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Florin Fodorean, *The Topography and the Landscape of Roman Dacia*, BAR International Series 2501, (Oxford, 2013), 147 p.

F. Fodorean has spent an important part of his scholarly career focusing on recreating the landscape of Dacia and also paying much attention to the network of roads in the former province. He is undoubtedly one of the leading authorities in this field from Romania.

The book written by F. Fodorean is in a sense the epitomized result of the work carried out by the author in the last years, on pressing matters such as the Roman road network, combining 18th – 19th century cartography with archaeological data to recreate ancient landscapes, or the analysis of ancient sources, in principal *itineraria*, related to the Danubian part of the Roman Empire, in particular Dacia. The language chosen is English because, first and foremost, the studies carried out by the author are known in the scientific literature from Romania, but there is a lack of information on the topics familiar to F. Fodorean throughout the international community. And these are not the only subjects related to the Roman world which lack general knowledge in the international community when it comes to the Roman province of Dacia. This is why one may easily understand why BAR International Series provided a perfect solution for this book to be published, for scientists to get much more familiar with the ancient landscape, road system or the geographic perception of Roman Dacia.

After a short introduction and acknowledgements (p. 1), the book starts with the first chapter entitled *The Geographical Perception of Space during Roman Times* (p. 2–21) where, differentiated in several subchapters, the author presents concisely the history of research of the road networks of the Roman world in its different geographical areas (Ch. 1.1, p. 2–5), followed by the main bibliographical references of the topic of this chapter (Ch. 1.2, p. 5–8). Then, the discussion is shifted to the geographical perception of the situation of Dacia by the Romans before Trajan's conquest of the Dacians, especially after the arrival of Domitian in the area during the last years of his reign (Ch. 1.3, p. 8–13). This image, however, is completed by the paper of S. Nemeti on the perception of the landscape north of the Danube and the Roman perception of the geography of this land before Trajan's conquest, including some minor texts perviously overlooked[1]. The next subchapter revolves around the main scholarly debates on why Trajan decided to conquer Dacia and the reasons behind this decision (Ch. 1.4, p. 13–15). The conclusion is very clear as the author argues that Trajan was pushed by strategy (and it should be added by political will), while the gold and other natural resources were a sort of an *icing of the cake*. The last subchapter is envisaging the "on field" creation of Dacia by the Romans, the work of Balbus, the *mensores*, the *exploratores* and other "pieces" of the huge system that integrated Dacia into the Roman world through its infrastructure, right after the end of the Dacian-Roman wars (Ch. 1.5, p. 15–21).

The second chapter of the book is called *Ancient Sources Concerning the Roads of Roman Dacia. The Main Arteries North of the Danube* (p. 22–44) and it brings together the pieces of

[1] Nemeti 2011, 37–49.

evidence on the topic known for Dacia. Not accidentally, this chapter in the richest one. It starts with the discussions of the most important modern scholars who have tackled the subject of the Tabula Peutingeriana (abbreviated from now on as TP), which is the best ancient source to be used (Ch. 2.1, p. 22–28) and analyzes the main differences between maps and *itineraria* according to the ancients (Ch. 2.2, p. 29–30). The methodology is kept the same in this second chapter as in the first, thus, after seeing the big picture, the discussion turns to Roman Dacia itself, with a brief presentation of the historiography of road systems in this province (Ch. 2.3, p. 30–33). One may easily observe that, unlike the rest of the authors dealing with this subject, F. Fodorean understands far better the concepts of cartography and "cartographic generalization", the latter a concept used when creating the TP, according to which, because of lack of space, only the most relevant elements from an early 2nd c. AD *itinerarium* were used for Dacia. The next step was to present the milestones from Dacia, only 9 of them being preserved and known so far (Ch. 2.4, p. 33–37)[2]. Finally, the chapter ends with the presentation of the road parallel with the Danube from Dacia (Ch. 2.5, p. 37) and the main roads of Dacia according to TP (Ch. 2. 6, p. 38–44).

