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**EARLY IRON AGE IN SIMLEU DEPRESSION  
AND SURROUNDING AREAS.  
GÁVA TYPE DISCOVERIES**

**PhD thesis abstract**

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## **Table of content**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

I.1. Geographical context

I.2. History of research

### **II. CULTURAL MANIFESTATIONS DURING BRONZE AGE D AND HALLSTATT A1 PHASES IN THE DEPRESSION OF ŞIMLEU**

II.1. Cehăluţ cultural group

II.2. Hallstatt A1 period discoveries

II.3. Short considerations concerning bronze and gold metallurgy in the studied area

II.4. Conclusions

### **III. GÁVA TYPE DISCOVERIES**

III.1. Habitat

III.1.1. Settlements

III.1.2. Dwellings and annexed household constructions

III.1.3. Hearths and ovens

III.1.4. Pits

III.1.5. Special character features

III.2. Material culture

III.2.1. Pottery

III.2.2. Metal pieces

III.2.3. Household objects

III.2.4. Magical-religious objects: zoomorph and antropomorph art, other categories of special objects

### **IV. CONNECTIONS OF THE GÁVA TYPE FEATURES FROM DEPRESSION OF ŞIMLEU WITH OTHER CULTURAL CONTEXTS**

IV.1. Connections with Kyjatice Culture

IV.2. Connections with Gornea-Kalakača Cultural group

IV.3. Connections with Basarabi Culture

### **V. HISTORICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING THE EARLY IRON AGE DISCOVERIES FROM THE STUDIED AREA**

V.1. Clues concerning every-day life

V.1.1. Crafts and activities

V.1.2. Nutrition, health care

V.1.3. Archeological discoveries concerning spiritual life

V.2. The chronology of discoveries from the Depression of Şimleu. Conclusions

### **VI. REPERTOIRE OF DISCOVERIES**

### **VII. ANNEXES**

VII.1. Graphs

VII.2. Abbreviations

VII.3. Bibliography

**KEY WORDS:** Early Iron Age, Gáva culture, Basarabi culture, settlement, fortress, Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, archeological complexes, pottery fragments

**I. INTRODUCTION.** The present work represents a monographical study of the Early Iron Age in the area of the Depression of Şimleu, concentrating mostly on the Gáva type discoveries from the well-known site *Observator* from Şimleu Silvaniei. It also gathers in a great proportion unpublished materials discovered during excavations I've participated as member of the research team, right kindly given by my colleagues from the County Museum of History and Art from Zalău, but also self-made researches, mostly field researches.

The chapter referring to the beginnings of the first period of the Iron Age, is based mostly on a great part of the PhD thesis and other studies of my dear friend and colleague dr. Ioan Bejinariiu, used mostly to observe and build an image on the historical stages that precede the cultural manifestation that makes the subject of the present study.

Concerning the separate presentation of Gáva and Basarabi type elements, which appear together in the majority of archeological contexts, I've tried to underline the differences that are individualizing them in cultural point of view, but mostly the presence of Basarabi elements at 150 kilometers north-west from the long time believed border of presence (middle course of Mureş river) and at a distance of 80 kilometers beyond the last known discovery points that belong to this culture.

The final stage of the Early Iron Age was tangentially reached, mostly given the fact that our discoveries indicate a continuity of these cultural manifestations transformed of course by several influences taken from surrounding ethno-cultural contexts, until the beginning of the late period of Hallstatt.

We also have to point out the fact that we've avoided as most possible we could the use of published materials, except those, which dating needed to be discussed in the present study. Where our contribution couldn't have been a major one, the data being not changed (see chapter concerning bronze deposits), we've preferred only to mention them during the description of the short history of research.

Missing the support of professional restaurateurs', without a large museum experience, I've restored personally several pots, including ones, with huge dimensions.

In matters of material drawings, that numbers more than 1600 plates I have received professional help, but the majority of them, and their digital makeover have been made by me, during the period of the research.

**I.1. The geographic area.** The Depression of Şimleu, as a quite unequal geographic and geomorphologic unit, is the largest depression in the hill area of Sylvania region. Sălaj County has its limits formed by Plopiş and Meseş Mountains on south and east, river junction

made by Crasna – Zalău valleys on west and Măgura Hill on the north. Barcău and Crasna rivers flow this area with a direction to west-north-west, their valleys assuring through two gorges/passing points, connections with areas as the lands of Crișana, Sătmar and further on the Basin of Tisa River.

**I.2. History of research.** For the study of the area, we have to discuss three evolution stages: **1. The “pioneer” stage** (middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century – end of WW I) – characterized by the collection and value of by-mistake-made archeological discoveries, sometimes observing small excavations made without scientific methods and rigor. Representatives: Szathmáry P. Károly (1860), Szikszai L. (1878), Fetzner F. János (1890s), M. Roska (1913). **2. Second stage** (between WW I and II and the 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) – after a stagnation of more than one decade, due to WW I, a series of synthesis works make their appearance, repertoires and archeological excavations linked mostly to Șimleu Silvaniei or Moigrad. Representatives: V. Pârvan (1926), I. Nestor (1935), M. Roska (1942), M. Moga (1949), M. Rusu (1958), S. Dumitrașcu (1969-1970). **3. Third stage** (70’s – present) – characterized by field, systematic or rescue excavations, intensified mostly during the last two decades, associated by the general or partial publication of research results. Representatives: Al. V. Matei, Eva Lakó, H. Pop and last but not the least, I. Bejinariu.

## **II. CULTURAL MANIFESTATIONS DURING BRONZE AGE D PHASE AND HALLSTATT A1 PHASE IN THE DEPRESSION OF ȘIMLEU**

On the basis of research made until nowadays, there are two distinct cultural manifestations that correspond to this period, *Cehăluț group* that seem to prolong its existence even during Bronze Age D phase, possibly even later, and a *Hallstatt A1* horizon, but its research it is still at the beginnings in the studied area.

**II.1. Cehăluț cultural group** known successively as integrated part of „*Otomani culture*” also known under names like *Cehăluț group* or *Cehăluț – Hajdúbagos* etc.; occupying the entire studied area, especially the valley of Crasna river. Among important sites we have to mention points of interest at Crasna *Csereoldal*, Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, Pericei *Kellertag* și Suplacu de Barcău *Lapiș*.

*Habitat and its elements.* Excepting the settlement from Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, situated on the superior plateaus of Măgura Hill, the rest of the settlements belonging to this cultural group are placed on the superior terraces of Crasna and Barcău Rivers. Concerning the archeological complexes, we can mention deepened and surface dwellings, hearths, ovens, but mostly pits.

As the *pottery characteristic elements* that assure a certain dating to Bronze Age D phase, we can mention the bi-truncated pottery, with widened everted rim, made of smooth,

good quality paste, polished exterior, with cone shaped prominences and nervure in relief on the maximum diameter of the pot. We also mention the slightly tall flat *cups*, with profiled body, having a short neck and straight rim, risen handles, or the bowls with thick walls, bad quality burning, decorated with belts in relief under the rim, or the superior parts of the vessel.

