

EDCS-Journal
Open Peer-Reviewed Online Journal

on the basis of

EDCS
Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss / Slaby

Manfred Clauss / Anne Kolb / Wolfgang A. Slaby / Barbara Woitas

EDCS-J 28, 11/2022

**George Cupcea /
Dan Deac / Markus Zimmermann**

**Cohors II Britannorum milliaria
eq. c. R. p. f. in the 3rd century CE**

Citation:

G. Cupcea / D. Deac / M. Zimmermann:

**Cohors II Britannorum milliaria eq. c. R. p. f. in the 3rd century CE
EDCS-J 28, 11/2022, DOI:10.36204/edcsj-028-202211**

Adressen der Autoren:

**george.cupcea@gmail.com / dandeac12@gmail.com /
markus1.zimmermann@uni-bayreuth.de**

The intention of this online journal (EDCS-J) is to publish contributions to epigraphy as well as new inscriptions, additions to inscriptions or new readings. In the case of articles with inscriptions for the database, article publication and database entry take place at the same time (once a month after submission). The authors will receive a PDF of their article, which will be available for them on the download page EDCS-Journal. For inscriptions intended for inclusion in the EDCS, authors are kindly asked to provide all the information necessary to answer the fields of the general search mask, i.e. province, place, date, text, commentary (all in Unicode; quotations of sources and literature as in the EDCS; languages: de, en, es, fr, it or Latin). A possibly newer version of the inscriptions is available in the EDCS. The authors are responsible for supplying the copy rights of all images sent to the editors of this journal. Please submit all articles and discussions (open peer-review) to: email@manfredclauss.de or Anne.Kolb@uzh.ch.

Die Online-Zeitschrift (EDCS-J) dient der Publikation von Beiträgen zur Epigraphik sowie der Anzeige von neuen Inschriften, Nachträgen zu Inschriften oder Neulesungen. Bei Artikeln mit Inschriften für die Datenbank erfolgen zeitgleich Artikel-Publikation und Datenbank-Eintrag (einmal pro Monat nach Einsendung). Die Autoren erhalten ein PDF ihres Beitrags, das auf der download-Seite EDCS-Journal allgemein zugänglich ist. Zu Inschriften, die in die EDCS aufgenommen werden sollen, liefern die Autoren alle Angaben entsprechend den Feldern der allgemeinen Suchmaske: Provinz, Ort, Datierung, Text, Kommentar (alles im Unicode-Zeichensatz; Zitate von Quellen und Literatur wie in der EDCS; Sprachen: de, en, es, fr, it oder lateinisch). Eine eventuell neuere Version der Inschriften steht in der EDCS zur Verfügung. Für die Bildrechte mitgelieferter Bilder zeichnen die Autoren verantwortlich. Ein-sendung von Artikeln und Reaktionen (Open peer-review) an: email@manfredclauss.de oder Anne.Kolb@uzh.ch.

Le journal en ligne (EDCS-J) est utilisé pour afficher de contributions sur l'épigraphie et nouvelles inscriptions, les ajouts aux inscriptions ou les nouvelles lectures. Dans le cas d'articles avec inscriptions dans la base de données, la publication de l'article et la saisie dans la base de données ont lieu en même temps (une fois par mois après leur soumission). Les auteurs reçoivent un PDF de leur article, qui est généralement disponible sur la page de téléchargement Journal de l'EDCS. Pour inscriptions destinées à être incluses dans l'EDCS, les auteurs fournissent toutes les informations selon les champs du masque de recherche général: province, lieu, date, texte, commentaire (tous en Unicode; citations de sources et de littérature comme dans l'EDCS; langues: de, en, es, fr, it ou latin). Une version éventuellement plus récente des inscriptions est disponible dans le EDCS. Les auteurs sont responsables des droits d'image des images fournies. Soumission d'articles et de réactions (examen ouvert par les pairs) à: email@manfredclauss.de ou Anne.Kolb@uzh.ch.

