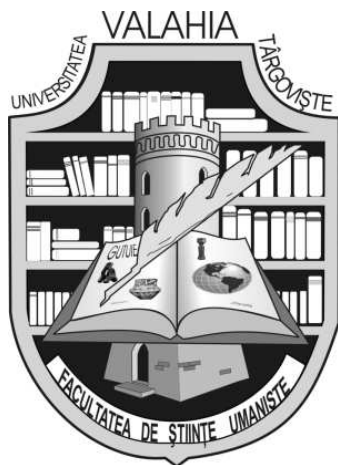


Ministère de l'Education, de la Recherche, de la Jeunesse et du Sport
L'Université Valahia Târgoviște
Faculté de Sciences Humaines

ANNALES



D'UNIVERSITÉ VALAHIA TARGOVISTE

SECTION
d'Archéologie et d'Histoire

TOME XIV
Numéro 1
2012

Valahia University Press
Târgoviște

Annales d'Université Valahia Targoviste Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire publie des mémoires originaux, des nouvelles et des comptes-rendus dans le domaine de l'archéologie préhistorique, de l'histoire du moyen âge, de l'environnement de l'homme fossile, de l'archéologie interdisciplinaire et de patrimoine culturel.

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Indexée dans:



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ISSN: 1584-1855

Funerary Venus cult in Roman Dacia

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Abstract: *Funerary Venus cult in Roman Dacia.* Nine Venus representations were discovered in Roman Dacia tombs as part of funerary inventory. Venus clay and bronze statues had an apotropaic role in protecting the soul after death. Goddess attributes like beauty, virtue and modesty had new connotations during the Empire becoming essential virtues for access to Elysian Fields. Therefore Venus iconography will be imitated by mortals in an attempt to acquire these virtues. The *invocatio in formam Veneris* phenomenon starts inside the imperial family then spreads among ordinary people.

Key words: Venus, Dacia, statues, graves, cult.

Résumé: *Le culte funéraire de Vénus dans la Dacie romaine.* Neuf Venus représentations ont été découverts dans les tombes romaines de Dacia dans l'inventaire funéraire. Venus statues d'argile et de bronze ont joué un rôle apotropaïque dans la protection de l'âme après la mort. Déesse attributs comme la beauté, la vertu et la modestie avait des connotations nouvelles au cours de l'Empire deviennent des vertus essentielles pour l'accès aux Champs Elysées. Par conséquent Vénus iconographie sera imitée par les mortels dans le but d'acquérir ces vertus. L'*invocatio in formam Veneris* phénomène commence à l'intérieur de la famille impériale, puis se propage parmi les peuples ordinaires.

Mots clés: Venus, Dacia, statues, tombes, culte.

Roman funerary cult

Most of religious cults from the Roman Empire promised soul survival after death to their believers. The idea of soul immortality was brought to Rome from the east, from the Greek and Oriental world, once with the cult for Dionysus, Sabazius, Cybele, Attis, Isis or Mithras, to which we could also add a series of philosophical trends like the Pythagoreanism or Neopythagoreanism (G. C. Picard, 1939; J. P. Salathe, 1997). The Romans' belief in the soul immortality is best highlighted by the cult for *Di Manes*. During the Republic period, the Manes Gods were the collective embodiment of ancestors' souls, unidentified as individuals. Once with the Empire the Manes acquired

individuality on the funerary inscriptions, as, next to their names was also mentioned the deceased's name, which, to a certain degree personalized the ancestors' souls (J. M. C. Toynbee, 1971; J. P. Salathe, 1997). The ceremonies for the dead with offerings of food, drinks, furniture or clothing necessary for the daily life are a direct result of the belief that the souls still live after death (F. Cumont, 1922; J. M. C. Toynbee, 1971).

The answer to the question "where do souls go?" differs depending on time, location or individual. The Neopythagoreanism stated that pure souls go to the Moon where the Elysian Fields are located. Yet, not all souls can reach the Moon, those of murderers or of the faithless are doomed to stay prisoners in atmospheres in order

to be purified (F. Cumont, 1922; J. P. Salathe 1997). The manner of providing immortality also depends on the type of deity worshiped. Oriental deities and the mystery cults offered the most successful methods. Nevertheless, under the influence of Roman traditions and of the different philosophical trends, the saviour deities coming from the Orient were worshiped in an original manner by the Romans (G. C. Picard, 1939). Moreover, some Roman traditional deities were invested with assignments pertaining to the saviour deities. This is how Venus ended up having funerary attributions (fig. 1).

