

ABOUT THE HORSES IN THE *DAVA* FROM RADOVANU-GORGANA A DOUA

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Abstract: The horse osteological remains, as well as two items made of burnt clay that rendered cabalines, have enabled the authors of the article to make a deeper analysis regarding the importance of the respective animal for the Getic communities and especially for southern Romania. There are considered the direct proofs (bones, harness pieces), but also the indirect ones (items made of burnt clay and metal with horse representations, depictions of cabalines, as well as riders on clay and metal objects).

Cuvinte cheie: cai, situri getice, Radovanu-*Gorgana a doua*, sudul României.

Rezumat: Resturile osteologice de la cai, precum și două piese din lut ars ce reprezintă cabaline, au permis autorilor articolului o analiză mai profundă a importanței respectivului animal pentru comunitățile getice în special din sudul României. Sunt trecute în revistă descoperirile de dovezi directe (oase, piese de harnașament) și indirecte (piese din lut ars și metal reprezentând cai, dar și imagini ale unor cabaline sau călăreți pe obiecte din lut și metal).

Direct proofs of the horse presence at Radovanu: osteological remains

Both the older archaeological campaigns (1971-1985) and the recent ones (2003-2008) have resulted in the identification of a relatively rich amount of animal osteological remains, in the Getic complexes (dwellings and pits) and in the archaeological strata, either belonging to the *Level I* or *II* of the *dava* situated on the *Gorgana a doua* from Radovanu¹, Călărași County. Even if this material was not fully analysed by the archaeozoologists, a first study has been dedicated to the bones recovered until 1980², while a preliminary report referred to the excavations of the campaign since 2008³.

¹ About the field investigations in the *dava* on the *Gorgana a doua* from Radovanu see Șerbănescu 1985; Șerbănescu 1987; Șerbănescu 1998; Șerbănescu *et alii* 2005; Șerbănescu *et alii* 2006; Șerbănescu *et alii* 2007; Șerbănescu *et alii* 2008; Șerbănescu *et alii* 2009; Șerbănescu *et alii* 2012; Schuster, Morintz, Chelmeș 2005; Schuster, Șerbănescu 2007; Șerbănescu, Schuster, Morintz 2009.

² Udrescu 1982.

³ El Susi 2009.

Mircea Șt. Udrescu has noticed that from the total osteological remains of *Equus caballus* (209 fragments, meaning 5.3% of the total amount of animal bones), 27 have been recovered from closed complexes, while the others have been found in the cultural layer⁴. In his opinion, “*the fragmentary character of the remains, together with the burning and cutting traces performed with sharp objects points out the fact that this species has been also used in alimentation. We consider that the use of the horse as food was absolutely accidental, being usually raised for riding and maybe also for his power force. In favour of this presumption we bring the fact that these bone fragments belong to immature animals... Two complete metapods permitted the establishing of the horse stature: 131.7 cm and 132.7 cm, values that fit into the variability limits of the horses that were usually found in the Geto-Dacian settlements*”⁵.

Cabaline bones have been documented, as already mentioned, even after the investigations

⁴ Udrescu 1982, Tab. 1.

⁵ Udrescu 1982, 141.