

PROPOSALS OF RECONSTITUTION OF A ROMAN STATUE FROM CIOROIU NOU

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Abstract. *This work present some proposals of reconstitution of a Roman statue from Cioroiu Nou.*

Keywords: *Roman statue, reconstitution.*

No doubt, the Roman fortification and settlement of Cioroiu Nou (fig. 1-2) is one of the most important monuments not only from Dolj County, but also from the entire Oltenia. Located at cca. 20km north of the Danube (fig. 3), the locality Cioroiu Nou has benefited by excellent natural conditions: moderate climate, fertile soil and springs with permanent flow. These were probably the most important reasons, which made the Roman colonists to settle here, beginning with the first years when Dacia was changed into a Roman province¹.

Archaeological excavations were made here in 1938 (C.S. Nicolaescu-Plopșor, D. Tudor), 1959 (Gh. Popilian), 1960-1961 (D. Tudor, I. Diaconescu) and in 2000 they were resumed (D. Bondoc) having been continued till today².

During excavations, there has been revealed a lot of edifices as it follows: a fortification³, a bath built by the soldiers of Legio VII Claudia⁴, a temple⁵ and a building with hypocaustum today under the moder cemetery⁶.

The archaeological excavations revealed an impressive quantity of the archaeological materials. In this respect, the inscriptions and the sculptural pieces present a special importance⁷.

For the subject of this paper, we want to raise for discussion the head of a statue (fig. 4-5) made of marble⁸. The piece was discovered by chance in 1971. The sculptor rendered the head of a young character. It was fragmented in antiquity and today it is broken from the neck down. Like in the case of many other statues, the nose was deliberately destroyed, so the conclusion is that the statue was maimed. A short description: round head, with uncovered ears, the hair is shortly cut, with the locks suggested by superficial strikes of chisel. The character has no beard or mustache. The eyes are big, almost exophthalmics. The origin of the marble of the statue has not been established⁹.

The piece presents a vertical fracture on its entire height, probably because of another strike applied with the purpose of breaking it. Sizes: the entire height - 21cm; the height of the head - 19cm.

The character has not been identified precisely. R. Florescu considered that it is a representation of Filip the Arab Junior, while M. Gramatopol oscillated between Herennius Etruscus- the son of Decius and Constantine II. More cautious, Al. Diaconescu has considered that it is a character belonging to the Imperial house, but he has not agreed with any of the proposals of identification. The exophthalmic eyes and the line of the hair from the forehead show us that it is a sculpture dated somewhere between the mid 3rd - the first half of the 4th centuries¹⁰.

For the proposal of reconstitution of the statue, we have resorted to the principles described in the work of the well-known Roman architect, Vitruvius¹¹. His work¹² dedicated to the emperor Augustus, it is the only work of this type from the ancient times that has been preserved till today. In the Greek literature there were a lot of works of architecture and sculpture about the proportions of the human body, all of these were used of course by Vitruvius.

One of the better translations of the Vitruvian work was made by August Choisy¹³, where a drawing rendered exactly the geometrical principles of the human body, which are valid even today. Furthermore, the famous drawing of Leonardo da Vinci, which rendered the human body inside a circle and respectively inside a square, was made according to the text of Vitruvius.

Here are some geometrical relations between different parts of the human body, which can be applied to art today, too:

- the height of the head represents 1/8 from the entire height of the body;
- the head is divided into four uniform parts;

¹ Bondoc 2010, p. 6.

² For all these, see Tudor 1942, p. 94-96; Tudor 1962, p. 547-533; Tudor *et alii* 1967, p. 593-605; Bondoc 2010, p. 6-7.

³ Tudor 1962, p. 547-548.

⁴ Bondoc 2010, p. 13-16.

⁵ Tudor 1965, p. 109-115.

⁶ Tudor *et alii* 1967, p. 599.

⁷ IDR, II, 141-156; Bondoc 2004, p. 9-36; Bondoc 2010, p. 27-36.

