

[...]. And now while peace is extended over virtually the whole border area, so also is the readiness for war. For the king knows that they who best prosper are they who are best prepared for war. The river bank bears its burden of forts, the forts their burden of soldiers, the soldiers their weapons, the weapons their splendour and protection...

**Themistius, Oration 10, Ἐπὶ τῆς εἰρήνης Οὐάλεντι/
On the Peace, 210/138** (Constantinople, Jan./Feb. AD 370).

REDISCOVERING ROMAN CIUS (GÂRLICIU, CONSTANȚA COUNTY, ROMANIA). FROM EMPEROR VALENS TO GRIGORE TOCILESCU, THEODOR MOMMSEN AND BEYOND

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Abstract: Our paper aims at bringing more facts to light over one of the Lower Danube forts – i.e. *Cius* (Gârliciu), by using all available data, including cartographic information, archive mentions by Pamfil Polonic, other epigraphic and numismatic elements, or aero-photogrammetric high-resolution imagery. In early 3rd century AD it was mentioned in *Itinerarium Antonini Augusti* 224.5, at a distance of 10000 steps from *Carsium* (Hârșova) and other 14000 steps from *Beroe* (Piatra Frecăței). Both forts identified at *Cius* are situated on Hissarlîk Hill, at the end of a 1.5 km long narrow peninsula mentioned by Themistius in the 4th century AD, almost surrounded by water and wetland. In ancient times, *Cius* must have had direct contact to the river and very likely had its own port. Nobody knows anything on the earlier 2nd-3rd century *castellum* and if it stood on the same plateau or if it exploited some other vantage point in the area. On the contrary, Late Roman *Cius* (120 x 120 m) was built, as most of the fortifications along the Lower Danube frontier, in the last decades of the 3rd — early decades of the 4th century. Equipped with U-shaped towers and possibly with a splayed fan-shaped or rectangular (?) corner-tower projecting outward, the larger fortification presents typical Tetrarchic / Constantinian characteristics, revealed by interpreting recent aerial photos. A second, smaller fort (85 x 60 m) has been identified at the end of the peninsula towards the Hasarlîc Lake. With its *Bauinschrift* dated AD 369 found somewhere in the middle of its northern side, the latter must be the one explicitly mentioned by Themistius in his *On the Peace* – 10th Oration, as being built on a personal initiative of Emperor Valens, during his Gothic war against Athanaric.

Keywords: *Lower Danube Limes, Roman castellum, Scythia, Themistius, Gothic war of Valens* (AD 367-369)

Even today very little is known of *Cius*¹. The toponym *Cius*/*Kíos* appears to have a pre-Roman origin, stemming from the Thracian lexical background, and this hypothesis is supported by archaeological traces in the area². The stronghold is situated at the south-western end of a plateau, in a position that dominates the entire area, at a distance of circa 4.5 km south from the village of Gârliciu (Fig. 1).

Immediately next to the citadel there is a lake — *Hazarlık* Ghiol in which one of the Dobrudjan rivers, Topologul (or Eni Serai, according to Pamfil Polonic's notes), discharges its waters. The entire floodplain of the Danube could be easily supervised from the plateau. This unique location was able to provide an excellent view towards the regional strategic centre at *Carsium* to the south, and to the north towards the



Fig. 1. Aerial photo of *Cius* (National LIMES Programme – NMRH/National Museum of Romanian History, Dan Costea).

¹ This paper represents the extended version of a popularization article written by the present author: Ioan Carol Oprea, *Cetatea romană de la Cius (Gârliciu, jud. Constanța). De la Valens la Theodor Mommsen*, LIMES (publication of the National LIMES Commission), no 6, 2019, 4-9 (<https://limesromania.com/ro/articole/publicatii>). My undertaking sits within the framework of the National 'Limes' Programme of the Ministry of Culture. The programme aims at cataloguing and at archaeological research of the frontier of the Roman Empire on the territory of Romania, as well as to the inscription of the limes in Romania on the List of Historic Monuments and on UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List / Nomination of the Danube Limes as a UNESCO WHS – Eastern Sector. During this endeavour, I have benefitted from the unconditional support of the specialists of the National Museum of Romanian History in Bucharest, official partner in the abovementioned programme. For this reason, I would like to thank especially Ovidiu Țentea and Alexandru Rațiu (NMRH); for the recently acquired high-resolution aerial photographic information and its processing, I owe gratitude to Daniel Costea and Vlad Călina. Not lastly, I would like to thank Michał Duch (Institute of European Culture, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) for the valuable bibliographic information provided for this paper.

² BĂLTĂC 2011, 90 and n. 1130; BĂRBULESCU 2001, 98 and n. 692 (with Getic pottery observed right on the citadel promontory and several tumuli identified on the territory of Gârliciu commune).

downstream *castellum* raised at Dăeni (Fig. 2). It is also very likely for the fortress to have had a port with a double role, both military and commercial. However, today the landscape is greatly altered: the Danube, which in the course of time deposited a large amount of silt, now flows at a distance of 4.5 – 5 km eastwards.

The Turkish toponym – glorious due to its resemblance with the one for Ilion – is *Hissarlık*, meaning 'place of the citadel(s)'. Pamfil Polonic used *Hazarlık*, which would translated to 'habitation' or even 'place of peace' in combination with the suffix; he further noted 'gallows place' (*loc de spânzurătoare*, Rom.) in the manuscript preserved in the Romanian Academy Library – Rare Books and Manuscripts Department³. Surprisingly, the drawing, initially in pencil

³ See 'Manuscrise Pamfil Polonic', an exceptional archive kept in the Romanian Academy Library, Manuscripts and Rare Books Department: Pamfil Polonic Archive, I Mss VIII, B. Cercetările din Dobrogea începând de la Ezerul Babadag pe marginea lacului Razelm spre nord până la Dunăre apoi malul

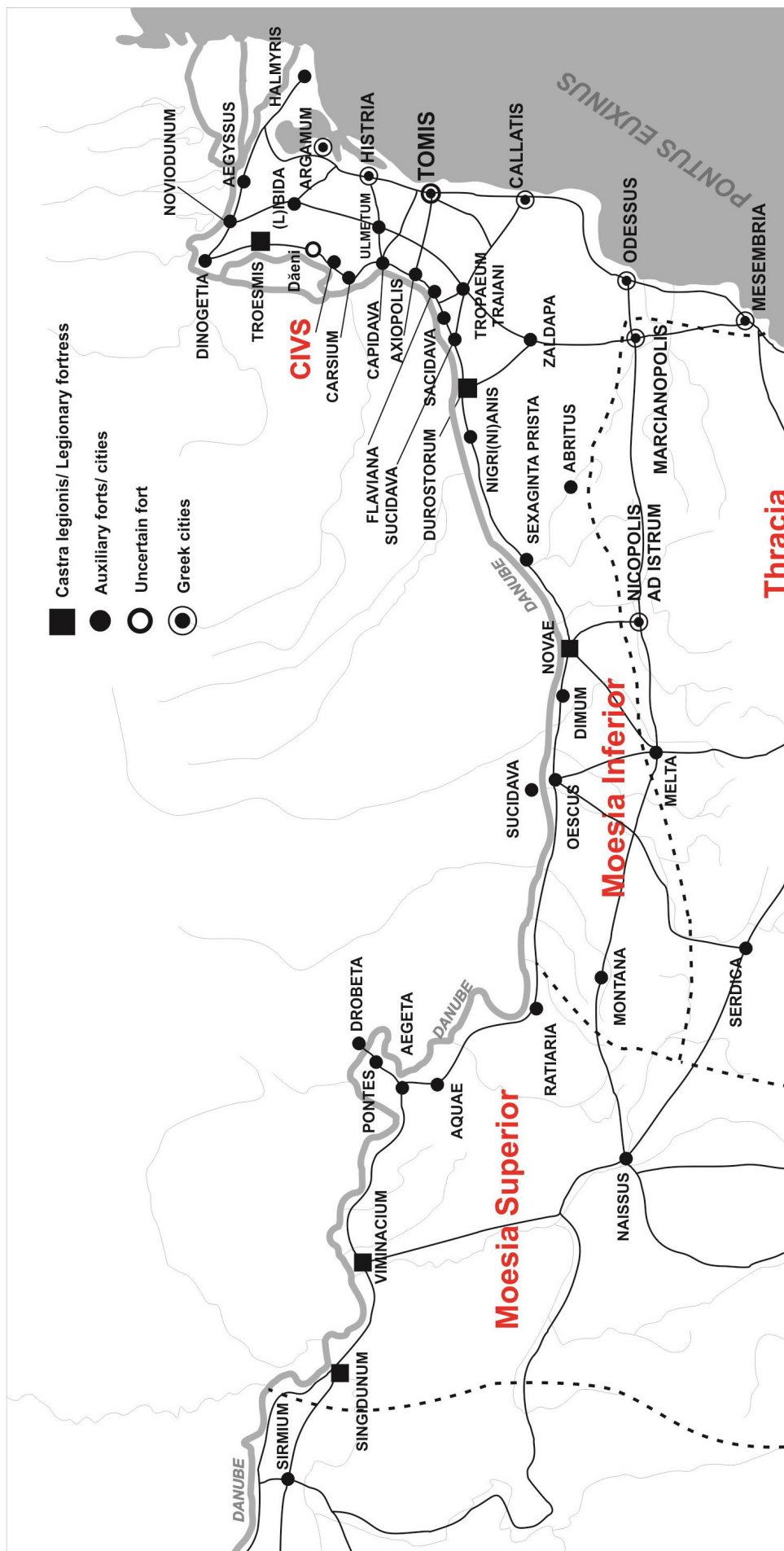


Fig. 2. Map of the Lower Danube provinces of Moesia Superior and Moesia Inferior (1st-3rd centuries AD).

