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Donev, D.

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Author: Donev, D.

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Chapter III: The genesis of the Roman urban network in the Balkan provinces and on the Danube. The newly founded settlements

Introduction: the basic categories of newly founded settlements

Having roughly estimated the percentage of settlements dating to the pre-conquest era, the next logical step is to the question of the genesis of the newly founded settlements. Although this issue cannot be approached without a thorough knowledge of the onomastic of the urban elites, a subject that goes beyond the limits of the present study, some basic distinctions can be made even on the basis of the topography of the settlements combined with the scant information preserved in the historical and epigraphic record. These inferences can then be complemented with the insights provided by important studies in the social and ethnic composition of the urban population in the Balkan provinces.¹⁹⁶

To distinguish between civilian settlements and those that grew up next to a garrison site would seem to be a straightforward exercise. It is an obvious difference in an area in which over 30% of the agglomerated settlements, including the largest towns, were attached to an army camp. Both strategic and logistical considerations determined the locations of these settlements and their economies revolved primarily around the needs of the garrisoned units. In fact, garrison settlements are better understood as inseparable demographic components of the army camp; the ties that bound the two were not limited only to the economic sphere.¹⁹⁷ Apart from the demand for a wide range of services – that sheds a strong urban tinge at all garrison settlements – the presence of the army units necessitated the establishment of civilian communities that, besides the expected craftsmen, small-scale merchants and specialists of all kinds, included the partners and families of the serving soldiers. This is the key feature that sets the garrison settlements apart from the rest of the settlement categories. It is no accident that these settlements were originally nameless and had no official status. They were pragmatically named after the legion stationed in the camp, a telling detail of the relationship between the two settlement components. The civilian settlement literally belonged to the military unit.¹⁹⁸ As will be shown later in this study, there was a municipal development among these settlements, but this was not universal and occurred under specific conditions.

On the other hand, civilian settlements - including veteran colonies - are most easily distinguished by the absence of a contemporary, adjoining military camp. Even in these cases, the impact of the Roman army on the economy of the frontier provinces should not be underestimated and the category of civilian settlements can appear somewhat vague. Although positive evidence of intensive intra-provincial trade is still relatively scarce, the numerous army contingents permanently stationed on the Danube and Dacian *Limes* undoubtedly represented an attractive market that would certainly have attracted the attention of the urban elite in the frontier provinces.¹⁹⁹ Judging by their locations, 30-40

¹⁹⁶ Dalmatia: Alföldy 1969; Pannonia: Mócsy 1959; Pannonia, Moesia Superior: Mócsy 1970, 1974; Moesia Inferior: Gerov 1997, 1998; Pippidi 1975; Doruțiu-Boilă 1980b, 281-287; Tačeva ed. 2004; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991; Thrace: Gren 1941; Gerov 1980, 273-283; Mihailov 1979, 263-271; Dacia: Macrea 1969; Balla 1975, 139-143; Russu 1980; Ardevan 1998; Ruscu 2004, 76-87.

¹⁹⁷ Vittinghoff 1971, 299-317; Mócsy 1974, 139-147.

¹⁹⁸ Vittinghoff 1971, 299; Bérard 1992, 75-105.

¹⁹⁹ See Chapter Six for specific examples in the light of the epigraphic evidence.

km behind the Danube *Limes*, towns like Cibalae or Nicopolis ad Istrum were in an ideal position to supply at least some of the needs of the frontier garrisons. In addition, a considerable proportion of their population, the upper classes in particular, was recruited from the army veterans who had served on the *limes*.²⁰⁰ On this premise, it can be argued that they performed a function analogous to that of the garrison settlements, moderating the difference between these two categories. But, although profiting from the proximity of the *limes* – as most provinces in our study-region – these towns developed independently and their economies were not entirely reliant on the demands of the military. In contrast to the garrison settlements, the civilian establishments were separate communities, demographically independent of the army units.

Earlier, scholars have claimed an even greater involvement of the Roman army in the urbanization of the Balkan Peninsula and the Danube provinces. A number of important towns possibly did grow up at the sites of former army camps, as the civilian population profited from the infrastructure left behind by the army.²⁰¹ However, these hypotheses have been seriously challenged in more recent studies but, even if they prove correct, they will hardly alter the civilian character of these foundations. With the exception of the possibility that their location was chosen for primarily strategic reasons, the fact that these towns were built by military engineers is not relevant to their subsequent economic development and history.

Our third major category of newly founded Roman agglomerations is the most difficult to define and often the most prudent step seemed to be to drop it from the analysis altogether. However, on reflection, this seemed to be premature. A sizeable minority of secondary agglomerations does not really fit into either of these two basic categories. The majority of these are smaller settlements that rarely entered the historical record. They evolved around special-purpose facilities; sometimes sponsored directly by the provincial government, sometimes emerging spontaneously. These include the larger road-stations and port facilities, hot springs and sanctuaries, mining areas and quarries. In the previous chapter, it was demonstrated that in certain provinces in our study-area these were the only settlement categories founded under the High Empire. By their nature, they are clearly a sub-category of civilian foundations, distinguished by their modest archaeological remains and their lack of official status, but also by their highly specialized economies and their slightly later date. This definition is apparently complicated by the fact that these resources were often kept under the watchful eye of the army, and consequently usually stationed in their immediate vicinity. This circumstance brings them closer to the category of garrison settlements. However, like the possible presence of pre-Roman hamlets at the sites of Roman towns or the likely involvement of the military in the construction of civilian agglomerations, these are purely terminological problems. Unless the presence of a large auxiliary unit can be definitely proven, sites like road-stations or sanctuaries guarded by small military detachments will not be counted as garrison settlements. The presence of the military in these cases was demographically insignificant and it had no effect on the local economy. It merely highlights the importance of the natural resource that attracted permanent settlers to these sites. This settlement category is well-established in some of the western provinces of the Roman

²⁰⁰ Gerov 1997, 105-117; Poulter 1999, 1-54; Iskra-Janošić 2004, 169-195.

²⁰¹ This circumstance might explain the very rapid emergence of some of these towns. The case of Emona is discussed by Plesničar-Gec, 1978, 103-109; Gaspari 2010; Šašel-Kos 2012, 79-104; for Sarmizegetusa, see, Diaconescu 2004, 89-103; Piso ed. 2006. The cases of Oescus and Troesmis in Moesia Inferior are less ambiguous: Alexandrescu, Grabherr, Gugl, Kainrath 2015, 11-20.

Empire. In the scholarly literature they are known as “secondary agglomerations” or “small towns”, differing from both the first-order civilian foundations and the purely agricultural village or hamlet.²⁰²

Perhaps it would have been safer simply to limit the analysis to the autonomous towns. This would have spared us a great deal of trouble trying to disentangle the true nucleated agglomerations from facilities with no permanent inhabitants or from the category of farmsteads, hamlets and small villages solely on the basis of poorly illustrated survey reports. However, the downside of this approach is that it ignores a considerable segment of the integral network. Given the sparseness of the urban network in most provinces in our study-area, it is conceivable that the limited urban coverage was compensated for by an unknown number of secondary agglomerations that provided the outlying countryside with a range of market and religious services. With the exception of a small number of individual case studies, there have been no major syntheses compiled of the secondary agglomerations in the Balkan and Danube provinces. Hence the ubiquity, importance and the possible role of the secondary agglomerations in the urban system of the area have not been paid the attention they deserve. As explained in the introductory chapter, the minimum criteria for the inclusion of certain sites in the analysis was the size threshold of 5 ha and/or epigraphic evidence of local magistrates or public buildings. Left with no other tangible indicators, we have had to revert to arbitrary criteria, like the 5 ha cut-off point that would soon prove both untenable and misleading. Nonetheless, we maintain that the study of this “grey-sector” can lead to a fuller understanding of the urban network in the area. It is unlikely that it will ever be possible to reconstruct the integral settlement hierarchy of the High Empire completely, but we shall attempt to give a rough projection of the number of agglomerations that fell in between the rural-urban divide.

Two site-categories lie at the heart of the issue. One is more specific and it includes the road-stations and port-facilities, often mentioned in the Late Roman itineraries. Whenever subjected to more detailed archaeological research, road-stations have revealed traces of small, agglomerated communities.²⁰³ The most common model consists of an unplanned agglomeration attached to a *mansio*, although this is found only in the most important and monumental representatives of the group.²⁰⁴ Even in these cases, the combined areas of the *mansio* and the adjacent civilian settlement rarely extend over more than five hectares. However, these were corporate communities, and their population regularly included skilled craftsmen, merchants and inn-keepers. They are therefore included in the non-agrarian segment of the settlement pattern, even though they never attained an autonomous status. Apart from the social composition of these communities, there is evidence indicating that they performed a certain range of services characteristic of central places: local markets and tax collecting.²⁰⁵ A number of these centres were transformed into bishoprics in Late Antiquity and they are referred to in the sources from this period as *civitates*.²⁰⁶ It is difficult to estimate their true number, but it has to be noted that not every station had an adjacent civilian agglomeration. Smaller *mutationes*, posts in mountainous areas and along local roads, probably did not attract civilian

²⁰² Cf. Burnham, Wachter. 1990; Rorison 2001.

²⁰³ See for e.g. Dinčev 2008, 123-133; Vasić, Milošević 2000.

²⁰⁴ Ivanov 1980, 205-206.

²⁰⁵ Suceveanu, Barnea 1993, 159; Vasić, Milošević 2000, 134-135. These authors follow Van Berchem’s thesis of the role of *mansiones* as points for the collection of the military tax from the time of the Severans. Although this thesis has been criticized, the fact remains that some of these road-stations almost certainly functioned as the *emporia* of the neighbouring towns.

²⁰⁶ See, for example, Remesiana in Moesia Superior, Mirković 2007, 69.

settlers. It is possible that, in the more remote areas, these facilities were actually attached to existing villa estates or traditional rural settlements, causing an even greater blurring of the distinction between the traditional village and special-purpose sites.²⁰⁷ Herein lies the chief difficulty in determining what proportion of these secondary centres were special-purpose foundations and what proportion had been recruited from the existing rural settlements or *villae*. The root of the problem is that our approach rests on the assumption that there was more or less a clear distinction between the urban and rural sectors; the rub is that these categories are bound to overlap even in modern societies. The overall impression – based on the scant archaeological remains and the low frequency of references to this settlement category in the written sources – is that this segment of the settlement network was mostly made-up of the existing *villae* and hamlets. We shall see that this role was not necessarily advantageous and this might have been the reason for their inconspicuousness in the archaeological and historical records of the region.

