

THE CULT OF VENUS WITHIN THE FORTS FROM DACIA

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Abstract: According to archaeologically identified contexts and the features of specific materials, the cult of goddess Venus may be divided into public and private. Discovered within forts, houses, sacred or funerary spaces, terracotta statuettes and most statuettes made in bronze rather belong to the private side of the cult, while inscriptions and stone statues are related to the public cult of Venus. Compared to other gods in the Roman pantheon, the figured material of Venus's cult is by far the most frequent among the finds in Dacia. This general statistics is also valid in the particular case of the forts. The figured material was found disparate, in various locations within the forts, yet statuettes predominate being identified in barracks, space of choice for the private cult. For their own benefit, in the private space, soldiers worshiped Venus for her primary attributes: goddess of love and marriage, protectress of life against death. Some inscriptions mentioning Venus, though not identified inside the forts perimeter, have soldiers as dedicants. These inscriptions belong rather to the public cult. In the official, public cult, Venus was worshipped as ancestor of the imperial family and mother to all Romans. Dedications for the official cult are made in public spaces, as the result of political loyalty and not of piety. The iconography of the imperial couples mimicked the divine couple Mars - Venus, Venus been thus also regarded as a deity leading to victory or army welfare.

Keywords: Venus; fort; statuettes; inscriptions; public; private.

Résumé: A partir des contextes archéologiques identifiés et des types de matériaux spécifiques, le culte du Vénus peut être divisé en public et privé. Découvert dans camps militaire, habitat, espaces sacrés ou funéraire, les statuettes en terre cuite et la majeure partie du bronze appartiennent au culte privé du Vénus. Les inscriptions et les grandes statues semblent appartenir à un culte public. En comparaison avec les autres divinités du panthéon romain, le matériel figuré pour le culte du Vénus est de loin la plus fréquente en Dacie. Cette statistique est valable aussi pour les camps militaires. Le matériel figuré a été trouvé par toute dans les camps mais en particulier dans les casernes, où le culte du Vénus a été essentiellement privé. Pour leur propre bénéfice, dans l'espace privé, les militaires ont adoré Vénus pour ses qualités primaires: déesse de l'amour et le mariage, divinité qui apporte la proliférité et protège la vie contre la mort. Même s'ils ne sont pas trouvés dans les camps, un certain nombre d'inscriptions de Dacie sont dédiés par militaires à Vénus. Ces inscriptions peuvent être attribuées au culte public du Vénus. Dans le culte public Vénus était adoré comme l'ancêtre de la famille impériale et mère de tous Romains. Les dédicaces pour Venus dans cette case sont faites dans l'espace publique, comme un acte politique de piété. Comme l'épouse de Mars, couple divin souvent imité dans la famille impériale, Vénus était une déesse qui peut apporter la victoire pour Rome et le bien-être de l'armée.

Mots-clés: Venus; *castrum*; inscriptions; statuettes; privé; public.

Rezumat: Pornind de la contextele arheologice și tipurile de materiale specifice, cultul zeiței Venus poate fi împărțit în public și privat. Descoperite în castre, complexe de habitat, spații sacre sau funerare, statuetele de teracotă și o mare parte a celor din bronz aparțin cultului privat al zeiței. Inscriptiile cu dedicații pentru Venus și marile statui aparțin cultului public.

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În comparație cu alte divinități din pantheonul roman, materialul figurat din cultul Venerei este de departe cel mai frecvent în Dacia. Această statistică este valabilă și în cazul particular al descoperirilor din castre. Materialul figurat acoperă întreg teritoriul unui castru, fiind găsit mai ales în barăci, acolo unde cultul pentru Venus a fost unul predominant privat. Pentru propriul beneficiu, în spațiul privat, soldații au venerat-o pe Venus pentru atributele sale primare: zeită a dragostei și căsătoriei, divinitate protectoare a prolificității și a vieții contra morții. Chiar dacă nu au fost găsite în interiorul castrelor, unele inscripții sunt dedicate de soldați, făcând parte cel mai probabil din cultul public al zeiței. Venus era adorată în cultul public ca strămoș al familiei imperiale și mamă a tuturor romanilor. În acest caz, dedicările pentru Venus sunt făcute în spațiul public, fiind rezultatul unui act politic de pietate. Ca și parteneră a lui Mars, formând un cuplu divin frecvent imitat în reprezentările cuplurilor imperiale, Venus a fost adorată ca zeită care aduce victoria pentru Roma și asigură bunăstarea armatei.

Cuvinte cheie: Venus; castru auxiliar; statuete; inscripții; public; privat.

Goddess Venus is consistently present in the province of Dacia, as shown by archaeological finds. Among Greek and Roman divinities, figured representations of Venus represent 80% of the total in terracotta, 24% of those in bronze and 5% in stone. Despite the many figured representations, the presence of Venus in inscriptions is rare, only 2% of the total inscriptions recording gods. Archaeological context may be specified only for half of the total of over 260 items discovered in Dacia. According to the find spot, the 130 items may be divided in four large categories: 1. domestic contexts, designating especially the living space (*villae rusticae*, *villae suburbanae*, city houses, *canabae* or *vici*); 2. military contexts, especially the forts; 3. cult contexts, namely temples and sanctuaries; 4. funerary contexts, more specifically, cemeteries and monuments associated to the funerary space.

Most Venus statuettes were found in military contexts, respectively within forts² (approximately 34%) (Pl. I.), followed by the cult contexts (33%)³ and domestic contexts (26%), funerary contexts being less represented (7%) (Fig. 1)⁴. The high percentage of finds within forts may be the result of either a real historical situation, like the case of other provinces, or that of an incipient stage in the archaeological research of other site types, excavations carried out in the forts of Dacia being more frequent than those performed in settlements or cemeteries. In what the manufacturing material of the statuettes is concerned, the majority are of terracotta (57%), followed by bronze (37%) and marble (only 9%). In terms of sizes, only a few statuettes exceed 15 cm in height.

² This study considers 44 marble, bronze and terracotta statuettes found in the forts at: Bologa (Cluj county), Buciumi (Sălaj county), Samum-Cășeiu (Cluj county), Cioroiu Nou (Olt county), Cumidava-Râșnov (Brașov county); Drobeta (Mehedinți county), Gherla (Cluj county), Gilău (Cluj county), Hinova (Mehedinți county), Ilișua (Bistrița-Năsăud county), Jidava-Câmpulung (Argeș county), Porolissum-Moigrad (Sălaj county), Potissa-Turda (Cluj county), Răcari (Brădești, Dolj county), Tibiscum (Caraș-Severin county), Micia-Vețel (Hunedoara county). Finds are more numerous, yet only a part has been published.

³ The large number of the statuettes in cult contexts is due to the finds from the sanctuary of Liber Pater at Apulum – 31 statuettes of the 42 total originating from cult contexts.

⁴ Each drawing herein was made by the author.

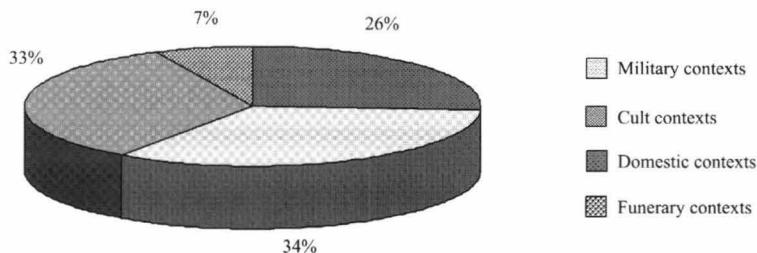


Fig. 1. Distribution of material upon discovery contexts.

Iconographical types these statuettes copy belong to the major statuary. One would expect that within the military environment, goddess Venus would appear armed and as *Victrix*⁵, yet the type does not appear at all in the statuary of Dacia (Fig. 2 a). In Dacia, Venus in the aspect of *Victrix* appears only on coins and a few gems, standing in a battle chariot, crowned by Amor⁶. The type Venus *Victrix* is rarely found in statuary all over the Roman empire. Circumstances of another type associated to victory, Venus *Felix*⁷ (Fig. 2 b) are similar. The statuary type is represented by only a few statuettes in Dacia⁸. In the symbolic of Venera *Felix*, on coins, palm leafs and garlands signify victory, while the crown and sceptre represent authority.

