

## BARBARIAN INVASIONS IN NORTHERN SCYTHIA MINOR DURING THE 4<sup>TH</sup>-5<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES B.C.

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**Abstract:** This article is dedicated to the barbarian invasions in the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C., connecting the historical events mentioned in the written sources with the archaeological finds from the Roman fortresses in Dobruja, such as Noviodunum, Halmyris or Carsium.

**Key words:** Scythia Minor, barbarian invasions, Noviodunum, Halmyris, Carsium

**Cuvinte cheie:** Sciția Minor, invazii barbare, Noviodunum, Halmyris, Carsium

Two of the most important fords along the Lower Danube are located in the northern part of Scythia Minor, at Noviodunum and Carsium. For this reason the area was exposed to the mounted invaders arrived from the steppe, even when the river was not frozen. The literary sources recorded several attacks on Scythia Minor in the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries, and sometimes the comparison with the archaeological evidence can prove that they damaged the fortresses. In some cases, the burned levels could not be precisely dated and for this reason they could not be related with one or other event known from the literary sources. For instance, a destruction level dated sometimes in the 5<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup> was identified at Argamum, but so far we cannot say which of the attacks discussed in this paper caused it.

The series of barbarian attacks on the Lower Danubian provinces started in 314, when the Goths participated as *foederati* in the civil war on Licinius' side against Constantine the Great, helping the emperor who ruled that part of the empire close to them, but on this occasion there is no evidence for destructions in the fortresses from the northern part of Scythia, nor in 318 and 323, when the Goths, the Carpi and the Sarmats launched other invasions<sup>2</sup>. Another less known Gothic attack over the frozen Danube occurred sometimes in the 340's, most probably in the winter of 346-347, when the Roman army was involved in the Persian war. This attack was not ordered by the Gothic king, therefore the *foedus* closed in 332 was not broken. The existence of this raid was inferred from a speech of Libanios (*Oratio* LIX, 89-90, dated in 348 or 349), saying that Constantius II convinced the Goths to make peace. The title *Gothicus Maximus* of this emperor attested by an inscription from Sirmium from 352 is another testimony for this invasion<sup>3</sup>. It seems that this time one fortress from the northern part of Scythia Minor was affected: Halmyris. Level 6 – constructed after the destruction in 295 – lasted until the 340's, and it's possible that its end was caused by this invasion<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Topoleanu 1999, 201.

<sup>2</sup> For the war of 314 see Zahariade 2006, 23; Kulikowski 2007, 82. The invasion of 318 is attested only by the titles *Gothicus Maximus* și *Carpicus Maximus* received by Constantine in this year (Patsch 1928, 13-14; Bichir 1976, 172, 173; Barnea, Iliescu 1982, 106). In 323 the Danubian region was attacked by a Gothic-Sarmatic coalition led by Rausimodus, when the frontier was less defended. See Madgearu 2008, 34-35.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson 1956, 379-380; Wolfram 1988, 63; Madgearu 2008, 56-57.

<sup>4</sup> Suceveanu *et alii* 2003, 35, 112.

The penetration of the Huns in Eastern Europe caused an almost continuous state of danger on the *limes*. For over a century, this event triggered a long chain of movements in the space between Dnieper and Lower Danube, until the last remnants of the Hunnic confederation lost their power. The first consequence was the migration of the Gothic groups led by Fritigern, Alaviv, Alatheus and Saphrax. In 376 and 377, they took refuge in Moesia Secunda, where after a short time they rebelled against the Roman authorities. Until the battle of Adrianople (9 August 378) and then until the closing of a peace treaty (3 October 382), the Gothic warriors plundered large areas in the Thracian diocesis. In the northern part of Scythia Minor, Dinogetia suffered destruction during these years (the end of phase I).<sup>5</sup> At Argamum, the end of life in the *extramuros* occurred under the same circumstances (a coin hoard dated to 375 is associated with the destruction)<sup>6</sup>. It is possible that the burned level noticed at Ibida, dated to the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century<sup>7</sup>, was the result of the same events and we could even assume there was a fire in Troesmis in this period<sup>8</sup>.

