KONSTANTIN PRESLAVSKY UNIVERSITY OF SHUMEN
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

STUDIA ACADEMICA ŠUMENENSIA

TRANSITION FROM LATE PAGANISM TO EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN THE ARCHITECTURE AND ART IN THE BALKANS

KRASSIMIR KALCHEV IN MEMORIAM (1954-2004)

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KRASSIMIR KALCHEV IN MEMORIAM

Krassimir Kalchev was born on 10th of April 1954 in Stara Zagora. His interest in the archaeology was inspired by the large-scale excavations in the centre of Stara Zagora in the 70-s of the last century. Following his passion, he graduated St. St. Cyril and Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo as a historian. In 1978 he began his professional career first as a curator and later on as the head of the department of Antiquity in the Regional Historical museum of Stara Zagora. By its significance in that part of Thracia, the ancient Augusta Traiana-Beroe took the second place after Philippopolis, therefore it is very important for the ancient history and archaeology.

Almost all his archaeological experience, Krassimir has acquired in the explorations of the reserve 'Augusta Traiana – Vereia – Stara Zagora', as well as with the monuments from the district of Stara Zagora. From the very beginning of his joining the museum, Krassi, as his friends used to call him, was lucky to be friendly accepted in the archaeological team of proven specialists, namely senior researcher Dimitar Nikolov and Assoc. Prof. Hristo Buyukliev. Krassimir was the man who continually and stoically, in rain and heat, excavated during all 25 archaeological seasons, unearthed and interpreted the ancient culture of Augusta Traiana-Beroe.

He was among the first discoverers of a huge archaeological space and numerous monuments in the ancient city, situated mainly in the central part of Stara Zagora. They preceded the new large-scale building, which began in the 70-s of the last century and reached its first climax in the 80-s. These were the field-works of 'The Central piazza – I and II', 'The Party House', 'The House of Youth', 'The Bank with museum', 'The District Direction of communication' etc. He was the excavator of big sectors of the city planning with its net of streets, including parts of the *decumanus maximus*. Much time was devoted also to the excavation of the *decumani* in the central city part, one of them with 38 shops, situated at both sides of the street. Also his merit was the research of the *cardo maximus* with the sidewalks and sewers, leading to the Southern gate of Augusta Traiana-Beroe. The list of monuments should be expanded by the fortress system, the dimensions of the *insulae*, etc. in the Roman, Late Roman and Early Byzantine period (2nd – beginning of 7th century).

The other spheres of his scientific interests were related to the social and demographic characteristic of the ancient population, the houses and the Early Christian architecture, and the results have been published in the numerous articles of K. Kalchev.

Being part of the team of D. Nilkolov, Krassimir participates in the excavations in 1979-1980 and in the publication on the Early Christian complex with martyrion and 14 tombs on D. Pechlivanov's street. Such an interesting and rich monument appeared for the first time in Stara Zagora and the most

interesting tomb was covered with wall paintings, including the citation of psalm 131/132/14 from the oldest translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek. Remnants of gold-lace were found over one of the skeletons pointing very probably to the presence of a clergyman, having in mind the psalm inscription too. Later he had the chance to explore also a vast Late Antique residence under the Post, a *villa suburbana* and a monastery outside the ancient city. These monuments developed his interest in Late Antiquity and in the new kinds of architecture and decoration (architectonic, mosaic and painted) and in the transformation of the ancient city and its suburbs.

Except in Stara Zagora, in 1980 K. Kalchev took part in the drilling of the Kaleto area near the village of Rupkite at Karasura station, carried out by a Bulgarian-German expedition. In the period 1981-1983 he was a member of the team excavating the settlement of Gradovete area near the village of Kran, Kazanlak district.

In 1989 K. Kalchev became a scientific researcher of 3rd degree in Ancient archaeology and in 1999 he got his first degree, which was the next stage of his scientific development.

In the period after the political changes in 1989, the number of private construction works in Stara Zagora increased. In its turn this enabled the new archaeological research inside different sectors of the ancient city and outside it. This was the time of the exploration of the western and northern fortress wall with towers and of some new parts of the Southwestern necropolis. The result was a very important article on the fortress system and a manuscript for a future dissertation. It offered precious observations on the funeral practices and rituals (2nd-4th century), the types of funerals and sepulchral architecture with the artefacts found there, some of them, such as pottery, were produced unusually in situ, in the area of the necropolis itself. The precise conclusions drawn by Krassimir from this vast empirical material were very necessary and important for this part of *Thracia*. It is a great pity that in spite of his plans, because of his constant archaeological occupations and untimely death the manuscript has not been published and in his lifetime only a monographic article appeared.

He also publishes in the acts of International congresses and symposiums his observations on the collection of bronze amphorae, candelabra and lamps in the Regional Historical museum of Stara Zagora and also on the numerous artifacts of Roman pottery from the excavations. Another important sphere of his scientific interests was that of the ancient wall paintings and mosaic art of Augusta Traiana. These new monuments from Late Antiquity and Early Christianity were published by him for the first time in several articles, mainly in the Corpus of Wall Paintings and the Corpus of Mosaics, revealing the splendour of Augusta Traiana-Beroe.

Again as in the case of the Roman period, Krassimir had to resolve many complex practical and scientific problems during the excavations themselves and afterwards in his publications, concerning the history, life and death of the ancient city.

These details reveal the extremely wide scientific interests of K. Kalchev, his amazing energy for work and his capabilities in interpreting practically many kinds of monuments - from the architectural ones to the small artefacts and from the official sphere to the private funeral one. At the 90-s of the last century Krassimir was already known in Bulgaria and abroad as one of the best experts of the ancient culture of Augusta Traiana-Beroe. The hundreds of objects, found by him during the excavations are exposed now in the Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora or enrich its funds.

Krassimir Kalchev was very passionately devoted to the archaeology, sparing no efforts, living for and excited by the ancient city. For him the process of research did not end with discovering the building or artefact, its registration and formal publication. He felt responsible for the fortune of every monument, from its very finding to its conservation. He used to do almost everything by himself, including the plans and the drawings. His working and scientific capacity were tremendous when looking, for instance, on his mosaic documentation of the fortress system of Augusta Traiana, the necropolises, etc. He would discuss the scientific problems also with the same fervour, fighting for his opinion. He belonged to the generation of scientists with the typical wide-range Renaissance interests and ardour, with the position of a responsible citizen and expert, whose first and greatest concern was the archaeological monument.

Unfortunately he burnt in his passionate work and passed away too early, in his best years of 50, on the 29th of October 2004. But he left for everybody the precious heritage of the past in the streets and in the museum of Stara Zagora. His friends and colleagues from the museum, Bulgaria and abroad will remember him as one of the best specialist in Ancient archaeology of Augusta Traiana-Beroe, and also as a reliable colleague and friend to be admired and followed in his deeds. This volume in his memory, collected by his friends and colleagues, is a modest sign of appreciation of his contribution to Stara Zagora and *Thracia*.

September 2017 Dr. Mariana Minkova

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Introduction

This volume of Studia academica Šumenensia is the second volume of the studies dedicated to the Transitional period from Late paganism into Early Christianity in the Balkans. As such it is a continuation of the previous issue of SAŠ. Since, however, it is our intention to dedicate this volume to the memory of our colleague Krassimir Kalchev, some studies which lie beyond the scope of the main topic are also included. They belong to colleagues of K. Kalchev from the Regional History museum in Stara Zagora, or deal with problems of Augusta Traiana, including archaeological sites where he took part in the excavations.

The issue starts with the introductory study of Dimitar Dimitrov dedicated to the religious policy of the Roman emperors in the early 4th century and the legal texts issued in that connection. Based on two main sources such as the legal texts known as the Edict of Galerius and Edict of Milan, the author's main task is to demonstrate how they fit in the logics of the contemporary politics and in the mentality of the age, distancing them from any legends, created in later centuries. In order to do this it is necessary to approach the study from the point of view of the contemporaries of these two events, which in fact he did.

The next article of Valeria Noeva deals with the mosaic techniques used in Roman and Late antique in present-day Bulgaria. The main task to contribute to the unification of the specific terminology used defines the nature of the article as a retrospection of all known mosaics and mosaics techniques in the area under consideration. It should be underlined that the study has no intention to debate terminology, the nature of various mosaic techniques, etc.

The studies that follow are linked with the archaeology in Augusta Traiana, an important part of which was Krassimir Kalchev. The intention of these articles is to publish the newly discovered site, to discuss the nature and development of the already discovered and known ones and to present the material about them.

The 'Augusta Traiana' article series starts with the study of Vanya Popova on the so-called 'Forum' of Augusta Traiana, part of whose team was Krassimir Kalchev. In this article, the author discusses the nature of the whole complex, its development through the centuries and dates. Unlike the prevailed opinion, it is suggested reasonably that in this case we are not dealing with an agora (forum), but with a complex containing an Asainic type of bath-gymnasion (the Severan gymnasion?). The specific *auditorium* and square located there allow a discussion on the various changes of the functions of the square, linked with the imperial cult, but also of the *bestiaria*.

The Christianization of the city put an end of this complex and transformed the bath's vestibule into an Early Christian basilica and bishop residence.

The next article of Mariana Minkova also deals with the so-called 'forum'. In fact, this is a preliminary study of the whole numismatic material (coins and seals) which so far albeit the importance of the complex remained unpublished. The discovered material is divided chronologically into four groups: pre-Roman, Roman, Early Byzantine and medieval. The coin study helps solving various problems starting with the construction of the complex itself till the end of the late antique city and its restoration in 10th century, and its life until 13th century.

The architectural decoration of the complex within the broad view on the decoration of the whole city is discussed in the study of Svetla Petrova. Her efforts are concentrated on the architectonic decoration in the Ionian order of Augusta Traiana-Beroe (mainly bases, columns, capitals, frieze-architraves, pediments etc.) of public, cult, domestic and sepulchral architecture. The earliest examples in the city are dated as early as the establishment of the city itself in Trajan-Hadrian' time, while the last ones - to the beginning of the 4th century and later reused. It seems that the peak of the development of the city architecture and in the use of the Ionian order is under the Severans with a certain 'Hadrianic Renaissance'.

Another study is that of Marina Koleva on the sculptural monuments derived from the city and its administrative territory. She is concentrated on the myth depictions, their iconography as well as the style's analysis and features. The function of these sculptural monuments is also discussed as well the ethnic origin of the people who ordered them under the Greek-oriented city culture.

The last article of this series is dedicated to a case – study. The joint article of Maria Kamisheva and Reneta Karamanova-Zlatkova presents the main features of the fully uncovered mosaic pavement in the room interpreted as the vestibule of the bath-gymnasion. Although the mosaic is known from 1974-1975, it was possible only in 2013 to uncover fully the mosaic floor dated to the first half of 3rd century.

The following articles concern the period of Transition from Late paganism into Early Christianity in the Balkans in Late antiquity. Various aspects of the problem are discussed in them deriving from both administrative civic centers and rural area. For example, the first of these article – that of Mario Ivanov, deals with the so-called mosaic 'Felix' which seems to have decorated the *aula* of one of the residential complexes located in the center of Late antique Serdica. Although the mosaic pavement was discovered in 2011 and finds its place already into modern bibliography, this study is important as it discusses the archaeological context of the pavement with coins unavailable when the initial publication was made and which provide the terminus of the

mosaic itself. Some new reconstructions of the mosaic and some details are also presented.

The publication and discussion of some of the archaeological material found in this site is the goal of Dochka Vladimirova – Aladzhova's study. She presents two lead artefacts, a commercial seal and a lead. With their images of the Old Testament parable of Daniel in the lion's den, and the image of the Good Shepherd with an image similar to the other on the reverse, they are among the earliest Christian objects found up to now in Serdica dated to the end of the 3rd and 4th centuries according to the archaeological context.

Another article that deals with mosaic pavement is that of Miroslav Markov, focusing on villa No 1 near Montana. Although known in the literature for a long time, the mosaic itself has not been properly published. This article fills the gap.

The last two articles in this volume are dedicated to the problem of the monasticism. The first one belongs to Alexander Manev who deals with the problems of the identification of monastic structures in Thrace as an issue of archaeology. His study reveals that the clear spatial scheme of the Early Christian cloisters is not to be attested in the diocese of Thrace which caused uncertainties with the identification of the early monastic sites. It seems that it was after the full institutionalization of monasticism by the Church after the Fourth ecumenical council of 451 when monastic emerged in Thrace.

The study of Halûk Çetinkaya is a case – study where on a monastic settlement. On the basis of archaeological evidence, he discusses the nature of the archaeological site in Hilariq, Kosovo, and concludes that this is a monastic settlement either from the reign of Anastasius I or Justin I.

Ivo Topalilov, Svetlana Nedelcheva

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The 'Edicts of Tolerance' in the Early 4th Century: Debates and Possible Solutions

Dimitar Dimitrov

Abstract: The article is dedicated to the religious policy of the Roman emperors in the early 4th century and the legal texts issued in that connection. My main task, running out of any excessive ambition, is to reconsider again the events and texts in order to demonstrate how they fully fit to the logic of the contemporary politics and to the mentality of the age, distancing them from any legends, created in later centuries. The legal texts, known as the Edict of Galerius and Edict of Milan, are presented in their full and discussed. Accordingly, the problems of the religious identity are involved, making some mandatory elucidation of how religion was accepted and what was to be Christian at that time. Concerning the much debated 'Edict of Milan', what we have as a text, at least in the version of Lactantius, is a, quite probably, *mandatum* of Licinius promulgated in June 313 in Nicomedia and directed openly against the restoration of persecutions by Maximinus Daia. The other text, translated from Latin into Greek and given to us by Eusebius, is a variant of that text with the role of Constantine stressed, but without any other clues to confirm an overall legal text edited in Milan in the early 313. Finally, the role of Constantine was observed, including the 'white' and 'black' legends created later.

Key words: Late Roman Empire, Christianization, religious policy, persecution, religious tolerance, the edict of Galerius, the edict of Milan, Constantine the Great

Резюме: Настоящата статия е посветена на религиозната политика на римските императори през ранния 4 век и на свързаните с тази политика законодателни текстове. Скромната задача, която си поставям, е да проследя събитията от първите две десетилетия на 4 век, поставяйки религиозната политика в контекста на времето и извън анахронистичните митове от по-късно време, както и да разгледам отново два ключови текста: едикта на Галерий и т. нар. Милански едикт. Що се отнася до прочутия Милански едикт, ние разполагаме с два различаващи се текста. Първият, предаден на латински от Лактанций, не е едикт в римския юридически смисъл на думата, а по-скоро *mandatum*, императорско послание, издадено от Лициний през юни 313 г. в Никомидия, адресирано до управителя на Витиния и разквартируваните там войски, и насочено конкретно срещу възстановената от Максимин Дая анти-християнска политика на Изток. Другият текст, превод на гръцки език от Евсевий Кесарийски, набляга в по-голяма степен на ролята на император Константин, но в никакъв случай не отговаря на представата ни за пълноценен законодателен текст, нито пък имаме безусловни основания да вярваме, че такъв текст е издаден в Медиоланум (Милано). В последната част от тази статия са представени

накратко двете основни линии в представянето на Константин Велики през следващите десетилетия и векове, които аз наричам „бялата" и „черната" легенда за Константин.

The Christian society of medieval and modern Europe was brought up with the brilliant concept of Constantine the Great's conversion. The stories, narrated by Lactantius and Eusebius, concerning the battle at the Milvian bridge, the dream of Constantine and his consequent conversion from paganism to Christianity went on rarely disturbed and strongly venerated for centuries. Since Gibbon and the spirit of Enlightenment, however, the veracity of that story has been more often put under doubt or even radically distrust. The new academic approach led to reconsideration of the *Edict of Milan*. Many scholars refused to recognize it as a law, other were even suspicious about its very existence. There were others, moreover, usually more connected with the Christian and Church tradition who preferred to stand at the embrasure defending the originality and veracity of the Edict as a turning point for the future history of the Christian civilization.[1] The personality of Constantine provoked, too, many controversial theories and passionate views pro and contra, comparable only with some political persons of the recent modern history. It is curious enough to observe scholars of the 20th and 21st century to be so divided on that issue, defending and blackening respectively either Galerius, or Constantine, as if to prove that the modern approach could be slightly different from that of Lactantius, Eusebius, or Emperor Julian.

My not so ambitious task is to reconsider again the events and texts in order to demonstrate how they fully fit to the logic of the contemporary politics and to the mentality of the age, distancing them from any legends, created in later centuries.

Firstly we have to pay attention to the political context during the time-span between 310 and 325. The years 310 and 311 were marked by the tumultuous repercussions of the rivalry between competing Emperors. After the violent death of Maximinus Herculius, Constantine, who was based in Gaul and Britain, came to consider his brother-in-law Maxentius as the only match for the preeminence in the Western part of the empire. The elder, and gravely ill, Galerius had appointed Licinius as his Caesar and co-emperor, thus ignoring his scandalously behaving relative Maximinus Daia. The latter was trying to consolidate his power in the East, challenging the supreme power of the Eastern half of the Empire. The persecution of Christians, started in 303, additionally aggravated the situation by provoking annoyance and distrust not only among the persecuted, but also among the 'pagan' (whatever this elusive notion could mean) subjects, who were fed up by the vicissitudes and horrors. That the general persecution was a mistake came to be obvious.

[1] Anastos 1967, 13-41. For a similar 'triumphant' view see Odahl 1990, 45-63.

Thus, in April 311 the already heavily ill Galerius ordered an edict in Serdica, which was some days later officially promulgated in Nicomedia, with the clear intention to cancel the persecutions and give the Christians certain rights and confidence.

The English translation of the Latin text of the edict, taken from *De mortibus persecutorum* of Lactantius, is as follows:

> Among other arrangements which we are always making for the advantage and benefit of the state, we had earlier sought to set everything right in accordance with the ancient laws and public discipline of the Romans and to ensure that Christians too, who had abandoned the way of life of their ancestors, should return to a sound frame of mind; for in some way such self-will had come upon these same Christians, such folly had taken hold of them, that they no longer followed those usages of the ancients which their own ancestors perhaps had first instituted, but simply following their own judgment and pleasure, they were making up for themselves the law which they were to observe and were gathering various groups of people together in different places. When finally our order was published that they should betake themselves to the practices of the ancients, many were subjected to danger, many too were struck down. Very many, however, persisted in their determination and we saw that these same people were neither offering worship and the due religious observance to the gods nor practicing the worship of the God of the Christians. Bearing in mind therefore our own most gentle clemency and our perpetual habit of showing indulgent pardon to all men, we have taken the view that in the case of these people too we should extend our speediest indulgence, so that once more they may be Christians and put together their meeting-places, provided they do nothing to disturb good order. We are moreover about to indicate in another letter to governors the conditions they ought to observe. Consequently, in accordance with the indulgence of ours, it will be their duty to pray to their god for our safety and for that of the state and themselves, so that from every side the state may be kept unharmed and they may be able to live free of care in their own homes.[2]

[2] Vackova & Dimitrov 2014, 10 (the Latin text of Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 34), 11 (the Greek text in Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 8.17), 12 (the English

The edict was to a great extent an acknowledgement for the failure of policy of pressure on Christians. It was a 'white flag' in front of the moral winners in the conflict. But even more of this, the edict was one of the first, if not the first, official recognition of the existence of the Christians as legal and 'national' entity. When compared with later texts, the language is harsh and disapproving the practices of the Christians. It, however, did appreciate their rights and even more their obligations to pray to 'their' God for the safety of the state vis-à-vis all the challenges and perils. Here, again, we encounter the gap between the very understanding of religiosity and duty, widespread in the ancient society/societies, and that of the Christians. When discussing the religious thinking and behavior of the non-Jewish and non-Christian subjects of the Roman Empire in the 3rd and early 4th century, we have firstly to recognize the variety of traditions and approaches, dependant on the ethnic origin, the social status or intellectual milieu of the groups and individuals under discussion.[3] We could, however, without falling into the unneeded sin of hybris, define three general modes of religiosity. Firstly, the traditional Greco-Roman gods and all the archaic set of beliefs were viewed as obsolete by many, but they were strongly supported by the state, anyway. It was to a great extent a political, moral, and a traditionalist issue. Secondly, there were specific cults, connected with different ethnic, social and intellectual groups. And thirdly, the Neoplatonic philosophy was more and more approaching to an intellectual and elitarian monotheism, without usually tearing apart from the polytheist religious narratives and beliefs.

One of the main reasons for the highly problematic and anachronistic view towards the pagan-Christian conflict, or debate, in Late Antiquity from the medieval and modern perspective is rooted in our own understanding of religion, or religious behavior. Too habituated with the monotheistic religions of revelation, we often ignore the other types of religious thinking. There is no need, moreover, to try desperately and uncertainly into roaming inside the minds of the people from the distant past. The widespread religious concept of the world in modern China or India could open our eyes for a different approach. The Roman religiosity was patriarchally traditionalist, stately supported and in a sense patriotic. Some parallels with Confucianism are not to be excluded. The citizens of ancient Rome venerated, along with the natural forces, also the ancestors, the *genia* of prominent persons, Emperors included, the City itself etc. The Latin word *religio* originated from the verb *religo* (to bind back, tie

translation according to Creed 1984, Lactantius, *On the Deaths of the Persecutors*, ch. 34). For another traditional translation into English see Fletcher, Roberts et al. 1886 (Lactantius, *MP*, ch. 34). For an older edition of the original Latin text see Fritzsche 1844.

[3] Useful discussion in Lieu 2004.

out, fasten up), thus bearing a cluster of possible meanings, like 'connection, adherence, devotion, conscientiousness, vow, sacred obligation, generational duty, piety'. Just to compare, the Greek verb *sebō* used to mean rather being afraid, being ashamed, be struck by a divine force, hence the act of veneration and devotion. The word *sebas*, or *sebasma*, followed the meaning of the verb, while *asebeia* was to mean 'dishonor, infamy, general lack of belief'.

The primitive beliefs and cults, connected with the forces of nature, were overcome for centuries along with the creation of a more 'modern' type society and the Roman Empire. Thus, the obsolete polytheism of most of the Roman subjects was transformed into the opportunity of membership in different cultic 'clubs', often connected with different mysterial cults. The main political cults, like those of Dea Roma, the Capitolian Tryad and the *genius* of the Emperor, continued to be held more as expressions of propaganda. Without being too anachronistic, we could compare them to the official devotion towards alive and deceased political leaders and heroes in some modern societies. We are not to miss, moreover, that the main accusation towards Christians in the 'pagan' period was that of atheism, that is, total disbelief or/and dishonor. We should not be at all in surprised, having in mind the specific features of the religious Roman *Weltanschauung*. The Christians refused to take part in the official cultic practices, nor to venerate any of the traditional deities, excluding thus themselves from the mainstream of the society. Their feeling of religious and moral supremacy led them to refuse completely any other religion, thus negating the main principles of religiosity in general. The Christians, as it was posted in the edict of Galerius, 'had abandoned the way of life of their ancestors' (*qui parentum suorum reliquerant sectam*). The main role of the government according to the mentality and official ideology was, as it was stated also in the edict, 'to set everything right in accordance with the ancient laws and the public discipline of the Romans' (*leges veteres et publicam disciplinam Romanorum cuncta corrigere atque id providere*). What had occupied the Christians, according to the editors and surely divided as an opinion by Galerius himself, was the 'folly' (*stultitia*), which led the Christians astray from the main trend. This type of thinking of Christians as being imprudent representatives of obstinacy and infamy was not far from what Marcus Aurelius was assuming some century and a half ago, not however without a certain granule of respect. What happened later, with the final triumph of Christianity, was that Christians became no less than judges and arbiters of the others, the latter being unified by the very misleading denominations, like 'pagans' or 'Hellenes'. The Christians were already too fond to rebuke from the position of both moral superiority and the formal law being on their side.

If I mentioned 'national entity' above, it was not by chance or a technical mistake. The Romans were ready to accept the ethnic/national

peculiarities of their subjects, including their beliefs, partly incorporated into what we not very precisely call 'the Roman paganism'. Even Jews, who created many problems to the Roman state and were generally viewed with suspicion, if not open hatred, were however allowed to follow their traditional religion, regarded as old and therefore proved by time. What Romans were mostly afraid off were innovations in the religious field. As late as the 4th century AD the 'national' cults were regarded with certain respect and the local gods were viewed as emanations, representations, or avatars of the main deities in the Graeco-Roman pantheon, or of the gods and heroes from the mysterial cults. Emperor Julian rebuked Christians in *Contra Galilaeos* that they had been trying to install their traditional god at the top, excluding arrogantly the other cults. The Christians were not far from this way of thinking either, defining themselves as a *natio Christiana*, the Christian people, and the others were put together again by the derogative notion of 'gentiles', or 'ethnoi', the 'nations' outside us, the false believers. The edict of Galerius was not able to avoid the suspicion for people who had abandoned the traditional beliefs which had formed the identity of the groups they used to belong, but were rather frivolous to follow their own judgment and pleasure (*pro arbitrio suo atque ut isdem erat libitum*). Generally the new groups formed in the society by religious or political criteria was looked over with distrust and were often forbidden by law, starting at least since the time of the emperor Trajan.

When considering Neoplatonism, it was discussed by many in the past for a possible philosophical influence on the decisions of the emperors, including the edict of 303 starting the last 'Great Persecution', or the terminology of the later edicts. I would not point out a word by word influence, but rather the influx of a new intellectual mentality of the age, which found its place in the religious thinking and in the jurisprudence alike.

The edict of Galerius was later swept away to a great extent by the stream of tumultuous events and nearly revolutionary changes to come. When later the star of Constantine the Great has risen on the horizon, and the legend of the first Christian emperor constructed and utilized for more than a millennium ahead, this legal text, edited by one of the greatest instigators of the 'Great Persecution' at the very close of his life has become obsolete, unneeded, not even convenient. There was an obvious need to load the 'first Christian emperor' with the happy responsibility to edit a great relieving text just to turn in completely another direction the world history. Thus, when the question periodically appeared 'Why the edict of Galerius was forgotten?', the answer has been just by the corner. And thus he palm of Serdica and Nicomedia was taken by Milan.[4]

[4] For older, but very concise and informative analysis see Knipfing 1922, 693-705. For the newest considerations see the abovementioned Vachkova & Dimitrov 2014.

Galerius died in 311, just few days after the promulgation of the edict. He was inherited by Licinius in the East, Maximinus Daia being his rival for the power. In the West, Constantine faced Maxentius in 312 and after the battle at the Milvian bridge in October that year and the perdition of Maxentius, Constantine became the sole ruler of the Western part and moreover, the strongest imperial person of the day. Sometimes during the winter of 312-313 (chronology is difficult because of discrepancies in the sources) Constantine met Licinius in Mediolanum (Milan), one of the main administrative hubs of the West then, to discuss political issues along with the nuptial festivities for the marriage of Licinius with Constantia, the half-sister of Constantine. Both emperors recognized to a great extent the limits of their power, Licinius receiving *Oriens* and Constantine obviously the other three prefectures – *Gallia*, *Italia*, and *Illyricum*. Licinius obtained also political support, rather than military, for his struggle with the irresistible Daia. One of the issues discussed was the attitude towards Christians. It was not by chance so far as the edict of Galerius hardly outlived its principal and was probably not implemented everywhere. It was not very clear on certain issues either, like the return of the confiscated property back to the Christians and the Church. Galerius envisaged for the implementation of the law 'another letter to governors for the conditions they ought to observe'. In that context it was normal for the *augusti*, who were more sympathetic than Galerius towards Christianity, to tackle the problem, so far as the inheritance of persecution was too vivid sore yet not healed over completely. What appeared out of the deliberations was the so called 'Edict of Milan', one of the most controversial issues in history. We know the story from Lactantius and Eusebius of Caesarea, thus having two texts in Latin and Greek respectively.

The two stories differ considerably. In the case of Lactantius (*De mortibus persecutorum* 46-48) the main hero of the story is Licinius. After mentioning in chapter 44 the successful war of Constantine against Maxentius, including the dream of Constantine and the Chi-Ro symbol, the author proceeds in the next chapters with the wars of Licinius against Daia. There was a dream of Licinius, too, before the battle with Daia, and a Christian prayer given to God by the army (46). Then the narration follows in that way:

> 'Not many days after the victory, Licinius, having received part of the soldiers of Daia into his service, and properly distributed them, transported his army into Bithynia, and having made his entry into Nicomedia, he returned thanks to God, through whose aid he had overcome; and on the ides of June, while he and Constantine were consuls for the third time, he commanded the following edict for the restoration of the Church, directed to the president of the province, to be promulgated:

When we, Constantine and Licinius, Emperors, had an interview at Milan, and conferred together with respect to the good and security of the commonweal, it seemed to us that, amongst those things that are profitable to mankind in general, the reverence paid to the Divinity merited our first and chief attention, and that it was proper that **the Christians and all others should have liberty** to follow that mode of religion which to each of them appeared best; so that God, who is seated in heaven, might be benign and propitious to us, and to every one under our government. And therefore we judged it a salutary measure, and one highly consonant to right reason, that **no man should be denied leave of attaching himself to the rites of the Christians, or to whatever other religion his mind directed him**, that thus the **supreme Divinity**, to whose worship we freely devote ourselves, might continue to vouchsafe His favour and beneficence to us. And accordingly we give you to know that, without regard to any provisos in our former orders to you concerning the Christians, all who choose that religion are to be permitted, freely and absolutely, to remain in it, and not to be disturbed any ways, or molested. And we thought fit to be thus special in the things committed to your charge, that you might understand that the indulgence which we have granted in matters of religion to the Christians is ample and unconditional; and perceive at the same tithe that the **open and free exercise of their respective religions is granted to all others**, as well as to the Christians. For it befits the well-ordered state and the tranquillity of our times that each individual be allowed, according to his own choice, to worship the Divinity; and we mean not to derogate aught from the honour due to any religion or its votaries. Moreover, with respect to the Christians, we formerly gave certain orders concerning the places appropriated for their religious assemblies; but now we will that all persons who have purchased such places, either from our exchequer or from any one else, **do restore them to the Christians**, without money demanded or price claimed, and that this be performed peremptorily and unambiguously; and we will also, that they who have obtained any right to such places by form of gift do forthwith restore them to the Christians: reserving always to such persons, who have either purchased for a price,

> or gratuitously acquired them, to make application to the judge of the district, if they look on themselves as entitled to any equivalent from our beneficence.
>
> All those places are, by your intervention, to be immediately restored to the Christians. And because it appears that, besides the places appropriated to religious worship, the Christians did possess other places, which belonged not to individuals, but to their society in general, that is, to their churches, we comprehend all such within the regulation aforesaid, and we will that you cause them all to be restored to the society or churches, and that without hesitation or controversy: Provided always, that the persons making restitution without a price paid shall be at liberty to seek indemnification from our bounty. In furthering all which things for the behoof of the Christians, you are to use your utmost diligence, to the end that our orders be speedily obeyed, and our gracious purpose in securing the public tranquillity promoted. So shall that divine favour which, in affairs of the mightiest importance, we have already experienced, continue to give success to us, and in our successes make the commonweal happy. And that the tenor of this our gracious ordinance may be made known unto all, we will that you cause it by your authority to be published everywhere.'[5]

This was the story of Lactantius along with the text of the imperial decision, or ordinance, promulgated actually not in Milan, but in the main eastern residence Nicomedia (modern Turkish city of Izmit). The story, narrated by Eusebius in his *Church History*, was quite different, notwithstanding the main Christian zeal shared with Lactantius. Chapter 9 of the history was dedicated to one of the main villains in it, Maximinus Daia. It is to be noticed, then, that although Constantine was the main moral and divinely elected hero of their stories, both Eusebius and Lactantius were more concerned with the civil wars in the East, than with the actions of Constantine in the West. This 'Eastern perspective' was due partly to the places of origin and activity of the both authors, but also because of the importance of the events in the East for the later success of the Christian cause. This fact would probably embezzle those readers who were accustomed by the millennial tradition to look at Constantine as the main protagonist of the Christian success story.

[5] Fletcher, Roberts et al. 1886, Lactantius, *MP*, ch. 48.

As mentioned above, chapter nine of the Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica* (HE) described the last year of the reign of Maximinus in the East and his policy towards Christians, which was quite versatile, if we are to believe to the author(which we should not do without great reservations). Few epistles, *rescripta* and ordinances were issued by the chancellery of Maximinus to either stop persecutions of the Christians, according to the edict of Galerius, or to enhance them again when petitioned by certain governors and cities. The fate of Maximinus as a typical case of tyrant's repulsive death because of his godless deeds was the main point and moral of that chapter. The next chapter 10 deals with the restoration of the churches, a long and exalted narration with many citations from the *Psalms*, and the legal texts of the Emperors, including that in 10.5, titled as decree (or ordinance, *diataxis*) of Constantine and Licinius, usually cited in the recent centuries as 'the Edict of Milan'. This is the Greek version of Eusebius. Because of the importance of the text I will cite it in its full length:

> 'We have long intended that freedom of worship should not be denied but that everyone should have the right to practice his religion as he chose. Accordingly, we had given orders that **both Christians and (all others)** should be permitted to keep the faith of their own sect (*proairesis*) and worship. But since many conditions of all kinds had evidently been added to that *rescript* (*antigraphe*) in which such rights were accorded these same people, it may be that some of them were shortly thereafter deterred from such observance.
>
> When under happy auspices I, Constantine Augustus, and I, Licinius Augustus, had come to Milan and were discussing all matters that concerned the public good, among the others items of benefit to the general welfare – or rather, as issues of highest priority – we decided to issue such decrees as would assure respect and reverence for the Deity (*to theion*); namely, **to grant the Christians and all the others the freedom to follow whatever form of worship they pleased, so that all the divine and heavenly powers that exist might be favorable to us** and all those living under our authority. Here, therefore, is the decision we reached by sound and prudent reasoning: **no one at all was to be denied the right to follow or choose the Christian form of worship or observance, and everyone was to be granted the right to give his mind to that form of worship that he thinks suitable**

to himself, so that the Deity may show us his usual care and generosity in all things. It was appropriate to send a *rescript* that this is our pleasure, so that with all conditions cancelled in the earlier letter sent to Your Dedication about the Christians (*obviously the edict of Galerius*), whatever seemed unjustified and foreign to our clemency might also be removed and that now everyone desiring to observe the Christians' form of worship should be permitted to do so without any hindrance. We have decided to explain this very thoroughly to Your Diligence, so that you may know that we have granted to these same Christians free and limitless permission to practice their own form of worship. And when you note that we have granted them this permission unrestrictedly, Your Dedication will understand that permission has also been given to others who wish to follow their observance and form of worship – something clearly in accord with the tranquility of our times – so that everyone may have authority to choose the practice whatever form he wishes. This we have done so that we might not appear to have belittled any rite or form of worship in any way.

As regards the Christians, in the previous letter sent to Your Dedication, definite instructions were issued regarding their places of assembly. We now further resolve that if any should appear to have bought these places either from our treasury or from any other source, they must restore them to these same Christians without payment or any demand for compensation and do so without negligence or hesitation. If any happen to have received them as a gift, they must restore them to these same Christians without delay, provided that if either those who have purchased these same places or those who have received them as a gift appeal to our generosity, they may apply to the prefect of the district, so that they may also benefit from our kindness. All this property must be handed over to the body of the Christians immediately, through zealous action on your part and without delay.

And since these same Christians not only owned places of assembly, but are also known to have had others belonging not to individuals but to the corporation of the Christians, all such property, under provisions of the above law, you will order restored without any question whatever to these same Christians, that is, to their corporation and

> associations, provided, again, that those who restore the same without compensation, as mentioned above, may seek to indemnify their losses from our generosity.
>
> In all these matters you should expend every possible effort in behalf of the aforesaid corporation of the Christians so that our command may be implemented with all speed, in order that here also our kindness may promote the common public tranquility. In this way, as mentioned earlier, the divine care for us that we have known on many prior occasions will remain with us permanently. And in order that our generosity and enactment may be known to all, what we have written should be announced by your order, published everywhere, and brought to the attention of all, so that the enactment incorporating our generosity may escape the notice of no one.'[6]

As it is to be seen, the two texts of the so called 'edict' are close, but not identical. The text of Eusebius is more extensive and quite probably more interpolated. The common in both texts was the intention to install more tolerant religious policy with special focus on Christians, their rights, and the return of the confiscated property. The milder and far more positive tone when discussing Christians distinguish the both variants from the edict of Galerius along with the stress on the unconditional return of the property taken away from them during the 'Great Persecution'.

The 'Edict of Milan' had provoked much controversy and ado starting with the Enlightenment and the Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* and passing through important negationists, like Otto Seeck in the late 19th century, up to the present day. I will not be able, neither is it my purpose, to follow in detail the discussion, which was centered about three main questions: 1. The very existence of such legal document and its precise juridical character; 2. The role of Constantine in editing it; 3. The sincerity or not of Constantine's Christianizing policy. In this short introduction into the problems of the Christianization in Late Antiquity I will try just to express my opinion based on both scrutinizing the original texts and following of the lengthy discussions in books and articles, which were often not devoid of passion.[7]

Firstly, the precise legal character of the 'Edict of Milan' is not clear at all. The authors use very confusing terminology with overlapping notions.

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[6] Meier 2007, 322-324. The Greek text consulted by Oulton 1932.

[7] For relatively full treatment of the previous literature and the prevailing arguments pro and contra see the abovementioned article of M. Anastos along with the articles of Drake 2014, 63-78 and DePalma Digeser 2014, 15-27.

It is enough to look in *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Eusebius in order to notice the variety of terms used for different legal texts: *epistole* (generally letter), *gramma*, *antigraphe* (most probably the Latin *rescriptum*), *nomos engraphos*, *psephysma* (also *rescriptum*) and *diataxis* (usually translated as decree, ordinance, or edict). Eusebius called the document agreed on in Milan *diataxis*, while Lactantius, who was writing in Latin, preferred *litteras ad praesidem*. *Littera*, pl. *litteras,* is an extremely general term, which could mean all the three main types of legal documents, issued from the imperial and provincial chancelleries in Late Antiquity. Those three types were: *edictum*, a proclamation, issued by the emperor or by some magistrates; *mandatum*, a letter of instructions to subordinates, especially provincial governors; and *rescriptum*, a written answer to officials. To the mentioned above we could add also the *decreta*, or forensic decisions of the emperor. In a discussion, which was traced by the zeal to either undermine or overpraise Constantine, the character of the legal text was very often considered of being crucial. We have to recognize, however, that the juridical distinctions in the Roman Empire were not as clear and strict as we would like them to have been. When issued and signed, moreover, all those documents had the force of law to be observed, notwithstanding the type or the place of issue. On the other side, in a society without phones, Internet or speedy transportation, the laws were not easily enforced, dependant on the local elites, and during the stormy political changes some of them were falling into oblivion just to be suscitated later more and again. That is why in *Codex Theodosianus* we have laws repeating the same topics with a distance of decades between them. The 'edicts' under discussion, that of Galerius and the so called 'Edict of Milan', were not included in the later codifications of the Roman law, like many other promulgations we know from the literature. M. Anastos is right in that it is not an argument for the 'Edict of Milan' not being an edict at all, but neither, according to me, it was an argument for the opposite. The full designation in Lactantius for the law promulgated by Licinius in Nicomedia was *litteras ad praesidem*, thus directing more towards *mandatum*. Just to sum up, it is not of such importance to define the exact legal form of the law issued, having in mind the versatility of terminology and the Roman documentary exchange, but rather to follow the intention put into the texts, the contents and their future implementation.

Considering the second point, the role of Constantine, it is probably out of question, following the logic of the both versions, that Constantine played an important role, including the organization of their common venue in Milan. If Constantine issued such a law for the Western part of the Empire, as M. Anastos was speculating, or not, we really don't know, lacking any positive argument, except hypotheses. That Constantine edited many legal texts during his rule, favoring the Christians, is also out of doubt. This does

not prove, however, the existence of the 'Edict of Milan'. The latter was rather a mutual accord, probably written rather than not, on one of the items, discussed by Constantine and Licinius, during their meeting in Milan in forming an alliance, which proved to be relatively short-lived. The policy of Constantine was becoming more and more favorable towards Christians in the years to follow, which led Licinius to disbelieve his Christian subjects and officers later, when the serial round of the civil war was set upon once again. What we have as a text, at least in the version of Lactantius, is a, quite probably, *mandatum* of Licinius promulgated in June 313 in Nicomedia and directed openly against the restoration of persecutions by Maximinus Daia. The other text, translated from Latin into Greek and given to us by Eusebius, is a variant of that text with the role of Constantine stressed, but without any other clues to confirm an overall legal text edited in Milan in the early 313.

As mentioned above, the debate around the so called 'Edict of Milan' was actually centered circa the personality of Constantine the Great.[8] For Eusebius, Constantine was a loyal son of the Church and a God chosen emperor to cancel the hardships of the Christians by establishing nothing more or less than a new Christian Empire. The two histories, that of the *gentiles* and that of the *chosen people*, have been tied together forever. Not even all the Christian authors of the 4th century, however, shared such an optimistic view, just to mention Athanasius of Alexandria and Augustine. Athanasius could not be confident with the family of Constantine promoting anti-Nicene and pro-Arian trends in the Church, while Augustine, disillusioned with the fate of the Empire, was not ready to accept anymore the idea of the Empire as the sacred vessel of Salvation, but rather treated it as a sinful human construct, juxtaposed to the other City, that of God.[9] The main Christian stream, nevertheless, created in the later centuries the 'white legend' of Constantine as a pious Christian, chosen by God, and founder of the new Christian Empire. Constantine was also canonized as a saint of the Church along with his mother Helena. We cannot be sure when it happened, but the Byzantines envisaged, at least from the 7th century onwards, Constantine as the saintly great Founder of both Constantinople and the Empire. Thus the Empire centered in Constantinople had two co-founders in a sense, August and Constantine, the latter being 'equal to the Apostles'.

During the Late Antiquity another, 'black legend' was created. One of its main originators was the half-nephew of Constantine, the Emperor Julian,

[8] On some modern discussions concerning the real and legendary Constantine see Lieu 1998; Lieu & Montserrat 1996; Marcone 2002; Van Dam 2008; Guidetti 2013, 185-200, 963-979; Bjornlie 2017. On conversion and Christianization see the useful overview of Cameron 2015, 1-30.

[9] On the Arian issue and the 'political parties' in the imperially protected Church see Gwynn 2007.

who in his satire *The Caesars* presented Constantine in front of the judges in Hades, being rebuked for his love and pursuit of pleasure.[10] Zosimus, the historian from the late 5th or early 6th century and one of the last champions of 'paganism', accused Constantine of his policy towards the army and the cities, considering him responsible for the later ruin of the Empire. The non-Christian authors were ready, moreover, to point on not very comfortable facts from the life and reign of Constantine, like the execution of his second wife Fausta and his son Crispus by his own orders, or the destruction of Licinius and his son Licinianus notwithstanding the former promises. The remorse and the search for excuse were explained by non-Christian authors as the main reason for turning towards the god of the Christians. Emphasis was put on the sins that were to be fatal for the imperial future. Many modern authors would continue that by demonstrating the character and manners of Constantine as unsuitable for a Christian saint. This questions and arguments, however, are tending to exit the strict scholarly investigations, diluting then among many voices of praise or disapproval, led by passion and partisan affiliations.

What is really important for us is the fact that there was Constantine, son of Constantius, a man of flesh and blood and a Roman emperor, rather typical than not for the realities of the Tetrarchy and its aftermath. We should be aware, too, that religion was not the only problem to be solved, nor was it probably the main one. Constantine had to deal, like many Roman emperors before and after him, with the incursions of different tribes, like Sarmatians and Goths, with the bandits in the Western part of the Empire, with the Sassanian Empire in the East, the only real match for the Romans. He had to deal with the reforms in the army and administration, with the social problems, with the cities and their middle class of *curiales* loosing more and more their social status. He has to deal, moreover, with his political enemies inside the Empire, seeing plots where they had been present and where not. The execution of his own son Crispus was not an easy task for him, too. Concerning the question of the Christian identity of Constantine, that had divided many scholars in the past in a way not far from the zeal of the modern football fan clubs, I would say just that Constantine **was** a Christian in the later part of his life, but Christian according to the requirements of the earlier Christianity. We have to have in mind that it was not the same to be a Christian in the 4th century, in the 7th and in the 20th century, for example. The importance of the time, however, for the future Christianization and the creation of the Christian civilization led to the creation of two main legends concerning Constantine, 'white' and 'black' ones, the first of them triumphant, the latter waning together with the 'pagan' cause just to be resuscitated with the de-clericalization of the modern era.

[10] Van Dam 2008, 2, n.3.

The same sober approach is needed for the legal texts of the early 4th century to be put cosily in the political and moral context of the time, having in mind the common education, religious and philosophical language dominating the elites along with the strict political necessities. Thus, the 'edicts of tolerance' are to present what tolerance could be in the early 4th century, not what we are ready to accept or condemn nowadays.

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Ancient mosaic techniques and materials. Differences in terminology and possible solutions

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Abstract: The paper deals with several mosaic techniques used in Roman and Late Antique mosaic art in Bulgaria. Each technique is presented with short historical background and its development stages illustrated by famous examples of the Greek and Roman world as well as the ones from Bulgarian provinces of the Roman empire. The main aim of the paper is to contribute to unification of the specific terminology used in scientific researches of mosaic art in Bulgaria according to the established scientific practices in this field.

Key words: mosaic techniques, *opus tessellatum, opus vermiculatum, opus sectile, opus signinum, emblema*.

Резюме: Статията има за цел да разгледа мозаични техники, намиращи употреба в примерите от България. Всяка техника е представена с кратко историческо развитие и илюстрирана с някои от най-известните екземпляри от Гръко-Римския свят и от българските провинции. Целта на работата е да подпомогне унификацията в употребата на специализирани термини при изследванията на мозаичното изкуство в България в съответствие с утвърдените научни изследвания в тази област.

The art of mosaics has been developed for thousands of years and its evolution continues to nowadays. One of the most universal definitions for mosaic art is artifacts with decoration such as inlay, incrustation and intarsia. All these artistic techniques are based on the principle of fitting pieces of different materials (marble, coloured stones, glass, ivory, wood) to form different patterns on flat surface.[1] Although ancient mosaics are seen as a distinctive feature associated with Greek and Roman culture, mosaic techniques are used long before in the Middle Eastern civilizations of Sumer, Babylon and Egypt, dated in the 4th millennium BC. A common view is that the development of the mosaics in Asia Minor, Greece and the Mediterranean follows his own path. The art of mosaic is outstanding with its variety of techniques and materials, following different trends and striving to fulfill the taste and preferences of

[1] Farneti 2001, 23.

the owners, as well as adjusting to different architectural spaces, utility and aesthetic needs. The diversity of decorative motifs and the wealth of artistic skills raise some inconsistencies in terminology regarding mosaic works. This short survey is not intended to present all mosaic techniques, but only the most common and widespread, bringing examples of their presence from the territory of Bulgaria. It also tries to propose linguistic arguments regarding several issues in terminology.

Pebble mosaics

The technique of pebble mosaics precedes *opus tessellatum* and is still used nowadays. The earliest known pebble mosaics from Greece date from 7th century BC, for instance from the Sanctuary of Arthemis Orthia in Sparta. They are described as irregularly laid cobble stones brought from the bed of the river.[2] Later those works combined indiscriminately several colours with no sign of using patterns[3] and the earliest examples with decorative motifs and images date from 5th century BC. They use the contrast effect of the vase painting and in a century their way of development resulted in the masterpieces Macedonian mosaics from Pella, elaborated in the last decades of 4th century BC according to archaeological data. Amongst the most famous are the mosaics Lion Hunt and Dionysus on Leopard (fig. 1).[4] Apart from sorting the pebbles very carefully by size and colour a new technique is applied to avoid the linear effect and achieve shading and density of the images. Figures are outlined by terracotta strips and then filled with pebbles. In the mosaic The Rape of Helen are also used lead strips to mark fingernails and eye sockets. Undoubtedly mosaic works from Pella are exclusive achievements of mosaic art, probably elaborated in one workshop, and very different from most of the other mosaic works in the same technique. The later pebble mosaics from 3rd and 2nd century BC present low quality and decline of the technique although the enrichment of decorative repertory.[5] Apart from the mainland of Greece and Asia Minor pebble mosaics are discovered in Spain and Italy, at Olbia and Ain Khanoum, Afghanistan. Pebble mosaics have not been found in the territory of Bulgaria to the present moment.

Tessellated mosaics

The mosaics in the 3rd century BC present experiments with several techniques. According to different scholars there is little doubt that in the same century

[2] Dawkins 1929, 6.
[3] Dunbabin 1999, 5.
[4] Dunbabin 1999, 12, fig. 9, 10.
[5] Dunbabin 1999, 16.

mosaicists began to use square cut stones - *tessellae*.[6] What was the exact time and place where *opus tessellatum* was invented remains a question without a proper answer. The opinion that there is no direct and uniform passage from pebble mosaics to tessellated[7] appears to be very reasonable. The transition from one technique to the other includes many experiments and mosaics made both of pebbles and *tessellae*. A small group of mosaic works represent the initial use of natural and a few cut stones in the mosaic art. The most recognized example is the mosaic with Tritons from the *pronaos* of the Temple of Zeus in Olympia, where thin yellow and red stones are used for the hair and beard of the male Triton. The mosaic is dated in or after the middle of 3rd century BC according to numismatic and archaeological data. In the same period pebbles are used to fill the background of the mosaic panels while the figures are made of roughly cut stones in contrast with the oval natural shaped pebbles. Another group of mosaics is made entirely of marble or limestone chips probably waste of a sculptor's workshop. Floor pavements with no decoration, made of irregular marble pieces, are known from the 4th century BC and they may not be a part of the process of development of *opus tessellatum*. Linear images, in black and white and simple two-dimensional compositions in the described techniques and variations are produced in the next 2nd century BC and even later.[8]

At the same period other experiments with mosaic techniques took place in Morgantina, Sicily, where has been found the largest number of Hellenistic mosaics from the island. The mosaics in the house of Ganymede have been accepted as one of the earliest and most important examples in the development of *opus tessellatum*.[9] The date of the mosaic is 260-50 BC or later with *terminus ante quem* 211 BC, according to the archaeological data. The three mosaic floors combine different techniques which include irregular stone chips, square cut *tessellae* or stones cut to fit certain shapes in the composition. A significant achievement is the three-dimensional meander which borders the mosaic Ganymede and eagle, as well as the figure of Ganymede. The motif executed entirely in *tessellatum* because the irregular cut stones or natural shaped pebbles would never produce the perspective

[6] *tessera, ae* f (Gr.) – die, cube made of wood or metal; square wooden tablet with inscription of password etc.; *tessella, ae* f (Lat.) – cube (small size), square or rectangular mosaic stone (see Voinov & Milev 1990, 713). Most probably the Latin noun *tessella* gives the name *opus tessellatum* as well as the term *tessellatus* – covered with square stones; mosaic. Therefore in this survey is used the term *tessellae* instead of *tesserae* although in English *tessera* is widely accepted and in other languages both of the terms replace one another.

[7] Dunbabin 1999, 18.

[8] Dunbabin 1999, 20.

[9] Dunbabin 1999, 21.

effect. After Pella Morgantina mosaic art succeed to produce live, three-dimensional images and imitate painting. The *tessellatum* technique had proved its variety of options stones to be cut in different size and shape to fit best the design of the composition. Apparently *opus tessellatum* remains the most widespread mosaic technique, which has never outdated and often is associated with mosaic art in general.

