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# ROMAN ROADS IN MOESIA INFERIOR IN THE BLACK SEA COAST AREA

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**Keywords:** Moesia Inferior, roman roads, Black Sea coast, milestones

**Abstract:** One of the main routes of communication in Moesia Inferior, which connected the Greek colonies on the seashore, was the coastal road; its course can be reconstructed mainly on the basis of cartographic and epigraphic sources, but also on the basis of field survey. The data collected in recent years allow us to trace other land routes between the coast and the interior of the province.

The stages of maintenance and use of these roads are established based on the epigraphic documentation currently available, which consists primarily of milestones. At the same time, the re-examination of previously published inscriptions allows us to formulate new hypotheses regarding the road network in this part of the province, as well as to re-discuss the location of some ancient toponyms.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Moesia Inferior, drumuri romane, țărmul Mării Negre, stâlpi miliari

**Rezumat:** Una dintre principalele căi de comunicație din Moesia Inferior, care lega coloniile grecești de pe țărmul mării, era reprezentată de drumul litoralului, al cărui traseu poate fi reconstituit în principal pe baza surselor cartografice și epigrafice, dar și a cercetărilor de suprafață. Datele adunate în ultimii ani permit trasarea și a altor căi de circulație terestră între țărmul mării și interiorul provinciei.

Stabilirea etapelor întreținerii și folosirii acestor drumuri este realizată pe baza documentației epigrafice de care dispunem în prezent, aceasta fiind reprezentată în primul rând de bornele miliare. Totodată, reluarea unor inscripții anterior publicate oferă posibilitatea de a formula noi ipoteze privind rețeaua de drumuri din această parte a provinciei și de a re-discuta localizarea unor toponime antice.

One of the most important roads in Moesia Inferior (Fig. 1), the road along the western Black Sea coast, connected urban centers with ancient traditions, from the Danube Delta to Byzantium (later Constantinople, the capital of the empire), its role appearing decisive when analyzed from the perspective of trade connections. Even if economics take precedence<sup>1</sup>, the strategic dimension of this route should not be overlooked, as the coastal road was one of the main access routes to the area, advancing from the south<sup>2</sup>.

Initially, the road was not paved ('country road'), with traffic mainly taking place by sea. The Romans took over the existing route and transformed it into a road in the true sense of the word.

The oldest information about this road appears in Herodotus<sup>3</sup>, in connection with Darius' campaigns against the Scythians. It is later mentioned again, also in connection with military expeditions, namely those of Philip II<sup>4</sup> and Lysimachus<sup>5</sup>. The poet Ovid reached his place of exile by traveling part of this road<sup>6</sup>, and the soldiers led by M. Terentius Lucullus Varro or C. Antonius Hybrida<sup>7</sup> followed the same route in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC during the Roman military expeditions in the area<sup>8</sup>.

The seaside road is depicted in the main ancient itineraries, the *Itinerarium Antonini* and the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, to which the Shield of Dura Europos can also be added:

*Tabula Peutingeriana:* Histria XL Tomis XII Stratonis XXII Callatis – XXIII – Trissa – XII – Bisone – XII – Dyonisopoli – XXXII – Odessos – XI – Erite – XVI – Templo Iovis – XVI – Mesambria – XII – Ancialis<sup>9</sup>;

*Itinerarium Antonini:* Historio XXV Tomos XXXVI Callacis XXX Timogittia XVIII Dionysopoli XXIV Odisso XXIV Marcianopoli XVIII Scatris XXVI Anchialis<sup>10</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Castelli 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Panaité 2016, p. 155, fig. 2, p. 160; Madžarov 2009, p. 184–186.

<sup>3</sup> Herodot, *Book IV*, 89–96, especially IV, 90.

<sup>4</sup> Iordanes, *Getica* 65.

<sup>5</sup> Diodor din Sicilia, *Biblioteca istorică*, XXI, 11, 12, cf. Fontes I, p. 195–197.

<sup>6</sup> Ovidiu, *Tristele I*, 10, 23.

<sup>7</sup> Dio Cassius, *Istoria romană XXXVIII*, 10, 1–3.

<sup>8</sup> Matei-Popescu 2022, p. 124–125.

<sup>9</sup> *Tabula Peutingeriana VIII*, 4, cf. Fontes I, p. 736–741.

<sup>10</sup> *Itinerarium Antonini 228*, 1–4, 229, 1–3, cf. Fontes I, p. 746–749.

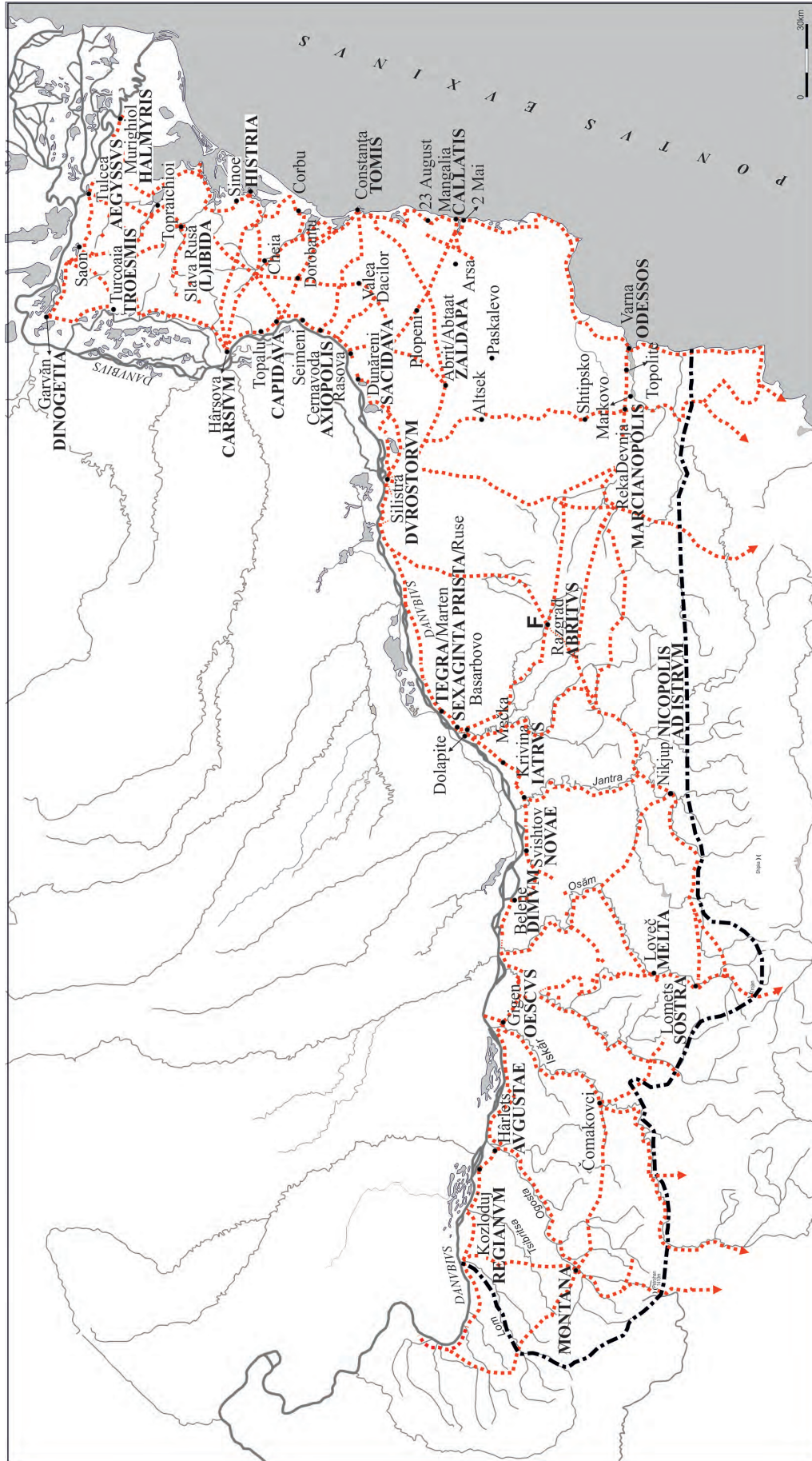


Figure 1. Map of Roman roads in Moesia Inferior.

*Scutum Durae Europae repertum: Panyosos (fl.) (?) – Bybona – Kallatis – Tomis, 33 miles – Istros pot. (fl.)/ Istropolis, 40 miles – Danoubis (fl.) – Tyra, 84 miles – Borysthénès – Chersonèsos – Trapezous (M.) – Arta, 30 miles (?) – Panticapée (?)*<sup>11</sup>.

A comparative analysis of the aforementioned cartographic sources, as well as the identification of several common elements between the *Tabula Peutingeriana* and the Shield of Dura Europos, on the one hand, and between these and the information provided by Strabo and Arrian, more specifically, identical placenames and distances<sup>12</sup>, demonstrates that the *Itinerarium Antonini* describes a land route, while the *Tabula Peutingeriana* shows a route by water<sup>13</sup>. While the *Tabula Peutingeriana* follows the route by water to the mouth of the Peuce branch, the *Itinerarium Antonini* shows us a route by land to the northern shore of Lake Razelm<sup>14</sup>.

The seaside road is the continuation southwards, to Constantinople, of the limes road, with no distinction being made between the two in ancient itineraries<sup>15</sup>; the name 'seaside road' is, in fact, a convention used by researchers, as in the case of the road along the Danube – the limes road.

The route of the road along the sea coast was as follows<sup>16</sup>: Dunavăţu de Sus<sup>17</sup> – Dunavăţu de Jos-*Cetatea Zaprojenilor*<sup>18</sup> – Sarinasuf – Valea Nucarilor – Agighiol (Vallis Domitiana)<sup>19</sup> – the hills of Iancina and Enisala – Ad Salices (Sălcioara)<sup>20</sup> – Argamum (Capul Dolojman) – Vişina and Ceamurlia de Jos – the shores of Lakes Goloviţa and Ceamurlia – vicus Buteridava (Mihai Viteazul) – Histria – vicus C... (Săcele) – Corbu – rural settlements on the shores of Lake Taşaul – Ovidiu – Tomis – on the western shores of Lake Agigea – vicus Amlaidina (August 23), from here a secondary road led to Stratonis (Tuzla<sup>21</sup> or Schitu Costineşti, Constanţa County) – from here onwards (on the same route currently followed by European road E87), the Roman road continues south through Callatis (Mangalia) – Tirizis (Cape Caliacra)<sup>22</sup> – Bizone (Cavarna)<sup>23</sup> – Dyonisopolis (Balchik)<sup>24</sup> – Odessos (Varna)<sup>25</sup> – Erite (Bliznatsi, with a port at Cape Killik)<sup>26</sup> – Templum Iovis (probably Obzor, but the location is uncertain)<sup>27</sup> – Mesembria (Nessebar)<sup>28</sup>.

According to the *Itinerarium Antonini* south of Odessos, the coastal road deviates inland towards Marcianopolis<sup>29</sup>, from where it reaches the sea coast again at Anchialos (Pomorie)<sup>30</sup> and continues in this way to Constantinople. There

<sup>11</sup> Cumont 1925, p. 1–15; Rebuffat 1986, p. 86–87; Arnaud 1989, p. 373–389; Hălmagi 2015, p. 41–51.

<sup>12</sup> Aricescu 1975, p. 315, 320.

<sup>13</sup> Aricescu 1975, p. 317–319; Torbatov 2002, p. 42–43, 443; Torbatov 2004, p. 88. The arguments of the two are based on identical distances, topographical analysis, similar toponyms, etc. In Aricescu's opinion, an additional argument is the absence of the city of Aegyssus from the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, and its presence in the *Itinerarium Antonini*. For the common elements in the *Tabula Peutingeriana* and the Shield of Dura Europos, see Aricescu 1975, p. 321–323.

<sup>14</sup> Aricescu 1975, p. 320.

<sup>15</sup> Referring to the main roads in Moesia Inferior, Pârvan (1912, p. 576) said that "the two actually form a single road, which, starting from Marcianopolis, goes directly to Durostorum, and from there it follows the Danube downstream to the river's mouth, where it turns south through the Greek cities on the coast, ending through Odessus (Varna) back to Marcianopolis, where it started" (translation into English by the present author).

<sup>16</sup> The road was studied by the Shkorpil brothers (Shkorpil, Shkorpil 1890, p. 3–40; Shkorpil, Shkorpil 1891, p. 107–131; Shkorpil, Shkorpil 1892, p. 31–47); see also Nedev 1972, p. 160–175; Nedev 1976, p. 53–58; Mititelu 1943, p. 78–91; Dimitrov 1972, p. 43–46; Aricescu 1975, p. 315–327; Aricescu 1977, p. 139, 142–143. For the segment within the present borders of Bulgaria, see Madžarov 2009, p. 184–202. For a review of the analysis of the Shield from Dura Europos, see Hălmagi 2015, p. 41–51.

<sup>17</sup> For more recent information, especially regarding the correct position of the fortification, see Alexandrescu *et alii* 2025, p. 131–137. Aricescu (1975, p. 318, note 26) proposed its identification with Ad Stoma, a toponym mentioned in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, later proposing the same toponym for the Caraorman grind (Aricescu 1977, p. 140); see also Băjenaru 2010, p. 131, no. 50 (Ad Stoma?); Ţentea *et alii* 2019, p. 67, no. 22.

<sup>18</sup> Alexandrescu *et alii* 2025, p. 126–131; Băjenaru 2010, p. 131–132, no. 51 (Gratiana?); Ţentea *et alii* 2019, p. 68–69, no. 23.

<sup>19</sup> Aricescu 1977, p. 142.

<sup>20</sup> According to several researchers, Ad Salices would have been located here, see Vulpe, Barnea 1968, p. 301, 305; Aricescu 1975, p. 325; Aricescu 1977, p. 140, 142. For recent excavations and the attempt to delimit the Roman settlement in the area, see Mocanu *et alii* 2022, p. 149–167.

<sup>21</sup> All the small settlements on the northern, western, and southern shores of Lake Tatlageac were included in a system of *semitae* that branched off from the seaside road.

<sup>22</sup> Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, p. 198.

<sup>23</sup> Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, p. 198.

<sup>24</sup> Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, p. 198–199; Băltăc 2011, p. 91–92.

<sup>25</sup> Băltăc 2011, p. 103–104. A Milesian colony located on the seaside road, Odessos grew in importance during the Roman era, later becoming the terminus point of the important northern Balkan Road, parallel to the limes connecting the cities of Montana, Melta, Nicopolis ad Istrum, and Marcianopolis. For this road, see Panaite 2019, p. 47–54; for the port of Odessos in the late Roman period, see Ivanov 2024, p. 202–216.

