

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE: THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ROMAN ROAD NETWORK IN *MOESIA INFERIOR*

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Abstract: The arrival of the Romans at the Lower Danube and transforming this area into the Roman province of *Moesia inferior* lead to a radical change of the landscape. A wide space is occupied and organized by the army resulting in an imperial province located by the border. This operation is carried out gradually - an expression of policy of "small steps" practiced by the Romans - over several stages, military organization, including - fortifications, roads, construction annexes along the roads, points of customs stations-, being doubled by civil measures in order to integrate in the new administrative body the pre-Roman and the newly emerged settlements, together with the Greek cities from the Black Sea Coast.

One of the main elements in roman organization of the territory is the roads network. The proper roads are absent from the pre-roman landscape, they were rather some access routes. Their lines and directions can be reconstructed based on the information gathered from archaeological sources: researched or only identified in the field settlements and necropolis provide us valuable data for this. The Romans "modernized" them and also constructed new ones in order to assure a good communication between the limes area and the inner part of the province, but also with neighboring territories.

The first action in this regard is recorded in the time of Augustus and his followers, but who really establish an integrated system of roads in the area is Trajan. He laid the foundations for the road system in Lower *Moesia*. After his conquest of Dacia the limes stretches all the way to the mouth of the Danube. Gradually appearing new branches filled out the communication network. The coast road was also modernized at this time and a road parallel to the limes started to be constructed. Trajan's successor started on the construction of the central road through Dobrudja. In the form that will be designed by Trajan, to which are added the interventions of Hadrian, the road system will keep the same organization until the end of Antiquity.

Keywords: *Moesia inferior*, limes, road, landscape, Trajan, settlement, fortification, necropolis.

The area of the Lower Danube consists of several separate units (Balkan Mountains, Dobrudja Plateau, Danube Valley and Delta), real puzzle of ecosystems characterized by the variety of resources and forms of habitat¹.

The arrival of the Romans at the Lower Danube and transforming this whole area into the Roman province of *Moesia inferior* lead to a radical change of the landscape. A sprawling space is occupied and organized by the army, resulting in an imperial province located by the border. The operation is carried out gradually - an expression of policy of "small steps" practiced by the Romans - over several stages, military organization, with all necessary infrastructure (fortifications, roads, construction annex roads, points of customs stations) being doubled by civil measures to integrate in the new administrative body the local settlements and the Greek towns from the Black Sea Coast, to which are added the new founded Roman settlements². This differentiation in the organization and administration of the conquered territories was accompanied by a different approach to the indigenous population, what subsequently produced an impact on its ethnic composition and socio-

¹ *Geografia* 1989, 27-65; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 19-21; Todorova *et alii* 2011, 9-31.

² For the history of the province see Vulpe, Barnea 1968, 13-365; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 22-154; Todorova *et alii* 2011, 237-303.

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economic development. Implementing their control on this area the Romans are using both the diplomacy and the military fights³.

The most western part of the future *Moesia inferior* inhabited by the *Moessi* and the *Triballi* was organized into a military prefecture in the time of Claudius (*praefectura civitatium Moesiae et Treballiae*)⁴ and from Ptolemy we know that the *civitas Moesorum* was *Ratiaria* and *civitas Treballorum* was *Oescus*⁵. The Greek colonies on the Black Sea Coast received the status of *civitates foederatae* after the campaign of Varro, and during Vespasian, they are only *civitas stipendiariae*. The kingdom of Rhoemetaces III became the procuratorial province of Thrace in 45 AD⁶.

Implementation of Roman forms runs parallel with measures for the integration in the empire. It is a well-known fact that along the borders (*limes*) near every military fortification there is always – at least one – civil settlement depending on it and working for its benefit⁷. The Roman authorities will be concerned primarily of creating the infrastructure which ensures the cohesion of space, which became functional in terms of production and trade, administration and military⁸.

Factors that determine the shape of space and the creation of a specific landscape have their origin in an element of necessity: water and food supply, the need for raw materials, defense and ability to respond quickly in case of attack, communication etc.⁹. Romans will impose a new system of land ownership, of making agriculture and farming and will decisively influence the organization and distribution of rural settlements¹⁰. Water provisioning and the access to raw materials primarily stone and clay create in the landscape aqueducts and quarries. Each settlement administrates a territory whose limits are visibly marked on land. They all were well connected by a network of land routes. With the passing of time next to them appear the cemeteries, flat or barrow¹¹. All this is nothing else than the basic elements of a new reality: Roman provincial landscape.