Venus cult in Dacia

In Dacia were discovered about 260 figurines of Venus, of which 200 of terracotta, 50 of bronze and 10 of stone. These figurative representations of Venus represent 80 % of the total of those made of terracotta showing Greek-Roman deities in Dacia, 24 % of those made of bronze and 5 % of those made of stone. Despite the numerous figurative representations, the presence of Venus in inscriptions is rare, representing only 2 % of the total of inscriptions with deities discovered in Dacia. The iconographic types which the figurines in Dacia imitate are those from the *statuaria maiores*: Venus *Cnidos*, Venus *Genetrix*, Venus *Capitolina* or Venus *Anadyomene*. The differences between *statuaria minores* and the models from *statuaria maiores* are sometimes so big that these original models are difficult to identify. Generally, the differences consisted in a simplification of the representations: the emphasis is not laid on the facial details, the anatomy proportions are not taken into consideration, changes appear (the hands' position in most cases is inverted so that the right hand would slip near the body and have the palm directed towards the viewer), some elements are eliminated (*hydria*) and some are introduced (the crown usually placed in the right hand).

Of the total of those 260 pieces discovered in Dacia, the exact discovery context can be stated only for half of them. These 130 pieces may be divided in four big categories: 1 - civil contexts, with reference especially to the habitation 2 - military context, mainly the *castra* and forts; 3 - cult contexts, like *favissae*, temples and sanctuaries; 4 - funerary contexts, meaning necropolises and monuments related to the funerary space. Most of the figurines with Venus

were discovered in military contexts, about 34 %, closely followed by the cult contexts, 33 %, and civil contexts – 26 %, the funerary contexts being the less encountered, of only 7 % (Fig. 3).

Venus funerary cult in Dacia

Of all discovery contexts spotted in Dacia, Venus has the lowest frequency in the funerary context, as there are only six terracotta figurines, a bronze one, a statuette and a marble relief. Most of the figurines from funerary environment, five in number, come from Alba Iulia - *Apulum* (Catalogue no. 1-5, fig. 5/a-d), but the particular contexts of discovery in the necropolis are only partially identified (D. Anghel *et al.*, 2011; A. Cserni, 1899; M. Gligor *et al.*, 2009). In a funerary context a Venus figurine was also spotted at Turda - *Potaissa* (Catalogue no. 9, fig. 5/f). Its discovery place on the right bank of Arieş river was related to eight graves, the piece was found in a circular shaped complex, where ceramic remains were found, bones and a few figurines among which a horse's head. They could not establish with accuracy if such complex was used for funerary banquets as it was subsequently turned into a waste pit or if there was a place where they would make funerary type of depositions (M. Pâslaru, 2007). Another discovery comes from Sarmizegetusa - *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa* (Catalogue no. 7, fig. 5/e). It is about a good quality bronze figurine representing Venus and found in the eastern area of the town's necropolis, not far from the Aurelii Mausoleum (C. Pop, T. Albulescu, 1976; D. Alicu, C. Pop, V. Wolmann, 1979; L. Marinescu, 1991; C. Pop, 1998).

Obviously, taking an overall look upon the necropolis from Dacia, Venus goddess is not the only deity presented in the funerary inventory. A few anthropomorphic vases may be linked with other deities, like that of Hecate at Celei - *Sucidava* (H. Nubar, 1971) or Clotho at Cluj-Napoca - *Napoca* (D. Isac, M. Bărbulescu, 1976), plus the medallion with *Sol* from Locusteni (S. Cociş, D. Ruscu, 1995). Nevertheless, the deities do not appear in the funerary inventory as much frequently as the terracotta birds, like cocks (D. Anghel *et al.*, 2011) or pigeons (A. Căţinaş, 1995), wild animals, the lion who has a significant role (N. Man, 2002), the anthropomorphic vases or *Risi* figurines (I. Țigăra, 1960; D. Anghel *et al.*, 2011).

