

**WAS CHILDE AN ORIENTALIST?
AN UPDATED VIEW OF GORDON CHILDE'S *THE DAWN OF
EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION AND NEW LIGHT OF
THE MOST ANCIENT EAST***

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Abstract. *This paper intends to provide an updated view of two essential books written by Vere Gordon Childe, *The Dawn of European Civilization* and *New Light on the Most Ancient East*, while trying to answer the following question: was Childe an Orientalist? In trying to answer this question I explore both books using the definitions provided by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism*, in which he analyses scholarly Western attitudes towards the East, and the way Western scholars embedded their cultural biases when explaining "Oriental culture" (and its material and nonmaterial manifestations. As a conceptual method of analysis, a deductive model is provided in order to answer this question.*

Keywords: *Gordon Childe, orientalism, cradle of civilisations, East, Western, cultural biases.*

Gordon Childe is, arguably, the best known archaeologist of the twentieth century. His work has been the subject of many theoretical debates since his death in 1957. Regarded as one of the most influential archaeologists working in Europe in the first half of the twentieth century, his work has been an influential source in the construction of knowledge in the subfields of European and Eastern archaeology. Books such as *The Dawn of European Civilization* and *New Light on the Most Ancient East* are examples of his genuine interest in these two areas, in his attempts to explain the rise of European civilisation. During the time in which Childe began his academic training and his archaeological inquiries, Europe was not only the centre of technological progress but also a social space with deep contradictions that led to two world wars. In this social environment, Childe begins his research.

More recently, the work of Edward Said has been extremely influential in the analysis of the academic world's social and political behaviour in relation to the East. In this respect, Said argued that most of the academic and literary writing done by British, French - and now American - scholars in relation to the East had an "Orientalist" essence.

My goal is to provide an updated view of the aforementioned Childe books answering the following question: was Gordon Childe an Orientalist, in the Said sense? This question has been previously addressed in a

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synchronic way by Trigger¹ and Nadeau.² More emphatic in his answer, Trigger states that Childe was a scholar opposed to Orientalism³ while Nadeau states that even though Childe's early writings reflected "the popular prejudices of an England of the 1920s which furthered the development of such institutions as 'Orientalism',"⁴ and that he "characterized the peoples of the Orient as existing upon a state of stagnation and degeneracy in contrast to true Europeans who had a peculiar vigour and genius,"⁵ he "sought from the archaeological record a substitute for the prevailing political history of his day that depicted history as a series of conquests,"⁶ hence redeeming himself from being labelled as an "Orientalist." Nadeau tries to offer a sole answer to this question while offering a fixed answer to a diachronic problem.

Thus, in order to answer the question that originates this essay, the definition of "Orientalist" will be analysed as well as the method that Said uses to discover an Orientalist vision of the Orient. Following his work, I propose a model of three categories, meant to answer the question stated above. Then, the model will be contrasted with *The Dawn of European Civilization* and *New Light on the Most Ancient East*. In regards to the former, the first edition has been analysed and for the latter, the third edition. This is done in order to gain a diachronic sense of Childe's intellectual production. Further works should be added in the future in order to attain a more comprehensive scope of the issue at hand.

Orientalism: Definitions and Methods

In 1979, Edward Said published *Orientalism*, a book in which he analyses the social behaviour of Western society in relation to the East and the different narratives constructed from the West that tried to explain the East, from a Western standpoint of superiority and colonialism. According to Said, Orientalism is

a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other.⁷

¹ Trigger 1980, p. 13, 23.

² Nadeau 1993, p. 312-315.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Nadeau 1993, p. 314.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Said 1979, p. 1.

Taking into consideration this definition, Orientalism is a vision intended to justify and impose one's understanding of events on the other, reducing one to the will of the other; "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient and (most of the time) the Occident."⁸ It is clear that this opposition is a product of political and economic factors such as the existence of British and French colonies in the Middle East or Near East.

Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point, Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views on it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short Orientalism as a Western style of dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.⁹

Academics involved in this discourse share a common consciousness in this respect, probably one imposed by the superstructure in which they were or are immersed. Thus, Orientalism becomes a social practice structured by a political institution and practiced by the intellectual body that is under the realm of that political institution. For many years, England and France ruled a vast part of the Orient, being responsible for the production of knowledge about it; then after World War II, and especially after the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions, the United States took the torch from England and France in the construction of knowledge about the Orient from the perspective of the one who holds power, a political practice reinforced by the current United States government.¹⁰

As Said acknowledges in his definition, Orientalism involves different layers of social practice. In these layers, two basic interconnected spheres can be identified, the abstract and the material one: "it will be wrong to conclude that the Orient was essentially an idea or a creation with no corresponding reality."¹¹ There is a material expression or material condition in which the idea is sustained as "material relations are the basis of all relations. These material relations are only the necessary form in which their material and individual activity is realized."¹² Therefore the understanding of these material conditions in specific times will enlighten the researcher regarding the growing body of ideas that sustained the social practice called,

⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

⁹ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁰ Current attempts to ban citizens from seven Muslim countries from entering the United States, as well as racial profiling in regards to immigrants from the Near East are among the best examples of this practice.

