

LETTERS FROM THE “ETERNAL CITY” HADRIAN DAICOVICIU - CONSTANTIN DAICOVICIU

Abstract: This study presents the correspondence between the archaeologist and university Professor Dr. Hadrian Daicoviciu (1932-1984), during a scholarship in Rome (1963), and his father, Acad. Constantin Daicoviciu (1898-1973), Rector of Babeș-Bolyai University.

Constantin Daicoviciu, an eminent scientist, professor, and brilliant orator, distinguished himself in the professional circles from the country and abroad through a vast activity as an archaeologist, epigraphist, philologist and historian of antiquity. From 1924 on, he led the excavations in the capital of Roman Dacia, Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, and the campaign of archaeological excavations from the Dacian fortresses in the Orăștie Mountains (Piatra Roșie, Grădiștea de Munte, Blidaru, Costești, Rudele, Fețele Albe). With a valuable scientific work, reflected in the research he conducted in the major archaeological resorts of antiquity, and in fundamental works that explore the ancient period of Romanian history, with outstanding teaching abilities, Constantin Daicoviciu was a veritable leader of the school of archaeology in Transylvania and his virtues were greatly appreciated by the highest national and international scientific milieus. C. Daicoviciu participated in numerous international congresses, conferences and reunions: the congresses of Greek and Latin epigraphy from Rome, Vienna, Munich, etc.; the “Eirene” international congresses of classical philology; the international congresses of the historians from Moscow, Warsaw, Budapest and Lausanne.

The high esteem in which the scientific work of Academician C. Daicoviciu was held resulted in the granting of scientific titles and his being co-opted in international historical committees and institutes: a correspondent member, then a full member of the Archaeological Institute in Berlin (1938, 1967); a member of the Society for Southeast European Studies in Munich (1966); a member of the International Association of Classical Archaeology in Rome (1960); a full member of the Austrian Archaeological Institute (1973); a member of the Society of Latin Studies in Paris; a correspondent member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (1962); a member of the International Committee of Historians (1968).

He became a full member of the Romanian Academy in 1955, Vice-President of the Academy, Chairman of the Department of Historical Sciences and a member of prestigious institutions abroad, as well as a laureate of the Herder Prize (1968).

The research undertaken by Professor Dr. Hadrian Daicoviciu targeted the history of pre-Roman Dacia, in particular, the period of the Dacian state and the history of Roman Dacia. The results of his research were appreciated at home and abroad, as attested by the large number of the eminent archaeologist's participations in national and international scientific events: the International Congress of Prehistorical and Protohistorical Sciences in Prague, 1966; the Congress of Southeast European Studies in Athens, 1970; the International Congress of Prehistorical and Protohistorical Sciences in Belgrade, 1971; the International Congress of Thracology in Sofia, 1972; the International Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy in Munich, 1972; the Congress of Southeast European Studies in Bucharest, 1974; the International Congress of Thracology, Bucharest, 1976; the International Congress of Historical Sciences, Bucharest, 1980. He was a member of the Society for Classical Studies (Bucharest, 1973) and an honorary member of the Romanian Numismatic Society (Bucharest, 1976).

For outstanding scientific merit, he received numerous awards and distinctions, most notably the “Vasile Pârvan” award of the Romanian Academy for the work *Dacii* [*The Dacians*] in 1965.

In the letters addressed to his father and mentor Constantin Daicoviciu, Hadrian Daicoviciu approached solely scientific, strictly documentary matters, throughout his sojourn in Italy, avoiding any

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comments that might seem “political,” even if they pertained to the cultural or quotidian atmosphere. This was obviously the result of their awareness that their correspondence was supervised: they did not want to leave any room for interpretation outside the strictly professional one, focused on classical archaeology, situated thousands of years away from the time of the account.