The earliest examples of tessellated mosaics from Bulgaria to nowadays are the pavements from villa Armira, Ivailovgrad and a mosaic with a dolphin from Pautalia. The fragment of the dolphin mosaic panel has decorated the floor of Roman bath or a temple of deity associated with healing and medicine.[10] Initially the panel is identified as a three-coloured tessellated mosaic (made of white, grey-black and blue *tessellae*) by T. Ivanov and later L. Ognenova dates it in the end of 2nd century AD according the style of the mosaic and despite the insufficient archaeological data. The simplicity of the image, the lack of details the silhouette effect of the mosaic suggest that most probably it was produced by local workshop.

Even more impressive examples of mosaic art are the mosaics from villa Armira, which date from the middle of 2nd century. Regarding *vermiculatum* technique, used in the portraits there, they are included in the next part of the survey. The term describes the central figural panel in the mosaic composition which often reproduces paintings.

Opus vermiculatum and Emblemata mosaics

In the period 2nd – 1st century BC the art of mosaic is highly influenced by techniques developed in Italy and the impact of Hellenistic culture. There is enough evidence for Greek artists and craftsmen who worked in Italy and direct import of mosaics or most probably *emblemata* from Greece.[11] The presence of *emblema* is one of the most distinctive elements of mosaics in the Hellenistic period. The *emblemata* are produced separately as they have been created in workshop, often by the most skilful artists. The mosaic is laid in a marble or terracotta slabs (fig. 2) and later placed *in situ*. Although many scholars use the term *emblema* to describe a figural panel in a mosaic, others prefer to outline the classical understanding of *emblema*. The terms for central panels of mosaics laid *in situ* are *pseudo-emblema*[12] or a panel with figural composition.

The new method of *emblema* works that succeeded and intensified the described 'picture effect' is known as *opus vermiculatum*. The size of

[10] Ivanov 1919/1920; Ivanov 1960, 206-206; Ognenova 1960, 235-236; Katsarova 2005, 50.
[11] Dunbabin 1999, 38.
[12] Farneti 2001, 115.

the mosaic stones is greatly reduced from 5 to 1 mm. The *tessellae* are not necessarily square or rectangular, but irregular or S-shaped to form three-dimensional images and light and shade effect. The sinuous stripes of *tessellae* give the name of the technique: *verimiculum, vermicula* – worm (Latin). The technique has been used and mastered in the period of Roman Empire and began to be neglected and replaced by other methods in the Christian era.

Comparatively small group of *vermiculatum* mosaics are amongst the finest examples survived to the present. They date from the time of the late Republic and the early Roman Empire and are discovered in Rome, Pompeii, Herculaneum, Rabat (Malta)[13] and Alexandria, Egypt. Panels and *emblemata* of *vermiculatum* mosaics are valued as exceptional works of art and attracted the interest of collectors and treasure hunters for centuries. As a result the archeological context of many is unknown and their dating remains disputable.

The earliest *vermiculatum* mosaics from Pompeii are two and were found in the House of the Faun.[14] They date at the late 2nd or the first decades of 1st century BC. In contrast to other mosaics from the same period they are true *emblemata* works, set in their own trey, most likely made in the artist workshop. *Tessellae* of local materials were found in the mosaics and suggest they were produced in a workshop in Pompeii, but the last is not quite certain for their *emblemata*. The reoccurrence of identical subjects in repertory is probably the strongest argument in favor of Pompeian workshop. The artist signature Dioscourides of Samos on two mosaics from the so-called 'Villa of Cicero' is evidence that some of the masterpieces were made of Greek mosaicists, who probably worked in Pompeii. Another mosaic with polemic, and possible Greek, origin is the exceptional Alexander mosaic. The usual size and shape of *embelma* was a square which side is from 0.5 to 1 m. A monumental exception is the famous from the House of the Faun with size 5.12 x 2.71 m. The discovered remains of the First Style paintings date Alexander mosaic around 100 BC. It is widely acknowledged as a close copy of a Classical Greek painting, created soon after the described historical event.

The great period of the picture (*vermiculatum)* mosaic in Italy may be placed between late 2nd and mid-first century BC.[15] Despite the increased number of mosaics under the empire their quality could not achieve Hellenistic masterpieces. True *emblemata* mosaics became a rare exception, unknown from the territory of Bulgaria. The earliest examples of *vermiculatum* mosaic from our country are the panels from rooms 6 and 10 of Villa Armira.[16] Portraits

[13] Bonanno 2005, 164-167.
[14] de Carolis 2004, 354.
[15] Dunbabin 1999, 51.
[16] Mladenova 1991; Popova-Moroz 1987, 10.

in mosaic art are unconventional choice of subject. The soft lines and shading of the portraits of the owner and his children from Ivailovgrad are not only the focus of the composition, but are also an important accent of the whole decoration of the house. The mastership of the portraits, as well as the features of the owner's face assumes that the artist, who undoubtedly worked *in situ*, might be of Greek or eastern origin. The date mid-second century makes them at present one of the earliest *vermiculatum* mosaics from Bulgaria. Another example with similar or the same date is a mosaic from an earlier building under the western baths of Philippopolis.[17]

Probably the finest *vermiculatum* mosaics from our country date from the late third and the 4th century AD and most of them adorned private buildings as The House of Anitiope in Marcianopolis/ Devnya,[18] Dionysus Thiasos mosaic from Augusta Traiana/ Stara Zagora,[19] fragments of mosaic under Maria Luisa Blvd from Serdica/Sofia,[20] *Domus Eirene* in Philippopolis/ Plovdiv[21] or from even the beginning of 5th century as the marina mosaic from Philippopolis/ Plovdiv.[22] One of the latest examples is the apse mosaic from basilica 7, Pautalia/Kyustendil dated in the period 527-550; although it is disputable should it be accepted as a *vermiculatum* mosaic.[23]

Opus signinum

Except the pebble mosaics, which are minority group in Sicily, another type of floor pavement became widespread on the island in the Hellenistic and later in south of Italy. Easily laid *signina* floors are mixture of mortar and aggregates, usually crushed brick or terracotta, preferred for their hydrophobic function. The surface is often decorated with cut or irregular pieces of stones or terracotta, with or without decorative pattern (fig. 3).

The term *opus signinum* is often used to describe simply mortar floor or even hydrophobic mortar or plasters. Regarding mosaic works a distinctive feature of the technique is the presence of *tessellae*, terracotta, stone-chips or other material with decorative effect. *Signina* pavements were used in Sicily in 3rd century BC or perhaps even earlier. The origin and development of the technique is probably influenced by Carthage,[24] which explains its spread in Italy, but not in Greece. A good argument is a mosaic at Selinus (Selinunte) adorned with a bull's head in a wreath and Punic symbols.

[17] Topalilov 2012, 129.
[18] Minčev 2016b, 65.
[19] Kamiševa & Popova 2016, 158.
[20] Noeva 2016, 299.
[21] Popova 2016c, 181.
[22] Popova 2016c, 227.
[23] Popova 2016a, 421.
[24] Dunbabin 1999, 20.

According to other scholars predecessor of *signinum* technique is the traditional Italic cement pavement made of lime and crushed pottery.[25] *Opus signinum* is extremely popular in the Republican period and common in the 1st century AD, often combined with other more refined mosaic techniques. Many examples remained unspoilt in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Simple *signina* floors never went out of use, but were replaced by more luxury tessellated pavements.

An unexpected find of *signinum* is the mortar floor of an early Christian basilica from Serdica, located in the in the subway of underground station Serdica II, between the Central Department Store and Maria Luisa Blvd.[26] In the course of the last archaeological research was discovered a fragment of red mortar floor decorated with scattered terracotta pieces on the surface (fig. 4). The numismatic material discovered over and under the floor dates the building in the last quarter of 4th century AD. The *signinum* technique appears to be rediscovered centuries after its prime in a distant province, which is likely to be a simple coincidence. Red mortar floors are quite common in the situated near by residence buildings and baths, but in a later period – 5th and especially 6th century. The search of inexpensive decorative solution for the monumental Christian basilica might explain the floor as an experiment of the commissioned artisans. On the other hand, the hypothetical wall mosaics in the same building presume that the decoration of the representative cult building was assigned to itinerant mosaicists who brought the unusual *signinum* technique.

Opus musivum

The development of *opus musivum* started in the late Republic or the early Empire period. The technique of glass mosaic is used for walls and vaults decoration. Smalt (glass *tessellae)* mosaics reached their peak in the late antiquity, especially as decoration of Christian cult architecture, although the earliest works in *musivum* date long before that. Glass mosaics are a typical creation of Roman art and taste and the method first appeared in Rome.[27] The origins of the technique come from traditions of *nymphaea* decoration, natural or most often manmade little cave with spring or fountain, devoted to the nymphs or muses, thus the name *musivum* (fig. 5). Such works were often decorated with natural materials as shells and marble chips or pieces of glass vessels. Later with use of smalt replaced natural materials and the design of works becomes rich and refined. Pliny the Elder's wrote about partly decorated with glass '*e vitro*' stage of Arminius Scaurus theatre in 58 BC. Some

[25] Farneti 2001, 33.
[26] Bobchev 1989, 37-58; Ivanov 2012, 318; 2014, 237-238.
[27] Farneti 2001, 39; di Sarcina 2012, 184.

scholars believe it is evidence of glass mosaics existence in Republican period, for others the described might be accepted as incrustation with glass panels and discs not as a mosaic piece. The last group considers that *opus musivum* dates from the rule of Tiberius.[28]

The technique achieves a significant improvement in the period of Empire. Watertight surface of *musivum* was used not only for walls, vaults or columns, but also for pools and fountains. Their damp resistance makes them suitable for baths decoration, where plasters and stucco could be easily spoiled. With the beginning of Christianity they became preferred decoration of representative cult architecture. In the course of 4th and 5th century AD apparently main centres for the art of smalt mosaics are Rome, Ravenna, Mediolanum (Milan) and since the beginning of 6th century – Constantinople.

The invention of golden and later – silver smalt which can reflect sunlight makes mosaics exclusively expressive. It is believed that the bright golden colour is a symbol of enlightenment and epiphany. The art of golden smalt mosaic goes beyond borders and of the Eastern Roman Empire in the Middle Ages and reaching Kiev, Damascus and Jerusalem and continues to be present in Italy (Sicily, Montecasino, Venice, Florence, Triest, etc.). Moisaicists from Byzantine workshops often work with local artisans and part of mosaic materials are imported from the Empire.

The expensive and not easily produced glass *tessellae*, and especially golden smalt, were carefully gathered and reused in later works and buildings.[29] Probably the earliest examples are the 10th century mosaics in Aghia Sophia, Constantinople.

The amount of smalt, found recently during excavations in Serdica is enough to presume *musivum* decoration. But its minimal quantity might support, though with uncertainty, the thesis of recycling glass *tessellae*. The building is the mentioned above early Christian basilica.[30] Apart from *signinum* floor a few smalts in shades of blue, purple, green and a colourless one, indicate *musivum* decoration on the walls and vaults. The building is dated in the last quarter of 4th century according to stratigraphic and numismatic data.[31]

Opus sectile

Opus sectile is probably the most prized and long-used mosaic decoration. A distinctive feature is the expensive materials inlaid in the mosaics therefore the method is considered to be one of the most difficult for implementation.

[28] Farneti 2001, 39.
[29] Greenhalgh 2008, 55.
[30] Ivanov 2012, 318-319; 2014, 237-238.
[31] Ivanov 2014, 237-238.

The term refers to wall or floor pavement, with flat and smooth surface, made of marble, stone or other material slabs or tiles in different shapes, forming geometrical or figural designs. *Opus secitle* pavements are valued in the Roman society and usually adorned the most representative parts of private and public buildings.

The first *sectile* floors appeared in the Greek world in the time of Hellenism in two quite dissimilar variations. Pavements, made of fitted tiles with simple design, for example lozenges with contrast colours, are discovered in the sanctuary of Samothrace. They appeared by 4th century BC. Completely different is the use of marble or stone pieces cut to fit a specific shape of the design, used in the mosaic at Morgantina, including Ganymede[32] and in erotes moisaic from Shatby Alexandria.[33] The second form appears to be a short-lived experiment, while the first was developed and expanded. In the course of 2nd century BC geometrical *secitle* pavements were wide-spread in Italy. There are numerous examples at Pompeii: The House of the Faun (*vestibulum, impluvium, tablinum*) and at Rome. At the end of the 1st century AD the technique was entirely developed. At many floors in the period 1st century BC – 1st century AD *sectile* panels are in combination with other techniques: *tessellatum, signinum* or *crustae* pavement (mosaic made of rough, irregularly cut stones, which often form geometrical pattern).

The first *sectile* pavements were made of slate, lime and other non-marble and easy to cut stones. Later, with the development of technique lime and slate were replaced with local and imported marbles and even more expensive materials as porphyry (red from Egypt, green (serpentine) from Laconia). In some cases even glass was inlaid in *sectile* works as in the House of Ephebe at Pompeii. In the *triclinium* of the house the *sectile* floor was adorned by a panel with floral decoration, made of green and red pieces of glass.[34] The mosaic date is the third quarter of 1st century AD. The lead sheet which covered to protect the panel indicated the value of the mosaic for the owner. In the late Empire was wide-spread the reuse of pieces cut with different width for different purposes in *sectile* mosaics. From many floors precious marbles or other materials were removed and reused and only their imprints remained to as a sign of representative decoration. The reuse of expensive materials continued in the Middle Ages, evidence is found in Carolingian churches, in and near Rome.[35]

The pieces of *sectile* pavements can vary greatly in size, depending on the scale of buildings which they decorated and the aim of the design. In the

[32] Phillps 1960, 245.
[33] Dunbabin 1999, 254.
[34] Dunbabin 1999, 256.
[35] Dunbabin 1999, 256.

immense public buildings, as the Pantheon, some of the slabs have length of 2 m. On the other hand mosaics from Tiberian and Nerionian palaces on Palatine, have pieces with size from 3 to 1 cm, made precisely to fit very closely. *Sectile* floors remained popular in Italy, and especially in Rome, where flourished the trade with expensive marbles, until the Late Antiquity. Mosaics in *opus sectile* are found in the provinces of the empire, a large number are those from North Africa. Such mosaics were made until the end of the 6th century AD and the reuse of materials transferred the method in the later periods.

Comparatively rare *sectile* mosaics are known from many of the significant ancient cities in Bulgaria. The use of expensive and luxury pavements flourished in the Christian era. Most of the *sectile* mosaics date from the period of late antiquity and adorned private houses or even more often Christian basilicas. In most of the cases *sectile* mosaics are combined with *tessellatum* pavements and sometimes with other techniques as *vermiculatum* and *signinum* or simple mortar floors.

A building with *sectile* pavements has been researched in Bononia/ Vidin, dated in 2nd century AD,[36] which is probably the earliest *sectile* mosaic from our country; only marble and stone tiles are preserved. Other examples from representative private residences are known from Serdica, dated in 4th century,[37] Augusta Traiana[38] from the last quarter of 4th century. Mosaics from basilicas and baptisteries: Odessos/Varna basilica, mosaic from presbytery dated in the end of 4th – the beginning of 5th century,[39] basilica at Tsarevets/ V. Tarnovo first quarter of 6th century,[40] basilica 1 from Nicopolis ad Nestum/ Gărmen, dated in the second half of 5th century,[41] the mosaic from presbytery of basilica 4 at Parthicopolis (?)/ Sandanski, dated in the middle or second half of 5th century[42] and the baptisterium of the same basilica, as well as the presbytery of basilica 2 at Pautalia/Kyustendil, dated around the middle of 5th century.[43] The mosaic from basilica 9 at Diocletianopolis/ Hissarya, dated to the second half of 6th century[44] is probably one of the latest *secitle* floors from Bulgaria.

[36] Atanassova 2016, 106.
[37] Grigorova 2016, 287.
[38] Kalchev 2009, 79-80.
[39] Minčev 2016a, 40.
[40] Pandurski 2016, 78.
[41] Popova 2016b, 345.
[42] Asamer 2016, 354.
[43] Russeva-Slokoska *et al*. 2016, 408.
[44] Lirsch 2016, 271.

Opus sectile and Opus interrasile for wall and vault mosaics

Apart from *opus musivum* two other techniques are used for decoration of walls and vaults. The main difference between floor and wall mosaics in *opus sectile* with rare exceptions only wall mosaics include figural scenes, made of irregular stone pieces. Some of the most famous wall *sectile* mosaics are from the Basilica of Junious Bassus, mid-fourth century AD and the building outside Porta Marina, Ostia, late 4th or early 5th century, as well as the panel Tiger attacks a goat, Capitoline museum, Rome (fig. 6). All of them show the aim to elaborate public buildings with diversity of art works and techniques.

Tarsia, intarsia or *opus interrasile* are the terms for incrustation. Pieces of stones, marble, glass are inlaid in a hollowed out marble or slate slab instead of foundation of mortar or plaster. Some details are engraved. *Opus sectile* and *tarsia* are considered as different methods for making mosaics and the last can include wood, semiprecious stones and others.[45] One of the finest examples of *intarsia* is the mural mosaic from a *nimphaeum* of Nero's *Domus Transitoria,* Rome, destroyed by fire in 64 AD. Three other *tarsia* works were found at Pompeii. In the later periods *tarsia* works became even more occasional and only minor details were treated with the method.[46] Such techniques have not been discovered in our country until present.

Crustae mosaics or chip-pavements

Crustae mosaics or chip-pavements are of the oldest and among the simplest techniques along with pebble mosaics. The pavement is usually made of irregular, stone or marble pieces which do not fit closely. Such mosaics can be plain or can form bands or other geometric pattern. The coarser technique is often used in combination with other techniques like *tessellatum* or *vermiculatum*, which form a finer carpet-like panel in the centre of the composition. Sometimes the different techniques are mixed in the same part of the pavement to create contrast with different textures. A lot of examples are known from Delos many of them are dated in the end of 2nd and the beginning of 1st century BC.[47]

A chip-pavement from a much later period was found at the ancient city under Sandanski, Bulgaria.[48] The mosaic from the bishop residence in Parthicopolis (?) is made of irregular colourful marble pieces, which form geometric designs. The use of representative materials and the importance of the building suggest that in this case the patron and the artisans might wish to imitate the more expensive and complex execution of *opus sectile*. However,

[45] Farneti 2001, 155.
[46] Dunbabin 1999, 263.
[47] Dunbabin 1999. 30.
[48] Popova 2007, 411.

the technique is an isolated example from our country which does not allow a lot of speculations on the subject.

Another attempt of *sectile* imitation comes from Serdica, (modern Sofia, Bulgaria). A recent discovery from the earliest Christian basilica in Serdica also resembles *opus sectile*, but the marble or stone tiles do not fit to each other. Each tile is laid in its mortar bed, forming wide gaps filled with mortar mixed with pieces of bricks. Only the imprints of tiles are preserved *in situ*. There are three types: square tiles with size 10 x 10 cm and rectangular tiles ca 3 to 4 x 10 cm and small square tiles ca 4 cm. Each four rectangular pieces form a cross, in the centre of the cross was placed a small square tile. Each side of the cross is filled with square tiles (fig. 7). A white marble tile with size 10 x 10 cm was found near the basilica, which shows that the floor might have been formed of white marble tiles, combined with rectangular tiles of different colour and material. Numismatic and archaeological data show that the floor was laid in second half of 5th century.[49]

Although performed in different techniques, both of the mosaics from Serdica and Sandanski most likely imitate *sectile* floors in a simple, less expensive and easier to elaborate way.

The art of the mosaics has a long history and many different and often independent ways of evolution in different regions and territories. In our country, as in other parts of the Roman empire and later Byzantine empire, classical techniques like *tessellatum, vermicilatum, musivum* and *sectile* remained wide-spread and long-lasting and indicated desire to follow the Roman or the empire taste. From the territory of Bulgaria undoubtedly the most widespread and long-lived are tessellated mosaics the earliest found up to present date from the second and even the middle of second century AD. The end of the 6th century marks the extensive use of mosaic pavements from our territories according to nowadays data. Very similar to described period is the time frame of using *vermiculatum* and *sectile* techniques. It is not exaggerated to point that in the course of 4th century AD vermiculated panels reached their prime compared to earlier and later works from our provinces and their fine quality remained rarely good and seriously declined after the second half of 5th and 6th centuries. *Sectile* mosaics are approximately less than one tenth of all discovered pavements, even though, in many cases, they have not been made of very expensive materials. They are rare exceptions during the period of the Roman Empire and their biggest number dates from the period 4th and 5th century, when they adorned basilicas, presbyteries or in some cases representative halls of private houses.

The significant level of demolition makes harder to collect data for the use of *opus musivum* or other mural decoration. Only fragments or most often

[49] Ivanov 2014, 239.

scattered smalt have been found as evidence for glass wall and vault mosaics. According to the present research, like *sectile* pavements, smalt mosaics adorned most often Christian basilicas and in some cases rich private houses. One of the latest examples, from the beginning of 6th century, is the fragments of mosaic from baptistery of basilica 4 at Parthicopolis (?)/ Sandanski, where has been found golden smalt.

Examples of rare mosaic techniques from Bulgaria such as *signinum*, chip-pavement or *sectile* imitations indicate the importance of decoration of large cult buildings, influenced by economical factors. They also pose field of discussion of terms used in their descriptions.

The immense variety of techniques and materials result in difficulties to be established a unified terminology. Creation of technical-historical glossary in Bulgarian, following the models of glossaries in other languages would be essential in resolving many terminological issues.

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Fig. 1. Detail of pebble mosaic "The Lion Hunt", part of mosaic pavement of Dionysos House, Archaeological Museum Pella (Photo: V. Noeva).



Fig. 2. Emblema in *opus vermiculatum*, Museo Archeologico Nazionale - Napoli (Photo: V. Noeva).



Fig. 3. *Opus signinum* floor, Pompeii (Photo: V. Noeva).



Fig. 4. *Opus signinum* floor of the early Christian basilica in Serdica (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 5. *Opus musivum* from the House with the Neptune and Amphitrite mosaic, Herculaneum (Photo: V. Noeva).



Fig. 6. *Opus sectile* wall mosaic, Capitoline Museum, Rome (Photo: V. Noeva).



Fig. 7. Imprints of marble tiles on the mortar floor of the early 4th century basilica in Serdica. An example of *opus sectile* imitation. (Photo: M. Ivanov).

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On the date and the interpretation of the complex at the Southwestern gate of Augusta Traiana/Beroe

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Abstract: The present paper deals with the bath-gymnasion (probably the known from inscriptions Severan gymnasion) with theatron in front of it, a piazza and an equestrian statue, all located near the Southwestern gate of Augusta Traiana-Beroe. Since long time the function and the date of every part of the complex has become the subject of discussion. The piazza was identified by its researchers as the forum of the city. But in the opinion of the author, it should be rather the agora, not the forum, located most probably not here, but almost in the Northern centre of the city, because it was Greek-speaking and organized similarly to the other Greek cities in the Balkans and Asia Minor. The first building period with three phases of the thermen-gymnasion is related to the time of the Severan dynasty. This theatre-like place was functioning simultaneously to the still not found theatre (or theatre-amphitheatre) of Augusta Traiana. The complex at the Southwestern Gate has several main functions: as a place of training in sports and for humanitarian and artistic education; as thermen for hygienic and recreational purposes; and finally as a place for demonstrations of the skills of the young men, probably in connection with the veneration of the imperial and other local cults. The visitors of the thermen and the city elite as spectators were watching from the *auditorium* the athletic games, the theatre-like performances and possibly other competitions. In the second period, beginning after the recovering from the Goths' devastations in the middle of the 3rd century and ending in 351, the piazza has changed its function and has become the arena of gladiatorial combats, some *venationes* and *bestiaria*, with a special railing, separating the decumanus and the traffic from the combats. In the third period, removing of the railing and erecting of an equestrian statue, probably of Constantius II, this put to an end the gladiatorial games in the piazza and generally of paganism in the city. The piazza with the statue has become one of the several centers of the imperial cult in Beroe in Late Antiquity. The whole area was Christianized, including the transformation of the bath's vestibule into an Early Christian basilica and bishop residence.

Key words: thermen-gymnasion, theatron/*auditorium*, games and entertainments, imperial cult, equestrian statue, Christianization

Резюме: Настоящата статия е посветена на банята-гимназион (вероятно известния от надписите Северов гимназион), с театрон пред него и площад с конна статуя, всичките разположени до Югозападната порта на Августа Траяна-Берое. Функцията и

датирането на всяка част отдавна са станали предмет на дискусия в научната литература. Мястото е идентифицирано от откривателите като форумът, но по мнение на автора в един гръцко-говорящ град, устроен подобно на гръцките градове на Балканите и Мала Азия, това трябва да е агората, която в конкретния случай най-вероятно е разположена почти в центъра на северната част на Августа Траяна. Първият строителен период с три фази е отнесен към времето на Северовата династия. Това здание от типа на театър е функционирало едновременно с все още неоткритият театър (или театър-амфитеатър) на Августа Траяна. Комплексът при Югозападната порта е имал няколко главни функции: като място за спортно, хуманитарно и художествено обучение и образование; като терми с хигиенна и възстановителна функция; и накрая като място за демонстрация на уменията на младите мъже, вероятно във връзка с почитането на императорския и местните култове. Посетителите на термите-гимназион и представителите на градския елит като зрители са наблюдавали от аудитория атлетическите игри, спектакли от театрален тип и вероятно и други състезания. През втория период, започнал след възстановяването от готските опустошения в средата на III век и завършил в 351 г., функцията на площада е променена и той се превръща в арена за гладиаторски борби и за някои игри с животни (венацио и бестиарии), чрез специален парапет, отделящ декумана и трафика от сраженията. В третия период, след премахването на преградата и издигането на конната статуя, вероятно на Констанций II, с това се слага край на гладиаторските игри на площада и общо на езичеството в града. Площадът със статуята се превръща в един от центровете на императорския култ в Берое през Късната Античност. Целият район се християнизира, включително чрез трансформацията на вестибюла на банята в раннохристиянска базилика, а банята вероятно в резиденция на епископа.

History of research

The ancient city under the present-day Stara Zagora is only partly uncovered. The Roman name Augusta Traiana was very shortly used in the 2nd-3rd century, while Beroe was more common in Antiquity.[1] From this important city in ancient *Thracia* (Pl. I, 1) are unearthed so far parts of the Roman fortress walls with its Early Byzantine *proteihisma*, two gates, a part of the street net and few ancient buildings. The monumental complex at the Southwestern part of the city consists of the adequate part of the Western city wall with its Southwestern gate;[2] the decumanus, the only one disrupting the orthogonal street grid so far; the cardo east of the bath-gymnasion, now Metropolite M. Kussev boulevard; the bath-gymnasion, with its vestibule later transformed to an Early Christian basilica; the theatron/*auditorium*, sticking to the *thermae*; the piazza in front of it; and finally the equestrian statue erected almost in the middle of the piazza. The complex is a result of

[1] See Buyukliev 1996; Slavova 2006, 464; 2007. Sear (2006), B. Nielsen (1993) and many authors use for the whole Roman empire the Latin term *gymnasium*, but as in our case it concerns a Greek-speaking city in *Thracia*, we should rather use the Greek term *gymnasion*.

[2] Nikolov 1987. In fact Nikolov discovered the Southwestern gate, but the data about localization of the West gate and the real *decumanus maximus* appeared later.

several centuries' development, from the second part of the 2nd century till the 6th century. Some of the mentioned parts have been built in different periods, others almost simultaneously or with a small chronological gap; in the third case there was a significant difference in the building periods. The function of each component of the complex could vary during the ages and partly that's the reason for their still disputable interpretation. Our goal is to analyze once more every part in the sequence of its creating, to try to establish more correctly the dates of the initial building periods and its additional phases and to offer new arguments for its interpretation and identification. For the purpose, we shall deal predominantly with the plans of the *thermae* and the *auditorium*, the role of the bath-gymnasions in Roman times and its functions, some monuments of art and particular epigraphic and historical data, concerning Augusta Traiana, the games and entertainments in it, its city plan, as well as the connection of the complex with the imperial cult. The decoration (mosaic, sculptural and architectonic) and finally the numismatic data, found in the same complex, are studied in three more articles in present volume of SAŠ.[3]

In the 70-s - 80-s of the last century, when the complex with *thermae* and theatron/*auditorium* was unearthed at the Southwestern Gate of Augusta Traiana/Beroe, the piazza south of them was announced as the forum of the city with the passing by *decumanus maximus*.[4] But already at the same time different opinion has been expressed that it was a place for open-air games and entertainments, connected with the official Roman cults.[5] In the next decades this opinion was either doubt or completely supported.[6] The professional carrier of the archaeologist Krassimir Kalchev from the Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, from his young years in the team of D. Nikolov and Hr. Buyukliev and up to the last years of his life, when Kalchev was the head of the excavation, were very fruitful for revealing the history of Augusta Traiana-Beroe. During all these years architect Lyudmila Manolova, being for a long period in charge for the monuments of culture in Stara Zagora and its region, thoroughly documented the occasionally found small parts of the ancient streets, the remnants of buildings, the water supply system etc. In this way she has reached to the most precise idea of the ancient forum localization

[3] See the article of M. Kamisheva and R. Karamanova-Zlatkova on the latest excavations of the *thermae*; of M. Minkova on the numismatic data, and of S. Petrova on the architectonic decoration in this volume.

[4] Nikolov 1987.

[5] Ivanov & Stancheva 1981; Popova 1994, 273. I had a discussion with K. Kalchev already at the beginning of the 90-s with my arguments against the forum interpretation of D. Nikolov.

[6] Vagalinsky 2009, 79; Ivanov *et al*. 2006, 91-94.

(Pl. I, 2).[7] She was guided both by the nature of the found remnants and also by the provisory place of maximum closeness of the *cardo maximus* (coming from the discovered South gate) and of the *decumanus maximus* (whose separate parts she has fixed in direction both to the supposed East and West gates). She also insisted that the complex at the Southwestern gate is not the forum of the ancient city. These shared observations and documentation of L. Manolova with K. Kalchev and his own long professional experience were for that time the most detailed and reliable and were reflected in the general plan of Augusta Traiana and the provisory place of its agora (Pl. I, 1).

At the beginning of the 90-es the team of archaeologists of the museum excavated additionally the area from the Southwestern gate to the east up to boulevard Ruski.[8] In the opinion of K. Kalchev, the decumanus, beginning from the gate, has been traced in order to join to the Late Antique market arteria with 36 shops, situated at the crossing of the next after the *thermae decumani* and *cardines* (Pl. I, 1 and Pl. III, 3). It should be added too, that most probably the Roman boule of the city has decided to open this direct access to the new trade quarter for the cars with goods, coming from the close western country area and Philippopolis. On the first place, in this way the South gate was released from an essential part of the traffic. Because of the results of these later excavations, K. Kalchev was finally convinced that this piazza was not the forum of Augusta Traiana-Beroe and supposed that it should be looked at the crossing of the modern boulevard Ruski and V. Levski street.[9] This place is very near to the provisory crossing of *decumanus maximus* and *cardo maximus* (Pl. II, 1). But even after this new announcement, D. Nikolov in the archaeological report for 1992 and in the next decade, being at the head of the excavation team, repeated again his thesis of a forum with *decumanus maximus*.[10] This opinion still can be met even in the recent publications.[11]

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[7] Manolova-Jeand'heur 2012, 174, fig. 2; Minkova 2015, fig. 2 (in our documentation Pl. I, 2).

[8] Kalchev 1992.

[9] Kalchev 1992, 50-51.

[10] Nikolov, Kalchev *et al*. 1994, 89-90.

[11] Yankov & Zlatkov 2014, 408. Nevertheless there existed other interpretations of the complex as well, especially of its south part, one of them that the *macellum* was situated south of the piazza (Buyukliev & Kalchev 2001; Kalchev 2001, 210). It should be taken into consideration that the inscription, mentioning the *macellum*, was found far from the so-called 'forum'. It is considered that most probably a market place for the farm production existed *extra muros*, very near to the Southwestern gate, where a ground for it has been prepared and a lot of coins and *exagiae* found in connection with the trade (Ignatov & Sirakov 2012; Minkova 2015). L. Vagalinski (2009, 79) on his turn supposed that the amphitheatre of Beroe could be situated south of the piazza. Nevertheless, as he himself confessed, there were no proves for this proposal. According

There existed stringent rules for the plan and the founding of a new Roman city, concerning the forum/the agora, the street grid, etc., known since Vitruvius and from the rich picture of archaeological observations.[12] In the case of Augusta Traiana it has been chosen almost a flat plain, probably without serious buildings to be removed from the preceding settlement (if it existed on the same place). First the place of the forum/the agora had to be chosen, with the zero point in the center, from which the distances to Rome and the neighboring settlements were measured. Then *decumanus maximus* and *cardo maximus* were traced. According to the reconstructed street net and the Roman practice, in the newly founded cities the forum/the agora should be near the imaginary crossing of *cardo maximus* and *decumanus maximis* (Pl. II, 1). In our map this crossing is shown only to denote the place of the agora, but in fact the *decumanus maximus* and the *cardo maximus* are never crossing each other: they either stop before the forum/the agora or tangent it. That's exactly the case of Augusta Traiana, considered to be founded by Traian. On the plan of 2009 (Pl. I ,1), with black colour are marked the already found small parts of *decumanus maximus* and significant parts of *cardo maximus*; its provisional prolongations and the insulae are shown by broken lines. Now it is already very clear the exact place of *decumanus maximus* with its two gates and its *extra muros* prolongation to the East. The cardo is much better known from both its ends, one of them with a gate.

In our century the old and the new generation of scholars has made a decisive shift towards the correct location and name, showing the agora almost at the same crossing of Ruski-boulevard and Levski street (Pl. II, 2).[13] Small corrections should be done in the plan of architect D. Popova (Pl. II, 2): the agora ought to be placed a little bit to the north because of the concrete location of *decumanus maximus*. The general theoretical and practical aspects of the problem of forum or agora in the Roman provincial cities were raised in literature by I. Topalilov, concerning in particular the agora of Philippopolis and of the other cities of *Thracia* and the empire.[14] There the author insists that a differentiation should be made when studying the central complexes in Thrace between Roman forum and Greek agora of the Roman period, and

to the observations of K. Kalchev (2001, 110), a huge building with uncertain plan has existed here before the thermen and only some architectonic elements have remained from it. Also, according to his observations, at the place of the piazza were found some traces of craft activity, which in our opinion could be related to the Middle Ages.

[12] We repeat these well known by the archaeological community rules only for the persons, who still continue to insist that the piazza in front of the theatron is the forum of Augusta Traiana.

[13] Ivanov, Martinova-Kyutova *et al*. 2006, 91-92; Popova 2012, 53-54 - Pl. I, fig. 3; Tsenova 2014.

[14] Topalilov 2004; 2012, 118-120.

therefore some complexes identified as *fora* are in fact *agoroi*. According to the archaeologist E. Tzenova, the piazza at the Southwestern Gate is the second agora of the city and we shall deal with this interpretation below. More important is that she is speaking of an agora, not of a forum.

The problem of the existence of agora or forum in Augusta Traiana-Beroe is first of all a matter of the language spoken in it. On the one hand, its administrative organization was Greek and the city was Greek-speaking. Generally Beroe was organized on the model of the Greek cities in the Eastern part of the empire with its tripartite division: elite state magistrates, local boule and demos.[15] The high-leveled written Greek is demonstrated in the inscriptions, especially in the metrical ones from the city and its area, whose number is the greatest in Roman *Thracia* within present-day Bulgaria.[16] Many arts and crafts from the Roman and Late Antique period in Augusta Traiana were Greek, either directly imported or made by itinerant workshops and individuals, coming from Continental and island Greece and Asia Minor.[17] On the other hand, Beroe is considered to be one of the most 'Roman' among the cities of *Thracia*, due to the worshipping of pure Roman cults. This fact may be illustrated by the cult of *Dea Roma* and the imperial cult of Alexander Severus and his mother Julia Mammea worshiped in temple, built by the veterans.[18] Nevertheless these typical Roman cults and temples in the city existed on the dominating Greek background. All these facts support the opinion that the central plaza of Beroe, similarly to Philippopolis, should rather be called agora than forum, witnessed by the epigraphic evidence of odeion, boule and demos and of many Greek elements of its architecture and arts.

In 2015 the occasionally found buildings and inscriptions caused rescue excavations in the Northwestern part of the city (Pl. II, 1).[19] One building was interpreted as the temple of the imperial cult of the Tetrarchs, with the typical flux motion, decorated in the interior by columns, among them a small pediment, probably part of an aedicula decoration over niches. Several Greek inscriptions, probably from 303, belonging to the statue pedestals at the exterior corners of the temple, are mentioning the names of the Caesars Galerius and Constantius Chlorus. This fact presumes the existence of two more statues, although not found: of the emperors Diocletian and Maximianus Herculius respectively. A marble head from Augusta Traiana with unknown provenance in the typical cubistic tetrarchic style may belong namely to this

[15] Price 1984.
[16] Sharankov 2005; 2007.
[17] Petrova 2009, 289, 293; 2017, 172-174; Sharankov 2011, 139-143, 153; Popova 2016b; Topalilov 2016.
[18] Gocheva 2007; Raycheva 2015, 27-28.
[19] Kamisheva 2015, 407-409; Sharankov 2015.

temple and represent one of the four Tetrarchs.[20] Another Greek inscription on the architrave, found opposite the temple on the same cardo, reveals that at its eastern side there existed a colonnade (stoa or porticus?), donation of the archiereus Marcos Aurelios Asiaticos, priest of *Dea Roma*, known from several more inscriptions from Augusta Traiana and Discoduraterrae.[21] Except on a pedestal with honorific statue, he is mentioned twice as *ktetor* of 35-column porticoes (the first one in the area of the temple of the Tetrarchs, the second one at the Severan gymnasion) and also for funding another 66-column stoa, located near the Severan gymnasion. The beginning of the architrave inscription next to the temple of the Tetrachs shows a very possible existence also of a temple of Hermes alongside the same cardo.[22] The most interesting part of the inscription in connection with the topography of the agora tells that the porticus of M. Aurelios Asiaticos is leading further to a wide street (plateia) and to the Odeion. Undoubtedly the mentioned *plateia* is the only wide street in the area, namely the *decumanus maximus*. Very often the odeion is built next to the agora, as in Philippopolis.[23] On the base of the architrave inscription, the agora in Augusta Traiana should be located at or near the provisory meeting of *decumanus maximus* (the plateia) and the *cardo maximus*, with several variants of the concrete place, possible forms and dimensions of this central square. The inscription, mentioning the odeion and the plateia, is a very convincing argument that the agora was almost in the central norteasternhern part of the city and not in front of the gymnasion with *auditorium* at the Southwestern gate.

It has been already proposed, that the Severan gymnasion should be identified with the *thermae* at the Southwestern gate. [24] The most correct interpretation finely related it to the *thermae-gymnasion*. The bath-gymnasion is a Graeco-Roman creation[25] with several functions: recreational, hygienic, educational, cultural, social, ideological and political. Each one was an the important part of the city centers, preparing the young men for life in the physical sense by means of the sports and for the culture by studying literature, history, rhetoric, theatre and music. Games and competitions (agons) have been performed in the palaestra of the gymnasion. The students could take part in the games and entertainments in the stadion and the theatre of the city in the festivals, organized either by the city, or by the Thracian koinon, or on a

[20] Popova-Moroz 1996, 321-322, fig. 33-35.
[21] Buyukliev & Sharankov 2007.
[22] It is also possible, that it may not be a temple of Hermes, but altar, included in the portico in one or another way, typical for the Eastern Mediterranean.
[23] Topalilov 2012, 112-114, 117.
[24] Buyukliev & Sharankov 2007, with literature.
[25] Steskal 2007.

global level by the Roman state and the emperor himself. The very fact that this gymnasion has a concrete name, connected with the most flourishing period of Augusta Traiana, shows that the Severan gymnasion was very famous among the other ones in the city. The existence of several *gymnasia* here is not strange, since the city is considered to be among the biggest one in *Thracia*, about 48.5 hectares, after Philippopolis and Marcianopolis.[26] The fortress walls of Beroe have been erected during the period of Marcus Aurelius, similarly to the other cities in *Thracia*. Southwest of the *auditorium* first a small gate with a tower over it has been constructed and in the next building period – a second, much more monumental gate.[27] It can be expected that before the existence of the fortress walls, normal *decumani* of the orthogonal grid have existed under the later built north vestibule wall and the south wall of the bath-gymnasion. But after the erection of it, the theatron and the piazza, a new diagonally placed decumanus appeared from the south and the second decumanus to the north disappeared, replaced by the probable palaestra.

The plan of the bath-gymnasion with theatron, its parallels and date.
The *thermen-gymnasion* is still in process of research and therefore not fully excavated, especially to the north and west, where contemporary buildings are placed over them. The known to the moment plan is symmetrical axial and relates to the type of the small imperial *thermae*.[28] The still not excavated parts in Beroe are streching generally to the north, where the main entrance is expected. Here also should be located the palaestra similarly to the numerous parallels, the latrines, the shops etc. (Pl. II,3; Pl. III, 1 and 2) The vestibule of the bath is usually considered as the *basilica thermarum*. In it there were excavated two rows of special construction, consisting of a half-rounded niche and a rectangular part (Pl. III, 1 and 3). The niches could contain ideal and portrait statues; or in these parts the library of the gymnasion was placed, with open shelves for the rotuli or shelves closed by doors.[29] The shelves could also be intended for the cloths of the visitors of the bath.[30] If they played the role of 'nympheian-like' parts in baths and private dwellings (Pl. IV, 3 and 4), they formed fountains or a cascade of falling waters, set upon the background of a wall and decorated very lavishly with statues of gods, mythological heroes and donators of the buildings. Indoors the *thermae* the teaching in literature,

[26] Dinchev 2001, 225.
[27] Kaltschev 1998.
[28] Nielsen 1993; Boyadzhiev 2006. The *thermen-gymnasion* obviously could not occupy all the enormous place stretching to the north, because the area was as three times bigger than the *thermae* themselves. To the north of them it can be supposed the existence of other important buildings as well.
[29] Strocka 1981, Abb. 4, 5, 9, 13.
[30] Boyadzhiev 2006, 69.

history, philosophy, rhetorics and other humanitarian and artistic disciplines was held, while the sports were supposed to be practiced in the open-air palaestra and pools and in some of the rooms for massages etc., all of them still not unearthed in Beroe.

The plan of the *thermae-gymnasion* in Beroe is following the general development in Rome and the provinces after the middle of the 2nd century up to the middle of the 3rd century. This plan is adapted, simplified and inserted in almost square configuration, with bigger and clearly distinguished volumes, with thick non-interrupted walls and with a smaller number of rooms, entrances and niches in comparison to the first half – the middle of the second century. There is a certain balance among the straight and the circular outlines, although the latter go to the fore more and more, especially at the south façade, consisting of two apsidal/ U-like halls. The gradual development of the new type of small imperial baths-gymnasions can be traced, beginning with the baths in Odessos, built around 150; then in the city bath I of Laureacum from the 2nd century, rebuilt in 248; in the theatre bath-gymnasion in Ephesos from the second half of the 2nd century; in the big *thermae* of Lambesis from the 3rd – 4th century; and finally in the Big Northern Bath of Timgad from the late 2nd – early 3rd century.[31] The dominating U-like halls can also be met with the other types of baths, for instance a bath from France (Pl. III, 4), in the *balneum* of the Arval brothers at Maliana in Rome, erected before 240; in the Western bath of Cemellum and the *thermae* of Aquileia, both from the late 2nd – early 3rd century (Pl. II, 3); in bath III2B of Anamurium, built around 250; finely in bath 5B of Jotape, made in the 3rd century after Caracalla.[32]

The first building period of the bath-gymnasion with *theatron*

D. Nikolov was pointing even to an earlier date, having in mind the inscription on the piedestal of a not preserved statue of Commodus,[33] although this monument could be left from the building preceding the erection of the bath-gymnasion. St. Boyadzhiev[34] also accepted that the bath could appear in the period of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, with t. p. q. the Marcomanian wars. But the plan, not typical for the Antonines, and the name of the bath-gymnasion as Severian do not allow relating it earlier than Septimius Severus. On the opposite, in the opinion of K. Kalchev, based on his later research from the 90-s, the bath-gymnasion of Augusta Traiana/Beroe has been built in the second half - end of the 3rd century, with several more building phases in the 4th-5th century.[35] But according to the parallels for the plan we have already

[31] Nielsen 1993, Catalog Nos 9; 70; 186; 316; 321.
[32] Nielsen 1993, Catalog Nos 290; 293; 297; 368, 91, 165, 235, 242.
[33] Nikolov 1987.
[34] Boyadzhiev 2006, 66.
[35] Kalchev 1998.

listed, regarding more narrow chronological limits, the earliest date should be connected mainly with the Early Severan period, from Septimius Severus to Caracalla. It can also be supposed that the building of the thermen-gymnasion may reflect the visit of Septimius Severus and his family or of Caracalla only to Augusta Traiana in 196, 202 and 214 during their imperial travels across *Thracia*.[36] The broader upper limits of building the theatron and the final decoration of the complex probably don't pass over the Late Severan period of Sever Alexander according to one of the inscriptions of the archiereus Marcos Aurelios Asiaticos.[37] In two inscriptions, concerning the Severan gymnasion and generally the acts of benefication of this archiereus, it is described that he has funded a two-stored colonnade and a double colonnade, mentioned in a very special way: 'five times six plus six'.[38] It may be, as already proposed, a merely poetic way of expression; or it can reflect the exact number of columns on each portico or colonnade of a small palaestra or in the cardo in front of it, following the length of the crosses among the two *decumani* and one cardo to the north. All these arguments show, that the bath-gymnasion (most probably with palaestra) was ready at the time of Septimius Severus - early Caracalla (phase A), the *auditorium* with its architectonic decoration – maybe at the time of Caracalla as sole emperor or Elagabal (phase B) and the street colonnades of the area were the last to be erected in the rule of Sever Alexander (phase C). And many of the researchers accept the early beginning of the same century (phase A) for the building of the bath-gymnasion.[39]

To the moment published properly in details are only some Dorian capitals. The opinion of its date slightly differs: according to the first one the Dorian capitals belong to the Severans, while according to the second opinion,[40] these pieces can be related to the period a little bit earlier, namely to the Late Antonines - maximum the Early Severans.

The theatron/ cavea/ coilon/ *auditorium* (Pl. III,1-3; Pl. V,4) is added to the southern end of the bath and placed over the usual for the theatres, odeons and amphitheatres radial substructures. In Augusta Traiana they are not dense, but partly over arcs. The outer outlines of the thermae-gymnasion are repeated from the south by the additional adhering lower wall of the

[36] Michailov 1963.
[37] Sharankov 2015; Buyukliev & Sharankov 2002; 2007.
[38] Buyukliev & Sharankov 2007.
[39] Nikolov 1987; Conrad 1993; Nielsen 1993; Sear 2006.
[40] Dimitrov 2007, 220-226; Petrova 2009, 14. It seems that there is no data for the initial decoration of this façade, only for the later colonnade. Some pieces of the architectonic decoration were found in situ, but most of them were dispersed over the whole area of the complex, from the immediate outside of the gate area, on and under the decumanus, the piazza, the theatron and up to the equestrian statue and even east of it.

auditorium in the same technique of *opus mixtum*. The theatron partly hides the south façade of the bath and has caused some changes in the arrangement of the praefurniums and the entrances to the ground level. These are clear signs for a later building and sticking of the *auditorium* to the bath-gymnasion.

The *auditorium* consists of three parts: of the central cavea and of two very unusual back straight wings, which are not to be met in another place. The wings have slightly different dimensions and increase the capacity and the panoramic sight on the piazza. The rows (cunei/kerkides) according to architect V. Kolarova are 12, with 60 seats in each of them (Pl. IV, 2; VI, 1-2). The supposed number of spectators should be calculated circa half of the usual number of a middle-sized theatre, about 1300-1500, which is quite insufficient for the supposed real theatre of Augusta Traiana and not responding to the supposed number of population. That is the first reason why the *auditorium* can't be the city theatre. The second reason is the fact that no remnants of the orchestra with the *scaenae frons*, made temporary by wood or constant by stone, were excavated. There is no place for it, having in mind the configuration of the piazza, surrounded by the western city wall with the Southwestern Gate and the new diagonally passing decumanus.[41] The diazoma with the colonnade atop is playing the role of the analemma in the theatre, usually decorated with a colonnade with statues. The monumental colonnade of the *auditorium*, built in the second phase of the first building period, is occupying partly in height the middle of the *thermae* south façade. According to the hypothetic reconstruction of V. Kolarova, the statues are placed over the arcade and its architrave (Pl. V, 1-2). The found on the plinthus of the *auditorium* curators' inscription witness the real existence of such statues, erected during the administration of two more magistrates, only the name of the second one preserved - Titos Aurelios Gaianos. In our opinion, the statues should be shown not over the arcade and the architrave, but rather on the level and between the columns, which is more standard and often used in the half-circle plans of theatres, nympheia, etc.

In this way, different magistrates and notables were in charge or funding and building of the bath-gymnasion, the palaestra, the theatron with its architectonic decoration and statues and the colonnades from the north of the bath. This fact evidences once more, that the complex was built gradually and every its part was made by different curators or different benefactors. The usage of many elements of a real theatre relates formally the *auditorium* with colonnade in Augusta Traiana to the circle of theatre-like buildings, although

[41] Usually the plaza is described as oval one, which does not correspond to the reality. A triangle space is formed north of the decumanus, at the theatron with irregular curvy form. It is only now oval because of the added recently rows with wooden seats south of the decumanus.

with diminished height and number of rows, including the height only to the first diazoma.

The old and the new excavations of the thermen-gymnasion[42] revealed that some rooms have been covered with marble revetment, wall paintings, mosaic pavements and most probably also with wall mosaics (Pl. VI). According to the opinion of the earlier excavator K. Kalchev, the mosaics belong to the Early Christian basilica of the 4th century,[43] while later M. Kamisheva dates the mosaics at the end of the 2nd – first half of the 3rd century. Surely they not reveal, in our opinion, the iconographic-stylistic features of the mentioned first Severan period of building, rather a decoration of the bath-gymnasion with t. p. q. the Goths invasions in the middle of the 3rd century, which means that the mosaics belong not to the initial period of the building, but to Late Antiquity. The exact date can be established after the publication of the new discoveries with all the finds.

The coins found over the area of the studied complex relate only to the time after its building, because they belong to the layers over the *thermae* and the piazza, not under them.[44] Several peaks can be observed, the first one connected namely with the period of Septimius Severus, Geta and Caracalla and in this is repeating the general picture of coins in Augusta Traiana.[45] Although the coins from the first half of the 3rd century continue up to Gordian III, they likely are reflecting the continuous usage of the thermen-gymnasion. These observations, the various historical and epigraphic data, including the name itself 'Severan gymnasion', confirm the more narrow chronological limits for the initial first period of creation with three phases in the Severan time. The unusual *auditorium* adds one more function to the bath-gymnasion, of a theatre-like building, excellently built and richly decorated.

The function of the *auditorium* and the piazza during the First period of existence.