In Chapter Two, we encountered a small group of sites most commonly defined as larger rural settlements; sometimes even as centres of micro-regions.²⁰⁸ Is it not possible that these sites actually represent a small segment of the elusive group of secondary agglomerations? Unfortunately, a common feature to all sites that belong to this group is that they are poorly researched. As these have been usually documented only by traditional survey techniques or more rarely, test-pit excavations, it is impossible to be certain about their true nature and extent. Therefore, in most of the cases, they are included in the category of uncertain settlements. For the majority of these sites, it is their location or the epigraphic material rather than the archaeological remains that have set them apart from the average village. Later in this chapter, when discussing the spatial distribution of the basic categories of Roman foundations, we shall indeed find them located either near rare natural resources, like thermal springs, in regions rich in mineral deposits or in the more remote corners of our study-area. We believe that there is a crucial difference here between quasi-industrial settlements, specialized in the tapping of natural resources and the rural communities in mountainous areas that did perhaps grow in importance and entered the epigraphic record. We have already touched upon this problem when discussing the numerous *vici* and *komai* in the provinces in the eastern half of the peninsula. There are many reasons to doubt the urban character of these sites, but the fact that they are regularly included in the archaeological literature about the respective provinces obliges us to take them into account. Of course, in contrast to the road-stations or port-towns, the near random distribution of this site-category does not allow us to extrapolate their approximate number.

This general introduction has been primarily necessitated by the very broad and basic categories employed in the main text. When using them for analytical purposes there is always the risk of creating distinctions that are artificial or simply irrelevant. We can only hope that we have, however roughly, clarified the criteria by which a settlement is classed as garrison or civilian, autonomous or secondary. In order to avoid detailed presentations of the archaeological or epigraphic evidence pertaining to individual towns in the main text, the controversial cases will be briefly discussed in foot-notes.

²⁰⁷ For private estates functioning as periodic markets, see De Ligt 1993.

²⁰⁸ Perhaps the most representative were the *politeiai* in Roman Macedonia, Mikulčić 1999, 90-93.

Northern Macedonia and Epirus

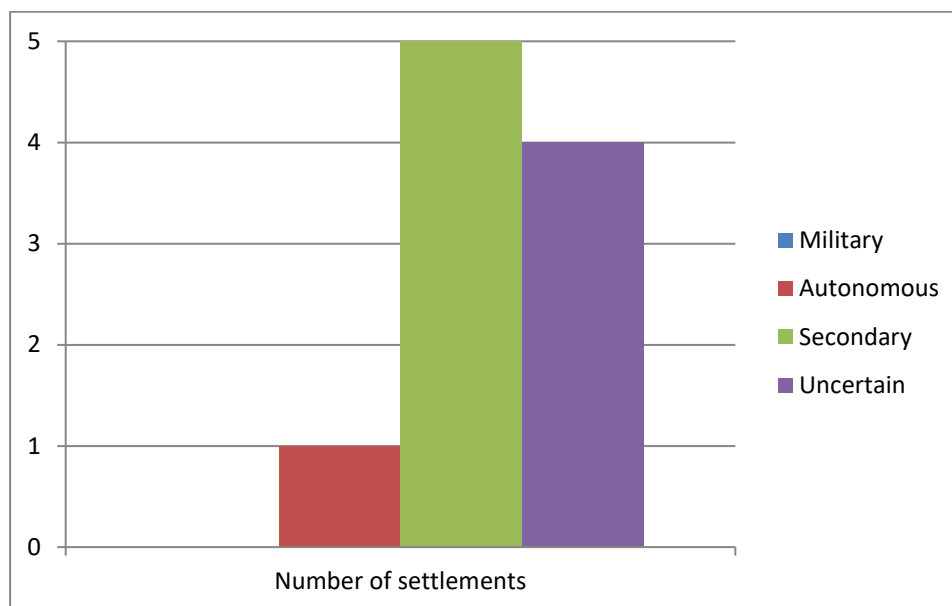


Figure III_1: The basic formal categories of the newly founded settlements in Roman Macedonia

To the small number of newly founded settlements for which it was possible to collect some data, we have added a few of the settlements whose founding date was uncertain (Figure III_1, Table II_1). This group includes the sites whose origins are unclear, but that appear in the written sources after the Roman conquest. These are Hadrianopolis, Onchesmos, Pelagonia, the Dostonei and Allantes. If future research proves that Neapolis was not located near Stari Grad in the Middle Babuna Valley – a site occupied throughout Antiquity - it too could join the group.²⁰⁹ With the exception of Hadrianopolis, none of these sites has produced substantial archaeological remains datable to the period of the High Empire. In fact, even in the case of this town, recent research has proven that it belongs to the group of towns originating in the Hellenistic period.²¹⁰ It was the character of these settlements that prompted us to reconsider the possibility that these were newly founded settlements. Most of these were self-governing communities and, if it is proven that they were founded after the Roman conquest, this discovery will require a slight rethinking of the urban developments in Roman Macedonia.

There are no remains of permanent military outposts in Roman Macedonia. In fact, apart from the construction of the main inter-regional corridor, the Via Egnatia, in the middle of the second century BC, the Roman presence in this region is almost imperceptible until the reign of Augustus.²¹¹ The numerous troops who took part in the eastern campaigns or the civil wars in the period of the Late Republic must have been stationed in or near the existing urban settlements. By the time the Roman legions began constructing permanent camps, Macedonia was well behind the state frontier and, until the period of Late Antiquity, there are no traces of a military presence in this province. The possible

²⁰⁹ Papazoglou 1988, 289-291, 312-313; for the location of the central places of these people I follow Mikulčić 1999, 91-93, 187-188.

²¹⁰ Perna, Çondi 2011, 365-385.

²¹¹ Shpuza 2009, 481-502.

garrison sites of the legions that conquered Moesia, the V Macedonica and the IV Scythica, continue to baffle modern scholarship.²¹²

Only one autonomous town was definitely founded after the conquest of Macedonia, but even in this particular case the chronology is not entirely clear. The site identified with the *polis* of Neine, mentioned on a few inscriptions from the Middle Struma, has not yet had any archaeological excavations or systematic surveys.²¹³ It has been added to the group of newly founded settlements because firstly, the scholars that studied this site do not refer to finds dating to the pre-Roman period and secondly, the micro-location of the site suggests that it was not a central place in the Hellenistic period. Finally Neine is not among the settlements mentioned in Strabo in his description of the Strymon valley, as it was then known.²¹⁴ The epigraphic monuments associated with this site do not predate the Flavian period.²¹⁵

The remaining settlements securely dated after the conquest of Macedonia are almost exclusively road-stations. As has been demonstrated in the preceding chapter, the number of these establishments is potentially much higher than the few examples included in our tables. Adding this category to the list of newly founded settlements could result in a complete reversal of the figures presented in the previous chapter. However, this exercise is not as straightforward as it seems. Only a small number of possible road-stations have been identified in this region and more thorough-going research has been carried out at no more than two or three sites. The information referring to these regions preserved in the Late Roman itineraries is often contradictory and the identification of the individual road-stations, especially those in the eastern half of the province, is highly controversial.²¹⁶ Pertinently, many important regional roads are not included in the Late Roman itineraries.²¹⁷ In a nutshell, there is no solid base to project the possible number of road-side *vici*.

More to the point, not all road-stations were necessarily new foundations. In the case of Roman Macedonia, they were often attached to the old strongholds and *poleis* or the latter had simply been degraded to road-stations. Hence even in this segment of the settlement network of Roman Macedonia, there is some evidence for topical continuity. At least three settlements, Ceramia, Zgurbita and Stenae, that were probably little more than road-side *vici* in the Roman period, had a Hellenistic predecessor, possibly of a higher rank.²¹⁸ Nonetheless, if it is assumed that all the *mansiones* mentioned in the Late Roman itineraries - but not the *mutations* - attracted small civilian settlements, their number could theoretically rise to nine or ten, excluding the cases in which a Hellenistic *oppidum* continued as a road-station. It is important to reiterate that this settlement category is essentially different from the category of autonomous towns. It was only the social

²¹² Mirković 1977, 171-178; Gerov 1980, 147-167; Dušanić 1983, 13-21.

²¹³ Velkov 1963, 141-156; Nikolov 1970, 284-293; the autonomous status of this settlement is supported by a few official dedications: IG Bul: 2247-2251; Gerasimova-Tomova 1980, 19-26, Angelov 2003, 138-142. Admittedly the name of the town is slightly unusual because, in the epigraphy of Upper Macedonia, most of the autonomous communities are commonly designated by their ethnonyms; cf. Papazoglou ed. 1999.

²¹⁴ Strabo 7.36; Gerov 1980, 67-75.

²¹⁵ Velkov 1963, 145-156.

²¹⁶ Georgievski 1991, 117-134.

²¹⁷ Mikulčić 1999, 223-236.

²¹⁸ Ceramie: Šašel ed. 1976, 130; Mikulčić 1999, 86-89; Zgurbita: Mikulčić 1999, 152-154; Stenae: Mikulčić 1999, 176-182.

composition of the communities and their specialized function that differentiated them from an ordinary *vicus*.

It is equally important to stress that, at the few sites that have been properly researched and are included in the list of newly founded settlements, the main phase dates to the period of Late Antiquity rather than the High Empire.²¹⁹ This seems to imply that an unknown proportion of the road infrastructure described in the itineraries was not created before the beginning of the fourth century. This is not to suggest that the High Empire lacked sophisticated and developed road infrastructure. It is nevertheless possible that the modes of road maintenance changed between the two periods; the High Empire tending to rely on the existing rural settlements or *villae* rather than on facilities built specifically for that purpose.

The settlements that emerged near port-facilities had a parallel function in the settlement network and at least in some cases these two settlement categories had similar geneses. Unfortunately, the paucity of the archaeological evidence is a stumbling-block to making more general observations. Pliny refers to a few ports of call on the coast of Epirus – *castellum Chimera*, *oppidum Aulon*, also possibly an *oppidum* called Meandria – but these settlements have not been identified archaeologically.²²⁰ The only settlement for which there is some tangible archaeological evidence is Onchesmos, omitted in Pliny, but mentioned by Ptolemy.²²¹ The archaeological excavations at this site have revealed that, in the period of the High Empire, the settlement basically consisted of a number of elite residences that clustered around the port-facility. Onchesmos developed true urban characteristics only in Late Antiquity, when a basilica and city walls were built.²²² In this respect, the urban genesis of this town is highly reminiscent of the urban genesis of Ad Scampsa, both towns becoming bishoprics in Late Antiquity.²²³ However, as Onchesmos is also mentioned by Strabo and there are scattered finds that pre-date the Roman conquest, it is not entirely clear if this settlement belongs to the group of newly founded sites.²²⁴

It is worthwhile to pay brief attention to the group of settlements with an uncertain date. They represent about 40% of the potentially newly founded sites and depart from the prevalent pattern in which all or most of the new foundations were secondary agglomerations. In the previous chapter, it was argued that, although decisive evidence was lacking, there are serious indications that at least some of these settlements – Hadrianopolis and Pelagonia in particular – were founded prior to the Roman conquest. Both Hadrianopolis and Pelagonia were autonomous towns at the time of the High Empire and together with Neine indicate that there were changes to the urban network of the Hellenistic period.

