

ROMAN ARMY AND SALT EXPLOITATION IN DACIA

Abstract: The authors study the connections between salt resources, salt exploitation and Roman army in Dacia. Even though salt resources are attested almost across the entire province of Dacia (excepting perhaps the western part), the eastern part is the richest not only in salt deposits, but also salt springs. Salt was important not only for the troops (food — nutrition and preservation, hide and leather processing, horses' and other animals' alimentation), but also for the civilian population. The army needed salt not only for its own purposes, but for distributing it in the rest of the province. However, despite the important role of the army concerning the salt resources' protection, we have to pay attention also at the other missions the troops were charged with.

Keywords: *Dacia, Roman army, salt exploitation, military camps, salt springs.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In a study concerning the administration of the Dacian saltworks, D. Benea noted that the locations of salt exploitation are linked to the presence of the Roman army in the area, specifically to safeguard these resources.¹ She exemplifies with the military camps from Sânpaul (for the halite deposits from Mărtiniș), Sărățeni (for Sovata), Inlăceni (for Praid), Ilișua (for Domnești), Gherla (for Ocna Dejului), and Potaissa (for Turda).² These castra have been documented both archaeologically and epigraphically.³

The following is an analysis of the main military camps and forts, as well as of the mentions of soldiers in the saline areas, in order to see if we can connect the soldiers' presence with the safeguarding of the exploitations. Even though salt resources are attested almost across the entire province of Dacia (excepting perhaps the western part), the eastern part is the richest not only in salt deposits, but also salt springs. Salt was important not only for the troops (food — nutrition and preservation, hide and leather processing, horses' and other animals' alimentation), but also for the civilian population. The army needed salt not only for its own purposes, but for distributing it in the rest of the province. However, despite the important role of the army concerning the salt resources' protection, Benea's remarks on the army-salt resources connections must be verified. Some castra were important not only for this purpose, but especially for the defense strategy of the *limes*.

¹ BENEA 2007a, 42-43.

² BENEA 2007a, 42.

³ S. more RECENTLY MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENȚEA 2016, 10-11 (Sărățeni, Inlăceni), 13 (Sânpaul).

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2. THE MILITARY CAMPS AND FORTIFICATIONS NEXT TO SALT RESOURCES

2.1. Ilișua-Orheiul-Bistriței-Domnești

Before addressing the camp of Inlăceni, we must take note of the inscription of the *centurio regionarius* attested at Domnești.⁴ I. Piso and G. Cupcea argue that the presence in this area of a *regionarius* was meant to protect the cattle herds roaming the pastures, as to prevent their raiding by brigands (local or from across the mountains), and that salt was abundant in Dacia.⁵ The *centuriones regionarii* had police duties in areas belonging to the imperial fiscus, as asserted by N.B. Rankov.⁶ Thus, at Dolna Verenica, in the rural hinterland of the city of Montana in Moesia Inferior, C. Iulius Saturninus, *centurio regionarius* is attested.⁷ The area of Montana was, however, known for the gold and silver mines, assigned to the imperial fiscus.⁸ In the case of the text from Domnești, Piso and Cupcea consider that besides these pastures and saltworks belonging to the fiscus, *regio* could have also designated the territory near the *limes*.⁹ Not far there were the castra from Orheiul Bistriței¹⁰ and Ilișua.¹¹ Accordingly, this *centurio regionarius* had police duties not only with regards to the pastures, but also the saltworks, because both sectors belonged to the fiscus. Besides them, the units from Orheiul Bistriței and Ilișua likewise probably contributed to the protection of the salt exploitations.

In this respect, I am not very sure if D. Benea's hypothesis on role of Inlăceni camp as defending the salt resource from Domnești can be accepted without doubt. Ilișua was for a long time known as a camp for *ala I Tungrorum Frontoniana*,¹² but the recent researches and reassessments made especially by S. Nemeti¹³ leads us to assume that the salt resources' defense came second. The scope of the defense system seems to concern more the northern part of the province rather than the salt resource.

Closer to Domnești is the fort from Orheiul Bistriței (see Fig. 1). The unit stationed in the fort was very likely *cohors I Hispanorum milliaria equitata*.¹⁴ The only inscriptions are in fact stamps of this cohort. In our opinion, the fort from Orheiul Bistriței not only ensured the control of the Rodna pass, but it also controlled the exploitation of salt resources from Domnești. The archaeological researches revealed two construction phases, one in the Trajanic period and the other during Hadrian's or Antoninus' reign.¹⁵ It seems that

in all cases, the presence of auxiliary units on the eastern *limes* of Dacia is in connection with both frontier defense and salt resources' protection.

2.2. Sovata-Sărățeni-Praid-Inlăceni

The epigraphic file from Sărățeni consists in tile-stamps belonging to *cohors I Alpinorum*¹⁶ and several private inscriptions.¹⁷ The private inscriptions are fragmentary and do not provide a full image of the persons who raised them. The tile stamps prove without a doubt the presence of *cohors I Alpinorum*. The cohort stayed in a fort, rectangular with rounded corners, built on the right bank of the Târnava Mică River. The last coin was from Gordian III, but this does not mean that the fort was not occupied later.¹⁸ The role of the camp from Sărățeni was to defend the eastern *limes* of the province and the salt resources from Sovata (see Fig. 2).

The fort of Inlăceni is better known in the archaeological literature. It was built in order to control the roads along both of the Târnava rivers. Archaeologists have identified three phases of construction at Inlăceni. The first works (140 × 142 m) were mostly carried out under Trajan; in this sense, D. Isac presumed it was built by the XIII Gemina legion. The second phase consisted of a fort of irregular rectangular layout with rounded corners (142 × 146 m), which has been dated to the end of Hadrian's reign or at the beginning of Antoninus' rule. The third phase witnessed a reconstruction of the fort, which has been dated to Caracalla's rule.¹⁹ The *vicus militaris* was situated next to the fort, but only geomagnetic prospections were carried out in this area.²⁰ Inlăceni accommodated many auxiliary units, like the *cohors VIII Raetorum c. R. eq. torq.*,²¹ *cohors III Hispanorum*.²² Brick-stamps of *cohortes I Alpinorum*²³ and *II Gallorum*²⁴ were also found. The position of the camp and its location facing both the salt exploitations points (Sovata and Praid) lends credence to the view of F. Matei-Popescu and O. Țentea that the units accommodated at Inlăceni were meant to control and defend the roads along the Târnava rivers.²⁵ On the other side, the camp of Sărățeni was situated closer both to Sovata and Praid, for which reason we believe that the units stationed at Sărățeni were meant to protect the salt exploitation. Nonetheless, their role of overall defense of the roads of eastern Dacia cannot be denied.

2.3. Sânpaul—Ocland-Mărtiniș

The salt resources from Sânpaul are very rich. Salt springs exploited in the La Tène have been identified by Harding and Kavruk, who also hold that the Iron Age exploitation could have been continued in the Roman period.²⁶ Geophysical surveys made by the same authors in the Sânpaul area led them to conclude that on the road

⁴ PISO/CUPCEA 2014, 115-123.

⁵ PISO/CUPCEA 2014, 121-122.

⁶ RANKOV 1983, 55-56. See also SPEIDEL 1984, 185-188; HERZ 2011, 307; FUHRMANN 2012, 222-223; IVANOV/LUKA 2015, 205-206.

⁷ CIL XIII 12380.

⁸ S. more recently IVANOV/LUKA 2015, 245, with bibliography.

⁹ PISO/CUPCEA 2014, 119-120.

¹⁰ At Orheiul Bistriței camped *cohors I Hispanorum* (SPAUL 2000, 109-110; PETOLESCU 2002, 111-112). For the camp itself, s. MARCU 2009, 86-87. More recently, with bibliography MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENȚEA 2016, 9.

¹¹ S. especially PROTASE/GAIU/MARINESCU 1997, 45-47, MARCU 2009, 78-85 (for the *ala I Tungrorum Frontoniana*); for the civilian settlement (Arcobadara or Arcobara), s. especially NEMETI/BĂRBULESCU 2006-2007, 107-118; NEMETI/BĂRBULESCU 2010, 446-455; NEMETI 2014, 79-133.

¹² See especially PROTASE 1985, 249-253; PROTASE 2010, 163-170; DANA/GAIU 2016, 257-267.

¹³ NEMETI/BĂRBULESCU 2006-2007, 107-118; NEMETI/BĂRBULESCU 2010, 446-455; NEMETI 2014; see also PISO 2006-2007, 163-166.

¹⁴ PISO/DEAC 2016, 44-1-3, 45-1 (204-206).

¹⁵ See MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENȚEA 2016, 9, with bibliography.

¹⁶ IDR III/4, 213, 1-5.

¹⁷ IDR III/4, 206-210.

¹⁸ See MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENȚEA 2016, 10, with bibliography: DUDĂU 2006, 133.

¹⁹ ISAC 2006-2007, 141-42.

²⁰ POPA et al. 2010, 112.

²¹ IDR III/4, 263. See also PETOLESCU 2002, 119-120, no 54.

²² IDR III/4, 265, 271-275, 288-278, 280-281, 283-285, 301.

²³ IDR III/4, 299.

²⁴ IDR III/4, 300.

²⁵ MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENȚEA 2016, 10.

²⁶ HARDING/KAVRUK 2013, 43.

to Ocland there was the Roman mining exploitation, though no investigations have been made to confirm it.²⁷ The dating of timber samples pointed not to the Roman era, but to the Iron Age.²⁸ Even though the authors do not specify which period of the Iron Age is concerned, we hold the opinion that it refers to the La Tène period, preceding the Roman conquest. The Roman fort of Sânpaul was built near the Vlăhița pass. It was rectangular with round corners.²⁹ Brick stamps of the *n(umerus) M(aurorum) S(---)* were found at Sânpaul.³⁰ The epigraphic file from Sânpaul is not very rich, but the most important inscription was set up by Iulius Omucio, *actor* and freedman of the *conductor* C. Iulius Valentinus.³¹ The activity of the *actor* and some other votive altars consecrated to Iupiter Optimus Maximus et Iuno Regina³² suggested that next to the camp was a civil settlement, more likely a military *vicus*. The dedications to Iupiter and Iuno are not rare in the rural milieu. Analyses for this type of *vota* in Moesia Inferior proved that most of inscriptions consecrated to these divinities were erected in the rural communities.³³ In Dacia, Iupiter and Iuno appeared often in the context of the Capitoline Triad,³⁴ but as a couple, the deities are also attested in the villages of the province.³⁵ The civil settlement of Sânpaul accommodated also offices of the clerks of salt administration. The resources were surely defended by the units stationed in the camp. Besides, these units had an important strategic role, that to control and defend the Vlăhița pass.³⁶

At Ocland, not very far from Sânpaul, a fortlet (20×20 m) was identified.³⁷ F. Matei-Popescu and O. Țentea noted that the small fort accommodated probably wooden barracks.³⁸ An altar at Crăciunel (a village of Ocland) was set up by Aelius Valerianus, *beneficiarius consularis*, with his son Valerianus.³⁹ I think that Matei-Popescu and Țentea assumed correctly that there was a *statio beneficiarii* controlling the road,⁴⁰ but that confirms the information provided by Harding and Kavruk, who speak about a Roman salt exploitation on the road from Sânpaul to Ocland.⁴¹

To this dossier we can add two other inscriptions found in the village of Mărtiniș (see **Fig. 3**). A. Harding and V. Kavruk carried out investigations which proved the existence of a salt spring at Mărtiniș (which definitely functioned in the Roman era).⁴² More recent non-intrusive surveys have confirmed the existence of more salt springs

in the Mărtiniș area.⁴³ One text represents the epitaph of Aurelius, Severus, *decurio* very likely in an auxiliary unit accommodated in Sânpaul.⁴⁴ He was commemorated by Aurelius Qui[ntianus?], a relative (son?) or a comrade. The *gentilicium* Aurelius without a *praenomen* indicates a post-212 dating. Another inscription, today lost, was erected for the safeguard of Alexander Severus.⁴⁵ The dedicant is unknown, but it is not excluded it could be a member of an auxiliary unit, as well as the unit as common dedicant itself.