Roman landscape in the area, its appearance and structuring of, should be equally understood as a response of the imperial authorities that take into account the features of this area, characterized by frequent movements of population, a rather pastoral economy and the lack of urban organization¹².

One of the main elements characterizing the landscape is the roman roads. "They are not simply physical structures enabling movement to a destination. They also embody issues of ideology, power and identity, and are intimately involved with our social constructions of the world"¹³. From the Roman point of view building a coherent and functional system of roads is equal to the introduction of a certain area under the direct control and administration of the Roman authorities.

The first road Romans constructed in the Balkans is *Via Egnatia* (**fig. 2**), described by Cicero as *via militares*¹⁴. Its construction started in 148 BC after the final annexation of Macedonia and Greece to the administrative system of Roman Empire. It connects *Dyrrachium* on the Adriatic Sea with *Constantinopol*. Connections between *Via Egnatia* and Thrace were realized by roads crossing the Rhodope Mountains, one from *Nicopolis ad Nestum* and another from *Topiros*, both heading to *Philippopolis*¹⁵.

³ Batty 2007, 400-410, 428-430.

⁴ CIL V 1838 = ILS 1349; Matei-Popescu 2010, 36 – 37.

⁵ Ptolemy III, 9, 3; 10, 5.

⁶ Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 22-35.

⁷ Ivanov 1999, 253-277; Ivanov 2004, 172-177, 180-181.

⁸ Ivanov 1999; Matei-Popescu 2010.

⁹ Aston 1985, 11-29.

¹⁰ Gerov 1988; Bărbulescu 2001.

¹¹ Oța 2013.

¹² Batty 2007, 350.

¹³ Witcher 1997, 60.

¹⁴ Fasolo 2005.

¹⁵ Madzarov 2009, 67-69.