Chapter 3 of the book represents the turning point as the main focus of the author shifts to the local landscape, envisaged by some examples very familiar to the author (Ch. 3. *Elements of the Dacian Landscape. Roads and Rural Settlements*, p. 45–61). It starts with *Potaissa* (Ch. 3.1, p. 45–49), *Napoca* (Ch. 3.2, p. 49–50), *Arcobara* (Ch. 3.3, p. 50–52), *Germisara* and its roads (Ch. 3.4, p. 52–54), and other segments of roads from Dacia as part of the local landscape (Ch. 3.5, p. 55–57). The next sub-chapter (Ch. 3.6, p. 57–58) tries, as the title itself explains it, to shape the landscape of Roman Dacia, basically analyzing the links of the *villae* (found in the area close to the North-Western frontier of the province, the basin of the Someșul Mic river, the Mureș river Valley, Banat and Southern Oltenia, p. 57)[3] and the most important roads. A special interest is given to the Roman roads after the abandonment of Dacia (Ch. 3.7, p. 58–59), followed by some concluding remarks in regard of the Roman roads from Dacia (Ch. 3.8, p. 59–60). In the end of the chapter, a special attention is given also to the bridges of Roman Dacia and the sources, both ancient and modern, for their identification in different parts of the province (Ch. 3.9, p. 60–61).

The final chapter of the book deals with *Recreating the Landscape of Roman Dacia Using Historical 19th Century Cartography, Digital Data and GIS* (Ch. 4, p. 62–76). It starts with the available databases to be used by archaeologists and the issues regarding the combination of cartography and archaeology (Ch. 4.1–3, p. 62–64). Then, F. Fodorean offers some precise examples on which the author himself worked on, such as the defensive system around the auxiliary fort of Bologa (Ch. 4.4, p. 64–65); the Roman Imperial road between *Napoca* and *Potaissa* (Ch. 4.5, p. 65); the Roman fort from Gherla (Ch. 4.6, p. 65–66); the Roman fort from Hoghiz (Ch. 4.7, p. 66); the Roman fort from Râșnov (Ch. 4.8, p. 66); the Roman fort from Brețcu (Ch. 4.9, p. 66); the Roman Imperial road from *Sarmizegetusa* to Sântămărie Orlea (Ch. 4.10, p. 66–67); the Roman road from Gelmar to Șibot (Ch. 4.11, p. 67); the Roman road from Alba Iulia (*Apulum*) to Șard and Ighiu (Ch. 4.12, p. 67) and the Roman road along the valley of the river Arieș from *Potaissa* to *Alburnus Maior* (Ch. 4.13, p. 67–68). Also an important segment of this chapter is given to the analysis of "Spa" vignettes in the TP combined with the "on-ground" archaeological, epigraphic and topographic situation of *Germisara* (Geoagiu Băi), *Ad Aquas* (Călan) and *Ad Mediam* (Băile Herculane) (Ch. 4.14)[4]. Finally, the last sub-chapter

[2] For the reinterpretation of five of the texts displayed on *miliaria* see Piso 2011, 321–330.

[3] For Dacia Porolissensis and mostly for its north-western part see the *whitekkerian* approach of Wanner 2010, p. 357–364.

[4] See also Fodorean 2012, 211–221 for a detailed version.

presents the 18th – 19th century maps of the Roman Empire and their sources made in Western Europe and their improvements by Romanian scholars when it came to Dacia (Ch. 4.15, p. 71–76).

The book ends with a large bibliographical reference list (p. 77–94) and a rich illustration comprising of 84 figures (p. 95–147).

When coming close to the end of the book, I thought about an episode from 153 AD, when five outstanding men from Dacia formed a delegation to Rome for the start of the consulship M. Sedatus Severianus. On their return they stopped by the thermal waters of Băile Herculane, making an *ex voto* for their safe return home[5]. One may only imagine the adventures, routes and time spent in their epic journey to Rome and back. This journey was possible only by using *itineraria* and of course the infrastructure, in particular the road systems. Scholars today have been able to create so far only a glimpse of the geographical knowledge and road systems available in 153 AD in particular, and during the Roman period as a whole, and F. Fodorean due to his scientific endeavors contributes to a far better understanding of the *itineraria* used in the Roman world (with a special regard on Roman Dacia), the landscape of the province and its infrastructure.

All in one, I can only hope that the effort made by F. Fodorean to present his work to the scholarly community worldwide by gathering the most important results of his studies will be followed by other Romanian scholars. Thus the non-Romanian speaking historians and archaeologists will get to know the province of Dacia in a more precise and useful manner.

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[5] IDR III/2, 56. Their names were *Ulp(ius) Secundinus, Marius Valens, Pomponius Haemus, Iul(ius) Carus* and *Val(erius) Valens.* For the travel inscriptions of Roman Dacia see Nemeti 2016, forthcoming. I would like to express my grattitude towards the author for offering me the manuscript of the paper for this review.

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