

## LA TÈNE C1 FUNERARY DISCOVERIES ON THE MIDDLE MUREȘ COURSE

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**Key words:** *Celts, La Tène, Transylvania, Mureș River, Funerary*

**Abstract.** *According with the archaeological discoveries, on the Middle Mureș Course, during the La Tène C1 phase, we know a clear Celtic presence. Many of the archaeological artifacts had been discovered fortunately, that's why our knowlegements about life, society and the history of the people who lived in the area are not so extensive.*

*We do not know the exactly number of graves in none of the cemeteries and generally speaking we know just a few informations about them. In accordance with the informations about the discoveries, we can say that in the area we found both rites of burials: cremation and also inhumations.*

### *1. Middle Mureș River Course*

The Transylvanian Intracarpatical area is a large one and it includes the area we are studying. Although in this paper our aim is mainly the Middle Mureș River, some aspects of the civilization from the Second Iron Age mean the connection with a larger area, including the whole Transylvania.

The area wich is in our interes in this paper, is a verry well individualized one, speaking about the geographical and historical point of view (Pl. I). The northern limit of the reserched space being established in the Luna commune, Cluj County and the second, towards west is on the area of Săvârșin, Arad County. Generally speaking, the aspect of the relief is characterized by plains along the rivers, and hills. The area is very good for agriculture and it is considered as one of the Celts penetration way in Transylvania (Nestor 1041-1942, p. 457; Rusu, Bandula 1970, p. 35).

Through the Mureș Valley the main trades between the Transylvanian basin and central european parts these ways being also the main way of acces used by different populations who came to Transylvania, among who were the Celts (Ferencz 2007, p. 19-26).

### *2. Carachteristic traces of La Tène C1 phase on The Middle Mureș Course*

According with the archaeological discoveries, on the Middle Mureș Course, during the La Tène C1 phase, we know a clear Celtic presence (Pl. I). Many of the archaeological artifacts have discovered fortunately, that's why our knowlegements about life, society and historical events of the people who lived in the area are not so extensive, but there are enough for us to make some considerations.

So, we can count today the amplacements of some shure settlements, belonging to the La Tène C1 phase, in the area of the next localities: Aiud (Ciugudeanu 1978, p. 39, nr. 44; Takács, Bogdan 1997, p. 94, note 8; Ferencz 2007, p. 40, 56-57), Gligorești (Gogâltan, Aldea, Ursuțiu 1996, p. 51-52; Găgâltan, Aldea, Ursuțiu 2004, p. 66, 69, 74, Pl. II; Ferencz 2007, p. 41, 55), Sebeș (Horedt and all 1967, p. 19-25; Crișan 1969, p. 273, nr. 261; Horedt 1965, p. 59; Crișan 1966, p. 74; *RepAlba*, p. 167, nr. 4; Ferencz 2007, p. 44-45, 56), Șeușa (Crișan and all 1997, p. 27-40; Paul, Ciută 1998, p.74-76; Ferencz, Ciută 2000, p. 22-50; Ciută and all 2000, p. 101; Ciută and all 2001, p. 239-242 ; Ferencz, Ciută 2005, p. 239-254; Ferencz 2007, p. 45-46, 55) and Vințu de Jos (*RepAlba*, p. 207, nr. 1 b; Plantos 2000, p. 87-96; Ferencz 2007, p. 47-48). Another settlement dated with probability in the same chronological phase was investigated at Lancrăm, near Sebeș (Popa, Totoianu 2000, p. 51-134; Popa, Simina 2004; Ferencz 2007, p. 55-56). In the same time, we know some isolated discoveries of archaeological artefacts belonging to La Tène C<sub>1</sub> phase, that indicate the presence of the Celts in the area of the middle Mureș River Valey. A good example for that asempcion is the silver fibula discovered in a cave, at Ohaba Ponor (Nicolăescu-Plopșor and all 1957, p. 46-47, fig. 5, 6; Feencz 2007, p. 43-44, Pl. 105/3).

### 3. Funerary discoveries belonging to La Tène C1 phase on The Middle Mureş Course

Some other archaeological discoveries could indicate the presence of some necropolises, or just isolated funerary complexes. This are the cases of the discoveries from Aiud (Crişan 1973, p. 51; Crişan 1974, p. 71-92; Ferencz 2007, p. 37-40, 75-77), where we have certain informations about two necropolises. Other places where the discoveries indicate a certain necropolis is Blandiana village (Aldea 1976, p. 415-421; Aldea, Ciugudean 1985, p. 37-43; *RepAlba*, p. 60, nr. 3; Ferencz 2007, p. 40-41, 77-78).