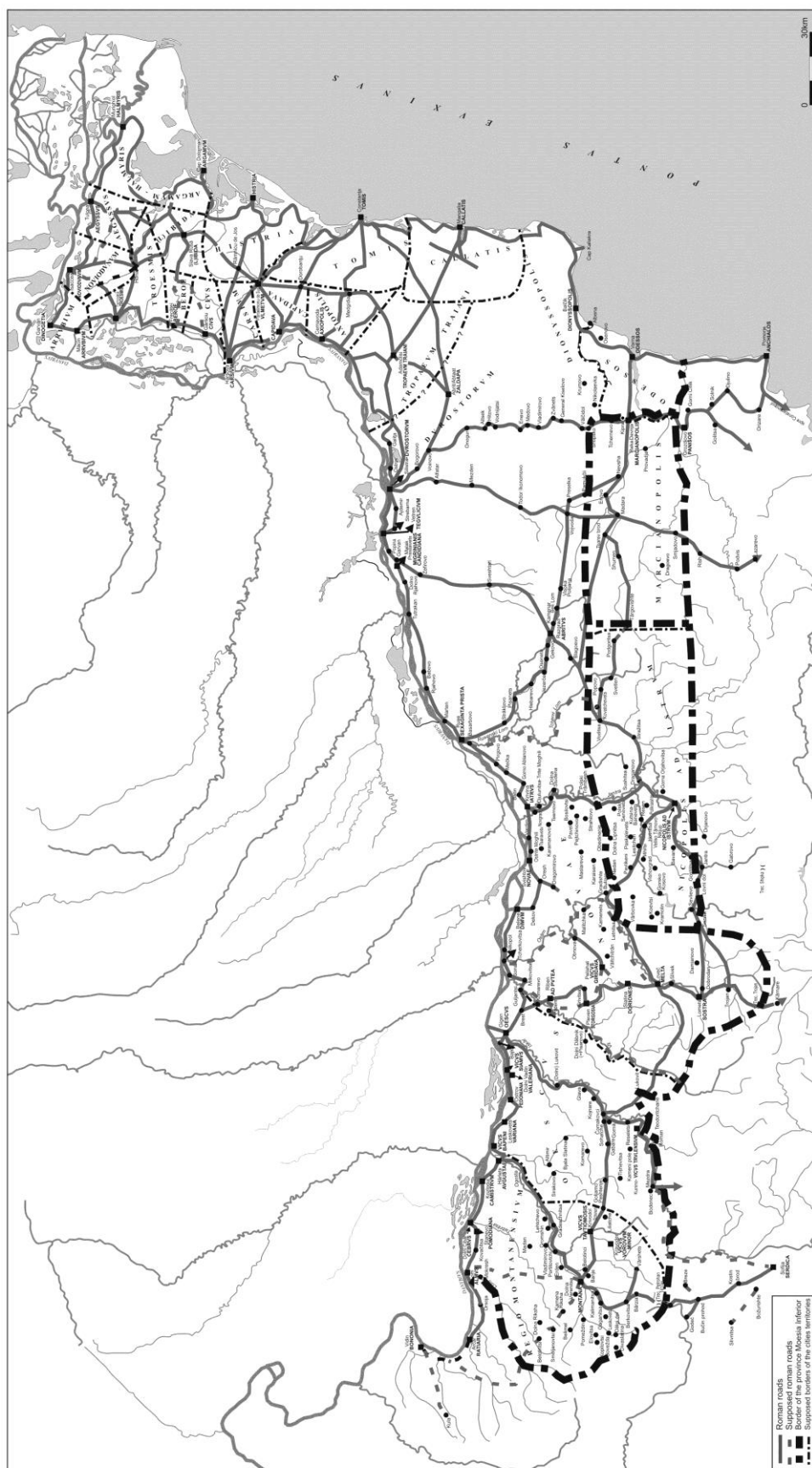


Fig. 1: Roman Roads in Moesia inferior (A. Panaite)

The second important road was the Central (or the Diagonal) one (**fig. 2**). It was constructed in the middle of the first century BC and represents the connection between the Western Europe, Balkan provinces and *Asia minor*. According to some archaeologists it was constructed along an existing older Thracian road¹⁶.

The proper roads are absent from the pre-roman landscape of the lower Danube area, they were rather some access routes. The first actions in this regard are recorded starting with the time of Augustus, but more visible in the time of Claudius and Nero¹⁷ and with decisive actions recorded from Vespasian onwards¹⁸.

In the first century AD fortifications activities were undertaken. Then started the first earthen-wooden construction. The construction of the military forts and roads connecting them was carried out from west to east in the chronological order following the stages of the expansion of the province. Along with the main west-east orientated road along the Danube, slowly transformed in the limes road, some secondary roads are constructed along the main rivers. Each tributary's mouth was invariably guarded by a legionary or auxiliary garrison. Coming from the west the romans are interested in a quicker connection with the already controlled areas. In this respect, the best example is given by the road connecting Oescus with Philippopolis¹⁹. Moreover, along others rivers which flows into the Danube will also be built roads. The water courses and the topography of the region fulfill a very important role. The second construction period is characterized by building of stone walls fortifications during the reign of Trajan²⁰, a period of real organization of the limes, continuing later, during Hadrian, with the establishing of the southern border of the province. Old roads repairing or construction of new ones is also a key-element in organizing the area.

The largest population that Romans meet at the Lower Danube is the *Getae*²¹. Information about them appears in written sources, to which are added the archaeological information²². Even so, reliable archaeological evidence is surprisingly limited.

Next to them, the ethnic mosaic that covers the territories that would form later *Moesia inferior* consists of the Greeks from the Black Sea colonies, Scythian²³, Sarmatians²⁴ and *Bastarnae*²⁵.

In Dobrudja, the most eastern part of the future *Moesia inferior*, just a few of the *Getae* settlements have been identified. What happens to them during the Roman times is very difficult to say²⁶. According to archaeologists' opinion they continue to exist and gradually romanized. What is certain is that there are attested by written and epigraphic sources Roman settlement bearing the indigenous name without any important indigenous settlements being discovered in the nearby. On the other hand, the ancient name of some *Getae* settlements is unknown to us, while in other cases the Roman settlements take over the name of previous one. Based on the discoveries so far, there can be documented three groups of *Getae* settlements and cemeteries: in the north of Dobrogea, dated mainly between 6th-4th BC, in southern Dobrogea, dated 5th-3rd centuries BC and those developed in the territories of the Greek colonies on the Black Sea coast. Because very few *Getae* settlements have been researched systematically and the existence of most of them is established through surface or accidental discoveries, the information at our disposal today does not allow for a thorough analysis of them

¹⁶ Jireček 1932; Jireček 1974; Madzarov 2009, 70.

¹⁷ Conole, Milns 1983, 183-200.

¹⁸ Batty 2007, 441-450.

¹⁹ Madzarov 2004.

²⁰ Țentea 2016, 85-93.

²¹ Băltăc 2011, 28-35.

²² Irimia 1980, 66-118; Irimia 1981, 67-122; Irimia 1983, 69-148; Irimia 2007, 137-235; Irimia 2010, 83-128.

²³ Irimia 2000-2001, 299-315.

²⁴ Bărcă 2006, 3-28; Bărcă 2013, 99-125; Oța 2013, 317-320.

