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HABILITATION THESIS

GREEKS, ROMANS AND AUTOCHTHONOMOUS IN THE
TERRITORY BETWEEN THE DANUBE AND THE BLACK SEA
(2nd CENTURY BC. – 1st CENTURY AD). A MONETARY
PERSPECTIVE.

Abstract

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Introduction. Statement of reasons and methodology

From a geographical point of view, the area in question belongs to the Istro-Pontic space, a territory that until the 1st century AD represented the north-eastern extremity of the Thracian space, which became part of the Roman province of Moesia, more precisely its eastern part, with this century. The province had the Danube Delta and the Black Sea as its eastern border, the Danube River to the north, the Balkan Mountains to the south and the mouths of the Sava River to the west.

Chronologically, the period for which we proposed this work covers approximately 250 years of the tumultuous evolution of the Dobrujan space. The lower limit belongs to the moment when we witness the spread of coins from the second stage of the evolution of the North-Pontic Geto-Dacian mint, and the upper one to the second part of the 1st century AD, the era before the reign of the emperor Trajanus, following the presence of Roman Republican denarii in early imperial monetary hoards. The end actually belongs to a period characterized by numerous military events, such as those during the time of the emperor Domitianus, which creates an uncertain environment full of insecurity in the Lower Danube, including the Pontic territory, which causes many monetary hoards to be hidden.

Our research aimed to stage, first of all, the creation of repertoires that would benefit from a complete monetary record regarding the chosen theme, geographical area and chronology. Our intention was to collect and process all possible information known at this time, from publications, archaeological and fortuitous discoveries. There is always space for more extensive and more reliable documentation, in order to have a guarantee of certainties as close as possible to the truth.

CHAPTER I.

Brief references regarding the history of the Istro-Pontic space in the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods.

The political and military history of the Istro-Pontic territory specific to the entire pre-Roman period (6th-1st centuries BC.) is marked by numerous events that directly influenced the life and activity of human communities, whether indigenous or Greek colonists. The civilization of the local population in the Dobrujan territory constantly knew, in the second iron age, a significant presence in the Greek environment (*polis/chora*) and in the autochthonous environment (settlements, fortifications, etc.). In this regard, some important local settlements can be mentioned such as those from Floriile, Izvoarele, Satu Nou, Hârșova, Aegyssus-Tulcea, Tulcea, Murighiol etc., probably some originally even emporiums for the early period of Greek-indigenous relations. The history of the Dobrujan space must be integrated into that specific to the northeastern part of Thrace. For the late Hellenistic period, following the "road" and the density of amphorae finds, a local market was identified, in full development, against the background of the stagnation or even the sharp weakening of trade links with the world south of the Haemus Mountains. In this regard, a series of settlements from the area of southern Dobruja, such as those from Odarti, Topola, Shabla, Durankulak, the Tsarevo hills near Veliko Târnovo and the one from Gorna Oriahovitsa, whether they were from major or lower rank, perhaps even specialized in commercial activities. These new population agglomerations were the expression of the reorganization of the demographic situation in the area after the period of the middle of the 3rd century BC in which the main center was at Sveshtari. They prepared and occupied the space on which the centers specific to the ancient Roman era would develop, coagulating resources from an early age in geographical areas favorable for living and carrying out craft activities based on local possibilities, marking important points on new trade routes.

The instability of relations with the natives and the probably increasingly high price paid for obtaining military protection, the creation of concrete possibilities of connection to a general Pontic economic and commercial system, are the reasons why the West-Pontic Dobrujan colonies joined the political-military system created

by the king of Pontus, Mithridates VI Eupator. On the other hand, although they seemed more and more weakened and abandoned in front of the locals, the Greek *polises* are considered of strategic interest by Mithridates and the Roman Republic. Before the First Mithridatic War, held between 89-85 BC, the entire west coast of the Pontos Euxeinos was under the authority of the King of Pontus. With the defeat of the Kingdom of Pontus by the Roman armies, on the occasion of the third Mithridatic war (74-63 BC), the entire system of alliances created at the level of the Black Sea disappears. Important for the situation of the Greek colonies is the secondary expedition, in relation to the main front opened in Asia Minor, carried out by the governor of the province of Macedonia, Terentius Varro Lucullus from the years 72-71 BC. On this occasion, the three West-Pontic Dobrujan colonies come under the authority of the proconsul of Macedonia and endured the presence of the occupation troops.

In the years 62-61 BC, when the governor of Macedonia was Caius Antonius Hybrida, we witness an uprising of the West-Pontic cities allied with the Dardanians, Bastarni and Getae (probably local dynasts). The battle between the rebels and the Hybrida took place at the northern border of Dobruja, somewhere near the walls of the Istros fortress. This, thanks to the significant alliance created, offered a win to the "locals" and, for a short period of time, Rome's authority in the area is removed. The temporary approach to various local or regional tribes and the removal of Roman garrisons with direct implications in creating a vacuum of authority soon attracted the interest of a remarkable military force from the north of the Danube, a military event that led to the pauperization and destruction of some Greek Pontic cities. After a short period of freedom, Roman and Dacian authority inevitably changed. King Burebista, following a large-scale military action, carried out sometime between 55-48 BC/or 48-44 BC/or the end of the 50s and the beginning of the 40s BC, becomes the ruler of the west-Pontic coast for about a decade from Olbia to Apollonia Pontica. Burebista's plan to occupy the entire west-Pontic coast responded to economic strategies and thoughtful

political reasons, an integral part of a broader action that also took into account the geo-political context of the moment, consolidating an important geostrategic position that implied a wide rule in the Lower Danube until 42/41 BC, when the sovereign disappears from the scene of ancient history.