There also can be added a series of bronze object deposits, known as Arpășel type (Cizer, Giurtelecu Șimleului, Huseni, Guruslău).

**II.2. Hallstatt A1 discoveries.** On the areas, where the archeological researches are in advanced stages, it was clearly shown the existence of cultural manifestations that cover the period between the end of Bronze Age and the beginning of the Early Iron Age. The same situation appears in the Depression of Șimleu as well, mostly on the Valley of Crasna River. The most important sites are the followings: Doh *La Izvoare*, Zăuan *Bánffitag*, Nușfalău *Str. Mare nr. 527*, probably at Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*.

*The habitat*, insufficiently documented, it is represented by a surface dwelling, a hearth and a few pits with household remains.

As *Hallstatt A1 characteristic pottery elements*, we can mention among several cup types or sack type pots, the *bitruncated vessels* with wide rims, some of the with large dimensions, polished, black on the exterior, orange in the interior, decorated with oblique deepened channels, comb made vertical stripes, prominences pulled on the relief of the vessel, or a decoration that consist in a smooth V shaped channel on the neck. Similar shapes and ornaments appear in the repertoire of Igrîța group, Lăpuș, Cugir-Band, in the Proto Gáva horizon, dated in Bronze Age D phase-Hallstatt A1 and the early phase of Gáva culture in Hungary. Low *bowls* with sunken walls and everted rims, straightened in the interior and a decoration made of star shaped fine channels and on the exterior channels in relief placed obliquely on the wall of the vessel, or simple exemplars, without decoration in the interior with longed lobes underneath the with small handles, or cone shaped prominences, closed rims towards the interior of the vessel. Similar bowl shapes, with their sunken walls, everted rims and sometimes flattened appear during the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of Lăpuș group, but the ones with the closed rims towards the interior of the vessel and star shaped decoration it is frequently met on the high handled cups of Igrîța or Susani groups.

**II.3. Short considerations concerning the bronze and gold metallurgy in the studied period.** According to the analyses made by I. Bejinariu in 2003, the bronze objects discovered in the Depression of Șimleu, numbering 82 pieces, of which most than two thirds (53) were parts of 9 bronze object deposits, other 15 of them, were isolated discoveries. To these, we can add 14 other pieces discovered in settlements, nowadays with a higher number, due to the latest researche made at Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*. Concerning the consistency

of the deposits and the isolated discoveries as well, we can observe a high percentage of jewelry (60,37%), tools only 33,96% and weapons (3,77%), most of the objects are bracelets and rings, amongst 2 axes assuming two thirds of the total amount. Given these facts, the mentioned researcher underlines a similitude with the land of Crișana, considered as result of the fact that the Depression of Șimleu was in the gravity area of the metallurgical center from the mentioned land. Speaking of objects discovered in settlements, the majority of the discoveries consist of weaving needles and decoration needles, several punchers, or chisels with handle orifice. A very important aspect is given by the objects linked to metallurgy activities in the studied area's settlements (clay crucibles and mold fragments).

Concerning gold metallurgy, we can see as in the case of bronze object manufacturing, which during the studied period it takes a great ascending tendency, fact proven by discoveries of *bracelets*, *rings* and *spirals*, brought here probably on commercial ways.

**II.4. Conclusions.** The special literature considers, that the evolution of Cehăluț group covers the first two stages of late Bronze Age (Reineke Bronze Age B2-C and D), meanwhile the next stage (Hallstatt A) less known in Transylvania. The appearance in settlements as those from Crasna, Doh or Șimleu Silvaniei of some vessels with analogies in Noua context in Transylvania, or Igrîța group in Crișana, both of them dated to Bronze Age D-Hallstatt A1, and the existence of some pottery fragments as well with certain analogies in Lăpuș group, suggests that the evolution of Cehăluț group passes by the final period of Bronze Age D phase. The attribution of bronze object deposits to these communities can be an argument to these affirmations.

The complexes that appeared in the upper levels of late Bronze Age culture strata at Cehei *Misig* and Pericei *Keller-tag*, and also in the settlements from Zăuan *Bánffitag* and Zalău *Valea Miții*, maybe even Nușfalău *str. Mare, nr. 527*, were considered to be late Bronze Age III (Hallstatt A). A similar case has been observed at Suplacu de Barcău as well, where the materials in the settlement seem to be more recent than those from the necropolis, but the urns is typical for the Cehăluț group. Defining the cultural connection of these discoveries which do not have roots in the context of Cehăluț group, it is quite difficult to make at the present stage of research. It cannot be denied the tight connection with the Igrîța group, fact observed in the bronze metallurgy as well. Other influences, in this case those coming from Lăpuș group context, maybe Susani as well, can be found on the pottery discovered at Zăuan and Pericei, reality underlined recently by I. Bejinariu, fact that makes us believe that the dating of these discoveries cannot be earlier than stage Ha A1, meaning the beginning of late Bronze Age III, most probably its second half.

### III. GÁVA TYPE DISCOVERIES

**III.1.Habitat.** The present subchapter gathers all the information connected to the habitat, shown by archeological discoveries, the majority of them being unpublished or just shortly mentioned in the excavation reports.

**III.1.1. Settlements.** *Geographical repartition:* terraces (66%), heights (21%), slopes (11%), field (2%). In 53% of the cases, settlements share the same places as those dated to the end of the Bronze Age. Given the function of the settlements, we can distinguish two categories:

a) *Opened settlements* – dominant type, represented by 47 point from 25 localities, of which 18 were archeologically researched. Concerning their *shapes* and the *dimension of the settlement core* we have at the present moment quite a few data. The dominant settlement shape is the oval or trapeze ones and their dimensions vary from 0.2 to 3 hectares. The stratigraphic data are insufficient as well, only in a few cases, due to ulterior disturbance there was visible a culture layer (approx. 0, 10 - 0, 20 m thick). The small number of archeological researches does not permit nor considerations linked to *internal organizing* of the unfortified settlement, neither the territory used outside the settlement core (agricultural fields for example). Most of them are rural settlements with a mixture of profiles (agricultural, goods production, military), gathered type, missing a certain interior organization (street ways, specific parcels, etc.).

