

**BRIDGES THROUGH TIME:**  
ART TRADE AND WARFARE FROM THE  
BALKANS TO ANATOLIA IN THE FIRST  
MILLENNIUM AD

***A fragment of a Roman-period mural painting discovered in Tomis (Constanța, Romania). Scientific and museographic valorisation***

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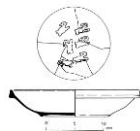
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This presentation examines the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of the pigments and preparatory layers used in Roman mural paintings discovered at Tomis



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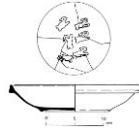
(modern-day Constanța, Romania). The goal is to identify the materials and painting techniques employed in this region during the 5th–6th centuries AD.

Archaeological investigations conducted between 2017 and 2019 in the acropolis area of ancient Tomis revealed a building containing a remarkably well-preserved painted wall segment measuring approximately  $1.5 \times 1$  m, along with a substantial quantity of painted plaster fragments in various colors. Such decorative architectural elements are uncommon in Tomis and throughout Dobrogea, where mural paintings are typically associated with Christian funerary structures—such as basilica crypts and tombs—and only rarely with civil architecture.

To characterize the materials and techniques, a suite of analytical methods was employed, including stratigraphic section analysis, X-ray fluorescence (XRF), physical testing of mortars and porosity, as well as microchemical and biological examinations. Together, these methods provide a detailed understanding of the structural and chemical composition of the fragments.

Surface examination revealed that the paint layers consist of multiple successive color applications. The fragments display refined decorative features, including imitation marble cladding and carefully smoothed surfaces designed to produce a glossy, compact finish. Seven main color tones were identified: bright red, yellow, red, gray-black, gray-blue, white, and red-violet. Subtle variations within these general color categories indicate nuanced pigment preparation and application techniques.

The combined physical, chemical, and biological analyses form a solid foundation for the conservation and restoration of the mural fragments. These results support future efforts to prepare the wall painting for museum display and to facilitate its continued scientific study.



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## **Command, Status and Space: Rethinking the Praetorium at Novae**

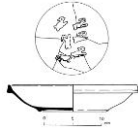
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This presentation focuses on a current research project aimed at determining the location, size, chronology, and role of the legion commander's residence (praetorium) in Novae. The discovery in 2004 of a fragment of the statue base of the legionary commander behind the headquarters (principia) prompted research into this part of the fortress. Research into the central part of Novae will help better understand the layout and spatial organization of legionary camps.

The project envisages seven research phases covering an area of 6,000 m<sup>2</sup>. Work will include excavations, geophysical surveys, artifact analysis, and laboratory analysis of charcoal, vessels, and animal remains.



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## **Legionary logistics on the Lower Danube: *pastus militum* and Novae through inscriptions and amphorae**

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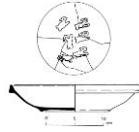
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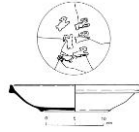
Novae, together with Oescus, is one of only two fortresses on the Lower Danube in which the activity of *primipilarii* is attested. The *primipilarii* were civilian clerks responsible for the transport of military provisions to frontier units within the *pastus militum* system, which operated from the early fourth century and possibly continued until the mid-fifth century AD.

The inscriptions from Novae are particularly informative, as they record not only the names of the clerks but, more importantly, their provinces of origin. On this basis, it is possible to reconstruct the directions from which supplies were conveyed to the Danubian frontier.



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These epigraphic data can now be compared with assemblages of Late Roman amphorae recovered during recent excavations in the central sector of the fortress. The correspondence between the textual and archaeological evidence appears strong, while the material record also provides further insight into the nature of the goods supplied to the army. At the same time, it raises new questions concerning amphora typology, chronology, and the possible association between the content of the vessels and the cult of Dionysus, who appears to have been the deity most prominently venerated by the *primipilarii*.