<sup>26</sup> Hristov 2024, p. 76–114.

<sup>27</sup> Hristov 2018, p. 98–112.

<sup>28</sup> Hristov 2018, p. 131–143.

<sup>29</sup> Băltăc 2011, p. 96–98.

<sup>30</sup> Hristov 2018, p. 149–166.

are several proposals for reconstructing the route of the seaside road between Odessos and Anchialos, ranging from a road along the shore to a road further inland<sup>31</sup>, but there is also a hypothesis that both roads were in use<sup>32</sup>.

No traces of this road have been identified in the province of Moesia Inferior, which explains the difficulties in establishing its route mentioned above. However, some fragments do appear on the field further south, in the province of Thrace, in the area of Burgas Bay<sup>33</sup>.

The route of the road can be reconstructed mainly on the basis of aerial and satellite photographs, to which is added the location of the necropolises<sup>34</sup> of the main Greek cities: Histria<sup>35</sup>, Tomis<sup>36</sup>, Callatis<sup>37</sup>, Dionysopolis, and Odessos<sup>38</sup>.

It is not known exactly when the 'Greek' road was taken over and redesigned by the Romans. We can only assume that this operation took place in the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, after Moesia became a Roman province in 15 AD<sup>39</sup>. The connection between this road and the interior of the province was established relatively quickly through the construction of the cities of Marcianopolis and Nicopolis ad Istrum during Trajan's reign and the construction of the road parallel to the limes that connects them and reaches Montana<sup>40</sup>, and the connection with the Danube line through the construction of the Marcianopolis-Durostorum road<sup>41</sup>.

The most reliable information regarding the dating and chronology of the seaside road is provided by the inscriptions on the milestones. For the road in question, we currently have at our disposal 34 such pieces discovered at: Buteridava/ vicus Buteridavensis (Mihai Viteazu, Constanța County)<sup>42</sup>; vicus Quintionis (Sinoe, Constanța County)<sup>43</sup>; Histria (Istria, Constanța County)<sup>44</sup>; Corbu (Constanța County)<sup>45</sup>; Tomis (Constanța County)<sup>46</sup>; vicus Amlaidina (23 August, Constanța County)<sup>47</sup>; Callatis (Mangalia, Constanța County)<sup>48</sup>; 2 Mai (Constanța County)<sup>49</sup>; Vama Veche (Constanța County)<sup>50</sup>; Albena (Dobrič County, Bulgaria)<sup>51</sup>; Odessos (Varna, Bulgaria)<sup>52</sup>. Seven of them are palimpsests: Buteridava<sup>53</sup>, vicus Quintionis<sup>54</sup>, Corbu<sup>55</sup>,

<sup>31</sup> From south of the Danube to Histria and from Callatis to Dionysopolis, and mostly from Dionysopolis to Odessos, the road moves away from the coast towards Marcianopolis, and then returns to the shore at Anchialos; this is primarily due to the characteristics of the relief, more precisely, the "lace-like" coastline, as a result of numerous bays and sea lagoons, some of them today lakes. See Torbatov 2004, p. 88; Aricescu 1977, p. 135–136, 139–145. For a renewed discussion on the segment of the seaside road between Odessos and Mesambria, as well as the hypotheses previously put forward in the scientific literature regarding its route, see Gospodinov 2024, p. 275–292. According to the Bulgarian researcher, the *Tabula Peutingeriana* describes a land route between Odessos and Mesambria, which runs further inland and therefore does not follow the coastline; the author proposes the following locations for the toponyms listed in the analyzed cartographic source: Erite-Bliznatsi, Templum Jovis-Čerkovishteto and identifies a new *statio* (not named in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*) – located at Popovich, on the road between Erite and Templum Jovis.

<sup>32</sup> Madžarov 2009, fig. 67, p. 199; two seaside roads: one along the coast and one inland.

<sup>33</sup> Shkorpil, Shkorpil 1890, p. 15–16; Shkorpil, Shkorpil 1891, p. 117; Shkorpil, Shkorpil 1892, p. 36. Madžarov 2009, p. 186–187. Cf. Torbatov 2004, p. 88. Information regarding the use of the coastal road on the Odessos-Anchialos segment is only available for the late period (6<sup>th</sup> century), and the traces of the road south of Odessos are few and difficult to date; for the reconstruction of Roman road routes in the Burgas area, see Gospodinov 1995, 2005.

<sup>34</sup> The necropolises develop along the access routes to the cities. Non-invasive investigations show that the spatial organization of burial mounds within the delimited plots and their alignment with the access roads entering the Greek cities are based on older elements, preserved for a long period of time, including during the Roman era.

<sup>35</sup> Ștefan 2019, p. 19–22, plates A and B.

<sup>36</sup> Barbu 1961; Buzoianu, Bărbulescu 2012, p. 100–102; Oța 2013, p. 291–293; Toma 2010; Teodor 2014; Nastasi 2014.

<sup>37</sup> Oța 2013, p. 294–295; Ștefan *et alii* 2017, p. 82.

<sup>38</sup> Rusev 2018, p. 133–134.

<sup>39</sup> Matei-Popescu 2022, p. 131–136

<sup>40</sup> Panaite 2019.

<sup>41</sup> Torbatov 2000.

<sup>42</sup> CIL III, 14463=IGLR 167; Doruțiu-Boilă 1964, p. 133 (no. 1).

<sup>43</sup> CIL III, 12513=ISM I, 317; CIL III, 12514=ISM I, 318; CIL III, 12515=ISM I, 322.

<sup>44</sup> ISM I, 316; ISM I, 319; ISM I, 320; Mirčev 1953, p. 72–73, no. 4 and fig. 88.

<sup>45</sup> CIL III, 14462=ISM I, 321; Bărbulescu, Câteia 1997, p. 190–193, no. 3; CIL III, 7614=IGLR 82.

<sup>46</sup> CIL III, 7613=ISM II, 53(19); IGLR 6=ISM II, 112(78); ISM VI.2, 611, pl. CXCIV–CXCV; ISM VI.2, 613, pl. CXCVII; ISM VI.2, 614, pl. CXCVIII; ISM VI.2, 615, pl. CXCIX; ISM VI.2, 616, pl. CC; ISM VI.2, 617, pl. CCI; ISM II, 109(75)=CIL III, 12517.

<sup>47</sup> CIL III, 7616=ISM III, 195.

<sup>48</sup> Avram, Ionescu 2022, p. 67–70; ISM III, 197; ISM III, 198=ISM II, 68(34); ISM III, 196; Bărbulescu *et alii* 2008, p. 177–179, no. 4=AÉ 2008, 1199; Bărbulescu-Munteanu, Rădulescu 1980, p. 151–155, no. 5=AÉ 1981, 0751.

<sup>49</sup> ISM III, 199.

<sup>50</sup> IGLR 108.

<sup>51</sup> AÉ 1979, 544.

<sup>52</sup> Hollenstein 1975, 23; Hollenstein 1975, 24; IGB I<sup>2</sup> 251; IGB I<sup>2</sup> 252.

<sup>53</sup> CIL III, 14463: (a) 293–305; (b) 324–326.

<sup>54</sup> CIL III, 12515=ISM I, 322.

<sup>55</sup> CIL III, 7614=IGLR 82: (a) 293–305; (b) 360–363.

Tomis<sup>56</sup>, Callatis<sup>57</sup>, Albena<sup>58</sup>. Only five pieces were discovered *in situ*: Tomis/ vicus turris Muca[---]<sup>59</sup>, vicus Amlaidina<sup>60</sup>, Callatis<sup>61</sup>, 2 Mai<sup>62</sup>, Odessos (no. 85)<sup>63</sup>.

In terms of dating, 26 dates go back to the early Roman period (Fig. 2): vicus Quintionis (Sinoe)<sup>64</sup>; Histria (Istria)<sup>65</sup>; Corbu<sup>66</sup>; Tomis (Constanța)<sup>67</sup>; vicus Amlaidina (23 August)<sup>68</sup>; Callatis (Mangalia)<sup>69</sup>; 2 Mai<sup>70</sup>; Odessos (Varna)<sup>71</sup>; and 13 dates are assigned to the Late Roman era (Fig. 3), as follows: six during the Tetrarchy: Buteridava (Mihai Viteazu)<sup>72</sup>, Corbu<sup>73</sup>, Callatis<sup>74</sup>, Albena<sup>75</sup>; six in the Constantinian era: Buteridava<sup>76</sup>, Histria<sup>77</sup>, Tomis<sup>78</sup>, Callatis<sup>79</sup>, Vama Veche<sup>80</sup>, Albena<sup>81</sup>, the last date being the inscription from Corbu<sup>82</sup>, chronologically placed during the reign of Emperor Julian.

The milestone at Callatis, erected in 114 AD, is strong evidence not only of road repair works, in our case along the coast, but also of the speed with which connections were established between old urban centres, located on the Black Sea coast, and newly founded cities in the interior of the province. It is made of limestone from the Deleni quarry, the same type of stone used to build the triumphal monument at Tropaeum Traiani (Adamclisi, Constanța County), near which the city of the same name (municipium Traianum Tropaeum) was founded<sup>83</sup>. The dedicatory inscription on the trophy is dated 109 AD<sup>84</sup>.

During Hadrian's reign, the road was repaired on the occasion of the emperor's visit to the area<sup>85</sup>.

The coastal road was the main focus of attention for the imperial administration in the second half of the 2nd century and the beginning of the next. Most of the milestones that attest to its repairs date back to the reigns of Marcus Aurelius, together with Lucius Verus,<sup>86</sup> and Septimius Severus<sup>87</sup>, a period when road construction in Moesia Inferior reached its peak. Roads repair work represents only a part of the general effort to strengthen the province, located in the immediate vicinity of the border, due to the increasing pressure during the Marcomanic wars or after the civil war of Septimius Severus (193–197 AD) and some incursions or invasions by Sarmatian tribes into Roman territory. This is also connected to the presence of the emperors<sup>88</sup> in the area during the imperial visits and inspections of the fortresses and forts.

<sup>56</sup> IGLR 6=ISM II, 112(78): (a) secolele II–III; (b) 324–337.

<sup>57</sup> ISM III, 196: (a) 163, (b) 293–305; Bărbulescu *et alii* 2008, p. 177–179, no. 4=AÉ 2008, 1199.

<sup>58</sup> AÉ 1979, 544: (a) 323–337; (b) 293–305.

<sup>59</sup> ISM VI.2, 611, pl. CXCIV–CXC. The indicated distance (II MP) is almost identical to that between the place of discovery (Grănicerului Street, Anadolchioi neighborhood) and the fortification at Tomis; in our opinion, this constitutes an argument in favour of its discovery very close to its original position.

<sup>60</sup> CIL III, 7616=ISM III, 195; the distance of VII MP, approx. 10 km, corresponds to the actual distance on the ground between the village of 23 August and Mangalia.

<sup>61</sup> Avram, Ionescu 2022, p. 67–70; it was discovered *in situ* in 2014, in front of the Northern Gate and the northwestern corner of the Callatis city walls, during a preventive archaeological research.

<sup>62</sup> ISM III, 199.

<sup>63</sup> IGB I<sup>2</sup> 252: II MP: the distance indicated is almost equal to that between the place of discovery and the fortification, therefore, the piece was discovered very close to the place where it was placed in antiquity.

<sup>64</sup> CIL III, 12513=ISM I, 317; CIL III, 12514=ISM I, 318; CIL III, 12515=ISM I, 322.

<sup>65</sup> ISM I, 316; ISM I, 319; ISM I, 320.

<sup>66</sup> CIL III, 14462=ISM I, 321; Bărbulescu, Câteia 1997, p. 190–193, no. 3.

<sup>67</sup> CIL III, 7613=ISM II, 53(19); IGLR 6 (a)=ISM II, 112(78) (a); ISM VI.2, 611, pl. CXCIV–CXC; ISM VI.2, 613, pl. CXCVII; ISM VI.2, 614, pl. CXCVIII; ISM VI.2, 615, pl. CXCIX; ISM VI.2, 616, pl. CC; ISM VI.2, 617, pl. CCI; ISM II, 109(75)=CIL III, 12517.

<sup>68</sup> CIL III, 7616=ISM III, 195.

<sup>69</sup> Avram, Ionescu 2022, p. 67–70; ISM III, 197; ISM III, 198 = ISM II, 68(34); ISM III, 196 (a).

<sup>70</sup> ISM III, 199.

<sup>71</sup> Hollenstein 1975, 23; Hollenstein 1975, 24; IGB I<sup>2</sup> 251; IGB I<sup>2</sup> 252 (b).

<sup>72</sup> CIL III, 14463=IGLR 167 (a).

<sup>73</sup> Bărbulescu, Câteia 1997, p. 190–193, no. 3; CIL III, 7614=IGLR 82 (a).

<sup>74</sup> ISM III, 196 (b); Bărbulescu *et alii* 2008, 177–179, no. 4.

<sup>75</sup> AÉ 1979, 544 (b).

<sup>76</sup> CIL III, 14463=IGLR 167 (b).

<sup>77</sup> Mirčev 1953, p. 72–73, no. 4 and fig. 88.

<sup>78</sup> IGLR 6 (b)=ISM II, 112(78) (b).

<sup>79</sup> Bărbulescu-Munteanu, Rădulescu 1980, p. 151–155, no. 5=AÉ 1981, 0751.

<sup>80</sup> IGLR 108.

<sup>81</sup> AÉ 1979, 544 (a).

<sup>82</sup> CIL III, 7614=IGLR 82 (b).

<sup>83</sup> For the road connecting Tropaeum with Callatis, and further West with Durostorum on the Danube limes, as well as other roads in the territory of Tropaeum, see Panaite 2006, p. 57–70; Panaite, Miu (Bem) 2016, p. 201–220.

<sup>84</sup> ISM IV, 5.

<sup>85</sup> Vulpe, Barnea 1968, p. 136–137; Eck 1993.

<sup>86</sup> The repair works to the seaside road began in 162 and continued the following year, as evidenced by the inscriptions on the milestones, which are based on a single text from the chancellery of Governor M. Servilius Fabianus Maximus, see Ștefan 1984, p. 95–107.

<sup>87</sup> For extensive road repair work throughout the province, see Vulpe, Barnea 1968, p. 191–195. For the milestones from Moesia Inferior dated during the reign of Septimius Severus, see Gizińska 2025.

<sup>88</sup> Boteva 2010, p. 231–248; Boteva 2013, p. 85–98.