b) *Fortified settlements.* Until the present moment, in the studied area there are known seven settlements of this type, dated for sure to the discussed period. The majority of the settlements sharing this type from the Depression of Șimleu are set on the branches or tops of hills, surrounded by steep slopes, difficult to access. The altitude of the hills they are set on vary from 200 to 350 meters above sea level the lower ones, almost 600 meters the higher ones (596 m Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*). All of them are set near main water sources (Barcău or Crasna rivers), that assure the connection between Transylvania and the area of Superior Tisa River region. The control of communication lines must have been one of the most important aspects that determined the choosing of the spot for the fortified settlements. As in the case of opened settlements, the data on the *shape* and *dimensions of fortified settlement* is far less to be complete. The defensive element, visible even today due to the great dimensions, are following in generally the configuration of the terrain, marking only in a few cases the limits of the inhabited areas. The dimensions of the certain settlements vary from 4,5 hectares (Marca *Iertașul Petacilor*), to at about 30 hectares at Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, of which 10 hectares represent the defensive elements that are continuous and are disposed on an irregular plan, but there are added circular elements that are closing the most

vulnerable access points of the fortress, from the north and west surrounding the settlement area that is the largest in the area. The *defensive system* has three main elements: ditch – rampart – palisade, all of them being specific to the period. The *ditches* have a flat bottom, slightly concave or in angle with variable dimensions between 4 m wide x 1.20 m deep and 2 m wide, 1 m deep. The *ramparts*, the majority of them have impressive dimensions, measuring over 20 m wide x 5-6 m high (Marca *Iertașul Petacilor*) and a continuous rampart for over 2 km, approximately 9 m wide x 3-4 m high (Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator* – northern part). The *palisades* are generally complex, as shown at Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator* made by two rows of poles with a diameter of 0,20 m, set at a distance of 0,50 m to each other, connected with beams, filled with clay and stone, beneath them being visible the traces of stairs forming the cassette structure of the palisade..

The *stratigraphy* data that we have at the present moment concerning fortified settlements, are unfortunately inconsistent, mostly due to the fact that the majority of the cases the surface of the settlements that we refer to were reused by later settlements dating to La Tène and Middle Ages, that, by new earthworks have altered the anthropic landscape of the Iron Age. The only information that we have at the present moment are coming from Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator* , where a discontinuous, 0,30 m thick strata appears, in some of the cases, several living layers are visible as well. As in the case of opened settlements, we still do not have a complete image concerning the topography of the presented fortification cores. The few data that we have, are coming from the area of the superior plateau of Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator* and it draws the image of a rural settlement, with a mixture of profiles, gathered type (compact) and an irregular shape. There are no clues of a certain *interior organization*, with dwellings set on regulate distances from each other, with a certain orientation. The reduced spaces of the interior of the fortification, where a lot of dwellings, pits and households were identified, determine us to think, that the usage territory of the settlement, was outside its core.

**III.1.2. Houses and annexed dwellings.** By the construction criteria, our discoveries can be arranged in three well define groups: a) rectangular *deepened houses*, with rounded corners, circular shaped, oval, or undetermined shapes. As technical solutions, there are proven complexes with poles set on the short sides or in the four corners, in both of the cases the result was two-sloped roof. There are also houses with cone shaped roofs as well, sustained by trusses set obliquely directly on the ground, linked with “scissors” on their superior part. All of these houses miss fireplaces, or compacted clay floors. The used area of the discovered houses at Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator* vary from 5,76 square meters (L2/1999) to 11,2 square meters (C25/2008). b) *Partially deepened dwellings* were found in the same



site mentioned above. There are seven houses of this type, round, oval or undetermined shaped ones. There was no post holes researched, fact that lets us think that the elevation and the roof were starting from the exterior of the pit, being very difficult to identify, due to later reutilizations. The compacted clay floors are missing, but two of the complexes had heating devices inside (oven - L5/2002, hearth - C65/2006). The used area is quite reduced, the smallest one had 5,6 square meters. c) *surface houses* appear in several settlements in the area, the most important ones were discovered at Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, polygonal shaped, with the elevations risen on a continuous “foundation” made of wooden beams, that had also the role of waterproof isolation. The two-sloped roof was sustained by trusses. The central posts were probably sustaining the main beam. The roof was made of organic materials. The most imposing building was discovered in the same site L4/1999, with a square plan and dimensions of 13 x 9,5 m. We also have analogies for this building, in the Gáva settlement from de la Remetea Mare and in Proto Gáva contexts in Hungary, at Jánoshida, (26 m x 6,5). The complex had a compacted clay floor and at least two hearths, that don't seem to function simultaneously. The used area is approximately 123 square meters.

As general data we can affirm that the walls of the houses were made in a constructive system composed by a structure made of poles and wooden cut lattices, or more frequently branches placed vertically, on what a layer of plaster was added, mixed with hay. The roof was probably made with organic materials, most probably reed, found in abundance in the lower territories.

In the category of household annexes we have included dwellings that have served as places for specific or complementary household activities. These constructions, some of them having a very light structure made of poles, covered with waterproof materials (workshops, sheds), but some of them were dug in the ground, used probably for provisions storage (a primitive cellar), all of them were documented for the discussed period, discovered in the settlement from Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*.

**III.1.3. Hearths and ovens.** In the category of household constructions it is suitable to mention the fireplaces, that by their type and structure can be divided in the following categories: a) *Hearths* – circular or oval shaped – they appear in the perimeter of surface or partially deepened houses, constructed – the majority of them – on the local bedrock, with their superior part covered with a thin clay layer, well smoothed, without repairing traces; b) *Kilns* have two categories: 1. household – circular or oval shaped – they appear in the perimeter of surface or partially deepened houses. As constructive system, we observed that they were placed directly on the ground, on it, afterwards it was built a clay vault; 2. Pottery

kilns – proven by the discovery of frame remains of a quite small pottery kiln (approx. 0,60 m), in secondary position on the site from *Zalău Farkas Domb*.

**III.1.4. Pits.** The last, but the most numerous category of the household annexes, that concerning their functionality are divided in: a) *Storage pits* – the most common category, documented through more than 100 complexes from all the researched sites. Their shape can be oval or circular (diameter of 0,50 - 1,80 m), the majority of them, having a cone shaped profile, narrow at its top, wider towards its bottom, rarely cylinder shaped. Their depth varies between 0,50 și 1,75 m; b) *Sacrifice disposal pits* can assume the following types: 1. With pottery; 2. With pottery, hand mill fragments and probably seeds; 3. With animal bones, possibly human ones as well. All these sacrifices had probably the aim to attract the wellness of certain agricultural deities that have positively influenced crops and animal fertility.

**III.1.5.** In matters of **special character dwellings** we must mention the complex conventionally named „house L4/1999”, with its impressive dimensions estimated by us to 13 x 9,5 m. By the presence of the compacted clay floor, shape and dimensions, the dwelling passes by every other living complex from Șimleu Silvaniei and other sites as well, this is why it gains the unique character. The very rich inventory and the huge labor volume needed to build this edifice, but also the incredible effort to heat such a large space, isn't at anybody's hand to build. These features, together with the inventory elements are pleading by our opinion to the character of special. On the basis of upper affirmations and with the risk of a subjective interpretation, we think that this edifice had the role of serving as the house of a certain political-religious elite, probably as a cult dwelling.

## **III.2. Material culture**

**III.2.1. Pottery** represents, as a large number of objects, form and variety, the most important category of artifacts of the inventory of discoveries from the Depression of Șimleu and its surroundings.

