

THE FUNERARY RITUAL AT THE GERMANIC TRIBES ON THE UPPER COURSE OF TISA RIVER

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During the period of the 1st - 4th centuries AD the greatest part of the population on the upper course of Tisa River was of North- Thracian origin; this fact determined the prevalence of the funerary rite of incineration, during the 4th century BC, known here from the 6th century BC.

Earthen tumulus, having various dimensions, were raised over the proper tombs.

The penetration of the Germanic tribes into this area led to the apparition of the plane tombs.

Chronologically, these tombs belong to three categories:

The first category consists of the tombs of *Pșevorsc Culture* population, identified as Vandal-Asting tribes, which penetrate into this area at the end of the 2nd century BC (*Dio Cass.*, LXXI, 12, 1; *Daus.*, X). Chronologically, these tombs are included between the second half of the 2nd century and the beginning of the 3rd century AD; they are represented by about 20 single tombs and by those within the polyethnic necropoleis at Zemplin and Medieșul Aurit.

Initially, the defunct was burned on a pyre, the cremated bones were afterwards disposed into the pit (in an urn or directly on its bottom). The tombs of military are prevalent in the type of single burials; weapons (swords, tips of spears or arrows) deliberately deteriorated were found beside.

The second category consists of the plane tombs of the Germanic population, which used the inhumation.

The most of these tombs were found within the region Sabolci-Satmare, mainly on the left bank of the Tisa River; chronologically these tombs belong to the period between the ends of the 3rd century AD and the 4th century AD. There are 30 localities in this area where a number of 1 to 3 tombs was discovered. The tombs were of rectangular shape, and they have sometimes the depth of 2 m. The defuncts are oriented on the North-South axis. Ceramic vases, fibulae, buckles, bracelets, coins were disposed as funerary inventory.

The "Pricely" tombs at Ostrovani and Teicoze also belong to this category, and these ones are remarkable for the richness of the funerary inventory.

The third category of tombs is well known during the 5th century AD. At Tisadob, Sighet, Tisaliuc-Razompurta, Căpușeni 35 single tombs and 3 necropoleis were investigated; these ones belonged to the East-Germanic tribes settled here during the Great Migration.

Excepting the 3 tombs at Tisadob Sighet, which belong to the incineration in urn type, the other tombs are entirely of inhumation type, in rectangular-shaped pits, orientated on a West-East axis, with a depth of 0.8 to 2.0 m. A large number of tombs of women, having a rich funerary inventory are certified for this group of burials. Within the first group of tombs the necropolis at Ize was completely researched; it has a decisive significance for the knowledge of the funerary customs of the autochthonous population during the Roman Epoch. The incineration and the deposition of the cremated fragments in funerary urns, in pit or on the place of the pyre are characteristic for this period.

During the 3rd and 4th centuries the funerary ritual became homogenous; this led to the domination of the tombs with funerary urns. Hand made vases having a traditional shape were used as funerary urns. Support-vases and fragments of the clothing inventory were disposed beside.

A particular group consists of the tombs in the necropoleis at Zemplin, Bratovo and Lesna; within these tombs the funerary ritual and inventory of *Pșevorsc* origin are also certified.

Relying on the material mentioned above we can certainly stress that the prevalent ethnic component part on the upper course of Tisa River during the 6th - 4th centuries AD was the North- Thracian one.