Figure 2. Early Roman milestones on the Black Sea coast.

The reorganization of the empire at the beginning of the late Roman era, whose first elements are documented both archaeologically and by written sources dating back to the time of Emperors Aurelian and Probus, was continued through the reforms initiated by Diocletian and completed by Constantine the Great; the extensive (re)construction works on the Lower Danube during this period are also visible in the analysis of the inscriptions on the milestones<sup>89</sup>. They were determined, among other factors, by the shift of the center of power from the West to the East due to increasingly frequent barbarian attacks and, implicitly, the eventual relocation of the empire's capital to Constantinople. The milestones dating from the Tetrarchy and those from the time of Constantine demonstrate the constant effort of the Roman authorities to maintain the province's road network in good condition<sup>90</sup>.

A variant of the seaside road that avoids the lakes (former sea inlets, coves, bays etc.<sup>91</sup>) north of Constanța (Siutghiol, Tașaul, Sinoe, Zmeica, Golovița, Razelm) can be represented by the road connecting Aegyssus (Tulcea) to Tomis (Constanța)

<sup>89</sup> Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, p. 252–257; Barnea 1997, p. 29–42; Panaite, Alexandrescu 2009, p. 429–455.

<sup>90</sup> For a detailed discussion on the information provided by late Roman milestones discovered in Moesia Inferior/Scythia, see Panaite 2024.

<sup>91</sup> Aricescu 1975, p. 321, footnotes 43 and 46.

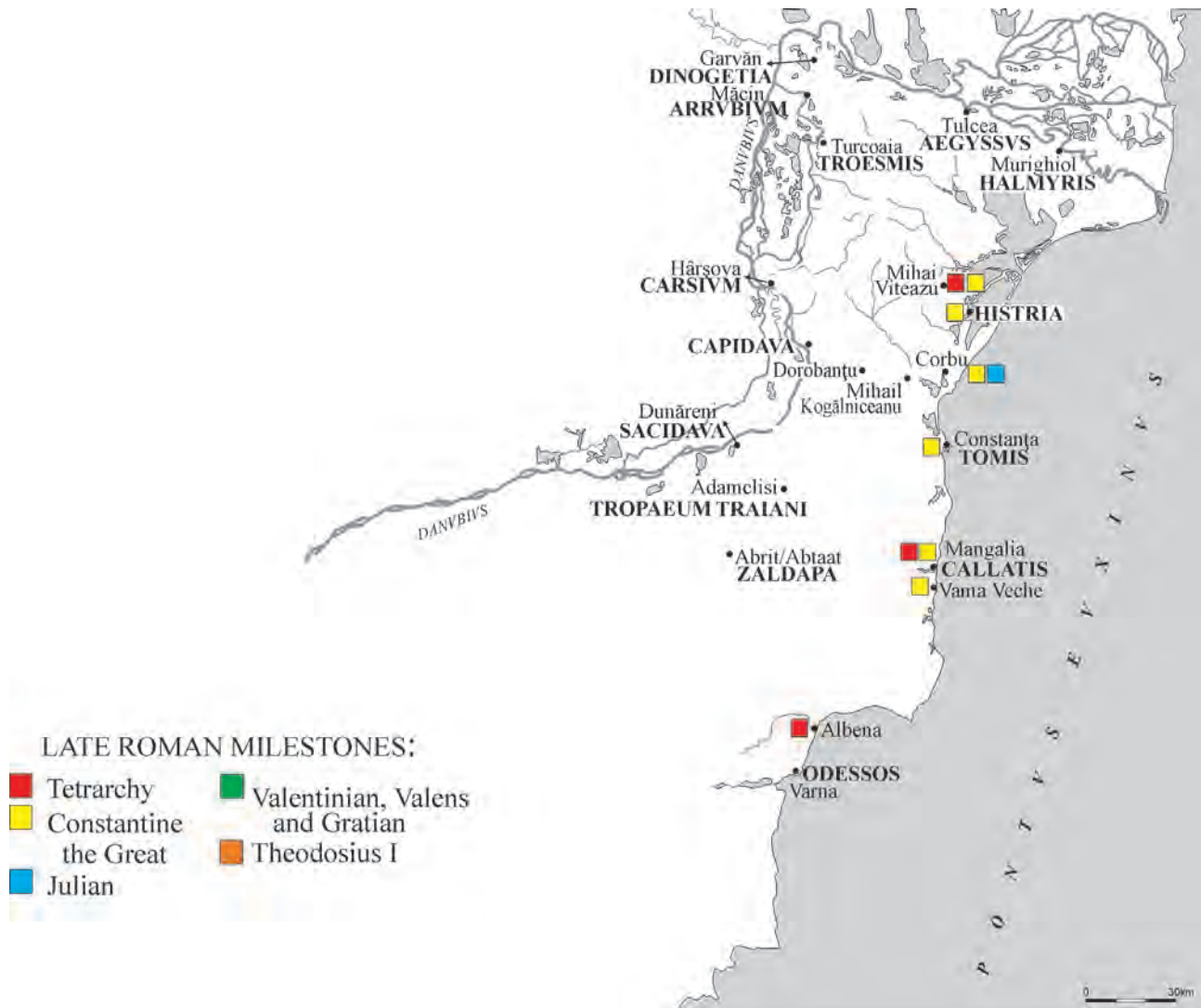


Figure 3. Late Roman milestones on the Black Sea coast.

in an almost straight line, which largely follows the route of European road E87<sup>92</sup> (Fig. 4). Its trajectory can be reconstructed in shorter segments, detailed below, from north to south.

The Tulcea–Cataloi segment can be reconstructed based on the routes of tumuli and traces of villae rusticae, some of which are attested epigraphically (by funerary inscriptions), documented by field research or archaeological excavations carried out over time by V. H. Baumann<sup>93</sup>.

From Cataloi southwards, east of the present route of the E87, satellite images provided by Google Earth Pro, of which those from 2021 are most suitable for observing archaeological traces, offer insights into several road routes that can be traced to the area of Lăstuni (Tulcea County) and further south towards Mihai Bravu (Tulcea County) and Turda (Tulcea County). Field research carried out in the area of the latter two localities has led to the identification of segments of Roman roads. Thus, a section of Roman road was identified within the built-up area of Mihai Bravu<sup>94</sup>, and 120–150 m northwest of Turda, built sections of a road made of large stone slabs were observed on both sides of the Taița River<sup>95</sup>. Since the aspect of the road is different in the two localities, we can assume that the discovered segments belong to

<sup>92</sup> Baralis *et alii* 2012, p. 171–172.

<sup>93</sup> Baumann 1983, p. 60–61, 81–84 and fig. 29, p. 80.

<sup>94</sup> The authors of the discovery published only two photographs of it, without further details. Based on these, it can be estimated that the road was approximately 4 m wide (which corresponds to a *semita*) and well preserved, with the upper layer consisting of medium-sized limestone stones, see Iacob *et alii* 2016, p. 228, p. 606, pl. 4, 1–2.

<sup>95</sup> Iacob *et alii* 2016, p. 227–228. According to the authors of the study, the road could date back to the Roman era, based on its building system.

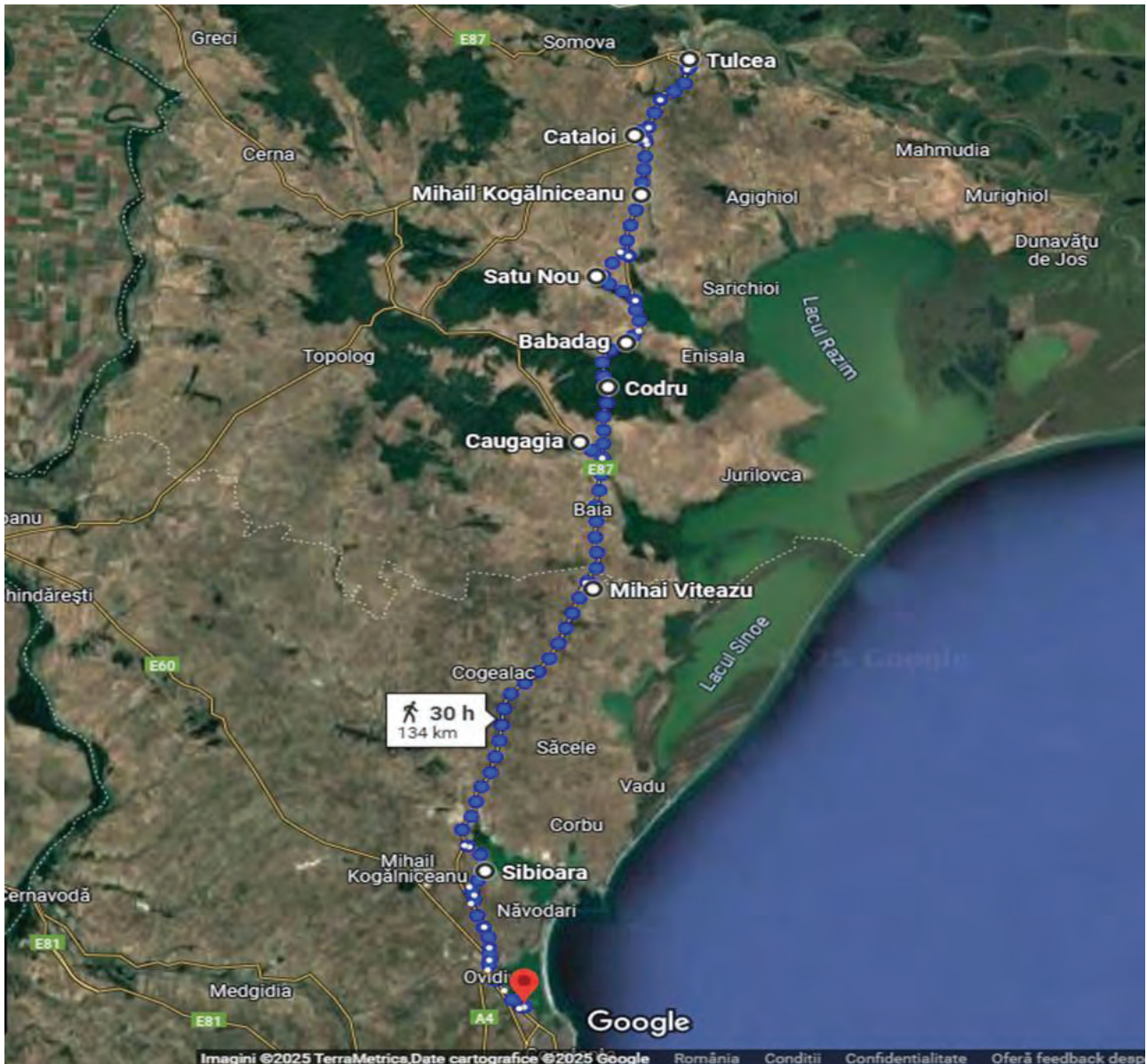


Figure 4. The route of the variant of the seaside road (based on Google Maps).

different traffic routes. However, they are too short to allow observations regarding their orientation. Consequently, they could belong either to the central Dobrudja road or to local roads. The layout of the two localities, as well as the Roman-era settlements in the Turda area<sup>96</sup>, could support the hypothesis of a local road coming from Troesmis and going towards the Babadag-Topraichioi area (Tulcea County)<sup>97</sup>, reaching Enisala (Tulcea County) on the seaside road. The same traffic route may also be linked to some archaeological remains at Mihai Bravu, more specifically a quadriburgium<sup>98</sup>, probably built during the reign of Constantine the Great<sup>99</sup>, a fortification identified by K. Shkorpil in 1917 and partially researched in 1987<sup>100</sup>, and the remains of several Roman-era settlements<sup>101</sup>, one of which is attested also epigraphically:

<sup>96</sup> RAN codes 160868.02 and 160868.15.

<sup>97</sup> Gugl, Panaite 2016, p. 449–458.

<sup>98</sup> RAN code 160840.03.

<sup>99</sup> Băjenaru 2010, p. 78, 172–173, 227.

<sup>100</sup> Opaït *et alii* 1991, p. 192, footnote no. 1; Băjenaru 2010, p. 154, no. 90.

<sup>101</sup> RAN codes 160840.03, 04, 05.

vicus Bad...<sup>102</sup>; an exception is a watchtower<sup>103</sup>, which could be linked to the central Dobrudja road, as assumed by the authors of the field survey<sup>104</sup>.

From Mihai Bravu, the road continues towards Babadag, its direction and route being marked on the ground by a series of tumuli, arranged in a line parallel to the western shores of the Topraichioi and Babadag Lakes<sup>105</sup>.

The Babadag-Topraichioi area is an important road junction. The late Roman fortification at Topraichioi<sup>106</sup> was located on the road that branched off from the seaside road at Enisala, about 200 m northeast of the junction between Babadag and Topraichioi lakes<sup>107</sup>, where it is very likely that a bridge existed in ancient times, at which point the roads to Enisala and Aegyssus diverged. The distance between Enisala and Babadag-Topraichioi is approximately 10 km in a straight line, with perfect visibility between the two points.

Another possible route connecting Babadag (probably Vicus Novus<sup>108</sup>) and Aegyssus was identified east of the E87 route. It was possible to reconstruct the route of one of the branches diverging from the central Dobrudja road in the Slava Rusă area, which reaches Aegyssus. The road segment is marked on the field by a series of burial mounds starting from the Telița mouth and following its valley to the northwest<sup>109</sup>, passing through Rândunica to Cataloi. Crossing the territory of the city of Aegyssus on a line oriented approximately north–south (Rândunica – Cataloi – Frecăței area – Denistepe hill), this road provided the connection from Aegyssus through Vicus Novus to the central area of Dobrudja<sup>110</sup>.

It is very likely that from Babadag the road went south through the Babadag forest (like the present E87 road). At the edge of the forest, in the area of the Codru monastery, Google Earth Pro images clearly show the traces of a road east of the E87, which reaches the ‘Două Cantoane’ intersection, where it meets a road coming from Slava Rusă and Caugagia, to which belongs an unscribed milestone discovered *in situ*<sup>111</sup>. In fact, the “Două Cantoane” intersection, where traces of a late Roman vicus have been identified through surface research<sup>112</sup>, was in ancient times, as it is today, an important road junction. From here, a secondary road leads to Argamum, passing north of the villages of Ceamurlia de Jos (Tulcea County) and Lunca (Tulcea County), while another connects this point to the seaside road<sup>113</sup>.

