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Proceedings of the International Conference
Held in Plovdiv 04.–07. November 2019

Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut

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(photo: Plamena Dakasheva)

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CONTENT

Milena Raycheva – Martin Steskal

INTRODUCTION

The international symposium »Roman Provincial Capitals under Transition« took place November 4–7, 2019 at the Grand Hotel in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, as a joint session of the National Archaeological Institute with Museum of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NAIM-BAS), and the Austrian Archaeological Institute (OeAI) at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW). The choice in venue was justified by the city's rich Roman past as Thrace's bustling metropolis Philippopolis, complemented with its recent status as European Capital of Culture for 2019. The goal of the symposium was to bring together participants from the fields of classical studies and archaeology from different scientific traditions, in order to illuminate the thematic field of the capital cities of the Roman Empire in as broad as possible a manner from a geographical and diachronic perspective. Invited participants from twelve countries presented a wide range of scientific problems related to Roman and late antique cities known as capitals at a certain time of their existence. The geographic span of the conference was more than impressive, covering most of the territories of the Roman Empire – from Tarraco to Tomis, and from the Danube Limes to North Africa – including cities such as Salona, Viminacium, Stobi, Corinth, Ephesos, Patara, and many more.

Rudolf Haensch was accordingly entrusted with the keynote speech. It was a logical choice on behalf of the organizers, considering his contribution to the problematic area of capitals in his book *Capita Provinciarum: Statthaltersitze und Provinzialverwaltung in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 1997). Ever since this landmark publication it is clear that the definition of a provincial capital is more complicated than one would assume from a modern point of view. Today, in around half of the cases we still cannot say with absolute certainty where the governor of the province actually resided. Even though there appeared to be certain rules: The seat of the governor was in most cases located in a place with very good road and sea routes as well as a stable and quick connection to Rome. However, it is not clear whether the residence of the governor was identical with the political centre of the province. One thing is certain: The capitals profited from the presence of the governor. It brought people to the cities on days of court hearings for example who stayed in the cities for a number of days and needed board and lodging. More importantly, it brought news from Rome to the cities. As the Roman Empire developed, the layout and number of the provinces changed multiple times in a constant process of transition. And even though many questions regarding the capitals of the Roman provinces remain open, new excavations, new methodological approaches and an ever-increasing amount of material evidence is constantly adding further pieces to the mosaic and creating a better understanding of this crucial topic.

The proceedings loosely follow the structure of the conference and reflect the thematic diversity of the twenty submitted contributions within seven thematic sections: In addition to general considerations regarding the essential characteristics of capital cities and their administration, specific themes are also explored, which geographically encompass the entire Mediterranean region as well as the northern provinces. The following issues are dealt with in the proceedings: How did cities become capital cities? Did every province have a capital city, or a number of administrative centres? Where did the provincial governor reside and what did the seats of the governor look like from an architectural viewpoint? How extensive was his personnel? How did cities respond to becoming a capital in terms of urban planning? How did capital cities develop economically? Which trading relations connected them with other cities in the respective province and with other capital cities? How did capital cities react to phases of crisis in the empire and to restructuring of the provinces? What influence did administrative centres and the presence of the Roman administration have on artistic development?

»What makes a capital?«, as the opening section, focuses on several important questions, such as – is the capital simply a seat of power, the location of a governor's residence, an assize centre, a provincial cult centre? Nearly twenty years after his seminal work, Rudolf Haensch revisits the topic and delivers an overview of several provincial capitals, touching upon some key issues which were consistently addressed throughout the conference – and especially the very thorny definition of ›capital‹ itself. He presents his current perspective on the theme of capital cities in the Roman Empire from the Imperial period up until Late Antiquity. It becomes clear that even if we take a close look at the characteristics of provincial capitals that were successfully identified the identification of capitals remains challenging. Apparently, it is even more difficult to identify the provincial capitals of the much more numerous provinces of Late Antiquity than in the earlier periods. However, Haensch presents on the basis of a description of the institutions and structures of Roman provincial administration, to what extent one can speak of a provincial capital from today's point of view and according to ancient understanding. The common denominator of a capital was the presence of the governor and his staff during most of the year. Haensch points out the existence of fixed residences of the representatives of Rome – at least after the required travelling within their province. Accordingly, the city in which the governor of a province resided should be designated as the capital of the province. The question why a particular city became the headquarters of a representative of Roman rule, however, remains under debate. Haensch concludes that in most cases provincial capitals ›emerged‹ as a result of the practices of the first governors, but they were not deliberately chosen or even planned. Haensch's judgment remains cautious regarding the question to what extent capitals profited economically or whether capital cities were preferably treated in relation to other cities in the province. He makes clear that being a capital is only one aspect in a multi-faceted picture that explains the urban, economic, and cultural development of a city.

Following Haensch's idea that the city in which the governor of a province resided should be defined as the capital, it becomes crucial to identify such residences. Christoph Baier presents such a possible residence of a governor, a palatial *domus* on the western slope of Mount Panayır in Ephesos. This *domus* with its Hellenistic core spread over an area of more than 10,000 m^2 in the Roman Imperial period and is closely comparable to confirmed Roman governors' palaces in other places. The significance of Baier's observations are manifold: Even if there is no final epigraphic or literary proof, the architectural, archaeological, and urbanistic characteristics of the described building complex show striking similarities to Hellenistic and Roman governor's palaces. Embedding the material evidence into a historical frame, Baier convincingly shows that the Ephesian residence can be interpreted as a key monument to understanding the city's development as a centre of administration and political power. Even more, it represents one of the exceptional cases to study the transition of an administrative residence from the Hellenistic to the Roman Imperial period.

The rich epigraphic evidence sheds light on the institutional and cultural development of another important city located on the western shore of the Black Sea, ancient Tomis. Tomis, the predecessor of the modern Romanian Constanța is known through more than 700 epigraphic monuments, mainly from the Roman period. Alexandru Avram (†) can show that since AD 46 the city was the governor's headquarters and, accordingly, the capital of Moesia (Inferior) – even though this opinion has been challenged lately by other scholars who want to see Durostorum as *caput provinciae*. The city's status fluctuated multiple times. Despite this, building activities under the Antonines and possibly privileges granted by the Severan emperors reflected in several inscriptions show a flourishing metropolis. Fully covered by the modern city, however, it is difficult to get a general archaeological image of ancient Tomis. Avram fills this gap by discussing the many Tomitan inscriptions that permit the reconstruction of the inner organization of the city, its urban development, the role played by Tomis as headquarter, the composition of its cosmopolitan population and their daily activities.

On the basis of new excavation results Mario Ivanov presents the earliest periods in the development of Serdica, located today in the territory of modern Sofia, before it became a capital. The synthesis of the archaeological data allows Ivanov to trace four distinct periods from the foundation of Serdica under the reign of Claudius or slightly earlier until the year AD 170 when a raid of the Costobocs ended a flourishing period of urban development. But this did not signal the end of Serdica's urban development. Ivanov's thorough archaeological and historical investigation clearly shows: Serdica's early history started from an initial settlement identified as an earth-and-timber Roman *castellum* that then developed into a prospering town in the middle of the 2nd century. This can only be seen as the prelude for the future apogee of Serdica as the provincial capital of Dacia Mediterranea.

Exploring the complexities of (mostly) epigraphic evidence, it becomes apparent that, despite the thousands of inscriptions related to administration, there are still several inconsistencies and unanswered questions regarding the way the seat of a governor actually functioned, or the number of staff he had. A substantial contribution by François Kirbihler is particularly dedicated to the wide topic of ›administration‹. He is responding in many ways to Rudolf Haensch's fundamental research on Roman provincial capitals and focuses on the question of the staff and personnel available to governors. Even though Kirbihler is primarily attempting to reconstruct the situation in the province of Asia he provides many cross-references to other senatorial provinces. By reviewing the fragmentary documentation Kirbihler reassesses the total number of the *officium* of the governor and discerns a trend of a steadily growing staff. Starting with a relatively modest workforce in the 1st centuries BC and AD he suggests a total number of staff in the Severan period of at least 150 to 200. The increase of staff was embedded within a relatively flexible structure allowing also the temporary loan of staff of the *procurator* to the personnel of the *proconsul* or the addition of military personnel. The expansion of Roman administration from the 2nd century onwards is referred to by Kirbihler as a »proto-bureaucratic structure«. However, Kirbihler makes this proposal with caution aware that the discussion about the personnel at the disposition of the *proconsul* is anything but over.

Nothing chronicles the process of political transition like changes in urban environment. Perhaps the most tangible – or at least most archaeologically detectable – aspects of ›capitalization‹ are the architectural makeovers of the new administrative seats. The subject chosen by many authors in the proceedings are the changes that occurred in the urban fabric in relation to the capital status as well as spatial organization, appearance of new ensembles, and elevated living standards among the most frequently referenced issues. This is amply illustrated by Joaquín Ruiz de Arbulo's paper on Tarraco. The author convincingly argues that the colony of Tarraco, once headquarters of Augustus and later *conventus* and seat of the *concilium*, was carefully conditioned to accommodate financial and judicial power, and thus acquired monuments befitting a capital. Public architecture was the embodiment of a deliberate large-scale program that lasted over two decades and included the construction or refurbishments of forums, temples, and entertainment buildings, taking into consideration the need for ›scenographic‹ space and ritual movement. A key element was »the symbolic occupation of all public spaces by the nascent imperial cult«. What is more, Ruiz de Arbulo offers a glimpse of the transformation of society and the methods of career promotion through the institutions in the capital.

The existence of a *praetorium*, i.e. a governor residence and seat of administration, is undoubtedly one of the surest signs of the capital status of a city. It is namely the possible *praetorium* of Serdica that Veselka Katsarova discusses in her paper. Katsarova revisits a half-a-century old discussion about the identification of a large public building in the Roman town as either *thermae* or *praetorium*, in light of the recent data from excavations in the centre of modern-day Sofia. Katsarova argues that, by the time Serdica became capital of the newly established province Dacia Mediterranea in the early 270s, the densely built urban environment had limited options for housing the provincial government body. Thus, the large and costly *thermae* building at the main square was adapted to become the administrative seat, and even metal goods manufacture took place in it until the 330s, possibly for military needs.

The recurring motif of the architectural splendor of new capitals can be seen also in Maya Martinova-Kyutova's paper about late antique Philippopolis. This city in Thrace poses an intriguing case study throughout its earlier history, as the metropolis and seat of the *koinon* in the province, but not a formal capital. It was only after the Diocletianic reforms that it acquired its long-deserved capital status, albeit of a much smaller province. Martinova-Kyutova outlines the city's rebuilding program that had already ensued in the aftermath of the Gothic invasions of the mid-3rd century, and its subsequent transformation into a new capital and bishopric. The author specifically explores the early Christian cult buildings constructed in Philippopolis, which include the episcopal basilica and its lavish mosaic decoration.

An extensive study of urbanism is also at the core of Silvana Blaževska's contribution about Stobi, the capital of Macedonia Secunda between at least AD 482 and 535, covering also the pre- and post-capital periods of the city for added context. The city underwent a complex transformation from its earlier urban layout with remarkable public and private buildings, lived through a streak of natural disasters and political events in the tumultuous 4th century which reshaped it forever, and was ultimately abandoned. Despite its long-standing economic and political importance, Stobi became capital of a province and an episcopal see only in the late 5th century, making it one of the latest appearing capitals under consideration in this volume.

In the case of Thessaloniki, a truly prominent city that became not just a capital but a seat of the Tetrarch Galerius, late antique urban redecoration reached astonishing levels. Polyxeni Adam-Veleni deals at length with the latest discoveries in the city prompted by the metro construction and development-led excavations. Her paper fills many gaps in our knowledge of the urban layout of the city and also discusses town-planning, street network and public buildings of the palatial period of »the capital of the Balkans«. Furthermore, Adam-Veleni's thought-provoking conclusion relates the rather problematic fate of the newly discovered monuments today.

Both the conference and the proceedings place great emphasis on the very large number of quickly emerging new capital cities in the changing political landscape of Late Antiquity, especially in southeast Europe. Several authors address the issue of the preference of one city's promotion over another, together with the apparent lack of a common denominator among very diverse settlements that ultimately achieve an equal status. An overview of the general situation within the context of the administrative system of the dioceses of Thracia and Dacia can be seen in Ventzislav Dintchev's paper, covering as many as 17 newborn capitals in the Balkans. While, admittedly, the state of research hinders the equal consideration of all cities, Dintchev arrives at some valuable conclusions. One of them is that, at the time of their promotion, the chosen cities would be most likely the ones to boast the most sizeable fortified area in the province. He also argues that throughout the capital period, the episcopal institution played the greatest role for the »legitimizing and defending the city's status«. Furthermore, Dintchev outlines some regional and chronological trends in the capitals' development: in the diocese of Thracia, most cities began to stagnate after the mid-6th century, while in Dacia this occurred earlier.

A separate case study confirming these chronological observations is that of Ratiaria, presented in Zdravko Dimitrov's paper. Drawing on the results from his latest archaeological campaigns in this formerly neglected and much looted site, Dimitrov reconstructs the various phases of the metamorphosis of the city. Starting as a camp on the Danube Limes in the early 1st century with wooden-earthen structures, Ratiaria evolved into a prosperous civil settlement and subsequently – the capital of Dacia Ripensis and an episcopal see. Under Justinian it was a metropolis, but could not survive the Avar attacks in 586. Dimitrov also comments on the interpretation of the so-called Residence of the provincial governor in the context of the new discoveries.

The criteria for the promotion of particular places as new capitals on the reformed administrative map in Late Antiquity are brought up for consideration again in Alexander Minchev's contribution about Marcianopolis. The author offers a very extensive research into the pre-capital period of Marcianopolis, outlining the many factors that brought about its later rise to an administrative seat. The city was established after Trajan's Dacian wars and was thriving on its trade connections with the Black Sea area, the Lower Danube, and Thrace. It became capital of Moesia Secunda under Diocletian and it appears that precisely that strategic location and economic resources were the key factors behind the promotion. Minchev reflects on the immense effect of the new status for the raised living standards and well-being of the city, and contemplates whether a »special connection« existed between Diocletian and Marcianopolis.

Crucial or catastrophic moments in the history of capital cities were also addressed by a number of scholars during the conference. Mustafa H. Sayar's concise contribution on Perinthos reveals the tumultuous story of a city that was continuously a capital, first of the large Roman province of Thracia, and later of the Diocletianic province Europa. Sayar searches for the reasons of choosing this city in both periods and concludes that its location at the crossroad of sea and land routes, as well as its natural harbours, must have been of utmost importance. The city proved impressively resilient, despite a great number of disastrous events, and retained its prominence in the region until the rise of Constantinople.

In the paper on Viminacium by Snežana Golubović, Bebina Milovanović and Nemanja Mrdjić, the »hard times« for the capital of Moesia Inferior (and later Moesia Prima) are viewed through the prism of the substantial ongoing research of the city's *necropoleis*, where over 13,000 graves have been unearthed so far. The authors are able to connect a specific burial ritual with the soldiers of the auxiliary detachments stationed in Moesia Superior. Moreover, by exploring a combination of archaeological evidence with the extant historical and epigraphic sources, they attempt to outline certain catastrophic events that occurred in Viminacium's history, particularly in the 3rd and the 4th century.

Whether the mere fact of being a capital had a direct impact on the economy of a city is still debated. Four articles specifically deal with the topic of trade, economy, and monetary policy in a separate section. Horacio González Cesteros presents the pottery trade of Ephesos with centres like Carthage and Alexandria, befriended cities that developed an intense economic activity with each other. He raises the question of trade and reciprocity aware that pottery only provides one perspective and that there are equally important evidence such as epigraphic and numismatic sources. Carthage, Alexandria, as well as Ephesos functioned as major commercial hubs of supra-regional significance. By analysing the epigraphic, numismatic and above all the pottery evidence González Cesteros reveals the existence of close ties between these cities. They acted as focal points for the distribution of commodities from their territories as well as redistribution hubs of further commercial routes. The described cases, however, show that being a capital alone does not explain the exceptional role these cities played in the economy of the Mediterranean. It is more likely their location at vital trade routes, the existence of harbours, direct and indirect routes as well as itineraries that interconnected these cities made them economically successful.

Sophia Zoumbaki not only offers a comprehensive analysis of Corinth's economic role as a major Mediterranean commercial hub but also how being a centre of Roman rule influenced the relationship to other close *poleis* like Argos or Athens – a relationship that was not without tension and conflict. Zoumbaki revisits these complex connections. She demonstrates how Corinth played multiple roles that go beyond the fact that Corinth was most probably the capital of the Roman province Achaia and a centre of Roman administration. Following Zoumbaki, as an international city Corinth always seems to have been open to new trends, philosophical, intellectual and religious concepts that the city permanently was confronted with by the many people that passed the city or stayed for doing business. As a real cultural melting pot it not only adopted elements of Roman lifestyle but also kept many elements of its grand Hellenic heritage as it is described in Apuleis' *Golden Ass* for the late 2nd century AD.

An impressive approach towards Roman monetary policy is demonstrated by Marina Tasaklaki, who juxtaposes »capital vs. local mints« in Thrace. Even though the Roman provincial monetary policy was not centralized Tasaklaki can identify several special peculiarities for the case of Thrace. She points out that Thrace neither resembles the monetary picture of other provinces distant from the Limes nor of those located along the borders. Situated on one of the most important ancient Roman roads, the Via Diagonalis, marching armies often passed through the province of Thrace. Tasaklaki considers the presence of the army as particularly important for the coin production. By taking a close look at the complex relationship between the province's main city, Perinthos, and its hinterland, Tasaklaki can elaborate a very flexible model of numismatic policy: Even though Perinthos was the administrative base of Thrace, the monetary centre shifted from time to time, depending on the needs of the province and the empire.

Dilyana Boteva adds further thoughts on the need of reassessment of coinage evidence from Perinthos. Focusing on the case of coins issued for Septimius Severus and his family members, Boteva calls for a reconsideration of Edith Schönert-Geiß' still fundamental study of the coinage of the provincial capital Perinthos. This appears justified since this mint provides important information about the development of the province of Thrace. By offering a more precise chronology of the issues Boteva is able to reconstruct many historical details in the history of Perinthos. As an example she elaborates on one particular historical snapshot: the development of the city after Geta's inauguration and prior to his assassination in December 211. Here, the issue of coins provides knowledge concerning historical events that apparently affected the provincial capital of Thracia, but which are not recorded in other ancient sources. In addition to that, Boteva draws our attention to a puzzling phenomenon: the exceptionally large amount of metal used by the mint in AD 212, a process that already started two years earlier. Further research is needed to clarify whether this lavish use of metal in the coinage of the provincial capital indicates significant changes in the economic life of Perinthos in these years.

The last section, »Material Culture under Transition«, deals with tangible aspects of lifestyle in capitals. Gabrielle Kremer explores the peculiarities of votive monuments from Carnuntum, a town that is known to be very rich in stone monuments. Kremer takes a holistic approach on these stone monuments not only dealing with the inscriptions but also with the inscription carriers considering their entire form and archaeological context. A series of votive monuments erected by *officiales* from the governor's staff are of particular interest to her. They characterize the role of Carnuntum that most probably became the seat of the governor of Pannonia Superior under Trajan as a centre of power. The mapping of these votive monuments allows Kremer to gain important information about the localisation and interpretation of certain buildings, such as the *praetorium*, but also about the reconstruction of Carnuntum's sacral topography. Even though Carnuntum was the administrative and military centre of the province, the religious centre was located in Savaria. Kremer identifies Carnuntum's supra-regional religious importance in the spread of the Mithras cult.

The editors are obliged to the executive director and director of the Department of Historical Archaeology of the Austrian Archaeological Institute at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Sabine Ladstätter, and the director of the National Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Hristo Popov, who developed the idea of a joint conference. The conference in Plovdiv in 2019 would not have been possible without their support and the initiative of Lyudmil Vagalinski, former director of NAIM-BAS. There are many people who contributed to the conference and proceedings that the editors want to express their gratitude: Astrid Pircher who helped organizing the event in Plovdiv, Nicolay Sharankov who co-led a walking tour in Roman Plovdiv, Sarah Cormack for the language check of the English submissions, Eva Diana Breitfeld-von Eickstedt and Barbara Beck-Brandt for the technical proofreading and support in the publication process, as well as Andrea Sulzgruber who is responsible for the layout of the book. For various support we want to thank Nicole High-Steskal and Pantelis Charalampakis. As the editors we are grateful to all the participants of the conference and the colleagues who submitted their contribution to the proceedings. The authors are not only responsible for the content of the texts presented in this volume, but also the choice of language and style, as well as the transliteration of ancient names and terms in their respective papers. This was an editorial decision in order to better represent the plurality of academic backgrounds. The wide range of topics and discussions from different perspectives regarding administration, urban development and material culture clearly show that Roman provincial capitals remain a highly relevant topic.

The editors mourn the passing of our dear colleague and co-author of the conference proceedings, Alexandru Avram, whose memory we wish to honor.

WHAT MAKES A CAPITAL?

Rudolf Haensch

FROM GOLD TO IRON?

PROVINCIAL CAPITALS AND THE CHANGES FROM MARCUS AURELIUS TO CONSTANTINE

Abstract

This article aims to introduce the questions of the colloquium. On the basis of a description of the institutions and structures of Roman provincial administration, it defines to what extent one can speak of a provincial capital from today's point of view and according to ancient understanding. The possibilities of identifying such a capital are explained in detail. On the basis of the successful identifications, the characteristics of such a provincial capital are discussed, especially in comparison to other cities of the province in question. Finally, we ask to what extent all this changed in the 3rd and 4th centuries as a consequence of the problems of the Roman Empire in this period and the measures taken by the emperors in response.

Keywords

caput provinciae – *conventus* – *praetorium* – factors of urban development in the Roman Empire – competition of cities

The year is 193. Antioch and its leading citizens had now failed for the second time in twenty years[1]. After having backed Avidius Cassius for emperor in AD 175[2], they had now enthusiastically, and just as unsuccessfully, supported Pescennius Niger in the very same endeavour. According to Herodian »everyone became excited. Straight away they began to press Niger with requests to be allowed to take a personal part in the campaign«[3]. The situation will have recalled the first days of January 69 at Cologne, when the *principes coloniarum … aut castrorum* offered Vitellius *auxilia equos arma pecuniam …, ut quisque corpore opibus ingenio validus*[4].

But while Marcus Aurelius, the emperor and philosopher, had not severely punished those who had backed Avidius Cassius[5], Septimius Severus paid back those who had helped and those who had opposed him in kind. Antioch was degraded to a village (κώμη) in the territory of its rival and neighbour Laodicea. Its income from local taxes and fees, the rents of its communal property went to the rival, which also received the title μητρόπολις. Decisions concerning Antioch were taken by the magistrates and the council of Laodicea[6]. Septimius Severus did not accept that Antioch,

[1] No effort has been made here to give exhaustive lists of literature. Only the most important and most recent studies are cited in this paper.
[2] SHA Avid. 6, 5; 7, 8; for Avidius Cassius see Kienast 2017, 138 f.
[3] Herodian. 2, 7, 8; for Pescennius Niger: Kienast 2017, 153 f.
[4] Tac. hist. 1, 57; for a commentary: Eck 2004, 190–193.
[5] Cass. Dio 71, 27, 3–28, 3; 30, 1–3; SHA Aur. 24, 8; 25, 5. 7–11; 26, 1. 3. 10–12. Cf. Fündling 2008, 144–147.
[6] Haensch 1997a, 251 f.; Ziegler 1978.

its inhabitants and its leading strata had had no choice, because the troops of Niger would have eliminated any resistance at the centre of his power immediately.

Only after some years and, according to the official view, only after the intervention of the emperor's highly esteemed son Caracalla[7], did Antioch regain its city status. In times of transition, as the late 2nd, 3rd and 4th centuries were, it was not always convenient to be the residence of a governor. It also had its risks. And not only in the case of Antioch: as we see from the coins of a number of cities in Asia Minor and the Levant in the 3rd century these cities gained and lost titles (and without doubt other privileges) with shocking regularity, depending on whether they had chosen the right pretender to back in the almost never-ending civil wars around the middle of the 3rd century or not[8]. The same was probably true for many cities on the Rhine and the Danube but in their cases, we do not have the epigraphic and numismatic sources to trace their ups and downs in such an explicit manner[9].

But before discussing the histories of individual cities in an age of transition and studying different aspects of being a capital, as our conference strived to do, it is necessary to discuss some general features of provincial capitals during the High Empire and the beginning of Late Antiquity. Let us begin with the question[10], who made a city the provincial capital and in which way? No surviving Roman text tells us explicitly what constituted a provincial capital in Roman times. Thus, we must take our modern understanding as our starting point. A capital is defined as follows in the *Oxford Dictionary & Thesaurus*: »the most important town or city of a country or region, usually its seat of government and administrative centre«[11]. Apparently, the concept of a capital has two implications for us: first, its population, size, and economic potential, and secondly, its status as the administrative centre of a political entity. The examples of the Hague or Washington D.C. show that not all of these conditions have to be fulfilled: administrative centrality is certainly its more significant attribute. Thus, we must search for the central political institutions of a Roman province to determine its capital.

Roman provinces normally had two kinds of central political institutions. In most provinces, during the High Empire and at least during the 4th century, the cities and other independent political communities of the province in question sent delegates to a common meeting for a certain number of days once or twice a year. This meeting of the representatives of the political communities of a province was called *concilium* in Latin or κοινόν in Greek[12]. But as far as we know, such a provincial assembly was not a modern parliament. It could not be, because a Roman province was not a separate unit in a federal state but a subject territory under Roman rule. Thus, these *concilia* held no budgetary rights beyond the finances of the *concilium* itself, could not give laws to the province and discussed only a very limited number of subjects. The most important function of these *concilia* was rather to celebrate the emperor's cult with a sacrifice and games for a few days or weeks and to send delegations to the governor or emperor, if general problems or questions needed to be solved[13] or a governor prosecuted[14]. Finally, in many eastern provinces, there were two or more meeting-places for the *concilia*, with the *concilia* rotating between them, so that no city could lay claim to this distinction exclusively.

Of much greater political importance were the representatives of Roman rule. During the High Empire, there were normally at least two: the governor of the province, in the so-called imperial provinces a senator of praetorian or consular rank, with the title *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, and the province's financial administrator, a member of the second order, an *eques*, with the title

7 SHA Carac. 1, 7; cf. Birley 1988, 140.
8 Haensch 1997a, 109. 284. 373 f.; cf. Heller 2006; Millar 1990; Sartre 2001, 704–710; Sartre 2005, 185–188.
9 Tac. hist. 1, 65 f. (cf. 51, 5) offers one of very few examples.
10 Haensch 1997a, 18–36.
11 Oxford Dictionary & Thesaurus 1993, 209.
12 See Deininger 1965; Price 1985; Fishwick 1987–2004; Burrell 2004; Edelmann-Singer 2015.
13 See for an example now Reger 2020.
14 See CIL XIII 3162; cf. IV p. 38 for some glimpses into the debate of such a *concilium*.

procurator Augusti[15]. Both were independently authorized, worked for different periods of time, and sometimes had divergent areas of authority – for example the *procurator* of the Belgica and the two Germaniae, who administrated the finances of three provinces. Small and not very important provinces under the emperor's purview were administered by an equestrian *procurator*, cumulating administrative, military and financial tasks[16]. The governor of Egypt was also an equestrian, but much more high-ranking, and supported by a growing number of other equestrians with juridical, financial and administrative tasks[17].

In the always smaller number of *provinciae populi Romani* a consular or praetorian senator with the title *proconsul* administrated the province, assisted by one, two or three *legati proconsulis* and a *quaestor*. These magistrates of the *provinciae populi Romani* acted only for a year, arriving and departing as a group, while the administrators of the imperial provinces stayed normally for two to three years, arriving and departing separately.

As in many pre-modern empires, most, if not all of these representatives of Roman rule had to tour their province at least for certain periods of the year to perform administrative tasks and to monitor Rome's subjects. But this did not prevent the representatives of Roman rule from staying at fixed residences for long periods – at least after Roman control over a territory had been established. Indeed, in the past years some very sceptical statements have been made about the existence of fixed centres of Roman provincial rule, especially by anglophone ›revisionists‹ among the ancient historians, as for example »Roman governors did not have any permanent headquarters in one city«[18] or as Fergus Millar put it: »the vain search for its [provincial] ›capital‹ … and the seat of its governor. That is a misapplied question«[19]. These authors are right to emphasize that Roman governors had to tour their provinces, partly for military reasons but also due to the existence of the assize system, the *conventus iuridicus*. These assize systems which existed in most, if not in all provinces[20], meant that the whole province was divided into districts likewise designated by the term *conventus*. A *conventus*, in the sense of judicial session, was held once a year in a fixed privileged town of the district in question.

But the existence of the assize-system did not prevent the Roman governors from staying for long periods at fixed residences. It is precisely from provinces where an assize-system is known to have existed, like Asia, Africa or Hispania Citerior, that we have explicit references to fixed seats of the governors[21]. Nor is this a mere accident: an assize-system and a fixed residence for the governor were entirely compatible. The assize-system obliged the governor to tour only for a certain part of the year. In Egypt, it seems, he did so during the four months between January and April[22]. In Roman times, travelling through a province was extremely unhealthy or virtually impossible during winter in the case of the northern provinces and in the height of summer in the case of the southern ones. What Strabo tells us about the governors of Hispania Citerior was without doubt typical: during the summer they toured the interior parts of their province. But the winter months they spent in two cities by the sea, Tarraco and Carthago Nova, exercising jurisdiction[23].

The voluminous archives of the representatives of Roman rule, which developed in imperial times[24], could also not always be transported in chests. It would have been an unnecessary burden for the province to have hundreds of members of a governor's staff touring the province with the

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15 For their tasks see Haensch 2006b.
16 Eich 2005, 85–158; Faoro 2011.
17 Jördens 2009.
18 Williams 1990, 12.
19 Millar 1993, 123 cf. 94 f. (but see Millar 2004, 39).
20 Haensch 1997a, 28 f.; cf. Fournier 2010, 62–98. For Africa see Christol 2012 (unfortunately only on the basis of French literature).
21 Haensch 1997a, 29; resp. 307–312; 748–751; resp. 84 f.; 87 f.; resp. 169–171.
22 Haensch 1997a, 33 f.; Haensch 1997b, 329–332.
23 Strab. 3, 4, 20; cf. Haensch 1997a, 20. 162 f.
24 Haensch 1992; cf. Haensch 2013.

governor each year[25]. Repeatedly, we hear of persons accused of a major crime who had to go to the place where the governor stayed or were brought to him[26]. Judging them was normally a time-consuming procedure, which did not fit easily into the tight-knit calendar of a journey through the province. It was better to take one's time judging them carefully, especially if they were members of the most prominent *ordines* and did not confess as quickly as Christians did.

Thus, the representatives of Rome had fixed residences, at least after a certain time, even if they travelled their assigned areas for certain periods. But how to identify these residences of governors and procurators, if we have no explicit literary references as is typically the case for most provinces? Our knowledge of cities of the ancient world beyond Athens and Rome depends mostly on inscriptions (and archaeology) and thus, it is no coincidence that inscriptions are the most important means to identify the residences of governors and procurators. These inscriptions must be of such a kind that they did not result from the normal routine of a governor or procurator, but could be found mostly or only at the place where he resided.

Few types of inscriptions are only typical of the governor's residence[27]. For example, an inscription which informs us about rooms for his administrative staff should turn up only in the capital of a province[28]. The same is valid for monuments by which a whole group of members of his staff honoured a governor[29]. But even during the High Empire these inscriptions are the exception. More common than inscriptions which are to be found only in capitals are types of inscriptions that ›cluster‹ around the residences, such as private dedications of governors. Surely, if a governor narrowly escaped a bolt of lightning he would thank Iuppiter (or another god) at the place where he was almost struck – so in individual cases at a stop on a *conventus*-tour or while inspecting a legionary camp. But chances are, if the location was indeed random, only a single governor would be attested in the location. The place where many governors spent most of their time, by contrast, would surely provide evidence of many governors thanking their gods, for instance after recovering from illness or at the end of their successful governorship. Altars erected by governors will hence be found mostly, but not exclusively, at the provincial capital, as is the case in Numidia (Lambaesis), Pannonia Inferior (Aquincum) or Sarmizegethusa (the *procurator* of Dacia Apulensis)[30].

Roman governors who died in office being buried in monumental tombs in their residences are rare, because the corpse was usually burnt and the ashes taken to Rome or their hometown to be buried there[31]. But what was typical for Roman governors and procurators was not typical for the members of their staff. When they died, their tombs were normally erected at their place of duty. Thus, a provincial capital of the High Empire normally holds a number of tombstones of different types of *officiales*[32]. The same is valid for sacred dedications of *officiales*[33]. All these types of inscriptions are the most important tool to identify provincial capitals of the High Empire. The more types we have and the more examples of these types, the safer the identification of a certain city as residence of a governor is.

By means of such evidence, we get the result that in the case of two-fifths of the provinces during the 1st to the 3rd century the ›capital cities‹ were not the residences of both Roman administrators, but only the governor's seat[34]. One of these provinces was probably Thrace, where two

[25] Haensch 1997a, 710–726 with the discussion of their number (not taken into consideration by Rankov 1999; cf. Austin – Rankov 1995, 142–169). For the number of the *singulares* see now Haensch 2020.
[26] Haensch 1997a, 213 f. 227 f. 385; Jördens 2016, 115–118. 122. 151. 155. 158–160. 162.
[27] For the methodology see Haensch 1997a, 37–62.
[28] See for example CIL III 3524 = ILS 2375 = TitAq I 9.
[29] See for example the inscription mentioned in n. 35.
[30] Haensch 1997a, 727–734 cf. 99; 196 f. 345.
[31] Haensch 2010.
[32] See for example Tarraco (Haensch 1997a, 481 under A II 3). Cf. Mitchell 1993, 69; Mitchell – French 2012, 28.
[33] See for example the Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium (Haensch 1997a, 414 under A II 2); but altars of *beneficiarii* were put up mostly at *stationes*.
[34] Haensch 1997a, 368–372. 752–756.

inscriptions by central groups of members of his staff[35] strongly suggest that the governor resided in Perinthus, at least in the 1st and 2nd centuries (and later perhaps in Serdica[36]), while the *procurator* certainly resided in Philippopolis. This is shown by an inscription mentioning an *aedes thensaurorum* in 183/184, sepulchral inscriptions of members of his staff and a personal dedication made by one of these procurators[37]. There were even certain advantages from the emperor's point of view in the existence of separate residences of the governor and the *procurator* of a province: a rebellious governor in charge of a great military province was not in a position to immediately seize the considerable financial resources at the procurator's disposal. Perhaps this was the reason why the finances of the two Germaniae and Belgica were administrated from Augusta Treverorum until Late Antiquity. But there were also other reasons for separate headquarters: in Sicily the governor apparently resided in Syracusae, the *legatus proconsulis* in Panhormus, and the *quaestor* in Lilybaeum. Consequently, there was a high-ranking Roman official in every part of the island[38]. This practice at least in part derived from Republican times. A separate administrative centre could also be the result of an arrangement made before constituting a province: for example, the *procurator* of Arabia remained at Gerasa because it had been the residence of a *procurator* for the Decapolis before the province Arabia was created[39].

According to a new inscription, Philippopolis had the right to use the title *metropolis*[40] at least from the times of Domitian onwards and therefore did not become the (or a) meeting-place of the *koinon* only under Caracalla. But perhaps this *koinon* met also (later [?]) at Perinthus, as its title *neokoros* and then two-times *neokoros* under Elagabalus seem to suggest[41]. Only in half of the better-known provinces were the cities where the governors resided also a meeting-point (or *the* only meeting-point) of the *concilium*[42]. Thus, it would seem that a considerable number of provinces had more than one administrative and political centre.

Therefore, we should primarily designate the city in which the governor of a province resided as the capital of a province. Naming the cities where the Roman governors stayed regularly for the greatest part of their tenure ›provincial capitals‹ is by no means anachronistic, for the idea is found in several ancient sources. Josephus wrote for example that the legate of Syria, P. Quinctilius Varus: »departed for Antioch, where he resided most of the time because it is the capital (βασίλειον) of Syria«[43]. Tacitus explained Vespasian's return to Caesarea after a meeting with Mucianus in the following words: *hoc Iudaeae caput est*[44]. A papyrus of 325 speaks of »an order of my lord Isidorus, who then adorned the throne of the *praesidiate* (i.e. the governorship of Aegyptus Iovia) of the said Alexandria«[45]. A number of ancient sources connect a Roman provincial functionary with a certain city, apparently because it served as his headquarters. The first of these

[35] The heads of his chancellery *(cornicularii)* in CIL III 7394, cf. 12324 = I.Perinthos 19 (of the year 161) and his horseguard *(equites singulares)* in CIL III 731 = 7395 = I.Perinthos 23.

[36] IGBulg IV 1985 and 2022 seem to point in this direction. AE 2007, 1257 from the year 198 does not suffice to show that Philippopolis had become the seat of the governor, especially because Perinthus was on the side of Septimius Severus. According to a newly found letter of Septimius Severus (personal communication of N. Sharankov, see also Martinova-Kyutova – Grueva-Zdravcheva 2020, 780 fig. 2), this emperor punished Philippopolis because the city had sided with Niger.

[37] AE 1950, 102 = 1985, 768; Botušarova 1968, no. 1; CIL III 14207, 14; CIL III 746 = 14207, 13.

[38] Haensch 1997a, 157–162.

[39] Haensch 1997a, 244. 371. This was confirmed by two newly found inscriptions: AE 1996, 1603. 1604. Cf. Gatier 1996, 55 n. 30; Sartre 2001, 613; Sartre 2005, 134.

[40] AE 2005, 1374 with the comments of Sharankov 2005, 241. In 2016 the missing larger part of this inscription was discovered confirming the previous reading, see Martinova-Kyutova – Sharankov 2018, 70 f. no. 2.

[41] Haensch 1997a, 329–332.

[42] Haensch 1997a, 368 f. 752–756.

[43] Ios. ant. Iud. 17, 132: ἀπῄει τοῦ συνεδρίου καὶ τῇ ἑξῆς ἐπ᾽ Ἀντιοχείας, ᾗπερ δὴ καὶ τὸ πλεῖστον ἦσαν αὐτῷ διατριβαὶ διὰ τὸ Σύροις τοῦτο βασίλειον εἶναι.

[44] Tac. hist. 2, 78, 4.

[45] POxy. LIV 3756: πρόσταγμα τοῦ κ̣υρίου μου Ἰσιδώρου τοῦ διακοσμήσαντος τὸν θρόνον τῆς ἡγεμονίας τῆς αὐτῆς Ἀ̣λ̣εξανδρίας.

remarks date already from late Republican times. Diodorus speaks of a governor of Africa as *praetor* of Utica[46] and Cicero of a governor of Asia as *Ephesius praetor* or of a *quaestor* of Sicily as *quaestor Syracusis*[47].

But we are in no position to determine generally how and why a city became the headquarters of a representative of Roman rule during the Imperial period. Did capitals during the High Empire ›emerge‹ like those in Republican times? Did the first governor set a precedent, which – if it influenced a number of his successors – became the rule? Or was there in the *mandata*, the instructions, which the emperor gave to each governor or *procurator* on their departure from Rome a regulation or recommendation about where he should stay, especially in the winter? Who decided at which time and where the great *praetorium*[48] for the winter months had to be built? Was such a *praetorium* built in all provinces? To all these questions there is no clear-cut answer.

This is valid even for Late Antiquity: in the late-antique chronicle of Malalas we find five short, similarly worded notices regarding the division of a province, according to which the emperor – Theodosius I or Theodosius II – decided which city was to become the seat of the governor of the new province. For example, Malalas wrote that, in the case of the partition of Lycia and Lycaonia, Theodosius II divided the province, »giving the status of a metropolis and a governor to the city of Lykia known as Myra«[49]. Because we find these notices only for these two emperors – and not in the whole work of Malalas – they must come from one of his sources which he had copied quite literally. The notices seem to confirm what one presumes: if new provinces were established in Late Antiquity there was an imperial decision about the seat of the governors[50]. But when we take a closer look such a general hypothesis becomes fragile. First, we have the case of the *provincia insularum*, i.e. the province embracing the Aegean islands. In 385, Theodosius decided that in winter, when navigation was sometimes dangerous, but always risky, the governor should stay on the island of Rhodes, alternating between the five most powerful cities of the island[51]. It is hardly controversial to argue that this was a specific solution for a province with specific geographic characteristics.

But when Justinian united the two provinces of Helenopontus and Pontus Polemoniacus (both today on the northern coast of Turkey) in 535, he made a series of arrangements in his Novella 28: he was concerned with the name and scope of the province, the title, the powers and duties of its governor, the composition of his staff, etc. But he did not regulate something we would expect to find: he did not determine which city would become the new provincial capital, from where the two united provinces would be administered, in other words, where the governor of the new province and his staff would reside. On the contrary, Justinian or his adviser only wrote: »He will be in the two *metropoleis* and in other cities, as it seems useful to him, as long as these cities can bear his arrival«[52]. That is, the individual governors could decide for themselves where they wanted to stay and how long, as long as their stay did not place too great a burden on the city in question. This undoubtedly implied a certain minimum size of the city, but otherwise offered many possibilities. This corresponds to the fact that in the same basic law of the new province it was stated that the two *metropoleis* of the old provinces should retain their title *metropolis* in the new united province. This regulation confirms once more what we already learned from all the evidence of

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46 Diod. 38, 4: τὸν στρατηγὸν τῆς Ἰτύκης.

47 Cic. Verr. 2, 2, 22 resp. Cic. Att. 5, 13, 1.

48 For *praetoria* see now Schäfer 2014 and Havas 2019. For methodology see Pavel 2015. For those of Late Antiquity Lavan 1999; Lavan 2001 and for Caesarea Patrich 2011.

49 Malalas 14, 24.

50 Christol – Drew-Bear 1999 tried to interpret the epigraphic evidence of a certain governor of Pisidia at Antiochia Pisidiae as the consequence of such a decision.

51 Cod. Iust. 1, 40, 6: *ut, quoniam tempore hiemis navigatio saepe periculosa est semper incerta, in illis quinque urbibus, quae potiores esse ceteris adserunter, vicissim hiemandum sibi iudices recognoscant.*

52 Nov. 28, 4: *eritque et in metropolibus et in aliis, ubicumque providerit – si omnino civitas sufficiens est ad susceptionem eius.*

the High Empire: the title *metropolis* of a city of a province was not linked to the residence of the governor. It was an honour given by the emperor and not dependent on administrative practices[53].

A very similar ›solution‹ to the one implemented by Iustinian is found in a constitution of Theodosius I of 392. Theodosius had to decide in which cities the *concilia* of the provinces of the *diocesis* of Illyricum were to meet. He answered[54]: *in uno opulentiore totius provinciae urbi absque ullius iniuria* – meaning that old practises should be observed and the city should not be too small.

We have to accept that in most cases – perhaps even in Late Antiquity – provincial capitals ›emerged‹ as a result of the practices of the first governors, but were not deliberately chosen or even planned. Of course, the importance of a city in pre-Roman times played a role, its geographical position in a province, its ›nearness‹ to Rome – in geographical terms, but also in terms of old alliances, time-honoured treaties –, its military importance etc. But there were no clear-cut general principles as to which city was chosen: it was, for example, not general Roman policy to occupy the palaces of the pre-Roman monarchs in order to demonstrate who the new ruler was. Seven *regiae* became seats of the governors, but four did not[55]. On the whole, continuity seems to have been more eagerly avoided in Republican times than later on. But there were exceptions in both periods.

Contrary to what one might expect, in provinces with great garrisons the capital was not always the most important military camp[56]. Only half of the consular *legati Augusti pro praetore* resided at the garrison of a legion. If there was only one legion in the province, its governor had praetorian rank and was also the direct commander of this unit. As one expects, these men in most cases resided at the same place as the legion, but even then we find exceptions, such as Caesarea in Iudaea after the first Jewish war (and before the stationing of a second legion at the start of the 2nd century) or Augusta Vindelicum in Raetia. The legion which was stationed in the province under Marcus Aurelius was garrisoned at Castra Regina, more than 150 km to the east. The reasons why capitals of military provinces were not the place of its most important garrison seem to vary: already in Republican times governors transferred the command of their troops to high-ranking subordinates in winter, while they themselves retired to more comfortable areas and discharged their civil duties. A good example is Q. Cassius Longinus, *propraetor Hispaniae Ulterioris* in 48 BC. After the summer campaign he left his troops, who wintered in the region of the campaign. Longinus himself went to Corduba *ad ius dicendum*. He was accompanied by his *familia*, his *lictores* and a bodyguard recruited from the *auxilia*. In Corduba he not only discharged his duties as judge but also oversaw the collection of the tribute and the recruitment of new troops, in other words: administered his province[57]. Sometimes the need for fast communications with Rome made a residence in the legionary camp impossible. Another reason might be that the emergence of a capital preceded the arrival of the legion, as was the case in the province of Raetia (and Noricum), and one did not alter this development.

Colonies of Roman citizens were apparently not favoured as capitals[58], although it would seem that their constitution, language, and customs would have made life in them easier for a Roman governor. He should have been more easily able to find persons of social standing with knowledge of Roman law, to whom he could delegate judicial affairs. This concern was obviously not important enough. While there were colonies of Roman citizens in many eastern provinces, such as Macedonia, Creta et Cyrenae, Thracia, etc., in none of them were any of these colonies chosen as capitals. Corinthus is the exception, not the rule. In several provinces the emerging seat of the

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53 See also for Late Antiquity the examples collected by Bleckmann 2003, 167–173.
54 Cod. Theod. 12, 12, 13 pr.
55 Haensch 1997a, 364 f. 752–756.
56 Haensch 1997a, 365–367 with detailed arguments, cf. also 338 f. with n. 94; 347 with n. 145; 356 f. The different attempts by Piso to argue otherwise are not convincing (last of all: Piso 2014, esp. 493–504).
57 Caes. Bell. Alex. 49–55.
58 Haensch 1997a, 372 f. 752–755.

governor did not even have city status and in some areas this was never changed, as for example in Germania Superior. Generally speaking, the status of a city chosen to be a capital was apparently not very important: it could also be a *civitas libera et immunis* like Tarsus or a *civitas libera* like Antioch or Ephesos. Utica was granted *libertas* when the *provincia Africa* was constituted. But it also became its capital during the first decades of Roman rule. These examples prove that a city could become a capital even if it possessed such special rights – contrary to very commonly held ideas, *libertas* implied not complete independence from Roman rule, but an individual bundle of privileges, which varied considerably between different *civitates liberae*.

To be sure, in the case of some provincial capitals, normally in regions which were not characterised by urbanisation before the Roman conquest, one gets the impression that they were heavily influenced by Roman models. We often automatically conclude from this fact that the Romans had wanted to build a ›capital‹. But this a misleading impression[59]: certainly, if the emperor or his designated successor spent years in a non-urbanised region, as was the case during the last decades of the rule of Augustus in Germany, a dwelling place acceptable for such an important person had to be built. A *praetorium* was hence built in the *civitas Ubiorum* already around the turn of our era, as were other impressive buildings[60]. Sure, Tarraco and Emerita received a number of monumental buildings under Augustus. But the conquest and the organisation of the Iberian peninsula was the first task by which Augustus had to show that he would fulfil the promise which he had given in 27 BC to get his exceptional position legitimized by the senate and people of Rome: he had justified the powers given to him, especially the provinces Spain, Gaul and Syria with the armies stationed in them, with his task to protect and pacify the *imperium populi Romani*[61]. The first step, as all knew who participated in the meetings of the senate in January of 27 BC, was to finish the conquest of the Iberian peninsula. That meant that Augustus had to succeed in Spain. The resulting pressure surely influenced his efforts to found and build up centres for the newly conquered regions. This can still be seen most clearly in Emerita: Augustus did everything to ensure that the city, founded in 25 BC, would be a success. In addition to its central location in the road network of the southwest of the peninsula, the city was endowed with a huge territory, even in the opinion of experts at the time, which provided a large, secure agricultural base for its growth. The settlement of the veterans of two legions, the *V Alauda* and *X Gemina*, gave the new city a strong Roman-Italian flavour. The size of the parcels awarded to the veterans (400 *iugera*) made sure that they remained on the assigned pieces of land and did not return to Italy. Fiscal privileges, which were probably only later summarized under the term *ius Italicum*, worked also in the same direction. No wonder that this city was strongly oriented towards the *urbs* in its public architecture, but also, for example, in the private burial practices. But whether Augustus planned from the outset that the city was to be the future seat of a Roman governor of a future province[62] or if he only wanted to build *the* Roman citizen colony of the peninsula, remains an open question.

Were there common characteristics, even if provincial capitals were not conceived in series on the drawing-board? On the one hand: yes. The most important factor was without doubt the presence of the governor and his staff during the major part of a year. This presence resulted normally in the building of an administrative complex for him and his staff, as had already sometimes been done under the Roman Republic. According to the *periochae* of Livy, there was a *praetorium* in Utica[63]. In contrast to the *praetorium* in Syracusae, mentioned by Cicero, which was the re-used palace of Hiero II[64], the building at Utica cannot have been a palace of a pre-Roman ruler. When Cicero was in exile, Thessalonica had a *quaestorium*[65], apparently a special building for

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[59] Haensch 1997a, 387 f.
[60] Eck 2004, 77–102.
[61] Kienast 1999, 85 f.
[62] As Wiegels 1976, 282 for example thought.
[63] Liv. per. 86; cf. Cic. Verr. 2, 1, 90.
[64] Cic. Verr. 2, 4, 118.
[65] Cic. Planc. 99.

the *quaestor provinciae*. It seems that already in the 1st century BC the Roman government had erected or adapted a building even for this minor official – and probably – given the greater importance of the governor – there was also a *praetorium* at Thessalonica.

Archaeological research has found and identified, normally by means of inscriptions found in the buildings, *praetoria* in a number of capital cities, as for example in Roman Cologne, Aquincum, Apulum or Caesarea Maritima[66]; as well as Gortyn for Late Antiquity[67]. But these buildings instruct us that there was not a standard type of *praetorium*, even if all shared common features, such as a *basilica*, large courts, a private bath, etc. All these common elements are, however, typical of Roman luxury architecture in general and could be found also in private residences, the *domus*, of prominent individuals.

From the mid-2nd century AD on we can observe in some major provinces at least that the capital functioned as an administrative centre even during the absence of the governor. Our evidence from Egypt, which seems to be typical also for other provinces, suggests that Alexandria was the legally binding place for the publication of some kinds of documents of the Roman administration. For example, it was in Alexandria that Roman *cives* had to make their *professiones liberorum natorum*, even during the time of the assize-tour of the governor[68]. In Egypt and some other provinces, we find the governor leaving another high-ranking official in the capital to carry out at least certain tasks of administration in his absence. In Egypt this was apparently the *iuridicus*, in Asia and Africa a *legatus proconsulis*[69]. In the case of Hispania Citerior we have evidence from the late 2nd or 3rd century of a *iuridicus Hispaniae (Citerioris) conventus Tarraconensis*[70]. Of course, these men could not handle all matters which a governor had to decide upon[71], but they could settle many trivial matters and keep him updated.

The presence of a governor also had its symbolic dimensions: we hear from Ulpian that a *praefectus Aegypti* could not resign his *imperium* until his successor had arrived in Alexandria[72]. Already in 180 BC the new governor of Hispania Citerior informed his predecessor as to when he would be arriving in Tarraco. There the departing governor handed his army over to the new one and together they decided which soldiers should be discharged[73]. At the end of March 43 BC, the *proconsul Hispaniae Ulterioris,* C. Asinius Pollio declared in a formal public speech *(pro contione)* in Corduba what he thought of the political situation after the murder of Iulius Caesar[74]. Some years earlier Caesar forced the governing legate of Pompey, M. Terentius Varro, to publicly account for the time of his governorship in Corduba[75]. According to the late antique author Quodvultdeus, a governor of his time should also be prepared to render account of his governorship in the capital of the province[76].

With the governor came his staff. It was also a permanent feature of such a capital. But obviously there were great differences, too[77]. All Roman dignitaries could take their family, their personal servants and a group of *comites* to their place of duty. However, the similarities between the different types of provinces end here. In the *provinciae populi Romani*, proconsuls and quaestors could call only on the services of a handful of *apparitores* of the various Roman panels, such as the *scribae, lictores, viatores,* etc. The *legati Augusti* took, at least from the 2nd century on, from these panels only five *lictores* to their province – because these *lictores* were necessarily con-

[66] See above n. 48.
[67] Lippolis 2016, esp. 172.
[68] Haensch 1992, 283–289. 306–313; Haensch 1997a, 213.
[69] Haensch 1997a, 92. 94. 224. 317 f.; cf. further Haensch 2016b, 168 f.
[70] Haensch 1997a, 174.
[71] But see Haensch 2016b, 165–182.
[72] Dig. 1, 17, 1.
[73] Liv. 40, 39, 3–4. 13–14.
[74] Cic. fam. 10, 31, 5.
[75] Caes. civ. 2, 20, 8.
[76] Qvodv. prom. 5, 13, 15.
[77] See for a detailed list Haensch 1997a, 710–726. For the *singulares* Haensch 2020. For Egypt Haensch 2007.

nected with the sign of the power of the Roman dignitary[78]. But the everyday work resulting from the duties of such a *legatus Augusti* was done by an *officium* of seconded soldiers[79]. These *officiales* did the paperwork[80], helped with jurisdiction and peace-keeping, cared for the *praetorium* and the horses of the Roman dignitary and protected him. We only have precise numbers for some of the grades in these *officia* and as such do not possess precise figures for the totals. But obviously there were great differences. While a legate of consular rank in a frontier province probably had several hundred soldiers on his staff and as his bodyguard, which had to be lodged in a special camp, a praetorian governor of the same type of a province had to be content with about half of these numbers. When there was no legion in the province, about thirty men were sent from a neighbouring province. Among the staff of some or all procurators we also find a small number of soldiers – perhaps two mounted and ten others. But most of the work which resulted from the duties of such a *procurator* was done by members of the *familia Caesaris*, i. e. *Augusti liberti* and *servi Caesaris*. How numerous these *Augusti liberti* and *servi Caesaris* were, we do not know[81].

By the beginning of the 4th century most of these differences had disappeared or been abolished. There was now only one group of staff members, recruited from the literate population of the empire and only nominally part of the army. Even the number and composition of the *officia* of the different provinces seem to have been standardized to a certain degree[82].

But even then, one fundamental difference remained: the number of high functionaries residing in one place. During the High Empire, the CCAA, for example, had only a *legatus Augusti* in residence, while at the same time Ephesos accommodated a *proconsul*, a special *legatus dioeceseos*, i.e. a legate dealing with the affairs of the *conventus*-district of Ephesos, a *quaestor* and different procurators. During Late Antiquity we have small provincial capitals, as for example in the Alps, where only a governor resided, and we have the testimony of Salvian about all the administrators and administrative buildings at Carthage: the *vicarius Africae*, the *proconsul Africae*, the *legatus dioeceseos*, the *rationalis*, etc. with their buildings and staffs[83]. No doubt cities as large as Carthage, Alexandria or Antioch held a greater number of high-ranking Roman officials than ›normal‹ provincial capitals did. But it is not certain that these cities were more deeply affected by the presence of the agents of Roman rule than were smaller capitals, because these cities were also exceptionally large and prosperous by the standards of the Roman world.

So much for the direct consequences of provincial capital status. But what about the indirect ones? Generally speaking, it has proved impossible to demonstrate that high Roman officials cared in a different way for their capitals than for other cities in their provinces[84]. Even if we find governors more often concerned with municipal buildings in the capitals than elsewhere, this probably resulted only from their being present and thus more accessible than in the case of other cities. There were no systematic building programmes and the buildings in these cities were not paid for by the Roman Fiscus to a greater extent than in other cities. Of course, governors were more accessible to the complaints or petitions of magistrates of capital cities, but they would also react to requests from other cities for help, protection of privileges, and intervention in keeping the peace.

The attention which a series of Roman governors paid to their seat could never match the interest which a ruler of pre-Roman times or a Roman emperor paid to his residence. Roman governors of the High Empire stayed only for a short time in their province – *proconsules* for one year and *legati Augusti* normally for three years at most. In Late Antiquity even one year became the rule. A little bit more wiggle room was perhaps sometimes given to the first governor of a

78 See now the splendid monument published by Bönisch-Meyer 2018.
79 For these see now also Bérard 2015, 319–411.
80 See for these *officiales* also Stauner 2004 (not entirely without errors).
81 Boulvert 1970; France 2000.
82 Palme 1999.
83 Salv. gub. 7, 68.
84 Haensch 1997a, 377–384.

newly constituted province, who also kept his function for more years than a ›normal‹ governor[85]. For most governors their provincial tenure was but a short phase in their career focused on the emperor and Rome (or later Constantinople). But most importantly they were not independent agents: they needed the emperor's permission if they wanted to spend money. Thus, Iuba II was probably more important for Iol than the procurators of Mauretania Caesariensis. The difference in status between the two capitals of the two Germaniae can only be explained by Agrippina's personal interests in one of them.

It is not easy to measure and evaluate the degree to which a city benefitted economically from being a capital. True, there was economic gain to be made from the governor's residence in a city: visits by petitioners, litigants[86], embassies of client kings and tribal chiefs, and newly arrived Roman officials worked as an economic stimulus, since they all needed accommodation and food, sometimes for months. A market for luxurious products might also be created by the demands of the governor, his *comites* and his illustrious guests. A real connoisseur such as P. [Cal]visius Sabinus Pomponius Secundus imported his Spanish *garum*, when he had become governor of the army of Germania Superior under Claudius[87]. But the *procurator* of Raetia in the years 77/80 C. Saturius Secundus – not known for his exclusive taste – did the same[88].

In a capital, one was also better informed about legal matters and had a better chance to have them addressed[89]. A *centurio* protected his foundation for boxing matches in Barcino by stipulating that these matches should be transferred to Tarraco if someone tried to change his arrangements[90]. The fact that all rights were better protected at a capital was useful not only for civic magistrates and advocates, but also for the other professions.

In no other place of a province did the local notables have so many opportunities to rub shoulders, so to speak, with a member of the *Reichsführungsschichten*[91]: there was the morning *salutatio*, one could petition a governor returning from a show at the theatre, become an advisor or *iudex delegatus* in legal cases and be invited to banquets. Such encounters might smooth one's path to promotion into the equestrian or senatorial *ordo* as it apparently did in the case of Tarraco[92]. But one must not be ›over optimistic‹: the first *consul* from such an important city as Ephesos is attested only in Severan times[93]. There were also other prerequisites for a successful career.

In any case, the mere fact of their being a capital is not enough to explain the economic prosperity of cities – often it was not the most important reason. If we take as an example the distinct group of legionary camps on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube which became governor's residences, we find that it was still the legion and its needs which dominated their economy. Many capitals demonstrably lay near the Mediterranean Sea or were situated on the banks of great rivers and were therefore great commercial towns. Their development was not hampered when they ceased being capitals, as for example the case of Utica shows, which lost its place to Carthago. Their harbours silting up, as happened to Narbo and Ephesos, would surely have proved far more damaging.

Many of the eastern capitals had had a long history before the first Roman governor arrived. This history, its myths and to a certain extent the city's role in the provincial *koinon* determined the way in which these cities regarded themselves.

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[85] Five years in the case of Lycia (AE 1953, 251); probably eight years in the case of Arabia (P. Mich. VIII 466; SEG 7, 844); six (?) years in that of Mesopotamia (Magioncalda 1982, no. 1).
[86] See now Haensch 2017.
[87] Ehmig 1996.
[88] Ehmig – Liou – Long 2004 (AE 2004, 882. 1055 f.).
[89] Haensch 1997a, 212 f. 385 f.
[90] ILS 6957.
[91] Haensch 1997a, 386 f.
[92] Alföldy 2002, 193.
[93] I.Ephesos 648. 892.

And what about the governors[94]? How did they regard their residences? The *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* tells us that new governors entered the megalopolis Alexandria only with fear and trembling *(cum timore et tremore)*. A single false step could lead to street-fighting. Already Dio Chrysostomus knew that the city had acquired a bad reputation with the *praefecti Aegypti*. Aelius Aristides thought that this was the reason cities like Alexandria were chosen as capitals by the Romans: the governor had to control the population[95].

It is possible that the western capitals, of which many had been founded by the Romans, were prouder to be capitals, but we cannot verify this hypothesis. For a certain time, at least part of the population regarded the Roman governor as an agent of suppression and conquest. The burning of Colonia Victricensis (Camulodunum) in the course of the uprising of Boudicca shows that it was not always possible to integrate the non-Roman element as successfully as it was done in the Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium.

A *procurator* of the small and mountainous province Alpes Graiae et Poeninae erected an impressive *ara* to Silvanus in its tiny capital of Axima – which no local monument could even begin to rival. He documented his readiness to dedicate a thousand trees to the god, if the latter protected him and ensured his safe return to Rome[96]. Apparently he felt a bit lost. Cicero, while *proconsul Ciliciae*, contrasted his lot, having to judge cases at Laodicea, with A. Plotius's, who was doing the same, but as *praetor urbanus* in Rome[97]. There real politics were made.

How did this change during the age of transition, that is, between the late 2nd and the late 4th century? Some points have already been made, some more general ones will be discussed now: first, one has to underline that we have a huge problem of identification, especially for the period during which the number of provinces grew once more and then doubled, i.e. in the late 3rd century and especially under Diocletian. As already mentioned, in the case of most provinces no ancient source tells us explicitly that this or that city was the residence of the governor or the *procurator*. Thus, we must turn to indirect evidence and identify the capital by what it can offer us. Our knowledge of cities of the ancient world beyond Athens and Rome during the High Empire depends mostly on inscriptions, and thus it is no coincidence that inscriptions are the most important means of identifying the residences of governors and procurators during this period. As has been explained, these inscriptions must be of such a kind that they did not result from the normal routine of a governor or *procurator*, but would have been set up mostly or only at the place where he resided.

But as is typical for most inscriptions in most parts of the empire[98], these types of inscriptions also became rare after AD 250. During the reigns of the last predecessors of Constantine – from Aurelian to Diocletian – there was once more a fashion for governors to dedicate altars to pagan gods[99], but this stops with 324, the final victory of Constantine[100]. Even if most governors of the 4th century were not Christians, public demonstrations of their religious convictions were apparently disapproved of or even forbidden. And the inscriptions of *officiales* never again became as numerous as they had been at the turn from the 2nd to the 3rd century. Because of this dearth of epigraphical evidence, capitals of Late Antiquity and especially the 4th century AD can normally only be identified[101] and characterized on the basis of the literary sources, especially Ammianus Marcellinus, the chronicles of Late Antiquity, the Cappadocian Church fathers and the literature originating from the Donatist controversy.

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94 Cf. Haensch 2011.
95 Expos. mundi 28; Dion. Chrys. 32, 71, 96; Aristeid. Eis Romen 67.
96 ILS 3528. See for the different characteristics of the monument in comparison to others Haensch 1997a, 143 f.
97 Cic. Att. 5, 15, 1.
98 Bolle – Machado – Witschel 2017.
99 E.g. in Raetia (IBR 95. 98. 191; cf. IBR 121; Wagner 1956/1957, no. 30).
100 Eck 1989, 35 n. 71.
101 See for example the discussion of Benseddik 2005, 257–259.

But for many parts of the empire there are no such sources (and also no papyri). For all these parts the identification is normally based on the lists of provincial towns of a certain part of the empire, for example the *Notitia Galliarum*. But in these lists we do not find explicit references that the governor resided in a certain town. Instead, they only indicate that a certain town (or two!) were the *metropolis* of a province, or we are confronted with the fact that a certain town was put at the beginning of a non-alphabetical list of cities of a certain province. But we know from the evidence of the High Empire that the title *metropolis* was not connected with the function of being the residence of a governor, and what we know about the quarrels between certain rival cities in the 4th and 5th centuries, such as Nicaea and Nicomedia or the cities of Phoenicia, confirms that this was true also in Late Antiquity. Finally, these lists were used and rewritten in a manner different form that of a historiographical text[102]. We do not know, for example, if the term *metropolis* in the *Notitia Galliarum* refers to a secular title or if it refers to the fact that the city was the seat of a metropolitan bishop. To be sure, *canon* 9 of the so-called Council of Antioch is normally interpreted in the sense that the ecclesiastical hierarchy followed the secular one. But, first, the canon does not say this exactly: »The bishops in each province ought to recognise that the bishop who presides in the metropolis also undertakes the care of the whole province, because people with business all congregate from everywhere in the metropolis. Whence it is resolved that he should be preferred in honour, and the other bishops … should do nothing without him beyond the affairs which concern their individual sees«[103]. Once more the role of the *metropolis* is not defined by being the residence of the governor, but only by the number of people that flock to such a city. Second, the *canones* of this council became general ecclesiastical law only after they had been cited during the ecumenical council of Chalcedon. In the case of the North African provinces (the Proconsularis excepted), for example, this regulation was never put into practise. Therefore, identifying provincial capitals (in our sense) based on which cities these lists give with the title *metropolis* is problematic at least.

Generally speaking, it is even more difficult[104] to identify the provincial capitals of the much more numerous provinces of Late Antiquity than to discuss the question for the High Empire, and it is no coincidence that this has not yet been done. The only study which has tried to deal with all of them, Luke Lavan's dissertation, has never been published and tackles its subject in an exemplary and structural way, rather than trying to treat the provincial capitals of Late Antiquity in a systematic and exhaustive fashion.

Against this background I can sketch only some developments: it is probable that in a number of cases cities which had been *conventus*-cities in the first to the 3rd century now became the residences of governors. This can be proved for some cities of the *provincia Asia*, but normally we know so little about the histories of the *conventus*-systems of the provinces that we cannot tell if there was any continuity. In any case in Late Antiquity the *conventus*-system no longer existed in any province. In Egypt its traces are lost during the second half of the 3rd century at the latest and the last testimony in another province dates from 275/276 and concerns Perge in Lycia et Pamphylia[105].

The uniting of the functions of governor and head of financial administration during Late Antiquity and the division of many provinces during the same period probably had the consequence that in smaller and medium-sized provinces there was now only one centre of administration. Because the governors of Late Antiquity generally no longer acted as supreme commanders of the units of their provinces – this function was now fulfilled by *duces* –, there was no reason at all for the residence of a governor to be located where the most important garrison of a province was stationed.

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102 Cf. Jones 1971, 514–521.

103 For a detailed discussion see Haensch 2006a, 139–142.

104 For an exemplary discussion of the capitals of the *dioecesis Hispaniarum* see Brassous 2011 (discussed by Le Roux 2019). For Italy Ausbüttel 1988, 104–106, for Ancyra see Mitchell – French 2019, 3. 205–207 (with the literature cited). Cf. also Färber 2014, 161–172.

105 SEG 34, 1306.

The fact that the number of the provinces more than doubled at the turn from the 3rd to the 4th century necessarily implied that many governors resided in smaller towns than before and that the gap between the capitals of the most important provinces and the smaller ones widened. One can cite Lactantius, who criticised Diocletian, because *multi praesides et plura officia singulis regionibus ac paene iam civitatibus incubare*, »because many governors and numerous *officia* were burdening the singular regions and almost every city«[106]. Almost without exception, these governors were now no longer the rich, experienced and powerful members of a few hundred leading families of the ruling power, but younger people with a much lower background, often recruited more locally. They normally held office only for a short period, one year or two, and were controlled by *vicari* and *praefecti praetorio*. It is not probable that they dominated their residence to the same degree as many of their predecessors had done[107]. How they looked, while dispensing justice, is shown by a number of sarcophagi depicting Jesus before Pilatus[108].

While the residences of governors and procurators were the only administrative centres in their provinces during the High Empire, this changed with the late 2nd and especially 3rd century. A number of more important and powerful ›rivals‹ emerged[109]. The first were those cities that became residences of the emperor for a longer period. The first of these cities was Sirmium, which had apparently played no supra-regional administrative role until the stay of Marcus Aurelius, but subsequently became the headquarters of an emperor time and time again. Especially the residences of Diocletian and his colleagues – not only Nicomedia, Salona or Thessalonica – were improved and developed by imperial building and money to a degree which had never been typical previously, even in the case of the capitals of the most important provinces. When the *praefecti praetorio* and their *vicarii* became administrators of whole regions of the empire at the beginning of the 4th century, much money also went to their residences.

Finally, we have to take the consequences of the Christianisation of the empire into consideration: places connected with the history of the Christian movement or with the top positions of the Christian hierarchy acquired an importance never achieved by pagan sanctuaries – Jerusalem outshone Caesarea without ever being the seat of a Roman administrator. The residences of the Roman governors, on the other hand, became Christianised. We do not know whether the small number of hints we possess are to be explained by the dwindling number of inscriptions in most provinces, or because the process was slow. While in office in 442, a praetorian prefect gave much (private) money towards the building of the most important church at the place of his residence, after being asked by the prominent local bishop: *Marcellus Gall(iarum) pr(a)ef(ectus) d(e)i cultor prece exegit ep(iscopu)m hoc on(u)s suscip(ere) inpendia necessar(ia) repromittens quae per bienn(ium) administ(rationis) suae pr(a)ebu(it) artifi(ci)b(us) merced(em) sol(idos) DC ad oper(a) et ceter(a) sol(idos) ID*[110]. In the 6th century a governor of Arabia, having served for four years, i.e. an exceptionally long period, paid for the east façade of a church at his residence of Bostra[111]. Perhaps around the same time, in the neighbouring province of Palaestina I, *officiales* had the idea to put a certain sentence of the new testament (NT Ep. Rom. 13, 3) into the mosaic of their office at Caesarea to admonish people to pay their taxes[112]. Ideas such as these show us that we are now definitively in a new world, that of the Middle Ages.

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106 Lact. mort. pers. 7, 4.

107 Jones 1986, 381–385. 409; Slootjes 2006, 175–183; Dey 2018 is not convincing and based on too many *argumenta ex nihilo*.

108 Bablitz 2016.

109 For a rapid overview for the Balkans see Poulter 1992.

110 CIL XII 5336, cf. p. 856 = ILCV 1806. There is no reason to think that Narbo was his birth place as for example Mathisen 1979, 601 does. Marcellus does not speak of his *patria*, but of his *administratio*. It is absolutely possible that Narbo had replaced Arles as residence of the prefect of the Galliae.

111 IGLS XIII 9139, for the governor see Sartre 1982, 111 f. no. 82. Unfortunately the inscription was not found *in situ*.

112 CIIP II 1334, cf. 1336.

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Christoph Baier

CAPITALS IN THE MAKING

A PALACE IN EPHESOS AND ITS POSSIBLE HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS[1]

ABSTRACT

A palatial residence on the western slope of Mount Panayır in Ephesos and its embedding into the surrounding urban environment shed new light on the monumentalization of the cityscape in the pre-Augustan periods. The available evidence gives reason to assume that particular political strategies were employed during the period of Attalid reign to design a new image of the city. Later, during the Roman Imperial period, the *domus* spread over an area of more than 10,000 m² and is closely comparable to confirmed Roman governors' palaces elsewhere. The residence might not only be a key monument to understand the rise of Ephesos as a centre of administration and political power from an urbanistic point of view, but also seems to represent one of the exceptional possibilities to study the transition of an administrative residence from the Hellenistic era to the Roman Imperial period from an archaeological perspective.

KEYWORDS

Ephesos – palace architecture – urban planning – Attalid administration – Asia

»The capital is by definition a seat of power and a place of decision-making processes.«[2]. More than other cities, capitals face the task of propagating specific political and ideological notions by means that are worthy of representing an administrative region and its authorities. Undoubtedly, these symbolic requirements of capital cities are reflected in their architecture, monuments and other symbols of authority. Specifically, both the physical urban fabric and the symbolic image of capital cities are often distinctively characterised by their seats of governments and by monuments of political power. Taking the city of Ephesos as a case study, the general aim of this paper is to address the reciprocal relationship between the formation of a new system of political administration, the formation of a new identity and the respective role of urban planning in these processes. What is more, the case of Ephesos might also help us to shed light on a phenomenon that is of interest above all for Roman provincial capitals on the former territory of Hellenistic realms: the possible Hellenistic predecessors of Roman provincial governor's seats.

With regard to the provinces of the Roman Empire, Rudolf Haensch's fundamental volume on the *capita provinciarum* has thoroughly evaluated the available epigraphic evidence as well as relevant written records and archaeological documentation in order to locate the administrative

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[2] Gottmann – Harper 1990, 63.

centres from which the Roman governors and other provincial officials operated[3]. According to his judgement, in about half of the 66 provinces considered in his analysis the existence of a capital in terms of a governor's seat can be taken as established[4]. From an architectural and urbanistic perspective, what must have made these cities unique compared to other cities is the existence of special buildings, monuments and places »for the concentration, administration and representation of political power«[5], above all the existence of a *praetorium* as the residence of the Roman governor[6]. The governmental buildings, therefore, would be one of the most characteristic urbanistic features of a Roman provincial capital, even if the available ancient literary sources provide proof for the existence of a *praetorium* only in the case of eleven or twelve provinces[7].

However, the material evidence for defining the common archaeological, architectural and urbanistic features of Roman *praetoria* and hence for safely identifying them is scanty. Even if the remains of especially large buildings in various provincial capitals have been labelled as palaces since their excavation, only five *praetoria* from the 1st to 3rd centuries AD are identified epigraphically and are reasonably well known also from an archaeological perspective[8]. They are located in Apulum (Alba Iulia), Aquincum (Budapest), Carnuntum, Caesarea Maritima and in the Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium (Cologne). In addition, a palatial residence in Dura Europos most probably also housed administrative functions, albeit its ascription to a regional military commander or *dux ripae* is not unchallenged[9]. In Cretan Gortyn, the Italian investigations have demonstrated that only from the late 4th century onward the building complex traditionally known as »pretorio« can indeed be connected with the construction of a new *praetorium* that is also epigraphically documented for this time[10].

It is hardly surprising that typologically these building complexes do not correspond to uniform standards[11]. Each of them had to respond to unique topographic and urbanistic conditions, and each of them was built under specific historical circumstances and according to the status and needs of the respective province[12]. Still, as a group of buildings that had to be compliant with comparable functions they nevertheless show a number of common features and characteristics that can be contrasted with other luxurious urban *domus* and *villae suburbanae*. These characteristics have been systematically evaluated and elaborated above all by Felix F. Schäfer and Barbara Burrell[13]. Even if the governors did not necessarily exercise their duties in the palace, the confirmed *praetoria* are all characterised by a very high degree of spatial and functional complexity, consisting of administrative, residential, sacred and subaltern parts. They had to offer the appropriate spaces for the accommodation of the governor, his *familia* and other staff, for court hearings, audiences, political receptions, political meetings and speeches, administrative activities, festive *convivia*, sacred acts, and probably also for archiving documents and for detaining prisoners[14]. Similar to the imperial palace of Domitian on the Palatine, in comparison to other representative *domus* the confirmed *praetoria* usually show a distinct structural separation

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3 Haensch 1997.

4 Cf. Haensch 1997, 361.

5 Campbell 2003, 3 addressing the uniqueness of capital cities in general terms.

6 For the broad meanings of the term *praetorium* see Schäfer 2014, 11–33.

7 Cf. Haensch 1997, 375.

8 An extensive comparative discussion of the archaeological evidence has been provided by Schäfer 2014.

9 Questioning the ascription to the *dux ripae*, but generally suggesting archival, fiscal and judicial functions of the building, see Edwell 2008, 128–135.

10 See Di Vita 2000, p. LVII–LVIII; Livadiotti 2000, 130–132 fig. 148; De Tommaso 2000, 337–348 esp. 342 f. figs. 51–52; Schäfer 2014, 331 f. fig. 330.

11 Also see Schäfer 2014, 32 and Rusu-Bolindeţ 2019, 116 referring to the case of Apulum.

12 In order to fulfil his specific tasks, the governor had an extensive staff of *officiales*, but no antique sources provide explicit information about who lived or worked in a *praetorium* alongside the governor. On the staff at the governors' disposal cf. Haensch 1997, 35. 710–726; Schäfer 2014, 29 f.

13 See Schäfer 2014, 337–342; Burrell 1996. For a synopsis of Roman *praetoria* also see Lavan 1999, 135–137.

14 See Haensch 1997, 374–377; Meyer-Zwiffelhofer 2002, esp. 64–73. 223–326; Schäfer 2014, 26–29 for the tasks and activities of the Roman provincial administration.

of the administrative and the residential spheres, which are characterised by high and low public accessibility, respectively[15]. In addition to these architectural characteristics, importantly, a comparatively large quantity of epigraphic documents including public building inscriptions has been found in the confirmed Roman governor's residences and in other administrative residences such as the *domus procuratoris* in Sarmizegetusa[16].

From an urbanistic point of view, and hence of particular importance in the context of the topic discussed here, the confirmed *praetoria* markedly differ from other *domus* with palatial features by means of their particular location within the urban fabric, which is usually characterised, on the one hand, by good accessibility from important roads and ports while on the other hand the topographical position is often at the same time elevated and somewhat peripheral. Referring to the impressive façades of the residences in Dura Europos, Aquincum, Carnuntum and Cologne, which were oriented towards non-Roman territory, Felix F. Schäfer has underscored the importance of the perceived image of the official residence as a symbol of political rule and military strength[17].

That the elevated, outstanding position of many Hellenistic and Roman palaces indeed was meant to symbolically reflect the power relations between the ruling elite and the subordinate civic community is not only indicated by the preserved buildings. Referring to the influence of the Persian royal residences on the perception of palace architecture in the Hellenistic world, Bernd Funck has stressed the fact that the erection of royal palaces had become the most important and obvious sign of one of the main characteristics of the Hellenistic monarchies, the separation of king from people[18]. His linguistic analysis of the terms used to denote Persian and Hellenistic royal palaces suggests that the ruler's palace was indeed perceived in everyday political life during the Hellenistic period as the centre of power. More specifically, with reference to a passage in Livy describing the ascent of the Haimos Mountains by Philip V of Macedonia, Burkhard Fehr postulated that the Macedonian kings understood the prospect over the land as a symbolic expression of their claim to political power[19]. As Fehr points out, various paragraphs in Herodotus and a formula of the »Daiva Inscription« of Xerxes suggest that already for the Persian kings a far-reaching prospect from an elevated position was a sign of their power[20].

Thus, if we want to describe the possible ideological connotations of ancient seats of power, it is necessary to follow the approach of a contextual semantic interpretation of the architectural and archaeological evidence, and hence to borrow methodological means from semiotic urban studies and architectural semiotics[21]. Following this approach, the analysis of the architectural, urban and topographical context of a building is of great relevance for understanding its cultural significance, insofar as the contexts further define the meaning of an object and confer additional meaning to it[22]. The same is true for the consideration of the social actions that have taken place in and around a building, in the case that they can be inferred from the available archaeological evidence[23].

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15 It has already been pointed out several times that a clear distinction of ›public‹ and ›private‹ does not correspond to the reality of ancient living habits. Cf. e.g. Trümper 1998, 88 f. on the problematic distinction of functions in multi-courtyard houses. Also see Schäfer 2014, 16 for the use of the terms ›private‹ and ›public‹/›official‹ with reference to aristocratic residential architecture, stressing that we should rather think of areas with varying degrees of accessibility than of a distinction between two static polar opposites. For privacy and publicity in early Hellenistic court architecture see the seminal article by von Hesberg 1996 and recently Ferrara 2020, esp. 285–287. 370 f. focussing on the Macedonian palaces.

16 Cf. Schäfer 2014, 337 f. with further references.

17 On the possible symbolic connotations of a commanding location see e.g. Schäfer 2014, 338; Burrell 1996, 228; Haensch 1997, 376.

18 See Funck 1996, 45.

19 See Fehr 1970, 50 f. referring to Liv. 40, 21–22.

20 See Fehr 1970, esp. 45–48 referring to Hdt. 4, 85; 7, 44–45; 8, 90.

21 On semiotic approaches to interpreting architectural and archaeological evidence, see e.g. Eco 1972a, 293–356; Preziosi 1979; Demandt 1982.

22 Cf. Eco 1972b, 110.

23 Pointing to the importance of considering social action for the semiotic analysis of architecture Maran et al. 2006, passim; Hölscher 2006, esp. 187; Wildgen 2013, 251 f.

THE ORIGINS OF ROMAN GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCES

Both Barbara Burrell and Felix F. Schäfer have stressed the fact that in light of the available archaeological evidence it is particularly problematic to trace back the origins of the known Roman governor's residences[24]. Until today, the earliest phases of these large architectural complexes remain especially vague. For the *praetorium* of Cologne, Schäfer suggests that the building even prior to the creation of the province of Germania Inferior, from its earliest traceable phases under the reigns of Tiberius and Claudius onward, had been used as a residence for the highest Roman magistrates and members of the imperial family[25]. In contrast, the earliest traceable phase of the palace of Aquincum can be dated to the years shortly after the creation of the province of Pannonia Inferior in the beginning of the 2nd century AD[26]. For the *praetorium consularis* of Apulum the available evidence does not allow to reconstruct a precise chronological evolution of the large building complex. The most recent excavation results indicate that the earliest stone building phase dates to the middle or the second half of the 2nd century AD and is thus roughly contemporary with the reorganisation of the province of Dacia during the reign of Marcus Aurelius[27]. In each of these cases, hence, the erection of the residence was directly connected to the new establishment of Roman rule. The character, extent and function of previous buildings at the aforementioned sites are largely unknown, however, due to the poor state of preservation of the earliest building remains[28].

The circumstances were quite different in those parts of the Roman Empire where urban life was characterised by the lasting imprint of Hellenistic culture and the traditions of royal architecture and urban planning. For some of these regions written sources explicitly attest that Hellenistic seats of power continued to be used as instruments of Roman government[29]. In his speeches *In Verrem,* Cicero mentions that the royal palace of Hieron II of Syracuse on the island of Ortygia had become the *praetorium* of the Roman governor[30]. Similarly, Philo of Alexandria and Flavius Josephus testify that the Roman governors during their stays in Jerusalem resided in the lavish Herodian palace, vividly described by Josephus[31]. Conceivably, other Hellenistic royal palaces in Roman provincial capitals such as Alexandria or Syrian Antioch might have been turned into Roman governor's residences as well, but so far there are no authoritative records available to prove such an assumption for these cities[32].

From an archaeological perspective the so-called Promontory Palace at Caesarea Maritima in Judaea to date remains the only preserved example to illustrate this phenomenon[33]. Given its strong architectural and urbanistic resemblances with Hellenistic royal palaces this building complex has been convincingly identified with the palace of the Roman client king Herod, which according to a passage in the *Book of Acts*[34] continued to be used as a *praetorium* by the Roman administration. Located prominently on a rocky promontory, the main building of the palace complex comprised a residential suite on a lower terrace centred on a big pool with a surrounding peristyle, and an upper terrace focussing on a large central courtyard flanked by various halls and

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24 Also pointing to this problem Hanel 2000, 666.
25 Cf. Schäfer 2014, 206.
26 See Havas 2016, 90–92; Schäfer 2014, 241 f.
27 On the chronology of the *praetorium* of Apulum see most recently Rusu-Bolindeţ 2019, 115 f. Also cf. Schäfer 2014, 275–284.
28 For Aquincum see Havas 2016, 88–90; Schäfer 2014, 236–238. For Apulum see Rusu-Bolindeţ 2019, 106. 115; Schäfer 2014, 272–276.
29 See Haensch 1997, 374 f.; Schäfer 2014, 23 f.
30 Cic. Verr. 2, 4, 118; 2, 5, 30.
31 Phil. legat. ad Gaium 299. 306; Ios. ant. Iud. 2, 301. 328.
32 Also see Mlynarczyk 1996, 200 on a potential Hellenistic predecessor of the villa of Theseus in Nea Paphos, considered to be the Roman governor's seat on Cyprus.
33 See Netzer 1996; Gleason et al. 1998.
34 Apg. 23, 35.

rooms suitable to accommodate public receptions[35]. In the architectural tradition of the Hellenistic *basileia*, the main building of the palace was surrounded by the most important spectacle buildings of the city, the theatre to the southeast and the hippodrome/*amphitheatron* to the north[36]. The location of the palace not far from the large harbour facilities was also of major importance, the more so as Caesarea would become the new main port of the region under the reign of Herod. As above all the studies of Barbara Burrell have pointed out, the continuing development and maintenance of the palace during the Roman Imperial period and the lack of structural modifications seem to support the written record that Herod's palace became the headquarters of the Roman government when Judaea became a Roman province in the beginning of the 1st century AD[37].

THE CASE OF EPHESOS

New archaeological fieldwork in the city of Ephesos might add importantly to our scholarly understanding of the phenomenon of pre-existing Hellenistic residences that continued to be used by the Roman administration. A palatial building complex on the western slope of Mount Panayır might reflect the very making of Ephesos as a centre of administration and political power and illustrate the process of the city becoming a capital during the 2nd century BC also from an urbanistic perspective (fig. 1). In order to respect the necessary limitations of this volume, the present contribution will focus on the earliest available archaeological evidence from the late Hellenistic period and its possible historical implications. It has to be understood against the background of the political and economic rise of Ephesos during the Hellenistic era, which is linked to the strategic importance of the town and its port in terms of political control and possibilities of trade[38].

The re-foundation of Ephesos/Arsinoeia around a then large marine bay between the hills of Panayırdağ and Bülbüldağ and its fortification early in the 3rd century BC by Lysimachos proved to be crucial for the city's flourishing throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Its central geostrategic location at the western end of two main long-distance routes of trade and deployment between the Aegean, Anatolia, Syria and Mesopotamia[39], is reflected in the fierce struggle between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies over the control of Ephesos during the 3rd and early 2nd centuries BC[40]. As has been already pointed out by Annalisa Calapà and Sabine Ladstätter, written sources clearly indicate that Hellenistic rulers and commanders from the 3rd century BC onward temporarily resided in Ephesos[41]. After the death of her husband Lysimachos in 281 BC, Arsinoë II escaped from Ephesos as mentioned by Polyainos[42]. According to Athenaios, Ptolemy ›the Son‹ was the commander of a garrison *(phrourarchos)* in Ephesos in 260/259 BC[43]. In the same passage, Athenaios also refers to a Seleucid governor or *phrourarchos* of Ephesos during the reign of Antiochos II Theos[44]. Furthermore, Eusebius informs us that Antiochos II died in Ephesos in 246 BC[45]. Finally, for the very beginning of the 2nd century BC, Livy even

[35] Cf. Gleason et al. 1998, esp. 36–48 on the chronology of the two wings.

[36] On the close connection between rulers' residences and spectacle buildings in Caesarea Maritima and Rome see Gleason 1996; Gleason et al. 1998, 52.

[37] See Burrell 1996. Also cf. B. Burrell in: Gleason et al. 1998, 48 on a mosaic floor with a Latin inscription corroborating the identification of the Promontory Palace as the Roman *praetorium*. On the status of Caesarea Maritima as its provincial capital see Haensch 1997, 227–229.

[38] Pointing to the key role of the port and to the geostrategic importance of the site among others Ladstätter 2019, esp. 197–203; Ladstätter 2016, passim; Billows 2007, esp. 35 f.; Calapà 2009, esp. 339–347.

[39] Cf. Ladstätter 2019, 195. 202 f.; Billows 2007, esp. 35 f. 42.

[40] For the political history of Ephesos in the late 3rd and 2nd centuries BC refer to Knibbe 1970, 257–263; Hansen 1971, esp. 74–88. 92–97. 160 f. 172; Calapà 2009, 340–346.

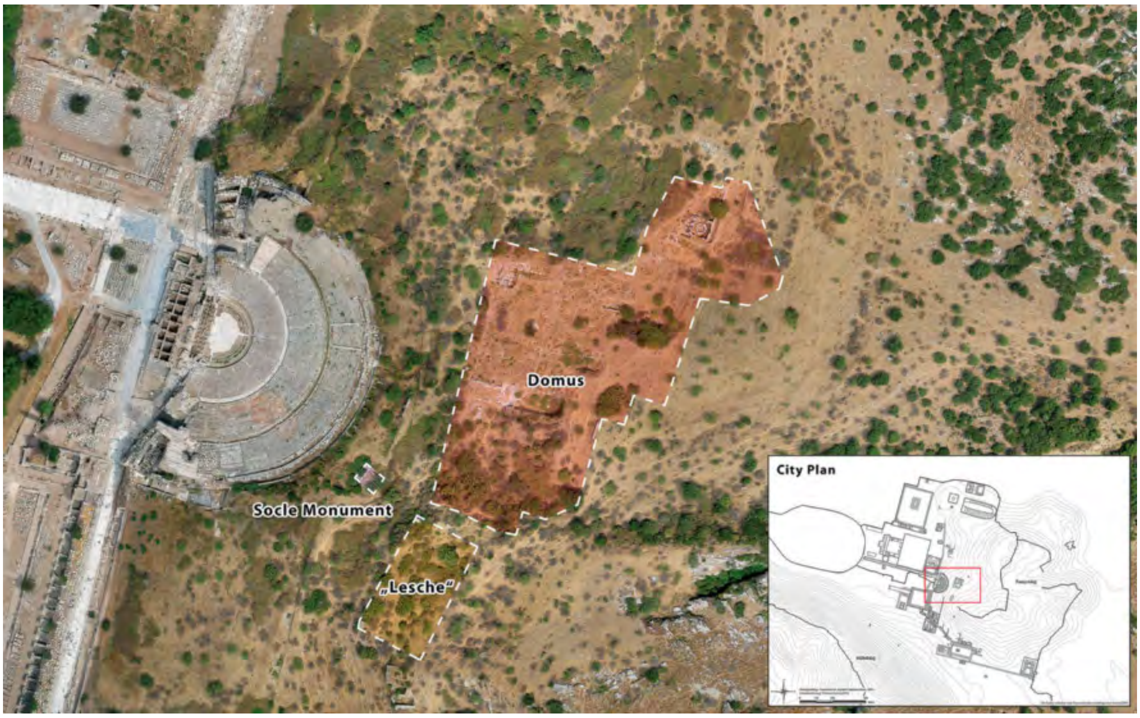
[41] Calapà 2009; Ladstätter 2016.

[42] Polyain. 8, 57.

[43] Athen. 13, 593a–b.

[44] Also cf. Calapà 2009, 342 with n. 103.

[45] Eus. chron. 1, 251 (edition: Schoene-Petermann 1866–1875, 251).



1 Aerial photograph of the city district above the theatre of Ephesos (09/2014) with indications of areas of interest (© Droneadventures.org, OeAW-OeAI; editing: C. Baier; city plan: C. Kurtze)

refers to a Seleucid palace in Ephesos, stating that the *regia* of Antiochos III was closed during mourning in 193 BC after the death of the king's first-born son[46]. Archaeologically, however, to date the building in question has not been localized.

After the Seleucid defeat in the Roman-Seleucid War and the Treaty of Apamea arranged in 188 BC, Ephesos came under the control of the Attalid kings who treated the city with particular attention with regard to both economic and administrative concerns. The economic rise of Ephesos during this period is well reflected in the presence of foreign (particularly Italian) merchants, in the steady issue of royal Pergamene *cistophoroi* as well as civic silver and probably also gold coins by the Ephesos mint, and in the start of a local production of tableware for export[47]. Strabo informs us that Attalos II commissioned a substantial reorganisation of the harbour of Ephesos narrowing its entrance with the construction of a mole[48]. Even if these engineering works eventually turned out to foster siltation instead of preventing it[49], the intent of the efforts to facilitate the entering of large vessels elucidates the role of Ephesos as an *emporium* and strategic military base of prime importance within the Attalid kingdom[50]. What is more, the city also came to be a major administrative centre for the Attalids, as is attested by an honorific inscription which was found in the area of the Artemision and most likely dates to the reign of Attalos II or III[51]. The document mentions a regional Pergamene governor with the title of *strategos* (στρατεγὸς ἐπί τε Ἐφέσου καὶ τῶν κατ᾽Ἔφεσον τόπων καὶ Καύστρου πεδίον καὶ τὸ Κιλβιανόν), who had the authority both over

[46] Liv. 35, 15.
[47] See Ladstätter 2016, 263–265; Ladstätter 2019, 204.
[48] Strab. 14, 1, 24.
[49] Cf. Kraft et al. 2011, 32; Kraft et al. 2000, 189. 198. Also see Ladstätter 2016, 260 for possible archaeological indications that the size of the harbour basin had been reduced by the 2nd century BC.
[50] On the significance of Ephesos for the Attalid realm see Allen 1983, 119–121; Calapà 2009, 342–345; Thonemann 2013, 10 f.; Ladstätter 2016, 262.
[51] Knibbe 1972–1975, 12–14 no. 4 = SEG 26, 1238 ll. 4–7 = IK 12, 201. On the likely dating of the inscription after the death of Eumenes II also see Savalli-Lestrade 2001, 81 f.; Thonemann 2013, 10. Calapà 2009, 344 suggests a date during the reign of Eumenes II but gives no specific explanation.

the city of Ephesos and a surrounding administrative district *(topos)* covering the city's hinterland and the Kaystros valley.

Unfortunately, the available archaeological records for the development of Ephesos during the Hellenistic period[52] hardly reflect its ever-growing importance during the Hellenistic period. While the refoundation of the city on a magnificent scale by Lysimachos is aptly illustrated by the gigantic city walls, the urbanistic development above all during the 3rd century BC remains largely unknown. The available evidence suggests that the nucleus of the Hellenistic city is likely to be located around the Lower Agora, the earliest architectural design of which is dated to the years around 270/260 BC[53]. On a large scale, however, urban development schemes cannot be reconstructed for the 3rd century, as the residential quarters of the early Hellenistic city to date remain unknown. Thanks to the revelations of recent fieldwork in various parts of the city, a comparatively dense sequence of large public building activities first can be documented from the first half and the middle of the 2nd century onwards. Probably around the beginning of the 2nd century BC, the first long-distance double clay pipeline of Ephesos was built, the so-called Aqua Throessitica that led water from the valley of Marnas southeast of Ephesos into the city[54]. Around the same time, the Upper Agora of Ephesos for the first time was defined by monumental architecture. All results currently available suggest that monumental stoas alongside the northern and the southern borders of the agora as well as a large terrace wall at its western side were erected during the first half of the 2nd century BC[55]. A number of inscriptions found in close vicinity to the Upper Agora might indicate that a gymnasium had already existed in this area at least as early as the 2nd, if not the 3rd century BC[56]. An inscription mentioning athletic games in honour of Eumenes II could indicate that the Attalid king had donated a gymnasium to the Ephesians, as he had done in other cities[57].

Around the first quarter of the 2nd century BC, the Lower Agora in the immediate vicinity of the Hellenistic harbour also saw considerable building activities. The stoa at the western side of the agora was rebuilt with more solid walls and the level was raised by ca. 1 m[58]. To the southeast of the Lower Agora, the first construction of terrace walls and simple workshops is also dated to the beginning of the 2nd century BC and indicates the establishment of larger development schemes[59]. Only a few years later, during the second quarter of the 2nd century BC, also the area to the northeast of the Lower Agora saw a further boom in public construction works with the construction of the city's first monumental stone theatre at the western slope toe of Mount Panayır[60]. A socle monument on a high pedestal directly above the theatre, which likely is to be considered an important memorial in the urban public space, might have been erected during the 2nd century BC as well, but the architectural remains currently only allow for a rough dating to the Hellenistic period[61].

A vast building complex on artificially terraced ground right above the theatre and the socle monument gives further reason to believe that the urban development of Ephesos was booming during the first half and the middle of the 2nd century BC also in this city area. The results of systematic field research that was conducted between 2009 and 2014 within the framework of a PhD

52 Ladstätter 2016. Also see Ladstätter 2019, esp. 197–198; Groh 2006, 61–73. 113.
53 Cf. Scherrer – Trinkl 2006, 15; Ladstätter 2016, 247.
54 Cf. Wiplinger 2019, 7.
55 For a brief description of the new results in the southern and western parts see T. Schulz-Brize – D. Steuernagel, Die Obere Agora in Ephesos <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/oeai/forschung/siedlungsarchaeologie-und-urbanistik/ephesos-obere-agora> (05.06.2020). For the dating of the northern stoa see Mitsopoulos-Leon – Lang-Auinger 2007, 4–8. 65. Also cf. Thür 1996, 360 f.
56 Cf. Scherrer 2001, 71; Engelmann 1993, 288 f.
57 SEG 17, 510 = IK 14, 1101; Bringmann – von Steuben 1995, 311 f.
58 Scherrer 2001, 67; Scherrer – Trinkl 2006, 17.
59 Ladstätter et al. 2005, 263. 273; Groh 2006, 69.
60 On the dating see Krinzinger – Ruggendorfer 2017, esp. 27–29. 129. 139. 433.
61 Cf. Baier 2017, 127–129.

project allow us to trace the history of this palatial building over more than seven centuries[62]. With regard to the focus of the present volume, it might be a key monument for us to understand the rise of Ephesos as a centre of administration and political power from an urbanistic perspective.

A HELLENISTIC PALACE: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The first excavations in the city quarter above the theatre took place in 1929 and 1930, when an agglomeration of extraordinary buildings was partially unearthed in two short campaigns. The excavations brought to light the ruins of a large *domus*, a small centralised room with water installations northeast of it, and a meeting hall on a spacious platform to the south of the house[63]. All of the buildings were uncovered only partially. Still, the assumption seemed intriguing, not only to the excavators, that the remains of the *domus*, because of its sheer size and outstanding topographical position, could be part of the Roman *praetorium* of Ephesos[64]. A comprehensive study of the building complex was only undertaken between 2009 and 2014, when a detailed building survey of its visible remains, test excavations at two selected places, a survey of the architecture visible above ground in the vicinity of the *domus*, and geo-prospections in restricted parts of the city quarter were conducted (fig. 2). Our possibilities of analyzing the architecture are limited because only small parts of the building have been excavated down to the floor level. Luckily, the available architectural evidence represents important stages of the building's history which thus can be traced from the 2nd century BC up to the beginning of the 7th century AD.

The earliest building, that was to constitute the core of the *domus* up until Late Antiquity, was a large peristyle house that covered an area of more than 2,400 m² (fig. 3) and thus in size by far surpassed the other known Ephesian peristyle houses of late Hellenistic and early imperial times[65]. The house was built on top of an artificial terrace which towered at least 6 m above the adjacent street 44 west of the building and thus guaranteed a truly commanding position facing the city and the harbour. Alongside its western front the terrace was supported by a series of substruction rooms with flat ceilings that were built in a technique which had been introduced in the architecture of Pergamon in the beginning of the 2nd century BC[66]. Behind the rooms of the substructure, the terrace was backfilled with dense clayish earth and rubble. A comparatively small quantity of pottery sherds recovered from the backfill in an excavation trench near the north-western corner of the terrace indicates that the substructions were first constructed during the 2nd century BC, likely around the middle of the century[67]. For topographical reasons it seems safe to assume that the main entrance to the building was located at the north-eastern corner of the original terrace and was aligned with the Hellenistic street grid.

While the available records are too limited in order to decide whether a small courtyard of ca. 12.75 × 9.50 m already in the earliest building phase had served as a first circulation area right behind the entrance, the preserved evidence allows for a theoretical reconstruction of the very large Doric peristyle courtyard that was the central element of the house. The foundations of the peristyle, blocks of its stylobate and the lowermost drums of four columns of the north portico

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62 A detailed monograph on the architectural and archaeological evidence is in print in the series *Forschungen in Ephesos*. The results have been published in the author's doctoral thesis: Baier 2018. Also see Baier 2013 and Baier 2017 for preliminary results.

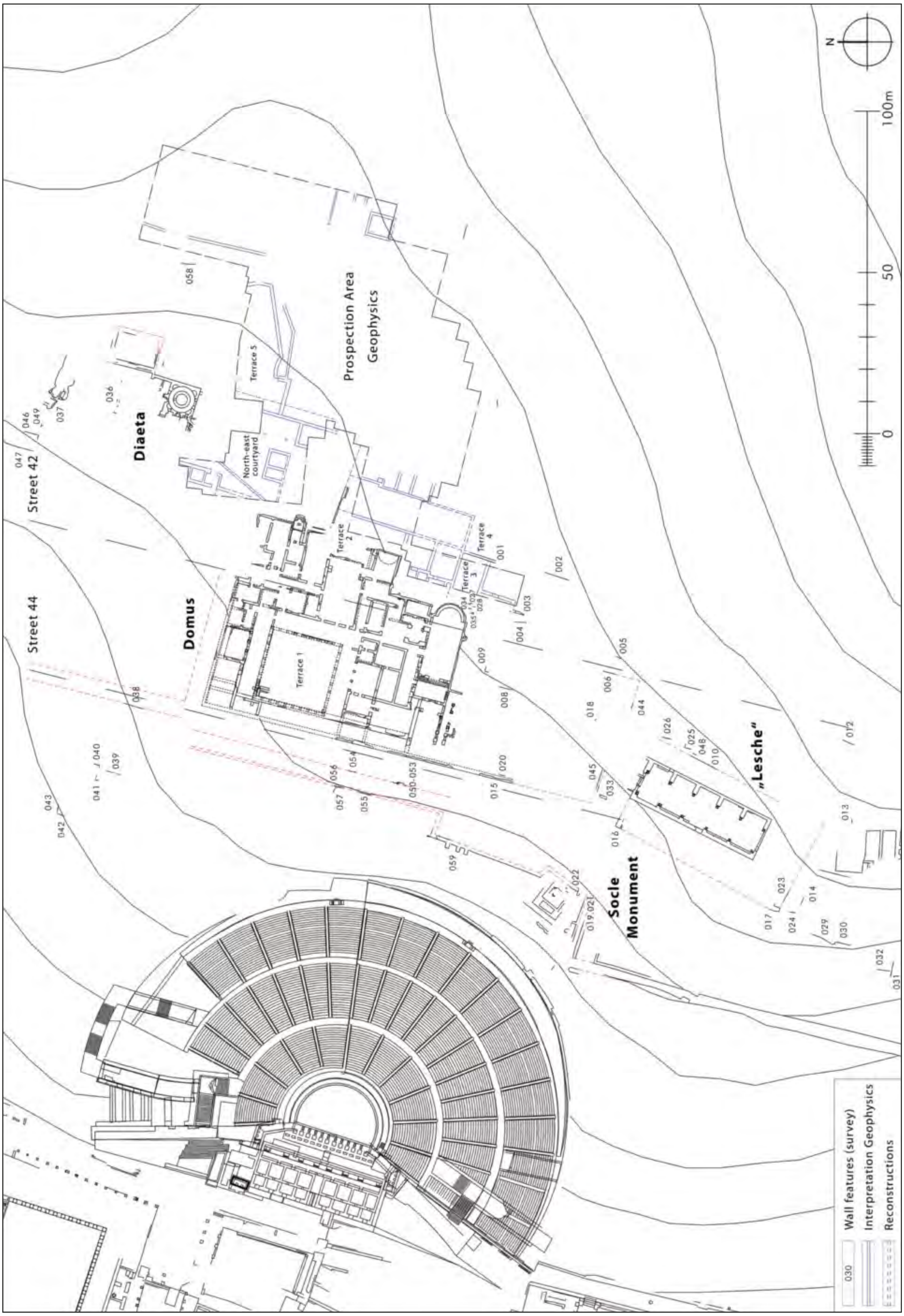
63 See Keil 1930, 31–34 figs. 14–15 and Keil 1932, 7–15 figs. 2–8. For further studies by other scholars on single aspects of the buildings see Baier 2013, 25 n. 10.

64 Cf. Keil 1932, 11 f.; Alzinger 1970, 1639; Hueber 1997, 258.

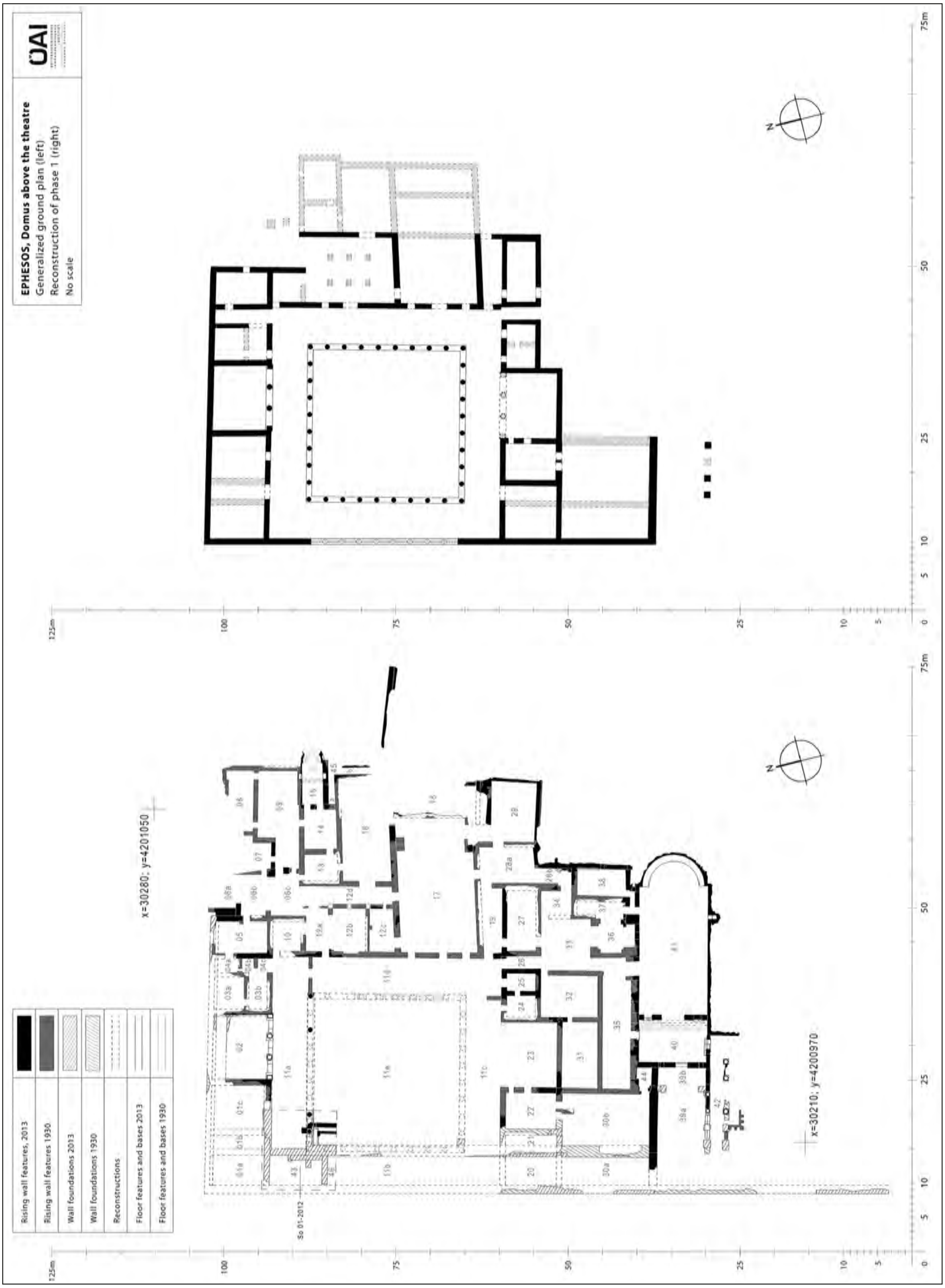
65 Thür 2002, 257–264 was the first to recognize the importance of the Hellenistic peristyle house at the core of the building. The available evidence on late Hellenistic and early imperial domestic architecture in Ephesos is discussed among others in Lang-Auinger 1999; Thür 2002; Thür 2005, 96 pl. 70; Krinzinger 2010, 81–83. 87–89. 426–432. 697 pls. 380. 383; Thür 2010; Thür – Rathmayr 2014, 121–123. 830–836 pl. 325.

66 See Bachmann 2004, 126–131.

67 The scientific analysis of the pottery has been carried out by Özlem Vapur (Muğla University). The detailed results will be presented in the final publication of the project.



2 City district above the theatre, generalised plan (© plan source: OeAW-OeAI, editing: C. Baier)



3 *Domus*, generalized ground-plan of the architectural remains (left) and reconstructed ground-plan of the Hellenistic peristyle house (right) (© plan source: OeAW-OeAI, editing: C. Baier)

have remained *in situ*. They allow for the reconstruction of a peristyle with ten columns on each side and interaxial spacings of 2.46 m. The courtyard is more than 21 m square, while the porticos have an additional span of about 6 m. The entire peristyle thus covers an area of approximately 1,100 m². In addition to the preserved stylobate blocks and the four column drums, two blocks of the Doric frieze and two blocks of the *geison* have been found. Taken altogether, the blocks provide indicative information on the elevation of a single storey peristyle for which an approximate total height of ca. 6.15 m can be estimated, comparing well to late Hellenistic stoas such as the porticoes of the sanctuary of Athena Polias in Pergamon[68]. The blocks also highlight the main principles and steps of the design procedure which is based on a foot-unit of 32.87 cm and a module of 29.88 cm, the latter being equal to the average triglyph width[69]. Both the dimensions of the peristyle and the main dimensions of the Hellenistic building can be expressed in simple multiples of this foot-unit with a high degree of accuracy. The total length of the peristyle's stylobate (22.995 m) corresponds to 70 feet, and the width of its blocks (0.82 m) equals 2½ feet. The peristyle interaxials come up to 7½ feet. The total length of the original western façade can be determined as being 65.75 m or 200 feet thanks to a short-preserved section of the primary southern wall in ashlar masonry which is incorporated in the northern wall of room 39. The preserved north-eastern corner of the primary terrace makes it possible to reconstruct a length of 40.43 m for the northern façade of the first building phase. This corresponds to 123 feet or 82 cubits of 32.87 cm.

While the peristyle extends up to the western façade of the terrace, ranges of rooms were organized around the other three sides. Three spacious halls constitute the most representative rooms, one in each range. An Ionic exedra at the centre of the northern range (room 2) is fully excavated. Probably in its original state it was flanked by groups of three rooms at both sides but had no direct connection with them. Measuring approximately 9.40 × 7.70 m, the exedra opened up towards the peristyle with two Ionic columns *in antis* (fig. 4). As was shown elsewhere in more detail, the decoration and syntax of the preserved architectural blocks closely refer to Pergamene architectural traditions and indicate a dating of the first building phase around the second quarter or the middle of the 2nd century BC[70]. The general structure of the southern wing on the opposite side of the courtyard was comparable in that a central exedra (room 23), of which only parts of the enclosing walls are to be seen today, was flanked by groups of three rooms at each side. Discrepancies to the north wing most probably are due to the difficult topography of the hillslope. The rise of the natural rock, which for the first building toward the southeast apparently had not been levelled yet, constrained the eastern rooms (24–26) of the southern wing to be less deep, while the western part (rooms 20–22, 30) even had a second row of rooms.

The reconstruction of the east wing of the primary building is particularly difficult because only the wall-tops of its rooms have been excavated. Thus, the original dimensions of the main hall in the east wing (room 17) currently cannot be determined with certainty. In its present dimensions of ca. 220 m² it can be compared to the Corinthian *oecus* of the »Palazzo delle Colonne« in Ptolemais (227 m²) or to the *oecus maior* of »Herod's First Winter Palace« at Jericho (234 m²). Even if we theoretically want to assume that the original east wall had run in line with the east wall of the small courtyard behind the entrance[71], the hall still would have covered approximately 105 m², coming close to the size of the main hall in »Palace V« of the royal palace complex on the acropolis of Pergamon (133 m²) or the biggest hall of the early Hellenistic palace of Aigai (100 m²)[72]. The supreme importance of this hall in the eastern wing is further emphasized by the three doorways connecting it with the Doric peristyle. Remarkably, the orientation of the hall differs distinctly from all other parts of the building. While at the current state of excavation

[68] See Bohn 1885, 34–36. 40 pls. 21–22; Kästner 2004, 132–134.
[69] For a detailed discussion see Baier 2018, 165–173. 187–191.
[70] See Baier 2013, 31–33; Baier 2018, 49–56.
[71] Cf. the graphic assumption made by Thür 2002, fig. 7.
[72] For the dimensions of audience halls in Hellenistic palaces cf. Nielsen 1994, 210 fig. 114.

4
Ionic exedra facing northeast, preserved building remains *in situ* (© OeAW-OeAI, N. Gail)

it is impossible to determine whether this deviation could be explained by potential pre-existing structures, it is to be noted that the central axis of the hall is directed towards the south-eastern corner of one of the most important watchtowers of the Early Hellenistic fortification (»St. Paul's prison«) which is prominently located near the western end of the city wall and was a landmark on the hilltop of the Kaleburun Tepe[73]. However, at the current state of research it is not possible to securely identify any potential practical or symbolic function associated with this alignment.

The size, general layout and palatial features of the Hellenistic peristyle house above the theatre can be especially well compared to the contemporary »Palace V« of the royal palace on the acropolis of Pergamon, which for its part stands out among the other residential buildings of the Pergamene *basileia* in terms of its disposition and design[74]. The total area of the Pergamene peristyle of approximately 34 × 33 m almost exactly corresponds to the dimensions of the Ephesian courtyard. While the porticoes »Palace V« are slightly less wide, the assumed column interaxials of 2.42 m come very close to the corresponding dimension of 2.46 m at the Doric peristyle in the Ephesian house on Panayırdağ. The halls of the Ephesian peristyle are almost equal the 6.30 m wide halls in the large peristyle of the Macedonian palace in Aigai[75].

THE URBAN SURROUNDINGS

The conceptual affinity of the Ephesian peristyle house to Hellenistic royal palaces becomes even more manifest if we consider its exceptional topographical setting inside the city and its close proximity to other public buildings of particular strategic and symbolic importance. First and most obviously, as has already been pointed out by Hilke Thür with reference to the Ephesian peristyle house[76], the vicinity to the theatre is one of the chief urbanistic characteristics of Hellenistic royal palaces such as the Macedonian palaces of Aigai and Pella, in Pergamon, or in Caesarea Maritima, where Herod's palace moreover had a direct connection to the hippodrome[77]. This connection was of imminent political importance. Written records provide evidence not only that the meetings of the civic assembly regularly took place in theatres during the Hellenistic pe-

[73] Cf. Benndorf 1899, 22–36 figs. 3–9; Alzinger 1970, 1596.
[74] On »Palace V« see Hoepfner 1996, 24–26; Wulf 1999, 174; Zimmer 2010, 157 f.
[75] Cf. Hoepfner 1996, 11.
[76] Thür 2002, 261–264.
[77] Cf. among others Lauter 1987.

riod, but also that Hellenistic rulers used the scenery of the theatre for public appearances in front of their people[78].

The tight connection between the theatre of Ephesos and the palatial peristyle house above it becomes evident both in the chronology of the buildings and in the design of the city quarter. As mentioned above, the first monumental theatre was built in the second quarter of the 2nd century BC, just some decades or even years before the peristyle house. Most probably, its *koilon* from the beginning consisted of three tiers[79]. Both the theatre and the Hellenistic peristyle house were incorporated into the surrounding city district following a thorough design. If we combine their layouts with the visible building remains in the surrounding area, a pattern of street axes and building blocks becomes apparent that indicates the existence of a coherent urban building program for the area around the theatre on the western slope of Panayırdağ (fig. 5). Most strikingly, south, east and north of the theatre all dimensions of the blocks and street axes of this ideal pattern can be expressed in integral values of the same foot-unit of 32.87 cm that can be reconstructed for the primary peristyle house[80]. In its ideal reconstruction, the street width of this system can be determined with 16 feet or 5.26 m. The size of an ideal city block of the district seems to have been 92 × 130 feet or 30.24 × 42.73 m[81]. This corresponds to a ratio of 1 : 1.41 or approximately 5 : 7. The ideal blocks of the horizontal rows A–D are 92 feet wide, while the blocks of the vertical rows 1–3 south of the theatre are 130 feet long. In the area above the theatre, the building blocks of the vertical rows 3 and 4 show a reduced east-west extension. According to the evidence of building block A3, a length of 116 feet seems probable for the blocks of the vertical row 3 of the grid. The vertical row 4 of the grid ideally had an east-west extension of 120 feet between the north-south streets 44 and 42, but was increased to 123 feet in the area of the Hellenistic peristyle house. The length of the west façade of the peristyle house of 65.75 m corresponds exactly to the north-south extension of two building blocks and one ideal street of the grid, that is to say exactly 200 feet. The ratio between the northern and the western façade (1.63 : 1) corresponds almost exactly to that of the reconstructed Hellenistic city blocks of Pergamon, which is given as 1.6 : 1 by Wolfgang Radt[82].

Further evidence underlines that the theatre's dimensions and system of entrances are compatible with the proposed design grid of the city quarter. Covering an area of eight ideal city blocks (fig. 5, vertical rows 1–2 and horizontal rows B–E), the distance between the preserved southwest end of the Hellenistic theatre *koilon* to the east of access ES2 and the tangible end of the *koilon* in the northwest is equal to 444 feet of 32.87 cm, corresponding to 296 cubits or 74 fathoms, respectively. It is also worth noting in this context that the Hellenistic orchestra's diameter of 24.66 m with great precision corresponds to 75 feet of 32.87 cm or 50 cubits, respectively[83]. Furthermore, street 48 between the vertical rows 1 and 2 of the grid leads to the south entrance ES3 of the theatre that gave access to the third tier of the *koilon*[84]. Access EN2 in the northern façade of the *koilon* lies in the axis of the reconstructed street between the vertical rows 1 and 2 of the grid north of the theatre. At the western side of this access, the curved north façade of the Hellenistic *koilon* forms a kink which is exactly in line with the northern border of horizontal row B of the grid and

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[78] Cf. von Hesberg 1996, 93; Ferrara 2020, 369 f.

[79] On the dimensions of the Hellenistic *koilon* see Krinzinger – Ruggendorfer 2017, 440 f. pl. 433 fig. 765 and plans 4 and 5.

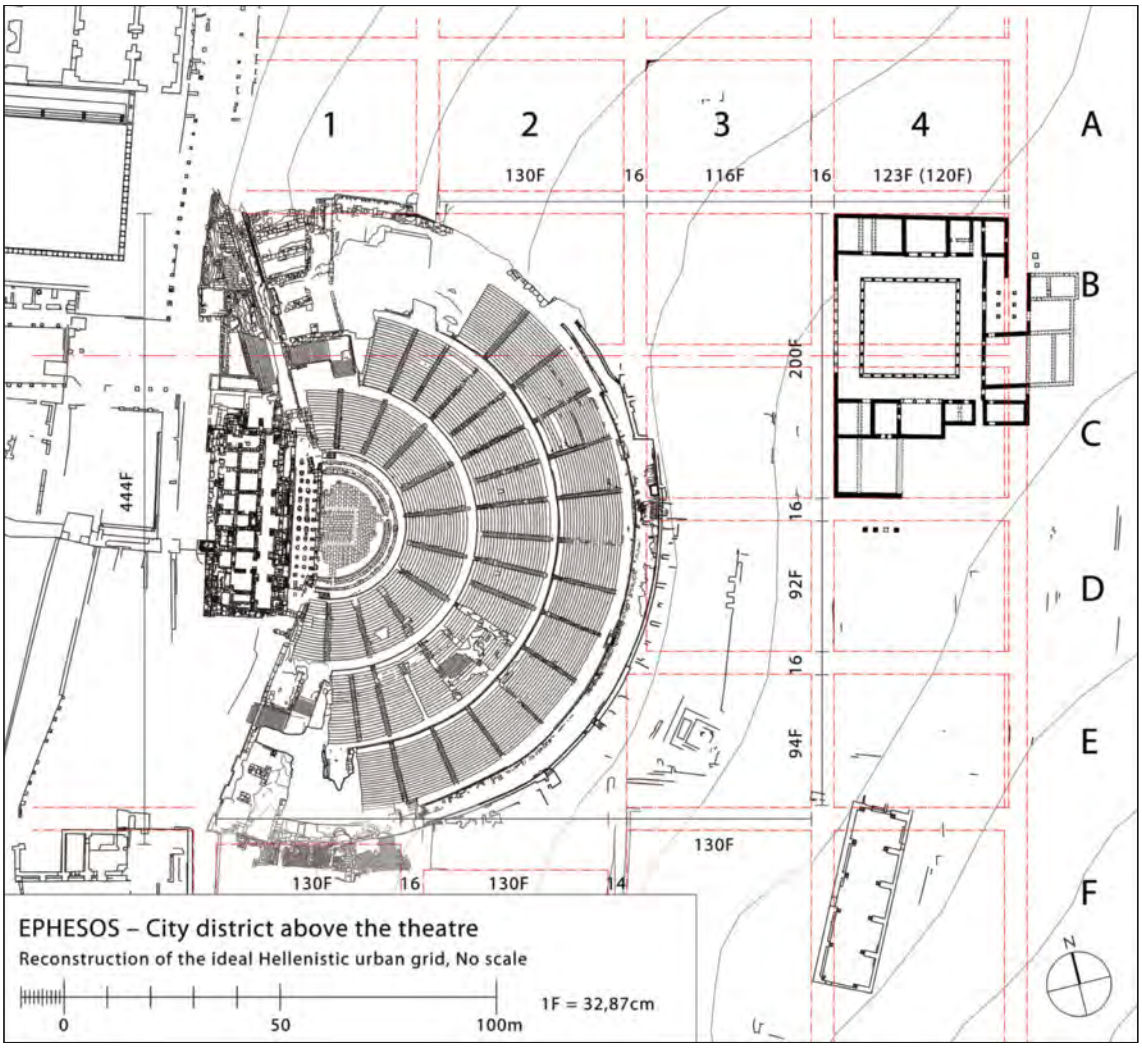
[80] A detailed discussion of the evidence this reconstruction is based upon will be provided in the upcoming monograph. Also see Baier 2018, 255–261.

[81] The size of the ideal Hellenistic city blocks reconstructed by Stefan Groh (43.8 × 104.7 m; cf. Groh 2006, 57–60) corresponds quite well to the sum of three blocks of the system proposed here. Three blocks of 42.73 × 30.24 m and three streets with a width of 5.26 m add up to a total size of 42.7 × 106.5 m.

[82] Cf. Groh 2006, 59 tab. 2 referring to Radt 2001, 48 f.

[83] See Krinzinger – Ruggendorfer 2017, 439 on the diameter of the Hellenistic orchestra. The inaccuracy is only 7 mm.

[84] A Hellenistic predecessor to the early Roman entrance gate ES3 has been suggested by Krinzinger – Ruggendorfer 2017, 97 pls. 187–188 figs. 383–385.



5 City district above the theatre, reconstruction of the ideal Hellenistic urban grid (© plan source: OeAW-OeAI, editing: C. Baier)

hence with the northern façade of the peristyle house[85]. West of this kink, the north façade of the Hellenistic *koilon* seems to respect the same line. Finally, it is worth mentioning that also the staircase EO1 above the third tier of the *koilon* and just east of the *porticus in summa cavea* does not refer to the central axis of the *koilon* but is located in the exact axis of the reconstructed street between the horizontal rows C and D. Whether an access located at this point had directly linked the theatre with the area above it as early as the 2nd century BC, however, is unknown[86].

To sum up, the available evidence on the western slopes of Mount Panayır indicates quite clearly that the cityscape of Ephesos during the first half of the 2nd century BC was impressively monumentalized by a large and coherent urban development programme. Considering the aforementioned importance of Ephesos within the Pergamene kingdom it seems most likely that this urban transformation was put into effect by the Attalid rulers, once the city had come under their control after the Roman-Seleucid War and the Treaty of Apamea. The position of the Hellenistic peristyle house within the street grid on Panayırdağ and its overall dimensions and proportions

[85] See Krinzinger – Ruggendorfer 2017, fig. 17 in the text and plan 4 for the location of the kink just west of entrance EN2.

[86] See Krinzinger – Ruggendorfer 2017, 128 pl. 465 figs. 831–832 on entrance EO1.

indicate that it was a key element of this urban development program. This is underlined by the fact that the central east-west axis of the Hellenistic house was in exact alignment with the central axis of an arched gate at the eastern end of the central port road at the foot of Panayırdağ (fig. 5)[87]. While detailed research on the gate and on its significance for the Hellenistic harbour are still a desideratum, the development of the coastline during the Hellenistic period might suggest that the gate even served as the main harbour entrance to the Hellenistic city[88]. The available architectural evidence is ambiguous. Judging by ornamented blocks found in the area of the foundations of the gate, a construction date at the beginning of the imperial era has been suggested[89], but it is unclear whether it might have had a Hellenistic predecessor. Relief panels depicting a battle between Galatians and Greeks have been found right next to the remains of the gate, and their use or re-use to decorate the gate has been subject to speculation. Based on stylistic grounds, the frieze usually – albeit not unanimously – is dated to the mid-2nd century BC and repeatedly has been interpreted as a propagandistic Pergamene commemoration of the victories over the Galatians[90].

Given the doubtful chronology of the gate, we can only speculate about the causality of the axial alignment with the Hellenistic peristyle house. While it seems possible that an early imperial gate was deliberately centred on the peristyle house, a Hellenistic harbour gate in the same position could have also been an important reference point for the urban transformation of the 2nd century BC or even part of the Attalid renewal of the Ephesian cityscape. Carefully designed visual axes and optical references in city compositions have been attested several times in Attalid urban planning, as for example in Pergamon or Assos[91]. It would therefore come as no surprise if a similar effort in urban design was undertaken by the Attalid rulers in Ephesos as well.

Be that as it may, the large-scale changes to the urban fabric of the harbour area and the western slopes of Panayırdağ must have had an imposing effect on the appearance of the city. Indeed, when approaching Ephesos from the sea it was the rising of the buildings around the great theatre that essentially characterised the urban landscape, as is also testified for the Roman Imperial period by a remark of Pliny the Elder stating that the city [...] *attolitur monte Pione*[92]. By the middle of the 2nd century BC the Hellenistic peristyle house dominated the cityscape to the east of the harbour as a crowning element. Its extraordinary location above the theatre made it the main visual target point at the peak of the city for those who reached Ephesos from the sea. According to an imperial rescript of Caracalla mentioned by Ulpian this was also the usual approach of the *proconsul* of Asia who even had the duty to enter the province by sea, landing at Ephesos first[93].

A similarly prominent location within the urban context has been identified as one of the most distinctive characteristics of Hellenistic royal palaces. The *basileia* of Aigai are situated high above the city on a terrace on the northern slope of the acropolis, and in like manner they dominate the urban topography of Pella as well[94]. Also, in Demetrias, the location of the vast palace on a small hill made it a highly visible landmark within the orthogonal urban grid of the city that came to be the favourite residence of the Antigonid kings in the southern part of the Macedonian realm[95]. In Pergamon above all the dominant presence of the acropolis fortress, which was renewed in the Hellenistic period to surround the *basileia*, and the extension of the palace quarters towards the southern edge of the acropolis under Eumenes II must have affected the visual appearance of the Attalid capital distinctively even if aesthetically in a different way than in Aigai or

[87] On the known remains of the gate see Heberdey 1899, 47; Heberdey 1900, 90.
[88] On the development of the urban topography and coastline of Ephesos during the Hellenistic period see Ladstätter 2016, esp. 253–257 and 262 f.
[89] See Oberleitner 1981, 59 f. fig. 37; Köster 2004, 10. 28. 75. 135. 156. 162 pl. 108, 1. 2.
[90] Cf. among others Ridgway 2000, 115–117; Pirson 2002, 75 f.; Stewart 2004, 233 f. In contrast see Krierer 1995, 168–172 and Kistler 2009, 23 n. 40 who favour a Roman dating.
[91] Cf. Winter 2006, 214 f.; Emme 2013, 283 f.; Rheidt 2015, 306 fig. 6.
[92] Plin. nat. 5, 155.
[93] Dig. 1, 16, 4. 5.
[94] See Nielsen 1994, 81. 88 figs. 41. 43 pl. 10.
[95] See Ferrara 2020, 231.

Pella[96]. The close spatial connection of the palace to the sanctuary of Athena, the patron goddess of Pergamon, and to the Great Altar certainly unequivocally emphasized its symbolic meaning as a seat of power[97].

As these examples aptly illustrate, the spatial distance between monarchs and subjects, that according to Bernd Funck had become the most important visual sign of political authority and sovereignty in the course of the Hellenistic period, found its appropriate expression in the planning of many Hellenistic capital cities. The presence of fortifications in the cases of Pergamon or Demetrias will have further emphasized the impression of spatial distance. Also, in the case of Ephesos, the proximity of the peristyle house on Panayırdağ to specific elements of the Hellenistic fortification system is worth noting. Just south of the house there is evidence to suggest a possible *diateichisma* crossing the western slope of the mountain and roughly following the line of the Byzantine city wall in this area[98]. To the north of the peristyle house, the existence of a fortified acropolis serving as the seat of a military unit has been repeatedly suggested for the north-western peak of Panayırdağ, taking up the highest position inside the Hellenistic city.

Following this tradition, as has been mentioned above, at the end of the Hellenistic period and in a very different topographical setting, the so-called Promontory Palace of Herod in Caesarea Maritima was also erected in a magnificent location on a rocky peninsula that ensured it was already visible from afar for those approaching the city from the sea as well as from the theatre and the hippodrome, which surrounded the palace. It has been justly pointed out by Ulrike Wulf-Rheidt that the first imperial palace on the Roman Palatine continued the Hellenistic concepts of placing the ruler's seat in a highly visible position embedded in the context of important political and religious sites. The particular meaning of Augustus' residence as a seat of power was essentially defined by its particular location above the Circus Maximus and in close spatial connection to other buildings of collective importance such as the Temple of Apollo and the legendary hut of Romulus[99].

Based on the evidence presented above, we may suggest that the new identity of an administrative residence that the city of Ephesos had acquired during the period of Attalid sovereignty after 188 BC, by the mid-2nd century BC had left clear traces in its urban fabric[100]. The large-scale changes to the urban landscape of Ephesos during the period of Attalid rule contributed to the shaping of a new cityscape which also symbolically conveyed the importance of the city as a regional capital. In the words of Michael Minkenberg, and hence from the perspective of semiotic urban studies, we may understand the profound transformation of the area east of the Hellenistic harbour bay as a »genuine act of constituting [a new] political reality«[101] in Ephesos. It seems likely that one of the reasons for the Attalid's special concern for Ephesos was the administrative decentralisation of their realm[102] and the installation of a permanent residence of a Pergamene *strategos* in Ephesos. Considering that the urbanistic and architectural characteristics of the peristyle house above the theatre give us every reason to speak of a palatial residence with strong Pergamene influences, it seems very tempting to suggest that the house was built as the seat of the new political administration, worthy of representing and propagating the political power of the Attalids. That the Pergamene kings indeed possessed palaces also outside Pergamon is documented by Vitruvius and Pliny, who attest to an Attalid residence in Tralleis[103].

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96 See Pirson 2012, 204–205; Rheidt 2015, 304.
97 Cf. Wulf-Rheidt 2012a, 37; Held 2012.
98 See the controversial discussion of the evidence in Scherrer 2001, 61–68 and Groh 2006, 61–65, as well as Ladstätter 2016, 243. Also cf. Thür 2002, 261; Baier 2018, 261–263.
99 See Wulf-Rheidt 2012a.
100 Also see Berlin 2019 for evidence of a distinct ›Attalidization‹ of Sardis under Eumenes II.
101 Minkenberg 2014, 2 f.
102 Cf. Thonemann 2013, esp. 5–17.
103 Vitr. 2, 8, 9; Plin. nat. 35, 49. According to Vitruvius, after the period of Attalid rule the palace was inhabited by the city's highest priest and hence continued to serve as the residence of a dignitary.

TAKING OVER THE INFRASTRUCTURE: THE ROMAN PALACE

Coming back to the focal interest of the present volume, there is much archaeological evidence to suggest that the building complex in question subsequently continued to be used by the Roman authorities as an administrative residence and thus might offer us the exceptional possibility to study these processes of transition from an archaeological perspective. While a full and detailed account of the evidence is to be presented elsewhere[104], in the context of this paper it seems appropriate to outline the characteristic features of the Roman *domus* that developed around the Hellenistic nucleus up to Late Antiquity. Even if various repairs of the terrace substructions and of other visible architectural remains document that the palatial residence had to be repaired and partly rebuilt after major destruction events during the 2nd, 3rd and 4th centuries AD, the building's history up until the 6th century AD is characterised by the maintenance of the existing fabric of the building and by a continuous development. In many respects, which shall be briefly addressed in the following paragraphs, the Roman *domus* corresponds to the criteria elaborated by Felix Schäfer and Barbara Burrell for the archaeological identification of Roman governor's palaces (fig. 6)[105].

