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## COLLECTIVE FEMININE GODDESSES IN ROMAN DACIA

In Classical mythology, feminine characters having a collective nature are common to the background of any mythical scene. As goddesses, heroines, priestesses, worshippers, they assist the birth of many gods, are involved in their growing-up and education, preside the divine weddings and form the train for some deities.

Camēnae, Carmentes, Erinies - Eumenides - Furiae, Charites - Gratiae, Hesperides, Horae, Maenades, Moirai - Parcae - Fatae, Musae, Nymphae - Lymphae, Pleiades, Silvanae, as well as the Celtic Badones, Campestrēs, Quadriviae, Matres, Suleviae are female gods with a collective nature. All of them take a secondary place in the Pantheon, being *secondary* divinities, placed between the major official religion and the minor, domestic one, between the cult itself and the practices and beliefs belonging to the boundaries of the religious phenomenon<sup>1</sup>.

Being similar, these goddesses were often misunderstood and assimilated, as the relationships between them are as old as they are confused. Thus, the Roman Nymphs Camēnae were identified with the Greek Muses<sup>2</sup>. The Nymph Echo is presented in mythology as being raised and educated by the Muses<sup>3</sup>. These were initially Nymphs of the mountains; they are usually mistaken for Nymphae and Gratiae<sup>4</sup>. The Gratiae are often associated with the Musae, Horae and Nymphae<sup>5</sup>. In their turn, Horae are identified with Nymphae (Feronia, Flora appear as *Horae*) but also with Furiae, Gratiae, Musae, Moirai<sup>6</sup>. The Maenades, initially primitive Nymphs, have become Dionysos' company and are identified in representations with the Furiae<sup>7</sup>. Moirai - Parcae - Fatae are identified with the Nymphs and associated with the Furiae, Horae and Musae<sup>8</sup>. In the Celtic world they will be associated with the Matres<sup>9</sup>. The Silvanae are also related to the Nymphs and Muses. In some Celtic areas they will be assimilated to different native gods which also have a collective nature<sup>10</sup>. A similar situation appears for the group of Celto-Germanic deities. The Campestrēs were detached from the group of Matronae, as well as from the Suleviae<sup>11</sup>. In the Roman Age, some of them will be related to, even assimilated with, Roman and Greek divinities. Thus, the Matronae will be associated with the Parcae and the Campestrēs and Quadriviae to the Silvanae<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> G. Dumézil, *La religion romaine archaïque*, Paris 1966, 63-467; G. Dumézil, *Fêtes romaines d'été et d'automne suivi de dix questions romaines*, Paris 1975, 34-35, 41, 64, 225-226; G. Durand, *Structurile antropologice ale imaginarului*, București 1998, 74, 95, 289-290; W. F. Otto, *Zei Greciei*, București 1995, 88-96; E. R. Dodds, *Grecii și iraționalul*, Iași 1998, 17-19, 26, 46-49, 77-79, 231-241; R. Cagnat, V. Chapot, *Manuel d'archéologie romaine I*, Paris 1916, 380-465.

<sup>2</sup> A. Bouché-Leclercq, *DA I*, 2, Paris 1887, 857-858.

<sup>3</sup> P. Decharme, *DA II* 1, Paris 1892, 450-451.

<sup>4</sup> O. Navarre, *DA III* 2, Paris 1904, 2059-2070.

<sup>5</sup> S. Gsell, *DA II* 2, Paris 1896, 1658-1667; A. Furtwängler, *LexMyth*, Leipzig 1884-1886, I 1, 873884.

<sup>6</sup> E. Saglio, *DA II* 1, Paris 1892, 853; S. Gsell, *DA II* 2, Paris 1896, 1658-1667; J. A. Hild, *DA III* 1, Paris, 1900, 249-256.

<sup>7</sup> A. Legrand, *DA III* 2, Paris 1904, 1479-1493; A. Rapp, *LexMyth I* 1, Leipzig 1884-1886, 1310-1336.

<sup>8</sup> W. Drexler, *LexMyth II* 2, Leipzig 1894-1897, 3048-3102.

<sup>9</sup> P. M. Duval, *Les dieux de la Gaule*, Paris 1993, 55-57.

<sup>10</sup> J. A. Hild, *DA IV* 2, Paris, 1344; M. Szabo, *Sur les traces des celtes en Hongrie*, Budapest 1971, 69.

<sup>11</sup> J. A. Hild, *DA III* 2, Paris 1904, 1635-1639; M. Ihm, *LexMyth II* 2, Leipzig 1884-1886, 2464-247; M. Ihm, *LexMyth IV* Leipzig 1909-1915, 1592-1600.

<sup>12</sup> P. M. Duval, loc. cit.

In the religion of Roman Dacia, these relationships and connections are very difficult to notice, as there are few monuments dedicated to the deities mentioned above. This situation requires a collective approach from a unitary perspective of interpretation.

### **NYMPHAE**

The archaeological material connected to the cult of the Nymphs is quite abundant, outlining this divine group as being the most important in the religion of the province. The pieces come from all regions of Dacia.

#### Alba Iulia - (Apulum)

1. - CIL III 1129 = unpublished-IDR III/5, 298<sup>13</sup> = ILS 3867 = I. Piso, *Fasti Provinciae Daciae* I Bonn 1993, 252, no. 1.

*Pro salut(e) / domini / nostri sa/nctissimi / 5 Antonini / Pii Augusti / Nymphis / novis sacrum / Rufrius Sulpici(anus) / 10 / leg(atus) leg(ionis) / XIII G(eminiae) Anto(ninianae).*

2. - V. Moga, *Apulum* 35, 1998, 136, no. 2.

Lateral wall of funerary *aedicula* decorated on the inner side with a mythological scene : Leda sitting next to the swan.

#### Bologa

3. - N. Gudea, *Castrul roman de la Bologa - Resculum*, Zalău 1997, 39 .

An inscription for *Nymphae Augustae* comes from the camp of Bologa.

#### Celei - (Sucidava)

4. - D. Tudor, *Dacia* 3, 1959, 432, no. 70 = D. Tudor, *Oltenia romană*, București 1978, 112-114.

Circular frame of mirror made of lead, where appears the image of a standing nude Nymph, holding out her arms .

#### Cioroiu Nou - (Aquae)

5. - D. Tudor, *Dacia* 3, 1959, 432, no. 70 = D. Tudor, *Oltenia romană*, București 1978, 112-114.

Fragment of votive plaque with three feminine busts. The characters wear *chiton* with a triangular fold on their chests and their long hair is knotted in a chignon on the top of their heads.

#### Geoagiu Băi - (Germisara)

6. - CIL III 1395 = IDR III/3, 239 = CLE 864.

Votive plaque. *Hanc tibi marmores caesam de monte dicavi / regina undarum Nympha decus nemorum / voto damnasti perfecto quem prece Bassus / moenitae propter moenia Germisarae.*

7. - CIL III 7882 = IDR III/3, 240 = I. Piso, *Fasti Provinciae Daciae*, Bonn 1993, 67, no. 4.

*Nymphis / M(arcus) Statius / Priscus / legatus / 5 Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

8. - CIL III 940 = IDR III/3, 241 = I. I. Russu, *Sargetia* 5, 1968, 98 = AÉ 1971, 386bis = I. Piso, *Fasti Provinciae Daciae*, Bonn 1993, 67, no. 5.