Keywords: scientific correspondence, Roman archaeology, the Archaeological School of Cluj, the university Professors Constantin and Hadrian Daicoviciu

The Historical School of Cluj has been illustrated by famous professors who have left an indelible mark on the spirituality of the city and the country. Constantin and Hadrian Daicoviciu² represent the best-known names of classical archaeology from the Napocensis University, as they guided dozens of generations of historians. The personality of these exceptional professors and directors of the National History Museum of Transylvania has entered into undeserved obscurity, which is nonetheless explainable by the ineluctable passage of time.

Constantin and Hadrian Daicoviciu placed their unmistakable stamp on the professional and intellectual trajectory of their disciples in the vast field of history. The archaeological sites Sarmizegetusa Regia and Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa were the “laboratories” in which the best known names of Transylvanian archaeology were trained and perfected their knowledge, and the history museum in Cluj was the halidom of science and culture with which they identified and which, under their leadership, was a trailblazing pioneer in the field of museology.

The archaeologist Hadrian Daicoviciu, who grew up, with his father, the academician Constantin Daicoviciu, amidst the ruins of the Dacian fortresses in the Orăștie Mountains and of the most important city in the space of Eastern Latinity, dedicated himself to the idea of investigating the two “columns” of the Romanian people: Sarmizegetusa Regia and Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa. “Hadrian Daicoviciu was, above all, the son of the great historian Constantin Daicoviciu because, indeed, he was not his heir only by the law of nature, but by the infinitely more severe law of culture. A difficult legacy, for his father was a great man in every respect, and it was difficult for anyone to measure up to him. But Hadrian Daicoviciu was truly and in the highest sense the heir of his sharp and learned father, for he carried on the work of his lifetime, inspiring this legacy with his own high spirit, with his own creative force, going deeper, decanting more subtly, in a word, innovating - as one rightly ought to surpass one’s great predecessors - with deep respect and unflinching intrepidity...”³

Most of the contributions of the researcher Hadrian Daicoviciu focused on the history of pre-Roman Dacia, in particular the period of the Dacian state and the history of Roman Dacia. Sources of all categories - archaeological, numismatic, epigraphic, literary - in conjunction with exhaustive documentation on the historiography pertaining to the issues he researched facilitated his production of reference works in the specialised literature. His contributions and new interpretations regarding the character

² Daniela Comșa, *Constantin și Hadrian Daicoviciu. Memoria imaginilor*, catalogue, Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2010, p. 58.

³ The “Daicoviciu” Fund, Camil Mureșan, *In memoriam Hadrian Daicoviciu*, inv. no. C₂ 8162, The National History Museum of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca.

of the Dacian state, ranging from its particularities to the chronology of the Dacian kings and the overall definition of the Dacian civilisation, were crowned by the imposing synthesis dedicated to the history of Dacia from Burebista to the Roman Conquest.

The eminent researcher Hadrian Daicoviciu addressed the vast and complex issue in his studies on the Roman era: the institutions and organisation of Dacia, urbanism, cultural and religious life, the continuity of the Dacians under Roman rule, Romanisation and its essence.

The National History Museum of Transylvania has a valuable historical and documentary fund - the "Daicoviciu" Fund - which includes documents and personal objects, correspondence, manuscripts, invitations to congresses and scientific reunions, diplomas and awards, as well as an impressive collection of photographs, which illustrate all stages in the life of these scholars, from the years of studentship until the last months of their lives.⁴

This study presents the letters by Professor Dr. Hadrian Daicoviciu⁵ to his father and mentor, Acad. Constantin Daicoviciu, while he was on a scholarship in Italy, in May-July 1963. The issues discussed in the letters are mainly professional, reference being made to meetings with renowned Italian professors and archaeologists, true authorities on Roman antiquity, who carried an extensive scientific correspondence with Prof. C. Daicoviciu and then with H. Daicoviciu.

The exchanges of publications and books, meant to make Romanian archaeological research known, the latest research results of the Italian specialists, and the specialised Italian libraries and institutions were the major concerns of the young researcher Hadrian Daicoviciu.