The presence of Venus in the funerary

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environment is a general phenomenon in the Empire. In Gallia the discoveries of terracotta figurines of the goddess in necropolises are very few in comparison to the rest of the complexes, despite the great number of Roman graves identified (G. Coulon, 1996; I. Faudet, 1997; S. Talvas, 2007). Among the deities which appear in the Gallo-Roman graves, Venus is the best represented followed by Minerva, the Mother Goddess, Diana or Mercury. The Venuses mainly come from incineration graves, the dead are usually young people or children, and this would explain their relation in the inventory with *Risi* and *Cucullati* (S. Talvas, 2007). Venus's figurines are also spotted in the funerary complexes from Britannia, yet very small in number. A special case is that of the necropolis from London - *Londinium* where in a lead coffin were found three terracotta figurines, two of them coming from the same pattern. In the same site were also found four *aediculae* of Venus (B. Barber, 1990).

Placing terracotta figurines in the graves seems to be related to the Greek tradition, such figurines of Aphrodite being discovered in funerary complexes (E. Pottier, S. Reinach, 1887). A good example of the association of Aphrodite with death seems to be that of the necropolis from Constanța - *Tomis*: on the door of a funerary grave are painted several mythological events, Herakles and Isis are also joined by Aphrodite and Eros (G. Bordenache, 1969; C. Chera, 1997). In the necropolis from *Tomis* were discovered several amphorae on which deities are represented, among which there is Venus; nevertheless the terracotta statuettes were not found despite the fact that for other deities like Nemesis or Cybele these statuettes have been identified (C. Chera, 1997).

Aphrodite had funerary attributes in the Greek world, probably some of them being taken by Venus afterwards. The Homeric episode of the Aphrodite's adultery and the death of Adonis, killed by Ares, is a significant episode in the Roman world (G.C. Picard, 1939). Salvation of Adonis from the inferno, and his premature death are celebrated once with *Adonaia* festivity. On this ceremony the courtesans or the lovers lament Venus's pain by planting seeds under the roof. The plant growing from these seeds will have Adonis's fate: a quick death for a short life. The obvious symbol of the episode is that of death and rebirth (G.C. Picard, 1939).

Starting from these mythological scenarios, Aphrodite played a significant role in the dead cult. In Corinth a temple for Aphrodite *Melainis* was found on the road to the city, nearby the necropolis, and the cult here had an obvious funerary role. The "black one" epithet also used by Demeter will be transferred to Venus, as well. At Delphi during the honouring ceremonies of the dead, Aphrodite *Epitymbia* of the graves was also honoured, who, probably had a statue near the necropolis where the libations were made (V.P. Delforge, 1994).

In the Roman world, Aphrodite *Epitymbia* is similar to Venus *Libitina*. It is very likely that behind such epithet is hidden an assimilation by Venus of an archaic deity, Libitina, the goddess of corpses and decomposition (G. Wissowa, 1912). The denomination is of Etruscan origin, which could suggest influences coming from this world and not only from the Greek world. A temple of Venus *Libitina* was erected at Rome on Esquilin, nearby a necropolis (R. Schilling, 1954) and those who were in charge of the funerary service, of the undertakings being called *libitinarii* (G. Wissowa, 1912).

Besides the discoveries from necropolises, Venus can also be linked with the funerary environment by a series of attributes rendered in the goddess's iconography. Such a symbol is *lunula*, representing the moon as a reaping hook. In Dacia the pendant appears on a bronze figurine from Vețel - *Micia* (L. Marinescu, C. Pop, 2000; C. Pop, 1998), but also on four figurines of terracotta from Turda - *Potaissa* (I. Mitrofan, 1969; M. Jude, C. Pop, 1973; A. Căținaș, 2005), Moigrad - *Porolissum* (N. Gudea, 1989), Sarmizegetusa - *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa* (D. Alicu, C. Pop, V. Wolmann, 1979; I. Andrițoiu, L. Mărghită 1972), and Reșca - *Romula* (C. M. Tătulea, 1994; D. Bondoc, D.R. Dincă, 2005). Also, at *Romula*, the *lunula* appears on three patterns of clay for figurines representing Venus (D. Bondoc, D.R. Dincă, 2005). *Lunula* was also used as an amulet; children usually were given such protecting *lunulae* at birth (E. Beu-Dachin, 2010).

The association of Venus to the moon originates in the Greek or Oriental world. The Greeks were preoccupied with the soul's fate after death and many religious cults provided scenarios in such meaning. Thus, some Plato beliefs were inculcated, according to which the world of dead and the Elysian Fields were on the

Moon, celestial body of the night and darkness (F. Cumont, 1922). One of the Pythagorean beliefs was that Venus represented the soul, being imprisoned by Mars (the physical body). Through death Venus was released. Due to such beliefs love scenes were represented with Mars and Venus on the Roman sarcophaguses. At the same time, the love scenes are seen as the moment when Harmony is created; born between Venus and Mars, the harmony in the Pythagorean doctrine was indispensable to the soul in order to gain celestial harmony (R. Schilling, 1988).