From the exit of the Babadag forest to the Mihai Viteazu area, the Roman road could be spotted at several points: close to ‘Două Cantoane’ north of DN (national road) 22D Baia-Brăila, near Baia, northwest of Baia, east and northeast of Panduru, and west of Mihai Viteazu<sup>114</sup>.

The road segments identified in the field differ in terms of size (7 m wide at Baia and “Două Cantoane” and 8 m wide at Panduru<sup>115</sup>) and (possibly) in terms of construction technique (northwest of Baia, it appears to have been paved with stone slabs, one of which was discovered *in situ*, measuring 0.40 × 0.40 × 1 m; at the other points, only the slightly convex shape of the road can be distinguished, which may indicate that it was covered only with gravel). According to researchers, the road passes west of Mihai Viteazu, thus avoiding the village, where another road arrived, descending from the mines at Altîn Tepe and heading towards Histria<sup>116</sup>.

From Mihai Viteazu southward, the route of the road cannot be precisely traced. However, one can assume that it descended towards the localities of Fântânele – Cogealac – Tariverde (Constanța County), where traces of Roman settlements can be found, and then headed towards Gura Dobrogei and Palazu Mic (Constanța County), located in the Casimcea valley, along which a road connected Tomis with the north–west of the province. Between Gura Dobrogei and Palazu Mic, Google Earth Pro provides a very good image (April 2020) of a possible settlement and road intersection; from here, the road continues towards the shore of Lake Tașaul and the settlements identified on the route Sibioara – Limba Oii – Ovidiu – Palazu Mare – arriving in Tomis (Constanța)<sup>117</sup>.

<sup>102</sup> Mihailescu-Bîrliba, Ibba 2021.

<sup>103</sup> RAN code 160840.06.

<sup>104</sup> Iacob *et alii* 2016, p. 228.

<sup>105</sup> For their layout see the map provided by RAN.

<sup>106</sup> Opaïț *et alii* 1991.

<sup>107</sup> Opaïț *et alii* 1991, p. 203.

<sup>108</sup> ISM V, 233. The location of the vicus Novus in Babadag, based on this inscription, is problematic. The editor of the inscription believed that it actually came from Noviodunum. F. Matei-Popescu argues that the inscription comes from a civilian vicus, called simply vicus Nov(iodunum), developed next to the important naval base Noviodunum (Isaccea, Tulcea County) on the Danube. Matei-Popescu 2016, p. 214–217, 220.

<sup>109</sup> Baumann 1983, p. 81.

<sup>110</sup> Baumann 1977, fig. 3 (*infra*).

<sup>111</sup> Baralis *et alii* 2011, p. 231–232 and fig. 5; Baralis *et alii* 2012, p. 171–172.

<sup>112</sup> Baralis *et alii* 2012, p. 172.

<sup>113</sup> Baralis *et alii* 2010, p. 186–187: ancient roads marked by tumuli in the area of Lunca, Vișina, and Sălcioara.

<sup>114</sup> Baralis *et alii* 2011, p. 231–232.

<sup>115</sup> The width of the road may indicate a *via (publica)*.

<sup>116</sup> Baralis *et alii* 2012, p. 171–172.

<sup>117</sup> According to older research, the road segment can be reconstructed based on possible road traces and an alignment of tumuli, some of them of large dimensions; for settlements and roads in the Histria territory, see Panaite 2014, p. 43–67. This is where the road passed, which, according to

One of the most important inscriptions providing valuable information about maintaining roads in optimal conditions for use is ISM I, 378, discovered at Histria<sup>118</sup>. It represents the petition (*libellus*) written in Greek addressed to Iulius Severus, governor of the province between 159–160/161 AD<sup>119</sup> from the inhabitants of Chora Dagis<sup>120</sup>, a village on the territory of Histria (not localized), and the *subscriptio* written in Latin of Antonius Hiberus, governor of the province about 20 years earlier, between 136–138/139<sup>121</sup>. The main reason for the petition is the presence of the public road and the trouble it makes for the inhabitants in connection with *cursus publicus*. Having their village by the public road, the inhabitants of Chora Dagis are burdened by liturgies and requisitions. They are obliged to take part in its maintenance, to receive guests and to be requisitioned. There are two specific terms used to describe the obligations of the inhabitants: *leiturgiai* and *angareiai*, where the first item is general, like *munus* in Latin, and the second is specific, which describes a series of other (extra) obligations, additional to those they had to deal with on a regular basis. The text of the inscription tells us that the public road originally started in a village called Laikos Pyrgos (also, not localized in the field), whose inhabitants, when they experienced similar problems, presented a petition to the legate of the province, Antonius Hiberus. The name Laikos Pyrgos indicates that there was a tower or fortification in the village<sup>122</sup>. Moreover, it seems quite reasonable to agree (according to the internal analysis of the text) that the village gave its name to the tower and, subsequently, the tower to the village. The expression τοῦ λεγομέν[ο]υ / so-called used to label the village Laikos Pyrgos tells us further that the name as yet is not the official or traditional one. It also indicates that both the road and the fortification are of a relatively recent date, which may suggest that the road was constructed to serve the fortification (or vice versa) and that the villagers of Laikos Pyrgos at this time were exposed to services of a new kind. At this time Dagis was beyond the public road; somewhat later the road was prolonged and led along Dagis which then encountered the same obligations or problems as Laikos Pyrgos. They chose the same means to have their obligations regulated, but the legate of 159–160 AD decided to apply the same regulations of Antonius Hiberus from 138–139 AD.

Similar place names within the empire are known in Africa, Spain, Palestine, but also closer to our lands, near Tyras, some of them mentioned by Strabo, which implies that they date back to at least the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; these are generally buildings erected on the coast to defend against bandits and barbarian attacks<sup>123</sup>.

In the territory of Dobrudja, several other place names containing the words *pyrgos* or *turris*, the Latin translation of the term, are documented in literary sources and inscriptions from the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD: vicus Turris Muca ...<sup>124</sup>, Stratonis turris<sup>125</sup> and the pyrgos near Callatis<sup>126</sup>. Two of these were inhabited by a Thracian population, the Laii<sup>127</sup>, attested epigraphically in the period 198–246 AD in vicus Turris Muca... (formerly Anadolchioi, today part of the city of Constanța) and in vicus Secundini<sup>128</sup>, the latter not localized<sup>129</sup>, but certainly within the territory of Histria. We must also assume that they were inhabitants of the settlement of Laikos Pyrgos<sup>130</sup>.

The earliest of these inscriptions is the fragment belonging to the Callatian chorothesia<sup>131</sup> which, by analogy with the Histrian one, has been dated to the reign of Trajan<sup>132</sup>.

Regarding some of these place names, it was first thought that they represented coastal fortifications from the Roman era<sup>133</sup>, and later it was hypothesised that the place names in question were older than the era in which they are

Pârvan, connected Tomis to the north–west of the province, see Pârvan 1912, p. 582 and the map of Roman roads at the end of the publication; see also Pârvan 1913c, p. 526–527 and fig. 17.

<sup>118</sup> Lambrino 1948; Stoian 1951; Stoian 1959; Hauken 1998, p. 170–178. Very recently, the inscription was (re)analyzed and discussed by Radulova (Radulova 2025). Starting from the abuses related to the use of the *cursus publicus*, the author emphasizes the excessive obligations imposed on the inhabitants of the settlements located along a public road, attempting to examine the nature of the problem of the villagers and to reconstruct the dynamics of the interaction between the local communities and the Roman authorities. In short, Radulova is of the opinion that the residents' complaint to the provincial governor is aimed at reducing their obligations and bringing them back to a previously established level.

<sup>119</sup> Thomasson 2009, p. 51, 20:088 T. Statilius Iulius Severus, 20:089 L. Iulius Statilius Severus; Doruțiu-Boilă 1989, p. 334–337.

<sup>120</sup> Băltăc 2011, p. 142.

<sup>121</sup> Thomasson 2009, p. 56, 20:150 Antonius Hiberus; Eck, Mugnai 2016, p. 218–222; Schindel 2010, p. 259–263.

<sup>122</sup> Doruțiu-Boilă 1975.

<sup>123</sup> Avram, Nistor 1982, p. 365–376, especially p. 372–373.

<sup>124</sup> CIL III, 7533=ISM II, 141(26).

<sup>125</sup> The toponym is mentioned only in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*. Vulpe, Barnea 1968, p. 205, footnote no. 131. A. Aricescu (1975, p. 322–323; 1977, p. 144) disagrees with Stratonis Turris (probably located in Tuzla) as a translation from Greek of Stratonos Pyrgos.

<sup>126</sup> ISM III, 55 = Bărbulescu-Munteanu 1978, p. 127–132, figs. 1–3, no. 1, fragment of the Callatis chorothesia discovered at Cobadin.

<sup>127</sup> Vulpe 1953, p. 733–745; Băltăc 2011, p. 33.

<sup>128</sup> ISM I, 343–347, 349; ISM V, 122.

<sup>129</sup> It has been proposed that it was located at Poarta Albă; see the comment on ISM II, 133(18).

<sup>130</sup> Vulpe 1953, p. 733–745.

<sup>131</sup> According to S. Lambrino (1948, p. 326, 342–343), the monument is an argument in favor of the allocation of plots of land through *centuriatio*, while E. Doruțiu-Boilă (1971, p. 331–333) argued in favor of a *limitatio* of the Callatian territory.

<sup>132</sup> ISM III, 55 = Bărbulescu-Munteanu 1978, p. 132.

<sup>133</sup> Lambrino 1948, p. 326, p. 342–343; Stoian 1959, p. 385, 389; Suceveanu 1974, p. 229.

mentioned, their origins possibly date back to the Hellenistic era, when these localities were merely farms in the chora of Greek cities<sup>134</sup>.

Even if we admit that the localities designated by *pyrgos* (*turris*) were originally Hellenistic farms, we should nevertheless consider them, given the analogies, as fortified farms, refuges, their contribution to the defence of the territory being, therefore, beyond any doubt<sup>135</sup>. Furthermore, regardless of their origin and purpose in the Greek era, given their fortified nature, it is possible that these constructions could have been used later, in the Roman era, as part of a coastal defence system<sup>136</sup>, as proposed by Al. Suceveanu (a maritime *limes*)<sup>137</sup>, followed by other researchers<sup>138</sup>.

The inscriptions from Dobrudja have been correlated with several others with similar texts, discovered in the province of Thrace and belonging to the reign of Antoninus Pius. Three inscriptions date back to 152 AD<sup>139</sup>, while a fourth is slightly later, from 154–155 AD<sup>140</sup>, all mentioning a series of military constructions with a defensive role (*praesidia, burgi, phruria*), located on internal roads, especially in the northern border area of the province<sup>141</sup>. Military detachments were stationed there, and sometimes beneficiary *consulares* are also attested. The important fortification works on the borders were carried out under the supervision of two governors of the province of Thrace and lasted for several years. The first was Caius Gallonius Fronto Quintus Marcus Turbo<sup>142</sup>, followed by Caius Iulius Commodus Orfitianus<sup>143</sup>. The scale of these works is also demonstrated by an inscription with a similar text but written in Greek and discovered in Bizye (Vize, Kırklareli Province, Türkiye)<sup>144</sup>.

Even without admitting that works of such importance were carried out in Moesia Inferior during that period, there are other works, also of a military nature, which certainly required a considerable concentration of means of transport, materials, and labour. The urgency of these needs is demonstrated by the threat of piracy and the increasingly powerful attacks by barbarian tribes from the north of the Black Sea<sup>145</sup>, among others, the Alans or Taurisci mentioned in the *Historia Augusta*<sup>146</sup>, who attacked Olbia and other neighbouring Greek cities, retreating only in the face of the forceful intervention by the Roman armies. We cannot know exactly where these troops came from and where they passed through. But we have reason to believe that, at least in part, they also came through Dobrudja; it is possible, according to R. Vulpe<sup>147</sup>, that the inscription at Capidava, with its dedication to *Fortuna Redux*<sup>148</sup>, refers precisely to one of these expeditions. If not, another possibility may be the deployment of troops for Lucius Verus' oriental campaign (161–169 AD). It is known that *Cohors I Germanorum*<sup>149</sup>, garrisoned at Capidava, went on this expedition, accompanying Legion V *Macedonica*, garrisoned at Troesmis, which participated with its entire contingent of soldiers.

In any case, whether it was fortification works<sup>150</sup> and massive troop movements to the Lower Danube, or just road construction and repair works and a simple intensification of troop movements, one thing is certain: the presence and

<sup>134</sup> Doruțiu-Boilă 1975, p. 219–224.

<sup>135</sup> Although different from the constructions discussed here, the fortification at Albești, located in the territory of the city of Callatis, demonstrates the concern for defending the territory in the Hellenistic era. For the history of the fortification, see Buzoianu, Bărbulescu 2008.

<sup>136</sup> Avram, Nistor 1982, p. 163: „The inhabitants of these castella (*burgi*) had, we believe, like those of *Scaptopara* and some African castella, defensive and police duties. Since the time of Hadrian, indigenous military units have been documented as defending *burgi*, especially in border areas” (translated into English by the present author). For the text of the inscription from *Scaptopara* (Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria), see IGB IV, 2236=CIL III,12336, and for its analysis, Hauken 1998, p. 181–249.

<sup>137</sup> Suceveanu 1974; Suceveanu 1981; Suceveanu 1992. For a contrary opinion, see Matei-Popescu 2010, p. 27–28 and more detailed, Matei-Popescu 2014. See also the comments by Torbatov (2011, p. 254–258).

<sup>138</sup> Ionescu, Papuc 2005.

<sup>139</sup> Nevsha – AÉ 2000, 1268; Shipka – AÉ 2016, 1390; Bălgarski Izvor – AÉ 2000, 1291.

<sup>140</sup> Pâncevo – AÉ 1927, 49; AÉ 2017, 1264.

<sup>141</sup> Torbatov 2002, p. 77–81; Matei-Popescu 2019, p. 104.

<sup>142</sup> Thomasson 2009, p. 64: 22:024 C. Gallonius Fronto Q. Marcius Turbo.

<sup>143</sup> Thomasson 2009, p. 64: 22:025 C. Iulius Commodus Orfitianus.

