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**Roman Imports in the Space of Southern Dacia
(2nd century BC – 1st century AD)**

The first utilization of the term by the Geto-Dacians and the drawing-up of the first Romanian archaeological map by Grigore Tocilescu brought about a substantial leap in the Romanian historiographic research regarding Dacia before the Romans. The Roman presence in Dacia represented the head idea of the men of letters and of the forerunners of the Romanian archaeological school in the 18th and 19th centuries. Starting with the above mentioned Grigore Tocilescu's studies, *Dacia before the Romans* and *Fouilles et recherches archeologique en Roumanie*, the Romanian archaeological research makes obvious the Geto-Dacian civilization. The pursuit of inscriptions and Roman hoard will be gradually given up, for the benefit of comparison and study of the written sources along with the field research.

As a matter of fact, the field research had started in a series of Geto-Dacian sites as those at Tinosu, Zimnicea or Piscul Crasani, under the ruling of Cezar Bolliac, in the first decade of the second half of the 19th century. A series of specialists are directed towards the research and archaeological study of certain periods belonging to prehistory and ancient times on the Dacian territory. Between 1920 and 1927 V. Parvan drew up a series of studies and writings dedicated to the Geto-Dacian civilization and the relations with the Roman and Greek civilizations, the author insisting mainly on the Greek factor which was better known due to the greater number of archaeological discoveries in Dobrogea and elsewhere.

However, the volume *Dacia. The ancient civilizations from the Carpathians-Danube countries* consists of a chapter wholly dedicated to the relations with Rome and its presence in the Lower Danube. On the other hand, *Getica. A protohistory of Dacia*, in its chapter dedicated to Laten, highlights both the Roman presence till the conquest and the archaeological discoveries from Tinosu and Crasani, where a series of objects could be identified as Roman imports. For the first time, Parvan approached in both volumes the issue regarding the penetration of the Roman trade in Dacia. What was limited to the west part due to the early change of Dalmatia into a Roman province, proved to become general for the whole Carpathian-Danubian space.

As a matter of fact, the study shows that the Roman products penetrate in Muntenia easier than in Oltenia in the 1st century AD. This is probably due to the greater power of the local authorities in the region and the clear tolerance of Rome in Muntenia, if we consider both Aelius Catus and Ti. Plautius Aelianus' expeditions and the incorporation of the Danube Cliff.¹

The issue of imports will be subsequently approached in certain studies and articles mainly focused on the Greek products. By the 7th decade of the 20th century when Ion Horatiu Crisan dwelt on the Roman import pottery in his book dedicated to the Geto-Dacian pottery, the Roman research was focused on the

¹ The issue will be approached in a subsequent chapter.

relations with the Greek cities of Pontus and Egeea. The field research will be continued in the rest of the country by Gh. Stefan, Ecaterina and Radu Vulpe, Vladimir Dumitrescu, C.S. Nicolaescu-Plopsor, C-tin Daicoviciu, who published articles and volumes dedicated to the Geto-Dacian civilization².

The issue regarding the imports and commercial relations between the Greek-Roman and Geto-Dacian world was mainly approached by Irina Casan-Faranga³, V. Christescu⁴, D. Tudor⁵, D. Berciu⁶, C. Daicoviciu⁷ and H. Daicoviciu⁸, R. Vulpe⁹, Fl. Preda¹⁰, Em. Condurachi¹¹, B. Mitrea¹², I. Winkler¹³. By the middle of the 8th decade of the 20th century, there was only a synthesis work regarding the imports and trade relations between the two civilizations and it belonged to Ioan Glodariu¹⁴.

The first list of discoveries is being presented and the Romanian and international bibliography and the most studies and articles related to this issue are being mentioned. The contribution of the Hellenistic civilization is being emphasized, and a series of objects of the 1st century BC are considered Hellenistic imports, though Rome controlled the whole Mediterranean and the Balkan Peninsula at that time, while the Roman influence cannot be questioned. Unfortunately, there hadn't been any other to widely approach the issue of the Roman imports in the 1st century BC – 1st century AD.

Some of the Romanian researchers among whom Mircea Babes¹⁵, Alexandru Barnea¹⁶, C.C. Petolescu, Maria Chitescu¹⁷, A. Rustoiu¹⁸, S. Cocis¹⁹, resumed in their studies the issue of the Roman military, economic and cultural presence in the north of Danube in the period before the conquest.²⁰ After 1980, the first archaeological monographies dedicated to the sites of Ocnita-Buridava²¹, Sprancenata²² and Pietroasele-Gruicul Darii²³ are published, along with a series of volumes dedicated to the Geto-Dacian settlements in the Plains of Muntenia and Oltenia. The specialized literature often refers to the international methods and working methodology with a view to synchronize the Romanian archaeological research with the foreign one²⁴.

The present study aims at synthesizing the Romanian bibliography and research, taking into account the German project regarding the Roman imports in barbaricum²⁵. The listing of all Roman objects and

² We mention here Vulpe's contribution, 1960, 309–332; 1961, 365–393; imported for the issue regarding the Roman presence in the North of Danube.

³ CASAN-FARANGA, IRINA 1967, 7–35.

⁴ CHRISTESCU, VASILE 1929.

⁵ Publishes a first study dedicated to the Greek amphora, *Hellenistic amphora discovered in the RPR territory*, Romanian History Studies, I, 1954, 81–88; this is followed by other articles on the same subject, *Ein in Suden Daciens gefundenes hellenistisch-romisches Silbergefäß*, Germany, 37, 1959, 232–242.

⁶ BERCIU 1972, 661–668, followed in 1981 by the archaeological monography of Ocnita-Buridava dwelling and by a whole series of articles regarding Greek and Roman import pieces.

⁷ DAICOVICIU 1961,

⁸ DAICOVICIU 1972.

⁹ VULPE 1958.

¹⁰ PEDA, FLORENTINA 1966, 15–34.

¹¹ CONDURACHI 1963.

¹² MITREA, BUCUR 1968, 53–64.

¹³ WINKLER, IUDITA 1955, 13–180.

¹⁴ GLODARIU, IOAN 1974.

¹⁵ BABES 1974, 217–244; 1975, 125–140.

¹⁶ BARNEA 1991.

¹⁷ CHITESCU 1981.

¹⁸ RUSTOIU 1997.

¹⁹ COCIS 1984, 149–157.

²⁰ We only mentioned a small number of the writings referring to the Roman presence in the North of Danube, the number of studies and articles dedicated to this subject being much wider.

²¹ BERCIU 1981.

²² PEDA 1986.

²³ DUPOI, SARBU 2001.

²⁴ EGGERS 1951; ISING 1957.