Two hypotheses can be offered for the function of the *auditorium* at that period, having in mind its very solemn character and lavish decoration. The first suggestion is that this was the place for watching a cult ritual. The main action, namely the sacrifice on the altar and the *libatio*, should be performed in front of a temple or sanctuary, built probably south of the piazza, on the other side of the decumanus. Such theatre-like buildings for the spectators and participants in different cult rituals are known from the Archaic, Hellenistic

[42] Kalchev 2009; 2016.

[43] Kamisheva & Yankov 2014; Karamanova-Zlatkova 2016. See also the article of M. Kamisheva and R. Karamanova in this volume.

[44] For details see the article of M. Minkova in this volume.

[45] Minkova 2015, 47-50.

and Roman periods.[46] After the end of the cult ritual, the elite with a procession should move to the still not found city theatre or theatre-amphitheatre, where all the population of the city and its territory come to watch the games and entertainments, organized by the *archiereuseis* and *archiereia*. The cult building south of the piazza of the *auditorium* in Beroe could be connected, for instance, with the Severan dynasty and especially with the visits of Septimius Severus or with the temple of the imperial cult of Severus Alexander and Julia Mamaea. In both cases the whole complex of the bath-gymnasion, the piazza and the supposed temple was Severan. After the murder of the latter emperor and the following *damnatio memoriae*, the cult statues of him and his mother were surely destroyed and the temple abandoned or reused for another purpose. However, there are special obligatory conditions during the ritual of every official Roman cult: the absolute sacred quietness and no movement and action, except of the priesthood, in order no sound and gesture to interrupt it, which was considered as a bad sign for the destiny of the empire, the ruler, the city and the inhabitants. In this case the ritual should be repeated again from the very beginning. The condition of absolute quietness could not be fulfilled in the circumstance of existing city gate, decumanus and constant traffic of crowds of people, cars etc., even if the gate was closed for the time of the ritual. This is a basic argument against the hypothesis of the *auditorium* with piazza in front of a cult place.

Nevertheless, another connection with a probable cult procession can be made as well. What was the reason for funding by M. Aurelios Asiaticos of two or even three colonnades on one and the same cardo (modern Mitropolite M. Kusev-boulevard), which at his time surely included at least one temple (or altar) of Hermes on it, in such a way changing the simple cardo to a very solemn and picturesque street? Having in mind, that Hermes and Heracles are protectors of the athletes, it may be also that this cardo was the processional route, connecting the gymnasion with the temple of Hermes or with some temple of the imperial cult, which was not on the agora. Was the temple of the Tetrarchs built only for them or could it be the abandoned earlier temple of Sever Alexander, reused in 303? The erection of the temple of the Tetrarchs in that north part of the cardo perhaps inherited a place, already occupied by earlier cult buildings. Such a hypothesis bounds together all data we know about the activity of Marcos Aurelios Asiaticos as priest of Dea Roma, as *archiereus di hoplon* with his four-time *munera* and his benefications to Augusta Traiana. It is obvious that the bath-gymnasion is the starting point for the cult procession in the cardo from the south to the north. After attending the cult ritual, the participants/the students, at the head of their gymnasiarch, should return back to the bath-gymnasion for the festivals and games, often devoted to the

[46] Nielsen 2002; Bingol 2005; Yegül 2007.

imperial cult, to other local cults or to their combination with the imperial one. So the second suggestion is that the *auditorium* has been built for the visitors/spectators, observing the demonstrative games and competitions, showing the skills of the young men, learnt during their occupations in the gymnasion and on the occasion of a local or global cult event. S. Price names such places at the gymnasions or bath-gymnasions 'the second agora of the city',[47] because crowds of young people were spending all day long here and their activity was watched by the city community. Such squares in front of the bath-gymnasion are usually called 'in agones', combining the Greek with the Latin. But they are with two functions: supplying the gathered people with open-space and as a scene without *scaenae frons*, similar to the stadion.

In *Thracia* there were a lot of local festivals, connecting the global imperial cult with the locally venerated Greek divinities, especially in the period of the Antonine and the Severan dynasty: athletic agons, musical competitions and *munera* have been held in several cities, especially in Philippopolis and Beroe.[48] Except regular games on the emperors' birthdates, anniversaries, dynastic festivals as Hadrianea, Antonineia, Severeia etc., there existed occasional or single games, very similarly to Greece and Asia Minor.[49] They were signs of identifications of each city, sometimes marked by inter-city rivalry, with local deities, heroes, founders and legendary mythological stories. In Philippopolis the sport agons have been performed in the stadion, but such one hasn't been excavated in Beroe so far. Nevertheless strigils hang on a ring, *balsamariae* (vessels for the oil of the athletes) and artificial palm branches, made of bronze, as sign of the winners in the sport agons and the gladiatorial games, are frequent finds in civic buildings, tombs and representations on votive steles.[50] Some of the finds surely belong to the occupations of the young men in the thermae-gymnasion. The demonstrative games and entertainments in front of the *auditorium* in Augusta Traiana/Beroe are not the official ones held in the stadions, the theatres and the amphitheatres and also they do not represent the process itself of education and training in the palaestra. They show only the final results of education after the efforts of the students, the teachers and the gymnasiarch during the games and competitions.

Similar setting, but not so representative and impressive, is the tribune for watching in the theatre-bath-gymnasion of Ephesos, arranged also against

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[47] Price 1984, 143.

[48] Gerassimov 1958; Gocheva 1985; Kolev 1992; Vagalinski 1997; 2000; 2009; Raycheva 2016.

[49] Price 1984, 104.

[50] Vagalinsi 2009, 79, 111. K. Kalchev has shown to me the unpublished artificial bronze objects, which were in the exposition at that time. He considered them as imitations of palm branches.

the walls of the bath in the palaestra (Pl. IV, 1-2).[51] The theatre-bath-gymnasion is situated at the beginning of the Harbour street and north of the real theatre - a fact, demonstrating that the tribune is not the theatre itself. This tribune under the sky is in the form of several straight rows for the sitting spectators. There is enough space around it for the standing ones and the judges as well.[52] The second example is the theatre-stadion in Thessaloniki, known from inscription and by one only found wall.[53] In the case of Ephesos the palaestra with tribune is also explained as a place for demonstrations and competitions of the students. We should add to this interpretation that all other activities in the gymnasion (theatre plays, mymes and pantomymes performances, musical playing, philosophical dialogues and rhetoric speeches, athletic competitions) could be trained here in the open-air in the presence of the all the students, their tutors, the gymnasiarch and eventually citizens wondering around. But while in Ephesos the palaestra and the place for demonstrations are together, in Beroe they are separated. The reason for it is clear – in Beroe there was no place for the palaestra to the south of the bath. The palaestra was built most probably either at the northern end of the bath, or in the same axis, occupying the next insula/insulae. Also possible is that it was traced at the right angles to the axis north-south of the bath, thus occupying the space stretching from the bath-gymnasion to the west fortress wall. It should be emphasized, that both examples in Thessaloniki and Ephesos reflect the existence of hybrid architectural forms, bound together by the games and the place for the spectators. These analogies reveal conveniently the conception of the multi-functional bath-gymnasion, known almost everywhere in the Roman empire. The most numerous examples of the architectural types of the bath-gymnasia are coming from Greece and the Greek East: Ephesos. Miletus, Sardes etc., demonstrating the wide range of education in them and their essential role in the public, ideological and political life of the Roman cities.[54]

It is not sure how many activities have been practiced in Augusta Traiana's case, but some indirect arguments point to most of them, beginning with sports. The city most probably boasted the Severan gymnasion, since its students became famous thanks to the excellent education and training, with several examples.[55] It is likely that its former student was Aurelius Fronton, the only participant from *Thracia* (in the boundaries of Republic of Bulgaria) and winner several times (!) in the Olympian, Isthmian and Rhodian games. Another student has been sent to study rhetoric in Sparta and for his great

[51] Nielsen 1993, 196, Cat. No 300, fig. 228.
[52] Thür 2000, 262.
[53] Velenis & Adam-Veleni 1997.
[54] Yegül 1982; Price 1984, 110, 142-144; Yegül 1986; Steskal 2007.
[55] Vagalinski 2009, 34.

successes he got the citizenship and honorific statues in both cities. Nikias, perhaps also a former student of the Severian gymnasion in Beroe, became a famous mimographos and also received honorific statue. It can be presumed that at least these three individuals have got their education and training namely at the most prestigious for the time Severan gymnasion. Its lavished architectural decoration is also differentiating the gymnasion from the other ones in *Thracia*, Lower Moesia and Macedonia (in the boundaries of Bulgaria).

During the excavations it was also discovered, that the piazza was paved first with crushed small stones. It could be easily covered by sand for the demonstrations of the athletes and cleaned very quickly for another kind of performance. All these games and entertainments could follow each other and when necessary, the sand could be swept off to one end, leaving a free surface for the more intellectual performances. This function of the theatron as a place for demonstrations and competitions of the students can explain the relatively smaller capacity and number of rows with seats, not adequate to the number of inhabitants of Augusta Traiana, although smaller theatres also existed in Roman times as well. But while the theatre could be visited by all social groups, except the criminals, the *auditorium* in front of the bath-gymnasion was intended for more restricted number of visitors, mainly young men from the middle-class and the elite families. This social group of young people was numerous in Roman times, having in mind the big number of children almost in every family.

The dimensions of the theatron and its capacity supply with additional arguments against its identification with the real theatre of Augusta Traiana, still not found and excavated. Several marble plates, coming from the city, may belong to the proskenion decoration of this theatre, as already proposed.[56] These plates do not belong to the *auditorium* at the Southwestern gate, because its orthostats are plain and covered only with a large building-commemorative inscription. As a rule, the proskenion decoration of the Roman theatres reflects, except the usual mythological representations, the kinds of spectacles and entertainments held in it. The decoration of the supposed theatre in Beroe represents Dionysos, a dancing menade, a venator fighting a panther and Hephestos, hammering and preparing the weapons of Achilles.[57] Surely mimes and pantomimes have been performed too in the real theatre, on the base of the inscription of Nikias, the famous writer of the city. The representation of the venator may lead to the opinion, that it was namely a theatre-amphitheatre in Augusta Traiana.

[56] Dimitrov 1950.

[57] The interpretation of this scene so far was of a shoe-maker in his atelier, which is quite inappropriate for a theatre decoration.

There are numerous evidences for the athletic competitions in Augusta Traiana, held probably in a stadion, not unearthed so far: the already mentioned strigils, *balsamariae* and bronze palm branches as sign of victory.[58] Yet the piazza in front of the theatron also has seen many similar athletic games. It can be supposed that some of the found attributes and rewards were intended not only for the winners in the games of the city, but also for the students, participants in the games at the Severan gymnasion with theatron. It is considered that already in the first half of the 4th century the athletic competitions gradually lost their attractiveness, not only because of the influence of Christianity and the ban of Theodosius I.[59] The physical and moral ideal of the Greek athlete could not survive in the new era of Late Antiquity. It was preserved only in the milieu of some notables, who could pay a private trainer, thus continuing in their private life the famous traditions of the agons, while official games were rare and seized about 430. The reason was first of all economical: even the big and prosperous cities like Ephesos already could not afford the very expensive oil for the athletes. At the same time in the case of Beroe there was no financial problem with the gladiatorial entertainments, because they were paid privately, usually by the main priests and priestesses, responsible for the imperial cult. Although the decline of the athletic agons in this city began already in the second half-end of the 3rd century, the real end came with the erection of the equestrian statue in the middle of the plaza in a position, impeding the spectators from observing the games and entertainments. The fact is obvious also from the pose of the horse and the rider, turned with their backs to the audience and adequately with the face and the muffle only towards the decumanus.

Although there lacks any data for the concrete locations in Stara Zagora of the big structures for entertainments (theatre, stadion, amphitheatre), obligatory for every big Roman city, the combination of the bath-gymnasion with theatron shows that it was copying the activities in them in connection with the imperial cult. It was a particular centre for games and entertainments, connected with it. There exist a lot of data, mainly epigraphic,[60] descending from Greece and the Greek East, revealing that the places of veneration of the imperial cult were numerous and dispersed in the city among the different social groups, public and group institutions and in the private sphere. The

[58] Vagalinski (2009, 11) describes the object in the hands of the gladiators as a lantern, but the earlier authors consider it as a palm branch. In fact it outlines are different from the natural branch (see also note 49). I think that Kalchev was right. Perhaps the natural branches have been replaced by the bronze ones, because in many places like Beroe with a more severe climate in winter, palms were rarely met.

[59] Remijsen 2015.

[60] Price, 1984, especially 110, 143-144.

gymnasia and the bath-gymnasia in *Thracia* were also among these places, manifesting the loyalty of the young men to the ruler and taking part in the periodical, annual and occasional global and local festivals, connected with the imperial cult, the cults of the Thracian koinon and of Augusta Traiana itself. The games at the piazza in front of the theatron were forming a mini-centre of the spectacles, repeating on a smaller scale the Great games and entertainments in Rome, the Big games in the stadion and the theatre and amphitheatre of the Thracian koinon in Philippopolis and the local festivals in the stadion and the probable theatre-amphitheatre of Augusta Traiana. This supposes that indoors the bath-gymnasion and in the open-air piazza there were places for the imperial veneration. They could be organized in different ways: like a small temple or altar in the palaestra and its colonnades or in front of the statue of the emperor inside and outside the bath-gymnasion.[61] Although in the excavated area of the bath-gymnasion of Beroe no fitting or sculptural monument is preserved, connected with the cult of the Severs so far, nevertheless the existence of such special places of worshipping existed surely. One of the supposed places could be the colonnade of the theatron, where the family of Septimius Severus or of Sever Alexander and his mother could be represented together with the statues of deities and benefactors; the second one as an altar with the imperial statue in one of the colonnades of M. Aurelios Asiaticos; finely in the interior, maybe in the basilica thermarum, with statues exactly at the place, where later the synthronon was erected.

The extremely unusual, well planned and highly executed architectural decision in Augusta Traiana, combining in one whole the separate functions of the bath, the gymnasion and the place for games and entertainments support such an interpretation of the theatron and of the complex. Although the first example in Thracia so far, it has taken most probably the formula first of all from the architecture in Greece and Asia Minor, where the culture of the bath-gymnasion was brilliantly developed in the 2nd and the first half of the 3rd century. Namely these examples are followed in Augusta Traiana, with its peak of development in the Severan period, which makes it possible the earliest games in the plaza to be connected with the Severeia, performed every 4 years; or with the visit of Thrace by Septimius Severus with his family; or of Caracalla as a sole emperor. Even more – it can be proposed that the fiscus or the emperor himself have supported the building of the thermen-gymnasion either by a significant funding, or by releasing some taxes of Augusta Traiana or

[61] In the 90-s, the so-called 'Marble hall' in the baths-gymnasia in Asia Minor was thought to be the place for veneration of the imperial cult, although later this hypothesis was rejected by B. Burrell (Yegül 1982; Burrell 2006). S. Price agrees with the general idea of worshipping in various ways of the imperial cult in the gymnasia, but remains sceptical about the interpretation of the concrete facts (Price 1984, 144).

by supplying it with building material from the state or the imperial quarries (in Thrace, in Proconnesos, etc.). The direct trade and craft connections with the Greek and Asia Minor cities or of settlers from there in Beroe, like the supposed predecessors of M. Aurelios Asiaticos, helped essentially in this aspect.

The gladiatorial games, *venationes* and *bestiaria* in the Second period

The city possesses the most numerous epigraphic and sculptural monuments and objects, connected with the gladiatorial combats on the occasion of the festivals of the imperial cult[62]. These are: different gladiatorial honorific representations during lifetime and sepulcral ones; numerous inscriptions of *archiereis* and *archiereiai di hoplon*, responsible for the imperial cult and the organization of the connected with it gladiatorial games, paid at the expense of these priests and priestesses; different kind of prizes for the winners. The greatest number of evidences for gladiators in Beroe in comparison to the other Roman cities in Bulgaria allows questioning if the city had its own gladiatorial school (although one can find here itinerant gladiators in the city as well). Were these highest priests and priestesses of the imperial cult the formal owners, if not of the school, at least of the gladiators? Where were these gladiators living and training? Could the school be near to the bath-gymnasion, on the opposite side of the decumanus in a definite period? At the present stage of knowledge it is possible only to raise, but not to answer all these questions.

After the Goth invasions in 250-251 in the Balkans, the fortune of the supposed theatre-amphitheatre of Beroe may be compared to the one in Philippopolis. There the invasions are known predominantly both on the base of the archaeological and epigraphic evidences. Most possibly its amphitheatre has been also totally destroyed, together with the stadion during the disastrous years, although the location of the amphitheatre still remains unknown and only several monumental reliefs with gladiators have survived.[63] In the total crisis of these years Philippopolis could not afford the rebuilding of the amphitheatre, therefore the urgent necessity caused the transformation of its theatre unto theatre-amphitheatre.

We don't know the concrete reason for moving of the gladiatorial games in Beroe to the plaza in front of the theatron, but maybe it was also a sequence of the Goths' invasions. No archaeological observations have been made on

[62] Vagalinski 2009, 111-112.

[63] Vagalinski 2009, fig. 123. One of the possible location of the amphitheatre may be under the monumental Episcopal basilica of Philippopolis, where an oblog/oval building is witnessed. In such a case the reason for its destruction was the Christian attitude to the pagan cult of the emperor and the connected with it gladiatorial combats.

their presence in Augusta Traiana, only the coin treasures mark their way in its territory.[64] Anyway, the city had chosen another way than Philippopolis: the only suitable place to be reconstructed quickly and without big investigations was the piazza with the theatron. The piazza could not be the forum at that time, even because only in Republican times the gladiatorial battles could be held at the forum, while in the imperial period since Trajan onwards they have been performed in special buildings.

Although according to one opinion,[65] it is doubtful that gladiatorial games, *venationes* and *bestiaria* have been performed namely at this piazza because of the lack of sand, this argument, as we have already pointed out, seems not to be decisive, especially having in mind two circumstances. The first one is the fact that not only the gladiators, but also the athletes of the gymnasion needed sand for their training in the palaestra and also for their demonstrative games and competitions on the piazza. The second fact is that the picture we see now is later, from the third period of existence, when the equestrian statue was erected and the initial small crushed-stone pavement replaced by limestone slabs.

The third most important fact is that we have at disposal remnants of a barrier, separating the piazza-arena from the walkers alongside the decumanus and protecting them from accidents during the cruel fights. These are four arae with the representations of gladiators, placed most probably alongside the north sidewalk of the decumanus: two of them with unclear provenance have the same form as the second pair, thrown in the city ditch immediately outsides the gate, which denotes them as belonging to the same barrier.[66] K. Kalchev has noticed that there have been drilled relatively large holes in a straight line on the limestone paving plates on the Northern sidewalk of the decumanus (22/18/9 cm). The holes on the lower undersurface of each ara have exactly the same dimensions, which reveals where namely and how they have been installed over the pavement. The long continuous railing (see the reconstruction, Pl. VII, 1, 3) consisted probably of such arae, connected in one opinion by wooden beams[67] or, in our opinion, by alternating solid marble plates between them in open-work, several fragments found during the excavations (Pl. VII, 2b). Two additional rabbets were used for connecting

[64] M. Minkova has prepared in February 2017 an exhibition in the Historical museum of Stara Zagora, showing the presence of the Goths in the region in the middle of the 3rd century on the base of the coin treasures, marking their routes to and from Augusta Traiana. Generally it is considered, that the Goths didn't enter it and it was saved.

[65] Vagalinski 2009, 79.

[66] Kalchev 2001.

[67] Vagalinski 2009, 11-112.

each ara with the flanking from both sides slabs in open-work. For the purpose, two deep square holes were made on each lateral side of the ara, next to its top and base horizontal parts. The parapet was stretching from the Southwestern gate till the Southeastern corner of the bath-gymnasion and probably had two mobile doors-entrances at both ends. The one at the Southwestern gate maybe served as the so-called gate of Hades, through which usually in the amphitheatres the dead bodies have been pulled out, here in Beroe out of the piazza and immediately outsides the gate. It is quite doubtful if initially the newly formed close necropolis *extra muros* (on S. Silov str.)[68] contains burials of the killed gladiators, since no finds of the kind are unearthed in the mentioned necropolis. It was rather used for burials of the representatives of the usual low-class citizens, beginning from the second half of the 4th century.[69]

Such real railings/barriers/parapets, made of marble, wood or bronze, were in constant usage in the interior of public buildings, private houses and *villae rustica* and in the exterior of their gardens in Roman and Late Antique times, often decorated with herms or geometrical elements. Imaginative, but quite veristic representations of parapets can be observed too in the wall paintings and mosaics in civil and Christian basilicas, pagan and Early Christian tombs and catacombs. The separation of the plazza from the decumanus in the second, 'gladiatorial' period of existence, with t. p. q. 250-252 and t. a. q. 351 , was not only unusual, but even unique for Northern Thrace and not only. The images represent the victors, with their full armament and their high status among the other gladiators. It was a kind of Alley of the Gladiatorial Fame in Beroe. Since such a glorification has been paid to the gladiators in the railing, since they were very famous and often very rich, there should exist their separate necropolis, still not found, except one tomb with a stele of a very high artistic quality (Pl. VII, 4).[70]

In such a way for the next almost 100 years up to Constantius II the theatron and the piazza in front of it have got the function of a small arena mainly for gladiatorial games. The iconographic-stylistic analysis of the gladiatorial representations on the railing demonstrate features of Late Antiquity. First of all the form of the arae are without the classical profiling, but with very heavy and protruding solid base and top, relating these monuments to the second half of the 3rd century, but they are generally dated in the 2nd – 3rd century or with t. p. q. 212 AD. Three of them, especially the ara with the helmet on the top, stylistically belongs also to the second half of the third century. Two other postaments are very rough and general and look like unfinished. Only the

[68] Ignatov & Sirakov 2012.
[69] Minkova 2016.
[70] Vagalinski 2009, 89, cat. 5 (our Pl. VII, 4).

ara with the *ratiarius* is sculpted quite better and with details and probably is from earlier time (Severan or of Gallienic?)[71] because of its mildness and classical treatment. The age of the Tetrarchs is also very well represented by their temple, inscriptions, portraiture and the unpublished slab near the same temple with the representations of two gladiators, sculpted in a very rough style, similar to that of the three rude arae. In this case the connection among the bath-gymnasion, the arena in front of the theatron, the cardo used for cult processions and the temple of the Tetrarchs is not only provisory, but quite sure. This time not only the students of the bath-gymnasion, but the whole population of Beroe was supposed to take part in the cult ritual and in watching the gladiatorial fights, because the theatron of the bath-gymnasion was used instead of the theatre-amphitheatre. Together with the coins from the second period, found here, the gladiatorial representations from the second half of the 3rd – the first half of the 4th century are showing not only the period of the arena existence, but revealing the time of Gallien and the Tetrarchy as a second flourishing period of the city.[72] It is necessary to emphasize, that in some of the gladiatorial representations can be felt the mild influence of the Greek athlete's ideology of virtues (appearance, behaviour, stature), typical for the Eastern Mediterranean.[73] Generally one can follow this influence not only in Beroe, but as well as in other sepulchral military representations, for instance from the valley of Middle Strymon, where the idealistic and lyrical mildness is prevailing over the military severity and rigour.[74] The gladiator is either shown almost as a lyrical Greek hero, or surrounded by relatives, with the nuance of the camera family atmosphere. Such peculiarities demonstrate once more the importance of the Eastern Greek Mediterranean culture and art in the creation of the local variants of the Graeco-Roman culture in *Thracia*. It seems, that somehow Beroe was competing with Philippopolis both in the places for games and entertainments and in the role and the architecture of the bath-gymnasia with theatron.

D. Nikolov mentions that during the excavations of the so-called 'forum' there was found a sculptural head of a panther and of a bull.[75] They

[71] It is for the first time the period of Gallienus to be witnessed in such a categorical way, first of all with honorific bronze statue of his general Marcian, found very near to the bath-gymnasium. See Sharankov 2015. It seems that the arae were intended initially for another monument/monuments and later re-used in the railing. Taken for the purpose from the workshop was also the unfinished ara.

[72] Such conclusions can be drawn also from the inscriptions at the temple of the Tetrarchs, see Sharankov 2015.

[73] Remijsen 2015.

[74] This idea was announced during my communication on the conference in memoriam of prof. M. Tacheva in the University Kliment Ochridski of Sofia in 2016.

[75] Nikolov 1987.

were probably either a decoration of the piazza or belonged to a statue of a venator. But it is hardly believable that in the hunting on the arena (*venationes*) and in the animal combats (*bestiaria*), were not excluded the most dangerous and high jumping animals (lions, panthers, etc.), because the railing was not sufficiently high (up to 1.10 m) to prevent the walkers passing by. But it is quite sure that a high set has been installed on the theatron orthostates of the first row, protecting the public. So the combats with wild animals in the piazza most possibly included only bears and bulls for taurobolia.[76]

The Third period of existence of the complex in Late Antiquity.
Several facts reveal when namely the gladiatorial and *bestiaria* displays have come to an end in Beroe: it was a sequence of the edicts of Constantine I and his immediate successors, who gradually prohibited one by one separate pagan practices up to the middle of the 4th century. Except the edicts, three other facts in Beroe evidence the introducing of Christianity. First, it was the erection of the bronze equestrian statue of a Christian emperor in the center of the piazza (Pl. VII, 1 and 3; Pl. V, 3); second, the gladiatorial fights were no longer existing, for that purpose the railing with gladiatorial representations was destructed and the plaza covered with a new limestone pavement; and third, the vestibule hall of the bath-gymnasion was turned to an Early Christian basilica by adding a synthronon, similarly to the transformation of a bath in France (Pl. III, 1 and 4). Earlier the equestrian statue was thought by D. Nikolov and Chr. Buyukliev to represent Septimius Severus, but the two coins, found during drilling under it, belong to Constantine I and Constantius II, the second coin minted in 251.

The attempt to connect the equestrian statue with an inscription from the village of Novoselets (former Kyusse Mahala near Nova Zagora, situated 35 km east of Stara Zagora/Augusta Traiana)[77] has no grounds. In Antiquity this place was maybe a *mansio* or another kind of settlement, located in the most eastern part of the territory of Beroe. Many inscriptions, tumuluses, coins etc. have been found occasionally in Novoselets, showing that it was a settlement with its own monuments. So the inscription from this village (Pl. VIII, 2) belongs to the ancient settlement there and is not brought from Beroe. On the other hand, the pedestal with the inscription from Novoselets is the usual high narrow one, intended for a standing statue, while the pedestal in Beroe is the typical large and wide one for an equestrian statue (Pl. VIII, 3). Except that, the inscription from Novoselets mentions the name of the provincial governor Flavius Palladius, who held the office of *praeses* in 339-

[76] We also cannot be sure about the free access to the plaza in the days without fights or it was always closed?
[77] See the discussion of Ulrich Gehn in Smith & Ward-Perkings 2012, No 1665.

340. This fact does not permit the sure identification with Constantine I, unless the statue was posthumous. For these reasons the inscription and the statue from Novoselets was already identified with his eldest son Constanine II. This is the third argument to reject the identification of the statue from Novoselets with the equestrian one from Beroe, where one of the coin as t.p.q. is already from 351.

In our opinion, the equestrian statue in Beroe represented not Constantine I, rather Constantius II, who was ruling over namely this part of the empire. Another reason to connect the monument with him is his famous *adventus* and procession in the streets of Rome, which has left a very strong impact on the historical memory. Finally, it is necessary to have in mind the strong influence of the monuments of Constantinople, especially a very possible impetus of the equestrian statues of the brilliant time of the Constantinian dynasty on the erection of a similar statue in Beroe, located about 400 km northwest from the new Roman capital. It should be paid attention as well to the habit of placing coins under new walls, mosaics and statues and its meaning, except as dating find.[78]

In this way a new centre of the imperial cult at the Southwestern gate of Beroe was formed. Usually the equestrian statues are placed on the forum/ the agora, as in Rome, Nicopolis ad Istrum in Lower Moesia, Constantinople and elsewhere.[79] But this time the place is different and reminds an *adventus*: although it is not *extra muros* at the very city gate, where the *adventus* is usually performed, but *intra muros*, yet still very near to the gate. The allusion is of the emperor's *adventus*, as if he has just arrived on a horse, entered the city through the gate and stopped in order to receive the ritual and the acclamations. In this connection it may be also supposed that some real *adventus* of Constantius II have happened in Beroe and this event and the example of Constantinopolitan equestrian statues have influenced the erecting of such a statue in it. Except the official city ceremonies, every individual, entering Beroe by the same gate and decumanus and reaching the statue, should make some sign of veneration to the emperor' effigy in one or another way. On the other hand, the constant flow of cars with people and goods to and off the central trade arteria with shops was profaning this cultic place and its atmosphere. All these observations show a rare way of organizing the imperial cult in that part of *Thracia*, involving it in a rare city planning, which combines the cult with the bath, the traffic and trade function of the southwestern part of the city. With no more performed games, the piazza with its imperial statue has become really a new agora, although with very mixed functions and on a smaller scale. Nevertheless this monument was of high

[78] Popova 2016a, 155-158.

[79] Bergemann 1990; Vladkova 2005; Smith and Ward-Perkins 2012, with numerous examples of inscriptions and bases for equestrian statues from Late Antiquity.

quality and very impressive, even judging only by its base, marble quality and position, comparable to the monuments in Rome and Constantinople.

So the elimination of the railing and the gladiatorial games, the erection of the equestrian statue south of the bath-gymnasion and the transformation of the vestibule of the bath into Early Christian basilica had finally changed this area from pagan to Christian. One can ask too when namely the syntronon has been introduced in the basilicas of the Mediterranean and particularly in Beroe, because it is generally considered to happen in the 5th century. Only Orlandos points to the evidence of Eusebius, who has written that Paulinos, the bishop of Tyre in the Constantinian period, was sitting with the clergy on a throne near the *mensa sacra*.[80] Really this mentioning does not describe concretely the place of the throne, the kind of fitting and can it be the episcopal throne, placed in the center of the synthronon. Nevertheless other archeological evidences should be taken into consideration for the earlier appearing of the synthronon already in the 4th century, like in Oratorium A of Salona from the time of Constantine I.[81] Basilica N2 in the environs of Nicopolis ad Nestum in Thracia, dated in the second half of the 4th century, has also a synthronon.[82] It should be added the numerous examples from the 4th century in the wall paintings of the Roman catacombs and the mosaic lunettes of the Roman basilicas from the 4th century, where Christ in the manner of a ruler or a philosopher is sitting in the centre on a throne, surrounded by the half-circle of the apostles. In the synthronon the clergy and the bishop as substitude of God on earth were just repeating the idea of such compositions. These arguments prove that very probably the synthronon has appeared for the first time earlier than it has been supposed so far, namely in the middle - the second part of the 4th century, including Beroe.

The possible reason for the transformation of the vestibule of the bath into an Early Christian basilica should be looked for in the impossibility to find a free place for building the first basilica in Beroe at the first stage of the official Christianity in the second quarter of the 4th century. Later this difficulty disappeared and several new basilicas and a villa, transferred to basilica, appeared in Beroe *intra* and *extra muros*. Another question should be raised about the usage of the bath after installing the synthronon. The parallel from France (Pl. III, 4) shows that except the synthronon, part of the bath was additionally rebuilt as to receive a baptisterium, which is missing or still not found in our case. Maybe the explanation is that the bath has been transferred to a basilica in combination with a bishop residence in one and

[80] Orlandos 1994, 489-509.

[81] Kaić & Bubić 2013; See also the interpretation of Mathews 1971, 13, of the description of the old St. Sofia in Constantinople, of two thrones of the bishop in the apse and at the ambo.

[82] Popova 2011, fig. 1.

the same building, where he was living, using the bath, holding the service and baptizing. The presence of the still functioning bath and of the basilica in it does not allow any other interpretation, because it is hardly believable that the city governor of these years could have at his residence an Early Christian basilica. The role of the governor's residence probably was played by the building under the Post in Stara Zagora from its earlier building period of the 4th century.[83] It is obvious that in Augusta Traiana the Early Christian buildings appeared inside the city not in the late 4th – beginning of the 5th century, as considered generally for these lands,[84] but much earlier, between the Edict of Milano in 313 and the middle of the 4th century. The thesis of late appearing of Christian basilicas and generally of Christian monuments in Dacia, T*hracia* and Macedonia (in the boundaries of present-day Bulgaria) should be revised now, having in mind the martyrium under St. Sofia in Serdica, the basilica No 1 (the first chronologically Episcopal basilica) in Parthicopolis, the domus with the mosaic with The Fountain of Life and crosses from Beroe and the Episcopal basilica in Philippopolis.[85] This list will be constantly expanded by the future new monuments and also by the revision of the date of the already known ones.

Conclusions

In the first period of its existence, the piazza in front of the thermen-gymnasion served as a place for various sport demonstrations and artistic skills of the students, most probably in connection with the imperial cult of the Severs. It was the second agora of the city, called usually 'in agones' and in that sense it had a double function The case of Augusta Traiana is very similar to the ones, described by S. Price about the organization and the essence of the imperial cult in Asia Minor.[86] There existed a very dense net of separate places, institutions and individuals, taking part in the rituals of the imperial cult, the bath-gymnasions being an important part of this net. Every city has formed its specific way of worshiping, in Beroe this was the cult procession from the bath-gymnasion to the north to the supposed earlier temple of imperial cult, later to the real existing temple of the Tetrarchs. After the cult ritual, the students went back and took part in the festivals of the athletes and mimes, performed on the piazza and observed from the theatron. The tradition was established to such a degree and the place 'in agones' became so popular, that the piazza received new functions during the next centuries and passed through several metamorphoseis.

[83] Kalchev 2016b.
[84] Popova 2016b, 177 with literature; 2016c, 168, Pl. VII, fig. 3.
[85] Kantareva 2018.
[86] Price 1984.

In the second period, from the second half of the 3rd century up to the middle of the 4th century, it became a place for gladiatorial games, maybe of some still performed, but rare athletic competitions, also of some *venationes* and *bestiaria* with restricted animals (bears and bulls). In the third period from the middle of the 4th century up to 447, the year of the Huns invasions, the plaza was playing again the role of a second agora. A new imperial, this time equestrian cult statue, probably of Constantius II was erected. Concerning the equestrian statue, it should be compared with the best examples, known archaeologically or by other sources, from Rome, the new capital Constantinople etc. The whole complex was destroyed once more during the barbarian invasions at the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th century. But probably its preserved parts after repairs and transformations were reused in Mediaeval times, judging by the numerous mediaeval coins and other finds. This part of the city was still actively living probably up to the end of the 14th century.

It is obvious the influence of similar architectural decisions, coming from the south and southeastern Greek cities, but the theatron, sticking to the bath-gymnasion in Augusta Traiana, is much more monumental and elaborated in comparison to the tribune of Ephesos. The architect of the theatron in Augusta Traiana has taken advantage of every cm of the restricted irregular space, using the best decisions, skills and decoration of the Severan period. The later decision with the parapet for the gladiatorial combats is also unique and functional. Similar transformations have been very practically made in the vestibule of the bath turned into an Early Christian basilica, perhaps with a bishop residence. This complex of Augusta Traiana demonstrates the best achievements of the Roman architecture, the genius of the ancient architects and sculptors in forming the city space and the continuous mobility, revealed in the change of the function and the essence of the inherited buildings. The picture of the development of the complex shows the transformation of the Roman city to Late Roman and Early Byzantine one in a similar to the big cities forms and manner. The complex at the Southwestern gate also shows Beroe as an integral part of the Eastern Mediterranean and particularly of Greece and Asia Minor. The settlers from there in Beroe or the connection with its cities, economy and culture had a significant attribution to the cultural, religious and everyday life in this Thracian city.

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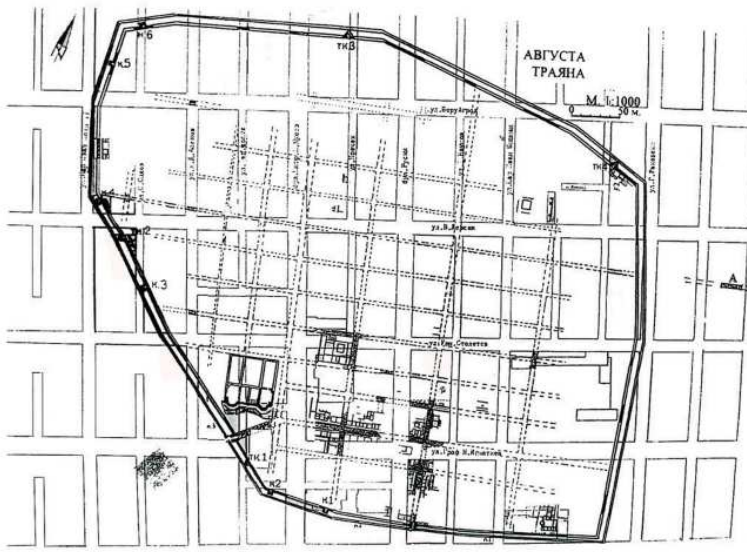
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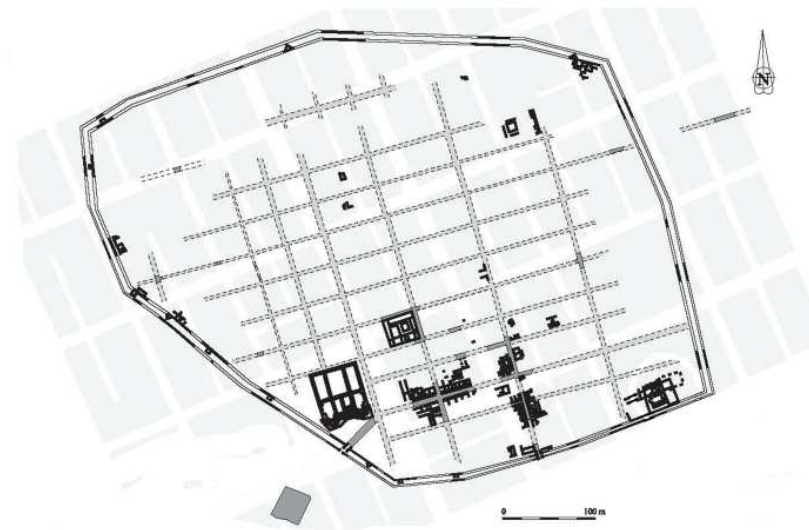
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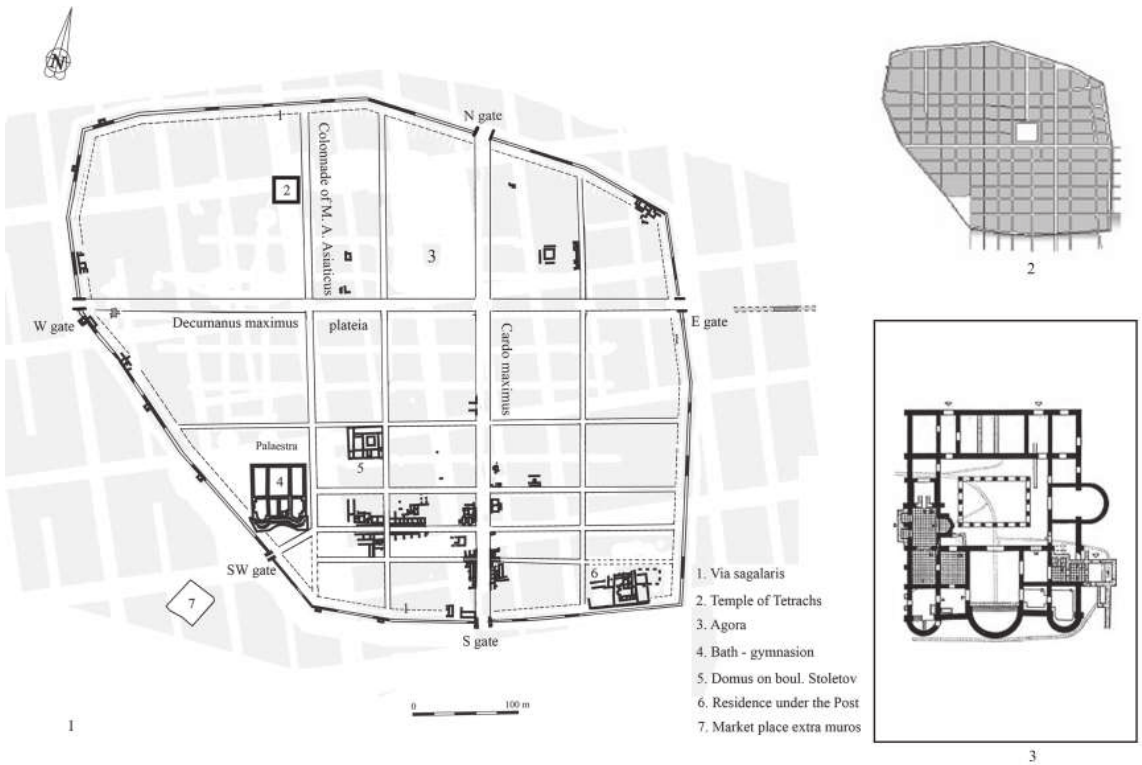
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Pl. I. 1. Augusta Traiana 2nd-6th century (with the proteihisma). Plan of the Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora from 2009.

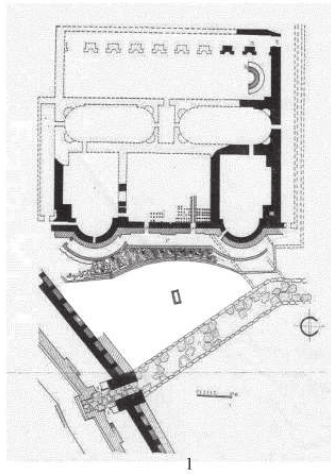
2. Plan of Augusta Traiana according to L. Manolova -Jeand'heur (2012).



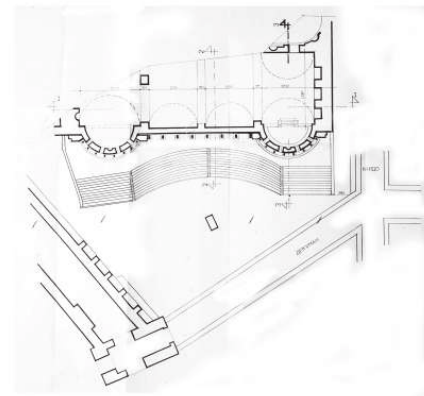
Pl. II. 1. Plan of Augusta Traiana (1st-4th century) with the street grid and the most important buildings (without the proteihisma of the 5th – 6th century). Authors: V. Popova & K. Petkova.

2. Scheme of the city planning of Augusta Traiana with the agora according to D. Popova (2012).

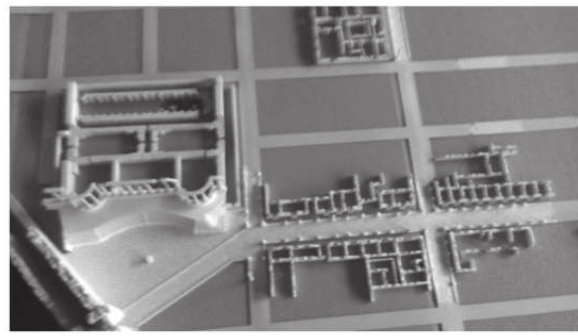
3. The thermen of Aquileia. End of the 2nd – beginning of the 3rd century.



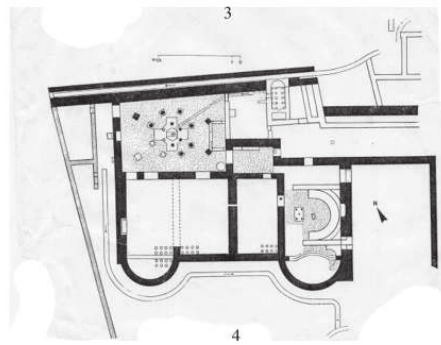
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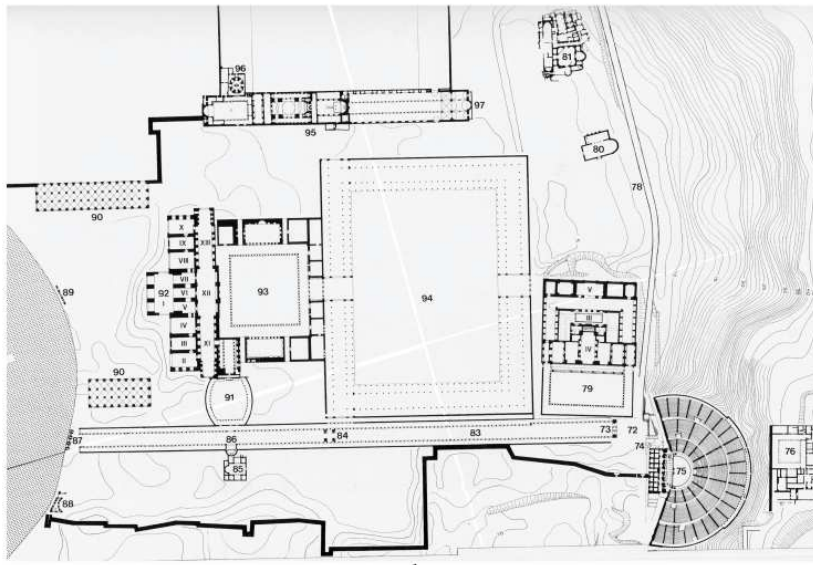
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Pl. III. 1. The complex at the Southwestern gate according to D. Nikolov (1987).

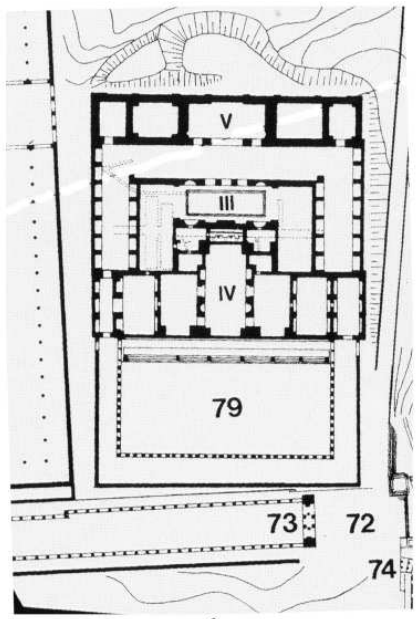
2. The piazza with part of the bath-gymnasion, *auditorium* and the decumanus with the statue. Author: architect V. Kolarova.

3. Model of the same situation with the trade center with shops to the East. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora.

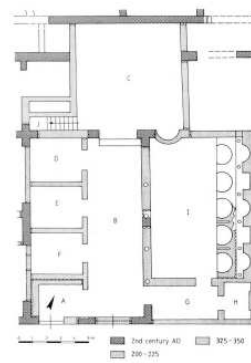
4. Alpes, France, Cote d'Âzur. Late antique bath turned to Early Christian basilica with synthronon and baptisterium.



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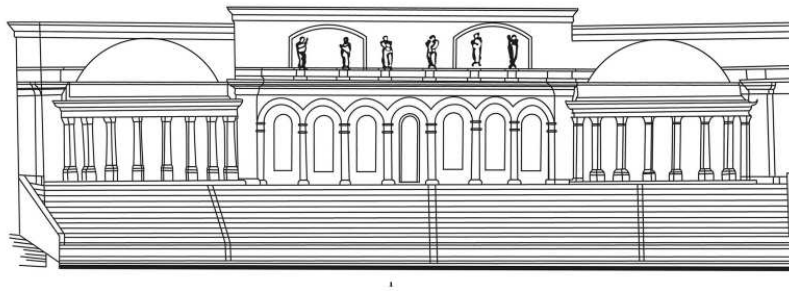
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Pl. IV. 1. Ephesos, district called Coressus, between the city theatre and the harbour. General plan (according Scherrer 2000, No 79).

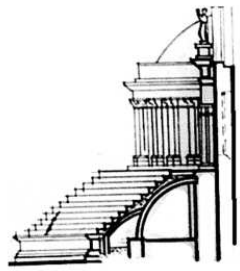
2. Theatre bath-gymnasium of Ephesos with the palaestra and the tribune (No 79).Detail of 1.

3. Plan of the House of Eros and Psyche and the nympheum in Ostia.

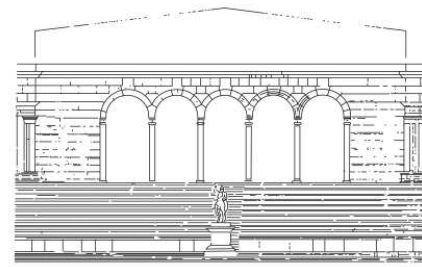
4. View of the nympheum in the House of Eros and Psyche.



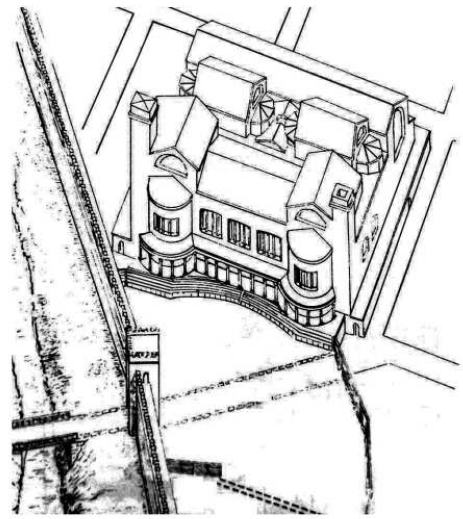
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Pl. V. 1. Reconstructions of the complex at the Southwestern gate in Augusta Traiana: Author: architect V. Kolarova.

2. Reconstructions of the complex at the Southwestern gate in Augusta Traiana: Author: architect V. Kolarova.

3. Reconstructions of the complex at the Southwestern gate in Augusta Traiana: Author: architect Y. Tangurov.

4. Reconstructions of the complex at the Southwestern gate in Augusta Traiana: Author: architect St. Boyadzhiev.



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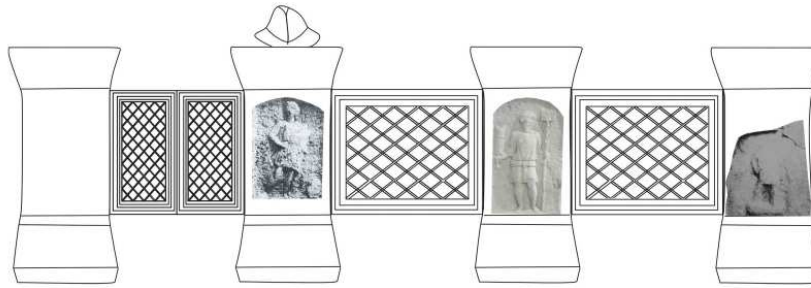
Pl. VI. Mosaics from the vestibule of the bath-gymnasion.

1. General view (according to R. Karamanova-Zlatkova).

2. Detail of one exedra with a vase (according to M. Karamisheva and D. Yankov).

3. The apse mosaic in front of the synthronon (according to K. Kalchev).

4. Ornamental motive (according to M. Kamisheva and D. Yankov).



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Pl. VII. 1. Reconstruction of the railing on the decumanus: Author: V. Popova and K. Petkova.