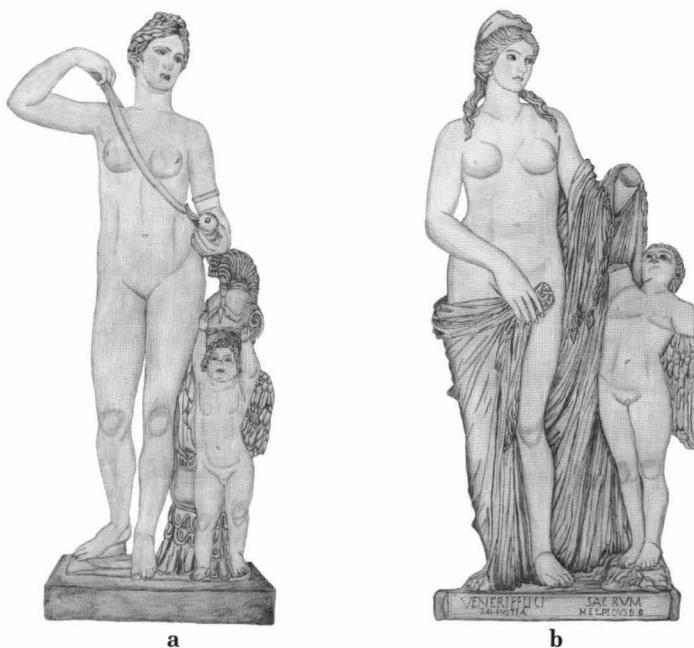


Fig. 2. a. Venus *Victrix*; **b.** Venus *Felix*.

⁵ LIMC, VIII/1, 211–212; Flemburg 1991, 110–114.

⁶ Marinescu 1960, 528, Fig. 2/31; Marinescu 1965, 84, Pl. 1, Fig. 3.

⁷ LIMC, VIII/1, 203.

⁸ Alicu, Pop, Wolmann 1979, 95, Pl. CXXXV; Nemeş 1987, 488–490, Fig. 1/a, b; Bondoc, Dincă 2005, 24.

Most frequent representations belong to types *Venus Capitolina* (Fig. 4 a-b), *Cnidos* (Fig. 3 a-b), *Anadyomene* (Fig. 4 c-d) or *Genetrix* (Fig. 3 c), the goddess being depicted both nude and semi-nude⁹.

Differences between minor statuary and major statuary models are occasionally so high that original models are hard to identify. In general, such differences consist in simplified representation: facial details are no longer emphasized; anatomical proportions are disregarded; changes are made (for instance, the position of the hands is in most cases reversed, the right hand slides along the body with the palm turned to the viewer); certain elements (*hydria*) are no longer represented, while others (crown usually held in the left hand) are added etc. Only a few of the statuettes are more carefully worked, like those in bronze from Gilău (no. 21)¹⁰, Drobeta¹¹ (no. 13) and Porolissum¹² (no. 33), the terracotta statuettes from Buciumi (no. 4)¹³ and Gherla (no. 18-19)¹⁴. Bronze and terracotta statuettes are mass produced, some being made in the workshops nearby forts. Obviously, the three marble representations are clearly superior in execution compared to the others.

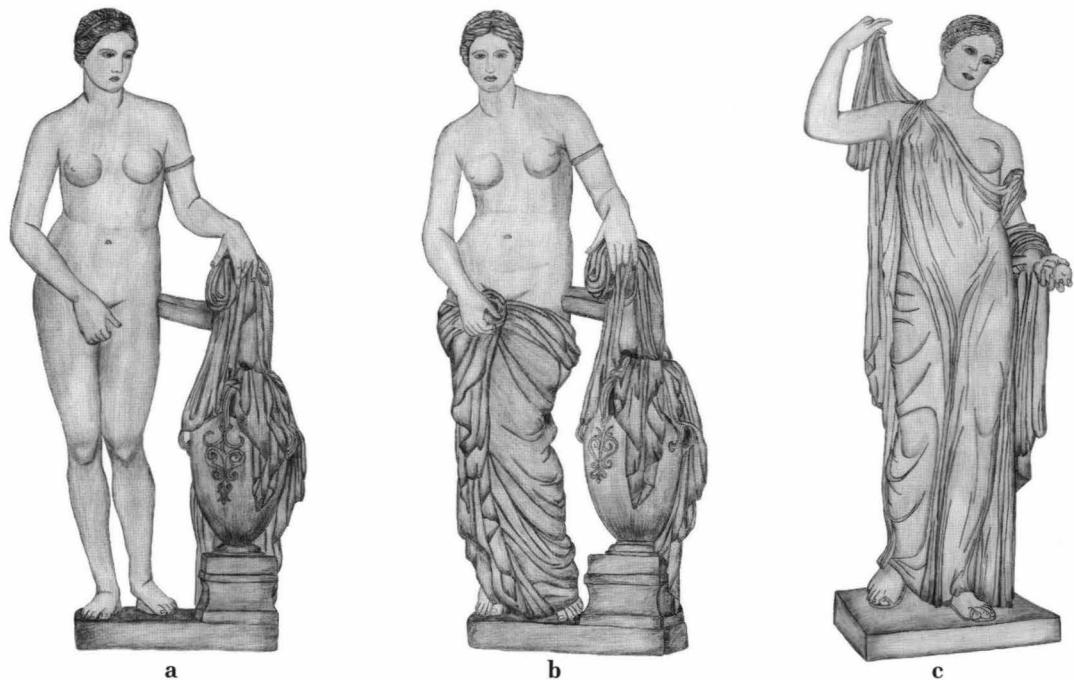


Fig. 3. a-b. Venus *Cnidos*; c. Venus *Genetrix*.

From the point of view of fort types with finds, no differentiations between legionary fortresses and auxiliary forts can be inferred. The location of the statuettes inside

⁹ LIMC, VIII/1, 196-198, 202, 204, 206.

¹⁰ Isac 1977, 163-170; Pop 1998, 317, no. 4, Pl. IX/5; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 86, no. 93, Pl. 50.

¹¹ Bărcăilă 1934, 21, no. 9c, Fig. 27; Marinescu 1988, 70, no. 24; Pop 1998, 318, no. 12, Pl. X/3.

¹² Gudea 1986, Fig. 14; Gudea 1997a, 26/71; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 97, no. 113, Pl. 60.

¹³ Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, 108, no. 4, Pl. CXXXI/3; Ungurean 2008, 157, no. 59.

¹⁴ Alicu, Szöke, Pop 1997, 40, 81; Protase, Gudea, Ardevan 2008, 100, Pl. LXXIII-LXXIV.

the forts is diverse, finds covering practically the entire fort surface: barracks - Buciumi (no. 4-6)¹⁵, Hinova (no. 24-25)¹⁶, Porolissum (no. 34)¹⁷, Tibiscum (no. 31)¹⁸; *horrea* - Micia (no. 42)¹⁹; *principia* - Potaissa (no. 40)²⁰; *praetorium* - Bologa (nos. 1-2)²¹; *retenitura sinistra* - Gherla (no. 17)²², Porolissum (no. 33)²³; *via sagularis* - Micia (no. 44)²⁴; *praetentura sinistra* - Gilău (nos. 21-23)²⁵; *porta praetoria* - Ilișua (no. 26)²⁶; *porta principalis dextra* - Jidava (no. 29)²⁷; *porta principalis sinistra* - Tibiscum (no. 30)²⁸ or *via principalis* - Porolissum (nos. 35-36)²⁹, Răcari (no. 37)³⁰.

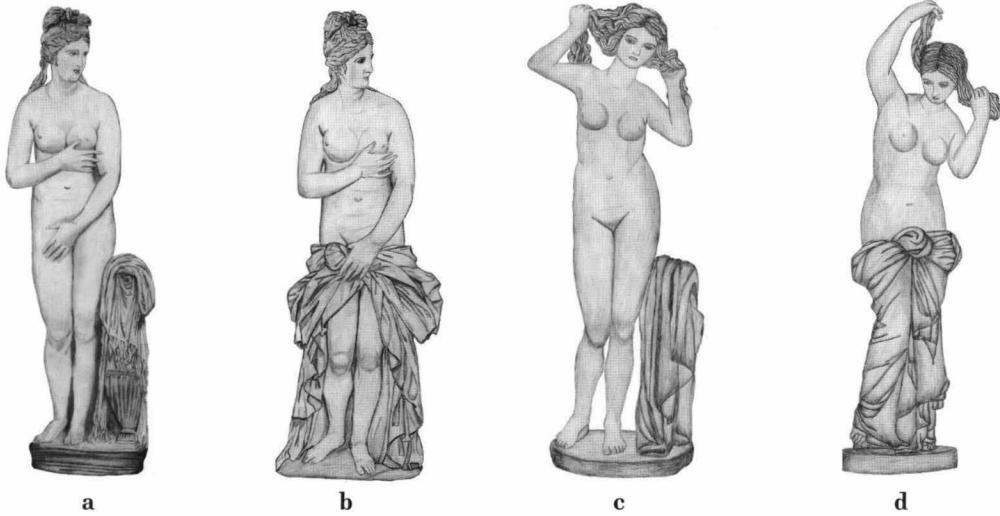


Fig. 4. a-b. Venus *Capitolina*; c-d. Venus *Anadyomene*.

Some of goddess Venus statuettes found within forts belong to the public cult, while other to that private. An official cult requires official space, a consecrated cult place, where statuettes would be displayed *ex-voto*. From *aedes principiorum*, storing standards, altars and emperor statues³¹ comes only one find, that in the fort at Potaissa. Inside forts, two possible cult locations were identified in Dacia - at Pojejena³² and

¹⁵ Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, 108, nos. 2-4, Pl. CXXXI/1-3; Ungurean 2008, 157-158, nos. 59-61.

