the First World War put an end to the completion of his ambitious scientific projects¹⁷.



Fig. 1. Jenő Zichy (left) and Béla Pósta (right) during the Russian expedition

¹⁵ Here I refer to three expeditions taken place in the eastern parts of Russia, planned and financed by count Jenő Zichy at the end of the nineteenth century (Pósta 1905).

¹⁶ Ten years later, still unsatisfied with the results, Béla Pósta described his activity in a letter to József Hampel: “Out of 40 years of nothing is hard to make something”. It is also true that years later, in the Transylvanian Museum's annual journal he expressed a much more optimistic view of the future of archaeology in Transylvania (Vincze 2002, 43; Pósta 1907, 230).

¹⁷ About August 15, 1914 the man that might have become the coordinator of this project, Balázs Létay, was one of the first to fall on the front in Galicia (Vincze 2004, 25–58; Pallag 2002, 108).

With the advent of Béla Pósta's school and the formation of a new generation of students (Márton Roska, István Kovács, Balázs Létay, Árpád Buday, Ferencz László, János Gulyás, János Banner), one can start to discuss the beginnings of professional archaeology in Transylvania. Their excavations and writings have remained to this day some of the most important landmarks of Transylvanian archaeology; their inventory registers found at the National Museum of Transylvanian History remain to this day valuable from a documentary point of view. I. Kovács and M. Roska's excavations were the first in Transylvania to document the Visigoth culture (the necropolis of the Sântana de Mureș [G.: Sankt Anna an der Mieresch; H.: Marosszentanna]) and the Gepid cultural continuity (the necropolis of Bandu de Câmpie [G.: Bendorf; H.: Mezőbánd] and Unirea-Vereșmort [G.: Rothberg; H.: Marosveresmart]) after the military and political changes of 567.

After the dismemberment of Austro-Hungary, "Pósta's school" was dismantled (Banner 1963, 17–28). Most of his students continued their archaeological activity in Szeged (in Romanian: Seghedin), where the University itself was transferred (part of the collections remained still at Cluj), while János Banner (Bóna 2001, 72) perpetuated the spirit of the archaeological school of Cluj within the archaeological department of Eötvös Lóránd University in Budapest¹⁸. Others like István Kovács and Márton Roska remained in Cluj, becoming teachers or assistants at the Ferdinand University.

Life and work of Márton Roska

There are some interesting publications about the life and scientific activity of Márton Roska written by József Korek and Zoltán Vincze. They used archival documents (some of these still unstudied) from Budapest and Cluj (Korek 1962, 89; Vincze 2005, 7–15).

Márton Roska was born on the 20th of June 1880 in Cubleșu Someșan (H.: Magyarköblös), Cluj County and was raised in an orphanage. The evolution of his identity bears the dual mark so specific to Armenians living in Transylvania: alongside his Armenian origin (which he considered to be his national identity), he considered Hungarian as his native language. Márton Roska's identity was marked by the social and cultural conditions of the dualist era and also by the multicultural specificity of Transylvania. From this conjuncture derived his interest toward the Romanian language, culture and tradition, to which he dedicated several ethnographic studies (Roska 1943, 2, 186–189; 1944, 125–129).

In 1900, after graduating high school he enrolled the department of philosophy, literature and history at the University of Cluj. Within a year he became

¹⁸ Among students who would later contribute to J. Banner's work I can single out István Bóna (works on the Bronze age tell excavation at Békés Várdomb: Banner–Bóna 1974), the future chairman of the department of archaeology at Eötvös Lóránd University in Budapest. Therefore Béla Pósta's teaching methods continued to steer the archaeological education at Eötvös Lóránd University (see the history of the University in: Kalla 2002, 419–421).

Béla Pósta's assistant after mentioning in his application letter that "alongside Hungarian, I fluently speak Romanian and I have strong knowledge of Latin and German" (Vincze 2005, 8). In 1903 he became research assistant at the Transylvanian Institute of Archaeology and Numismatics. Alongside listing artefacts from excavations and isolated finds, he also led rescue excavations on a small scale in Simeria Veche, Fizeșu Gherlii, Iclozel, Iclodu Mare, Balsa, Dezmir, Petroșani and Zlatna (Vincze 2005, 8). In 1904 he graduated and in the following academic year (1905–1906) he was appointed assistant at the Department of Archaeology, position that was later prolonged. During this time he gathered numerous Prehistoric and Roman artefacts from isolated excavation sites like Cubleșu Someșan, Cornești, Lacu, Feldioara, Cetan, Pintic, etc. He also enriched the museum collection with artefacts from Denmark (Seeland Island) and France (Saint Acheul). In 1904 he was delegated by Béla Pósta to Deva where he helped with the systematization of the local museum's collection¹⁹.

Meanwhile his academic career continued. In 1908 he defended his Ph.D. on the influence of the Mediterranean on the Neolithic funerary rituals of the Carpathian Basin. In 1912 he was promoted and in 1913 received credentials in paleontography (Vincze 2005, 10). Up to 1914 he made several study trips abroad: in 1908 he had a European scholarship, during which he toured museums of Berlin, Brussels and Paris. Next year he visited museums in Germany and in the Czech-Moravian region. In 1912 he participated on an excavation in Frankfurt am Main where he had the opportunity to demonstrate how a skeleton must be investigated, documented and extracted from its grave. In the same year, he attended the International Congress of Archaeology and Anthropology in München (Roska 1927, 351–352).

If until 1909 he rarely had opportunities to conduct systematic excavations, being only confined to small scale digs, after this date, he started to participate in several excavation campaigns at important sites which became a part of the history of archaeology (table 1).

The outbreak of the First World War impeded many of his plans including those to continue excavations at Gâmbaș and Unirea-Vereșmort sites. On 15 March 1915, Márton Roska was enrolled in the army and sent off to fight on the Galician front; later on he became lieutenant. After seizure of Cluj by the Romanian troops difficult times began for M. Roska. Béla Pósta died and Árpád Buday was appointed director of the Institute (Sas 2003, 495–505). He is the one, who on 14 May 1919 handed over the Institute to the Romanian authorities (Vincze 2005, 11). The university, now Romanian, maintained a part of the former staff, but the authorities began a series of political actions, during which M. Roska and Á. Buday were arrested. They were released a few days later and acquitted by the court-martial in May 1920.

¹⁹ The letter that he wrote to his superior Béla Pósta described his activity in Deva (see Vincze 2005, 9).