2. The ara decorated with the retiarius during the excavations, approximately in situ. Photo K. Kalchev.

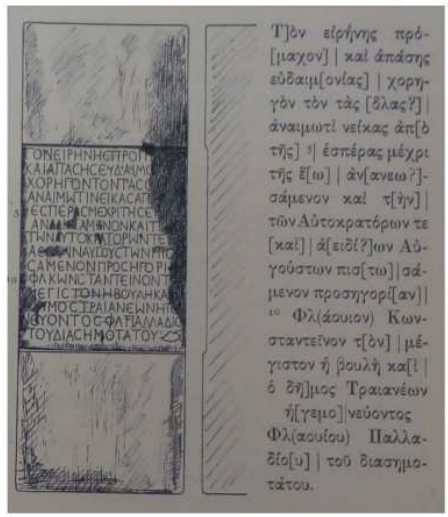
3. Head of a Tetrarch. Phototheque of Institute of Art History, Sofia.

4. A tomb stele of a gladiator from Augusta Traiana.

5. Two fragments of the plates of the railing in open technique (Photo V. Popova).



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Pl. VIII. 1. The piazza with the equestrian statue, reconstruction of K. Petkova on the base of the contemporary state.

2. The postament from Novoseletz and its text (according to U. Gehn).

3. The piazza with marble postament of the equestrian statue (Photo Museum in Stara Zagora).

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The Numismatic Materials from the Excavations of the so-called 'Forum Complex' of Augusta Traiana-Beroe (Preliminary report)

Mariana Minkova

Abstract: The article represents for the first time the whole numismatic material (coins and seals), found occasionally and mostly during the regular archaeological research of the complex of the so-called Forum of Augusta Traiana - Beroe, situated immediately next to the Southwestern gate of the ancient city. Chronologically the coins are related to four groups: pre-Roman, Roman, Early Byzantine and medieval ones. The earliest two coins, of Philip II Macedonian and Seuthes III, are not connected with any archaeological structures. Such early coins have been discovered too in the other parts of the city, but the earlier layers are also missing there.

The Roman and the Early Byzantine coins from the complex illustrate the coin circulation, which is similar to the one known in the other parts of the city. Two coins unearthed during the drilling under the bronze equestrian statue of an emperor in this piazza are of great interest. They belong to Constantine I and Constantius II and provide the *terminus post quem* for the erection of the statue of emperor from the Constantinian dynasty.

The coin circulation in Beroe has ceased after 615 linked with the invasions of the Avars and it was restored only in the beginning of the 10th century. In the late period houses have been built in the same area, which according to the numismatic material covers the period between the 10th – 13th centuries. The numismatic data also reflect the crossing of the Third Crusade in the Balkans, lead by Frederick I in the years 1189-1191, these events fixed by a coin of Bella III (1172-1196). The plumb seal of Nikephoros of Kontostephani, the son-in-law of Alexios III Comnenos (1195-1203), reveals the presence in Beroe of a representative of this family. This is a proof that during the period of the Comnenos dynasty the rulers themselves or their relatives have sojourned in Beroe.

Key words: Augusta Traiana, Beroe, forum, pre-Roman, Roman, early Byzantine and medieval coins, Bela III, Nikephoros of Kontostephani.

Резюме: Статията представя за първи път целия нумизматичен материал (монети и печати), открит случайно и най-вече при редовни археологически проучвания на комплекса при т.н. Форум, ситуиран непосредствено до Югозападната порта на античния

град. Монетите се разделят хронологично на четири групи: предримски, римски, ранновизантийски и средновековни. Откритите два броя ранни монети на Филип II Македонски и Севт III не са свързани с археологически структури. Предримски монети се откриват и в други части на античния град, където също липсват по-ранни поселищни пластове.

Римските и ранновизантийските монети илюстрират монетната циркулация, която не се отличава от тази в останалата част на града. Монетната циркулация прекъсва след 615 г., което е свързано с аваро-славянските нашествия, и се възстановява едва в началото на X век. Интерес представляват двете монети, открити при сондажа под бронзовата конна статуя на император. Тяхната датировка от епохата на Константин I и Констанций II ни дава terminus post quem за издигането на статуя на наследник на император Константин I Велики на площада.

В по-късния период на мястото на т.н. Форум са построени жилищни сгради, с датировка според нумизматичния материал в периода от X до XIII в. Нумизматичният материал отразява и преминаването на кръстоносците от Третия кръстоносен поход, предвождани от Фредерик I в годините 1189-1191, което е фиксирано с монета на Бела III. Оловният печат на Никифор от рода Контостефани, зет на Алексей III Комнин (1195-1203 г.), разкрива присъствието в Берое на представител на тази фамилия. Това още веднъж потвърждава извода, че в Берое по времето на Комнините често са пребивавали самите владетели или техни сродници.

One of the earliest studied archaeological sites[1] in Stara Zagora is the elliptical shaped piazza with the complex, situated next to the Southwestern gate of Augusta Traiana-Beroe. It has been characterized as the Forum of Augusta Traiana by D. Nikolov, its first excavator.[2] The piazza is disposed between the city *thermae* to the north and one of the city's decumanus to the south. The Southwestern gate served as an entrance to the city on the road coming from Philippopolis and Serdica. K. Kalchev suggested that there existed another gate to the north of the above mentioned, at the place where *decumanus maximus* reached the city wall.[3]

The latest research indicates that prior to the so-called 'Forum', there was another building with unclear shape, destroyed in the middle of the 3rd century.[4] It is suggested that in the period between Hadrian till the Severans the piazza and the *auditorium* served as a place for gladiatorial games which, however, is doubtful.[5]

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[1] The so-called 'Forum' of Augusta Traiana was accidentally discovered. In 1968, during the construction of a modern administrative edifice, the workers encountered an ancient building which caused rescue excavation carried out by D. Nikolov and Hr. Buyukliev (Dimitrova 2007, 85). In 1971, an elliptical shaped piazza was revealed with a pedestal for a statue. In the same year the Southwestern gate was discovered by D. Nikolov, Hr. Buyukliev and D. Yankov (Dimitrova 2007, 85).

[2] Nikolov 1987, 96.

[3] Kalchev 1992, 50-51.

[4] Bujukliev, Kalchev *et al*. 1994, 90.

[5] Vagalinski 2009.

The numismatic and archaeological finds help us in dating the main phases of the later reconstruction of the so-called 'Forum'.[6] It seems that at the beginning of the 4th century both the *thermae* and the paved piazza had been rebuilt, with the equestrian statue erected at the piazza's center.

The buildings here have been destroyed again by the Huns in the 5th century. It should be mentioned that most coins found in this area are heavily worn out, possibly indicating intense usage.[7]

D. Nikolov has reported the presence of a road station, a *mansio*, about 200 m away from the Southwestern gate, *extra muros* of Augusta Traiana. The numismatic material supports an existence of a certain close connection of the complex under question here and the *mansio*.[8]

Some of the represented here coin material has been processed by D. Nikolov, but without publication. Our communication is the first systematic analysis of all the coin material (coins and seals), belonging to the complex near the Southwestern gate. These coins, however, are found in the layers situated above the plates of the piazza. The layers situated below its surface have not been excavated, with the exception of a small drilling under the pedestal of the equestrian statue.

The numismatic material found during the excavations can be divided chronologically into four main groups: pre-Roman, Roman, Early Byzantine and medieval.

There are only two bronze coins from the pre-Roman period: one of Seuthes III (4 Sz 4022) (fig. 1), and another one of Philip II of Macedonia (4 Sz 4021) (fig. 2). They are not connected with any archaeological structures. Pre-Roman coins, however, have been also found in the other areas of Augusta Traiana.

The Roman and Late Roman coins (total 71 pieces) cover the period from 1st/early 2nd century till the end of the 4th – beginning of the 5th century. Thus, the earliest one is a badly preserved Roman bronze coin (4 Sz 7091), which was discovered during the excavations in 1977.

Table I exhibits nine Greek imperial coins from the period 2nd–3rd century, minted by the emperors Caracalla (fig. 4), Geta (fig. 5) and Gallienus (fig. 7), one of which (4 Sz 6785) is not identified because of its worn surface (fig. 3).

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[6] The numismatic materials, from the 2012 excavations at bul. M. Kusev (Yankov 2012) are not included in our article.

[7] Nikolov 1965, 20; 1979, 12

[8] Minkova 2015a, 36.

Table 1. Greek imperial coins

Emperor	Dating years	Mint	№
Caracalla	198-217	Augusta Traiana[9]	4 Sz 6557
Caracalla	198-217	Deultum	4 Sz 4023
Caracalla	198-217	Serdica	4 Sz 6556
Caracalla	198-217	Serdica	4 Sz 4555
Geta	198-209	Augusta Traiana	4 Sz 4024
Geta	198-209	Augusta Traiana	4 Sz 6541
Gallienus	253-268	Augusta Traiana	4 Sz 6448
Gallienus	253-268	Philippopolis	4 Sz 4547
Unidentified	2nd century	Augusta Traiana	4 Sz 6785

Among these coins, the following ones dominate by sizes and denominations: pentasarium of Caracalla, minted for Augusta Traiana; unidentified pentasarium; tetrasarium of Gallienus, minted for Augusta Traiana; and finally pentasarium of Caracalla, minted for Serdica.

These coins of Augusta Traiana are of the type, usual for the coinage of this city: *Gate with three towers*, *Hygeia and Asklepios, Crescent with three stars*. There have been found also twelve Roman imperial coins dated to the 3rd century. The earliest one (4 Sz 6669) is antonianus of Gordian III (238-244), with antonianus of Philip II (4 Sz 6649), Valerian I (4 Sz 4544)(fig. 6) and Salonina (4 Sz 6731). Four *antoniana* of Claudius II (4 Sz 6848, 4 Sz 7119, 4Sz 6672, 4 Sz 6837 – fig. 8) of *Equitas* type, dated 269-270, are the next ones. The antonianus of Aurelian (4 Sz 6547) of the popular type *ORIENS AVG* and another one of his wife Severina (4 Sz 6636) dates back to 270-275. Single specimens of Probus (4 Sz 7119)(fig. 9) and Julian I of Pannonia (4 Sz 6811) complete the list of Roman imperial coins dating to the end of the 3rd century. Three *antoniniana* of Diocletian (284-305), two of which (4 Sz 6736 and 4 Sz 6546) of *CONCORDIA MILITVM* type, mark the transition to the 4th century.

The reign of Constantine I and especially the period following the establishment of Constantinople exercised an extremely positive impact on the development of Augusta Traiana-Beroe. The proximity to the new capital, its strategic position and the monetary reform, carried out by Constantine I, contributed to the ensuing development of Beroe.

The next construction period of the *thermae* has been performed in the 4th century: the piazza has been paved and the equestrian statue erected.

[9] Minkova 2015b.

The so-called 'Forum' received its complete look, whose remnants we presently see. The big number of coins, dated to the 4th century and found at the area, possibly reflects the period of this intensive new building. Twenty one coins minted by Constantine I and his successors are part of the total thirty seven coins, all dated to the 4th century and found during the excavations. The most common type of coins is *GLORIA EXERCITVS* from the so-called *'Military type'* of Constantine I dated to 330-335. Other common types of Constantine I and his successors are: *VOT* with a wreath; the inscriptions *VOT XV MULT XX* (4 Sz 6833) and *VOT XX MULT XXX* (4 Sz 6632, 4 Sz 6633, 4 Sz 6813, 4 Sz 6555). More frequent types are also *FEL TEMP REPARATIO* (4 Sz 6817, 4 Sz 4038, 4 Sz 4031, 4 Sz 8395, 4 Sz 4035) and *SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE* (4 Sz 4039, 4 Sz 6634).

During the excavations in 1988, two bronze coins from the 4th century were found just under the pedestal of the equestrian statue, placed in the central part of the piazza. The first coin (4 Sz 8396) is minted by Constantine I in Constantinople in the year 328 (fig. 11). It is a less common type *CONSTANTINIANA DAFNE*. This type appears on gold and silver coins and on AE 3 bronze coins of Constantine I. The second one (4 Sz 8395) is a *FEL TEMP REPARATIO* type of Constantius II, minted in Cyzicus in 351-354 (fig. 12). The latter coin provides a *terminus post quem* for the date of the equestrian statue.

Only two follises have been unearthed, the first one by emperor Licinius II, of *IOVI CONSERVATORI* type (fig. 10) in 321 -324, and the second one by Julian II, in 355-363.

The numismatic material indicates that the construction of the so-called 'Forum' was commenced in the second part of 2nd century, following the foundation of the Roman city by Trajan. It seems that much later, at the end of 3rd – first half of the 4th century, the piazza was covered with marble plates and in the middle of the century some reconstruction of the complex took place, when the equestrian statue of the emperor was erected.

Ten bronze coins dated to the end of the 4th century - the beginning of the 5th century are found, seven of which can be identified. Two coins belong to Theodosius I, one of them with *Concordia.* The third one is with *Victoria* of Eudoxia (fig. 15). The other two are minted by Arcadius with the reverse *Victoria puts a wreath to the emperor* and two by Honorius with the reverse *Victoria walking to the right*. The last three coins are in a bad condition. One of them can possibly be determined as the type *Victoria puts a wreath to the emperor,* minted of Cyzicus, while the other two (4 Sz 7069, 4 Sz 7071) can only be determined as being from the 4th century.

During the excavations of the Southwestern gate of Augusta Traiana, two follises (fig. 14) of Valentinian II of Heraclea mint (4 Sz 7026; 4 Sz 6841) and one of *SALVS REIPVBLICAE* type were discovered.

In the eastern part of the so-called 'Forum' two coins were found, one of Philippopolis (4 Sz 7029), dated to the 2nd-3rd century, and the second one, generally related to the period of the 4th century.

Two bronze coins were discovered between the walls in the eastern part of the 'Forum'. One of them (4 Sz 7027) is completely depersonalized, although some of its signs can be attributed to the 4th c. The second one (4 Sz 7102) is of Theodosius II, of the type *Cross in wreath*, minted in Constantinople and dated to 425-450 (fig. 16).

An Early Christian church with syntronon and colourful wall paintings, dated within the 5th - 6th century according to the numismatic materials, was excavated in the previous vestibule of the *thermae*.[10] In 1975, during the explorations of the basilica, next to the frescoes in the north and next to the apse, a completely depersonalized coin (4 Sz 7028) was found dating to the 5th century. Another coin (4 Sz 7067) AE 12 dates from the end of the 4th - beginning of the 5th century. The latest one is a coin of the type *Cross in wreath* (4 Sz 7070), dated to the 5th century. All the material is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Roman and Late Roman coins

Emperor	Number
Diocletianus	3
Maximianus Herculius	1
Maximinus II Daja	2
Constantinus I	16
Constantinus II (fig.13)	1
Constantius II	6
Licinius II	2
Constans	4
Valens	3
Valentinianus II	2
Theodosius I	3
Arcadius	2
Honorius	2
Eudocia	1
Theodosius II	1
IV-V century	13

[10] Nikolov 1999, 37.

In the middle of the 5th century the Huns invaded Beroe and caused the reduction of the coin circulation.

Among the Roman coins from the 3rd-4th century, found at the so-called 'Forum' some dominate by number (Table 3): these are follises (n = 21) and antoniniani (n = 17), minted in the capital Constantinople (n = 3) and eastern mints, such as Heraclea (n = 5). Others are less frequent, such as the Western mint of Milan (n = 3) and Trier (n = 1), see Table 4.

Table 3. Roman and Late Roman coins by denomination

Antoniniana	Follises	Ae 2	Ae 3	Ae 4	Total
17	21	1	6	17	62

Table 4. Roman and Late Roman coins by mints

Mint	Quantity
Nicomedia	4
Antiochia	3
Cyzic	2
Siscia	2
Heraclea	5
Thessalonica	2
Constantinople	3
Milan	3
Trier	1
Roma	7
Unidentified	30
Total	62

After the division of the Roman Empire into Eastern and Western one, Augusta Traiana - Beroe remained in the Eastern part of the empire. Thirty eight coins have been discovered in the area under consideration dated in the period of 5th-7th century. The reconstruction and fortification of the city in the time of emperor Justinian I is testified both by the archaeological excavations and the written sources. Procopius of Caesarea mentions Beroe, as well as Philippopolis, Hadrianopolis and Plotinopolis as fortresses that had been carefully rebuilt.[11]

The coins from the Early Byzantine period found on the so-called 'Forum' are presented in next table:

[11] Procop. *De aedif.* IV, 11.

Table 5. Early Byzantine coins

emperor	Years	Denomination	Mint	№
Anastasius I	498-518	follis (fig.17)	Constantinople	4 Sz 4546
Anastasius I	498-518	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz Sp 676
Anastasius I	498-518	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6676
Justin I	518-527	follis (fig.18)	Constantinople	4 Sz 6542
Justin I	518-527	half follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 4548
Justin I	518-527	decanummium	Constantinople	4 Sz 1997
Justin I	518-527	decanummium	Constantinople	4 Sz 6815
Justinian I	527-538	follis (fig. 19)	Constantinople	4 Sz 6825
Justinian I	527-538	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6826
Justinian I	538-539	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6825
Justinian I	527-538	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6662
Justinian I	538-539	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6982
Justinian I	538-539	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6544
Justinian I	545-546	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6545
Justinian I	542-543	half follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 4044
Justinian I	548-549	half follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 4549
Justinian I		decanummium	Constantinople	4 Sz 4043
Justin II	567-568	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6543
Justin II	569-570	follis (fig.20)	Constantinople	4 Sz 4046
Justin II	572-573	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6892
Justin II	575-576	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6685
Justin II	575-576	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz Sp 4
Justin II	565-578	pentanummium	Constantinople	4 Sz Sp 73
Mauricius Tiberius	583-584	half follis (fig.22)	Antiochia	4 Sz 4545
Mauricius Tiberius	584-585	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6683
Mauricius Tiberius	592-593	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 4554
Mauricius Tiberius	584-585	half follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 4042
Mauricius Tiberius	590-591	half follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6823
Heraclius	611-612	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz Sp 88
Heraclius	613	follis	Constantinople	4 Sz 6807
Justin II	571-572	follis	Nicomedia	4 Sz 6622

Tiberius II Constantinus	574-582	follis	Nicomedia	4 Sz 6684
Mauricius Tiberius	587-588	follis (fig.21)	Nicomedia	4 Sz 4047
Mavricius Tiberius		follis (fig.24) overstrucked by Phokas		
Phocas		follis	Nicomedia	4 Sz 6845
Justinian I		half follis	Thessalonica	4 Sz 6515
Justin II	569-570	half follis	Thessalonica	4 Sz 4045
Phocas	603-605	half follis (fig.23)	Thessalonica	4 Sz 6688

In general, coins of larger denominations prevail, such as follises (n = 23) and half follises (n = 9) minted during the reign of emperors Justinian I (n = 9) and Justin II (n = 7). The latest coins, discovered from the early Byzantine period, are of Heraclius, in the year of 613. The coins are mainly of Constantinople mint (n = 28).

Next three tables represent the Early Byzantine coins grouped by emperors, mints and years of minting.

Table 6a. Early Byzantine coins grouped by emperors

Emperor	Coinage
Anastasius I	3
Justin I	4
Justinianus I	11
Justin II	8
Tiberius II Constantinus	1
Mauricius Tiberius	7
Phocas	2
Heraclius	2
total	38

Table 6b. Early Byzantine coins grouped by denominations

Follises	Half follises	Pentanummium	Decanummium	Total
24	9	3	2	38

Table 6c. Early Byzantine coins by mints

Constantinople	Nicomedia	Thessalonica	Antiochia	unidentified	Total
29	4	3	1	1	38

Table 6 d. Early Byzantine coins

Years of minting	Number	Years of minting	Number
498 – 518	3	569-570	2
518 – 527	4	571-572	1
527 - 538	3	574-582	1
538 – 539	3	583-584	1
542 – 543	1	584-585	2
545 – 546	1	587-588	1
548 – 549	1	590-591	1
567 – 568	1	592-593	1
569 – 570	1	603/605	1
572 – 573	1	611/612	1
575 – 576	2	613	1
565 - 578	1	unidentifed	3

The coin circulation interrupts at the beginning of the 7th century due to the Avars' raids at the end of the 6th century.[12]

The coin circulation in Beroe ceased in 613 and did not recover until the beginning of the 10th century. There are only findings of single coins in different places of the medieval city, such as a follis of Leon III (717-741) (4 Sz 8466), two follises of Constantinus V Copronimus (751-769) (4 Sz 6693, 6984) and a follis of Leon IV (775-780) (4Sz 4397). At the beginning of the 10th century the coin circulation slightly recovered. Five coins of Leon VI (866-912) originate from different places in Beroe (4 Sz 1793, 4 Sz 4361, 4 Sz 8227, 4 Sz 1871, 4 Sz 4243). One of them derives from the so-called 'Forum' and dates from the end of the 10th century.

A period of firm coin circulation took place after Beroe has become part of the Byzantine Empire. Short after the seizing of Beroe by emperor Joannes I Tzimiskes, the city was elected as the center of strategia.[13] Beroe was also the

[12] Teoph. Simocata, *Historiae* II, 16, 309.

[13] Three lead seals of strategist of Beroe are the sphragistic finds proving the existence of the strategia Beroe after it has been conquered by Byzantium (Jordanov 1992, 58).

place where Alexios I Comnenos escaped after being defeated by pechenegs at Druster, according to the communication of his daughter Anna Comnena.[14] Again in Beroe, this emperor received the funds and redeemed his captured soldiers. At the same time he met the Flander count.[15] Two lead seals of Alexios I Comnenos as *Sebastos* and Great Domesticos have been found in Beroe.[16] A third seal from the second half of the 12th century with the name of the duke of island of Crete Nikephoros Kontostefani,[17] son-in-law of Alexios III Comnenos (1193-1205), had been found prior to the archaeological explorations on the so-called 'Forum'.

A follis of the Hungarian ruler Bella III has been also discovered in the area of the so-called 'Forum'.[18] It is of the same type as the coin of Bella III (fig. 28), unearthed during the excavations in Carasura. The coin of Bella III (4Sz 6570) is associated with the Third Crusade under the command of Frederick I in 1189-1191. Bella III welcomed the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and his troops accompanied the crusaders across the Balkan Peninsula. The coins of Bella III in Beroe and Carassura marked the way of the crusaders within the administrative territory of medieval Beroe.

The hora of Beroe, as an inherent part of the Second Bulgarian kingdom, was mentioned in the Dubrovnik charter of Ivan II Assen from 1232. From this period on the so- called 'Forum' there are only three Latin imitative coins.

The next table presents the finds of medieval coins from the so-called 'Forum' site 10th-13th century.

Table 7 a. Medieval coins

Follis type/Emperor	Mint	Years of minting	Number
Anonymous follis class A 1	Constantinople	970/6-1030	4
Anonymous follis class A 2	Constantinople	970/6-1030	5
Anonymous follis class B	Constantinople	1030/5-1042	4
Anonymous follis class C	Constantinople (fig. 25)	1042-1050	2
Anonymous follis class D	Constantinople	1050-1060	3
Nikephoros III Botaniates	Constantinople (fig.26)	1078-1081	1

[14] Comnena, *Alexias* 3, 66.
[15] Comnena, *Alexias* 6, 69.
[16] Jordanov 1992, 57-80.
[17] I. Jordanov (1992, 64) assumed that Nikephoros Kontostefani is the duke of the island of Crete and son-in-law of Alexios III Comnenos (1193-1203).
[18] Minkova 2002, 193, No 228.

Table 7 b. Medieval coins

Emperor	Mint/ Years of minting	Denomination	Number
Alexios I Comnenos	Constantinople, III minting	billon	1
Alexios I Comnenos	Constantinople, IV minting	billon	2
Alexios I Comnenos	Thessalonica, II minting, type D	tetarteron	3
Joannes II Comnenos	Thessalonica	billon	1
Joannes II Comnenos	Thessalonica, I minting	half tetarteron	3
Manuel I Comnenos	Constantinople 1143-1180, III minting I phase	billon	1
Manuel I Comnenos	Constantinople 1143-1180, IV minting	billon	1
Manuel I Comnenos	unlocalizied mint 1143-1180, type A	tetarteron	1
Manuel I Comnenos	Thessalonica, 1143-1180, II minting (fig.27)	tetarteron	1
Bella III	1172-1196	copper follis	1
Latin imitation	1208-1241, small denomination D	copper trachea	1
Latin imitation	1208-1241	copper trachea	2

The numismatic material (coins and seals) from the so-called 'Forum' of Augusta Traiana are similar to the rest found in the city. The presence of the pre-Roman coins is not unexpected, but not connected so far with concrete structures etc. The earliest coins from the Roman period dated to the middle of 1st century from emperors Claudius I and Vespasianus, were found in the necropolis of Augusta Traiana. Like the other cities in Thrace that minted local coinage in 2nd-3rd century. Augusta Traiana also did from the time of emperors Marc Aurelius and Lucius Verus till Gallienus.[19] According the numismatic finds most intensive are the relations between Augusta Traiana and Philippopolis, as well as the colony Deultum, Serdica and Hadrianopolis. The coins, circulating in Beroe in the period 4th - 8th century, are also the eastern mints of Constantinople, Cyzicus, Antiochia, Thessalonica and Nicomedia.

The coin circulation interrupts after 613 because of the invasions of Avars and Slavs. It has been restored at the end of the 10th century. The plumb

[19] Minkova 2015b.

seal (fig. 29) of Nikephoros Kontostefani, a son-in-law of emperor Alexios III Comnenos, reveals the presence of his relatives in Beroe. This fact is an additional proof of the presence of the Comnenos dynasty in the medieval city.

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Fig. 1. Philip II of Macedon
Fig. 2. Seuthes III
Fig. 3. Augusta Traiana, II c.
Fig. 4. Augusta Traiana, Caracalla
Fig. 5. Augusta Traiana, Geta
Fig. 6. Valerianus (253-260)
Fig. 7. Augusta Traiana, Gallienus (253-268)
Fig. 8. Claudius II Goticus (276-282)
Fig. 9. Probus (276-282)



Fig. 10. Licinius II (321-324)
Fig. 11. Constantinus II, 328
Fig. 12. Constantius II (337-347)
Fig. 13. Constantinus II (351-354)
Fig. 14. Valentinianus II (388-392)
Fig. 15. Eudocia (400-404)
Fig. 16. Theodosius II (425-450)
Fig. 17. Anastasius (498-518)
Fig. 18. Justin I, Constantinople



Fig. 19. Justinianus I, follis, Constantinople
Fig. 20. Justin II, follis, Constantinople
Fig. 21. Mauricius Tiberius, follis, Nicomedia
Fig. 22. Mauricius Tiberius, half follis, Antiochia
Fig. 23. Phocas, half follis, Thessalonica
Fig. 24. Phocas overstriked on a follis of Mauricius Tiberius



Fig. 25. Anonymous follis, class C
Fig. 26. Nicephorus III Botaniates (1078-1081)
Fig. 27. Manuel I Comnenus, (1143-1180)
Fig. 28. Bela III (1172-1196)
Fig. 29. Lead seal of Nicephorus Kontostefani

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The application of the Roman Ionic order in Augusta Traiana

Svetla Petrova

Abstract: This paper studies the architectonic decoration in the Ionian order of Augusta Traiana-Beroe (mainly bases, columns, capitals, frieze-architraves, cornice etc.). They were applied in different types of architecture – public, cult, residential. Four building periods can be followed in their application. The earliest one is the period of Trajan-Hadrian; the second period belongs to Marcus Aurelius-Commodus; the third one is from the end of the Antonines to the end of the Severans. The fourth period relates to the beginning of the 4th century. From the first period some bases from houses and porticoes were re-used in the Late Antique colonnades. In the second period the fortress walls were built. The Ionian order from that period demonstrates very rich pieces and supports the announcement of Marcus Aurelius as the 'κτίστης' of the city. The peak of the development of the city architecture and in the use of the Ionian order is the third period of the *Severi*, in which the samples from the time of Hadrian are repeated and further enriched, leading to the so-called 'Hadrianic Renaissance'. Emblematic for this period is the *Auditorium* in front of the *thermae* at the Southwestern gate. The heritage of the second architectural and decorative period can be observed as well: the astragal, the Ionian kyma etc. In the fourth period earlier can be found elements used in the houses and colonnade till the 4th century.

The author is looking for evidence for the local production (stone, manner of carving and treatment, motifs, technological markers). For the first time the Proconessian import is publically inaugurated in Augusta Traiana based on the type of marble, motifs, decorative scheme and technology. The materials from the city enlarge the panorama of this center of production with the interior of Thrace and especially with Augusta Traiana.

Key words: Roman Ionian order, local workshops, Proconnessian import, Augusta Traiana.

Резюме: В статията се изследва архитектурната декорация на Августа Траяна-Берое в йонийски ордер (бази, колони, капители, фриз-архитрави, корнизи и пр.). Те са използвани в различен тип архитектура – публична, култова, жилищна. Проследени са в четирите периода на архитектурно строителство на града. Най-ранният е периода на Траян-Хадриан; вторият принадлежи на Марк Аврелий- Комод; третият е от края на Антонините до края на Северите. Четвъртият се отнася към началото на 4 в. От първия период произхождат детайли от жилища и от колонади на уличните тротоари, преизползвани в късноантичните колонади. През втория период се изгражда крепостната стена.

Йонийският ордер от този период демонстрира много богати екземпляри и подкрепя обявяването на Марк Аврелий като строител (κτίστης) на града. Върхът на градската архитектура и употребата на йонийския ордер е през третия период, при Северите, когато се повтарят и обогатяват още повече образците от Хадриановата епоха, което довежда до т.н. 'Хадрианов Ренесанс'. Емблематичен за периода е Аудиторият на термите при Югозападната порта. През този период може да се наблюдава и наследството от втория архитектурно-декоративен период: астрагалът, йонийската кима и др. През четвъртия период могат да се открият по-ранни материали, преупотребени в жилища и колонади до 4 в.

Авторът търси доказателства за местно производство на йонийски ордер (камък, маниер на дялане и трактовка, мотиви, технологични белези). За първи път импортът от Проконесос в Августа Траяна е осветен масово въз основа на типа мрамор, мотивите, декоративната схема и технологията. Материалите от града увеличават панорамата на този производствен център за вътрешността на Тракия и специално с Августа Траяна.

The foundation of Augusta Traiana in close proximity or over the place of an old Thracian settlement with the name Beroe[1] is connected with the name of Emperor Trajan and his victory over the Dacians.[2] There exists also a second hypothesis according to which the city was founded not by Trajan, but by Hadrian. In it the leading argument is the absence of the name of Augusta Traiana among the inner cities of Thrace listed by Claudius Ptolemy. It is considered that it is very possible that the foundation of Augusta Traiana in honor of Trajan, the adopter of Hadrian, happened at the same time as the foundation of Hadrianopolis by the latter emperor.[3] Accepting that Augusta Traiana was founded after 106 by Trajan or by Hadrian, the city planning and initial building should be bound with the last decade of Trajan's reign and the beginning of that of Hadrian, most of all with the building program of this emperor intended to Thrace. The excavations till now reveal wide paved streets with colonnades, public buildings, temples and rich houses, decorated with architectonic sculpture and mosaic pavements.[4] The city planning consists of

[1] Nikolov 1965, 17; 1986, 8-9; Yankov 1994, 192; Ivanov 2012, 468-470 and cited lit. The city by the name Beroe is known also from the ancient itineraria, see Slavova 2007, 313-327.

[2] Seven cities in Thrace were founded by Trajan in honor of this victory: Nicopolis ad Istrum, Marcianopolis, Augusta Traiana, Plotinopolis, Trajanopolis, Remesiana and Ulpiana. Additionally five older settlements received the right to be called cities, adding to their names the family name of Trajan – Ulpia. These are Serdica, Pautalia, Nicopolis ad Nestum, Topiros and Anchialo, see Velkov 1979, 307. According to D. Boteva, the latter settlements are seven, adding to the previous five also Ulpia Bizye and Ulpia Tonzos, see Boteva 2014, 197.

[3] Boteva 2014, 195-198; 2016, communication at the Annual National Archaeological Conference held in Stara Zagora on 26-28 May 2016.

[4] See: Nikolov & Kalchev 1986, 42-48; Ivanov 2002, 221; Minkova 1991, 50-58; 2015, 25-26.

orthogonal streets with almost equal insulae, the houses occupying usually one insula.[5]

The subject of our research is the Roman-Ionic architectonic decoration in Augusta Traiana-Beroe, which has received little attention so far. Only few elements of it are published and analyzed[6] and as a result the architectonic decoration of Augusta Traiana in that order is still terra incognita.[7] Therefore for the moment we have a very poor idea of the presence and development of its separate architectonic elements, as well as of the whole picture they are representing. The aim of our article is to collect and publish as much materials as possible for applying the Ionian order in the Roman city and its buildings at the present stage of knowledge.

There exists a big problem with this kind of decoration in Augusta Traiana, because in its majority it has no concrete provenance. Materials are shown in the lapidarium of the Regional Historical museum, alongside the presented ancient street. Another part of the decoration is kept in different funds of the museum or exposed at the open-air complex of the baths in the Southwestern part of the ancient city.

The usual method of research is applied here, following the Ionian architectural order by its different elements, beginning with the base, followed by the column and the capital, and finishing with the frieze-architraves, the pediments, the gable etc. This is giving the opportunity of studying and reconstructing the order as a whole. All its elements are made either of white dense local limestone or of marble. Some details help to relate the pieces to definite buildings.

Supporting elements

Bases

The bases found in the city belong to the Attic-Ionian ones with genesis in Attica of the classical Hellas.[8] The Attic-Ionian base is applied in an extremely

[5] My gratitude to the colleague assis. prof. Petar Kalchev, director of the Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, for the help and the permission to publish this architectonic sculpture.

[6] Although the number of pieces (bases, columns, capitals and friezes-architraves) is great, no attempt is made so far for a general analysis of the usage of this order. They are published separately see Petrova 1988; 1990, 8-16; 1996; 2009, 283-298. An attempt is made to use some of the materials in a discussion as evidence of the level of the workshops in the city, see Dimitrov 2007, 216-217.

[7] See Petrova 1996, 5, 6; 2017, 349-351.

[8] The early imperial buildings in Attica and the East are showing a new type of base, made together with the *plinthus* as a monolithic block. This becomes a typical feature after the middle of the 1st century AD, see Merit 1969, 186-204, Pl. 49-53.

wide chronological period, from its creation in Attica till the end of the Roman Empire, and many parallels with Augusta Traiana can be discovered in public and private buildings from different periods in the Balkans, Greece, Asia Minor and Africa. Hence, it is quite difficult to date strictly the different types of the bases in Augusta Traiana. The proper dating can be done only after comparison with the bases of chronologically clear monuments elsewhere in the empire. In that we should have in mind that the width and the height of the Attic-Ionian base in Roman times are based on clear definite proportions according to the dimensions of the lower diameter of the column.[9]

The unearthed bases in Augusta Traiana so far are intended to support free standing round columns and reveal stylistic and chronological differences. The re-usage in some cases is with the same function, after some repairs and transformations of the street colonnades: in one *cardo* and in several *decumani*;[10] in *cardo maximus* with its two porticuses alongside both sidewalks, beginning probably from the South city gate; in houses, public and cult architecture. The bases are made of whitish-yellow dense limestone or marble. They belong to the Roman Attic-Ionian bases with square *plinthus*. Above the *plinthus* is situated the base detail, whose profile forms two chronologically determined types.

Type I. *Attic-Ionian base with plinthus/pedestal, two toruses, a trohilos and two listels, separating the toruses from the trohilos* (Pl. I, 1-3, 7). With some early examples, the almost marked small listel, ending in the height of the base, serves as an optical connection of it with the column (Pl. I, 1 a-b). The *plinthus* is a square plate equally cut, connected with the base detail like a monolith. Its height constitutes 1/3 of the base's general height. Two plain *toruses* and a *trohilos* with two listels between them are sculpted over the *plinthus*. The diameter of the lower convex torus is equal to the length of the *plinthus*, while the diameter of the upper torus is a little bit smaller. The profile of the base detail is slender and elegant.

The bases of type I represent the complete canonic Attic-Ionian base, applied in Roman times in colonnades of all architectural orders – Dorian, Ionian, Corinthian and Composite one. They are intended for installation of round free standing columns. The majority of bases are made of white medium to coarse-grained marble with bluish-grey veins (Pl. I, 1-c). The marble structure and color is identical to the one extracted in Proconnesos

[9] Vitruvius III, 4, 4; Petrova 1988, 7-11; 2017, 350-352. For the details and dimensions of the base in the Ionian order (the so-called simple or Attic variant), according to Vitruvius, where the height of the *plinthus* is equal to 1/3 of the general height of the base, see Barbaro 1938, 121; Merit 1969, 196-198 and cited literature.

[10] Nikolov & Kalchev 1985, 33-37, figs. 5-7; 1986, 42-45, figs. 5, 6, 8, and $18_{12\text{-}14}$.

(today Marmara), where slugs (semi-manufacture) of analogical by form and structure bases still can be observed in the ancient quarries there (Pl. I, 7).[11] The import of the Proconessian workshops of different ready architectural details is witnessed everywhere in the ancient West Pontic cities and in the interior of the provinces of Lower Moesia and Thrace – in Odessus, Marcianopolis, Anchialo etc.[12] The marble bases of type I according to the color, structure and fracture of the marble demonstrate, similarly to the case with the West Pontic cities, import from Proconnesos as ready pieces or semi-manufactured ones. This import was added to the local production, repeating the Proconnesian samples, although not with the same elegance and grace in forming the convex surfaces of the *toruses* and the concave surface of the trohilos, with the formation of the dividing listels (Pl. I, 2). Similar bases are also excavated in the villa at Chatalka from the earlier and later period.[13]

The bases of type I from Augusta Traiana represent the classical model of the Attic-Ionian base, applied in the architecture of late Trajan, Hadrian and the Antonines and the Early Severans. The earliest of them possesses a canonic profile, influenced by the classical Greek architecture and with the typical deep groove, the *scotia*, separating the *plinthus* from the lower torus (Pl. I, 1-d). Chronologically the later bases show diminishing of the scotia, typical for the last years of the Antonine reign (Commodus) and of the Severans. The bases are used or re-used with their initial purpose in colonnades, houses; public and cult buildings.

The bases-pedestals in Augusta Traiana represent the complete canonic type of the basic Attic-Ionian detail (two *toruses*, a *trohilos* and two listels).[14] They are on a low rectangular pedestal, whose cases are decoratively formed as frames; or the pedestal is polygonal, in this case octagonal, of the canonical height about 90 cm. The low bases-pedestals are widely spread in the buildings in the Eastern Mediterranean: in the Ionian colonnade on the first floor of the Celsus library in Ephesos, built between 117 and 125 in the time of Hadrian,[15] in Perge in the street colonnades, in the ones in the city

[11] For the structure of marble and the isotope analysis of the Proconnesian marble see Asgari 1978, 467; Asgari & Matthews 1995, 123-124.

[12] Ward-Perkins 1980, 23-69; Getov 1978, 13-19; Petrova 1988, 20-23; 1990, 10-15; Minchev 2012, 49-60.

[13] Nikolov 1984, 21, fig. 28. They were part of the colonnade in front of the chain of dwellings. The bases were placed 3 m in front of the walls and each at a distance of 1.5 m to the next one. The bases from the later period were parallel to the partition wall, a fact revealing that a covered gallery-porticus was placed in front of them. It is considered that they carried wooden columns.

[14] Although these low bases-pedestals are intended for double columns, their usage for free standing columns cannot be excluded.

[15] Keil 1953, 36; Strocka 1981, 326; 2003, 33-43; Hoepfner 2002, 123-126.

squares and in front of the city gate;[16] in the monuments of Perinthos, not far from Augusta Traiana; and in the *scenae frons* of the theatre in Philippopolis.[17] Similar bases are not an isolated phenomenon in the Roman architecture, they can be found in the other areas of the empire as well.[18] The lower bases-pedestals are defied as a typical feature of the architecture from Hadrian-Antoninus Pius and the dynasty of Septimius Severus. In the period of the latter emperor can be observed a revival of the architectural-decorative motifs from the period of Hadrian and the approach to the Classical Greek forms, although not so elegant in the carving.

The octagonal bases-pedestals are not known so far among the few published pieces from Thrace, neither from Lower Moesia nor from Macedonia. The dimensions in the case of Augusta Traiana point that they belonged to an inner colonnade and not to a front façade space, having in mind the thin and elegantly modeled body of the pedestal. Maybe this pedestal in Augusta Traiana has been imported from an Asia Minor or Proconnesian workshop for a specific building – public, cult or private house, having in mind a similar base-pedestal, known from the Proconessian quarries.[19] Octagonal base-pedestals were used in the theater of Hierapolis, built in the 2nd century under the Emperor Hadrian, renovated under Septimius Severus.[20] Two analogical octagonal pedestals are used under the pair of columns in the north apse of the Severan basilica in Leptis Magna, whose construction started after 203 and finished in 216 by Caracalla.[21]

The bases on *plinthus* or on pedestals in Augusta Traiana – Beroe[22] have many parallels:[23] in Hadrianic and Antoninian buildings in Perinthos; in Perge, whose architecture, having in mind the lack of marble finds in the area, is made entirely of Proconnesian marble first in the period of Hadrian

[16] Gliwitzki 2010 35-37.
[17] Personal observations of the author, octagonal pedestals in Tekirdag Museum and rectangular pedestals in Philippopolis.
[18] Büsing 1970, 13-15.
[19] It is kept in the lapidarium and the exhibition of the museum of Tekirdag.
[20] Pensabene 2007, 17-228; Sobrà & Masino 2010, 373-412; Masino, Sobrà *et al*. 2011, 72-78.
[21] Squarciapino 1966, 105-107, Abb. 70. For the building of the complex of the Forum, the temple of the Severans and the basilica different types of marble have been used: Proconnesian, Carystian and Pentelic. See Boëthius & Ward-Perkins, 1970, 476-477, fig. 179.
[22] Nikolov & Kalchev 1986, 43, figs. 5 & 6; 57, fig. 18_{12}.
[23] Perinthos. There are re-used bases in the colonnade of the Early Christian basilica, as well as occasionally found bases, now exposed in the lapidarium in the center of the city. Personal observations of the author; Akurgal 1973, 329-333; Weeb 1996, 57, fig. 20; 89, fig. 57.

and then in the period of Septimius Severus; in the sanctuary of Athena in Pergam, built in the first half of the 2nd century (Hadrian-Antoninus Pius); in the temple of Artemis in Magnesia on Meander and in many other places.

Chronologically parallels for this type of base, marble or made of local stone, intended for round columns, can be found also in the cities of Thrace: in Nicopolis ad Istrum;[24] in the west stylobate from the first half of the 2nd century; in the *propylaea* of the Agora and in the porticus, tangent decumanus No 8 to the south; also in Philippopolis.[25]

Type II. *Attic Ionian bases with plinthus/pedestal, two toruses (the upper one with a disc-like form), trohilos and two listels, separating the toruses from the trohilos* (Pl. II, 4, 8-12). The canonic Attic-Ionian base (type *I*) developed and changed its profile, creating a new type of Attic-Ionian base dependent on numerous factors: economic, chronological, skillfulness of the stone-masters, architectural-decorative practice etc. Now the shifts are in the second torus, which changes its convex form. Gradually its profile with the typical half-circle curve becomes a disk with an evenly cut end. The torus rather reminds of a ring (high listel). The bases of the type with square *plinthus* can be observed in the street colonnades of Augusta Traiana (Pl. II, 12). In some pieces the lower torus is not precisely flattened to half of a circle, the sharping of the not polished curve is obvious. The upper torus has a disc-like form (Pl. II, 9). This peculiarity is probably a result of a more careless treatment or was made under the influence of the imported semi-manufacture details, which can be observed in the quarries of Proconnesos (Pl. II, 17).[26]

Bases with disc-like upper torus in Thrace can be dated in the second half of the 2nd – first half of the 3rd century. Many of them are unearthed in Nicopolis ad Istrum:[27] in building No 2 south of the Agora, dated similarly. Other finds are the bases of the colonnade at the theatre of Philippopolis from the same period[28] and the colonnade in Mesambria, made of Proconnesian marble, dated to the Late Antonines – the Severans.

According to the bases of the type found in Augusta Traiana so far, there prevail the bases-pedestals, made as monoliths from one block. While with the base-pedestal of type I the pedestal itself are rectangular and polygonal (octagonal) the bases-pedestals of type II are rectangular, with canonical

[24] Ivanov & Ivanov 1994, 83, figs. 33, 34; 49-51; 145-146, figs. 134-136.

[25] From the colonnade of the Agora, unpublished. Personal observations of the author.

[26] Asgari 1992, 73-80.

[27] Ivanov & Ivanov 1994; Dimitrov 2007, 349, Cat. No 8.

[28] Unpublished materials at the theatre, observations of the author; the examples from Mesambria are published for the first time by Dimitrov 2007, Cat. No 24, but the marble is not defined.

height about 80-85 cm. They have a classical form and profile on a pedestal and a constructive function to support a colonnade. The bases-pedestals are profiled in their upper and lower parts. They are of the same type as carving, partition and profile. The body of the pedestal is plain and made of marble (Pl II, 8, 9, 10) and one pedestal is made from red breccia (Pl. II, 11). By their profile and base detail they have analogies with monuments from Thrace[29] from the theatre of Philippopolis and the ones from Nicopolis ad Istrum, dated in the second half of the 2nd – first half of the 3rd century. This type of base details is created at the end of the Antonines and the beginning of the Severan dynasty. The type is connected with the buildings of Marcus Aurelius and most of all with the big building activity, initiated by Septimius Severus in Leptis Magna in Africa, in Rome and also in Thrace. Such bases are present in the nearby Philippopolis and the other cities of Thrace, Macedonia and everywhere in the territory of the Roman Empire. The bases of both types demonstrate continuity in the development of the detail, inherited from the Hellenistic samples, carrying free standing columns.[30] The bases with upper torus reminding of a disc also find parallels in the Eastern Mediterranean and most of all in Ephesos.[31]

The architecture of Augustus (the Late Hellenistic and the Early Imperial one) becomes the leading model, followed by the cities of Asia Minor. Later in the development the examples are under the exceptional influence of the Hadrianic architecture, again developing its greatest representation in Asia Minor and Ephesos. We are of the opinion that the development of the Attic-Ionian base in Augusta Traiana is under the strong influence of the Eastern workshops, mainly of the Ephesian-Pergamian school, spreading such bases in the public and private city architecture, although made of Proconnesian marble. Two are the routes of penetration of the low pedestals-bases in the architectural decoration of Augusta Traiana. The first one was realized in the Asia Minor cities, mainly Ephesos; the second one is the route from Attica –Athens by the porticus of Hadrian.[32] In Thrace the application of such architectural decoration as a type comes from the East, through the quarries of Proconessos, which have built Perge in Asia Minor. The Proconessian import spread not only to the West Pontic coast, but also in the interior of Thrace, in Philippopolis[33] and Augusta Traiana. But while in the cities of Asia Minor and in Philippopolis the low pedestals-bases are intended for round columns,

[29] Personal observations of the author; the pieces from the theatre are unpublished. For Nicopolis ad Istrum see Dimitrov 2007, Cat Nos 28 & 29.
[30] The Attic-Ionian column is applied not only in the Ionian, but in all orders.
[31] Alzinger 1974, 66-68, Abb. 57-63.
[32] Mauch 1890/1906, Taf. 42.
[33] The theatre, personal observations of the author.

in Augusta Traiana they are applied to double columns, unique for Thrace. Also unique in it is the octagonal pedestal, descending from the Severan architecture. This type of pedestal can be discovered in Heraclea-Perinthos, in the quarries of Proconessos, in Hierapolis and in Leptis Magna in North Africa.[34] Up to the moment in the scientific literature and from our personal observations such pedestal-bases, have not been discovered either in Thrace, or in Upper and Lower Moesia. Therefore these first examples in Augusta Traiana are revealing the craft, economic and cultural connections of the city with several important centers of architectural decoration in Asia Minor.

Columns

The columns found in the ruins of the ancient city are slender and conical, with round or ellipse section, plain or fluted (Pl. I, 3; II, 12-14). They were discovered on the sidewalks of the streets in the public and house architecture and represent a free standing support. They are made of a monolithic stone block,[35] either of white compact local limestone or of marble. Its height varies from 2.70 up to 3.6m. The aphesis (αφεσις), which is the lower end of the column and the connecting unit with the base, has different profiles, more often as a convex ring or listel. The enthasis of the column is almost unnoticeable. The apophisis (αποφισις) of the column is the sculptural end of its top end. Although the majority of the columns are in a fragmentary state, it can be seen, that the apophisis is with a double profile and is formed in a canonical way, with one or two relief rings, not too high. There are also cases of apophisis with a convex ring in the upper part and a listel placed under it, similar to a ring (Pl. III, 13, 14). In other cases the ring is replaced by a straight listel, wide between 5 and 7.5 cm (Pl. I, 3; II, 12).

The outstanding dating features about the columns are the profiles of the aphesis, the apophisis and the enthasis. Their analogies coming from strictly dated buildings from other Roman cities and provinces point to the chronological limits of their production in Augusta Traiana and including them in the architectural decoration of the city. The double profiled apophisis of the convex-ending type, with a represented listel or lizis ('throat') can be seen in the columns from Nicopolis ad Nestum (our personal observations), in Philippopolis, in Lower Moesia in the temple of Jupiter in Oescus and

[34] Personal observations of the author. The pedestal is a part of the lapidarium exposition in the museum of Tekirdag; Squarciapino 1966, Abb. 70. For the marbles see: Matthias & Bianchi 2015, 14-15.

[35] The columns from the villa at Chatalka in the territory of Augusta Traiana are an exception.

in several buildings in Nicopolis ad Istrum (the Π-like porticus, the thermoperipatos, the agora, the Propylon), in the thermae of Odessus.[36] It Asia Minor such columns are used in public buildings and houses of Ephesos from the time of Hadrian; in North Africa this is the Severan basilica and the thermae in Leptis Magna; in Rome in the villa of Hadrian in Tivoli and in Ostia, dated in the second century, from the period of Trajan and Hadrian up to the Early Severans.[37] The double ending apophisis is considered as typical for the Eastern provinces and mainly for the architectural sculpture of Ephesos.[38] The application of such ending of columns in Rome and Ostia is attributed to stone-cutters from the East, working on a special order. It is considered that the presence of such architectural decoration is due to the big import from the Asia Minor and Proconnessian quarries. This import and usage is proved by the loads found in the shipwrecks in the Mediterranean sea some of the vessels with a mixed cargo, including architectural details from different quarries and marble – Docimium and Proconessos.[39]

Obviously the major part of the columns in Augusta Traiana are imported, made of Proconessian marble (Pl. II, 13-15), but also local production (Pl. II, 12). The columns of the local production are made of hard wide and compact marbled limestone.[40] All the free standing round columns discovered in the city are monoliths.

Gradually the complex profile of the apophisis and that of the aphesis are losing, similarly to the development of the base detail, its convex form, getting the form of a more or less high listel (disk). The enthasis of the columns is also diminishing, especially in those of the Severan time and the second half of the 3rd century, which are getting less elegant, lower and clumsier.

The found columns, completely preserved or in fragments, have a plain or fluted shaft with 24 flutes. The profile of the major part of the columns from Augusta Traiana has a double apophisis, convex in its upper part with a lister under it; the aphesis circa 5-7 cm wide, and small enthasis. The parallels for the double profile descend from the whole Roman Empire in all periods – from the Late Hellenistic up to the end of the Principate. The later apophisis is gradually losing its convex form, remaining as a relatively high (7-10 cm) listel, similar to the aphesis of the columns.