**III.2.1.1. Short technological considerations.** a) *Fine pottery* (cups, pots, rarely bowls or large vessels) is remarked by an attentive selection of the clay material, a high grade sorting the mixture, paste well homogenized, polished surfaces, complete burning on high temperatures b) *Half-fine pottery* (bowls, jugs, pots and large channel decorated vessels, rarely cups), the majority of them are double-colored, black on the exterior, orange on the interior, with only one surface polished. c) *Rough pottery* has a very low level of mixture sorting, using mostly sand, pebbles, large pottery chunks, the paste is not homogenized and straightened well, incomplete and unequal burning, the result is a finite material that is black on the superior part and orange at the bottom.

If the last category leaves the impression that to make the ceramics was at hand to anybody, the same thing did not result from the study of the first two, where the technique of the manufacture, decoration and firing or the homogeneity of the form would require the knowledge and experience which indicates the presence in the area of a specialised person (a “master potter”). These categories were fired probably in a closed kiln, at a high temperature, the atmosphere and the reducing type of firing controlled through the sealing of the kiln, the more rare appearance, obviously, of the different colours on the same vase, being the result of the insufficient sealing of the orifices of the kiln, a fact which allowed the oxygen to enter.

**III.2.1.2. Typology of forms.** The analysis of ceramic forms of the study area has at its foundation numerous materials discovered at *Șimelu Silvaniei-Observator*, reported in the typological schemes made for some contemporary settlements, among them Teleac, Grănicești and Mediaș. The reconstitution of the repertory of forms was possible thanks to the rich ceramic inventory, partially whole, which we had at our disposal, this being the principal motive for our choice to make a proper typology; to this we further add the appearance, in the study area, of a vase form which is not found in the settlements cited above. In the description of the principal categories of vases we utilised the conventional names already entered into specialised literature, and the differentiation of these in regard to the variants and types was made starting from the aspect of the morphologies. **1. Bitruncated vases** are attested in four variants, the majority of large dimensions, evidenced by the constructive criteria, every one of them having, in its variant, other subvariants. **2. Storeyed vases** that are evidenced through three principal categories. **3. Pots**, worked from a thick paste, smoothed superficially, with simple decoration, consisting in the majority of cases of applied ornamentation in relief. **4. Dishes** are a very numerous ceramic category and well represented in about all the settlements of the Șimleu Depression. The forms that are whole or reconstructable permit us to distinguish four principal variants (with the body bent toward the interior; with the body bent and the lip pulling toward the interior; with the truncated body; with the everted lip). **5. Bowls** represent a ceramic form not very numerous in the repertory of our discoveries that are distinguished in general by their height, greater than the dishes to which they are related. **7. Cups**, attested in a great variety of forms, on the basis of morphological differences evidenced by complete and reconstructable examples; we differentiate six principal variants (simple, with a truncated body or bending toward the interior, over-raised handle or placed under the level of the lip; with the body bending toward the interior, the shoulder well limited, in some cases through a deepened line and a gently everted lip, the profile of the wall represented by the form of the letter “S”; with the swelled body, short neck, prominent shoulder and gently torn lip, with the handle located on the body, surpassing the height of the mouth or with a part drawing from

the lip and over-raised; with the truncated body or bent toward the interior, the exaggerated shoulder and everted lip, black, worked from fine paste with heavy polish on both sides, with inscribed ornament (garlands, arcades), disposed on the interior; with the short body and much over-raised handle, the maximum diameter located in the bottom part, and a rounded base, simple or decorated with horizontal channels, fine, situated in the upper part; with the oval body and equipped with a plastic deformation straightened in toward the interior situated in the area of the handle). **8. Jugs** have a swelled body and a high neck, truncated, equipped in some cases with a handle that begins on the shoulder and not exceeding the lower half of the neck. The decoration consists in general of fine channels disposed vertically on the body. Comparable vases with our examples we find in the area of the Danube and in Italy under the name of “jugs of water” (“Wasserkrügen”), reflecting, in the opinion of specialists, the connections between northern Italy and Pannonia. **9. Glasses**, few in number, have no decoration, are worked superficially and oxidised. **10. Miniature vases** imitate in general the forms of the specific repertory of the Gáva culture, able to be distinguished from the bitruncated vases, dishes and bowls. **11. “Biberon” vases** are vases of reduced dimensions, of bitruncated form, equipped with prominent perforations, located in the area of maximum diameter. **12. Lids** can be divided, on the basis of morphological differences, in two principal types: with dimensions reduced enough, conical body or bent, worked from a semifine and thick paste, well homogenised however, equipped probably with buttons; flat discs, worked from thin homogenised paste, smoothed superficially and oxidised. **13. Strainers / smokers** are worked negligently and preserved in a fragmentary state, allowing us to catch sight of at least two different types. One with a narrow mouth, easy eversion, and a wider body toward the base and another approximately truncated form, having a narrower base. The two types seem to express a functional difference, but the small number and fragmentary state do not permit more considerations. **14. Other forms/indistinguishable forms** include whole or fragmentary vases, whose rarity requires a separate treatment or interesting fragments from a morphological point of view, but impossible to attribute to a named form (bitruncated vase, with short legs, truncated, gap in interior, decorated with broad, oblique channels, “turban”-like, disposed in the middle area and equipped with small prominent applications in the area of maximum diameter; a flat vase, with oval form, inverted lip, and reduced dimensions, that has probably on the long sides a prominent conical perforation; a fragment of a flat vase, with a low margin, known under the name of “fish plates”; oval pieces, with a truncated profile, with long sides of mouth and base, elongated and perforated, polished on the exterior, and with faint remains of secondary burning inside; a vase preserved fragmentarily, with a diameter of cca. 10 cm and a height that exceeds 4 cm, of a dark grey, well smoothed and

decorated in the bottom part with horizontal channels, for which we do not know any analogies at present; fragments of a bitruncated vases, equipped with pressed prominences on the interior and decorated with narrow channels, disposed in a semi-circular pattern under these prominences; a fragment of the wall of a large bitruncated vase, equipped with a massive handle, 9 cm wide; a recipient of brick colour, without polish and with partial secondary burning, with medium dimensions and a short neck, decorated with horizontal channels.

The rim is straight, widened at its top and the body is very large, decorated with ribs and channels vertically disposed; bowls with truncated neck, straight rim, rounded body, with their surface slightly polished, decorated with prominences associated with concentric circles printed or in a circular pinched row that form several geometrical shapes. Similar exemplars, decorated with point rows or prints in concentric circles exist in other Gáva sites as well, where they are considered “imports”, fact that we cannot agree upon, because, by our opinion they represent a specific decoration element of this cultural horizon, although less used; fragment of a pot with proteome ending, well-polished.