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## **Housing, Trade and Material Goods in the civil settlement of Potaissa. Case study: the lower northeastern slope of the Fortress Hill**

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The study of the administrative-territorial evolution of the roman settlement at Potaissa cannot be reconstructed with precision, as it as it presents a number of difficulties. The presence of the military component, which contributed significantly to the settlement's prosperity, complicates the delimitation of the civil space, occupied by the municipium, administratively independent from the authority of the officers commanding the legion, and of the *canabae* that developed within the *territorium legionis*.

The principal challenges in tracing the administrative evolution of the civil area of Potaissa arise from the absence of distinct epigraphic attestations differentiating the urban agglomerations that developed on Fortress Hill and at its base, as well as from the territorial overlap of the modern city of Turda over significant parts of the ancient settlement.

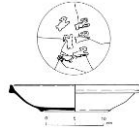
Given the scarcity of direct sources, epigraphic evidence, the present study undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the archaeological structures identified within the area defined by the lower northeastern slope of Fortress Hill, with the aim of advancing the current state of knowledge and contributing to the reconstruction of the archaeological topography of the area.

The urban expansion of Turda along the lower northeastern slopes of Fortress Hill has led, since the beginning of the twentieth century, to the identification of a considerable number of ancient structures and archaeological materials. The paper incorporates a detailed geospatial analysis and a modern reinterpretation of earlier discoveries, directly correlated with recent, unpublished, preventive archaeological investigations.



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Another essential component of this study consists in the analysis of archaeological material derived both from unpublished personal research and from historiographical sources, with particular emphasis on the imported artifacts. Through this approach, the study seeks to assess the degree of urbanization of the settlement at Potaissa and its integration into the roman world through commercial networks.



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## **An inscribed base of a candlestick from Manisa (western Turkey)**

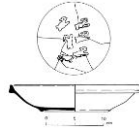
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A Middle Byzantine bronze lampstand's (candelabra) tripod base with animals' feet and votive inscription. The inscription could be later, even modern and reworked, especially given the presence of the donour's name.



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## **Roman Militaires on the Southeastern Thracian Sea Coast**

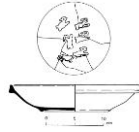
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In the concept of the classical Roman jurists, the state, viewed as *res publica*, has been primarily associated with its citizens. Therefore, Roman claims to establish order have been practically unlimited in space.

The Roman military campaign in the Pontic region during the Third Mithridatic War has initiated the political integration of the Southwestern Pontos in *orbis Romanus*. In AD 70 veterans from *Legio octava Augusta* have established *Colonia Flavia Pacis Deultensium* near nowadays Burgas Bay. This Roman presence has become a stabilizing factor in the Pontic region of the newly established province of Thrace.

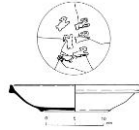
The Roman military presences are documenting in diplomas from the *classis Misensis*, from the auxiliary units from Dacia Inferior, and with inscriptions of *beneficarii consularis*, *stratiotai*, *centurions*, *stationarii*, *primi pili*, and about the *Classis Flavia Moesica*.

The permanent regional personal presence of the Severus', imposed by the civil war, necessitates a descending form of princeps-polis communication. Emperor Septimius Severus has been honored in Apollonia, his statue has been placed in the temple of Minerva in Deultum. A military reason initiated a visit of the Severus' sons Caracalla in AD 198-199, 204-205, and 214-215, and of Geta in AD 210-211 to the north of Haemus. The processes of militarization in the Empire have reflected on the intensity and volume of coinage, especially of Odessos and Anchialos. In AD 270 Goths have ravaged Anchialos and Deultum. The following year, Aurelian has driven them north of the Danube and has triumphed in Rome as *Gothicus Maximus*.



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The visit of Emperor Diocletian to the Southwestern Pontic region in AD 294, is also an symbolic act, with/after which the Southwestern Black Sea “has entered” in the Dominat.



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## ***Phragmos-* the Borderland between the Byzantine Empire and the Paradise**

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The space exterior to the mobile border of Byzantium was defined beyond any ambiguity, both from the perspective of the immediate politics of the Empire and from the cultural, symbolic perspective.