A new vacuum of military power followed in the situation of the Dobrujan space, a fact that involved, on the one hand, the development of autochthonous union formations, successors of Burebista's kingdom near the Danube, and on the other hand, a liberation of the colonies in terms of their internal and external situation. The temporarily gained independence lasts for about a decade, because in the years 29-28 BC, the proconsul of Macedonia Marcus Licinius Crassus initiates, in support of the Dentheletes, a military campaign against the Dacians and Bastarni led by Cotiso, also reaching Dobrudja or the northeast extreme of Thrace. The action, done in favor of the local leader Rholes leads to the defeat of two other local leaders, Dapyx and Zyrares. Thus, the Roman authority extends both over the native population and over the West-Pontic colonies. This control is indirect as the Dobrudjan territory is ruled by Rholes, and after its disappearance by the kingdom of Odryd which capitalized on the old Getic fortifications inside Dobrudja and the Danube area.

In the last quarter of the 1st century BC, the Greek cities of Istros, Callatis and Tomis become subject to Roman authority, in the form of „*civitates stipendiariae*” (Istros), of „*civitas foederata*” (Callatis) and of „*civitas libera*” (Tomis). The entire west-Pontic coast was directly controlled by the governor of the province of Macedonia (with the position in Thracia of *legatus Augusti pro praetore*) with the year 2 AD. With the period of Augustus, the center of Tomis, the smallest in relation to Istros and Callatis, was chosen by the Romans to benefit from many investments in urban-economic restoration and development. A proof of its growing importance is the creation here of a customs office for *Portorium Illyrici et Ripae Thraciae*.

The transformation into the Roman province of Thracia, in the year 46 AD, of the entire area located in the southern part of the Balkans, represents the moment when the part of the extreme north-east of Thrace is definitively integrated into the Roman world.

In the 1st century BC and the first decades of the 1st century AD, the Getic settlements in Dobruja show numerous influences from the Greek and Roman worlds (in the primary stage), despite a certain degree of conservatism. Influences from the Roman world were imposed selectively and gradually, depending also on their usefulness, as was for example the Roman Republican denarius.

The Dobrujan area was part of the territorial area of the province of Moesia, and its creation was one of the most important actions by which Rome transformed the area of the Lower Danube into the frontier of the Roman Empire, with direct consequences on the monetary dynamics and commercial exchanges. This annexation occurred either from 46 BC or from the time of Vespasianus. During 86 AD, for strategic reasons, Domitianus divided the province of Moesia into two separate entities, Moesia Inferior and Moesia Superior. The limes of the province of Moesia Inferior is reorganized under the Traianus and auxiliary troops appear housed in stone castrum and are brought to Durostorum *legio XI Claudia pia fidelis* and at Troesmis *legio V Macedonica*.

CHAPTER II.

The presence of Celtic and Geto-Dacian coins in Dobruja (2nd-1st centuries BC).

The coins from the Geto-Dacian types that appeared in Dobruja are part of the category of local imitations specific to the second final stage of mint development in the north of the Danube, being from the types Dumbrăveni, Adâncata-Mănăstirea, Vârteju-București, Inotești-Răcoasa and Alexander III-Philip III Arrhidaeus. Added to these in our analysis is the Măcin type, the only one of Dobrudjan origin. The coins of the Geto-Dacian type from Dobrudja, from a chronological point of view, are specific to the period of the

2nd-1st centuries BC. These generally used as a prototype the tetradrachm of Philip II. This second phase of the Geto-Dacian coinage corresponds more precisely to the middle of the 2nd century until the year 70 BC, being characterized by the sharp reduction in the number of monetary types (including ponds and silver titles), along with the expansion of the area of discoveries. Also, all are shows characterized by a predilection for highly stylized representations over Greco-Macedonian prototypes. The decrease in the iconographic quality of the portraits on the obverse and reverse has often been noted in the specialized bibliography, as if the model from one type to another was a prototype struck with increasingly worn dies. In addition to these coins specific to the second phase, two possible monetary hoards are also known which contain specimens specific to the first phase of the evolution of the North Danube Geto-Dacian coinage and of the transition from the Agriș types (Agriș B-Silindia, dated at the beginning of the 2nd century BC) and the Golden Medieș (dated to the middle of the 2nd century BC), discovered near Silistra/Durostorum.

The discovery of some Geto-Dacian coins on the right bank of the Danube are not the result of a "wrong recording or information", but conclusive for the knowledge of the Getic relations from the north and south of the Danube, but also perhaps, collaterally, of the "Geto-Greek" ones. The Geto-Dacian issues naturally crossed the "barrier" of the Danube, even if relatively timidly and mainly in the late phase of the Geto-Dacian coinage. All the important crossing fords from Wallachia to Dobruja present monetary finds of Geto-Dacian type. Thus, the favorable places to cross from Izvoarele, Hârșova and Isaceea are the most accessible locations positioned between the left and right banks of the river, through the southwest, through the center and through the north. From here, until the monetary production technique was taken over, there was only one more step, made, we believe, by the Getic from the northern part of the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea, in the form of Măcin-type coins. Or, at the theoretical stage, based on the increase in political power, one ends up ordering some copies (also in silver!)

with their own insignia, but with an iconography and a Greek-inspired legend. The order in silver (and not in bronze) can be explained precisely by knowing the Geto-Dacian issues of silver produced in the north of the Danube by various unions of tribes. They are much closer to what happens north of the Danube than to what is known south of the river, or on the Pontic coast.