**III.2.1.3. Decorations.** The main techniques visible on the studied pottery are the followings **I. channel** that accumulated eight main decoration motives, but every one of them can be summarized in sub-categories as well. *Type I.A* is grouping the vertical channels with the following sub-types: 1. narrow; 2. normal; 3. normal depth, with its margins in relief. *Type I.B* is represented by oblique channels, having several sub-types, in morphologic point of view: 1. Very wide, with its margin in relief; 2. normal, with smaller dimensions than the anterior ones; 3. normal, deep, with margins in relief; 4. oblique long, placed on the rim of the pots; 5. wide, associated sometimes with horizontal channels; 6. Flattened, with margins in relief; 7. narrow, grouped three of them, on the exterior part of the body of a bowl; 8 – 12. on the bowl rim, known also under the name „turbanrand Schüsseln”. *Type I.C* horizontal channels: 1. wide, with margin in relief; 2. flattened; 3. normal; 4. Narrow, with margins in relief; 5. narrow, traced roughly; 6. narrow, with margins slightly in relief; 7. Wide, traced roughly; 8. narrow. *Type I.D* materialized through semicircular channels, set around prominences. *Type I.E* wreath shaped channels, placed in the interior and exterior of the vessels: 1. Shaped by segments; 2-3. Small, narrow channel fascicles; 4. Fine, on the shoulder of some vessels; 5. Fine, on the interior; 6. Normal, with margins in relief; 7. spreaded; 8-10. normal continuous. *Type I.F* „in dial”. *Type I.G* is grouping concentric channels placed only on the interior of the vessels. *Type I.H* is represented by angled channels. **II. Prominences** are ornaments in relief, made by either adding a surplus of raw material, or by pushing the wall of the pot from the inside towards the outside. *Type II.A* prominences pushed from the inside,

with the following sub-types: 1. Large, cone shaped; 2. normal, cone shaped; 3-4. small, cone shaped or oval –longed set vertically; 5-6. large, long-oval shaped, or longed in beak shape, set vertically; 7. convex, long – oval shaped set horizontally. *Type II.B* is represented by full prominences, applied on the body of the vessel in a large variety of shapes and motifs (pyramid shaped or flattened horn shaped ones, oriented upwards, associated two or three; cone shaped, simple, or associated with two or three oval flattened prominences with pinched beak shapes; bird beak shapes; cone shapes united with a horizontal peak; “hanging” prominences; truncated prominences, long and perforated; with endings through stylized zoomorphic shapes; tablets that seem to copy the bolts used at metallic vessels). *Type II.C* truncated buttons, simple ones, or two associated. **III. Beaks/ribs** are ornaments in relief, made by adding a surplus of material, separated by us in three main types. *Type III.A* is represented by vertical beaks/ribs in three types: 1. long, massive and channeled; 2. long, narrow, simple or three grouped; 3. short, three stuck together, slightly curved. *Type III.B* horizontal or oblique beaks/ribs with the following forms: 1. short, with the aspect of small horizontal channeled rib, sometimes with a tubular aspect with its extremities of small vertical lobes; 2. short, oblique, set grouped, so it creates the impression of deep channels in relief. *Type III.C* beaks/ribs set in arcade shape or wave shape. **IV. Belts** made by adding of material, well documented in the studied area, where two types appear (pinched and cut). **V. Incisions** sare made by tracing different, several motives in the soft paste of the pot, with the help of sharp instruments, with the following types: 1. Waved and arcade lines; 2. Straight or oblique lines; 3. Lines in network; 4. Angled lines; 5. Unorganized lines/webs. **VI. Impressions have also three types:** 1. dots; 2. circles; 3. Small, oval impressions. **VII. Pinches** appear in a quite varied motif, as decoration or in association with other elements, the most frequent are the pinches. The following types are known: 1. Set in regulate intervals on the wall of the pot; 2. Set in one or more rows; 3. vertically aligned; 4. Small, oval, on the rom of some cups; 5. Small, oval set in circle, forming floral motifs. **VIII. Decoration perforations** appear on the “sack” type vessels, in association with pinched or cut be. **IX. Squirt** is executed through adding of material on the wall of the pot, decoration well documented in the studoed area. **X. Cutting** appears only on two pottery fragments decorated with incised lines.

**III.2.2. The metal objects** are divided concerning the materials are made of, in two major groups: a) *iron* – flat axe with wings, strong body, only fragmentary kept; b) *bronze* – much more documented then the iron objects, consists of *weaving needles* or *decoration needles* (cone shaped head, well profiled with an almost bitruncated prominence ; with a pot shaped head / *Vasenkopfnadeln*; slightly curved end, spiral shaped head / *Spiralenkopfnadeln*

– *Variante mit zurückgelegtem Spiralkopf* or straight axis / *Spiralkopfnadeln / Rolellenkopfnadeln - Variante mit geradem Schaft*; with spherical profiled zones and ribs / *Kolbenkopfnadeln der jüngeren Form - Varianten mit gerundeten Rippen*; fragmentary kept needle, decorated with horizontal incised lines, slightly visible, due to corrosion; simple needle, without decoration. *Fibulas/Brooches* represent very rare apparitions, the only objects discovered in our interest zone, come from the settlement at Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*. The first piece belongs to the double-bodied type, torsional spring (*Zweischleifige Bogenfiblen mit tordiertem Bügel*). The second piece, a unique type, that has the shape of a “violin bow” (*Violinbogenfibel*), made of a single bronze wire, with tensioned body and the head ends in three nobs, of which two are horizontal “8” shaped and one is vertical. The body is made of a spiral twisted four times. The leg has the shape of a vertical oval nob, parallel with the body of the fibula, ending with spiral disc, set horizontally. Other rare finds that worth to be mentioned are the pearls, hair rings, arrow heads (one piece that is similar to the *archaic Scythian* type from Teleac), all of them documented with only a single piece.

**III.2.3. Household objects** can be grouped by the material that was used for their manufacturing, we can differentiate three main groups: a) *clay* („bead”, spindles, spoons, waving machine weights, or pyramidal massive weights / „hearth dogs”); b) *antler and bone* (piercer, grinder, planting tool, decorated bone object, antler handle fragment); c) *stone* (whet stone, pottery polisher, perforated axe fragment, hammer, grinding stones and mashers, stone slices).

**III.2.4. Magical-religious character objects** include the followings: a) *Zoomorphic art*, is represented by only one piece (a bull); b) *Anthropomorphic art* is represented in the studied area by three fragmentary objects, all of them coming from the settlement from Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*. Only two of these can be clearly attributed to the Early Iron Age, one of them being decorated with “pine” style incisions.; c) *miniature wagon wheel* ; d) *Clay discs*; e) *Clay rings*; f) *Clay objects with beak*; g) or other clay objects with *possible magical-religious significance*, where we have included pieces, that are called in the special literature “clay grinders”. One of them has an oval section and widened extremities; on one face it has two symmetrically disposed pinches, suggesting the eyes and nose of an anthropomorphic figurine.