<sup>144</sup> AÉ 1951, 257 and translation into Romanian *cf.* Băltăc 2011, p. 276 (Catalog epigrafic Thracia, C. Bizye): Ἀγαθὴ τύχη / ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος / Τ(ίτου) Αἰλ(ίου) Ἀδριανοῦ Ἀπωνεῖνου Καί(σαρος) Σεβ(αστοῦ) Εὐσεβοῦς καὶ Οὐήρου Καίσαρ/ος νείκης τε καὶ αἰωνίου διαμονῆς καὶ τοῦ / σύμπαντος αὐτῶν οἴκου ἱερᾶς τε / συνκλήτου καὶ δήμου Ῥωμαίων / ἡγεμονεῦοντος ἐπαρχείας Θρά(κῆς) Γ(αίτου) Ἰουλίου Κομ(μ)όδου πρεσβ[ευτοῦ] Σεβ(αστοῦ) / ἀντιστρατήγου ἢ πόλις Βιζυηνῶν / κατεσκευάσεν τοὺς πυργούς διὰ / ἐπιμελητῶν Φίρμου Ἀυλουπορε/ος καὶ Αὐλουκενθου Δυτουκενθου / καὶ Ραζδου Ὑακίνθου εὐτυχεῖτε / „Good luck! For the victory and eternal preservation of Emperor Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Caesar Augustus Pius and Verus Caesar and their entire Sacred House and the Senate and People of the Romans, governing the province of Thracia, Caius Iulius Commodus, legatus Augusti pro praetore, the city of Bizye (built) towers through the care of Firmus of Auluporis and Aulukentos of Dusakentos and Razdos of Hyakinthos”; the inscription dates to 155 AD (translated into English by the present author).

<sup>145</sup> Vulpe, Barnea 1968, p. 141–143.

<sup>146</sup> SHA, Vita Pii, V, 5, VI,1; IX, 9–10.

<sup>147</sup> Vulpe, Barnea 1968, p. 142, footnote no. 10; Aricescu 1976, p. 80.

<sup>148</sup> ISM V, 16.

<sup>149</sup> *Cohors I Germanorum civium Romanorum*: ISM V, 16, 36. Matei-Popescu 2001–2002 (2004), p. 211–212, no. 25; Matei-Popescu 2010, p. 213–215; Aricescu 1976, p. 79–83, 87; Aricescu 1977, p. 60–61.

<sup>150</sup> Perhaps some proof of this, as Stoian (Stoian 1959) assumed, can be found in the very existence of the tower that gave the village of Laikos *Pyrgos* its name. Without necessarily accepting the same date, 154 or 155 AD, for the construction of this tower, the expression τοῦ λεγομέν[ο]υ accompanying the name of the village seems to indicate a date quite close to that of the complaint (159 AD) of the inhabitants of Chora Dagis (ISM I, 378).

pressure caused by these works were more than enough to drive the inhabitants of Chora Dagis and Laikos Pyrgos to appeal to the emperor for an easing of their road maintenance duties<sup>151</sup>.

Over time, researchers have proposed several variants for the localization of the toponyms Chora Dagis and Laikos Pyrgos. The internal analysis of the inscription suggests that they were positioned either near the southern or near the northern border of the Histrian territory.

A first hypothesis refers to the localities of Sibioara-Limba Oii and Corbu (Fig. 5), located on the border between the Histrian and Tomitan territories. In the Sibioara area, RAN records a settlement located west of the northwestern end of Lake Taşaul and dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD (code 62244.01), based on archaeological material identified through surface research, to which a series of tumuli is added<sup>152</sup>. A little further south, also on the lake shore, at the point called 'Limba Oii', a peninsula that juts out into the lake from south to north, older scientific literature contains information about an earthen rampart, approximately 260 m long, and traces of walls, traces of a tower, etc.<sup>153</sup> According to the hypothesis put forward by M. Bărbulescu, the settlement of Laikos Pyrgos would be located at this last point<sup>154</sup>.

Three epigraphic monuments originate from Sibioara. The first inscription<sup>155</sup>, dated 155 AD or shortly thereafter, is a dedication in Greek, made by the senate and people of Heraclea Pontica in honour of T. Flavius Longinus Q. Marcius Turbo, governor of the province of Moesia Inferior in 153/154–156 AD<sup>156</sup>. The inscription presents the entire *cursus honorum* of the governor, who had previously been, among others, commander of a *cohors I Germanorum*, before he was promoted in the senatorial order<sup>157</sup>, but also administrator of public places and works, after he had been consul, probably in 149<sup>158</sup>. The second inscription, dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD and written in Latin<sup>159</sup>, mentions the toponym *vicus Celeris*, but internal analysis makes its location in Sibioara unlikely, as the village is more correctly located in Vadu<sup>160</sup>. The third inscription, dated towards the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD and written in Greek, mentions a soldier from the *legio V Macedonica*, a military unit that returned to the garrison at Oescus after the Roman administration withdrew from Dacia<sup>161</sup>. All these elements demonstrate the predominantly Greek character and importance of the settlement at Taşaul, which may be identified with the fortification previously reported at Sibioara<sup>162</sup>.

On the other side of Lake Taşaul, to the north, on the seashore, lies the village of Corbu, also proposed as a possible location for Laikos Pyrgos<sup>163</sup>. The arguments in favor of this are its location on the road along the seaside and the milestones discovered here, but also the existence of a possible fortification at Cape Midia. In addition, the area is also known for other archaeological sites, with the mention that for the Roman time, those dating from the late period are predominant<sup>164</sup>.

If Laikos Pyrgos were localized in Sibioara, then Chora Dagis would also be somewhere nearby, on a road – a branch of the seaside road – that would start in Tomis and, following the route assumed by Pârvan, through Ovidiu-Sibioara-Gura Dobrogei-Cheia-Pantelimon (ancient Ulmetum), would reach Carsium (Hârşova), on the limes road, along Danube River<sup>165</sup>. Furthermore, the dating of the inscription could also represent the moment when the road was built.

If Laikos Pyrgos were localized in Corbu, on the seaside road, then we would have some evidence of repairs to this road, initiated during the reign of Antoninus Pius, perhaps as part of a broader program to fortify this road or the province as a whole, based on analogies suggested by inscriptions from Thrace. The repairs were then continued and amplified during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, who, as we have already mentioned, paid special attention to the road along the sea coast, as evidenced by the large number of milestones placed along it during his reign.

<sup>151</sup> Stoian 1959, p. 385–386.

<sup>152</sup> Their entries in the RAN are unclear, as they are dated both to the Roman era and to ancient times!

<sup>153</sup> These are not recorded in the RAN. For archaeological remains on the southern shore of Lake Taşaul, identified on the basis of surveys, see Bărbulescu 2001, p. 51 and Matei 1985, p. 132–139, no. 4.

<sup>154</sup> Bărbulescu 2001, p. 156.

<sup>155</sup> ISM II, 57(23), inv. no. MNA L 69. If the inscription does indeed originate from Tomis, as is assumed, then the circumstances under which it arrived in Sibioara are unknown to us.

<sup>156</sup> Thomasson 2009, p. 50, 20:086 T. Flavius Longinus Q. Marcius Turbo; Doruţiu-Boilă 1989, p. 332–333.

<sup>157</sup> It is not certain that this is the same unit as *cohors I Germanorum*, which was stationed at Capidava, see Aricescu 1976, p. 81–82, and Matei-Popescu 2010, p. 215.

<sup>158</sup> This task was the last one accomplished before he became governor of Moesia Inferior (Doruţiu-Boilă 1989, p. 332–333), a position he held in 151 AD, Piso 2004, p. 274. Apart from the legation of Moesia Inferior, the last one mentioned in the inscription, it is not known what other positions he held after.

<sup>159</sup> ISM II, 371(207), inv. no. MNA, L 227.

<sup>160</sup> Doruţiu-Boilă 1964, p. 132, no. 3; Suceveanu 1977, p. 85, note no. 101; Bărbulescu 2001, p. 51.

<sup>161</sup> ISM II 442(51), today probably lost.

<sup>162</sup> Nicorescu 1922, p. 559–561.

<sup>163</sup> Papuc, Ionescu 2005, p. 121, no. 29: Corbu de Sus.

<sup>164</sup> Avram *et alii* 1987, p. 327–330.

<sup>165</sup> Pârvan 1912, p. 582; Pârvan 1913c, p. 526–527 and fig. 17.

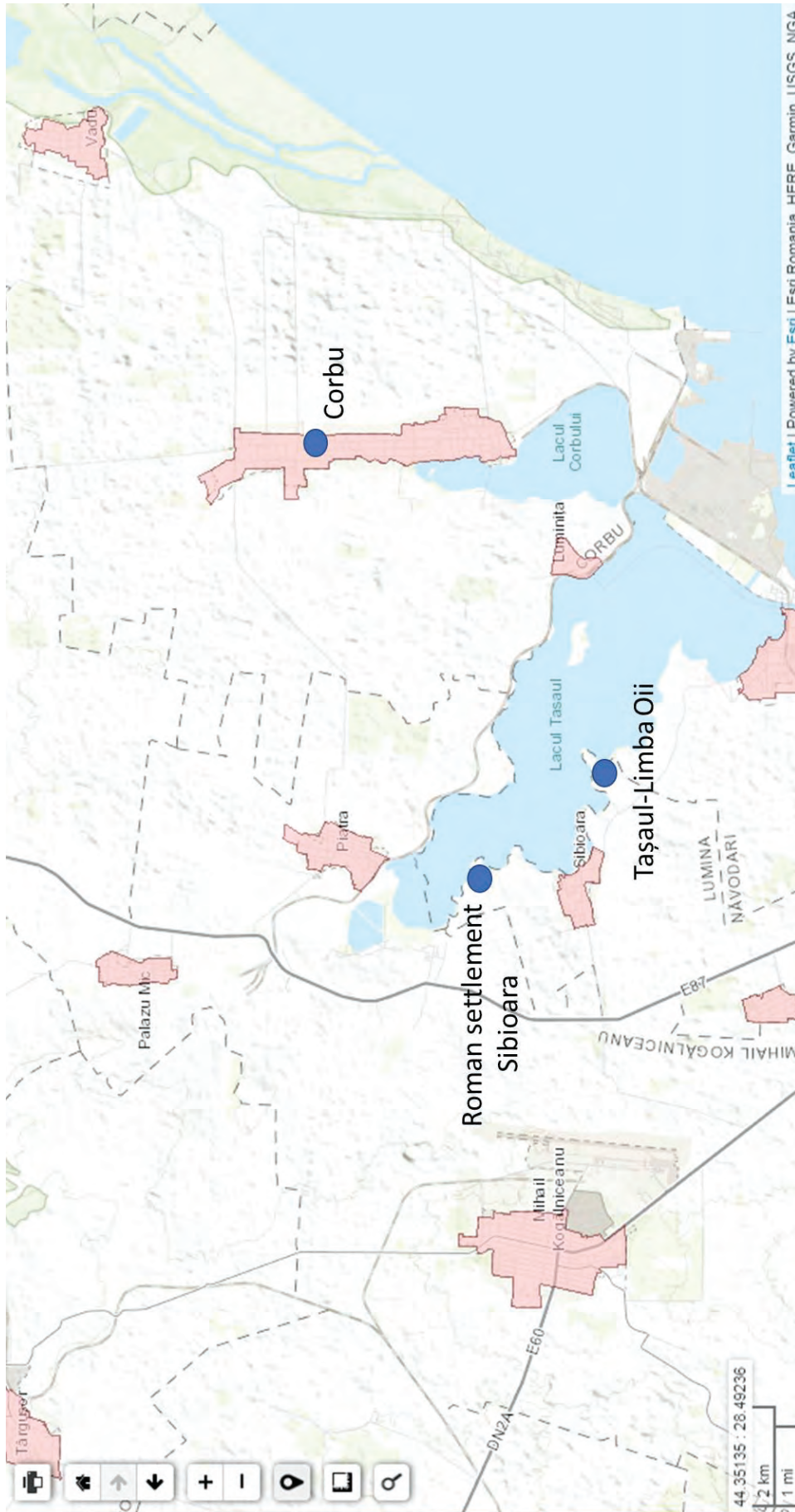


Figure 5. Localization of Sibioara, Taşaul-Limba Oii and Corbu settlements (base map RAN).

A second proposal for the localization of the two toponyms is in the area of the villages of Istria and Sinoe (Fig. 6). Based on the analysis of the inscription, I. Stoian believed that Chora Dagis was situated in Istria or in one of the settlements identified in Sinoe, and Laikos Pyrgos somewhere not far away, but on the seaside road<sup>166</sup>. In the area of the village of Istria, we know of several sites with traces of habitation dating back to the Roman era<sup>167</sup>, as well as several epigraphic discoveries<sup>168</sup>. Quite recently, using aerial photos, a Roman marching camp was identified<sup>169</sup>. At Sinoe, where the vicus Quintionis is located<sup>170</sup>, mentioned in a series of inscriptions, most of which were discovered at Histria, several sites with Roman settlements have been documented: the village of Sinoe itself<sup>171</sup> (Fig. 6, no. 1); the settlement located 2 km southeast of the village<sup>172</sup> (Fig. 6, no. 2); the settlement on the shore of Lake Sinoe, at the confluence of the Sariurt stream and Lake Sinoe, 3 km east of the village<sup>173</sup> (Fig. 6, no. 3), and the settlement at Acik-Suhat, approx. 10 km from the village<sup>174</sup> (Fig. 6, no. 4).

The most important of these is the settlement identified as vicus Quintionis. Its population consisted of veterans and Roman citizens alongside the Bessi, a south Thracian people<sup>175</sup> colonized in Moesia Inferior<sup>176</sup> and attested epigraphically between 139 and 177 AD in vicus Quintionis<sup>177</sup>, at Ulmetum, between 140 and 172 AD<sup>178</sup>, but also at Ibida<sup>179</sup>. They were known as excellent miners, which may have been a reason for their colonization<sup>180</sup>.

Three milestones come from Sinoe: the first dated 159 AD<sup>181</sup> (Fig. 7), the second 162 AD<sup>182</sup> (Fig. 8), and the third 249–250 AD<sup>183</sup>. The first two monuments contain a number indicating the distance (XVIII m.p.), but without mentioning the settlement from which it is measured.

The first milestone from Sinoe dates back to the same year as the complaint of the villagers of Chora Dagis. It does seem reasonable to agree that the construction of a new road or the repair of an existing one, along with other obligations to be fulfilled for the *cursus publicus*, could be a sufficiently important reason for the inhabitants to complain to the governor. The identical dating, added to the data presented above, could be an argument in favor of locating the villages of Chora Dagis and Laikos Pyrgos in the Istria-Sinoe area.

<sup>166</sup> Stoian 1959, p. 389.

<sup>167</sup> Avram *et alii* 1985, p. 123, nos. 2–5. RAN code 62039.

<sup>168</sup> ISM I, 363, 365.