¹⁶ Davidescu 1989, 86, Fig. XXIX /a, b; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 316, 318, nos. 1, 16, Pl. IX/1, XI/2.

¹⁷ Gudea 1996, 227, Pl. LI/3; Gudea 1997a, 29/71.

¹⁸ Benea 2001, 275; Ungurean 2008, 174, no. 135.

¹⁹ Petculescu 1983, 49.

²⁰ Bajusz 1980, 383, no. 662; Bajusz 2005, 674, Fig. 44/91; Ungurean 2008, 230, no. 408.

²¹ Gudea, Pop, 1972, 137, Fig. 17/4, 9; Ungurean 2008, 157, nos. 57-58.

²² Gramatopol 1982, 184, Pl. X/8; Marinescu 1994, 277, no. 36, Fig. 5; Pop 1998, 318, no. 15, Pl. XI/1.

²³ Gudea 1986, Fig. 14; Gudea 1997a, 26/71; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 97, no. 113, Pl. 60.

²⁴ Marinescu 1979, 405-408; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 59, no. 112, Pl. 59.

²⁵ Isac 1977, 163-170; Isac 1997, 8, 70; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 86, no. 93, Pl. 50.

²⁶ Protase, Marinescu 1977, 42, 70; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 92, no. 103, Pl. 55.

²⁷ Popescu 2004, 90.

²⁸ Benea, Bona 1994, 107, 112; Alicu, Szöke, Pop 1997, 40, no. 245; Ungurean 2008, 173, no. 133.

²⁹ Gudea 1986, 48, 109; Gudea, Tamba 2005, 472, no. 6, Fig. 1; Ștefănescu 2009, 69.

³⁰ Florescu 1931, 22-23, no. 4, Fig. 14; Tătulea 1994, Fig. 35/2; Ungurean 2008, 188, no. 206.

³¹ Domaszewski 1895, 9-10; Helgeland 1978, 1476; Marcu 2010, 75.

³² Gudea, Bozu 1977, 128.

Tibiscum³³ –, both dedicated to the worship of Mithras, none for goddess Venus. The existence of a location inside the fort where soldiers would revere various gods, the *auguratorium*, placed between *praetorium* and *via principalis*, was rather supposed than archaeologically identified. The association of certain Venus statuettes discovered in this area with such a cult space is highly hypothetical.

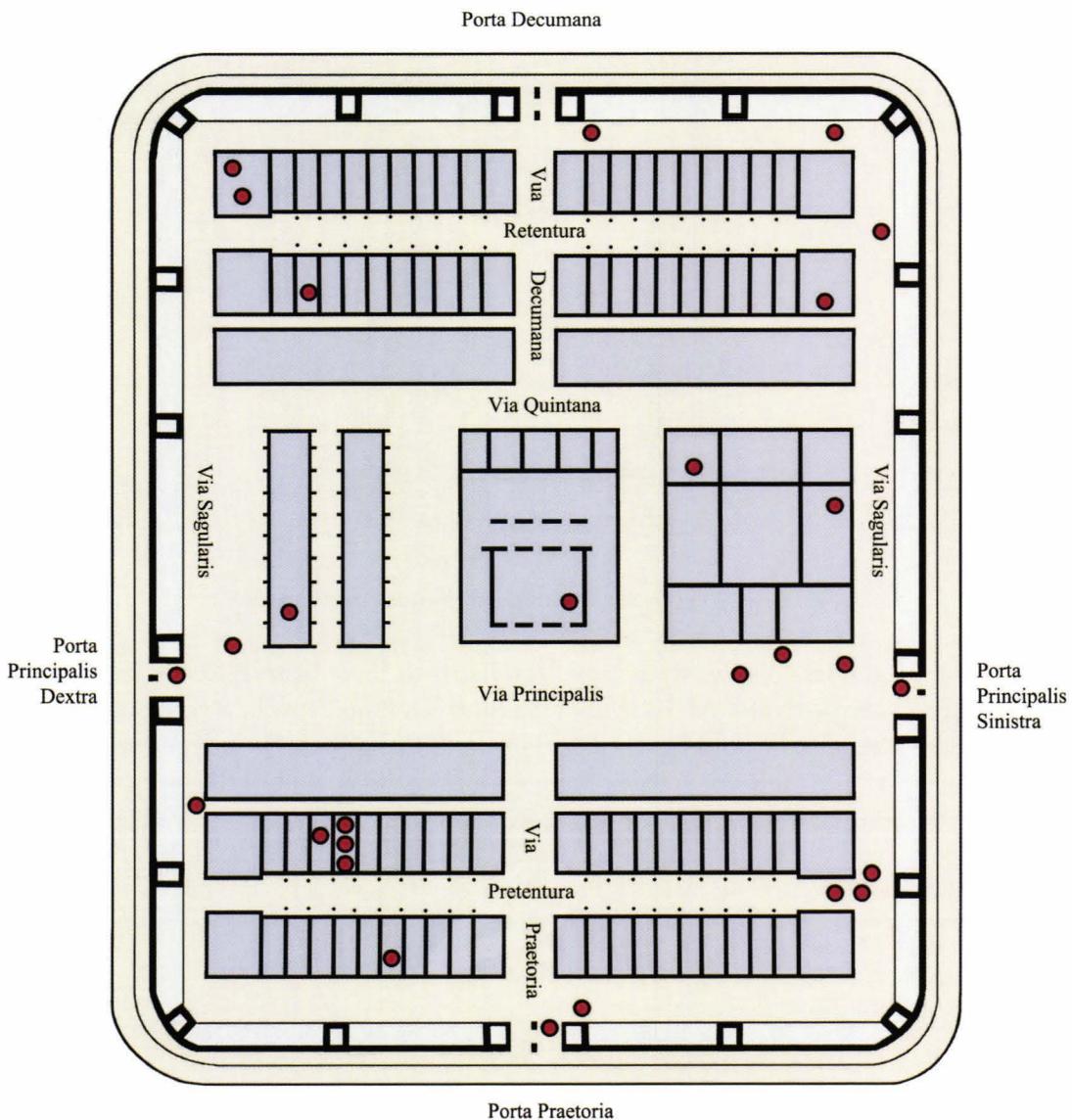


Fig. 5. Distribution of finds within forts (according to Johnson 1983, Fig. 19).

A possible public cult of goddess Venus within forts may be related to the imperial cult and its attribute as goddess-mother to the Romans and the imperial family.

³³ Benea, Bona 1994, 50.

Some of the imperial couples copy the divine couple Mars – Venus, the emperor and spouse posing as two divine protectors of the Empire³⁴. The best examples to this effect are Hadrian and Sabina or Commodus and Crispina³⁵. Venus associated with Mars are two fundamental virtues of the Roman religion: *felicitas* and *victoria*. In this aspect, Venus's role is not to disarm Mars, but to participate in his actions, in the service of Rome. This warlike emphasized side of Venus is mirrored in some of the late epithets, like Venus *Martialis*³⁶. In addition, Venus is frequently associated to another warlike god, Hercules.

Occasionally, only empresses are associated to Venus, the goddess being deemed personal ancestor or as the goddess of beauty and fertility. Coins issues with the face of the empress and goddess Venus as *Victrix* on the reverse are many. In other cases, empresses are portrayed by statues in various aspects of Venus, being worshiped after death *informam deorum*. *Post mortem*, in Puteoli Iulia Domna is also deified as goddess Venus *Caelestis*³⁷. Noticeably, some of these empresses associated to Venus, like Faustina Minor³⁸, Iulia Domna or Iulia Mamaea, also receive epithet *Mater Castrorum*.

The goddess popularity within the military environment is also recorded by the consecration of a legion, X Veneria, just after Caesar deemed the goddess the ancestor of gens Iulia. Noticeably, the symbol of the legion was the bull³⁹, which was also chosen by other Caesar's legions like VII and VIII Augusta or X Gemina. The bull is the zodiac sign associated to Venus, much previous the emergence of the Mithraism in the Empire, symbol of procreation and life⁴⁰. The symbol is later adopted by legions III Gallica, III Macedonica or V Macedonica. This would constitute an additional argument for the popularity of the goddess at Potaissa.

Even though no inscription put in honour of goddess Venus was identified within forts, of the nine found in Dacia, four may be related to the military environment and the official cult. These are the inscriptions from Napoca⁴¹, Băile Herculane⁴², Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa⁴³ and Apulum⁴⁴, the dedicants exercising the public offices of *decurion* or *procurator*. In fact, all the nine inscriptions from Dacia may be almost entirely assigned to the public cult, Venus being worshipped with epithets like *Victrix*, *Augusta* or *Ubique*.

According to the location of the finds within forts, one may argue that the cult of Venus was rather disorganised than organised. An obvious cluster of finds was not identified around a possible place of public worship, but in the barracks, area which is mainly private. Materials found in barracks are rather the result of personal devotion

³⁴ Aymard 1934, 178–196.

³⁵ Kleiner 1981, 538, Pl. XXVI/9.

³⁶ CIL XI 5165.

