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**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH,
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**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE
FIRST IRON AGE IN THE INTRACARPATHIAN
SPACE OF ROMANIA. ARCHAEOLOGICAL
DISCOVERIES FROM ALBA IULIA „DEALUL
FURCILOR – MONOLIT”**

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I. Introduction

This paper focuses on presenting the Hallstatt settlement from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor-Monolit”. The settlement was discovered in the autumn of 2003 following some rescue archaeological excavations. Archaeological researches for historical load discharge were begun in the autumn of 2003 by a team of archaeologists from the National Museum of Union from Alba Iulia. The terrain where the researches were conducted is owned by Roşia Montană Gold Corporation (RMGC). The following archaeologists were part from the research staff during 2003-2006: Vasile Moga, George Bounegru, Horia Ciugudean, Radu Ciobanu, Aurel Dragotă, Matei Drâmbărean, Constantin Inel, Radu Ota, Cristinel Plantos and Ilie Alexandru Lascu.

This paper approaches only Hallstatt complexes, both those belonging to the complex with black fluted pottery and discoveries of Basarabi type, researched during 2003-2006, period during which I was part from the archaeological research staff.

The paper attempts to present this open settlement from Hallstatt, together with its main components. We consider useful dealing separately with the complexes from

the early stage of Hallstatt and those of Basarabi type, because we are dealing with two different inhabitations. We will present the main elements of inhabitation and inventory elements, proposing a typology for the discovered pottery. The paper includes integrally archaeological materials discovered within researched complexes. We do not consider as being useful producing statistics of the ceramic material according colour, paste, grease remover. At the same time, because of material fragmentation and subsequent interventions, that affected the complexes, we do not consider as beneficial realization of statistics as far as the frequency of forms within complexes is concerned.

I. 1. Natural environment

Geographical position and relief. The Hallstatt settlement from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor-Monolit” is placed on the first terrace of the Mures River, on the left side of the county road DJ 107 A, Alba Iulia – Pîclişa. The terrace is bordered to south-west by the meadow of the Mures, and to north and west by the second terrace of the river, named „Dealul Furcilor”. The terrain on which the archaeological researches were carried out was wholly destined in the modern period to the agricultural labours and the relief presented a mild slope descending from north towards south, with a more pronounced inclination in the crossing area

between the two terraces, area where ground water is closer from the surface of soil and where more active springs were noticed.

The area is part from from the Alba Iulia - Turda depressionary area, which belongs to the pre-Carpathian area. The region is at the contact between the formations of the Trascău Mountains and Transylvania Plateau. It is marked by the wide valley of the Mures River, which traces it the main morphological characteristics.

I. 2. Overview of the researches

Within specialized literature, the settlement from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor - Monolit” was not known until the rescue archaeological researches began in 2003. At the same time, only a small part of the results of the archaeological researches were scientifically valorized until this moment. We think that the realization of an overview of the researches on Hallstat in the intra-Carpathic area would only lead to remembering some aspects already discussed within specialized literature.

Throughout researches from 2004, a surface of approximately 8 ha was probed, with stratigraphic sections of 20x1,5m. These sections revealed two different situations from stratigraphic point of view and some areas out of which anthropical evidence is missing. Complexes identified

following the probe sections concentrated in two areas. We mention that throughout the paper we will refer only to the surface of 8 ha, it being divided into two sectors (eastern and western).

During the four campaigns of rescue archaeological researches there were made on the whole 200 sections, 11 excavation areas and 59 ditches. Throughout the four campaigns of rescue archaeological researches there were discovered complexes belonging to Early Bronze, Middle Bronze, Late Bronze, Hallstat, Roman period and period of migrations.

II. DISCOVERIES BELONGING TO THE COMPLEX WITH GAVA TYPE BLACK FLUTED POTTERY

II. 1. Habitation elements

In this sub-chapter we wish to present the main elements related to the specific of the settlement from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor - Monolit” noticed throughout carried out archaeological researches and similarities with other settlements from this period in the intra-Carpathic area. 15 dwellings (14 sunken and one of surface), 47 food storage pits/garbage pits, seven cult pits, a hearth and a possible cult

place (?) have been discovered within archaeological researches from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor - Monolit” from 2003-2006.

