

# EPHEMERIS NAPOCENSIS

XXIII

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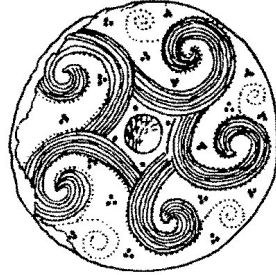
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INSTITUTUL DE ARHEOLOGIE ȘI ISTORIA ARTEI



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# THE TOPONYMY OF *DACIA POROLISSENSIS*. RECENT RESEARCH AND NEW APPROACHES\*

Dan-Augustin Deac<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** First and foremost the present study aims to create an image of the names of several places (toponyms) in *Dacia Porolissensis*, which are encompassed in the current stage of research. Taking into account the names of the military or civil settlements of the province, these can be categorized into two groups: the first one is represented by the names attributed with certainty to different Roman settlements (for example the urban areas: *Napoca*, *Potaissa*, *Porolissum*) or the forts and adjacent civil settlements (for example *Ilișua/Arcobara*; *Cășeiu/Samum*), and the second category, that is represented by the Roman settlements for which the Roman name is rather uncertain. One can only deduce them using epigraphic, cartographic or literary sources. These hypotheses shall be presented thoroughly in the present research paper. Last but not least, the study also takes into consideration the names of some regions (*regio Ansamensium*) and the hydrography of the landscape of *Dacia Porolissensis*, namely the rivers nowadays known as *Mureș* and *Someș*.

**Keywords:** toponymy, *Dacia Porolissensis*, Roman settlements

The ancient name of the Roman settlements, places, rivers etc. has always been a big issue among scientists dealing with the Roman era<sup>2</sup>. However, regarding the northern part of *Dacia*, which has been transformed into the province of *Dacia Porolissensis* in the early years of Hadrian's reign (the year 123 AD is the earliest one in which this administrative entity is first known for the time being),<sup>3</sup> some of the names of the ancient settlements were already known from the ancient documents. This paper aims to present virtually all what is scientifically known related to the names of different places in *Dacia Porolissensis* and to identify new toponyms of known Roman settlements. Nevertheless, after mapping the new situation we will try to find a relevant answer to why the Romans preferred to maintain the older Dacian toponymy and why in some cases they chose to give new genuine Roman names.

## Roman settlements with certain identification (Fig. 1)

### 1. *Potaissa* (Turda, Cluj county)

*Potaissa* started as a *vicus* with the earliest attestation dated somewhere in the years of 107–109 AD, on the *milliarum* of Aiton (Cluj county), found on the Roman imperial

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<sup>2</sup> BRATU 1992 (see in this case especially *Napoca*, *Potaissa* and *Porolissum*); NEMETI 2006a, 271–288.

<sup>3</sup> About the entire discussion (with the old bibliography) see: ECK/PANGERL 2011, 234–242.

road between *Potaissa* and *Napoca*<sup>4</sup>. The name seems to have a Dacian origin. Once the 5<sup>th</sup> Macedonica legion settled in 168 AD<sup>5</sup> in the area, the settlement began to grow spectacularly. Thus, besides the old *vicus*, a legionary fort and their *canabae* were built. Moreover, during the reign of Septimius Severus, the *vicus* develops up to a *municipium* (*Septimium Potaissensis*)<sup>6</sup> next to the legionary fort, which soon after gets to be a *colonia* under the rule of the same emperor as the author Ulpianus<sup>7</sup> specified. Other literary sources mention the Roman settlement of *Potaissa*. The *Tabula Peutingeriana*'s VIIIth c) segment<sup>8</sup>, tells us about the *vicus* of *Patavissa*. Claudius Ptolemy in his *Geographike Hyphegesis*,<sup>9</sup> when talking about the map of Dacia mentions the existence of Πατρούισσα with the coordinates at 49 degrees longitude and 47 degrees, and 20' latitude (Geogr. III 8.4)<sup>10</sup>. Also last but not least, the Anonymous geographer of Ravenna calls the settlement *Patabissa*.<sup>11</sup> Looking onto the epigraphic monuments in general, the name seems to be written down under the form *Potaissa*. In one specific case coming from *Salonae*, as stressed out by C. C. Petolescu, a *decorio Patavis(s)ensis* is attested<sup>12</sup>.