⁸ Tudor 1979, pl. VII; Miclea & Florescu 1980, p. 120, no. 391; Gramatopol 1982, p. 124; Gramatopol 1985, p. 183; Bondoc 2004, p. 28, no. 33; Diaconescu 2004, vol. II, p. 99-100, no. 61; Bondoc 2010, p. 31-32, no. 10.

⁹ Al. Diaconescu 2004, p. 99.

¹⁰ Al. Diaconescu 2004, p. 100.

¹¹ We have used the edition București 1964, translation made by G.M. Cantacuzino, T. Costa and G. Ionescu.

¹² *De architectura libri X*.

¹³ Vitruve, I-IV, Paris, 1909.

- the length of the palm equals the height of the face and represents 1/10 from the height of the body.

We started the reconstitution of the statue, beginning with the height of the head, which is 19cm. We multiplied this size by 8, and we obtained a total height of the statue of 152cm. After we had the entire height of the statue, we had to identify (better say to suggest!) the attitude and the clothing of the character.

Our first proposal, which is very plausible, suggests that it was an armour-plated statue¹⁴. From the statue of Augustus of Prima Porta, to the Colossus of Barletta, the area of the Roman Empire is full of this kind of representations. Probably, starting from them the reconstitution of the armour-plated statue of Emperor Hadrianus was possible (today in the front of the Saalburg fort). The existence of a fortification¹⁵ and the presence of a vexillations of Legio VII Claudia¹⁶, supports the existence of an armour-plated representation (fig. 6) at Cioroiu Nou.

The possibility that the statue would have been a togated (fig. 7) one cannot be ignored¹⁷. The quantity and especially the quality of the sculptural pieces from Cioroiu Nou¹⁸ suggest a special social rank of its inhabitants during the Roman Period. Unfortunately, without clear inscriptions in this respect, we cannot discuss about this rank, although we can suppose it was. If it had been a honorary statue or a funeral one, we don't know.

At the end, as it has been suggested, we render here another possible reconstitution, the bust-representation¹⁹. It is very comfortable to have a bust-representation (fig. 8). The bust statues were easy to make, cheaper because of the small quantity of used material, easy to move and of course, easy to put in a place²⁰.

These are our proposals of reconstitutions for the Roman statue from Cioroiu Nou. Till the discovery (if possible) of the other parts of the statues, we cannot discuss about a certain type, but rather about possibilities. Anyway, there are other variants: in hunting clothes, trip clothes, s.a. This is the reason for entitling our article *Proposal of reconstitutions* ...

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¹⁴ About this type, see generally Mancini 1966; Stemmer 1978; for the armour-plated statues from Dacia, see Diaconescu 2004, vol. I, p. 116-127.

¹⁵ Tudor 1962, p. 547-548; Bondoc 2010, p. 12-13.

¹⁶ Bondoc 2010, p. 16.

¹⁷ For the togated statues, see generally Goette 1990; for the togated statues from Dacia, Diaconescu 2004, vol. I, p. 100-112.

¹⁸ Tudor 1965, p. 109-115; Bondoc 2010, p. 18, 32-34.

¹⁹ From the bibliography of the problem, see Fittschen & Zanker 1985.

²⁰ For the last problem, see Diaconescu & Bota 2009, p. 247-254; Diaconescu 2010, p. 74-75 and 78-79.

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1-2. The Roman fortification and settlement of Cioroiu Nou, acc. to Bondoc 2010, p. 64-65.
Fig. 3. Cioroiu Nou and its surroundings on the map of Roman Oltenia, acc. to Tudor 1978.
Fig. 4-5. The head of a Roman statue from Cioroiu Nou.
Fig. 6. A Roman statue from Cioroiu Nou. An armour-plated reconstitution.
Fig. 7. A Roman statue from Cioroiu Nou. A togated reconstitution.
Fig. 8. A Roman statue from Cioroiu Nou. A bust reconstitution.