³⁷ Mikocki 1995, 70.

³⁸ Boatwright 2003, 249–268.

³⁹ Lawrence 1984, 139.

⁴⁰ Clebert 1995, s.v. *taurus*, 294.

⁴¹ CIL III 00864.

⁴² CIL III 1567; IDR III/1, 68.

⁴³ AE 1998, 1101; Piso 1998, 264, no. 14; ILD 278.

⁴⁴ CIL III 1157; IDR III/5, 363.

than of duty-requested obligations. There, the goddess was worshipped for her primary attributes, those powerfully influenced by the Greek Aphrodite.

The statuettes present in the private military environment are neither due to the fact they are made of a cheap material, accessible to anybody, nor to its function as the depiction of beauty, field pertaining by excellence to Venus. The deposition of a statuette, in agreement with the contractual character of the Roman religion, could be made only in the hope of materialising a love request or as a reward, following its fulfilment beside other gifts and offerings. One should not neglect the healing function of Venus. Her association in inscriptions with Aesculapius or Hygia likely references certain “amorous” diseases the soldiers might have suffered from, for the healing of which the one “causing” the disease in the first place had to be persuaded. Not by accident, a Venus terracotta was found in the legionary hospital at Novae⁴⁵.

Venus was also worshipped as protectress of life against death. This attribute of the goddess is underlined by the pendant she occasionally wears, the *lunula*, a symbol of Moon’s phases, of the idea that life triumphs over death⁴⁶. The association of the Moon with the funerary space is based on certain beliefs according to which the souls of the dead go to the Moon, to the Elysian Fields. The diffusion of this symbol within the Empire was most likely done via soldiers coming from the East. Thus, the Moon appears rendered when also referencing the Eastern triad (Babylonian): Moon (Sin), Sun (Shamash) and Venus (Ishtar)⁴⁷. The goddess is also known as patron of fecundity and fertility not only human, but also agrarian, which might explain the emergence of her statuettes in forts barns.

By *interpretio Romana*, a series of deities of the populations incorporated within the Empire, whose worship rather concerns the private field, may be regarded as Venus. Many of the recruited soldiers bring with themselves their own gods, some foreign to the official Roman pantheon. A good example to this effect is the fort at Carnuntum, where cults for Venus *Victrix* (likely disguised as Venus *Heliopolitana*), Jupiter *Heliopolitanus* and Mercurius *Augustus* were recorded. In fact, behind this triad lie the tutelary gods of Heliopolis, Venus *Victrix* or *Heliopolitana* being in fact goddess Astarte⁴⁸. This would explain the large number of inscriptions from the Danubian provinces dedicated to Jupiter or Mercurius. Dedications to Jupiter *Heliopolitanus* are also made by the centurions of legion XIII Gemina⁴⁹ and those in IV Flavia Felix⁵⁰ in the fort at Micia. Venus *Heliopolitana* is yet missing from the repertoire of divinities identified insofar in Dacia.

In conclusion, the overall view concerning the environment where the cult of goddess Venus was carried out in Dacia clearly points out that the figured material belongs most frequently to the military environment. The proper situation is not the result of a likely state of research of the archaeological sites from Dacia, but

⁴⁵ Popescu 2004, 90.

⁴⁶ Ungurean 2008, 86.

⁴⁷ Cumont 1966, 211.

⁴⁸ Birley 1978, 1520; Speidel 1984, 2228; Kremer 2005, 449-450, Fig. 4.

⁴⁹ IDR III/2, 243; IDR III/3, 96.

⁵⁰ IDR III/3, 95.

records a historical phenomenon. This is also found in other Roman provinces. The cult material for goddess Venus also abounds in other forts of the Empire, especially in the provinces which, alike Dacia, were strongly militarised (Germania, Britannia, Pannonia).

Given the poor artistic quality of the representations, they were not used as simple decoration objects, but carried an intrinsic cult value. Their modelling attempted to render stereotype gestures, which were not supposed to be detailed. The significance of gestures and not their fine rendering made them important. The right palm downwards might be the gesture by which the divinity welcomed her worshippers, while the reversed gesture with the upward palm might be the sign of offering blessings to the believers. According to this view, the fact that fingers are only sketched is of no great importance.

Statuettes in the military environment were mainly identified in the barracks area, a space closest to what a private area means to a civil environment. The significance of the cult performed there is also close to that completed in the private environment outside fort walls. As such, Venus is worshiped for her primary attributes: protectress of human or agrarian prolificacy, goddess of love or keeper of life against death.

Inscriptions having soldiers as dedicants, even though discovered outside the forts, is indicative of the fact that they worshiped Venus also in the public space. In addition, inscriptions indirectly record that Venus was also revered collectively, her attributions being other than those in the private field, rather complementary than different. In public, the soldiers' attitude to Venus is one profoundly politicised. Venus appears early as an ancestor of the imperial family, later becoming mother to all Romans. Moreover, imperial couples mirror iconographically, *informam deorum* the divine couple Mars - Venus, alike Hadrian and Sabina or Commodus and Crispina. Her popularity with the imperial house is additionally recorded by certain epithets like *Augusta* or even *Victrix*, the last epithet being in direct relation to the relation of the goddess to Mars. As such, the fact that some empresses received the title *Mater Castrorum* is not surprising. Roman soldiers made dedications in the public space, more visible to the community than that private, rather as the result of a duty task, as an obligation, as a necessity incurred once with the office held. Personal piety is almost excluded from this public cult.

Beyond all these aspects of the cult, it is worthy of mention that Venus also received epithet *Ubique*, the one who is everywhere, above all, attribute of a goddess with general and universal authority. This epithet likely reunites best the two spaces where the cult was performed, the military and private, intimate and personal, with that public, official and impersonal.

Catalogue of finds⁵¹

1. Bologa (Cluj county); MIA - Zalău; unspecified inv. no.; fort *praetorium*; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 4 cm; fragmentary - preserving only the head; unidentified type (Pl. V).

Gudea 1972, 137, Fig. 17/9; Ungurean 2008, 157, no. 57.

2. Bologa (Cluj county); MIA- Zalău; unspecified inv. no.; fort *praetorium*; terracotta statuette; reddish-brick fabric; unspecified h; fragmentary - preserving only the shoulder and upper part of the left arm; unidentified type.

Gudea 1972, 137, Fig. 17/4; Ungurean 2008, 157, no. 58.

3. Bologa (Cluj county); fort; bronze statuette; no further specifications.

Isac 2001, 178.

4. Buciumi (Sălaj county); MIA - Zalău, inv. no. C.C. 144/ 69; fort, barracks 5; terracotta statuette; grey fabric; h = 15.8 cm; relatively complete, missing base on the right side; type Venus *Anadyomene* semi-nude (Pl. V).

Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, 108, no. 4, Pl. CXXXI/3; Ungurean 2008, 157, no. 59.

5. Buciumi (Sălaj county); MIA - Zalău; inv. no. C.C. 273/68; fort, barracks 5; terracotta statuette; reddish fabric; h = 7.3 cm; fragmentary - preserving only from waist down; unidentified type (Pl. IV).

Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, 108, no. 3, Pl. CXXXI/2; Ungurean 2008, 157, no. 60.

6. Buciumi (Sălaj county); MIA - Zalău; inv. no. C.C. 378/70; fort, barracks 4; terracotta statuette; brownish-grey fabric, with strong firing traces; h = 16.5 cm; fragmentary - fractured by the middle, part of the right side of the dress and base missing; type Venus *Cnidos*, nude (Pl. V).

Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, 108, no. 2, Pl. CXXXI/1; Ungurean 2008, 158, no. 61.

7. Buciumi (Sălaj county); MIA - Zalău; unspecified inv. no.; fort, without any specifications; terracotta statuette; reddish fabric; unspecified h; relatively complete; type Venus *Anadyomene* semi-nude.

Gudea 1997b, 71, Fig. 26; Ungurean 2008, 158, no. 62.

8. Buciumi (Sălaj county); MIA - Zalău; inv. no. C.C. 145/69; fort, no further specifications; bronze statuette; artificial green patina; h = 11.9 cm; fragmentary, slightly damaged diadem, base missing; type Venus *Capitolina* semi-nude (Pl. II).

Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, 107-108, no. 1, Pl. CXXX; Miclea, Florescu 1980, 242-244; Pop 1998, 320, no. 32, Pl. XIV/3; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 98-99, no. 117, Pl. 61.

9. Cășeiu-Samum (Cluj county); MI - Dej; inv. no. 128; fort, no further specifications; marble statuette; h = 31 cm; fragmentary, preserving lower part from waist down and part of the base; type Venus *Genetrix* (Pl. III).

Isac 1994, 54-57, no. 2, Fig. 2.

⁵¹ The presentation order of the items in the catalogue is as follows: find spot; storage location; inventory number; archaeological context; representation type; production material; item sizes; preservation state; statuary type; plate, references. In addition, within the illustration accompanying this study, the order number of the items in the catalogue corresponds to the number given in their afferent illustration. Very fragmentary items and those published without images were not included.