Judging from the visible architectural remains, the building was expanded into a palace of monumental proportions in the course of the 2nd century AD. To the northeast of the main building, a prestigious centralised room with sumptuous water installations was probably erected during the Trajanic or early Hadrianic period as indicated by the décor syntax and style of the preserved architrave-frieze blocks of an interior colonnade (fig. 7)[106]. From the perspective of architectural history, the structure is of extraordinary interest, being among the earliest known examples of a centrally planned room with a rectangular exterior and circular interior with a diameter of approximately 8.15 m. It centres upon a basin of ca. 1.1 m depth that was surrounded by an interior colonnade of eight columns and an ambulatory. Four semi-circular conchs in the corners of the surrounding wall open up onto the ambulatory, which had a large window opening in its southern wall. Water was channelled not only to the central basin but also towards the area in front of the western façade. While the design of the façade with three niches framed by projecting corners is reminiscent of nymphaeum architecture, a possible water basin has been covered by later building activities. Access to the centrally planned room was possible via a small anteroom to the north which in turn had an opening toward the east. The modern topography and geophysical results in the unexcavated area to the southeast of the building seem to suggest the existence of a cryptoporticus that may have linked the two-roomed structure to the main building of the *domus*. Geophysical prospections conducted to the south and southwest of the small building indicate that it was detached from the northeast wing of the main building by a courtyard or a garden-like open space. Considering the lavish architectural design of the centrally planned room and its abundant use of water it seems likely that it was initially used as a nymphaeum and had a recreational character. Conceptually, the building resembles the *diaetae* of suburban and rural aristocratic villa architecture in the western parts of the Roman Empire[107] and in particular brings to mind the extensive ›*otium* ensembles‹ in the so-called Sunken Peristyle and in the area of the so-called Domus Severiana of the Domitian palace complex on the Palatine[108]. During the second half of the 2nd or the first half of the 3rd century this *diaeta* was expanded into a multi-room bathing complex that covered an area well over 300 m². At least from this phase onward it is likely that the central space on top of the interior colonnade of the centrally planned room, which now was converted into a *sudatorium* or *caldarium*, was covered with a small cupola. Again, this suggests that the centrally planned room northeast of the *domus*, thanks to its extremely innovative architectural design, is

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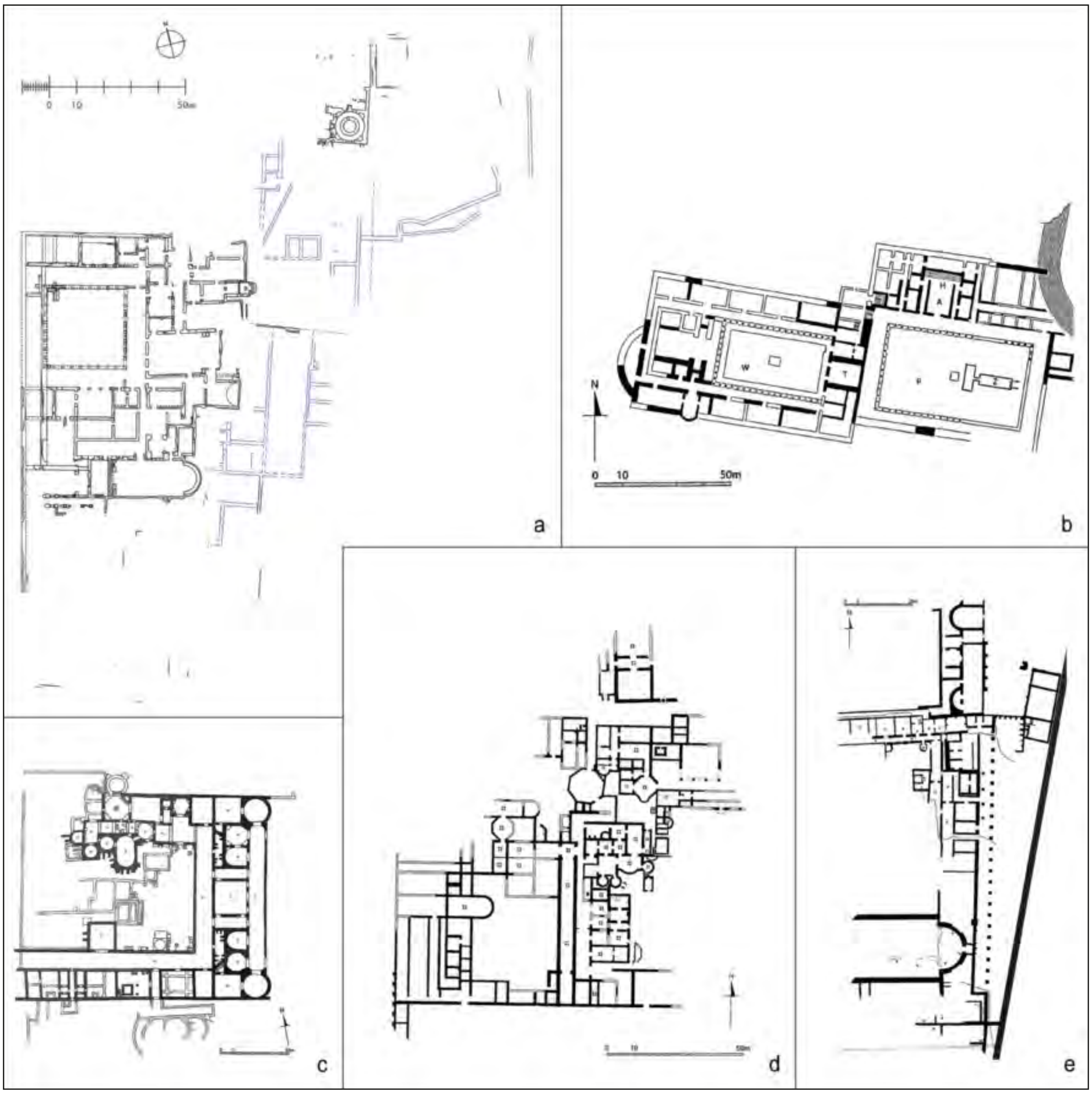
104 For the present refer to Baier 2018.
105 See Schäfer 2014, 337–342 and Burrell 1996.
106 On this building, Baier 2013, 46–51.
107 On *diaetae* in Roman villa architecture, Förtsch 1993, 48–58.
108 Cf. Wulf-Rheidt 2012b, 265–267.



6 Generalized ground plan of the Roman *domus* (a) compared to the *praetoria* of Caesarea Maritima (b), Aquincum (c), Apulum (d) and Cologne (e). (© a: C. Baier; b: Schäfer 2014, fig. 299; c–d: Schäfer 2014, Beil. 3; e: Schäfer 2014, fig. 155)

7
Roman *domus*, centrally planned room of the *diaeta* facing north (© OeAW-OeAI, N. Gail)

of utmost interest for our understanding of the historical development of centrally planned room structures in Roman architecture, being a possible predecessor of an architectural development that is generally considered to take off during the reign of the emperor Constantine[109].

Likewise, during the first quarter of the 2nd century AD the peristyle house on Panayırdağ was monumentally enlarged also towards the south, where a second, smaller peristyle came to be at the centre of a new representative wing[110]. Considering the very prestigious character of this wing and its high accessibility from the south, it is probable that the main entrance of the *domus* was also relocated towards this side of the palatial complex. Of the generously dimensioned and luxuriously furnished rooms that probably flanked the southern courtyard on three sides only the northern suite as well as the northern portico of the peristyle were excavated in 1929. A suite of anterooms leads towards a grand apsidal hall (room 41) which, judging by the style of two pilaster capitals, probably was built a few decades after the construction of the southern peristyle around the middle of the 2nd century AD, and is therefore to be considered as one of the few known examples of monumental apsidal halls in Roman palatial and domestic architecture prior to the 3rd century AD (fig. 8). The peculiar architectural design of the hall in its first phase, featuring a semi-circular apse with a pedestal alongside its rear wall and a large arcade at its northern side, is reminiscent of buildings that have been tentatively associated with judicial procedures and administration such as the eastern hall of the municipal offices on the Forum of Pompeii and the so-called Basilica in the *domus* of Domitian on the Palatine[111]. Typologically, the best-known comparison for the first phase of the Ephesian hall is an elongated hall dating only to the first third of the 7th century AD in the northwest of the late antique *praetorium* of Gortyn that has been identified as the early Byzantine court basilica[112]. Similar to the Ephesian hall of the 2nd century AD it is characterized by a deep apse and large pillar openings on its western and northern sides.

Undoubtedly, the apsidal room on Panayırdağ was designed to house large gatherings or receptions and belonged to a part of the Roman *domus* that was characterised by high accessibility, showing indications for the targeted guidance of a large number of visitors via a differentiated system of passageways and floorings. In this respect the southern part of the Roman *domus* differed strikingly from the new *diaeta* in the north-eastern part of the palatial compound that clearly was of a less public character. Coming from the new southern wing, access to the old northern peristyle was easily controlled, being only possible via a corridor (room 26) and perhaps a hypothetical corridor along the western front of the building.

As I have already cautiously suggested elsewhere, the erection of a large assembly hall (the so-called *lesche*) on a high and spacious platform of approximately 57 × 30 m to the south of the *domus* might have been part of the same building programme, judging by the blocks of an internal colonnade that very closely resemble the architecture of the southern peristyle of the *domus*[113]. The oblong hall measured 40.5 × 11.5 m, was subdivided into five compartments and had the entrance at its northern side, directed towards the *domus*. Projecting more than 8 m above the main terrace of the *domus*, the platform and the hall probably provided space for ceremonies that were staged at the highest point of the cityscape. Considering the hall's peculiar architecture, its outstanding topographical position and proximity to the residence, its orientation parallel to the Roman processional road along the slope toe of Panayırdağ, and also considering epigraphic indications that Dionysiac processions connected with the veneration of the Roman emperors revolved around the theatre district, it has been suggested that the gatherings taking place in the hall and on the platform might have even had a sacred character with possible links to the imperial

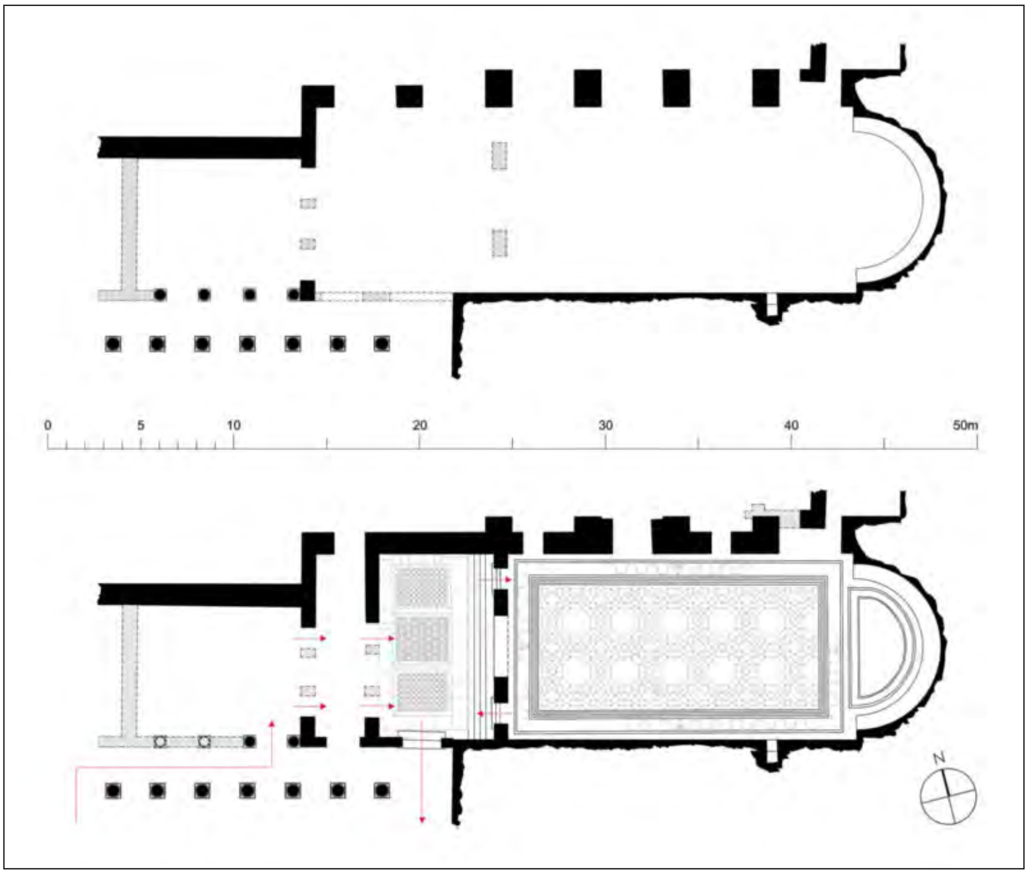
[109] Already pointing to the peculiar building type, Keil 1932, 12 and esp. Fasolo 1962, 58–61. For the typological developments in Late Antiquity for instance refer to Deichmann 1982, 54 and Rasch 1985, 120.

[110] Also see Baier 2013, 36–41 for a more detailed overview of the preliminary research results in this area of the *domus*.

[111] For a more detailed classification, Baier 2013, 56–59.

[112] Livadiotti 2000, 166–168; De Tommaso 2000, 353–358 figs. 61–62.

[113] See Baier 2013, 42 f. figs. 17–18; 51 f. fig. 24; Baier 2018, 241–243.



8 Roman *domus*, reconstructed ground plan of rooms 39–41 in the 2nd half of the 2nd century AD (above) and in the late 4th/early 5th century AD (below) (© plan source: OeAW-OeAI, editing: C. Baier)

cult[114]. This brings to mind the *praetorium* of Cologne which among other public and representative buildings was located in immediate spatial proximity to the Ara Ubiorum, one of the city's most important cult buildings. For typological and contextual reasons, also the large hall 41 with its semi-circular apse and pedestal could have been connected to practices of imperial cult, the more so as two fragments of a large inscription panel were found in the debris filling of the hall during the excavations in 1929/1930[115]. They belong to an honorific inscription dedicated either to emperor Marcus Aurelius or Commodus. Unfortunately, as the exact circumstances of discovery of the inscription are unknown, its original context cannot be determined. Also, no remnants of the statuary decoration that may have stood on the apse's pedestal have survived.

The existence of a sanctuary among the rooms of the Roman *domus* is assured by the time of the 5th or early 6th century AD when a small chapel (room 15) with a *synthronon* reserved for the clergy was built in the wing northeast of the Doric peristyle. Comparable buildings such as the so-called Byzantine Palace in the lower city of Ephesos[116], which might have been the residence of the metropolitan of Ephesos, and to the so-called Palace of the Dux in Apollonia[117], suggest that the existence of in-house chapels in urban domus at least during the 5th and 6th centuries may have been limited to the residences of public officials. Unquestionably, they are to be understood as an indication of the outstanding social rank of the host. For the late Roman phase

[114] See Baier 2017, 122. 129; Thür 2019.
[115] IK 14, 1380.
[116] See Miltner 1959, 248 f.; Lavan 1999, 148 f.; Ladstätter – Pülz 2007, 408. 416 fig. 8. For a brief overview of recent research results refer to Pülz 2011, 64–66.
[117] See Ward-Perkins 1976; Bowes 2015, 55. 58 fig. 3, 1–2.

of the *domus* on Panayırdağ this is tellingly underlined by the presence of extraordinarily large amounts of purple snails *(hexaplex trunculus)* and oysters *(ostrea edulis)* as well as triton snails *(charonia variegata)* and other gastropods in the debris layers of the 6th and early 7th century AD in the north-western part of the main building, documenting highly elitist consumption patterns and pointing again to the extraordinary social rank of the late Roman residents of the house[118].

The remarkable extent of the Roman *domus*, as well as its high degree of spatial differentiation and functional complexity are further affirmed by the results of a limited geophysical survey conducted on the terraces east and northeast of the excavated remains and by the results of an architectural survey in the immediate surroundings. The building complex spread over two more terraces at higher levels east of the main building and hence covered a total area of at least 10,000 m² (excluding the platform of the so-called *lesche*). Moreover, the existence of an enclosure wall of ca. 0.8–0.9 m thickness towards the undeveloped hill east and northeast of the building complex suggests that there was a need to protect the building in its exposed location.

Comparison with the archaeologically known Roman *praetoria* shows that the *domus* above the theatre indeed was of a similar palatial character with regard to both functional complexity and size. Even if large parts of the palatial compound are not excavated, the available evidence suggests that it included wings with high accessibility suited to house large gatherings and receptions, possible rooms for administrative activities, parts with limited accessibility appropriate for sleeping and recreation areas, as well as subaltern parts that were suitable for housing staff, utility rooms and the like. What is more, certainly the late Roman palace and probably also the imperial *domus* had a close connection to sacred spaces. Although we are currently not able to reliably establish the overall size of any of the Roman governor's palaces, the known examples provide important clues. With regard to its minimum overall size the main building of the *domus* on Panayırdağ can be well compared to the fully developed main building of the *praetorium* of Aquincum which takes up an area of approx. 9,000 m² (83 × 108 m), while the entire complex spread over an area of ca. 18,000 m² (120 × 150 m)[119]. For the main building of the *praetorium* in Cologne an extent of 14,500–15,000 m² (approx. 90 × 160 m) has been calculated hypothetically, assuming that it had the extension of two *insulae*[120]. The total extent might have been twice as big if other buildings on the two city blocks to the west of it also were part of the *praetorium*[121]. In Caesarea Maritima, the main building of the Promontory Palace[122] on the upper and the lower terraces covers an area of a little more than 10,000 m².

In addition to these aspects that concern the architecture and the conceptual planning of the building complex, it is important to note that numerous fragments of Greek inscriptions have been found in the southern part of the *domus*, even if only a handful of rooms have been fully excavated and the building seems to have been cleared of its furnishings before it was abandoned in the early 7th century AD. Besides the above-mentioned inscription panel that was found in the debris filling of the apsidal hall, more than 40 small fragments of various shattered marble inscription panels have been found re-used as floor slabs in the late 4th or early 5th century ante-rooms of the apsidal hall. Even if the original location of the re-used inscriptions cannot be determined, their concentration in the area of the prestigious wing at the southern peristyle and their high degree of fragmentation might indicate that they had originally belonged to inscribed panels which had fallen from nearby walls in a catastrophic destruction event before

[118] The scientific analysis of the zooarchaeological remains is carried out by Gerhard Forstenpointner, Gerald Weissengruber (both University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna) and Alfred Galik (Austrian Archaeological Institute). The detailed results will be presented in the final publication of the project.

[119] Cf. Schäfer 2014, 248 f. 252.

[120] On the extension of the praetorium in Cologne see Schäfer 2014, 222–227.

[121] For four *insulae* Schäfer 2014, 225 n. 71 assumes a total area of ca. 180 × 180 m. Judging by the city plan published in Schäfer 2014, Beil. 4, the north-south expansion of the two *insulae* possibly covered by the *praetorium* seems to have been ca. 160 m in effect.

[122] See Schäfer 2014, 305.

the end of the 4th century AD. In the context of an administrative residence a large number of documents would be conceivable along the walkways of visitors around the southern peristyle, for example.

CONCLUSION

Even if there is no epigraphic or literary proof, the architectural, archaeological and urbanistic characteristics of the building complex above the theatre of Ephesos in its various phases show striking similarities to Hellenistic and Roman governor's palaces, suggesting to us that it might be one of the exceptional possibilities to study the transition of an administrative residence from the Hellenistic era to the Roman Imperial period from an archaeological perspective.

According to François Kirbihler and others, Ephesos most likely had become the provincial capital of Asia after the end of the First Mithridatic War on the occasion of the administrative reorganization of the province by Sulla in 85/84 BC[123]. Also the epigraphic and literary sources discussed by Rudolf Haensch suggest that it was at least from the sixties of the 1st century BC onward that Ephesos had become the official seat of the Roman *proconsul* of Asia[124]. Doubtless, Ephesos alongside Pergamon was of highest administrative and strategic importance for the Romans already before Sulla, as is indicated also by its official function as *caput viarum* in the reorganisation of the road system of Asia by M. Aquillius in 129–126 BC[125]. It has been questioned, however, to what extent a formal *caput provinciae* had even existed in the late 2nd century BC[126], and it has also been pointed out that reconstructing the circumstances of the Roman annexation and provincial organization of Asia, and hence the transition from Attalid to Roman rule in the years and decades after 133 BC, is problematic[127]. It has been argued with regard to both the fiscal system and to the administration of justice that the Romans confirmed solutions that can be traced back to the Attalid precedents[128].

As has been sketched out in this paper, we have reason to assume that the building complex above the theatre of Ephesos from an archaeological perspective might illustrate the taking over of the Attalid royal infrastructure by the Romans. Although our knowledge of the palatial compound's rich history necessarily can only be fragmentary, the available records from the middle of the 2nd century BC to the end of the 6th century AD suggest a continuing development of the building[129], supporting the assumption that the residence of an Attalid *strategos* was turned into the headquarters of the Roman provincial administration when Ephesos became the capital of the province of Asia. However, the available records do not attest to any immediate large-scale adaptation measures to the building in the course of the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. Whether this impression might be due only to our limited state of knowledge and hence rather reflects our state of research than the historic development of the building can only be answered by further excavations. Judging by the large construction programs during the Imperial period, major adjustments to the palatial compound above the theatre became necessary at the latest in the first half of the 2nd century AD. They strikingly illustrate that not only the utilitarian infrastructure but also the symbolic visualization of political power were adjusted to new needs.

As our new insights into the urban development of Ephesos during the 2nd century BC suggest, also from an urbanistic point of view the Roman administration could already build upon the Attalid heritage that had started to give Ephesos the urban image of a capital city. Already then, the

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123 Cf. Kirbihler 2014, 233 f.; Kirbihler 2016, 30–32. 73–75. Also see Jones 2000, 13 f.; Santangelo 2007, 107.
124 Cf. Haensch 1997, 312–321 who especially refers to Cic. Att. 5, 13, 1; Cic. fam. 13, 55, 1; 13, 57, 2.
125 Cf. Santangelo 2007, 107; Mitchell 1999, 19 f.
126 See Kirbihler 2016, 30 f.; Kallet-Marx 1995, 114 f.
127 Cf. Freeman 2007.
128 See Freeman 2007, 64. Also cf. Kirbihler 2016, 27 f. Scepticism about the supposed continuities between the Attalid *topoi* organisation and the Roman *conventus* system is expressed by Santangelo 2007, 110.
129 Refer to Baier 2013 and Baier 2017.

structuring of the western slope of Panayırdağ, facing the harbour, was designed according to the specific utilitarian and symbolic requirements of a then new political authority. It followed a particular pattern of architectural and urban characteristics which referred to well-defined semiotic codes and aimed at the visualization of social hierarchies, power relations and at the legitimation of political authority[130]. In this sense, Ephesos had already become a capital in the making. If the conclusions put forward in this paper turn out to be correct, the Roman provincial administration occupied a location within the city that had been associated with political power at least since the middle of the 2nd century BC. We can speculate that similar to Caesarea Maritima[131] the reasons for the Romans to take over the residence will have been manifold: in addition to the obvious symbolic significance of taking over the existing palace, above all the easy accessibility of the building from the port, the proximity to important public facilities, its adequate infrastructure corresponding to the representative needs of the new rulers, and last but not least the favourable microclimatic conditions on the western slope of Panayırdağ may have been decisive factors. Additionally, taking over the existing palace will have been of obvious symbolic significance: a symbolic reference to the preceding ruling authorities and hence a symbolic act of establishing political legitimacy. If the suggested scenario applies, and if we consider the political significance of Ephesos during the Roman period as the seat of important imperial magistrates of the province of Asia, not only the *proconsul* but also the *quaestor* and the patrimonial *procurator* should be considered as possible residents in the *domus*[132]. However, besides the architectural and structural parallels to the known Roman governor's palaces it is the extraordinary urban and topographical context that seems to indicate to us that the building complex may indeed have served as the official residence of the *proconsul*. Within this particular context, the *domus* contributed so importantly to the shaping of the city image that presumably it became itself a symbol of the provincial capital of Asia.

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[130] Also see Baier 2017, esp. 130.
[131] Cf. Schäfer 2014, 307.
[132] On the provincial magistrates that are likely to have resided in Ephesos see Haensch 1997, 315–321.

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ROMAN TOMIS: EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE FROM AUGUSTUS TO THE SEVERANS*

ABSTRACT

The institutional and cultural history of Tomis is known through more than 700 epigraphic monuments, mainly from the Roman period, which have been discovered in this city since the 19th century. Despite some recent opinions, it can be considered as certain that Tomis was not only the headquarters of the Hexapolis but also the ›capital‹ of Moesia Inferior. Its status fluctuated: *ciuitas libera et immunis* under Augustus, possibly *stipendiaria* since Vespasian, then once again *libera* since Hadrian. Building activities under the Antonines and possibly privileges granted by Severan emperors are reflected in several inscriptions, some of them presented here with improved restorations. Inscriptions also allow us to reconstruct the inner organization of the city, the role played by Tomis as headquarters of the Hexapolis (which became after AD 202 a Pentapolis), the composition of its cosmopolitan population, and activities in gymnasia and cults.

KEYWORDS

Tomis – inscriptions – coins – Roman emperors – pontarchs

Tomis was a rather insignificant city during the Hellenistic period. We can collect no more than eight or nine decrees besides a few other inscriptions, while narrative sources very seldom mention this city in the context of the major events along the Lower Danube or the western shore of the Black Sea. Ovid, who was exiled to Tomis in AD 8[1], gives several descriptions of the Tomitan society[2] but there is still nothing to be inferred from his poems concerning the status of his adoptive city. At about the same time Strabo 7, 6, 1 calls Tomis a *polichnion*. It is true that the geographer uses the same term for Istros (Histria), whereas the term *polis* is reserved in the same area for Callatis alone.

Thanks to several inscriptions, most of them discovered in recent years, we are better informed about the circumstances of the establishment of Roman power on the western shore of the Black Sea[3]. After some successful campaigns in 9–6 BC led by Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Augur (PIR² C 1379)[4], honoured as [εὐεργέτ]ας ̣καὶ πά[τ]ρω[ν] in Callatis, as recently revealed by an

[*] Due to the death of Alexandru Avram his contribution is printed in the original form.

[1] All the dates that follow are to be understood as AD unless otherwise stated. For a general introduction to the history and archaeology of Tomis, see in particular Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012.

[2] See in general Syme 1978; Podosinov 1987. This exile is denied by some scholars, e.g. Brown 1985; Hofmann 2001; Hofmann 2006; Hofmann 2017, 205 n. 19 (and with some nuances Ballester 2002; Bérchez Castaño 2015). See, with new arguments, against such assertions: Liebs 2012; Seibert 2014, 48–54; Podosinov 2014. As far as I am concerned, I have no doubt that Ovid really was relegated to Tomis in AD 8.

[3] For older points of view (without benefit of newly discovered epigraphic records), see in particular Pippidi 1972 (= Pippidi 197 5, 159–171); Pippidi 1974 (= Pippidi 1988, 174–178).

[4] About his campaigns see Flor. epit. 2, 28–29: … *misso igitur Lentulo ultra ulteriorem perpulit ripam; citra praesidia constituta … Sarmatae patentibus campis inequitant, et hos per eundem Lentulum prohibere Danuuio satis fuit*; Tac. ann. 4, 44, 1: *triumphalia de Getis*. Further epigraphic evidence in Šarankov 2015, 62 f. no. 1 (SEG

inscription carved on the base of his statue[5], the cities of this area seem to have entered under Rome's control shortly after a campaign of P. Vinicius in Thracia Macedoniaque (Vell. 2, 101, 2) in 3–2 BC[6]. C. Iulius Caesar, Augustus' adoptive son (PIR² I 261), the recipient of *imperium maius* in the Eastern provinces, was honoured between 1 BC and AD 4 in Olbia by the *strategoi* (θεῷ Καίσαρι Σεβαστῷ καὶ Γαίῳ Ἰουλίῳ Καίσαρι)[7], while P. Vinicius, the future *consul* of AD 2 (PIR² V 662), became about the same time, as Lentulus Augur some years before, πά[τρων καὶ εὐερ]γέ[τας] of the city of Callatis (I.Callatis 57)[8]. In Histria the same event, accompanied beyond any doubt by several privileges granted to this city, is celebrated as a »second foundation of the city« (δευτέρα κτίσις [τῆς πόλεως]) (I.Histria 191 and 193)[9]. In Callatis we even can identify the »founder of the city« (κτίστας τᾶς πόλιος) who negotiated with Roman authorities the renewal of the old *foedus* passed about the end of the 2nd century BC (I.Callatis 1)[10], i.e. the status of *ciuitas foederata* for Callatis. In Odessos, moreover, we have a list of eponyms having held their offices »after the coming back« (μετὰ τὴν κάθοδον), i.e. after the city had been temporarily occupied by Burebista's Getae in 48 BC (IGBulg I² 46): since 46 eponyms are mentioned, we can infer that the stele was set up in 2 BC, which strangely concords with the date of P. Vinicius' campaign, as it would be a mark for the beginning of a new era.

Nevertheless, the epigraphic records are not very generous in distributing information concerning the status of the new Roman conquest[11]. The Roman province of Moesia was established only in AD 15 and even after this date its territory extended only up to Dimum (I.Histria 67–68), therefore, it did not reach the coast of the Black Sea: it is only after 46, when Thrace became a Roman province, that the maritime shore between the Danube Delta and Mesambria was incorporated into the province of Moesia[12]. In my opinion, the Greek cities from Istros (Histria) to Apollonia formed until 46 a kind of *praefectura ciuitatium*[13], possibly a *praefectura Ponti* or *Laevi Ponti* under the command of a *primipilarius*[14], rather than a *praefectura orae maritimae*[15] or, even less probably, a *praefectura ripae Thraciae*[16]. There are two sound arguments in this direction. First of all, the well known *horothesia* of Dionysopolis (IGBulg V 5011, AD 12–19), where it is mentioned (lines 26–32) that this territory was supposed to be controlled by the *Dionysopolitai* themselves and the »δημωσιῶναι who took on lease the Pontus« (δημοσιωνῶν τῶν ἠγορακότων τὸν Πόντον). Mirena Slavova rightly identified the δημωσιῶναι with the famous

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65, 566), a decree in honour of a *strategos* of king Rhoemetalces I (ca. 12 BC–AD 12) who successfully fought against Iazyges, στρατευσάμενος δὲ πέραν τοῦ Ἴστρου ἐπὶ τοὺς κοινοὺς πολεμίους Ἰαζύγους. This might refer to the same events: see Avram 2015, 153–155.

5 SEG 60, 783; Avram – Ionescu 2007–2009.

6 SEG 48, 971; Avram 1998.

7 Ivantchik 2017.

8 See also I.Callatis 29, a fragmentary decree mentioning a copy of a letter supposed to have been sent to a patron of the city whose name disappeared in the *lacuna*. This patron could be either Lentulus Augur or P. Vinicius.

9 Add Moretti 1986, 74 no. 3 (SEG 36, 684) 269 with a convincing restoration of I.Histria 269: [ἡ δεῖνα τοῦ δεῖνος τὸ δ]εύτερον | [γενομένου κτίστου τῆς πόλεως], γυνὴ δὲ | [τοῦ δεῖνος τοῦ– – –]ος.

10 For the treaty see Avram 1999b (cf. about its dating Ferrary 2007; Errington 2014). For Callatis recognized as *ciuitas foederata* and the role of the ›founder of the city‹ in the negotiations with Roman authorities, see Avram 1998; Avram – Ionescu 2007–2009; Avram 2019a with references.

11 For a recent discussion see Avram 2018a.

12 Largely admitted by scholars with the sole exception of A. Suceveanu in several repetitive (and not convincing) papers from Suceveanu 1971 to Suceveanu 2008.

13 von Domaszewski 1891, 194 f.; Avram 1999a, 55. Approved in Kantor 2017, 89 f. n. 22.

14 Matei-Popescu 2014a, 464–467. A newly published Histrian inscription (Bărbulescu – Buzoianu 2014a; SEG 64, 618) mentions as involved in the affairs of the Greek cities »of the left sides of the Pontus« Iulius Vestalis, already known as *primus pilus* thanks to Ovid's poems (Pont. 4, 7, 15–16. 48). Cf. Syme 1978, 82 f.; Dobson 1978, 170 no. 10.

15 Barbieri 1941; Barbieri 1946; Minchev 2003, 230.

16 Suceveanu 1977, 18; Suceveanu 1991, 26; cf. Zerbini 2015, 317. On the other hand, Ruscu 2014, 166, suggests renouncing any kind of *praefecturae* in the attempt to reconstruct the administrative context of this area before AD 46.

1 Tomitan coin Pick – Regling 1910, no. 2576 (© <www.wildwinds.com/coins/greece/thrace/tomis/i.html> [21.09.2020])

publicani[17], whereas, more recently, Florian Matei-Popescu convincingly demonstrated that through »Pontus« we are invited to understand the Greek cities of the coast[18]. Secondly, a newly published decree from Histria dating from the first years of Tiberius' reign (18 or 19)[19] speaks about the »Greek cities of the left sides of the Pontus« (τῶν ἐν τοῖς εὐωνύμοις μέρεσι τοῦ Πόντου Ἑλ[λ]ηνίδων πόλεων). These cities obviously constituted a coherent administrative and military unit before 46, whatever this body might have been officially designated.

We also know that Callatis was recognized as a *ciuitas foederata* and, thanks to the newly discovered decree quoted above, that the Romans granted to Histria the status of a *ciuitas libera et immunis*[20]. But we know nothing about the status of the other cities of the region. Only for Tomis – and thus, I come back to the main purpose of my paper – we can suggest, thanks to numismatic evidence, that it became on this occasion a *ciuitas libera*. There is indeed a type of coin (fig. 1) minted beyond any doubt under Augustus showing on the obverse two draped busts (either the personifications of *abundantia* and *concordia* or, possibly, Livia and Iulia) with the legends ЄΥЄΤΗΡΙΑ to left and ΟΜΟΝΟΙΑ to right and on the reverse a cornucopia filled with grain ears and grape bunches with the legend ΤΟΜΙΤѠΝ[21].

On the other hand, we can be certain that Tomis was designated as *caput provinciae*, very probably in 46 when the Greek cities of the Left Pontus had been incorporated into the province of Moesia. Rudolf Haensch cautiously supposed that Tomis, since the Republican period, would have been a *ciuitas foederata*[22] but there is no evidence for such an assumption. Moreover, I do not know any example of *ciuitas foederata* as headquarters for a governor (that would mean, in fact, a violation of the status itself), whereas there are many cases of *ciuitates liberae et immunes* chosen as *capita prouinciarum*[23]. On the basis of the coin mentioned above, I maintain, therefore, that Tomis was a *ciuitas libera et immunis* since Augustus. On the other hand, if we are ready to trust Strabo's distinction between Callatis as *polis* and Tomis as *polichnion*, we are invited to suppose that Callatis would have been in a better position to be chosen as ›capital‹: but precisely because it was a *ciuitas foederata*, this was juridically impossible.

Whatever the case, we are informed by the inscription I.Histria 67, line 54 (cf. I.Histria 68, line 54) that Tullius Geminus, the governor of Moesia in ca. 50–53[24], received the delegation sent by Histria ἐν Τόμει[25]. Despite a newly expressed opinion according to which not Tomis, but Durostorum, the *municipium* established close to the camp of the *legio XI Claudia*, was the ›capital‹ of the province[26], this information about the official meeting of the governor with the Histrian delegation in Tomis remains for me a sound argument for assuming that since 46 Tomis was the governor's headquarters. Moreover, as we shall see, many imperial dedications and *tituli honorarii* for governors are concentrated in Tomis, whereas Durostorum seems to be rather poor in this respect. I recall, on the other hand, that at latest under Trajan, a *koinon* of the Left Pontus

[17] Slavova 1998.
[18] Matei-Popescu 2014a, 458–460.
[19] Bărbulescu – Buzoianu 2014a, 416, ll. 5–6 of the inscription. About this inscription, see also Jones 2016 with new restorations; Kantor 2017.
[20] See ll. 9–10 about embassies sent to Tiberius (πρεσβεύσ[α]ντες περὶ τούτων εἰς Ῥώμ[η]ν πρὸς τὸν αὐτο[κ]ράτο[ρ]α) and 12–15 showing Q. Iulius Vestalis recognizing officially the χρηστὰς ἐ[λπίδ]ας [δι]δοὺς τὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ Σεβαστοῦ.
[21] Pick – Regling 1910, no. 2576. Cf. Ardevan 2010, with detailed commentary.
[22] Haensch 1997, 332 f.: »seit republikanischer Zeit soll die Stadt *civitas foederata* gewesen sein«.
[23] Haensch 1997, 372 f.
[24] Thomasson 1985, 138–141 no. 23.
[25] Cf. Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 146 f.
[26] Piso 2014. Against this assumption Matei-Popescu 2014b, 182.

2
Inscription I.Tomis 37
(© »Vasile Pârvan« Institute of Archaeology, Bucharest, photo: C. Nicolae)

had been established, whose headquarter was the same Tomis. Starting with the 1st century, and in particular during the 2nd century, archaeology also suggests that Tomis became a *metropolis* in the full meaning of the word, as it is called in local inscriptions.

For the good relations between Tomis and the Roman authorities during the first decades after Augustus we have as a concrete example the fact that about 49–59 Nero's mother Agrippina Minor held the eponymy in Tomis. The inscription IGR I 621 (I.Tomis 37) (fig. 2) has been interpreted as a dedication, but according to the new restoration[27] I present here, it is obviously a decree passed under Agrippina's eponymy:

τύχ[ηι ἀγαθῆι·]
[ἱερωμένης] θεᾶς Ἀγριπ[πείνης Σεβαστῆς μηνὸς]
[Ἀπατουρε]ῶ̣νος ἕκτη πα[– – – – – –τῆς ἐκκλησί]-
[ας ἀρχαιρε]τικῆς ἐπιμη[νιεύοντος τοῦ δεῖνος]
[τοῦ Ποσειδ?]ωνίου, *vac.* ἄρχ[οντες εἶπαν· ἐπειδὴ ὁ ἱε]-
[ρεὺς Σαράπιδ]ος καὶ Ἴσιδ[ος ὁ δεῖνα τοῦ δεῖνος]
[εὐσεβῶς μὲν δ]ιακείμεν[ος πρὸς τὸ θεῖον, εὐνόως]
[δὲ εἰς τὴν πα]τρίδα, φιλ[– – – – – – – – – – – – –]
[– – – – – – – –] θεοῖς [– – – – – – – – – – – – – –]
– – – – – – – – – –ỊΤΩΝ– – – – – – – – – – – – – – –
– –

Nevertheless, this *histoire d'amour* seems to finish at the beginning of Vespasian's reign. A curious interruption in the coinage of Tomis between Nero and Hadrian suggested to some scholars a kind of relegation: it is indeed very possible that, for reasons about which we are unfortunately fully ignorant, Tomis lost its privileged status of *ciuitas libera et immunis* under Vespasian[28].

This status was later re-established under Hadrian, as demonstrated by a newly published inscription which speaks about the »restoration of liberty« ([ἀποκαθ]εσταμήνης τῆς ἐλευθερίας) (fig. 3)[29]:

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[27] Avram – Hălmagi 2019.
[28] Suceveanu 1975; Suceveanu 1991, 27 f. 41, approved in Avram 2014, 161–167. See also I.Tomis Suppl. VI 2, commentary on no. 482.
[29] Avram 2014, 161–167 no. 1 (I.Tomis Suppl. VI 2, 482).

3
Inscription I.Tomis Suppl. 482
(© Museum of National History and Archaeology, Constanţa, photo: O. Ţiţei)

[ἀγαθῆι τ]ύ̣χηι· τριακοστολόγο̣[ι]
[– – – – – – – – –] Ἐπιστράτου καὶ Ὀχε̣[– – – – – – – –]
[– – – – –καὶ Πο]σειδώνιος Ἀκέσεως ΑΛ̣[– – – – – – – –]
[– – – – –ὑπὸ τ]ο̣ῦ δήμου διά τε πρὸς τοὺς θ̣[εοὺς εὐσέβει]-
[αν? καὶ ἀποκαθ]εσταμήνης τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἡ̣[μῶν?]
[– – – – – – – –π]ρὸς τῷ βωμῷ τοῦ ἡρῴου ΜΟΝ[. .]
[– – – – – – – – – –]αν πηχῶν δεκαπέντε τὸ πλάτος *vac.*
[– – – – – – – – – –] διπλοῖς κείοσιν διηνυγμένην ἀ-
[πό τε τῆς ἀνατ]ολῆς καὶ δύσεως στεγάσα^{v}τες κατὰ
[– – – – – – – –] τ̣οῦ ἔργου κεραμείσιν· εὐχαριστήριον
τ̣ῷ θεῷ.

4 Coins with the legend ΤΟΜΟC ΚΤΙCΤΗC (© <www.wildwinds.com/coins/greece/thrace/tomis/i.html> [21.09.2020])

Thus, at this occasion a *heroon* has been consecrated to a hero. He is very probably the mythical founder Tomos who will be represented and called ΤΟΜΟC[30], ΤΟΜΟC ΚΤΙCΤΗC or ΚΤΙCΤΗC ΤΟΜΟC[31], ΤΟΜΟΥ ΗΡΩΟC[32] on local coins starting with Antoninus Pius' reign (fig. 4)[33]. The works were carried out under the responsability of a college of τριακοστολόγο̣[ι] (line 1). This is a new Greek word, to be connected with a tax called τριακοστή, i.e. 3.33 %. Whatever it might be, this inscription suggests that the legend about the mythical founder Tomos, later confirmed by the series of coins, as well as by three epigrams calling Tomis »Tomos' city«, ἄστυ | Τόμοιο or ἄστυ Τόμου (I.Tomis Suppl. 492. 493 and 732)[34] and by the presence of the unique personal name Tomos (I.Tomis 31, col. II.2), emerged precisely in the context of the re-establishment of the status of *ciuitas libera et immunis* for Tomis under

[30] Pick – Regling 1910, nos. 2571–2574; BMC Tomi, 55 no. 6.
[31] Pick – Regling 1910, nos. 2554–2570; BMC Tomi, 5. 55 nos. 7–8; SNG München, no. 487; SNG England XI, no. 891.
[32] Pick – Regling 1910, nos. 2547–2553; SNG England XI, no. 890.
[33] Cf. Leschhorn 1984, 381 no. 168; Schultz 1997; Leschhorn – Franke 2002, 295.
[34] See on this evidence Avram 2018c.

Hadrian, the well-known philhellene emperor. Moreover, as an expression of gratitude, Hadrian was himself honoured in Tomis, as on the island of Lesbos[35], as Eleutherios and Olympios, IGR I 607 (I.Tomis 47): Αὐτοκρά[το]||ρι Καίσαρι [Ἀδρι]|α{ι}νῷ Σεβα[σ]|τῷ Ἐλε<υ>θ[ερί]|[5]ῳ, Ὀλυμπ[ίῳ,] | [σ]ωτῆρι, [χα]ριστή[ρι]|[ο]ν.

During the 2nd century and until the end of the Severan dynasty we find in Tomis several Greek, Latin or mostly bilingual imperial dedications, as well as several *tituli honorarii* for Roman governors or inscriptions mentioning building activities carefully supervised by governors[36]. Some of them are carved on enormous architraves that give us an idea of the monumentality of the buildings erected during this period. Despite the energy of local archaeologists in constantly carrying out rescue excavations, it is impossible to have a general archaeological image of this flourishing metropolis under the Antonines and the Severans, ancient Tomis being fully covered by the modern city of Constanţa. Only *membra disiecta* (as the famous treasury of sculptures)[37] and epigraphic records can supplement this lack of information[38].

5 Dedication to Severan emperors found in Conacu and attributed to Tomis (from: Avram 2018b, 418 fig. 5)

It is worth underlining the great number of dedications to Severan emperors. Many of them have been included in the *Supplementum epigraphicum* of Dilyana Boteva's book on Moesia Inferior and Thrace under the Severans[39]; therefore, I will not revisit them, but I can now add to this epigraphic crop first of all a fragmentary inscription found in the village of Conacu, in the vicinity of Tropaeum Traiani and traditionally attributed to this *municipium*, but which is in my opinion without doubt a monument coming from Tomis (fig. 5). I recently restored this fragmentary text[40], which is a dedication to the Severan house:

[Imp(eratori) Caesari, diui M(arci) Antonini Pii Germanici Sarmatici fil(io),]
[diui Commodi fratri, diui Antonini Pii nep(oti), diui Hadriani pronep(oti)]
[diui Traiani Part]hici et diui [Nervae abnep(oti), L(ucio) Sept(imio) Severo Pio Pert(inaci)]
[Arab(ico) Adiab(enico) Au]g(usto), Imperat[ori – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –]
[Αὐτοκράτορι Καίσαρι], θεοῦ Μ[άρκου Ἀντωνείνου Εὐσεβοῦς Γερμανικοῦ]
[Σαρματικοῦ υἱῷ, θεοῦ Κομμόδου ἀδελφῷ, θεοῦ Ἀντωνείνου Εὐσεβοῦς]
[υἱωνῷ, θεοῦ Ἀδριανοῦ ἐκγόνῳ, θεοῦ Τραϊανοῦ Παρθικοῦ καὶ θεοῦ Νέρουα]
[ἀπογόνῳ, Λ(ουκίῳ) Σεπτιμίῳ Σεουήρῳ Εὐσεβεῖ Περτίνακι Ἀραβικῷ Ἀδιαβηνικῷ]
[Σεβαστῷ, αὐτοκράτορι τὸ –]
– –

[35] IG XII.2 185, 191 (Ἐλευθερίῳ Ὀλυμπίῳ Σωτῆρι). 192–197 and Suppl. 53 (Ἐλευθερίῳ Ὀλυμπίῳ).

[36] *Tituli honorarii* for governors: I.Tomis 57 (IGR I 622). 66. 106 (IGR I 623). Building activities with governors involved: I.Tomis 41. 44 (with AE 2012, 1272; SEG 62, 512; I.Tomis Suppl. 44; cf. Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 147. 177). 45. 65. Dedication set up by a governor: I.Tomis 48.

[37] Canarache et al. 1963; Covacef 2011, *passim*.

[38] Bordenache 1960; Alexandrescu Vianu 1992; Covacef 2002, *passim*; Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 175–179.

[39] Boteva 1997.

[40] Avram 2018b, 414 f. no. 33.

Three other dedications must be corrected in their restorations. The first one is I.Tomis 82, dating from 198–201[41], which has been edited as follows:

Latus A
[ἀγαθῆι τύχηι]·
[ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν θειοτάτων αὐτοκρατό]-
[ρων τύχης τε καὶ νείκης καὶ αἰωνίου]
[διαμονῆς Λ(ουκίου) Σεπτιμίου Σευήρου Περ]-
[τίνακος καὶ Μ(άρκου) Αὐρηλίου Ἀντωνείνου]
[Παρθικῶν, Μηδικῶν, Βριταννικῶν]
[καὶ [[Π(ουπλίου) Σεπτιμίου Γέτα ἐπιφανεστάτου]]]
[[[Καίσαρος]] καὶ τῆς μητρὸς κάστρων Ἰου]-
[λίας Αὐγούστης καὶ [[Πλαυτίλλας?]] καὶ]
[τοῦ σ]ύνπαντ̣ο[ς αὐτῶν οἴκου καὶ ὑπὲρ]
[[[Φουλβίου Πλαυτιανοῦ]] καὶ τῆς ἱερᾶς]
[συ]νκλήτου καὶ [τῶν ἱερῶν αὐτῶν στ]-
[ρα]τευμάτων κ[αὶ κρατίστου ὑπατικοῦ]
[Ὀο]υεινίου Τερτ̣[ύλλου καὶ δήμου τῆς]
[το]ῦ Εὐωνύμου̣ [Πόντου μητροπόλεως]
[Τ]ό̣μεως ἱερασ[άμενοι? – – – – – – – –]
.. καὶ προστατ[οῦντες? – – – – – –οἱ πε]-
[ρ]ὶ ἱερέα β´ ἀρχι[ερέα– – – – – – – – –]
...ΝΕΟΥ̣Λ̣Π– – – – – – – – – – – – – –
– –

Latus B
(fragmentary names of members of an association)

C. Ovinius Tertullus' (PIR² O 191) mission as *legatus Augusti pr. pr.* (line 4) is strongly dated beween 198 and 201[42]. It is, therefore, impossible to insert, as Iorgu Stoian did, the names of the *praefectus praetorio* C. Fulvius Plautianus (PIR² F 554) and of his daughter Publia Fulvia Plautilla (PIR² F 564) because Caracalla married and proclaimed her *Augusta* only in 202 (possibly between 9 and 15 April)[43], i.e. after Ovinius Tertullus accomplished his mission in Moesia Inferior[44]. We can take as a model (with a minor change) the inscription I.Tomis 83, which mentions the same governor and whose first lines have been restored in the following manner:

ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν θειοτάτων Αὐτοκρατό-
ρων τύχης τε καὶ νείκης καὶ αἰωνίου
διαμονῆς • Λ(ουκίου) • Σεπτιμίου Σεουήρου Περ-
τινακος • καὶ • Μ(άρκου) • Αὐ[ρηλίο]υ Ἀντωνείνου
Π[αρθι]κῶν, Μηδ[ικῶν, Βριτα]ν̣νικῶν
[[[καὶ Π(ουπλίου) Σεπτιμίου Γέτα κτλ.

[41] First edited in Stoian 1959 = Stoian 1960; Stoian 1962, 113–122 no. II.22 (SEG 19, 461). Cf. Mihailov 1963, 122 n. 43; Boteva 1997, 181 f. no. IV 26; Bottez 2009, 238 no. 36.
[42] Thomasson 1984, no. 20: 107. Cf. Leunissen 1989, 15. 155. 251. 365; Boteva 1996, 242 (AE 1996, 1335; SEG 46, 882); Żelazowski 2009, 143.
[43] Kienast et al. 2017, 161. See, however, Christol 1997 (duly followed by Daguet-Gagey 2005, 507), who suggests that Fulvia Plautilla was already *Augusta* just after her engagement with Caracalla in 201. But even if we accept this date, her father C. Fulvius Plautianus was not yet *socer et consocer Augustorum*.
[44] Mihailov 1963, 122 n. 43, and Boteva 1996, 24 n. 35, rightly cast doubt on the reliability of Stoian's restoration.

At line 6 Π[αρθι]κῶν, Μηδ[ικῶν, Βριτα]ννικῶν is to be changed into Π[αρθι]κῶν, Μηδ[ικῶν, Ἀδιαβη]ηνικῶν[45]. On the one hand, Septimius Severus (PIR² S 487) will be *Britannicus maximus* only in 210[46]; on the other hand, the stone reveals an H rather than a N before -νικῶν. Thus, having I.Tomis 83 in mind, one can restore I.Tomis 82[47]:

[ἀγαθῆι τύχηι·]
[ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν θειοτάτων αὐτοκρατό]-
[ρων τύχης τε καὶ νείκης καὶ αἰωνίου]
[διαμονῆς Λ(ουκίου) Σεπτιμίου Σευήρου Περ]-
[τίνακος καὶ Μ(άρκου) Αὐρηλίου Ἀντωνείνου]
[Παρθικῶν Μηδικῶν Ἀδιαβηνικῶν καὶ]
[[[Π(ουπλίου) Σεπτιμίου Γέτα ἐπιφανεστάτου]]]
[[Καίσαρος]] καὶ Ἰουλίας Δόμνης, μη]-
[τρὸς στρατοπέδων καὶ Σεβαστῶν, καὶ]
[τοῦ σ]ύνπαντ̣ο[ς αὐτῶν οἴκου [[καὶ– –]
[[[. . .]Ρ̣Α̣– – – – – – – – – – – –]] καὶ ἱερᾶς]
[συ]νκλήτου καὶ [τῶν ἱερῶν αὐτῶν στ]-
[ρα]τευμάτων κ[αὶ κρατίστου ὑπατικοῦ]
[Ὀο]υεινίου Τερτ̣[ύλλου καὶ δήμου τῆς]
[το]ῦ Εὐωνύμο̣υ [Πόντου μητροπόλεως]
[Τ]ό̣μεως ἱερασ[αμένου– – – – – – – – –]
[..] καὶ προστατ[οῦντος– – – – – – –οἱ πε]-
[ρ]ὶ ἱερέα β´ ἀρχι[ερέα– – – – – – – – – –]
– – – –ΝΕΟΥ̣Α̣Π– – – – – – – – – – – – –
– –

7 ἱερασ[άμενοι] Stoian *dubitanter* ‖ 8 προστατ[οῦντες] idem *dubitanter* ‖ 10 perhaps -νέο̣υ Ἀ̣π[-.

The second inscription is IGR I 613 = I.Tomis II 85[48], dating from 199–209[49], which also reveals a new πρῶ[τος ποντάρχης], the first to be attested with this title in Tomis[50], if, of course, I am correct with my restoration. I suggest:

[ἀγαθῆι τύχηι·]
[ὑπὲρ τῆς τύχης καὶ νείκης Αὐτοκρ]άτο-
[ρος Λουκίου Σεπτιμίου Σεουήρου] Περτί-
[νακος Σεβαστοῦ Ἀραβικοῦ Ἀδι]αβηνικοῦ
[Παρθικοῦ μεγίστου τε κ]α̣ὶ αἰωνίου δια-
[μονῆς Μάρκου Αὐρη]λ̣ίου Ἀντωνείνου
[Σεβαστοῦ καὶ [[Π(ουπλίου) Σεπτ(ιμίου)] Γέτα]] Καίσαρος καὶ
[Ἰουλίας Δόμνη]ς̣ Αὐγούστης καὶ ἱερᾶς

[45] This order of titles is, of course, wrong. But see as parallels I.Histria 81 (Μη]δικῶν, Ἀδιαβη[νικῶν) and 87, dating from the time of the same Ovinius Tertullus (Παρθικῶν, Μηδικῶν).

[46] Kienast et al. 2017, 151.

[47] There is a hammered line after [τοῦ σ]ύνπαντ̣ο[ς αὐτῶν οἴκου I cannot restore. Perhaps the stone cutter began to insert too early καὶ (τοῦ) κρατίστου ὑπατικοῦ and then, realising his error, he deleted these words, so we could have there the remainder of the word [κ]ρα̣[τίστου].

[48] First edited in Tocilescu 1887, 47 no. 59. Cf. Stoian 1962, 113 no. II.21; Boteva 1997, 199 no. VIII 13.

[49] P. Septimius Geta (PIR² S 454) is Caesar (perhaps after autumn 197, anyway definitely after 199) and not yet Augustus (209, possibly September/October). See Kienast et al. 2017, 160.

[50] For the honorific title of πρῶτος ποντάρχης see Avram – Bărbulescu – Ionescu 2004; Maurer 2014.

[συγκλήτου καὶ ἱ]ερῶν στρατευμάτων *vac.*
[καὶ δήμου Ῥω]μ̣αίων καὶ βουλῆς καὶ δή- *vac.*
[μου τῆς μητροπ]ό̣λ̣ε̣ως Τόμεως ❦ *vac.*
[—– – – – – – – – – – –]ν ὁ καὶ Λέων πρῶ-
[τος ποντάρχης?] ἐπὶ ἀ̣ρχῆς [– – – – – – –]
– –

2 Α̣ΤΟ *lapis*, καὶ αἰω]νίο̣υ Tocilescu (Stoian) ‖ 7 [συνπάσης οἰκία]ς̣ iidem ‖ 11–12 πρ[ο|στάτης] *dubitanter* Stoian.

The third inscription (restored in IGR I 616, and re-edited without any change as I.Tomis 86)[51] looks as follows:

[Αὐτοκράτορα Καίσ(αρα), Λουκίου]
[Σεπτιμίο]υ Σευήρου Π[ερτίν(ακος)]
[Ἀραβικο]ῦ Ἀδιαβη[νικοῦ υἱὸν],
[θεοῦ Μ]άρκου [Ἀντωνείνου]
[Εὐσεβ(οῦς) υἱ]ωνόγ, [θεοῦ Τραιανοῦ]
[Παρθικ]οῦ κ[αὶ θεοῦ Νέρουα]
[ἀπόγονον] Μᾶρ[κον Αὐρήλιον]
– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

Nevertheless, the traces of a moulding preserved above show that the first legible letters belong to the first line and that it is, therefore, impossible to add something before it. It is, on the other hand, certain that the text began with [Αὐτοκράτορα Καίσαρα] and that the lines were, therefore, longer. Using as parallel a monument from Nicopolis ad Istrum (IGBulg II 630)[52], I.Tomis 86 may be restored as follows:

[Αὐτοκράτορα Καίσαρα, Λ(ουκίου) Σεπτιμίο]υ Σευήρου Π̣[ερτί]-
[νακος Εὐσεβοῦς Σεβαστοῦ Ἀραβικο]ῦ Ἀδιαβη[νικοῦ]
[Παρθικοῦ μεγίστου υἱόν, θεοῦ Μ]ά̣ρκου [Ἀντωνείνου]
[Εὐσεβοῦς Γερμανικοῦ Σαρματικοῦ υἱ]ωνόγ, [θεοῦ Ἀντωνεί]-
[νου Εὐσεβοῦς ἔγγονον, θεοῦ Ἁδριαν]οῦ κ[αὶ θεοῦ Τραϊανοῦ]
[Παρθικοῦ καὶ θεοῦ Νέρουα ἀπόγονον,] Μ̣ᾶ̣ρ̣[κον Αὐρήλιον]
[Ἀντωνεῖνον Σεβαστόν– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –]
– –

At line 3 there is insufficent space to insert Βρεταννικοῦ μεγίστου, a title received by Septimius Severus in 210, perhaps on 31 March[53]. Therefore, the inscription could basically date to any year after Caracalla's (PIR² S 446) proclamation as Augustus in 197. I, however, suggest that the monument from Tomis belongs, as the inscription from Nicopolis ad Istrum adduced above, to the interval 209–210.

We can add to the same series the very fragmentary inscription I.Tomis 419[54]:

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[51] First published in Tocilescu 1894, 92 no. 23 with few restorations. Cf. Boteva 1997, 197 no. VIII 7.

[52] Αὐτοκράτορα Καίσαρα Λ(ουκίου) Σεπτιμίου Σεουήρου Περτίνακος Εὐσεβοῦς Σεβαστοῦ Ἀραβικοῦ
Ἀδιαβηνικοῦ Παρθικοῦ μεγίστου υἱόν, θεοῦ Μάρκου Ἀντωνείνου Εὐσε-
βοῦς Γερμανικοῦ Σαρματικοῦ υἱωνόν, θεοῦ Ἀντωνείνου Εὐσεβοῦς ἔγγο-
νον, θεοῦ Ἁδριανοῦ καὶ θεοῦ Τραιανοῦ Παρθικοῦ καὶ θεοῦ Νέρουα ἀπόγονον.

[53] Kienast et al. 2017, 151.

[54] First edited in Tocilescu 1882, 35 no. 74 and *per errorem* once again in Tocilescu 1887, 54 no. 83.

– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –
[– – – – – – – – –]ις καὶ C– – – – – –
[– – – – – – –Ἀν]εικήτου– – – – – – –
– – – – – – – – – – –ṚΩCTỊ– – – – – – –
– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

I suspect here a *titulus honorarius* for the empress Iulia Domna (PIR² I 663)[55]:

[Ἰουλίαν Δόμναν]
[Σεβαστήν, Αὐτοκράτορο]ς Καίσ[αρος Λ(ουκίου) Σεπτιμίου]
[Σευήρου Περτίνακος ἀν]εικ<u>ήτ</u>ου [γυναῖκα, μητέρα]
[κάστρων καὶ Αὐτοκράτο]ṛος Κạ[ίσαρος Μ(άρκου) Αὐρηλίου]
[Ἀντωνείνου καὶ Π(ουπλίου) Σεπτιμίου Γέτα Σεβαστῶν]
– –

If I am right, the date would be 209–211 because Septimius Severus (PIR² S 487) was alive and P. Septimius Geta (PIR² S 454) was already *Augustus*. An alternative possibility, as suggested by Dragoş Hălmagi *(per epistulam)*[56], would be to restore simply[57]:

[ὑπὲρ ὑγεί]ạς καὶ σ[ωτηρίας τοῦ μεγίσ]-
[του καὶ ἀν]εικ<u>ήτ</u>ου [καὶ θειοτάτου Αὐ]-
[τοκράτο]ṛος Κạ[ίσαρος Μ. – – – – –]
– –

In this case the emperor and the date would remain unknown[58].

Finally, a newly published dedication to Caracalla (I.Tomis Suppl. 476) dating between April 210 and 4 February 211 completes this collection:

[ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ·]
[Αὐτοκράτορα Καίσαρα, Λ(ουκίου)]
Σεπ[τ(ιμίου) Σεουήρου Περτίνακος Εὐ]-
σεβο[ῦς Σεβ(αστοῦ) Ἀραβικοῦ Ἀδιαβη]-
νικο[ῦ Παρθικοῦ μεγίστου]
Βρετ[αννικοῦ μεγίστου υἱόν]
– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

It is very possible that special privileges were granted to Tomis under the first Severans, which would explain the large number of monuments devoted both by the Council and the People and by several associations to these emperors.

As for the *koinon* of the Left Pontus (a Hexapolis including Histria, Tomis, Callatis, Dionysopolis, Odessos and Mesambria, which became in 202 a Pentapolis when Mesambria was assigned to the province of Thrace), it is well known that Tomis produced the richest evidence concerning the *pontarches* and their activities as responsibles for the imperial cult and as *agonothetai*[59]. But the series becomes, I could say, every day more comprehensive. I identified some years ago a stele

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[55] See as parallel IG IV 704: Ἰουλίαν Δό‹μ›ναν Σεβα|στήν, μητέρα στρατοπέ|δων, Αὐτοκράτ‹ο›ρος Καί|σαρος Λ(ουκίου) Σεπτιμίου Σευ|ήρου Περτ‹ί›νακος ἀνε[ι]|κήτου γυναῖκα καὶ Αὐ|το{υ}κράτορος Καίσαρος | Μ(άρκου) Αὐρηλίου Ἀντωνείνου | κ(αὶ) Λ(ουκίου) Σεπτιμίου | Καίσαρος Σεβαστῶν μη|τέρα κτλ.

[56] I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Dragoş Hălmagi, who has constantly greatly helped me in my investigations.

[57] Line 1 seems in fact to reveal at the beginning the remains of the right foot of an A.

[58] I have discussed the inscriptions I.Tomis 82, 85, 86 and 419 in more detail in Avram 2020.

[59] Detailed treatment in Maurer 2014.

6 Inscription I.Tomis Suppl. 480 identified in the wall of an old house from Constanţa (© Museum of National History and Archaeology, Constanţa, photo: O. Ţiţei)

7 Inscription I.Tomis Suppl. 481 (© Museum of National History and Archaeology, Constanţa, photo: O. Ţiţei)

embedded in the wall of a house from Constanţa from the end of the 19th or the beginning of the 20th century bearing a *titulus honorarius* for a certain Tiberius Claudius Falco Pompeianus (I.Tomis Suppl. 480; fig. 6), priest of the Goddess Roma (first attestation of this cult in Tomis, known elsewhere at Odessos and Nicopolis ad Istrum[60]), ἀπὸ [λο]γιστειῶν (a formula that can be paralleled by I.Prusias ad Hypium 7, line 13) and having been *pontarches* twice. The monument was set up by a *trierarches* of the *Classis Flauia Moesica*, whose headquarter was at Noviodunum:

Τιβ(έριον) • Κλ(αύδιον) Φάλκωνα Πομπηιαν[ὸν]
ἱερέα θεᾶς Ῥώμης καὶ ἀπὸ [λο]-
γιστειῶν καὶ • β̣´ • ποντάρ[χην]
ἀπὸ προγόνων • Γ(άϊος) • Ἰού[λιος]
Σιλουανὸς ἐκ τριηράρχ[ων].

Another inscription (I.Tomis Suppl. 481; fig. 7) demonstrates that, at least since the *koinon* became a Pentapolis (202), i.e. without Mesambria, but very probably even earlier, the community included beside the *pontarches* a council composed by members called *bouleutai*. It is very possible that each city delegated one or more persons to represent it on this council.

Finally, the list of *pontarches* can be supplemented thanks to the new reading I suggest for a catalogue belonging to the Louvre collections[61], whence it had been transported from Constanţa during the Crimean War (I.Tomis 27; fig. 8):

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60 Odessos: Šarankov 2011, 303–309 no. 1; IGBulg I² 48. Nicopolis ad Istrum: IGBulg II 701.

61 First published in Dain 1933, 161 f. no. 182. Improved readings and restorations in Robert 1933, 143 f. (SEG 9, 909) (= Robert 1969, 1598–1600).

8 Inscription I.Tomis 27 (© Musée du Louvre, photo: Maurice & Pierre Chuzeville)

– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –
– – – – – – – – – –ΞΟ– – – – – –
[– – – – –Ἀ]θανέων πον(τάρχης) *vac.*
[– – – – – –]ον πον(τάρχης) *vac.*
[– – – –Κ]λημεντιανὸς πον(τάρχης)
[Καλπ]ούρνιος Φῆλιξ κοιν[οσώστης],
[Αὐ]ρ(ήλιος) • Σευῆρος προστάτ[ης],
[Οὐαλέ]ριος Σευῆρος νε(ώτερος),
[Οὐαλ]έριος Πρεῖσκος,
[Οὐαλ]έριος Ἰουλιανό[ς],
[Οὐαλέ]ριος Δημήτ[ριος],
[– – –Ἀσ]κληπιόδω[ρος]
[– – – – –]τωρ Ἀκέ[σιος]
– – – – – – – – – – – – – –

2 -]θα νεων πο[- Robert (Stoian) ‖ 3. 4 πον(τάρχης) Avram ‖ 3 -]ον πον[- Stoian ‖ 5 Κοΐν[του] Dain (et al.), κοιν[οσώστης] Avram ‖ 12 Ἀκέ[σιος] idem.

Here we observe at the end of lines 2–4 of the preserved text a typical ligature occurring also in a recently published inscription from Histria from 215[62] suggesting the abbreviation of the word πον(τάρχης). Thus, we have three new pontarchs as members of an association of unknown character.

[62] Avram 2018d.

Pontarchs were very often leading members of several associations called, as usually, *koina*, and our inscription is one of the numerous examples furnished by Tomis. I add another remark concerning the restoration of line 5. I cannot agree with what has been suggested by my predecessors, Κοΐν[του] as patronym of [Καλπ]ούρνιος Φῆλιξ, because, as we see, all the other names of the list occur without patronym. By contrast, the first ones are accompanied by titles, therefore, I would expect the same here. Moreover, I am sure that the right restoration is κοιν[οσώστης], a compound I had myself recognized many years ago in an inscription from Callatis as a new Greek word[63]. This word, »saviour of the *koinon*«, can be restored in three other inscriptions from Tomis (I.Tomis 17, line 19; 19, line 13; 23, line 8) and, as we see, also in this case. Thus, we have a total of five occurrences of this special Greek word, one in Callatis and four in Tomis.

Another interesting chapter could be opened by studying the life of Tomitan *gymnasia*, whose gymnasiarchs occur very often in epigraphic records[64]. I only mention as novelty the new restoration I suggest for one of these inscriptions (I.Tomis 95, ca. 200):

[ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ· ἐπὶ ἱέρεω τοῦ δεῖνος τοῦ– – – – – – –].του, φυλάρ-
[χοῦντος τῆς φυλῆς *nomen tribus* τοῦ δεῖνος τοῦ– –]ου, γυμνασιαρ-
[χούντων τοῦ δεῖνος τοῦ δεῖνος καὶ τοῦ δεῖνος τοῦ –]ṃου τῆς τε φυ-
[λῆς τοῦ δεῖνος τοῦ δεῖνος, – – – – – – – – – – οἱ γρα]μματεῖς καὶ
[οἱ– – – – – – *e.g.* ἐστεφάνωσαν τὸν ἑαυτῶν γυμνασί]α̣ρχον διὰ
[βίου τὸν δεῖνα τοῦ δεῖνος καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ– –]ιανὴν Πῶλ-
[λαν– φ]υ̣λάρχου
– –

Last but not least, Tomis produced an impressive number of funerary epigrams[65]. Thanks to this category of inscriptions but also to the other funerary monuments, both in Greek and in Latin, we are aware of the cosmopolitan composition of the Tomitan population. This is not a surprise: as main harbour of the region, Tomis was a remarkable trade centre which attracted people from Bithynia (in particular Nicomedia), Thrace, but also *inter alia* from Egypt. It would be perhaps enough to mention the οἶκος τῶν ἐν Τόμει ναυκλήρων (I.Tomis 60) and in particular the οἶκος τῶν Ἀλεξανδρέων (I.Tomis 153). These merchants from Alexandria were, of course, largely responsible for the diffusion of Egyptian cults in Tomis, for which we have a surprisingly great number of epigraphic records of all kinds[66].

Since I am preparing a volume for the *Inscriptiones Graecae* including a revised corpus of the inscriptions from Tomis, I am sure that new surprises will arise and that the epigraphic evidence will be able to improve our knowledge regarding Tomis during the Imperial period.

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[63] Avram 1992–1994 (SEG 46, 896).
[64] See in particular Dana 2011, 40–48; Bărbulescu – Buzoianu 2014b, 141–150.
[65] I am aware of no less than 59 epigrams, without taking into account some inscriptions of uncertain provenance that could be cautiously attributed to Tomis. To the epigrams already re-edited in I.Tomis add I.Tomis Suppl. 492–500 and Avram 2019b.
[66] Recently discussed in Avram – Hălmagi 2019.

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Mario Ivanov

FROM TIMBER TO FORTIFICATION

DEVELOPMENT OF SERDICA FROM CLAUDIUS TO MARCUS AURELIUS

ABSTRACT

The article presents the earliest periods in the development of Serdica before it became a capital on the basis of the new excavation results. The synthesis of the archaeological data allows the foundation of Serdica to be dated as early as the reign of Claudius or even earlier. The initial settlement is identified as an earth-and-timber Roman *castellum*. During the second period the existence of another military fort or veterans' settlement is assumed. The next two stages in the history of Serdica correspond with its urban development presenting some indicative features of the buildings' construction and urban layout.

KEYWORDS

Serdica – timber – fort – development – cohort

The early history of every Roman town is of utmost importance for the better understanding of its further development. Serdica became a provincial capital for the first time with the administrative reforms of the last third of the 3rd century AD. At that time it already had over two centuries of history and during this period the town underwent significant changes from an initial earth-and-timber settlement to a fortified urban centre.

The foundation and early history of Serdica have been discussed by scholars for more than a century. In brief, there are three major opinions. The first states that the Roman town developed from an earlier Thracian settlement[1], or even a pre-Roman urban centre called Serdonpolis[2]. According to the second hypothesis, the town of Serdica was founded for the first time by the Romans on an appropriate new place[3]. The third opinion proposes the presence of a small early Roman fort and a road station on the site of the future town[4]. Until 2010 actual archaeological evidence of the foundation and early stages of Serdica's development before it became a capital is almost completely absent. The scholars of the late 19th to the first half of the 20th century based their opinions entirely on the scarce epigraphic and ancient literary sources. The large-scale archaeological research in the 1950s brought to light for the first time archaeological evidence regarding the existence of layers and buildings earlier than the late 3rd century AD. In several

1 Kacarov 1910, 15–20; Mihajlov 1953, 543 f.; Bobčev 1958, 215; Venedikov – Petrov 1964, 107; Balkanska 1964, 135–137; Stančeva 1966, 231–233; Gerov 1967, 11; Velkov 1989, 16. 21.

2 Stančeva 1985; Stančeva 1987, 62 f.; Stančeva 1989a, 9 f.; Stančeva 1989b, 28–33; Ivanov 1993, 225; Bojadžiev 2002, 127.

3 Kirova 2012, 204.

4 Oberhummer 1923, 1670; Bobčev 1943, 39.

places within the town, partly preserved walls were documented, made of stone with clay bonding, as well as a layer of blackish soil. A handful of pottery sherds associated with these walls have been published[5]. On the basis of the new discoveries a hypothesis about the development of Roman Serdica from an earlier Thracian settlement/town has grown rapidly[6]. A brief comment on the circumstances of the excavations is necessary here. In the first place, the archaeological research in the 1950s was conducted as a rescue excavation, necessitated by the implementation of the major building projects for the reconstruction of the centre of Sofia after bombing during World War II. The speed of the construction work and the immense areas to be excavated virtually disabled the research in proper terms. In most of the cases the archaeologists were able only to unearth and document the architectural remains of Roman and late antique buildings. A proper stratigraphic and contextual distribution of the structures and finds was entirely lacking during the fieldwork, as well as in the publication of the archaeological reports. Due to the circumstances described and methodological gaps, the available archaeological evidence of the earliest periods should be interpreted with utmost caution.

In 2010, construction work on the metrostation Serdica II started, part of Sofia's second underground line. Its location, almost in the very centre of the Roman town (fig. 1) caused rescue excavations[7] to be carried out in the area under Knjaginja Marja Luiza Blvd. between Todor Aleksandrov Blvd. and Pirotska Str. The discovery of well-preserved archaeological remains led to substantial changes of the initial project, and as a result the underground station was built using tunnelling construction methods, preserving in such a way the excavated structures *in situ* above the station. During the next two years, the area of research was extended further to the north and east, almost doubling its size. The new excavations were caused by the reconstruction of the subway adjacent to the north of the 2010 excavation area, and the need to remodel the space between Knjaginja Marja Luiza Blvd. and the Central Department Store building in the framework of the project for the exposition of archaeological heritage, and tracing new communication lines under Nezavisimost Square.

The results of the archaeological excavations are highly significant in many ways: an area of ca. 6,000 m² was excavated in the north half of the fortified Roman town; for the first time sufficient stratigraphic sequences were established for all the historical periods from the 1st century AD until the modern era; several thousand finds and an enormous amount of pottery and bones was collected during the excavations; and finally, the precise contextual and stratigraphic distribution of the coins and other finds allowed for the first time an attempt to specify the chronological periods in the development of Serdica from the time of its foundation.

Due to their large size and solid construction the architectural remains of the late antique period are best preserved. During the excavations seven buildings of different size, parts of two early Christian basilicas and a thermal complex were discovered. Significant parts of the two main and four secondary streets were also examined, along with sanitation facilities, water supply and drain systems (fig. 2). In many places in the area the earlier Roman houses were examined, as well as some earth and timber buildings of early Roman date[8]. This paper presents a synthesis of the chronological periods, architectural and construction features and their changes over time on the basis of the 2010–2012 excavation results. The available archaeological information from the other sites will be compared to the established chronology of the periods in order to achieve a better picture of the development of Serdica from its beginning until the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

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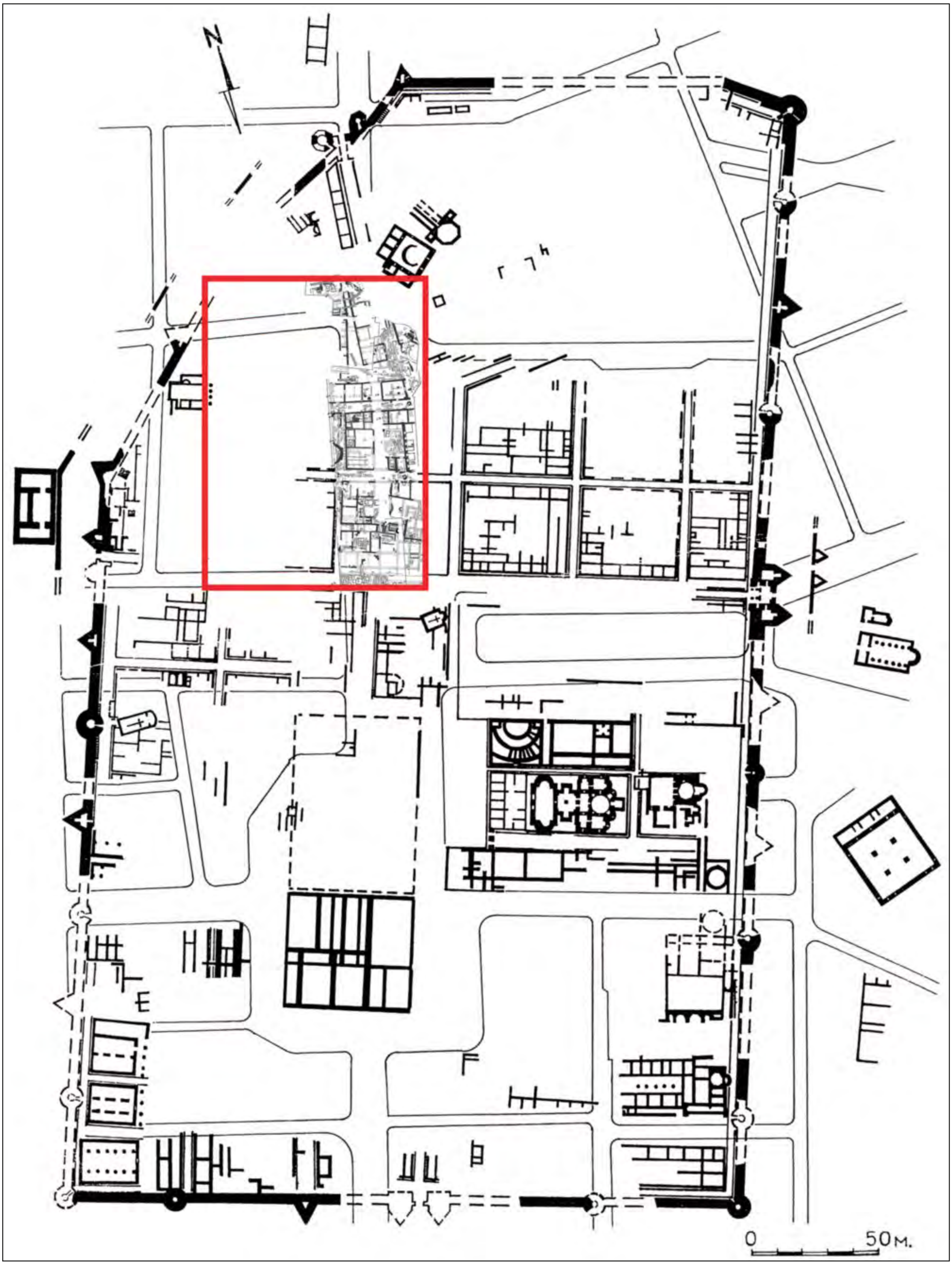
[5] Balkanska 1964; Stančeva 1966.

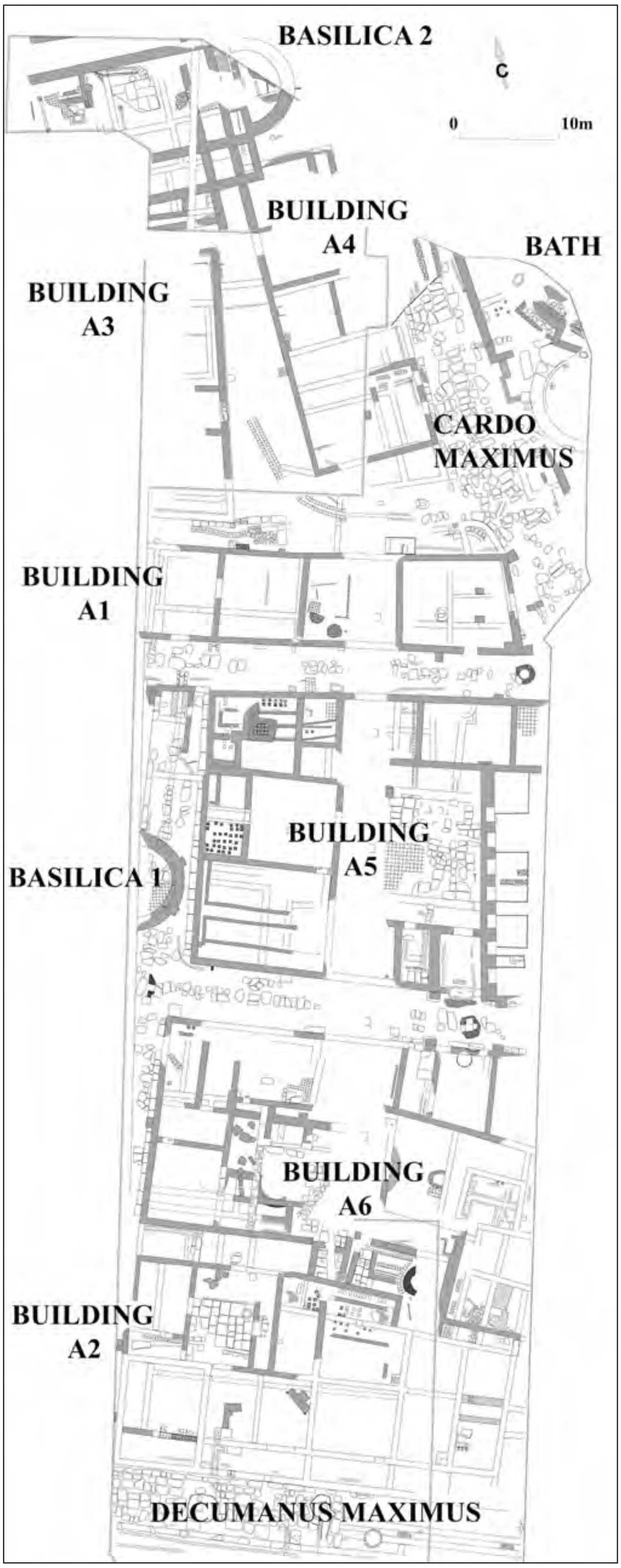
[6] See n. 1 and 2.

[7] The excavations were carried out by a team from the National Archaeological Institute with Museum in Sofia under the direction of Dr. M. Ivanov and S. Gorjanova.

[8] Ivanov 2011a; Ivanov 2011b; Ivanov 2012a; Ivanov 2012b; Ivanov 2013a; Ivanov – Noeva 2016; Ivanov 2016a; Ivanov 2016b.



1 Plan of Serdica with the presumable location of the early Roman fort (in red) and the 2010–2012 excavated area in its eastern part (© J. Topalova and M. Ivanov; plan after: Šalganov – Kirova 2010, 30 fig. 2)



2 Geodetic plan of the excavations 2010–2012 (© A. Kamenarov and D. Ognjanov)

In the first place, the stratigraphy of the site and the chronological distribution of the periods will be presented. The stratigraphic sequence provided by the significant number of cross-sections all around the excavated area is similar at least for the deepest levels corresponding to the first phases of Serdica's history. The period from the initial human presence on the site up to the Costobocs' raid in AD 170 includes four stratigraphic units. The structure and colour of the layers differs in the south and the north half of the site because of different soil conditions and the higher level of underground moisture in the northern area.

The first three layers have similar greyish-black (to the north) to beige-brown (to the south) colour and a relatively homogeneous structure, occasionally mixed with thin layers of ashes and charcoal and/or small pieces of burnt daub. The high concentration (especially in the first and second layers) of wooden remains of timber constructions is noteworthy, parts of which are discovered in many places in the north half of the site. As a whole the floor levels are marked by tamped soil, but some dwellings of the first period have an additional covering of wooden planks as well (fig. 3). The floor levels of the second and occasionally of the third layers are made by tamped gravel and sand of greyish-green to greenish-beige colour. This flooring was probably used for additional strength and some protection against the underground moisture. Thick gravel and sand deposits are in fact the main ingredients of the naturally formed geological substratum under the settlement layers. As such this material was easily accessible and used extensively by local inhabitants at least until the 3rd century AD[9]. In

[9] See Ivanov – Noeva 2016, 546.

many of the investigated sectors the third layer contained intense charcoal deposits caused by burnt wooden constructions.

The fourth layer has brownish-beige to brownish-red colour and a heterogeneous structure. The floor level is marked almost everywhere by a layer of tamped sand and gravel with greenish-beige colour. The upper part of the layer shows traces of intense fire − charcoal and burnt pieces of mud-brick construction.

The chronology and date of the four layers, respectively, of the initial periods in the development of Serdica is based on related finds (coins especially) and the coherence with possible historical events. During the excavations several thousand coins were found, of which more than 200 pieces belong to the periods up to the reign of Marcus Aurelius[10]. The distribution of the coins by layers allows the initial and final date of each period to be specified.

The first layer provides 28 coins covering the period up to Nero. Among them there are two Hellenistic coins and one *denarius* of the Roman Republican period. These three earliest pieces should not be considered as proper chronological indicators for two reasons: (1) similar ones are found also in the later layers, even in the 3rd century AD contexts[11]; (2) there are no other contemporary finds associated with them. The coinages of Augustus, the Thracian king Rhoimetalces I, Tiberius and Caligula are attested with single coins (1 or 2). The reign of Claudius is marked by a significant inflow of 15 pieces including a rare *sestertius* of Britannicus[12]. The picture is completed with three coins of Nero, the latest one minted in AD 63, providing in such way a *terminus post quem* for the end of the first period and beginning of the second one.

3 Timber remains from the first (far right) and the second periods of Serdica (© M. Ivanov)

[10] The coin material is studied by Assoc. Prof. Dr. D. Vladimirova-Aladzhova (NAIM – BAS) and Dr. E. Paunov. I would like to express my gratitude for their significant contribution.

[11] For the presence of Hellenistic and Roman Republican coins in later contexts on other sites, see for example Veličkov 2014, 370 and Stojanova – Prokopov 2018.

[12] Vladimirova-Aladžova 2011.

The second layer provides 70 coins up to the reign of Trajan. In this sequence one Hellenistic and one Republican piece are also attested. The emperors Caligula, Nero, Galba, Vitellius and Nerva as well as Colonia Augusta Iulia Philippensis in the province of Macedonia are attested with single coins (1 to 4). The coinage of Claudius is well presented (8) but predominant are the coins of the Flavian dynasty (27) and Trajan (18) with the latest ones issued between AD 103–111.

The third layer provides 52 coins covering the time of the emperors from Claudius to Hadrian. Tiberius, Nero, Vitellius, Nerva and Sabina are presented with one or two pieces while the presence of Claudius' coinage is significantly reduced (4). The mass circulation of Flavian and Trajan coins is attested once again as well as the ones from Philippi. Last in date are the pieces of Hadrian (7) and Sabina (1) of which the latest coins are issued between AD 129 and 137.

The fourth layer provides more than 60 coins of the emperors from Claudius to Marcus Aurelius. The 1st century AD rulers and the reign of Trajan are presented with single pieces with a slight predominance of Flavian ones. The coinage of the Antonines obviously prevails, especially the pieces of Marcus Aurelius. It is important to stress the significant number of provincial coin minting of Philippopolis, Pautalia, Hadrianopolis and most of all the one of Serdica[13]. The latest coins of Marcus Aurelius and one piece of Faustina Minor issued in AD 168 give a *terminus post quem* for the end of the fourth period.

The chronology of each period could be further specified by the analysis of the described coins, some other finds and their coherence with historical events, political and administrative changes attested by other sources.

The initial date of the first settlement on the site of the future Roman town of Serdica is not easy to determine. The insignificant chronological value of the earliest Hellenistic and Roman Republican coins has already been discussed. The scarce numismatic evidence of the period before Claudius can be accepted as a sign of some habitation here; even more there are single finds of early date which should be taken into consideration: a *fibula* variation of the Nauheim type and a Terra Sigillata bowl with the stamp »Cornelius« whose date could be placed earlier than the mid-1st century AD[14]. Nevertheless, the mass coin inflow occurs during Claudius' reign, as well as the distribution of other finds such as Terra Sigillata, glass and brooches[15]. Bearing in mind the important political and administrative act of the creation of the province of Thrace in AD 46[16], it seems more than logical to accept this date as a starting point in the development of Serdica. A possible earlier (late Augustan or Tiberian) foundation is of course not to be excluded, but at the present state of the archaeological research such an early date requires more evidence. Indeed, the act of building the initial settlement could have taken place a few years earlier or later but for the time being it is impossible to give an accurate date for this event. The final date of the first period should be placed sometime after AD 63, the date of issue of the latest coin. In order to establish a more precise date, it is noteworthy to emphasize that no single coin of the Flavian dynasty and from the period of the civil war (AD 68–69) was found in the first layer, while such pieces are abundant in the next period. It is obvious that the first settlement was abandoned/destroyed before AD 68–69. Whatever happened, the turbulent years of the civil war could be accepted as a *terminus ante quem* for the existence of the first settlement.

The second period of Serdica's development begins around AD 69 or shortly thereafter. The final date of the period is marked by the latest coins of Trajan issued between AD 103 and 111. The obvious overlap with the period of significant administrative reforms of Trajan after the Second Dacian War (AD 105–106) can hardly be seen as a coincidence. Soon after AD 110 many settlements in Thrace were proclaimed cities, probably as a consequence of the new governorship

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[13] Aladzhova 2018, 23 f.

[14] Genčeva 2004, 16 f.; Oxé et al. 2000, 189; Ivanov 2013b, 149.

[15] See Ivanov 2013b, 150 f.; early Roman glass vessels were published partly in Koseva 2018, 336.

[16] Tačeva 2004, 55; Lozanov 2015, 80.

of the province by *legatus Augusti* instead of by a *procurator*[17]. The town itself is known to be named Ulpia Serdica with the emperor's family name emphasizing the new status. It seems quite logical for the archaeological data to reflect this important change in the settlement's rank.

The third period begins ca. AD 110 and coincides with the first urban stage of Serdica's development. The end of the period should be seen sometime in the 30s of the 2nd century AD, as suggested by the presence of the latest coins of Hadrian and his wife Sabina. The archaeological evidence for this period[18] reveals constant but slow growth of a small town with modest architecture. Some external impetus was needed to improve the situation. The change most probably came with the Hadrian's visits to Thrace. On his return from Judaea in AD 131–133 the emperor passed through the Balkans and Thrace[19]. Several years later, a second visit to Thrace, probably between AD 134–138, is documented by the coinage[20]. During his journeys Hadrian improved the provincial administration, abandoning the earlier system of strategies in favour of the municipal territories, settled the border between Lower Moesia and Thrace, founded new cities and stimulated building activities in others[21]. Precisely during his reign for the first time a public building is attested in Serdica by an inscription[22]. All the available data combined with the coin evidence allow the end of the third period to be identified in the 30s of the 2nd century AD, most probably in the last years of Hadrian's rule.

The next, fourth, period coincides as a whole with the reign of Antoninus Pius and the first half of Marcus Aurelius' rule. This first flourishing period in the development of Serdica was suddenly brought to an end with a massive raid of the Costobocs in AD 170[23].This event is attested archaeologically in Serdica by a layer of burnt debris detected over almost the entire site[24]. The latest coin of Faustina Minor issued in AD 168 left no doubt about the coherence between archaeological evidence and historical records.

Summarizing the data given above, the development of Serdica from the foundation of the settlement to AD 170 can be traced through four distinct periods:

- First period – between AD 46 and 68–69
- Second period – between AD 68–69 and 110–112
- Third period – between AD 110–112 and 134–138
- Fourth period – between AD 134–138 and 170

The initial and final year of each one of the four periods should not be perceived as exact. Some tolerance of several years is quite acceptable, but as a whole the complex picture given by the archaeological evidence is well supported by the historical sources and epigraphic documents.

In the following the changes in the construction techniques, building layout and settlement planning of each period will be presented. The specific features of each one of these components is important for the interpretation of the settlement's character and its dynamics.

The construction techniques of the buildings and the initial settlement layout were studied for the first time during the 2010–2012 excavations. The dwellings discovered are built entirely of timber. Because of the high level of underground water in the lower, north half of the site, well preserved wooden remains were attested, many of which still in their original location. It is not possible here to give a detailed picture of all the excavated buildings but some of the best preserved archaeological contexts exemplify well enough the situation. The earliest building technique uses a construction of upright posts set most probably into the post-trench. The sections of walls

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17 Poulter 1995, 10; Andreina 1999, 391; Sharankov 2005, 241; Eck 2007, 245; Lozanov 2015, 82.

18 See below.

19 Topalilov 2005b, 96; Birley 2007, 136–145; Sharankov 2011, 150.

20 BMCRE III 171 f.; Topalilov 2005b, 96.

21 Gerov 1970, 128 f.; Gerov 1980, 35; Tačeva 2000, 60; Topalilov 2005b, 97; Topalilov 2011, 23–25; Boteva 2018, 243–245.

22 IGBulg IV 1925.

23 Gerov 1968, 334 f.; Velkov 1989, 23.

24 Ivanov 2011a, 316.

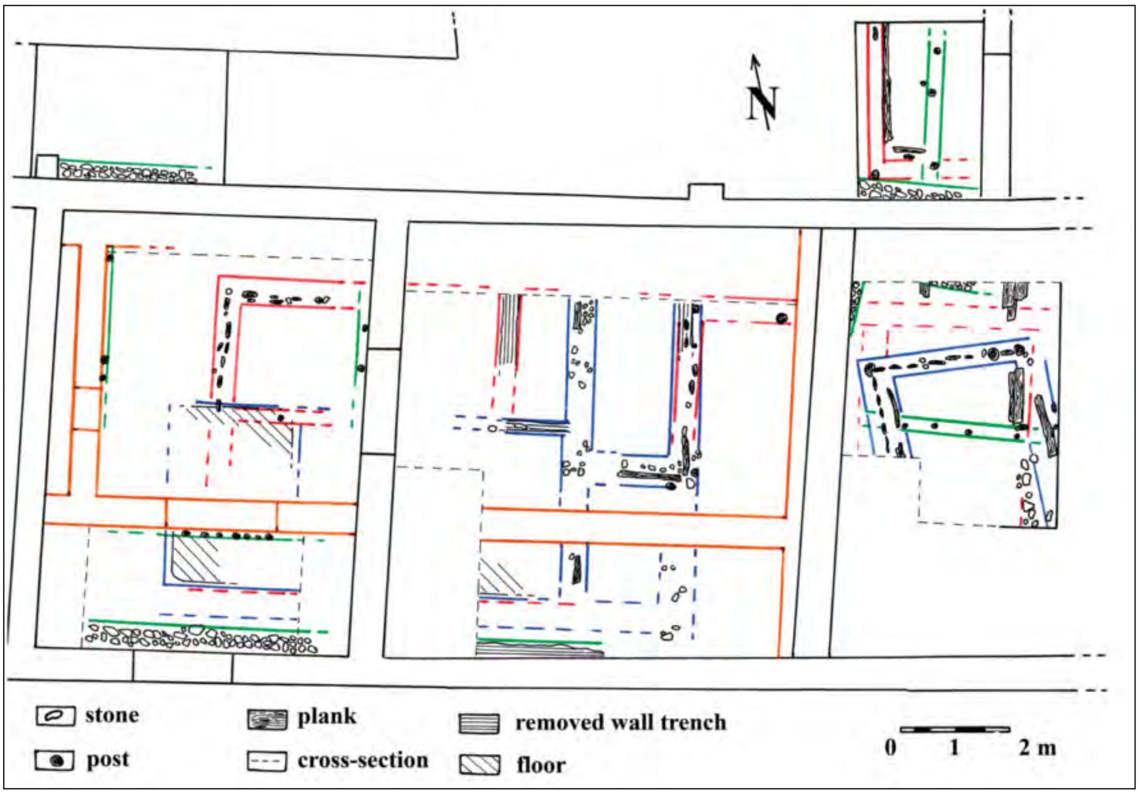
between the main construction posts are of wattle and daub. The main core of the wattle itself is made by upright staves, rectangular or almost triangular in section, positioned one after another or in a chequerboard pattern at intervals of 0.15–0.20 m (fig. 4). Thinner sticks, round in section are interwoven between the upright planks creating in this manner a good surface for the daub plastering on both sides of the walls. From the inside (and probably from the outside) at the floor level of the building there are horizontal beams for strengthening the lower part of the construction (figs. 3. 4). Remains of such construction were detected in many areas, but the most instructive one is a large section of wall found fallen *in situ* (fig. 5).

The layout of the buildings and the internal planning of the settlement itself are difficult to establish because of the limited areas of excavation. Wooden remains of the earliest periods of Serdica have been discovered only in spaces between the later Roman and late antique walls, often offering only sporadic pieces of information. Nevertheless, in two areas it was possible to obtain more data. The relatively large area that has been investigated within the late antique house A1 (see fig. 2) allows a more complete layout of one of the buildings to be established. The restored reconstructed plan of the earliest timber construction reveals an elongated rectangular building with an east-west axis and two rows of premises (fig. 6). The width of the building is 6 m with a length of at least 26 m. The width of each pair of rooms on the east-west axis is ca. 3 m while the north-south dimensions vary between 2.40–2.50 m for the north premises and 3.50–3.60 m for the south ones. Wooden posts of the neighbouring building are located at a distance of 2 m to the north. The remains of several other buildings are excavated to the north and south of the one described, but the discovered segments of walls are insufficient for a reconstruction of the entire plan, except for confirming the same east-west orientation. In the northernmost area of the site, during the excavation of the subway, a sequence of posts and additional contexts were excavated which allows the reconstruction of two other buildings (or at least half of them) with 2.50 m space in between. The buildings run parallel to each other and have a north-south axis with the following dimensions: east building – 8 m excavated length by 3.50–3.60 m width; west building – 11 m discovered length by 2.50 m width. A single room measuring 2.50 by 3 m is located in the northern part of the west building.

According to the archaeological evidence presented here in brief, the first settlement of Serdica was organized in an orthogonal layout with buildings and street passages following the main

4 Timber construction from the first period of Serdica (© M. Ivanov)

5 Fallen part of wattle-and-daub wall from the first period of Serdica (© M. Ivanov)



6 Plan of the remains of first (red), second (blue), third (green) and fourth (brown) periods in the west half of the late antique building A1 (© M. Ivanov)

compass directions with some deviation to the northeast. The available data about the dwellings allows a reconstruction of elongated buildings with an internal distribution in equal rooms of almost identical size, most probably grouped in pairs. The described buildings in terms of layout, size and construction techniques are very similar to the barracks of the earth and timber forts from the early Principate[25]. The timber construction of Serdica's buildings should be identified as horizontal wattling technique, well known in early Roman forts, too[26]. It is also attested for example in the early phase of the legionary fortress Novae[27]. In addition to construction features there are a number of finds considered characteristic for military sites: Terra Sigillata and glass vessels, brooches typical for the forts on the Rhine and Danube Limes, as well as bronze vessels of Trulla type[28]. Of special importance are also the pieces of Roman military equipment: a fragment of a *lorica segmentata*, spear butts, a significant number of shoe nails and decorative elements of horse harnesses. Military presence in Serdica is also suggested by the analysis of the coin material[29]. The summarized available data allows the opinion to be proposed that the initial settlement of Serdica is actually a military fort of a Roman unit positioned here for protection of the main road and for guarding the peace in the western region of the new provincial territory.

The buildings of the second period were also entirely built of timber construction. The main upright posts were set in holes, sometimes on the flat surface of a stone placed underneath. The wall segment between two posts consists of several upright staves, placed in a trench and strengthened additionally with stones. Between the uprights a horizontal wattle with daub plastering was made.

[25] See e.g. Hanson 2007, 64–70; Davison 1989, 72–82.
[26] Davison 1989, 220.
[27] Genčeva 2002, 19 f.
[28] Ivanov 2013b, 148; Koseva 2018, 336. 339; Genčeva 2004, 19 f. 25 f.; Nenova-Merdjanova 2011, 122.
[29] Paunov 2012, 457.

Along the lower end of the wall, immediately on the floor surface there is a horizontal flat beam with L-shaped section and two square holes at both ends (fig. 3). Short vertical stakes of square or rectangular section are hammered in the slots to secure them to the ground and also probably for a junction with another transverse flat beam. Horizontal wooden planks set on their narrow sides, adjacent to the main upright posts are attested in two of the buildings as well as an additional bark lining on the external and internal sides of the walls.

The available archaeological evidence is insufficient for a reconstruction of the layout of the buildings and even less adequate to draw conclusions regarding the settlement's planning. A part of an elongated rectangular (?) building was excavated under the late antique house A5 (fig. 3). It has an east-west axis and measures: width 2.50–2.60 m by 6.40 m discovered length. It is quite possible that some unexcavated parts of the building can be presumed to the south or the north. Several metres to the north the most significant remains of the next buildings were discovered. In the west half of the late antique house A1 remains of at least five premises with different sizes were discovered (fig. 6). Only the east and probably the south limits of the building are certain. Keeping in mind the fragmentary state of archaeological data, the reconstruction of the layout is still extremely hypothetical. The excavated walls could belong to one building with a complex plan and several rooms, or to two elongated buildings with a north-south axis separated by a narrow passage. The remains in the east half of the same late antique house A1 have a different orientation and obviously belong to another building. The situation is similar to the one already described: there is not enough data for a reconstruction of the overall plan. Further to the north the preserved evidence is even scarcer. The fragments of dwellings provide only information about the orientation and some construction details.

The available archaeological evidence reveals several important facts. The second period settlement more or less follows the same planning as the first one. However, some significant changes could be noted. The buildings of the east part of the site have a different orientation of about 12–13° to the north compared to the earlier ones. This axis coincides with the line of the later *cardo maximus* and will be followed by the later Roman and late antique houses in this area for several centuries. It is possible to assume that this change was connected to the presence of the mineral spring at a distance of some 50 m to the northeast. The construction of the buildings is of earth-and-timber technique with no significant differences from those of the first period, except for some details in wall lining. The reconstruction of some buildings with an axial plan and premises in one or two rows is possible but not explicitly clear. According to the archaeological record the presence of houses with a more complicated layout is equally acceptable[30].

The finds from the second period are quite similar to the assemblage of the first one. The use of Terra Sigillata, glass vessels such as ribbed bowls and conical beakers of different types and brooches of the so-called military type are attested even more intensively[31]. The military equipment is represented by a buckle probably for fastening a *lorica*. Fragments of spurs and horse harness as well as shoe nails and a bronze statuette of an eagle complete the picture. Among the numismatic material the relatively high number of coins issued in the short period of the civil war of AD 68–69 should be emphasized: a *denarius* of Galba and three *denarii* of Vitellius. Another two *denarii* and two bronze coins of Vitellius are found in later contexts. Such a concentration of silver and bronze pieces of the short-reigned emperors is most probably in connection with the money inflow for the soldiers' salary.

In 2015, a small area close to the eastern gate of Serdica was excavated. The earliest layers were documented in a small trench only. According to the published data from these excavations, the first habitation of the area is associated with a layer of charcoal. A coin hoard of 15 silver

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[30] The supposed complicated layout of the building in question is not necessarily an explicit indication of a civil house. Its position at the east end of a longer (?) building allows a possible identification as a dwelling of a *centurio/decurio* as well.

[31] See Ivanov 2013b, 148–151; Koseva 2018, 334–337.

7
Stone-sill from the third period of Serdica (© M. Ivanov)

coins, the latest one of Trajan, and a Terra Sigillata sherd were found[32]. The archaeological situation is not entirely clear but according to their stratigraphic position these finds most probably should be associated with the first occupation layer attested in this place. The date of the latest coin and the Sigillata sherd[33] allow the suggestion that the earliest stratigraphic horizon in the area of the eastern gate is contemporaneous to the second period of Serdica attested at the site of the metro station.

If such a hypothesis is correct, an enlargement of the initial territory of the settlement could be supposed, at least in an eastern direction.

To sum up, the analysis of the complex archaeological data from the second period reveals many similarities with the first period of Serdica's development. The evidence of small finds could suggest some military presence during the second period, too. On the other hand, evidence in favour of the civil character of the settlement is also available: the described changes in the settlement's layout; the presumed complex plan of at least some of the dwellings; some jewellery finds indicating the presence of women and children. At the present stage of archaeological research the exact nature of Serdica during the second period is difficult to establish.

The building technique of the third period differs from the previous ones. The main supporting construction is of timber on stone-sill. The wattle and daub walls are not securely attested, probably due to the insufficient level of preservation. The stone bases of the walls have a width of ca. 0.50 m and are made of two to four rows of stones with clay bonding (fig. 7). These bases were partly dug into the ground leaving the upper part slightly higher than the floor level of the buildings. On the upper surface of the stone-sill most probably a sleeper beam is placed as is attested in one case. The main uprights should be positioned in the corners and at regular intervals in the stone-sill or in the sleeper beam. The inner walls are thinner and made of upright poles 5–10 cm in section[34], probably forming the frame for the wattle and daub walls. Because only the lower parts of the rods inserted into the soil are preserved, we lack indisputable information about the upper part of the construction.

The reconstruction of the building layout is not easily made even though some indications are available. In all areas where the described construction is attested the walls from the third period run parallel or very close to the later walls of the later, fourth period (fig. 6). In several cases the

[32] Stojanova − Prokopov 2018, 336 f.; Stojanova 2018, 28.
[33] The form of the Sigillata piece is already attested in Serdica (see Ivanov 2013b, 148 f.) and should be dated to the middle or the 2nd half of the 1st century AD.
[34] See e.g. the plan of the 3rd period building in fig. 6, far right.

8
West half of the inner courtyard of the peristyle house from the fourth period of Serdica with a wooden beam linking two stone bases for columns (© M. Ivanov)

latter partly destroy the earlier stone-sills cutting them almost in half on a longitudinal axis. In other places the lines of the walls from the third and the fourth period coincide, so the last ones actually incorporate the earlier as a part of their fundament. In this situation it is almost impossible to distinguish the one from the other. Nevertheless, in some places (at the doorways especially) it is possible to do so. The inner timber walls of the third period were also doubled by later stone constructions. In many places the wooden poles of the inner walls are almost attached to one of the sides of later foundations. As a whole the archaeological evidence allows the proposal of a more or less identical layout of the buildings from the third and fourth periods. In such a way, the better preserved later buildings could be used as a good indication for the planning of the earlier ones. Even though the information is insufficient, there is enough data to summarize the facts. The buildings of the third period have more elaborate construction techniques, and larger sizes with more spacious rooms. As far as a reconstruction of the layout is possible, the presence of a more complex house-planning could be recognized. Most probably there are buildings with different functions and organization of the inner space, including peristyle-like ones. The settlement layout is more or less similar to the later one, although the archaeological evidence is still insufficient for the moment. An enlargement of the inhabited area of the third settlement to the east and probably to the south could be presumed despite the limited data from the excavations[35]. As mentioned above, the third period in Serdica's development coincides with its first urban stage after the municipal rights bestowed on the settlement by Trajan. A change in building characteristics is visible, although the constructions still fall within the range of timber architecture. Nevertheless, the archaeological evidence of the first town period is of utmost importance for understanding the subsequent development of Serdica.

The fourth period is better documented because of intense archaeological research through the years on several sites, although its proper identification and sometimes misunderstanding is a matter of discussion. The archaeological excavations in 2010–2012 provide more than enough stratified and contextual data for creating a solid scientific basis to which the previous research can be referred.

The building technique of the fourth period could be seen as an improvement and further evolution of the one used during the preceding period. The use of timber continues but the walls of the houses are mainly built of mud-bricks on a stonewall of up to 0.80 m height over the

[35] Stojanova – Prokopov 2018, 336 f.; Michajlov 1953, 543 f.; Venedikov – Petrov 1964, 107. Some of the mentioned ›Thracian‹ walls of stone with clay bonding could actually belong to the dwellings of the 3rd period.

ground level. The wall itself has a width of 0.50–0.55 m and is made of stones with sandy-clayish bonding sometimes mixed with yellowish sandy mortar. The foundations of the walls built of stones and clay are usually wider than the walls themselves and are dug into the ground down to 0.80–0.85 m. The sides of the entrances are of bricks with the same bonding as the stones in the upper parts. Some rooms are separated into smaller spaces by thinner walls made of wattle and daub on a thick wooden beam. In one case masonry of rectangular bricks and mortar was attested on a wooden beam[36].

It is impossible to reconstruct the complete layout of the buildings, but there is sufficient data for supposing at least two types. The predominant one is most probably the peristyle house. The inner courtyard of such a house is partly excavated in the north area of the site. It is almost square in plan measuring 4 by 4.50 m. At the four corners there are column bases of sandstone. At least two of the bases are connected with a wooden beam with a slot for an upright post, probably marking the location of the door to the courtyard (fig. 8). On the upper surface of the beam a groove is visible, whose purpose was to fix the ends of the sticks of the vertical wattle or to ensure a better link between the wooden base and the masonry of the brick wall on top of it[37]. The walking level of the courtyard has a pavement of cobbles over a layer of sand and gravel. The other excavated buildings have many rooms, arranged in a complex layout, most probably around a courtyard although such courtyards were not discovered because of the limited space available for excavations. In one case an elongated building could be presumed, with one row of rooms adjacent to the *cardo maximus* from the west.

The urban plan of Serdica during the fourth period most probably follows the one from the previous period. As a whole it is reflected in the better known late antique model of the town. The streets were significantly wider and most probably covered with gravel and sand (at least the secondary ones). Elaborate sanitation, drain and water-supply systems are not attested archaeologically without question, although such installations could be supposed under the main streets[38]. Bathing facilities in the houses are also missing. The picture presented is of course incomplete and refers mostly to private buildings, since the public ones for the period have not yet been excavated. Their presence is attested only by epigraphic evidence[39]. It can nevertheless be presumed that they would have had a more solid construction and elaborate appearance.

As has already been mentioned, on several other areas within the town, excavated sections of walls, structures and layers most likely pertain to the fourth period of Serdica described above. In the first place the archaeological research of the 1950s ought to be mentioned here. The partly excavated or merely recorded earlier walls under the Hotel Balkan and to the northeast of it[40] are identical in their dimensions and construction features to those described above, and therefore should be considered not Thracian of pre-Roman or Early Roman age but as Antonine in date. Similar walls have also been discovered in recent years not far to the west, under the present-day Sveta Nedelya Square. Their chronology varies slightly in the preliminary reports but as a whole is associated with the first half of the 2nd century AD. The demolition of these walls coincides with the reign of Marcus Aurelius[41]. During archaeological research in the area around the west gate of Serdica a layer from the first half of the 2nd century AD, as well as walls of buildings associated with it, were excavated[42]. The description of the walls identifies them as part of the fourth period of the town. The excavations of the east gate complex provide some unspecified data for an earlier street and a drain, cut by the later wall, which also could belong to the fourth period[43]. On another

36 See Ivanov 2012b, 319 fig. 2.
37 The identical wooden beams with groove on its upper surface are attested in several places.
38 Borisova-Kacarova – Aladžov 2014, 367.
39 IGBulg IV 1903. 1904. 1925. 1926.
40 See Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 17; Venedikov – Petrov 1964, 107.
41 Kacarova et al. 2019, 279.
42 Borisova-Kacarova – Gorjanova 2015, 510 f.; Borisova-Kacarova 2016, 61.
43 Stančeva 1989a, 13.

site situated immediately to the east of the north-eastern tower of Serdica, part of a mid-2nd century AD building was excavated[44]. At the second site to the east of the east fortress wall of the town, remnants of a building were found as well as a gravel pavement and a stratigraphic layer from the first decades of the 2nd century AD. Their end is associated with the Costobocs' raid in AD 170[45]. All the sites mentioned provide some fragmentary evidence for the described period. Their continual growth allows additional features of the early urban development of Serdica to be identified, as well as some earlier opinions to be corrected.

The archaeological evidence presented above allows the establishment of a suitable chronology and a reconstruction of the development of Serdica from its beginning up to the reign of Marcus Aurelius. The foundation of Serdica near the mineral spring more or less corresponds to the creation of the province of Thrace in AD 46. Earlier Thracian settlement of the pre-Roman period is for now not archaeologically attested. Excavations at some other areas within ancient Serdica in recent years confirm the situation. The first settlement is built entirely of earth-and-timber. Keeping in mind the construction and planning features of the excavated buildings of the first settlement, as well as the data from the finds, it should be identified most probably as a Roman auxiliary fort. Its foundation during the reign of Tiberius or even Augustus should not be entirely excluded, yet still needs additional arguments. The inner planning of the fort is impossible to reconstruct because of insufficient information. The available evidence suggests the presence of soldiers' barracks with an east-west and north-south axis. The exact number of the buildings and the *contubernia* inside them is impossible to determine at the present stage of the excavations. Nevertheless, the size of the fort itself could be provisory estimated. The earliest period of Serdica is currently attested only at the area of the site excavated in 2010–2012. All the other excavated areas provide archaeological information not earlier than the second or the third period. Considering this argument, the area of the initial fort could be restricted as a whole to the northern half of the subsequent fortified town. The line of the *decumanus maximus* is the border south of which early Roman contexts and finds have not yet been attested. The north line should most probably be placed to the south of the subsequent northern fortification wall of Serdica. To the west the initial Roman fort could have been extended somewhere to the east of George Washington Str., because the excavations of the area to the west of it did not provide any early Roman materials. In the northwest direction the existence of a small river is supposed in antiquity; the riverbed was probably the reason for the irregular shape of the later fortification wall in that area[46]. The presence of the river should also be taken into consideration when trying to establish the location of the first settlement. The area of the mineral spring to the northeast, where the location of the military bath could be expected, most probably was not incorporated into the borders of the first settlement. In most cases the baths of military forts were not inside the fortified area because of the high risk of fire for the wooden barracks and other buildings[47]. If we accept the same case for the Serdica fort, the line of the subsequent *cardo maximus* should be considered more or less as the eastern border of the settlement. If so, the 2010–2012 excavated area covers the eastern third of the fort. Accordingly, the size of the first inhabited area could be estimated approximately at around 1.1–1.2 ha (see fig. 1). A significant number of the excavated auxiliary forts have a fortified area of 1.2–1.4 ha[48]. The presumed dimensions of the initial Serdica settlement fit well into the size range of auxiliary unit bases.

Roman Thrace was a *provincia inermis* and its military garrison probably consisted of *vexillationes* from the legions along the Lower Danube and/or auxiliary troops[49]. The precise location

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44 Veličkov 2014, 371.
45 Dinčev – Gatev1999, 49 f.
46 See Bojadžiev 2002, 125.
47 Campbell 2009, 52.
48 Campbell 2009, 28.
49 Gerov1980, 29; Tačeva 2004, 55 f.; Bojanov 2008, 184; Lozanov 2015, 80.

of their forts has not been identified so far. An early (Augustan-Tiberian) military presence in Philippopolis and Cabyle is proposed on the basis of historical narratives and numismatic evidence[50]. A recently published military diploma provides explicit information for the first time regarding the presence in Thrace of the *cohors I milliaria Ituraeorum* at the time of Domitian. The reconstruction of the military history of the unit identifies its relocation from Mogontiacum in Upper Germany to Moesia and, after AD 46, to Thrace. In its initial state it was an ordinary cohort but during the reign of Vespasian it became *milliaria*[51]. It is highly tempting to relate the cohort in question with the supposed military fort in Serdica. All the archaeological information presented so far supports such an identification. An inscription in Greek from the second half of the 1st to the beginning of the 2nd century AD mentions Secundus Cornutus, commander (?) of the *cohors milliaria Ituraeorum*[52]. The inscription is supposed to originate from Serdica. Admitting the unknown findspots of the diploma and the inscription, the combined archaeological and epigraphic data make the identification of Serdica as the first base in Thrace of the *cohors I Ituraeorum* a highly probable proposition. There is also epigraphic evidence about the deployment of *vexillationes* from the *legio V Macedonica* and *legio VIII Augusta* in Thrace[53]. The fragment from a *lorica segmentata* is more in favour of the hypothesis about the presence of legionaries in Serdica, as this type of cuirass was used mainly by legionaries and praetorians. Future archaeological research and finds will provide additional evidence which will either support or reject this hypothesis.

The second period in Serdica's development is similar in many ways to the first one. Some differences in construction techniques, and probably in the layout and size of the buildings were observed, along with a change in the planning scheme in the eastern part of the excavated site. The available data is insufficient for general conclusions about the military or civil character of the settlement. As mentioned above, a military presence could be assumed on the basis of the finds and other circumstantial evidence. The transformation of the initial fort into a veterans' settlement is equally possible. After the annexation of the Thracian kingdom there are no records about significant rebellions of the Thracians against Roman rule. Apparently, the territories more or less were settled in peace. After 22 (or more [?]) years of military presence in Serdica there was probably no more need of it. Along with other reforms of Vespasian[54], initial measures of the following administration may have included settling veterans in Serdica[55]. The process was probably slow and gradual, not in the terms of *missio agraria* as occurred previously at the colony of Deultum, for example. The change in the layout of the settlement and its presumed enlargement to the east could be considered as possible indications about the civil character of Serdica in the second period. Whatever the case, the specific arguments are also lacking at the moment.

The third period of Serdica reflects the transformation of the former military base or veterans' settlement into a small provincial town. A small military detachment probably remained in Serdica to police the road and surrounding territory as indicated by the finds − a buckle of a military belt, a fastening hook for a *lorica segmentata* and a clamp of a *gladius*' scabbard. A significant change in the layout of the buildings is attested, as well as the enlargement of the inhabited area at least to the east and probably also to the south[56]. Archaeological remains of the third period can be presumed in several other areas as well[57], but in the preliminary reports its possible presence is not emphasized as a separate stratigraphic unit. The urban planning of Serdica as a unified scheme most probably took place during this period and is replicated with certain changes until the end of the 6th century AD. The scarce archaeological data at the moment only permit a few sketches

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[50] Topalilov 2012, 9 f.; Paunov 2012, 458 f.
[51] Eck – Pangerl 2014, 250‒252; Țentea – Matei-Popescu 2016, 373.
[52] Kalinka 1906, 146 no. 162; Gerov 1967, 229 no. 47; IGBulg IV 1952.
[53] CIL II 3272.
[54] See e.g. Topalilov 2005a; Parissaki 2009, 341–352.
[55] See Gerov 1980, 40; Ivanov 1993, 225; Bojanov 2008, 184–186.
[56] See n. 35.
[57] Kacarova et al. 2019, 280; Borisova-Kacarova – Gorjanova 2015, 511.

of the early appearance of the town. Due to the supposed resemblance of the buildings from the following fourth period, however, houses with diverse layout, including peristyle ones, could be reconstructed. Nevertheless, the construction techniques reveal limited resources. The streets either had gravel and sand covering or no surface layer at all. It has not yet been possible to identify sanitation, drain and water-supply systems. The entire appearance of Serdica in the first years of its urban life is relatively modest. A higher settlement status conferred by Trajan reflects rather the administrative position of Serdica than its architectural vision. As a whole the third period in the development of Serdica is a time of gradual growth, both in size and administrative functions, as well as a slow formation of appropriate urban features.

The fourth period of Serdica is the period of the first flourishing of the town. The inhabited area was significantly enlarged, extending even beyond the limits of the future fortification wall[58]. Traces of buildings from the fourth period are attested at many of the excavated areas[59]. The construction technique was further improved and houses become spacious. The secondary streets had a pavement of gravel and sand, while the main thoroughfares were probably covered with stone slabs for the first time. A drainage system is presumed only under the *decumanus maximus* given the current state of evidence. At that period, public buildings are attested for the first time, though admittedly only via inscriptions. As a whole, the overall outlook of Serdica during the fourth period is far improved, reflecting its character as a small provincial town imposed with ordinary administrative duties. In AD 170 the Costobocs succeeded in breaking the Danube frontier defence system, devastating the territories south of the river and the Balkan mountains. The unexpected barbarian raid was sudden and caused a total destruction of the town[60]. In the archaeological record of Serdica this event is marked by a layer of burnt debris, with broken household furniture and vessels, covering many contexts. During subsequent years Serdica was rebuilt and, for the first time in its history, enclosed with a curtain wall. This substantial addition to the town's appearance is commemorated with inscriptions dated to AD 177–180[61].

This early history of a regular Roman town in Thrace briefly presented here can probably be instructive in many ways with regard to the historical development of other provincial centres. A similar evolution in terms of construction techniques and the architectural appearance of the town is also attested in other provinces such as Gallia, Britannia and Pannonia, for example[62]. The subsequent, fifth period was a flourishing time for Serdica, preparing the ground for the future apogee of the town as a provincial capital of Dacia Mediterranea.

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[58] See Dinčev – Gatev 1999, 49 f.; Veličkov 2014, 371.
[59] See the discussion above.
[60] See Gerov 1968, 334 f.; Kirova 2012, 199 f.
[61] IGBulg IV1902; IGBulg V 5668.
[62] MacMahon 2003, 42 f.; Dobosi – Borhy 2015, 184. 199.

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ADMINISTRATION

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THE *OFFICIUM* AND PERSONNEL AT THE DISPOSITION OF THE *PROCONSUL* OF ASIA

PROOF OF A RUDIMENTARY OR EXPANDED ROMAN ADMINISTRATION?

ABSTRACT

The question of the staff and personnel available to governors divides the researchers. A review of the fragmentary documentation, essentially of epigraphic nature and subject to some distortion, about the personnel of the Asian *proconsul*, leads to a reassessment of the total number of what is somewhat hastily called the *officium* of the governor: it is better to speak of a series of complementary personnel developed over time, and forming a relatively flexible structure combining a Republican heritage with innovations during the Imperial period, such as the addition of military personnel. It is even possible to envisage a temporary loan of staff, perhaps in the case of the *tabellarii*, from the procurator of Asia. The total number of staff in the Severan period is expected to have numbered at least 150 to 200.

KEYWORDS

proconsul – Asia – Ephesos – *officium* – staff

The topic addressed at the colloquium »Roman Provincial Capitals under Transition« may include the issue of administration in or from the capital. I have therefore chosen the question of the personnel at the disposal of the *proconsul* of Asia. I could certainly target Late Antiquity, but I have chosen to deal mainly with a period, the High Empire, where we have a large number of epigraphic documents at our disposal. This study does not exclude a comparison with the final century of the Roman Republic, nor with Late Antiquity, if it helps to evaluate our documentation of the High Empire[1]. I have also selected the province of Asia, where the *caput provinciae* was Ephesos, because of the important documentation provided by inscriptions.

Ephesos was a significant port and one of the largest cities of the Roman Empire, with an urban area of more than 300 ha; its territory[2] covered approximately 1,200–1,300 km². Ephesos also became the capital of the province of Asia and replaced probably Pergamon in this function. R. Haensch has gathered evidence in his book published in 1997 about Roman provincial capitals to prove the capital character of Ephesos from the end of the years 70 BC or beginning of the years

[1] I would like to thank the organizers of the symposium Milena Raycheva and Martin Steskal for inviting me and accepting the proposed topic. I would also like to thank Frédéric Hurlet and Alain Bresson for the rereading of this paper and for some corrections. I am also grateful for the interesting discussion with Pauline Cuzel, new expert of administrative civilian personnel of Roman governors and procurators. Her forthcoming PhD, which will bring some new light in this field, will be cited below.

[2] See the discussion about territory in Kirbihler 2009 and also Kirbihler 2016, 31–33.

60 BC onwards[3]. In a paper written with M. Coudry and published in 2010, we tried to demonstrate that Ephesos became (at the latest) a capital probably since the important Sullan reorganization of 85/84 BC after the Mithridatic War. We in turn have collected evidence to prove this change was an important turning point in the history of the province, and this was corroborated and further confirmed by a commentary about various types of documents. The importance of the Sullan era for Asia confirmed in another way a fact already noticed by W. Leschhorn in his book, *Antike Ären*[4]. N. Barrandon and the author of this article attempted to show that after Sulla the Republican administration gained somewhat in complexity. Even T. Ñaco del Hoyo, who belongs to the ›primitivists‹, thinks that taxes became perhaps a permanent system instead of military requisitions at that time in a few provinces[5]. The Sullan *lex Cornelia* remained in place as the *lex Provinciae* of the province of Asia during the High Empire and this law was binding on the *proconsul*[6].

This research will also contribute to an old debate – that of accepting a primitivist side of the Roman administration or, on the contrary, for other scholars, the certainty of a consistent development affecting it during the High Empire, especially during the Antonine age and the Severan period. Another problem in this general question is that the number of people in the service of proconsuls is estimated differently by scholars[7]. Both viewpoints continue to inspire the work of Roman specialists[8]. Certainly, the Roman State was above all reactive to the requests formulated by the citizens or certain governors, but could it also have included a proactive attitude? Could some emperors have been favourable to a political programme of reforms and reformation, and the development of the administration?

There is also a problem of definition regarding the staff at the disposal of the governor of Asia. The entourage and staff in the service of the governor include different people who can be categorised as friends *(amici)*, counsellors *(comites)*[9], members of the *officium* itself[10], such as *cornicularii, commentarienses, speculatores*, and individuals, often slaves, *servi publici* or *privati*, and freedmen, who could be described as core staff; later on, soldiers were also added[11]. I have chosen a broad and relatively loose definition of the personnel at the service of the *proconsul*, allowing the inclusion of friends, companions and staff coming from Rome as well as the personnel present in the offices of the province, probably characterized by a certain sedentariness, and personal slaves who came with their master. This broad definition is better for proconsular provinces, where the personnel were a more heterogeneous conglomerate or aggregate than in the imperial provinces.

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3 Haensch 1997a, 312–315 *(proconsul)*; 315–321 (other important representatives of Rome). For a few cases of the presence of the *proconsul* and the control of the city, see Fournier 2010, 375–384.

4 Leschhorn 1993, 418–423 and Coundry – Kirbihler 2010, 163–165.

5 Ñaco del Hoyo 2003 and Ñaco del Hoyo 2010 as well as the conclusion of Barrandon – Kirbihler 2010, 213–215.

6 See e.g. TAM V 2, 956, a text from the 2nd century AD, which mentions the *lex Cornelia*.

7 Austin – Rankov 1995, 154 f., estimated that the proconsular provincial staff was »much less developed and far less numerous than the military staff of a frontier legate«. See Millar 1992 and Eich 2012, 91, for opinions about the parity between proconsular senatorial and imperial provinces in governmental responses to petitions, which would perhaps make an equal number of staff personnel necessary.

8 A few examples here: in a landmark book, P. Garnsey and R. Saller defended the idea of an under-administered Roman Empire (Garnsey – Saller 1994, esp. 40–48). Millar 1992 pointed out the reactive side of the Roman administration and emperor, who partly ruled by rescripts in a rather passive way: in his book he defended the point of view of an emperor and a Roman power reactive to the requests of the citizens, but little concerned with initiatives; see Eich 2005, 78–84. R. Haensch also believes that the proconsular provinces had very few personnel for a long time (Haensch 1997a, 720). P. Eich defended the reactive side of Roman government in a paper (Eich 2012), but also accepted the idea of an administrative development, especially during the 3rd century (Eich 2012, 106, and esp. Eich 2005). In contrast, the author of this paper shares with W. Eck a more optimistic view of the reform capacity and initiative of the Roman state, especially after periods of crisis. See e.g. Coudry – Kirbihler 2010; a balanced view in Hurlet (forthcoming). Other titles in Palme 1999, 91, with notes.

9 What some sources call *cohors* of the governor: see Pittia 2007; Bérenger 2014, 103–151 discusses different types of persons of the staff.

10 For the evolution of the words *officium* and *officialis*, see already Hirschfeld 1905, 457 n. 2.

11 For this problem of definition, see von Domaszewski 1967, 29–37; Stein 1932, 71–86 (division in three parts of the *officium* itself); e.g. also the discussion in Pittia 2007, 59 f. with n. 13; for some soldiers, see below.

This research will attempt to take stock of the *officiales* of the Asian *proconsul* and also evaluate the global staff available to the governors of the province. Historians consider soldiers were in a majority among the *officiales* of many imperial provinces like the Germanies, Britannia or Lugdunensis, and even often formed the majority of the total personnel at the disposal of the *legatus Augusti pro praetore*[12]. Slaves and freedmen appear on the contrary to have been numerous among the proconsuls of the provinces of the Roman people. *Officiales* were also probably less numerous in the latter territories than in imperial provinces. Some Rhenish or Danubian provinces, or Numidia, offer significant documentation for the first case. Asia is perhaps the best example, together with Africa Proconsularis, for the second. Carthage offers hundreds of inscriptions from the cemetery of the *officiales*[13]. This research therefore attempts in its final stage to examine the documentation and the problems of representation and tries to describe the preponderance of the personnel that formed part of the staff of the Asian governor. This paper also applies a diachronic perspective and proposes an assessment of the govenors's staff, attempting to integrate the contributions of various recent publications.

I must finally add, however, that this research can only be a provisional assessment of the available documentation given the current state of research, or in other words a statement of issues. I would ask the reader of this paper to take these remarks for what they are: a methodological and heuristic presentation based on an analysis of the documents, but also impressions and feelings about sources, which are often fragmentary or allusive. This publication will try to present a global balance sheet, but even this attempt will be a little too impressionistic. So, I must also add that some points will remain speculative, because a definitive answer cannot yet be given, and new results will soon be presented and perhaps published[14]. Let us begin with problems connected to the state of the available documentation, which make it more difficult to study the topic. A table, related to available staff, follows (tab. 1); a thematic and diachronic synthesis about this list of people, with a comparison with the staff of the procurator from Asia and new hypotheses about both groups of personnel, will finally conclude our enquiry.

PROBLEMS OF DOCUMENTATION

Ephesos was a provincial capital with a composite population. Starting from the seventies of the 1st century BC three sorts of population can be identified in Ephesos: first, a majority of Greeks; second, an important Italic community (there are in the city over 250 non-imperial *gentilicia*). It is very difficult to make an evaluation, but there must have been at least two or three thousand Italic people, perhaps more if we include their freedmen (*liberti*)[15]. Finally, there are the administrative staff members of the *proconsul* and *procurator*, with their families. It is also possible to begin to study the staffs of the *proconsul provinciae Asiae* and the *procurator* of Asia, the latter being an Augustan creation, from post-Sullan and Augustan times onwards[16]. The staff of the *procurator* of Asia seems to be even more structured and is sometimes better documented than the proconsul's personnel[17].

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[12] F. Bérard wrote a book about the place of the army in Lyon/Lugdunum, which contains observations regarding the place of the soldiers in the provincial administration (Bérard 2015, esp. 323–411: *officia* of the governor and the *procurator*).

[13] List of *officiales* e.g. in imperial provinces such as Pannonia (CIL III 4452 = 11093) and Numidia (CIL VIII 2586; AE 1917/1918, 57); inscriptions of the cemetery of *officiales* in Carthago: most inscriptions of CIL VIII 12590–13186 and some texts from CIL VIII Suppl. IV e.g. 24609; some texts, however, concern the *proconsul* of Africa, while others concern the *procurator*.

[14] See the forthcoming PhD thesis of Cuzel 2021.

[15] See Kirbihler 2016, 276–345 and 465; also Kirbihler (forthcoming); for some features of a provincial capital see Kirbihler 2021.

[16] Kirbihler 2017 and Dalla Rosa 2017.

[17] The *tabularii* for example have to be linked to procuratorial archives: for this other aspect of a staff, with the example of *tabularii* and *tabularium* archives in Pannonia, but in connection to the procurators of the province, see Fertl 2015. There is a mention in IvE 660E of a dedication for L. Didius Marinus *procurator* of Asia, of *cornicularі(i) et / benificiari(i) et / exacti*. We can also add the presence, for fiscal reasons, of other personnel. A

The majority of the documentation is epigraphic, but it is not without problems. The city of Ephesos has perhaps 6,000 inscriptions, and a not insignificant number of them concern the activity of the Roman administration, mainly individuals who were members of the staffs of the *proconsul* or *procurator of Asia*. The epigraphic texts belong to the funerary, honorary or religious categories, but only from the 1st century AD onwards. Cicero offers also some insights for 61–59/58 BC, in connection with the proconsulate (for three years) of his brother Q(uintus). The *Verrines* for the end of the seventies of the 1st century BC offers a useful documentation, nevertheless dealing with another proconsular province of praetorian rank, namely Sicily[18]. Starting with Augustus and the compromise of January 27 BC, which instituted an Asian province governed by a *proconsul* of consular rank, there was a growing flood of epigraphic documents until the Severan dynasty, but this abundance offers only limited information regarding the proconsul's staff. A significant proportion of inscriptions in connection with persons of the staff of the *proconsul* are funerary, but this category cannot be seen as representative: not a single necropolis of Ephesos has been exhaustively excavated and the finds of funerary inscriptions depended mostly on chance. We do not have the equivalent of the cemetery of the *officiales* of Carthage, and therefore this fact contributes to an underestimate of the total quantity of persons in the service of the governor.

There are still vast, even surprising, documentary gaps in this theme. Some functions are only attested in one province, without allowing the conclusion that this function is specific to the province or whether the certification is the result of a documentary bias. R. Haensch states that we know only 5 % of the *beneficiarii* of Germania Inferior. This example shows the gaps in the documentation, even in well-documented imperial provinces[19]. The proconsular provinces like Asia have specific problems, perhaps due to the long tradition of loosely structured staff in the service of the senatorial governor. Personal or public slaves, even freedmen, if they were not freed by the emperor, are often poorly documented. Nevertheless, they have to be added to the administrative personnel in order to provide a fuller picture of this field. The presence of soldiers in administrative structures of senatorial provinces is also a point of debate: the mention of a *centurio* in the *Acts of Polycarp*, who certainly was on the proconsul's staff, remains a relatively isolated fact in the middle or in the second third of the 2nd century[20].

Another example is the existence of one or more *ab epistulis Graecis* of the *proconsul*. Not a single epigraphic text from Ephesos attests this function, but two documents, different in nature and time, are proof of the long existence of this special function: an inscription from Miletus from the (first half [?] of the) 1st century AD and, more than a century later, a letter from Cornelius Fronto from the time when he was preparing for the proconsulate of Asia[21]. Another example of the utility of comparative or parallel documentation is the proof of the existence of a herald of the *proconsul (praeco)*. There is no direct documentation about this position in the epigraphic documentation of Asia, but the attestation of the existence of a herald on the staff of, the consular African *proconsul*, makes the presence of a herald in the entourage of the Asian *proconsul*, his counterpart, almost certain, and the *Acta Polycarpi* provides the only known definitive proof of this[22]. Therefore, this reconstruction work does not preclude the use of parallels capable of correcting documentary bias[23].

nice example is provided in IvE 3054: Harpocratiôn was a freedman from the twentieth (part) of the inheritances. See also Haensch 1997a, 645–648, for documentation linked to the *procurator*, and here below.

18 Until the proconsulate (46–44 BC) of Servilius Isauricus, former *consul* in 48 BC, Asia had proconsuls of praetorian rank; see for example Ferrary 2000a and Ferrary 2000b.

19 Haensch 2007, 100; see also the reflections and thoughts about the documentation in Eck 1999b.

20 Acta Polycarpi 18; but see below for *frumentarii*. A rapid evocation and problematisation of the historical question of the different staffs in Jacques – Scheid 1990, 177.

21 See below. P. Goukowsky, in a forthcoming book about the historian Appian, believes Fronto held in fact his proconsulship (Goukowsky forthcoming).

22 Apul. flor. 9, 10–12; Acta martyrum Scilitanorum 16; Acta Polycarpi 12.

23 The same point of view is valid for the proconsular province of Bithynia-Pontus, even in the case of the extraordinary mission of Pliny, who relied on the existing staff; see below. See Loriot 2011 for the existence and construction of the province.

