

# THE COIN ASSEMBLY AS A VOTIVE DEPOSIT IN IRON AGE. THE CASE OF COINS IN THE RITUAL COMPLEX AT THE DACIAN FORTRESS OF COSTEȘTI-CETĂȚUIE (HUNEDOARA COUNTY, ROMANIA)<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** The present paper is focusing on the interpretation of a coin deposit found within a sacred area at one of the key fortresses in Iron Age Dacia – Costești-Cetățuie.

Based on a detailed catalogue, the analysis is taking into account the closest analogy, the geographic area of coin type distribution, the monetary iconography and the comparison with similar situations from other parts of ancient Europe prior to the Roman conquest.

Following these aspects, the conclusions are emphasizing the votive function instead of economic one of certain coins when deposited in specific areas and in association with particular artefacts. It is demonstrated that this ritual practice at the Costești is part of a general pattern.

Chronologically, this votive deposit may be connected with the ritual activity at the Costești fortress in the aftermath of the Dacian king, Burebista, campaign at the Black Sea shore (second half of the 1st century BC).

**Keywords:** *coin assembly, votive deposit, coin types, Pre-Roman Dacia, Burebista campaign at the Black Sea*

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**W**ithin the ancient communities the threshold between the economic and votive role of coinage is very often a relative one.

R. Seaford stated that a pre-condition for a unanimous acceptance of coinage in the Greek society was its symbolic association with the idea of community self-identity. A feature inherited from goods' distribution as part of ritual and sacrifices processes<sup>2</sup>.

There are close analogies between the money and the ritual function<sup>3</sup>. Both elements mediate a large variety of transactions and experiences. If the money is for both individual and community a standard of wealth, while the ritual comes with the scheme of standard situations, and both ensure a

<sup>1</sup> My gratitude goes to Professor Gelu Florea (University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania) and Dr. Răzvan Mateescu (National History Museum of Transylvania Cluj-Napoca, Romania) for providing me with the numismatic evidence and for their comments on the first version of the manuscript.

<sup>2</sup> SEAFORD 2004, 1-9.

<sup>3</sup> DOUGLAS 1978, 69-70.

connection between past and future<sup>4</sup>.

The present study is focused on such a case: the discovery of a coin assembly in a ritual context of the Iron Age: the Dacian fortress of Costești (Hunedoara County, Romania). (maps 1-3)

For those less familiar with the site and its historical importance a brief presentation is offered in the next lines, courtesy of the official web site of the Dacian Fortresses in the Orăștie Mountains<sup>5</sup>:

"The Dacian fortress of Costești is situated on Dealul Cetățuia ("Stronghold Hill"), at 561 m altitude, on the left bank of the Apa Grădiștii at the point where the valley is narrowing. Even if it is not the highest point in the area, the hill dominates the landscape offering a good visibility over the Mureș Valley to the north.

The fortress had a complex system of fortifications and different facilities. Many of them are still visible today [...]. The fortress occupies the upper part of the hill; the hill top was levelled by the Dacians, resulting an ellipsoidal plateau 160 m long and 20-25 m wide. On the slopes, several terraces were built, some of them being outside the fortified area. The civil settlement probably occupied the lower terraces as well as the lowland near the valley, under the present centre of the village.

The citadel fortification consisted of earth embankments placed on different height levels, stone-block walled precinct and rectangular towers. The fortification elements were built in several construction stages. During a first stage, at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC or at the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC the horseshoe-shaped embankment was built on the eastern, southern and western slopes as well as the rampart surrounding the plateau, and the first terraces. During the second construction phase, starting at the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and later during the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, were built the Hellenistic-type stone ramparts, as well as the temples with limestone plinths. During this phase, the fortification was destroyed by a powerful fire, most probably during the first Trajan war, in the years AD 101-102. The last construction phase covered the period between the two Dacian wars. The fortifications destroyed after the first war were rebuilt especially the embankment surrounding the plateau and the first terraces ("the red embankment"). The access gate of the stone wall was blocked using even a temple plinths. Despite these restorations, the stronghold was conquered again in AD 106 and put through fire<sup>6</sup>.

During the archaeological campaigns 1997-1999 at the Dacian site of Costești-Cetățuia, on the terrace located above the dwelling-tower no. 3, a ritual complex was discovered (map 3). The inventory found within this complex consists of: one mug, one cup, one fruit-plate, one fragmentary belt-buckle plated in gilded silver, one *sica* (the Dacian curved dagger), one spearhead, one muff and iron scraps from a chariot, animal bone fragments, a vine leaf-shaped footplate from a bronze vessel and a deposit of 13 Histrian bronze coins<sup>7</sup>.

Owing to its meaning in the above mentioned

<sup>4</sup> HASELGROVE/WIGG-WOLF 2005, 9.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cetati-dacice.ro/en> (accessed on February 11, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cetati-dacice.ro/en/sites/costesti-cetatuie/archeological-objectives> (accessed on February 11, 2018).