<sup>169</sup> RAN code 62039.01. Țentea *et alii* 2019, p. 69–70. Al. S. Ștefan disputes the identification of the structure observed in aerial and satellite photographs as a marching camp, see in detail Ștefan 2020, p. 333–338. For other recently identified marching camps in Moesia Inferior, see Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2023, p. 36–62; the authors also propose, for the cases presented, an attempt to corroborate the field data to known events from the military history of the province; in this case, the fortification could be connected either with the destruction of the city of Histria in 253/254 AD or with the year 258 AD, when the city of Tomis was besieged, see Țentea, Matei-Popescu 2023, p. 48. For the state of research on marching camps in the provinces of Dacia and Moesia Inferior, see Țentea, Călina 2024.

<sup>170</sup> Tudor 1951, p. 512; Băltăc 2011, p. 144.

<sup>171</sup> RAN code 62271.02. Avram *et alii* 1985, p. 124, no. 19. To be corroborated with points 6 and 7 of the entry for Sinoe in the Archaeological Repertory of Romania, available online: <https://rarindex.cimec.ro/>.

<sup>172</sup> Canarache 1953, p. 136–138. Avram *et alii* 1985, p. 119. To be corroborated with point no. 8 of the entry for Sinoe in the Archaeological Repertory of Romania, available online: <https://rarindex.cimec.ro/>. According to the specialized literature, this is the location of vicus Quintionis. It should be noted, however, that no early Roman levels have been identified; only two levels of habitation have been identified: Hellenistic (with traces of walls) and late Roman (5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century AD). It is assumed that the settlement here, like the one in the village of Istria, existed for as long as the fortress on which it depended.

<sup>173</sup> Large early Roman settlement, researched in 1952 through several surveys, which remain unpublished, Canarache 1953, p. 136–143. Avram *et alii* 1985, p. 119 and the entry for Sinoe in the Archaeological Repertory of Romania, point no. 4, available online: <https://rarindex.cimec.ro/>.

<sup>174</sup> RAN code 159794.09. Avram *et alii* 1985, p. 122–123 and the entry for Sinoe in the Archaeological Repertory of Romania, point no. 2, available online: <https://rarindex.cimec.ro/>.

<sup>175</sup> Băltăc 2011, p. 33–34.

<sup>176</sup> For a recent review of the hypotheses regarding the dating, stages, and purpose of their colonization in Moesia Inferior, see Codescu 2021.

<sup>177</sup> Suceveanu 1977, p. 44, note no. 135.

<sup>178</sup> Suceveanu 1977, p. 68, note no. 458.

<sup>179</sup> ISM V, 228 (mentions Othis, son of Seutes, and his wife, Bithidia, daughter of Bitus); ISM V, 229 (mentions Durisses, son of Bithus; a person with the same name, holding the position of magister vici, appears in an inscription from vicus Quintionis, ISM I, 326, dated 149 AD). Mihailescu-Bîrliba 2016, p. 13–16. Other inscriptions with Thracian anthroponyms come from Mihai Bravu (vicus Bad ...), not far from Slava Rusă, see Mihailescu-Bîrliba 2020, p. 159–171.

<sup>180</sup> Zah, Suceveanu 1971, p. 567–578, who propose the hypothesis of their colonization in two stages. According to A. Opaïț (1991, p. 21), the mention of some Thracian colonists' names in the inscriptions from Ibida and the existence of the Altîn-Tepe mines nearby could suggest the existence of an imperial *saltus* in this area; the same opinion is shared by Matei-Popescu 2013, p. 225–226. Al. Suceveanu (1988, p. 166–167) suggests also a *saltus*, located in the regio Histriae, to which the settlements of Laikos Pyrgos and Chora Dagis would belong.

<sup>181</sup> CIL III, 12513=ISM I, 317.

<sup>182</sup> CIL III, 12514=ISM I, 318.

<sup>183</sup> CIL III, 12515=ISM I, 322. It is a palimpsest, dating back to the time of Decius; except for the name of the emperor, which can be read clearly, the rest of the inscription is difficult to reconstruct.

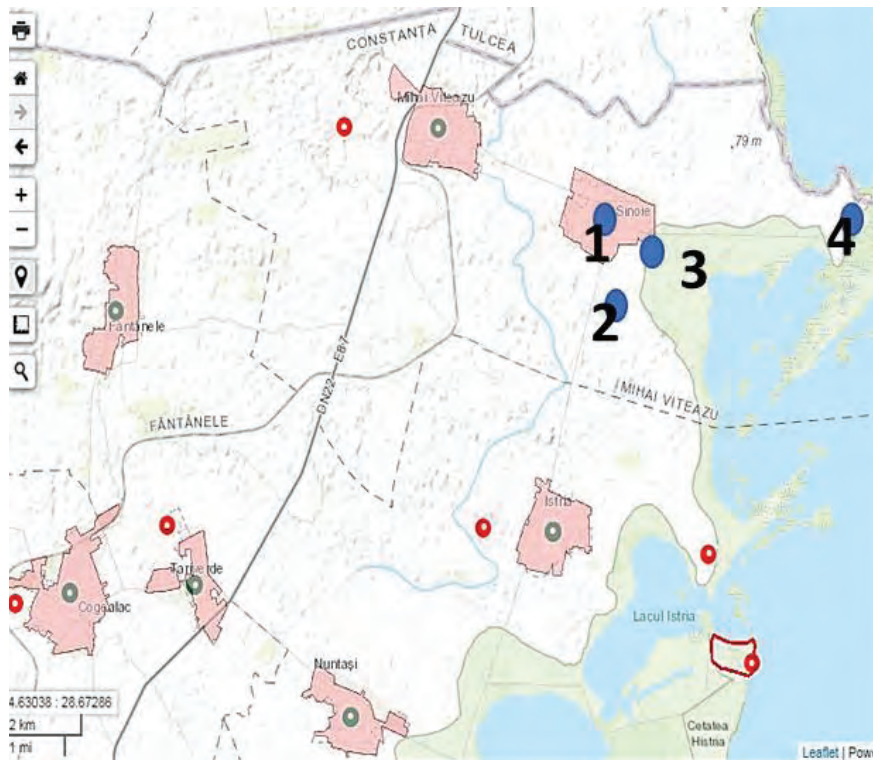


Figure 6. Localization of Sinoe and Istria settlements (base map RAN).

D. M. Pippidi considered that the three monuments, if they had been placed not far from where they were found, belonged to a road branching off from the central Dobrudja road (Tropaeum-Noviodunum), namely the road that connected Histria with Noviodunum via vicus Quintionis and Ibida<sup>184</sup>.

Before discussing the distance in more detail, we would like to draw attention to the very close dating of the first two milestones. The setting of a new milestone in the same place only three years apart demonstrates successive repairs to the road following intense use of that route<sup>185</sup>. In addition, the texts of the inscriptions contain the full imperial title, the names of the emperors – Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius together with Lucius Verus – appear in the nominative case, alongside which are mentioned the names of the governors in charge of repairing the road, in the ablative case for T. Statilius Iulius Severus, on the milestone from 159 AD, and in the nominative case for M. Servilius Fabianus Maximus<sup>186</sup>, on the milestone from 162 AD. In other words, we are looking at a text characteristic of milestones dating back to the early Roman period, when the nominative forms of imperial names and titles were used to portray the emperors as active road builders<sup>187</sup>.

Reporting the distance to the information provided by *Itinerarium Antonini*, Aricescu assumed that the locality from which the distance was measured was Ad Salices, located north of Histria at XXV m.p., because if we subtract the XVIII m.p. on the Sinoe milestones from this value, we are left with VI m.p. (8.874 km), a distance that coincides with the real distance between vicus Quintionis and Histria in the field; consequently, the two milestones indicate, on the seaside road, the distance from vicus Quintionis to Ad Salices, a settlement which, with the help of these data, Aricescu localized in the Sălchioara (former Caramanchioi)-Enisala area<sup>188</sup>.

Aricescu's hypothesis, widely accepted in the specialized literature, is logical, but it is not – in our opinion – the only one to be taken into consideration. It is also possible that the milestones at Sinoe may indicate the distance between

<sup>184</sup> ISM I, p. 430. Pippidi does not bring into discussion any kind of arguments based on the distance given by the two milestones.

<sup>185</sup> Laurence 2004, p. 44: „There is no such thing as a durable maintenance-free road. Roads cannot continue without maintenance”.

<sup>186</sup> Thomasson 2009, p. 50–51, 20:093 M. Servilius Fabianus Maximus.

<sup>187</sup> For changes in the structure of the texts on milestones from Moesia Inferior/Scythia from the early to late Roman period, see Panaite 2024. For the activity of the governors of the province of Moesia Inferior based on epigraphic sources, see Żelazowski 2009.

<sup>188</sup> Aricescu 1975, p. 324–325; Aricescu 1977, p. 146.

*Imp(erator) Caes(ar),  
diui Hadr(iani)  
fil(ius), [d]iui Tra[ia]-  
ni n[e]p(os), T(itus) [A]el(ius)  
5 Ha[dr(ianus) An]t(onus)  
Au[g(ustus) Pius]  
p(ontifex) m(aximus) tr(ibunicia) [p]ot(estate)  
XXII, co(n)s(ul) IIII  
p(ater) p(atriciae), T(ito) [Stati]-  
10 lio [Iulio Se]-  
uer[o] leg(ato)  
Aug(usti) [pr(o) pr(aetore)],  
m(ilia) p(assum) XVIII*



Emperor Caesar,  
son of the divine Hadrian,  
grandson of the divine Trajan, Titus Aelius  
Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, high  
priest, holder of  
tribunician power for the 22nd time,  
consul for the 4th time,  
father of the fatherland, <ordered to be  
done,> imperial governor of praetorian  
rank  
being Titus Statilius Iulius Severus.  
Nineteen thousand steps.

Figure 7. Milestone from Sinoe, dated 159 AD.

*Imp(erator) Caesar M(arcus) Aurelius  
Antoninus Aug(ustus) ponti-  
fex maximus trib(unicia) pot-  
[est]at(e) XVI, co(n)s(ul) III et  
[Imp(erator)] Caesar Lu(cius) Aure-  
lius Verus Aug(ustus) tri-  
b(unicia) potestat(e) II co(n)s(ul) II  
diui filii Pii, diui Ha-  
driani nepotes, di-  
ui Neruae abnepo-  
tes M(arcus) Seruilii  
Fabianus Maxi-  
mus leg(atus) Aug(usti)  
pr(o) pr(aetore)  
M(ilia) p(assum) XVIII.*



Emperor Caesar Marcus Aurelius  
Antoninus Augustus, high priest,  
holder of tribunician power  
for the sixteenth time, consul for the third  
time, and Emperor Caesar Lucius Aurelius  
Verus Augustus, holder  
of tribunician power for the second time,  
consul for the second time,  
sons of the divine Antoninus Pius, grandsons  
of the divine Hadrian, great-grandsons of the  
divine Nerva, <had it made by>  
Marcus Servilius Fabianus Maximus,  
governor of the province.  
Nineteen thousand steps.



Figure 8. Milestone from Sinoe, dated 162 AD.

vicus Quintionis and Ibida<sup>189</sup> and, consequently, may belong to the secondary road proposed by D. M. Pippidi (Fig. 9). If we were to travel this road today (along DN 22/E87 and DN 22D), the distance from Sinoe to Slava Rusă would be

<sup>189</sup> One of the largest Roman fortification in Dobrudja, better known in the late Roman period, Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, p. 52–54. For a synthesis of the history of the fortification and of the archaeological excavations, see Iacob, Paraschiv 2021, p. 111–150.

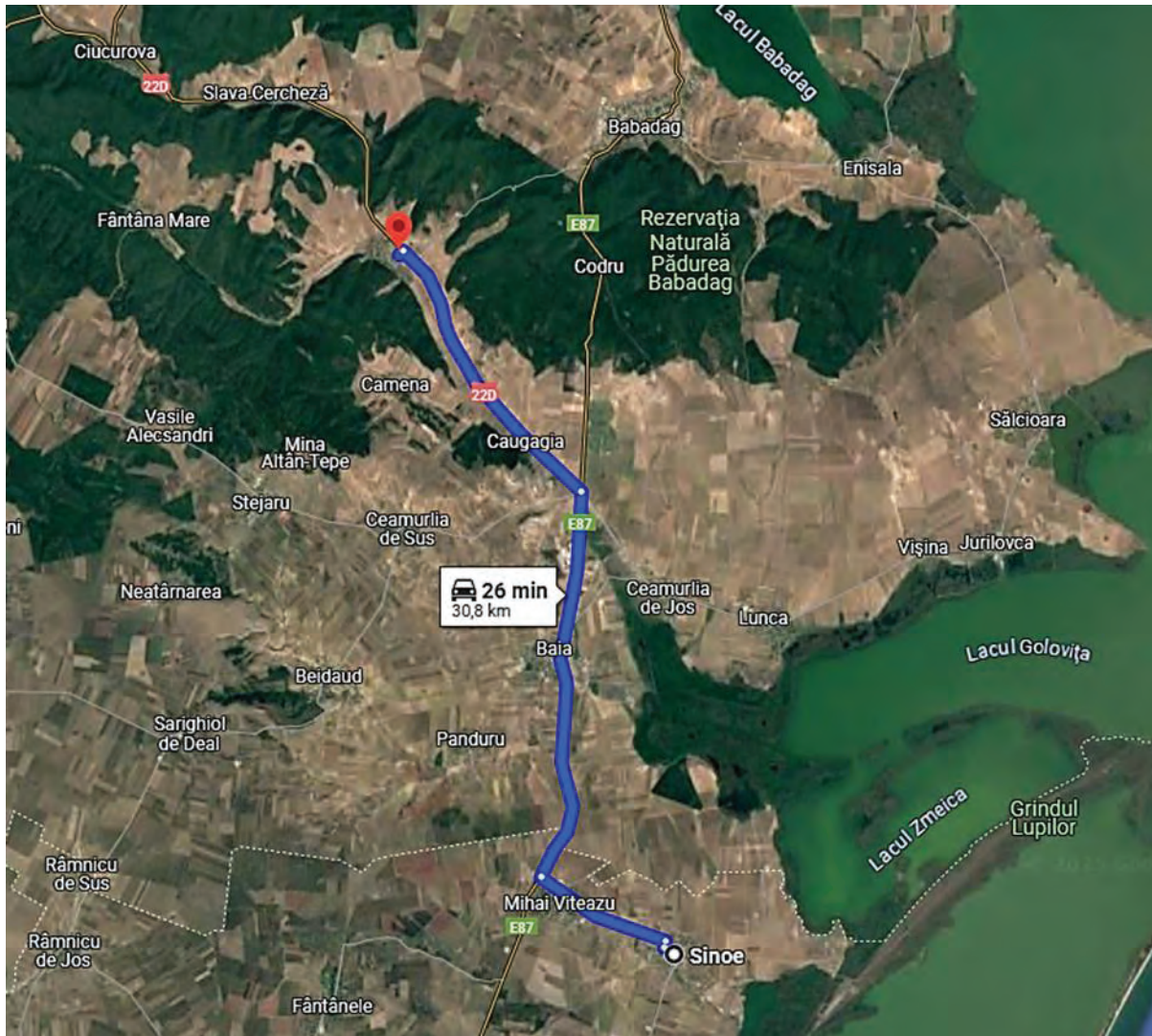


Figure 9. The route of the road Sinoe-Slava Rusă (based on Google Maps).