After a few years, the Hunnic advance began to show its enduring effects in this region. An invasion of *Skiri* and *Karpodakai* mixed with the Huns is recorded in 381. The battle took place somewhere near the Danubian frontier, and the enemies returned north of the river. The most probable date is 381.<sup>9</sup> The name *Karpodakai* was created by Zosimos to distinguish them from their brothers previously settled in the empire, during the Tetrarchy: they were the *Carpi* who remained in Dacia, now under Hunnic domination<sup>10</sup>. If they came from Moldavia, it is highly probable that the Danube was crossed at Noviodunum. In 386, King Odotheus of the Greuthungs asked to be received in the empire with his people, and tried to cross the frontier, leading a coalition of various tribes. If Odotheus was able to gather it and start the conflict, it could be inferred that the Huns were not yet the true masters in the region, and that Odotheus was more or less independent. The attack was launched with 3000 monoxilae (the number was perhaps exaggerated by Claudianus). Their use implies the cooperation with the local population that possessed such small boats for fishing. The *limes* were still well defended by the army commanded by Flavius Promotus, *magister peditum Thraciae*, and the navy blocked the river, trapping and slaughtering the enemies; even Odotheus was killed<sup>11</sup>. The fight took place somewhere in northern Dobrudja, perhaps around Noviodunum. One of the sources, the *Panegyricus* composed in 398 by Claudius Claudianus (a poet who wrote for Flavius Stilicho), locates the conflict in *Peuce*, but it is improbable that the battle was fought only in the Danube Delta, because the Roman field and navy forces were deployed along the river for a great distance. Yet, the Delta was sometimes crossed by invaders; we know that Halmyris was

<sup>5</sup> Barnea 1979, 206; Barnea 1984, 339-341.

<sup>6</sup> Iacob 1999, 175-189; Iacob 2003, 116.

<sup>7</sup> Iacob *et alii* 2009, 196-197.

<sup>8</sup> Oberländer-Târnoaveanu 1980, 250.

<sup>9</sup> Zosimos, IV, 34. 6 (tome II/2, 298, 409-410, footnote 168) (FHDR, II, 312/313); Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 40; Kazanski 2009, 113.

<sup>10</sup> Bichir 1976, 145-146.

<sup>11</sup> Zosimos, IV, 35. 1, 38-39 (tome II/2, 299, 303-306, 410-411, footnote 169, 426-429, footnotes 177-178) (FHDR, II, 312/313); Marcellinus Comes, 3 (year 386) (FHDR, II, 360/361); *Consularia Constantinopolitana*, year 386; Claudianus, *Panegyricus de quarto consulatu Honorii Augusti*, 623-636 (vol. I, 333); Stein 1959, 194; Vulpe, Barnea 1968, 405; Burns 1984, 44; Heather 1995, 7; Heather 1998, 502; Zahariade 2006, 27-28.

plundered by some unidentified barbarians on other occasions, too, but we believe that the Delta could be crossed by a mounted army only when frozen.