## 2. *Napoca* (Cluj-Napoca, Cluj county)

*Napoca* is mentioned on the *mlarum* from Aiton as being one of the earliest Roman settlements in Dacia<sup>13</sup>. I was most probably the older name of the previous Dacian settlement found nearby<sup>14</sup>. During the time of Hadrian, *Napoca* gains the rank of a *municipium* under the official name of *municipium Aelium Hadrianum Napoca*<sup>15</sup>. Later on, in the second part of the 2nd c. AD, more exactly during the reign of Commodus, the city becomes *colonia Aurelia Napoca* as mentioned on a funerary monument from Mediaș<sup>16</sup>. In the *Tabula Peutingeriana*'s VIIIth c) segment *Napoca* can be observed as one of the urban settlements of the province<sup>17</sup>. The Anonymous geographer of Ravenna, mentions the settlement of *Napoca*, between *Potaissa* and *Macedonica*, under the same name<sup>18</sup>. Ulpian also refers to the above mentioned urban

<sup>4</sup> CIL III 1627: *Imp(erator) / Caesar Nerva / Traianus Aug(ustus) / Germ(anicus) Dacicus / pontif(ex) maxim(us) / [tr(ibunicia)](?) pot(estate) XII co(n)s(ul) V / imp(erator) VI p(ater) p(atriciae) fecit / per coh(ortem) I Fl(aviam) Ulp(iam) / Hisp(anorum) mil(liariam) c(ivium) R(omanorum) eq(uitatam) / a Potaissa Napolcae / m(ilia) p(assuum) X.*

<sup>5</sup> BĂRBULESCU 1987; PISO 2000, 214–215.

<sup>6</sup> CIL III, 913 = 7689; Année Épigr. 1934, 17; Année Épigr. 1950, 14; Année Épigr. 1973, 457; Année Épigr. 1974, 550 (*municipium Septimium Potaissensis*); CIL III 903 (*municipium*); CÂRJAN 2010, 68 note 515. For the form *Patavissa* see: CIL III 2086 = IDRE II 299, *decurio Patavissensis*.

<sup>7</sup> Ulpianus Digestae 50,15,1,9: *Patavissensium vicus, qui a divo Severo ius coloniae impetravit.*

<sup>8</sup> FODOREAN 2012, 211–221 with a wider bibliography.

<sup>9</sup> BOGDAN-CĂTĂNICIU 1988, 145–162; BOGDAN-CĂTĂNICIU 1990, 223–234 and recently NEMETI 2006, 86–98; NEMETI 2006a, 271–288 and NEMETI 2010, 102–113.

<sup>10</sup> MÜLLER 1883.

<sup>11</sup> Geogr. Ravenn. IV 7.

<sup>12</sup> PETOLESCU 2011, 97.

<sup>13</sup> Supra note 2.

<sup>14</sup> All the theories regarding the early development of the settlement and the scenarios which finally gave the name of *Napoca* to the early Roman *vicus* were recently summarized by V. Rusu-Bolindeț (RUSU-BOLINDEȚ 2007, 68–74).

<sup>15</sup> E.g. CIL III, 14465 = ILS 07150: *[I.O.M. / Cons(ervatori) mul(nic)ip(ii) Aeli / Hadr(iani) Napoc(ae) / cura Iivir(orun)q(uin)q(uennalium) / C(ai) Numeri Decilani et Iuli Ingenui / v(otum) s(olverunt) l(ibentes) m(erito).*