Altar. *Nymphis Aug(ustis) / pro salute / Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) Titi / Ael(ii) Hadr(iani) 5 / Anto(nini) Aug(usti) Pii p(atris) p(atriciae) / M(arcus) Statius Pris(cus) leg(atus) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

<sup>13</sup> IDR III/5 is not published yet. I saw the volume thanks to the kindness of Professor Ioan Piso, Ph. D.

9. - CIL III 7858 = IDR III/3, 115 = AEM III, 1879, 110, no. 64.

Altar. *Nymphis / C(aius) Iul(ius) Iul(ianus) (centurio) / leg(ionis) XIII / 5 G(eminæ) v(otum) s(olvit)*.

10. - CIL III 1396 = IDR III/3, 243.

*Nymphis / sanctissimis / P(ublius) Aelius Marce/llinus signifer / 5 et quaestor n(umeri) Brit(annianorum) / mortis periculo li/(beratus) v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito) / Imp(eratore) Comm(odo) Aug(usto) Felice V et Glabrione / 10 Il co(n) s(ulibus)*

11. - A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 202.

Altar. *Nymphis / sanctissimis Mar(cus) Aur(elius)/ Mosianus / 5 opti(o) leg(ionis) / XIII Gem(inæ) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

12. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 16-17, 1, 1990, no. 11 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 202.

Base of statue or altar. *Nymphis / T(itus) Fab(ius) Aquil(eiensis) / tribunus / 5 n(umeri) s(ingularium) B(ritannianorum)*.

13. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 16, 1, 1990, no. 9 = AÉ 1992, 1485 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 202.

Base of statue or altar. *Nymphis / sanctissimis / C(aius) Siron(ius) / IIII viralis mu/ Snicipi(i) Aur(elii) Apul(ensis) / pro salute sua / et suorum / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

14. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 16, 1, 1990, no. 10 = AÉ 1992, 1486 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 202.

Base of statue or altar. *Nymphis / sacr(um) / L(ucius) Livius Mar/cellus II vi/ 5ral(is) col(oniae) / fil(i)s ex vi/su l(ibens) m(erito)*.

15. - CIL III 1397 = IDR III/3, 242.

*Nymphis salutiferis sacrum / M(arcus) Lucius Lucili/anus aug(ustalis) col(oniae) pro / 5 salute sua et / L(uci) Antisti One/simi aug(ustalis) col(oniae) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

16. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 14-15, 1, 1990, no. 8 = AÉ 1992, 1484 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 202.

Base of statue or altar. *Nymphis sanctis(simis) / August(is) simul et / tibi Sancta Deana / fontiq(ue) vestro / 5 retulit sua vo/ta libens salu/tifer reafirmatus / aquis Germis(are) / M(arcus) Aur(elius) Theodo/ 10tus v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito) Imp(eratore) / Comm(odo) / Fel(ice) (consule) VI (ante diem) VIII Kal(endes) Com(mode)*.

17. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 11, 1, 1990, no. 3 = AÉ 1992, 1481 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 203.

Gold lamella. *Nymf(is) / Baebius / Ingen(uus)*.

18. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 11, 1, 1990, no. 4 = AÉ 1992, 1482 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 203.

Gold lamella. *Nymph/ is Lici(nia) / Cale*.

19. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 12, 1, 1990, no. 5 = AÉ 1992, 1483 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 203.

Gold lamella. *Nymf(is) Dece/ balus Lu/ci(i) posuit*.

20. - E. Pescaru, Sargetia 24, 1994, 664 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 203.

Gold lamella with three female figures. The Nymphs are depicted in semi-profile in a static position, oriented towards the left. They wear a long *chiton* and their hair is knotted in a chignon.

21. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 12, 1, 1990, no. 6 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique édilitaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 203.

Gold *lamella* without image or inscription. Specialists consider that it is dedicated to the Nymphs.  
22. - I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 12, 1, 1990, no. 7 = A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique édilitaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, Cluj 1993, 203.

Gold *lamella* without image or inscription, but, like the previous piece, it is considered as dedicated to the Nymphs.

#### Moigrad - (Porolissum)

23. - L. Ţeposu-Marinescu - E. Lakó, Catalogul colecției de geme romane, Zalău 1973, 10, no. 41.

Gem of red jasper. Flora is represented on it in left profile, with her hair plaited and wearing a wreath of flowers on her forehead.

#### Reșca - (Romula)

24. - IDR II 337 = CIL III 13798 = AEM 19, 1896, 1, 79-80, no. 5.

Altar. *Nymphis / Hylas vi/cesimar(ius) / e(x) v(oto) p(osuit)*.

25. - D. Tudor, Romula 1968, 22-23.

Gem decorated with the profile image of a Nymph bust, with her head turned so that she could be seen frontal. She has a bare shoulder and her eyes are slightly turned to the right.

26. - D. Tudor, Apulum 6, 1967, 224, no. 68 = M. Bărbulescu, Omaggio a Dinu Adameșteanu, Cluj-Napoca 1996, 142.

Copy of wax after a gem that represents Leda lying and looking at the egg from which two snakes are being born. Eros is represented in the background holding a scepter.

27. - D. Tudor, CrNA 12, 1936, 205, no. 1 = M. Bărbulescu, Omaggio a Dinu Adameșteanu, Cluj-Napoca 1996, 142.

Gem of red jasper. There is a semi-nude Leda engraved on it, lying on a *kline*. Next to her is represented Zeus as a swan turning his head towards Leda's face.

28. - D. Tudor, CrNA 12, 1936, 212.

Gem representing Flora in right profile, with a branch with blossoms and leaves under her chin.

#### Roșia Montană - (Alburnus Maior)

29. - W. Wollmann, AllACluj 27, 1985-1986, 283, no. 22 = W. Wollmann, Mineritul metalifer, extragerea sării și carierele de piatră în Dacia romană, Cluj-Napoca 1996, 169; M. Bărbulescu, Cultele greco-romane în provincia Dacia, Diss. Cluj-Napoca 1984, 133.

Altar. *Nimpis / sacru(m) / Implaiu/s Sumel / 5 v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens)*.

#### Sarmizegetusa - (Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa)

30. - D. Isac - I. Stratan, Banatica 2, 1973, 127-128.

Statue serving as a fountain, fragmentarily preserved, representing a female figure on a rectangular base. Preserved is only the lower part of a female body, with a nude bust and her hips covered with a veil up to her heels. Below the abdomen is a cavity represented as a shell with an oval orifice in its center. Behind the statue, a long ditch corresponds to this orifice, stretching all along the dorsal side of the piece and of the pedestal.

31. - Unpublished - information from Prof. I. Piso, Ph. D., and Lecturer Al. Diaconescu, Ph. D. Statue serving as a fountain showing Iulia Domna as Amphitrite.

Tihău

32. - I. Piso, AMN 15, 1978, 183 = I. I. Russu, Sargetia 5, 1968, 101 = C. C. Petolescu, Epigraphica. Travaux dédiés au VII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international d'épigraphie grecque et latine, Bucarest 1977, 159-165 = I. Piso, Fasti Provinciae Daciae, Bonn, 168-169 = AÉ 1977, 666. Altar. *Nymphis / Augg(ustis) / pro sal(ute) / dominn(orom) / n(ostrorum) dedic(ante) / Fl(avio?) Postumo / co(n)s(ulari)*.

Turda - (Potaissa)

33. - I. Téglás, ArchÉrt 30, 1910, 355-356 = M. Bărbulescu, Cultele greco-romane în provincia Dacia, Diss. Cluj-Napoca, 1985, 48, 190 = M. Bărbulescu, Omaggio a Dinu Adameșteanu, Cluj-Napoca 1996, 142.