Table 1. Excavations conducted by Márton Roska during 1910–1914*

<i>Place</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Chronological sequence</i>	<i>Site character</i>
G.: Perjamosch/H.: Perjámos/R.: Periam	1910	Bronze age	Tell
H.: Apahida/R.: Apahida	1910	Roman period	Villa Rustica
G.: Thorendorf/H.: Oláhtordos/R.: Turdaş	1910	Neolithic age	Settlement
H.: Nagyikland/R.: Iclodu Mare	1910	Neolithic age	Settlement
G.: Perjamosch/H.: Perjámos/R.: Periam	1911	Bronze age	Tell
H.: Csoklovina/R.: Cioclovina (cave)	1911	Palaeolithic age	Cave
H.: Nándorválya	1911	Neolithic age	Settlement
G.: Eisenmarkt/H.: Vajdahunyd/ R.: Hunedoara	1911	Early Arpadian age	Necropolis
G.: Burgdorf/Hung.: Várfalva/R.: Moldoveneşti, Varfalău	1912	Early Arpadian age	Necropolis
G.: Gombasch/H.: Marosgombás/ R.: Gâmbaş	1912	Scythian period	Necropolis
G.: Gombasch/H.: Marosgombás/ R.: Gâmbaş	1912	Avar period	Necropolis
G.: Gombasch/H.: Marosgombás/ R.: Gâmbaş	1912	10 th century A.D.	Necropolis
G.: Perjamosch/H.: Perjámos/R.: Periam	1913	Bronze age	Tell
G.: Gombasch/H.: Marosgombás/ R.: Gâmbaş	1913	Avar period	Necropolis
G.: Gombasch/H.: Marosgombás/ R.: Gâmbaş	1913	10 th century A.D.	Necropolis
H.: Igric/R.: Igrîţa	1913	?	Settlement (cave)
H.: Felsőszöcs/R.: Suci de Sus	1913	Eneolithic age	Necropolis
G.: Unterwinz, Winzendorf/ H.: Alvinc/R.: Vinţu de Jos	1913	?	?
G.: Rothberg/H.: Marosveresmart/ R.: Vereşmort (today: Unirea-Vereşmort)	1914	Gepid epoch	Necropolis

* I publish also the German and Hungarian names of the sites, because until 1920 they belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as well as in Romanian. I believe that is important, because in the archaeological literature the names of these archaeological sites before 1920 can be found just in German and Hungarian: G.-German; H.: Hungarian; R.: Romanian.

In September 1920, M. Roska took an oath of abjuration to the Romanian state, but he wasn't downgraded to the position of assistant. Only in 1924 he is promoted as project supervisor at the Institute while Á. Buday is appointed chairman of the Department of Archaeology in Szeged. Subsequently he became member of the Transylvanian section of the Commission for Historical Monuments, for the Transylvanian. If we follow his archaeological researches until 1930, we can see that this was a prolific period, thanks to the new director of the Institute Dragoş M. Theodorescu (who occupied this position between 1920 and 1929). Referring to Theodorescu's influence on the Institute and the scientific milieu, M. Roska wrote two decades later: "the administration was taken over by foreigners, and fortunately, at the head of the Institute of Archaeology and Numismatics was appointed D.M. Theodorescu, a remarkable specialist and an understanding and noble colleague, who understood well the sufferings of his new co-operators, appreciated their scientific background, under his guidance research and fieldwork could begin again" (Roska 1941a, 3). These lines reflect perfectly the fact that no matter the age or the nationality, the borderline must be drawn first and foremost between competence and incompetence, between work and indolence, and in this respect both Theodorescu and Roska were top of the line competent and hard working researchers. Roska's opinion about the humanism and professionalism of Theodorescu is once more confirmed by János Herepei's (Herepei 2004, 87–88) annotations on his emigration from Romania, which he wrote in 1955 at Kajdacs. Meanwhile it seems that between M. Roska and the founder of the Romanian school of archaeology some dissensions appeared²⁰.

Without a doubt there was a need for M. Roska and I. Kovács's knowledge in the field of archaeology. No one knew better the deposited artefact lists and the existing archaeological registry books. M. Roska also exchanged artefacts with museums from Bucharest, Iaşi, Timişoara (G.: Temeschwar; H.: Temesvár); he traced the origin of several sites at the request of Hermann Schroller from Braşov (G.: Kronstadt; H.: Brassó). He also took part in the 50 year jubilee of the Székely National Museum where he selected pictures of Neolithic artefacts which later

²⁰ "It is a mistake to assume in your letter that you can deal with me like your equal, on the base of equal responsibility. You are one of the many contributors placed under my command at the national Romanian Institute of Archaeology. If you were to leave for Hungary, I will not be losing 1:2 of the archaeological potential of the Romanian Kingdom, but a much smaller part, on which I am working to replace by nurturing young and wise researchers for the Prehistoric period than study both here and abroad. Therefore, I believe that you, as a legal citizen of the Romanian state and an objective scholar, have the obligation to justify your honourable position as project supervisor within a Romanian university by publishing scientific papers in Romanian journals" (cf. Pârvan 1983, 275; Anghelinu 2003, 127, footnote 397). Anghelinu considers that Roska hesitated to bring his contributions to Pârvan's publication (*Dacia. Recherches et découvertes archéologiques en Roumanie*) which is not entirely true, because I considered that Roska wrote about the 11th and 12th centuries burial site from Biharia-Ţiglărie. I wish to express my gratitude here to Gheorghe Alexandru Niculescu, who drew my attention to the letter that V. Pârvan wrote to M. Roska from which I quoted here. It would be interesting to see the response of the Transylvanian archaeologist.

were sent by D.M. Theodorescu to the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest. He was also the one who selected the artefacts from the Turdaş (H.: Tordos) excavation that were to be sent to the University of Gröningen (The Netherlands). In 1928 he passed the Romanian language exam with an excellent rating.

There is no doubt that his most important work was done in the field of archaeological research. With D.M. Theodorescu's support he excavated numerous sites, especially from the Prehistoric period, but also from the Migration and early Arpadian (11th and 12th centuries) periods (table 2).

Table 2. Excavations conducted by Márton Roska during 1920–1930

<i>Location</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Chronological sequence</i>	<i>Site character</i>
G.: Perjamosch/H.: Perjámos/R.: Periam	1921	Bronze age	Tell
H.: Csoklovina/R.: Cioclovina	1921	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Ohábaponor/R.: Ohaba Ponor	1923	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Igric/R.: Igrîța	1924	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Körösloró, Remetelórév/R.: Lorău	1924	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Fegyér/R.: Federi	1924	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
G.: Christendorf, Kratschendorf/H.: Alsó-karácsonyfalva/R.: Crăciunelu de Jos	1924	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Ottomány/R.: Otomani	1924	Bronze age	Tell
H.: Érmihályfalva/R.: Valea lui Mihai	1924	Eneolithic	Tell
H.: Bihar/R.: Biharea-Țiglărie/Téglavető	1924	Early Arpadian age	Necropolis
H.: Csoklovina/R.: Cioclovina	1925	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Bihar/R.: Biharea-Țiglărie/Téglavető	1925	Early Arpadian age	Necropolis
G. Ponor Ohaba/H.: Ohábaponor/R.: Ohaba Ponor	1925	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Ottomány/R.: Otomani	1925	Bronze age	Tell
G. Ponor Ohaba/H.: Ohábaponor/R.: Ohaba Ponor	1926	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Csoklovina/R.: Cioclovina	1927	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
G. Ponor Ohaba/H.: Ohábaponor/R.: Ohaba Ponor	1927	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Ottomány/R.: Otomani	1927	Bronze age	Tell
H.: Csoklovina/R.: Cioclovina (cave)	1928	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
G. Ponor Ohaba/H.: Ohábaponor/R.: Ohaba Ponor	1928	Paleolithic	Habitation layer

