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DOCTORAL THESIS  
SUMMARY

The population of Potaissa in the II-III centuries

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## The population of Potaissa in the II-III centuries

The civil settlement of *Potaissa* is first mentioned in 108 on the pillar of Aiton. This settlement most likely formed around a pre-Roman Dacian nucleus, which has not yet been located exactly.

After the conquest of Dacia, as in most major cities, settlers were brought to Potaissa. They come from all the provinces of the Roman Empire. With the administrative reform of Marcus Aurelius in Potaissa was brought, in 168 - 169, the 5<sup>th</sup> Macedonian Legion, which influenced the subsequent evolution of this settlement both from a legal point of view and from the point of view of city development..

Doctoral thesis *The population of Potaissa in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries* is outlined around the people who appear in the epigraphy of Potaissa. We have identified all the people who appear in the captions from Potaissa and not only, for whom it appears that they were stationed here.

In the so-called census that I made to the population from the potaissense epigraphs, I did not stop only at the civilian population, but also the military. Potaissa itself is a flourishing city thanks to the legion's military.

In a first chapter I turned my attention to exemplify how to approach this topic and the limitations that this topic faces. The biggest limitation is that only the epigraphic sources can be used to perform this approach. The chance of discoveries is also a limit, the number of inscriptions and people certified in them is tiny compared to the number of people who must have lived in a Roman city like Potaissa.

Thus was drawn up the Directory of Persons who deposit monuments at Potaissa. Repertoire that I set out to be more than a series of names, of dictionary type, existing at Potaissa. So it was drawn up in the form of a catalogue through which, together with the person's name, we can find out as much information as possible about him and about the epigraph in which he is mentioned. Through the prosopographic file, for each person was interpreted the ethno-linguistic origin of the name and not the person, as well as its spread in the Empire, and then, where possible, a link was established between the origin of the name and that of the origin. ethnic characteristics of the person. Also from here we find out the legal status, the occupation, the type of inscription he submits and for whom it is intended, the dating of the epigraph and the bibliographical reference.

An Epigraphic Repertoire was compiled of all those inscriptions which led to the partial knowledge of the people who lived at Potaissa. The inscriptions were also included, due to which the occupations, functions or ranks of those who perished here can be known, even in the absence of keeping the name in the text of the epigraphs. Not only the epigraphs discovered in Potaissa were taken into account, but also those epigraphs discovered in other cities but in which people who lived at one time here are mentioned. As for the military, only those were included, about whom, following the registration of the inscriptions, it can be stated that they also worked at Potaissa. The corpora of inscriptions were used to compile the epigraphic repertoire: *AE*, *CIL*, *IDR*, *ILD*, as well as online epigraphic databases *Epigraphic Database Heidelberg* and *Romans1by1*.

The epigraphic repertoire that brings into discussion in the preserved and known texts, people who lived in Potaissa, respectively worked in the military service during the stationing of the 5th Macedonian Legion in Potaissa, includes 205 epigraphic monuments. From their text resulted a number of 452 individuals (civilians and military alike). For 64 of them, we do not know the full name, they appear only suggested as being dedicated or deceased in the epigraphic monuments.

Chapter *Onomastics in Potaissa* was made on the basis of information obtained from prosopographic files compiled in the repertoire of people, capturing the etymological diversity of the names of people who lived in Potaissa, especially their way of formation and composition.

If we refer to *nomina civium Romanorum* we refer to the complete onomastic system composed of *tria nomina*: *praenomen*, *nomen*, *cognomen*. Along with them may appear *agnomina*, *filiatio*, *patronymica*. Of course, this would be the ideal system by which each individual would appear mentioned in the text of the inscription.

They appear with the *tria nomina* system in inscriptions a number of 52 individuals. Most of them have names of Latin origin, but as always there are exceptions to the rule. This is how we meet people who take a *cognomen* which in theory suggests their geographical origin or their family, as is the case of *Marcus Pollius Hispanus* which we would consider to clearly indicate its origin due to the *cognomen* which he attributes to himself, but in reality its origin is Roman-Italic because it mentions in the text of the inscription that it originated from *Mediolanum*. The simple joining of a *cognomen* indicating a geographical region does not necessarily show the ethnic origin of the individual but rather the territorial area of origin. We

encounter situations in which those who use the *tria nomina* nomination system type adopt a *cognomen* taken from classic forms of *nomen gentile* or of *praenomina*. *Caius Valerius Septimius*, *Marcus Aelius Antoninus*, *Marcus Aurelius Cassianus*, *Lucius Carvilius Statius* and *Tiberius Claudius Claudianus* are examples of individuals using a *nomen gentile* to name *cognomina*. The functions they hold indicate their nationality and takeover of the *cognomen* according to certain criteria that influenced them at one time. *C. Valerius Septimius* is a veteran of the legion, so it is possible that he took this surname as a result of benefits received from the emperor *Septimius Severus*, or perhaps he was left at home during his reign.