²⁵ Babeș 1994, 164-166.

²⁶ See for example Wells 2005, 49-88.



Fig. 2: *Via Egnatia*, Diagonal Road and the access roads from Thrace to *Moesia inferior* (A. Panaite)

Most part of these sites have somewhat stereotypical descriptions, most of the time mentioning the ceramic fragments and/or construction materials, when, in fact, these stereotypes relate to the methods of collection, interpretation and evaluation of the data for the whole territory. In addition, there is still a lack of systematic coverage of the territory and no unitary method of recording. The only observation that can be made is that there are both fortified and unfortified settlements. In addition, few of them can be securely dated in later Latène, when witnessing an intensifying of the Roman Empire activities in the Lower Danube region. Historical and archaeological sources give data of a significant demographic development within the area inhabited, but the pattern of occupation and settlement of the territory is still unclear. The existence of significant variations within the types of *Getae* settlement is generally accepted and there are some studies dedicated to producing typologies of *Getae* settlement²⁷.

For the territory of Dobrudja there is information on 78 *Getae* settlements, in which 16 systematically investigated: Adâncata (Adâncata I and Adâncata II), Albești, Beștepe, Canlia-Gura Canliei, Beidaud, Capu Dolojman, Cheia, Gura Dobrogei, Histria-sat, Mangalia, Rasova-Malu Roșu, Sinoe-Zmeica, Tariverde, Satu Nou (Valea lui Voicu and Vadu Vacilor), Tulcea and Vama Veche. From the same area there is information on 63 cemeteries, in which 11 systematically investigated: Adamclisi, Bugeac, Canlia, Caraorman, Ceamurlia de Jos, Cernavodă, Enisala, Istria-sat, Murighiol, Satu Nou, Telița²⁸.

Analyzing field layout of the settlements one can notice there is a higher density in the southern Dobrudja. In this area, better known, thanks to systematic archaeological excavations are settlements from Adâncata²⁹; one of them, Adâncata I, the author of the researches characterizes it as a center of power, controlling the surrounding territory within a radius of 20-25 km, which later will be (most probably³⁰) the territory of the Roman city of *Tropaeum Traiani*, including also the settlement near (or on) the city will raise later on³¹. Adâncata I is one of the few settlements which continue to be functional in the period between I BC – I AD. Not far from here, at Florile and to the south at Rositsa (Bulgaria, Dobrich district), two Latin inscriptions were discovered, mentioning two *princeps loci*, rulers of the administrative formations of the native population during Roman time³². Fortified settlement is likely to have been abandoned and the population moved to open settlements, which are easily controllable areas. The presence of fortifications, which could represent coagulation points of revolts could not be accepted by the Roman state, in a new zone included within the borders. In this region this target will be taken up by the Roman camps along the limes.

Extensive research field carried on both sides of the Danube, more extensive South of the Danube, between Svishtov and Krivina completes the data we have about the area in the pre-Roman period and offers a possible model for territorial organization. It was noted that the North and North-West region of Bjala (fortification located at South of Krivina and dated in the Latène period) settlements occupy an area of about 10,000 square meters and are arranged like a network, the distance of approximately 4-5 km each other and on the valley South of Svishtov, each settlement occupies under 5000 m² and the access to water is lacking. From these settlements comes a small

²⁷ Irimia 2007, 137-141.

²⁸ Irimia 1980, 66-118, especially 115 (map); Irimia 1983, 69-148, especially 75 (map).

²⁹ Irimia 2007, 150-153.

³⁰ The newest hypothesis regarding the limits of the territory belongs to A. Băltăc (Băltăc 2011, 109), who believes that the status of *municipium* since the founding implies also a large territory, which does not reach the Danube; In addition, there is no other important center in the area whose territory could limit the territory awarded to *Tropaeum*. In the author's opinion the estimated area of land would be about 3500 km².

³¹ Irimia 2007, 150-153.

³² Băltăc 2011, 267-268.

amount of pottery, which may be an indication for short periods of use or for their seasonal nature. Most of them date back to the Hallstatt and data for the next era are much less common³³.

The results of an extensive field research project conducted by a joint Bulgarian-British team provide us a hint about how the landscape, incorporating *Getae* settlements continuing to exist, might have looked after the Roman conquest. Towards the northern parts of the territory of *Nicopolis ad Istrum* the interpretation of the survey's results shows the existence of two different types of villas, with and without associated settlements. "Those with associated settlements, which lie towards the northern boundary of *Nicopolis*' lands, may be estates that were not relocated when the city was founded but continued to be owned by the *Getae* aristocracy. If so, the communities of estate-workers living close by may have been natives who continued to be dependant upon the same landowning families as they had been during the pre-Roman period. At any event, the distinction between the two types of villa – and their geographical separation – remains a feature of the Roman landscape, whatever the explanation for it may be"³⁴.