H.: Szitabodza/R.: Sita Buzăului	1928	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Szentgerice/R.: Gălățeni	1928	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Baszarabásza/R.: Basarabasa	1928	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H. Brotuna/R.: Brotuna	1928	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Józshely/R.: Iosășel	1928	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
G.: Perjamosch/H.: Perjámos/R.: Periam	1928	Bronze age	Tell
G. Ponor Ohaba/H.: Ohábaponor/ R.: Ohaba Ponor	1929	Paleolithic	Habitation layer
H.: Gyulavarsánd/R.: Vărșand	1930	Bronze age	Tell
H.: Gyulavarsánd/R.: Vărșand	1930	Sarmatian period	Necropolis
H.: Gyulavarsánd/R.: Vărșand	1930	Early Arpadian age	Necropolis

After D.M. Theodorescu's resignation from position of head of the Institute of Archaeology in Cluj in February 1929, hard times began for M. Roska (Roska 1941^a, 3). Until 1930 he was allowed to excavate at Vărșand with the support of the Commission for Historical Monuments, but afterwards he did not receive funds and thus turned his attention to publishing his works, mostly in prestigious foreign journals. The new chairman of the institute, Emil Panaitescu, objected to the use of Roska's name (in his opinion the Transylvanian scholar should have spelled his name Rosca) and was vexed because of the position Roska had in the hierarchy of the Transylvanian Museum Society²¹.

During the Great Depression (1929–1933) M. Roska mostly dealt with the working out of his excavation materials in a repertoire that was published only in 1942. In order to avoid personal blows he asked permission to retire and applied for a study trip abroad, his application was rejected. Amid these tensions and because he had published in the volume about the Transylvanian archaeology of the 10th century, edited by M. Asztalos (Roska 1936, 162–173), he was accused by Constantin Daicoviciu during a press conference²², and later suspended from his academic position (June 11, 1936) (Vincze 2005, 13). After several search raids, on the 13 November 1936, he was sentenced to 3 years in prison, he was forced to pay 5000-lei fine, and he lost all his civil rights during the sentence²³.

²¹ Vincze 2005, 13, quoting documents from the archive of National Museum of Transylvanian History.

²² Based on Tudor Soroceanu's data, Roska, before 1936, helped Constantin Daicoviciu to obtain financial aid to continue his studies. C. Daicoviciu was assisted in the court by Sándor Ferenczi, who was a witness in this case. I would like to express my acknowledgment for these data.

²³ *Patria*, November 14, 1936. Information from Vincze (2005, 13).

The next day the Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga²⁴ demanded the immediate suspension of this inhumane sentence²⁵. Following an amnesty act given on the National Day of that year, Roska was released on the 1st December²⁶ but unable to return to his previous university position, he was forced to leave Romania. He spent the next 4 years working at the University of Debrecen (in Romanian: Debrețin), where he published articles on prehistoric archaeology in Finnish and Hungarian journals.

Major events occurred in Márton Roska's life after the Second Vienna Award (August 30, 1940). Beginning with the 19th October 1940 he became the head of the Institute of Archaeology and Numismatics and teacher of prehistoric archaeology at the university which moved back from Szeged to Cluj. The German university administration model was readopted in Cluj: in parallel to the Department of Archaeology (with a very substantial autonomy) the Institute of Archaeology was also re-established. Thus the theoretical training of young archaeologists had a more practical facet. Alongside activities such as systematization and registration of archaeological artefacts (some of the cemeteries excavated three decades before had not yet been registered) he resumed excavations at Igrîța, Așchileu Mare (G.: Gross-Schwalbendorf; H.: Nagyesküllő) and many other sites with the help of a new generation of archaeologists from Cluj (Gyula László, Amália Mozsolics, Gyula Novák, Aladár Radnóti, Wilhelm Schneller). He founded the journal entitled *Közlemények az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Érem és Régiségtárából* (I–IV) and dedicated the first issue to the memory of his mentor Béla Pósta. He also initiated the first excavations at Dăbâca (G.: Dobeschdorf/H.: Doboka) which were implemented together with topographical measurements made by Károly Chrettier (Chrettier 1943, 197–208).

Because he did not undertake as many excavations as he had used to and obviously because of old age, Márton Roska focused his attention on the publishing of his most important works (Roska 1941a; 1942).

The advancement of the front towards Cluj thwarted several research projects among which the chronological pursue of the Archaeological Record of Transylvania. In October 1944, several of Roska's colleagues were deported to the Ural Mountains, from where only Gy. Szabó returned a year later. The others took refuge in Hungary. Shortly after, M. Roska followed them and he never returned to the garden of Fairies (the romantic denomination of Transylvania).

In Hungary, the last years of his life were quite tenebrous. Because he was not a member of the communist party he got sidelined as many other intellectuals of that period. A good example is that of Nándor Fettich, the most important

²⁴ According to Tudor Soroceanu's data, Iorga, for this assistance, asked the Armenian community for a possibility to research in their archives, which was closed to the foreigners. I would like to express my acknowledgment for these data.

²⁵ *Neamul Românesc*, 15th November 1936.

²⁶ *Keleti Újság*, December 5th 1936. after Vincze (2005, 14).

Hungarian archaeologist of the interwar years, who ended up working as a day labourer in constructions during the rules of the pro-Russian Mátyás Rákosi (the original name was Mano Roth) in Hungary. In the first years of the regime Márton Roska worked as a professor at the Szegeed University and from 1950 at The Institute of Geology. During this time he led an archaeological excavation in the Bakony Mountains. Due to health problems he could not accept in 1955 the invitation of The Institute of Geology to excavate in the Tokaj area.

In 1956, he defended Cardinal Mindszenty for which he was persecuted. We cannot forget the name of the “*red-archaeologist*”, the Moscovitan communist, Gyula Gazdapusztai by discussing this issue²⁷.

Roska’s troubled life ended on the 16th July 1961, the Farkasrét cemetery in Budapest is his final resting place (Korek 1962, 89).

Through the multitude of themes which he approached regarding various historical periods, the vast documentation he used for his works, the balanced nature of his opinions, the respect and concern for the heritage that he researched (all the artefacts discovered during his excavations have been thoroughly registered and organized and are still available at the National Museum of Transylvanian History) and with the creation of an archaeological repertoire which is still used today, Márton Roska offers an example to follow for the new generations of archaeologists in Romania.

10th and 11th century sites excavated by Márton Roska

During his prodigious activity, Márton Roska excavated sites spanning through different centuries, among which some date back to the 10th and 11th centuries (Tab. 1–2). He only investigated cemeteries as it was typical for the Hungarian archaeology at that time. Investigations of settlements from these centuries started much later due to the “noble preconception” which existed at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century²⁸. Márton Roska’s name is linked to the unveiling of the first cemetery in the county centres of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom, from Hunedoara, and Moldovenești, dated to the first decades of the 11th century. He also investigated the Gâmbaş site where he discovered Scythian and ancient Avar burial sites dated to the 10th century.

After 1920, as an employee of the Ferdinand University, Márton Roska continued his archaeological work on the sites from the 10th and 11th centuries although not in the Transylvanian basin, but in the Bihar region and later in Vârșand

²⁷ Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon 1000–1990: <http://mek.niif.hu/00300/00355/html/ABC04834/05068.htm>.

²⁸ The research of settlements has been hindered by the fact that the conquering Hungarians (honfoglaló magyarság) were considered nomads and, therefore, it was supposed that their camps could not leave material traces. Furthermore, there were logistic and financial problems because these settlements could be spread over several acres of land, which would have required substantial research cost (the best example of this is the site at Hajdúdorog, Hungary) (Langó 2007, 41–43).

