

## HISTORICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE CULTIVATION OF THE VINEYARD IN ANCIENT ANTIQUITY

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### ABSTRACT

*Viticulture is an occupation that has been practiced in Sspatiul de la Dunărea de Jos from Prehistory. In antiquity, the Geto-Dacians, independently or under the influence of the Mediterranean, Greek and Roman, developed this occupation. Historiography, archeology, epigraphy and numismatics are scientific tools of real utility in studying the evolution of viticulture. The wine was consumed by Geto-Dacians as food, but also in various riviations, including initiation.*

### INTRODUCTION

This article is intended to be an introduction to the history of vine cultivation on the territory of Romania today, throughout its historical existence. Without trying to fit into the theory of Geto-Dacian protoconism in European civilization, we can still say that the Lower Danube area was one in which the vine was cultivated from ancient times. There are opinions that claim that in this territory there were forms from which species such as *Vitis*, derived from the neozoic era, were derived. (Macici 1996, 10). Going from harvester to cultivator, human communities have practiced agriculture since the Neolithic Age. It is supposed that in a later stage, perhaps later, the cultivation of the vine also occurred. Various assumptions have been made on the origin of viticulture, each with scientific or speculative arguments. Some scholars agree to place the origin of viticulture in the Ancient Orient, Syria and today's Iran, or in the East-Pontic area of present Georgia. B. B Harden, R. Billiard and A. Griesbach think that Thrace is one of the areas where viticulture has developed and developed (Macici, 1996, 12). This hypothesis adheres to A.D. Xenopol and N.Iorga, and in a scientific work devoted to the theme, it is stated: "The vineyard culture is unrelated, older than the plumage" (Teodorescu, 1964, 67).

### MATERIAL AND METHOD

The material required for the study was composed by the writings of ancient authors, the works of important historians, archaeologists and oenologists, as well as the archaeological material of the museum exhibitions In the study, I used the bibliographic documentation method, respecting the Umberto Eco's canon: studying 2-3 general syntheses, studying the main and secondary sources, followed by the critical analysis of the sources. The analogous method involves using the comparison as a scientific argument. The results concern knowledge of particular or general aspects. The results are not always certain, but they can be highly probable).

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Since the middle of the 1st millennium BC, ancient writer's mentions and archaeological evidence provide us with information about the Geto-Dacian culture, beliefs and occupations, including viticulture and wine consumption. Thus, in Tariverde, in the inventory of the homes of the natives, stone stones were discovered, coming from a press very used to produce wine. (Pippidi & Berciu, 1965, 119) It is certain that the Getae, after having bought wine from the colonial Greeks, had their own production. About the Dobrogean Getae, Ovidius, said they did not cultivate the vine "and the vines with their crutches do not intertwine with the elm." (Pârvan, 1982, 84). This is contradicted by other testimonies and discoveries. Thus, there are histrionic coins of drachma type, whose

symbols are inspired by local occupations. A common symbol is the cluster of grapes, demonstrating the presence of viticulture in the Greek colony and the Getae neighbors of Dobrogea. (Pippidi & Berciu, 1965, 193). Vasile Pârvan supported the cultivation of the vine in the southern territories, claiming that "the vine was lovingly cultivated in the southernmost part of the getic" and according to a Greek inscription "Aulusenes settled as Apollo's thanks to [this monument] for salvation and his coming from the rock." (Pârvan, 1982, 85). In the same way, Strabo's writings show that the Getae cultivated the vineyard in the hilly, sub-Carpathian regions, until Burebista's command of the 1st century BC.