²⁵ The working methodology is at large approached in *Corpus der römischen Funde im europäischen Barbaricum*, Deutschland Band 2. Freistaat Sachsen.

pieces in Southern Dacia in the 1st century BC- 1st century AD points out the pieces and the Roman early presence in the north of Danube as well as the reinterpretation of the geo-political situation in the Lower Danube. Enjoying a wide bibliography and the experience of Ioan Glodariu's work, the present study also aims at the integration of the discoveries after 1974 into the general picture of the Roman imports in Dacia.

The lack of certain standards and methods in the presentation of the materials discovered in the sites caused a great difficulty in listing the objects. On the other hand, the diversity of approaches or the lack of materials makes communication in this study almost impossible. The documentary basis comprises 150 studies and articles, a list of more than 200 archaeological sites, that mention objects of Roman origin. This time, their number doubled as compared to I. Glodariu's work and to the number of objects and sites found there.

The pieces of the museums are also inventoried, along with the studies and articles mentioned in the bibliography though this approach is far from being completed. There is a large number of unpublished objects which can be found in the archives of the museums or in private collections. The term *imports* does not necessarily imply a strictly commercial approach as regards the origin of the Roman objects in Northern Danube. A series of aspects should be mentioned in this respect. They result both from ancient sources and archaeological researches.

The ancient authors' references to the Geto-Dacians' robberies in Southern Danube allow us to approach the hypothesis according to which a series of products and treasures are thus brought to Dacia. From the foundation of the Greek colonies to the turning of the North-Danubian space into a Roman province, the northern part of the Thracians establishes its ethnic-social and cultural background which permits the separation of these populations within the mentalities of the Greek-Roman world.

The two elements often mentioned in the contemporary historiography – geography and the Geto-Dacian ethnography – envisage the ethnic and political configuration in the Lower Danube²⁶. Two thousands years before, the above described space had been dwelt by Geto-Dacians. The term was generically attributed to the north thracian population in the North of Danube in the 1st century BC- 1st century AD by the specialists who considered that this historical epoch had in view the cultural standardization of the two north-Thracian ethea, Getae and Dacians²⁷. It should also be mentioned that the Latin ancient sources in the 1st century AD use the term *Dacia* to describe the North-Danubian space in the 1st century AD²⁸.

As a last chronological and cultural observation, one should mention the use of the term *classic Geto-Dacian culture* for 1st century BC- 1st century AD, instead of the Geto-Dacian *Latene*, owing to the fact that we do not deal with a celtic society²⁹. As regards the dynamics of society and space of Southern Dacia in the 1st century BC-1st century AD, we need both to review the ancient sources that refer to this space and a drawing-up of the geo-political account in the Lower Danube.

The Roman presence in the Balkans begins at the end of the 3rd century AD and is due to the Illyric and Macedonian Wars which will cause the turning of Dalmatia, Macedonia and Greece (in the years 167-145, 148, 146 BC) into Roman provinces³⁰. A commercial and cultural penetration widely commented on by V. Parvan³¹ is recorded in the 2nd century AD, at the same time with the military penetration of the Roman Republic in the Balkans. Before we largely discuss on these aspects, we should mention that Rome slowly and surely moves forward a natural boundary on the Danube for the next two centuries. This was made possible by Augustus, the only Balkan territory incorporated in the Empire after Octavian being Thracia, in the year 46 AD³².

²⁶ CONDURACHI 1969, 533–540; KARL STROBEL 1998, 61–96; 207–228.

²⁷ BABES, 1979, 329.

²⁸ VULPE 1980, 7.

²⁹ BABES 1979, 328.

³⁰ PARVAN, VASILE 1972, 131; BARNEA 1991, 22–30.

³¹ As regards V. Parvan's comments on the commercial relations in the Low Danube, one should review the above mentioned notes, p. 132–134.

³² PETOLESCU, CONSTANTIN 2001, 29, with the proper bibliography recommended by the author, see note 7.

After turning Macedonia and Greece into provinces, the Romans will first confront with the Geto-Dacians, if we exclude Apian's accounts about the Getae who were tradesmen in the army of the Macedonian king Perseu, in the battles of 168 BC (Apian, IV, 15), in the years 109-106 BC, when the Macedonian proconsul, M. Minucius Rufus is compelled to reject the common attacks of the Scordisci and Dacians (Frontinus, Stratagemata, II, 4,3).

At the very beginning of the 1st century AD, Rome was involved in a series of new disputes in the Danubian Basin. In the years 78-76 BC, the Macedonian proconsul, A. Claudius Pulcher rejected the Sarmatians who were probably allied with the Dacians (Florus, I, 39, 6), and two years later, C. Stribonius Curio tried to conquer Dardania, stopping at Istru because of the forests in Dacia (Florus, I, 39, 6).

C. Antonius Hybrida failed in his attempt to occupy Dobrogea (Dio Cassius, XXXVIII, 10, 1; XXXVIII, 10, 3; LI, 26, 5) at the end of the first half of the 1st century AD. It was the first time that the greatest part of the North-Danubian space was unified under the ruling of a single *basileus* in the 1st century AD. *Incrementa dacorum per Rubobostem regem* probably referred to Burebista³³, "the first and greatest king of Thracia, the ruler of the territories far and beyond the Danube"³⁴.

Against the background of political instability in Rome, and due to the great power of the Dacians, as Strabon mentioned (VII, 3, 11), Burebista organized military campaigns in order to destabilise the Roman presence in the Balkans, crossing the Danube and plundering Thracia, Macedonia and Illyria (Strabon, VII, 3, 11). The military victories against the Celts in the west, were followed by Burebista's paying attention to the Pontus Euxinus, a controversial territory until the 6th decade of the 1st century AD by Rome and the king of Pontus, Mithridates VI Eupator (Strabon, VII, 3,17).

M. Tertentius Varro Lucullus placed the Roman garrisons on the banks of Pontus, thus defeating Mesembria, Odessos, Dionysopolis, Callatis, Tomis, Histria in the years 72-71 AD. The Greek cities came under the authority of Rome, probably under certain alliances like that concluded with Callatis and dated earlier in 72-71 AD and later in 29-27 AD³⁵. Regardless the existence or the absence of such an alliance, it was obvious that Rome controlled the Pontic fortresses. A decade later, M. Antonius Hybrida suffered a first defeat which made him retreat.

Around the year 55 AD, Burebista began his pontic campaigns, completed by incorporating the Greek fortresses³⁶ to his ruling (Dion Chrysostomos, Orationes, XXXVI, 4; Suetonius XLIV, 1). There was a hypothesis according to which Burebista contributed to the defeat of the Roman governor³⁷, yet a part of the flags taken from the Roman general were found in Genucla by Crassus (Dio Cassius LI, 26, 5) could exclude the possibility of the Dacian king's participation in the battle³⁸.