<sup>7</sup> GHEORGHIU 2005, 208; SÎRBU/BODO 2011, 213.

archaeological context the coin deposit is the subject of analysis in the following pages.

One can easily have noticed the homogenous feature of this numismatic discovery. All the coins are made of bronze, minted in Histria – Greek colony on the Black Sea – and they are countermarked (see catalogue).

According to the catalogue attached to this paper, the coin deposit consists of two types, both assigned the god Apollo:

Apollo – head of god, right, on obverse; eagle on dolphin, left, on reverse;

Apollo on the *omphalos* (the sacred stone of god Apollo kept in the temple in Delphi).

The countermarks on these coins belong to the types: Athena/Mars, Apollo, Helios, Hermes:



As the coin types, the countermarks as well as their combinations with the magistrates' names have been already discussed<sup>8</sup>, I will mention them when the analysis on the numismatic evidence from the ritual complex from Costești will request it.

A first aspect that it should be discussed here is one of iconographic matter. For the reverse of the type 1 – head of Apollo –, frequently, some scholars have considered the object in front of the eagle as a corn-ear<sup>9</sup> or cornucopia<sup>10</sup>. This error may be caused by the design and, most likely, due to the influence of the Demeter type, where, indeed, this plant appears as an attribute of this goddess (fig. 1)<sup>11</sup>.

It must be stated here that the object under discussion should be seen as the laurel branch. According to mythology, Daphne being harassed by Apollo seeks shelter to her father, the god Peneus. He transforms her into a laurel-tree. Apollo,

<sup>8</sup> GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 25-34.

<sup>9</sup> PICK 1898, no. 476a; MACREA 1936 148-151, 153; GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 25-29; MARIN 2018, 21, no. 26; 22, no. 28.

<sup>10</sup> MARIN 2018, 21-22, no. 27.

<sup>11</sup> PICK 1898, no. 476.



Fig. 1. Histria. Demeter type – with corn-ear. SNG IX, 261.

filled with sadness, proclaimed this tree as his sacred one (fig. 2)<sup>12</sup>.



Fig. 2. Apollo and Daphne (1622-1624) by Gianlorenzo Bernini (<http://www.noradot.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/collage-e1483441049415.jpg>)

As a coin iconography, the laurel branch turned up frequently on coins' reverse that have Apollo's head on the obverse (fig. 3).

As one can imagine, the small size of the coin flan of coins minted at Histria, plus, perhaps, the engraver's skill, and the modern perception have led to the confusion between

<sup>12</sup> TAIZ/TAIZ 2016, 193.



Fig. 3. Coin minted in Antioch, Syria, in AD 55/56. On obverse, Head of Apollo, right. On reverse, laurel branch. RPC I, 4289.

the laurel-branch and the corn-ear. A recent catalogue also describes the discussed object as a laurel branch<sup>13</sup>. This coin assembly is one of high historical importance due to its specific meaning but also if it is regarded in a wider historical context.

From the very beginning of the analysis on this numismatic evidence one particular characteristic can be spotted.

At the first sight, the issue of these coins seems to have occurred during the mandates of the magistrates ΔIONY and XAI/XAIPE. Magistrate XAI/XAIPE is known to have had an intense minting activity<sup>14</sup>. Regarding magistrate ΔIONY, the situation is exactly the opposite one. His name appears rarely on the coins from Histria belonging to the Demeter and Apollo types<sup>15</sup> - with a very large chronology similar to other magistrates<sup>16</sup>. The name ΔIONY also appears on the coins minted in Callatis - Greek colony at the Black Sea, 100 km south of Histria - for the coins of the type Athena<sup>17</sup>.

However, the coins found in the deposit from Costești that bear the names of magistrates ΔIONY and XAIPE (catalogue, nos. 1 and 6) are re-struck pieces<sup>18</sup>. In fact, the two names belong to the first minting of the coin. Practically, the coins of the Apollo type - eagle on dolphin and laurel branch on the left - were actually minted only by one magistrate, XAI.

Another particular feature of this coin deposit is represented by the coin types and the countermarks applied to them.

Bronze coins of the types Apollo or Demeter countermarked with the heads of Athena/Mars, Helios, Hermes were also found in other parts of pre-Roman Dacia, including other Dacian fortresses from the Orăștie Mountains<sup>19</sup>.

Although minted and countermarked at Histria, coins of the Apollo type - eagle on dolphin and laurel branch on the left - were previously found only at the same site of Costești during the archaeological excavations led by D.M.

<sup>13</sup> SNG XI, no. 210.

<sup>14</sup> GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 25-29, with a detailed study of coin-die types; TALMAȚCHI 2011, 123-124.

<sup>15</sup> PICK 1898, 476.

<sup>16</sup> TALMAȚCHI 2011, 127.

<sup>17</sup> SNG XI, pl. V, no. 101; TALMAȚCHI 2011, 362.

<sup>18</sup> Thanks go to Dr. Gabriel Talmățchi for his suggestions on the re-striking of some of the studied coins.