Other characteristics of this area landscape are the burial mounds. Although the information at our disposal about the time of their construction is very scarce we can suppose that some of them are dated during the Roman time. Originally, a funeral practice of the Thracian and Scythian elites was also adopted by the Greeks and Romans³⁵, as it is proved by the excavations in the cemetery of the Greek colony of Histria, located on the Black Sea coast³⁶. According to a recent research, based on an integrated programme of aerial photography and satellite remote sensing to identify and map barrow cemeteries and settlements, there are 8758 burial mound on the southern parts of Dobrudja. They are associated with the large towns and their road networks, being also relevant for the landscape. Preliminary results of this project allow the reconstruction of the secondary road network inside the province and provide a glimpse on settlements pattern, too³⁷.

In the case of prehistoric *tumuli* we know that they were built in locations with good visibility. Others may indicate movement lines whose age is difficult to determine. A comparison of the archaeological map of the barrow cemeteries with the one resulting from the interpretation of satellite images, shows a much higher density of them than it was previously assumed by traditional research methods.

Another important observation is their concentration on a diagonal line extending from the area *Durostorum* - Izvoarele, on the Danube to the Black Sea coast, to *Callatis* and further to the south. This data also confirmed the existence of an inland route of travel starting from the Greek colonies, whose previously route it could only be presumed based on Greek pottery discovered in settlements located along it³⁸.

The discovery of Greek artifacts primarily amphorae, proves the connections, above all commercials, between *Getae* and Greeks from the colonies. In the settlements from Izvoarele, Satu Nou and Adâncata supposedly even some emporia were functioning in the pre-Roman times³⁹. Let us not forget that along this route, in Roman times, there is a well documented Greek community at *Urluia*⁴⁰, in territory administered by the city of *Tropaeum*.

³³ Conrad, Stančev 2002, 673-684; Conrad 2006, 312-314; Conrad 2008, 68-81. See also Tomas 2009, 31-47.

³⁴ Poulter 2007a, 361-384; Poulter 2007b, 51-101; Poulter 2007c, 583-595; Tsurov 2007, 581-583; Boyd 2007, 597-609.

³⁵ See for example Crowley 2009, 113-126, Eckardt *et alii* 2009, 65-98.

³⁶ Alexandrescu 1966; Angelescu 2009, 1-17.

³⁷ Oltean 2013, 202-219.

³⁸ Irimia 2007, 168.

³⁹ Irimia 2007, 169-174, especially 173-174.

⁴⁰ Barnea 1969, 595-609, no. 2 and 3.

A similar situation is well documented also for *Axiopolis*, which was involved in the transit trade with cereals from the Romainian Plain (Bărăgan) along the Carasu valley, to *Tomi*⁴¹. This is also the shortest link across Dobrudja, from the Black Sea coast to the Danube. The two paths of circulation will be taken over by the Romans and later transformed into real "highways".

Ancient sources provide information about two operations of transfers of population in the area, which according to sources would have been uninhabited. Performed during the first century, the two well-known operations belong to Aelius Catus⁴² and Silvanus Aelianus⁴³. Romanian historiography has challenged, with various arguments - archaeologically included⁴⁴, the interpretation that the area would have been deserted, while Bulgarian historiography supports the colonization of South Dobrudja with Thracian elements⁴⁵.

Very likely the area was depopulated after frequent clashes in the area, but not so, as to arrive at the idea of a desolate region. In the population transfers we have to see rather the imperial authorities' actions organizing and strengthening the area near the border, doubled by an economic interest⁴⁶. This action was primarily of a fiscal nature, as is apparent from the inscription, which praises Tiberius Plautius Silvanus Aelianus: *ad praestanda tributa*, but also with immediate consequences: *primus ex ea provincia magno tritici modo annonam p(opuli) R(omani) adlevavit*⁴⁷. Although we cannot trace this transfer in the archaeological data it is clear that it increased pressure on the food and water supplies and on the environment in which the displaced people settled.

The existence of local *Getae* should be extended also to the Roman times, as it is demonstrated not only by archaeological and epigraphic sources, dating from the second and third centuries, but also by the toponyms, especially those ending in *-dava*, belonging to the broader category of Geto-Dacian toponyms⁴⁸.

