

# EPHEMERIS NAPOCENSIS

XXIII

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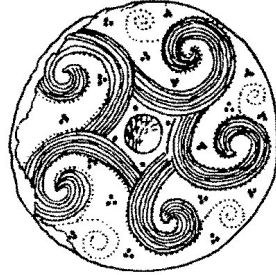
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INSTITUTUL DE ARHEOLOGIE ȘI ISTORIA ARTEI



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# SCULPTURAL MONUMENTS FROM *DACIA POROLISSENSIS*\*

Irina Nemeti<sup>1</sup>, Radu Iustinian Zăgreanu<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** *The study presents twenty one previously unpublished monuments preserved in the Roman Lapidarium of the National History Museum of Transylvania in Cluj-Napoca. Most items were found in various locations in Dacia Porolissensis, but in some cases the place of discovery remains unknown. Those monuments that can be identified despite their fragmentary state can be included in the category of funerary sculptural pieces. Their presentation as a group allows for the formulation of a series of observations on stonemasonry workshops from northern Dacia.*

**Keywords:** *monument, sculptural, funerary, Roman Art, Dacia Porolissensis*

In the Roman lapidary of the National History Museum of Transylvania we have identified several sculptural pieces from older or newer findings that were never published before. Some of the monuments were found in Gherla, Cluj – Someșeni (*territorium Napocae*), Moigrad (*Porolissum*), Turda (*Potaissa*), Dumbrăveni (Sibiu County), but in the case of others the place of discovery has not been recorded. As for the latter we will assume that they were found on sites from Dacia Porolissensis, in villages or towns in the area of Cluj and thus ended up in the collection of the museum there.

Most of the items under discussion are funerary monuments. Their presentation as a group might lead to the identification of specific traits of provincial art from *Dacia Porolissensis*<sup>3</sup>, thus enabling a wider discussion on the products of stonemasonry workshops in the province.

The presentation of the monuments is organized according to their type. The following abbreviations are used: CL – current location, D – dimensions, PD – place of discovery, MNIT: Muzeul Național de Istorie a Transilvaniei [National History Museum of Transylvania].

## REPERTORY OF MONUMENTS

### 1. Funerary relief (Pl. I/1)

PD: Gherla;

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\* CNCSIS Project – PN-RU-II–3-0131 – *Digital Corpus for the virtual exploration of the Antiquity. Art and text on Roman monuments from Dacia.*

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<sup>3</sup> Among the items with known place of discovery, only one was found outside the province of *Dacia Porolissensis*.

CL: MNIT – inv. no. D 919; volcanic tuff; D: 50 × 40 × 10 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Funerary relief, partially preserved; only the upper part of a plaque and the upper right corner of the monument remain. The preserved image represents the lower body of a fantastic animal, i.e. a *hippocampus*. The contorted body displays the twisting specific to this kind of representation; the thin, slightly curled tail ends in three lobes. The relief is shallow and the contour of the body of the *hippocampus* is underlined by a deeper incision, which renders the sense of volume and depth. The unprocessed surface still shows traces of chiseling. The artistic quality is rather modest.

The fragment represents the upper part of a funerary relief with two *hippocampi* flanking a *kantharos*, or a medallion which is part of an arch<sup>4</sup> or of a funerary postament<sup>5</sup>. This type of representation is attested on monuments from *Apulum*<sup>6</sup>, *Potaissa*<sup>7</sup> and *Jebucu*<sup>8</sup>.

## 2. Wall of a funerary *aedicula* (Pl. I/2)

PD: Gherla;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. D 898; volcanic tuff; D: 20 × 29 × 5 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Lateral right wall of a funerary *aedicula*, preserved fragmentarily. A small fragment from the right side is preserved, from the central area of the wall. The tail and the right foreleg of a horse turned to the right can be partially distinguished. The tail is thin and rather wavy, hanging along the body. The visible part of the horse's body, that remained unprocessed, and the edge of the piece were probably among the areas where the item was connected to the rest of the funerary construction.

The fragment is part of the upper row of a lateral wall, decorated with two registers, the original image representing a rider turned to the right. Such pieces are frequently found in the funerary iconographic repertory from *Dacia Porolissensis*, on monuments from *Potaissa*, Gilău, Gherla, *Porolissum*, and *Sutoru*<sup>9</sup>.

## 3. Wall of a funerary *aedicula* (?) (Pl. I/3)

PD: Gherla, castrum, *retentura sinistra* (found during the 1982 campaign, in the western end of S3, in a secondary position)<sup>10</sup>;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. v. 58. 591; volcanic tuff; D: 39 × 52 × 10 cm; dating: 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Lateral *aedicula* wall with the representation of a horseman. The horse's head, neck and rich mane, as well as the reins are still visible; one can also observe the leather straps connecting the bit and the bridle. The horse is turned to the right.

By comparing this image with other representations and judging by the position of the horse, this could be the lateral right wall of an *aedicula*. Nevertheless, the unprocessed part in front of the horse's head seems a bit too large for such identification. One cannot rule out the possibility that the animal was part of a different type of scene and that it was oriented towards the interior of the *aedicula*. The fragment was discovered along other fragments from an *aedicula* found in the *retentura sinistra* of the *castrum* in Gherla and was reused as building material<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> See an arch from *Porolissum* – BĂRBULESCU 1977, 187–188 no. 79, Pl. IX/1.

<sup>5</sup> See a postament from *Napoca* – HICA-CÂMPEANU 1977, 226 no. 3, Fig. 4/1 1, a-c. Another from *Romita*, see ȚEPOSU-MARINESCU 1982, 178 no. 12.

<sup>6</sup> MOGA 1975, 121–122, Fig. 1.

<sup>7</sup> WOLLMANN 1978, 52 no. 24, Fig. 15.

<sup>8</sup> ARDEVAN/ZĂGREANU 2012, 73 no. 1, Pl. IB.

<sup>9</sup> NEMETI 2003, 316–318, with the bibliography.

<sup>10</sup> Conf. Dr. Radu Ardevan brought the pieces discovered during the rescue excavations performed inside the *castrum* from Gherla in 1982–1983 to the museum in Cluj; we thank him for kindly allowing us to publish the items (R3, 6, 17).

<sup>11</sup> PROTASE/GUDEA/ARDEVAN 2008, 83 no. 3, Pl. XXXII; 81 no. 5, Pl. XXVIII, Fig. 5.

**4. Funerary lion** (Pl. I/4)

PD: unknown;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. L 25; limestone; D: 16 × 18 × 30 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

A small funerary lion from the roof of a funerary *aedicula*. The piece is deteriorated; the lower part is missing (the animal's chest, forepaws and parts of the hind legs). The lion is lying on its paws. The mane is crudely represented, composed of thick strands represented through parallel incisions, finished only around the face. The ears are relatively small, placed among the mane's strands. The forehead is narrow, the arched eyebrows are marked by incisions, and the large eyes have the upper lid strongly contoured. A wrinkle marks the base of the lion's thick muzzle; the animal's whiskers are suggested through parallel incisions and the mouth is open, revealing the tongue. The realization is mediocre.

Small funerary lions represented lying and facing the viewer, were usually placed on the anterior corners of *aedicula in antis* roofs with Syrian-type fronts. They were sometimes made from the same block as the rest of the roof. A good analogy for this piece is the roof with funerary lions found at Gilău<sup>12</sup>, as well as item number 5 in the present repertory.