Thus, the importance of the Sânpaul–Ocland zone with respect to salt resources has, besides the archaeological testimony, epigraphic and archaeological confirmations. The field researches identified an auxiliary fort at Sânpaul, a fortlet and a *statio beneficiarii* in the village of Ocland. The inscriptions revealed a *conductor* of the saltworks and his *actor*, as well as military presence in the fort of Sânpaul and in Mărtiniș area.

2.4. Olteni

Several salt springs have been identified at and around Olteni.⁴⁶ A military fort was built on a high terrace of the river Olt (**Fig. 4**). Two phases were identified, one under Trajan, and the second, in stone (142 × 92, 5 m), under Hadrian.⁴⁷ The fort is trapezoid in shape and with rectangular towers. The strategic role of the fort was in connection with the defense of Tușnad pass and the Olt valley. The epigraphic material consists in many brick stamps. One of them belonged to the *legio IIII Flavia* and it can be put in relationship with the presence of units belonging to this legion in the Trajanic phase of construction. In the collection of the Székely National Museum in Sfântu Gheorghe there are 51 tile- and brick-stamps with the name of a cohort coming from a Roman grave dating at the end of the 2nd c.–beginning of the 3rd c. AD.⁴⁸ The lecture of the unit's name has originated some controversies. N. Gostar⁴⁹ and C. C. Petolescu⁵⁰ have read *cohors II Bessorum*. However, a ligature can be observed at the letter E. A ET or EL can be read. A. Bordi and R. Zăgreanu have recently proposed the solution *cohors III B(a)etianorum* or *B(a)etica*,⁵¹ following N. Gudea.⁵² We do not think, from a visual investigation of high-quality photographs of the stamps, that they concern *cohors II Bessorum*. Even *cohors IIII B(a)etianorum* or *IIII B(a)etica* are hard to accept, because of the lack of occurrences, we cannot ignore the hypothesis advanced by F. Matei-Popescu and O. Țentea according to whom, in the 3rd c., the presence of units still unknown in Dacia should be taken into account.⁵³ The lecture *c(ohors) IIII Bel(garum)* seems more plausible.

Another inscriptions found in Olteni is a property

²⁷ HARDING/KAVRUK 2013, 43.

²⁸ HARDING/KAVRUK 2013, 47. See also HARDING 2015, 216; HARDING 2016, 377.

²⁹ GUDEA 1997b, 61. see also MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENTEA 2016, 13, with bibliography.

³⁰ IDR III/4, 254.

³¹ IDR III/4, 248.

³² IDR III/4, 247, 249.

³³ MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2014, 303-306; MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2015, 439-445.

³⁴ IDR III/5, 195-199, 215§ ILD 195 etc.

³⁵ Arcobadara (Ilișua): CIL III 7627 (GAIU/ZĂGREANU 2011, 74, no I.2.8; NEMETI 2014, 117, no 11.); Micia (IDR III/3, 94).

³⁶ I totally agree here with MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENTEA 2016, 13.

³⁷ RAJH 167, 388.

³⁸ MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENTEA 2016, 15.

³⁹ IDR III/4, 256 (CBI 5390).

⁴⁰ MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENTEA 2016, 15.

⁴¹ HARDING/KAVRUK 2013, 43.

⁴² HARDING/KAVRUK 2013, 43.

⁴³ Information A. Asăndulesei.

⁴⁴ IDR III/4, 259.

⁴⁵ IDR III/260.

⁴⁶ BUZEA/(CHIRICESCU) DEÁK 2008, 47, 53.

⁴⁷ See especially VLĂDESCU 1983, 118, no 28; GUDEA 1997b, 61, no 37; BUZEA/(CHIRICESCU) DEÁK 2008, 62-64; SZÉKELY 1978-1979, 55-75; SZÉKELY 1993, 279-282; SZÉKELY 2012, 142-149; MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENTEA 2016, 13.

⁴⁸ BORDI/ZĂGREANU 2010, 201-204. See also IDR III/4, 318.

⁴⁹ GOSTAR 1966, 178-179.

⁵⁰ PETOLESCU 2002, 85.

⁵¹ BORDI/ZĂGREANU 2010, 200; see the English version BORDI/ZĂGREANU 2011, 131-144.

⁵² GUDEA 2001, 55-60.

⁵³ MATEI-POPESCU/ȚENTEA 2016, 13.

mark on a bronze molding. It belonged to Candidus, from the *centuria* of Maximus.⁵⁴ These property marks are originating exclusively from the military milieu.⁵⁵ Vegetius reports that equipment marking was mandatory for legionnaires.⁵⁶ In this case, we cannot speak about a *centuria* of a legion, but of the cohort accommodated in Olteni. However, the soldiers could have owned their equipment and weaponry.⁵⁷ The text proves once again the military presence at Olteni.

Like in the previous cases, the strategic role of the auxiliary unit was in connection with the protection of salt resources.

2.5. Ocna Dejului-Sic-Cojocna-Gherla

The first three places, Ocna Dejului, Sic and Cojocna, were known for the salt resources (see **Fig. 5**).⁵⁸ Since 142–143, Gherla was home to the *ala II Pannoniorum*,⁵⁹ but stamps of the *ala I Batavorum* were also found.⁶⁰ Next to the camp there was a civil settlement, the military *vicus*. Both the camp and the *vicus* have not actually been investigated systematically. The book published by D. Protase, N. Gudea and R. Ardevan presents however the results of the archaeological investigations since the beginning to the end of the 20th century.⁶¹ The volume shows the main results from the excavations in the military camp and all type of findings.⁶² The earth- and the timber-phase of the Roman fort dated, after the authors, approximately 106–140, while the stone phase started at the end of Hadrian's reign or the beginning of Antoninus' reign.⁶³ That corresponds with the dating of the inaugural inscription set up in 142–143.⁶⁴ Another stone phase (only repair works), according to the authors, dates from the beginning of the 3rd⁶⁵ c. The *vicus*, even if it was not systematically investigated, provided finds which proved that the settlement was rather important in the area. The problem with the epigraphic material is that (save for a few samples) it is difficult to establish the origin of the inscriptions (camp or civilian settlement). We present the texts in which we can assume a military presence at Gherla, from which a connection (though indirect) can be made with the protection of salt resources situated not far from the camp, among which the most important were those from Ocna Dejului. However, I think that the main role of the auxiliary unit accommodated there was to control the road that connected Napoca to Porolissum, but the defense of the saltworks was not overlooked.

The presence of the *ala II Pannoniorum* is attested by many tile- and brick-stamps,⁶⁶ but there are other epigraphic evidences mentioning soldiers and commanding-ranked men of the unit. We mention in this regard simple *equites*,

like Roemetalces, commemorated by the *imaginifer* Brisenus (both having a Thracian origin),⁶⁷ Ulpius Boniatius,⁶⁸ another soldier whose name is not preserved,⁶⁹ the *decuriones* M. Aurelius [---] and M. Aurelius Secundinus⁷⁰, an anonymous *immunis*,⁷¹ the *stator* Aurelius Tato⁷², the *signifer* Dines (another Thracian)⁷³ and the equestrian *praefecti alae* Tannonius Maximus⁷⁴, C. Caelius Salvianus⁷⁵ and M. N(...) Lucretianus.⁷⁶ The texts also mention two veterans, a former *imaginifer*, Aelius Ana[---],⁷⁷ and an *ex-decurione*, Septimius Pisusus.⁷⁸ The soldiers bore Thracian names (likes Roemetalces, Brisenus, Dines, Pisusus) or Celtic names (like Boniatius). The name of Tato is present in both the Illyrian and Celtic space.⁷⁹ Hercules Magusanus is a Germanic deity, adored in the Batavian milieu.⁸⁰ In our opinion, the context shows that Aurelius Tato belongs to the Batavian community: this rests not only on the record of Hercules Magusanus,⁸¹ but also on the presence of *ala I Batavorum* at Gherla, attested by brick stamps. Other inscriptions mention civilians and probably originate from the military *vicus*. However, taking into account the names of some individuals, it is very likely that they are related with the soldiers or with the veterans. More specifically, there are persons who bear Thracian, Illyrian and Celtic names, like Aurelius Diaies and Aurelius Ditugentus,⁸² Scenobarbus Dasi,⁸³ Aelia Deccia and Aelius Consius.⁸⁴

In conclusion, the military presence is not attested only by tile- and brick-stamps, but also by stone inscriptions mentioning soldiers or veterans of the *ala II Pannoniorum*. As pointed out before, the salt exploitations at Ocna Dejului, Sic and Cojocna were protected by the soldiers of this unit, but the main task of the *ala* was the control of the road Napoca–Porolissum. Of course, the salt transportation on this road was included in the unit's missions. Moreover, the salt was used for the army's needs, too.

2.6. Potaissa (Turda)

Potaissa is known in literature as the camp of *legio V Macedonica* after the beginning of Marcomanic wars (most probably 168–170 AD).⁸⁵ Of course, the legion, first dislocated for these wars, was accommodated in Potaissa

⁵⁴ IDR III/4, 319.

⁵⁵ See for example, a property mark from Moesia Inferior published by RUBEL 2008, 1–8 (see also MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2011, 100–101).

⁵⁶ Vegetius 2, 8.

⁵⁷ BISHOP/COULSTON 2006, 242; MANNING 2014, 15.

⁵⁸ WOLLMANN 1996, 242.

⁵⁹ AE 1906, 112.

⁶⁰ PISO/DEAC 2016, 13–14.

⁶¹ PROTASE/GUDEA/ARDEVAN 2008, 16–23.

⁶² PROTASE/GUDEA/ARDEVAN 2008, 24–30.

⁶³ PROTASE/GUDEA/ARDEVAN 2008, 24–41.

⁶⁴ AE 196, 112.

⁶⁵ PROTASE/GUDEA/ARDEVAN 2008, 41.

⁶⁶ CIL III 1633–3. See especially ARDELEANU, ZĂGREANU 2010, 489–500.

⁶⁷ I prefer the lecture of PISO (2013a, 46–47).

⁶⁸ PISO 2013a, 47–48.

⁶⁹ ILD 594.

⁷⁰ CIL III 12542; ZĂGREANU 2007, 259–260.

⁷¹ ILD 593.

⁷² ILD 590.

⁷³ ILD 594.

⁷⁴ CIL III 83b. I prefer the new lecture of PISO 2013b, 172–174, following the new photos.

⁷⁵ ILD 586.

⁷⁶ CIL III 12540; ILD 587.

⁷⁷ Lupa 11360.

⁷⁸ ILD 588.

⁷⁹ CIL III 2749; AE 1981, 670; CIL XIII 5027, 130131–1–2, 13032. See also SCHÄFER 2001, 260.

⁸⁰ See especially CIL VI 31162, but also CIL XIII 8010, 8075, 8492, 8610, 8771, 10027–212c; AE 1971, 282; 1977, 570; 1994, 1282, 1284.

⁸¹ See also VARGA/SĂSĂRMAN 2012, 94. For the cult of Hercules Magusanus in German provinces, see ROYMANS 2009, 219–238; ROYMANS 2010, 200–202, 238, 242 etc.

⁸² CIL III 835.

⁸³ PROTASE 1968, 339–341.

⁸⁴ CIL III 1608. See especially ARDELEANU/ZĂGREANU 2005, 257–264.