The attack on Halmyris was recorded in Philostorgios' *Church History*, in relation with the exile of the heretic Eunomius in this city: "This is a place in Moesia that is in Europe, in the region of the Danube. When the Danube froze, however, Halmyris was captured by the barbarians who crossed over"<sup>12</sup>. Until now, the date of the attack was approximated between 383-384<sup>13</sup>, 384-385 or 385-386<sup>14</sup>, but a study of the specialist in patrology R. Vaggione clarifies the problem: Eunomius was present at Halmyris between the summer of 389 and the spring of 390<sup>15</sup>. This means that the barbarians captured the city in the winter of 389/390. Philostorgios does not specify the ethnic origin of the barbarians. There is instead another recently discovered source that could be connected to the same event: the *Life of Saint Hypathios*. Hypathios was a monk who lived some time between 386 and 395 in a monastery located near Halmyris. The source says that the monastery was fortified "because the Huns were neighbors and they could easily invade that area". According to the source, the monastery was somewhere in Thrace, but this could refer to the diocese, not the province. Because the Huns were neighbors and because the people around received wheat transported on the sea from Constantinople, it is less probable that the monastery was in the province of Thrace<sup>16</sup>. For this reason, we can assume that the monastery was near the city of Halmyris in Scythia Minor. We think that the end of level 7 from Halmyris should not be connected with this event, because the last coins found on this level were issued between 395 and 402<sup>17</sup>. We consider that the city was only captured, as the source says, and not set on fire in 390. The destruction of this level should be connected with another event, as we shall see below.

In 391, Moesia Secunda, Scythia and Thrace were invaded by Bastarnae and Getae, according to the single available source, the poems of Claudianus. The South-East European provinces had already plundered some years before by the rebel Visigoths settled in Moesia, who broke the peace agreement from 382. The army commanded by Flavius Promotus, appointed *magister equitum*<sup>18</sup>, and then by Stilicho, who followed after Promotus died, defeated them in a battle on the Hebrus River.<sup>19</sup> We doubt that the Bastarnae were still living in Moldavia (they were deported south of the Danube in 280 and 295). The poem contains a mixture of contemporary ethnic names (*Greuthungi*, *Visi* for Visigoths, *Chuni*, *Alani*) and archaic names (*Bastarnae*, *Getae*, *Moesi*, *Geloni*, *Massagetae* etc.), because his emphatic and laudatory style required the use of antique heroic models. The emergence of the Hunnic

<sup>12</sup> Philostorgios, 137 (X. 6).

<sup>13</sup> Zahariade 2006, 27.

<sup>14</sup> Suceveanu, Zahariade 1987, 95.

<sup>15</sup> Vaggione 2000, 356.

<sup>16</sup> Callinicus, 312-315; Wölflle 1986, 56-58; M. O. Cătoi, *Discuție asupra localizării Mănăstirii Halmyrisos din Vita Sancti Hypatii*. Paper presented at „Pontica”, 4 October 2007 (based on Callinicos, *Vie d'Hypatios*, introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes par G.J.M. Bartelink (Sources chrétiennes, 177), Paris, 1971). The source was also used by Thompson 1948, 36-37, for the invasion of 395.

<sup>17</sup> Suceveanu *et alii* 2003, 35-36, 112.

<sup>18</sup> See Jones, Martindale, Morris 1971, 750-751 for his career.

<sup>19</sup> Claudianus, *Panegyricus de tertio consulatu Honorii Augusti*, VII, 147-150 (vol. I, 280-281) (FHDR, II, 168/169) – dated in 396; *De Consulato Stilichonis*, I, 94-115 (vol. I, 370-373) – dated in 400; Stein 1959, 194; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 47-48; Zahariade 2006, 28.

confederation stirred various populations across the frontier to make inroads south of the Danube, in cooperation with the Huns or independently. In 386 and 391, the Huns were not involved. Because the enemies came from Moldavia, we can assume that northern Scythia Minor was in some way affected in 391, but no destruction level was identified in any fortress that could be certainly associated with this invasion.