Fragmentarily preserved plaque showing Daphne being chased by Apollo. The semi-nude god with a mantle on his shoulders holds his bow in his right hand and stretches his left arm towards Daphne. The Nymph is seen from behind, having only the upper part of the body represented, while the rest of it is absorbed in the ground. The god hardly manages to grab her hair which turns into leaves. She lifts one arm upward and the other one towards her hair, while her fingers are also turning into leaves.

Vetel - (Micia)

34. - O. Floca, AMN 5, 1968, 122-123 = M. Bărbulescu, Cultele greco-romane în provincia Dacia, Diss. Cluj-Napoca, 1985, 190 = M. Bărbulescu, Omaggio a Dinu Adameșteanu, Cluj-Napoca 1996, 142. Trapezium-shaped plaque with a round niche in its center, framed by a wreath of leaves. Inside is depicted Europa on the back of the bull. The Nymph is semi-nude, with a veil flying above her head, she is holding its ends with both hands, while the left one also gets hold of one of the bull's horns.

Pieces with an unknown source (the Brukenthal Museum collection)

35. - L. Țeposu-David, StComSibiu 12, 1965, 94-95, no. 15.

Opal gem. It shows a nude Hercules standing on a rock, seizing a Nymph with his right hand; the Nymph is picking up her fallen garment, putting it back on her shoulder.

36. - L. Țeposu-David, StComSibiu 12, 1965, 94-95, no. 3.

Red carneol gem. Neptunus and Amphitrite are engraved on it. The god, with his bust nude, is floating over the waves keeping the trident in his left hand, together with a shield, with his right hand he is embracing Amphitrite's waist. The Nereid is nude, having a long and disheveled hair, she looks backwards.

37. - L. Țeposu-David, StComSibiu 12, 1965, 86, no. 19.

Onyx gem depicting Leda, semi-nude, embracing the swan. In front of her there is a shield, probably engraved later on.

38. - L. Țeposu-David, StComSibiu 12, 1965, 86, no. 21.

Onyx gem depicting the head of a young girl with long hair, wearing two wreaths of flowers and looking towards her right. It could be an image of Flora.

Surveying the presented material, we may say that in Dacia the cult of the Nymphs is represented by 38 archaeological pieces (epigraphs, sculptural monuments, votive plates, gems, mirror frames) and three architectonic groups (two wells and a *nymphaeum*). Germisara gives 45 of the total of things discovered, this being the only place consecrated to the Nymphs known so far in Roman Dacia.

We may outline the image of this cult in Dacia by analyzing the worshippers, the images of the divinities as well as the associations and epithets referring to them.

The collective feature of the divinity is confirmed by inscriptions, for, with one exception, the dedications are made in the plural<sup>14</sup>. On monuments they are represented by one or three. In spite of their collective feature, the ancients attribute to some of them proper names and certain legends. Here are some, which appear in Dacia: Amphitrite, Salacia<sup>15</sup> Daphne, Europa, Flora, Leda. They are usually characters in mythological scenes, such as: Zeus capturing Europe, Apollo chasing Daphne and her transformation into a bush, Zeus and Leda transformed into a swan, Leda giving birth to the Twins<sup>16</sup>.

The healing character of divinity is shown by the epithet *salutiferae*, by the specification *pro salute* appearing on several monuments and also by the strict specification of the person who receives the dedication<sup>17</sup>. This idea is confirmed by the fact that half of the relevant pieces were found at Germisara, a health resort, frequented for its healing water. There are other epithets appearing on the inscriptions, like *sanctissimae*, *sanctae*, *Augustae*. They, especially the last one, indicate the political loyalty of the worshipper, drawing the religious gesture near the sphere of the imperial cult. This is also underlined by the fact that some of the monuments dedicated to the Nymphs are built for the health of the emperor<sup>18</sup>. Another epithet, *novae*, singular for the moment, is probably connected to the reviving force of the waters<sup>19</sup>.

The epigraphic connections appear in one case only, the monument being dedicated to the Nymphs, to Diana and to their spring<sup>20</sup>. Excepting the mythological scenes, none of the figured monuments seem to have any connections.

The worshippers are, with one exception, men. Two of them are governors, five military men, two municipal magistrates, two *augustales*, three *peregrini* and one slave<sup>21</sup>. Out of 18 worshippers, seven have Roman names, one an old Italic one, two Celtic names, one Illyrian, one Thracian and one a Dacian name. The statistic analysis illustrates that there exists a cult of adoration of the Nymphae by persons from almost all ethnic groups present in Dacia (as long as the name indicates every person's origin) as well as the existence of an important number of military men, and no women among the worshippers.

The iconographical repertory is rather poor, containing 14 images, which prevents us completing its typology. Some representations are uncertain, the identification of images with Nymphs being plausible but not certain. On a votive *lamella* from Aquae, are represented three feminine characters identified with the Nymphs by C. C. Petolescu - on the basis of South-Danubian analogies<sup>22</sup>. But D. Tudor, I. Diaconescu, C. Popilian identify these

<sup>14</sup> CIL III 940, 1395, 1 396, 1397, 7882, 7858; IDR II 337; A. Rusu, E. Pescaru, La Politique édititaire dans les provinces de l'Empire Romain, București 1993, 202; W. Wollmann, AIACluj 27, 1985-1986, 282-283.

<sup>15</sup> I. Piso, ZPE 190, 1998, 266, no. 14.

<sup>16</sup> M. Bărbulescu, Cultele greco-romane în provincia Dacia, Diss. Cluj-Napoca 1985, 190; idem, Omaggio a Dinu Adameșteanu, Cluj-Napoca 1996, 142-143.

<sup>17</sup> I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 1, 1990, 14-15, no. 8.

<sup>18</sup> CIL III 1129, 940; I. Piso, AMN 15, 1978, 183.

<sup>19</sup> CIL III 1129.

<sup>20</sup> I. Piso, A. Rusu, RMI 1, 1990, 14-15.

<sup>21</sup> I. Piso, Fasti Provinciae Daciae 1 Bonn 1993, 66-73, no. 4, 5; 168-169; 252, no. 1; M. Bărbulescu, Cultele (n. 16), 133; CIL III 1129; A. Rusu, E. Pescaru (n. 14), 201-215; CIL III 7858, 1396; I. Piso, A. Rusu (n. 20), 11-16; CIL 1397; IDR II 337.

<sup>22</sup> C. Petolescu, Oltenia 1, 1978, 61-62.

divinities with the Celtic Matres, this version being also plausible<sup>23</sup>. The representations attributed to Flora<sup>24</sup> could also belong to the Summer personification - *Aetas*<sup>25</sup>.

There are things to be discussed about the categories of pieces on which the images of several Nymphs appear. The reliefs are *ex-voto* rather than cult reliefs. They could have been set up in the *nymphaea*, close to the springs, in special cult places dedicated to deities, or in private gardens. The funeral monuments with mythological scenes had a certain meaning for the transition of the dead to a better condition<sup>26</sup>. The wells' statues have no direct connection to the cult. Gems are jewellery, their religious signification being restricted. The mirrors' frames discovered at Sucidava, in the late Roman fortress, could come from the temple of the Nymphs or of Bacchus, where they might have been used as offerings<sup>27</sup>.

