

THE DINASTY OF THE ANTONINS AND THE RELIGION OF THE SOLDIERS IN ROMAN DACIA

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The dynasty of the Antonins, meaning for the history of Dacia the IInd century AD, more exactly the period between the conquest of Dacia (107) and the end of Commodus's reign (192) meant a very active religious time (54 inscriptions surely belong to this century).

The beginning of the military religious life at the north of the Danube is reflected by monuments dating from the time of the emperor Traianus (98-117), obviously following the transformation of Dacia into a Roman province. Some of the inscriptions are a consequence of the events from 101-107, when certain soldiers were released from duty for special merits. We refer to the altar of L. Antonius Apollinaris, veteran from the legion I Adiutrix, raised for Dominus Aeternus for the health of the emperor Traianus at Apulum¹, but also the votive column² raised at Apulum for the Capitolian Triad around 115-117 by veterans from the legion XIII Gemina „missi honesta missione”. This is a collective act of high significance. We should also mention the altar from Apulum for Iuppiter Optimus Maximus belonging to the veterans from the legion XIII Gemina enlisted during the fifth consulat of Traianus³.

Other inscriptions were raised by imperial legati. C. Avidius Nigrinus (112-117) is indirectly mentioned on a well known inscription⁴ coming from Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa for Epona and Campestres, deities who were believed to protect the horses, horsemen and the instruction field. Perfectly justified, the gesture was made by M. Calventius Viator, centurion in the legion IIII Flavia Felix, also charged with the training of the governor's guard.

The most interesting are two altars of the legatus M. Herennius Faustus (115-117)⁵ to Minerva Supera and Mercurius Hilarus (these epithets are so far unique in Dacia).

Following a chronological sequence without being able to say it was during the reign of Hadrianus or Antoninus Pius, C. Cassius Proculeianus, centurion in the legion XIII Gemina raised at Apulum an altar for Iuppiter Optimus Maximus⁶.

After commanding the legion V Macedonica with the headquarters at Troesmis, Calpurnius Iulianus became legatus Augusti Daciae Superioris (126-167?), and in this position he set an inscription at Băile Herculane⁷. The place where the inscription was

¹ IDR III/5, 65.

² IDR III/5, 198.

³ IDR III/5, 174.

⁴ IDR III/2, 205.

⁵ IDR III/5, 265; Rodean, Ciută 1998, p. 152.

⁶ IDR III/5, 140.

⁷ IDR III/1, 67, fig. 54.

found, the deities it was adressed to (Hercules, Genius loci, Fontes calidae) are arguments this character was in the watering place for a treatment; his inscription was put for personal reasons and if this trip was possible than in Dacia Superior was peace and his presence was not necessary. Thus it is very possible for his gesture to be related to the reign of Antoninus Pius rather than to the one of Hadrianus, that we know it started, for our province, with a conflict.

That in Dacia was a time of peace during the time of Antoninus Pius comes from other votive inscriptions, like the one from 154 of the centurion M. Domestius Restitutus from the legion XIII Gemina from Apulum to Iuppiter⁸, worshipped with the epithets Victor and Depulsor. We have no information about a military event related to this monument, but it must have been a victorious action.

Very active was the legatus M. Stadius Priscus (157-158), who signed no less than six altars. These are official inscriptions as they were raised „pro salute imperatori” (two cases)⁹ or the deities had the epithet Augustus / Augusta¹⁰. We believe one inscription was put in personal interest, for Nimphis at Germisara¹¹.

The moment he raised these inscriptions was a peaceful one for Dacia. No inscription comes from Apulum, but the legatus is travelling, getting to Ampelum, Germisara, Sub Cununi.

Prof. M. Bărbulescu suggests these inscriptions, as well as other actions from the same time (157-158), more precisely the rebuilding of the amphitheatres from Porolissum and Ulpia, eventually the baths from Ulpia, could be a clue for the celebration of the semi-centenary from the conquest of Dacia¹².

During the reign of Antoninus Pius water was brought to Apulum. That this action took place for the well being of the Roman Empire and the virtue of the legion XIII Gemina is signaled by a statue basis with an inscription for *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus et consessui deorum dearumque*¹³.