The province of *Moesia inferior* was crossed by important, long-distance, north-south and east-west routes (fig. 1). Because of its position, it was an important link between the Danube provinces, Orient and Upper Italy and there was a particular military need to allow the passage of large bodies of troops.

For the first time, *Moesia inferior* saw properly constructed roads built with military precision, providing links between settlements and allow quick movement within province, both for civilians and for the army, if needed.

Articles and monographies published in the last years gives us now an overview⁴⁹ of the Roman road network in the province of *Moesia inferior*. Though so far little traces of Roman roads are preserved, their route can be reconstructed, especially based on milestones inscriptions and

⁴¹ Suceveanu 1977, 105; Suceveanu 1998, 45.

⁴² Strabo 7, 3, 10.

⁴³ CIL XIV 3608; Conole, Milns 1983, 183-200.

⁴⁴ Suceveanu 1977, 20, 21, 31-34.

⁴⁵ Torbatov 1997, 507-514.

⁴⁶ Mrozewicz 2013, 424-442.

⁴⁷ Batty 2007, 404-405, 407 is of a slightly different opinion, according to him: „He (Catus n.n.) may not so much have „transplanted” these Getae, as allowed them free access.”, as an element of deliberate policy of the Romans bringing across of tribes considered friendly to secure territory. „Quite probably, Silvanus responded to a situation which was already in motion – admitting refugees from wars which were occurring without Roman participation, and brokering deals between the various factions”. In a recent article M. Boatwright (Boatwright 2015, 122-146) argues that the populations transfer „were contested at Rome, because they did not demonstrate Rome’s military superiority” (Boatwright 2015, 139).

⁴⁸ Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 34-39.

⁴⁹ Madzarov 2004; Torbatov 2004, 76-96; Madzarov 2009; Panaite, Alexandrescu 2009, 429-455; Panaite 2011; Panaite 2012a, 67-80; Panaite 2012b, 131-143; Panaite 2013, 69-76; Fodorean 2014, 40-45, 56-58, 116-148.

carthographical sources⁵⁰. The main roads in the area are the so-called *limes* road, along the Danube and the road along the Black Sea coast.

The road along the Danube (*limes*) was primarily of strategic military importance. Fortifications and both watch and signal towers were positioned along it at set distances. The road started from *Singidunum* and ran in its entirety on the right bank of the river⁵¹. Having reached the mouth of the Danube it turned along the Black sea coast and ran to Constantinople.

Road construction along the Danube on the route *Singidunum – Viminacium – Ratiaria – Oescus – Novae – Durostorum* and further to the river delta began in the reign of Tiberius⁵² (work in the Djerdap or Iron Gate) and was continued in the time of Claudius⁵³. In 93–94 Domitian ordered a reconstruction of this road, which was deteriorated for lack of use in the preceding years⁵⁴. Trajan continued its construction in preparation for his Dacian campaign, reaching across the whole area to the Danube Delta⁵⁵.

The road along the Black sea coast connected urban centers of ancient tradition, from the Delta of the Danube to the later imperial capital in Constantinople⁵⁶. Its role was mainly commercial, although being the main route up from the south it had its strategic importance as well. Initially, this Greek path was little more than a “country road”, so to speak, most of the traffic going by sea, but the Romans transformed it into a proper road. During the numerous conflicts from the area this road had mostly a military significance. For Lucullus and Hybrida’s campaigns this way represents the most important access road to the north. Trajan also will use it during the war with Decebal. Exiled from Rome, Ovid will travel the same way on his journey to the remote city of *Tomi*⁵⁷.

There were another two roads parallel with the *limes* one, crossing Lower Danube area from West to East, at the foot of the Balkan Mountains, passing through *Bononia – Montana – Čomakovci – Melta – Nicopolis ad Istrum – Marcianopolis – Odessos*, and south to north, crossing Dobrudja, from *Noviodunum* and *Aegyssus* to *Marcianopolis*, passing through *Zaldapa, Tropaeum Traiani, Medgidia* and *Ulmetum*.

The central section of the road from *Marcianopolis* to *Melta* was built in the second part of the reign of Trajan, immediately after the inauguration of the cities of *Nicopolis ad Istrum* and *Marcianopolis*. At this time *Melta* was already a functioning station on the road from *Oescus* to *Philippopolis*. The road was extended subsequently to the east, up to *Montana*, and subsequently to the west, to *Odessos*. The construction of the other road was started with all likelihood in the time of

⁵⁰ Panaite 2012b, 131-143; Panaite 2015a, 593-600.

⁵¹ Ivanov 1999, 277-290; Madzarov 2009, 131-184; Fodorean 2014b, 215-230.