Archeology has come up with other arguments in support of the spread of viticulture to Geto-Dacians. In the settlement of Popești there was discovered a clay chink on which a vine leaf was printed, and grapes were discovered in the settlements of Brad and Gradistea de Munte. (Crișan, 1977, 138-139). All archeology also offers us numerous discoveries of viticultural instruments. I recalled before the stones of Dobrogea and the mowers, those small curved knives with a short rod in extending the blade to fit into the wooden handle are present in many Geto-Dacian settlements. The oldest such tools for the work of life are those discovered in the Dacian settlement of Huși (Crișan, 1986, 138-140) and are dated in the 4th-3rd centuries BC. It is possible that their location in one of the most famous wine-growing areas of today is a continuation of occupation. The cultivation of vines by Geto-Dacians is proven and linguistic. The Romanian viticultural terminology has in its content words derived from the Daco-Moesian substrate, *mugure*(suchasbuds), *doaga*(dwarf), *butuc*(hubs), *strugure*(grapes), *curpen* (curpenes). (Russu 2009). The most famous testimony on vine cultivation is that of Strabon, referring to Burebista's austerity policy, at the instigation of High Priest Deceneu: "For the discipline of the people, he helped Deceneu, a powerful man of the quacks [...]. As a sign of obedience: they were convinced to cut the vine and live without wine." (Strabon, VII, 3, 11, XVI, 2, 39). The decision to eradicate vineyards is part of the policy of settling the morals of his people, a policy of sobriety or even abstinence, inflated by the puritan view of religion promoted by Deceneu. The policy of Burebista-Deceneu has not become generalized. Evidence is the persistence in the archaeological inventory of viticultural instruments, such as the marshmallows, of which we have spoken above. It is possible that the religious principles promoted by Deceneus are part of a Zalmoxis cult, which addressed only initiates from the aristocracy and the clergy. These connoisseurs of a Pitagorian-type rite are those who received the pileus and who were initiating rituals that were more abusive, including abstinence: they did not consume meat or wine. The royal-theocratic leadership of the Dacians wanted to impose this cult of abstinence and people and organize it into a society following Croton's model of Pythagoras.

By analogy with the Celtic world, we come to the probable conclusion that in the world, if only the rich drink wine and the rest of the population a kind of beer or mead. The vines could not occupy very large areas, given the extent of the forests at that time. Vines could only be grown in the plain of the plain along the Danube and in the Banat, but also on the southern hills. (Pârvan, 1982, 87). There are, in return, testimonies of wine trade made by locals or through the Greek colonies on the shores of Pontus. The number of amphorae found indicates a high volume of trade in Greek wine. Such amphoras are spread throughout the archaeological site. In Dobrogea, the necropolis of the Nuntași, Cernavoda, Telita and Murighiol contain such examples. From the necropolis of the Wedding comes a beautiful Hellenistic amphora made in Thassos and having the pottery stamp. All this in the necropolis was also found a luxury Hellenistic cup, used to drink the wine. (Pippidi & Berciu, 1965, 126). The Greek colony trade has expanded beyond the Danube, so that Greek amphorae meet in the necropolis of the extra-Carpathian area, in Braila (Braila County), in Pența (Teleorman County), in Locusteni (Dolj County). (Crișan, 1986, 120-122). The production of local wine is testified to by the inferior quality amphoras

produced in the Dacian workshops, which have an epigraphic stamp (Glodariu, 1974, p.27-30). Trade in wine has passed beyond the Carpathians. In the Olt and Buzau valleys, the Greek merchants from the south reached the fortresses of the Dacians in Transylvania. Coins from Histria and Mesembria were found in the inventory of the Dacian fortress in Costesti. (Pârvan, 1982, 340) The most popular testimony about the use of wine in the Dacian feasts is the scene described by Pausanis in Greek Description, I, 9.7 and by Diodorus of Sicily on the conflict between King Dacian Dromichaites and Diadochal Lisimah, King of Thrace. After the victory, the Dacian King held a banquet for the prisoner, now his guest: "Dromichaites ... led him to a city called Helis ... Finally, to pour them to the Macedonians, they come in silver and gold cups, as long as he and his Thracians drink wine in horns and woods, as the Getae used to." (Diodorus of Sicily, XXI, 11-12)

In the behavior and occupations of the Thracians, historians also include the Geto-Dacians, establishing a cultural unity between the two branches, so we can make an analogy between the Thracians and the Dacians. Claudius Aelianus, who wrote in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. said: "About Thracians came the news that they are great drunkards" (Various History, 14, 15). In a dialogue about the habit of drinking wine, introduced by Plato in the Laws, I, 37 says: "[...] the Scythians and Thracians drink wine unmixed with water, both women and men, and scatter them on their clothes, considering it to be a good, lucky skill." Xenophon tells a feast at the courtyard of King Seuthis, where guests were served with horseradish wine by the servants of the goblins (*Anabasis*, VII,) 3.21). Thus, the feasts of the Geto-Dacian royal courts or of the aristocracy must have taken place. Believers were also met among the people, in many cases ritualistically, funeral, marriage, religious celebrations: "it is necessary to enjoy the pleasures of love, food, and drink, both the Ionian and the Tessian and the Italic, the Getus and the Indus, and the Spartan." (Dion Crzsostomos - *Speeches*, LXVIII, 2). We can not overlook the contrary. I mentioned above Ovidiu, the poet of Tomis, who believed that the vine is not cultivated by the Dobrogea Getae. In the same sense, Pompeius Melo, speaking about marriages, tells us: "In some Thracians the use of wine is unknown, but at the feast it is thrown into the fire around it, seeds, the smell of which provokes a joy similar to drunkenness" (Crișan, 1986, 139) and Vasile Pârvan and Mircea Eliade consider that in the Geto-Dacians and some Thracians, the Dionysiac cult was not in the form of Bahia organisms.