The vocabulary of different functions allows the identification of people working in the offices *(officia)*. Generally, we have gravestones or religious dedications, rarely dedications of administrative nature. Another problem is distinguishing the staff of the *proconsul* from that of the *procurator* of Asia created in the Augustan era and developed throughout the following period. Documents sometimes cannot be attributed to the respective offices. One example is the fragmentary inscription ÖJh 33, 1983, 896, which mentions a *[...comm]entarium*, in Greek also κομμεν[τάριον?] and will (διαθ[ήκη]) connected with this, but from which administration does this mention derive? If it is in connection with financial affairs, it must be related to the procuratorial staff, but we rarely have certainty in this matter.

Another point is the scarcity of the mention of messengers, traditionally called *tabellarii*. Research of a different kind has demonstrated the importance of the *conventus* system. The 11 or 12 other leading cities of the *conventus* in the province of Asia played a crucial administrative role, for example in the collection of taxes or displaying of edicts and letters[24]. There must have been messengers who certainly were also in the service of the *proconsul*, and this is securely attested in another context – Sicily – for the *proconsul* Verres[25]. Their number, logically, would have been at least a few dozen, because there must have been a perpetual flow of messengers between the *conventus* cities which broadcast messages of news and measures from the *proconsul* in the provincial capital. An alternative solution would imply the existence of messengers sent from the cities in the *caput provinciae* to gain information. The infrastructure of *vehiculatio* was used for administrative purposes[26]. But we have very little proof regarding personal couriers of the governor of Asia. Moreover, there is also another problem: the connection of *tabellarii* to the state post system, *vehiculatio* or *cursus publicus*, and the mention of *tabellarii* in connection with the *procurator* of Asia, but never with the provincial *proconsul*[27].

Finally, the Severan period, especially in the imperial provinces, is very rich in documents; indeed, sometimes facts and names of functions are only attested during this last moment of the early Roman Empire. An inscription, however, does reveal that there was an *officium* in Lugdunum which was organized and structured in the Flavian period[28]. We therefore have the phenomenon that documented functions are often older than the oldest document which proves this. B. Rankov has argued that imperial provinces had perhaps 100 persons for a province with one legion, 200 persons for a province with two legions, 300 for a province with three legions, etc. Scholars, however, often overlook the fact that this is a vague opinion, and also one which refers to older publications[29]. The debate is more vivid for proconsular provinces, with a common view being the idea of heavy Republican heritage, and therefore a tradition of under-administration and reduced personnel[30]. A variety of historians have contributed to this discussion in the last twenty years: the names of R. Haensch, J. Nelis-Clément, A. Bérenger, B. Rossignol and F. Bérard are of significant importance for the debate regarding *officium* and the importance of personnel for governors[31]. Recent historiography has achieved important results, but the documentation often remains ambiguous and open to various interpretations, and the historians do not always have the same point of view.

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[24] For the *conventus* system in general and in Asia, see Haensch 1997a, 28–34 and 748–751; Heller 2006, 125–162; Guerber 2010, 303–323; Fournier 2010, 41–87; Edelmann-Singer 2015; for the situation in Egypt see Haensch 1997b.

[25] Cic. Verr. 2, 2, 64; but Laetilius was not alone in carrying out this activity: there must have been other *tabellarii*.

[26] Kolb 2000.

[27] On this problem see, again, below.

[28] Bérard 2000 and Bérard 2015, 333 f.

[29] Rankov 1999, 23–25, who takes up a hypothesis already formulated by Stein 1932, 75. Austin – Rankov 1995, 149–155, esp. 152, proposed even larger numbers for the staffs; Bérenger 2014, 116–118 and 127 f.; also, Hurlet (forthcoming).

[30] Jacques – Scheid 1990, 177; Wesch-Klein 2008, 106–123; see esp. Haensch 1997a, 710–726; Bérenger 2014, 105–116 for a list of *apparitores*.

[31] Haensch 1997a, 298–321. 619–652 and 710–726 is very important; see also Nelis-Clément 2000; Bérenger 2014; Bérard 2000 and Bérard 2015, 323–411 (*officia* of governor and procurator) for discussions about the *officium*.

A FEW OBSERVATIONS: THE SIZE OF THE STAFF AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE *PROCONSUL*

Although it is very difficult to evaluate the number of employees in the provincial administration, I have tried to take over citations of certain functions from the epigraphic repertorium and also from some literary sources. I have also considered parallel documentation about other proconsuls, especially those of Africa, of the same consular rank, and have consulted the Notitia Dignitatum Pars Orientalis 20, 10–18, concerning the *proconsul* of Asia and his entourage in Late Antiquity, with the hope of finding analogies[32]. The resulting table 1 below is not intended to be exhaustive; it combines some documentation that is incomplete, but with examples that I hope will be representative. This type of list of testimonials, admittedly, hardly allows us to go beyond a cursory documentary approach.

The *proconsul* did not come alone. Indeed he was not always the first to arrive in his province: one of his *legates* sometimes arrived first (Dig. 1, 16, 4). T. Mommsen wrote that the proconsular year began on the first of July, and this date of June or July is traditional for the beginning of the proconsulate[33]. The *proconsul* was accompanied by a number of people, senators, family, friends, clients and personnel from Rome, and sometimes from elsewhere, in his new place of exercise of authority. He could delegate his judicial attributions to his three senatorial legates, one of whom was specially assigned in the 2nd century to Ephesos itself, while the *proconsul* toured the province to dispense justice[34]. The three legates are already attested in the time of Q. Tullius Cicero (61–58 BC). We know the identity of the three legates of Q. Cicero from Cicero's letter to his brother[35]. We perhaps also know all three *legati* of the *proconsul* of Asia of AD 79/80, M. Ulpius Traianus the Elder: C. Antius A. Iulius Quadratus and T. Pomponius Bassus, both consuls of 94, are certain. The third legate was probably, as was often the case, the son of the *proconsul*, M. Ulpius Traianus, the future emperor[36] (figs. 1. 2). As commander in a senatorial province, he also had at his side a *quaestor* of Asia with financial responsibilities[37].

The *proconsul* chose friends and *comites* as advisers during his charge[38]. In 157/158 Cornelius Fronto chose *propinquos* and *amicos* (from Cirta and probably Rome), and other friends and clients from Alexandria and from Cilicia, as well as Iulius Senex from Mauretania. He also took at least two persons in charge of Greek correspondence: »and I had delegated to the most educated men the care of Greek correspondence«[39]. I suggest there must have been more than ten, perhaps twenty people in his panel of friends from three or four different geographical areas. R. Haensch suggested a council of approximately ten persons. This was probably the case most of the time, but we should not forget that we do know of a senator with a council of fourteen advisers. A session of the *consilium* did not always include all the potential members, but only those most qualified on the day for the matters being debated. The letter of Fronto should be taken as proof that this number was somewhat uncertain[40].

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32 For Late Antiquity see Palme 1999, who also describes p. 91–95 the situation in the late Republic and early Empire.

33 Mommsen 1887–1895 III, 294; Bérenger 2014, 16 f. It is surprising that a literary source like Artemidorus' interpretation of dreams does not mention the *proconsul* of Asia at all (Kirbihler 2014, 79).

34 List of attestations in Haensch 1997a, 639–643.

35 Cic. ad Q. fr. 1, 1; 4, 12; Broughton 1952, 191.

36 PIR² V 864 *(Traianus pater)*; PIR² I 507 (A. Iulius Quadratus) and PIR² P 705 (T. Pomponius Bassus). Tombs of legates with *fasces* in IvE 631 (M. Calpurnius Rufus) and 683 (M. Helvius Geminus); see below for Rufus.

37 List of attestations in Haensch 1997a, 643–645.

38 Szramkiewicz 1976 I, 269–285 has some examples of friends and sons as *comes*, legate, or officer for the Augustan period, but the book is in part out of date.

39 Fronto ad Ant. Pium 8: *iisque Graecarum epistularun curam doctissimis viris detuli.*

40 The *consilium* of Cornelius Lentulus Crus in 49 BC had fourteen persons (Suolahti 1958, 153); the list of twelve *consiliarii* in the *consilium Principis* of 177 listed in the *tabula Banasitana* (AE 1971, 534), about the concession of Roman citizenship, probably included some specialists of Roman law and administrative specialists in this field. For an Egyptian example of a council with at least twenty persons: Balogh – Pflaum 1952, 122 f. Balogh – Pflaum 1952, 123 f. report about the composition of the council, which was adapted according to the quality of the petitioners and to the field of discussion.

Table 1 Staff at the disposal of a *proconsul*

Name	Significant documents	Number	Date	Remarks
1 *proconsul provinciae Asiae*	Cic. ad. Q. fr. 1, 1[41]	1	129–126 BC	*proconsul* of praetorian rank at the beginning of the province from 46–44 onwards: consular rank
legatus (legati) propraetore	Cic. ad. Q. fr. 1, 1; 4, 12	3	61–59/58 BC	3 *legati*: L. Aelius Tubero, A. Allienus, M. Gratidius
	IvE 611			*M'. Acilius Glabrio Cn. Cornelius Severus* *legatus Asiae* e.g.
	IvE 282			*Ti(tus) Iulius Candidus Caecilius Simplex leg(atus) dioeceseos Ephesiacae* (IvE 282)
quaestor pr. pr. prov. Asiae	IvE 614A	1	50–49 BC	*L. Antonius quaestor pr. pr. Asiae*
amici/comites of the *proconsul/consilium*[42]		6/10–14 (?) up to 20 (?)		only a fraction (half [?]) of this should be counted; friends coming from Rome, the others having other responsibilities in the province
	IvDidyma II 272		1st c. AD	(Claudius Chionis) συνέγδημος ἀναγραφεὶς ἐν αἰραρίωι Μεσσάλλα τοῦ γενομένου τῆς Ἀσίας ἀνθυπάτου (= *comes proconsulis*)
	Fronto ad Ant. Pium 8, 1		157/158	*propinquos et amicos meos* (Roma, Cirta, Alexandreia)
	CIL X 7852 (Sardinia)	8	69	*consilium* of *proconsul L. Helvius Agrippa*
	SEG 42, 1992, 780	6	165	Samothrace, Macedonia: perhaps only a fraction of the total in the inscription
	AE 1921, 38 f. (Aunobaris, Africa proconsularis)	10	121	*consilium* of the *proconsul* of Africa
comes legati	CIL III 430 = IvE 2233	a few (?)		*L(ucio) <G=C>avio Sab(atina) Vescenniano domo Volaterras / equo publico ex quinq(ue) decuriis / comiti L(uci) Vetinae Prisci legati*
	CIL III 6079 = 7128 = IvE 2238			*C. Coelio […] comiti M. Ca[lpurnii Rufi?] leg. pro[pr. prov. Asiae]*
praefectus fabrum proconsulis	AvP 8, 2, 635	1	Augustus or Tiberius (ca. 15 BC [?])	*M(anio) Aimilio M(ani) f(ili) Pal(atina) Proculo praef(ecto) fabr(um) M(ani) Lepidi aug(uris) proc[o(n)s(ulis)] / sacrum*
	CIL X 5393 (?) (Aquinum)		Tiberius (ca. 25–30 [?])	*Q. Decio (…) Saturnino (…) praef(ecto) fabr(um) i(ure) d(icundo) et sortiend(is) / iudicibus in Asia*
ab epistulis Graecis[43]	ILS 8860 = IvDidyma II 272	1–2 (?)	1st c. AD	*Claudius Chionis comes of the proconsul*[44]
	Fronto ad Ant. Pium 8, 1	2 (?)	158	*iisque Graecarum epistularum curam doctissimis viris detuli*

[41] Broughton 1952, 181. 185. 191.

[42] Bérenger 2014, 146–151. Some persons of the proconsul's *consilium* could be counted in other places in the table, like the *legati*, so it seems reasonable to count no more than 6–10 supplementary persons in this case.

[43] When did the *ab actis* and *a libellis* exist in the proconsul's staff in Asia? (Not. dign. or. 20, 14. 17; Neira Faleiro 2005, 387 f.; for a comparison with the *proconsul* of Africa: Not. dign. occ. 18).

[44] Haensch 2000, 265; Haensch 2007, 95 f.; Haensch 2008, 186; also Mitchell 2007, 367.

accensus	Cic. ad Q. fr. 1, 1; 4, 12	1	Cicero	*accensus*
	IvE 646. 1544. 1545		Ti. Claudius Secundus	*accensus velatus*
	IvE 807			*accensus*
	Färber 2019, 441–452 (Pergamon)			*accensus L. Iunius Aeschylus*[45]
	IvTralleis 192			*accensus* (tomb)
apparitores				attested in proconsular Africa under the name *apparitores* see *lictores, viatores, praeco, accensus*
lictores	IvE 646. 1544. 1545	12	Traianus	*lictor curiatus* *Ti(berio) Claudio / Secundo / viatori tribunic[io] / accenso velato licto/ri curiato*
	IvE 734		129–132	*Flavius M. f. B[assus] lictor* [Φ]λάου[ιος Μ(άρκου) υἱὸς Κυρείνα] / Βᾶσσος / [ῥαβ]δοῦχος
	IvE 517. 517a		Traianus	*A(ulo) L vel A[…]cio [A(uli) f(ilio) Palatina Crispino(?)] […lictori] curiato*
	AE 1933, 265 = AE 1962, 13 = IvPergamon 67		ca. 17/18	*Nummius Primus lictor proxumus*
	IvE 712		68/69	*D(ecimus) Publicius / Fructus lictor Fontei Agrippae pro/co(n)s(ulis) vixit annis XXX* (68–69) (with *faces*)
	Aristeid. 50,90		ca. 152/153	*rhabdoukoi*
viator tribunicius	IvE 1544. 1545	1 (?)	Traianus	Ti. Claudius Secundus
praeco (public crier)	Acta Polycarpi 12, 1–2	1	ca. 155 or 166/167	herald of the *proconsul* proclaims Christianity and condemnation of Polycarp
	Apul. flor. 9, 10–12		2nd c., ca. 160	existence also certain alongside the *proconsul* of Africa
	Acta martyrum Scillitanorum 16		180	
1 *haruspex*	IvE 1540	1	2nd c.	*Stertinius Maximus Eutyches haruspex de LX*
victimarius		1 (?)		
pullarius		1 (?)		
tibicen/tibicinus (flute player)		1 (?)		
scriba quaestorius	AE 2010, 1601 (Nysa)	1	120–160	M. Servilus Eunicus σκρεῖβαν κυαιστώριον
	IvE 1540		2nd c.	*Stertinius Maximus Eutychès scriba librarius quaestorius*
	AE 2002, 1393		2nd c.	*L. Mamius Fabius Largus scriba quaestorius*
librarii (secretaries)	IvE 4123	2 (dozens in some imperial provinces, see *servi*)	Nero (?)	*C(aius) Stertinius C(ai) Stertini Maximi consularis / l(ibertus) Orpex scriba librarius*
	AE 2010, 1601 (Nysa)		120–160	M. Servilius Eunicus λιβράριον (of a *proconsul* [?])

45 Färber 2019.

scriba hypographeus	AE 2007, 1464	*scribae*		C. Iulius Agathopus, from Pergamon, ὑπογραφεύς of several governors (also in Asia)
scriba	IvE 2283			*scriba* of (*proconsul* [?]) *Lupercus*
interpres (?)	Cic. verr. 2, 3, 37	1 (?)		
princeps (*officí* [?]) (?)	Acta Pionii 15, 5	1	250	*princips (offikiou)*
cornicularius[46]	IGR IV 965 = IG XII 6, 2, 571 (Samos)	3 (?)	Traianus	κορνικλάριος
commentariensis, a commentariis (archives and criminal justice)	MAMA IV, 62	several 3 (?)	2nd c.	*Amiantus Aug(usti) / lib(ertus) / a commentari(i)s*[47]
centurio	Acta Polycarpi 18, 1	several (?)	155/156	presence of an officer in the proconsul's entourage in the middle of 2nd c.
strator offici(i) proconsulis	IvE 664 + add. p. 19	several (?)	245	*Aur(elius) Augendus / strator offici(i) eius* (242–245)
s(trator) co(nsularis)	IvE 2230b = AE 1983, 913	several (?)	2nd c.	*M(arcus) Palicanus / M(arci) f(ilius) Quir(ina) / Marcellinus / s(trator) co(nsularis) v(ivus?) posuit (…)*
soldier of the *praetorium* of the *proconsul* (sic)	IG XII 5, 697 Syros	several (?)	2nd c. (?)	στρατιώτης of the *praetorium* of the *proconsul* (sic)
frumentarii[48]	IvE 2244	several in Ephesos (?)		*frumentarius leg(ionis) X / Geminae frumentarius leg(ionis) I Ad/iutricis agens curam carceris*
	IvE 1826			*frumen[tarius…]*
	IvPergamon III 106 (?)			*frumentarius* (of *legio VI Ferrata*)
	MAMA X, 114		244–247	*pe[r] Didymum mili(tem) cen (tenarium) frum(entarium) proconsul{e}*[49]
	AE 1933, 256 = 1984, 838 (Sardis)		100–250	*[…fru]menta[rius] leg(ionis) X Ge[minae] (…) [a]gens cu[ram] custod[ia]rum*
	D 9474 = CIG 2802 (Aphrodisias)		before 250	*centurio frumentarius*
	IGR IV 1368 = TAM V 1, 154 (Saittai, Lydia)		end 2nd –3rd c.	*frum[entarii]*
	TAM V 1, 419 (Kavacik, Lydia)		end 2nd–3rd c.	*frument[arii]*
	TAM V 1, 611 (Iouddènôn katoikia, Lydia)		end 2nd–3rd c.	*frume[ntarii]*
	IvE 2318 (?)			*frumentarius legio(nis) VIII Aug(ustae)*

[46] *A cornicula[rius co]hortis* in Eumeneia, city of the garrison attested for Asia in the 2nd–3rd century, one *cohors* (Drew-Bear 1978 I, 10. 18 f.). In the inscription for a *proconsul* of the time of Claudius, *C(aio) Sal[lustio Cris]po / Passi[eno pr]o[co(n)s(uli)] / co(n)s(uli) des(ignato)* with a word sometimes read as *corn[icularius?]* or *Corn[elius?]* (IvE 3026 = ZPE 184, 192 = AE 2013, 1542), which seems very doubtful.

[47] It cannot be excluded that *Amiantus Aug(usti) lib(ertus)* was a member of the staff of the *procurator* of Asia (cf. MAMA I, 21).

[48] *Lucius Valerius Fatales frumentarius leg(ionis) VIII Aug(ustae)* in Numidia must have been on mission in Asia (IvE 2318).

[49] Also Hauken 1998, 140–161, but with another reading: *pe[r] Didymum mili(tem) gen(erum)* (sic).

stationarii (?) pretorians detached seconded to another region	IvSmyrna 382	several in Ephesos	3rd c. (after 212 (?)	*Aur(elius) Maximinus / mil(es) c(o) ho(rtis) VII pr(aetoriae) [|(centuria)] Se/cundini stat(ionarius) Zmyr(nae)* (tomb for his spouse)
	IvE 2319 (+ Brélaz 2005, 417 H1)	2	2nd c.	*T(itus) Valerius T(iti) f(ilius) Secundus miles / cohortis VII praetoriae (…) militavit annis VIII stati/onarius Ephesi (…)*
	CIL III 7148 (?) (Nysa)			*M(arcus) Ulpius / A<l>binus / mil(e)s coh(ortis) VI / pr(aetoriae) st<i>p(endiorum) X vixi/t annis XXX/V me(n)sib(us) quat/t(u)or di<e>bus X*
	TAM V 1, 154 (Saittai)			*[stationari]i*
	TAM V 2, 1219 (Apollonis)			*stationarius*
	TAM V 1, 611 (Satala)			*[stationa]rii* (*?*)
	AE 1989, 721 (Takina)			*stationar[ii..]*
	TAM V 1, 419			*[prae]torianoi*
eques singularis (?)	IGR IV 234 Hadrianoutherai	a few (?)		*eques singularis*
	TAM V 1, 474 = AE 1984, 841, north-east of Sardis (Maeonia?)		223/224	*Aurelius Nicias, eques singularis* from Ephesos
evocatus ex praetor(io)	IvTralleis 217	?		*evocatus Aug(usti) ex praetor(io)*
evocatus	IvIasos 399	?	end 2nd c. or before (?)	*evocatus Aug(ustorum)*[50]
speculator (?)	TAM V 3, 1467 = AE 2007, 1363 (Philadelphia)		after 120–140 (?)	*Ael(ius) Maxim[us] / [s]peculator l[eg(ionis?)]*
personal guard (?)		some dozens (?)		part of the *cohors* of *auxiliarii* present in Asia?
				a *centurio* in the *Acta Polycarpi*
				stationarii/praetorians in Ephesos
				[Africa: 1 *cohors* in Carthago CIL VIII 2532 Ab = 18042, Ab: *cohors … in officium proconsulis mittitur]*
				Dig. 1, 16, 4: *nemo proconsulum stratores suos habere potest, sed vice eorum milites ministerio in provinciis funguntur*
nomenclator	IvE 1665	1		*P(ubli) Corneli Nicephori nomenclatoris*
	CIL VIII 24692 (Carthago)			*Lascivus Aug(usti) ser(vus) / nomenclator*
cubicularius	CIL X 7127 (Syracusae)	1		*D(is) M(anibus) / Eroti Iuni Iuliani pro/co(n)s(ulis) ser(vo) cubiculario = cubicularius proconsulis Siciliae*
	CIL VIII 12657 (Carthago)			*Valentinus ex / numero cubiculariorum Aug(usti)* see below *servi privati*
liberti		dozens (?)		

[50] Nelis-Clément 2000, 105 n. 112: perhaps only *evocatus Aug(usti).*

servi publici	comparison with other documentation	dozens (?)	73–71 BC	200 in Sicily (Verres: Pittia 2007, 71, with references) analogy with another proconsular province (?)
	SEG 42, 1992, 780			Samothrace: 1 *verna Aug(ustorum)* with *proconsul* of 165 may be up to 25 or 26 other slaves (*publici* or private [?]) in an incomplete list of escort of the *proconsul* of Macedonia
servi privati	comparison with other documentation Val. Max. 4, 3, 12	at least 20 or 30 personal slaves (?)		12 is a very reduced number for an escort
	AE 1967, 444 = SEG 42, 1992, 780			may be up to 25 or 26 slaves (*publici* or private [?]) in an incomplete list of escort of the *proconsul* of Macedonia, of praetorian rank, in Samothrace (?) dozens with the *proconsul* in Asia (?)

We have very little documentation about the *praefectus fabrum proconsulis*, who was a trustworthy man chosen by the governor for the year of his promagistracy. A single inscription of Pergamon and a text from Italy attest his existence in the province of Asia in the beginning of the Imperial period, under Augustus or Tiberius. R. Haensch is probably correct in his opinion that this function disappeared shortly after this attestation, probably in or after the Julio-Claudian period[51].

A tradition inherited from the Republic consisted in sending to the province a certain number of Roman *apparitores*, who are attested in the 1st and 2nd century[52]. There is a great probability, however, that they continued to exist into at least the first half of the 3rd century, even in Asia, before the general crisis of the Empire. It cannot be excluded, moreover, that they existed for a longer interval: the *Codex Theodosianus* continues to mention *apparitores* in Constantinian times[53]. The documentation concerning them is limited, as they only stayed in the province for a short period of time[54].

The *proconsul* of Asia, as governor of a senatorial province of consular rank, had twelve *lictores* who were proof of his importance as a senator at the end of a prestigious career. In senatorial provinces of praetorian rank their number was six, while there were only five for the *legati Augusti pro praetore* who only had a delegated power[55]. The *lictores (lictor curiatus, lictor proxumus)* are attested in inscriptions of the 1st and 2nd century and in a text of Aelius Aristides: Nummius Primus was *lictor proxumus*, consequently the highest ranking Roman *lictor*, and probably proud of his position. In Ephesos, we even know the tomb of D. Publicius Fructus (fig. 3), *lictor* in 68/69 of Fonteius Agrippa. He died in the city where he exercised his duty as *apparitor*[56].

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51 See Welch 1995 for the function at the end of the Republic; Dobson 1993, esp. 222 f. (early Principate); Haensch 1997a and Haensch 2007.

52 Mommsen 1887–1895 I, 380–426; Jacques – Scheid 1990, 61 f.; Bérenger 2014, 105–116 lists them. David 2019 replaces the older bibliography, see below.

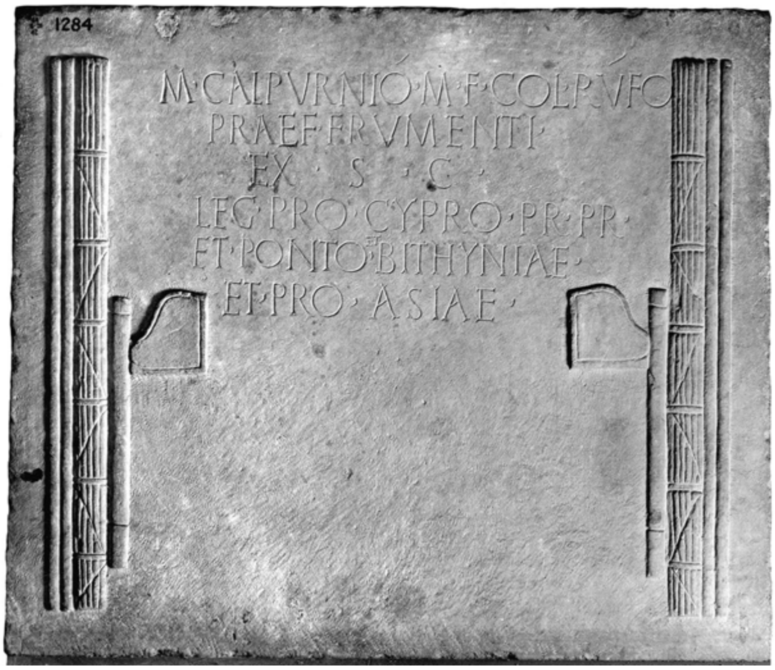
53 Cod. Theod. 8, 9, 1 mentions *librarii, lictores, lictor consularis* (335); also Kolb 2000, 274.

54 But the fact that in the Neronian period C. Stertinius Maximus was *scriba librarius*, and that in the 2nd century Stertinius Maximus Eutyches was *haruspex* and *scriba librarius quaestorius* raises the question regarding the existence of dynasties of *apparitores*.

55 On the *lictores* see David 2019, 31–40 and 193–206. Haensch 1997a, 713, mentions only six *lictores* for the Severan period: but Dig. 1, 16, 14 (Ulpian) is a very short extract, which perhaps in the time of Justinian did not consider the specific situation of Asia and Africa in the High Empire. P. Cluvius Maximus Paullinus, consul and *pr[oc]onsuli sortito pro[v]in[ci(ae) Asiae]*, has twelve *fasces* ca. AD 157 or 158–159 (Schäfer 1989, 364 f., with illustration 78, 1–2, and Syme 1983, 280 f.).

56 IvE 712 and Schäfer 1989, 416 f. and pl. 120, 1.

1 Inscription for Antoninus Pius from Ti. Iulius Candidus Caecilius Simplex, *legatus pro praetore dioeceseos Ephesiacae* in AD 139 (IvE 282) (© F. Kirbihler)



2 Ephesian funerary inscription of M. Calpurnius Rufus, *legatus pro praetore Asiae*, with *fasces* (IvE 631). British Museum no. 1868, 0620.42 (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

3 Ephesian funerary inscription of D. Publicius Fructus, *lictor* of Fonteius Agrippa, *proconsul* AD 68/69, with *fasces* (IvE 712). British Museum no. 1868, 0620.55 (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

There is very limited documentation regarding the *viatores*: a *viator tribunicius* is attested at Ephesos. These individuals could serve as messengers, but were often a sort of bailiff. The *accensus*, often a personal freedman of the *proconsul*, was a man of confidence, early in the time of the orator Cicero[57]. A few testimonies exist in Imperial times: *accensus velatus* and *accensus*[58]. One of them, Ti. Claudius Secundus, is also attested as *viator tribunicius*, a situation attested elsewhere[59]. A recent publication highlights the *accensus* function in an inscription from Pergamon[60].

The *praeco* only seems to be attested in the martyrdom of Polycarp, but is documented elsewhere and especially by Apuleius for Africa, the other proconsular province of consular rank[61]. It was the *vox praeconis*, and not a personal declaration of the governor, who proclaimed the death sentence pronounced on Polycarp.

A number of scribes are attested in Ephesos. The tradition distinguished between *scribae* proper and *librarii*, the former being superior in dignity to the latter, but both titles had to do with the writing of acts or deeds for magistrates and promagistrates[62]. A *proconsul* received three *scribae*, one *scriba quaestorius* and two *librarii*[63]. Ephesos offers both titles, but only in a handful of cases, and we are not certain at all that the *librarius* whose tomb inscription has been retrieved in Nysa has anything to do with the governor of Asia. The scribes wrote the proconsul's official daily acts *(commentarii)* and they certainly were also involved with the conservation of archives at the beginning of the Principate, perhaps in association with slaves[64]. A funerary inscription of Ancyra from the 3rd century commemorates C. Iulius Agathopus, a ὑπογραφεύς, secretary to several governors, including the *proconsul* of Asia. Perhaps it is the same function; perhaps other additional secretaries were created subsequently, and Agathopus was a sort of ›vagrant‹ professional secretary for different governors and heads of the Roman administration[65].

The *proconsul* also had religious duties. Even in proconsular provinces he carried out many religious acts, most often sacrifices and auspices. Thus, the *proconsul* accomplished different types of religious activities and acts relating to the imperial cult, in the same way as the *legati Augusti pro praetore*, governors of imperial provinces sometimes with many troops: for example *vota*, and the birthdays of emperors[66]. The sacrifices performed by the *proconsul* Q. Vibius Egnatius Sulpicius Priscus are mentioned in letters to Aphrodisias[67]. He probably had at his disposal a number of employees who were specialized in religious duties; these would normally be one *victimarius*, one *pullarius*, one *haruspex*, also accompanied by a flute player, a *tibicen/tibicinus*. These categories of *apparitores* continued to exist well into the 2nd century, but in fact we have very few attestations of these technical functions in the provincial context[68]. Stertinius Maximus Eutyches was *haruspex de LX*. He is also attested as *scriba librarius quaestorius*. This perhaps attests to the porosity between the two fields of activity.

Private secretaries, slaves or freedmen, are under-represented in the documentation. It is traditionally considered that the proconsuls of senatorial provinces predominantly used slaves

57 Cic. ad Q. fr. 1, 1; 4, 12–13; David 2019, 184–193.
58 IvE 646. 807. One *accensus* had a tomb in Tralleis (IvTralleis 192); also Di Stefano Manzella 2000.
59 Färber 2019, 442 with n. 5.
60 Färber 2019.
61 David 2019, 40–43 *(viatores)*; 44 f. 162–165. 184–193. 252–259 *(accensi)*; 45–57. 207–222 *(praeco)*: also Pittia 2007, 67.
62 Bérenger 2014, 107–110; David 2019, 57–67. 223–246.
63 Haensch 1997a, 712.
64 David 2019, 62 f., for the end of the Republic and probably also the beginning of the Imperial period.
65 Mitchell 2007, 366–367, and AE 2007, 1464; see now the commentary in Mitchell – French 2012, 64. Another proposition in Haensch 2008, 186: the delegation of authority for processing of petitions.
66 Eck 1992, 152 f., on the example of Pliny the Younger, sent to a proconsular province, and for the argument that all governors undertook these activities.
67 Reynolds 1982, nos. 47–48; Eck 1992, 156.
68 See Eck 1992 for the religious duties of Roman governors in the early Imperial period; Jacques – Scheid 1990, 62.

4 A *proconsul* as military commander: Ti. Iulius Celsus Polemaeanus, *proconsul provinciae Asiae* AD 105/106 (© OeAW-OeAI, N. Gail)

(*servi publici* and *privati*) and freedmen in the gubernatorial personnel rather than soldiers, especially in the early Roman Empire[69]. Tombs in Ephesos show the presence of many freedmen or imperial slaves, without mention of their job[70]. An often-forgotten fact is the presence of *servi publici* in the service of proconsuls in the Republican period: Verres, as *proconsul* of praetorian rank of Sicily, had the power to give orders to 200 *servi publici*[71]. It seems almost certain that proconsuls took a number of private slaves and freedmen with them for their proconsular year, and that they also found in the capital of the province public slaves available to serve them. This situation is reflected in a rare document, an inscription from Samothrace, which reveals that the *proconsul* of Macedonia in AD 165, Anteius Orestis, visited Samothrace with his entourage. Since the improvement of the text of the inscription by W. V. Harris, we know that six *amici* were with him, and we can read or see space for the names of approximately twenty-five slaves. There was also a slave of the emperors, a *verna Augustorum,* which provides evidence that sometimes imperial slaves could be in the service of a *proconsul*. The *lictores* and *viatores* as read by J. H. Oliver never existed in this inscription[72]. If, however, this is a partial staff and list of personnel during a trip, it can only be an incomplete number. A part of the personnel continued to stay in the provincial capital, and the epigraphic text is incomplete, broken in the lower part. Thus, we can certainly consider that the personnel at the disposal of the governor's staff of this senatorial province of praetorian rank exceeded fifty persons. This raises the question of how many people, *privati* or *publici*, of this category a consular governor of Asia could have; certainly more than fifty.

The functions of *nomenclator* and *cubicularius*, who were slaves or freedmen, were private, but they also played a role in the activity of the governor, because they could provide access to his person. Cicero mentions their role in positive and negative situations[73]. The documentation from Sicily and Carthage makes their existence at Ephesos probable. If we add these two people

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69 But the *servi* and *liberti Augusti* were rather in a financial procuratorial administration, like *arcarii*, *dispensatores* or *tabularii*; IvE 2200A mentions a *collegia lib(ertorum) et servorum domini n(ostri) Aug(usti)*, probably of the *procurator* of Asia; see below for the *tabellarii*; for the discussion see Haensch 2006a and Haensch 2006b.

70 E.g. IvE 2200A; 2203; 2203A (?); 2210; 2222C; 2223A, 2; 2261; 2272B; 2273B; 2451 (?).

71 Pittia 2007, 71.

72 AE 1967, 444 (from Oliver 1966) has to be amended by the important corrections in Harris 1992 (SEG 42, 1992, 780).

73 Cic. Verr. 2, 3, 8 *(cubicularius)*; Cic. Att. 4, 1, 5 *(nomenclator)*. A curious text is worth noting: SHA Alex. 42 tells us that governors received cooks from the state.

to the Roman magistrates, *amici* and *comites*, also to the *apparitores* in the extended sense, we then probably have to assume that there were more than forty people in the governor's entourage. Although this remains hypothetical, the Macedonian inscription suggests that a few dozen *servi privati* or *publici* and an unknown quantity of freedmen would be a minimum for a senator of the rank of *proconsul* of Asia.

Another important, controversial and difficult question, however, is the place of the soldiers and officers in the core of the provincial *officium*.

The search for the proconsul's staff raises the question of the military competence of the *proconsul* and the problem of the *officium*. The *officium* itself, precisely defined in a limited sense, included personnel from the Roman army: *cornicularii, commentarienses, speculatores, beneficiarii,* and *frumentarii*[74]. Like other proconsuls, the *proconsul* of Asia had *imperium militiae* and consequently the right to give orders to soldiers (figs. 4. 5). The discovery and publication of a military diploma of AD 148 where Flavius Tertullus appears as provincial commander of an auxiliary *cohors I Raetorum* came as a welcome confirmation. The list of nine petitions between the last quarter of the 2nd century and the middle of the 3rd century from rural communities against exactions of soldiers also demonstrates the military power of the *proconsul*, who was asked to punish the soldiers and compose letters regarding this issue[75]. The ability of the *proconsul* to give orders, or at least injunctions, to the *procurator* seems to be demonstrated at the same time: the rescript of Pertinax to Tabala confirmed the ability of the governor to punish soldiers in his province[76].

5 *Fasces* of the proconsul's tomb and library *(heroon)* of Celsus in Ephesos (© F. Kirbihler)

W. Eck has demonstrated that every proconsular province should have had at least one *cohors* for the protection of the governor and the maintenance of order and law enforcement. The power of proconsuls over soldiers was not essentially different from that of the legates of the emperor[77]. We have the proof that at least one *cohors* was stationed in the province at Eumeneia in the 2nd century. Some epigraphic attestations of *cohortes* of *auxiliarii* exist in the province[78]: a *cohors Apula c(ivium) R(omanorum)*, and perhaps *a cohors Lepidiana*[79] were probably in the province of Asia in the 1st century. For the 2nd century we find a *cohors I Claudia Sugambrorum veterana equitata* which was temporarily stationed in Eumeneia (from 134 to perhaps 144). Additionally, we know of a *cohors I Raetorum* in Eumeneia from a military diploma of 148[80], epitaphs of soldiers and an inscription of the time of Gordian III from 240–244.

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[74] Relatively recent studies of the *officium*, and also of different *officiales*, in Bérard 2000 and Bérard 2015, 323–397; also Bérenger 2014, 116–127, with bibliography; also Haensch 1997a, 710–724, and Rankov 1999.

[75] Overbeck 1981, esp. 272 f.; Hauken 1998, 198 f.; the list of petitions in Mitchell 1999, 39–45, with the list on p. 41.

[76] SEG 38, 1244 (and SEG 43, 870).

[77] Eck 1998, 187–202 (at least one auxiliary corps in each senatorial province) and Hurlet 2006, 131–160.

[78] Eck 1998, 190 f. 194 and 201 f.; Brélaz 2005, 237–240; see now Bennett 2016.

[79] In the opinion of Bennett 2016, 155, the presence of the *cohors Lepidiana* was doubtful: L(ucius) Calpurnius Valens was an *optio / coh(ortis) I Lepid(ianae) eq(uitatae) c(ivium) R(omanorum)* (CIL III 12251 = D 2590 = AE 2010, 71).

[80] AE 1981, 845 = RMD II, 100.

M. Christol has recently proposed that soldiers from these cohorts were used as administrative personnel. He is convinced that the cohort of Eumeneia provided personnel not only for the *procurator*, but also for the *proconsul* of Asia[81]. This point seems to be proven for the *procurator*, yet it remains unproven but probable for the *proconsul*[82]. The speech of emperor Hadrian in Lambaesis attests this fact for the *proconsul* of Africa in Carthage; he had at his disposal one *cohors* of the *legio III Augusta* of Numidia[83]. We also know that some legionaries from the garrison of Moesia Inferior were provided by emperor Trajan to Pontus-Bithynia, perhaps shortly before Pliny's arrival[84]. The presence of auxiliary soldiers, however, and the reference to a *stratura* of soldiers in Ephesos are linked, given the present state of documentation, with the *officium* of the *procurator provinciae Asiae*. This is proof, at least, of the presence of even a modest garrison of military personnel in the provincial capital[85].

W. Eck raised the question of the presence of *beneficiarii* in the proconsular staff[86]. No *beneficiarii* are attested in the personnel of proconsuls of senatorial provinces. We indeed do not know of any *beneficiarius proconsulis vel consularis*. It is certain that this category of province did not have *beneficiarii consularis* at all, in the sense of a *beneficiarius* of the *proconsul* of consular rank[87]. The mention of *beneficiarii* would be possible and could theoretically have to do with the *officium* of the *procurator* of Asia.

The question deserves to be raised for the 3rd century, because *stratores* and *frumentarii* appear in lists of members of the staff of the *proconsul* of Africa connected with the arrest and the execution of Saint Cyprian. R. Haensch wrote that soldiers appear in proconsular staffs from the 3rd century on[88]. The majority of the documentation is indeed from this time, but we must also consider the presence of a *centurio* during the process and the execution of Polycarp. This, therefore, seems to be proof that some officers already belonged to the governor's staff in the middle of the 2nd century.

Historians consider the proportion of soldiers among the officials of the majority of the imperial provinces to be significant, while slaves and freedmen, and also some *ingenui* appear to have been numerous among the proconsuls of the provinces of the Roman people. Some Rhenish or Danubian provinces, and Numidia, provide much evidence for the first case. The province of Lugdunensis was also relevant here, as F. Bérard's study of many epitaphs from Lugdunum/Lyon has demonstrated the use of soldiers from the *cohors* which was stationed at Lyon at this time for the *officium*[89]. This fact is interesting, because Lyon also had an *officium* for the *legatus Augusti propraetore* and another for the *procurator*, just as in Asia. Lyon had only one *cohors*, and N. Duval was convinced that Carthage also had a garrison of only one *cohors* at the same time[90]. Lugdunensis, however, was an imperial province and we have seen that auxiliary forces seem to have been linked to the procurator's staff. However, the military diploma of Asia shows the *proconsul* as the supreme military authority, also for auxiliaries, in the province.

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[81] Christol – Drew-Bear 1995, 61–66, and now Christol 2015, 27.

[82] AE 1988, 1018. 1023.

[83] Le Bohec 2008, 82.

[84] Plin. epist. 10, 42. 74 (Calpurnius Macer, governor of Moesia Inferior ca. 110–113, see RMD IV, 222); also the letters 77–78. In an imperial provincial context, after 197 the legate of Gallia Lugdunensis had at his disposal some legionaries of the Roman provinces of Germania (Bérard 2015, 136).

[85] AE 1988, 1018. 1023; IvE 4112 *(decuriones et equites)*; also AE 1984, 841 = TAM V 1, 474, which is a tomb of a soldier buried in Maeonia in Lydia, but he served during his active life in the capital of the province, Ephesos: Αὐ[ρ]. Νεικίᾳ στρατιώτῃ ἱππικαλῃς συνβίωσις·στηρηθεὶς τῶν συσστρατιωτῶν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ (223/4); discussion in Christol – Drew-Bear 1995, 61–66; Christol 2015.

[86] Eck 1998, 186 n. 7; 191 n. 25.

[87] Discussion in Nelis-Clément 2000, 103–106, and Bérard 2015, 350–365, esp. 356 f., with further bibliography.

[88] Proconsular: Acts of St. Cyprian *(Acta proconsularia sancti Cypriani)*, Recensio A, 2 (*strator*); St. Cyprian, Letters 81, 1 *(frumentarii)*; Haensch 1997a, 720; same opinion in Speidel 2006, 264.

[89] See the case of M. Carantius Macrinus: Bérard 2015, 38–41.

[90] Bérard 2015, 28 f. 34 f. and chap. II (p. 37–80); after 197, the city had legionaries from the legions of Germany (Bérard 2015, 136); Duval 1993.

A certain number of soldiers, moreover, could also have been assigned directly to the *proconsul*. B. Rossignol proposed for the west that some *stationarii* and praetorian soldiers were at the disposal of the proconsuls of Baetica and Gallia Narbonensis[91]. We have no direct absolute proof of legionaries in Ephesos itself, but there are praetorians in the capital of the province, and we have *de facto* the frequent presence of some *stationarii* in the province of Asia. The dossier shows that the *proconsul* seems to have had direct authority over these troops as well[92].

It must also be taken into account that, from the reign of Trajan at the latest, there seems to have been a certain alignment in the treatment of proconsuls with that of the *legati Augusti pro praetore*. The proconsuls received imperial *mandata* regularly from this reign onwards at the latest, and reforms by emperor Trajan may have strengthened the administration of the provinces[93]. This situation was probably reinforced under the Severan dynasty, where there are even iterations of proconsulates[94]. There is even a document from Cos of Cn. Domitius Corbulo, *proconsul* of Asia during the reign of Claudius (49/50 or 50/51 [?]), probably already evoking *mandata* of the emperor, but the meaning of the document is not clear[95]. The situation of the proconsuls in the 2nd century, therefore, seems to have become closer to that of their colleagues in the imperial provinces.

Some documents of the 2nd century could support a change, in the sense of increasing visibility of the military in the personnel of the governor. The presence of a *centurio* in one episode of the martyrdom of Polycarp could be a first indication; another indirect proof of this trend could be the presence of *frumentarii* in the province from the 2nd century onwards, some of them in Ephesos[96]. Perhaps a στρατιώτης of Syros of the *praetorium* of the *proconsul*, named on an inscription which refers to an Ulpius and a Iulia, and the *strator consularis* with references to the *praenomina*, could be dated to the 2nd century. The Ephesian inscription of a *stationarius* is dated to the 2nd century[97]. Taken together, this evidence would reinforce the probability of the presence of soldiers in the governor's staff from the 2nd century on.

There are increasing signs of a reinforced presence of military personnel on the governor's staff in the 3rd century. We find, for example, in Ephesos a *frumentarius agens curam carceris,* and table 1 shows that the *frumentarii* and *stationarii* were not rare. The cases of praetorian soldiers *(praetoriani)* detached to Ephesos are especially interesting[98]. In the middle of the 3rd century a *strator officii* of the proconsul and a *centenarius frumentarius* are attested[99]. The martyrdom of Pionios evokes the existence of a *princeps officii*, which would indicate a resemblance with the staff of the imperial provinces, and perhaps a sign of a final evolution[100].

Two inscriptions from Hadrianoutherai and Maeonia inform us about two riders *(equites singulares)*, probably from Ephesos. These riders could have been assigned to the service of the *proconsul*, as with other cases attested in Achaia and Carthage[101]. There is also the already mentioned example of a soldier of a *proconsul* in the Cyclades (Syros). The *proconsul* mentioned was

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[91] Rossignol 2009, 85.
[92] One *stationarius* in IvE 2319.
[93] For the question of imperial *mandata* to proconsuls, see Hurlet 2006, 223–233 and 240 f.; also Bérenger 2014, 87–90; for changes under Trajan for some governor's staffs, Dise 1997.
[94] See Christol 2016 regarding some cases of *proconsulates* of Asia and Africa in the careers of Marius Maximus and Cassius Dio.
[95] Hurlet 2006, 236 f.; Bérenger 2014, 88.
[96] They came from Dacia, Pannonia Superior and Dacia Superior (Clauss 1973, 86).
[97] IvE 2319; *stationarii* in Brélaz 2005, 254–263.
[98] Clauss 1973, 86–95; Rankov 1990, 176 f. n. 6–8; also Bérard 2015, 76 n. 206; 366–368 with further bibliography.
[99] IvE 664 *(strator)*; MAMA X, 114 *(miles centenarius frumentarius)*, inscription from Phrygia (Appia/Pınarcık-Abya). Later, during the Tetrarchy, the famous Aurelius Gaius became *centurio frumentarius* in the province of Asia (AE 1907, 35 = ILS 9474 = MAMA VIII, 508; AE 1981, 771). Bérard 2004 for *frumentarii* of Rome in Lyon.
[100] Martyrdom of Pionios 15 (see also Robert 1994 with the commentary).
[101] AE 1984, 841; also Speidel 1978, 19–22.

certainly the governor of Asia[102]. Perhaps the majority of these personnel were only in Ephesos for a short time, which would explain the lack of documentation. They had no family in the capital and did not stay for long, so the lack of any local roots is apparent. Consequently, these military forces also had less possibility to generate documentation concerning them: as short-term displaced forces they were also statistically less likely to die in that location and to leave a tombstone with a funerary inscription.

The presence of soldier grades typical for an *officium* is represented at a relatively late date: the existence of *cornicularii* in the proconsul's staff is not specifically proven. One doubtful case of a *cornicularius* exists at Samos, with an inscription perhaps from the Trajanic period. This case is itself not sufficient evidence of an inclusion in the governor's personnel. This person was instead perhaps in the dependency of the *procurator*[103]. On the other hand, in the case of Pionios in AD 250, one *commentariensis/a commentariis* who worked as an archivist is attested in the staff of the *proconsul*[104]. The *commentariensis/a commentariis* in criminal cases usually introduced the accused Christians to the governor, because he had to be active in penal procedures. This also appears to be a sign of a direction towards an alignment with the situation in the imperial provinces[105]. Although we have few signs of this evolution, nevertheless some are from the 2nd century.

The *speculatores* were often employed in the governor's staff for criminal affairs, but we know from table 1 of only one *speculator* for Asia. It is therefore difficult to form an opinion about the presence of *speculatores* in our proconsular province or their employment in the staff of the governor. The *frumentarii* were assigned to a variety of tasks, but were often implemented into the governor's *officium,* especially in provinces *inermes,* and were also responsible for the circulation of information. *Frumentarii* were sometimes used as couriers or messengers, but we are not aware of large numbers of *frumentarii* in the service of the *proconsul*[106]. The *speculatores* also had policing responsibilities, while the *stratores* made requisitions[107]. A certain number of these military forces must have been placed under the authority of the governor, who thus had at his disposal more administrative staff and police forces.

At the beginning of this study we reviewed the problem of the quantity of messengers in the proconsul's staff: they are not documented at all. Traditionally, from the Republican period on, they were called *tabellarii*[108]. This is an important and serious question: the known *tabellarii* are attested in connection with the *procurator* of Asia[109]. A. Kolb has published documentation about *servi publici* as messengers for consuls under Nero, and the employment of certain private couriers[110]. In my opinion, there must have been certain individuals carrying out the functions of *tabellarii,* also in connection with the information destined for the twelve other capitals of the *conventus*. Evidently, they could use the *vehiculatio* at their disposal in the province[111].

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[102] IG XII 5, 697; Speidel 1978, 20; see the discussion about the administrative situation of the Cyclades in Le Quéré 2015, 58–67: the islands were part of Asia in the 2nd century.

[103] *Cornicularii* in Clauss 1973, 17–40; Bérenger 2014, 118 f. and Bérard 2015, 331–339. Under emperor Trajan, the knight M. Gavius Bassus, *praefectus* of Pontus, had three *cornicularii* (IvE 680).

[104] Martyrdom of Pionios 21; Fournier 2010, 384–387; see also for this episode Meyer-Zwiffelhoffer 2002, 143–171; for the office of *commentariensis/a commentariis*, see Haensch 1995.

[105] Bérard 2015, 339–344; see for this example Bérenger 2014, 119 f.

[106] *Frumentarii* in Clauss 1973, 82–117; p. 86–88 for *frumentarii* as couriers; pp. 87 and 96 for the employment in the *officium* of the governor, especially provinces *inermes*; Brélaz 2005, 275–282; Rankov 2006; Bérard 2015, 365–382; *speculatores* in Clauss 1973, 46–81; also below regarding couriers.

[107] Bérard 2015, 344–350 *(speculatores)*; Bérard 2015, 386–390 *(stratores)*.

[108] See Hirschfeld 1905, 190–204, but now Kolb 2000, 269–294 for different names and categories of messengers; also Rankov 2006, 129 f.

[109] Plin. epist. 10, 63–64 mentions *tabellarii*, but they were sent to him; for the problem of the exact title of Pliny in a proconsular province, see also Alföldy 1999a; Alföldy 1999b, 221–244 (AE 1999, 92).

[110] Kolb 2000, 274. In another time and context, in Late Antiquity, a βιάτορος ἀπὸ πρημικιρήων, but probably connected with the administration of imperial property, is attested in Laodikeia (MAMA I, 243).

[111] Crogiez-Pétrequin – Nelis-Clément 2009, 122–134.

Table 2 The *tabellarii* in Asia

Name	Significant documents	Number	Oldest date	Remarks
adiutor tabellariorum	IvE 651	1 (?)	*lib. Augg.* = Marcus Aurelius and Commodus 176–180	*lib(ertus) Aug(ustorum)*
optio of *tabellarii* of the *officium (procuratoris)*	IvE 2222B	1 (?)		*optio (tabellarii officii) [procuratoris?]*
decuriones	IvE 4112	?		*decuriones et tabellarii et equites*
tabellarii of the *officium (procuratoris* [?] on loan [?])	IvE 2200A IvE 696A	a few dozens (?)	176–180/200 (?)	*(collegium) tabellariorum*
	IvE 855			*tabellarii*
	IvE 2281A (?)			[Li]cinianus ταβελλάριος
	IvE 2222B		3rd c. (?) (Aurelius Felix)	[οἱ] ταβελλάριοι ὀφικίου
	IvE 4112			*decuriones et tabellarii et equites*
	BCH 1923, 381 f. no. 15 (Colophon)			[οἱ] ταβελλάριοι ὀφικίου
tabellarius Caesaris	TAM V 2, 1125			ταβελλάριος

The principal problem of the *tabellarii* is that they seemed to be linked exclusively to the office of the *procurator provinciae Asiae* as table 2 shows[112]. The procuratorial *officium* apparently consisted of a well appointed team with an efficient configuration, more so than of the *proconsul*: this is for example, the case for the *tabularium*[113]. In other cases we have evidence that the *proconsul* had to ask the *procurator* of Asia for certain specialists, as can be shown in Aizanoi in AD 125/126: the *proconsul* Avidius Quietus required from the *procurator* specialists for documentation concerning *kleroi*[114]. R. Haensch has also described rare cases of attested collaboration of both governor and *procurator*[115]. The existence of this possibility can also easily be explained by the geographic proximity of both staffs in the same provincial capital[116]. The staffs of *procurator* and *proconsul* may perhaps have had some degree of fluidity from one to another, a rarely made assumption[117]. In my opinion it is not impossible that the *procurator provinciae Asiae* lent a few *tabellarii* to the governor, but the question remains, how many? Three or four, or a few dozen? This issue should be studied in the future.

[112] See Kolb 2000, 275–278, for different ranks of *tabellarii*.

[113] It seems also to be the case for the archivists and accountants *(tabularii)*: we know for the *tabul(arium) pr[ovinciae Asiae]*, one *verna arcarius pro/vinciae Asiae* (IvE 2200A); an *adiutor tabulariorum* (IvE 820 and 651), one *praepositus* of *tabularii*, one *libertus tabularius provinciae Asiae* (IvE 1564); another *lib(ertus) ta[b(ularius)]* in IvE 297A; one *tabularius* in IvE 2201; also attestation of *collegia / lib(ertorum) et servorum domini n(ostri) Aug(usti) i(nfra) s(cripta) / magnum et Minervium tabulari/orum et Faustinianum commen/tare(n)sium et decurionum et ta/bellariorum* (IvE 2200A). Also Haensch 2006a, 162–166, for the mass of these archives.

[114] CIL III 355, cf. p. 977; 7003 = 14191^1 = OGIS 502 = MAMA IX. XXXVI–XLIII, esp. XXXVI–XXXVII (Avidius Quietus *proconsul* of Asia 125/126); Haensch 2007, 99 and Haensch 2006a, 173, for a sort of order from the governor of Syria to the *procurator* of the province.

[115] Haensch 2006a, 171–174. The *procurator* of Asia remained in Ephesos while the *proconsul* made an itinerary to dispense justice (Haensch 2006a, 170).

[116] In some cases the governor and the *procurator* of the province did not have the same residence as the governor: see for example the Gallic and Germanic provinces discussed by Haensch 2009, 424 f.

[117] For some propositions in this field, see Cuzel 2021.

The reality of the use of letters was probably flexible for the *proconsul*, who was able to draw on a variety of personnel. It was probably a conglomerate of *servi publici* (and *privati* [?]) *viatores*, especially in early times, and also increasingly of *frumentarii* (especially)[118], *statores*, *equites singulares*, *stationarii*, maybe some *speculatores praetorii*[119], perhaps also a few *tabellarii* loaned by the *procurator* of Asia, who served as couriers of the *proconsul*[120]. Certainly, some soldiers serving as couriers belonged to the imperial staff. But the fragmentary state of our documentation about the presence of *frumentarii* and *stationarii* makes it very likely that some of them were also used as the governor's couriers, at least at the end of the High Empire. Therefore, more than a dozen, perhaps even a few dozen individuals acting as couriers of the proconsul of Asia would be plausible, even though this view remains speculative.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADMINISTRATION: THE INCREASING OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL OF THE *PROCONSUL PROVINCIAE ASIAE*

At the beginning of the establishment of Roman provinces under the Republic it is evident that the governor probably had a very small number of staff available, at least before Sulla. A famous source is Plutarch's text describing Cato the censor in Sardinia with one person at his side during his tour of his province[121]. It is an undeniable fact that between Sulla and the final decades of the Republic and the middle of the 3rd century the Roman administration developed, expanded and became more complex[122]. The number of written acts in particular must have increased significantly. Thus, it is clear that the governors required more *scribes* and secretaries[123], which explains the creation of one or two *ab epistulis graecis*. At the beginning of the 1st century, Claudius Chionis from Miletus was *praefectus fabrum* at Rome, *tribunus militum* in Alexandria and, as *comes proconsulis Asiae* he was an editor of letters, responses and edicts of the proconsul, and was also responsible for the drawing of lots for the judges presiding in the proconsular court[124]. At the time of Fronto the office of *ab epistulis graecis* continued to exist. But this function, although it is discontinuously attested, conceals the writing work carried out by a much larger number of servile or freedmen in the staff who left little trace in the documentation.

Each governor maintained the archives of his predecessors, especially the *commentarii*, documents recording daily activities. Since the mid-2nd century at the latest they were systematically archived and could be consulted under supervision and via payment of a fee. This was perhaps the case from the first years of Claudius onwards, but it remains a controversial point. The fact that copies of relevant documents were sometimes asked of the plaintiffs seems possibly to point to the relativley slow bureaucracy or to a long period of shortage of staff for running these archives. Since AD 83 at the latest, correspondence books (collections of letters) also existed. At the latest after the third quarter of the 2nd century the work of petitions gave rise to an archive depository, which was certainly systematic in the 3rd century. There were probably also documents relating to the birth certificates of Roman citizen children[125]. All these examples and needs, combined with the proconsular tours of the *conventus*, contributed to the expansion of personnel, especially in the 2nd and 3rd centuries.

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118 See Clauss 1973, 86–88 and perhaps 116 f., for *frumentarii* especially as couriers.
119 For soldiers as couriers see also Kolb 2000, 286–294; Clauss 1973, 73 f.
120 Rankov 2006, 134 f.; Bérenger 2014, 124 f.; Kolb 2000, 269–294.
121 Plut., Cato maior 6; but the same part of the biography evokes other Romans who took more people with them.
122 For some important administrative staff in the final years of the Republic until the *triumviri*, see Eich 2005, 86–98.
123 For Egypt see Haensch 1997b and 2007.
124 Haensch 2008, 186.
125 Haensch 1992, 222, example of archives in an opisthodomos of a temple; also Haensch 2018; Haensch 2006a for financial procurator's archives.

P. Eich has demonstrated that the expansion of imperial administration continued into the 3rd century[126]. Moreover, he has also shown the expansion of the procuratorial system, first in the early Empire and then especially in the 3rd century[127]. A very experienced administration often existed, perhaps more structured and efficient than some proconsul's staff. However, the governor continued to be the chief of the soldiers of the province, even if some of them served in the procuratorial *officium*. But the *procurator* was not exactly a subordinate of the governor. He was rather a parallel force, who also had direct contact to the emperor[128]. P. Eich used the expression of a proto-bureaucratic structure. In my opinion, this structure developed increasingly over time in the senatorial provinces.

The Roman administration and the control over cities in the provinces expanded further from the 2nd century on, perhaps after reforms by emperor Trajan, indeed if not already in the Flavian era[129]. The administration of the imperial *legati* of praetorian rank perhaps also expanded[130]. The *stationarii* also appear under Trajan or in the first years of Hadrian, and some *beneficiarii*, who already existed before, began under Trajan to be assigned to *stationes* on roads and crossroads, and their number increased, even in senatorial provinces[131]. The modalities of control over cities were developed under this reign: the creation or development of *curatores rei publicae* for cities. Control over free cities, often located within senatorial provinces, was reinforced by the institution of *correctores*[132]. The imperial armed provinces had a developed and structured staff, with perhaps ten *speculatores* in the *officium* per legion present in the province, and 30 to 60 *beneficiarii* for a province to a legion[133]. But soldiers appeared also in the 2nd century in some senatorial provinces. The trend had begun in Asia by the time of Polycarp ca. AD 155/156. It increased in the last quarter of the 2nd century, and also in this province soldiers perhaps later played a role in the increasing militarization and bureaucratization in the Roman Empire in the 3rd century AD[134].

Thus, in the senatorial provinces a trend can also be detected to increase the number of persons at the disposal of the governor of consular rank. Perhaps from the time of Trajan there was a trend towards the development of the proconsuls' staffs. It may not only be the general quantitative growth in epigraphic evidence from this period that explains the increasing documentation about administrative personnel in proconsular provinces. The inscription of Macedonia cited above demonstrates that more than thirty people visited a sanctuary in Samothrace with the *proconsul* of 165. *Amici* and slaves accompanied the *proconsul* Anteius Orestis[135]. This text is sometimes used to demonstrate that in the province of the Roman people the staff of the *proconsul* was very small. If this is a staff list of members participating on a journey, however, it might represent only a partial number of staff and reveals the contrary, since the stone is broken and the list incomplete. A part of the *officium* remained in the provincial capital, so we can certainly consider that the personnel at the disposal of a proconsul of praetorian rank exceeded fifty and perhaps even eighty people. We cannot, however, determine which part of them came from the state administration itself or how many slaves were from the private suite of the *proconsul*.

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126 Eich 2005.

127 The apparition of *Caesariani* is a parallel evolution (Haensch 2006b).

128 Eich 2005, 98–257, with cases of conflicts between procurators and governors. For an example of a case and career of another type of *procurator Augusti libertus* who had links to Ephesos and Alexandria, see Boulvert 1981.

129 Some documents are indices of growth under Claudius and the Flavians: the *proconsul* T. Clodius Eprius Marcellus was three years in Asia (70–73) and probably instituted many reforms (Dräger 1993, 44–50).

130 Dise 1997; for Trajan as an emperor who carried out reforms, see Eich – Eich 2014, 45 f. concerning *frumentarii* and *beneficiarii*.

131 Nelis-Clément 2000, 180.

132 Jacques 1984 and Guerber 1997.

133 Rossignol 2009, 84–85, with bibliography.

134 Eich 2005, 338–390.

135 AE 1967, 444 has to be amended by SEG 42, 1992, 780.

Additionally, the very difficult question of soldiers remains. Let us summarise the preceding pages by considering only the approximate numbers of personnel:

Table 3 Number of personnel in the service of a *proconsul*

Categories of personnel	Number	Appearance
legati and *quaestor*	4	Republic
comites and *amici* (also of *legati pr. pr.*) not in other functions	10–15 (?)	Republic
apparitores and *ab epistulis*	between 20 and 25	Republic
slaves (analogy with Macedonia, Sicily, and rank of a consular province)	between 60 and 100, perhaps more	end of the Republic and early Empire
officers *officiales*	5–10 (?)	2nd–3rd c.
frumentarii, *stationarii*, praetorians, different couriers without personal guard	40–100 (?) some couriers on loans from the *procurator* of Asia (?)	2nd–3rd c.
Total	150–200 (?) or more (?)	2nd–3rd c.

Therefore the total number of personnel in the service of the *proconsul* should not be less than a hundred, and more likely 150–200 people; in the Severan period this number might even have been higher, in spite of the lack of documentation. This proposal is, however, made with caution. Another indication is perhaps the continuity of certain names in the *officia* of Late Antiquity, which would provide a clue for continuity in terms of organization of the governor's administration[136]. In my opinion it is possible that the *ab actis* and *a libellis* exist in the proconsul's staff in Asia in the 3rd century, which would imply two more people in the staff[137]. A commentary regarding the evolution in the 4th century would, however, go beyond the limits of this study.

CONCLUSION

The evidence surveyed here has provided a discontinuous view and has sometimes necessitated the use of parallels from other senatorial provinces led by a proconsul. In my opinion, certain clues allow us to deduce that there was a steadily growing staff for the governor. The starting situation of the 1st centuries BC and AD seemed initially to be that of a relatively modest workforce, largely dependent on arrivals from *apparitores* of Rome, as far as we can tell from Cicero's letters. We should not forget, however, that the situation described in the *Verrines* could also apply to Asia, even though the situation is not revealed by adequate documentation. The number of slaves in the service of the governors is certainly underestimated, as we have seen. Changes became apparent in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, and the final assessment was not the same. In my view, a relatively substantial number of personnel existed in the Antonine and Severan era, and also in the mid-3rd century in the service of the *proconsul provinciae Asiae*. There were also steadily developing trends towards specialization and towards partial alignment with the functioning of the imperial provinces. Another avenue of research would be a certain flexibility and loans from the *officium* of the *procurator* to the personnel of the *proconsul*, and the provision of private slaves in addition to the staff of freedmen and public slaves. For a long time, the proconsul's staff was more loosely structured than the *officium* of the *procurator* of Asia. The Roman magistrates, *apparitores*, *officiales*, soldiers, freedmen and *servi* carrying out administrative duties in the province certainly numbered over 100, perhaps 150 and possibly 200 individuals active in the administration and as personnel. Together with their families, there could have been several hundred people comprising

[136] Palme 1999.

[137] Not. dign. or. 20, 14. 17; Neira Faleiro 2005, 387 f.

an ›administrative community‹ in Ephesos. To sum up, the personnel of the *proconsul* of Asia was at the beginning, especially in Republican times, evidence of a relatively rudimentary administration, even if this administration began to expand in the last decades of the Republic. This aspect of Roman administration expanded increasingly from the 2nd century on with the *officium* itself, and was also a sign of the trend towards a proto-bureaucratic structure.

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URBAN DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAPITAL FROM THE IMPERIAL PERIOD TO LATE ANTIQUITY

Joaquín Ruiz de Arbulo

TARRACO, ROMAN COLONY, HEAD OF *CONVENTUS* AND CAPITAL OF THE PROVINCE OF HISPANIA CITERIOR

URBANISM, SCENOGRAPHY AND SOCIETY

ABSTRACT

The paper presents the different functions of the Colonia Tarraco as the capital of the *provincia Hispania citerior (pHc)* and head of the *conventus tarraconensis*. It was a town prepared to accommodate the fiscal apparatus of the province and the judicial activities that were the responsibility of the legate governor. The colony undertook extensive programmes of public monumental architecture – the forum, temples, a judicial basilica, a theatre, an altar and a large temple dedicated to Augustus, the provincial forum, etc. – designed to draw the whole population together around the dynastic image of the *domus Augusta*. From the Flavian period on, once a year the *concilium pHc* gathered the representatives of towns from the whole province in Tarraco and the imperial cult became the essence of Roman influence.

KEYWORDS

Tarraco – *conventus iuridicus* – *concilium provinciae Hispaniae citerioris*

The *Imperator Caesar Divi f(ilius) Augustus* arrived in the Colonia Tarraco in late autumn of the year 27 BC. According to Cassius Dio (53, 25), the princeps, sick and weak, having had to leave his troops besieging the Cantabrians and Asturians in the Cantabrian Mountains, withdrew to a town with mild winters, a port and good communications, where he would be able to rest and recuperate. Augustus would stay in Tarraco for almost two years. We know from Suetonius (Aug. 26, 3) that while in the town he took possession of his eighth and ninth consulates, corresponding to the years 26 and 25 BC[1].

In those years Tarraco was a new Roman colony, a distant heir to Iberian Kesse, a small pre-Roman *oppidum*[2], and the large Roman military base established alongside it by the three Scipios during the Second Punic War. The town was a permanent military base for the Roman governors of Hispania citerior throughout the 2nd century BC[3] and became a new Latin colony at the end of that century[4]. It was endowed with a forum, an orthogonal grid street layout and a public sewage network[5]. During the civil wars, Julius Caesar called a provincial assembly in the town in the year

[1] The architectural reconstructions that appear in the figures of this paper are a collective work by the author and Prof. Dr. Ricardo Mar (Architecture and Archaeology, URV), Dr. Ferran Gris (Architecture), Dr. Alejandro Beltrán-Caballero (Architecture) and Prof. Dr. David Vivó (History of Art, UdG), members of the Seminari de Topografia Antiga research group of the URV and ICAC <www.setopant.com> (accessed 01.08.2020).

[2] Alföldy 1978; Otiña – Ruiz de Arbulo 2000.

[3] Ruiz de Arbulo 1992; Ruiz de Arbulo 2006.

[4] Espinosa Espinosa 2016.

[5] Archaeological evidence and detailed planimetries in Mar et al. 2012.

49 BC, months after the surrender of the Pompeian troops in Ilerda. It was probably then that the town received the new privileged statute of Roman colony, given that we know the name of the prefect in charge of its foundation, the young senator P. Mucius Scaevola. That is our interpretation of the very brief homage *P. Mucio [.fil(io)] / Scaevol[ae]* (CIL II² 14, 988) engraved on a highly unique medium, the rear of a local stone pedestal previously dedicated to no lesser a person than Pompey in the year 71 BC: *[Gn(aeo) Po]mpei[o Cn(aei) f(ilio)] / (M)agn(o) im[p(eratori) iter(um)]* (CIL II² 14, 991)[6].

Recent epigraphic finds tell us that various contingents of Caesarean veterans were settled in Tarraco between 39 and 37 BC. The ex-soldiers went on to control the public life of the colony. Proof of this can be found in the history of the *legio Martia*, a famous legion with an ephemeral existence formed in the year 49 BC during the great enlistment of Caesarean troops and disbanded following an ill-fated naval battle on the same day as the battle of Philippi in 42 BC. A tribune from that legion is cited as two times *duumvir quinquennalis* in Tarraco (CIL II² 14, 1023: *[— II vi]r (o?) quinq(uennalis) ite[rum —] / [— Trib(unus / uno) Mi]l(itum) Leg(ionis) Mar[tiae ...]*)[7]. Neither can it be a coincidence that the general in charge of that fleet – the loyal Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus who survived to return unharmed to Brindisi – was appointed by Octavian as governor of Hispania citerior in the years 39–37 BC. The *colonia tarraconensis* declared him patron in the year 36 BC, a homage in which the new colonists played a large part (CIL II² 14, 838: *[Cn(aeo) Domitio M(arci) f(ilio) Calvino] / [pontif(ici) co(n)s(uli) iteru]m imp(eratori) / [colonia urbs Triu]mphalis / [Tarrac(onensium) patro]no*)[8]. Further evidence of these colonists is provided by the case of M. Coelius of the *legio VI Victrix*, a native of Dyrrachium to whom a funerary tribute was dedicated in Tarraco by his son, a soldier in the same legion during the time of Tiberius (CIL II² 14, 1065a and b)[9]. It was, therefore, a society in full social and urban reorganisation, although fully integrated into the orbit of the *gens Iulia*, that received the sudden visit of the princeps[10].

Thus, the colony became the seat of the court of Augustus and his entourage of friends, clients and guests. It was also the venue for the obligatory diplomatic receptions held for foreign ambassadors; the permanent judicial seat of the continuous audiences that, as supreme judge, Augustus had to concede to communities and private individuals, mediating in all types of conflicts and suits[11]. Finally, Tarraco was the first centre of a new and incipient bureaucratic activity for the provincial territories directly entrusted to the figure of the princeps. These were immense territories that, as Joaquín Muñiz Coello would recall[12], Augustus came to govern in the same way as a Republican senator would have run his house and estates: through his personal circle of relatives, clientele *amici*, freedmen and slaves.

It was, therefore, in the Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco that the gestation of the political and administrative transformation of the new Roman Empire began. Letters, visits and meetings with his closest collaborators allowed Augustus to set out the bases for a new authoritarian and autocratic model of state that would gradually develop over the following decades. The new imperial Rome would thus be constituted by an enormous mosaic made up of many hundreds of towns that functioned as the true economic and social driving force of the state. At the same time, instead of competing amongst themselves, the urban elites began to devote their efforts to climbing the social ladder, taking on political commitments and investing large amounts of their personal wealth in acts of euergetism and the organisation of spectacles. The dynamism of these local elites explains the relatively simple administrative functioning of the immense provincial

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6 Cf. Ruiz de Arbulo 2002; Ruiz de Arbulo 2015.
7 Cf. Ruiz de Arbulo 2013.
8 Cf. Alföldy 2000.
9 Cf. Ruiz de Arbulo 2017.
10 Ruiz de Arbulo 2015.
11 Ruiz de Arbulo 2015.
12 Muñiz Coello 1986.

territories and, at the same time, allows us to witness evidence of the profound social change that had been set into motion[13]. This social change was manifested in the urban scenography through a new typology, decoration and ornamentation of all the buildings for public use, linking them directly through the architectural decoration and statuary programmes with the symbolic image of a progressively deified princeps and the different members of his household, the *domus Augusta*.

The Tarraco Augustus knew was a town under construction, a huge unfinished building site. The town had to radically transform its major public architecture to adapt it to its new administrative, judicial and political position in the transformation of provinces that Augustus and Agrippa undertook in the following two decades[14].

TARRACO, ROMAN COLONY AND THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF HISPANIA CITERIOR OR TARRACONENSIS

Augustus departed Tarraco in 25 BC to be present at the final offensive of the Asturian campaign. Once the combats had ended with the taking of Lancia, he commissioned his legate, P. Carisius, to found the new colony of Emerita Augusta with the older veterans *(emeriti)* of the V and X legions. He returned victorious to Rome in the first semester of 24 BC, closing the doors of the Temple of Janus to symbolise the end of the wars. However, he was somewhat premature in doing this, as the Asturians and Cantabrians rose up against Augustus' legates. This led to a new campaign under the command of Agrippa in 19 BC. In the summer of 16 BC, Augustus left for Gaul accompanied by his young stepsons, Tiberius and Drusus. They took charge of pacifying the Alps and the Rhine frontier in 15 BC, while Augustus set off again for Hispania, where he stayed in the two provinces for three years.

For Hispania, these new events between 16 and 13 BC signified the effective organisation of the provincial reforms that had been sketched out just ten years before[15]. A *census* of the Hispanic provinces, which we know was directed by Agrippa himself, allows us to define the general guidelines of a new provincial administrative situation. The two original Hispanic provinces were replaced with three new provinces: Hispania ulterior Baetica, Hispania citerior tarraconensis and Hispania ulterior Lusitania. The first had been completely pacified and was under the control of the Senate, while the other two, with a considerable military presence, came directly under the princeps (fig. 1).

Tarraco would continue to be the *caput urbs* or principal town of the *provincia Hispania citerior (pHc)* and from then on would also begin to be known as Hispania tarraconensis. This is attested by the precise administrative lists linked to Agrippa's *orbis pictus* consulted by Pliny (nat. 3, 6): »… after it [Baetica], from the boundary marker of Murcia, begins (Hispania) Citerior, called Tarraconensis, until the Pyrenean Mountains …«[16]. Pomponius Mela, a native of Cádiz, who around AD 40–44 wrote the *De Chorographia*, the earliest book of geography in Latin we have preserved, agrees with this provincial denomination. In his description of the Mediterranean coast of Hispania he includes a very brief reference to the town of Tarraco (Mela 2, 87–90): »(Hispania) is divided into three parts: one is called Tarraconensis, another Baetica and another Lusitania. Tarraconensis, which is bordered on one side by the Gauls and on the other by Baetica and Lusitania, stretches along the south-facing coasts of our sea and on the Ocean along the part that faces the Septentrion … Tarraco is the most opulent town among those situated on the shores of the maritime regions of this coast, it is bathed by the small River Tulcis, beyond which lies the enormous River Hiberus that bathes Dertosa.«

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13 Abascal Palazón – Espinosa Ruiz 1989; Melchor Gil 1994; Rodríguez Neila – Navarro Santana 1999.
14 Mar – Ruiz de Arbulo 2011; Mar et al. 2012; Ruiz de Arbulo 2015.
15 Abascal Palazón 2009; Abascal Palazón 2015.
16 All translations of ancient sources are quotes from the Loeb Classical Library.

1 Delimitation of the Hispania Tarraconensis, Baetica and Lusitania provinces, indicating the respective limits of their *conventus iuridici* after the reforms of Augustus and Agrippa in the year 13 BC (© F. Gris)

For his part, at the end of the 1st century BC, during the mandate of Augustus, the Greek traveller and geographer Strabo wrote his magnificent *Geographiká*, a description in seventeen books of the whole of the *oikouméne* or known world. In Book III, he describes the lands and natural riches of the Iberian Peninsula, as well as the characteristics of the peoples who lived there. He includes brief descriptions of the towns of Carthago Nova and Tarraco written in a similar comparative sense: »After Abdera comes new Carthage, founded by Hasdrubal, successor of Barca, father of Hannibal, the most important of all the towns in this area. It has a strong situation, well-built walls and is enriched by ports, a lagoon and the silver mines of which we have already spoken. In it and its surroundings there abound salted fish factories, it is the main emporium for goods arriving from the interior to be exchanged for those coming from the sea and those that arrive from inland (there follow references to the River Sucro; Dianium, Sagunto and other towns; the Colonia Dertosa and the Ebro Valley) … Between the mouths of the Ebro and the end of the Pyrenees, there where the trophies of Pompey are raised, the first town is Tarraco, that, although it has no port, is built on a gulf and is well capacitated in the rest of things without its population being less than that of Carthago Nova. It is also well situated as a centre for the journeys of the governors, as it serves as a metropolis not only for the lands in the part on this side of the Ebro, but also for a large part of the other side. The Gymnesian and Ebusitan Islands, famous islands, are close, which explains the importance of the town. Eratosthenes tells us that it also had a maritime station, but Artemidorus contradicts him by denying that it had a favourable place of anchorage.«

Strabo's description reveals that Carthago Nova and Tarraco reconciled their strategic roles as large trading ports and communication centres with the respective interior regions of Hispania[17].

[17] Ruiz de Arbulo 1992.

He would once again remind us of this when he described the deployment of the three legions stationed in the lands situated to the north of the Duero Valley, as well as the tasks of the provincial governor: »The prefect himself (the legate consular governor of Hispania citerior) resides during the winter in the maritime region, mainly in Carthago Nova and Tarraco, where he administers justice; during the summer he travels the province on a tour of inspection, correcting errors. There are also the procurators of the Caesar chosen from the equestrian order and charged with distributing to the troops what they need for their maintenance.« (Strab. 3, 4, 20).

The provincial judicial nature of both these port towns is thus clearly defined in the context of the turn of the era, a situation that would be made concrete with the division of all the Hispanic provinces into *conventus iuridici*.

TARRACO, THE HEAD OF A *CONVENTUS IURIDICUS*

Along with the legate governor's provincial tribunals mentioned by Strabo, we know from Pliny (nat. 3, 23–28) that the organisation of the three Hispanic provinces also included the establishment of a series of judicial districts known as *conventus iuridici*[18]. In his description of Hispania citerior, Pliny first mentions the seven *conventus iuridici* that made it up and then classifies their 179 towns into categories: 12 Roman colonies, 13 towns with Roman rights, 18 towns with Latin rights, one federate town and 135 stipendiary towns. Thus, we see that more than three quarters (76 %) of the provincial towns lacked their own rights and were subjected to the annual payment of the *stipendium*. The province also had 293 towns that were subordinate to others; in other words, their populations had neither magistrates nor their own public organisation and therefore depended legally on a neighbouring larger town as *adtributae/contributae*[19]. This would have been the situation above all in the mountainous valleys of the north of the Iberian Peninsula and among the hillforts of the Castilian tablelands.

The organisation of a *conventus* consisted of designating a specific town as the place in which to hold the public trials that affected the communities within a certain geographical radius. The immense area of Hispania citerior was divided into eight districts: Tarraconensis, Carthaginensis, Caesaraugustanus, Cluniensis, Asturum, Lucensis and Bracaraugustanus. The first four judicial districts around the towns of Tarraco, Carthago Nova, Caesaraugusta and Clunia were very large territories. The remaining three were more distant with centres in Asturica, Lucus and Bracara and covered much smaller territories, but were of strategic importance due to their gold mines. By consulting the imperial records for each of these *conventus*, Pliny (nat. 3, 4, 23) was able to establish the list of peoples who attended their tribunals. In the case of Tarraco: »On Tarraco depend 42 peoples, of which the most famous are, of Roman citizens, the people of Dertosani and Bisgargitani; of Latin right citizens, the Ausetani, the Ceretani nicknamed Iuliani or Augustani, the Edetani, the Gerundenses, the Gessonenses, the Teari qui Iulienses; of the stipendiaries, the Aquicaldenses, the Aessonenses and the Baeculonenses.«

The *conventus tarraconensis* comprised the peoples of the coastal area of Catalonia and the Levante as far as the River Júcar. It had under its jurisdiction Roman colonies such as Dertosa (Tortosa) and Bisgargis, a town also mentioned by Ptolemy (2, 6, 63) that may have been in Ilercavonian territory, perhaps in the area of present-day Morella. Next came the Latin municipalities and colonies of Ausa (Vic), Iulia Livica (Llivia), Gerunda (Girona), Ieso (Guisona) and Edeta (Liria). The remaining stipendiary towns were Aquae Calidae (Caldes de Malavella or Caldes de Montbuí), Aeso (Isona) and Baetulo (Badalona). The interior frontier did not reach as far as the Segre Valley, as the municipality of Ilerda came under the *conventus caesaraugustanus*, as did the Castellón and Teruel mountains. In contrast, the whole coastal strip of Hispania from the Pyrenees to the River Júcar came under the *conventus tarraconensis* and its tribunal.

[18] Dopico Caínzos 1986; Abascal Palazón 2015.
[19] Laffi 1966.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE NEW PROVINCIAL TAXATION

As the two provinces of Hispania citerior and Lusitania were the personal property of Augustus, he governed them himself by sending different procurators of equestrian rank – *procuratoris Augusti pHc* – to supervise the provincial finances. However, the highest authority in the province continued to be the provincial governor, who was also in charge of justice, the administration and the military. This was a very prestigious post reserved only for senators who had already held the post of consul. The official title of the new governor was *legatus Augusti propraetore provinciae Hispaniae citerioris*[20]. As in the Republican period, the governor travelled with his family and an entourage of secretaries, personal advisors and trusted clients to counsel him and help him take decisions. Officially he also had an assistant, the *legatus Augusti iuridicus pHc*, as the high official in charge of administering the law, the governor's main public activity.

Despite the enormous area of the *provincia Tarraconensis*, the administrative apparatus was very small. This was due to the intriguing situation that the number of people that made up the administration was the same in all the Roman provinces, regardless of their size[21]. It was known as the *officium* and at its head was a *princeps officii* with the rank of centurion and the collaboration of an *adiutor* or assistant. These civil servants consisted in large part of slaves and imperial freedmen charged with the different tasks of record keeping *(subprocuratores, tabularii, commentarienses)* and control of the public accounts *(arkarii)*. They would have run two very important provincial institutions located in Tarraco. The first was the *tabularium pHc* or central provincial archive, where the lists of the censuses of all the towns were held, as well as the forma or provincial map. Secondly, Tarraco was the home of the *arka pHc*, or provincial treasury, that received all the income from taxes, the rental of public assets and other concepts, such as fines or legacies[22].

Around the archive and provincial treasury buildings there was a series of offices responsible for collecting the various taxes. They all answered to the fiscus, the administrative apparatus of the imperial provinces that had its headquarters in Rome in the Palatium, clearly separated from the *aerarium* of the Temple of Saturn, which was administered by the Senate. All the residents of Hispania Tarraconensis had to pay the *tributum*, the replacement for the Republican *stipendium*, which was levied according to agricultural production *(tributum soli)* and personal wealth *(tributum capitis)*. This was the direct tax from which only a few privileged towns *(immunes)* were exempt.

Both, Roman citizens and provincials had to pay the two indirect taxes or *vectigalia* instituted by Augustus. The first was the *XX Hereditatum* or *vicesima*, a 5 % tax on inheritances of more than 100,000 HS, and the second, the important *XX Libertatis*, a 5 % tax on the value of liberated slaves, the funds from which went in part to cover military expenses. Logically, the *portoria* or duties on goods in transit continued to be levied, with the three Hispanic provinces being counted as a single district. Goods crossing to other districts, such as Gaul or Italy, were charged a duty of 2 % or 2.5 % at the frontier. Other global taxes included the *centesima rerum venalium*, a 1 % general sales tax, and the *quinta et vicesima venalium mancipiorum*, a 4 % tax on the sale of slaves[23].

The major change in the imperial regime with respect to the Republican legal system was the establishment of new state monopolies. During the Republican period, natural resources, such as quarries, salterns and, above all, the numerous large mines, had been exploited by societies of publicans who had purchased operating leases at auctions organised by the censor. Now they were run directly by the fiscus as monopolies. The emperor could also own large agricultural estates acquired through confiscations *(bona damnationum)*. Some emperors, such as Tiberius, Caligula or Nero, made widespread and despotic use of their prerogatives in this respect. Legacies without heirs went automatically to the fiscus as *bona caduca*. Lastly, *aurum coronarium* were extraor-

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[20] Alföldy 1969; Alföldy 1978.
[21] Haensch 1997.
[22] Muñiz Coello 1986; Haensch 1997; Ruiz de Arbulo 1998; CIL II² 14, 4: *indices*.
[23] Muñiz Coello 1982; Muñiz Coello 1986.

dinary payments made by the provinces to a new emperor as a coronation gift or to celebrate a triumph following a military victory.

In Tarraco, the *officium* of the governor required the presence in the provincial capital of a contingent of soldiers assigned to different tasks related to the transmission of messages, the management of military affairs (permits, licences, payments, etc.), policing duties, and the administration of justice. In reality, we know almost nothing about how this *officium* was organised in the first decades of the Imperial period. We can imagine that its members – *cornicularii, commentarienses, speculatores, frumentarii, beneficiarii* and *stratores* – were already active at the beginning of the Imperial period, but the epigraphy relating to them only became abundant at the end of the 2nd century AD. This was a precise consequence of the militarisation of the entire provincial administration by the emperor Septimius Severus and the end of the Tarraconense provincial assembly[24].

THE NEW PUBLIC BUILDINGS OF THE URBAN SCENOGRAPHY, 26 BC – AD 15

Once the foundational rites had been completed, it fell to the new *ordo decurionum* of Tarraco to build and decorate the colony with the prestige its new position merited (figs. 2. 3). Around the turn of the era, the Tarraco forum was a public square situated in the lower part of the town. It had been built in the late 2nd century BC when the town was first laid out and the main drainage network was built. It was a porticoed square initially presided over by a temple with three cellas that, in recent years, we have been able to partially excavate and define architecturally[25].

This temple was restored decades later as a large building of ashlars raised on a podium. It was 29.79 m wide (almost exactly 100 Roman feet) and consisted of five areas organised around a 5.5-metre-wide central chamber, followed by two 4.83-metre-wide side chambers and two 4.90-metre-wide spaces at each end. This ground plan can thus be defined as that of a triple cella temple with lateral porticos and a continuous rear wall, i.e. a temple of the type defined by Vitruvius as *peripteros sine postico*. The temple was orientated from north to south and its front faced the nearby port, the waters of which it overlooked from a height of 20 m above sea level.

The pilaster wall that delimited the forum square was also replaced with large superimposed foundations that appear to correspond to a new perimeter portico of regular dimensions. With a stratigraphic dating of around 50/25 BC, before the arrival of the first Arretine pottery, this major reform of the temple would have been part of the first building works commissioned by the new *ordo* of the Colonia Tarraco between 40 and 25 BC.

Around the same time, in addition to rebuilding the large Capitoline temple, the forum square was considerably expanded to occupy the area remaining between the first public square and the town walls. In this space, a large judicial basilica was built transversely next to the new Capitoline temple. The two buildings thus formed the northern façade of a new forum square adjoining the earlier one[26].

The basilica was a large porticoed building with adjoining premises and a large axial exedra that we can define typologically as a basilica with three naves and a porticoed interior perimeter. The building had well-made continuous *opus signinum* paving that extended to all three of its naves. We were able to define the porticoed central area thanks to the seven Attic bases without plinths that remain *in situ*, forming the north-eastern corner of the building, while in the other cases the respective foundation sockets can clearly be seen. The symmetric reconstruction of the building had a *peristasis* of 14 × 4 columns.

Presiding over the basilica was a spacious exedra or axial hall 13.07 m wide and 11.20 m long with a marble slab floor. It was separated from the rest of the building by a compartmented

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24 Rankov 1999; Mar – Ruiz de Arbulo 2011; Ruiz de Arbulo 1993; Ruiz de Arbulo 2007; Ruiz de Arbulo 2011/2012.

25 Mar et al. 2011; Mar et al. 2012.

26 Mar – Ruiz de Arbulo 1987; Mar – Ruiz de Arbulo 1988; Mar et al. 2010a; Mar et al. 2012, 238–281.

2 Documented archaeological remains of ancient Tarraco (Macias Solé et al. 2007) superimposed on the current urban fabric of the city of Tarragona. The city sits on a coastal hill next to the mouth of the Francolí River (© A. Beltrán-Caballero and R. Mar)

3 Reconstruction in three dimensions of the Tarraco colony in the 2nd century AD. Firstly, the port *emporium*, and already within the city, the monumental complex made up of the two forensic squares presided over by the Capitoline temple and the great basilica. Nearby was the great theatre. At the top of the hill, the enormous provincial complex that surrounded the temple of Augustus. Outside the city, next to the beach, the amphitheatre outside the walls (© F. Gris, R. Mar and A. Beltrán-Caballero, accessible at <www.tarraco360.com> [accessed 01.08.2020])

opening with two columns similar to those of the portico. On either side were rows of premises aligned in two groups of five on both sides of the large central hall on the building's transversal symmetrical access. Nine of these premises have been preserved, although there would originally have been eleven, if we consider a logical axial composition based on the large central area. On the other side, to the south, the building would have opened onto the large public square through a grand façade with doors[27].

The first phase of Tarraco's forum basilica defined it as a building with a central colonnade of 4 × 14 columns, adjoining premises and an axial exedra/tribunal. However, in that phase the building had a lower volume, the axial tribunal hall was smaller and the columns were lower and slimmer. According to Serra Vilaró's observations of the fill of an adjoining cistern, we should date the construction of this first building to around the turn of the era, at the time of arrival and generalisation Arretine pottery. However, not long after, in the second quarter of the 1st century AD, the basilica was reinforced and its height was increased. This reform consisted of adding a new, more impressive colonnade of large Corinthian columns that remained in use until the building fell into ruin in the 4th century. To counteract the greater weight and volume it was necessary to line the perimeter walls and double their section. In addition, as part of this major reform, a wide entrance was built on the eastern side facing the Capitolium and the *decumanus* adjacent to the first forum square. This resulted in a porticoed area that we identify as an imperial cult *chalcidicum*[28].

The importance of the large central exedra in the judicial basilica is explained in Vitruvius' description (5, 1, 6–8) of the basilica that he himself built for the Italian town of Fanum. It was the *aedes Augusti* in which the litigants presented their cases to the magistrates who imparted justice below the statue of the princeps without being disturbed by the hustle and bustle of the businessmen present in the basilica. This *aedes* in the Tarraconense basilica was of particular importance as we know that Tarraco, as the head of a *conventus*, was the seat of trials and arbitrations for the dependent towns from the Pyrenees to the River Júcar. Moreover, as we have already stated, Tarraco was where the legate governor and his judicial assistant held their winter tribunal, which would have sat in this hall. Tarraco's judicial basilica was thus a reference building for the whole province[29].

The second important and singular element in the architectural composition of the Tarraconense basilica is the row of twelve premises on each side of the central tribunal. As we have also stated, the Tarraconense judicial basilica was the focus of important legal activities on an urban, conventual and provincial level, and it is quite likely that these premises were *tabularia* in which to store the abundant archival documentation generated by the judicial and administrative processes.

In conclusion, a new forum square was laid out in the Augustan period next to the earlier Republican square presided over by the grand Capitolium. From the evolutionary perspective of the Hispanic provincial forums, the urban planning sequence documented in the Tarraco forum is of considerable importance. Based on the first square from the Republican period, presided over by an initial three-cellae temple converted into an imposing ashlar-built Capitolium that overlooked the forum of the new Caesarean colony, a new adjoining square presided over by a grand judicial basilica was built. The most recent archaeological finds have obliged us to abandon the idea of a traditional single forum square consisting of the temple, the porticoed square and the large basilica and to recognise a more complex phenomenon of juxtaposition of squares defined by large terraces.

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27 Mar et al. 2012, fig. 148.
28 Vivó et al. 2011; Mar et al. 2012, 268–279.
29 Mar – Ruiz de Arbulo 1987; Mar – Ruiz de Arbulo 1988.

THE THEATRE: PRESERVED ELEMENTS, RECONSTRUCTION AND DATING

The colonial forum was built along the 20-metre-high hill crest that separated the urban area from the port esplanade, which was occupied by large warehouses. Backing against that long hillcrest and occupying part of the port warehouse zone, the town's new theatre was built around the turn of the era. Its remains and those of an adjoining monumental sector cover two cadastral plots bordered to the south and east by Sant Magí Street and to the north by Caputxins Street.

The remains of the orchestra (20.5 m in diameter) with the two side-access aditus and the first rows of the *imma cavea* have been almost completely preserved. In front of these we can see the foundation wall of the *pulpitum* (stage) and behind it the large foundation wall of the *scaenae frons* that formed the rear wall of the building. The eastern end of the stage and the seating were completely destroyed when a huge oil tank was installed in the 20th century. Nevertheless, on the other side of this large gap, it was possible to document the western side wall of the theatre next to the western *parascenium*. Beyond that was a large public area presided over by a chamber *nymphaeum*, a large frontal pond and two monumental bases for colossal statues or more probably large marble craters[30].

We can reconstruct the layout of the *scaenae frons* based on a large collection of architectural elements, all of which were made with stuccoed and painted local Mèdol-type stone found during the excavations carried out at different times in the 20th century. They include Corinthian capitals of different sizes, shaft fragments, bases, cornices, architraves and parts of epigraphic friezes. The excavation of the *hyposcaenium* fill also yielded an assemblage of 43 statue fragments, mainly from imperial portraits[31]. The first group of statues from the *scaenae frons* was organised around a monumental, 3 m high figure dressed in a *toga picta*. It still bore the remains of red/purple paint and without doubt represented the emperor Augustus wearing the purple toga of the *pontifex maximus*. Judging by its size and features, this togate depiction of Augustus could only have occupied a central position on the *scaenae frons* above the *valva regia* and would have been accompanied by two statues crowned by heads that have been preserved. The question as to whose heads they are has been much debated, although new joint studies suggest they may be Agrippa Postumus and Germanicus[32]. The fact that both the portraits are of juveniles leads us to believe that the *scaenae frons* statues were related to the adoptions in AD 4 that were part of Augustus' plans for his succession. The group would have been completed by a portrait of Tiberius in the so-called By Adoption type, given that he was the other major beneficiary of this last restructuring of the line of succession of Augustus' family.

The scenographic function of the building was basically to allow for festive gatherings of citizens during the various annual *ludi* presided over by their magistrates and the *ordo decurionum*. These were held in the setting of a monumental architecture and a stage front with niches and ledges occupied by statues of the different members of the *domus Augusta*. Logically, these portraits changed over time to keep up with the variations in the order of succession. Around the turn of the era, the premature deaths of the heirs Caius and Lucius Caesar gave rise to a widespread provincial programme of ideological submission to the regime. This was expressed in the cult to the new heroes through altars and even forum temples, such as the one given as an offering in Nemausus[33]. In Tarraco, a new series of coins bearing the Latin legend of the town clearly corroborates the importance given to the youthful princes and Augustus' succession programme in that period. The first *ases* and *semises* minted by the colony, shortly after 2 BC, repeat the dedications to Caius and Lucius. They were followed, from AD 4, by a new issue dedicated to the official adoption of Tiberius[34].

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[30] Mar et al. 2010b; Mar et al. 2012, 286–326.

[31] Koppel 1985.

[32] Marc Lamuà's study included in Mar et al. 2010b.

[33] Ruiz de Arbulo 2009; Cesarano 2015, 39–54.

[34] RPC I 210–215; García-Bellido – Blázquez 2001, 362 f.

All the decorative elements of the theatre participated fully in the simplification and schematisation of the so-called Second Triumvirate style, which spread across both Gaul and Hispania during the Augustan period. However, the use of El Mèdol stone is proof that the work was carried out by a local workshop or *officina*. Therefore, the chronology of Tarraco's theatre is clearly later than 43 and 31 BC, when the Second Triumvirate was in operation in Rome. In reality, we know from archaeology that Tarraco's theatre was built by demolishing and levelling an earlier port warehouse, whose fills of paving provided a huge assemblage of pottery that can be dated by the Arretine and thin-walled ware, lamps and numerous amphoras to the last quarter of the 1st century BC[35]. If the warehouse was built at that time, the chronology of the theatre must be later, perhaps only by a few years, but sufficient to place its construction around the turn of the era. The fact that Tarraco's theatre was built by a regional or local workshop that worked exclusively with stuccoed sandstone allows us to explain the chronological difference between the ›style‹ of the architectural elements and their stratigraphic dating.

Construction of the theatre must have begun a few years before the turn of the era and would have been finished very quickly. The local workshop responsible for its architectural decoration was working with designs that had already gone out of fashion in Rome, but were still in use in the provinces. Building work must have speeded up around the turn of the era and would have been completed just before AD 4.

The use of stuccoed local stone to build Tarraco's theatre tells us that Augustus himself was not the benefactor of the project, despite his name *Imp Caes…* appearing at the beginning of the dedicatory inscription on one of the two *tabulae* that presided over the aditus to the orchestra[36]. The bilingual dedications in Latin and Neo-Punic above the aditus of the theatre at Leptis Magna – dedicated by the *flamen Annobal Rufus de sua pecunia* – bear his name, official posts and actions preceded by the titles of Augustus. In that respect, it is a very precise parallel to that of Tarraco (IRT 321). In reality, Tarraco's theatre would have been paid for by one or several *euergetes* from the colony who would have commissioned a workshop from the town. They would have had their names inscribed on the *tabulae* only after acknowledging the emperor with his name and titles declined in the ablative case.

TARRACO'S MONUMENTS TO THE CULT OF THE EMPEROR: THE ALTAR AND TEMPLE OF AUGUSTUS

Around turn of the era, the colony's first public monuments, including the new Capitolium, the grand theatre and the forum basilica, were built by local workshops heirs to two centuries of effective Romanisation. They were therefore well versed in the stylistic fashions emanating from Rome, although they worked exclusively with local stone stuccoed in white. In reality, the major change in Tarraco's public urban architecture would have come with the construction of the first large monuments dedicated to the imperial cult. This brought to the town some of the large workshops responsible for the new Augustan ›Rome of marble‹, thus contributing to the provincial ›marbleisation‹ phenomenon[37].

Without doubt, an essential feature of this new urban planning phase was the symbolic occupation of all the public spaces by the nascent imperial cult. The architectural decoration, the iconic statuary series and the epigraphic tituli of buildings and sculptures now functioned together as exponents of a new political and social order subjected entirely to the new principate of Augustus, his heirs and his family circle, the *domus Augusta*. If we consider the temple of Jupiter to be the first building necessary in the monumental architecture of the new colony, we cannot forget the central scenographic role played in Rome's forum by the new temple consecrated in 29 BC to the

[35] Ruiz de Arbulo et al. 2010.
[36] CIL II² 14, 875; Mar et al. 2012, fig. 180.
[37] Pensabene 1996a; Pensabene 1996b.

divus Iulius, the deified Julius Caesar. In Tarraco, Caesar's veterans no doubt reflected this devotion, either with a new temple, or simply by associating the new cult to Caesar with that of Jupiter in the colony's Capitolium.

Years after Augustus's sojourn in Tarraco, when he was once again living in Rome, a very brief anecdote related by Quintilian (inst. 6, 3, 77) tells us that the town had dedicated an altar to him: »The people of Tarraco announced to Augustus that a palm tree had grown out of the altar dedicated to him. It appears, he responded that you don't use it very much.«

Quintilian's book was a rhetorical treatise describing the training of the perfect orator and his virtues. By quoting Augustus' reply, he simply wanted to offer an example of a witty response and the inherent ingenuity of the *inventio*, the search for arguments in an exposition and the *elocutio* or way of expressing them. However, we cannot overlook the symbolic importance of the scene. According to Suetonius, in the prelude to the decisive battle of Munda, soldiers who were cutting down an area of woodland came across a palm tree, the sacred tree of Apollo, next to which a small offshoot was beginning to sprout. The find was presented to Julius Caesar as a favourable omen. This motivated him to seek an heir, which he did shortly thereafter, and quite unexpectedly, when he was visited by his nephew-grandson C. Octavius Turinus, the future Augustus. The palm tree growing out of the Tarraco altar without doubt corroborated that first dynastic reference, to which the princeps would not have been indifferent.

The ›miracle‹ was recorded on *dupondii* and bronze *semises* minted in the town during the time of Tiberius (RPC I, 218. 221. 225. 231). The *dupondii* bore the radiate head of Augustus on the obverse and the reverse depicted a small palm growing from the focus of an altar with lateral *pulvini*, a frame with a frieze of scrolls and a body framed by corner Doric pilasters. The front panel was decorated with the augural motif of bucrania joined with garlands around a central panoply of a shield and a spear; at the sides of the altar are the initials *C(olonia) U(rbs) T(riumphalis) T(arraco)*.

Without doubt, the altar dedicated to Augustus by the people of Tarraco became a true reference symbol for visitors to the town. We do not know on whose initiative it was first suggested or how it was assumed by the different orders, from the assembly of the *ordo* to the incipient provincial government apparatus. Neither do we know where the money came from to pay for it or who took part in its consecration. Whatever the case, it was not long before the Tarraconensis example spread to become a new type of official cult, the *arae Augustanae* promoted by the legates in charge of the different western provinces as a symbolic unifying element[38].

Over the decades during which he occupied the position of the supreme power, the figure of Augustus would accumulate all the possible responsibilities and privileges. In 2 BC, the Senate named him *pater patriae*, »father of the homeland«, and on his death in AD 14 he was officially deified. Tacitus (ann. 1, 78) recalls that the following year, the new emperor, Tiberius, authorised the people of Tarraco to dedicate a temple to him: »(The emperor Tiberius) gave the Hispanics permission to build a temple to Augustus in the colonia tarraconensis giving an example to all the provinces.«

The need to seek imperial permission, its request by »the Hispanics« and its exemplary nature for the provinces definitively corroborate the ›provincial‹ and ›state-owned‹ status of this large temple[39], although we still do not know exactly what that meant. We do not know where the funds came from to pay for it, nor who made up the delegation of Hispani that went to Rome, nor how the election of the *flamines* and the ceremonial calendar was organised. Nevertheless, its historical nature as an emblematic monument of reference, a true *exemplum provinciae* as in Tacitus' quote, is clearly attested by the mention relating to its restoration by the emperor Hadrian during his stay in the town in AD 122 (SHA Hadr. 12).

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[38] Ruiz de Arbulo 2009.

[39] Hänlein-Schäfer 1985; Fishwick 2002, 43–52; Ruiz de Arbulo 2009; Ruiz de Arbulo 2015.

4 Tarragona's commemorative emissions from the temple of the god Augustus whose construction was requested from Tiberius in the year AD 15 (from: RPC).
Left: Sextertius, Brass, RPC 222. Av.: DEO AUGUSTO, statue of Augustus as divinity enthroned with a scepter and holding Victoria on a globe. Rev.: *C(olonia) U(rbs) T(riumphalis) T(arraconensis)*; AETERNITATIS AUGUSTAE; octastyle temple of the Corinthian order on Greek style
Center: Sextertius, Brass, RPC 223. Av.: DEO AUGUSTO, statue of Augustus as divinity enthroned with a scepter and Victoria on a globe. Rev.: *C(olonia) U(rbs) T(riumphalis) T(arraconensis)* inside a crown
Right: Dupondius, AE, RPC 224. Av.: DEO AUGUSTO, statue of Augustus in a robe, with a radiated crown and sitting in the curul chair, with a scepter and *patera*. Rev.: *C(olonia) U(rbs) T(riumphalis) T(arraconensis)*; AETERNITATIS AUGUSTAE; octastyle temple of Corinthian order on podium

The Colonia Tarraco commemorated this new event with various coin issues (fig. 4) that show on the reverse the frontal image of an octastyle temple in two versions, one Greek (temple on stylobate) and the other Roman (on podium), accompanied by the initials *C(olonia) U(rbs) T(riumphalis) T(arraco)* and the significant legend *aeternitatis Augusta*. On some series (RPC I, 219. 222. 224. 226), the temple accompanies the image of the new emperor, Tiberius, with the legend *Ti(berius) Caesar Divi Aug(usti) f(ilius) Augustus*.

However, the most significant aspect of these coin issues is on the obverse, shared with the coins that depict the altar, and a third series with the initials CUTT of the colony inside a crown of oak leaves. The obverses of all three series bear the radiate head of Augustus and the legend *Divus Augustus Pater*. It is a direct reflection of the pre-AD 15 *dupondius* and bronze as issues commemorating the consecration of Augustus as a god in Rome. However, one of the obverses from Tarraco, associated with the reverses of both the altar and the temple, depicts the image enthroned and surrounded by the legend *Deo Augustus*. This presents Augustus as a true *deus* or god, in contrast to his official title of *divus* or divine[40], an exceptional denomination not found anywhere else in the Empire.

Thus, it took just a few years to consolidate in the provincial space a process of collective extolment of the supreme ruler's virtues through the creation, copying or adaptation of specific monuments of a symbolic nature. Through building models and decorative styles emanating

[40] García-Bellido – Blázquez 2001, 361.

directly from the *urbs*, the provincial towns would concentrate around their forum squares all types of temples, altars, arches, monuments and images offered to the new ruling dynasty. The different urban ordines would also dedicate their euergetic posts to endowing their towns with these new urban symbols, contributing to the dissemination of the imperial and dynastic messages. Tarraco, along with Emerita, Corduba, Narbo and Lugdunum, would have been an essential reference point in this dissemination, with an explicit and enthusiastic message that would spread through the veins of all the provincial towns, large and small[41].

Once the obligatory submission to the central power had been expressed, the communal spaces of each town would also have become places of self-affirmation for the local family sagas. They would have been filled with reiterated homages from the citizens in gratitude for one munificent action or another that turned the history of each town into a series of building projects and monuments carried out solely on the initiative of the important families of each town.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF SOCIAL PROMOTION: THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL AND PROVINCIAL FORUM OF TARRACO

We know from Pliny (nat. 3, 30) that Vespasian conceded Latin rights (Latium or Latinitas) to the three Hispanic provinces. Under this measure, all the *civitates peregrinae* in Hispania became *municipia*, equating their statutes with those already granted to towns in Italy and Cisalpine Gaul after the Social War[42]. This meant that the new municipalities were able to organise themselves ›in the Roman way‹ with the privileges enjoyed by the old towns of Latium allied to Rome. The main privilege was that those residents who exercised urban *magistratures* would, on completing them, be granted Roman citizenship together with their families. The measure, dictated during the civil war in AD 69, would eventually be made official when the great Flavian census was carried out in AD 73–74[43].

The ›municipalisation‹ of the Hispanic towns would see the beginning of an intensive and generalised process of urban reconstruction. The measure led to an explosion of activity by the elites of the new ›Flavian municipalities‹, who were anxious to fulfil their obligations as magistrates and decurions and to demonstrate their economic power and civic virtues, in other words, the *munificentia* and *liberalitas* expected of rich and powerful notables[44]. Together with those magistrates, we also see the growing activity of wealthy private individuals, both men and women, in all types of services, donations, decorative apparatus and restorations. The urban communities frequently expressed their gratitude to such individuals by publicly honouring them with statues, which the benefactors often paid for themselves. The characteristic social pyramid of Roman society thus achieved the perfect integration of the provincial urban elites, opening up a limited and select route to the equestrian and senatorial *ordines*.

The new map of the Empire began to be sustained increasingly by the dynamism of these urban elites, who were responsible for ensuring the dignitas of each town and its territorium. Having performed the role of *magistrature* in the colony, decurions could opt for certain prefectures, although these were more of a symbolic nature. They included the *praefectus fabrum*, whose occupant basically had ceremonial functions, but who could also act as head of the fire brigade if necessary, and the *praefectus orae maritimae* or coastguard[45]. At the same time, the Roman political and social system prepared a promotional path through which a small select group of the wealthiest and best educated could, if they wished, seek promotion to other public responsibilities in the provincial administration and the army. However, to do this they first had to be admitted into the social order of the *equites*.

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[41] Ruiz de Arbulo 2004; Gonzáles Villaescusa – Ruiz de Arbulo 2010.
[42] Andreu Pintado 2004.
[43] Ruiz de Arbulo 1998.
[44] Melchor Gil 1999.
[45] Ruiz de Arbulo 2011/2012.

Admission to the equestrian order guaranteed access to a large number of procuratorates, posts with responsibility for the various offices of the administration. These came with a variety of salaries and would have been combined with military commands and, finally, with the appointment as a judge in one of the different central courts organised by *decuriae* in Rome itself[46]. It was also possible that some – although very few – of the wealthiest and best-placed in the social and clientage order could even aspire, through an *adlectio*, to be admitted into the highly select *ordo senatorius*. This had been reformed by Augustus and was made up of 600 senators who represented the power and majesty of the Empire[47].

The route along this path of social promotion was clearly laid out. It was first necessary to become prominent in the political life of a colony or municipality. Next, the ambitious person had to seek out alliances – e.g. through marriage – as a way of accruing the minimum fortune on which access to the equestrian order depended. At the same time, it was necessary to become known and, as far as possible, to guarantee clientage alliances with the most powerful and influential figures. From the Flavian period, this was the role played by the *concilium provinciae Hispaniae citerioris* that met every year in the provincial capital in an enormous new construction we now call the Tarraco provincial forum[48].

In barely twenty years, beginning in AD 69, an enormous ceremonial complex was built on the highest hill in Tarraco. It consisted of a new porticoed *area sacra* laid out around the earlier temple of Augustus; a second massive square surrounded by superposed cryptoporticus; and finally, a circus situated transversely and serving to delimit the site and separate it visually from the rest of the urban area[49]. This architectural unit was conceived as a superposition of different terraces with an axial layout in the tradition of the large Hellenistic and Italo-Republican sanctuaries. It represented a huge undertaking that was skilfully fitted into the available urban space by its architect. The rock was cut down to make room for the upper square; a huge area of foundations was laid for the lower square (at 320 × 175 m it was one of the largest squares in the whole Roman world); and there was an almost unlimited use of Carrara marble. That the whole complex formed a single urban unit is clear from the archaeological study of its foundations and above all from the presence of an axial ceremonial route that communicated the upper sacred area with the circus *pulvinar* via a series of monumental stairways between the different levels[50].

For the upper square, set around the temple of Augustus with its first porticoed perimeter now removed, the architectus designed a new sacred area of approximately 153 × 136 m with a ground plan remarkably similar to that of the Templum Pacis being built at around the same time in Rome. In other words, it was a *triportico* in the shape of the Greek letter *Pi* endowed on its axis with a large monumental hall or *aedes* with a giant order octastyle colonnade imbricated in the rear portico and alternate exedras. The perimeter porticos of the *area sacra*, with a composite Corinthian order colonnade, would have been crowned by a decorated attic. The latter would have been faithfully decorated with the iconography of the Forum Augustum, including *clipei* with the heads of Jupiter Ammon separated in this case by candelabra rather than caryatids[51].

It seems clear that the main idea was to turn the temple of Augustus, until then isolated from the urban centre, into the hub of a new and extraordinary religious (temple and sacred area), scenographic/festive (a giant square with ponds and statues) and entertainment/festive (circus) complex. The townspeople would have been able to gather on the stands of the circus every year and watch a lavish procession in which the members of the *concilium pHc* and the *ordo tarraconensis*, following the governor, the provincial *flamen* and the *duoviri*, descended in a solemn procession from the upper temple to take their seats in the circus *pulvinar* and the front row of the podium.

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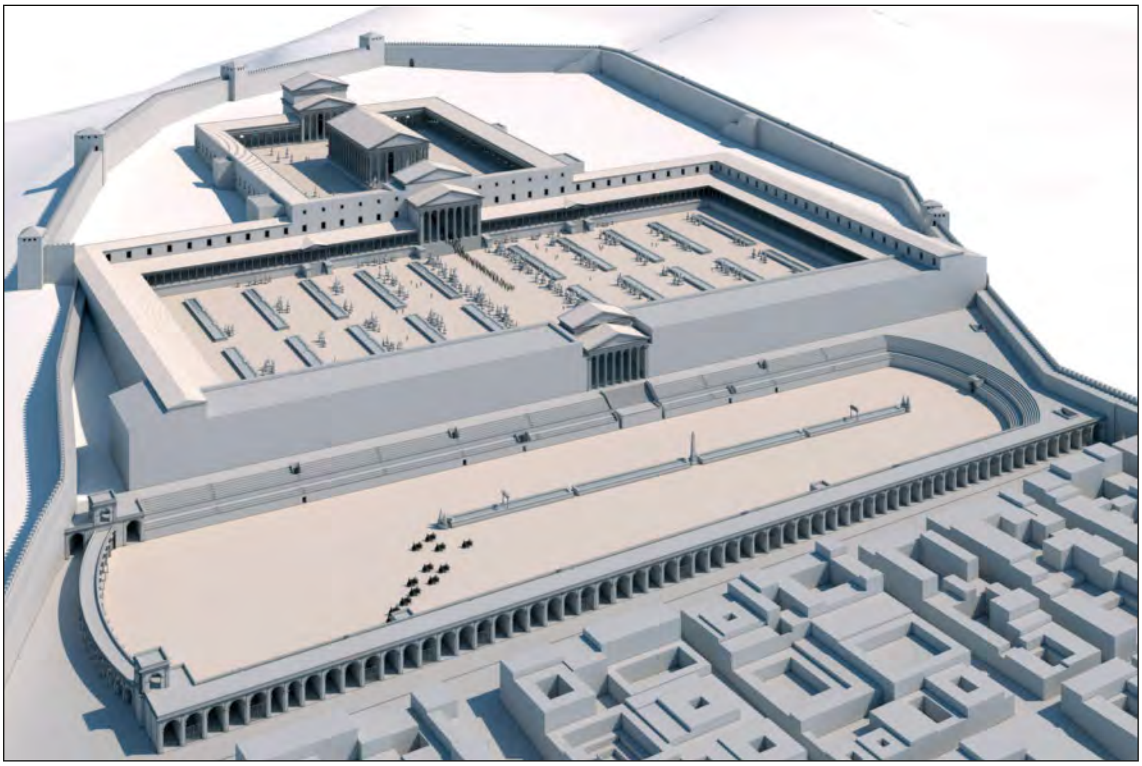
46 Ojeda Torres 1993.
47 Caballos Rufino 1990; des Boscs-Plateaux 2005.
48 Alföldy 1978; Ruiz de Arbulo 1998; Ruiz de Arbulo 2007.
49 Mar 1993; Ruiz de Arbulo 2007.
50 Mar et al. 2015, 83–165; Mar et al. 2018.
51 Mar 1993; Mar et al. 2015, 83–165; Mar et al. 2018.



5 Reconstruction of the forum of the province surrounded by the late-Republican walls of the late 3rd century and the middle of the 2nd century BC. Enlarged by the Flavian dynasty, it was composed of a sacred upper square that surrounded the temple of Augustus with large perimeter porticos decorated with an attic with Jupiter Ammon shields inspired by those of the Forum Augustum and a large *aedes* in an axial position similar to that of the Forum Pacis. It followed a lower square of enormous dimensions limited by cryptoporticos and galleries of various heights and finally a circus placed in a transversal position. A central processional route crossed the squares communicating the temple of Augustus with the tribune of authorities of the circus (*pulpitum* or *pulvinar*). The 325 m long façade of the circus was made up of 63 open arches as the Via Augusta passed from one door to another in the city (© F. Gris, R. Mar and A. Beltrán-Caballero, accessible at <www.tarraco360.com> [accessed 01.08.2020])

This would have been the immediate prelude to the *pompa circensis* (circus parade). However, these basically ritual and scenographic functions appear to have been by no means sufficient. If we take the events in Rome as a parallel, we know that time and time again, the reason for the construction of new imperial squares, i.e. the successive forums of Caesar, Augustus, Peace, Transitorium and Trajan, was, above all, the increasing traffic gridlock caused by the extraordinarily levels of judicial activity in the buildings and spaces of the forum[52] (fig. 5).

This enormous enclosure can be interpreted through the *tituli* of numerous statue pedestals embedded in the house walls of medieval and modern Tarragona or found during rebuilding work. In a specific 1973 study devoted to the *flamines pHc* and their successive corpora on Tarraco's Roman inscriptions, in the upper square around the cathedral Géza Alföldy (RIT; CIL II² 14) documented fundamentally epigraphs dedicated to the *divi*, the deified emperors and their family circles. In the large lower square, however, he found a concentration of those dedicated to provincial *flamines* offered by the *concilium provinciae Hispaniae citerioris*, abbreviated in the epigraphs as *concilium pHc* or simply *PHC* (CIL II² 14, 1109–1194). In Tarraco, the *concilium pHc* is cited as erecting statues to the *diui* and the *diuae*, in other words, the deified emperors and empresses, as well as to the reigning emperor and his family circle. It also dedicated statues to the *provincial flamines* and *flaminicae*, important members of the provincial administration, patrons

52 Ruiz de Arbulo 1998.

6 The provincial *flamines* C. Atilius Crassus, from Segontia and L. Numisius Ovinianus, from Tarraco, were chosen by the *concilium pHc* to occupy their annual *flamines* after having held all public offices in their respective cities. Numisius Ovinianus also continued his course with a military command of the equestrian order. Having finished their mandates, all the *flamines* had the right to receive a statue in the precinct of the province in charge of the province assembly (abbreviated PHC). This honor was also received by a census archive manager whose statue »was placed among those of the *flamines*« as a prize for his excellent administration (© DAI Madrid and F. Gris)

of the province, and members of the *concilium* for specific merits, for example heading delegations and embassies to the emperor (fig. 6). Finally, it was the provincial council that gave permission for other dedicants to erect honorary statues in the enclosure. These were normally provincial towns paying homage to a benefactor fellow citizen (CIL II² 14, 1184: *consensus concili pHc*; CIL II² 14, 1180: *consentiente pHc*; CIL II² 14, 1026: *loco a provincia [imp]etratus*).

As its name indicates, the *concilium pHc* was an assembly of delegates from the colonies and municipalities in the whole province. It met once a year in Tarraco to participate in the annual ceremonies of the imperial cult and to choose the annual cult *flamen*. That these *concilia* extended to the different provinces of the Roman west is attested by a fragment of the *lex* found in Narbo that regulated the attributions of the provincial *flamen* in the neighbouring province of Narbonensis. This was a public law governing provincial worship, with a text issued from the chancellery in Rome that we can consider to have been similar in its essence to those that governed the rest of the provinces. The preserved fragment of the *lex de flamonio provinciae narbonensis* (CIL XII 6038)[53] is explicit in describing the event that each year signified the election of the *flamen provinciae*. It also covers the rights inherent in his mandate (and extended to his wife as the *flaminica*), among them that relating to having a statue erected in the provincial complex on completing his period of office, control of the public money destined for the annual ceremonies, and the possibility of using what remained to dedicate iconic statues to the emperor.

In reality, behind the religious paraphernalia of the *concilium* dedicated to the cult of the emperors, the annual meeting allowed the province's urban elites to discuss their common problems. These were essentially fiscal and territorial, as well as its role as a pressure mechanism, sending embassies to the emperor and seeking the protection of influential patrons. It appears they did not hesitate to directly confront the emperor if they believed it necessary. For example, on the occasion of the exceptional assembly convened by Hadrian in the year 123 (SHA Hadr. 12: »Hadrian called all the inhabitants of Hispania to an assembly in Tarraco and when the Italic colonists rejected the levy with gibes, as Marius Maximus tells us literally, and the others opposed it very vehemently, he deliberated with prudence and decided with caution …«).

[53] Cf. Gayraud 1981; Fishwick 2002, 3–16.

It was, therefore, first and foremost, a self-representation mechanism for the provincial urban elites, a system of collective participation in the ostentation that represented the power and its ceremonies, as well as a rung on the social ladder towards the select equestrian and even the senatorial orders for the richest and best disposed[54]. However, more than anything, the *concilium pHc* was an efficient corporative tool for defending the particular interests of the select but extensive collective of decurions, the true economic driving force behind Roman provincial society and a guarantee of the stability and prosperity of its respective towns.

During the 2nd century AD, the provincial *flamen* chosen by the Tarraconensis assembly would have held the official title of *flamen Romae, diuorum et Augustorum provinciae Hispania citerioris*. Accompanied by his wife, who held the title of *flaminica*, he resided in Tarraco during his year-long mandate and his actions would have had to be in keeping with his prestige and elevated status. Proof of this can be recognised in the find of a fragment of the dedicatory *tabula* of the amphitheatre from the beginning of the 2nd century AD commissioned by a provincial *flamen* whose name has not been preserved (CIL II² 14, 921)[55] or the urban restorations undertaken in the 2nd century AD by *flamines pHc* such as C. Calpurnius Flaccus, mentioned as *curatori templi, praef(ecto) murorum* (CIL II² 14, 1124) or L. Emilius Sempronius Clemens Silvanianus, *curator[i C]apitoli* (CIL II² 14, 1201). We know from the epigraphs dedicated to the *flamines* that they had all occupied the post of urban magistrature *(omnibus honoribus in res public sua functus)* in their towns of origin, showing that the social promotion route was clearly marked out in all its phases.

We have good evidence of what Géza Alföldy called the »Tarraconense epigraphic explosion«[56], the passion to have a statue dedicated in the great provincial square, the true *locus celeberrimus* of reference. This was above all a specific privilege of the *flamines pHc*, but we also know of some pedestals dedicated to benefactors by their communities of origin. Pedestal CIL II² 14, 1194 dedicated to C. Valerius Arabinus, a native of Bergidum Flavium, mentions that homage was paid to him by the *concilium* for his excellent administration of the provincial *census* archive, specifying that his portrait was placed »among the statues of the *flamines*« … *ob curam tabulari / censualis fideliter administr(atam) statuam inter flaminales viros positam*, which we should understand as an exceptional honour.

There can be no better place than Tarraco's provincial square to evaluate the endorsements and solidify the matrimonial and clientage networks that provided stability to Roman aristocratic society in the first centuries of the Empire. Every year, the towns of each of the main provincial *conventus* chose delegates (we do not know their exact number) to take part in the grand provincial assembly, one of the functions of which was to choose a new *flamen* for the following year. However, they also found time to discuss those matters that concerned the notables and we can imagine that fiscal pressure, the periodic shortages or the constant military requirements of the princes were recurrent subjects.

Where did this assembly meet? As we will see below, a series of pedestals found at different points of the upper part of Tarragona, in the area of the provincial forum, can give us the answer. The statue pedestals belong to a single iconic group dedicated to the *genii locorum* of the province's different *conventus* (fig. 7). The known pedestals were all carved from solid blocks of Santa Tecla stone, a local limestone commonly used for epigraphic purposes. The documented pedestals are:

1. CIL II² 14, 821: *Genio / convent(us) / [---].*
2. CIL II² 14, 822: *Genio / convent(us) / Asturicensis.*
3. CIL II² 14, 823: *Genio / convent(us) / Caesaraug(ustani).*
4. CIL II² 14, 824: *Genio / convent(us) / Cluniens(is).*
5. CIL II² 14, 825: *Genio / convent(us) / Tarraco/ nens(is).*

[54] Panzram 2002.
[55] Cf. Alföldy 1997.
[56] Alföldy 1979.

In all these cases, the pedestals were for bronze statues whose supports have been preserved in the tops of the blocks without the rest of the image. The iconic series would have comprised statues of the *genii* of the province's seven *conventus*: Tarraconensis, Carthaginensis, Caesaraugustani, Cluniensis, Lucensis, Asturicensis and Bracaraugustani. The size of the pedestals is almost identical in all cases, with blocks of approximately 90 × 58 × 56 cm. The absence of dedicants shows that these were not erudite dedications from one community or another or from illustrious provincial citizens, but made up a cycle integrated into the ›official‹ decoration of the Tarraconense complex[57]. The presence of all the *conventus* geniuses introduces a definitive argument in favour of the essentially ›provincial‹ nature of this huge complex (fig. 8).

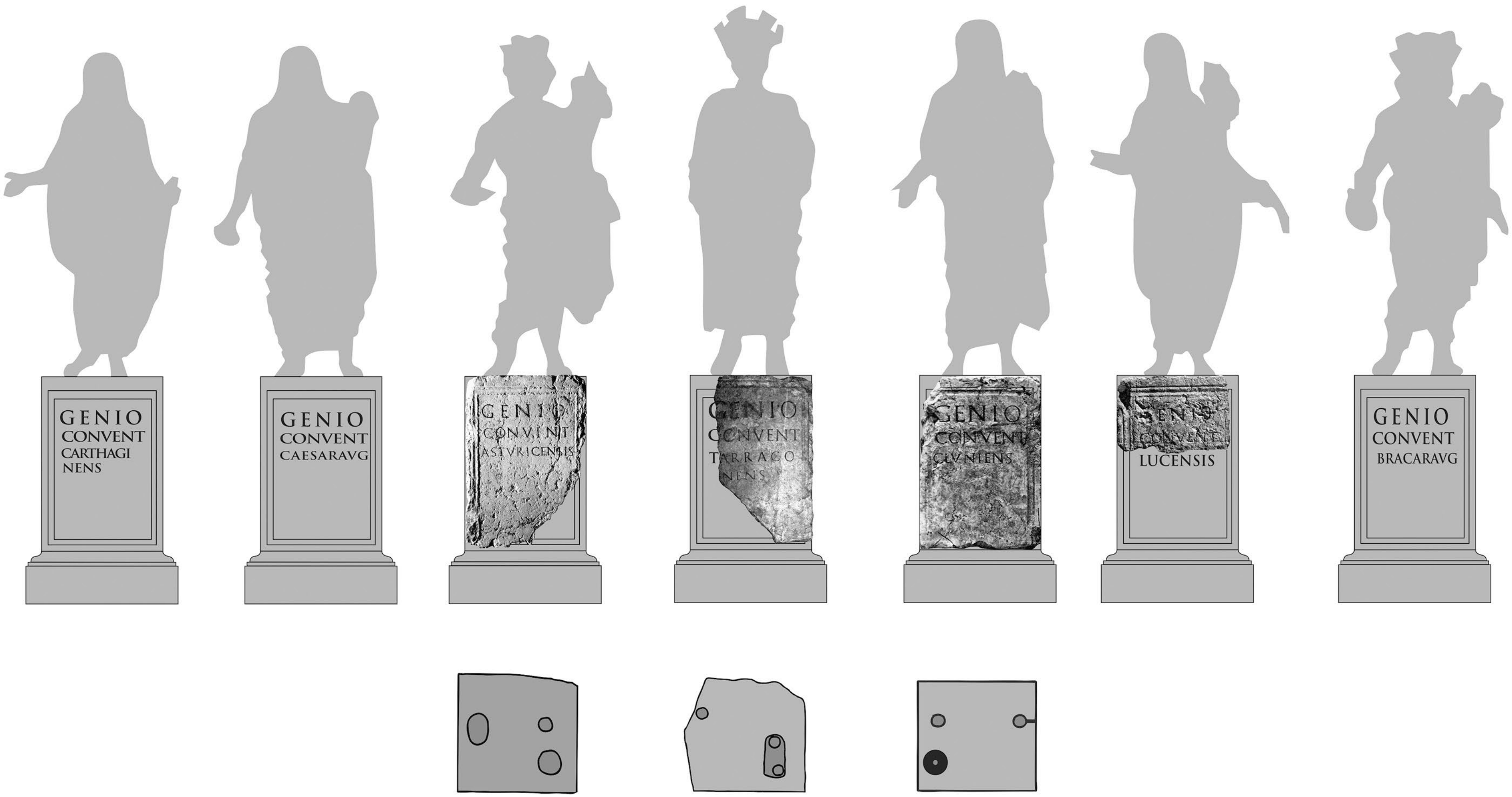
For our part, we have studied this epigraphic assemblage observing that the sockets for bronze statues and the absence of cornices on these pedestals is evidence that they were placed in an interior space, a portico or a room[58]. The cella of the temple of Augustus would have been a suitable place, but we have to remember that all its walls would already have been occupied by the many members of the Augustan and Julio-Claudian *domus*. Therefore, we believe that the only possible place this statuary cycle could have been erected was the large axial *aedes* at the rear of the sacred area.

The Flavian architect designed the large axial hall surrounded by the new colonnades as a monumental area, endowing it with the same dimensions as the central temple, as is shown by the identical sizes of their marble friezes. We believe this is proof that it was indeed a new worship area, an *aedes*. We have to imagine that it was dedicated to the new Flavian dynasty and, in the time of Domitian, would have contained the images of the deified Vespasian and Titus. Seated below the images of the Flavian imperial household and surrounded by the geniuses of the provincial *conventus*, we believe it highly likely that the provincial governor and his assistant, the *legatus iuridicus*, would have imparted justice in this very room. This was also the ideal place with the most suitable decoration in which to hold the great annual meeting of the *concilium pHc*. When the delegates gathered for their assembly in the grand Flavian *aedes* presided over by the images of the imperial household, each of them would undoubtedly have sought out along the side walls the statue of the genius of their respective *conventus*, in order to situate themselves and participate in the council[59].

AN EXAMPLE OF INTEGRATION: A CLUNIAN *FLAMEN* AND *FLAMINICA* IN TARRACO

Thanks to Géza Alföldy's prosopographical study[60], we know of the statues of 75 *flamines pHc* and 12 *flaminicae* from the Flavian and Antonine dynasties. Their chronological evolution allowed him to recognise how, during the 2nd century AD, there had been a transfer of interest in becoming a provincial *flamen* from the coastal towns, which were under increasing pressure from imperial taxation, to the less Romanised inland territories, where the wealthiest individuals continued to use this route as the only possible method of social promotion[61]. We have recently re-studied an example of this situation[62] in the case of M. Valerius Avitus, *duumvir* of Tarraco and owner of the villa of Els Munts in Altafulla. An illustrious native of Augustobriga (Soria), he was called on to serve in the capital by the emperor Antoninus Pius (CIL II² 14, 1215: ... *translato / ab Divo Pio / ex municipio August(obrigensi) / in col(oniam) Tarrac(onensium)*, according to the pedestal of the statue dedicated to him in Tarraco by his mother, Valeria Firmina). It was only through the great provincial assembly that the governor, procurators and imperial freedmen could

[57] Alföldy 2001.
[58] Mar et al. 2013.
[59] Mar et al. 2013.
[60] Alföldy 1973.
[61] Alföldy 2003.
[62] Ruiz de Arbulo 2014.



7 Set of statues dedicated to the geniuses of the seven *conventus* provinces that probably decorated the great axial classroom of the provincial compound where the governor gave justice and the council of the province met. Four of the epigraphic pedestals have been preserved (© reconstruction D. Vivó and J. Ruiz de Arbulo)

8 The courtship of the delegates in the *concilium pHc* descended from their meetings in the cult enclosure towards the circus crossing the great square of representation occupied by large rectangular ponds and huge craters. Many hundreds of statues dedicated to the *flamines* of the province and the great dignitaries grouped by families and origins were erected here. It was the *locus celeberrimus*, the most prominent place (© F. Gris)

come into contact with the illustrious figures from the rest of the province to be able to assess their characters and positions, in case they needed them in the future.

On the list of provincial *flamines* documented in Tarraco, we know of a couple from Clunia who were honoured respectively as *flamen* and *flaminica* in the mid-2nd century AD. Lucius Antonius Modestus was described in the dedication as a Clunian native of Intercatia, a Vaccaean town, who had held all the *magistratures* in Clunia, as well as the priesthood of the cult of Roma and Augustus in the Augustan altars. These were the famous *arae Augustanae* installed in the borderlands of the world by the legate Sestius Quirinalis between 22 and 19 BC; they were the origin of what would later become the *conventus lucensium*, with Lucus Augusta as capital of the *conventus*. Antonius Modestus would have been a rich man of considerable prestige, probably with business interests not only in Clunia, but also in Gallaecia. The full text of the inscription (CIL II² 14, 2, 1114) reads: *L(ucio) Anto[n]io Paterni / filio Quir(ina) / Modesto Inter/catiensi ex gen/[te V]accaeorum / Cluniensi / [o]mnibus hono/[r]ibus [in r(e)] p(ublica) sua / functo sacerdo/ti Romae et Aug(ustorum) Ar(arum) Au/gustanar(um) fl(amini) p(rovinciae) H(ispaniae) c(iterioris) p(rovincia) H(ispania) c(iterior).*

His wife, Paetina Paterna, *ex gente cantabro(rum)*, was also honoured with a statue in the Tarraco provincial forum as the *flaminica* of the province. The statue was dedicated by her husband as *flamen* and, although he paid for it himself *(sua pecunia fecit)*, he would have needed the prior approval of the assembly *(consentiente pHc)*, as is also stated in the dedicatory text (CIL II² 14, 2, 1180): *Paetiniae Pa/ternae Paterni / fil(iae) Amocensi Cluniens(i) / ex gente Cantabro(rum) / flaminic(ae) p(rovinciae) H(ispaniae) c(iterioris) L(ucius) An/tonius Modestus / Intercat(iensis) ex gente / Vaccaeor(um) uxori pi/entiss(imae) consent(iente) p(rovincia) H(ispania) c(iteriore) s(ua) p(ecunia) f(ecit).*

These are two magnificent examples for understanding the way Clunia integrated the communities of its *conventus*, such as the Intercatienses of Vaccaean origin from whom Antonius Modestus was descended or the Cantabrian Amocenses from which his wife, Paetinia Paterna, came. Despite the remoteness and isolation of the communities of origin, the *conventus* structure had, in the first place, allowed them to participate in the public ceremonies of the imperial cult and in the assemblies with their *conventus* neighbours. It had also accustomed them to the baths, public spectacles and urban customs of the small copy of Rome that was the Colonia Clunia, a market town well supplied by traders arriving from great distances with all manner of exotic products.

Moreover, following Modestus' election as *flamen pHc*, the couple spent a year living on the Mediterranean in Tarraco, where Modestus took part in the meetings of the local senate (one of the rights of the provincial *flamen* according to the *lex Narbonensis*). In this way they were able to rub shoulders with the other important families of the *ordo*, by organising and being invited to the habitual parties and banquets. As *flamines pHc*, they were charged with convening and organising the great annual assembly for the whole province. They would also have met the governor and any senators passing through the town. For the price of investing a good part of their fortune in euergetic building projects and paying for spectacles and performances, this provincial couple from Clunia – a Vaccaean and a Cantabrian – had climbed several rungs on the Roman social ladder; an ascent that could have led them to reach the heights of the equestrian order, although in this case it did not.