Presence of Venus in the funerary contexts mentioned above should be seen rather as a part of the private not public cult. The funerary canons and the tutelary deities are generally those accepted by the Roman authorities, but the burial ritual is coordinated by *pater familias*, according to own beliefs and customs. Nevertheless, for some of the Romans the funerary cult also acquired strong public features. The death of an emperor or of a member from the imperial family was a public event. Even after death, most of them will have a public cult, being worshiped. But, as it often happens in the Roman world the death of the important people was imitated by the more modest people. The phenomenon of *invocatio in formam deorum*, in this case *in formam Veneris*, is the best example in this meaning. *Invocatio in formam deorum* refers to an iconographic imitation of a deity by a member of the imperial family or by a private individual. But, only in case of the imperial family we can speak about *apotheosis*, the transformation into deity after death. For the other mortals it is just an *imitatio* of the transformation, a simulation of *apotheosis* (H. Wrede, 1981). The representation of Alexander the Great as Achilles, Herakles, Zeus, Apollo or Hermes is probably the best example used by the Romans. The rendering during life of an emperor/empress as deity relates to some divine forces or origins, in very few cases they being considered actual gods. For private individuals the choice of deity relates to the trend launched by the imperial family, to the deity's function in the existence after death, as well as the profession, age, sex or virtues of the deceased person. Yet, it is certain that *invocatio in formam deorum*, just as Jupiter is a privilege only of the imperial house but other deities like Venus are imitated by all social classes (H. Wrede, 1981).

Invocatio in formam formam Veneris, appears

once with the cult organized by Caesar for Venus *Genetrix* in the 1st century B.C., but it is generalized in the Roman world only in the 2nd century A. D. It is a phenomenon which progresses simultaneously with adopting the image of the divine couple Mars and Venus by the imperial couples, like Hadrian and Sabina or Commodus and Crispina (E. Kleiner, 1981). Starting from this point, the majority of women in the imperial family are associated with Venus, as proven by the great number of epigraphic, literary, numismatic, sculptural, glyptic or handcrafted discoveries (M. Mikocki, 1995). The empresses were then imitated by the women from aristocrat families, and less than 130 cases of *invocatio in formam formam Veneris* were archaeologically identified on the scale of the entire Empire (J.P. Salathe, 1997). Most of these representations have a funerary nature.

The empresses and the princesses were iconographically linked to Venus mainly due to the dynastic tradition started by Caesar with Venus *Genetrix*. This association is more obvious in case of going from one dynasty to another. In the *nimfeum* of Claudius from Baies are represented Augustus and Livia, together with Drusus and Antonia Minor (parents of Claudius). Antonia Minor, rendered as Venus *Gentrix*, identifies a relation between the Julian and Claudian families. We should also notice that children of Drusus and Antonia Minor are pictured: Claudius, Messalina and Octavia Claudia, the last one also rendered as Venus *Genetrix* (M. Mikocki, 1995).

Beyond this selection which relates to the Empire's policy, choice of Venus involves the idea of beauty, virtue and modesty, qualities taken by the goddess from the Greek Aphrodite. Perhaps the first example of divine association of an empress in the oriental parts of the Empire was not made randomly: in an inscription from Chios Livia is named Aphrodite (M. Mikocki, 1995). The phenomenon had a well known antecedent in these places: Cleopatra and her son Caesarion were pictured on a coin discovered in Alexandria as Aphrodite and Eros (R. Schilling, 1988). Rendering of women *in formam Veneris* does not have negative, ambiguous or immoral connotations. Once with Domitian the image of Venus goddess, nude and semi-nude becomes the image of modesty and chastity, features so different from those of Greek Aphrodite. The husband who represents the nude deceased wife

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in formam Veneris wants her to be remembered for her beauty and modesty. Imitation of some draped iconographic types is mostly related to the financial context and the political status rather than to morality and chastity (E. D'Ambra, 1993). Venus's virtues are considered indispensable by poets for a woman to reach the Elysian Fields.

