

*Roman weapons and armour in Dacia  
at the beginning of the second century AD*

*Liviu Petculescu*

- abstract -

The Roman arms found in Dacia are dated mostly in two periods of time: the beginning of the second century; the end of the second - third century.

The first period largely corresponds to Trajan's reign, when Dacia had a large garrison which diminished towards the end of his rule. During Hadrian's reorganisation of the province the disposition of the military units changed, which meant abandoning some forts and building others, usually of bigger size and placed on the same location. As Bishop repeatedly asserts, the abandonment of the forts occasioned the discarding of many military equipment items, especially of scrap awaiting re-use. Therefore, the changings in size, composition and disposition of the garrisons of the province in the second and third decades of the second century probably determined the deposition of most of the early military items.

The pieces discovered in Dacia contribute to the refining of the general chronology and typology of the Roman weapons and armour. Thus, one can state for the beginning of the second century, until a date which for the time being could not be precised, the survival of different types of arms specific to the second half of the first century AD. Among them are firstly the *gladii*, the sword suspension loop bands and V-shaped chapes, narrow daggers with handles ending in a semicircular flat-topped pommel, but also the slingshot and the early type of *lorica segmentata* used by the legionaries probably for a longer period of time, towards the middle of the second century. The helmet from Berzovia attests the coming into use of the reinforcing cross-bars on bowl and the *spatha* from Rucar, if really of Trajanic date, should be the first known second century pattern-welded Roman sword.