Il giornale online (EDCS-J) viene utilizzato per la pubblicazione di contributi all'epigrafia e a nuove iscrizioni, aggiunte a iscrizioni o nuove letture. Nel caso di articoli con iscrizioni alla banca dati, la pubblicazione dell'articolo e l'inserimento nella banca dati avvengono contemporaneamente (una volta al mese dopo l'invio). Gli autori ricevono un PDF del loro articolo, generalmente disponibile sulla pagina di download Giornale EDCS. Alle iscrizioni per l'inclusione nell'EDCS, gli autori forniscono tutte le informazioni secondo i campi della maschera di ricerca generale: provincia, luogo, data, testo, commento (tutto in Unicode; citazioni di fonti e letteratura come nell'EDCS; lingue: de, en, es, fr, it o latino). Una versione forse più recente delle iscrizioni è disponibile nell'EDCS. Gli autori sono responsabili dei diritti d'immagine delle immagini fornite. Presentazione di articoli e reazioni (peer-review aperta) a: email@manfredclauss.de oppure Anne.Kolb@uzh.ch.

La revista en línea (EDCS-J) se utiliza para la publicación de contribuciones a la epigrafía, y a nuevas inscripciones, las adiciones a las inscripciones o las nuevas lecturas. En el caso de artículos con inscripciones para la base de datos, la publicación del artículo y la entrada en la base de datos se realizan al mismo tiempo (una vez al mes después de su presentación). Los autores reciben un PDF de su artículo, que generalmente está disponible en la página de descarga Revista EDCS. A las inscripciones para su inclusión en el EDCS, los autores proporcionan todas las informaciones según los campos de la máscara de búsqueda general: provincia, lugar, fecha, texto, comentario (todo en Unicode; citas de fuentes y literatura como en la EDCS; idiomas: de, en, es, fr, it o latín). Una versión posiblemente más reciente de las inscripciones está disponible en el EDCS. Los autores son responsables de los derechos de imagen de las imágenes suministradas. Envío de artículos y reacciones (revisión abierta por pares) a: email@manfredclauss.de o Anne.Kolb@uzh.ch.

Cohors II Britannorum milliaria eq. c. R. p. f. in the 3rd century CE

There are still significant difficulties in identifying the military units garrisoned in the auxiliary forts in the province of Dacia during the 3rd century CE.¹ The situation of the auxiliary fort at Brusturi, better known in the scientific literature as the auxiliary fort from Romita,² presumably ancient *Certiae*,³ in north-western Dacia Porolissensis, is similar to the rest of the province (fig. 1).⁴