In Dacia, two representations may be attributed with a certain probability to the phenomenon of *invocatio in formam Veneris*: a sarcophagus from Băile Herculane (Catalogue no. 6, fig. 4/b), which is lost at present and a figurine from *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa* without a precise discovery context (Catalogue no. 8, fig. 4/a). Other two figurines found in the collection of the Romanian National History are most likely a part of the same phenomenon: a figurine of the type Venus *Syracusa* and a figurine of which only the head is preserved. But, in these two cases the provenience from Dacia is disputable (J.P. Salathe, 1997; G. Bordenache, 1969).

The sarcophagus wall from Băile Herculane (Catalogue no. 6, fig. 4/b) was discovered in the 17th century, but the piece was lost and only an engraving from the era was preserved (F. Grisellini, 1780). On a sarcophagus wall the deceased is represented in the centre, semi-nude lying on *kline*, surrounded by two divinities, Hercules and Diana (N. Gostar, 1956; D. Tudor, 1968; M. Bărbulescu, 1977; M. Bărbulescu 2003b). Hercules appears on several funerary monuments from Dacia (M. Bărbulescu, 1977), the funerary aspect of the cult – conqueror of death is related to the episode of bringing the Cerberus to earth (M. Bărbulescu, 2003b). As a vegetation goddess, the presence of Diana makes a referral to the idea of rebirth and regeneration.

The type used in the rendering of the defunct is that of Venus *Capua*, in a semi-nude variant adapted and simplified for the funerary environment. Generally, in the representations of *invocatio in formam deorum* appear particularities like the bracelet from the deceased's wrist, exceptions or deviations from the imitated type. The best analogy for the discovery from Băile Herculane is at the Vatican Museum (fig. 2) where on a sarcophagus the dead was rendered as Venus *Capua*, lying on a *kline*, with a Flavian hair style and her eyes closed (F. Cumont, 1966; W. Amelung, 1908; M. Collingnon, 1911). Other similar examples are

found in the collections of the Vatican Museum: the funerary monument of Ulpia Epigone during Domitian period or a cover of a sarcophagus during the Antonini period on which the defunct is rendered as draped (F. Cumont, 1966; W. Amelung, 1908; H. Wrede, 1977).

The other monument from Dacia which could picture an *invocatio in formam Veneris* is a marble statue from *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa* (Catalogue no. 8, fig. 4/a) with the inscription *Cla(udius) Saturnin(us) sculpsit* (A. Diaconescu, 2005; D. Alicu, C. Pop, V. Wolman, 1979; M. Gramatopol, 1982; M. Bărbulescu, 2003a). The figurine imitates the type Venus *Genetrix*, being almost completely draped and leaving just the left breast uncovered. Simplification of composition, the disappearance of the ribbon from the hips or the altar on which the inscription is and on which Venus rests with her left elbow are just a few of the arguments which make the representation from *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa* differ from the classical iconographic pattern of Venus *Genetrix* (fig. 3/a). These particularities could suggest this is a case of *invocatio in formam formam Veneris*. Having no head to see the hair style or the individual features and with no clear discovery context this reference is just hypothetical. We should notice that the statue is the only representation is natural sizes of Venus goddess in Dacia.

The representation trend in the shape of Venus *Genetrix* starts with the empresses from the Julio-Claudian period, the earliest statues being those of Antonia Minor or Agripina Minor, both discovered in the theatre from Vicenza (J.P. Salathe, 1997). For the Hadrian period we could remind Sabina, who appears on coins with the epithet *Genetrix*, and whose statue from the Ostia Museum (fig. 3/b) is a good analogy for the statue from *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa* (M. Mikocki, 1995). For the later period we will remind the coins of Faustina Minor and Crispina. For the private the type appears on different reliefs from sarcophaguses or statues like Manlia Scantilla from Tayrac (H. Wrede, 1981).

The presence of terracotta figurines of Venus in graves highlights the apotropaic role of the goddess, for the protection of the dead in the other life. The matrons' representations rendered posthumously *in formam Veneris*, underlie the virtues which the goddess represents (beauty, harmony, modesty) and the hope that through their embodiment they can save their soul after

