

# CONTRIBUTIONS TO DOBRUDJA HISTORY UNDER ANASTASIUS I

The reign of Anastasius I (491—518) is known especially for the financial policy of that Byzantine emperor, thanks to which the State treasury amounted on his death to a sum which it had never known and would never reach again. It was with these reserves that Justinian could cope with his exaggerate expenses and the 6th century could see the acme of Byzantine power and civilization<sup>1</sup>.

As concerns the province of Scythia, today's Dobrudja, the most important event which for good reason has drawn the attention of the historians, is the uprising led by Vitalian, commander (*comes*) of part of the federate troops stationed in the diocese of Thrace. He himself was the son of a *comes foederatorum*. What has never been shown in its true light was the cause of the uprising which burst out on the Lower Danube in 513. It was conducted by Vitalian, who is supposed to have been a Roman-Gothic crossbreed<sup>2</sup>. We think that these causes were: 1) the hard life led especially by the village population, following the frequent «barbarian» raids south of the Danube; 2) the new system of taxation which by abolishing the *chrysargyron*, in 498, brought an easing of trade and crafts but by resorting to the so called *coemptio* (*συνωνή*), set a cumbersome task upon the rural population, and — generally — the severe taxation imposed by Anastasius who tried to achieve the largest possible savings<sup>3</sup>. The immediate cause of the uprising lays in the discontent of the *foederati* troops, following the withdrawal of *annona*, upon the emperor's orders<sup>4</sup>. The same measure also explains

<sup>1</sup> Procopio di Cesarea, *Le inedite*, ed. Domenico Comparetti-Domenico Bassi, Rome, 1928, p. 128 – 129; E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, tome II. *De la disparition de l'empire de l'Occident à la mort de Justinien (476 – 565)*, Paris-Bruxelles-Amsterdam, 1949, p. 192 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> E. Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 178 sqq., considers Vitalian first as « un nouveau champion du catholicisme ».

<sup>3</sup> M. V. Levchenko, *Byzance des origines à 1453*, transl. by P. Mabilie, Paris, 1949, p. 54–57; G. Ostrogorsky, *Histoire de l'État byzantin*, transl. by J. Gouillard, Paris, 1956, p. 94–95; P. Lemerle,

*Esquisse pour une histoire agraire de Byzance; les sources et les problèmes*, in RH, 82, CCXIX, 1958, p. 35–36.

<sup>4</sup> Joannes Antiocheus, *Χρονικά*, ed. C. Müller, in FHG, V, 1, 1860, p. 32 and Th. Mommsen, in «Hermes», VI, 1872, p. 344; Ἀφαιρεθεὶς γὰρ σιτήσεως δημοσίας τῶν καλουμένων φοιδαρτικῶν ἀνθρώπων (ἀνόνων). Cf. Ch. Diehl-G. Marçais, *Histoire du moyen âge*, tome III; *Le monde oriental de 395 à 1081* (G. Glotz, *Histoire générale*), Paris, 1936, p. 45 and R. Vulpe, *Histoire ancienne de la Dobroudja*, Bucharest, 1938, p. 325.

the fact that the uprising burst out precisely on the Lower Danube. To the above facts must be added certain measures taken against the colonists, among which the best known is the famous Constitution issued by Anastasius in 500, proclaiming the thraldom of all agriculturists who remained for 30 years on the same land (Cod. Just., XI, 48, 19)<sup>5</sup>.

Such is also the explanation for the great number of discontented people participating in the rising. The effective of those who enlisted under Vitalian's banner reached 50 000 «warriors and peasants»<sup>6</sup>, an enormous figure for that time. The pretext of defending the Orthodox creed against the emperor who supported Monophysitism, was the means by which those who were dissatisfied with Anastasius' religious policy could also be drawn in the camps of the rebels — and in the first place the Blue Party in the capital, who opposed the emperor. Otherwise it is difficult to admit that the worst wounds inflicted by Anastasius' Monophysitism were given precisely to the commander of the *foederati* troops, whose Orthodoxy was generally rather suspect. On the other hand history has recorded other uprisings of the troops who defended the Lower Danube frontier, at the time when the money allowances granted to the latter were either reduced or entirely cancelled<sup>7</sup>.