<sup>16</sup> CIL III, 963 (7726) = IDR III/4, 96: *D(is) M(anibus) / C(aius) Ulp(ius) Sab(inus) d(ecurio) col(oniae) Aur(eliae) Na[p(ocae)] / vix(it) an(nos) L Ulp(ia?) Sabi(na?) vix(it) an(nos) ...] / [3 M]ar(cus) Ulp(ius) Maximus A[...] / [...]anus Na[p(ocae)] / vix(it) an(nos) L Ulp(ia?) Sabi(na?) vix(it) an(nos) ...] / [3 M]ar(cus) Ulp(ius) Maximus A[...] / [...]anus pa[trono]. For other examples during the same period of time see PETOLESCU 2011, 98, note 157.*

<sup>17</sup> About the judicial status of *Napoca* and their probable original settlers see: CÂRJAN 2010, 67–68. More recently about the urban settlements of Dacia, including does mentioned above see PETOLESCU 2011, 83–109.

<sup>18</sup> Geogr. Ravenn. IV 7.

settlement as *Napocensis colonia*<sup>19</sup> while Ptolemy refers to it as Νάπουκα at 49 degrees longitude and 47.40' latitude (Geogr. III 8.4)<sup>20</sup>.

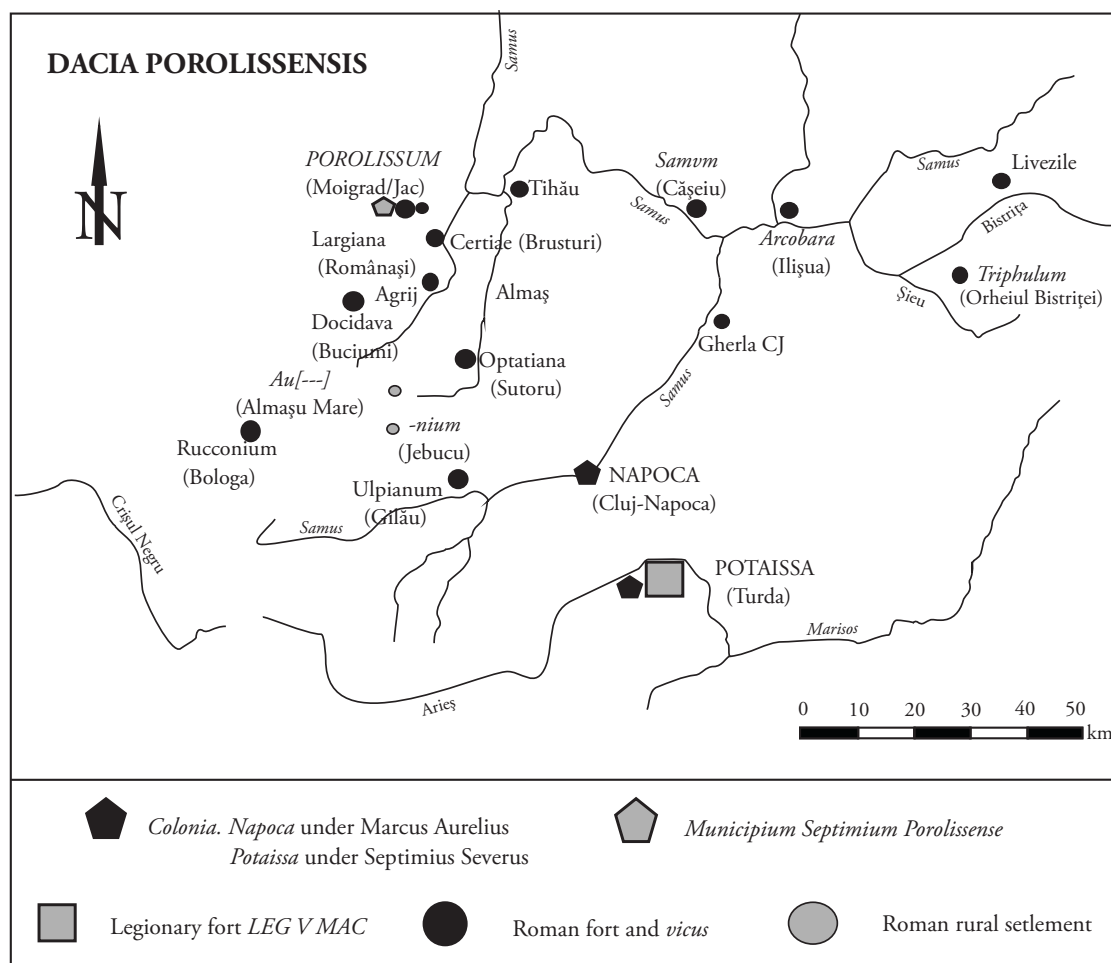


Fig. 1. Map of *Dacia Porolissensis* redrawn after Nicolae Gudea (GUDEA 1989).