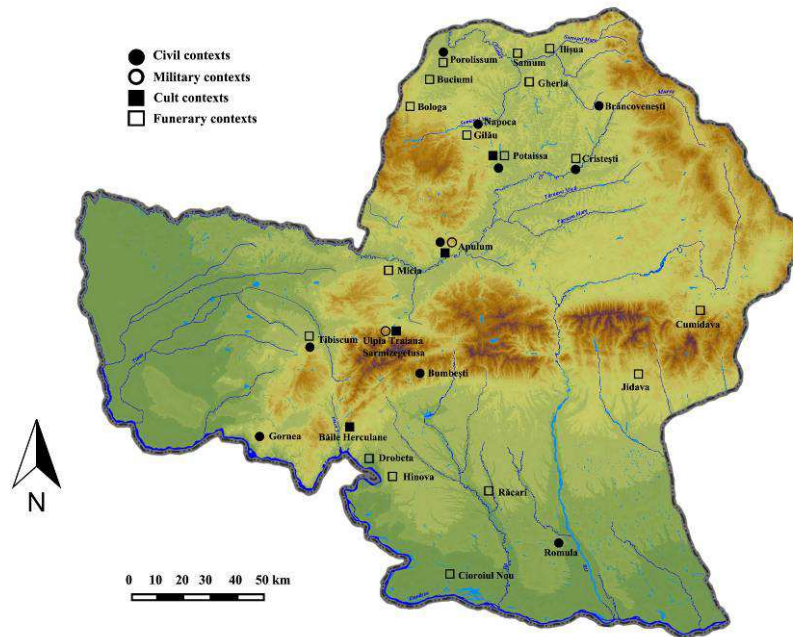


Fig. 1 - Material distribution on discovery contexts in Roman Dacia

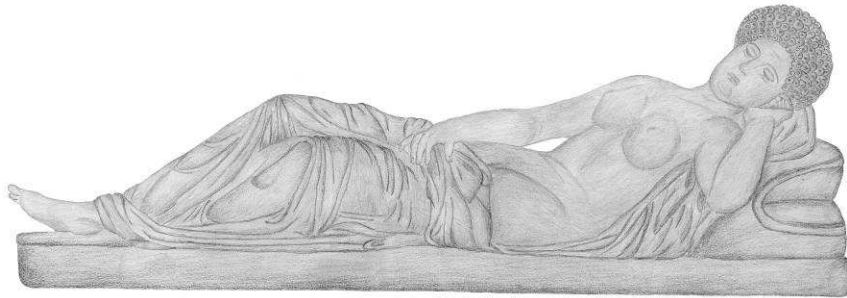


Fig. 2 - Sarcophagus cover, Vatican Museum



Fig. 3 - Venus Genetrix, Louvre Museum (a); Vibia Sabina rendered as Venus Genetrix, Ostia Museum (b)

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a.



b.

Fig.4 – a: Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa (after A. Diaconescu 2005); b: Băile Herculane (after F. Grisellini 1780).