**5. Funerary lion** (Pl. II/1)

PD: Gherla;

CL – MNIT – inv. no. D 879; limestone; D: 17 × 19 × 45 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Funerary lion from the roof of an *aedicula*. The fact that only the left side of the object was finished (the right side was crudely processed) suggests that it was placed as an *acroterium* on the right side of the roof. The piece is fragmentarily preserved; both the upper and lower parts are missing, probably destroyed when the piece was reused; also, it shows a slight flattening of the volumes, caused by its corrosion over time. The lion is lying on its paws. The anatomic details are rudimentarily rendered and the head is oversized compared to the body. The mane is rendered through thick, slightly curved strands, which become thinner at the tips. The ears are small, round, with marked auricles. The large eyes have hanging eyelids and the outer corner is lowered. The muzzle is thick and the nostrils are marked by two small holes. The mouth of the animal is open, revealing the tongue. The hind legs are partially preserved; the haunch of the left leg is represented. The right side of the item seems to have been left unfinished. The curls of the mane are slightly sketched and the haunch of the right leg is slightly marked by an incision, while the rest of the surface shows traces of chiseling. It is possible that the piece was left unfinished, but it is more probable that the left side was less visible, being in contact with the roof. The artistic quality is modest.

**6. Funerary stela** (Pl. II/3)

PD: Gherla – castrum, *retentura sinistra* (during the 1982 campaign, in secondary position);

CL: MNIT – inv. no. L 222; volcanic tuff; D: 37 × 29 × 18 cm; dating: 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Profiled funerary *stela* with the canopy decorated with a triangular pediment. Because of the fragmentation of the piece its type cannot be clearly established. Only one part of the upper right corner of the *stela* has been preserved. The actual corner of the plaque is missing, but the lower limit of the pediment, consisting of a listel, can be seen. A small part is preserved from the medallion representing the deceased, surrounded by a *corona* of laurel leaves; the *corona* is surrounded by a *cyma*, and then by a listel. A vine leaf with long haulm, beautifully represented, is placed in the free corner, between the medallion and the listel that forms the edge of the field. The artistic realization of the piece is of good quality.

<sup>12</sup> FLOCA/WOLSKI 1973, 24 no. 76, Fig. 96.

The fragment does not allow for the clear observation of the type of niche employed. It could have been semicircular or horseshoe-shaped. Analogies for this piece have been found in Gherla (four fragments from similar pieces<sup>13</sup>), as well as in *Napoca*<sup>14</sup> and Mintiul Gherlei<sup>15</sup>.

### 7. Funerary *stela* (?) (Pl. II/2)

PD: Gherla;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. D 924; volcanic tuff; D: 16 × 22 × 15 cm; h. of letters 4 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Small fragment from a profiled funerary *stela* (?). It is a fragment from the left side of an epigraphic plaque, framed by a border composed of a listel, a stylized vegetal motif (?), and a simple molding. Only the beginning of two rows has been preserved from the entire inscription, containing letters [...]/ *AM(?N?)* .... / *O*.....

### 8. Funerary sphinx (Pl. III/2)

PD – Turda (*Potaissa*);

CL: MNIT – inv. no. v. 1108 (4613); sandy limestone; D: 35 × 18 × 15 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Funerary sphinx, fragmentarily preserved; the lower part of the statue has been destroyed. The animal's forelegs, part of the hind legs, the left wing, and the back side of the body are missing. The entire surface of the piece was deteriorated, probably during its discovery. The portrait is that of a mature man. The rich hair is arranged in parallel strands and combed back over the head, hanging down to the shoulders. The forehead is separated from the hair by a deep incision; the eyebrows are arched, the arches of the eyes are prominent, and one can note the pupils of the almond-shaped eyes. Although deteriorated, the delicately suggested irises are also visible. The entire face is flattened, having a rudimentarily rendered nose and full lips. The chin (deteriorated) is massive, slightly disproportionate, slit in the middle. The thick neck, rudimentarily represented, continues with the chest; the upper part of the shoulders can also be seen. A human mask was probably depicted between the forelegs. A small part remains from the left wing, while the right wing is missing its tip. The wings were represented slightly opened, apart from the body. The plumage is rendered schematically, through four rows of relatively symmetrical feathers. From the rear side only the upper part of the right hind leg remains. The artistic realization is rudimentary, the anatomic traits are rather schematic and the body of the sphinx shows obvious disproportions and rigidity.

The statue was attached to the canopy of a funerary construction, most likely on the roof of a funerary *aedicula*. As analogies for this item one can mention monuments found in *Ampelum*<sup>16</sup> and *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa*<sup>17</sup>.

### 9. Funerary eagle (Pl. II/4)

PD: unknown;

CL: MNIT – inv. no L27; limestone; D: 40 × 24 × 14 cm, pedestal D: 8 × 24 × 14 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Statue representing an eagle, fragmented and corroded in the upper part. The beak is destroyed, and the left wing has been cut in its upper part, just like the right front corner of

<sup>13</sup> ZĂGREANU/SĂSĂRMAN 2008, 190–191 no. 2, 3, Fig. 9, 10; ZĂGREANU/MEȘTER 2004–2005, 64 no. 2, Fig. 2.

<sup>14</sup> BIANCHI 1985, 275 no. 160.

<sup>15</sup> ZĂGREANU/MEȘTER 2004–2005, 64 no. 2, Fig. 2.

<sup>16</sup> WOLLMANN/LIPOVAN 1982, 99.

<sup>17</sup> ALICU/POP/WOLLMANN 1979, 184 no. 549, Pl. CX.

the pedestal, probably during its discovery. The bird is shown with the head turned towards the right wing. The eagle is depicted resting on a rectangular pedestal, with the wings raised and slightly opened in the upper part, but held tight in the lower part. The beak is arched, continued by a prolongation specific to this type of monuments, connecting it to the upper part of the wing. The head (?), extremely flattened, probably had the eye facing the viewer represented. The fairly disproportionate body seems strong and massive, just like the legs; the claws were not preserved. Due to the erosion of the rock, the feathers can be seen only partially. They are represented schematically, by chisel pinches and small incisions in the area of the wings and legs. The trace of an orifice is visible on the pedestal, possibly from a holdfast or stud used for connecting it to an ensemble. The back is unprocessed and flat, which shows that the piece was part of a larger monument and its back was not visible.

A good analogy is the funerary eagle statue from Dragu<sup>18</sup>, and another statue of this type from *Alburnus Maior*<sup>19</sup>. Probably this type of statues decorated the roofs or canopies of funerary constructions; it is also possible that the eagle was placed between two funerary lions in a large funerary canopy (see the possible reconstruction fig. 9, according to another analogy also found in *Alburnus Maior*<sup>20</sup>).

### 10. Funerary eagle (?) (Pl. III/1)

PD: unknown;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. L 368; limestone; D: 33 × 19 × 17 cm, pedestal D: 6 × 19 × 17; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Fragmentary statue representing an eagle. The upper part of the statue is missing; the head, part of the neck, and part of the wings are destroyed. The eagle is placed on a somewhat rectangular pedestal, marked more clearly in the front part. The eagle is small and very schematically rendered. The body is slightly elongated and rigid, the legs are crude, the thighs are almost round, and the claws are represented as semicircular lobes. The plumage is schematically suggested by superficial incisions, parallel on the thighs and diamond-shaped on the chest. Only part of the wings remains, but the preserved areas suggest that they were spread open, apart from the body. The back of the piece is crudely finished, with strong chisel-marks, meaning that the statue was fixed in a position in which only the front part was visible. The artistic realization is mediocre.