The Roman conquest was a policy of spreading the Mediterranean civilization in Dacia. In this export of civilization, we must also include the growth of wine-growing areas and the production of wine based on more advanced technologies brought by the new rulers. The importance of viticulture is confirmed by the representations on Roman monetary and sigilographic issues. In 112, Traian issues the *Dacia Augustus* medal, containing the symbolic representation of the province, with its main riches: the mountains with various ores, grains and vineyards. Dacia, represented by a woman, is placed on a rock, with a child carrying a grape and the second child a handful of spices. This symbolism is taken over by Decius (240-251) emperor who issues a new medal and a monetary issue, copying Traian's medal and taking the title of *Restitutio Daciae*

The archaeological and epigraphic sources complete the picture of a developed viticulture with economic, cultural and ritual dimensions. The cult of Bacchus, the god of nature, wine and parties, often appears in the images of Roman Dacia. From Aguae-Cioroiu Nou we have a beautiful marble head, with our hair caught in grapes and painted in brick. Also in Cioroiu was discovered a fragment of a dionysiac bas-relief, decorated with grapes and vine leaves. At Drobeta, the cult of Bacchus is expressed through four stone monuments and a bronze statuette. In a bas-relief, Bacchus pours from a pot (kantharos) into the mouth of the panther, his favorite animal. In another scene, the panther is eaten with wine. There are two other fragments of the statues of the god at Romula. In the Roman vicus at

Caracal a statuette was found, representing the god standing on the throne, having a richly braided hair with grape bunches, with one hand leading to the wine cup and the other holding the scepter (the Museum of Drobeta Tr. Severin). In Sucidava we have a lead-glass frame with the inscription: "Let me drink!" And the letters placed among grapes, presses and barrels, technical instruments of viticulture, but also objects of the Dionysian rituals. (Tudor, 1978, 361-364).

The epigraphy also offers proof of vine culture. For example, the Sucidava testament inscription of an anonymous: "I want and command to give my carers the income of the two gourds and the use of the building." Wine symbols are also used in the epitaph: the inscription was framed in a painting decorated with a grape vine, loaded with grapes and leaves (Tudor, 1978, 408-410), allusion to the occupation but also to the beliefs of the deceased. Such decorations are often used (Romula, Drobeta). After the Aurelian retreat, viticulture remains one of the basic occupations. The native population continued their way of life in rural areas. From the 4th century AD date the iron cuttings for the cutting of the vine, discovered at Celeiu-Sucidava, being produced by the natives. So are also the amphoras, the amphorides, the limestone and the cups discovered at Bistreț, Corabia, Făcăi, etc. Though narrow, trade continued to be practiced, especially in times of peace. The amphorae with which the wines and the oils were brought are of local production (4th-6th centuries), but also of import (Caracal, Celeiu, Dunăreni, Reșca, Orlea and others). The origin of import vessels is from Scythia Minor, Moesia and Greece, originated by stamps and inscriptions. (Toropu, 1976, 62, 86, 87, 93, 131-142). Since the sixth century, vine cultivation does not seem to be a basic occupation. Viticulture equipment in the archaeological inventory is drastically collapsing, and road insecurity and currency insecurity destroy trade relations.

## CONCLUSIONS

Viticulture has been known to the Daco-Moesian population since Indo-Europeanization or even earlier. The Getae-Dacians have cultivated the vine throughout their existence, with different intensity from one stage to the next. Historical, archaeological or epigraphic testimonies support the veracity of this hypothesis.

A history of viticulture, the evolution of wine-growing property, and wine consumption offer the satisfaction of knowing not only the domain itself but also.

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