The next Ostrogothic attack over the Danube took place in 394. This information is again from another of Claudianus's poems (*Against Rufinus*). The church historian Socrates Scholasticus asserted that the *praefectus* of the eastern *praetorium* Rufinus, the rival of Stilicho, summoned the Huns to invade the empire<sup>20</sup>, but this cannot be proved. If true, Zosimos would have been recorded something about such „invitation”. Claudianus was speaking only about the Getae (*Geticis catervis*) who crossed the frozen Danube with their wagons (*per terga ferocis Danuvii solidata ruunt expertaque remos frangunt stagna rotis*), reaching the borders of Dalmatia<sup>21</sup>. If Dalmatia was reached by the invaders, we can assume that the attack started somewhere in the western part of the Danubian frontier, and for this reason we doubt that the northern Scythia Minor was crossed by these invaders. In the context of this source, the Getae could be identified only with the Goths. The fragments from Philostorgios and Sozomenos about the Hunnic invasions in the eastern provinces and in Persia (395) include some preliminary remarks on a contemporary invasion over the frozen Danube<sup>22</sup>, but it was demonstrated that they are mixing different events, from the Hunnic attack over the Goths to the subsequent invasions<sup>23</sup>. Therefore, a single attack occurred in 394: a great invasion of the Ostrogoths. The Huns were not involved this time, and their offensive in the East (Persia and the oriental provinces of the Roman Empire) in 395 indicates a change of their plundering raids. The reason was very simple: the South-East European provinces, pillaged for two decades by various invaders, were already exhausted, and the Huns did not have too much to steal. The same reason explains why the Ostrogoths also chose another direction for invasion, towards Dalmatia.

We can see that in the first two decades following the Hunnic invasion of 376, northern Scythia Minor was only seldom affected by the barbarian attacks or mutinies. After the troubles between 378 and 382 that indeed caused much destruction, this region entered a period of relative peace. As it results from the archaeological evidence, the attacks launched between 381 and 394 set the fortresses from this area on fire. At Halmyris, the Hunnic occupation was a mere incident without enduring consequences.

A real Hunnic domination was established near the Lower Danube only after the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. In 400, King Uldin became Arcadius's ally after he killed the rebel Gainas who was searching shelter and support from his Gothic brothers in present-day Walachia or Moldavia. Being perhaps unsatisfied by the gifts, he turned to aggressions. The Huns crossed the frozen Danube in the winter of 404/405, plundering the Thracian diocesis<sup>24</sup>. In 408, Uldin launched a more serious attack in Dacia Ripensis, Moesia Secunda and Scythia,

<sup>20</sup> Socrates, VI. 1. 7.

<sup>21</sup> Claudianus, *In Rufinum*, II, 26-28, 36-38 (vol. I, 60-61).

<sup>22</sup> Sozomenos, VIII. 25. 1 (FHDR II, 228/229); Philostorgios, 149 (XI. 8) (FHDR II, 264/265).

<sup>23</sup> Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 53.

<sup>24</sup> Sozomenos, VIII. 25. 1 (FHDR, II, 228/229); Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 62-63; Williams, Friell 1999, 28; Escher, Lebedinsky 2007, 21.

but the Roman army was finally victorious because many Hunnic warriors betrayed<sup>25</sup>. In northern Scythia Minor, destructions that could be associated with this moment are clearly attested at Troesmis<sup>26</sup>, Dinogetia (in extramuros)<sup>27</sup> and Aegyssus<sup>28</sup>. Level 7 from Halmyris was burned during one of these invasions in 404 or 408. The chronology of the first two levels of the fort from Babadag-*Topraichioi* is unclear, because coins issued between 395 and 402 were found on both levels. Few pieces from 402-408<sup>29</sup> were recovered from level 2. This would mean that the end of level 1 could be associated with the invasion of 404, and the next level with the attack of 408. The second fire was much more violent than the first one.