Eagle statues can have a funerary or votive character, in the latter case dedicated to deities such as Jupiter or Jupiter Dolichenus. Given the fragmentary state of this statue, we cannot firmly distinguish its character. It was part of a funerary canopy or of a votive statuary group.

### 11. Funerary bust (Pl. III/3a-d)

PD: unknown;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. L 26; limestone; D: 30 × 20 × 17 cm; D. pedestal: 7 × 21 × 18 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Herm representing a male head on a pedestal. The piece has suffered a few deteriorations in the area of the face and it is generally slightly flattened. The portrait depicts a mature man (Pl. III/3a), probably wearing a beard and a moustache, barely visible due to the flattening of the item's surface. The hair flows down to the shoulders in curls, with a parting in the middle of the head. The forehead is high, the eyebrows are full, the eyes are large and slightly flat, the nose thick, the cheeks round and the lips full, though superficially marked. The back of the head is

<sup>18</sup> FERRI 1933, 290, Fig. 376.

<sup>19</sup> CIONGRADI 2009, 108 no. 161, Pl. 65.

<sup>20</sup> CIONGRADI 2009, 106–107 no. 155, Pl. 64.

crudely finished and unnaturally flat, showing that the piece could not have been viewed from behind (Pl. III/3c). The pedestal is rectangular, profiled, with a simple molding along the base, separated from the upper part of the pedestal by a deep incision. The pedestal has a prolongation similar to an implanting support, 3 cm high, starting from under the molding, with a width equal to that of the pedestal; but in depth it doubles the pedestal only in the first third, over a 10 cm surface (Pl. III/3b). The edge that separates the pedestal from its prolongation shows traces of fixing in the rear area.

The shape of the piece, and especially of the pedestal, shows that it was placed on a base or on a pillar. The functionality of the monument must be placed in a funerary context. It is possible that the piece was a funerary bust, part of a funerary canopy or the upper part of a pillar delimiting a funerary area<sup>21</sup> (Pl. III/3d).

### 12. Funerary canopy (Pl. III/4)

PD: Moigrad (*Porolissum*).

CL: MNIT – inv. no. v. 15.802 (IN 1304); sandstone; D: 59 × 46 × 21 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Canopy of a funerary *stela* with lions. Only the lion from the right side remains. The monument was broken in two pieces and repaired; it is fairly corroded and it is deteriorated on almost the entire surface, especially in the area of the head and forelegs. The animal is oriented towards the right, with the head turned towards the viewer, sitting on its hind paws. The mane is rich, suggested through deep incisions contouring the strands of hair. The right ear is clearly visible, slightly rounded, while the left one is corroded. The eyes are almost completely flattened and the muzzle is destroyed. The opened mouth and strong teeth are still visible. The legs are well marked, with the forelegs strongly bent. The front paw, broken towards the end, was probably resting on the head of an ox. The lion's abdomen is suggested schematically, by a deepened niche, and the lower right leg still has its paw with short claws. The feline is placed on a 3 cm wide plinth. In the rear area of the lion's body one can note traces of bracing from an ensemble that probably continued with a pinecone, followed by another, identical funerary lion.

According to its size, the monument is part of the funerary canopy of a funerary *stela*. Such *stelae* are known from *Porolissum*<sup>22</sup>, where the canopy with lions placed back to back is preserved. Typologically, this monument belongs to the “lions back to back” type (Type A – *Lei adosași (lions back to back)* according to D. Isac. V. Wollmann, I. P. Albu; Type I *Rüken an Rüken liegende Löwen* according to C. Ciongradi)<sup>23</sup>.

### 13. Funerary canopy (Pl. IV/1)

PD: probably Gherla.

CL: MNIT – inv. no. D 893; volcanic tuff; D: 54 × 48 × 22 cm; dating: 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Canopy of a funerary *stela* with lions. Only the lion from the right side remains, with the head, mouth, and rear part destroyed. A small, four-sided hole is visible on top of the lion's head, probably made after the monument's completion. The animal is lying turned to the right, on a 7 cm thick plinth. The round, flat head, turned towards the viewer, probably had its mouth open, with the tongue and teeth visible. The rich mane, covering the head and the chest, is composed of strands suggested through several parallel, shallow incisions. These are grouped so that the curls seem almost circular, suggesting volutes. The frowned forehead and the prominent frontal arcades give the feline's face a somewhat human aspect. The small, half-rounded ears are barely sketched, hardly visible through the curls of the mane. The eyes are large, with the

<sup>21</sup> FEJFER 2008, 115, Fig. 58; FERRI 1933, 59, Fig. 31.

<sup>22</sup> PETRUȚ/ZĂGREANU 2011, 203 no. 4, Pl. 1/4, no. 6, Pl. 2/6.

<sup>23</sup> ISAC/WOLLMANN/ALBU 1973, 141–142; CIONGRADI 2007, 104, Pl. 21.

eyeballs and eyelids well emphasized. The paws are shaped by deep incisions, with long and strong claws, stylized like a decorative element, similar to the mane. The right forepaw is placed over the left forepaw, suggesting a state of relaxation. The lion is resting on its hind legs and the tail is not represented. The back of the piece is crudely carved, indicating that it was meant to decorate a funerary construction. The artistic execution is modest. The rich mane covering the beast's chest, suggested through incisions forming curls, is a model specific to the workshop of Ilișua<sup>24</sup>, where similar, but much larger monuments have been produced.

Iconographically, the monument belongs to the type of representation of lions back to back, resting on a plinth, diametrically opposed, with the rears close to one another, the heads turned towards the viewer, without the sacrificed animal under the forepaws and with a *nux pinea* placed centrally; Type A according to D. Isac. V. Wollmann, I. P. Albu, Type I according to C. Ciongradi.

#### 14. Funerary canopy (Pl. IV/2)

PD: Gherla;

CP: MNIT – inv. no. L 346; volcanic tuff; D.: 51 × 52 × 17 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Funerary canopy with lions and pinecone. The piece is fragmentarily preserved, only the lion from the right side and the pinecone remaining. The monument is fairly corroded, presenting deteriorations over the entire surface. The animals are placed on a 17 cm thick profiled pedestal, the profile of which consists of a listel, a *cyma* and two thin *scotiae*; the whole ensemble becomes narrower towards the base. The remaining lion is represented lying, turned towards the right. The animal's head, muzzle and abdomen are destroyed, and the advanced degree of corrosion does not allow for the recognition of any anatomical detail. The curly mane of the feline and the opened mouth can still be seen. From the left-side lion only a part of the hind leg remains. A simple pinecone is placed between the two animals.

Typologically, it belongs to the same category as the previous pieces.