Such was the final objective of the social structure of the judicial *conventus* and the great provincial assembly: to prepare a path of unlimited ascent and promotion for the wealthiest, the best placed and best educated. It was undoubtedly a difficult path and suitable for very few, but the biographies of Trajan and Hadrian clearly attest how, by passing through the upper ranks of the army (reserved for knights and senators) and the complex Roman social system of patronage relations, alliances and adoptions, this path of social promotion could even take provincials to the dizzying heights of the imperial purple itself. This, therefore, was the final development of the *arcanum Imperii* to which Tacitus referred (hist. 2, 4) on the death of Nero and of which Géza Alföldy spoke to us frequently. The previous conquering senatorial Rome was now disposed to hand all the power over its Imperium to those it considered the best of all its citizens, whatever their origin. This was the culmination of that complex historical process we call Romanisation.

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Veselka Katsarova

THERMAE OR *PRAETORIUM* IN SERDICA

ABSTRACT

Ulpia Serdica (modern-day Sofia, Bulgaria), located at the western outskirts of the Roman province of Thrace, was granted city status at the beginning of the 2nd century AD. Its architectural layout was formed with the tracing of an orthogonal street plan, the construction of large public and private buildings, and the setting up of fortress walls. Since the early AD 270s, Serdica became the provincial capital of the newly established province Dacia Mediterranea. The existence of a building that served as residence of the governor and seat of his administration in the city has been under discussion for the past 50 years in Bulgarian scholarly literature. One ancient building has been identified as a *praetorium*. Its remains have been partly uncovered beneath and southwest of the St. Nedelya church, located in the middle of St. Nedelya Square in the centre of modern Sofia. This building has also been interpreted as a *thermae* of imperial type. The archaeological investigations during 2015–2018 to the north of the church have revealed new evidence about the plan, chronology, and function of the ancient edifice.

KEYWORDS

praetorium – *thermae* – city square – urban planning – metalworking

The establishment of the Roman province of Thrace in AD 46 marked the beginning of a new stage in the urbanization of the last Thracian kingdom's territories. The Roman authority catalysed the process of creating urban centres, which resulted in a number of Thracian settlements, including Serdica, obtaining an official city status at the dawn of the 2nd century AD. Contrary to the Balkan provinces, located adjacent to the Danube Limes, Thrace was not militarized; it had the status of a *provincia inermis* with a limited contingent of auxiliary troops[1]. Ulpia Serdica was among the new urban centres in the province. Despite being neither the largest, nor the richest city in Thrace, its position, from a strategic point of view, was of utmost importance as it was situated on one of the main Roman roads that crossed the Balkans – the Via Diagonalis/Via Militaris. This factor was crucial to the choice of the city's location in today's Sofia plain and provides solid grounds for assuming that there was a reinforced military presence from the beginning of the Roman Period and, later on, throughout Late Antiquity[2].

During the 2nd–3rd century AD, the Greek language preserved its leading position not only in the day-to-day communication of the common people, but also in the administration and the public life of the Thracian cities. The municipal self-government authorities of Serdica were organized in a similar manner to those of the *poleis* in Asia Minor. Epigraphic monuments mention *boule, demos, gerousia* and *archons* of the city[3]. By the end of the 2nd century, Serdica began minting with its name written in Greek on the reverse[4]. From the end of the 3rd and throughout

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1 Ivanov – von Bülow 2008, 28–32.
2 Gerov 1980, 40; Ivanov 1993, 225.
3 Mihailov 1966 = IGBulg IV 1907. 1909. 1910. 1914. 1917. 1919. 2010; Ivanov 1993, 226.
4 Mušmov 1926.

the 4th and 5th century, judging mainly from the preserved tombstones that have been discovered, there was a noticeable increase in the usage of the Latin language in the city and on its territory[5].

Today, the Roman city of Serdica lies beneath the centre of the present-day Bulgarian capital – Sofia (fig. 1). The archaeological investigations of its remains started in the late 19th century in relation to new construction sites and, with varied intensity, continue to the present day. The layout of the fortress walls that protected the city during the Roman period and Late Antiquity has been established, as well as some of the towers and the locations of three of the main gates. The routes of a number of streets have been uncovered that demonstrate a classical urban plan of *decumani* and *cardines*. The remains of various residential and public buildings, erected between the 2nd and 6th century AD, have been studied and displayed[6].

So far, the earliest excavated constructions dating to the Roman period are usually buildings made either of wood and wattle-and-daub, or with stone foundations and mud-brick walls[7]. The stratigraphic position of these sites and the finds from them indicate that these types of buildings were predominant in Serdica until the Marcomannic Wars, when the city was destroyed around AD 170. During the diarchy of the emperor Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus (AD 176–180), Serdica received not only fortress walls, but also a new and monumental appearance of the central urban core. The new buildings are constructed with walls in *opus mixtum*. The public buildings and porticoes of the main streets were decorated with architectural details in the Ionic and Corinthian orders. The city council's building, the *bouleuterion,* was also built during this time[8]. At the end of the 2nd to the first half of the 3rd century, the citizens of Serdica and of the entire province of Thrace experienced a period of relative prosperity and peace. The city's development was uneventful until the AD 240s, when the systematic invasions of tribes living to the north of the Danube began, which affected the provinces Moesia and Thrace, including the territory of Serdica. The crisis in the Empire's governance in the middle of the 3rd century, combined with the invasions in the Balkan provinces for a period of about 30 years (AD 239–270), led to the retreat of the Romans to the south of the Danube. In ca. AD 271, a new Roman province was administratively formed under emperor Aurelian (AD 270–275) – Dacia Aureliana with its main city Serdica. In AD 285, emperor Diocletian's reorganization of the Empire divided Dacia Aureliana into two provinces – Dacia Ripensis with its capital Ratiaria and Dacia Mediterranea with its capital Serdica[9].

The change in the city's status also brought a change in its architectural appearance, which accordingly reflected its increased significance as a provincial capital. The late 3rd and the first half of the 4th century are associated with the reign of the so-called Illyrian emperors with origins from the territories in immediate proximity to Serdica. Presumably, this fact played a major role in the recurrent choice of the city as a temporary imperial residence – initially by the emperors Diocletian and Galerius, and later by emperor Constantine I[10]. Historical sources attribute to the latter the following statement: »Serdica is my Rome.« The reconstruction of the city's *bouleuterion* in the late 3rd and early 4th century, intended to increase the number of the seats, could be related to the need that arose at that time for a building in which the provincial assembly could deliberate[11].

The presence of another building which was crucial for the provincial government in Serdica – the seat of the governor and the administration of Dacia Mediterranea – known as a *praetorium*, has been discussed in the Bulgarian scholarly literature for the past 50 years[12]. An ancient building, the remains of which have been partially excavated beneath and to the southwest of St. Nedelya church, situated in the middle of the present-day central St. Nedelya Square in Sofia, has been identified as a *praetorium/presidium* (fig. 2).

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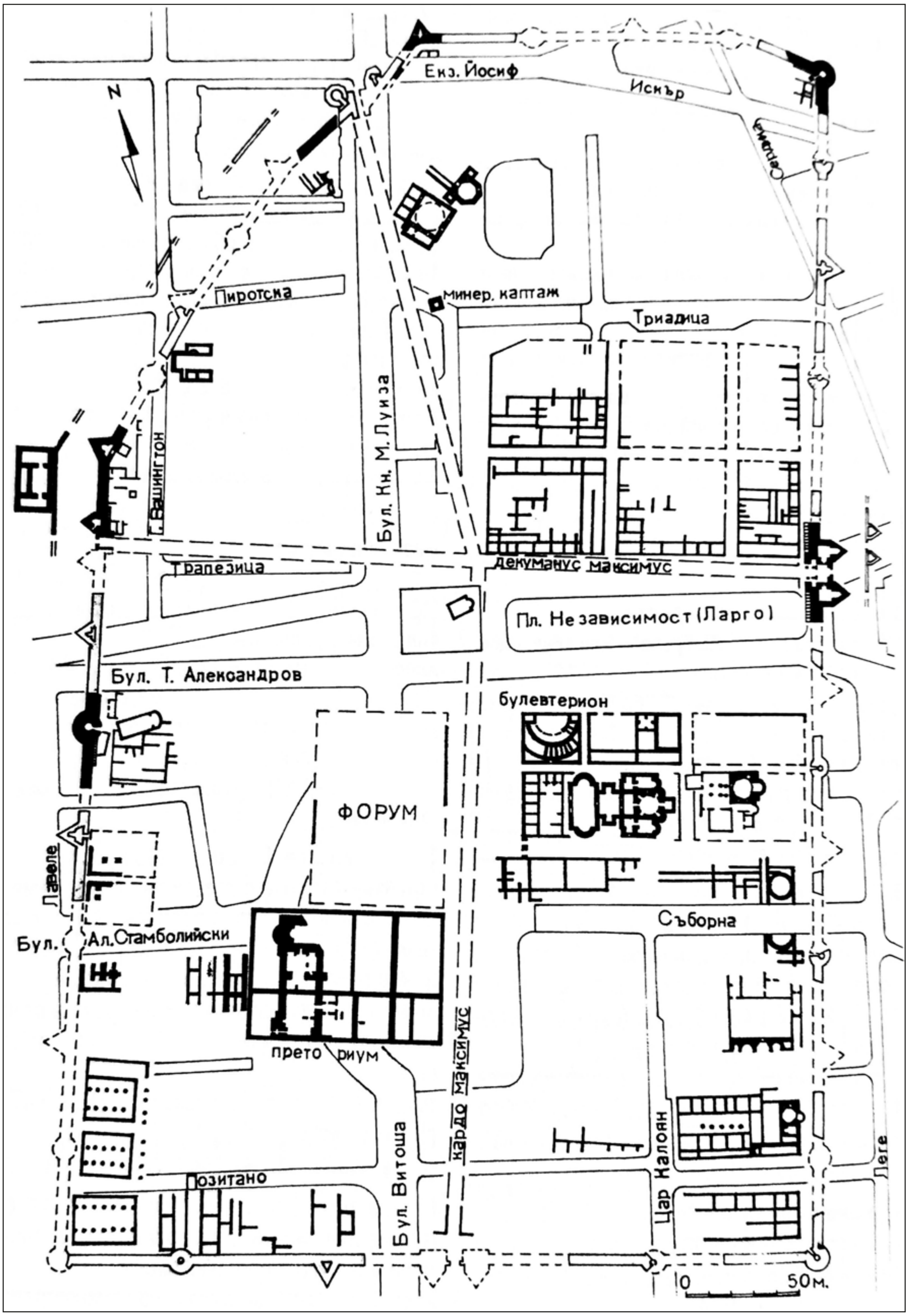
5 Ivanov 2006, 38–46; Ivanov 2010; Beševliev 1964, 5–17 nos. 5. 9. 11. 12. 13. 14. 19.
6 Stančeva 1989, 11–23; Šalganov – Kirova 2010, 22–31; Kirova 2012.
7 Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 15 f.; Ivanov 2011, 316.
8 Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 17–27.
9 Velkov 1959, 79–84; Kirova 2012, 200.
10 Dančeva-Vasileva 2017, 23–30.
11 Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 27.
12 Bobčev 1989; Stančeva 1982; Genčev 2012, 211–217.



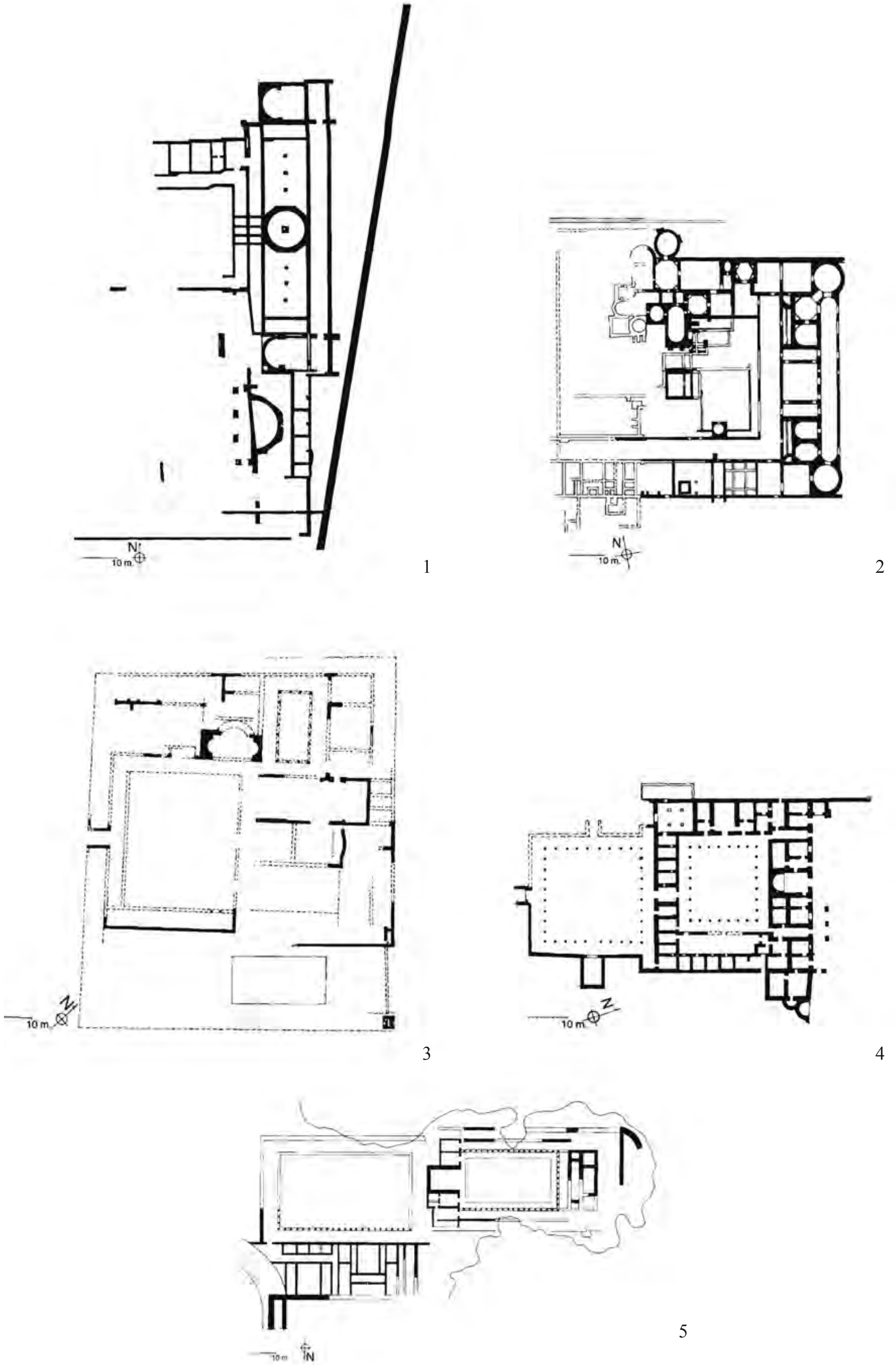
1 Serdica's city plan (from: Šalganov – Kirova 2010)

2
Remains of the ancient building southwest from the church of St. Nedelya, 1982 (© Archive of the Regional History Museum, Sofia)

In the territories that were part of the Roman Empire, several buildings are known which are undoubtedly identified as *praetoria* (fig. 3) – in Colonia Agrippina, Aquincum, Carnuntum, Apulum, Gortyn, Dura Europos, Caeserea Maritima, etc.[13]. All of them are enormous architectural complexes with various rooms, organized and grouped in accordance to their functions around one or multiple inner courtyards. The listed *praetoria* largely differ in terms of size, location in the respective city, internal structure (public and private zones), decoration, and the like. Depending on the size and the significance of the province that they supervised, the Roman governors are mentioned in the epigraphic monuments from the period with the titles *praefectus, procurator, legatus,* and later *praeses*. Their duties were mainly administrative, judicial and military. Apart from being a residence of the governor, the *praetorium* provided rooms for the officials of lower administrative rank *(officia)*, which all varied for the different provinces[14]. Almost all buildings of this type have a great hall for audiences, offices, stables, kitchens, and baths. However, it is impossible to derive patterns and general features in the plan, the layout and interior of the rooms that were specific only to *praetoria* and that could serve as an indicator for the identification of other buildings with such functions. Revealing in this respect is the case of the *praetorium* in Apulum (capital of the province Dacia during the late 2nd century), which for many years has been described in the scholarly literature as a baths *(thermae)*[15].

The remains of the monumental ancient building in Serdica, identified as a *praetorium*, are located in the southwest quarter of the city's fortified area. Information about it can be found in the notes of travellers dating from the 17th–18th century, and parts of its walls have been recurrently discovered during the urbanization and construction works in the 19th and the early 20th century[16]. The building's central location, its exceptionally massive walls (2, 2.5 and 3 m thick) and their distinct structure (with ›drains‹/›passages‹ built in their foundations with height of 1.80 m and width of 0.70 m and built-in vertical clay pipes) provided grounds for S. Bobčev to identify it

13 Burrell 1996, 232–245; Schäfer 2005; Schäfer 2014.
14 Lintott 1993, 50–52.
15 Rusu-Bolindet 2019, 98–101.
16 Genčev 2012, 387–415.



3 Plans of *praetoria*. 1: Colonia Agrippina. 2: Aquincum. 3: Gortyn. 4: Dura Europos. 5: Caesarea Maritima (from: Burrell 1996)

as the main administrative building in Serdica in the 3rd century – the *praesidium*. In the 1970s, a group of speleologists attempted to document the plan of the building to the east and south by traversing the passable drains at the base of the walls. Thus, the outlined hypothetical dimensions of the building in question amount to approximately 100 m east-west × 60 m north-south[17], or 86 m east-west × 56 m north-south[18]. Its estimated built area[19] is ca. 5,000 m². It is believed that its northern façade bordered the city square (forum/agora) of Serdica to the south.

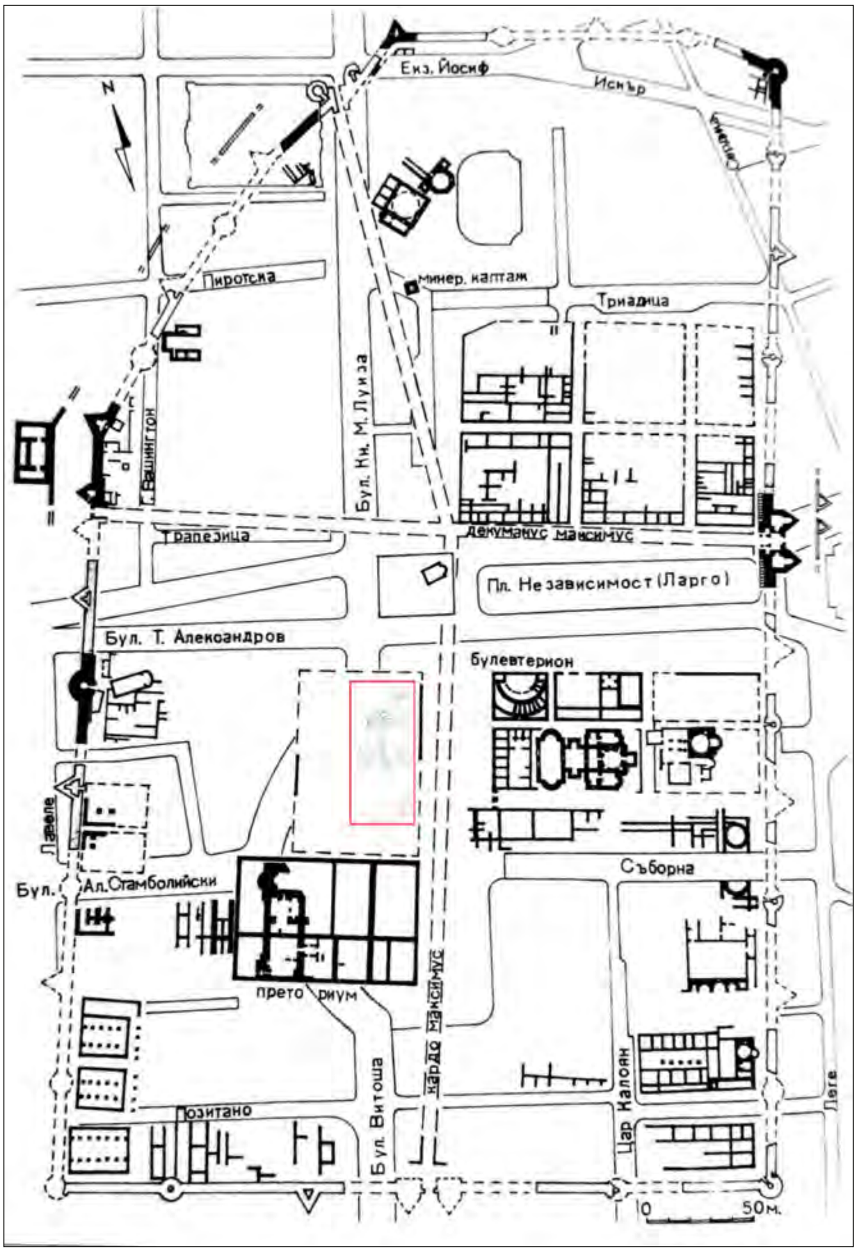
Large-scale archaeological excavations of the building were carried out in two stages in 1982 and 1985[20]. What was discovered initially were its southern façade wall and parts of two rooms in the southwest corner. Of particular interest are the results of the investigations of Room 1. It is a large hall measuring 16 m (east-west) by approximately 20 m (north-south). There is a semi-circular niche with marble facings in its western wall, and its floor has a hypocaust of brick arches with a height of 1.70 m. According to M. Stančeva, the building was erected at the end of the 2nd century[21]. This date is also supported by the archaeomagnetic examination of the bricks used in the construction of the walls[22]. It has been established that at the end of the 3rd/beginning of the 4th century, part of Room 1 changed its functions. Production facilities were built in its southwest quarter and a large amount of charcoal, lumps of copper slag (over 180 kg), clay tips for blowers (nozzles) and 21 coin blanks have been found. These finds are interpreted as traces from the activity of an *officina* of the state mint, accommodated in the building that was the seat of the representative of the Roman authority in Serdica – the *praetorium*, in the period between the reign of emperor Gallienus (AD 253–268) and that of emperor Constantine the Great (AD 306–337)[23]. According to M. Stančeva, the building was completely abandoned at the end of the 4th century, due to the fact that there were no archaeological finds present that could be dated to Late Antiquity.

In 1985, two more of the building's rooms were uncovered, located to the north of the great hall (Room 1)[24]. The results of these excavations remain unpublished, with the exception of the architectural plan of the walls. Thus, the total area studied during archaeological excavations in the southwest part of the building amounts to approximately 1,000 m². The plan and the construction of the northernmost of the discovered rooms is undoubtedly defined as a pool of significant size[25]. This offers new arguments in support of the thesis of a different purpose of the ancient public building under the St. Nedelya church, namely *thermae* of imperial type[26].

Archaeological excavations were carried out between 2015 and 2018 of an area of approximately 0.1 ha in the northern half of St. Nedelya Square, enclosed between the present-day Dondukov Blvd. from the north and Maria Luisa Blvd. from the west, the St. Nedelya church from the south and the building of the Balkan Hotel from the east (fig. 4, 1. 2). Over the course of four consecutive campaigns, architectural remains and archaeological structures were uncovered and documented in this area, covering a broad chronological span – from the late 4th millennium BC until the end of the 19th century.

The interest in the archaeological research of this part of the centre of Serdica by specialists in classical archaeology and all who deal with the problems of ancient urban planning in Bulgaria increased following the publication of the results of a large-scale rescue excavation in the early 1950s in the centre of Sofia, particularly in the area reserved for the construction of a luxury hotel, located to the east of St. Nedelya Square. In this place, three urban *insulae* with their adjoining

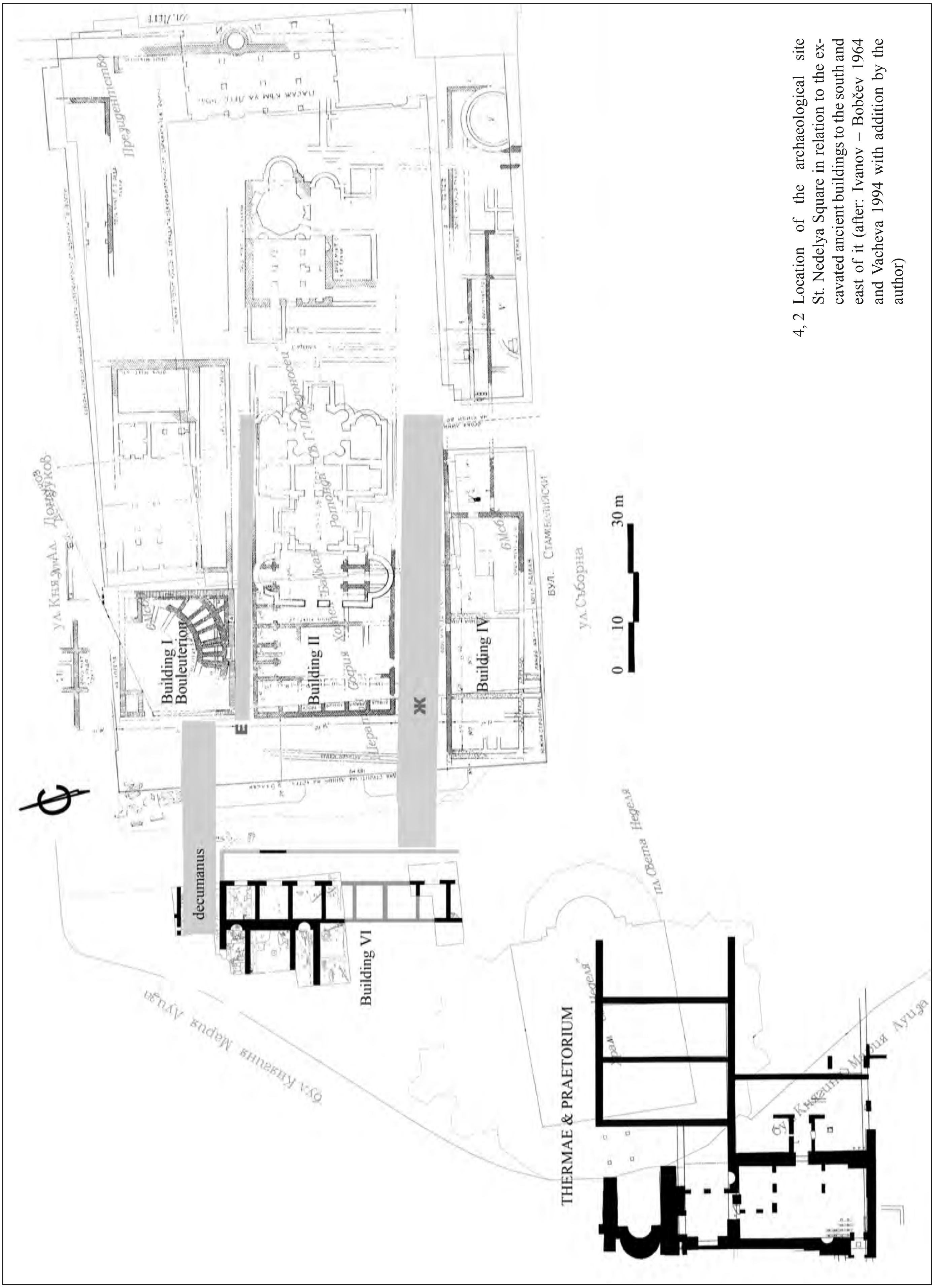
17 Bobčev 1989, 46.
18 Šalganov – Kirova 2010, 26.
19 Vacheva 1994, 90.
20 Stančeva 1983; Grigorova 1986.
21 Stančeva 1997, 25.
22 Kovačeva 1989, 151.
23 Stančeva 1982, 19; Stančeva 1997, 27.
24 Grigorova 1986.
25 Boyadžiev 2002, 142; Tangărov 2010, 171–173.
26 Vacheva 1994, 87–90; Boyadžiev 2002, 139–142; Tangărov 2010; Dinčev 2011, 101–113.



4, 1
Location of the archaeological site in the northern half of St. Nedelya Square (after: Šalganov – Kirova 2010 with addition by the author)

buildings and the routes of several streets were almost completely uncovered. The most interesting among the investigated and documented buildings at that time is the so-called Building I, identified as belonging to the city council/*bouleuterion* of Serdica[27]. In the section to the west of the discovered buildings, the archaeologists reached a poorly preserved pavement of stone slabs, and at a distance of 26 m to the west of their façades they discovered a wall of another building that probably continues to the west – the so-called Building VI. As a result of these discoveries and the observations made during the construction, they expressed the opinion that the city square (forum) of Serdica was located in this place[28]. Even without specifying the northern border of the supposed location, the area outlined so far of Serdica's square is disturbingly small – with a width of just 26 m east-west and a length of ca. 65 m north-south. In their later publications, both T. Ivanov and S. Bobčev make some adjustments to their thesis. According to T. Ivanov, the main part

[27] Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 17–27.
[28] Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 10–13.



4, 2 Location of the archaeological site St. Nedelya Square in relation to the excavated ancient buildings to the south and east of it (after: Ivanov – Bobčev 1964 and Vacheva 1994 with addition by the author) of the forum »remains undiscovered and unstudied beneath the present-day square«[29]. S. Bobčev determines the uncovered area as a »square extension« or »transitional forum« *(forum transitorium)*, and states that the actual square is located to the west – to the north of the monumental building under St. Nedelya church, defined by him as the *praesidium*[30].

In the course of the archaeological excavations in the northern half of St. Nedelya Square in 2015, it became clear that the architectural remains located here support neither this hypothesis for the localization of Serdica's forum, nor the later proposed reconstruction of the ancient square as an agora of Greek type[31]. In the area of the space of the supposed square, the northeast corner of a public building was revealed, with part of its northern façade towards a *decumanus* street (fig. 5, 1. 2). The walls of the building are massive, built in *opus mixtum*, and their thickness varies from 0.85 m to 2.30 m. It was built in the last quarter of the 2nd century and used until the end of antiquity (late 6th – early 7th century)[32].

The length of the building along the north-south axis exceeds 50 m. Its initial layout in the 2nd–3rd century included rooms arranged in a chain from the east; they are of approximately square plan and similar dimensions (6.60 × 5.80 m; 6.70 × 5.80 m; 6.75 × 5.80 m; 5.30 × 5.80 m). Six of them (nos. 8. 1. 7. 11. 12. 14) are completely or partially uncovered. The eastern façade of the building with a monumental portico probably coincides with the wall of Building VI discovered in the 1950s[33]. All rooms have wide entrances from the east, from the portico. They have a connection neither with each other, nor with the large room located at the northern end of the building.

The stratigraphic observations of the eastern Rooms 1 and 7 reveal the presence of a relatively thick layer (approximately 0.80–0.90 m) saturated with various finds from the period between the end of the 2nd century and the 230s/240s – a significant amount of fragmented and intact ceramic vessels (amphorae, jugs, pots, bowls, cups, lamps, etc.), clay pots and moulds, various jewellery and elements of costume (fibulae, buckles, appliqués), bone and bronze sewing needles, bone spoons, styluses, ceramic gaming pieces, etc. (fig. 6)[34]. Its formation is probably due to the filling of basements below the floor levels of the rooms. In order to compensate for the significant natural slope of the terrain from south to north, the floors of the eastern row of rooms seem to have been constructed on wooden beams. The archaeological finds determine that until the middle of the 3rd century, these rooms functioned as shops, craft workshops, and drinking and eating establishments *(tabernae)*. Additional arguments for this are the numerous animal bones found in the same layers. Among them, those from domestic animals (mammals: 425 bone fragments, and birds: 85 bone fragments) predominate[35]. Traces of cutting and heat processing were found on some of the bones.

The eastern rooms of Building VI are identical with the western ones of Building II (to the south of the *bouleuterion*), also defined as shops. The presence of such rooms on the west façade of Building II and of a portico with a colonnade on the east façade of Building VI support to some extent the interpretation of the space, enclosed between them, as the area of the ancient square. The two investigated city squares in the province of Thrace – in the cities of Philippopolis[36] and Nicopolis ad Istrum[37], follow the scheme of the Greek agora with a square area, surrounded by porticos and shops with entrances from the area. The question whether in Serdica the shops in the two opposite buildings II and VI were located on both sides of the main north-south street *(cardo maximus)*, or flanked an unusually narrow square from the east and the west, remains open.

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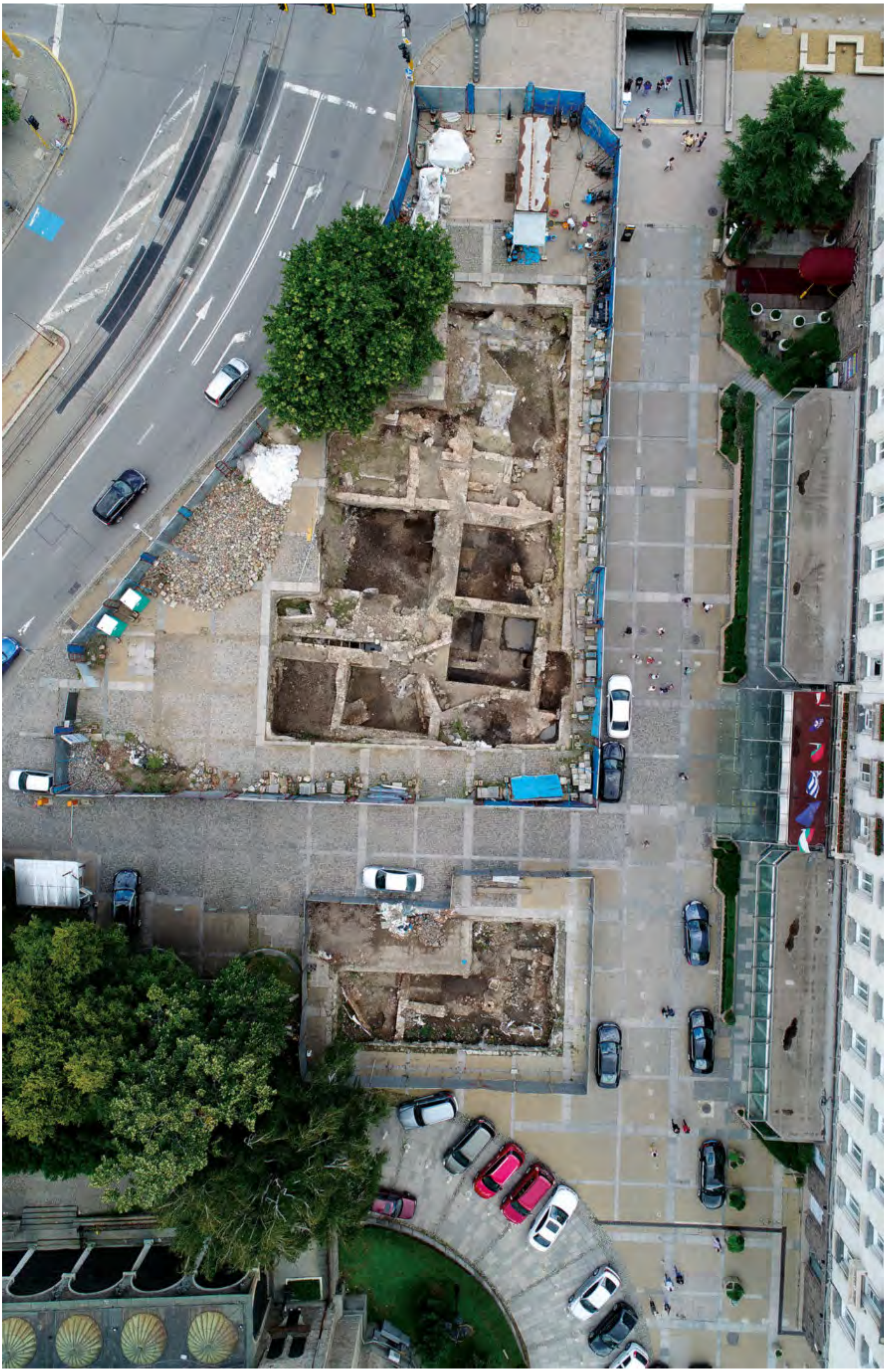
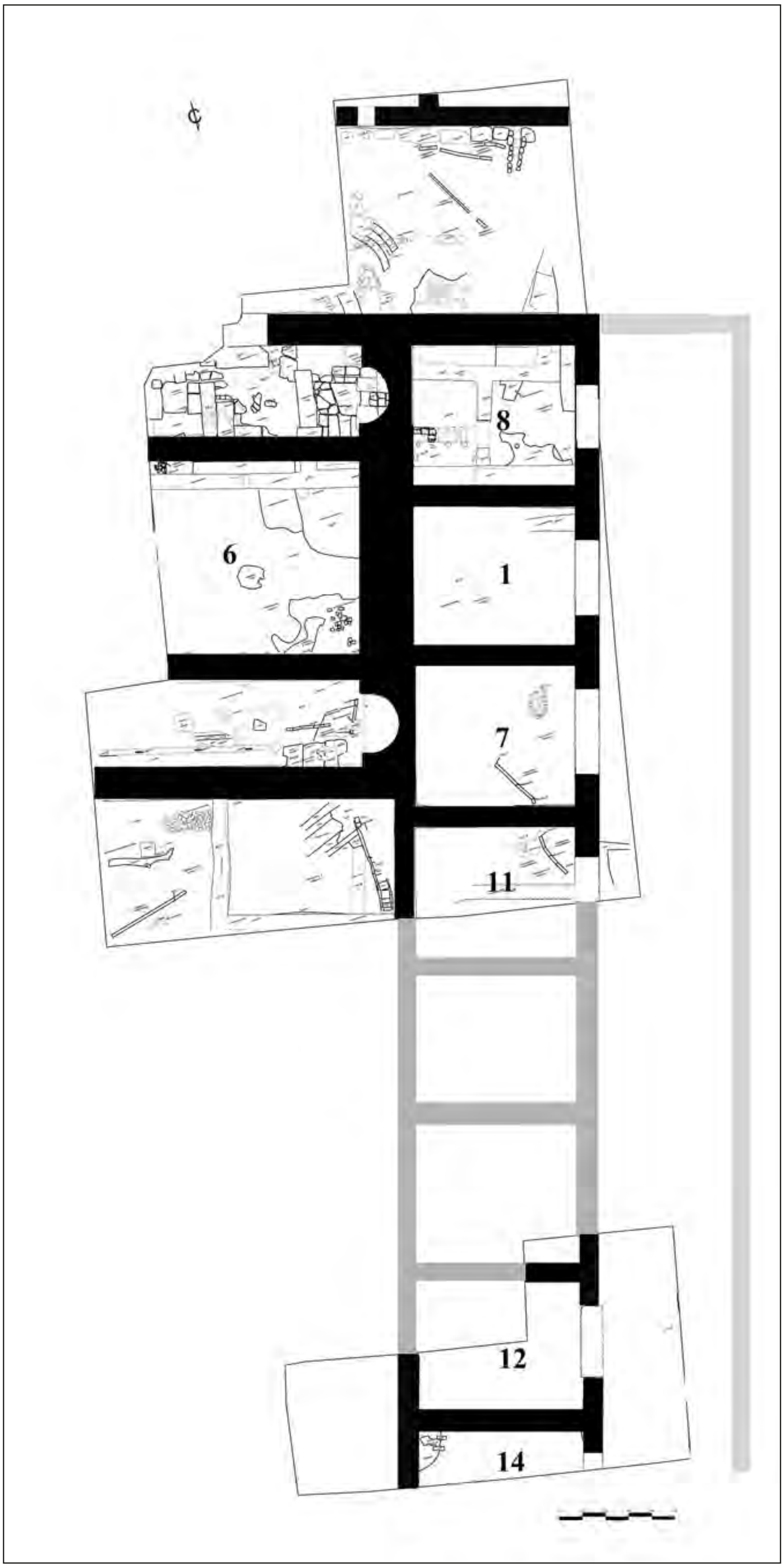
[29] Ivanov 1967, 27.
[30] Bobčev 1989, 44 fig. 2.
[31] Dinčev 2010, 24–30 fig. 2.
[32] Kacarova et al. 2016; Kacarova et al. 2017; Kacarova et al. 2018; Kacarova et al. 2019.
[33] Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 43–49 tab. 26.
[34] Kacarova 2018; Nikolova 2018.
[35] Paleo-osteological analysis by Prof. Z. Boev from the National Museum of Natural History in Sofia.
[36] Kesjakova 1999, 26–37 fig. 13.
[37] Ivanov – Ivanov 1994, Annex I.



5, 1 Building VI, aerial view (© Regional History Museum, Sofia)



5, 2 Plan of the Building VI (2nd–3rd century) (after: I. Ivanov, D. Nedyalkov, National Institute of Immovable Cultural Heritage; with additions by the author)

1

2

3

6 Ceramic vessels (late 2nd–3rd century) *in situ* in the eastern rooms. 1. 2: Room 7; 3: Room 11 (© V. Katsarova)

The northern end of Building VI is occupied by a large hall with a basilica plan with a long axis east-west – Room 6 (fig. 7). Its width is 17.40 m, with a maximum uncovered length of 11.10 m. The entrance to the hall was from the north, through a 2.20 m wide door. Its central part is 8.30 m wide and the two lateral parts are 3.50 (south) and 3.60 m (north), respectively. The northern and southern parts of the hall terminate from the east in deep semi-circular niches, built of bricks. Their floors are raised by a blockage of river stones and sand, and covered with large stone slabs of relatively rectangular shape. In the 15th–16th century, a dwelling was dug within the central part of the room and destroyed the cultural layers and its pavements to the level of the sterile soil. The stylobates separating the three parts of the hall are 1.10 m wide and probably carried colonnades. Numerous fragments of marble columns and other architectural details (capitals, bases, pedestals, tiles and cornices) were found. The evidence of the architectural appearance of the large hall at the northern end of the building indicates that it had a public function in the 2nd–3rd century. An important feature of its layout could probably answer the question of what exactly this function was. Next to the south wall of the hall, there is a drain – its walls are made of large limestone blocks, fastened with iron cramps. It is 0.55 m wide and 2.11 m deep. A similar construction probably runs along the north wall too. However, only the drain's brick-vaulted opening was found, from where the wastewater ran off to the street *(decumanus)*. The presence of a drainage system with such a high flow rate and the location of the sewers along the walls make it possible to identify the room as a public *latrina*. Its impressive size, the location and the time of its construction relate it closely to the largest and most controversial public building in Serdica from the Roman period, namely, the one under St. Nedelya church.

At this stage, the archaeological excavations in the northern half of St. Nedelya Square cannot unambiguously answer the question whether Building VI and the building to the south of it *(thermae/praetorium)* formed a single architectural complex in the 2nd–3rd century, or whether these were two completely separate buildings. The grounds for the first hypothesis seem more convincing. The two buildings have a similar starting date of construction[38]. The marble details of their architectural decoration, discovered during the various archaeological campaigns, reveal a uniform style and time of construction between the last quarter of the 2nd century and the early Severan period[39]. Together with the established length of the eastern façade of Building VI, the length of the entire architectural complex along the north-south axis would exceed 120 m. The construction of such large buildings in various cities of the Empire is not uncommon for the era of the Antonine and Severan dynasties, especially of *thermae* of the imperial type or bath-gymnasium complexes

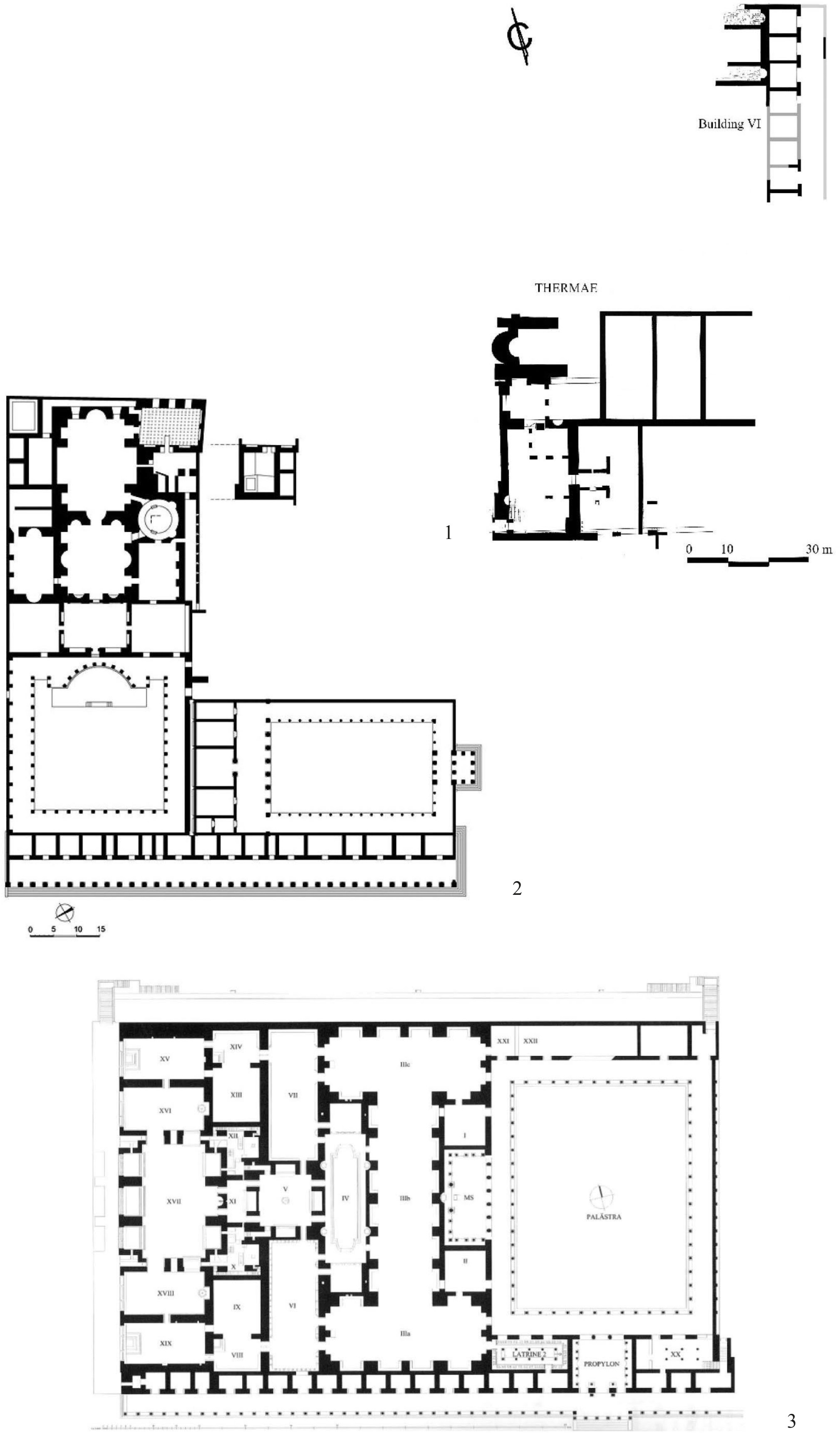
[38] Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 53; Bobčev 1989, 44; Stančeva 1997, 24 f.; Dinčev 2011, 101–113.
[39] Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 44–49; Dimitrov 2004, 43; Dimitrov 2008, 210–212.

7 Room 6, plan and cross section (© orthophoto: I. Ivanov, D. Nedyalkov, National Institute of Immovable Cultural Heritage; graphic documentation D. Vasileva, V. Todorov)

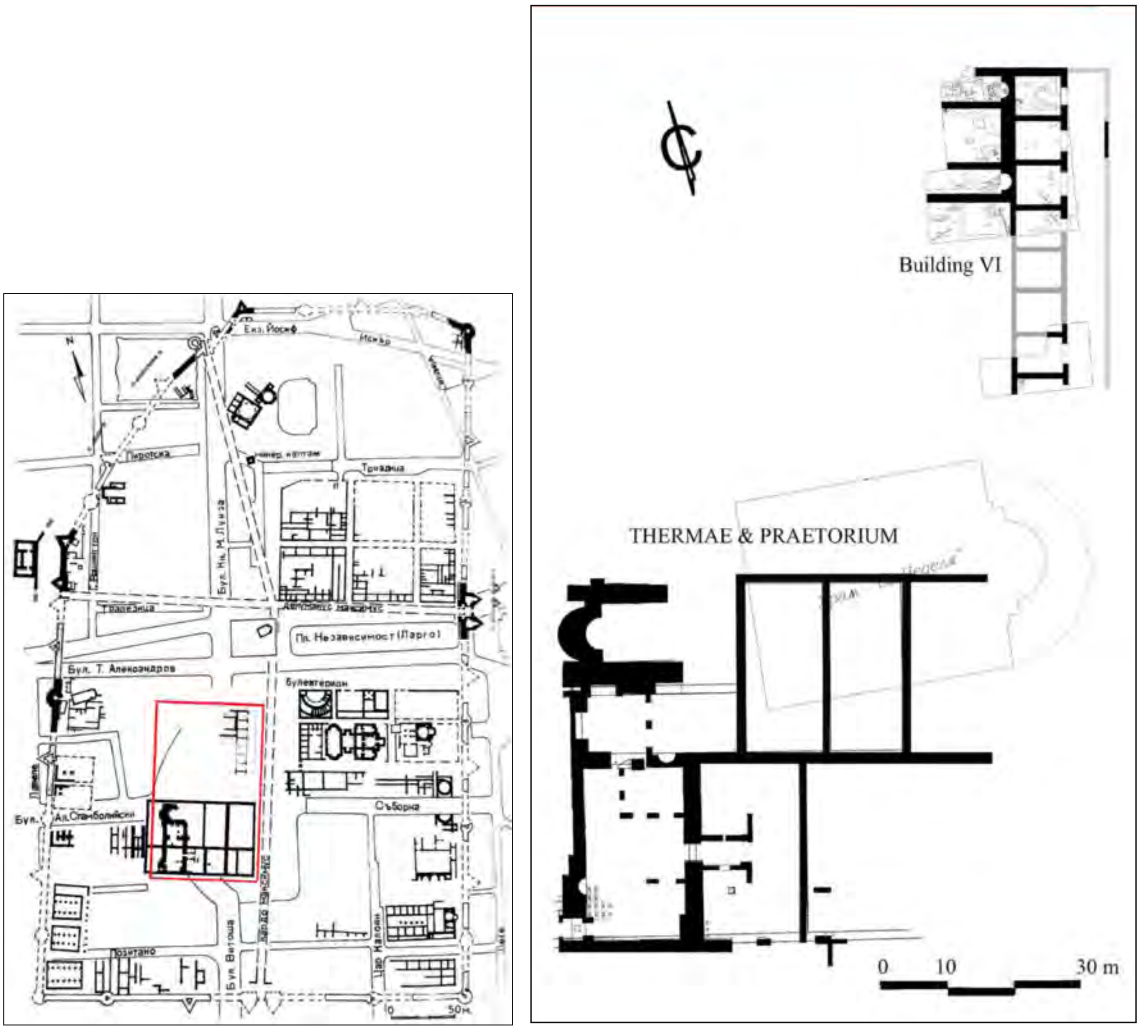
(fig. 8), known from Asia Minor[40]. The large dimensions of the rooms, the enrichment of the interior with decorative semi-circular and rectangular niches, the presence of a pool *(natatio)* and *latrina* support the thesis that the building was built as public baths *(thermae)* in the central area of Serdica in the late 2nd century (fig. 9). Thus, its previous identification as a *praetorium* should be excluded also due to the fact that during that time there was no need for a building with such a purpose in the city[41].

A group of specific finds related to metalworking, found during the excavations in the eastern rooms of Building VI, provides further evidence indicating that these are two parts of the same architectural complex. In the last quarter of the 3rd century, the floor levels in four of the eastern rooms were made of beaten earth. In one of them (Room 1), the remains of an unclear facility (furnace [?]) were found, as well as a rectangular pit, filled with a large number of lumps of copper slag (about 80 kg), and numerous fragments of clay nozzles (fig. 10). Another 27 kg of copper slag and hundreds of clay nozzle fragments were found in a layer with a copious amount of charcoal covering the floor of the room. In the adjacent rooms (nos. 8. 7. 11), lumps of metal slag (a total of

[40] Yegül 1992, 250–313; Nielsen 1993, 104–108; Gros 1996, 397–404. 413–415.
[41] Dinčev 2011, 105.



8 Plan of the *thermae* of Serdica (1) compared to the plans of the Baths of Capito, Miletus (2) and the Vedius Gymnasium in Ephesos (3) (1: after: I. Ivanov, D. Nedyalkov, National Institute of Immovable Cultural Heritage; with additions by the author; 2: from: Matthews 2014, 309; 3: from: Steskal – La Torre 2008)



9 *Thermae* of Serdica (2nd–3rd century), location and plan (after: I. Ivanov, D. Nedyalkov, National Institute of Immovable Cultural Heritage; with additions by the author)

ca. 20 kg) and broken nozzles were also found, but they are less numerous[42]. The time when this activity, apparently related to the processing of copper (bronze [?]), took place here is dated precisely between the 270s and the beginning of the 4th century. The coins found in the context were minted during the reign of the emperors Gordian III (AD 238–244), Claudius II (AD 268–270), Aurelian (AD 270–275), and Probus (AD 276–280)[43]. Later, in Room 1, two successive floors of white and pink mortar were built, ›sealing‹ the situation. During the excavations, 22 coins were found between the two mortar floors, 18 of which are identified (one of Licinius I, issue from AD 313, and 17 of Constantine I, with a latest date of the issues in AD 335). This signifies that the production activity, unusual for an urban environment, was relatively short-lived.

When examining the finds from Room 1 of the so-called *praetorium*, given the identical materials found in the eastern rooms of Building VI, it is noteworthy that the volume of the waste from the large-scale activity that was carried out here in the late 3rd – early 4th century does not seem to correspond to the technological process of coinage[44]. The city mint ceased its activities following

[42] Dr. A. Cholakova provided the summarized data from the statistical analysis and the quantification of the finds, for which I express my gratitude.

[43] I am grateful to Assoc. Prof. Dr. D. Vladimirova-Aladzhova for identifying all coins from the investigations at St. Nedelya Square in 2015–2018.

[44] Cholakova 2018.

10 Room 1 (late 3rd – early 4th): Level with metalworking residues (1), floor level with furnace remains and slag pit (2) (© graphic documentation: E. Nikolova)

the regulations of emperor Gallienus (AD 253–268)[45]. Serdica, after acquiring the statute of a provincial capital, between the time of emperor Aurelian (AD 270–275) and AD 313/314 with brief intermissions, accommodated four or five *officinae* of the state's mint, whose main function was the coinage of gold and silver coins[46]. In Serdica in this period, in addition to coins of precious

[45] Mušmov 1926, 27.
[46] Božkova 1977, 4.

11 Finds: Clay nozzle fragments (1), slag (2), cylindrical ingot (3), blanks (4), coins of emperor Aurelian, minted in Serdica (5. 6) (© 1–3. 5–6: V. Katsarova; 4: Regional History Museum, Sofia)

metals, bronze coins were minted for almost all emperors – Aurelian, Diocletian, Maximian Hercules, Galerius, Maximinus, Constantine I, etc.[47].

In 2017, comparative laboratory analyses were carried out on samples of metal adhering to clay nozzle fragments, two coin blanks (discovered during the excavations in 1982), two coins of emperor Aurelian, minted in Serdica[48], and a cylindrical ingot (found in the respective context in Room 7 of Building VI)[49] (fig. 11). The data revealed that the chemical composition of the metal, covering the nozzles, significantly differs from that on the other examined objects – blanks, coins, and ingot. Another result was the similarity between the chemical composition of the metal of the blanks and of the cylindrical ingot, especially regarding the increased silver content in them. The composition of the blanks and the coins, minted in Serdica's mint under emperor Aurelian, greatly differs. These preliminary results allow the problem of the functions of the large public building in the centre of Serdica to be approached from a slightly different perspective.

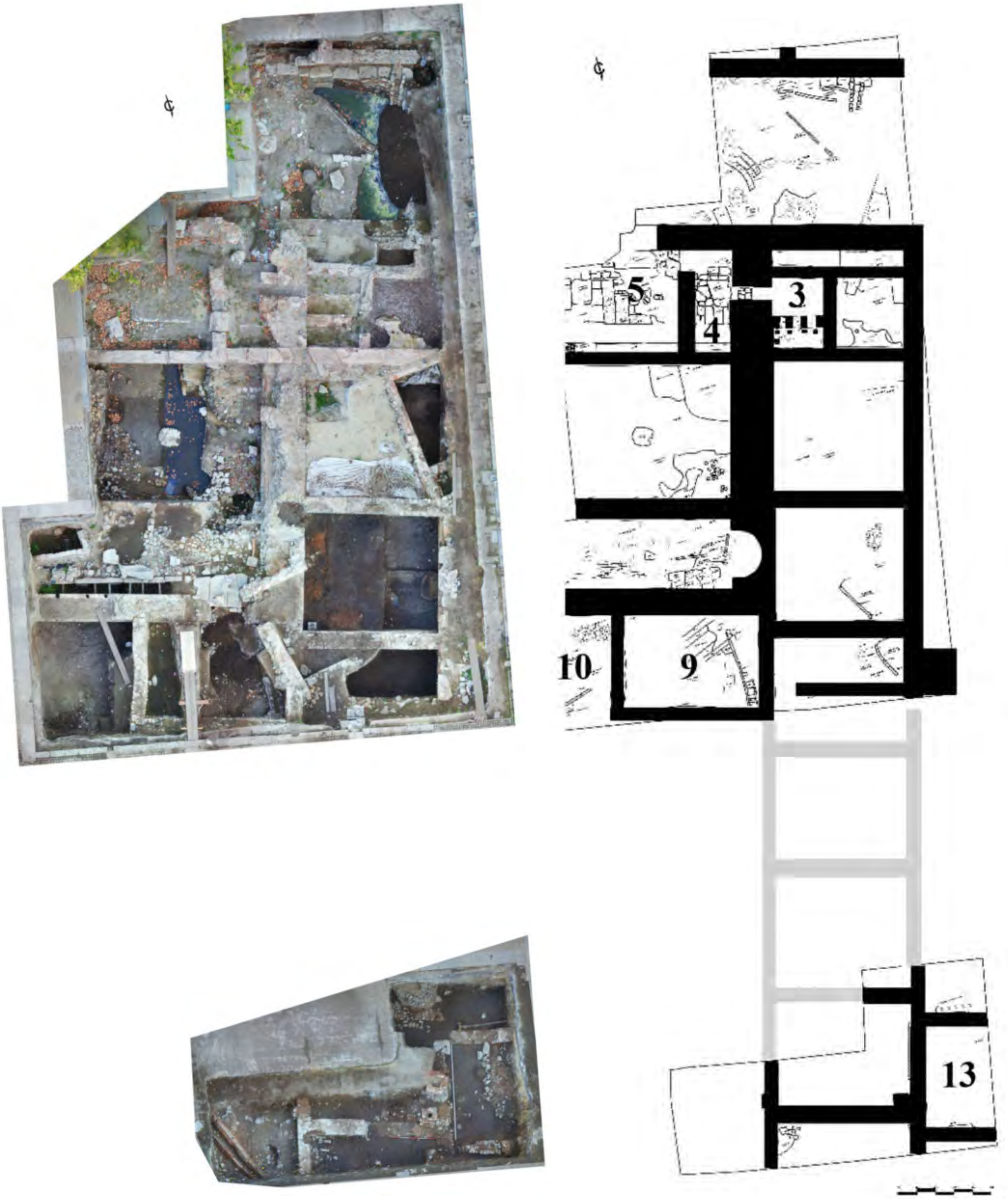
Having the Danube as a border between the Empire and the barbarian world by the end of the 3rd century brought significant changes to the life of the population of the interior of the Balkans. In the early 4th century, the constant threat of barbarian attacks and the contested power struggle between Constantine I and Licinius I led to an increase in the military presence here[50]. Due to the dense construction of the urban *insulae* in the newly built provincial capital of Serdica, the possibilities for providing a building for the needs of the provincial government were limited. On the other hand, the maintenance of large public *thermae* was already financially straining for the city government. This is evidenced by the construction at that time in Serdica of a number of smaller

47 Božkova 1977, 4–8.

48 The coins are registered in the numismatic collection of the Regional Historical Museum – Sofia: № МИСМ 840 (fig. 11/5) and № МИСМ 931(fig. 11/6). I would like to thank M. Doychinova, curator of the numismatic collection, for his assistance.

49 The analyses of the chemical composition of the above-listed finds are preliminary; I am grateful to Dr. P. Penkova and Dr. A. Cholakova from NAIM-BAS for the analyses and the observations on the differences between the samples.

50 Velkov 1959, 26–32.



12 Plan of the Building VI (4th– 6th century) (after: I. Ivanov, D. Nedyalkov, National Institute of Immovable Cultural Heritage; with additions by the author)

bathing facilities *(balnea meritoria)*, which were probably rented out[51]. The *thermae* building, whose substantial rooms offered considerable space, was turned into an administrative one, and for a short time even the manufacture of metal products, possibly for military needs, was located in it[52]. The finds of coin blanks and cylindrical ingots could be the product of unregulated counterfeiting, well disguised behind an official activity that was apparently permitted by the authorities. Similar finds were discovered at various locations in the city of Trier, including in a private villa. This ›barbaric‹ coinage is associated with the short-lived rule of the ›Gallic emperors‹ – the separatists Tetricus I and Tetricus II – and dates from the period of AD 275–285[53].

1

2

3

13 Room 10, level with fire from AD 470s: Charred remains of sacks with cereals (1), restored ceramic vessels (2), hand mill (3) (© 1: V. Katsarova; 2–3: A. Stanev)

Given the results from the archaeological excavations, it is difficult to establish how long the building of Serdica's *thermae* fulfilled these new functions. Judging by the described stratigraphic situations in Room 1 of Building VI, a change in its functions occurred at the latest in the 330s. There is a hypothesis among scholars that at the end of the 320s, the state (imperial) residence, which provided accommodation not only for the governor of the province of Dacia Mediterranea but also for the emperor himself, was located not in Serdica, but some 15 km northwest from the city, in a large architectural complex (villa) discovered in Gradishteto locality near the present-day town of Kostinbrod – *palatium/praetorium Scretisca*[54].

Due to the numerous reconstructions in more recent times in the surroundings of St. Nedelya church, the cultural layers from Late Antiquity have been significantly disturbed. The walls of the building appear at a depth between 0.40 and 1.00 m from the level of the modern pavements on the street and square. The excavations in 2015–2018 revealed that around the middle of the 4th century, the northeast corner (Room 8 and the northern part of Room 6) was reconstructed (fig. 12). A hypocaust was built, whose canal bored through the northern semi-circular niche. More bricks and *spolia* were used in the construction of the new walls. During this period, many water pipes were laid, the routes of which cross various rooms of the building.

Towards the end of the 4th–5th century, two new rooms were built to the south of the great hall (Room 6). Around the last quarter of the 5th century, an intense fire broke out in the south-western Room 10 (fig. 13) that was used as a warehouse, and a large number of ceramic vessels and piled-

[51] Heinz 1983, 26; Dinčev 2011, 115–120.
[52] Cholakova 2018.
[53] Knickrehm 2014, 87–116.
[54] Dinčev 2003, 57–61; Dinčev 2020, 9 f.

14 Lead seal of military commander Priscus (end of the 6th – beginning of the 7th century) (© K. Georgiev)

up sacks of cereals (wheat, lentils, peas, rye, millet, barley and beans)[55] burned. Among the burnt remains, over 500 coins dating from the middle of the 4th century to the 470s[56] were found. This seems to be the time when this part of the building completely lost its public role and had mainly residential functions.

The north-eastern quarter of the building continued to function until the end of the 6th century, and most likely until the beginning of the 7th century. Its last occupants used two household furnaces built in Rooms 7 and 12. The latest dated artefacts from antiquity are coins of the emperors Maurice Tiberius (AD 582–602), Phocas (AD 602–610) and Heraclius (AD 610–641). Unfortunately, the coins and the two lead seals, found in Room 11, one of which is of the famous military commander Priscus (fig. 14) from the end of the 6th and beginning of the 7th century[57], cannot be related to contemporaneous habitation levels.

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[55] Palaeobotanical analyses by Dr. I. Hristova and Prof. E. Marinova.
[56] Vladimirova-Aladžova 2017.
[57] Vladimirova-Aladžova 2016, 33–37 fig. 2.

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EARLY CHRISTIAN CULT ARCHITECTURE IN PHILIPPOPOLIS IN THE CONTEXT OF URBAN CHANGES DURING LATE ANTIQUITY

ABSTRACT

The recent intensive archaeological excavations on the territory of the contemporary town of Plovdiv revealed a wealth of information and new facts relating to the urban changes during Late Antiquity – the time when the city became the thriving capital of Diocletianic Thrace. The exploration and display *in situ* of the Episcopal Basilica of Philippopolis, the largest Christian church in the city, was finalised in early 2020. A smaller basilica was localised in the eastern outskirts of the city, right next to the fortification wall. An impressive ensemble of a colonnaded street leading to the Eastern Gate, the main thoroughfare in and out of the late antique city, was unearthed. Adjacent to the gate, *extra muros* a *martyrium* and a large early Christian complex were uncovered. A basilica was erected on the place of the pagan temple of Apollo Kendrisos, built on top of a hill *extra muros*. The early Christian cult buildings constructed in Philippopolis and the related urban changes appeared as a result of the overall Christianisation of Thrace and the role of the city as a capital and a major episcopal centre.

KEYWORDS

Philippopolis – Episcopal Basilica – *martyrium – late antique mosaics – opus tessellatum*

The urban plan of Philippopolis during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and during Late Antiquity has been studied by a number of researchers[1]. The city is located in the fertile Thracian plain, next to the deep Hebros River and along the important Singidunum–Serdica–Philippopolis–Constantinopolis road. The three naturally fortified hills where the earliest fortifications were built functioned rather as a fortified point to protect the population from enemy attacks. The urban plan in the lowlands was developed in line with the principles of the Hippodamian Plan. There is a deviation of 15–16° to the northeast[2]. The main axes *cardo maximus* and *decumanus maximus* are not very pronounced. They intersect at the eastern entrance of the agora. The streets are 5.80 m wide on the average and form *insulae*, which are 51–72.50 m long (east-west), and 24.50–34 m wide (north-south). The major landmarks in the organisation of the Roman city are the large public buildings and facilities. Philippopolis is a city built according to the canons of Roman urban planning, with a large town square, open theatre, stadium, temples, and baths (fig. 1). The fortification system is a fundamental structural element. In the early years of Roman rule no new fortifications were built in Philippopolis, and the city in the plain was not protected by fortress walls. The fortifications of Nebet Tepe from the pre-Roman period were maintained. In AD 172,

[1] Botušarova – Kesjakova 1983; Kesjakova 1999, 7–25; Kesjakova 2012; Martinova – Bospačieva 2002.
[2] Kesjakova 1999, 11.

during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, a fortification wall was built which encompassed Trimontium (the Three Hills) and the city in the lowlands, and represented a single fortification system[3].

The devastating destruction of the city as a result of the Gothic invasions in AD 251 and the spread of Christianity are two factors that brought about significant urban changes in Philippopolis during Late Antiquity, attested in almost all excavated sites throughout modern Plovdiv. The streets were raised by about 1 m, and were paved with large syenite slabs. The waste water collection system was repaired. An aqueduct was built, which provided clean potable water from the Rhodope Mountains. New residential and public buildings were constructed. Particular attention was given to the cult buildings associated with the new Christian religion.

The Episcopal Basilica[4] is situated to the east of the agora. It is a three-aisle basilica, with an apse to the east, a narthex and an atrium to the west. Its total length is about 83 m, and its width is about 36 m. The stylobates between the aisles are made of large marble blocks. A massive marble pulpit is erected on the axis of the central aisle. The altar is structured on a site set in the eastern part of the central aisle, surrounded by a low marble partition, delineating the presbytery. A special feature in the liturgical plan is the existing *deambulatorium*, which provided access for the laymen to the apse. The basilica could be accessed through five entrances, three to the central aisle and one each to the south and north aisles. Remains of brick partitions covered with murals were found between the aisles. Apart from its imposing dimensions, the building is notable for its outstandingly rich interior design and mosaic floors. The three aisles of the basilica, the narthex and the porticos of the *atrium* are covered with floor mosaics spreading over a total area of more than 2,000 m² (fig. 2). The stratigraphic studies during the conservation process revealed the presence of three floors laid on top of one another[5].

The first floor of the basilica is made of pink mortar in *opus signinum*. Researchers point to the coin of Licinius I (AD 308–324), found in it, as a *terminus post quem* for its construction[6]. The second floor of the basilica is made of mosaic in *opus tessellatum*, laid in several stages in the period from the mid-4th to the early 5th century AD. The mosaic floors were laid in stages, the earliest being the one in the central aisle, and afterwards mosaic was laid on the floors in the southern aisle, the apse, the narthex, the porticos and the premises around the southern portico. The third floor of the basilica was laid on the earlier mosaics. It was made of stone *tesserae* in *opus tessellatum* in the period from the end of the 5th to the mid-6th century AD[7].

The mosaics from different periods vary in terms of their compositional schemes, decoration and technology. The earliest mosaic unearthed in the central aisle is relatively monochrome and exhibits the typical features of the early mosaics in Philippopolis. The composition depicts octagons forming a meandering swastika and hexagons, a spiralling ›running wave‹, and intersecting circles forming four-leaf rosettes. The mosaic is laid in *opus tessellatum* with larger *tesserae* made of natural stone in four colours: white, greyish-black, ochre and red.

The mosaics in the second floor, laid later on in the side aisles, the apse and the porticos represent richly decorated intricate compositions, and feature many Christian ornaments and symbols. In the centre of the south aisle there is a mosaic inscription in *tabula ansata* containing the name

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[3] Martinova-Kjutova 2008.

[4] The basilica was first excavated partly in the course of roadworks for the construction of an underground passage in central Plovdiv (1982–1985). Following a long pause, restoration works started at the basilica and subsequently, the excavations were resumed in 2015 and continued until 2020. As a result, several archaeological reports and papers dealing with the mosaic decoration have been published, cf. Kesjakova 1989; Kessiakova 1989; Kesjakova 1999, 66–75; Kesjakova 2011; Kesjakova 2016; Kessjakova et al. 2016; Tankova 2017; Tankova 2018; Stanev – Tankova 2018; Tankova – Draganova 2019. The results from the 2015–2017 archaeological campaigns prompted the organization of a conference entirely dedicated to the basilica, which took place on 10–11 May 2018 in Plovdiv. Currently, the basilica with its mosaics is a candidate for the Unesco Indicative List of Significant Cultural and Natural Objects.

[5] Stanev – Tankova 2018.

[6] Kantareva-Decheva 2017, 369 f.

[7] Stanev – Tankova 2018.

1 Plan of Philippopolis in the 4th–6th century. 1: Agora; 2: Stadium; 3: Theatre; 4: Nebet Tepe; 5: Episcopal Basilica; 6: »Small Basilica«; 7: Eastern Gate; 8: Martyrium; 9: Early Christian complex *extra muros* (© plan: M. Martinova-Kyutova – G. Pirovska)

2 The Episcopal Basilica of Philippopolis, orthographical image of the archaeological site (© photo: Stanev – Tankova 2018, fig. 1 after: Iv. Ivanov)

[…] κιανοῦ the bishop in office when the mosaic was laid[8]. The mosaic is laid in *opus tessellatum* with smaller *tesserae* made of natural stone.

The third floor of the basilica dates back to the second half of the 5th – early 6th century AD. Images of over 100 birds, vases, and flower baskets figure in the design of the mosaic floors. The scene »Fountain of Life« is depicted in the centre of the two side aisles. A peacock with an outstretched tail surrounded by birds and *kantharoi* is depicted in the middle of the narthex. Natural stone *tesserae* were used, laid in *opus tessellatum*[9].

The basilica was used until the end of the 6th century AD, and in the Middle Ages a Christian necropolis appeared on its ruins. The impressive dimensions and decoration of the Episcopal Basilica of Philippopolis make it the largest basilica building from the 4th–6th century AD in the territory of Bulgaria and one of the largest in the Balkans. It stands to reason that significant changes had to be made in the urban plan of the late antique city centre, given the fact that the basilica was built in the immediate vicinity of the agora. Drilling has shown that the basilica was built on an earlier structure, which might have been used for religious purposes during the Roman period[10]. The basilica covers two *insulae*, and for this reason the existing street network had to be redesigned. A new *cardo* was built west of the atrium, providing a direct access to the late antique »Eirene House«. This building is peristyle in plan, with separate prestigious and household areas, and is synchronistic[11]. Rooms with polychrome mosaic floors were uncovered, with a female image bearing an inscription ΕΙΡΗΝΗ as its focus. This building was presumably the episcopal residence (fig. 3)[12].

The so-called Small Basilica was unearthed in the eastern outskirts of the fortified Philippopolis[13]. It is a three-aisle basilica with an apse on the east, and a chapel appended to the south wall. There are two construction periods dating back to the 5th–6th century AD. The basilica underwent an internal reconstruction during the second construction period, when the floor level was raised, a marble pulpit was installed, a *synthronon* was built, and a narthex was designed. A baptistery with a cruciform *piscina* and a mosaic floor was attached to the north-eastern end of the building (fig. 4). The floor of the basilica from the 5th century AD is covered with a polychrome mosaic in *opus tessellatum* ornamented with geometric and floral images such as vase-*kantharoi*, rosettes, Solomon's knots, etc. A donor inscription was localised in a *tabula ansata* in front of the altar partition in the central nave. The mosaic in the baptistery was laid in the 6th century AD on an earlier brick floor[14]. The mosaic features the figures of two stags and a pair of doves – traditional early Christian symbols. The basilica was constructed right along the bed of the fortification wall, on the compacted construction remains of earlier buildings. There is a street to the west of it that does not belong to the orthogonal/Hippodamian city-planning in the lowlands.

The topographic continuity between the pagan and Christian cult buildings is evidenced by the unearthed remains on Džendem tepe, a hill *extra muros*, around which the western necropolis of the ancient city developed, and it must be noted that an important road passed at the foot of this hill. D. Končev believed that the temple of the main deity protecting Philippopolis, Apollo Kendrisos, was built on the top of the hill[15]. During the reign of Elagabalus, when the city was proclaimed *neokoros*, the emperor's cult was practiced in this god's temple, presumably in this location[16]. The basilica, built on the ruins of the temple, was dated to the 5th–6th century AD by the

8 Kesjakova 2016, 591 f.; Šarankov 2016, 972.
9 Kantareva-Decheva – Stanev (forthcoming).
10 Stanev – Tankova 2018.
11 Bospachieva 2003, 85–88.
12 Bospachieva 2003, 85–88.
13 Bospachieva 2002.
14 Bospachieva 2002, 70–76.
15 Končev 1938, 28.
16 Gočeva 2008.

3 Mosaics with a female image bearing an inscription EIPHNH (© E. Kantareva-Decheva)

4 The »Small Basilica«, baptistery (© M. Martinova-Kyutova)

archaeologist who excavated it[17]. The single-apse, three-aisled basilica with a *narthex* is aligned in an east-west direction. Its nave is 21.5 m long and 9.4 m wide. It was built of stone, bonded with pink lime-based mortar and fragments of bricks. To the south of the building there are two premises of rectangular and square plans, which are believed to be the rooms for the clergy serving the basilica[18].

The complex of the Eastern Gate of Philippopolis was found near the eastern slope of Trimontium; it is an architectural ensemble that has survived to the present times with remarkably preserved archaeological structures. A 13.20 m wide street was unearthed, with sidewalks, flanked with marble porticos in Roman-Corinthian style and connected passage rooms. It has been ascertained that the street continued to the south for about 600 m. The pavement is made of large syenite slabs with a pronounced axis line in the middle. The street leads to the main gate of Philippopolis. The porticos frame the architectural volume of the complex; their monumental design was particularly important and relevant to the function of the street as the main thoroughfare of the late antique city. The height of the portico reaches 7.64 m[19]. Between the columns and in front of the porticos there were statues of honourable prominent citizens of Philippopolis. A base for a statue of the future emperor Basiliscus, dated to the 70s of the 5th century AD with an inscription bearing verses in Latin, was also found here[20].

The bed of the street is not part of the typical Roman *cardines-decumani* system of the city in the lowlands. The complex was built on the ruins of the fortification wall with a gate dated to AD 172, built during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, which belongs to the outer fortification ring of Philippopolis[21]. In the early 4th century AD, a new curtain with a gate was built on the ruins from the 2nd–3rd century AD, but without replicating the old plan[22]. According to the plan, the gate is a *tripylon*, with one central entrance and two small side entrances (posterns), lined with marble blocks.

Immediately after leaving the gate, the street changes its course to the northeast, where remains of a bridge crossing the Hebros River were found. Bases for statues (mostly from the 3rd century AD, the majority of them statues of the emperors who suffered *damnatio memoriae*) were reused as building material in the structure of the bridge[23]. No doubt the direction of the street has to do with the route of the Singidunum–Serdica–Philippopolis–Constantinopolis/Via Diagonalis.

The Eastern Gate is mentioned in a literary source, the *Lives of the Holy Martyrs Severus and Memnon*. It narrates that St. Severus was honoured with a dream where God appeared to him, and he was instructed to go to the Eastern Gate in the morning[24].

In Late Antiquity, a complex of important public buildings *extra muros* appeared to the north of the gate, in relation to the new Christian religion. An early Christian martyrium is located northeast of the Eastern Gate and some authors associate it with the legend of the 38 Philippopolis martyrs[25]. It has a six-conch plan. During the first construction phase, placed in the time of Constantine the Great, it was built of mortared stones in the substructure and *opus mixtum* in the superstructure. The floor level is made of compacted clay. The building was probably destroyed during the invasions of the Huns in AD 441–442, and was afterwards reconstructed. The floor was lined with polychrome mosaic during the repair. The central panel is framed with lotus leaves, and there is a motif of geometric ornaments and octagons in the middle, where *kantharoi*, vessels and

[17] Cončev 1938, 29–32.
[18] Cončev 1938, 29–32.
[19] Martinova-Kjutova – Pirovska 2011, 225 fig. 15.
[20] Martinova-Kjutova – Šarankov 2014, 169 fig. 8-a.
[21] Martinova-Kjutova 2008.
[22] Martinova-Kjutova 2008.
[23] Bospačieva – Kolarova 2014, 151–153.
[24] Martinova-Kjutova – Šarankov 2014, 165.
[25] Bospatchieva 2001.

rosettes were depicted. Images of birds are also to be seen in the frame. The building might have been used until the late 6th century AD, when it was destroyed[26].

A sector of a building *extra muros* was uncovered in the immediate vicinity of the Eastern Gate, dated to the 5th–6th century AD. The floor levels in the studied premises are made of bricks, and there is a polychrome mosaic in one of the buildings. An early Christian tomb, built of bricks, was located in one of the structures. The researcher of the site interpreted the building as a monastery; however, no data supporting this interpretation was found during the archaeological excavations carried out in the immediate vicinity in 2018[27].

After the administrative reforms of Diocletian and Constantine the Great, Philippopolis was the centre of the province of Thrace Proper, belonging to the Thrace diocese in the Prefecture of the Orient.

Significant changes took place in the economic, religious and political environment in the Roman Empire towards the end of the 3rd century and in the 4th century AD. A new factor which shaped the image of the city was emerging in this historical context – Christianity. The above summary of the main architectural complexes and their location in the development plan of the city during Late Antiquity illustrates the urban changes which occurred during this period, primarily related to the new Christian religion and the arising need for churches to practice this cult.

Devastating barbarian invasions were also becoming more frequent. In AD 447, Philippopolis was again plundered and razed to the ground by the Huns of Attila. Subsequently, construction works took place in relation to restoring the destroyed city infrastructure and reinforcing the fortification walls. The plundered city could not, however, regain its former splendour.

Considering the present accuracy of the ›archaeological cadastre‹, given the difficult conditions when it comes to excavating a living city, it seems that the major public and religious complexes were constructed in the eastern part of the city. The probable reason for this is the reduced protected territory of the city, confined within the fortification walls, whereby a significant part of the *insulae* south and west of the fortifications remained *extra muros* and were gradually turned into necropolises. The southern fortification wall is built on the pavement of a previously existing street *decumanus*. Thus, the agora happens to be in the immediate vicinity of the fortification walls, and its significance and splendour faded.

The existing development plan of the city included a new group of magnificent large-scale structures – Christian churches. The largest Christian church, the Episcopal Basilica, occupied two *insulae*. It was built on the ruins of large public buildings, probably cult buildings, thereby achieving topographical continuity of the sacred functions. The same continuity is to be seen with the basilica built on Džendem Tepe on the ruins of the temple of Apollo Kendrisos[28]. The so-called Small Basilica was built close to the fortification wall and probably next to the non-localised gate in the eastern outskirts of the city.

East of the agora and south of the theatre a residential quarter of houses, suggesting a higher social status of the owners, is emerging. These houses occupy far larger plots, covering half or a whole *insula*, and stand out with their lavish interior decoration. There are also drastic urban development solutions, for example the merging of *insulae*, the closing of certain sectors of streets, or the overlapping of residential structures with streets. A good case in point is the »Eirene House«, located at the foot of Trimontium and about 100 m north of the Episcopal Basilica. The house was built on the site of smaller buildings destroyed after the Gothic invasion of AD 251. After the Episcopal Basilica was built, one of the north-south aligned streets *(cardo)* was moved to the west so that the »Eirene House« could have direct access to the basilica. This was presum-

26 Bospatchieva 2001.

27 Topalilov 2007; Martinova-Kjutova – Sengalevič 2018.

28 Končev 1938, 28; Majewski 1977.

ably the episcopal residence. Certain elements in the design of the house itself provide evidence that it was Christianised[29].

At the beginning of the 4th century AD at the eastern foot of Trimontium, a complex of a late antique gate, a *tripylon* in plan, and an impressive street flanked with colonnades was developed. This constitutes the main thoroughfare in and out of Philippopolis. Right next to the gate, but *extra muros*, within the northern necropolis there is a complex of buildings, one of which is a *martyrium*[30]. It is noteworthy that such an expensive engineering facility as an aqueduct, over 25 km long, was built to supply the late antique city with water.

The data provided leads to the conclusion that in Late Antiquity, with the proclamation of Philippopolis as capital of the province of Thrace, and with the affirmation of the new Christian religion, the city continued to be one of the significant urban centres in the part of the Empire.

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[29] Bospachieva 2003.

[30] Bospatchieva 2001; Boyadjiev 2001.

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Silvana Blaževska

URBAN TRANSFORMATION OF STOBI

FROM *OPPIDUM CIVIUM ROMANORUM* TO CAPITAL OF MACEDONIA SECUNDA*

ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes our present knowledge of the urban development of Stobi throughout the six centuries of its existence. Known as *oppidum civium Romanorum* and *municipium* during the Imperial period, Stobi became an episcopal see and capital of the province of Macedonia Secunda in Late Antiquity. The remarkable public buildings, churches, public baths and private residences revealed so far point to a prosperous city located at the crossroads of major ancient trade routes. The rises and declines of the city and its urban design were influenced by various causes, events and individuals, emperors, prominent citizens and bishops who played a significant role in its development as driving forces and patrons. Having survived the periodic crises caused by barbarian incursions, natural disasters and social changes in the Empire, the city was finally abandoned in the early 7th century.

KEYWORDS

Stobi – urbanism – *municipium* – capital

The ancient city of Stobi was located at the confluence of the two largest rivers in the northern part of the Roman province of Macedonia, the Axios (Vardar) and the Erigon (Crna) (figs. 1. 2). Its ruins, spread over three alluvial terraces that gradually slope towards the east and the left bank of the Erigon river, were identified in the mid-19th century[1]. The city lies at the intersection of two major routes: a north-south road (Thessalonica–Stobi–Singidunum) and the so-called Diagonal Road that branches off the Via Egnatia near Heraclea Lyncestis and runs east through Stobi and beyond to Pautalia and Serdica. Such a strategically important position at the crossroad of major trade routes enabled Stobi to become a very prosperous city in the Roman period and in Late Antiquity. Besides its significant position, many factors shaped the urban layout of the city: the social status and wealth of its inhabitants, the interests of certain emperors, religious beliefs, as well as forces of nature and warfare.

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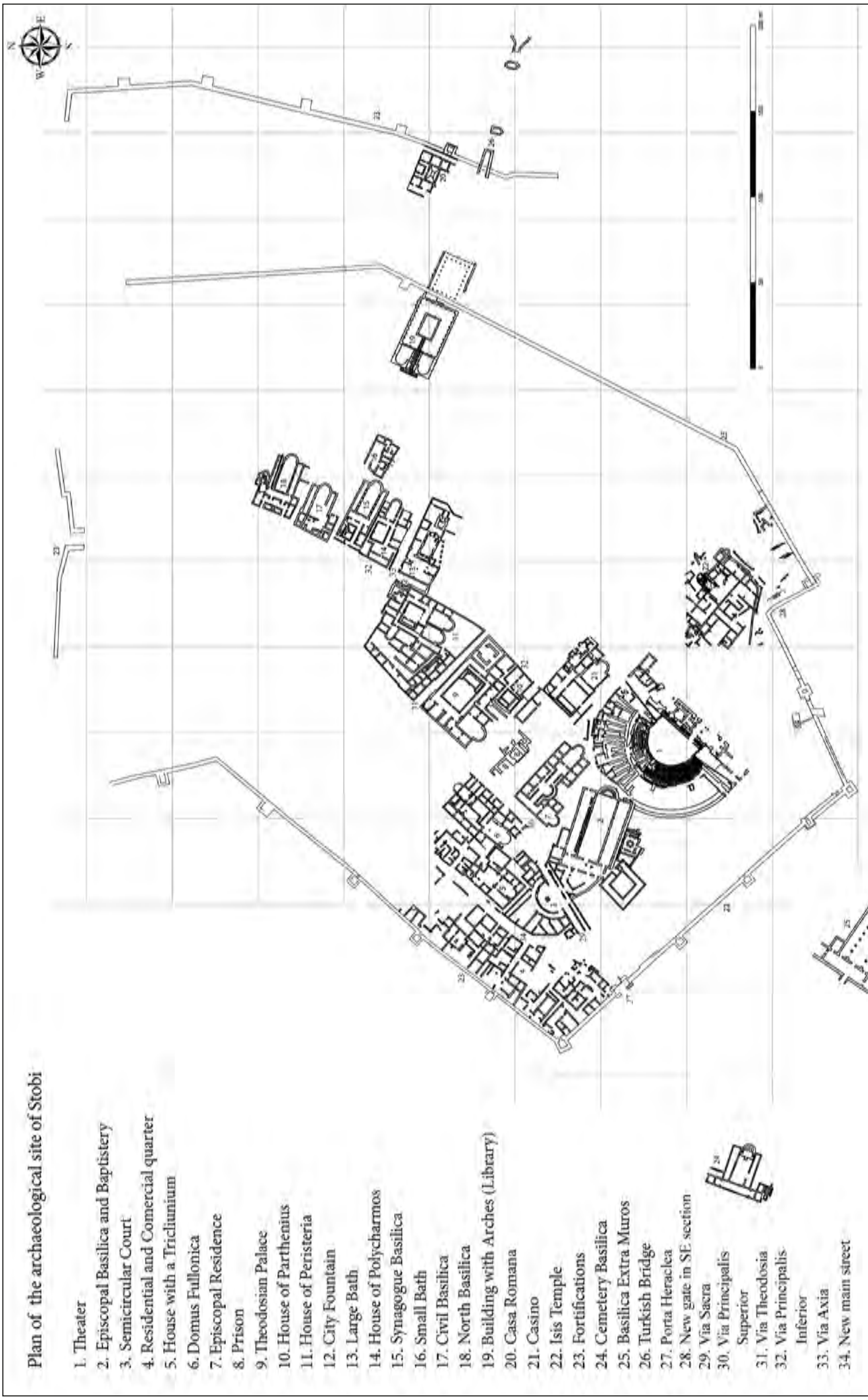
[1] von Hahn 1867, 158–160; Heuzey 1873. The first archaeological investigations began during the First World War and continue until today. For extensive bibliography of the excavations at Stobi until 1973, see: Radošević 1973. The latest large-scale excavations were undertaken by the National Institution Stobi between 2008 and 2017, conducted by the author, except in the Theatre between 2014 and 2017, which were conducted by G. Pavlovski. The detailed results of the excavations are not yet published, and some observations given in the annual reports of each season will be used on this occasion. The updated bibliography on Stobi will be published in the forthcoming Studies in the Antiquities of Stobi vol. 5.



1 Plan of the archaeological site of Stobi (© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

2 Aerial view of the archaeological site of Stobi from the northeast, 2017 (© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

FROM *OPPIDUM CIVIUM ROMANORUM* TO *MUNICIPIUM STOBENSIUM:* URBAN DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN THE 1ST AND 3RD CENTURIES

Livy, referring to earlier information from Polybius, was the first of the ancient historians to mention Stobi, as a place close to the battleground where the Macedonian king Phillip V defeated the Dardanians in 197 BC[2]; in 183 BC Philip founded the new town Perseis named after his son, not far from the Paionian *urbs vetus* Stobi[3]. After king Perseus was defeated by Aemilius Paullus in 168 BC and the formerly powerful kingdom of Macedonia was divided into four administrative districts, Stobi entered the fourth *meris* and became a centre from which salt was exported to the north, to Dardania[4]. In 147 BC when the Roman province of Macedonia was created, Stobi remained its largest northern town. The city probably suffered in one of the frequent incursions of the Scordisci and other tribes into the newly founded province of Macedonia in the second half of the 2nd and the early 1st century BC. A coin hoard, ranging in date from 211 to 125 BC and found hidden in a pit below the Central Basilica, is probably related to the battle between Roman troops and Scordisci near the town of Argos in 119 BC[5].

It is assumed that the acropolis of the Hellenistic town was located on the northern part of the highest terrace and its southern and south-eastern periphery in the area under later buildings, the

[2] Liv. 33, 19, 3.

[3] Liv. 39, 53, 15–16.

[4] Liv. 45, 29, 12–13. According to Livy, Stobi was in the third *meris,* accepted by most authors. For a detailed discussion of the boundaries of the *merides* and the arguments for Stobi belonging to the fourth *meris*, see Papazoglou 1988, 67–71.

[5] Crawford 1973, 1–21; Wiseman 1986, 38. For the intrusions of the Scordisci along the Axios during the 2nd half of the 2nd century BC and the victory of M. Anius Publius over the Scordisci and Maedi in 119 BC near Argos, see Papazoglou 1969, 226–234.

Civil and Central (Synagogue) basilicas, where remains of modest stone and mud-brick structures, pits and a pottery kiln from the 2nd to the early 1st centuries BC were found[6]. Fifteen burials belonging to the Hellenistic cemetery, dated from the late 3rd to the end of the 2nd century BC, were discovered further to the south, in the area below the later residences known as the »House of Peristeria« and the »Domus Fullonica«[7].

Four periods are crucial in the urban development of the city: the Augustan period when the city territory was significantly enlarged; the 2nd century when the construction of public buildings was initiated; the transitional 4th century when Stobi gradually was transformed into a late antique city; and finally, the second half of the 5th century when the buildings and urban layout were largely influenced by Christianity.

The Romans had foreseen the strategic importance of Stobi. Pliny referred to Stobi as an *oppidum civium Romanorum* in the time of Augustus, a status that required the existence of a *conventus* of Roman citizens who possessed the *ius Italicum*, in addition to the native population and other foreigners. F. Papazoglou placed the foundation of the *oppidum* Stobi in the period between the battles of Pharsalus in 48 BC and Philippi in 42 BC, assuming an existing community of Roman citizens in Stobi at this point, for the town was granted its extraordinary status due to their loyalty and support for Caesar[8]. The citizens of Stobi were members of two tribes: the newcomers of Tromentina, and the local *peregrini* of Aemilia[9].

Later Stobi received the status of a *municipium*, recorded on issues of local coinage bearing the legend *MVN(icipium) STOB(ensium)* during the reign of Vespasian in AD 72/73[10], and on a few inscriptions dated in the period between the 1st and 3rd centuries AD[11]. Both F. Papazoglou and J. Wiseman discussed the possibility that Stobi had received municipal status in the time of Augustus, based on a few facts: the already existing *conventus* of Roman citizens, the strategic position of the town that guaranteed economic prosperity, as well as the fact that the rest of the *oppida* mentioned by Pliny became *municipia*[12]. Papazoglou proposed that the imperial mint at Stobi had been established to honour the centennial of the municipality of Stobi, an event that in this case would have happened in 28/27 BC[13].

Our knowledge of the city's urban layout during the Augustan period is quite modest. The city had expanded to the south and east, as far as the left bank of the Erigon river, and occupied 20 ha, confirming the increase in the population and its significance in the province. One should take into consideration the possibility that it had also spread onto the left bank of the Axios River[14]. Parts of the early Roman fortification wall and the paved Via Sagularis were revealed in the 1970s on the east side, along the Erigon[15], and during the 2010 excavations under the northwest and southeast segments of the late antique fortification[16]. The architectural analysis of the main city gate, the Porta Heraclea, showed that it was also planned and constructed at the same time as the early fortification[17], while the cemetery was positioned in a new location, 50 m south of the gate[18].

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[6] Wiseman 1986, 37 f.; finds from earlier periods of occupation at the site were found out of their original context. Mikulčić 1981, 215–217.

[7] Blaževska – Pavlovski 2018, with references for the Hellenistic burials *intra muros* found earlier.

[8] Papazoglou 1986, 214. 226 f.; Wiseman 1994.

[9] Papazoglou 1988, 316 and n. 49. Wiseman 1999a, 941.

[10] Josifovski 2001; Josifovski 2010.

[11] I.Stob 15. 16. 29.

[12] Papazoglou 1986; Wiseman 1994.

[13] Papazoglou 1986, 231.

[14] Mikulčić 2003, 14. 105; the aerial photographs from 1934 clearly show structures on the left bank of the Axios River. No excavations were undertaken on the other side of the Vardar River, so there is no confirmation whether they belong to the city of Stobi nor to which period they belong.

[15] Wiseman 1986, 39.

[16] The late antique fortification now visible mainly followed the line of the early Roman city wall.

[17] Georgiev 2018, 222.

[18] Wesolowsky 1973, 97–117; the earliest burials at the West Cemetery date from the last quarter of the 1st century BC.

Not many structures are known from this period within the new city walls. The test trenches excavated in the 1970s below the Civil and Central (Synagogue) Basilicas, the »House of Peristeria«, the »Domus Fullonica« and the Large Bath revealed remains of modest houses, courtyards, and workshops or more elaborate structures decorated with painted designs over lime plaster or stucco. The pottery found in the associated deposits dates these structures to the 1st century[19]. The latest excavations have revealed parts of similar structures of the same date in other areas of the city. A pottery kiln of a Hellenistic type succeeded by an open court and later by a modest house with earthen floor and painted plastered walls below the mosaic floor in the east *triclinium* of the »House of Peristeria« also date to the early 1st century. Deposits from the same period were found in the area of the Temple of Isis (2013) and below the level of construction of the south wall of the Episcopal Basilica and the Baptistery (2017–2018), with pottery also from the 1st–2nd centuries. The limited area of the excavations does not allow more conclusions to be drawn about these structures, except that most of them were modest buildings in terms of construction material and that most of them had suffered from fire, which might have been the result of separate events. A residential building for which a 1st century BC to 1st century AD phase was proposed is the urban villa known as the »Casa Romana«, discovered in the 1970s close to the east city wall and the Erigon river[20]. A few rooms and corridors were revealed with three construction phases and elaborate decoration on the walls: painted imitation of marble revetment, stuccoed Ionic pilasters, and figured wall paintings, which belong to phase III, i.e. 2nd – early 3rd century[21].

The construction of public buildings began in the late 1st or early 2nd century. Only a few structures of this date have been unearthed: the »Building with Arches« and the Temple of Isis on the lower terrace, the Synagogue on the middle terrace, and the Theatre to the southeast. The street network of the early Roman city is not known, but it is certain that the core of public life at Stobi and its forum must have been located on the lower terrace[22].

The »Building with Arches«, the most remarkable public building in terms of size and decoration, was constructed by the end of the first quarter of the 2nd century (fig. 3). Since its discovery in the 1970s, several proposals have been made for its purpose: a bath, a basilica, an archive, and a library[23]. The rectangular building, oriented in an east-west direction, measures 45 × 25 m and consists of a large rectangular hall with arched niches on three sides, except on the west. An arched doorway supported on four massive pillars and four columns leads from the hall into two apsidal rooms, each with two niches for sculptures measuring 3.10 × 1.75 m in the west walls. The main entrance into the building was on the west side, through the corridor between the apsidal rooms. The building had a second floor, reached through the stairs behind the arched door in the east wall of the large hall[24]. The niches on the first floor are preserved to their original height of 5 m on the north wall, while the estimated total height of the building to its roof is between 12 and 13 m.

The walls were built of a combination of sandstone, bricks and pink mortar with finely modelled joints, covered with elaborate marble and painted and moulded stucco decoration. Revetments of coloured marble, white marble slabs with floral motifs rendered in shallow relief, marble

[19] Mano-Zissi 1973, 191–200; remains of buildings A to D found below the Civil Basilica date between 1st and 4th century. Wiseman 1986, 38 f.

[20] See the reports in Wiseman – Mano-Zissi 1973, 394–397; Wiseman – Mano-Zissi 1974, 126–128; Wiseman 1986, 39.

[21] Wiseman 2006a, 230 f.

[22] Wiseman 1986, 40; it is not clear whether the irregular street network of the late antique city followed the street network of imperial times. It is certain that Via Sacra was in use at least since the 2nd or early 3rd century.

[23] Wiseman – Mano-Zissi 1974, 122–126; Sanev – Saržovski 1981, 232–234; Wiseman 1986, 39; Šurbanovska – Jakimovski 2010, 34. Detailed architectural analysis and discussion of possible function(s) of the building will be given in the forthcoming Studies in the Antiquities of Stobi 5, by Goce Pavlovski, to whom I owe my gratitude for sharing his observations with me.

[24] Šurbanovska – Jakimovski 2010, fig. on p. 32 f. The arches and pillars from the second floor, which collapsed later, possibly during the 6th century earthquake, were found along the north wall of the building.

3 The »Building with Arches« (library), view from the south 2017 (© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

fluted pilasters and composite capitals with various floral patterns carved in deep relief all show fine workmanship suitable for an imperial building. The marble used for the decoration and architectural elements is of different origin: white and grey-veined marble, pink and purple marble breccia from the local quarries, imported green Thessalian marble, and colourful marble with grey or blue veins of unknown origin. Both apsidal rooms were paved with polychrome *opus sectile* of geometric design, but the floor in the large hall was made of clay, which is peculiar compared to the elaborate embellishments on the walls. In the north-eastern part of the hall, close to the north wall, there is a large rectangular pedestal base made of marble and sandstone blocks joined by iron clamps and set over a deep stone and mortar foundation. Along the south wall of the north apsidal room, a 0.90 m high bench was built, also covered with marble revetment. Marble and gilded statues of various gods – Minerva, Zeus, Asclepius, Heracles, Dionysus, Diana Lucifera (?) – and many hands of statues holding scrolls once stood in the niches. If the proposed function as a library is correct, and if the number of the niches on both floors of the large hall is taken into consideration, this would make it one of the largest libraries in the Roman Empire. It is possible that this obviously imperial building was part of a larger multifunctional structure built on the Roman forum of Stobi.

The Theatre (fig. 4) was discovered in the 1920s, and is still under investigation[25]. Its construction started in the late 1st century AD as a western type, but by the middle of the 2nd century when it was completed its design had changed to an eastern architectural model. The reasons for the change are unknown. Built on a slope, the first phase of the Theatre had a semi-circular auditorium *(cavea)*, vaulted *aditi maximi* and *analemmata* parallel to the scene building[26]. The long and narrow scene building had a colonnaded façade raised on the porches with central curved niche and rectangular lateral niches, flanked with basilicae at both ends. The remains of the first phase show elements of 1st century theatres built in the western part of the empire. Finding the closest analogy to the Stobi theatre at Augusta Emerita in Spain, E. Gebhard assumed that a stage 2.10 m above the orchestra linked the *cavea* and the stage building, bordered by lateral *versurae* and approached from the stairs in the façade and additional doors on both ends. Based on the pottery discovered in the construction deposits, the first phase is dated to the late 1st or early 2nd century[27].

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[25] Gebhard 1981, 13–27; for the latest discoveries between 2009 and 2012, see: Pavlovski 2018a, and references for earlier bibliography.

[26] For the first phase of the scene building see Gebhard 2018, 132–155. For the design of the *cavea* in both phases, see Pavlovski 2018b.

[27] Gebhard 2018, 134.

4 The Theatre, drone photo, 2019 (© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

The first floor of the scene building was erected and the foundations and walls of the *ima cavea, aditi maximi* and the podium were finished to various heights in the first phase. Then, the construction of the *cavea* stopped, and the scene building and *aditi maximi* were completely altered.

The changed plan of the second phase included some of the walls of the first phase while others were dismantled to fit the new design, which finds closest parallels in Roman theatres of eastern type common in Asia Minor. The rectangular scene building was wider, but shorter in length. The two-storeyed *scaenae frons* had a colonnade placed on six porches flanked by shallow curved *paraskenia* at both ends. The colonnade was a combination of Corinthian columns on the first floor and a simple Ionic epistyle, repeated in smaller scale on the second floor. There was no stage, and five stairways led directly to the orchestra. Two niches for statues flanked the central entrance. From the stairs, five doors led into five rooms of the building, of which four were spanned by cross vaults supported on brick piers, while the central room was barrel vaulted.

The *cavea* included vaulted *aditi maximi* of the first phase as radial corridors, and new marble *analemmata* were constructed so that when completed, it was larger than a semicircle with slanted and open *parodoi* and a high podium around the orchestra with diameter of 29.40 m. Both parts of the auditorium *(ima* and *summa cavea)* divided by a *praecintio* had 35 rows of seats (18 in the *ima cavea*) with a capacity of 7,600 spectators, set upon a complex system of 30 massive radial walls in the *ima cavea*, 32 in the *summa cavea* including *analemmata*, and four circular walls with vaulted corridors, plus one behind the podium. The circular and radials walls revealed evidence for the construction phases and sequences: red lines and Roman numerals that were guidelines for the masons[28]. Two red lines at different heights delineated the first phase of construction of the walls in *opus incertum*, and above the second red line the walls were built in *opus vittatum*.

[28] Pavlovski 2018a, 158–160. The red lines are recorded on almost every wall and the different *opus* is noticed on different height of the walls; these point to the conclusion that they were erected to varying height in the first construction phase. The different *opus* is not recorded only on the 2 and 26 radial walls of the *ima cavea*; they were built in *opus incertum* to the top. The material found in the earthen fill between the radial walls of the *ima cavea* dated also to the late first and early 2nd century.

In the second phase, the masons left their marks in the form of various graffiti on the finely modelled mortar joints, similar to those in the »Building with Arches«[29]. Three radial corridors, the central and those on the east and west ends of the *cavea*, and the two circular corridors served for circulation of the audience, who entered the Theatre on the rear side through the arched entrances in the outer (fifth) circular wall. The arched passages in the retaining walls *(analemmata)* at both ends of the *ima cavea* led from the *paradoi* to the side radial corridors and up the steps to the top of the podium and the first two rows of seats, i.e. to the *proedria*. The central corridor provided direct access from outside to the orchestra and through the two side rooms and flight of stairs to the tribunal. The tribunal (a box of honour) assigned for the game sponsors and other dignitaries is not preserved at the theatre at Stobi. It occupied the front part of the central *cuneus* (first four rows above the central radial corridor), above the central room formed between the central radial corridor and the orchestra. The central position of the tribunal, above the central radial corridor with the side rooms and the room directly below, resembles the arrangement common for amphitheatres[30].

The Theatre was built of sandstone and lime mortar, while marble parts were made of variously coloured marble: pink breccia from local quarries for the columns, lintels and jambs of the doors on the scene building; fine-grained white marble from Sivec for the capitals and entablature; and a grey-veined type from Pletvar for the blocks of the podium, *analemmata*, seats and porches of the scene building[31]. The podium was painted, while the exterior of the scene building was covered with stucco imitating white marble.

The analysis of architectural features provided evidence for various events that took place in the Theatre. From the beginning, it was planned and used for a mixed programme, including both theatrical performances and various bloody spectacles. The high podium along with the temporary net and post barrier set on the podium provided protection for the spectators from such violent forms of entertainment as gladiator fights and wild animal shows that occurred in the orchestra[32].

On the horizontal surface and on the vertical lip of the seats preserved in the western half of the Theatre in the four *cunei* of the *ima cavea*, almost 600 inscriptions in Greek (as are the majority of inscriptions found at Stobi), names of individuals, and six of twenty-one municipal *phylae* are preserved: Claudia, Martia, Valeria, Merkuria, Vibia, and Terentia[33]. The arrangement of the inscriptions revealed the social status of certain individuals or families. The wide seats in the first two rows – *proedria* – were reserved for the members of the town council, magistrates, priests and other distinguished citizens. The next two rows were also for high officials, while the upper seats were reserved for the members of the *phylae*. J. Wiseman suggested that during the 2nd and 3rd centuries, besides entertainment, the Theatre served as a place where the town council met[34].

A temple dedicated to the Egyptian divine couple Isis and Serapis was discovered in 2008 in the southeast part of the city (fig. 5)[35]. It is a typical Roman temple on a 2.40 m high podium, possibly *templum in antis* or tetrastyle prostyle, with two subterranean barrel-vaulted chambers. The rectangular structure is oriented north-east–south-west, measuring 16.10 × 8 m. Eleven steps on the north side led into the portico and the cella. The front part of the podium and the stairs were made of pink marble breccia, the rest of the podium of green sandstone blocks, and the founda-

29 Pavlovski 2018a, 160.
30 Pavlovski 2018a, 169.
31 Only the blocks that enclose the podium around the orchestra in the line with the stairs between the *cunei* are made of white marble. There is an assumption that maybe in the first phase the stairs were planned down to the orchestra. For the origin of the marble and other types of stones used as building material in Stobi, see Folk 1973, 47–51.
32 Gebhard 1975; I.Stob 38; Babamova 2018, 114–117. A fragmentary *invitatio ad munera* for games held over three days in honour of an emperor whose name unfortunately is not preserved, by the high priestess Tiberia Claudia, dates from the 3rd century.
33 Wiseman 1994, 1759.
34 Wiseman 1984a, 570.
35 Blaževska – Radnjanski 2015.

5
The Temple of Isis and Serapis, view from the northeast, 2012 (© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

tions and subterranean rooms of sandstone and lime mortar. Unfinished details on the blocks of the crepidoma and the slanted alignment of the blocks of the podium over the crepidoma point to careless construction. The upper structure of the temple is not preserved but parts of the entablature and the simple pediment were scattered around in later contexts or built into the later structures around the temple.

The entrance to the subterranean chambers was located on the south side, where four steps led down into the first chamber. The walls and the vaults were covered with thick lime mortar and the floors were earthen. An arched door with threshold high above the floor level, probably reached by wooden stairs, led into the second, smaller chamber with a niche in the north wall and two ventilation openings in the west and east walls. Because no hydraulic installations, which are typical for the temples of Isis and Serapis, were discovered inside the chambers, it is assumed that they served for initiation rituals.

The temple's courtyard was enclosed by a stylobate on three sides except on the north, not exactly parallel to the temple. Traces of column bases visible on the surface of the stylobate blocks suggest that porticos enclosed the temple's court. On the north side, in front of the stairs is the main marble altar, processional path and a water channel running in a west-east direction. The floor in front of the temple around the altar was also paved with large marble slabs. The dedication of the temple to Isis and Serapis was confirmed by the over life-sized marble statue of the goddess Isis discovered in 2012 in front of the stairs, but which probably originally stood inside the cella[36], and by a votive plaque of Opia[37], which stood on the first step where holes and channels for molten lead are still visible. Statues of other deities and devotees or votive inscriptions perhaps stood in and around the temple: in the niche in the subterranean chamber, on the two bases made of marble and sandstone blocks on the west side of the stairs, or elsewhere.

Several finds in the past had suggested that Isis and Serapis were worshiped at Stobi. The marble head of Serapis[38], the Greek votive inscription on a statue base of Claudia Prisca, priestess

[36] Bitrakova Grozdanova 2015, 45 f.
[37] Blazevska – Radnjanski 2015, 235.
[38] Sokolovska 1987, 206 f. no. 196 pl. 75; Bitrakova Grozdanova 1999, 58–62 fig. 1.

of Isis Lochia and Divine Emperor[39], and the Latin inscription of the *augustal* T. Flavius Longinus, found reused in a later context in the Episcopal residence in 1970s[40], who dedicated a *sacrum Isidi* to the *municipium* of Stobi and to Deo Caesar. Both inscriptions show a close relation between the Isiac and the imperial cult at Stobi and the existence of an organized priesthood of both. The inscription of T. Flavius Longinus, dated to the time of Domitian or later, is of special interest for the discovered temple. Unless there is an earlier temple where Longinus could have dedicated an altar, he might have been the commissioner of the temple in the early 2nd century, and the inscription should be of later date than the time of Domitian[41]. The finds discovered on the floor levels inside both subterranean chambers and around the temple in its precinct confirmed that the same floors were used for a longer period, between the early 2nd and late 4th centuries[42].

The present level of research in the area around the temple does not give a clue as to how the space was organized in the 2nd and 3rd centuries due to extensive rebuilding which occurred in the Late Antiquity. To the east of the temple stairs and at a distance of 5 m from the stylobate stood an apsidal structure which was probably contemporary and closely related to the temple, although its purpose is not yet clear. It is an almost rectangular room measuring 9 × 7.5 m and ending with a semi-circular, fully built apse on the east side. The east and west façades and the four corners of the building were built of brick and the side walls and apse of sandstone and lime mortar in *opus mixtum*. Similar masonry can be seen in the walls of the »Building with Arches«. The entrance to the room is on the west side, where a large pink marble breccia block was reused for the threshold, which is much higher than the floor level of the portico. It seems that the room was semi-subterranean, since the nicely worked inner faces of the walls continue to a depth of 1 m below the level of the threshold, suggesting that the original floor inside the room was also well below the threshold. Only a few stones from the substructure of the stairs remained on both sides of the entrance. Fragments of wall paintings and wall mosaics found in the debris that filled the room of the building suggest that the interior was richly decorated.

In addition to the native population and settled Romans, a large Jewish community existed at Stobi. It is not known when exactly they immigrated to Stobi. The remains of two phases of the holy temple of the Jewish community (Synagogues I and II) were found below the nave of the Central Basilica[43]. Synagogue I was a generous donation of Claudius Tiberius Polycharmos, also called Achyrios, Father of the Synagogue, who gave part of his house on the ground floor, a colonnaded courtyard *(tetrastoon)*, a large hall (*triclinium* with stone paved floor and frescoes on the walls), and a few other rooms, to serve the religious needs of the community in the 2nd century AD[44]. His donation was inscribed on one of the columns of the courtyard found reused in the atrium of the Basilica and on the fresco *dipinti* within *tabula ansata*, all related to Synagogue I[45]. Polycharmos added to or remodelled the already existing house and both parts were linked via a doorway and connecting room. Additional inscriptions indicate that other individuals contributed to the maintenance of Synagogue I until its destruction in the late 3rd or early 4th century. Alexander with the title φροντιστής (guardian or curator) reconstructed the *peripatos*[46], one of the covered

[39] Wiseman 1973a, 152–164 fig. 83, reads the missing letters in the first row as [ΑΡΤΕΜΙ]ΔΟΣ. Christodoulou 2009, 348–351, revised as [ΤΗΝ ΙΣΙ]ΔΟΣ. I.Stob 37.

[40] Papazoglou 1990b, 217–219; Wiseman 1999a, 1361 f. fig. 3; I.Stob 16.

[41] Christodoulou 2015, 177 f.; Blaževska – Radnjanski 2015; the earliest finds in the closed deposit in the second subterranean chamber date from the early 2nd century.

[42] Blaževska – Radnjanski 2015; the earliest ceramic finds contemporary with the construction were found in the first chamber. Bitrakova Grozdanova 2015, 46, the statue of Isis also dates to the 2nd century.

[43] For the excavation reports see Wiseman 2009–2011, 326 n. 2.

[44] For the Synagogue and the Jewish community at Stobi, see: Kraabel 1979, 494–497; Poehlman 1981; Bitrakova Grozdanova 1999, 286–302; Wiseman 2009–2011, 325–350; Kolarik 2014, 116–120.

[45] The dedicatory inscription of Polycharmos dates to AD 163/164 according to the Macedonian era: Vulić 1932; Poehlman 1981; Habas 2001, 50; I.Stob 19. Fresco dipinti were found in the large hall covered by destruction debris of the late 3rd century, see Wiseman 2009–2011, 331.

[46] See Kolarik 2014, 118 for a different date for the Alexandros repairs.

corridors in the courtyard, and a certain Posidonia fulfilled a vow to Holy God in the late 2nd or 3rd century, while a descendant of Polycharmos, perhaps his nephew, carried out renovations in the Synagogue »for fulfillment of a vow« later in the 3rd century[47].

The Synagogue and the Temple of Isis were commissioned by wealthy citizens of Stobi, Polycharmos – the father of the Synagogue, and the *augustal* Titus Flavius Longinus, but the question arises for the Theatre and the Library, both grandiose and costly structures, whether they could have been commissioned by a member of the wealthiest and most prominent families or by an emperor. The construction of public buildings in the eastern provinces is usually connected with Hadrian, although the role of other emperors should be considered more closely in future analysis of initiation of ideas for urban development at Stobi.

Nevertheless, not just construction but also maintenance of these buildings would be costly, and that was the task of some of the distinguished families who held high-ranking positions in the city and who were elected by the βουλή to oversee the affairs of the city. The town council (βουλή) and its official body (ἐκκλησία) approved the decisions of the council, especially when the voting of honours was in question[48]. The inscriptions on the theatre seats as well as honorific inscriptions reveal more details about the social structure of the city and the complex administrative system of its municipal institutions as well as about prominent families at Stobi who were the driving force for its development; they included the Sentii, Silvani, Aelii, Iulii, Ulpii, Granii, Granonii, Livii and others, probably settled at Stobi since the Augustan period or before[49]. Sentius Septimius Nikolaos, on an honorific monument dated in the 3rd century AD, is listed as *pontifex*, *gymnasiarch* and patron of the city of the Stobenses, while his wife Grania Alexandra was noted as a high priestess[50]. The other members of his family, based on epigraphic evidence, held high positions in provincial and municipal offices in Beroia, Thessalonika and Styberra. The Sentii hold six *biselia* in the first row of the *proedria* in the Theatre, and Silvani had their seats in the third row of the second *cunea*, i.e. the first row of the fifth municipal *phyla*[51].

The title of high priest, who was elected by the βουλή with a single-year term of office, was one of the highly appreciated posts in the town, and at the same time one of the costliest. The elected high priest oversaw the affairs of the city cults including the celebration of public religious festivals as well as games. The position of municipal high priest, which was held by two members of the family of Sentii, does not necessary mean that they were priests of the imperial cult as well, although it was quite common for the municipal high priest to take care of the cult of the deified emperor. We already mentioned the inscriptions where *augustales* were also connected to Isis, while other inscriptions linked them with Ultrix Augusta and Jupiter Liberator[52].

Although incomplete, the general image of Stobi in imperial times shows a typical provincial city with inhabitants of different origins and ethnicities, a city in which western ideas affected the eastern tradition. The deep-rooted tradition is reflected also in many aspects of daily life, especially the use of the Greek language beside the presence of Romans and the obviously Roman character of individual names, and names of municipal *phylae*. Large and costly structures, decorated with magnificent architectural decoration and fine works of art made of local and imported marbles, show that Stobi was a city of wealthy patrons, whether they were emperors or distinguished local families who engaged artists and architects of good repute to work in the city.

The prosperity of the city was interrupted in the second half of the 3rd century, around the year AD 279 when raids of Gothic and Herulian tribes ravaged the Balkans and possibly affected

47 Wiseman 2009–2011, 326–329; cut pieces of a marble plaque inscribed with red painted letters were found reused as a sectile patch in the mosaic in the main hall.

48 Wiseman 1984a, 570.

49 Wiseman 1973a; Wiseman 1984a; Papazoglou 1990a, 577–582; Wiseman, 1999.

50 Wiseman 1984a, 569–573.

51 Wiseman 1984a, 582.

52 For the formula Deo Caesar, see Papazoglou 1990b; Wiseman 1999b.

Stobi[53]. A hoard of 305 coins and a few pieces of jewellery were found in the »Building with Arches«; it included the latest issue of the emperor Gallienus, minted in AD 257/258 in Mediolanum[54]. As it is reported, the hoard was discovered in the earthen deposits in which the late 4th century burials were found, above the second phase of the large hall[55]. If this is the original hiding place, then the owner valued the metal more than the coins, since the treasure was buried almost a century after the latest issue in the hoard, or the find spot suggests that this is not the original place of burial. Nevertheless, its existence, regardless of where it was originally hidden, might point to upcoming danger posed by Goths and Heruli.

THE TRANSITIONAL 4TH CENTURY: TOWARDS THE LATE ANTIQUE CITY OF STOBI

Serious changes in the urban layout at Stobi occurred during the 4th century, provoked by overall changes in the Empire and by local events[56]. An earthquake in the early 4th century, Constantine's Edict for recognition of Christianity as equal to other religions, the establishment of the episcopal see in Stobi before AD 325, Theodosius' visit to the city in AD 388 eight years after he issued the Edict of Thessalonica adopting Nicene Christianity as the state religion, a landslide, and several floods of the Erigon river by the end of the century, all marked the transition toward the late antique city of Stobi.

An earthquake, which struck Stobi around AD 300 or slightly later, caused damage to existing buildings. Some of them were repaired and functioned until the end of the 4th or beginning of the 5th century, while in others, large scale rebuilding after the earthquake caused changes in function.

Evidence for the earthquake in the Theatre is clearly visible in the displacement of large blocks of the podium and *analemmata*, collapsed vaults and parts of walls in the corridors and scene building, and in vertical cracks in the walls of the *ima cavea*[57]. The podium blocks were not returned to their places; the collapsed vaults and walls in the corridor and the scene building were repaired and reinforced, and the architectural elements on the second floor of the *scaenae frons* were probably replaced. A few trenches were dug in the corridors to check the stability of the foundations. The pottery discovered beneath the floor of the final phase in the Theatre dates to the end of the 3rd and the early 4th century, while a coin, found in a wall of the Theatre, places the repairs after 326–328[58]. In addition to the repairs, other changes occurred: a large wall was constructed over the podium and in front of the scene building, and gates were placed in both *paradoi* and in the central room below the tribunal, completely enclosing the orchestra. At the west end of the scene building a large room was added, probably for animal cages, while two shelters were opened in the podium. At the same time, the central room in the scene building served as a sanctuary of Ultrix Augusta, where an inscription to the goddess was dedicated by *augustales*[59]. These new arrangements, undertaken for the purpose of securing the audience from the violent entertainment that occurred in the orchestra, converted the Theatre into an arena. We cannot be sure that theatrical plays, mime or musical performances were still part of the programme during the 4th century, or whether the Theatre still served for meetings of the city council, but we should keep in mind that the protective wall on the podium would have blocked the view of events in the orchestra to those sitting in the *proedria* and in the next two rows of seats. The Theatre was abandoned in the late 4th century and served as a quarry for later structures, although it is possible

[53] Papazoglou 1988, 321; Wiseman 1986, 41.
[54] Šurbanovska – Jakimovski 2010, 82–90. The coins were identified by the numismatist P. Josifovski.
[55] See infra n. 62.
[56] Observation of the urban changes of the late antique cities on the Balkans, see Snively 2009.
[57] Gebhard 1996; Pavlovski – Blaževska 2017/2018, 51–53.
[58] Pavlovski – Blaževska 2017/2018, 53.
[59] I.Stob 15. The inscription dates in the late 2nd or 3rd century. It is possible that the sanctuary was there much earlier. Two more fragmentary inscriptions, now lost, are dedications to Nemesis: I.Stob 13. 14.

that dismantling of the *summa cavea* had started earlier. Two coin hoards were found hidden in the scene building, and it is uncertain whether they were buried after its abandonment. The *terminus post quem* of the first hoard is 355–361, and of the second 378–383, the latter perhaps pointing to the danger of Visigothic intrusions into the Balkans[60]. During the following two centuries, modest houses were erected above and between the circular and radial walls of the Theatre's substructure.

The earthquake caused damage to the »Building with Arches«, resulting in large vertical cracks in the walls of both apsidal rooms and sinking of the sectile pavement in the south room[61]. Slightly later, the building suffered in a severe fire that destroyed the marble embellishments on the walls and the statues, and underwent extensive remodelling: the entrances to both apsidal rooms were closed with walls and completely separated from the large rectangular hall. The level of the floors was raised about 3 m above the original floor level by earthen fill that sealed the burnt deposit beneath. A substantial cistern was built in the middle of the large hall, supplied by a water channel passing through the corridor between the apsidal rooms, and repairs and additional features provided a functional structure only on the second floor of the building. A massive staircase of sandstone blocks, set over deep foundations of stone and mortar, was added on the west side. The raised floors in the apsidal rooms were paved with pink mortar, marble slabs served as a pavement over the cistern, and a mosaic floor paved the room to the east. The structure largely reused the walls of the primary building, but whether its original function was lost or it still served as a library is not known. The building was already out of use in the second half of the 4th century, since the area was soon used for *intra muros* burials in the last quarter of that century[62].

The Temple of Isis and the apsidal building to the east were damaged by the earthquake. Serious cracks and sinking of the foundation of the stairs and collapse of the podium blocks on the eastern side of the temple as well as vertical cracks in the walls of the apsidal building were definitely caused by tectonic activity[63]. There were repairs on the east side of the temple podium and remodelling of the stairs and entrance of the apsidal room. Some repairs also occurred in the subterranean chambers, on the stairs and the doorway between both chambers. A column, with a partially preserved dedicatory inscription mentioning the four tetrarchs, Galerius and Valerius Severus as Augusti and Maximinus Daia and Constantine as Caesares and thus dated to AD 306–307[64], was placed on the processional path in front of the temple for a certain occasion or might have been related to the repairs or rebuilding of the temple after the earthquake. In addition to the large marble altar in front of the stairs, two small rectangular ritual pits were built in front of the entrance to the subterranean rooms at the back covered by a baldachin supported on four pillars[65]. These additional features suggest possible changes in the rituals performed in the temple's court. The Temple of Isis lost its original function in the late 4th or early 5th century, when the whole upper structure was completely dismantled. Fragments of statuettes representing various deities were thrown into the subterranean rooms and sealed with a thick layer of greenish clay[66].

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60 Vinčić – Hadji-Maneva 2000; Ivanišević – Hadži-Maneva 2003.

61 Pavlovski – Blaževska 2017/2018, 53.

62 Šurbanovska – Jakimovski 2010, 96. Fifty skeletal burials were discovered above the floor of the second phase. The latest coins found in the graves are issues of Valentian I and Valens, giving a *terminus post quem* for the burials in the late 4th or early 5th century. The graves are concentrated in the area above the large hall of the building. No burials were found on the outer side of the Inner fortification wall, suggesting that the wall was already built and therefore the graves might be of later date. Anthropological analysis of the skeletons showed that male and female adults as well as children were buried here. Except for the north-south orientation of most of the burials, grave types, burial ritual and gifts do not give a clue why this group of people was buried in a small cemetery inside the city walls during a short period. Isolated cases of *intra muros* burials were found in other areas in the city during the 6th century, usually of children or infants buried under the floor of houses.

63 Blaževska – Radnjanski 2015, 218; Pavlovski – Blaževska 2017/2018, 54.

64 The inscription was discovered during the 2015 excavations and discussed by S. Babamova (forthcoming), in: Studies in the Antiquities of Stobi 5.

65 Blaževska – Radnjanski 2015, 221. A large quantity of ash and animal bones was found in the pits, and four small ceramic bottles date their latest use to the end of the 4th century.

66 Blaževska – Radnjanski 2015, 222–229.

The area around the temple was largely modified during the 4th century with features and finds no different than the settings in any other house. A series of rooms attached to the south wall of the apsidal structure surrounds the temple and its court on the east, south and probably on the west, creating a large complex around the temple. Walls built of sandstone, lime mortar and many *spolia* closed the courtyard on the east and south leaving only one entrance from the south. The east rooms were opened towards a street paved with sandstone slabs running in a northwest-southeast direction to the east of the complex. The earliest floor levels, reached until the 2017 excavation season in the eastern rooms, contained finds that date to the late 4th or early 5th century[67]. During the 5th and 6th centuries modest houses filled the whole area, attaching their walls to the temple podium, while the subterranean rooms were probably used as cellars. A paved peristyle court with a stone built well was constructed to the south, while the rooms to the east were rearranged and floor levels renewed several times in the 5th century. Future excavations and detailed analysis of architectural features, phases and related deposits are necessary, before we can discuss whether the surrounding complex had an earlier phase contemporary with the temple.

The second phase of the Synagogue (Synagogue II) is thought to be a result of the same earthquake, when the large meeting hall was remodelled and paved with rather crude mosaic floor with geometrical motifs, and the walls of the southwest room were covered with stucco bearing graffiti and nine-branched menorahs[68]. An additional mosaic floor added to the west of the meeting hall is even later in date[69]. At some time during the 5th century Jews either left the city or were converted, since a Christian basilica was erected over the remains of the Synagogue, probably in the late 5th century[70].

Besides the rebuilding and remodelling of the existing structures, an extensive construction of new buildings occurred during the 4th century in other areas of the city. A 4th century phase is proposed for most of the known late antique residences: the Theodosian Palace, the »House of Polycharmos«, the »House of Parthenius«, the »House of Peristeria«, and the public baths built on the middle terrace, the »Domus Fullonica« on the upper terrace, and for the two buildings to the north and northeast of the Episcopal complex: the Episcopal residence and the so-called Casino. Remains of six buildings, which existed during the 4th century, were discovered below and around the Episcopal complex, in the area between the Theatre and Via Sacra. Except for Building A which proved to be the Early Church, these are: Building B found below the floor at the eastern end of the south aisle of the Early Church, Building C at the west end of the north aisle and in the atrium of the Episcopal Basilica on the Terrace, Building D – another residence, at the southwest corner of the basilica, Building E – remains of a bath (?) or rooms with water heating system at the southeast corner of the Baptistery, and Building F, or the so-called *domus ecclesiae*, below the nave of the Early Church[71]. The preliminary analysis of the context material in these buildings (except for Building A) points to the early 4th century AD. Some of the walls served as foundations for or were incorporated into the later Episcopal Basilicas, but their character is yet to be determined as well as the extent of their re-use in both basilicas and baptistery.

Stobi became an episcopal see before AD 325, since bishop Budios of Stobi was recorded among the church officials at the council in Nicaea in that year (Mansi 9, 696). The first ecclesi-

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[67] During excavations until 2017, no ceramic finds on the floors in the complex of rooms to the east of the temple dated earlier than the late 4th or early 5th century. A large number of coins are not yet cleaned and identified.

[68] Wiseman 2009–2011, 335–341; Kolarik 2014, 115–120.

[69] Kolarik 2014, 118 f.: based on material and technique, Kolarik relates the finer mosaic in Synagogue II with the mosaic in the extension of the Early Church and the Casino and consequently dates it to the early 5th century. She also relates the placement of the finer mosaic with the Alexandros φροντιστής – the curator of the Synagogue who renovated the covered corridor of the Synagogue II.

[70] Snively 1984, 525–528; Wiseman 2006b, 801. Kolarik 2014, 119, a coin dated between 457 and 474 found below the floor of the church, gives a *terminus post quem* for its construction in the late 5th century.

[71] Snively 2018, and quoted references for the earlier reports and publications. For the identification of »Building F« as *domus ecclesia* see Aleksova 2006.

6
The Early Episcopal Basilica, view from the northeast, 2014
(© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

astical structure, the three-aisle basilica with deep apse was built behind the Theatre in the late 4th century[72]. Two major construction phases are clearly visible, as well as minor repairs that occurred sometime after the second phase. In the first phase, the Early Church measured 29.50 m in length and ca. 17.80 m in width; mosaic in *opus tessellatum* with geometrical designs paved the nave, and wall paintings in fresco technique decorated walls and ceiling (fig. 6). The lower part of the walls (up to 2.20 m in height on the north wall and 1.60 m on the south wall) were built of sandstone and mortar, but in the upper parts *terre pise* or mud bricks are visible. Three entrances in the west wall provided access into nave and aisles, and two doors were discovered in the south wall of the church[73]. The side aisles were separated from the nave by colonnades, of which only the north stylobate has survived. In the first phase there were probably eight columns of which five bases for columns made of reused elements, mainly sandstone altars or pedestals from earlier structures set at unequal intervals, are preserved. It seems that the Early Church extensively reused elements or walls of earlier structures, which was recently confirmed also in the case of the south wall.

In the second phase, probably during the first half of the 5th century, the church was extended to the east, thus measuring 34.35 m in length. A new apse and *presbyterium* were built, one more column and two *antae* were added on the colonnades, the doors in the south wall were closed and the whole church was painted with wall paintings in secco technique. Three more panels of pavement in *opus tessellatum* were added in the extension of the nave, the central one decorated with a large kantharos and vine and a dedicatory inscription of the holy bishop Eustathius who renovated the church[74]. *Opus sectile* formed a cross in the pavement of the *presbyterium*, and four panels in *opus tessellatum* with geometric designs filled the corners.

Based on the information that Budios had attended the Nicaean council, B. Aleksova proposed that the first church at Stobi had been constructed at »the end of the first quarter of the 4th century« and the second phase »sometime in the second half of the 4th century, before the Council of Constantinople in AD 381«[75]. The claim of such an early date for the first Episcopal Basilica at Stobi has created serious confusion among scholars about the beginning of ecclesiastical construction

72 For the discovery of the Early Church see Wiseman – Mano-Zissi 1974; Wiseman – Mano-Zissi 1976; Wiseman 1978; Aleksova 1982/1983; Wiseman 2006b.

73 Both doors might have led towards the earlier baptistery. Namely, remains of an earlier piscine was found in 1977, below the floor of the baptismal pool of the later Baptistery. Wiseman 1978, 411 fig. 19.

74 For the mosaic in the Early Church see: Kolarik 1987; I.Stob 256.

75 Aleksova 1995, 96.

in Macedonia. J. Wiseman argued against B. Aleksova's conclusions, presenting a *terminus post quem* of AD 383–395 and suggesting that the Early Church was probably built or possibly renovated at the time of emperor Theodosius' visit[76]. Theodosius obviously played an important role for Stobi, from which he issued two edicts (Cod. Theod. 16, 2; 5, 15). Although some authors have proposed that the visit of Theodosius to Stobi was related to administrative changes in the late 4th century when the city became the provincial capital of the problematic province of Macedonia Salutaris (Not. dign. Or. p. 3), established ca. AD 386, F. Papazoglou concluded that the short-lived Macedonia Salutaris did not include Stobi, which continued to belong to Macedonia (Prima) until the late 5th century[77].

The earthquake in the early 4th century might have been a reason for construction of the new city wall, but the precise date of its construction is not precise and remains an open question. It was certainly built before the inner east wall, for which the dates range between the early and mid-5th century. The whole line of the late antique fortification walls, which enclosed the city from northwest to southwest and from south to southeast and includes eleven rectangular towers, has been revealed. The wall is 2.4 m thick, except at certain parts where it is reinforced and is 5 m thick. It was built in *opus incertum*, with horizontal rows of larger sandstone blocks, lime mortar, and nicely worked joints. The towers were strengthened with large reused sandstone and marble blocks in the lower zone and at corners. Besides the main gate – the Porta Heraclea known since the 1930s, another gate was uncovered during the excavations in 2010 in the southeast section of the fortification wall to the south of the Temple of Isis. Future excavations in this area will reveal more information, e.g., did the gate stand in the same spot in the earlier, Roman fortification wall, remains of which were found along the same line below the late antique wall, further to the east[78]? For now, we are sure that a staircase of reused theatre blocks was built on the inner side and over the paved street that runs along the east side of the temple complex. It is placed perhaps towards the end of the 4th century or later, to bridge the difference in ground levels outside and inside the gate.

5TH TO 7TH CENTURIES: PROVINCIAL CAPITAL AND ABANDONMENT OF THE CITY

The 5th and 6th centuries at Stobi were intense, turbulent and full of events, natural or caused by human agency that influenced the further changes of the city. In addition to the plague in the 540s, the Huns (AD 447), Goths (AD 479 and 482), and Avars and Slavs in the second half of the 6th century threatened or interrupted life in the city. An earthquake in the early 6th century caused damage but also provoked building activities undertaken to repair the damage, to improve the infrastructure and to embellish the city to a certain point. The city was finally abandoned in the late 6th or early 7th century[79].

Several floods by the Erigon river and a landslide in the early 5th century had caused shrinking of the city's territory and construction of the inner east wall. The area along the river was abandoned and the core of the city was moved onto the middle and upper terraces, and the new inner east fortification wall was built, defining the new eastern boundary of the late antique town[80]. The proposed date for the construction of the inner wall varies between the early 5th century and after

[76] Wiseman 2006b; for recent discussion on the chronology see: Snively 2018, 291–298.
[77] Papazoglou 1988, 94 f.; Snively 2010, 548 f.
[78] Pavlovski – Blaževska 2017/2018, fig. 17; remains of the earlier, Roman fortification wall are visible inside the tower uncovered at the east end of the southeast section of the late antique wall.
[79] For historical events and general observations about Stobi during the 5th and 6th centuries, see Papazoglou 1988; Wiseman 1984b; Mikulčić 2003; Wiseman 2007.
[80] Folk 1973, 232–234; Wiseman 2007, 88 f. and 101 figs. 7–9.

the mid-5th century[81]. Its line is visible on the surface, but only small portions were excavated in the area above the »Building with Arches« and at the southeast corner for a length of 50 m, where it meets the southeast section of the late antique fortification. The foundation and a few rows of nicely worked blocks on the outer face of the wall had already been constructed when the Erigon flooded the lower terrace. The building of the wall continued as foundation using the marble seats from the Theatre and blocks from the *analemmata*, when another flood struck.