The gold *lamella* from Germisara belongs to a lot of about a hundred pieces of this kind, found all over the Roman Empire. They were dedicated to Graeco-Roman and local deities; it is very likely that the Roman deities are an *interpretatio Romana* of some local ones. At Germisara, this would be more probable because here we have to deal with a place for an ancient Dacian cult<sup>28</sup> and one worshipper has a Dacian name<sup>29</sup>. It is difficult to say which would be the local support in this case. The worship of the waters, implicitly the worship of water divinities by the Dacians, is proved by the discovery of many ritual wells<sup>30</sup>. At the same time the religious Dacian iconography offers examples of feminine divinities with a collective nature<sup>31</sup>. We cannot demonstrate that these divinities had aquatic qualities and, furthermore, we cannot prove that they are Dacian deities in disguise under the image of the Roman Nymphs, but this hypothesis must be accepted and taken into consideration.

The material presented allows the observation of the cult character of the Nymphs in the religion of Dacia. Studying the epithets, the site where the pieces were discovered as well as the deities that received the offerings, we can emphasize the salutiferous, military, popular, rustic aspect of this cult and also a kind of connection to the sphere of imperial cult. We can also remark the lack of the idea of a world mastered by women, the absence of several qualities, such as: motherhood, fertility and fecundity. The offering put by *Decebalus Lucii* at Germisara proves the hypothesis that the Graeco-Roman Nymphs overlapped the Dacian cult of the waters, giving it a new form of expression in the phenomenon of *interpretatio Romana*.

## PARCAE

Concerning the belief in the *Parcae*, the archaeological material is not very abundant. However, it is hard to believe that such popular divinities were almost absent in the mythical - religious universe of the inhabitants of Dacia. It is more likely that the character

<sup>23</sup> D. Tudor, I. Diaconescu, G. Popilian, *Apulum* 6, 1976, 61-62.

<sup>24</sup> D. Tudor, *CrNA* 12, 1936, 205; L. Țeposu-David, *StComSibiu* 12, 1965, 88; L. Țeposu-Marinescu, E. Lakó, *Catalogul colecției de geme romane*, Zalău 1973, 10, no. 41.

<sup>25</sup> C. C. Petolescu, *ActaMP* 5, 1981, 289.

<sup>26</sup> M. Bărbulescu, in *Omaggio ...* (n. 16), Cluj-Napoca 1996, 143.

<sup>27</sup> D. Tudor, *Dacia N.S.* 3, 1959, 415, 432; idem, *Oltenia romană*, București 1978, 112-117.

<sup>28</sup> I. I. Russu, *Etnogeneza românilor*, București 1981, 82.

<sup>29</sup> I. Piso, A. Rusu (n. 20), 12; D. Protase, in *La Politique éditiltaire dans les provinces de l'Émpire Romain*, Berne 1993, 157-158.

<sup>30</sup> S. Sanie, *Din istoria culturii și religiei geto-dacilor*, Iași 1995, 44-49.

<sup>31</sup> R. Vulpe, *Materiale* 3, 1957, 234; Al. Vulpe, *SCIV* 16, 1965, 2, 341-351; M. Bărbulescu, *AMN* 8, 1971, 99-102.

of “funerary belief” rather than of a “religious cult” could be the reason of a small number of representations belonging to the major plastic, while the similitudes with other divinities superpose the latter in the image of the *Parcae*.

Alba Iulia - (Apulum)

1. - V. Moga, *Apulum* 35, 1998, 134-137.

Lateral wall of a funerary aedicula, showing Clotho wearing a long chiton and a mantle, she keeps with her hands the spindle and the bundle in her hands. At her feet, a kneeling man, wearing *tunica manicata* and a helm, seems to apologize.

Cluj - (Napoca)

2. - D. Isac, M. Bărbulescu, *AMN* 13, 1976, 179-181.

Anthropomorphic vessel representing Clotho wearing a mantle tied up over her waist line. She seems to wear a bracelet on each arm, a necklace and on each shoulder a big fibula. In her left hand she keeps a bundle and in the right hand the spindle, between them there is a figurative thread.

Gherla

3. - I. I. Russu, *Dacia* 11-12, 1945-1947, 269 = D. Isac, M. Bărbulescu, *AMN* 13, 1976, 182.  
*Ael(ia) Ingenua e.../ inis. Iris hic iacet.../ sub terra misera ?/ Alita es in annis.../ 5 plus fata vetarunt.../ iam nulla est.../ parentes mater .*

Turda - (Potaissa)

4. - M. Jude, C. Pop, *Monumente sculpturale romane în Muzeul de Istorie Turda, Cluj* 1973, 12-13, no. 14 = O. Floca, W. Wolski, *BCMI* 42, 3, 1973, 15, no. 41 = D. Isac, M. Bărbulescu, *AMN*, 13, 1976, 181-182, no. 2.

Lateral wall of a funerary *aedicula*; one of its faces is decorated with the image of a woman wearing a long *chiton* and a short mantle. Due to the deterioration, her bust and head are missing. In the right hand she holds a spindle, a thread from the bundle she must have had in her left hand. In front of her, standing up, there is a nude child, making an imploring gesture with his hands in the air. M. Jude and C. Pop have identified the feminine figure as being a *Parca*, D. Isac and M. Bărbulescu, specifying that it has to be Clotho.

Zlatna - (Ampelum)

5. - W. Wollmann, *Potaissa* 3, 1982, 96, no. 5.

Wall of a funerary *aedicula* with the representation of Clotho sitting down, wearing a long *chlamys* tight over her chest. The hair is parted in the middle and knotted at the nape. Unlike other representations, she holds the spindle in the left hand and the bundle in the right one. Her right foot is standing on a cubic object tied on each side with a ribbon, in a cross sign. In the lower part of this piece there appears the tail of a dolphin.

6. - W. Wollmann, *Potaissa* 3, 1982, 96, no. 6.

Wall of a funerary *aedicula* with the representation of Atropos sitting down, wearing a *chiton* and a long *chlamys*, in the left hand holding the roll, pointing her hand at an unidentified object. In the scene there also appears the snake, specific for the representation of *Parcae*. The fact that the *Parca* is oriented to the left, while Clotho is oriented to the right, allows the hypothesis that the same *aedicula* in the center may have shown the rendering of a third *Parca*-Lachesis.



Ocna Mureș - (*Salinae*)

7. - M. Gramatopol, *Dacia antiqua*, București, 1982, 132.

Statue representing Hekate. On the *chiton* of goddess, in the second register, appear two feminine characters standing near a child. The divinity on the right is bent over the child, pouring on his head the content of a vessel which is held in her right hand; in the raised left hand she holds a similar vessel. The goddess on the left holds her right hand over the child's head and in the other hand the forelegs of a small animal. These two characters wear a long *chiton*, a *himation* and have their hair combed in a loop. M. Gramatopol identified the characters as being Telephos and two Parcae.

Place of discovery unknown -from the collection of General Mavros

8. - D. Tudor, *CMRED* 1, Leiden 1976, 27, no. 47.

Tablet of Danubian Riders. In the second register are depicted three feminine busts, placed on three rectangular bases. Their long, parted hair is knotted in a small knot on the top of head. D. Tudor identified them with the Matres, but F. Chapouthier showed, proving it with an analogy from Brindisi, that the characters must be identified with the three Moirai-Parcae.

The pieces represented are, so far, the archaeological testimonies of the belief in the Parcae. The repertory is rather poor and we must observe that none of the pieces has a cult aspect. The walls of *aediculae* come from the funerary construction, the inscription is an epitaph and the anthropomorphic vessel comes from the grave.