### 3. *Porolissum* (Moigrad, Jac, Sălaj county)

The Roman settlement of *Porolissum* is one of the most important ones, which dates at the beginning of the province of Dacia<sup>21</sup>. The name most certainly comes from the Dacian language and was used as a name for the nearby Iron-Age fort, at “Măgura”. During the reign of Septimius Severus, the population is granted the right of building a Roman municipium, somewhere at the south-eastern corner of the fort or as I. Piso suggests that the vicus should be granted directly the status of a municipium (*Septimium Porolissensis*)<sup>22</sup>. On one hand, epigraphically the settlement is virtually addressed on every sculptural monument that we know

<sup>19</sup> Ulpianus Digestae 50,15,1.

<sup>20</sup> MÜLLER 1883.

<sup>21</sup> See GUDEA 1989 for a complete picture.

<sup>22</sup> PISO 2001, 225–233 after the reinterpretation of the inscription of an altar: *IOM[D] / pro salute et [incolu]/ munitate Imp(eratoris) C(aesaris) M(arci) [Ant(onii)] / Gordiani Pii Fel(icis) Aug(usti) / et coh(ortis) III Camp(estrus) M(arcus) Aur(elius) Fla(vus) IIIIvir m(unicipii) S(eptimii) P(orolissensis) M(arcus) Ant(oni)us Maximu[s] / vet(eranus) et dec(urio) o[rnat]us ornam(enti) IIIIvir(alibus) / m(unicipii) s(upra) s(cripti) et Aure(lius) Fla(vus) dec(urio) m(unicipii), vegesi[m]a[r](ius) (sic) / sacerdotes dei et coh(ortis) s(upra) s(criptae)[t]emp[or]um cum / tabernis (a)ere suo feceru[nt]*. For the judicial situation see CĂRJAN 2010, 67.

of, being written in Latin as Porolissum<sup>23</sup>, or in one case Paralis(s)ensium civitas<sup>24</sup>. On the other hand, the name written in Greek suffers two different spelling<sup>25</sup> issues. It is called Πορόλισσον by Claudius Ptolemy (50.40 degrees longitude and 48 degrees latitude Geogr. III 8.4)<sup>26</sup>, *Porolisso* in the Tabula Peutingeriana<sup>27</sup> and while referring to it two times, the anonymous geographer of Ravenna calls it Porolissum<sup>28</sup> and Porolissos<sup>29</sup>.

#### 4. *Arcobara* (Ilișua, Bistrița-Năsăud county)

The name is most probably of Dacian origin with the suffix *-bara* probably meaning „village”<sup>30</sup>. The identification of the toponym at Ilișua was possible due to the discovery of an altar (cut into two parts, only the right part being preserved) in 1989 in the civil settlement next to the Roman fort and dating from 246 AD<sup>31</sup>. This Roman settlement is also mentioned by Claudius Ptolemy among the πόλεις ἐν τῇ Δακίᾳ ἐπιΦανέστεραι, under the probable original writing Ακοβαρα<sup>32</sup>, on the observations of the authors who published the altar<sup>33</sup>.

