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Studies

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOPOGRAPHY

MAPS OF ROMAN DACIA. V. LUIGI FERDINANDO MARSIGLI AND ROMAN DACIA IN 1726

Abstract: We are continuing our series of studies regarding the maps of Roman Dacia¹ with this short note regarding the representation of Dacia on a map published by Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli in his book *Danubius Pannonico-Mysicus, observationibus geographicis, astronomicis, hydrographicis, historicis, physicis perlustratus et in sex tomos digestus*, I-II, Hagae-Amstelodami, 1726. The military engineer born in Bologna in 1658 elaborated a map in his book, at the beginning of the second volume, entitled *Theatrum antiquitatum romanarum in Hungaria: sive mappa geographica regionum Danubio circumjacentium, Pannoniarum, Daciarum, Mysiar: etc. in quibus antiquitates romanae Svis singulae figuris in hoc tomo descriptae reperiuntur*. Our study examines the main features illustrated in Marsigli's map, including some Roman roads and forts.

Keywords: *Dacia, Roman roads, forts, Marsigli, topography, cartography.*

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Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli (1658-1730) was born in Bologna and in 1683 he entered in the service of the Habsburg family. In 1868 he became general inspector of fortifications.² Much has been written about his life and work.³ His famous book *Danubius Pannonico-Mysicus, observationibus geographicis, astronomicis, hydrographicis, historicis, physicis perlustratus et in sex tomos digestus*, I-II, Hagae-Amstelodami, 1726, is an encyclopaedia which indicates his vast knowledge on different topics, like geography, astronomy, hydrographical data, antiquities, mineralogy, flora, and fauna.

Our focus is on the map published at the beginning of the second volume, entitled *Theatrum antiquitatum romanarum in Hungaria: sive mappa geographica regionum Danubio circumjacentium, Pannoniarum, Daciarum, Mysiar: etc. in quibus antiquitates romanae Svis singulae figuris in hoc tomo descriptae reperiuntur*.⁴

The legend of the map is entitled *Notarum explicatio*. It includes six categories of representations: 1. *Fortalitia Romana, quorum adhuc apparet figura*; 2. *Murorum rudera aut aggeres ita destructi ut figura non amplius bene appareat. Et haec duo Antiquitarum genera ipsa etiam scriptura, erectâ literâ;*

¹ FODOREAN 2014, 40-43; FODOREAN 2021, 47-51; FODOREAN 2022, 125-128; FODOREAN 2023, 91-95.

² BĂRBULESCU 2022, 83-90.

³ Some contributions: STOYE 1994; RIPÀ 2019; MORĂRESCU/CODREA 2011, 89-94; CARLEVARIS 2020, 19-22; FRANCESCHELLI/MARABINI 2006, 129-139; TÖRÖK 2006, 419-428.

⁴ Excellent reproduction of the map here: [Danubius Pannonico-mysicus observationibus geographicis, astronomicis, hydrographicis, historicis, physicis, perlustratus et in sex tomos digestus.jpg \(3482x2400\) \(wikimedia.org\)](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Danubius_Pannonico-mysicus_observationibus_geographicis_astronomicis_hydrographicis_historicis_physicis_perlustratus_et_in_sex_tomos_digestus.jpg).

3. *Aggeres adhuc extantes et fosae*; 4. *Viae lapidibus stratae quarum onnexio cum natali Romanorum sede, Româ, ut videtur; etiam Italiae pars hic in conspectum prodit*; 5. *Colles manufacti*; 6. *Loca, in quibus Inscriptiones, aut alia monumenta, Romano-antiqua etiamnum reperiuntur*.

Actually, the map presents a part of Italia, the Balkan area, the Adriatic Sea and the province of Dacia.

In Italy, four important roads are mapped. Via Appia is represented as a line connecting Rome to Brundisium. Via Flaminia connects Rome with Ariminum. Another road recorded in the map is Via Aemilia, and then in the north-eastern part of Italy Via Postumia is represented. Several settlements are also named in the map: Fosumbrun, Ariminum, Ravenna, Aquilegia (sic!), Roma, Brundisium, and Hydrunt. Padus F. is also represented, and a range of mountains. In the north-east, three provinces are recorded: Norici Pars, Pannonia Superior, and Pannonia Inferior. A road connects Aquilegia (sic!) with Patovia (sic!) (Poetovio, today Ptuj, Slovenia), via Cileia (sic!) (Celeia, modern Celje, Slovenia). Other settlements mentioned in these areas are Sopronium (Roman Scarabantia, modern Sopron, Hungary), Savaria (modern Szombathely, Hungary), Kanisa (sic!) (modern Nagykanizsa, Hungary), Alba Regalis (modern Székesfehérvár, Hungary), Caposvar (sic!) (modern Kaposvár, Hungary), Siget, Sexar, and Brod. Along the Danube River, Vienna is represented, and also Buda vetus. Savus f. and Dravus f. are also mapped. In the south, three more provinces are mentioned: Mysia Superior, Mysia Inferior, and Thracia.

A road is depicted from Apollonia to Clodiana and Scopia, named Via ad Pontem Traiani. The road continues north, via Pristina and Nis.