According to the information supplied by Malalas, in the ranks of Vitalian's army there were «Gothic, Hun and Scythian soldiers»<sup>8</sup>, and according to Theophanes and Cedren «many Huns and Bulgarians»<sup>9</sup>. In the present case the «Scythians» were most probably native peasants called like that because they inhabited Scythia Minor. The Goths, the Huns and the Bulgarians, the latter known for the first time about 480, when emperor Zenon called them to struggle against the Ostrogoths, belonged with the *foederati* recruited from among the «barbarians» who had reached the frontier of the empire. The Huns and Bulgarians could also be called from the North bank of the Danube where they wandered just waiting to seize an opportunity for plundering the empire. Malalas seems to place them all among the «soldiers», a title generally granted only to those recruited from among the subjects of the empire, unlike the «foederati»<sup>10</sup>.

A less known side of the activity under Anastasius is that of the buildings and art monuments in general. Among these are quoted as being connected with his name, the fortifications in Mesopotamia and on the frontiers of North Armenia, the Dara citadel, near Nisibi, which took the name of Anastasiopolis, the «long wall», rebuilt and finished under Anastasius between the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea, 40 km west of Constantinople, building and ornamental works at Hierapolis, Caesarea in Palestine, Alexandria, Constantinople and finally

<sup>5</sup> M. V. Levtchenko, *op. cit.*, p. 55; A. R. Korsunski, *Despre colonat in imperiul roman de Răsărit (secolele V–VI)* (translation from Vizantiiskii Vremennik, IX, 1956), in ARS, seria istorie, IX, 1956, 4 (16), p. 16, 22, 32–33; P. Lemerle, *op. cit.*, p. 37–48.

<sup>6</sup> J. Antiocheus, *op. cit.*, p. 32: ἀμφὶ τὰς ὀχτώ χιλιάδας πολεμικῶν τε καὶ ἀγροίκων ἀνδρῶν.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. N. Bănescu, *Les duchés byzantins de Paradoynavon et de Bulgarie*, Bucharest, 1946, p. 91–92.

<sup>8</sup> I. Malalas, *Chronographia*, XVI, Bonn, 1831, p. 405, 1.8–9; μεθ' ὧν [πλοίων] εἶχον Γότθων καὶ Οὐννων καὶ Σκυθῶν στρατιωτῶν συνεπομένων αὐτῷ [τῷ Βιταλιανῷ].

<sup>9</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 1839, p. 247, 1.3–4; πλήθη Οὐννων καὶ Βουλγάρων. G. Cedrenus, *Hist. compendium*, I, Bonn, 1838, p. 632, 1.10–11: πλήθος Οὐννων καὶ Βουλγάρων.

<sup>10</sup> J. Maspéro, *Φοιδερᾶτοι et Στρατιῶται dans l'armée byzantine au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in BZ, 21, 1912, p. 97–109.

at Dyrrachium, the emperor's native citadel<sup>11</sup>. Recently the big church of the Monophysitical monastery called Quartamin, at Tur Abdin, the centre of Syrian Monophysitism, finished in 512 with the financial aid and with masters sent by emperor Anastasius<sup>12</sup>, was studied.



Fig. 1. — Bricks, stamped with the name of the emperor Anastasius. 1, from Histria; 2–10, from Dinogetia.

At Histria, in Dobrudja, a large number of bricks had formerly been discovered. Their size was  $0.35 \times 0.35 \times 0.055$  m, and they bore an official stamp in Latin, with the name of emperor Anastasius: + IMP(erator) ANASTASIVS (fig. 1/1). They showed for certain that the *b* curtain on the north-west side of the

<sup>11</sup> E. Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 89, 100, 193.

<sup>12</sup> Jules Leroy, *Le décor de l'église du monastère de Quartamin d'après un texte syriaque*, in *Cahiers*

archéologiques, VIII, 1956, p. 75–81; A. Grabar, *Quelques observations sur le décor de l'église de Quartamin*, in *Cahiers archéologiques*, VIII, 1956, p. 83–91.

wall surrounding the citadel, where the bricks have been found, had been rebuilt under Anastasius, by the soldiers in the garrison of the citadel<sup>13</sup>.

On the occasion of the excavations made between 1950 and 1959 at Dinogetia, in various places inside the citadel, especially towards its western side as well as outside the surrounding wall, sometimes in the Roman-Byzantine stratum (4th—6th centuries), at other times in the early feudal one (10th—12th centuries), re-used by its inhabitants, 15 fragments of bricks out of as many complete pieces were discovered, carrying on one of the two long and narrow facets a stamp in relief with the name of emperor Anastasius (fig. 1/2—10)<sup>14</sup>. So far no brick has been found in the wall. The explanation must probably be seen in the fact that generally, only the foundations of the walls have been preserved, for which the common building materials were stones, while the bricks were used rather for the upper part of the buildings. With the exception of just one fragment preserved in its full length, 0.34 m, the breadth being probably equal to the length, the size of the other bricks cannot be known from the fragments preserved. Their thickness varies between 0.045—0.065 m. Only two fragments carry the stamp on one of the two broad faces of the brick. On two other fragments a larger portion of mortar has been preserved, including small bits of broken bricks — a very valuable indication for the construction technique under Anastasius.