#### 5. *Samum* (Cășeu, Cluj county).

The name *Samum* comes from the name of the nearby river *Samus*<sup>34</sup>. It is attested several times only epigraphically and only on monuments dating in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD<sup>35</sup>. Unfortunately, we are not able to admit the Dacian origin of this name certainly, this aspect, remaining a matter which is fiercely debated. However, an inscription found in Cășeu in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, nowadays lost, has triggered considerable attention<sup>36</sup>. This lost inscription is very damaged and hard to read, but still, there is a slight possibility (among lots of others) that the text could speak of an onorific inscription put by the [*vicani*] [---]renses- the people of the village ending in [...]*rum*, [...]*rus* or [...]*ra* (maybe another village ending in *-bara*). Unfortunately the precarious state of the text only adds to the confusion, but it also raises questions regarding the toponymy<sup>37</sup>.

#### 6. *-nium?* (Jebucu, Cluj county).

<sup>23</sup> For other examples see: CÂRJAN 2010, 67 note 502 or PETOLESCU 2011, 99.

<sup>24</sup> CIL III 2866; IDRE II 293.

<sup>25</sup> “ἐν Παρολί[σσω]” *apud* PETOLESCU 2011, 99, note 165 with the older bibliography. The second case comes from *Augusta Traiana (Thracia)* under the form Παρολίσσου (again PETOLESCU 2011, 99 and dated in the time of the reign of Severus Alexander).

<sup>26</sup> MÜLLER 1883.

<sup>27</sup> Tab. Peut. VIII d.

<sup>28</sup> Geogr. Ravenn. IV 5.

<sup>29</sup> Geogr. Ravenn. IV 7.

<sup>30</sup> DANA/NEMETI 2012, 436. The authors give another example: Ζουρόβαρα (trad. Zourobara= the village of Zura).

<sup>31</sup> DANA/NEMETI 2012, 431–437 with the entire bibliography of the reading of the inscription from which *Arcobara*’s toponymic identification at note 5 (pages 432–433). The final reading goes as follows: [*Geni*]o terri/ [*tor(ii) A*]rcoba(rensis?) / [--- Au]r(elius) Sal/[--- et] Ael(ius) No/[---]s magg(istri), / [*Praes*]ente et Al/[bino] co(n)s(ulibus).

<sup>32</sup> MÜLLER 1883.

<sup>33</sup> DANA/NEMETI 2012, 435–436.

<sup>34</sup> See *infra* the “River names” section.

<sup>35</sup> For example: CIL III 827=7633: *agens sub sig(nis) / Samum cum reg(ione) Ans(...)*; RUSSU 1956, 120–123, no. 1, Fig. 1.: *agens Salmo cum reg(ione) Ans. / sub seg(nis)*; ISAC 2003.

<sup>36</sup> CIL III 829: [...] / [---]F/ [---]RI / [---]FEL / [---] I / [-----] / [-----] / [-----] / [---] E Brit(---) / [---]renses / [---]LI Bithi / [---]iunct[---] / [---].

<sup>37</sup> Some examples: *vicani Auquenses (Aquae Mattiacorum, Germania Superior, CIL XIII 7566 a)*; *vicani Venetonimage[n]s[es] (Venetonimagus, Narbonese Gaul, CIL XIII 2541)*; *vicani Altiainses (Altiaina, Germania Superior CIL XIII 6265)*; *vicani Mogontiacenses (Mogontiacum, Germania Superior, CIL XIII 6722)*.

In 2012 the researchers R. Ardevan and R. Zăgreanu published a new statue base for Jupiter, found in the area of the modern village of Jebucu (Sălaj county), considering it to be the monument which mentions another toponym from Claudius Ptolemy's *Geographike Hyphegesis*, namely *Rucconium*<sup>38</sup>. However, the letters –NI in row 5 do not necessarily prove that the name is *Rucconium*, but rather we are tempted to consider that the name of the Roman settlement of Jebucu is just ending in –*nium*. Unfortunately we do not possess any other pieces of information of how the first part of the name could have been, so only this fragmentary form can be advanced<sup>39</sup>.