⁸⁵ BĂRBULESCU 2012, 1997, 1994, 1987; PÎSLARU 2009.

in order to defend the northern frontier. The legion also protected the salt rock deposits from Turda, situated in the proximity. Before the 5th Macedonica legion came to Potaissa, the settlement was a *vicus*, as it is indirectly proved by an inscription erected by two *magistri*.⁸⁶ The dedication to Terra Mater also suggests a mining activity, but we shall speak later about the dedications to this deity. However, the military presence at Potaissa consists not only in the mentions of the *legio V Macedonica*. Brick-stamps with the name of the *legio XIII Gemina* were also found.⁸⁷ One of them attests the name of Aurelius Menander.⁸⁸ This *magister figlinae* is mentioned on the stamps of two bricks from Salinae.⁸⁹ Normally, the main discoveries with his name come from Apulum and its environs⁹⁰, but there are another stamps found at Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa,⁹¹ Sebeș,⁹² and Micia.⁹³ From the onomastics, the bricks probably date from the 3rd century, in any case after 212. The other brick does not bear any name, but a presence before the coming of the *legio V Macedonica* at Potaissa is not excluded. However, these stamps clearly prove the short stay of sub-units belonging to the 13th Gemina legion. I cannot prove (because there is no dating argument to find) if one brick is dated before the Marcomanic wars, but if it is so, one of the reasons of this military presence is the defense of salt deposits from Potaissa (**Fig. 6**).

The dislocation of the 5th Macedonica legion near the salt deposits was in connection not only with the defense of the exploitation, but also with the food supply of the army. The deposits are among the richest in Transylvania and the extracted salt was sufficient for an entire legion. Its supplying was easier given that the deposits were next to the camp.

2.7. Războieni (Ad Vatabos) and Salinae (Ocna Mureș)

Războieni, situated 5 km north-east from Ocna Mureș, but on the other bank of the Mureș River, was the camp of the *ala I Batavorum miliaria*.⁹⁴ The unit controlled not only the saltmines from Ocna Mureș, but also the riverine circulation (**Fig. 7**).⁹⁵ The researches carried until a few years ago produced few results, and the historical interpretations were cautious and hesitant.⁹⁶ The camp was partially excavated in 1995–1996.⁹⁷ I. A. Oltean provided the aerial photos of the military *vicus* and of the camp.⁹⁸ V. Rusu-Bolindeț and C. Onofrei published a small sample of the pottery assemblage found in both castra and the civilian settlement.⁹⁹ Recent archaeological investigations confirmed the presence of

this military unit and of the civilian settlement.¹⁰⁰ Brand new geomagnetic surveys proved that the camp's surface was ca. 5.2 ha.¹⁰¹ These investigations revealed the *principia*, the barracks, the *praetorium* and the *horreum*.¹⁰² The stratigraphy of the camp was not clear from the geomagnetic prospections, nor the gate and tower construction works.¹⁰³ The surveys showed that a barrack room accommodated eight men; a corresponding number of horses were in the stables situated next to the barracks.¹⁰⁴ West from the camp, a military *vicus* was archaeologically attested.¹⁰⁵ There are another constructions north and north-west from the camp, which are assumed to belong to the same *vicus*.¹⁰⁶ The surveys revealed houses, small streets and other buildings along the *via decumana* of the *vicus*.¹⁰⁷ South to the camp, another *vicus* was identified.¹⁰⁸ Other complexes outside the *vicus* can be interpreted as *villae*, judging from their size.¹⁰⁹ The salt resources were in connection with the more important salt exploitation at Salinae, but they existed also next to Războieni.¹¹⁰

What about the epigraphic file for Războieni? Except the brick- and tile stamps with the name of *ala I Batavorum miliaria*,¹¹¹ other brick stamps mention *legio XIII Gemina*.¹¹² It is possible that some detached units of the legion were accommodated here, in order to oversee not only the salt exploitation, but also the transportation of goods on the Mureș River. On the other side, officers and soldiers of the *ala* are mentioned in Apulum. For example, C. Iulius Corinthianus, *tribunus* of this unit, died at Apulum around 200.¹¹³ Another soldier, horseman in the same *ala*, has an Illyrian origin (Dasas Scenobarbi).¹¹⁴ Aelius Dubitatus was freed from the unit and died at the age of 30 in Apulum.¹¹⁵

Identified with the ancient settlement Salinae, the archaeological excavations in the site of Ocna Mureș have revealed the traces of a camp. V. Wollmann states that the remains of a Roman surface exploitation and of buildings used for this purpose between Ocna Mureș and Șpălnaca were still visible in the 19th century.¹¹⁶ In any case, Ocna Mureș is located at ca. 55 km to the north-west of Alba Iulia, the headquarters of the *legio XIII Gemina*.

Foremost represented by the stamped bricks of the aforementioned legion, the epigraphic assemblage from Ocna Mureș also contains other interesting inscriptions, which we will discuss below. The bricks bearing the stamp of the legion are accompanied by anthroponyms of *cives Romani*,

⁸⁶ ILD 500.

⁸⁷ CIL III 1629, 17b; 8064-1k.

⁸⁸ CIL III 1829, 17b.

⁸⁹ IDR III/6, 164a, 167.

⁹⁰ IDR III/6, 165b, 165, 166; AE 1998, 1075d; IDR III/4, 47-5.

⁹¹ CIL III 1629-17a, 8065-20c-d.

⁹² AE 1971, 375e.

⁹³ AE 1975, 729j.

⁹⁴ For example, the bricks and the tiles with the name of this unit: IDR III/4, 78-81.

⁹⁵ See MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 377, but also the other works on Războieni and Ocna Mureș.

⁹⁶ CRIȘAN 1965, 63-74.

⁹⁷ BOTA/RUSCU/RUSCU/CIONGRADI 2004, 291-300.

⁹⁸ OLTEAN 2007, 158-159. See also MARCU 2009, 153.

⁹⁹ RUSU-BOLINDEȚ/ONOFREI 2010, 401-447.

¹⁰⁰ POPOVICI/VARGA 2010; VARGA 2012, 806-820; BOUNEGRU/VARGA 2017, 47-51.

¹⁰¹ MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 382.

¹⁰² MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 382-385, Abb. 6-7.

¹⁰³ MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 384.

¹⁰⁴ MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA, 389-390. See other situations by HODGSON/BIDWELL 2004, 123-131; SCHOLZ 2009, 55.

¹⁰⁵ MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 393.

¹⁰⁶ MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 303.

¹⁰⁷ MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 393.

¹⁰⁸ OLTEAN 2007, 158-159; MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 396.

¹⁰⁹ MISCHKA/RUBEL/VARGA 2018, 396-397.

¹¹⁰ See also ARDEVAN/VARGA 2010, 183-199.

¹¹¹ IDR III/4, 78-81; PISO/DEAC 2016, 12-1,2.

¹¹² IDR III/4, 77A-B.

¹¹³ IDR III/5, 442.

¹¹⁴ IDR III/5, 522.

¹¹⁵ IDR III/5, 475.

¹¹⁶ WOLLMANN 1996, 241. See also OLTEAN 2007, 182.

which are probably *magistri figlinae* (or *figlinarum*) — soldiers tasked with overseeing the manufacturing workshops. This is indicated by a stamp from *Apulum* in which the name of Aurelius Godes (also mentioned at Ocna Mureş) is accompanied by the group of letters ‘M F’ (interpreted by C. Băluță as *manu facit*, but actually designating responsibility — *magister figlinae* or *figlinarum*)¹¹⁷. B. Lörincz holds that these *magistri figlinarum* were regular soldiers, perhaps *immunes*¹¹⁸, a view also shared by Y. le Bohec. The few stone inscriptions with direct or indirect references—from Germania Inferior (Iulius Victor — *magister figlinarum*,¹¹⁹ two *immunes figlinarum*¹²⁰), Germania Superior (one *custos castelli figlinarum*)¹²¹, and Dacia (Drobeta — one in *figlinis magister super milites LX*)—confirm that these *magistri* were soldiers of the legion tasked with superintending the production of bricks on the property (properties) in which the legion’s workshops were found.

Besides Aurelius Godes, to whom this responsibility can be assigned, the other individuals lack such functions assigned to their names, but it follows that they were likewise soldiers of the legion (being Roman citizens) with similar attributions.

It must be stated from the onset that the presence of these stamped bricks at Ocna Mureş does not necessarily imply the presence of the legion in that place. But considering the number of such materials, the proximity to *Apulum*, and the economic and strategic importance of the exploitation from *Salinae*, the discussion is more complex and will be detailed after enumerating the more important epigraphic mentions from this settlement.

Thus, Ocna Mureş yielded two bricks of the *legio XIII Gemina* bearing the name of Lucretius Aquila¹²². Besides *Apulum*¹²³, tiles bearing the name of the same soldier are furthermore found at Germisara,¹²⁴ Micia,¹²⁵ Sebeş,¹²⁶ Sighişoara,¹²⁷ Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa¹²⁸, and Ampelum.¹²⁹ C. Băluță places these *tegulae*, on the basis of an archaeological context (presented superficially), not earlier than the rule of Marcus Aurelius¹³⁰, but it’s not excluded that they date from much later, starting with Caracalla¹³¹.

Flavius Heliodorus is another name mentioned on the stamped *tegulae* from Ocna Mureş.¹³² The same name is found on bricks of the *legio XIII Gemina* from Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa,¹³³ Micia¹³⁴ and, surely, *Apulum*.¹³⁵ The archaeological contexts in which the stamps were found are

¹¹⁷ IDR III/6, 163. BENE 2005, 143-150; BENE 2010, 207.

¹¹⁸ LÖRINCZ 1994-1997, 1999; LE BOHEC 2001, 1999.

¹¹⁹ CIL XIII 8739.

¹²⁰ AE 1930, 33.

¹²¹ KURZMANN 2005, 412.

¹²² IDR III/6, 225, 228.

¹²³ AE 1965, 39-14; 1995, 1293s; IDR III/6, 226-227, 229; OTA/LASCU 2011, 208-209.

¹²⁴ IDR III/3, 226-4B.

¹²⁵ IDR III/3, 195-18A-B.

¹²⁶ AE 1971, 375F.

¹²⁷ CIL III 8065-31I.

¹²⁸ IDR III/2, 541-7.

¹²⁹ AE 1911, 37.

¹³⁰ IDR III/6, 226 *sqq.*, *sub numero*.

¹³¹ See OTA/LASCU 2011, 208-209.

¹³² IDR III/6, 183.

¹³³ IDR III/2, 541-6.

¹³⁴ CIL III 8065-25B.

¹³⁵ IDR III/6, 182-184; OTA/LASCU 2011, 208.

not relevant, so we can date these bricks to the last quarter of the 2nd century and the first half of the 3rd century.

Iulius Deiotarus¹³⁶ and Ulpus Fronto¹³⁷ are two names of *magistri figlinarum* attested at Ocna Mureş. Both names are recorded elsewhere in Dacia. Besides *Apulum*¹³⁸, Iulius Deiotarus is also attested at Micia.¹³⁹ Ulpus Fronto is attested only at *Apulum*.¹⁴⁰ Like in the previous cases, the *tegulae* date not earlier than the last quarter of the 2nd century.

Another soldier mentioned on the stamped bricks from Ocna Mureş is Aurelius Dionisius¹⁴¹, a name also found at *Apulum*.¹⁴² An Aurelius Dionisius consecrates an altar at Micia to the genius Turmazgadas¹⁴³, a Syrian god¹⁴⁴. With the *cohors II Flavia Commagenorum* having stationed at Micia, we can presume that the Aurelius Dionisius from here was a *curator* in this military unit. This makes it hard to identify this *curator cohortis* with the soldier from the stamps of *Apulum*. In any case, the gentilicium Aurelius argues for a dating of these stamps starting with Caracalla.

Another name encountered on the bricks from *Salinae* is that of Aurelius Callistratus.¹⁴⁵ Besides *Apulum*,¹⁴⁶ tiles mentioning his name have also been found at Micia and its environs¹⁴⁷. His onomastics point to a dating starting with the rule of Caracalla.