The end of the reign of Antoninus Pius meant a new time of peace, or at least this is suggested by the fact that the legatus P. Furius Saturninus (159-161) came to Germisara and set an altar for Aesculapius et Hygia¹⁴, or from the inaugural inscription from Tibiscum, dated in the year 161, for the temple of Liber Pater (still unidentified archaeologically), raised by a vexillatio palmyrenorum. The inscription was put by a legatus augusti (his name could not be found due to the fragmentary state of the plaque) for the health of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius¹⁵. This would be the first epigraphical evidence of a cult structure from Dacia built by soldiers.

⁸ IDR III/5, 232.

⁹ IDR III/3, 306; CIL III 1299.

¹⁰ CIL III 940, 1416; IDR III/3, 276.

¹¹ CIL III 7882.

¹² Bărbulescu 2006, passim.

¹³ IDR III/5, 185.

¹⁴ Moga 1985, 14e.

¹⁵ Piso, Benea 1999, p. 1.

One of the few situations an auxiliary unit appears on a II century inscription is the altar from Micia raised by M. Verus Superstes, *praepositus* of the numerus from Orăștioara de Sus, set for Diana, for the health of the legatus C. Arrius Antoninus (176-177)¹⁶.

We believe the two altars or statue basis raised by M. Caelius Iulianus, tribunus laticlavus in the legion XIII Gemina¹⁷ were related to and set after the marcomanian wars, because the deities worshipped are Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, Genius legionis and Genius Daciarum. Perhaps this was also the reason for setting an inscription at Germisara for Nymphae *Sanctissimae* by P. Aelius Marcellinus, *signifer et quaestor* in numerus Brittanicianorum, „mortis periculo liberatus”¹⁸.

The last inscription from the II century, connected to the reign of Commodus (it was raised in 183 for his health), was set for Liber Pater by Lucius Calvisius Secundus, primipilaris¹⁹.

The other inscriptions or artefacts cannot be analysed here as they have no dating element. During this time Iuppiter Optimus Maximus is present at Apulum on an altar raised by centurions²⁰. We encounter Iuppiter Heliopolitanus on centurions' altars from Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa and Micia²¹. On a personal inscription from Ulpia Traiana the tribunus Herennius Gemellinus worships Hecate due to the recovery of his wife²².

Serapis and Isis appear on an altar from Apulum raised by L. Iunius Rufinus Proculianus, tribunus laticlavus²³. Other inscriptions of imperial legati mention Saturnus Securus, Apollo and Hercules²⁴.

There are several figurative representations belonging to the II century that sketch the image of the pantheon worshipped now. With one exception (a relief with the Danubian Horsemen from the camp of Cășei²⁵), all the others are terracotta or bronze statues: Iuppiter (Potaissa), Mars (Drobeta), Fortuna (Micia), Mercurius (Drobeta, Ilișua and Gherla), Venus (Gilău, Ilișua), Liber Pater (Drobeta), Dolichenus (Ilișua), Isis (Drobeta).

If for the terracotta pieces their perishable nature offers a doubtless dating, the bronze statuettes were chronologically framed based on analogies or coming from their typological features, existing the possibility for their dating not to correspond with the moment they appeared inside the camp, perhaps being later used.

This period is characterized by a certain religious unity. Some Greek-Roman deities prevail, but we also encounter Egyptian gods, such as Isis and Serapis. Other deities appear too, such as Iuppiter Dolichenus at Ilișua, Saturnus Securus at Apulum or Epona and Campestres at Ulpia Traiana.

¹⁶ Russu 1968, p. 97; IDR III/3, 262, fig. 195.

¹⁷ IDR III/5, 43; Piso 2004, p. 211, nr. 13, fig. 2a-b.

¹⁸ IDR III/3, 243.

¹⁹ IDR III/5, 235.

²⁰ Piso 1981, p. 446; IDR III/5, 148, 166.

²¹ IDR III/2, 243, IDR III/3, 95-96.

²² IDR III/2, 220, fig. 176.

²³ CIL III 7770; IDR III/5, 318.

²⁴ CIL III 832, IDR III/5, 314, 275.