### Roman settlements known from literary sources (Fig. 1)

Recently S. Nemeti has continued the study of the names of Roman settlements of Dacia. In his study from 2006<sup>40</sup>, the author calculates the distances of the settlements using the ptolemaic algorithm (1 degree = 500 stadii, 1 stadius = 185 m) and concludes that the settlements *Triphulum*, *Patridava*, *Carsidava* and the ones between *Petrodava* and *Cumidava* (*Angustia*, *Utidava*, *Polonda*, *Zusidava* and *Romidava*) are in reality placed not in Moldova but on the eastern frontier of Roman Dacia<sup>41</sup>. Thus horizontally, the elongated distances are repaired by the scientist using a narrowing method. Regarding *Dacia Porolissensis*, he advances the idea that *Triphulum* could be identified with the Roman settlement of Orheiu Bistriței, a possibility that I find very plausible<sup>42</sup>. On the western side of the province the same measurements are used identifying *Docidava*<sup>43</sup> as being the name of the *vicus* adjacent to the Roman fort of Buciumi, between *Rucconium* (Bologa) and *Porolissum* (Moigrad/Jac) on the 48<sup>th</sup> parallel. He also mentions the possibility that *Rucconium* (between the 48<sup>th</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup> parallel) could be the name of Bologa. Between the 47<sup>th</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> parallels S. Nemeti advances the idea that the Roman fort and *vicus* of Gilău could have been called in the Roman era *Ulpianum*. It could have been as suggested by N. Gostar in 1969, a *castellum Ulpianum*<sup>44</sup>.

Finally in the case of the forts from Gherla (Cluj county) and Tihău (Sălaj county) it is impossible to advance any plausible hypothesis regarding its Roman name, either epigraphic or cartographic<sup>45</sup>.

At the moment, one can affirm the fact that the Roman names of the most important πόλεις ἐν τῇ Δακίᾳ ἐπιφανέστεραι can be identified as follows (of course this remains only a hypothesis until further epigraphic back-up for most of these settlements will emerge): *Napoca* = Cluj-Napoca, Cluj county; *Potaiissa* = Turda, Cluj county; *Porolissum* = Moigrad, Jac, Sălaj county; *Optatiana*<sup>46</sup> = Sutoru, Sălaj county; *Largiana*<sup>47</sup> = Românași, Sălaj

<sup>38</sup> ARDEVAN/ZĂGREANU 2012, 73–83. The inscription is: *[I(ovi)] O(ptimo) M(aximo) / [et Geni]o (trium) d(ominorum) n(ostorum) Sev(eri) / [et Ant(onini) A]ug(ustorum duorum) [[et Getae C(aesaris)]] / [c(ives) R(omani) et] vicani vici / [Rucco]ni(i) imp(ensis) com(munibus) / [devoti (?)] sacrum p[os]uerunt*].

<sup>39</sup> In Jebucu there were found segments of Roman walls, three Roman monuments, the statue base in discussion and Roman ceramics (see GUDEA 2008, 77 no. 22 and ARDEVAN/ZĂGREANU 2012, 83, Fig. A-D).

<sup>40</sup> NEMETI 2006a, 271–288.

<sup>41</sup> NEMETI 2006a, 281.

<sup>42</sup> NEMETI 2006a, 281–282.

<sup>43</sup> Some Romanian scholars have pointed out that the name should be *Dacidava* (trans. the fort of the Dacians) but in reality Ptolemeu clearly writes Δοκίδαβα.

<sup>44</sup> GOSTAR 1969, 171–176 and NEMETI 2006a, 282, note 70.

<sup>45</sup> About the fort of Tihău and its epigraphic material see: DEAC 2013, 47–55. For the fort from Gherla see: PROTASE/GUDEA/ARDEVAN 2008.

<sup>46</sup> The name *Optatiana* appears under the same form in all literary sources and was identified with the fort and *vicus* of Sutoru because of the tile stamps *NMO* found in that fort. For the entire problem see the recent work of M. Grec (GREC 2010, 133 with especially the notes 215–217).

<sup>47</sup> Geogr. Ravenn. IV 7 is *Lagiana*.

county; *Certiae*<sup>48</sup> = Brusturi/Romita, Sălaj county; *Docidava* = Buciumi, Sălaj county; *Rucconium* = Bologa, Cluj county; *Ulpianum* = Gilău, Cluj county; *Samum/ [...]*rum = Cășeiu, Cluj county. *Arcobara* = Ilișua, Bistrița-Năsăud county; *Triphulum* = Orhei Bistriței, Bistrița-Năsăud county.