According to the type of the stamp, the Dinogetia bricks carrying the name of emperor Anastasius divide into four different kinds, none of them being identical with the single kind of the Histria bricks, published by V. Pârvan. The text of all stamps is in Latin. Three of the four kinds of stamps having been inscribed on the moulds in the usual way, from left to right, have appeared reversed on the brick and must be read accordingly, from right to left (fig. 1/3—10).

Just one stamp (fig. 1/2) — preserved on two different fragments of bricks which, placed side by side, do not offer the possibility of completing the initial text — is impressed correctly from left to right, with regular and elegant letters. Both fragments were found in the early feudal stratum of the A III sector of the Dinogetia-Garvăn site, namely inside the citadel in front of the curtain between its 11th and 12th towers. The stamp, applied as usual on one of the narrow and long sides of the bricks has a less pronounced relief and smaller letters than the other ones. Unlike all the stamps with the name of the same emperor, found at Histria and Dinogetia, on these not only the name but also the title of the emperor were written in full + Imp]ERATOR ANASTA[sius] (fig. 1/2). Moreover, the background of the stamp is divided into three zones, out of which one was broader in the middle and the two other narrower, up and down. On each of the marginal zones of the stamp, towards the middle, are spaced the letters T I N, perhaps the only ones also existing on the complete brick, which we hypothetically reconstitute in the following way: T(urma) I(uniorum) N(oviuduno) or N(oviudunensium), or T(urmarii) I(uniores) N(oviudunenses)<sup>15</sup>. To support such hypo-

<sup>13</sup> V. Pârvan, *Histria IV*, in ARMSI, XXXVIII, 1915—1916, p. 701—702, no. 61; idem, *Fouilles d'Histria*, in « Dacia », II, 1925, p. 248, no. 45, fig. 72.

<sup>14</sup> SCIV, II, 1, 1951, p. 33, fig. 21—22; III, 1952, p. 393—394, fig. 29; V, 1—2, 1954, p. 168, fig. 7; « Materiale », VI, 1959, p. 646 and fig. 17.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. R. Grosse, *Römische Militärgeschichte von Gallienus bis zum Beginn der byzantinischen Themenverfassung*, Berlin, 1920, p. 48, 215, 216 and Fr. Lammert, *Turma*, in RE, 2. Reihe, XIV, 1, 1943, col. 1390—1392.

theses, we may quote the bricks with the stamp *Classis Flavia Moesica* (2nd—3rd centuries) and those with the stamp *Legio I Iovia Scythica* (4th century) found both at Noviodunum, and at Dinogetia<sup>16</sup>, which show that during the Roman and early Byzantine empire the lower Danube frontier, between Galați-Isaccea and the Black Sea was a unit, being defended by the same troops, whose headquarters were in the larger settlement at Noviodunum. It will be incumbent on future researches in this latter settlement to confirm also our supposition concerning Anastasius' epoch. For the time being it is worth mentioning that during the archaeological excavations limited only to the portion of the Danube's beach, which is sometimes overflowed, among the ruins of the Noviodunum citadel, it was established that the series of the early Byzantine coins began with Anastasius and ended with Focas<sup>17</sup>.

The only construction at Dinogetia, whose ruins have been entirely brought to light and about which one can safely assert that it was rebuilt under Anastasius, is the basilica at the south-western angle of the citadel, among the ruins and on the pavement of which most bricks with that emperor's stamp were found<sup>18</sup>. Other constructions among which could also be included the western side of the citadel seem to have existed towards towers 11 and 12 and, probably, in other parts of the citadel too. They are going to be identified in the future by the archaeological diggings which so far pursued first of all the discovery of the remnants of the early feudal settlement.