Hadrian Daicoviciu recounted to Constantin Daicoviciu about his encounters and efforts (unofficial, "as a young researcher, without representing anyone's standpoint") for reopening the Romanian Academy in Rome.⁶ An important stage in his travels was his research of Trajan's Column, the resulting publication being *Columna lui Traian*, Bucharest: Meridiane, 1966, 36p.; second edition 1968 (in collaboration with Constantin Daicoviciu).

It may be noticed that Hadrian Daicoviciu endeavoured to address only scientific, strictly documentary issues in his letters, throughout his sojourn in Italy, avoiding any comments that might have seemed "political," even those pertaining to the cultural and quotidian atmosphere. This was obviously the result of their awareness that their correspondence was supervised: they did not want to leave any room for interpretation outside the strictly professional one, focused on classical archaeology, situated thousands of years away from the time of the account.

⁴ The "Daicoviciu" Fund, inv. no. C₂ 1- C₂ 8417.

⁵ Idem, inv. no. C₂ 3713 - C₂ 3717.

⁶ The Romanian School in Rome began its activity on 1 November 1922, granting, in the period 1922-1947, scholarships in the fields of archeology, history, philology and the fine arts, to the best graduates from the Romanian universities (Bucharest, Cluj, Iaşi, Cernăuţi). C. Daicoviciu was a scholar of the Romanian School in Rome, in the years 1925-1927, in the specializations of ancient history, archeology, epigraphy and classical philology. In 1947, the Romanian authorities decided to close the institution, until 1969, when it reopened its gates, with the status of the Romanian Library in Rome. In 1990, after the fall of communism, the institution changed its status again, becoming once more the Romanian Academy in Rome.

Rome, 31 May 1963

Dear Father,

I am hereby taking advantage of Mr. Petrovici's kindness to write you a few lines about what reckon is more important. So here I go:

1. I have talked to Pallottino⁷ about the possibility of opening our Academy here. After speaking to Professor Devota, recently returned from Romania, Pallottino is determined to strive for the reopening of our Academy and looks optimistic. Talking, we arrived at three possibilities of solving this matter, namely:

a) Opening, without reciprocity, the Academy in Rome, which should be strictly scientific and which should deal, if possible, with those branches of science that are the least "political";

b) Opening our Academy in Rome and a similar Italian institution (therefore strictly scientific, in Bucharest);

c) If the Italian government lacks the funds for opening an Academy in Bucharest, our Academy in Rome should open immediately, while Italy's right to establish a similar institution in Bucharest, whenever it seemed appropriate, would be ensured.

I am writing this with the thought that it may be of use to you. If Mr. Lascu comes to Rome, he should know the matter in all its details. Naturally, I emphasised in my discussion with Pallottino that I spoke as a private individual, as a young researcher, without representing the views of anyone else, and I didn't even tell him that I would inform you of the matters discussed; the conclusion was that of his own initiative and out of friendship for our country, he would take all the steps he deemed necessary with the Italian government.

2. Prof. Antonio Giuliano⁸ cannot come to Sinaia this year. So if you have not yet sent him the invitation, do not send it. He would, however, very much like to come next year.

3. Please do not forget about the archaeological material for the Museum of the Faculty of Letters here. Do you think it could be sent by mail? If not, we should wait for the arrival of the delegation to Bologna.

4. I have noticed that the Library of Archaeology and Ancient History of the Faculty here does not include any Romanian books (except for some new periodicals: *Dacia* etc.). Would it be possible to send, in some way, the *Yearbook of the Institute of Classical Studies*, *The Treatise on Romanian History* (vol. I), *The CD Homage Volume*? I'm sure I could get other publications in return for these. You can send these books to

⁷ Massimo Pallottino (1909-1995) – a university professor, an archaeologist specializing in Etruscan civilisation. He created in Rome "C N R per l Archeologia Etrusco: Italica." He carried a vast scientific correspondence with Hadrian Daicoviciu (the Daicoviciu Fund, inv. no. C2 7862) and, on the latter's death, he sent an evocation with the title *From Rome with Nostalgia and Love* (the Daicoviciu Fund, inv. no. C2 8175).