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[36] Petrova 2009, 283-293, figs. 1, 2, 5, 9; Ivanov & Ivanov 1994, 127 -129; 1998, 97 -99.
[37] Wiplinger & Wlach 1996, 73, 134-135; Wilberg 1908, 118-135; Romanelli 1927, Tav. III, fig. 64; Sear 2000, 174, figs. 101; 127, 71.
[38] Sear 2000, 244.
[39] Dworakowska 1983, 67. For transport see: Fitzler 1910, 104.
[40] All architectural details of the local production, included in the decoration of the city, are made of this limestone. On the quarries of its extraction and the ateliers working on the details see below in the text.

Capitals

The capitals are the third element of the carrying part of the order and the bearers of the specifics of the architectural order.[41] Eight Roman-Ionian capitals are known in Augusta Traiana. Four of them are kept in the lapidary fund. They are made of the local hard limestone with whitish-yellow color. The other four capitals, exposed in the museum, are made of white medium-grained marble with blue-grey veins. Its decorative scheme, the carving as well as the stone show rather an import of marble capitals, according to the kind of marble and its structure probably Proconnessian.

Its composition and decorative scheme relate all the capitals to the usual Roman-Ionian ones. They are made of one stone block, together with the abacus.[42] Its echinus is decorated with Ionian kyma, flanked from both sides with a differently represented palmette. The coiled volutes end with a round plain eye. The limestone capitals have in the center a concave hole, left after the technological designing of the volute (Pl. IV, 20-a).[43] Such a technological peculiarity is to be seen also with the marble capitals, but the points over the round eye are already five (Pl. III, 17 a, c).

The front part of the capitals constitutes an independent group I with two types, according to the way the canalis is made: the echinus and its decoration, the Ionian kyma sculpted; the number of coiling of the volutes around the round eye; the representation of the palmettes.

Group I, type I. These capitals have on the front side strongly or not so strongly turned downwards canalis, without a decorated abacus and a echinus (Pl III, 16-a, 17-a, 18-a; Pl. IV 19-a; Pl. V 23-c). The non-decorated canalis is separated from the abacus by a concave 'stab' (a horizontal concave edge),[44] the hanging determines the height of the echinus. The volutes coil about 2 ½ times, forming a round and a flat eye. Three of the capitals have the specific position of five holes, used in the technological designing of the volute (Pl. III, 17-c; Pl. IV 19-a).[45] The echinus reveals a decoration of Ionian kyma, which together with the limiting of its palmettes is protruding strongly forwards and slightly downwards, in that the palmettes, beveled and hanging over the

[41] Hoepfner 1968, 213-235.

[42] On the terminology, classification and the typology of the Roman-Ionian capitals in the Bulgarian lands see Petrova 1996, 22-24.

[43] It can be seen on the lower surface (soffit) of the capital very clearly a diagonally traced straight line with a hollow in the center, dividing the diagonal into two radiuses. By the help of this diagonal the masters could more easily form the place at the base of the echinus and the place of the base of the volutes.

[44] The 'stab' is concave or convex well-made rim, dividing the separate elements

[45] According to the description of Vitruvius, book III, chapter V, 8.

echinus, remind of eyebrows (Pl. IV, 19-a, 55-a; Pl. V, 21-c). The canalis, strongly hanging over the echinus at the front side of the Roman-Ionian capitals, is a typical sign of the Attic variant of the capitals in Ionian order. The overhanging palmettes, reminding together with the hanging canalis eyebrows, can be observed since the Hellenistic period in mainland Greece and Western Asia Minor, for instance in the altar of Zeus in Pergamon, dated 197-195 BC. The monuments from the Roman period are related to the 2nd - 3rd century or predominantly to the time of Hadrian.[46]

The Ionian kyma on the echinus has three ovuli in shells, separated by a stick-like ornament and with a lancet-like ornament with a sharp point (Pl. III, 16-a, 18-a;Pl. IV, 19-a) or by arrows (Pl. III, 17-a). By some capitals the shells of the ovuli are widely opened, and its sharp points are connected with the shell through a short small stick (Pl. III, 16-a). Such a connection of the ovula with its shell is typical for the Roman architecture since Antoninus Pius and predominantly at the time of Marcus Aurelius, as shown by monuments with building inscriptions, coming from Asia Minor and dated strictly, as well as those from Moesia and Thrace (in the contemporary boundaries of Bulgaria), which have no inscriptions.[47]

The plastically sculpted palmettes are go out of the differently formed calyces and flank both ends of the echinus. They are bi-leaf (Pl. IV, 19-a) and three-leaf (Pl. III, 16-a, 17-a, 18-a), closing more than the half of the back ovuli. With some capitals the leaves are overlapped or the palmette is represented in such a way that the upper ovula's part remains visible. Identical to the stepping over the leafs of the palmette can be seen in the capitals from the Asclepeion in Aphrodisia and in Perge, dated in the 2nd century or in the time of Hadrian.[48] The volutes coil twice (Pl. III, 16-a) or 2 ½ times around the round and the flat eye. At the front sides the volutes of some capitals are going forwards spirally (Pl. III, 18-a; Pl. IV, 20-b).

Capitals with similar decorative scheme are seen mainly in Asia Minor (in the museums of Manissa and Aydın); those from Pergamon are dated in the 2nd-3rd century, in Heraclea Pontica from the second half of the 2nd century; in the temple of Dionyssos in Theos from the time of Hadrian; in Ostia from the first decades of the 2nd century; in the ancient quarries of Proconnessos in Saraylar.[49]

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[46] Bingöl 1980, 24, Taf. 1-224, Taf. 2-297, Taf. 877, Taf. 14-249.

[47] Wiegand 1924, 51 -53; Ivanov 1979, 3, fig. 3; 1987, 9-13; Petrova 1985, 18-20, figs. 6, 7, 10, 12.

[48] Bingöl 1980, Kat. Nos 74, 76, 248. The architectonic sculpture of Perge is imported from the Proconnessian quarries.

[49] Bingöl 1980, 214, Taf. 15-203, Taf. 1-78; 25, Taf. 2-221, Taf. 41-142; Taf. 2-299; Puchstein 1887, 41-42, Abb. 32, 33; Pensabene 1973, 39, tav. IX-112; Beykan 2012, 8-71.

To Type II, group I belong those Roman-Ionian capitals, which possess not decorated abacus and evenly cut canalis and echinus (Pl. IV, 20-a, 21-a, 22-a; Pl. V, 23-a). They are made of hard whitish-yellow limestone or marble. The echinus is decorated with Ionian kyma with three ovuli and widely opened shells, divided by stick-like lancet. The decorative motifs are deeply incised by a drill. The three-leaf palmette with calyx covers almost half of the back ovuli, leaving its upper part opened and visible. The palmette goes out of the foot of the volute, which coils two times and ends either with a round and a flat eye with technological hole in the center or with five technological holes left after designing the volute. Some of the volutes are going forward spiral-like. The abacus is with a plain plate, separated from the canalis by a shallow groove. The capitals with evenly cut echinus and canalis are spread in Rome and Asia Minor, as well as in many cities in the Balkans, being most generally dated from the end of the 1st century to the end of the 4th century: in Claudiopolis from the period of Hadrian; in Aphrodisia and Heraclea Pontica, related to the time between Hadrian and Septimius Severus.[50]

According to the articulation of the *pulvinus* the capitals belong to the Roman type, in which different decorative motifs are represented on the place of the *balteus*.[51] The *pulvinus* of the capitals have a *balteus* with boundaries, whose ornaments are crossing as tendrils or leaves to the foreheads of the capitals (Pl. IV, 21-b; Pl. V, 23-b, d); or a pure Roman *balteus* without boundaries, usually a vertical leaf or a row of leaves, similar to scales (Pl. III, 16-b, 17-b, 18-b; Pl. IV, 19-b, 20-b, 22-b). The decorative motifs on the *balteus* are: a straight leaf, similar to a reed or acanthus, with schematically sculpted tree palms, appearing in the decorative practice for the first time in Asia Minor at the end of the 1st and the beginning of the 2nd century; tendrils, turned S-like, whose appearing was first in Moesia and Thrace almost at the end of the 1st century.[52] The foreheads of all found capitals of this type are decorated.

According to the decoration of the *pulvinus*, the capitals may belong to the type I, II, III, V and VIII.[53]

Type I: Horizontally placed leaves in two layers, in the upper one the leaves tied in its base. Only one capital of the type was discovered so far, made of local whitish-yellow limestone (Pl. III, 16-b). The leaves are with a sword-like form, similar to the leaves of a reed, with a concave central nerve. The leaves in the upper row are bound at the base. The *balteus* is a sword-like

[50] Bingöl 1980, 36-38, Taf. 14, 17, 18, 19; Taf. 3-81; Taf. 8, Taf. 32. Kat. No 61, Taf. 33, Kat. No 40.

[51] For the typology and the articulation of the *pulvinus* see Petrova 1996, 23-24; variant 3.

[52] Petrova 1985, 15-25; 1996, Philippopol, Cat. No 1, 58 etc.

[53] Petrova 1996, 23-24.

leaf, equal to that of the *pulvinus*, and vertically placed. It passes also to the forehead of the capital, the point touching the base of the abacus. From both sides of the leaf, on the forehead of the capital two stylized ivy leaves are represented, with coiled to the eye points, the leaf being arc-like is touching the abacus. The border of the *pulvinus* is plain and 4 cm wide. The type finds parallels in Thrace and Asia Minor from the middle – the second part of the 2nd century.[54]

Type II. The pulvinus is decorated with leaves in two horizontally placed rows to the border of the volute (Pl. III, 17-b, 18-b; Pl. IV, 19-b). The leaves are sculpted in a different way: sword-like with a central nerve (Pl. III, 18-b, 19-b) or stylized acanthus. A small part with rhomboid form and convex central edging is visible from the second row of leaves. The type is represented by three capitals, made of marble and revealing an import from Proconnessos. The *balteus* has a vertically placed stylized acanthus leaf, whose point passes to the forehead of the capital and ends under the edge of the abacus. Stylized ivy or other leaves are carved from both sides of the leaf, so the whole surface of the forehead is covered with vegetative decoration. The sword-like leaves as well as the acanthus ones are not rare in the decorations of the capitals in Thrace. The acanthus leafs on the *pulvinus* of the capitel show a stylized form of cutting and the palms. They have close analogies with the form of the cutting of the acanthus on capitals from Nicopolis ad Istrum in the colonnade of the south sidewalk of *decumanus maximus*,[55] from the second half of the 2nd century. The capitals from Serdica, Manissa and Ostia[56] from the 2nd -3rd century are analogical examples for capital Pl. III, 18-b. Parallels for the capitals from Augusta Traiana can be found mainly in the pieces from Asia Minor: in Aphrodisia, Pergam, the museums of Ankara and Alania and in the Marble street of Ephesos, all dated in the 2nd century up to the Severans (193-235). The forehead decoration, as well as the horizontal rows with leaves are also among the most frequent motifs of the ateliers in Proconnessos, whose production is established in large numbers also in the big city centers of Asia Minor.[57] In Thrace and Moesia the type can be seen in capitals from the end of the 1st – the 2nd century in Odessus, Novae and in the village of Dropla, Dobrich region, dated in the 2nd – the first half of the 3rd century.[58]

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[54] Bingöl 1980, No 149; Petrova 1996, 24.

[55] Ivanov & Ivanov 1994, 117, fig. 106, a & b; Petrova 1996, Cat. No 53, National Archaeological Museum-Sofia, 3A-169 & Cat. No 37.

[56] Petrova 1996, National Archaeological Museum-Sofia, 3A-169 and Cat. No 37; Bingöl 1980, No 202; Pensabene 1973, Nos. 122, 131, 159, 161,163, 168.

[57] Asgari 1988 115-128; Fant 1993, 145-170

[58] Petrova 1996, Cat. No 3, 14, 20, 25, 30.

Type III. The pulvinus is decorated with a row of horizontally placed sword-like (reed-like) leaves, with double concave central nerve, reminding of the leaves from the upper row of type I (Pl. IV, 20-b). Only one capital of this type was found so far. The *balteus* is without borders and represents schematically placed one over the other coiled in points of leaves, reminding of scales in one row. The forehead is decorated with two leaves, similar to the form of those on the *pulvinus*, but with one nerve only and a rhomboid leaf between them. The sword-like leaves follow the curve of the *pulvinus* in such a way that their points are reaching to the angle, formed by the border of the volute and the beginning of the abacus plate. The analogies to this type of decoration of the *pulvinus* are chronologically related to the time between Emperor Hadrian and the end of the 2nd century and descend from the Asclepeion of Aphrodisia, from Perge and Parthicopolis.[59] The motif of the horizontally placed row with leaves, originating in the Hellenistic and Late Hellenistic period, is largely spread in the decoration of the Roman-Ionian capitals in Asia Minor and in those, defined as Asia Minor and Proconnessian import in Ostia.[60]

Type V. It possesses a richly articulated decoration of the pulvinus from two types of leaves: a small stylized ivy leaf at the end of the pulvinus, followed by a bigger stylized leaf. Only one marble capital of this type was found in Augusta Traiana. These two pairs of leaves on the upper and the lower side of the *pulvinus* are separated by a straight sword-like leaf. The whole composition is placed on the *pulvinus* on both sides of the *balteus*, reminding of the form of the anthemion (palmette) (Pl. IV, 21-b). Although the *balteus* is imitating the classical one, it rather should be related to the Roman kind of *balteus*, having in mind its transition to the forehead of the capital. The borders of the *balteus* represent two vertical to the forehead stems, ending with an ivy leaf curved to the volutes. A straight sword-like leaf is represented between them in the role of a *balteus*, dividing the ivy leaves on the forehead in two directions.

The decoration with anthemion on the *pulvinus* of the capitals, created already in the Late Hellenistic period, is known in many pieces found in Asia Minor.[61] The great number of capitals belong to the imperial period decorated with palmettes and related to the time of Hadrian.[62] And if in the other centers of Thrace (Philippopolis, Serdica and Nicopolis ad Istrum) the back pairs of leaves coil with the eye inside to the straight leaf, here the back leaves repeat the form of the leaf placed on the forehead of the capitals. A similar form of

[59] Bingöl 1980, Nos 74 and 76; Petrova 1996, Cat. No 40.
[60] Pensabene 1973, 188-191.
[61] Bingöl 1980, Taf. 34-36.
[62] Bingöl 1980, 110.

the anthemion with pairs of ivy leaves can be observed also on the friezes-architraves in Augusta Traiana and the friezes-architraves at the theatre in Philippopolis.[63] Here the form of the stylized ivy leaf is extremely popular and carved in one and the same way both on the Ionian capitals and the friezes-architraves.

Type VIII is represented by two capitals, one of them made of Proconnessian marble (Pl. IV, 22-b; Pl. V, 23-b, d). The precise work on the *balteus* over the *pulvinus*, whose borders are passing like dividing tendrils with a leaf towards both sides of the forehead of the capital, places it closer to the Roman articulation of the *pulvinus*. The decorative motif of the *balteus*, also the tendrils passing from the *balteus* to the forehead as 'S'-like ornaments, display the extremely good work of the stone-cutter. This motif of the *balteus* in Thrace can be traced in the first half of the 2nd century. The unusual matter in this capital are the two differently carved stylized acanthus leaves over the *pulvinus*. The leaves on the first *pulvinus* are two, placed horizontally at both sides of the *balteus*. The leaves on the second *pulvinus* have two halves in the upper and the lower part of the *pulvinus* and a whole leaf in the middle, in the longest and most visible part of the *pulvinus* (Pl. V, 23-d). A small rhomboid configuration is to be seen among the leaves, and it can be defined as a second row of leaves (?) or as a stylized acorn concerning the cutting and the form of the leaves over the *pulvinus*. If accepted as a stylized representation of an acorn, then the also stylized leaves should be of an oak. In such a case and similarly to Odessus,[64] this will be a mixture of two different decorative motifs in one and the same capital, namely of stylized acanthus and oak leaves. Thus the chronological limits of the capital should be set at the end of the 1st and the first quarter of the 2nd century.

Very interesting is the representation of the palmettes on the echinus of the capital. A two-leaf palmette with calyx is coming out from the one side of the left volute, while from the right side the palmette has three leaves, also with a calyx. The situation is mirror-like on the opposite side of the capital. Thus the first volute has two-leaf palmettes on both sides, while the second one has a three-leaf one. Both *pulvinus* are carved with a different depth of the details and the leaf cuttings. Such differences allow raising several questions. If this was made on purpose, did only one master work on the capital or more than one? Why were not the palmettes identical on each side, for instance one side only with two-leaf palmettes and the second side only with three-

[63] See below in the text the analysis of the friezes-architraves. For Philippopolis – personal observations of the author.

[64] Petrova 1996, 52-53, Cat. No 2 & 4. Dated to the end of the 1st – the first half of the 2nd century (the period of Trajan-Hadrian).

leaf ones? Was this capital made at one at the same time or by two masters in slightly different times? Is it possible that at a certain moment the work was interrupted and finished by another master with different visions for the detail, carving and composition. Had these differences in the details any meaning when the capital was installed in the colonnade?

Till now similar differences have not been recognized, the decorative system was always followed and the carving and the cutting of the motifs and the details followed the canon, synchronously with the chronology of the work. In our view, such differences are not to be seen in the architectonic decoration of the other Roman cities. Chronologically the capital is related to the first half – the middle of the 2nd century, when in Ostia, Thrace and in the Asia Minor centers the capitals with decoration of acanthus and oak leaves were used in large numbers. The straight lancet, separating the ovuli of the echinus, and the strict work also helps the precise dating. In our opinion, in case that two different stone-cutters sculpted the capital, the time between the work of the first master and the second was short. But maybe this unique capital was send, bought or taken by an itinerant master to serve as a sample for two variants of one and the same decorative scheme. The Proconnessian marble confirms it was imported and the possibility of being a sample, similarly to the practice in Roman portraiture, the cult sculpture, etc.[65]

The second capital, not less interesting, is made of the local limestone with whitish-yellow color. It possesses a similar decoration like the previous capital: decoration of acanthus leaves, carved horizontally around the *balteus*, and a vertical acanthus leaf, whose point decorates the forehead of the capital, almost reaching to the abacus. The free space of the forehead is filled from both sides with a stylized acanthus leaf, which is gradually rising to the border and the forehead of the capital. In this way the half-circle of the forehead is entirely filled with vegetative decoration. Close analogies of the capital are the ones from Nicopolis ad Istrum from the second half of the 2nd century, the ones from Philippopolis, dated to the 2nd century, as well as many pieces in the territory of the entire Roman empire in Asia Minor, North Africa, Spain etc., all dated in the 2nd or in the first half of the 3rd century.[66] In our case the capital should be related to the middle - the second half of the 2nd century, having in mind the fine lancets in the Ionian kyma of the echinus and the connection through the short small stick on the point of the ovula with the shell.

The capitals found so far, being definitive for the order, show together with the bases and the columns the use of the Ionian order in the city. The capitals with a slightly overhanging canalis, with a different height, non-

[65] Koleva 2017, 269 and cited literature.
[66] Petrova 1996, 29 and cit. lit. Cat. Nos 53, 55, 56.

decorated abacus and rich *pulvinus* and foreheads demonstrate the application of this order in the architectonic decoration of Augusta Traiana. The capitals, according to the slightly overhanging canalis with different height,[67] the non-decorated abacus, the richly decorated *pulvinus* and foreheads, point to a definite closeness with the Attic variant of the Ionian capital. Its predominantly Roman *balteus* and articulation of the *pulvinus* with rich motifs on the foreheads place them among the examples with the most lavish decoration and articulation.

The stone used for the Ionian capitals in Augusta Traiana is the local limestone and marble with blue-grey veins and specific structure, most probably Proconnessian. This fact allows us to differentiate the local production from the imported Proconnesian one. Some technological differences can be established as well, especially in designing and carving of the volutes. The capitals made of the local limestone and by the local masters have only one dot in the center of the volute, around which the designing has been made,[68] while the capitals of Proconnessian marble possess five dots on the eye of the volute. These dots are fully responding to the canon left for us by Vitruvius, on the technology of designing an Ionian volute. These five visible dots for more than 40 years were accepted as typical for the ateliers on the island of Thassos and most of all for those in the quarries of Aliki.[69] According to the authors, their production is spread on the Roman agora of Thessaloniki, in basilica C of Amphipolis, in Aigina, Syria and Italy.[70] In the Bulgarian territories similar capitals with five dots on the eye of the volute are known only in Parthicopolis (Sandanski)[71] in the Roman province of Macedonia. The extremely enormous production of Roman-Ionian and Late Antique capitals made in the Proconessian quarries and workshops in the Roman-Ionian order[72] and their publications demonstrate this long technological tradition of the five dots. This is 'the identity card' of the imported to the East, West and North Africa Proconnessian production.[73]

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[67] Petrova 1996, 22-24.

[68] The same capital demonstrates another technological peculiarity: the way the center of the capital' soffit is determined. This has been projected by drawing a diagonal, distant and parallel to the already sculpted *pulvinus*. The center of the diagonal is marked by a concave dot.

[69] For details see Hermann & Sodini 1977, 473-474, figs. 1-11.

[70] Hermann & Sodini, 482-493.

[71] Petrova 2017, 159, fig. 26.

[72] Beykan 2012, 11-14.

[73] Beykan 2012, 74-101. In the catalogue in more than 30 pages this type of capitals with one ovula and five dots on the eye of the volute is shown, similar to the dots on a dice. In the 70-s of 20th century J.J. Hermann and J. P. Sodini proposed the thesis, that such capitals are made on Thassos and that the treatment is typical for the workshops in

That is the reason to consider that the hypothesis of 'the Thassian character of the five dots over the eye of the volutes' and the problem of the distribution of the Thassian and Asia Minor workshops in Thrace should be revised. More than 35 years ago, J. B. Ward-Perkins proved the Proconnessian import of Dorian capitals; later L. Getov studied the Proconnessian semi-manufacture of sarcophagi in Odessus, I. Doseva found such import among the architectonic decoration of the Early Christian basilicas in Apollonia on the Black Sea and A. Minchev established an import from Proconnessos in Odessus and Marcianopolis. All these are made of Proconnessian marble, imported to the West-Pontic cities, Thrace and Lower Moesia for the architectonic decoration of different types of buildings, including public and cult ones during the Principate, Dominate and Early Byzantine period.[74] On the base of the newly found capitals of Proconessian type with five dots in Augusta Traiana and the published Roman-Ionian capitals from Proconessos, it already should be accepted that the earlier appearance of the five dots on the eye of the Ionian volute first happened in the Proconnessian workshops in the first half of the second (Hadrian) century and continued to the end of Antiquity. The good quality of the marble, the low cost of extraction and distribution by sea and land have led to the 'fashion trend' on this very attractive and not expensive marble most of all in the Balkans, in some areas of Italy and in North Africa, although all these provinces have their own marble quarries, also working for export. The workshops in the latter, as the ones on Thassos, in Late Antique times borrowed this technology of designing and drawing the volute and other traditional methods in preparing a capital. It is urgently and ultimately necessary to make all the analyses of marble samples of different kind of architectonic decoration in Bulgaria by using all contemporary methods of research in order to find the concrete quarries of provenance, because differentiating the different architectural schools only on the base of the visible characteristics is quite insufficient.

The Proconessian marble can easily be recognized as structure and facture, but it is still rarely identified by Bulgarian archaeologists, dealing with the architectural decoration in Roman Thrace, Moesia and Macedonia. The case of Augusta Traiana-Beroe gives a concrete opportunity to study in details

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Aliki. At that time the Proconnessos quarries and production, left still in situ, were unknown and there were no publications. Only after the appearing of the work of Beykan with details of the quarry and the export from this island in the Asia Minor cities, for instance in Perge, the role of Proconnessos became clear. But still little is done about the Roman-Ionian capitals in Bulgaria, imported from Proconessos.

[74] Ward-Perkins 1980, 23-69; Getov 1978, 13-19; Dosseva 2012, 39-50; Minchev 2012, 49-60.

all aspects of the Proconnessian import in Thrace: analyses of the marble, concrete quarries in the Marmara Sea, way of supplying by sea and land, the decorative schemes and motifs, workshops and masters, usage in different kind of buildings etc. It can be observed that the Proconnesian import has played a very significant role in the housing architecture of Augusta Traiana, but unfortunately only a capital from a rich house on 54, V. Levski Street is documented, excavated in 2011.[75] The most probable routes for supplying were by sea from the Proconnesian islands to Heraclea-Perinthos and further by land through Hadrianopolis to Augusta Traiana.

SUPPORTED ELEMENTS

The capitals are the last element of the supporting structure. The capitals define the architectural order and together with the supported elements give the architectural face of the building. Above the colonnade consisting of a capital in a certain architectural order, was erected the entablature, consisting of an architrave, frieze and cornice, the so-called supported/carried elements finishing with a roof. The parts from entablature, found in Augusta Traiana-Beroe, come from different areas of the city and unfortunately again we have no strict data at our disposal for its provenance. Several fragments of the architrave blocks were discovered in 1911 during the construction of the Theatre building (the Old Theatre of Stara Zagora). They were used as spoliae in the socle of the southwestern corner of one of the rectangular towers in the south sector of the ancient fortress wall.[76] Three more fragments of architraves have been found at the so-called Jewish necropolis.[77] During the excavations of the 70-s and the beginning of the 80-s around the baths and the *auditorium* at the Southwestern gate were discovered several preserved and some fragments of friezes-architraves, reflecting the Dorian and Corinthian order of the *auditorium*. The fragments of the entablature constructions, which probably belonged to buildings in Roman Ionian order, are some marble friezes-architraves (Pl. V, 24, 25; Pl. VI, 27, 28) and cornices (Pl. VI, 29, 30).

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[75] My gratitude to assis. prof. P. Kalchev, who excavated this monument, for the permission to publish the capital. According to him it is a part of the architectonic decoration of a house, built at the end of the 2nd – beginning of the 3rd century. It was unearthed together with a part of a decumanus, wide 6 m with a sidewalk wide 1, 20 m. See Kalchev 2012, 348-349.

[76] Buyukliev & Sharankov 2007, 176 with lit.

[77] IGBulg III, 2, No 1589, devoted to Sever Alexander (222-235) and Julia Mammea; No 1612, 1613 announces the building of a temple in November 223.

Frieze-architraves

The blocks with frieze-architraves can be differentiated in two groups: frieze-architraves without decoration (Pl. V, 24, 25) and richly decorated frieze-architraves (Pl. VI, 27, 28). The architraves are tripartite, following the tradition the height of the lower *fascia* to be the module for the middle one, whose height is 1.5 times of the lower *fascia*. Graded in this way, the heights of the three *fascia* (the three architrave beams) should be equal to the upper diameter of the column. The width of the architrave should be equal to the average diameter of the column. The architrave balks are placed step-like one over the other. The lower side[78] of the architrave is visible in the inter-*columnium*. This surface used to be decorated with a rectangular profiled frame, with a shallow carved plain field or decorated one.

The first type without decoration in the Roman Ionian order was made of one stone block. It has plain convex frieze field (Pl. V, 24, 25). We can defy it as a part of the Ionian order in Augusta Traiana on the analogy with the found frieze-architraves of Nicopolis ad Istrum. This is a fragment of a frieze-architrave from an unknown building with inscription, mentioning Faustina the Younger (161-176);[79] parts of frieze-architraves from the *thermoperipatos* of Nicopolis ad Istrum, built in the time of Commodus in 184-185;[80] and from the Π-like porticus, synchronous to the building of thermoperipatos.

The marble of the frieze-architraves of Augusta Traiana is entirely identical to the marble of the semi-manufacture frieze-architraves, found in the quarries of Proconnessos[81] (Pl. V, 26). The frieze-architraves of Augusta Traiana with convex frieze field, according to its spreading in the province

[78] So-called 'Sofit'.

[79] Dobruski 1901, 718, fig. 10; Kalinka 1906, Petrova 1992, 157-160; Dimitrov 2007, Cat. No 341.

[80] Ivanov & Ivanov 1994, 127-144, fig. 116 a, b with literature. The *thermoperipatos* was built in Roman Ionian order. The bases of its colonnade belong to type II (according to the classification of the bases in Augusta Traiana in this article). The columns are plain, crowned with Ionian capitals. The entablature consists of frieze-architrave with an inscription, placed on the architrave balks), the frieze field plain and convex. The frieze architrave consists of the three *fascia* of the architrave, followed by double regula, a convex non-decorated frieze field and on the place of the upper regula is represented Ionian cyma with ovuli in largely opened shells, separated by a small arrow with high shoulders. Ionian cornice is placed over it. The pediment is also preserved. At the time of building the thermoperipatos, Nicopolis ad Istrum still belonged to the province of Thrace, but later it became part of Lower Moesia.

[81] Similar frieze-architrave with a convex frieze field, imported from Proconnessos, is kept in the *lapidarium* of Varna museum, descending from the *thermae* of the time of Marcus Aurelius up to the end of the 2nd century.

of Thrace, should be related to the second half of the 2nd century (in the time of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus) after the models, brought by Asia Minor settlers. A great number of settlers from there is known, mainly from Nicomedia, who settled in Nicopolis ad Istrum, also not so small number of veterans, probably people from Asia Minor who migrated in Augusta Traiana.[82]

There is one entirely preserved and several fragments of the richly decorated frieze-architraves, made of a monolith rectangular block and part of the Ionian order in Augusta Traiana (Pl VI, 27, 28). Two of them are included in the anastylosis of the *auditorium* in front of the baths. In our opinion, the frieze-architraves are not correctly placed in the western part of the colonnade of the *auditorium*, built in Corinthian style. The west and the east part of the colonnade flanked both ends of the *auditorium* and ended to the south with two arc-like *exedrae*, forming two wings of the colonnade. In that curved and protruding to the south colonnade in the anastylosis straight frieze-architraves should not be placed. On the opposite – here should be included the arc-like curved frieze-architraves, found on the terrain and now exposed open-air in the lapidarium at the Southwestern gate. One can suppose that maybe this change was done in order to show the complete picture of the order, ending with a cornice – the last element of the entablature. At the same time there was probably no proper arc-like cornice for the correct anastylosis.

The *fasciae* of the architrave are separated, and over the first one a cordon (rope-like ornament) is placed with the cut to the right; over the second *fascia* an astragal is shown and a lesbian kyma over the third one. The frieze field is separated from the architrave with cordon in direction to the cut, to the left. Flutes are sculpted with stylized ovulae at the base of each flute over the cordon at the height of the whole frieze field. The tongues of the flutes do not leave the general mass and the profile of the frieze field. Between the tongues of the flutes there is a stylized swallow-tail, similar to the low and rounded letter 'V' (Pl. VI, 27).The appearance of the flute[83] in the architectural elements is connected with the Hellenistic period and the flute is used in the Ionian and the Corinthian columns. This motif in the Roman imperial period is to be seen not only on the columns, but also on the capitals and as a decoration of the frieze field. It is an extremely popular motif in the architecture of the Severan dynasty, most frequently in Leptis Magna, as well as in the big Asia Minor centers in buildings, constructed under the patronage of the *Severi*.[84]

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[82] Tacheva-Hitova 1969, 3-18; 1976, 81-88.
[83] Petrova 1990, 10.
[84] Ward-Perkins 1948, 59-80; 1985, 370-372.

The architectural-decorative motifs, such as the astragal, the kyma, cordon etc., included in the decoration of the frieze-architraves, show the influence of several decorative schools, and are applied in a very wide chronological diapason. The representation of the astragal is an extremely chronologically definite motif. It is shown every time in a very specific way in the different building periods, during the rule of the different emperors and dynasties. The form of the astragal almost to the middle of the 2nd century is classical and Hellenistic, then the big bead becomes longer, reaching size relative to the small beads. Very typical is its form as a cylinder with ends like cone. It is flanked from both sides by a pair of small biconical beads, where the astragal string as if tied together on a string, with a small connection among the beads, similar to a short small stick. This is a practice, proved from the time of Antoninus Pius and Marc Aurelius, accepted also by the masters during the time of Septimius Severus and his heirs, for whose building-decorative period is spoken as the 'Hadrianic Renaissance'.

The Lesbian kyma over the astragal is canonically placed. Every long tongue of the kyma is represented over the pair of small beads. The bases of the arcs of the Lesbian kyma are still, like arcs, while during the Severans they are almost straight. The loop in the upper part of the Lesbian kyma is clearly formed even the traces left by the drill are visible as pairs of holes.

The new phenomenon in the architectonic decoration is the representation of the rope (cordon) under the astragal. The cordon separates the first *fascia* of the architrave from the next one. It is inclined with the slit to the right, which is a normal practice and can be observed with the frieze-architraves from Serdica, Oescus, and the provinces in Asia Minor.[85] Interesting is the representation of the cordon over the Lesbian kyma. The slit, imitating a tortuous rope, inclined to the left. The cordon appears in the decoration during the rule of Marcus Aurelius. The analysis reveals that the presence of the motifs from the time of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus and the ones of the time of the Severans narrows the chronological limits for the frieze-architraves to the last quarter of the 2nd up to the 30-s of the 3rd century.

The soffit of the frieze-architrave is decorated with tendrils, rolled in the regularly situated circles. The tendril decoration begins at the time of Trajan and Hadrian in the *pulvinus*, *balteus* and foreheads of the Ionian capitals. The tendrils, rolled in circles, are again typical for the capitals from the time of Trajan and Hadrian, where a rosette is shown in the circle.[86] The tendrils represented on the soffit are coiled snail-like and end with a compact dot in the center. This is a very typical representation of the tendrils on the

[85] Dimitrov 2004, Cat. Nos. 1-5, Abb. 1, 5-7, 11; Gerkan & Krischen 1928, 52, 53, Abb. 66, 67; Köster 1980, 161, Taf. 18, 2.
[86] Found mainly in Thrace, see Petrova 1996, Pl. IX.

pulvinus of the Roman-Ionian capitals from Philippopolis, related to the time of Trajan and Hadrian. After Hadrian and particularly after Marc Aurelius the tendril climbs to the soffit and becomes a typical element of the soffit decoration of buildings connected with the dynasty of the *Severi*.[87] Having in mind the ornaments included in the architectural decoration for the first time during the reign of Marcus Aurelius and the representation of the tendril on the soffit, this frieze-architrave should be placed in the last years of the 2nd century. Similar decoration of the frieze-architrave with cordon, Lesbian kyma and flutes over it can be observed in the buildings opposite to the temple of Fortuna in Oescus from the end of the 2nd – beginning of the 3rd century.[88]

Cornice

Several details of cornices also come from Augusta Traiana (Pl. VI, 29, 30). The main purpose of the cornice is to cover the façade and to lead the roof construction. Because of the constructive role of the cornice, which is ending the façade and forms the space for the frame of the pediment, the cornice elements in the Ionian order are distinguished by their rich decoration (Pl. VI, 29, 30).[89] The Roman Ionian cornice consists of three elements: the denticulari at the base and after it the geison and the cyma. The cyma is the end of the detail, protects the façade and leads the rainwater. Its decoration is of vegetative motifs and differently represented palmettes.[90] The geison initially is without ornaments, with plain profile and big, going out in front of the façade, in this way protecting it from the moisture.[91] In the Roman period the geison is richly decorated with astragal, Ionian and Lesbian kyma (Pl. VI, 29). The denticuli represented in a stylish way the roof beams with the supporting girders.

The elements of the cornice are related to the elements of the roof, ending the entablature. They show closeness to the ones from the Hellenistic period, rather than to the Asia Minor variation, having in mind the presence of the denticuli. In the cornices of Augusta Traiana, although belonging to the Roman period, there are no consoles and modillions, separating the cornices

[87] Wegner 1980, 97-104.
[88] Dimitrov 2007, Cat. No 366.
[89] Often they are found also in buildings of Roman Corinthian order. The Roman architects have not created cornice elements intended to crown the architectural decoration of the Roman Corinthian order, that's why they used the accepted Roman-Ionian cornice.
[90] Bingöl 1990, 105-110, and cited lit.
[91] Bingöl 1990, 105-107.

of the decorative fields, which are typical for the architecture of Rome. This absence again relates the details of the cornices to the influence of the Asia Minor architecture, although some details were included in architectural complexes, built in a different order to the Ionian one. That is the reason for the usage of the Ionian order in the Corinthian colonnades, a very often practice also in the cities of Thrace and in the provinces of Asia Minor, Africa and the Western ones. The cyma is decorated with different palmettes, under which there is a Lesbian kyma. The geison is decorated with an Ionian kyma and astragal, followed by the denticuli. The palmettes over the cyma (Pl. VI, 29) have five leaves, differently represented. One of the palmettes has a straight reed leaf in its middle. From both sides there is a leaf similar to anthemion, whose points are coiling inside toward to the points of the straight leaf, and finishing as a round eye. Next follows another kind of a palmette, again with five leaves with a standing central sword-like leaf, being flanked from both sides by pairs of very plastically represented leaves, similar to stylized ivy leaves from the foreheads and the *pulvinus* of the Roman-Ionian capitals. These alternating palmettes are tied at the base by a ribbon. Every palmette has a *balteus* of ribbon, placed at the width of the palmette, and ends with a rolled end, which is a prolongation of the lateral stems of the palmette leaves. The base of the cyma, decorated with these tied palmettes, begins with a Lesbian kyma with slightly curved arc-like legs, extremely skillfully modeled. At the base of the geison the astragal is shown with long cylindrical bead and a pair of almost flat biconical beads, as if string like thread. The Ionian kyma is in shells that are not opened too much, separated by arrows, where the point of the ovuli is connected with the shell by means of a small short thin stick. The work of a drill is obvious. Denticuli with wide teeth follow it under the geison. Similar unpublished cornice is known from the theatre of Philippopolis; from the temple of Fortuna in Oescus, where under the palmettes there is a representation of the Ionian kyma and of the astragal.[92] Another monument from the province of Thrace, very near to the representations of the palmettes and the astragal is the cornice from the porticoes in the west area of the Agora of Nicopolis ad Istrum,[93] dated in the period 136-161. Here the astragal is completely copying its canonical form from the time before and during the reign of Marcus Aurelius. One more cornice, probably also with tied palmettes, can be observed in the open-air lapidarium at the *auditorium* of the *thermae* at the Southwestern gate. The denticuli and the geison are preserved, decorated from down to upward with an astragal, Ionian kyma with widely opened shells, separated by small arrows, also with

[92] Dated 190-192, see Dimitrov 2007, Cat. Nos 378 & 380. The big bead of the astragal is different from the one on the cornice of Augusta Traiana and the Ionian kyma too.
[93] Ivanov 1979, 1-11, fig. 9; Ward-Perkins 1980, Cat. No 20, Pl. XX-b; Ivanov & Ivanov 1994, 68-69, fig. 59.

widely opened shoulders. The shell of the ovula is not connected with a small stick. The kyma is more schematically represented (Pl. VI, 30). Decorated like this, although very fragmented, the cornice can be related to the time after the Antonines, namely to the Early Severans.

The supported elements should end with the roof construction after the cornice. In the representative Roman imperial buildings it usually consists of the ceiling plates-cassettes and the pediment (tympans and acroteria, part of the roof elements). Unfortunately up to this moment there are no data for such ceiling cassettes to have been found, but there are data for the presence of pediments, forming the façade of the buildings. A detail of a pediment is known from a mentioning in the media.[94] One more such piece comes from the hypothetically called *Augusteum*. In the vicinity of Marasha close to the town of Chirpan, in the territory of Augusta Traiana, parts of the fronton are found, probably from a sanctuary.[95] They make it clear that the buildings had a ridge roof, an usual and frequent practice in the cities of Asia Minor, North Africa and the Western Roman provinces. The ridge roof prevails on behalf of the flat roof, where to lead the rain water is more difficult.

The numerous elements and details of architecture connected with the application of the Ionian order in Augusta Traiana are made of the local limestone and of marble. Concerning the local production, using the local stone, are defined several possible ateliers. In our opinion, traditionally they were specialized in the production of separate architectural details.[96] Such was the workshop producing the Roman-Ionian capitals with one deep dot in the center of the volute's eye – a technological marker missing at the marble capitals and also not known in other centers, for instance in the closely located Philippopolis. These small technological markers show very clearly, that this atelier existed in the 2nd – 3rd century, providing architectural – decorative details for the construction works of Augusta Traiana and its territory. The typical visible features of the medium-grained white marble with blue-grey diagonal veins, used for the bases, the columns and the Ionian capitals, frieze-architraves with plain and convex frieze field, reveal that it was extracted

[94] Excavations of M. Kamisheva on str. Mitropolit Metodi Kusev No 55. http://starozagorskinovini.com/news/index.php/instituciи1/5038-razkrivat-bazilika-na-antichniya-grad-avgusta-trayana.

[95] According to the information of Nansy Marinova from the museum in Chirpan. The materials were brought to the museum by Assoc. Prof. M. Tonkova from the National Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia.

[96] For instance the Dorian capitals and drums for the columns produced for the villa at Chatalka, are not found in the later production in Augusta Traiana. Perhaps the workshop changed its orientation from Late Hellenistic to pure Roman forms.

in the quarries of Proconessos. Up to the moment there is no evidence for Proconessian import in the interior of Thrace, except in Philippopolis[97] and now in Augusta Traiana. Previously evidence was provided for such import for the West Pontic seashore and Marcianopolis,[98] as well as for import of Docimium and Proconnessos marble in Byala, Varna district and Novae, from an Early Christian period.[99] The work of the Proconnessian quarries and ateliers was much better known from the studies on the Early Christian period than on the Roman one.[100] The workshops there prepared not only sarcophagi for the seashore in proximity to the Marmara islands, but also a significant number of architectural elements like bases, columns, capitals and frieze-architraves for many other cities of the empire.[101] Already in the period of the Flavians Proconnessos supplies Rome with such elements. Later during the time of Hadrian the import increased,[102] because its price was much cheaper in comparison to the marble from Thassos and Docimeion. Usually Proconnessian marble is distributed in the places, where the production of the Asia Minor quarries is missing. The supply of Proconnessos is mainly of semi-manufacture and more rarely with ready pieces.[103]

A significant part of the production of the Proconnessian quarries is now exposed in the open-air museum on the island of Saraylar, the ancient Marmara, near to the seashore in the northern part of the island.

The studied architectonic decoration in Ionic order from Augusta Traiana and its peculiarities allows us to distinguish several chronological building-decorative periods, showing the usage of the local limestone, the import of marble and marble production and the presence of Asia Minor masters, working with Proconnessian marble.

The first and the second building periods are connected with the establishment of Augusta Traiana and its city planning in the time of Trajan-Hadrian up to the end of the Antonines. To it should be related the bases of Proconnessian marble (Pl. I, 1, 3), some columns of the same marble, with complexly modeled apophisis and aphesis and some of the Ionian capitals. Most of these pieces are re-used in the colonnades of the streets after the re-building of the houses. The first houses appeared with the establishment of the city and its planning and were occupying according to the excavations a whole insula. They were the typical peristyle houses with an inner yard, rich

[97] Roman-Ionian and Corinthian capitals, personal observations of the author.
[98] Ward-Perkins 1980, 23-69; Minchev 2012, 49-60.
[99] Biernacki, Yotov *et al*. 2015, 417-435; Skoczylas 2003, 205-220.
[100] Vanderheyde & Prochaska 2011, 351-375; Dosseva 2012, 19-21. For the sarcophagi see Getov 1978, 13-19; and for the Dorian capitals see Ward-Perkins 1980, 23-69
[101] Asgari 1988, 115-125; Beykan 2012, Russell 2012, 533-539; 2013, 331-361.
[102] Pensabene 2015, 578
[103] Pensabene 2015, 584-586.

architectonic decoration and mosaic pavements, later with additions and rebuilt in the second part of the 3rd and the 4th century. We suppose that the Roman-Ionian capitals type III that were found belong to some of the houses from the time of Hadrian.

The decoration and its motifs display the architectural influence from the period of Trajan-Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius-Commodus, but evidence of the architecture of the period of Antoninus Pius is missing.[104] In our opinion, the reason for this disregard of Augusta Traiana by the emperor is due to his special attention to Philippopolis and to the cities of Asia Minor and the Aegean ones, which suffered very seriously during the devastating earthquakes in the middle of the 2nd century.[105] Augusta Traiana considered namely Marcus Aurelius as 'κτίστης', founder and builder of the city. The influence of the architecture from the third quarter of the 2nd century up to Commodus can be related to the frieze-architraves with plain, convex frieze field, inherited from the architectural practice by the stone-cutters from the Hadrian's age in Asia Minor. In the architectonic decoration of Augusta Traiana is also established the influence of the workshops in Ephesos and those in Proconnessos, which are the direct suppliers of a significant part of the marble and marble production. We hope the new discoveries will bring more information about the building and the architecture of the city, filling the gaps in the context of the separate elements that were discovered and used.

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[104] From the epigraphic monuments of Parthicopolis (see IGBulg IV, No 2263; Petrova & Petkov 2015, 354), and in Philippopolis there were a lot of construction works in the period of Antoninus Pius, which cannot be established in Augusta Traiana so far.
[105] An aqueduct was build, the necropolis was enlarged, see Topalilov 2012, 16.

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Pl. I
1-3. Attic-Ionian bases of type I. Marble and limestone. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, exposition (Photo: S. Petrova).
4. Attic-Ionian base of type II. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, exposition (Photo: S. Petrova).
5-6. Finished and semi-manufacture Attic-Ionian base. Marble. The island of Proconnesos, the quarry Saraylar (Photo: S. Petrova).
7. Octogonal postament with Attic-Ioninan base of type I. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Archaeological Museum of Stara Zagora, exposition (Photo: S. Petrova).
8-9. Rectangular postaments with Attic-Ioninan bases of type II. From Augusta Traiana. Lapidarium at the Southwestern gate to the decumanus (Photo: S. Petrova).



10



11



12



13



14



15

Pl. II

10-11. Rectangular postaments with Attic-Ioninan bases of type II. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Lapidarium at the Southwestern gate (Photo: S. Petrova).

12. Attic-Ioninan bases of type II. Marble. Augusta Traiana, decumanus to the Southwestern gate, in situ (Photo: S. Petrova).

13. Fragment of a plain column. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, exposition (Photo: S. Petrova).

14. Fragments of fluted columns. Marble. Augusta Traiana, decumanus to the Southwestern gate, in situ (Photo: S. Petrova).

15. Semi-manufactured columns. Marble. The island of Proconnesos, the quarry Saraylar (Photo: S. Petrova).



16-a



17-a



16-b



17-b



18-a



17-c



18-b

Pl. III
16 a-b. Roman-Ionian capital. Limestone. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, lapidarium (Photo: S. Petrova).
17 a-b. Roman-Ionian capital. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, exposition (Photo: S. Petrova).
18 a-b. Roman-Ionian capital. Limestone. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, lapidarium (Photo: S. Petrova).



19-a



21-a



19-b



21-b



20-a



22-a



20-b



22-b

Pl. IV

19 a-b. Roman-Ionian capital. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, exposition (Photo: S. Petrova).

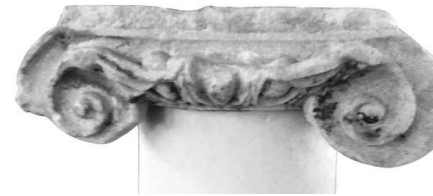
20 a-b. Roman-Ionian capital. Limestone. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, lapidarium (Photo: S. Petrova).

21 a-b. Roman-Ionian capital. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, exposition (Photo: S. Petrova).

22 a-b. Roman-Ionian capital. Limestone. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, lapidarium (Photo: S. Petrova).



23-a



23-c



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Pl. V
23 a-d. Roman-Ionian capital. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, exposition (Photo: S. Petrova).
24. Fragmented frieze-architrave. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Lapidarium in front of the *auditorium*, over the fortress wall (Photo: S. Petrova).
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Pl. VI

27. Two fragments of frieze-architrave and a fragment of a cornice over it. Marble. From the anastylosis in the western part of the colonnade of the *auditorium* (Photo: S. Petrova).

28. Fragment of a frieze-architrave. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Lapidarium in front of the *auditorium*, over the fortress wall (Photo: S. Petrova).

29. Cornice. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Regional Historical Museum of Stara Zagora, lapidarium (Photo: S. Petrova).

30. Fragment of a cornice. Marble. From Augusta Traiana. Lapidarium in front of the *auditorium*, over the fortress wall (Photo: S. Petrova).

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The Ancient Myths in the Sculpture from Augusta Traiana

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Abstract: This paper refers to the sculptural monuments with depictions of myths from one of the cities in the province of Thrace - Augusta Traiana. In the city and its territory have been discovered the representations connected with Apollo myths – the Metamorphosis of Daphne and the Punishment of Marsyas; also some with the Heracles Labours and one of Orpheus among the animals. The paper discusses the function of these sculptural monuments, as well as their iconography and style features.

The monuments from Augusta Traiana reveal a very good example of the existence of mythological subjects and representations in a Roman city and its territory. These depictions find their natural place in the city itself. It is inhabited by people of different origin, but they all live in a cultural milieu, in which the Greek mythology is well known. These mythological representations are spread in the territory of Augusta Traiana under the influence of the Greek-oriented city culture. They are met and used in different contexts by the various representatives of the provincial society.

Key words: Roman sculpture, provincial Roman art, Thrace, myth, copying.

Резюме: В статията се разглеждат скулптурни монументи с изображения на митологични сюжети, произхождащи от един от градовете в провинция Тракия – Августа Траяна. В града и в територията му са намерени изображения, свързани с митове, в които участва Аполон – Метаморфозата на Дафне и Наказанието на Марсий; също така такива, показващи някои от подвизите на Херакъл, и едно изображение на Орфей сред животните. В текста се дискутира функцията на тези скулптурни паметници, а също така иконографските и стиловите им особености.

Паметниците от Августа Траяна и територията ѝ са много добър пример за наличието на изображения на митологични сюжети в един римски град и прилежащите му територии. Тези образи са в естественото си място в града. В него заедно живеят хора с различен произход, но всички те принадлежат на една културна среда, в която съществува добро познаване на гръцката митология, изразено и чрез паметниците на визуалните изкуства. Под влиянието на градската култура тези изображения са разпространени и в околните територии. Те се срещат и използват в различни контексти от представители на провинциалното общество.

Several sculptural monuments, although not so numerous, representing ancient myths, originate from the territory of present-day Bulgaria, including the Roman imperial period in the provinces of Lower Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia. The sculptures have been preliminary published and commented in various studies.[1] Some of them are included also in more general works, devoted to the representation of definite myths.[2]

When examining these monuments, some local peculiarities can be found and also their concentration in some regions. Augusta Traiana with its territory is among the centres of the kind. Here has been discovered the more substantial part of mythological depictions, such as the myth of Apollo and Daphne, the Punishment of Marsyas, Orpheus among the animals, as well as the Labours of Heracles.

I. Monuments with mythological representations

Subjects connected with Apollo

The history of the chase and metamorphosis of *Daphne* is among the most popular mythological representations in Bulgaria and a considerable part of the monuments comes from the territory of Augusta Traiana.