#### 15. Funerary canopy (Pl. IV/3)

PD: unknown;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. L 350; volcanic tuff; D.: 34 × 44 × 16 cm; dating: 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Funerary canopy with lions, fragmentarily preserved. Only the lion from the right side has been preserved, the monument is extremely corroded and it has a terracotta-like color due to environmental factors. The animal is depicted lying, turned to the right, with the head towards the viewer, resting on a 5 cm high, simple pedestal. It is hard to distinguish its anatomical details, due to the item's poor state of preservation. The lion has a rich mane, parted on top of the head, composed of ample curls realized through shallow, parallel incisions. They are grouped in such a manner that the curls seem almost circular. The small, rounded ears are placed anatomically wrong, much too close to the forehead. One can still distinguish the large eyes, with emphasized eyelids, and the stumpy, triangular muzzle with superficially marked nostrils. The mouth of the animal is open, revealing the teeth; an orifice can be observed between the teeth (possibly added later?). The paws are carved through deep incisions, with long and strong claws, stylized as a decorative element, just like the mane. The paw of the foreleg is destroyed, but probably underneath it held the skull of a deer, whose trace is still visible. Both limbs are placed too much in front as compared to the natural position. The hip of the hind leg is marked by a deeply carved curvature, and the barely visible tail rests on it.

Typologically, it belongs to the same category as the previous pieces.

<sup>24</sup> PROTASE 1961, 134 no. 2, Fig. 2; GAIU/ZĂGREANU 2006, 165–166 no. 2, Pl. II/2; GAIU/ZĂGREANU 2011, 97 no. II. 2. 5, Pl. XII; NEMETI 2010, 423 no. 80.

**16. Funerary canopy (Pl. IV/4)**

PD: unknown;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. L 344; limestone; D: 50 × 38 × 21 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Funerary canopy with lions, fragmentarily preserved; the monument is heavily damaged in the area of the animal's muzzle, chest and limbs. The destructions on the surface of the piece are a consequence of its reutilization as building material. The lion is oriented to the left, resting on a 6 cm high plinth, with the head raised in a daring position, turned towards the viewer. The mane was schematically carved, by some sort of triangular prominences framing the face, covering the neck and chest. Only the left ear is preserved, small and rounded, placed much too close to the forehead. The eyes are well contoured, with the eyelids represented. Only a small part of the muzzle remains, and one can see that the mouth was wide open, revealing the tongue. The abdomen and the hind leg are schematically represented, and the rest of the anatomical details are destroyed. The plinth under the animal is also destroyed, but one can still see that it had a simple, rectangular shape.

From a stylistic point of view, this lion is closer to the monument from *Porolissum* described in our catalogue at number 9. It has some stylistic similarities to the funerary lions from *Napoca*, especially in regards to the lion's face and mouth with protruding tongue, but it is impossible to say, on basis of these similarities, where they were produced. Typologically, the monument belongs to Type A according to D. Isac. V. Wollmann, I. P. Albu, Type I according to C. Ciongradi.

**17. Funerary canopy (Pl. V/1)**

PD: unknown;

CL: LP: MNIT – inv. no. E 76, E 78; limestone; D: 59 × 51 × 21 cm; 59 × 50 × 21 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Canopy consisting of two funerary lions back to back; the central part of the monument is missing. The lion on the left side is relatively well preserved. The animal, turned to the left but facing the viewer, is depicted lying on its paws. Its rich mane is rendered through roughly sculpted curls, in a rudimentary manner. Its ears are small, slightly rounded, and the eyes are large, almost almond in shape, with marked eyebrows. The muzzle displays slight deteriorations; it is thick, with marked nostrils and whiskers, while the long tongue protrudes from the opened mouth. The forelegs also display certain deteriorations; only the left foreleg was partially preserved, with marked claws under which one can distinguish the head of another animal, most probably a calf, with the nose, eye, and ear rendered sketchily. The lion's abdomen is visually separated from the pediment through a crude incision. The hind leg is depicted with a delimited rump and schematic claws continuing the paw. The animal's tail is rendered crudely, through deep incisions, and it hangs along the body, with the tip under the hind legs. The lion from the right side is almost identical to the first, but the item displays more numerous degradations. The animal is turned to the left, facing the viewer, laying on its paws; the forepaws are almost completely destroyed, just like the herbivore head that was once placed under them. The lion's mane, ears, muzzle, and tongue are in an equally poor state of preservation, and the upper part of the snout has been destroyed. The body, legs, and tail are depicted almost the same of those of the lion placed on the right side. The animals rested on a 7 cm thick plinth each; a plaque started from behind each lion and it must have connected the different elements of the canopy. The back is flattened, indicating the fact that this canopy was fixed on a funerary monument and was only meant to be seen from the front.

The two lions were once part of the same funerary monument; possibly the canopy of a large funerary *stela* or of some funerary construction (due to the dimensions of the two items). The head of Medusa, Amon, or some other funerary personification was probably placed

between the two felines. One cannot exclude the possibility that the two lions belonged to some funerary ensemble of the lions back to back funerary medallion type, such as, for example, in a medallion discovered in Aiud.<sup>25</sup> From a stylistic perspective, the two lions resemble the funerary lions from *Dacia Porolissensis*, thus we believe that they were produced in the same province. The closest analogies were found in Ilişua<sup>26</sup> and Gherla.<sup>27</sup>

### 18. Funerary lion (Pl. V/2)

PD: Someşeni (*territorium Napocae*)<sup>28</sup>;

CL: MNIT – inv. no. v. 58.912; limestone; D: 70 × 68 × 35 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Fragmentarily preserved column lion. The head of the animal was deteriorated in Antiquity and further deterioration occurred during its discovery. The lion is resting on a 10 cm high, simple plinth; the animal is depicted lying, turned to the left and facing the viewer. The animal is resting on its front paws, with the head held high, in a daring position. The head is round, slightly flattened, with the mouth probably open and the tongue and teeth visible. The long tongue is preserved, hanging down below the chin. The large ears are summarily sculpted, pointy, and slightly rhomboidal. Only a few curls remain from the animal's mane. The paws are represented schematically, in a specific manner, with the claws and pads suggested through parallel incisions. The foreleg is raised, laid on a head that is no longer distinguishable, probably a calf's head. The hind leg's thigh is crudely represented, displaying traces from the finishing process. Part of the semicolon on which the lion was placed can still be seen behind the animal. The artistic realization is modest; the depiction is schematic and rigid.

The closest analogy is a lion from *Napoca*.<sup>29</sup> Another possible analogy is the funerary monument discovered at Polus, where fragments of two funerary lions<sup>30</sup> marked a funerary enclosure delimited by a wall. Such an enclosure, probably rectangular in shape, must have surrounded this funerary lion, according to the reconstruction model suggested by C. Ciongradi.<sup>31</sup> Typologically, the monument belongs to Type B according to D. Isac. V. Wollmann, I. P. Albu, Type III (Säulenlöwe) according to C. Ciongradi.

### 19. Funerary lion (Pl. V/3)

PD: unknown; brought from the castle from Dumbrăveni (Sibiu County);

CL – MNIT – inv. no. v. 15.874 (I 293); volcanic tuff; D: 70 × 90 × 30 cm; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Column lion from a fragmentarily preserved monument.<sup>32</sup> The lion has several deteriorations, especially in the area of the head. The animal is turned to the right, facing

<sup>25</sup> PROTASE 1960, 324–325 no. 1, Fig. 1.

<sup>26</sup> GAIU/ZĂGREANU 2006, 167–168 no. 4, Pl. III/4.

<sup>27</sup> PROTASE/GUDEA/ARDEVAN 2008, 84 no. 2, Pl. XXXIII.