and finished in ink (perhaps in the last decade of the 19th century, after the author was hired by the National Museum of Antiquities in 1892), is accompanied by the erroneous mention 'Rom. Fort at Hazarlâc (BEROE)'. In fact, the stronghold at *Beroe* (Piatra Frecăței) sat on a 30 m high cliff at circa 20 km downstream, where the Danube met one of its arms, locally known as *Băroi*. It is difficult to explain Pamfil Polonic's inadequacy in correctly identifying the ancient name of the fortress at Gârliciu; in any case, it perpetuated an older confusion, this time owed to Grigore Tocilescu, made when the latter rediscovered and republished the famous *Bauinschrift* of Valens (CIL III, 6159 = 7494) in 1882⁴. (Fig. 3 drawing by P. Polonic)

In a 1935 issue of the journal *Natura* (*Revistă pentru răspândirea științei*), the same Pamfil Polonic wrote the following: 'At 6 km south from the village of Gârliciu, at the site called Hazarlâc, one can see the widespread ruins of a *great Roman stone stronghold*. Inside the large fortress (120 x 120 m) there is a smaller one (85 x 60 m). One can see everywhere traces of walls – many of them were destroyed by an entrepreneur who used them to cobble the road. It is said that here was the ancient city of *Cius*; I have found a brick

drept al Dunărei până Ostrov (lângă Siliștră) [Researches from Dobrogea starting from Ezerul Babadag, on the Razlem lake shore, to the north up to the Danube then on the Danube right bank to Ostrov (near Siliștră)], 60 pages, 58-60, respectively; for the graphical part see, Desene (drawings), I, varia (149/17).

⁴ TOCILESCU 1882, 48: "... und folglich müssen wir bei Hassarlîk, in den grossen dort sichtbaren Ruinen das alte Beroe oder Biroe der Itinerarien (vgl. C. I. L. p. 999) suchen, aber nicht bei Dăieni (sic!), wo keine Spur römischer Ruinen zu sehen ist."

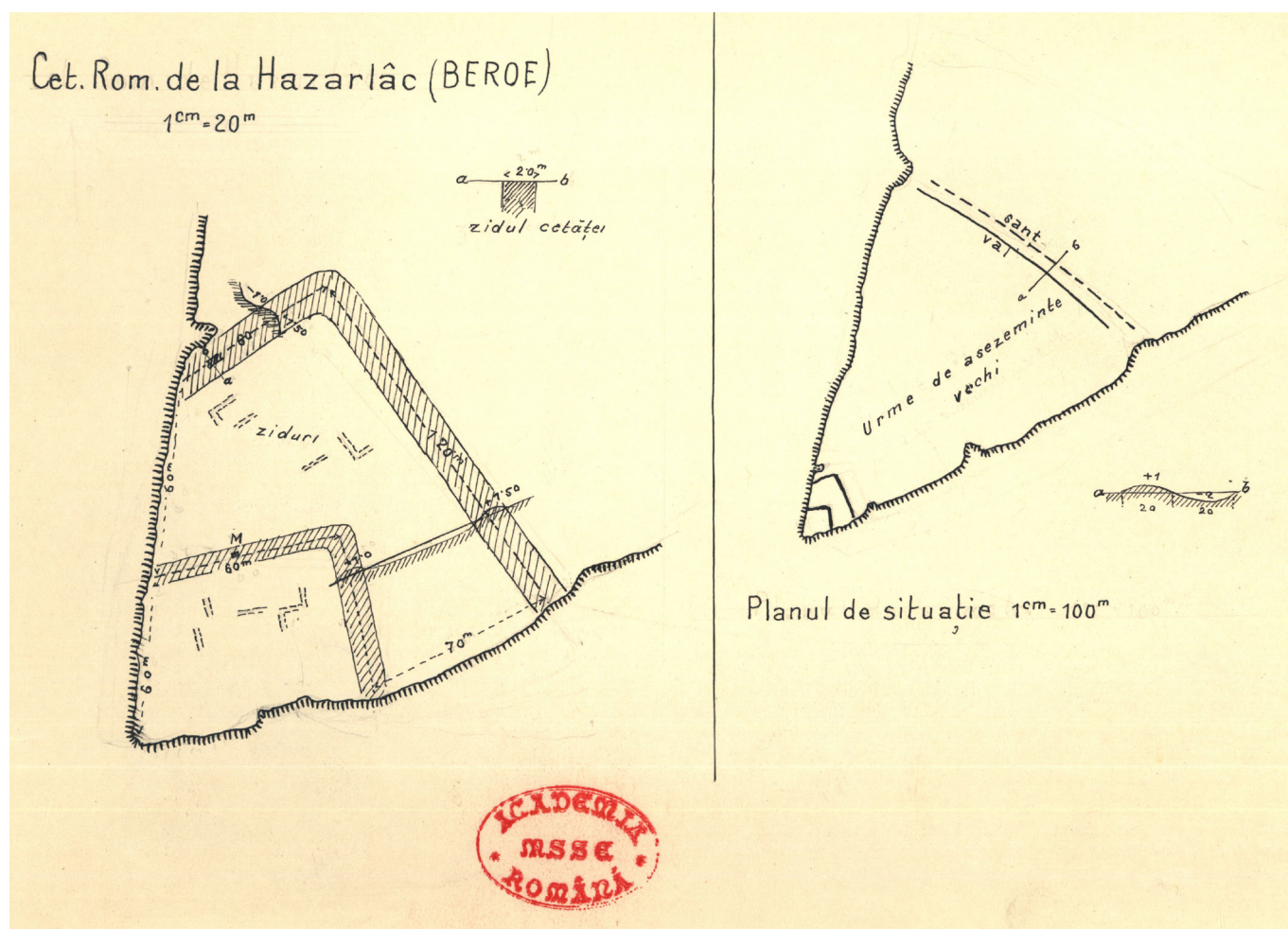


Fig. 3. Roman *Cius*. Drawing by Pamfil Polonic, Mss. Romanian Academy – Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books, *varia*, envelope I, no 149/17.

stamped (in reverse) with *Rumori*⁵.

What did the topographer Pamfil Polonic note on his visit at the site, when he sketched out the first situation plan of the citadel? He observed that the smaller fortress had a north-south orientation, the western and southern perimetral walls making additional use of the advantage of the steep margins of the plateau. Of the large fortress – located at 60-70 m away from the interior one – he only saw the northern and eastern walls, on a length of 60 and 120 m, until the fracture of the terrain towards the lake. Later, relying on the undoubtedly essential data provided by Polonic, other researchers of the frontier (namely Mihail Zahariade and Nicolae Gudea) would take over *tale quale* the graphical information of their industrious precursor, without subjecting it to a necessary critique⁶. Therefore, their papers perpetuate the confusion rising from Pamfil

⁵ POLONIC 1935, 22: "La 6 km spre sud de satul Gârlici la locul numit Hazarlâc se văd ruinele întinse a unei cetăți mari romane de piatră. În interiorul cetății mari (120 x 120 m) se găsește o cetate mai mică (85 x 60 m). Pretutindeni se văd urme de ziduri, - multe dintre ele au fost distruse de un antreprenor întrebuițându-le pentru pietruirea șoselei. Aci se zice că a fost orașul antic *Cius*, am găsit o cărămidă cu ștampila (inversă) *Rumori*" [Six km southward of the Gârlici, at the spot called Hazarlâc, one can see the vast ruins of a large Roman fort in stone. Within the large fort (120 x 120 m) there is a smaller one (80 x 60 m). All over the place, prints of walls are visible, - some of them were dedamaged by an entrepreneur who used them as stone material for the road. It is said that this was the ancient town of *Cius*, I found a stamped brick (reversed stamp) *Rumori*].

⁶ ZAHARIADE/GUDEA 1997, 79-80, nos 43-44 (*Cius* and *Beroe* respectively), Fig. 58; GUDEA 2005, 451, nos. 43-44.

Polonic's hurried note, attributing the plan of *Cius* to the fortress at *Beroe*⁷.

However, recent measurements made with the help of aero-photogrammetry are now available. They allowed a first rigorous evaluation of the monument, over a century later after the moment of its initial recording. The photographs acquired for the National Limes Programme offered the occasion of observing parts of buildings and eventually fortification elements that may have long since gone, i.e. 'negatives' of dismantled walls. This assemblage of indirect evidence can equally mark out the building plan, and therefore our reconstruction proposal paid attention to modern ditches following the facing of ancient walls. Several recently investigated Lower Danube sites along the right bank in Tulcea County, such as *Noviodunum* (Isaccea), *Luncavița* and *Salsovia* (Mahmudia)⁸ obey the above-mentioned scenario. Two of the latter (Isaccea and Mahmudia) additionally conserve precious WWI entrenchment details.