We must mention that the anthropical deposits are of small dimensions, in the greatest part of the researched area. More consistent anthropical deposits were noticed only at the base of the slope which descends from the „Dealul Furcilor” plateau, area in which settlements from the Bronze period develop in the western sector. In the settlement taken into consideration was not noticed a layer of culture, which to may be attributed to this period, complexes being contoured in a black soil or in the sterile yellow soil. Ceramic materials which may be attributed to discoveries of Gáva type were encountered also in this black soil, but the number of ceramic fragments is quite reduced.

II. 1. a) Dwellings:

Throughout researches from 2003-2006, only one surface dwelling was discovered, approximately contoured according to dispersion of archaeological material. Extensive researches carried out in the fortified settlement from Teleac reached to the conclusion that surface dwellings appear sporadically beginning with the second level of inhabitation, level in which were discovered only two such dwellings, however their number increasing in the third level, where six dwellings were discovered.

14 dwellings with sunken or semi-sunken pit were discovered throughout researches. A variation of dimensions was noticed within sunken dwellings. Thus, the smallest dwelling is L12 (C107/S074) which has a surface of only 5,3 m², the biggest dwelling is L5 (C60/S041J) with a surface of 29,5 m². Sunken dwellings discovered throughout researches from Alba Iulia are of oval shape. Only in two cases, dwelling L1 (C21) from section S012 and L10 (C86) from surface Sp02, rests from interior hearths were noticed.

II. 1. b) Other facilities

Within this category we include food storage pits/garbage pits, ritual pits, hearth and a possible cult building discovered during the four campaigns of rescue archaeological researches from Alba Iulia. Out of the total of 47 pits, which on the basis of the discovered material could be framed within the early stage of Hallstatt, 37 may be considered food storage pits, which after their abandonment could have been used as garbage pits.

In interpretation of ritual pits we apply the way of approaching pits proposed in the monography of the site from Teleac. Thus we have two categories: a) pits with offerings and b) pits with deposits of children's skeletons. Different offerings were laid in ritual pits. In most cases there have been discovered deposits of vessels, only one case when ceramic material was not laid being noticed.

Throughout researches there has been discovered a pit where a human skeleton was laid next to a skull. The walls and bottom of the pit were covered up with adobe. Pits with deposits of human bones are mentioned in two of the sites in which were discovered archaeological materials belonging to Hallstatt: in the fortified settlement from Teleac and in Baciu.

II. 1. c) Considerations on the habitation

The relatively small number of surface complexes discovered throughout archaeological researches from 2003-2006, hearths or dwellings, is to be connected with subsequent habitations from this area (we mention here habitations from the Roman and post-Roman period). Another factor which explains the small number of surface complexes discovered is practicing of agriculture in the modern period, in this area.

A first area of inhabitation is noticed in the eastern area of the researched surface. There have been discovered complexes in the sections S038A, S038B, S041A, S041H, S041I, S041J, S043, S043A, S044, S044D, without being discovered a culture level to be related to this inhabitation. There have been researched here four dwellings, one of surface and three sunken, a cult building (?) and 12 pits.

The second area of habitation is concentrated on the western area of the terrace, in the area of sections S058, S060,

S082, S084, Sp06, S104, Sp03, Sp04, Sp09, Sp11, S105, S070, without being discovered a culture layer to be related to this inhabitation. There have been discovered in this area 11 sunken dwellings, 35 pits, seven ritual pits and an exterior hearth.

II. 2. Pottery

Archaeological researches from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor – Monolit” site led to identification of abundant ceramic material which belongs to discoveries of Gáva type. The three main types of pottery are: fine pottery, semi-fine pottery and rough pottery.

II. 2. a) Typology of pottery

When analyzing pottery from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor – Monolit” site people had taken into consideration typological framings made for the Gáva material from Transylvania, from the fortified settlements from Teleac and Medias and for discoveries from Moldavia those from Granicesti. Within pottery from analysed site there have been discovered the main forms from the pottery repertoire of Gáva discoveries from Transylvania.