We also propose the same dating for the stamps bearing the name of soldier Aurelius Caius¹⁴⁸ attested, besides *Apulum*¹⁴⁹, at Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa¹⁵⁰ and also Sighişoara.¹⁵¹

A frequent name encountered on the *tegulae* is that of Aurelius Enthimus. At Ocna Mureş it is found once¹⁵². Besides *Apulum* and its environs¹⁵³, his name is also attested on bricks at Şard,¹⁵⁴ Sighişoara,¹⁵⁵ Brucla,¹⁵⁶ Cenad¹⁵⁷, and Sănnicolau Mare.¹⁵⁸ Al. Flutur proposed in the case of the discoveries from Cenad and Sănnicolau Mare that the bricks were carried there sometimes in the Middle Ages.¹⁵⁹ This is possible, but a Roman military presence should not be excluded. That no Roman fortifications have been found does not necessarily prove that soldiers of the *legio XIII Gemina* were not stationed there. In this case too, a dating post-Caracalla is likely.

¹³⁶ CIL III 8065-29a.

¹³⁷ CIL III 8065-34a.

¹³⁸ CIL III 8065-29c; AE 1995, 1293m; IDR III/6, 202-205.

¹³⁹ AE 1975, 729m, CIL III 8065-29b, IDR III/3, 195-15a.

¹⁴⁰ AE 1995, 1293v, IDR III/6, 249, 251-253, 254b, 456.

¹⁴¹ IDR III/6, 150a.

¹⁴² IDR III/6, 150b.

¹⁴³ IDR III/3, 149.

¹⁴⁴ See SANIE 1981, 99-103; NEMETI 2005, 235-238; NEMETI 2013, 140.

¹⁴⁵ CIL III 8065-13a.

¹⁴⁶ IDR III/6, 143-147.

¹⁴⁷ CIL III 1629-10a-c; 8065-13f.

¹⁴⁸ At Ocna Mureş: CIL III 8065-17b-c.

¹⁴⁹ IDR III/6, 140a-d.

¹⁵⁰ IDR III/2, 235.

¹⁵¹ IDR III/4, 194.

¹⁵² CIL III 8065-18b; OTA/LASCU 2011, 208.

¹⁵³ IDR III/6, 151a-c; III/4, 47-2.

¹⁵⁴ IDR III/4, 51-2.

¹⁵⁵ IDR III/4, 194-1.

¹⁵⁶ CIL III 8065-18d.

¹⁵⁷ IDR III/1, 277g.

¹⁵⁸ IDR III/1, 275b.

¹⁵⁹ FLUTUR 2010, 63-67.

Aurelius Menander is attested on the stamps of two bricks from Salinae¹⁶⁰. Besides Apulum and its environs¹⁶¹, this name is attested at Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa,¹⁶² Sebeș,¹⁶³ Potaissa,¹⁶⁴ and Micia¹⁶⁵. I'm inclined to assign these bricks likewise to the 3rd century, in any case after 212.

Also from the same period date the stamped bricks bearing the name of Aurelius Mommo, numbering two at Ocna Mureș¹⁶⁶. The name of this *magister figlinae* is found, besides Apulum,¹⁶⁷ at Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa¹⁶⁸ and Micia.¹⁶⁹

Finally, Aurelius Godes, *magister figlinae* of *legio XIII Gemina*, is found in two instances at Salinae.¹⁷⁰ His name is obviously attested at Apulum and the surrounding area,¹⁷¹ but also at Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa,¹⁷² Păuca,¹⁷³ Cenad¹⁷⁴, and Sânnicolau Mare.¹⁷⁵ Like in the case of the other Aurelii *magistri figlinarum*, these bricks date from the period after 212.

The epigraphic assemblage from Ocna Mureș contains several other interesting texts. One is a votive inscription to Apollo by Atilius Celsianus, *decurio*.¹⁷⁶ The character is undoubtedly *decurio* in an auxiliary unit, very likely the *ala I Batavorum*, located nearby, at Războieni-Cetate (Ad Vatabos).

An extremely fragmentary funerary text mentions another *decurio*, most likely belonging to the same unit¹⁷⁷: Aurelius C[api?]to, *tesserarius* in *legio V Macedonica* is commemorated by his wife Aelia Candida. On account of the name of the character and the date of the legion's presence in Dacia, the inscription can definitely be dated after Caracalla, but it also shows that the soldiers of this legion had brief missions at Salinae.

Finally, we can conclude the review of the most important inscriptions from this settlement without mentioning the altar dedicated to the goddesses Diana and Terra Mater by a character (or characters) whose name(s) has not been preserved.¹⁷⁸ Terra Mater is a divinity worshiped in the mining areas of the Balkan-Danubian provinces.¹⁷⁹ In Moesia Superior, in the Rudnik mining area, the temple of the goddess, ruined by old age, is rebuilt under the rule of Septimius Severus.¹⁸⁰ In Dalmatia, in the Ljubija mining district, Terra Mater is found on six dedications, on part of functionaries from the iron exploitation administration.¹⁸¹

In Dacia, three inscriptions come from the Alburnus Maior area, the main center of gold mining. They were produced by the workers of the gold mines.¹⁸² Besides the inscription from Salinae, Terra Mater is also mentioned in two centers of salt exploitation, specifically at Potaissa (Roman citizens from the *vicus* through the intercession of *magistri*)¹⁸³ and Domnești (by Atticus, *actor* of Publius Aelius Marius, *conductor pascui et salinarum*).¹⁸⁴ The text from Salinae, albeit fragmentary, is linked to the exploitation of salt in this place.

The epigraphic dossier from Ocna Mureș, even if it has not been presented exhaustively, is particularly relevant for underlying the importance of salt exploitation in the area. The ancient name of the settlement, corroborated by the altar dedicated to the goddess Terra Mater, discussed above, confirm the exploitation of this resource in the present-day Ocna Mureș. The stamped bricks likewise have special significance. It could be argued that their presence does not necessarily imply the presence of legionnaires. But we notice that at Salinae the most frequent mentions are of *magistri figlinarum* of *legio XIII Gemina*, whose activity span most probably from the end of the 2nd century to the middle of the 3rd century. The stamped bricks bear the name of no less than eleven *magistri figlinarum*: Lucretius Aquila, Flavius Heliodorus, Iulius Deiotarus, Ulpianus Fronto, Aurelius Dionisius, Aurelius Callistratus, Aurelius Caius, Aurelius Enthimus, Aurelius Menander, Aurelius Mommo, Aurelius Godes. Many of these (foremost the Aurelii) bear Greek (Heliodorus, Dionisius, Callistratus, Enthimus, Menander) or Eastern (Godes) *cognomina*. The proximity to Apulum and the importance of the resource for the army, as well as for the civilian populace, explains the large number of individuals mentioned on the stamped bricks. Even if a castra of a military unit has not been discovered, the presence of soldiers in mission cannot be denied. In point of fact, the inscription Atilius Celsianus or the epitaph of Aurelius C[api?]to clearly shows that the soldiers of the *ala I Batavorum* and of the *legio XIII Gemina* were present at Salinae. Even though the castra from Războieni-Cetate was closer to Salinae than Apulum, the number of soldiers from the legion and the power of the legion account for the control of this territory by the *legio XIII Gemina*. In point of fact, a stamped brick with the name of the legion was even found in the castra from Războieni-Cetate¹⁸⁵.

To conclude, several soldiers were present at Salinae, most from *legio XIII Gemina*, tasked with ensuring the protection of the salt exploitation in the region. Very probably, their number varied throughout time and according to the efficiency of exploitation, though a higher concentration of troops occurred at the end of the 2nd century and probably under the Severans. At Războieni, the task of the *ala I Batavorum miliaria* was not only to defend the salt exploitation, but also to survey the circulation of goods on the Mureș River. Furthermore, the supplying with salt was important in itself for the auxiliary unit accommodated at Războieni.

¹⁶⁰ IDR III/6, 164a, 167.

¹⁶¹ IDR III/6, 165b, 165, 166; AE 1998, 1075d; IDR III/4, 47-5.

¹⁶² CIL III 1629-17a, 8065-20c-d.

¹⁶³ AE 1971, 375e.

¹⁶⁴ CIL III 1629-17b, 8065-22e.

¹⁶⁵ AE 1975, 729j.

¹⁶⁶ CIL III 8065-14 (most likely Mommo); IDR III/6, 170.

¹⁶⁷ IDR III/6, 168-169.

¹⁶⁸ CIL III 1629-11e, 8065-23e.

¹⁶⁹ IDR III/3, 195-11.

¹⁷⁰ CIL III 8065-20a; IDR III/6, 155.

¹⁷¹ IDR III/6, 156-163; IDR III/4, 42, 47-4, 51-3.

¹⁷² IDR III/2, 541-2.

¹⁷³ IDR III/4, 45.

¹⁷⁴ CIL III 8065-20e.

¹⁷⁵ IDR III/1, 275e.

¹⁷⁶ IDR III/4, 72.

¹⁷⁷ IDR III/4, 68.

¹⁷⁸ IDR III/4, 67.

¹⁷⁹ See also DUŠANIĆ 1999, 129; NEMETI/NEMETI 2010, 119-120.

¹⁸⁰ ILJug 71. See also HORSTER 2001, 411.

¹⁸¹ ILJug 158-159, 161, 778-781. See also MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2006, 153-

154, 162-163.

¹⁸² ILD 378, 397, 409.

¹⁸³ ILD 500.

¹⁸⁴ ILD 804. I have adopted the lecture of DANA/ZĂGREANU 2013, 31, more plausible than that of BENEĂ 2007, 43 (see also MIHAILESCU-BÎRLIBA 2016, 54, 57).

¹⁸⁵ IDR III/4, 77.

2.8. Ocna Sibiului

Ocna Sibiului is a rich saliferous area, which was certainly exploited in the Roman period (**Fig. 8**). However, the area is poor in epigraphic monuments. On the Topârca road, a military camp has been identified.¹⁸⁶ The camp has a rectangular form with four round-shaped towers at the corners. It was a marching camp and very likely more detachments of several units were stationed there. B. Moinier showed that rock salt was used for the treatment of the leather for the soldiers' tents.¹⁸⁷ It is clear that Moinier's hypothesis cannot be overall applied, but the rock salt resources in Ocna Sibiului make this theory possible in this case.

At Sibiu (thus practically next to Ocna Sibiului) there were discovered many tile- and brick-stamps bearing the name of military units, like *legio XIII Gemina*¹⁸⁸ and *cohors I Alpinorum*.¹⁸⁹ One brick-stamp contains the name of the *magister figlinae* of the legion: Flavius Martinus.¹⁹⁰ This *magister* is mentioned on twelve other brick-stamps, ten found at Apulum,¹⁹¹ one at Cenad¹⁹², and one at Sebeș.¹⁹³ In the case of Cenad, we have already mentioned the opinion of Al. Flutur according to which in the case of the discoveries from Cenad the bricks were carried there sometimes in the Middle Ages.¹⁹⁴ However, a military presence cannot be excluded. Like other cases of *magistri figlinae* in Apulum, an exact dating cannot be made, but we can presume that Flavius Martinus could be related to another *magister*, Flavius Heliodorus, so a dating from the end of the 2nd c. to the first half of the 3rd c. is possible.

At Gusterița (a neighborhood of Sibiu), a brick-stamp mention the *cohors N(umidarum)*.¹⁹⁵ The cohort is attested in Dacia inferior¹⁹⁶ and it is not surprising that this stamp appears in the area of Sibiu, on the other side of the Carpathians. Taking into account that other bricks or tiles with the stamp of the same unit bore the epithet *Antoniniana*,¹⁹⁷ we can date this brick before Caracalla.