Of the small fortress, which is also the more recent, the northern and eastern sides are preserved on a length of circa 70 and 50 m respectively, somewhat noticeably lesser than what was noted by Pamfil Polonic. Regarding the larger fortress, on the new aerial photographs the northern

⁷ However, two other monograph studies, clearly signalling this erroneous attribution, should be mentioned: BĂJENARU 2010, 128; TOPBATOB 2002, 116-118, Fig. 9-10. The latter has correctly labelled the mentioned illustration, with no further critique.

⁸ See in this respect, ȚENȚEA 2015; ȚENȚEA 2018.

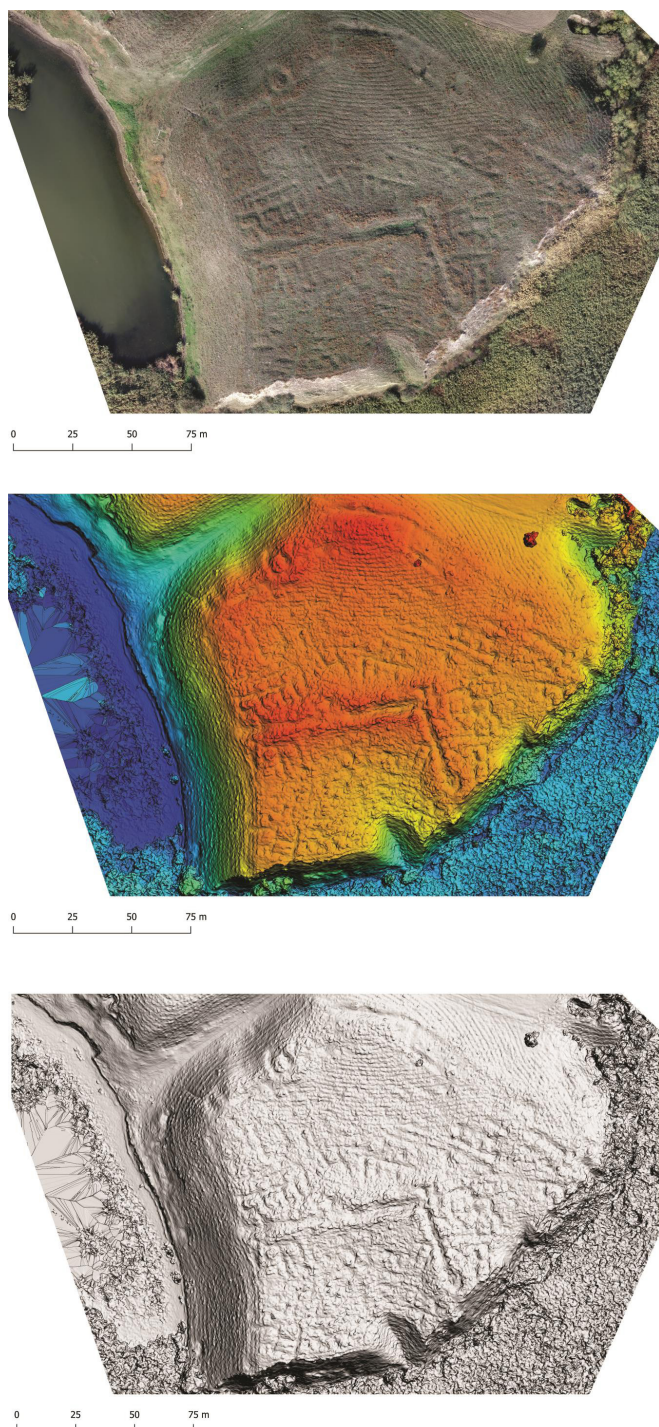


Fig. 4. Aerial photos of *Cius* (orthophoto/ elevation/ hillshade). National LIMES Programme – NMRH, Vlad Călina.

side can still be followed on a section of circa 75 m and the eastern one on only 110 m (Fig. 4-6). Without casting any doubt on the reliability of the topographical work carried out more than a century ago, I will note that a significant part of the spur had degraded in the course of time. As such, only 1.65 ha of the large fortress are preserved today; as for the smaller one, built in the time of Valens, its remaining surface covers 0.40 ha. We do not know the exact date and place of the first fortification at *Cius* – a *castellum* built for an auxiliary troop, but it is possible to have been raised during the Flavian dynasty or more likely at the beginning of the 2nd century AD, when Trajan embarked on the war

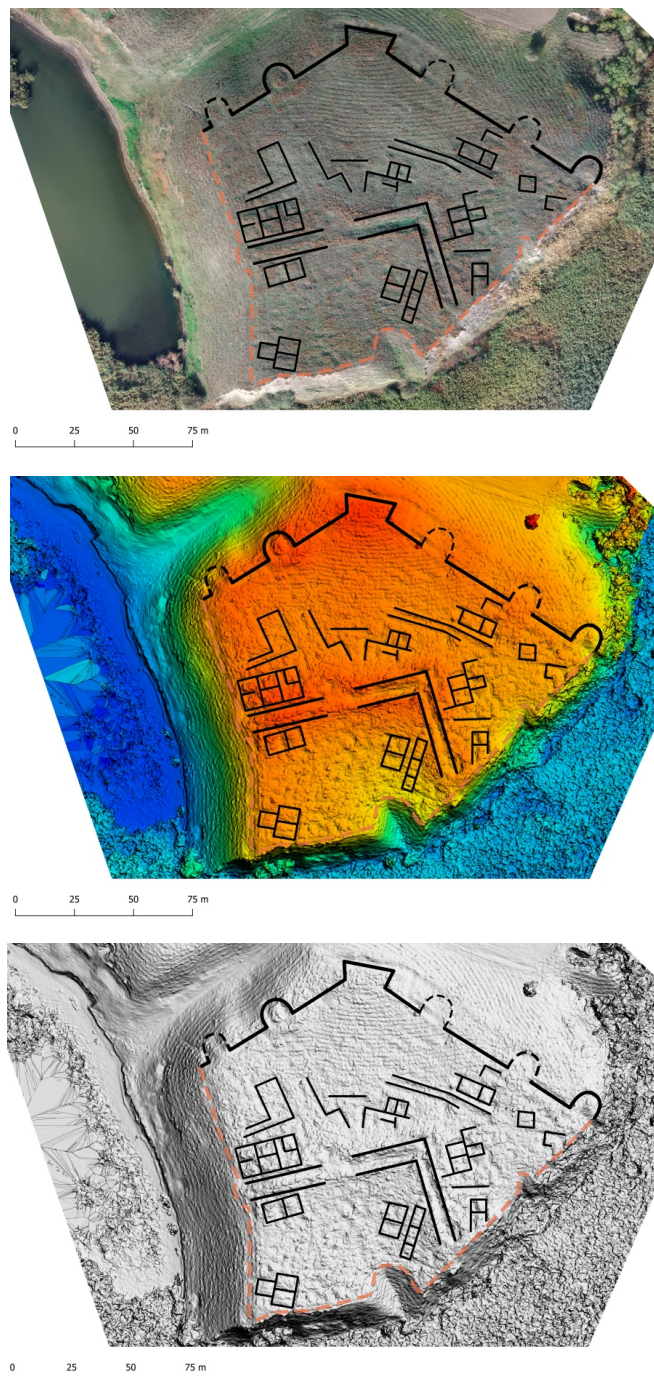


Fig. 5. Aerial photos of *Cius* (orthophoto/ elevation/ hillshade) with outlines of the Roman fortifications. Hypothetical reconstruction of the curtain walls and inner buildings (National LIMES Programme – NMRH, Vlad Călina).

against Decebalus. Nobody knows if it stood on the same plateau or if it exploited one other vantage point in the area. Nevertheless, several inscriptions dating back to the 2nd – 3rd centuries AD, the largest part funerary ones, have been found on this site, in the Turkish cemetery at Gârliciu or were taken from the yards of the locals (ISM V, nos 115-125).