In order to strengthen the defensive system, a new fleet of 250 boats for Moesia and Scythia was established by the edict of 28 January 412<sup>30</sup>. But this was not enough to repel the increasing danger that became manifest after a few years. In the 420's, there was another Hunnic power center in the North-Pontic steppes. Its ruler, King Rua launched an invasion in the Thracian diocesis in 422, when the army that defended the region had been moved to fight against Persia. The Huns advanced up to the *Succi* gorge (Trojanova Vratza). The *comitatensis* army was summoned from the East in order to fight against the invasion that threatened even Constantinople. The Huns were convinced to retreat, receiving an annual tribute of 350 gold pounds (around 114.5 kg).<sup>31</sup> The attack from 422 had a wide impact in northern Scythia Minor. Destructions are attested at Babadag-*Topraichioi* (level 3)<sup>32</sup>, Aegyssus (in the *thermae*)<sup>33</sup>, Ulmetum (level 4 dated according to the latest researches with a coin hoard dated to 408-423)<sup>34</sup>. A coin hoard from Beștepe was hidden under the same circumstances<sup>35</sup>. The Danube was crossed at Noviodunum but perhaps also at Carsium. In this city no 5<sup>th</sup> century coins dated after 422 were discovered, and this could mean that Carsium was destroyed during this war, too<sup>36</sup>.

The conflict was ended when the Huns already moved to Pannonia, with a peace closed at Margus between Attila and the ambassadors Plinthas (*magister militum*) and Epigenes (*quaestor sacri palatii*). The date of this treaty has usually been set in 435, but now it is known that Epigenes became *quaestor sacri palatii* in 438. C. Zuckerman drew the conclusion that the treaty of Margus could be dated only to the winter of 439/440<sup>37</sup>. According to Priscus, after this

<sup>25</sup> Sozomenos, IX. 5 (FHDR, II, 228/229); *Codex Theodosianus*, 221 (V. 6. 3); Bury 1923, 212-213, 271; Stein 1959, 247; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 63-66; Williams, Friell 1999, 108-109; Rouche 2009, 113-114.

<sup>26</sup> Baumann 1980, 166, 172; Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1980, 250.

<sup>27</sup> Comșa 1988-1989, 329, 331.

<sup>28</sup> Opaîț, Sion, Vasiliu 1980, 270.

<sup>29</sup> Opaîț *et alii* 1991, 191, 340-341.

<sup>30</sup> *Codex Theodosianus*, 343 (VII. 17. 1); Williams, Friell 1999, 29, Whitby 2007, 138.

<sup>31</sup> Olympiodoros, fr. 27 (FHG, IV, 63); Marcellinus Comes, 13 (year 422) (FHDR, II, 360/361); Theodoretos, V. 37. 4-10 (FHDR, II, 236-237); Stein 1959, 289; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 76; Croke 1977, 346-367; Sinor 1990, 186-187; Bóna 1991, 47.

<sup>32</sup> Opaîț *et alii* 1991, 192, 341.

<sup>33</sup> Opaîț, Sion, Vasiliu 1980, 270.

<sup>34</sup> Papuc, Covacef 2009, 164.

<sup>35</sup> Poenaru-Bordea, Ocheșeanu 1990, 313; Oța 2000, 369.

<sup>36</sup> Nicolae 1995-1996, 154 points to the lack of 5<sup>th</sup> century coins, but two pieces from 408-423 were afterwards published: Chiriac *et alii* 1999, 326 (nr. 33, 34), 338.

<sup>37</sup> Zuckerman 1994, 160-163.

peace treaty were returned to the Huns the princes Mama and Atakam, executed as possible rivals. They were handed over in a small fort (*phrourion*) from Thrace called *Karsus*<sup>38</sup>. This was usually identified with *Carsium* in Scythia Minor (Hârşova), and some authors said, without source confirmation, that this city was under Hunnic domination<sup>39</sup>. However, the available data are showing that the Huns did not try to extend their domination over several cities in the empire, as their target was simply to plunder and collect tribute. As Gh. Popa-Lisseanu has noticed, *Karsus* should not be confused with *Carsium*. We agree with this opinion. First, Karso is called *phrourion*, which is a word applied exclusively to small fortifications. In the same fragment, Priscus calls Constantia (also known as Contra Margum) a *phrourion*, the small fort from Kuvin in front of Margus, a city which was called instead *pólis*. In his work, Priscus makes a distinction between *pólis*, and *phrourion* and *kastéllon*. The last two words apply to the forts with exclusive military function, but not to the cities, such as Carsium. Second, Priscus always used the name of the provinces, not of the dioceses. As we specified, it is possible that life ceased at Carsium after the Hunnic invasion of 422. The place where the fugitives were handed over was an unidentified small fort somewhere in Thrace, most probably on the Vardar-Morava road, which was on the way to Margus. Therefore, the alleged Hunnic domination at Carsium did not exist.