¹¹ Said 1979, p. 5.

¹² Marx 1973, p. 4.

by Said, "Orientalism." And the same has to be done when analysing intellectuals involved in this social practice.

In this respect Said talks about a method developed in the understanding of Orientalist practices. He suggests two categories: strategic location and strategic formation. The first one is "a way of describing the author's position in a text with regard to the oriental material he writes about,"¹³ while the latter "is a way of analyzing the relationships between texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large."¹⁴ There are specific conditions and positions that have to be found in the writer: a sort of model that could indicate whether the narrative could be labelled as an Orientalist social practice. In this respect, following Said, I propose the following model, one that I will use in analysing the work of Gordon Childe in relation with the Near East:

1) The location of the writer is in opposition to the Orient. If the writer comes from the Western world, there is a sense of membership with respect to the West and a sense of otherness in respect to the Orient.

2) The writer speaks on behalf of the Orient, without being part of the Orient (colonial appropriation).

3) The writer justifies - explicitly or implicitly - the political order of the West in regards to the East.

One can argue that a new approach to a specific field regarding the Orient will always be charged as having Orientalist connotations given the fact that

every writer on the Orient assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies. Additionally, each work on the Orient *affiliates* itself with other works, with audiences, with institutions, with the Orient itself.¹⁵

In that sense, it also can be argued that all researchers from the first half of the twentieth century would have been biased in respect of the sources they used while developing their research. In this sense, the model's third point becomes crucial in identifying an Orientalist position. The other two points are relevant to the discussion but do not have the same hierarchical position as point three, this third point being not in the realm of strategic location nor that of strategic formation. I would argue that a third strategy would be necessary in Said's method, a strategy that explicitly deals with the political meanings of the writer, not only with position and formation. The political

¹³ Said 1979, p. 20.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

structure is indeed embedded in location and position, but as I have mentioned, it is embedded and not explicit. This strategy I will call political strategy.

This model is not intended to give a definitive answer, as the model is not perfect itself, but at least will provide initial responses that could be validated with future work. Now we turn to the two aforementioned books.

The Dawn of European Civilization

In this book, Childe intends to understand the archaeological and social processes that led to the emergence of what he termed “European Civilisation,” using a wide range of archaeological information and showing an impressive knowledge of stylistic and morphological features. Childe makes the case that the seeds of European Civilisation lie in the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilisations, but populations from the island of Crete reinterpreted these seeds.

In the process of diffusion and creation, the isle of Crete played a foremost role. Its geographical position enabled the Cretans to take advantage of advances made in the South and East without becoming dependent either on Egypt or on Sumer. At the same time the limited resources of their homeland obliged the islander to turn to maritime trade and thereby to diffuse their civilizations along the coasts of the Mediterranean and Black Sea.¹⁶

Childe spends several pages trying to make the case for the role of Crete in the diffusion and filtering of Oriental influences as if he was trying hard to make the case that the Orient does not directly influence Europe but that and Oriental presence exists in European prehistory through Crete. On one side, he elevates the Orient to the category of a bright and influential civilisation.

The idea of a south-eastern origin for the higher elements in European civilization finds its justification if, instead of groping among the epipalaeolithic remains of shell-heaps and cave shelters, we turn for a moment to the lands where the full light of history has shone from the beginnings of the third millennium before our era.¹⁷

But on the other side, he makes a distinction between the Orient and Crete, reinforcing the role of Crete in the reinterpretation of Eastern influence, locating an improved Orient in Crete, which in turn will be the Orient that Europe will get through the Mediterranean.

The Cretan artist was not limited to perpetuating the cruel deeds of a selfish despot nor doomed to formalism by innate conservatism of priestly

¹⁶ Childe 1925, p. 24.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

superstition. Hence the modern naturalism, *the truly occidental feeling* for life and nature that distinguish Minoan vase paintings, frescoes and intaglios. Beholding these charming scenes of games and processions, animals and fishes, flowers and trees *we breathe already a European atmosphere*.¹⁸

In this last quotation, Childe implicitly makes a judgement value regarding the political, artistic and religious conditions of the prehistoric Orient, explicitly saying that the Minoan civilisation was European in essence and acted as an intermediary in the transmutation of oriental discoveries to other parts of Europe. A difference is made between “us” (Europe) and the “other” (Orient). Childe, rather than focusing on the archaeological record of the Orient, pays attention to the description of archaeological features from Crete, trying to find their counterparts in Europe.