The lack of legend on the reverse of the Măcin type coins may suggest their inclusion in the large family of types produced by the Geto-Dacian mint from the north of the Danube. Also, the type pieces *Moskonos* it does not copy the silver model of the Istros fortress, but also the iconography of the Philip II-type Macedonian coins, also present on the Geto-Dacian coins from the area on the left bank of the Danube. Chronologically, before the beginning of the 2nd century BC. In conclusion, the Dobrujan territory is part of the resonance space of the Geto-Dacian type mint, on the one hand through the presence of a functional workshop within the native communities, on the other hand through the presence of silver pieces from several monetary types specific to Wallachia and Moldavia.

Although the existence of a monetary circulation through these coins has been affirmed, we remain circumspect, as we believe that we are rather witnessing their presence, a fact doubled by the borrowing by the local elite, from a symbolic and political point of view, of a manifest tendency in the north of the river, to strike silver coin. Absolutely at the hypothesis stage, the possibility of the existence of continuity between the political formation of *Moskonos* and the one that issued the coins of the Măcin type was affirmed, in the context of a difference of several decades between the two monetary types.

The specimens from the late stage of operation of the Geto-Dacian mint seem, occasionally, to have been produced for reasons and economic needs, being discovered in the settlements of the natives. Except that their role is not primarily economic, but above all political. And then we must take into account the same desire of the Gaetic communities in the south of the river, as those in the north of the river, to issue directly or to order monetary types that would

represent a sign of a political nature, a symbol of local power. Coins of large size and implicitly of high value had a political and religious role, being outside of what monetary economy, monetization and monetary circulation would entail. Also, in support of these ideas, other relevant stylistic, historical, archaeological, metrological and economic arguments were brought forward. The so-called "limited and isolated initiatives" are part of a large monetary process, it is true especially specific to the geographical area north of the Danube. These monetary processes are not necessarily common, but they are undeniably similar, the one in the south being of a certain North-Danubian inspiration and with implications that are in a continuous dynamic towards the area along the right bank of the river, of the approaches more or less immediate.

Geto-Dacian coins stopped penetrating the Istro-Pontic space only when Burebista achieved the economic and political unification of the area north of the Danube, when the Geto-Dacian, political, ethnic and monetary variety is put to an end, together with the end of the Geto-Dacians traditional mint. There are four hoards containing coins of the Măcin type, having been discovered in Niculițel (2), Parcheș and Valea Teilor. The hoards composed of silver pieces made in the Geto-Dacian space from (or also from) the norths of the Danube comprise 11 hoards. The Adâncata-Mănăstirea type appears in Cavarna, Izvoarele and southern Dobruja, the Vârteju-București type appears in Canlia, Hațeg and Somova, the Inotești-Răcoasa type appears in Cochirleni and Rasova and the Alexandru III- Philip III Arrhidaeus type appears in Floriile, Hârșova, Ostrov and Urluia. There is no hoard containing coins of Dumbrăveni type.

All Geto-Dacian monetary hoards known to have been discovered in Dobruja (perhaps with the exception of the one from Garvăn), consist exclusively of coins of this type, minted or cast in the second half of the 2nd century BC and which can also be discovered in contexts specific to the 1st century BC. Monetary pieces in hoards appear to be sums or valuables made in distant environments and which seem to penetrate into some similar tribal noble residences at least as coagulation in the context of the

existence of a military force. Generally, *the presence* of Geto-Dacian coins in Dobruja is the best term to use when discussing the respective monetary finds. However, we consider such a position slightly taken to the extreme, if we hyperbolize it, considering the nature of the local environment in the Istro-Pontic territory and the experience of social, including economic-commercial cohabitation between the Getic and Greek populations. The monetary penetration observed on several occasions in the *chora* and in the rest of the Dobrujan space in the pre-Roman period, does not exclude sporadic, punctual (such as for example the huge fortified center identified at Floriile with points Adâncata I and II), a timid beginning of monetary circulation. The various monetary discoveries as an issuer, numerous in bronze and impressive from a quantitative point of view, contain the seeds of a possible circulation which, however, due to objective reasons, was no longer possible to develop in a favorable environment with the political-military decay and the installation the Romanian authority.

CHAPTER III.

The presence of tetradrachms from Macedonia Prima, Thasos and Maroneia in the Dobrujan territory.

A separate chapter from the monetary presence within the autochthonous and Greek communities in Dobruja, in the 2nd-1st centuries BC, is the presence of two categories of late Greek coins, those from Macedonia Prima and Thassos. Their presence and circulation took place during a period when the transition was being made from the realities specific to the late Hellenistic era to those of the Roman Republic, including in terms of the monetary system. Their minting in the local mint is due to the growing financial needs manifested by the Roman Republic, considering the payment needs necessary to support strategic military efforts.

The number of discoveries of tetradrachms from Macedonia Prima has improved significantly compared to what was known in the 80s and 90s of the last century and even slightly later in the

numismatic bibliography regarding Dobruja. The hoards that consist only or also of tetradrachms from Macedonia Prima discovered in Dobruja are five in number. Three of these are discovered on the right bank of the Danube, one in the coastal area of the Pontic coast and the last one in the central-western part. In general, they seem to be present especially in the southwest of the Istro-Pontic space. Those from Floriile, Hârșova and Silistra seem to have been discovered in the local environment, possibly inside or near some fortified and open autochthonous settlements, from the late Hellenistic period. Altogether, in all hoards, 33 tetradrachms of Macedonia Prima are present. From a chronological point of view, through associations with the Thasian tetradrachms, they seem to have entered the first quarter of the 1st century BC, exceptionally perhaps earlier. Maybe only the one discovered at Jurilovca was penetrated earlier (toward the end of the 2nd century BC), and, who knows, maybe on a trade route from the West-Pontic colonies, a fact that should be viewed from an exceptional perspective. The Jurilovca hoard is the northernmost discovery of tetradrachms coagulated from Macedonia Prima for the Black Sea coastline, earlier ones having been discovered in Varna and the Burgas region. For the isolated finds, 10 points are chartered with a total of 12 pieces, plus another three pieces if we also add the passim finds from the Dobruja position.