#### **IV. CONNECTIONS OF THE GÁVA TYPE FEATURES FROM DEPRESSION OF ŞIMLEU WITH OTHER CULTURAL CONTEXTS**

Amongst the discoveries from well researched sites, as it is the one from Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, we have witnessed the appearance of a pottery fragment series, with

morphologic characteristics of surrounding cultural areas, proving, by our opinion the connections between the Gáva type discoveries and surrounding cotemporary cultures.

**IV.1. Connections with Kyjatice culture** were first affirmed by prof. A. László four decades ago and they are represented by (László 1972a, 176 sqq.): a fragment of a medium sized pot, light brown colored, smoothened surface, similar with the type we named „III.B”, decorated on its shoulder by horizontal channels, interrupted by an oval prominence that has the aspect of a small not perforated handle and underneath it, there is a pinch decoration with small oval impressions around it, forming a floral/solar motif; fragment of a large vessel, with very thick walls, that are close to 1,5 cm, rough aspect and decorated with unequal channels, horizontally traced, underneath it, a series of oval impressions, disposed in a circle forming a floral/solar motif; a small sized dish, black colored, well-polished, with torn rim, decorated with small pinches placed obliquely on its superior part. On its maximum diameter it has an oval prominence, above it, channels set in an arcade shape.

**IV.2. Connections with Gornea-Kalakača cultural group** are novelty, fact that makes them very important. These connections are represented by a bitruncated body pot, small size, orange colored, polished having a prominence on the maximum diameter of the pot, decorated with fine incised channels forming a wreath. There is another dish with horizontal flattening associated with prominences oriented towards the bottom of the vessel.

**IV.3. connections with Basarabi culture.** On the basis of archeological researches made in the studied area, mostly during the last two decade, it was emphasized through a series of settlements attributed to Gáva culture due to the presence of archeological material, that's shapes and sizes are similar to those present in the environment of Basarabi culture. The lack of an attentive analysis of the Iron Age pottery made, that these fragments were not observed during the entire time of the research. This kind of discoveries, that are not very numerous are coming from sites like *Cehei Misig*, *Zalău Farkas Domb* and the large fortified settlement from *Șimleu Silvaniei Observator*, *Marca Primăria Nouă* and a momentarily singular discovery from *Șimleu Silvaniei Cetate*.

*Its habitat and elements* As I have already affirmed these kinds of materials appear almost in every case of settlements, where the Gáva component is the predominant and it's dating, as will be visible during this study, permits the coexistence of the two cultural horizons. From the beginning we must mention, that the Bsarabi type materials were found in several complexes from *Cehei*, *Zalău* sau *Șimleu Silvaniei Observator*. In some of the cases it has been visible a numeric dominance of the inventory, rarely an exclusive presence, but the percentage remains on an inferior scale if we consider the amount of Gáva type discoveries. Concerning the archeological complexes, there have been documented surface and partially



deepened houses, hearths, ovens but mostly pits that can be categorized as follows: a) storage pits and b) sacrifice deposit pits.

*Specific elements of the pottery* on the analysis and description of main pottery categories, I have used the conventional names, that already entered the special literature, distinguishing 8 categories: 1. Bitruncated or wide body pottery; 2. “Sack” or “jug” type pottery; 3. Dishes; 4. Bowls; 5. Cups; 6. Miniature pottery; 7. Lids; 8. Special/undefined forms. Concerning the decoration of the pottery, we assist at the dominant presence of the channels, the lack of “S” shaped incisions, the false rope appears on only one exemplar, network of hachured triangles appear in only two cases, prominences, pinched and cut belts, mostly set in pair on the body and on the rim of the vessels, pinches or incised lines (only one case)

The quite large number of Basarabi type materials proves, by our opinion, an effective presence of the carriers of this cultural horizon. The destruction of fortification elements at Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, their remake and their ulterior abandoning dovetails with the quantitative increasing of Basarabi type materials, resulting that the reports with the autochthones were not very peaceful even from the beginning. The expansion was made probably from the direction of Bihor, if we take a look at the materials from Girişul de Criş and points like Marca, Cehei or Şimleu Silvaniei proves the way of access into the Depression of Şimleu.

## **V. HISTORICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING THE EARLY IRON AGE DISCOVERIES FROM THE STUDIED AREA**

**V.1. Clues concerning every-day life** are based on the study of materials and household inventory objects, vegetal and bone remains.

**V.1.1. As crafts / activities** we mention: *stone processing; animal raw material processing* (bone, antlers); *skin, animal and vegetal fiber processing* (spinning, weaving); *pottery processing; construction activities; trading; herding* on a lower scale *hunting*, documented by the paleo-fauna of all researched settlements. A preliminary analysis of the bone materials discovered at Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator* emphasizes a large number of domestic animals, fact proven in other Iron Age settlements as well. The dominant specie belongs to the cattle, followed by goat/sheep, pork, dog and rarely horse; as proof of *agriculture* we deal with carbonized seed remains of cereals (*Triticum dicoccum*) and vegetable plants as well (*Vicia faba*) or objects, like the planting spear, hand mills, grinders (indirect proof); *gathering* is proven by the presence wild plants (*Galium spurium, Vicia*

*hirsuta*); *metallurgy* is based on the discovery of molds, slag, molding residues, small bronze tablets.

**V.1.2. Nutrition, health care.** The reconstruction of a nutrition history in lack of multidisciplinary research, may seem, at first glance a hazardous process. Indeed, the archeological discoveries from the studied area in comparison with data from other cultural spaces permit a certain underlining of some aspects concerning this subject. The analysis of the archeological material (animal bones, plant remains, tools, objects linked to agricultural activities) shows us, that the food of the communities that are subject to the present study, was animal flesh, and completed with plants (cultivated or gathered). The percentage of each type (animal or vegetal) in nutrition is difficult to establish, but it is most certain, that the space we refer to does not make an exception from the “barbarian” nutrition system, as it was called later by Greeks and Romans. This system, different from the Mediterranean one (with a strong vegetal character, concentrating on pasta, bread and vegetables) was based on flesh obtain by herding cattle and hunting, or even milk products, if we take in consideration the amount of mature cattle and goat/sheep bones discovered at Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*. We think that the cereals and vegetables or wild growing plants had a secondary role; most probably this was one of the motifs that these kind of finds are very rare. Concerning health care, we can conclude this issue from the special character objects that can be placed in connection with some magical practices of healing, mostly if we think on the presence of *Galium spurium*, a plant with very strong medical effects. Plinius the Old, citing older sources, as the famous Hippocrates, he says that „the fire has also medical powers”, concerning the hearth, this is seen as a „pharmacy pot”, because from here “lye is prepared, and if it is beaten, it heals”.