<sup>19</sup> Piatra Roșie, Grădiștea Muncelului, Oarța de Sus, Luncani - DAICOVICIU 1954, 76, no. 2; CRIȘAN 1991, 344-345; GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 31; PĂRPĂUȚĂ 2006, nos. 221, 342.

Teodorescu in the years 1925-1929 at the units "Cetățuie" ("Stronghold") and the temples – 16 coins<sup>20</sup>. Beside these coins, at the moment, the only analogy for the coin deposit under study is the one found near the city of Călan (Hunedoara County), which consists of 11 Histrian bronze coins: 10 pieces of the Apollo type – eagle on dolphin and laurel branch on the left; 1 piece of the type Apollo on the *omphalos*<sup>21</sup>. Unlike the coin deposit from Costești studied here, for the one from Călan there is no information on the conditions of discovery. The city of Călan is located only 13.50 km, straight line distance, from Costești. (map 4)

At the same time, beside the identic coin types, the countermarks are similar in the two deposits, but these countermark types are known also for other Histrian coin types found in various places from Dacia<sup>22</sup>.

The distribution of this coin type may raise a question mark on the dating of this type and the moment of countermarking. It must be pointed out that the majority of dating were focused on the Apollo type – eagle on dolphin but without laurel branch. Some scholars have considered this type as being earlier than the Demeter type<sup>23</sup>. Recently, it has been demonstrated the opposite<sup>24</sup> and One more argument can be added to the late theory. Coins no. 1 and 2 in the catalogue indicate a re-striking on previous coins of the Demeter type (?) and of the type Apollo – eagle on dolphin with laurel branch (see catalogue). According to *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum XI. William Stancomb Collection* (SNG XI), the type Apollo – eagle on dolphin with laurel branch – is dated between 170 and 70 BC<sup>25</sup>. The other coin type attested in the coin deposit from Costești, Apollo on the *omphalos*, is dated by the same SNG XI in 70-30 BC<sup>26</sup>.

A comparative view on the both coin deposits, Costești and Călan, reveal the fact that the coins of the Apollo on the *omphalos* are more worn out than those of the type Apollo – eagle on dolphin with laurel branch. It must be added here, that both types were countermarked with the same types. These aspects suggest that the type Apollo – eagle on dolphin with laurel branch – can be dated later than the type Apollo on the *omphalos*. A possible argument on this line can be considered the coin deposit from Sarichioi (Tulcea County, Romania) discovered in 1958. The coins of the type Apollo on the *omphalos* appears together with the Demeter type<sup>27</sup>.

On the basis of this chronological scheme together with historic, geographic and archaeological elements, one can forward a chronology sequence and historic interpretation for the coin deposit from Costești.

The homogeneity of coin types and their countermarks in the deposits from Costești and Călan together with the distribution area of the type Apollo – eagle on dolphin with laurel branch (in the area of the citadel from Costești) may offer a hint. This coin types knew a small and short production

– perhaps, even one series as there is only one magistrate name, XAI, mentioned – with a period of circulation shorter than the type Apollo on the *omphalos*, as demonstrated by the higher level of wear degree of the coins belonging to the latest type.

The countermarking of all coins in the two deposits indicate an episode of monetary crisis. Following the lack of new coin or not-enough quantity of coins on the market, older coins were countermarked by authorities to offer them an official market value<sup>28</sup>. The presence of the same countermarks on both coin types in the two deposits suggest the same moment of countermarking probably for a common reason.

As mentioned previously, the discovery area of the coin deposit under study is the Dacian citadel from Costești, while the closest analogy is the deposit from Călan, 13.50 km north-west from Costești. The single coin finds from the same site reveal a similar picture. As stated above, during the archaeological excavations of 1925-1929, 26 coins were found. They cover a chronological segment from Hellenistic period to the reign of Trajan<sup>29</sup>. Among these coins, 19 pieces were minted in Histria. Sixteen of them belong to the type Apollo – eagle on dolphin with laurel branch<sup>30</sup>, 1 piece to the type Demeter, 1 type Athena and 1 unidentified type. All these 19 coins are countermarked with the types Helios, Hermes and "the Great God". According to the findspot, the coins were discovered in various spots of the site: the area of one of the rectangular temples; the fortress courtyard; near the towers 1, 4, 5, 7; near the fortress wall<sup>31</sup>. The large number of the Histrian countermarked coins, on one hand, and their frequency of finding on the area of the sites suggest that these coins arrived here in a short time after being countermarked in Histria. Furthermore, the archaeological context indicates that they were in use at the time when the Dacian fortress from Costești underwent a strong development. As it is known this process occurred during the reign of king Burebista (82-44 BC), when the largest edifices were built in stone<sup>32</sup>.

Therefore, the coins in the deposits from Costești, Călan, as well as the single finds from the old excavations were, more likely, to have been countermarked during Burebista's campaign at the Black Sea (55-48 BC), when Histria was besieged and sacked. These coins reached the area of the fortress from Costești once the army return from campaign and the increase of the architectural dynamics of the citadel begun right after<sup>33</sup>.

On the other hand, the archaeological context together with the numismatic evidence reveal other aspects regarding the findspot functionality.