One reason for their penetration is due to payments made to possible mercenaries involved with Rome, in the political-military context defined by the conflict between Rome and Mithridates VI Eupator, the latter allied with the Greek colonies. Also, the penetration of some coins such as the tetradrachms, especially along the right bank of the Danube within the local *Gaetic* communities, had a prestige component, they were goods of a noble metal, widely recognized in the Balkan Peninsula and which they expressed a special level of individual and family prestige, they expressed a special material status and a good quality metal reserve. Quite a remote possibility of establishing a connection in the respective areas of discoveries between them and a monetized market

economy, or perhaps a trade in monetized silver imported from the southern regions of the Balkan Peninsula. There may also be exceptions from a commercial point of view, but hard to identify (maybe at Jurilovca?). They can also end up as stipends and raw material for making jewelry. To a small extent we can also see a commercial role.

Contrary to the usual direction of appearance of Greek coins in the Greek-autochthonous and autochthonous environments of Dobruja, known as being from the east and southeast, the tetradrachms from Macedonia Prima penetrate from the west, south and southwest, being favored by the military proximity and politics of the Roman Republic, being oriented towards the commercial fords of the Danube. On the other hand, we also add the fact that no direct connections can be established between the Istro-Pontic space and the respective emission centers. Their entry coincided with a period when the west-Pontic mints, belonging to weakened colonies, were having problems with the current issuance of new currency and with supporting a prosperous economy. As a result, they could no longer support the eventual trade in the local areas of the Danube without syncope.

Monetary hoards that are composed only or also of tetradrachms from Thasos are much more numerous in Dobruja after 30 years of intensive research on the phenomenon of their penetration. Thus, we know a total of 10 discovery points that hold 11 hoards. Ten of these are discovered on the right bank of the Danube or in the relatively close vicinity or in the immediate vicinity. There is currently no monetary hoard containing Thasian tetradrachms to be discovered near the littoral coast. From a chronological point of view, it is possible, through the associations present in the discovered hoards, to be able to make distinctions regarding certain horizons of hoards in accordance with the situations found. Thus, the oldest hoard could be the one that also includes a Măcin Geto-Dacian silver piece, the only one otherwise recovered among several such pieces (perhaps from the end of the 2nd century BC), followed or all from the same chronological area,

from Ostrov, where Roman Republican denarii are also present (around the end of the 2nd century or the beginning of the 1st century BC). These two hoards would constitute a first identified horizon. Then, the second hoard horizon is composed of Thasian tetradrachms from Macedonia Prima and Maroneia, which could have entered with the first quarter of the 1st century BC. A third horizon of hoards contains Thasian tetradrachms (original or not), which are not associated with other monetary issues. Except that the "Thasian" hoards can be hidden at the same time as those combined with tetradrachms from Macedonia Prima. The hoards containing only Thasian tetradrachms may very well be part of the earlier horizon or be slightly posterior to it, after the end of the first quarter of the 1st century BC.

For the isolated discoveries, 33 points with a total of 51 pieces are charted, plus another 13 pieces if we also add the passim discoveries from Dobruja and Northern Dobruja. The numismatic material that is the basis of our research, either older or newer, allows us to foresee with caution, certain directions of penetration. An important part of the isolated discoveries were made on the right bank of the Danube or in the immediate vicinity.

What can be observed at first sight is a higher frequency in terms of the presence of the Thasian ones compared to the tetradrachms of Macedonia Prima, a situation also found in Dacia and other geographical areas. The discoveries at Canlia, Cetatea, Floriile, Gârliciu, Ion Corvin, Izvoarele, Oltina, Poarta Albă, Satu Nou and Vlăhi are made inside or near settlements specific to the Getic population. The contexts of some specimens discovered isolated in Dobruja belong, in general, to the 3rd-1st centuries BC. As happened in the north of the Danube, these tetradrachms discovered in Dobruja can end up as payment for mercenaries, stipends, spoils of war, raw material for the manufacture of ornaments and to a lesser extent they can have an economic-commercial role. Also, a possible origin of their penetration would have been "the trade with the monetized silver imported from the southern regions of the Balkan Peninsula". Just like the tetradrachms of Macedonia Prima, those of

Thasos penetrate from the west, south and southwest, being favored by the military and political proximity of the Roman Republic, being also oriented towards the commercial fords of the Danube.

Tetradrachms from Maroneia are present only through two pieces discovered in the hoard from Popina. So that the products of the respective mint represent far too little relevance for the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea.

CHAPTER IV.

The presence of drachmas from Dyrrhachium and Apollonia in Dobrujan territory.

Beginning with the 3rd century and continuing with the 2nd century BC the Roman Republic gradually begins to show its commercial interest and then military dominance over the Adriatic area and Macedonia. In their turn, after the last quarter of the 3rd century BC, the two Adriatic centers turned towards Rome, obtaining its military support and protectorate, often having privileged support. The port of Dyrrhachium was the best link between the Italic peninsula and the space of the Balkan world. The minting of drachmas and the self-interested use of local mints was occasioned by the need to pay mercenaries and allies of the Romans who were to assist the general military and diplomatic efforts supported by Republican Rome. And from here to their circulation in the Balkans.

We benefit based on the information present in the repertoire of three monetary hoards, with 33 drachmas from Dyrrhachium and 15 from Apollonia. Then there are 30 points of isolated discoveries, to which Dobruja and Northern Dobruja are added. In general, the drachmas discovered in Dobruja belong in small numbers to the center of Dyrrhachium from the IV production phase (120-80/70 BC), the great majority of them being specimens corresponding to the fifth stage (80/70-66/65 BC). For Apollonia, almost all specimens correspond to the last minting phase of the local mint,

from the years 80/70-48 BC, except for one piece that belongs to the earlier phase 120/100-80/70.