A post-conquest date is likelier for the Dostonei and the Allantes, two communities that were introduced into the epigraphic record only in the period of the High Empire.²²⁵ The anonymous agglomeration near modern Vitolište on the Moriovo Plateau could also join the group, although the possibility that this was a unique example of a mining settlement in this part of Roman Macedonia

²¹⁹ For Ad Scampsa see fn. 62 in the previous chapter, *Castra-Parembole*: Šašel ed. 1976, 35.

²²⁰ Pliny *NH* 4.4, 14.

²²¹ Ptol. *Geog.* 3.13.42; Lako *et al.* 2014, 613-625.

²²² Lako 1986, 279-281; Lako *et al.* 2014, 613.

²²³ Hier. *Synec.* 652, 3.

²²⁴ Strabo 7.7.5; Lako *et al.* 2014, 613.

²²⁵ See fn. 65 in Chapter Two.

should not be excluded.²²⁶ The centres of these communities have not been located and their nature is controversial. Some scholars have interpreted them as rural *koina* that did not constitute self-governing units, while others have claimed that these were self-governing communities, constituted after the Roman conquest to improve the sparse urban infrastructure in the mountainous parts of Upper Macedonia.²²⁷ The latter view postulates important additions to the existing urban system of the province. Indeed, as we shall see in Chapter VI, the autonomous status of these communities could explain the apparent gaps in the urban coverage of the province. That they are nearly impossible to trace in the archaeological and written records seems to suggest that these were not urban-based communities.

A common characteristic of all newly founded settlements in Roman Macedonia, including the self-governing communities whose founding date remains undetermined, is that they have left very few traces in the archaeological or written records. This absence is not necessarily related to the lack of systematic research at the majority of these sites. With the exception of Hadrianopolis, replacing Hellenistic Antigonea as the main centre of the fertile Dropul Basin, the rest of the autonomous settlements and communities are located in the periphery of the urban network. Regardless of its exact location, the bulk of the territory of Pelagonia consisted of mountainous terrain, while the territory of Neine was limited by the proximity of the provincial border with Thrace. If these towns were symptomatic of the policy of urbanization of the economically marginal regions of the province, their presence is difficult to reconcile with the archaeologically attested decline in the smaller *poleis* of ancient Illyria and Macedon. It is possible that this incongruence is another indicator of the differential developments in the western and eastern halves of the province.

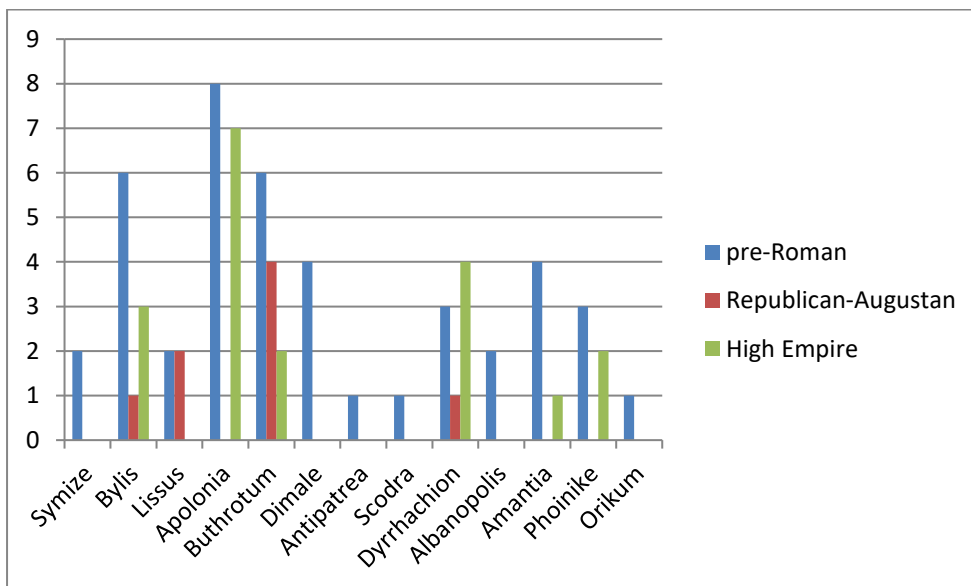


Figure III_2: The number of large construction projects in the old towns of Illyria and Epirus (the western half of Macedonia)

²²⁶ Mikulčić 1999, 91-92, associates it with the central place of the Geneati or the Euxini, peoples known solely from the epigraphic sources in the area; the evidence of mining activities in this region is discussed by Keramitčiev 1976, 89-104; Keramitčiev 1978, 67-81.

²²⁷ Papazoglou 1988, 1; the debate is summarized succinctly in Nigdelis, Souris 1997, 55-56.

In many of the old towns in Upper Macedonia and Epirus, the period of the High Empire saw very little public construction. There was an undeniable strong urban development in the area under the High Empire, but it was limited to a small number of existing settlements. In this respect too, the impression is that there was an important difference between Epirus and Macedonia, the western and eastern parts of the Early Roman province. Whereas in northern Epirus and southern Illyria it can be demonstrated that the majority of the big infrastructural projects were inherited from the pre-Roman period, in Macedonia the Roman period introduced radical changes to the physical make-up of the most important towns.

Figures III_2 and III_3 compare the number of public constructions in the two historical parts of the Roman province, Illyria and Epirus and Upper Macedonia and Paeonia. In the western half of the province, over 60% of the monumental buildings and infrastructure had been constructed prior to the Roman conquest. Even in the towns that became colonies under Augustus – Bylis or Buthrotum – most of the public buildings were inherited from the Hellenistic period. The only exception is Dyrrhachium, but this is related to the local taphonomic realities rather than to the difference in the intensity of construction between the two periods.²²⁸ The opposite is true of the east of the province, Upper Macedonia and Paeonia, in which, with the exception of Lychnidos, in most of the Hellenistic towns the surviving monumental remains do not predate the Roman Imperial period.

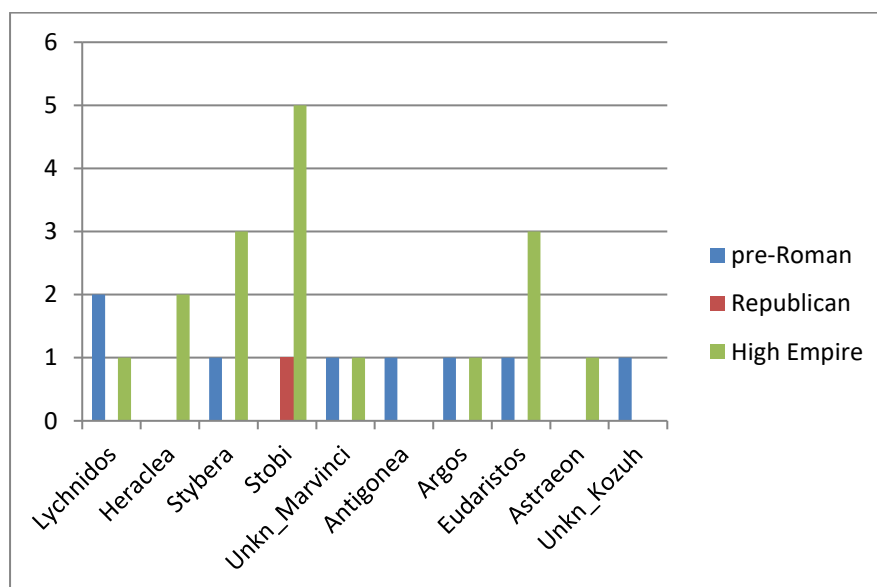


Figure III_3: The number of large construction projects in the old towns of Macedonia and Paeonia (the eastern part of the province)

This is another indication of the divergent developments between the two principal components of Roman Macedonia. It is no accident that Epirus was constituted as a separate province in the later Principate, the provincial borders roughly coinciding with the western border of ancient Macedon.²²⁹ Nonetheless, looking at the average town in Upper Macedonia, the Roman period introduced hardly

²²⁸ Because of the site-formation processes, the Antique layers at Dyrrhachium are buried under several metres of Medieval and post Medieval deposits; Santoro, Monti 2011, 491-495.

²²⁹ Islami *et al.* 1985, 209-264; Shpuza 2009, 488-493.

any radical changes, at least in the general urban appearance. On the surface, towns such as Argos and Antigonea on the Vardar or Neapolis changed little throughout the entire period of Antiquity, although admittedly research on these urban centres has just only begun.

The northern Adriatic and Dalmatia

After the founding of Aquileia in the early decades of the second century BC, and especially after the creation of the province Cisalpine Gaul, the eastern part of Italy X was added to the territory of the colony. Only the coastal zone and the Istrian Peninsula were excluded from the territory of Aquileia. The very small size of the region in question, its mountainous character and the high density of pre-Roman proto-urban settlements left little room for new urban foundations in the area between the Gulf of Trieste and the watershed of the Sava Basin. The main trends on the settlement map of this part of the Adriatic can be observed only at the very edge of the area, on the Istrian Peninsula and in the Upper Sava Basin.

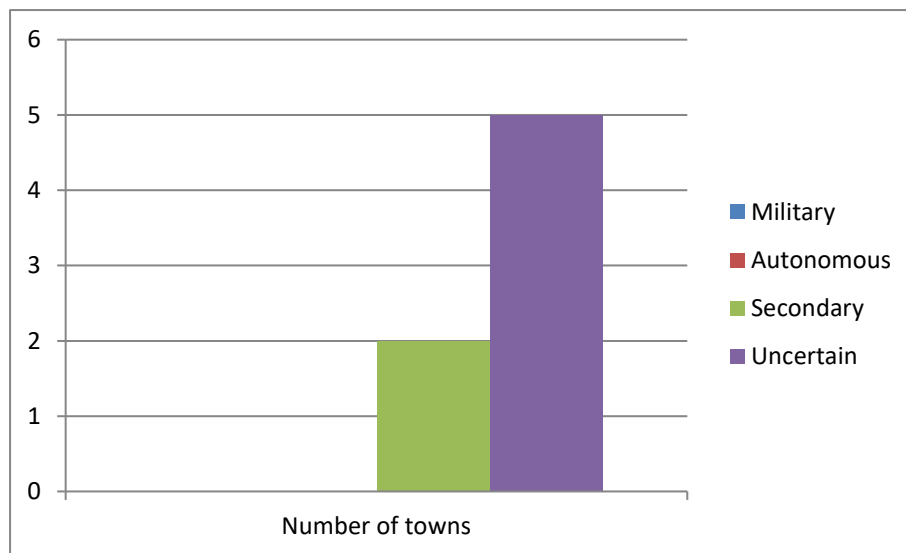


Figure III_4: The basic formal categories of newly founded settlements in the northern Adriatic

As in Macedonia, the Roman army did not build permanent camps in this part of the Empire. Istria and its mountainous hinterland had been conquered in the course of the second century BC and it did not require permanent military units under the Empire.²³⁰ The militarization of the region with the creation of the *Praetentura Italiae et Alpium* was but a brief episode during the Marcomannic Wars that left hardly any trace on the settlement map and economy of the region.²³¹

The profile of the newly founded settlements in this region is not as clear as in Roman Macedonia. This is partly attributable to the uncertain chronology of a number of official towns and partly to the unknown status of two of the settlements founded after the Roman conquest. Both groups were lumped together in the category of uncertain settlements in Figure III_4 (see also Table II_4 in

²³⁰ Jurkić 1987, 65-80; Dzino 2010, 59-60.

