

**UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI CLUJ-NAPOCA
INSTITUTUL DE STUDII DOCTORALE**

***ASPECTE FUNERARE ȘI INTERFERENȚE
ETNOCULTURALE ȘI RELIGIOASE LA ALBA
IULIA ÎN JURUL ANULUI 1000***

TEZĂ DE ABILITARE

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**BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES**

***FUNERAL ASPECTS AND ETHNOCULTURAL
AND RELIGIOUS INTERFERENCES IN ALBA
IULIA AROUND THE YEAR 1000***

HABILITATION THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The present habilitation thesis has been drawn up in accordance with the active standards and consists of three units: the administrative component (units 1-2) and the scientific one (unit 3), adding also the corresponding bibliographical list.

The section dedicated to the administrative component includes some of the most important studies, which were written after receiving the PhD degree in 2003. These studies emphasized both artefacts, as well as an analysis on pagan and pre-Christian funeral customs from the turn of the millennium. Amongst the most important ones there is also a more recent study, a volume regarding the problematic of the minor art within this region: *Adornments and clothing accessories in Banat, Crișana and Transylvania (10th-11th century)/Podoabe și accesorii vestimentare din Banat, Crișana și Transilvania (secolele X-XI)*, Mega Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2014.

Within this section, we have underlined the directions and perspective plans concerning our academic and scientific career, which are obviously centred upon Transylvanian funeral archaeology between the 9th and the 11th centuries. The 13-year long teaching line is based upon academic courses, such as Funeral archaeology, History of Transylvania during the migration period, History of the Middle Ages, History of the Byzantine Empire, upon archaeological campaigns (burial grounds in Alba Iulia dated back to the early Middle Ages) and upon coordinating Bachelor and Master's programmes, as well as some activities at the Doctoral School of the "Lucian Blaga" University in Sibiu.

The third unit, ***Funeral aspects and ethnocultural and religious interferences in Alba Iulia around the year 1000***, is based upon a synthesis of funeral discoveries made within a multi-ethnic area, where we are able to trace back the existence of a power centre (the "Voivodeship in Bălgrad"). Why in Alba Iulia in particular? This was the place for the most evident symbiosis between the autochthonous and the foreign elements perceivable at the level of funeral rite and ritual.

The interest of the period's great political and military forces (Bulgarians, Magyars and Byzantines) showed towards this area, as well as the existence of a political leader and entity are not to be contested anymore nowadays. The "birth" of this political entity on the grounds of the former Roman castrum in Alba Iulia was called forth by religious, economic and political factors.

Amongst the multiple problems that are to be solved during future times, the one standing out regards the communities of Slavs from Moravia, who entered Transylvania. It is from our point of view, that this historical sequence would imply two hypotheses if we are to link it with the archaeological sources in Alba Iulia. First, we have to take into account two different phases/periods of penetration, namely of a distinct community (Ciumbrud, Orăștie X8) settled in this area under religious aspects before the penetration of the Bulgarians and a mixed one coming from the Bulgarian area (Alba Iulia-Stația de Salvare/phase I). The second hypothesis refers to the possibility of

a single penetration period resulting in the distinct group (Ciumbrud, Orăștie X8) and finally, the fusion of Western elements with Roman and Bulgarian ones (Alba Iulia-Stația de Salvare/phase I).

Our scientific efforts of the following years will be dedicated to an exhaustive research and harnessing of the burial grounds in Alba Iulia- *Stația de Salvare, Izvorul Împăratului and Vânătorilor Str.*, all related with each other.

When completing this research path, we will be able to understand what the Bulgarian and Hungarian horizon in Transylvania truly mean and both their power centre. As we have proved it ever since 1999, the time frame between the 9th and 11th centuries obliges us to emphasize our efforts concerning the complex funeral discoveries in Alba Iulia. It is through this paper, that we are striving to draw up – as much as possible – a correct and general canvas of these particular discoveries and their connexions to the European area in order to set aside misguided ideas and conclusions or artificially designed groups, all of them considered barriers in understanding the problematic.

This unit aims to portray the funeral diversity and the cultural realignment in Alba Iulia between the 10th and 11th centuries, both understandable through two political-military and religious events: the baptism of Gylas and the intervention of Stephen I. in Transylvania. Gylas' baptism, together with the Hierotheus sequence during the second half of the 10th century, had managed to determine the first and most significant diversification of the funeral spaces. It was a mark off caused by the religious and ethnic element. Therefore, the burial ground at *Stația de Salvare* was still used by the pagan Magyar community during the mid-11th century.

Izvorul Împăratului was a different burial ground in use. It was a distinct one mainly because the burials of this site all have in common the Christian element. It was exactly during this particular time frame that the burial grounds on Brîndușei Street and Pîclișa-La Izvoare were functioning as such. The former was used by the Roman/autochthonous population until most likely 1075. A smaller community, perhaps detached from the one from *Stația de Salvare* started to bury those who had passed away in the burial ground in Pîclișa-La Izvoare. This could be traced back starting with the second half of the 10th century and the first half of the following one. The origin of this community in Alba Iulia is supported by funeral rite and ritual, elements that are not to be identified in other Transylvanian areas.

The second important event was given thus by the campaign of 1002/1003 led by king Stephen I. to Alba Iulia but also by the impact of Christianity. The latter is to be observed in the burial ground at *Stația de Salvare*, where the burials continued as such until the mid-11th century. After that point, we have noticed a break from pagan traditions and it was at the same time that burials started taking place in the burial ground from *Vânătorilor Street*. The burials continued in all other burial grounds; however we manage to trace back several modifications called forth by Christianity. It is with this second event, that the burials from the Byzantine burial ground, researched by our

colleague Dana Marcu-Istrate are to be linked. In regard to the Bulgarian element, after the Magyar penetration, it is our belief that part of them blended within other communities and another part withdrew to a neighbouring area, a situation suggested also by archaeological researches.