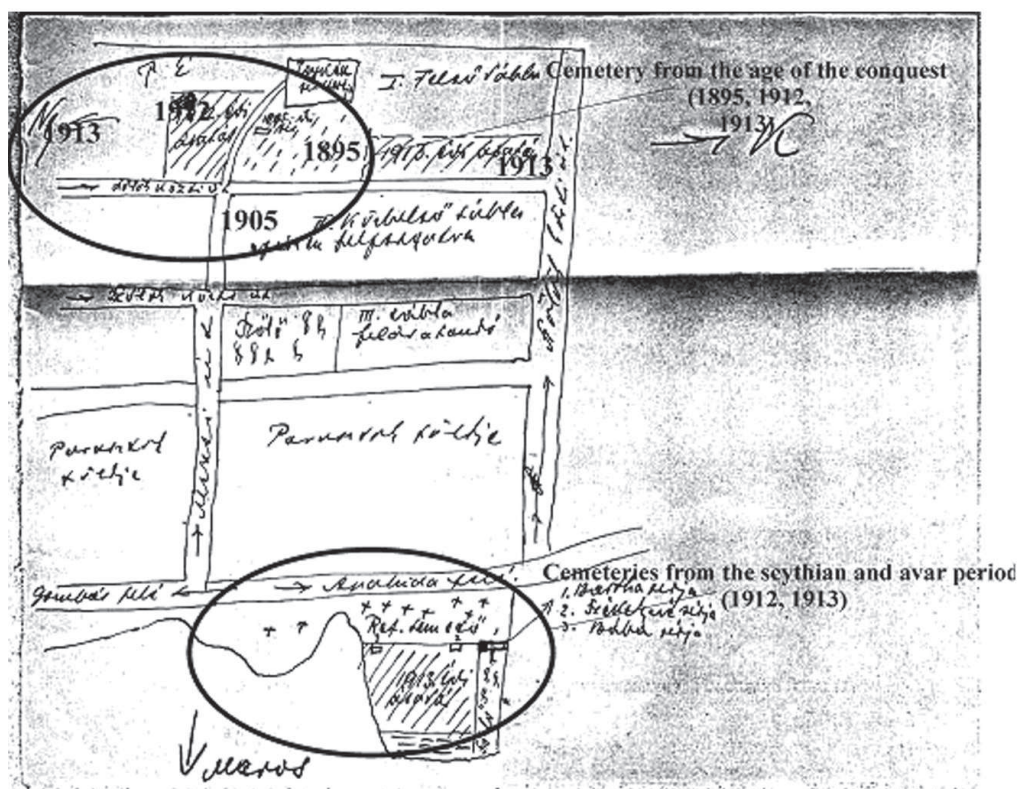


Fig. 2. Gâmbaș, Alba county. Topographic outline of 10th century, Scythian and Avar sites discovered in 1912 and 1913 (fragment from a letter sent by Márton Roska to Béla Pósta)

(Arad county). It is impossible for us to state whether his reasons for choosing to excavate these regions were mostly contextual or they were part of a larger research plan that he was working on, since in Transylvania this kind of research was not supported²⁹. A good example are experiences of János Herepei who was denounced to D.M. Theodorescu³⁰, that he had gathered several S-shaped lock-

²⁹ Radu Harhoiu (2004, 159–162), talks about the existence of a research program forgotten after 1920. I note that the project in question which R. Harhoiu named “Miereschprogramm” was actually a “Szamosch- Miereschprogramm”, which means that it covered the Someș area as well and not just the Mures one.

³⁰ D.M. Theodorescu was in turn attacked by some of the so called “Romanian patriot professors” to have allowed Herepei to access the 12th century cemetery in order to research his “Turanian ancestors”(sic!). Cf.: „A munkásokkal folytatott eszmecsere – szerencsétlenségemre – meghalotta egy, a gödröt kerítő palánk résein kíváncsiskodó fiatalember. Másnap azután a helybeli Keleti Újság című napilapban hosszú cikk számolt be a Kolozsvár főterén előkerült „turáni” jellegű temetőről. E híradás – a benne foglaltakért – erősen bosszantott, sőt nagyon lehangolt, mivel e cikknek különösen a bevezető sorai egyenesen végzetesek voltak. Ezek szerint ugyanis engemet az Erdélyi Múzeum igazgatója küldött volna ki az ásatás vezetésére, holott – érthető okok miatt – az én jelenlétemnek a nyilvánosság előtt titokban kellett volna maradnia. Ez a hírlapi híradás azután nem került el egyik-másik egyetemi tanár figyelmét, ezek meg haladéktalanul meg is támadták az egyetemi Régiség-tani Intézet áldott emléké igazgatóját azért, amiért eltűri, hogy egyik másik tisztviselője a magyar elődök emlékei után kutasson. Teodorescu professzortól erre megkaptam a valóban szelíden tudomra adott tanácsot, hogy kerüljem el a főtéri földmunkákat” (Herepei 2004, 87–88).

rings³¹, from the 12th century necropolis situated in the central square of Cluj (Herepei 2004, 87–88). There is no doubt that if it had been published, the most important of Roska's excavations would have been the one from Biharea-Țiglărie (Roska 1924, 313; 1925, 403; Rusu, 1975, 204; Dumitrașcu 1983, 51–95; Bóna 1988, 194–237). Till to-day it is still a mystery why Roska did not publish this very important excavation, neither between 1925 and 1940 nor between 1940 and 1944.

In the interwar period, M. Roska excavated at Vârșand in 1930, a site where amateur archaeologists had previously “done some research” at the beginning of the century. He unveiled 11 graves belonging to the early Arpadian period and tombs from the Sarmatian period, which have been dug into a bronze age tell (Roska 1941^b, 45–61).

It should be noted that Roska used to draw the plans of the sites he investigated, a practice, which he acquired from Béla Pósta's methodology:

Table 3. Excavations of 10th and 11th century funeral sites conducted by Márton Roska

<i>Year</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>chronological sequence</i>	<i>Number of graves</i>	<i>Year of publication</i>	<i>Plan of the necropolis</i>
1911	G.: Eisenmarkt/H.: Vajdahunyad/R.: Hunedoara	11 th century	54	1913	Accomplished
1912	G.: Gombasch/H.: Marosgombás/R.: Gâmbaș	10 th century	3	1927, 1936	-
1913	Germ.: Burgdorf/Hung.: Várfalva/R.: Moldovenești, Varfalău	11 th century	54	1914	Accomplished
1913	G.: Gombasch/H.: Marosgombás/R.: Gâmbaș	10 th century	3	unpublished	Accomplished
1924–25	H.: Bihar/R.: Biharea-Țiglărie/Téglavető	11 th –13 th centuries	506	unpublished	Accomplished
1930	H.: Gyulavarsánd/R.: Vârșand	11 th century	11	1941	Accomplished

³¹ The artefacts are in the custody of the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest. They were published by Gáll, Gergely (2009, 151–156, pl. 58; Gáll, Gergely, Gál 2010, pl. 58).