²³¹ Šašel 1974, 225-233.

Appendix 2). The two settlements for which the archaeological evidence suggests a post-conquest date were both secondary agglomerations. Nauportus was a historically attested *emporium* of Aquileia and archaeological research at this site has confirmed that the outpost was founded in the course of the first century BC.²³² The anonymous settlement on Čaška Bay on the island of Pag was not an autonomous town and the archaeological excavations at this site suggest that Čaška was not even a nucleated settlement, but a group of residences built around a port-facility.²³³ In view of its genesis this settlement is strongly reminiscent of the small port-towns of Epirus.

There is hardly any archaeological evidence to suggest that either Argyrunum or Tarsatica were built at the sites of earlier settlements.²³⁴ Nonetheless, the possibility that, like Emona or Salona, the pre-Roman predecessors of these towns were located on some of the hill-top sites in their surroundings should not be excluded. The vague juridical status of these communities is another reason to place them in the category of uncertain settlements. If both Tarsatica and Argyrunum were secondary agglomerations, they will only add to the small group of new foundations associated with major roads and ports of call. Obviously a different conclusion will have to be drawn should it be proven in the future that both settlements were autonomous towns.

The remaining sites classed as uncertain in Figure III_4, Crexus, Orthopla and Vegium, were most likely self-governing communities, but it is possible that their central places were located at the sites of earlier settlements.²³⁵ Continuity was the prevalent tendency in this part of the study-area. As in other highly urbanized regions, the Romans founded their colonies in the existing towns, and the autonomous status of the remaining communities was respected. Many of the scholars who have studied this region seem to favour the continuity thesis, although too often the claim is based on sporadic finds rather than securely attested archaeological layers.²³⁶ The fact remains that in none of these four cases can we point to the site of the pre-Roman settlement.

There is another reason to tread cautiously when it comes to the founding dates or the status of these settlements. The epigraphic corpus from the majority of the ancient towns on the eastern Adriatic coasts indicates that a significant proportion of the dominant class was made up of settlers of Italian origin.²³⁷ In comparison to Epirus and Macedonia, the Italian element was much stronger in this area and it is possible that in the less urbanized regions – like the western shore of the Kvarner Bay where most of our problematic cases are located – their arrival resulted in a new wave of urbanization. After all, the great majority of the settlers were representatives of the trading families based in northern Italy and the emergence of new port-towns would have been of enormous help to them in their role

²³² Nauportus: Strabo 7.5.2; Horvat eds. 1990. A more recent archaeological and palaeo-environmental study of this site has discovered only isolated finds from the Late La Tène, Horvat *et al.* 2016, 177-258.

²³³ The autonomous status of the settlement on the island of Pag depends on the highly problematic identification of this site with ancient Cissa, Suić 1992, 11-35; Ilakovac 1998, 69-82. For the archaeological remains, see Kurilić 2008, 368-369.

²³⁴ See Chapter Two, fn. 80.

²³⁵ The evidence for the autonomous character of these settlements is discussed in Chapter Six. For the archaeological data for Crexus, see: Blečić 2005, 263-264; Fulfinum: Čaušević-Bully 2007, 290-292; Čaušević-Bully 2008, 334-335; Senia: Glavičić 1982, 63-90; Ortopla: Miholjek, Stojević 2012, 143-174; Vegium: Zaninović 1984, 29-40.

²³⁶ For example, Blečić 2006, 76; or Glavičić 1984, 7-28, for Senia, that might also be a candidate to join this group of settlements.

²³⁷ Alföldy 1965, 72-76; Medini 1978, 67-85.

as mediators between the mountainous hinterland of Liburnia and Italy.²³⁸ Nevertheless, the socio-economic profile of the leading classes in these towns cannot be taken as a proxy for their foundation dates. The Italian element is strongly represented in all major coastal towns in Dalmatia, regardless of the time of their foundation.²³⁹

Even if we leave out the problematic settlements, it is possible that the list of new foundations is far from complete. As in the case of Epirus and Macedonia, we have excluded the road-stations that were mentioned in the itineraries but whose archaeological remains have not yet been located. It might be thought that most of these establishments were newly founded – forming a part of an infrastructure that did not predate the Roman conquest - but empirical evidence from the south of the peninsula has shown that topical continuity was possible even in this segment of the settlement network. Moreover, the mountainous character of the terrain that separated Italy from Pannonia and Dalmatia probably precluded the development of stable civilian settlements near the stations on the high mountain passes, for instance, at In Alpe Iulia or Ad Titulos. However, even if we allow the presence of civilian settlements only along the low-land sections of the roads, they will still amount to a sizeable group, potentially increasing the number of new foundations by nearly 100%.

When assessing the changes in the settlement pattern after the Roman conquest, it should be remembered that in most of the micro-regions of the northern Adriatic, and especially on the islands and the Istrian Peninsula, there was a considerable investment in the countryside. The severe drop in the number of *gradina* sites dating to the pre-conquest period was compensated for by a large number of elaborate villa complexes, especially along the coast.²⁴⁰ In contrast to Roman Macedonia, that remained predominantly peregrine, the Istrian Peninsula, and possibly parts of Liburnia, were included in the tenth region of Italy. The local communities were exempted from land taxes and the incentive to invest in the countryside would have been much greater than in Inner Dalmatia or Macedonia.²⁴¹

In view of the strategic importance of this corner of the study-area, the maintenance of the existing settlement network was a rational decision. Although poor in natural resources, control of this area was crucial to the security of Italy and future expansion in the Balkan Peninsula and the Danube. The representatives of the large trading families from northern Italy or Etruria, who formed the back-bone of the urban elite at the time of the High Empire, either settled in some of the existing urban settlements or established their settlements in the immediate vicinity of the earlier central places. The new establishments in the northern Adriatic were limited to secondary agglomerations, stations on the roads that led into the Balkan interior and minor port-towns that emerged in the wake of the increased demand in Aquileia.²⁴²

²³⁸ A similar genesis has been suggested for Argyruntum, Dubolnić 2007, 15. See Jurišić 2006, 175-192, for the increase in the number of shipwrecks in the northern Adriatic during the Late Republic and the Early Empire.

²³⁹ Alföldy 1969; Wilkes 1969.

²⁴⁰ Matijašić 1982, 53-64; Škegro 2006, 149-173; Begović-Dvoržak, Schrunck-Dvoržak 2004, 65-91; Tassaux 2011, 434-436.

²⁴¹ On the controversies surrounding the status of Liburnia see Vittinghoff 1977, 3-51; Čače 1993: 1-35; Starac 2006. 107-114.

²⁴² Matijašić 1998.

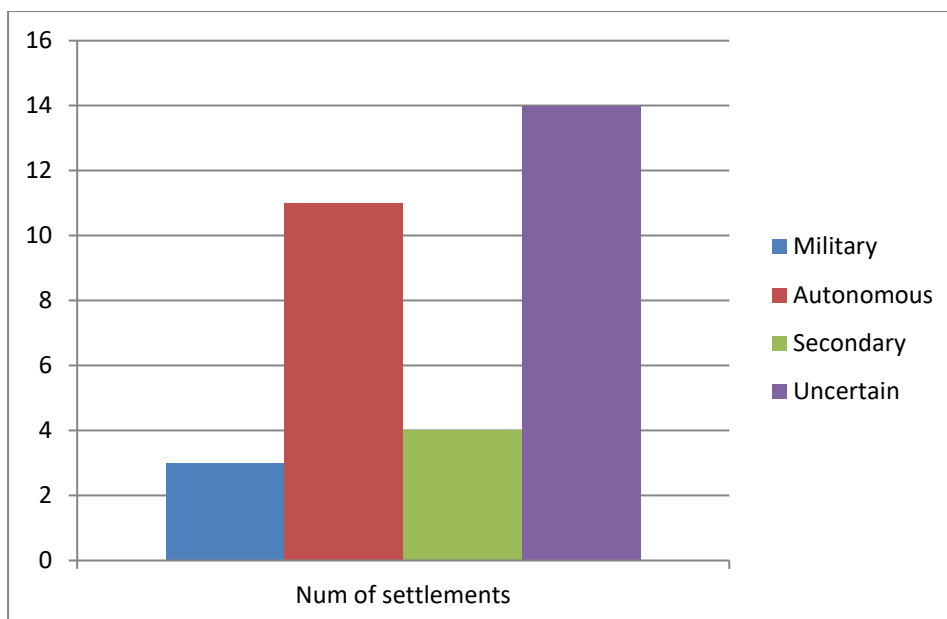


Figure III_5: The basic formal categories of newly founded settlements in Dalmatia

In comparison to Macedonia and the northern Adriatic, the new foundations in Dalmatia were more numerous and they include settlements of varying rank and character. At least 27% of all agglomerated settlements included in this study were founded after the conquest. It should be reiterated that the list excludes the majority of the road-stations, unless it has been proven they expanded into larger agglomerations, as well as the poorly researched sites. In the previous chapter it has been demonstrated that the urbanisation of Dalmatia under the High Empire was largely a new phenomenon, especially in the interior in which there was very little continuity, either topical or toponymical, from the pre-conquest period.

Three, possibly four, of the newly founded settlements in the province can be defined as garrison settlements (Figure III_5, Table II_5 in Appendix 2). These include the anonymous fort near Dobož on the Bosna, the former legionary camp Tilurium, in which auxiliary units had replaced the legion by the late first century AD, the supposed auxiliary fort near modern Humac to the north of Narona and possibly the outpost known from the itineraries as *Castra*, located in modern Banja Luka on the Middle Vrbas.²⁴³ This last site is classed as uncertain, as the only indication of a military presence is its ancient name.²⁴⁴ Andetrium, the former Dalmatian *oppidum*, also garrisoned smaller army units but, as in the case of Tilurium, the nature and extent of the civilian settlement are unclear.²⁴⁵ Moreover, if Andetrium did continue as a garrison site into the High Empire, it will qualify primarily as a pre-Roman settlement. Although at a first sight surprising, the presence of a small number of garrison settlements

²⁴³ Dobož: Čremošnik 1984, 23-84; Tilurium: Sanader, Tončinić 2005, 685-688; Sanader, Tončinić 2010, 33-52; Bigeste: Zaninović 1976, 169-184; Bojanovski 1988, 116-128; *Castra*: Bojanovski 1988, 300-303. For the army in Roman Dalmatia, see Wilkes 2000, 327-341. Recent studies have brought to light another potential auxiliary fort to the north of Magnum, but its date and longevity are yet to be determined, Glavaš 2014, 63-74.