The Huns violated the peace of 440 in the spring of 441, because they pretended that the bishop of Margus had pillaged the royal Hunnic graves somewhere north of the Danube. The Roman army was again involved in Persia and in another war against the Vandals; Attila took advantage of this circumstance to obtain a greater tribute and to plunder the cities in the Illyrian and Thracian dioceses. The Huns reached the Thracian Chersonesus, where *magister militum* Aspar was defeated in the first open field battle between the Huns and the Late Roman army<sup>40</sup>. It was a single continuous war that started at the end of 441 and ended in 442<sup>41</sup>. Attila's strategic plan was to destroy the main defence points in the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula and to advance toward Constantinople. An even more serious attack followed in 447. The Huns reached Thermopylae, and Constantinople was again in danger<sup>42</sup>. Of course, the archaeological evidence could not be dated with such precision as to distinguish between the two invasions, but several places in the northern part of Scythia Minor were most certainly destroyed during these years. These attacks that occurred before the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century caused the end of level 8 from Halmyris (a coin hoard dated to 425-435)<sup>43</sup>. At Ulmetum, level 3, dated to

<sup>38</sup> Priscus, frg. 1 (FHG, IV, 72) (FHDR, II, 248/249).

<sup>39</sup> Altheim 1962, 289; Vulpe, Barnea 1968, 407; Scorpan 1980, 123; Poenaru-Bordea, Ocheşeanu, Nicolae 1988-1989, 178; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 206; Nicolae 1995-1996, 154; Chiriac *et alii* 1999, 338 (this study sustains that the city was involved in the peace discussion of 449, an assertion based not on sources, but on a supposition of V. Brătulescu from 1940); Oța 2000, 372; Harhoiu 2007, 84.

<sup>40</sup> Priscus, frg. 2 (FHG, IV, 72-73) (FHDR, II, 286/287); frg. II, FHG, V/1, 25-26; Marcellinus Comes, 17 (years 441, 442) (FHDR, II, 360/361); Bury 1923, 273-275; Stein 1959, 291-292; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 109-116; Williams, Friell 1999, 63-72; Gračanin 2006, 59-63; Rouche 2009, 153-156.

<sup>41</sup> Zuckerman 1994, 165.

<sup>42</sup> Marcellinus Comes, 19 (year 447) (FHDR, II, 360/361), 88-89; Iordanes, *Romana*, 331 (FHDR, II, 410/411): *omnem Illyricum Traciamque et utramque Daciam, Mysiam et Scythiam populatus est*; Chronicon Paschale, I, 587 (FHDR, II, 586/587); Bury 1923, 275; Stein 1959, 292-293; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 117-125; Williams, Friell 1999, 77-79, 109; Heather 2006, 309-312; Rouche 2009, 165.

<sup>43</sup> Suceveanu *et alii* 2003, 36, 113, 162.

the second quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, also ended in a violent fire, and the hiding of a coin treasure dated to 425-450 should be ascribed to the same event, the attack of 441-442, or that from 447<sup>44</sup>. The destruction of level 6 from Histria could also be explained by one of those invasions<sup>45</sup>, as well as the destruction of phase II A at Dinogetia<sup>46</sup>. The fort at Babadag–*Topraichioi* suffered a new destruction (level 6)<sup>47</sup>.

