

PAMFIL POLONIC AND THE DAWN OF ROMANIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL CARTOGRAPHY

Motto: A map should speak like any other script...
(Pamfil Polonic).

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Abstract: A century after Pamfil Polonic's manuscripts were written and although they are quite frequently quoted in the archaeological literature, a substantial amount of the information they contain remains unpublished. Other than archaeological field documentation items (reports, plans, drawings or sketches of objects), the archive also comprises other types of documents such as travel journals containing descriptions of sites and their topographic sketches, drawn during field research. Some of the data from those documents complete the information we have on sites which are well-known today, such as Pietrele - Movila Gorgana, Bordușani or Popești. The range and scope of Pamfil Polonic's research was sustained by his knowledge and use of a rich bibliography on topics like history, archaeology, geography and cartography. The aim of the present paper is to identify and present a part this scientific apparatus dating from the end of 19th century to the beginning of 20th century.

Rezumat: Deși în literatura de specialitate se face trimitere la manuscrisele care alcătuiesc fondul de arhivă P. Polonic acestea sunt încă inedite, la un secol după conceperea lor. Exceptând documentația de șantier (rapoarte, planuri și relevee, desene ale pieselor descoperite) apar și alte tipuri de documente: jurnale de călătorie care cuprind descrieri de situri și schițe topografice ale acestora, făcute în urma cercetărilor de teren. Câteva manuscrise din această categorie completează istoricul cercetărilor unor situri cunoscute astăzi: Pietrele-Movila Gorgana, Bordușani, Popești. Demersul cercetărilor făcute de P. Polonic a fost susținut de cunoașterea și utilizarea unei bogate bibliografii de factură istorică, arheologică, geografică și cartografică. Am încercat să identific și să prezint aici o parte a acestui instrumentar științific care datează de la sfârșitul sec. XIX și de la începutul sec. XX.

1. Biographical sketch

In 1892, Grigorie G. Tocilescu, the director of the National Museum of Antiquities offers the position of illustrator-cartographer to a young topographic engineer – Pamfil Polonic. At 34 years of age, the new employee had renounced a military career following some previous health issues.¹

Born in 1858 in Suceava,² P. Polonic attended a series of military schools. Between 1875 -1878 he studied at the Military Academy in Vienna, graduating as a sub-lieutenant specialized in topography. Assigned to the 31st Infantry regiment in Sibiu, he taught topography at the School for Reserve Officers in town. Following a mission in Galicia in 1888 where he had been sent as a topographer, his health started deteriorating and after only three years he had to leave the army and move to Bucharest.

His employment with the National Museum of Antiquities lasted until 1902. From 1903 he worked as a topographer and illustrator for the State Fisheries Service in the Danube Delta, and thus became a close collaborator of Grigore Antipa.³ The latter considered him “an exceptional illustrator”⁴ and in 1905 ensured his

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¹ Information on his biography and the main stages of his career were published in several papers: Barbu 1965, pp. 237-240; Mateescu 1969, pp. 340-343; Mateescu 1978, pp. 198-199; Păunescu 2003, Chapter IV – *Pamfil Polonic, a pioneer of our archaeological cartography*, pp. 65-69. This chapter can be also found at <http://www.cimec.ro/arheologie/arhivadigitala/4Pamfil%20Polonic/M.htm>, hosted by CIMEC - Institutul de Memorie Culturală, at Archaeological Digital archives / Documents in the archive of the Institute of Archaeology “Vasile Pârvan”; Mecu, Barnea 2010, pp. 59 and 70. This information was also used by the present author on several occasions while working on manuscripts from the P. Polonic collection containing data on archaeological and historical sites from Buzău County (Măgureanu 2010, pp. 341-376).

² He was the son of the head of the furriers' and shoemakers' guilds.

³ He illustrated exemplary for Grigore Antipa two of his fundamental works: *Fauna ichtiologică a României (cu 31 de tabele în fototipie)* [Ichthyological Fauna of Romania (with 31 tables)], Bucharest, 1909, The Romanian Academy. Publications of the Vasile Adamachi collections, no. XVI. The tables contains approx. 200 drawings signed P. Polonic. In the volume *Pescăria și pescuitul în România* [Fish Farms and Fishing in Romania] (403 figures in text and 75 tables), Bucharest, 1916, the figures and tables are the work of P. Polonic. In fact, in 1906, the paintings *Fishing methods in Romania* received the gold medal at the General Exhibition in Bucharest.

⁴ Netzhammer 2005a, p. 138.