II. 2. b) Decoration of pottery

When analyzing decoration of pottery people had taken into consideration the model proposed for pottery from the fortified settlement from Teleac, model that was

subsequently used also at approaching ornaments of pottery from the fortified settlement from Medias.

Within pottery belonging to Gáva discoveries, from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor – Monolit” site, there have been discovered the main decorative elements from the pottery repertoire of Gáva discoveries. The principal decorative element is the flute, used for decoration of majority of shapes. Within the pottery repertoire from the site there have also been noticed vessels or ceramic fragments decorated with incised ornaments, but their number is quite reduced by comparison with fluted pottery.

II. 3. Bone, horn, burnt clay and stone artefacts

On the occasion of researches from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor - Monolit”, from 2003-2006, in the complexes of Gáva type, different artefacts were discovered, which will be presented according the material they are made of. We underline that we won't have in mind pieces from outside complexes, they could belonging to another period.

A cudgel, a knife handle made of bone were discovered. A sceptre is made of horn. Tools used for pottery decoration, a discus, fire dogs, balls, whorls, weights, small wheels of miniature cart, anthropomorphous and zoomorphic statuettes were made of burnt clay. The polishing stones and whetstones are made of stone.

II. 4. Metal artefacts

Only bronze pieces were discovered throughout researches from 2003-2006. Inside complexes were discovered: bitronconical pins, simple pins, a ring and a fragment from a bracelet (?), a compact and a fragmentary Celt being discovered in the layer.

From the point of view of the shape, Celts are framed within Fizeșul Gherlii-Sângiorgiu de Pădure series, dating from HaB2, where it finds analogies, in deposits from Fizeșul Gherlii II.

II. 5. Chronological considerations

To establish chronology of early Hallstattian discoveries from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor – Monolit” we appeal to chronological division proposed for the fortified settlement from Teleac, where three levels of inhabitation were attested. Throughout the four campaigns of rescue archaeological research there have been discovered complexes from Hallstatt, which in the actual phase of the researches indicate two distinct areas of inhabitation.

The *eastern area* of inhabitation, represented by four dwellings, one of surface and three sunken, a cult building (?) and 12 pits, researched through campaigns from 2003-2006,

is to be framed throughout Ha B2, most likely at its beginning. We specify that inhabitation in this area occupies a short period of time. We consider this dating may be extended for all complexes researched in the eastern area.

The *western area* of inhabitation develops in the area mostly inhabited from the site. There have been discovered complexes from Early, Middle and Late Bronze, but also complexes belonging to inhabitation of Basarabi type, only to mention the pre-historic complexes. In this area, within researched complexes there have been noticed, within pottery inventory, elements that indicate the existence of an inhabitation that is earliest by comparison with that from the eastern side.

Ceramic material from complexes discovered in the western area of inhabitation indicate a different dating of complexes from this area. Thus, the earliest discoveries are those from dwellings L7, L8, L10, L13 and L14 and pits G15 (C68), G18 (C80), G43(C184) and from ritual pits Gr3 (C90), Gr6 (C168), which contain elements that lead to a datation from the beginning of Gáva penetration, there existing materials which plead for a synchronic dating with Teleac I level, possibly quite previous to it, somewhere throughout HaA2. Dwellings L11 and L15, by presence of imports from groups with imprinted ceramics and lack of some early elements, are to be dated in a synchronic period

with the IInd level of the settlement from Teleac. At the same chronologic line with L15 is dated also the Celt discovered in surface Sp11. In the western area, the oldest elements are noticed in the pit from section S076, which by presence of Basarbi material is synchronously dated with the third level of the settlement from Teleac.

Taking into consideration the presence in this area of some complexes which indicate more phases of inhabitation we do not consider beneficial a general dating of those in which elements of dating were not discovered. Additionally, we must mention that although there appear complexes which are to be dated beginning with HaA2 and until the beginning of HaC, these do not indicate a continuous habitation, the absence of the culture layer and the extremely small number of ceramic materials discovered in the soil in which the complexes were contoured indicate a transient inhabitation.