In some other cases, some isolated discoveries could indicate some funerary discoveries (Pl. II, 3, Pl. IV). This are the cases of the artefacts belonging to Jidvei (Crişan 1973, p. 58; *RepAlba*, p. 114, nr. 2; Roska 1942, p. 313, nr. 8; Roska 1944, p.73 nr. 146; Ferencz 2007, p. 42), Şona (Crişan 1973, p. 62, nr. 70 a, b; *RepAlba*, p. 183, nr. 11 d; Petică 1994, p. 33; Ferencz 2007, p. 46), Uroi (Popescu 1941-1944, p. 183; Popescu 1944, p. 648; Roska 1944, p. 58, nr. 7; Crişan, 1973, p. 64; Ferencz 2007, p. 47, 114-115), and Veţel (Roska 1942, p. 301, nr. 52; Roska 1944, p.73, nr. 64; Popescu 1944, p. 648; Crişan 1973, p. 67, nr. 80; Ferencz 2007, p. 47, 119).

With just a singular exception, at Aiud (Herepey 1901, p. 76, 96, pl. XXI, 222-223; M. Roska 1944, p. 66, 35; Crişan 1973, p. 51, Crişan 1974, p. 71-92; *RepAlba*, p. 22-23, nr. 11a; Ferencz 2007, p. 38-39, 76), all of the funerary discoveries on the middle Mureş valey, belonging to La Tène C<sub>1</sub> had made fortunately. We do not know the exactly number of graves in none of the cemeteries and generally speaking we know just a few informations about them. In spite of the lack of discoveries, in accordance with the informations about them, we can say that in the area the funerary discoveries had both rites of burials: cremation and also inhumations.

On the middle Mureş course were identified the necropolis from Aiud and Blandiana to which it could be add some materials which could be included in the inventory objects category discovered in different kind of places. The number of this types of archaeological sites known till now are less numerous on the middle Mureş in comparison with those coming from settlements. The archaeological artifacts found as grave goods are represented by weapons, harness pieces, jewelry, accesories for clothes and potteries vessels. Sometimes there was found also some kind of implements, represented only by scissors. There are missing some artifacts with prestigious value (graves with helmets or chariots or women's graves with many jewelry for example), all of them are usual. The vessel with anthropomorphic handles discovered at Blandiana (Pl. III), could be an exception, but we don't know anything about it's context.

Also it has to be notice that any kind of necropolis known in our area of interest has not been researched as a result of a systematic investigation, till now.

The most numerous discoveries known until now in our area of interest are contemporary with the graves framed in III and IV horizons from Pişcolt (Pl. II, Pl. III, Pl. IV). About the dating of the end of this stage are necessary some words. The final moment of the cemetery and of the sub-phase C<sub>1</sub> in that area was somewhere around 120-130. The end of sub-phase C<sub>1</sub> was placed, in other parts of Central Europe between 190-175 B.C, one of the dating being between 185-170. The same moment in Transylvania was placed in the first part of the II Century B.C. As it can be noticed, the very late dating done by J. Nemeti is against the others chronological systems. Although in nowadays west and northwest Romania it is possible that the Celtic presence to continue along the C<sub>2</sub> sub-phase.

### 4. Conclusions

Our knowledge about funerary discoveries belonging to La Tène C<sub>1</sub> phase, on the Middle Mureş Course area are just a few. But there are very important for us to understand social and politic events involved the population who lived in those times. The La Tène C<sub>1</sub> phase has ending in the same time with the presence of the Celts on the area with the presence of the Celts in the first part of the II<sup>nd</sup> Century B. C. (Ferencz, Ciută 2005, p. 240-241, 245; Ferencz 2007, p. 159).

The next period is specific for some other civilization which have characteristics who had been observed in the believes and in the ideas about the after life (Sîrbu 1993, p. 37), but also in the material civilization. In western and central Europe, starting with La Tène C<sub>2</sub> horizon had been developed the *oppida civilization* (Ferencz 2007, p. 159), wich is characterized by archaeological with Celtic inventories. In Transylvania the rural civilization continues and fortified settlements and fortress appeared (Ferencz 2007,