⁵² The earliest information on road construction in the Iron Gates area is dated 33-34 AD. The construction works in the area were made by legions (IV *Scythica* and V *Macedonia*) as results from two identical inscriptions carved in stone at Gospodin Vir and Lepenski Vir: *Ti. Caesare Aug(usti) f(ilio)/ Augusto imperato[re]/ pont(ifice) max(imo) tr(ibunicia) pot(estate)/ XXXV leg(io) IIII Scyt(hica) leg(io) V Maced(onica)*. - cf. Mirković 1996, 30, note 15.

⁵³ The text of the inscription from the time of Claudius: *Ti. Claudio Drusi f(ilio) Caesare/ Aug(usto) Germanico pontif(ice) max(imo)/ trib(unicia) pot(estate) VI imp. XII p(atre) p(atriae) con(s)ule) desig(nato) IIII / leg(io) IIII Scyth(ica) leg(io) V Mac(edonica) montibus ex[cisis an]confib[us] .../ Ma[r](tii) Macri leg(ati) Aug(usti) propr(aetore); inscrip[ti]a se datează în anul 46. - cf. Petrović 1986, 41-52.*

⁵⁴ ILJug 55: *Imp(erator) Caesar divi / Vespasiani f(ilius) Domi/[t]ianus Aug(ustus) Germ(anicus) pont(ifex) / maximus trib(unicia) pot(estate) XII / imp(erator) XXII co(n)s(ul) XVI censor / perpetuus p(ater) p(atriae) i[t]er Scor[us]fularum vetu[s]tate [e]t / incursu Danuvi c[or]ruptum operib[us] i[ter]at[is] O(?)[---] / LEG[---]; ILJug 58: *Imp(erator) Caesar [divi] / Vespasian[i] f(ilius) Domi/[t]ianus Aug(ustus) Germani]/cus pont(ifex) m[ax]imus tr(ibunicia) p(otestate) XII / impe[r]ator XXII co(n)s(ul) XVI cen[sor] perp(er)etuu[s] [p(ater) p(atriae) i[t]er Scor[us]fularum [vetustate et in]/cursu Danu[vi] corr[uptu]m / operib[us] i[t]erat[is] re[s]titui[t] ---.**

⁵⁵ Ivanov 1999, 277-290; Madzarov 2009, 131-184.

⁵⁶ Suceveanu 1992, 195-223; Madzarov 2009, 184-202.

⁵⁷ Batty 2007, 426.

Hadrian, during the administrative reorganization of the province and, as it is also proved by some milestones inscription⁵⁸.

Connections between the main roads and both the settlements from inside or the camps on the Danube were assured by secondary roads, developed with the passing of time and the consolidation of the Romans across the region⁵⁹. For some of them, especially those connecting the Danube with the Black Sea coast it is possible to suppose older ways of trade and communication, as it is the case, for example for the roads *Durostorum - Callatis/Tomi* and *Axiopolis - Tomi* mentioned above.

It is important to point out that the inland road network is based mainly on civil settlements - cities. But, even for some of them, results or interpretations of the latest research seems to demonstrate the existence of small wooden fortifications which were operating very short period of time, before the founding of the cities, as is the case for example of *Nicopolis ad Istrum*⁶⁰.

Roman road network in the province of *Moesia inferior* is organized during the reign of Trajan. In preparation for the war with Dacians important military forces are displaced in the area, are built military fortifications and *Via Egnatia* is repaired. All those actions show a carefully considered and very strategically elaborated measures in the region, undertaken most probably in the personal presence of the emperor himself. Based on information provided by the data founding of several cities in Thrace were highlighted three major ways of advancing from south to north (**fig. 2**)⁶¹. In the eastern part of the province a line is formed by the cities of *Marcianopolis*, *Ulpia Anchialos* and *Ulpia Bizye*. This road goes further north in the direction of *Tropaeum Traiani*. From *Marcianopolis* a road was advancing northwards directly to the legionary camp of *Durostorum*, on the Danube. A second line connects *Nicopolis ad Istrum*, *Augusta Traiana*, *Plotinopolis* and *Traianopolis* with two important settlements on the Danube – *Sexaginta Prista* and *Novae*. The third line is linking *Ulpia Serdica*, *Ulpia Pautalia*, *Ulpia Nicopolis ad Mestum*, which were connected with *Oescus* and *Ratiaria*. All this lines are turned in very important roads, used till the end of antiquity.