Most of them are preserved only in fragments and that's the reason for the impossibility of a thorough examination of the whole scene. In this case, the study can rely only on the details of the iconography of the separate personages. A relief in a relatively good state originates from the villa at Chatalka.[3] The monument is unearthed in the housing part of the villa, at the extension of the complex, dated from the last period of the villa in the second half of the 3rd century, together with other fragments of votive reliefs from the middle and the second part of the 2nd century. It is consideredby the archaeologists, who excavated the complex, that these were gifts to the sanctuary situated near the villa.[4] A part of Apollo's figure is preserved in the scheme of Apollo Citharoedus: standing naked with a mantle thrown over and leaning on the cithara. A part also preserved is the figure of Daphne in comparatively smaller dimensions than those of the god. She is represented on his left side, with long hair hanging over the shoulders and hands lifted up. The metamorphosis of the nymph is shown by the fingers of her hands in the form of twigs with leaves. This monument is similar to the next group from

[1] For instance Filov 1911 b; Dimitrov 1945; Buyukliev 1971; 2006; Munzova 1978; Tabakova-Tzanova 1980.
[2] Stoyanov 1980; Rabadzhiev 2005; 2016.
[3] Buyukliev 1971, 11, No 12, fig. 11.
[4] Buyukliev 1971, 7-8; Nikolov 1984, 10-11, 23, 28.

the sanctuary at the village of Viden, Stara Zagora district. Three monuments are included in this group, but they are only in fragments. The iconography of Daphne is similar to two of them. A part of the cithara and the mantle of Apollo can be seen over her (fig. 1).[5] G. Katsarov has published one more similar fragment,[6] but later this part of the plate was lost.[7]



Fig. 1.
Apollo and Daphne, sanctuary near Viden, Stara Zagora district (After Velkov 1922/1925, fig. 195).

Monuments with the representation of the same myth have been found in both sanctuaries near Kryn, Stara Zagora district. On the fragment of the sanctuary of Apollo Zerdenos,[8] apart from a similar iconography of Daphne to the above mentioned, a part of the representation of Apollo can also be observed. It can be reconstructed as the type of Apollo Citharoedus with a figure bigger than that of Daphne.

Two monuments from the sanctuary of Apollo Teradeenos near Krun, Stara Zagora district, are also identified with the myth of Apollo and Daphne. On the first one only the female figure is preserved: Daphne is moving to the right, dressed in *chiton*, the right hand pulled back and ending with a leaf. It is dated to the 3rd century.[9] A part of a Greek inscription is to be read on its lower part, but only the name of Apollo is preserved.[10] From the other plate a fragment from the lower part of the cithara of Apollo can be recognized, probably also of the quiver of the god and a laurel tree with three leaves and two fruits. The monument is dated to the 3rd century.[11]

Another monument with the representation of the same myth comes from Plovdiv. I am citing it here in a text concerning Augusta Traiana, because the scheme is the same: standing Apollo and a much smaller female figure of Daphne, with hands raised up, ending in leaves, and with two small laurel

[5] Katsarov 1923/1924, 79, No 20; Velkov 1922/1925, 144, Nos. 4-5, figs. 195-196; Tabakova-Tsanova 1961, 210-211, Nos. 27-28, fig. 8-9.
[6] Katsarov 1923/1924, 79.
[7] Tabakova-Tsanova 1961, 215, No 38.
[8] Tabakova-Tsanova 1959, 101, No 54, Tabl. II, 54.
[9] Tabakova-Tsanova 1980, 184, No 33, fig. 499.
[10] IGBulg.V, 5623.
[11] Tabakova-Tsanova 1980, 184, No 34, fig. 500.

leaves on the head.[12] One more fragment with a similar iconography originates from South Bulgaria.[13]

All the above monuments show the nymph's ongoing metamorphosis, and thus belong to a large group of similar images from across the Empire. In some instances the chase is rendered as intensely dramatic.[14] But there are also monuments where the chase is missing, with the figures rendered static – upright or seated.[15] Where a preserved Apollo figure is presented, it is of the iconographic type Citharoedus, one of the most typical for the Roman age. This is a stationary iconography of the god, and therefore his participation in the myth is suggested by the presence of the nymph instead.[16] Her metamorphosis is usually indicated by the already transformed into laurel leaves palms and fingers, as well as in some instances, also by laurel leaves on her head. This is the accepted means for depicting the transformation in Roman art.[17]

The number of the sculptural representations of the myth with the Punishment of *Marsyas* from Bulgarian lands is relatively small. In the sanctuary of Apollo Teradeenos at Krun the figure of the satyr Marsyas (fig. 2) has been discovered, considered as a part of a sculptural group. He is represented at the very moment of punishment: naked, frontal, with long hair and beard, with arms raised over the head, tied to the trunk of a tree.[18]

This group is reconstructed with a slave, who is grinding his knife for the punishment of the satyr. Two other monuments, the first one from Montana[19] and the second one from Pernik,[20] also partly preserved, demonstrate the same scene. It is very popular in Roman art, with different variants, the iconography of figures influenced by the Classical and Hellenistic prototypes.[21] The figure of the seating Apollo is added to the group of the satyr and the slave by the majority of scientists.[22] Unfortunately, on the monuments in Bulgaria only parts with the hanging Marsyas (and the slave) are preserved but not the representation of Apollo. The images of the latter in round sculpture in the sanctuary at Krun

[12] Velkov 1922/1925, 143-144, No 2, fig. 193.
[13] Velkov 1922/1925, 144, No 3, fig. 194.
[14] Palagia 1986, 345-346, nos. 9, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24; Simon & Bauchhenss 1984, 456, nos. 592, 593.
[15] Palagia 1986, 345-346, nos. 12, 15, 18; Simon & Bauchhenss 1984, 425, nos. 444a, 446.
[16] Palagia 1986, 345-247, nos. 12, 21, 30, 33; Simon & Bauchhenss 1984, 425, no. 444.
[17] Palagia 1986, 345-346, nos. 10, 11, 15, 18, 24; Simon & Bauchhenss 1984, 425, 456, nos. 446, 592.
[18] Tabakova-Tsanova 1980, 187, No 40, fig. 512.
[19] Alexandrov 1986, 42-43, No 8, fig. 9.
[20] Lyubenova 1980, 43, 122, No 178, fig. 196.
[21] Weis 1992, 373-377.
[22] Weis 1992, 374, no. 57.

are but strongly fragmented[23] to assign them to the mentioned group. The only possibility is given by the monument from Montana. There can be seen two foreparts of feet, asides of the representation of the slave, which logically should belong to the body of Apollo. But on the bases of what is preserved, although little, not a seating figure can be supposed, but rather a standing one. It is quite possible that Apollo was represented in some of his most popular and easily recognizable types, known from Lower Moesia and Thrace. Maybe here we have to do with the Citharoedus, a very frequent type in Roman art, including the provinces of Lower Moesia and Thrace. Except that, the frequent representation of Apollo as Citharoedus in the different phases of the myth with Marsyas[24] also speaks in favour of this hypothesis. Nevertheless, having in mind the state of the monument, this remains only a proposal.



Fig. 2.
Marsyas, sanctuary near Viden, Stara Zagora district (After Tabakova-Tsanova 1980, fig. 512).



Fig. 3.
Heracles and Ceryneian Hind, Augusta Traiana (After Munzova 1978, 79).

[23] Tabakova-Tsanova 1980, 184-186, Nos.35-36, figs. 501-503.
[24] Weis 1992, 372-374, nos. 40, 42, 52, 57.

Mythological subjects connected with Heracles

Two of the Labours of Heracles, the one with the subjugation of the Ceryneian Hind (Deer) and the one with his battle with the amazon Hippolyte, are shown on two reliefs coming from Stara Zagora. They are placed on two similar in their dimensions blocks in the form of ara. D. P. Dimitrov considers that both blocks are part of a big sepulchral monument, possibly flanking the entrance of a small mausoleum. The similarity of both blocks generally is not only concerning the form and their dimensions, but the form of the aedicula as well with the placed there representations, the compositional rendering of the participants, the similar poses of Heracles on both reliefs and their symmetry.[25]

On the piece with the hind Heracles' right knee is on the fallen animal, holding it with both hands by the antlers (fig. 3).[26] The monument is dated in the second half of the 2nd – the beginning of the 3rd century.[27] Another sculptural monument from Bulgarian lands with similar scene was found in the fortress of Montana.[28]

Such iconography with the kneeling Heracles on the back of the brought down hind, pulled by the antlers, is to be seen in the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic period.[29] In the Roman period the scheme, used also in our monuments, is especially typical. Similar representations are placed also on stone and bronze monuments, on vessels made of different materials and on gems.[30]

The other labour, shown on the similar block, is the victory of Heracles over the queen of the amazons Hippolyte (fig. 4).[31] On this relief Heracles is pressing with his left knee the horse, holding with one hand the Amazon, who is trying to dismount the horse while still flourishing the labris in order to defend herself, and in her dropped down left hand she holds the typical shield of the Amazons - the pelte.[32]

A very similar iconography is represented on the sarcophagus from Chavdartsi.[33] Such an image of the Amazon is to be observed on a votive

[25] Dimitrov 1945, 18-19.
[26] Filov 1910/1911, 51.
[27] Munzova 1978, 78-79.
[28] Alexandrov 1987, 86, fig. 25.
[29] Boardman *et al*. 1990, 50, 53-54, nos. 2189-2195.
[30] Boardman *et al*. 1990, 51-52, 54, nos.2213-2230.
[31] Kozhuharov 1923/1924, 216-218, fig. 86; Dyakovich 1923, 167-168; Dimitrov 1945, 1-3, figs. 1-2.
[32] Dimitrov 1945, 3.
[33] Munzova 1978, 80.

relief in the museum of Razgrad[34] and also on the one from Madara,[35] but the peculiar fact is that in both cases the figure of the hero is missing.



Fig. 4.
Heracles and Hippolyte, Augusta Traiana (Photo: RH museum in Stara Zagora).

Here I will only mention two more representations of the Amazon, this time heavily wounded, lying on the horse's back, with the labris and pelte in her hands. They are part of the chariot decoration from the village of Mogilovo, Chirpan district. They are combined with several busts of Heracles and that's the reason of their recognition as connected with this myth.[36]

In the first two representations from Augusta Traiana and Chavdartsi mentioned above, Heracles is shown at the moment of chasing, overtaking and trying to set down the Amazon. He is in movement, raises his club grasping her by the hair or the body. The iconographic schemes of this scene can vary and very frequently one among them is the one of Heracles grasping his enemy by the hair. Such a motif can be seen already in the early representations of the Amazonomachy.[37] The variations of the scene are known from the sculptural, mosaic, numismatic and jewelry monuments.[38] With some of them the horse is thrown to the earth similar to our monument from Augusta Traiana.[39]

At the end I shall only add monuments made of bronze and clay with representations of the Labours of Heracles placed on them. This is for instance

[34] Katsarov 1926/1927, 100-102, fig. 48.
[35] Filov 1911 a, 85-88, fig. 1.
[36] Kozhuharov 1923/1924, 214; Dyakovich 1923, 151-196; Dimitrov 1945, 10.
[37] Boardman *et al*. 1990, 72.
[38] Devambez & Kaufmann-Samaras 1981, 594-597, nos. 104 c, i, f, 111, 127, 140, 147, 157, 159, 161, 161 a, 162, 167.
[39] Devambez & Kaufmann-Samaras 1981, 596-597, nos.157, 159, 161 a.

a bronze vessel with all the Twelve Labours of Heracles. It is found together with three chariots and other bronze and glass vessels, weapon and strigils near Stara Zagora.[40] Also a glazed jug should be mentioned, with Heracles and Cerberus represented. It is discovered in a grave at the village of Stamovo, Stara Zagora district.[41] It is considered to be a local production of atelier in the territory of Augusta Traiana. It is dated to the last decade of the 2nd – the first quarter of the 3rd century.[42]

Mythological subjects connected with Orpheus

Orpheus is also among the mythological personages depicted on the monuments from Bulgarian lands. Two fragments of a statue of Orpheus are found during building activities in Stara Zagora. They are restored on the base of the analogy with other monuments and their popularity makes it possible the whole scheme to be reconstructed (fig. 5). The hero is represented seating and playing the cithara. It is placed on his left hip, the right hand is holding the plektron and he is surrounded by wild animals. In the publication the monument is identified as votive and dated to the end of the 2nd – beginning of the 3rd century.[43] A marble ara with inscription originates from Stara Zagora too, dated to the end of the 2nd – beginning of the 3rd century. The dedicator has a Thracian name.[44] Already G. Michailov supposed that the dedication was representing the image of Orpheus with the animals.[45] The inscription supplies data of being devoted to Apollo.[46] It is proposed that the sculptural group is connected with the described ara.[47]

Indeed the monument in Stara Zagora has very exact parallels among the sculptural monuments from the imperial period in its whole composition and the iconography of the Orpheus' representations. Some of the closest parallels are completely preserved and served as table legs. A number of them have clear context of finding and came from the *nymphea* or from *thermae* and were used there as decoration.[48] This usage could hint the function or the initial placement of our monument, although the analogical monument does not suppose the obligation of identical use.

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[40] Nikolov 1986, 47-51.
[41] Naydenova 1969, 79-85.
[42] Kabakchieva 1994, 78-87.
[43] Buyukliev 2006, 47-53.
[44] IGBulg. III, 2, 1595.
[45] Mihailov 1944, 61-62.
[46] Sharankov 2003, 102-103.
[47] Buyukliev 2006, 47-53; Sharankov 2003, 107.
[48] Garesou 1994, 94, 102, no. 143.



Fig. 5.
Orpheus, Augusta Traiana (Photo: RH museum in Stara Zagora).

The above mentioned parallels[49] are dated between 3rd and 5th century. On that basis we should consider that rather the later date than the beginning of the 3rd century for the monument from Augusta Traiana is also possible.

Another sculptural representation of Orpheus placed on the sun-dial is coming from Durostorum.[50] The scene of Orpheus and also the presence of Isis and Sarapis point to the religious association of the image of Orpheus

[49] Garesou 1994, 94, no. 143
[50] Mladenova 1964, 274-278.

with that of Helios.[51] The scene is discussed in a relation with the cult of Isis and Sarapis, and also to the imperial cult and that of Sol Invictus.[52] It is also connected with the cult and rituals of Isis and Sarapis and Navigium Isidis.[53]

Orpheus can be observed also on other monuments of different arts found in the territory of Bulgaria,[54] although the function of the majority of them is decorative.[55] In is a fact that the monuments from Bulgaria can be compared in iconographic aspect very well with the ones from all the empire. Especially Orpheus from Augusta Traiana is almost identical to the already mentioned numerous group of such representations from different parts of the empire, such as Aegina, Istanbul, Byblos, Leptis Magna, Aquileia, etc.[56] It is quite possible that its presence here is due to the cultural influence impacted by some centres outside our provinces.

II. The Iconography of monuments. The copying of models

Usually, when depicting a myth, one ceases a moment completely familiar to the observer. The most obvious choice is the moment of the climax; that which has the highest charge and would naturally indicate most clearly the participants, and the story.[57] The moment of the dramatic transformation is depicted on several of the representations of Daphne's metamorphosis. The Labours of Heracles are typically depicted through the myth's climax, and Heracles is represented in the act subduing his enemies.

The repertory of mythological scenes on the monuments found in Augusta Traiana and its territory consists of familiar, circulating far and wide within the Empire images, readily identifiable. In most instances the primary participants in the myth are depicted: Apollo and Daphne, Heracles and his enemies. All measures are taken to ensure the scene would be deciphered with ease and the myth identified.

Everything outlined above: the selection for an appropriate scene for representation; the familiar and commonly found myths, although illustrated with examples from Thrace is in fact a feature of the Roman age, culture and art. The subjects, the compositions, and the iconographies are created during the Classical or the Hellenistic age, changed over the centuries, became adopted

[51] Mladenova 1964, 274-278.
[52] Rabadzhiev 2005, 75.
[53] Mladenova 1964, 274-278; Popova 2016, 227-228.
[54] Rabadzhiev 2005, 72-80.
[55] Rabadzhiev 2005, 75-76.
[56] Garesou 1994, 94, no. 143.
[57] Woodford 2003, 11, 15.

by the Romans and distributed within the borders of the Empire. They arrive on our territory already shaped, complete with artisans and designs.

Presumably, in the making of the Roman copies of Greek originals pattern-books were used. The same were also used in the making of sarcophagi to facilitate duplication of motives. This would explain the occurrence of similar motives in mosaics, murals, and sculpture. The books likely featured drawings of scenes and individual figures, and also scales for establishing proportions. Sculptors were schooled in the repertory of figures and combined them in a variety of scenes, slightly modifying them according to the motive.[58]

In this aspect a good example among the studied in this paper monuments is the scene with the victory over Hippolyte. The iconography of the monument from Augusta Traiana and the one on the sarcophagus from Chavdartsi are very close. Similar is the depiction on the already mentioned two votive reliefs from Madara and from the region of Razgrad in which the Amazon is 'taken out' of the battle scene and shown separately. The representation is very curious, because she is flourishing in her hands the shield and the labris, not having an enemy against her. But this is a chance to see how a standard model of the Amazon could be used. Similar iconography of her, represented mounted on the horse and flourishing the same attributes in her hands, is to be met on reliefs with Amazonomachy from different periods of Antiquity.[59]

For the Apollo and Daphne's reliefs from the sanctuaries in Krun and Viden, one and the same workshop has been proposed.[60] Such a hypothesis can be accepted, having in mind the similar iconography and the territorial closeness of both sanctuaries. It is possible even to go further in this direction, adding the monument from the villa at Chatalka together with the ones from Plovdiv and South Bulgaria. All they together demonstrate that they concern a popular model of the depiction of the myth of Apollo and Daphne which is spread in the province of Thrace.

Of even greater interest is the unrestricted re-combination of discrete models. Combinations of images of deities familiar from many monuments, for example of Apollo Citharoedus, are coupled with a distinctive mythological scene – Daphne's metamorphosis. Curiously, however, this composite is not intended as a unit, representing the myth, because the key participants have no association with each other, no correspondence. Such mixture of designs could be explained by, on the one hand, opting for the standard rendering of the God as it was the identifiable image of the deity, and also the most commonly depicted. The goal is to make easily identifiable an image, which

[58] Birk 2012, 22, 25; Stewart 2003, 243; Moltesen 2002, 16, 23.
[59] Devambez & Kaufmann-Samaras 1981, 594, 614, 619, 623, nos. 104 g, 434, 499, 651.
[60] Valchev 2015, 78.

after all functioned in a provincial setting, where not all viewers are equally conversant with the specifics of the Greco-Roman culture and art. On the other hand, perhaps, as it has been pointed for the Middle Strymon monuments depicting the myth of Artemis and Actaeon, the references to moments from the Actaeon myth functioned to contribute to the characterization of the iconography and the aspects of the deity.[61]

Could it be that in these instances the mythical scenes become 'attributes' of the deities? Perhaps we should also consider a similar perspective. It was already mentioned about the depictions of Heracles holding Cerberus, when these are not part of the cycle of Twelve Labours, but separate. In this instance, it is not a depiction of a myth, but the application of Cerberus as an attribute of Heracles.[62]

III. On the function of Monuments with mythological representations

A greater part of the monuments, namely the ones with the representations of Apollo and Daphne and the Punishment of Marsyas, come from the sanctuaries, such as Viden and Krun, situated outside the city. These monuments are with votive function. In this case the usage of the mythological scene shows or stresses a definite aspect of the cult of the deity.[63]

The monument with the representation of Orpheus could also be a votive, in this case it is connected with the mentioned inscription. But in Late Antiquity it could also reflect the iconography of Orpheus as a symbol of Christ and its transformation in Early Christianity.[64]

The monuments with the Labours of Heracles are connected with the sepulchral beliefs, as the representations are parts of a mausoleum, of funerary chariots and finds in graves. In this aspect our lands are not exception from the other parts of the empire, where the Labours are also given meaning of a funeral context. Such typical depictions in the same context are also to be met in the monuments of Heracles in Thrace.[65]

The Thracian society of Pre-Roman Thrace had encounters with Greek mythology, and Greek art and culture as a whole. But the mass infiltration of mythological themes, their appearance in various genres and contexts, belongs to the Roman age.

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[61] Stoyanov 1980, 32.
[62] Boardman *et al*. 1990, 99.
[63] Stoyanov 1980, 32.
[64] Popova 2002, 23-24.
[65] Rabadzhiev 2016, 263, 274.

The monuments from Augusta Traiana display a very good example of the existence of mythological subjects and representations in a Roman city and its territory. These depictions find their natural place in the city itself. It is inhabited by people of different origin: a part of them are foreigners, predominantly from Greece, Asia Minor and the Latin West[66] and another part consists of the local Thracians inhabitants. But all they live in a cultural milieu, in which the Greek culture is well known, expressed both in the Greek language of high literary level[67] and in the monuments of visual arts. They both are part of the Hellenistic branch of the Roman culture in Thrace and adhere to the Roman art of the Greek East and the Eastern Mediterranean. These mythological representations are spread in its turn in the territory of Augusta Traiana under the influence of this Greek-oriented city culture. They are met and used in different contexts by the various representatives of the provincial society, first of all according to their social status and cultural level, and also to their general religious and particular funeral beliefs.

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Mosaic pavements in the *thermae* of Augusta Traiana (Preliminary report)

Maria Kamisheva, Reneta Karamanova-Zlatkova

Abstract: During the archaeological investigations in 1974-1975, conducted by D. Nikolov and D. Yankov, a significant part of a thermal building with *auditorium* in front of it has been discovered in close proximity to the Southwestern gate of Augusta Traiana-Beroe. One of the excavated rooms, interpreted as vestibule, was decorated with mosaic pavement, over which a synthronon was built later, connected with the transformation of this part of the complex into Early Christian basilica. The mosaic floor itself was excavated completely in two stages, the second one performed in 2013.

The mosaic covers all the space of the vestibule. Its decoration is formed by several bands in the central part, in front of the exedras and the niches different floral and geometric ornaments are represented. The technique is *opus tessellatum*, with dimensions of the tesserae from 1 cm up to 1.6 cm with a great variety of colours: white, black, ochre, red, grey and light blue.

As a whole the condition of the mosaic is good, but in some parts can be seen small areas with stratification, cracks and single loss of tesserae. On other places some repairs with mortar can be observed, whose aim was to level the deformed surface. The mosaic pavements will be exposed in situ after the protective building is erected and the conservation activities finish.

Key words: mosaic pavement, *thermae*, *opus tessellatum*, *tesserae*, conservation

Резюме: При археологически проучвания през 1974-1975 г., проведени под ръководството на Д. Николов и Д. Янков, в непосредствена близост до югозападната порта на Августа Траяна/Берое е разкрита голяма част от термална сграда с аудиторий отпред. Едно от проучените помещения, интерпретирано като вестибюл, е било украсено с подова мозайка, върху която впоследствие е бил изграден синтрон, свързан с трансформацията на тази част от комплекса в раннохристиянска базилика. Самият мозаичен под е разкрит изцяло на два етапа, като вторият е бил през 2013 г. Мозайката обхваща изцяло пространството на вестибюла. Украсата и е оформена на няколко пояса в централната си част, а пред екседрите и нишите са представени разнообразни растителни и геометрични орнаменти. Изработена е в техника *opus tessellatum*, с тесери с размери от 1 см до 1,6 см с голямо разнообразие на цветове – бяло, черно, охра, червено, сиво и светлосиньо.

Като цяло състоянието на мозайката е добро, но се наблюдават малки участъци с разслоения, пукнатини и единични загуби на тесери. На места се констатират преправки с хоросан, чиято цел е изравняване на деформираната повърхност. След изграждането на защитна сграда и завършване на консервационните дейности мозаичният под ще бъде експониран in situ.

The public *thermae* of Augusta Traiana are partially uncovered and studied in the complex at the Southwestern gate of the city in the course of rescue excavation,carried out in the period from 1968 to 1972 (fig. 1). It continued, with some interruptions, during 1988-1989, 1992 and 2013. The complex at the Southwestern gate consists of the building of the *thermae* itself, amphitheatrically situated *auditorium* in front of the southern façade of the building, and semi-circular square (the so-called 'forum') with an equestrian statue base. The *thermae* comprises the square of two *insulae*, confined to the east by cardo no 3, to the north by decumanus No 4 and by the western fortress wall to the west. This leads us to the conclusion that its construction started after the reconfiguration in the layout, necessitated by the possible destructions in the city at the end of the 2nd century.[1] These public baths are of the 'small imperial *thermae*' type and are located over an area of about 7 decares. It has a square layout with a side of 80 m (fig. 2).

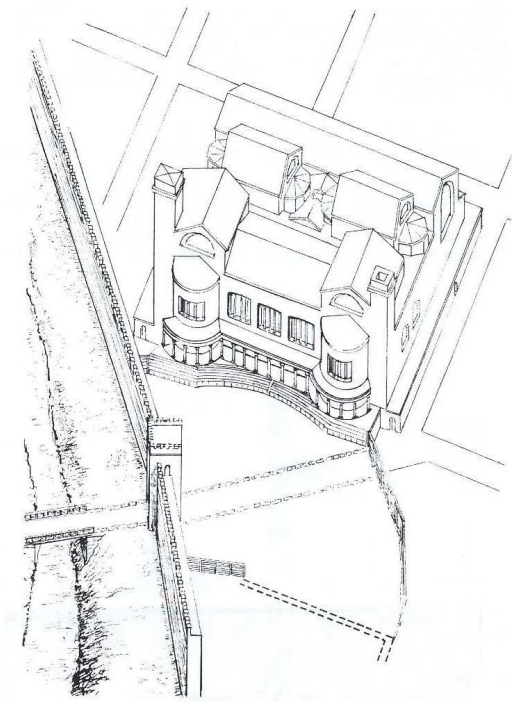


Fig. 2. Isometric reconstruction of the thermae of Augusta Traiana (according to arch. St. Boyadzhiev).

Heating was provided through a hypocaust. The building had more than 10 spacious rooms. Initially the southern premises, partly the *frigidarium* and the eastern part of the vestibule were uncovered.[2] In the vestibule, which was located at the northern part of the building at the time, part of floor mosaics was discovered. It is tailored to the exedras and niches that form the premise

[1] Boyadzhiev 2006, 66-70.
[2] Nikolov 1987, 105, fig.10.

from north and south. An internal apse with synthronon was constructed over the mosaics later, when the premises were transformed into an early Christian church, without destroying it.[3] It is built of crushed stones, bounded with mortar, while its steps are entirely built of bricks. The walls of the synthronon as well as of the room were decorated with murals. Above the mosaic and the synthronon a temporary protective cover was constructed initially. During the first stage of the conservation of the so-called 'forum complex' (1985-1988), the preserved parts of the mosaics and the mural decoration of the synthronon were dismantled by the team of the National Institute of Cultural Monuments – branch Plovdiv.[4]

The latest research in 2013 was carried out in relation to the project under 'Regional Development 2007-2013' Programme – 'Turning the Cultural – Historical Monuments in the Town of Stara Zagora from the Antique Period into Tourist Attractions' of EU. The research was focused on the vestibule of the *thermae*. Thus, west of the synthronon an area with length of 23 m and width of 13 m was explored. Architecturally the vestibule is formed with exedras and rectangular niches along the north and south walls. The exedras have a width of 1.85 up to 1.90 m and a depth of 0.90 m, while the niches have 3.30 m and a depth of 0.53 m. The walls are made entirely of bricks weld together with pink mortar. On the south wall of the vestibule, on the side of the neighbouring premises, exedras are formed as well. In the eastern corner of the vestibule was found an entrance to the neighbouring premises, which was additionally formed.

During the research it was discovered that the exedras are decorated with murals (figs. 3-4). The walls are plastered with mortar and decorated with plant ornaments in red, blue and ochre. The straight façade was probably tiled with decorative marble revetment.

Below the mosaic floor was uncovered a complex sewerage system comprising one longitudinal and six transverse sewers. Their walls and bottoms were built of square bricks. Most of them were covered with stone slabs, only the southeast sewer was vaulted with bricks (figs. 5-6).

The mosaic completely covers the vestibule area. It is formed in several bands. The central part occupies an area with width of 7 m, and depicts interlaced circles made of black *tesserae* forming four-leaved rosettes, which are made of white *tesserae* (figs. 7-8). Their diameter is 0.36 m. The spaces between the rosettes are rhomboid and filled with ochre *tesserae*, which change their colour into red at the spots, where traces of fire are visible. On both sides of the central parts are formed bands with meanders with opposite

[3] Nikolov 1987, 106, fig. 23.

[4] Kalchev 2009, 89-90, fig. 13. There is no conservation documentation in Regional History Museum of Stara Zagora.

squares with an 'X' and a swastika, made of black and white *tesserae* (figs. 9-10). Demarcation lines of black, white and red pebbles are formed behind them. They divide the above described areas from those located along the periphery.

The area in the front of the exedras and the niches is decorated with various plant and geometric ornaments – peltae, intersecting octagons, scale ornament, inserted circles, 'X's (which probably should be interpreted as stars), clover, 'fir tree', basket with fruits, Solomon's knot, checkmate ornament (figs. 11-16). A great variety of colours is used in them – white, black, ochre, red, grey, light blue, etc., and some red *tesserae* are ceramic.

In the two exedras uncovered to the north, the mosaic area is filled with a scale ornament, while to the south – by diamonds and a *cantharos* with tendrils coming out of it (figs. 19-20). In the two rectangular niches along the south wall of the vestibule, ivy leaves (in the east) and a Solomon's knot are depicted, while in the north – a diamond ending with peltae (figs. 17-18).

The periphery of the mosaics around the walls is formed with marble curbs. Because of the numerous *smaltae* found on the site, it is possible that the vestibule was also decorated with wall mosaics.

The mosaic is made in the *opus tessellatum* technique. It consists of: *statumen* – the lowest layer made of large stones; above which is the *rudus* – a layer of mortar with larger filling and crushed brick; and the *nucleus* – a layer with fine filling. The cushion, the top layer, is laid in a very thin layer above the nucleus and it holds the *tesserae*. The latter were of different types of stone which size vary from 1 cm to 1.6 cm. The size of the pavement base varies from 45 cm to 60 cm.

The condition of the mosaic pavement is good, the connections between the separate layers and between the *tesserae* and the cushion are predominantly stable. There are small areas with stratification, cracks and a single loss of *tesserae*. There are destructions in the *tessellatum* with missing *tesserae* – lacunae (figs. 24-25). In these areas a significant number of displaced and separated *tesserae* was found along with pieces of the plaster with coloured coating.

Other structural damages include the raising and sinking of parts of the mosaic surface from the original level of the *tessellatum*, which are due to collapsing or movement of the earth layers (fig. 23). In some of these sunken areas there are amendments with mortar aiming to straighten the deformities. In the eastern part of the central area there is a significant collapse that destroyed the integrity of the *tessellatum* and the pavement base.

The condition of the tesserae is different in the different areas. At some points changes in the colour of the *tesserae* can be observed due to coercion of the fallen on the mosaic surface iron objects and the fire that occurred in that ancient time. In these areas the connection between the *tesserae* and the

cushion is also deteriorated. On the surface of the burnt areas there are tightly attached deposits, which are dangerous to be mechanically removed before the connection between the *tesserae* and the cushion is stabilized (figs. 21, 22, 24, 25).

In most of the lacunae and on many areas of the mosaic surface there are pieces of molten lead. Problematic are also the roots of bushes and plants that penetrated through the mosaic and grow on the *tessellatum* and in the joints between the *tesserae* (fig. 26).

An interesting detail is the large number of *tesserae*, found on the mosaics, which are different in size and material used. Their number, as well as the fact that they are not part of the floor mosaics points to the existence of wall mosaic decoration. The possible technique for the laying of this wall mosaic is mixed: there are bigger *tesserae* for *opus tessellatum* and smaller for *opus vermiculatum*. Most of the *tesserae* found are *smaltae*, which can be divided into several groups according to their size: 0.4-0.5 cm; 0.7 cm; 1 cm; 1.2 cm.

The desire to enrich the geometrical decoration is clearly visible not only through different elements but also through introducing *tesserae* with colours that differentiate from the main range of colours, and diversification by changing the laying direction. Examples of this are two panels with white *tesserae*, where there is cross decoration in black. Here the composition is distinguished due to the diagonally laid *tesserae*, compared to the rest of the mosaics.

Having in mind the period of the construction of the *thermae*, we can date the floor mosaic to the first half of the 3rd century, the period of the greatest flourishing of Augusta Traiana.

The mosaic, together with the walls of the vestibule, will be exposed *in situ* after erecting of protective building and the end of the conservation activities.

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Fig. 1. Forum of Augusta Traiana – archaeological research 1968-1972.



Fig. 3. Mural in the south exedra of the *thermae*.



Fig. 4. Mural in the south exedra of the *thermae* – detail.



Fig. 5. Sewer under the mosaic floor covered with stone slabs.



Fig. 6. Sewer under the mosaic floor, formed with vaulting.



Fig. 7. Mosaic floor – central area – view from the west.



Fig. 8. Mosaic floor – central area and second belt with meanders – view from the west.



Fig. 9. Mosaic floor – belt with meanders – view from the south.



Fig. 10. Mosaic floor – belt with meanders – detail.



Fig. 11. Mosaic floor – area in front of the exedras and the niches.



Fig. 12. Mosaic floor – area in front of the exedras and the niches.



Fig. 13. Mosaic floor – area in front of the exedras and the niches.



Fig. 14. Mosaic floor – area in front of the exedras and the niches.



Fig. 15. Mosaic floor – area in front of the exedras and the niches.



Fig. 16. Mosaic floor – area in front of the exedras and the niches.



Fig. 17. Mosaic floor – forming of the south niche.



Fig. 18. Mosaic floor – forming of the north niche.



Fig. 19. Mosaic floor – forming of the south exedra.



Fig. 20. Mosaic floor – forming of the south exedra.



Fig. 21. Mosaic floor – iron deposit on the *tessellatum*.



Fig. 22. Mosaic floor – destructed *tesserae* from the tesselatum.



Fig. 23. Mosaic floor – collapsed part of the *tesselatum*.



Fig. 24. Mosaic floor – deposits on the *tesselatum* and destruction.

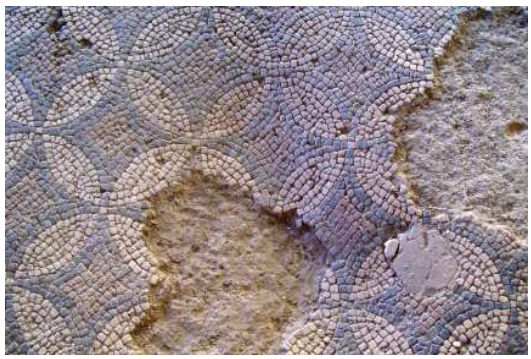


Fig. 25. Mosaic floor – change of the colour of the *tesserae* and destruction.



Fig. 26. Mosaic floor – root in the joint between the *tesserae*.

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The 'Felix' mosaic from Serdica

Mario Ivanov

Abstract: In 2011 during archaeological excavations in the central area of Sofia was discovered a well preserved mosaic. It covers the floor of a spacious room (probably a representative hall) of one of the large houses. The mosaic consists of six panels with different geometrical schemes. In the central part of the floor is placed the *pseudo-emblema*, which presents a running wheel surrounded by a stylized laurel wreath with alternating green and purple leaves. Around the wreath in the four corners of the panel there are four *cantharoi* with wine stems, leaves and grapes growing from their rims. The techniques used in the mosaic decoration are *opus tessellatum* and *opus vermiculatum* (only in the *pseudo-emblema*). On two of the crescent-like segments of the running wheel is inscribed a word 'Felix' with *smaltae*. According to the archaeological context the mosaic dates to the 80s of the 4th century AD.

Key words: Serdica, mosaic floor, *opus tessellatum*, laurel wreath

Резюме: През 2011 г. при археологически проучвания в центъра на София е открита добре запазена мозайка в приемната зала на една от големите жилищни сгради. Мозайката се състои от шест пана с различни геометрични мотиви. Централната част на помещението е заета от псевдо-емблема, представяща изображение на въртящо се колело, обхванато от стилизиран лавров венец с редуващи се зелени и лилави листа. Около венеца са поставени четири кантароса с прорастващи лозови стебла с листа и гроздове. Използвани са техниките *opus tessellatum* и *opus vermiculatum*. Върху два от сегментите на въртящото се колело със смалтови кубчета е изписана думата 'Felix'. Комплексните данни от археологическото проучване датират мозайката към 80-те години на IV век.

Serdica is among the important Roman cities in province of Thrace. Its significance rapidly grows up at the end of 3rd–beginning of 4th century when the city was proclaimed a provincial capital of *Dacia Mediterranea*. Several mosaic floors belong to that period which reflect the wealth and prosperity of the citizens during Late Antiquity.[1] In the period 2010–2012 in the central part of the ancient city was excavated large area of *ca*. 6000 m² (fig. 1). There were discovered seven large houses, two early Christian basilicas, part of

[1] See Pillinger, Lirsch *et al*. 2016, Nos 57–68.

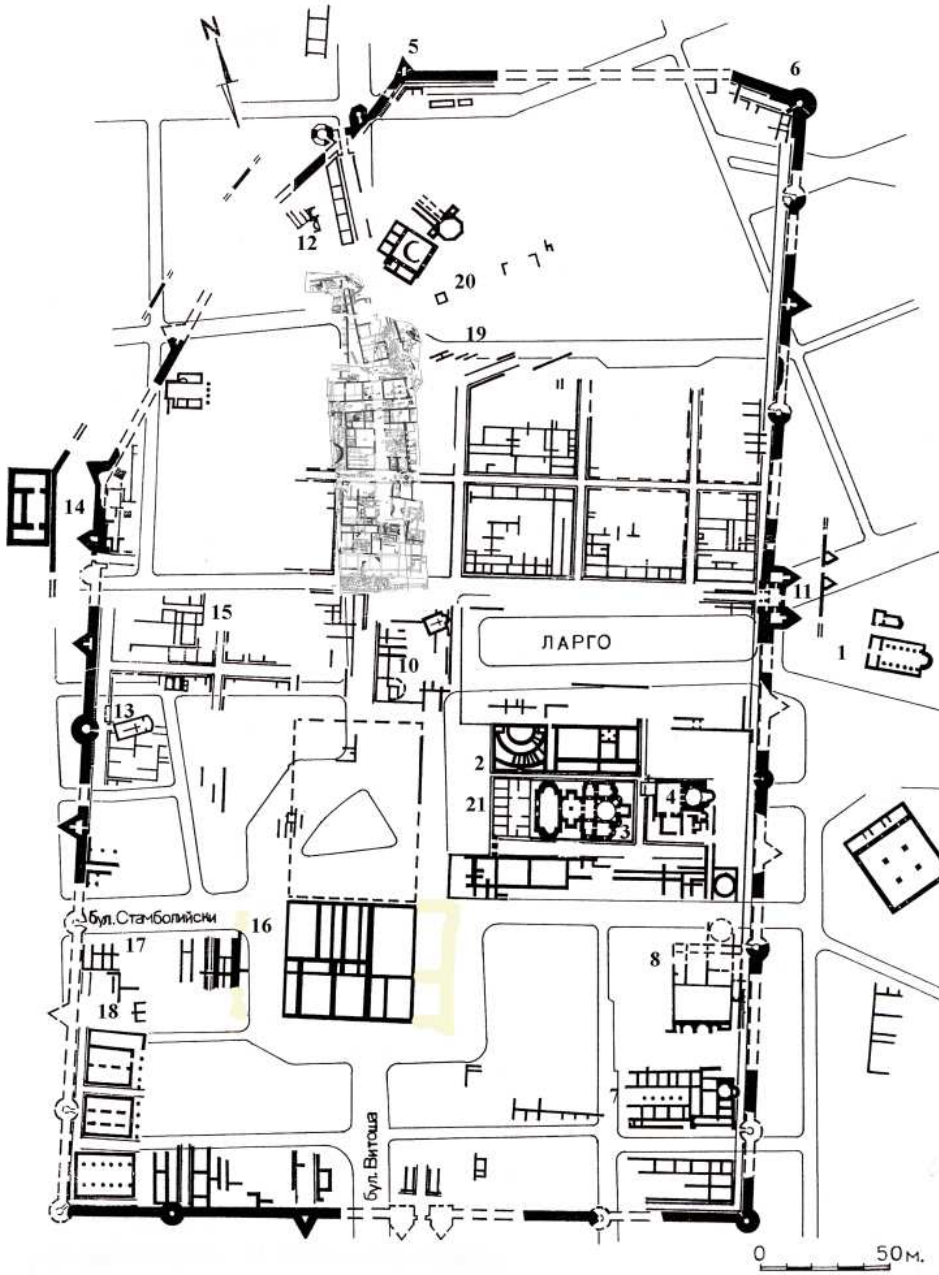


Fig. 1. General plan of *Serdica* (After Shalganov & Kirova 2010, 30, fig. 2) with the new excavated area (Authors: Y. Topalova and M. Ivanov).

Late Antique thermal complex and six streets.[2] In 2011 was found a well preserved mosaic floor in a reception hall (room 1) of the so-called 'building A6' (fig. 2). The house has significant size and many rooms arranged around an inner courtyard. Together with the so-called 'building A2' it occupies the first *insula* north of *decumanus maximus* and west of *cardo maximus* (fig. 3). Both buildings were separated by a narrow passage. The building A6 was erected at the beginning of 4th century over a destroyed earlier bath from the 3rd century. Part of the semi-circular pools of the bath were discovered to the east of the mosaic hall - in the area of the inner courtyard and the room east of it. The western part of the bath is under room 1 which causes the uneven surface of the mosaic floor (fig. 2; fig. 4). The contemporary level of the mosaic (elevation +540.00/ 540.05) is preserved only at the highest points of the floor over the earlier walls of the bath. All the rest of the mosaic pavement was discovered more or less depressed under the pressure of the later earth deposits (*ca*. 4 m thickness). The lowest point of the mosaic is on elevation + 539.40. During Late Antiquity (4th–6th century) building A6 was reconstructed several times which caused some changes in the house plan, laying new floor pavements etc.



Fig. 3. The *insula* north of *decumanus maximus* with buildings A2 and A6 (Geodetic plan A. Kamenarov and D. Ognyanov).

The mosaic in the room 1 belongs to the second building period of the building A6. According to the stratigraphic observations and the coins found under the synchronous mortar floor in the next room 2 (latest coin of emperor Gratianus issued between 379–383), the mosaic should be dated in the 80s of 4th century.[3]

[2] Ivanov 2011a; 2011b; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2016a, 204.

[3] In the preliminary publications of the excavations results (Ivanov 2011b, 10; 2012, 316; 2016b, 294) the date of the mosaic was *ca*. middle of the 4th century. After the cleaning and studying of all coins the date should be placed in 80s of the 4th century.

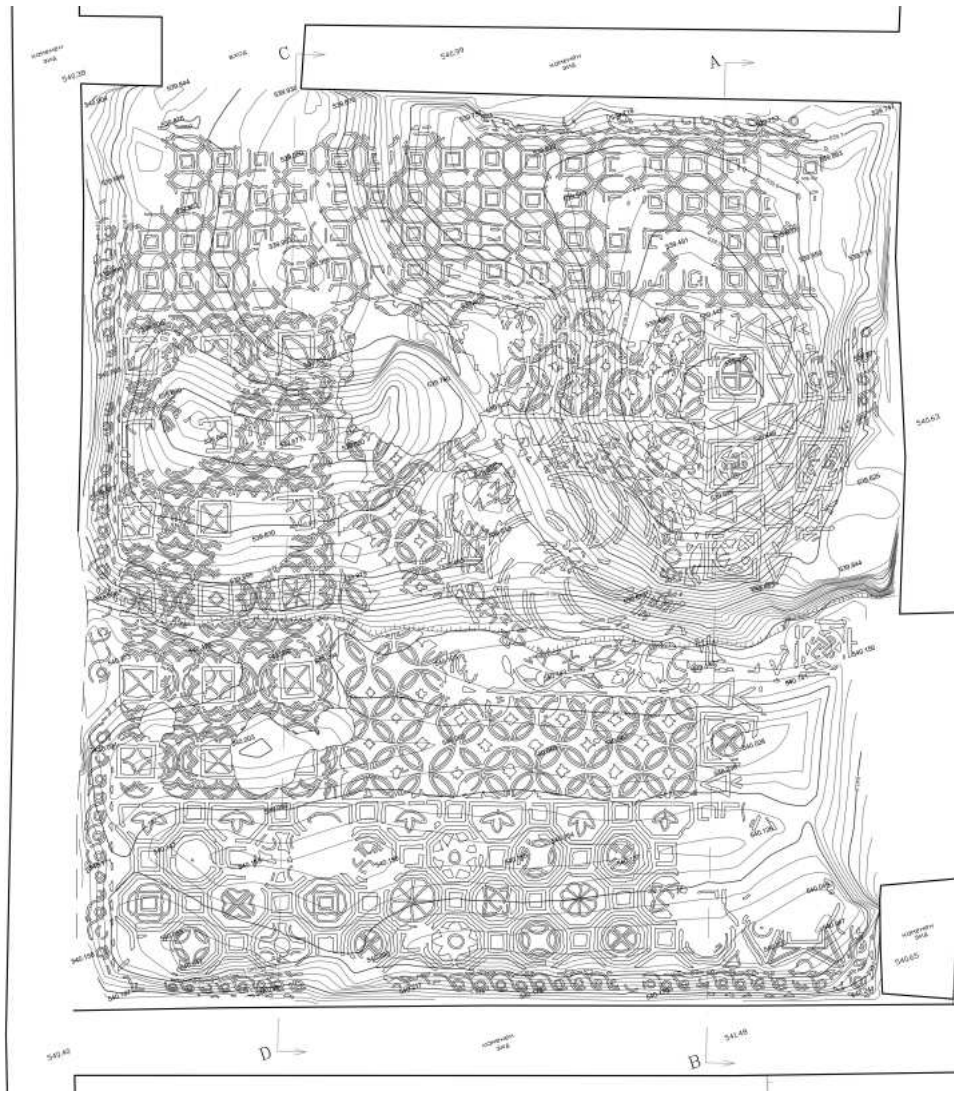


Fig. 4. Geodetic and photogrammetric drawing of the mosaic with depressions of the floor surface (Authors: Iv. Ivanov, Al. Gerov, D. Nedyalkov and St. Bakalov).

The mosaic floor in building A6 (fig. 5) covers the entire surface of room 1.[4] It consists of 7 rectangular panels composed of different geometrical patterns (fig. 6). The mosaic has dimensions as follows: 6.90 m (east–west) by 7.60 m (north–south). The description of each panel below begins with the small panel in the southeastern corner, than a large panel along the south wall, than follow the panels along west, north and east walls, finishing with the central panel embracing the pseudo-*emblema*. Almost the entire mosaic is in *opus tessellatum,* but several details in the pseudo-*emblema* are made in *opus vermiculatum*.

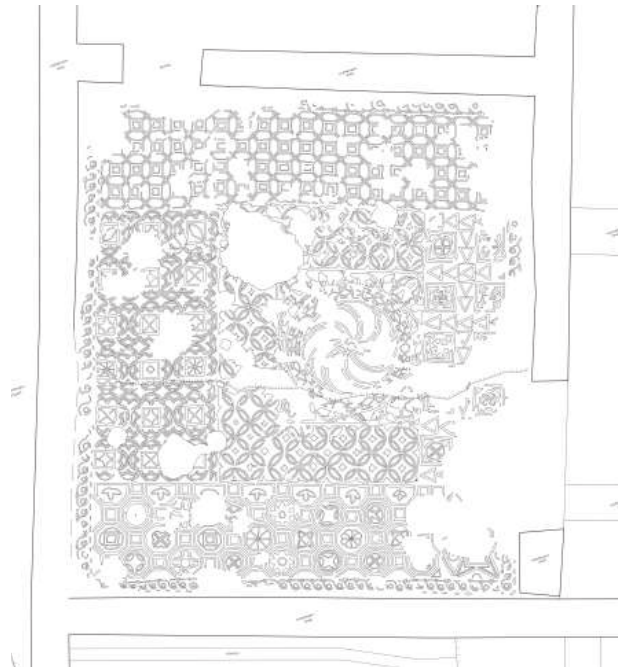


Fig. 5. Photogrammetric drawing of the mosaic decoration (Authors: Iv. Ivanov, Al. Gerov, D. Nedyalkov and St. Bakalov).

Border. All the mosaic panels along the walls of the room are encompassed by a border with dimensions 6.90 by 0.30 m (south part), 7.60 by 0.30 m (west part), 6.90 by 0.30 m (north part) and 7.60 by 0.30 m (east part). The border (fig. 7) is separated form the panels by a double-*tessellae* line.[5] The pattern of the border is composed of two interlaced straps on colour background. The motif corresponds to the decoration pattern 'b'[6] as well as to the variant 'a' of guilloche according C. Dunbabin.[7] Each one of the of two stripes is bordered by a single row of grey *tessellae* while the white line of single

[4] See also Ivanov 2016b.

[5] For the usage of both terms *tesserae-tessellae* see the article of V. Noeva in this volume.

[6] See also Ivanov 2016b; Balmelle *et al*. 1985, Pl. 71b.

[7] Dunbabin 1999, 340.



Fig. 6. Drawing and graphic reconstruction of the decorative pattern of the mosaic (Author: Kr. Frangova).

tessellae bolded the inner grey contour of the both straps. The coloring of the stripes is made of three rows of alternating *tessellae* in ochre and dark green. The inner space in-between the straps has a form of a circle bordered by a single row of white cubes and filled up with red *tessellae*. The background between the outer contours of the straps and the grey border is made of white *tessellae*.

Dimensions of the *tessellae*: from 0.8 by 1.0 cm to 1.5 by 1.9 cm; predominant sizes: 1.2 by 1.4 cm or 1.4 by 1.4 cm.

Panel 1. The first mosaic panel (fig. 8) covers the southeast corner of the room. It has dimensions 0.90 (east–west) by 1.40 m (north–south). The mosaic floor here is damaged by a medieval pit. The central part of the panel was repaired in antiquity with pink mortar filling.

The outer borders of the panel are made of double line of grey *tessellae*. Besides the later damages, the geometrical pattern is obvious. The scheme presents two four-pointed stars (the north one is almost completely missing) with inscribed squares and lozenges - scheme 'f'.[8] Between the stars and the borders there are isocseles triangles. The contours of the stars and lozenges are made of one row of grey *tessellae*. The inner space of the star rays is bolded with a single line of white *tessellae* while the outlines of the squares are of two lines of white *tessellae*. The inner borders of the lozenges and triangles are doubled with two rows of white and one row of red *tessellae*. The space of the square is filled with unclear pattern in red and dark green while in the lozenges and triangles are placed circles and semi-circles outlined with grey and white line. The filling of circles and semi-circles is with dark green with a single white cube in the centre. The star rays are filled with dark red while the lozenges and triangles with ochre.

[8] Balmelle *et al*. 1985, Pl. 28 f.

Dimensions of the *tessellae*: from 0.8 by 1.3 cm to 1.0 by 2.0 cm; predominant sizes - 1.2 by 1.4 cm.

