

ON A LOT OF ROMAN POTTERY FRAGMENTS FROM THE SITE IN ZIMNICEA

Mariana-Cristina Popescu*

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Abstract: The article presents a lot of 68 ceramic fragments in the National Museum of Antiquities patrimony which were apparently discovered at Zimnicea in the 1924 campaign. The identified forms, the production centres / production areas and their chronology open the possibility that Zimnicea was also inhabited in Roman times, sometime during the 2nd – 3rd centuries AD.

Rezumat: În articol este prezentat un lot de 68 de fragmente ceramice aflate în patrimonial Muzeului Național de Antichități care, după toate aparențele, au fost descoperite la Zimnicea, în campania din 1924. Formele identificate, centrele/zonele de producție și datarea lor lasă deschisă posibilitatea ca Zimnicea să fi fost locuită și în perioadă romană, cândva pe parcursul secolelor II-III AD.

In the summer of 2012, during a research stay at the V. Pârvan Institute of Archaeology dedicated to identifying Hellenistic and Roman pottery wares discovered on Geto-Dacian sites, I had also the opportunity to see in the National Museum of Antiquities deposit some of the pottery material found in Zimnicea.¹ Among the materials discovered on the mentioned site during several excavations performed during the Inter-War Period and until the beginning of the new millennium, I noticed several fragments of ceramic wares that had been, according to all current information, discovered in Zimnicea during the 1924 archaeological excavation campaign. The lot consists of ca. 68 fragments of Roman pottery that share, with a single exception, the marking “Zimnicea 1924, C 145-165”.

The lot of Roman Pottery

a. *Forms*

I was able to identify several pottery shapes even if the fragments are rather small and none of them is an “entire profile” of the original vessel. The shapes can be grouped thus:²

Cups (nos.1-6) (pl. I/1-3, 5; pl. V/1-4).

Six of the fragments belong to average-size cups. Fragment no. 1 might be part of a cup with straight walls, a simplified variant of shape Drag. 30, with possible analogies in the workshops of Butovo³ and Durostorum⁴. Nos. 2, 3 and 4 are fragments that belong to cups with bitronconic body, angular in the area of maximum diameter, with two handles applied to the upper half of the body and with ring base. Fragments no. 2 and no. 3 are decorated with vegetal motifs (lanceolate leaves with stalks) applied in the technique of barbotine and with rouletting rows. The shapes they belong to can be similar to cups, with barbotine decoration or undecorated, discovered in the workshops in Butovo⁵ and Durostorum.⁶ Fragments no. 5 and no. 6 belong to cups with thickened out-turned lip slightly, inside rim with straight wall and with hemispherical body. They might belong to cups similar to form Zhuravlev 27, documented among the Pontic sigillata in the area north

* National Museum of Transylvanian History, Cluj Napoca, email: marianacristinapopescu@yahoo.com

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² For the grouping of identified shapes I was mainly guided by the “visual outlook” of the items in the detriment of the classification of shapes according to dimensions as specialists usually do in the case of Roman fine wares (for example Opaît 1980, pp. 336-339; Zhuravlev 2009, p. 29), mainly because the fragments researched here are not “entire profiles” of the pots they once belonged to (thus the fragments suggest the shape and not the size of the original pots), but also for a better reading of the shapes.

³ Sultov 1985, p. 70, pl. XXXII/3.

⁴ Mușețeanu 2003, no. 375, pp. 70, 99, pl. 35.

⁵ Sultov 1985, p. 79, pl. XXXVIII/5.

⁶ Mușețeanu 2003, no. 322, pp. 65, 95, pl. 31; no.7, p. 124, pl. 42.