An important part of the discovered coins appeared in open and fortified settlements of the local population of the late Hellenistic period. All three hoards are mixed and were discovered in the autochthonous environment, generally located on the right bank of the Danube, near open or fortified settlements (the one from Satu Nou was discovered approximately 4 km east-southeast of the fortified settlement from the points "Valea lui Voicu" and "Vadul Vacilor"). At Canlia, all Illyrian drachmas are dated between 80/70-60/55 BC. (Dyrrhachium), respectively between the years 80/70-48 a.Chr. (Apollonia). The 43 known Republican denarii from the initial 56 discovered in the hoard fall chronologically between the years 114/113 and 32-31 BC. At Satu Nou, although information on the hoard is rather scarce, we know that Dyrrhachian drachmas (possibly from 80/70-60/55 BC) were only associated with Republican denarii. And as only a few denarii have been identified, all from Marcus Antonius for the legions, it is very possible that also for the hoard we have a *terminus post quem* around the years 32-31 BC. As could be seen in the areas north of the Danube and beyond, drachmas from Adriatic cities often accompany Roman Republican denarii in hoards. It is quite possible that the hoards from Canlia and Satu Nou were buried in contexts subsequent to the Battle of Actium. For the third one from Şiriu, we cannot establish a direct connection with the same possible hoarding horizon. But, as I mentioned, the pieces belong to the last production phases of the two mints (especially from the years 80/70-60/55 BC), and a *terminus post quem* after 48 BC would indicate his involvement in the whole horizon of Roman Republican hoards during the civil conflicts or perhaps, rather they may be related to the expedition of Marcus Licinius Crassus from 29-28 BC. Or it would belong to one not much earlier than that formed by the previous two.

As is known, the directions of penetration of the drachmas from Dyrrhachium and Apollonia are southwest towards the north of the Danube, through Banat and Thrace, either to Transylvania or to

Wallachia. And from here, either through Wallachia or through the south of the Dobrujan space, they will penetrate inside the continental area. We would opt for both variants, considering their arrangement in the discoveries from Dobruja. Their direction of penetration is west and south-west, mostly stopping on the right bank of the Danube, excluding any comment regarding their possible penetration from the Pontic coast. In Dobruja or in the northern extremity of northeastern Thrace, their penetration from the south and west is due to the same monetary flow that includes the Roman Republican denarii. Their penetration into the Istro-Pontic space is part of a wider phenomenon of the penetration of the Roman Republican denarius and has the same relatively discrete weight in terms of presence and distribution, the eventual massive lots bypassing the Danubian-Pontic territory. Anyway, the time of their arrival belongs to the late phases of operation of the respective mints, specific to the 1st century BC. The massive penetration of drachmas from Dyrhachium and Apollonia is particularly evident between the years 75-60 BC and is related to military movements rather than trade.

CHAPTER V.

The presence of the Roman Republican denarius in Dobrudja (2nd century BC-1st century AD).

Researching the presence of the Roman Republican denarius on the territory of Dobruja has been a topic that I have often considered in the last three decades in the studies dedicated to the specific monetary realities of the 2nd-1st centuries BC in Dobruja. Among other things, also due to the direct implications on the end of circulation and the presence of Greek coins of the autonomous period specific to mints in the west of the Euxine Pontus. It's just that today the recovered database is much richer, offering relevant and diversified information.

Although a currency of universal circulation, the Roman Republican denarius made its appearance in Dobruja in a Greek-

autochthonous world that used from a monetary point of view the Greek or Greek-type nominal (especially Tomitan, Istrian, Callatian, but also from other coastal centers), thus explaining, perhaps up to a certain point, the relative rarity of the denarius in monetary finds. However, gradually, the special quality of the silver used and the growing influence of Republican Rome imposed the use of the denarius in various everyday areas.

The contacts between the Greek-autochthonous communities present in the Dobrujan territory and Republican Rome were early, in various diplomatic and military forms, having been initiated since the first quarter of the 1st century BC, and the presence of the Roman Republican denarius in the Istro-Pontic space represented, against the background of the loss of the influential position of the Greek colonies, the expression of the political, military and economic rise of Rome in this area.

The numerous legionary and auxiliary military units were involved in various local or regional conflicts starting from the 1st century BC, the importance of traffic and the frequency of their involvement being highlighted even before the creation of the province of Moesia. We add the cantonment in the next century of troops to ensure the protection of the borders of the new provincial context. These constant presences were a perpetual reservoir for the penetration of Republican and then Imperial coinage. With the middle of the 2nd century BC there is a correlation between the volume of denarii issues and the number of enlisted soldiers, as there is a correlation between the periods corresponding to large official issues and the times when most legions were created for current military needs.

From a commercial point of view, the presence of merchants who disseminate products of Roman origin is a reality demonstrated in the Dobrujan area by the archaeological discoveries of Western type, coming from the western and southwestern Roman Europe. An important role in supporting trade and in the circulation of the denarius was played by the main and secondary roads located along the Danube, the maritime coast, in the center of the territory and

those between Axiopolis and Tomis, respectively Noviodunum and Istros (intensively used especially since first half of the 1st century BC).

The analysis of the Roman Republican monetary finds must be done in close connection with the archaeological and historical context, with the implications of its presence and use for various aspects of civil and military life in the chosen geographical area, in order to understand as best as possible the specific elements of late Hellenistic, Roman Republican and early Imperial Romans numismatics.