One can notice in the above compiled Roska's chronological table of research that he had a special interest in the cemeteries of the royal county seats from the 11th and 12th centuries (Biharea, Hunedoara, Moldovenești); seats which were also mentioned in written sources. It is worth mentioning that M. Roska was the first professional archaeologist who had the chance to investigate such spectacular archaeological sites³². He excavated three cemeteries with both pagan and Christian traits, situated between the rich 10th century pagan graves filled with weapons and horse skeletons and cemeteries surrounding the church, established by the royal decrees of the Szabolcs (1092), Tarcál (ca. 1100) and Esztergom (1104, 1112–1113) synods³³. Roska ceased to research the sites from 10th–11th centuries until 1941–1944. He only directed K. Chrettier to explore the earth fortification of Dăbâca³⁴.

Márton Roska's view of the 10th and 11th centuries

Until the last decade of the 19th century then around 1944, when Elemér Moór (Karácsonyi 1896, 456–483; Moór 1944) published his prominent study, most of the Hungarian historians used to consider that the Hungarian cultural traits can be detected in the Transylvanian Basin beginning only with the 10th century when the area was fully incorporated into the Hungarian Realm. Archaeological discoveries made after 1895 (Herepey 1896, 426–430) and József Hampel's (Hampel 1905) studies radically changed this historiographical conception. In this controversy between historians and archaeologists, Márton Roska's research plays an important part.

Márton Roska joined the historical investigation of the 11th century after excavations in 1911 and 1912 in Hunedoara and Moldovenești, the results of which he quickly published in Hungarian and French (Roska 1913, 166–198; 1914, 125–167, 168–187).

In the following lines I will briefly mention the ideas that M. Roska outlined within the first of these published works (cf. Karácsonyi 1896, 456–483; Moór 1944). After a brief description of the tombs along with graphic illustrations, Roska makes an exemplary chronological analysis of the field data, interpreting for the first time the archaeological discoveries in the Someș and Mureș Basins as traces of migration and conquest by the "Magyars" in the 10th century, a period that he calls "the age of the leaders" (*a vezérek kora*). Thus M. Roska made it

³² In other parts of the Carpathian Basin (Slovakia, Hungary) the investigation of this cemetery type began only a few decades ago (Bóna 1988, 197; 1998, 31–34).

³³ The decree of Ladislaus I: "Si quis? mortuos suos ad ecclesiam suam non sepeliret duodecim diebus pane et aqua poenitate in cippo"; and in the decree of Coloman I the Book-lover: "Sepultura christianorum non nisi in atriis ecclesiarum fiat" (CIH, 56. l. art. 25, 116. l. art. 73).

³⁴ K. Chrettier made topographic measurement of the fortification which was later used by Ștefan Pascu's team (Chrettier 1943, p. 65–67. On the chronology of the fortification: Gáll 2011^a, 50–51, fig. 35, 152; Gáll 2011^b, 339, fig. 15).

clear, contrary to what was thought earlier, that finds belonging to the Hungarian conquerors can be documented both in the Someșul Mic area (Cluj, Zapolya Street) and in the Mureș area at Gâmbaș and Lopadea Nouă (G.: Schaufeldorf; H.: Magyarlapád). On this basis built a theory, which after nine decades is still relevant, stating that the Magyar conquerors entered these micro-areas in the 10th century. If one is to follow M. Roska's research evolution one can notice that the theories and concepts he used in his works from 1927 and 1936 were already outlined in his publication from 1913.

In his second work published a year later, dealing with the cemetery from Moldovenești (cf. Karácsonyi 1896, 456–483; Moór 1944), M. Roska slides towards a thoroughly historic interpretation, an attitude, which we will no longer find, at least not in such a well defined form, in his later works. For example he connects the finds from the Mureș area with the “Black Hungarians”³⁵ and with the Szeklers, and those from the Someșu Mic area with the “royal nation” and the great princes (*künde*)³⁶ of the 10th century (Roska 1914, 166).

Roska's idea to discuss the presence of the Szeklers in the Mureș valley in the 10th century was inspired by an Géza Nagy's article written in 1883³⁷. Furthermore Roska (1914, 167) made a note, disregarded by Romanian archaeology of the early medieval period, that the cemeteries from the 10th and 11th centuries do not belong to any heroes fallen in battle³⁸ but to persons belonging to established communities. The bodies from the tombs were dated to the 10th century on the basis of the coins found inside (from the reign of Stephen I, Peter Orseolo, Aba Sámuel, Andrew I, Béla I, Géza I, Solomon and Ladislaus I), and thus they must

³⁵ On the “White” and “Black” Hungarians: Tóth 1983, 3–9; 1985, 23–29; Kristó 1985, 11–17; Klima 1993, 115–126.

³⁶ The name “*kundu*” or “*kende*” refers to the highest position one could hold during the early Magyar dual kingship, following the Khazar and early Turanian political structure. The model characterized also the Hungarian power structure already in the 9th and probably at least the first half of the 10th century. “*Kundu*” was the “sacred king” with while “*gyla*” held the executive power and was the head of the army. The existence of the “*kundu*” functions is mentioned by Gaihani who cited Ibn Rusta, but we also have information about this from Gardezi who stated that the Hungarians have two kings: *kundu* and *gyla*, who they respect a lot. It is therefore still unclear whether this power structure was also applied in the Carpathian Basin at the beginning of the 10th century. *Kundu* might have been *Álmos*, respectively *Kursan*, but the latter had participated in the Western military campaigns where he was killed by the Bavarians, fact that contradicts the thesis of the sanctity of the office that does not allow the holder to effectively participate in battles. In any case at the middle of the 10th century, when *Bulcsú* visited Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the Byzantine emperor stated that the Hungarians are ruled by a prince, archon in Greek, making no mention of the title “*kundu*”. However the titles “*gyla*” and “*karha*” are mentioned but there is no telling if the prince was actually ruling, which would mean that by the middle of the 10th century, the dual kingship had disappeared (Róna-Tas 1997; Csorba 1997).

³⁷ For details regarding G. Nagy activity see: Langó 2007, 35–38.

³⁸ It is surprising that an archaeologist as renowned as Mircea Rusu would claim that the tombs discovered at Biharia-Șumuleu belonged to Hungarian soldiers, who died during the siege of Menumorut's stronghold, information that is later implicitly assumed by Radu Popa as well. This is a classic example of “Gemischte Argumentation” (see: Rusu 1975, 204; Popa 1994, 181).

be placed in the context of a population living in the strongholds of the counties (castle folk), an observation, which was without a doubt later documented in several places throughout the territory of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom.