Administrative changes also affected Stobi. Macedonia was divided into two provinces in the later 5th century; Macedonia Secunda is known to have existed at least between 482 (Marcellinus Comes, *Chronicon* for AD 482) and 535 (Iust. Novella 11), but it does not appear in the sources after the latter date. Hierocles, in the *Synekdemos*, listed the capital Stobi as the first of eight cities in the province. Novella 11 placed Macedonia Secunda, together with the provinces of the Diocese of Dacia, under the jurisdiction of the new archbishop of Justiniana Prima (Caričin Grad). Stobi played an important role as an episcopal see. In addition to Budios, who was present at Nicaea in 325, and Eustathios, who according to a mosaic inscription renovated the Early Church, bishop Nikolaos attended the Council of Chalcedon in 451. An inscription identifies bishop Philip as responsible for the reconstructed »Basilica on the Terrace« in the 6th century. Phocas, perhaps a bishop at Stobi, participated in the Council at Constantinople in 553, representing the archbishop of Justiniana Prima. Given that the city began to decline during the second half of the 6th century and had been abandoned by a large percentage of its population by the end of the century, it is unclear what roles bishops Ioannes and Margaritus, who were present at the ecumenical councils in Constantinople in AD 680 and AD 692 respectively, would have played.

Major construction of Christian architecture occurred during the second half of the 5th century, when Christian churches were built within and outside the city, and continued into the 6th century. Toward the end of the 5th century the new Episcopal Church with quatrefoil baptistery was constructed on an artificial terrace 4.5 m above the Early Church, dominating the cityscape[82]. The large episcopal basilica, known as the »Basilica of bishop Philip« or »Basilica on the Terrace«, is a three-aisled church with atrium and narthex on the west side, semi-circular apse with ambulatory and sunken crypt on the east, a Π-shaped *presbyterium* with lateral clergy seats, and annexes on the northwest side. The total length of the church is 70 m and the width of nave and aisles is 26 m, while the atrium has a somewhat triangular shape due to adaptation to the existing main street or Via Sacra. The narthex and south aisle of the basilica were decorated with mosaics in *opus tessellatum*, *sectile* and schist slabs paved the nave, and architectural elements were made of white marble and pink marble breccia. Panels of mosaic in the south aisle were donated by two women, a very pious deaconess Matrona and Peristeria[83]. The door in the south wall of the narthex and the stairs, built in the narrow space between the Basilica and Building D, led down approximately 4 m to the Baptistery with domed roof, large circular baptismal font with two smaller fonts, a mosaic with Eucharistic themes and frescoes illustrating scenes from the New Testament (fig. 7).

Besides the Episcopal complex, three more churches, the North, Civil and Central Basilicas were built *intra muros*, well aligned with the existing street network. Three more stood outside the city walls, the Cemetery Basilica, the Extra Muros Basilica, and the basilica in the village of Palikura, 2 km southwest of Stobi[84]. The »House of Polycharmos« and Synagogue II were in use at least into the third quarter of the 5th century, after which the Central Basilica was built over the Synagogue, and the house, now the property of Christian clergy, acquired a new mosaic with

[81] For the segment of the inner east wall above the »Building with Arches« see: Wiseman 2007, 88. Publication of the results of the excavations of the south-east segment by the author is in progress.

[82] For the Episcopal Basilica there is an extensive bibliography of articles and chapters, in which various phases and its decorative elements are thoroughly explained. For the most recent discussion on the phases and chronology of the Episcopal Basilica and the Baptistery see Snively 2018, 286–302; Kolarik 2013; Wiseman 2006b, and quoted earlier bibliography.

[83] I.Stob 266. 267.

[84] For the Early Christian Churches at Stobi see Snively 1979; Snajvli 2013, 1357 f.

7 The Baptistery of the Large Episcopal Basilica (»Basilica on the Terrace«), 2018 (© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

8 The Theodosian Palace, view from the west, 2009 (© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

Christian symbolism in the *triclinium*. All the basilicas share similar basic architectural features: three aisles divided by colonnades, a semi-circular apse on the east and a narthex on the west side. In the case of other elements, e.g. an atrium, annexes, baptistery and interior decoration, each basilica displays its own distinctive features. Most of them were decorated with floor mosaics and marble architectural decoration, some with wall paintings or mosaics, of varying quality or richness depending on the wealth of their donors. In addition to the baptistery belonging to the Episcopal Basilica, baptisteries were attached to the North Basilica and the Extra Muros Basilica.

The large residences, the Theodosian Palace, »House of Parthenius«, »House of Peristeria«, »Domus Fullonica« and the »Casino« were remodelled with up-to-date features, especially nymphaea in the peristyle courts (fig. 8)[85]. They all belong to the category of peristyle houses, displaying a similar inner division of rooms organized around a peristyle court paved with stone slabs or mosaic, an apsidal *triclinium* decorated usually with mosaic floor and central octagonal fountain, while three of them (»House of Peristeria«, »Domus Fullonica« and the »Casino«) have private baths inside the house. Excavations have confirmed that the so-called Casino was the actual residence of the bishops, proved by exclusive rich finds, images of saints on the wall paintings, and a narrow, marble-paved street, now named Via Episcopalis, that led directly to the north aisle of the episcopal »Basilica on the Terrace«[86].

Public life circulated around the Semicircular Court located beside the Via Sacra near the Porta Heraclea and across from the Episcopal Church. In its first phase dated also to the late 5th century, the paved courtyard was enclosed by a semi-circular colonnade of marble columns and along the street by reused marble seats from the Theatre[87].

Changes are noticed in the West Cemetery, where the latest burials date to the late 4th century and modest structures of the large suburb were erected above the graves. The burial ground in the following two centuries was moved onto the plateau around the Cemetery Basilica, built in the late 5th century ca. 500 m southwest of the Porta Heraclea, and further to the south. A large concentration of graves was discovered along the fortification walls as well[88].

An earthquake struck the city in the early 6th century[89]. It was traditionally connected with the famous earthquake of AD 518 in the province of Dardania described by Marcellinus Comes (Chron. 518, B). The earthquake damaged the city and the damage is most visible in the Episcopal Basilica, the fortification walls and the towers, the Small Bath and other buildings. The Episcopal Basilica was rebuilt from the foundations in the 520s or 530s by bishop Phillip, as recorded on the lintel inscription[90]. New colonnades were erected between the nave and the aisles, the *presbyterium* was remodelled, new mosaic floors were made in the south aisle and the narthex, and a massive terrace wall was constructed between the south wall of the church and the Baptistery. The decoration was even more grandiose with fresco paintings and gilded wall mosaics, composite capitals with animal figures, and painted and gilded mullion capitals on the apse windows. Building D was incorporated into the basilica complex; in its northeast corner, a room on the second floor, decorated with a beautiful mosaic and accessible from the narthex of the basilica, served as a *catechumeneum*. The roof of the Baptistery was remodelled, repairs were made to the mosaic floor, and a baldachin supported on twelve columns was erected above the baptismal pool[91]. Repairs were made to the fortification walls, to the Semicircular Court where piers were built between the columns and nine rooms were organized behind the colonnade to serve various commercial purposes as shops and workshops, and a colonnade was added along the Via Sacra.

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85 For the late antique residences at Stobi see Hemans 1986.
86 Z. Georgiev (forthcoming), in: Studies in the Antiquities of Stobi 5.
87 Snively 2012, 186; Nikolovski 2018.
88 During the 2010 excavations of the northwest fortification around 280 graves were found along the northernmost curtains of the wall.
89 For detailed discussion of the 6th century earthquakes, see Pavlovski – Blaževska 2017/2018, 55–67.
90 I.Stob 303.
91 Dinsmoor 1975, 15–26; Kolarik 2013; Wiseman 2006b; Snively 2018, 286–302.

9 Part of the »Residential and Commercial Quarter« after the excavations in 2010 (© Archive of the National Institution Stobi)

The damaged water supply system in the city was repaired and new mosaic floors with typical Christian symbolism were added, e.g., in the east *triclinium* of the »House of Peristeria«, where a new panel was inserted in the south-west corner[92].

Obviously in the last two centuries of its existence Stobi was a wealthy city with grandiose private or public structures embellished with fine art works, floor pavement or architectural marbles, in the contemporary taste of the time, but also a city where reuse of earlier architectural and artistic pieces was common practice. Some of the emperors, perhaps Theodosius, bishops and other individuals such as Peristeria played an important role as initiators or wealthy patrons who largely influenced the urban development of the city during Late Antiquity.

The area within the fortification walls was smaller than in the Imperial period, because of space lost along the Erigon (and possibly the Axios) river. The episcopal »Basilica on the Terrace« in the southwest part of the city dominated the skyline, but on the other side of town the North, Civil, and Central Basilicas and the »House of Psalms« formed a religious enclave that stretched along the Via Principalis Inferior. A number of more or less palatial residences occupied blocks on the middle terrace. Houses, often solidly constructed and ranging from modest to middle class, now stood above the Temple of Isis area, above or within the ruins of the Theatre, and on the so-called Acropolis and the eastern slope below it, as well as in the »Residential and Commercial Quarter«, to be discussed below. A substantial suburb occupied the space outside the Porta Heraclea along the road leading west toward Heraclea Lyncestis. A market area was located along and behind the Via Sacra. The only public buildings known, however, are the Large and Small Baths, in sharp contrast to the imperial city. This situation, seen as well in other late antique cities, shows how administrative and governmental functions, e.g., judicial and financial, had been taken over by the church or were now located within the residences of high officials[93].

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[92] Kolarik 2018.
[93] Snively (forthcoming).

During excavations at Stobi in the 1920s and 1930s, modest dwellings were found above the remains of the large residences on the middle and upper terraces. Rooms and courtyards had been divided by walls made of stone and mud, which were removed by the excavators to reveal the earlier phases of the lavishly decorated residences. They were explained as a rural phase, which occurred after the earthquake in the early 6th century then believed to mark the end of urban life. But the excavations in 2009 and 2010 on a large area of almost 7,000 m² in the southwest part of the city, between the Via Sacra and the northwest fortification wall, revealed a part of the city layout with similar modest dwellings organized along the new, 7 m wide street, now named the »Residential and Commercial Quarter« (fig. 9). At the south end of the Semicircular Court, a street branches off from the Via Sacra, turns behind the court, and runs north. Modest structures were built on the west side of the street, filling the area as far as the northwest fortification wall. They are smaller in size and consist of only a few rooms, mainly oriented south-west–north-east, divided by narrow parallel alleys leading from the main street to the wall. Their walls were attached to the rampart without leaving a passage between in the last phase of their existence. Many *spolia* were reused in the walls, made of stone and mud or mixed mud and mortar in the lower parts and mud bricks in the upper, roofed with tiles or thin sandstone slabs, with earthen floors and without interior decoration. Only the »House with Triclinium« built to the north of the Semicircular Court retained the size and inner division with large courtyard, *triclinium*, kitchen, storage areas and rooms on the second floor, similar to the residences on the middle terrace. The »House with Triclinium« is 700 m² in size, with a paved courtyard of sandstone slabs, a *triclinium* paved with bricks, and earthen floors elsewhere. For now, we can be sure only that it had an earlier, late 5th century phase, when the courtyard was surrounded by arched piers.

This represents the last urban phase of the city, definitely modest compared to the previous phase, but urban as well with a functional street network, drainage, water supply, private and public space and structures. Further excavations and research will be necessary to determine when exactly they were built, but they definitely existed throughout the whole 6th century until the abandonment of the city. Two coin hoards were discovered in two houses, hidden below the earthen floors and including the latest issues of Mauricius minted in AD 584/585, pointing to the dangerous times of Avar and Slav invasions and providing a *terminus post quem* for the abandonment of the city[94]. The inhabitants left the city and took refuge somewhere in the vicinity or in larger cities, but the hidden hoards indicate that they planned to return to the city. Obviously only a small number of people returned and remained until the final abandonment of the city, since the records show that imported items arrived in the city after AD 584/585[95], and there are some small-scale repairs and remodelling of the existing houses in the »Residential and Commercial Quarter«. A settlement, no longer meeting urban standards, barely existed after that year and was abandoned at the end of the 6th century or perhaps at the beginning of the 7th century, struck by another earthquake that buried some of the inhabitants under the ruins[96].

The end of the city was obviously slow and not a violent process. Many problematic events and reasons during the 6th century caused the final abandonment of Stobi: economic decline, earthquakes, the bubonic plague during the time of Justinian, barbaric raids in the second half of the century and environmental changes[97]. A small settlement was recorded in the medieval period after which Stobi vanished under thick deposits of sand and earth, until the middle of the 19th century when the travellers and historians J. G. von Hahn and L. Heuzey located the city at the confluence of both rivers.

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[94] Hadji-Maneva 2009. Four more hoards containing the latest issues of Mauricius were found in other buildings at Stobi.

[95] Nikolovski 2018, 321. 325 and n. 43; Radnjanski 2018.

[96] Wiseman 2007; Pavlovski – Blaževska 2017/2018, 55–67; Georgiev 2012, 35–55, explains them as victims of the Avar and Slavic raids.

[97] Wiseman 2007.

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Polyxeni Adam-Veleni

THESSALONIKI: A METROPOLIS THROUGH THE CENTURIES

ABSTRACT

During the excavations for the construction of the Metropolitan Railway in Thessaloniki, important antiquities came to light. At two main stations in the heart of the ancient and modern city, significant new archaeological data was discovered: the central street (the Roman *decumanus maximus*) with perpendicular streets *(cardines)*, large squares, multiple shops, and luxurious public buildings. These together constitute a majestic image of the ancient city and provide new information about its urban planning. As Thessaloniki was a densely populated and important metropolis in the Balkans, according to its inscriptions, throughout the Imperial period (1st–3rd centuries AD) it was transformed into a privileged capital of this region of the empire during the Tetrarchy in the 4th century AD, becoming the seat of the Tetrarch Galerius. At this time, a large-scale urban reconstruction of the city took place, and Thessaloniki received the magnificent appearance of the capital of the Balkans. Another major urban change took place in the 6th century, when the city acquired large public open spaces and squares through a well-designed urban programme similar to that observed in the capital of the Byzantine State, Constantinople. The historical development of the city continued to be important during the middle Byzantine era (7th–11th centuries AD), and also during the last period of Byzantine prosperity, while the city retained its commercial significance throughout the Ottoman period.

KEYWORDS

Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine Thessaloniki – Galerius Complex – *decumanus maximus* – nymphaeum

Thessaloniki is a city with uninterrupted urban life for over 23 centuries. Founded by Kassandros as an important and large urban centre of the Hellenistic world, it developed into a glorious seat of the Roman administration of the Province of Macedonia and a majestic imperial capital of the Roman state in Late Antiquity under the Tetrarch Galerius, who embellished the city. It was fortunate to remain the second most important city, after the capital Constantinople, throughout the thousand-year-long Byzantine Empire. During Ottoman times it continued to maintain its role as a transit, business and commercial centre.

Excavations carried out in recent years for the construction of the Metro in Thessaloniki have provided new and rich data on the urban development of the city from its foundation to the present day[1]. As is known from Strabo (7, 24), the city was founded in 316/315 BC via the method of *synoecism*, that is, gathering the population of 26 smaller urban centres around the Thermaic Gulf[2]. Its founder was the General Kassandros, son of general Antipater, a »royal child« (βασιλικός

[1] For the excavation works in the Metro see in general Adam-Veleni – Mylopoulos 2018 and for the excavation seasons see Marki – Vasileiadou 2008; Acheilara 2009; Acheilara 2010; Païsidou et al. 2010; Acheilara 2011; Makropoulou et al. 2011a; Makropoulou et al. 2011b; Misailidou-Despotidou 2012; Makropoulou et al. 2012; Misailidou-Despotidou et al. 2014; Makropoulou – Tzevreni 2014; Kanonidis et al. (in print); Kanonidis et al. (forthcoming); Adam-Veleni et al. (forthcoming a); Lambrothanasi (in press); Adam-Veleni – Protopsalti (in press); Adam-Veleni – Protopsalti (forthcoming).

[2] Adam-Veleni 2011.

παις), a »companion« (εταίρος) of Alexander the Great[3], who was educated similarly to him in the royal court with the philosopher Aristotle as teacher[4]. Kassandros secured blood ties with Alexander by marrying his half-sister Thessaloniki. Honouring his wife the queen and rivalling his brother-in-law, the ambitious Kassandros established a city in the heart of the Thermaic Gulf, giving it the name of his wife Thessaloniki.

The city of Thessaloniki is characterised by three major features since its establishment until today: 1. its continuity throughout the centuries, 2. its multiculturalism, having been created from the populations of 26 different urban centres, and 3. its continued importance as an economic/ trade urban centre. Little is known regarding its planning organization at the time of its foundation, although it is certain that Kassandros secured it with strong walls[5]. A small section of the walls of his time was found in the east wall and one in the north[6]. An important Hellenistic edifice, perhaps of public use, was discovered unfortunately in a very fragmentary state under the early Roman phases in the archaeological site on the square in front of the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace[7]. The city in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC was an important urban centre of the Macedonian Kingdom.

The citizens were wealthy and some of them were perhaps related to the royal family, as the grave goods found in the cemeteries during the Metro excavation show. The area of the city consisted of both mountainous and lowland areas[8]. It probably originally extended to the hills beneath today's Upper Town (Ano Poli) and would have had an irregular urban plan. Foresight was applied, however, and the possibility existed to extend the city over the lowlands to the sea, where a parallel east-west road ran[9]. In fact, when the city expanded in these lowlands during the reign of Philip V, the Hippodamian urban planning system was applied, as the recent excavations of the Metro at Aghia Sophia Station demonstrate[10]. At this site, in 2012, after the removal of the 6th century AD road slabs, the lower levels of the road alongside the sea were brought to light. The road was initially paved with pebbles, broken ceramics, roof tiles and other recycled second-hand materials.

The Metro line cuts through the historic centre of Thessaloniki with two stations situated where Aghia Sophia and Venizelos streets intersect Egnatia[11]. The excavations at these two central stations have revealed finds that trace the organization of the city's urban core from the second half of the 3rd century BC to the Great Fire of 1917, filling in the topographical map of the area of what has always been its principal thoroughfare, known today as Egnatia Street.

At the Metro Station of Aghia Sophia[12], sections of two rectangular urban *insulae* were excavated with a north-south road between them, of approximately 4.5 m in width. In the eastern building quarter, mainly residential sections were exposed. In the western one, in addition to houses and workshops, workshop objects and a pottery kiln were found. The eastern *insula* was primarily residential and commercial, while evidence of structures and finds to the west of the cardo clearly attests to workshop activity (fig. 1 a. b). A workshop with a pottery kiln is located in the Hellenistic neighbourhood[13]. Excavation along the line of the east-west artery (the later *decumanus maximus*) brought to light 23 stone bases from the 1st or the 2nd century AD. Thus, it was established that a stoa was built along this road (the *decumanus maximus*).

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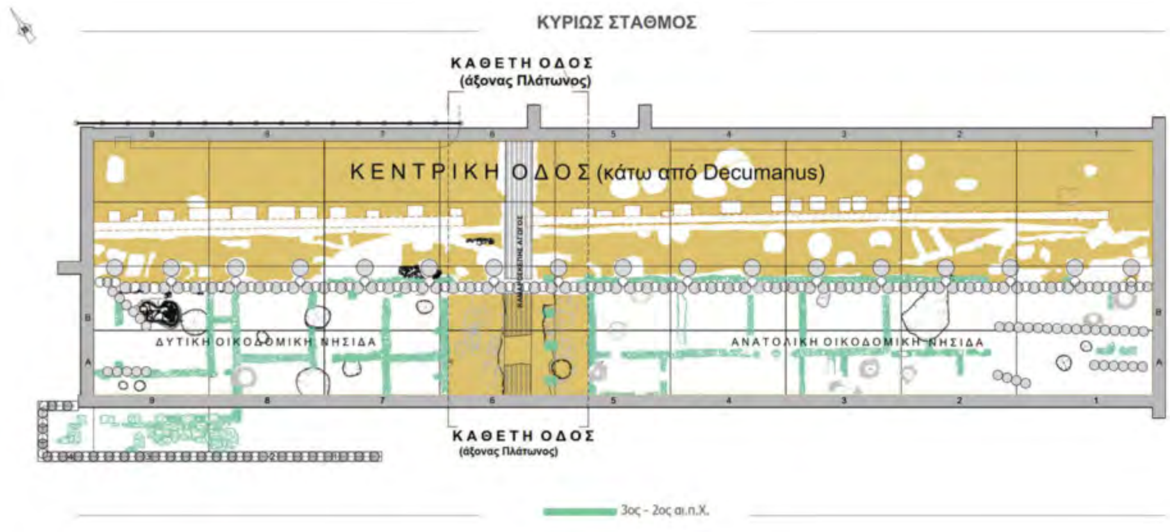
3 Worthington 2004; Wiemer 2005; Lane Fox 2011a.
4 Hatzopoulos 2006.
5 Velenis 1998.
6 Adam-Veleni 1989.
7 Tasia 1997.
8 Vitti 1996; Vickers 1970.
9 Velenis 1996.
10 Adam-Veleni et al. (forthcoming b); Adam-Veleni – Protopsalti (in press); Adam-Veleni – Protopsalti (forthcoming).
11 Adam-Veleni – Mylopoulos 2018.
12 Vasileiadou 2019.
13 Lambrothanasi et al. 2018.



1 a Aghia Sophia Station. Plan of the Hellenistic remains (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/ Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

1 b Aghia Sophia Station. General view of the Hellenistic remains (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

The city of Thessaloniki flourished during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, in the era of the Antonine and Severan dynasties, when a huge administrative centre consisting of a Roman forum was constructed[14] (fig. 2). The city became a trade centre and was very densely populated. From that period on, the city became more and more important for the Roman administration, since it had many advantages with its safe harbour and with the construction of the ancient Egnatia road which ran through the vicinity, outside the walls of the city.

Thessaloniki reached the culmination of its glory at the beginning of the 4th century AD when emperor Diocletian divided the vast Roman Empire into four parts and designated the city as the capital of one part of the Tetrarchy. With this decision, Thessaloniki was transformed from the seat of the Roman administration of the Province of Macedonia into a capital city. At this time a major urban reconstruction seems to have been carried out. With its new status as a capital, many of Thessaloniki's older public buildings were repaired and embellished, and a new ambitious

[14] Adam-Veleni 2001.

2
The Roman Forum of Thessaloniki (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

3
The Palace of Galerius (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

urban plan to accommodate its new administrative needs as the capital was put in place. During this period the city's majestic appearance, with glorious and imposing public buildings befitting a capital, was enhanced.

The *decumanus maximus* was paved with marble slabs in the 4th century AD. A monumental palace was built in the eastern part of the city area[15] (fig. 3). The huge building complex starts from the Rotunda, from which point a paved road runs toward the sea. At the crossroads where the two roads met (i.e. the *decumanus maximus* and the paved road from the Rotunda towards the sea) a monumental *tetrapylon* was constructed from which only the Arch of Galerius now remains[16] (fig. 4 a–c). It then leads to spaces with official or private use, and to the Hippodrome and the Octagon[17]. Galerius' architects created a monumental building complex that would be imposing in its size and its unity in order to declare the presence of the emperor. They designed a building ensemble in the longitudinal land strip available along the inner side of the eastern wall of the city. This complex appropriately organised the infrastructure necessary for the operation of the imperial seat: venues for formal hearings and reception halls, as well as private residences in

[15] Athanasiou et al. 2015.
[16] Laubscher 1975; Velenis 1996; Torp 2003.
[17] Velenis 2018.

4 a
Reconstruction of the Palace of Galerius with the Rotunda and the Arch (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/ Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

4 b
Reconstruction of the Arch of Galerius (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

4 c
The Arch of Galerius (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

5
The Nymphaeum
(© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/ Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

6
The mosaic with the lying Aphrodite (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

the southern and south-western side; a Hippodrome in the east; and ideological buildings, i.e. the triumphal arch and the pantheon[18], in the northern, elevated area of the palace complex[19].

The succeeding emperors made Thessaloniki even more prominent as a capital with important construction projects. Constantine, who lived there for four years, selected it among the candidate cities as a new capital for his state, although he finally chose Byzantium which would later become Constantinople. Thessaloniki, however, due to the importance it had acquired, retained the

[18] Regarding the different views of the use of Thessaloniki's Rotunda see Mühlenbrock 2003.
[19] Stefanidou-Tiveriou 2009.

characteristics of the capital city and throughout the thousand-year-old Byzantine Empire remained the second most important city, the »co-ruling« city, the συμβασιλεύουσα.

At the same time, to the north of the *decumanus maximus* a monumental fountain, a luxurious multi-storey nymphaeum, was constructed, of which 16 m were discovered, with an estimated length of about 20 m. The nymphaeum is in the shape of a double L, of the type with theatrical facade *(scaenae frons)*[20]. During its long use, from the 4th to the 7th century AD, it underwent many refinements and variations[21]. Initially it had rectangular and semi-circular niches from which water flowed into a large cistern in front. Subsequently the niches were closed off, and the water cistern in the front changed its form[22]. It would certainly have had two to three floors and would have been embellished with rich sculptural decoration. The nymphaeum represents the largest water supply building found in Thessaloniki, and is one of the most imposing in the whole of northern Greece[23] (fig. 5).

In any case, the nymphaeum remained in use for centuries in one of the most central parts of the city, where a crossroad can be expected, corresponding to that of Venizelos Station, under the current street of Aghias Sophias. This central nymphaeum was supplied with water probably by the Aqueduct of Chortiatis[24] and guaranteed an abundant water supply to the entire central and eastern part of the city in Late Antiquity and during the early Byzantine era. Its location in this part of the city is by no means accidental. Apart from the fact that it served a large portion of the population of the city, it was not only connected with places of worship, possibly of the goddess Aphrodite[25], but also with an extensive bath complex, much of which has been excavated to the south of the *decumanus maximus*.

The district that built this central city fountain seems to have had been supplied with plenty of water. Even today, below the *cardo* that meets the *decumanus maximus*, which roughly coincides with the course of today's Egnatia Road, a torrent flows at a depth of about 6.5 m. The area is close to the later Early Christian church of Acheiropitos, which was probably built above a sanctuary of Aphrodite, as is shown by a series of small statues found in the area[26]; the goddess was also protector of natural springs and waters.

The building excavated at the southern entrance of Aghia Sophia Station is certainly related to the abundance of water in the area. It is a large building with peristyle, inner courtyard and *impluvium*. Whether this building was a huge *villa urbana* or, more probably, a large complex belonging to Roman public baths *(thermae)*, several areas were decorated with mosaics of exceptional quality, including geometric motifs and a central medallion depicting Aphrodite with Eros lying on a couch[27] (fig. 6). An underground chamber was excavated beneath a hot bathing room with hypocausts, while an infrastructure for sub-floor *tepidarium* heating was also brought to light. The building, with its mosaic floors and bathing facilities, was in use from the second half of the 4th century to the end of the 5th century AD (fig. 7 a. b).

In the first half of the 6th century AD yet another major change in city planning occurred. The bathing building was destroyed after a natural disaster, perhaps an earthquake, and then almost completely levelled[28]. Above this, a large elliptical plaza to the south of the *decumanus maximus* was set up, lined with large slabs of volcanic material and acquiring a greater width which, together with the sidewalks and arcades on both sides, attained a width of 16 m (fig. 8). Correspon-

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20 Aristodimou 2011.
21 Adam-Veleni – Mylopoulos 2018; Vasileiadou – Tzevreni 2020.
22 Neuerburg 1965; Walker 1987; Letzner 1990.
23 Velenis – Adam-Veleni 2011.
24 Manoledakis 2018.
25 Adam-Veleni (in press).
26 Adam-Veleni (in press).
27 Adam-Veleni (in press).
28 Kanonidis et al. (forthcoming).

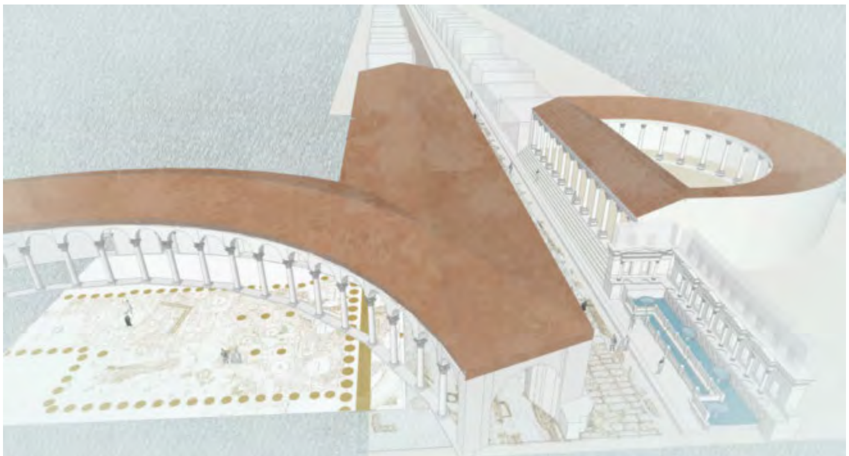
7 a
The hypocaust of the bath complex (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

7 b
The mosaics in the bath complex (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

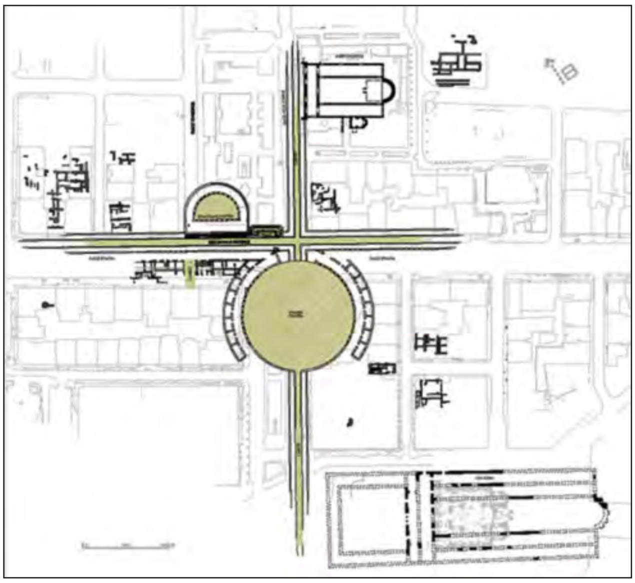
dingly, a semi-circular plaza was constructed adjacent to the monumental nymphaeum[29] (fig. 9) on the north side of the *decumanus maximus*.

The centre of the city thus had a magnificent appearance with huge public open and semi-open spaces, squares, galleries, fountains and other luxurious buildings. The elliptical plaza to the south was paved with marble slabs and was adorned with arcades of monolithic green stone columns from Thessaly (fig. 10). The magnificent configuration of the area in the 6th and 7th centuries displayed how important the city was during this period. Its large-scale urban reconstruction was obviously funded by the imperial fiscus and was undoubtedly due to imperial will, probably of

[29] Adam-Veleni et al. (forthcoming a).



8
Reconstruction of the squares north and south of the *decumanus maximus* and the nymphaeum (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)



9
Plan of the squares north and south of the *decumanus maximus* (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

10 The circular square south of the *decumanus maximus* and the semi-circular square north of the *decumanus* with the Nymphaeum (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

Justinian or Leo; such an urban reconfiguration should certainly be associated with the large and important monuments erected contemporaneously in Constantinople.

The next significant phase excavated during the construction of the northern entrance to Aghia Sophia Station belongs to the late 7th up to the 13th century. It is a fine specimen of mid-Byzantine urban planning, with shops along the *decumanus maximus* and houses or other public and private buildings, representing a unique specimen of architecture that has not been discovered elsewhere so far, not even in Constantinople. Corresponding building phases and alterations are also observed along the *decumanus maximus* at Venizelos Station[30]. Here the main road crossing the city

[30] Konstantinidou et al. (in press); Konstantinidou – Miza 2020.

along the sea was again excavated, located about 6.5 m below the modern Egnatia Road (fig. 11). At the same time, under the current Venizelos Street, the *cardo* leading to the sea was excavated. The crossroads where the two arterial roads met was marked in the 4th century by a monumental *tetrapylon*, built on 12 pillars (fig. 12) constructed of brick and rubble masonry, corresponding and similar in proportion to the triumphal monument which existed in the eastern part of the city and of which only a part now remains, the famous Arch of Galerius. Thus, there were two main monumental *tetrapyla* in the city, one on the east side of the city and one on the west side (fig. 13).

Similar construction phases of the *decumanus maximus*, which remain *in situ*, have also been identified here. It was covered with marble slabs in the 4th century AD and was almost completely reconstructed with slabs of volcanic material in the 6th century, when both large semi-circular and circular squares were created in the area of Aghia Sophia Station. Shops and other public and private buildings were excavated on both sides of the road. In the 7th century the road was enlarged and formed a rectangular square with a monumental gate in the south. After the end of the 7th century the course of the road was narrower, and during the 9th and 10th centuries encroachments are observed, thereby reducing its width significantly.

Correspondingly, the width of the *cardo* is reduced below the current Venizelos Street, which also deviated from the straight line and was curved. However, the functions around these streets remained the same for centuries: shops and workshops were located here for goldsmiths and silversmiths, and for the manufacture of copper utensils and other objects, uses similar to those existing to this day. After all, the Christian church built in the area was dedicated to the Virgin as protector of copper-works – Virgin (Panaghia) of Chalkeon. Even today we find shops with bronze vessels and other metal wares in this area[31].

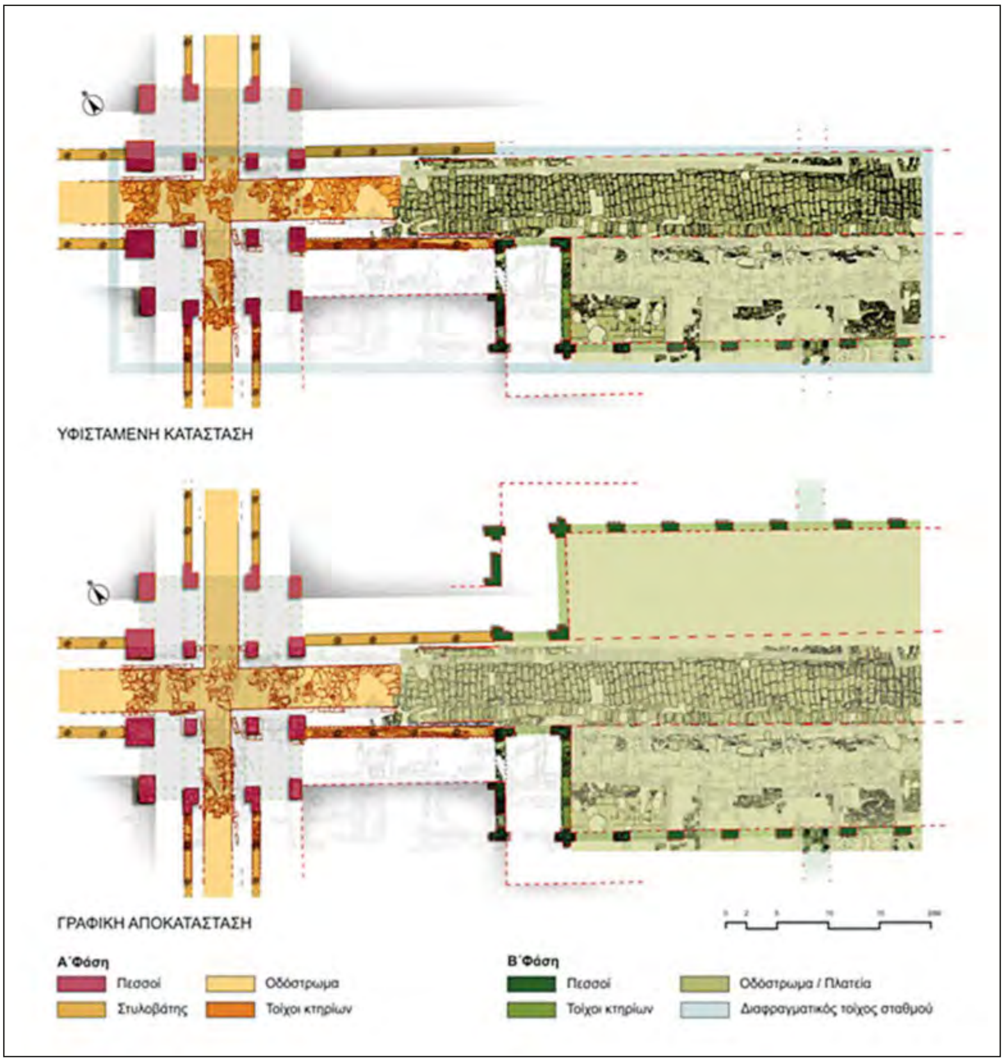
The existence of jewellery workshops is demonstrated by small metal tools and solid mercury parts used in metallurgy, also showing that the jewellery sold on the market was manufactured locally in workshops[32]. These were the shops and workshops of the Byzantine Agora of the city that produced jewellery, metalwork and glassware, ceramics, etc. Vessels for mixing raw materials for the production of various objects, tools, moulds for jewellery, semi-finished ceramics and tripods are consistent with other sites throughout the Byzantine period. Plenty of small items and jewellery, including crosses of various types, glass and copper bracelets, and silver rings attest to the commercial nature of the area over the centuries, especially for gold and silver processing uses, just like today. Some ceramic cylindrical bars and fragments of sigmoid artefacts of circular cross-section found on the surface of the *decumanus maximus* and dating to the late 11th century show the function of a middle Byzantine pottery kiln in the area.

The market stretching along both sides of the Byzantine Avenue was found to continue at least until Aghia Sophia Station[33]. With the excavations at the two stations, the urban area of Byzantine Thessaloniki was revealed, and the city's layout was highlighted[34]. These findings constitute the most legible and authentic part of its historical centre in the centuries from the 4th to the 10th centuries AD, which have survived in the same position to this day, with present-day Egnatia passing 6.5 m above them.

The stations that revealed the most important information about the daily life of the city are undoubtedly the stations of Venizelos and Aghia Sophia. The monumental building remains at these two stations radically changed the image we had of Thessaloniki in Late Antiquity, the early and mid-Byzantine period. Serving as the capital during the years of the Tetrarchy, Thessaloniki during the early and middle Byzantine era continued to be a large metropolitan city, with impressively shaped public spaces containing squares, fountains, monumental rectangular complexes at important crossroads, and processional streets. For the first time, we have an extensive and

[31] Konstantinidou 2019.
[32] Veropoulidou 2012.
[33] Tzevreni 2019.
[34] Adam-Veleni – Mylopoulos 2018.

11
The *decumanus maximus* in Venizelos Station (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/ Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)



12
Plan of the *decumanus maximus*, the rectangular square and the Tetrapylon at the crossroad (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/ Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

13
Reconstruction plan of the rectangular square, the *decumanus maximus* and the Tetrapylon in Venizelos Station (© Ephorate of Antiquities of the city of Thessaloniki/Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports)

authentic segment of the urban landscape of secular Thessaloniki beyond the well-known ecclesiastical and monastic monuments and fortifications that contribute to our knowledge of the city's organisation.

We are therefore informed regarding its extent in the late Hellenistic period, how important and majestic it became as a capital between the 4th and 6th centuries AD, how active it remained commercially during the Byzantine and post-Byzantine era, and how it evolved in the following centuries as a leading trading city of the Ottoman Empire. Ultimately, and after the publications of the excavation finds in coming years, the history and archaeology of the city should be republished incorporating the new information obtained by the Metro archaeological excavations.

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ANTIQUITIES IN THE TWO STATIONS OF AGHIA SOPHIA AND VENIZELOS IN THE *INTRA MUROS* CITY OF THESSALONIKI

The insistence of the construction company (Attiko Metro S.A.) to extend the Metro line through the heart of ancient Thessaloniki, despite the warnings since the 1990s of archaeologists about the importance and extent of antiquities, the absence of any cooperation in the initial planning phase, and a memorandum signed in 2006, clearly bypassing the provisions of the Archaeological Legislation (Greek Law 3028/2002), which provided only for the relocation or deconstruction of antiquities, were not the best guarantees for the fate of antiquities[35]. During the implementation of the project the problem was exacerbated by the incorrect schedules of the construction company, and by insufficient financial budgets, issues which were in obvious contradiction with the excellent preservation and abundance of the antiquities discovered, which in the meantime had been revealed and required other ways of management. These circumstances consequently created an explosive mix of constant controversy, frustration and delays, resulting in antiquities often becoming the scapegoat in a project that was designed from the beginning with carelessness, haste and lack of professionalism.

The *decumanus maximus* at the main building of Aghia Sophia Station, excavated in 2011/2012 for a length of 73 m, was removed from the site in July 2012. According to the relevant Ministerial Decision, 45 of the 73 m would be repositioned inside the building of the station after the completion of the construction. This relocation was never carried out, as in the meantime the station building was closed without a relocation plan, and finally the construction company realized that there was not enough space to accommodate those 45 m of the road.

The mid-Byzantine urban complex excavated at the northern entrance of Aghia Sophia Station remained *in situ* with a Ministerial Decision of 2017 as a new archaeological site in the modern

[35] For the management of antiquities in the Metro Stations in general see Kountouri et al. 2018, 47–49.

city, and the entire planning of the north entrance of the station was modified. The 16 surviving metres of the nymphaeum were temporarily moved, and they will be repositioned and will remain visible below the northern entrance stairs.

The marble slabs from the part of the elliptical shaped square, with an area of about 300 m², which were revealed during the construction of the southern entrance of Aghia Sophia Station were temporarily removed for conservation reasons and it has been decided to relocate them to the same level after the construction of the south entrance.

The amazing urban ensemble that came to light at Venizelos Station was the subject of great controversy. Initially, in 2013, it was decided to detach the road and relocate it to the Pavlos Melas military base, in an area outside the Municipality of the city of Thessaloniki. After the first reactions, another decision was made to detach the road and relocate it back in the station after the construction of its shell, without, however, proceeding with a relevant economic and technical study of the total cost of detachment and relocation. After a strong reaction from many institutions and leading individuals of the city, but also internationally, and mainly by the Municipality of Thessaloniki, with the then-mayor Giannis Boutaris predominant, it was decided by the state to preserve the road *in situ*, and to build the station in two levels below the antique level.

In 2015, after the reversal of the decision to remove the structures, the *in situ*-preservation of the extremely important building complex excavated during 2011–2013 began to be applied at Venizelos Station. Based on the *in situ*-conservation study, two shafts in the eastern and western part of the station were excavated in the natural ground. These two shafts avoided the entire level of the unearthed archaeological site of 1,600 m², and through them the construction of the station was to proceed to deeper levels.

The realization of this pioneering technical project started in 2016, after changes were made to the decision by which the entire, unique building complex of almost 2 acres of archaeological site was to remain in place[36]. By June 2019, the perimeter walls of the two shafts had been constructed, as well as the roof slab of the station, which was at the same time the roadway of the Egnatia Highway. This solution proceeded smoothly until August 2019 when the notion of relocating was revisited after the July 9th -elections and the goverment's change; work was stopped in July 2019 in order to change the solution regarding the construction of the station again. The scenario of the removal and relocation of the structures was resumed, based on a new decision taken by majority vote in December 2019[37]. The study for the detachment and relocation of the archaeological remains of Venizelos Station, despite the almost total rejection by the scientific community both nationally and internationally, was approved unanimously[38] by the Central Scientific Council of the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports in September 2020.

Undoubtedly, the construction of the main building of the station on two levels below the antiquities, which would remain *in situ* and therefore authentic and intact, thus accomplishing the two main principles of UNESCO, would enrich our know-how as a country. Furthermore, it would provide added value for both the station and the surrounding environment, which even today remains the most commercial point of the modern city, offering its residents and visitors many benefits. It would be an achievement of modern technology and would attract the public and experts, creating a new landmark destination for visitors to the city. Thus, modern technology would have

[36] For a brief description of the solution and its principles, see Gatopoulou – Svolopoulos 2018, 50–55.

[37] I participated in the Central Archaeological Council *ex officio* as Director General of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage in the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports until March 2020. In December 2019, at the meeting that decided the fate of the important archaeological ensemble of Venizelos Station, together with Professor V. Koumousis, a civil engineer specializing in static studies, from the National Polytechnical School at Athens, I voted against the detachment of the building ensemble, arguing that the solution of keeping the ancient remains *in situ* was possible and after all, since 2017, I was the one who together with a large group of scientists had started its implementation.

[38] With the change in the composition of the members of the Central Archaeological Council after spring of 2020, in which Professor V. Koumousis and I, the author of this paper, were not included, unanimity for the detachment of the archaeological ensemble of Venizelos Station was achieved.

to save the ancient one, as the main thoroughfare and the crossroads with its four gates and all the commercial buildings around it, would be nothing short of a remarkable technological achievement of its time. Many institutions and individuals in the country have appealed to the Supreme Court on the issue of the legality of the relocation of this building complex. The hope that the Supreme Court would issue a ruling in favor of conservation *in situ* did not come true, and, with votes 13–12, it was equally legal to remove the entire archaeological site and relocate it in the first level of the station after its construction. Thus, the modern city missed the opportunity to have an authentic, intact, unique and extremely important urban ensemble of ancient Thessaloniki.

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NEWBORN CAPITALS ON THE EVE OF LATE ANTIQUITY

Ventzislav Dintchev

THE PROVINCIAL CAPITALS OF THE LATE ANTIQUE DIOCESES OF THRACIA AND DACIA

ABSTRACT

The stagnation and the decline of the autonomous urban self-government in Late Antiquity is accompanied by an increase in the role of the imperial administration in the governance and social life of the cities. Favoured by these changes are mainly the centres in which the provincial governors reside, i.e. the provincial capitals. At the same time, with the establishment of Christianity as a dominant religion, the territorial-administrative organization of the church is formed. It duplicates that of the state. Gradually the episcopal institution became a key factor in legitimizing and defending the city's status. The bishop of the provincial capital – the metropolitan – is in a position of supremacy over other bishops in the province. A material expression of these advantages of the provincial capitals is the large-scale construction of public and private buildings and facilities.

KEYWORDS

Late Antiquity – diocese of Dacia – diocese of Thracia – urbanism – late antique architecture

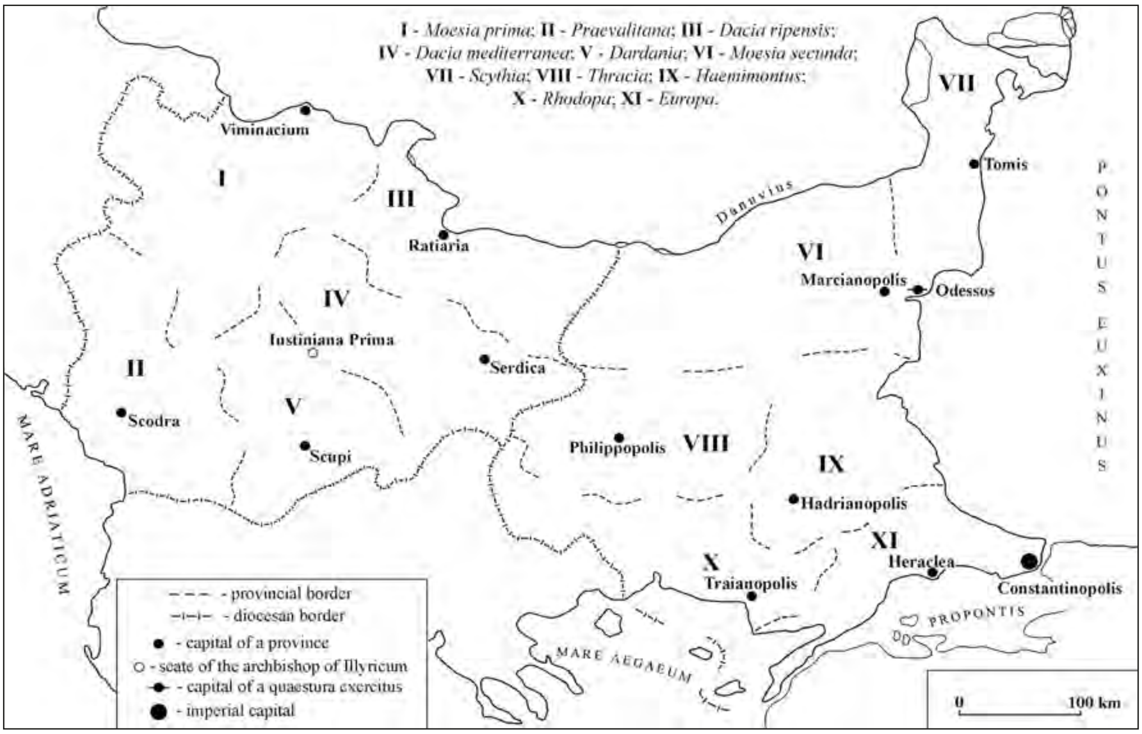
With the reforms at the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century the Roman Empire introduces a complicated territorial administrative organization, subordinated to several prefectures, dozens of dioceses and hundreds of provinces. The Balkans are divided between the dioceses of the prefecture Illyricum (in the western and central part of the peninsula), on the one hand, and the diocese Thracia (on the eastern part of the peninsula), which belongs to the prefecture Orient, on the other. Originally, the prefecture Illyricum belongs to the western part of the Empire, under the control of the old capital of Rome. Even before the end of the 4th century, however, with two of the Illyrian dioceses – Dacia and Macedonia, the new prefecture Illyricum orientalae was founded, a component already of the eastern part of the Empire.

The mentioned reforms and accompanying changes in public life stimulated the development of the late antique capitals of provinces. The other ›face‹ of the overall tendency of stagnation and decay of the autonomous urban self-government is the increasing role of the imperial administration, whose headquarters are the provincial capitals. Affirmation of their privileged status was also contributed by the development of the territorial-administrative structure of the church after AD 313 which duplicates the state structure and distinguishes the provincial capitals as headquarters of metropolitans/archbishops[1].

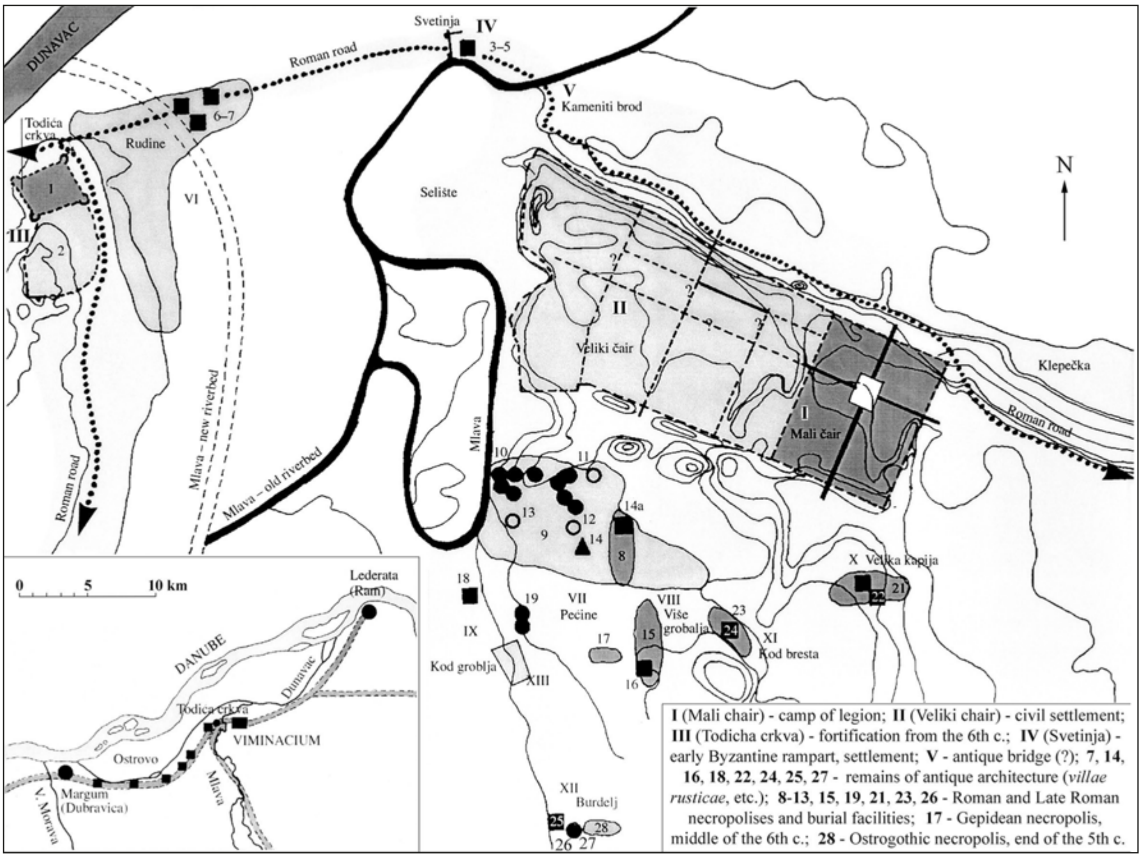
The current overview of the provincial capitals of the dioceses Thracia and Dacia (fig. 1) is geared towards the architecture and the changes in their urban planning, and is based primarily on current archaeological data regarding these areas.

During the Principate Viminacium was a significant military and settlement centre in the Middle Danube, and its choice as the capital of the late antique province of Moesia Prima (fig. 1) was

[1] Dintchev 2018, 362–365.



1 The provincial capitals of the late antique dioceses of Thracia and Dacia (© V. Dintchev)



2 Situational plan of the known remains of Viminacium (after: Milošević 2002, 158 fig. 4)

not accidental[2]. The location of the Roman military camp and of the Municipium Aelium Viminacium is known (fig. 2). As for their fortresses, information regarding their dimensions has been forthcoming from the beginning of the last century: 442.70 × 385.60 m for the camp and about 850 × 600 m for the city fortress[3]. According to new geophysical research, the military camp is 430 × 337 m in size, resulting in an area of about 14.5 ha[4]. The remains of the northern gate of the camp and from several buildings in the northeast sector of the city fortress, including amphitheatre and public baths, have been investigated. All of them have a start date before the end of the 3rd century, construction phases from the end of the 3rd/the beginning of the 4th century and an end exploitation date until the middle of the 5th century[5]. By analogy, it can be assumed that the legion camp here underwent transformations at the end of the 3rd/beginning of the 4th century and should thereafter be considered as part of the urban structure. Outside the fortress walls, a large number of graves and burial facilities, remains of suburban villas and other structures have been explored (fig. 2)[6]. Viminacium was severely affected by the Hun invasions in the mid-5th century. It is accepted in literature that this is when organized life in its old form was disrupted[7]. According to some, in the 6th century the fortified city core changed its location about 1 km to the west, to a more defense-suitable terrain – the »Todića Crkva« fortress with an area of ca. 2 ha (fig. 2, III)[8]. The »Svetinja« site is also associated with the early Byzantine Viminakion (fig. 2, IV)[9]. It is a fortified settlement, but modest in size and architecture, of *foederati* a few hundred metres northwest of the old city fortress[10]. Taking into consideration the characteristics of these sites, the idea of recognizing in them the capital city of Moesia Prima at the end of the 5th–6th centuries is doubtful[11]. Perhaps part (the northwestern part [?]) of the old city fortress of Viminacium was also used in 6th century.

After the abandonment of Roman Dacia and the following reforms, the Colonia Ulpia Traiana *Ratiaria* was proclaimed the capital of the newly established province of Dacia ripensis (fig. 1). Along with the new management administration, the main units of the *legio XIII Gemina* were also stationed here. Different opinions have been expressed concerning the positioning and dimensions of the fortress of the earlier Roman colony. The investigated section of the western fortress wall remained unchanged in route from the 2nd to the end of the 6th century (fig. 3, 1)[12]. The location of the gate established here also remained unchanged; from here originates the well-known inscription expressing gratitude to the emperor Anastasius I: *+ Anastasiana Ratiaria semper floreat*[13]. In all likelihood, at the end of the 3rd – the beginning of the 4th century the protected urban area was significantly increased to the east and southeast direction and reached 30–35 ha[14]. However, it is not clear whether it was preserved in the 6th century. Separate sections of streets were discovered, including of the *decumanus maximus*. It seems that at least in the western part the late antique city retained the main street routes and layout of the previous epoch (fig. 3)[15]. The local forum has not yet been located with certainty. The buildings investigated so far in the protected area are mostly

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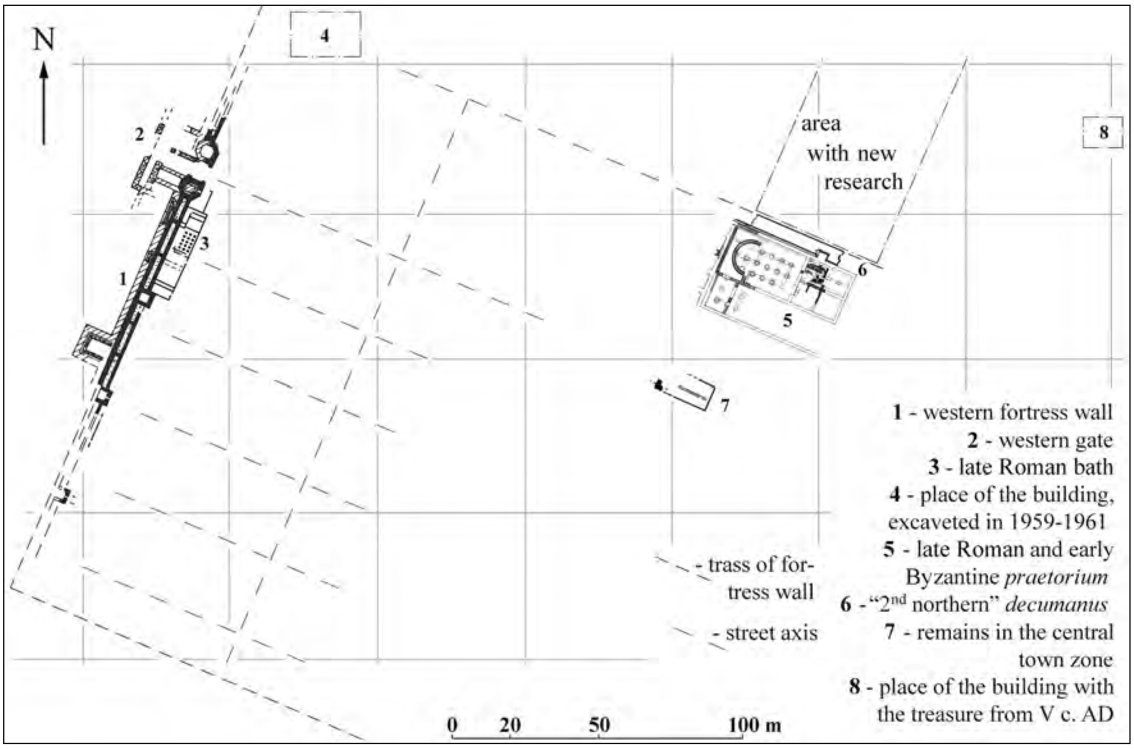
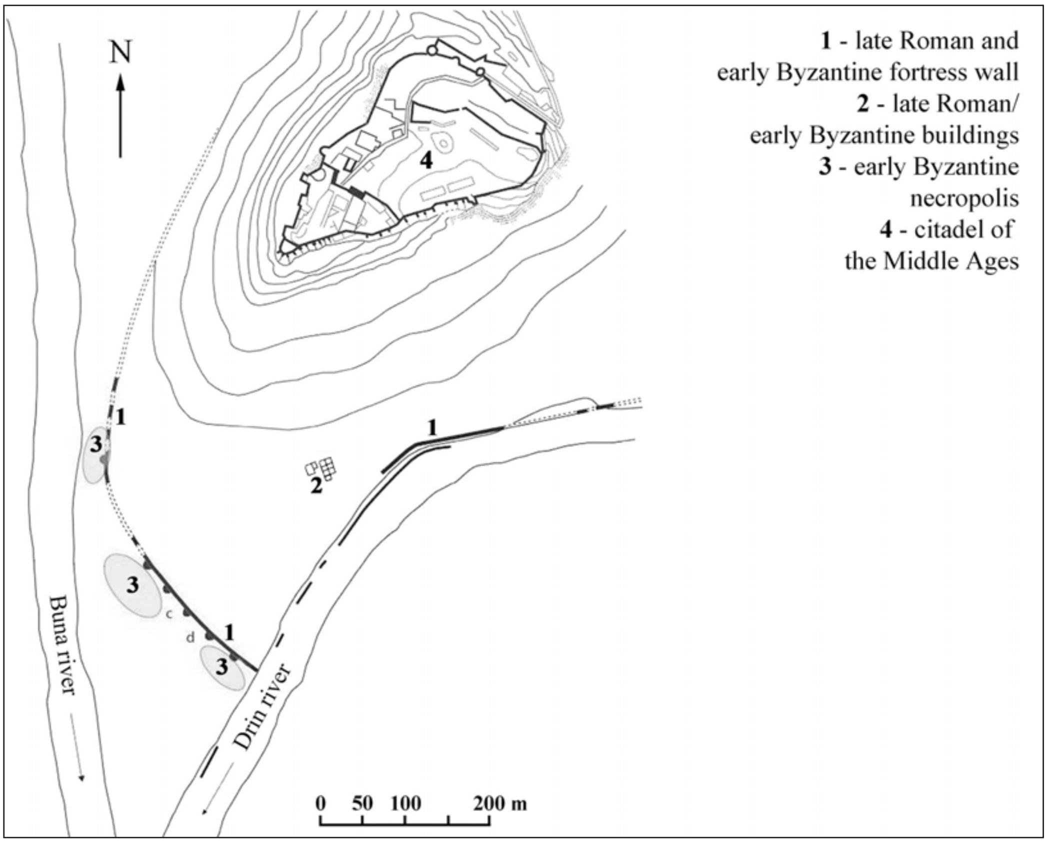
2 See e.g. Popović 1967, 29–33. 38–41; Mirković 1968, 56–73; Mirković 1997, 44–46; Mirković 1998, 117–125; Spasić-Đurić 2015, 22–28; Korać et al. 2018, 42–45.
3 e.g. Popović 1967, 30; Petrović 1986, 93; Milošević 2002, 151; Spasić-Đurić 2015, 29.
4 Korać et al. 2006, 24. 30.
5 Milošević 2002, 151 f.; Spasić-Đurić 2015, 29–32. 40–45; Korać et al. 2018, 54–61.
6 Milošević 2002, 152–154; Ivanišević et al. 2006, 7–12. 129–135; Spasić-Đurić 2015, 35–39; Korać et al. 2018, 46–54. 62–65; Ivanišević – Bugarski 2018, 102–104.
7 Mirković 1968, 73; Popović 1967, 39. 49; Mirković 1998, 122; Milošević 2002, 152; Vasić 2013, 88; Spasić-Đurić 2015, 28; Korać et al. 2018, 45.
8 Popović 1987, 1. 32 f.; Mirković 1998, 123; Ivanišević et al. 2006, 132; Spasić-Đurić 2015, 28.
9 Ivanišević – Bugarski 2018, 102 f.
10 Popović 1987, 1–31. 33–35; Mirković 1998, 123–125; Mirković 1999; Milošević 2002, 154.
11 Dintchev 1999, 45.
12 Atanasova-Georgieva 1986, 438–440; Atanasova – Popova-Asenova 1987, 85–93; Atanasova 1995, 60–74; Dinčev 2002, 20–22; Dinchev 2015, 183–186.
13 Velkov 1984; Velkov 1985, 886–889.
14 Dinčev 2002, 17; Dinchev 2015, 180.
15 Giorgetti 1987, 41 f.; Dinčev 2002, 17–19; Luka 2014, 56–59; Dinchev 2015, 180–183.



3 General plan of the studied remains of Ratiaria (after: Dintchev 2015, 181 fig. 7)



4 General plan of the known remains of Scodra (after: Hoxha 2017, 129 fig. 2)

from Late Antiquity (fig. 3, 3. 4. 7. 8)[16]. Among them the important building with a large one-apse hall in the central area of the city stands out (fig. 3, 5). It was erected in the beginning of the 4th century. Its type and location, as well as its large-scale reconstruction around the end of the 5th/beginning of the 6th century serve as arguments for the interpretion of it as a residence *(praetorium)* of the governor (initially *praeses*) of Dacia ripensis[17]. Until the Hun invasions in the mid-5th century, Ratiaria had significant suburbs, mainly to the south and east of the city fortress. Significant and relatively remote from the fortress are the urban *necropoleis*. After the middle of the 5th century, the suburbs were already abandoned and the *necropoleis* approached the fortress walls[18]. The city's history ended with its capture by the Avars in 586 (Theophylact Simocatta 1, 8, 10).

The archaeological information on late antique Scodra, the capital of the province of Praevalitana (fig. 1), is still extremely scarce. The most significant structure which was investigated is a section of its southern fort wall with several U-shaped towers (fig. 4, 1). Initially, two periods were distinguished in the construction of the wall: from the beginning of the 5th century; and from the rule of emperor Justinian I (527–565)[19]. Later, an earlier period from the end of the 3rd/ the beginning of the 4th century was also distinguished[20]. It is assumed that with its appearance the protected area of the city was reduced to 12–14 ha[21]. Remains of various buildings have been partially discovered inside, including those with prestigious exterior and interior (fig. 4, 2)[22]. The protected area also includes a medieval citadel (fig. 4, 4)[23]. It is not yet clear how the site of the citadel was used during Late Antiquity[24]. Immediately in front of the southern fortress wall of the late antique city a synchronous necropolis has been located and partially explored (fig. 4, 3)[25].

The verification of the known hypothetical plan of the fortress of Scupi – Colonia Flavia Scupinorum during the Principate and capital of the province of Dardania in Late Antiquity (fig. 1), according to which the protected urban area results in 43–44 ha (fig. 5)[26], is still pending. So far, only a limited, poorly preserved section of the southern fortress wall, dating from the end of the 4th to the beginning of the 6th century, has been investigated (fig. 5, 4)[27]. In the late antique Scupi most of the known buildings from the previous epoch[28], including the theatre (fig. 5, 1), initially continued to function[29]. At the end of the 3rd/beginning of the 4th century, the appearance of a large *horreum* (fig. 5, 3), a partially investigated monumental building interpreted as a civilian basilica (fig. 5, 2), and of other buildings occurred (fig. 5, 4). At that time, the street network was also reconstructed. Some of the mentioned buildings, including the theatre and the late Roman *horreum* were abandoned at the end of the 4th/the first half of the 5th century[30]. At this time the so-called City bath, erected partly on the remains of the *horreum*, appeared (fig. 5, 3)[31]. Probably the Christian

16 Giorgetti 1987, 45–51; Džordžeti 1988, 30. 37; Atanasova 1995, 76–78; Dinčev 2002, 22 f.; Dinchev 2015, 186–189; Dimitrov et al. 2018, 184 f.; Dimitrov et al. 2019, 220 f.

17 Kuzmanov 2000; Valeva 2000; Dinčev 2002, 22 f.; Dinchev 2015, 186 f.

18 Dinčev 2002, 24 f.; Dinchev 2015, 189–192.

19 Hoxha 1993, 551–558; Hoxha 1994, 231–245.

20 Dyczek – Shpuza 2014, 393.

21 Hoxha, 1993, 559 f.

22 Hoxha 2003, 43–48.

23 Karaiskaj 1981, 148–158; Hoxha 2003, 128–133.

24 e.g. Dyczek – Shpuza 2014, 388–391; Lemke 2015, 223–229.

25 Dyczek – Shpuza 2014, 393 f. fig. 11; Hoxha 2017, 129–131 fig. 2.

26 e.g. Mikulčić 1973, 30–32 fig. 2; Mikulčić 1974, 208–210 fig. 7; Mikulčić 1982, 41; Mikulčić 1999, 137 f. fig. 85.

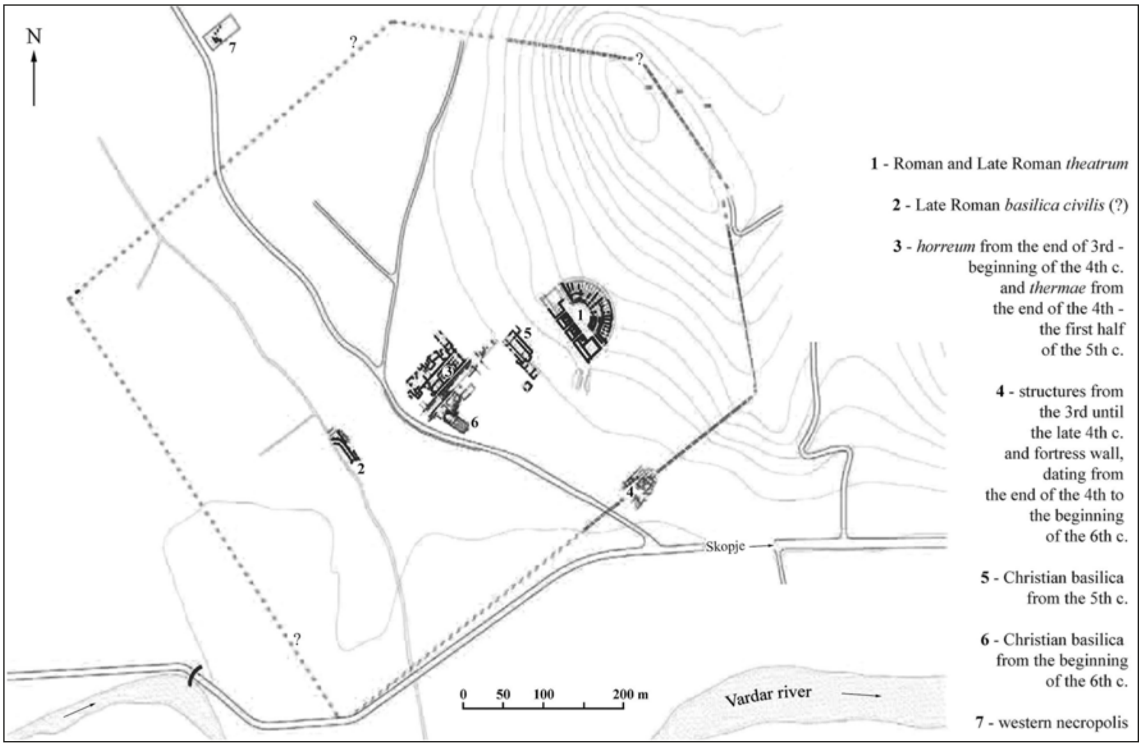
27 Jovanova 2015a, 22 f.; Jovanova 2015b, 226–230. 242–248; Jovanova – Ončevska-Todorovska 2018, 29. 39–43. 74–82.

28 Jovanova 2015a, 20. 31 f.; Jovanova 2015b, 236–238; Jovanova – Ončevska-Todorovska 2018, 44 f. 50–65. 87. 104–123. 138 f.

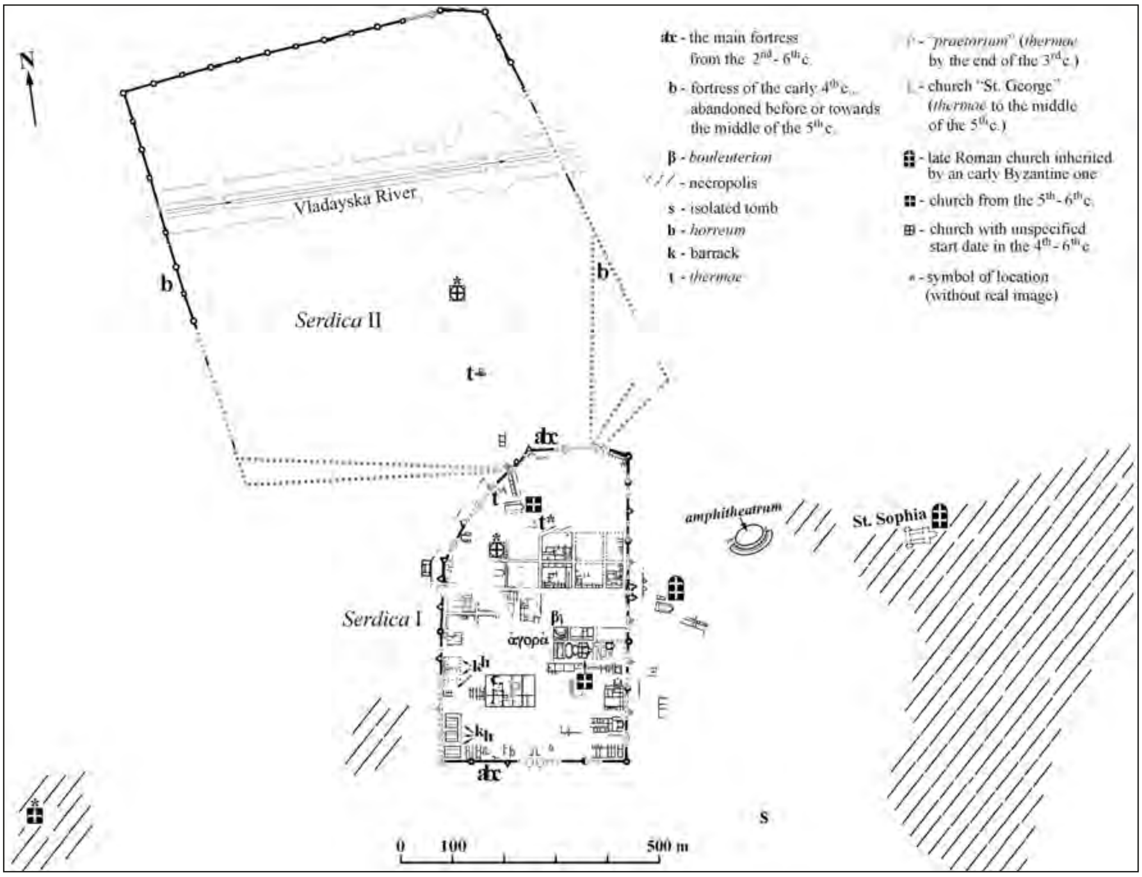
29 Mikulčić 1999, 138–140; Jovanova 2015a, 38 f.; Jakimovski et al. 2017.

30 Mikulčić 1999, 255–258; Jovanova 2015a, 23–32. 37 f. 40–43; Jovanova 2015b, 230–236. 238–241; Jakimovski et al. 2017, 104 f.; Ončevska-Todorovska 2017, 247. 267 f.; Jovanova – Ončevska-Todorovska 2018, 27–29. 46 f. 60 f. 66–73.

31 e.g. Jovanova 2015a, 27–29.



5 General plan of the known remains of Scupi (after: Jovanova 2015b, 224 fig. 3)

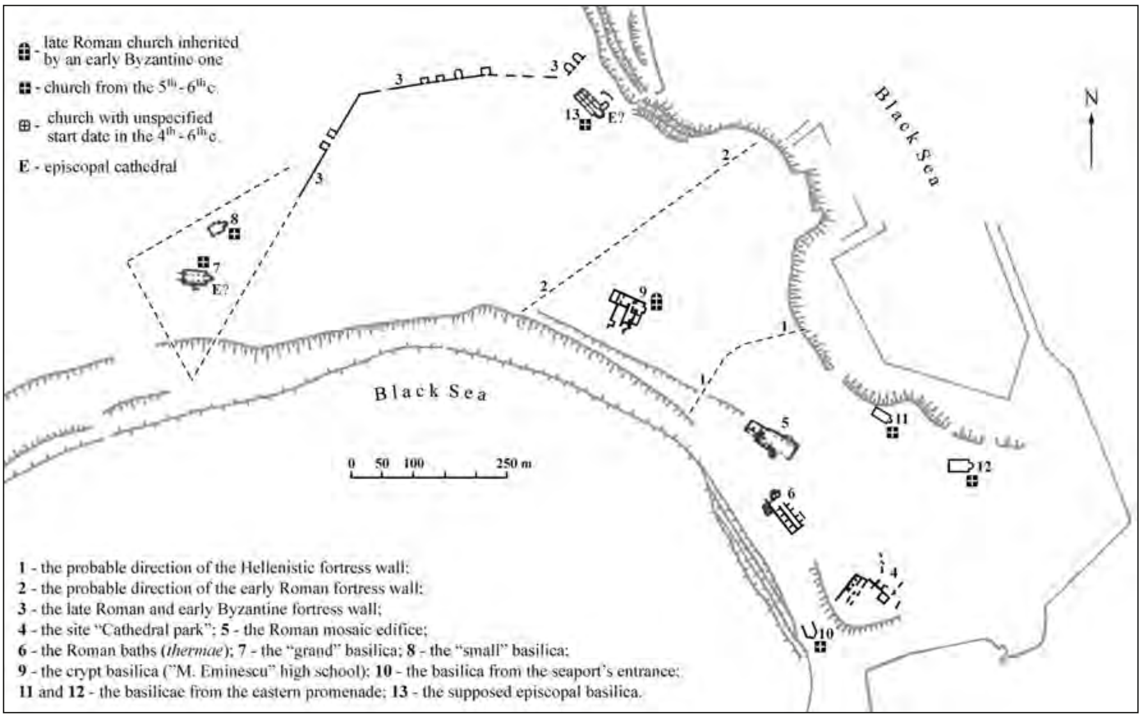


6 General plan of the known remains of Serdica (after: Dintchev 2018, 360 fig. 3 with additions)

basilica with a two-conch baptistery (fig. 5, 5) was built during the 5th century. The construction of the second established Christian church, the three-apse basilica with atrium (fig. 5, 6), dates back to the beginning of the 6th century[32]. Several antique and late antique urban *necropoleis* have been localized, in two of which a large number of graves have been examined (fig. 5, 7)[33]. Scupi was badly hit by a major earthquake in 518 (Marcellinus Comes ad a. 518). The prevailing opinion that the city failed to overcome its consequences[34] is partly revised today[35]. It is a fact, however, that after its mentioning by Hierocles (Hierocles, Synecdemus, 655, 8), the city disappears from the historical sources. Among the causes for its decline in the 6th century was the establishment of Iustiniana Prima (fig. 1), in favour of which Scupi lost its status as a provincial capital[36]. Probably part of the functions of the old city were inherited by the heavily fortified 6th century centre on the nearby hill Markovi Kuli[37].

At the end of the 3rd/beginning of the 4th century the development of Serdica, the capital of the province of Dacia mediterranea (fig. 1), marked an indisputable rise. The old city fortress, whose area is about 17.50 ha, was repaired (fig. 6, a–c)[38]. The central city square, including the local *bouleuterion*, was reconstructed (fig. 6)[39]. Large military and warehouse buildings (fig. 6, hk) and many luxurious dwellings were built[40]. An amphitheatre was erected east of the fortress (fig. 6)[41]. During this period, an extraordinary project was underway, related to the construction of a new huge fortress north of the old one (fig. 6, b)[42]. Its probable purpose was to make Serdica an imperial centre from the rank of the Tetrarch capitals[43]. By and after the middle of the 4th century, tendencies in the city development were changing towards greater realism. Due to lack of funds and/or changes in the political circumstances, the implementation of the mentioned project was suspended at an early stage[44]. At the latest towards the middle of the 5th century the old square complex ceased to function, including the *bouleuterion*[45]. At the end of the 4th/beginning of the 5th century several Christian churches *intra-* and *extra muros* were erected, as well as new public *thermae* next to the old square (fig. 6)[46]. The political instability in the Balkans around the middle and during the second half of the 5th century had a negative influence on the city[47]. During this period the short life-span of the above-mentioned *thermae* ended and their main premise – the so-called rotunda, was later rebuilt as the church of St. George (fig. 6, L), which is still preserved until today[48]. The stabilization of the Empire in the 6th century is also reflected in the fate of Serdica. Most likely, by the middle of the century, the city fortress was reconstructed and strengthened with an exterior enhancing brick wall and new towers with protruding edge (fig. 6). Then the famous Basilica of St. Sophia (fig. 6), to which the present-day Bulgarian capital owes its name, was

32 Mikulčić 1999, 351; Jovanova 2015a, 33. 35 f.; Jovanova 2015b, 245 f.; Jovanova – Ončevska-Todorovska 2018, 102 f. 124–137.
33 See e.g. Jovanova 2015c, 16–41, and the cited literature.
34 e.g. Mikulčić 1974, 209 f.; Dragojević-Josifovska 1976, 113; Koračević 1977, 144. 160 f. 169; Mikulčić 1999, 351 f.
35 Ončevska-Todorovska 2006–2008, 365–374; Jovanova 2015a, 13. 21. 33. 36. 43; Jovanova 2015b, 246–248; Ončevska-Todorovska 2017, 247 f. 249–267. 309–311; Jovanova – Ončevska-Todorovska 2018, 85–87. 92–96. 140–147.
36 Dinčev 2014, 102 f.
37 Mikulčić 1973, 32–34; Mikulčić 1974, 210–212; Mikulčić 1982, 48–55. 143 f.; Mikulčić – Bilbija 1981/1982, 205. 210–219; Mikulčić 1999, 294 f. 380 f. 382 f. figs. 180. 263.
38 e.g. Ivanov 1994, 31 f.
39 Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 9–54; Dinčev 2010, 24–37; Dintchev 2018, 357.
40 Stančeva 1987, 72–74; Stančeva 1994, 55–64. 67–75; Dinčev 2005, 279 f. 292; Šalganov 2011, 33 f. 41–43; Šalganov – Kozarev 2012; Ivanov 2012, 316 f.; Borisova-Kacarova – Aladžov 2014, 367–369.
41 Veličkov 2009, 53–60; Velichkov 2014, 251–260.
42 Bojadžiev 1959, 38–45; Dinčev 2013, 237–261. 267–279.
43 Dinčev 2013, 260.
44 Dinčev 2013, 258 f.
45 Dinčev 2010, 36 f.
46 Ivanov – Bobčev 1964, 33–37; Dinčev 2010, 25. 35–37; Ivanov 2014, 237 f. 241–248; Dinčev 2014, 51. 81 f.
47 Velkov 1977, 42 f.; Dinčev 2014, 54 f.
48 e.g. Dinčev 2010, 35 f.



7 General plan of the known remains of Tomis (after: Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 274 pl. 1)

erected[49]. In the two known *necropoleis* – the eastern and the western (fig. 6), and especially in the eastern, the main urban necropolis, many late antique burial facilities were explored, including a large number of tombs with frescoes[50]. The severely deteriorating political situation at the end of 6th/beginning of 7th century[51] and the consequences of a powerful earthquake at that time[52] presuppose the interruption of organized urban life here.

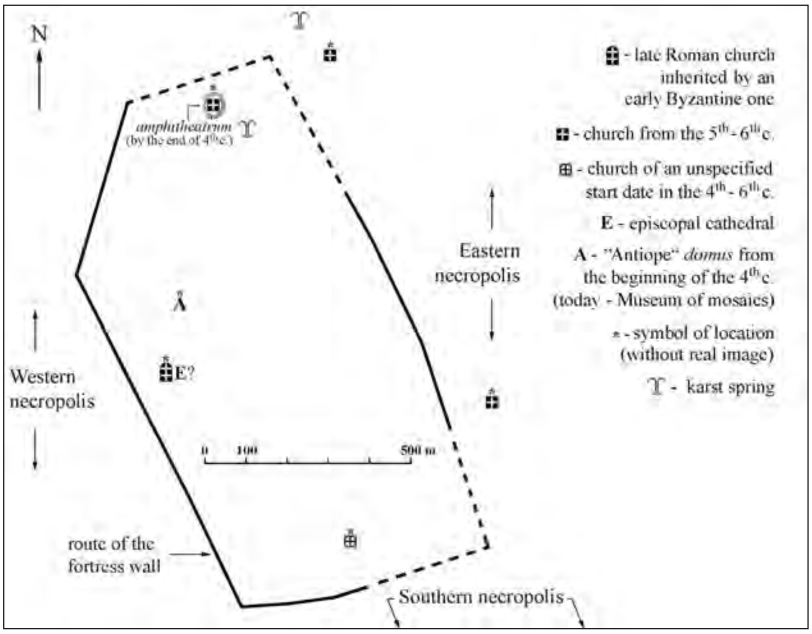
The significance of Tomis, the capital of the late ancient province of Scythia (fig. 1), has been attested in the sources and commented many times in contemporary literature[53]. The area of the city, protected by the so-called external (western) defense line (fig. 7, 3), reached and perhaps even exceeded 60 ha[54]. The prevailing opinion is that the corresponding fortification, with which the protected urban area was doubled, was erected at the end of the 3rd/the beginning of the 4th century. It is supposed that the southwest sector of the fortress (fig. 7) was an extension from the beginning of the 6th century[55]. Information regarding urban planning and the street network of Tomis is still scarce[56]. A considerable number of private and public buildings are known, including large *thermae*, but almost all of them have been partially investigated during rescue excavations (fig. 7, 4. 6. 9)[57]. Some have a long period of usage, with construction periods before and after the beginning of the 4th century, but in most cases their functions are not clear. Particular interest is provoked by

[49] Dinčev 2014, 64 f. 104.
[50] See e.g. Dinčev 2014, 7, 13–17. 21–27. 40 f. (figs. 1. 5. 6) and literature cited there.
[51] Dinčev 2014, 56 f. 59 f. 113.
[52] Ivanov 2011, 318.
[53] e.g. Stoian 1961, 271–274; Velkov 1977, 107; Harreither 1987; Barnea 1991a; Suceveanu – Barnea 1991, 195–197. 289 f.; Zahariade 2006, 71–74; Lungu 2006, 203–206; Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 74–80. 179–185; Holubeanu 2015/2016, 25–55; see the sources and other publications cited there.
[54] Teodor 2014, 93 n. 2.
[55] Cheluță-Georgescu 1977, 253–259; Rădulescu 1991, 23–29; Suceveanu – Barnea 1991, 269; Rădulescu 1995/1996; Papuc – Lungu 1998; Torbatov 2002, 188–193; Papuc 2005, 56. 101; Zahariade 2006, 68. 74 f.; Cliante 2006, 249–257; Toma 2010, 59–63; Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 95–97. 201–203.
[56] e.g. Zahariade 2006, 75; Toma 2010, 68–71; Teodor 2014, 122–126.
[57] e.g. Suceveanu – Barnea 1991, 274 f.; Rădulescu 1991, 35 f.; Papuc 2005, 55–64. 102; Zahariade 2006, 75–79; Toma 2010, 63–68; Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 89–95. 97–100. 195–201. 203–206.

the so-called Marele edificiu cu mozaic – a late Roman architectural complex developed on several levels on a terraced slope over a supposed port in the southern part of the city (fig. 7, 5). At its lower level there are storage rooms, and above them a huge hall with a polychrome floor mosaic covering an area of about 2,000 m² (civilian basilica [?]). It functioned with its original purpose until the end of the 4th/the beginning of the 5th century[58]. Several Christian basilicas were established in the protected urban area, some of them with large underground crypts – *martiria* (fig. 7, 7–13)[59]. The basilica in the central part of the city, which dates from the middle or the second half of the 4th century (fig. 7, 9), is supposed to be the first cathedral of the local bishop[60]. A similar interpretation, but for the period towards and after the end of the 5th century, is proposed for the two largest basilicas – the so-called Basilica Mare in the southwestern sector of the city (fig. 7, 7)[61] and the one in the north-western sector, which was erected on the remains of an amphitheatre from the 2nd–3rd centuries (fig. 7, 13)[62]. Several *necropoleis* are located, in which a number of late antique burial facilities have been investigated, including those with frescoes[63].

Among the major Balkan cities during Late Antiquity is also Marcianopolis – the capital of the province of Moesia Secunda (fig. 1)[64]. Its first fortress probably dates from the end of the 2nd century. By the end of the 3rd/the beginning of the 4th century it was repaired and expanded, with the protected area reaching or even exceeding 70 ha (fig. 8)[65]. A later construction period has also been registered – attested so far by the remains of a tower which is pentagonal in plan[66]. Data on urban planning and the street network are still scarce. The investigated street sections are provided with the usual stone pavement and were in use at least until the middle of the 5th century[67]. A significant advantage of the city is the existence of high flow springs within the protected area (fig. 8)[68]. Remains of various public and private buildings have been recorded[69]. From a partially studied building comes one of the largest coin treasures found within the Empire in general – about 100,000 denars, hidden in *dolia* in the middle of the 3rd century[70]. Among the known buildings with public secular functions is the amphitheatre, whose remains extend over an area of about 0.4 ha in the northern part of the city (fig. 8), and which was constructed after the middle of the 3rd century. It was abandoned around the end of the 4th century[71]. Among the known residential buildings the so-called Antiope house stands out – a luxurious peristyle-type building occupying an entire *insula* with an area of 1,406 m² in the western part of the city (fig. 8, A). Some of its rooms were decorated with polychrome floor mosaics with figural images. It was built at the beginning of the 4th century and functioned in its stately form until the beginning of the 5th century[72]. Marcianopolis was severely damaged by the Hun invasions in the middle of 5th century. Investigations reveal lowered standards in urban planning and architecture over the coming decades. A contrasting exception to this trend is the construction of cult buildings. There are several Christian basilicas known within and outside the protected urban area, fully reconstructed or erected around the end

58 Canarache 1961; Bucovala 1977, 3–30; Suceveanu – Barnea 1991, 271; Sâmpetru 1994, 74–76; Zahariade 2006, 77 f.; Toma 2010, 66. 71 fig. 10; Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 91 f. 197 f.; Teodor 2014, 125.
59 e.g. Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 93–95. 199–201; Achim 2016a, 54 f.; Achim 2016b, 367–369. 370–374 figs. 2–10.
60 e.g. Barnea 1991b, 271 f.
61 e.g. Barnea 1991b, 272; Achim 2016b, 379.
62 Rădulescu 1991, 29–35; Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 93. 199 n. 633.
63 e.g. Buzoianu – Bărbulescu 2012, 100–107. 206–213; Teodor 2014, 99–102. 133 fig. 4.
64 See e.g. Mirčev – Tončeva 1956, 77–79; Gerov 1975, 66–72; Velkov 1977, 99; Minčev 1987, 297–304; Angelov 1999, 3–9; Angelov 2002, 105–113.; see the sources and other publications cited there.
65 Angelov 1999, 12–17; Angelov 2002, 113–115; Rusev 2016, 399 f.
66 e.g. Angelov 1999, 14. 16 f.
67 Minčev – Angelov 1991, 111; Angelov 1999, 17; Minchev 2002, 245.
68 Angelov 2002, 115; Cărov 2017, 101.
69 e.g. Mirčev 1951; Tončeva 1965; Minčev – Georgiev 1979, 101–104. 110 f.; Minčev – Angelov 1991; Kuzov 2010; Kuzov et al. 2019; Minčev 2016, 65 f. 71–75 pls. 38–40 figs. 108–114.
70 Mušmov 1930/1931; Mouchmov 1934.
71 Tončeva 1981, 138–142; see also: Petrov 1967; Angelov 2002, 117 f.
72 Minchev 2002; Minčev 2016, 54–65 pls. 22–31 figs. 53 a–83.



8 Situational plan of the more significant known monuments of Marcianopolis (after: Dintchev 2018, 361 fig. 5; Tenekedjiev 2019, 132. 137 fig. 4, not. 13)

of the 5th to the 6th centuries (fig. 8). One of them was built on the remains of the amphitheatre. The largest basilica whose remains have been excavated in the western part of the city (fig. 8) is supposed to be the local Episcopal cathedral[73]. The creation of the so-called *Quaestura exercitus* in 535 (Nov. Iust. 41), whose main centre is the site of nearby Odessos (fig. 1), must have undermined to some extent the capital's prestige and privileges of Marcianopolis. The approximate outlines of urban *necropoleis* are known. In them both Roman burial facilities[74] and late antique graves and tombs[75] have been investigated, including tombs with mural frescoes[76].

Philippopolis is the religious and cultural *metropolis* of Roman Thracia, and later the capital of the late antique province of the same name in the diocese of the same name (fig. 1)[77]. At the end of the 2nd century the town was given a fortress, which included the Trimontium and most of the so-called City in the plain (fig. 9, a). Its protected area is estimated at about 80 ha[78]. In the following centuries, it was maintained and reconstructed periodically[79]. Among the fortifications from the beginning of Late Antiquity, the new eastern city gate stands out (fig. 9, b)[80]. At that time, the street network was maintained in very good condition and developed further[81]. The partially investigated Philippopolis agora (fig. 9) is the largest known square complex within the diocese of Thracia. At the end of the 3rd/beginning of the 4th century this area was fully reconstructed, including the local *bouleuterion*[82]. At that time, other symbolic buildings of the previous epoch were renovated, such as the stadium in its north-western area (fig. 9)[83] and the theatre on the Trimontium (fig. 9)[84]. The two known, partially researched public baths – the so-called Eastern *thermae*

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73 Minčev 1987, 299–301. 306 fig. 1; Čaneva-Dečevska 1999, 183 f.; Angelov 1999, 46–48; Popova 2016, pls. 32–37 figs. 84–107; Tenekedjiev 2019.

74 e.g. Angelov 2002, 118–120.

75 See Rusev 2016, 400–405 and literature cited there.

76 Gerasimov 1961; Văleva 1999a, pl. 4 figs. 19–21.

77 e.g. Velkov 1977, 128; Danov 1987; Martinova – Bospačieva 2002, 181 f.; Topalilov 2012b, 363–374; Šarankov 2014, 276–286; see the monuments and literature cited there.

78 e.g. Mateev 1993, 91.

79 e.g. Botušarova – Kesjakova 1983; Bospačieva 2001, 173–175; Martinova – Bospačieva 2002, 186 f.; Martinova-Kjutova 2008, 120–125; Topalilov 2012b, 374.

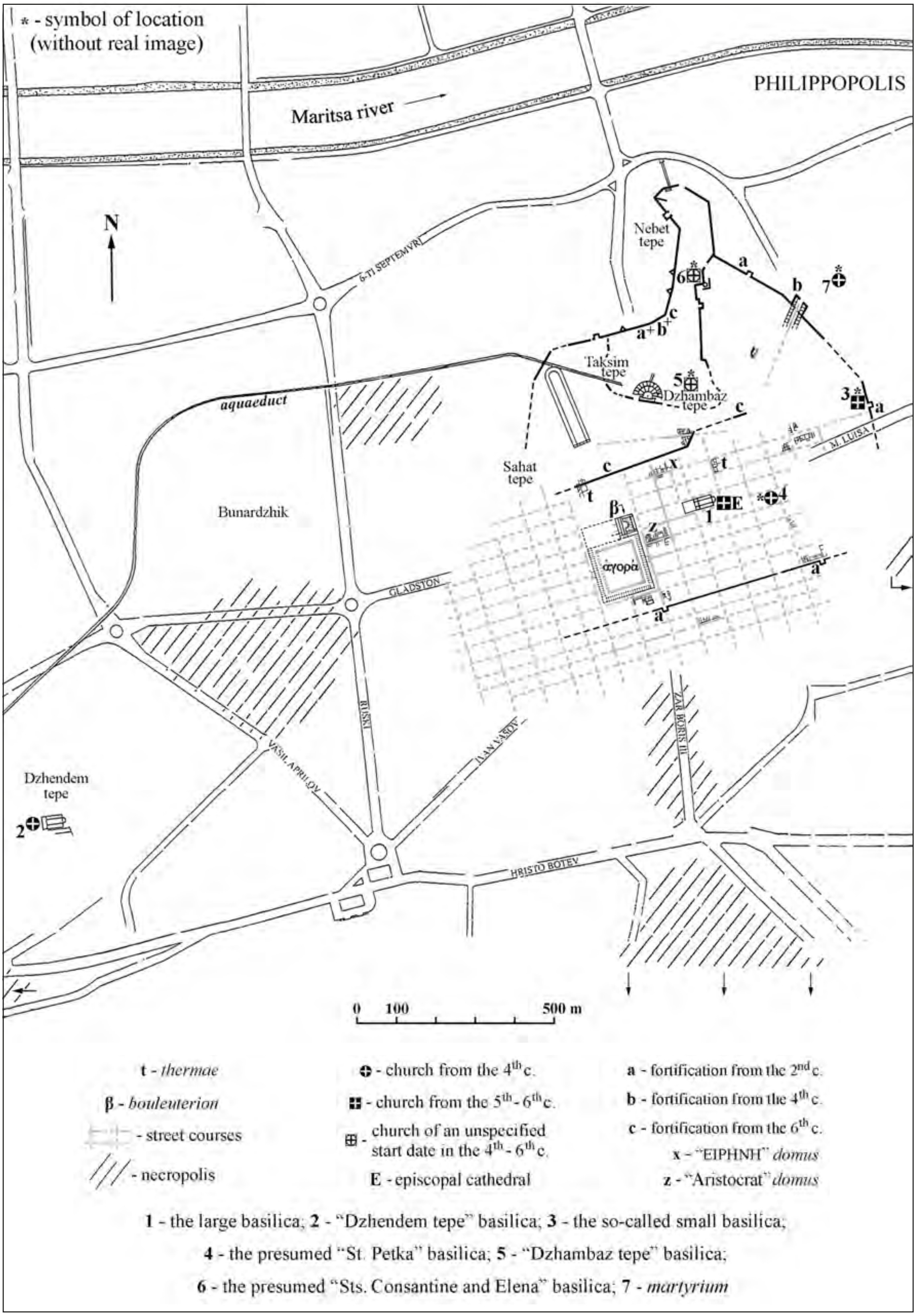
80 Botušarova – Kesjakova 1983, 266–270; Kesjakova 1999, 93–98; Martinova-Kjutova – Pirovska 2011, 211–213. 217–219 fig. 8; Topalilov 2012a, 137–143.

81 e.g. Martinova 2002, 297–299 fig. 1; Martinova-Kjutova – Pirovska 2011, 219–222 fig. 10.

82 See Dinčev 2009, 64–69 fig. 1; see the literature cited there.

83 Tsontchev 1947, 11–41 pls. 16. 49; Mateev 1993, 24–37; Kesjakova 1999, 44–49; Martinova-Kjutova 2006; Topalilov 2012a, 120–125.

84 Botušarova 1980, 11–13; Mateev 1993, 45–55; Kesjakova 1999, 61–65; Martinova – Bospačieva 2002, 188 f.; Kolarova 2006, 86–89; Topalilov 2012a, 131–137; Martinova-Kyutova – Sharankov 2018, 67–75.



9 General plan of the known remains of Philippopolis (after: Dintchev 2018, 359 fig. 2)

and the so-called Western *thermae* (fig. 9, t) also functioned at the beginning of Late Antiquity, and the more significant one, the »Eastern *thermae*« may probably have been erected at that time[85]. The famous synagogue continued also to function[86]. The end of the 3rd and the 4th centuries represented the summit of prestigious housing construction in the city. Earlier residential buildings were reconstructed and expanded – e.g. the »Domus Narcissus«[87]. Many new luxury residential buildings also emerged – e.g. the »Domus EIPHNH« (fig. 9, x), the so-called Aristocratic *domus* (fig. 9, z), amongst others[88]. At the end of the 4th/the first half of the 5th century important changes occurred in the urban appearance. The agora complex, the stadium, and the theatre were abandoned. However, intensive construction of Christian churches began. A large episcopal basilica was erected alongside the old agora (fig. 9, 1)[89]. A polyconchal *martirium* probably appeared in front of the eastern gate at that time (fig. 9, 7)[90]. So far, church construction over the coming decades is best illustrated by the so-called Small basilica next to the eastern fortress wall (fig. 9, 3)[91]. At the end of the 5th/the first half of the 6th century a large-scale construction work was carried out along the route of the main city aqueduct (fig. 9)[92]. It was probably at that time that the fortress of the Trimontium was also reconstructed, including with the construction of new towers, triangular in plan (fig. 9, a–c)[93]. A crucial moment in the history of Philippopolis is the abandonment of most of the fortifications in the plain and the construction of a new fortress wall that ran close to the Trimontium (fig. 9, c). It reduced the previously protected area by more than 50 %, leaving the aforementioned episcopal basilica outside the walls[94]. This drastic change occurred around or after the mid-6th century. In the known *necropoleis* of Philippopolis (fig. 9) different late antique burial facilities are periodically discovered[95], including tombs with mural frescoes[96].

Hadrianopolis, the capital of the province of Haemimontus (fig. 1), is often mentioned in the sources[97], but the current archaeological information about it comes mostly from accidental finds[98]. A plan of modern Edirne of 1918 depicts a fortress not preserved today, which is presumably considered to be the fortress of its antique and late antique predecessor. It has a quadrangular shape and an area of 40–45 ha (fig. 10)[99]. So far, only a limited sector has been investigated near the so-called Macedonian tower in the northeast corner of the fortress. In view of this review, the most important result of this study is the confirmed presence of fortification remains dating from the 2nd century and their use, repair and reconstruction over the coming centuries (fig. 10)[100].

Traianopolis, the capital of the province of Rhodopa (fig. 1)[101], has so far not been studied archaeologically. According to one report, its fortress, traced by visible remains, is irregularly

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85 Končev 1940, 129–152. 156; Končev 1950, 137–148; Kesjakova 1999, 40–43; Bospatchieva 2002, 301–305; Bojadžiev 2006, 65 f.; Topalilov 2012a, 125–131.

86 Kesjakova 1989, 20–32; Kesjakova 1999, 76–82.

87 Kesjakova 1999, 85–87; Kesjakova 2009, 115–128; Topalilov 2012a, 156 f.

88 Kesjakova 1999, 52–57. 87–92; Bospachieva 2003, 83–103; Kesjakova 2008, 235–242. 244–255; Topalilov 2018a, 273–284.

89 Kessiakova 1989; Kesjakova 1999, 66–75; Čaneva-Dečevska 1999, 253 f.; Kesjakova 2006, 148–149; Kessjakova et al. 2016, pls. 140–160 figs. 363–414; Tankova 2017.

90 Bospatchieva 2001, 59–68; Bospačieva 2005, 32. 34 fig. 6; Topalilov – Ljubenova 2010, 59–61. 67–69.

91 Bospachieva 2002, 55–75; Popova – Lirsch 2016, 227–238 pls. 164–172 figs. 422–446.

92 e.g. Kesjakova 1983, 63–74; Mateev 1993, 111–115; Kesjakova 1999, 99–107; Topalilov 2012a, 148–154; Mitkova 2017; Cărov 2017, 126–136; Korkutova 2018, 292 f.

93 e.g. Bobčev 1961, 113–115 fig. 12.

94 Botušarova – Kesjakova 1983, 272 f.; Moreva 1988, 130–139; Mateev 1993, 92; Kesjakova 2001, 52–59. 61–65.

95 e.g. Martinova – Bospachieva 2002, 191 f.; Bospačieva 2005, 26–28; Topalilov 2008, 566–569; Topalilov 2018b; see the early literature cited there.

96 Văleva 1999b, pls. 19–22. 59 figs. 76. 78–89; Martinova-Kjutova 2013.

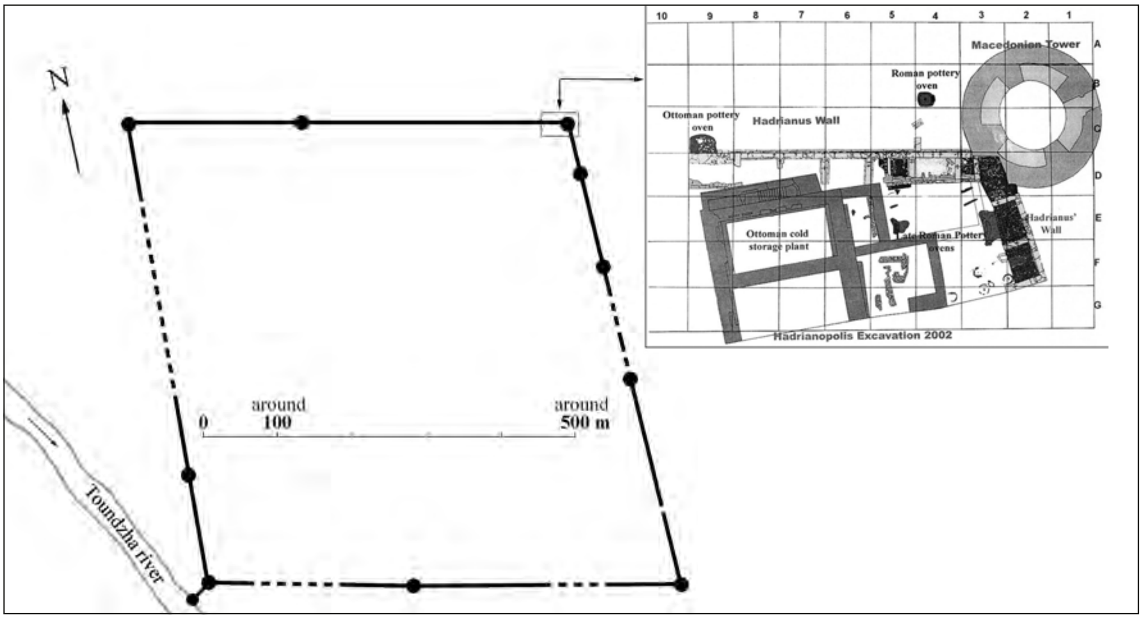
97 See Velkov 1977, 115 n. 452, the sources and other publications cited there.

98 e.g. Ötüken – Ousterhout 1989, 121–131.

99 e.g. Kuran 1996, 119 fig. 4; Yildirim 2015, 190. 192 fig. 12.

100 Yildirim 2006, 296–298; Yildirim 2015, 189–195 figs. 9–17.

101 See e.g. Velkov 1977, 125 n. 501 and the sources cited there.

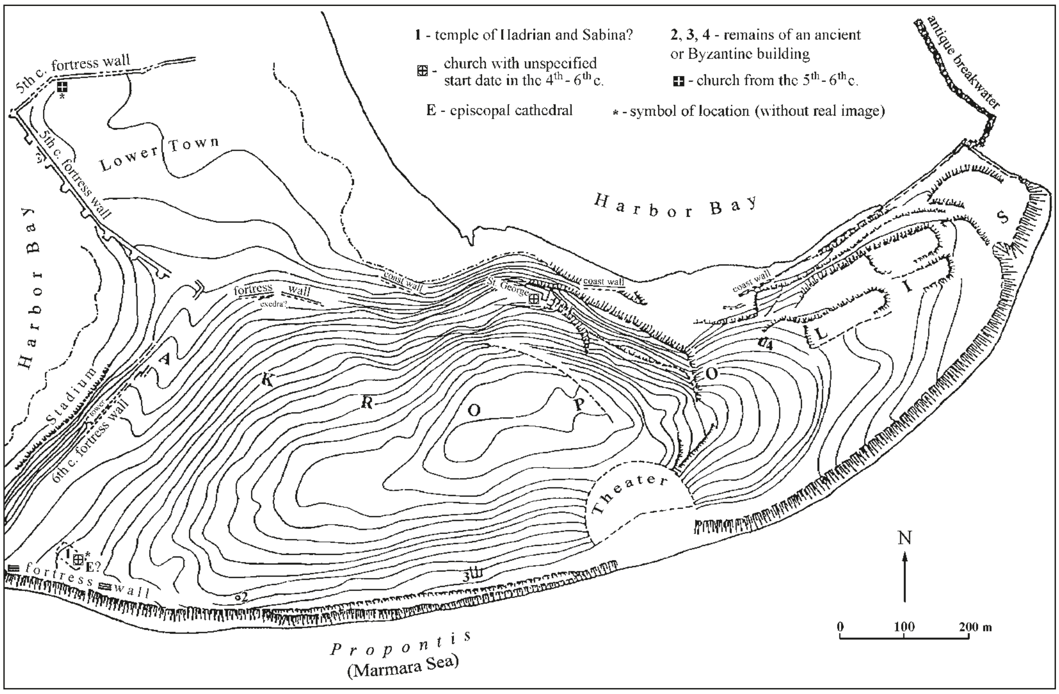


10 The fortress of Hadrianopolis and the studied sector in its north-eastern corner (after: Kuran 1996, 119 fig. 4 [plan of fortress]; Yildirim 2006, 303 pl. 18 [studied sector])

shaped, with walls of total length of about 2 km[102]. Based on this information, it does not rank among the most significant centres of the diocese of Thracia[103]. In its localized eastern necropolis, late antique graves have been explored[104].

Old Perinthus, renamed in honor of emperor Diocletian to Heraclea, is the official capital of Roman Thracia, and subsequently the capital of the late antique province of Europa (fig. 1)[105]. Among the historical sources is the report of Procopius about the reconstruction of the city aqueduct and of the city »palace« that took place here and was organized by emperor Justinian I (Prok. aed. 4, 9). The archaeological study of Heraclea is still in its initial phase. Two fortress walls have been recorded – an internal and an external one. The inner wall surrounds the so-called Acropolis, while the outer encloses the so-called Lower city northwest of the former (fig. 11)[106]. The total protected area is about 60 ha. Data on the outer wall point to a date in the first half of the 5th century[107]. The inner wall is supposed to duplicate the route of a pre-Roman fortress. Its construction and the type of its towers point to a date in the 6th century[108]. The route of the main aqueduct of the city mentioned by Procopius has been established[109], and the port facilities have been investigated (fig. 11)[110]. The most famous city monuments from the Roman epoch are the theatre in the southern part of the Acropolis[111] and the stadium, located outside the protected area at the western foot of the Acropolis (fig. 11)[112]. The end date for their use probably does not reach the 5th century. In the northern sector

102 Pantos 1983, 173; see also the publication cited there.
103 Dinčev 2001, 228.
104 Pantos 1983, 173.
105 e.g. Velkov 1977, 120 n. 471; Sayar 1998, 74–79. 91–160. 191–209. 357–370; see the sources and literature cited there.
106 Dirimtekin 1967, 22–27 pl. 2; Sayar 1998, 60 maps 1. 2; Crow 2002, 343.
107 Sayar 1998, 60 n. 44; Crow 2002, 343. 349 fig. 2.
108 Crow 2002, 343. 349 fig. 3.
109 Dirimtekin 1967, 29; Sayar 1998, 61 f. maps 2. 3.
110 Dirimtekin 1967, 31–35 pls. 1. 3–5; Sayar 1998, 59 map 1; Sayar 2016, 195.
111 Dirimtekin 1967, 28; Sayar 1998, 60 map 1; Crow 2002, 342 f.
112 See Sayar 1998, 60 f. maps 1. 2; Sayar 2016, 195 and the literature cited there. J. Crow interprets this monument as a hippodrome and is inclined to allow its construction at the end of the 3rd/beginning of the 4th century (Crow 2002, 343).



11 General plan of the known remains of Perinthus/Heraclea (after: Sayar 1998, map 1)

of the Lower city, a large Christian basilica, dating from the 5th century[113] or from the 6th century[114], has been explored (fig. 11). Remains from other massive buildings and facilities, which were used or erected during Late Antiquity, have been partially revealed (fig. 11, 1–4)[115], but for the time being, their chronology and functions cannot be specified. The known urban necropoleis – western and northern – were in use for a long time, including in Late Antiquity[116].

The review presented here reveals that the differences in the state of current archaeological information regarding the capitals of the late antique dioceses Thracia and Dacia are too significant and do not allow for a generalized characterisation. However, it can be stated that at the time of their proclamation as capitals, the respective cities already were, or were to become, the most significant centres of the respective provinces in view of the size of their fortresses and in light of their protected areas (figs. 2. 3. 5–11). So far this statement is in doubt only for Scodra in the province of Praevalitana (fig. 4) and for Traianopolis in the province of Rhodopa. In view of the architectural manifestations of the distinctive characteristics of the provincial capitals as centres of secular and ecclesiastical authority, local examples so far are isolated cases – the archaeologically investigated residence of the (most likely) governor of Dacia ripensis in Ratiaria (fig. 3, 5) and Procopius's narrative of the renovated palace in Heraclea – perhaps the residence of the governor of Europa. Assumptions regarding the identification of their Episcopal/Metropolitan cathedrals have been promulgated for some of the local provincial capitals such as Tomis, Marcianopolis, and Philippopolis[117]. The respective churches are basilicas, distinguished by size, construction and decoration (figs. 7, 7. 13; 8; 9, 1).

The review presented here also points to the conclusion that there is some local specificity in the development of the provincial capitals of the two late antique dioceses. It is known that stagnation and regression in town planning, construction and architecture are general conditions of urban life in the Balkans at the end of Late Antiquity. In the provincial capitals of the diocese

[113] Sayar 1998, 61 n. 44; Sayar 2016, 195.
[114] Crow 2002, 343.
[115] e.g. Dirimtekin 1967, 28–30; Sayar 1998, 55. 60 f.; Sayar 2016, 195.
[116] Sayar 1998, 61 maps 3. 4.
[117] Dintchev 2018, 365 f.

of Thracia, with the exception perhaps of Marcianopolis, the obvious manifestations of this condition appear after the mid-6th century. However, in most provincial capitals of the diocese of Dacia, this regression occurred before the mid-6th century. Currently, undisputed examples of this are Viminacium, where drastic changes were a fact in the mid-5th century, and Scupi. The certain exception here is Serdica: although shrunk to the outline of its early fortress, Serdica was a well-functioning city centre by the end of the 6th century.

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Alexander Minchev

MARCIANOPOLIS IN THE 2ND– 6TH CENTURIES AD

FROM A ROMAN CITY TO A LATE ANTIQUE CAPITAL

ABSTRACT

Trajan established Marcianopolis (Devnya, Bulgaria) in Moesia after AD 106. It developed as a real Roman city of Hellenistic pattern under Hadrian/Antoninus Pius and became a large trade, craft, religious and cultural centre. In the mid-3rd century AD the city was ransacked by the Goths but soon afterwards it was reconstructed again. In the early 4th century AD Diocletian proclaimed Marcianopolis as capital of the new province of Moesia Secunda. The city thrived as an important administrative and military centre and an Early Christian stronghold, a Bishopric and later Archbishopric see. Churches lavishly decorated with marbles and mosaics, and large residential houses were erected in the 4th–5th century AD. In AD 447, the Huns devastated Marcianopolis and it never recovered its previous status. Eventually, a new and much smaller fortress was erected in the late 5th or early 7th century AD in its north-eastern section. By the early 7th century, after a raid of Avars and Slavs, the ancient city ceased to exist.

KEYWORDS

Roman – late antique – Early Christian – Marcianopolis – mosaics

MARCIANOPOLIS IN PRE-CAPITAL TIMES

Marcianopolis (now Devnya, Bulgaria) is among the few ancient cities in Bulgaria about which ancient records exist regarding the time of its establishment. According to Iordanes, this happened under Trajan (93–117), who named the new city after his sister Marciana. An ancient legend connected with her tells why the city received her name[1]. The time of that event, agreed upon by most scholars, is after the Second Dacian War of the emperor, i.e. soon after AD 106.

However, several occasional and diverse types of archaeological finds including coins, speak in favour of an earlier occupation of the site, which was first settled in the Late Copper Age (about the mid-5th millennium BC), through the following Bronze and Early Iron Age (with large gaps in between), and continuing to be inhabited from the Early Hellenistic period onwards. The settlers of the Hellenistic settlement were most likely indigenous Thracians. In reality, this was a minor settlement, but if we judge by the variety of origin coins of the 4th–1st centuries BC discovered at the site, it perhaps was an important trade centre for the region. These coins are bronze, silver or gold issues of Histria, Odessos and Mesambria on the Western Black Sea Coast, Olbia on the Northern Black Sea Coast, Byzantion on the Bosporus, and coins of the Macedonian kings Philip II and Alexander the Great minted in Odessos and in Amphipolis on the Strymon River[2]. Their diversity is the reason to believe that the site was a little emporium, controlled by a local Thracian dynast and possibly established under Lysimachos (306–281), Alexander's heir in Thrace. The presumable stronghold of the local dynast dated to the late 4th–3rd century BC, was partially

1 Iord. Get. 16, 93.
2 Minchev 2004, 215–223. 228 f. figs. 2–28.

1 Map of the Balkan provinces of the Roman Empire from the 1st to the 3rd centuries AD with the location of Marcianopolis (© <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/343962490283377177/>) (26.10.2021)

studied about 4 km to the east of the future Roman city[3]. The location of this large stone-built residence close to the city of Odessos – an important port on the Western Black Sea coast – indicates the importance and economic capacity of that area still in early Hellenistic times.

The site chosen by Trajan was indeed a very important and strategic centre of land communications in ancient Thrace: it was the crossroad of several ancient military and trade routes of the Balkan Peninsula running north-south and east-west, establishing a true network (fig. 1). From Marcianopolis, the then-contemporary roads divided and followed several directions that helped connect it with both the new military camps and fortresses erected by the Romans on the Lower Danube Limes, and those located in the inland of Lower Moesia and the Thracia provinces.

Near the new city, these routes joined with the road coming from Odessos[4] and with the ancient route going along the coast from the Bosporus to the Danube Delta. Additionally, the Roman city was located in a large plain with fertile lands and dense woods surrounding it. Furthermore, a large fresh water lake was located not far to the south too. There were many rocky hills nearby, with soft limestone which can easily be extracted into blocks and carved. Inside the city, there was an abundance of springs, which provided good potable water, and the source for a river running through Marcianopolis refreshed the air throughout the city. Excavations conducted over the past 120 years on the site (with a gap between 1920s – early 1940s) have yielded material, which confirms the significance of the city from the 2nd to the 6th century AD in the region and beyond.

As with all the cities established by Trajan in the Balkan provinces of the Roman Empire, the public administration as well as the internal life in Marcianopolis was organized according to the traditional pattern of the Hellenistic cities of the Greek East, namely, as a *polis.* It followed the tradition of the old cities and Greek colonies along the western Black Sea coast. The city received additional urban territory *(chora)* and there was a governmental body with functioning

3 Minchev 2004, 223 f.
4 Gerov 1975, 51 with a detailed list of all these roads.

boule and *demos* as ruling city authorities. Conclusive evidence for this has been found in several inscriptions in Greek and Latin of the 2nd–3rd century AD discovered both there including about and elsewhere in Moesia Inferior and there was a division in *phylai* in the city[5]. On the other hand, other epigraphic material has revealed that the imperial power was imposed on the city life of Marcianopolis, because Roman law was introduced and functioned there[6]. In a 3rd century AD inscription, a *beneficiarius consularis* who was involved in law enforcement here and in two other cities of Moesia Inferior was appointed member of the city council[7].

At the beginning, the city was part of the Roman Province of Thracia, and only after around AD 187–193 it was incorporated into the Province of Moesia Inferior/Lower Moesia[8]. This change presumably occurred between January and March AD 193, under Pertinax[9]. Most of the epigraphic material, of both public and private character, discovered in the city is in Greek, as well as all inscriptions on the coins issued by the city mint in 2nd–mid-3rd century AD; these facts indicate that Greek was the official and widely spoken language. If we can judge by the names that survived on votive and funerary inscriptions, which were unearthed in Marcianopolis and its several Roman cemeteries, the city population was mixed. There were Greeks (including immigrants from Asia Minor and the East in general), local Thracians and far fewer Romans, who seem to have been mainly veterans or public employees.

Despite the fact that emperor Trajan established Marcianopolis as a Roman city, some archaeological finds have revealed that in the earliest decades of its existence it was still a modest and not too large settlement. The ›citizens‹ who occupied the central area lived mostly in poor buildings or rather cabins constructed of thin wooden beams fixed and covered by mud[10]. The city owed its real urban development to Hadrian (117–138) and to Antoninus Pius (138–161). In fact, the first Roman settlement emerged as a real city only in the second half of the 2nd century AD. In addition to certain archaeological discoveries at the site, this suggestion is confirmed also by some available epigraphic data, namely the earliest mention of Marcianopolis, commemorating a soldier who originated from the city and served in the *legio III Augusta* in Lambaesis, North Africa. It is accepted that the inscription dates back to the late years of Hadrian's reign or to the time of Antoninus Pius[11]. Construction works carried out under Hadrian also included the improvement of the existing road infrastructure in the region and the building of an outer defence system for the newly established city, a system consisting of an unknown number of new small fortresses *(phrouria)* around its territory[12]. A fragmentary building inscription incised on an architrave made of local limestone found in the city also describes the construction of a public building of unknown function by a provincial governor under Antoninus Pius[13].

Under Commodus (180–192), the importance of Marcianopolis was already recognized and the city authorities received from Rome the right to mint their own coins of bronze, which continued to be issued until the end of the reign of Philip the Arab (244–249)[14]. Possibly soon after the invasion of the Costoboci tribe in the Balkan provinces of the Roman Empire in AD 170–171, a strong and solid stone-built fortress with semi-circular towers was erected around the territory, which then covered the city of Marcianopolis (fig. 2). The building of the wall might have been initiated under Marcus Aurelius (161–180) or during the reign of Commodus (180–192) when it was completed[15]. Unfortunately, the available archaeological data does not allow us to establish

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5 IGBulg I² 24bis; CIL III 14416; IGBulg II 799, etc.; Gerov 1978, 482 f.
6 Gerov 1975, 56 f.
7 Matei-Popescu 2010, 82. 283.
8 Gerov 1975, 58; Tacheva 1995, 433 f.
9 Boteva 2001, 213.
10 Unpublished investigations of the author.
11 CIL VIII 18084; Gerov 1974, 49.
12 Mirčev 1962, 15 no. 14 fig. 12 pl. 4.
13 Mihailov 1977, 155 no. 15 pl. 3.
14 Mušmov 1912, 32–55 nos. 363–868; Hristova – Žekov 2006.
15 Angelov 1999, 12–15.

2
Remains of the Roman fortification wall of Marcianopolis (2^{nd} century AD) (from: Angelov 1999, 15)

3
Roman street at Marcianopolis (2^{nd}–3^{rd} century AD) (© Courtesy of A. Angelov)

4
Remains of the amphitheatre at Marcianopolis (ca. late 2^{nd} century AD with reconstructions in the late 3^{rd} century AD) (Courtesy of the Municipality of Devnya)

with certainty how large the fortified area of the city was at the time. In any case, it was at this period that the city layout and inner infrastructure was organized and to a great extent completed.

Marcianopolis was built according to the typical pattern for the Hellenistic East: with straight streets running east-west and north-south, which formed large rectangular *insulae.* Most of these *insulae* covered an area of about 1,400 m², while a few were only about 800 m². The later ones were situated next to the river that ran through the eastern part of the ancient city[16]. The streets were covered by large limestone slabs and were provided with a well-designed drainage system with deep canals (fig. 3) that also collected the water coming from sewers in the surrounding houses[17]. Certain sections of the streets had special enclosures (doorsills), which made possible their closing by night and perhaps converting them into temporary markets during daytime, as seen at one *cardo* in the central area of the city[18]. Under the streets, ceramic pipelines were laid to supply most of the houses and the fountains in certain public spaces of Marcianopolis with fresh water from a large source located west of the city. Another pipeline started from three of the main springs situated within the northern part of the city[19], supplying more water to cover the needs of the people, shops and workshops.

5 Honorary arch at Marcianopolis depicted on a bronze coin of Gordianus III (238–244) (© <http://www.coinproject.com/> [accessed 03.11.2020])

Most of the Roman period (2nd – first half of 3rd century AD) was a time of relative security and peaceful development for the city and its residents. In the second half of the 2nd – early 3rd century AD, in the central city area some large residential houses were constructed, lavishly decorated with marbles, polychrome wall plaster and stucco cornices. They were often provided with water and hypocaust heating systems. Some of these mansions covered the area of an entire *insula* (about 1,400 m²) and were built of stone and brick[20]. In the same period of time, various public buildings, temples, a bath[21] and an amphitheatre (fig. 4) that could house about 3,500 spectators were erected too[22]. Two honorary arches were constructed, decorated with sculptures above the attic zone, as seen on coins of Caracalla (211–217) and Gordian III (238–244) issued by the local mint (fig. 5). The arches were situated most probably in the city centre or on main streets close to the central area and commemorated the victories of the two emperors.

The heyday of the city was the period of the Severan dynasty (193–244), as it was for most of the Roman cities established in the Balkan provinces of the Empire. It is likely that some of the most important public and private buildings in the city were completed at that time. In all three Roman cemeteries that have been identified, a number of grave goods of fine quality were discovered deposited in the tombs. Along with finds from private houses of the same era, they testify to large quantities of imports originating from eastern, rather than from western production centres. Furthermore, locally made products of reasonable quality and others coming from workshops in Moesia Inferior have also been found. The discovered imports from other regions of the empire include terracotta lamps from Greece and Asia Minor[23], fine Roman pottery and various high-

[16] Unpublished excavation by the author.
[17] Angelov 2002, 116 fig. 7.
[18] Minchev 2002, 245.
[19] Angelov 1999, 26.
[20] Minchev 2002, 245 f. fig. 1.
[21] Gerov 1975, 53.
[22] Tončeva 1981, pls. 1–3.
[23] Kuzmanov – Minchev 2018, 74 nos. 246–247 pl. 18; 76 no. 260 pl. 19; 91 no. 355 pl. 26, etc.

6 Gold earrings and cameo from Marcianopolis (2nd–3rd century AD) (© Courtesy of Regional Museum of History – Varna, R. Kostadinova)

7 Marble table support in the shape of sitting Aphrodite from Marcianopolis, import from Attica (late 2nd – early 3rd century AD) (© Courtesy of A. Angelov)

8
Limestone quarry in vicinity of Marcianopolis, which functioned in 2nd–6th centuries AD (© Courtesy of A. Angelov)

9
Unfinished marble sarcophagus from a Proconnnesian workshop discovered at Marcianopolis (2nd – mid-3rd century AD) (© A. Minchev)

quality bronze vessels[24], as well as some silver vessels[25]. Personal adornments made of bronze[26] as well as glass vessels, gold- and silver jewellery (fig. 6), were also imported, mainly from eastern workshops[27]. Among the imported marbles of the 2nd–3rd century AD via the port of Odessos were Proconnesian sarcophagi[28] and architectural elements[29]. Marble decorative sculptures[30] and expensive furniture from Greece (fig. 7) and Asia Minor[31] as well as some bronze figurines were also imported[32].

During the Roman period (2nd–3rd century AD), various crafts were developed in Marcianopolis: carpentry, wood- and bone carving, iron and non-ferrous metal working, jewellery making, etc. The merchandise, which the native craftsmen/artisans produced, supplied the local market, yet they also found their way to Odessos and the smaller settlements in the region too. Finds in the city and in its cemeteries represent a large range of objects made here[33]. Several quarries were located next to the city (fig. 8). The limestone blocks extracted there were processed in the stone-cutting workshops into construction materials, architectural units, sarcophagi, sculptures and reliefs, and household objects[34]. On a 3rd century AD limestone sarcophagus discovered in the city cemetery, the engraved iron tools used by the buried individual indicate his profession as a stone-carver[35].

In the late 2nd and 3rd century AD, masters in local pottery workshops produced imitations of Attic terracotta lamps[36] and other imports, as well as some local types[37]. A very well-designed clay mould for the production of either terracotta or bronze votive tablets is indicative of some of the more sophisticated objects made in the city[38]. The production of native artisans included simple bronze vessels[39] and everyday objects such as finger rings, fibulae, bracelets and other personal decorations made of bronze[40]. It is highly likely that glass vessels were manufactured in the city too. A nicely designed and finely executed bronze female arm (unpublished) proves the existence of life-size bronze statues, which may have been made by artists in the city. The local stone-carvers used imported marble material from Proconnesos, from the Greek East and potentially also from Italy for producing architectural elements of different shapes[41]. The same material was used for carved gravestones, religious and other sculptures, and reliefs[42]. Semi-finished sarcophagi were imported from Proconnesian workshops (fig. 9) and occasionally they were finished by stone-carvers in Marcianopolis[43]. All trade goods produced here were available at the city market, but were also sold in the smaller settlements in the region and beyond.

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24 Nenova-Merdžanova 2011, 123 fig. 14 b and unpublished finds.
25 Minchev 2002, 245.
26 Genčeva 2004, 186 pl. 25 no. 16.
27 Angelov 1982, figs. 1–6 pl. 2; Angelov 1983, pls. 2–3; Angelov 1985, pls. 3–4; Nenova – Angelov 1999, figs. 1–7. 10–11.
28 Minchev 2012, 53 f. figs. 5–7.
29 Dimitrov 2007, 96 f. and 388–390 nos. 82–84; 153 and 460 no. 220.
30 Minčev 2013a, figs. 1–4.
31 Minchev (in print).
32 Ognenova-Marinova 1975, 146 no. 164 and unpublished ones.
33 Angelov 1985, 59 f. figs. 4–5. 7–8 pl. 8; Minčev – Georgiev 1979, 104 f. pls. 15–16.
34 Angelov 1999, 33 and figs. on 15. 20. 28. 31. 50–51; Mirčev 1971, 157 fig. 4, etc.
35 Minchev 2012, 57 fig. 11.
36 Minčev 1977, 166–169 tabs. I–II, 1–4.
37 Kuzamnov – Minčev 2018, 67 nos. 197–198 pl. 14; 252 nos. 246–247 pl. 18; Angelov 1985, 57–61 figs. 1–4 pl. 5; fig. 9 pl. 7.
38 Minčev – Georgiev 1991, 223 fig. 1.
39 Angelov 1985, 59 no. 1 pl. 8, 3.
40 Angelov 1985, 58 nos. 5–6 pl. 8, 4. 7.
41 Dimitrov 2007, 379 no. 61; 381 no. 65; 389 f. nos. 83–85; Dimitrov 2009/2010, 128 f. fig. 6, etc.
42 Angelov 1999, 37. 44; Tončeva 1960, 78 fig. 44 pl. 13.
43 Minchev 2012, 53 f. figs. 5–7.

10 Marble votive relief showing Dionysos and Heracles from Marcianopolis (late 2nd – early 3rd century AD) (© Courtesy of I. Sutev)

Inscriptions, votive stone reliefs, bronze and marble figurines discovered in the city and the environs illustrate the variety of religious beliefs of the citizens of Marcianopolis in the 2nd–3rd centuries AD. Gods and goddesses of Greco-Roman and indigenous (Thracian) origin, as well as a few Eastern deities, belonged to the city pantheon. The list is long and includes the following deities: Zeus, Hera, Apollo, Urania, the Mother of the gods – Cybele, Athena[44], the Three Nymphs[45] and Fortuna/Tyche[46]. In addition, the following deities were also worshipped in Marcianopolis: Aphrodite[47], Hermes[48], Asclepius, Hygieia and Telesphorus[49]. Much venerated in the city were Heracles[50] and Dionysos[51]; the cult of the latter was sometimes combined with that of Heracles (fig. 10)[52]. On an unpublished, partially preserved fine marble relief dating to the late 2nd – early 3rd century AD found in the city, several of the venerated deities are represented. The surviving figures of gods and goddesses are Hephaestus, Zeus, Hera, Tyche and perhaps Apollo, together with Sol Invictus and Nemesis, who are represented only in the form of small busts above the other figures. This is an interesting combination of deities, and additional gods were also included in the group.

Especially popular among the citizens of Marcianopolis and its vicinity was the Heros, or so-called Thracian horseman. This fact was not only due to the number of citizens of Thracian origin and the indigenous population in the surrounding region, but also to natives of other ethnic groups who venerated the deity[53]. In one inscription on a votive relief, the ›Thracian horseman‹ received the rare local epithet of Heros Ouetespion[54]. It is important to note that the region around Marcianopolis is one of the few in Moesia Secunda where a number of local epithets of the ›Thracian horseman‹ are registered[55]. Occasionally, this deity was syncretized in the city with Apollo[56], which led to the fact that the Greek god received a popular epithet of the Heros and within the city he was referred to by his worshippers as Apollo Aularchenos and Apollo Staraskenos[57]. Despite the settlement of army veterans in the city and the surrounding *chora*, the cult of Mithras was not particularly popular. However, a fragment of a fine relief with an engraved Mithraic scene and dedication in Greek has been found, proving that this eastern soldiers' deity did have worshippers in Marcianopolis[58]. Without doubt, his appearance here was due to veterans settled in the city.

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44 IGBulg II 185–187 nos. 800. 803. 805–807; Tončeva 1960, 72 nos. 6–7 figs. 6–7; Mirčev 1946, 189 fig. 79.
45 Tončeva 1965, 76 no. 2 fig. 6.
46 Tončeva 1965, 77 no. 8.
47 Ognenova-Marinova 1975, 137 no. 151; 146 no. 164; Ilieva 2014, 47 no. 71.
48 Ognenova-Marinova 1975, 109 no. 115.
49 Tončeva 1960, 76 no. 2 fig. 33; Angelov 1999, 43 fig. on p. 44.
50 Dimitrov et al. 1965, 136 no. 51; Georgiev 1984, 29 fig. 4.
51 Mirčev 1946, 188 fig. 77; Minchev 2020, 317 figs. 9–10.
52 Minčev (in print).
53 Mirčev 1946, 187 f. figs. 76. 78; Oppermann 2006, 332 no. 327; 333 nos. 349–350; 352 no. 394; IGBulg II 187 f. no. 808; Mirčev 1971, 157 fig. 4.
54 IGBulg II 186 f. no. 804.
55 Gočeva 2005, 26.
56 Oppermann 2006, 338 no. 486.
57 IGBulg II 185 f. nos. 805–806. 838.
58 IGBulg II 188 no. 810 pl. 114.

For the veneration of some of the deities mentioned above, temples or smaller sanctuaries existed in the city. During construction works around one of the largest natural springs in Devnya, the ruins of a temple with a marble revetted pool were discovered as well as the damaged marble head of a statue of Asclepius. This discovery led to the conclusion that the temple (or the sanctuary) was dedicated to the health-bringing deity[59]. He was venerated there, most likely along with Hygieia and Telesphorus. This temple, and other reliefs dedicated to Asclepius and deities related to him, prove that his/their cult was important for the inhabitants of the city and its environs. Based on a large votive relief with a dedication to the Heros/›Thracian horseman‹[60] and a number of additional smaller reliefs of similar design aforementioned, he was much worshipped both in the city and in the region too. Therefore, we have to expect that a sanctuary dedicated to this deity existed in the city or in the close vicinity.