A precious art object renovated (*renovatum*) under emperor Anastasius in one of the Constantinople workshops is the well-known plate in gilt silver, belonging to bishop Paternus of Tomis, nowadays at the Ermitage Museum in Leningrad (fig. 2). The object dates—at the latest—in the last year of emperor Anastasius' reign (518). The seal showing the emperor's bust with a halo around the head and the inscription: D(ominus) N(oster) ANASTASIVS P(ius), AVG(ustus), all round, is impressed on the back of the object (fig. 2/2)<sup>19</sup>. It is supposed that being stolen by one of the «barbarian» tribes which plundered Tomis in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the plate bearing Paternus' name was transformed later in a workshop north of the Black Sea, by adding to it the medallion worked in the technique of the cloisonné used by the Huns, and filled with enamel or coloured gems. It seems but little probable however that the inscription in Greek too stitched on the back of the plate and indicating the weight and quality of the silver and gold used for making it, should have been equally added in one of the Pontic workshops and not at Constantinople, as has been supposed<sup>20</sup>. Noteworthy is the fact that the hoard with objects, dating in the 6<sup>th</sup>—7<sup>th</sup> centuries, found at Malaja Peresce-

<sup>16</sup> «Materiale», VII, 1961, p. 595, and Gh. Ștefan, *La Legio I Iovia et la défense de la frontière danubienne au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle de notre ère*, in *Nouvelles études d'histoire présentées au X<sup>e</sup> Congrès des sciences historiques*, Rome, 1955, Bucharest, 1955, p. 161—167.

<sup>17</sup> I. Barnea and B. Mitrea, *Săpăturile de salvare de la Noviodunum (Isaccea)*, in «Materiale», V, 1959, p. 471.

<sup>18</sup> SCIV, III, 1952, p. 393—394; «Dacia», N. S., II, 1958, p. 338—339, fig. 7—8.

<sup>19</sup> L. Matzulewitsch, *Byzantinische Antike. Studien*

*auf Grund der Silbergefäße der Ermitage*, in *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus russischen Sammlungen*, II, Berlin—Leipzig, 1929, p. 101 sqq., pl. 26—27 and fig. 21; H. Leclercq, *Poltava*, in *Dict. d'archéol. chrét. et de liturgie*, fasc. CLVI—CLVII, Paris, 1939, col. 1347—1348; I. Barnea, *Discul episcopului Paternus*, Bucharest, 1944, p. 3—15 (excerpt from «Analecta», II).

<sup>20</sup> N. Fettich, *Archäologische Studien zur Geschichte der späthunnischen Metallkunst*, in *ArchHung*, XXXI, Budapest, 1951, p. 135—136, 138.



Fig. 2. — 1, the plate of Bishop Paternus from Tomis; 2, a—d, the seals on the back of the same plate.

pina in 1912, to which Paternus' plate belongs, had been buried in a region which was not in the way of the nomadic tribes of horsemen. This finding has led to the supposition that it was plundered from Tomis by one of the Antes' tribes

who took it away and after making the above-mentioned transformation, hid it under the stress of danger in the region inhabited by them<sup>21</sup>.

Apart from the above-mentioned monuments, dated for certain during Anastasius' reign, some more have been discovered in Dobrudja, which may with more or less probability be attributed to the epoch of the same emperor. Among these the most important have been so far discovered at Histria. We mean first of all some of the large public and private buildings which have been discovered in the south-western and eastern parts of the citadel, as are for instance: the basilica bordering the western wall of the citadel, near towers G and H; the basilica with *tabernae*, situated south-eastward of the former but just near it; in its first phase of construction (only one room with an apsis); the big edifices on the hillock which towers over lake Sinoe, in the eastern part of the town<sup>22</sup>. All these buildings are attributed to the second period of construction at Histria, after the reconstruction of the citadel in the 3rd—4th centuries, an epoch stretching from the end of the 5th century up to the year 580, and represents a period of maximum prosperity for the town<sup>23</sup>.

A special problem is raised by the «basilica coemeterialis» at Histria (fig. 3). The last excavations made in 1956 in order to bring entirely forth the ruins of this construction identified by V. Pârvan, led to the statement that the oldest coins found on the pavement of the basilica can be traced to Anastasius while the later ones must be traced to Mauricius Tiberius (582—602)<sup>24</sup>. This cannot necessarily lead to the conclusion that the basilica was built under Anastasius and lasted up to the reign of Mauricius Tiberius, although such a conclusion is not precluded. As we know that following the great currency reform carried out by Anastasius, his coins circulated also later on<sup>25</sup>, during his successors' reign; it seems that as concerns the dating of this basilica we must stick to the opinion of V. Pârvan who, proceeding from the more rudimentary construction technique (walls bound with clay) attributed its building to a late Byzantine-Barbarian epoch in the 6th century<sup>26</sup>.