The pieces presented do not allow, as D. Isac and M. Bărbulescu have emphasized, the outline of a cult of the Parcae, the votive character is missing. It is rather about some funerary beliefs connected to the image of Destiny Deities.

The funerary inscription put by Aelia Ingenua's parents refers to *fata* who decided to end their daughter's life. Such is the character of the *Parcae* as the masters of human life, destiny and death. The walls of the *aedicula* are decorated with images related to funerary beliefs. The anthropomorphic vessel comes from the inventory of a grave and must be connected to ancient beliefs in the "deceased's thirst"<sup>32</sup>.

The Parcae are related to other divinities (Nemesis, Hekate, Fortuna), which often overlapped their image. Similitudes of behaviour, specific common activities, determined the *Parcae* to take over the votive aspect of believing in destiny. It is certain that the *Parcae* remain in the beliefs and superstitions of the people and also in the practices connected to the essential moments of life, which is difficult grasp archaeologically.

**SILVANAE**

The discoveries belonging to the Silvanae are not many in Dacia. They are better represented epigraphically and figuratively in monuments; they are also the beneficiaries of a cult place<sup>33</sup>.

Geoagiu Băi - (*Germisara*)

1. - IDR III 3, 220 = AÉ 1967, 405; I. I. Russu, *AMN* 1, 1964, 191-194, no. 8.

Altar. *Silvanis et / Silvano Campestris) pro / sal(ute) Boceni Fr/onto pater ( posuit ? )*<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> M. Bărbulescu, *Interferențe spirituale în Dacia romană*, Cluj-Napoca 1984, 200. Two similar small vessels were discovered at Potaissa - I. Țigăra, *Probleme de muzeografie*, Cluj 1960, 203-204.

<sup>33</sup> M. Bărbulescu, *Culte (n. 16)*, 116-119; A. Rusu, *Sargetia* 10, 1973, 395-408; C. Daicovicu, D. Alicu, *AMN* 18, 1981, 63-67; C. Pop, *EN* 4, 1994, 67.

<sup>34</sup> The inscription was read *Silvanis et / Silvano Campestris)...*; we prefer the lection : *Silvanis et Silvano Campestris)...*

Sarmizegetusa - (Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa)

2. - A. Rusu, Apulum 13, 1975, 697, no. 1.

Bas-relief; only the left side of the relief has survived. Silvanus is accompanied by nine Silvanae (only two of them are visible, due to the fragmentary state of the piece). The goddesses wear *chiton* and *himation*. Their curled and parted hair is knotted at the nape. They hold a wreath of flowers in their left hand.

3. - A. Rusu, Apulum 13, 1975, 698, no. 2.

Fragment of a bas-relief. The bust of a Silvana is depicted in the same position as in the previous one.

4. - A. Rusu, Apulum 13, 1975, 698, no. 3.

Fragment of a bas-relief on which one can see the inferior part of three Silvanae.

5. - A. Rusu, Apulum 13, 1975, 698, no. 4.

Fragment of a relief on which one can see the partial representation of two Silvanae.

6. - A. Rusu, Apulum 13, 1975, 698, no. 5.

Fragment of a relief on which one can see the forearms of two Silvanae and the left palm of one of them holding a wreath.

7. - A. Rusu, Apulum 13, 1975, 698, no. 6.

Fragment of a relief on which is visible the inferior part of a Silvana, the last one of a group.

8. - I. Piso - A. Rusu, AMN 14, 1977, 155.

Bas-relief. On the left side there is depicted Silvanus wearing a wreath; he is holding a *pedum* in his left hand. To the right follow nine Silvanae dressed in *chiton* and *himation* with little wreaths in their hands. Their hair is parted in the middle and knotted at the nape. On the lower border, the inscription reads : *M( arcus)? Aur(elius) Valens dec(urio) col(oniae) ex voto posuit .*

Stolna

9. - C. Pop, AMN 5, 1968, 487-488 = M. Bărbulescu, Cultele greco-romane în Dacia romană, Diss. Cluj-Napoca 1985, 117.

Votive plaque on which five female figures are depicted (the head of the character on the right is only partially preserved). The deities wear long dresses. Their hair is loose on their shoulders and they hold each other's hands in a position of *saltatio*. C. Pop identifies the divine characters with the Nymphs. As the deity at the right end is taller than the other four, M. Bărbulescu emphasizes the possibility that the characters in discussion might be Silvanus and the Silvanae.

The inscription from Germisara is dedicated to the Silvanae and to Silvanus Campester. The worshippers are just two : Fronto, Bocenus' father (probably a Celt) and M. Aurelius Valens, a *decurio*. of Sarmizegetusa.

The reliefs from Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa are unitary from a stylistic point of view, all following the same pattern, fact that allowed the hypothesis of their production in the same workshop. On all reliefs (it is obvious that the fragmentary reliefs are identical with the one found almost entirely preserved) Silvanus is accompanied by nine Silvanae. Their unusual number, their position as a "procession" might illustrate a local iconographic contribution<sup>35</sup>. The representation of the Silvanae as nine goddesses was compared with an *aedicula* from Dobruja on which are depicted nine feminine divinities in a ritual dance<sup>36</sup>. A phenomenon of *interpretatio Romana* of some beliefs common to the north Thracian

<sup>35</sup> M. Bărbulescu, Cultele (n. 16), 119.

<sup>36</sup> G. Bordenache, Sculture greche e romane del'Muzeo Nazionale di antichita di Bucarest 1, București 1969, 49.

area has been supposed. I. Piso and A. Rusu prefer to consider that the number of Silvanae is determined by some old and confused relationships between Nymphae - Silvanae - Musae or by recent contamination with the Musae<sup>37</sup>. We cannot speak exclusively about a cult of the Silvanae, as they are worshipped together with the God.

### MAENADES

The study of the Maenads faces the problem of their difficult identification. Many pieces are uncertainly attributed as being Libera, Maenada or Baccha, because there are no clear criteria of identification. Our repertory will not include those pieces that have been published as representing Libera or a Maenad, when proofs favouring the first identification are more convincing. In the literature a permanent confusion appears between Maenada and Baccha. Worshippers of Dionysos, in their clothes, attributes and behaviour, the Bacchae imitated Maenades which accompanied the god, which renders the distinctions between them less obvious. We preferred a uniform terminology and we consider all feminine characters of the Bacchic convoy as being Maenades. The other representations could be Maenades or Bacchae but our premise is that for an ancient mind they are more likely to represent the divinities accompanying the god and not the mortal worshippers.

#### Alba Iulia - (Apulum)

1. - A. Bodor, *Dacia* 7, 1963, 238.

Dionysiac relief, Potaissa type, depicting Liber Pater accompanied by a Silenus and a Maenad. She wears a folded *chiton*, curly hair and holds a *cista mystica* in her hands.

2. - C. Pop, *Bronzuri figurate în Dacia romană*, Diss. Cluj-Napoca 1998, 156 pl. CII; C. Pop, *Apulum* 27-30, 1990-1993, 224.

Ornamental bronze bust depicting a Maenad; it is similar to the bust from Gherla and Bathyanem, representing a Maenad or more likely Libera. These ornamental pieces of bronze are fixed on the upper part of the Klapptisch-type tables.

#### Cădaciu

3. - C. Pop, *Apulum* 6, 1967, 176-178, no. 10.

