

ROMAN POTTERY DISCOVERED IN THE AREA OF THE GETO-DACIAN FORTIFICATION FROM BÂZDÂNA

Dorel Bondoc

The archaeological excavations in the Geto-Dacian fortification from Bâzdâna started in 1980¹ and have been continued almost every year. Thus there have been possible to draw out some conclusions about the dwelling levels and the existence stages of the fortification².

Since 1996, I have been a member of the team that runs the archaeological excavations in this site. This position allowed me to notice a new aspect of the inventory of the fortification, namely Roman pottery.

During the campaign from 1998, I noticed that, at a depth of -0.50m from the present treading level, there is a stone stratum, which is not perceptible stratigraphically. In its composition, there was found a fragment of grinder made of stone (fig. 1).

Apart from the pottery of Coțofeni type and the one characteristic to the Geto-Dacian culture, my attention was drawn by another type of pottery discovered in the area. The fragments of pottery were discovered at a depth of 0.50m. They were made at the pottery wheel and quantitatively they are in a small amount³. There have not been preserved any intact vessel or at least which could be completed and the shapes of the vessels are difficult to reconstitute. Below, there are presented a few significant fragments of pottery⁴.

– fragment of pottery with vegetal motifs in relief (fig. 2); it was made of fine red paste. The vessel was surely of good quality, the ingredients the paste was made of, are almost invisible. The resemblance with the Roman pottery of terra sigillata type is striking. From the opinions⁵ that have been expressed so far, it seems that we deal with a much older piece of pottery, coming from Asia Minor. Most probably, it can be dated to the end of the first century A.D. and the beginning of the second, during the reign of the emperor Octavian Augustus.

– fragment of pottery (fig. 3) made at the wheel of fine red-brick paste; it was a part from the upper side of a vessel, including a fragment of the rim and the neck of the vessel. The rim is straight and grooved inwards, there is also a groove on the exterior side. The most similar analogies to the Roman pottery from Oltenia indicate that the fragment might come from a cup⁶.

– fragment of pottery (fig. 4), made of fine brick-red paste at the pottery wheel. The rim is turned horizontally to the exterior. Most probably, it was a part of a pot with two handles⁷.

– fragment of pottery (fig. 5) made of fine red-brick, at the wheel. It is a fragment of rim, thickened, rounded off and turned up outwards. It comes from a jar-pot.

– fragment of pottery (fig. 6) made of fine red paste, at the wheel; it is a piece of circular and shaped bottom of a vessel, most probably a pot with two handles⁸.

– fragment of pottery (fig. 7) made of fine brick-red paste at the wheel; it is a piece of a circular and shaped bottom of a vessel.

– five fragments of bottoms of vessels (fig. 8-12), all are made of fine red paste at the pottery wheel.

There are two possibilities for the existence of Roman pottery at the north of the Danube, in the Geto-Dacian fortification from Bâzdâna.

First, it is possible that Roman troops could have been stationed here, after the fortification was conquered. There are not too many arguments to support this hypothesis so far. The future excavations will prove if the stratum of stones at 0.50m depth we mentioned above, is a trace of the Roman conquerors or not.

The second hypothesis is more plausible. It suggests that the Roman pieces of pottery were goods, sold by traders to the locals, a proof of the trade between the Roman Empire and Geto-Dacians. This idea is supported by various analogies⁹ and also by the early dating of the fragment of pottery (fig. 2).

NOTES

1. C.M. Tătulea, *Materiale și cercetări arheologice*, 15, 1983, p. 218-221; idem, *Thraco-Dacica*, 5, 1984, 1-2, p. 92-110; idem, *OLTENIA. Studii și comunicări*, 7-8, 1989, p. 15-28.

2. See also V.V. Zirra, *Arhivele Olteniei*, SN, 10, 1995, p. 13-27; idem, *Arhivele Olteniei*, SN, 11, 1996, p. 5-20; idem, *Arhivele Olteniei*, SN, 13, 1998, p. 13-21.

3. This hypothesis might be changed as a result of the future excavations. The Museum of Oltenia keeps all the materials resulted from the excavation campaigns led by C.M. Tătulea; they have not been published yet.