The monument seems to have a peculiar importance as proof of the relations of Histria with Asia Minor in the 6th century of our era. The architectural element which indicates such relations is the pastophorium prolonged in the form of a chapel on the left side of the main apsis. The type of basilica with such pastophoria is a creation of Asia Minor (5th century) whence it spread to Syria too<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> P. N. Tretiakov, *Восточнославянские племена*, Moscow, 1953, p. 182—185.

<sup>22</sup> Among the ruins of the edifice whose worship room has a pentagonal apsis on the outside, in this latter region, an impost of a capital has been discovered on which there is a monogram cross with the letter rho with an open buckle like the chrysm of bishop Paternus' plate (see above, fig. 2): Iorgu Stoian, *Edificiul descoperit lângă marea locuință din zona de est a cetății*, in the report: *Șantierul arheologic Histria (1954)*, in SCIV, VI, 3—4, 1955, p. 532—538, fig. 14. See also: in «Dacia», N. S., II, 1958, p. 336—337 and fig. 5; SCIV, VIII, 1—4, 1957, p. 347 sqq., fig. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Em. Condurachi, *Histria à l'époque du Bas-*

*Empire d'après les dernières fouilles archéologiques*, in «Dacia», N. S., I, 1957, p. 249—251, 256, 261; *Histria I*, 1954, p. 61, 69—70, 121—122, 126; «Materiale», V, 1959, p. 288—289.

<sup>24</sup> «Materiale», V, 1959, p. 291—296, fig. 4.

<sup>25</sup> A. Andréadès, *De la monnaie et de la puissance d'achat des métaux précieux dans l'Empire byzantin*, in «Byzantion», I, 1924, p. 79—80; M. G. Soutzo, in BSH, XIII, 1927, p. 54—58; P. Grierson, *The currency reform of Anastasius*, in *Acti VIII Congr. Internaz. di Studi bizantini*, 1951, I (Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici, 7), Roma, 1953, p. 374—375.

<sup>26</sup> V. Pârvan, in ACMI, 1914, p. 118—119.

<sup>27</sup> G. A. Sotiriu, *Χριστιανική και βυζαντινή Ἀρχαιολογία*, I, Athens, 1942, p. 279—280.

In Europe as yet only one such basilica was known, at Teurnia, dating back to the year 500 ca<sup>28</sup>. That of Histria had probably just one pastophorium, not two, like all other basilicae of the same type; the future excavations will have to verify it. It is worth stressing that all or almost all basilicae with such pastophoria are graveyard basilicae, which may be an indication holding good also for the nature of that at Histria, even if only for a certain period of its utilization.

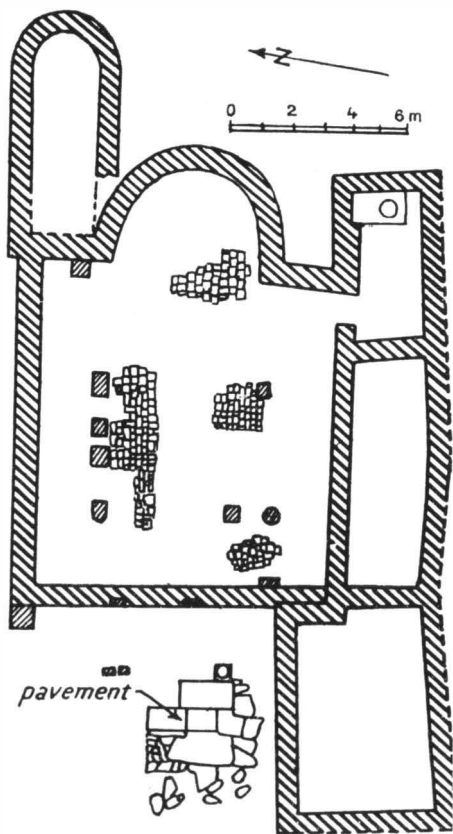


Fig. 3. — Histria: Basilica extramurana.

One last remark concerning Histria refers to the whole sector situated between the surrounding wall (of the 3rd vallum) and the Z wall, situated on the western plateau of the citadel, 370 m far from the latter. The remnants of the constructions dating back in the 5<sup>th</sup>—6<sup>th</sup> centuries and the «unusual multitude of coins», beginning with Anastasius and ending with Justin II<sup>29</sup>, lead to the supposition — which must be verified by subsequent excavations — that the sector started being inhabited more intensively in Anastasius' time.