Head of a terra-cotta statue. It represents a feminine character with her hair parted in two, tied with a *taenia* which goes around her head and hangs in a queue over the neck. There are flowers and ivy leaves in her hair. The deity is a Libera or a Maenad.

#### Turnu Severin - (Drobeta)

4. - Al. Bărcăcilă, *Arhivele Olteniei* 13, 1934, 94.

Votive plaque. To the right there is depicted Dionysos-Liber and beside him is sitting a panther. In front of the god a feminine character holds a stag by its horns. Publishing the piece, Al. Bărcăcilă mentions that in her left hand the deity holds a curved object which might be a bow. In the published photo this object cannot be observed. The author regards it as a possible identification with a Libera. It is more likely that this character is a Maenad.

#### Moigrad - (Porolissum)

5. - C. Băluță, *Sargetia* 14, 1979, 206 = C. Băluță, *Cahiers d'archéologie romande*, Lousane 1979, 168-169.

<sup>37</sup> I. Piso, A. Rusu, *AMN* 14, 1977, 157.

Bronze lamp with the container decorated with the head of a Baccha or a young Bacchus. The inner side of the *discus* has an incised inscription : *MAMA....*

Reșca - (Romula)

6. - D. Tudor, BCMI 30, 1937, 115, no. 288 = D. Tudor, Monumente inedite din Romula, Vălenii de Munte 1940, 44, no. 288.

Terra-cotta mask depicting the head of a Maenad. The hair is tied with a pearled *taenia* and decorated with a cluster of grapes. In the sockets there were pieces of colored glass.

7. - D. Tudor, BCMI 31, 1938, 93, no. 496.

Gem engraved with a Maenad dancing and playing a double whistle. The clothes are rendered as long stripes around her body, suggesting movement.

Sarmizegetusa - (Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa)

8. - Al. Diaconescu, AMN 35, 1, 1998, 77-81.

Golden bronze statuette depicting a partially preserved Maenad (her head is missing). The character is sitting; the lower part of her body can be seen in profile, her naked bust is turned so that it can be seen frontal. The folded clothes cover her lower half, her back and her left shoulder. Her arms are bent from the elbow and brought forward.

Turda - (Potaissa)

9. - C. Pop, AMN 7 1970, 152, no. 1.

Head of statue depicting a Maenad. The abundant hair is curled. She wears a big diadem with incisions.

10. - C. Pop, AMN 7 1970, 155, no. 10.

Bronze head of statue from the Kemeny collection, probably from Potaissa. It depicts the head of Maenada or Libera wearing a diadem.

11. - C. Pop, AMN 6, 1969, 531, no. 1.

Statue representing a Maenad with her head turned to the right, wearing a folded *palla* with short sleeves and holding a *cista mistica* in her hand.

12. - C. Pop - Z. Milea, AMN 2, 1965, 204, no. 7.

Head of statue depicting a Maenad or a Libera. The long curly hair is parted in the middle and tied on the nape, in three queues, with a *taenia*. The head, slightly inclined to the right, is decorated with a wreath of ivy and flowers and above the ears she has a cluster of grapes and vine leaves.

13. - Unpublished - information from Bajusz István - *apud* C. Pop, Bronzuri figurate în Dacia romană, Diss. Cluj-Napoca 1998, 47, no. 3; 335, no. 3.

Bronze head of a statue depicting probably a Maenad. The piece is lost today, the information being kept in an unpublished manuscript by Téglás István.

Pieces with unknown place of discovery from the Brukenthal Museum collection

14. - L. Țeposu-David, StComSibiu 12, 1965, 85, no. 11.

Amethyst gem on which Methe is engraved stepping to the left and holding a cup in her hand.

15. - L. Țeposu-David, 12, 1965, 85, no. 12.

Amethyst gem on which Methe is engraved wearing on her shoulders a veil waving in the wind. To the right there is a stick and to the left a spear. In front of her there is a running dog.

Archaeological finds illustrate the presence of *maenadae* in the mythical and religious universe of the inhabitants of the province, a natural situation as long as Liber Pater was worshipped in Dacia, which is proven by many documents<sup>38</sup>. The gems cannot be analyzed from a votive perspective, because the selection of their motives was often related to the fashion of the time or to the artistic models preferred by the *cavatores gemmarum*. The same is the situation of the decorative handle. In order to discuss the religious aspect we can take into consideration only the pieces of pottery and of stone with a certain votive role, as well as the mask of terra-cotta used in specific ceremonies.

Like the Silvanae, the Maenades had neither a cult of their own nor a worship addressed exclusively to them. They had been honoured together with the couple Liber - Libera, or only together with the god, in a very popular cult, common to all people from all social classes, which had many cult places in Dacia<sup>39</sup>.

## MUSAE

The religious archaeological repertory in Dacia includes only three pieces that belong to the Musae.

### Alba - Iulia - (Apulum)

1. - A. Hekler, MKÉ 4, 1910, 15; M. Bărbulescu, Cultele greco-romane în provincia Dacia, Diss. Cluj-Napoca, 1985, 134.

Stone statue in natural size from a collection of Aiud. It depicted a sitting woman wearing a long plated *chiton* fastened under her breasts. M. Bărbulescu identified her as one of the Musae, this hypostasis being proper for Cleo and Urania.

2. - (V. Moga, Apulum 16, 1978, 165; M. Bărbulescu, Cultele greco-romane în provincia Dacia, Diss. Cluj-Napoca 1985, 134). Conical terra-cotta mold with rounded top. Inside a border there is depicted a female figure in profile, with a thoughtful attitude, leaning on an object resembling the trunk of a tree. She wears a folded *tunica* and *palla* and her hair is tied in a knot. M. Bărbulescu identifies her with Polyhymnia, the Muse of mime and rhetoric, on the basis of her specific position.

### Reșca - (Romula)

3. - D. Tudor, Apulum 6, 1967, 218, no. 38 = IDR II 486.

Gem depicting Melpomene standing, leaning on a column, with the head in profile to the right. She wears a *chiton* and *himation*. In her left hand she holds a mask and looks at it and in her right hand she has a *parazonium*. On both sides of the deity there are engraved the letters: *WM*.

The mould from Apulum, as well as the gem discovered at Romula, does not imply a votive attitude. The statue from Aiud is the only piece from the repertory of the Muses which could have votive implications, but its identification remains uncertain. Moreover, the representations of the Muses on sarcophagi, so often found in other

<sup>38</sup> A. Bodor, Dacia N.S. 7, 1963, 211-240; C. Popescu, M. Popescu, Thraco-Dacica 16, 1-2, 1995, 277-235; A. Căținaș, Sargetia 11-12, 1974-1975, 343-350.

<sup>39</sup> C. Popescu, M. Popescu, op. cit., 227-228; E. Chirilă, N. Gudea, Al. Matei, V. Lucăcel, ActaMP 4, 1980, 98; N. Gudea, E. Chirilă, Al. Matei, I. Bajusz, ActaMP 7, 1974-1975, 343-350; H. Daicoviciu, D. Alicu, Colonia Ulpia Traiana Augusta Dacica Sarmizegetusa, București 1984, 59-84; C. Pop, EN 4, 1994, 61-72.

provinces, are totally lacking in Dacia<sup>40</sup>. The discoveries attributed to the Muses till now do not allow us to outline the image of a cult of Muses; they only certify their existence among the beliefs of the mythical universe of the inhabitants of Roman Dacia.