4. The drawings have been made by Mihaela Pena.

5. I thank dr. Gh. Popilian for the information and dating.

6. Gh. Popilian, *Ceramica romană din Oltenia*, Craiova, 1976, p. 107, type 6.

7. *Ibidem*, p. 91, type 2, for analogies.

8. *Ibidem*, p. 91, type 1, for analogies.

9. S. Sanie, *Civilizația romană la est de Carpați și romanitatea pe teritoriul Moldovei*, Iași, 1981, p. 51 and the following ones; Gh. Bichir, *Geto-dacii din Muntenia în epoca romană*, București, 1984, p. 38 and followings.; I. Ioniță, V. Ursachi, *Văleni. o mare necropolă a dacilor liberi*, Iași, 1988, p. 73-74.

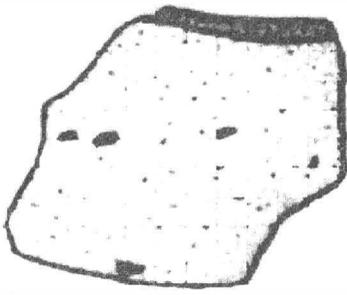


Fig. 1

Fragment of grinder

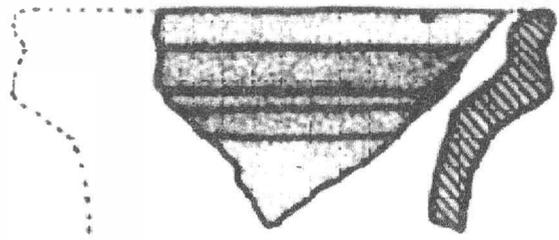


Fig. 3

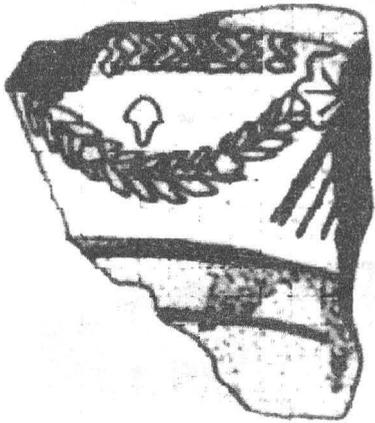


Fig. 2



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

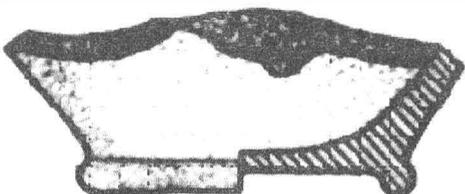


Fig. 6

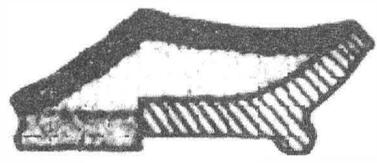


Fig. 7

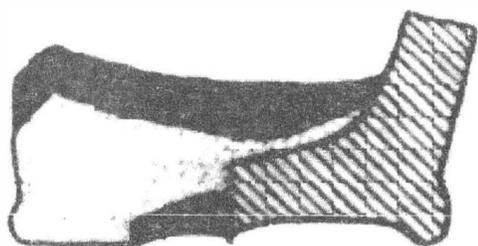


Fig. 8

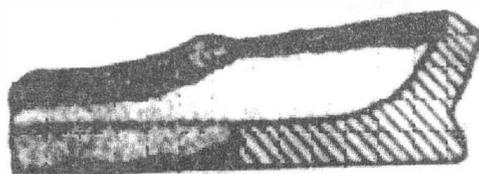


Fig. 9

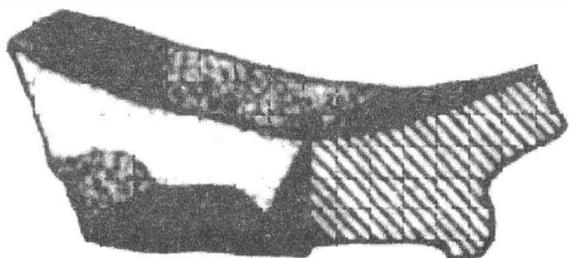


Fig. 10

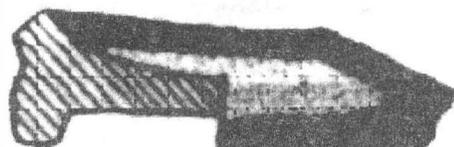


Fig. 11



Fig. 12