Without doubt the most important work of Márton Roska, both from a conceptual and also a theoretical point of view is entitled *A honfoglalás és Erdély* (The Age of the Conquest and Transylvania; Roska 1936, 162–173), which was published in Miklós Asztalos' synthesis *A történeti Erdély* (The historic Transylvania). Besides listing and describing the archaeological finds from the Transylvanian Basin (more precisely nine funeral sites and other isolated discoveries) Roska presented his cultural and historical interpretation (as most of the archaeologist from his age did) regarding these monuments. His most important ideas regarding the 10th century, seen as the “age of the conquering of the homeland”, written down at the very beginning of his paper, are:

1. A critical review must be made for the period of the migration of the Magyars to the Transylvanian Basin. I have to point out that 19th century historians (Karácsonyi 1896, 456–483) stated that the Hungarian migration (more precisely the occupation of the Transylvanian Basin) did not happen in the 10th century („a vezérek korában” = the age of the chiefs) but only later, during the creation of the Western-Christian type Hungarian state (in other words only after the campaign of Saint Stephen against Gyla, in 1003). M. Roska clearly stated that these ideas are in contradiction with the archaeological finds that are characteristic for the “conquering Magyars”. In his time, researchers believed that a typical Hungarian from the 10th century was an individual buried with his weapons and his horses, while individuals found with no weapons in their tombs were thought to have belonged to the “subjugated Slavs”³⁹. This projection of the Hungarians can still be found in nowadays Romanian archaeology, with the distinction that the dead found with no weapons are considered to be Romanians or Christians (Theodorescu 2001, Vol. III; 2010, Vol. III). Nevertheless, even today, certain funeral rites and parts of material culture, as an archaeological expression are considered to be distinctive “Hungarian” features (Daim–Laueremann 2006; Révész 2006, 297–302), that can be chronologically traced from the Vienna Basin (Gnaden-dorf) to the Transylvanian Basin (Cluj, Plugarilor and Zápolya street, or in Alba Iulia [G.: Karlsburg, Weissenburg, Keist; H.: Gyulafehérvár, Károlyfehérvár; old R.: Bâlgrad]).

It is appropriate to summarize the current state of research concerning the cultural phenomena connected to the “conquering Magyars”. The material culture of the Magyars cannot be classified as a particular ethnic one⁴⁰, but rather

³⁹ For the historiography on this topic see: Langó 2007, 61–135.

⁴⁰ In the Romanian archaeological research there are not original theories regarding ethnicity (nor are there in other countries from the Carpathian basin). In recent years some scholars tried to present to the Romanian academic world the results of researches on this topic made in the West-European countries (Szűcs 1997; Curta 2002, 5–25; Bálint 2006, 277–347; Lăzărescu 2008, 55–77; Niculescu

as a regional culture (a macro-regional one) that used to characterize large areas of the Carpathian Basin in the 10th century. The archaeological artefacts (known especially from cemeteries) from the 10th century, discovered in the Carpathian Basin could not have belonged to a population with a homogeneous ethnic identity (such identities did not exist at that time). Even the narrative sources, otherwise highly subjective by nature, refer to the usage of two languages and offer details about the rapid assimilation of the Slavic-speaking population by the Magyars. The link between ethnicity and material culture (in this case archaeological culture) is shifty, fluid and instable (thus burials do not provide clear evidence about the ethnic identity of an individual). Furthermore the archaeological record does not provide clues of different ethnic identities, but rather distinct material traces that we can indirectly link to traditions, cultural connections and other cultural interactions.

It is worth mentioning that human beings can have multiple identities. The interpretation of archaeological data cannot objectively assert a persons' ethnicity (for example that one is an "Avar" or a "Magyar from the period of conquest") due to the fact that over time various self-identification criteria were used, different from the criteria used in the modern epoch (18th and 19th centuries).

From this point of view, the archaeology of the "conquest age" (*honfoglalás korának kutatása*)⁴¹ does not refer to the Magyars, but to a period when the land was conquered (*honfoglalás kora*), and more precisely to the conquerors themselves (*honfoglalók*) without any particular ethnic connotations. In the Carpathian Basin, during the early Middle Ages no population, mentioned in narrative sources, can be associated or identified with a definite anthropological typology, and no anthropological type can be associated with a particular ethnic group⁴². Thus, the 10th century Magyar is an individual who lived in an area belonging to a political structure, which is mentioned in written sources (for example in Constantine Porphyrogenitus' work) and can be archaeologically defined through a macro-regional archaeological culture, which spreads from the Vienna region to Alba Iulia. It remains a goal for future research to analyse different processes of acculturation, integration or assimilation that took place during the 10th century, resulting in the rapid or slow disappearance and/or integration of the previous inhabitants.

2009, 15–39). A systematization of the issue regarding the connection between ethnicity and material culture in: Jones 1997, 106–127.

⁴¹ This word entered the scientific vocabulary after the 1848 revolution as "hont foglalni" (to occupy the homeland). The word was included in Gergely Czuczor and János Fogarasi's dictionary. In the historical literature, the term is used for the first time in K. Szabó's work: *A magyar vezérek kora. Árpádtól Szent Istvánig*, Budapest, 1869 (Vékony 2005, 198).

⁴² Out of many works written on this subject, I mention here only a few that refer strictly to the Carpathian Basin and the early Middle Ages: Brather 2004; Bálint 2006, 277–347; Pohl 1991, 15–24; Pohl 2009, 17–29. About the populations from the Transylvanian Basin in the tenth century: Gáll 2011^b, 271–314.

Narrative sources contemporary with the events offer indisputable information about the outcome of the migration and the settlement process in the Carpathian Basin. Consequently, an independent political structure with not ethnic but rather social and regional implications was organized, which in time evolved into the foundation of the medieval Hungarian Realm⁴³.

These issues were not debated during Roska's lifetime and unfortunately in the Romanian archaeology (and historiography) regarding the early medieval period they are still disputed predominantly at the same level as in Roska's time⁴⁴.

2. M. Roska's second contribution to the 10th century phenomenon refers to the directions from which the Hungarians entered the Transylvanian basin. He used many examples from the prehistoric and migration periods arguing that the path followed by the Hungarians crossed the Eastern Carpathian passes, in particular the Oituz pass. In support to his theory, M. Roska brings the following arguments:

2.1. The mountain passes from the Eastern Carpathians, which linked the Ghimeş and Oituz areas with Moldavia, were well-known and used by different populations since the Neolithic. Regarding the importance of this route it should be noted that it crosses the mountains near the Târgu Ocna salt mines. Roska underpinned his theory with a linguistic argument, namely, that in his opinion the suffix *-tuz* referred to salt.

2.2. Among the archaeological arguments, M. Roska points to the research from the Székely land, more precisely to the find from Eresteghin (H.: Eresztevény), discovered in 1908 (Gáll 2008, II, 24–25). The historical and archaeological theory of Roska can be challenged from various directions. Nevertheless, it should be noted that his observations about the use of the east–west oriented roads⁴⁵ from the pure historical point of view is correct. The most commonly known examples which confirm Roska's interpretation are nomadic incursions of 11th century and the Mongol invasion of 1241, when the same Eastern Carpathian passes were used. We must add, that, even if Roska did not mention them, Tătar, Bârgău, Bicaz, Radna, Bodza passes were also used.

It is not our intention to discuss the linguistic issues raised by the Roska's interpretation of the Oituz toponym, but from the archaeological point of view there are several remarks to be made:

⁴³ A significant example from the 18th century, relevant for our discussion, is that of Ádám Kollár, a Slovak born intellectual considered himself "Hungarus", i.e. inhabitant of the Hungarian Realm (Dümmert 1987, 276–277).

⁴⁴ In archaeology the term "gemischte Argumentation" is used for the method in Romania (independent of the national identity of the author). It means that when the analysis of archaeological finds or archaeological facts is made, it is supported by the interpretation of other archaeological data or hypotheses, or by historical facts and circumstances, or in some worse cases by historical hypotheses. The term was first used by Joachim Werner and Rolf Hachmann. Regarding the *mixed argumentation* (gemischte Argumentation) see: Bálint 1995, 245–246; Niculescu 1997; Brather 2004.