The year 44 AD coincides with the end of a first stage both for Dacia and Rome, which had brought Dacia in the conscience of the Roman world, especially if we take into account the episode reported by Strabon, in which Burebista was involved in the civil war between Pompei and Caesar, being on the former's side³⁹ and had allowed Rome to be permanently present in the Balkans and in the East.

The ancient authors mention Burebista's successors, Deceneu, Comosicus, Coryllos in Orastie mountains as well as a series of local authorities such as Cotiso (Florus, II, 28, 18-19; Suetonius, LXIII, 4) Coston⁴⁰, Dicomes (Plutarh, Marcus Antonius, 63)⁴¹ placed either in Muntenia or in South Moldavia (Strabon, VII, 3, 11; Iordanes, Getica, 73)⁴².

³³ ILIESCU 1968, 115–122.

³⁴ CRISAN 1977, 92–94, here we find Acornion of Dionysopolis' decree, translated and largely commented on.

³⁵ SUCEVEANU 1969, 269–274.

³⁶ CRISAN 1977, 257.

³⁷ PARVAN 1982, 50.

³⁸ There is little possibility of Burebista's taking the flags from Hybrida, moreover Cassius Dio talks about a catch of the bastarns not of the Getae. Under the circumstances, the flags could reach the Getae in the respective fortress any other way.

³⁹ DAICOVICIU 1972, 74.

⁴⁰ DAICOVICIU 1972, 109.

⁴¹ DAICOVICIU 1972, 111, PARVAN 1982, 52.

⁴² PETOLESCU 2001, 59–63.

The next century and a half refers to the Lower Danube in accordance with the *Res gestae Divi Augusti* account (V 30, 47- 49): *Under my supreme command, the army of the Dacians that had passed on this side of the river was defeated and driven away, then my army went beyond the Danube and forced the Dacians to endure the Roman domination.* In the 1st century AD, Rome exceeded the internal struggle for power and established *Pax Romana* on the banks of Istru.

These Roman expeditions probably led to the destruction of a large number of Geto-Dacian settlements in the Plain of Muntenia, as archaeological research stated⁴³. The temporary Geto-Dacian state was divided into four than into five state formations (Strabon, VII, 3, 11), a series of local authorities becoming in turn allies of Rome, as was the case of Rholes, who became *amicus et socius populi Romani*, against the *Bastarnae*, in 28 AD (Cassius Dio LI, 24, 1-7)⁴⁴.

Dobrogea gradually came under the Roman authority, certain local representatives such as Dapyx and Zyaraxes were defeated, while Rome confronted with the Sarmatians' invasion and the Dacians's incursions under Cotiso's ruling (Florus, II, 28, 18-19). The conflicts with the Dacians were resumed, while Cornelius Lentulus conducted a series of expeditions in the north of Danube where *the Dacians were not defeated but rejected and scattered* (Strabon, VII, 3, 13). In the upcoming expedition Aelius Catus brought 50000 Getae in Thracia⁴⁵, and L. Pomponius Flacus rejected a Getic invasion over Troesmis fortress, dating from the year 15 BC.

Under the circumstances, Dobrogea was far from other Geto-Dacian incursions for more than half a century (Rufus Festus VIII,1)⁴⁶. At least until 46, when Moesia became a province, this territory was probably under the authority of the Macedonian proconsul⁴⁷, III Scythica and V Macedonica being transferred here⁴⁸.

As in the case of the space between the Danube and the Sea, where Rome probably exercised its control through *praefectus orae maritimae* or *praefectus ripae Danuvi*⁴⁹, there was a *praefectus civitatum Moesiae et Treballia* in the region of present Serbia. After the final fall of Odris kingdom, Rome turned this territory into a province, in 46. The governor of Moesia, Ti Plautius Silvanus Aelianus moved 100000 transdanubians in the south of Danube, in an attempt to create a secure space in the north of the river⁵⁰, which caused the *Bastarnae*, the Scythians and the Dacians' invasions in 62, as shown in the funeral praise from Tibur.

After these events, Tacitus (Hist. III, 5, 1) tells about the destruction of the Roman camps on both sides of the river, by the Dacians and the Sarmatians who succeeded in killing the governor Fonteius Agrippa. At that time, the Empire had possibly established a series of strategic points of control in the Plain of Muntenia. V. Parvan advanced the idea of building Novac's North Trace in that period⁵¹.

The Romans put an end to the new invasion and restored order in the Lower Danube, as mentioned by Flavius Josephus, VII, 4,3. The Empire also organized a fleet on the Danube to ensure the *classis Flavia Moesica* border, while its prefect was *praefectus ripae Danuvi*⁵². The period of Iulia- Claudia and Flavia dynasties did not bring new conquests in the Lower Danube, but a strengthening of the Empire position, by establishing border on the Danube and by attracting the Geto-Dacian dynasty in a series of treaties. The Geto-Dacians' most important conflict with the Empire was caused by the disruption of the *foedus* (treaty) and the devastation of Southern Danube, in 85. Domitian had to come personally to the Danube where he divided province of Moesia in two and put troops under the leadership of Cornelius Fuscus.

⁴³ BABES 1975, 125–140.

⁴⁴ PIPPIDI 1965, 292.

⁴⁵ PETOLESCU 2001, 28–29.

⁴⁶ PETOLESCU 2001, 33.

⁴⁷ PETOLESCU 2001, 29.

⁴⁸ BENEÀ, DOINA 1983, 13–23.

⁴⁹ PETOLESCU 2001, 33–35.

⁵⁰ PARVAN 1982, 62; PIPPIDI 1967, 309.

⁵¹ PARVAN 1982, 73; V. Parvan hypothesis should be resumed, along with Tudor Dumitru's all arguments (Roman Oltenia, p. 244–249); the destruction of the Geto-Dacian settlements was not itself an argument, instead the present work is being taken into account, both through the list of imports, chronology and the distribution of materials. This issue will be resumed in the next chapter.

⁵² PETOLESCU 2001, 39.

After triggering the conflict, the 5th Alaude Legion was destroyed while the Roman general lost his life, which led the Empire to a new rebuff; this time the troops were put under the command of Tettius Iulianus. He earned the victory against Decebal's army at Tapae, in 88, but he couldn't advance to Sarmisegetusa, probably because of the emperor's defeat in front of the Quazi and the Marcomanni (Cassius Dio, LXVII, 7, 1-3), which caused the conclusion of an agreement.

Following the Peace of 89, Dacia concluded a new agreement with the Roman Empire as a transitional situation both for the Dacians and the Romans⁵³. The last event that marked the classical civilization was the war with the Roman Empire in 101 / 102 and 105 / 106, which led to the organization of a Roman province to the North of the Danubian Limites. Among the arguments and reasons that triggered the war were the humiliating peace in 89 and the destruction of the 5th Alaude Legion, Cassius (Cassius Dio, LXVII, 6,1).