The Minoan religion has much in common with that of Egypt and Mesopotamia, but it was distinct from both and is further important for its wider Mediterranean relations. The deity worshipped under several forms was the great mother [...] The divine being was represented by symbols such as the baetylic pillar, the holy tree, and the double axe-objects which had a sacral significance not only in the East but throughout the western Mediterranean and in France and Britain. Doves and snakes in association with the divine cult again find echoes in Sardinia and Brittany.¹⁹

He not only differentiates Europe from the Orient but also explicitly argues for the superiority of European features over Oriental ones.

At the same time these enormous swords *vindicate conclusively the supremacy of West over East*, both in technical skills and originality, for nothing to compare with them was ever born in Mesopotamia and Egypt. *European civilization is henceforth armed to defend its independence*.²⁰

This attitude is contradicted by an effort to praise the achievements of the Orient that will be further discussed in the section devoted to *New Light on the Most Ancient East*, though such praise is sometimes apparent in such passages from *The Dawn of European Civilization* as the following: “In any case at the end of the fourth [millennium] the Sumerian civilization was so highly developed that we must wait until the nineteenth century for a comparison with northern Europe.”²¹

In dealing with the presence of Oriental features on the Iberic peninsula, Childe fluctuates between explanations giving pre-eminence to Western and Oriental influences. For the former, the peninsula was an original force that was highly influential upon societies of the Atlantic and

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 30.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 36, my italics.

²¹ Ibid., p. 23.

Western Mediterranean but also as far as the Aegean isles and the Nile Valley; for the latter, “the cultures of Iberia are only poor reflections of the civilizations of the Eastern Mediterranean.”²² Childe pointed out that the natives of what is now Portugal sailed to western seas and took with them the idea of dolmen tombs to Brittany, Ireland and Denmark, while in 3000 BC, trading posts were established in Almeria, the Algarve and Andalusia by Eastern Mediterranean travellers who from these trading posts started trade with Britain, Ireland and Scandinavia. For him, these “Eastern Mediterranean travellers” were actually from Crete, as he suggests that

the collapse of the Minoan and Mycenaean thalassocracies in the twelfth century [BC] cut off all intercourse with the Aegean. The cultural decline which followed the deprivation of that Eastern stimulus shows how completely the civilization of Iberia had been dependant on that of the Aegean.²³

New Light on the Most Ancient East

Without being an expert on the Orient, Childe wrote this book based on the literature available at the time and on some unpublished reports that colleagues gave him access to. As in *The Dawn of European Civilization*, Childe uses a wide range of archaeological information, basically features such as morphology and style, in order to establish the relationship between Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley. He does try to establish an evolutionary trajectory, based on diffusion and ecological determinism (which are strongly present in *The Dawn of European Civilization*) and on dialectics.

In due course we shall deal in detail with archaeology’s revelations that disclose no abstract evolution but the interaction of multiple concrete groups and the blending of contributions from far -sundered regions.²⁴

What is interesting about this book is that the references to Europe are restricted to the first chapter and the allusions to Crete are less relevant than in *The Dawn of European Civilization*. Also in regards to the Orient, the approach in this work is substantially different. Childe tries to establish the superiority of the oriental past in regards to Europe as can be seen in the way he begins the book by saying,

barely a thousand years ago Scotland and the rest of northern Europe were still sunk in the night of illiteracy and barbarism. A thousand years earlier and history’s light shines upon *our dark continent* merely from a few points on the shores of the Mediterranean.²⁵

²² Ibid., p. 129.

²³ Ibid., p. 137.

²⁴ Childe 1957, p. 7.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 1, my italics.

Unlike in *The Dawn of European Civilization*, where Childe emphasises the point that the Orient was filtered through Crete, here he indicates the close relationship between people from the Orient and Europe by suggesting that “some of the peoples of Oriental antiquity were close kinsmen to the Neolithic inhabitants of parts of Europe or descendants of the race of Paleolithic hunters who had lived there before.”²⁶ He goes further in claiming that it is necessary to study the Orient in order to understand Europe:

The prehistory and protohistory of the Ancient East is therefore an indispensable prelude to the true appreciation of European history. The latter is first mainly the history of imitation, or at best adaptation of oriental achievements. The record of the achievements themselves is enshrined in the former.²⁷

In *The Dawn of European Civilization*, he dedicates a whole chapter of his book to Crete, a chapter that is interestingly called “The Ancient East.” In *New Light on the Most Ancient East* the role of Crete is still the same; however, Childe now does not try to reinforce the primordial role of it but uses it as a proof of how “civilisation” was diffused from the Orient to Europe. Crete is no longer a filter, a place where the “true European spirit” emerges, reinterpreting despotic oriental features, but one of the places through which civilization was diffused:

