

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS. 7. EPIGRAPHICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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**Abstract.** *The author of these improvements brings some rectifications in connection with the two military units, cohorts VII Raetorum, and respectively cohorts III Campestris, about which were affirmed a series of wrong hypotheses.*

**Keywords:** *cohorts equitata, cohorts VIII Raetorum, cohorts III Campestris, Inlăceni, Porolissum/ Moigrad.*

### 1. Cohorts VIII Raetorum

Commenting on a military diploma from the year 119, regarding the Roman troops of Dacia Superior/Apulensis<sup>1</sup>, the authors, most likely hastily (in order not to say the truth), states that the above named unit (*cohorts VIII Raetorum*) was a *miliaria* and *equitata* unit<sup>2</sup>.

Such hypothesis is unbelievable. No one among those who know the military history of Dacia has affirmed this before<sup>3</sup>. Roman forts archaeology in Dacia teaches us something completely different.

The Roman fort from Inlăceni<sup>4</sup> measures 142 x 146 m, therefore a surface area of 2,073 ha; at such camp, the corresponding units are *quingenariae* cohorts<sup>5</sup>.

Generally, Roman forts for *miliariae equitatae* cohorts (with a number of 1056 soldiers and 265 combat horses + 120 beasts of draught) had a surface area of 3, 00 – 3, 50 ha with 14 barracks and 4 stables. The same data can be found also at Th. Fischer<sup>6</sup>.

Therefore, Cohorts VIII Raetorum was a *quingenaria equitata* unit, as it is shown by the inscription in Inlăceni<sup>7</sup>, in which is named cohorts VIII Raetorum civium Romanorum equitata torquata.

### 2. Cohorts III Campestris

Carrying on a series of epigraphical speculations, many of which seeking at any cost innovations, I. Piso<sup>8</sup> gracefully replaced M. Macrea completion from an inscription in Porolissum: *cohorts V Lingonum Antoniniana* with *cohorts III Campestris Antoniniana*<sup>9</sup>.

Basically, I have nothing with this replacement. It may be so. The difference lies in that the Lingoni unit is attested at Porolissum by several honorific inscriptions and relatively well-dated tiles stamps.

*Cohorts III Campestris* appears poorly documented. A former soldier in this cohort, became veteran, reached leading position in *municipium Porolissensis*, mentions the unit in a votive dedication in Gordian era<sup>10</sup>. I. Piso knows without doubt that a single votive inscription can not attest the stationing of a unit in a particular place where it was found. That is why he added a series of speculations regarding the military stamps at Porolissum, which are not sustained. The cohort suspected to be *Campestris* is actually *cohorts III D(acorum)* confirmed by several types of stamps which have the D letter on. These have been published topologically by N. Gudea<sup>11</sup>. There have been identified four safe types, two in simple cartouches, with

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<sup>1</sup> W. Eck, A. Pangerl, *Ein Diplom für die Truppen von Dacia Superior unter Kommando von Marcus Turbo im Jahr 119 n. Chr.*, in *ActaMN* 41-42, 2004-2005, pp. 61-67.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> C. C. Petolescu, *Auxilia Daciae*, București, 2002, pp. 119-120.

<sup>4</sup> N. Gudea, *Der dakische Limes. Materialien zu seiner Geschichte*, Mainz, 1997. Sonderheft von Jahrbuch RGZM, pp. 59-60.

<sup>5</sup> Anne Johnson, *Römische Kastelle des 1. und 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. In Britannien und in die germanischen Provinzen*, Mainz am Rhein, 1983, pp. 34-36, 320-321.

<sup>6</sup> Th. Fischer, *Die Armée von Cesaren. Archäologie und Geschichte*, Regensburg, 2012, pp. 287-288.

<sup>7</sup> N. Gudea, in *ActaMP* 3, 1979, p. 200, no. 1 = *IDR* III, 4, no. 263.

<sup>8</sup> I. Piso, *Studia Porolissensis*. II. in *ActaMN* 41-42, 2004-2005, pp. 183-188; J. Szilágyi, *A daciai erődrendszer helyőrségei és a katonai téglabélyegegek*, Budapest, 1946, pp. 185-186.

<sup>9</sup> N. Gudea, *Porolissum. Un complex daco - roman la marginea de nord a Imperiului Roman*. I. Zalău, 1989, p. 1133, nr. 8. pl. CCLXX.

<sup>10</sup> Gudea – Tamba 2001, p. 25, fig. 16-17.

<sup>11</sup> Idem, *Contribuții la istoria militară a Daciei Porolissensis*, 8. *Alte îndreptări în legătură cu cohors III Dacorum*, in *Apulum*, XLVIII, 2011, pp. 327-329.

letters rendered in relief: C H III; two in rectangular cartouches, with letters shown in depth (fig. 1). Then, like now, I pointed out that there are many versions, depending on cartouch size and letters.

It is known that the *Campestris* unit stationed on the Danube river in Moesia Superior, where is attested by inscriptions and military diplomas<sup>12</sup>; the fact that the veterans of the unit appear in other places such as Napoca or Porolissum is not out of the ordinary. The reading of the COH III type stamps was also made by J. Szilágyi<sup>13</sup> in the form *c[o]h(ors) hi(spanorum)*.

E. Tóth<sup>14</sup> thinks it's about three cohorts who put the same stamp CH III, but carefully avoids reading the stamps in fig. 18 which is CH III D.

It is interesting how easily has reached I. Piso to this conclusion. I wonder, because searching in IDR III.2 (Ulpia Traiana), p. 126, no. 129, I notice that a centurion of Legio VII Valeria Victrix place a votive inscription for his father in law at UTS ! Is this legion really stationed at UTS?

Moreover, our inventive author found a way out: *cohorts III Campestris* has replaced at Porolissum *cohorts I Ulpia Brittonum miliaria equitata* (mentioned at Porolissum on military diplomas and stamps between 118 - 164), which, in his belief, was moved to Dacia Superior, in the Roman fort from Bumbești, under the name of *cohorts I Aurelia Brittonum miliaria Antoniniana*. This idea was "borrowed" to him by F. Marcu<sup>15</sup>.

With this little invention, the cohort *I Aurelia Brittonum miliaria* "file" thickens a little bit more. Our inventor did not notice that C. C. Petolescu<sup>16</sup> already had "operated" a modification: he claimed that this unit (*cohorts I Aurelia Brittonum miliaria*) was initially *cohorts I Nervia Pacensis Brittonum miliaria*, which has changed its name in the honour of the emperor Caracalla. Also under Caracalla, I. Piso believed, the poor unit changed its name again!!!

It's a pretty unique case in the history of the Roman army that a military unit radically change its name. I personally have never found anywhere such (changes).

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<sup>12</sup> Barbara Pferdehirt. *Römische Militärdiplome und Entlassungsurkunde in der Sammlung des RGZM*. 1, Mainz, 2004, no. 31 (151). 37 (157). 40 (160).

<sup>13</sup> J. Szilágyi, *op. cit.*, p. 13. 52. Taf. XIV. 208; XV. 218.

<sup>14</sup> E. Tóth, *Porolissum. Das Castellum in Moigrad. Ausgrabungen von A. Radnóti 1943*, Budapest, 1978, p. 51.

<sup>15</sup> *ActaMN* 39-40, 2002-2003, p. 226.

<sup>16</sup> C. C. Petolescu, *Auxilia Daciae*, București, 2002, p. 88.