⁴⁵ Here Roska was probably influenced by Pósta, who believed that the Carpathian Basin was a contact zone between the East and the West side of the continent.

A. The stirrup found at Eresteghin belongs to the typological group of stirrups of trapezoidal form, having spherical buttons between the sole and the bars (type III, subtype 1) (Gáll 2008, I, 339, tab. A.5, typological table 38). Laszló Kovács has clearly demonstrated that these types of small ladders have not been used prior to the second half of the 10th century (Kovács 1986, 195–225). Therefore this find cannot be linked with the Hungarian migration from the late 11th century.

B. M. Roska disregarded the possibility of other migrations or attacks coming from the East towards the Transylvanian Basin in the 10th century although such events are described in narrative sources. On the basis of certain artefacts, such as one piece of bridles, which appeared in a larger number in cemeteries of southern Transylvania (Alba Iulia – Stația de Salvare: 2 pieces; Orăștie [G.: Broos; H.: Szászváros]: 2 pieces) than in other parts of the Carpathian Basin, one can assume that a population shift from the East towards the Carpathian Basin took place during the second half of the 10th century.

Roska's theory, that the Székely land (Szeklerland) was occupied in the 10th century (Roska 1936, 171) resulted from the idea that this land was a border area. Hungarian and Romanian historiographies look at this issue from different angles. While the Hungarian historiography makes a clear distinction between "habitation areas" and "border areas", even for the 10th century; the Romanian one does not use such concepts. For us it is obvious that the Someș and Mureș basins cannot be regarded as "border areas" (*gyepű* of Hungarian historiography) due to the high density of archaeological finds. Some scattered finds support the assumption that there was a system similar to that from the Avar period, when around Avar habitats different groups of Slavic origins were settled. Archaeological excavations from Frumușeni (a punctured coin from the time of Leon VI the Wise), Jigodin (H.: Csíkzsögöd) in the Ciuc region (Gáll 2008, II, 24–25) and those from Eresteghin and Sfântu Gheorghe (G.: Gergen; H.: Sepsiszentgyörgy) (Székely 1945, 1–15; László 1943, 82, fig. XV. 3–4), seem to mark the eastern borderline. This area resembles the archaeological situation from the western borderline of the Carpathian Basin (Örség, presently Oberwart, Austria) and the area around Enns (Austria). In M. Roska's opinion at the beginning of the 11th century, the eastern border-region expanded at the same time as the main habitation. This hypothesis cannot be archaeologically verified⁴⁶ yet, on the one hand, because of the geographical conditions which make the research in the area difficult, on the other hand due to the inadequacy of the archaeological research, which can be explained

⁴⁶ An archaeological complex excavated at Sâncrăieni (G.: Heilkönig; H.: Csíkszentkirály) (Harghita county) by István Botár, was dated to the 11th century. I cannot agree with the leader of the excavation, who dated the site to the 10th century relying on an artefact, found in a secondary position in this complex. I express my gratitude to my colleague István Botár from the Székely Museum in Miercurea Ciuc (G.: Szeklerburg; H.: Csíkszereda) for sharing this information with me.

by the lack of professional personnel and funds⁴⁷ but also by the fact that the excavations made so far have not yet been published⁴⁸.

Roska's publication from 1936 represented an important step forward in the research. Lack of consideration on the acculturation phenomena and the integration of other populations (western Slavs, Kabars) is weak point of his work although narrative sources (Theotmar, 150, lines 10–13; Regino, 35) were available to him. There is neither debate on the acculturation issue nor on the integration of populations living in the Transylvanian Basin in the 10th century, even though the old Slavic toponyms from the Mureş basin should have caught his attention⁴⁹. Nevertheless we cannot criticize Roska for overlooking these problems, if even till today these issues have not been fully examined because of lack of anthropological and archaeogenetic analysis⁵⁰. Furthermore, we think that it is worth mentioning some of the archaeological data regarding the acculturation processes of some individuals, found in the cemetery of Alba Iulia, Stația de salvare. In tomb 1, section IV, which also contained the remains of a horse, the deceased was placed laying in an E–W direction and covered with stones, a situation which does not resemble other tombs containing horse remains (Fig. 3).



In 1943 M. Roska published two isolated finds from Periam (Roska 1943, 140–143). The first one, found on the Poșta Veche Street, contained two horse stirrups and a temple ring (which has since disappeared). The second discovery was found on the Șanturi site, in disturbed layers of a Bronze Age tell and the 15th and 16th century layers. It was an appliqué from the 10th century with some other

⁴⁷ The first archaeologist was hired by the Gheorgheni Museum only in 2007 (I refer to Andrea Demjén). At the Székely Museum in Miercurea Ciuc () from 1990 up to 2004 there were no archaeologists at all.

⁴⁸ The isolated ceramic finds from the 8th and 11th centuries found in the Ciuc basin have not been published till now and the documentation of the incineration cemetery from Lăzarea (H.: Szárhegy) (Giurgeu basin) which was excavated in the 1960's was only recently recovered. These are the reasons why the Giurgeu and Ciuc basins are still blank spots on the archaeological maps of Transylvania of the period from 5th to 11th century.

⁴⁹ In the same period, one of the most important papers on analysis of toponyms was published by Kniezsa (1938, 367–454).

⁵⁰ For example in the case of the necropolis from Alba Iulia (Brândușei street) the lack of anthropological and archaeogenetic analysis deprive us of important data (Dragotă et al. 2009). For comments on the funerary rituals, cultural ties and horizontal-stratigraphical analysis of the necropolis, see the work of Gáll (2010^a, 297–335).

artefacts dated to the Avar period. After analyzing the stirrups he observed several button shaped knobs between the bars and the sole of the stirrups for which he then identified typological similarities (Szentés-Naphegy, Kecskemét-Magyari tanya, Székesfehérvár-Demkóhegy). These stirrups, later called “stirrups of trapezoidal form” have inlay decorations on one side of the bar. He prepared also a small repertoire of decorated stirrups from the 10th century but without marking the differences between the types of decorations. As Roska mentioned, the first decorated stirrups have been documented in Immenstadt. In the second part of his work, together with the finds from the migration period, Roska published data about a decorated appliqué for a waist belt, which he correctly dated to the 10th century. Another important Roska’s article about the cultural diffusion⁵¹ and/or trade in the 10th and 11th centuries concerned a sword anvil found at Alba Iulia (in an unknown archaeological context) which was brought in 1943 (Roska 1944, 102–108) to The National Museum of Transylvanian History in Cluj. After a thorough description of the piece and its close analogies from the Carpathian Basin (Beszterec, Székesfehérvár-Demkóhegy), Roska pointed out several similarities from the Balkan area: Madara, Rupkite-Grădište, however the most resembling was one from Biljarsk, on the Volga river. In the German area he found a similarly shaped piece, in the tomb 125, from Linkuhnen, with the specification that the adorned anvils found in the northern areas can be classified in a different typological group⁵². Using analysis results of P. Paulsen, V. Reinerth, T.J. Arne, N. Fettich and others, Roska identified several resemblances with decorated artefacts found at Krasnojarsk, Treyden, Gotland, Oland and Kurland⁵³. Next, he examined the decorative patterns found on the anvil, giving analogies from different cultural backgrounds from the East (Minusinsk area) and Eastern-Europe. At the end of his typological and cultural analysis, Roska formulated three important questions: where was the anvil created, how did it come to Alba Iulia and what was its chronological time-frame?