The amplitude of the presence of the denarius with that of the second half of the 1st century BC, finds its explanation in the inclusion of the Dobrujan territory in a Roman province (Moesia Inferior), along with regions between the Balkan Mountains and the Lower Danube. Naturally, the entire area is integrated into the Roman maritime and land trade system, and as a result the number of coins also increases exponentially. The finds of Roman Republican denarii, associated with other revealing archaeological discoveries, provide frameworks of a prosperous economic life for the second half of the 2nd century BC and the first part of the 1st century AD in the Danubian-Pontic territory. In Dobruja there is also bronze coin that can be used for exchanges, there are coins reduced in value, which indicates the existence of exchanges on the economic market, the presence of a divisional currency. Mainly on the littoral coast west of the Pontos Euxinos, but also in certain areas of the interior continental territory, between the Danube and the Sea.

The penetration of denars into Dobruja had an official and a private character, there being a series of fluctuations in the supply of currency and new nominal, due both to the basic mint and to some political-military events that took place in the area. It is certain that there was no regular influx. Roman Republican denarii represented, in the first half of the 1st century AD, the majority of the nominal silver present in the local monetary flow, enjoying trust, being partially hoarded. The Imperial denarius, until the last quarter or the

end of the same century, has a modest presence, inferior to the republican.

In the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea, a number of 89 administrative points with discoveries were recorded, to which are added three other general ones established as Dobruja, North Dobruja and South Dobruja (as they were published), a total of 92 points. The number of Roman Republican denarii is over 332 specimens and 5 bronze pieces. In total over 337 pieces beaten by the Roman Republic. As a time of issue, the first coins from the isolated finds date back to the last decade of the 3rd century BC, and the last ones from 32-31 BC, i.e. from the end of the fourth decade of the 1st century BC.

Another direction of research, minor in relation to the number of Roman Republican denarii discovered in Dobruja, is that of Roman Republican bronze pieces. In Dobruja several bronze pieces were discovered, from 211 BC (*semis*), from 209 BC (*sextans*), from 199-170 BC (*as*), from 169-158 BC (*as*) and from 155-149 BC (*as*).

In the Dobrujan territory, the continental directions of interest in the study of the circulation of the denarius are two main ones: the coastal area from the Black Sea and the right bank of the Danube. On the coast it is very possible to have an economy with a certain degree of monetization, especially after 72-71 BC. It can be observed, partially, a synchronization of the Roman Republican monetary situation in Dobruja with that of Wallachia, the similarities being related to the supply of the two from the same Balkan reservoir, being after all two neighboring regions. Thus, there is a continuous tendency to decrease the penetration of the denarius until the second and third decades of the 1st century BC when we reach a peak and a permanent slight growth trend, but with syncope until the end of the same century. Augustus pursued a deflationary policy in order to save the monetary situation in the Roman world. The coming of the denarii is due to the commercial relations between the Romans and the natives, respectively in the context of the difficult situation that arose after the disappearance of Burebista. Of course, we also retain a consistent number of issues of Marcus Antonius

struck to support military efforts, in workshops that were in motion in the years 32-31 BC.

Between 54 and 49 BC there seems to be a *hiatus* in the supply of Republican currency, a phenomenon attributed to several factors: the instability created by Burebista's military expedition in the Pontic space; the Roman financial need oriented towards Gallia; the crisis of the civil wars and a reduced or anyway fluctuating rate of minting of the Italian mints. The shortage of "new" currency contributed to the sharp decline in the distribution of fresh monetary stocks. After this moment, there is a revival expressed as we stated previously, through a significant amount of pieces with the second and third decades of the 1st century BC. After Actium, between 31/30 BC and 20/15 BC, there followed an intermediate period marked by political uncertainty and frequent unrest. After the years 23/19 BC important changes take place in Thrace, Macedonia, and other provinces in accordance with Augustus' new imperial monetary policy. With severe consequences including at the edge of the Roman world, as was the Istro-Pontic space. Appear the prerequisites for the establishment of a new economic and monetary trend in the eastern Mediterranean and the rest of the Balkan Peninsula up to the Black Sea coasts. Thus, coins of heavy weight will be replaced and gradually withdrawn, hence the temptation to produce imitations of the Thasian type, in the absence of batteries of the originals, but not later than the years 20-10 BC. With the march of L. Calpurnius Piso in southern Thrace, from the years 13-11 BC, the denarius becomes the only accepted currency, nothing else is tolerated. We are witnessing the moment of complete dominance of the Roman denar as means of payment and standardized market value.

The isolated discoveries in Dobruja can come from civil centers (pre-Roman and early Roman), from outside the civil centers (surroundings), from a military environment, from burials or with other religious content. We note the appearance of coins in open or fortified settlements of the native population, in open settlements or small Roman farms, in the area of urban centers, etc. The best

represented city in terms of the number of specimens discovered for the whole of Dobruja is Tomis (with 38 coins), the capital of the future province of Moesia Inferior. Also Istros and Callatis have an important number of finds: 10, respectively 19 specimens.

The number of coins in hoards reflects, quantitatively, the power of accumulation. It also indicates including the structure of local or provincial market coins in circulation if they were created locally or provincially. 22 monetary hoards composed of 830 *denarii* have been discovered, of which 2 are mixed and 20 composed only of *denarii* (one also with imitation of *denarii*). The hoards discovered were divided into several horizons as follows: horizon 1, during the years 72-71 BC (18.18% of the total); horizon 2, during the years 62/61 BC (18.18% of the total); horizon 3, years 50/40 BC (during Burebista's campaign in the west of the Pontus Euxin, with 13.64% of the total); horizon 4, after 32/31 BC (after 29/28 BC?), with 50 % of the total. It is possible that hoards of Roman Republican *denarii* that close to the second half of the 1st century BC may not be the result of a revival of economic and commercial life, they may reflect the movement of troops due to political and military events in the area and throughout the Balkan. The hoards showing Republican coins dated in the first half of the 2nd century BC expresses a pronounced archaic character, a similar issue is also found in the north of the Danube. About three decades ago it was considered that there was a density of monetary hoards composed of Roman Republican *denarii*, especially towards the peripheries of the region.