**V.1.3. Archeological discoveries concerning spiritual life.** Any religious concept of the world implies the distinction between laic and profane, but such a distinction it is not always sufficient to define the religious phenomena. The sacred always belongs to certain things (cultic objects), certain persons (priest, king), certain spaces (cultic dwellings), certain periods (days of deities) and nothing exists that can, or cannot be possessed or dispossessed from the sacred (Caillois 2006, 21). The lack of written documents referring to the Early Iron Age on our areas makes analysis of archeological materials the only way to get to know some things about spiritual life. The most important elements are the constructions and the discovered objects by their shapes and sizes, treatment method of surfaces reveal a special character, that permit us to see a series of magical-religious practices and beliefs: a) *Cult of the Sun – Cult of fertility* in a very tight relationship, M. Eliade affirms concerning supreme deities from the indo-Mediterranean space, that these deities *accumulate frequently the*

*prestige of fecundity with the solar prestige* (Eliade 2008, 145 sq.). This relationship can be emphasized even by our discoveries, like *zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figurines, miniature wheels, or clay rings*; b) The magical practices are proven starting from fragmentary status of some pieces with special character, or the presence of pinching or pierces. Information on Hittite textiles, mentions a certain type of “anti-magic” ceremony, used to offer remedy against situations provoked by black magic, sins or anger of a god, completes the above mentioned opinion. This purification ceremony that is made by a transfer ritual, involves a human substitute, materialized in a clay “puppet” (that are the most frequently used) or animals (cattle, pigs, mice, birds, fish). As soon as the ritual ended, the human substitute animal, or “symbolic puppet” placed in contact with the impurity it is destroyed or thrown away. (Filoramo et alii 2008, 199 sqq.).

Of the above mentioned facts we must underline the usage in these ceremonies of clay made anthropomorphic figurines, or animal origin substitutes. We have to mention, that the most of the figurine representations dating to the iron Age are made in animal shapes, fact that could link these rituals to those, used in the middle East.

## **V.2. The chronology of discoveries from Depression of Șimleu. Conclusions.**

The poverty of data offered by the vertical stratigraphy inside the sites in the studied area and in its adjacent zones makes impossible the process, to offer a chronology to the discovered archeological materials, strictly on the basis of relationships between the contexts they were gathered from. So, we must specify that concerning chronology of our inventoried objects we have used the few stratigraphical data offered by sites like *Cehei Misig, Zalău Farkas Domb* especially *Șimleu Silvaniei Observator*, but mostly the dating of objects found in the surroundings of our area. Before continuing our discussion concerning the subject, we have to mention the contribution of I. Bejinariu to the establishment of the Early Iron Age period evolution in Sălaj County, but mostly the Depression of Șimleu.

In the definition of the studied historical period we have adopted a tripartite chronological system, similar to the one proposed for the site at Teleac, where the materials discovered show a strong resemblance with our archeological materials, with slight dating differences, as follows: Phase I Ha A2–Ha B1; Phase II – Ha B2–Ha B3; Phase III – Ha C–beginning of Ha D. in some cases there can be distinguished nuances concerning the dating of our materials, but the lack of research obliges us to be reserved in matters of theories. Because of this, we have to specify, that that we did not use a subdivision of the evolution phases already affirmed, being conscious of the subjectivist dosage that is involved by such a procedure.

*Phase I: Ha A2 – Ha B1* We add to this phase the complexes C45, C47 and C107 from Pericei *Kellertag*, such a dating being sustained by the association of certain elements recognized as being early : pot similar to the one called 1.III.B by us; large bitruncated vessel, decorated with wide channels placed horizontally on the neck of the pot, obliquely on its body under the form of ribs in relief; fragments of hearth vessels; the short legged pot, truncated, with empty interior, decorated with oblique wide channels set on the median zone, with small prominences on the maximum dimension of the pot; fragment decorated with wide channels on the neck and the needle with cone shaped profiled head, with an almost bitruncated prominence on the neck, established by I. Bejinariu as being a variant of *Mostkovice* needles with a “Bohemian” type profile, dated to „Hallstatt A stage“ (Bejinariu 2010, 8, Pl. 18/8). For the rest of the complexes which do not offer the possibility of dating, we can only assume that they belong to a certain period of Ha A2. On the basis of the few pot fragments decorated with wide channels on their neck, we attribute them with a certain reserve, to the beginning of phase I as we do with the discoveries from Poř *Baza Bechtel*. We can add to the same horizon a part of the materials discovered at Doh *La Izvoare*, starting from the similitude of the pot without a neck, 2.I type, the wide channels as well, both of them found at Pericei *Kellertag* as well. Elements from the classic phase of Gáva culture is combined with a series of complexes from Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, with a few earlier ones, like 1.I.A.1 type vessels, the everted rimmed dish, with vertical handles on the shoulder, or the well-polished black dish with the interior torn rim decorated with small oblique pinches and prominences on the maximum dimension of the pot, associated with arcade shaped channels, the pot fragments decorated with horizontal channels associated with small impressions, set in a circle, forming a floral/solar motif, pot fragment with bird beak shaped prominences, or the dishes with concentric channels set on the inferior part and last, but not de least, the novelty “violin bow” type fibula/ *Violinbogenfibel*. On the basis of these associations, we consider that all the complexes that contain the materials described above belong to the second half of Ha A2 stage. Referring to the dating of the defensive system elements of the fortification from Șimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, the discovered materials do not allow us to make a strict dating. The presence of the fragments decorated with oblique wide channels that appear at Pericei in the early phases of Gáva manifestations in the studied area and the stratigraphical relationships of the first works on the fortification system with certain archeological complexes, as the chronology of the north-eastern segment, makes us to propose a dating to Ha A2 – Ha B1 phases beginning with this period, but mostly during the next ones, make their appearance: bitruncated body dishes or leaning towards the interior, decorated with oblique long channels of I.B.9 and I.B.11 type; the dishes decorated with channels set on concentric

circles, those decorated with star shaped channels and lobe rims with interior channels; the large bitruncated vessels decorated with vertical channels associated with beaks/ribs in relief, applied directly on the channeled zones that appear in multiple complexes with early materials; those with wreath channels, type 1.I.C; the large recipients with cylindrical neck; the small bitruncated vessels, decorated with channels in wreath associated with small handles in horizontal channels set on the superior part of the pot (type 1.III.B); pots with large diameters, with prominences of multiple shapes, empty interior, made by the easy pushing of the pot's wall from the inside, everted rim, sometimes with circular channels in the interior and truncated neck, in the majority of cases decorated with horizontal channels placed on the superior part of the pot.