## HORAE

Like the other abstractions personified in a group of feminine divinities, the Horae do not make up a very rich repertory in Dacia. Some of the archeological pieces identified as images of seasons represent teenagers or children<sup>41</sup>. We will deal only with feminine representations.

### Vetel - (Micia)

1. - L. Țeposu-David, Omagiu lui Constantin Daicoviciu, Bucuresti 1960, 530, no. 34.

Red carnel gem on which is engraved a deity walking to the left. In her right hand she holds a stick from which a small animal, probably a rabbit, is hanging and in her left hand she holds a wheat ear. The hanged animal as well as the wheat ear proves the identification of the character with the personification of summer.

### Reșca - (Romula)

2. - D. Tudor, BCMI 28, 1935, 83, no. 50 = C. C. Petolescu, ActaMP 5, 198, 187, no. 3.

Fragment of a statue depicting a winged female deity, probably Aetas. She wears a *chiton* and holds a sheaf of wheat in her arms.

### Ocna Mureș - (Salinae)

3. - Petersen, AEM 1881, 193-196 = M. Bărbulescu, Cultele greco-romane în provincia Dacia, Diss. Cluj-Napoca 1985, 138-139.

Statue depicting Hekate wearing a *chiton* decorated with divine characters. In the fourth register, beside Diana, there appear the four Horae. They hold each other's hands and shoulders in a dancing position. Each of them wears a short *chiton* fastened under the breasts and a wreath in her hand. The hair is tied in a knot at the nape.

The Seasons' representations are not many in the iconographic religious repertory of Dacia. This situation is due to the secondary place occupied by them in the Pantheon, but also to their difficult identification. The artists represented them as beautiful girls, the same as the Nymphae, Musae or Gratiae. Their attributes - flowers, fruits, wreaths or game - are specific for many other divinities.

This situation determined many researchers to identify the same representation differently - as personifications of a season or as another divinity. C. C. Petolescu underlined that the gems on which Flora<sup>42</sup> was pictured might render Spring and some of the images attributed to Ceres might represent Aetas, the personification of Summer<sup>43</sup>. At the same time, Pomona from Romula, as C. C. Petolescu has interpreted her, could also be the personification of Autumn<sup>44</sup>. Unlike in other provinces, in Dacia the seasons are not rendered on sarcophagi<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>40</sup>R. Turcan, Les sarcophages romains avec représentations dionysiaques, Paris 1966, 542.

<sup>41</sup>C. C. Petolescu, ActaMP 5 1981, 287-289; M. Bărbulescu, Cultele (n. 16), 138.

<sup>42</sup>L. Țeposu-David, StComSibiu 12, 1965, 86, no. 21; L. Țeposu-David, E. Lakó (n. 24), 7, no. 41.

<sup>43</sup>L. Țeposu-David, Omagiu lui Constantin Daicoviciu, Cluj-Napoca 1960, 528, no. 9-10; L. Țeposu-Marinescu, E. Lakó (n. 24), 1973, no. 21, 22, 23.

<sup>44</sup>D. Tudor, BCMI 28, 1935, 83, no. 50; M. Bărbulescu, Cultele (n. 16), 139.

The pieces so far discovered do not present clear votive features. But the seasons were certainly worshipped together with other major divinities they were associated to.

### GRATIAE

The belief in these divinities is certified by a single representation, whose assignment is not very certain.

#### Celei - (Sucidava)

D. Tudor, *Dacia* 3, 1959, 432, no. 65.

Frame of a mirror, made of lead. There are three naked female deities depicted on it, holding each other's shoulders in a dancing position. The one in the middle seems to be taller. The unclear image does not allow us to see if the character in the middle is rendered in a backward-turned position (specific to the Gratiae). D. Tudor identified them as being Gratiae or Nymphae.

Tudor's supposition about the whole group of mirrors, namely that they would come from a temple of the Nymphae or of Dionysos, sustains their identification with the Gratiae, which are often depicted onex-voto-s dedicated to the Nymphs and worshipped in cult places of the Nymphs. A precise identification is not possible as long as there are no obvious attributes or hypostasis of the goddesses.

### CELTO-GERMANIC DIVINITIES

#### MATRONAE

Their worship is certified only by a few pieces, this situation being similar for all Celto-Germanic divinities of this type, especially because their attributes overlap those of some Graeco-Roman divinities.

Our repertory includes the dedications for Dominae and Gesahenae, since we have followed the model of a recent synthesis about the Celts and Germans<sup>45</sup>. Collective female goddesses, the Dominae represent in fact the Italic form of the Celtic Matres. In the same way the Gesahenae are the Germanic Matres, specific especially for Germania Inferior<sup>47</sup>.

#### Alba Iulia - (Apulum)

1. - CIL III 1005 = IDR III 5, 66 - unpublished.

*Mestrius Martinus / pictor constituit / pro salute sua et / suorum/ fanum Dominar(um) .*

#### Cluj - (Napoca)

2. - M. Macrea, *AISC* 5, 1949, 249-254 = AE 1971, 395 = I. Piso, *Potaissa* 2, 1980, 125-127.

*Altar. Gesahenis pro / se et suis P(ublius) Ael(ius) Maxi/mus / Ilvir q(uin)q(uennalis) et fla/men col(oniae) Nap(ocensis) a milit(i)s/ sacerdos arae Aug(usti) n(ostri)/ coronat(us) Daciarum Ill dec(urio) col(oniae)/.....s*

To these two inscriptions we can add a third one, also discovered at Apulum, but its reading is uncertain<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> R. Turcan (n. 40), 298-300, 345, 420.

<sup>46</sup> A. Husar, *Celți și germani în Dacia romană*, Cluj-Napoca 1999, 241.

<sup>47</sup> R. Peter, *LexMyth* I 1, Leipzig 1884-1886, 1197.

<sup>48</sup> AE 1980, 738 = IDR III/5, 377 - unpublished

As far as the images are concerned, the Matres were identified by some authors on two pieces, but the identifications were uncertain. The pieces in discussion are the votive plate from Cioroiu Nou, where there appear the busts of three feminine characters wearing *chiton* and with the hair dressed in a chignon<sup>49</sup>, and a tablet with a Danubian Riders<sup>50</sup> where there appear the busts of three similar characters. The divinities from Aquae were identified by D. Tudor, I. Diaconescu, G. Popilian with the Matres<sup>51</sup>. C. C. Petolescu, bringing as proofs some analogies from the South of the Danube, showed that the characters in discussion are Nymphs<sup>52</sup>. On the plate from the Mavros collection, D. Tudor also identified the Matres, but F. Chapouthier identified them with the Parcae<sup>53</sup>.

From the above-mentioned material we can consider only the inscriptions from Apulum and Potaissa as being evidence of the worship of the Matres in Dacia. It is also possible, as in the case of the Parcae, that their cult practices were poorer.

The ethnic support for a possible cult takes us to the Celtic and Germanic space. Mestrius Martinus seems to have a Celtic origin<sup>54</sup>. P. Aelius Maximus dedicated an altar to another German divinity - Hercules Magusanus, which renders possible the hypothesis that he might have fulfilled his *militiae equestres* somewhere on the Rhine<sup>55</sup>. A third inscription, coming from Apulum, may have been dedicated to the Matres and the person who dedicated it is P. Aelius Secundinus, with a Celtic *cognomen*. We have not included this inscription in our repertory, because its reading is uncertain.

## QUADRIVIAE

They are certified by five inscriptions only, three of them coming from Apulum. No figurative representation has been discovered until now.