10. Cioroiul Nou (Olt county); MO - Craiova; inv. no. 14669; southern corner of the fort; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 11 cm; fragmentary - missing head, right forearm and feet; type Venus *Cnidos* semi-nude (Pl. V).

Tudor, Diaconescu, Popilian 1967, 597, Fig. 3/5; Bondoc 2005, 9, no. 2; Ungurean 2008, 162, no. 82.

11. Cioroiul Nou (Olt county); MO - Craiova; inv. no. I 50876; fort, no further specifications; terracotta statuette; fine, light grey fabric; h = 8 cm; fragmentary - preserving lower part from waist down and part of a tree trunk; unidentified type (Pl. V).

Bondoc 2005, 10, no. 3; Ungurean 2008, 162, no. 83; Bondoc 2010, 39, no. 35, Pl. XVI/35.

12. Drobeta-Turnu Severin - Drobeta (Mehedinți county); MNIR; inv. no. 636; fort, no further specifications; marble statuette; h = 55 cm; fragmentary - missing head, arms and legs from knee down, chest chopped on the left side; unidentified type (Pl. II).

Pârvan 1913, 371, no. 12, Fig. 7; Tudor 1966, Fig. 31; Bordenache 1969, 28, no. 33, Pl. XVII.

13. Drobeta-Turnu Severin - Drobeta (Mehedinți county); M - D. Tr. Severin; inv. no. II 7102; fort, no further specifications; bronze statuette; grey patina; h = 20.5 cm; fragmentary - missing arms below armpits and right leg from shank; unidentified type (Pl. II).

Bărcăcilă 1934, 21, no. 9c, Fig. 27; Miclea, Florescu 1980, 110, no. 341, Fig. 341; Pop 1998, 318, no. 12, Pl. X/3; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 85-86, no. 91, Pl. 49.

14. Drobeta-Turnu Severin - Drobeta (Mehedinți county); M- D. Tr. Severin; inv. no. II 7116; fort, no further specifications; bronze statuette; grey patina; h = 9.5 cm; mediocre preservation state - corroded surface; fragmentary - missing both hands from wrists, left leg from shank and left leg above the knee; unidentified type (Pl. III).

Marinescu 1981, 593, no. 76; Pop 1998, 319, no. 25, Pl. XI/6; Marinescu, Pop, 2000, 94, no. 107, Pl. 57.

15. Drobeta-Turnu Severin - Drobeta (Mehedinți county); M- D. Tr. Severin; inv. no. II 9349; fort, no further specifications; bronze statuette; brownish patina; h = 10.8 cm; poor preservation state - missing right hand from wrist, shows casting traces in-between the legs, strongly corroded surface; unidentified type (Pl. II).

Marinescu 1981, 593, nos. 73-76, Pl. IV, Fig. 4; Marinescu 1988, 71, no. 40; Pop 1998, 320, no. 30, Pl. XIII/5; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 94, no. 108, Pl. 57.

16. Drobeta-Turnu Severin - Drobeta (Mehedinți county); M- D. Tr. Severin; inv. no. II 9350; fort, no further specifications; bronze statuette; brownish-golden patina; h = 8.5 cm; relatively good preservation state - missing fingers from right hand only; type Venus *Cnidos* nude (Pl. IV/16).

Miclea, Florescu 1980, 110, no. 341, Fig. 341; Marinescu 1994, 277, no. 23; Pop 1998, 317, no. 8, Pl. IX/8; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 84, no. 89, Pl. 48.

17. Gherla (Cluj county); MNIR; inv. no. 37852; fort, *retentura sinistra*; bronze statuette; brownish patina; h = 11.8 cm; complete - light scratch on the chest; type Venus *Anadyomene* nude (Pl. III).

Gramatopol 1982, 184, Pl. X/8; Marinescu 1994, 277, no. 36, Fig. 5; Pop 1998, 318, no. 15, Pl. XI/1; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 91, no. 102, Pl. 55.

18. Gherla (Cluj county); MNIT; inv. no. V 31075; eastern side of the fort; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 14 cm; fragmentary - missing feet; type Venus *Cnidos* nude (Pl. IV).

Alicu, Szöke, Pop 1997, 40, 81; Protase, Gudea, Ardevan 2008, 100, Pl. LXXIII.

19. Gherla (Cluj county); MNIT; inv. no. V 31067; north-eastern corner of the fort; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 10.3 cm; fragmentary - missing feet; type Venus *Cnidos* nude (Pl. IV).

Protase, Gudea, Ardevan 2008, 100, Pl. LXXIV.

20. Gherla (Cluj county); MNIT; inv. no. V 31071; fort, no further specifications; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 2.2 cm; fragmentary - preserving only the head; unidentified type.

Protase, Gudea, Ardevan 2008, 100.

21. Gilău (Cluj county); MNIT; inv. no. 21094; outside a stone barracks located on the left side of *praetentura*, close to the eastern side; bronze statuette; brownish patina; h = 14 cm; relatively good preservation state - missing fingers from left hand and feet (restored); type Venus *Cnidos* nude (Pl. III).

Isac 1977, 163-170; Miclea, Florescu 1980, 88, no. 176, Fig. 176; Pop 1998, 317, no. 4, Pl. IX/5; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 86, no. 93, Pl. 50.

22. Gilău (Cluj county); MNIT; inv. no. 46760; fort, *praetentura sinistra*; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 8 cm; fragmentary - statuette is preserved from chest down, missing legs from knee down and left arm; unidentified type (Pl. V).

Isac 1997, 70.

23. Gilău (Cluj county); MNIT; inv. no. 45629; fort, *porta principalis dextra*; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 7 cm; fragmentary - preserving only the head; unidentified type (Pl. V).

Isac 1997, 8.

24. Hinova (Mehedinți county); M - D. Tr. Severin; inv. no. II 11037; fort, barracks (western side); bronze statuette; patina removed upon cleaning; h = 13.5 cm; fragmentary - missing right forearm, right foot and left leg below the knee; type Venus *Anadyomene* nude (Pl. III).

Davidescu 1989, 86, Fig. XXIX /b; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 318, no. 16, Pl. XI/2.

25. Hinova (Mehedinți county); M - D. Tr. Severin; inv. no. II 9812; fort, barracks; bronze statuette; grey patina; h = 11 cm; mediocre - missing both hands from wrists down and legs from ankles; type Venus *Capitolina* nude (Pl. II).

Davidescu 1989, 86, Fig. XXIX/a; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 316, no. 1, Pl. IX/1.

26. Ilișua (Bistrița-Năsăud county); MJ - Bistrița; inv. no. 20647; fort, *porta praetoria*; bronze statuette; green patina; h = 15 cm; relatively good preservation state - missing feet; type Venus *Anadyomene* nude (Pl. III).

Protase, Marinescu 1977, 42, 70; Alicu, Szöke, Pop 1997, 40, no. 243; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 92, no. 103, Pl. 55.

27. Ilișua (Bistrița-Năsăud county); MJ - Bistrița; unspecified inv. no.; fort, no further specifications; terracotta statuette; reddish fabric; h = 8.3 cm; fragmentary - preserving only the bust up to the chest area; unidentified type (Pl. V/27).

Protase, Gaiu, Marinescu 1997, Pl. XLII/3; Cătinaș 2005, 145.

28. Ilișua (Bistrița-Năsăud county); MJ - Bistrița; unspecified inv. no.; fort, no further specifications; terracotta statuette; reddish-brick fabric; h = 15.8 cm; fragmentary - preserved from the front the head and part of the right arm, and from the back side - almost entire legs; missing left shoulder and arm; unidentified type (Pl. V).

Protase, Gaiu, Marinescu 1997, Pl. XLII/2; Cătinaș 2005, 145.

29. Jidava (Câmpulung, Argeș county); storage place and inv. no. unspecified; fort, *porta principalis dextra*; terracotta statuette; reddish fabric; unspecified h; fragmentary; unidentified type.

Popescu 2004, 90.

30. Jupa - Tibiscum (Caraș - Severin county); MJ - Caransebeș; inv. no. I 3305; fort, *porta principalis sinistra*; terracotta statuette; reddish-brick fabric; h = 13.1 cm; fragmentary - preserving only the lower part, bust down; unidentified type.

Benea, Bona 1994, 107, 112; Alicu, Szöke, Pop 1997, 40, no. 245; Ungurean 2008, 173, no. 133.

31. Jupa - Tibiscum (Caraș - Severin county); storage place and inv. no. unspecified; fort, barracks terracotta statuette; reddish fabric; height and preservation state unspecified; unidentified type.

Benea 2001, 275; Ungurean 2008, 174, no. 135.

32. Jupa - Tibiscum (Caraș - Severin county); MO-Craiova; inv. no. 10971; fort, barracks; terracotta statuette; reddish-brick fabric; h = 9.5 cm; fragmentary - preserving the torso and an arm; unidentified type.

Bona et alii 1983, 411, no. 2.

33. Moigrad - Porolissum (Sălaj county); MIA - Zalău; inv. no. 1001/1982; northern side of the fort; bronze statuette; dark green patina; h = 11.3 cm; complete; type Venus *Anadyomene* nude (Pl. III).