Panel 2. The panel is situated to the west of the first one along the southern wall of the room (fig. 9). It has dimensions 1.40 (north–south) by 5.30 m (east–west). As the previous one, the borders are made of double row of grey *tessellae*. The entire surface of the panel is occupied by pattern 'b' - octagons with squares between them.[9] The octagons are arranged in four rows. The last north line is of half octagons. As a whole there are 40 octagons and parts of octagons and 28 squares. In the west and east part of the panel there are repairs of the floor with pink mortar as well as later damages. The octagons of the last north and south row are with similar decoration while the middle ones are different. The first and third octagons from the east have the same pattern as well as the first and third ones from the west but the east and west pairs of octagons are different. All parts of octagons forming the north line bear the same decoration. The outline between the squares and octagons is made of double grey line which outside and inside is repeated at all elements by double white line. At all the octagons of the first and third rows the inner white line is repeated with double red line while in the middle row and the half octagons in the north row the double line is in ochre. All squares as well as half octagons in the east and west end are filled with dark green *tessellae* outlined by single red line. The half octagons on south and north border of the panel are filled with red *tessellae* while the north ones bear three-leaf green pattern bordered by a single white line (stylized lotus blossom?). The pattern of the first east pair of octagons is unclear because of the damages. It is possible it could be the same as the third pair. The second pair of octagons show grey circle on white background separated in four parts by single grey lines.[10] The opposite parts are filled with dark green and red bordered with single white line. The third pair of octagons are decorated with single white line circle and square with concave sides inscribed in it.[11]

The inner surface of the square is filled with ochre *tessellae* while the ellipse parts around the square are in red and dark green bolded with white line. The fourth pair of octagons have eight-pointed star formed of two concave squares on white background outlined with single grey line. The concave squares of the star are filled with alternating red and ochre while in the centre there is a red circle outlined by two rows of grey and a single row of white *tessellae*. The fifth pair of octagons is identical to the second one. The sixth pair has a different motif - a cross with concave sides[12] outlined by single grey

[9] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, Pl. 163 b.
[10] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, 38.
[11] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, 38.
[12] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, 40.

line and filled with white. In the centre of the cross is placed an ochre circle with double grey border. The semi-circle elements between the cross and the octagon are with dark green filling and white border. The last pair of octagons is the same as the third one. The first and third octagon of the middle row have identical pattern - arched cross on white background outlined with single grey line.[13] In the centre of the cross there is a square of white line filled with red. The shoulders of the cross are in dark green. The second octagon of the middle row shows on red background an eight-leaf rosette outlined in white with dark green and ochre leafs. The inner surface of the fourth octagon of the middle row is divided in eight parts filled with dark green and red. The fifth and seventh octagon have identical pattern - inscribed square encompassed by elongated hexagons. The square is outlined by double grey line while the hexagons – by a single one. The inner borders of the figures are underlined with a single white line and filled with red and dark green. The sixth octagon of the middle row bears four-leaf pattern of single grey line[14]. The inner surface of the motif is separated by grey lines in four heart-shape figures filled with red and dark green. In the centre is placed a single red *tessella*.

In the first east square of the north row of the panel there is a little *smaltae* cross on green background with dimensions 4.5 by 4.5 cm. The cross is made of alternating light blue and yellow *smaltae* (fig. 10). The *tessellae* in the centre and in the ends of the cross are yellow while the other ones are blue. Most probably this pattern is a later addition because it does not fit well the whole composition of the panel.

Dimensions: the side of the octagons and squares - 0.23 cm; *tessellae*: from 0.8 by 0.8 cm to 1.2 by 2.0 cm; predominant sizes - 1.2 by 1.4 cm; *smaltae* - 0.8 by 0.8 and 1.0 by 0.9 cm.

Panel 3. The third mosaic panel covers the west part of the room along the western wall (fig. 11). It has dimensions 1.90 (east–west) by 4.20 m (north–south). The panel is bordered with double grey line. In the south part there is a later damage while in the centre and the northwest area the floor was repaired with pink mortar. The decorative pattern of the panel consists of 18 squares arranged in six row (3 squares in each east–west row). Between the squares are placed pairs of *peltae*. Between the *peltae* are formed red lozenges with concave sides (on east–west direction) and ochre heart-shaped elements (on north–south direction).[15] All the squares are outlined with double grey and double white line; the *peltae* are bordered with triple line - two white and a

[13] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, 40.
[14] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, 36.
[15] See Koranda 1991/1992, 108, Taf. III, Rep. II 228b, Abb. 7.

grey in-between. The inner surface of the *peltae* is filled with dark green while the semi-circles between the squares and the *peltae* have red color. Every first and third square of each row has the same pattern while the middle one is different. The first and third square of the first row (from south to north) and the middle square of the second row shows the same motif: inscribed in the square lozenge with concave sides on dark green background outlined with white *tessellae* and filled with dark red. The second square of the first row is identical with the first and third ones of the second row. The inner surface of the squares is divided in four triangles by a single white line running from corner to corner. Each opposite pair of triangles is filled with different colour: dark green and lighter red. The inner surface of the first and third square of the third row is divided by single white line on eight triangles with red and dark green colour. The second square of the same row bears a motif of arched cross on ochre background.[16] The cross is outlined by a single grey line and filled with red. In its centre there is an ochre square bordered with white line. The squares of the fourth row are identical with the ones of the first row. The first and third square of the fifth row have the same pattern as the second one from the first and fourth row. The second square of the fifth row is decorated with a red circle on dark green background. In the circle is inscribed a white lozenge with concave sides. The first and third square of the sixth row show a red ellipse on dark green background. The second square of the same row is identical with the first and third ones of the first row.

Dimensions of the *tessellae*: from 0.7 by 1.3 cm to 1.6 by 2.1 cm; predominant sizes 1.2 by 1.4 cm.

Panel 4. The panel covers the entire north area of the room along the northern wall (fig. 12). There is an entrance in the western part of the north wall connecting the hall with mosaic floor with the next room to the north. The panel has dimensions 6.30 (east–west) by 1.40 m (north–south). The whole panel is in one geometrical pattern consisting of 72 interlacing octagons arranged in four rows (in east–west direction). Every row has 18 octagons. The outside border of the panel is a double grey line while the octagons are outlined with a single grey line. In the centre of each octagon is placed a red square outlined with double grey and single white lines. At the intersections of the octagons are formed elongated hexagons with double grey and single white border lines. The horizontal arranged hexagons are filled with dark red while the vertical ones are in dark green.

Dimensions of the *tessellae*: from 0.7 by 1.2 cm to 1.6 by 2.0 cm; predominant sizes 1.4 by 1.4 cm.

[16] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, 40.

Panel 5. The panel covers the east side of the room along the eastern wall (fig. 13). It has dimensions 4.20 (north–south) by 1.34 m (east–west). The south and northeast sections are partly damaged. The outer border of the panel is made of double grey line. The geometrical pattern consists of 10 squares arranged in five rows (in east–west direction) by two squares in each. Between the squares are placed one vertical and six horizontal straps of triangles on dark red background. The triangles are outlined by double white line and filled with dark green. Each pair of squares shows one and the same motif. The first and the last rows have similar patterns as well as the second and the fourth rows. All squares have a frame of six rows of *tessellae*: two grey, two white and two red. In each square there is a circle of double grey line on white background with different element in it. The squares in the first and the last rows have circles divided by a single grey line in four parts filled with red and ochre.[17] The second and fourth pairs of squares present the motif Solomon knot on white background. The knot is composed of four lines of *tessellae*: the outer and inner are grey, the middle ones are ochre and white (at vertical elements) or red and white (at horizontal elements). The third pair of squares has in the circle six-leaf rosette on white background with alternating red and dark green leaves.

Dimensions: side of the square - 0.50 m; side of the triangles - 0.28 by 0.28 by 0.23 m; diameter of the circles - 0.35 m; *tessellae* - from 0.7 by 1.3 cm to 1.9 by 2.0 cm; predominant sizes - 1.2 by 1.4 cm.

Panel 6. The panel has a П–shape form and covers the central part of the floor embracing the pseudo-*emblema* from the south, west and east (fig. 14). It has dimensions: 3.06 (east–west) by 0.90 m (north–south), 4.20 (north–south) by 0.90 m (east–west) and 3.06 (west–east) by 0.90 m (north–south). The outer border of the panel is made of double grey line. The decoration pattern is composed by three rows of intersecting circles on white background[18]. All circles are outlined with a single row of grey *tessellae* while in the center there is an ochre lozenge with a single dark green *tessella* in the middle. In the intersection areas are formed a dark green and red ellipses outlined by single white line.

Dimensions of the *tessellae*: from 0.7 by 0.9 cm to 1.4 by 2.1 cm; predominant sizes: 1.2 by 1.3 cm.

The pseudo-*emblema*. The central panel of the mosaic floor - the pseudo-*emblema* is formed as a large circle element on white background (fig. 15) inscribed in rectangular field with dimensions 2.16 (east–west) by

[17] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, 38.
[18] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, pl. 237 b.

2.40 m (north–south). The rectangular panel is bordered with double grey line. In the four corners are placed two-handle *cantharoi* on high stems with growing vines from their rims (fig. 16). The *cantharoi* are outlined with a single grey line doubled with white one at the handles, rim and body of the vessel. The neck of the vessel is made in two colors - white and grey - separated diagonally while the body of the *cantharoi* has five ribbed parts in different colours - red, white and ochre. The space between the handles and the neck of the vessel is filled with dark purple *tessellae* while the rim showed in perspective is filled with red ones. From the four *canhtaroi* symmetrically grow vine stems connected with the ones of the neighboring vessels forming this way a wavy frame around the circle (fig. 17). The stems are made of three rows of *smaltae* - two light blue and one black (or dark green). On both sides of the *cantharoi* are placed grapes with rounded upper part and pointed lower part. The fruits are outlined with black *smaltae* and filled with yellow ones. Next to the grapes are placed leaves of blue and green *smaltae*. In the middle of the stem between the each pair of vessels is placed another grape or a blue tendril.

Dimensions of the *tessellae*: from 0.7 by 0.8 cm to 1.6 by 1.8 cm; predominant sizes - 1.2 by 1.3 cm; dimensions of *smaltae*: from 0.4 by 0.6 cm to 1.0 by 1.2 cm; predominant sizes - 0.8 by 0.8 cm.



Fig. 18. A drawing of the pseudo-*emblema* (Author: Kr. Frangova).

In the middle of the described rectangular panel is placed the round pseudo- *emblema* with diameter 2.0 m. The main pattern represents a running wheel[19] surrounded by a stylized laurel wreath (fig. 18). In the middle of the wheel is placed a small circle (diameter 0.18 cm) outlined with double row of grey *tessellae*. The inner contour of the central circle is bolded with one white and one dark purple lines and filled with black (or dark green) *smaltae*. From the centre to the periphery of the wheel run curved double grey lines by which the inner surface of the wheel is divided in 8 crescent shaped elements. Each of the crescents is outlined with double white line and filled with a different colour. There are two dark green, two ochre and four red elements

[19] Balmelle *et al*. 2002, 42.

placed oppositely. In the north part of the wheel is inscribed a word in Latin: FELIX (fig. 19). The inscription is made of yellow *smaltae* and placed on two of the crescents (red and ochre ones). It has dimensions: length - 0.40 m, height of the letters - 0.07–0.10 m. The letters F and L are made in a cursive manner, the letter I has small horizontal *hastae* on both ends while the X is smaller than other letters and is placed up to the dividing line of the crescent. The word Felix (which means 'Happy') probably indicates the name of the owner of the building or expresses a wish of good fortune to him. It is quite possible the inscription to be added later in the pseudo-*emblema*, probably at the same time when the small *smaltae* cross in panel 2 was made.

The running wheel is surrounded by a stylized image of laurel wreath bordered by two concentric circles of double grey lines. Between the borders are placed three-leaf elements on ochre background outlined with white line (fig. 20). The leaves are filled with alternating dark green and dark purple colours. The base of the wreath is in the middle of the west side where two dark green three-leaf elements are placed with their bases one to the other. From this point the pattern of alternating green and dark purple leaves runs in north and south direction until the middle of the east side where is placed a small circle outlined with white and ochre lines and filled with dark purple *tessellae*.

Dimensions: width of the wreath - 0.22 cm; *tessellae* - from 0.7 by 0.8 cm to 1.7 by 1.8 cm; predominant sizes - 1.2 by 1.3 cm; *smaltae* - from 0.4 by 0.6 to 1.0 by 1.2 cm; predominant sizes - 0.8 by 0.9 cm.

Structure of the mosaic base. The structure of the base on which the mosaic decoration is settled could be described thanks to the several discovered pieces of the floor found in the damaged areas (fig. 21) as well as the observations made during restoration work in 2015. The mortar base of the mosaic was placed over rammed building destructions of the earlier period of the building. There is not any kind of additional base of stones or other material. The thickness of the mosaic base is ca. 5 cm. The real base consists of ca. 4.2 cm thick layer of pale pink mortar mixed with brick particles. This layer in fact forms the so-called *nucleus*. Its surface is covered with 0.7–0.8 cm thick layer of pure white mortar - *supranucleus* - in which are settled the mosaic *tassellae*.[20]

Petrographic analysis of *tessellae*. For studying the materials used in mosaic floor it was made a petrography of 24 *tessellae* of all colours. The analysis was made by Assos. Professor Stefka Pristavova (Mining and Geology University 'St. Ivan Rilski') and Tsveta Stanimirova (Faculty of Geology and

[20] See Farneti 1993, 89.

Geography, Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski'). There are established several rock species for the mosaic *tessellae*:

- white *tessellae* are made of white middle-grain marbles;
- grey *tessellae* are made of pale grey, clayish limestones;
- green *tessellae* are made of greyish-green diabases;
- yellow *tessellae* are made of pale-yellow sandstones;
- dark red *tessellae* are made of red-brownish sandstones;
- light red *tessellae* are made of pottery shards;
- purple *tessellae* are made of trachyandesites;
- blue, yellow, green and dark green to black *smaltae* are made of glass.

For all kinds of rocks could be supposed a local origin except the purple ones. The mineral specter, structure and hydro-thermal modifications of the rock are not attested on territory of Bulgaria. The specific structure of the purple *tessellae* allow to define the rock as so-called '*imperial porphyry stone*'. The comparative analysis with similar specimens in scientific studies indicates that the three purple *tessellae* are of porphyry from the Gebel Dokhan quarries in Egypt.

Analysis of the decoration. The decorative patterns used in the Felix mosaic are not exceptional in the repertoire of the provincial mosaic art. The closest parallels are known from *Serdica* - the mosaics of the basilica St. Sofia,[21] a part of mosaic floor near western gate of *Serdica*.[22] Similar geometrical motifs show also several mosaics from *Pautalia*[23] and *Augusta Traiana*.[24]

The most interesting is the pattern of the pseudo-*emblema* - the running wheel with a laurel wreath around it (figs. 15, 18). Some mosaic floors form *Pautalia* and *Philippopolis* are decorated with rosette of scales which patterns have similar visual effect[25] but the wheel of this kind in Bulgaria is attested only in the Felix mosaic of *Serdica* up to present. The motif of the running wheel is known from one mosaic from *Apamea* dated *ca*. 362-363.[26]

The shape of the wreath around the running wheel is very similar to the images of imperial diadems from Constantine the Great onward. The composing elements of mosaic image - stylized laurel leaves in green and purple on ochre background with a round medallion in centre - are similar to type '1 g' of the imperial diadems.[27] The collections of the Louvre and The Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore have such kind of imperial crowns made of

[21] Koranda 1991/1992, 87-89, 92-93, Abb. 1-3, 7; Popova 2015, t. VII.
[22] Borisova-Katsarova 2015.
[23] Katsarova 2005, 80, fig. 39.
[24] Kalchev 2009, 86-89, figs. 11-12.
[25] Ivanov 1960, 215-219, figs. 15, 20; Bospachieva 2003, 93, fig. 9.
[26] Balty 1981, 208.
[27] Popovič 2005, 105, fig. 1, 109-110, fig. 11.

gold plates in *opus interrasile* adorned with amethysts, emeralds and pearls. The diadems are interpreted as imperial insignia.[28] The change from *corona civica* to diadem with gems is attested at the reign of Constantine I, after 326.[29] The colours used in the Felix mosaic of *Serdica* obviously represent a real object: the ochre background is for the golden strap on which are set the stylized laurel leaves of amethysts made of porphyry *tessellae* and emeralds of green ones. The round medallion in the centre is also adorned with amethyst. The use of porphyry *tessellae* is exceptional in mosaic art and could be an additional indication of the connection with the imperial diadems. The *Serdica* wreath is close to the images of diadems of porphyry statuary group of the tetrarchs in Vatican library. Similar image of wreath is placed on the obverse of many 4th century coins of the type VOTIS X MULTIS XX.[30] An image of a wreath is known from *Apamea* in which there is also inscription in Greek '*eu chro*'.[31] The interpretation of the *Apamea* wreath reveals its iconographical connection with the imperial insignia which in Neo-Platonist context is a sign for the victory of the wisdom.[32] The symbolic meaning of the wreath from Classical Antiquity onwards has close connection with a high status and privileges. The golden crown with gems usually indicates the members of emperor's family but also saints and martyrs.[33] Taking in consideration the secular character of the building in *Serdica* the value of the wreath as a symbol of martyrdom and sainthood is hard to believe. It could be identified as stylized image of imperial diadem - a common insignia from the Tetrarch emperors onward. The use of purple and green colours on ochre background as well as the porphyry *tessellae* is additional argument in this respect. On the other hand the building has no character of imperial residence or palace. The image of an emperor's diadem in the mosaic floor of a private house could be explained by an act of honour from the emperor to the owner. Most probably the symbolic meaning of the entire *emblema* intends to represent a high status rank of the owner and a wish of happy and prosperous life, which is supported by the the word FELIX. The location and size of the building indicate that this was the house of some important person most probably a city magistrate. The archaeological excavations in 2010-2011 discovered in vicinity a huge apse of an early Christian basilica most probably the bishop's one.[34] Taking in consideration this fact it is not excluded the house with the Felix mosaic to be the bishop's residence in the last quarter of 4th – beginning of 5th century.

[28] Popovič 2005, 107, figs. 5-7.
[29] Meischner 1995, 439.
[30] See Kent 1981, 50-54.
[31] Balty 1981, 119, fig.127.
[32] Balty 1995, 272-273.
[33] Severini 2000, 155-156.
[34] See Ivanov 2014, 240.

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Fig. 2. The mosaic floor in room 1 of building A6 (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 7. A detail of the mosaic border (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 8. The pattern of panel 1 (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 9. The pattern of panel 2 (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 10. The *smaltae* cross in the east part of panel 2 (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 11. The pattern of panel 3 (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 12. The pattern of panel 4 (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 13. The pattern of panel 5 (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 14. The pattern of panel 6 (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 15. The pseudo-*emblema* of the mosaic (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 16. A *cantharos* with growing vine stems (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 17. A detail of the vine stem with leaf and grape cluster (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 19. The inscription FELIX in the pseudo-*emblema* (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 20. A detail of the wreath (Photo: M. Ivanov).



Fig. 21. A piece of the mosaic with the structure of the base (Photo: M. Ivanov).

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Late antique artefacts with biblical storylines found in Serdica

Dochka Vladimirova-Aladzhova

Abstract: The focus of the present article are two lead artefacts, uncovered at the archaeological explorations of Serdica.

The first artifact is a commercial seal, on whose obverse side is depicted a straight human figure between two lions, both of them with heads facing backwards towards the central figure.

According to the iconographic standards, the image on the seal is associated with the Old Testament parable of Daniel in the lion's den. The image of Daniel is one of the earliest Christian symbols.

The second artefact is a lead, double-sided round plate. On the conditionally accepted as a front side is depicted the image of the Good Shepherd who symbolizes the Savior in the early years of Christianity. On the reverse there is an image, similar to the one depicted on the seal - Daniel, hands uplifted in prayer standing between two lions.

The examined monuments from Serdica originate from the strata in the city and are related to a certain archaeological context. Data coincide with the time of the end of the 3rd and 4th centuries, when the described above scenes with their style peculiarities and iconography are famous among the population.

Key words: commercial seal, tessera, Daniel in the lion's den, Good Shepherd, late antique

Резюме: Обект на настоящата статия са два оловни паметника открити при археологически разкопки на антична Сердика.

Първият паметник е търговски печат (пломба), върху чието лице е изобразена права човешка фигура (частично запазена) между два лъва с обърнати назад глави към централната фигура.

Описаната сцена се свързва със старозаветната притча за Даниил в пещерата/ямата с лъвовете. Образът на Даниил е един от най-ранните християнски символи.

Вторият паметник представлява оловна, двулицева кръгла плочка. Върху едната страна е представен образът на Добрия пастир, като символ на Христос в ранното християнство. Върху обратната страна има изображение, аналогично на описаното върху пломбата –Даниил с лъвовете.

Разгледаните паметници от Сердика произхождат от късноантичните пластове в града и са свързани с определен археологически контекст. Данните съвпадат с времето от края на III и IV век, когато описаните по-горе сцени със своите особености в стила и иконографията са популярни сред населението.

The focus of this article are two lead finds discovered during the archaeological excavations of ancient Serdica. Although different in appearance, both of them have in common images depicting scenes from the Holy Scriptures.

The first artefact is a commercial seal, which is a rectangular lead plate with rounded corners and dimensions of 17/23 mm. On the obverse side is depicted a straight human figure (partially preserved) between two lions, one moving to the left, the other to the right, both of them with heads facing backwards towards the central figure. The latter figure is partially preserved because its place coincides with the duct of the cord, which was used to attach the commercial seal to the container or the package subject of trade.

The reverse side is a convex smooth surface with an oval shape and dimensions of 15/19 mm. The weight of the seal is 20, 08 g (fig. 1 a, b).[1]

According to the iconographic standards, the image on the seal is associated with the Old Testament parable of Daniel in the lion's den. The fear of death, after which nothing remains, accompanies the man from his birth to the grave.[2] The refusal of people to accept the reality of life leads to the presence in the mythological tales of response-promise about 'afterwards', of course only when certain conditions, usually moral ones, are observed. The Christianity also promises eternal life after the resurrection, which has attracted followers during the centuries. In this regard, the scene of Daniel between the lions was perceived by the Christians as a symbol of salvation and resurrection.[3]

The second artefact is a lead, double-sided round plate with a diameter of 23 mm; thickness of 3 mm and weight of 4.42 g.[4] The edge of the plate has a convex shape, which gives a reason to be assumed that the plate was made by casting in a stone or ceramic mold (fig. 2 a, b). On the conditionally accepted as a front side, is depicted a beardless young man wearing a short tunic tightened in the waist, holding with his hands a sheep, which is placed on his shoulders. Below, on both sides at his feet there is a sheep - one moving to the left and and the other to the right with heads turned back towards the young man. It is assumed that this scene represents the image of the Good Shepherd who symbolizes the Savior in the early years of Christianity.

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[1] Ivanov 2013, 290-291. The Seal (FIN/Field inventory number 116/ 2012) was found in 2012 during regular archaeological excavation at site'Metro station 8 II' - East to Cardo Max - west of building A7 and south of canal north-west part of the same building, at depth of 537.95 m. I would like to thank Dr. Mario Ivanov for the opportunity to publish the artifact.

[2] Markov 2006, 65.

[3] Markov 2006, 66.

[4] Borisova-Katsarova & Stanev 2017, 314-316. I would like to thank Dr. Iliana Borisova for the opportunity to publish the artefact.

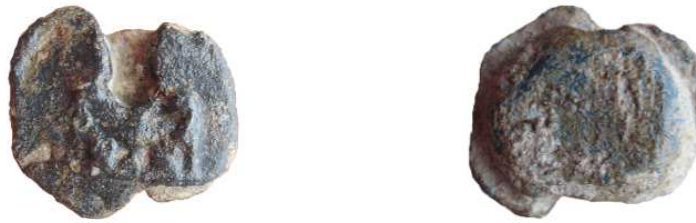


Fig. 1 a, b. Lead seal from Serdica.



Fig. 2 a, b. Lead round-plate from Serdica.

On the reverse there is an image, similar to the one depicted on the seal - Daniel, hands uplifted in prayer standing between two lions. The image of Daniel is one of the earliest Christian symbols and is based on some episodes from the book of Daniel, written in 163 BC. The main plot of the book is based on the throwing of Daniel into the Lion's Pit because of his faith in God according to an order issued by King Darius.[5]

On the periphery of the plate there are two concentric circles with tilted short lines between them. This additional decoration creates the feeling of greater expressiveness of the scenes depicted on the plate.

The described two-sided artefact refers to the group of *tesserae*,[6] which have a wide range of purposes - tokens / coupons for bread, wine, a pass to visit private and public events, an identification document, etc.

[5] Pokrovskii 1878, 483-398; Muller 1944, 87-90; Ramsey 1983, 375-378.

[6] http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/tesserae/t.html; Nikolai Markov identifies this type of artefacts as amulets, based on traces of broken hoop for hanging: see Markov 2005, 6-9. At the artefact from Serdica no evidence of hanging was found.

Publishers of this type of finds are state and city institutions, professional associations and private individuals, etc. The depicted on them scenes of the Good Shepherd and Daniel in the cave (the pit) with the lions can be found separately or in combination on various early Christian objects – seals,[7] lamps, gems,[8] lead *tesserae*, frescoes in tombs, etc.,[9] which confirms their popularity. These storylines are built upon older pagan traditions, while preserving their symbolism. The main motif is the human hope for the victory of the good over evil and the protection from the latter.

The examined monuments from Serdica originate from the late antique strata in the city and are related to a certain archaeological context.[10] Data coincide with the time of the end of the 3rd and 4th centuries, when the described above scenes with their style peculiarities and iconography are well-known among the population.[11] During the period after the adoption of the Edict of Milan and the proclamation of ecclesiastical peace, objects (in this case seals and *tesserae*) with scenes of the Good Shepherd and Daniel with the Lions were allowed to be used quietly, without sanctions, since they have been perceived in the spirit of the new religion. The purpose of the unification of these two images is to make a stronger impact while creating an ideologically richer symbol at the same time.[12] In this regard, the information of Eusebius of Caesarea is interesting, he writes: 'At the spring which is in the middle of the market, we will see the well-known, to the ones knowing the Holy Scriptures, images of the Good Shepherd; also a figure of Daniel with the lions, made of bronze and shining with its golden coat'.[13] This statuary group can also be viewed as an expression of the universal prayer of the Christians from the city for their spiritual salvation: 'God save us, as you have saved Daniel!'.[14]

Probably the owner of the *tessera* from Serdica also has relied on the strong protection of the Good Shepherd and Daniel. At the same time, we should not exclude the possibility for the *tessera* to be a pass for participation

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[7] Markov 2000, 157-159.

[8] Markov 2017, 253-259 - http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=59182&partId=1&searchText=Byzantine&page=84.

[9] Wessel 1966, col. 1114; Ramsey 1983, 375-378; Bowes 2008, 575-619; Freeman 2015, 159-161.

[10] Until now the known artifacts of this type and with similar scenes are random finds, see Markov 2000, 157-159; 2005, 6-9.

[11] Undisputed contributions to the topic have the publications of Nicholai Markov, see Markov 2000, 157-159; 2005, 6-9; 2006. I would like to thank him for the collegial attitude and the discussion on the subject.

[12] Markov 2005, 9.

[13] Cited Markov 2005, 9: Eusebius. *De vita Constantini*. III, 41.

[14] Markov 2005, 9.

in some religious rituals, or to be an insignia showing affiliation to a religious society.[15]

The popularity of the images of the Good Shepherd and Daniel is transmitted over the centuries, despite the reduced intensity and various manifestations.[16] At the Sixth Ecumenical Council in Trullo, 691-692 AD, during the reign of Emperor Justinian II, 102 rules are adopted, of which, the one under number 82 prohibits the depiction of Christ on symbols.[17] Nevertheless, the tradition is so strong that these images, even modified, in combinations with saints revered during their time, appear on monuments from the early[18] and late Middle Ages.[19]

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[15] Turcan 1987, 15; Mitrev 2016, 245-255.
[16] Freeman 2015, 159-161.
[17] Malitski 1994, 135-136.
[18] Atanasov 1990, 42-48.
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Late Roman Mosaic in villa No 1 in Kalimanitsa near Montana

Miroslav Markov

Abstract: The mosaic pavement in villa No 1 in Kalimanitsa belongs to the West-Balkan type of composition with geometric character. It is well dated with a coin, found in the mortar, in the years immediately after or synchronous to 319-320. At that time additional rooms and walls were constructed in the villa. Very interesting are the data on the mosaic technique and the specialization in the craft of mosaic. In the *horreum* near the villa a lead sheet was found, probably used for samples of different motives and elements of the mosaic. The non-used tesserae found in another room of the *horreum* show that the assistant of the mosaicist was occupied in cutting the stone and preparing the material for the mosaic, while the master was busy with its designing and making. The analysis of the mortar evidence the usage of blood for better quality of the mosaic foundation. The marble of Berkovitsa in several colours is used predominantly.

The composition is typical for the West Balkan areas, influenced by Northern Italy. It has no figural or ornamental decoration, but there is a balance between the orthogonal and curvy elements-fillings. The places of the entrances, real or provisory, are marked at the borders.

Keywords: mosaic technique, lead sheet in mosaic designing, West Balkan compositions, coin-habit in mosaic

Резюме: Мозаичният под от вила No 1 при Калиманица принадлежи на Западнобалканския тип композиция с геометричен характер. Мозайката е добре датирана с монета, намерена в подложката ѝ, в години веднага след 319-320 или едновременно с тях. През това време са изградени допълнителни помещения и стени във вилата. Много интересни са данните за мозаичната техника и специализацията в мозаичния занаят. В хорея до вилата е намерен оловен лист, вероятно за шаблони на различни мотиви и елементи на мозайката. Неизползваните тесери, намерени в друго помещение на хорея, че помощника на мозаиста се е занимавал с чукането на камъка и приготвянето на материала за мозайката, докато неговият майстор се е занимавал с дизайна и нареждането ѝ. Анализът на хоросана доказва използването на кръв за по-добро качество на мозаичната подложка. Основно е използван е Берковски мрамор в няколко цвята.

Композицията е характерна за района на Западните Балкани под влиянието на Северна Италия. Тя не притежава фигурална или орнаментална декорация, но в нея е постигнат баланс между правоъгълните и извитите елементи-запълвания. Местата на входовете, реални или въображаеми, са отбелязани в бордюрите.

In Lower Moesia the municipal property, in which comprised big and middle landownership, was developed with the appearance of the towns and the forming of its territories in the 2nd century.[1] This process has begun with the settling of veterans and civic population already with the first years of the Roman rule. The agrarian colonization leads to increasing significantly the number of landowners – Roman citizens, which represent the upper crust in the developing towns, first of all in the colonies Ulpia Oescus and Ratiaria. Gradually such veterans appeared also in the fertile valleys of the rivers flowing into Danube, first at its mouths, later in the interior as well. Other settlers joined them, mainly from the provinces of Asia Minor, as well as from Italy. These conditions have created great possibilities for the existence of land ownership different in size. The settlers, attracted by the good conditions of farming, converted to rich owners of significant parcels of land. Independent of the difference between the trade and the land nobility, both invested their money in land, which became the base of their economic power.

At the same time the building of the so-called 'villas' has begun – vast architectural complexes, situated among the land estates near to the neighboring town centers. Such villas are discovered near all bigger towns and in the fertile river valleys.[2] The town aristocracy gave expression of its material power and economic possibilities in the rich decoration of the villas.

Near the present-day Montana there are three Roman villa complexes. The first was found in the already non-existing village of Kalimanitsa, in the location 'Manastira', 6.5 km from the town. This archaeological monument, sheltered among the peripheral heights of Stara planina (the Balkan mountains), is built on a plain land on a surface about 200 m long and 1000 m wide. The river Zlatitsa flows 50-100 m to the east-southeast, while to the west-northwest a small height is rising, overgrown with forests and meadows and there are five tumuli destroyed at the moment. To the south of this terrain there is a marshy place with already non-existing source.[3]

This place has not been chosen at random. It meets the requirements for such buildings, described by the ancient authors Varro and Columella, who have announced that a villa should be constructed near to a big road, but not immediately next to it; in a beautiful locality and near to water; on a southern slope; and the most important, next to good neighbors.[4] This architectural complex belongs to the villas of group II with a representative dwelling part.[5] It

[1] It was presented at the conference 'Ancient quarries and ancient mosaics in Bulgaria', held in New Bulgarian University in Sofia in 2013.
[2] Velkov 1979, 301-302.
[3] Alexandrov 1983, 39-40.
[4] Kabakchieva 2009, 8.
[5] Dinchev 1997, 32.

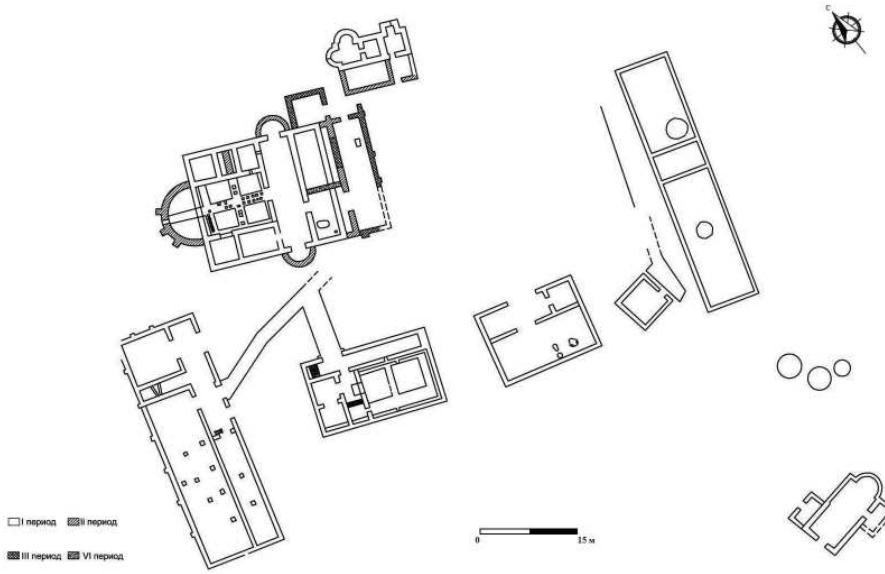


Fig. 1. The villa complex No 1 of Kalimanitsa (according G. Alexandrov with additions of M. Markov).

consists also of a separate bath and several more predominantly farm buildings, grouped around an inner yard with irregular outlines (fig. 1). The house and the bath of the so-called 'block type' are in the northern part of the complex, which appeared in the second half of the 2nd century.[6] A later building period is outlined in its development, related to the end of the 3rd – the first half of the 4th century. Initially the house had rectangular plan, covering about 360 sq. m, but in the later building period a big apse, connected with the central hall, has been appended. In the third building period two smaller rooms have been constructed south of the central room, the west one covered with mosaic pavement (fig.2). It is very well preserved, except a small part of the northern frame, and has almost a square form with dimensions 3.72x3. 93 m (Inventory No 50 of the Regional Museum of Montana).

Technique. The foundation of the mosaic is very solid. First the clay surface was rammed and then the statumen made. This thick lowest layer consists of cobble-stones and fragments of bricks and tegulae with dimensions 0.10-0.15 cm, laid on the rammed clay and overwhelmed by white mortar. It has penetrated among them, forming an even layer 0.12 cm thick. The next layer, the rudus, 0.03 m thick, is with grey-brownish colour, due to the great amount

[6] Dinchev 1997, 33.

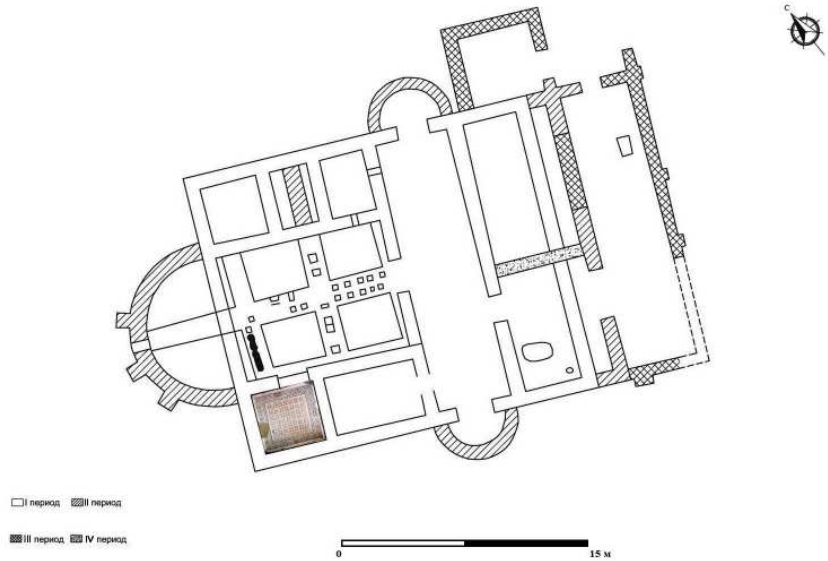


Fig. 2. Villa in the complex No 1 of Kalimanitsa (according to G. Alexandrov with additions of M. Markov).

of sand and slaked lime. The analysis of it made in the last century[7] revealed that except a lot of sand and a little amount of lime, the mixed substance has a great quantity of blood. Probably with it the mosaicist aimed not only at a greater cohesion, but also at the isolation of the padding from the subterranean sweat.[8] The third layer, the nucleus placed over the mentioned two is a fine padding of white lime 1 cm thick, in which the *tesserae* were inserted.

The technique is *opus tesselatum*, with stone and terracotta *tesserae* as big as 1 cm, but there are also separate smaller ones, up to 0.1-0.2 cm. The white, light blue and pink *tesserae* are marble. Its geologic provenance is from the local quarries of the town of Berkovitsa, the so-called Berkovitsa marble. Almost all the marble arae, tomb steles, statues and different architectonic elements from Montana and the region are made of this marble. Only the black tesserae are made of biotite schists.

A very interesting find was unearthed in the *horreum* next to the dwelling of the owner of the estate. A lot of tesserae, most probably made *in situ*, were found in room 2 (figs. 3-4), and a fold up sheet of lead in

[7] The Benzidine Test was made in the Regional Hospital of Montana (at that time Michailovgrad) in the last century.
[8] Alexandrov 1974, 6.

room 1 (figs. 5-6), The sheet is 0.37 cm long, 0.005 m thick and preserved width of 0.27 m. A lot of traces made by a pointed instrument are visible on it. It is known that the mosaic motifs could be outlined on such lead sheets.[9] It is quite possible that small thin straps cut from it have been used in the outlining and the drawing of the catenaries and curves in the motifs of the mosaic decoration of the villa in Kalimanitsa. The already cited example coming from Aquincum[10] represents a bronze triangle with a handle, with an ivy leaf inside. This was also a real mould, giving a conventional stencil on the wet surface of the nucleus to be repeated many times, which assures stricter dimensions both of the separate ornamental motifs and of the geometric forms. These two finds also demonstrate the specialization in the craft of mosaic: the chief mosaicist was doing the most important activities of the design, while his assistants, journeymen or simply slaves were cutting the stones as to prepare the tesserae.

Composition and motifs. The central field is surrounded by three different in width and ornaments frames (fig. 7). The biggest of them is 0.32-0.33 m wide, placed on a white background. It is a swastika-meander, with double turn to the left. Its uniformity is interrupted four times in the middle of each side; on two neighboring borders two guilloches in a straight line; on the third one a Solomon knot is placed. It is supposed that the now destroyed middle of the fourth side also has contained the same knot. These motifs are marking the entrances to the room, real or not, from the other rooms. But in the case of Kalimanitsa there existed only two entrances because the room with mosaic was at the utmost end of the villa.

Next follows the border with guilloche, whose curves are more open and wider, this time white against a black background. The last most inner border is a grey band against a white background. The width of all three borders is diminishing to the center, creating an effect of depth. It is obvious that there is a special search for balance between the strict geometric orthogonal elements and the motifs with curvy and round outlines. Although the borders are in almost monochromic palette, the alternation of the motifs as forms, size, direction and background make the borders look very dynamic.

This impression is strengthened by the composition in the center. First of all many colours are included in the marble tesserae themselves, among them the pink one and its combination with the light blue, which eliminates the severity of the geometric scheme of the tangenting circles and the monochromatism.[11] On the second place these are the circles with

[9] Alexandrov 1974, 8.
[10] Popova & Lirsch 2016, 96, note 409.
[11] Popova & Lirsch 2016, 96-99.

included Solomon knots, white on a black background. Next 'softening' of the geometry is achieved by the squares with concave sides among the circles (fig. 8). They are filled with dots or several alternating small squares in the centers with different sizes and various colours. The dynamic play is very strong, but not aggressive. In spite of the many details, the scheme is easily read and the fillings are subordinate to it in a very decorative way. The skill of the mosaicist is on a quite good level. Among the fillings some Latin but also Greek letters as monograms can be observed, but it can't be read as a name (fig. 9). The researchers supposed so far that it is either the name of the owner, or of the mosaicist.

The coin. A very important fact for the study of the mosaics in Bulgaria and in the Balkans is the coin of Constantine I, found in the mortar under the tesserae of the mosaic. It is minted in Siscia in 319-320.[12] The coin is kept in the numismatic fund of the Regional Historical Museum of Montana, Inventory No 1036. Its diameter is 18.2/19.5 mm, 1.7 mm thick, 3.1 g heavy.

Averse: CONSTANTINVSAVG (Constantinus Augustus). Bust of the emperor turned to the left, with helmet, cuirass and spear.

Reverse: VICT LAETAE PRINC PERP (Victoriae laetae princeps perpetuus). Two Victories standing and facing each other. Between them a shield with the inscription VOT/PR, placed on an altar.

Mint mark: Δ SIS*

The closest parallel can be found in RIC, VII, 436, no 95, coin minted in Siscia in 319-320.

The coin-habit in the Late Antique mosaics is observed already several times in the monuments in Bulgaria.[13] Its genesis can be traced in the votive offerings to the pagan gods for health and well-being of the community and the individual. But in Late Antiquity and especially in the period of the Constantinian dynasty every new building and new mosaic in the official and private sphere received such a coin offering, dating very precisely the monument itself. The used coins are contemporary to the year of construction and always in a good state, when put under the mosaic surface. That is why the date only around 319-320 and not the supposed second quarter of the 4th century is more convenient for the mosaic of the villa in Kalimanitsa.[14]

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[12] I am grateful to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bistra Bozhkova from the National Archaeological museum in Sofia, who worked on the coin in 2013 and thus helped my own work. Her opinion with all the necessary numismatic data precedes and coincides with the one from the cited article on the coin by V. Popova and A. Lirsch (2016, 99).

[13] Popova 2016a, 169-170.

[14] Popova & Lirsch 2016, 99.

Generally the mosaic scheme and the motifs relate this mosaic to the Western monuments in the Balkans, Pannonia and Italy.[15] Nevertheless it is richer with the balance of orthogonal and curvy lines, colour nuances and play between the motif and the background. This style has appeared on the eve of the new classicizing Constantinian period in art after the severe style of the Tetrarchy. The importance of this mosaic pavement is also in the data about the process of using lead samples in designing the separate motifs and in the specialization of works (designing and laying and cutting the tesserae) in the mosaic atelier.

Alexandrov, G. (1974) 'Antichna mosaika ot Montana', *Muzei i pametnitsi na kulturata* 4, 5-9.

(1983) 'Antichna vila No 1 krai Michailovgrad', *Izvestiya na muzeite ot Severozapadna Balgariya* 8, 37-81.

Velkov, V. (1979) 'Obstestveno-ikonomichesko razvitie prez II-III v.', in: *Istoriya na Balgariya*, t. I (Sofia), 301-302.

Dinchev, V. (1997) *Rimskite vili v dneshnata balgarska teritoriya* (Sofia).

Kabakchieva, G. (2009) *Velikolepieto na vila Armira* (Sofia).

Mashov, S. (1983) 'Antichni pametnitsi ot Vrachanski okrag', *Izvestiya na muzeite ot Severozapadna Balgariya* 8, 83-101.

Popova, V. (2016a) 'Monuments from the Tetrarchy and the Reign of the Constantinian Dynasty', in: M. Rakocija (ed) *Niš and Byzantium* 14, 155-186.

(2016b) 'Itinerant and local Workshops: the Problem of direct Work and indirect Influences on the Roman Mosaics in Bulgaria', in: L. Neira Jiménez (ed) *Estudios sobre Mosaicos Antiguos y Medievalis* (Roma), 115-120.

Popova, V. & Lirsh, A. (2016) 'Mosaikaus der sog. villa rustica No 1 von Kalimanica', in: R. Pillinger, A. Lirsch & V. Popova (Hg.) *Corpus der spätantiken und frühchristilichen Mosaiken Bulgariens* (Wien), 96-99.

Wollanka, J. (1929) 'Ein römisches Mosaika aus Balacza', *Jahreshefte des Österreichisches Archeologisches Instituts* 25, 5-9.

[15] For the earlier parallels see Wollanka 1929, 5 and Mashov 2003, 9; for the Western trend and some later examples see Popova 2016b, 116-117; Popova & Lirsch 2016, 97-99.



Fig. 3. Non-used *tesserae* made probably in situ in room 2 of the *horreum*. Regional Historical Museum of Montana (Photo: M. Markov).



Fig. 4. Another portion of the non-used but prepared tesserae found in the *horreum* (Photo: M. Markov).



Fig. 5. The lead sheet found in the *horreum*. Regional Historical Museum of Montana (Photo M. Markov).



Fig. 6. Another view of the lead sheet (Photo: M. Markov).



Fig. 7. The mosaic of villa No 1 in Kalimanitsa, general view. The Official entrance hall of the Regional Governor of Montana (after Popova & Lirsch 2016).



Fig. 8. Detail of the mosaic composition (Photo: M. Markov).



Fig. 9. Detail from the central field with letters (Photo: M. Markov).



Fig. 10. Coin of Constantine I from 319-320, mint of Siscia, found in the mosaic. Averse (Photo: M. Markov).



Fig. 11. Reverse of the same coin (Photo: M. Markov).

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Early monasticism in Thrace: an issue of archaeology

Alexander Manev

Abstract: The identification of monastic structures in Thrace is closely related to their presumed coenobitic character. The main issue in recognizing a monastery within the archaeological process is generated by the lack of a clear spatial scheme of the Early Christian cloisters. This is why some structural elements of the large eastern complexes are being translated into standard landmarks of the monastery core, namely: the enclosed character of the monastic space; the chain disposition of the cell-dwellings and the binding presence of a *katholikon*. A particularly important role in the series of buildings take the ones for communal activities, i.e. a kitchen or refectory.

Archaeological research has not encountered such spatial program within the diocese of Thrace. The lack of explicit coenobitic complexes predetermines the uncertainties related to the identification of the early monastic sites.

Not all the sites can be chronologically specified correctly, and yet the lack of evidence for monastic organization in Thrace before the middle of fifth century is quite notable. This could be due to the imperfection of the archaeological method, but possibly must be related to the full institutionalization of monasticism by the Church after the Fourth ecumenical council of 451. We should point out that all sites in Thrace which can be assigned monastic emerge after this date.

All examined sites bring us to the conclusion that the main challenge for the identification of an Early Christian monastery is presented by their unclear archaeological context. A structural character of the Early Christian monastery cannot be laid down and the lack of wide-range of archaeological results can bring incorrect conclusions.

Key words: Early Christianity, Early Monasticism, Late Antiquity, Thrace, coenobitic, anchoretic, katholikon, archaeological identification

Резюме: Идентификацията на монашески структури в Тракия е тясно свързана с презумпцията за киновиалния им характер. Основният проблем при разпознаването на манастира в археологическия процес представлява липсата на ясна пространствена схема, отличаваща раннохристиянските обители. Поради тази причина структурни елементи от големите източни киновиални комплекси получават статута на основни белези в ранното манастирско ядро, а именно: затвореният характер на отшелническото пространство, верижното разположение на килийните жилища и задължителното нали-

чие на католикон. С особено голяма тежест в тази подредба би следвало да се натоварят пространствата, предназначени за комунални дейности – магерница или столова.

Тази планова програма в идеален вид не е регистрирана в Тракия. Липсата на ясно изразени киновиални комплекси определя и съмненията при идентификацията на раннохристиянските манастири. Броят на потенциалните манастирски обекти в Тракия е ограничен. При повечето от тях археологическите проучвания не предоставят цялостни резултати, които да доведат до безспорна идентификация.

Въпреки че не е налична ясна хронологическа информация за всеки един от обектите, липсата на свидетелства за монашески организации в Тракия преди средата на V век, е показателна. Това може и да се дължи на недостатъци в археологическите методи. Тази граница обаче вероятно не случайно съвпада с времето на пълно институционализиране на монашеството от Централната църковна власт след Четвъртия Вселенски Събор от 451 г. Трябва да се отбележи фактът, че всички обекти в Тракия, които с голяма степен на вероятност могат да се идентифицират като монашески, се развиват след тази дата.

Thrace was the westernmost diocese of the Prefecture of the East in the Late Roman Empire (fig. 1). It consisted of six provinces and coincided with the eastern half of the Balkan Peninsula which represented the hinterland of the capital Constantinople. In the field of Early Christianity, a complex and challenging discipline, it is difficult to examine Early Monasticism. This aspect of Christianity during the first centuries of the Church is under-researched. It is hard to say how widespread monasticism was in the Balkans and Thrace before the seventh century, and to what extent it was a common phenomenon in this region. This lack of knowledge lowers the scientific expectations about the scale of distribution of monastic buildings.

It is the opinion of some researchers that monasticism in all its forms had taken a vital role in the social life of the Empire from the first centuries of its existence.[1] As relevant as that may be in the eastern provinces, the impact of early monastic establishments on secular life in the eastern Balkans is yet to be unveiled.

Unlike the East, in the Balkans multitudinous monastic communities have not left large monastery complexes as evidence of a flourishing ascetic lifestyle, separated from society. Most parts of Thrace remained away from the major pilgrimage routes, directed to the Holy Lands and the dwellings of the first hermits.[2] The written data and archaeological evidence bear record of the rapid spreading of the Christian cult from the beginning of 4th century onwards in the region: the bishop's institution was well-developed after the

[1] Hussey 1939; Trombley 1985.

[2] Although Thrace is in immediate proximity of Constantinople and on the easiest way to reach the eastern provinces by land, the maritime travel was preferred for pilgrims. Still, a frequent land route used by Christian pilgrims was *Via Militaris* as evident from the Itineraria Burdigalense (Cuntz 1929, 86-102).