In conclusion, at Ocna Sibiului there were small troops defending the saltworks. Detachments from *legio XIII Gemina cohors I Alpinorum* and *cohors Numidarum* were certainly there, but it is not excluded that other units were also present. The camp from Ocna Sibiului could only accommodate small units on the move, but it was sufficient for the defense of the salt exploitation.

2.9. Ocnele Mari-Buridava

Ocnele Mari is another area where halite deposits have been identified. Even though no archaeological interventions have been carried out, the likelihood of Roman

¹⁸⁶ LUCA/PINTER/GEORGESCU 2003, 158. See also <http://ran.cimec.ro/sel.asp?descript=ocna-sibiului-oras-ocna-sibiului-sibiu-castrul-roman-de-la-ocna-sibiului-drumul-toparcii-cod-sit-ran-143860.05>.

¹⁸⁷ MOINIER 2013, 367-388.

¹⁸⁸ CIL III 1629-11; 8065-26c.

¹⁸⁹ CIL III 1633-23.

¹⁹⁰ CIL III 8065-c.

¹⁹¹ CIL III 12612g; AE 1995, 1293k; 1997, 1291; IDR III/6, 185, 185a, 186, 187, 187a, 188-189.

¹⁹² IDR III/1, 227i.

¹⁹³ AE 1971, 375d.

¹⁹⁴ FLUTUR 2010, 63-67.

¹⁹⁵ IDR III/4, 174.

¹⁹⁶ See ȚENȚEA/MATEI-POPESCU 2004, 290, with bibliography.

¹⁹⁷ IDR III/4, 177.

exploitation are rather high. Not far from here, the Romans built the camp of Buridava (**Fig. 9**). The camp was primarily founded for strategic reasons during Trajan's Dacian wars. Tile- and brick-stamps with the names of the three legions that took part in the Dacian conflict (together or separately) were found here.¹⁹⁸ The strategic role of the camp is beyond any doubt, with the units stationed here controlling the gorge of the river Olt.

Besides the stamps containing the names of the aforementioned legions, there are three more auxiliary units attested on the same type of sources. One of them is *cohors I Augusta Nervia Pacensis miliaria Brittonum*.¹⁹⁹ The cohort received battle honors and the reward of Roman citizenship at Darnithithi during Trajan's second Dacian war, as evidenced by a special diploma of 110.²⁰⁰ The cohort is also recorded in military diplomas from Dacia of 109 and 110 as *cohors I Brittonum milliaria Ulpia torquata c. R.*²⁰¹ Another unit is *cohors II Flavia Bessorum*.²⁰² Both units belong to the army of Moesia Inferior, and their presence at Buridava is connected with the information from the so-called *Hunt papyrus*, attesting to the presence of military units from Lower Moesia at Buridava.²⁰³

The aforementioned units are definitely related to the second Dacian war, in which the Roman troops prepared the entrance in the Olt gorge. Not far from Buridava, at Bârsești, another Roman fort was built and the *cohors II Flavia Bessorum*²⁰⁴ was attested. D. Tudor read the name of *cohors IX Batavorum* on a brick-stamp,²⁰⁵ but a new lecture proposed by F. Matei-Popescu, doubled with historical and epigraphic arguments, convincingly shows that this cohort never was dislocated to Moesia Inferior or to Dacia Inferior.²⁰⁶

It seems that all the units mentioned at Buridava and Bârsești are connected with the second Dacian war, and that they did not stay in the region after the war concluded. The fort was nevertheless occupied until the Roman army left the province²⁰⁷, and it is certain that some of its units controlled not only the Olt gorge, but also the salt deposits from Ocnele Mari.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The salt exploitations were, as we have already seen, defended by the Roman army (see **Fig. 10**). First of all, we should not exaggerate the army's mission. The camps were situated in a prioritary strategic position, in order to defend important objectives of the province (river gorges, mountain's passes, the frontier with Barbaricum). However, our opinion is that the Roman administration sought to place these castra in such a way that the army could control and defend the strategic points and the salt exploitations at the same time. The salt resources were supply sources for the army, too.

¹⁹⁸ IDR II, 556-558, ILD 151b.

¹⁹⁹ AE 1967, 420; IDR II, 560

²⁰⁰ CIL XVI 160.

²⁰¹ CIL XVI 163; RMD III 148. See also ROXAN 1999, 252-253.

²⁰² IDR II, 561-562.

²⁰³ See FINK 1971, 217-227. Moreover, see PETOLESCU/POPESCU 2008, 358-359.

²⁰⁴ IDR II, 571.

²⁰⁵ TUDOR 1965, 184. See also BIANCARDI 2002, 245-251.

²⁰⁶ MATEI-POPESCU 2004-2005, 55-60.

²⁰⁷ PURECE 2012, 91.

There were two main types of salt resources: the salt springs and the rock salt deposits. In both cases, the distance between the salt resources and the military camps does not exceed 20 km. Some important salt exploitations were controlled not only by the auxiliary units, but also by sub-units of the main legions (*legio XIII Gemina* and *legio V Macedonica*). At Salinae the most frequent mentions are of *magistri figlinarum* of *legio XIII Gemina*. Even if a castra of a military unit has not been discovered on the ground, the presence of soldiers in mission is beyond any doubt. The castra from Războieni–Cetate was closer to Salinae than Apulum; however, the number of soldiers from the legion and the power of the legion proved that this territory was control conjointly by the *legio XIII Gemina* and by the *ala I Batavorum*. The salt exploitations from Turda were the most important in Dacia; before the coming of the 5th Macedonica legion, exploitation already took place. Surely, a military presence is not well attested epigraphically, but the brick stamps of the 13th Gemina legion show that this legion controlled all the important mines until 170. After that, the presence of the *legio V Macedonica* not only assured the frontier's control, but also the mines' defense.

Other mines were also defended by auxiliary units (like Ocna Dejului, Ocna Sibiului and Ocnele Mari). Gherla was home to the *ala II Pannoniorum*: the unit assured the control of the Ocna Dejului mines, but also of the salt surface resources from Sic and Cojocna. At Ocna Sibiului, tile- and brick-stamps mention the *legio XIII Gemina*, *cohors I Alpinorum*, and *cohors Numidarum*. Their presence is confirmed by the existence of a small camp. At Buridava, except for the units stationed during the second Dacian war, no other is attested in this location, but the camp proves that there was a rather strong military presence in the area. Other salt mines were in Sovata and Praid. Not far from Sovata was the camp of *cohors I Alpinorum* at Sărățeni, while the units accommodated at Inlăceni (*cohors VIII Raetorum c. R. eq. torq.*,²⁰⁸ *cohors III Hispanorum* and likely *cohors I Alpinorum* and *cohors II Gallorum*) defended the mines from Praid.

Besides the salt mines, the salt springs also came to the attention of the army, very likely the most important ones. Domnești was not only such a place, but also an administration center. The inscriptions attested both clerks and soldiers. The *centurio regionarius* mentioned at Domnești had police duties with respect to both the pastures and the saltworks. Two camps are attested not far from Domnești. Ilișua was for a long time the castra for *ala I Tungrorum Frontoniana*, while Orheiul Bistriței accommodated the *cohors I Hispanorum milliaria equitata*. Another important area with salt spring was that of Sânpaul–Mărtiniș–Ocland. At Sânpaul, like at Domnești, an administrative clerk is mentioned, but there are also bricks bearing the name *n(umerus) M(aurorum) S(---)*. At Ocland, the archaeological excavation revealed a fortlet; an inscription of a *beneficiarius consularis* found at Crăciunel (village part of Ocland) revealed a *statio* of *beneficarii* controlling the road along the saliferous area (Ocland–Mărtiniș). Olteni was the camp of a probable *c(ohors) IIII Bel(garum)*: the area is quite rich in salt springs.

As we can notice, even though the strategic role of the units took precedence, the defense of the salt exploitations

was not at all neglected. The supplying with salt of the units was another important military objective. Thus, in this regard, the presence of the army next to salt resources is perfectly explainable through the importance of this resource not only for the province, but for the *exercitus* itself.

There is another last aspect less clear for the province of Dacia. B. Moinier stated that rock salt was extremely useful for the treatment of the tents' leather, which was practiced by auxiliary units in march.²⁰⁹ Considering the dimensions of the camps, only at Ocland and Sibiu we can speak about castra for troops on the move. Rock salt deposits were found only at Ocna Sibiului, while at Ocland there were salt springs. I am not questioning Moinier's analysis for other regions of the Empire, but this association is hard to prove for Roman Dacia, even if it cannot be excluded.

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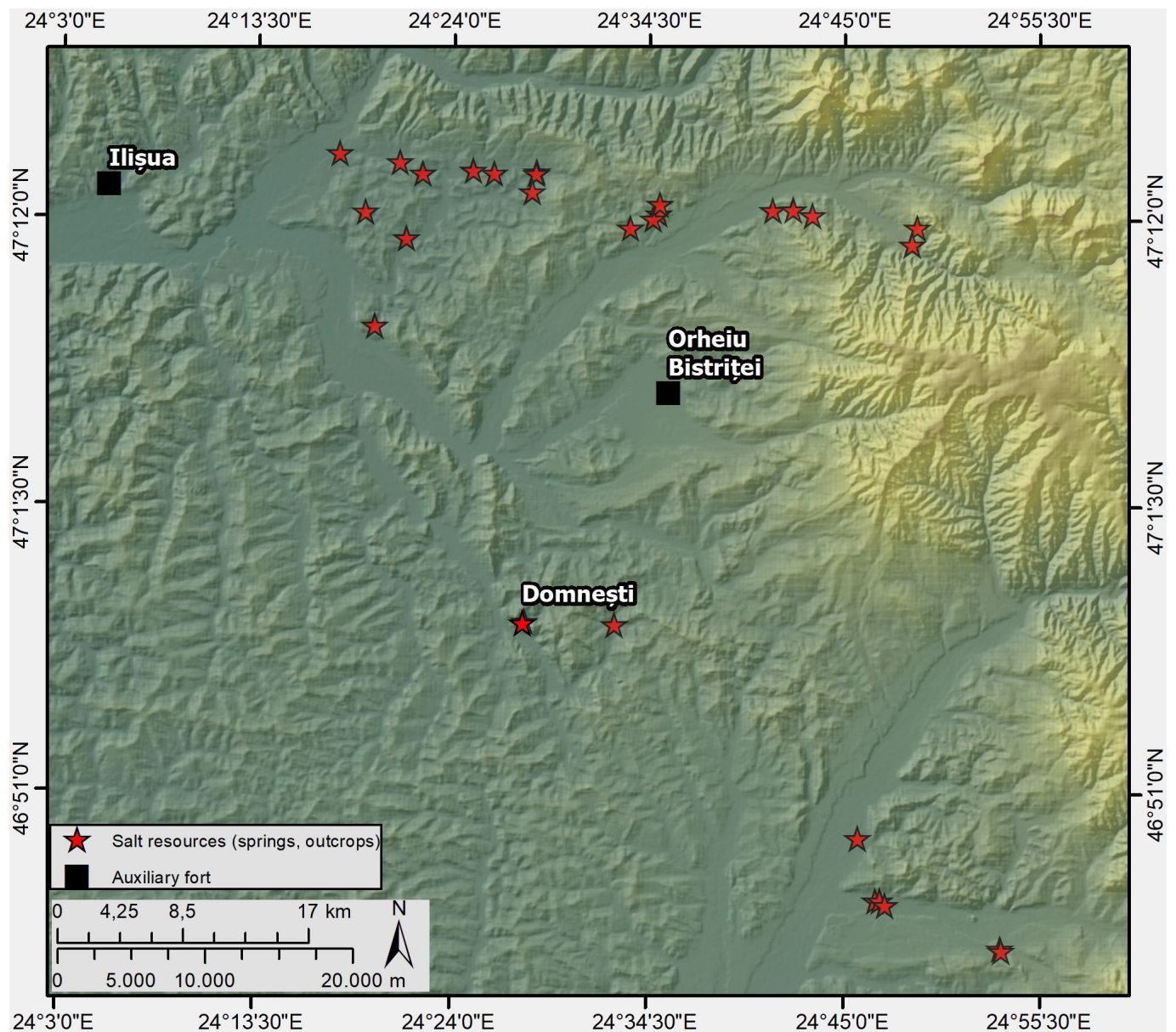