### The *milliarum* of Almașu Mare

The *milliarum* was found in 1851 on the Roman road, linking the forts of Sutoru and Bologa and it is nowadays lost. According to the titulature of the emperor Maximinus Thrax, the monument dates in 236 AD as observed by I. Piso. It was seen by C. Torma and A. von Domaszewski, the later making a cast of it<sup>49</sup>. As I. Piso observed, the *milliarum* is at a distance of 16 miles (23 km) from the fort from Bologa a fort that starts with the name of *R[...]*. In my opinion the restoration should be made *Rucconi vico Au(?)[...]*. About the name of the *vicus* called *Au?*(maybe *Aurelianus*) I am tempted to follow the idea of I. Piso that the name is of the site of Almașu Mare, but which is in the territory of Bologa (*Rucconium*)<sup>50</sup>.

### Reg(io) Ans(amensium)/Regio Ans(ae)

The dossier of the land names will end with the presentation of the situation regarding the *regio* around *Samum*, called *reg(io) An(samensium)*. This region has triggered the attention of many scholars. The first one to raise questions regarding the nature of this district was C. Daicovicu<sup>51</sup>. In recent years, while discussing the missions of the *beneficiarii consulares* on the northern frontier, C. Opreanu mentioned also the fact that the epigraphic solution to the *syntagma* REG ANS, based on analogies from Britain, should be *reg(io) ans(ae)* meaning “the area of the river’s wimple” or “the area of the banks of the river” (Someș, that is)<sup>52</sup>. Still most of the scholars accept the term *reg(io) An(samensium)*<sup>53</sup>. B. Vătavu has focused in his study on this particular region and helped by analogies from *Montana* (Moesia Inferior) and *Socnopaei Nesus* in Aegyptus concluded that this *regio* was a policing area on the frontier under the authority of consular beneficiaries. Regarding the geographical extension of this *regio*, the same author is tempted to presume the fact that this *regio Ansamensium* could have stretched even including the city of *Napoca* due to the fact that one of the beneficiaries, called M. Val(erius) Valentinus had the title of *aedilis coloniae Napocensis*<sup>54</sup>. Unfortunately, for now, this hypothesis, although plausible, is hard to prove with strong evidence.

### River names in Dacia Porolissensis (Fig. 1)

Two main river names known to us, can be identified being connected with the landscape of *Dacia Porolissensis*. One of them, known as *Marisia*, Μάρισος, *Marus* or Μορήσις<sup>55</sup> used to represent most likely the border line between *Dacia Porolissensis* and *Dacia Superior/Apulensis*, a line which stretched from the eastern borders of Dacia to the eastern vicinity of *Patavisium vicus*

<sup>48</sup> *Cersiae* in Tab. Peut.

<sup>49</sup> For the entire bibliography see PISO 2011, 323. The text *apud* I. Piso is: *Im[p(erator) / C]aesari (sic!) Caius [[Iul(ius) Verus Ma]] / [[x]i[m]i[nus]] p(ius) f(elix) Aug(ustus) pontif[ex] / [[maximus]] trib(uniciae) potestat[is] / II imp(erator) III co(n)s(ul) pater patria[e] / et Gaius [[Iul(ius) V]eru[s] M[aximus]] / nobilissim[us] Caes(ar) fil(ius) Augu[sti] / m(ilia passuum) XVI a R[...]*VL vico Au(?)[— —].

<sup>50</sup> For the theory of I. Piso see: PISO 2011, 323–324, no. 2.

<sup>51</sup> DAICOVICIU 1966, 153–170.

<sup>52</sup> OPREANU 1994, 72.

<sup>53</sup> ISAC 2003 48–58; NEMETI 2006, 88 note 18; VĂTAVU 2011, 225–234.

<sup>54</sup> VĂTAVU 2011, 230.

