

MINIATURE ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS
IN THE COROPLASTIC WORKSHOP
AT OSTROV (DUROSTORUM), FARM 4,
CONSTANȚA COUNTY
(PRELIMINARY RESEARCH)

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Abstract:

The Roman settlement at Ostrov, Farm 4 (Constanța County), although systematically investigated since 1990, is known to the scientific world, thanks to numerous discoveries made since the mid-50s of the last century. The collapse of the Danube bank led to the discovery and research of 19 pottery kilns and numerous clay and waste pits, with a rich and very varied material (pottery, terracotta, lamps, bronze and glass pieces, coins, etc.) indicating the settlement at Ostrov as one with intense and diversified craft activity. Systematic research has confirmed those data, bringing in addition to the three buildings under investigation a rich archaeological material. Among these, the terracottas stand out, with more than 500 pieces already published and another 500 being processed. The large number of pieces has allowed typological classification, one of them being miniature architecture. In this category have been integrated: pediments, columns, fragments of niches or aedicules. The craftsmen's care in rendering the specific details of the architecture can be seen, so as to reproduce the architectural styles known in stone. The fragments preserved and catalogued are part of larger complexes such as miniature temples or niches/aedicules used in practices and rituals specific to the Roman world.

Rezumat:

Așezarea romană de la Ostrov, ferma 4 (jud. Constanța), deși cercetată sistematic începând cu anul 1990, este cunoscută lumii științifice, grație numeroaselor descoperiri făcute de la mijlocul anilor 50 ai secolului trecut. Prăbușirea malului Dunării a condus la descoperirea și cercetarea a 19 cuptoare de ars material din lut, precum și numeroase gropi de lut și menajere, care au oferit un bogat și foarte variat material (ceramică, teracote, opaițe, piese din bronz și sticlă, monede etc.) care indicau așezarea prefigurată la Ostrov drept una cu o activitate meșteșugărească intensă și diversificată. Cercetările sistematice au confirmat datele aducând pe lângă cele trei clădirii aflate sub cercetare și un bogat material arheologic. Printre acestea se remarcă teracotele, fiind publicate deja peste 500 de piese, alte 500 fiind în curs de prelucrare. Numărul mare de piese a permis integrarea tipologică a acestora, una dintre categoriile stabilite fiind arhitectura miniaturală. În această

categorie au fost integrate: frontoane, colonete, fragmente de nișe sau edicule. Se observă grija meșterilor coroplaști pentru redarea detaliilor specifice arhitecturii astfel încât se reproduc stilurile arhitecturale cunoscute în piatră. Fragmentele păstrate și catalogate fac parte din ansambluri mai mari de tipul templelor miniaturale sau a nișelor/ediculelor folosite în practici și ritualuri specifice lumii romane.

The Roman settlement at Ostrov, Farm 4 (Constanța County) began to be systematically researched from the beginning of the 90s of the last century, but the richness of the material here attracted attention since the 50s of the same century, when, with the collapse of the Danube's bank, numerous furnaces, clay pits and waste pits were reported. Thus, a series of fired clay materials (pottery,¹ terracotta,² lamps,³ aqueduct tubes, suspension tubes, etc.) and more (bronze,⁴ plumb,⁵ glass,⁶ coins,⁷ etc.) would be known to the scientific world, which indicated the settlement foreshadowed at Ostrov as one with an intense and diversified craft activity. So far, 19 kilns⁸ and 30 pits⁹ have been investigated on the banks of the Danube, the amount of material provided by these investigations being very large, and even if an important part has been published,¹⁰ it has not yet been exhausted.

As it should be, the systematic research of the settlement brought to light not only numerous data about the habitat here (three buildings being under investigation¹¹), but also a rich and varied archaeological material (variety object of burnt clay, metal, glass, coins, etc.). Among them, the terracottas have an important consistency, with more than 500 pieces discovered between 1998–2016 being published so far, another 500 (discovered later) being under processed. Given such a large amount of pieces, even if many fragments, it was possible to integrate them typologically into different categories: human figures¹², divinities on the throne,¹³

¹ Mușețeanu 2003.

² Mușețeanu, Elefterescu 1985.

³ Mușețeanu, Culică, Elefterescu 1980; Mușețeanu, Elefterescu 1983; Elefterescu 2016; Elefterescu 2017.

⁴ Elefterescu 2004; Elefterescu 2010a; Elefterescu 2011; Elefterescu 2013; Nuțu, Elefterescu 2018.

⁵ Mușețeanu, Elefterescu 1978; Elefterescu 2004–2005; Elefterescu 2010b.

⁶ Boțan, Elefterescu 2018.

⁷ Dima, Elefterescu 2009.

⁸ Mușețeanu, Elefterescu, Băltăc 1998–2000.

⁹ Information provided by Dan Elefterescu, to whom we thank once more.

¹⁰ Beside note 1–7 (*supra*), see also Mușețeanu 1986; Mușețeanu 1993; Mușețeanu, Elefterescu 1996; Elefterescu 2008.

¹¹ Damian, Băltăc 2008, completed by the annual reports from 2009 to 2021 in CCA.

¹² Băltăc, Știrbulescu 2017.

¹³ Băltăc, Știrbulescu 2019.

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