Fig. 1. Domnești-Ilișua-Orheiul Bistriței

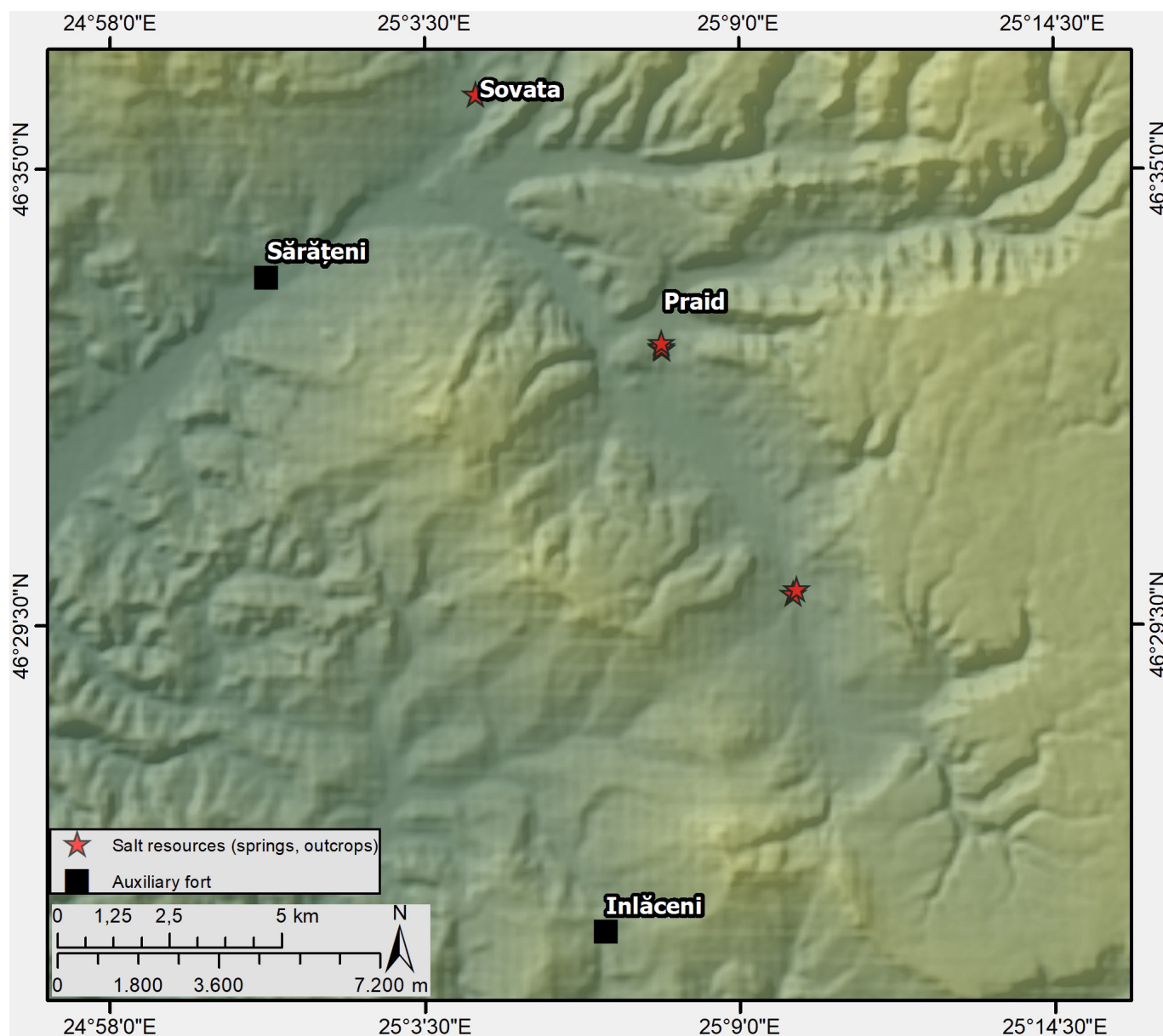


Fig. 2. Sovata-Praid-Sărățeni-Inlăceni

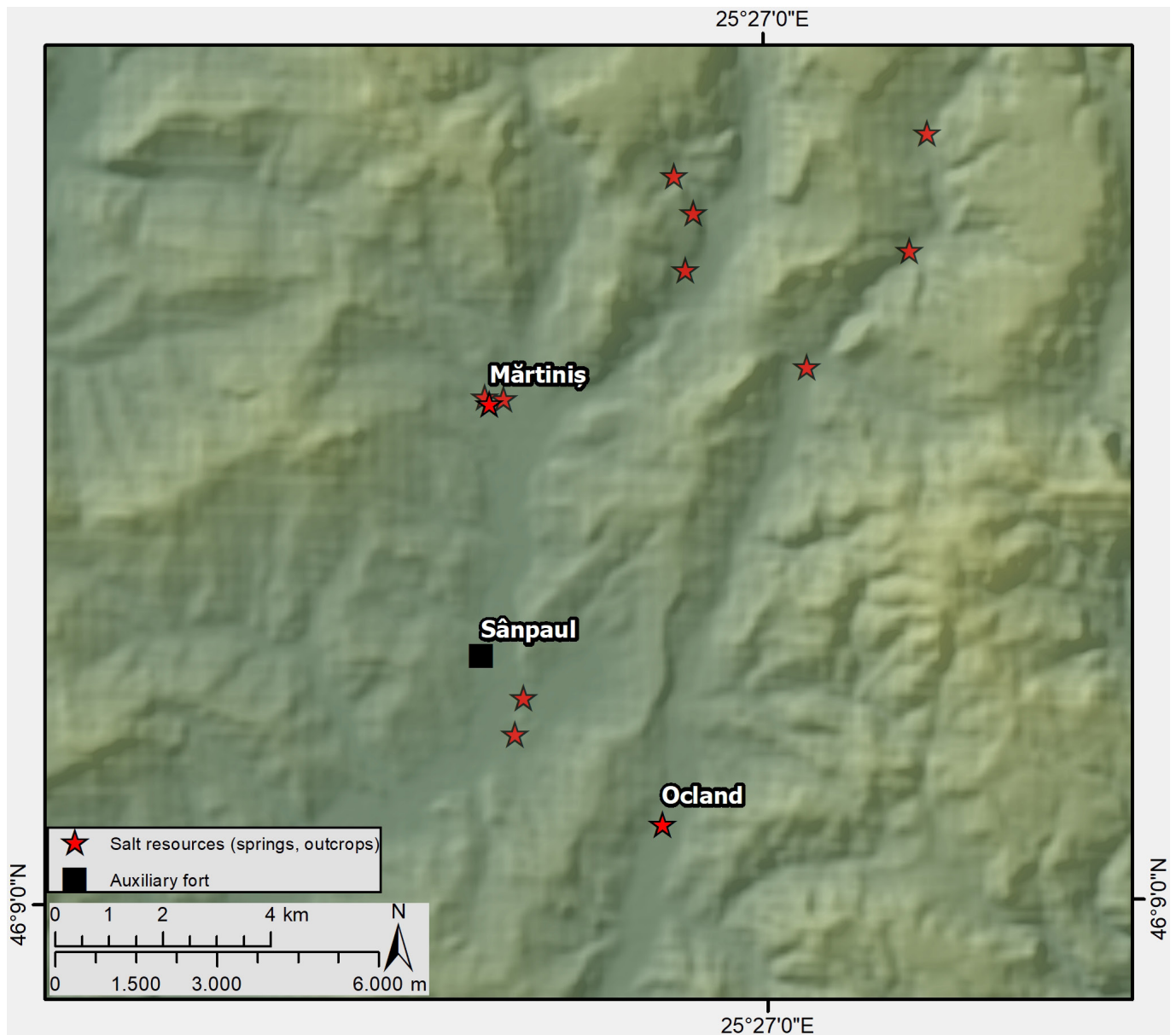


Fig. 3. Sânpaul-Ocland-Mărtiniș

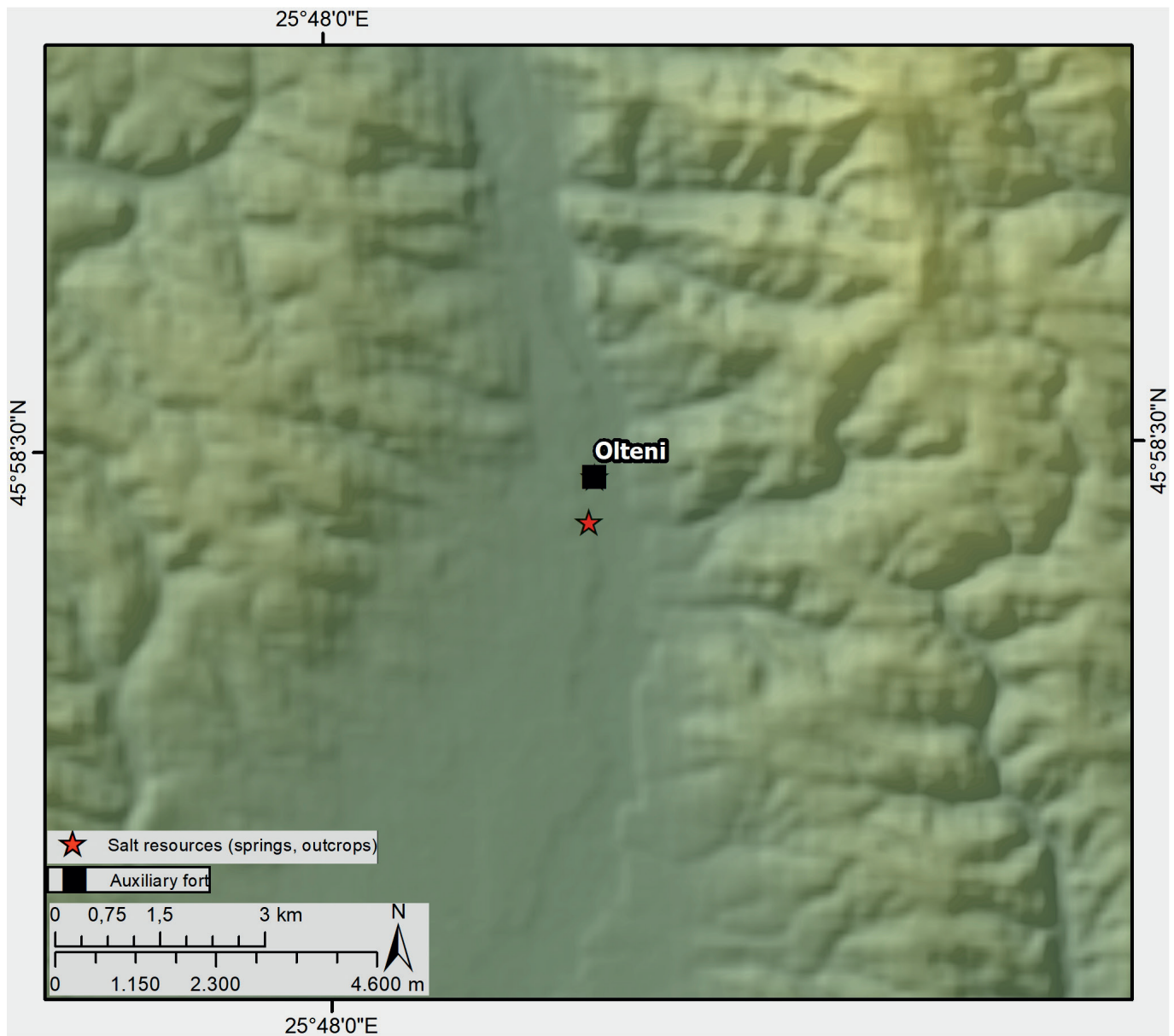


Fig. 4. Olteni (camp and salt exploitation)