A particular incident took place at Noviodunum. According to a fragment from Priscus's lost history, Valips, the chief of the Germanic tribe of Rugi, conquered this city, took hostages and stirred up its inhabitants to rebel. He intended to start an attack against the Thracian and Illyrian dioceses, but the Roman army forced him to surrender after a siege<sup>48</sup>. We think that this mutiny could occur only during the troubled years of 441-442 or even 447, when the Hunnic attacks gave small warlords the opportunity to act independently in a territory that was partially out of the control of the Roman authorities. It is not clear when the Rugi came to Noviodunum. It is likely that they were living somewhere north of the Lower Danube, like the Ostrogoths, but a previous settlement on the Roman territory could not be excluded, since the events suggest that Valips rebelled. After the end of the Hunnic confederation, the Rugi were attested in Noricum<sup>49</sup>. This was perhaps the reason why one of Priscus's editors, Karl Müller, considered that Noviodunum should be identified with Neviodunum, a city located at Drnovo (Slovenia), on Sava River, in the former province of Savia. However, the intention of invading Thrace shows that Valips was somewhere near this area, therefore we can be sure about the identification with the Dobrudja city. The city from Slovenia is far away from the area where the army of the Eastern Empire was interested in and able to organize a siege. Instead, Noviodunum from Scythia Minor had always had an obvious strategic importance.

Shortly after the battle of Nedao (454) when Attila's sons were defeated by the coalition led by the Gepid King Ardarich, a group of Alans, Skiri and Sadagari ruled by Alan chief Candach received from Marcianus the status of *foederati*, and settled in Scythia and Moesia<sup>50</sup>. Ernak (one of the Attila's sons), Emnetzur and Ultzindur (cousins of Attila) were also granted lands in Dacia Ripensis, Moesia Secunda and Scythia. The Ernak arrived in northern Dobrudja, the region that Iordanes called *extrema Scythiae Minoris*, while the other two tribes settled between Oescus and Almus, an area that until around 458 became a kind of Hunnic land<sup>51</sup>. In other cases, the groups separated from Attila's former confederation and launched attacks in

<sup>44</sup> Poenaru-Bordea, Ocheșeanu, Nicolae 1988-1989, 163-186; Papuc *et alii* 2008, 219; Papuc, Covacef 2009, 164.

<sup>45</sup> Suceveanu, Scorpan 1971, 167-168; Scorpan 1980, 123-125. Oța 2000, 369-370 sustained that the attack of 447 did not affect Dobrudja, but the archaeological evidence is clear in this respect.

<sup>46</sup> Barnea A. 1984, 340, 341.

<sup>47</sup> Opaî *et alii* 1991, 192, 341-342.

<sup>48</sup> Priscus, frg. 1 (FHG, V, 24); Wescher 1868, 89, 91-92; Thompson 1948, 78, 217-218; Ensslin 1955, 277; Vulpe, Barnea 1968, 407; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 423-424; Poenaru-Bordea, Ocheșeanu, Nicolae 1988-1989, 178; Oța 2000, 372.

<sup>49</sup> Pohl 1980, 278-280.

<sup>50</sup> Iordanes, *Getica*, L, 265 (FHDR, II, 430/431); Stein 1959, 353; Altheim 1962, 338-340; Vulpe, Barnea 1968, 408; Várady 1969, 333; Zahariade 2006, 30.

<sup>51</sup> Iordanes, *Getica*, L, 266, LII, 268 (FHDR, II, 430/431); Vulpe, Barnea 1968, 408; Várady 1969, 334; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 150-162; 53. Beševliev 1981, 69-72 supposed that *extrema Scythiae Minoris* was the area north of the Danube's mouths, but from the context results that all these groups were settled inside the empire.

the Danubian provinces. In the winter of 466-467, the Huns led by Hormidac crossed the frozen Danube with their wagons, reaching Serdica, being finally defeated by *magister militum* Anthemius (the future Western Emperor).<sup>52</sup> We could probably associate with this moment a single attested destruction: level 5 from Babadag–*Topraichioi*. The most recent coins in the fort are from Marcianus (450-457), one from this level and another one from level VI<sup>53</sup>. This means that the fort existed for an indefinite time after the reign of Marcianus, but without numismatic remains, and that both levels were burned some time in the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The most probable solution for level 5 seems to be the invasion of 466-467.