Gudea 1986, Fig. 14; Gudea 1997a, 26/71; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 97, no. 113, Pl. 6o.

34. Moigrad - Porolissum (Sălaj county); MIA - Zalău; inv. no. CC 491/1988, fort, barracks 1; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 5.5 cm; fragmentary - preserving only head and neck; unidentified type (Pl. IV).

Gudea 1996, 227, Pl. LI/3; Gudea 1997a, 29/71.

35. Moigrad - Porolissum (Sălaj county); unspecified storage place and inv. no.; fort, in the water tank near the *praetorium*; marble statuette; h = 18.4 cm; fragmentary - preserving only the goddess legs and those of Amor on the right side, the left Amor missing its head; unidentified type (Pl. II).

Gudea, Tamba 2005, 472, no. 6, Fig. 17.

36. Moigrad - Porolissum (Sălaj county); unspecified storage place and inv. no; fort, at 5 m from *praetorium*; marble statuette; height and preservation state unspecified; unidentified type.

Gudea 1986, 48, 109; Ștefănescu 2009, 69.

37. Răcari (Brădești, Dolj county); MO - Craiova; inv. no. I 6131; fort, *via principalis*, near *praetorium*; terracotta statuette; fine, reddish fabric; h = 13.5 cm; fragmentary - preserving only the lower part, waist down, without feet and great part of the base; unidentified type (Pl. IV).

Florescu 1931, 22-23, no. 4, Fig. 14; Tătulea 1994, Fig. 35/2; Ungurean 2008, 188, no. 206; Gudea, Bondoc 2009, 195, no. 405.

38. Râşnov - Cumidava (Brașov county); MIA - Zalău; unspecified inv. no.; fort rampart; terracotta statuette; brick fabric; h = 16.3 cm; fragmentary - missing head and part of the base; type Venus *Anadyomene* nude (Pl. V/38).

Gudea, Pop 1972, 54, Fig. 51-52; Isac 2001, 178; Ungurean 2008, 188, no. 207.

39. Turda - Potaissa (Cluj county); missing piece; fort, no further specifications; bronze statuette; dark grey patina; h = 16.2 cm; fragmentary - missing right palm from wrist and legs from ankles; type Venus *Cnidos* nude (Pl. II).

Téglás 1904, 410-413; Bărbulescu 1994, 61, Pl. XIV/2; Bajusz 2005, 915, Fig. 29/94C.

40. Turda - Potaissa (Cluj county); missing piece; fort, *principia*; terracotta statuette; reddish fabric; h = 9 cm; fragmentary - preserving only head and bust; type Venus *Capitolina* (Pl. IV).

Bajusz 1980, 383, no. 662; Bajusz 2005, 674, Fig. 44/91; Ungurean 2008, 230, no. 408.

41. Vețel - Micia (Hunedoara county); MNIR; unspecified inv. no.; fort, no further specifications; terracotta statuette; reddish fabric, glaze; h = 9.5 cm; fragmentary, preserving the back side and right arm; unidentified type.

Bărbulescu 1985, 66, nr. 51; Ungurean 2008, 237, no. 457.

42. Vețel - Micia (Hunedoara county); unspecified storage place and inv. no.; fort, *horreum*; terracotta statuette; fabric with yellowish slip; height and preservation state unspecified; unidentified type.

Petculescu 1983, 49.

43. Vețel - Micia (Hunedoara county); MNIT; inv. no. 4225; fort, no further specifications; bronze statuette, dark grey patina, solid cast; h = 7.4 cm; fragmentary - missing right arm, part of the left forearm and right leg from knee down; unidentified type (Pl. II).

Alicu 1994, 22, Fig. 6; Marinescu 1994, 227, no. 29; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 100, no. 120, Pl. 62; Benea 2008, 115.

44. Vețel - Micia (Hunedoara county); MNIR; inv. no. 131731; western side of the fort, inside a pit; bronze statuette; patina removed upon cleaning; h = 11.8 cm; relatively good preservation - little deterioration on the body surface and a cut on the face; type Venus *Cnidos* nude (Pl. III).

Marinescu 1979, 405-408; Miclea, Florescu 1980, no. 56, Fig. 56; Pop 1998, 320, no. 32, Pl. XIV/2; Marinescu, Pop 2000, 59, no. 112, Pl. 59.

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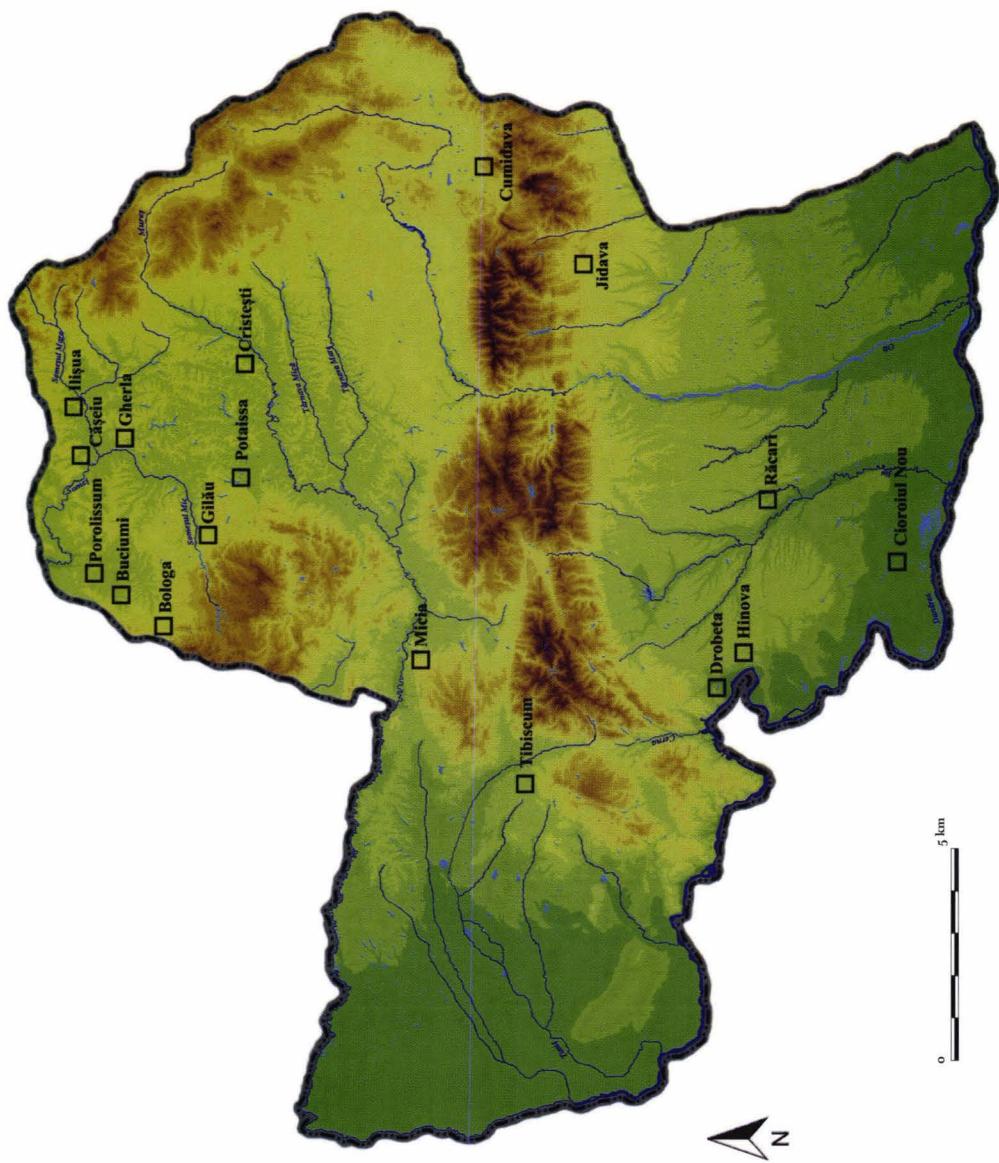
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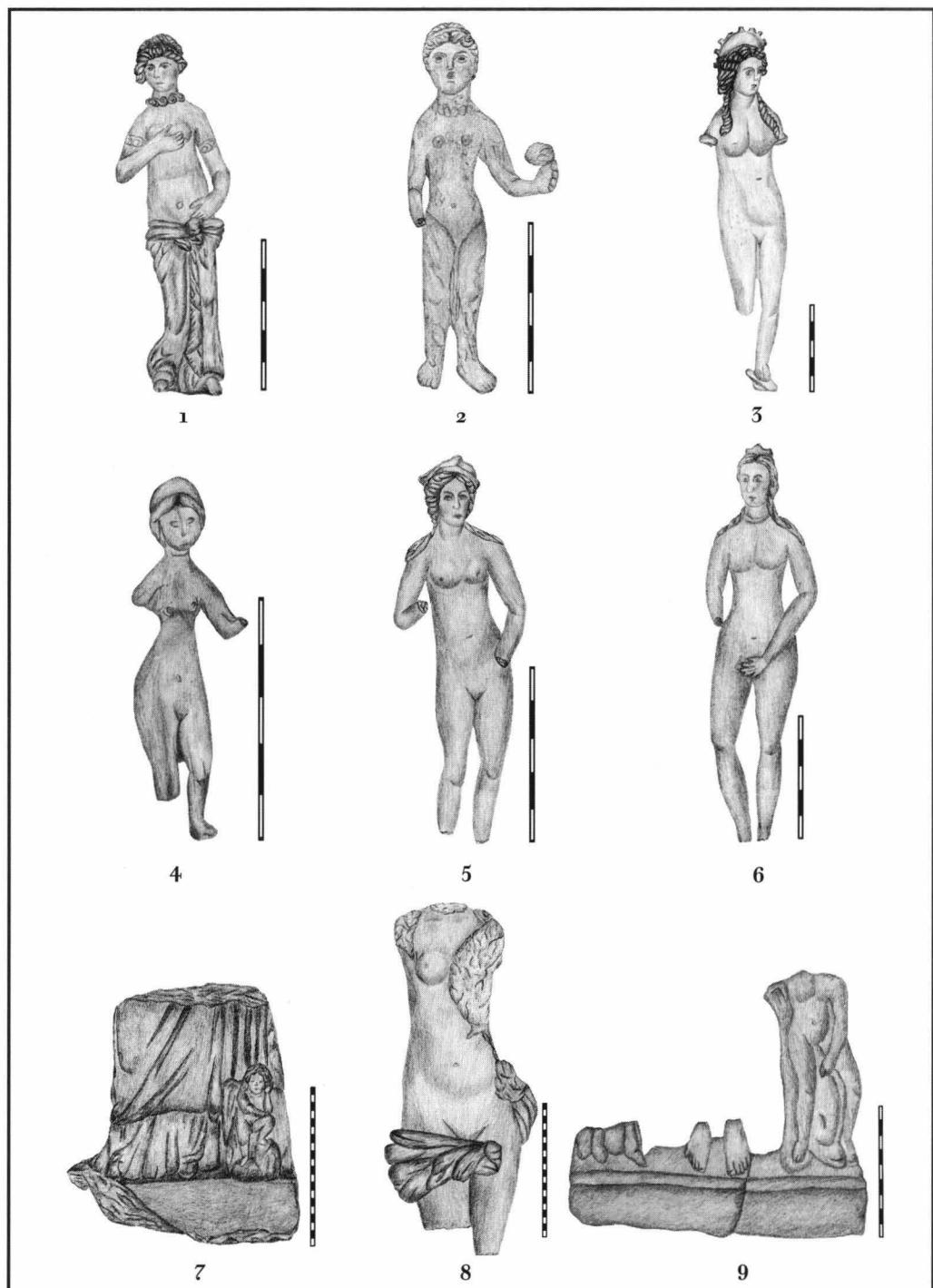
Museum Logos