III. DISCOVERIES OF BASARABI TYPE

III. 1. Habitation elements

Eight dwellings (two of surface and six sunken), 17 storage pits / garbage pits and a hearth have been discovered in the archaeological researches from Alba Iulia "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit" from 2003-2006. In what follows we will

make a presentation of complexes depending on the category they belong to.

Investigations have not revealed a layer of culture that can be attributed to this period, the complexes are outlined in a black soil, yellow sterile soil. In the black soil were discovered complexes and materials from other historical periods, such as those of Gáva fluted pottery, Roman and post-Roman period. Pottery attributable to Basarabi discoveries were found in this layer, but the number of fragments is quite small.

III. 1. a) Dwellings

The researches from 2003-2006 unearthed eight dwellings, two of surface and six sunken. Surface dwellings were delineated based on archaeological material dispersion, due to which the shape and size cannot be specified. Hut type housing area, found in Alba Iulia " Dealul Furcilor-Monolit " ranges from 4.4 m² (L17) (C91/S069), and 8 m² (L22) (C151/S105). Sunken dwellings, discovered in archaeological researches from Alba Iulia " Dealul Furcilor-Monolit ", are oval shaped with rounded corners, having the hole, generally well steeped in the ground. In the interior was not observed the existence of clay flooring or other facilities that can be considered as evidence in determining the level of walking within the complex.

III. 1. b) Other facilities

In this category we include the food storage pits or garbage pits and the hearth found in the four campaigns of rescue archaeological research from Alba Iulia.

A number of 17 pits have been discovered in the researches from Alba Iulia "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit" from 2003-2006. Out of the total pits studied, 13 were found to have bell-shape and only four tronconical walls. A single pit, investigated in the 2005 campaign, G51 (C109/S075), has traces of burning on the walls. The archaeological research uncovered a single hearth belonging to the Basarabi habitation.

III. 1. c) Considerations on the habitation

A few surface complexes were discovered in the researches from 2003-2006. Inhabitation in subsequent periods may justify, somewhat, the small number of complexes belonging to this Hallstattian period, both to Gáva black fluted pottery type and Basarabi discoveries. Lack of a culture layer and the small number of complexes detected, indicates, in the current state of research, a short-term Basarabi inhabitation at Alba Iulia "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit".

The Basarabi inhabitation from Alba Iulia "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit" is placed at the base of the slope that

descends from the second terrace of the river Mures to the center of the terrace investigated. Settlement limits are set according to the dispersion of complexes and the presence of specific materials within the layer, where also were found complexes from other historical periods.

III. 2. Pottery

Archaeological researches from the site of Alba "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit" have identified ceramic material belonging to Basarabi type discoveries. A first aspect that we have in mind is the quality of ceramic paste, degreasing agents used, how the clay was prepared, polishing and burning. We can distinguish three basic categories: fine pottery, semi-fine pottery and rough pottery.

III. 2. a) Typology of pottery

In the analysis of ceramic material were taken into account typological datings that were made for the material of Basarabi type from Transylvania. Typological classification of ceramic material found in the settlement of Alba "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit" has however suffered due to fragmentary state of mostly found material.

III. 2. b) Decoration of pottery

The analysis of ceramic ornamentation took into consideration the model proposed by H. Ciugudean at the publication of Basarabi type ceramic material discovered in

south - western Transylvania and then accepted by A. Ursuțiu when publishing the Basarabi type ceramic material from Bernadea.

Within the ceramic of Basarabi type from Alba Iulia "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit" we can find the main decorative elements from decorative repertoire of Basarabi type pottery. Most frequently used ornaments are embossed decoration, represented by: grooves, belts and applied projections, which appear on all types of vessels found. The main decorative element is the groove, which can occur alone or combined with other decorative embossed elements, engraved or incised. Ceramic fragments were found and decorated in engraved and incision technique, but they are small in number compared with the rest of pottery.

III. 3. Bone, horn, burnt clay, stone and metal artefacts

In archaeological research, undertaken in 2003-2006, in the archaeological complexes with Basarabi type material, was observed a small number of artefacts in the complexes. This observation relates to both those from the living area and the pits. Given the small number of artefacts discovered there will be no division in categories, but we will only stick to their presentation. A horn pendant, a sandstone hone, a

bronze pin and an iron spearhead were discovered in the complexes.