The military function of a road is perhaps the most important. The Roman army was thus „the cause” and the „result” of the Roman roads network in the region. The road appears along with the military conflicts, is built by the military and is mainly circulated by military units. But the army does not influence only the roads; it is also the main factor to shape the economy and local production. The numerous military troops quartered in the province and the civil settlements accompanying them need food supply and building materials⁶². As a consequence the landscape is transform by the appearance of a lot of rural settlements and villas and a new way of making agriculture⁶³.

The large military presence, which is normal for a border area, may give the impression of the absence of cities. They are not lacking. Although less numerous they are developing both in the hinterland of the province (*Tropaeum Traiani*, *Montana?*), and on the Danube, where, after leaving legions appear a colonia, *Oescus* and municipia from *Novae*, *Durostorum*, *Troesmis* and *Noviodunum*. Besides them there are other settlements resembling cities, some *vici* included⁶⁴.

The reigns of Trajan and Hadrian are defining for the administrative and military organization of the province. After the reorganization of the border between the Thrace and *Moesia inferior*, in 136 AD⁶⁵, is following a period of peace. The region flourishes, a lot of veterans and newcomers are

⁵⁸ Panaite 2012b, 131-143.

⁵⁹ Panaite 2006, 57-80; Panaite 2010, 373-380; Gugl, Panaite forthcoming.

⁶⁰ Vladkova 2000-2001, 100-107; Vladkova 2002, 30-35. Paunov, Topalilov 2013.

⁶¹ Boteva 2014, 195-204.

⁶² Duch 2015, 235-260

⁶³ Bărbulescu 2001; Băltăc 2011.

⁶⁴ Tatcheva 2004, 43-81; Aparaschivei 2010.

⁶⁵ There were found several inscriptions with an almost text identical which refers to setting boundaries *inter Moesos et Thraces* in 136 AD by Antius Rufinus, special envoy of the emperor: Butovo (ILB 429), Hotnitsa (ILB 386), Maslarevo (ILB 358), Polski Senovets (ILB 390), Svishtov (ILB 357); Staklen (IGLN 72); east of the village

settling down in the province. The region represents a gateway for both goods and people. The imperial control of the area guarantees the stability and the good functioning of the economy and trade, also the general development of the area. It is no less true that this is achieved by an increasingly accentuated military control, primarily on cities. As a consequence we can easily speak about the militarization of the region, proved by a lot of small fortifications built in the territories of the cities, near the mountain passes or along the roads⁶⁶.

It is still difficult to assess accurately what effect the Roman conquest and the subsequent period of Roman occupation had on the development of the landscape⁶⁷. Clearly, large numbers of new features were introduced, new types of settlement were constructed and new activities were carried out.

There can be emphasized few aspects in which the landscape was transformed under the roman rule: changes in pattern of rural settlements, changes in the nature of land use and agrarian exploitation and changes in organizing the road network.

Roman elements were identified at different levels: administrative, military, economic, social and so on. During this period this area gets a number of new features which are defining a new reality. The Romans preserved some of the existing elements and added to them new ones; new settlements and forms of organization and as an integrative element have developed a road network.

Topography and the water courses are the major factors in determining the access network throughout the area. The main trade and communication routes give more structure than before to the organisation of the landscape and the emergence of settlement. This influenced the location of the military camps, which in turn influenced the construction of the road network. The Roman army was clearly an important factor in *Moesia inferior*. Military sites are associated with the emergence of romanised settlements, *canabae* and *vici*, which played an important role in the urbanisation of the province. Many army veterans were colonised in the province as landowners (legionary veterans) or as the inhabitants of towns and some of them became active in local municipal administration. *Vici* as well as the *canabae* provided important centres for a large number of activities and services directed at both the army and the civilians, including industry, trade, transport and religious activities. Through their functions these sites had a huge impact and contributed to the rapid romanization of the territory. More than in terms of administration or markets, the Roman army crucially influenced the development of the rural landscape through the construction and maintenance of the communication system. This influenced the location of settlements and made the whole province mechanism work.

of Roman, 100 km West of *Novae* (ILB 184; AE 2004, 1306). It might have been another one at Radanovo (Gerasimova Tomova 1987, 17-21). - For their interpretation see Kolendo 1975, 83-94; Kolendo 1976, 45-67; Božilova *et alii* 1992, 87-90; Tomas 2009, 31-47. For the border between *Moesia* and Thrace see Tatcheva 2000, 60-61 and Tatcheva 2004, 86-89 (discussing also the previous bibliography).

⁶⁶ Nikolov 1994, 125-131.

⁶⁷ Panaite 2015b, 17-50.

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