Fig. 1



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

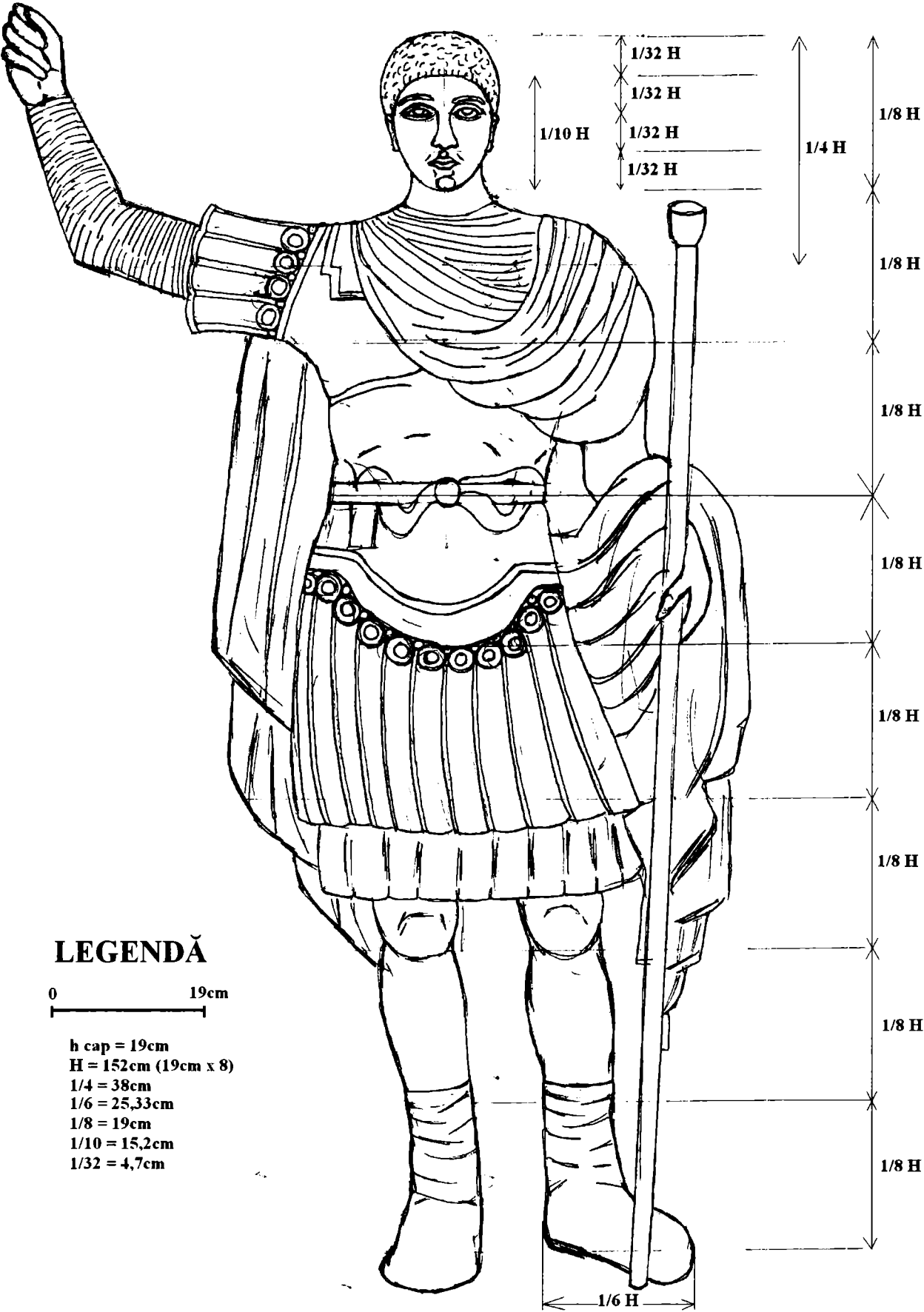


Fig. 6

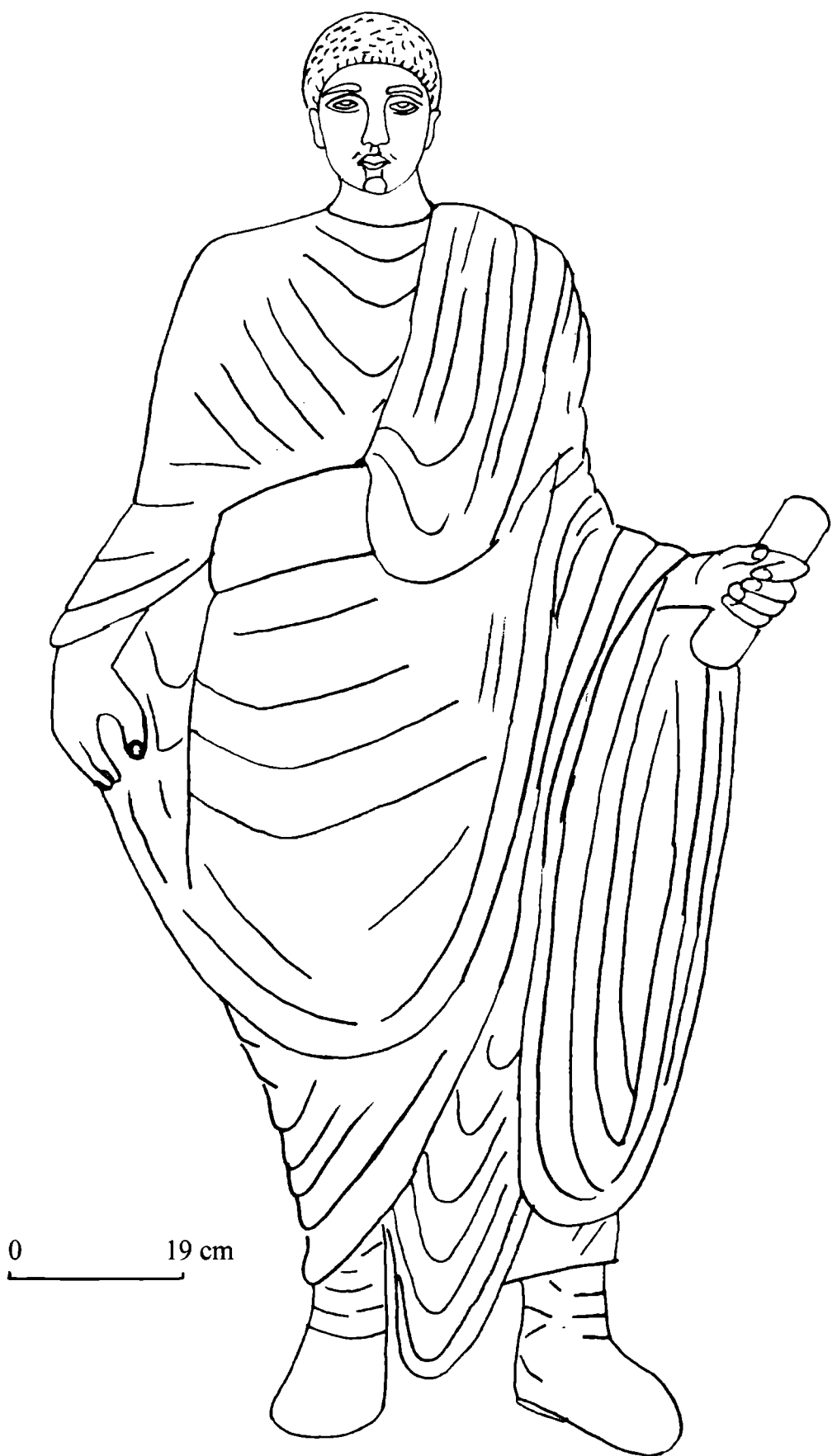