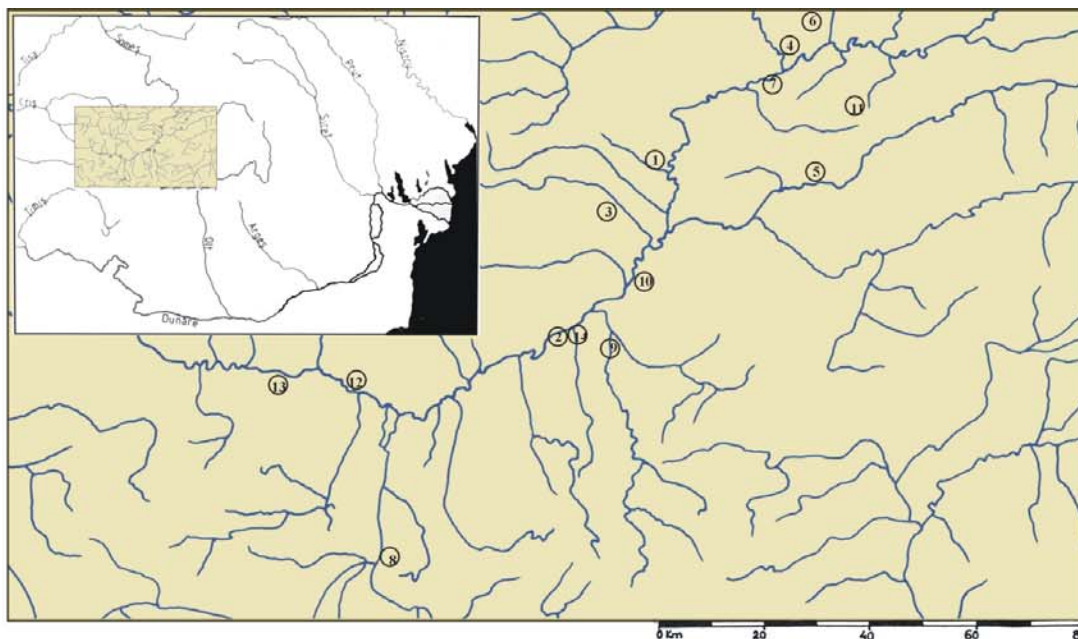
p. 159, nota 1231). From these sites inventory are missing almost entirely Celtic materials (Rustoiu 1999, p. 189-203).

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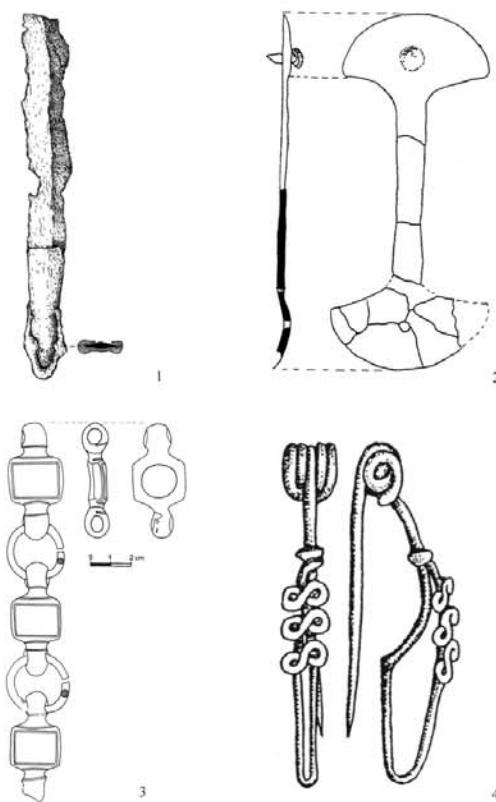
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Pl. I. Discoveries belonging to La Tene C1 from the middle Mureș area. 1. Aiud; 2. Blandiana; 3. Craiva; 4. Gligorești; 5. Jidvei; 6. Lunca; 7. Noșlac; 8. Ohaba Ponor; 9. Sebeș; 10. Șeușa; 11. Șona; 12. Uroi; 13. Vețel; 14. Vințu de Jos.



Pl. II. Some artefacts with chronological value provided from funerary discoveries from the middle Mureș area. 1. Fragmentary sword from Aiud; 2. Shield handle from Blandiana; 3. Fragmentary bronze belt from Vețel; 4. Silver fibulae from Ohaba Ponor.



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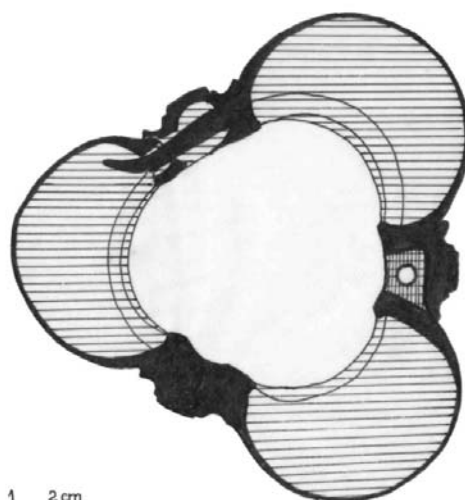
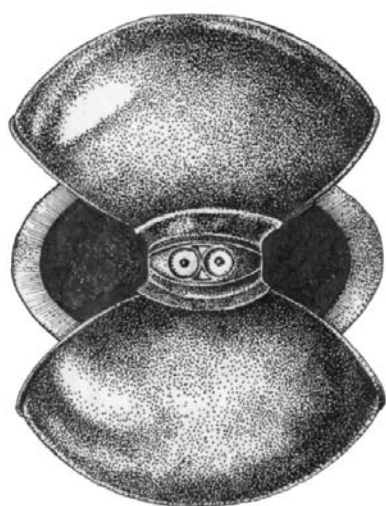


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Pl. III. Vessel with anthropomorphic handles discovered at Blandiana.



Pl. IV. Ankle ring with big semi-oves from Uroi.