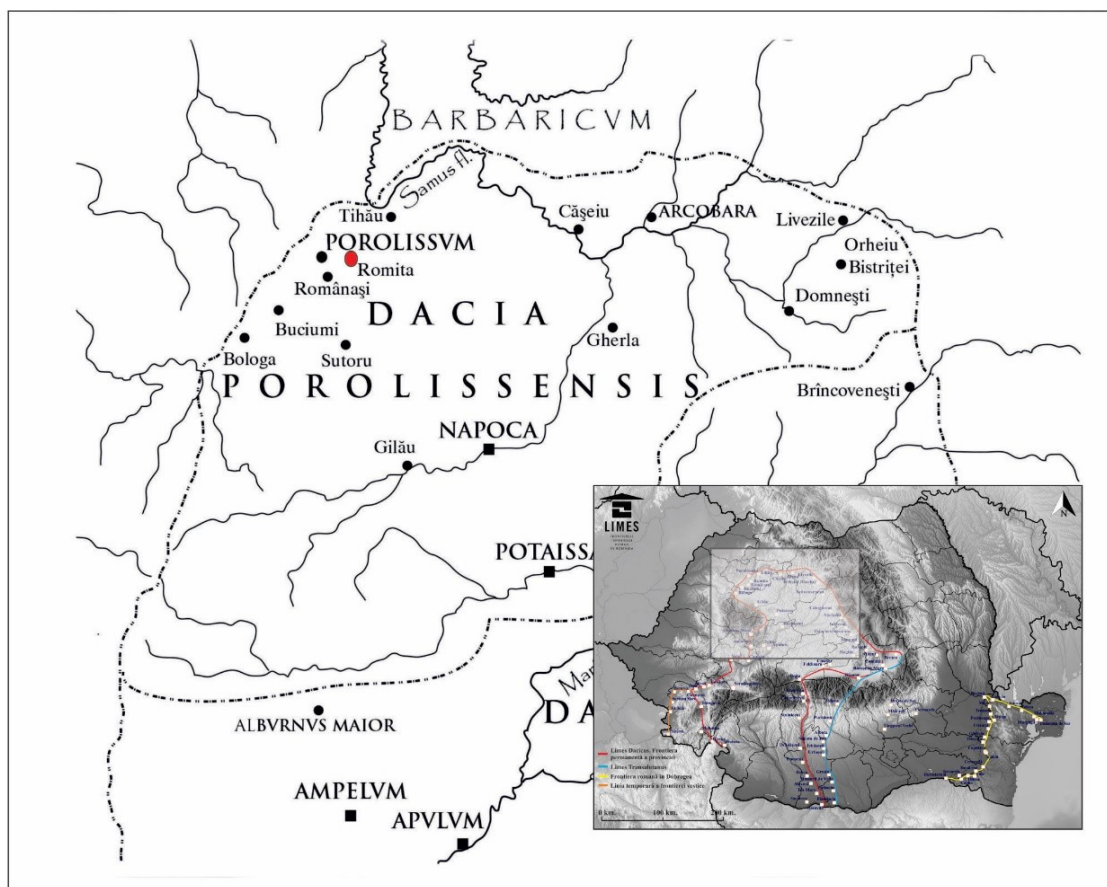


Fig. 1. Map of Dacia Porolissensis with the location in red of the auxiliary fort from Romita (author D. Dana, modified by D. Deac). In the medallion, the map of Dacia (© limesromania.ro).

^{1*} The work of all three authors has been supported by a grant financed by the Gerda Henkel Foundation. See Marcu 2009, with references for an overview.

² The fort is now situated in the village of Brusturi, Creaca commune, Sălaj county. However, the auxiliary fort has been known since the 19th century in the scientific literature as the fort from Romita (Romlott in Hungarian), a nearby village from Românași commune. In order not to confuse the reader, we will name it Romita.

³ The ancient name is known from the Tabula Peutingeriana: <https://tp-online.ku.de/trefferanzeige.php?id=1012> (last visit: 24.10.22); see further Deac 2013 with references.

⁴ For the auxiliary fort, see, for instance: Matei and Bajusz 1997; Franzen et al. 2004-2005; Marcu 2009, 101-110; Opreanu and Lăzărescu 2016, 71-74, no. 3.

Cohors II Britannorum milliaria eq. c. R. p. f. was stationed in Germania inferior and arrived in Moesia superior before the Dacian wars. After the hostilities ceased, the cohort was moved to the newly established province of Dacia. More specifically, the cohort was garrisoned at *Samum* (Cășeu) and possibly at *Arcobara* (Ilișua) before moving to Romita in the newly established Dacia Porolissensis during the reign of Hadrian.⁵ So far, only tile and brick stamps provide direct evidence for the garrisoned units at Romita.⁶ The other unit with whom this unit shared the fort was *cohors VI Thracum*, which had been garrisoned here since Trajan's reign.⁷ A fragment of a funerary stela dated, on paleographic reasons alone, to the late 2nd or the 3rd century CE and reused in the fort's *porta praetoria* may mention active personnel or a veteran of the *cohors VI Thracum* at Romita, implicitly providing circumstantial evidence that the unit was still in the fort during this period.⁸