Cius appears in the *Itinerarium Antonini Augusti* 224.5 at the beginning of the 3rd century AD, located at a distance of 10000 steps from *Carsium* and other 14000 steps from *Beroe*. A milestone from Hârşova (*Carsium*) erected during the reign of Septimius Severus, when C. Ovinus Tertullus was *legatus Augusti pro praetore Moesiae Inferioris* (between 198 and 201

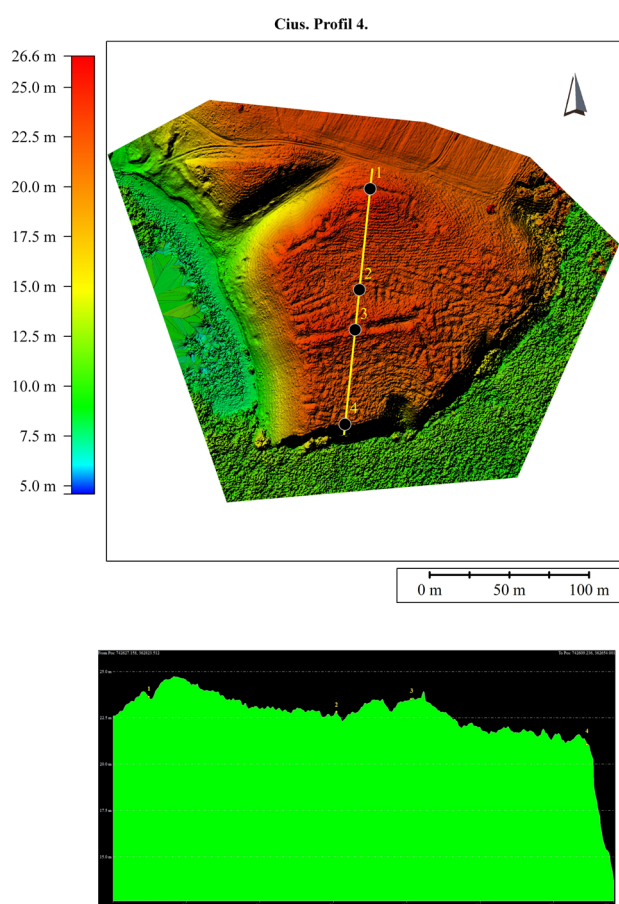


Fig. 6. Altimetric profile North-South (National LIMES Programme – NMRH, Vlad Călina).

AD)⁹, marks precisely the distance of 10000 steps (*milia passuum X*) mentioned in the *Itinerarium Antonini Augusti*. Even if the stone slab was found in the Turkish cemetery at Hârşova, the probability of it being brought all the way from *Cius* can rightfully be taken into account¹⁰. In any case, during the time of the aforementioned governor the *via militaris* was reconditioned and milestones attesting this operation are known upstream on the Danube, at *Axiopolis*, *Seimeni*, *Topalu* and, of course, at *Carsium*¹¹ (Fig. 7).

The troop associated with this unidentified fortification is one initially recruited from Lusitanians – *Cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica*. It is mentioned at the site until the 3rd century AD, when it would be moved upstream, at *Candidiana – Nigrinianis* (Malāk Preslavec)¹². Regarding the population of the stronghold and of its territory, whose

⁹ For C. Ovinus Tertullus, governor of Lower Moesia, see STEIN 1940, 84-66; FITZ 1966, 42, 49; PIR2 O 191; THOMASSON 1984, col. 139, no 107; THOMASSON 2009, 53-54, no 20:107.

¹⁰ ISM V, no 96. See also the discussion to that effect by Emilia Doruțiu-Boilă, ISM V, 124.

¹¹ CIL III, 7602 = ISM IV, 216 (*Axiopolis*); ISM V, 2 (Seimenii Mari); BĂRBULESCU-MUNTEANU/RĂDULESCU 1980, 140-144, no 1, inv. MINAC 29701 (Topalu); CIL III, 7603 = ISM V, no 95 (*Carsium*).

¹² MATEI-POPESCU 2010, 221-222, 242, 243. An alternative interpretation proposed the station of the troop in the immediate periphery of *Tomis* (at Lazu) on the basis of the inscription set up by a prefect of the cohort, of whose name only the patronymic and cognomen are still visible on the stone: C. f. *Torquatus*, ISM II, no 80 = AE 1977, 747. This hypothesis (DORUȚIU-BOILĂ 1977, 177-180) did not have a real echo and it was not followed by other discoveries that could confirm it. For the station of the cohort *I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica* at *Cius*, see also ZAHARIADE/GUDEA 1997, 79.

southern limit towards the fortress at *Carsium* could well be the feeble course of Topolog river, we know several epigraphs that mention veterans¹³, owners of plots of land received at the end of a military service 'of 25 years and even more' (*agri viritim adsignati*). We also know a *villicus*¹⁴ and, from a Greek inscription, a patron (πάτρων – intendant of a lot worked with *coloni*) at Saraiu¹⁵, as well as a *magister* of a *vicus* (ISM V, no 115) of this *territorium* of undisputable agricultural value¹⁶. The rural territory of the two representative centres – *Cius* and *Beroe* – was estimated at around

600 sq. km, bordered to the south by the valley of Topolog and to the north by the course of Roștilor valley¹⁷. The Greek presence in the territory of *Carsium* since the 2nd century AD at Dulgheru¹⁸, and, in the neighbouring territory, at *Cius* and Saraiu, could indicate the flourishing of several Greek communities dedicated to agriculture or commerce after the middle of the 2nd century AD¹⁹ (Fig. 8) (of course, provided that these stones were not brought from further away).

Veterans from several troops, such as *legio V Macedonica* (C. Iulius Valens, ISM V, no 115) or *Cohors I Lusitanorum Cyrenaica* (the ex-infantryman Marcus Ulpus Domitius Anthius, ISM V, no 119), settled down at *Cius* or in its surroundings. Another example is G. Valerius Herculanus, in his turn a former clerk (*stator*) in the office of the prefect of *ala II Aravacorum* from *Carsium* (ISM V, no 117).

Late Roman *Cius* was actually built, as most of the fortifications along the Lower Danube frontier, in the last decades of the 3rd – early decades of the 4th century. Equipped with U-shaped towers and an unclear splayed fan-shaped or rectangular (?) corner-tower projecting outward, the larger fortification presents typical Tetrarchic/Constantinian characteristics²⁰. One should however add

¹³ ISM V, no 115: C. Iulius Valens, veteran of *leg. V Macedonica* and *magister vici Verg[ob]rittiani*; ISM V, no 117: G. Valerius Herculanus, ex-*stator* of the prefect of *ala II Aravacorum*; ISM V, no 118: M. Ulpus Domitius Anthius, former *pedes* in the cohort *Lusitanorum*; ISM V, no 121: Iulius Valens, veteran of the *ala*, former *singularis*. See also MATEI-POPESCU 2010, 190, 222.

¹⁴ ISM V, no 116. BĂRBULESCU 2001, 99, n. 699 and 181, considered that this *vil(l)icus* pointed to the existence of a near-by *villa rustica*, unless he was a person (slave) in the local customs office. Personally, I believe that the first version is more acceptable.

¹⁵ ISM V, no 120; BĂRBULESCU 2001, 100, considered that the person mentioned by the versified epitaph was rather involved in artisanal or trade activities.

¹⁶ BĂRBULESCU 2001, 99-100; BĂLTĂC 2011, 237.

¹⁷ BĂLTĂC 2011, 90.

¹⁸ ISM V, nos 128-130.

¹⁹ SUCEVEANU 1991, 81, 94.

²⁰ LANDER 1984, 255.

IMP CAES L SE
PTIMVS SEVERVS
PIVS PERTINAX
AVG ARAB ADIAB
PART MAX COSI
TRIB POT VIII
IMP
IMP CAES
ANTONVS AVG TR
POT II ET
P SEPTIMVS
TA CAES AVG RE
STITVERNT PER C
OVINIVM TERTVL
LVM LEG PR PR
M P X

Fig. 7. Milestone found at *Carsium* (ISM V, no 96).