### Alba Iulia - (Apulum)

1. - CIL III 1140 = IDR III/5, 310 - unpublished.

*Quadri/vis sacr(um)/ Fl(avia) Pulchra / pro se et su(is) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

2. - E. Zefleanu, Apulum 2, 1943-1945, 99-100 = AE 1947, 24; IDR III/5, 309 - unpublished.

Altar. *Quadru/vi(i)s aram/ Cornelia Daphnis / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibente) a(nimo) m(erito) .*

3. - IDR III/5, 311 - unpublished.

*Quadruv(i)is L(ucius) Gallius/ Caminas/ dec(urio) col(oniae) Sar(mizegetusae)/ cum.....Sabina/ ?eius.... v(otum) s(olverunt) .*

### Sarmizegetusa - (Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa)

4. - CIL III 1440 = IDR III/2, 330.

Altar. *Quadrib(is)/ Cl(audius) Anice/tus aug(ustalis) c(oloniae)/ Sarmiz(egetusae)/ Metrop(olis)/ ex voto.*

### Unknown place of discovery

5. - CIL III 8045.

*Philistio/ Trivis Quadr(ivis)/ v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

<sup>49</sup> D. Tudor, I. Diaconescu, Gh. Popilian (n. 23), 593.

<sup>50</sup> D. Tudor, CMRED 1, 1976, 27, no. 47.

<sup>51</sup> D. Tudor, I. Diaconescu, Gh. Popilian, loc. cit.

<sup>52</sup> C. C. Petolescu, Oltenia 1, 1978, 61-62; G. Mihailov, IGB II, 170-190.

<sup>53</sup> D. Tudor, CMRED 1, 1976, 27, no. 47; F. Chapouthier, R&EA 61, 1, 1939, 65.

<sup>54</sup> A. Husar (n. 46), 218.

<sup>55</sup> Ibidem, 219.



Three of the known inscriptions were found in Apulum, which might suggest the existence of a Celto-Germanic group here. But the worshippers' names are common Graeco-Roman ones. It is interesting that two of these inscriptions are dedicated by women, who rarely appear among the worshippers.

### CAMPESTRES

They are certified in two inscriptions found at Sarmizegetusa and Germisara; no other representation dedicated to them is known until now.

#### Sarmizegetusa - (*Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa*)

CIL III 7904 = ILS 2417 = IDR III/2, 205.

Altar. *Eponab(us) et / Campestrib(us) / sacr(um) / M(arcus) Calventius / Viator (centurio) leg(ionis) IIII Flaviae Felicis / exerc(itor) eq(uitum) sing(ularium) / C(ai) Avidi Nigrini leg(ati) Aug(usti) pt(o) pr(etore) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

The worshipper was a *centurio* in the *Legio IV Flavia Felix*. The dedication refers to divinities specific for a military context. The name of M. Calventius Viator does not offer a precise ethnic indication.

At Sarmizegetusa, the *Campestres* were associated with *Epona*, another Celtic divinity, which was preferred by the military. It is very interesting that the name of *Epona* appears in its plural form: *Eponab(us)*, the situation being singular, with no analogy. If there is no mistake, one can assume *Epona*'s multiplication together with a divinity with collective character.

### SULEVIAE

The *Suleviae* are certified in Dacia by only two inscriptions and one representation, a natural situation if it is related to that of the other Celtic - Germanic divinities presented so far.

#### Alba Iulia - (*Apulum*)

1. - CIL III 1156 = IDR III/5, 359 - unpublished.

*Sule(viis) / Fl(avius) Atta/ lus votum/ l(ibens) solvit* .

#### Found in an unknown place

2. - CIL III 1601 = M. Macrea, AISC 5, 1949, 257.

*Sul(eviis) Montanis/ T(itus) Iulius lapid(arius)/ v(otum) l(ibens) s(olvit)*. The inscription was accompanied by a relief on which two female deities were represented, one of them seems to engrave something.

One of the inscriptions was discovered at Apulum, where several dedications for Celto-Germanic collective divinities come from. The worshipper is certainly a Celt, as his *cognomen* proves: *Attalus*<sup>56</sup>. Titus Iulius is a *lapidarius* and his dedication illustrated the aspect of the *Suleviae* as protective divinities of the *lapidarii* or of the craftsmen generally. We cannot specify if *Montanae*<sup>57</sup> represents an epithet or the name of another divinity.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, 231.

<sup>57</sup> M. Macrea, AISC 5, 258-256.

None of the worshippers are military men, which made M. Macrea believe that this cult was introduced into the province by the civilian colonists coming from Gallia<sup>58</sup>.

### BADONES REGINAE

Divinities of Celtic origin, the Badones Reginae are certified in Dacia only by an inscription that comes from Apulum, as many other inscriptions referring to such divinities do.

#### Alba-Iulia - (Apulum)

ILS 9335 = IDR III/5, 37 - unpublished = S. Sanie, SCIV 21, 1973, 2, 295-298.

*Badonib(us) / reginis / Sextia Au/gustina/ ex voto .*

The dedication is made out for certain feminine deities with collective character. The inner structure of deity, as well as its external profile, is probably integrated in the same type represented by the deities previously analyzed.

The worshipper's name indicates a possible Rhenan origin<sup>59</sup>.

### CONCLUSIONS

We have studied the feminine characters, having a collective feature, that have so far been certified in Roman Dacia. Archaeological repertory permits the reconstitution of a cult's image, of the beliefs in these divinities. It is certain that this image remains a partial one, based on the accidental selection of archaeological discoveries. The detailed analysis of the pieces has allowed us to understand several aspects, such as the divinity's character, the character of the cult, the iconographic aspects, the ethnic element and the social one. This inventory should be regarded simply as a documentary base for a reconstitution of Dacia's religious life. However, this will not do, because religion cannot be explained as a statistic of persons who worship a cult or as a typology of their representations<sup>60</sup>. Religion and mythology constitute a human language of their own, which interferes with the rest of the manifestations of the society which produced them<sup>61</sup>.

Man expresses the sacred things through concepts transcribed as ideograms - structures of thought. The female gods having a collective character are such a kind of structure of the religious imaginary.

In Roman Dacia several feminine divinities with collective features have been identified: Nymphae, Parcae, Silvanae, Maenades, Musae, Horae, Gratiae, Matres, Matres, Quadriviae, Campestrae, Suleviae, Badones Reginae.

In the beginning we show the similarities and the relationships between these deities. But it is difficult to say to what extent, in Dacia, they are close to each other, overlap, as mythical image and religious personality.

We have already pointed out the difficulty of identification for some of them. On the frames from Sucidava there can be Graces or Nymphs, on the plate from Cioroiu Nou and the plate from the Mavros collection, they could be Parcae or Matres. This difficulty of identification does not result from such a contamination among the deities as to make

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*, 337.

<sup>59</sup> A. Husar (n. 46), 223.

<sup>60</sup> M. Meslin, *Știința religiilor*, București 1993, 11.

<sup>61</sup> A. J. Greimas, *Despre zei și despre oameni*, București 1997, 16-17; M. Meslin, *op. cit.*, 8-22.

their distinction impossible; rather, they are the result of a lack of attributes, dedications, or well-delimited iconographic types. The archeological material presented does not allow us to obtain all of their connections or influences.

The deities that we have taken into account have in common not only their external mythical image but also internal structure. It is important to remember that they all represent the type of female deity having a collective character. Their image populates every Indo-European mythology, so we can regard them as an archetype of human language, constituted by mythology and religion.