Even the familiar cross design is faithfully reproduced in Anatolia, in Thessaly, and even on the Maros in Hungary. Could a more convincing proof of diffusion from Hither Asia to our continent be demanding? Early Minoan button seals, too, are descended from the same stock, but are thought to have reached Crete by a more circuitous route via Egypt.²⁸

It is really remarkable how his approach changed over the years. Since *New Light on the Ancient East* is dedicated to the Orient, his take on the Orient is a romantic one, which is supported by a wide knowledge of archaeological information. It is a romantic one because he praises the Orient as a cradle of civilisation. The same can be said about *The Dawn of European Civilization* in which he expresses a romantic view in regards to Europe, stating its superiority over the East.

The archaeologist’s spade has revealed a concrete record of man’s progress from savagery to civilization in the same region. It largely substantiates the traditions and deductions just summarized and at the same time it supplements them and enlarges their scope. But further it brings the

²⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 40.

reanimated body of most ancient Egypt into living contact with Europe's most remote past, infusing for a moment a glow of life into those pale lips.²⁹

The sophistication of the argument is the same, supported by a wide range of archaeological information, which led to Childe acquiring fame as the great synthesiser in archaeology. This sophistication is rooted in his profound knowledge of archaeological materials, but the arguments per se are rooted in specific attitudes towards the area he studied. Obviously - or maybe not - he would consider himself part of the "European Civilisation" as he obtained prestige in British lands even though he was born in a British colony.

Diffusion has always been a major component in Childe's syntheses, not a passive but active one: the difference is that as a Marxist, he applies a dialectic approach in explaining change. This would sound contradictory, but for Childe traits originated in one place were diffused through contact and reinterpreted by specific social or environmental conditions, which then could affect the meaning of the traits to be diffused again, in some cases diffused to places where those traits came from.

The Urban revolution would have been consummated first in Sumer during the Uruk period; Egyptian, Susian and Indian civilizations are explicitly later. But, as we have seen, neither are mere reproductions of the Sumerian. Even the script signs are quite distinct. It is indeed conceivable that the Egyptian clerks somehow learned from Sumer the device of investing pictograms with phonetic values [...] Both Egypt and India were undoubtedly in contact, direct or indirect, with Sumer before they achieved civilization. But the earliest form of its political counterpart, the State, was different in all regions.³⁰

In the book about the East, traits are flowing in three directions, to Egypt, Mesopotamia and India, being interpreted and kept in movement; constant movement of traits led to the emergence of complex social forms in these three areas which were subsequently exported to Europe. It is very interesting that the dialectic process stops in Crete where the island is just a route for the diffusion of traits, while in *The Dawn of European Civilization* the island becomes the centre of interpretation and reinterpretation.

Discussion

Now it is time to turn to the question that originated this inquiry: was Gordon Childe an Orientalist in the Said sense? For Said, an Orientalist deals with the Orient by

²⁹ Ibid., p. 7.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 238.

making statements about it, authorizing views, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short Orientalism as a Western style of dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.³¹

In answering the question, I proposed a model that would serve to arrive at a coherent answer to this question. I cannot help but say that this task has not been easy as I have approached two different moments of Childe's work in which probably two different answers would emerge, if those two books were analysed independently. It is also necessary to consider that each person is a product of specific and particular material conditions of existence.

The model Orientalist is as follows:

1) The location of the writer is in opposition to the Orient. If the writer comes from the Western world, there is a sense of membership with respect to the West and a sense of otherness in respect of the Orient.

As explained, in *The Dawn of European Civilization*, Childe takes a standpoint in relationship to the Orient which can be explained by the academic conditions in which he developed his career in England. In reference to Said's Strategic Location, Childe identifies himself as European, in spite of being Australian. Childe adopts a European consciousness in regards to the Orient, as expressed in the examples I have provided earlier in this paper, and he clearly treats Orient as the "other." Childe's location is in opposition to the Orient.

2) The writer speaks on behalf of the Orient, though not being part of the Orient (colonial appropriation).

Childe praises the Orient, but he does not embrace it as if it were his own; rather, he projects the Orient as a source of all technological and cultural achievements that were processed in Europe. He presents a romantic vision of the Orient's past, a vision that was well accepted among scholars of his time. In terms of Said's Strategic Formation, Childe's *The Dawn of European Civilization* could probably be understood as a subtle or unconscious effort to belittle the Orient in relation to Europe, as Childe implicitly makes a negative judgement value of the religion and political systems of prehistoric and protohistoric Oriental civilisations, a situation that changes in *New Light on the Most Ancient East* where his position is exactly the opposite. Childe cannot truly speak on behalf of the Orient as he maintains in both books his European affiliation. Childe does not talk about the Orient's present.