²⁵ Nemeti 2005, p. 357.

Very surprising is that the auxiliary units are almost absent from inscriptions, a little compensation being brought by the figurative pieces concentrated in several centres (Micia, Drobeta, Gherla, Gilău, Ilișua). The most active religious centre was by far Apulum, camp of the legion XIII Gemina.

The first century in the existence of Roman Dacia was marked by a certain religious conformism. The main religious actor was the legion XIII Gemina. Most of the cult manifestations are connected to Greek-Roman deities. In few situations appear Isis and Serapis, for whom the emperors of the dynasty had a special attraction. The other cults (Oriental, German), are singular. Perhaps we are not exaggerating saying this is the image of the romanization process, significantly carried on by the Roman army.

Religia militarilor din Dacia în timpul Dinastiei Antoninilor (Rezumat)

Dinastia Antoninilor, care pentru istoria Daciei înseamnă secolul II p.Chr, mai exact intervalul de timp dintre cucerirea Daciei (107) și sfârșitul domniei lui Commodus (192), a însemnat din punct de vedere religios o perioadă activă (54 de inscripții se datează cu certitudine în acest secol).

Există pentru această perioadă o oarecare unitate religioasă, în sensul prevalenței divinităților greco-romane, completate de divinitățile egiptene Isis și Serapis. Există însă și apariții pasagere ale unor divinități de altă factură, cum ar fi Iuppiter Dolichenus la Ilișua, Saturnus Securus la Apulum sau Epona și Campestris la Ulpia Traiana.

Surprinde faptul că trupele auxiliare aproape absentează din inscripții, compensând însă prin piesele figurate, și acestea concentrate în câteva centre (Micia, Drobeta, Gherla, Gilău, Ilișua). De departe cel mai activ centru religios a fost Apulum și legiunea XIII Gemina.

Primul secol de existență a provinciei Dacia și de prezență militară romană la nordul Dunării a fost marcat de un anume conformism. Principalul actor pe scena vieții religioase a fost legiunea XIII Gemina. Majoritatea manifestărilor de cult vizează divinități greco-romane. În foarte puține cazuri apar Isis și Serapis, divinități pentru care Antoninii au avut o simpatie deosebită. Celelalte culte (orientale, germanice) sunt prezențe singulare. Poate că nu exagerăm dacă am spune că acest tablou este expresia procesului de romanizare la realizarea căruia armata și-a adus o contribuție semnificativă.

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Religia militarilor din Dacia în timpul Dinastiei Antoninilor (Rezumat)

Dinastia Antoninilor, care pentru istoria Daciei înseamnă secolul II p. Chr., reprezintă intervalul de timp dintre cucerirea Daciei (107) și stăruința domniei lui Commodus (192), a jacobinilor din punct de vedere religios o perioadă activă (54 de inscripții se datază cu certitudine în acest secol).

Există pentru această perioadă o oarecare unitate religioasă, în sensul prevalenței divinităților greco-romane, compoziție de divinități egipțiene lais și Setapis. Există însă și apartențe pasagere ale unor divinități de altă factură, cum ar fi Iuppiter Dolichenus la Iliava, Saturnus Securus la Apulum sau Epos și Campestes la Ulpia Traiana.

Suportând faptul că trupele auxiliare aprobe absentează din inscripții, compoziția însă prin piesele figurate, și acestea concentrate în câteva centre (Micia, Drobeta, Ghetla, Gilaia, Iliava). De departe cel mai activ centru religios a fost Apulum și legiunea XIII Gemina. Primul secol de existență a provinciei Dacia și de prezența militarilor romani la nordul Dunării a fost marcat de un anumit conformism. Principiul actor pe scena vieții religioase a fost legiunea XIII Gemina. Majoritatea manifestărilor de cult vizează divinități greco-romane. În foarte puține cazuri apar lais și Setapis, divinități pentru care Antoninii au avut o simpatie deosebită. Celelalte culte (orientale, germanice) sunt prezente singulare. Poate că nu exagerăm dacă am spune că acest tablou este expresia procesului de romanizare la teritoriul cărui armata și-a adus o contribuție semnificativă.

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