We can not talk only of a policy of revenge from the Roman part, the need for such a pretext does not exclude the interest of Rome for the economic part as well. Dacia was not only a bare ground or marshy area as was the case of the Rhine and Elba, lost after the battle in the Teutoburgic forests, in the year 9. Overlooking the unfolding of the two campaigns, it should be recalled that Decebal's state, even if more advanced economically and military, was much reduced as territory and force as compared to Burebista's. The centrifugal tendencies⁵⁴ of the Geto-Dacian nobles had distinguished themselves since the time of Burebista.

Cassius Dio speaks in his turn of the betrayal of certain local allies and nobles (Cassius Dio, LXVIII, 10, 3-4)⁵⁵. At the end of the two wars most of the northern territories in the Danube entered the Roman Empire. At least in large part this was the geo-political picture in the Lower Danube in the centuries before the Roman conquest; the literary sources joining the archaeological research outline as a whole the economic and cultural level of the Geto-Dacian civilization.

The Roman Republic was present in the Balkans in the 1st century AD not only politically, but also economically. It is proved by the impressive number of monetary treasures of Roman dinars, the certification of some inscriptions with Latin letters in the north Danubian space, the presence of Roman objects produced in Italy or in the German and Eastern provinces⁵⁶.

What until now was considered Hellenistic product can be placed, quite rightly, among the Roman-Greek imports, not only because the Empire stretched from Egypt up to the Hispania, from Africa to the Rhine, but also because the tradition felt the Roman contribution⁵⁷.

A series of settlements and Geto-Dacian fortresses were developed between the Carpathians and the Danube in the 1st century BC- 1st century AD; the evolution was due to the massive use of iron, through exploitation of deposits located in Muntenia, Transylvania or Oltenia; the proof was the discovery of certain roasting stalls at Ciresu (Mehedinti County), Bragadiru (Bucharest), Teiu (Arges)⁵⁸, workshops of iron and bronze processing at Cetateni, Ocnita, Gradistea⁵⁹.

Along with the local coarse, fine or painted pottery⁶⁰, there are imitations after Greek cups, and Roman and Hellenistic imports⁶¹. The large number of water courses, semi-abrupt and steep relief, sub-

⁵³ PETOLESCU 2001, 71–79; We only confine to a brief description of the event, considering that C.C. Petolescu's work make a complete survey both of the existent bibliography and of the event.

⁵⁴ In this respect C.C. Petolescu considers that centrifugal tendencies are much reduced, yet a settlement such as Ocnita-Buridava, an economic and political centre, is not proved to have been destroyed in a Roman attack, instead it was in good terms with the Empire. The question remains if there was a Getae representative in the area of Muntenia and if he collaborated with the Romans.

⁵⁵ The issue regarding the betrayal of certain Dacian nobles is discussed both by Daicovicu, Hadrian in *Dacia from Burebista to the Roman conquest*, 1972, 330, and PETOLESCU in 2001, 144.

⁵⁶ GLODARIU 1974, 183–300, 1984, 150–155; the present work confirms a series of conclusions found in Ioan Glodariu's work and emphasizes a double number of Roman discoveries, as compared to the list in 1974.

⁵⁷ A series of objects listed as Hellenistic imports by Ioan Glodariu, will be found in the present work as of Roman origin, which is due both to chronology in the 1st century BC – 1st century AD and to certain aspects related to the influence of style.

⁵⁸ GLODARIU, JAROSLAVSCHI 1979, 9–40; CRISAN 1977, 387–389.

⁵⁹ COCIS 1982-1983, 140–142; SARBU 1992, 37-43.

⁶⁰ FLOREA 1998.

mountainous peaks that reach heights of over 1,200 meters, and large depressions in favor of agriculture and life are the basic features of the emergence and development of the Geto-Dacian settlements.⁶²

The emergence of fortress-like settlements compared with Celtic *oppida*⁶³, demonstrates that the Geto-Dacian society makes a qualitative leap in this area. Archaeological discoveries of the last century have shown in the south area of Dacia as well as throughout the state of Burebista, an impressive number of settlements and fortresses⁶⁴, in addition to monetary discoveries⁶⁵.

As regards the space in our attention, one can notice the settlements and fortresses from Gradistea, Carlomenesti, Pietroasele, Piscu Crasani, Tinosu, Popesti, Radovanu, Zimnicea, Bucuresti, Cetateni, Ocnita, Sprancenata, Socu-Barbatesti, Vartu, Polovragi. More than 213 archeological places of the 4th century BC-1st century AD⁶⁶ were discovered in the Plain of Muntenia, in addition to the 44 settlements and fortresses in Oltenia⁶⁷, while the area of Getic sub-Carpathians between Dambovita and Motru valleys offer 79 Geto-Dacian sites⁶⁸.

Most of these settlements disappeared in the last decade of the 1st century BC, following the expeditions organized by the Roman Generals in the north of the river, as it was the case of the settlements from Tinosu, Popesti, Radovanu or Piscu Crasani. Another series of settlements experienced a boom period at the end of the 1st century BC, especially in the course of the first christian century, Ocnita being a relevant example. The settlements in the hilly and sub-Carpathians areas of Oltenia and Muntenia existed up to Traian's first Dacian wars⁶⁹.

The local representatives were heavily involved both in the political activity of Rome, as in the case of Cotiso or Dicomes, and the commercial activity that the Republic and Empire carried on in the Middle and Lower Danube. V. Parvan thought that Dacia was full of merchants from the Roman world, holding his theory on Titus Livius' statements, who, in his turn, spoke about *cives Romani and socii Latini nominis*, molested in Dalmatia⁷⁰. Archeological research stated that relations between the Roman and Geto-Dacian world were early, dating from the beginning of the 1st century BC, when they noticed an impressive number of monetary treasures and objects of Roman origin.

In the 1st century BC, Dacia was probably full of *mercatores*, since a century before Polibiu had written about the Geto-Dacians' trade with the Greek world: *As regards life necessities, the Pontic area gives us cattle and of slaves in numebr and quality acknowledged by all as excellent. As regards the luxury items, we buy plenty of honey, wax, and salty fish. In exchange we receive oil and wines and have mutual exchange with wheat. Sometimes we need to give them, sometimes they take from us* (Polibiu, IV, 38, 4).

As an extra proof that there were merchants in Dacia, at least in the 1st century BC, here is what Dion Chrysostomos says: *I went there as a dry-goods neither to collect luggage carriers in the service of military camps or carers of oxen, nor I took a deputation to allies or any one of those beautifully named that promise only to mouth...* (Dion Chrysostomos, XII, 17), which means that at that time the space of Dacia was well known to the Roman merchants. The latter's speech probably hinted at the existence of certain military camps in the north of the Danube and the existence of allies.