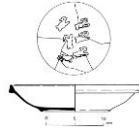
The border separates a circumscribed space from the exterior world that is simply-present. In case of the Byzantine peratological system, the exterior world has meant a group of *ethnois* drawn to the Byzantine sphere of influence by missionary actions or pure political acts – in case of peoples with universalistic religious orientation: Persian, Arabian, Tatar-Mongolian. The mere ethnic, social and politic demarcation, and the management of the space in ethnic terms was not enough in the byzantine history. Since the 4<sup>th</sup> Century the space management has gained an *apodemis* character. The border (*peras*) was not just a simple way of expressing the property feeling, yet a reference to the external space, the bridge where the adventure of defining the political and religious Ego in relation with the world (*oikoumene*) took place.

The Byzantine peratological metaphysics has combined the constant overpassing of the own political limits with the spiritual *epektasis*, mandatory from the religious perspective. The Byzantine apodemis instinct (of crossing of the own geographical limits) has had as Cultural analogon, the crossing of the own spiritual limits, the evasion in ontological and cosmologic areas.



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The Byzantine political thinking was dominated by the need of an aperigraphic space, being permanently defined and meant- by vocation of the in perpetuum missionary activity - to communicate with the spaces that were non-congruent from political or religious perspective. In the morphology of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine culture, the border had a double role: to define the visible territorial limit, beyond which existed a foreign political and cultural space (*hyperoria*), and to define the margin, the extremity (*peras*), excluding the synonymy with the radical *eshatos*.



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## **The eastern connections of Brigetio: art, trade and religion**

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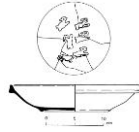
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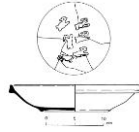
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Brigetio was one of the most important settlements of Roman Pannonia. As a key element of the frontier defense system, it maintained extensive connections in all directions across the Empire, including towards the East. Contacts with Asia Minor are reflected in a wide variety of archaeological evidence. Numerous individuals of eastern origin are known from inscriptions as well as from artistic representations (e.g. wall paintings). The presence of imported objects originating from the East can also be identified in significant numbers within the city. Particularly noteworthy is the presence of eastern cults (such as Mithras and Jupiter Dolichenus), attested both by simple objects (e.g. bronze statuettes) and by sanctuaries in Brigetio. The paper provides a comprehensive overview of the currently available evidence for the eastern connections of Brigetio.



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## **The golden path. About gods and people from Asia Minor to Tomis**

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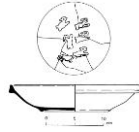
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Although the distance between the two geographical areas is considerable, the Roman cities on the Black Sea coast are linked through many discoveries to Asia Minor and its cities. In this paper, we will try to make a brief review of these links, based on older, or on the contrary, newer archaeological discoveries made in Tomis and its territory.



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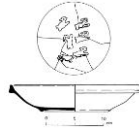
## **Coins as Evidence of Military Movements: the Impact of Valens' Campaign Against the Goths (AD 367–369) on Monetary Circulation in the Province of *Scythia***

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Like precious-metal coin finds, bronze coin issues also serve as important indicators of troop movements and military conflicts, offering valuable insight into the impact that major historical events could have exerted on local monetary circulation. This paper aims to present such a case through the study of coin assemblages from the fortifications of Ulmetum (Pantelimonu de Sus, Constanța County) and Babadag–Topraichioi (Tulcea County), whose results are corroborated by the composition of coin hoards dating to AD 364–401 discovered in the province of *Scythia*.