⁵ Maybe the fragmentary inscription from Romita, mentioned at the end of this paper ([EDCS-09700726](#)), is the only stone inscription from this unit in Dacia. Otherwise, its presence in Dacia is only attested through military diplomas (e.g. [EDCS-12100013](#); [EDCS-12300367](#)) and several brick and tile stamps. Before the excavation of the *tetrapylon*, 96 stamps of the unit were inventoried in the Zalău County Museum of History and Art and eight in the National History Museum of Transylvania Cluj-Napoca; see FN 6. During the excavation of the *tetrapylon*, 20 stamps of the unit were found, among them two of the new type presented in this paper. For the current state of research on this unit, see: IDR-App-01, page 45; IDR-App-02, pages 95-96; Matei-Popescu and Țentea 2018, 40-41, no. XVI and Petolescu 2021, 193-194, no. 26 with references.

⁶ 96 stamps of the unit are published from the collection of the Zalău County Museum of History and Art. Among them 43 stamps of the type: [IDR-App-01-18, 00001-00043](#); 19 stamps of the type: [IDR-App-01-19, 00001-00011](#); 21 stamps of the type: [IDR-App-01-20, 00001-00021](#); 2 stamps of the type: [IDR-App-01-21, 00001-00002](#); 1 stamp of the type: [IDR-App-01-22](#); 3 stamps of the type: [IDR-App-01-23, 00001-00003](#); 3 stamps of the type: [IDR-App-01-24, 00001-00003](#); 4 stamps of the type: [IDR-App-01-25, 00001-00004](#); 8 stamps of the type: [IDR-App-01-26, 00001-00008](#).

8 stamps of the unit are published from the collection of the National History Museum of Transylvania Cluj-Napoca. Among them 1 stamp of the type: IDR-App-02-113; 2 stamps of the type: IDR-App-02-114, 00001-00002; 1 stamp of the type: IDR-App-02-115; 1 stamp of the type: IDR-App-02-116; 1 stamps of the type: IDR-App-02-117; 2 stamps of the type: IDR-App-02-118, 00001-00002.

Some of the stamps were also found in the neighboring Roman settlements of *Porolissum* and Românași. For an overview of the recent epigraphic evidence from the auxiliary fort from Romita, see Dana and Deac 2018; Dana et al. 2019; Deac and Dana 2019.

⁷ Also connected to this fort based on the tile stamps found here. 41 stamps of the unit are published from the collection of the Zalău County Museum of History and Art. Among them 12 of the type: [IDR-App-01-70, 00001-00012](#); 8 of the type: [IDR-App-01-71, 00001-00008](#); 1 of the type: [IDR-App-01-72](#); 15 of the type: [IDR-App-01-73, 00001-00015](#); 1 of the type: [IDR-App-01-74](#); 4 of the type: [IDR-App-01-75, 00001-00004](#).

2 stamps of the unit are published from the collection of the National History Museum of Transylvania Cluj-Napoca. Among them 1 of the type: IDR-App-02-152; 1 of the type IDR-App-02-153.

Some of the stamped bricks at *Porolissum* were found in Severan contexts. F. Marcu points out that the unit might have been transferred to Britannia at some point, given the discovery of lead seals from Brough under Stainmor mentioning this unit (Marcu 2009, 113). See latest on this unit Petolescu 2021, 245-246, no. 60.

⁸ [EDCS-70100079](#): *D(is) [M(anibus)] / Ael(ius, -ia) B[- - - vix(it)] / an(nis) XX[- - - Ael(ius)] / T(h)eimeș [- - -] / ⁵tata C(?)[- - -] / vix(it) a[n(nis) - - - / Ael(ius)?] / Bas[sus(?) ... coh(ortis) VI? Th]/ra[cum(?) - - -] / b(ene) [m(erentibus) p(osuit)?]*. See the discussion in Piso et al. 2015, 224-225.