North of the Danube River, three provinces are represented: Dacia Ripensis, Dacia Mediterranea, and Dacia Transalpina. The Carpates Montes are also depicted in the map. Several important Roman roads are represented. One starts at Orsova and continues via Meadia (Mehadia, Caraș-Severin County), Bistra, Ulpia Traiana, Alba Iulia, Torda (Turda, Cluj County), and Micaza (sic!) (*Mikháza*, modern *Călugăreni*, Mureș County). Another road connects the locality Pons Trajani (allusion to Trajan's bridge in Drobeta Turnu-Severin) with a Roman fort, indicated with the toponym Castrametatio, ending at Cita de su (sic!) ("Cetatea de Sus"?). Another road is mapped along the valley of the Olt River. Both Alba Iulia and Torda are recorded in the map with the symbol of *murorum rudera*.

In fact, the bridge at Drobeta was described by Marsigli in a work entitled *Lettera intorno al ponte fatto sul Danubio sotto l'Impero di Trajano*.⁵ From 1688 to 1691 and after that he travelled in different regions north of the Danube, visiting Oltenia, Țara Românească, and Transylvania. He drew a plan of Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa.⁶

2. COMPARISONS WITH OTHER MAPS DEPICTING THE REGIONS NORTH OF THE DANUBE IN THE 18TH CENTURY

To prove Marsigli's level of knowledge on the topography of the former province Dacia, one must compare this map with other cartographic materials published during the 18th century.

A schematic and inaccurate representation of Dacia was published in 1700 and it is entitled "A new map of Sarmatia Europaea, Pannonia and Dacia".⁷ The author is Edward Wells (1667-1727).⁸ Only some settlements are recorded, such as *Zarmisegaethusa quae et Ulpia Trajana, Tibiscum, Patruissa, Patrovissa, Alba Iulia, and Zurobara*.⁹ As in other cases, the area north of the Danube River is divided into three provinces: *Dacia Ripensis* (in the western part), *Dacia Mediterranea quae et Gepidia* (in the center), and *Dacia Alpestris* (in the east).

"*Regiones Danvbianaë, Pannoniæ Dacia Moesiae cum Vicino Illyrico*"¹⁰ is the title of another map, published in 1720 and created by an engraver, art dealer and publisher, Christoph Weigel (1654-1725), active at Nuremberg at the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century. This map was part of an atlas entitled *Descriptio Orbis Antiquæ in XLIV tabulis*,¹¹ printed in 1720. The map¹² depicts some interesting features, including several toponyms, like *Sarmizegetusa, Pons Traiani, Pons Alutæ* and *Pons Augusti*. The map provides data about some river names, several toponyms, and the names of several tribes. The information is based on a mixture of data from Ptolemy's *Geographia*. Some of the rivers recorded are *Rhabon fl. Pt. Marisus Strab., Aqua nigra fl., Sargetia fl., Aluta fl. and Hierassus fl.* A total of 34 settlements is recorded. With five exceptions, *Zarmizegetusa Ulpia Trajana Augusta Dacica, Pons Traiani, Pons Aluti, Pons Augusti* and *Vicus Patavicensium*, the other settlements are recorded in Ptolemy's *Geographia*. *Col. Zernensis* should be a derivative from *Germizera* (Ptolemy) / *Germigera* (*Tabula Peutingeriana*).¹³

"*Tabula Veteris Pannoniæ, Daciæ et Illyrici*"¹⁴ is another map printed at the beginning of the 18th century. Its author is Johann van der Bruggen (1695-1740). The settlements mentioned in the document are closely related to the content of Ptolemy's *Geographia*. Some of these are: *Trissum, Ulpianum, Parolissum, Napuca, Patroissa, Marcodava, Augusta Praetoria, Bersovia, Pirum, Comidava, Apulum, Salinae, and Sarmizagethusa Ulpia Traiana, Augusta Dacorum*. There are no roads depicted on the map.

"*Dacia atque Moesia*"¹⁵ was printed in 1750 at it presents mainly data from Ptolemy's *Geographia*. Several

⁷ [A new map of Sarmatia, Europaea Pannonia and Dacia - David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.](#)

⁸ FODOREAN 2022a, 34.

⁹ FODOREAN 2021, 47.

¹⁰ [Regiones Danvbianaë, Pannon... \(mzk.cz\).](#)

¹¹ [Antique Maps and old Atlases by Christoph Weigel - Götzfried Antique Maps \(vintage-maps.com\).](#)

¹² FODOREAN 2021, 47.

¹³ [Name: Germizera \(cambridge.org\).](#)

¹⁴ [Tabula Veteris Pannoniæ, D... \(mzk.cz\); Tabula Veteris Pannoniæ, D... \(mzk.cz\).](#)

¹⁵ [Dacia atque Moesia \(mzk.cz\).](#)

⁵ BĂRBULESCU 2022, 86.

⁶ MARCU/CUPCEA 2011, 545, fig. 4.

settlements are recorded, such as *Lizizis, Dierna, Zurobara, Porolissum, Ulpianum, Col. Napuca, Patruissa, Salinae, Col. Zernensis, Zeugma, Augusta Praetoria, Marcodava, Col. Apulensis, Vicus Patavicensium, Zarmisogethusa Ulpia Trajana, Aemonia, Drubetis, Amutria, Castra Nova, Romula, Tiasum, Termizirga, Argidava, Poloda, Zusidava, Netindava, Ramidava, Comidava, Sandava, Patridava, Petrodava, Utidava.*

3. SHORT FINAL REMARKS

Compared with other maps printed during the 18th century, Marsigli's cartographic representation of the regions north of the Danube River is far more accurate, more complete. This is due to his travels in Transylvania, Oltenia and the region of Țara Românească. During his journeys, he observed and described many ruins of former roads, forts, and cities. This map is obviously the first real "archaeological" map of Roman Dacia.

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