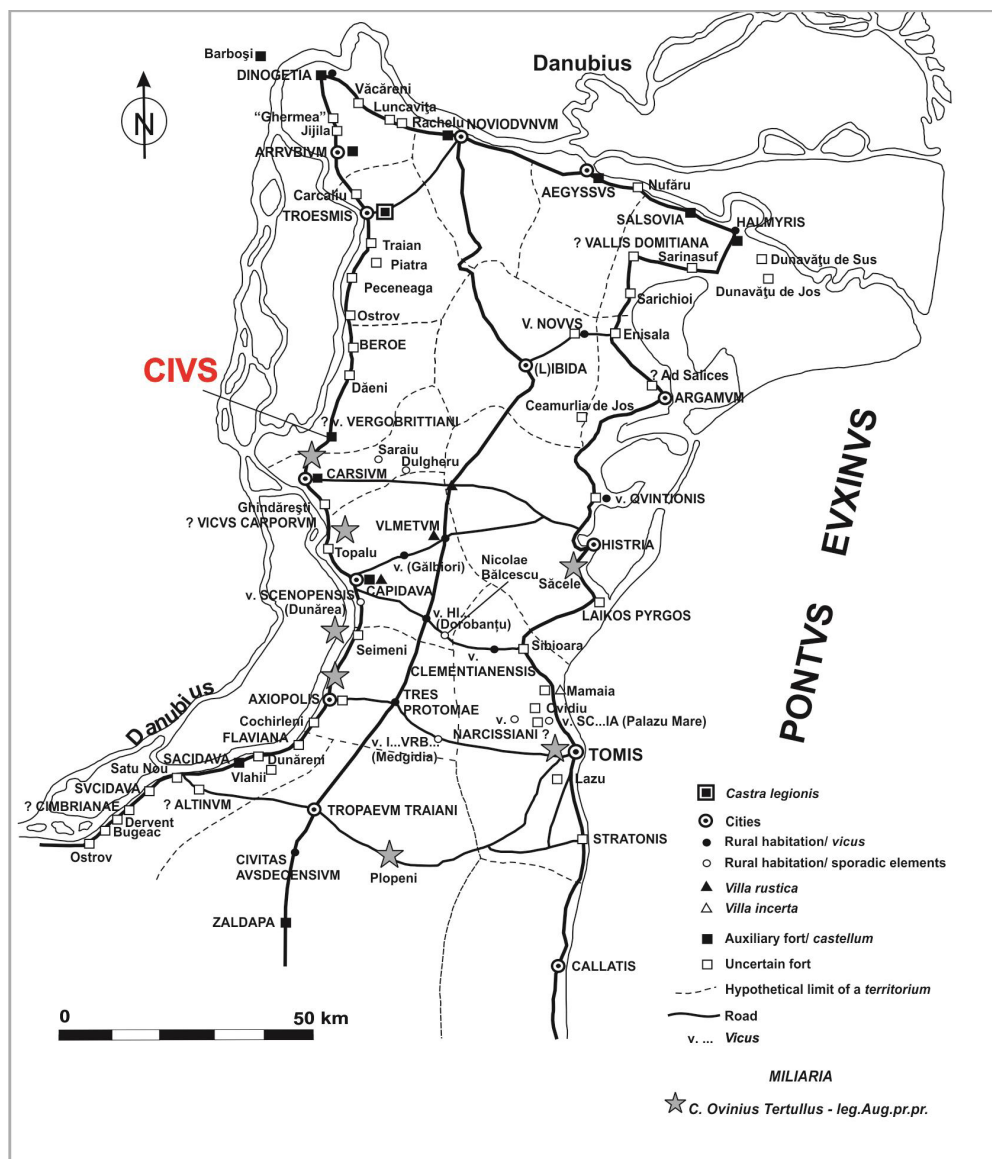


Fig. 8. Map of Roman Dobrudja (1st-3rd centuries).

that the "splayed fan" shape is mostly a Valentinianic one; as to the square towers²¹, they have been observed on forts built by Constantius II or Valentinian, as well²². At the current state of research, in absence of either test excavations or other non-invasive sensing techniques, a deeper analysis is quite impossible. Hard to say where the main gate of the larger fortification stood. In return, as we shall further see, the position for the gate of the smaller fort was conjectured in the middle of its northern side. The new fortress reveals itself as being rectangular, with similar rectangular corner-towers. Traces of a street grid and of some buildings can still be seen inside both precincts, where the Roman masonry had been intensively dismantled during the modern period; testimonies to that are not lacking²³.

The monumental marble slab set up by emperor

²¹ Or, better, rectangular towers: possible analogies in Scythia and the Lower Danube provinces at BĂJENARU 2010, pl. 7, no 21 (*Sacidava*); pl. 8, no 26 (*Argamum*); pl. 9, no 28 (*Ravna/ Timacum Minus*); pl. 10, nos 38-39 (*Madara and Odărcei*); pl. 82, no 313 (*Vidrovgrad*); pl. 383, no 103 (*Lyubenovo*).

²² LANDER 1984, 257.

²³ See ISM V, 137; TOCILESCU 1882, 48; POLONIC 1935, 22; FLORESCU 1951, 125.

Valens on the occasion of the stronghold's re-foundation in 369 AD (**CIL III**, 6159 = 7494; **IGLR**, no 233) is for sure the most important local inscription. Its notoriety increased after being exemplary interpreted by Grigore Tocilescu and Theodor Mommsen within the same year (1882). The former precisely identified the place of discovery (at Gârliciu, in the pavement of the altar in the village church), but the piece had been extracted some 25 years earlier by locals from the ruins of *Cius*²⁴. In this context I find particularly interesting the information provided by Pamfil Polonic, according to which the marble slab had been found somewhere around the middle of the northern side of the small fortress by peasants²⁵. We can readily imagine that the *Bauinschrift* will have been placed above the northern gate of the new fortress (Fig. 9).

A much more important fact owed again to Grigore Tocilescu is the clear establishment, in *Archaeologisch-epigraphische Mittheilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn*, of the name of the emperor who built the

fortress, Flavius Valens²⁶. The piece occupies a prime place among the epigraphs (swiftly) published by the professor of the University in Bucharest after he became director of the National Museum of Antiquities in 1881²⁷. The other person to publish the inscription was Theodor Mommsen, whose immense competence in the field of Latin epigraphy was concurred by a savant knowledge of Roman history and of the literary sources and by the entire interest of German science in the epos of the Roman-Gothic confrontation between Athanaric and Valens. After initially believing the inscription referred to Constantine the Great, he revised his opinion, certifying the dating of the inscription in the course of 369 AD²⁸. The date is subsequent to the anniversary of

²⁴ From IGLR, 242 we learn of another variant: the piece had been found in 1868 and reburied in place until discovered by Gr. Tocilescu.

²⁵ See annexe I, *infra*.

²⁶ TOCILESCU 1882, 47-51.

²⁷ TOCILESCU 1882, 1. In the very beginning of his article Grigore Tocilescu stated that on the occasion of two field visits to Constanța he succeeded gathering and bringing to Bucharest 150 archaeological artefacts (bas-reliefs, statues, architectural and sculptural details, sarcophagi and various other inscriptions on stone).

²⁸ MOMMSEN 1882, 524-526.

7494 (= 6159) lapidem effossum esse in ruinis castelli Romani, quae hodie appellantur 'Hassarlik', ex narratione parochi vici *Girličiu*, ubi fuit in pavimento ecclesiae, comperit TOCILESCV. Nunc est Bucuresti in museo publico.

ALENS VICTOR MAXIMVS TRIVMFATOR
 ARICO VICTIS SVPERATISQVE GOTHIS
 S TEMPORE FELICITER QVINQVENNALIORVM
 OB DEFENSIONEM REI PVBLICAE EXTRVXIT
 5 MORVM MILITVM SVORVM PRIMANORVM
 VMCVRE MARCIANI TRIB ET VRSICINI PP SEMP VESTRI
 RCORIO VIRO CLARISSIMO DVCE

*d. n. invictissimus princeps fl. u]alens victor maximus triumphator
 semper aug. in fidem recepto rege athan]arico victis superatisque Gothis
 ingruente item in victorias illa]s tempore feliciter quinquennaliorum
 [. hunc burgum] ob defensionem rei publicae extruxit
 [labore devotissi]morum militum suorum Primanorum
 [et commissor]um cure Marciani trib. et Ursicini p(rae)p(ositi) semp(er) vestri
 ordinante fl.] Stercorio viro clarissimo duce.*

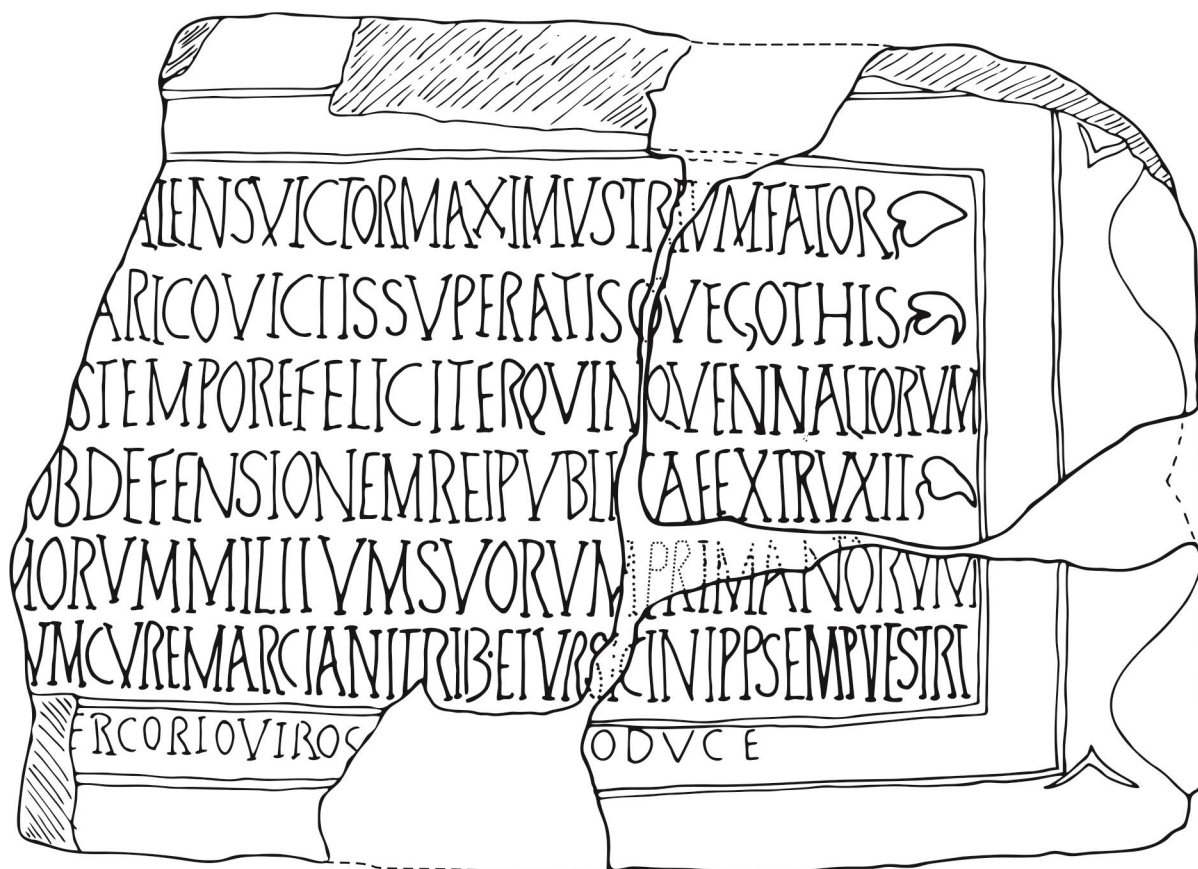


Fig. 9. *Cius* inscription CIL III, 6159 = 7494; IGLR, no 233. Drawing by Ioan C. Opris.