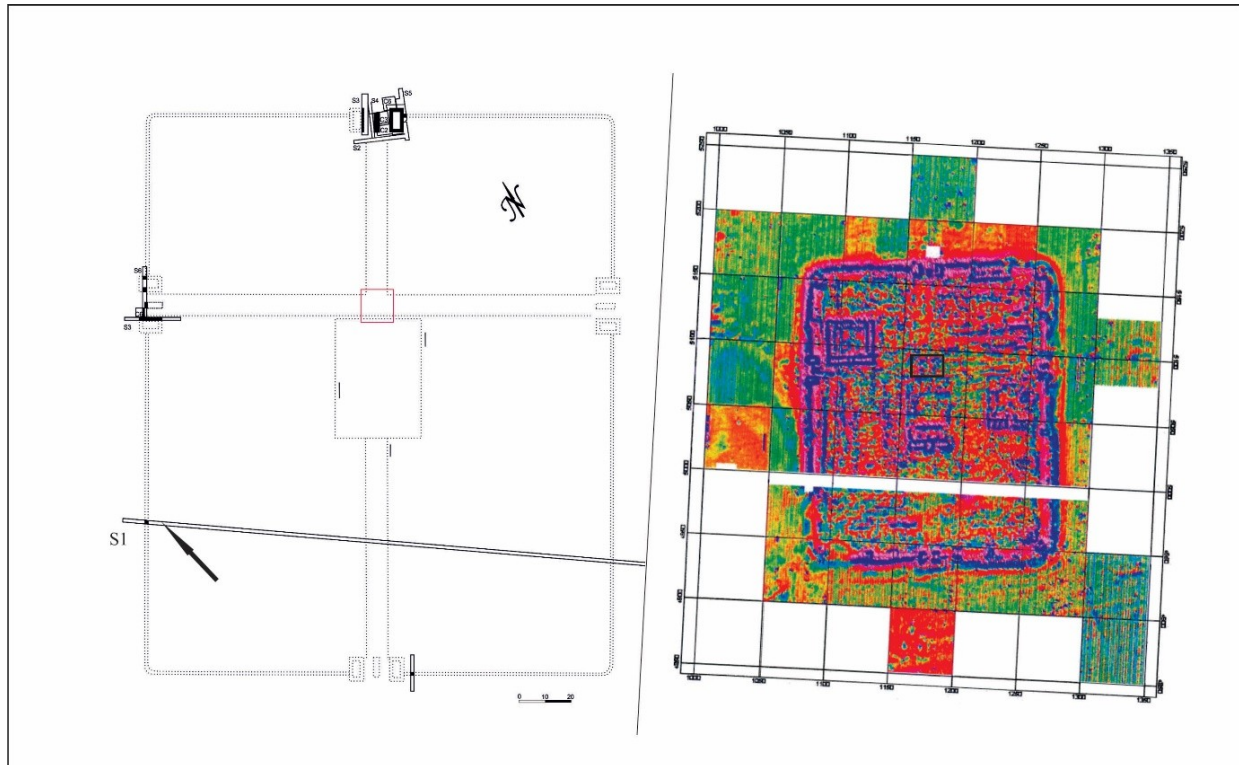


Fig. 2. Left: the plan of the auxiliary fort with the red lines marking the location of the archaeological investigations (© authors). Right: geophysical measurements of the fort with the black lines marking the location of the *tetrapylon* (after Franzen et al. 2004-2005, 176, fig. 1).

Recent archaeological investigations conducted in the fort since 2018, at the crossroads of the *via principalis* and *via praetoria* – where geophysical measurements suggested the presence of a *tetrapylon* – have yielded some important preliminary results (fig. 2).⁹ For example, the collapsed roof of the *tetrapylon* was excavated, from where 33 roof tiles with the stamps of the two units and graffiti with *cohors II Britannorum milliaria*, as well as other *graffiti*, were recovered.

