

THE VALORIZATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF CALLATIS FORTRESS THROUGH HISTORICAL TOURISM

TEODORA MOȚ¹, I. PETROMAN¹

¹ *Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Romania*
Faculty of Agricultural Management; teodora_tm@yahoo.com

Abstract: *Romania has several historic heritage sites which date back to Greek and Roman times. Among them, an important place is held by the Callatis Fortress located in the city of Mangalia. Callatis was built during the 4th century BC by the greek colonists who came from Pontic Heracleea. Callatis has a lot of archaeological attractions on the shore, such as: the Princiar Tombstone, the Papyrus Tombstone, the Archeological Museum of Callatis and the hellenistic fortress ruins. Southeastwards of Mangalia, 6-7 metres under the sea level, on a surface of about 2 hectares, vestiges of the ancient fortress were discovered, findings that have boosted the visitors interest in underwater archaeological tourism, the construction of an underwater touristic park, similar to the ones from Baiae, Caesareea and Alexandria from Egypt, being taken into account. The Fortress of Callatis has great historical tourism potential, recently being observed an increasing interest concerning the archaeological and historical aspects of the ancient Greek settlement.*

Keywords: *heritage, archaeological attractions, underwater touristic park, ruins.*

INTRODUCTION

Historical tourism, included in the cultural tourism category, is represented by the legacy of historical and archaeological artifacts which complete the classic offer of traditional tourism, being composed of great attractions. The country of Romania has several historical heritage sites which date back to Greek and Roman times [1,6,10]. Among them, an important place is held by the Callatis Fortress located in the city of Mangalia.

Callatis is a very old Greek fort which was built during the 4th century BC by the greek colonists who came from Pontic Heracleea. The settlement is enumerated among the oldest ones located on the plateau. Being situated on the coast of the Black Sea, Callatis imitates the style of Greek state forts. The fortress was built on the site of an older settlement built by the people of Thrace. First it was given the name Acervetis, while others called it Cerbetis. The name was most probably inspired by a brook called Cales which flowed across the lands of Heracleea. The Greeks have constructed several forts along the shores of the Black Sea among which we can mention: Chersones, Odessos, Mesambria, Olbia, Tyras, Tomis, Histria and of course Callatis [2,9,12,].

Callatis Fortress and its surrounding region has been an important archeological center for centuries as several researches took place here. A great number of intellectual individuals have resided in Callatis which are worth mentioning. Heraclid the philosopher, Demetrios of Callatis the orologist, Istros the playreader and Satyros, writer of „Life of Euripide” lived here. Because of the invasions in the second half of the 5th century AD the flourishing of Callatis started to decay. The fort was wrecked and the settlement of Mangalia took its place. The old ruins of Callatis can be visited near the Beach of Mangalia where still can be seen the remains of its walls. Archeologists are convinced that most parts of the fortress are sunk on the bottom of the Black Sea hence they currently are

trying to find sponsorship in order to develop researches and pull out the city from the deep waters [3,5].

Archaeological touristic potential of Callatis

The modern city of Mangalia, erected on the ancient Callatis ruins, is the most southern resort on the Black Sea seaside, located on the south-eastern extremity of Romania, on the Black Sea shore, at 44 km south of Constanța, on the same latitude as French Nice city. Mangalia, city-port with a plethora of cultural traditions and historic heritage is currently an important cultural and economic center on the west coast of the Black Sea. Over 2,500 years of history testimony the rich cultural inheritance of this corner of timeless civilisation, whose traces still delight any inquiring spirit. Of all these, only the most notorious which benefit by the specialists attention will be presented in this research.

The Princiar Tombstone - mound Documaci - situated in the vicinity of town, is a funerary complex consisting of a grave of large-scale oriented east-west and a rectangular-shaped construction whose functionality couldn't have been established yet. The entire complex was inhabited, proof being the great quantity of ceramic fragments representing amfores and vessels for common use.

The Papyrus Tombstone, dated from the 4th century BC, was discovered in 1959. Its interior is built of large blocks of limestone, carved on the interior and covered above with stone slabs, three being dug to a depth of 1.50 m above the ancient ground level. Around it stood a stone ring, with a diameter of 14 m, in the south-western side with a small shrine for officiating the ceremonies. In the earth covering the tomb have been found 4 greek vases and on the top stone, fragments of a coronet comprising bronze leaves and grains, trapped on a bone frame, all gilded, imitating the ancient crown of laurel [7]. Inside the tomb, along with the skeleton of the dead, have been found remains of a coronet similar to that on the cover, fabrics and clothing and the debris of a papyrus written in Greek in a state of preservation quite precarious, being the first document of its kind discovered in Romania. Above the tomb has been built a mound of earth, a tumba, according to the greek custom of the time, which protected the entire complex.

In 1993-1994 Museum of Archaeology Callatis Mangalia initiated in the former Hotel Scala, now President, the extensive archaeological rescue research in connection with the repair works of the hotel. On an area of more than 1000 square metres, had been found **urban planning aspects of romano-byzantine era** of a southern neighborhood of the city. The neighborhood was crossed by a main street, east-west oriented, 6 metres wide, paved with tiles carved out of limestone and envisioned with a drain collector, built of large slabs of limestone 1 m deep and 2 m wide, all dated between VI-VII centuries AD.

Most of the archeological artifacts are stored and exhibited in the Archeological Museum of Callatis, where features a collection of archeology of great value, with parts discovered in the area around the old fortress of Callatis: ancient columns, sarcophagi, fragments of architectural designs, sculptures, trinkets, inscriptions, ceramics, domestic and agricultural tools, statuettes, etc [4, 9].

Callatis, on Alexandria's, Baiae's and Caesarea's footsteps

Southeastwards of Mangalia, 6-7 metres under the sea level, on a surface of about 2 hectares, were discovered vestiges of the ancient fortress of Callatis. The settlement known since the 4th century BC, had almost a millenary existence, but it is not known when it

ceased to exist and what causes triggered it. Different suppositions were made, among them, the teluric causes are plausible [1,8].

Under the sea, in the city and port area of Callatis has been found pottery, amphorae and tiles being more numerous, architectural fragments, and wrecks of ancient ships, heavy land, paving, remains of ancient brick walls, or processed stone tiles[5]. Unfortunately, because of the lack of funds, the research evolves slowly. However, these findings have boosted the visitors interest in underwater archaeology tourism, the construction of an underwater touristic park, which would give the tourists the opportunity to view the vestiges in situ should be taken into consideration in the future by the local authorities. This, following the path of Alexandria from Egypt, where, a underwater archaeological park is under construction, after the discovery of Heracleion, an Egyptian city lost under the water for 1.200 years, now excavated and investigated by an international team of underwater archaeologists.

Until now, the only archaeological underwater archaeological touristic parks are the ones from Baiae, from the Bay of Pozzuoli, Region of Campania, Italy, where the ruins of a famous Roman city can be visited and the one from Caesarea Maritima, on the Israeli coastline, another Roman settlement [2].

CONCLUSIONS

The Fortress of Callatis offers a wide range of touristic attractions, recently being observed an increasing interest concerning the archaeological and historical aspects of the ancient Greek settlement. As the tourist attractions are not few at number and importance, what remains is a competitive holistic tourism management system to facilitate the development and implementation of the tourism strategy, through funds allocation and monitoring, land use control and examination of tourism public and private sector practices.

Enhancing the satisfaction of tourists and delighting the customer are pivotal to ensuring the well-being of Callatis as a tourist destination, while the improvement in services and the innovative initiative are perhaps the most important strategic objectives, as well as the desire and disponibility to learn from the internationally gained experience.

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