<sup>28</sup> The monument was discovered in early March 2007, during works performed along the ring road of Cluj-Napoca, by the Someşeni – Apahida segment, near to the tram-depot of Someşeni. The rescue-excavation team was led by Univ. Prof. Dr. M. Bărbulescu and it included D. Blaga and D. Matei, from the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, to whom we wish to thank for allowing us to publish this monument. The research done in the area led to the hypothesis that the piece was brought from the bed of Someş river along with ballast used by the workers, since the excavation was no deeper than 30 cm and no other archaeological material was found in the investigated area.

<sup>29</sup> BODOR 1987–1988, 218 no. 34, Fig. 15.

<sup>30</sup> CIONGRADI/COCIŞ/ILOVAN/GĂZDAC 2009, 293 no. 7, Pl. VI/2, Fig. 4/1, no. 8, Pl. VI/1, Fig. 5/2.

<sup>31</sup> CIONGRADI 2007, 310, Pl. III and CX/21b.

<sup>32</sup> The monument has been published once before; a photograph of the item, with the mention that it is from *Napoca*, but without description, dimensions or comments, features in a paper on funerary art from *Dacia Porolissensis*, signed by Lucia Țeposu Marinescu (ȚEPOSU-MARINESCU 1977, 135, Fig. 6).

the viewer, resting on a simple, 10 cm thick pedestal. The feline is represented lying; only the head is raised in a typical, daring position. The rich mane is composed of asymmetrical strands, suggested through parallel, slightly curled and shallow groups of incisions. Only the left ear is preserved; it is small, rounded, placed among the curls of the mane. The top of the head and the face are destroyed; the mouth is preserved, open and revealing the tongue. The forepaw, with the claws marked, rests on the head of an herbivore animal. The head is partially deteriorated, but it seems to belong to a mule, represented with the tongue hanging. The tail of the lion is twisted underneath the thigh, over the rear ankle, and with the end laid on the semicolon on which the animal is placed. The semicolon is partially preserved, and it has a rectangular hole, used for fixing the next element of the *lorica*. The rear part is quite carefully finished. The monument is of mediocre artistic quality, but obviously superior to the other lions analyzed in this study.

This monument too is part of a funerary enclosure, as mentioned for the previous piece. The closest analogies for this canopy are items from *Micia*<sup>33</sup> and *Sarmisegetuza*<sup>34</sup>. Given the place of origin of this monument, i.e. the Apaffy castle from Dumbrăveni<sup>35</sup> (Sibiu County), the monument probably originates from a large funerary premise, most likely brought from one of the important centers of Roman Dacia; nevertheless, one cannot exclude the possibility that it was once used in a local necropolis, considering that the roman fort from Sighișoara and several Roman Era discoveries catalogued as *villae rusticate*, in the valley of Târnava, are located close-by. The manner of representing the mane strands is so far unique; it has not yet been encountered on any of the other funerary lions from Dacia. Typologically, the monument belongs to Type B *Self-standing lions* – subtype column lions according to D. Isac, V. Wollmann, I. P. Albu, Type III – *Säuenlöwe* according to C. Ciongradi<sup>36</sup>.

## 20. Funerary canopy (Pl. V/4)

PD: Gherla, roman fort, *retentura sinistra* (during the 1982 campaign, in secondary position);

CL: MNIT – inv. no. v. 58.593; volcanic tuff; D: 40 × 20 × 25 cm; dating: 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Fragment from the statue of a funerary lion. Only part of the lion's right hind leg has been preserved; the animal was turned to the right, resting on an 8 cm thick, simple plinth. The animal's long, powerful claws are still visible. The artistic realization is mediocre.

Judging by the size of the fragment, it belonged to a large sculptural piece.

## 21. Sarcophagus (Pl. V/5)

PD: Moigrad (*Porolissum*);

CL: MNIT – inv. no. v. 15.801 (IN 1303); sandstone; D: 70 × 55 × 103; dating: 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century.

A small-size child's sarcophagus. The lid (*operculum*), with a triangular front and acroteria, measures 43 × 55 × 103 cm. All the acroteria are preserved, shaped like quarters of spheres. The level of the median crest is higher than that of the acroteria. It seems damaged at one end, thus indicating that it was probably robbed. The *arca* is rectangular, carved from

<sup>33</sup> CIONGRADI 2007, 288, L/M 27, Pl. 135.

<sup>34</sup> CIONGRADI 2007, 281, L/S 22, Pl. 135.

<sup>35</sup> We have identified two more lions in the same castle, one of which is also column-bearing and belongs to the collection of the ARCA museum (Museum Collection of Transylvanian Armenians from Dumbrăveni), but stylistically it is completely different from the item under analysis. According to V. Călinescu, museum supervisor, two large lions once flanked the entrance steps to the castle.

<sup>36</sup> ISAC/WOLLMANN/ALBU 1973, 142–143; CIONGRADI 2007, 104, Pl. 21.

a single block of stone. Analogies for such sarcophagi are items found at *Apulum*<sup>37</sup>, *Napoca*<sup>38</sup> and *Potaissa*.<sup>39</sup>

\*

Twenty of the twenty-one items included in the present repertoire were once used in settlements from *Dacia Porolissensis*. The monument from Dumbrăveni is the only exception. The largest group, consisting of eight items, was found in Gherla; two monuments were discovered in *Porolissum*, one in *Potaissa* and one in the neighborhood of the city of *Napoca*. In the case of seven monuments, the place of discovery remains unknown. The fact that they were included in the collection of the museum in Cluj suggests that they might have been found in the city or its neighborhood, thus in the province of *Dacia Porolissensis*. The structure of the stone they were made of and certain details of artistic production also support this possible original location.

Due to the fragmentary condition of some of the indexed items, one cannot decide on the type of monument they were once part of. Where such identification was possible, the monuments were tombstones. More specifically, we are talking about items from funerary constructions (R1), funerary *aedicula* elements – sidewalls and lions on the roof (R2, R3, R4, R5), funerary *stelae* (R6, R7), funerary sculptural groups (R8, R9, R10, R11), funerary cornices (R12, R13, R14, R15, R16, R17), column lions from burial enclosures (R.18, R19, R20) and a sarcophagus (R 21).

In cases when the functionality of these monuments was unclear, it was identified on the basis on analogies. All items must be identified as parts of tombstones. They were created in the style of funerary art specific to provincial Dacia, ranging from simple funerary *stelae* and sarcophagi, to more elaborate *aedicula* types or demonstrating the existence of certain funerary enclosures. One faces difficulties in dating these monument parts, because the identified analogies are stray finds lacking archaeological context. We were thus cautious and dated the items in our registry to the classical 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, since the place of discovery of most parts is uncertain. The only case in which restricting the chronological interval of use might have been possible is Gherla, but the monuments from there are fragmentary preserved. Regarding the funerary lions, i.e. most of the monuments included in the present study, the lack of a complete and updated *corpus* of such finds from *Dacia Porolissensis* currently prevents us from providing more accurate dating intervals.

The symbolic representations that decorated these monuments are typical to provincial funerary iconography.

The *hippocampus* (seahorse) was a popular funerary symbol; it can be included in the wider group of marine creatures<sup>40</sup>. The image usually features on a number of elements of funerary constructions, such as arches or bases, either alone or in pairs, sometimes accompanied by a *kantharos*, depictions of Medusa, Jupiter, Ammon etc<sup>41</sup>. It can also be encountered on hippocampus funeral *stelae*, usually placed in the upper part, between gable sides and the corners of the plate. Such examples are known from *Apulum*, *Napoca*, and Romita<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> OTA 2008, 211 no. 4, Pl. 2b.