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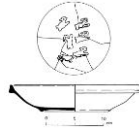
## **From Discovery to Interpretation: Dolphin Iconography in the Archaeology of Ancient Dobruja**

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Within the symbolic universe of the Greco-Roman world, the dolphin occupied an important place, being associated with different deities and other legendary figures. Ancient literature, philosophy, and mythological traditions contributed to the construction of its sacred and benevolent image, representing protection, salvation, guidance, and divine connection. In ancient Dobruja, the motif became integrated into local artistic and symbolic traditions through sustained cultural and commercial interaction. Representations of dolphins appear on a wide range of artifacts, including ceramics, sculptures, jewellery, and coinage, illustrating both the diffusion and adaptability of the motif across diverse social and religious contexts, as well as the transmission and transformation of symbolic imagery over time.



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## **Preliminary consideration on the olive oil supply of Novae during the early Roman period**

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Dr. Habil. Agnieszka Tomas

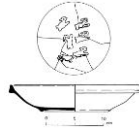
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Novae, the legionary fortress on the Lower Danube, has been continuously excavated by a Polish-Bulgarian team since 1960. During excavations in the headquarters building by Tadeusz Sarnowski in 2010-2012, have been found four refuse pits filled with fragments of various finds, including kitchenware, tableware, terracotta lamps, glass, and amphorae. Several coins have been found in the pits, with the latest denarius of Titus issued by Vespasian (AD 71-72).

Important information is provided by the study of amphora materials, which attests to a conspicuous supply of this legion with wine, fish products, and, mainly, olive oil. The latter product arrived mainly in amphorae of types 24 and 25, attesting to the thorough care for the diet and hygiene of the military based in Novae.

If amphorae of Dr 24 are quite well known due to recent publications, Dressel 25 is far more mysterious. Our presentation aims to shed some light on this mystery.



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## **Some considerations regarding the location of a new early Christian basilica at Tomis**

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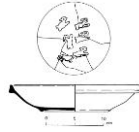
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The paper explores the possible identification and location of a newly discovered early Christian basilica within the ancient city of Tomis. It analyses archaeological evidence, urban context, and historical sources, while also taking into account the six other already identified basilicas in the city. The study contributes to a better understanding of the religious landscape and urban development of Late Antique Tomis.



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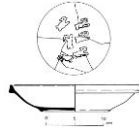
## POSTERS

### **Home sweet home with pottery on the table.**

### **A Roman house discovered in a rural settlement from Tomis (House 1 from archaeological site Centură Constanța, Km. 8+400 – 9+500). Case study: Tableware**

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As a result of the construction project of Constanța's bypass (A4 motorway) carried out in 2010-2011, a large rural Roman settlement was discovered between Km. 8+400 – 9+500. This settlement has two inhabited cores (the northern one and the southern one), characterized by two inhabited phases. The first one took place from the end of the 2nd to the middle of the 3rd centuries AD, and the second from the end of the 3rd to the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. All habitation phases in their chronology include a few subphases distinguished by building restorations and reconfigurations, as well as pottery items, which are key elements for dating specific moments. Our case study focuses on the Roman house designated as House 1 from Roman property 1. The discovered pottery comprises many functional categories such as tableware, kitchenware, lighting equipment, amphoras, and building materials. Tableware is represented by imports – products made in the northeastern Thrace and pottery produced locally in Moesia Inferior workshops, such as the group of Early Pontic Red Slip Ware. However, we have discovered two pottery groups: Pontic Grey Slip Ware and the one we designed as Pontic Slipped dishes, which are unattributed regarding their



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production origin. Our hypothesis posits that they are produced regionally (in the north Pontic region) or locally (in production complexes located in the northern part of the current Bulgarian country). This tableware reflects a community where local pottery is popular but also has an interest in finer, higher-quality pottery imported from abroad. Those imports allow us to formulate the thesis that this rural settlement is part of the local market, has a population that could afford even finer items, and is a part of the provincial economic circuit.