Among the stamped roof tiles are two of a new type, bearing the Imperial epithet *Severiana*, abbreviated through the letters S and E. The stamp has a cartouche in the form of a *tabula ansata*, 8 cm wide and 2 cm high, with letters 1.1 cm high.¹⁰ Housed by the Zalău County Museum of History and Art, Zalău (fig. 3), site inv. T 24/2019 (fig. 1). The text goes as follows:

coh(ortis) II Br(itannorum) Se(veriana)

⁹ The archaeological excavations are directed by George Cupcea in a joint project of the National History Museum of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Zalău County Museum of History and Art, Zalău, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca (represented by Dan Deac) and the University of Bayreuth (represented by Markus Zimmermann). So far, short reports have been published by Cupcea et al. 2018; Cupcea et al. 2019; Cupcea et al. 2021. A more detailed study of the archaeological investigations and the finds will be published soon.

¹⁰ One of the stamps is just partially preserved (4 x 2 cm), namely, its right side; the unit's numeral is missing, site inv. T 24/2019. The two roof tiles were found in trenches S3A and S3B in August 2019.



Fig. 3. Tile stamp of the *cohors II Britannorum milliaria* bearing the imperial epithet *Severiana* (photo and drawing Dan Deac).

Before the excavations started in 2018, nine tiles with a cartouche type with the letter S inscribed after the abbreviated name of the unit were already known. This was interpreted, with a certain degree of caution, as the abbreviation of the imperial epithet *Severiana*.¹¹ Seven roof tiles with this stamp have been identified in the roof of the *tetrapylon* as well, one being part of the collapsed roof of the northern portico of the *principia*. The presence of the imperial epithet *Severiana*, now clearly identified through the new tile stamps, demonstrate that the roof of the *tetrapylon* was either constructed anew or reconstructed sometime during the reign of Alexander Severus. After the Severan dynasty, we are aware of a dedication on an altar or statue base made to Jupiter Dolichenus and the health of the emperor Gordian III and his wife Sabina Tranquilina by a certain Scribonius? Flavinus?, who held the position of a *tribunus*,¹² perhaps of the *cohors II Britannorum*.¹³ Thus, one can imply that by the middle of the 3rd century, the unit mentioned above was still camped at Romita. After this, nothing is

¹¹ [IDR-App-01-26, 00001-00008](#); IDR-App-02-118, found in the collapsed roof of the bathhouse from the *vicus*, the *porta praetoria* of the fort at Romita, and the *porta decumana* of the Pomet hill auxiliary fort at *Porolissum*. There are also 4 stamps of this unit bearing the imperial epithet *Antoniniana* ([IDR-App-01-25, 00001-00004](#)). Stamps of military units bearing Imperial epithets in the 3rd century CE are extremely rare in Dacia.

known about this unit, but it is generally assumed that it remained here until the Roman withdrawal.¹⁴

George Cupcea
Cluj-Napoca
george.cupcea@gmail.com

Dan Deac
Zalău/Cluj-Napoca
dandeac12@gmail.com

Markus Zimmermann
Bayreuth
markus1.zimmermann@uni-bayreuth.de

¹² [EDCS-09700726](#): *I(ovi) o(ptimo) m(aximo) D(olicheno) / pro s(alute) d(omini) n(ostri) / M(arci) Ant(onii) Gor(diani) p(ii) f(elicis) Aug(usti) / et Sab(iniae) Tran{t}/quilinae Aug(ustae) / Scr[ib(oni)us]? Fla?]vinus / trib(unus) c[oh(ortis) cu]m suis*. See the discussion in Piso and Deac 2019, 253-256. The inscription is now used as a base for the altar at the wooden church in the village of Romita.

¹³ Piso and Deac 2019, 255.

¹⁴ For the last decades of Roman rule in Dacia the bibliography is abundant, and it is not our scope to analyze this matter here; see for example the discussion in Piso 2018, although one has to take his conclusions with caution. Recent suggestions imply that Dacia was lost as early as 260 CE, e.g. Öztürk and Dana 2021, 39-40.