Another attack launched in 469 by Dengizich (a son of Attila who most probably ruled in present-day Oltenia and Walachia) was a failure,<sup>54</sup> but according to the few available data from the sources the next Hunnic invasion was quite serious. The invaders did not encounter any resistance when they crossed the frontier in 474, because the empire was then in a state of chaos<sup>55</sup>. In northern Scythia Minor, this invasion caused the destruction of level 2 from Ulmetum. The researchers consider that this happened during the reign of Leo I because *terminus post quem* is a gold coin from this emperor's time<sup>56</sup>. We consider that this *terminus* fits better with the invasion of 474 occurred in the first year of Zeno, because there is no proof that the inroads dated during Leo I reached this area. If the chronology proposed for level 5 from Histria is right (the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>57</sup>, then the burning of this level can be ascribed to the same invasion, as well as that of the last level (level 6) from Babadag–*Topraichioi*.

Another nomadic warrior group arrived from Central Asia to the north of the Danube around 480: the Bulgars (or Protobulgarians). They were summoned in 480 by Zeno to take part in the war against the Ostrogoth King Theoderic, but soon they started to act like the Huns, ravaging the Thracian diocesis in 493, 499 and 502<sup>58</sup>. It seems that these invasions caused the destruction of level 5 of the Great Tower from Noviodunum<sup>59</sup>. However, the beginning of the reign of Anastasios I meant a time of recovery for the Danubian *limes*, when the restoration of some of the destroyed forts and cities began. For several decades, the area became peaceful.

<sup>52</sup> Sidonius, 28-33 (*Panegyric for Anthemius*, 235-287); Pohl 1980, 265; Martindale 1980, 97, 212-213, 1201; Escher, Lebedynsky 2007, 173.

<sup>53</sup> Opař et alii 1991, 294, 342.

<sup>54</sup> Priscus, frg. 38, 39 (FHG, IV, 108-109); Marcellinus Comes, 25 (year 469) (FHDR, II, 362/363), 98; Chronicon Paschale, I, 598 (FHDR, II, 586/587); Vulpe, Barnea 1968, 408; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 163-168; 265; Pohl 1980, 265; Beševliev 1981, 72-73; Williams, Friell 1999, 110; Oța 2000, 371; Escher, Lebedynsky 2007, 173.

<sup>55</sup> Evagrius, 132 (III. 2) (FHDR, II, 524/525); Theophanes, 186-187 (year 5966) (FHDR, II, 596/597); Stein 1959, 362; Escher, Lebedynsky 2007, 173-174.

<sup>56</sup> Papuc et alii 2008, 218-219; Papuc, Covacef 2009, 164.

<sup>57</sup> Suceveanu, Scorpan 1971, 167.

<sup>58</sup> Marcellinus Comes, 31 (year 493), 32 (year 499), 33 (year 502); Bury 1923, 435; Stein 1949, 89, 90; Vulpe, Barnea 1968, 410; Beševliev 1981, 77-78; Bóna 1981, 85-90; Williams, Friell 1999, 199, 202, 204, 207.

<sup>59</sup> Baumann, Stănică 2006, 182.



Attacks	346/347	378-382	404-408	422	441-447	466-467	474
Cities							
Carsium				X			
Troesmis		?	X				?
Dinogetia		X (end level I)	X		X (end level II A)		
Aegyssus			X	X			
Halmyris	X (end level 6)		X (end level 7)		X (end level 8)		
Ulmetum				X (end level 4)	X (end level 3)		X (end level 2)
Ibida		?					
Babadag– Topraichioi			X (end level I, end level II)	X (end level III)	X (end level IV)	X (end level V)	X (end level VI)
Argamum		X	?	?	?		?
Histria					X (end level VI)		X (end level V)

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