<sup>38</sup> FLOCA 1941, 19 no. 5.

<sup>39</sup> FLOCA 1941, 19 no. 5.

<sup>40</sup> BIANCHI 1985, 138–139.

<sup>41</sup> MOGA 1975, 121–122, Fig. 1; ALICU/POP/WOLLMANN 1979, 175 no. 511, Pl. XCIX; 175 no. 514, CIONGRADI 2009, 113, 211, Pff/S3, Pl. 70.

<sup>42</sup> ȚEPOSU MARINESCU 1982, 111 no. 137, 178 no. 12; CIONGRADI 2009, 158, S/A 2 Pl. 24; 12.

Representations of horsemen are also frequent in funerary Danubian art. The equestrian hero as symbol of the underworld travel has generated a rich funerary iconography<sup>43</sup>. In Dacia Porolissensis, in the environment of the *vicii militares*, this symbol seems to have been preferred by masonry workshops as ca. 18 monuments decorated with such depictions are known: *stelae* and walls of funerary *aediculae* discovered in *Potaissa*, in the *territorium* of *Napoca*, Gherla, Gilău, Căței, *Porolissum*, and Sutoru<sup>44</sup>.

The lion is one of the most popular symbols of Roman funerary art. Statues of lions were placed around graves because the animal was believed to have apotropaic powers. Lions were usually depicted devouring their prey or with one of the forepaws resting on the head of an animal, being interpreted as demons of death or symbols of the sacrifice ritual. In the same posture, the lion was interpreted as symbol of the fact that divine forces controlled death, the animal guarding the sanctuary against both evil forces and grave robbers<sup>45</sup>. Lions were associated with the *buchranium*, which they held in their front paws, and in the case of canopies with lions back to back from our repertoire, with *nux pinea* – the pine cone, another frequent funerary symbol<sup>46</sup>.

The Sphinx, a fantastic animal with human head and torso, a lion's legs, and wings, was in the ancient world a well-established symbol of death. In addition to its role as monster that captured its prey and carried it in death, it has been assigned the role of tomb guardian. The ancients believed that the image of the sphinx can drive away bad luck and curses, and can scare off the spirits that haunt the graves. Sphinxes with their front paws on the head of a ram or a bull were interpreted as signifying victory over death. Another interpretation of the sphinx with a human mask between its paws is that of a prey creature, symbol of death, and protector of tombs<sup>47</sup>. Funerary monuments depict sphinxes in association with other symbols or mythological characters such as human masks, bovine heads, the head of Medusa, Scylla, and funeral lions. In a recent study devoted to representations of sphinxes in the funerary art in Dacia, S. Chiș recorded 28 such funerary statues, funerary cornices, and burial pedestals. The items were found in *Sarmisegetusa*, *Apulum*, *Alburnus Maior*, *Ampelum*, Gârbova, Gilău, and Suatu<sup>48</sup>.

The eagle is also a known burial symbol. The representation of the bird with folded wings and the head turned towards one of the wings was interpreted as symbolizing pain and mourning<sup>49</sup>. Monuments depicting eagles are best known from *Apulum*, *Alburnus Maior*, Dragu, and *Ulpia Traiana Sarmisegetusa*<sup>50</sup>.

Herms are apotropaic elements well recognized throughout Antiquity. The protective powers associated to this type of representation lead to the wide distribution of such monuments not only at crossroads but also on various funerary monuments including burial canopies<sup>51</sup>.

The pieces included in our repertoire, except for one, were found over a small geographic area in the province of *Dacia Porolissensis*. It is possible that they were produced in a few workshops working for local buyers. Their general artistic level is mediocre and can be

<sup>43</sup> LIMC 1992, 1019–1081.

<sup>44</sup> BIANCHI 1985, 123–126; NEMETI 2003, 314–319; COCIȘ/ZĂGREANU/TAMBA 2009, 57 no. 5, Pl. IV, Fig. 1a-d; no. 6, Pl. III, Figs. 1d and 2d.

<sup>45</sup> GLODARIU 1967, 163; BIANCHI 1985, 117–119; FERRI 1933, 272–281; ȚEPOSU MARINESCU 1982, 43–44.

<sup>46</sup> CIONGRADI 2007, 91–92, 112.

<sup>47</sup> LIMC 1997 1174; LIMC 2009, 463; RENARD 1968, 273–275.

<sup>48</sup> CHIȘ 2005, 89–92.

<sup>49</sup> ȚEPOSU MARINESCU 1982, 43.

<sup>50</sup> FERRI 1933, 290, Fig. 376, 378; CIONGRADI 2009, 106–107, Pl. 64 no. 155, 65, Pl. 65, no. 161; ALICU/POP/WOLLMANN 1979, 100–101 no. 140, Pl. CXLIV, 101 no. 141, Pl. XXXI, 165 no. 477, 478, Pl. LXXXV.

<sup>51</sup> BURNETT/GROSSMAN 2003, 54; DA 1900, 133–134.

integrated in the category of provincial craftsmanship. The representations are stiff, schematic, ignoring the natural proportions. In the case of monuments with known place of discovery, one can presume that they were produced by local workshops active in the area of those settlements.