3) The writer justifies - explicitly or implicitly - the political order of the West in regards to the East.

³¹ Said 1979, p. 3.

This is the most important point of this model, which is what I earlier termed the author's Political Strategy. Childe was a Marxist, a member of the British Communist Party, which makes it reasonable to argue that it is not possible for Childe to justify - explicitly or implicitly - political oppression. But in *The Dawn of the European Civilization* he reasons that Europe is superior to the Orient. His continuous references to the superiority of Europe in technological terms, the reinforcement of Crete's role as a filter and a representative of the "true European spirit" tacitly differentiate Europe and the Orient and elevate Europe above the Orient. But if we take a look at the *New Light on the Most Ancient East* this approach has been severely moderated; au contraire, Childe argues for more direct links historically between Europe and the Orient, diminishing Crete's role, portraying it as a mere staging-post in the diffusion of Oriental traits to Europe.

The answer to the question that originated this paper is not easy in spite of the model created for answering it. The Gordon Childe who wrote *The Dawn of European Civilization* was an Orientalist, in Said's terms. But the one who wrote *New Light on the Most Ancient East* was not. An academic career goes through different stages, in which theoretical positions may vary according to specific material conditions.

Men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and *independent of their will*, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social *consciousness*.³²

This social consciousness may be challenged, but the specific social conditions in which an individual interacts with the rest of society could modify that consciousness. Childe was a product of his time, an exceptional scholar who fought adversity until reaching the acknowledgement he deserved. His attitude towards the Orient was modified in *New Light on the Most Ancient East* but further analysis of the rest of his work will be required in order to fully answer the question that guided this essay.

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³² Marx 1973, p. 5, my italics.

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- Trigger 1980 - Bruce G. Trigger, *Gordon Childe, Revolutions in Archaeology*, New York, 1980.

LISTA ABREVIERILOR

AAR-SI	- Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice. Academia Română. București.
ActaArchHung	- Acta Archaeologica. Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Budapesta.
ActaHASH	- Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Budapesta.
ActaMN	- Acta Musei Napocensis. Muzeul de Istorie a Transilvaniei. Cluj-Napoca.
Adevărul	- Adevărul. București.
AÉ	- Archaeologiai Értesítő a Magyar régészeti, művészt-történeti és éremtani társulat tudományos folyóirata. Budapesta.
AF	- Altorientalische Forschungen. Institut für Archäologische Wissenschaften, Abteilung Vorderasiatische Archäologie. Berna.
AH	- Archaeologia historica. Masarykova univerzita, Filozofická fakulta. Brno.
AHY	- Austrian History Yearbook. Center for Austrian Studies. Minneapolis MN.
AIEFCB	- Anuarul Institutului de Etnografie și Folclor „Constantin Brăiloiu”. Academia Română, Institutul de Etnografie și Folclor „Constantin Brăiloiu”. București.
AIAC	- Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie Cluj-Napoca. (este continuat de AIIGB).
AIIAI/AIIX	- Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie „A. D. Xenopol” Iași (din 1990 Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „A. D. Xenopol” Iași).
AIIGB	- Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „George Barițiu” Cluj-Napoca. (continuă AIAC).
AIIN	- Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Națională. Cluj-Sibiu.
AISC	- Anuarul Institutului de Studii Clasice. Cluj.
AJPA	- American Journal of Physical Anthropology. The Official Journal of the American Association of Physical Anthropologist. Baltimore.
Alba-Iulia	- Alba-Iulia. Alba Iulia.
Aluta	- Aluta. Studii și comunicări - Tanulmányok és Közlemények. Sfântu Gheorghe.
AM	- Arheologia Moldovei. Institutul de Istorie și Arheologie „A. D. Xenopol” Iași.
AMM	- Acta Moldaviae Meridionalis. Muzeul Județean Vaslui.
Anatolia Antiqua	- Anatolia Antiqua. L'Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes d'Istanbul.
AnB	- Analele Banatului. Muzeul Național al Banatului (serie nouă). Timișoara.
Anistoriton	- Anistoriton / <i>Ανιστόριτον</i> . History and Archaeology Journal. Digital Journal (Grecia).