the five years of joint reign (*Quinquennalia*) of the brother emperors Valentinian and Valens on the 26th of February 369, and comes soon after winning the war against the

Goths in the summer of 369. It remains of secondary importance if in line 2 the missing text on the left part will have been *debellato rege Athan]arico* (Gr. Tocilescu), *in solo*

barb]arico (Dessau and Em. Popescu) or *in fidem recepto rege Athan]arico victis superatisque Gothis* (as reconstructed by Th. Mommsen)²⁹. The essential contribution of the great German scholar followed soon after Grigore Tocilescu's, in the course of the same year (1882), in a paper entitled *Die Inschrift von Hissarlik und die römische Sammherrschaft in ihrem titularen Ausdruck* published in *Hermes. Zeitschrift für classische Philologie*. Here one must surely remark the speed at which scientific information circulated at that time between the European epigraphists and the intense debates to which it gave rise³⁰. In any case, one should keep in mind that half of this marble slab is still missing, in other words the topic of discussion among scholars is likewise unexhausted.

The reconstruction of the inscription, as proposed by Emilian Popescu (**IGLR**, no 233) is the following³¹:

[D(ominus) n(oster) invictissimus princeps Fl(avius) V]alens
victor maximus triumphator
[semper Aug(ustus) in solo barb]arico victis superatisque Gothis
5 [ingruente item in victorias illa]s tempore feliciter quinquennialiorum
[hunc burgum a fundamentis] ob defensionem reipublicae extruxit
[labore.....devotissi]morum militum suorum Primanorum
[et.....comissor]um cure Marciani trib(uni) et Ursicini
p(rae)p(ositi) semp(er) vestri
[.....adiuvante Fl. St]ercorio viro c[larissim]o duce

Translation:

'Our Lord, the undefeated emperor Flavius Valens, the great victorious, triumphant, perpetual Augustus, he who defeated the Goths on Barbarian soil, having won this victories at the time he was happily celebrating the fifth year of his reign, also raised from the ground this fortress, for serving to the defence of the country, doing so by the labour of his devoted soldiers of the Primani legion working under the care of the tribune Marcianus and of the (commander's) *praepositus* Ursicinus, always at your service, and with the help of Flavius Stercorius, man of equestrian rank, duke (of the province).'

The actual moment of construction takes place under the co-ordination of Flavius Stercorius³², the governor of the province and man of equestrian rank (*dux, vir clarissimus*) and is carried out by the *milites primani* led by the *tribunus* Marcianus and the *praepositus* Ursicinus. The motivation is clear enough: *ob defensionem rei publicae*, meaning 'for serving to the defence of the country'. Apart from these *milites primani*, undoubtedly a detachment specialised in constructions and sent here precisely for the operation described above³³, at *Cius* we know of other troops mentioned by the literary sources of Late Antiquity. Thus, according to

²⁹ See the thorough discussion on the stone and the text inscribed on it, with extensive bibliography, in *IGLR*, 242-243.

³⁰ See, in the same issue of *Hermes. Zeitschrift für classische Philologie* 17 a second article on this inscription: GARTHAUSEN 1882.

³¹ In full respect to this latter major reading of Emilian Popescu, I found useful to make a first line-drawing of the inscription and, following the visible letter-outlines, further operated minor transcription corrections, as well. See, recently, OPRÎȘ/RAȚIU 2016, 95, 109 = Pl. X.2.

³² This name, *Stercorius*, suggests humble origins, as it literally means 'left on a dung heap'.

³³ BARNEA 1991, 216. See also the discussion on *milites primani* in the comments to the Bauinschrift, *IGLR*, 244.

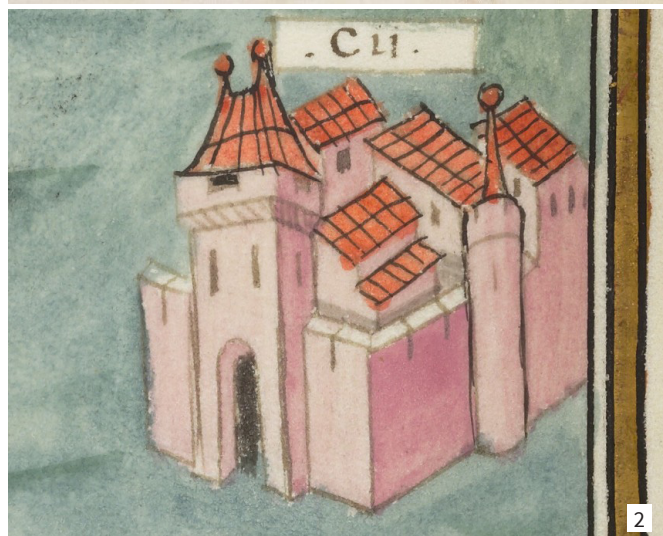
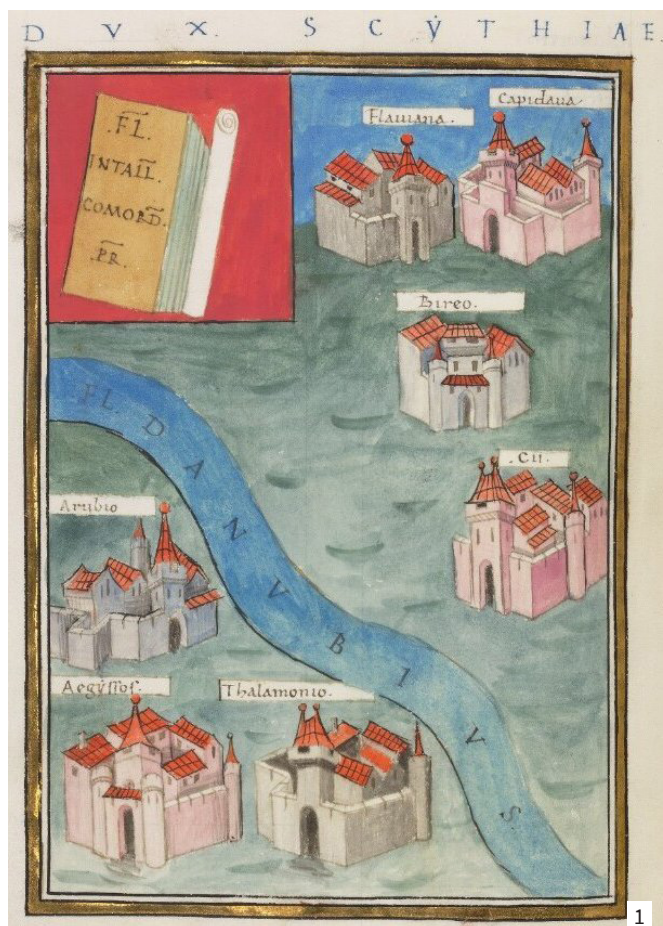


Fig. 10.1-2. *Notitia Dignitatum*. Photo: © Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford. Bodleian Library MS. Canon. Misc. 378 fol. 124 v. <https://iiif.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/iiif/viewer/3eb32a9c-616b-4c66-ae15-411881ee1625#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=253&r=0&xywh=5200%2C0%2C16594%2C7789>

the information from *Notitia Dignitatum* (NDO. XXXIX, 14), we find here a unit of cavalrymen, *Cuneus equitum stablesianorum* (garrisoned in Moesia Secunda at *Sucidava*, but whose effectives appear also downstream, at *Cius* or at *Beroe*)³⁴ (Fig. 10. 1-2).

On the occasion of this reconstruction *a fundamentis*, if not even earlier, inscribed slabs will have been brought

³⁴ BARNEA 1991, 212; ZAHARIADE/COVACEF/LUNGU 2006, 170-171; BĂJENARU 2010, 128.

