

Sacidava and Its Role of Military Outpost in the Moesian Sector of the Danube Limes: Animal Food Resources and Landscape Reconstruction

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Abstract : Sacidava archeological site is located in Dobrudja region, Romania, on a hill on the right bank of the Danube - the Musait point, located at about 5 km north-east from Dunareni village. The place-name documents the fact that, prior to the Roman conquest, in the area, there was a Getic settlement. The location of the Sacidava was made possible by corroborating the data provided by the ancient sources with the epigraphic documents (the milial pillar during the time of Emperor Decius). The tegular findings attest that an infantry unit, cohorts I Cilicum milliaria equitata, as well as detachments from Legio V Macedonica and Legio XI Claudia, were confined to Sacidava. During the period of the Dominion, the garrison of the fortification is the host of a cavalry unit: cuneus equitum scutariorum. In the immediate vicinity to the Roman fortress, to the east, were identified two other fortifications: a Getic settlement (4th-1st century B.C.) and an Early Medieval settlement (9th-10th century A.C.). The archaeological material recovered during the research is represented by ceramic forms such as amphoras, jugs, pots, cups, plates, to which are added oil lamps, some of them typologically new at the time of discovery. Local ceramic shapes were also founded, worked by hand or by wheel, considered un-Romanized or in the course of Romanization. During the time of the Principality, Sacidava it represented an important military outpost serving mainly the city of Tropaeum Traiani, controlling also the supply and transport on the Danube limes in the Moesian sector. This role will determine the development of the fortress and the appearance of extramuros civil structures, thus becoming an important landmark during the 5th-6th centuries A.C., becoming a representation of power of the Roman empire in an area of continuous conflict. During recent archaeological researches, faunal remains were recovered, and their analysis allowed to estimate the animal resources and subsistence practices (animal husbandry, hunting, fishing) in the settlement. The methodology was specific to archaeozoology, mainly consisting of anatomical, taxonomical, and taphonomical identifications, recording, and quantification of the data. The remains of domestic mammals have the highest proportion indicating the importance of animal husbandry; the predominant species are *Bos taurus*, *Ovis aries*/*Capra hircus*, and *Sus domesticus*. Fishing and hunting were of secondary importance in the subsistence economy of the community. Wild boar and the red deer were the most frequently hunted species. Just a few fish bones were recovered. Thus, the ancient city of Sacidava is proving to be an important element of cultural heritage of the south-eastern part of Romania, for whose conservation and enhancement efforts must be made, especially by landscape reconstruction.

Keywords : archaeozoology, landscape reconstruction, limes, military outpost

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