Of the 452 characters attested in the inscriptions at Potaissa, 234 bear the imperial gentiles names. There were 54 different gentiles names used by those who perish at Potaissa. The imperial gentiles names are preferred by the inhabitants, respectively the military from Potaissa, this being the reason why 52% of those who appear on the Potaissense monuments wear such names. As already discussed on this topic in the literature, *Aurelii* totals 27.23% of the inventory of people who appear on the epigraphic monuments at Potaissa, especially due to the period in which the 5<sup>th</sup> Macedonian legion is stationed here. 16.51% of those who have the imperial gentile in their name *Aurelius* are soldiers (active or veterans). They are followed by *Aelii* which are represented in proportion of 10.93% among those who were once the inhabitants of Potaissa. On the third place in the ranking of the imperial gentiles names found among those that appeared in the local epigraphy are *Iulii* with 6,47%. Imperial *nomina gentile* which are found in a very small number are *Ulpus* (3,79%), *Claudius* (1,78%), *Flavius* and *Septimius* (each with 0,89%) and *Cocceius* (0,22%).

The *cognomina* of those who appear in the texts of the inscriptions from Potaissa regardless of whether it is taken over or inherited, as the case may be, is very diverse. In the raid on the names of the Potassian population were identified *cognomina* of Greek, Thracian, Semitic, Illyrian and Celtic origin. Of course, most of those that appear in the epigraphs have italic names that from an etymological point of view are inspired by personal characteristics; living condition; circumstances of birth; environment; the name of some deities or military attributes.

Just by studying the epigraphy of a place it is not possible to know exactly what was the relationship between the inhabitants or if there was a better represented category than another, because after the inscriptions one can find out who actually allows himself to erect a funerary

monument, a votive altar or perform an act of evergetism. The limit of studying the society is given by the number of inscriptions discovered and the information provided by them.

The chapter entitled *The society in Potaissa* was aimed at identifying all categories of people identified in Potaissa.

We find a number of 50 women among the persons nominated in the inscriptions. 15 of them are part of the military families, and the remaining 35 belong to civilian families. 18 ladies are mentioned from the position of deceased. Although usually in the case of the funeral epigraphs of the military families the family was the one who dedicated the funerary monument for the deceased soldier, in one case in Potaissa a military wife appears in the position of deceased. *Ulpia Claudia*, died at the age of 35 is commemorated from the posture of *coniux pientissima* by the husband *Aelius Certus*.

Following the trajectory of the veterans of the 5<sup>th</sup> Macedonian legion in the inscriptions discovered at Potaissa or in other cities of Dacia, their mobility can be observed. Some choose to return to previous places where the legion stationed and where they most likely had family, while other veterans will choose the path of local magistrates to places where they will settle after leaving the hearth. Only one veteran can be said to have been involved in the municipal administration of Potaissa.

79 veterans are known in Potaissa, part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Macedonian Legion, and we know their data (name, rank or just veteran status, or sometimes all of them).

Regarding the epigraphic documentation of the civilian functions in Potaissa, the situation is deficient, as there are few inscriptions in which the occupation of the character is mentioned.

Out of an estimated population of approximately 20,000, the identification of 452 people in the Potaissa inscriptions led to a tiny proportion of knowledge of the composition of civil and military society. For a percentage of 36% of those identified in the headings, the functions held or the social status of the individual are not mentioned, which sends these people in the category of the middle social stratum, they actually make up the great mass of society, the plebs. If we include here the veterans who remain in Potaissa after completing the military service, we reach a percentage of 53% of those identified in the potaissense epigraphy. And if we relate this percentage strictly to the number of civilians identified in this repertoire, eliminating the military, we notice that 82% of them are part of the blanket that

made up most of the Roman city of Potaissa. The fact that they do not mention the positions held does not automatically invalidate the classification of some of them in another social category, or perhaps even military.

Discussing civil society, I considered it necessary to bring up a much debated topic for antiquity, namely infant mortality. Infant mortality means the deaths of children up to the age of one year, but because on the epitaphs the ages are usually rounded, for Potaissa no ages under one year are mentioned in the case of deceased children. Therefore, those deaths of children up to 10/11 years of age were taken into account, deaths that are largely due to the impossibility of overcoming childhood diseases. Infant mortality can be traced through funerary inscriptions, and from an archaeological point of view, through archaeological discoveries of burial tombs considered to belong to children.

Epigraphically, 21 deceased children aged between 1 and 11 years are attested. There are epitaphs on which more than one commemorated child appear. This is the case of the funerary epitaph of a family, preserved extremely fragmentary where, among other commemorated persons, three deceased children can be identified at the ages of 2, 7 and 10 years, respectively.

Those in the military service enjoyed a certain prestige among the civilian population. Although soldiers would be expected to form a majority in terms of their presence in the potaissense epigraphy, in Potaissa they account for only 33% of the total number of individuals identified in the Directory of Persons. This calculation did not include veterans who we have already placed as part of civil society.

