

LAMPS DISCOVERED IN PRE-ROMAN DACIA (2nd CENTURY BC – 1st CENTURY AD). NOTES ON THE ADOPTION OF AN INNOVATION*

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Abstract: The article presents Hellenistic and Roman lamps and those locally produced discovered in three of the largest Geto-Dacian settlements researched until now – Poiana, Răcătău (both in County Bacău) and Popești (County Giurgiu). In this context, I attempted to follow the reception of these products in the indigenous milieu, in the conditions in which under the impact of Hellenistic and Roman products, local workshops from these three settlements introduced numerous innovations and developed their own production of pottery influenced by Hellenistic and Roman models.

Rezumat: Articolul prezintă opaițele elenistice și romane și produsele locale descoperite în trei dintre cele mai mari situri geto-dacice cercetate până acum - Poiana și Răcătău (jud. Bacău) și Popești (jud. Giurgiu). În acest context am încercat să urmăresc în ce fel aceste produse sunt receptate de mediul indigen în condițiile în care, sub impactul produselor ceramice elenistice și romane, atelierele locale din siturile menționate introduc numeroase inovații și dezvoltă o producție proprie de ceramică influențată de modelele elenistice și romane.

I. Preliminaries

Hellenistic and Roman pottery items (amphorae, tableware, lamps), of various functions, techniques and decoration, stand out among artefacts dated between the second century BC and the first century AD discovered on Geto-Dacian sites. One also notes the sensibility of indigenous to certain Hellenistic and Roman products, a sensibility expressed through the introduction of new techniques and the enrichment of local ceramic repertory with new shapes and types of decoration. The adoption of these innovations indicates a dynamic society, one prone to and capable of innovating according to rules and selection criteria that can be intuit if one tries to place particular cases in the general picture of the phenomenon. At the present state of research, a particular/specific analysis is unlikely due to the lack of relevant data that would allow one to analyze the adoption mechanism of each innovation. Data on the context of discovery of many imported items and their imitations is not available. Statistical data on the quantity of imported items and their imitations on particular sites are only available in few cases, and most of them are not up to date.¹

Studies in anthropology, economy, sociology, etc. on the spread and adoption of innovation as indicators of human behavioural change have pointed out same patterns that are used in explaining the spread and adoption of innovations in primitive/antique societies.²

One such model starts from the premise that innovation is the result of a complex process structured according to several distinct or overlapping phases – discovery, invention, development, investment, production and distribution, obsolesce - whose length in time varies according to the given circumstances.³

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¹ One can mention as exceptions the pottery discovered in the settlement Brad (County Bacău) (Ursachi 1995, pp. 148-225) and the pottery discovered on the site of Bordușani (County Ialomița) (Trohani 2005-2006; Trohani 2006).

² For example: S.I. Rotroff (Rotroff 2006) uses the model suggested by D.A. Sparrt (Sparrt 1989) in order to explain the introduction of moldmade bowls in the repertory of Athenian workshops. J. Kim explains the differences in the introduction of ironworking technology in Bronze Age societies in Denmark and Southern Korea defining innovation adoption as an investment which requires initial cost and risks (Kim 2001).

³ Sparrt 1989.