The situation is preserved, what we can say in addition is the presence of only less than ten such discoveries on the right bank of the Danube with a total of 419 *denarii*, to which we must add another five from the southwest corner of the central Dobrujan area, very close to the shore with 118 *denarii*. The concentration of hoards in an area should have nothing to do with the prosperity of that area, with strong monetization, but with a certain insecurity (especially military conflicts) that also results from not recovering them. There are four hoards to be listed on the coastal area, containing a total of

123 *denarii*. Discoveries made along the west coast of the Black Sea and in Dobruja indicate that the accumulation of hoards in this area evidently began after the military expedition carried out by the consul Terentius Lucullus Varro in 72/71 BC. The largest hoard in terms of the number of constitutive pieces in total is the one from Ostrov (178 pieces), followed by the one from Southern Dobruja (129 pieces) and the one from Murighiol (117 pieces). The smallest hoards are those discovered in Dunăreni (11 pieces) and Oltina (8 pieces).

A number of 18 monetary hoards corresponding to 16 administrative positions have been identified for the imperial period. A total of 2.986 Roman Republican and Imperial *denarii* were totaled, of which 574 were Roman Republican *denarii* (19.22% of the total constituent *denarii*). There are 14 hoards from the 1st century AD (77.77%) and 4 hoards from the 2nd century AD (23.23 %). In the 1st century AD republican *denarii* remain present in Dobrudja in early imperial hoards, in even comfortable proportions, as for example in the hoards of Rachelu (96.34%), Slava Rusă (92%), Casicea II (90.60%), Viile (84.31 %), Costinești (84.21%), Adamclisi (66.66%), etc. The fewest republican pieces appear in the hoards from Tulcea 1 (32.18 %), Silistra (20 %) and Niculitel (5.59 %).

The discovered hoards were divided into several horizons as follows: horizon 1, from the years 29 BC-14 AD, with two hoards (11.11% of their total); horizon 2, from the years 41-54 AD, with only one hoard discovered (5.55% of their total); horizon 3, from the period 54-69 AD, with three hoards (15.66% of their total). From the time of the Flavian dynasty we have hoards buried/lost under the emperors as follows: horizon 4, from the years 70-78 AD, with three hoards (15.66% of their total); horizon 5, from the period 79-81 AD, with four hoards (22.22% of their total); horizon 6, from the period 81-96 AD, with a hoard (5.55% of their total). In addition to the hoards from the 1st century AD, we add a number of four monetary hoards that were buried during the 2nd century AD (22.22% of their

total). Their introduction into our repertoire is due to the presence of legionary denarii minted for Marcus Antonius in their composition.

As the known hoards reveal, in the age of Augustus most of the denarii in circulation on the Dobrujan monetary market were Republican issues. The situation is established against the background of the already mentioned monetary reform carried out in 23 AD which creates a new universal monetary system in the Roman world. The imperial denarii of the Iulia-Claudia dynasty are very discreet in the creation of the circulating monetary fund and probably the one that formed the basis of the hoarding. The situation changes during the Flavian dynasty, when Imperial denarii can also represent 100% of the hoard. This is in the context of the integration of the Dobrujan space in the eastern half of Moesia Inferior province. The discoveries so far belong mainly to the rural environment.

Regarding the burial moments of some early Roman Imperial hoards, it can be individualized for the 1st century AD several times: around 69-70 AD, around 77/78 and 80/81 AD and 88-89 AD, for the years 77/78 and 80/81 AD and 88-89 AD.

An overview of the present hoards indicates the existence in the local market of a large number of finds of late Roman Republican denarii and relative finds of early Imperial denarii, and the military and civil centers of Moesia are intensely monetized sites of provincial society.

The circulation of early Roman monetary hoards that also include Roman Republican denarii is varied. But, as with hoards of Roman Republican denarii from the 1st century BC, a few trends can be seen that stand out. Often, as observed for this period in other geographical areas of the Roman Empire, the distribution of early Imperial hoard expresses the location and directions of deployment of military garrisons. An important direction of their spread appears on the right bank of the Danube with six hoards (33.33% of the total hoards from the 1st-2nd centuries AD). Next in order of the number of discoveries is the northern central area of Dobruja with four hoards (22.22% of the total hoards from the 1st-2nd centuries AD). Next

comes the southern Dobruja area with four hoards (22.22% of the total hoards from the 1st-2nd centuries AD). We continue with the central area of Dobruja with two hoards (11.11% of the total hoards from the 1st-2nd centuries AD), the southwestern area of the central part with one hoard (5.55% of the total hoards from the 1st-2nd AD) and only one on the littoral coast (5.55% of the total hoards from the 1st-2nd centuries AD). Out of the total of over 337 Roman Republican *denarii* discovered isolated in Dobruja, 78 specimens are of the legionary type: (23.14% of the total). Out of the total of over 830 Roman Republican *denarii* present in Roman Republican hoards discovered in Dobruja, 62 specimens are of the legionary type (7.46%). From the total of 2,986 Roman Republican and Imperial *denarii* present in early Roman hoards from the 1st-2nd centuries AD discovered in Dobruja, 87 specimens are of the legionary type. Initially, they were not hoarded because of the depreciated title, having a consistent copper content. The situation changes with the Flavian era (probably with the monetary reform made by Nero in 64 AD, when the silver title of the *denarii* is lowered to 93%).

