

## THE MAGIC-RITUAL „ALTAR“ DISCOVERED IN THE NEOLITHIC SETTLEMENT AT GHIRBOM (BERGHIN, DEP. OF ALBA)

A contribution to the study of prehistorical religions

### ABSTRACT

The excavations carried out at Ghirbom (municipality of Berghin, department of Alba) have revealed a vast Late Neolithic settlement of the Petrești culture. In 1971 a large house was unearthed which was rectangular in plan, and whose East side contained a hearth with the remains of a layer of calcinated earth, the clay head of a raven, many ceramic vessels and a concave tablet with engraved signs. This was an „altar“ on which the above-mentioned objects were placed. In a similar discovery, made in 1963 at Pianul de Jos, the triangular shape of the altar could be made out and several vessels were completely reassembled. In the area of the Petrești culture, three other cult ensembles are known: pits filled with vessels and other objects, which belong to the settlement at Poiana în Pisc and are analogous to the finds at Traian in Moldavia, in the area of the Cucuteni—Tripolie culture. These pits have been interpreted as being related to agrarian rites.

### EXPLICATION OF FIGURES

*Fig. 1.* Traces of the neolithic house and magic-ritual „altar“.

*Fig. 2.* Vessels and cult objects from „altar“.

*Fig. 3.* A big pot discovered near by the „altar“.