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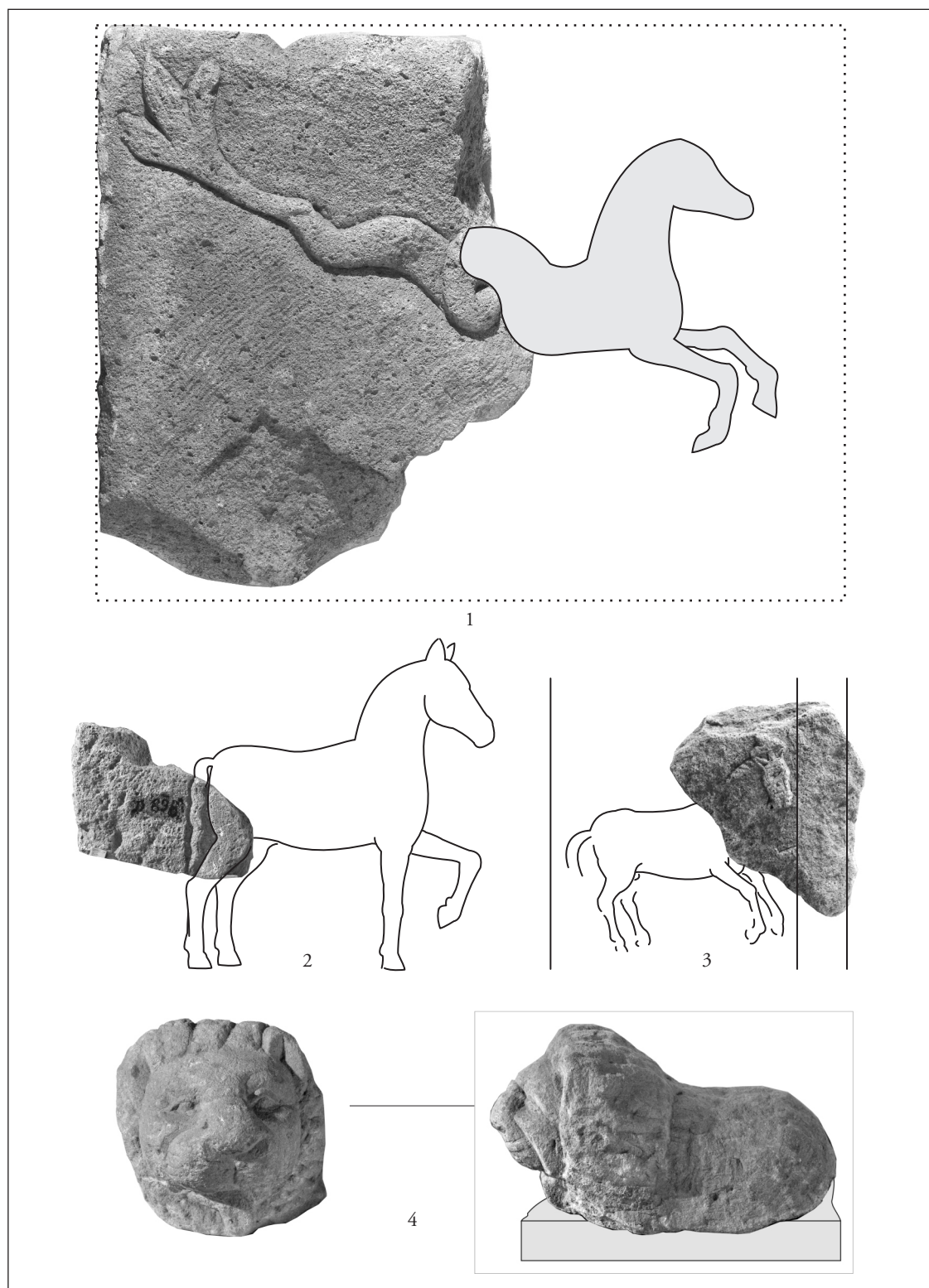
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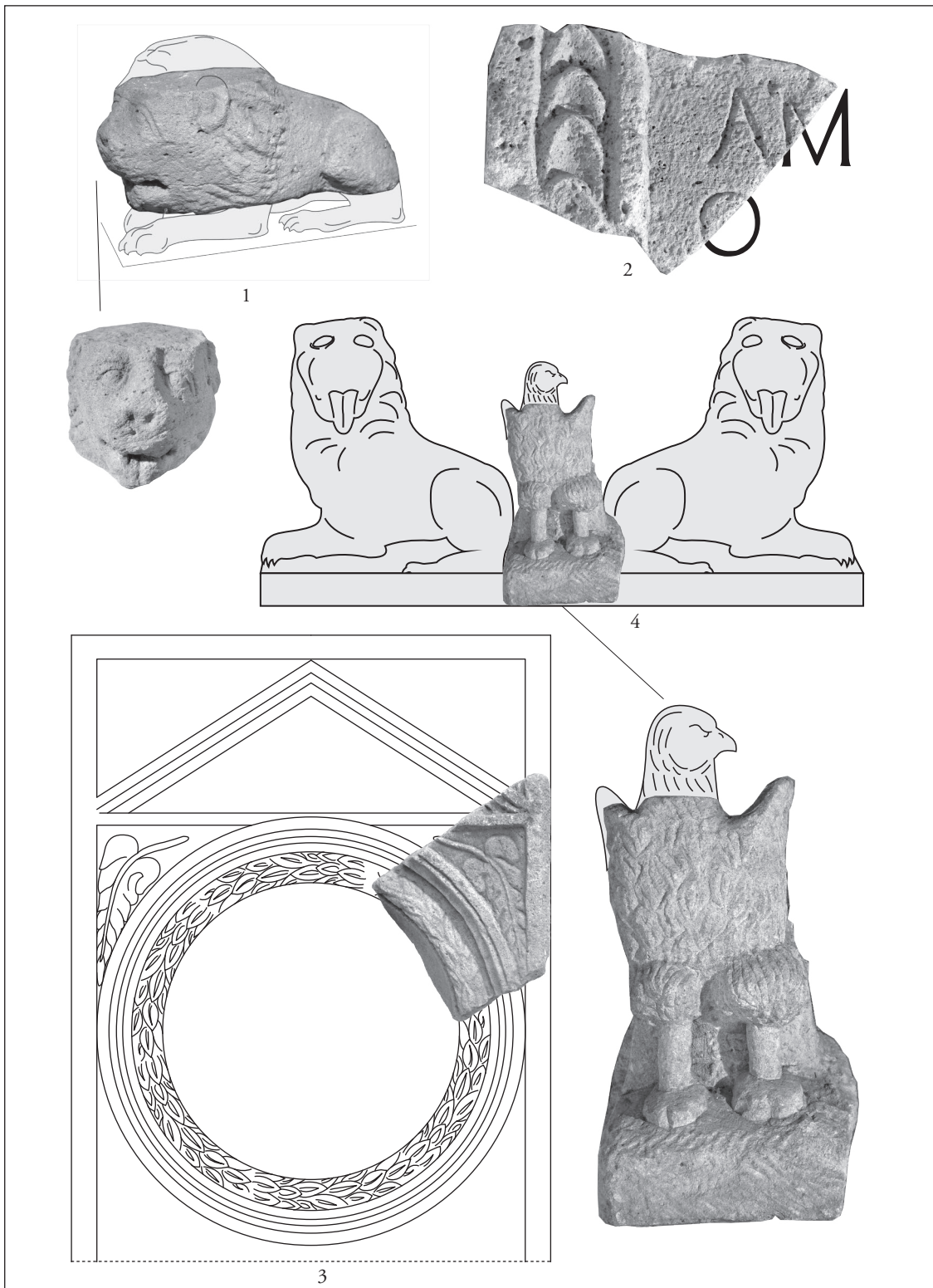
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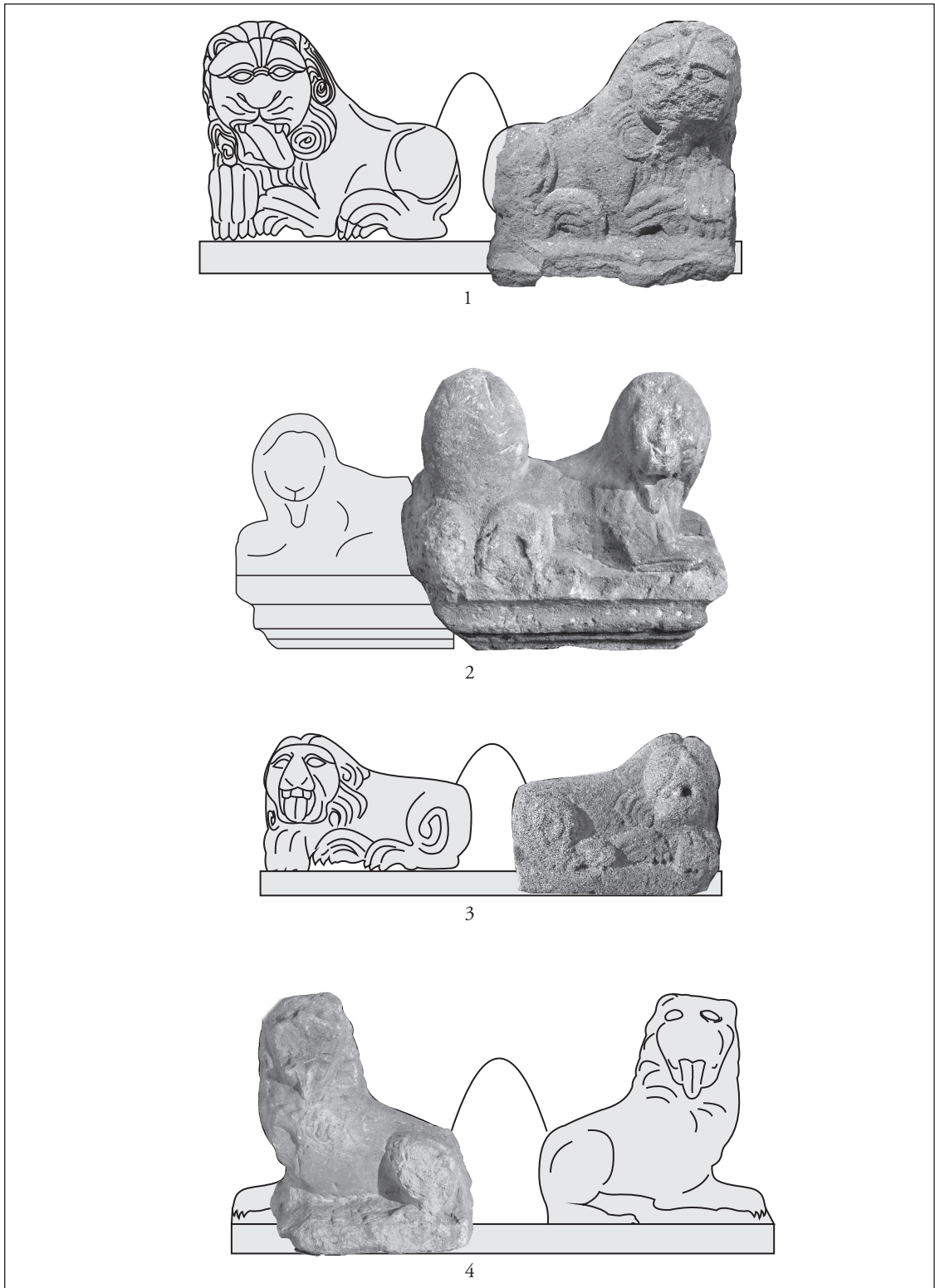
Pl. I. Gherla. 1: funerary relief. 2 – wall of a funerary *aedicula*. 3 – wall of a funerary *aedicula* (?). 4 – funerary lion, unknown. Photos Sergiu Odenie (photo library MNIT).



