

Agnieszka Tomas
(Warsaw)

**LIFE ON THE FRONTIER:
ROMAN MILITARY FAMILIES IN LOWER MOESIA**

Abstract

The epigraphic evidence from four Lower Moesian legionary bases provides information about military-civilian society living along the Lower Danubian frontier zone. The inscriptions on stone originating from these four sites inform not only about the names, age or status of the people living in the border zone, but may be helpful in recreating the emergence of Roman provincial society in the military garrisons. The epigraphic evidence collected from Oescus, Novae, Durostorum, and Troesmis includes only the inscriptions related to the people who were not active soldiers and officers serving in the legions. The aim of the paper is to find out whether the epigraphic evidence may bring any additional information concerning the civilian and military families, ethnic and social composition of the inhabitants living near legionary bases, conditions of life, and the nature of the settlement.

Key words

Roman frontier archaeology, Lower Moesia, extramural settlement, epigraphic evidence

Géza Alföldy published some tens of monographs and a number of articles, book chapters and reviews on epigraphy, social history, history of the Roman provinces, Roman army and administration, historiography and prosopography. He was also very devoted to onomastic analyses, paying the same attention to the elites and to the low social strata. The role of Roman settlements near military bases can be analysed from different points of view, but each investigation leads to observations which are crucial in understanding the development of the Roman provincial society. The present paper shows evidence from four Lower Moesian sites: Oescus, Novae, Durostorum and Troesmis, of which Novae provides the largest number of epigraphic finds.

NOVAE

The earliest archaeological remains of the camp at Novae in Moesia are dated to the reign of Nero and belong to the Eighth Augustan Legion¹. Most probably in AD 72, the First Italic Legion arrived in Novae and replaced the former unit. The presence of its detachments is attested epigraphically still in the 430s². Civil settlement in a more permanent form developed around the Flavian fortress and at a certain distance from it. The *canabae* developed outside the West and East Gate, and the *vicus*, 2.7 km east of the camp, in a place called Ostrite Mogili (Fig. 1, 2).

Over the years preceding regular archaeological research, Novae was a subject of interest of many travelers and scholars, among them, Ferdinand Marsigli, Friedrich Kanitz and Karel Škorpil, who made first drawings and documented the remains of defences and buildings visible on the site. Many movable finds, including inscribed stones, were transported by local inhabitants to nearby town of Svištov and surrounding villages and only some of them were collected by the local Historical Museum. Finally, some important epigraphic finds were transported from Novae to Romania during the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829, by general Nicolas Mavros and now are stored in the Vasile Pârvan Institute of Archaeology and the National

¹ T. Sarnowski, The Legionary Defences of Novae, *Archeologia* (Warszawa) 32 (1981), 1983, pp. 43-44; E. Genčeva, Pärvijat voenen lager v Novae provincija Mizija (Severna Bälğarija), Sofija-Warszawa 2002, pp. 10-11.

² T. Sarnowski, Drei spätkaiserzeitliche Statuenbasen aus Novae in Niedermoesien, [in:] M. Mirković (ed.), *Römische Städte und Festungen an der Donau*, Beograd 2005, pp. 223-230.

Military Museum in Bucarest³. Since 1960 regular archaeological surveys have been carried out on the site, but the architectural remains were excavated mainly within the fortress. The only remains unearthed *extra muros castrorum* is a large residential building of an official character and late antique basilica with a burial ground, in the western part of the *canabae*⁴. Salvage excavations were made in the *mithraeum*⁵, in the very poorly published shrine of Liber Pater⁶, as well as in three cemeteries where only a few burials were unearthed⁷.

The camp in Novae was laid out on a high Danubian escarpment, on three terraces sloping downward toward the Danube. The legionary fortress covers 17.99 ha, but the spread of finds around it are traceable on another 80 ha. The area adjacent from the west is a flat and easy accessible, while the eastern side of the fortress is surrounded by the irregular terrain with flat land and a deep gully in the north-east and elevated terrain on the south-eastern side. Toward the end of the 3rd century, a new circuit of defensive walls was added on the eastern side, enlarging the fortress by an additional 8 ha. The layout of the fortress had changed then and the legionary camp and attached civil settlements developed into the Late Roman town.

Exploring and reconstruction of civil settlement around Novae is feasible only with the use of multidisciplinary approach and requires integrated methods of landscape archaeology supplemented by archive and museum studies. A three-year project of non-intrusive surveys in the extramural area

³ J. Kolendo, Découvertes d'inscriptions grecques pendant la guerre russo-turque 1828-1829, *Archeologia* 18, 1968, pp. 51-54.

⁴ M. Čičikova, La basilique et la nécropole paléochrétiennes extra muros (Mésie Inférieure), [in:] A.B. Biernacki, B. Pawlak (eds.), Late Roman and Early Byzantine Cities on the Lower Danube from the 4th to the 6th cent. AD. International Conference. Poznań, Poland, 15-17th November 1995, Poznań 1997, pp. 57-69; P. Vladkova, Nekropol kraj Novae ot vremeto na Teoderih Veliki, [in:] R. Milev (ed.), *Goterna – Current Aspects of the Gothic Historical and Cultural Heritage in Bulgaria*, Sofia 2006, pp. 57-70.

⁵ V. Najdenova, Le culte de Mithra à Novae (Mésie Inférieure), [in:] G. von Bülow, A. Milčeva (eds.), *Der Limes an der unteren Donau von Diokletian bis Heraklios, Vorträge der Internationalen Konferenz Svištov, Bulgarien (1.-5. September 1998)*, Sofia 1999, pp. 117-120; A. Tomas, M. Lemke, The Mithraeum at Novae Revisited, [in:] A. Tomas (ed.), *Ad fines imperii. Studia in honorem Thaddaeo Sarnowski ab amicis, collegiis discipulisque dedicata*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 227-247.

⁶ D. Mitova-Džonova, Svetilište na Dionis kraj Svištov, *Arheologija* 3, 2, 1961, pp. 21-24 and see A. Tomas, Dionysus or Liber Pater? The Evidence of the Bacchic Cult at Novae (castra et canabae legionis) and in its Hinterland, [in:] eadem (ed.), *Ad fines imperii Romani*, pp. 257-275.

⁷ S. Kołkówna, Nekropola północno (*sic!*)-wschodnia, [in:] K. Majewski (ed.), *Sprawozdanie tymczasowe z wykopalisk w Novae w 1960 roku*, *Archeologia* (Warszawa) 12, (1961), 1962, pp. 123-128; V. Válov, Razkopki na Kaletu v gr. Svištov, *Arheologija* 4, 4, 1965, pp. 7-15.

carried out in three spring seasons from 2012 to 2014⁸ was supplemented by museum and archive investigations, which included inscribed stones. The epigraphic monuments, in their major part published, were mapped in the GIS database together with some other non-inscribed finds. The texts which refer to the extramural settlement or the civil inhabitants were catalogued, analysed, and compared to the evidence from other Lower Danubian legionary bases.

Recent discoveries in Novae shed light on supply of provisions for the army in the 1st century AD. Large pits explored in the central part of the camp contained, among others, large quantities of amphorae sherds which allowed to reconstruct entire forms, some of them unique⁹. Long distance wine trade in this early period is also attested by a funerary monument of a *negotiator vinarius* and his wife¹⁰.

However, archaeology and epigraphy seem to prove that wine was not exclusively imported product from afar. It seems that the surroundings of Novae is an area where the tradition of viticulture goes way back to the Roman, or perhaps, even pre-Roman times. As it has been shown years ago by the late Jerzy Kolendo, such a hint may be a relief on one of the tombstones of a certain family of *Atronii*, possibly freedmen, which shows a *falx vinitoria* – a tool used in collecting grapes (a billhook)¹¹. A popular subject in funerary arts could be just regarded as a decorative motif, but some other hints indicate that it was not a matter of coincidence. Members of the *Atronii* family are listed on a famous album of the *Bacchii vernaculi* – a monument of the members of Bacchic congregation, discovered in the rural hinterland of Novae¹².

⁸ On multidisciplinary approach and methods used in Novae, see A. Tomas, Tracing Civilian Settlement in the Surroundings of Novae (Lower Moesia). Sources, Investigations, Results, [in:] Cr.-G. Alexandrescu (ed.), Romans and the Others in the Lower Danube Region in the First Century BC – Third Century AD. Proceedings of the International Colloquium Tulcea, 7-11 of October 2015, Biblioteca Istro-Pontică. Seria Archeologie, 12, Cluj-Napoca 2016, pp. 191-204. Preliminary results were published by A. Tomas in the following volumes of Światowit: LI/A (2012) 2013, LII/A, (2014) 2015, LIII/A, (2014) 2016.

⁹ T. Sarnowski, L. Kovalevskaia, A. Tomas, R. Chowaniec, P. Zakrzewski, Novae – castra legionis, 2010-1012. Preliminary report on the excavations of the University of Warsaw Archaeological Expedition, Archeologia (Warszawa) 61, 2010 (2014), pp. 79-83.

¹⁰ IGLNov 100. Wine was imported also in barrels; see J. Kolendo, Symboles des fonctions militaires et des métiers sur les monuments funéraires de Novae, camp de la legio I Italica (Moesia inferior), Novensia 22 (2011), pp. 28-31.

¹¹ Ibidem, pp. 31-33.

¹² CIL III 6150 = 7437 = 12346 = ILBulg 438 = AÉ 2004, +1197.

Recent discoveries add to this small, but significant list some more intriguing evidence. An inscription on a statue base set up by two civilians living in the *canabae*, a woman and a man, described Jupiter as *fructuorum conlator*¹³. The crops mentioned in the text should refer to this deity and indeed, one of the traditions known from ancient sources informs about the first fruit of a harvest which the Latins offered particularly to Jupiter. According to this tradition, the offerings consisted of wine or grapes and the act of consecration – in the form of a libation to Jupiter – took place on 23rd April as *vinalia priora* or *urbana*, and on 19th August as *vinalia rustica*¹⁴. Therefore, it is possible that the statue and the base was dedicated during the celebration of the *vinalia*.

Last but not least, all these hints are supported by the results of laboratory analyses made recently. Vine seeds were identified in soil samples dated to the pre-Roman period, as well as in the contents of a local hand-made pot discovered in the earliest layers of the camp¹⁵. All the subsequent layers of the legionary fortress contained vine seeds, too. It is noteworthy that the natural conditions in the area are very good for the cultivation of grapes and wine production, as it is continued nowadays by Svištov Winery.

Mapping epigraphic finds can be sometimes the same fruitful, although not easy. This concerns, for example, the evidence of Bacchic cult at Novae. A number of finds is relatively large. Due to the discovery of the inscribed base we know that Liber Pater or Bacchus was venerated in the central part of the fortress and the map of all finds seem to confirm this fact (Fig. 3). Another concentration of finds shows that he was venerated also in the eastern part of the *canabae*. Moreover, his shrine which was excavated in the past, existed 2 km to the south-west of Novae. Bacchic cult was particularly popular and strong in Novae and this popularity is well seen both in small finds and in inscribed monuments.

Mapping finds related to the solar cults seem to reflect the topography and confirm that such method may bring valuable results. As the map shows, Mithraic finds were discovered, i.a., reused in the western defensive walls, very possibly moved from the *mithraeum* which was placed around 300 m to the south-west from the fortress (Fig. 4). The re-examination of the

¹³ P. Vladkova, New Data on the Cult of Iuppiter in Novae (Lower Moesia), [in:] A. Tomas (ed.), *Ad fines imperii Romani*, pp. 209-217.

¹⁴ Ovid, *Fasti* IV 897ff.; Pliny, *NH* XVIII 284, 287. The latter day was dedicated also to Venus.

¹⁵ H. Winter, *Opracowanie palinologiczne próbek ze stanowiska archeologicznego Novae (Bułgaria)*, unpublished laboratory analyses, Warszawa 2013.

architectural remains and the texts of three altars discovered there, allowed to date the shrine to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd centuries¹⁶.

Quite mysterious cult of Deus Aeternus, a deity worshipped mainly in Dacia, is also well attested at Novae. Deus Aeternus very possibly joined variety of deities believed to be powerful and eternal¹⁷. Two out of the four inscribed monuments dedicated to this deity were found in the Episcopal basilica and two others were discovered in another place – to the south-east from the legionary camp (Fig. 5). It is possible that the finds from the basilica originate from the western part of the *canabae*. Carrying stone from the western part of the *canabae* to the place on the south-eastern side of the fortress would be very difficult due to the shape of the terrain and inconvenient transportation. Thus, we can assume that another place of cult may have existed somewhere to the east of the camp.

The cult of Isis and Sarapis is attested at Novae by sculpted and inscribed monuments. It is possible that the place of worship dedicated to Egyptian deities existed in the western part of the settlement. Although the finds related to his cult, i.e. an altar or a base dedicated to Sarapis, an architectural element bearing dedication to Isis and a fragment of a relief with his representation¹⁸ were found reused in three distant places, we can consider some additional hints. Firstly, the architectural element which must have belonged to some shrine was found in the ruins of the Episcopal basilica, which is closer to the western side of the fortress. Secondly, the mentioned altar or a base is a heavy stone difficult to transport, hence we may assume that it was found not far from the place where it was originally set up.

The evidence of extramural life is not always so helpful, but it may provide some information which allows to imagine the variety of religious, social, and cultural life, as well as its quality or limitations. Sometimes mapping a certain type of finds may be an aimless procedure. Such an example seem to be finds related to the cult of Hecate called also Dea Placida. So far, we know about six finds related to this goddess 1) an altar dedicated to Dea Sancta Placida by *augustalis municipii*, discovered to the east of the East Gate of the legionary

¹⁶ The discovery has recently been documented once again and re-examined by A. Tomas, M. Lemke, *The Mithraeum at Novae*, p. 15.

¹⁷ J. Bartels, A. Kolb, *Ein angeblicher Meilenstein in Novae (Moesia Inferior) und der Kult des Deus Aeternus*, *Klio* 93/2, p. 421.

¹⁸ IGLNov 29, dated to AD 151-250; IGLNov 43, dated to AD 101-250.

camp¹⁹, 2) an altar dedicated to Placida by *praefectus legionis* and his wife, discovered in the extramural residence in the western *canabae*²⁰, 3) an altar dedicated to Numen Placidae, a stray find²¹, 4) a votive tablet bought by the Historical Museum in Svištov in 1905²², 5) a votive tablet bought by the National Museum in Sofia, according to the seller, found in the nearby village of Vardim²³, 6) a fragment of a votive tablet kept in the Historical Museum in Svištov²⁴. Although only two of these finds have an established archaeological context, it is possible that their potential spread would be random. Hecate, as a goddess of fate and witchcraft, underworld and ghosts, had shrines in households and on crossroads. She was venerated in liminal places and in liminal moments of life, like childbirth and death. Such a broad realm could be the reason for the evidence of her cult to be found in many places within the site. What is interesting, is that the cult of Hecate is well attested in Dacia inferior, not in Moesia²⁵, hence Novae is an exception within the entire province.

Apart from the evidence of cult practice, we can trace some features of the civil settlement. One of the inscriptions from Novae possibly mentions the renovation of a water source (*fons*) by two veterans, certainly inhabitants of the *canabae*²⁶. Two altars dedicated to Quadriviae – protective deities of crossroads discovered near the West Gate²⁷. Both altars were set up by civilians, hence they may have stood outside the camp, most probably at the crossroads to the west of the West Gate. All these hints, combined with the spread of the archaeological finds visible on the surface, lead to the conclusion that the main part of the *canabae* was situated to the west of the fortress.

¹⁹ ILBulg 281 = IGLNov 39 = AÉ 1964, 224, dated to AD 171-250, discovered during works in the park in 1958, i.e. prior the start of the regular excavations.

²⁰ IGLNov 40, dated to AD 271-350, discovered during excavations in 1980.

²¹ AÉ 2011, 1126.

²² MSv, Inv. No. 3692 (23×17.5×2.5 cm); B. Filov, IBAD III, 1, 1912, pp. 46-47, fig. 42.

²³ MSo, Inv. No. 2429 (14.5×10.5×1.5 cm); M. Nowicka, Archeologia 12, 1961, p. 152, No. 15 (with wrong reference to B. Filov, IBAD III); Ja. Mladenova, Arheologija 5, 4, 1963, pp. 27-33.

²⁴ MSv (7×7×2.5 cm); G. Kazarow, Archaeologischer Anzeiger 42, 1927, col. 345, No. 28c; M. Nowicka, Archeologia 12, 1961, p. 152, No. 14.

²⁵ In Moesia superior in Ratiaria (AÉ 2010, 1393), Naissus (CIL III 1673 (p. 1024) = IMS IV 2), and Kottenovci (IBAD III, 48). In Dacia at Romula (CIL III 1590a = 8029 = IDR II 338), Aquae (IDR II 144 = AÉ 1959, 333 = 1965, 277) and Sucidava (IDR II 198 = AÉ 1959, 321). See also J. Kolendo, Dea Placida à Novae et le culte d'Hécate, la bonne déesse, Archeologia 20 (1969), 1970, pp. 77-84.

²⁶ AÉ 1999, 1332, dated to AD 222-235.

²⁷ IGLNov 41 and 42. See also L. Mrozewicz, Quadriviae in Novae (Moesia inferior), Eos 73, 1985, pp. 167-169.

Novae provided a quite significant amount of epigraphic finds, thus also people's names. Although some inscriptions are only partly preserved and some of them do not inform whether they give a name of an active soldier or a civilian, we can assume that at least 148 persons we know by name might have lived *extra muros castrorum*. Among them at least 22 veterans, 25 members of military families, 79 civilian inhabitants, and 22 persons whose military or civilian status remains unknown²⁸. The tombstones dated to the 1st or the beginning of the 2nd century mention 46 people living most probably in the *canabae*. The 2nd-century inscriptions name 76 people, 69 of them civilians. The inhabitants of the *canabae* left far more inscribed monuments than the military and the majority of them is dated to the 2nd century. This period should be treated as a moment of the greatest development of the settlement.

It is expectable that the surroundings of the legionary fortress should be inhabited by the civilians and the military families. Surprisingly, the names of the relatives of the soldiers and officers occur not as often as of the civilians. This fact may be partly explained by the so-called „marriage ban” on active soldiers²⁹. However, from the reign of Claudius soldiers could have established heirs in their wills, including children born in illegitimate relationships³⁰, hence their relatives should appear on tombstones. The children of soldiers and of veterans raised their own families and were commemorated by their own families, who were not necessarily military. Perhaps some women who were in relationships with soldiers and veterans moved to the countryside or did not leave any trace of their „military marriage”, if they remarried³¹.

²⁸ A. Tomas, *Living with the Army I. Civil Settlements near Roman Legionary Fortresses in Lower Moesia*, Warszawa 2017, p. 127.

²⁹ In fact one cannot speak about a ban. The soldiers (*militēs*) did not possess the legal ability to enter a full Roman marriage (*iustum matrimonium*). They had such status probably until AD 197 and – in consequence – their informal families had no claims to their estate unless they were named heirs in the wills. The officers and perhaps centurions, were possibly allowed to enter into such marriages also before this date. Such privilege is based on the evidence given by Herodian (III 8.4-5). Some scholars consider the information given by Herodian as unreliable, however; see A. Tomas, *Living with the Army I*, p. 123 with literature.

³⁰ This privilege is described in the Gaius' *Institutiones* and by Cassius Dio (Gaius, *Inst.* 2.110; Cass. Dio LX 24.3).

³¹ S.E. Phang, *The Timing of Marriage in the Roman Army*, [in:] P. Freeman, J. Bennett, Z.T. Fiema, B. Hoffmann (eds.), *Limes XVIII. Proceedings of the XVIIIth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies held in Amman, Jordan (September 2000)*, II, B.A.R. Int. Ser. 1084, Oxford 2002, pp. 873-878; A. Tomas, *Female family members*, p. 103.

Only 10 out of the 42 women known from Novae were certainly related to the military³². There are two cases of presumably active soldiers who commemorated their wives. The first involves a freedwoman commemorated by a trumpeter (*cornicen*), most probably of the First Italic Legion. The *cornicen* could be a veteran, in fact, but this presumption should be treated as the same possible as the fact that he was an active soldier who was married and the monument should be dated to the 3rd century. The second case – of a *centurio* who commemorated his one-year-old son, does not necessarily have to be dated to the 3rd century, as it was in the primary publication, as centurions with families are attested before the end of the 2nd century³³.

The inhabitants of the *canabae* arrived to Novae from various parts of the Empire. One of the earliest monuments is a tombstone of an Etruscan family from Crustumiae Arniae³⁴. Etruscan origin has also been attested for a producer of clay pipes through stamps bearing the name Arrius and dated to the Flavian period. The Arrii family has been attested in the rural hinterland of Novae, namely at Butovo, which was a big production centre for pottery and building materials, hence it has been suggested that the family was involved in clay manufacturing there³⁵. It is possible that Arrius started his business in the *canabae* and his descendants developed it in Butovo, which had strong economic ties with the legionary fortress³⁶. Apart from people from Italy, Spanish Asturians also lived at Novae, serving in Moesia in the 1st century AD³⁷. Among veterans were former soldiers who did not

³² Ibidem, pp. 94-95.

³³ This monument was dated in IGLNov by J. Kolendo to AD 201-250, but Fr. Feraudi-Gruénais in the Epigraphik Datenbank Heidelberg (henceforth: EDH) follows the dating to AD 151-200 as proposed by S. Conrad (Die Grabstelen aus Moesia inferior. Untersuchungen zu Chronologie, Typologie und Ikonografie, Leipzig 2004, p. 232, No. 393; Taf. 102, 4 = EDH, No. HD42193).

³⁴ The monument was found together with another gravestone of a *cornicen leg. VIII Aug.* (IGLNov 81). Such a find context became the basis for an argument presented by G. Forni that the commemorated family not only may have lived in the *canabae* of the Eighth Augustan Legion, but even might have been related to an individual from the military of that legion, but J. Kolendo evaluated this argument as too weak. See G. Forni, *Esercito, e marina di Roma antica. Raccolta di contributi*, Stuttgart 1992, p. 88 and cf. IGLNov, ad No. 93.

³⁵ J. Kolendo, T. Kowal, *Stamps on ceramic pipes from Novae (Moesia Inferior)*, Novensia 22, 2011, p. 71.

³⁶ A. Tomas, *Inter Moesos et Thracas. The Rural Hinterland of Novae in Lower Moesia (1st-6th centuries AD)*, Oxford 2016, pp. 56, 72.

³⁷ C. Aurelius Vegetus served in *cohors V Asturum* and was transferred to *legio I Italica* (AÉ 1999, 1333), and Ti. Bassus, probably a *decurio* of *ala I Asturum*, retired and died in Novae (IGLNov 56). For *ala I Asturum* in Moesia, see F. Matei-Popescu, *The Roman Army in Moesia Inferior*, The Centre for Military Studies, 7, Bucharest 2010, pp. 167-169.

serve in the First Italic Legion, but decided to settle down at Novae, like a certain Thracian named Tarsa Bassus, a former *miles cohortis I Tyrriorum sagittariorum*, who lived in the *canabae* just after Trajan's Dacian Wars³⁸. A former *centurio*, who had served in the Eleventh Claudian Legion based at Durostorum decided to settle down in Novae, as well³⁹. In the first half of the 2nd century, a soldier previously enrolled in Claudian municipium Virunum in Noricum (now Zollfeld in Austria) retired and died at Novae, where he was buried by his friend⁴⁰. Another veteran born in Ancyra lived at Novae until he was a very old man⁴¹. In the 2nd century AD, a certain Aurelius Victor arrived in Novae from distant Piroburidava and raised a family with Aelia Dionysia.

The majority of the civilian inhabitants of Novae bore the names of Roman citizens, while the smallest group is formed by people bearing peregrine names (6%). Among them Greek, Thracian, Celtic, Etruscan, and possibly Illyrian⁴². Thracian names in the *canabae* are attested only in four cases and all of them belong to men who were related to the army. Thracian and Dacian female names are absent among the civilians living near the base. This, however, does not mean that the local population was a small minority absent in the *canabae*. It is quite obvious that the epigraphic habit is a phenomenon of Roman and Greek culture and was practiced by the Romans and those who were Romanized at least superficially. Those who were Romanized include people who changed their native names into Roman ones. Such a case is that of famous Aurelius Statianus, a former soldier in a fleet and a producer of building materials, known from two inscriptions discovered at Novae, whose origin is recognized thanks to a military diploma in which he is named Apta⁴³. In some cases, the names of children and other members of the family provide a hint suggesting the origins of a certain person. Such is the example of a boy from Novae whose name, Mampsalachanus, may be of African or Eastern origin, while his parents bear common Roman names. Another case refers to a veteran of the First Italic Legion who settled in the countryside. Although he bears a Roman

³⁸ RMM 10.

³⁹ IGLNov 88.

⁴⁰ IGLNov 79.

⁴¹ IGLNov 83.

⁴² A. Tomas, Female family members, pp. 97-98 and Chart 4.

⁴³ RMD IV 311 and see A. Tomas, T. Sarnowski, M. Aurelius Statianus from Lower Moesia. A Note on his Origin, Status and Business, [in:] L. Vagalinski (ed.), The Lower Danube in Antiquity, 6.-7.10.2005, BG – Tutrakan, Sofia 2007, pp. 231-234.

name, his daughter's and brother's names are Thracian⁴⁴. Similarly misleading is the case of a certain Antonia Optata from Novae, whose customary name, Maura, may indicate either a dark complexion or African roots, but this is not indicated in her „official name”⁴⁵. The majority of the families living in the *canabae* must have been ethnically mixed. Hence, a change of a name seems to have been unexceptional⁴⁶. We can imagine that in the civilian-military environment of the *canabae*, Roman *homines novi* could and wanted to possess Roman-sounding names as an expression of their social promotion.

Greek names which prevail among the civilians does not mean that the civilian inhabitants of the *canabae* were people of Greek or eastern origin. Slaves sold at the market at Ephesos, Delos or Delphi were very often renamed, and their new names could be Roman or Greek, but only Greek names can be recognizable as those given to the slaves⁴⁷. Among the Greek servile names recorded in Novae, we find Glaphyrus, Elpidephorus, Chresimus, Timocrates, Abascantus, Onesiphorus, Eutyches and Therapo. Sometimes only the names of the freedmen's family members, are helpful in determining the possible low social status or slave origins of people.

Freedmen who bear Roman names are recognizable in cases when they belonged to rich Italic families, i.e. Caeserni, Metelli, or Paccii, but also those who are probably related to imperial slaves. Caeserni originated from Aquileia, but in the 1st century they settled down in Emona, and later in other

⁴⁴ A. Tomas, *Living with the Army I*, p. 98. The wives of all the veterans (including from other military units) settled in Lower Moesia usually bear Balkan and Near-Eastern names; see L. Mrozewicz, *Roman Military Settlement in Lower Moesia, 1st - 3rd c.*, *Archeologia* 33 (1982) 1985, p. 85.

⁴⁵ IGLNov, p. 127, ad No. 92. The name Optatus appears in the Western provinces, mainly in Hispania, southern Gallia and Italia (Nomenclator, p. 209). The assumptions concerning the presence of the Mauri at Novae were based on the fact that the First Italic Legion was supposed to participate in their revolt during the reign of Antoninus Pius. However, such theory is very doubtful, since it is based on two finds of stamped building materials: CIL VIII 10474, 13 et p. 911, Numidia, Constantine / Cirta, now lost, and the other, of doubtful provenance, kept in the Museum in St. Germain. On the stamps and their interpretation, see E. Ritterling, s.v. Legio, RE 12, 2, 1925, col. 1407-1417.

⁴⁶ As was the case of a sailor serving in Egypt, see P. Weiß, *Zu Vicusangaben und qui-et Namen auf Flottendiplomen des 3. Jhs*, ZPE 130, 2000, pp. 279-285.

⁴⁷ Some Greek names were typical for freedmen although they were not popular among the Greeks. Moreover, six out of ten slaves from Rome bore Roman names which made them undistinguishable among freeborn people; H. Solin, *Die stadtrömischen Sklavennamen: ein Namenbuch*, Stuttgart 1996; idem, *Griechische und römische Sklavennamen. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung*, [in:] H. Bellen, H. Heinen (eds.), *Fünfzig Jahre Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei an der Mainzer Akademie, 1950-2000. Miscellanea zum Jubiläum*, Stuttgart 2001, pp. 307-330.

Pannonian cities, including the military sites of Brigetio and Aquincum⁴⁸. In Novae, a couple bearing such a name is attested in the 2nd century. As it was stated above wine trade is very well attested at Novae. Among other occupations, we find a civilian medic and local wine producers. The descendants of rich freedmen played a very important role in the local society as shown by the example of the Oppii. The altar discovered at Nicopolis ad Istrum set up by two members of this family – one of them a priest of Mater Deum (i.e. Cybele) and the second of Liber Pater – is very important evidence of the social and religious life of the *canabae*. The text of the inscription provides information that the two priests set up an altar under the standards of Novaensium Oppianorum⁴⁹. It has been suggested that the Oppii could have been firemen as one of them was a priest of Cybele, in which *dendrophori* played an important role, and *dendrophori* were once considered to be involved in fire-fighting, the same as *fabri* and *centonarii*⁵⁰. However, the theory about the connection between fire-fighting duties and the *fabri* (not *dendrophori*) based on Plinian testimony has been rejected widely by scholars⁵¹. We can assume that the mentioned *vexillum* was in all likelihood the standard of a sacral *collegium*⁵², not that of firemen or any other paramilitary association⁵³. However, their religious positions may have been linked with some other activities in the *canabae*, e.g. social or economic. It has been suggested that the *centonarii* could have been connected with trade and the provision of supplies to frontier towns⁵⁴. Perhaps in frontier towns the members of these *collegia* were active both in religious life and in business of various kinds.

Some of the inhabitants of Novae must have enjoyed wealth. One of the tombs, which was built for a veteran and his wife, was located on a plot

⁴⁸ A. Móczy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia*, London-Boston 1974 (2014), p. 120.

⁴⁹ T. Sarnowski, *Accepta parietoria und pastus militum*. Eine neue Statuenbasis mit zwei Inschriften aus Novae, *Tyche* 28, 2013, pp. 135-146, here p. 141, fn. 32; A. Tomas, *Dionysus or Liber Pater?*, p. 258: *(sub) vexillo / Nov{a}e(n)sium Oppianorum*.

⁵⁰ I. Turov, *Sacral Inscription from Nicopolis ad Istrum by Priests from Novae*, *Novensia* 8, 1995, p. 11.

⁵¹ Plin., *Ep.* 10.33 and 34 and the theory presented in the fundamental work by J.P. Waltzing. This idea was challenged by O. van Nijf and J. Perry; see J. Liu, *Collegia centonariorum. The Guilds of Textile Dealers in the Roman West*, Leiden-Boston 2009, pp. 3-4 with literature. Other scholars ascribed this function to *centonarii*, but still the evidence is not clear; see *ibidem*, pp. 125ff., esp. 128 and 159.

⁵² Cf. SHA, *Gall. duo*, 8.6; *Aurel.* 34.4; *AE* 1995, ad no. 1362; J. Liu, *Collegia centonariorum*, pp. 52-54, 202.

⁵³ *AE* 1995, ad 1362; cf. J. Liu, *Collegia centonariorum*, pp. 202-203.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 159-160.

measuring 80×80 *pedes*, i.e., over 560 sq. m without the possibility of sharing it with their descendants⁵⁵. Another interesting case refers to Aurelia Quieta who was mentioned first, before her husband, Flavius Decebalus, a veteran⁵⁶. In epigraphic evidence, women are usually recorded directly following the men. However, the women sometimes came first if they were the founders of the tombstone or the deceased to whom it was dedicated. In other cases, the reason behind such a placement might have been the higher social position of the women⁵⁷. Although in this case the monument was erected by their heirs, who carried her *gentilicium* (Aurelii), the fact that she was mentioned first before her husband, may have had also other reasons, like the influential position of the family.

Looking at the shape of the tombstones and their decoration, we can observe common motifs, but also some peculiarities which perhaps were specific for Novae. The gravestones from Novae commemorate mostly men, very rarely children, and usually they were born in the military families. Tombstones depicting the deceased were infrequent and it is worth noting that we do not know of any portrait of a child from Novae, while in Dacia funerary reliefs from various military bases show military families with children⁵⁸. The quality of the stone should not be considered as the reason behind such differences. Funerary monuments from Novae were usually carved using relatively high-quality limestone, while those from Dacia were made not only with limestone, but also sandstone and andesite of an inconvenient porphyritic texture. We can assume that the funerary habit either was not focused on portraying the deceased or the local workshops were not specialized in such reliefs⁵⁹. Moreover, among the few portraits discovered at Novae the majority had been intentionally damaged at some point in the past.

⁵⁵ Veterans were a relatively wealthy social group; see K. Królczyk, *Veteranen in den donauprovinzen des römischen Reiches 1.-3. Jh. N.Chr.*, Poznań 2009, pp. 126-127.

⁵⁶ IGLNov 82, dated to 222-235.

⁵⁷ M. Boudreau Flory, *Where Women Precede Men: Factors Influencing the Order of Names in Roman Epitaphs*, *The Classical Journal* 79, 3 1984, p. 216.

⁵⁸ E.g. J. Mander, *Portraits of Children on Roman Funerary Monuments*, Cambridge 2012, Nos. 796-814 (Apulum); 826 (Gherla); 830-836 (Deva); 837-839 (Micia); 847 (Porolissum); 852-855 (Potaissa); 857-858 (Tibiscum); 871 (Resculum); 878 (Tihău).

⁵⁹ S. Conrad, who collected a catalogue of funerary monuments from Lower Moesia, drew attention to several types of stelae from the surroundings of Novae. All of them bear floral motifs. See S. Conrad, *Die Grabstelen*, pp. 83, 94-95.

OESCUS

Oescus was the legionary base of the *legio V Macedonica*, probably from the reign of August or rather Tiberius⁶⁰. In the times of Nero, the Legion was to take part in the Armenian expedition together with the newly created First Italic Legion, and was absent in the military base between 62-71⁶¹. At that time, auxiliary detachments may have stationed there⁶². The military base existed up to the end of the second Dacian Wars of Trajan, when the Legion was transferred to Troesmis, i.e., between 102 and 106⁶³. The foundation of the colony is dated between 106 and 112⁶⁴.

The archaeological remains of the legionary fortress are almost certainly placed below the buildings of the later *colonia*⁶⁵. The majority of researchers accepted the theory that the *principia* were situated at the place where later was the *forum*⁶⁶, and – as a camp built in the Augustan-Tiberian period – may have had an irregular pentagonal plan. Still, its exact area and plan remains unknown and the line of defensive walls are reconstructed on the very weak premises⁶⁷. The exact location of the *canabae* is a debated subject. The scholars rather exclude the northern side of the fortress, as this area was swampy in the past, although some finds from the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age have been found there⁶⁸. According to archaeologists, the *canabae* could

⁶⁰ B. Gerov, Epigraphische Beiträge zur Geschichte des mösischen Limes in vorclaudischer Zeit, AAHung 15, p. 88; idem, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Provinzen Moesien und Thrakien. Gesammelte Schriften, Amsterdam 1980, pp. 1-21; G. Kabakčieva, Die Gründung des Militärlagers bei der Mündung des Flusses Oescus und die Entstehung der Provinz Moesien, [in:] W. Groenman-Waateringe, B.L. Beek, W.J.H. Willems, S.L. Wynia (eds.), Roman Frontier Studies 1995. Proceedings of the XVIth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies, Oxbow Monograph, 91, Oxford 1995, p. 389.

⁶¹ E. Ritterling, s.v. Legio, col. 1573; T. Ivanov, R. Ivanov, Ulpia Oescus, I, Sofija 1998 (2005), p. 14.

⁶² Ibidem, p. 24; F. Matei-Popescu, The Roman Army, pp. 172-173.

⁶³ E. Ritterling, s.v. Legio; F. Matei-Popescu, The Roman Army, pp. 257-259 with further literature.

⁶⁴ CIL III 753; I. Boyanov, Oescus – from castra to colonia, Archaeologia Bulgarica 12, 3, 2008, p. 69.

⁶⁵ G. Kabakčieva, Castra Oescensia. Rannorimskijat voenen lager pri ustieo na Iskär, Sofija 2000, pp. 100-102.

⁶⁶ T. Ivanov, R. Ivanov, Ulpia Oescus, pp. 199-200; G. Kabakčieva, Castra Oescensia; I. Boyanov, Oescus – from castra to colonia, p. 70. Analogically as in other former camps transformed into colonies, see S. Sommer, Kastellvicus und Kastell: Modell für die Canabae legionis?, Jahresbericht der Gesellschaft pro Vindonissa s.n., 1997, pp. 41-52.

⁶⁷ S. Boyadjiev, La destination initiale de la porte occidentale d'Oescus, [in:] The Roman and Late Roman City. The International Conference (Veliko Turnovo 26-30 July 2000), Sofia 2002, p. 173.

⁶⁸ I. Boyanov, Oescus, p. 70.

be placed on the territory of the later annex (Oescus II), but this presumption is based only on the fact that some residential buildings dated to the 3rd century were discovered there⁶⁹.

For obvious reasons the epigraphic and archaeological evidence of civil settlement is far less than that at Novae. The epigraphic evidence dated to the 1st century AD provides information about 21 persons: 9 veterans and members of their families, 9 civilians, and 3 persons of undetermined military or civilian status⁷⁰. Among seven veterans, five certainly served in the Fifth Macedonian Legion, one in the Fourth Gallic Cohort and one in undefined unit.

One of the monuments was found embedded in the church of the present-day village Bajkal⁷¹. It has been suggested that the commemorated veteran could be buried in his property outside Oescus⁷² and this assumption cannot be excluded.

At least five freedmen attested at Oescus form the biggest group of civilians known from the 1st century. The earliest known monument commemorates a freedmen of a *centurio leg V Mac*. Other freedmen are Hermes, a former slave of a veteran G. Iulius Longinus, Eutyches, and a freedmen of the Moesian legate from the times of Domitian. A partly preserved name of [---]aculia – perhaps – *(liberta)* is the only female example of a former slave. One monument commemorates a veteran of an unknown name, but gives the names of certain Braetii, the family originating from northern Italy (Venetia et Histria)⁷³, hence possibly merchantmen or freedmen. Nothing can be said about the *heres* of the *duplicarius alae Pansianae*⁷⁴, apart from the fact that his testator originated from Treveri.

Only by chance we receive information concerning life in the *canabae* of Oescus. Unnamed *heres* who commemorated a *signifier* of the Legion,

⁶⁹ Kabakčieva, *Castra Oesciensia*, p. 100; I. Boyanov, *Oescus*, p. 71.

⁷⁰ I do not include the gravestones dated to the first half of the 2nd century as they can be monuments commemorating veterans who retired from the Fifth Macedonian and First Italic Legion and settled down in the Colonia Ulpia Oescus after its foundation (CIL III 14417 = ILBulg 63, L. Firmius Valentinus; CIL III 7428 = ILBulg 56, C. Iulius Celer and Iulia Tyche; CIL III 12352 = ILBulg 60, Q. Falcus Constans, *vet. leg. I Ital.*), although earlier they may have lived in the *canabae*.

⁷¹ ILBulg 51.

⁷² I. Boyanov, *Oescus*, p. 72, but also admits that the stone could have been moved.

⁷³ TLL II, col. 2163.

⁷⁴ According to I. Boyanov (*Oescus*, p. 72) and K. Królczyk (*Veteranen in den Donauprovinzen*, p. 140), the *duplicarius* was most probably a veteran, as he was 36 years in service. However, double payment may have been a reward for a long service, and other examples of *duplicarii* who were active soldiers despite their age are known; see e.g. *duplicarius alae Asturum*, 32 years in service (AÉ 1988, 998, Tomi).

Q. Philippicus from Edessa⁷⁵ set up the monument according to the decision (*arbitratu*) of Antonius, who was an architect (*architectus*) and Titus, a leather worker or a tanner (*coriarius*)⁷⁶. Antonius and Titus were arbiters in inheritance obliged to control the *heres* in execution of the Philippicus' will. It is noteworthy that both arbiters were identified by their *gentilicia* and occupations instead *cognomina* or origin. This small detail shows their important role in the services provided to the army.

One of the most interesting inscriptions is a tombstone of L. Freius l. lib. Faustus, who was described as *lix*a of the Fifth Legion. A term *lix*a is not fully recognized, but certainly refers to an army sutler⁷⁷. No civilian women are attested on the stone monuments from the 1st-century Oescus.

DUROSTORUM

Prior the encampment of the legion, an unknown auxiliary unit was deployed at Durostorum, but probably not earlier than in the Flavian period⁷⁸. In AD 79 *legio III Gallica* marched along the Danube, and perhaps it encamped at Durostorum⁷⁹. It has been suggested that C. Iulius Apo[---], veteran, who commemorated himself and his wife, most probably at the turn of the 1st and 2nd century AD was discharged from one of the units based in this early period⁸⁰. However, excavations have not proved the existence of an auxiliary fort.

The Eleventh Claudian Legion was detached to Durostorum between or just after Dacian Wars of Trajan, but the exact moment of its arrival is a subject of a debate⁸¹. The *castra* probably cover an area of about 22 ha,

⁷⁵ ILBulg 49.

⁷⁶ OLD, p. 445.

⁷⁷ E.g. H. von Petrikovits, *Lixae*, [in:] W.S. Hanson, L.J.F. Keppie (eds.), *Roman Frontier Studies 1979. Papers Presented to the 12th International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies, I*, B.A.R. Int. Ser. 71(i), Oxford 1980, pp. 1027-1034; R. Feig Vishnia, *The Shadow Army: The Lixae and the Roman Legions*, ZPE 139, 265-272.

⁷⁸ R. Ivanov, G. Atanasov, P. Donevski, *History of Silistra, I, The Ancient Durostorum*, Silistra-Sofia 2006, pp. 74-75. A military diploma discovered at Brestovene, near Silistra, dated for the reign of Claudius is invoked as a proof of an early veteran settlement in this area; see R. Vulpe, I. Barnea, *Din istoria Dobrogei, II*, Bucuresti 1968, p. 63.

⁷⁹ R. Ivanov, G. Atanasov, P. Donevski, *History of Silistra*, p. 75.

⁸⁰ R. Hošek, V. Velkov, *Ein tesserarius von Durostorum*, *Archaeologica Classica s.n.*, 2, 1957, pp. 1-10; R. Ivanov, G. Atanasov, P. Donevski, *History of Silistra*, p. 75; I. Boyanov, *Oescus*, p. 101.

⁸¹ M. Zahariade, *How and When the Legion XI Claudia Arrived in Lower Moesia*, [in:] N. Gudea (ed.), *Roman Frontier Studies. Proceedings of the XVIIth International Congress of*

which would be 4 ha more than the Trajanic camp at Novae. The ancient layers of Durostorum are covered by a modern city of Silistra, which is an obstacle for any regular excavations. Only salvage investigations are possible and the results of them were published in a few articles and book chapters. The major part of the *canabae* is situated to the north from the military base and its estimated area is approximately 60 ha⁸². Five buildings with baths have been unearthed so far within the area of the *canabae*⁸³. The buildings discovered in the *canabae* seem to have been solid, many of them had heating system, water supply and sewers⁸⁴. The settlement was provided with paved streets with canals. The *castra* and the *canabae* were destroyed in AD 170, i.e., during the Costoboci raids⁸⁵. The settlement existed throughout Antiquity, with the most flourishing residences in the 4th century AD. During the 6th century AD the buildings in the extramural area changed their function into manufacturing sites⁸⁶. The same at Novae, at a distance of 2-3 km from the *canabae*, another settlement (*vicus*) existed. The second settlement which possibly developed from the local site may have had a name of *Gavidina*, known from an inscription⁸⁷.

The epigraphic evidence provides quite significant information concerning the status of the civil settlement and its importance. Among them are texts which mention the members of the magistrate. It is a debatable subject which settlement (*canabae* or *vicus*) was granted municipal status⁸⁸, but it is noteworthy that some *cognomina* of the magistrates like T. Lucretius Felix, L. Numerius Ponticus, C. Terentius Herodianus, T. Flavius Papirianus do not have a typical sounding of Roman citizens, but they may have had a foreign

Roman Frontier Studies, Zalău 1999, pp. 599-607; F. Matei-Popescu, The Roman Army, pp. 262-263 with further literature.

⁸² R. Ivanov, G. Atanasov, P. Donevski, History of Silistra, p. 227.

⁸³ P. Donevski, G. Milošević, Public and private baths at canabae legionis XI Claudiae (Lower Moesia), [in:] Collection of Works from the Symposium „Water, Life, and Pleasure” in 2008, Strumica 2009, p. 52ff.

⁸⁴ R. Ivanov, G. Atanasov, P. Donevski, History of Silistra, p. 226; P. Donevski, Archaeological Investigations in Silistra (Durostorum), Buletinul Muzeului Județean Teleorman. Seria Arheologie 1, 2009, p. 106.

⁸⁵ P. Donevski, Archaeological Investigations, p. 106.

⁸⁶ Ibidem, p. 111.

⁸⁷ I. Boyanov (Municipium Aurelium Durostorum or *vicus* Gavidina, Archaeologia Bulgarica 14, 2, 2010, pp. 53-59) published the following reading of the inscription: *Iovi Opt[i]mo / Maximo Iuli(u)s / Eutuches ex v[o]/[t]o pro se et pro / [p]atronum suum / Iuli Maximu (sic!) po/[sui]t et donavit / vicos Gavidin(a) / Arnumtum sup/periore.*

⁸⁸ A. Tomas, Living with the Army I, pp. 158-159 with further literature.

or servile origin. The *portorium Illyricum* station is epigraphically attested⁸⁹, as well as the Mithraeum⁹⁰.

More than 72 people⁹¹ who may have lived in the *canabae* or the *vicus* at Ostrov are attested in inscriptions. Twenty-five of them were veterans and members of military families and 37 were civilians. The status of the remaining 10 persons is unknown.

A relatively high number of persons who may have lived in the surroundings is actually provided by three inscriptions where 32 people are mentioned⁹². Among them is a gravestone of a military family whose members bear Dacian and Roman names or an architect paid by the Legion dedicated an altar to Mithras.

Two inscriptions dated to AD 197–209 and 209 are of special interest. The stones were found in 1970, about 500 m to the south of the *castra*⁹³. The text calling Four Winds and Good outcome *per quibus constat animale genus bene gubernantes sanctis sacrum* mentions *vicani*, while the second altar set up by one of the dedicants known from another inscription, Antonius Herculanus, a veteran, bears a dedication made to Mercury for the *veterans consistentibus huius loci* (AÉ 1974, 571). The place mentioned in the text refers to the extramural settlement, as the expression „consistentes” was usually used to denominate people attached to the military bases. The word „vicani”, not necessarily refers to the inhabitants of the settlement at Ostrov or „the official settlement of veterans (*vicus*) in the neighbourhood of the camp”⁹⁴. The term may refer here to the people living along one street or in a quarter of houses in the *canabae* (*vicus canabarum*)⁹⁵, hence in fact the

⁸⁹ CIL III 7479; III 12454.

⁹⁰ CIL III 7475 = CIMRM II 2273, 101-300; CIMRM II 2314 = ZPE 181, 208 = AÉ 1936, 12.

⁹¹ Two inscriptions were dedicated by undefined groups of people; see Tab. 1, no. 12 (veterans) and Tab. 3, no. 9 (women).

⁹² In AD 209, eight veterans and eleven civilians made a dedication to Four Winds and possibly Good Outcome (*Quattuor Ventis et Bono Evento or Bono Flanti*, AÉ 1974, 570. P. Georgiev (Rimski statui i nadpisi ot Silistra, *Izvestija na Narodnija Muzej Varna* 10, 1974, pp. 95-102) read *Fl[a]nto* and B. Gerov (B. Gerov, *Zum Problem der Entstehung der römischen Städte am Unteren Donaulimes*, *Klio* 59, 1977, pp. 299-309) *Fla/nti*. The second monument was set up by the six members of the municipal magistrate between AD 169-176. The third one is a gravestone of a military family with five children.

⁹³ P. Georgiev, *Rimski statui*, pp. 95-97; B. Gerov, *Zum Problem*, pp. 302-305, No. 1; P. Donevski, *Archaeological Investigations*, p. 109.

⁹⁴ K. Banev, *Addenda et corrigenda epigraphica* (II), *Archaeologia Bulgarica* 5, 2, 2001, p. 34.

⁹⁵ A. Poulter, *Town and Country in Moesia Inferior*, [in:] A.G. Poulter (ed.), *Ancient Bulgaria. Papers presented to the International Symposium on the Ancient History and Archeology of Bulgaria*, II, Nottingham 1983, p. 81 and fn. 35; D.J.P. Mason, *Chester: The Canabae Legionis*, *Britannia* 18, p. 143. The same observation was presented by P. Donevski (*Archaeological*

neighbours, who very often celebrated festivals and made religious dedications together.

Eight freedmen or people of servile origin are attested at Durostorum, among them two people of the Oppii family, a father and a son, who dedicated a temple, a statue and an altar dedicated to I.O.M. for the health of the emperor A. Pius and *caesar* L. Verus⁹⁶. Although they did not state their positions or any relations to business, it is obvious that they must have been wealthy men and that they were of servile origin.

One inscription from Durostorum should draw attention again. Its text published in 1887 by G. Tocilescu was reconstructed according to the testimony of an inhabitant of Silistra⁹⁷. The Romanian scholar proposed reconstruction of the text as a funerary monument to Valeria Irene made by Cat(---)rus, a *vilicus* of *portorium vectigalis Illyrici*⁹⁸. A reassessment of the monument gives presumptions to another reconstruction, where the name of the commemorated person would be Ireneus, an imperial slave working in the station of *vectigalia Illyrici*⁹⁹. Analogical inscriptions are known from other sites¹⁰⁰.

TROESMIS

Troesmis was a base of the Fifth Macedonian Legion which was dispatched there from Oescus after the end of the Dacian Wars and remained there up to AD 162 when it was sent to the Parthian campaign, and after AD 166 moved to Potaissa. It is possible that prior the arrival of the Fifth Macedonian Legion *ala I Pannoniorum* was garrisoned here¹⁰¹, but the

Investigations, p. 109) and I. Piso (Le siège du gouverneur de Mésie inférieure, [in:] V. Cojocaru, A. Coşcun, M. Dana (eds.), *Interconnectivity in the Mediterranean and Pontic World during the Hellenistic and Roman Periods*, Pontica et Mediterranea, 3, Cluj-Napoca, p. 491).

⁹⁶ CIL III 7474, AD 139-161.

⁹⁷ *Archäologisch-epigraphische Mitteilungen* 11, 1887, p. 24, No. 12: „Die am linken Rande hinzugefügten schiefen Buchstaben sind der Copie eines Romänen aus Silistria entnommen.

⁹⁸ *Vale[?]riae Irene [quae vixi]t annis LV Catrus vectig[alis] [Illyrici] stat[ionis] Duros[tor]i] rarissimo....*

⁹⁹ A. Tomas, *Living with the Army I*, pp. 138-139.

¹⁰⁰ J. Carlsen, *Vilici and Roman Estate Managers Until AD 284*, Rome 1995, pp. 50-51.

¹⁰¹ Evidenced by brick stamps (e.g. CIL III 6242); see F. Matei-Popescu, *The Roman Army*, pp. 191-192; A. Tomas, *Living with the Army I*, p. 106.

earliest inscriptions come from the times of Hadrian¹⁰². The detachments of the *legio I Italica* were based at Troesmis after 167¹⁰³.

Thanks to the recent non-intrusive surveys it has been established that the legionary fortress was situated on a plateau adjacent to the high riverbank sloping down to the waters of the Danube. Two longer sides of the camp were identified, as well as the shorter side in the north-east¹⁰⁴, but the total length of the fortress remains unknown due to the erosion of the riverbank.

The civil settlement was stretched out to the north-east of the fortress. Its topography is recognized only to a certain degree as the basis for the plan is the image obtained from the geomagnetic surveys. Several streets and rather densely packed quarters of buildings are visible there. Very modest archaeological evidence remain in contrast with the rich epigraphic evidence. However, the the municipal status granted between 177 and 180 must certainly refer to the period when the legion was dispatched to Dacia. Nevertheless, the magistrate of the *canabae* is considerably well attested there.

According to the inscriptions, more or less 65 people may have lived in the *canabae legionis*. The vast majority of them (50) were people related to the army – among them veterans and their families. A considerable group of the soldiers and veterans who served in the Fifth Macedonian Legion originated from the East (Asia, Bithynia, Syria, and possibly from Iudaea¹⁰⁵). Others were born in Italy, Pannonia and Lower Moesia (Oescus). Such a composition reflects local enrolment made in the 60's of the 1st century AD when the Legion was stationed in Bithynia, and later was sent to suppress the Judean revolt. The latest recruitment before arrival to Troesmis was made in Oescus, most probably in the *canabae*¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰² CIL III 6166, AD 117-138; III 6178, AD 134.

¹⁰³ CIL III 14443, Tropaeum Traiani: *vexillatio legionum I Italicae Moesicae et V Macedonicae Daciae Tropaei agens*. The First Italic Legion is mentioned also in CIL III 6176, 6185; see R. Vulpe, I. Barnea, *Din istoria Dobrogei*, II, Bucuresti 1968, pp. 157, 176.

¹⁰⁴ C.-G. Alexandrescu, Chr. Gugl, *Troesmis și romanii la Dunărea de Jos. Proiectul Troesmis 2010-2013*, Peuce 12, 2014, p. 295.

¹⁰⁵ IScM V 158 and here Table 1, no. 9. The first editor R. Vulpe (*Canabenses și Troesmensis*. Două inscripții inedite din Troesmis, *Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche* 4, 3-4, 1953, pp. 562-568) identified Nicopolis mentioned in the inscription with the town in Iudaea, but according to L. Mihailescu-Bîrliba, the veteran originated from Nicopolis ad Istrum; see L. Mihailescu-Bîrliba, *Aspects prosopographiques concernant la colonisation dans les canabae de Troesmis: les élites locales*, *Invigilata Lucernis* 34, p. 150.

¹⁰⁶ E. Adam, *L'origine des légionnaires de Mésie inférieure. La V^e légion Macedonica à Troesmis*, *Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica* 19, 2013, p. 129.

Predominance of the Bithynians in Troesmis fits well into the ethnic pattern of Dobruja where the significant part of population originated from Asia Minor, particularly from Bithynia and Pontus¹⁰⁷. Economic connections may have been based, among others, by the veterans from Troesmis¹⁰⁸.

The earliest attested members of the magistrate of the *canabae* most probably originated from Italy, Pannonia, and the East¹⁰⁹, hence represents well the ethnic composition of the settlement. The evidence mentioning local magistrate seem to indicate that the veterans played significant role in self-government and constituted the local elite. Contrary to other sites, freedmen are less attested than the veterans. It is worth to note, that the stone used for setting up the monuments was imported from distant areas of Dobruja, which means that it was more expensive and not available to a common inhabitant of Troesmis. Only wealthy group of inhabitants could afford it, and among them were veterans who were members of the magistrate. Perhaps, the composition of local elites (including tradesman, *augustales* etc.) was more diverse, but stone monuments were left by this specific group.

CONCLUSIONS

The *canabae* of Oescus were the first civil-military settlement in Moesia. Regrettably the state of research and the difficult conditions of archaeological investigations on the site make our knowledge about the early settlement very limited. The *canabae* at Durostorum must have been a wealthy and prosperous settlement, but it is difficult to excavate its remains. The present city of Silistra hides many secrets, and perhaps some more evidence will come to light in the future. The same mysterious remains the *canabae* of Troesmis, but in this case we can expect some discoveries, as the site is available for archaeological investigations. Among three settlements presented above, only Novae provides information from the 1st to the 6th century and the number of the inscriptions is prevailing. The importance and variety of information achieved from inscriptions makes it possible to reproduce the character of the *canabae* and its inhabitants.

¹⁰⁷ R. Curcă, N. Zugravu, «Orientaux» dans la Dobrudja romaine. Une approche onomastique, [in:] V. Cojocaru (ed.), Ethnic Contacts and Cultural Exchanges North and West of the Black Sea from the Greek Colonization to the Ottoman Conquest, Iași 2005, pp. 326-327.

¹⁰⁸ Ibidem, p. 328.

¹⁰⁹ L. Mihailescu-Birliba, Aspéctrs prosopographiques, p. 148.

Comparing the three legionary settlements placed on the Lower Danubian border, we can draw some conclusions, which are not always applicable to all of these sites.

According to their names, women in relationships with legionaries and veterans seem to have been mainly of free status, and this rule applies not only to Novae, but also to other sites in Lower Moesia and in Lower Pannonia¹¹⁰. The veterans tended to choose Roman freeborn women with whom they could form a *matrimonium iustum*¹¹¹. Nevertheless, at Novae we find Valeria Elphis and Iulia, who were the former slaves of their military husbands. A detailed analysis shows that the majority of the freedwomen living at Novae were in relationships with civilians, not soldiers. This phenomenon seems to indicate that the soldiers and veterans made deliberate choices to find citizen wives and did not shun other social groups¹¹² and former soldiers, who very often had Balkan roots, held on to Roman culture¹¹³.

The first settlers who left evidence of their presence were foreign traders and their representatives, but also veterans and their families. At the turn of the 2nd and 3rd centuries, the people living in the *canabae* formed a well-integrated society with a civilian-military elite. This integration is visible not only in acculturation traceable e.g. in archaeological finds but also in epigraphic evidence. Some of the inhabitants of Novae and other neighbouring towns were local military families for generations. This process can be traced as early as from the beginning of the 2nd century, when in Oescus lived Iulia Tyche, the wife of C. Iulius Celer, veteran of the Fifth Macedonian Legion and the mother of C. Iulius Crescens, centurion of the First Italic Legion. The emergence of local society involved indigenous

¹¹⁰ V. Piftor, L'espérance de vie et la structure d'âge de la population féminine en Mésie Inférieure (I^{er}-III^e s. ap. J.-C.), *Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica* (Iași) 13-14, 2007, pp. 135-146, p. 144. For a similar result but different interpretation, see Scheidel 2007, pp. 422-423.

¹¹¹ S. James, Soldiers and civilians: identity and interaction in Roman Britain, [in:] S.J. Millett, M. Millett (eds.), *Britons and Romans: advancing an archaeological agenda*, CBA Research Report, 125, York 2001, pp. 187-209.

¹¹² This is rarely certified in Lower Moesia (see L. Mrozewicz, Roman Military Settlement, p. 86), but the same conclusions apply to Africa, Britannia, and Dalmatia, as well as other provinces (A. Tomas, Female family members related to soldiers and officers of the legio I Italica. A case study, [in:] L. Mihailescu-Bîrliba (ed.), *Colonization and Romanization in Moesia Inferior. Premises of A Contrastive Approach*, Kaiserlautern 2015, pp. 93-124; W. Scheidel, Probleme der Datierung des Costoboceneinfalls im Balkanraum unter Marcus Aurelius, *Historia* 39, pp. 423-424).

¹¹³ The same conclusions have been reached concerning veterans, see L. Mrozewicz Roman Military Settlement, p. 88; K. Królczyk, Veteranen in den Donauprovinzen, p. 179.

population, which is traceable in religiosity and evidenced by dedications to deities, such as Apollo Kendrissos, the Thracian Horseman, Sabazius, and Deus Aeternus¹¹⁴. The liaisons with the rural hinterland are visible also in people's names, which in some cases sound the same in the *canabae* and in the rural hinterland. Such an example is Valerius Festus, listed in the Bacchic album from Boutovo, but also appearing in the text of a votive tablet from Paskalevec in the rural hinterland and on a funerary monument from Novae¹¹⁵. Perhaps this was one or two or even three different persons, but certainly such repetitive names are an expression of a change in the society which united autochthons and those living in the *canabae*¹¹⁶.

In the 1st and 2nd century an opportunity to develop local business was attractive enough to settle down near the fortress. Although the conclusions are very much assumptive, it is possible that the family of Oppii who were very well known traders reached Lower Danubian lands through their freedmen embed in the vicinity of the military camps. Delos was famous for its slave market¹¹⁷, but in the east, at least on Delos, the Oppii family was most probably involved in wine trade¹¹⁸, and perhaps wine trade was the reason of their

¹¹⁴ IGLNov 2 (Apollo Kendrissos), IGLNov 15 (Thracian Horseman), AÉ 1998, 1137 (Sabazius), IGLNov 9 (Deus Aeternus). Apollo Kendrissos was venerated in Philippopolis as a protector of the city (IGBulg III 1, 886 and 918). The relief from Novae shows the Thracian Horseman and a dog attacking a hare, which is an unknown motif.

¹¹⁵ ILBulg 416, Paskalevec and cf. J. Kolendo, Stèles funéraires réemployées dans la construction d'une rue à Novae, *Archeologia* 50, 1999, pp. 29-31. Although the name Valerius Festus is quite colloquial (see *Nomenclator*, p. 126), the monument from Novae commemorating Festus's wife is decorated with a vine motif.

¹¹⁶ A. Tomas, *Inter Moesos et Thraces*, Appendix 2, Nos E.86, E.116 and J. Kolendo, *Stèles funéraires*, pp. 29-31.

¹¹⁷ Strabo XIV 668.

¹¹⁸ P. Arthur, *Romans in Northern Campania: Settlement and Land-Use Around the Massico and Garigliano Basin*, London 1991, p. 67. On Delos L. Oppii are attested by several inscriptions dated to the 2nd c. BC. The family was involved in wine trade; see K.S. Verboven, *Good for Business. The Roman Army and Emergence of a 'Business Class' in the Northwestern Provinces of the Roman Empire (1st Century BCE – 3rd Century CE)*, [in:] L. de Blois, E. Lo Cascio (eds.), *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 BC-AD 476)*. Proceedings of the Sixth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Capri, March 29 – April 2, 2005, Leiden-Boston 2001, p. 314 and fn. 2. The decline of the Roman wine trade on Delos surprisingly coincides with the year of Cicero's defence of the Bithynian quaestor, P. Oppius, and the pillage of the island by the pirates serving the Pontic king (Dio 36.40.3-4; A. Lindhagen, *The freedmen milieus at Delos and Narona. New perspectives on the Lamboglia 2 wine trade*, [in:] A.-L. Schallin (ed.), *Perspectives on ancient Greece. Papers in celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Swedish Institute at Athens*, Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen, 8, 22, Stockholm 2013, p. 235). Tensions with economic background between the Romans and the Pontic cities allied with Mithridates resulted in fiscal measures taken by the Romans, and finally the military expedition of Lucullus in 72-71 BC.

activity along the Lower Danube. In the late 2nd-3rd c. their descendants might have become influential people in the civilian frontier towns.

The evidence of the civil inhabitants of Troesmis is quite different than those living near the legionary base at Novae and Durostorum. Only eleven freedmen are attested there, two of them former slaves of physicians (*medici*). The freedmen of the influential families of traders or merchants are not so well attested, and this is quite striking. At the same time, the veterans in Troesmis seemed to play far more important role than in other Lower Danubian sites. This phenomenon should be perhaps analysed against their settlement in the hinterland. Certainly the composition of inhabitants in Novae had influence on the process of municipalisation of the *canabae*, where veterans' associations seem to have been not as active as in Durostorum and Troesmis¹¹⁹.

Inscribed monuments may provide information about the social and ethnic composition of its inhabitants, but sometimes can be helpful in reproducing the landscape around the fortress, the topography of the surroundings, religious life, and the nature of the settlement itself. A statistical approach provides further information concerning the development and prosperity of such a settlement. The prosperity of the legionary settlements reached its peak in the 2nd century until the Severan period, when it was finally stopped by the barbarian raids. Depopulation and the destruction of the civil settlements combined with the consequences of a series of reforms resulted in the emergence of the Late Roman towns.

¹¹⁹ A. Tomas, *Living with the Army I*, p. 167.

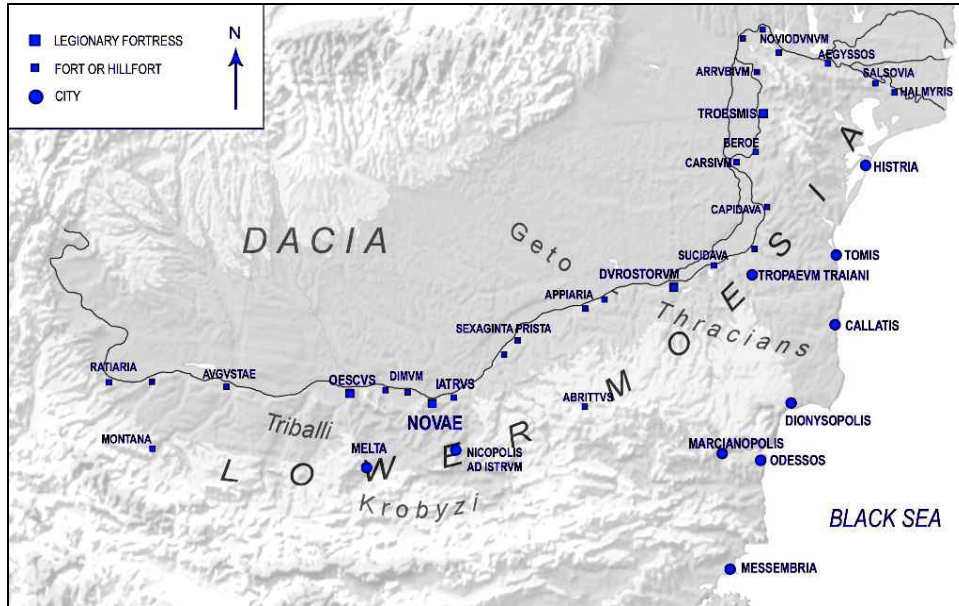


Fig. 1. The province of Lower Moesia in the 2nd century AD (by A. Tomas)

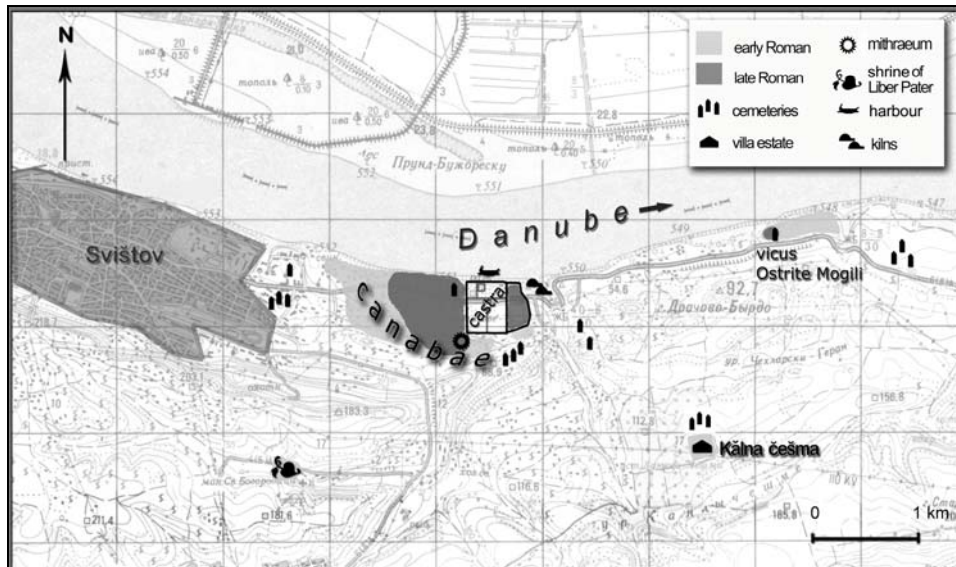


Fig. 2. Novae. The legionary fortress and extramural civil settlement (by A. Tomas)

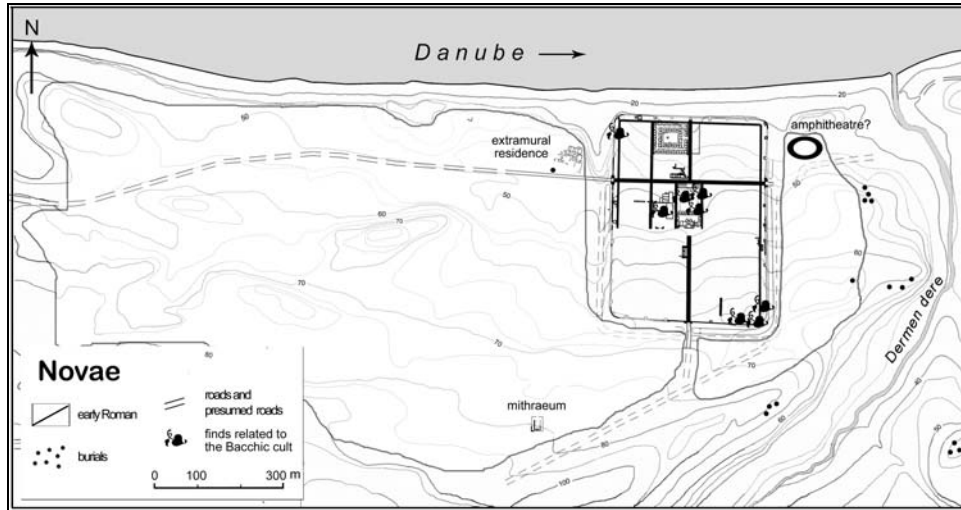


Fig. 3. Novae. Map of the finds related to the Bacchic cult (by A. Tomas)

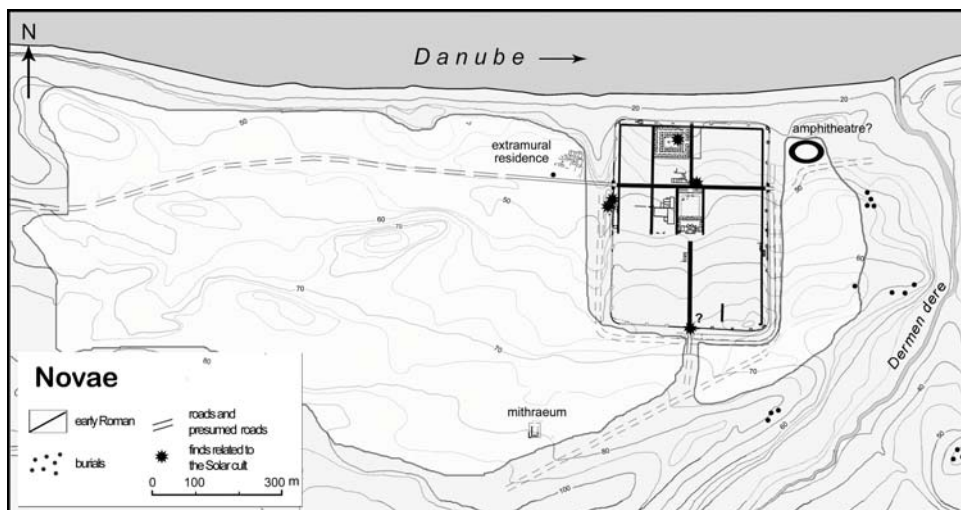


Fig. 4. Novae. The mithraeum and the map of finds related to the Solar cult (by A. Tomas)

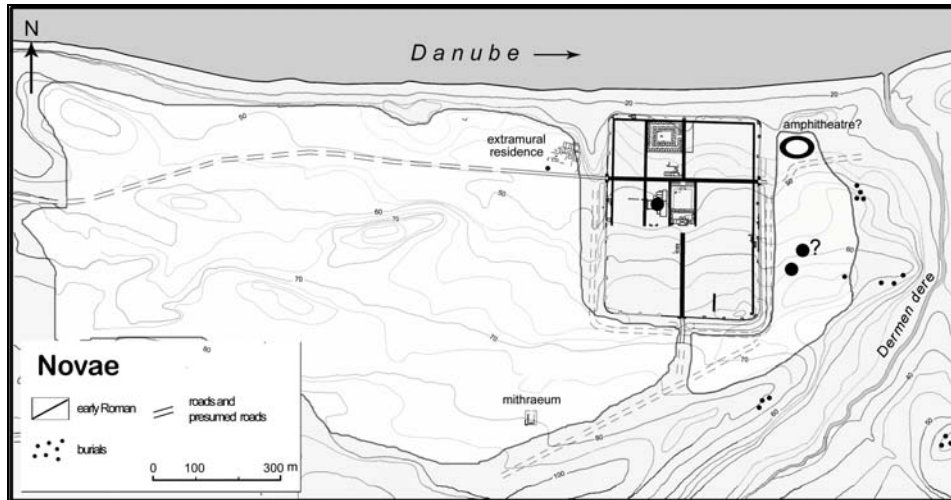


Fig. 5. Novae. Map of the finds related to the cult of Deus Aeternus (by A. Tomas)

Summary

The present paper is a contribution to the civil settlement near four legionary fortresses based on the epigraphic evidence from four Lower Moesian sites: Oescus, Novae, Durostorum and Troesmis. The earliest evidence of extramural settlement in Moesia provides Oescus which was founded at the beginning of the 1st century AD as a legionary camp and remained the military base until the foundation of the colony at the beginning of the 2nd century. Novae provides archaeological evidence from the longest period – from the middle of the 1st century until the beginning of the 7th century AD. Durostorum became a legionary base in the Flavian period and the same as at Novae, the military unit remained there until the late Antiquity, which was a convenient factor for a more permanent and larger settlement to develop. Both at Novae and at Durostorum existed another settlement in the vicinity of the camp – the *vicus*, located at a certain distance from the fortress. At Troesmis civil settlement may have existed prior to the arrival of the legion and it is possible that the settlement pattern was different there than in other Lower Moesian legionary bases.

The state of research and the conditions for archaeological investigations in four sites mentioned above is not the same. The settlement at Durostorum existed throughout Antiquity, Medieval period and survived until nowadays, therefore the ancient layers of the *castra* and the *canabae* at Durostorum are covered by a modern city of Silistra, which is an obstacle for any regular excavations. The foundation of

a colony at Oescus and the presence of a modern village of Gigen very close to the site makes surveys on the 1st-century settlement the same difficult. Although the access to the archaeological remains in Troesmis is far better the state of research on the legionary fortress and its extramural settlement is very modest. The accurate position of the *castra* and the *canabae* at Troesmis has been established only recently as the result of non-intrusive surveys. The excavations carried out so far, have been focused on the remains of two Late Roman fortresses positioned to the west and east of the 2nd-century legionary camp. Novae is the only site which has been excavated regularly, but in this case the archaeological excavations were carried out mainly within the legionary fortifications.

The number of inscriptions originating from them varies. This results from their different history (their shorter or longer time of existence) and different state of research. The larger number of inscriptions provides Novae. Based on these texts we know at least the names of 148 persons who might have lived *extra muros castrorum* (at least 22 veterans, 25 members of military families, 79 civilian inhabitants, and 22 persons whose military or civilian status remains unknown), the majority them are dated to the 2nd century, when the civil settlements must have been flourishing. As it is indicated directly in the inscriptions the inhabitants of the *canabae* arrived to Novae from the various parts of the Empire, i.e. from Italia, Hispania, Noricum, Asia, as well as from the Lower Danubian provinces. In their major part civilian inhabitants of Novae bore Roman sounding names, followed by the Greek names, while the smallest group is formed by the peregrines (6%), but only in four cases they belonged to Thracians, all of them men. The sounding of the names, however, may be misleading, especially in case of those people who were of servile origin. Former slaves and their descendants formed quite considerable group of inhabitants of Novae.

Although the number of inscriptions discovered so far at Durostorum is lower than at Novae, they provide very important information concerning the status of the settlement. We know about 72 people who may have lived in civil settlements near the legionary fortress (25 veterans, 37 civilians and 10 people of unknown status). Almost half of these names are known from three inscriptions dated to the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd century. The family of Oppii draws special attention among freedmen attested both in Novae and Durostorum. At Novae two people bearing such name held positions of priests of Cybele and Liber Pater and at Durostorum the members of the same family were rich enough to build the temple and fund a statue and an altar dedicated to Jupiter. It is possible that the members of this family were involved in trade and provisions to the army.

Although Troesmis was excavated only within these Late Roman sites and only partially, the number of known inscriptions is relatively high. The status of Troesmis is attested by preserved *lex municipii*. Fifty out of sixty-five people known from the inscriptions were related to the army, with considerable number of veterans, which stands in contrast to the social composition of Novae. The inscriptions from Oescus mention 21 persons, among them 9 veterans and members of their families, 9 civilians, and 3 persons of undetermined military or civilian status. Civilians were mainly freedmen and craftsmen. Interestingly, women are very poorly attested.

Compared with Troesmis and Durostorum, Novae had different social composition. Freedmen and people of servile origin were prevailing and the collegial communities of veterans are so far not attested there, while they were active both at Troesmis and at Durostorum. This phenomenon might have had influence on the process of municipalisation.

Apart from people's names, some texts provide various information concerning everyday life, like trade and agriculture. E.g. local viticulture and import of wine is well attested at Novae. The importance of local wine production is attested by a relatively high number of dedication to Dionysus or Liber Pater discovered within the fortress, but also in the texts discovered in the rural hinterland of Novae. This observation is confirmed by archaeological finds and laboratory analyses of soil samples from the culture layers and from the locally hand-made jar which contained seeds of grapes.

Mapping the finds related to certain deities may allow to recreate places where the monuments were originally set up. Such methodological approach is possible in case of Novae. Bacchic cult is attested inside and outside the fortress, while the finds to another popular cult – of Solar deities were discovered, i.a., reused in the western defensive walls, not far from the *mithraeum*. This fact seem to prove that the method of mapping in some cases may be a valuable tool. The map of inscribed monuments dedicated to Deus Aeternus – a deity worshipped mainly in Dacia, but also well attested at Novae – shows that the finds may have originally come from the south-eastern side of the fortress.

The ethnic composition of the Lower Moesian *canabae* indicates that the majority of the families living in the *canabae* must have been ethnically mixed, but the process of cultural homogenisation was gradual. The first camp followers attested in Moesia were those at Oescus, and the epigraphic evidence shows that they were foreign traders and their representatives, veterans and their families. Already at the turn of the 2nd and 3rd centuries the inhabitants of the Lower Moesian legionary extramural settlements formed a well-integrated society, with the liaisons with the rural hinterland, as it is attested by the inscriptions from Novae and its hinterland.

Abbreviations

AAHung	Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae
AÉ	L'année épigraphique
B.A.R. Int. Ser.	British Archaeological Reports International Series
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
CIMRM	M. Vermaseren, Corpus inscriptionum monumentorum religionis Mithraicae, 1-2, Hagrae 1956, 1960
IBAD	Izvestija na Balgarsko Arheologičesko Družestvo
IGLNov	J. Kolendo, V. Božilova, Inscriptions grecques et latines de Novae (Mésie inférieure), Bordeaux 1997
IDR II	G. Florescu, C.C. Petolescu, Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae. Pars meridionalis, inter Danuvium et Capatos montes, Bucharest 1977
ILBulg	B. Gerov, Inscriptiones Latinae in Bulgaria repertae, Sofija 1989
IMS IV	P. Petrović, Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure. Naissus – Remesiana – Horreum Margi, Belgrad 1979
IScM V	A. Doruțiu-Boilă, Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris. Capidava, Troesmis, Noviodunum, Bukarest 1980
Nomenclator	A. Mócsy, R. Feldman, E. Marton, M. Szilágyi (eds.), Nomenclator provinciarum Europae Latinarum et Galliae Cisalpinae cum indice inverso, Dissertationes Pannonicae III, 1, Budapest 1983
OLD	A. Souter et al., Oxford Latin Dictionary, Oxford 1968
RE	Pauly-Wissowa Realencyklopedie
RMD	M.M. Roxan, P. Holder, Roman Military Diplomas IV. Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Suppl. 82, London 2003
RMM	B. Pferdehirt, Römische Militärdiplome und Entlassungsurkunden in der Sammlung des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, Mainz 2004
TLL	Thesaurus Linguae Latinae (de Gruyter)
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

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