The deposit of thirteen Histrian coins from Costești were found near an artefact which was conventionally named

<sup>20</sup> MACREA 1936, 148-151.

<sup>21</sup> GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 25-29.

<sup>22</sup> GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 26-31.

<sup>23</sup> PREDĂ/NUBAR 1973, 38, 42; PREDĂ 1998, 66, 69.

<sup>24</sup> GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 32.

<sup>25</sup> SNG XI, no. 210.

<sup>26</sup> SNG XI, no. 215.

<sup>27</sup> OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 1980, 82. It must be mentioned here that only three Histrian coins are known from this much larger hoard: the type Apollo on the *omphalos*, the type Demeter and the type Dionysus.

<sup>28</sup> HOWGEGO 2006, 12-13.

<sup>29</sup> MACREA 1936, 147-163.

<sup>30</sup> It must be mentioned that in his paper, M. Macrea identified the coins as belonging to the type Demeter without veil as he was misled by the 'corn-ear' presence (in fact, the laurel branch), MACREA 1936, 148-151, 153. For a similar opinion GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 31, n. 10.

<sup>31</sup> MACREA 1936, 152.

<sup>32</sup> GHEORGHIU 2005, 54.

<sup>33</sup> A similar opinion at GRĂMĂȚICU/OBERLÄNDER-TÄRNOVEANU 2005, 32.

'the urn'<sup>34</sup> almost central placed within the complex. This aspect suggests a votive offering within a sacred context. The deliberate placement of coins on ritual pits has a high frequency within the Iron Age communities before the Roman conquest<sup>35</sup>.

It has been demonstrated in detail that presence of coins in sacred contexts in the Dacian world was a very strong phenomenon in the period of 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC – 1<sup>st</sup> century AD<sup>36</sup>. Coins with votive function were found in all categories of the religious/sacred environments of the Dacian territory: temples, sanctuaries, fields with ritual pits, votive deposits on islands, lake shores, near caves<sup>37</sup>. One particular aspect of the votive deposits from Costești and Călan is defined by the metal of coins: bronze. There is only one more bronze deposit with votive character known at the moment at Sboryanovo – Novite Korenezhi (Razgrad County, Bulgaria) (56 Roman republican bronze coins)<sup>38</sup>.

Practically, the archaeological context demonstrates that the coins in this environment lost their economic role becoming 'circular objects'<sup>39</sup>, with more symbolic value. For the coins under discussion, taking into account the metal, the iconography and the state of wearing due to the long period of use, it seems that the coins were selected for the countermarks' types – Helios, Hermes, Athena/Mars, well-preserved on these coins no matter the coin types (Apollo – eagle on dolphin with laurel branch – or Apollo on the *omphalos*). As stated by J. Creighton, the monetary iconography is very rare neutral from the ideological point of view<sup>40</sup>. At the same time, the fact that the coins are made of bronze it does not mean a deliberate deposition of them seeking to get rid of small value coins, but, on the contrary, to place in a ritual context objects with high symbolic meaning<sup>41</sup>.

Another argument to support the votive role of the Histrian coins in the deposit from Costești is their display in the central part of the complex while on the edge of the pit, among the stones that served as the mantle of the complex two Roman republican denarii were found (catalogue, nos. 14-15). The discovery of coin assemblies minted at different dates and metal placed in various places is another practice often noticed within the ritual complex<sup>42</sup>.

As it was mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the coin assembly was found within the ritual complex together with other artefacts. The association between coins and other objects in a ritual context is another compulsory element for the votive statute of coin and, at the same time, testifies for the ritual/religious/sacred profile of the complex<sup>43</sup>.

Moving further with the analysis on the coin assembly from Costești, one can notice that whatever deity depicted on the obverse on the reverse is the eagle on dolphin,

<sup>34</sup> The contents of this artefacts consist of cremated sheep bones, SÎRBU/BODO 2011, 213.

<sup>35</sup> CURTEIS 2005, 209-210.

<sup>36</sup> SÎRBU/BODO 2011, 207-218.

<sup>37</sup> SÎRBU/BODO 2011, 207.

<sup>38</sup> SÎRBU/BODO 2011, 212.

<sup>39</sup> POUX 2006, 194.

<sup>40</sup> CREIGHTON 2005, 78.

<sup>41</sup> HASELGROVE/WIGG-WOLF 2005, 13.

<sup>42</sup> NICK 2005, 146-155; VAN HEESCH 2005, 247-263.

<sup>43</sup> CURTEIS 2005, 210-225.

and in most of the cases, in front of the eagle is the laurel branch/'corn-ear' (fig. 4).



**Fig. 4.** Bronze Histrian coin, type Apollo. Eagle on dolphin; on left, laurel branch.

This aspect may also be connected with a certain symbolic of the eagle.