Fig. 7

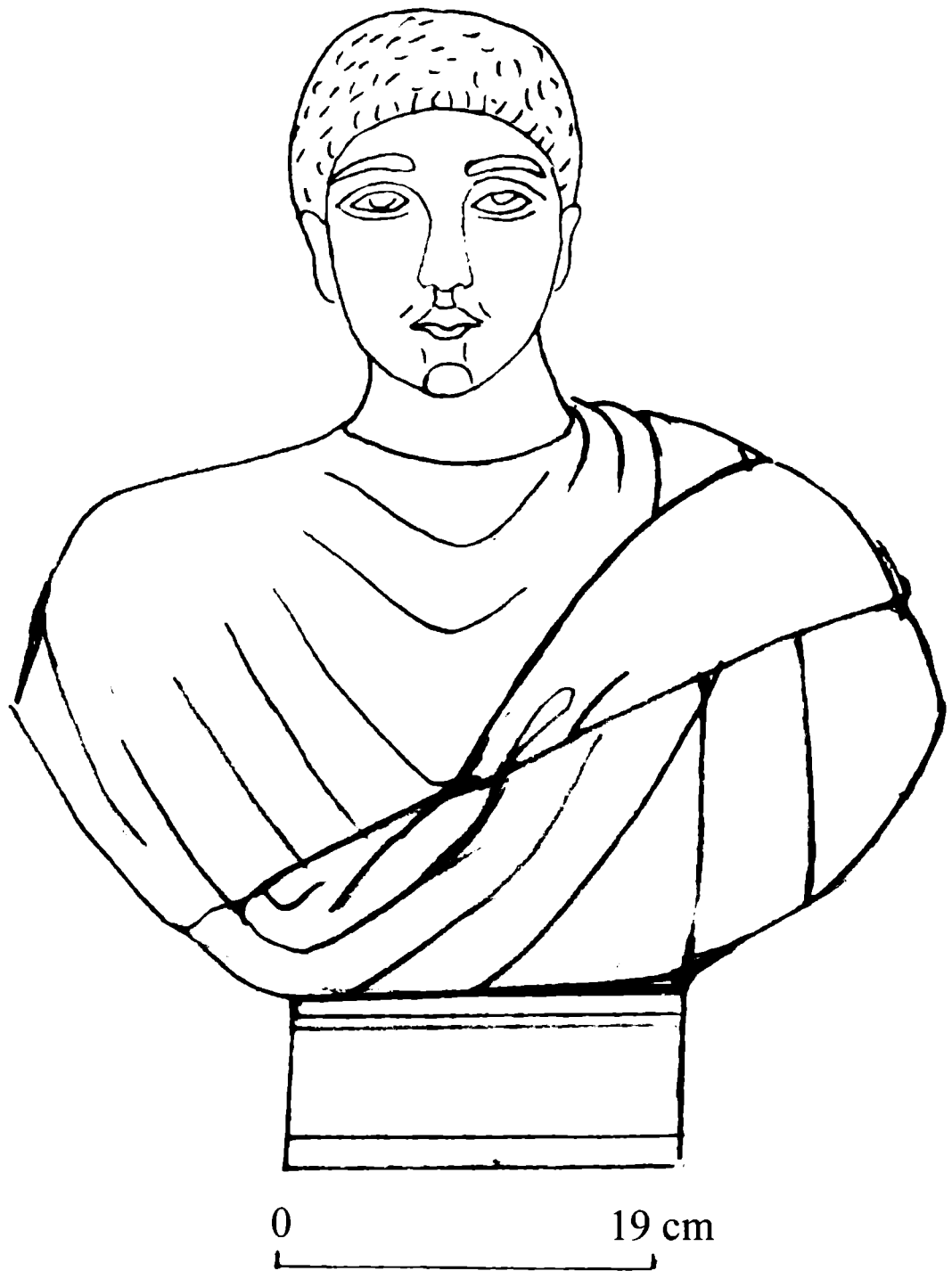


Fig. 8.