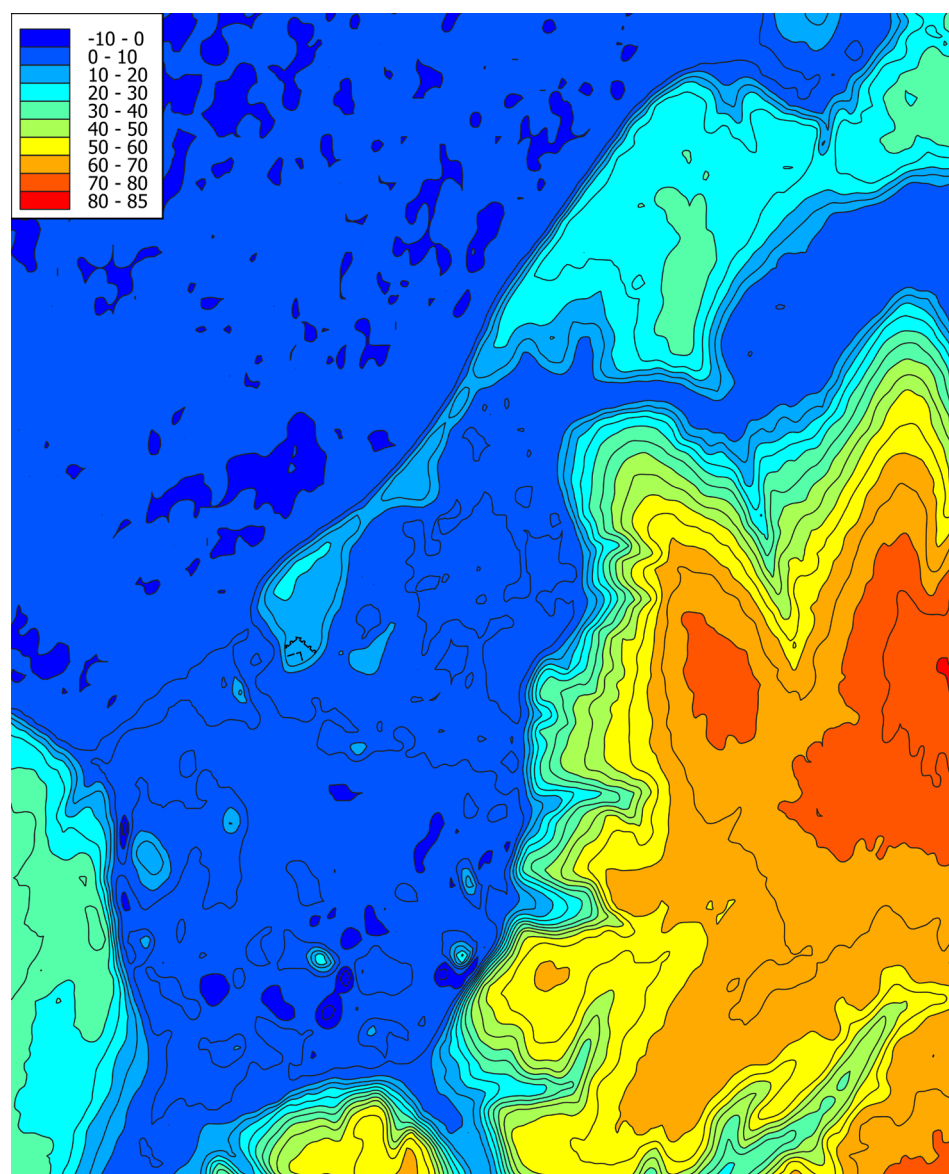


Fig. 11. Elevation details of the Hissarlik Peninsula and surroundings (National LIMES Programme – NMRH, Vlad Călina).

from far away, in an operation ordered by the emperor Valens himself, as suggested by two (if not actually three) of the inscriptions from *Cius* originating from *regio Histriae* (**ISM V**, nos 123-124, maybe also 122)³⁵. This archaeological and epigraphic situation receives a fortunate attestation thanks to the text of the ‘eloquent’ (εὐφραδής) Themistios, who, in Oration X addressed to Valens in Constantinople in January/February 370, lets us know the following: [...]. It was for this reason that he built some completely new border forts, restored others that had fallen into disrepair and furnished others with what they required – height where this was too low, thickness where this was needed, an abundant water supply where before this was sorely lacking, hoards of provisions everywhere and ports on the neighbouring

³⁵ See also MATEI-POPESCU 2010, 29, n. 85; in addition, an epigraph found near Hârșova in the 19th century (**ISM V**, no 111) and another honorary *cippus* coming from Ciobanu (**ISM V**, no 126) could possibly be interpreted in the same vein.

coastline, soldiers from the lists and garrisons whose numbers were not fraudulent, weapons and missiles and war engines – everything was calculated down to the last detail. For hitherto as a result of the neglect of the garrisons, the enemy had believed that war and peace lay entirely in their hands ... (Themistius, Or. X, 135-6/206-207).

Hereinafter, we can recognise fairly clear the local topographic situation, with the promontory on which the new fortress, measuring 85 x 60 m, would be built inside of what used to be *Cius* in the time of the Principality (or maybe at the beginning of the Tetrarchy): [...]. The king was not, however, unequal to the demands of the terrain. He discovered in that land a narrow peninsula which extended into the lagoon and terminated in a high mound from which the whole surrounding area could be observed. There he raised anew a fort, following a trace of walls which a previous emperor had laid down because of its advantages but had discontinued because of the difficulty involved. In a place where there was no stone near at hand nor easily available supplies of brick and mortar, but where everything had to be transported over however many miles on countless pack teams, who would not excuse those who had abandoned the venture as impracticable? (Themistius, Or. X,

137/208-209).

The analysis of the local topographic conditions makes us fully understand the short life of the latter fort (Fig. 11). The 1.5 km long narrow peninsula mentioned by Themistius is undeniably the one ending at Hissarlık Hill on modern maps. Almost surrounded by water and wetland, with such a challenging communication with the mainland, the fort was virtually isolated and provisions for the garrison must have arrived almost exclusively by ship if not with pack animals. In this perspective its re-building by Valens fulfils a rather propagandistic goal aiming to galvanize the army and provincial population than a long term strategic one.

A final discovery at *Cius*, perhaps contemporary, perhaps subsequent to the abovementioned episode recounted by Themistios, is related to the stamp mentioned by Pamfil Polonic – **RUMORID(US)** or **RUMORID(I)**. This probably refers to Flavius Rumoridus, *magister militum* during the time of Valentinian II (in 384 AD) and afterwards

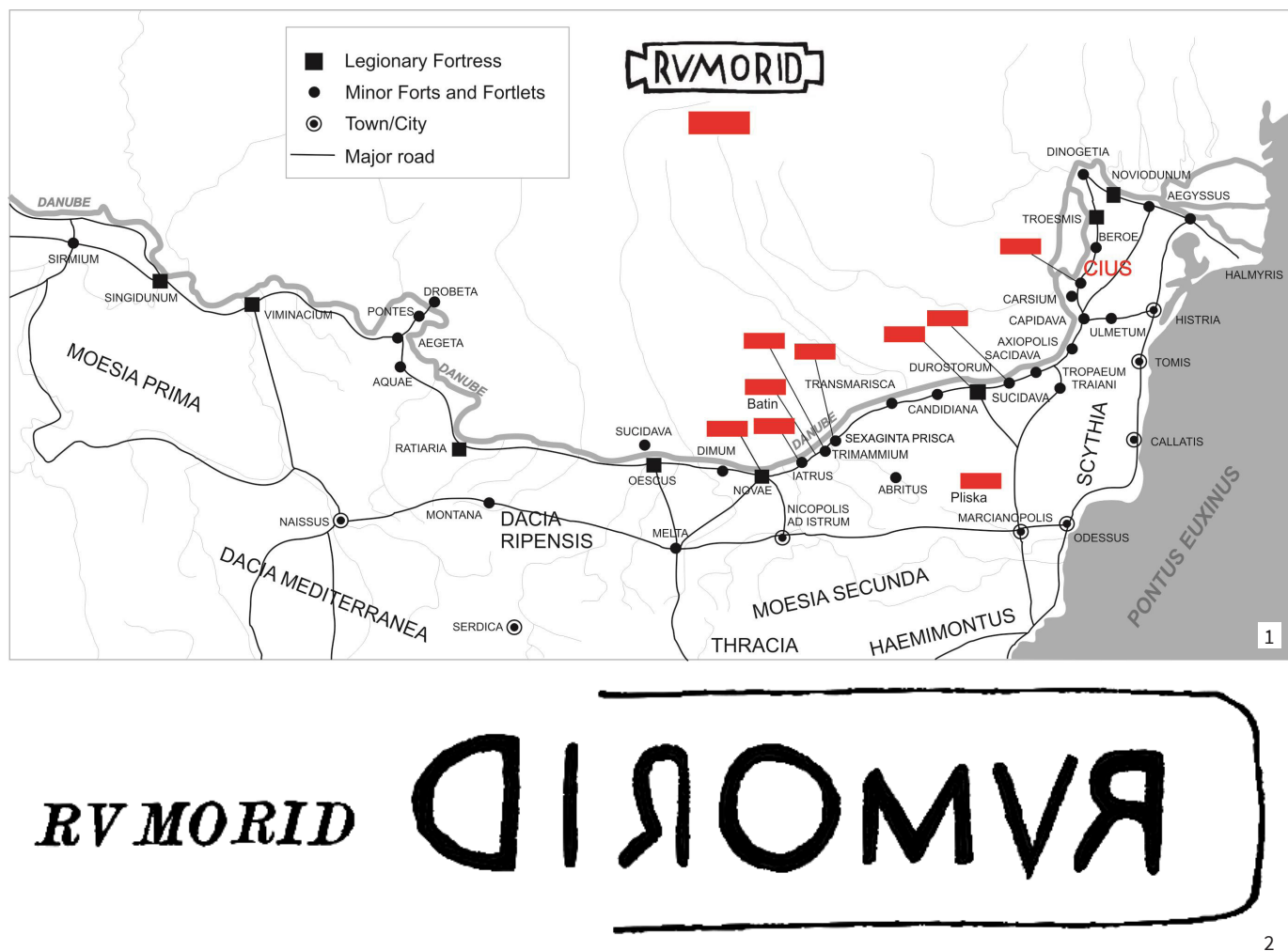


Fig. 12.1-2. Map of the RVMORID stamp distribution in Moesia Secunda and Scythia (loan C. Oприş); drawing of the RVMORID stamp found at *Cius* (ISM V, no 125).