III. 4. Chronological considerations

In determining the chronology of the discoveries of Basarabi type from Alba "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit" I turned to the tripartite scheme of evolution of these findings, proposed by M. Guma. For Banat the three chronological phases have the following limits: the early phase in the first half of the VIIIth century BC.; middle phase between the second half of the VIIIth century and the mid of the VIIth century BC.; the late phase in the second half of the VIIth century BC. Research shows that the ceramic material finds its best analogies in the discoveries from the middle stage from Banat and Transylvania.

Given the pottery findings within the complexes, the Basarabi settlement from Alba Iulia "Dealul Furcilor-Monolit" is classified chronologically in the second phase of development, at a subsequent time to discoveries from the middle phase of Aiud "Cetatuie". Thus, the settlement is to be dated in the second half of the middle phase, somewhere in the mid VIIth century BC. Also, it must be mentioned that the end of settlement is to be assumed, given the materials found in the 2003-2006 campaigns, at a time before the beginning of the settlement from Vintu de Jos "Deasupra

satului”. There is, however, some early evidence, such as simple incised triangles, indicating the existence of earlier elements in the settlement.

IV. GENERAL CHRONOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONCLUSIONS

The open settlement belonging to early Hallstattian inhabitation from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor – Monolit” is placed at a relatively small distance, approximately 7,3 km, from the great fortified settlement from Teleac. Human communities which occupied this territory were closely connected with the inhabitants of the above mentioned fortification. The first terrace of the River Mures, placed south-west from Alba Iulia town offered beneficial conditions for inhabitation, including both agricultural terrains, and pastures or fishing areas, all situated nearby the settlement.

Inhabitations, both that from the early phase and that belonging to discoveries of Basarabi type, are open inhabitations. Stratigraphically was noticed the absence of culture layer which to may be attributed to them. For the inhabitation belonging to discoveries of Gáva type there was noticed an evolution along horizontal within the site.

We mention that accentuation of the two distinct areas of inhabitation belonging to discoveries from the Early

Hallstart illustrate a transient inhabitation in several stages. In the eastern area countoured complexes contain ceramic materials that lead to a chronological dating from the beginning of phase HaB2. The chronological sequence rendered by these complexes is quite short and corresponds, probably, to the average duration of using a sunken dwelling.

In the western area of inhabitation there have been unearthed complexes in which were discovered elements that plead for an earliest dating, but also complexes where elements that lead to a later dating were encountered. Ceramic material from this area leads to a dating of the inhabitation throughout HaA2. A subsequent phase is given by the complexes in which imports from the environment of imprinted pottery were discovered, and which lead to a chronological period synchronous with the level Teleac II. We wish to draw attention that by comparison with the eastern area, in these complexes does not appear any ceramic fragment to include early elements. This fact determines us assume that these are dated subsequently to the inhabitation from the eastern area. The last elements of the Gáva pottery, from within the site, are noticed in the pit from section S076, where Basarabi pottery appears next to local pottery. Elements to lead to a dating from early phase haven't been noticed within the Basarabi pottery inventory from the complex, thus the pit can be dated at the beginning of HaC.

As far as Basarabi inhabitation from Alba Iulia „Dealul Furcilor - Monolit” is concerned we mention that this only concentrates in the western area of the terrace and contains elements that lead towards a datation from middle phase of development, somewhere towards the middle of HaC phase. Due to very poor presence of black-red pottery within Basarabi complexes, we consider, that in the actual phase of the researches, Gáva inhabitation is not simultaneous chronologically with that Basarabi. Without processing materials resulted from the other campaigns of excavation, extending these conclusions for the whole site cannot be justified.

Analysing the ceramic material belonging to the complex with Gáva type black fluted pottery, from dwellings and researched pits, there were noticed elements which indicate an inhabitation which occupies short sequences from the early phase of Hallstatt. For Basarabi inhabitation from within the site, pottery from complexes indicates an inhabitation which is to be dated towards the end of the middle phase of the culture. We consider that the importance of the site consists mainly in the existence of early elements, both as shapes and decorations, within Gáva pottery.

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