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DOCTORAL SCHOOL "HISTORY, CIVILISATION, CULTURE"

ROMAN PRESENCE AT GRĂDIȘTEA DE MUNTE
- SARMIZEGETUSA REGIA
(ceramic material)
-PhD THESIS-

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CLUJ-NAPOCA
2019

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SUMMARY

Keywords: Sarmizegetusa Regia, Romans, Roman pottery, legionary pottery, romanization, Roman army, Roman buildings.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the time, the specialists' attempt to tell the history of Sarmizegetusa Regia has emphasized, as it is normal, on the Dacian civilization and material culture. In the last century, this subject has produced a vast amount of specialized literature.

This scientific approach began in 2016, as a result of personal interest in Greek-Roman influences in the Dacian milieu. The lack of a large picture regarding the Roman ceramics from Sarmizegetusa Regia has led to a major incursion into the subject. The impressive amount of Roman ceramic material has led to a narrowing of the researched area, so I have selected, with few exceptions, only the material discovered inside the fortress and in the sacred area. This area constraint was also due to the fact that typically the various ceramic categories studied require a specific in-depth studies, especially on methodology, as is the case of *terra sigillata*, *amphorae*, lamps etc. The work on the Roman ceramic material from Sarmizegetusa is structured in seven chapters, including the catalog of the material studied and its plates.

I. HISTORIOGRAPHICAL DATA

This first chapter is dedicated to the numerous studies on Grădiștea de Munte - Sarmizegetusa Regia, although in terms of Roman ceramic material and Roman presence the paper numbers are low. The chronology of the site and its destruction due to the Roman conquest was also widely discussed, but this topic still remains open. The archaeological material was widely spread in numerous excavation reports and articles that led to the present thesis.

I have also included the works dedicated to Dacian ceramics, discovered in enormous quantities. Among the first are the work of Ion Horațiu Crișan, with a special regard to the Dacian pottery from Transylvania. Lastly, a large work whose topic is the painted Dacian pottery belongs to Professor Gelu Florea, and more recently, Cătălin Cristescu brought new data on the Dacian ceramics from the closed complexes on terrace VII.

For western syntheses it is useless to try enumerating them because of the endless list. However, the main publications were mentioned, starting with those of the nineteenth century, specializing in certain ceramic categories. Basic works on *amphorae*, lamps, *terra sigillata* etc. are also still widely used today by all specialists whose concern is Roman ceramics.

II. ROMANIZATION. BETWEEN ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY AND REALITY

As the historiographical trends or western research methodology, Romanian scholars have often approached the subject of Romanization over the last century. The discussion of this complex process specifically addresses the subject's historiography, and its evolution. In general, the subject's approach had a steady and similar evolution to Western patterns. As well as Dumitru Protase points out, and then the idea was taken over by Alexandru Diaconescu, in Romanian studies the aspect of Romanization is viewed in two stages, one being the fast colonization of territories, and another one seen as a gradual process by which the natives take over the Roman lifestyle.

The new historiographical approaches attempt to rectify the old theses, but the lack of a clear methodology is still a problem. In order to understand the whole process, it is meaningless to omit the archeology and data provided by it. This includes the numerous ceramic materials discovered from the archaeological sites. The traces of Romanization through the perspective of ceramics are particularly noticeable due to the functionality of various vessels or objects and their archaeological context. In Gallia, for example, Sylvie Barrier discusses the Romanization and the process of aculturation through ceramic vessels. We therefore observe that imports and the influence of ceramics play an important role in this ample process, but not a defining one.

For a clear discussion regarding the possibility of a Romanization before the conquest, it would have been necessary to study the Dacian civil settlements, not the fortifications. Such studies are unfortunately still lacking, so far the researchers focusing mainly on fortifications. Up to now in Romanian archeology there can not be mentioned extensive studies on Dacian civil settlements, which remains a great unknown.

III. THE ROMAN ARMY IN DACIA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 2nd CENTURY AD.

The historical events that took place in Dacia at the beginning of the 2nd century AD were mainly treated in particular on historiographic data. In this sense, I attempted a review of the movements of the Roman army in the first decades of the second century. In this respect, the chapter was structured in three distinct discussions.

1. Historiographical data and the ancient sources on the conquest of Sarmizegetusa Regia:

Without much reference to the Dacian and Roman conflicts between 44 BC and the 85 AD, which mainly concern the southern area of the Carpathian Mountains, I analyzed in particular the period between the time of Domitian and especially the beginning of the 2nd century AD. From the great amount of information and details on Trajan's Dacian wars, I summed up the description of their deployment in the area of Sarmizegetusei Regia.

2. Roman army in Dacia after 106 AD:

Especially because of the importance of a possible link between the material culture (Roman ceramics) from Sarmizegetusa and other early Roman settlements in Dacia, I chose to follow the Roman military movements and actions in Dacia after 106 AD. The most important data in this regard was the abandonment of Sarmizegetusa Regia by the Roman military troops after 106 BC, following the history of the military troops attested in the area: Legio III Flavia Felix, Legio II Adiutrix Pia Fidelis and a *vexillatio* of Legio VI Ferrata.

3. Archaeological and epigraphical sources regarding the conquest of Sarmizegetusei Regia:

In particular, the six epigraphic sources discovered on the Grădiștea de Munte-Sarmizegetusa Regia archaeological site were treated in this respect, all dedicated to the military troops mentioned above.

IV. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE GRĂDIȘTEA DE MUNTE – SARMIZEGETUSA REGIA

In the chapter dedicated to the organization of the archaeological site, I decided to refer strictly to the archaeological researches, the building material and very briefly, the structure of the site including the Dacian buildings. The chapter is

structured in four parts dedicated to archaeological research, fortification and sacred area, to Roman buildings and finally to the topic of the everyday life of Roman soldiers at Sarmizegetusa Regia.

The widest discussion has in the foreground the Roman buildings, the well-known building on the IV terrace, the barracks, Roman structures discovered on the terraces X-XI and especially the Roman bath. In the latter case, identifying the functionalities of the rooms and the architectural details. Building materials have been treated in a distinct study due to contextualization difficulties.

V. THE ROMAN CERAMIC STUDY

This chapter was treated as an introduction to the ceramic material study itself. Thus, it covers the main methodological problems used in the ceramic study and discussions on production, decoration or stamping techniques. From a methodological point of view, the main features were included, namely typology, chronology, fabric analysis, functionality and terminology. In the case of the last feature, I used throughout both the contemporary terms and the Latin names of the vessels.

VI. ROMAN CERAMICS

The most extensive chapter of the thesis is dedicated to Roman ceramic vessels. Its structure comprises 20 subchapters based on ceramic types, including vessels with uncertain functionality.

From the categories percentage point of view it can be noticed that their majority are cookingware, the pots occupying a percentage of 38.56% and their basis 13.85%.

The *amphorae* amount is also not negligible, constituting 12.47% of the total ceramic vessels studied. Nonetheless, the cooking pots case proved to be important, not only because of their number but also due to the identification of a local production, the information being confirmed by the laboratory analyzes. Returning to the *amphorae* topic, must be mentioned that it is a special category, especially due to the rich information provided. It was thus possible, out of 54 exemplaries, to identify typologically 40, divided in 14 distinct types. Although some of them come from the Aegean Sea (Dressel 24 and Pompei 38) and the Pontic area (Zeest 94), most of them are from Western production centers. In this respect, three major centers were identified, the Italian ones (Dressel 1, Dressel 2-4, Portorecanati, Forlimpopoli,

Aquincum 78), Hispanic area (Dressel 7-11, Beltrán IIA, Beltrán IIB) and from Istria (Dressel 6B). Also from the western area, although less numerous are the Gallic *amphorae* (Haltern 70 *similis* Rhône-Valley) and those from Moesia Superior (Bojović 549/554). As chronologies and their general spread indicate, most must have been part of the Roman soldiers *annona*.

The lamps are also numerous, the 21 exemplaries constituting a percentage of 4.84% of the total ceramics studied. Their typologies indicate a prevalence of imports from Western provinces, especially from Pannonia and Italy. This is by no means a coincidence, as the products of these areas are constantly imported into Dacia Province throughout the 2nd century AD.

Although they are less numerous, the incense burners (*thuribula*) also brought information about the soldiers daily life, especially in terms of the cultic manifestation. Instead, *terra sigillata* and stamped pottery provided clues about luxury dishes. In the case of these two categories, it is not excluded to question the issue of imports and imitations before the actual conquest of Sarmizegetusa Regia. An overall image of *terra sigillata*, which are in a relatively large number, constituting 3.23% of the ceramic material, also indicates a preponderance towards the italic shapes.

The ceramic material spread in the site is also an important aspect of the thesis. Most ceramic categories were discovered inside the fortification, especially in the perimeter of the first three terraces. The distribution aspect can thus indicate the main areas in which the Roman soldiers settled. In this respect, the areas where Roman military barracks have been attested, especially terraces III and IV, are also relevant, hence much of the material comes from. As a result of the information provided by the studied ceramic material, can be confirmed a great diversity of the material culture at Sarmizegetusa Regia, as well as the existence of the main categories of the Roman ceramics repertoire.

VII. CASE STUDY: ROMAN POTTERY FROM GRĂDIȘTEA DE MUNTE – SARMIZEGETUSA REGIA

In ceramic material topic, it is impossible not to include a material spread study on the archaeological site, categories and especially the fabric composite. The last chapter of the doctoral thesis is thus dedicated to the case study that includes the above mentioned discussions. Very important to mention in this respect are the microscopic pictures, especially those of the amphoric material, which was often a

good indicator of the typology. The cookingware case, especially for cooking pots, laboratory analyzes have identified a local production, although its magnitude and the lack of ceramic kilns still constitute an unknown.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the information provided by the studied ceramic material, they can certainly assert a diversity of material culture at Sarmizegetusa Regia. This PhD thesis is a major contribution to the Roman presence on the Grădișteea de Munte - Sarmizegetusa Regia archaeological site, bringing rich information regarding this issue, so far unknown. I am also aware of the fact that the data provided is a present a current interpretation, which due to new archaeological discoveries may change to a greater or lesser extent. Last but not least, the human character of ancient civilizations must always be taken into account, so the understanding and explanation of their lives must result from the correlation of archaeological and material data, so the present study is currently a first step to understand the Roman's daily life inside the Dacian capital.