*Phase II: Ha B2 – Ha B3* this phase assist at the continuing and generalization of the followings: the dishes with truncated body or arched towards the interior, decorated with long oblique channels types I.B.9 and I.B.11; the everted rim dishes, few of the with flattened rim; the large dishes with their rim very everted and concentrically channeled; type 7.VI cups, with a deformed rim towards the interior, on the area of the handle (“kidney” type), deformation that is much more accentuated than at the earlier variants of the vessel; the large bitruncated vessels, with prominences pushed from the interior, type 1.I.A.2; vessels decorated with wreath channels (type 1.I.D) and some of the few ribs associated with undecorated zones; vertical channels; at the level of rough pottery, the vessels with pinched or cut belt increase their numbers, bowls decorated with imprinted dots and circles or network incisions make their appearance, as well the flat lids. Bitruncated vessels start to appear, which, at the basis of their necks, ant regulate intervals have short, horizontal beaks/ribs, made by adding of surplus materials; large, but simple recipients, decorated with vertical ribs grouped three by three, set in regular intervals. During the first half of this stage as well, certain Gornea-Kalakača element make their appearance, marking the beginning of contacts with the southern world, and at this same time takes place the first violent destruction of the fortification with the continuous rampart on its northern side and also its renewal on the same spot. Towards the end of this phase, more exactly at the end of Ha B3 stage, or maybe at the beginning of the next one, the first Basarabi type materials are showing up slightly documented with the discoveries from Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*. During this period, a new fire is destructing the northern side of the fortification, but they are leveled. Such an activity was registered on the north-eastern side of the palisade as well. In the filling, that covers almost integrally the ditch, Basarabi type material appears, fragments of the so-called „water cups”/Wasserkrügen. In this chronological horizon can we place the destruction of the fortification elements, numerous pits and dwellings at Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, the discoveries from Şimleu Silvaniei *Str.*

*Argeşului, Ştrandul termal Cehei Nove, Marca Primăria Nouă, Coaste şi Iertaşul Petacilor, Pericei Miliceritag sau Zalău Farkas Domb*, among the great majority of the sites that are missing sure dating elements. Through analogy with the situation at Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*, we consider that during this phase are used and destroyed the fortifications from *Derşida Coasta Sorliţii* and „*Moigrad*”/ *Jac Cămnini*, both with sure Gáva type materials discovered.

*Phase III: Ha C – beginning of Ha D.* The pottery of this phase, at least until the middle of it, continues to reproduce the forms and ornaments that appear during the preceding stages, so we can find the following types: large bitruncated vessels, decorated with vertical channels on their body, sometimes associated with horizontal channel on their neck.; large bitruncated vessels, with vertical ribs, without channels, on very weak exemplars. Rarely do appear: wreath channels, horizontal channels on vessel shoulders; large dishes, decorated with concentric channels on the everted rims. As a consequence of Basarabi element contact intensification, the dominant form is the dish with torn rims, decorated with ling oblique channels, or horizontal flattening. At the level of the rough pottery, we can observe their usage on a very high scale, decorated with pinched and cut belts, wreath or arcade belts sometimes associated with perforations or applied prominences, in the detriment of the quality pottery that is polished and burned well. Under different impulses, new types of pottery appear, like the medium sized, short necked pot, decorated with horizontal channels, straight rims, thickened on its upper part, large dimensioned, decorated with vertical channels and ribs, or the medium height pot with bitruncated body, everted rim, on its maximum diameter, a broken prominence, type that is very well known in the Scythian context from Transylvania. The discoveries from Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator* are specific as well to this period, when the dominant materials are the Basarabi type ones, with the total lack of “S” shaped decoration, the rare appearance of the incised triangles, hachured in their network or impressions and higher frequency of channeled ornament determine us to date them into the II<sup>nd</sup> and III<sup>rd</sup> phases of this culture.

Concerning later discoveries, we must mention a dish decorated with oblique channel fascicles set in angle that lowers on the body of the pot in the interior, or an exemplar of large dimensions, decorated on the contact point between the neck and the body of the pot, with short, oblique channels, giving the impression of a torsion, followed by three concentric channels and a rich ornament of channels in a registry, that covers the entire surface, towards a fragment of a large pot, probably bitruncated, with a massive button with an almost disco head, decorated on the superior part with lowered prominences with analogies at Chendu, Ghirbom or in necropolises in south-eastern Poland, where they are dated to the IV<sup>th</sup> horizon

(Ha C2 – Ha D1), or the bitruncated vassels, with applied spiral decoration, ornament that appears on similar exemplars in the necropolis from Nagyberki – Szalacsikai, dated to the end of Ha C. Amongst these materials, new bronze objects make their appearance, for example the bronze arrow head with prominent median rib, fibula with two resorts and twisted spring / *Zweischleifige Bogenfiblen mit tordiertem Bügel* or the flat axe with wings. The late discoveries from Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator* and the traces of violence mark the end of this settlement and the Gáva type discoveries in the Depression of Şimleu, this dating being proposed even for the fortified site from Bozna (Vasiliev 1995, 68), at a distance of 10 km from the studied zone. For the destruction dwellings it is relevant the abandoned human skeleton from house L1/1994 in the settlement from Şimleu Silvaniei *Observator*. Traces of violence are kept almost in every settlement proving tragically ended existences, by an attack that probably provoked the loss of all valuable goods and forced the community to abandon their homes, leaving all behind. The actual archeological researches do not offer very much on the identity of the aggressors, but we cannot finish without underlining the fact that a pot, with prominences on its upper part was found in the mentioned dwelling and a similar one, that was found in the Scythian necropolis from Cipău.

These kinds of discoveries, dating to the VIth century BC, will be followed by others, at Boghiş *Nagy Mező*, the *akinakes* from Firminiş or the settlement from Cehei *Misig*, in this last one there was found a cup with risen handle with prominences at its maximum diameter, identical with the one found at Uioara de Jos *La Pârloage*. At the end of the VIth – beginning of the Vth century BC, the settlements from Pericei *Gouţ*, Porţ *Corău*, Aghireş *Sub Pășune* and important fortified settlement from Porţ *Paliş*, make their appearances, their dating passing over the Vth century BC, continuing to exist until the arrival of the Celts.

In alphabetic criteria, all the sites were shortly presented in the chapter of **VI. REPERTOIRE OF DISCOVERIES**. It contains 53 archeological interest points of 26 localities, most of them novelties, marked by an order number as seen on the map of discoveries as well. To loosen the lecturing of the repertoire and mostly to easily extract some conclusions linked to habitat in the Early Iron Age in the studied area, we have constantly used a series of fields such as *relief forms, topographic or geographical localization, type of discovery*, and we have also added *researches made, their history and bibliography*.

The last chapter, **VII. ANEXES**, include a series of graph charts linked to the habitat, abbreviations and a bibliography list that contains at least 350 titles, giving the main support for our conclusions. A very rich illustration, consisting of 29 (maps, plans, profiles, excavation photos, graphical reconstructions) and over 1600 drawings of archeological materials, most of them unpublished, structured in 237 plates, all of them linked in a separate

volume, to complete everything that has been told. Their introduction in the scientific circuit with all the risks of subjective interpretations, fortunately complete the small amount of information held until the present moment about the discoveries dated in the Early Iron Age in the studied area, practically forming the weight element of the present work.



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