⁸ Antonio Giuliano – a professor of archaeology and the history of Greek and Roman art at the University of Rome.

me or, officially, to the Institute of Archaeology and Art History, Fac. of Letters, the University of Rome.

That's about all. I am working and I feel good. Mr. Petrovici'll tell you what we've done and what we've seen together.

Vale! Auguri!
Hadrian

P. S. 1. Will you please not forget the issue of Biți's mother and our departure to Austria?

2. I received your telegram and I was glad that everything was all right at home.

Rome, 7 - VI – 1963

Dear Father,

I'm sending you another issue of *Capolavori*. I haven't been able to get a hold of the old issues, but I will eventually. Also, I'm sending you the little book about EUR, together with a small booklet about the Archaeological Museum of the University here.

The two bigger books are for Biți. Please give them to her.

Another matter: I've met a professor (not of archaeology!) who is interested in the collection "The monuments of our homeland" and would like to have it. In exchange, he will buy me books that are of interest to me. I will give him "Ulpia Traiana" and "Sarmizegetusa". Could you get me "Apulum", "Tomis" "Histria" and whatever has been published in this collection? They can be in Romanian, in fact Leonardi (that's his name) wants them to be in Romanian, which he knows to some extent and would not like to forget it. If possible, send them to me, to my address here. I will give them to him. Also tell me if there is any book that you might be particularly interested in, in exchange for them.

I'm fine, working, work is good. I hope all is well with you. Take care of Cucuț!

Kisses to all of you!
Vale !
Hadrian

Rome, 24 – VI - 1963

Dear Father,

I have received all the three letters from you. I didn't have time to answer the first two, which I received at once, because I was away. I went on a splendid trip

(although a bit tiresome) to Padua, Este, Venice, Aquileia and Ancona. I saw many interesting and useful things. I think I managed to solve, in Aquileia, the problem of the monuments shaped like an arched pyramid trunk. I talked there to Gioramini Brusin,⁹ who sends you the warmest greetings.

I was glad to receive good news from home. Last evening I received all the books you let me know you had sent, and today I received "Callatis" too.

I have not had time yet to do everything you asked me in the first letter. Where I've been, I haven't found Bloch's book, but I'll look for it here in Rome. I sent Mr. Naum a postcard from Venice. To Surianu too. I will not forget the others either.

Soon I will send you a series of books, which I can't possibly carry with me on a plane. About this, I must tell you that I have booked a ticket for 31 July. I'll arrive, then, at around 9 p.m. in Bucharest (it's the same plane you took when you left here). I will write to Aurelian to meet me at the airport, but you'd better also tell Condurachi's (in case Aurelian is away doing excavations). In fact, it's not the waiting at the airport that is important; what is important is that someone will be at home in Bucharest (Aurelian or Florica or Puica and Emil). Whoever will be will have to pay for the taxi from the airport to the city and wait for me with a wagon-lits ticket for the evening of 1 August on the 10 pm train (approximately) which arrives in Cluj in the morning at 7⁵⁵. Can this whole thing be arranged? If yes, then it means that on 2 August in the morning, I'll be at home. It wouldn't be a bad idea if Turcu waited for me.

One last request: could you send me an extract or, or if you don't have one, a typed copy of your article "On Christianity in Dacia," published in *Studii*, I, 1948? Do this only if the matter of this article is different from your study which appeared, I think, in *Mélanges Marouzeau*. If it's the same thing, don't send it to me, just write that there is no difference.

Dear Father, that's about all. Tomorrow we have a meeting at the faculty to distribute participation in the excavations from Pyrgi. Depending on this, I will then set, with Pallatino, the date of my trip to Naples - Pompeii - Herculaneum - Capri - Paestum - Beneventum.

