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"CANeW, however, is an interesting sort of conference. Unlike the annual symposium in Ankara for instance, where the body of knowledge gets its passport picture taken, so to speak, in order to be presented to the bureaucracy along with its official I.D. card, CANeW is more like a family picture. Yet, not a snapshot. It is a formal family dinner let's say, where the young and the old, uncles and aunts and cousins meet, speaking within the family, yet not necessarily all too sincerely. The gathering is among people that are closely related, but it is not necessarily a cozy one. The less so, perhaps, for this dinner party is a first of its kind – gathering around the same table, the young and the old, the youthful and the wise, the closer and the more distant, the joyful and the resentful, and so on." (Oğuz Erdur, p. 285).

It all began after a discussion among a few archaeologists travelling to a common destination, in a hot summer day of June 2000 on the way from Istanbul to Aşağı Pınar, in Turkish Thrace. Taking into account the new data gathered from vast researches started at the end of the '80s and the beginning of the '90s (for instance, Ufuk Esin at Aşıklı Höyük, Ian Hodder at Çatalhöyük), they decided to initiate a project dedicated to the Neolithic in Central Anatolia. Consequently, in November of the same year, Frédéric Gérard and Laurens Thissen formed a closed discussion group, made up of 12 researchers (Americans, English, Dutch, French, Italians and Turks) who, via the Internet, were supposed to exchange opinions, ideas and data likely to contribute to a new understanding of the Central Anatolian Neolithic societies from the 9th–6th millennia CAL. BC. At the same time with the discussion group, an flexible and dynamic website was created also, open to all those interested in the theme proposed, where were published the preliminary results of the project: syntheses of the online dialogues, geo-archaeological maps with the site distribution, radiocarbon databases etc. (www.chez.com/canew/).

A year since the project started, the initiators have decided to transform the discussion group into a free debate in which anyone who wishes can take part. That resulted in the organizing on the 23rd–24th of November 2001 of a round table in Istanbul. It was not by chance that a city in Turkey has been chosen for the event, as the organizers wished all the students and researchers in the country about which they speak to be present. At the same time, in order to make it easier for all the participants to attend this round table, admission was free, while the cheapest accommodation as well as the best transport offers in Istanbul was shown on the website. Due to this policy, the number of the participants was very high (over 100, 50 of whom Turks) and varied (Americans, Australian, Belgian, British, Bulgarians, Germans, Greeks, Israelis, Italians, Japanese, Dutch and Polish). Best represented was the young generation of British,

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Dutch, French, German, Italian and Turkish archaeologists. In order to prevent this event from becoming a formal one, enhancing the participants' bibliographical list (namely to strengthen their professional/social status), the organizers decided to lay emphasis not on the presentation of the papers (for which 20 minutes were allowed), but on the debates brought about by each paper separately (for which 40 minutes were allowed). Meanwhile, only those papers tackling really important matters were accepted, not the excavations report type. The topics approached were varied, encompassing the following themes: proposals regarding the absolute chronology of the Central-Anatolian Neolithic (Craig Cessford; Peter Ian Kuniholm and Maryanne Newton), the importance of geo-archeological maps related to the distribution of Neolithic sites (Catherine Kuzucuoğlu), methodological discussions regarding the fieldwalking in the region (Douglas Baird; Geoffrey Summers), the creation of a useful regional terminology (Mihriban Özbaşaran and Hijlke Buitenhuis; Jean Perrot), new perspectives regarding the man-environment relation in Neolithic societies (Eleni Asouti and Andrew Fairbairn; Louise Martin, Nerissa Russell and Denise Carruthers; Henk Woldring), hypotheses regarding the origin of the Neolithic in Central Anatolia (Didier Binder; Güneş Duru), aspects of the cultural and homogeneity and transformations of social systems in the region (Bleda Düring; Frédéric Gérard; Roger Matthews; Laurens Thissen), ethnicity (Isabella Caneva), the evaluation of the extent and intensity of contacts between Central Anatolia and the contiguous regions: South-East Anatolia, northern Levant, Cilicia, the Lakes Region, the Egeean Sea and north-western Anatolia (Harald Hauptman; Clemens Lichter; Mehmet Özdoğan) and an attempt at explaining the social representation by analysing the symbolic repertoires from two important sites of the Neolithic in Anatolia- Göbekli Tepe and Çatalhöyük (Damien Bischoff). In the annex of the volume are published two databases comprising the radiocarbon data (Laurens Thissen) and, the Neolithic sites in Central Anatolia, respectively (Frédéric Gérard).

Everyone was invited to join the debates, irrespective of the hierarchy- students and teachers as equal participants. Both for the papers and the debates only one international language was used- English. All the debates were recorded on tape, and then transcribed on paper, as later the texts were presented on website *in integrum*. At the end of this workshop the tapes were offered to Oğuz Erdur for him to make a "sociological evaluation" of the conference. His evaluation materialized in one of the most intriguing articles of the volume: *Pages from the secret memoirs of a tape-transcriber: a Nietzschean note on knowledge*. These transcriptions were also printed in a book only six months after the completion of the project, owing to an independent publishing house. For the printed volume, each participant was invited to speak once again.

As well understood, while presenting this volume I did not insist upon the "scientific" content itself in the least. That not only out of competence reasons. I just wanted to point out **the story** of this volume, the debates, critical arguments and opinions, often contrary that are present in it. The papers, far from being simple statements of solutions, become pretexts and starting arguments for a type of debate understood as a series of questions whose answers become questions in their turn expecting answers: a number of readings of the past; a round table justified by debates only, not the position in the academic hierarchy or the appartenance to an age group.

After having read this volume one cannot fail to remark that in Romania, unfortunately, we keep on showing the same apathy towards the issueing of an archaeological work, lack of interest in various archaeological issues, especially those linked to the theoretical background of our discipline. Today's Romanian archaeology is a series of monotonous, parallel discourses rarely intersecting.

I have red this volume with pleasure, as a play in which one regrets being just a spectator gradually turns, while reading, into the joy of taking part in a beautiful discussion next to Frédéric Gérard, Laurens Thissen and their guests.