<sup>55</sup> For further details see NEMETI 2010, 108–109, no. 6.

(which transformed itself during the reign of Septimius Severus up to the status of a *colonia*)<sup>56</sup>. Known today as Mureş, this river is one of the oldest mentions of this kind both in ancient Greek and Roman sources<sup>57</sup>.

Nonetheless, the other important river from *Dacia Porolissensis* is *Samus*, known today as Someş<sup>58</sup>. The river served as an important supply and communications route for the forts found on the frontier and close to the river. It must have been, of course, to a smaller scale, a similar sample as the one on the Danube, masterfully portrayed by C. R. Whittaker in his study of the Roman frontiers,<sup>59</sup> contradicting the general view of most of the Romanian scholars related to what the frontier was actually meant for, namely that the river *Samus*, was used in great part in the defensive system of Roman Dacia<sup>60</sup>. But this aspect, of the frontiers of Roman Dacia, and implicitly of *Dacia Porolissensis* is a subject that will require future investigations, new points of view and some reconsiderations which are not the case in the present study. As I have mentioned before, it is a *communis opinio* the fact that most likely the name of the fort and *vicus* of *Samum* had been taken from the name of the river's name<sup>61</sup>.

## Conclusions

Firstly, it can be observed the fact that the Romans preferred to use, at least for the province of *Dacia Porolissensis*, the older names, used by the Dacians (e.g. *Potaissa*, *Napoca*, *Porolissum*, *Arcobara*, *Triphulum*, *Samum* and *Docidava*), namely for the places where the Romans built forts, probably next to older Dacian settlements<sup>62</sup>. Some other Roman settlements have genuine Roman names (*Ulpianum*, *Optatiana*, *Certiae*, *Largiana*).

Secondly, looking at their placement we can observe that these forts were built in key points on the Roman imperial road in the segment between *Porolissum* and *Napoca* (e.g. *Optatiana*, *Largiana*, *Certiae*, or on the *diverticulum* road coming from Bologa to *Napoca* (e.g. *Ulpianum*). This means that at least in the first years of the province of Dacia, among other duties, the soldiers that camped in these forts had to secure the safe use of these roads. The forts were not built following the position of previous Dacian settlements nearby, but rather were strategically built in key parts of the road, for a better control, thus taking new-born genuine Roman names. Although Iron Age artifacts were found in these forts and adjacent *vici*, this does not attest the existence of a Dacian settlement under the Roman establishments.

All things considered, one way of seeing these forts and their military objectives is similar to the fortlets found for example on the road between the Nile and the Red Sea ports in the eastern Egyptian desert<sup>63</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> About the territory of Potaissa see NEMETI ET AL. 2003, 69–75.

<sup>57</sup> *Apud* NEMETI 2010: Herodotus 4.49: ἐκ δὲ Ἀγαθύρσον Μάρης ποταμὸς ῥέων συμμίσγεται τῷ Ἴστρω. Strabo 7.3.13: ρεῖ δὲ δε' αὐτῶν (=διὰ Δακῶν) Μάρισος ποταμὸς εἰς τὸν Δανούϊον. Plinius Nat. Hist. 4.80: *a Maro*; Tac. Ann. 2.63: *inter ... Marum*; Jordanes 113: *iuxta fl uina Marisia, Miliare et Gilpil et Grisia*; Const. Porphy. 40: Μορήσης.

<sup>58</sup> CIL III 827=7633: *agens sub sig(nis) / Samum cum reg(ione) Ans(...)*; RUSSU 1956, 120–123, no. 1,

Fig. 1.: *agens Salmo cum reg(ione) Ans. / sub seg(nis)*; NEMETI 2010, 111,a.

<sup>59</sup> WHITTAKER 1994.

<sup>60</sup> GUDEA 1979. 63–87 is the perfect example in such a matter.

<sup>61</sup> About *Samum* see *supra*.

<sup>62</sup> NEMETI 2006a, 282.

<sup>63</sup> ALSTON 2003, 192–207, with the older bibliography, especially note 10.

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