²⁴⁴ Some scholars have suggested that both *Castra* and the unnamed fort near Dobož belonged to Pannonia Superior rather than to Dalmatia, Bojanovski 1988, 325-326. This possibility hardly changes their role and position in the broader regional network.

²⁴⁵ Bojanovski 1974, 131-132.

in a demilitarized province, located far from the *limes*, is not an exception in our study-area.²⁴⁶ It should be stressed that, in contrast to the provinces on the Danube, the military segment of the urban network of Dalmatia played a rather ephemeral role in the overall urban constellation.

Unlike the provinces discussed in the preceding sections, in which the new foundations were predominantly composed of secondary agglomerations, almost one-half of all newly founded settlements in Dalmatia were autonomous towns; the great majority of them founded as civilian rather than as garrison settlements²⁴⁷. The only exception is Burnum, a former legionary camp that was granted a municipal status in the early second century.²⁴⁸ In some cases, these towns are eponymous of the communities that inhabited their territories, for example, Burnum, Delminium and Doclea. This implies that at least a part of the urban population was recruited from the native communities. This assertion is further substantiated by the onomastic formulae that appear in inscriptions.²⁴⁹ However, most of the epigraphically attested part of the population had Italic or Oriental origins. In comparison to the Roman foundations in the northern Adriatic, the towns in continental Dalmatia were at least fifty years younger and the members of their leading classes were recruited from a different population base to those in the towns on the Adriatic coast or along the Amber Road, including legionary veterans from the eastern provinces and the native communities.²⁵⁰

As argued in the previous chapter, although numerically significant in every aspect, the new foundations in Dalmatia were overshadowed by the pre-Roman coastal settlements. Any mention of the colonies and *municipia* of the Dalmatian interior outside their respective territories is very sporadic. Their epigraphic legacy is tiny and the archaeological remains so scanty they barely allow us to relate these settlements to specific sites. In this respect, the patterns of urban developments in Roman Dalmatia are similar to those attested in Macedonia: in both provinces the most successful urban settlements grew from the communities of Roman citizens stationed in the pre-existing towns and *oppida*. Although these settlements traced their roots back to the pre-Roman period, their urban fabric and their role in the integral urban network were completely changed after the Roman conquest. In this sense, these towns were as Roman as the green-field foundations in the continental part of the province.

Having pointed out the meagre traces of the self-governing towns in the Dalmatian interior, it is hardly surprising that the category of secondary agglomerations is even more elusive. However, thanks to the series of extensive surveys along the Roman roads in the interior of Dalmatia, we know of a relatively large number of subordinate settlements from this province.²⁵¹ Over one-half of the group of newly founded settlements, including most of the uncertain cases, can be assigned to this category. However, only three or four settlements in this group display certain urban characteristics, like densely built-up areas or remains of public architecture, and were definitely founded after the conquest. For

²⁴⁶ In one of her later studies, I. Čremošnik has pointed out yet another garrison settlement near modern Šipovo, but without adducing any evidence, Čremošnik 1990, 355-364. In this study we have followed Bojanovski 1974, 347-369, who saw an autonomous civilian settlement called Baloie at this site.

²⁴⁷ This prominence of the autonomous towns among the category of newly founded settlements is caused primarily by the large number of secondary agglomerations whose chronology is uncertain, but were most likely new foundations, see Chapter II.I

²⁴⁸ Alföldy 1965, 87-88; Campedelli 2011, 33-64.

²⁴⁹ Alföldy 1965, 121.

²⁵⁰ Ferjanić 2002.

²⁵¹ Bojanovski 1974; Bojanovski 1977, 83-151; Bojanovski 1978, 51-125. See Chapter Two, fn. 90 and 91.

the rest, we only have descriptive accounts, often stressing the extent of their size. Nonetheless, on the basis of their location and certain artefact categories, at least five have been interpreted as mining colonies and seven as road-side *vici*.²⁵² In some cases – Stanecli, Leusaba – there is evidence of ore-smelting at the supposed sites of the road-stations.²⁵³ Because most of these sites are so poorly researched, they are classed uncertain in Figure III_5. It is interesting to note that, of the three settlements for which we have more tangible archaeological evidence, two – Domavia and the unnamed settlement at modern Kolovrat - clearly belong to the group of mining settlements and only one –Aquae S. - is a positively identified road-station and spa-town.²⁵⁴

There can be no doubt that the true number of secondary agglomerations was much higher. Half of the entries that belong to the group of uncertain settlements – the anonymous Roman agglomerations near modern Velečevo, Vinjani, the road-station of Pardua– will join the group of secondary agglomeration if future research proves that these are agglomerated settlements rather than clusters of farms.²⁵⁵ One fact is certain, a large number of settlements of similar rank still await discovery. The absence of monumental remains and fortifications has made them invisible to the traditional techniques of field survey. Nevertheless, their inconspicuousness in the archaeological record is an important tale-tell sign. The situation is almost identical to that encountered in Macedonia, and the road-stations and mining colonies would have been hardly more elaborate than those in the other provinces of the study-area. The fact that these settlements have failed to produce monumental remains or to enter the historical and epigraphic record must be taken as an accurate indicator of their status and wealth. Economic prosperity epitomized by urban development was inseparable from juridical status in this part of the Roman Empire and, as often happened, the presence of scarce natural resources was not necessarily beneficial to the local communities. More to the point of the present chapter, apart from their specialized functions, we cannot be sure if these settlements were essentially different from the average village in the Dalmatian interior. It is possible that at least some of our secondary agglomerations belonged to the rural sector.

In the case of Dalmatia, it can be argued that the relative prominence of the secondary settlements is an actual index of the feeble impact of the autonomous towns on the economy and demography of the province. The pre-existing urban infrastructure was obviously deemed inadequate, but the newly established network of autonomous towns likewise did not have the capacity to provide essential services to the more remote parts of the province. When discussing the spatial distribution of the basic categories of Roman settlements, we shall see that other inhibiting factors were the large state-owned districts in the central and eastern parts of the province, famed for their riches in gold, silver and lead.²⁵⁶

²⁵² Road-side *vici*: Stanecli, Leusaba, Aquae S., the unnamed settlements near modern Drenovik, Vinjani, Velečevo and possibly Ustikoline, see fn. 91 in the preceding chapter. Mining settlements: Domavia, the agglomerations near modern Višnjica, Kolovrat, Kaćuni and Vojlavica.

²⁵³ Bojanovski 1974, 105, 179-182.

²⁵⁴ Aquae S.: Pašalić, 1959, 113-136; Bojanovski 1988, 144-154; the mining colony near modern Kolovrat: Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1981, 103-107; Loma 2002, 143-179; Domavia: Wilkes 1969, 377-378; Bojanovski 1988: 193-203.

²⁵⁵ For the archaeological remains at some of these sites, see Bojanovski 1974, 166; Bojanovski 1977, 83-151; Bojanovski 1988, 284-287.

²⁵⁶ Cf. Mattingly 2006.

The Pannonias

As in the rest of the provinces on the Danube frontier, urbanism in the two Pannonias was distinctly marked by the large number of army contingents. Four permanent legionary camps and at least thirty-two auxiliary forts guarded the Pannonian sector on the Middle Danube.²⁵⁷ This adds up to a minimum of 40,000 soldiers on active duty, on its own a significant demographic factor. As argued in the Introduction, these communities were not self-sufficient and it is likely that the population figure directly linked to the military sector was much higher. The majority of the settlements that grew up around the military bases in these provinces were not urban in the strict sense of the word. Undeniably, this categorization has been chiefly determined by the old legal principle that separated the military from the civilian sphere.²⁵⁸ By the early second century AD, the Romans had found a formula to grant official statuses to the largest and most successful among these communities without violating the ancient rule of civic foundations.²⁵⁹ In the end, the great majority of the garrison settlements were never granted an official town charter. However, although on paper these communities failed to reach an urban status, in other aspects – especially size and physical appearance – they were more urban than many of the official towns in the demilitarized provinces of the Balkan interior.

As shall be demonstrated, there are significant differences between the urban profiles of the individual Danube provinces. In the case of Pannonia, these differences were recognized by the division of the province at the beginning of the second century AD.²⁶⁰ It is therefore worthwhile taking a brief look at each province separately.

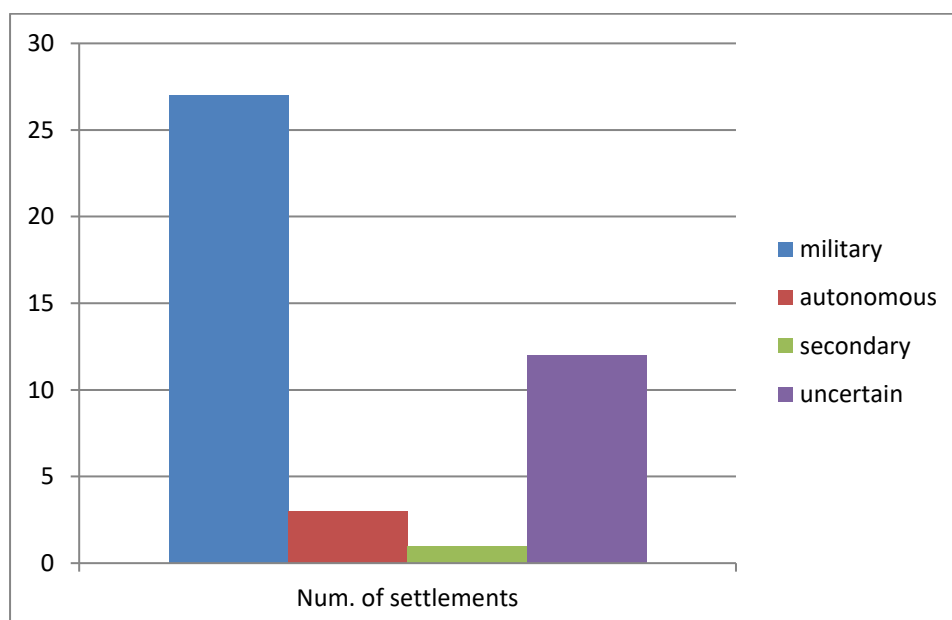


Figure III_6: The basic formal categories of newly founded settlements in Pannonia Inferior

²⁵⁷ Fitz 1980b, 125-140; Visy 2003.

²⁵⁸ See, for instance, Mommsen 1873, 299-326, especially fn.2.