At this stage of the documentation, the information regarding the diffusion and circulation of the Roman Republican *denarii* in the Pontic Dobrujan space is constantly accumulating. The accentuation of the "foreign" monetary presence, other than the local colonial one, offers new indications regarding the gradual development of the specific germs of monetary circulation in the province, both in rural settlements and in the cities on the sea coast and then, in those created along the Dobrujan bank of the Danube. The fact that, right near the old centers or inside some that know a smooth evolution and in the first half of the 1st century AD, silver and bronze coins issued either in the official mint in Rome or in colonies under the Imperial authority, proves the presence of a local or mixed population that knew the currency and its functions. These elements would indicate the preservation of the local population in such areas in the composition of the new forms of administrative organization, including in the "dawn" of the Roman domination.

CHAPTER VI.

Archaeological evidence in Dobruja (2nd BC-1st AD centuries).

What is lacking for a very good integration of the known monetary discoveries (but not only) in the realities of the late Hellenistic era in the Istro-Pontic space is the lack of archaeological research in Greek-autochthonous and autochthonous sites specific to the specified chronological interval. The exception is the fortified center from Satu Nou in the southwest of Dobruja, located on the right bank of the Danube. Although we do not have much more accurate information from the archaeologically controlled spaces, however, numerous fortuitous archaeological discoveries from possible open and fortified settlements are known from the publications, which are quite well marked, relatively described and even, based on the materials collected from their surface, even chronologically defined. Thus, benefiting from these published sources, we have chosen to present the existing information in the specialized bibliography regarding the archaeological discoveries known in the areas where there are already indications of monetary discoveries found and in the corresponding monetary repertoires drawn up at the end of this paper.

Creating a repertoire of archaeological discoveries specific to the analyzed period, pre-Roman and early Roman (following the settlements and necropolises) from the Dobrujan territory, we consider it absolutely necessary for the most pertinent reflection of the concrete stage of the research, the analysis of some archaeological situations on a concrete basis, the integration of monetary discoveries in the archaeological context corresponding to the respective administrative point, etc. The presentation of archaeological discoveries from Dobruja (actually the extreme north-east of ancient Thrace), within the repertoire, is done alphabetically, being specific to the period of the 2nd century BC-1st century AD.

More than 55 open and fortified autochthonous settlements of the Latène period, from the 4th-2nd or 3rd-1st centuries BC, or 2nd BC,

were discovered and mentioned from surface research until the early Roman era, in the 1st century AD.

CONCLUSIONS.

With the second part of the Hellenistic era, the situation of the colonies on the western coast of the Black Sea becomes precarious internally, frequent events contributing to the creation of a difficult economic life in a troubled period from a political and military point of view. During this period, the autochthonous population manages to reach a level of socio-political organization advanced enough to have a military force. This fact facilitated the obtaining of numerous subsidies for the protection of the Greek colonies, being able, from an economic point of view, to support this zonal force. However, with few exceptions, the two communities, Greek and autochthonous, had an evolution characterized by cohabitation and collaboration, from an economic-commercial and military point of view, facing different realities specific to the historical-military framework from different chronological sequences. The appearance of the Republican Rome in the area periodically changed the existing balance of forces. Even if the two primary ethnic components collaborated in the temporary removal of Roman supremacy, in the end, for the next 600 years, the Empire also integrated the Istro-Pontic space into the general political, military, economic and commercial system.

An important component of Greek-Roman-autochthonous relations in Dobruja in the 2nd century BC-1st AD it constituted the currency. The changes that occurred along the way in its social and economic organization allowed a significant development of the autochthonous communities creating, against the background of the strong Greek influence, the possibility of using the currency for the purpose for which it was created, for the one that came mainly from the colonial mint workshops. Or also for accumulation and prestige when the currency came from the west, southwest and south. The problem of the relations between the Greek cities and the local

communities, and later between the Romans and the Greek, Greek-autochthonous and autochthonous communities is complex, but the currency, under certain conditions, can contribute to the understanding of various specific aspects of the economic phenomena in the area. Greek coastal cities, despite some hard times, have always overcome troubled situations. And they used in their trade the coins minted in their own mints. A second category of coins comes from the west and has different causes of penetration than those found to be defining for those penetrated from the east. It is about the Geto-Dacian coins specific to the general mint north of the Danube, from Thasos and Macedonia Prima, those from Apollonia and Dyrrhachium, the Roman Republican denarius, etc. There was undoubtedly a strong link between coin and what we call the local environment, either as an instrument of exchange with monetary attributes (very rare) or under the image of a "special good".

Dobruja can be integrated, from the point of view of the structure of the Republican cash, into the overall monetary circulation manifested in the Danube area. The relatively significant gradual diffusion of the Roman Republican denarii in the Pontic territory, through military and commercial means, was allowed by a series of local factors, which became individualized with the transformation of the territory into a Roman province (Moesia Inferior), other regions between the Balkans and the Lower Danube are included here.

At this stage of the documentation, the information regarding the diffusion and circulation of all the coins analyzed in the course of this work, in the Dobrujan Pontic space is constantly accumulating. The accentuation of the "foreign" monetary presence, other than the local one, provides new clues regarding the gradual development of the specific germs of monetary circulation in the province, both in rural settlements and in the cities on the sea coast and then, in those created along the Dobrujan coast of the Danube. The penetration of all quasi-majority Greek type issues in the 1st century BC is favored, in general, by the closer approach of the

Roman power, but also by an accentuated process of economic decadence of the West-Pontic Greek *polis*, of drastic restriction of the local currency present on the Dobrujan monetary market on the littoral coast in the context of the problems with issuing new currency and supporting a prosperous economy.

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