Many kisses and greetings to you and the other family members. A special supplement to the little one!

Vale!

Hadrian

Rome, 4 – VII – 1963

Dear Father,

I'm writing briefly to you (but it's still going to be a long letter!) about what I've been doing lately.

⁹ Gioramini Brusin – a professor, an Italian archaeologist.

1. I've sent postcards to everyone about whom you wrote to me: Acad. Bălan, Edgar Müller, Dr. Şurianu, Professor Ruffini, Mrs. Sena.¹⁰

2. But I haven't managed to find that laboratory with teaching materials. I think I will find it eventually.

3. I have not seen Degrassi. I have not looked for him because I was told that he might be sick. I will nonetheless contact him by all means before my departure.

4. I phoned Lugli¹¹ and thanked him, in your name, for the book. He told me that before I left he wanted to see me and that he would invite me to his place in the countryside one day.

5. I've been to Fasti again. I saw, of course, Forni,¹² who had not come with us then because his daughter was sick. I went to Ostia with Mrs. Squarciapino.¹³

6. I've been a few times to Alessandrini and I'll go again before I leave. Now he's on a cure at Abano Terme, near Padua.

7. I've seen Pallotino, too, but I could not really talk to him because he's terribly busy. He's leaving for Yugoslavia in a few days. To be able to discuss at leisure, he has invited me for a day or two, to Perugia on 24 July, at University for foreigners, where he delivers courses on Etruscology. Naturally, I will go.

8. To Bianchi Bandinelli¹⁴ I've given, for the Library of the Archaeology Inst., the homage volume and "Ulpia Traiana." He wants to establish a more regular exchange of publications, and has proposed *Miscellanea* of his Institute to us. I replied that I would write to him from Cluj.

9. I gave Volume I of *The History of Romania* to the Library of the German Institute of Archaeology, which had vol. II, but didn't have the first. I also gave them *Sarmizegetusa* (in French) and *Ulpia Traiana*. They thanked me warmly and gave me, in exchange, some of the books that I sent you today and about which I will talk below.

10. I have contacted Mrs. Foà for the problem of the photos of Trajan's Column. The situation looks, for now, bad. The publishing houses no longer have the clichés used for the old editions (Cichorius, Froehner). New photographs are difficult to take because our casts are inaccessible, as you know, and the casts of the Vatican Museum (made by the same casts as ours) are, for now at least, inaccessible because of the extension works from the Vatican Museum; there is, it is true, at the Museo della Civiltà Romana (EUR), a plaster copy of these casts, but: a) the copies are not in very good condition; b) they are placed in a dimly lit corridor and in rows stacked at such close range from each other that shooting becomes extremely difficult. The only hope that I have left now is that the L. U. C. E. Institute, which took the photos of the scenes from

¹⁰ M. Ruffini, a university professor, a specialist in the history of culture and the Romanian-Italian cultural relations; Gemma Sena – a specialist in the history of ancient art, Milan.

¹¹ A. Degrassi, epigraphist, Director of the Italian School of Archaeology, Professor at the University of Padua; G. Lugli, Professor of ancient topography at the University of Rome. He founded *Italiae Forma* - archaeological maps.

¹² G. Forni, a professor and Rector of the University of Bologna, an epigraphist and historian of the Roman army.

¹³ M. F. Squarciapino, an archaeologist, the editor of *Fasti archaeologici*.

¹⁴ Bianchi Bandinelli, a professor of archaeology and Greek and Roman art history at the Universities of Florence and Rome.

the Column in 1942, during the anti-aircraft protection works, photographing indeed the entire Column (in the album of P. Romanelli, which we also have, only the most artistically eloquent photos are published) has kept these photographs in the archive. If even this hope will dispel, we will see here what is to be done. In any case, I will keep in touch with Mrs. Foà.