The North-Danubian space was an integral part of the Roman-Greek world, Dion Chrysostomos' journey in Dacia, in 96 showing that the region was in the attention of the Empire, and the acknowledgement of reality in the north of the river could become useful and necessary. The presence of Rome in Muntenia and Oltenia until Traian's conquest wars as well as ancient sources, such as Hunt papyrus, archaeological

⁶¹ CRISAN 1969, 100–212; GLODARIU 1974, 181–232.

⁶² ANTONESCU 1984, 9–20; FLORICEL 1981-1982, 43.

⁶³ ANTONESCU 1984, 9–20; MARINESCU, 1981-1982, 43; PARVAN 1982, 271–272; FERENCZI 1989, 129–156.

⁶⁴ BERCIU 1939, 190–202; VULPE 1966; BABES 1979, 330–339; CONOVICI 1985, 71–80.

⁶⁵ PREDĂ 1973; MOISIL, DEPEYROT 2003; only two of the synthesis works dedicated to the coins found in Romania were mentioned here.

⁶⁶ TURCU 1979, 40–71

⁶⁷ BERCIU 1939, 191–202; GHERGHE 2001, 43–99.

⁶⁸ A list of the Geto-Dacia settlements and discoveries can be found in the work *Archeologic repertoire of the Geto-Dacian discoveries in the Getic sub-Carpathians in the 2nd century BC – 1st century AD*, p. 23–47, PITESTI 2003.

⁶⁹ BABES 1975, 125–140.

⁷⁰ PARVAN 1972, 132–133.

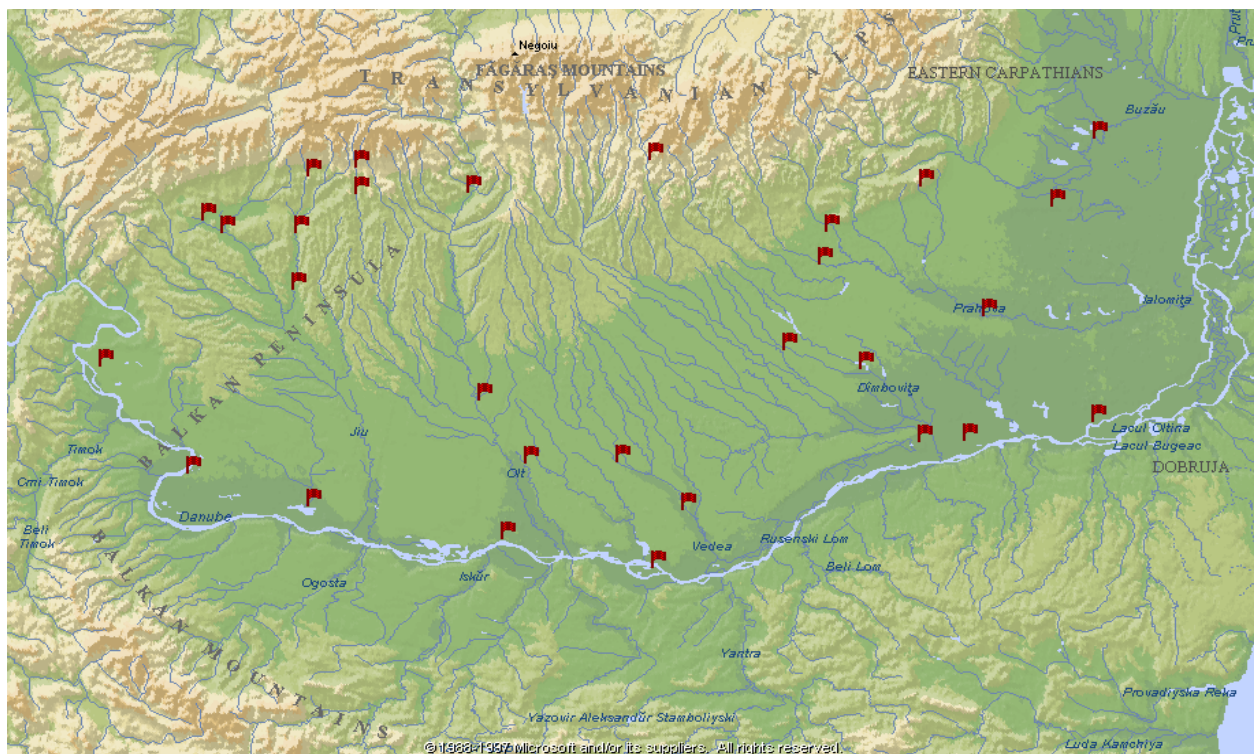


Fig. 1 - Roman imports in the space of Southern Dacia (2nd century BC – 1st century AD) (the map was carried out with the program Encarta 1988-1997 Microsoft and/or its suppliers).

aspects and the issue of Roman imports in the area will be resumed later in the work. Although we did not succeed in creating a clear image of the Dacian society in the 1st century BC – the 1st century AD, due to the attempt of not resuming a series of events or of describing in detail the stages of the Roman policy in the Lower Danube⁷¹, the reported episodes allow the drawing-up of a general picture regarding the relationd between the two worlds. Southern Dacia currently offers 250 archaeological sites belonging to the Geto-Dacian period but few of them were researched and outlined, the remainder being known as a result of accidental discoveries. The current stage of research allow us to emphasize - in comparison with the situation three decades before – an impressive Roman presence in the north of the Danube until turning this space into a Roman province.

A clearer analysis of the Roman imports (fig. 1) in Dacia involves the research of causes and conditions under which these objects reach the Geto-Dacian settlements. In the previous chapter we drew up the political and military situation in the Lower Danube in the 1st century BC – the 1st century AD. Archaeological research in conjunction with ancient sources confirm that at the end of the 1st century BC and the beginning of the 1st century AD, a series of Geto-dacian settlements in the Plain of Muntenia ended by being destroyed and this can be related to the Roman expeditions in the north of the river and the creation of a secure space.

It was the case of the settlements in Crasani, Gradistea, Tinosu, Popesti, Radovanu, Sprancenata, which according to archaeological investigations were destroyed at the beginning of the 1st century AD. If by the end of the 1st century BC, the settlements in the Plain of Muntenia played an essential role in terms of economic exchanges, once they were destroyed, Ocnita-Buridava becaem the main centre of commerce. The above statement was supported by the very report of the Roman imports in Southern Dacia, almost half

⁷¹ For a clear and detailed image of the situation in the Lower Danube, see Mr. C.C Petolescu's volume, *Dacia and the Roman Empire* above quoted.