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- AntAfr** - Antiquités africaines. Université de Provence. Paris.
- AnUB-ŞP** - Analele Universităţii din Bucureşti. Seria Ştiinţe Politice. Universitatea din Bucureşti.
- AO** - Arhivele Olteniei. Serie nouă. Institutul de Cercetări Socio-Umane. Craiova.
- Apulum** - Apulum. Acta Musei Apulensis. Muzeul Naţional al Unirii Alba Iulia.
- ArhMed** - Arheologia Medievală. Reşiţa. Cluj-Napoca.
- ArhVestnik** - Arheološki Vestnik. Institut za arheologijo. Ljubljana.
- Arts of Asia** - Arts of Asia. The Asian Arts & Antiques Magazine. Hong Kong.
- Astra Sabesiensis** - Astra Sabesiensis. Despărţământul Astra „Vasile Moga” Sebeş.
- AUASH** - Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Historica. Universitatea „1 Decembrie 1918” din Alba Iulia.
- Banatica** - Banatica. Muzeul de Istorie al judeţului Caraş-Severin. Reşiţa.
- BAR** - British Archaeological Reports (International Series). Oxford.
- BB** - Bibliotheca Brukenthal. Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal. Sibiu.
- BCH** - Bulletin de correspondance hellénique. L’Institut de correspondance hellénique d’Athenes. Atena.
- BCŞS** - Buletinul Cercurilor Ştiinţifice Studenteşti. Universitatea „1 Decembrie 1918” din Alba Iulia.
- BECh** - Bibliothèque de l’école des chartes. Revue d’érudition. Paris.
- BerRGK** - Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Frankfurt pe Main.
- BHAB** - Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Banatica. Muzeul Banatului Timişoara.
- BJJS** - The British Journal of Sociology. London School of Economics and Political Science. University of London.
- BMA** - Bibliotheca Musei Apulensis. Muzeul Naţional al Unirii Alba Iulia.
- BOR** - Biserica Ortodoxă Română. Patriarhia Română. Bucureşti.
- Boabe de grâu** - Boabe de grâu. Revistă de cultură. Bucureşti.
- BR** - Budapest Régiségei. Budapesti Történeti Múzeum. Budapesta.
- Britannia** - Britannia: A Journal of Romano-British and Kindred Studies. Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies. Londra.
- Brukenthal** - Brukenthal. Acta Musei. Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal. Sibiu.
- BS** - Balkan Studies. Institute for Balkan Studies in Thessaloniki. Salonic.
- BSNR** - Buletinul Societăţii Numismatice Române. Bucureşti.
- BTh** - Bibliotheca Thracologica. Institutul Român de Tracologie. Bucureşti.
- BudRég** - Budapest Régiségei. Budapesti Történeti Múzeum. Budapesta.

CAC	- Central Asia and Caucasus. Institute for Central Asian and Caucasian Studies. Luleå (Sweden). Institute of Strategic Studies of the Caucasus. Baku (Azerbaijan).
Carpații	- Carpații: Vânătoare, pescuit, chinologie. Cluj.
Castrum	- Castrum. A Castrum Bene Egyesület Hírlevele. Budapesta.
CCA	- Cronica cercetărilor arheologice. București.
Cercetări arheologice	- Cercetări arheologice. Muzeul Național de Istorie a României. București.
Chronica	- Chronica: annual of the Institute of History. University of Szeged.
Cibinium	- Cibinium. Analele Muzeului Etnografic „ASTRA”. Complexul Muzeal „ASTRA”. Sibiu.
CN	- Cercetări Numismatice. Muzeul Național de Istorie a României. București.
CNA	- Cronica Numismatică și Arheologică. Foaie de informații a Societății Numismatice Române. București.
CP	- Classical Philology. A Journal Dedicated to Research in Classical Antiquity. Chicago.
Crisia	- Crisia. Culegere de materiale și studii. Muzeul Țării Crișurilor. Oradea.
Dacia	- Dacia. Recherches et découvertes archéologiques en Roumanie. Nouvelle série: Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne. București.
Denarius	- Denarius. Slovenské národné múzeum - historické múzeum. Bratislava.
Der Unterwald	- Der Unterwald. Sebeș.
DolgCluj	- Dolgozatok az Erdély Nemzeti Múzeum Érem - és Régiségtárából. Kolosvár (Cluj).
EDR	- Ephemera dacoromana. Annuario dell'Accademia di Romania. Roma.
EHQ	- European History Quarterly. Sage Publications. New York.
EO	- Etnograficheskoye obozreniye. Institut etnologii i antropologii RAN. Moscova.
Erdély Múzeum	- Erdély Múzeum. Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület. Cluj-Napoca.
Études balkaniques	- Études balkaniques. Cahiers Pierre Belon. Association Pierre Belon. Paris.
European Archaeology	- European Archaeology/online. București.
FBW	- Fundberichte aus Baden-Württemberg. Stuttgart.
FI	- File de Istorie. Muzeul de Istorie Bistrița (continuată de <i>Revista Bistriței</i>).
FolArch	- Folia Archaeologica. Magyar Történeti Múzeum. Budapesta.
FUrb	- Forma Urbis. Roma.
Gasyrlar avazy	- Gasyrlar avazy. Ekho vekov. Kazan.
Germania	- Germania, Römisch-Deutscher Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Frankfurt am Main.
GM	- Golos minuvshogo. Federal'noye gosudarstvennoye byudzhethnoye obrazovatel'noye uchrezhdeniye vysshego obrazovaniya Kubanskiy gosudarstvennyy universitet. Krasnodar.
Godišnjak	- Godišnjak. Jahrbuch Knjiga. Sarajevo-Heidelberg.