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MIA - Zalău	History and Art Museum - Zalău;
MJ - Bistrița	Bistrița - Năsăud County Museum;
MJ - Caransebeș	Caransebeș County Museum of Ethnography and Border Regiment;
MNIR - București	National Museum of Romanian History - București;
MNIT - Cluj-Napoca	National History Museum of Transylvania - Cluj-Napoca;
MO - Craiova	Oltenia Museum - Craiova.

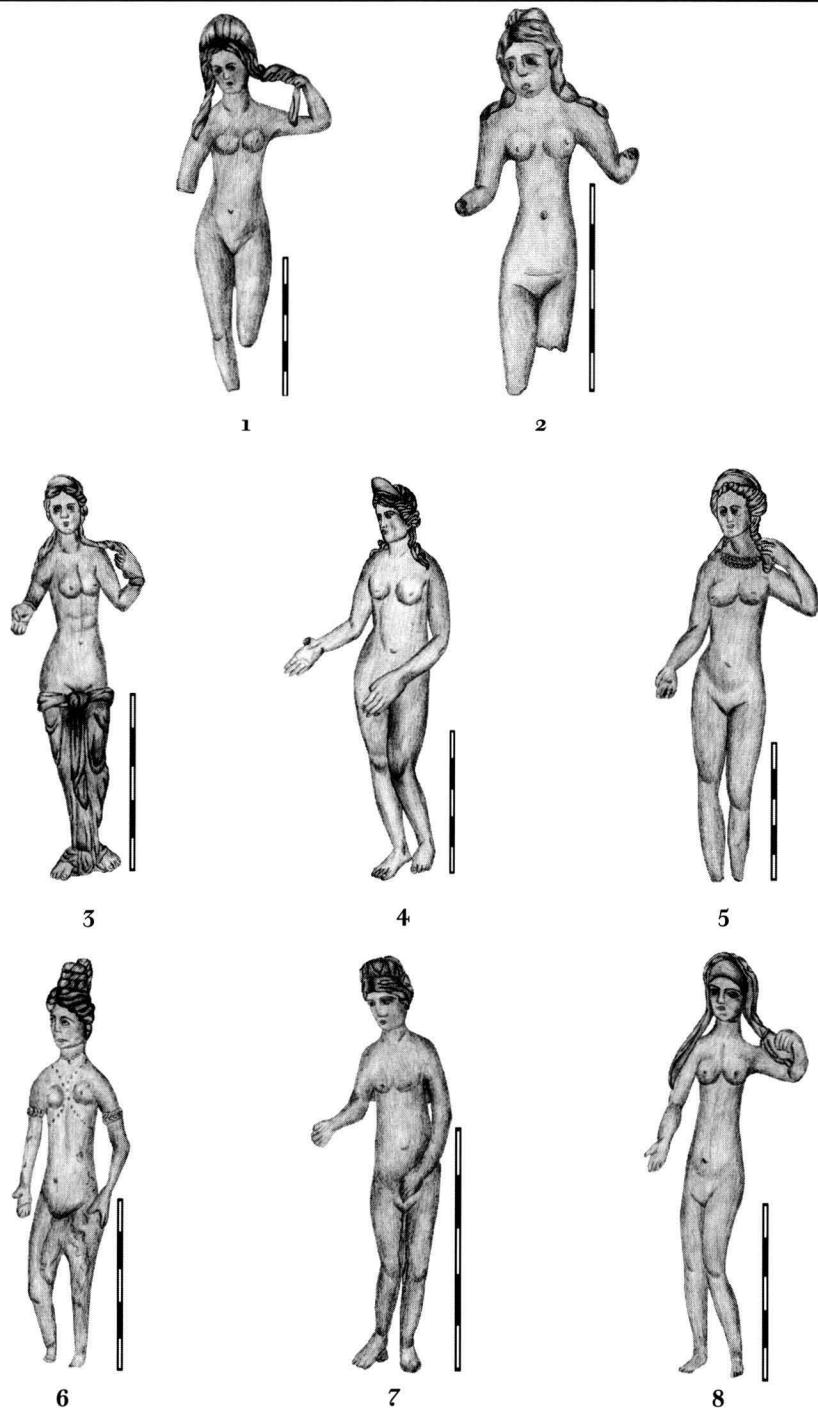
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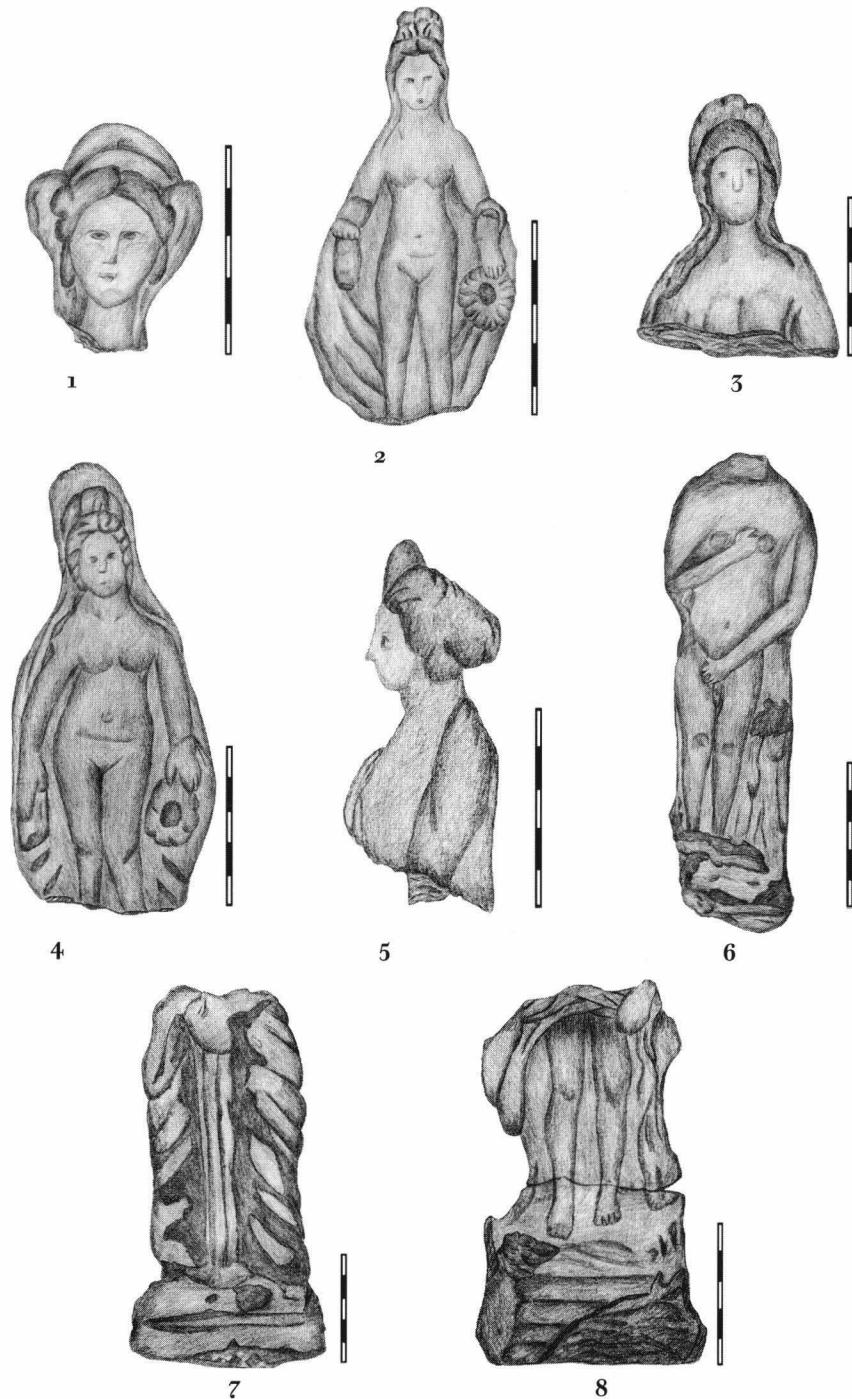
Pl. I. Forts in Roman Dacia with Venus statuettes.