30.7 km, the difference from the distance indicated by the milestones being (only) 2.59 km, and this could be easily accepted, since we cannot trace precisely the road in the field.

Recent archaeological research shows that there was a settlement in the early Roman period at Ibida<sup>190</sup>, a vicus or a civitas, inhabited by Roman veterans and Thracians, whose names have been preserved in inscriptions. As early as the first years of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, a checkpoint for the central area of Dobrudja was established here; moreover, Hellenistic-era ceramic and numismatic discoveries demonstrate intense commercial exchanges and even support the hypothesis that an emporion may have functioned here<sup>191</sup>. Its civilian character and the imposition of military control over the area only in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD seem to be contradicted by more recent epigraphic discoveries of military character. Three fragments of military diplomas<sup>192</sup>, copies of the imperial constitution of August 14, 99 AD (Trajan for the army of Moesia Inferior), to which is added an older inscription depicting the Capitoline She-Wolf<sup>193</sup> and a gem with the same representation, are the elements of L. Mihăilescu-Bîrliba's argument in favor of the existence of a military fortification at Ibida, where a vexillation of the XI Claudia legion was stationed. A bronze tablet with an inscription in tabula ansata, which was attached to a piece of military equipment and dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, represents for A. Rubel the strongest element in favor

<sup>190</sup> For a review of epigraphic information about early Roman Ibida, see Mihăilescu-Bîrliba 2011, p. 83–143.

<sup>191</sup> Iacob, Paraschiv 2021, p. 117.

<sup>192</sup> Mihăilescu-Bîrliba 2011, p. 85–97, no. 1; Mihăilescu-Bîrliba, Paraschiv 2023, p. 475–487; Mihăilescu-Bîrliba, Colțeanu 2024, p. 51–62.

<sup>193</sup> ISM V, 224; Mihăilescu-Bîrliba 2011, p. 97–100, no. 2.

of the stationing of a vexillatio here<sup>194</sup>. A military unit is, in fact, documented in the area by cohorts III Gallorum<sup>195</sup>, which appears on one of the recently published fragments of military diplomas; on the basis of their study, the authors suggest that it may have been stationed in an area delimited by the localities of Slava Rusă-Camena-Mihai Bravu-Topolog<sup>196</sup>.

Another possible starting point from which to measure the distance of XVIII m.p. on the milestones at Sinoe is the village of Pantelimon, Constanța County, located in the center of Dobrudja, on the main road from Tropaeum to Noviodunum (Isaccea, Tulcea County). While it is not currently possible to travel directly along a line connecting Sinoe – Istria – the marching camp at Istria – Tariverde – Cogealac – Grădina – Pantelimon, but based on information about the roads in the Histrian territory<sup>197</sup>, this was possible in ancient times. The approximate distance is about 32 km. As in the above case, the difference would be acceptable, approx. 4 km in this instance.

Vicus Ulmetum (Pantelimon, Constanța County) (Fig. 10) was a rural settlement with vicus status in the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD<sup>198</sup>, which underwent significant development, as evidenced by numerous archaeological and epigraphic discoveries<sup>199</sup>, and later transformed into one of the most important fortified centres in the province of Scythia<sup>200</sup>, located on the central road of Dobrudja. Around Ulmetum there were a number of *villae rusticae*, some properties being attested<sup>201</sup> epigraphically or by tumuli<sup>202</sup>. Two marching camps<sup>203</sup> were identified not far from the late Roman fortification, demonstrating the strategic importance of the area. The first one was identified based on the analysis of aerial photographs and consists of two adjoining enclosures – one rectangular and the other south of it irregular in shape, covering an area of 2.6 ha and 7 ha, respectively. The second was identified and archaeologically researched by Pârvan, who believed it to be a north-south oriented fortification, built entirely of earth, used for a short period of time – a few weeks during an expedition – and then used as a rest stop. As for the time of construction, Pârvan did not identify any elements that could help him, as the fortification could have been built either during Trajan's reign or during Valens' time. Instead, he emphasized its strategic position, at the intersection of two valleys: the Casimcea Valley and the Pantelimon (Ceatalorman) Valley. Along the Casimcea Valley there was a road connecting Tomis and north-western Dobrudja, which at the intersection with the Pantelimon (Ceatalorman) Valley branched into two ramifications, reaching Noviodunum and Carsium<sup>204</sup>. Another important road from Ulmetum went east to Capidava, coming from Histria<sup>205</sup>.

A field study carried out in 1993<sup>206</sup>, on the territory of the late Roman fort and its surroundings, examined the spatial and chronological distribution of ceramic material. Noting the presence of early Roman material only in the area of the camp (identified by Pârvan, and interpreted by S. V. Krebs as a permanent fort from the Flavian period, and not seasonal, as Pârvan considered it to be), the author assumes that a civilian settlement composed of Roman colonists and Bessi, attested epigraphically, established around it<sup>207</sup>, could be identified with the vicus Ulmetum<sup>208</sup> mentioned in inscriptions<sup>209</sup>. The discovery of a boundary stonemarker<sup>210</sup>, dated based on its shape to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, could indicate a *centuriatio* in the area, carried out sometime between Flavius Sabinus' Moesian legation and Trajan's war with Decebalus.

<sup>194</sup> Rubel 2008, p. 1–8.

<sup>195</sup> Its location is unknown; for information about this military unit, whose presence in the army of Moesia Inferior is documented by other military diplomas, see Matei-Popescu 2010, p. 209–210, no. 25.

<sup>196</sup> Mihailescu-Bîrliba, Coțeanu 2024, p. 60.

<sup>197</sup> Panaite 2010; Panaite 2014.

<sup>198</sup> Băltăc 2011, p. 145.

<sup>199</sup> ISM V, 57a, b; ISM V, 62, 63, 64, 69. Pârvan 1912, 1913a, 1913b, 1915.

<sup>200</sup> IGLR 206–219; Vulpe, Barnea 1968, p. 422–424; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991 p. 202–204. Archaeological research resumed in 2004, and excavation reports are published annually in the chronicle of archaeological research.

<sup>201</sup> ISM V, 59, 72, not localized in the field.

<sup>202</sup> Identified during a field survey by C. Chera and V. Lungu in 1989, cf. Bărbulescu 2001, p. 109 note no. 824, east of Pantelimonul de Sus at 1.5 km and 2.5 km, respectively.

<sup>203</sup> Băjenaru 2019, p. 18–21; Pârvan 1913c, p. 526–529; Țentea, Călina 2024, p. 128: the two camps identified by Băjenaru and Pârvan are conventionally named Ulmetum I and Ulmetum II.

<sup>204</sup> Pârvan 1912, p. 582; Pârvan 1913c, p. 526–527 and fig. 17.

<sup>205</sup> Panaite 2010, p. 376.

<sup>206</sup> Krebs 1998, p. 97–125.

<sup>207</sup> Țentea, Călina 2024, p. 128, fig. A 21, p. 165 and pl. II, p. 165, pl. VII/d, p. 143: The fort is oriented north–south and consists of two enclosures: one rectangular, measuring 115 (north side) × 200 (east) × 135 (south) × 200 (west) m, and a second, irregular enclosure to the south of it, measuring 115 × 180 × 260 × 300 m. In our opinion, the two enclosures may suggest a permanent fortification in the rectangular enclosure and a civilian settlement in the irregular enclosure, which, if confirmed by future archaeological research, raises the question of the name of the unit that was stationed there.

<sup>208</sup> Krebs 1998, p. 119 also proposes another localization of the settlement, namely at Râmnicu de Jos, where an inscription, CIL III, 14442, was found, on which one can read [Vi]co V..., the author proposing [Vi]co V[Imeto]. We have to also mention that an important inscription was found here, attesting to a beneficiarius consularis, see Alexandrescu 2008, p. 259–262 = AE 2008, 1196. In CIL III and in the online database Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg (EDH, <https://edh.uni-heidelberg.de/home>) the place of origin of the inscription – Tulcea, indicated after G. Tocilescu (Tocilescu 1900, p. 203, no. 26) – is incorrect, the inscription actually comes from Râmnicu de Jos, cf. Doruțiu-Boilă 1964, p. 131, no. 1 and note no. 2.

<sup>209</sup> ISM V, 62, 63, 64.

<sup>210</sup> Krebs 1998, p. 122–124.

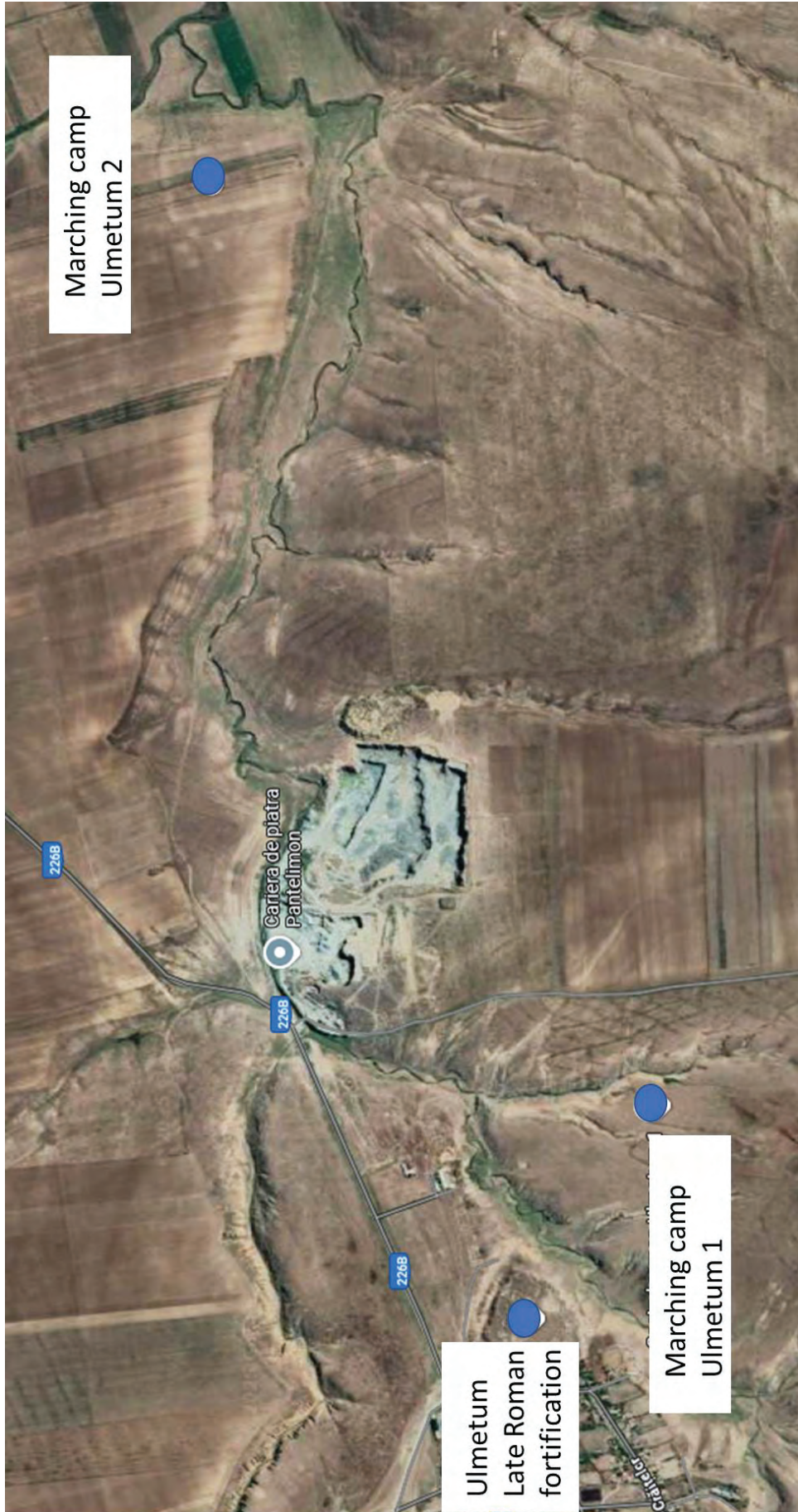


Figure 10. The Ulmetum area (based on Google Maps).

From Ulmetum also comes a fragmentary inscription<sup>211</sup> that mentions, among other things, a *via publica*. From the few preserved elements, as the inscription is very poorly preserved, Pârvan believed that the inscription delimited the stretch of road to be built by the inhabitants of the village, while E. Doruțiu-Boilă believed that we are dealing with a decision to delimit a plot of land, in which the words *a tumulo, petram et viam publicam* were landmarks used to establish its boundaries. Based on the shape of the letters, the inscription has been dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century<sup>212</sup>. Whatever the explanation might be, the mention of the public road is particularly important.

The second milestone from Sinoe dates back to 162 AD. A milestone from the same year was discovered in a secondary position, in Cheia, a locality not far south of Pantelimon<sup>213</sup>. Although the stone is in a very poor condition, it was possible to reconstruct the governor's name, M. Servilius Fabianus Maximus. This milestone could come either from the seaside road or from central Dobrudja road, or even from the secondary road Histria-Capidava<sup>214</sup>. If so, this could represent an argument for dating the construction of this road in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, based on the data provided by the inscription ISM I, 378 and accepting the localization of the toponyms Chora Dagis and Laikos Pyrgos in the Sinoe-Istria area. Moreover, it could demonstrate also the strategic character of this road, if we take into account the marching camps from Ulmetum and Istria.

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<sup>211</sup> ISM V, 60.

<sup>212</sup> We kindly asked our colleague Dragoș Hălmagi to review the inscription – for which we thank him again here – and he believes that it may date back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

<sup>213</sup> Bărbulescu et alii 2008, p. 169–171, no. 1; fig. 1 a–b, p. 182.