11. I sent you four packages of books this morning. The first contains the volumes *Tuscany I*, *Tuscany II* and *Lombardy I* (beautifully illustrated publications, of the Italian Touring Club).

The second comprises: *Lombardy II*, G. Anibaldi, *Le antiche civiltà della Maveche*, G. Brusin, *Di un tipo di stela sepolcrale carateristico di Verona*, B. M. Scarfi, *Due pittori apuli della seconda metà del IV secolo A. C.* and *Una testa scopadea di Athena al Museo archeologico di Venezia* (all these are extracts) and *La vie en moyen-âge* and *Charlemagne* (the collection *Que sais-je ?*). The third package contains publications of the Touring Club (Rome I, Rome II and Sicily), and the fourth contains the following books or booklets: R. Bloch, *Gli Etruschi*, V. Childe, *Il frammenti del passato*, P. Romanelli, *Il Palatino*, M. Pallotino, *La Necropoli di Cerveteri*, G. Fogolari, *Il Museo Nazionale Attestino in Este*, G. A. (Nibaldi), *Il Muses Nazionale delle Marche in Ancona, Spoleto* (tourist ad), A. Camus, *La peste* (literature for Biți,¹⁵ and the following volumes in the collection *Que sait-il?: Le calendrier, La numismatique antique, L'épigraphie latine* and *La science des Chaldéens*.

Please put all these books away until my arrival. The exceptions are *La peste*, *La vie en momoyen-age* and *Charlemagne*, which you can give to Biți right away.

12. Tomorrow morning I'm going to Naples, armed with letters of recommendation from Pallotino. The trip will last a week (including Naples, Herculaneum, Pompeii, Capri, Paestum and Beneventum)

Warm kisses,
Hadrian

Rome. 13 – VII – 1963

Dear Father,

I'm back from Naples. Everything was wonderful and I think it has been very useful to me.

I will try to discuss with Forni the problem of the prefect of Dacia Inferior this afternoon, if I find him at Fasti. It would be the last chance because on Monday, 15 - VII -, I'm going to Pyrgi, where I will stay for a week, and Forni is going on vacation on 18. If I cannot talk to him, I will try with Degrassi after my return from Pyrgi.

Today I sent you the following books and extracts or brochures (distributed in two packages):

¹⁵ Beatrice Daicoviciu, with a PhD in World Medieval History, a professor at Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, the first wife of Hadrian Daicoviciu.

- *Campania* (publication – Italian Touring Club)
- S. M. Puglisi, *Preliminary Report of the Reserches at Hezar*
- J. de Vries, *La religion des Celtes*
- A. de Franciscis – O. Parlangeli, *Gli Italici del Bronzo nei documenti epigrafici*
- E. Pozzi, *Exedra funeraria pompeiana fuori Porta di Nola*
- G. Luigi, *Foro Romano. Palatino*
- A. Maiuri, *Pompei*
- “““, *Capi*
- ,””, *Ercolano*
- P. C. Sestieri, *Paestum*
- G. Mazzini, *I doveri del’ uomo*
- C. Carbonara, *Platonismo e cristianesimo nella concezione mazziniana della storia*
- Issues 2, 3, 6-11 of the publications of the so-called Centro Napolitano di Studi Mazziniani.

I have received all this stuff with Mazzini as a gift. Maybe it is of some interest for the specialists in modern history. As with the other books sent, please put them aside until my arrival.

Tomorrow I’m going to lunch to Alessandrini’s, who has returned from the baths.

I think this is the last letter I’m sending to you. I’ll probably get home before you receive another letter.

Warm kisses,
Hadrian

P. S. Important! Hadn’t you better write to Swoboda¹⁶ and ask him: where should I be on 15 August? Will someone be waiting for us at the station, at the airport, etc.? In a word, ask him to tell us all the administrative and technical details of our visit.

¹⁶ Erich S. Swoboda, Director of the Carnuntum Museum near Vienna.