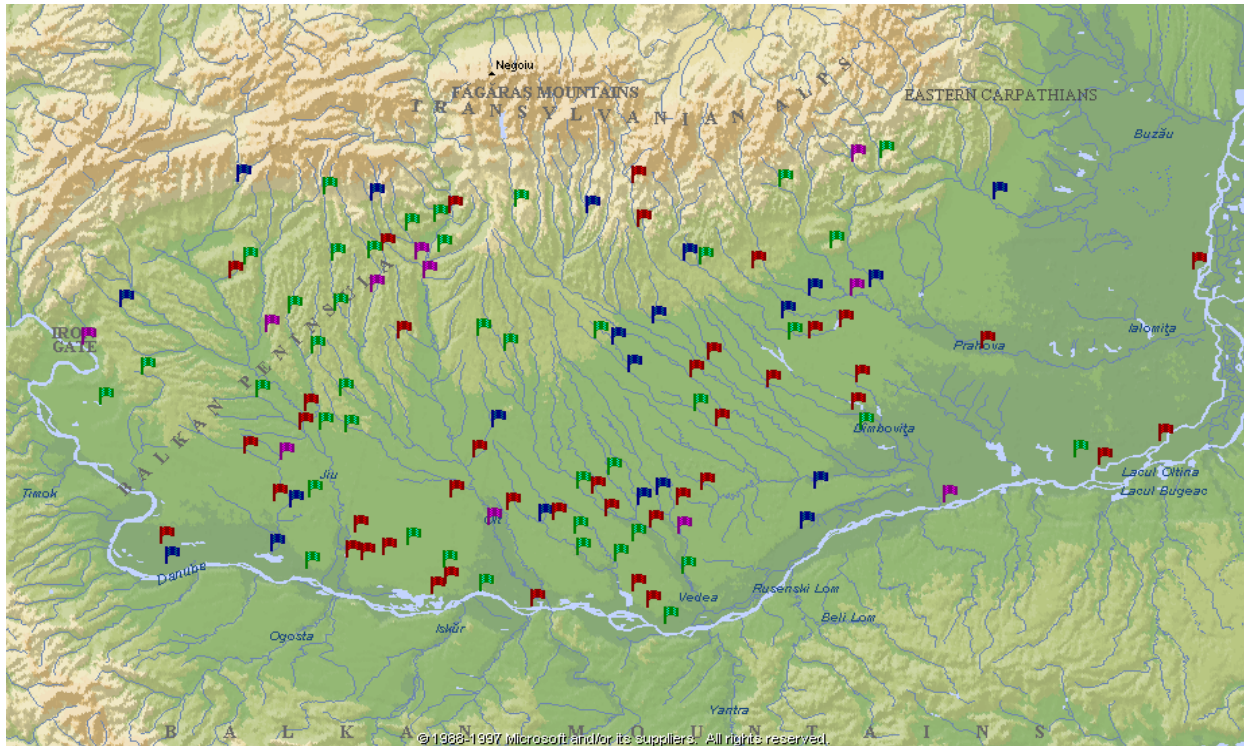


Fig. 2 - Roman monetary in the space of Southern Dacia (2nd century BC – 1st century AD) (the map was carried out with the program Encarta 1988-1997 Microsoft and/or its suppliers).

of them coming from Ocnita⁷². Moreover, the objects found there belong chronologically to the 1st century AD⁷³.

The settlement of Ocnita has developed into a large proportion due to trade with salt and geographical position. The settlement of Cetateni was deteriorated because of the crash of the other sites in the Plain of Muntenia, the latest coins there dating from 14 AD. Moreover, the large number of amphora from the Greek fortresses confirmed that it was focused on trade with the Hellenistic world and the Roman presence in the Danube had really confused trade there. Vasile Parvan thought that the North Trace became the new Roman borderline, beyond the Danubian Limes⁷⁴, whereas D. Tudor tried to prove the opposite⁷⁵.

However, one could notice the idea of turning the greatest part of Muntenia into the secure space of the Empire. At the end of Burebista's reign up to Domitians wars against the Dacians, the Danubian and Pontic areas will cross one of the most tumultuous periods in their history. The local dynasts will frequently pass to the south of Danube to attack the Roman garrisons, and the Empire will finally rule over both banks of the river. The 1st century AD was marked by a real explosion of Roman products in the north of Danube, the causes of this abundance being already mentioned.

The data presented in the list of imports, the illustrations I-II, as well as the attached statistics⁷⁶, showed that the imports in the 1st century BC came mainly from trade and looting, and those in the 1st century AD came from commerce, subsidies and looting as well.

Southern Dacia of the 1st century BC was full of a great number of glass objects, monetary treasures and silver objects. As regards the last category, the silver objects were found in some treasures, coming

⁷² Statistics can be found in Annexes 1 and 2.

⁷³ See the list of discoveries Annexes 1.

⁷⁴ PARVAN 1982, 73.

⁷⁵ TUDOR 1978.

⁷⁶ See annexes 1 and 2.

mainly from Calafat, Vedea and Bucuresti and they were probably destroyed at the beginning of the 1st century AD.

The monetary treasures and the finery discovered there dated from the middle of the 1st century BC, the latest 32/31 BC (fig. 2). This implies that the respective pieces were buried at the end of the 1st century BC, for fear of the Roman incursions in the north of the river. Contrary to some specialists' opinion, we believe that the respective silver objects were not necessarily presents offered by the Roman governors to the local Geto-Dacian authorities; rather they come from trade and economic incursion of robbery. This explains the large number of monetary treasures in the 1st century BC and their sudden disappearance in the 1st century BC. The silver vessels follow the Hellenistic models.

If we leave aside the findings from Ocnita, we statistically notice that the settlements of Popesti, Pietroasele, Crasani and Tinosu are the richest in Roman imports, the most frequent objects being the glass vessels, ornaments and ceramics. They are all commercial exchanges, not incursions of robbery. Popesti economically controlled the Romanian Plain and fed the centre of Cetateni, making the connection with Transylvania. The conditions that established the commerce or looting were influenced by the division on settlements. Ocnita holds supremacy with the largest number of Roman objects that largely come from economic exchanges.

Buridava settlement developed due to the salt-mine and geographic position, the Olt Valley, the contact zone with intra-Carpathians Dacia. The only areas, except Ocnita, where one could find Roman objects in the 1st century AD were Polovragi, Socu-Barbatesti and Pietroasele. They join to the site of Cetateni, but the chronology based on coinage dates from Augustus. The objects discovered in the mentioned settlements are mostly bronze vessels, pieces of military equipment, pots and glass embroidery. Such a division of the pieces would confirm an extraeconomic origin.

Ocnita settlement holds almost half of the Roman import pieces in Southern Dacia. Can we talk about a Roman commerce directed to Ocnita? Buridava holds all the categories of Roman imported objects. Up to 1974, Gradistea Muscelului held the only Roman medical kit found in Dacia. Such imports are specific to Ocnita as well.