Using Peter Paulsen’s (Paulsen 1933) results, M. Roska argued that these types of weapons could have reached Transylvania from the Eastern Prussian area. However he found himself in a dilemma: he could not decide whether these weapons came here as a result of trade activity or with the migration and the Hungarian conquest? He wrote: “regarding this issue we should examine whether this artefact was brought by the conquering Hungarians, through the Verecke pass, or it reached our country on the same trade circuit that branched out from the trade routes on the Elba, Oder and Vistula areas and headed towards the Danube”⁵⁴.

⁵¹ I refer to a theory developed by Boas (1911); Goldschmidt (1959).

⁵² For a modern approach on the issue: Hedenstierna Johnson (2006, 89–92).

⁵³ The analysis and data offered by M. Roska are the solid proof that he was up to date with the European archaeological writings of the 30’s and 40’s (especially the Scandinavian, German and Russian literature)

⁵⁴ The original quotation: “ebben a tekintetben mérlegelnünk kell, hogy vajon a honfoglalás rendjén a Vereckei szoroson bevonuló magyarság hozta-e magával vagy pedig a honfoglalás tényének

In fact this statement is rhetorical and one can see this in the next lines of Roska's study. Roska, based on P. Paulsen and Gy. Laszló's results dated the artefact to the 11th century and he connected it to a "warrior" from the army of Stephen the Great, after the campaign of 1003. I agree with the dating suggested by Roska, but we have to emphasize that the analogies used in the case of the anvil from the Carpathian Basin can be dated to an earlier period. Therefore the anvil could have reached Alba Iulia coming from the South (as a large number of finds from Bulgaria confirms this). From a chronological point of view the artefact can be dated between the second half of the 10th and the beginning of the next century (Gáll 2007, 444).

This was the last important article concerned the archaeological research of the 10th and 11th centuries signed by M. Roska. After his departure to Hungary, being deprived of a direct link with the archaeological collections, he could not continue his research of this period of Transylvanian history. This was one of his greatest regrets.

*

Being also an ethnographer Márton Roska worked mainly as an archaeologist, who did not abuse the available historical sources and who did not fall into the trap of *Gemischte Argumentation*, in spite of the fact, that this was a very popular approach in the historiography of the last century, frequently used by great names of the Hungarian historiography (e.g. Gyula László)⁵⁵, after the third and fourth decade of the 20th century.

A list of positive traits, such as his critical attitude with demure conclusions, his non-abusive way of working with archaeological artefacts (some of his contributions are still used today), his broad bibliographical research, the great variety of excavations that he participated in, the quality of his published works⁵⁶, still useful for today's specialists, the fact that he initiated a new direction in medieval archaeological research (he researched the 11th century cemeteries from the first counties of the Hungarian Realm), the concern he expressed for the cultural heritage he studied (his archaeological excavations are fully listed and ordered), all these are the hallmarks of an exemplary professional career, which should inspire and encourage the new generations to follow his activities. Márton Roska remains a great example of professional excellence, a most worthy figure to follow for the young archaeologists from Romania, interested in the research of the early medieval age and whose mission is to break down the scientific isolation imposed by the communist period.

befejezése után észak felől azon a kereskedelmi úton jutott hazánkba, amely az Elba, Odera és Visztula mentén haladó kereskedelmi útból ágazik el Észak-Magyarország felé s innét a Dunának tart" (Roska 1944, 108).

⁵⁵ László's example was followed by many east-European archaeologists. About Gyula László's work, see: Balassa (2001, 9–136); Langó (2007, 117–124).

⁵⁶ Among which we can recall an archaeological repertoire for the Prehistory.

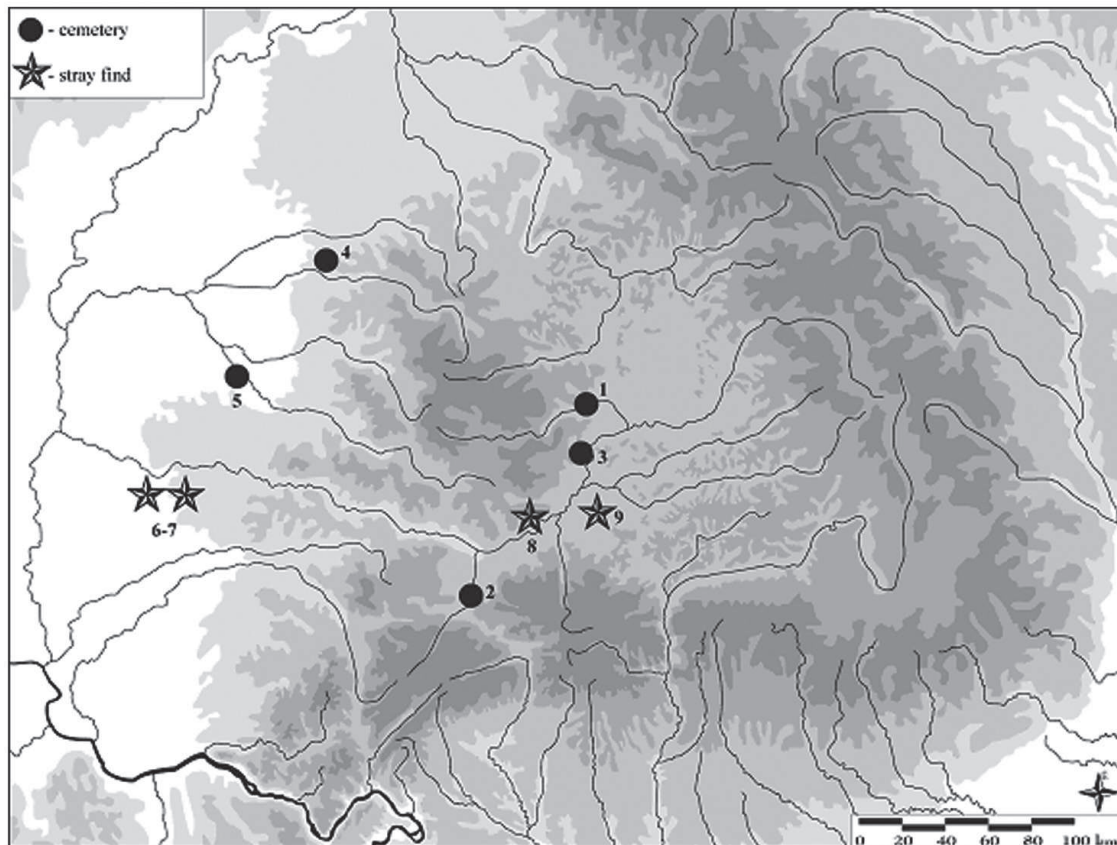


Fig. 4. 10th and 11th century archaeological excavations and isolated finds published by Márton Roska: 1. Moldovenești; 2. Hunedoara; 3. Gâmbaș; 4. Biharea; 5. Vărșand; 6–7. Periam; 8. Alba Iulia; 9. Heria

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