²⁵⁹ Vittinghoff 1971, 299-324; Mócsy 1974, 139-147.

²⁶⁰ Mócsy 1974, 91-92.

Second only to Dacia, Pannonia Inferior was the most militarized province in our study area. Twenty-seven out of forty-three settlements, or almost 65% of the newly founded agglomerations, can be classed as garrison settlements (Figure III_6, Table II_6). This count excludes the auxiliary forts built on top of or near pre-Roman *oppida*, as well as the auxiliary fort near modern Albertfalva, possibly abandoned after the Marcomannic Wars.²⁶¹ Such a high percentage of garrison settlements is paralleled only in a few other provinces on the Danube *Limes*. At the end of this chapter, we shall see that this was partly related to the geographical position of the province in relation to the *Barbaricum*. Like its Moesian counterpart, during most of the Principate, the territory of Pannonia Inferior was little more than a narrow military zone along the right bank of the Danube, measuring not more than 50 km at its widest. Obviously under these circumstances, the space and demographic potential necessary for the constitution of autonomous municipal entities were rather limited. This would change in AD 214, when its frontier with Pannonia Superior was drawn at least 50 km farther west; a change that hardly increased the number of towns in the province.²⁶² Urbanization in the juridical sense of the term remained confined to the large garrison settlements on the frontier. By the Severan period, the two settlements that grew up near the legionary camps of Aquincum and Brigetio were granted town charters.²⁶³ As this act did not cause perceptible changes in the layout or the socio-economic profile of these settlements, they too have been included in the list of garrison towns.

In the entire province there were no more than five newly founded civilian establishments. Four of these – Sirmium, Bassianae, Volgum and Spodentium - were autonomous towns, although the history of the latter two is problematic as they are yet to be located.²⁶⁴ The only certain secondary settlement dated after the Roman conquest is Sopiana, granted civic status only after the period of the Tetrarchy.²⁶⁵ It was most likely joined by Gorsium. The latter grew at the site of a former auxiliary camp, and some scholars believe that, by the second century, it had become an autonomous town.²⁶⁶ It is therefore assigned to the group of uncertain settlements. In view of the situation and role of this province on the Danube frontier, the relative scarcity of newly founded civilian settlements is hardly surprising. Whereas in the north it was the presence of the military that prevented the emergence of new autonomous settlements, in the south of the province the scope for new foundations was limited by the persistence of the pre-Roman *oppida* at Cibalae and Mursa. Both settlements had been granted an autonomous status by the early second century, completing the municipalization of Pannonia Inferior.²⁶⁷

On the surface, it is more difficult to explain the near absence of secondary agglomerations in this province. If anything, the state of research in Pannonia Inferior, especially in its northern half, is far more advanced compared to that in the Dalmatian interior. However, the evidence for small, quasi-urban communities is extremely scant. Most probably the large group of settlements with an uncertain status and origin includes at least some secondary agglomerations but, on the account of

²⁶¹ Gabler 1999, 75-86.

²⁶² Mócsy 1974, 198; Fitz 1989, 533-558.

²⁶³ Mócsy 1974, 134-139, 217-227.

²⁶⁴ Sirmium: Mirković 1971, 5-90; Bassianae: Milin 2004: 253-268; Volgum: Tóth 1986, 163-181; Spodentium: Crnobrnja 2011, 373-388; Sopdent is included in the list only on the condition that it was located at the site proposed by Crnobrnja.

²⁶⁵ Gábor *et al.* 2004: 269-294.

²⁶⁶ Fitz 2003, 197-207; Kovács 1999, 278-295, summarizes the debate about the autonomous status of Gorsium.

²⁶⁷ Mócsy 1974, 118, 142-143; Iskra-Janošić 2004, 169-195; Filipović 2004, 157-168.

the character of the data, it is impossible to decide if these were average sub-corporate communities that found their way into the archaeological literature by accident or special-purpose settlements that stood apart by virtue of their size and physical remains. Some of these sites, like those near Morović and Županja, have been identified as road-stations, but only on the basis of extensive surveys and topographic studies.²⁶⁸ In short, unless more detailed field studies and excavations are carried out, it is impossible to be sure about the correct interpretation of these sites. The same is true of the Late Roman fortified settlements near modern Ságvár and Alsóhetény, normally identified with the stations of Tricciana and Iovia.²⁶⁹ There is very little positive evidence of earlier phases at these sites, especially at Tricciana.²⁷⁰

Regardless of these uncertainties, it is clear that the number of secondary, civilian agglomerations was much higher than indicated in Figure III_6. It would be unlikely that there had not been any spontaneous growth near the stations on the important inter-regional corridors along the lower courses of the Sava, Drava and Drina. Somewhat less attractive were the sections along the two diagonal roads that connected the Pannonian *Limes* with the interior of the province.²⁷¹ Ptolemy, writing in the middle of the second century AD, mentions at least seven or eight settlements besides the known auxiliary forts on the Danube.²⁷² The locations of most of these sites cannot be determined but, as there is no evidence that they were autonomous towns, it can safely be surmised that they were secondary agglomerations. As in the other provinces in the study-area, the main dilemma is whether the government constructed or invested in settlements designed specifically to function as road-stations and local markets or whether it merely assigned these functions to the existing rural estates or villages.

Another possible reason for the near absence of secondary agglomerations in Pannonia Inferior is terminological. Although by layout and origin the agglomerations that developed near auxiliary camps belong to the category of garrison settlements, from a purely functional perspective they are secondary agglomerations. In addition to providing a range of specific services to the army units, they also functioned as road-stations, and probably markets, along the *Limes* Road. In a nutshell, it would seem that the preponderance of the military segment in the urban network in Pannonia Inferior restricted the development of both categories of civilian settlements. Not only did the garrison settlements consume the territorial and demographic potential of the province, they actually replaced a large proportion of the civilian settlements by providing a similar range of services.

²⁶⁸ Bojanovski 1984, 145-264.

²⁶⁹ Tóth 1985, 121-136; Fitz 1989, 547-548, has proposed a different location for Iovia.

²⁷⁰ In the case of Alsóhetény, earlier remains have been detected to the south and southeast of the fort, Tóth 1985, 126.

²⁷¹ Burghardt 1979, 3-4, Figure 5; Soproni 1980, 207-217.

²⁷² Ptol. *Geog.* 8.16.6; Bojanovski 1984, 150-154; tried to identify these sites with some of the road-stations along the Sava Road.

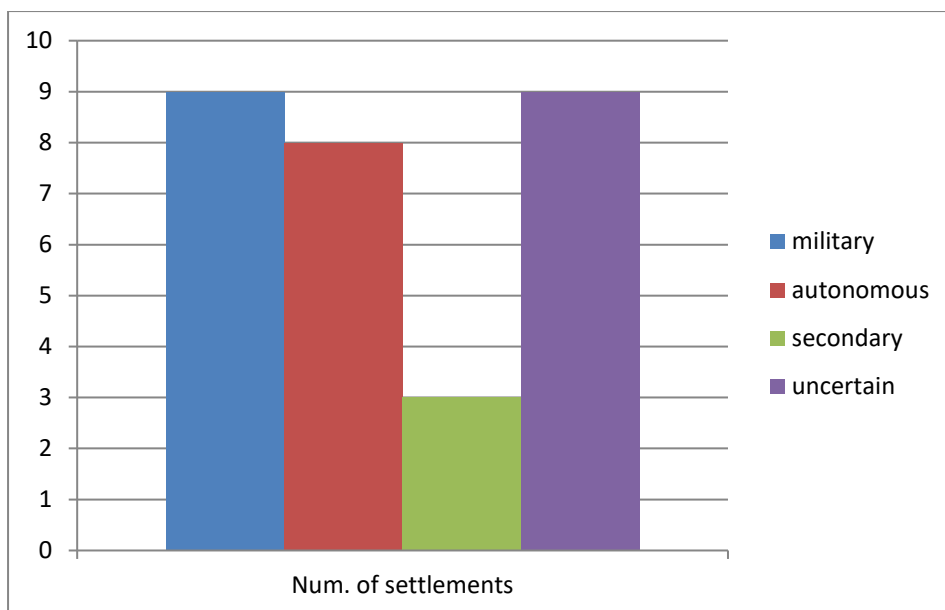


Figure III_7: The basic formal categories of newly founded settlements in Pannonia Superior

Although Pannonia Superior was also a frontier province, the profile of the newly founded settlements in it differs quite sharply from that of its eastern neighbour. There are fewer garrison sites, representing slightly over 30% of the total number of agglomerated settlements (Figure III_7, Table II_7). As our tables include only a proportion of the secondary civilian settlements founded after the Roman conquest, it is likely that the true share of the garrison settlements in the urban network of the province was even less significant. This is hardly surprising in view of the fact that the *limes* in Pannonia Superior was less than three times longer than the *limes* in Inferior. (Map III_1).²⁷³

Although not as numerous as in some other frontier provinces, the garrison settlements in Pannonia Superior developed into the largest and most important agglomerations in the province. The provincial capital and two of the largest settlements in the province – Carnuntum and Vindobona - developed around permanent army camps on the northern Pannonian frontier. As in other frontier provinces, urban growth translated into monumentality and public construction was particularly strong on the *limes*.

However, in comparison to Dalmatia or Pannonia Inferior, the urban settlements in Pannonia Superior were more evenly spread. The number of newly founded civilian towns almost equals the number of garrison settlements and it is among the highest in the provinces of our study-area. In total, eight of the newly founded settlements had been granted an official town charter by the time of the Severan dynasty – excluding the garrison settlements that became autonomous towns – amounting to over 27% of the integral settlement network. It is true that the number of newly founded towns was slightly higher in Dalmatia, but this fact merely obscures the significant differences in the level of urbanization between the two provinces. With the exception of a few towns in the Trans-Pannonian half of the

²⁷³ This is essentially the Marcomannic front. For sectoring on the Pannonian *Limes* see Krekovič 2001, 103-107.

province – like the vaguely attested *municipia* of Mogentiana and Halicanum²⁷⁴ – all Pannonian towns have left a very rich archaeological and epigraphic legacy. As we saw in the preceding section, the archaeological heritage of the newly founded towns in the Dalmatian interior is so insignificant the locations of a number of them remain controversial.