The interpretation of the coin iconography by the users according to their personal religious believes/perceptions is a demonstrated act. A representative example on this vein comes from those coins with an iconography connected to the grape vine. Previously, such coins have been associated with the wine trade, but, lately, it has been demonstrated



**Fig. 5.** Gold Koson. Eagle holding sceptre and laurel wreath.

that the large majority of these coins were found in religious spots, where certain rituals were carried out. In fact, those coins had a votive aspect. Their iconography was tied up with the wine role during these rituals – the libations<sup>44</sup>.

Returning to the symbolic of the eagle on the coins found in the Dacian environment from the Orăștie Mountains, perhaps, it is not a coincidence that the coins of the type Koson also have an eagle depicted on one side. An eagle that holds in one of his claws a sceptre of which design is similar close to the laurel branch (fig. 5).

Regarding the presence of the eagle on the coins placed in the ritual complex at Costești, another specific practice frequently noticed for the sacred complexes can also be pointed out for the site under study.

The analysis on animal bones and the coins depicting animals found in religious complexes suggest an inverse relationship<sup>45</sup>. Thus, 'the coins selected for deposition were being used to represent animals which were under-represented at the site'<sup>46</sup>. In the case of the complex from Costești, the cremated bones were from sheep<sup>47</sup> while the coins depict the eagle<sup>48</sup>. Certainly, the millennial heraldic symbolism of the eagle may also count: "The eagle with its keen eyes symbolized perspicacity, courage, strength and immortality, but is also considered "king of the skies" and messenger of the highest gods"<sup>49</sup>.

One last aspect analysed here is the dating of this sacred complex from Costești. The Histrian coin types found here were minted between 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Their countermarking seems to have taken place at the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC (see catalogue). The two republican denarii were issued at Rome in the year 90 BC (catalogue, nos. 14-15). These aspects suggest a dating of the complex after mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC.

An argument on this line is the vine-leaf-shaped footplate from a bronze vessel found within the same complex. This artefact is a variant of the types Eggers 91 and 92 dated in the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD<sup>50</sup>.

In the absence of the archaeological context for the coin deposit from Călan – as mentioned, the closest analogy for the case from Costești as coin types, countermarks, number of coins, geographic close vicinity – it cannot be stated, at the moment, whether there was a global sacred use of certain coins or just an individual one in the area of the Dacian citadel from Costești. For sites in the Celtic world with a well-documented archaeological and numismatic evidence of sanctuaries it has been demonstrated various patterns of ritual use of certain coins<sup>51</sup>.

As the field research restarted in 2017, perhaps, the new excavations will bring more information that may

<sup>44</sup> WILLIAMS 2005, 25-39.

<sup>45</sup> CURTEIS 2005, 222-225.

<sup>46</sup> CURTEIS 2005, 223.

<sup>47</sup> SÎRBU/BODO 2011, 213.

<sup>48</sup> It must be mentioned that the dolphin on the Histrian coins' reverse from this deposit can hardly be seen.

<sup>49</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eagle\\_\(heraldry\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eagle_(heraldry)) (accessed on February 2, 2018).

<sup>50</sup> The information on the shape and the dating of the vessel footplate was provided by Dr. Silvia Mustață, to whom I express my gratitude. For references, see KUNOW 1983, 21; SEDLMAYER 1999, 58-59.

<sup>51</sup> GRUEL 2005, 301-319.

complete the puzzle.

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THE COIN CATALOGUE

HELLENISTIC COINS



1. Histria, type "Apollo"  
 Material: bronze  
 Weight: 3.18 gr.; Diameter: 19.9x18.9 mm; Axis: 12  
 Dating: 170-70 BC  
 Obverse: Laureate Head of Apollo, right.  
 Reverse: Eagle on dolphin to left; on the left, lotus branch upright.  
 Inscription: [ΔI]ONY under dolphin.  
 Countermarks: Obverse: head of Helios (diameter: 5.7mm); head of Hermes, right (diameter: 6.1 mm).  
 Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 210.  
*Remark:* Re-striking upon a coin of the type Demeter/Apollo? On the reverse, the eagle seats on... another eagle. Most likely, the fragmentary preservation of the magistrate's name, ONY, belonging to the first type, is a consequence of this re-striking. This re-striking has also helped the appearance of cracks at the moment of countermarking, as the coin flan was already thinner.



2. Histria, type "Apollo", magistrate XAI  
 Material: bronze  
 Weight: 3.47 gr.; Diameter: 17.7 mm; Axis: 12  
 Dating: 170-70 BC  
 Obverse: Laureate Head of Apollo, right.  
 Reverse: Eagle on dolphin to left; on the left, lotus branch upright.  
 Inscription: XAI under dolphin.  
 Countermarks: Obverse: head of Helios (diameter: 5.7mm); head of Hermes, right (diameter: 6.1 mm).  
 Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 210.



3. Histria, type "Apollo", magistrate XAI  
 Material: bronze  
 Weight: 5.01 gr.; Diameter: 19x17.3 mm; Axis: 12  
 Dating: 170-70 BC  
 Obverse: Laureate Head of Apollo, right.  
 Reverse: Eagle on dolphin to left; on the left, lotus branch upright.  
 Inscription: ΙΣΤ... above the eagle.  
 XAI under dolphin.  
 Countermarks: Obverse: head of Helios (diameter: 5.6 mm); head of Hermes, right (diameter: 5 mm).  
 Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 210.