Half of the Roman import ceramics is found at Ocnita, 80% of the military equipment comes from there, the number of bronze and glass vessels exceed 30%, while the number of inscriptions with Latin letters is much higher in the whole Dacia. The monetary findings at Ocnita were accidental, and the coins found there stretchend during the 1st century AD, the latest coin dating from Domitian. Ocnita-Buridava was both an economic and a political centre, as stated by D. Berciu, but what was its situation during Domitian and Traian's wars against the Dacians? How much of Dacia did Decebal controlled before 101?

Archaeological research at Ocnita did not reveal traces of burns or violent destruction of the settlement as appropriate to Polovragi, once the Romans advanced to the intra-Carpathians area. Papyrus Hunt mentions Cohors I Hispanorum's canton at Buridava before 101 the chronology of the text being questioned in the specialized literature.⁷⁷ Such a hypothesis cannot be completely omitted and it implies a possible connection between the economic and political centre of Ocnita and the Empire.

A series of findings from Stolniceni-Buridava date from Domitian and Nerva⁷⁸. Imports were discovered in three regions: Sub-Carpathians of Oltenia, on both sides of the Danube and central and eastern part of Muntenia Plain. Most of the settlements are placed on the river courses, controlling the adjacent areas both strategically and economically. It is the case of Polovragi on the Jiu River, Ocnita and Sprancenata on the Olt River, Cetateni on Dambovita River, Popesti on Arges River, Tinosu and Crasani on Prahova and Ialomita Rivers etc. The settlements in the plain date from the 1st century BC and those in the sub-Carpathians area know a further development in the 1st century AD.

Regardless Parvan's statement about the Roman merchants' presence in the north of the Danube in the 2nd century BC or the presence of the Roman army in Muntenia, along with Silvanus' incursions, it is obvious that the Geto-Dacian world was an active part of all the changes in the Roman space, before the

⁷⁷ See VULPE 1960, 324–331.

⁷⁸ BICHR, BARDASU 1983, 336–343.

conquest. The presence of such a large number of Roman objects in Southern Dacia reveals the synchronism with the Roman world.

Whether Muntenia was part of a border structure controlled by the Empire in the second half of the 1st century AD, is still a question mark. However, Ocnita-Buridava seems to hold a privileged role in its relations with Rome. This role is possibly due to the commerce with salt or the economic and military position in which the local representatives seem to have played the role of *allies* for the Empire.

Annex 1

N r.	Site/ department	Ceramics	Bowl of the bronz, glass, pottery	Tools and creature confort	Finery – fibule, mirror, beads	Arms and militar echipa ments	Coins	Latin inscriptions	Number
1.	Afumați, jud. Ilfov						X		1
2.	Albești, com. Poboru, jud. Olt						X		1
3.	Albești, jud. Gorj				X				1
4.	Alexandria, jud. Teleorman						X		1
5.	Alimpești, jud. Gorj				X				1
6.	Amărăștii de Jos, jud. Dolj						X		1
7.	Bălănești, jud. Olt						X		1
8.	Bălteni, jud. Buzău	X							1
9.	Bistrețu, jud. Dolj						X		1
10.	Brânceni, jud. Teleorman						X		1
11.	Brâncoveanu, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
12.	Breasta, jud. Dolj						X		1
13.	București		X						1
14.	București – Arhivele Statului	X							1
15.	București -Fundeni								1
16.	București –Herăstrău		X						1
17.	București -Tei				X				1
18.	Bugiulești, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
19.	Bujoru, jud. Dolj						X		1
20.	Bumbești, jud. Gorj						X		1
21.	Butculești, jud. Teleorman						X		1
22.	Buzău, jud. Buzău						X		1
23.	Câmpuri, com. Pătârlagele, jud. Buzău						X		1
24.	Calafat, jud. Dolj		X						1
25.	Caracal, jud. Olt						X		1
26.	Călărași, jud. Călărași		X				X		2
27.	Călinești, jud. Teleorman						X		1
28.	Călmățui, jud. Teleorman						X		1
29.	Cătina, jud. Buzău						X		1
30.	Cătunu, com. Cornești, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
31.	Cele, jud. Olt	X							1
32.	Cetățeni, jud. Argeș								1
33.	Chițorani, jud. Prahova				X	X	X	X	4
34.	Ciupercenii Noi, jud. Dolj						X		1
35.	Cocoșești, jud. Prahova						X		1
36.	Comoșteni, jud. Dolj						X		1
37.	Corabia, jud. Olt						X		1
38.	Cornetu, jud. Gorj						X		1
39.	Craiova, jud. Dolj						X		1
40.	Crângeni, jud. Teleorman						X		1
41.	Crăsani, jud. Ialomița	X	X	X	X		X	X	6

42.	Cremenari, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
43.	Curtea de Argeș, jud. Argeș						X		1
44.	Dăești, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
45.	Dăița-Daia, jud. Ilfov						X		1
46.	Desa, jud. Calafat						X		1
47.	Dobreni, com. Vărăști, jud. Ilfov						X		1
48.	Dolj						X		1
49.	Drăgănești de Pădure, jud. Teleorman						X		1
50.	Drăgănești-Olt, jud. Olt						X		1
51.	Drăgășani, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
52.	Drobeta, jud. Mehedinți						X		1
53.	Dunăreni, jud. Dolj		X						1
54.	Dunăreni, jud. Dolj						X		1
55.	Fântânele, jud. Teleorman						X		1
56.	Farcașele, jud. Olt						X		1
57.	Florești, jud. Dolj						X		1
58.	Frâncesti, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
59.	Fundeni, București						X		1
60.	Găești, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
61.	Gherghița, jud. Prahova						X		1
62.	Gliganu de Jos, Jud. Argeș						X		1
63.	Goranu, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
64.	Govodarva, com. Căzănești, jud. Mehedinți						X		1
65.	Grădiștea, jud. Brăila	X	X		X				3
66.	Grădiștea, jud. Călărași						X		1
67.	Grozăvești, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
68.	Gruiu, jud. Ilfov						X		1
69.	Gura Padinii, jud. Olt						X		1
70.	Horezu, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
71.	Hotărani, jud. Mehedinți						X		1
72.	Hotâroaia, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
73.	Ipothești, jud. Olt	X							1
74.	Islaz, jud. Olt						X		1
75.	Ișalnița, jud. Dolj						X		1
76.	Izlaz, jud. Olt						X		1
77.	Izvoru Frumos, jud. Mehedinți						X		1
78.	Jegălia, jud. Călărași						X		1
79.	jud. Olt?						X		1
80.	Leșile, jud. Argeș						X		1
81.	Licuriciu, jud. Teleorman						X		1
82.	Lipănești, jud. Prahova						X		1
83.	Lipovu, jud. Dolj						X		1
84.	Locusteni, jud. Dolj						X		1
85.	Lunca, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
86.	Malaica, com. Cerātu, jud. Dolj						X		1
87.	Mihai Bravu, jud. Ilfov						X		1
88.	Mofleni, jud. Dolj						X		1
89.	Movila, com. Niculești, jud. Ilfov						X		1
90.	Mozacu, jud. Argeș						X		1
91.	Nedeia, jud. Dolj						X		1
92.	Nicolae Bălcescu, jud. Teleorman						X		1
93.	Ocnîța, jud. Vâlcea	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7
94.	Olari, com. Gherghița, jud. Prahova						X		1
95.	Olt, județul						X		1
96.	Olteni, jud. Teleorman						X		1