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## **Between Wall and Frontier: Military Equipments from the Small Gate Sector of the Argamum Fortress**

Dr. Ștefan Honcu

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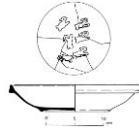
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The aim of this poster is to examine a group of military-related artifacts discovered at the archaeological site of Argamum, in the Small Gate Sector, dated to the Late Roman period. The assemblage includes a shield umbo, several arrowheads, and a number of bone *psalia*, attesting to the presence of a composite bow. Although Argamum functioned primarily as a civilian settlement during this period, the presence of such artifacts suggests a more complex socio-military landscape. Comparative analysis of Late Roman military finds indicates that the occurrence of this type of equipment within fortified settlements was a widespread phenomenon during the sixth century AD, as most fortified sites from this period yield similar categories of military material. These discoveries reflect the broader process of the militarization of civilian settlements during Late Antiquity and contribute to a better understanding of defensive strategies and daily life at Argamum.



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## **Trends in the Decoration of Local Ceramic Production in Pompeiopolis (Kastamonu, Turkey)**

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Pompeiopolis, located in northern Anatolia approximately 150 kilometers south of Sinope, has yielded over 25,000 diagnostic ceramic fragments from both imported and local products. During the Late Roman period, the city prospered and established multiple production centers. One center employed skilled potters who produced painted ware featuring red and white patterns across various domestic categories, including storage vessels, drinking vessels, and kitchen utensils. Another workshop, characterized by less artistic activity, decorated its products solely with incised patterns, predominantly wavy lines. The decorated panels, dating from the 6th to 7th centuries AD, also incorporate Christian symbols. Notably, red crosses on jugs are frequently bordered by a white dotted circle.

The abundance of painted and decorated vessels across all utilitarian categories indicates high productivity and strong local market demand. Additionally, the presence of these products in Pompeiopolitan households reflects the community's diverse cultural preferences. The inclusion of Christian symbols offers insights into the extent of Christianization and underscores the bishopric's significance in daily life in Pompeiopolis.



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## **Preliminary archaeozoological analysis of the faunal material recovered from the preventive archaeological investigations at Castrum XXV (Tocilescu) of the stone rampart**

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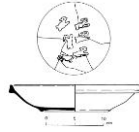
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Spanning a period of four years (2020–2023), the preventive archaeological research conducted as part of the soil remediation and ecological restoration project at a site that formerly housed an OMV-Petrom petroleum products storage facility, located within the city limits of Constanța, at 32 Caraiman Street, led to the discovery of numerous traces of habitation and archaeological artifacts, dating from a broad period (2nd century – first half of the 10th century



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AD). The research conducted led to the identification of the route followed by the stone rampart running parallel to the large earthen rampart, the enclosure wall of “Castrum” No. XXV (Tocilescu) - approx.  $295 \times 200$  m, ~6 ha (including two towers and an entrance gate flanked by bastions) and its defensive ditch on the western side. Intensive habitation within the fortification and partially outside it was investigated over an area of approximately 2 ha, with over 1,100 archaeological features recorded (mainly consisting of huts, various domestic structures, storage or refuse pits, wells, and boundary ditches). A total of 123 burial graves were also identified, forming at least three distinct funerary horizons (pre-settlement?, contemporary with, and post-settlement within and outside the fortification). Additionally, 30 dwelling complexes and two graves dating to the Roman and Roman-Byzantine periods were documented.

The numismatic finds help refine the chronology of settlement within the fortification; among the more than 230 coins inventoried, there is a significant collection of Hellenistic, Roman, and early Byzantine coins, many of which were reused during the early medieval period. The oldest Byzantine coins are two specimens from Leo VI (886–912), and most of the recovered coins were issued during the reign of John Tzimiskes (969–976) (anonymous *miliaresia* and *folles* of class A1).

This site can be considered a strong candidate for the location of the place name Constantia, mentioned in the mid-10th century by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and by the chroniclers Skylitzes and Zonaras in the context of Ioan Tzimiskes’ campaign against the Kievan forces of Sviatoslav.