If for the moment we disregard the garrison settlements, that at least in the early phases of their existence were truly cosmopolitan communities, probably the most decisive element in the early genesis of the towns in Pannonia Superior was the settlers from Italy.²⁷⁵ In this respect, Pannonia Superior resembles the situation on the Dalmatian coast, although the wave of colonizers reached the Pannonian interior several decades later. Communities of merchants, mostly freedmen from northern Italy or their descendants, occupied key nodes along the main interregional corridors traversing the province, in particular the road along the Sava and the Amber Road. It was these communities of Roman citizens that planted the seed of Roman urbanism in Pannonia. They were present in the oldest and most distinguished Pannonian towns: Poetovio, Savaria, Scarbantia and Siscia. In comparison, the input of veteran colonists was either far less important or has simply left very little traces in the epigraphic record.²⁷⁶ In the case of Pannonia, the participation of the native communities was also far more significant than in some other provinces in the Balkan interior and a few of the autonomous towns can be plainly related to some of the tribes who inhabited this land at the time of the Roman conquest.²⁷⁷ However, their presence does not diminish the influence of the Italian communities even in some of the peregrine capitals.²⁷⁸

Despite the strong wave of urbanization that swept over the provincial territory, large parts of Pannonia Superior remained under-urbanized. In view of the restricted size of the military sector in this province, an increased role in the category of subordinate central places might have been expected. These are indeed somewhat more prominent in comparison to those in Pannonia Inferior, but still only a handful of sites can be securely qualified as “small towns”. When compared to the number of secondary agglomerations in Dalmatia, this sector in Pannonia Superior appears rather insignificant. There is a temptation to explain this difference by the clustering of the autonomous towns in coastal Dalmatia, leaving large sections of the interior of the province without self-governing towns. Furthermore, it has to be stressed that our figures for the secondary agglomerations are only partial and of limited significance. It is therefore possible that these differences merely reflect the divergent histories of archaeological research in the individual provinces.

On account of the large number of inscriptions and remains of monumental architecture, at least three sites can be classed as town-like secondary agglomerations. However, even this small group is not entirely unambiguous. It includes two healing sanctuaries – *Aquae lasae* and the site of a *Fortuna* sanctuary near modern Topusko, identified with the station of *Quadrata* or *Ad Fines* – but the

²⁷⁴ Mogentiana: Nagy 2004, 75-83; the humble, mostly Late Antique remains from Sv. Martin on the Mura, Tomičić 1979, 40-43; Lolić, Wiewegh 2012, 191-224, have been identified with the *municipium* Halicanum, known from an inscription found in Aquincum, Soproni 1979, 93-98.

²⁷⁵ Šašel 1966, 117-137; Mócsy 1974, 74-78; Fitz 1980, 141-159; Mócsy 1974, 197-222; see, most recently, Gregoratti 2013, 133-53; for a full bibliography on this topic.

²⁷⁶ Ferjanić 2002; 46-48, 52-55.

²⁷⁷ Mócsy 1974, 134-139; Andautonia, Neviodunum and *Aquae Balisae* surely belong to this group, but it is impossible to relate either Sala or Mursella to any of the known Pannonian *civitates*. Sala: Redö 2003, 191-235; Mursella: Szönyi 2004, 85-97.

²⁷⁸ Andautonia: Nemeth-Ehrlich, Špalj 2003, 107-129; Neviodunum: Lovenjak ed. 1998.

residential quarters at these sites have not been properly documented.²⁷⁹ The third settlement is the mining *vicus* near modern Blagaj, in the iron-mining district close to the provincial frontier with Dalmatia.²⁸⁰ This anonymous establishment in the north of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of a metallurgical and a residential component and, like the rest of the known mining-establishments in Dalmatia, it was provided with baths. In its layout and micro-location, it is reminiscent of the road-side *vici*, although it has to be stressed that the majority of the buildings at this site can be dated only to the Late Roman period. Compared to the small towns that developed along the main provincial roads, this mining settlement on the Japra presents a rather humble appearance. This is attributable to the lowly social status of the mining communities but, given the very limited amount of research, any comparison between the two groups of settlements must be exercised with due caution.

The other sites included in this analysis are open settlements that have often been described in the archaeological reports as major agglomerations. The reliability of these accounts is questionable.²⁸¹ Aware of the dispersed nature of rural settlements from the Roman period, these sites might easily belong to the rural sector, despite the impressive size-estimates given in the literature.²⁸² Compared to one of the rare examples of a well-studied *vicus* in Roman Pannonia – discovered near modern Strebersdorf - these settlements are true giants.²⁸³ The fact that the latter settlement was located at the site of a former auxiliary camp and was situated on the Amber Road arouses even greater suspicions of the very large sizes attributed to the settlements south of the Sava. Because of the inadequate data, the supposed sites of some of the road-side *vici* along the Sava road are also included in the group of uncertain settlements.

The number of newly founded secondary agglomerations in Pannonia Superior was certainly higher than suggested by our figures, although it is difficult to arrive at a more specific estimate. In a recent survey of the towns and settlements in the Croatian part of Pannonia, T. Lolić and Z. Wiewegh have listed forty-six sites.²⁸⁴ In addition to the autonomous towns, the group consists almost entirely of stations along the Sava and Drava Roads and the road that links Siscia to the Amber Road. We cannot be sure about the character, or indeed even the very existence of these sites in the period of the High Empire, but the ratio of one autonomous town to eight or nine secondary agglomerations does not seem improbable.

²⁷⁹ *Aquae lasae*: Gorenc, Vikić 1979, 32-49; Lučić 2013, 185-255; Topusko: Šegvić 1996, 283-289; for the possible identification, see, Durman 1992, 117-133.

²⁸⁰ Basler 1977, 121-216.

²⁸¹ These are the unnamed settlements near modern Skurgić and Strigova, Bojanovski 1984, 235; 242; the area of the former site has been estimated at 30 ha, equalling the size of some of the autonomous towns in the province!

²⁸² Donev 2017, 79-94.

²⁸³ Groh 2009, 175-187.

²⁸⁴ Lolić, Wiewegh 2012, 191-224.

The Moesias

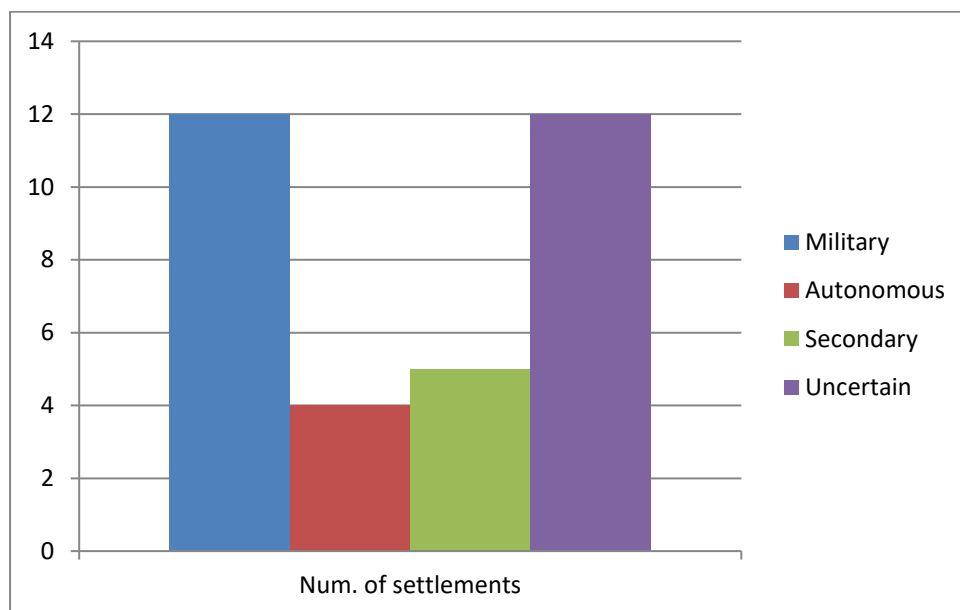


Figure III_8: The basic formal categories of newly founded settlements in Moesia Superior

Of the thirty-three agglomerations possibly established after the Roman conquest of Moesia Superior, at least twelve were permanent settlements that developed adjacent to the sites of auxiliary or legionary camps (Figure III_8, Table II_8 in Appendix 2). This amounts to slightly over one-third of the settlements included in this analysis, very close to the share of the army sector in Pannonia Superior. The fairly moderate percentage of military settlements in this frontier province should not come as a surprise in view of the fact that, after the conquest of Dacia, only a very short section of the northern Moesian frontier faced the *Barbaricum*. Earlier scholars have assumed that much of the military infrastructure in the Iron Gates built under the Flavians and Trajan lost its original purpose after the conquest of Dacia and was abandoned.²⁸⁵ However, the large-scale rescue excavations in the area in the 1960s and 1970s brought to light second and third century phases at a number of auxiliary forts that had been active on the eve of Trajan's campaign.²⁸⁶ Obviously, the maintenance of the road along the Danube and the navigability of the river were deemed crucial to the functioning of the Danube *Limes* and some of the military outposts were retained after the conquest of Dacia. In addition to logistical considerations, some of these sites also played a role in the export of the mining products from the region.²⁸⁷ However, it is not always clear if they continued to exist as garrison settlements or were fully demilitarized. The number of garrison settlements could be slightly higher if we include the problematic examples - Dorticum, Aquae and Transdierna.²⁸⁸ The group could also include the *civitas*

²⁸⁵ Mirković 2007, 41-42; Mócsy 1970, 55-58, on the basis of the distribution of stamped military tiles, has assumed that certain forts in the Iron Gates area were continually occupied up to the reign of Aurelian.

²⁸⁶ Vasić 1982-1983, 91-136; Vasić, Kondić 1986, 542-560; Wilkes 1998, 635-643.

²⁸⁷ Werner 1986, 561-564; Dušanić 2004, 247-270.

²⁸⁸ Dorticum: Ivanov 2003, 11-17; Wilkes 2005, 211; if there was a permanently stationed army unit at this site, it left very little or no epigraphic monuments; Aquae: Mirković 1968, 85-89, Jovanović 1996, 263-264; Transdierna: Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1982-1983, 337-343; Vasić, Kondić 1986, 544.

known from the Late Roman sources as Aureus Mons.²⁸⁹ Located on the *limes* it might be expected that this site was occupied by the military, but there is very little evidence to support this assumption.

As in the Pannonias and the other Danube provinces, some of the largest and most important urban settlements in Moesia Superior developed around military camps and, by the end of the second century AD, some – Viminacium, and possibly Singidunum - were granted an autonomous status.²⁹⁰ In fact, the number of autonomous towns recruited among the garrison settlements almost equals the number of purely civilian foundations with an official town charter, further underlining the extent of the military sector in Moesia Superior. Nevertheless, the share of the civilian sector, more specifically the autonomous towns, should not be underestimated. By the time of the Late Principate, Moesia Superior boasted no fewer than six newly founded autonomous towns. This amounts to about 12% of all settlements in this province, slightly more than the number in Pannonia Inferior. The chances are that this percentage was higher because the group excludes two autonomous towns that are yet to be located. Both are known solely from isolated epigraphic testimonies and they have been kept in the graph “uncertain” only for the sake of consistency.²⁹¹ If their names are anything to go by, it is likely that at least the *Municipium Aelianum* was founded after the Roman conquest of the area. Moreover, it certainly belonged to the group of mining *municipia* and, analogous to the *Municipium Dardanorum* and Ulpiana, it was not attached to a military fort. Finally, the group of autonomous towns unrelated to military camps might also be expanded by the addition of Horreum Margi.²⁹² The topography and chronology of this site is utterly confused, but its name and late promotion would seem to point towards yet another garrison settlement that became a *municipium* under the Severans.²⁹³ Given the nature of the evidence from these sites, the number of civilian, autonomous towns could increase by at least 50%.

