

## Amphorae storehouses or military instalations?

(Summary)

The archaeological and epigraphical documentation of the Roman *territorium* inside the Traian – Tulucești *vallum*, located on the left bank of the Danube, in the area where the Siret River meets the Danube, is well known especially due to the discoveries made inside the fortress and settlement at Barboși and more recently, following rescue excavations, the site from Galați city, „Dunărea” neighborhood (located 1.5 km east of Barboși), on Danube’s bank.

Our observations will focus on the recent research undertaken in the roman fortlets located in the *territorium*. It was considered, for example, that a detailed chronology of the fortress can be established with the aid of the amphorae discovered in three different layers of filling in the ditches. Therefore the fortress in question would have functioned for almost two centuries. The identification of the amphorae in several layers of filling in the ditches cannot represent an argument for establishing a chronology of the fortlet functioning phases in the absence of the internal stratigraphy. During the 2004 research campaign we noticed that the ditches’ slopes bear no traces of the usual maintenance work undertaken by the soldiers of the garrison, in some places the slopes being difficult to be traced, their upper parts collapsing immediately after the fortlet was abandoned. Thus, the amphorae – apart from their earlier or later datation– discovered following archaeological investigation in the fortlet ditches, are simple residues.

During the 2004 campaign, inside the ditches were discovered an important number of *narrow-necked light-clay amphorae*. Accepting the fact that the frequency for these artifacts is grater for the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., consider that it is possible for the fortlet to have functioned in the first half of the same century. Judging after the *tituli picti* and the traces of resin inside some of the recipients, I consider that this type of amphora was used for transporting wine. These amphorae are wide-spread on the shores of the Black Sea, especially on the northern and western shores, and are rarely found in the Mediterranean space.

The fortlet allows considering this structure as belonging to the category of small fortlets used for sheltering groups of soldiers in certain outposts, with the mission of surveying

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<sup>16</sup> Țentea, Cleșiu 2006, p. 48.

<sup>17</sup> Gostar 1965, p. 146; vezi și Croitoru 2004, p. 90.

### Depozite de amfore sau instalații militare?

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fords, roads or places of specific strategic importance. In these circumstances, a *vexillatio* could be sent near the garrison, in a place where a *centurio* or a variable number of soldiers could be stationed. The sources indicate that such vexillations could be deployed as mentioned even for as long as several years.

Based on the interpretation of the historical aerial photographs (made by dr. Ioana Oltean) the limes installations on the left bank of the Danube around the modern town of Galati would have included at least 4 or 5 small fortifications (fortlets) along with a number of watchtowers. They extended as far as 6.5 kilometers away from the line of the Danube within the territory enclosed by the Traian-Tulucești *vallum* and, if they were contemporary, the fortlets were sufficiently close together to facilitate communications and control of the territory (Țentea, Oltean - forthcoming).