Several issues of the city mint provide additional information on religion in Marcianopolis. On the reverse of bronze coins issued in the city in the first half of the 3rd century AD, typical temple buildings are depicted, and statues of their patrons are shown inside some of them. Based on these images, it can be assumed that temples of even more deities stood inside the city. The existence of cult buildings dedicated to Zeus, Apollo Lycaios, Sarapis, Concordia and Tyche[61] has been established. Most of these deities are also represented in the city on cult reliefs, indicating that they were worshipped by the locals. Of course, according to ancient religious tradition, other gods and goddesses were housed in their temples as well.

There is certain historical and archaeological data that Greco-Roman science and knowledge was common among the well or highly educated citizens of Marcianopolis. This suggestion has been proved by several important discoveries: in the city, a Roman marble sundial of ca. the 2nd–3rd century AD was found by chance[62]. This rare find helps us to assume that mathematics was applied not only in the city architecture but maybe also in producing sophisticated devices, which needed extended knowledge of astronomy too. On the other hand, a detailed study made of the sundial revealed that it did not show the exact time[63]. Concerning the field of humanities, late antique historical sources provide interesting information that in the 3rd century AD, philosophy was familiar to some of the educated local people. In AD 248, when Marcianopolis was under siege for the first time by the Goths (along with other barbarian tribes), the leader of its defence was a certain Maximus. According to Dexippus[64] and Iordanes[65], he was a philosopher and obviously an eminent and respected person in the local society. Under his guidance, the city managed to withstand the barbarian attacks and soon after, they withdrew[66].

Finds of medical and pharmaceutical instruments combined with specially designed thin stone plates for the preparation of creamy remedies and other medicines have been found in several graves in the cemeteries of the Roman city[67]. These finds are evidence of the healthcare that the citizens of Marcianopolis could receive during the 2nd–3rd century AD. Maybe some of the physicians who worked in the city were also priests of Asclepius, as far as his cult was connected to medicine.

There are enough finds of reliefs and sculptures, which testify to the appreciation of art in Roman Marcianopolis[68]. Among the discovered art pieces are two fragmented little marble Dionysiac statues[69], a little torso of Aphrodite (unpublished) and a small votive relief of Dionysos

[59] Angelov 1999, 43 fig. on p. 44.
[60] Mirčev 1971, 157 fig. 4.
[61] Gerov 1975, 54. 64 f. and bibliography.
[62] Tončeva 1961, 236 fig. 3.
[63] Angelov – Ivanov 1983, 111–115 figs. 1–2.
[64] Dexippus fr. 25.
[65] Iord. Get. 14, 91–92.
[66] Gerov 1975, 60.
[67] Minchev 1983b; Minchev 2016, 231 f.
[68] Kalinka 1906, 151 no. 166 fig. 45; Tončeva 1960, 72. 76. 78 nos. 6. 7. 3. 44 pls. 2. 7–8, etc.
[69] Minchev 2020, 317 figs. 9–10.

11 Marble head of Asclepius found at Marcianopolis (2nd–3rd century AD) (© Courtesy of A. Angelov)

and Heracles[70]. They are all dated to the early 3rd century AD. Their high quality demonstrates the affinity of Marcianopolis' citizens to fine plastic arts and the artistic quality of the local sculptors. The same is true for the aforementioned almost life-size marble head of Asclepius of the late 2nd – early 3rd century AD, which although damaged is a very good example of Roman provincial art developed in the city (fig. 11). Gravestones of varying design have also been found, some of them decorated with relief scenes most of which, however, are usually of lower quality[71].

It is worthwhile to mention an interesting suggestion made by E. Condurachi a long time ago: according to him, a statue of Hermes depicted on a 3rd century AD coin issued in Marcianopolis under Philip the Arab represents the god tying his winged sandals. The idea was that this is a Roman copy of the famous Hellenistic sculpture by Lysippos (ca. 390–310) completed about 330 BC, which is likely to have decorated a public space in the city[72]. Later on, other scholars dealing with numismatics[73] adopted the idea of the Romanian scholar. If that is true, this fact is important evidence that the city authorities of Roman Marcianopolis had shown a real passion for ancient art.

In the 2nd–3rd century AD, poets also resided in the Moesian city. It appears, besides writing poems and hymns dedicated to deities and emperors or to some local events and eminent persons, they also used to write by request funerary inscriptions in verse, using various metric feet. Some of the local authors were even able to compose these in the Doric dialect, despite the fact that the spoken Greek in the city was the Ionic one[74]. A funerary epigram from Marcianopolis reveals that some of the city's poets were well educated: the text contains phrases from verses of Homer's *Iliad*, while others follow certain maxims of Plato[75].

There was no lack of amusements in Roman Marcianopolis: apart from the regular religious processions and feasts, gladiatorial fights were often presented to the local public. The large amphitheatre covered an area of about 4,000 m² and hosted about 3,500 spectators, probably most of the entire free population of the city. It was erected perhaps at the end of the 2nd – or in the early 3rd century AD if not earlier[76]; other scholars propose that it had a capacity of up to 5,000 spectators. Gravestones of four gladiators who took part in these cruel fights held in the city have been discovered. Some of the competitors in the fights met their death in the arena. The funerary inscriptions reveal that the gladiators belonged to specific types of fighters (mostly *secutores*), although one of them fought in two categories: as a *secutor* and as a *murmillo*[77]. Sport competitions *(agones)* and other sporting events were also familiar to the public of Marcianopolis and an interesting part of the city life. This conclusion arises from a funerary inscription found in the city dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD that mentions a successful professional wrestler named Narcissus[78], presumably a popular athlete who took part in local sporting events.

In the first half of the 3rd century AD Marcianopolis arose as a highly developed and prosperous Roman city. This historical moment has been proved by the largest coin treasure discovered in

70 Minchev (in print).
71 Conrad 2004, 209–211 nos. 310–315.
72 Condurachi 1945, fig. 1.
73 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 81.
74 IGBulg II 190 f. nos. 815. 817bis; 818 pls. 115–116.
75 Mihailov 1977, 158 f. no. 21 pl. 6.
76 Tončeva 1981, pls. 1–3.
77 Angelov et al. 1996b, 135–144 figs. 1–3; Minchev 2011, 141 f. figs. 16–18.
78 IGBulg II 191 no. 84 pl. 115.

Bulgaria. About 100,000 silver *denarii* dating to the 1st – mid 3rd century AD were found by chance deposited in two large container jars *(pithoi)* hidden in the basement of a Roman house[79]. Whether it belonged to the public, or was owned privately, there is no doubt that this immense amount of money shows the wealth that had accumulated in the city by the mid-3rd century AD.

This discovery reflects also a tragic event in the history of Marcianopolis. The city managed to withstand the siege of the Goths and other barbarian tribes allied to them during their first invasion of the Balkans in AD 248. However, during the second siege in AD 250–251, they succeeded to capture Marcianopolis, after which they plundered it and burned the city to ashes[80]. Most of the population was killed or enslaved by the barbarians. Despite that disaster, the city soon recovered: likely still under Valentinian I (253–260) and/or by the time of Gallienus (263–268), the fortification wall was reconstructed, and was able to withstand the new Gothic invasion in AD 269 and several more in the following decades as well. By that time, certain districts of the city with houses and public buildings had already been re-erected and new people settled in the city. At that time, or in the following decades of the 3rd century AD, the amphitheatre was reconstructed as well. Gladiatorial games were organized again but now the large public structure was also the site where, under Diocletian (284–305) and/or Galerius (305–311), some of the citizens – faithful Christians – were accused, put on trial and publically tortured.

Historical sources describe that Christianity found its way to Marcianopolis quite early, during the reign of Antoninus Pius, only a few decades after the city was established. One of the first Christians who devoted her life to propagate the new religion there was St. Meletina. It seems apparent that this woman was successful in her preaching because after her capture she was accused of spreading Christianity among her fellow citizens. The main figure in the process against her was the city governor, and after St. Meletina was accused for her beliefs, she was tortured and later decapitated[81].

Another martyr, St. Alexander of Rome, who was sentenced in the imperial capital under Maximian Herculius (286–305) was later transferred to Marcianopolis. There he was tortured as an example to other Christians in the city. The fact that the martyr was sent so far away from Rome to be accused again for his faith shows the importance of the Moesian city as an Early Christian cluster in the late 3rd – early 4th century AD. During the reign of Diocletian, two more Christians, St. Asclepiodota and her little son St. Theodotos, were imprisoned by the local authorities for their faith. The fear of their religious influence and deeds in the city and perhaps also in its vicinity is underlined by the fact that they were put on trial led by the Vicarius of the Diocese Thracia in person, a certain Teres, who was obviously of Thracian origin. They were accused for their Christian beliefs in the city amphitheatre, implying that this happened in front of a large audience of several thousand people. There, another Christian, St. Maximus, tried to defend them but after his speech he was also accused and forced to join the other two on trial. After being harshly interrogated and tortured, all three victims were sent to Hadrianopolis and later met their death as martyrs on the road to Philippopolis[82]. However, all these processes did not stop the broad dissemination of the Christian religion among the citizens of Marcianopolis and other people in the surrounding region.

MARCIANOPOLIS – THE CAPITAL OF MOESIA SECUNDA

The new political and economic situation in the Roman Empire after the series of barbarian invasions of the Balkan provinces in the 3rd century AD, and the subsequent inner conflicts raised the question of a reform of the traditional defence system within the Balkans. A new administrative organization of the provinces in the region and in the state in general was required; this

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79 Mušmov 1934.

80 Gerov 1975, 60.

81 Velkov 1964; Minčev 1987a, 297 f. and bibliography. I do not mention the ›data‹ about St. Sebastiana, who is said to have been preaching in the city in the 1st century AD, which is impossible; see: Minčev 1987a, 297 and bibliography.

82 Minčev 1987a, 298 and bibliography.

12 The late Roman fortress wall of Marcianopoplis (late 3rd – mid-5th century AD), ruined by the earthquake in 1977 (© A. Minchev, 1975)

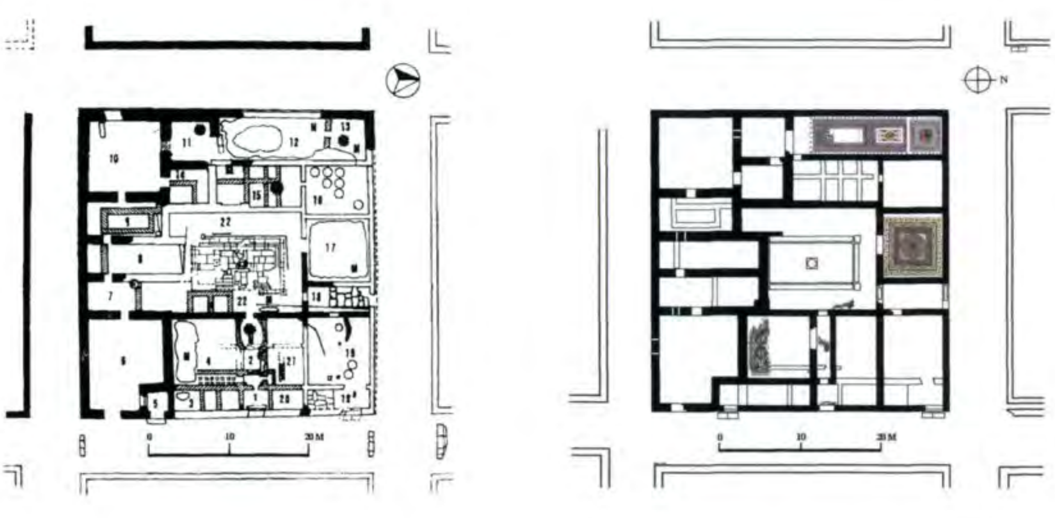
development was undertaken by Diocletian around the turn of the 4th century AD. After the turbulent period in the second half of the 3rd century AD, he quickly managed to restore the efficient imperial government again. His successors on the throne, Galerius (305–311) and Constantine the Great (306–337), adopted his ideas and decisions and even developed them further. According to the new administrative organization established by Diocletian, the former province of Moesia Inferior was divided into three new provinces: Scythia, Moesia Prima and Moesia Secunda. Marcianopolis was proclaimed as the capital city of the latter one.

Most probably, Diocletian made his choice due to the city's strategic location north of the Balkan Range, and the well-organized communications with the defence chain of fortresses located on the Lower Danube Limes, the Black Sea cities and those of inland Thrace. This important event was crucial for the rapid rise of the city. Within the span of a few decades, Marcianopolis developed to become the largest administrative, military and cultural centre in the region, later emerging as a religious one too: namely an Early Christian stronghold. One may speculate that Diocletian had a special relationship with the city, because on his way to or returning from Nicomedia, he visited the new provincial capital several times. His presence there is documented in AD 294 and AD 303, though there may have been more visits in between[83]. The emperor also ordered the reconstruction of the important strategic road from Marcianopolis to Abritus (near Razgrad), which led to the main fortresses located in the Province of Scythia and on the Lower Danube Limes[84]. In AD 332, Constantine the Great also visited Marcianopolis and resided here for a while to inspect and oversee the battles with the Goths, with which his army was engaged beyond the Danube River[85].

Valens also chose the city as his base during his continuous war against the Goths, and in fact, he transmuted it into a temporary capital city of the empire. Between AD 366–369 the emperor spent substantial time here, in preparation for battles with the barbarians or to rest during the winter. He even celebrated his Quinquennia in Marcianopolis and welcomed as guests of honour a delegation of the Senate, the Bishop of Constantinople and several members of his family[86].

In the late 3rd – early 4th century AD, after it was proclaimed capital city of the new province Moesia Secunda, the city was enlarged, now covering an area of about 70 ha. The fortified area of Marcianopolis was extended to the north and a new fortress wall was constructed to secure the defence of the citizens against future hostile attacks. This fortification retained a large section of the old wall, which was partially reconstructed, but also a new one completed its circuit. Its lower level was stone-built, while its upper part was constructed in *opus mixtum* (fig. 12). After the disaster of the mid-3rd century AD caused by the Goths, the ›classical‹ Roman environment of the city was changed to some extent including some sections of the existing grid system of

[83] Gerov 1975, 66.
[84] Mirčev 1953, 71 f. no. 3 fig. 87.
[85] Gerov 1975, 66.
[86] Gerov 1975, 66 f. and bibliography.



13 a–b Plan of the »House of Antiope« at Marcianopolis: a) the »House of Antiope« of early 4th – mid 5th century AD and remains of an earlier residential house underneath of late 2nd – mid 3rd century AD; b) plan of the »House of Antiope« showing the spaces with mosaic floors (© a: plan by A. Minchev, drawing K. Goranov; b: from Pillinger et al. 2016, fig. 55 b)

streets, while other parts survived almost intact. Their stone pavements and canalization system were repaired, and perhaps another new water conduit was built. In some areas, longitudinal sections of the streets were incorporated into the newly constructed large private buildings. New and much more lavishly decorated residential houses were constructed in the city, replacing some of those ruined by the Goths. These were predominantly built of local limestone, although occasionally imported marble was also used in their furnishing. Most, if not all, houses in the city were supplied with fresh water; they had a well-functioning canalization system, and occasionally the main living rooms in the largest ones were heated by a hypocaust system. Some of the houses had coloured plaster on the walls and rooms with floors covered by splendid mosaics. Outside the city walls large suburban villas were situated, which were also richly decorated and furnished.

The best example of the newly built large houses in the capital city is the so-called House of Antiope. It was a luxurious mansion, which occupied an entire *insula* of over 1,400 m², surrounded by four streets and with access to all of them (fig. 13 a–b). The house is of peristyle type, with a two-storeyed southern section constructed in stone and brick masonry, while the rest of the house was one-storeyed and constructed only of stone. The layout is typical for the Greek East: the central point was a rectangular atrium – a large paved courtyard with crypto-portico and colonnade, and a circular well in the centre. Twenty (or twenty-one) rooms of different function were situated around the atrium: living rooms, storerooms and household-rooms, corridors as well as a stable and a shop, which was possibly combined with a pub. The last two spaces had extra access to the streets next to them[87]. The official side was the east façade, and over the main entrance, a marble sundial (fig. 14) was built into the wall[88]. At least five living rooms, two antechambers, the main entrance corridor

14 Late Roman marble sundial from the »House of Antiope« at Marcianopolis (early 4th century AD) (© A. Minchev)

[87] Minchev 2002, 246 f. fig. 1.
[88] Angelov 1999, 43.

15
Mosaic of the shield of Athena with Medusa-Gorgon emblem in the »House of Antiope« at Marcianopolis (early 4th century AD) (© Courtesy of R. Donev)

16 Details of the mosaic of the shield of Athena with Medusa-Gorgon emblem in the »House of Antiope«: lioness and panther (© Courtesy of R. Donev)

17 Mosaic showing the Abduction of Ganymede by Zeus as an eagle in the »House of Antiope« at Marcianopolis (early 4th century AD) (© Courtesy of R. Donev)

and the eastern section of the crypto-portico had floors decorated by colourful mosaics of various design, which covered an area of about 350 m². For their execution, *tesserae* of sixteen different colours that were made of terracotta, various local stones, marble and glass *(smalti)* were used. The mosaics in the antechambers, in the corridor and in the portico are in general the simplest ones in the house but they were also well executed. Their design shows various geometric patterns in different shapes and combinations surrounded by decorative frames[89].

[89] Minčev 2016a, 56 figs. 56–58.

18 Details of the mosaic showing the Abduction of Ganymede by Zeus-Eagle in the »House of Antiope«: antelope and lioness (© Courtesy of R. Donev)

19 Mosaic showing the Seduction of Antiope by Zeus-Satyr in the »House of Antiope« at Marcianopolis (early 4th century AD) (© Courtesy of R. Donev)

Much more sophisticated are the mosaics in the living rooms. Best preserved is the mosaic in the dining room *(triclinium)* of the mansion (8 × 8 m), which represents a large black-and-white shield of Athena with a colourful and beautifully designed head of Gorgon-Medusa in the centre (fig. 15). The shield is included in several square frames with geometric- and floral design, while in the corners, exotic animals and trees are depicted, but only a lion and a panther under palms and olive trees are intact (fig. 16)[90]. In the reception hall of the residence – the *oecus* (13.40 × 5.60 m) and in the adjacent *cubiculum* – sleeping room (4.40 × 5.60 m), the love affairs of Zeus are represented in full colour. Only two of them have survived more or less well-preserved. In the *oecus* there were originally two emblems. The first is better preserved, and shows the scene of the abduction of Ganymede, where the Olympic god is disguised as an eagle (fig. 17). Around the emblem, exotic animals are depicted: antelopes, a lion and a lioness enclosed in triangles (fig. 18) and surrounded by several geometric frames[91]. The second emblem in the *oecus* is now lost but the remains reveal that it was circular in form and surrounded by wild birds. The other preserved mosaic in the *cubiculum* depicts the seduction of Antiope by Zeus disguised as a young satyr. Next to each figure there are inscriptions in Greek: ΑΝΤΙΟΠΗ and ΣΑΤΥΡΟΣ (fig. 19). Within the several geometric frames that surround them, various colourful birds are represented, some of which are exotic species (fig. 20). The representation of Antiope and Zeus/Satyr in Marcianopolis is the best of the few mosaics showing this scene discovered so far in the ancient world[92]. The mosaic in the office of the owner, the

[90] Minčev 2016a, 59–61 figs. 69–71.
[91] Minčev 2016a, 61 f. figs. 73–78.
[92] Minčev 2016a, 63–65 figs. 79–83.

20 Details from the framing of mosaic emblems in the *oecus* of the »House of Antiope« at Marcianopolis: various bird species (early 4th century AD) (© Courtesy of R. Donev)

tablinum (8.60 × 8.60 m), was very picturesque. Unfortunately, it is only partially preserved. The mosaic shows a very sophisticated wide circular frame designed by various intersecting geometric figures and patterns of different colours. These are enclosed in a square frame, with female busts in the corners, personifying the four seasons. Of these, only Autumn and the upper part of Summer have survived. In some of the intersections, birds, sandals (situated near the room entrance) and several geometric figures are depicted. Regrettably, the central emblem of the mosaic is now missing, having been destroyed by later structures[93].

All of the mosaics in this residential house of Marcianopolis were created at the same time and are the work of a group of skilled artists. Based on the exotic trees, birds and animals depicted, we may assume that they were commissioned by the owner and, like him, came from the Near East. Some rooms such as the *oecus* also had coloured plaster on the walls. The »House of Antiope« was constructed and decorated with mosaics in the early 4th century AD, i.e. soon after Marcianopolis was declared the capital city of Moesia Secunda; it functioned with some reconstructions up to the mid-5th century AD. It was subsequently plundered and burnt at the same time when the city was completely destroyed by the Huns during their invasion of the Balkans in AD 447[94].

This lavishly decorated mansion was not, however, unique in the city. In the central area of the city, traces of additional two houses with mosaics have been found, one of which is also of peristyle type[95], while the possible second one is still under investigation and the results have not yet been published.

93 Minčev 2016a, 63–65 figs. 59–65.
94 Minčev 2016a, figs. 55–83 pls. 22–31; Minchev 2019, figs. 1–6.
95 Minčev 2016b.

Around the Moesian capital, several large late antique villas were located. One of them is a *villa suburbana* situated about 100 m outside the eastern city wall and dated to the 4th century AD. It was investigated partially and regrettably, only two of its rooms with fine mosaic floors were excavated. The mosaics are decorated with various picturesque geometric patterns. Only stone and terracotta *tesserae* of limited colours were used for their decoration[96]. In 1970, outside the south city wall, another large *villa suburbana* dated also to the 4th century AD was partially investigated (although not published). Most of the excavated rooms have hypocaust heating systems and in a few of them, remains of coloured wall plaster were found. There is a brief record of another villa with a peristyle courtyard, probably of similar date, which was situated about 500 m outside the city[97]. The listed luxury buildings inside and outside Marcianopolis support the opinion declared by Iordanes that it »became the most splendid city of Moesia [Secunda]«[98].

The finances accumulated by some wealthy inhabitants of the late antique provincial capital were also reflected in certain funerary constructions which were investigated in the city *necropoleis*. Several tombs of the 4th – early 5th century AD have been unearthed. They were constructed in stone or brick, and some were decorated with colourful frescoes featuring Christian motifs or imitations of stone revetment. In one of them, birds and flowers among garlands are depicted on the walls, with birds in the lunettes[99]. The wall decoration of another tomb consists only of flowers of different design, once again displayed among garlands[100]. In the 1970s, in the eastern necropolis of the ancient city, a heavily damaged vaulted tomb built of stones and brick was discovered. It was only partially preserved and displays another design of decoration: rectangular framed panels with imitation of marble revetment executed in various colours. In antiquity, there was regular access to the tomb by a staircase which led to the burial chamber. The walls of the staircase had a decoration with a girdle of black and white triangles (unpublished). During the short excavation, no grave goods were found because the tomb, which most probably was a family tomb, had been looted and heavily destroyed in antiquity, and was further demolished by modern construction work. This fact makes the dating of the tomb difficult. The same scheme of wall decoration (but painted in different colours) can be found in another vaulted tomb in late antique Naissus (Niš, Serbia), which has been dated to the late 4th – early 5th century AD[101]. The parallels with the Niš frescoes and the historical fate of the city in the second half of the 4th – first half of the 5th century AD suggests a very reasonable date for this tomb. The murals discovered so far that decorated large tombs in the cemeteries of Marcianopolis suggest that in the second half of the 4th – first half of the 5th century AD, either single artists or perhaps a painting atelier were active here, meeting the artistic needs of the wealthy citizens and nobles in the city.

In the 4th–5th century AD, the main occupation of the inhabitants of Marcianopolis and the region continued to be agriculture and livestock breeding. A sickle and combination of a pick and mattock were discovered in houses of the late 4th – first half of the 5th century AD[102]. The native inhabitants, both in Marcianopolis and in the surrounding area, traditionally cultivated vines and produced wine. A rectangular wine press constructed of stone and brick, medium in size (2.10 × 1.70 m), and plastered inside with waterproof mortar was discovered in the city. It belonged to a little winery, which functioned in the first half of the 5th century AD and was located in a house dating to the 4th – mid 5th century AD[103]. Of course, it was probably not the only one in the city and surrounding area.

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96 Minčev 2016c, figs. 108–114 pls. 38–40.
97 Mirčev – Tončeva 1956, 69 f.
98 Iord. Get. 16, 93.
99 Valeva 1999, 19–21 figs. 19–21 pl. 4.
100 Valeva 1999, 21 f. fig. 15.
101 Rakocija 2009, 94 f. figs. 14–16.
102 Tončeva 1965, 75 no. 4; 77 no. 3 fig. 10.
103 Minchev 2020, 317 fig. 24.

21
Set of bronze surgical instruments discovered at Marcianopolis (3rd–4th century AD) (© A. Minchev)

In the late antique period, medicine continued to be practiced in the city according to the traditions of Roman medical knowledge. Well-educated physicians settled in Marcianopolis and offered to their fellow citizens high quality medical care and efficient cures for various diseases and traumas. In the city a large set of medical instruments (over thirty) was discovered; these were used for treatments of a number of diseases and specialized medical aid, together with a few vessels needed for medical care (fig. 21). Several of the instruments found were necessary tools for first-aid treatment and surgery, while others were used for sophisticated gynaecological operations. Some of them were even employed in carrying out delicate cranial operations[104]. The medical/surgical instruments were discovered in a building burnt by a strong fire in the mid-5th century AD, but the set also contained some earlier medical instruments dating approximately to the 3rd–4th century AD. Actually, this was the full *instrumentarium* of an experienced doctor, who was evidently a member of a family trained by traditional physicians[105]. We should not exclude the possibility that the building where the instruments were discovered was in fact a (military [?]) hospital.

During Late Antiquity, trade continued to be an important occupation for many citizens of Marcianopolis and this fact substantially enriched the list of imported goods sold at the local market. These merchants supplied the shops with ordinary merchandise to assure that the residents in the capital city had a sufficient supply of food and other products for their daily life. Also, various commodities, including luxury goods, were imported to fulfil the demand of the wealthy citizens. An example of a luxurious pottery import is African Red Slip ware, imported from North African pottery workshops, although in a small number[106]. Rich families in the city were supplied with everyday glass vessels and with even more luxurious wares, as well as with bronze vessels and utensils, all imported from glass and bronze workshops in Asia Minor and the Near East. Finished marble architectural elements or similar unworked stone blocks were also imported. These arrived here at the request of the architects for the new public and private buildings and churches constructed in the city. They were imports mainly from Proconnesos and from other marble producing centres in the empire. Judging by the variety and abundance of amphorae discovered in the city[107] wine was also widely imported, from many wine-producing centres in the Mediterranean, the Aegean and the Black Sea regions. The same is true for olive oil, the main cooking fat in the ancient world. Via the neighbouring port of Odessos, luxury goods such as gold and silver jewellery may have found their way to Marcianopolis, as well as expensive furniture, table vessels,

[104] Minčev 1983b, 143–148; Kirova 2010, 56 f.; Minchev 2016, 232 f.
[105] Minchev 2016, 233.
[106] Minchev 1983a, 195 pl. 2.3 fig. 1 and unpublished pieces in the Museum of Devnya.
[107] Tončeva 1965, 74 f. figs. 4–5; Minčev – Georgiev 1979, pl. 17, 5; Angelov 1999, 28, fig. down left, etc.

church plate and fine textiles from Constantinople, rare spices from the East, etc. Perhaps the sundial found in the House of Antiope was also imported to the capital city of Moesia Secunda.

The importance of late antique Marcianopolis as a strategic military centre is confirmed by the fact that one of the few arms and armour factories in the late Roman Empire (and one of the two in Diocese Thracia) was located here. As described in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, shields and armour were produced in Marcianopolis (*scutaria* and *arma*), which supplied the Roman troops in the Eastern Balkan provinces and those located on the Lower Danube Limes[108]. According to a 4th century AD inscription, officers of lower rank served in the factory[109], either as workers or most probably as supervisors. Furthermore, in the late antique period, the craft industry in Marcianopolis was developed to a higher level. Handicraftsmen and artisans produced a large range of objects which were employed in agriculture, craftwork and in everyday life.

Traditionally, quarrying and stone cutting were popular crafts in Marcianopolis because of the nearby quarries, where soft limestone was continuously cut for several centuries[110]. The extracted stones met most of the needs of the city. In the Roman and late antique period, this stone was widely used in the construction and furnishing of public buildings and city houses, as well as in the new fortification system, pavements of the streets, for manufacturing sarcophagi and gravestones, etc. Part of the quarried stone was exported to the settlements in the region, including large cities such as Odessos. Artisans in the city also met the needs of the new religion. In some of the newly erected churches, they provided the inner furnishings made mostly of imported marbles and perhaps also produced Christian cult objects. An example is a fragment of a marble (round [?]) table with elegant figural decoration in relief, representing an Apostle and an angel[111]. A dedicatory inscription by the donor was added to it later. This could be done only after the table was imported to the city from a Greek workshop[112].

In the 4th–5th century AD, local pottery production of both construction ceramics and a wide range of household and other pottery and ceramic articles was flourishing. Finds in the city and the region confirmed that a number of ceramic wares made here were widely used by the citizens and residents of the surrounding regions. Pottery kilns were discovered both inside and outside the city walls. A rectangular, substantial (6.40 × 3.80 m) kiln for building ceramics was located just 10 m outside the southern city wall. It produced a huge amount of bricks of traditional Roman type, which were used for the construction of the Late Roman city wall and possibly also in other buildings[113]. Another kiln was much smaller (with a diameter of 1.54 m) and was situated close to one of the springs in the northern part of the city. The diversity of the ceramic production in this fairly small ceramic workshop is noteworthy. The finds at the site include both finished pottery and production waste, displaying a wide range of kitchen and table ware: cooking pots and matching lids, casseroles, jugs of various size and form, cups and deep plates, container jars of medium size and several types of table amphorae. Moulds for the production of lamps were also discovered, along with several types of finished lamps and wasters as well as supports for firing the ceramics and various potter’s tools made of bone and horn.

Interestingly, just before the destruction of the kiln, the potter had begun to test the production of the so-called Green Glaze ceramics, which are typical for Pannonia and towns in Moesia Secunda located on the Lower Danube Limes. Based on the pottery, the lamp types and the coins found on the site, the workshop was dated to the first half of the 5th century AD[114]. Other single finds connected to pottery production indicate that, at the same time, other ceramic workshops produced

108 Velkov 1959, 113.
109 Mihailov 1965, 150–155 no. 3 fig. 3.
110 Angelov 1999, 31 figs. on p. 33.
111 Mirčev 1966, 76 f. fig. 11; Tenekedžiev 2010, 445 fig. 15.
112 For a possible reconstruction of the relief on the table see Oppermann 2006, pl. 141, 41/1.
113 Minčev – Georgiev 1991, 223 f. fig. 5.
114 Minčev – Georgiev 1991, 224–243 figs. 6–37.

22 Set of male gold jewellery from Marcianopolis (late 4th century AD) (© Courtesy of Regional Museum of History – Varna, R. Kostadinova)

different types of lamps and ceramic lids with decoration in relief[115]. There is no doubt that within the same period, other types of pots, large container jars *(pithoi)*, roof tiles, perhaps local types of amphorae and other household ceramics were also produced in the city.

Metal finds discovered in late antique houses of the 4th–5th century AD at Marcianopolis indicate that local blacksmiths manufactured various iron tools and implements, fittings and other objects needed for household and agricultural use, and maybe also arms such as arrowheads and spearheads[116].

In the 4th–6th century AD, artisans of bronze work who manufactured simple personal decorations such as finger rings, bracelets, fibulae, belt appliqués, belt buckles, etc. were working in the city[117]. In addition, they also produced other objects for everyday domestic use, e.g., bronze lamps and lamp hangers, candlesticks[118], bronze vessels, and lampstands. Two decorations from bronze folded tables in the shape of a bust of Athena/Minerva and a figurine of Nike/Victoria were found in the city and immediate environs. These figurines have been dated to around the late 3rd – early 4th century AD or somewhat later, and are believed to be products of artists in Moesia Secunda[119]. An unusual object was found in the city: a bronze stamp in the shape of a foot with an engraved name of the owner who was of Thracian origin. It dates to the late 3rd–4th century AD and most likely belonged to a baker. There is no doubt that the stamp was made by a master in a bronze workshop of the city[120].

Given the facts regarding wealth demonstrated in some late antique buildings unearthed in Marcianopolis, it can be assumed that jewellers worked for the noble and prosperous citizens and their families. In one of the above-mentioned painted tombs, several personal decorations of solid gold were found. The set consists of a cross-shaped fibula, a belt buckle and belt tip, a finger ring and a cylindrical amulet (fig. 22). The tomb is dated to the second third of the 4th century AD[121] and it may be assumed that at least some of the items were manufactured in the city.

During Late Antiquity, continuity of cultural life in Marcianopolis according to ancient tradition is proved by a number of poetic epigrams written on gravestones of the 4th century AD[122]. Although we may assume that there were choirs in the churches that sang Christian hymns during the service and following processions, on the other hand, in the 4th century AD, the most popular entertainments continued to be the gladiatorial fights.

Moreover, arts in Marcianopolis suffered a decline in the late antique period; this phenomenon is observed in all of the Balkan provinces of the Late Roman/Early Byzantine Empire. Finds of works of art are scarce and of rather poor quality. Two portrait heads of a man (fig. 23) and of a woman that were discovered in the city provided evidence about that decline. Both are made of local limestone and should be dated to the 4th–5th century AD. They once belonged to statues (pro-

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[115] Minčev – Georgiev 1991, 226 figs. 38–39 and unpublished finds in the Museum in Devnya.
[116] Tončeva 1965, 75 no. 4; 78 nos. 3. 7. 10 and other described but not illustrated pieces.
[117] Mirčev – Tončeva 1956, 78; Daskalov 2012, 83 additions 54. 55; 85 addition 73; 129.
[118] Tončeva 1965, 75 no. 3; 77 no. 7 fig. 9.
[119] Charalambieva 1985, 45 f. figs. 1–3.
[120] Minčev 1987b, 71–74 figs. 1–3.
[121] Dimitrov 1960, 96–101 figs. 3–7.
[122] Angelov et al. 1996a, fig. 2.

23 Portrait head of a man from Marcianopolis (4th century AD) (© Courtesy of E. Mircheva)

bably displayed in the necropolis) but the artists who carved the portraits were not masters of the sculptural art and craft[123]. Regardless of the quality, the features of their faces are typical for late antique art, implying that the sculptors were aware of the general trends in plastic arts in the Late Roman Empire. Another local product of the 4th century AD was discovered reused in a house that was destroyed in the mid-5th century AD. This is a limestone relief of the Three Nymphs, portraying the popular deities in the region in a very crude manner[124]. It appears that an unskilled artist engraved the relief, which was executed perhaps around the mid- or late 4th century AD. As is well known, later in the 5th–6th century AD, the authorities of the new Christian religion in the Eastern Empire imposed a strong negative attitude towards the realistic Roman sculptural art. This is one of the reasons for the lack of figural sculptures and reliefs in the city during the 5th–6th century AD.

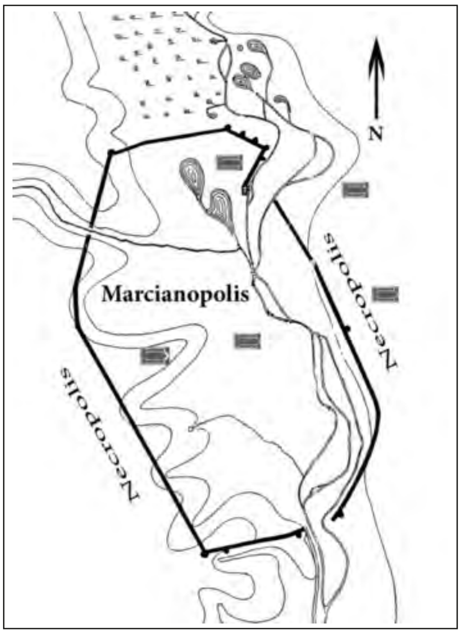
After the *Edict of Tolerance* towards the Christians in the empire issued by Galerius in Serdica in AD 311, and that of Constantine in Milan in AD 313, which put an end to the persecutions against them initiated by Diocletian, the adherents of the new religion in Marcianopolis were able to express freely their beliefs. Soon after, the capital city emerged as a large early Christian stronghold and was the first known episcopal centre in the Balkan provinces of the [Late] Roman Empire[125]. Some of the bishops who in the 4th–6th century AD had their see at Marcianopolis joined several Church councils. The ancient council records report that Pistus, Bishop of Marcianopolis participated in the First Council at Nicaea in AD 325 and was active in the debates, and another Bishop of the Eparchy – Martyrius (or Marmarius) – participated in the First Council of Constantinople held in AD 381. There, he was among the participants who supported the thesis that the decisions/conclusions of the Council in Nicaea were the right ones. Other known heads of the See of Marcianopolis are Domninus, an adherent of Arianism, who was bishop at the time when Valens was based in this city in AD 367, and Epagathus in AD 391. Dorotheus was an interesting individual seated on the bishop's throne here in AD 431. He was a highly educated individual who left his mark on the early history of the Church. A devout follower of the Nestorian doctrine, he wrote several polemic works defending it. Dorotheus participated in the First Council of Ephesos (3rd Ecumenical Council) where he opposed Cyril, the Patriarch of Alexandria and because of that he lost his position and was later expelled from the Church. In the same year, Saturninos was appointed as his follower as head of the See in Marcianopolis though the citizens, obviously also adherents of Nestorianism, did not allow him to take up his position in the Eparchy. However, later Saturninos returned to power and served as bishop until AD 438[126]. In AD 458 Valerianus is recorded as Archbishop of Moesia Secunda[127]. By that time (about AD 457–458), in the Encyclia of Leo I (457–474), the city was already proclaimed an Archbishopric See and likely continued to be one up to AD 527 (or to AD 536)[128]. Valerianus was only head of the See at Marcianopolis for a short time and did not reside in the city but in Constantinople[129]. The last known Bishop

[123] Mirčev 1946, 189 no. 4 fig. 80; Dimitrov et al. 1965, 137 no. 57.
[124] Tončeva 1965, no. 2 fig. 6.
[125] Schreiner 1987, 52.
[126] Minčev 1987a, 298 f.; Holubeanu 2018, 319–347 appendices 1–7.
[127] Minčev 1987a, 298.
[128] Holubeanu 2018, 141 f.
[129] Holubeanu 2018, 119 f. 127–129.

of Marcianopolis is Paulos. He was the heir of Valerianus and is assigned in the regular Church council held in AD 458–459 in Constantinople under Patriarch Genadius[130]. At the time when the city became an Archbishopric centre, it dominated five other suffragan Bishopric Sees in Moesia Secunda: Abritus, Appiaria, Durostorum, Nicopolis ad Istrum and Novae[131]; later more were added, becoming nine in AD 527–536[132]. Of which Balkan province – Moesia Secunda or Haemimontus – Marcianopolis actually was the Archbishopric See is open to debate, and will not be discussed here[133]. In around AD 536, Marcianopolis lost the Archbishopric See of Moesia Secunda to Odessos. After this, it became suffragan to the proclaimed new Archbishopric See of the province based in this city. In the same year, on May 18th AD 536 Justinian proclaimed Odessos as the capital city of the newly established large administrative and judicial entity in the East Roman Empire named *Quaestura exercitus*. His decision to combine two provinces located on the Balkan Peninsula (Moesia Secunda and Scythia), one in Asia Minor (Caria), along with Cyprus and the Cycladic Islands was based primarily on military reasons[134].

There were several reasons vital for the empire for that decision: one was to ensure new recruits for the army located on the Lower Danube Limes garrisons, which at that time were suffering great losses of soldiers. Furthermore, they needed a better supply of arms and food coming mainly from Caria, where the economy was not disturbed by the invasions[135]. This new, significant position of Odessos, its steady development throughout the period and the rapid economic decline of Marcianopolis at that time led the emperor to decide to transfer also the religious power of Moesia Secunda to Odessos.

The late antique/early Byzantine written sources and the archaeological discoveries in Marcianopolis have revealed that in the 4th – early 6th century AD it was a large Christian centre, especially in the 4th – first half of 5th century AD. During these three centuries, several larger and smaller Early Christian basilicas in the city and its immediate environs were erected, some of them later undergoing reconstruction (fig. 24). Most of the churches were furnished with expensive imported marbles, although in some cases such furnishings may date to later reconstructions. The places for worship of the new religion constructed in the city in the 4th–6th century AD were incorporated into the already existing urban layout. The available archaeological data suggests that churches were erected both in the central area and close to the city walls, as well as outside them. At the beginning, the churches built were somewhat smaller and fit within the traditional *insulae,* but later, depending on the size of the new religious buildings, some sections of the city-grid became obsolete.



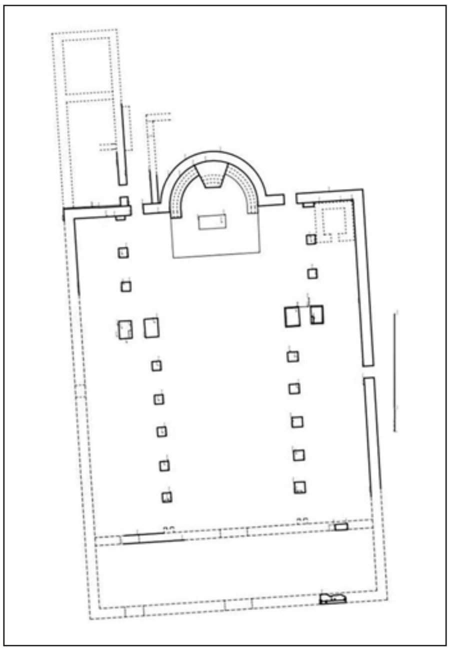
24 Plan of late antique Marcianopolis (4th–6th century AD), showing the locations of the Early Christian churches discovered within and outside the city (© A. Minchev)

As mentioned before, by AD 325 Marcianopolis was already an episcopal centre, meaning that before or around that time at least one church must have been erected to serve the faithful Christians living here. In spite of this, however, there is no properly excavated church in the city, which may be securely dated to the

[130] Holubeanu 2018, 349 appendix 8.
[131] Holubeanu 2018, 142. 301.
[132] Holubeanu 2018, 164.
[133] See the recent discussion on this topic by Holubeanu 2018, 165–173.
[134] Velkov 1956, 114 f.
[135] Torbatov 2001.

first half of the 4th century AD. I repeat here my hypothesis about a church, which possibly might represent one of them, or even the first episcopal one. In the unpublished work »Christian monuments in Bulgaria« the founder of Bulgarian archaeology, K. Škorpil, who was also the first to investigate the ruins of Marcianopolis, there is a short description of a little basilica[136]. The basilica was situated in the central zone of the ancient city but unfortunately, after the investigation, it was totally destroyed by building works in the early 20th century. The church had one nave and a single apse. It was only 7.7 m long (without the apse, which means that the total length was about 10 m) and 5.5 m wide. The basilica was lavishly decorated with marbles and, according to Škorpil's excavation, the following were discovered: column bases and a Corinthian capital, fragments of relief cornices, chancel screen plates and window colonnettes, all made of marble. Only the columns found there were made of (local) limestone. Very close to the basilica, the ruins of a ›solid building‹ were also partially investigated. Regrettably, K. Škorpil did not provide a plan of the basilica (or is it now lost [?]), nor any dating of the ancient structures discovered at the site. Furthermore, no data about the interior of the church is available[137]. The small dimensions and the rich marble decoration of the basilica as well as its centralized position in the ancient city suggest that this may have been the earliest episcopal basilica of Marcianopolis. It must have been erected prior to AD 325, the year of the Council of Nicaea when the first bishop of Marcianopolis was recorded as participant in the debates. Given these circumstances, the remains of the ›solid building‹ located only 1.8 m from the church and partially investigated by Škorpil might have been the residence/palace of the first Bishops of Moesia Secunda.

The largest and most attractive church discovered in the ancient city so far is situated on top of the hill in the south zone of the city; all scholars who have studied that building agree that it was the episcopal basilica. It measures 38.70 × 25.30 m and is a three-aisled, single apse building with narthex and transept (or pseudo-transept) in the nave. Several small rooms were adjoined (perhaps added at a later stage) to the eastern wall of the north aisle; their function remains unclear (fig. 25). There are traces of later reconstructions in the church, which suggest at least two building periods during the time when it was in use. Nine columns of Proconnesian and other marbles divided the nave and the side aisles; some of these are of different diameter and are decorated with crosses in relief. All of the column bases and capitals were also made of marble, although most of them are spolia, taken from destroyed Roman public buildings and reused in the Christian temple. A marble chancel screen separated the *presbyterium* with a large altar table situated in the centre; behind this was a high *synthronon* constructed with a cathedra platform in the centre[138]. The walls of the basilica were covered in colourful plaster and multicoloured mosaic floors decorated three zones of the church. These picturesque mosaics covered the western zone of the nave and the transept, and in each section the mosaic is designed in a different way. The mosaic in the nave is divided into areas consisting of large framed squares (fig. 26), and in each area, the squares are filled with different geometric motifs or crosses (fig. 27). The mosaic panels at both



25 Plan of the Episcopal basilica at Marcianopolis (late 4th or early 6th century AD) (from: Tenekedjiev 2019, 131 fig. 3)

136 I am grateful for permission to access the archive of K. Škorpil, where this unpublished work is preserved.
137 Minčev 1987a, 300 f., after Škorpil's archive.
138 Tenekedjiev 2019, 138–151 figs. 1–27.

26 Mosaic in the nave of the Episcopal basilica at Marcianopolis (© Archive of Regional Museum of History – Varna)

27 Mosaic panels from the nave of the Episcopal basilica at Marcianopolis (© Archive of Regional Museum of History – Varna)

28 Mosaic in the transept of the Episcopal basilica at Marcianopolis (© Archive of Regional Museum of History – Varna)

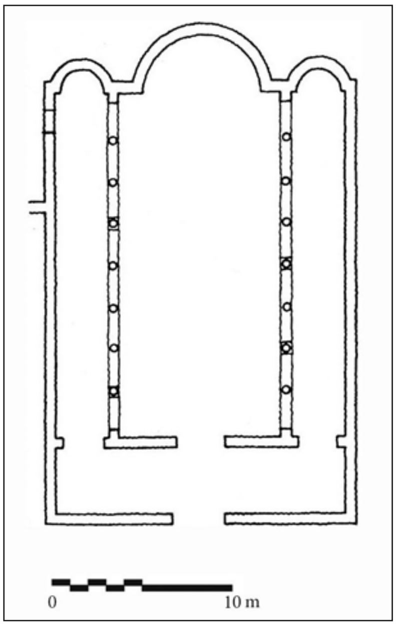
29 Mosaic panels from the transept of the Episcopal basilica at Marcianopolis (© Archive of Regional Museum of History – Varna)

sides of the transept display another general design, consisting of framed octagons in lines with swastikas between the panels (fig. 28). In some of the lines, repeated geometric motifs and stylized crosses are shown, while in others each panel varies (fig. 29). The large central panel in the transept contains interwoven circles with diamonds and rosettes in the middle. The use of a variety of bright colours makes all mosaics in the basilica very attractive. The episcopal basilica was no doubt the most elaborate Christian building in Marcianopolis and we must assume that somewhere near it, the Bishop's palace was situated. The dating of the basilica is under discussion. Some scholars believe that it was built in the first half of the 4th century AD as a single-nave basilica and only in the 6th century AD (under Justinian) it was reconstructed into a three-aisled basilica with a transept[139]. Others, based on the mosaics, attributed it to the third quarter of the 4th century AD

[139] Čaneva-Dečevska 1999, 183 f. fig. 9.

with a second construction period in the 6th century AD[140]. A recent study on the construction of the church, its inner architecture and the marble furnishings, however, suggested a single construction period for the basilica with transept dating to around the late 5th – early 6th century AD, with minor later reconstructions in the same century[141].

Later in the 4th and in the early 5th century AD, the traditional Roman places for public entertainment in Marcianopolis such as the amphitheatre gradually (or abruptly [?]) went out of use. This was also the case at the same time in many other ancient cities of the Late Roman Empire. The building was not re-developed but was used as piecemeal source for building materials. G. Tončeva reported briefly that during the excavation of the amphitheatre conducted by her in the 1960s, she discovered the ruins of a three-aisled basilica constructed within the arena. Regrettably, in her short note about that, the researcher did not provide a plan, nor did she supply any details about the building[142].



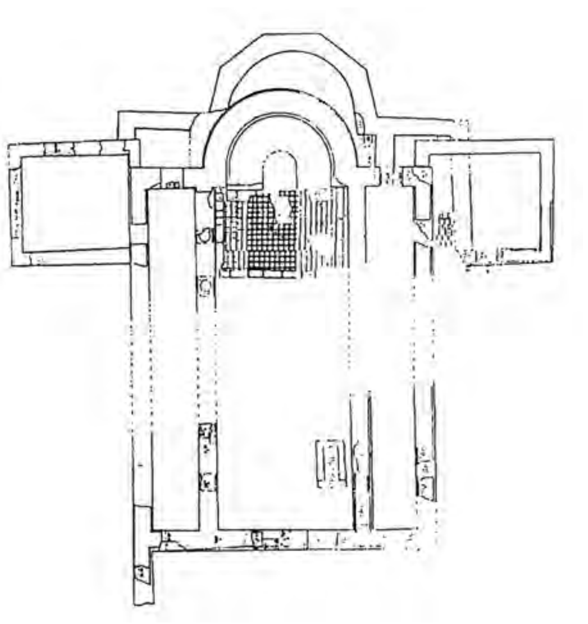
30 Plan of the Early Christian basilica at »Egreka« locality in the Eastern necropolis of Marcianopolis (5th–6th century AD [?]) (after a drawing by K. Škorpil)

Given the fact that about the turn of the 4th century AD, several local Christians were tortured in the arena[143], it is quite possible that later in the 4th or in the early 5th century AD, when the amphitheatre was abandoned, a church was erected in memory of their martyrdom. A few architectural units, that are at the site now like some marble Corinthian- and Roman-Doric capitals of late 2nd–3rd century AD, are not *in situ* and of Roman date (2nd–3rd century AD), which suggests that they were re-used – a normal building practice of the period. However, the architectural remains visible now and the scarce data published by G. Tončeva, raise some doubts about the certainty of the existence of a building with such a function there (see above fig. 4).

Two other basilicas have been investigated outside the fortified area of Marcianopolis and are located in its eastern necropolis. One of them was excavated in 1906 by K. Škorpil but was not published. It was situated close to the north-eastern corner of the ancient city, in the »Egreka« locality. This structure was a large three-aisled basilica with three apses and undivided narthex. The church was 25.50 m long, not including the apse (i.e. about 29 m altogether) and 18 m wide. The inner space was divided into three aisles by seven limestone columns, but the chancel screen and other decorative features of the church were made of marble (fig. 30).

Close to the altar was found a lead reliquary box, already empty of its contents[144]. Along the north wall of the church, remnants (walls) of other buildings adjacent to it were discovered, which suggests that this complex perhaps served as a monastery[145]. The lack of information about other finds in the basilica and the absence of information regarding its marble decoration make its dating uncertain. The undivided narthex of the church points to a construction date around the 5th century AD, whereas the three apses suggest a later date, around the second half of the 6th century AD[146]. Of course, two periods of construction of the basilica are also possible (i.e. a later

[140] Popova 2016, 67–70 figs. 84–107 pls. 32–37.
[141] Tenekedjiev 2019, 155 f.
[142] Tončeva 1968, 234.
[143] Minčev 1987a, 300.
[144] Buschhausen 1971, 285 f. no. C-17 pl. 13; Minchev 2003, 39 f. no. 30.
[145] Minčev 1987a, 300.
[146] See the comment on the three-apse basilicas by Čaneva-Dečevska 1999, 70–72.

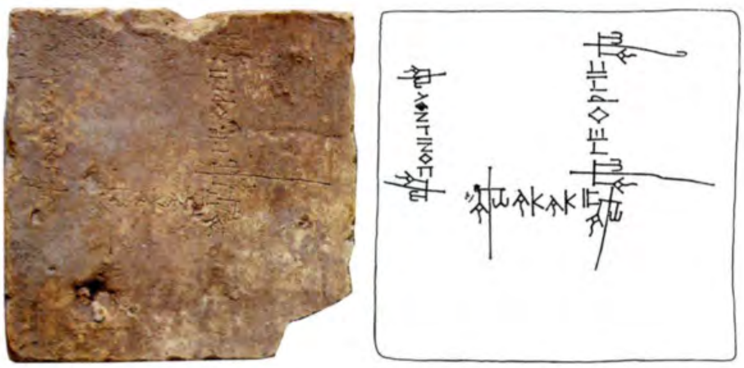


31 Plan of the Early Christian basilica at »Tabiya« locality, in the Eastern necropolis of Marcianopolis (5th–6th century AD) (from: Angelov 2008, 115 fig. 3)

reconstruction in the 6th century AD) as it has been observed in other churches in the city and its vicinity.

Another church *extra muros* was excavated in 1989–1993 east of the ancient city, at the »Tabiyata« locality, where the main area of one of the Early Christian cemeteries of the 4th–6th century AD (the eastern one) is located. This is a three-aisled, single apse basilica with a narthex; two periods of construction can be identified, but both phases survived mostly as foundations. During the first period, the church was somewhat larger and had a five-wall apse. It was discovered in a poor state of preservation and only its width could be reconstructed as 20.20 m, while its length remains unknown. The second church was constructed over the ruins of the previous one and overlapped it but did not exactly follow its original plan. Furthermore, it was situated slightly to the west of the first one. The new basilica is 25.50 m long and 17.70 m wide and has a semi-circular apse. Six pillars, circular in cross section built of specially designed bricks divided the space into three aisles. During the excavation, no architectural elements of the inner decoration of the basilica were found but it seems that it was rather modest. At a later period, two rectangular rooms, which served presumably as *diaconicon* and *prothesis,* were added to the eastern part of the main building (fig. 31). The second basilica has been attributed to the 5th century AD while the additions have been dated to the early 6th century AD. The erection of this basilica should be dated more precisely to the second half of the 5th century AD. The location of the basilica in the cemetery led the investigator A. Angelov to conclude that this was a cemetery church[147].

In an unknown church located in or around Marcianopolis relics of three Early Christian martyrs were kept: St. Longinus, St. Acacius and St. George (fig. 32). Their names were carefully incised in Greek on a ceramic plaque (a brick), which was found »in a tomb« about the turn of the 20th century. The name of each saint is marked at the beginning and at the end by large crosses with the apocalyptic letters A and Ω underneath[148]. The brick may be dated to the second half of the 4th – first half of the 5th century AD and most probably it marked the crypt which contained



32 a–b
Brick with incised names of St. Longinus, St. Acacius and St. George from Marcianopolis (4th – early 5th century AD) (© A. Minchev; drawing after K. Škorpil)

[147] Angelov 1999, 47–49 figs. on 48 f.; Angelov 2008, 114–116 figs. 1–4.
[148] Beševliev 1964, 55 no. 83 pl. 30.

relics of these three saints, or was inserted in one of its walls[149].

This rare artefact and some other occasional finds connected to Early Christian churches like the aforementioned fragment of an altar table with decoration in relief and other pieces, are evidence that in the future, we may expect some other buildings similar in function to be discovered in the city and its environs.

By the time that Marcianopolis lost its religious importance as an Archbishop See of Moesia Secunda, the city had already suffered a serious decrease in population and economic downturn for decades. The decline of the city's development was a result of the invasion of the Huns in AD 447/478 when the city was captured, plundered and completely burnt[150]. Most of its citizens who were not killed in the battle were taken in slavery. The large villas and smaller farms in the vicinity and in the region in general were looted and burnt, as well as many villages. This caused the loss of the agricultural and stock breeding background of the city. The evidence collected during the continuous archaeological excavation carried out at the site for over seventy years confirmed that tragic historical event. Among the ruins, burnt layers were discovered everywhere. About thirty years after that invasion and the great destruction of the city in AD 477 emperor Zeno gave official permission to the Goths under the leadership of Theodoric to settle in Moesia Secunda. Subsequently, a large group of Goths of the Tervingi tribes chose Marcianopolis and the surrounding region for their new homeland[151]. In the still ravaged city, a group of these new settlers built their small, simple pit-dwellings in the debris of ruined ancient houses[152]. The Goths seem to have inhabited only certain sections of the city and the surrounding areas. Their presence in Marcianopolis is confirmed by a few fragments of unusual hand-made pottery found in their dwellings and several other finds both in the city and in graves: typical Gothic silver- and silver gilt fibulae (fig. 33) of the second half of the 5th century AD[153]. The barbarian occupation of the region lasted only about twenty years, after which they withdrew from Moesia Secunda and moved into Central and Western Europe. At that time, or shortly afterwards, certain parts of the city walls were reconstructed again by the imperial power in Constantinople.

33 Pair of Gothic silver gilt fibulae from Marcianopolis (2nd half of 5th century AD) (© Courtesy of Regional Museum of History – Varna, R. Kostadinova)

The history and development of Marcianopolis as a living city in the late 5th–6th century AD is not clear. Archaeological research has revealed that large areas of the city, which were destroyed by the Huns in AD 447, remained uninhabited.

There are a few occasional finds of the 6th century AD, which indicate that some areas of the city were (perhaps temporarily) occupied. However, no solid structures of that time have been discovered yet, except for a few churches, which were reconstructed (see above). It is likely that in the late 5th or in the first half of the 6th century AD, a new and much smaller fortress was erected next to the already heavily destroyed amphitheatre using stones from it. Large building blocks from other destroyed buildings in the city were also used for its construction. Until recently this

149 Minčev 2013b, 218–233 figs. 1–4.
150 Velkov 1959, 41; Gerov 1975, 67 f.
151 Gerov 1975, 68.
152 Minchev 2002, 251.
153 Charalambieva, 1988, figs. 1. 2; Dimitrov 1961, 58–60 figs. 2–4; see also the discussion about their dating in Charalambieva 1992, 139.

fortification was considered an Early Bulgarian one, i.e. dated to about the 9th–10th century AD[154], but the way it is constructed is reminiscent of the Early Byzantine building tradition. According to Procopius, the fortress of Marcianopolis was reconstructed under Justinian[155], implying that there were permanent inhabitants and perhaps also a small garrison stationed there. In AD 586, the Avars seized the city but life here continued again, but most probably now on a poorer level. The last information regarding Marcianopolis as a military centre is dated to AD 596. At that time Peter, brother of emperor Maurice (582–602) and his army fought against the Slavs, who had invaded the north-eastern part of the empire. After the battle, Peter stationed his troops for a short term in the city[156]. Whether the city was already deserted at that time, or whether life still flickered inside the walls, is difficult to ascertain. In any case, most likely about the end of the 6th century AD or in the first decade of the 7th century, Marcianopolis was finally abandoned by the last residents, which still occupied some parts of the city. This represented the final chapter in the antique history of the city.

Despite that, centuries after the ancient city ceased to exist it was mentioned continuously in Byzantine written sources as a Bishopric centre. These references are based on the tradition dating to the 4th–6th centuries AD, when Marcianopolis emerged as an important Christian centre in the Balkan provinces of the Late Roman/Early Byzantine Empire.

In the 8th–9th centuries, the Bulgars who already occupied this territory exploited the ancient city ruins as a quarry for constructing their capital city Pliska, located some 50 km to the north-west. When in the late 10th – early 11th century the Byzantines reintegrated the north-eastern territory of the Balkans into their empire, they restored the historic name of the Bishopric of Marcianopolis[157]. Nevertheless, the little mediaeval fortress erected over the ruins of the Early Byzantine fortification (and probably overlapping it) did not receive the name of the ancient city again, nor did the new town ever gain the high position held by its predecessor in the region.

The archaeological, historical and epigraphic materials summarised in this article enable insights into certain aspects of the development of Marcianopolis as a well-organized and maintained Roman city. The evidence also proves that, despite being heavily affected by the mid-3rd century AD invasion of the Goths, the transition of the city into the active and flourishing capital of Moesia Secunda was rapid and successful. All of the archaeological information gathered until now convincingly supports the Early Byzantine historical sources which report that, in the 4th–6th centuries AD, the city played an important political, military and religious role in this region of the late antique/early Byzantine Empire. The Early Christian churches, richly decorated houses, painted tombs and the number of valuable finds of everyday life and with Christian character, discovered in Marcianopolis and its environs generally support such a vision. This conclusion, however, is valid mainly for the 4th – first half of the 5th century AD, while later in the 5th and in the 6th century AD, a certain decline in the city development and decrease of its population can be observed. The new situation is reflected in the loss of the leading position that Marcianopolis had attained in the previous centuries, both in the immediate region and in the province in general.

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154 Angelov 2002, 120.
155 Prok. aed. 4, 11; Gerov 1975, 68.
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157 Minčev 1987a, 301 f.

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Zdravko Dimitrov

RATIARIA: FROM A MILITARY CAMP TO A ROMAN COLONY AND PROVINCIAL CAPITAL

ABSTRACT

Ratiaria begins its history as a military centre on the Lower Danube. After the Dacian wars of Trajan (101–106) the fort was transformed into a Roman colony. In the 2nd–3rd century AD Ratiaria became a flourishing city with wealthy inhabitants. It is not by accident that in the next phase of its history Ratiaria became the capital of the province of Dacia Ripensis. This new study presents many unpublished data from the field of archaeology. Since the resumption of the regular excavations in 2013 a great number of architectural complexes have been unearthed – streets of town-planning, drain channels, a few buildings, baths, probably the temple and new elements of prestigious complexes. Under the ruins of Ratiaria from Late Antiquity are found traces of the early military camps or its satellite structures, and material including coins, ceramics, glass, and metal finds. These new finds are dated to the time of the emperors Tiberius (17–37), Caligula (37–41) and Claudius (41–54).

KEYWORDS

Ratiaria – Lower Danube – frontier of the Roman Empire – Roman Limes

In the autumn of 2013, at the initiative and express requirement of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria, a large team of archaeologists and interdisciplinary experts resumed the regular excavations of the Roman military and civic centre of Ratiaria[1]. The Bulgarian government intervened so seriously because large gangs of treasure hunters and organized criminals have been plundering the site of the ancient city for a long time, and as a result much of the site was destroyed as the perpetrators used excavators and other machinery. The main bodies in charge of the salvage excavations at the Roman city of Ratiaria were the National Archaeological Institute with Museum, and the Regional Museum of History – Vidin.

Today, already seven years after this difficult beginning, we are able to present significant results from the archaeological excavations, providing a great deal more data about the history of the city in spite of the widespread destruction during recent decades.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF RATIARIA

Ratiaria is the major Roman and late antique centre in present day north-western Bulgaria[2]. Initially founded as a military fort, and later developing into a Roman colony, the city rose to the rank of capital of the Danubian Roman province of Dacia Ripensis during the last four centuries of its existence. Ratiaria is the only archaeological site from the Roman and late antique periods in Bulgaria which passed through all the stages of the Roman civilization model along the Limes

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1 Dimitrov 2014.

2 Dinchev 2015, 173; the bibliographic and field data from Ratiaria prior to resuming the excavations are collected, interpreted and analyzed in this study.

area – a military fort, a Roman city and a provincial capital. Today its remains are to be found near and under the village of Archar, in the district of Vidin[3] (fig. 1, 1). Its most notable part is the late antique city, which was localized in the Kaleto area near the Danube River, i.e. precisely at the outskirts of the so-called Turkish neighbourhood of Archar, the northernmost area of the village (fig. 1, 2).

No doubt, various military units were stationed here in the 1st century AD. Studies so far have established that these must have been units of *legio IV Flavia* and *legio VII Claudia*[4]. It is highly likely that Ratiaria was one of the bases of the Roman military river fleet[5]. The colonization of this frontier area attracted veterans as well as civilians to settle in the region[6]. Studies show that these theories have been confirmed by the numerous imported Italic goods found by archaeologists during each campaign[7].

At the time of the territorial-administrative reform in AD 86, Ratiaria was zoned in the eastern part of Moesia Superior, corresponding today to the north-western area of Bulgaria – the region of Vidin[8]. After the Dacian Wars of Trajan (AD 101–106), when the border of the Roman Empire moved to the north of the Danube, Ratiaria was granted the status of Roman colony and developed into a flourishing city. The name of the city in this colonial period of its existence was recorded in an inscription dated to AD 125 during the reign of Hadrian (AD 117–138), referring to Colonia Ulpia Traiana[9].

An influx of Romanised population arrived in Ratiaria during the period when it was a Roman city with the status of a colony along the Lower Danube Limes system[10]. Ratiaria was an autonomous self-governing centre, organised after the Italic model, like the imperial capital Rome. Thus, for instance war veterans and other dignitaries from the city sat in the *curia* (city council). The data from the inscriptions testify that there were *decurioni* and other administrative positions, as well as citizens of Italic and eastern origin, and local people[11].

The Roman colonial period, from Trajan (AD 98–117) to Aurelian (AD 270–275), marked also a boom in the region. Agriculture is still the main means of support in the region of Vidin, but during the Roman period the huge agrarian lands between the Danube (Istros) (north), the Timok River (Timacus) (west), the Balkan Mountains (Haemus) (south) and the Tsibritsa River (Cebrus) (east) were greatly relied on, as these lands provided the well-being of the urban aristocracy and secured

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3 Kanitz 1882, 97–99; Dobrusky 1890, 20–22; Djakovič 1900, 147. 157–167.

4 Filov 1906, 36–46. 89; Ritterling 1925, 1267–1279, with bibliography and analysis of the data (epigraphic and historical sources about the legions in Moesia during Flavian times); Ivanov 1999, 91 f.; Velkov 1965, 5; Velkov 1966, 157 f.; Giorgetti 1980, 18–20. 26; Giorgetti 1983, 23 f.; Bollini 1980, 94 f. 102. 104–113 pls. 15–17; Dinchev 2015, 173. There are new data from archaeological excavations in 2019 regarding the presence of Roman troops of *legio VII Claudia Pia Fidelis* (Excavations 2019: Fd. Nr. 1. 19. 45) and also new research with important epigraphic monuments: Stoev – Topalilov 2019. However, currently it is difficult to ascertain any *vexillationes* of *legio IV Flavia* and *legio VII Claudia* in Ratiaria, especially if we follow specifically the data from the field studies.

5 Not. dign. or. 42, 42–43; Dobrusky 1890, 21; Velkov 1965, 5; Velkov 1966, 162 f.; Giorgetti 1980, 28 f.; Mitova-Džonova 1986, 507–509 figs. 8. 10; Ivanov 1999, 136; Dinchev 2015, 173.

6 Danoff 1939, 101–104. 106. 107 f. (no. 11) figs. 32. 35; Velkov – Atanasova 1967; Mocsy 1970, 101 f. 105–108; Stoev 2014, 172 f. 176–178; Stoev – Topalilov 2019.

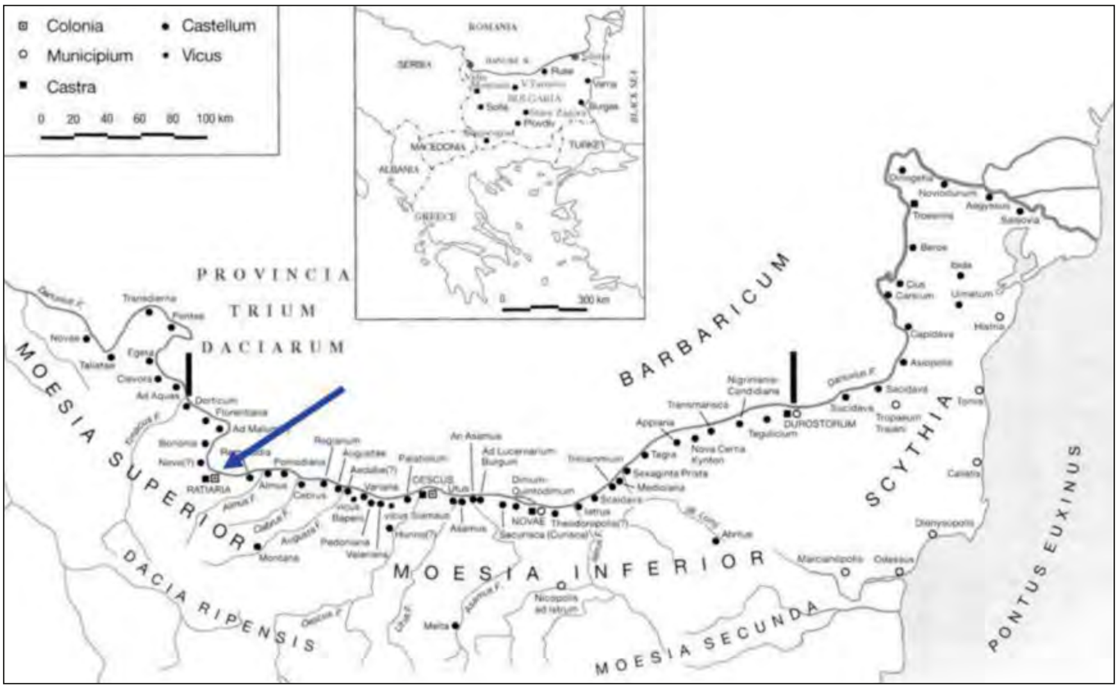
7 The materials and finds localized during the last seven years of excavations at the site of Ratiaria can be summarized as follows: a large percentage of fragments of Terra Sigillata vessels (Italian, Gaulish, German, Pannonian and local Upper Moesian productions), glass vessels – *Rippenschalen* and a number of other goods imported by the Romans into the frontier areas of the Empire predominantly to supply the military units stationed there.

8 Velkov 1966, 158; Giorgetti 1983, 24.

9 CIL III 14499.

10 Danoff 1939; Velkov 1966, 158 f.; Mocsy 1970, 101–109; Stoev 2014, 176–178; Stoev – Hristov 2014, 65–68. 72–74 fig. 1, 3.

11 Danoff 1939, 112 f. figs. 39–40; Atanasova-Georgieva – Mitova-Džonova 1985, 32 f. 36 f.; Dimitrov 2019, 122–124 figs. 20–26.



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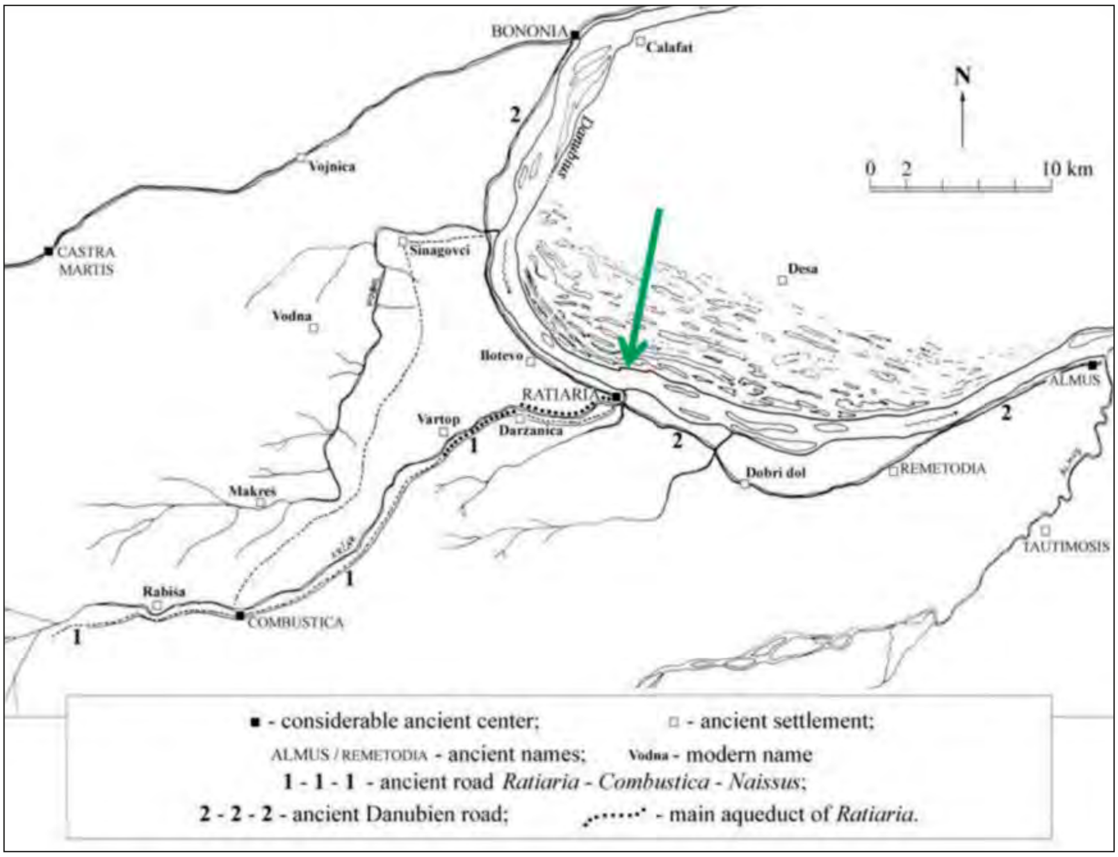

2

1 Maps of the lower part of Danubian Limes of the Roman Empire

1, 1 The location of Ratiaria in the Roman frontier area along the Lower Danube (after: Ivanov 1999, fig. in addition on p. 367)

1, 2 Eastern part of Moesia Superior province (nowadays north-western Bulgaria) with the territory of Ratiaria (after: Giorgetti 1980, pl. 2 and Dinchev 2015, fig. 1) the robust development of the city[12]. The villas near Makresh[13], Gramada[14] and probably Sinagovtsi are well-known, and there must be many more villas that have not as yet been localised. We obtained particularly important data from the Roman villa near Gramada, which was studied in 2019. It encompassed a prestigious building with a hypocaust, a production building (workshop), a large necropolis from the Roman period, as well as data indicating that the fields along the Vidbol River were cultivated[15].

Colonia Ulpia Ratiaria developed also as an important artisan and trading centre[16]. The largest collection of sarcophagi in Bulgaria originates from Ratiaria[17]. Over 50 architectural details from monumental buildings, as well as statues (intact and fragmented) were found[18]. One of the customs stations along the Danube, *Portorium Illyrici*, might have also been located in Ratiaria[19].

As far as cult activities are concerned, there is evidence of official veneration of the emperor, of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, and recently we have unearthed two new inscriptions, erected by the provincial governors of Moesia Superior and dedicated to the Goddess Diana[20]. Archaeological finds attest to the worship of deities from the entire Roman pantheon. These include the votive plates, statues, stone and epigraphic monuments dedicated to Jupiter, Dionysus, Heracles, Venus, Jupiter Dolichenus, Mars Ultor, Apollo, Diana, Mercury, Mithras, and others[21]. The condition and development of the city during this period is evidenced by materials found by chance on its territory, in its vicinity and above all by the rich findings from the *necropoleis* in Ratiaria. These include numerous gravestones and dedications, tombs with sarcophagi, some of which are elaborately decorated, sculpture, many gold ornaments and several complete gold treasures[22].

During the reign of Aurelian (AD 270–275) the Roman legions returned from Dacia. This withdrawal of the Roman power was positive for Ratiaria. The city became the capital of the newly established province of Dacia Ripensis. The population continued to increase, the residential areas expanded, and the military units returned.

From the late 3rd century AD and throughout Late Antiquity – till the end of the 6th century AD – significant military units were again stationed in Ratiaria. There are numerous and far more reliable data about the legionary presence during that time[23]. Throughout Late Antiquity, *legio XIII Gemina* was stationed in Ratiaria, which was withdrawn from Apulum (present-day Alba Iulia, Romania)[24]. In the period from the end of the 3rd century AD till the end of the 6th century AD (when Ratiaria was finally destroyed by the Avars) the civilian population increased substantially.

During the early Christian period of the Roman Empire, Ratiaria acquired the status of an episcopal and metropolitan centre. The first bishop about whom we have information from historical sources was Paulinos (AD 340). Another clerical figure, Bishop Sylvester, took part in the well-known Council of Serdica in AD 343. The most prominent figure in the early Christian period of Ratiaria was the Arian Palladius, who was bishop of the city for quite a long time, from AD 346 to AD 381[25].

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12 Velkov 1966, 159.

13 Dinčev 1997, 25 f. fig. 3; Atanasova 1980.

14 The large Roman villa discovered last year (2019) in the agricultural lands near Gramada (rescue excavations by S. Alexandrov and Z. Dimitrov, unpublished) can be connected to a family described in a tombstone found in the town of Gramada: Velkov – Atanasova 1967, 151–153 figs. 9–12.

15 Also in these rescue excavations a collective find of iron agricultural implements were found *in situ* in the villa.

16 Velkov 1966, 159.

17 Filov 1910, figs. 3–4; Atanasova 1964, figs. 1–4; Atanasova 1972, figs. 7–11; Dimitrov 2019, figs. 2–28.

18 Dimitrov 2015, pls. 1–6, 35 architectural details, found before 2012, were published in volume 22 of the »Limes Congress« in Ruse. New fragments have been uncovered recently, thus the number of the newly found architectural elements is already over 50.

19 Velkov 1966, 163; Dinchev 2015, 174.

20 Topalilov – Bru 2016; Topalilov 2017.

21 Giorgetti 1980, 23–25; Atanasova-Georgieva – Mitova-Džonova 1985, 49–130.

22 Atanasova 1964; Velkov 1966, 159 f. pl. 15, 3; Atanasova 1969; Atanasova 1972; Atanasova 1978; Anatasova 1991; Dimitrov 2019.

23 Ivanov 1999, 94. 134.

24 Not. dign. or. 42, 38; Filov 1906, 82; Ritterling 1925, 1346.

25 Dinchev 2015, 176.

Very important for the late antique history of Ratiaria is the unearthed official inscription attesting the restoration of the city after the invasions of the Huns in the middle of the 5th century AD. This is an inscription (+Anastasiana *Ratiaria semper floreat*), where the name of Anastasius I (AD 491–518) is added. He was the first ruler to take actual steps to strengthen the Lower Danube Limes after the barbaric invasions that lasted for several decades[26]. The reason for this inscription is the special, extraordinary support provided to the city by Anastasius I, including important construction works, which we have also attested archaeologically in recent excavation campaigns.

Towards the end of Late Antiquity, additional historical evidence exists, from the Synecdemos of Hierocles, i.e. during the reign of Justinian I the Great (AD 527–565). In it, Ratiaria is explicitly mentioned and identified as a metropolis – the most important city in the province of Dacia Ripensis[27]. Ratiaria is also mentioned in the work *On Justinian's Buildings* by Procopius of Caesarea, praising the work of Justinian I, and here again there is a record that construction works were paid for by the central authorities in order to strengthen the Limes against the barbarians[28]. The great Danubian city is also mentioned by Theophylactus Simocattus in connection with the invasion of the Avars in AD 586[29]. This event marked the end of the six-century long history of Ratiaria[30].

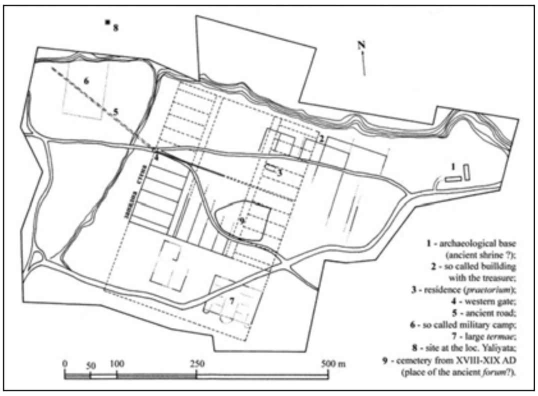
In the early Middle Ages a settlement from the First Bulgarian Kingdom (7th–11th century) was founded on the ruins of the Roman city. Today fragments of medieval ceramics from this settlement frequently come to light, but so far only in layers without a clear context.

EXCAVATIONS AT RATIARIA

The initial impulse to ›re-instate‹ Ratiaria in history and archaeology was given by F. Kanitz in his descriptions at the end of the 19th century[31]. We are indebted to V. Dobrusky and B. Dyakovič for the exact localisation of the remains of the town and the first published materials[32]. In the early decades of the 20th century, B. Filov, G. Katsarov and other prominent Bulgarian scholars published a number of accidentally uncovered finds and burial facilities[33]. In the period from 1958–1962, the first planned archaeological excavations in the area of Ratiaria were carried out under the guidance of V. Velkov. He was the first to publish academic summaries dedicated specifically to Ratiaria[34]. Excavations were resumed in 1976 with the participation of experts from the Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and from the museum in Vidin. Since 1978, Italian experts from the University of Bologna have also been involved in the excavations. Along with the excavations several volumes of the *Ratiariensia* series were published over the next decade, where almost all of the available information regarding the ancient city was analysed from various aspects. The most complete and systematic review of the excavation results in the last volume is the work of D. Giorgetti[35]. Publications on studied sites or materials also appeared subsequently[36].

In the early 1990s, the excavations at Ratiaria were discontinued. This, together with the political, social and economic changes in the country, is the reason for the incursion of treasure hunters in the following years. Unfortunately, this was an invasion of unprecedented scope.

26 Velkov 1984, fig. 1; Dinchev 2015, 177 fig. 5.
27 Hierocles, Synecdemus 655, 2.
28 Prok. aed. 4, 6, 24.
29 Theophylactus Simocattus, Historiae 1, 8, 10.
30 Velkov 1966, 170.
31 Kanitz 1882, 96–99.
32 Dobrusky 1890, 22–31; Dyakovič 1900, 156–167.
33 Filov 1910; Kacarov 1911.
34 Velkov 1965; Velkov 1966.
35 Giorgetti 1980, pls. 1–6; Giorgetti 1983; Giorgetti 1987, pls. 1–22, A–E.
36 Atanasova 1995; Kuzmanov 2000; Kouzmanov – Valeva 2001; Kuzmanov 2002.



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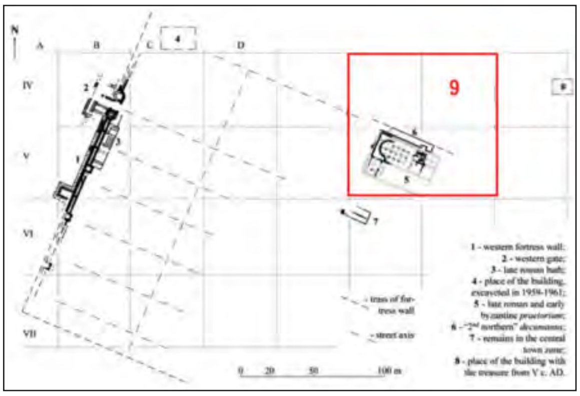

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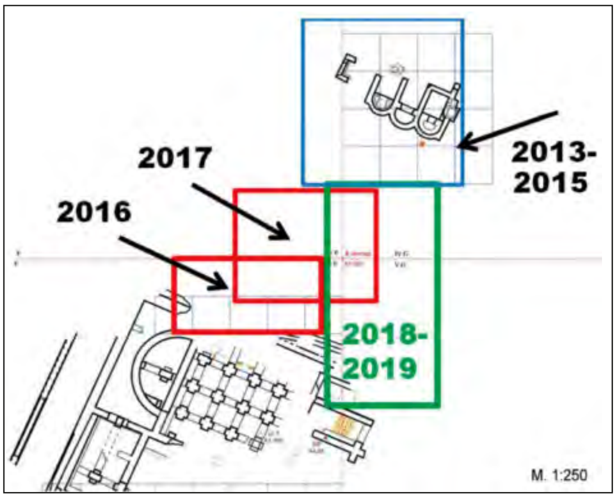

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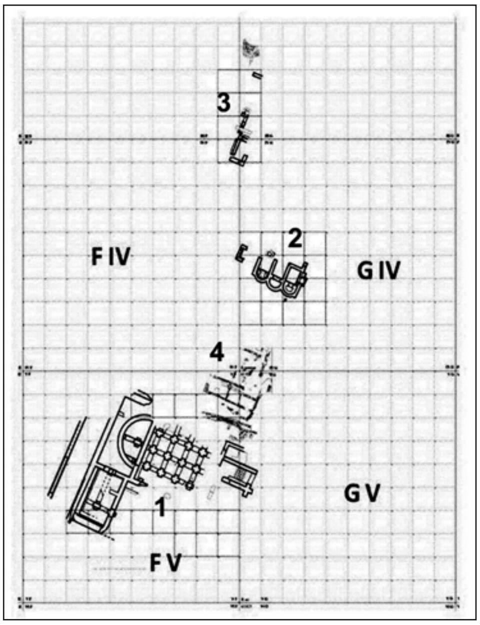

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2 General plans and sector plans of the new excavations in Ratiaria (2013–2019)

2, 1 Hypothetical plan of Ratiaria in Late Antiquity (metropolitan city of Dacia Ripensis province) (after: Giorgetti 1987, pl. 1 and with places of the working sectors of the new excavations 2013–2019; addition: Z. Dimitrov)

2, 2 Plan of the centre of the late antique Ratiaria and distance to the western wall (from: Dinchev 2015, fig. 7). The continuation of the research, squares G IV-V and F IV-V (2013–2019; additions: Z. Dimitrov)

2, 3 Working sectors in the centre of Ratiaria 2013–2019 (author: Z. Dimitrov)

2, 4 General plan of the Ratiaria architectural complexes after the new excavations (2013–2019): 1. »Residence«; 2. Late antique baths; 3. North quarter; 4. Building A (author: Z. Dimitrov; publ. Dimitrov 2018, 742 fig. 2)

The archaeological excavations at Ratiaria are significantly lagging behind in comparison with the studies of other Roman cities in Bulgaria. During the previous excavations (1958–1962 and 1976–1989) only a few complexes were localised in Ratiaria – a large prestigious building, the so-called Residence (the general plan, the stratigraphy of the layers and the functional characteristics of the complex have not been fully clarified); significant areas along the route of the western fortress wall and the western gate (the chronology and stratigraphy are also problematic); *thermae*; and several additional buildings[37]. Today, these complexes are regrettably half-destroyed or buried under the landfills left by treasure hunters. The other areas of the ancient city, not explored so far, are literally ploughed by the regularly used excavators and bulldozers.

It is precisely this situation that required urgent measures to initiate new excavations at Ratiaria. These excavations began in 2013, and in spite of the modest funding excavations have subsequently been carried out annually. In 2013–2019, new regular excavations of Ratiaria were conducted in the centre of the late antique city. The remains of a late antique bath were found, damaged by illegal excavators, but still preserved in some parts to a considerable height. The bath building is located in two *insulae* north of the »Residence«, and the residential buildings from Late Antiquity were found exactly in these two *insulae*. Today they are perfectly visible in the field. We identified the complete stratigraphy and construction periods of the residential buildings from the end of the 3rd century AD to the end of the 6th century AD, and on the basis of the stratigraphic data a grid was developed for the architectural structures at the centre of the late antique city. The existing cultural layers, the materials deriving from them (coins, ceramics, glass, etc.) and the floor (or passage) levels accurately were related to the respective structures in the architectural complexes of the residential buildings and the bath.

Of particular importance was the fact that, for the first time in the archaeological excavations of Ratiaria, in 2016–2019 we reached layers from the 1st century AD that have survived *in situ*.

As was noted above, at the time Ratiaria was a Roman military fort along the Lower Danube Limes. Preserved cultural layers, construction levels and floors of buildings from Late Antiquity were found in the G IV–F IV sector, which covered burnt layers of wooden-earthen structures from the first half of the 1st century AD. The best-preserved structure from the 1st century AD is a large burnt area of wooden structures, located stratigraphically below the lowest sector of the base of the waste-waters canal under the *decumanus*, north of the »Residence«, dating back to the 6th century AD. Exactly the base of the late antique canal had ›sealed‹ and preserved the remains of a probable fort from the 1st century AD. The materials from this area are noteworthy – Terra Sigillata, Italic imports, numismatic units from the time of the emperors Gaius Tiberius Claudius (AD 14–37) and Gaius Caligula (AD 37–41), i.e. the second quarter of the 1st century AD[38].

All these new archaeological data from our latest excavations provide evidence that regular, annual excavations at Ulpia Ratiaria are valuable, and will lead not only to the restoration of the site, but also to many new scientific results of exceptional importance.

The main purpose of this paper is to present all recently found data about the development of Ratiaria from the time of the military camp to the point when it became the capital of the province. Over the last seven years, our team has explored much of the centre of the late antique Ratiaria (fig. 2, 1. 2). A number of urban planning solutions from the 6th century AD surfaced in this area, as well as earlier *insulae*, baths and new sections of the monumental complexes from the 4th–5th century AD (fig. 2, 3. 4). In addition to focussing on the centre of the *metropolis* Ratiaria in the last three years, we have been excavating a new sector as well – the so-called Pioneers' Camp from the socialist period, under whose bungalows we found significant data about Colonia Ulpia Ratiaria, including the above-mentioned inscriptions for the temple of the Goddess Diana.

[37] Kuzmanov 2000; Atanasova 1995; Atanasova – Popova-Asenova 1987; Atanasova-Georgieva 1986.
[38] Dimitrov 2015/2016, 59 f. figs. 15–18.

LATE ANTIQUE RATIARIA – CAPITAL OF DACIA RIPENSIS: LATE 3RD TO LATE 6TH CENTURY AD

The area of the central part of Ratiaria: results from the excavations during the last seven years

During the recent archaeological investigations two zones in the centre of Roman Ratiaria were explored most systematically – the western fortress wall, studied in the 1970s and 1980s by a team from the Regional Museum in Vidin, led by Y. Atanasova, and the region of the so-called Residence, where the excavations were led by G. Kuzmanov[39]. Both work sectors are in the Kaleto area, where according to F. Kanitz the ruins of ancient Ratiaria were to be found.

The Roman city of Ratiaria extended over a very large area. Today, the guarded area alone, which is under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture, covers over 80 ha. Furthermore, the history of Ratiaria is quite complex and spans six centuries. It is therefore difficult at this stage of the excavations to consider the Kaleto site as the main focus of archaeological attention. Certainly, it is a serious problem that the fortification wall has not as yet been localized, nor has its chronology been clarified.

When the archaeological excavations were resumed in 2013, work began with the exploration of the »Residence« area, i.e. precisely from the point where the 1989 archaeological excavations had finished (fig. 3, 1. 2). After over 20 years of treasure-hunting the complex was in a deplorable state. Conservation and restoration works were carried out. During the archaeological excavations we localised and examined the structure of the hypocaust in room no. 5 of the »Residence«, started by G. Kuzmanov in the 1980s (fig. 3, 2. 3). In addition, we examined the channel below the *decumanus*, north of the »Residence« and its westernmost part (fig. 3, 2).

Yet, the restoration and complete examination of the complex in the centre of Ratiaria is far from over. Today, this impressive building has clear boundaries to the west and north, but how the architectural ensemble developed to the south and east is yet to be investigated[40]. Neither the earlier layers under the »Residence«, nor its main function in the 4th–6th century AD are clarified. Obviously, this is the most prominent complex in the capital of Dacia Ripensis, but whether civil or episcopal is another matter[41].

During these seven years, the major archaeological activities depended heavily on the fact that Ratiaria, especially in the Kaleto area, was almost completely destroyed by treasure hunters' activities. The illegal excavators continued their activities during and after our excavations. So, in 2013, there was no option but to begin investigations in a section rather ruthlessly damaged by treasure hunters' raids. This area is located 50 m north of the »Residence« and has survived to a good height. During active excavations in 2013 and 2014 we managed to investigate the whole building. The structure is a large, public bath from Late Antiquity (fig. 4). Three large premises with pools were uncovered, terminating in the form of large *exedrae* (fig. 4, 1. 2. 4). Among the most important architectural elements of this bathing room are the exquisitely finished *piscinae* that are built in the exterior walls (fig. 4, 3. 4. 6) and which are coated with white plaster (fig. 4, 6). More marble slabs were localised in the bathroom, entire water pipes, and fragments of mosaic panels that were filled with ceramic elements rather than *tesserae*.

This bath in the centre of late antique Ratiaria was also originally sumptuously architecturally decorated. In its ruins we found a large marble Ionian base, which is at present in the *lapidarium* in the village of Archar. The base is made according to the classical scheme of the Ionic style – a wide plinth, *torus*, *trochilus* and listels in between them. The massive plinth and the parameters of the base themselves are very impressive, which suggests that this element supported the substan-

[39] Kuzmanov 2000; Atanasova – Popova-Asenova 1987; Atanasova-Georgieva 1986.
[40] Topalilov 2015/2016, 157 f.
[41] Topalilov 2015/2016, 157 f.

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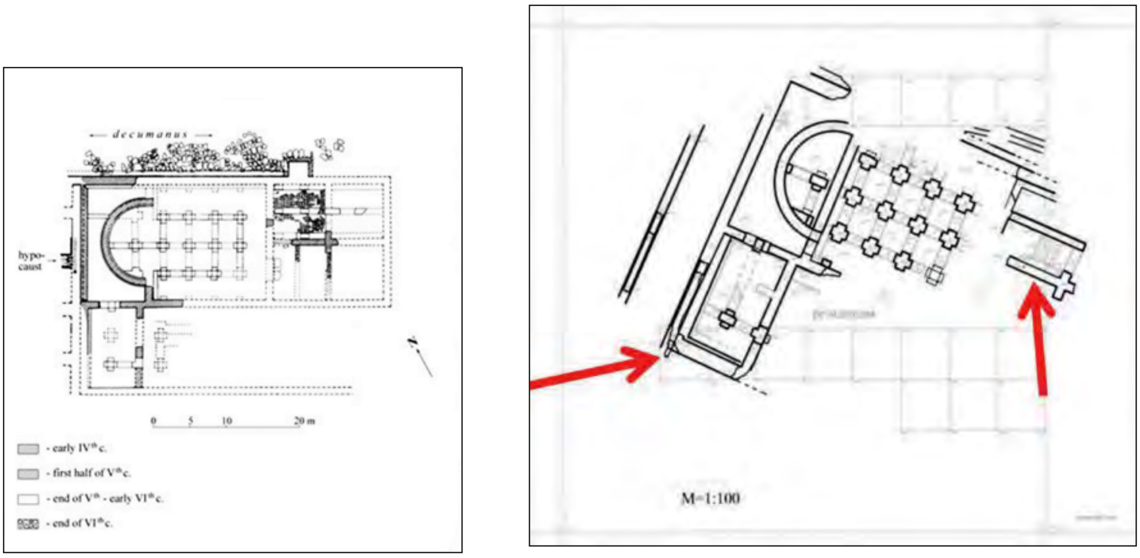

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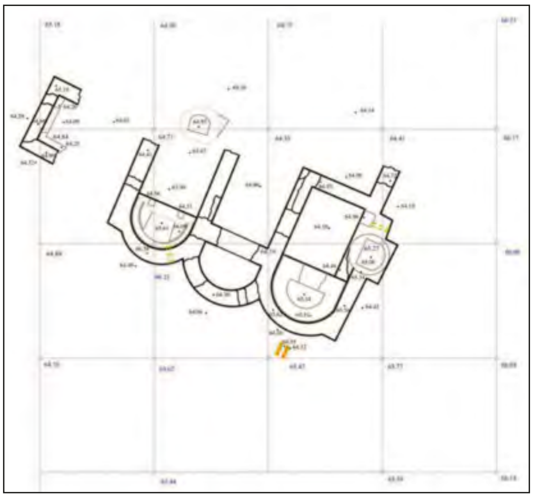
3 Excavations in the so-called Residence of Ratiaria (2013–2017)

3, 1 »Residence« of Ratiaria, the most prestigious architectural complex in the late antique city so far (© Z. Dimitrov, from the excavations 2018)

3, 2 General plan of the »Residence«. Left: after Kuzmanov 2000, fig. 3; right: new plan from the latest excavations, with locations of current studies 2015–2017, after: Dimitrov 2018, 743 fig. 4)

3, 3 »Residence«: premises no. 5, hypocaust system (© I. Topalilov, excavations 2016)



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4 Excavations in the late antique bath complex in the centre of Ratiaria (2013–2015)

4, 1 General plan of the bath from Late Antiquity in the centre of Ratiaria (author: I. Sarov; publ. Dimitrov 2018, 744 fig. 5)

4, 2 General view of the bath from the north (three preserved premises), stage of the excavation campaign 2013 (© Z. Dimitrov)

4, 3 General view of the bath from the east with the best-preserved walls of the complex (© Z. Dimitrov)

4, 4 Premise no. 3 of the bath from the northeast with *piscinae* in the external wall structure (© Z. Dimitrov)

4, 5 Detail of the *suspensura* of the premise no. 1 (Dimitrov 2018, 744 fig. 5)

4, 6 Detail of the best preserved *piscina* in the premise no. 3 (© Z. Dimitrov) tial weight of a high-rising architectural structure, although it is a pillar detail that was attached to the wall behind it (a base of the engaged architectural type).

The solid, massive structure of the bath can be inferred from the thickness of the walls of the *caldaria*, which are over 1 m wide in some sections (fig. 4, 3. 4). Furthermore, the high-rising complex was secured by a strong structure, made mainly in *opus mixtum*, large stone blocks alternating with especially solid rows of Roman bricks (4 cm thick; 33 × 33 cm in size), which are generously bonded with mortar. The surviving height of the bathing room structure is noteworthy. In room no. 1, we found a large part of the *suspensura* of the complex, including parts of the hypocaust, and also most of the floor levels in the *exedra* itself (fig. 4, 5). There were seats for citizens who used the complex. Undoubtedly, these were parts of the warmest, southernmost, premises in the bath.

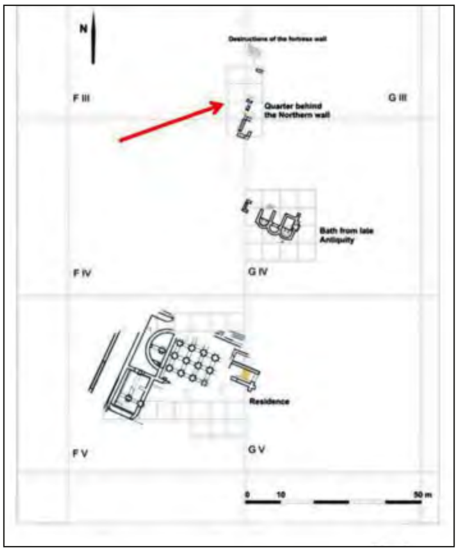
Two facts are of particular importance for the analysis of this bathing room in terms of presenting the new findings from the excavations of Ratiaria. Firstly, this complex is one of the main public structures from the metropolitan period of Ratiaria. Thus, just one *insula* away from the large prestigious complex, known as the »Residence« of the provincial governor of Dacia Ripensis, another important architectural element of the urban environment of Ratiaria was uncovered dating to the period when Ratiaria was the provincial capital. Secondly, it is precisely in the bath complex, despite the years of looting, that the most numerous and significant finds have been discovered. Furthermore, a large number of details were actually imported.

Concerning Terra Sigillata alone, over 30 fragments of this important, imported pottery were found here. It is of interest that the Terra Sigillata found in the ruins of the bath complex, is dated mostly to the Flavian era and to the period towards the late 1st – early 2nd century AD. The Sigillata fragments are mainly relief sigillata decorated with festoon relief ornaments – combined with images of Gorgon Medusa, floral motifs or zoomorphic imagery. The Sigillata localized here differ decidedly in terms of their production centres from the Sigillata localised below and in the ruins of the »Residence«. Here, in the bathing area, the Sigillata mainly belong to the Gaulish types – from the production centres in Lezoux (near Clermont-Ferrant) and La Graufesenque (near Millau, Aveyron), France. By comparison, fragments of Terra Sigillata of Tiberian-Claudian date were identified in the »Residence«, located nearby, and its surroundings – this is Italic Sigillata from Arretinian producers and most of the pieces bore the Lucius Gellius stamp (fig. 8, 3. 4).

To recapitulate: The entire centre of the Kaleto area in the ruins of Ratiaria has been intensively studied from 2013 to 2019, rescue excavations which were also necessitated by the continued illegal excavation activities. Nonetheless, the results are impressive and raise a number of questions. The main question which can be posed is, does this area represent the centre of Ratiaria? With regard to the metropolitan period, it can be argued that this is indeed a central urban area. There are a number of public complexes of prestigious character, monumental architectural structures with rich decoration and numerous imported finds in this area.

Even more important are the full surveys in the vicinity of the »Residence« along the north wall that we carried out in 2014. They make it clear that completely different neighbourhoods, consisting of small residential buildings, developed in this area during the period of Late Antiquity, the 4th–6th century AD. The walls of these structures, made from crude sun-dried bricks, were erected upon a small stone plinth, and the houses were roofed with tiles (fig. 5, 1. 2). The foundations of these buildings were constructed in a very interesting way. They are slightly dug into the ground, but in addition the construction trenches were filled with small fractions of pebbles (fig. 5, 3. 5). Rows of dry limestone block masonry and adobe walls were erected on these pads of pebbles (fig. 5, 6). Entire sections of the stone walls were lined with clay structures (adobe).

In these studies, we identified at least three periods of habitation: the 4th century AD, when one of the buildings had a hypocaust heating system; subsequently the building was reconstructed in the first half of the 5th century AD, which, given the current progress of the excavation, we cannot attribute to any cataclysms in the historical development of the *metropolis* Ratiaria. In the mid-5th century AD there was a considerable destruction layer in all of the three small buildings that we uncovered between the north wall and the late antique bath. They contain apparent traces of



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5 Excavations in the north quarter of Ratiaria (2014) (after: Dimitrov 2018, 745 figs. 6–7)

5, 1 General plan of the centre of late antique Ratiaria with the structures behind the northern wall

5, 2 General plan of the excavations behind the northern wall: 1. the trench of the wall and destructions; 2. two buildings (nos. 1 and 2) and passages between them

5, 3 The quarter behind the northern fortress wall, buildings nos. 1 and 2 (2014)

5, 4 Remains of the hypocaust system in the northern sector and main stratigraphic profile of the zone

5, 5 Constructing the foundations of the walls, boulders in the few trenches forming the lines of the walls

5, 6 Building the upper structures of the walls (superstructions): 1. foundations from boulders; 2. over them – stone blocks from limestone; 3. outside: clay and mortar coatings massive fires (fig. 5, 4), indicating that the entire neighbourhood was burnt down and razed to the ground at this date. These archaeological facts substantiate the historical record of Priscus about the devastating blow dealt by Attila's Huns along the entire Lower Danube Limes. According to historical data, the Hun invasions took place between AD 441–448[42]. We recorded similar cataclysmic fires in fortification tower no. 8 during the 2018 excavations of Bononia (Vidin)[43].

The archaeological remains both in Bononia and the north quarters of Ratiaria are identical. Remains of wooden and sun-dried brick structures, burnt to the ground, were localised over huge areas, and thick layers of destroyed buildings were identified; the levelled debris and the later higher floor level attest that people resettled in the area. The latest coins found in these archaeological layers, which spread over entirely burnt down quarters both in Ratiaria and in Bononia, are of the ›minima‹ type (11 mm in diameter) coins of Theodosius II (AD 408–450), i.e. numismatic finds which confirm the period of the Hun invasions and the complete plundering of the lands along the Lower Danube Limes.

The investigations in this central zone of metropolitan Ratiaria delivered the following results in terms of spatial planning and stratigraphy.

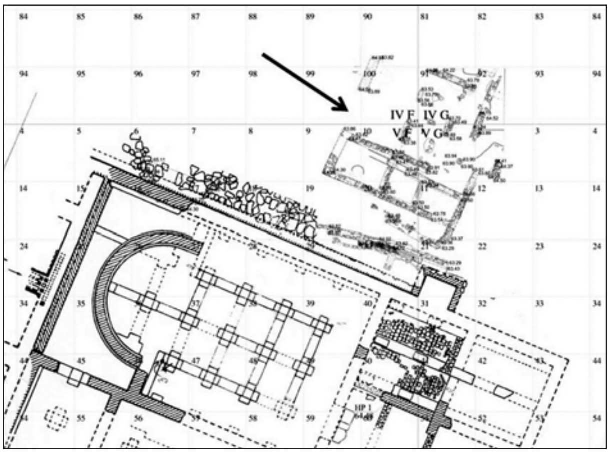
The following new sections of the overall plan of metropolitan Ratiaria, from the late 3rd to the late 6th century AD, were uncovered: new zones of the »Residence«, investigated by G. Kuzmanov; an entire building to the north of it, covering one *insula* (excavated 2015–2019); the late antique bath which was discussed previously, and the north quarters reaching the north fortification wall. Stratigraphic data in the »Residence«, the north quarters and especially in the bath, are sporadic. However, the residential building localised between the »Residence« and the late antique bath provide excellent in depth data. Given this, we can argue that this is the first correct and complete stratigraphy of metropolitan Ratiaria identified during regular archaeological excavations, at that after 25 years of treasure hunters looting.

The archaeological excavations were focused in the sector of the »Insula with a residential building between the Residence and the late antique bath« – Building A (fig. 6). These consist of the following quarters: F V (squares 8 and 9), G V (squares 1, 2, 11, 21) and G IV (squares 71, 81, 91) according to the overall plan of metropolitan Ratiaria, produced by the Bulgarian-Italian team. Our field work confirmed this plan, and we continue to uncover more elements (fig. 6, 1. 2).

As a result of the archaeological studies of the »Insula with a residential building between the Residence and the late antique bath«, which was designated as Building A, for the first time in the recent excavations of Ratiaria we unearthed structures from Late Antiquity dating all three floor levels from the late 4th to the 6th century AD (fig. 6, 3. 4). The first period when the building was erected and inhabited dates from the late 3rd century AD to the 70s of the 4th century AD, after which the building was destroyed and reconstructed. The second period of usage started at the end of the 4th century AD and lasted until the 40s of the 5th century AD (this cessation corresponding, again, to the invasions of the Huns in AD 441–448, when the city was entirely destroyed). The third period, which is also best described in the sources, dates to the reign of Anastasuis (AD 481–518) – the time when Ratiaria was restored after being razed to the ground during the Hun invasions in the mid-5th century AD[44] (fig. 6, 5).

These stratigraphic layers are easily recognizable considering the results of our excavations (fig. 6, 3–5). The architectural plan of the building was developed during the first two construction periods. Around the third quarter of the 4th century AD (we cannot currently specify the date more precisely), the overall plan of the building was redesigned. The floor level was raised and the new floor was made of stamped clay. Here the difference between the levels is about 10–15 cm, as there is no structural debris below. We identified the two floor levels in the archaeological plan,

[42] According to Priscus (Priscus, The Fragmentary History of Priscus fr. 5) in the years AD 441/442–447/448, see Velkov 1959, 41.
[43] Dimitrov – Stavreva 2019, figs. 2–3.
[44] See n. 42.



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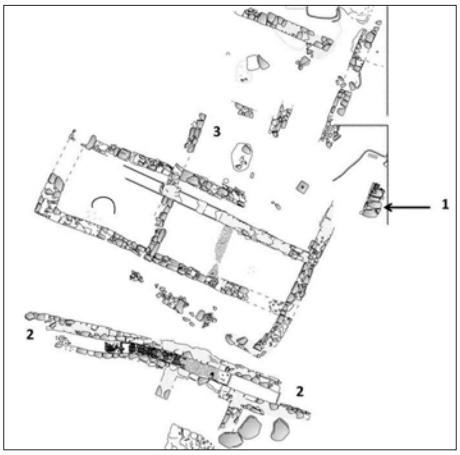

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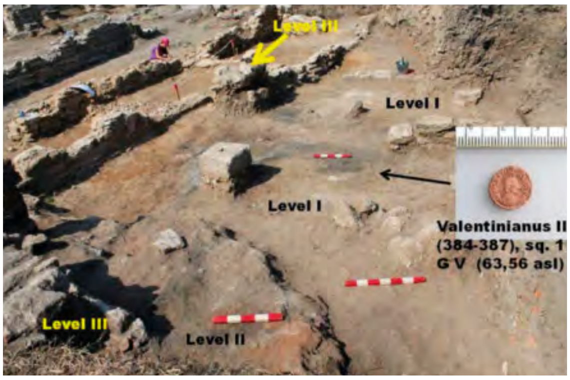

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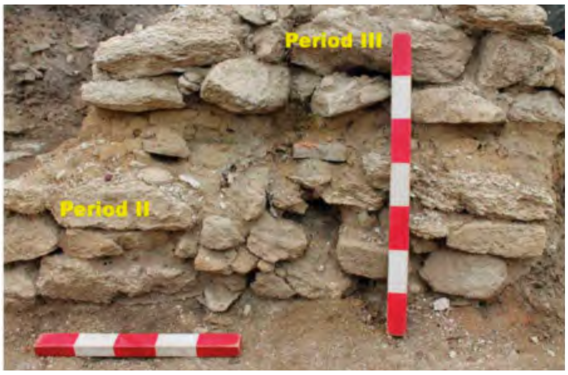

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6 Excavations in the building north of the »Residence« in Ratiaria, Building A (2015–2019) (© all photos: Z. Dimitrov)

6, 1 General plan of the »Residence« from the Late Antiquity and the new founded building north of it in the *insula* before baths – Building A

6, 2 Plan of the Building A: 1. remains of the *cardo* from 6th century AD; 2. *decumanus* north of the »Residence« – channel of the construction, 6th century AD; 3. Building A (three periods)

6, 3 Building A in square 9–10/F V and square 1–2/G V: levels of the Ist, IInd and IIIrd building and exploitation periods. Ist period: end of the 3rd – first three quarters of the 4th century AD; IInd period: end of the 4th – first half of the 5th century AD; IIIrd period: end of the 5th–6th century AD

6, 4 Architecture of the building connected to the levels of stratigraphy and floor levels. Architecture: I–III; levels: 1–3

6, 5 Wall construction in the Building A from IInd period (last decades of the 4th – first half of the 5th century AD) and IIIrd period (end of the 5th–6th century AD; Ratiaria Anastasiana, over the destructions)

6, 6 Levels (perfectly preserved under the base from 6th century AD) *in situ* from the centre of the Building A. Periods nos. 1 and 2 end with burnt levels and no. 3 is marked with the level of the stone base. Find no. 83/2019 (emperor Valens bronze coin from the period: AD 364–367), square 1/G V (63,32) marks the end of the Ist building period (burnt level on the floor of the building) the first one when clearing the floor levels in the field, and the second when cutting down through the stratigraphic layers which have survived below the square stylized stone base, placed in the central part of this building directly in the 6th century AD level (fig. 6, 6).

Other important data used to identify the first and second periods of the building, apart from the changes in the layout and the different floor levels, is derived from the ceramic material and the coins. We unearthed ceramic forms from the 3rd–4th century AD, but also from the late 4th century and the first half of the 5th century AD (fig. 9).

Of particular significance are the small thermal structures (probably household furnaces – fire places) that were found at the eastern section of the building. The two levels of the 4th century AD and the 5th century AD were localised in square 2/G V; similar to the situation in the north quarter, traces of widespread fire destroying the whole complex were registered on the second level. All of these new finds, attesting the Hunnic invasion in the mid-5th century AD, lie below a destruction layer upon which the last period of Building A was erected.

Here again for the first time in the excavations we found stratigraphic data showing the connection between the destroyed Ratiaria in the 5th century AD and the restored *metropolis* in the reign of Anastasius (AD 491–518). Above the destructions we found sections of the walls of the restored Building A and, even more importantly, a whole fragment of the canal below the *cardo* leading north to the late antique bath. We uncovered zones below the *cardo*, its sides and the slabs covering it. This *cardo*, in terms of level and structure, corresponds to the *decumanus* passing north of the »Residence«. Precisely this *decumanus* and the canal below it are the best evidence about Anastasius' Ratiaria, the last period of the life of the late antique metropolis.

RATIARIA AS A ROMAN COLONY ALONG THE LOWER DANUBE: THE 2ND–3RD CENTURY AD

The historic sources and also the vast mass of architectural and epigraphic remains indicate that Ratiaria was one of the best developed Roman colonies along the Lower Danube[45]. It was made a colony during the reign of Trajan and for that reason took its name after him – Colonia Ulpia Traiana Ratiaria. It is a problem, however, that no stratigraphic data and no layers from the colonial period (the 2nd–3rd century AD) were found at the Kaleto site. Apparently Ratiaria, one of the most extensive Roman cities in present-day Bulgaria, extended over a large territory and flourished. Given this we cannot rule out a horizontal stratigraphy; on the contrary, the city developed on different areas during the different historic periods. The Kaleto area might have been a large late antique extension of Colonia Ulpia Traiana Ratiaria and this might explain why no stratigraphic data in relation to the colony was recorded here.

The archaeological repositories, warehouses and depots in the village of Archar and in Vidin have already a collection of over 50 large architectural details from monumental buildings from the colonial period. These include Corinthian capitals and bases probably from a temple or another public building; details from the roof structures of temples – two in Vidin and one in Archar; Corinthian cornices from the bath area and many other elements[46]. In addition, over a period of more than 120 years, a collection of 10 large sarcophagi has been gathered, some of them without ornament, some belonging to the Anatolian garland type, and some to the Danubian type with *tabula ansata*. It is the largest collection of sarcophagi, many of which with splended architectural decoration, in Bulgaria. Some of the sarcophagi with inscriptions reveal invaluable information about the citizens of Ratiaria, providing information as well about local people who rose up in the government of a Roman colony[47].

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45 Velkov 1965, 5; Velkov 1966, 157 f.; Giorgetti 1980, 20–27; Dinchev 2015, 173–175.

46 Dimitrov 2015.

47 All these complexes were presented at the conferences on Roman provincial art (Tübingen and Graz), at the Limes congresses (Ingolstadt and Ruse) and at the conferences on the Danubian provinces of the Roman Empire (Vienna, Ferrara, Zagreb).

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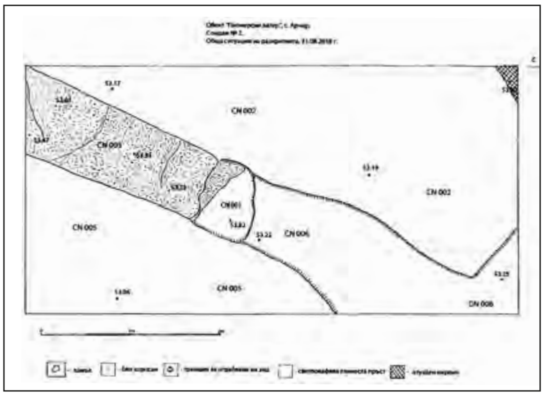

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7 Excavations in the so-called Pioneer Camp, Archar village, new sector of Ratiaria (2018–2019)

7, 1 Trench no. 1: the wall structure from the possible temple building (?), excavations 2018 (© I. Topalilov)

7, 2 Trench no. 1: the wall structure from the possible temple building (?), excavations 2018 (graphic documentation of the terrain situation from the level 2nd–3rd century AD, author: I. Topalilov)

7, 3 Two inscriptions from temple of Diana in Ratiaria (© Z. Dimitrov; publ.: Topalilov 2017, 292; Topalilov – Bru 2016, 218 fig. 1, 2; Dimitrov 2018, 746 fig. 8)

7, 4 Ceramic lamp, *Bildlampentypus* (find no. 91/2019) (© Z. Dimitrov)

7, 5 Silver coin (*denarius* of Claudius AD 46–47). Obverse: TI CLAVD CAESAR AVG P M TR P VI IMP XI; Reverse: CONSTANTIAE AUGUSTI (find no. 51/2019) (© Z. Dimitrov)

Yet, where are the remains of these grand complexes with plentiful sarcophagi and architectural details? There are architectural remains in huge illegally excavated pits, some 11–12 m deep, in the north section of the Turkish neighbourhood of the present-day village of Archar. In the early excavations of Ratiaria, most of the architectural details found by V. Dobrusky were also in this neighbourhood. A new find in 2016 also suggests a location east of Kaleto, somewhere in the northern sections of Archar.

In the so-called Posta area, where there was a large pioneer camp in the late socialist period in the 1980s, together with the director of RMH-Vidin, F. Filipova and I. Topalilov, we found two key inscriptions dedicated to the goddess Diana (fig. 7, 3). They were placed in a sanctuary – a temple to Diana dedicated by the governors of Moesia Superior during the period of the Antonine dynasty. The first inscription was erected by T.MINICIVS OPIMIANVS, governor of Moesia Superior under Hadrian (AD 117–138), and the second inscription was set up by P.MVMMIVS SISENNA RVTILIANVS, governor of the province under Antoninus Pius (AD 138–161)[48].

After finding these inscriptions, we initiated archaeological excavations in this zone, and we have been investigating for two seasons so far. Again, the stratigraphy here is somewhat complex. In sum, to date we have identified the following: remains from a late antique necropolis, remains from late antique buildings and, most importantly, at a considerable depth below the late antique buildings we came across two large walls, some sections of which were robbed for construction material, from a building of a rectangular plan facing southwest (fig. 7, 1. 2).

The remains of the building are massive. It was constructed from quadrangular blocks, recorded at 3 m below the late antique necropolis, and the walls were 0.90–0.95 m wide. We should not rule out the possibility that these structures might be related to the period of the Roman colony and the localized inscriptions for a temple to Diana. This year, in this section of Ratiaria we have also found early materials from the 1st–3rd century AD: several handles from Dressel amphoras, red slip ware, hand-made ceramics, few beautiful clay lamps (fig. 7, 4) and a *denarius* from the reign of Claudius (AD 41–54), minted in AD 46–47 (fig. 7, 5).

RATIARIA AS A MILITARY CAMP – THE 1ST CENTURY AD

This *denarius* from the reign of Claudius (minted in Rome in AD 46–47) raises one of the key issues in the investigation of Ratiaria, namely, the problems concerned with the history of the site as a military centre in the 1st century AD. There is no doubt that Ratiaria was a military centre at this time, not only according to historic data but also due to the huge quantities of imported materials from this period found here; specifically, significant quantities of Arretinian Terra Sigillata, including intact vessels, have come to light only recently. The question arises, where are the remains of this military centre? Was it a permanent military base or, alternatively, were there several military camps at different locations in different periods?

What can be reported at the current stage of studies is that for the first time during field studies we found categorical remains from the 1st century AD on the site of Ratiaria[49]. The huge quantities of ceramic materials (local and imported) support the point that a legion or cohorts of several legions were stationed at various stages along the Lower Danube Limes.

Studying the *decumanus* channel north of the »Residence«, we found that the foundations of the lowest part of the structure of this facility – i.e. the underside of the foundation of the channel, the lowest on the ground – lies entirely on a thick layer of burnt wood (fig. 8, 1). The layer is homogeneous, with no interruption along a section of over 3 m, and is stratigraphically ›squeezed‹ by the 6th century AD canal. This represents a complete layer of wooden structures burned on-site. This fact made us explore in detail the adjacent square no. 20 in quarter F V. There we found again a burnt level of wooden structures. We encountered a similar archaeological situation at the west

48 Topalilov – Bru 2016.

49 Dimitrov 2015/2016, 59 f. figs. 15–18.

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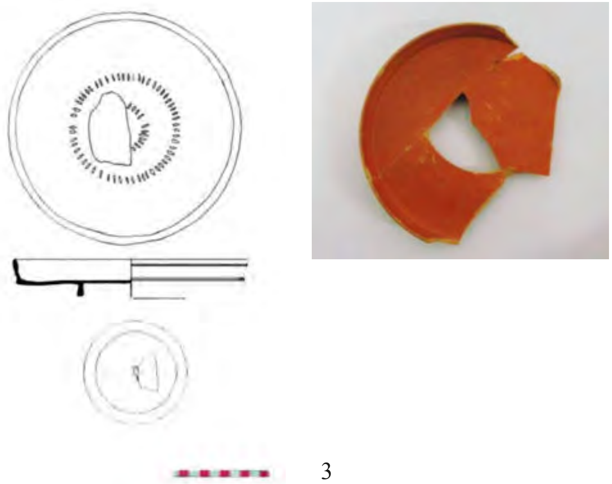

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8 Materials from the excavation in Ratiaria (2013–2019), 1st century AD (military camp) (© all the photos: Z. Dimitrov)

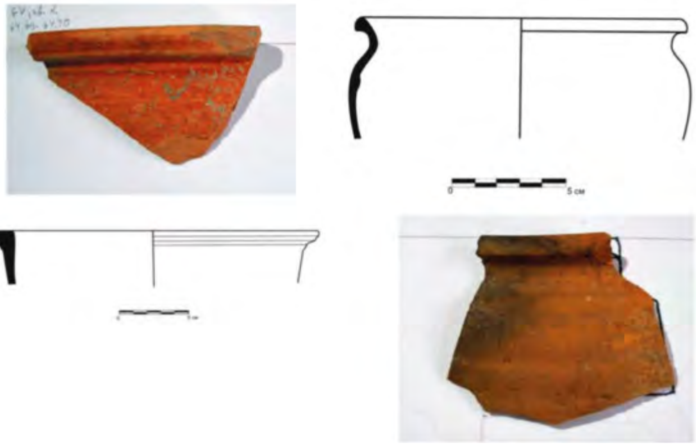
8, 1 The channel under *decumanus* from 6th century AD and the zone north of it, place with the possible remains from 1st century AD (Sigillata, coins, glass fragments)

8, 2 Coins found *in situ* under the burnt levels in zone square 20/F 5: three bronze coins *(asses)* of Tiberius (AD 14–37) and Gaius Caligula (AD 37–41)

8, 3 Whole vessel Terra Sigillata D 17 (Consp. 20), Arezzo, North Italy – Tiberius-Claudius time

8, 4 The whole stamp of Lucius Gellius: L. GE

8, 5 The brick stamp of the *legio VII Claudia Pia Fidelis* (LEG VII CPF) (find no. 19/2019)



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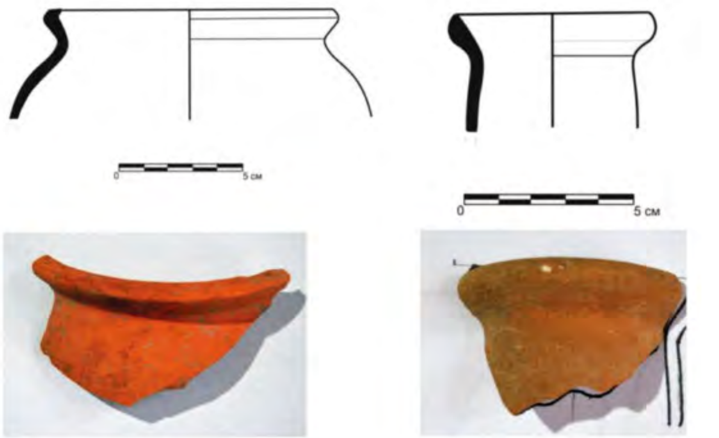

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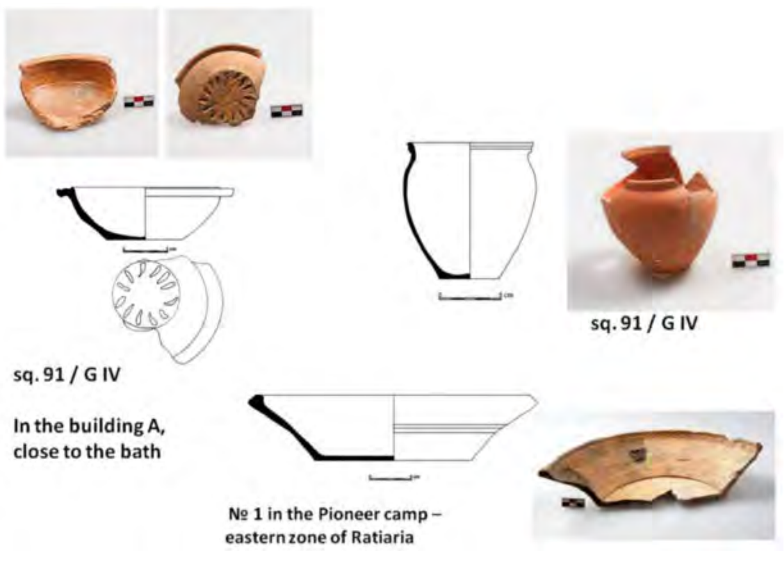

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9 Materials from the excavation in Ratiaria (2013–2019), capital period: end of the 3rd – end of the 6th century AD (© figures: N. Rusev)

9, 1 Floor level no. 1 in Building A. Red-slip ware. Chronology: end of the 3rd – first three quarters of the 4th century AD (context: RATIARIA 2019, GV/square 2, d.16-17.08.2018, n. 63.60 – 63.40 m. asl)

9, 2 Floor level no. 2 in Building A. Ordinary Roman ceramic. Chronology: end of the 4th – first half of the 5th century AD. Stratigraphic position under the channel from the 6th century AD (context: Ratiaria 2019, G V/square 2, d. 23.08.2018, n. 63.80 m. asl)

9, 3 Whole vessels from the centre of Ratiaria and from the so-called Pioneer camp. Excavations 2019 end of Building A from Late Antiquity, where besides wooden structures there were remains of charred sun-dried bricks.

All these archaeological findings, typical of the early military camps along the Limes of the Roman Empire when the camps were built of wooden-earthen structures, are to be viewed in combination with several fragments of Terra Sigillata from the reign of Tiberius-Claudius, found in this central part of Ratiaria (fig. 8, 3). Many of these materials are smooth Italic Sigillata, Arretinian production from the 30s–40s of the 1st century AD, with some forms bearing the Gellius stamp (fig. 8, 4). Three large bronze coins – *asses* of Tiberius (AD 14–37) and his successor Gaius Caligula (AD 37–41) – were also found under the burnt layer in F V/square 20 (fig. 8, 2). They also bear witness to the earliest military history of Ratiaria from the 30s–40s of the 1st century AD.

In the area of the so-called Pioneer Camp (Posta area of the Turkish neighbourhood in Archar), as mentioned above, findings also came to light from the 1st century AD: ceramic fragments, especially the important artefacts from the Dressel amphoras, red slip ware, lamps and from the last campaign (2019) also three finds of brick tiles with the stamp of *legio VII Claudia Pia Fidelis* (second half of the 1st century AD; fig. 8, 5).

It is not only the 1st century imports that give us an idea of Ratiaria's military history since the time it was founded. During this earliest period of the Roman centre along the Lower Danube, exceptionally important ceramic vessels made by the local population are also attested. These are several whole Dacian cups found in the area of the bath in 2014. They provide strong evidence that ceramic items were made locally and that the Roman colonists had developed close contacts with the local population in Moesia Superior.

THE PERSPECTIVES

In conclusion, I would like to summarise the prospects for our study within the next few years. To date, as a result of the resumed excavations of Ratiaria, led by the author and conducted by a large interdisciplinary team, significant architectural structures and stratigraphic data have been discovered. Therefore, the next stage of our activity is to publish the first volume of a series on the Roman city of Ratiaria.

Furthermore, the future excavations could be focused on four different sub-sites of Ratiaria.

According to D. Georgetti it is pressing, both from a scientific point of view and in terms of the future socialization of the site, to start studying the so-called Great Imperial Baths. Such an undertaking would require additional trenches to be laid in the central Kaleto area, necessary to identify the function, plan and chronology of the early buildings under the »Residence«, as well as to identify any remains from the 1st century AD. It is appropriate to move to a new stage in the search for the archaeological remains of the Trajanic colony, which is definitely located east of the currently known area of the late antique *metropolis* of Ratiaria.

Serious questions remain to be answered regarding the chronology and stratigraphy of the west fortification wall of Ratiaria, and last but not least we should initiate regular archaeological excavations in the surviving sections of the *necropoleis* of the huge Roman centre of Ratiaria.

For these reasons, it is clear that the new scientific evidence from the archaeological excavations presented so far marks only a fresh start to the study of Ratiaria, which certainly has much to reveal in the future as well.

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CAPITALS IN CRISIS

Mustafa H. Sayar

PERINTHOS: FROM THE CAPITAL OF PROVINCIA THRACIA TO THE CAPITAL OF PROVINCIA EUROPA

MANAGEMENT OF THE CRISIS IN THE 3RD CENTURY AD AND THE TRANSITION IN THE SHADOW OF THE NEW IMPERIAL CAPITAL KONSTANTINOPOLIS

ABSTRACT

All the changes that took place throughout the history of Perinthos/Herakleia were due to the connections of the city with the Black Sea, the Aegean, the Mediterranean Sea and Anatolia and Egypt via the port and the roads passing through the city. Because of this position, a multicultural environment was formed in the city, where groups speaking different languages came from different regions. Since the Roman annexation of Thrace in AD 46, Perinthos had the primacy in the administration of the province, and it was organized as the capital of Thracia founded by emperor Claudius. On October 13, 286, Perinthos was renamed as Herakleia, which is mentioned also as »Thracian Herakleia in Europe« or as »Herakleia near Thrace«. The province Europa was established by Diocletian, who divided the province Thrace into four smaller provinces in 293. Probably in 297 Herakleia became the capital of the newly founded province of Europa, administered by a *consularis*, until Byzantium became the capital of the Roman state with the name Constantinople in 330.

KEYWORDS

Harbour – *phyle* – capital – city-state – fortifications

Perinthos was founded on the northern coast of the Propontis peninsula as an *apoikia* of Samos at the end of the 7th century BC[1]. After the peace of Apameia in 188 BC, Perinthos remained under the sovereignty of the kingdom of Pergamon and from 129 BC on, it was under the control of the Roman governor in Macedonia[2]. Since the Roman annexation of Thrace in AD 46, Perinthos had the primacy in the administration of the province, and it was organized as the capital of Thracia founded by emperor Claudius[3]. The status of Perinthos continued as capital of the senatorial province, which was established between 107 and 109[4]. Inscriptions starting from the second half of the 2nd century AD prove that the provincial governors of Thracia had their residence in Perinthos[5], although it is not known when it became the residence of provincial governors. Even though Perinthos was not geographically located in the inner regions of the province, as were Serdica or Philippopolis, where the provincial assembly was convened, it was able to successfully fulfil its mission as

[1] See Loukopoulou – Lajtar 2004, 919–921; Zahrnt 2015, 37; von Bredow 2000.
[2] See Sayar 1999; Sayar 2018a, 41 f.; see also Thonemann 2013b, 10. 38; Psoma 2013, 280.
[3] See Danov 1979, 145–150; Gerov 1979; Külzer 2008, 73; Lozanov 2015, 76. 85.
[4] See Külzer 2010, 436.
[5] Schönert-Geiß 1965a, 10; Haensch 1997, 12. 25. 329–332 and for the *metropolis* title see Haensch 1997, 374.

1 a Perinthos/Herakleia on the northern shore of Propontis (from: Külzer 2008)

1 b Perinthos on Tabula Peutingeriana (National Library Vienna, photo: M. Sayar)

a state capital for centuries because of its strategic location at the junction of the sea and land routes to the southeast of Thracia (fig. 1). Coins and inscriptions document that the *concilium* and the finance procurator's office were located in Philippopolis[6].

When all the available data was evaluated, all the changes that took place throughout the history of Perinthos/Herakleia were due to the connections of the city with the Black Sea, the Aegean, the Mediterranean Sea and Anatolia and Egypt via the port and the roads passing through the city. Because of this position, a multicultural environment was formed in the city, where groups speaking different languages came from a number of regions. In this environment, a large number of associations and guild organizations that form the basis of trade life can be identified. It is possible to learn about the trade life of the city during the Roman period thanks to the inscriptions of professional organizations such as the butchers' guild, the stonemasons' guild, the porters' guild and others[7].

The climate of Thracia was suitable for growing wheat and grazing animals. For this reason, Perinthos/Herakleia has maintained its position as an important port city where wheat and other cereal products were transported from Anatolia's northern coast to inland Anatolia[8] (fig. 2). The ports in the east and west of the peninsula where the city was founded were used not only for civilian, but also for military purposes. The Roman fleet, the *classis Perinthia*, responsible for the Propontis and the Propontic Straits, was stationed here[9]. Starting from the end of the 2nd century AD and during the 3rd century, the port of Perinthos was used extensively to send troops to the Euphrates front, or to the Danube and Rhine fronts from the Euphrates front. In addition to these important maritime transport possibilities, Perinthos was connected over the Via Militaris to Philippopolis–Serdica–Naissus and Viminacium and over the Via Egnatia to Thessalonica–Dyrrachium–Brundisium[10]. With these strategic

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[6] Mitthof – Strobel 2019, 420.

[7] Sayar 1998, no. 58 (porters = *sakkophoroi*); no. 59 (row sellers = *kopopoloi* or junkdealers = *ropopoloi*); no. 117 (butchers = *makellarioi*); no. 131 (stone masons = *lithourgoi*); see also Feuser 2020, 285. 292 with n. 64.

[8] For the harbour of Perinthos/Herakleia, see Schönert-Geiß 1965b, 313–315; Sayar 1998, 59; Rohde 2012, 58. 64–78. 351 f.

[9] For *classis Perinthia* s. Sayar 1998, 59 (with previous bibliography) and no. 44.

[10] Sayar 1998, 67 f. and nos. 40. 41; Külzer 2008, 194. 200; Kolb 2018.

2
Perinthos/Herakleia from the air (© M. H. Sayar)

road connections, it sided with Septimius Severus during the battle[11] at the end of the 2nd century between Pescennius Niger and Septimius Severus. Perinthos shared its role as gateway from Asia to Europe with its ancient rival, Byzantium, the guardian of the Bosporus. Naturally favoured by its unrivalled strategic location, the military importance of Byzantium was exceptional for a provincial city. During the war between Septimius Severus and Pescennius Niger in 193, Byzantium withstood on its own more than two years of siege by Severus' army (193–195). Such an ability of resistance was not common for a provincial city, and must have left a lasting impression. Despite its symbolic humiliation by Severus, and its temporary downgrading to a *kōmē* (village) of Perinthos, Byzantium was restored, and resumed its active military role during the 3rd-century wars, as a base of military forces defending the Bosporus. After Severus' victory, Perinthos received the title of neokoros and the privilege of organizing the games of Aktia, Pythia, Severeia and Philadelphia[12]. It is estimated that the first temple of the neokorate was built in that period[13]. The second neokoros temple was once again given during the reign of Elagabalus and, after his *damnatio memoriae*, again under Severus Alexander[14]. Perinthos/Herakleia, which was influenced by all historical events in Late Antiquity due to its proximity to the New Rome, Constantinople, was a station frequently visited by emperors[15]. In 275 Aurelian was killed soon after he left Perinthos[16].