Lista abrevierilor

HEI	- History of European Ideas. International Society for the Study of European Ideas. Londra.
Hierasus	- Hierasus. Muzeul Județean Botoșani.
Hiperborea Journal	- Hiperborea Journal. Societatea de Istorie Balcanică. București.
HOMÉ	- A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve. Miskolc.
HSCP	- Harvard Studies in Classical Philology. Harvard University. Cambridge (SUA).
IIER	- Issues in Educational Research. Western Australian Institute for Educational Research Inc. New South Wales, Australia.
IJESE	- International Journal of Environmental & Science Education. Kazan.
IJL	- International Journal of Linguistics. Makrothink Institute. Las Vegas.
IPH	- Inventaria Praehistorica Hungarie. Budapesta.
Istoricheskie	- Istoricheskie, filosofskie, politicheskie i yuridicheskie nauki, kulturologiya i iskustvovedenie. Voprosy teorii i praktiki. Tambov.
Izvestiya ASU	- Izvestiya. Altayskiy gosudarstvennyy universitet. Barnaul.
Jászkunság	- Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Tudományos Egyesület. Szolnok.
JHE	- Journal of Human Evolution. Elsevier.
JRGZM	- Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums zu Mainz.
Közlemények	- Közlemények az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Érem - és Régiségtárából. Cluj.
KST	- Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı. Ankara.
Kubaba	- Kubaba. Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa.
Lumea nouă	- Lumea nouă. București.
Lupta	- Lupta. Iași.
Mannus	- Mannus. Gesellschaft für Deutsche Vorgeschichte. Leipzig.
Maqarnas	- Muqarnas Online. An Annual on the Visual Cultures of the Islamic World. Cambridge.
Marisia	- Marisia. Muzeul Județean Târgu Mureș.
MCA	- Materiale și cercetări arheologice. București.
ME	- Memoria Ethnologica. Centrul Județean pentru Conservarea și Promovarea Culturii Tradiționale Maramureș. Baia Mare.
MEFRA	- Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Antiquité. Roma.
MEJSR	- Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research. International Digital Organization for Scientific Information. Deira, Dubai.
MFME	- A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve. Studia Archaeologica. Szeged.
Mir nauki	- Mir nauki, kulturni, obrazovania. Gorno-Altaysk.
MN	- Muzeul Național. Muzeul Național de Istorie a României. București
Mots	- Mots. Les langages du politique. ENS Editions. Paris.
Muzeológia	- Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo. Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave.
Múzeum	- Slovenské národné múzeum. Bratislava.

Natura	- Natura. Revistă pentru răspândirea științei. București.
NK	- Národní knihovna: knihovnická revue. Národní knihovna České republiky. Praga.
Numizmatika	- Numizmatika. Slovenská numizmatická spoločnosť. Bratislava.
PA	- Patrimonium Apulense. Direcția Județeană pentru Cultură Alba. Alba Iulia.
PBF	- Prähistorische Bronzefunde. München.
PolSci	- Romanian Journal of Political Science. Societatea Academică din România. București.
Pontica	- Pontica. Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie. Constanța.
PQCS	- Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society. University of San Carlos. Cebu.
PZ	- Prähistorische Zeitschrift. Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie. Berlin.
Rațiunea	- Rațiunea. Revistă bilunară de liberă cugetare. București.
RB	- Revista Bistriței. Complexul Muzeal Bistrița-Năsăud. Bistrița (continuă File de Istorie).
RES	- Review of European Studies. Canadian Center of Science and Education. Toronto.
RevHisto	- Revista de Historiografia. Instituto de Historiografía Julio Caro Baroja. Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.
RHA	- Revue historique des armées. Ministère de la Défense. Paris.
RHSEE/RESEE	- Revue historique du sud-est européen. Academia Română. București, Paris (din 1963 Revue des études sud-est européennes).
RI	- Revista de Istorie (din 1990 Revista istorică). Academia Română. București.
RIR	- Revista istorică română. Institutul de Istorie Națională din București.
RMM-MIA	- Revista muzeelor și monumentelor. Monumente Istorice și de Artă. București.
Romantisme	- Romantisme. Revue du dix-neuvième siècle. Editeur Armand Colin. Paris.
România liberă	- România liberă. București.
Rossiyskaya istoriya	- Rossiyskaya istoriya. Akademicheskii nauchno-izdatel'skiy, proizvodstvenno-poligraficheskiy i knigorasprostranitel'skiy tsentr Nauka. Moscova.
RRH	- Revue Roumaine d'Histoire. Academia Română. București.
RRSE	- Revista română de studii eurasiatice. Centrul de Studii Eurasiatice, Universitatea „Ovidius” Constanța.
SA	- Sociological Analysis. Oxford University Press. Oxford.
SAA	- Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica. Universitatea „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași.
SAI	- Studii și articole de istorie. Societatea de Științe Istorice și Filologice a RPR. București.
SArcheologiczne	- Sprawozdania Archeologiczne. Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii PAN. Cracovia.