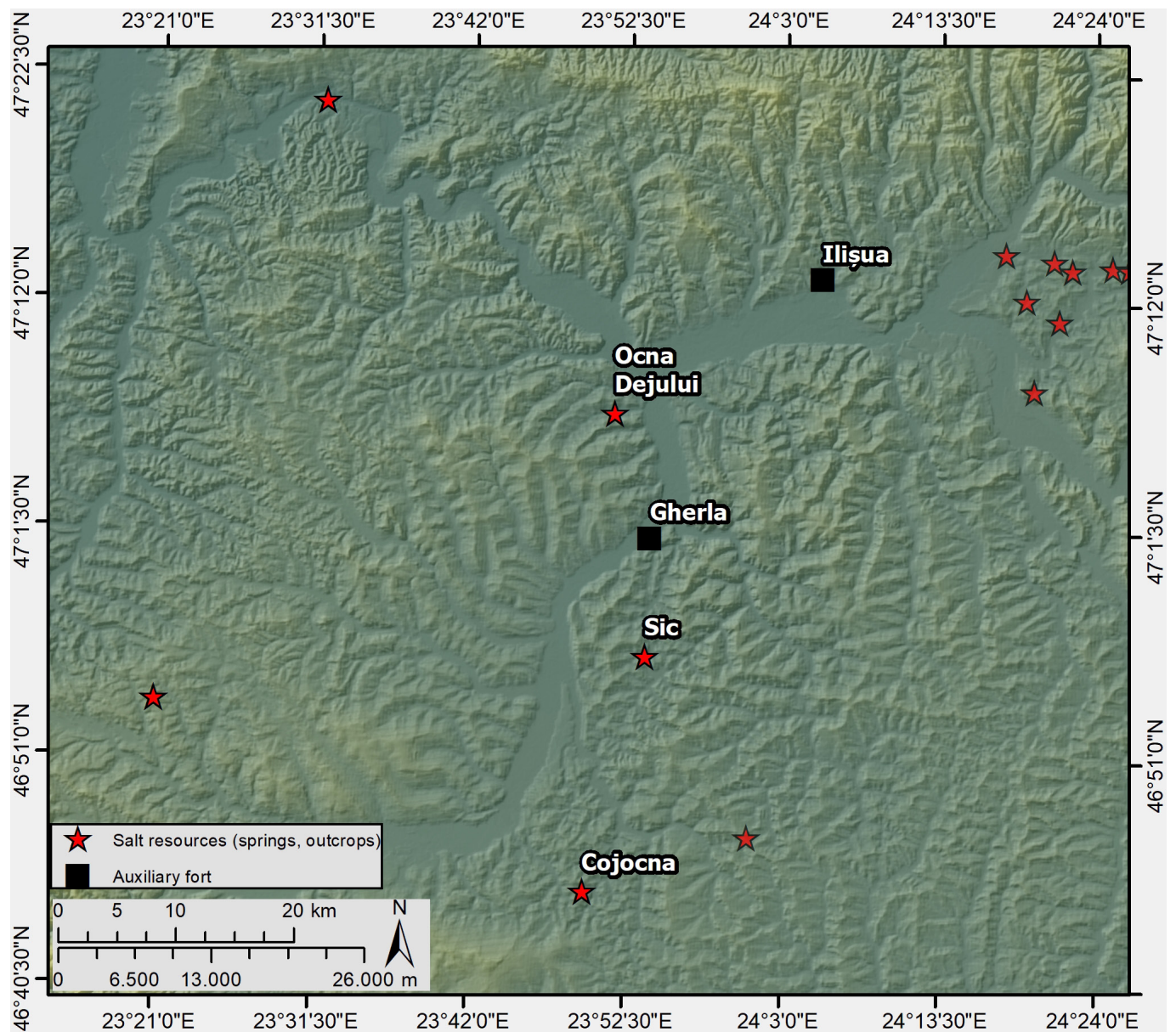


Fig. 5. Ocna Dejului-Sic-Cojocna-Gherla

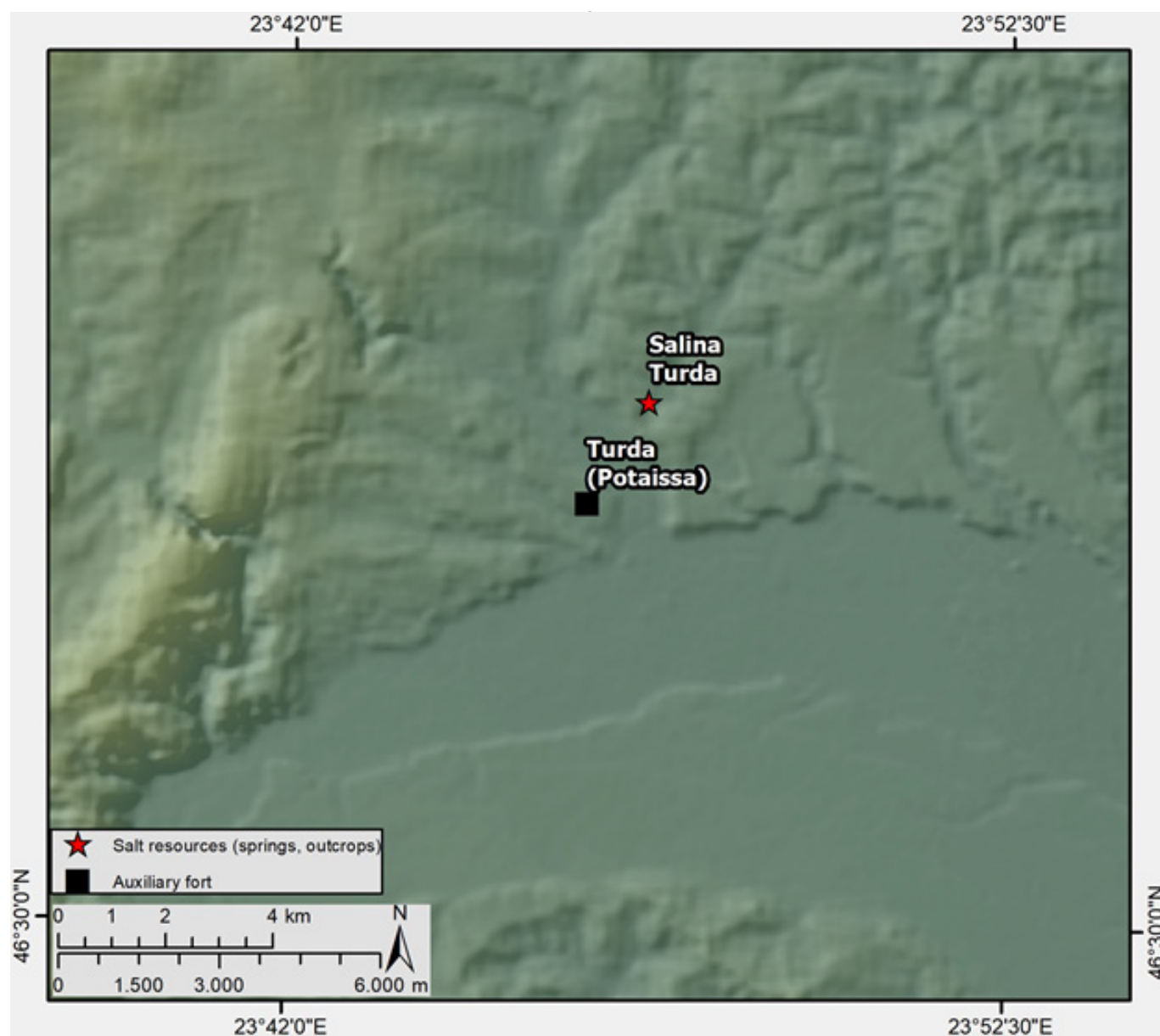


Fig. 6. Potaissa (Turda) – Turda salt mine (Salina Turda)

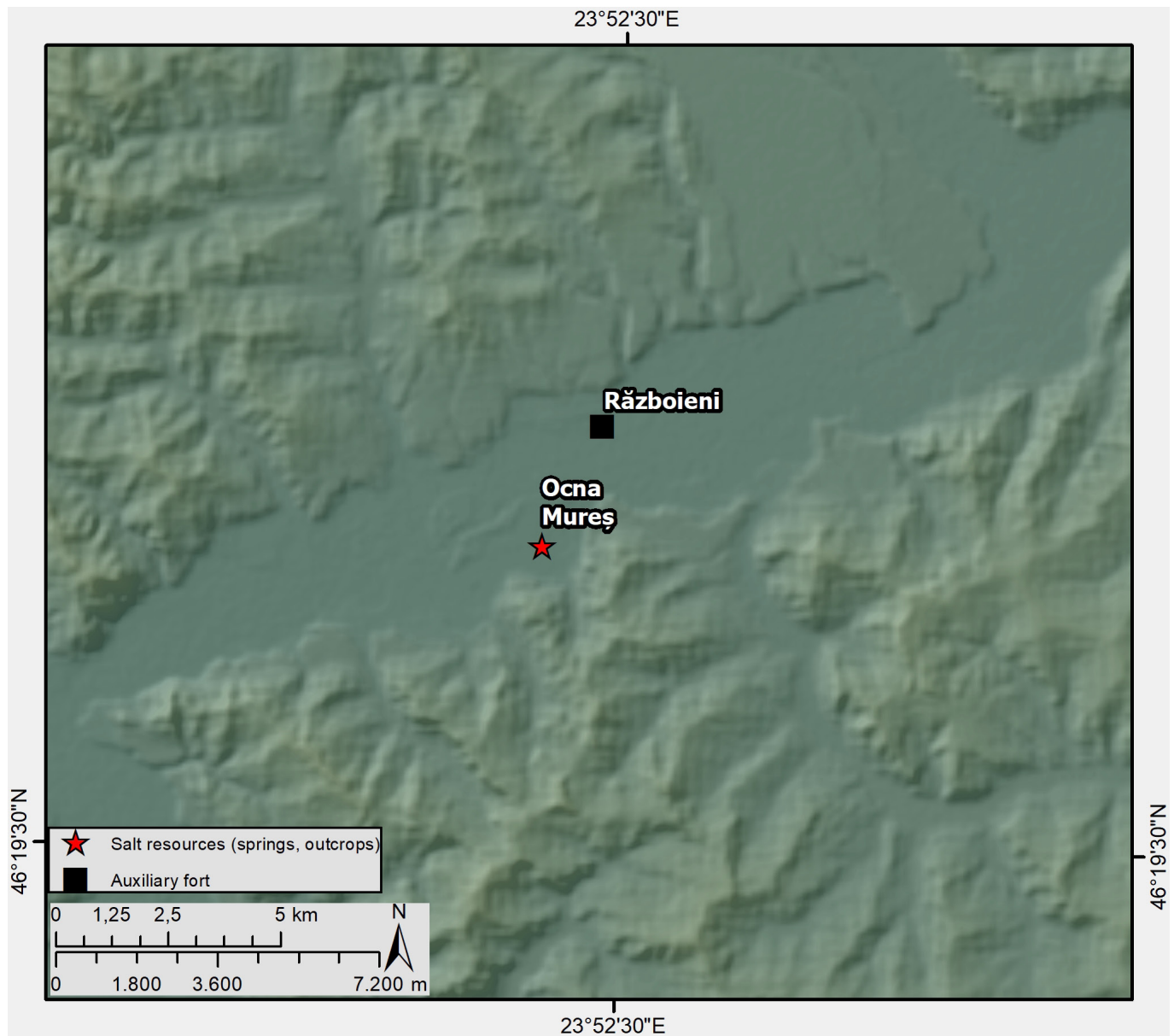


Fig. 7. Războieni-Ocna Mureș (Salinae)