97.	Oltenia						X		1
98.	Oltenița, jud. Ilfov						X		1
99.	Orbeasca de Jos, jud. Teleorman						X		1
100.	Orbeasca de Sus, jud. Teleorman						X		1
101.	Orlea, jud. Olt						X		1
102.	Ostrovu Corbului, jud. Mehedinți				X				1
103.	Părăușani, com. Livezi, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
104.	Peretu, jud. Teleorman						X		1
105.	Pietroasele, jud. Buzău		X		X		X		3
106.	Pietroșani, jud. Teleorman						X		1
107.	Piscul Sadovei, jud. Dolj						X		1
108.	Ploiești, jud. Prahova	X					X		1
109.	Plopșor, jud. Dolj						X		1
110.	Poiana, jud. Gorj						X		1
111.	Polovragi, jud. Gorj						X	X	1
112.	Popești, jud. Giurgiu	X	X	X	X		X		5
113.	Poroschia, jud. Teleorman						X		1
114.	Prahova						X		1
115.	Priseaca, jud. Olt						X		1
116.	Pruneni, com. Zărnești, jud. Buzău						X		1
117.	Racoviăț, jud. Olt						X		1
118.	Radovanu, jud. Călărași	X							1
119.	Râfov, jud. Prahova						X		1
120.	Râmnicul. Vâlcea, jud. Vâlcea:						X		1
121.	Râureni, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
122.	Râzvad, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
123.	Reșca, jud. Olt						X		1
124.	Roata, com. Roata de Jos, jud. Ilfov:						X		1
125.	Roata, com. Videle, jud. Ilfov						X		1
126.	Rociu, jud. Argeș						X		1
127.	Roești, com. Pesceana, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
128.	Roșiorii de Vede						X		1
129.	Rovinari, jud. Gorj				X				1
130.	Sadina, jud. Ilfov						X		1
131.	Sadova, jud. Olt						X		1
132.	Scundu, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
133.	Segarcea, jud. Dolj						X		1
134.	Sfințești, jud. Teleorman						X		1
135.	Sinaia, jud. Prahova						X		1
136.	Snagov, jud. Ilfov						X		1
137.	Socu-Bărbătești, jud. Gorj				X	X	X		3
138.	Sprâncenata, jud. Olt	X			X		X		3
139.	Stâncuța, jud. Brăila						X		1
140.	Stâncuța, jud. Buzău						X		1
141.	Stănești, jud. Ilfov						X		1
142.	Stoenești, com. Berislăvești, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
143.	Stolniceni, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
144.	Suhaia, jud. Teleorman						X		1
145.	Surdulești, jud. Teleorman						X		1
146.	Suseni, com. Runcu, jud. Gorj						X		1
147.	Șopot, jud. Dolj						X		1
148.	Tâmpeni, jud. Olt						X		1
149.	Târgoviște, jud.						X		1

	Dâmbovița								
150.	Târnava, jud. Teleorman						X		1
151.	Tătulești, jud. Olt						X		1
152.	Teiu, jud. Argeș						X		1
153.	Telești, jud. Gorj				X				1
154.	Tinosu, jud. Prahova	X	X	X	X				4
155.	Tunși, jud. Gorj						X		1
156.	Turburea-Spahii, jud. Gorj				X				1
157.	Țigănești, jud. Teleorman		X						1
158.	Ulmeni, com. Bogdana, jud. Teleorman						X		1
159.	Ulmeni, jud. Călărași	X	X						2
160.	Valea Strâmbă, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
161.	Valea Voievozilor, com. Râzvad, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
162.	Valea Voievozilor, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
163.	Văcarea, com. Mihăești, jud. Argeș						X		1
164.	Vădaștrița, jud. Olt						X		1
165.	Vedea, jud. Teleorman		X						1
166.	Vlădeni, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
167.	Voinești, jud. Dâmbovița						X		1
168.	Zătreni, jud. Vâlcea						X		1
169.	Zimnicea, jud. Teleorman	X	X		X		X		4

Annex 2

N r.	Site/ department	Ceramics	Bowl of the bronze, glass, pottery	Tools and creature confort	Finery – fibule, mirror, beads	Arms and militar echipaments	Coins	Latin inscriptions	Număr descoperiri
1	Albești, jud. Gorj				1				1
2	Alimpești, jud. Gorj				1				1
3	Bălteni, jud. Buzău	1							1
4	București		4						4
5	București – Arhivele Statului	1							1
6	București – Herăstrău		2						2
7	București -Tei				1				1
8	Calafat, jud. Dolj		1						1
9	Călărași, jud. Călărași		1				1		2
10	Cele, jud. Olt	2							2
11	Cetățeni, jud. Argeș				2	1	2	1	6
12	Crăsani, jud. Ialomița	6	3	1	2		1	1	14
13	Dunăreni, jud. Dolj		1						1
14	Grădiște, jud. Brăila	1	1		2				4
15	Ipotești, jud. Olt	1							1
16	Ocnița, jud. Vâlcea	21	21	8	71	12	3	5	141
17	Ostrovu Corbului, 1jud. Mehedinți				1				1

18	Pietroasele, jud. Buzău		9		11		2		22
19	Ploiești, jud. Prahova	1					2		3
20	Polovragi, jud. Gorj						1	1	2
21	Popești, jud. Giurgiu	3	13	4	10		4		34
22	Radovanu, jud. Călărași	1							1
23	Rovinari, jud. Gorj				1				1
24	Socu-Bărbăești, jud. Gorj				2	2	1		5
25	Sprâncenata, jud. Olt	1			2		2		5
26	Telești, jud. Gorj				1				1
27	Tinosu, jud. Prahova	2	4	1	6				13
28	Turburea-Spahii, jud. Gorj				1				1
29	Țigănești, jud. Teleorman		1						1
30	Ulmeni, jud. Călărași	2	2						4
31	Vedea, jud. Teleorman		2						2
32	Zimnicea, jud. Teleorman	1	1		1		1		4
33	Situri neprecizate		1						1
	TOTAL	44	67	14	116	15	20	8	284

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