During the chaotic years of the 3rd-century crisis (AD 235–285), the Roman emperors spent most of their reigns in the frontier areas, and almost all the emperors of the crisis years visited the Balkan region, Thrace, the south-eastern Thracian and the Bosporus area, often several times. During the 3rd-century wars, the Propontis, the area of Perinthos and the Propontic Straits, became a crucial part of the military zones of the empire, as it was the crossing point of some major maritime and land routes used by the army on its frequent movements between Asia and Europe. The cities of Nicomedia, Nicaea, Perinthos, and Byzantium stood at the terminal points of the military highways of the Balkans and Anatolia, and they thus became central hubs in the defence network

[11] For the military operations in the territory of Perinthos, see Rubin 1980, 60–66; Birley 2002, 98. 204; Spielvogel 2006, 81; Pasek 2014, 131. 133–148. 209.
[12] For the games of Aktia, Pythia and Philadelphia in Thrace, see Andreeva 2014, 307–356.
[13] For the epigraphic sources of the first neokorate see Sayar 1998 nos. 10. 11. 40. 56 and 307; for the numismatic evidence of the first neokorate see Schönert-Geiß 1965a, 11. 19 f. 44–46; for the *neokoros* titles of Perinthos see Burrell 2004, 236–245.
[14] For the epigraphic sources of the second neokorate see nos. Sayar 1998 nos. 12. 13; Raycheva 2015.
[15] Sayar 1998, 76–80.
[16] SHA Aurelian. 35, 5; Aur. Vict. Caes. 35, 8; Eutr. Breviarum 9, 15; Zos. 1, 62, 1–3; Iord. Roman 291; Malalas, Chronographia 12, 399; Johannes Antiochenus 156; Georgios Synkellos, Ecloga Chronographica 470.

3 Remains of the seawalls on the eastern harbour of Perinthos/Herakleia (© M. H. Sayar)

of the Roman Empire. It is therefore no coincidence that the new era of stabilization of the Roman Empire started here. Diocletian ascended the Roman throne on November 20, 284, choosing Nicomedia as his principal residence and the base of the senior Augustus. His goal was to bring to an end the long-lasting turmoil and instability; for this purpose, he introduced numerous administrative and fiscal reforms, one of the most important of which was the creation of multiple imperial centres and the establishment of an entirely new system of provincial administration[17].

On October 13, 286, Perinthos was renamed as Herakleia[18], by Diocletian, in honour of the junior Augustus Maximianus Herculeus. Interestingly, this change is not recorded on the Peutinger Map[19]. The new name of the city is written mostly ἡ Ἡράκλεια τῆς Θρᾴκης[20]. Herakleia is mentioned also as ἡ Ἡράκλεια τῆς Θρᾴκης τῆς ἐν τῇ Εὐρώπῃ[21]. On a newly discovered funerary inscription[22] from Kios (= Gemlik) the new name of the city is written in an exceptional form: Ἡρακλίας τῆς πρὸς Θρᾴκην. These two definitions of the city as »Thracian Herakleia in Europe« and »Herakleia near Thrace« prove that the city no longer belonged to the cities of Thrace but to the province of Europe, which was nearby the newly founded province Thrace. The Province Europa was established by Diocletian, who divided the province Thrace into four smaller provinces[23]. This administrative reform was initiated around 293 and continued throughout a transition period[24]. Emperor Diocletian arrived in Herakleia in March 293 and stayed for about two weeks in Herakleia[25] and perhaps during his stay ordered the construction of a palace in Herakleia. Particularly in the area close to the western harbour, a monumental structure whose remains (fig. 3) can be traced partially on the ground may be identified as the palace built in Herakleia, as the pendant to Diocletian's palace at Nicomedia. A porphyry head of a Tetrarch and four bases with the honorary inscriptions[26] for tetrarchs from the theatre suggest that the palace of Diocletian lies in the area

[17] For the administrative reforms of Diocletian, Demandt 2007, 20–34 (with previous bibliography).

[18] Zos. 1, 62, 1; Fragmenta Vaticana 284 *proposita III id. Oct. Heraclea Thracum Maximo et Aquilinio conss*. FIRA II² 526 no. 284; Mommsen 1861, 356 f.; Amm. 22, 2, 3; Theophylactos Simocatta 1, 11, 6; 6, 1, 1; Sayar 1998, 123; for the renaming of Perinthos in Herakleia, Alkan – Nollé 2017, 120 f. Starting from the 1st century AD, it is evident that the *Perinthos phylai* were numbered; for the organization of the *phylai* in Perinthos see Sayar 1998, nos 61. 62. 130. 165 and Kunnert 2012, 63–65. When the name of the city was changed to Herakleia in 286, it is clear that those who stated that they belonged to the *phylai* started to use the expression of »citizen of Herakleia«, identifying themselves with the new name of the city. Sayar 1998, 255 and nos. 176. 178. 180. 186. 187.

[19] Rathmann 2018, Blatt 7, 74 f.; an overview of the various proposals for dating the ancient original of Tabula Peutingeriana: Weber 2016.

[20] Notitia Episcopatuum 1, 117: Μητρόπολις Ἡράκλειας Θρᾴκης; 3, 160: Ἡράκλεια τῆς Θρᾴκης or 21, 160: ἡ Ἡράκλεια (edition: Darrouzes 1981).

[21] Nilus Doxapatrius (edition: Parthey 1866, 298 no. 233).

[22] Alkan – Nollé 2017.

[23] Soustal 1991, 62 f.

[24] See Bleckmann 2019, 425; an honorary inscription from Augusta Traiana, dated to the early 4th century, documents a Europarch and a Thrakarkh; see: AE 2001, 1743; SEG 51, 916.

[25] Elton 2018, 35 f.

[26] For the honorary inscriptions for tetrarchs, see Sayar 1998, 198–200 nos. 14–17.

4 Remains of a monumental building on the southern part of the acropolis (© M. H. Sayar)

between the remains on the acropolis and the theatre (fig. 4). The main reason for the arrival of Diocletian was the strategically important location on his itinerary. While Perinthos was of great importance because of its harbour before it became a state capital, it was the richest and most important city of Thrace after Byzantium[27].

Probably in 297 Herakleia became the capital of the newly founded province of Europa[28], administered by a *consularis*[29], until Byzantium became the capital of the Roman state with the name Constantinople in 330. The history and culture of south-eastern Thrace in Late Antiquity was deeply marked by the foundation of the new capital Constantinople in a region of extraordinary strategic importance, the Propontic Straits. Under the Principate, this part of the Roman world belonged to the province of Thrace, but its strategic importance rose dramatically during the 3rd-century crisis[30].

Like Nicomedia and Nicaea, Herakleia housed one of the imperial mints – the only one in Thrace – established under the new monetary reform[31]. The city was also the base of an imperial mint which produced coins for the payments of the Lower Danube troops until 497. The life of the mint of Perinthos/Herakleia was coterminous with those of Nicomedia, Thessalonica, Cyzicus, Antioch and Alexandria – in other words, this city was one of the major regional capitals of the Roman Empire, playing a role equivalent to that of Thessalonica in Illyricum, and Nicomedia.

The great military road of Anatolia was virtually the continuation of the two great military roads of the Balkans[32], the Via Egnatia or Egnatian Way[33] (from Dyrrachium to Perinthos and Byzantium, via Thessalonica) and the so-called Via Militaris or Diagonal Way (from Aquileia to Perinthos and Byzantium, via Sirmium, Singidunum and Serdica). The role of Nicomedia and Nicaea as custodians of the military highway[34] in Bithynia was mirrored by Perinthos[35] and Byzantium in Thrace, which commanded the common terminus of the Via Militaris or Via Diagonalis and the Via Egnatia.

Before the city of Herakleia became the capital of the Roman province, it was a settlement concentrated only on the peninsula. In the Roman period, the infrastructural constructions such as waterways and port buildings developed due to the connection of the city to the land transporta-

[27] Sayar 1998, 77 and nos. 10. 11. 40. 56 and 307; Oberhummer 1937, 809; Schönert-Geiß 1965a, 11. 19 f. and 44–46.
[28] Amm. 27, 4, 12; Hierokles, Synekdemos 632, 2; Constanti Porphyrogennetos, de thematibus 47; Sayar 1998, 123; Alkan – Nollé 2017, 121.
[29] Külzer 2008, 76.
[30] On the 3rd-century crisis, see: Drinkwater 2005; Demandt 2007, 34–46; Ward-Perkins 2014, 112–116.
[31] For the mint of Herakleia, see Sayar 1998, 77; furthermore see Sayar 1998, nos. 185 and 186; Hendy 1985, 378–397.
[32] For the Via Militaris, see Jireček 1877; Beševliev 1969; Schreiner 1986; Avramea 1996; Sayar 1998, 67 f.; Rathmann 2002; Rathmann 2018, Blatt 7, 74 f.
[33] For the Via Egnatia see Gren 1941, 23. 51 and Gren 1942; Soustal 1991, 138; Külzer 2008, 199–202; Sayar 2010; Külzer 2011, 179–201.
[34] For milestones and roads in Bithynia, see French 2012; see also Belke 2020, 264–274.
[35] For roads in the territory of Herakleia in Late Antiquity, see Külzer 2011a, 193.

5
Western late antique city walls and the ruins of the house of Konstantin, metropolit of Herakleia (© M. H. Sayar)

7 Late antique building inscription of the city walls of Perinthos/Herakleia (© M. H. Sayar)

6 Pentagonal tower of the lower city walls (© M. H. Sayar)

8 Pentagonal tower of the late antique city walls on the western slope of the acropolis (© M. H. Sayar)

9 Remains of the basilica behind the lower city walls (© M. H. Sayar)

tion network. This enabled trade with remote regions, extended to the old isthmus region which was previously sea and now turned into land, and also extending to the north from the Diocletianic to the Justinianic period, as determined by research in the area.

Already monumental since the Roman Imperial period, Perinthos/Herakleia grew and flourished during Late Antiquity[36]. The excavated parts of the lowland walls of the city resemble architecturally the walls of Nicaea, featuring large U-shaped towers. However, this fortification has been dated by brick-stamps to the early 5th century, that is 150 years later than the walls of Nicaea[37]. Unless there are phases of earlier construction, which still await discovery, the absence in Perinthos/Herakleia of a good fortification from the 3rd or early 4th century is somewhat surprising. Whatever its Tetrarchic fortification may have been, the walls of Herakleia were diligently maintained and strengthened throughout Late Antiquity (fig. 4). During the late 5th or early 6th centuries, a new wall was built on the acropolis, the architecture and construction of which differed notably from the lowland walls, as it had pentagonal towers and pure brickwork in the curtain sections (figs. 5. 6).

Until the Roman period, urban life was developed towards Anatolia and the Aegean Region to the south, but during the Roman period, it became a city not only connected to Anatolia and the Aegean, but also to the political and economic developments on the east-west line. Its importance is underscored by the fact that almost all emperors in Late Antiquity from Constantius II to Justinian arrived at and stayed in Herakleia[38].

The city suffered considerable destruction during the years 359–460 and was only restored during Justinian's extensive reconstruction in the 6th century (fig. 7). According to Procopius, Justinian caused the old imperial palace in Herakleia and the city's waterways to be repaired[39].

There are no visible remains from the Hellenistic city walls of Perinthos, but the impressive fortifications built during the late 5th or early 6th centuries AD are well preserved in places. The lower city walls were constructed with pentagonal towers and blocks, while parts of the acropolis walls combined pentagonal towers exclusively using brickwork in the curtain sections (fig. 8). At the west end of the acropolis are the remains of the church of Megaloi Apostoloi. An ancient building inscription, reused here as *spolia*, documents a temple for Hadrian and Sabina[40]. Herakleia was a *metropolis* in early Christian times[41].

Herakleia was developed in order to become a partner to the power in Constantinople or to follow closely the events in the capital. These developments show that the strategic importance of the city continued in Late Antiquity and subsequently in the Middle and Late Byzantine periods[42]. The emperors seem to have built up and maintained the old local capital Perinthos/Herakleia as a kind of replacement capital during difficult times. There are examples for this intention in the newly excavated basilica[43] in the upper city as a copy of the Studios basilica in Constantinople, and in the fortifications of Herakleia, which contain very similar architectural aspects to the land walls of Constantinople. In the lower city a basilica with mosaics from the 5th century AD has been excavated (fig. 9). This basilica was destroyed, perhaps during the incursions by the Avars at the end of the 6th century[44]. The region of Herakleia was indeed pillaged by the invading Avars in 590, but it is uncertain if they managed to take the city itself.

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36 For the development of the settlements in south-eastern Thrace during Late Antiquity, see Soustal 1991, 132–137; Rizos – Sayar 2017, 93–99.

37 Crow 2002, esp. 342 f.; Crow 2013, esp. 414–418.

38 Zon. 13, 7, 19 (Constantius II; about AD 350); Amm. 22, 2, 4 (Julianus; AD 361); Chr. Pasc. (Theodosios II; AD 416); Theophanes, Chronographia (Justinianus; AD 532; during the riot of Nika in Constantinople).

39 Prok. aed. 4, 9, 14–16.

40 Sayar 1998, no. 37.

41 Kalinka – Strzygowski 1898; Wulff 1903, 128–134; Eyice 1987; Külzer 2008, 400; Külzer 2011b.

42 For the strategic importance of south-eastern Thrace between Constantinople and Herakleia, see Külzer 2008, 76–96; Sayar 2018b, 31–35.

43 Westphalen 2016, 1–122.

44 Theophylactos Simocatta 6, 2, 16; Pohl 2002, 131.

Other churches in Herakleia, according to inscriptions and hagiographic sources, are St. George and St. Romanos. Perinthos/Herakleia faced the challenges of the tumultuous 5th and 6th centuries with remarkable success: alongside Hadrianopolis (Edirne), it was reportedly the only city Attila failed to take on his devastating march through Thrace, a march which spared no city from the Danube to the Aegean.

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VIMINACIUM: SEGMENTS OF HISTORY DOCUMENTED BY ARCHAEOLOGY

ABSTRACT

Excavations of the archaeological site of Viminacium began at the end of the 19th century with excavations of *necropoleis* that are still the most extensively researched areas due to rescue projects. The systematic research of the legionary fortress and the city only began in this millennium. The investigators have several sources in connecting historical and epigraphic knowledge about Viminacium as the capital of the Roman province Moesia Superior, later Moesia Prima, with the results of archaeological exploration. When it came to the necropolis, it was possible to connect a specific burial ritual with the soldiers of the auxiliary detachments who were stationed in Moesia Superior. With regard to buildings such as the amphitheatre, fortification, or aqueducts, the construction material could provide an answer to the question of the identification of the legion or legions present in the fortress. Special attention is paid to the recently discovered and researched site which is considered to provide events of events in the second half of the 3rd century AD.

KEYWORDS

Moesia Superior – Viminacium – necropolis – legionary fortress – mausoleum

INTRODUCTION

The remains of the Roman city and the legionary fortress of Viminacium, the capital of the Roman province Moesia Superior, later Moesia Prima, could be seen in the fields until the middle of the 20th century. As a ›Roman city‹, it was never lost, yet its remains were scattered for centuries to be built first into fortifications, and also used by the local population to build houses, barns, stables and to pave courtyards. To reconstruct the past of this city, the scientist in the 21st century has several sources, as well as many challenges in connecting historical and epigraphic knowledge with the results of archaeological research undertaken in the last 50 years.

HISTORY OF RESEARCH

Viminacium was mentioned in many historical sources from the 2nd to the 7th century (Ptolemy's *Geographia*, *Cosmographia* of Iulius Honorius, Hierocles' *Synekdemos*) and in many itineraries *(Tabula Peutingeriana, Itinerarium Antonini, Itinerarium Burdigalense)*, as well as in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, the list of offices and administrative organisation of the Eastern and Western Empire[1].

The first information about the site was given by Count Luigi Ferdinand Marsigli, who cruised the Danube in the diplomatic service of Venice on his way to Istanbul and exhibited the collected material in his monumental work *Danubius pannonico-mysicus, observationibus geographicis, astronomicis, hydrographicis, physicis perlustratus*, printed in the Hague in 1726. Then in the

[1] Mirković 1986, 13.

19th century Felix Philipp Kanitz, an Austro-Hungarian naturalist, geographer, ethnographer, and archaeologist, travelled around Serbia, and researched and published several papers on the results of his journeys. One of his most significant works and the pinnacle of archaeological research is the *Römische Studien in Serbien*, in which he emphasized his commitment to preventing the destruction of cultural treasures[2].

Archaeological excavations began only at the end of the 19th century. The first person to excavate Viminacium was in fact the architect Mihailo Valtrović in 1882 and he first published the results of research, mostly concerned with the northern graveyard[3]; subsequently, excavations were undertaken by Miloje Vasić in 1902 and 1903.

Marsigli was the first to give a plan of the fortifications on the left and right banks of the Mlava, which were later edited by other researchers. The first more precise plan of the *castrum* was published by Valtrović after the excavation of the south-western necropolis in 1882, while Vasić's excavations shed new light on the relationship between fortresses and settlements[4]. Namely, he established stratigraphy for the first time and provided the main topographic data for further systematic research.

Miloje Vasić was a Professor at the University of Belgrade and member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, he was the first educated Serbian archaeologist, and is considered the founder of modern archaeology in Serbia. The research he undertook at the beginning of the 20th century was related to the civilian settlement. On that occasion, a street and several buildings were explored, as well as certain parts of the military fortification[5].

With regard to the inscriptions, the first ones originate from Viminacium and were built into the Smederevo fortress, or were found in the vicinity; these were published by Marsigli and were reinterpreted over the centuries. New inscriptions were found at Požarevac, Veliko Gradište, built into the Kulič Fortress and the Ram Fortress; these also have been the subject of study by many scholars (J. Šafarik, C. Edschlager, T. Mommsen, H. Koeler Cellensis, T. Ortvey, T. Ormós, M. Despinić, C. Torma, A. Kalinka, E. Swoboda, A. von Domaszewski, F. Cumont)[6]. Only at the end of the 19th century the great experts Anton von Premerstein and Nikola Vulić began their work on the publication of inscriptions from Serbia that were published in the periodical Spomenik[7]. After World War II, epigraphic material was published in Živa Antika and Starinar[8].

Long-term rescue excavations undertaken from 1977 have yielded several inscriptions that have been published in *Inscriptiones de la Mésie Supérieure*[9]. Most were found at the site Čair near Stari Kostolac, in the fields around the village and in the village of Drmno.

During rescue and systematic excavations in this century, new Greek and Latin inscriptions and fragments were found on various sites of Viminacium whether at the large eastern and southern parts of the necropolis or at the civil settlement and legionary fortress, mostly in secondary use *(spolia)* built into the fortification walls or simply as findings in the archaeological layers independent of the features[10].

EXCAVATIONS OF THE NECROPOLIS: EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

The archaeological excavations in the second half of the 20th century were mostly rescue excavations because of the construction of a thermoelectric power plant, and later because of the open

2 Kostić 2011, 10.
3 Valtrović 1884.
4 Vasić 1903; Vasić 1904.
5 Vasić 1905.
6 Mirković 1986, 15.
7 Vulić – fon Premerštajn 1903; Vulić – fon Premerštajn 1909; Vulić 1931; Vulić 1941–1948.
8 Petrović 1968; Petrović 1971.
9 Mirković, 1986.
10 Ferjančić et al. 2017.

cast coal mine. These excavations were mostly concerned with the necropolis research and resulted in more than 13,000 excavated graves.

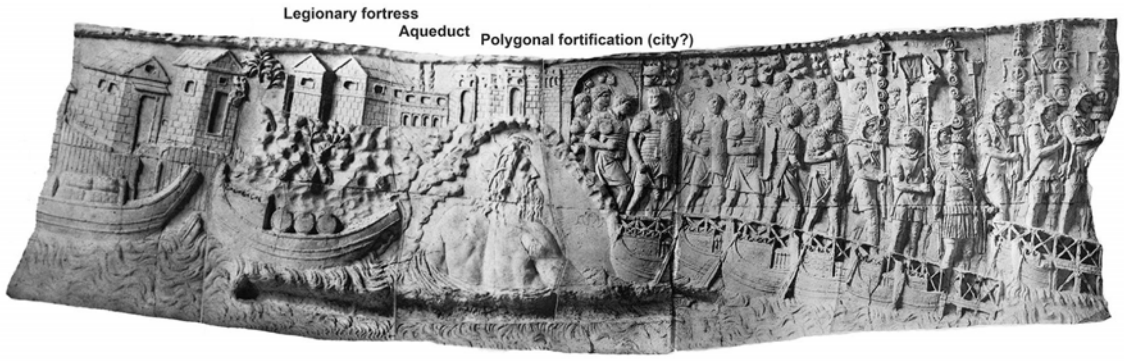
At the outset, only the cemetery provided evidence to confirm the scarce written sources. For example, at the very beginning of the rescue excavation the occurrence of well graves at the southern cemeteries intrigued researchers, who then found analogies in the ›well graves‹ *(puits funéraires)* excavated in the early 19th century at sites in Bretignol and Le Bernard in western France. In fact, this interpretation was based on M. Valtrović's observations after his excavation of the Singidunum necropolis where he found this kind of grave for the first time[11]. Later research suggested the explanation of their origin in the territories where they were found in large numbers, i.e. in Gaul, England, and Ireland, in the funeral practice of the European Iron Age. Such burials reflect the special mixture of features from graves located in cemeteries of the late La Tène and Gallo-Roman periods, Middle La Tène sacrificial pits and Celtic sanctuaries. It is considered that they symbolised the entrance to the underworld – *mundus*. At the southern necropolis of Viminacium, 25 well graves were found, which were connected with those found in the western part of the Roman Empire. This connection led to the conclusion that this grave type was associated with the Gauls. To resolve the origin of the well graves, not only in Viminacium but also in Singidunum and Sirmium, we must return to the finding from 1966 on the Roman Limes. At the site of Taliata a military diploma, the oldest one in Moesia, was found, dating from AD 75 with inscribed references to the III, IV, V, VII, and VIII Gallorum cohorts which arrived in Moesia Superior as the part of the Roman army as part of military operations in the late 1st century[12]. This diploma provides historical confirmation of the Gauls' presence in this region and explains the cultural borrowings expressed in the type of grave. More indirect proof of the Gauls' presence could be realized through the skull cult, for which we have proof in the contents of the graves. Indirect proof for the cult of the skull could also be assumed through the images on the Gundestrup cauldron, on the reverse of Celtic coins, and the skull cult noted at Celtic sanctuaries in Gallia[13].

EXCAVATIONS OF THE CITY AND THE FORTRESS: EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

Very extensive rescue excavations undertaken at the end of the 20th century were mostly concentrated on the excavations of the necropolis. Occasional archeological excavations of the city and fortresses during the 19th and 20th centuries did not provide enough information for more far-reaching interpretations.

At the beginning researchers had only vague ideas regarding the appearance of the city and its regional topography. One of the assumptions was that the visualization of the early *castrum* ramparts might be reconstructed on the basis of reliefs from Trajan's Column in Rome[14]. In one scene (fig. 1), legionaries leave the heavily fortified centre and cross the Danube over a bridge laid over numerous interconnected boats (a pontoon bridge in modern terms). It is accepted that this crossing happened below the fort of Lederata some 10 km downstream from Viminacium. The question remained, however, whether it was Lederata or Viminacium that was depicted on this scene, or whether the scene was intended to portray both. This remains a matter of speculation without any firm evidence. Aleksandar Jovanović has proposed that these are both Viminacium and Lederata; but let us analyze this scene in depth: there are two fortifications depicted. The left one is symbolized only by the monumental gate (military fortification), and another polygonal site from which troops depart to war. None of the fortresses are polygonal but square – so this could be a city rather than a fort. Viminacium, situated in the middle of the spatial Stig plain with an abundance of food and water, was more suitable for a concentration of large military force than

11 Valtrović 1885, 35.
12 Vučković-Todorović 1967, 25.
13 Golubović 2008, 137.
14 Cichorius 1896, pls. 6. 7.



1 Image of Viminacium (from: Cichorius 1896, pls. 6. 7)

the rocky area around Lederata. A further argument supporting the theory that both the Viminacium fortress and the city were depicted here is the fact that they are connected by an aqueduct. Viminacium and Lederata are not connected by an aqueduct, but there is an aqueduct built by the *legio IIII Flavia* and *legio VII Claudia* prior to the Dacian wars. Furthermore, if the aqueduct ran past the legionary fortress over the *fossa* into the city (the *fossa* was also documented and excavated partially between the city and fortress), the view from the Danube towards Viminacium seems very familiar to the depiction on the Columna Traiana. Another fact supports the identification of Viminacium as the staging point for the Dacia invasion – in the previous centuries numerous riverine islands, as many as 24, existed in front of Viminacium. These would be well suited as hiding places, and would have provided much needed space for concentration and cover from hostile scouts of the invasion fleet and the numerous boats that formed the bridge. The only problem is that, at this stage of research, we still cannot define urban defenses or their lack, in the time of emperor Trajan. Later fortifications correspond wonderfully with the shape of the city depicted on the Columna Traiana, but the question remains open for future debate.

In the 21st century the change in the methodology of archaeological research resulted in the team at Viminacium becoming multidisciplinary in approach. Corresponding to this was the beginning of the application of non-invasive archaeological methods, such as geophysical survey. Thanks to geophysical research and archaeological excavations, many features, such as aqueducts, an amphitheatre, baths, the north gate of the *castrum*, and a part of the eastern cemetery could be identified. Combining the results of both approaches provided the basis for a better understanding of the topography and later visualization of Viminacium. Over the course of several years, the model of the city and the military fort was completed, although the model is flexible and can always be adjusted depending on new results.

The assumption that two legions were stationed at Viminacium in the 1st century was made by Miloje Vasić after the excavation of parts of the *castrum* at the beginning of the 20th century. He defined two, and perhaps even three, phases of the fortress building. For the first phase, the finding of lead water pipes with stamps *VII Claudiae* and *IV Flaviae* was of exceptional importance, on the basis of which he concluded that in that initial phase of the fortress building, between AD 70 and 90/91, both legions were stationed there[15]. The two legions were stationed in Moesia Superior and both came from Dalmatia. The confirmation of the presence of *IV Flavia* during the 1st century AD is also strengthened by the latest archeological excavations that began in this century.

The exploration of the aqueduct began in March 2003. Initial research revealed two extremely well-preserved aqueduct canals. Their path was not completely parallel since they converge and diverge, following the terrain configuration. One arm of the aqueduct has been explored for a distance of 1,025 m, while another over the length of 1,040 m[16]. Throughout the excavations, several bricks displayed the stamps of the *legio IV Flavia* and the *legio VII Claudia*. In additi-

[15] Vasić 1904, 251.
[16] Mrdjić 2007, 24.

2 Brick from Viminacium with stamps of two legions (© Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade)

on to the stamps of single legions (*LEGIIIIFF*, *LEGVIICL*), there were also stamps that mention both legions together (*LEGIIIIF ////? VIICL*) (fig. 2)[17]. Furthermore, during research into the northern ramparts of the fortifications and buildings in that area in 2017, it was determined that they were paved with *tegulae* with the *IV Flaviae* stamp[18].

Systematic archaeological investigations of the amphitheatre started at the end of 2007, and were carried out continuously until mid-July 2017. The research included the arena and the wall of the arena, four gates of the amphitheatre, as well as the area of the grandstands. Based on previous research, it was determined that the amphitheatre was built in the early 2nd century and continued in use until the first half of the 4th century. In the late antique period, a necropolis of inhumation burials grew up in the area of the amphitheatre. The research showed several phases of construction for the amphitheatre. The first, in the first quarter of the 2nd century, was entirely wooden, followed by a combined stone-and-wood phase built before the middle of the 2nd century and replacing the wooden one; finally, this stone-wooden amphitheatre underwent some smaller alterations over time, until the middle of the 4th century when it fell out of use. In the last phase, the dimensions were ca. 84 × 74 m, while the arena measured ca. 55 × 45 m. It was estimated that the amphitheatre could hold around 7,000 spectators in the final wooden-stone phase[19].

During excavations in the area of amphitheatre various projectiles were found. The presence of projectiles here can be interpreted as an indicator of warfare, as evidence of training, or as part of the equipment used for Roman entertainment. The missiles from the Viminacium amphitheatre were made of stone and clay; the majority of them were made of limestone (126 projectiles), while two were made of sandstone and five were made of refined hard-baked clay. The vicinity of the city ramparts indicates very intensive utilization of the area during armed conflicts, so the slingshot projectiles, ballista balls, and hand-thrown stones were expected finds[20]. Given that the projectiles are not chronologically sensitive, nor were they found in a context that would allow precise dating, the possibility remains that they are connected with events that have yet to be historically verified.

THE CASE OF THE MAUSOLEUM

Archaeological rescue excavations at the site of Rit have been carried out for almost two decades. Chronologically, the structures under investigation were used at the same time in this part of the site at the end of the 1st and in the 2nd century (pits for clay exploitation, wells, a drainage ditch, and a necropolis with cremated or inhumed deceased). During the second half of the 2nd century, these structures were gradually filled up with soil. At the beginning of the 3rd century, three *villae rusticae* were built[21] (fig. 3), and southeast of these buildings, along the southern road, another row of buildings was formed, the walls of which were discovered in 2004[22]. Ten years later, one of these buildings was designated as a villa dating to the beginning of the 3rd century, on which certain additions were made in the later centuries. In addition to residential buildings some structures of commercial purpose were identified. Southeast of these complexes, in 2014, two

[17] Mrdjić 2007, 25.
[18] Nikolić et al. 2019, 128.
[19] Bogdanović et al. 2018.
[20] Bogdanović 2013.
[21] Redžić et al. 2017; Danković – Petaković 2014.
[22] Mikić et al. 2006.

3 Aerial photo of the site of Rit (Viminacium) (© Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade)

4 Structure 11 during excavation (© Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade)

5 Plan of the Structure 11 (© Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade)

smaller buildings were studied, of which one was interpreted as part of the workshop complex, and another one as a workshop for dyeing and fabric processing – a *fullonica*. Both buildings were dated from the 30s of the 3rd century until the end of the 3rd century[23].

In January 2018 a special feature had been investigated, with the working title Structure 11 (fig. 4) or the second mausoleum. The first one was excavated at the beginning of this century and is currently open to the public in the Archaeological Park Viminacium[24]. Structure 11, which came to light in trench 289, probably represented a platform for a mausoleum enclosed by walls on all four sides (fig. 5). Within the complex, graves which probably contained members of the family were investigated. The graves were assumed as part of the complex. The four enclosure walls around the platform were mostly preserved in the negative, while the rectangular platform was positioned along the south-western corner. The inner dimensions of the structure between the walls measured 11.30 × 12.40 m. Within the enclosure, between the walls and the platform on three sides, there were 11 inhumation burials (9 with tile construction, while 2 were freely buried), and one grave of a cremated deceased. The graves were properly arranged in a row, parallel to the walls and the platform, forming one entirety. No burial was contained in the northern part of the building, and therefore the entrance to the complex would be expected in that area.

The platform had a rectangular base. During the breakthrough within the platform, the layers of

23 Redžić et al. 2017, 80–83.
24 Golubović – Korać 2013, 69.

6 Fragments of found sculptures (© Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade)

7 Marble tablet with inscription (© Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade)

8 Fragments of architectural decorations (© Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade)

the platform construction itself could be defined. The foundation rests on a layer of natural sand, in which pieces of green slate were vertically placed, with reddish river sand in between. Above this row of stones were several rows of horizontally placed green slate, of which the upper layers were bound by a hydrostatic mortar.

All graves had been robbed with poorly preserved and dislocated bones. Among the grave inventory, which included beakers and a necklace of glass beads, were two coins dating to the middle of the 3rd century. A specific feature of the graves, which could even be termed dramatic, was the abundance of stone decoration which had been deliberately broken into small pieces. Some of these pieces could perhaps be attributed to an imperial statue, as a hand on the hilt of a sword or part of an imperial eagle's wing were found above wall 3 (fig. 6).

In the layer above wall 4 several fragments of a high-quality monumental marble tablet with dedicatory inscription were found (fig. 7). The fragments can be combined to form the top of a profiled panel with at least three lines of inscription carved with large letters. The tablet was located at what is presumed to have been the entrance into the funerary complex. The possibility exists, however, that it was also used as spolia since the general dating of the tablet precedes the funeral complex.

L COSMIO AVG … |
[MVN A]EL VIM SIR …? |
AT …… |

Lucius Cosmio Augustal
Municipii Aelii Viminacii sir (sip?)
........AT.……

In the debris above wall 4 in the north-western part, three separate parts of a marble arm were found but the pieces do not fit together. Elements of architectural decorations were also found scattered around Structure 11 (fig. 8). According to the archaeological evidence, Structure 11 with its graves could be dated to the 3rd century AD.

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

Information from historical and epigraphic sources attests that Viminacium, the capital of Moesia Superior (later Moesia Prima) established at the confluence of Mlava with the Danube, was located on the important military route leading from Singidunum. Three roads transversed this area, connecting the town to the eastern, western, and southern regions of the Roman Empire. At the same time, Viminacium was an important military and civil Danubian port. Besides the camp of the *legio VII Claudia*, a civil settlement developed, encompassing a chronological span between the 2nd and 5th centuries, as evidenced in epigraphic sources. Its traces have been confirmed archaeologically to the west of the camp. The settlement received municipal status under Hadrian in AD 117, followed by status as a colony in late AD 239 under Gordian III, when it also obtained permission to mint coins. In the course of sixteen years (AD 239–256) the mint emitted coins, the obverse of which depicted portraits of emperors (from Gordian until Valerian) with reverses displaying a female figure, personification of the town, flanked by a lion and bull symbolizing the two Upper Moesian legions[25].

If we try to relate these new archaeological discoveries and historical events, several possibilities emerge. What data do we have directly or indirectly related to Viminacium for that period?

Some of the soldier emperors (also referred to as barracks emperors or military emperors) are known to have been selected by the Moesian army or to have had the support of *legio VII Claudia*. It is alleged that Pacatianus (Tiberius Claudius Marinus Pacatianus), who usurped power in Moesia in the year AD 248, was based in Viminacium where he was proclaimed by Moesian troops. Two years later the army in the Danube acclaimed Decius to the throne, who was sent as *dux Moesiae et Pannoniae* by Philip the Arab to quell the rebellion of the army on the Danube[26]. According to the order of coins minted by Philip and Decius at Viminacium, one stage of the fight between them was assumed to be related to Viminacium.

Géza Alföldy dates the rebellion of the *legio VII Claudia* in Viminacium to the year AD 261[27], which he believed was the case of Macrianus Major and Minor who had rebelled from Gallienus, while Rudolf Egger dated the rebellion closer to the year AD 244 and related it to Maximinus Thrax and his son[28]. Originally from Thrace, this emperor enjoyed the support of the Lower Moesian army, which had remained in the Viminacium fortress, while Decius, according to contemporary information, was not favoured by the lower Moesian army. Iordanes[29] wrote that the introduction of discipline into the army caused the soldiers' defection to the Goths, and Decius feared the army on the Lower Danube. Taking the legion VII with him to Italy, Decius left less reliable troops of the lower Moesian army behind in the fortress, and these subsequently rebelled in his absence.

The period of Valerian and Gallienus's reign was characterised by usurpation. Some of the usurpers were either proclaimed by the Moesian army or enjoyed the support of the Moesian garrison. In the sources concerning Regalianus and Ingenuus, Viminacium is not specifically mentioned, but it was claimed that they were chosen as emperors[30] by the Pannonian and Moesian troops[31]. After defeating Ingenuus at Murcia in Pannonia, Gallienus punished his followers in Moesia, not only the soldiers but also the civilians: *sed Gallienus, ut erat nequam et perditus, ita etiam, ubi necessitas coegisset, velox, fortis, vehemens, crudelis, denique Ingenuum conflictu habito vicit eoque occiso in omnes Moesiacos tam milites quam cives asperrime saeviit* (SHA trig. tyr. 9, 3). Legions from Lower Moesia, Upper Pannonia and Dacia participated in fighting

[25] Mirković 1968, 56–66.
[26] Zos. 1, 20, 21 (transl. R. T. Ridley 2006).
[27] Alföldy 1959.
[28] Egger 1936.
[29] Iord. Get. 16, 90 (ed. T. Mommsen 1882).
[30] Mirković 1968, 71 f.
[31] SHA trig. tyr. 9, 1; Aur. Vict. Caes. 33, 2 (ed. F. Pichlmayr 1922).

Sarmatians. It is unlikely that both of the Upper Moesian legions, stationed closest to Pannonia, would have been spared from participating in these events[32]. In the first place, these could have been residents of settlements with large legionary fortresses in Singidunum and Viminacium.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, all the military-political events mentioned during the second half of the 3rd century left indelible traces in Viminacium. The area north of the city (the site of Rit) with villas was completely devastated, and burials ceased in the northern necropolis. The population of Viminacium retreated within the city walls, and conducted burials in the southern *necropoleis*, closer to the protected area. The mausoleum was completely destroyed, and the graves were looted. Certain instabilities that accompanied the last decades of the 3rd century probably caused destruction in the city itself. At the beginning of the 4th century, there was a major renovation and expansion of the baths, but it is obvious that some parts were abandoned at the end of the 3rd century (so-called locker room and toilet-latrine; rooms 1 and 2) and were not restored again. This reconstruction was carried out in a short period by levelling the older phase, which was destroyed in a fire probably caused by riots that shook the city. In the same period, the amphitheatre lost its primary function, and from the middle of the 4th century it became a place of burial.

Archaeological excavations at this site continue on an annual basis and provide new data on the general socio-economic situation in the northern and north-eastern part of Viminacium. Only two decades ago, this space was unexplored and unknown. Thanks to current research, this picture is constantly changing and enriching us with new knowledge. At this stage of research, we can only suggest several possible explanations for the recent archaeological discoveries, but it can certainly be expected that future excavations will provide more accurate information leading to more secure interpretations.

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[32] SHA trig. tyr. 9, 3.

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TRADE, ECONOMY, AND MONETARY POLICY

Horacio González Cesteros

»DOING BUSINESS AMONG FRIENDS«

EPHESIAN TRADE WITH OTHER ANCIENT CAPITALS

ABSTRACT

Ephesos was one of the most important cities of antiquity. Settled in the heartland of a very productive region, the city had good road networks with the Anatolian inland and a main harbour open to the Aegean. Archaeology has shown evidence of the arrival of commodities from the entire ancient world at Ephesos and the intense commercial activity of the city, even with remote regions. On the other hand, the exportation of Ephesian and Asia Minor commodities is attested due to the presence, in almost every ancient site, of non-perishable materials produced and exported from Ephesos. This paper attempts a first approach to the extremely complex archaeological and historical question of the trade interconnectivity of Ephesos with other major commercial centres, in this case with two other major cities: Carthage and Alexandria. These cities also acted as focal points for the distribution of commodities from their territories as well as redistribution hubs of further commercial routes. The analysis of the epigraphic, numismatic and above all the pottery evidence will reveal the existence of close ties between these cities.

KEYWORDS

Ancient metropolises – commercial ties – pottery – epigraphy – numismatic

INTRODUCTION[1]

Exchanges in antiquity have attracted the attention of many scholars as a primary element of the study of the ancient economy. Such exchanges are especially important chronologically after the development of the large metropolises of the Hellenistic period[2]. In this paper attention will be drawn to Ephesos and the commercial exchanges the capital of the Roman province of Asia developed throughout the Roman period with two other important geographical, political and economic metropolises: Alexandria as the largest and most interesting city in the Eastern Mediterranean; and Carthage as a vibrant trade centre and hinge between East and West (figs. 1. 2). The majority of

1 Map of the Mediterranean with Ephesos, Alexandria and Carthage (© OeAW-OeAI, C. Kurtze)

[1] I would like to thank Pascal Arnaud, Alexander Sokolicek and Martin Steskal for their help and important comments.

[2] e.g., quite symptomatic is the number of works referring to Hellenistic and Roman economies in Scheidel et al. 2007. In this article the word *metropolis* is used in the Christian and modern definition, it is a big and important city with a large population and seat of administrative, religious and economic institutions.

2 Map of Ephesos (© OeAW-OeAI, C. Kurtze)

previous studies have been carried out based on epigraphic, numismatic and – to a lesser extent – on pottery evidence, but it still remains a research topic barely developed.

Reciprocity was a common fact in the ancient world[3] and played an essential role in ancient societies[4]. This aspect of Mediterranean ancient society was also extrapolated to the essential relations between states and cities; and further, in an interconnected Mediterranean world, reciprocity between cities was a common feature which had an important impact on the movements of goods, persons and ideas. This exchange model, based on cities that were of similar rank, seems to have been especially important during Hellenistic times, but also continued during the period of Roman domination, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean and those areas of the West where a powerful urban society already existed long before the Roman conquest.

It is not our aim here to complete an in-depth study about these relationships, which would require a much broader analysis; instead we propose some remarks, based mainly on the ceramic evidence yet incorporating other kinds of evidence, which provide unique information regarding relationships between Ephesos, and Carthage and Alexandria.

COMMERCIAL EXCHANGES

In order to understand the exchanges made by Ephesos with Alexandria and Carthage mainly through the analysis of the presence of African and Egyptian products at Ephesos, but also through the arrival of Ephesian or Asia Minor ceramic repertoires at these two sites, it is necessary to consider the main products produced in and exported from their respective territories.

The three metropolises should have acted as extensive emporia, meeting points of important commercial routes and centres where the state could carry out its law enforcement and tax control over the provincial exports and imports. The custom law of Ephesos, dated to the late Julio-Clau-

[3] For this topic in the Greek world: Gill et al. 1998; Donlan 1981/1982.
[4] Peterman 1997, 4–10.

dian period but having roots in the Hellenistic period, is clear evidence of the manner of control of merchandise and taxation developed at that particular time[5].

Even if ancient authors such as Strabo, Pliny, Athenaios and others described the richness of some provinces and the exportation of certain products, and in the last decades archaeological research has paid special attention to the remains linked with production- and export activities, we cannot be sure of the massive amount of commodities that were sent from the considerable harbours, which, it must be kept in mind, also served as important redistribution centres.

Ephesos, Carthage and Alexandria seem to have been largely supplied by their hinterlands and/or by their closest regions. Architectonic remains of production and in some cases artisanal installations have been found on the vicinity of Ephesos, Carthage and Alexandria. Furthermore, in these three metropolises, situated at important marine locations, an intense exploitation and use of the marine resources occurred in ancient times. All of this evidence suggests massive production and exploitation of agricultural goods, which would have been consumed primarily by the inhabitants of the cities, but also in some cases exported. In this regard, the presence of pottery production centres is suggestive, especially in the case of kiln sites where amphorae were produced. Transport amphorae are extremely valuable for the understanding of the exchange of agricultural commodities. The existence of kiln sites indicates that at these areas, the production of goods such as wine, olive oil or fish commodities took place at massive scale, far beyond the mere consumption of the local population.

But, if they were easily supplied by their hinterlands, why did they need external commodities? The answer is not simple. Periods of heavy rain and in particular drought led to poor harvests and were more common that has been supposed[6]. However, other essential conditions for a better understanding regarding the consumption of external commodities in Hellenistic and Roman metropolises is directly linked with social questions. In most cases, the consumption of imported agricultural commodities was not related to physiological subsistence or an adequate diet, but to other levels of consumption; in other words, the population, or at least a part it, demanded these commodities due to psychological factors[7]. We must regard consumers in ancient times, or at least some high-ranking consumers, not just as passive actors, but as very active and in some cases very powerful entities[8] that could certainly be the engine of commercial exchanges.

Nevertheless, another important factor for the movement of goods was state demand and supply, that not only covered the necessities of the imperial capitals or of the army, but also should have been extended, at least at certain times, to other important settlements[9]. In cases such as grain, covering the demand of a large urban centre was an essential aspect of city and state administration. In most cases, the import from external sources should have been sporadic or included a relatively small quantity, but the huge size of some capitals suggests that this option could be more common as previously thought. It may well have been the case at

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5 Engelmann – Knibbe 1989.

6 For an ecological perspective of Mediterranean history: Horden – Purcell 2000.

7 In an article about fish consumption, Ervynck et al. 2003, distinguish among four different levels of consumption, from physiological needs to luxury. In my opinion, most of the agricultural imported goods in cities open to a fertile territory, such as Alexandria, Carthage and Ephesos, must be attributed to the two last levels of this division, namely, affluence and luxury. Nevertheless, in the interconnected Mediterranean world, it cannot be ruled out that at certain times, basic goods such as wine and grain were also imported in large quantities due to specific shortages. The goods related directly or indirectly to the state supply/redistribution, are obviously not part of this equation.

8 The role private consumers played in the ancient economy is disputed. For the Roman Imperial period, see among others: Morley 2007, 91–93; Jongman 2007; Tchernia 2011, chap. 5; or more controversial: Temin 2001. For the interaction between state and private consumers, see among others: Arnaud 2011; Lo Cascio 2006; Wilson – Bowman 2017.

9 Imperial redistribution or concessions of food is documented in many other places, including Ephesos (see *infra*). Nevertheless, the question is if those concessions were made on a regular basis and formed part of the *annona* system or something similar, or by contrast were they simply sporadic in order to solve shortage problems or show gratitude by the emperors. For late antique Antiochia *annona*: Wickham 2005, 73 and 714.

Ephesos that, in certain moments, grain had to be imported from Carthage[10] and above all from Alexandria.

Finally, for the distribution of goods which was either commercial/private or under state control, the existence and maintenance of vast and adequate harbours was essential. This condition was clearly fulfilled by Carthage, Alexandria, and Ephesos. The three cities are among the best examples of harbours and harbour engineering in antiquity. The ports were not only obviously used for the import of external products but also for the export of local wares; they generated a continuous commercial exchange, a phenomenon that is clearly visible in the local epigraphy with the presence of large quantities of local and foreign trade communities.

EVIDENCE OF TRADE WITH ALEXANDRIA AND CARTHAGE IN EPHESOS BEYOND POTTERY: SOME NOTES

This paper is mainly focused on pottery, but brief mention must be made of epigraphy and other non-ceramic evidence. In the case of Ephesos this evidence correlates with the vision of an important commercial centre and underlines the important trade relations with Carthage and Alexandria.

An interesting epigraphic document sheds light on the matter under discussion. The document is an inscription in which the Ephesians honoured the emperor, in this case Hadrian, due to the allowance of imported grain from Egypt as the first of all cities after Rome[11]. In a parallel inscription the Ephesians are grateful to Hadrian for the delivering of grain, and also mention that Hadrian commissioned the clearing of the harbour and the redirection of the river Kaystros, which caused the harbour to silt up[12]. This was a necessary action to sustain the imports to the city, including those of grain. The systematic interpretation of these inscriptions allows the analysis of the following facts: the impact of the silting action of the Kaystros river on the Ephesian harbour[13], and the privileged concession of grain imports to the city[14].

Whether Hadrian's intent was to open up the Egyptian grain supply for the Ephesians on a regular basis, or if this grain import was allowed only by the emperor's affirmative agreement at a singular event, is a matter of dispute. If we follow Galen, himself born in Asia Minor in the 2nd century AD, at that time the production of grain in the western part of Anatolia, especially in the Hermos and Lydian valleys, was at its height[15]. Was this grain production, however, enough to support the large population of one of the most densely populated provinces? Ephesos was the natural port of Lydia, an important grain producer, and the Kaystros valley ought to have been an important grain producer as well, but we must not forget that the city was considered a megalopolis that already in the 2nd century AD achieved the status of metropolis and had a large population that surely surpassed 100,000 inhabitants, a closer estimation being 200,000–250,000[16]. Be that as it may, the fact is that Ephesos at least occasionally needed supply from outside, just as Rome or other ancient mega-cities, because the local or regional grain production was not always enough to cover the city's demand. It is not the aim here to develop an in-depth analysis of this topic, neither to pronounce in favour of any option. However, there is some evidence that seems to suggest that the delivery of Egyptian grain to Ephesos took place on several occasions[17]. Furthermore, exchanges between Egypt and Ephesos increased during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD and such exchanges were

[10] Export of grain from Africa is documented in various written sources: Hobson 2015, 11. It seems to have been important for the Roman state in Late Antiquity, especially during the 7th century to Constantinople: Panella 1993; Haldon 2000; Wickham 2005, 695 f. 712. 720–728.

[11] IvE 211.

[12] IvE 274.

[13] Kraft et al. 2000, 190; Kraft et al. 2007, 139 f.; Steskal 2014, 336.

[14] Wörrle 1971. Recently V. Hofmann has completed a Ph.D. dissertation on this topic, which I unfortunately have not been able to access: Hofmann 2015.

[15] See Drexhage 2007, 131–135.

[16] For the difficult question of the Ephesian demography: Kirbihler 2009.

[17] Wörrle 1971; Sokolicek (forthcoming).

3
Examples of coins of the Homonoia between Ephesos and Alexandria (from: Nollé 1996)

probably linked to three main factors: the increase of international trade, in particular with India and the Arab Peninsula, controlled directly from Alexandria; the increase in the population of both cities; and, linked with the increase of the Ephesian population, the requirement for Egyptian grain and, secondly, of other Egyptian commodities (e.g., glass, imperial marbles, textiles, wine, and fish).

The erection of the Serapeion in Ephesos some 10–15 years after the Hadrianic edict must be seen under the premises of the ties between imperial policy and regional trade with Egypt[18]. Further, the cult of Serapis and Isis is normally associated with the *annona* and the grain distribution, even if it is not the only characteristic of both divinities. The Egyptian gods were worshiped in Ephesos already from the Ptolemaic domination of the city in the 3rd century BC, but their cult seems to have been important from the 1st century BC, related to the increase in commercial exchange between Alexandria and Ephesos[19]; and a bloom in their veneration occurred during the Antonine era[20]. The presence of Alexandrian merchants and related branch offices of Alexandrians in Ephesos can be suggested for the Hellenistic period and is confirmed for the Imperial period. But the close connections between both cities went far beyond the mere presence of foreign private entrepreneurs in their harbours and included the local and state administrations. The letter of Hadrian including Ephesos among the beneficiaries of Egyptian grain clearly reveals this aspect. Furthermore, other evidence reinforces the idea of the close connections between both metropolises beyond the private realm.

In the 3rd century, during the government of Gordian III, an important and large set of coins was issued in Ephesos commemorating the Homonoia between Ephesos and Alexandria (fig. 3)[21]. These coins are an exceptional document of the close relations between both cities. The iconographic terms of this issue are characterized by great heterogeneity, showing Ephesos and Alexandria through their local divinities, heroes and rivers. Most of the coins were issued under the Ephesian normal parameters and should have been used in normal Ephesian money transactions, not just for commemoration, even if there is one interesting exception: a commemorative medallion representing the Ephesian harbour together with a commercial ship with Serapis and Artemis on board[22]. Both divinities are protectors of seafaring and have commercial connotations as well, since Serapis, as already mentioned, was also protector of the *annona*.

Why did the Ephesians issue these coins under Gordian III? M. Nollé suggests that there is a connection with the preparations and supply of the soldiers involved in the military campaigns at the Persian front; this author thinks that for the military actions against Persia, Asia Minor and Egypt would have played a very important role in the grain supply and transportation; Ephesos would have supplied the army with grain, and probably other commodities, on its way to the east, but this action might well have meant a scarcity of grain for Ephesos itself[23].

[18] Sokolicek (forthcoming).
[19] Nollé 1996, 66 f.
[20] González Cesteros et al. 2020, 150.
[21] Nollé 1996.
[22] Nollé 1996, cat. 19.
[23] Nollé 1996, 64.

As can be seen, the epigraphy and numismatic documentation point to a close relation between Ephesos and Alexandria, which is also supported by the architectural remains. In the case of Carthage, direct documents also exist, although they are not as numerous. An inscription found in the Ephesian theatre honours Carthage as a ›sister city‹ of Ephesos[24]. This honour is extended to other cities such as Kos and Knidos, both of which had close commercial ties with Ephesos[25].

With regard to numismatic evidence, a quantity of coins of the 5th and 6th centuries issued in Carthage were also found in Ephesos[26]. These are small *nummi* that, equally, in some manner refer to relations between Ephesos and Carthage, or perhaps to the presence of Carthaginians/Africans in Ephesos at that time. The relatively large number of these coins, attaining 12 % in the old finds of the Basilica of Ephesos, could be connected with the presence of an African community as is well documented by Procopius (aed. 30) for Constantinople in the 6th century AD[27]. Caution is perhaps advised with regard to this numismatic evidence and it should rather be compared to other evidence, for instance, pottery.

THE POTTERY EXCHANGES

Archaeology is essential for the understanding of social, cultural and economic aspects of ancient societies. This assumption is at present generally accepted, but within archaeology there are many different tools or methods that can be useful for an in-depth analysis of such aspects. Material culture is one of the most valued areas of investigation, and among material culture, pottery plays an essential role[28]. The overwhelming quantities of pottery found in any archaeological excavations in the Mediterranean, representing *de facto* the most common artefact of any excavation, make pottery an essential element for a better understanding of the economy and society in antiquity. Although we may not be able to explain such abstract and ideological concepts as the *per capita* income, Gross Domestic Product etc., it is nonetheless undeniable that pottery can explain, amongst others, the introduction of new eating habits, the presence of external populations, the increase of the agrarian economy of certain regions, or the relative wealth of a population[29].

However, we must unfortunately accept that the evidence provided by ceramic assemblages is far from perfect. Many methodological problems exist, from the beginning of the data collection to the interpretation of sherds and their quantification. Furthermore, we must always keep in mind that pottery, as a kind of artificial stone, withstands the test of time much better than other commodities produced and traded in large quantities[30]. This particularity implies that pottery is much more abundant in any archaeological excavation than other commodities. Yet it must not be forgotten that these other commodities also had an important economic significance; in some cases they were much more important than pottery. The most obvious of these commodities is the grain redistribution and trade that goes to the core of the economic relevance of major cities and trade poles such as Alexandria and, to a lesser extent, Carthage.

Pottery studies have a long tradition in the three case studies, but it must be admitted that a discontinuous and unequal attention to the different types of pottery produced and imported has been paid to all three of them. This problem is especially acute in the case of Alexandria, where only in recent decades some progress has been made in the understanding of the Egyptian production;

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24 IvE 2053.
25 I would like to thank P. Arnaud for this very interesting remark.
26 Schindel 2009.
27 Moorhead 2008, 212; Reynolds 2016, 139.
28 For the Roman period, see among others: Peacock 1982; Greene 1986; Fülle 1997.
29 Concerning economy, G. Fülle clearly underlined the huge relevance of pottery for a better understanding of economic relations: »If the field of ancient economy is a battlefield, arguments based on pottery research certainly belong with the best of the weapons.«: Fülle 1997, 111.
30 Pottery survives in the archaeological record even better than marble and other stones that were constantly reused or directly burnt and transformed into lime.

previously most attention was paid to the imports of Aegean amphorae, mostly Rhodian, of the Hellenistic period. It is not the aim of this paper to present the state of research of pottery studies in the three centres; instead, attention will be paid to Ephesos and the arrival of Ephesian products in Alexandria and Carthage, taking into account the publications of other specialists working on those centres.

The ceramic evidence in Ephesos indicates the city was a primary trade centre from the Hellenistic to the Byzantine era, with common imports from everywhere in the Mediterranean, including Egypt and North Africa, but also with an intense pottery production and export.

THE EPHESIAN/ASIA MINOR POTTERY PRODUCTION: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

The Ephesian and Asia Minor pottery production was very important from a quantitative point of view. Different kinds of table and cooking wares were produced in centres such as Çanakkale, Foça, Tralleis or Ephesos and exported all around the Mediterranean, especially from the 5th to the 7th century AD[31]. The most important production of table wares of western Anatolia were the ESB (Eastern Sigillata B) for the Imperial period and the LRC (Late Roman C-Ware) for Late Antiquity, but already during the Hellenistic period centres such as Pergamon and Ephesos acted as main producers and exporters of fine and utilitarian wares and their diffusion reached the western Mediterranean, probably following the routes of the slave trade of Delos. Nevertheless, it was the LRC which achieved the largest diffusion among the productions of western Anatolia, and also arrived at large areas of the western Mediterranean and the European Atlantic regions. The main production centre for LRC was Foça, but it was also produced in other regional settlements[32], including Ephesos[33].

The production and export of coarse and cooking wares is well attested in many regional centres; Foça and Ephesos were also important sites of production (fig. 4). The export of cooking wares seems to have been of relevance again from the 5th century onwards, and these wares also reached different areas in the western Mediterranean and the Atlantic coast, such as Vigo in northern Spain[34].

In addition to these wares, in Roman and Byzantine Asia Minor an important production of transport amphorae existed, focused on the packaging and export of agricultural commodities, wine and oil being the most important. During the Roman period a small container of around 7 litres in its standard form, with some typological variations, was produced in several centres (fig. 4). Among these centres, the largest production was concentrated in Ephesos. As is common practice in amphora studies, these containers have received different names since their complete identification as a unique amphora type in the 1950s[35]. At present, the most common terms are those coined by D. P. S. Peacock and D. F. Williams (PW 45 = Peacock – Williams 45)[36] for the Imperial period, and by J. A. Riley for Late Antiquity (LR 3 = Late Roman 3)[37].

At Ephesos, petrographic analysis and the discovery of discarded overfired amphorae have attested to the important local production of these containers[38]. Furthermore, in the city the entire development of these vessels and their contemporary variants has been recorded, including also the latest moments of production, dated to the very end of the 6th and the first part of the 7th cen-

[31] A large number of publications regarding pottery production in imperial and late Roman times in the Aegean and western Anatolian region exist, but unfortunately until now there is an almost complete lack of regional synthesis concerning the Aegean production. An exception is the monograph of Bes (2015) concerning the production and above all export of table wares in the eastern Mediterranean.

[32] Ladstätter – Sauer 2005, 144; Cau et al. 2011b, 6; Bes 2015, 24.

[33] Ladstätter – Sauer 2005.

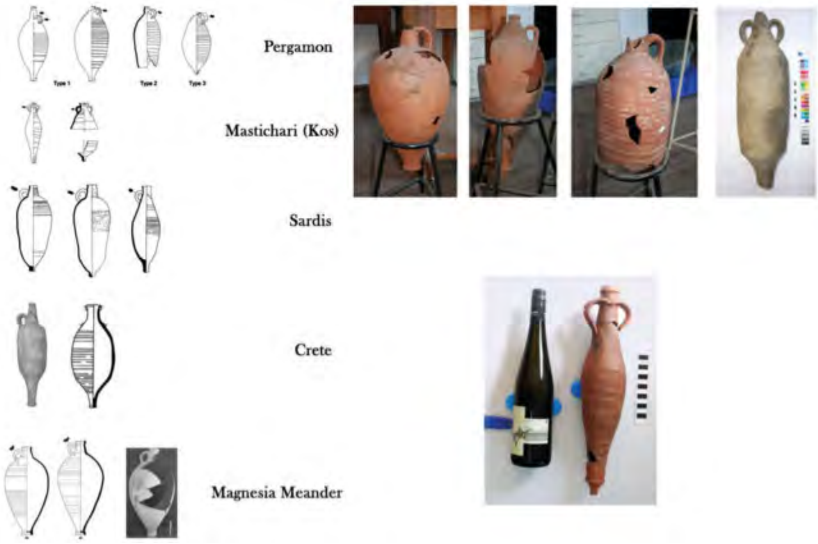
[34] Fernández 2014, 364.

[35] Lang 1955; H. S. Robinson, in his publication of the Roman pottery from the Athenian Agora, proposed the first chronological division of these containers: Robinson 1959.

[36] Peacock – Williams 1986, 188–190.

[37] Riley 1979, 183.

[38] Outschar 1993; Bezeczky 2013, 26–32.



4 Left: One-handled jars and LR 3 produced in different parts of Anatolia and Aegean islands: Pergamon (from: Japp 2014); Kos (from: Didioumi 2014); Sardis (from: Rautman 1995); Eleutherna (from: Yangaki 2004/2005); Magnesia on the Meander (from: Vapur 2009). Right: Some examples of one-handled jars of the Augustan period to 3rd century and LR 3 of Late Antiquity, including small versions of the late 6th and early 7th century (H. González Cesteros)

tury, when very small versions of just half a litre capacity were produced[39]. LR 3 were, however, not the only transport amphorae produced in the Ephesian territory. The amphora tradition in Ephesos can be traced back at least to the late Classical/early Hellenistic period with the so-called Mushroom rim amphorae[40]. During Roman and Byzantine times this tradition of production also continued and included different types, probably for different commodities or at least different qualities[41].

Furthermore, Ephesos also produced other pottery classes such as lamps and *unguentaria*[42], with particular intensity in Late Antiquity. Even if the distribution of the lamps seems to be very limited, the distribution of the unguentaria, so-called Ephesian Amphoriskoi, is somewhat wider, including some sites in the western Mediterranean. Nevertheless, the diffusion of these two types appears to be much more limited than that of the amphorae, even if it is not always easy to distinguish between both pottery classes when only wall fragments are preserved.

Most of these ceramic products were consumed within the western Anatolian and Aegean borders, but, as has already been noted, they also achieved a broad diffusion, above all the small amphorae. The archaeological evidence has clearly pointed out the presence of Ephesian amphorae and other pottery classes produced in Ephesos or in other sites in the province of Asia, in

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[39] Ladstätter 2008, 180–182; González Cesteros (forthcoming); González Cesteros – Vroom (forthcoming). For the typological and chronological sequence, the finds of the British School in Carthage have been of great relevance: Fulford – Peacock 1984, 121. See fig. 4 for small examples of the late 6th or early 7th century.

[40] Gassner 1997, 105–113; Lawall 2004; Bezeczky 2013, 26–32.

[41] For the production of Ephesian amphorae in the imperial and late antique periods: Bezeczky 2013, 26–32. Recently a Middle Byzantine amphora type has been confirmed as an Ephesian production: Vroom 2018; González Cesteros – Vroom (forthcoming). Equally, the production of late Coan amphorae and Agora G 199 can be suggested for Ephesos based on macroscopical characteristics of some exemplars found in Ephesos. The same can be said for the Samos Cistern: González Cesteros (forthcoming); González Cesteros – Vroom (forthcoming).

[42] Metaxas 2005; Lochner et al. 2005. According to S. Metaxas, two types of *unguentaria* were produced in Ephesos. The first of them would be a copy of the ones from Lycia-Pisidia-Pamphilia: Metaxas 2005, 95–97. The other, called by Metaxas »Ephesische Amphoriskoi«, are bigger and their formal characteristics suggest that they were probably produced by the same potters that modelled the Ephesian amphorae: Metaxas 2005, 97–101.

5 African amphorae of the 3rd/4th and late 5th – late 7th century AD and African Red Slip of the late 6th/early 7th century from different Ephesian contexts (© OeAW-OeAI, N. Gail)

Carthage and Alexandria, in what seems to be a bidirectional exchange of different commodities, also including pottery.

EPHESOS AND CARTHAGE

If for Carthage the non-ceramic evidence of its relation with Ephesos is scarcer than the evidence from Alexandria, the pottery reveals a different picture. Egyptian pottery is only present in small quantities in Ephesos, whereas the African pottery was one of the main extra-regional imports, with special significance from the late 2nd or early 3rd century AD onwards, with some identification problems for the 4th century AD (as is usual for Ephesos[43]). Nevertheless, the long and substantial presence of African pottery is not just limited to the Roman and early Byzantine periods. Imports of Hellenistic North African Punic amphorae[44] as well as the 1st century Tripolitanian and Proconsularis amphorae[45] are also attested, as are the earliest, but only occasional, imports of ARS (African Red Slip Ware) during the 1st century[46]. However, the largest amount of amphorae and Red Slip Wares arrived from the 3rd century onwards, and are important in the Ephesian pottery assemblages dated in the 5th–7th century (fig. 5)[47]. Not all of the pottery types produced and exported from Africa, however, have been found in Ephesos. For instance, only a handful of African cooking wares and lamps are documented at Ephesos; and not all of the documented pottery is present in the same quantities: amphorae are absent or almost absent in certain contexts while quantities of ARS are much lower at certain chronological periods[48].

P. Bes has analysed the available documentation of ARS in the eastern Mediterranean indicating different regional variations and different import peaks[49]. In general terms it seems to have been important in the western Aegean and Crete from the 3rd century onwards; and it enjoyed a

[43] Waldner – Ladstätter 2014, 49; Ladstätter 2019, 17–28.
[44] Bezeczky 2006; Bezeczky 2013, 95–97; Springer – Ferazin 2018.
[45] Bezeczky 2013, 152; González Cesteros – Sauer 2020, 110.
[46] Groh et al. 2013, 143.
[47] For the ARS see: Waldner – Ladstätter 2014; for the late antique African amphorae: González Cesteros (forthcoming); González Cesteros – Vroom (forthcoming).
[48] The absence of African amphorae is remarkable in the *taberna* excavated in the upper part of the Curetes Street: González Cesteros – Ladstätter (forthcoming).
[49] Bes 2015.

broader diffusion, including the eastern Aegean, during the 4th and early 5th century, even if it competed at that time with important regional productions such as LRC. Some scholars have suggested that their lower number in the late 5th and early 6th century is due to the Vandal conquest of North Africa and could be linked with the cessation of commercial and redistributive ties between Carthage and Constantinople[50].

Since the early 1980s scholars have continuously indicated that, contrary to the ARS, the other two main pottery types produced in mid- and late Roman Africa, the cooking wares and the amphorae, did arrive in a testimonial way in the east, with exception of Egypt.

M. S. Hobson, in his work on the African economic boom, states: »Sites in the E Mediterranean demonstrate a complete lack of N African cooking ware and very few N African amphorae of the 2nd–5th c.: the amphorae that do appear tend to be from Tripolitania«[51]. M. Bonifay is generally of a similar opinion but introduces some nuances, as for example a higher presence in the western Aegean, a higher presence of some amphora types such as the small *spatheia*, or a higher percentage of African amphorae together with ARS during the 7th century[52]. P. Reynolds is of the same opinion, concluding that during the 5th century African exports to the east are very rare and almost exclusively limited to ARS[53].

With regard to Ephesos, if for the cooking wares the assumption of Hobson seems to be correct and only a few fragments have been documented so far, this does not seem to be the case for the amphorae. There is a relatively large number of African amphorae and, even if more studies need to be undertaken, we can confirm that these are not just sporadic finds but are always present in more or less good quantities, representing the largest group within the western imports from the 3rd century onwards. It seems that not only olive oil, but also fish commodities and probably wines were exported from Africa to Ephesos[54]. Recent excavations carried out in the so-called Harbour Necropolis and the so-called Late Antique-Medieval City Quarter to the south of the Church of Mary have emphasized the relative success of the African amphorae from the late 5th to the late 7th century[55], a phenomenon already suggested by M. Bonifay for the Aegean.

The larger presence of amphorae and other ceramic classes could indicate a closer connection between North Africa (Carthage) and the eastern Aegean (Ephesos) than has been previously assumed, but in-depth analysis is required to calibrate the real scope of the African amphora imports in Ephesos, in order to suggest a revision of the commonly assumed hypothesis of a relatively small number of African amphorae in the East. On the other hand, additional studies on this pottery are necessary in other Aegean settlements in order to determine if Ephesos represents an exception or not.

What do we know about the opposite case, namely, the presence of Ephesian/Asia Minor pottery in Carthage? Asiatic pottery and specifically the Ephesian amphorae have been found in Carthage and other Tunisian and Libyan sites, especially the LR 3, but also one-handled versions of imperial date as well as late antique amphorae such as Ephesos 56 and Samos Cistern. Even if in my opinion the quantification system used by the British mission in Carthage, based on the weights of the pottery fragments, is far from perfect, the contexts of the Avenue du President Habib Bourguiba seem to suggest that the peak of their import occurred in the 5th and early 6th century when a larger quantity of LR 3 arrived at the city[56]. Nevertheless, earlier and later examples are

[50] Hayes 1972, 417–420. For a nuanced vision: Bonifay 2004, 480–482; Bonifay 2005, 577; Reynolds 2016, 131. For this controversy, see also: Bes 2015, 91 f.

[51] Hobson 2015, 133.

[52] Bonifay 2005.

[53] Reynolds 2016, 132.

[54] For African fish amphorae in Ephesos: Gonzalez et al. 2020, 63–66.

[55] González Cesteros (forthcoming).

[56] Fulford – Peacock 1984, 121 f. Hayes 1976, 116 f. suggested a drop-off of the LR 3 imports already in the 6th century. For other amphorae imports from Ephesos/Asia Minor also see: Tomber 1988; Stevens et al. 2009.

also known from the British mission and other excavations in Carthage, and it could indeed be the case that the LR 3 continued to arrive during the 7th century[57], but always in very low quantities.

These amphorae probably occasionally travelled together with other pottery items. Nevertheless, LRC in Carthage is very scarce[58], and the cooking wares, especially the casseroles, are only slightly more numerous[59]. In both cases the forms indicate a chronology again between the 5th and the 7th century.

Observing the African imports in Ephesos and the Ephesian imports in Carthage, one question comes to mind: did the greatest number of African pottery imports arrive at Ephesos at the same time that Asia Minor pottery arrived at Carthage? Based on the current pottery evidence, can we speak of a really bidirectional commercial traffic at that time? Unfortunately, this is not an easy question to answer given the current state of knowledge, and more archaeological evidence is required. Nevertheless, we can suggest that based on the pottery evidence that has been analysed to date, and on the previously mentioned numismatic evidence, it seems that the 5th and 6th century is a moment of special intensity in trade relations between both cities, with common African imports in Ephesos and Ephesian amphorae frequently occurring in Carthage.

What was the situation from the mid-6th century? Did the Byzantine conquest of Africa reinforce relations between Carthage and Ephesos? In Ephesos, coins of the period of Justinian strucked in Carthage are the largest group within the African coins, larger than those of the Vandal kings of the 5th and early 6th century[60]. Concerning pottery, the presence of African amphorae continues in Ephesos in similar quantities or slightly increased from the second part of the 6th century and during the 7th century; in fact, these are the only western amphorae so far documented in that century[61]. Regarding the ARS, after a broad diffusion in the Aegean, mainly in the western Aegean and Crete from the early 4th century, their presence remained stable with only small decreases and upturns until the central decades of the 7th century[62]. Even though for Ephesos the 4th century continues to represent an archaeological problem, there is plenty of evidence that the ARS increased dramatically from the last years of the century and achieved an important role in the first part of the 5th century. Nevertheless, in the late 5th and during the 6th century it is almost non-existent[63] and it is not until the final decades of the 6th century that it recovered some presence[64].

Taking into consideration this evidence, we can suggest that, in contrast to the Ephesian pottery in Carthage, the presence in Ephesos of African commodities and probably African traders increased from the Byzantine conquest. This situation could indicate a different pattern in the relations between two cities that were ›sisters‹ in the Imperial period. If, for the Vandal period, relations followed the dynamic of close connections between both provinces yet mainly from a commercial perspective, after the recovery of Africa by Belisarius relations were reoriented due to the increased state control and redirected to an almost exclusive one-direction. In this new situation Africa would act as a producer for the Byzantine heartland and the army, in a similar situation as has been suggested for the Byzantine territories and military detachments in Italy and Spain[65]. C. Wickham suggests that the *annona* system, disrupted by the Vandal conquest of Africa, would have been reinstalled by the mid-6th century and reoriented to Constantinople[66].

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[57] Fulford – Peacock 1984, 121 within a group dated in the 7th century but with a large quantity or residuality. The same problem may be mentioned for the material from a cistern dated mostly to the 7th century but with some residuality of previous periods: Bourgeois 2011.

[58] Fulford – Peacock 1984, 87; Bonifay 2013, 547.

[59] Fulford – Peacock 1984, fig. 71.5 frying pan and fig. 70.35 cooking pot; Bonifay 2013, 549.

[60] Schindel 2009, 184.

[61] Gonzalez Cesteros (forthcoming); González Cesteros – Vroom (forthcoming).

[62] Bes 2015, fig. 58.

[63] Waldner – Ladstätter 2014, 50.

[64] Waldner – Ladstätter 2014, 53.

[65] Murialdo 1995, 450; Saguì 1998; Reynolds 2015, 185–190; in general, see Wickham 2005, 712.

[66] Abadie-Reynal 2007 has suggested that the western Aegean was supplied with African grain already from the 3rd century. Panella 1993, 639 proposed a close connection between Africa and Constantinople from the foundation of Constantinople. Bonifay 2005, 576 suggested that the foundation of Constantinople had an indirect effect in

The presence of ARS and some Spatheia in the 7th century contexts of the church of Polyeuctus in Constantinople might indicate this new situation, even if at previous times African amphorae and ARS did also arrive in the city.

Even if at present the archaeological evidence, or at least that which has been published, from Constantinople is far from being indicative, the subordination of the African economy to the needs of the Byzantine state, whether in the western or eastern Mediterranean, appears certain. How exactly Ephesos profited from this new situation, whether in an indirect manner or directly by state supply, cannot yet be answered.

EPHESOS AND ALEXANDRIA

Whereas we count on more reliable epigraphic and numismatic evidence for the relation between Alexandria and Ephesos, the pottery evidence apparently is scarcer for economic exchange between the two metropolises. This contrast between written and numismatic sources and pottery evidence is also the case for other important urban centres, such as Rome or Constantinople, with closed commercial and state-directed ties to Alexandria. The reason for this discrepancy can be found in the specific nature of Egyptian export production, which although rich in several commodities such as wine[67] and fish[68], focused mainly on the massive export of grain directly under imperial supervision.

Egyptian amphorae have been found at Ephesos as well (fig. 5)[69]. There are some examples of Egyptian forms of the early and mid-imperial periods, but the imports of Egyptian wine amphorae are more numerous in Late Antiquity, especially in the 6th century AD and are present in 7th and probably 8th century contexts[70], a time when Egypt was already outside Byzantine control and no more state grain was delivered to Constantinople or any other Byzantine settlement.

Despite the presence of some Egyptian amphorae, we must admit that they only arrived in Ephesos in low quantities, even in Late Antiquity. However – and this is an important remark – there are other amphorae that are perhaps connected with Egyptian trading networks and are much easier to find in Ephesos: the Gaza amphorae (fig. 6)[71]. We know from written sources that control of the trade of the highly appreciated wine from Gaza was in the hands of the merchants of Alexandria[72]. In Ephesos, the large number of Gaza amphorae from the period between the 5th to 7th century could indicate increasing trade with Alexandria[73]. In this trade, Alexandria acted as a redistribution centre not only for goods from the Nile valley and the Egyptian coast, but also from the south Levantine area.

Once again, it is a priority to analyse the exact chronology of the Ephesian imports in Alexandria in order to search for ›reciprocity‹ and ›bidirectionality‹ in the trade relations between both cities. Even if there is still a lack of well-stratified contexts and in-depth analysis in regard to Roman pottery in Alexandria, Ephesian products did appear in some excavations.

Africa, with an increase of the supply to Rome, from now on also including grain, due to the connection between Egyptian grain and Constantinople.

67 Production of Egyptian amphorae increased in Late Antiquity. The exportation of new amphora types is well documented as is the increase of their presence in many import sites: Dixneuf 2011; for a good overview of the archaeological and papyrological evidence for wine production during the Roman period in Egypt: Brun 2004, 143–183; also for the region of Mareotis near Alexandria: Blue – Khalil 2011.

68 For the production of fish commodities in Roman and late antique Egypt: Van Neer et al. 2006; Van Neer et al. 2007.

69 Bezeczky 2013, 98 f. 172. 182 f.; González Cesteros – Vroom (forthcoming).

70 González Cesteros (forthcoming); González Cesteros – Vroom (forthcoming).

71 Bezeczky 2013, 170–172; González Cesteros (forthcoming).

72 McCormick 2012, 54.

73 The presence of LR 4 in Alexandrian contexts is almost monopolistic in the 6th and early 7th century: Majcherek 2004, 234 f.

6 Egyptian (top) and Gaza (bottom) late antique amphorae from Ephesos (© OeAW-OeAI, N. Gail)

LR 3 and earlier types have been documented in certain Alexandrian contexts as well. G. Majcherek[74] and K. Şenol[75] indicate a large number of ›one handled‹ versions dated to the 2nd and 3rd century[76]. This is the period of Hadrian's letter, the construction of the Serapeion and the issues relating to Homonoia. In this case we are probably confronted with return cargoes and a bidirectional exchange between both cities. Furthermore, it must be considered that Alexandria not only acted as an important consumption centre, but also as a redistributive hub with special ties to the long-distance trade with Arabia and India. From Alexandria, a variety of Mediterranean commodities were sent to other Egyptian settlements and even beyond the Egyptian frontiers. This is also the case for the Ephesian amphorae, which are documented all along the trade route to India, where they have been found in places such as Arikamedu[77].

Other pottery classes arrived in India from Asia Minor, such as the ESB produced mainly in the region around Tralleis[78]. According to P. Bes, in some Alexandrian contexts the presence of ESB is important from the second quarter of the 1st century AD[79] but ceases in the mid-2nd century.

For later periods we count on the evidence of the presence of LR 3 in the important context of Kom el-Dikka[80], where they are far fewer than other amphora imports such as LR 1 and other eastern Mediterranean amphorae. Their presence seems to follow the same patterns as in Carthage with a higher occurrence during the 5th and early 6th centuries and a decrease from the mid-6th century. Other late antique wares such as LRC are also present in good numbers in Alexandria in similar chronologies, but they are always far fewer than the LRD produced in Cyprus, that should have been exported to Alexandria in many cases together with LR 1, or at least following the same trade routes from Cyprus and Antioch.

The foundation of Constantinople in the early 4th century and the redirection of the state grain supply from Rome to the new imperial capital ought to have had a direct impact on the commercial links of Alexandria. The presence of Baetican olive oil amphorae and later ARS and African

[74] Majcherek 2007.
[75] Şenol 2007; Şenol 2018.
[76] Based on a fabric description made by Majcherek 1993, 218 T. Bezeczky suggests the possible presence of some Kapitän 2 amphorae with Ephesian fabrics in Marina el-Alamein: Bezeczky 2013, 30 f. The production of Kapitän 2 in Ephesos, even if stressed by T. Bezeczky, it is a controversial subject due to the complete absence of such wares in Ephesos. See: Bezeczky 2013, 26–31.
[77] Tomber 2008, 166.
[78] For the ESB production in the area of Tralleis see for example Ladstätter 2007; Bes 2015, 17.
[79] Bes 2015, 71.
[80] Majcherek 2004.

amphorae in the city has been related to the return cargoes of the *annona* ships from Rome[81]. If from the mid-4th century the *annona* ships were directed to Constantinople, and no longer to Rome, then, what were the items that they brought with them on their way back to Alexandria?

The increase of Aegean pottery in Alexandria could be related to these new routes and the return cargoes. The presence of LR 3 in Alexandria, albeit scarce, could suggest the existence of return cargoes from Constantinople directly or via a staging post in Ephesos. However, it cannot be excluded that direct relations existed between Alexandria and Ephesos in Late Antiquity and Alexandrian grain arrived at the Asiatic metropolis, as the written and numismatic evidence underlined for the Imperial period. Unfortunately, the lack of such evidence makes such conclusions speculative.

In any event, the close ties between the two cities appear to have survived the fall of Byzantine Egypt in the 640s. As previously mentioned, Egyptian amphorae that can be dated to the 7th and some of them probably to the 8th century have been documented in Ephesos[82]. They are of particular relevance for the understanding of Ephesos' trade relations during the so-called Byzantine Dark Ages and provide reliable evidence of the vitality of the Egyptian export economy at that time. The ongoing study of this material will surely reveal crucial new information about Ephesos and the trade relations of the period. Although little is known about the presence of Ephesian productions of the period in Egyptian sites, it is quite probable that some of the LR 13 and globular amphorae found at various sites correspond to an Ephesian or western Anatolian production.

FINAL REMARKS

In this paper an attempt has been made to approach to a subject already *en vogue* in Ephesian research from a different perspective. The pottery evidence can give us important clues to the vital question of trade and reciprocity between the capitals of the ancient world. How were they connected? How did exchanges between them take place and develop? The answer is not always completely satisfactory, but nonetheless a persuasive study of well-stratified contexts in the three proposed ancient mega-cities can play an important part in this analysis.

Nevertheless, it must be underscored that the direct evidence transmitted by the epigraphic, and in this case also by the numismatic sources, is more suggestive than pottery concerning direct relations between Ephesos and other ancient capitals. Ephesos is provided with a privileged epigraphy, especially relating to the different social groups and their functions. The epigraphic and numismatic evidence of Ephesos highlights the close relations with Alexandria and, to a lesser extent, with Carthage. Unfortunately, the epigraphic record for Carthage and Alexandria is in this aspect poorer.

Pottery emerges as an ideal contribution to supplement the information provided by written and numismatic sources, or to provide direct information in case there are no written documents. The example of Carthage and Ephesos with extensive trade relations until the fall of Carthage in AD 698, or the presence of Egyptian amphorae in Ephesos beyond the Muslim conquest of Egypt, stresses the essential role of pottery for our understanding of the close relations maintained by these cities.

In these special relationships between ›sister‹ cities and equals, it would be crucial if we could inquire deeper into the products and objects of exchange. The letter of Hadrian referred to above explicitly mentions grain as the commodity supplied by Alexandria to Ephesos. The object of the Homonoia of the 3rd century between both cities was probably also the grain supply, in this case indirectly connected with the supply to the army.

[81] Mattingly 1988; Tchernia 2011, 117; Bes 2015; Malfitana – Bonifay 2016.
[82] González Cesteros (forthcoming); González Cesteros – Vroom (forthcoming).

Moreover, not only grain arrived from Alexandria in Ephesos. The presence of a small number of Egyptian amphorae and of a larger quantity of Gaza amphorae, most probably exported from Alexandria, underlines the import of the respective wines in Ephesos. Further, the existence of fish-bones of catfish probably from the Nile estuary or North African coast has also been suggested in Ephesos[83]. On the same basis, the presence of objects, statues and architectonic elements made of Egyptian stones might indicate that they were also part of these direct commercial exchanges between both cities; but the particular nature of the exploitation of the Egyptian quarries, and the redistribution system of marbles and marble objects in the Roman world suggest that caution must be applied. Lastly, we must also bear in mind that other commodities, not explicitly mentioned with regard to Ephesos and which did not leave any archaeological trace, also came to Ephesos from Alexandria, even if some of them, such as spices or textiles, were not always produced in Egypt.

In the case of Carthage, from the main African port a rich variety of agricultural products and secondary cargo of fine wares were sent to Ephesos. Grain has been suggested as an important commodity expedited from Africa at least in some historical periods[84]. Nevertheless, if perhaps for the late 5th to the 7th century and especially after the loss of Egypt by the Byzantine state, African grain was important in the Aegean and Constantinople, it is difficult to visualise a special link between Ephesos and African grain. It is more realistic to think about other agricultural commodities, such as olive oil, fish and wine, and perhaps certain craft products as the main objects of exchange.

Ephesos, for its part, should have sent to both places wine of its territory, but also wood, artisanal products, pottery and marbles from the whole province of Asia and probably from the inner Anatolian territories as well[85].

The existence of more or less direct and indirect routes and itineraries between Ephesos and Alexandria and Carthage is evident[86]. These routes, in both directions, interconnected the ancient capitals in an intense way, generating a continuous movement of persons, products and ideas. They are reflected in the archaeological evidence that in some cases complements and enhances other important historical sources, as has been stressed with regard to Ephesos and Alexandria, or Ephesos and Carthage, befriended cities that in antiquity developed growing economic activity with each other.

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[83] González Cesteros et al. 2020, 171 f.
[84] See *supra*.
[85] As an example, Ephesos has been suggested as one of the main export harbours for the marbles of Docimeium and Aphrodisias: Barresi 2012.
[86] Arnaud 2005.

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Sophia Zoumbaki

FROM PEGASUS TO THE GOLDEN ASS: CORINTH'S ROLES, RELATIONS AND CONFLICTS IN THE PROVINCE OF ACHAIA

ABSTRACT

Despite the ambigous and indefinite information of the written sources, various indications point to the fact that Corinth was the capital of the Roman province Achaia. The aim of this paper is to investigate Corinth's distinct role on three levels: first, on the level of Corinth's symbolism for Roman rulers and its role for the service of Rome's needs and interests in the region; second, how private individuals from other poleis of the province Achaia regarded Corinth; third, Corinth's position among the *poleis* of the province and the nature of their relations. A special emphasis is given to the only explicit reference to a conflict between Corinth and a neighbouring town, Argos, which is recorded in a text preserved in the emperor Julian's correspondence and therefore initially dated to the 4th century AD, but as closer, recent research has shown, it is to be placed in the late 1st/early 2nd century AD. The letter preserves an Argive protest to a recent reorganization, according to which Argos was assigned to the district of Corinth and was thereafter compelled to provide certain payments to Corinth. This source is revisited, the view that the conflict between Corinth and Argos was an internal affair of the Achaean *koinon* is re-examined and a new interpretation is suggested on the basis of a combination of literary and epigraphic evidence. Further, there is an attempt to shed light on Corinth's relations with Athens, the cultural ›capital‹ of the old Greece, and on Athens' envy of Corinth, which is recorded in some literary sources. This gives rise to a reassessment of Corinth's possible role as a cultural influencer as well as of the various roles it undertook in the course of time.

KEYWORDS

synteleia – *venationes* – Achaean *koinon* – Argos – Athens

Pegasus, the mythological winged horse which became identified with Corinth's image, »flies«[1] through many series of Corinthian coins representing the pride of the wealthy town. Located on a highly strategic location with control of two harbours, one facing west, Lechaion, and the other, Kenchreai, facing east, the city was a naval and commercial power already in the Archaic period and an important node of various regional and Mediterranean networks, the most significant being the chain of Corinthian colonies of which all but one (Potidaea) were westward oriented. The numismatic iconography of the Corinthian colonies adopted the motif of Pegasus as well. Through the circulation of coins minted by Corinth and its colonies as well as through vase painting and numerous references in Greek and Latin literature, the legend of Pegasus was so widely spread and popular in the west that it was often used along with Corinth's landmarks, such as the spring Peirene, in Roman decorative arts[2]. The flying horse visualized the power, beauty and dynamism of a fabulous town whose life was violently terminated by L. Mummius.

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1 On Corinthian coins see Edwards 1933; the word »flies« is used on p. 2.

2 For references in Latin literature and the use of the myth in decorative arts, from frescoes of houses in Pompei and Herculaneum to luxurious tableware, as e.g. the silver cup from the hoard of Berthouville, see Robinson 2011, 28–64 generally on Peirene in literature and visual arts, esp. on the cup see pp. 55–59; Concannon 2014, 94.

Corinth's destruction by L. Mummius in 146 BC – the same year as the fall of Carthage to Scipio Aemilianus' troops – brought about the dissolution of all commercial networks which were constructed around the town as well as its abandonment not only by traders of various origins (Strab. 10, 5, 4), but also largely by its population. Certainly, some people were still active in the area, as recent archaeological research shows, but there was no civic community, no institutions and the buildings were left to collapse[3]. After a whole century of non-existence as a *polis*, Corinth was refounded by Caesar as a Roman colony, Colonia Laus Julia Corinthiensis, in 44 BC, the same year of the refoundation of Carthage (App. Pun. 136). The decision to resurrect the once glorious and wealthy town was certainly not a merely symbolic action for the promotion of Caesar's personal policy, but part of a broader economic and political strategy, given Corinth's crucial location[4]. Some years after the refoundation, Strabo (8, 6, 20) describes its thriving economic life on an extraordinarily advantageous spot of the Mediterranean, »Corinth is called wealthy, because of its commerce, since it is located on the Isthmus and is master of two harbors, one which leads straight to Asia and the other to Italy« (translation: Loeb Classical Library). The Caesarean foundation was a Roman town, but it did not renounce its glorious Greek predecessor. On Roman Corinth's coins[5], already under Caesar, Pegasus was depicted anew in order to bridge past and present, but was now often paired with its tamer, which has been regarded by some scholars as an allusion of Corinth's and Greece's conquest by Romans[6].

Obviously, the ›resurrected‹ town was bequeathed a heavy legacy and assumed a significant new role in Greece. The aim of this paper is to investigate this role on three levels: firstly, I shall shed light on what Corinth represented for Roman rulers and which of Rome's needs and interests in the region it served; secondly, how private individuals from other *poleis* of the province envisaged Corinth; and thirdly, Corinth's position among the *poleis* of the province Achaia and the nature of their relations.

FROM THE SYMBOLIC HEART OF GREECE TO THE CAPITAL OF THE PROVINCE ACHAIA

There are various indications which point to the fact that Corinth became in the Imperial period – we do not know exactly when – the capital of the province Achaia. R. Haensch[7] has extensively analysed all references in written sources, which directly or indirectly show Corinth's exclusive position in

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[3] Cicero, who passed by in his youth in the early 70s BC, describes (Tusc. 3, 53) the ruins of Corinth and some native Corinthians who were slaves, cf. Murphy-O'Connor 1983, 45 f. For the destruction of Corinth, see Livy's epitome (per. 52); Diod. 32, 27 (… Κόρινθος ἄστρον οὐκ ἄσημον Ἑλλάδος. Αὕτη πρὸς κατάπληξιν τῶν μεταγενεστέρων ὑπὸ τῶν κρατούντων ἠφανίσθη. Οὐ μόνον δὲ κατὰ τὸν τῆς καταστροφῆς καιρὸν ἡ πόλις ἔτυχε παρὰ τοῖς ὁρῶσι μεγάλης συμπαθείας, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ὕστερον χρόνους εἰς ἔδαφος κατερριμμένη πολὺν ἐποίει τοῖς ἀεὶ θεωροῦσιν αὐτὴν ἔλεον. Οὐδεὶς γὰρ τῶν παροδευόντων αὐτὴν παρῆλθεν ἄδακρυς, καίπερ ὁρῶν λείψανα βραχέα τῆς περὶ αὐτὴν γεγενημένης εὐδαιμονίας τε καὶ δόξης); Vell. 1, 13, 1 *(… Eodem anno, quo Carthago concidit, L. Mummius Corinthum post annos nongentos quinquaginta duos, quam ab Alete Hippotis filio erat condita, funditus eruit)*; Paus. 7, 16, 7 (Ἀχαιῶν δὲ οἱ ἐς Κόρινθον ἀποσωθέντες μετὰ τὴν μάχην ἀπεδίδρασκον ὑπὸ νύκτα εὐθύς· ἀπεδίδρασκον δὲ αὐτῶν Κορινθίων οἱ πολλοί. Μόμμιος δὲ τὸ παραυτίκα, ἀναπεταμένων ὅμως τῶν πυλῶν, ἐπεῖχεν ἐς τὴν Κόρινθον παρελθεῖν, ὑποκαθῆσθαί τινα ἐντὸς τοῦ τείχους ὑποπτεύων ἐνέδραν· τρίτῃ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ μετὰ τὴν μάχην ᾕρει τε κατὰ κράτος καὶ ἔκαιε Κόρινθον). Finds from the excavation, such as amphoras, coins, and inscriptions, which are dated to the so-called interim period (146–44 BC), show that there was some activity in the ruined town, see Romano 1994; Gebhard – Dickie 2003. Millis 2006 discusses the »squatters' miserable huts« which are reported to have been found at the early excavations of Corinth, but, as the dating of these structures remains problematic, he disassociates them from evidence for the existence of a population at the site during the so-called interim period. See also James 2014 on the interim period and survivals of Hellenic elements in Roman Corinth. Trainor – Stone 2015 claim on the basis of pottery that Corinthian craftsmen who survived the sack of their town may have moved to neighboring Sicyon.

[4] Diod. 32, 27, 1: Διὸ καὶ κατὰ τοὺς τῆς παλαιᾶς ἡλικίας καιρούς, διεληλυθότων χρόνων σχεδὸν ἑκατόν, θεασάμενος αὐτὴν Γάιος Ἰούλιος Καῖσαρ ὁ διὰ τὰς πράξεις ὀνομασθεὶς θεὸς ταύτην ἀνέστησεν.

[5] Walbank 2010b, 152.

[6] For the ›colonization‹ of the myth of Pegasus see Concannon 2014, 119–122; Mizutani 2015, 80–82.

[7] Haensch 1997, 322–328. 633–664.

the province, although they do not mention it explicitly as the capital, a fact that gave rise to a good deal of speculation on this issue[8]. Despite the vague and fuzzy information of the written sources, Corinth remains the main candidate as the capital of the province Achaia, also in Late Antiquity[9].

A look at R. Haensch's book[10] indicates that ambiguous or fragmentary information exists for other capitals as well. The ambiguity is perhaps to be explained on the basis of the meaning and use of the terms »province« and »provincial capital« for Roman political thought. In the Late Republic the term *provincial* signified a short-term military task assigned to a Roman magistrate and later began to define a territory under Roman rule, which was governed by a magistrate[11]. Within the territory of his province the governor had to move around in order to carry out his administrative and juridical duties, as G. Woolf mentions, »partly perhaps because of poor communication …, partly too because the patrimonialism of Roman culture led them to think of central persons as much as central places«[12]. In this rather person-centred than place-centred administrative system, in which ›province‹ was initially perceived rather as a task than as a territory, seats of the provincial governors, namely capitals of the provinces, did not apparently possess the role which is familiar to us. R. Haensch has stressed that being the seat of a representative of Roman rule was not necessarily the highest distinction for a town, since, in other words, the political-administrative criteria seem not to have been envisaged as the most important for a classification of a *polis* as of excellent rank[13]. Other rankings of towns existed within a province as well, for example in Achaia, Athens was the cultural capital of Greece and Messene is defined as *metropolis* (I.Olympia 458). This does not mean that capitals did not exist[14] or that their position among the other towns of a province was not distinct. On the contrary, some of the capitals of the Roman provinces were outstanding towns already before they were chosen as seats of the Roman administration. This holds true for Corinth. Long before Roman expansion to the east, Corinth already symbolized the centre of Greece.

Beyond Corinth's unique geographic location which facilitated not only commerce, but also administration, as it offered easy connections with both Rome and the east and rapid transportation of supplies and news, Corinth's role as the heart of Greece was recognized by Roman magistrates long before the foundation of the province Achaia. Having been chosen by Philipp II (337 BC) as the site of the council of the so-called League of Corinth, the first common body of Greeks, this central role of Corinth was repeatedly reinstated by the diadochs[15]. Corinth was chosen by Flamininus, after his victory in the Second Macedonian War[16], to proclaim Greece's liberation in 196 BC at the Isthmian Games. As the head of the Achaean League, the town was annihilated by Mummius in 146 BC, its devastation thus marking Greece's submission to Roman power. A century later, Corinth was refounded by Caesar as a Roman colony in the hope – perhaps as part of wider strategic plans – of revitalising the archetype of a thriving commercial city. After his victory at Actium, Octavian not only passed by Corinth, before he journeyed to Rome in order to celebrate his triumph[17], but also commemorated his victory in Corinth with the erection of a

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[8] See e.g. Walbank 1986, 401 f. who argues for Olympia as the place of the residence of the provincial governor based on Paus. 5, 12, 2 (κατ' ἐμὲ δὲ ἐς αὐτὸ Ῥωμαίων ἐσωκίζοντο οἱ τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἐπιτροπεύοντες). Olympia was in any case not a *polis*, but a Panhellenic sanctuary. Lodging *(katalymata)* for Romans, especially those on an official capacity, but also for private individuals, existed in the major towns and sanctuaries in Greece. G. Walbank further finds possible that Patrae was the original capital of the province and at a later date, perhaps under Vespasian, was replaced by Corinth. On further similar cases of speculation on the capital of the province Achaia see Haensch 1997, 322.

[9] For Late Antiquity Brown 2008, 59 f. On Corinth in Late Antiquity and its civic and religious officeholders see Walbank 2010a, 270–280.

[10] Especially the introductory chapter, Haensch 1997, 11–36.

[11] For a summary of this evolution of the use of the term »provincial« see Jiménez 2016, 17 f. 27.

[12] Woolf 1997, 9 and 11.

[13] Haensch 2006, esp. 151.

[14] Haensch 1997, 18–36 has convincingly argued for the existence of capitals of Roman provinces.

[15] Dixon 2014, 15–109.

[16] Pol. 18, 44; Plut. Flamininus 12, 8; cf. Walsh 1996.

[17] Strab. 10, 5, 3: ὧν ἐν τῇ Γυάρῳ προσορμισθεὶς ἔγνων κώμιον ὑπὸ ἁλιέων συνοικούμενον: ἀπαίροντες δ' ἐδεξάμεθα πρεσβευτὴν ἐνθένδε ὡς Καίσαρα προκεχειρισμένον τῶν ἁλιέων τινά (ἦν δ'ἐν Κορίνθῳ Καῖσαρ βαδίζων ἐπὶ τὸν

memorial whose similarity to a memorial erected in Nicopolis, his ›town of victory‹, is striking. From the Corinthian monument a cylindrical drum has been preserved, the so-called Guilford Puteal, decorated with low reliefs of deities and heroes in neo-Attic style, remarkably similar to a drum from an Augustan memorial in Nicopolis[18]. It is noteworthy that Augustus chose to advertise his decisive victory not only at the spot of the sea-battle and in the town he founded there, but also at the town which was regarded as the core of Greece. Augustus favoured Corinth, as it was a foundation of his adopted father, Caesar, but it is unknown whether he made Corinth the capital of the province Achaia which he founded in 27 BC[19]. This role – if really already undertaken by Corinth under Augustus – had in any case to be abandoned from AD 15, when Tiberius made Achaia part of a large province comprising also Macedonia and Moesia until AD 44. After this scheme was dissolved, Corinth certainly reassumed the role of a dominant city in the province, since it was chosen by Nero as the scene for the proclamation of Greece's (i.e. Achaia's) freedom from taxation. This is explicitly mentioned in an inscription from Akraephia (IG VII 2713), which reproduces Nero's liberation speech: Nero invited as many people of the province as possible to gather at Corinth on a given date, (ll. 3–6) … κελεύω πλείστους καθ' ὅ[σ]ο[ν] | ἐνδέχεται ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἐπαρχείας παρῖναι | ἰς Κόρινθον τῇ πρὸ τεσσάρων Καλανδῶν Δε|κεμβρίων … He was at Corinth on the occasion of his participation in the Isthmian Games, but his decision to make this important proclamation there, cannot be regarded as accidental. Since Nero participated in various crown contests at a Panhellenic level[20], and above all in the Olympic Games, the choice of Corinth – and not of the well-frequented Olympia or another emblematic place – for his proclamation was deliberate. This shows that Corinth was regarded as the foremost spot of Greece, its capital. Since Flamininus had proclaimed Greece's liberation here about two and a half centuries earlier, the town was also the ideal scenery for Nero in order to place himself in the chain of the famous figures of the past who had already been connected with Corinth and conceived it as the principal point of Greece.

All this shows the huge impact of symbols on Roman political thought and that symbolism should not be undermined as a factor of Roman policy. Therefore, beyond Corinth's strategic location, its strong long-standing symbolism as the centre of Greece could not have been disregarded by Rome in the administrative organization of the province Achaia.

CORINTH AND THE ÉLITES OF THE PROVINCE

Literary and epigraphic evidence shows that in the eyes of private individuals and the other *poleis* of the province Achaia, Corinth was the focal point of their region. Private individuals from various towns of Achaia, mainly members of the élite, maintained Corinthian connections[21] and pursued activities in Corinth, given the opportunities offered to these people by contact with the personnel of the Roman administration, which was based there and which spent much time in the city despite the obligations within the province. Members of the provincial élite, with ambitions for an illustrious career beyond the limits of their hometowns, could profitably use their contacts with representatives of the Roman administration in Corinth, and vice versa, Roman magistrates relied on their relations with local élites. As F. Millar describes the situation, »we cannot understand the government, such as it was, of the peaceful provinces of the Empire if we do not think of the close personal relations which the governor was bound to have with the provincial upper classes, and above all with those of the city in which he spent most of his time«[22]. So, prominent individuals from various *poleis* of the province visited Corinth as frequently as possible either on official delegations to the Roman governor or with the aim of socializing, especially during periods of exclusive events

θρίαμβον τὸν Ἀκτιακόν).

[18] On Guilford Puteal see Golda 1997, 106 no. 58.

[19] Engels 1990, 19.

[20] Kennel 1988.

[21] This was eloquently stressed by Spawforth 1996, 173 f.

[22] Millar 1981, 69.

such as the Isthmian Games. A characteristic example is Plutarch. It is not clear whether Plutarch's mission to the *proconsul*, which is mentioned in Moralia 816D, was to Corinth or elsewhere in the governor's circuit within the province. In any case, in his works he describes his visits to Corinth, e.g. a dinner given by the high-priest Lucanius during the Isthmian Games (symp. 5, 3, 1–3 [mor. 675D–677B]) and another visit again during the Isthmian Games under Sospis'[23] second presidency (8, 4, 1 and 5 [723A and 724F]). Plutarch also places his imaginary *Table Discussion of the Seven Wise Men (Septem Sapientium Convivium)* at a dining hall at the port of Lechaeum, a place certainly well-known to him, where he probably used to disembark coming from his hometown of Chaeronea. Plutarch dedicated his essay *On the advantage to be derived from one's enemies* (*De capienda ex inimicis utilitate*, mor. 86B) to another *agonothetes* of the Isthmian Games of the Trajanic and Hadrianic period, Cn. Cornelius Ti. f. Fa(bia) Pulcher[24]. Cornelius Pulcher is a telling example of a provincial from Achaia, who managed to climb the ladder and build a career on a high level. He was a citizen of Epidauros, attested in various documents from Corinth and the Argolid. He held various offices at the municipal, regional and imperial level, the highest being the procuratorship of Epirus and that of *iuridicus Aegypti et Alexandriae*. His family maintained contacts with Corinth for decades before him. One of his ancestors, perhaps his grandfather, Cn. Cornelius Pulcher, was *agonothetes* of the Isthmia Caesarea Sebasta games in AD 43[25].

More members of the provincial élite were active in Corinth already before Pulcher's family. As far as our sources allow us to know, the earliest attested case is M. Antonius Aristocrates[26] (early 20s BC) and on the basis of a prosopographic analysis, additional civic or religious office holders in Corinth can be identified as natives of other towns[27]. M. Antonius Aristocrates is

[23] Sospis is attested in inscriptions as Antonius Sospis, see Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 72. Among numerous other offices, he also held the *agonothesia* of the Isthmian Games. It seems that he was connected with the prominent Athenian family of Leonidas of Melite. Antonius Sospis must be discerned from his grandson P. Aelius Sospis (Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 18).

[24] Cn. Cornelius Ti. f. Fabia Pulcher from Argos/Epidauros was επιμελητής εύθηνίας, *IIvir quinq(uennalis)*, άγωνοθέτης Καισαρείων Τσθμίων/ *[agonothet(es) Ceasareon Nervaneon Traianeon Sebast(eon) et Isthmion et Caesare]on et Aescul[apeon et Sebast(on)]*, έλλη[νοδίκης]. For Cn. Cornelius Ti. F. Fabia Pulcher see Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, ARG 117. COR 228 with bibliography.

[25] For this individual, see Spawforth 1996, 174; Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, ARG 116, COR 226 and Stemma IV.

[26] M. Antonius Aristocrates from Argos: *agonothetes* of Isthmia et Caesarea games; for him see Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, ARG 19 and COR 57. Although his involvement in the Isthmian Caesarean games had been deduced from Kent 1966, 221, a new Latin inscription from Corinth mentions him as *agonothetes* of the games, see Balzat – Millis 2013 for an investigation of the individual's career and personality. He was a friend of Marc Antony and is to be identified with the individual mentioned by Plut. Antonius 69.

[27] Beyond **Cn. Cornelius Pulcher**, **Cn. Cornelius Ti. f. Fabia Pulcher** and **M. Antonius Aristocrates**, the following prominent individuals from various provincial *poleis* maintained contacts with Corinth and formed part of the élites active in the colony, some of them presented by Spawforth 1996, 173 f.: **P. Caninius Agrippa**: *duumvir quinquennalis, procur(ator) Caesa(ris) Aug(usti) prov(inciae) Achaiae*, see Spawforth 1996, 173; Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, ACH 64 (remarks on his Greek provincial origin); **C(aius) Iulius C. f. Fab(ia) Laco** from Sparta: *augur*, *agonothetes* of Isthmia et Caesarea games, *IIvir quinquennalis, flamen Augusti, cur.* (for the expansion of this obscure abbreviation see West 1931, 49); for him see Spawforth 1996, 174; Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 345; **C. Iulius Laconis f. Euryclis n. Fab(ia) Spartiati[cus]** from Sparta: *procurator Caesaris et Augustae Agrippinae, tribunus militum, flamen divi Iuli, pontifex, IIvir quinquennalis* (twice), *agonothetes* of the Isthmia et Caesarea Sebastea games, *archiereus domus Augustae in perpetuum primus Achaeon*; for him see Spawforth 1996, 174; Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 353; **P. Memmius Cleander** from Delphi (?): *IIvir* on Corinthian coins, attested also in the fragmentary inscription Kent 1966, 81; for him see Spawforth 1996, 174; Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 421; **C. Iulius Polyaenus** from Sicyon (?): *IIvir* on Corinthian coins; for him see Spawforth 1996, 174; Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 350; **[Γ(άιος) Ἰ]ούλιος Πολύαινος υ(ιός)** from Sicyon (?), son or grandson of C. Iulius Polyaenus: *hellanodikes* of the Caesarea Isthmia games; for him see Spawforth 1974, 297–299; Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 351; **M. Antonius Achaicus** from Argos: *agonothetes* of Caesarea Nervanea, Traianea, Isthmia and Caesarea, *isagogeus, decurionalibus ornamentis ornatus, aedilis, praefectus iure dicundo, curator annonae, IIvir, IIvir quinquennalis, agonotheticiis ornamentis ornato*; for the individual see Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, ARG 18 and COR 53. He held the office of *agonothetes* of Sebasteia and Nemeia at least twice (Piérart 2000, 495 and fig. 9; cf. also Charneux 1956, 610–614 no. VII fig. 7 [SEG 16, 1959, 258b]), was honoured as benefactor by the tribe of Hyrnathii and was connected with the *procurator Augusti* A. Pomponius C. f. Quirina Augurinus T. Prifernius

also the first attested prominent foreigner who held the office of the *agonothetes* of the Isthmian Games. This office was held by several foreigners[28] despite the huge expenses it entailed, since it enhanced the social profile of the office holders. It is further remarkable that next to the *agonothetes* of the Isthmian Games, a new office appears in the framework of this festival in the Roman period, that of the *hellanodikes*[29]. This office is not attested previously; it was usurped from the Olympic Games and echoes perhaps Corinth's claim to be now regarded as the centre of Hellas.

Cultivation of useful personal contacts with representatives of Roman rule included the erection of monuments in their honour. Inscriptions from monuments erected by private individuals, both Corinthians and foreigners, for Roman magistrates, which have been found at Corinth[30] outnumber equivalent texts from other *poleis*, since the instigators expected a higher visibility in the town where the members of the Roman administrative mechanism spent a great deal of their term in the province.

CORINTH AND THE *POLEIS* OF THE PROVINCE: THE QUARREL WITH ARGOS AND ATHENIAN ENVY

Corinth's quarrel with Argos: an internal affair of the Achaean *koinon*?

»Empires enhance hierarchy«[31] and it is clear that in the hierarchical order in the Roman province Achaia, Corinth had an indisputably distinct position. The hierarchical order caused frequent rivalries over titles and privileges[32], as is known in other provinces, e.g. over the first rank in the province or over the neocorate (»warden of the temple of the Augusti«)[33]. In the province of Achaia there is no direct evidence for a rivalry between Corinth and any other town over privileges – the term »neokorate« is not even attested for *poleis* in the south of Macedonia.

There is only one explicit reference to a conflict between Corinth and a neighbouring town, Argos, but, at least on the surface, it was not sparked by a rivalry over privileges, but rather by economic reasons. The quarrel is recorded in a text preserved in the emperor Julian's correspondence (Jul. Ep. 28 [198 Bidez/Cumont]) and was therefore initially dated to the 4th century AD, but as B. Keil has shown and as is now generally accepted, this event is to be placed in the late 1st/early 2nd century AD[34]. It is a letter to an unknown but certainly powerful recipient, which was

Paetus for whom he erected an honorific monument in Argos (Vollgraff 1904, 425 n. 7 (ILS 8863). This is why his name is restored in a fragmentary inscription from Corinth (Kent 1966, 134), where the procurator's name is mentioned. Achaicus' name is also attested in some fragmentary Corinthian inscriptions; **L. Marius Pylades** from Epidauros: [- - -]arius Pyladis mentioned on a fragmentary marble Ionian frieze in Corinth (Kent 1966, 316 pis 28, 63); see Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, ARG 188. COR 524; **Ti. Claudius Ti. Claudi Hipparchi f. Quir(ina) Atticus** from Athens: *isagogeus*; see Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 169.

28 On the financial burden of the office of *agonothetes*, but also its social prestige see Concannon 2014, 201 (with earlier bibliography). Foreigners who held this office in Corinth were M. Antonius Achaicus, Ti. Claudius Ti. Claudii Hipparchi f. Quir(ina) Atticus, Cornelius Pulcher, Cn. Cornelius Ti. f. Quir(ina) Atticus, C. Iulius C. f. Fabia Laco, C. Iulius Laconis f. Euryclis n. Fab(ia) Spartiaticus; for them see n. 27 above.

29 Zoumbaki 2011, 14. For attestations at Corinth see Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 2. 3. 15. 28. 60. 71. 75. 80. 82. 90. 177. 178. 195. 228 [12]; 282. 291. 308 [1]; 350 *adn.;* 351. 356. 368. 371. 390. 429. 480. 483. 484. 577 [1]. [2]; 670.

30 Kent 1966, 125; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 54 (L. Antonius L. f. Albus); West 1931, 54; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 83 (L. Aquillius C.f. Pom. Florus Turcianus Gallus); Kent 1966, 135; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 121 (C. Caelius C.fil. Ouf. Martialis); West 1931, 65 f.; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 135 (P. Caninius Alexiadae f. Co. Agrippa); Kent 1966, 137; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 151 (Caius Cerialis); Meritt 1931, 80. 82 f.; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 228 (Γν. Κορνήλιος Τιβ. Κορνηλίου Πούλχρου Φαβία Ποῦλχρος); Kent 1966, 124; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 264 (Λ. Φλάβιος Ἀρριανός); West 1931, 67; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 345 (C. Iulius C.f. Fab. Laco); Meritt 1931, 70; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 353 (C. Iulius Laconis f. Euryclis n. Fab. Spartiaticus); CIL III 1, 537; cf. Rizakis – Zoumbaki 2001, COR 645 (Q. Villius . f. Titianus Quadratus).

31 Woolf 1997, 7; cf. also 9 and 10–12 for the reasons for promoting certain hierarchies of towns on the part of Rome.

32 Such situations are often described in Dio Chrysostom's orations; cf. Callander 1904; Jones 1978; Heller 2006; Wandsnider 2015.

33 Friesen 1993; Burrell 2004.

34 Keil 1913; Spawforth 1994; Spawforth 1995. Remijsen 2015, 52–55 argues anew for a date to the 4th century.

written by an unknown but certainly influential author in support of Argos. As becomes clear from the text, Argos was assigned to the district of Corinth on the basis of a recent reorganisation and was thereafter compelled to provide certain payments to Corinth. The letter aimed at supporting the Argive protest against this situation and at requesting an official hearing of the case, which would have been the second one after the rejection of an earlier Argive appeal.

Summarizing this text[35], we can observe that it is structured along the following points[36]: after a long reference to Argive history and alliance with Rome (407 B–408 A), the author focuses on the administrative modification which came into being seven years earlier and required *synteleia* of Argos to Corinth (408 A–B). There follows a series of arguments against this modification: first, it ignored the fact that Argos hosted a Panhellenic festival, as did the tax-free cities of Elis and Delphi; there is a hint that Argos enjoyed the privilege of immunity earlier, but it was deprived of it, despite the fact that it organized the trieteric Panhellenic festival of Nemea as well as some additional games, which meant that it was burdened with more celebrations in a four year cycle (408 B–C). Furthermore, Corinthians used the money in order to organize wild beast shows *(venationes)*, which were neither an ancient nor a Greek custom; the wealthy Corinthians were able to undertake the great expenses of such spectacles, given that they received contributions from other towns too; the Argeians were, however, poorer and they were obliged to be slave to a foreign spectacle organized by others, which was unfair, given their ancient glory. Furthermore, this was not fair treatment of a neighbouring town on the part of the Corinthians (408 D–409 B). The Corinthians ignored Hellenic customs and traditions and followed those which *they* had recently adopted from Rome (409 C); if they respected ancient laws and customs, they would pay tribute to Argos. Subsequently, the text stresses (409 D) that it was because of the incompetence of Argos's representatives during the first hearing of the case that this procedure resulted in favour of Corinth and in rejection of the Argive complaints; therefore, a second hearing of the case was requested. The new Argive representatives, Diogenes and Lamprias (410 B), were outstanding individuals and the new judges were »all that Argos could wish« (410 D). The letter concludes with the statement that, since even private individuals do not want to leave open disputes for their descendants, *poleis* which are immortal should settle their conflicts with other *poleis*.

It is obvious that the author of this letter uses impressive phrases which appeal to emotion and his arguments are at some points vaguely formulated and without strong consistency. The author is not quite sure about some facts in the articulation of his argumentation, e.g. about privileges which Argos enjoyed earlier. So, he »thinks« (οἶμαι), but is not certain, whether Argos enjoyed »freedom and other rights« in the past on the basis of its alliance with Rome (408 A: καὶ ὥσπερ οἶμαι μετεῖχε καὶ αὐτὴ καθάπερ αἱ λοιπαὶ τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ τῶν ἄλλων δικαίων). As a supportive argument of the Argive request for exemption from payments, he states vaguely, that Argos »perhaps« (τυχὸν) enjoyed »at the beginning« (τὴν ἀρχήν) – when this was is not accurately

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[35] For a short presentation of the content see also Spawforth 1994, 212; Spawforth 1995, 152 f.

[36] The crucial passages which are cited in our summary, are the following: 408 A–B: Κορίνθιοι δὲ νῦν αὐτὴν προσνεμομένην αὐτοῖς· οὕτω γὰρ εἰπεῖν εὐπρεπέστερον· ὑπὸ τῆς βασιλευούσης πόλεως εἰς κακίαν ἐπαρθέντες συντελεῖν αὐτοῖς ἀναγκάζουσι, καὶ ταύτης ἦρξαν , ὥς φασι, τῆς καινοτομίας ἕβδομος οὗτος ἐνιαυτός, οὔτε τὴν Δελφῶν οὔτε τὴν Ἠλείων ἀτέλειαν, ἧς ἠξιώθησαν ἐπὶ τῷ διατιθέναι τοὺς παρὰ σφίσιν ἱεροὺς ἀγῶνας, αἰδεσθέντες … – 408 C: πῶς οὖν εὔλογον ἐκείνοις μὲν ὑπάρχειν τὴν ἀτέλειαν τὴν πάλαι δοθεῖσαν, τοὺς δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς ὁμοίοις δαπανήμασιν ἀφεθέντας πάλαι, τυχὸν δὲ οὐδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν ὑπαχθέντας νῦν ἀφῃρῆσθαι τὴν προνομίαν ἧς ἀξιώθησαν;…ἐν μέντοι τούτῳ τῷ χρόνῳ καὶ δύο πρόκεινται παρὰ τοῖς Ἀργείοις ἀγῶνες ἑτεροι τοιοίδε, ὥστε εἶναι τέσσαρας τοὺς πάντας ἐν ἐνιαυτοῖς τέσσαρσι. – 408 D–409 B: πῶς οὖν εἰκὸς ἐκείνους μὲν ἀπράγμονας εἶναι λειτουργοῦντας ἅπαξ, τούτους δὲ ὑπάγεσθαι καὶ πρὸς ἑτέρων συντέλειαν ἐπὶ τετραπλασίοις τοῖς οἴκοι λειτουργήμασιν, ἄλλως τε οὐδὲ πρὸς ἑλληνικὴν οὐδὲ παλαιὰν πανήγυριν; οὐ γὰρ ἐς χορηγίαν ἀγώνων γυμνικῶν ἢ μουσικῶν οἱ Κορίνθιοι τῶν πολλῶν δέονται χρημάτων, ἐπὶ δὲ τὰ κυνηγέσια τὰ πολλάκις ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις ἐπιτελούμενα ἄρκτους καὶ παρδάλεις ὠνοῦνται. ἀτὰρ αὐτοὶ μὲν εἰκότως φέρουσι διὰ τὸν πλοῦτον τῶν ἀναλωμάτων τὸ μέγεθος, ἄλλως τε καὶ πολλῶν πόλεων, ὡς εἰκός, αὐτοῖς εἰς τοῦτο συναιρομένων, ὥστε ὠνοῦνται τὴν τέρψιν τοῦ φρονήματος. Ἀργεῖοι δὲ χρημάτων τε ἔχοντες ἐνδεέστερον καὶ ξενικῇ θέᾳ καὶ παρ' ἄλλοις ἐπιδουλεύειν ἀναγκαζόμενοι πῶς οὐκ ἄδικα μὲν καὶ παράνομα, τῆς δὲ περὶ τὴν πόλιν ἀρχαίας δυνάμεώς τε καὶ δόξης ἀνάξια πείσονται, ὄντες γ' αὐτοῖς ἀστυγείτονες, …

defined[37] – the privilege of immunity, of which it was later deprived (408 C: τυχὸν δὲ οὐδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν ὑπαχθέντας νῦν ἀφηρῆσθαι τὴν προνομίαν ἧς ἀξιώθησαν).

We owe redrawing scholarly attention to this important source. A. J. S. Spawforth dedicated two fascinating articles[38] to its discussion and used this letter in combination with epigraphic sources for a reconstruction of certain aspects of the situation in the province Achaia during the 1st century AD. His main suggestion is that the *venationes* mentioned in the letter took place in the context of the central festivities of the Achaean *koinon* whose headquarters should have been Corinth[39]. So, Spawforth regards the conflict between Corinth and Argos as an internal affair of the Achaean *koinon*, sparked by the contributions which Argos and the other members of the *koinon* had to pay to Corinth for the common imperial cult. Furthermore, in order to strengthen his argument, Spawforth refers to two fragmentary, but apparently identical, lists of towns, one from Corinth (IG IV 1605) and one from Argos (IG IV¹ 619), as possible lists of members of the Achaean *koinon*[40]. The letters ET + sums of money next to every town, which appear in the copy from Corinth, are interpreted by Spawforth as ἐτ(έλεσεν) followed by financial contributions in the context of the Achaean *koinon*. The towns listed in the two inscriptions are Lacedaemon, Mothone, Epidauros, Troizen, Hermione, Elis, Patras, Mantinea, Leuctron, Korone, Cephallenia, Boiai, Kleitor, and Messene. It should be stressed, however, that, since the heading of neither list is preserved, there is no certainty about the nature of these catalogues. Spawforth makes some further remarks on the evolution of the organization and activity of the Achaean *koinon*, starting from the attestation of a lifelong high priest of the *domus Augusta* of the *koinon* for the first time under Nero. The high priest C. Iulius Spartiaticus appears in two inscriptions, one Latin from Corinth as *archieri Domus Aug(ustae) [in] perpetuum, primo Achaeon* and one Greek from Athens as ἀρχιερέα θε[ῶν] Σεβαστῶν κ[αὶ] [γέ]νους Σε[β]αστῶν ἐκ τοῦ κοινοῦ τῆ[ς] Ἀχαίας διὰ βίου πρῶτον τῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος[41]. Spawforth's suggestion is that the introduction of a lifelong *archiereus* of the imperial house to the Achaean *koinon* coincided with the choice of Corinth as the headquarters of the union[42]. Based on the aforementioned letter and its reference to *venationes*, Spawforth further assumes that the first *archiereus*, Spartiaticus, celebrated the central festivities of the *koinon* at Corinth, probably with the organization of *venationes*, since he could supply wild beasts from Mt. Taygetos in his native region in Laconia[43].

This attractive restoration is based on certain indisputable facts, but also displays certain difficulties which need to be revisited. The introduction of a lifelong high priest into the Achaean *koinon* under Nero is epigraphically attested and thus ascertained. It is also known from various sources that *venationes* were frequently organized in the context of the imperial cult and sometimes were part of the festivities celebrated by *koina*. From the letter in question we are informed that wild beast shows were organized at Corinth. We have to clarify, however, some further obscure points before we can proceed to an interpretation of the letter in support of Argos and its historical background.

First, *venationes* were not organized exclusively by *koina* in the context of the provincial or federal imperial cult, but also on the civic level of performance of the imperial cult in various *poleis* or colonies[44]. From the letter in question we are merely informed that wild beast shows

[37] As a closer definition of the unclear phrase τὴν ἀρχὴν (»at the beginning«, 408 C) of the situation described in the letter in support of Argos, Spawforth 1995, 165 suggests AD 54, when »the new cult was founded and its finances were first set up« or even earlier »if we assume that member cities of the Panachaean union were obliged to contribute towards the cost of federal celebrations of imperial accessions in the pre-Neronian period«.
[38] Spawforth 1994; Spawforth 1995.
[39] Spawforth 1994, 217 f. 220; Spawforth 1995, 151.
[40] Spawforth 1994, 224–226.
[41] Spartiaticus's high priesthood is to be dated to the early years of Nero's reign, certainly before Agrippina's death, since he is mentioned in the Corinthian text as *[p]rocuratori Caesaris et Augustaẹ Agṛịp̣p̣inae.* Corinthian inscription: West 1931, 68; Athenian inscription: IG II² 3538.
[42] Spawforth 1995, 166.
[43] Spawforth 1994, 226 f.
[44] Cf. e.g. n. 76. 77 below for Athens and Patras, both not belonging to a *koinon*. Cf. also Price 1984, 101–132.

were organized in Corinth, but these events are not necessarily to be regarded as part of the central festivities of the Achaean *koinon*, given moreover that no word is – at least explicitly – stated in the letter about the *koinon*.

Second, the view that *venationes* were celebrated at Corinth as seat of the Achaean *koinon* takes for granted that Corinth assumed the leading role of this union and that it was indeed charged with this role on the occasion of the koinon's reorganization under Nero. However, there is no solid evidence in support of this view. As for the Neronian reorganization, we merely know that it introduced the office of the lifelong *archiereus* of the *domus Augusta*. The Corinthian inscription[45] which mentions Spartiaticus as the first lifelong *archiereus* of the *koinon* does not necessarily prove Corinth's special role in this body, since, as already mentioned, there is an Athenian inscription (IG II² 3538) which reproduces Spartiaticus's titles in Greek. The latter inscription gave no rise to speculation on Athens's role in the *koinon*, as it is known that Athens was never a member, just as various *poleis* and regions of the province did not belong to the Achaean *koinon*. Thus, the *koinon* did not include the whole province and could not be regarded as a provincial *koinon*[46]. In fact, not only Corinth's leading role, but even its membership in that body is doubtful. Corinth's membership could only be deduced from the attestation of Corinthians as office holders of the *koinon*. The following table includes the attested office holders whose origin is in some cases explicitly mentioned, in some others indirectly deduced or remains unknown.

Table 1 A: *archiereus*, H: *helladarch*, S: *strategos* (cf. the variations mentioned in the table [!] *Strategos* of the Hellenes, [!!] *Arxas tes Hellados*, [!!!] *Arxas tois Hellesi*), G: *grammateus*, P: *prostates*

Officeholders of the Achaean *koinon*	**A**	**H**	**S**	**G**	**P**	**Date**	**Origin**
C. Iulius Spartiaticus West 1931, 68; IG II² 3538	*					under Nero	Sparta
Cn. Cornelius Ti.f. Fab. Pulcher SEG 26, 253; Kent 1966, 138; IG IV 795	*	*	*	*		under Trajan	Epidauros/ Argos
T. Statilius Teimocrates Memmnianus, son of Lamprias IG IV 590; Meritt 1931, 80	*	*	*			AD 130–138	Epidauros/ Argos
[- - -]ος ἑλλαδάρχης Kent 1966, 307		*				late 2nd c.	?
Ti. Claudius Saithida Caelianus I IG V 1, 1455; SEG 48, 490	*	*				2nd c.	Messene
Ti. Claudius Saithida Caelianus II IG V 1, 1451; IG V 1, 512	*	*				AD 139–161	Messene
Claudius IG V 1, 1455a		*				2nd c.	Messene
T. Flavius Archelaus I.Olympia 483		*				AD 245	Elis
L. Gellius [- - -]sos I.Olympia 460		*				3rd c.	Elis (?)
L. Gellius Areto I.Olympia 382		*	*			AD 138	?
τὸν ἑλλαδ[άρ]χην τῆς [Ἀ]χαίας ΗỌΥΜỊỌṆ Flacelière 1954, 268		*				2nd half of the 2nd c.	?
Tib. Claudia Polycrateia Nausika Syll³ 846	*					late 2nd c.	Sicyon

[45] West 1931, 68.

[46] The imperial cult organized by the Achaean *koinon* is thus not to be regarded as a provincial cult; Lozano 2017, esp. 157 argued for the need to replace the term »provincial cult« with »federal/*koinon*/league cult«, since various *koina* of the East – the Achaean *koinon* included – were not provincial *koina*, as they did not cover whole provinces. Some scholars assume that the *koinon* did not cover, but represented the whole province, e.g. Camia 2016, 275 wonders whether the *ethn*é of central Greece, which were earlier members of the Panachaean *koinon*, were after the latter's disappearance »represented by the archiereus of the Achaean *koinon*«.

Ti. Claudius Polycrates Syll^3 846	*	*				late 2nd c.	Sicyon
Tib. Claudia Diogeneia Syll^3 846	*					late 2nd c.	Sicyon
P. Egnatius Brachyllus I.Olympia 57; IG II^2 1094			*			AD 126	?
P. Licinius Hermogenes IG IV 857			*			AD 175–180	Methana (?)
C. Iulius Theagenes, son of Cleoboulus IG V 1, 1398					*	AD 246	Korone
C. Claudius Iulius Cleoboulus, son of C. Iulius Theagenes I.Olympia 452			*		*	after AD 212	Korone
C. Iulius Theagenes, son of C. Iulius Theagenes I.Olympia 451			*			after AD 212	Korone
Damon, son of Aristeas IG V 1, 1352				*		under Hadrian	Abia (Messenia)
Claudius Teimander IG V 2, 517			*			1st/2nd c.	?
M. Antonius [---] I.Olympia 569			*			2nd/3rd c. (?)	?
Iulius Agrippa I.Olympia 487			*			3rd c.	?
L. Pompeius Craterus Cassianus I.Olympia 477			*			AD 210–220	Elis
Claudia Tyche I.Olympia 473–474	*					AD 212/3	Kleitor
P. Aelius Aristo I.Olympia 459			* [!]			under Hadrian	Messene
Ti. Claudius Calligenes I.Olympia 458		* [!!]				under Hadrian or Antoninus Pius	Messene
Ti. Claudius Pelops I.Olympia 430			*	*		early 2nd c.	Elis
T. Flavius Polybius I.Olympia 450			*			under Hadrian	Messene
Ti. Claudius Crispianus I.Olympia 448		* [!!!]				2nd c.	Messene
M. Aurelius Amarantus SEG 13, 480	*		*			shortly after AD 212 (?)	?
[.]ν Κρατέρο[υ] IG II^2 4085; I.Eleusis 471	*					2nd/3rd c.	?
Sex. Pompeius Menophanes, son of Theoxenus SEG 41, 384	*		*			AD 218–235	Sparta and Tegea

As arises from table 1, on the basis of the existing evidence, no functionary of the Achaean *koinon* can be recognized as Corinthian, and therefore, we do not know whether Corinth was a member of this body. Perhaps some of the office holders of unknown origin were Corinthians, but none of them is to be assigned with certainty to Corinth, not even three individuals who are often mentioned by some scholars as Corinthians: the aforementioned first high priest, C. Iulius Spartiaticus, who was a foreigner active in Corinth, and two individuals who were perhaps Corinthians, but are mentioned merely as *archiereis* and not as *archiereis* of the *koinon*[47]; *archiereis*

[47] In the appendix written by F. Camia in: Camia – Kantiréa 2010, 398–402, esp. 400 the following individuals are included in the list of the *archiereis* of the Achaean *koinon* as Corinthians: C. Iulius Spartiaticus who was of Spartan origin, although he held several offices in Corinth (West 1931, 68); Lucanius (Plut. symp. 5, 3, 1 [mor. 675 D–E]), who is however attested merely as *archiereus* and not as *archiereus* of the *koinon*. Camia assumes his identification with the third individual regarded as a Corinthian *archiereus* of the *koinon*, P. Licinius Priscus

and lifelong *archiereis* are not to be found exclusively in *koina*, but also in the context of the civic imperial cult[48].

Furthermore, the assumption that the first lifelong *archiereus* of the imperial cult of the Achaean *koinon*, C. Iulius Spartiaticus, who held the office early under Nero, organized *venationes*, contrasts with the fact that the organization of such shows by various office holders was officially forbidden by Nero, as we are informed by Tacitus[49]. The emperor's edict was to be applied not only in Rome, but also in the provinces[50]. Some exceptions[51] to this order are attested in the last years of Nero's reign. So, Spartiaticus's role as the high priest of the *koinon* early in the Neronian age should not necessarily be connected with *venationes*, since such shows were most probably not organized in Corinth during this period.

Even if one accepts that the spectacles mentioned in the letter in support of Argos were organized after the Neronian age in the context of the koinon's imperial cult, we should nevertheless wonder whether Argos, a member of the *koinon* (see tab. 1), would protest against contributions to the koinon's festivities, adopting indeed sharp language and speaking for festivities of »others«, in which Argos was »compelled« to contribute as a »slave«‹, πρὸς ἑτέρων συντέλειαν, παρ' ἄλλοις ἐπιδουλεύειν ἀναγκαζόμενοι. On the contrary, the fact that the *venationes* were financed from contributions of »many towns«, is defined in the letter (409 A) as »normal« (εἰκός). Can these towns be regarded as the members of the Achaean *koinon*[52]?

The Argive request for an exemption from payments to Corinth used as an argument the immunity which Elis and Delphi enjoyed as hosts of Panhellenic festivals, a fact which had not been assessed in the case of Argos which organized the Panhellenic Nemea. If Argos compares its position with that of Elis and Delphi, this could have hardly happened in the context of the Achaean *koinon*. Delphi never belonged to the Achaean *koinon*. As for Elis, which was a member of the *koinon* (see tab. 1), it is noteworthy that the town is included in the above-mentioned lists (IG IV 1605 and IG IV² 1, 619) which Spawforth connected with contributions to the *koinon*. As already mentioned, we are ignorant of the nature of these lists, since their heading is lost, but if we accept that they really include members of the Achaean *koinon*, then it arises that Elis was not exempted from contributions and, as a result, could not be used as an example in support of the Argive request for freedom from liability to payments. The inclusion of Elis in this list would be incompatible with the main argument of the interpretation of the conflict between Corinth and Argos as an internal affair of the *koinon*, and the attempt to rectify it on the basis of the assumption that we are dealing here »with an honorific record of voluntary payments«[53] needs to be reconsidered. Obviously, Delphi and Elis enjoyed exemption not from whatever contributions in the context of the *koinon*, but from tributes to which both towns were subject and this could only be taxation by the Roman state[54]. Therefore, if Argos requested immunity similar to that of Elis and Delphi, this would be an exemption from Roman taxation too.

Iuventianus (IG IV 203). Even if the identification is right, Iuventianus is attested merely *as archiereus dia biou* and not of the Achaean *koinon*.

48 Lifelong *archiereis* were not only the *archiereis* of the *koina*; Camia 2008, 24 refers to *archiereis* of the imperial cult in Athens, who held the office for life. For more civic *archiereis* of the Sebastoi for life see e.g. IG V 1, 65. 137. 380. 971. 1172; IG V 2, 515B; IG VII 2713. Cf. also Camia 2016, 256.

49 Tac. ann. 13, 5, 2; 31, 5; for Spartiaticus's connection with *venationes* see Spawforth 1994, 226 f.

50 Tac. ann. 13, 31, 5: *et edixit Caesar, ne quis magistratus aut procurator in provincia quam obtineret spectaculum gladiatorum aut ferarum aut aliud ludicrum ederet. Nam ante non minus tali largitione quam corripiendis pecuniis subiectos adfligebant, dum quae libidine deliquerant ambitu propugnant.*

51 Thornton 1977, n. 11.

52 Spawforth 1995, 164.

53 Spawforth 1994, 226.

54 See also Spawforth 1994, 221 and n. 40 with bibliography; however, he stresses the fact that the only reference to Delphi's and Elis' freedom and immunity is only in the letter in support of Argos. References to privileges of Delphi, among which ἀνεισφορία, are to be found in inscriptions already in the 2nd century BC (e.g. RDGE no. 1, A.3, 5; B.3, 5; C. 4; no. 37, l. 10). For a special treatment of Elis by Roman rulers thanks to Olympia, see Zoumbaki 2001, 161–166.

Hence, the quarrel between Argos and Corinth can hardly be associated with Corinth's economic demands emerging from its doubtful leading role in the Achaean *koinon*. Corinth possessed the role of both the provincial capital and a *conventus iuridicus*, an assizze centre, and its involvement in the extraction of revenues from the province should have been active[55]. So, contributions from Argos and »many other *poleis*«, as is mentioned in the letter (409 A), were apparently the revenues collected by Corinth, as imposed by its administrative role. The organisational modifications which ascribed Argos to Corinth's administrative periphery, apparently go back to the reconstruction of the province and its tax-collection system, after the abolition of Nero's grant of *immunitas* to Achaia by Vespasian.