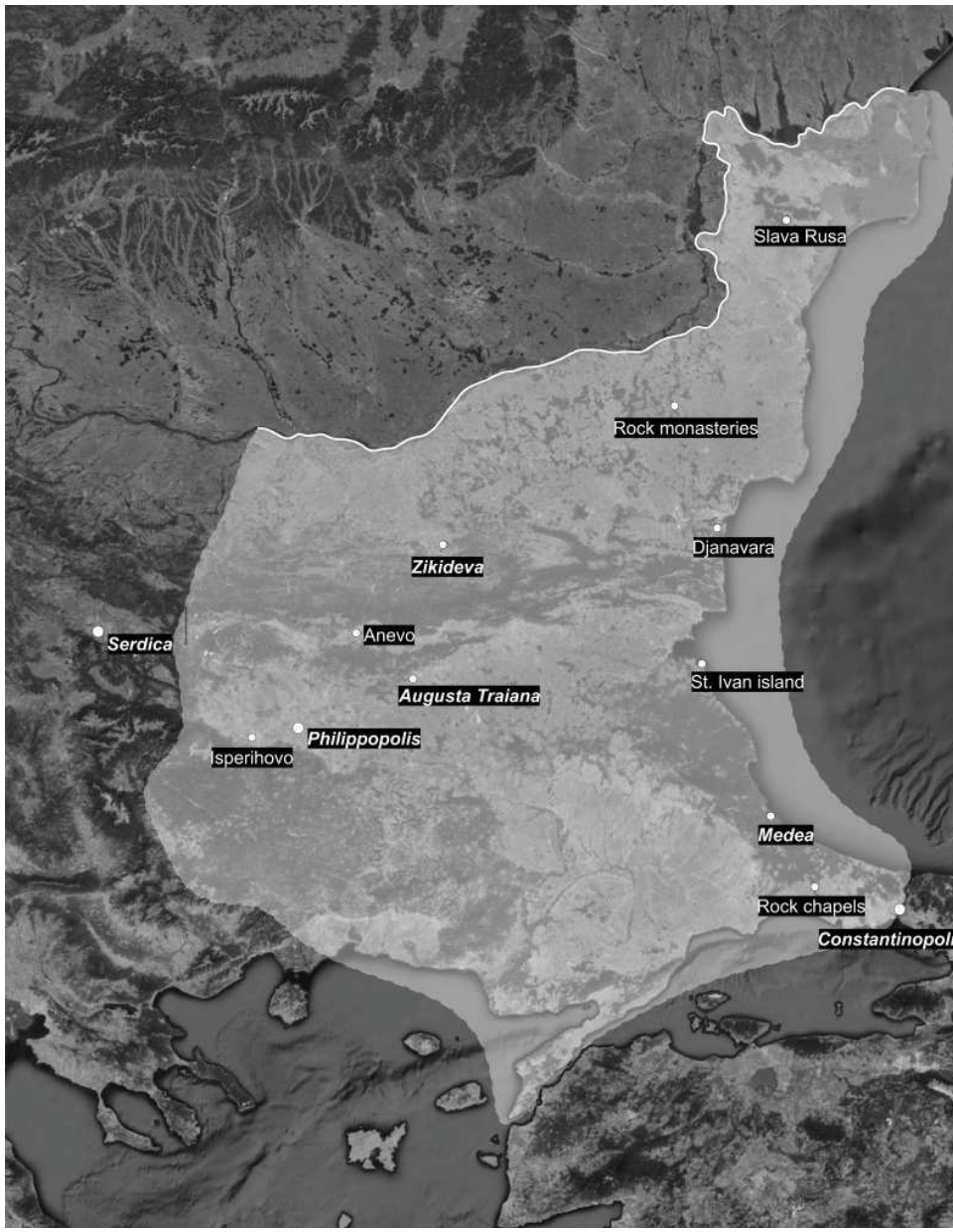


Fig. 1. The Diocese of Thrace.

Edict of Mediolanum, which is attested by the lists of Church councils as well as the proceeding of a local council which took place in Philippopolis in 343;[3]

[3] Gramatikov 2004.

the martyrs' cult is well-recorded, as seen in multiple archaeological sites in the Thracian provinces;[4] and since the very beginning of 5th century a large number of parish churches were erected.[5] Monasticism, on the other hand, is one aspect of Early Christianity, which still remains vague. The written sources provide only scarce information concerning monastic communities, referring mainly to specific limited territorial areas in Thrace. According to the words of *Paulinus*, bishop of Nola, in the beginning of 5th century monks were dwelling in monasteries along the slopes of the Rhodope Mountains.[6] A theological group grown famous as the 'Scythian monks' in the 6th century is presumably originating from a monastic organization somewhere in the northernmost province of the diocese.[7] Archaeology still has to uncover evidence to support this information.

The recognition of monastery sites is the basic problem in the matters concerning early monasticism. There is no structural scheme that would facilitate the distinction of monastic complexes. The huge organized monasteries in the deserts of Syria and North Africa like the monastery of Simeon Stylites[8] or the monastery at Tebessa[9] are not applicable to the Balkan area. Still some features of a monastic complex are the basis, where the recognition of a monastery begins. Such are the enclosed areas of the monastery premise, the chain disposition of the monastic cells, large buildings for common activities (a kitchen or a refectory). A *katholikon* is indispensable in such a complex.[10]

There are a couple of sites in the Balkans which evidently fulfill these spatial prescriptions. The first is the site at Zitomislici in *Dalmatia* (fig. 2a). It consists of a temple, a funerary chapel, a few premises, recognized as dwelling cells, all of these surrounded by a continuous wall. Outside that area a self-contained building is situated, which is considered a hospice.[11]

The second one is the monastery in Orlandovtsi, near Serdica, in the province of *Dacia Mediterranea* (fig. 2b). The regular square complex here comprises a small temple and multiple secular buildings surrounded by a fortification wall with four towers.[12]

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[4] Commentary on martyr buildings in this region can be found in Doncheva 2006.
[5] A catalogue of Early Christian buildings in Thrace is available in Chaneva-Dechevska 1999.
[6] Migne 1847.
[7] Barnea 1979, 15-16.
[8] Krautheimer 1992, 153-160, fig. 101; Tuleshkov 1988, 15, fig. 7.
[9] Krautheimer 1992, 204-205, fig. 156; Tuleshkov 1988, 15, fig. 8.
[10] On the role of the *katholikon* in monasteries see Torp 1978, 555-559, and Schroeder 2004.
[11] Andjelic 1978, 636-640; Basler 1993, 83-84; Chevalier 1995, 415-418; Popovic 1998, 137-139.
[12] The initial researcher ascribes the complex to the group of private foundations of *villae rusticae*, Velkov 1938. The excavation was carried out in a rushed manner, within

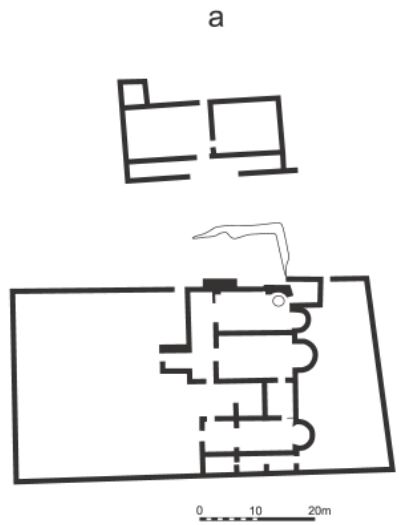


Fig. 2a. The monastery at Zitomislici (after Popovic 1998, fig. 3a).

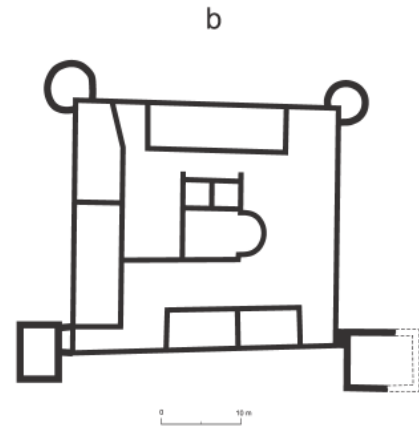


Fig. 2b. The monastery at Orlandovtsi (after Dinchev 1997, fig. 100).

Both sites were situated in river valleys outside settlement areas but close to the episcopal see. The first one is dated to the late fifth – sixth century. The latest material finds in the second one date back to the middle of fifth century. These two complexes bear essential resemblances in architectural aspect, despite the scale difference. None of the sites in Thrace, labeled as monastic, abide by such architectural formula.

The identification of a monastic site in Thrace is closely connected to the presumption of its coenobitic character. After the Fourth Ecumenical Council of 451 the Church takes upon the administration of all monasteries and anchoretic solitude is no longer favored by the Orthodox institution. Instead, it is stressed on the piousness of the *koinon bios* or the Community Life. Monasteries now cannot be seen only as places of solitude and humble dedication to divine power. Monasticism now serves the Church in various ways. This new nature of the religious austerity sets different aspects of the monastic role in society and predetermines the physical structure of separate monasteries. The monastery is still thought of as a place for separation from the secular, but the monks now could be missionaries, spreading the faith among society.

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one month. Little can be judged about the character of the site, based on the scarce information in the immediate publication. The interpretation of the buildings was apparently misplaced. It was more than 50 years later when it was recognized as a monastic compound, Dinchev 1997, 96-97.

Monastic organizations were also devoted to charity. Sometimes they turned into centers for education. In some cases their holy premises became designated pilgrimage sites. This way monasticism entered the social life and alongside it – the urban territory. This transition is not unusual for Constantinople where monastic complexes were introduced to the city environment in the late 4th century.[13] But in small provincial settlements the presence of a monastery within the social borders is innovatory. It is considered that after the Council of 451 the monastery officially enters the urban area, but no reliable data in favor of this theory applies for this region. The monastery's undefined spatial scope is the main obstacle for distinguishing it among the village structures.

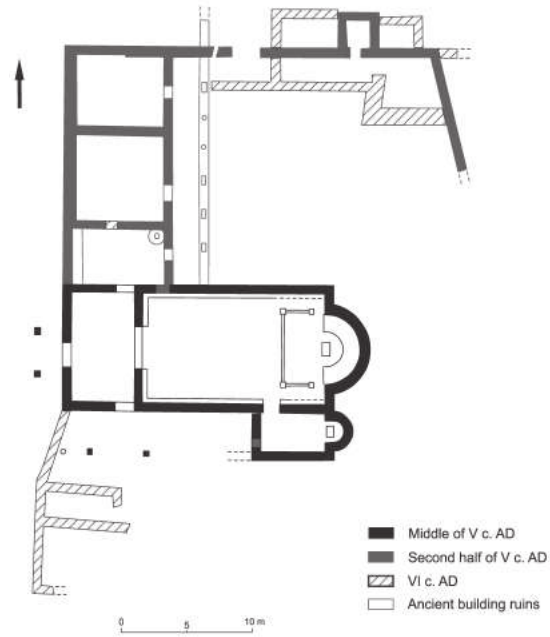


Fig. 3. Early Christian site near Isperihovo (after Dzhambov 1956, fig. 2).

This particular issue is observed at the site near today's village of Isperihovo (fig. 3).[14] It concerns an Early Christian complex situated within the inhabited area of an ancient settlement. It is prematurely assigned as a monastic site[15] and this hypothesis is subsequently repeated by many researchers.[16] The temple itself was built in the middle of 5th century. Later, three premises were added to the northwest of the church. During the excavations parts of a wall were unearthed that is supposed to have encircled a large yard. These are the only remains that are in direct connection with the temple. The arguments in favor of the monastic interpretation of the site are the wall to the north, and the function of the added premises. The first room is undoubtedly a baptistery and the others had agricultural functions according to the finds.

[13] Dagron 1970.
[14] Dzhambov 1956.
[15] Dzhambov 1956, 190.
[16] Popovic 1998, 141.

The structures from the third period in the 6th century are not in conformity with the lay-out of the cult complex and therefore cannot be considered a next stage in the development of the place. Moreover, their masonry is less representative since the builders used earth-bound rough limestone.

The disposition of the whole complex amidst a settlement brings uncertainty to the monastic identification of the site, for the additional buildings could be part of secular buildings adjacent to the church.

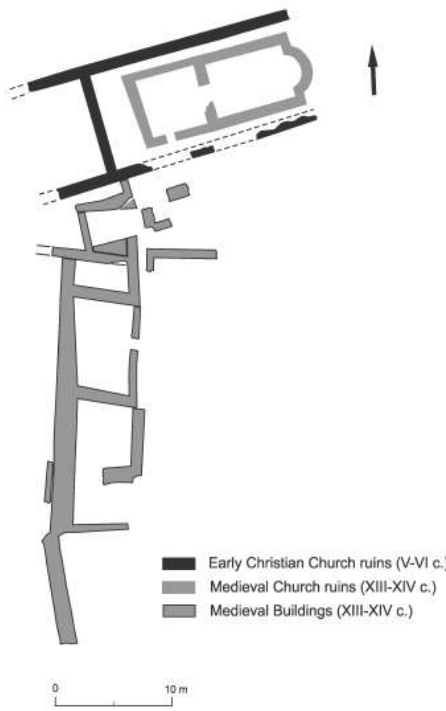


Fig. 4. Early Christian site near Anevo (after Dzhambov 1991, 149).

Another widely-accepted monastic interpretation of an Early Byzantine site should also be questioned.[17] The site is situated north of the small village of Anevo, in the southern outskirts of the Balkan Mountain, in Karlovo Valley. Once again the structures are within the borders of a small unfortified settlement, which in this case was in the immediate proximity to an Early Byzantine fortress to the south.[18] The early church was succeeded by a medieval (13th – 14th century) church or monastery (fig. 4). The excavators of the site declared the complex monastic on the basis of an uncertain functional continuity between the different ages of the ruins. The only argument is the presence of a supposed chain-building to the south, which is medieval, but appears to be superstructural in relation to 5th-6th century foundations.[19] Even so, the information is insufficient for a conclusive functional interpretation of the site. Moreover, this could be the parish church of the settlement, since no other temple has been uncovered on its territory.

These two are the only reported cases of monasteries within a village environment in Thrace. This is why their monastic affiliation may have to be

[17] Djambov 1989, 2519; Dzambov 1991, 143-144, 149; 1999.
[18] Dzhambov 2002.
[19] Djambov 1989, 2519; Dzhambov 1991, 143; 1999, 52.

re-examined. In addition, it should be noted that in the diocese the introduction of the monastery in settlement areas in archaeological terms is almost unknown throughout the whole period in question. There is only one example of a monastic complex within the fortified area of a large urban structure. Namely – the monastery in the Early Byzantine fortress under the medieval City Tsarevets (fig. 5),[20] which was recently identified with *Zikideva*,[21] a settlement known from the written record. The monastery is situated in the topographic center of the settlement. It was built soon after the fortress was founded – in the second half of 5th century. It comprises a single nave church with various buildings around it, including a large premise for community activity of some kind and a water depository.[22] Most of the complex is not retrieved, since it was destroyed by the construction of the Rulers' palace during the Second Bulgarian state. In 6th century it was reorganized as part of a larger Christian complex, including a representative residence, presumably belonging to the bishop, which was built close by.[23] This included restructuring the church into a three-nave basilica. The rest of the structures were reused and another two-storey house was built up to the southeast. Along with the episcopal palace and a small martyr sanctuary,[24] the complex formed the urban cult center.[25]

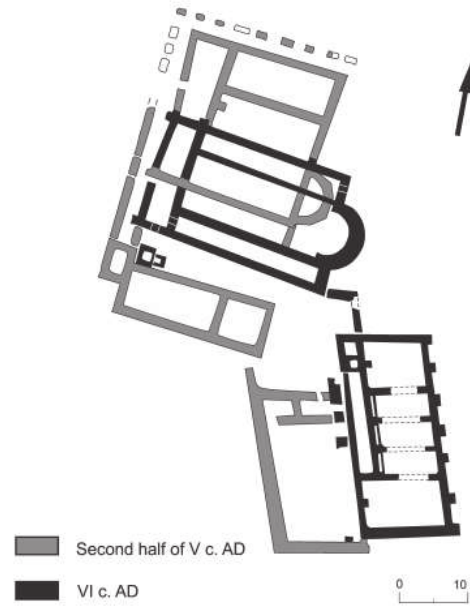


Fig. 5. The Early Christian monastery complex in Zikideva (after Angelov 1986, fig. 15).

The monastic identification of the complex seems justified. The structural units bear record of a centralized community of clerics, probably in connection with the Church administration of the bishopric.

[20] Angelov 1986.
[21] Dinchev 2003.
[22] Angelov 1986, 274-277.
[23] It is believed that in 6th century *Zikideva* succeeded Nicopolis ad Istrum in the urban priority of *Moesia Inferior* (Dinchev 2003, 409), along with the transfer of the episcopal see – Angelov 1986, 332, 336.
[24] Angelov 1962.
[25] Angelov 1986, 277-299, 333-336.

Although this monastery sets precedent for urban disposition in Thrace, the natural topography of monasteries is apart from the society. The best example for such a location is represented by the site near the city of *Ibida* (today's Slava Rusa in northern Dobrudzha).[26] The Early Christian complex is situated some 2 km from the Western gate of the city across the lowlands. It has 3 structural stages in the Late Antiquity period (fig. 6), the first one

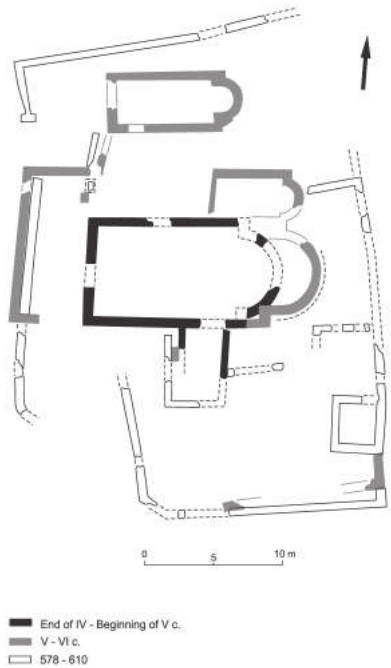


Fig. 6. Early Christian complex near Slava Rusa (after Opajt, Opajt *et al.* 1992, Abb. 2).

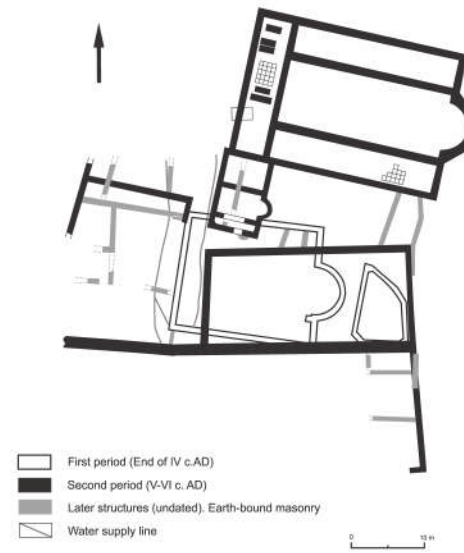


Fig. 7. Early Christian complex in Trite Chuchura quarters of Stara Zagora (after Buyukliev 1994, fig. 1b).

composed only by a single-nave church. During the second stage (second half of 5th and 6th century) additional chapels and a possible baptistery were added. Not until the very end of 6th century the surrounding of the complex was erected with various structures, most of which poorly preserved today. The monastic interpretation of the site is admissible. These are the only archaeological structures in the vicinity. Presumably the clergy in charge of the temple resided close by. The existence of possible cells for the monks in the first period cannot be ruled out, which would have formed a veritable *Lavra*.

[26] Opajt, Opajt *et al*. 1992.

A complex of light buildings (or huts) that leave no architectural evidence is a plausible speculation, on the ground of the several *dolia* found in the field nearby without archaeological context. These vessels appear to have been part of a monastic economy.

The same topographic characteristic is reproduced at a site in the province of Thrace, known as the complex of 'Trite Chuchura' quarters of today's city of Stara Zagora (fig. 7).[27] It is an Early Christian complex, situated approximately 2 km west of the fortress of the ancient Augusta Traiana, near the main road to Philippopolis. The structures here were built in the late 4th or early 5th century. They comprise a poorly preserved basilica and a small reservoir with irregular shape. In the second half of 5th – 6th century the structure had grown in scale forming a larger complex. A basilica, twice the size of the previous was erected, a baptistery was added, and possibly a surrounding wall, only the southern route of which is preserved today. The small reservoir was restructured as a large pool. The researcher believes it served as the so-called *vivarium* – a structure for fish breeding. Several graves from both periods were excavated in the area of the late basilica's narthex. According to the archeologist high-ranked clerics were buried in the temple in which they officiated.

The complex shows consistency in its economy – both periods were supplied with a *vivarium*. Unfortunately some of the structures were destroyed by projects in modern era, which leaves no room for additional examination. Therefore in this case there is not sufficient evidence for the monastic interpretation of the site. Its disposition is a convenient argument in favor of such a hypothesis. Nevertheless, the materials collected all around, present the existence of a possible ancient settlement in this place which would question the function of the temple.

Despite the dense population and well-developed settlement network in the region of Thrace, the landscape presents some almost inaccessible, isolated areas, which are the proper environment for ascetic communities. Such conditions are offered by the four islands near the coast of the province *Haemimons*. They are situated along the shore, south of today's city of Burgas. There is evidence for Christian cloister concerning all four of them. They all bear names of Christian saints and the existence of monasteries are attested on all of them during medieval times. In spite of that, very little data is found to prove early monastic presence on the islands. Late antique materials were found on both St. Anastacia[28] and St. Thomas.[29] An Early Christian basilica was excavated on the island of St. Kyrik and Iolita near Sozopol.[30] Monasteries

[27] Buyukliev 1994.
[28] Karaiotov 2004.
[29] Gerganova 2002.
[30] Panaiotova, Daskalov *et al*. 2010.

may have existed on these islands but lack of research on the first two and modern intervention on the latter are the reasons that such complexes have not come to light.

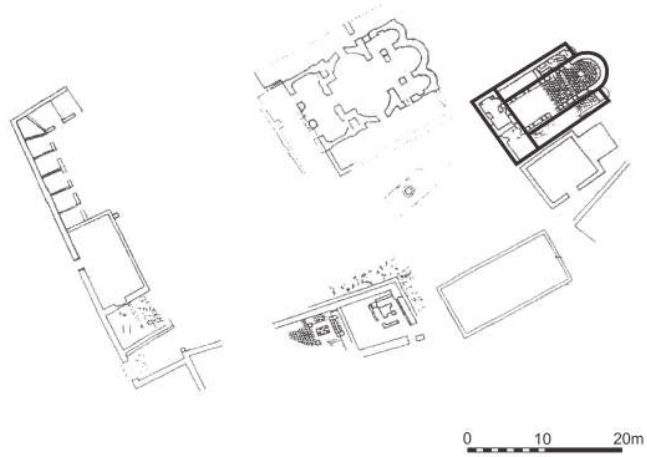


Fig. 8. The Early Christian Basilica in the medieval monastery complex on the island of Sv. Ivan (after Petrinski 2000, 188).

Fortunately the largest island named after St. John has kept sufficient evidence to attest the presence of an early monastery on the island territory.[31] It is situated underneath the ruins of the medieval monastery of St. John Forerunner (fig. 8). Only a basilica from the Early Christian period was excavated in the complex. All other buildings date from the 10th century and later. The basilica was built in the end of 4th or the beginning of 5th century. Its shape is still vague, since the excavations of the late antique layers have been carried out in the last few years. An additional obstacle for the researchers lies in the fact that the ruins of the medieval basilica reuse the site of the Early Byzantine one.[32] An interesting discovery was made in a crypt under the altar of the oldest temple. In a small marble reliquary the relics of a saint were uncovered. The popular interpretation states they belong to St. John the Baptist.[33] In any case the reliquary and its content represent an undoubted value for the Christian congregation. We lack any written data concerning the early history of the monastery but the relics bespeak the role of this sanctuary. Some 10 m length of a roundabout fence from the 4th century complex has also been recovered east of the basilica.[34] During the constructions of the monastery here in 13th century many different buildings were erected, such as a refectory, an oven, dwelling cells and a scriptorium. No evidence has been found that any of these buildings repeats the bedding of an early Christian structure.

[31] Petrinksi 2000.
[32] Popkonstantinov & Kostova 2014.
[33] Popkonstantinov, Drazheva *et al*. 2011.
[34] Popkonstantinov, Drazheva *et al*. 2012, 481.

The island is at a distance of approximately 1 km from Early Byzantine Sozopolis. No other structures from the Late Antiquity are found there. If the ruins were not a coenobitic monastery in Early Christian times, still the excavations suggest it was an enclosed complex with a constant ecclesiastical presence. Even in the case of being only a site of pilgrimage, a monastic organization had probably resided here in order to take care of the relics.

The last archaeological site that can be recognized as a monastery is situated on a hill, few kilometers south of the ancient Odessos (today's city of Varna). The locality is named Dzhanavara and the ruins have been known for more than a hundred years.[35] Along with the uncommon building design, the church owes its fame to the exceptional find under the altar. In the crypt, a saint's relics were hidden in a golden decorated box, contained within two sarcophagus-shaped reliquaries, made of silver and marble. The excavations were recently resumed and the once known massive church appears to have been surrounded by a *peribolos* forming a courtyard, organized around the temple. Different structures are being unearthed during every archaeological campaign (fig. 9).[36] The existence of premises with an economic function has been attested along the outside length of the *peribolos*. The materials bear a record for various craft workshops. The complex was founded in 5th century, when the temple was erected. Not before the 6th century the additional structures were built. The site is considered to originate from a Syrian settlers' community, evident from the architecture of the church.[37] It is not yet clear whether the character of this community was of religious nature. The monastic interpretation of the site is yet under doubt, given the evidence for various secular activities in the complex. The whole range of the structure has not been cleared up yet, but full clarification of the site's character is very probable in the years to come, in respect of the thorough annual excavations here.

Rock monasticism is the most obscure form of ascetic life, attested in Thrace. A wide spread of early Christian rock-cut sites has proved even harder to verify. Under the stress of some evidence, the general scientific investigation leads to the area along a few river runways, cut in the rocky surrounding in the province of *Scythia Minor*. The monastic complexes, carved deep in the rocks, have attracted the archaeological attention since the end of 19th century.[38] Nevertheless, it is not before the last decades of 20th century

[35] Ivanova 1926, 460-461; Minchev 1986, 36-38.

[36] The first excavations of the surrounding complex were implemented in 2009, Minchev & Tenekedzhiev 2010. Since then structures that fully encircle the church building have been registered after yearly excavations, accounted for at the annual archaeological reports in Sofia. For more detailed information on the architecture and date of the complex see Minchev & Tenekedzhiev 2013; 2015.

[37] Minchev 1986, 37; Chaneva-Dechevska 1999, 176.

[38] Shkorpil & Shkorpil 1892, 5-17.

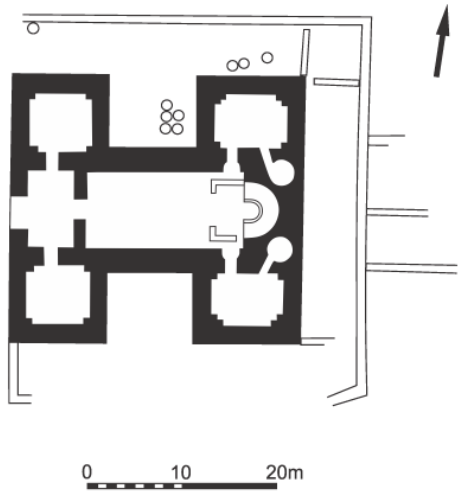


Fig. 9. The Early Christian complex in Dzhanavara locality near Varna (after Minchev & Tenekedzhiev 2013, fig. 1).

when they were first associated with the Early Christianity. Given the specificity of cave research, it comes as no surprise that actual archaeological information is very scarce and all deductions can only be made on mediate evidence. The informational gap on the subject of an early monastic network in this territory naturally predetermines the conjectural character of all interpretations. The sites in question[39] have long been recognized as rock monasteries,[40] but the date of their construction is still to be specified. The latest research suggests that the multitude of rock formations in Northern Dobrudzha were wrongfully dated to the Middle Ages by their excavators. Instead, the author believes most of the caves in the region were Early Christian rock-cut monasteries, later reused in 9th to 14th centuries. We are not going to range over the subject here, since this theory is in a premature stage. Still it must be noted that the presented analogies with Early Christian church architecture[41] is an unreliable argument. In the same time the scarce archaeological evidence[42] does not sustain this thesis beyond doubt. A secondary problem is the undefined and irregular lay-out of most structures. In all cases natural caves, unequal in scale, were secondarily carved in a rough manner to give the premises suitable form. Despite all associations with traditional basilical architecture, many of the carved elements remain

[39] For detailed description of the sites see Atanasov 1991; 2011.

[40] Margos 1983, 125-128; Bobcheva 1974, 21.

[41] Atanasov 1991, 37.The researcher believes that there is an architectural pattern, concerning the length – width ratio of the chapel premises, which associates them with the built Christian temples, although he himself notes that such observation is disputable and inconclusive.

[42] Early-Byzantine material has been recovered inside a trench, dug by treasure hunters in the foot of the rock, where the big cave monastery Gyaour-evleri is situated, Atanasov 2011, 204. Nevertheless, Atanasov himself admits that such material cannot be used as dating reference, since it might belong to a nearby settlement, Atanasov 1989, 61.

vague and unexplained. Atanasov ascribes their origins to Syrian emigrants and justifies the various peculiarities in their planning with a presumed influence from the East and Nestorian heresy in this area.[43] It is even harder to prove the distribution of early monastic complexes by the seaside, where a number of cave dwellings were registered along the rocky sea shore.[44] Although Atanasov has devoted his research on proving the existence of such occurrence in 5th and 6th century,[45] none of the sites can be associated with a certain Early Christian temple and therefore considered a skete.

The natural features of *Scythia Minor* present a convenient environment for multiple anchoretic structures. At the same time the data from the sources on the so-called group of Scythian monks presupposes a consistent expectation for the existence of a developed system of monastic establishments across the territory of the whole province. This matter needs to be exploited through archaeological methods, due to the lack of sufficient written sources. Yet, the available information on actual Early Christian monastic sites in the region is partial and inconclusive.

Southeastern Thrace is the only other area, where the expectance for early Christian rock monasticism is backed by the record of several sites in the province of *Europa*. In a remote, depopulated area near Constantinople, a group of rock-cut monastery structures with chapels has been registered.[46] Their use in the Middle Ages is attested by the remains of wall paintings. Ceramic material from Early Byzantine age, found in front of the caves suggests the monasteries might have been cut in the 5th or 6th century. Nevertheless, no actual research has been conducted on the site. The roughly cut premises are situated high up in the rocks along the Karasu river valley, reusing natural cavities. Their planning scheme is disorderly. The immediate dating information inside them is insufficient. Finally, the lack of archaeological intervention on the sites is a decisive factor in regard to the interpretation of their character. Their affiliation with Early Christianity remains uncertain at this stage of research.

The only site which is attested to Early Christian period without doubt is the rock-cut monastery, situated outside Medea (turk. Midye; modern town of Kıyıköy) (fig. 10).[47] The whole structure was carefully cut into a hillside with the decorative program inside the complex indicating the date of construction. The monument comprises a three nave vaulted chapel with a pronounced bema, a synthronon and pastophoria; a holy spring (*haghiasma*); a vaulted

[43] Atanasov 1991, 36-38.
[44] Atanasov 1991, 34-37; Shkorpil & Shkorpil 1892, 48-57.
[45] Atanasov 1991, 32-37.
[46] Dirimtekin 1957.
[47] Eyice & Thierry 1970.

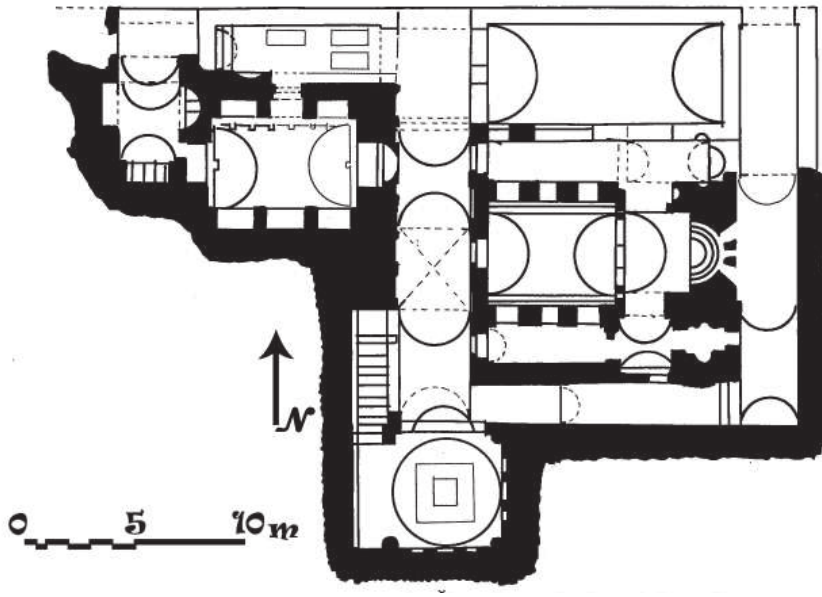


Fig. 10. The rock monastery near Medea (after Eyice & Thierry 1970, fig. 1).

burial chapel with seven tombs; and a small ascetic cell for one or two monks. Outside, the complex was framed by extra premises, which are not preserved today. Archaeological excavations were never carried out here. Nevertheless, the monastic character of the complex is without doubt. The remoteness from settlement structures and the existence of habitation premises within the complex provide a sufficient proof. Although the monastery is ranked among the other rock formations in southeastern Thrace,[48] it is obvious that this site has a rather different function. The skillfully carved spatial and decorative scheme speaks to the representative character of the complex. It is evident from the easy access to the monastery and its close proximity to the sea shore that it served as a pilgrimage site. The remains of venerated saints rested in the burial chapel, which served as a mortuary crypt, attended by one or two monks.

Any evidence for anchoretic monasticism in Thrace during the Early Christian period is absent. This may be due to the shortage of archaeological research, but may also be related to the chronological manifestation of monastic

[48] Eyice & Thierry 1970, 61-62; Eyice believes the sanctuary near Midye is part of a homogenous group of rock monasteries in Turkish Thrace, including the ones near Inceğiz (Dirimtekin 1957), as well as similar Christian rock structures near Vize (Eyice 1969, 333-336), although certain dating information lacks for both.

establishments for the diocese. Although specific dating information is not available for all examined sites, it appears that monasticism cannot be outlined in a definite mien before the middle of 5th century. This threshold coincides with the circumstances concerning the institutionalization of monasticism by both State and Church. So far no distinguishable evidence has been registered for a certain monastic structure before that date. On the other hand, the few sites which can be associated with monasticism in certitude are dated to the second half of 5th and 6th century. If monasticism had attracted followers before the Church sanction, it has left very little evidence for its popularity in Thrace. This fact is unexpected, considering that monasticism should be associated with customs of martyrdom (as attested in few of the examples from Thrace) and pilgrimage arose as early as the first half of 4th century.

In conclusion we must state that there is very little unambiguous archaeological evidence for early monasticism in Thrace. Almost all sites' interpretation is at the very least disputable. Most of them lack structures that determine a coenobitic community, namely premises for communal activities. Their archaeological identification is based mainly upon the record of (1) an enclosure wall, which in none of the sites is fully excavated and (2) chain-like buildings, presumably comprising the monks' cells. From archaeological point of view such evidence is unreliable and further research is required in most cases.

The greatest issue concerning identification of early monastic sites is the archaeological context of the complexes, or rather the lack of research of it. Excavations revealing only a church and the adjacent structures leave blank spots in the study of the site. This way the recognition of monastic functions relies upon immediate material research and fragmentary overview of the structures' environment. In the complex study of Early Christianity more detailed and extensive information on the context of the sites is indispensable.

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Early Christianity in the Balkans and an unknown monastery from Harilaq / Kosovo

Halûk Çetinkaya

Abstract: The spread of Christianity compared to other provinces, especially Eastern ones, is not well documented. One factor in this is the lack of epigraphical evidence, the other is the lesser number of archaeological sites. As the new religion eked out in the Balkans different groups of ethnicity accepted it for several reasons. In the meantime not only parish churches but monasteries were established. Harilaq in Kosovo is one of the least studied and documented sites in the region. On a dominant hill with and enclosing wall overlooking the village is a monastery known to locals as kalaja. This is the first time to identify the site as a monastic settlement.

Key words: Early Christianity, Kosovo, Slavization, Dardania.

Резюме: Разпространението на християнството в сравнение с останалите провинции, и особено на Източните, не е добре документирано. Това е обусловено от една страна от липсата на епиграфски свидетелства, а от друга страна на малкия брой археологически обекти. На Балканите различни етнически групи приели новата религия поради различни съображения. В хода се изграждали не само енорийски църкви, но и манастири. Така, в Хиларик в Косово, който е един от най-малко изследваните и документирани обекти в региона, на върха на доминиращо възвишение оградено със стена е разположен манастир, познат на местните жители като 'калая'. За първи път тук този обект е идентифициран като манастирски комплекс.

One of the most intriguing issues in the Early christianity is, how it eked out. St Paul, as part of his missionary journeys, arrived at Neapolis with his companions Timothy and Silas in 49. Soon after his speeches, difficulties occurred. How many followers were there, is impossible to know, but his speeches must have had and impact on at least some people. Despite having no exact figures, rough estimates for Early Christian congregations between mid 1st century and 4th century can be made by means of ancient sources, archaeological finds and epigraphical evidences. In the provinces such as Asia, both archaeological excavations and inscriptions are numerous. Whereas the Balkans have a lesser number of sources. The number of cities mentioned



Fig. 1. Site of Harilaq (Photo: H. Çetinkaya).

in the inscriptions of Early Christianity in the Balkans are as follows: Thrace 20; Greece 60; Moesia Superior 10; Dacia Traiana 11 and Pannonia 23.[1] Hagiographical sources of 4th century provide names of martyrs.[2] In Athens, where pre-Christian inscriptions are abundant, there are no inscriptions with dates on them until late 7th century. The earliest record of a Christian in Athens is written on an epitaph of 3th - 4th century.[3] In the scale of the Roman empire it is difficult to estimate percentage of the Christians. Among several other opinions concerning the number of Christians in the Roman society probably the closest one provides us with the figures of 1.9 % by 250; 10.5 by 300 and 56.5 by 350.[4] The number of Christians increased dramatically after the second half of 4th century. Women are believed to play a major role in proselytism and gained a status in the church. In the Balkans the situation was not much of a difference. There were deaconesses from Stobi, Delphi and Mt. Hymettos during this period.[5] It is interesting to note that, although there are

[1] Mullen 2004, 143-183.
[2] Zeiller 1967, 148-176.
[3] Trombley 1993, 284.
[4] Stark 1997, 7. Table 1. 1.
[5] Kraemer 1993, 183.

views of women being converters, the opposite might be true since traditional Roman family structure continued to exist.[6] Christianization of the Balkans were thought to be in two phases: 3rd to 6th century and 7th century onwards.[7] Christianity spread not only among locals but also among new-comers such as Goths into the Balkans. In return for protection from the Huns, they accepted to be Christians in the second half of 4th century.[8] Among all groups of people such as Avars, Bulgars, etc. Slavs were permanent settlers. They settled in the region in three phases between the first half of 6th century and 7th century.[9]

Together with the number of Christians, buildings accomodating their needs increased. One of the earliest types of constructions, other than the church, was a funerary structure. This type developed after the burials of martyrs. One of the best examples is from Salona. Extramural burial site nearly doubled in size in the early 4th century due to a prominent families' intention of having their graves near the martyr's.[10] The Roman army, once the repressor of Christians, probably unintentionally, was the key element in the spread of Christianity. Due to this there are churches, especially in mid to late 4th century, built close to the garrisons or fortified cities such as Ulpiana[11] or Iatrus.[12] Unlike Eastern provinces there were not as many baths or large public buildings to be used by the Christian congregations. Because of this in most cases churches were built instead of being converted from a different functioned building in the Balkans. Comparing to Asia or Egypt the number of temples were less in the Balkans. Upon legalizing Christianity some of these were transformed into churches. For instance in Alexandria, according to Notitia Urbis Alexandrinae of 4th century, there were 2478 temples.[13]

Monasticism also grew slowly in the Balkans compared to the Eastern provinces, where the idea originated from.

Harilaq

The monastic settlement of Harilaq is located in the southwestern part of Prishtina, roughly 1 km west of Prishtina airport. It is on top of a steep hill next to the village with the same name (fig. 1). The hill gave access from four directions to the site, two of which were covered by trees. The site is known to the villagers as 'kalaja', derived from the Turkish word 'kale', meaning 'fortress'.

[6] Salzman 2004, 176-177.
[7] Banfi 1988, 148-151.
[8] Iordanis. *Romana et Getica* XXV 131.
[9] Vlasto 2009, 3-5.
[10] Dyggve 1951, 76, fig. IV.
[11] Çetinkaya 2010, 254-256.
[12] Ivanov 1966, 165.
[13] Hahn 2008, 7.

The name of the nearby village Harilaq does not have any meaning neither in Serbian, nor in Albanian and Turkish. It was within Dardania. Unlike Harilaq there were several major settlements in Dardania. One of them, which is approximately 10 kms away is the city of Ulpiana, which was probably a Dardanian settlement, turned into a Roman city.[14]

The settlement at Harilaq was first discovered in 1960's during an archaeological survey of the area by the Museum of Kosovo and the Archaeological Institute of Belgrade. But none of the observations or finds have been published. After a long interval, the site was included in the archaeological map of the region made by the Archaeological Institute of Kosovo, Archaeological Institute of Albania and the Museum of Kosovo in the early 2000's. First archaeological excavations started by the Archaeological Institute of Kosovo in 2004 and continued by the Museum of Kosovo. During the excavations of 2004 enclosing walls of the monastic settlement, a circular section with hydraulic mortar and a funeral chapel were brought to light. From 2005 on, excavations were under the jurisdiction of the Museum of Kosovo. The area where the circular structure and the funeral chapel were located, given the priority, and in their vicinity an apsed wall was discovered. The apsed wall was covered to be studied in 2006. In 2006 the excavations were focused on the apsed wall and continued towards west in expectation of finding the rest of the ecclesiastical edifice. Neither archaeological surveys, nor the excavations yielded any inscription, which causes great difficulty in identifying the site of Harilaq. The author participated in the excavations as a scientific advisor in 2007. None of the results of archaeological survey and excavations have been published. The only publication is a touristic pamphlet with general information of the site. The information provided here is based on author's personal observations and conversations with the excavators of former years.

The ruins on the top of the hill are surrounded by the enclosing wall made of ashlar. Inside the enclosing wall are the ruins of a church, two buildings with extending parts used as funeral chapels (fig. 2). The enclosing wall of the monastic settlement has been used long after its original construction for different purposes, such as quarry or observation post.

The Church

The church is a three aisled basilica with two nartheces and a single apse at its eastern end. The apse is made out of ashlar masonry and is circular inside, polygonal (three sided) outside. This is a typical arrangement of the Constantinian period, but timewise it fits with later examples which became typical of Early churches of Constantinople.

[14] Hoxhaj 2000/2001, 1.

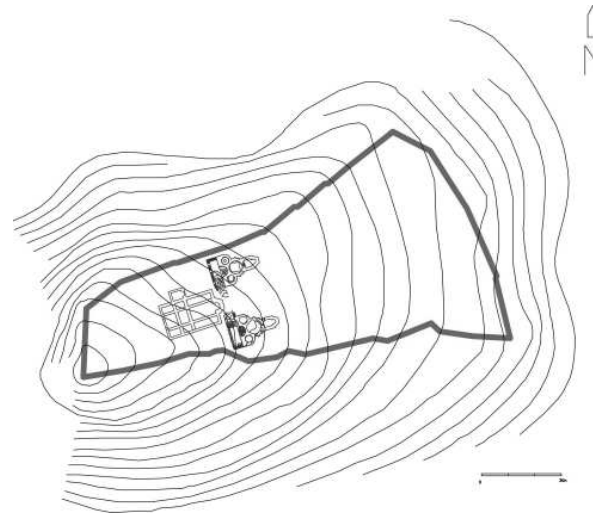


Fig. 2. Setting of the structures and enclosing wall (Author: F. Berisha).

The size of the church building, which only survived at the foundation level, would help suggesting a fair sized monastic establishment. In the northern part of the church along with the length of the inner narthex is a small parekklesion. Such parekklesia were common especially during the Middle Byzantine period, though there are several examples from the Early Christian period in the region. Monastic churches with parekklesia generally indicate the burial of a lay person, in most cases the re-founder or donor. This system, which includes the lay person to be given certain priviliges in return for financial assistance, was known as *kharistike. Kharistike* system was effective between 10th and 14th century.[15]

There are traces of neither mosaics, nor frescoes in the church. The same applies to the column shafts and capitals. The only decorated architectural elements are the bricks. Brick stamps include crosses and irregular geometrical patterns similar to these are found at Čaričin Grad. An interesting stamp on both Harilaq and Čaričin Grad is the one depicting a man. Unfortunately in both cases the brick stamp is only mentioned by the excavators, neither a picture, nor a drawing was provided.[16] Another example of such a brick stamp was found in Bargala. In this case the measurements of the bricks were exactly the same as the ones in Harilaq. In Bargala the brick stamp not only had a human figure but a short inscription as well.[17]

Funeral Chapels

Outside the church in the east are the two, rather interesting formed, twin constructions. Both had a narthex-like part in the west and stairs leading to the direction of the apse of the church (fig. 3). Underneath this section, in

[15] Galatariotou 1987, 88.
[16] Mano-Zisi 1954/1955, 165.
[17] Aleksova & Mango 1971, 273.

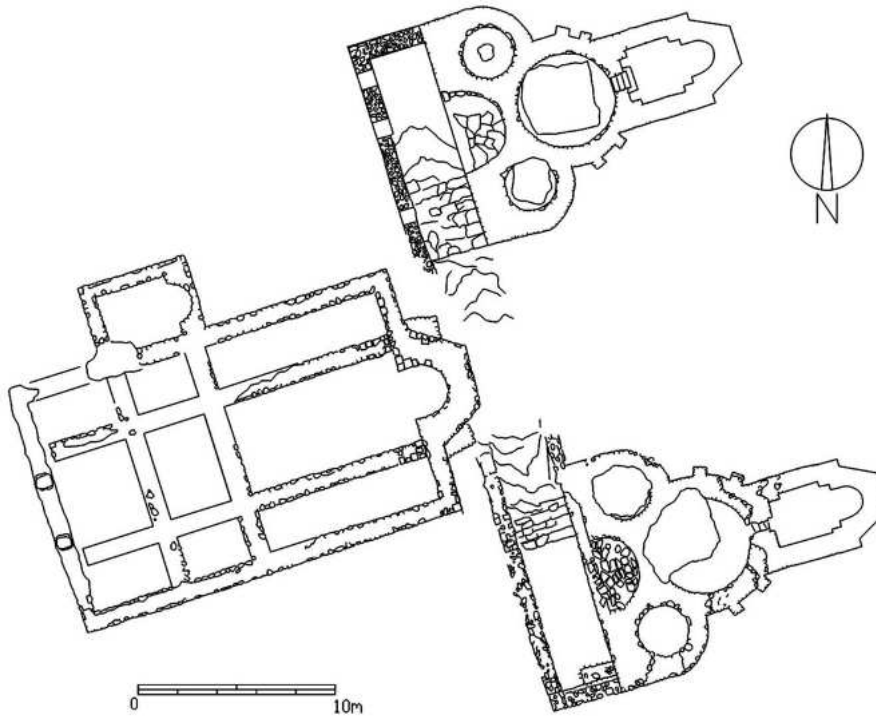


Fig. 3. Plans of the church, cisterns and funeral chapels (Author: F. Berisha).

the southern building on its souteastern part a burial with skeleton has been recorded by the excavators. Each one of the twins had four sections, three of which are circular and the fourth part is extended towards the east in the form of a small church with an apse. Both structures were constructed with irregular bands of brick and stone. Two circular sections at the west have brick floors and walls were covered with hydraulic mortar. In some parts there are traces of another layer of mortar, which may indicate the change of use. Most probably circular buildings were added to provide water. Central section of them indicate a wooden stairwell (fig. 4). There is no connection between the two circular sections in the west and the one in the east, other than the floor level walkway.

The use of the hydraulic mortar is a clear indicator of the circular sections being used for water. The question that arises here is for what purpose, cistern or baptistery? There are no similar formed buildings among the baptisteries. The structures at Diyarbakır and Gravedona are the closest ones.[18] But to name a building baptistery because of the shape is a weak argument. Considering

[18] Khatchatrian 1962, 6/118, 47/316.



Fig. 4. Southeastern funeral chapel facing west (Photo: H. Çetinkaya).



Fig. 5. Stairwell on the northeastern cistern (Photo: H. Çetinkaya).

the high position of monastic settlement and difficulty in obtaining water makes more sense to consider these structures as cistern.

At the eastern end of each twin building is a funeral chapel, which can be reached through the steps and it is approximately 1.1 m below (fig. 5). On northern and southern walls of the chapel are the two arcosolia. Since architecturally the arcosolia were not a necessity, it can only be for the use of *pseudo-sarcophagi*. The use of *pseudo-sarcophagi* were very common starting from the Middle Byzantine period onwards. The two arcosolia have traces of plaster and fresco. The thick lower layer is a 8-12 mm of hydraulic mortar which may be related to the first use of the building. The second layer is on top of the mortar in the form of fresco. It is much thinner and 9 mm at the thickest part.It is mostly white coloured but other colours such as black and ochre can be observed. During the excavations of this section vertebral bones have been found but alas not recorded, which might have enlightened us about the ones buried there. Neither the upper part nor the side section of the *pseudo sarcophagus* exist. Existence of two funeral chapels and a parekklesion is rather intriguing. But most probably the funeral chapels were for the monks, whereas the parekklesion was for the use of a *kharistikarios.* In return for their financial support *kharistikarios* and his household were given the privilege to be buried in the parekklesion and rarely at the funeral chapels. The apse of the funeral chapels were made out of bricks and is circular inside, polygonal (three sided) outside.

Further investigations aiming at finding the secondary buildings of the monastic settlements were discovered roughly 40 metres in the east of the church. In the soundings of this area, pieces of glass and parts of metal together with a coin have been found. Very small fragments of glass together with metal pieces with carefully drilled holes inthem and part of a chain might indicate their use as polycandelion. Unfortunately there is no further material supporting this view at the moment. During the excavations only a handful number of coins were found which date in the range of Anastasius I and Justinian I. According to the excavator all were minted in Constantinople.

Conclusion

The site was most probably created as a monastic settlement either during the reign of Anastasius I or Justin I. Soon afterwards when the region was hit by a major earthquake in 518[19] it was most probably reconstructed and enlarged during the reign of Justinian I, who is known to have contributed to several construction activities in the region.

The location of the church is nearly impossible to reach on everyday basis. On the other hand, it provides a perfect setting for a monastery. Since

[19] Marcellinus Celeris et Venantii XI 1.

its creation there were few changes in its architecture. An enclosing wall must have been built from the beginning. On the other hand, twin circular cisterns, funeral chapels and a small parekklesion attached to the north of the church must have been added in later phases. Though Slavic migration of the region occurred between 6th - 7th century it is believed the province of Dardania was Slavicized only in 10th century.[20] It is also interesting to note that according to an anthropological research in the area of Kosovo and Metochia it is indicated that Slavs did not intermingle with other ethnicities of the region until 13th century.[21] Based on these two important sources of information it may be safe to assume that an Early Christian monastery, probably of late 5th century, was constructed on the hills of Harilaq. In the following centuries it continued its existence despite suffering from natural phenomena and when financial difficulties arose had support from laymen, who in return were buried in the parekklesion. When did this happen is not easy to tell. But 10th century Slavization of the province of Dardania may provide some ideas. Monastic settlement might have been put under the jurisdiction of the Slavic church. The fate of this monastic settlement is far from being clear in the following centuries. Most probably it was abandoned only to be used as a military post in 19th - 20th century wars.

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[20] Milich 1995, 190.
[21] Mikić 2005, 49.

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