<sup>214</sup> The earliest milestone from Capidava is dated to 159 AD. Given that its location in antiquity is unknown to us, the editors of the inscription assume that it could also have come from a secondary road, more precisely the one leading to Băltăgești, which then went to Histria or Tomis. Oprîș, Popescu 1996.

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## ABREVIERI / ABRÉVIATIONS / ABBREVIATIONS

- AA – Archäologischer Anzeiger. Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Darmstadt, München, Tübingen–Berlin  
(A)ARMSI – Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice, București  
ACD – Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debrecenensis, Debrecen  
ActaArchHung – Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest  
ActaHistArt – Acta historiae artium Academiae scientiarum Hungaricae, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapesta  
ActaMN – Acta Musei Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca  
ActaMP – Acta Musei Porolissensis, Zalău  
AÉ – L'Année épigraphique, Paris.  
AIIA Iași – Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie „A. D. Xenopol”, Iași  
AIIC – Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „George Barițiu”, Cluj  
AJBA – American Journal of Biological Anthropology  
AJPA – American Journal of Physical Anthropology  
AK – Archaeologiai Közlemények, Pest  
AnSt – Anatolian Studies, British Institute of Ankara  
AnUCDC – Analele Universității Creștine „Dimitrie Cantemir”  
AnUVT – Annales d'Université « Valahia » Târgoviște, Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire  
AO – Arhivele Olteniei, Craiova  
ArchBulg – Archaeologia Bulgarica, Sofia  
ArchÉrt – Archaeológiai Értesítő, Budapest  
Argesis – Argesis. Muzeul Județean Argeș. Pitești  
ArhMed – Arheologia Medievală  
ArhMold – Arheologia Moldovei, Iași  
AȘUI – Analele Științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași  
Az Érem – Az Érem kiadványai, Budapest  
Banatica – Banatica. Muzeul Banatului Montan, Reșița  
BARBrSer – British Archaeological Reports. British Series, Oxford  
BARIntSer – British Archaeological Reports. International Series, Oxford  
BCMI – Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice  
BerRGK – Bericht der Romisch-Germanische Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Frankfurt am Main  
BibIstroPontica-P – Biblioteca Istro-Pontica. Seria Patrimoniu, Tulcea  
BJ – Bonner Jahrbücher – Bonner Jahrbücher des Rheinischen Landesmuseums in Bonn, Bonn  
BMC – *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, Londra: I, *Augustus to Vitellius*, 1923; II, *Vespasian to Domitian*, 1930; III, *Nerva to Hadrian*, 1936; IV, *Antoninus Pius to Commodus*, 1968; V, *Pertinax to Elagabalus*, 1950 (H. Mattingly); VI, *Severus Alexander to Balbinus and Pupienus*, 1962 (R.A.G. Carson).  
BMI – Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice, București  
BMJT – Buletinul Muzeului Județean Teleorman, Alexandria  
BSNR – Buletinul Societății Numismatice Române, București  
Buridava – Buridava. Studii și materiale, Muzeul Județean „Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu”, Râmnicu Vâlcea  
CA – Cercetări Arheologice. Muzeul Național de Istorie a României, București  
Caiete ARA – Caiete ARA. Asociația Arhitectură, restaurare, arheologie, București  
Carpica – Carpica. Complexul Muzeal „Iulian Antonescu” Bacău  
CCA – Cronica Cercetărilor Arheologice din România  
CEpR – Cronica Epigrafică a României  
Cerclst – Cercetări Istorice, Iași  
CICSA – Centrul de Istorie Comparată a Societăților Antice, Facultatea de Istorie, Universitatea din București  
CIL – *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, I–XVII, Berlin  
CN – Cercetări Numismatice. Muzeul Național de Istorie a României, București  
CNM, V.1 – *Corpus Nummorum Moldaviae*, vol. V.1, Chișinău  
CRAI – Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres. Comptes rendus des séances de l'année ...  
Crisia – Crisia. Muzeul Țării Crișurilor, Oradea

- Dacia – Dacia / Dacia Nouvelle Série. Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne. Académie Roumaine. Institut d'archéologie « V. Pârvan », Bucarest
- Danubius – Danubius. Revista Muzeului de Istorie Galați
- DHA – Dialogues d'histoire ancienne, Institut des Sciences et Techniques de l'Antiquité
- Documenta Praehistorica – Documenta Praehistorica, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Department of Archaeology, Ljubljana
- EphemDac – Ephemeris Dacoromana, Roma
- EphemNap – Ephemeris Napocensis, Cluj-Napoca
- ERSIR – *Enciclopedia reprezentanților scrisului istoric românesc*, I – V, V. Spinei, D. N. Rusu (coord.), Suceava, 2021
- FoIArch – Folia Archaeologica. A Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Évkönyve. Annales Musei Nationalis Hungarici, Budapest
- Fontes I – *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae – Izvoarele istoriei României*, I, București, 1964
- Fontes II – *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae – Izvoarele istoriei României*, II, București, 1970
- FSI – Forensic Science International
- Glasnik – Glasnik. Srpsko Arheološko Društvo (Journal of the Serbian Archaeological Society), Belgrad
- Hierasus – Hierasus. Muzeul Județean Buzău
- HOMO – HOMO. Journal of Comparative Human Biology, Stuttgart
- Ialomița – Ialomița. Studii de cercetări de arheologie, istorie, etnografie și muzeologie, Slobozia
- IDRE – C. C. Petolescu, *Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae. Inscriptiones externae – Inscriptions externes concernant l'histoire de la Dacie*, I-II, București, 1996-2000
- IGB – G. Mihailov, *Inscriptiones graecae in Bulgaria repertae*, vol. I-V, Sofia, 1956-1970
- IGLR – E. Popescu, *Inscripțiile grecești și latine din secolele IV–XIII descoperite în România*, București, 1976
- IGRR – *Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas pertinentes*, publiées par R. Cagnat, J. Toutain, G. Lafaye, Paris, 1906-1927
- IJP – International Journal of Paleopathology
- ISM – *Inscriptiones Daciae et Scythiae Minoris antiquae. Series altera: Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris Graecae et Latinae – Inscripțiile din Sythia Minor*: I. *Inscriptiones Histriae et vicinia – Histria și împrejurimile* (Dionisie M. Pippidi), București, 1983; II. *Tomis et territorium – Tomis și teritoriul său* (Iorgu Stoian), București, 1987; III. *Callatis et territorium – Callatis et son territoire* (Alexandru Avram), București – Paris, 1999; IV. *Tropaeum – Durostorum – Axiopolis* (Emilian Popescu), București – Paris, 2015 ; V. *Capidava – Troesmis – Noviodunum* (Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă), București, 1980; VI.2. *Supplementa 2. Tomis et territorium – Tomis et son territoire* (Alexandru Avram, Maria Bărbulescu, Livia Buzoianu), București – Paris, 2018
- Istros – Istros. Muzeul Brăilei „Ferdinand I”, Brăila
- IzvestijaVarna – Izvestija na Narodnija Muzej (Izvestija na Varnenskoto Arheologičesko Družestvo), Varna
- JAHA – Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology, Cluj-Napoca
- JAS – Journal of Archaeological Science, Amsterdam
- JAT – Journal of Ancient Topography
- JFS – Journal of Forensic Studies
- JITE – Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics
- JHE – Journal of Human Evolution
- LRBC – *Late Roman Bronze Coinage A.D. 394-498*, Londra, 1965: I, *The Bronze Coinage of the House of Constantine A.D. 324–346* (P. V. Hill, J. P. C. Kent); II, *Bronze Roman Imperial Coinage of the Later Empire A.D. 346–498* (R. A. G. Carson, J. P. C. Kent).
- MarNero – Il Mar Nero. Annali di archeologia e storia, Roma
- MemAnt – Memoria Antiquitatis, Piatra Neamț
- Marmatia – Marmatia. Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Arheologie Maramureș, Baia Mare
- MCA – Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice, București
- MCSEE – Monedă și comerț în Sud-Estul Europei, Sibiu
- MEFRM – Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen Âge, Rome
- MER – *Catalogue des monnaies de l'Empire romain*. II. J.-B. Giard, *De Tibère à Néron*, Paris, 1988 ; III. J.-B. Giard, *Du soulèvement de 68 après J.-C. à Nerva*, Paris-Strasbourg, 1998
- MFMÉ-SA – A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve – Studia Archaeologica, Szeged
- MIR – *Moneta Imperii Romani*. 14. B. Woytek, *Die Reichsprägung des Kaisers Traianus (98–117)*, I–II, Wien, 2010; 18. W. Szaivert, *Die Münzprägung der Kaiser Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus und Commodus (161–192)*, Wien, 1986.
- Mousaios – Mousaios. Buletinul Științific al Muzeului Județean Buzău
- MuzNaț – Muzeul Național, Muzeul Național de Istorie a României, București
- Numizmatičar – Numizmatičar. Casopis za anticki i stari jugoslovenski novac, Belgrad

- Numizmatikai Közlöny – Numizmatikai Közlöny. A Magyar Numizmatikai Társulat, Akadémiai Klado, Budapest
- NZ – Numismatische Zeitschrift, Viena
- Oltenia – Oltenia. Studii și Comunicări, Craiova
- Paléorient – Paléorient: revue interdisciplinaire de préhistoire et de protohistoire du sud-ouest et de l'Asie centrale, Paris
- PBF – Prähistorische Bronze Funde, München – Stuttgart
- Peuce – Peuce. Studii și cercetări de istorie și arheologie, Institutul de Cercetări Eco-Muzeale „Gavrilă Simion”, Tulcea
- PME – H. Devijver, *Prosopographia militiarum equestrium quae fuerunt ab Augusto ad Gallienum*, Leuven, I (A–I, 1976), II (I–V, 1977), III (1980; indici)
- Pontica – Pontica. Studii și materiale de istorie, arheologie și muzeografie, Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie, Constanța
- Przegląd Archaeologiczny – Przegląd Archaeologiczny, Institut Archeologii i Etnologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław
- PZ – Prähistorische Zeitschrift, Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie, Berlin
- RAASI – Revista de Arheologie, Antropologie și Studii Interdisciplinare, Institutul de Cercetări Bioarheologice și Etnoculturale, Republica Moldova
- RAN – Repertoriul Arheologic Național / National Archaeological Repository
- RCAN – Revista de Cercetări Arheologice și Numismatice, București
- RESEE – Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes. Academia Română. Institutul de Studii Sud-Est Europeene, București
- RevArh – Revista Arheologică, Chișinău
- RGZM – Barbara Pferdehirt, *Römische Militärdiplome und Entlassungsurkunden in der Sammlung des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums*, Mainz, I-II, 2004
- RI – Revista Istorică. Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga”, București
- RIC – *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, Londra: I<sup>2</sup>, *From 31 BC to AD 69*, 1984 (C. H. V. Sutherland); II, *Vespasian to Hadrian*, 1926 (H. Mattingly, E.A. Sydenham); II.1, *From AD 69–96. Vespasian to Domitian*, 2007 (I. A. Carradice, T.V. Buttrey); II.3, *From AD 117–138. Hadrian*, 2019 (R.A. Abdy, P.F. Mittag); III, *Antoninus Pius to Commodus*, 1930; IV.1, *Pertinax to Geta*, 1968 (H. Mattingly, E.A. Sydenham); IV.2, *Macrinus to Pupienus*, 1938; IV.3, *Gordian III – Uranian Antoninus*, 1949 (H. Mattingly, E. A. Sydenham, C. H. V. Sutherland); V.1, 1927 (reimprimat 1968; P. H. Webb); VII, *Constantine and Licinius A.D. 313–337*, 1966 (P.M. Bruun); VIII, *The Family of Constantine I A.D. 337–364*, 1981; X, *The Divided Empire and the Fall of the Western Parts A.D. 395–491*, 1994 (J.P.C. Kent)
- RMD – Margaret M. Roxan, *Roman Military Diplomas*, London: I. *Roman Military Diplomas 1954–1977*, 1978; II. *Roman Military Diplomas 1978–1984*, 1985; III. *Roman Military Diplomas 1985–1993*, 1994; Margaret M. Roxan, P. Holder, *Roman Military Diplomas IV*, 2003; P. Holder, *Roman Military Diplomas V*, 2006
- RMM-MIA – Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor – Monumente Istorice și de Artă, București
- Romanoslavica – Romanoslavica. Asociația Slaviștilor din România, București
- RPC – *Roman Provincial Coinage*, Oxford ([https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/search/map?volume\\_id=](https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/search/map?volume_id=))
- RPC, VII.2 – *Roman Provincial Coinage. VII.2. From Gordian I to Gordian III (AD 238–244): all provinces except Asia*, Londra/Paris, 2022 (J. Mairat, M. Spoerri Butcher, cu contribuția M. Amandry, R. Bland, K. Butcher, J. Nurpetlian, U. Peter).
- RRH – Revue Roumaine d'Histoire, Bucarest
- SAA – Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica, Iași
- SCIA.AP – Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei. Seria Artă Plastică
- SCIV(A) – Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie), București
- SCN – Studii și Cercetări de Numismatică, București
- SHA – *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Teubner, Leipzig, 1965
- Simpozion Chișinău 2003 – *Simpozion de numismatică dedicat Centenarului Societății Numismatice Române (1903–2003)*, Chișinău, 26–28 noiembrie 2003, București, 2005.
- SMIM – Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie. Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga”, București
- SMMIM – Studii și Materiale de Muzeografie și Istorie Militară, București
- SNGCop 2 – *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum. The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals, Danish Royal National Museum*, Copenhaga, 1942–1969 (serie reeditată); II, *Thrace and Macedonia*, West Milford, 1982.
- SP – Studii de Preistorie, București
- StCl – Studii Clasice, București
- StratumPlus – Stratum Plus, Școala Superioară de Antropologie, Chișinău, St Petersburg, București
- Suceava – Suceava. Anuarul Muzeului Național al Bucovinei, Suceava
- SympThrac – Symposia Thracologica, București
- Syria – Syria. Archéologie, art et histoire. Institut Français du Proche-Orient
- TdE – Trabajos de Egiptología. Papers on Ancient Egypt, Universidad de La Laguna, Tenerife, Spania

Th-D – Thraco-Dacica, București

Tyragetia – Tyragetia. Anuarul Muzeului Național de Istorie a Moldovei, Chișinău

VAH – Varia Archaeologica Hungarica V. Redigit Csanád Bálint. Publicationes Instituti Archaeologici Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest

Valachica – Valachica. Studii și cercetări de istorie și istoria culturii, Complexul Muzeal Național „Curtea Domnească”, Târgoviște

ZPE – Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik, Bonn

ZRVI – Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta. The Institute for Byzantine Studies. Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrad