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MUNICIPIUM NOVIODUNUM (IN MOESIA INFERIOR) DURING THE PRINCIPATE PERIOD: ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRESENTATION USING COMPUTER SOLUTIONS, EPIGRAPHIC AND NUMISMATIC DOCUMENTATION

Abstract: The work under consideration here offers a reconstruction of aspects of the history of the *Noviodunum* fortress during the Principate period. This reconstruction is based on a variety of historical, archaeological, epigraphic, and numismatic sources. The data provided by each of these sources was analyzed separately, from the perspective of the corresponding auxiliary disciplines (epigraphy and numismatics). These data were utilized to identify new information, confirmations, nuances, and integrations of information provided by one source through another from another category. Furthermore, it presents a computer-based method for presenting the positioning of archaeological discoveries, thereby facilitating analysis of the spatial distribution of habitation in various historical stages. In this project we have valued and highlighted the archaeological reports published over time as well as syntheses regarding the province of Moesia Inferior; the mentions in historical sources (*Ptolemaios*, *Tabula Peutingeriana*, *Itinerarium Antonini*); the inscriptions included in vol. V of the corpus “Inscriptions from Scythia Minor” but also the inscriptions published after its publication; studies and articles including isolated monetary discoveries mostly collected in the volume “Early Roman and Byzantine Coins Discovered at *Noviodunum*...” (A. Popescu, M. Iacob) or thesauruses, provincial syntheses such as the volume “Monetary Circulation in Roman Dobrogea” (A. Vertan) or thematic ones such as the work “Coining in the Province of Moesia Inferior” (M. Iacob). The analysis of the data indicates that *Noviodunum* attained a level of economic, urban, and cultural development during the Roman period that substantiates its designation as a *municipium*.

Keywords: *Noviodunum*, *Moesia Inferior*, *municipium*, *epigraphical sources*, *roman coins*, *Isaccea (Romania)*.

1. INTRODUCTION – STATE OF THE ART

Noviodunum Fortress, a pre-Roman, Roman, Romano-Byzantine and then Byzantine fortress, is located in the vicinity of Isaccea, on the right bank of the Danube, on a promontory over 20 meters high, in the place known as “Pontonul Vechi”, but also “Eski Kale”, from Turkish translation: “Cetatea veche”/“Old Fortress”.

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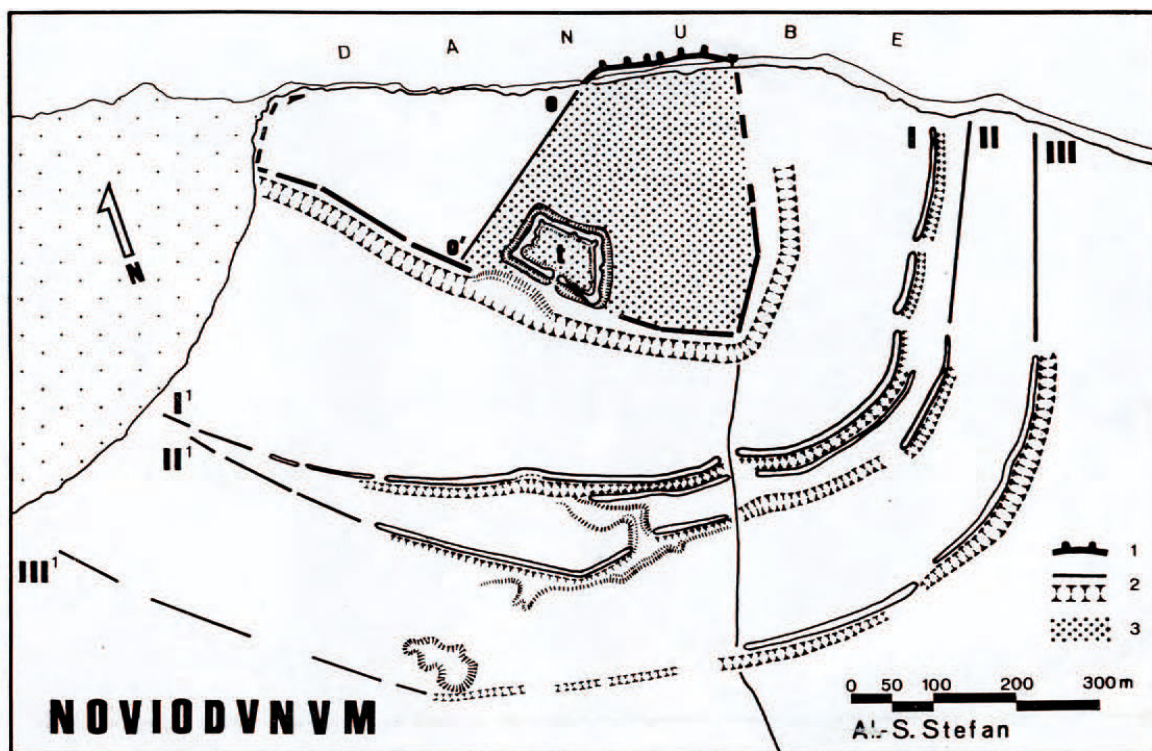


Fig. 1. *Noviodunum* – Restitution of the archaeological area realized by Al. S. Ștefan after aerial photographs (ȘTEFAN 1973, Pl. 6).

From a geographical point of view, the area in which the fortress was built lies at the intersection of the wetland area – marked by the Danube river and the lakes of Ghiolul Pietre, Rahova, Crapina and Saun – and the hilly area – the Niculițel plateau and the Saun depression, with deep valleys, filled with water in ancient times, with natural resources in the form of the rocks used in the construction, as well as forests, pastures and land suitable for agriculture, to which must be added the fish resources. The climate is characterized by high air and soil humidity and moderate temperatures, which has led to the presence of human habitation in the area since the Eneolithic period – as demonstrated by the settlements of Isaccea-Suhat and Revărsarea-Tabie; the burial necropolis of Isaccea – SNG point, the settlement of Revărsarea – Dealul Tichilești and that of Revărsarea – cotul Tichilești have been investigated from the first Iron Age, the latter also functioning in the second Iron Age; there are also Getic remains, which have been identified at Revărsarea – “Pescărie” point.¹

For the Roman period the vestiges are much more numerous and demonstrate a good knowledge and exploitation of the area’s resources, its strategic position – a ford of the Danube – and water transportation facilities, later on and its location on the imperial road that crossed Dobrogea from South to North, with the possibility of “exiting” into *barbaricum*.

The Roman remains on the banks of the Danube are part of the fortress complex (with a defensive system consisting of 3 waves and ditches, Fig. 1) – **civil settlement – necropolis**, built in the Roman era and known as *Noviodunum*. The burial mounds of the necropolis are aligned along ancient

road arteries; traces of aqueducts supplying the city with water have also been identified in the area.²

As a result of systematic archaeological investigations, a number of public and private buildings were uncovered; the access gate leading to the port facilities, the northern part of the enclosure wall with seven semicircular towers, two basilicas, the thermal baths, the tombs of the tombs and the flat tombs were investigated. These archaeological finds bear witness to the level of development of the citadel during the Roman period.

The ancient remains from Isaccea were identified and associated with the name of *Noviodunum*, mentioned in ancient sources, by E. Desjardin, one of the French archaeologists involved in the research of *Troesmis* in the mid-19th century.³

The one who was to provide a close-up of the fortress – which he considered to be a “huge fortress” – was none other than the tireless topographer Pamfil Polonic (Fig. 2) who at the end of the 19th century, at the request of Gr. Tocilescu, the director of the National Museum of Antiquities, the fortifications of Dobrogea.⁴

At the time of Polonic’s recording, the fortress, with all its components, had suffered some destruction, some due to succession, habitation from the pre-Roman period to the Middle Ages.

The fact that Isaccea was a place of encampment for Ottoman troops on expeditions to Moldavia, certain military installations led to the destruction of the archaeological layers. The camp (*tabia*) was set up in the southern area in the 16th century, during an extensive military-administrative

² BARNEA 2000, 204, (s.v. *Noviodunum*).

³ ȘTEFAN 1973, 3, note 2.

⁴ ȘTEFAN 1973, 5.

¹ BAUMANN 2010, 6 (with bibliography).

Fig. 2, 3. *Noviodunum*, schiță de situație de P. Polonic (după M.C.A., IV, 1957, p. 156) (stînga), și după un desen inedit (dreapta).

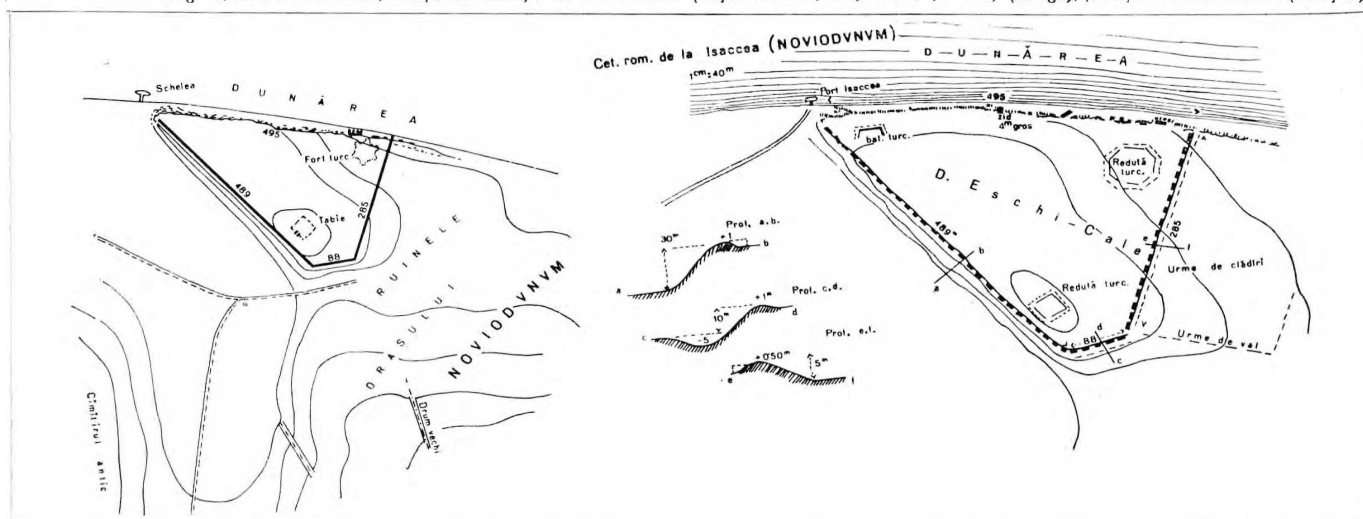


Fig. 2. Plans for *Noviodunum* realized by P. Polonic (ȘTEFAN 1973, 5, Fig. 2, 3).

program of the Ottoman Empire, which led to the massive dislocation of Byzantine archaeological layers. In the 18th century, the Ottoman authority built at *Noviodunum* a star fort and a shelter to protect the line of the Danube against the offensive of Great Russian from the time of Peter I and Catherine II. These were used for coastal gun batteries during the Russo-Turkish wars.⁵

In the modern period, between 1879–1916, a pier was built on the territory of the Byzantine fortress for barges loaded with stone quarried in the north-western part of the fortress. The stone was used for the construction of buildings, and some of the inscriptions discovered disappeared during the Bulgarian-German occupation of 1916–1918.⁶

The fortress was also affected by certain developments – trenches, pillboxes – during the First and Second World Wars; later (in 1950), grain silos were built in the eastern part of the fortress; the construction of the Russia-Bulgaria gas pipeline in 1972 affected the civil settlement, the northern part, and the earth waves in the same area (north-east);

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND DIGITAL REPRESENTATION USING INFORMATICS

The research began in 1953 with the involvement of a team from the *Dinogetia* Archaeological Site, coordinated by Prof. Gh. Ștefan, who wanted to gather more information about the archaeological sites located on the Danube. In 1955, a team from the National Museum of Antiquities in Bucharest carried out the first rescue excavation along the flooded Danube embankment at *Noviodunum*, with the aim of studying and protecting previously unexplored archaeological monuments damaged by the Danube waters. The two archaeological campaigns led to the uncovering of about 170 m of the enclosure wall and the study of six towers, two of which – close by – flanked an entrance, and to the identification of several other buildings: the therme, a basilica, a building with a basilica plan, truncated, with the apse to the north, a street, a quadrangular construction (tower?) as seen in Fig. 3 and 4; of particular importance is the discovery on the eastern side of a second enclosure, running parallel to

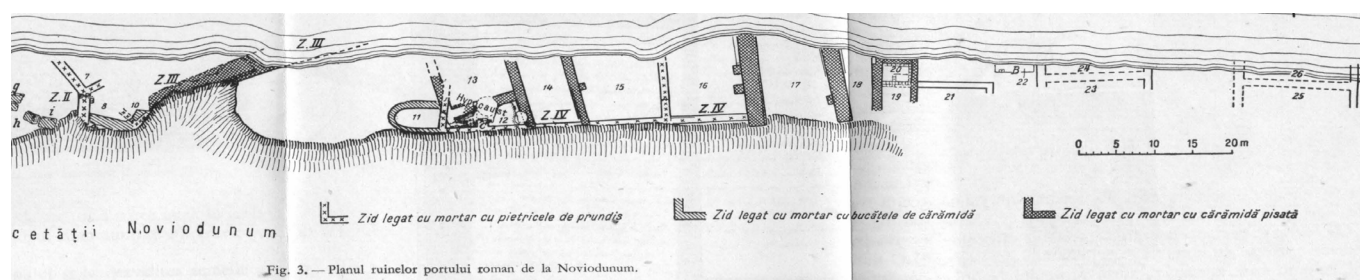


Fig. 3. Archaeological research at *Noviodunum* – 1955, cliff (after BARNEA et alii 1957, Pl. 3).

other interventions on the site were carried out in 1973 – the construction of a transmission station for the high-voltage power line.⁷

the first, about 12 m away from it, and certainly dating from another historical period.⁸

Other salvage researches took place in 1967, 1970 and 1971, coordinated by Prof. I. Barnea (Institute of Archaeology in Bucharest). They discovered Roman buildings and an enclosure with two parallel walls, more than 3 m

⁵ BAUMANN 2010, 5.

⁶ BAUMANN 2010, 9.

⁷ BAUMANN 2010, 10.

⁸ ȘTEFAN et alii 1954; BARNEA/MITREA/ANGELESCU 1957; BARNEA/MITREA/ANGELESCU 1959.

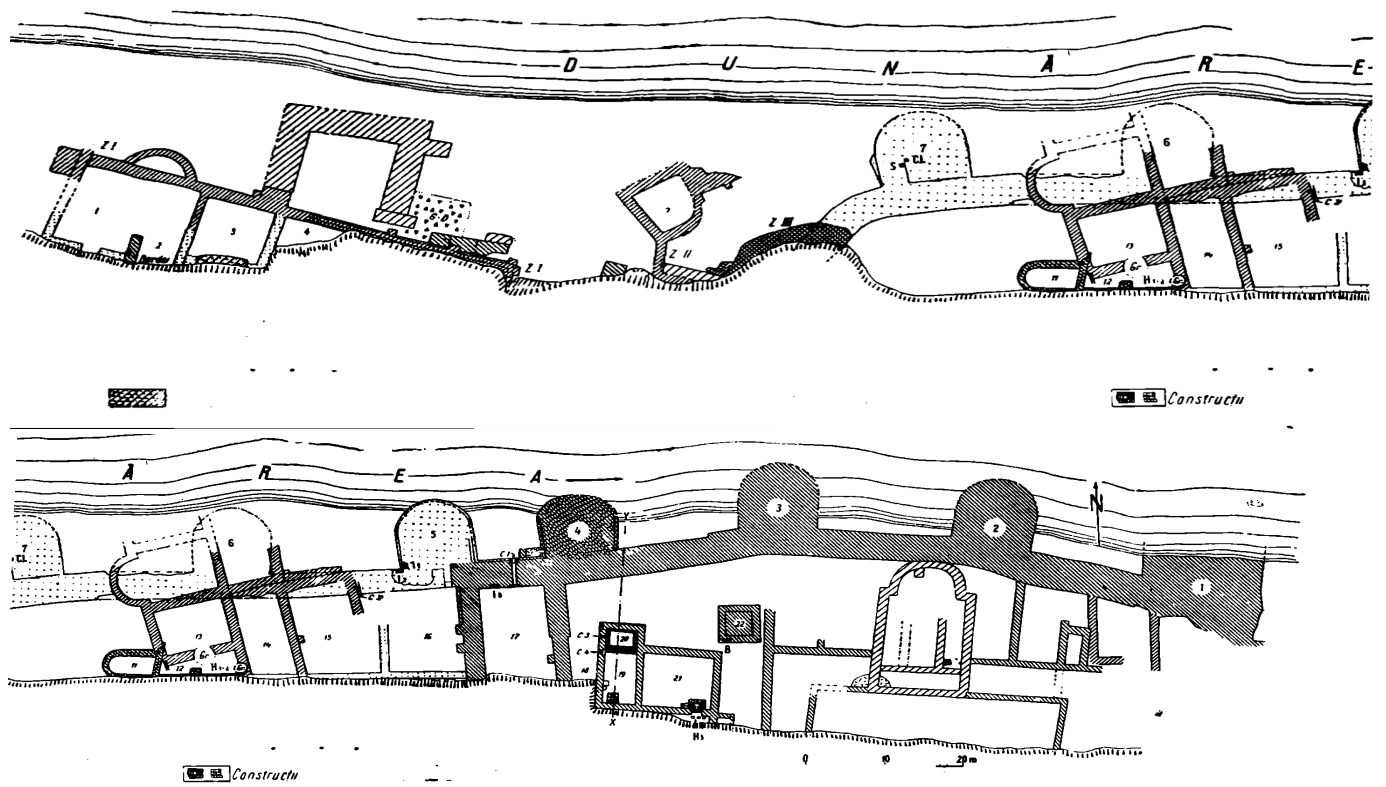


Fig. 4. Archaeological excavations at Noviodunum – the fortress north side, 1956 (after BARNEA et alii 1959, Fig. 1).

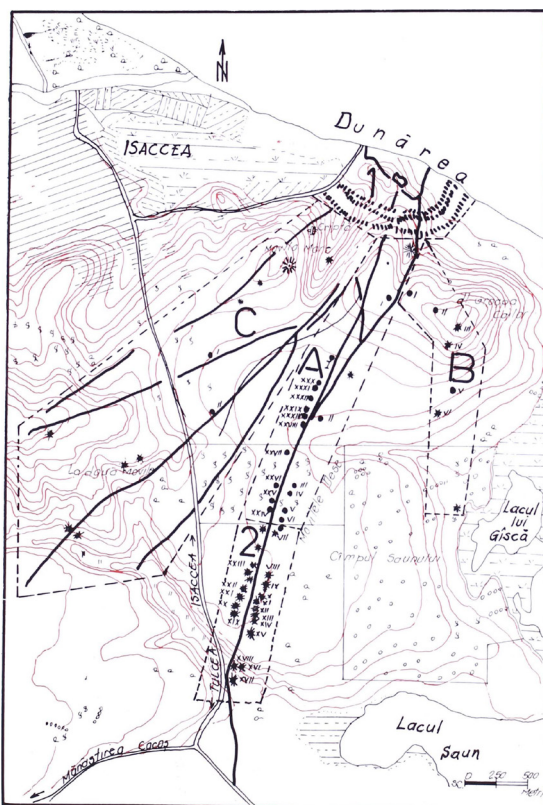


Fig. 5. Noviodunum – the relationship between the fortress – with the defense system (waves) and the necropolis (ȘTEFAN 1973, 13, Fig. 21).

thick, between which there was a pedestal made of limestone blocks and a granite stone pillar bound with mortar, a discovery associated with the Byzantine fortification practice

called *protechisma*; it was also found that, on the Danube bank, there are in fact two spa buildings, one of which was built in the 2nd–3rd centuries AD and rebuilt in the 4th century.⁹

The archaeological researches in 1973 focused on the eastern side of the fortress, when a fragment of a Byzantine wall was uncovered, considered the first Byzantine enclosure wall of the Tzimiskes – Vasile II period; the presence of artifacts from various historical periods, from the Neolithic to the medieval period, was documented; on the same occasion a hoard of Byzantine coins, 11th–13th centuries AD, was discovered.¹⁰

Other rescue surveys were carried out in the area between wave I and wave II in 1990 by Florin Topoleanu and Gh. Mănușu-Adameșteanu, an opportunity to highlight a succession of archaeological layers: late Roman pottery kilns, 11th century AD settlement level, medieval necropolis.¹¹

The research in the necropolis of the Noviodunum fortress, located on the south-western plateau, was carried out under the direction of Gavrilă Simion, director of the “Danube Delta” Museum Tulcea (today the Institute of Eco-Museum Research Tulcea), alone or in collaboration with other specialists. Six tumuli were investigated in 1958–1959,¹² 12 tumuli in 1979–1980,¹³ in addition to the tumulus investigated in the territory of the Noviodunum fortress, at Bădila point; other investigations were carried out in 1982, 1987–1990 in the „La movilele dese” area with an exhaustive

⁹ BARNEA/BARNEA 1984.

¹⁰ BARNEA/BARNEA 1984.

¹¹ Unpublished results, see BAUMANN 2010, 14.

¹² BUJOR/SIMION 1960; SIMION 1984.

¹³ SIMION 1984.

investigation of the XXX tumulus¹⁴ and 9 other mounds.¹⁵

The necropolis extends along radial alignments to the south, south-west and south-east, on either side of ancient road arteries linking the citadel to its territory (Fig. 5). The Vizier's Mound, (approx. 120 m in diameter and approx. 37 m in height) is the most impressive tomb monument in Dobrogea, and its strategic role is more important than its funerary one.¹⁶

The medieval necropolis of the fortress was partially excavated (approx. 172 tombs) by I. Vasiliu in the area of the necropolis in the area of the tomb necropolis in the point "La movilele dese".¹⁷

Systematic archaeological research began at *Noviodunum* only in 1995 and was carried out until 2009 under the direction of the Tulcea archaeologist V.H. Baumann.¹⁸ In the period 1995–2009, the civil settlement was surveyed by means of control probing, where it could be observed that the level of the Middle Byzantine settlement is superimposed by a medieval necropolis, the earthen wave and the southern ditch were sectioned, and it was found that at some point burials were carried out including in the wave; the large tower, with an area of 225 square meters, located on the south side of the fortress, dating back to the Roman-Byzantine period, but also with later stages of reconstruction, medieval dwellings *intra muros* (sec. XIII–XIV), late Roman buildings; it was emphasized that this defensive archaeological complex with an urban function had several stages of construction and reconstruction, with interventions that disturbed the previous layers; it was also unveiled the corner tower of the Roman-Byzantine fortification and the tower conventionally called A.¹⁹

Since 2009, another Tulcea archaeologist, Florin Topoleanu, has been in charge of the site, with a much larger team from several national institutions. Research continued at the Corner Tower, the investigation of the enclosure on the east side began (Fig. 6); a craftsman's area was identified and investigated – a tegular material burning kiln dated to



Fig. 6. Research status in 2019 – TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2020, 197.

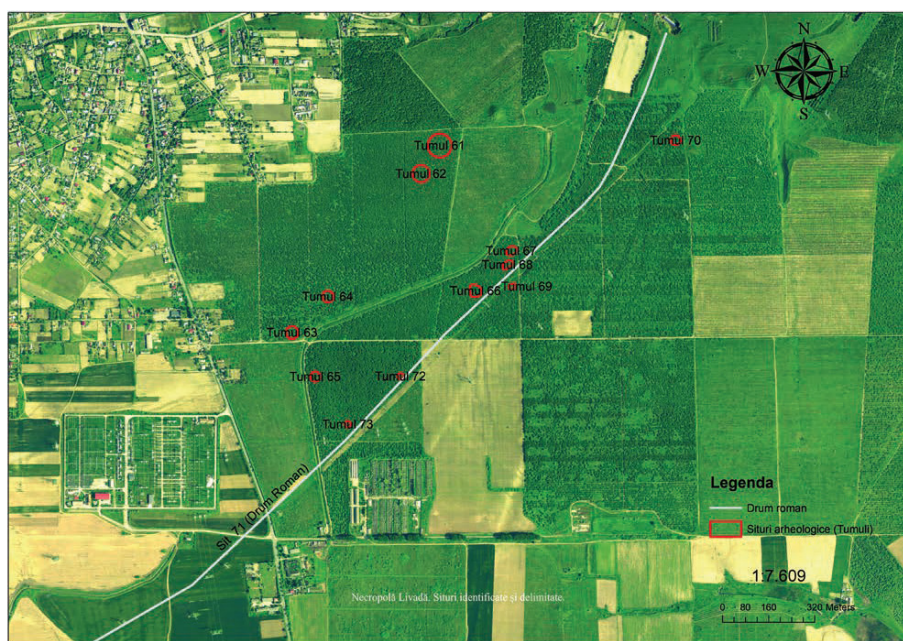


Fig. 7. Necropolis – Isaccea "Livadă" area, Research status, campaign 2022 (after STĂNICĂ *et alii* 2023, 169).

the 4th–6th centuries AD; the 4th century Christian funerary monument of the Christian funerary monument of the "Livada" point was rediscovered and studied; Basilica II (dated 5th–6th centuries AD) on the Danube bank was investigated; investigations were carried out to identify the port and port installations (collaboration with the University of Aix-Marseille); three military pillboxes dating from 1878–1914 were identified and mapped²⁰.

Since 2020, the *Noviodunum* site has been directed by Aurel Stănică, an archaeologist from the same museum

²⁰ Isaccea, jud. Tulcea [*Noviodunum*]: TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2011; TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2012; TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2013; TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2014; TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2015; TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2017; TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2018; TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2019; TOPOLEANU *et alii* 2020.

¹⁴ SIMION 1994–1995.

¹⁵ SIMION 1991; SIMION 1994; SIMION 1994–1995.

¹⁶ BAUMANN 2010, 14.

¹⁷ VASILIU 1984.

¹⁸ The archaeological reports have been published in the CCA (also available at <https://cronica.cimec.ro/>); those from the period 1995–2010 are summarized in the study by V. H. Bauman (BAUMANN 2010).

¹⁹ BAUMANN 2010, *passim*.

institution as the previous ones. The researches continued and are still continuing on the previously started sectors, resuming the researches on the northern enclosure, at the Corner Tower (Tower I); several tombs in the Necropolis of Isaccea – “Livadă” area were identified by geo-magnetic methods (Fig. 7), a series of geo-magnetic investigations were carried out in order to establish the archaeological map of the *Noviodunum-Isaccea* area.²¹

In the year 2000, in parallel with the research project initiated by the Tulcea Museum, an international project started, financed by research institutes in England (London, Southampton, Cambridge), coordinated by Kris Lockyear, Adrian Popescu and Timothy Sly, which aimed at carrying out topographic, geophysical and field researches in order to highlight the relationship between the fortress and the territory, the dynamics of the settlement in the area of the fortress, the commercial relations of the site of Isaccea with other regions. Kris Lockyear, Timothy Sly, Adrian Popescu²².

All these researches, summarized by us, have highlighted the existence of a complex, multilayered archaeological site, with an extraordinary dynamics of habitation from the Neolithic to the modern period, with constructive interventions that have destructively intervened on the previous archaeological layers, which makes it difficult to research and interpret the remains discovered. The quantity of archaeological artifacts is also immense, requiring years of research, cataloguing and interpretation.

The multilayered history of the Isaccea site – The “Pontonul Vechi” from which we studied a fragment, that of the Principate period, makes it one of the most attractive from the perspective of archaeological, inter- and multidisciplinary research, of which the most important aspect is that of the spatial distribution of the vestiges, the spatial and temporal overlap of the inhabited areas, but also of the relationship between the *Noviodunum* fortress and its territory, the communication (land, river) between it and the other military and commercial centers in the vicinity: *Aegyssus*, *Dinogetia*, *Arrubium*, *Troesmis*, *Ibida*, etc.

Achieving such an approach is possible through the utilization of Geographic Information System (GIS)-type computer applications. One such application is available through the ArchTerr project,²³ which is presented on the website www.archterr.ro and is accessible at no cost.

The scientific research initiative ArchTerr proposes a model for the effective and conscientious administration of archaeological heritage. This model utilizes a computer

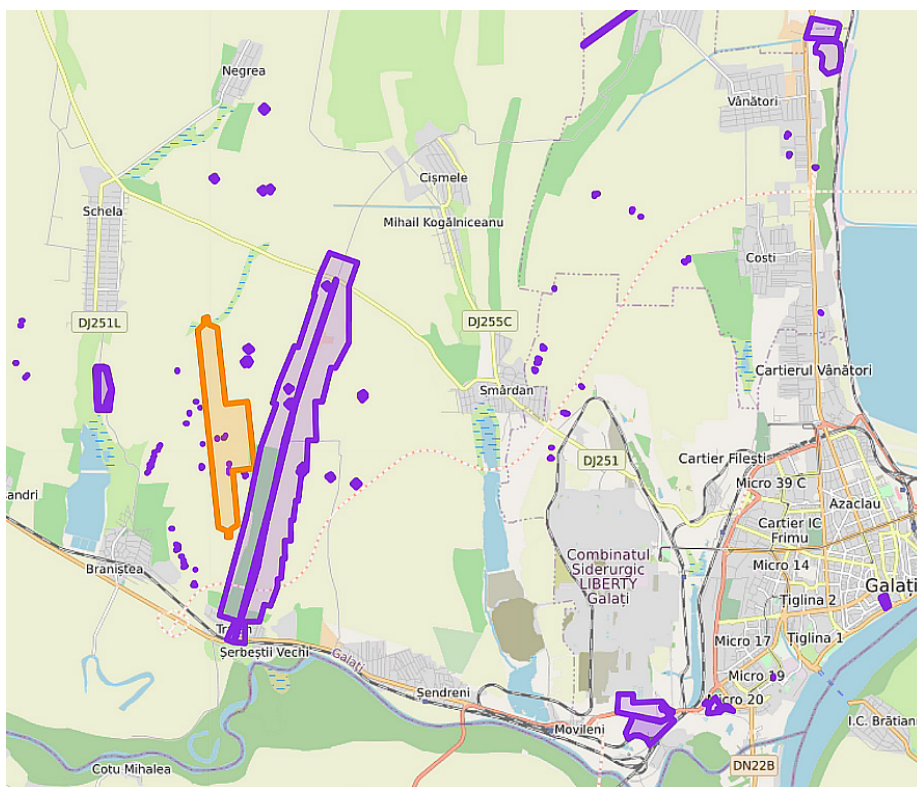


Fig. 8. ArchTerr interactive map.

application, exemplified by an archaeological map with digitized cartography (GIS), to oversee interventions in regions encompassing archaeological heritage.

The interactive application provides information on known archaeological heritage accumulated by research institutions, including museums, institutes, and universities. The present discussion pertains to archaeological sites that have been catalogued in the List of Historical Monuments or the National Archaeological Repertory, sites that have been accentuated in General Urban Plans or Zonal Urban Plans, and sites that have been documented and delineated in scientific publications and are represented in purple (Fig. 8).

A novel functionality has been incorporated into the system. In addition to the existing capability of entering polygonal-shaped archaeological sites by referencing geospatial coordinates, a new functionality has been implemented that allows for the specific entry of the shape of a mound. This new functionality utilizes the diametrical dimension of the mound and a designated point that represents its center.

The software module has been developed to implement a key functionality, namely the provision of automatic conversion between representations at no cost. This functionality facilitates the conversion of World Geodetic System (WGS84)²⁴ geospatial coordinates to Stereo70²⁵ coordinate representations, which are utilized in geodetic cartography and topographic photogrammetry. It is important to note that alternative software applications that offer this functionality are typically commercial and expensive.

²⁴ United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, EUREF Permanent GNSS Network, <https://www.epncb.oma.be>. Accessed May 2025.

²⁵ Decretul nr. 305 din 15 septembrie 1971 privind activitatea geodezică, topo-fotogrammetrică și cartografică, precum și la procurarea, determinarea și folosirea datelor și documentelor rezultate din această activitate (publicat în Monitorul Oficial nr. 111 din 26 septembrie 1971).

²¹ Isaccea, jud. Tulcea [*Noviodunum*]: STĂNICĂ *et alii* 2021; STĂNICĂ *et alii* 2022; STĂNICĂ *et alii* 2023; STĂNICĂ *et alii* 2024.

²² LOCKYEAR *et alii* 2005–2006, 121–158.

²³ MARIAN/IACOB 2022.



Fig. 9. New site /tumulus – user graphical interface.

Inițiere fișă sit Autor	Cod fișă	Nume sit	Inițiere fișă sit Dată
SUPERVIZOR	Abcdefgh	Tumulus Test	04/09/2024
Județ 1	Nume alternativ	Validare fișă sit Autor	Validare fișă sit Dată
Tulcea	Tumulus Roman	N/A	N/A

Datare

- Preistorie
- Paleolitic
- Mezolitic
- Neolitic
- Eneolitic
- Epoca bronzului
- Epoca fierului
- Hallstatt
- Latène
- Epoca greacă
- Epoca geto-dacică
- Epoca romană
- Epoca post-romană
- Epoca romano-bizantină
- Epoca migrațiilor

Fig. 10. Site data.

New archaeological sites that are still under evaluation and validation are represented in orange.

The process is initiated when a new archaeological site or tumulus is positioned on the map, thus prompting a request for its validation (Fig. 9).

Subsequently, information pertaining to the new site is incorporated (Fig. 10).

The final step in the process is the verification stage leading to site validation or rejection, which is conducted by the chief archaeologist using a different graphical interface (Fig. 11).

The computer application, which manages the database and interacts with a digitized cartography (GIS), enables the production of a series of thematic maps diversified according to the objectives of the query and the user concerned.

It is evident that the information system under discussion is both rich and flexible. It is therefore reasonable to hypothesize that the information product provided by this project will offer an important proactive value in the field of territorial planning, and also in the field of scientific research.



Fig. 11. Site validation – administrator graphical interface.

3. NOVIODUNUM – HISTORICAL DATA

Noviodunum – historical data from the pre-Roman period

The name of the settlement indicates the earlier existence of a pre-Roman nucleus: it is very likely that the Celts²⁶ found on the Danube bank a Getic settlement of the “dava” type, whose name was “translated” into Celtic.²⁷ The presence of archaeological material – primarily ceramic fragments – dated to the Hallstatt period and Latène – has been reported by archaeologists who have conducted research at *Noviodunum*: Ion and Alexandru Barnea,²⁸ Fl. Topoleanu,²⁹ V. H. Baumann.³⁰ In this sense, in the Encyclopedia of Archaeology and Ancient History of Romania, s.v. *Noviodunum*, it is noted: “The archaeological discoveries (...) and then the preservation by the Romans of the name of Celtic origin mentioned in the literary sources of the Principate, Dominate and later flesh (...) show that the Roman settlement overlapped an important Getic one”³¹. It has not yet been possible to identify an autochthonous fortification on the ground, given that systematic archaeological research has been carried out for only a few years, as we have shown above.

Situated on a promontory near one of the most important fords of the Danube, the settlement/citadel of *Noviodunum* had an important strategic and economic role, even before the Romans; the amphora totem with the name of the Histria citadel and its producer – Theognetos – discovered in 2003 in Isaccea shows the exchange relations of the settlement with the important Greek economic center of Histria

in the Hellenistic period.³² In Isaccea several silver and bronze coins minted in Greek cities on the western Pontic coast have been discovered: six coins minted in *Histria*, 11 in *Callatis* and two in *Tomis*³³ suggesting that the settlement of Isaccea was involved in important commercial operations with Greek merchants from the left bank of the Black Sea.

Noviodunum – historical facts from Roman times

Noviodunum came under Roman control in the context of the Roman advance along the Danube, the establishment of the province of Moesia and the fortification of its lower course (*limes*). The choice of such a point for the construction of a Roman fortress was closely related to its strategic position: the ford of the Danube, the previous existence of a Getic fortification with a Celtic name, the construction of an imperial road that crossed from South to North the territory of the new Roman province (*Moesia/Moesia Inferior*) and which connected the area inhabited by populations not under Roman rule, but consumers of Roman goods, a road that at *Noviodunum* intersected the Roman road built along the Danube *limes*; this also explains the construction of a bridgehead, on the other bank of the Danube, the fortress of *Aliobrix*, at Orlovka, Ukraine.³⁴ Military, urban and economic development begins during the reign of Emperor Vespasian (69–79 AD), during which the main headquarters of the Roman fleet on the Lower Danube, *Classis Flavia Moesica*, was established at *Noviodunum*.³⁵ The large quantity of tegular material and the attestation of no less than four stamp variants are arguments, considers archaeologist Dan Aparaschivei, to indicate a long cantonment of the fleet in

²⁶ On the presence of the Celts in Dobrogea and the analysis of toponyms see the article by BARNEA 2010.

²⁷ BAUMANN 2008, 189–190, and notes 1, 2, where he lists bibliographical references on this topic.

²⁸ BARNEA 1977.

²⁹ TOPOLEANU 1984.

³⁰ BAUMANN *et alii* 2006.

³¹ BARNEA 2000 (s.v. *Noviodunum*), 204.

³² BAUMANN 2008, 190–191.

³³ TALMĂȚCHI 2006, 105–106.

³⁴ BARNEA 2000 (s.v. *Noviodunum*), 204.

³⁵ APARASCHIVEI 2010, 114, nota 544: “The name of the Danubian fleet became known from a military diploma of 92 AD: CIL XVI, 37. As for the founder of this fleet, opinions are divided; either Vespasian or Domitian.”

the area and, at the same time, the scale of the activity of the workshops bearing such insignia.³⁶

Noviodunum was also the headquarters for detachments of *Legio V Macedonica*, later of *Legio I Italica* stationed in the province of *Moesia Inferior*.³⁷

Archaeological research has managed to identify fragments of the typical Roman fortification – a possible phase from the end of the 1st century AD, a second phase from the beginning of the 3rd century AD.³⁸ The overlapping of the late Roman, Roman-Byzantine and mid-Byzantine phases of the fortress makes it difficult to reach the early Roman levels, so that the size, shape, and fortification system of the early Roman fortress cannot be reconstructed. It is assumed, based on the data provided by aerial photography³⁹ and some previously mentioned research, that the civil settlement, which must have been of the *canabae* or *civitas* type, reaches the level of urbanization necessary to be declared a *municipium*, at least in the time of the Severans.⁴⁰

The importance of the military, political and commercial center at *Noviodunum* is also demonstrated by its mention in written sources, as we will see below; we recall that Ptolemaios called it *polis*. The artifacts, discovered especially in Roman tombs,⁴¹ the inscriptions and the monetary discoveries prove the presence of a population made up of soldiers, veterans, Roman citizens, natives and Greeks.

The economic development of the fortress during the Roman period is proven, on the one hand, by the production of goods attested or at least suggested by archaeological discoveries. There are thus indications for a rich ceramic production considered to be of local manufacture – Getic but also Roman – belonging to the categories of pots, cups, jugs, mugs, plates, bowls.⁴² And it is not excluded that a certain type of amphorae from the Istro-Pontic category was produced in the territory of the fortress of *Noviodunum* – at Telița⁴³ As for the production of Roman lamps at *Noviodunum*, this fact is proven both by the presence of pieces and patterns.⁴⁴ There was certainly a production of construction materials, primarily of a military nature, as proven by the discovery of over 20 bricks bearing the fleet's insignia, but also civilian workshops for which kilns were identified in the *Noviodunum* fortress territory, at Telița, Telița-Amza, Telița-Valea Morilor; at Telița-Mamia there were kilns for bombards.⁴⁵

Also in the territory of the fortress, at Telița – the “Izvorul Maicilor” point, the only kilns for reducing iron ore in the

north of the *Moesia Inferior* province⁴⁶ were discovered and researched, and there are indications of the presence of stone processing workshops for religious and secular sculpture.⁴⁷

Regarding the commercial relations of the *Isaccea* center with the Roman provincial world, these were analyzed and synthesized by M. Iacob through the prism of artifact imports. Terra *sigillata* ceramics reach *Noviodunum* as early as the 1st century AD – vessels from Northern Italy, southern and central Gaul, but also from the Northern Black Sea and from workshops in the area of the city of *Nicopolis ad Istrum* (in the province of *Moesia Inferior*).⁴⁸ Regarding the amphorae, there are no studies that analyze the archaeological material resulting from research after 1995, and the amphorae are North-Pontic or Oriental, from the category of those for wine, in particular. The amphorae that reached the province of *Moesia Inferior* transported products such as “oil, wine and fish products”.⁴⁹ The Firmalampen workshops of *Fortis* and *Cassius* located in Northern Italy were also found at *Noviodunum*, provincial imitations of products from the workshops of *Fortis* and *Octavius*,⁵⁰ but also from Greek workshops (*Corinth*, *Athena*), the latter in small quantities.⁵¹

From *Isaccea/Noviodunum*, from the tombs, comes an impressive quantity of glassware, some vessels being preserved intact; these are mostly products of oriental workshops, from Cyprus and, in small numbers, from Northern Italy.⁵² For the bronze pieces (statuettes) coming from the *Noviodunum* necropolis, spectral analyses were carried out,⁵³ based on which they could be attributed, with some margin of error, to workshops in northern Italy, *Alexandria* (Egypt) and *Corinth* or considered Western products without specifying the workshop.⁵⁴

The analysis of the artifacts in the category of statuettes, architectural elements and marble sarcophagi discovered in the area of the *Noviodunum* fortress shows us that in the important cities of the province of *Moesia Inferior*, including *Noviodunum*, marble products from *Prokonnesos*, *Afyon*, *Naxos*, etc. come in the prefabricated stage, to be finished at the destination;⁵⁵ the major role in the marble trade was played by the city of *Nicomedia* in *Bithynia*.⁵⁶

All these data presented briefly configure for *Noviodunum* a provincial society, still little known, connected to the great interprovincial trade with both the West and the East.

Noviodunum suffered from its position on the Danube, where floods and erosion of the promontory on which it is located determined reconfigurations of the fortification in this area over time, but it was also the target of attacks by migrants, some of which resulted in the destruction of the fortress. Thus, in the 3rd century, the fortress was destroyed

³⁶ APARASCHIVEI 2010, 114.

³⁷ APARASCHIVEI 2010, 114–115.

³⁸ BAUMANN 2008, *passim*; APARASCHIVEI 2010, 115.

³⁹ ȘTEFAN 1973, *passim*.

⁴⁰ SUCEVEANU 1991, 48–49; APARASCHIVEI 2010, 115–116; the date on which it was granted the status of a *municipium* is still under discussion among specialists.

⁴¹ The researches in the necropolis have not been published in a monograph that gathers and analyzes all the funerary inventories, but the few articles dedicated to Roman tombs, signed by G. Simion, demonstrate the variety, richness and artistic refinement, most of them being imported pieces: SIMION 1977; SIMION 1984; SIMION 1988; SIMION 1991; SIMION 1994; SIMION 1994–1995.

⁴² IACOB 2013, 70–71.

⁴³ PARASCHIV 2006, 96; IACOB 2013, 76–77.

⁴⁴ IACOB 2013, 85–86.

⁴⁵ IACOB 2013, 90–92.

⁴⁶ IACOB 2013, 96.

⁴⁷ COVACEF 2002, *passim*.

⁴⁸ IACOB 2013, 124–128.

⁴⁹ IACOB 2013, 130–138.

⁵⁰ IACOB 2013, 143–148.

⁵¹ IACOB 2013, 152–154.

⁵² IACOB 2013, 156–158.

⁵³ SIMION 1988; SIMION 1995; the author recognizes that the outcome of the analyses depends on a myriad of factors, so he urges that the data obtained be used “only as approximate and indicative rather than definitive values”.

⁵⁴ IACOB 2013, 160–161.

⁵⁵ IACOB 2013, 171–173.

⁵⁶ ALEXANDRESCU-VIANU 2008–2009, 60.

by the Goths and Heruli in 267 AD, the hiding of the treasury of antoniani from Isaccea, concluded at Gallienus, being linked to such an event;⁵⁷ the reconstruction of the city, most likely begun during the reign of the emperors Aurelianus and Probius, was continued and completed under Diocletian and then, under Constantinus (Constantine the Great), when the province of *Scythia* acquired great strategic importance by moving the center of gravity of the Roman Empire to *Constantinopolis*, on the banks of the Bosphorus.⁵⁸

4. NOVIODUNUM IN ANCIENT DOCUMENTS

Systematic archaeological research has only sporadically managed to reach the archaeological layers corresponding to the fortress from the early Roman period (1st–3rd centuries AD), so that, for this period, historical information is completed by other categories of sources – ancient authors, epigraphic sources and monetary discoveries, to which is added the interpretation of some of the artifacts discovered in the tumulus necropolis.

The ancient name of the fortress is not preserved in any inscription discovered in the Isaccea site, but the Celtic composition of the toponym *Noviodunum* is difficult to dispute.⁵⁹ An epigraphic monument discovered at Babadag, which recalled a hypothetical *vico Nov...*, was erroneously attributed to the fortress at *Noviodunum* (ISM V, 233) and only an inscription from *Dinogetia*, discovered in 1980, provides clarification regarding these working hypotheses.⁶⁰

The toponym “*Noviodunum*” appears in ancient sources – geographers, writers, itineraries in slightly altered forms compared to the consecrated form, written in the period 1st–3rd centuries AD or referring to the period 1st–3rd centuries AD.

The first source that mentions the name of the fortress at Isaccea is geographer, mathematician, astronomer, astrologer of Greek origin Claudius Ptolemaios of *Alexandria*, who lived in the period 100–170 AD; he worked in the city of Alexandria in Egypt during the reign of Emperors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius. His work, “Geographical Directory”, structured in 8 books, to which he also attached an atlas of the world known until then with the mention of the coordinates of approx. 8,000 localities, the names of waters, mountains and populations, which covered a huge area, from present-day Ireland to China, was based on an older map, by Marynos of Tyre, who lived approx. 200 years before him.⁶¹ Ptolemaios speaks of the province of *Moesia Inferior* in book III, chapter 10 “The Settlement of *Moesia Inferior* (Map IX of Europe)”; after describing its borders (III, 10, 1), in chap. III.10.2, he notes that “the order of the mouths from here on is this: „the first division of the mouths from the fortress of *Noviodunum* has the degrees...”⁶² A little further on, in chap. III.10.5, after listing the cities near the Danube river, Ptolemaios maintains the cities under

the authority of the Vth Macedonian Legion: “*Dinogetia, Noviodunum, Satioenta*”.⁶³

The second historical source that mentions, in chronological order, the name of the fortress of *Noviodunum* is the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, the best-known cartographic document written in the Roman period and preserved in a copy of the 13th century. The document, preserved in the form of a parchment scroll with a length of about 7 m and a width of about 0.34 m, was discovered in a monastery in Germany by the humanist Konrad Celtes (1459–1508) who handed it over to Konrad Peutinger, minister, at that time, of Emperor Maximilian I. The *Tabula* re-entered the attention of specialists in the second half of the last century, enjoying special attention in recent years.⁶⁴

The *Tabula* represents a painted itinerary containing information about the most important Roman roads, painted in red; localities from all areas of the Roman Empire (about 2700 names), distances between localities expressed in Roman miles, stopping points along the roads, temples, thermal edifices, cities with enclosure walls, special toponyms, representations of waters or landforms; a series of signs (vignettes) are used to convey information about one place or another.⁶⁵

Regarding the dating of the Roman original, several proposals are formulated, including that of Constantin Daicoviciu, who, starting from the fact that the map does not show the eastern part of Roman Dacia, considers that at the time of its drafting this area had already been abandoned and proposes dating it sometime between the years 251–271, a proposal taken up by other scholars.⁶⁶

Regarding the division into provinces, it was noted that the *Tabula* features both elements related to the administrative division from the Augustus-Trajan period, as well as from the period after Diocletian’s reform.⁶⁷ On segment VIII, the fortresses of *Moesia Inferior* are also depicted, including *Noviodunum*, with the name written in the form *Noviodum*, between *Arubium* and *Salsovia*, with the distances marked as follows: *Arubio* – *Noviodunum* XXVI miles paces, *Noviodunum* – *Salsovia* XLI miles.⁶⁸

The third document referring to *Noviodunum* is also a cartographic document, the *Intinerarium Antonini* or, in its full form, the *Intinerarium Provinciarum Antonini Augusti*, which was drawn up in a first form during the reign of Emperor Caracalla (212–218 AD). It contains 16 main routes that are supplemented by numerous secondary lines, indicating the main stations and the distances between them. The itinerary covers the entire Roman Empire, from southwest Africa to Britain,⁶⁹ with special importance given to the road that left Rome and went along the Danube and then reached *Asia Minor* and from there to *Egyptus*; from the territory of *Moesia Inferior*, the cities are mentioned starting with *Transmarisca* (Tutrakan, Bulgaria), to the junction of the Danube and

⁵⁷ PREDA/SIMION 1971.

⁵⁸ BARNEA 2000 (s.v. *Noviodunum*), 205.

⁵⁹ “Celtic *dunos* defines a fortified height, *dunum* being the usual ending for Celtic settlements” (BAUMANN 2008, 189–190, note 1, quoting all references to this subject).

⁶⁰ BARNEA 1991, 81–84.

⁶¹ TOMESCU 2000 (s.v. *Ptolemaios, Claudios*), 392.

⁶² *Ptol.* III, 10, 2.

⁶³ *Ptol.* III, 10, 5.

⁶⁴ FODOREAN 2016.

⁶⁵ FODOREAN 2016, 52–53; <https://www.myoldmaps.com/maps-from-antiquity-6200-bc/120-tabula-peutingeriana/120-peutinger.pdf>. Accessed June 2024, April 2025.

⁶⁶ FONTES HISTORIAE DACO-ROMANAE, I, 737.

⁶⁷ FONTES HISTORIAE DACO-ROMANAE, I, 737.

⁶⁸ *Tab. Peut.* (col. 506–512), VIII, 4.

⁶⁹ HOLFFENDER 2011.

the Sea and then those on the Pontic coast, from Histria to Odessos.⁷⁰ The name of the fortress at Isaccea is mentioned as *Novioduno*, between *Dinogetia* and *Aegiso* (*Aegyssus*), at a distance of 8 thousand paces from *Dinogetia* and 20 thousand paces from *Aegyssus*; the city is mentioned as the headquarters of *Legio II Herculeae*,⁷¹ installed at *Noviodunum* by the emperor Diocletian, a fact which, together with other arguments – such as the use of new names of some cities (*Diocletianopolis* for *Pella*, *Heraclea* for *Perinthus*), pleads for the drafting of this form of the Itinerary after the year 285/286.⁷²

The three cartographic sources mention the name of the city in forms close to the consecrated one, position the city on the Roman roads within the province of *Moesia Inferior* and note the distances between this city and the other neighboring cities. It is interesting to note that Ptolemaios considers *Noviodunum* as a *polis*, located in the area of influence of *Legio XIII Macedonica*.

The name of the city then appears in Roman and Byzantine sources from the 4th–7th centuries AD, which refer to realities from the respective periods,⁷³ which we will not present since they exceed the chronological framework of our work.

5. NOVIODUNUM IN EPIGRAPHIC DOCUMENTS

As regards the editing of the inscriptions discovered at *Noviodunum*, presented in Table 1, it should be recalled that

Table 1. Inscriptions discovered at *Noviodunum*

	Inscription – catalog/publication	Type	Dating	Language	Dedicators	Civil functions	Military functions	Honored persons/officials	Administrative/military structures/institutions
1.	ISM V 268	honorific?	2 nd c.	Latin	Ti Claudius Valens, Cessius Celerianus, Claudius M.	quinquennialis magistris			vicus
2.	ISM V 269	honorific	234	Latin	C. Messius Quintus Decius Valerianus	legatus		Iulia Mamaea Augusta Severus Alexander	Provincia (Moesia Inferior)
3.	Al. Barnea 1991	honorific?	late 2 nd -early 3 rd c.	Latin		questor municipii			municipium
4..	ISM V 270	votive/altar	2 nd c.	Latin	(...) Veteranus, (...) Marcianus, (...) Cassius, Numidicus, M. Ulpius Maximinus, C. Atulenus Narcissus, C. Iulius Epigonus M. Aemilius, Optatus, C. Iulius Hermas				collegium
5.	ISM V 271	votive/altar	late 2 nd -early 3 rd c.	Latin	(...) Romanus		miles		Legio I Italica
6.	ISM V 272	votive	late 2 nd -early 3 rd c.	Greek	G. Antonio Fronto Demosthenes son of Philippus	collegium (iereis)			
7	ISM V 273	votive (Dominus e Domina)	early 3 ^d	Latin	Liburna Armata from century of Q. Iulius Heliodorus				Liburna Armata/ Classis Flavia Moesica

the inscriptions published before 1980 in various publications in the country and abroad were collected by Emilia Doruțiu Boilă in vol. V of the collection *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris*, a volume dedicated to the inscriptions discovered on the Danube *limes*, but also in the central area of Dobrogea (ISM V 268–285).

To these have been added:

– an inscription discovered in the wall of the *Dinogetia* fortress, mentioning a *questor* of the municipality of *Noviodunum*;⁷⁴

– two fragments of inscriptions, one definitely funerary, the other possibly funerary, found in the necropolis;⁷⁵

– an inscription on a sarcophagus, front side, mentioning an *arkarius classis*⁷⁶

– an inscription with 5 names (veterans of *Classis Flavia Moesica*)⁷⁷

– a fragment of a limestone inscription discovered during the Isaccea excavations in 2000 in the medieval stratum, in the *intra muros*⁷⁸ area which was part of a Roman altar and on which the letters: „...DEC.C.../AELI.../MAT...”, completed by V. H. Bauman: *dec(urio) c(ivitatis) sive c(anabensium) sive coh(ortis)*.⁷⁹ We present, in summary, in tabular form, the information provided by the inscriptions.

Inscriptions discovered at *Noviodunum* are: funerary (10), votive (7), honorific (3), undefinable (2) as in Fig. 12.

⁷⁰ FONTES HISTORIAE DACO-ROMANAE, I, 747; BARNEA 1996 (s.v. *Itineraria Romana*), 270.

⁷¹ *It. Ant.*, 226, 1; FONTES HISTORIAE DACO-ROMANAE, I, 748–749.

⁷² HOFFFENDER 2011.

⁷³ *Tabula Imperii Romani* L 35, s.v. *Noviodunum*, 53, 54.

⁷⁴ BARNEA 1991, *passim*.

⁷⁵ BAUMANN 1984, 207–233; 597–630, nr. 6, 8.

⁷⁶ SIMION 2008, 260.

⁷⁷ TOPOLEANU/ZAHARIADE 2017.

⁷⁸ BAUMANN 2016, 235.

⁷⁹ BAUMANN 2010, 8.

	Inscription – catalog/publication	Type	Dating	Language	Dedicators	Civil functions	Military functions	Honored persons/officials	Administrative/military structures/institutions
8.	ISM V 274	votive	late 3 rd -early 4 th c.	Latin	Aurelius Probus			Caius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus Flavius Valerius Constantius Galerius Maximianus	
9	TOPOLEA-NU 1991	votive (IOM, Genio loci)	late 2 nd -early 3 rd c.	Latin	Caius Candidus Germanus		trierarchus		Classis Flavia Moesica
10.	TOPOLE-ANU/ZAHARIADE 2017	votive	late 2 nd -early 3 rd c.	Latin	Ulpus Caius Valerius Castus Aelius Respectus Valerius Saturninus Fonteius Iulius		classici?		Classis Flavia Moesica
11.	ISM.V 275	funeral	2 nd c.	Latin	Aelius Valens				
12.	ISM.V 276	funeral	2 nd - 3 rd c.	Latin	Iulius Valens		signifer	P. Aelius Celsus (veteran) Flavia Alexandra P. Alexander	Legio XI Claudia
13.	ISM.V 277	funeral	2 nd c.	Latin				C. Valerius Respectus	
14	ISM V 278	funeral	2 nd c.	Latin				Maria Ingenua, Aufidus Aquila....	
15	ISM.V 279	funeral	2 nd c.	Latin				Valeria Flavia Iulia Crispina	
16.	ISM.V 280	funeral	2 nd c.	Greek	Alexandra			Alexandros, son of Heracleon	Gerusia
17.	ISM.V 281	funeral	3 rd c.	Latin				Krystallus Archeolous (Postumus' alumni)	
18.	ISM.V 282	funeral	2 nd c.	Latin	Marcus Cocceius Sabinus				
19	Baumann 1984 no 6	funeral	2 nd c.	Latin	Titus Flavius			Alexandros	
20	Baumann 1984 n0 8	?	2 nd - 3 rd c.	Latin	?				
21	Simion 2008, 260	funeral	2 nd c.	Latin	Publios Aelius Mithres		arkarius classis	Ulpia Iulia	Classis Flavia Moesica
22	Baumann 2010, 8	?	2 nd - 3 rd c.	Latin					

Stamps					
	ISM.V 283	Stamps on tiles	1 st -3 rd c.	Latin	CL FLM, CL FL M, CLASSIS F M and retrograde
	ISM V 284	Stamps on tiles	2 nd c.	Latin	Leg(io) V Mac(edonica)
	ISM V 285	Stamps on tiles	3 rd -4 th c.	Latin	P(raefectura) C(lassis) R(ipae) S(cythicae)

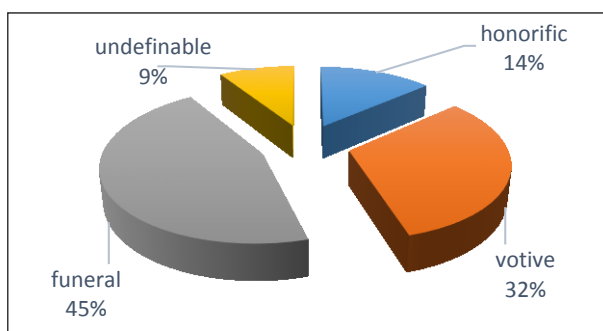


Fig. 12. Classification of Noviodunum inscriptions by type.

The inscriptions belong to the period between the 1st and 4th centuries AD and are written mainly in Latin, but we also find two inscriptions in Greek, distributed in time as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of inscriptions by language and chronological period.

Period (p. Chr. /AD)	Number	Language
2 nd c.	10	9-Latin, 1-Greek
2 nd - 3 rd c.	7	7- Latin, 1- Greek
3 rd c.	4	Latin
3 rd -4 th c.	1	Latin

It can be seen that most of the inscriptions belong to the 2nd century (10), but there are also inscriptions dated generally to the 2nd and 3rd century AD (7), in 3rd century (4) and one from the end of the 3rd century and beginning of 4th century (Table 2).

As can be seen from the summary table above, the inscriptions, although few in number, provide us with data on the status of *Noviodunum* – *municipium*, administrative bodies – *provincia*, *vicus*, *municipium* – and their functions – *legatus*, *magister*, *quinquenalis*, *questor*, the fleet and army stationed at *Noviodunum* (*Classis Flavia Moesica*, *Legio I Italica*, *Legio XI Claudia*) and military functions: *miles*, *signifer*, *trierarchus*, *arkarius*, *classici*. There are also references to religious bodies – probably a *collegium*. Also related to religious life, we have information about the worship of *Jupiter Optimus Maximus*, *Herakles* and local deities (*Dominus* and *Domina*).

The most interesting area is that of the analysis of onomastics, where we find Roman citizens (individualized by *tria nomina*) – the majority among dedicants or honored with inscriptions, but also pilgrims, Greeks. To these we add numerous tegular stamps belonging to the fleet and the 5th Macedonian Legion,⁸⁰ confirming information provided by written sources.

6. NOVIODUNUM – MONETARY DISCOVERIES

The coins discovered in Isaccea/*Noviodunum* and in the territory of the fortress are mostly isolated finds; a hoard discovered in 1960, in October, about 3 km from the town of Isaccea, in the place called “Pepiniera veche”⁸¹ was recovered in two batches: the first (Oct.1960), numbering 1040 coins, the other (Dec.1960), totaling 31 other coins.⁸² The hoard in question, by its size and the time of burial, provides important information on the history of the fortress in the 3rd century AD, but also for the numismatics of the 3rd century AD. in general.

The coins to which we will refer are random discoveries made by various people in the area of the fortress, especially on the cliff, but also through numismatic research over time.

Thus, the most important batches of Roman coins (1st–3rd centuries AD) were published by:

– Oberlander Târnoveanu 1980, 499–513. no. 31–64: **34 coins**;

– Topoleanu 1984, 187–205, 585–596, no. 54–72: **29 coins**;

– Oberlander Târnoveanu/Opaiț 1984, 267–279, no. 4–13, 33–57: **35 coins**;

– Baumann 2010, 43–46 (no. 1–104), 82–83 (no. 1–27), 56 (no. 1–31), 170–171 (no. 1–66), several groups totaling **228 coins**, of which a **small number (about 20)** are early Roman coins,⁸³

– Iacob 2020, *passim*: **30 coins**;

– Popescu/Iacob 2017: **1177 coins** in the collection of the Tulcea Museum (ICEM Tulcea), the collection of the Cocoș Monastery and in several private collections, of which **262 coins** from 1st–3rd centuries AD.

To these are added the Chronicles of monetary discoveries in Romania in the *Dacia* journal, N.S. (Découvertes monétaires en Roumanie, since 1966) and *SCIV(A)* (Descoperiri recente și mai vechi e monede antice și byzantine în R.S.România, since 1971), edited by Bucur Mitrea, Gh. Poenaru Bordea and contributors. An estimate of the monetary finds from *Noviodunum*, dating from the 1st–7th centuries AD, amounts to more than 3,700 pieces, located in public and private collections (estimate A. Popescu).⁸⁴ A first attempt to discuss aspects of monetary circulation in Isaccea in the context of analyzing the monetary circulation in 1st–3rd centuries AD in Dobrogea belongs to the Constanta numismatist Antoaneta Vertan (*Circulația monetară în Dobrogea romană, secole I–III*, Cluj Napoca, 2002), who, based on the coins published up to the year 2000, realizes the following chronological distribution of the known coin group for *Noviodunum* (Table 3).

Table 3. Distribution of coins by chronological stages (Roman imperial and provincial coins)⁸⁵

No.	Stage (p.Chr. = AD /a.Chr. = BC)	Roman imperial coins			Provincial coins	Total coins per stage
		AR	AE	Total		
1 I	27 a.Chr.–69 p.Chr.	-	5	6(?)	-	6
2 II	69 p.Chr.–96 p.Chr.	-	4	5(?)	3	8
3 III	96 p.Chr.–138 p.Chr.	-	2	3(?)	-	3
4 IV	138 p.Chr.–161 p.Chr.	-	8	8	-	8
5 V	161 p.Chr.–193 p.Chr.	-	-	-	1	1
6 VI	193 p.Chr.–218 p.Chr.	-	-	-	15	15
7 VII	218 p.Chr.–238 p.Chr.	-	-	-	1	1
8 VIII	238 p.Chr.–249 p.Chr.	13	-	13	-	13
9 IX	249 p.Chr.–270 p.Chr.	21	-	21	-	21
10 X	Provincial coins not specified chronologically				2	2
	Total	34	19	56(?)	22	78

We note a small number of pieces under discussion – only 78, which makes any intention of analysis skeptical. The presence of the silver coin can be observed after 238, in the context of the conflicts with the Goths and the coalition of populations engaged with them. The Roman bronze coinage is almost on a par in number with the Roman provincial coinage, with the observation that in the period 161–238 the bronze coinage issued in Rome is missing, the need for small coinage for daily expenses being provided by the provincial workshops in the area.

Analysis of the hoard of Roman antoniniani, based on the preliminary list provided by C. Preda and G. Simion, and the synthesis provided by A. Vertan, allows us to observe that it shows two moments of accumulation, one during the reign of Gordianus III and Philippus Arabs (over 33%) and the second during the reign of Gallienus (34.91%) as in Table 4.

⁸⁰ BARNEA 1991, 81.

⁸¹ VERTAN 2002, 275.

⁸² PREDASIMION 1971.

⁸³ Not all pieces were previously identified at the time of publication.

⁸⁴ POPESCU/IACOB 2016, 10, note 22.

⁸⁵ VERTAN 2002, 391.

Table 4. Isaccea monetary treasury structure by issuers (after PREDA/SIMION 1971, 168; VERTAN 2002, 214–216).

Issuer	No.	%
Caracalla	1	0,09
Elagabalus	1	0,09
Severus Alexander	3	0,28
Maximinus I	1	0,09
Balbinus	1	0,09
Gordianus III	181	16,90
Philippus Arabs	164	15,31
Otacilia Severa	33	3,08
Philippus II	28	2,61
Trajanus Decius (including the type <i>Consecratio</i>)	77 (71+6)	7,18
Herenia Etruscilla	18	1,68
Herrenius Etruscus	12	1,12
Hostilianus	5	0,46
Trebonianus Gallus	64	5,97
Volusianus	42	3,92
Aemilianus	6	0,56
Valerianus I	49	4,57
Saloninus	5	0,46
Salonina	43	4,01
Macrianus	4	0,37
Quietus	2	0,18
TOTAL	1071	99,92

In the time of Gallienus are buried two other hoards much smaller in number of coins – Mangalia II and Măcin.⁸⁶ The volume gathers together a group of about 1177 coins discovered at *Noviodunum* from the period between the 1st and 7th centuries AD; of these 1071 are Roman and Late Roman coins and only 106 early Byzantine coins.

Of the Roman coins included in the catalog *Early Roman and Byzantine coins discovered at Noviodunum from the collection of the Museum of History and Archaeology Tulcea* belong to the Early Roman period – 1st century B.C. and 3rd century AD – a number of 262 pieces: a Roman denarius from the Republican period, 66 silver coins (denarii and antoniniani), 115 Roman bronze coins produced in the Roman Imperial workshops both Eastern and Western and 59 Roman provincial coins. The analysis of the coins group collected by A. Popescu and M. Iacob shows the following chronological distribution of Roman coins struck in imperial and provincial workshops (Table 5).

Table 5. Distribution of coins by chronological stages (Roman imperial and provincial coins) (after POPESCU/IACOB 2016, 33–81, nr. 1–262).

No.	Stage (p.Chr. = AD /a.Chr. = BC)	AR	AE	Provincial coins	Total coins
1 I	27 a.Chr.- 69 p.Chr.	1	28	1	29
2 II	69 p.Chr.- 96 p.Chr.	6	14	0	14
3 III	96 p.Chr.- 138 p.Chr.	5	41	3	44
4 IV	138 p.Chr.- 161 p.Chr.	3	26	3	29
5 V	161 p.Chr.- 193 p.Chr.	2	4	6	10
6 VI	193 p.Chr.- 218 p.Chr.	15	1	33	34

⁸⁶ VERTAN 2002, 214–216.

No.	Stage (p.Chr. = AD /a.Chr. = BC)	AR	AE	Provincial coins	Total coins
7 VII	218 p.Chr.- 238 p.Chr.	7		5	5
8 VIII	238 p.Chr.- 249 p.Chr.	5		3	3
9 IX	249 p.Chr.- 270 p.Chr.	10	1		1
10 X	270–275	15			
11 XI	276–294	19			
	chronologically unspecified			5	5
	Total	88	115	59	252

This group gives us the opportunity to observe that the Roman imperial bronze coin is sent to the territory (to *Noviodunum*) only sporadically after the reign of Antoninus Pius, this also against the background of the devaluation of the denarius by the antoninianus minting starting from the time of Cracalla and then the Aurelianus minting during the Tacitus – Maximianus period; the silver coin, even if devalued, is well represented, especially in the second part of the 3rd century AD, being undoubtedly used to pay the troops.

As far as provincial coinage is concerned, it attains a high value (over 55%) during the Severan dynasty, compensating for the absence of the imperial bronze coin.⁸⁷

The Roman provincial coins, 59 in the group in question, are thus distributed among the provincial mints of *Moesia Inferior* and beyond presented in Fig. 13.

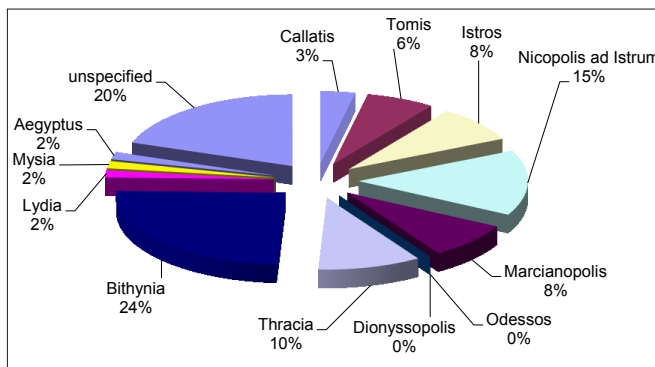


Fig. 13. The distribution of Roman provincial coins from *Noviodunum* by centers and issuing provinces (based on the POPESCU/IACOB 2016, 33–44, no. 1–59).

It can be seen that issues arrive in *Noviodunum* both from the province of *Moesia Inferior* (*Nicopolis ad Istrum*, *Istros*, *Marcianopolis*, *Callatis*) and from outside the province, from *Thracia*, *Bithynia*, *Aegyptus*, *Mysia*, *Lydia*, which shows a particular mobility of people and goods.

In terms of monetary circulation, the city of *Noviodunum* was also involved in trade with far-flung regions, a fact also suggested by the diversity of the centers of origin of the archaeological artifacts.

As for the Roman imperial workshops supplying the province with petty cash, the best represented is the workshop in the capital of the Empire (*Rome*), to which is added, from the mid 3rd century AD, *Mediolanum*, and from Aurelianus onwards: *Ticinum*, *Siscia*, *Lugdunum*, *Serdica*; among the eastern imperial Roman workshops we find issues from *Emesa*, *Antiochia*, *Cyzicus*.

⁸⁷ IACOB 2020, 159–165.

CONCLUSIONS

The fortified settlement of *Noviodunum*, situated on a promontory 20 meters high on the right bank of the Danube near Isaccea in Tulcea County, played an important military role since the Getic period, prior to the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea coming under the occupation of the Roman Empire. Subsequently, it functioned as the base of the Roman fleet of the Lower Danube, designated *Classis Flavia Moesica*, as well as detachments of *Leg. V Macedonica* and *Leg. I Italica*. Furthermore, *Noviodunum* functioned as the terminus of the overland military and trade route from *Marcianopolis* through contemporary Dobrogea, in addition to the road situated on the right bank of the Danube, the Danube *limes*.

The city's position as one of the major centers of Lower Moesia is confirmed by geographical references in historical sources dating from the Roman period (1st–3rd centuries AD). Notable examples of such works include the works of *Ptolemaios*, *Itinerarium Antonini*, *Tabula Peutingeriana*. According to *Ptolemaios*'s assessment, the city (or *polis*, as it is referred to in his work) was located within the region of Lower Moesia.

Archaeological discoveries indicate a significant economic development during this period, as evidenced by an intensive exchange of goods with the Greek and Eastern worlds. Furthermore, the integration of the city into the Roman world is apparent through imports and local production of Western and Southern European origin.

The financial compensation awarded to the plaintiffs in this case was substantial. The results of archaeological research demonstrate that from the 2nd century AD onwards, it possessed a status that was superior to that of a vicus or even a *civitas*, reaching the status of a *municipium* from the Severan period.

The necropolis of the citadel is comprised of various burial sites that span different historical periods and extend over several kilometers. The citadel's organization is situated in proximity to the ancient roads that facilitated connectivity with other centers within the territory.

In addition to the variety of artifacts found (including glass vessels, cult objects, jewelry, and coins), the necropolis provides information about the city's population. Anthropological analyses have revealed that the deceased came from various ethnic groups. Romans, Greeks, Orientals, and Iberians. The subjects of this study included military personnel, veterans, and civilians, as well as Roman citizens and pilgrims. This assertion is further substantiated by epigraphic data.

The Goths and the Heruli are known to have caused significant destruction to the city in 267, a fact which has been documented by the 1071 coins buried in the area of the necropolis tomb. The construction of this tomb is attributed to the reign of Roman Emperor Gallienus. Subsequent to the aforementioned destruction, the city underwent a gradual recovery. It is hypothesized that the region will once again become a significant military and commercial hub.

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