During the paper I tried to capture in the epigraphic texts the heirs of the deceased from Potaissa, but in most cases the attention is focused on the information about the deceased, completely missing the details about the heirs. So they were only supposed to exist because of the relationships of the people who dedicate the monuments to those commemorated by epitaphs.

The final remarks on the population of Potaissa are the subject of the last chapter *Conclusions*. Of the 452 people identified in the Potaissa inscriptions for 64, no names have been preserved. Of the total identified, 84% are males, 11% are females, and the remaining 5% are attributed to deceased children commemorated in the funeral captions.

If from the onomastic point of view all the identified persons were treated in the same place, in terms of social structure it was necessary to classify them into categories such as civil society and the military corps, just to be able to follow more clearly what happens in each of these categories and how they are represented in the caption of the place. Thus, in the potaissense epigraphs were identified 152 persons who were included in the military corpus and a number of 300 persons who were classified as part of civil society.

Potaissa has a cosmopolitan population. Most of those who dedicate the potaissense monuments are allogeneic, a fact that can be observed by the onomastics found here. An important aspect to reiterate is that there is no direct link (or cannot be made) between the origin of the name, the origin of the person and its origin. As it was observed during the paper, the name can have multiple origins which in the absence of complementary information does not help the concrete knowledge of the origin of the person bearing that name. What could be established from this paper is the ethnic origin of the names of the settlers who came here and less the origin of the people.

Key-words: Potaissa, population, epigraphy, onomastics, society, prosopography.



## ABBREVIATIONS

AEM	Archäologische Epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn.
AÉ	<i>L'Année Épigraphique</i> , Paris, 1888-2012.
AMN	<i>Acta Musei Napocensis</i> , Cluj-Napoca.
ArchÉrt	<i>Archaeologiai Értesítő</i> , Budapesta.
CCIS	E.N. Lane, <i>Corpus Cultus Iovis Sabazii</i> , vol II, <i>Other monuments and Literary Evidence</i> , 1985.
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> , vol. I-IX, Berlin, 1853-
EDH	Epigraphic Database Heidelberg.
EphNap	<i>Ephemeris Napocensis</i> , Cluj-Napoca.
IDR	Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae – Inscriptiile Daciei Romane, București, Editura Academiei. Colecție îngrijită de D.M. Pippidi și I.I. Russu. II, Oltenia și Muntenia (Gr, Florescu și C.C. Petolescu, 1977); III/1, Dacia Superior, Zona de sud-vest (de I.I. Russu, în colaborare cu N. Gudea, V. Wollmann și Milena Dusanic, 1977); III/3, Dacia Superior, Zona centrală (teritoriul dintre Ulpia Traiana, Micia, Apulum, Alburnus Maior și Valea Crișului) (de I.I. Russu, în colaborare cu O. Floca și V. Wollmann, 1984); III/4, Zona răsăriteană (de I.I. Russu, 1988); III/5, Inscriptions d'Apulum (I. Piso, Paris, 2001).
IGLNovae	J. Kolendo, V. Bojilova, <i>Inscriptions grecques et latines de Novae (Mésie inférieure)</i> , Bordeaux, 1997.
ILD	C.C. Petolescu, <i>Inscriptii latine din Dacia</i> , București, 2005.
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , vol. I-III, Berlin.
LGPN II	M. J. Osborne, S. G. Byrne, <i>Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, Attica</i> , Oxford, 1996.

LGPN III.A	P.M. Fraser, E. Matthews, <i>Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, Peloponnese, Western Greece, Sicily, and Magna Graecia</i> , Oxford, 1997.
LGPN III.B	P.M. Fraser, E. Matthews, <i>Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, Central Greece: From the Megarid to Thessaly</i> , Oxford, 2000.
LGPN IV	P.M. Fraser, E. Matthews, <i>Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, Macedonia, Thrace, Northern Regions of the Black Sea</i> , Oxford, 2005.
LGPN V.A	T. Corsten, <i>Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, Coastal Asia Minor: Pontos to Ionia</i> , Oxford, 2010.
MCA	<i>Materiale și cercetări arheologice</i> , București.
OPEL	B. Lörincz, F. Redö, <i>Onomasticon Provinciarum Europae Latinarum</i> , vol. I, Budapest, 1994; B. Lörincz, idem, vol. II-IV, Wien, 1999-2002.
ReDIVA	<i>Revista doctoranzilor în istorie veche și arheologie</i> , Cluj-Napoca.
REP. EP.	<i>Infra</i> Repertoriul epigrafic.
REP. PERS.	<i>Infra</i> Repertoriul persoanelor.
RGRW	<i>Religions in the Greco-Roman World</i> , H.S. Versnel et all. (eds.).
RNGCL	H. Solin, O. Salomies, <i>Repertorium nominum gentilium et cognominum Latinorum</i> , Hildesheim-Zurich-New York, 1988.
SAA	<i>Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica</i> , Iași.

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