Lista abrevierilor

Sargetia	- Sargetia. Acta Musei Devensis. Muzeul Civilizației Dacice și Romane Deva.
SC	- Studii și comunicări. Asociația Folcloriștilor și Etnografilor din județul Sibiu (din 1992 devine Studii și Comunicări de Etnologie).
SCB	- Studii și cercetări de bibliologie. Academia RPR. București.
SCIV(A)	- Studii și cercetări de istoria veche. București (din 1974, Studii și cercetări de istorie veche și arheologie).
SCN	- Studii și Cercetări de Numismatică. Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan” București.
SJ	- Saalburg Jahrbuch. Bericht des Saalburg Museum. Mainz am Rhein.
SJAHSS	- Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Scholars Academic and Scientific Publishers (SAS).
SlovArch	- Slovenská Archeológia. Nitra.
SlovNum	- Slovenská numizmatika. Národný numizmatický komitet Slovenskej republiky a Archeologický ústav SAV. Nitra.
SM	- Svobodnaya mysl. Obshchestvo s ogranichennoy otvetstvennost'yu Politizdat. Moscova.
SMIM	- Studii și materiale de istorie modernă. Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga” al Academiei Române. București.
SMIMed	- Studii și materiale de istorie medie. Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga” al Academiei Române. București.
Socialismul	- Socialismul. București.
SP	- Studii de Preistorie. Asociația Română de Arheologie. București.
SS	- The Social Sciences. Western Social Association. Dubai.
Stâna	- Stâna. Revistă profesională și de cultură. Organ al oierilor din întreaga țară. Poiana Sibiului.
Steaua	- Steaua: literară, artistică și culturală. Uniunea Scriitorilor din România. Cluj-Napoca.
StudiaTC	- Studia Theologia Catholica. Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca.
StudiaUBBH	- Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Series Historia. Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca.
Studii	- Studii. Revistă de istorie. (din 1974 Revista de istorie și din 1990 Revista istorică). Academia Română. București.
Suceava	- Anuarul Muzeului Județean Suceava.
SUCH	- Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis, Serie Historica. Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” Sibiu.
Syria	- Syria. Archéologie, art et histoire. Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie. Institut français du Proche-Orient.
Századok	- Századok. A Magyar Történelmi Társulat folyóirata. Budapest.
TAD	- Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi. Ankara.
Telegraphul	- Telegraphul. București.
Terra Sebus	- Terra Sebus. Acta Musei Sabesiensis. Muzeul Municipal „Ioan Raica” Sebeș.
Thraco-Dacica	- Thraco-Dacica. Institutul Român de Tracologie. București.
Transilvania	- Transilvania. Centrul Cultural Interetnic Transilvania. Sibiu.

Tyragetia	- Tyragetia. Muzeul Național de Arheologie și Istorie a Moldovei. Chișinău.
UPA	- Universitätsforschungen zur Prähistorischen Archäologie. Berlin.
Vestnik Moskovskaya	- Vestnik Moskovskaya gosudarstvennaya khudozhestvenno-promyshlennaya akademiya imeni S. G. Stroganova. Moscova.
Vestnik Omskogo	- Vestnik Omskogo universiteta. Seriya Istoricheskiye nauki. Omskij Gosudarstvennyj Universitet. Omsk.
Vestnik Tatarskogo	- Vestnik Tatarskogo gosudarstvennogo gumanitarno-pedagogicheskogo universiteta. Filologija i kul'tura. Kazan.
VI	- Voprosy istorii. Institut russkoy istorii Rossiyskoy akademii nauk. Moscova.
VF	- Voprosy filosofii. Izdatel'stvo «Nauka». Moscova.
VTT	- Veszprémi Történelmi Társaság és Veszprém Megyei Múzeumi Igazgatóság kiadványa. Veszprém.
WASJ	- World Applied Sciences Journal. International Digital Organization for Scientific Information. Deira, Dubai.
Xenopoliana	- Xenopoliana. Buletin al Fundației Academice „A. D. Xenopol” Iași.
Ziridava	- Ziridava. Muzeul Județean Arad.