4. Histria, type "Apollo", magistrate XAI  
 Material: bronze  
 Weight: 5.18 gr.; Diameter: 18.7 mm; Axis: 12  
 Dating: 170-701 BC  
 Obverse: Laureate Head of Apollo, right.  
 Reverse: Eagle on dolphin to left; on the left, lotus branch upright.  
 Inscription: ΙΣ... above the eagle.  
 [X]AI under dolphin.  
 Countermarks: Obverse: head of Helios (diameter: 5.6mm); head of Hermes, right (diameter: 5 mm).  
 Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 210.



5. Histria, type "Apollo", magistrate XAI  
 Material: bronze  
 Weight: 4.07 gr.; Diameter: 19x17.3 mm; Axis: 11  
 Dating: 170-70 BC  
 Obverse: Laureate Head of Apollo, right.  
 Reverse: Eagle on dolphin to left; on the left, lotus branch upright.  
 Inscription: ΙΣΤ... above the eagle.  
 [X]AI under dolphin.  
 Countermarks: Obverse: head of Helios (diameter: 5.7mm); head of Hermes, right (diameter: 6.1 mm).  
 Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 210.



7. Histria, type "Apollo", magistrate XAI  
 Material: bronze  
 Weight: 4.61 gr.; Diameter: 19.6x17.3 mm; Axis: 12  
 Dating: 170-70 BC  
 Obverse: Laureate Head of Apollo, right.  
 Reverse: Eagle on dolphin to left; on the left, lotus branch upright.  
 Inscription: XAI under dolphin.  
 Countermarks: Obverse: head of Helios (diameter: 5.7 mm); head of Hermes, right (diameter: 6.1 mm).  
 Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 210.



6. Histria, type "Apollo", magistrate XAI?  
 Material: bronze  
 Weight: 4.80 gr.; Diameter: 21.7x17.8 mm; Axis: 12  
 Dating: 170-70 BC  
 Obverse: Laureate Head of Apollo, right.  
 Reverse: Eagle on dolphin to left; on the left, lotus branch upright.  
 Inscription: XAI under dolphin.  
 Countermarks: Obverse: head of Helios (diameter: 5.7mm); head of Hermes, right (diameter: 6.1 mm).  
 Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 210.  
*Remark:* The abnormal position of letters PE beside the others, XAI, and a fragment of another design on the obverse, beneath Apollo's neck, indicate a re-struck coin. This re-striking has also helped the appearance of cracks at the moment of countermarking, as the coin flan was already thinner.



8. Histria, type "Apollo", magistrate XAI  
 Material: bronze  
 Weight: 5 gr.; Diameter: 19.2x17.7 mm; Axis: 12  
 Dating: 170-70 BC  
 Obverse: Laureate Head of Apollo, right.  
 Reverse: Eagle on dolphin to left; on the left, lotus branch upright.  
 Inscription: ΙΣΤ... above the eagle.  
 XAI? under dolphin.  
 Countermarks: Obverse: head of Helios (diameter: 5.7mm); head of Apollo, right (diameter: 5.1 mm).  
 Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 210.



9. Histria, type "Apollo on the *omphalos*"  
Material: bronze  
Weight: 3.19 gr.; Diameter: 19 mm; Axis: -  
Dating: 70-30 BC?

Obverse: the silhouette of Apollo seated left on the *omphalos*, holding arrow in left hand.

Reverse: erased.

Countermarks: three circular countermarks on the obverse (6 mm each). The upper one depicts the laureate head of Apollo; the lower right one bears the head of Hermes with petasos while the left one, represents a helmeted Athena/Mars.

Catalogue: cf. SNG XI, 215.



10. Histria, type "Apollo on the *omphalos*"  
Material: bronze  
Weight: 3.54 gr.; Diameter: 19.9 mm; Axis: -  
Dating: 70-30 BC?

Obverse: erased. (based on the weight, sizes, countermarks, worn out level, most likely, the coin was one of the type Apollo on the *omphalos*)

Reverse: vague silhouettes of the eagle and the dolphin, left.

Countermarks: three circular countermarks on the obverse (6 mm each). The upper one depicts the laureate head of Apollo; the lower right one bears the head of Hermes with petasos while the left one, represents a helmeted Athena/Mars.

Catalogue: -



11. Histria, type "Apollo on the *omphalos*"?

Material: bronze

Weight: 3.04 gr.; Diameter: 20.2x17.4 mm; Axis: -

Dating: 70-30 BC?

Obverse: erased. (based on the weight, sizes, countermarks, worn out level, most likely, the coin was one of the type Apollo on the *omphalos*)

Reverse: erased.

Countermarks: three circular countermarks on the obverse (6 mm each). The lower one, depicts a helmeted Athena/Mars.

Catalogue: -



12. Histria, type "Apollo on the *omphalos*"?

Material: bronze

Weight: 2.96 gr.; Diameter: 18.8x16.9 mm; Axis: -

Dating: 70-30 BC?