Bibliography

- Cupcea G., Marcu, F., Petiș, I., Bajusz, M., Deac, D., Cociș, H., Zimmermann, M. 2018. *Castrul auxiliar de la Brusturi/Romita, jud. Sălaj – reluarea cercetărilor arheologice*, Limes. Frontierele Imperiului Roman in Romania 4: 16-20.
- Cupcea G., Marcu, F., Petiș, I., Bajusz, M., Deac, D., Cociș, H., Zimmermann, M. 2019. *Romita, com. Creaca, jud. Sălaj, Punct: Castrul auxiliar de la Romita-Brusturi*, Cronica Cercetărilor Arheologice din România (Campania 2018), București- Sibiu: 171-172, no. 63.
- Cupcea G., Marcu, F., Petiș, I., Murzea, D., Tivadar, M., Deac, D., Cociș, H., Ciobanu, C., Postoș, R., Toth, D., Piticar, A. I. 2021. *Brusturi, com. Creaca, jud. Sălaj* [Tetrapylon – principia], *Punct: Castrul roman auxiliar (la Ruine)*, Cercetărilor Arheologice din România (Campania 2020), București: 50-53, no. 8.
- Dana, D. and Deac, D. 2018. *Un diplôme militaire fragmentaire du règne d'Hadrien découvert à Romita (Dacia Porolissensis) et relecture du diplôme RMD I 40 (Porolissum)*, ZPE 208: 273-278.
- Deac, D. 2013. *The Toponymy of Dacia Porolissensis. Recent Research and New Approaches*, EphNapoc 23: 261-270.
- Deac, D. and Dana, D. 2019. *Liber Pater Frugifer: Un graffite votif du camp auxiliaire de Romita (Dacia Porolissensis)*, AMP 41: 113-120.
- Dana, D., Deac, D., Bajusz, I. and Pripon, E. 2019. *Nouvelle constitution de Marc Aurèle et Lucius Verus pour les cohortes prétoriennes et urbaines (début 162)*, ZPE 212: 261-264.
- Franzen, P., Matei, A. V. and Marcu, F. 2004-2005. *The Roman Fort at Romita (Dacia). Results of the Geophysical Survey*, AMN 41-42/I [2007]: 161-177.
- Marcu, F. 2009. *The Internal Planning of Roman Forts of Dacia*, Cluj-Napoca.
- Matei A. and Bajusz, I. 1997. *Castrul roman de la Romita – Certiae / Das Römergrenzkastell von Romita – Certiae*, Zalău.
- Matei-Popescu, F. and Țentea, O. 2018. *Auxilia Moesiae Superioris*, Cluj-Napoca.
- Opreanu, C.-H. and Lăzărescu, V.-A. 2016. *The Province of Dacia*, in Opreanu, C.-H., Lăzărescu, V.-A. (éds.), *Landscape Archaeology on the Northern Frontier of the Roman Empire at Porolissum. An Interdisciplinary Research Project*, Cluj: 49-111.
- Öztürk, H. S. and Dana, D. 2021. *From Dacia Minor to Nicomedia: Iconography, Onomastics and a New Career of the Late Roman Army. The Sarcophagus of Tziampo, protector divini lateris*, Acta Classica Mediterranea 4: 29-65.
- Petolescu, C. C. 2021. *Armata romană din Dacia*, București.
- Piso, I. 2018. *Das verhängnisvolle Jahr 262 und die amissio Daciae*, in L. Vagalinski, M. Raycheva, D. Boteva and N. Sharankov (eds.), *Proceedings of the First International Roman*

and Late Antique Thrace Conference "Cities, Territories and Identities" (Plovdiv, 3rd-7th October 2016), Sofia: 427-440.

Piso I. and Deac, D. 2019. *Epigraphica Porolissensia (II)*, AMP 41: 253-261.

Piso, I., Deac, D. and Zăgreanu, R. 2015. *Epigraphica Porolissensia (I)*, AMP 37: 215-229.