From various sources it arises that a substantial economic benefit accrued for towns where tributes were collected[56], before they were forwarded to the central fisc, and where assizes were held[57]. Besides, on the basis of direct and indirect evidence, various scholars have stressed the role of assize centres, beyond their function as courts of justice, for further administrative purposes, financial purposes included[58], e.g. for the collection of contributions from their peripheries. Therefore, the status of provincial capitals and assize centres entailed not only high prestige within the hierarchy of the province, but a considerable tangible economic advantage as well. Thus it was regarded as an exceptional privilege by Hierapolis in Phrygia to have the δ[ίκαιον τῆς - - -] τραπέζης τῶν φόρων (»the right of the bank for the tributes«) confirmed by Antoninus Pius, whatever this *trapeza* exactly was[59]. Similarly, in certain of Dio Chrysostom's speeches it is obvious that collecting the tributes was regarded as a noteworthy privilege for a *polis* and compulsory for minor towns to have their tributes collected at treasuries situated at a regional centre, to have their legal cases judged in regional courts, and to participate in sacrifices performed at

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55 See Haensch 1997, 654. That Corinth was a *conventus iuridicus* can be deduced from Aristeid. Isthm. 27: καὶ μὴν εὐνομίας γε ὁρμητήριον ἡ πόλις ἔτι καὶ νῦν βραβεύει τὰ δίκαια τοῖς Ἑλλῆσι. On the *conventus* system in Achaia see Fournier 2010, 88–98.

56 See e.g. Corbier 1991, 660 f.; Ritti 1999, 272; Heller 2006, 143.

57 Burton 1975, esp. 100; Kantor 2013, 145–149.

58 Habicht 1975, 91: »… the question at least arises of what other purposes the system of assizes may have served in any of the Roman provinces in the Imperial period. Several possibilities come easily to mind: the census and the system of tax collection, recruitment to the army, the composition of the provincial assembly and others.« The inscription from Ephesos, which was first published by C. Habicht, later I.Ephesos 13, is a fragmentary list of the dioceses *(conventus iuridici)* of Asia and the communities attached to each of them, followed by certain rubrics and amounts of money. The dating of the text to the Flavian period is generally accepted. Various topics related to its interpretation are still debated. Cf. Knibbe 1987 for a further discussion on this text. On the *conventus* system of Asia see Fournier 2010, 62–87. Swain 1996, 228: »It is apparent that the assize districts – as the only administrative divisions in proconsular provinces … could also be used for wider administrative purposes, financial and other, outside the normal cycle of meetings.« Mitchell 1999, 26: »However, the organisation of the assize centres provided a schema which was readily adaptable for uses other than jurisdiction.«

59 Ritti 1999 (SEG 49, 1813 with interesting comments). Ritti considered various possibilities for restoring the gap in the phrase δ[ίκαιον τῆς - - -] τραπέζης and examining the nature of this treasury at Hierapolis, the possibility of a local treasury or a regional *trapeza* for the tributes from Phrygia, »come un ufficio distrettuale dipendente dal fiscus Asiaticus, e quindi con funzionali dipendenti dal questore provinciale, oppure come un organismo realmente municipale, cioè in qualche modo gestito dalla città, sia pure naturalmente, trattandosi comunque dei tributi, del tutto responsabile di fronte al governo provinciale del versamento di questi all'erario« (p. 271). Heller 2006, 145 f. finds »hautement probable que chaque district possédait une τράπεζα τῶν φόρων située normalement dans les capitales de *conventus.* Le privilège pouvait cependant, par décision spéciale de l'empereur et comme marque de sa générosité, être étendu à d'autres cités, autorisées à concentrer les tributs d'une région plus petite que celle correspondant au *conventus*«; Heller further rejects the idea that Hierapolis was entitled to the new *conventus* capital and believes that »Il faut plutôt penser que la capitale a dû renoncer à centraliser l'ensemble des tributs de son district et céder une partie de cette tâche à Hiérapolis, ou encore que Hiérapolis s'est ajoutée à la liste des intermédiaires dans le système de perception fiscale, concentrant une partie des tributs du *conventus*, qui venaient ensuite se joindre aux autres dans la caisse de la capitale, avant d'être enfin transférés vers le trésor romain.« Thonemann 2011, 114 and n. 41 (SEG 61, 1152) sees in the ›bank‹ of Hierapolis the ›Phrygian treasury‹ and considers Phrygia as a separate administrative district using also epigraphic attestations of magistrates charged with economic duties, in whose area of competence Phrygia is mentioned as a distinct unit.

these centres, which was regarded as a degradation of their status[60]. It is remarkable that a town's assignment to the periphery of a major town where justice was administered and tributes were collected is equated by Dio Chrysostom to the status of a *kome* (μὴ παρ'ἑτέροις ἐξετάζεσθαι μηδὲ συντελεῖν ἄλλοις καθάπερ κώμην) and hence was envisaged as a reduction to a lower level within the province[61]. A further humiliation was the obligation of the attached towns to endure burdensome behaviour on the part of a major town. Incidents of cruelty to subordinated towns recur several times in Dio's speeches, who induced on certain occasions privileged *poleis* to treat towns assigned to their district with gentleness (πράως καὶ κηδεμονικῶς καὶ φιλοτίμως), so that the latter do not feel burdened and offended (ἀπεχθῶς; βαρύνεσθαι καὶ βλασφημεῖν; ὑβρίζειν πως καὶ ἐνοχλεῖν τοὺς ἐλάττονας)[62].

All this displays a striking similarity with the Argive complaints about oppressive behaviour on the part of Corinth, and about Corinth's vice (κακία) which was encouraged by Rome's decision to assign Argos to Corinth's periphery (ὑπὸ τῆς βασιλευούσης πόλεως εἰς κακίαν ἐπαρθέντες). Additional words and phrases in the letter in question show how burdened Argos felt (ἀναγκάζουσι, παρ' ἄλλοις ἐπιδουλεύειν ἀναγκαζόμενοι, ἄδικα μὲν καὶ παράνομα). There are further remarkable commonalities between the expressions used in both the letter and Dio Chrysostom's speeches as well as commonalities in certain issues which appear to be of crucial importance in both cases. Attachment to the sphere of a major town and the obligations it entailed are often called *synteleia*[63], both in Dio's speeches and in the letter (συντελεῖν αὐτοῖς ἀναγκάζουσι, ὑπάγεσθαι καὶ πρὸς ἑτέρων συντέλειαν). The motif of subordination to another town, which appears so crucial in the letter, recurs several times directly or indirectly in Dio's speeches. Argos used its glorious past and earlier privileges in order to claim independence, a motif which is also to be found in inscriptions[64].

A careful reading of the letter indicates that a deeper reason for Argive disaffection and protest was the city's assignment to Corinth's administrative district, a move which was regarded as a humiliation of a *polis* with a glorious history. However, it was not merely the contribution to *venationes* that was seen by Argos as a downgrading within the hierarchy of the province. Therefore, focusing exclusively on the *venationes* which are mentioned in just a few lines in a letter of six pages seems misleading for our comprehension of this source. It is evident that administrative hierarchy in the province Achaia enabled the dominant behaviour of Corinth. Thus, the capital of the province could profit for its own purposes from the revenues collected from Argos and »many other *poleis*«, before the predetermined amount of money was sent to the state treasury. It is further possible that expensive *venationes* were financed from the profit which was drawn in favour of Corinth, or, at least this was an Argive denouncement.

In any case, the organization of *venationes* at Corinth triggers the author of the letter to contrast the different cultural backgrounds of an old glorious Hellenic city and a Roman colony and to use

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[60] Dio Chrys. 34, 14: … βαρύνεσθαι καὶ βλασφημεῖν καὶ μᾶλλον ἑτέρων ὑπακούειν … ὑβρίζειν πως καὶ ἐνοχλεῖν τοὺς ἐλάττονας … 34. 47: ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας πόλεις ὑμᾶς ἀξιῶ προσφέρεσθαι πράως καὶ κηδεμονικῶς καὶ φιλοτίμως καὶ μὴ ἀπεχθῶς. Οὕτω γὰρ ἑκόντες ἀκολουθήσουσιν ὑμῖν θαυμάζοντες καὶ ἀγαπῶντες: ὃ μεῖζόν ἐστι τοῦ θύειν παρ' ὑμῖν καὶ δικάζεσθαι … 38: Ἡμεῖς δὲ ἂν ἀπολάβωμεν τὸ πρωτεῖον ἀμαχεὶ παραδόντων αὐτὸ τῶν Νικαέων, πότερα ληψόμεθα τοὺς φόρους οὓς νῦν ἐκεῖνοι λαμβάνουσιν; ἢ τὰς πόλεις τὰς συντελούσας εἰς τὸ παρ' ἐκείνοις δικαστήριον ἐνταυθοῖ καλέσομεν; cf. Price 1984, 130 for the financial subordination to a major neighbouring town and more specifically the obligatory participation in the sacrifices of a major town, which was sometimes a reason for protest. Evidence from the sources cited above, as well as further related documents, are taken into account for an analysis of this situation by Heller 2006, esp. pp. 125–162.

[61] e.g. Dio Chrys. 40: … καῖ τῷ δικάζειν αὐτοὶ καὶ τῷ μὴ παρ'ἑτέροις ἐξετάζεσθαι μηδὲ συντελεῖν ἄλλοις καθάπερ κώμην, πᾶσι τούτοις συναίρεσθαι πέφυκε τὸ φρόνημα τῶν πόλεων καὶ μεῖζον ἀξίωμα γίγνεσθαι τὸ τοῦ δήμου καὶ πλέονος τυγχάνειν τιμῆς …

[62] See n. 60.

[63] Cf. e.g. Dio Chrys. 38: τὰς πόλεις τὰς συντελούσας εἰς τὸ παρ' ἐκείνοις δικαστήριον; 40: μὴ παρ' ἑτέροις ἐξετάζεσθαι μηδὲ συντελεῖν ἄλλοις καθάπερ κώμην. On Synteleia see Counillon 2008 with earlier bibliography.

[64] e.g. SEG 17, 528 (Philadelphia, Lydia): the town's exemption from financial contribution to the expenses of high-priesthoods and presiding over festivities (ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρχιερωσύνας καὶ τὰς τῶν πανηγύρεων ἀρχὰς) to the mother-cities *(metropoleis)*, is based on the argument that Philadelphia itself was earlier accounted among the *metropoleis*; cf. Price 1984, 130.

this as an argument in support of the Argive point. Spawforth emphasized the ›outspokenness‹ of this text[65]. It is striking that criticism against Corinth indirectly addresses Rome itself, since the recent modifications planned by the »reigning city« encouraged Corinthian misbehaviour (ὑπὸ τῆς βασιλευούσης πόλεως εἰς κακίαν ἐπαρθέντες), whilst the brutal spectacles were taken over from the »reigning city« (παρὰ τῆς βασιλευούσης προσειληφέναι πόλεως). Disapproval of *venationes*, since they were neither a Hellenic nor ancient practice (… οὐδὲ πρὸς ἑλληνικὴν οὐδὲ παλαιὰν πανήγυριν; …ξενικῆι θέαι …), as well as of the exploiting of such spectacles by individuals with political ambitions, is to be found in the works of bright spirits of the time, such as Dio Chrysostom or Plutarch. An educated man, most probably from the province of Achaia, who was familiar with the situation and interconnected both with the élite of Argos and with Roman magistrates, a figure like Plutarch, can be recognized in the unknown composer of the letter[66].

Summarizing all these observations, it arises that the letter in support of Argos was sparked by an Argive wish for freedom from subordination and compulsion to *synteleia* to Corinth, and by an Argive invocation for exemption from tributes which were collected by Corinth, the capital and one of the assize centres of the province. There is no evidence that Corinth assumed a further leading role, that of the headquarters of the Achaean *koinon*, and neither is there certainty that it was even a member of the *koinon*. Spawforth's final reluctance and wondering, whether the inconvenient Argive situation is to be placed into the context of the *koinon* or of the Roman administration, reflect the reservation of an honest scholar[67].

Athens's envy of Corinth

Criticism for Corinth's cultural orientation and deflection from ancestral Hellenic customs is to be found in various sources[68]. This emphasizes how shocking it was that Athens, the cultural centre of Greece, was equally fond of Roman spectacles. Literary sources refer to the Athenians' emulation of the Corinthians, which led them to organize bloody combats. Dio Chrysostom criticizes the Athenians for envying the Corinthians (31, 121: … οὕτω σφόδρα ἐζηλώκασι Κορινθίους) and disapproves the fact that they staged such shows in the theatre of Dionysus, under the Acropolis, thus outstripping Corinthians who watched them in a glen outside the town. Philostratus (Ap. 4, 22) presents Apollonius of Tyana as blaming the Athenians for indulging in bloody spectacles, which surpassed Corinthian passion. Lucian (Demonax 57) also mentions that it was out of envy of the Corinthians (κατὰ ζῆλον τὸν πρὸς Κορινθίους) that the Athenians organized spectacles in the amphitheatre.

In all aforementioned sources the notions of Athenian emulation and envy recur several times. In the case of Argos, Corinth's deviation from Hellenic culture was rejected and was, moreover, converted into an argument against its subordination to Corinth. It is interesting that in the case of Athens competition with Corinth did not result in a conflict, but in an imitation of Corinth's practices, if we trust the sources cited above. After all, Athens was a tax-free *polis*, which means that it could not be subordinated to Corinth in the provincial administrative hierarchy.

The fact that Athens was a *civitas libera* did not, however, necessarily mean that it still maintained its old glory. Corinth's refoundation may have been one of the factors that outshone Athens' glamour, not only because it occupied a distinct place in the province, but also on an economic level. Certainly, we are not legitimized to see an economic competition in the creeping contro-

[65] On the ›outspokenness‹, see Spawforth 1995, 167. On the author of the letter see Spawforth 1995, 159. 167 f.

[66] Ideas against *venationes* and their exploitation for political purposes are to be traced in several of Plutarch's works, such as the *Precepts of statecraft* and *De sollertia animalium*. On Plutarch's attitude towards *venationes* and a comparison with hunting, see Jazdzewska 2009/2010.

[67] Spawforth 1995, 165. Despite Spawforth's careful reservation, his suggestion has been used by other scholars as a solid basis for further research, see e.g. Winter 1995; Pawlak 2013, 158; Ajootian 2014; Di Napoli 2018, esp. 384 f.

[68] Cf. e.g. the lament of Krinagoras from Lesbos (Anth. Gr. 9, 284) for the fate of Corinth and its unworthy new inhabitants; Strab. 8, 6, 23 for the freedman origin of the Corinthians of Roman age and their search for ›necrocorinthia‹; Favorinus's of Arles *Corinthian Oration* (commentary König 2001; Concannon 2014, esp. 41–43).

versy between Athens and Corinth, which is to be observed in the sources mentioned above. The regression of the Athenian economic life displays, in any case, a counterpoint to the flourishing of a resurrected Corinth. The Athenian economy was not as robust as it had been earlier, since the loss of economic benefits from Delos after the Mithridatic Wars put an end to its crucial role in the regional economic life. The disastrous results of Sulla's hostility, namely the damage to buildings at the Athenian agora and at the harbour of Piraeus, must have remained unrepaired and visible for several years, a fact which suggests economic difficulties[69]. Production of Athenian silver coins ceased in the 40s BC and bronze currency was also interrupted under Augustus for about one century; on the contrary, the Corinthian mint produced regularly at least until the Severan period[70]. Corinth's refoundation by Caesar and the revitalization of commercial activity at its two harbours should have certainly resulted in a reduction of the importance of Piraeus. When Strabo (9, 1, 15 [= 395–396]) visited the region, he saw the Long Walls in ruins and Piraeus shrunk to a small settlement round the harbours. Archaeological investigation in the area discovered that »building remains dating to the Classical period (mainly the fourth century BCE) extend over a larger area than those of Roman date, which tend to concentrate on the isthmus between the Kantharos and Zea harbours«[71]. D. Grigoropoulos disconnects this fact from Sulla's destruction and disassociates the shrinkage of the settlement size from population numbers which emerge from estimations based on gravestones, and attributes it to changes in demography[72]. Grigoropoulos is perhaps right in regarding it as an exaggeration to envisage Piraeus as a declining harbour throughout the Roman period. Nevertheless, it was certainly less dynamic compared to Corinth with its flourishing ports. In particular Kenchreai, which is better investigated, seems to have been the most impressive Roman harbour construction in the Aegean, where no new major harbour was built in the Roman period[73]: the fortified naval station of the Classical and Hellenistic period was now replaced by an organized settlement with new structures, extensive storage facilities, shops, *piscinae* and a quasi-urban planning with monumental buildings, even an amphitheatre[74]. Piraeus's shrinkage contrasts obviously with this flourishing development.

Economically weakened Athens struggled for many years in attempt to recover. The only superior quality which Athens could advertise was its reputation as the educational centre of Hellenism, a destination for upper class members with a thirst for the pursuit of knowledge, but despite its efforts it had certainly lost much of its glamour until Hadrian offered it a renaissance. The population of the town which was recognized as the quintessence of Hellenic culture could not, however, resist the new Roman cultural trends which were gradually spread over the Greek *poleis*. Bloody shows which were as a rule organized in the context of festivities of the imperial cult were attractive especially for the lower social masses, and were therefore used by wealthy individuals with ambitious plans for a political career as a tool for the manipulation of the people. Organizing spectacular shows as part of the imperial cult could enhance one's social profile, satisfying both the emperors and the people. In this environment, new trends transplanted by Corinth into the province were imitated by Athens, even though those trends were generally criticized as non-Hellenic. Thus, diffusion and popularity of bloody performances is contrasted with the criticism of intellectuals, who apparently expressed a view which was not in accordance

[69] Hoff 1997.
[70] Kremydi – Iakovidou 2015, 457 f. 470 f.
[71] Grigoropoulos 2009, 165 referring also to similar conclusions which can be drawn from the archaeological investigation by K.-V. von Eickstedt.
[72] Grigoropoulos 2009, 178 f.; Grigoropoulos 2016 (with previous bibliography) presented statistics of the attested foreigners in Piraeus in the Roman period, based on tombstones and disagreed with the method used by R. Garland who also observes a shrinkage of the population in Piraeus during the Roman period. From this statistical analysis it arises that the vast majority of these foreigners came from the Eastern Mediterranean, Achaea, Macedonia, Asia Minor, Thrace, and the southern Black Sea littoral. Grigoropoulos's arguments have been revisited by Carugati 2019, 199–201 who sees a decline of Piraeus as a commercial harbour in the course of the Hellenistic and Roman periods given the development of the harbours of Alexandria and Rhodes as well as of Delos.
[73] Rothaus 2000, 64–83; Bouras 2016, 205 and 212.
[74] Rife 2010, 396–397.

with the people's indulgence in these shows[75]. Even the passionate lover of Hellenic culture, the emperor Hadrian, funded a *venatio* of 1,000 wild beasts in the stadium of Athens[76], obviously in order to offer the people a lavish spectacle worthy of a ruler. This makes clear that the dividing line between cultural levels was rather blurred. The Athenians' passion for Roman spectacles appears more striking if one takes into account that, beyond the archaeological finds related to spectacles of the amphitheatre, which have been discovered at the colonies of Corinth and Patras, and beyond the literary sources referring to Corinth and Athens, there is hardly any evidence for the organisation of Roman shows in the province of Achaia, nor for premises where they could be staged as early as the late 1st century AD[77]. The fact that Athens appears side by side with the colonies as the only case known so far for adopting officially Roman-type entertainment during this period, as well as the recurring reference to its envy of Corinth, betrays that the stronghold of Hellenic culture was liable to an inevitable external influence. So, Corinth functioned as a cultural influencer in the province, even for the people of preeminent Athens.

CONCLUSION: MULTIFACETED CORINTH IN CONSTANT TRANSITION

Old, powerful and wealthy Corinth, which was brought back to life by Caesar who refunded it as a Roman colony, assumed multiple roles in the province of Achaia, beyond becoming a provincial capital where various elements of the administrative infrastructure of the province were based. Whereas certain *poleis*, like Argos, might have felt in some cases oppressed by the administrative superiority of Corinth, ambitious provincials looked upon it as an appropriate place for socializing, holding offices, erecting monuments for Roman magistrates, and aiming at useful networking which could lead to a career on a higher level. Corinth's cultural orientation and indeed popular bloody spectacles which were criticized by cultivated members of the provincial élite, such as Plutarch, were however enthusiastically imitated by the people of Athens. Plutarch's criticism of spectacles of the amphitheatre could not prevent him after all from frequently visiting Corinth, apparently for all of the aforementioned reasons of cultivating useful contacts.

Yet Roman Corinth displayed more cultural faces, beyond that of the conduit of Roman culture in old Greece. The colony maintained – at least artificially – symbols of its Hellenic past, such as Pegasus which was still depicted on its coins. Moreover, Greek was always used in Corinth and as the epigraphic record shows, there is an increase of Greek texts by the Hadrianic period[78]. It is questionable whether Corinth joined the Achaean *koinon* of the Imperial period, but it was certainly a member of Hadrian's Panhellenion[79].

Beyond displaying the different facets of its new colonial character and its Hellenic legacy, Corinth gradually assumed various features of its cosmopolitan societal components. As a major Mediterranean commercial hub, Corinth attracted businessmen from various corners of the empire and enabled the accumulation of material wealth as well as the adoption of new trends, philosophical and intellectual concepts, religious beliefs and superstitions. These clearly resulted from an intense and free flow of ideas which were traded along with goods. The ideological and religious complexity which is evident in archaeological finds and inscriptions, the coexistence of traditional

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75 See Carter 2009 and a reinterpretation of this ›cultural performace‹ for the Greek East.

76 SHA 19, 3: *Athenis mille ferarum venationem in stadio exhibuit.* Cf. Birley 1997, 263.

77 At least archaeological evidence for amphitheatres or other structures used for gladiatorial combats, e.g. stadia, on Greek mainland about the late 1st century AD exists for Patras (Papapostolou 1989; Petropoulos 2009, 70–72) and Corinth (Fowler – Stillwell 1932, 89–91 for the amphitheatre; cf. n. 73 above for an amphitheatre at Kenchreai; cf. Dio Chrys. 31, 121; Apul. met. 10, 18 for bloody spectacles in Corinth); literary evidence for staging bloody spectacles in Athens (Dio Chrys. 31, 121; Philostr. Ap. 4, 22; Lukian. Demonax 57; SHA 19, 3). It is possible that in other towns already existing premises were used for staging such shows, but there is no direct proof. Cf. Welch 2007, 182 f.; Dodge 2009.

78 See Kent 1966, 18 f.; cf. Millis 2010, esp. 23–30 and Stroud 2013, 9 and n. 19 adding interesting comments on the use of Greek also in the 1st century AD; Økland 2010, 213–215 for comments starting from the use of the language in the the cult of Ceres/Κόρη.

79 Cf. e.g. Spawforth – Walker 1985.

Greek and Oriental cults, merging mystic, ecstatic and magical rituals, and a vibrant Jewish community negotiating with an emerging Christian community, appear also as the background of the story which unfolds in Apuleius' *Golden Ass*[80]. This story offers snapshots of the world of Corinth of the late 2nd century AD, a colourful town with busy harbours, a vivid countryside, a bustling market, religious events and spectacles of the amphitheatre, individuals from various geographical and social origins, and various allusions to Corinth's privileged status as well as references to the governor. In the world of the *Golden Ass* the symbols of Roman power and culture appear side by side with elements of a Hellenic heritage, as well as a mix of cultural orientations of a crowd living in the melting pot of a *metropolis* at the meeting point of West and East.

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[80] For Apuleius's story and its background see Millar 1981; Graverini 2012. For the religious and ideological complexity in Roman Corinth see the contributions of the rich volume Schowalter – Friesen 2005; Stroud 2014.

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Marina Tasaklaki

CAPITAL VERSUS LOCAL MINTS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ROMAN PROVINCIAL MONETARY POLICY

THE CASE OF THRACE*

ABSTRACT

It is certain that the Roman provincial monetary policy was not centralized; on the contrary, elements of decentralization can be traced in tandem with the establishment or re-establishment of administrative structures. It was within this framework that capitals and other provincial cities struck coins. The aim of this study is to discuss the complex relationship between the province's main city – in our case Perinthos – and its hinterland in terms of numismatic policy: excluding issues that can be safely characterized as non-systematic, the city-issues are examined in light of the real needs of the urban centre and in connection with the mobility of the army. Such an approach allows us to explore holistically how networks were developed within the province. Thus, although Perinthos firmly remained the administrative base of Thrace, the monetary centre shifted from time to time, depending on the needs of the province and the empire. Lastly, this paper discusses whether this particular relationship between the capital and local mints in the province of Thrace appears elsewhere.

KEYWORDS

Numismatics – Roman Thrace – provincial coins – local mints – monetary policy

INTRODUCTION

The Roman administrative policy was neither intervening nor centralized. Elements of decentralization were already present from the beginning of the Principate, with power, authority, and duties being delegated by the emperor and imperial Rome to the governors and provincial capitals and, in turn, by them to the cities and the local *boule* and *demos*. The same principle of decentralization occurred in the economic sector and can be traced back to the time of Augustus. This phenomenon culminates at the time of Antoninus Pius when 480 provincial cities in the Roman world acquired the right to issue coins bearing the portrait of the emperor[1]. This policy partially

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[1] For the coin production of the provinces under Antoninus Pius, see RPC IV; Heuchert 2005; Yarrow 2012. The launch of so many active mints throughout the empire, apart from the general political situation, clearly had various local causes. Regarding the Empire, it is the time when the official mint of Rome reduced the production of bronze coins and therefore in the middle of the 2nd century AD *dupondii* and *asses* became scarce and quadrans disappeared. In addition to this, the Riotinto silver mine in Spain collapsed and the Marcomanni attacks led to the abandonment of the gold mines in Dacia (Howgego 1992; Wilson 2007). So, changes related to the weight and authenticity of gold and silver coins of this period are traceable. Rome's difficulty in responding to the continuing rise in money led not only to revaluations and the reduction of the silver content of the *denarius* – measures known to Roman educated citizens (Fronto, *Frontonis epistula ad M. Antoninum imperatorem de orationibus Liber* 13) –, but also to the necessity to operate provincial mints, which could at least meet the issue of bronze coins needed locally on a daily basis (Yarrow 2012, 423 f.). For the gradual decrease of silver in Roman *denarii* and implica-

tackled the persistent inflationary rise of *denarii* and the reduction of silver content. Simultaneously, it relieved the empire from the burden of issuing low value coins, mainly bronze, and of transferring them from the capital to the provinces.

Roman Thrace is a good case for studying the administrative organization and monetary policy of a province and how those two factors interacted[2]. This is because the great administrative project that was implemented in the province after its integration carried over to the monetary organization. Bearing in mind the overall picture of monetary production, we can identify two important landmarks that led to the demarcation of three periods. The first landmark is the administrative upgrade of the province with the establishment and re-establishment of urban structures in the inland by Trajan, immediately after the successful outcome of the Dacian wars; while the second one was the civil war for the seizure of power by Septimius Severus, disputes that took place in the eastern part of the empire and directly affected Thrace. It is in the context of the monetary production during these periods that this paper will discuss and propose a model for the relationship of Perinthos (the administrative centre of the province) with all other cities of the province. Apart from the mint of Perinthos, 23 more local mints operated in the region throughout these two and a half centuries and their depiction on table 1 and figure 2 show, on the one hand, their geographical distribution throughout the province and, on the other, the degree to which their production was systematic.

The first part of this paper examines the cities' numismatic production on the basis of the number of obverse dies and that of coins found in order to determine whether it was systematic and targeted to meet real needs or simply the result of the cities' participation in festive events related to local or imperial actions. At this point, this method was applied with some reservations, as it is notoriously difficult to provide any reliable estimation of the relative, let alone the absolute, amount of coinage production of the province, since the numismatic corpora at our disposal do not always offer a die-link study[3]. Moreover, even when we have such studies, it is difficult to calculate the exact amount of the pieces produced by each pair. Thus, the number of dies and coins that have been found gives us an indication of the relative production of different cities and areas[4].

tions of Roman coinage, see Walker 1977, 40–44; Duncan Jones 2005; Butcher – Ponting 2012, 64; Uhlir et al. 2006.

[2] For Thrace, see Valeva et al. 2015; esp. see Lozanov 2015 (Roman Thrace). The integration of Thrace into the Roman province in AD 46 or 47, albeit inevitable after the assassination of the last tribal king Rhoemetalkes III and the dynastic disputes, was a slow process without problems and upheavals (Lozanov 2015, 78–80; Parissaki [forthcoming]). Moreover, the area, being south of the province of Moesia, was not on the border of the empire, so it did not require drastic changes. The Romans had, in fact, been familiar with the political situation in the region for almost two centuries before the integration, through the alliances and allied relations with the Greek cities of Maroneia and Abdera, see I.Thrac.Aeg. E8; I.Thrac.Aeg. E9; I.Thrac.Aeg. E10; I.Thrac.Aeg. E168; Clinton 2003; Parissaki 2009; Parissaki 2013b; Parissaki 2018; Terzopoulou 2018.

[3] Die-studies can be found only in numismatic corpora of the cities of Perinthos (Schönert-Geiß 1965), Hadrianopolis (Jurukova 1987), Bizye (Jurukova 1981), Traianopolis and Augusta Traiana (Schönert-Geiß 1991), and Pautalia (Ruzicka 1932/1933). For Philippopolis and Pautalia a new die-link project is ongoing under the direction of Dr. Ulrike Peter and Dr. Lily Grozdanova respectively. Due to the fact that almost all numismatic corpora need a revision, in this study I also add new material coming from online digital databases like RPC online and CN along with other lists of museums and electronic auctions, being careful to avoid duplicate copies. Especially for Plotinopolis and Topeiros, I used the material gathered for the purpose of my doctoral thesis (Tasaklaki 2020). Therefore, the majority of the evidence used is updated and if there are cases where there is no evidence for the die-link, I simply mention the number of known specimens. Such is the case for Philippopolis based on Varbanov 2019.

[4] Esty in 2006 (see also Esty 1986 and Esty 2011) proposed a formula (formulas 3 and 4), which is now widely accepted, for estimating the initial number of dies that one city produced. This formula, was improved by Panagiotis P. Iossif and Petr Veselý with a degree of confidence interval reaching 95 %, especially in cases where the ratio between number of specimens and number of dies ($R = n/d$) is high (>7). A review of all studies in terms of the estimate of methods of initial dies of a city was conducted in 1995 by Françoise de Callataÿ (1995) and later by Warren Esty (2011). Apart from the bibliography cited in the above mentioned articles, see also Katsari 2011 and Howgego 2015. A different perspective is expressed by Buttrey 1993, who questioned the possibility of estimating dies. Either way, we ought to keep in mind that all related studies apply to silver coins, but it is also feasible to

Table 1 Panorama of the active mints in the province of Thrace; × = pseudo-autonome issues

24 cities	Abdera	Anchialos	Ainos	Apollonia Pontica	Augusta Traiana	Bizye	Byzantion	Deultum	Hadrianopolis	Markianopolis	Maroneia	Mesembria	Nikopolis Nestum	Nikopolis Istrum	Pautalia	Perinthos	Plotinopolis	Serdica	Topeiros	Traianopolis	Philippopolis	Thasos	Samothrace	Imbros	Total
Augustus (27–14)																									2
Tiberius (14–37)																									1
Claudius (41–54)																×									2
Agrippina																									
Nero (54–68)											×					×									3
Octavia - Poppaea																									
Vespasian (69–79)																									1
Titus (79–81)																									
Domitian (81-96)																×					×				3
Nerva (96–98)																									1
Trajan (98–117)																									4
Hadrian (117–138)											×					×									9
Sabina																									
Antoninus Pius (138–161)		×		×		×					×					×	×				×				13
Faustina I																									
Marcus Aurelius																									
Faustina II																									
Marcus Aurelius (161–180)																									10
Lucius Verus																									
Commodus																									
Faustina II																									
Commodus (180–192)							Belong to the province of Pontus-Bithynia		×						×										9
Crispina																									
Septimius Severus (193–211)		×			×	×				Belong to the province of Moesia				Belong to the province of Moesia		×					×				14
Caracalla																									
Plautilla																									
Geta																									
Julia Domna																									
Caracalla – Geta (211)							?		?																7
Geta																									
Julia Domna																									
Caracalla (212–217)			×						×							×	×	×			×			×	13
Julia Domna																									
Macrinus (217–218)																									2
Diadumenian (218)																									3
Elagabalus (218–222)																									5
Julia Paula – Julia Maesa																									
Alexander Severus (222–235)																×									4
Julia Mamaea																									
Maximinus I (235–238)																									3
Maximus																									
Gordian III (238–244)																									7
Tranquillina																									
Philip I (244–249)																									4
Otacilia Severa																									
Philip II																									
Trebonianus Gallus (251–253)																									2
Volousianus (251–253)																									2
Valerian (253–260)																									2
Gallienus (253–268)																									4
Total	7	7	1	4	7	4	11	8	8	1	8	5	1	2	7	15	5	5	3	5	10	2	1	2	

1 Map of active mints in Roman Thrace, 1st century AD (© M. Tasaklaki)

One die can produce approximately 20,000 specimens, the value of which is contingent on the denomination[5]. Tables 2–4 provide the number of dies that each city produced and the known specimens. Coin issues indicate possible reasons that led cities to strike coins, e.g., for the covering of practical needs in everyday transactions, for matters of prestige or even for reasons dictated by external factors[6]. Horizontal monitoring of the indicators will show us the policy followed in each period, the network formed within the province and, finally, the degree of interaction between the Roman and provincial powers. At this stage, no calculations of either the initial dies that a city had or nominal values of the issues are given, as preliminary conclusions can be extracted also by the number of known dies.

Finally, a comparison with other neighbouring provinces, such as Pontus-Bithynia, Macedonia, Achaia and Moesia is attempted. This comparison shows that the production model found in each province is different and depends primarily on the local military, as well as on less political conditions on the local military primarily and less political conditions.

THE PROVINCE OF THRACE, 1ST CENTURY AD

The monetary profile of the province of Thrace (fig. 1; tab. 2) in the 1st century is strongly connected to the geopolitical situation in the region. At the time of Claudius, the time of Thrace's integration into the Roman Imperium, besides Perinthos, the existing cities were situated on the

use them in bronze issues. Reservations regarding the life extension of dies, the common dies between different cities and, moreover, the civic intentions for the final volume of coins should always be taken into consideration.

5 According to Kinns 1983 each pair of dies can give between 23,000 and 47,000 coins. New studies, however, point to 15,000 or 20,000 coins (see Esty – Carter 1991/1992; de Callataÿ 2006; de Callataÿ 2011b, 25–27; Amandry 2011).

6 Illuminating for possible minting reasons are the inscriptions of Sestos (I.Sestos 1 = OGIS I 339 = SEG 29, 685), Olbia (SIG³ 218) and the Ptolemaic Papyrus 258; for the use of provincial coins see the inscriptions of Mylasa (OGIS II 515) and Pergamon (OGIS II 484 = I.Pergamon II 279).

coastal zone of the Thracian Sea, the Propontis and the West Black Sea. The Thracian inland was until the beginning of the 2nd century AD largely an un-urbanized area, as every urban structure – with the exception of Philippopolis, Bizye and Topeiros[7], all of which were associated with the headquarters of the strategies, and the newly established Colonia Claudia Aprensis – had either been degraded to a *kome* or altogether abandoned. Thus, at that point only three cities were issuing coins: Perinthos, Abdera and Maroneia. Maroneia in Aegean Thrace struck only *assaria*, of which one die has been found, under Nero. Abdera, on the other hand, had struck one denomination (5 dies) under Tiberius, at least two or three decades before Thrace's annexation to the Roman Empire. Thus, although Perinthos was the capital and the seat of the *legatus*, the first Thracian city to strike coins was Abdera[8], which would also strike two denominations under Claudius (5 dies), Nero (4 dies) and Vespasian (6 dies). Two more mints, those of Apollonia Pontica and Philippopolis, were activated under Domitian, each having one issue: the former of one denomination (four *asses*) and the latter of four (*asses*, two-three-four *asses*).

The limited number of dies and therefore of specimens (tab. 2) that have been found shows that throughout the first century no city struck a sufficient volume of coins that could meet the transaction needs of the local community. To underscore this point further: if we convert the number of dies to the number of produced coins, according to the Esty 2006 formula (by P. Iossif and P. Veselý), and estimate the initial number of dies that each city had at its disposal, it appears that the city had only a certain amount of money[9]. The annual needs of a city, according to the inscription at Tauromentium of Sicily dating back to the late 1st century BC, are estimated at one million *denarii*[10]. Therefore, provincial issues, at least of the Julian-Claudian period, with *asses* as the basic denomination, are not even remotely close to meeting such high needs. The purpose of these early issues has to be sought in more local explanations, such as the city's prestige and profit, in accordance with the inscriptions of Sestos, Olbia, or the Ptolemaic Papyrus 258[11]. In this case, iconography may be able to help.

Maroneia, for example, selected the bust of Dionysus and that of Maron as the reverse type and Perinthos the statues of Hera and Isis[12]. These themes highlight the notion of the city's mythical origin and local identity in an attempt to maintain or strengthen its position within the new political situation. This practice is further in line with the general climate created in Greece due to the spectacular visit of Nero in November of AD 67, when he proclaimed the freedom of the Greek cities from the province of Achaia and their independence from the Roman administration. On the other hand, the early imperial iconography of the Abderitan coins is probably the result of the strong presence of a local client king in the area: a large volume of bronze issues of Rhoemetal-

[7] The new cities were founded at sites where important Thracian settlements had been. Topeiros, Bizye and Plotinopolis, before their administrative reform into *civitates* under Greek institutions in the framework of Trajan's urbanization project, were probably the seats of important Thracian tribes. For Topeiros and Plotinopolis, see Tasaklaki 2020, 368; for Bizye, Kolev 2017.

[8] For Abdera and the early start of its coinage with the emperor's portrait, see below n. 13.

[9] Supra n. 4.

[10] For the inscription in Tauromentium of Sicily, see I.Sicily 1246–1247. 1254. 2985–2987. 3081–3082 (for the text see <http://sicily.classics.ox.ac.uk/inscription/ISic1246> (08.11.2020); Manganaro 1988, esp. 184–187; Willers 1905, 328).

[11] Supra n. 6; Katsari 2011, 212 with relevant bibliography.

[12] Dionysus, Hera and Isis are considered patron gods of the two cities and were associated with their mythological past. Dionysus appeared on Maroneia's coinage in the middle of the 4th century BC and since then his figure and his symbols (grapes or cantharus) alternated on the obverse and reverse until the final closure of the mint under Trebonianus Gallus in AD 251–253. For Maroneia, see Schönert-Geiß 1987; Psoma et al. 2008; for this coin type, see CN 5627. Hera was the main deity worshipped on Samos, the *metropolis* of Perinthos, and her ξόανον was transported by the first settlers to the Thracian land. Nevertheless, her image appears only on coins of the Roman era. Isis Faria, along with other Egyptian Gods, had been worshiped in the city since the Hellenistic era. For Perinthos, see Schönert-Geiß 1965; Sayar 1998; for coin types, see CN 2012, CN 3657, CN 5921 and RPC I 1747.

Table 2 Active mints in Roman Thrace 1st century AD

		Tiberius 14–37	Claudius 41–54	Nero 54–68	Vespasian 69–79	Titus 79–81	Domitian 81–96	Nerva 96–98	Trajan 98–117
Abdera	Ob/R	5/8	5/10	4/8	6/8				13/15
	spec.	12	20	23	29				46
Maroneia	Ob/R			1/1					
	spec.			5					
Perinthos	Ob/R		5/4	27/38			10/18	2/7	22/48
	spec.		18	78			79	24	202
Deultum	Ob/R						9/9		3/4
	spec.						31		22
Philippo-polis	Ob/R								4/7
	spec.								31
Apollonia	Ob/R						1/1		
	spec.						1		

kes I have been found at Abdera and appear to have influenced the Abderitan coinage[13]. The early Abderitan issues under Tiberius can also be explained in the same fashion. The inauguration of Philippopolis' coinage with four denominations during the reign of Domitian at first glance seems dynamic. However, the limited number of dies points again to limited issues related to festive occasions. The appearance of medals depicting the personification of the city and the river Hebros corroborate this hypothesis. The building project implemented by Domitian and the fact that Philippopolis became the seat of the Thracian Koinon, are good reasons for issuing coins and medals[14]. At the same time, issues of Perinthos are equal to those of Philippopolis in terms of quantity, iconography and denominations, which implies that the same workshop supplied both cities with dies. Furthermore, the artistic quality points to the same engraver[15]. However, in a broader picture, Perinthos, during the second half of the 1st century AD and at least until the establishment or re-establishment of new administrative structures at the beginning of the 2nd century AD maintained the exclusivity of systematic coin issues. It was at that time that notable changes took place and a trend of decentralization started to emerge within the province.

THE 2ND CENTURY AD AND THE ANTONINE DYNASTY

At the beginning of the 2nd century AD, the implementation of Trajan's urbanization project which was continued by Hadrian changed the geopolitical status in the area, as new cities were established or re-established along two major roads, the Via Egnatia and the Via Diagonalis/Militaris (fig. 2; tab. 3). The aftermath of this project was the gradual inauguration of the monetary production in nearly all cities, a phenomenon that culminated during the reign of Septimius Severus. Of course, as has been mentioned above, the character of the issues, at least until the time of Hadrian, did not change. In other words, the fact that the cities continued their small monetary production with limited denominations and targeted iconography leads us to hypothesize that the motivation for striking remained the transmission of specific messages and not exclusively the coverage of the daily needs of the cities.

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13 Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2007. Abdera was the first city in the province of Thrace to mint coins with the imperial portrait on the obverse at the time of Tiberius. It is the period just after the issues of Rhoemetalkes. The case is very reminiscent of that of Byzantium and Mesembria, both of which were used by the Thracian king for their silver and bronze issues. For Rhoemetalkes I coin issues, see Papageorgiadou – Parissaki (forthcoming); Parissaki 2018; Apostolou – Papageorgiadou 2018; for Abdera and Rhoemetalkes, see Chryssanthaki 2004, 725–728 and Tasaklaki 2020, 374–376.

14 For the building program of Domitian in Philippopolis, see Topalilov 2012; for the theatre of the city under Domitian, see Martinova-Kyutova – Sharankov 2018, 69–71.

15 Cf. CN 5399 (Perinthos) and CN 7519 (Philippopolis).

2 Map of active mints in Roman Thrace, 2nd century AD (© M. Tasaklaki)

Thus, during the reign of Trajan, Abdera, Perinthos, Philippopolis and Deultum, after almost 50 years of its foundation[16], struck mainly small denominations, *asses* or double *asses*. To be more specific, Abdera struck three denominations (half *asses*, *asses* and double *asses*) with no changes in the iconography. The total amount of dies is 13 and we have 46 specimens. Philippopolis had one denomination but three different iconographic types depicting its patron deities: Apollo and Artemis. The known dies are three while the specimens are 22. Deultum, on the other hand, had only one issue with one iconographic type, a bull's head, which, according to Dimitar Draganov, is connected with the 50th anniversary of the city's foundation[17]. From this group of four active mints only Perinthos shows more systematic productions, the known dies of which are 22. Also, it is the only city that struck four *asses*, a denomination that would be established under Antoninus Pius. Despite the fact that the number of active mints increased at this time, the same artistic quality shows again that the dies were supplied by the same workshop.

With the re-foundation of Hadrianopolis the province acquired its final urbanized form[18]. The coin of the city depicting Hadrian seated inside a temple and a Nike in front of him crowning him is characteristic[19]. The city struck *asses*, double *asses* and four *asses* with a limited number of dies (8 dies: 10 specimens). In addition to this, coins of Maroneia bear as a reverse type a Capricorn, the zodiac symbol of Augustus, and in those of Abdera the emperor is called ΘΕΩ ΔΙ ΑΒΔΗΡΙΤΗ

[16] For the foundation of Colonia Flavia Pacis Deultensium in AD 69 by veterans of the *legio VIII Augusta* at the site of the Greek emporion Δέβελτον, see Plin. nat. 4, 45–47; Balabanov – Petrova 2002; Sharankov 2017; Vagalinski (forthcoming).

[17] Jurukova 1973; Draganov 2007; for the coin type, see CN 11904.

[18] After the administrative re-foundation of Hadrianopolis, the next foundation according to literary sources was the ἐμπόριον of Pizos in AD 202 (IGBulg III 2, 1690, cf. IGBulg III 2, 1689), an intermediate between the city and the *komé* structure, with a purely commercial orientation without its own monetary issues. From that point on, any changes at an administrative level only included changes in the provincial boundaries. In AD 193, Marcianopolis and Nicopolis at Istros were integrated within the borders of the province of Moesia, while Byzantium from the province of Pontus-Bithynia became part of the administrative jurisdiction of Thrace.

[19] Jurukova 1987, 117 no. 1 (= Varbanov 2005, 3132).

Table 3 Active mints in Roman Thrace 2nd century AD

		Hadrian 117–138	**Antoninus Pius** 138–161	**Marcus Aurelius** 161–180	**Commodus** 180–192	**Septimius Severus** 193–211
Topeiros	Ob/R spec.		48/89 288		1/1 5	
Abdera	Ob/R spec.	17/24 50	3/22 31			
Maroneia	Ob/R spec.	4/4 13	2/2 5		3/3 4	3/6 10
Traianopolis	Ob/R spec.			14/23 39		19/32 49
Perinthos	Ob/R spec.	11/16 63	26/55 91	12/14 30		58/104 161
Anchialos	Ob/R spec.	2/4 5	21/31 71	20/25 54	38/41 81	96/123 214
Apollonia	Ob/R spec.		3/3 6	10/16 33		8/19 40
Mesembria	Ob/R spec.	4/4 14				8/21 33
Plotinopolis	Ob/R spec.		34/82 199	6/7 13		6/7 19
Hadrianopolis	Ob/R spec.	8/8 10	53/86 222	29/43 118	39/69 139	107/187 370
Bizye	Ob/R spec.	8/9 48	23/24 84			17/45 116
Augusta Traiana	Ob/R spec.			99/121 414	15/25 53	(>100)/207 588
Nikopolis Istrum	Ob/R spec.		23/27 98		55/89 282	
Markianopolis	Ob/R spec.				12/35 127	
Philippopolis	Ob/R spec.	11/16 42	92/127 387	69/92 211	99/239 516	(>130/>340) 510
Serdica	Ob/R spec.			31/43 98		44/54 127
Pautalia	Ob/R spec.		61/65 179	99/127 401	79/90 189	(>100)/262 525
Samothrace	Ob/R spec.	1/1 1				
Thasos	Ob/R spec.	2/3 9	1/1 1			4/3 6

while the city itself was renamed ΑΔΡΙΑΝΕΙϹ ΑΒΔΗΡΕΙΤΑΙ[20]. Both cities are strongly connected to the emperor as he visited them on his way back to Rome from his trip to the East in AD 132. Moreover, this last journey of Hadrian's is connected with a series of privileges bestowed upon the two Thracian cities[21]. Maroneia, again, struck only one denomination of which four dies are known, while Abdera two, *asses* and double *asses*, of which a total of 17 dies have been traced.

The emperor's visit was a unique event for the local society, which gave cities the opportunity to express their complaints and to celebrate through the erection of monuments and the striking of coins[22]. Therefore, it would not be insightful not to associate the above mentioned issues, as well as those of the islands of Samothrace and Thasos and the coastal cities of Mesembria and Anchialos on the Black Sea, with the aforementioned imperial visit to the area[23]: one denomination of one or two pairs of dies for Anchialos (2 dies: 5 specimens), Samothrace (1 die: 1 specimen) and Thasos (2 dies: 9 specimens); only in Mesembria there are three denominations but still limited dies and specimens (4 dies: 14 specimens). An issue of Bizye comprising three denominations, seems to be the most numerous edition of the period (8 dies: 48 specimens); owing to its special iconography – the city's Monumental Gate decorated with a quadriga driven by Hadrian – and the name of the *legatus* Quintus Tineius Rufus on the reverse it can be safely associated with the emperor's journey to the east[24]. Moreover, until Hadrian's reign there was no clear distinction between Perinthos and other local cities, neither in terms of numismatic policy nor of the volume of their numismatic production: both Perinthos and Philippopolis had 11 dies whose stylistic analysis points to the same workshop and engraver. The parallel course of the two cities, however, ended from Hadrian on as Perinthos would continue striking small amounts of coins, mainly of large denominations with festive iconography, while Philippopolis would focus on denominations of wider use.

Under Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, seven more mints were activated. Especially under Antoninus Pius thirteen cities were active and great sums of money could be found in each one. The only peculiar case is that of Abdera. The city's mint issued asses and half asses (3 dies: 31 specimens) at the beginning of Pius' reign and then suddenly ceased production. This cessation at the very moment of highest production in terms of quantity must be connected with the city's competition with Topeiros[25]. Topeiros' activation is related either to maintenance works of the Via Egnatia – even though there are no inscriptions such as milestones to verify that such works actually took place – or to a building project in the city itself. The iconography of its first issues attests to the construction of temples. Forty-eight dies belong to that first period, the low engraving quality of which confirms a rush in their production.

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[20] With the foundation of Topeiros under Trajan, Abdera seems to have lost part of its *chora*. Perhaps a large part of the northern part was bestowed on Topeiros in order for the new city to have a vital area. According to the Abderitans, this injustice was redressed by the Philhellene emperor Hadrian. Two boundary inscriptions dedicated to Hadrian were found in the area of Toxotes (I.Thrac.Aeg. E78 and I.Thrac.Aeg. E79), essentially next to the city of Topeiros. If their *chora* reached that point it meant that for Topeiros there was only a very narrow strip of land left along the Via Egnatia. Topalilov 2016 stresses that the return to the previous state must have taken place during the reign of Severus when the epithet Ulpia appears on the city's coins. See also Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2007, 344 f.; Tasaklaki 2020, 232–236; for the coin types, see CN 8981 (Maroneia, Hadrian) and CN 29118 (Abdera, Hadrian).

[21] For Abdera, see I.Thrac.Aeg. E23; I.Thrac.Aeg. E78; I.Thrac.Aeg. E79; Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2007, 344 f.; for Maroneia, see I.Thrac.Aeg. E185; Jones 2011; for the impact of Hadrian's journey in Thrace see Topalilov (forthcoming).

[22] Boatwright 2000, 204–210; Højte 2000; Højte 2005, 159; Burrell 2004, 238 f. (Philippopolis, Pythia); 275; Peter 2013; Boteva 2013; Vagalinski 2009; Andreeva 2014; Topalilov 2016, 390.

[23] Varbanov 2007, 2997 (Samothrace); RPC III 668 (Thasos); CN 8903 (Mesembria) and RPC III 773A (Anchialos).

[24] CN 3857. Quintus Tineius Rufus' incumbency dates the coin within the period of AD 124–127. Thus, that issue is relevant to Hadrian's first visit to the province in AD 124. For Quintus Tineius Rufus, see Thomasson 1984, 163 no. 13.

[25] For the competitive relationship among Abdera and Topeiros, supra n. 20. Coins of Abdera, according to Chryssanthaki-Nagle (2007, 357), can be dated to around AD 143. At the same time Topeiros struck its first issues bearing the name of the *legatus* Fabius Agrippinus on the reverse (Tasaklaki 2020, 264; Thomasson 1984, 164 no. 22).

On the west coast of the Black Sea, and in particular in Apollonia and Anchialos, limited issues bear mainly Apollonian iconography. From Apollonia Pontica we only have double *asses* – 3 and 10 dies under Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius respectively –, whereas from Anchialos we have four denominations with 21 and 20 dies for each emperor. In the region of the west Pontic Sea coins of Anchialos predominated, at least until the appearance of Deultum, in the first half of the 3rd century AD. On the other hand, all cities in the Thracian hinterland located along or close to the Via Diagonalis/Militaris (i.e., Hadrianopolis, Plotinopolis, Philippopolis, Serdica, Augusta Traiana, and Pautalia) produced a larger amount of coinage, using more than 30 dies per emperor. Apart from the fact that these cities were in fact stations for those using the Via Diagonalis/Militaris (e.g. civilians, public servants or soldiers), they were also at the edges of a dense network of supplementary roads. Big marketplaces quickly developed around this network, where goods and money changed hands. Furthermore, let us not forget that all issues dated back to the reign of Marcus Aurelius belong to the period of his co-reign with Lucius Verus.

At the other end of the spectrum, the invasion of Costoboci around AD 170 caused not only movement of people and troops but also catastrophes and a moratorium on civic issues. Perinthos' mint, as well as those of Traianopolis, Plotinopolis, Philippopolis, Augusta Traiana and Serdica ceased to strike coins around this time[26]. This recession in numismatic production for many cities continued under Commodus since, in most cases, the next issues date back to the end of his reign. The number of active mints was reduced and the remaining ones (see tab. 1) produced only coins of low artistic value yet very rich in terms of iconography. Topeiros and Maroneia are both present with only one issue and one and three pairs of dies each[27]. As far as Perinthos is concerned, this period constitutes the only gap in its monetary history. It seems that, with the exception of Anchialos, the coastal zone of the province underwent a significant period of monetary inactivity.

THE SEVERAN DYNASTY AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE 3RD CENTURY AD

The last period is characterized by constant military movement (figs. 2. 3; tabs. 3. 4). Septimius Severus declared war against Pescennius Niger, and stayed in Perinthos with his family[28]. The city became his military headquarters and the presence of the army and navy in this context along with the movement of *legiones* from the north to the east were necessary. Moreover, after the end of warfare, the emperor and his family visited the province repeatedly. All this had a strong impact on the imperial as well as the provincial finances. To cope with the above mentioned political and military situation, all cities, mainly those on the Via Diagonalis/Militaris, produced large amounts of coins (tab. 1). Fourteen mints – except for Marcianopolis and Nicopolis at Istrum which at the time belonged to Moesia Inferior – were activated throughout the province. Maroneia, Thasos, Apollonia, Plotinopolis and Mesembria produced at this period less than 10 dies of one, two and even four denominations; in the last case it is obvious that the number of dies per denomination is limited (tab. 3). Traianopolis and Bizye have close to 20 dies whereas all the other mints have more than 30. Although Perinthos belongs to the last category, it gave us mainly large denominations (5 *asses*) and medals of Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Geta celebrating the new era at the side of the emperor alongside the organization of the Σεβήρεια*,* the Ἄκτια Πύθια Φιλαδέλφεια and the *neokoria* the city gained[29]. Thus, dies that are related to regular issues are only 58 and

[26] Vassileva (forthcoming); for Plotinopolis, see Tasaklaki 2020, 95 f. 100 f. The extent of the Costoboci invasion and its impact is a controversial issue, mainly due to the lack of written sources. The monetary evidence in this case, or rather its absence, along with the archaeological finds – mainly layers of destruction – from each city are the main sources of knowledge for the period (Tasaklaki [forthcoming]).

[27] For Topeiros, see Tasaklaki 2020, 278 f. no. 108 (RPC IV.1 3619); for Maroneia, see Schönert-Geiß 1987, 216 nos. 1707–1708a (CN 8983); it's about one die and not three as Schönert-Geiß mentions.

[28] Cass. Dio 75–76; Birley 2002, 108–120.

[29] On the one hand there is a series of medals depicting Hercules and his feats, on the other, there are issues projecting the *neokoria*, a title that had been gained for the first time. For the *neokoros* title, see Burrell 2004. For coins

3 Map of active mints in Roman Thrace, 3rd century AD (© M. Tasaklaki)

concern five denominations. In Philippopolis, Pautalia, and Augusta Traiana numismatic production in this period is at its peak. In anticipation of the numismatic corpora of those cities, the only thing that can be stressed with some certainty, based on the number of the surviving specimens (more than 500 pieces), is that they had more than a hundred dies.

The first half of the 3rd century AD is known for the crisis that started at the time of Gordian III when the Empire met with devastating military events (barbarians overwhelmed the northern frontiers while the Sasanians struck the most humiliating blow at the empire: the capture of the emperor Valerian), social conflict and economic turmoil, all of which had a strong impact on the imperial finances and put a strain on imperial infrastructures[30]. For an area that, since its incorporation to the Roman Imperium in AD 46 or 47 and especially after Dacia's conquest was characterized by a prolonged period of calm, security and peace, conditions sufficient for its development, this new geo-military situation with the permanent presence of the army and the emperor himself was unprecedented[31]. A typical example for this turbulent period is the inscription of Skaptopara in Thrace[32], whereby the residents of Skaptopara, a village situated along the military transit routes, complained to the emperor Gordian III about soldiers who, turning off the main roads, had been harassing them and whose military avarice and misbehaviour had brought about misery and bankruptcy. It is evident that itinerant armies cost more in many ways than stationed forces which could also contribute to the production or building projects and were regular customers at the local markets.

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with athletic types, see CN 2611; CN 2612 (Septimius Severus); CN 3111 (Caracalla-Geta); for *neokoros*, see CN 2619 (Septimius Severus); CN 2958 (Caracalla); CN 13163 (Geta); for medals depicting Hercules' feats, see CN 2806 (Septimius Severus); CN 2981 (Caracalla); CN 3032 (Geta).

[30] Drinkwater 2005; Dumanov 2015.

[31] After Septimius Severus Roman emperors like his son Caracalla or Elagabalus were present in Thrace not for military purposes but on their way to the East and back. From AD 249–268 war events that succeeded one another with stormy rhythms highlight the need for this physical presence, not just to show strength across the frontiers but more importantly to deter potential revolts. For the critical 3rd century see Ando 2012.

[32] For the inscription of Skaptopara in Thrace, see IGBulg IV 2236 (= SEG 44, 610); Hallof 1994; Hauken 1995; Hauken 1998, 74–139 with previous bibliography.

Table 4 Active mints in Roman Thrace, first half of the 3rd century AD

		Caracalla-Geta Caracalla 211–217	**Macrinus** 217–218	**Diadumenian** 218	**Elagabalus** 218–222	**Alexander Severus** 222–235	**Maximus - Maximinus** 235–238	**Gordian III** 238–244	**Philip I-II** 244–249	**Trebonia-nus Gallus** 251–253	**Volusianus** 251–253	**Valerian** 253–260	**Gallienus** 253–268
Topeiros	Ob/R spec.	21/57 223											
Maroneia	Ob/R spec.	4/9 13								7/10 36	3/9 25		
Traianopolis	Ob/R spec.	38/69 124		1/2 2				1/1 1					
Ainos	Ob/R spec.	1/2 2											
Perinthos	Ob/R spec.	19/29 138			44/54 185	34/62 198		34/95 345	1/1 1				15/24 56
Anchialos	Ob/R spec.						49/104 235	>100/>200 600+					
Mesembria	Ob/R spec.							12/28 92	35/53 218				
Deultum	Ob/R spec.	18/26 98	23/46 122	25/57 133		>50/97+ 500+	>30/61 200+	>50/203 453	>55/297 500+				41/140 470
Plotinopolis	Ob/R spec.	20/39 146											
Hadrianopolis	Ob/R spec.	65/147 442						74/241 910	34/116 355				
Bizye	Ob/R spec.								33/104 347				
Philippopolis	Ob/R spec.	>73/>165 540			>90/>280 950								
Augusta Traiana	Ob/R spec.	14/46 137							25/75 159			1/1 2	8/16 42
Serdica	Ob/R spec.	>100/190 500+											29/44 58
Pautalia	Ob/R spec.	1/9 10											
Nikopolis Nestum	Ob/R spec.	18/71 238											

Once again, at the time of Gordian III and Philip I, the numismatic production of the Thracian cities was adjusted to military events (fig. 3; tab. 4). The number of active mints was really limited as most of them, such as Philippopolis, Pautalia, Plotinopolis, Topeiros, Traianopolis, Augusta Traiana, Apollonia Pontica and Serdica, ceased their production just after Caracalla's or Elagabalus' assassination[33]. From AD 222 until the time of Gallienus, the picture we get is that of sporadic issues by cities that had found themselves at the centre of military warfare. The active mints were five at most under Alexander Severus, seven under Gordian III and four under Philip I. The burden of numismatic production fell on Hadrianopolis and Deultum since the mint of Philippopolis was no longer active. According to Jordanka Jurukova, the output of Hadrianopolis under Gordian III was the most numerous regarding dies and specimens and the latter have been found in hoards all over the province. Perinthos, on the other hand, continues the same policy striking mainly medals and large denominations advertising the new Neokorate and the Homonoia between cities of Pontus-Bithynia and Asia Minor[34]. In all cases the hundreds of coin types indicate a promise for the return to stability[35]. For the same reason both Gordian III and Philip I, just like Septimius Severus in the past, found themselves in Thrace.

What initially looked like sporadic attacks, in the middle of the 3rd century AD evolved into full blown assaults. Gothic invasions from the north affected the cities of the Black Sea first; Anchialos, Deultum and Mesembria were assaulted, but Philippopolis and Augusta Traiana were the cities that were seized[36]. The effects of these assaults are also visible in the archaeological remains of Plotinopolis, Hadrianopolis and Perinthos; the latter reached its highest rate of numismatic production at the time. As Roman frontiers were weakened against the Germanic tribes across the Rhine and the Danube, Philip I, having established his headquarters in Philippopolis by the summer of AD 246, pushed the Carpi back across the Danube and chased them into Dacia. During that time, only Bizye, Mesembria and Deultum struck a limited number of coins. It was not possible for local mints to accommodate the needs of the region any more. It was time for a more centralized handling of the new situation.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON MONETARY PATTERNS

From the very beginning of this article it has been pointed out that the data we have at our disposal come either from published corpora or digital databases and auction catalogues. In some cases, such as that of Philippopolis and Pautalia, for which there are no corpora, the absence of data makes it difficult to draw conclusions. For this reason, we chose, at least for the time being, to make only preliminary remarks, hoping that in the future other publications with more specialized statistics, and therefore conclusions, will follow.

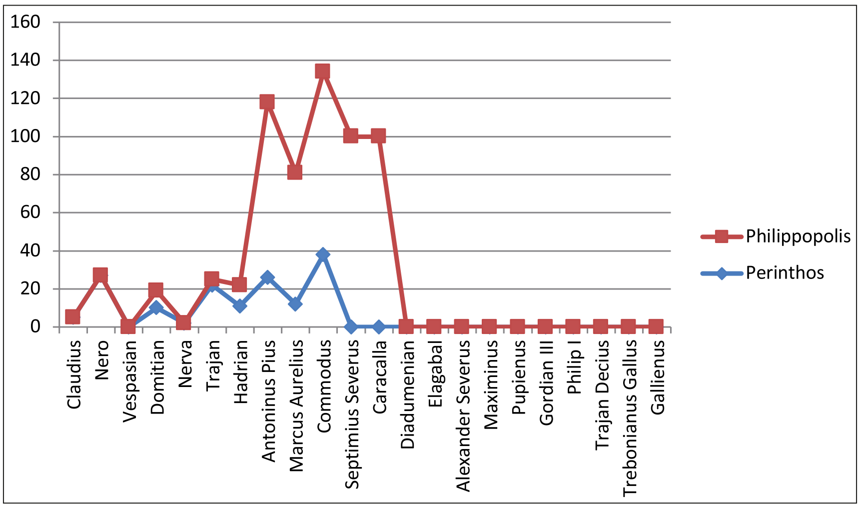
Between the 1st and 3rd century AD, 24 mints were operating within the province of Thrace. From the numismatic data regarding their production, which was presented earlier, it appears that Perinthos, despite the fact that it was the capital of the province and the seat of the governor, by no means had the most productive mint. On the contrary, even though the city struck regularly from

[33] Caracalla as a sole emperor was in Thrace twice, once just after his ascension in AD 212/213 and once more in AD 214/215 on his way to the East as a new Alexander the Great and a new Dionysus (Boteva 1999 and more recently Raycheva 2016). Elagabalus visited Thrace on his way to Rome after the military troops declared him emperor. Those visits instigated the cities to organize gladiatorial games or to re-name athletic ones like Πύθια (Peter 2013, see also CN 767), while the contemporary numismatic iconography had a festive character. At the time of Elagabalus, issues of Philippopolis and Perinthos advertised the new neokorate title (CN 8824 and CN 3069).

[34] The title of *neokoria* at the time of Gordian III appeared on every denomination of the city's issues (CN 4058: four *asses*, CN 4164: three *asses*), while for the first time there are Homonoia issues with Cyzicus (CN 5954) and Nicomedia (CN 4272) of Pontus-Bithynia, and with Smyrna (CN 4274) and Ephesos (CN 4267) of Asia. For the augmentation of such iconographic types in this period, see Johnston 2012, 455 f.

[35] Peter (forthcoming).

[36] For the impacts of the Gothic invasion in Thrace, see Velkov 1977; Varbanov 2012.



4 Graph of coinage production in Philippopolis and Perinthos

the time of Claudius till Gallienus – with the only noteworthy gap being that under Commodus –, it had a medium production of mainly large denominations (four *asses*) bearing types that point to events that were significant for the city, like the assumption of the *neokoria*, imperial visits and athletic events[37]. Based on the quantitative analysis of dies, Perinthos' issues seem to have never reached the necessary amount for meeting the needs of the city on a daily basis. At the opposite side of the spectrum stands Philippopolis. Although a die-study is missing, it is clear that the largest volume of the province's monetary production was undertaken by the seat of the Κοινόν Θρακῶν, and not by Perinthos, the seat of the governor. The city started striking under Domitian but it was only during the reign of Antoninus Pius that production became significant, until its termination under Elagabalus. The difference in the volume of production between the two large cities of Thrace can be observed from the middle of the 2nd century AD (fig. 4).

To explain this phenomenon, we need to take into consideration the following: being the seat of the governor, Perinthos could follow the political developments in the empire and participate in various events. Thus, the emperor's ascension to the throne or the placement of a new government instigated coin issues. Moreover, it is known that the Roman navy and army were stationed there and, as the most important port of the province, it was the centre of a trade network[38]. For all these reasons, the demand for coins was high on a daily basis. Barter transactions were certainly not sufficient, nor were the provincial issues able to cover all the needs. It is likely that financial transactions were based on imperial money and not local. Probably, due to the importance of the city and the high need of money Perinthos became the first of a series of late-Roman imperial mints in the Balkans.

Considering the numismatic activity of the rest of the Thracian cities, one realizes that the 23 mints operated in three different directions (tab. 5). The pattern is contingent on the geographical location of each city in relation to the main road networks and especially that of the Via Diagonalis/Militaris. We can identify three groups: (1) those that issued a few coins on festive occasions (e.g. Maroneia, Nicopolis ad Nestum, Ainos, Thasos); (2) those that issued coins that could cover practical daily expenses (e.g. Plotinopolis, Traianopolis, Topeiros, Bizye) but also show limited issues related to festive occasions. The mints of these cities were activated during the 2nd century AD most probably to accommodate for the extensive building works, but had only

[37] Cass. Dio 75, 14; Herodian. 3, 6, 9; Sayar 1998, 116–118. 158 f.; Burrell 2004, 236–242, Schönert-Geiß 1965, 9–11; Raycheva 2015.

[38] In AD 88–90 according to the inscription IGR I 781 (= Sayar 1998, no. 44): τριήραρχος κλάσσης Περινθίας was stationed in the port of Perinthos (Dumont – Hommolle 1892, 72a). See also Sayar 1998; Schönert-Geiß 1965, 9–12.

Table 5 Monetary production of cities

Mint	Life expand of the mint	Total of obv. dies	specimens	
Abdera	AD 14–145 = app. 131 years	53	211	away from Via Egnatia
Maroneia	AD 54–253 = app. 199 years	24	44	
Ainos	AD 212–217 = app. 6 years	1	2	
Nikopolis Nestrum	AD 211 = app. 1 year	18	238	
Topeiros	AD 145–211 = app. 66 years	70	534	along Via Egnatia
Traianopolis	AD 160–211 = app. 50 years	73	215	
Perinthos	AD 41–268 = app. 227 years	254	401	Via Egnatia/ Via Diagonalis/ Militaris
Philippopolis	AD 81–222 = app. 140 years	560+	3,500+	along Via Diagonalis/ Militaris
Hadrianopolis	AD 117–249 = app. 130 years	400+	1,918+	
Serdica	AD 161–268 = app. 100 years	270+	956	
Plotinopolis	AD 155–222 = app. 67 years	71	403	away from Via Diagonalis/ Militaris
Augusta Traiana	AD 161–268 = app. 100 years	240+	1,055	
Pautalia	AD 155–222 = app. 67 years	340+	1,304	
Bizye	AD 117–249 = app. 132 years	81	595	
Samothrace	AD 117–137 = app. 20 years	1	1	Islands
Thasos	AD 138–211 = app. 73 years	7	16	
Anchialos	AD 117–244 = app. 127 years	330+	970+	West Pontic cities
Mesembria	AD 117–249 = app. 132 years	59	357	
Apollonia	AD 81–211 = app. 130 years	22	80	
Deultum	AD 212–249 = app. 37 years	300+	2,500+	
Nicopolis Istrum	AD 138–193 = app. 55 years	78	380	Haemus region
Marcianopolis	AD 180–193 = app. 13 years	12	127	

sporadic issues to show once such works ended. Perinthos and all the other cities far from the Via Diagonalis/Militaris belong to this group; and (3) mints of the last group of cities (Philippopolis, Hadrianopolis, Serdica, Pautalia and Augusta Traiana) on or very close to the Via Diagonalis/Militaris, which show consistent quantities throughout the 2nd and 3rd centuries. The amount of coins produced was contingent mainly on the political and military conditions of their time.

Between AD 145 and 169, around 20 years of intense coining followed a period of reduced production probably due to the Costoboci invasions. It turns out that issues in Thrace were reduced during periods of turbulence and increased either when itinerary military groups crossed the region or when there was local building (mainly) or athletic activity. It is not certain whether bronze issues were being used for military purposes during the 2nd century AD, but they were important as soldiers had to exchange Roman coin with the local one in markets. In the first half of the 3rd century AD, after the assassination of Elagabalus, the province had to face unprecedented conditions due to external factors. Goths, mainly, and Heruli invaded Thrace. Apart from Gordian III, Trajan Decius, Gallienus and Claudius Gothicus arrived at the area to confront them. Although there was no hiatus in numismatic production, just like at the time of the Costoboci invasions, the production was limited to the cities that were close to the theatre of warfare but did not suffer immense impacts. The volume of production as well as the type of the denominations in Gordian III's era and their geographic distribution show intense mobility. If we were to attempt to draw a line for the whole period of the two and a half centuries of local minting activity, it would definitely look like a cardiogram.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that during the 2nd century AD certain elements such as the name of the *legatus* on the reverse, the adoption of the same metrological system by all active mints or the use of imperial portraits in the same denominations, etc. point to a monetary policy controlled not only by each city but also by a central authority[39]. This policy appears to be unique and is not encountered in other provinces, like Pontus-Bithynia, which is both literally and metaphorically close to Thrace. Close relationships (mainly of a commercial character) between those two regions go back to pre-Roman times. Iconographic similarities and Homonoia relations between cities (e.g. Perinthos-Nicomedia, Byzantium-Nicaea) have been identified in Roman times[40]. Despite the fact that Pontus-Bithynia was a senatorial province, the majority of its cities were active during the 2nd century AD with limited and occasional output, but with no mention of the *legatus* and no connection between imperial portrait and denomination. Furthermore, firstly Nicomedia, the capital, and secondly Nicaea were the only cities with intense production since the time of Julius Caesar and Claudius[41].

In the neighbouring province of Macedonia, nine cities and colonies minted coins from the time of Augustus to that of Gallienus, along with the Κοινόν Μακεδόνων[42]. The limited number of dies and specimens reflects the general tendency of all cities to produce coins that could only partially cover their local needs, supported by barter transactions. Bronze issues of Dion appeared at the beginning of the reign of each emperor, usually 4 to 5 dies. The same can be seen in Edessa, where, except for Septimius Severus and Gordian III, there is the same rate of dies per emperor and also in all the other cities[43]. Only Thessaloniki, the capital of the province, provides a significant amount of coins. For Sofia Kremydi-Sicilianou the occasion was the accession of every new emperor to the throne, while for Ioannis Touratsoglou other possible reasons may include the organization of sports and music events held every October in Veroia or the ambitious building programmes in Philippi, Veroia and Thessaloniki[44]. The uniformity of production across all cities reflects the stability throughout the province. With the provincialization of Thrace and Moesia, Macedonia ceased to be used by the Romans as a base for military operations in the Balkans. Also, Macedonia was not on the route of military transportations from the East to the North, the two main and constantly active Limes of the empire. The main incident that interrupted this stability was the invasion of the Costoboci in AD 170. Roman soldiers returned to the area in the middle of the 3rd century AD because the repeated Gothic assaults had devastated Thessaloniki and Cassandreia. However, there were no active mints at that time.

Continuing south with the province of Achaia, 42 cities have been monetarily active[45]. The starting point for each city differs. Nero's visit to the Peloponnese and the announcement of the liberation of all cities led Sicyon and Messene to the first issues. According to Ioannis Touratsoglou, celebrations, games such as the Nemea and building programmes were also causes for minting. The monetary output of Corinth, the capital of the province, was the most important as was the case of Thessaloniki in Macedonia. The general picture is that of a gradual increase in provincial production: 6 cities minted coins during the 1st century, 12 during the 2nd, with 42 mints active under Septimius Severus. What is striking is that most cities, 30 out of 42, issued for the first time and uniquely in the years of Septimius Severus. Many of these coins have been found in

39 Tasaklaki 2020, 372.

40 Franke – Nollé 1997; Klose 1983. For coin types, see supra n. 34.

41 Nicomedia, as the capital of the province, provided safe and secure tenure for many Roman emperors, like Hadrian, Caracalla, Elagabalus, and also supported Septimius Severus in his dispute with Pescenius Niger, contrary to Nicaea. There are no numismatic corpora for either city. Güney 2012; Güney 2015.

42 Kremydi-Sicilianou 1996 (Dion); Touratsoglou 1988 (Thessaloniki); Papaefthymiou 2002 (Pella); Papaevangelou-Genakos 2009 (Amphipolis); Amandry 2015 (Philippi); Kremydi-Sicilianou 2004 (circulation); Touratsoglou 1987; Touratsoglou 1993.

43 Papaefthymiou 2002, 218.

44 Touratsoglou 2010.

45 For the coinage of the Peloponnesian cities, see Agallopoulou 2012 (Patra); Edwards 1933 (Corinth); Flament – Marchetti 2011 (Argos); Grandjean 1997 (Messene); Kroll 1996 (Aigion); Knapp – Mac Isaac 2005 (Nemea); Wojan – Amandry 2013 (Elis); Grunauer – von Hoerschelmann 1982/1983; Flament 2007; Kremydi 2013; Kremydi – Ward 2017; Amandry 2012, 398; Kremydi – Iakovidou 2015.

excavations in Syria and can only be linked to auxiliary military troops based in the Peloponnese that were eventually moved to the East to strengthen the defence of the eastern front. Immediately afterwards, almost all active mints ceased, with the exception of Argos and Sparta. According to Sofia Kremydi-Sicilianou, the numismatic production of the Peloponnesian cities was focused on large trade centres like Corinth and Patra, while all the other cities struck coins just for prestige

To conclude, I would like to stress the following: the monetary picture of Thrace does not resemble that of the provinces away from the Limes such as Macedonia and Achaia, nor of those located at the borders, such as Moesia and Dacia. This peculiarity can be explained by the fact that, while not being on the border, due to the presence of the Via Diagonalis soldiers very often passed through the Thracian territory. Even though the presence of the army may affect in different ways the local areas, as Constantina Katsari notes in her study of coin circulation in the Balkan provinces, for Thrace, marching armies had a significant impact on various aspects of the local society, including coin production.

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THE MINT OF PERINTHOS WITHIN THE PROVINCIAL COINAGE OF THRACIA

A CASE STUDY WITH A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS BASED ON MORE PRECISE CHRONOLOGY

ABSTRACT

The paper argues for a more precise chronology of the coinage of the provincial capital Perinthos. A revision of E. Schönert-Geiß' study (1965) is needed because this mint could provide essential information about the development of the province of Thrace. As such a task requires fundamental reconsideration, just a case study is offered here dealing with the coins issued for Septimius Severus and his family members. Different chronological precisions are reasoned for each one of them. Highlighted is also the prevailing number of Perinthos' coins for Geta Augustus when compared with the coins of Caracalla Augustus minted prior to Geta's assassination in December 211 – a fact that possibly provides information regarding historical events that affected the provincial capital. A further unusual phenomenon discussed here is connected with the amount of metal used by the mint in AD 212 which is exceptionally large.

KEYWORDS

Caracalla – chronology – quantitative analysis – Roman provincial coinage – Thrace

As is well known, the province of Thrace belonged to the Roman provinces with numerous active local mints, especially within the period early 2nd to mid-3rd century. So far the RPC project has published the Thracian issues minted only until AD 138[1]; the decades of the most intensive minting in Thrace are still not covered by this fundamental undertaking, and accordingly a clear overview of the Thracian provincial coinage is lacking[2]. On the other hand, Edith Schönert-Geiß' study on the coinage of the provincial capital Perinthos was published over half a century ago[3]. Meanwhile, much new relevant information has come to light calling for a careful re-evaluation of the evidence provided to the numismatic community and the entire *Altertumswissenschaften* back in the 1960s. A revision is needed not only because Perinthos, being the provincial capital, and its coinage could provide essential information about the development of the province. Even more important is the widespread influence of this book, clearly visible in the data base portal Corpus Nummorum (CN) developed and hosted in the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of

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[1] Amandry – Burnett 2015.

[2] Four parts of RPC IV for the period »From Antoninus Pius to Commodus (AD 138–192)« are already online, covering »Cyrenaica to Bithynia-Pontus« (IV.1), »Asia« (IV.2), »Lycia-Pamphylia to Arabia« (IV.3) and »Egypt« (IV.4): <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/volumes> (14.08.2020).

[3] Schönert-Geiß 1965.

Sciences[4]. A clear example is provided by some coins with the name and the bust of Caracalla on the obverse, which – strangely enough – are dated by Schönert-Geiß to the long period of AD 198–217[5], despite evident features that allow a more precise dating either earlier or later in this period. Thus, for example CN_2937 (and many others) depicts a portrait of a bearded man, who could not possibly be identified as Caracalla at the age of 10–12 years as would have been the case if the issue were minted in AD 198. Still, CN dates it to AD 198–217[6], which is obviously incorrect and misleading.

Without employing the results of the RIC already accomplished at that time[7], in 1965 Schönert-Geiß defined a very limited and obviously imprecise chronology, which is still used in the otherwise modern and highly important database of the CN:

- the coins of Septimius Severus are divided into three chronological categories: between AD 193 and 196[8]; ca. AD 196[9]; between AD 196 and 211[10];
- the coins of Julia Domna are divided into just two chronological categories: before and after AD 196[11];
- the coins of Caracalla are divided into three chronological categories: between AD 196–198[12]; shortly after AD 198[13]; between AD 198–217[14];
- the coins of Geta are divided into just two chronological categories: between AD 198 and 209[15]; between AD 209 and 212[16].

Further, Schönert-Geiß proved convincingly that during the rule of emperor Trajan the mint of Perinthos started issuing coins with the name of the provincial governor on the reverse, the first of whom was Iuventius Celsus, firmly attested as governor of Thrace in AD 114[17]. The last Thracian governor whose name appears on the coins is Caelius Oneratus[18]. For the time of the latter's tenure in Thrace Edith Schönert-Geiß refers to Arthur Stein, who dates it »kurz vor 196«, i.e. shortly before AD 196[19]. Then follows a surprising conclusion: according to Schönert-Geiß, the mint of Perinthos dropped the name of the provincial governor not due to political reasons but instead due to the great importance for the city of the title of neokoros and the athletic games organized in the provincial capital: »Wenn man weiß, wie eifersüchtig die einzelnen Städte den Titel der Neokorie gehütet und mit der Anzahl ihrer im Laufe der Zeit erworbenen Neokorien geprahlt haben, wie stolz sie auf die in ihrer Stadt veranstalteten Spiele waren, wenn man also sieht, daß sie diese kulturellen Ereignisse für viel wichtiger nahmen als das politische Geschehen, dann läßt sich vielleicht eine Erklärung darin finden, daß die Angabe des Statthalters auf den Münzen einfach der für die Stadt viel wertvolleren Titulierung als νεωκόρος und der Darstellung ihrer Spiele in Bild und Schrift weichen mußte.«[20]

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4 <https://www.corpus-nummorum.eu/coins?search=Perinthos> (14.08.2020).
5 See e.g. Schönert-Geiß 1965, 193 no. 576.
6 <https://www.corpus-nummorum.eu/coins?id=2937> (14.08.2020).
7 Mattingly – Sydenham 1936.
8 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 167.
9 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 170.
10 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 171.
11 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 185.
12 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 188.
13 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 189.
14 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 191.
15 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 206.
16 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 208.
17 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 6 f.; Thomasson 1984, col. 163 no. 10.
18 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 9.
19 Stein 1920, 40. Further in Stein's text about Oneratus appears the statement that he was governor of Thrace before 198 which is obviously a misprint.
20 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 9.

Bearing in mind the imperial context, this explanation seems too naïve. There must have been a serious administrative and/or political reason for such an important change in the minting of the capital city; if we want to find a reasonable explanation, we need to have precise dates for the important events in the province at that period. It should be remembered that AD 196 appears in Stein's chronology of the coinage of Perinthos because of the older opinion that Caracalla was proclaimed Caesar in that year, which in fact was questioned long ago. As a result, some scholars, among them Helmut Halfmann (1986, 220) and Anthony Birley (1999, 122), have re-dated the proclamation to the spring of AD 195. I find the entire argumentation for this early date absolutely convincing[21]. Accordingly, ca. mid-195 should be considered as the latest possible date for the presence of the name of the provincial governor on the reverse of the coins minted in the provincial capital.

In my PhD thesis[22], I studied the provincial coinage of the Roman provinces of Lower Moesia and Thrace dated to the time of Septimius Severus and his two sons. Taking into consideration a relatively global picture and employing the achievements of the RIC, I offered a more precise chronology of the provincial issues of almost all cities within the two provinces. In the case of Perinthos the main conclusions are as follows:

1. There is, so far, information about only one single coin with the name of the governor Caelius Oneratus[23], which in 1920 – according to A. Stein – was unpublished and belonged to the Gotha Cabinet[24]; in 1965 it was reported as lost by E. Schönert-Geiß[25]. This would mean, unfortunately, that this important piece remained unpublished, or at least I have not managed to find any further trace of it, despite numerous efforts. Without having an autopsy of it, any conclusions should be made with extreme caution; still, at least two features could be highlighted. Up until now no coins of Perinthos attest on the obverse the name and the bust of Septimius Severus' first Caesar Clodius Albinus. This fact is to be noted explicitly due to the existence of such coins minted in another Thracian mint – Pautalia[26], whereas Perinthos, despite being the provincial capital, did not produce coins for this Caesar. Clodius Albinus' title of Caesar was recognized by the Senate more or less simultaneously with the Augustus title of Septimius Severus: the latter is dated to June 1st 193[27], while the former is connected loosely with June 193[28]. Hence, it is not clear whether the eventual coins of Perinthos with the name of Caelius Oneratus on the reverse were issued in the very first weeks after Severus was proclaimed Augustus by the Senate and prior to the recognition of Clodius Albinus, i.e. early in June 193 (if such a delay existed), or only after the rift between Severus and Albinus occurred. At present, one has to bear in mind that such coin(s) was/were never confirmed and accordingly any general conclusion should be made with caution. If in the future their existence is confirmed, both options for their dating should be considered when analyzing the coinage of Perinthos. It should also be emphasized that if such a coin issue was minted by the provincial capital, it must have been of a very restricted volume, thus leaving almost no traces in the coin circulation. Most probably this could have been caused by the wartime conditions (with the siege of Byzantion) during the period of AD 193–195 in south-east Thrace where Perinthos was situated.

21 On this very important problem see most recently Boteva 2020, 24 f. with lit.
22 PhD published: Boteva 1997.
23 Thomasson 1984, col. 169 no. 42 dates his tenure in the province of Thracia as follows: »Sub Septimio Severo (Caracalla nondum Caesare, ut videtur)«, while in the Tabulae synchronae (Thomasson 1978, 42) the name of Caelius Oneratus – followed by a question mark – is associated solely with AD 195. For a different dating see Boteva 1998, 132 f.: »?–194–195«.
24 Stein 1920, 40: Gothaer Kabinett.
25 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 9 n. 3.
26 Ruzicka 1933, nos. 439–441.
27 Kienast 2011, 156; Kienast et al. 2017, 149.
28 Kienast et al. 2017, 155. On the first coins issued by the central mint see Birley 1988, 105 f. unfortunately without precision in the chronology.

2. A further enigmatic coin issue is of crucial importance for understanding the chronology of the coinage of the provincial capital, namely the coins with the name and bust of Plautilla, Caracalla's wife from April 202 to January 205. Such coins are announced in earlier literature[29], but were not included in either the corpus of E. Schönert-Geiß or the coins uploaded so far in CN. Finding a definite answer whether Perinthos issued coins for emperor Caracalla's short-term wife or not will allow a more precise dating of the activity of the mint. It is however clear that if Perinthos did mint coins for Plautilla, the emission must have been of a very restricted volume, leaving almost no traces in the coin circulation.

3. More precise dating is possible for the coinage of Septimius Severus due to the achievements of the RIC studies. Such a precision is based on certain details in the iconographic features of the emperor's portrait, especially his beard. Thus, despite E. Schönert-Geiß' opinion that all three obverse dies for the medallions of Septimius depict his late portrait[30], in fact one of these dies (B)[31] features an earlier portrait of the emperor. Obverse dies A and C for the medallions[32] belong firmly in the last months before Septimius Severus' death on February 4th 211, i.e. late in AD 210 or in January 211. This chronology is confirmed by the common reverse die attested in medallions of both father and younger son co-Augusti[33]. Along with the medallions with obverse dies A and C, some of the coins of the fourth denomination[34] also belong to the last months of Severus' life.

4. The earlier coins of Septimius minted in Perinthos feature the emperor's portrait which is unfortunately not eloquent enough to be dated more precisely. They form, however, three distinctive groups due to other elements, present or not on the reverse: 1) without the ΝΕΩΚΟΡΟΣ title, they belong to the first one or two year(s) of Septimius Severus' rule[35]; 2) with explicit reference to the emperor's second visit to the provincial capital in ca. mid-195[36]; 3) coins with the ΝΕΩΚΟΡΟΣ title but lacking any further evidence for a more precise chronology within the period which followed Septimius' second visit to Perinthos, and predated the emperor's latest coins discussed here above.

5. The mint of Perinthos issued coins for Geta Caesar, whose acclamation happened on a disputed date: late in 197[37], early 198[38], 28th January 198[39], before 3rd May 198[40]. It is even suggested that the acclamation took place in the autumn of 197 (?), but the *dies Caesaris* was celebrated on 28th January 198[41]. Due to the lack of certainty concerning this important event, I will refer to it here with the loose date of »late 197/early 198«. A further feature of Perinthos' issues for Geta Caesar is his *praenomen*, attested as both Lucius[42] and Publius[43]. The change of Geta's *praenomen* from Lucius to Publius is differently dated: 203/204[44], 204[45], and even »205 (?)«[46]. The lack of reliable evidence for any of these years makes the entire period of AD 203–205 as possible for this

29 Cohen 1884, 251; Mušmov 1912, nos. 4573–4574. See also Varbanov 2007, 45.
30 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 20.
31 Schönert-Geiß 1965, no. 519.
32 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 516–518. 520–527.
33 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 525 (Septimius Severus) and 663 (Geta Augustus).
34 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 494–505.
35 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 167.
36 On this date see most recently Boteva 2020, 23–25. See also Raycheva 2015, 29 with the earlier literature.
37 Halfmann 1986, 51. 53; Rubin 1975, 431 f.
38 Hasebroek 1921, 113.
39 Guey 1948; Birley 1988, 218 no. 22 (to be checked together with p. 215 no. 18).
40 Bernhart 1926, 292.
41 Kienast 2011, 166.
42 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 633–636.
43 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 631–632. 637–638.
44 Pick – Regling 1910, 765.
45 Touratsoglou 1988, 53 n. 96; Birley 1988, 218 no. 22.
46 Kienast 2011, 166: »Name*:* P. Septimius Geta, von 195–205(?) vorübergehend auch L. Septimius Geta«.

important change. Because of this and due to the lack of certainty concerning Perinthos' minting for Plautilla, the coins with the name and portrait of Geta Caesar should be dated not within the period of AD 198–209 as stated by Schönert-Geiß in 1965 and followed by Corpus Nummorum[47], but to late 197/early 198–203/205 (with *praenomen* Lucius) and AD 203/205–Oct./Nov. 210[48] (with *praenomen* Publius).

6. Further precision is at hand concerning the final possible date of the issues for Geta Augustus, as the year 212 introduced by E. Schönert-Geiß[49] and accepted by Corpus Nummorum[50] is no longer supported in the literature[51]. Now it is clear that his assassination took place in December 211 (the precise day is still disputed) and accordingly this would be the latest chronological frame for the minting of his coins.

7. An observation concerning the coinage with the name and portrait of Julia Domna should be explicitly highlighted as it gives a fixed chronological framework for her coins issued in Perinthos. Most significantly, the mint of the provincial capital of Thracia did not strike for Julia Domna portraying her with the hairstyle composed of narrow vertical and broad horizontal waves with a tucked braid below, which belongs to the Empress' latest issues[52]. Schönert-Geiß obviously noticed this detail and fixed the final year of Domna's obverse dies in 211[53], a chronology accepted and followed by CN[54]. However, a further precision is possible and in fact necessary: there are clear indications that the mint of Perinthos issued coins even in the first months after the assassination of Geta by his brother Caracalla in late December 211[55], i.e. most probably early in AD 212, when Caracalla was at the start of his sole rule. Domna's hairstyle on two published obverse dies[56] marks the transition from the earlier shape (attested in numerous coins from Perinthos) to the later one (not attested in Perinthos' issues), featured in the second half of Caracalla's rule as a sole Augustus. When exactly this transitional hairstyle of Julia Domna was introduced in her portraits – after the death of her husband in February 211 or after the assassination of her younger son in December 211 – is not clear. In the case under discussion here one should take notice of the fact that this hairstyle is combined with the obverse legend ΙΟVΛΙΑ ΑVΓΟVCΤΑ, thus pointing to the time of Caracalla's sole rule. Accordingly, the latest coins of Perinthos for Julia Domna are datable at least up to AD 212, not just until AD 211, as traditionally accepted[57].

8. The same final date, i.e. early in AD 212, should be stated also for the coins of four different denominations (fourth[58], fifth[59], sixth[60] and medallions[61]) minted in Perinthos for Caracalla, whose official name on the obverse includes his father's *cognomen* Severus[62]. It should be explicitly

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47 See e.g. CN_3001, CN_3002, CN_3003, etc.

48 For this date of Geta's acclamation as Augustus see Birley 1988, 218 no. 22 with lit. For the traditional dating to September/October (?) 209 see Kienast et al. 2017, 160 (it should be underlined that this edition of the book is published after the death of D. Kienast). See however Kienast 2011 published while D. Kienast was still alive and had a control over the content: he mentions both the traditional and the revised chronology: »Sept./Okt.(?) 209 (oder Herbst 210?) – Erhebung zum Augustus« (Kienast 2011, 166).

49 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 208.

50 CN_13058, CN_13059, CN_13060, CN_13162, CN_13163, etc.

51 Kienast et al. 2017, 160 with more recent literature on this assassination.

52 See Schönert-Geiß 1972, 69 nos. 1503–1505 with obverse die V 105 dated to AD 212–217. See also Draganov 2007, 47 with n. 27.

53 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 20.

54 See CN_2851. CN_2856. CN_2877. CN_4749. CN_13039. CN_13188.

55 Halfmann 1982, 229 f.; Birley 1988, 218 no. 22; Kienast 2011, 166; Kienast et al. 2017, 160.

56 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 533. 540; see also CN_2856.

57 Schönert-Geiß 1965, 20; see also CN_2851. CN_2856. CN_2877. CN_4749. CN_13039. CN_13188.

58 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 588–590.

59 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 583–586.

60 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 567–580.

61 Schönert-Geiß 1965, nos. 594–626.

62 On the *cognomen* Severus in Caracalla's name see Komnick 2003, 9 with lit.

underlined that all medallions minted in Perinthos for Caracalla belong to the months after Geta's assassination in December 211, thus belonging to the start of Caracalla's sole rule at the very end of December 211 and early in 212. This observation is of great importance as it allows the supposition that the emperor visited the capital shortly after the assassination of Geta. Connecting the coins of Perinthos for Caracalla Augustus generally to AD 198–217[63] is misleading and deprives scholarship of primary evidence regarding the development of the province of Thracia and its capital city.

Some additional new observations may also be added, and I include them here:

E. Schönert-Geiß' description of the portrait of Caracalla Augustus on coins of first denomination as »bartlos«, i.e. beardless, is not correct. The picture of the obverse of Schönert-Geiß 1965, no. 592 clearly shows a bearded head which fully corresponds with the emperor's name and title: ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟϹ·Π·ΑΥΓΟΥϹΤΟϹ[64]. All these details point to a date during Caracalla's sole rule. As already said, it seems very plausible that the latest Perinthos issues for Julia Domna, with the obverse legend ΙΟΥΛΙΑ ΑΥΓΟΥϹΤΑ, are synchronous with these coins for Caracalla.

The prevailing number of Perinthos' coins for Geta Augustus that have come down to us when compared with the coins of Caracalla Augustus minted prior to Geta's assassination in December 211 also is worthy of attention. The comparison is more than striking. On the one hand, for the elder brother, who was proclaimed Augustus in 197/198, Schönert-Geiß publishes coins in three different denominations (sixth, fifth and fourth) each one of them with just one obverse die[65], and restricted number of available pieces (a total of only 5). On the other hand, for the younger brother, who was proclaimed Augustus only in 210, Schönert-Geiß publishes coins in five different denominations, each one of them with more than one obverse die (sixth denomination – with two obverse dies[66], fourth – with four dies[67], third and first – each with two[68], and medallions – with four[69]) and 43 available pieces. This is a noteworthy phenomenon which possibly provides knowledge concerning historical events that affected the provincial capital of Thracia, but which however are not recorded in other ancient sources. There are two factors that could be taken into consideration when trying to reconstruct the development of Perinthos after Geta's inauguration and prior to his assassination. Thus, the medallions of Septimius Severus and his younger son Geta with shared common reverse die indicate that the new Augustus probably visited the provincial capital at a time during the very last months of Septimius' life. If such a visit indeed took place, it did not last long since Cassius Dio (77, 15, 2) notes both Caracalla and Geta were at their father's deathbed in Eburacum on 4th February 211. The other possibility would be to refer to Herodian's narration (4, 1, 5; 4, 3, 19) about the relations between the two brothers. Even though the ancient historian reports on these relations in the context of the months following Septimius' death, it can hardly be doubted that the tension between the two brothers developed prior to the loss of their father. Also bearing in mind the close connection between Caracalla and Byzantion[70], as well as the hostility between Perinthos and Byzantion, it would not be unjustified to conjecture an attempt of the Perinthians to favour the younger brother as a counterbalance to what was happening with their rival neighbour.

The mint of Perinthos features yet another phenomenon also overlooked so far. The medallions with the portrait and name of Caracalla, issued during the first months of his sole rule, are very numerous and remarkably heavy in weight. A quantitative analysis based on E. Schönert-Geiß' corpus of 1965 gave instructive results. The parameters of interest are the number of coins taken

[63] Schönert-Geiß 1965, 191.
[64] Schönert-Geiß 1965, 196.
[65] Schönert-Geiß 1965, 191 obverse die A (sixth); 194 obverse die A (fifth); 195 obverse die A (fourth).
[66] Schönert-Geiß 1965, 208 obverse dies A and B.
[67] Schönert-Geiß 1965, 209 obverse dies A–D.
[68] Schönert-Geiß 1965, 211 obverse dies A and B (third denomination); 212 obverse dies A and B (first denomination).
[69] Schönert-Geiß 1965, 212 obverse dies A–D.
[70] Weisser 1998; Boteva 2013, 96–98.

into account in this book and the *approximate* weight of these pieces (in the cases without reported weight, I counted the value given for the respective previous or next coin). This quantitative research is especially eloquent for certain short periods with more or less precise chronology. Some of the general results are presented below in table 1.

Table 1 Quantifying Perinthos' coinage (AD 98–222)

Time	Emperor	Perinthos' coins for other family members	Number of coins reported in Schönert-Geiß 1965	Approximate general weight of the coins in Schönert-Geiß 1965
AD 98–101	Trajan	–	37	~ 396 g
AD 161–169	Marcus Aurelius Lucius Verus	Faustina Minor	9	~ 78 g
mid-193 – mid-195	Septimius Severus	Julia Domna	21	~ 119 g
Nov. 210 – Dec. 211	Septimius Severus Geta Augustus	Coins of Caracalla and Domna could not be dated precisely and are excluded from these calculations	(23/SS + 43/G = **66**) without the coins of Caracalla and Domna; in any case they are restricted in number	(~ 795 g/SS + ~ 913 g/G **~ 1,708 g**) without the coins of Caracalla and Domna; in any case they are of restricted weight
Dec. 211 – mid-212	Caracalla	Julia Domna	137/C + 4/D = **141**	~ 4,410 g/C + ~ 38 g/D **4,448 g**
218–222	Elagabalus	Cornelia Paula Julia Maesa	87	~ 1,612 g

For the sake of a clearer picture with necessary comparisons, quantitative analysis was also made of the precisely datable relevant coinage of two other mints in the province of Thracia – Nicopolis ad Nestum/Mestum and Colonia Flavia Pacis Deultensium.

The mint of Nicopolis was active solely after the death of Septimius Severus either till the assassination of Geta[71], or up to a month or two after this tragedy[72].

Deultum issued coins for Caracalla and Julia Domna datable to AD 212[73], i.e. more or less synchronous with the latest coins of Perinthos for the elder Severus' son and his mother.

The results of these analyses based on the two respective corpora[74], are presented below in table 2.

Table 2 Quantifying the coinage of Nicopolis ad Nestum/Mestum (February 211 – early 212) and Deultum (AD 212)

Mint	Time	Emperor(s) and family members	Number of coins	Approximate general weight
Nicopolis ad Nestum/Mestum	Febr. – Dec. 211 or Febr 211 – very early 212	Julia Domna Caracalla Geta	8 142 83 **Σ 233**	~ 58 g ~ 2,197 g ~ 1,312 g **Σ ~ 3,566 g**
Deultum	AD 212	Julia Domna Caracalla	8 55 **Σ 63**	~ 72 g ~ 485 g **Σ ~ 557 g**

71 Komnick 2003, 9 f.
72 Boteva – Božkova 2004, 105 f.
73 Draganov 2007, 49.
74 Komnick 2003, 55–74; Draganov 2007, 190–198.

In the name of the provincial city of Nicopolis ad Nestum/Mestum, coins were minted within only a very short period which luckily for our analysis coincides with the time under discussion in this paper. Their number is relatively high (total of 233 pieces are reported)[75] and accordingly their preserved general weight is relatively high, ca. 3,566 g. However, the average weight of each individual coin remains within the traditional parameters. The only element to be explicitly mentioned here is the difference in the number of coins for Caracalla (with 10 attested obverse dies)[76], when compared with the coins for Geta (produced with 7 attested obverse dies)[77], thus forming a clear counterpoint of the synchronous situation in the mint of the provincial capital.

Clearly different is the picture of the coinage for Caracalla and Julia Domna minted by the Roman colony of Deultum in AD 212: the number of coins for the emperor and his mother, known so far, is relatively restricted. Their general weight is also relatively low, being in full accord with the minting rules of the Roman colonial coinage throughout the empire.

It is obvious that the amount of metal used by the mint of the provincial capital within just a couple of months at the start of Caracalla's sole rule is phenomenally large, and an explanation for it should be carefully sought by historians and numismatists. Of course, it is evident that the process started with the inauguration of Geta in November 210, but during the months between November 210 and December 211 the scale was still more or less restricted. Accordingly, one could ponder whether these facts should be connected with the events preceding Septimius' death discussed here above, or whether, behind this lavish use of metal for the coinage of the provincial capital within just a couple of months in early AD 212, lay further and deeper reasons. Apart from the possible political implications of the picture drawn above, there are other equally important questions to be answered: how did these coin series affect the financial structure of the capital city and the province as a whole at the time of transition here under scrutiny? Are we allowed to view these coin series as a mirror of significant changes in the economic life of the Perinthians in these troubled years? Future research will no doubt provide clarity in these and other issues.

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MATERIAL CULTURE UNDER TRANSITION

Gabrielle Kremer

CARNUNTUM, CAPITAL OF PANNONIA SUPERIOR: THE EVIDENCE OF THE VOTIVE MONUMENTS AND THE SACRAL TOPOGRAPHY

ABSTRACT

The role of Carnuntum as the seat of the governor of Pannonia Superior can be illustrated by a series of votive monuments erected by *officiales* from the governor's staff – usually for an official reason – and thus characterizing the centre of power. By locating the respective sites on the Carnuntum city map, we gain important clues for the localisation and interpretation of certain buildings, such as the *praetorium*. The ›sacral topography‹ provides a picture that is well compatible with Carnuntum's role as the administrative and military *caput provinciae*. The religious centre with the provincial emperor's cult and the *concilium*, however, was located in Savaria, not in Carnuntum. Several large sanctuaries of supra-regional importance are concentrated at the eastern edge of the settlement area in the *canabae legionis*. As a religious centre, Carnuntum seems to have played an important role mainly in the spread of the Mithras cult beyond the city limits.

KEYWORDS

Carnuntum – Pannonia Superior – sacral topography – capital – votive monument

The inscriptions carved in stone play a prominent role in the answer to the question of what constitutes the capital of a Roman province and how to recognize it[1]. This applies all the more to a city in the central Danubian provinces, such as Carnuntum, where we have at our disposal a large number of Roman stone monuments, but very few other written sources. However, not only the inscriptions themselves and their testimony are revealing for this query, but also the inscription carriers, i.e. the monuments in their entire form and, above all, the archaeological sites and contexts of discovery with which they are associated.

The work on *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani* for Carnuntum therefore offers a favourable starting point, because more than 700 cult-related stone monuments from the whole settlement area – civil town and surroundings, auxiliary fort, legionary fortress, *canabae legionis* – have been documented in a first step and special attention has been paid to the localisation and interpretation of the sites, thus providing the basis for the establishment of a ›sacral topography‹ of Carnuntum[2]. In addition, Carnuntum offers today an outstanding potential for overarching scientific research, as it is one of the few Roman cities visible in its entire settlement extent, not only by excavations and surveys, but also by evaluation of remote sensing data and by extensive geophysical data, which are currently being evaluated[3] (fig. 1).

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[1] Regarding the concept of a ›capital‹ and the problems of its application to conditions in antiquity see Haensch 1997, 11–17.

[2] Kremer 2012.

[3] e.g. Doneus et al. 2013; Gugl 2014; Neubauer et al. 2017.

1 General plan of Carnuntum based on excavations and remote sensing data (1: *praetorium consularis*, 2: *castra singularium*, 3: amphitheatre I with sanctuary of Nemesis; 4: so-called Thermal Baths; 5: sacral area Carnuntum-»Mühläcker«; 6: sanctuary on Pfaffenberg) (© 2013 M. Doneus/C. Gugl/N. Doneus/U. Fornwagner; DGM: ALS Daten des Landes NÖ)

Let us recall a few historical benchmarks[4]: after the establishment of the province – probably under Tiberius – and the temporary presence of military troops, the legionary fortress was built by the *legio XV Apollinaris* in the middle of the 1st century AD. After the division of the province under Trajan, Carnuntum most probably became the governor's seat and capital of Pannonia Superior. The civilian town was made *municipium* under Hadrian and *colonia* under Septimius Severus. An important building activity is perceptible in the Severan period and in the first half of the 3rd century. In 308, a conference of the emperors was held in Carnuntum during which Licinius was appointed Augustus of the Western Empire[5]. It was only then that Pannonia Superior was divided into Pannonia Prima and Pannonia Savia. The latest known and reliably dated votive inscription found in the sanctuary on Pfaffenberg was dedicated in 313, the year of the Edict of Milan[6].

There is no doubt today that the *legatus Augusti pro praetore* of Pannonia Superior resided in Carnuntum, next to the legionary troops, of which he was commander-in-chief[7]. The strong evidence for this assertion is furnished by several well-known stone monuments, of which the most important is the votive monument dedicated by a group of *officiales* of the three legions based in Carnuntum, Vindobona and Brigetio[8] (fig. 2). The addressee is the *numen Augusti* of the emperor Caracalla, the dedicants are three *cornicularii*, three *commentarienses* and 30 *speculatores* – all listed by name – working in the governor's *officium.* The whole monument is about 2.30 m high and made of white marble – a special quality feature in Carnuntum because only 10–15 % of the stone monuments were made of marble, which had to be imported from the Alpine or from the Mediterranean regions[9]. The statuette of a Genius has been heavily restored and completed – a historical restoration from the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century, which has been preserved for the current presentation in the Archaeological Museum Carnuntinum. But despite the post-antique additions of restoration, it is clearly recognizable that next to the right leg of the Genius there is a *cista mystica* with a snake escaping under the lid of the casket. The dedicants were probably devotees of a mystery cult – of Bacchus or Liber Pater, for example – and the monument could have been erected in their meeting room *(schola)*, situated in or near the *praetorium*[10]. It is important to underline that the monument has been officially donated by a corporation of *officiales* and that it is not simply a single or private vow of somebody from the staff[11]. It therefore very likely indicates the location where this staff was stationed or a public space situated in the immediate vicinity. The so-called Monument of the three Legions is one of several dedications with an official character in Carnuntum and its surroundings under the reign of Caracalla[12]. Quite a similar monument is the 1.33 m high pedestal dedicated to Hercules Augustus by a group of *speculatores*, who also belonged to the governor's staff (fig. 3)[13]. It was surely meant to bear a statuette as well, most probably of the god Hercules. Both monuments were found at the end of the 18th century – allegedly somewhere between the legionary fortress and the civil town, but it is not possible anymore to define the exact finding spot and the original context of display.

This unfortunate circumstance is compensated by two other monuments, which help us situate the governor's palace in the area between the legionary fortress and the civil town, about 300 m west of the fortress. It lies directly on the Danube bank and is today already partly washed away by the Danube[14] (figs. 1, 1; 8). The monument discovered in 1902 is a bilingual base, dedicated

4 Mócsy 1974; Kovács 2014; Beutler 2014.
5 See recently Weber 2014.
6 AE 1982, 784; AE 1991, 1313; Piso 2003, 47 f. no. 45; Humer – Kremer 2011, 209 no. 172.
7 Haensch 1997, 376.
8 CIL III 4452 = 11093; von Domaszewski 1981, 29–32. 207; Kremer 2012, 36–37 no. 23 pl. 11 (with lit.).
9 Kremer et al. 2009; Djurić 1997; C. Uhlir – M. Unterwurzacher in: Kremer 2012, 421–430.
10 For further examples of monuments dedicated to a Genius in *scholae* in military context see e.g. Stoll 1992, 179–185.
11 Cf. Haensch 1997, 42; Derks 1998, 215–239; Kremer 2012, 396–399.
12 For more see Kremer 2012, 317.
13 CIL III 4402; Haensch 1997, 349. 694; Kremer 2012, 150 no. 283 pl. 80 (with lit.).
14 Doneus et al. 2013, 85 f.; Schäfer 2014, 258–264.

between 247 and 249 by the governor L. Pomponius Protomachus himself to the goddess Aequitas/Eudikía[15] (figs. 4. 8). Already at its discovery it was interpreted by Eugen Bormann, and later on by Rudolf Egger[16], as an indicator of the *praetorium*, especially of the rooms where the jurisdiction took place. It is one of the very few inscriptions in Carnuntum written partly in Greek language, Protomachus being of eastern origin[17].

A more recent find corroborates the localisation of the *praetorium*, namely the altar dedicated to Epona Augusta[18] by the *superiumentari et muliones* of the *legatus Augusti pro praetore* Claudius Maximus between AD 150 and 155 (figs. 5. 8). The *superiumentari* and *muliones*, appearing here as a group and not listed by their individual names, are therefore also acting as a part of the governor's staff and not on a private account[19]. Their vow might be understood as a sign of cohesion and an act of loyalty towards their employer Claudius Maximus. Ioan Piso drew the parallel to the *praetorium* in Apulum, where several dedications to Epona have been found in the stables, the place where the *iumenta* were kept and where the carters did their work[20]. Applying the same reasoning to Carnuntum, this means that the findspot of the altar dedicated to Epona probably indicates the stables of the *praetorium*, which were situated about 180 m west of the legionary fortress on the south bank of the Danube and about 130 m east of the building where the altar of L. Pomponius Protomachus was discovered. We may conclude that the governor's palace reached a length of at least 150 m, the presumed stables included[21] (fig. 8).

There is another huge building, in the eastern part of the military settlement, where there is a concentration of votive monuments connected in one way or another to the governor's staff, namely the so-called Thermal Baths[22] (fig. 1, 4). This complex was excavated in the 19th and early 20th centuries but barely documented, so that we may only speculate about its function. It is however highly probable that it was connected to the military troops, that it was in function from the second half of the 2nd to the advanced 4th century, and that it had an increased importance in the second half of the 4th century[23]. The votive monuments found in this area offer a complex picture of religious practices during the later 2nd and 3rd centuries that cannot be discussed here in detail[24]. Therefore, only a few characteristic aspects common to some of the monuments will be mentioned. Particularly interesting is a life-size head of a goddess[25], wearing a helmet with a crest, additionally a *corona muralis* and at the front side something like horns (*lunula* [?], *cornicula* [?])[26] (fig. 6). The combination of the helmet with a *corona muralis* seems to indicate a protective function in a military context, whereas the horns or the *lunula* might point to a syncretism of oriental origin. The designation as Virtus *(legionis)* has been suggested[27] – based on the representation of this goddess on coins among others – but the exact denomination remains difficult. We are not aware of an exact parallel to this representation, but we find similar syncretistic goddesses or personifications in official or public contexts from the late 2nd century onwards,

15 AE 1903, 206; Groller 1904, 101 f. map fig. 53; Bormann 1904, 134–138 fig. 69; Groller 1905, 113–118 fig. 72; Haensch 1997, 349 f. 697; PIR² VI (1998) 327 no. 748; Kremer 2012, 126–127 no. 237 pl. 65 (with lit.).
16 Egger 1966, esp. 8–10.
17 Weber 1999.
18 AEA 1983–1992, 202; Jobst – Weber 1989; AE 1991, 1308; Piso 1993/1994; Haensch 1997, 349 f. 694; Kremer 2012, 137 no. 258 pl. 71.
19 According to Piso 1993/1994, 204 they could have been *servi publici*, assigned to the governor's household. Cf. Eck 1992.
20 Piso 1993/1994.
21 For the possible inclusion of further building remains with mosaics in the complex of the governor's palace see Piso 1993/1994, 208 f.; C. Gugl in: Doneus et al. 2013, 86; Gugl – Wallner 2019.
22 Kenner 1876; Kandler 1977, 673–676.
23 C. Gugl in: Doneus et al. 2013, 87–100.
24 Kremer 2012, 366 and nos. 21. 61. 69. 149. 162. 400. 543. 728 (?).
25 Kremer 2012, 58 no. 69 pl. 26; Kremer 2015a, 277–282 fig. 11 a. b.
26 Maxfield 1981, 97–100.
27 Kenner 1876, 60–62 figs. 1. 2 and pl. fig. 3.

2 Votive monument with statuette of a Genius, erected by the *cornicularii*, *commentarienses* and *speculatores* of the three Pannonian legions, KHM Wien (© Landessammlungen NÖ, Römerstadt Carnuntum, N. Gail)

3 Pedestal with votive inscription addressed to Hercules Augustus, erected by the *speculatores*, KHM Wien (© Landessammlungen NÖ, Römerstadt Carnuntum, N. Gail)

4 Pedestal with bilingual votive inscription addressed to Aequitas/Eudikia, erected by the governor L. Pomponius Protomachus, AMC (© Landessammlungen NÖ, Römerstadt Carnuntum, N. Gail)

5 Altar or pedestal with votive inscription addressed to Epona Augusta, erected by the *superiumentari* and *muliones*, AMC (© Landessammlungen NÖ, Römerstadt Carnuntum, N. Gail)

6 Head of a syncretistic goddess from the so-called Thermal Baths, AMC (© Landessammlungen NÖ, Römerstadt Carnuntum, N. Gail)

where they played a protective and an identity-forming role. A frequently cited parallel is the winged Minerva with helmet, *corona muralis*, *cornucopia*, shield and lance from *Bulla Regia*[28].

In Carnuntum, a similar eclectic concept is represented by the cult statue from the sanctuary of Nemesis near the military amphitheatre in the *canabae legionis*[29] (fig. 1, 3), which combines attributes of Artemis/Diana, Selene/Luna, Tyche/Fortuna, Nemesis and Virtus (fig. 7). The inscription on the statue base addresses her as Dea Nemesis[30]. According to the ensemble of monuments from the sanctuary and the votive inscriptions, which are mostly dated by consuls, the cult must have had an official component in the military context, linked to the activities in the amphitheatre[31]. Among the dedicators are several high-ranking militaries, such as two *centuriones*[32], a *primus pilus*[33] and also an *immunis caerei*[34] of the 14th legion.

The presumed Nemesis-Fortuna from the governor's palace in Aquincum[35] is provided with the diadem and the veil characterizing Iuno, holding a globe in her left hand and a torch in her right hand. Moreover, the statuette has been associated with the imperial cult of the empress[36] – an interpretation that is corroborated by the archaeological context, as the statuette has been discovered near a sanctuary of the imperial cult inside the *praetorium* of the capital of Pannonia Inferior[37]. The goddesses mentioned above have in common that they are characterized by an abundance of attributes suggesting an almost pantheistic intent and that they appear as personifications of imperial and military power.

Something like a universal claim is also perceptible in three other monuments from the so-called Thermal Baths, namely a rather singular statuette of Iuppiter Dolichenus[38], bearing the pantheistic formula *diis* on its plinth, secondly an altar to *Serapis conservator, Isis ceterisque dis deabusque immortalibus*[39] erected (during the reign of Caracalla [?]) by an important person whose name was erased – possibly a *legatus Augusti* or a *legatus legionis*[40], and finally a smaller fragmentary altar, donated by a *strator legati legionis* to an unknown deity and again *dis deabusque*[41]. In the same period as the last-mentioned altar, namely under the reign of Severus Alexander, a pedestal for Silvanus Domesticus was donated by a *cornicularius legionis* named Iulius Faustinus[42].

[28] Picard 1984, 1109 f. no. 3.
[29] Tragau 1897, 207–210 figs. 18–19; Kremer 2012, 32 no. 14 pl. 7 (with lit.); Kremer 2015a, 259–277 fig. 1.
[30] Kremer 2012, 189 f. no. 371 pls. 116. 117 (with lit.).
[31] Kremer 2012, 338–340. 387–389. Cf. Hornum 1993, 84–88; Weber-Hiden 2008, 621 f.
[32] CIL III 14071; Kremer 2012, 195 f. no. 384 pl. 123 (with lit.) and CIL III 14357; Kremer 2012, 190 no. 372 pl. 118 (with lit.).
[33] CIL III 14078; Kremer 2012, 254 no. 561 pl. 174 (with lit.).
[34] CIL III 14358.2; Kremer 2012, 191 f. no. 375 pl. 120.
[35] Szirmai 2005, 287 fig. 1; Kremer 2015a, 275 fig. 10; lupa 5296.
[36] Hornum 1993, 17–19.
[37] Szilágyi 1958; Póczy 2001, 21–29; Kérdő 2008.
[38] Hörig – Schwertheim 1987, 151 no. 230 pl. 42; Kremer 2012, 53 f. no. 61 pl. 23 (with lit.).
[39] CIL III 11157; Kremer 2012, 201 no. 400 pl. 127 (with lit).
[40] Haensch 1997, 697 no. 263.
[41] CIL III 11108; Kremer 2012, 249 no. 543 pl. 169 (with lit.).
[42] CIL III 11172; Kremer 2012, 211 no. 427 pl. 137 (with lit.).

Other monuments have been found in the so-called Heilthermen, and the common characteristics to be pointed out are, on the one hand, the dedicants who belong to the environment of the governor or the *legatus legionis* and, on the other hand, their all-embracing religious choice, clearly articulated at least on some of the monuments.

A third area in the *canabae* has only recently been identified – a result of the interpretation of the geophysical data – as the *castra singularium*, the fortress of the *equites singulares*, the guards of the *legatus Augusti*[43] (figs. 1, 2; 8). These barracks are situated south of the *praetorium consularis* and cover an area of 1.73 ha. Immediately to the south there is another huge building, which Christian Gugl discusses as the private residence of the governor[44] (fig. 8). There are no monuments and inscriptions so far assignable to this area, but a chronological indication is given by the fact that the tombs dated to the 1st century lining the so-called Gräberstraße – the oldest funeral area of Carnuntum – have been abandoned and superposed by the mentioned military and official structures (fig. 8). This far-reaching change in the settlement structure is supposed to have taken place around AD 106, when Pannonia was divided into Pannonia Superior and Pannonia Inferior[45].

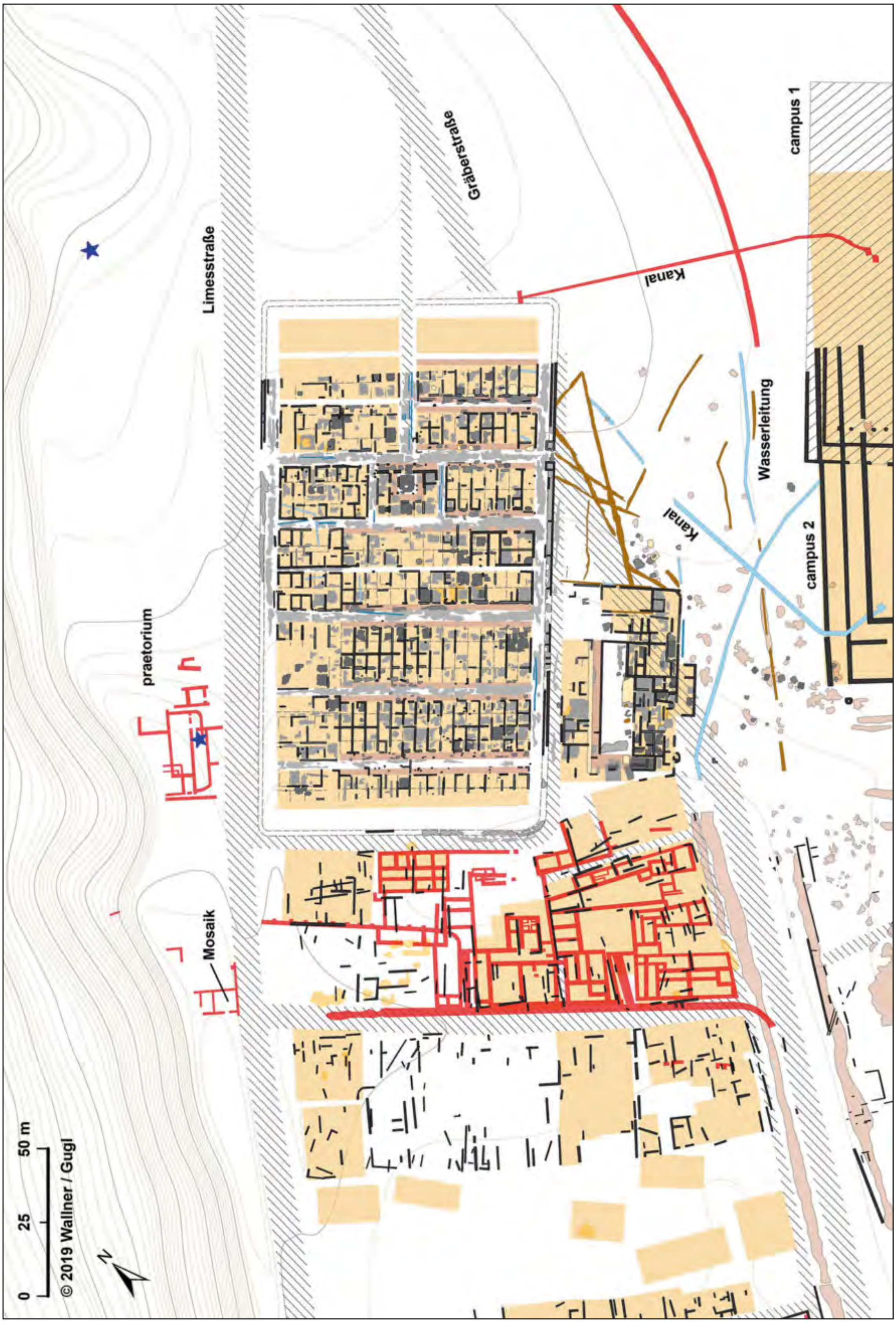
To summarize, the monuments discussed above all belong to the official or private religion of the entourage of the governor and therefore characterize the centre of power. They also help us to situate the *praetorium* of Carnuntum in the *canabae*, next to the legionary fortress, in the same way as is the case in Apulum[46] and in Aquincum[47] for example.

We may now ask if there are any other indications among the monuments pointing to Carnuntum's special status. Until now, there is no evidence for the presence of a *procurator* or associated members of his staff in Carnuntum, whereas several significant votive monuments are known from Poetovio, mentioning a *procurator provinciae Pannoniae superioris*[48] or a *procurator Augusti*[49] respectively. Neither is there any explicit proof available for Carnuntum as the centre of the provincial cult or the meeting place of the *concilium,* which was rather held in Savaria[50]. The evidence is provided among others by the – documented, but nowadays lost – pedestals bearing the inscriptions of the Pannonian towns Siscia and Scarbantia[51], which were found near the area where the *ara Augustorum provinciae Pannoniae superioris* is supposed to be located[52]. A series of epigraphical testimonies from Savaria, including a building inscription[53] and two votive inscriptions to the goddess Nemesis[54] mentioning the *sacerdotales provinciae* of Pannonia Superior give additional information. It is most probable that the *concilium* and the centre of the provincial cult was already located in Savaria before the division of the province, in the Flavian period[55].

As for Carnuntum, several sanctuaries worth mentioning have been discovered in the eastern part of the *canabae legionis* (fig. 1, 5). Among them is probably the temple of Sarapis (and Isis), whose building inscription[56] was set up by the *legatus legionis* P. Cornelius Anullinus during the reign of the emperor Caracalla. If the inscription has been correctly completed by Ekkehard

43 Gugl – Wallner 2019.
44 Gugl – Wallner 2019, 35 figs. 15. 20 »Gebäude 15«.
45 Gugl – Wallner 2019, 47–49.
46 Rusu-Bolindeţ 2019; Schäfer 2014.
47 See n. 37.
48 CIL III 4031; lupa 8843.
49 AE 1978, 647; lupa 6193.
50 Szabó 2003; Scherrer 2003, 68 f.
51 CIL III 4192, 4193; RIU I 133. 134; lupa 12893. 12894.
52 Deininger 1965, 116; Tóth 2011.
53 CIL III 4183; lupa 5235.
54 CIL III 10911; lupa 7972 and AE 1972, 389; lupa 7957.
55 Edelmann-Singer 2015, 126 f. n. 522 mentioning the Flavian tombstone with funeral inscription of Valentiana Repentina, *provinciae liberta* (AE 1972, 416; AE 2003, 1366; lupa 3336). Cf. Scherrer 2003, 69.
56 Kremer 2012, 292 no. 710 pl. 199 (with lit.).

7 Cult statue of Dea Nemesis from the Nemeseum near amphitheatre I, AMC (© Landessammlungen NÖ, Römerstadt Carnuntum, N. Gail)



8 Area of the governor's palace *(praetorium)* and surroundings (red: results of excavations; blue stars: find spots of the votive monuments to Aequitas/Eudikia [left] and Epona [right]) (© LBI ArchPro, M. Wallner; OeAW-OeAI, C. Gugl)

Weber[57], it relates to the renovation of the sanctuary, which then must have had a predecessor. Although the building inscription was found in secondary use and the archaeological context has not been well documented, we may assume that this sanctuary was located in the vicinity of the temple of Iuppiter Heliopolitanus, one of the buildings supposed to be part of the so-called Sanctuary of Oriental Gods in Carnuntum-»Mühläcker«[58] (fig. 1, 5). Immediately west of the mentioned sanctuary, another *temenos* was dedicated to Liber and Libera[59]. At least the cult place of Iuppiter Heliopolitanus must have been of supra-regional importance for the numerous soldiers, merchants and accompanying population of Syrian origin testified in Pannonia[60], as no other sanctuary dedicated to the deity from Baalbek has been discovered north of the Alps until now. The imperial promotion of the cult is highlighted in Carnuntum also by the representation of the cult statue of Iuppiter Heliopolitanus on the cuirassed statue of a Severan emperor from the *principia* in the legionary fortress[61]. Further monuments document the strong but by no means exclusive military presence among the worshippers of Iuppiter Heliopolitanus (and Venus victrix) in Carnuntum[62].

The sanctuaries mentioned here in the south-eastern part of the *canabae legionis* all together covered a huge sacred area on the outskirts of the settlement. Their topographical location clearly points to the fact that their importance was mainly linked to Carnuntum as the military capital of the province (fig. 1).

Another important sanctuary is situated further east of the *canabae* in a prominent position, on the hill called Pfaffenberg[63] (fig. 1, 6). More than one hundred votive monuments were dedicated mostly to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, in the later period specified by the epitheton *K(arnuntinus)*. Many questions still remain unanswered concerning this sanctuary, but the cult seems to have had a major significance for the whole territory of Carnuntum[64]. Several group consecrations of official character were dedicated by the *cives Romani consistentes intra leugam primam*, always *pro salute domini nostri* or *pro salute imperatorum*[65]. The priests charged with the cult in the sanctuary during the second half of the 2nd century – a *collegium* of four *magistri montis* – were recruited among the *decuriones* of the civil town, as well as among the veterans. Fragments of at least two more than life-size statues have been attributed to representations of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, seated on a throne which is supported by giants. This iconography seems to be related to the wars and military events at the Danubian Limes[66]. Another statuette corresponding to the scheme of the enthroned Iuppiter Capitolinus is seated on a throne which has similarities to the *sella curulis* or the *sella castrensis* and therefore might represent an emperor in the pose of Iuppiter[67]. Unfortunately, neither the head nor the attributes of this statuette are preserved, so that the identity of the depicted person remains open. A head that only survived in a photograph was identified by Werner Jobst with high probability as the portrait of the emperor Marcus Aurelius and we may assume that there was at least one sculpture of the emperor in the sanctuary[68].

The origins of the sanctuary are probably connected to the Roman occupation and the establishment and development of the Danubian Limes. The oldest dated altar found in the sanctuary,

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57 Weber 1985, 649–651 no. 1 pl. 12, 1. Cf. Kremer 2012, 390; Kremer 2015b, pls. 7–10.
58 See e. g. Eschbaumer et al. 2003; Gassner – Steigberger 2013; Gassner et al. 2014.
59 Kandler 2001; Kandler 2004, 57.
60 Mócsy 1974, 227–230; Solin 1983.
61 Hajjar 1977, 331–334 no. 277 pl. 104; Landskron 2007; Kremer 2012, 100 f. no. 185 pl. 51 (with lit.).
62 Gassner – Kandler 2002; Kremer 2012, nos. 330. 331. 728. 729.
63 Jobst 1977; Piso 2003; Kremer 2004; Jobst 2006; Jobst 2021.
64 Cf. Kremer 2014.
65 Piso 2003, passim.
66 Kremer 2004, 51–55. 93 f. nos. 2. 25; 66–70. 91 f. nos. 7. 24; Humer – Kremer 2011, 211 no. 175.
67 See the whole argumentation in Kremer 1996; Kremer 2004, 22–25. 59 f. no. 4 fig. 9 pls. 13–16.
68 Jobst 1977, 703 f. 719; Kremer 2004, 24 f. fig. 14 pl. 55.

dedicated to Victoria by a soldier of the 15th legion in the middle of the 1st century AD[69], as well as other monuments related to Victoria[70] point in this direction. Historical events are also reflected by the victory celebrations held in the sanctuary on Pfaffenberg, which are documented by inscriptions such as the *clipeus virtutis* celebrating a military victory during the reign of Commodus[71].

Another point can be made that is possibly more closely related to the importance of Carnuntum as a provincial capital, namely the numerous inscriptions from the sanctuary on Pfaffenberg consecrated to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Karnuntinus *pro salute imperatoris* on June 11th[72]. In Carnuntum, all these inscriptions originate from the Tetrarchic period, the last one being erected in AD 313[73]. The date of June 11 does not appear in the official Roman festival calendar, but it occurs repeatedly in a second place, namely in Aquincum, the capital of Pannonia Inferior, on altars for Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Teutanus, *pro salute adque incolumitate Augusti et civitatis Eraviscorum*[74]. Many possible explanations have already been proposed for this circumstance[75] that cannot be discussed here, but it seems likely that the common festive day in the two Pannonian provinces has to do with the common past of the undivided province and with the function of Aquincum and Carnuntum as capitals of the two Pannoniae. The thesis that attributes the festive day to the inauguration of the *ara Augusti* in Savaria remains most plausible to me at the moment[76], although decisive proof is still missing.

The *ara Augusti* in the sanctuary on the Pfaffenberg near Carnuntum has been assumed on the basis of a ground plan and architectural as well as sculptural fragments found in the north-western area of the plateau[77]. Its interpretation and possible function does not appear to be satisfactorily clarified yet.

One more monument has to be mentioned when considering the sacral topography of Carnuntum as a capital: the famous so-called Altar of the four Emperors *(Iovii et Herculii religiosissimi Augusti et Caesares)*, which was re-dedicated to *D(eus) S(ol) I(nvictus) M(ithras), fautor imperii sui*, by the tetrarchs on the occasion of their meeting in Carnuntum in AD 308[78]. According to Peter Kovács, Pannonia Superior was divided into Pannonia Prima and Pannonia Savia only during the reign of Licinius, and Carnuntum was still the centre of power when the tetrarchs met there to designate Licinius as the future emperor of the western part of the Empire[79]. We do not know where exactly the conference took place. Most suitable would have been one of the buildings described at the beginning of this paper, or the legionary fortress itself. The altar dedicated by the emperors was found in the 18th century, probably in the so-called Mithraeum III in the civil town[80], which would then be the *sacrarium* mentioned in the inscription that had been renovated on the occasion of the conference. The building is known by excavations of the late 19th century[81], and by a more recent, but unpublished investigation one hundred years later[82]. It is one of the biggest sanctuaries of Mithras known in the western provinces, with a length of 23 m, the two anterooms not included, comparable only to the Mithras-sanctuary »am Ballplatz« in Mainz[83], which has a length of 30 m. Not only the votive altar and the *sacrarium* itself, but also the huge

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69 Piso 2003, 17 no. 1.
70 Kremer 2004, 86–89 nos. 18–20.
71 Piso 2003, 27 no. 16.
72 Piso 2003, 14 f. and passim; Humer et al. 2014, 136–141.
73 See n. 6.
74 Szabó – Tóth 2003.
75 Most recently Scherrer 2013; Piso 2017, 137–139.
76 Piso 1991; Scherrer 2003, 69; Tóth 2011.
77 e.g. Piso 2003, 11; Jobst 2006, 62–66; Jobst 2021, 156–167.
78 CIL III 4413 p. 2328.32; Kremer 2012, 179 f. no. 351 pls. 106. 107 (with lit.).
79 Kovács 2012.
80 Kremer 2012, 332–334.
81 Reichel et al. 1895.
82 Cencic – Jobst 2004.
83 Huld-Zetsche 2008.

cult relief representing the tauroctony seem to have undergone changes in Late Antiquity – at least it shows several traces of reworking[84]. The dedication of the emperors to Mithras as late as in the 4th century, in AD 308, is a clear indication of the importance the Mithras cult had for Carnuntum and vice versa. It reminds us that Carnuntum was as well one of the earliest centres of this cult in the western provinces, highlighted already by monuments and inscriptions of the late 1st and early 2nd centuries AD[85].

The outreach of the cult centre in the capital Carnuntum is also illustrated by the presence of civil and military officials from Carnuntum in the smaller sanctuaries in the hinterland, for example in the *mithraea* of Stixneusiedl[86] and Fertörákos[87]. At Stixneusiedl, a small settlement some 20 km southwest of Carnuntum, two *seviri* of the Colonia Carnuntum apparently founded a community and dedicated a very distinguished tauroctony relief *pro salute Augustorum* to *deus invictus Mithras*[88]. In the *mithraeum* of Fertörákos, situated at the western shore of the Neusiedlersee and on the border of the territoria of Carnuntum and Scarbantia, a *decurio coloniae Karnunti*[89] and a *custos legionis* of the 14th legion[90] appear as dedicators.

In addition to the solid evidence of the governor's seat in Carnuntum, the cult and votive monuments from Carnuntum and the surrounding area provide numerous testimonies of relative significance on the subject of *caput provinciae*[91]. All in all, however, the sacral topography provides a picture that is well compatible with Carnuntum's role as the administrative and military capital of Pannonia Superior and enriches it by several facets.

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[84] Kremer 2012, 103 f. no. 189 fig. 16 pls. 52. 53 (with lit.).
[85] Kremer 2012, 180 f. no. 352 pl. 108 (with lit.) and 382–384.
[86] Schön 1988, 67–71.
[87] Gabrieli 1993.
[88] CIL III 4539; Vermaseren 1960, nos. 1658. 1659 fig. 423; Schön 1988, 69 no. 73; lupa 8902.
[89] CIL III 4236; Vermaseren 1960, no. 1637; lupa 9294.
[90] CIL III 4238; Vermaseren 1960, no. 1638; lupa 9295.
[91] See the basic methodological comments on the evaluation of sources in Haensch 1997, 41–62.

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