Obverse: erased. (based on the weight, sizes, countermarks, worn out level, most likely, the coin was one of the type Apollo on the *omphalos*)

Reverse: erased.

Countermarks: three circular countermarks on the obverse (6 mm each). The lower right one bears the head of Hermes with petasos while the left one, represents a helmeted Athena/Mars?; the upper countermark, head of Apollo?

Catalogue: -



13. Histria, type "Apollo on the omphalos"?

Material: bronze

Weight: 3.55 gr.; Diameter: 20.9x17.5 mm; Axis: 12

Dating: 70-30 BC?

Obverse: erased. (based on the weight, sizes, countermarks, worn out level, most likely, the coin was one of the type Apollo on the *omphalos*)

Reverse: eagle's silhouette, left.

Countermarks: three circular countermarks on the obverse (6 mm each). Upper right, the head of Hermes with petasos, right; lower right: helmeted Athens/Mars?; left, head of Apollo, right.

Catalogue: -

**ROMAN REPUBLIC**



15. C. VIBIUS PANSA

Material: silver

Denomination: denarius

Weight: 3.61 gr.; Diameter: 20.5x17.2 mm; Axis: 5

Mint: Rome

Dating: 90 BC

Obverse: Laureate head of Apollo right, behind, inscription: PANSA; before, control-mark T. Border of dots.

Reverse: Minerva in quadriga right, holding spear and reins in left hand and trophy in right hand. Border of dots.