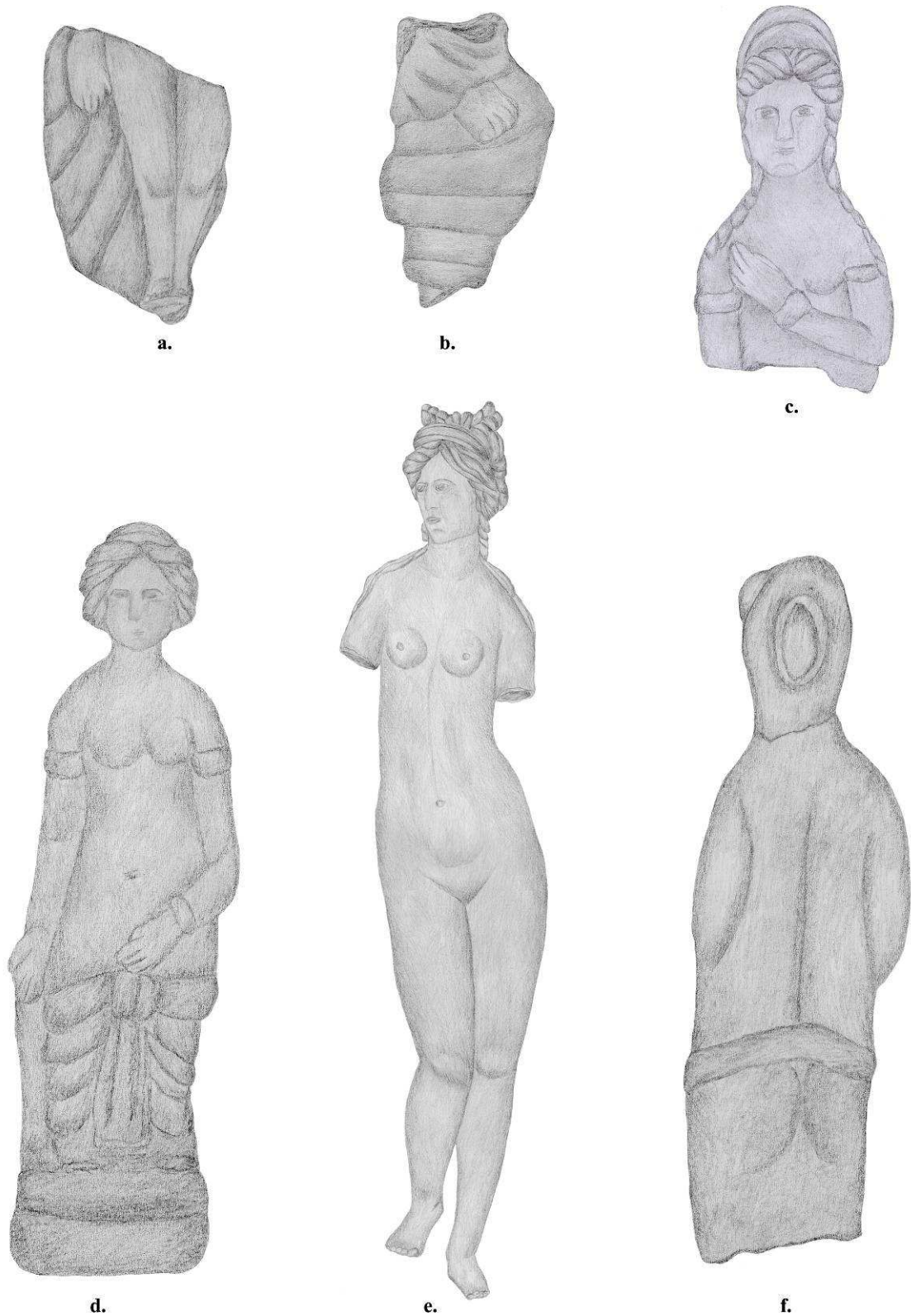


Fig.5 – a: Apulum (after D. Anghel *et al.* 2011); b: Apulum (after D. Anghel *et al.* 2011); c: Apulum, after D. Anghel *et al.* 2011); d: Apulum (after D. Anghel *et al.* 2011); e: Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa (after A. Diaconescu); f: Potaissa (after M. Pâslaru 2007).

death.

Catalogue

1. Alba Iulia – Apulum (Alba County); deposit: The National History Museum of Unification Alba Iulia; inventory number: R 10137; find spot: north necropolis, piece of funerary inventory (M2/SX); brick-colored clay; h = 8, 1 cm; the conservation status is fragmentary; the lower parts of the body are missing. Venus *Capitoline* type (fig. 5/c).

The goddess was portrayed with a nude torso, with the right breast covered by the left hand and the right arm parallel with the body and with the palm facing towards the viewer. The goddess hair was parted in the middle, tight in a loop at the back with two twisted strands lying on the shoulders. Venus wears a tiara on her head, two bracelets on her arms and one on her left wrist (H. Ciugudean *et al.* 2003; D. Anghel *et al.* 2011).

2. Alba Iulia – Apulum (Alba County); deposit: The National History Museum of Unification Alba Iulia; inventory number: R 10724; find spot: Dealul Furcilor – Podei necropolis; red – brick colored clay; h = 7, 1 cm; the conservation status is fragmentary, the upper part of the body and the foot are missing (fig. 5/a).

The goddess was portrayed nude in front, having the back side covered with a many oblique folds *palla*. The right arm was parallel with the body probably with the palm facing towards the viewer (D. Anghel *et al.* 2011).

3. Alba Iulia – Apulum (Alba County); find spot: Dealul Furcilor – Podei necropolis, piece of funerary inventory; brick - colored; conservation status: lost. Venus *Cnidus* type (fig. 5/d).

Venus was portrayed half nude with a *palla* covering the lower parts of the body. The left hand covers her groin, making so a well-known bashfulness gesture. The right arm was parallel with the body with the palm facing towards the viewers. The garment has many oblique folds and it is tied with a knot. The goddess face was not well preserved and it is difficult to distinguish her features: the curly hair was parted in the middle and gathered in a loop at the back with two twisted strands lying on the shoulders. The goddess wears a tiara on her head, two bracelets on her arms and one on her left wrist. The goddess was placed on a rectangular pedestal decorated with two parallel grooves (A. Cserni 1899; A. Cerni 1901, p. 239).