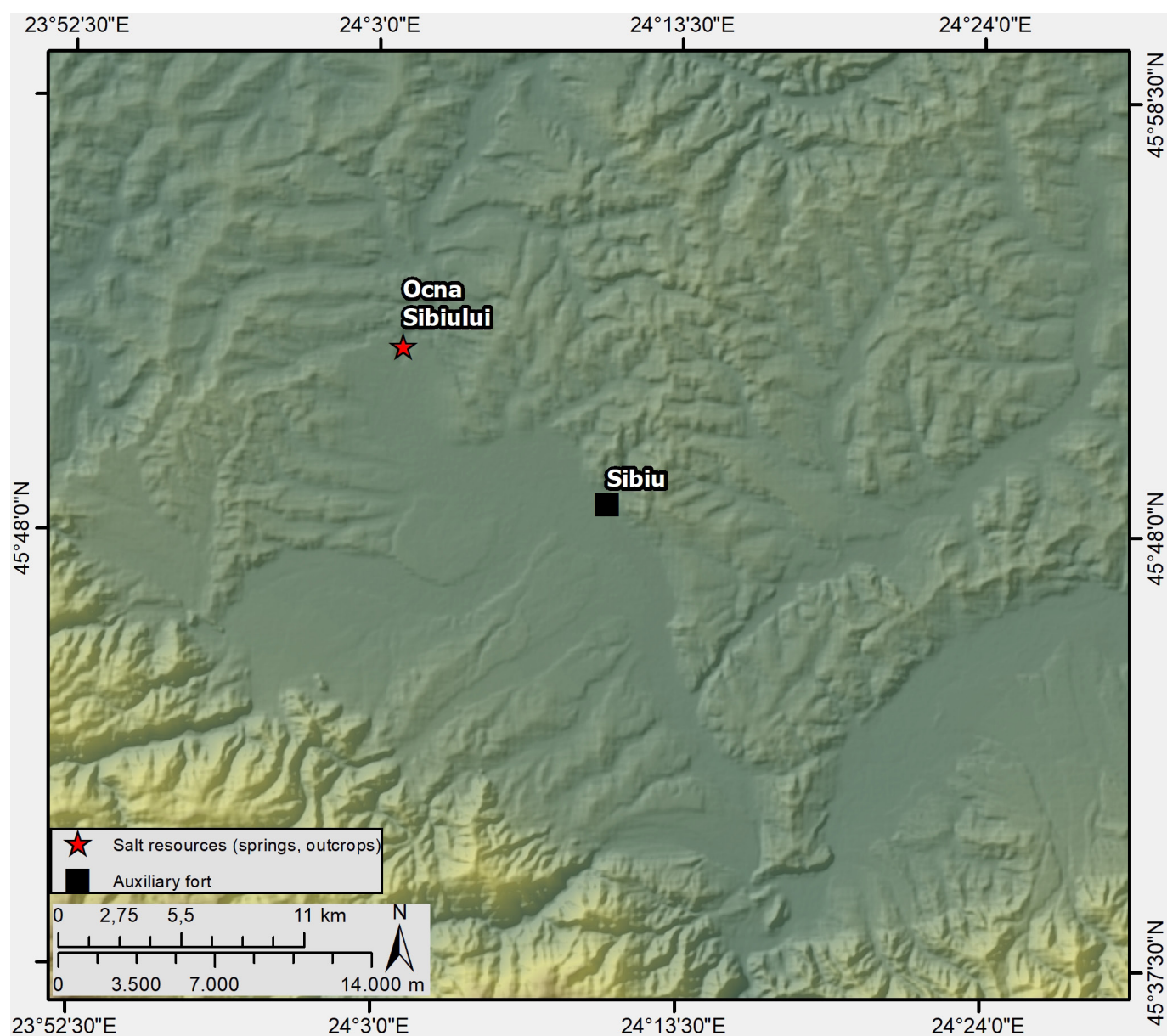


Fig. 8. Ocna Sibiului-Sibiu

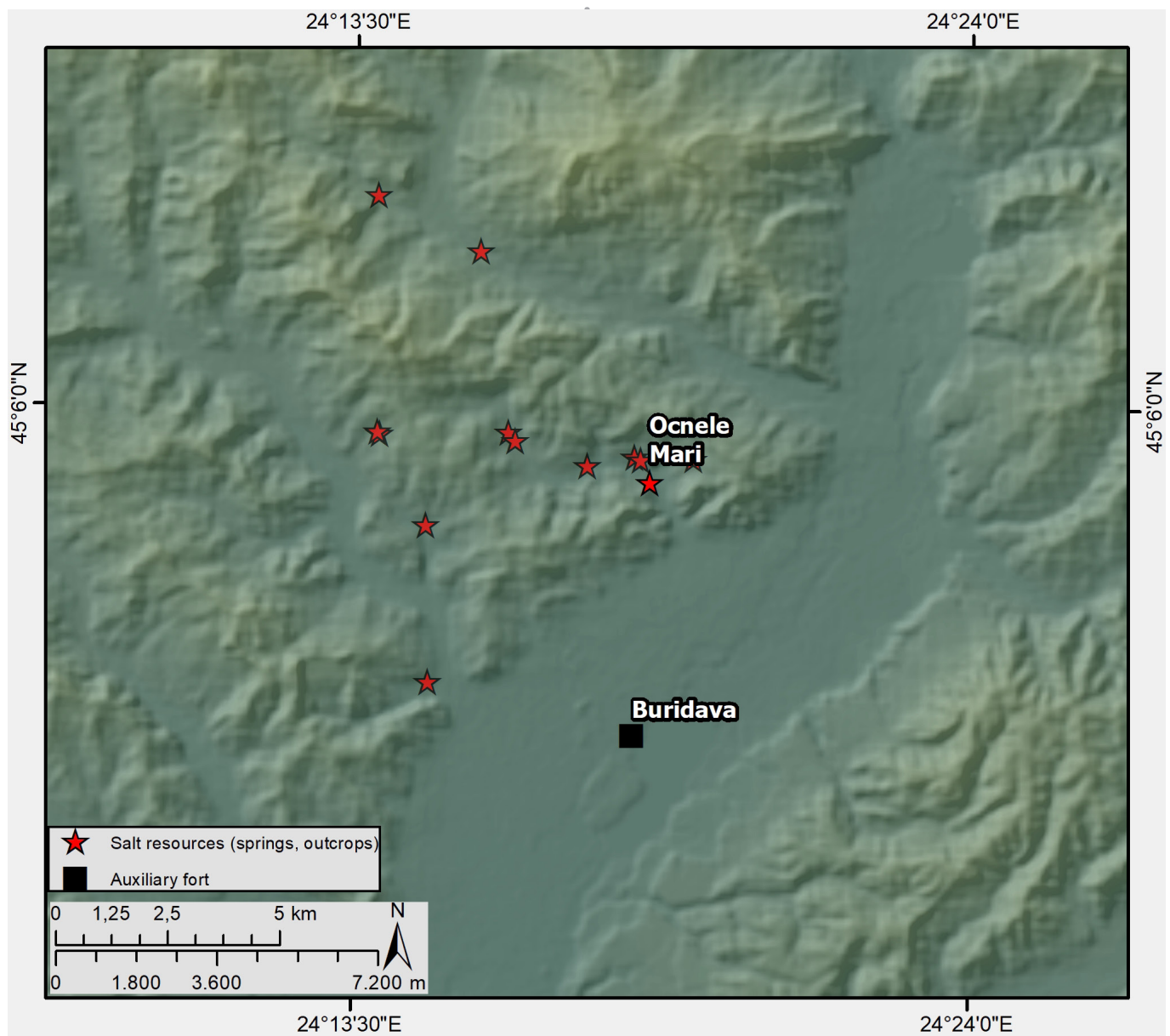


Fig. 9. Ocnele Mari-Buridava

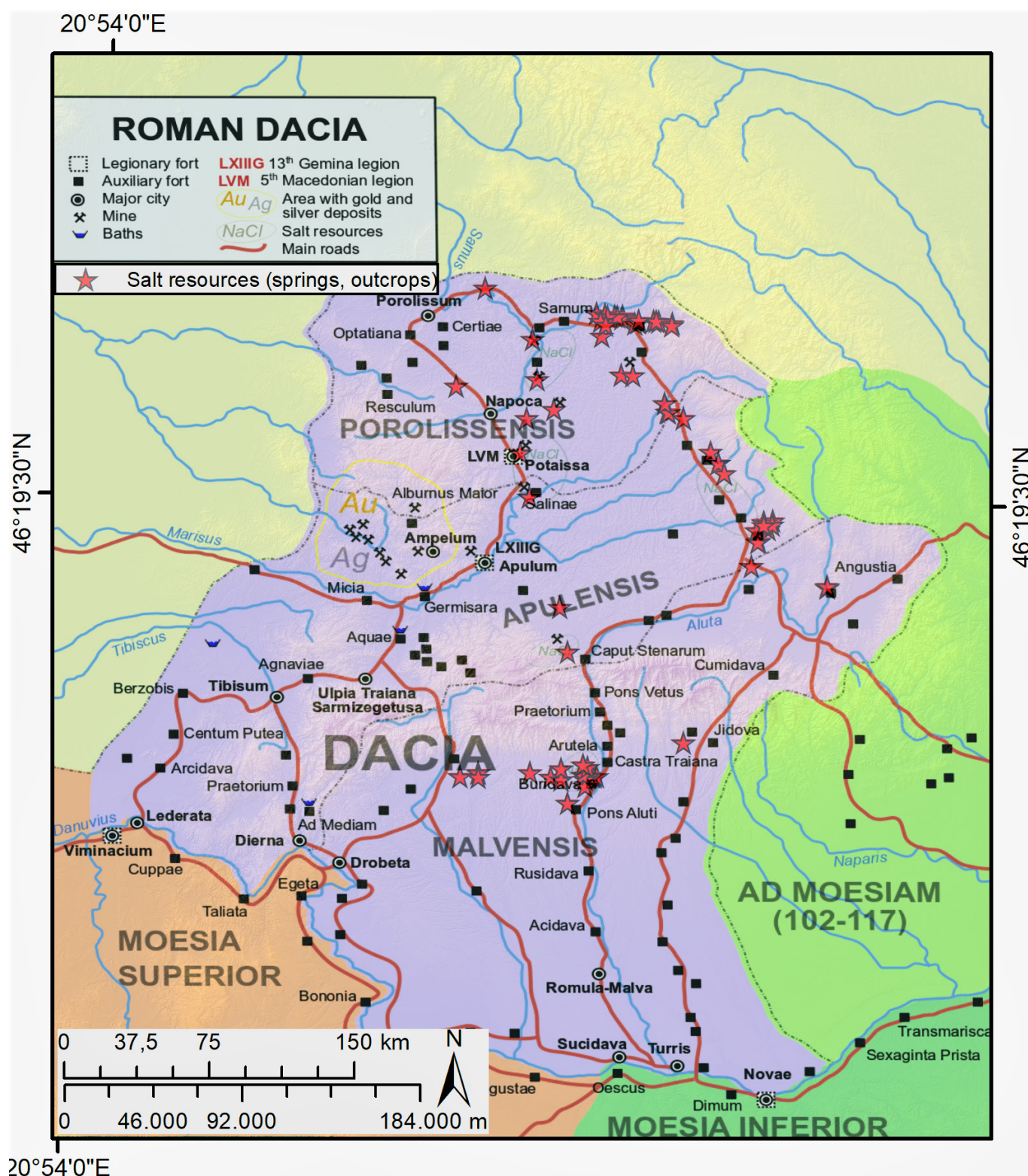


Fig. 10. General map of Dacia with military camps and salt exploitations