exergue: C VIBIVS C F

Catalogue: RRC, 342/5b



14. L. CALPURNIUS PISO FRUGI

Material: silver

Denomination: denarius

Weight: 3.56 gr.; Diameter: 17.9x16.9mm; Axis: 1

Mint: Rome

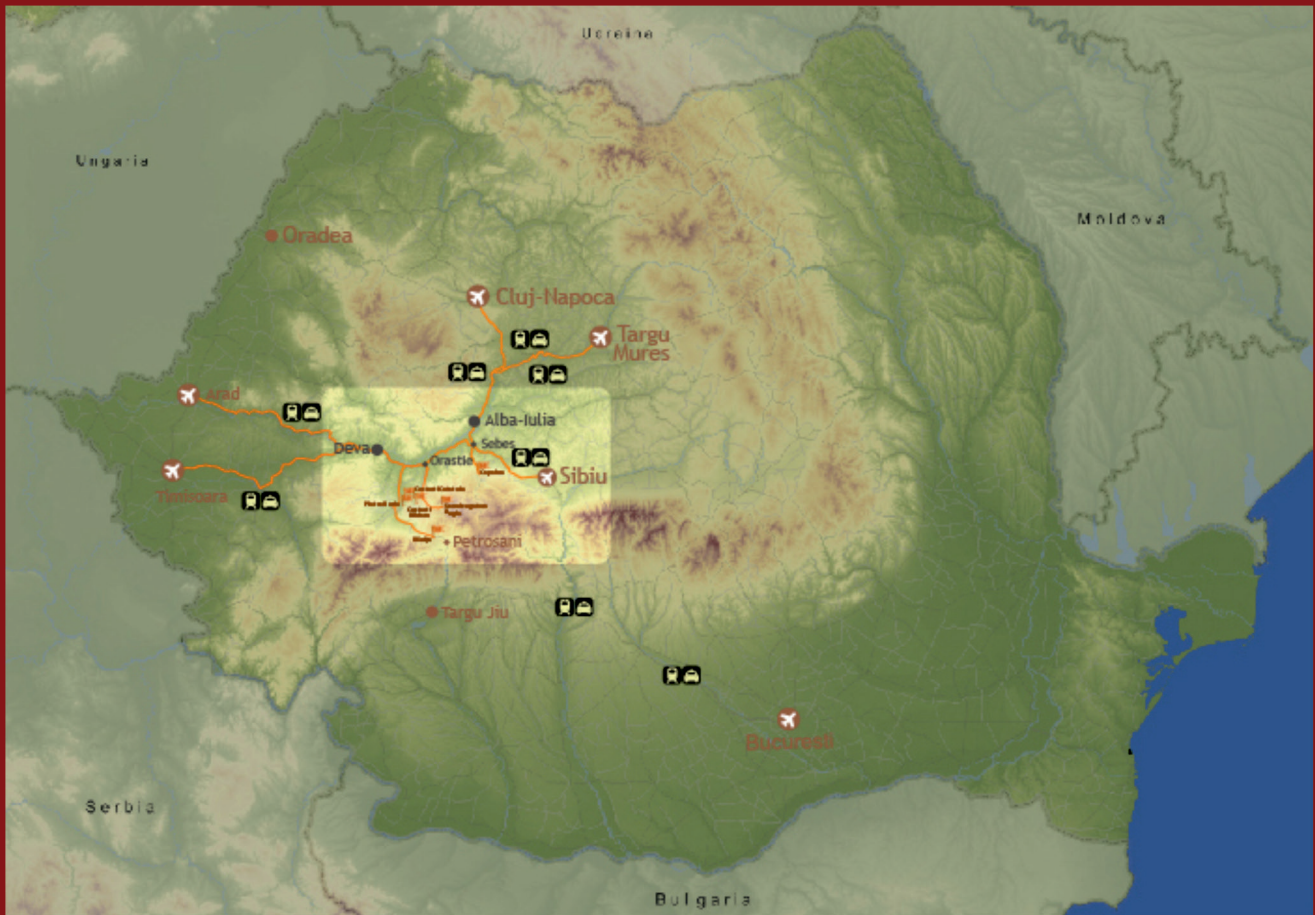
Dating: 90 BC

Obverse: Laureate head of Apollo right; behind, control-mark I; below chin, control-mark I. Border of dots.

Reverse: Horseman right with palm-branch in left hand and reins in right hand; Border of dots.

exergue: [L] PISO FRVGI; beneath, control-mark S

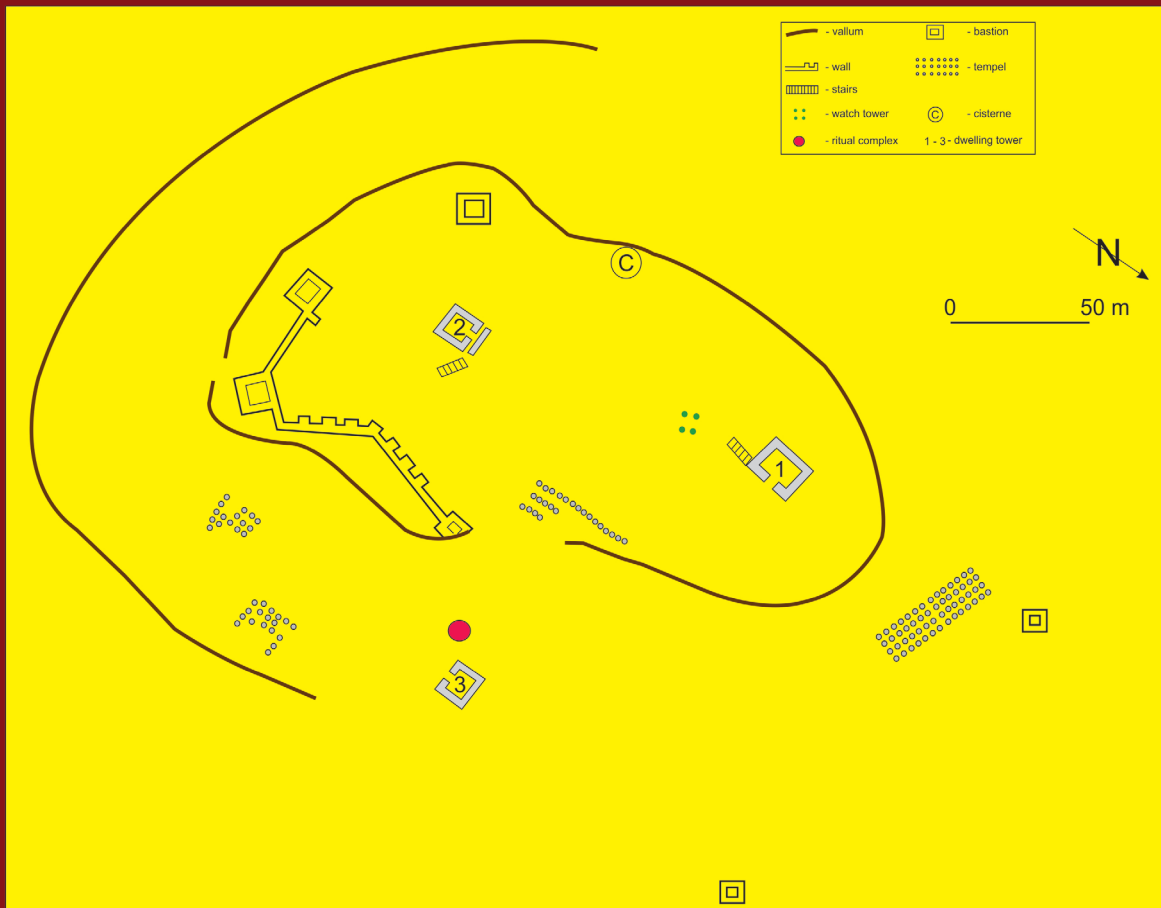
Catalogue: RRC, 340/1



Map. 1. Romania. The area of the Dacian fortresses in the Orăștie Mountains  
(<https://www.cetati-dacice.ro/en/community/access-map>)



Map. 2. Romania. The area of the Dacian fortresses in the Orăștie Mountains - detail  
(<https://www.cetati-dacice.ro/en/community/access-map>)



Map 3. Plan of the Dacian fortress from Costești-Cetățuie (based on GHEORGHIU 2005, 253, 327 - fig. 53)



Map 4. The straight line distance between the fortress from Costești and the city of Călan (based on Google Earth)