A very large quantity of faunal material has been recovered from the complexes dated to the 10th century AD, for which a preliminary analysis has been conducted. Faunal remains attributed to fish, birds, and, for the most part, mammals have been identified. For the bird group, the chicken has been identified. The domestic mammal species identified so far are: cattle, sheep and goat, pig, horse, donkey, and dog. The wild mammal species identified are: red deer, wild boar, aurochs, roe deer, and hare. The mammal remains come from both domestic (which are in the majority) and wild species, indicating the two occupations important to the human community, namely animal husbandry and hunting.

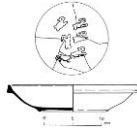


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## **ARMY AND GOVERNMENT IN DACIA POROLISSENSIS**

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This paper will present an overview and state-of-the-art on the deployment of the Roman auxiliary units of Dacia Porolissensis throughout its existence from early Hadrian's reign to about 168/170 AD, when a new reorganization of the Dacian provinces occurred. The paper will also explore the *fasti* of the *procuratores praesidiales* of Dacia Porolissensis based on the newest epigraphic evidence and will tackle the issue of the seat of these *procuratores*, with a special focus on the situation at *Porolissum*, where it is presumed that the central command of the government was located.



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**Bioarcheological Indicators Related to Human-Environmental  
Interactions in  
a Roman-Byzantine Settlement in Central Dobruja (Romania): Ulmetum  
Fortress (5 th -6 th  
centuries AD)**

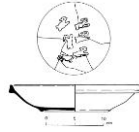
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The fortress of Ulmetum is located in the eastern part of Pantelimon village, in central Dobruja, in the northern part of Constanța County. Systematic archaeological investigations conducted within the Late Roman fortification at Ulmetum have yielded a substantial assemblages of faunal remains recovered from well-defined stratigraphic contexts.

Based on ceramic and numismatic evidence, these contexts are dated from the last quarter of the 4th century to the end of the 6th century AD. The analysed material comes from contexts dated to the 5th–6th centuries AD and includes remains belonging to several animal groups: molluscs, fish, reptiles, birds, and mammals (both domestic and wild). The majority of the mammalian remains correspond to domestic species, including cattle, sheep/goat, horse, donkey, pig, dog and cat. Among these, sheep/goat and cattle are the most prevalent. The identified wild mammals include red deer, wild boar, hare, roe deer, and aurochs. Remains of wild fauna, fish, and molluscs occur in very small proportions, suggesting occasional or seasonal consumption, possibly associated with hunting activities or local fishing practices. The results indicate that faunal remains should not be regarded merely as biological debris but rather as silent witnesses to a complex socio-ecological system in which human communities and the natural environment coexisted in a fragile yet functional balance. Phytoliths are microscopic silica structures formed within and between plant cells, which are frequently well preserved in sediments after the decomposition of plant tissues. The phytolith analysis conducted in this study, based on the diversity of identified morphological types, indicates the presence of several grass groups, and provides insights into the environmental conditions of the area. Moreover, it offers evidence for the presence of cereals. These results complement the archaeozoological data and contribute to a more comprehensive reconstruction of the interactions between human communities and their surrounding environment.



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## **The Roman lamps from Asia Minor workshops discovered in Tomis**

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Founded by the Greeks and transformed by the Romans into a glittering provincial capital, Tomis (Constanța, Romania) is one of the most thoroughly researched archaeological sites and, as a result, the city is well known for the extraordinary discoveries made inside the city and especially in its necropolises. The frequency with which these discoveries are made, mainly due to the rapid pace of preventive archaeological research, allows us to discuss today the subject of Roman lamps and the provincial economy branch based on imports and local production. Unfortunately, most of the older discoveries do not preserve the context of the discovery, thus, making hard to argue on the chronology of the artefacts. In addition to those already known and published by Ct. Ionomu, recent archaeological research, especially in necropolises, has brought new material, which will be also presented.

The frequency of appearances of the stamps and the iconography related to the discoveries of lamps workshops from Asia Minor will be discuss in this paper, with noted discoveries from the workshops of Romanensis, Laukios and other known craftsmen.