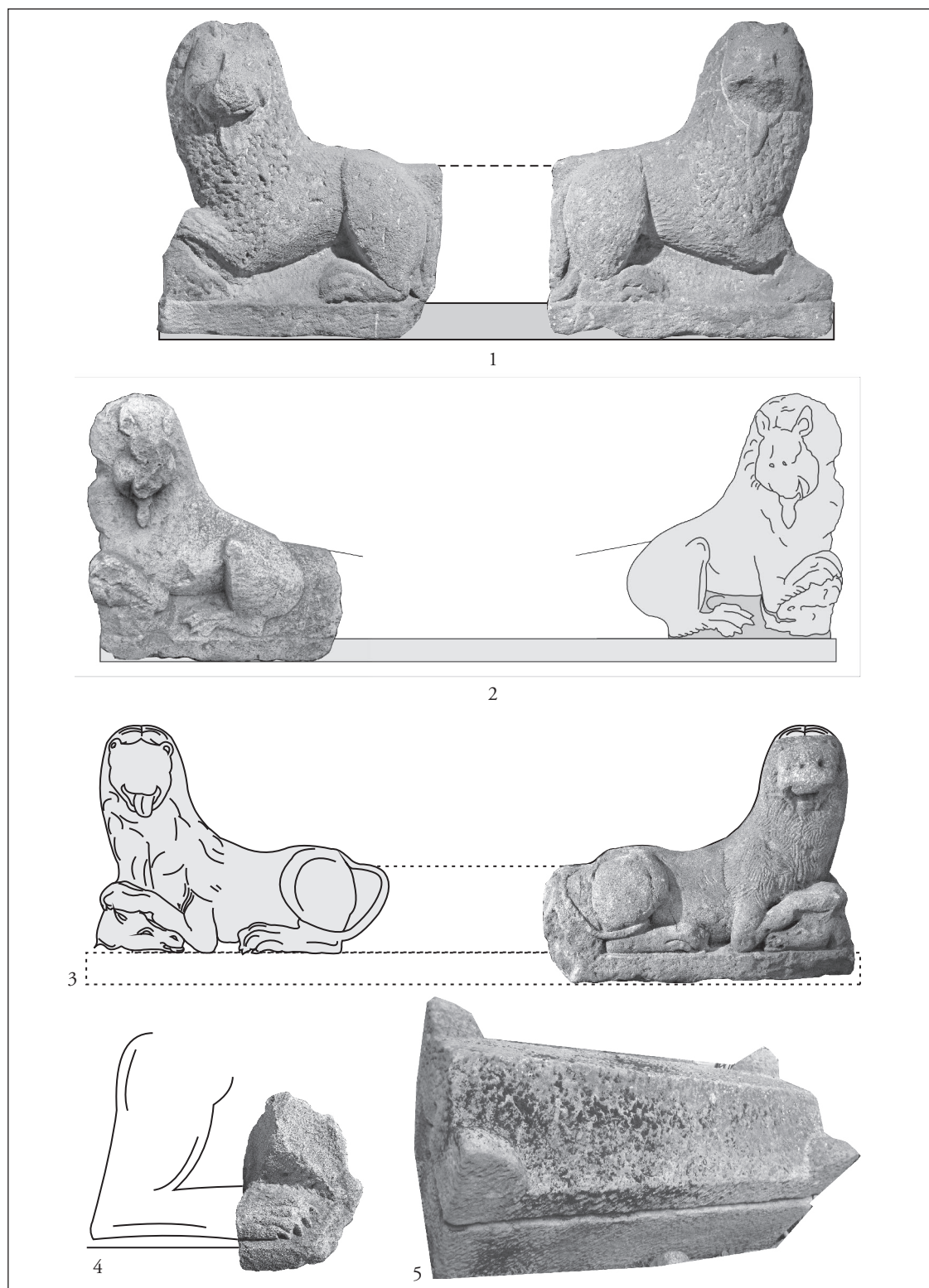
Pl. II. Gherla. 1 – funerary lion. 2 – funerary *stela* (?). 3 – funerary *stela*. 4 – funerary eagle, unknown. Photos Sergiu Odenie (photo library MNIT).



Pl. III. 1 – funerary eagle (?), unknown. 2 – funerary sphinx, Turda (*Potaissa*). 3 – funerary bust, unknown. 4 – funerary canopy, Moigrad (*Porolissum*). Photos Sergiu Odenie (photo library MNIT).



Pl. IV. 13 – funerary canopy, probably Gherla. 14 – funerary canopy, Gherla. 15, 16 – funerary canopies, unknown. Photos Sergiu Odenie (photo library MNIT).



Pl. V. 1 – funerary canopy, unknown. 2 – Someșeni (*territorium Napocae*), funerary lion. 3 – funerary lion, unknown. 4 – Gherla, funerary canopy. 5 – Moigrad (*Porolissum*), sarcophagus. Photos: 1–4, Sergiu Odenie (photo library MNIT); 5, R. I. Zăgreanu.