consul in AD 403, under Theodosius II³⁶. Based on the distribution of his stamps, T. Sarnowski considered that Flavius Rumoridus had been *dux Moesiae Secundae* at the beginning of his career, during the reign of Valens, when Flavius Stercorius, was in turn, active in Scythia³⁷. The reversed stamp from *Cius* appeared in the area of the civilian habitation, where a 1 m high earthwork and a 2 m deep ditch cross the plateau from east to west, at 500 m away from the stronghold³⁸. This type of stamps – in reverse or not – are also known at *Novae*, *Iatrus*, Batin, Stălpiște/ Dikilitash (*Trimammium*), *Sexaginta Prista*, in the area of the baths from the *canabae* at *Durostorum* or even, unexpectedly, at Pliska³⁹. They appear to point to a common order received

by the commanders from Dacia Ripensis, Moesia Secunda and Scythia to re-establish in full co-ordination the Danube *limes*⁴⁰. During the last decades another point on the map of discoveries of this type has been added on the right bank of Danube, in southern Dobrudja (in 2000, from the area of the Roman-Byzantine fortress at *Sucidava*, Izvoarele, Lipnița commune), following the publication of a tile stamp bearing the abbreviated inscription **RUMORID** by the late Mihai Irimia⁴¹. New stamps also appeared during the systematic excavations at *Trimammium* (Stâlpiște), being discovered in the 2007 and 2009 seasons⁴². (Fig. 12.1-2)

The scarce numismatic evidence remains in complete agreement with the available epigraphic information and literary sources. A single monetary hoard is known near the village of Gârliciu, next to the road to Saraiu. The accidental discovery of a vessel containing around 20 bronze coins, of which eight pieces were recovered (sestertii, dupondii and asses from Antoninus Pius, Faustina I and II and Marcus Aurelius) could point to a loss/ deposition during the attack of the Costoboci in AD 170⁴³. Apart from this, there are only

³⁶ PLRE I, 786; SARNOWSKI 1985, 124.

³⁷ SARNOWSKI 1985, 124-125, Abb. 6.

³⁸ Pamfil Polonic Archive, Library of the Romanian Academy, Manuscripts and Rare Books Department, I Mss VIII, B. Cercetările din Dobrogea, 60.

³⁹ SARNOWSKI 1983, 41, Abb. 18; DUCH 2017, 102, 112, 114, Fig. 4.8-9 (*Novae*); WACHTEL 2007, 313-314, Abb. 12, Kat.No. 62-64 (*Iatrus*); STANČEV 1999, 203-205, Abb. 5.1-6 (*Batin*); TORBATOV 2012, 443-444, Fig. 7.3-5 (*Trimmammium*); ТОРБАТОВ 2012, 179-181, 197, Fig. 3, nos 5-8; Fig. 5, nos 20-23 (*Sexaginta Prista*); ISM IV, 267, no 146 and ДОНЕВКИ 2006, 226-227 (*Durostorum*); ISM V, 147, no 125 and ПАКЕВА-МОРОФОВА 1970, 39 for the reference to this type of stamp identified at Pliska. Without question, the most numerous specimens are those discovered at *Iatrus*, whence no less than 19 tile stamps of the RUMORID type have been published in the course of time, see WACHTEL 2007, 324.

⁴⁰ SARNOWSKI 1985, 125-126; see also BĂJENARU 2010, 24.

⁴¹ IRIMIA 2002-2003, no 4, 163-164, 169, 171, 173 = Fig. 2.4, 4a-b; see also ISM IV, 284-285, no 162, (*Sucidava*).

⁴² TORBATOV 2012, 444.

⁴³ CUSTUREA/TALMAȚCHI 2011, 208; <http://chre.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/hoard/16524>.

a few isolated discoveries at *Cius* (Gârliciu), dating from the period of the Tetrarchy and until the time of the emperors Honorius or Theodosius II (including also two pieces from the time of Valens)⁴⁴. Thus, none of the coins goes beyond the start of the large Hunnic attacks of the first half of the 5th century⁴⁵. For this reason – in lack of systematic archaeological research – the situation described above casts serious doubt on the continuous functioning of the fortress in the 5th – 6th centuries AD. Until then, however, the *castellum* or (maybe only) the *burgus* raised by Valens will have functioned under the administrative authority of the significant strategic centre at *Carsium*, in its immediate vicinity⁴⁶.

(English translation by Monica Gui)

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⁴⁶ ZAHARIADE 2016, 117.

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ANNEXE

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ENGLISH

58

The stronghold at Hazarlîc (gallows place)

At 6 km south from the commune of Gârlici, in the south-western corner of the plateau north from the mouth of Eni Sarai creek, at the spot called Hazarlîc, there lies a Roman stone fortress.

It consists of a smaller interior fortress and an additional exterior fortress.

The interior fortress measured on the rampart 85 x 60 m and is oriented straight to the north, its western and southern sides lean under the abrupt margins of the plateau – traces of a defensive wall can be seen on the rampart, which, however, has been largely removed by the locals. A new fort? was later raised around the smaller stronghold, of which only the northern and eastern sides were preserved. The first measured 120 m – the second 60 m and they are both at a distance of 60-70 m away from the interior fortress.

59

The surrounding wall of this additional fortress, likewise partially destroyed, displays in a place a width of 2 m, and in front of it there is a surrounding ditch 20 m wide and up to 1 m deep.

In the middle of the northern side of the smaller fortress the inscribed stone speaking of Valens and the king of the Goths, Atanarik, was found; it is now housed in the National Museum of Antiquities in Bucharest. Inside the fortress, there are very many stone building foundations, which were, however, largely removed by the owner of this land, Gherasim Oprea, inhabitant of Gârlici, and sold to a road entrepreneur by the name of Solomon. He used the material extracted from around 40 fathoms for the construction of the road along the Danube.

60

At 500 m north from the fortress, we find a 1 m tall rampart with a 2 m deep ditch to the north, which crosses the corner of the plateau on which the fortress is situated from west to east and which I believe was meant to defend in this part the small town next to the citadel whose traces are found here. Bricks with the stamp Rumorid have been found here.

ROMANIAN

58

Cetatea de la Hazarlîc (loc de spânzurătoare)

La 6 km spre sud de comuna Gârlici se găsește în colțul de sud vest a platoului la nord de gura parîului Eni Sarai la locul numit Hazarlîc o cetate romană de piatră.

Ea constă dintr-o cetate mai mică interioară și un adaus de cetate exterioară.

Cetatea interioară măsura pe val 85 x 60 m și este orientată drept spre nord, laturele ei destre (sic) vest și sud se reazămă sub malurile abrupte a platoului – pe val se văd urmele unui zid de apărare care însă în mare parte a fost scos de locuitori. În jurul cetatei mici sau făcut mai târziu un nou lagăr din care s-au păstrat numai laturele despre nord și est. Cea dintâi măsura 120 m – a două 60 m și ambele sunt cu 60 – 70 m depărtate de cetatea interioară.

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Zidul înconjurător al acestui adaus asemenea parțial distrus arată întrun loc grosimea de 2 m și înaintea lui se găsește un șanț înconjurător care are o lățime de 20 m și o adâncime până la 1 m.

În mijlocul laturei de nord a cetatei mici sau găsit piatra cu inscripție care vorbește de Valens și regele goților Atanarik care se găsește acum la Muzeul de antichități din București. Prin interiorul cetății se găsesc foarte multe temelii de construcțiuni de piatră care însă au fost scoase în cea mai mare parte de proprietarul acestui teren locuitorul Gherasi Oprea din Gârlici și vândute unui antreprenor de șosele cu numele de Solomon care a întrebuința (sic) materialul scos cam la 40 de stâneni pentru construirea șoselei de pe marginea Dunărei.

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La 500 m spre nord de cetate găsim un val de 1 m înalt cu un șanț de 2 m adânc spre nord care taie colțul platoului pe care este așezată cetatea. De la apus spre răsărit în două, și care cred că avea menirea de a apăra în această parte orașelul de lângă cetate ale cărui urme se găsesc pe aci. Pe aci s-au găsit cărămizi cu ștampila Rumorid.