Going further, to the capital of Scythia Minor, we must first note that in the present stage of the research, there is no certain archaeological proof of the restoration of Tomis under Justinian, as Procopius informs us (*De aedif.*, IV, 11). It is probable, but not certain, that all the three stone-blocks with Greek inscriptions describing the «renovation» of the enceinte wall date from Justinian's time. About the inscription at the «butchers' tower» V. Pârvan asserted that it dated «from Justinian» or «from a somewhat earlier epoch»<sup>30</sup>. Some

of the epigraphic characters of the three inscriptions<sup>31</sup> are very much like those on the bricks stamped with the name of emperor Anastasius or on bishop Paternus' plate. Other inscriptions found at Tomis, of a different nature, offer however the same analogies<sup>32</sup>. Without taking this similitude of the epigraphic characters as an absolute criterion for dating the three inscriptions in the wall of Tomis, which is of primary interest to us, we cannot however exclude the possibility for

<sup>28</sup> R. Egger, *Teurnia. Die römischen und frühchristlichen Altertümer Oberkärntens*, Wien-Leipzig, 1926, p. 21—32.

<sup>29</sup> E. Condurachi and others, *Şantierul arheologic Histria*, in «*Materiale*», IV, 1957, p. 19, 22—24. In the collection of the coin office of the National Museum of Antiquities there are several coins from Anastasius, found at Histria (information supplied by B. Mitrea).

<sup>30</sup> V. Pârvan, *Zidul cetăţii Tomi*, in ARMSI,

XXXVII, 1915, p. 437.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, pl. V, 2 and I. Barnea, *Quelques considérations sur les inscriptions chrétiennes de la Scythie Mineure*, in «*Dacia*», N. S., I, 1957, p. 269, fig. 3.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. R. Vulpe, *op. cit.*, pl. XLIII, fig. 76; I. Barnea, *Quelques considérations...*, p. 266 sqq., fig. 1, 2, pl. I/2, 4; pl. II/3, fig. 8; *idem*, *Creştinismul în Scythia Minor după inscripţii*, in *Studii Teologice*, VI, 1954, 1—2, 87, fig. 15.



one or another of them to be precisely a creation of that time (Anastasius' epoch) all the more so as besides these similitudes there are also differences between their epigraphic characters.

A second category of monuments which are proof of important buildings having been erected at Tomis in the period we are interested in, are the capitals. For the time being we think only of a few Corinthic and Ionic impost capitals, which can be dated with the greatest probability at the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th (fig. 4/1,3,5,6)<sup>33</sup>.

As concerns Callatis, the fragment of architrave on which there is the inscription του φιλωκτίστου, official according to contents and rightly supposed to refer to Justinian<sup>34</sup> as is confirmed, as a matter of fact, by its epigraphic characters<sup>35</sup> is a precious indication of the erection of some buildings under this emperor. The sculptural monuments and especially the capitals so far discovered at Callatis, show however that in the second half of the 5th century and in the first decades of the 6th century, there was a more intensive constructional activity in the citadel than under Justinian (fig. 4/2, 4)<sup>36</sup>.

Another two capitals at Stratonis and Tropaeum Traiani belong also to the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th<sup>37</sup>.

About the great constructions made at Tropaeum Traiani in the 5th—6th centuries, V. Pârvan asserted that some of them had been erected or rebuilt in the second half of the 5th century and others under Justinian—which seems correct without however excluding the possibility for such constructions and rebuildings under Anastasius too. Only concerning the basilica situated north of *via principalis*, close to the eastern gate, called by him «simple» and by Tocilescu «forensis» (although it is neither the one nor the other), Pârvan esteemed that it probably dated in the second half of the 4th century, which was also admitted by later investigators<sup>38</sup>. Such a dating is however contradicted by the presence of the narthex, an architectural element which appears only in the 5th century<sup>39</sup>, leading therefore to the dating of the basilica towards the end of that century or the beginning of the 6th.

<sup>33</sup> I. Barnea, *Capiteluri romano-bizantine din Dobrogea*, in «Materiale», IX, (in the press) fig. 10, 13–15, 23–24, 30.

<sup>34</sup> Th. Sauciu-Săveanu, *Callatis*, I, in «Dacia», I, 1924, p. 147–148, fig. 46–47; V. Bechevliev, *Notes épigraphiques*, in «Godišnik-Plovdiv», II, 1950, p. 63, no. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. another inscription dated for certain back to Justinian's time, with Gh. Ștefan, *O balanță romană din sec. VI e.n. descoperită în Dobrogea*, in SCIV, I, 2, 1950, p. 152–162.

<sup>36</sup> I. Barnea, *op. cit.*, no. 11–12, 17–18; idem *Chapiteaux à protomes de béliers de la Scythie Mineure*, in «Balcania», VII, 2, 1944, p. 408–416, fig. 1–5. Other capitals of the same period have lately been discovered at Callatis (Mangalia). Among the coins found in that place so far, only two are known from Anastasius (information supplied by Octavian Iliescu). Another two have been found at

Schitu, Negru Vodă district. Irimia Dimian, *Cîteva descoperiri monetare bizantine pe teritoriul R. P. R.*, in SCN, I, 1957, p. 192.

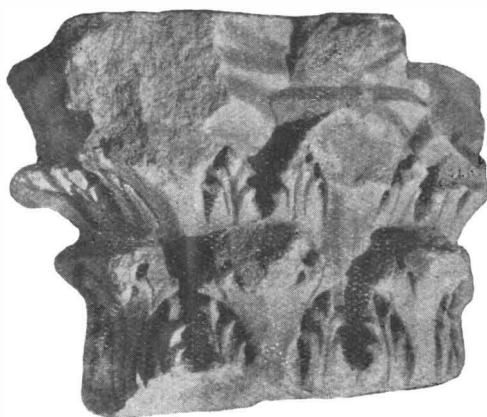
<sup>37</sup> I. Barnea, *Capiteluri romano-bizantine...*, *op. cit.*, fig. no. 16 and 27; G. Murnu, *Monumente de piatră din colecția de antichități a Muzeului de la Adamclisi*, in BCMI, VI, 1913, p. 101–102, fig. 4.

<sup>38</sup> V. Pârvan, *Cetatea Tropaeum*, in BCMI, IV, 1911, p. 181–185; R. Netzhammer, *Die christlichen Altertümer der Dobrudscha*, Bucharest, 1918, p. 190–192; I. Barnea, *Nouvelles considérations sur les basiliques chrétiennes de Dobroudja*, in «Dacia», XI–XII, 1945–1947, p. 225.

<sup>39</sup> A. Orlandos, *Ἡ παλαιοχριστιανικὴ βασιλικὴ τῆς Μεσογακκῆς Λεκάνης*, I, Athens, 1952, p. 130–132; P. Lemerle, *Philippe et la Macédoine orientale à l'époque chrétienne et byzantine*, text, Paris, 1945, p. 323–324.



1



2



3



4



5



6

Fig. 4. — Capitals from the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century: 1, 3, 5, 6, from Tomis; 2, 4, from Callatis.

As to the only inscription of the same late time, at Tropaeum Traiani, whose Greek-Latin text is well-known (*Crux mortis*, etc.), V. Pârvan asserted that it could not be dated earlier than the year 500<sup>40</sup>. Moreover, it is to be noted that some letters of this inscription (A, R and especially M) offer the most striking similitudes with the Latin text on Paternus' plate (fig. 5).

Nor seem the proofs of a certain constructional activity under Anastasius to be absent in connection with Ulmetum, the citadel «rebuilt from the foundations» by Justinian, as Procopius assures us (*De aedif.*, IV, 7). In the absence of more intensive archaeological diggings, for the other Roman-Byzantine citadels on the right bank of the Danube, we are not possessed of any proof like those we have for Dinogetia. However it is not insignificant to note that, as it happens, from Troesmis and Aegyssus which are also included by Procopius (*De aedif.* IV, 7 and 11) on the list of citadels restored by Justinian, no coin of this emperor has reached so far the collections of the National Museum of Antiquities and of the Coin Office of the Academy of the Rumanian People's Republic. However there is one coin from Anastasius<sup>41</sup>.



Fig. 5. — Tropaeum Traiani: inscription dating back around the year 500 our era.

The above facts lead to the conclusion that after the repeated attacks of the Goths and Huns at the end of the 4th century and the first half of the 5th century on Scythia Minor, in the second half of that century followed a period of a certain quiet and safety which is reflected in a whole number of monuments preserved to our days. At the end of the 5th century, some Bulgarian tribes which, starting from the north of the Black Sea had come to the Lower Danube and Pannonia, in search of better pastures<sup>42</sup>, crossed the Danube and plundered Thrace in 493. In order to defend the capital, Anastasius proceeded to rebuild «the long wall» of 65 km between the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea, very probably finished in 497<sup>43</sup>. But the Bulgarians' invasions into Thrace were repeated in 499 and 502. It is to be supposed that following these last attacks, if not before, Anastasius began the works for rehabilitating the Danubian limes, works which were continued by his successor Justin and completed under Justinian<sup>44</sup>. Even the construction of the stone wall between Axiopolis and Tomis — 59 km long — has been attributed to Anastasius owing to certain similitudes of the latter

<sup>40</sup> V. Pârvan, *Cetatea Tropaeum*, p. 185–186 and 166, fig. 2; R. Vulpe, *op. cit.*, pl. XL, fig. 71.

<sup>41</sup> Information supplied by B. Mitrea (for *Troesmis*) and Oct. Iliescu (for *Aegyssus*).

<sup>42</sup> D. Simonyi, *Die Bulgaren des 5. Jahrhunderts im Karpatenbecken*, in *ActaArch*, X, 3–4, 1959, p. 227–250.

<sup>43</sup> E. Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 89–90.

<sup>44</sup> D. Tudor, *Prima bislică creștină descoperită în Dacia Traiană*, Iassy, 1948, p. 17, proceeding from the remark that the Byzantine coins discovered at the Sucidava citadel, began for the most part with issues from Justin I, reaches the conclusion that «the restoration of Sucidava as well as of other citadels about which Procopius speaks, was made as early as the reign of Justinian's uncle».

with the long wall of Constantinople<sup>45</sup>. But while more certain proofs for attributing the stone defence wall to Anastasius are absent, on the other hand, for the reconstruction of Dinogetia and Histria citadels in this time, the bricks stamped with the name of that emperor are the best documents. The remark that Anastasius fortified Histria and therefore also Dinogetia as well as other citadels on the right bank of the Danube and on the Dobrudja shore of the Black Sea (about which we have not got so far very precise data) — against Vitalian, because, thanks to the Byzance fleet, the latter could be « successfully defended against the rebel general »<sup>46</sup> — is opposed to the fact that the rebel Vitalian had himself a fleet with which in 515 he made bold enough to attack even the empire's capital<sup>47</sup>. Therefore it is much more natural to admit that such works were performed in the longer interval of calm for the Byzantine power in Dobrudja, in the first part of Anastasius' reign, without thereby contesting that they were aimed at the defence against the enemy at home not only that abroad.

Parallel with the works for the rehabilitation of at least some citadels on the Danube banks and the Black Sea shores, in Scythia Minor, under Anastasius there was a peculiar flourishing of town life, with which the works in discussion are closely connected, being mutually conditioned. More than the relative quiet, the abolition of the chrysargyron contributed to this prosperity, which gave great impetus to the trade and crafts. On the other hand, the replacement of the land tax in kind (*annona*) by payment in cash, on the basis of the gold standard, meant the aggravation of the conditions of the peasantry, which aroused much discontent and numerous popular risings, culminating in that of Vitalian, in 513—515<sup>48</sup>.

Anastasius I and his successor Justin I were without doubt surpassed by Justinian I as concerns the constructive work in the empire as a whole and, for the time being we have no reasons to doubt it as concerns the Danubian limes as well as throughout Dobrudja. But the archaeological discoveries in the latter province make us hold certain reserves concerning all the construction works attributed by Procopius to Justinian. In the enthusiastic, laudatory and sometimes exaggerate description which the well-known historian makes in *De aedificiis*, he attributes to this emperor the personal merit of whatever was built not only under his reign and that of Justin I<sup>49</sup> but, as shown by many archaeological documents between the Danube and the Black Sea, largely also those made under the reign of Anastasius I. Thus, the archaeological discoveries made in Dobrudja so far begin to fill a gap of the literary sources and to reestablish the truth concerning one of the less known, but particularly prosperous periods in the history of this province, which was that of the 5th century and early 6th century of our era.

I. BARNEA

<sup>45</sup> R. Vulpe, *op. cit.*, p. 359—360, 371.

<sup>46</sup> V. Pârvan, *Histria IV*, in ARMSI, p. 702.

<sup>47</sup> E. Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>48</sup> G. Ostrogorsky, *op. cit.*, p. 95; *Istoria Romîniei*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1960, p. 598—599.

<sup>49</sup> E. Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 723; P. Lemerle, *Invasions et migrations dans les Balkans depuis la fin de l'époque romaine jusqu'au VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in RH, 211, 1954, p. 285; D. Tudor, *op. cit.*