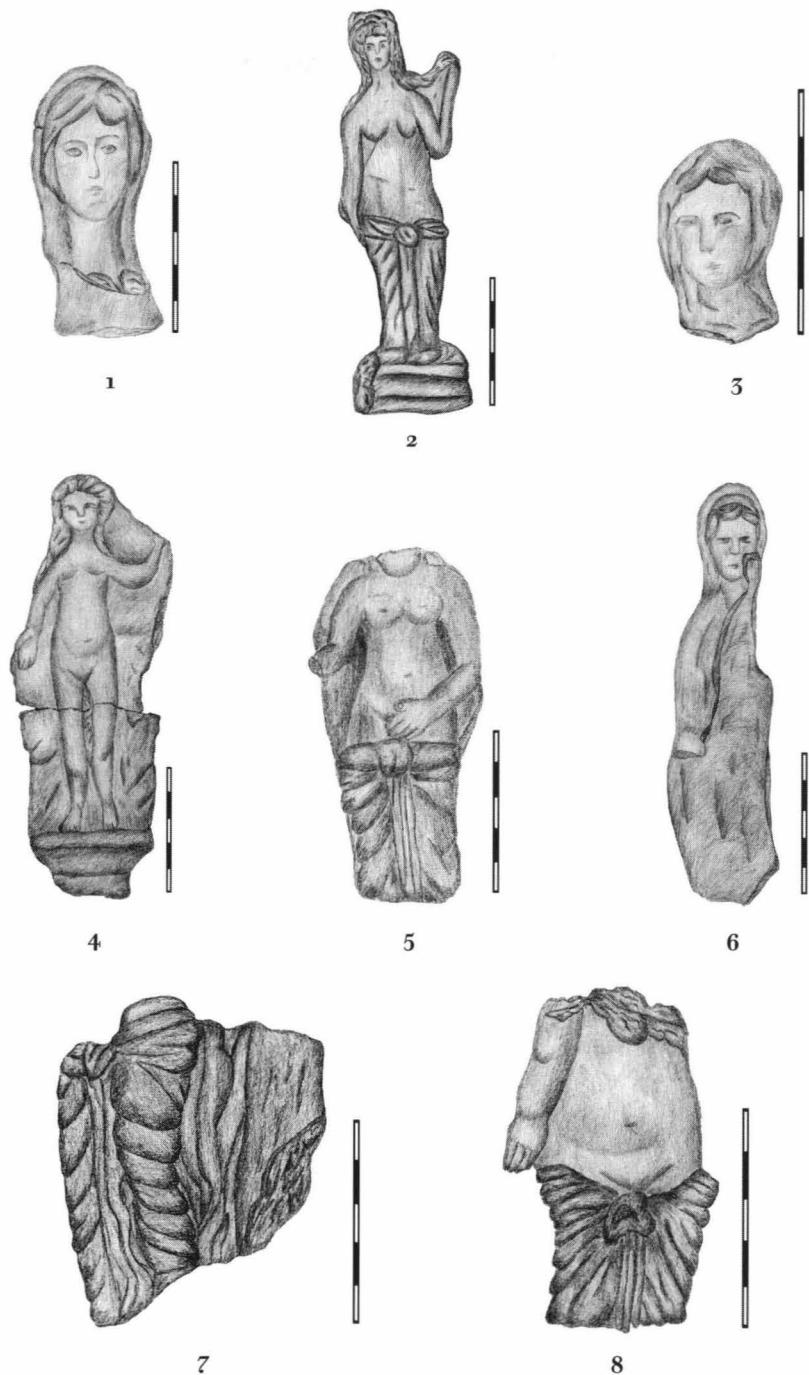
Pl. II. Bronze and stone statues: 1. Buciumi, cat. no. 8 (after Marinescu, Pop 2000, Pl. 61/117); 2. Drobeta, cat. no. 15 (after Marinescu, Pop 2000, Pl. 57/108); 3. Drobeta, cat. no. 13 (after Marinescu, Pop 2000, Pl. 49/108); 4. Micia, cat. no. 43 (after Alicu 1994, Fig. 6); 5. Hinova, cat. no. 25 (after Marinescu, Pop 2000, Pl. 9/1); 6. Potaissa, cat. no. 12 (after Bărbulescu 1994, Pl. XVII/2); 7. Samum, cat. no. 9 (after Isac 1994, Fig. 2); 8. Drobeta, cat. no. 12 (after Bordenache 1969, Pl. XVII); 9. Porolissum, cat. no. 35 (after Gudea, Tamba 2005, Fig. 17).



Pl. III. Bronze statues: 1. Hinova, cat. no. 24 (after Davidescu 1989, Fig. XXIX/b); 2. Drobeta, cat. no. 14 (after Pop 1998, Pl. XI/6); 3. Porolissum, cat. no. 33 (after Gudea 1986, Fig. 14); 4. Gilău, cat. no. 21 (after Marinescu, Pop 2000, Pl. 50/93); 5. Ilișua, cat. no. 26 (after Marinescu, Pop 2000, Pl. 55/103); 6. Micia, cat. no. 44 (after Pop 2000, Pl. XIV/2); 7. Drobeta, cat. no. 16 (after Miclea, Florescu 1980, Fig. 341); 8. Gherla, cat. no. 17 (after Marinescu, Pop 2000, Pl. 55/102).



Pl. IV. Terracotta statues: 1. Porolissum, cat. no. 34 (after Gudea 1996, Pl. LI/3); 2. Gherla, cat. no. 19 (after Protase, Gudea, Ardevan 2008, Pl. LXXIV); 3. Ilișua, cat. no. 27 (after Protase, Gaiu, Marinescu 1997, Pl. XLII/3); 4. Gherla, cat. no. 18 (after Protase, Gudea, Ardevan 2008, Pl. LXXIII); 5. Potaissa, cat. no. 40 (after Bajusz 2005, Fig. 44/91); 6. Cumidava, cat. no. 38 (after Gudea, Pop 1972, Fig. 51-52); 7. Buciumi, cat. no. 5 (after Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, Pl. CXXXI/2); 8. Cumidava, cat. no. 38 (after Gudea, Pop 1972, Fig. 51-52).



Pl. V. Terracotta statues: 1. Gilău, cat. no. 23 (after Isac 1997, 8); 2. Buciumi, cat. no. 4 (after Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, Pl. CXXXI/3); 3. Bologa, cat. no. 1 (after Gudea 1972, Fig. 17/9); 4. Buciumi, cat. no. 6 (after Chirilă, Gudea, Pop 1972, Pl. CXXXI); 5. Cioroiul Nou, cat. no. 10 (after Tudor, Diaconescu, Popilian 1967, 597, Fig. 3/5); 6. Ilișua, cat. no. 28 (after Protase, Gaiu, Marinescu 1997, Pl. XLII); 7. Cioroiul Nou, cat. no. 11 (after Bondoc 2010, Pl. XVI/35); 8. Cumidava, cat. no. 22 (after Isac 1997, 70).