4. Alba Iulia – Apulum (Alba County); deposit: The National History Museum of Unification Alba Iulia; inventory number: R 10733; find spot: Dealul Furcilor – Podei necropolis; red clay; h = 7, 3 cm; the conservation status is fragmentary; only the left foot, a part of garment and a corner of the pedestal was preserved (fig. 5/b).

The goddess was probably portrayed half nude, with a *palla* covering her lower body parts, having only the left foot out. The goddess was placed on the rectangular pedestal, decorated with two parallel grooves (D. Anghel *et al.* 2011).

5. Alba Iulia – Apulum (Alba County); deposit: The National History Museum of Unification Alba Iulia; find spot: Dealul Furcilor – Podei necropolis; brick – colored clay; the conservation status is fragmentary (M. Gligor *et al.* 2009).

6. Băile Herculane (Caraș-Severin County); marble; sarcophagus wall; conservation status: lost; only an engraving of the object was preserved. Venus *Cnidus* type (fig. 4/b).

The engraving shows three characters, placed each one on a different pedestal. The deceased woman lying on the sarcophagus cover was placed in the scene center portrayed as goddess Venus. She is half – nude as the Venus *Cnidus* type. A *palla* covers her lower body parts, being then brought forward on the left shoulder, leaving the whole torso naked. The deceased left elbow rests on a pillow while the right arm is lying over the body. On the left arm a bracelet could be noticed. The head and the legs lower parts are missing. Right side of the deceased woman, Hercules was portrayed nude and standing. His right arm is missing. On Hercules left shoulder rests the *exuvia leonis* and near his right leg is a sea monster. Left side of the deceased woman, Diana was portrayed also standing. Her right arm is missing. The goddess is dressed with a short *chiton* that leaves the right breast uncovered and she wears sandals. Near her left leg two dog paws could be noticed (F. Grisellini 1780; N. Gostar 1956; M. Bărbulescu 1977; M. Bărbulescu 2003b).

7. Sarmizegetusa – Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa (Hunedoara County); deposit: Sarmizegetusa Museum; inventory number: 1613; find spot: eastern necropolis, 100-150 meters west of the *Aurelii Mausoleum*; bronze with green patina; h = 28, 3 cm; the conservation

status is good; the arms lower part, the right leg fingers and the left leg than are missing. Venus *Cnidos* type (fig. 5/e).

Venus was portrayed nude. The body weight is on her left foot, while right foot is brought forward. The goddess body was carefully rendered. The head is slightly bent to the right, with round face, straight nose, easily open mouth and wide eyes with inlay pupils. The breasts have small holes instead of nipples, holes which were probably filled with silver or red enamel. The hair was parted in the middle, tight in a loop at the back with three twisted strands lying on the shoulders. Venus has *krabylos* knot on her forehead and a tiara on her head (C. Pop, T. Albulescu 1976; D. Alicu, C. Pop, V. Wolmann 1979; L. Marinescu 1988; C. Pop 1994).

8. Sarmizegetusa – Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa (Hunedoara County); deposit: Museum of Dacian and Roman Civilization Deva; marble; h = 140 cm; the conservation status is good; the head, right arm and left hand are missing; Venus *Genetrix* type (fig. 6/a).

Venus was portrayed dressed with a long *chiton* that slipped off her left shoulder, revealing her left breast. The body weight is on her left foot, while right foot is slightly brought forward. The goddess left elbow rests on a shrine with the inscription *Cl(udius) Saturnin(us) sculpsit*. The shaping was rudimentary, the left breast was not well marked, the folds were rendered through simple grooves and the legs coming out under the robe have no fingers. The statue was placed on a round pedestal (D. Alicu, C. Pop, V. Wolmann 1979; M. Gramatopol 1982; M. Bărbulescu 2003; A. Diaconescu 2005).

9. Turda – Potaissa (Cluj County); deposit: History Museum Turda; find spot: on the right side of the Arieș river, near eight Roman graves, from a circular complex; brick-colored clay; the conservation status is fragmentary; only the back side of the statue was preserved (fig. 5/f).

Venus was portrayed half - nude, having the lower body parts covered with a *palla*. The hair was tight in a loop at the back. The goddess had a tiara on her head (M. Pâslaru 2007).

Acknowledgements

This work was possible with the financial support of the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, co-financed by the European Social Fund, under the project number POSDRU/107/1.5/S/77946

with the title "Doctorate: an Attractive Research Career".

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