As to be expected, the secondary agglomerations make-up the most elusive category of newly founded civilian settlements. In fact, in Moesia Superior they are comparatively well represented on account of the auxiliary forts that were demilitarized after the conquest of Dacia, but probably continued to exist as civilian settlements. Most of these sites have been poorly researched, but any known archaeological material dates to the Late Roman period.²⁹⁴ Only the epigraphic record and the necropolis finds in Bononia indicate that these settlements were occupied throughout the period of the High Empire. Almost all of these sites are located to the east of the Iron Gates and, should it be proven that some of the auxiliary camps in the gorge were also demilitarized, the number of secondary agglomerations could rise. At least two sites in the interior of the province – Remesiana and the settlement near Drsnik in Merohija - also belong to this group. Remesiana was a road-station and

²⁸⁹ Mirković 1968, 83-85; Wilkes 1998, 641; has nonetheless claimed that Aureus Mons was a Flavian auxiliary fort; possibly Trajanic in Wilkes 2005, 208.

²⁹⁰ Mirković 1968, 37-49; Mirković ed. 1986.

²⁹¹ These are the *municipium Celegerorum* and *Aelianum*; Mócsy 1970, 30, 36. For the connection between *Aelianum* and the mining district *Aelia Pincensia*, see Dušanić 1977, 52-94 and Chapter Six.

²⁹² Petrović ed. 1979; for the archaeological remains, see Vasić, Kavajin-Mundrić, Popović 1989, 7-37.

²⁹³ Petrović ed. 1979, 57.

²⁹⁴ Bononia: Ivanov 2003, 18-22; (second century urns) Mitova-Džonova 1972, 203-210; Almus: Ivanov 2003b, 23-26; Almus is not included in the catalogue of auxiliary forts on the Lower Danube *Limes* compiled by Gudea 2005, 319-566; Combustica has been interpreted as yet another road-station. It is located off the Danube *Limes*, on the Ratiaria-Lissus Road. According to Atanasova-Georgieva 1986, 437-440, Bononia, Combustica and Dorticum were all secondary settlements in the territory of Ratiaria.

possibly the centre of a separate district that became a town in the Late Roman period.²⁹⁵ Some scholars have claimed that the settlement in Metohija was also an autonomous town. This claim is not supported by the epigraphic evidence and it is possible that this was yet another road-station on the road between Lissus and Ratiaria.²⁹⁶

The case of Remesiana once again underlines the importance of road-stations in the settlement map of the Balkan Peninsula and the Danube. Though positive evidence for the proliferation of these secondary agglomerations in the period of the High Empire is missing, the potential was evidently there. Indeed, the great majority of the group of settlements with uncertain status can be related to road-stations. At five of the sites in this group, the surface remains indicate the presence of small civilian agglomerations in the immediate vicinity of the supposed *mansiones*.²⁹⁷ Unfortunately, the chronology of these remains is not entirely clear. In at least one case – a possible station on the road Naissus-Lissus, near modern Kuršumlija - the discovery of an Early Roman bath-house and a Late Roman basilica suggests that at least some of these sites were slowly being monumentalized.²⁹⁸ In view of the importance of the roads that linked the Danube frontier with the Vardar Valley and the Aegean and the main east-west transversal linking the Adriatic and the Lower Danube, the potential for settlement growth along these corridors is unquestionable.²⁹⁹ Of course, nothing guarantees that this potential was realized and the study of the non-agrarian settlements that developed near road-stations will surely be one of the most exciting study topics in the field of Roman archaeology of the Balkan Peninsula.

Because of its riches in precious metals, large sections of the territory of Moesia Superior had been expropriated by the central government and were constituted as separate fiscal districts by the reign of Trajan.³⁰⁰ In this aspect Moesia Superior resembled Dalmatia but, unlike the latter province, the archaeological evidence for mining *vici* is extremely scant. Most of the sites associated with ore-extraction and smelting in the regions of present-day eastern Serbia, the Timok Valley and Mount Kosmaj in the northwest can only be dated to the Late Antique period.³⁰¹ Although epigraphically well attested, the archaeological remains from the supposed centre of the mining district in the area of Mount Kosmaj do not predate the period of the Tetrarchy. Furthermore, the inscriptions found in this region testify to the presence of an auxiliary unit after the Marcomannic Wars and it is possible that the central place belonged to the group of garrison settlements, like Timacus Minus in the Timok Valley.³⁰²

²⁹⁵ Petrović ed. 1979, 51-57, 101-108; Dušanić 2004, 258, sees Remesiana as a centre of a mining district. Mirković 2007, 69. In connection to the possible size and status of Remesiana, the interpretation of the *album* of AD 196, listing the recruits for the VII Claudia in Viminacium is also highly relevant, Mirković ed. 1986, num. 53.

²⁹⁶ Čerškov 1969, 39-40; Mirdita 1975, 69-81; Mirković 2007, 70-71.

²⁹⁷ Čerškov 1961, 123-131; Petrović ed. 1979, 20-29; Vasić, Milošević 2000.

²⁹⁸ Petrović ed. 1979, 20-21.

²⁹⁹ Recently rescue excavations along the modern highway between Belgrade and Thessaloniki have revealed another road-side *vicus* at the entrance to the Grdelički Gorge, showing evidence of metallurgical activities and other crafts. Typically most of the finds date to the period of the Tetrarchy or later, Ivanišević, Stamenković, Jović 2016, 47-69.

³⁰⁰ Dušanić 1977, 52-94; see Chapter Six for a more extensive list of references to this topic.

³⁰¹ Dušanić 1990, 217-224; Petković 2009, 187-196.

³⁰² Mirković, Dušanić ed. 1976, 104-107. Timacus Minus: Petrović ed. 1995.

The dearth of archaeological remains in the mining districts of Moesia Superior and in the Central Balkans in general is understandable in view of the juridical status of this land. There would have been little incentive to make long-term investments on land that could neither be appropriated nor passed-on to future generations. Researchers studying the organization of mining in the Balkans during the period of the High Empire have pointed to the likely seasonal character of the work in the mines.³⁰³ This implies that the exploitation of these regions did not require a particularly advanced infrastructure. If, for instance, the labour force was stationed in provisional camps, it was unlikely to leave any perceptible traces in the archaeological record. Often the most imposing remains encountered in the mining districts are the traces of the actual mining activities themselves: the mine shafts and spoil heaps along the auriferous rivers. However, in the case of Moesia Superior, the diminished prominence of the secondary agglomerations in the mining districts was preconditioned by the fact that our formal settlement classes are based primarily on the topography rather than the economic focus of the settlements. The centres of the Moesian mining districts were either regularly guarded by the army units or had become *municipia* by the Severan period, thereby leaving little room for non-military or subordinate agglomerations in these regions.

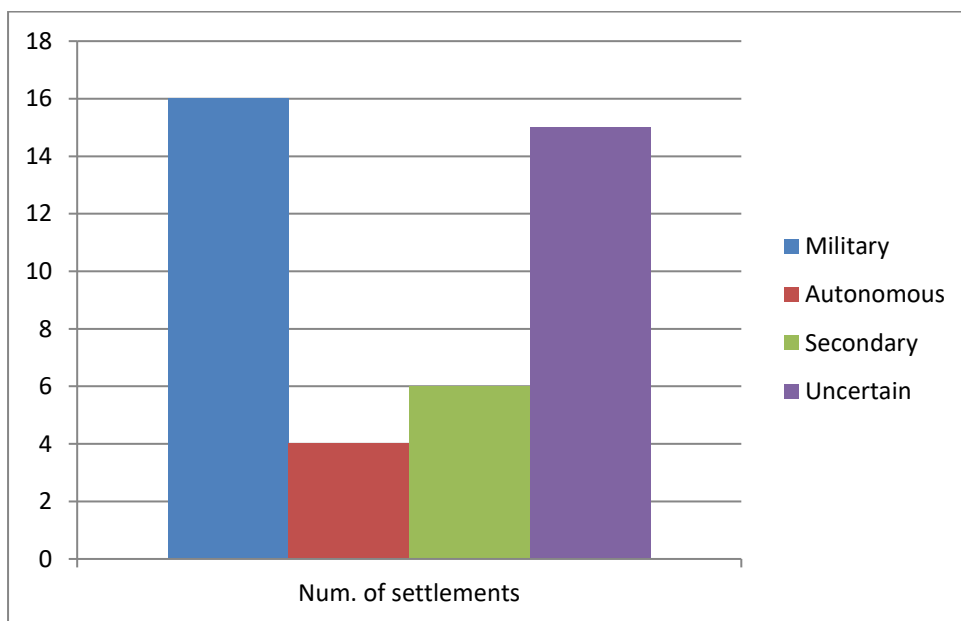


Figure III_9: The basic formal categories of newly founded settlements in Moesia Inferior

The newly founded segment of the settlement network in Moesia Inferior was far from uniform. In Figure III_9 the list of newly founded settlements has been extended to include the sites with a predominant Late Roman phase and sites whose origins and status are unclear but were possible Roman foundations. The effect of this is to increase the share of the secondary agglomerations. As in the case of Moesia Superior, the number of settlements with unclear chronology and character is worryingly high and inevitably complicates the interpretation of the data (Table II_9 in Appendix 2).

No fewer than sixteen sites with a securely established post-conquest date are garrison settlements. They make-up at least 35% of all new foundations in Moesia Inferior, a percentage only slightly higher

³⁰³ Ørsted 1985, referring to iron-mining in Noricum.

than in Moesia and Pannonia Superior. In reality, the number of garrison settlements must have been higher. Almost one-half of the settlements classed as uncertain are problematic, not because of their status under the High Empire, but because of their ill-defined chronology. In the preceding chapter, we explained that there is not much evidence in support of a pre-Roman origin of these sites. Even if they did predate the Roman conquest, during the period of the High Empire they belonged to the military sector and are not readily distinguishable from the rest of the garrison settlements. Together with the garrison forts that occupied the sites of pre-Roman *oppida*, they will increase the number of garrison settlements by over 50%. This will raise their share in the settlement network of the province to nearly 60%, close to the estimates for Pannonia Inferior. In view of the length of the *limes* in Moesia Inferior, this is a far more realistic assessment of the extent of the military sector in the province.³⁰⁴

As in the Middle Danube provinces, the largest conurbations in Moesia Inferior emerged near the army camps. By the Severan period, this trend had been recognized by the central government and the settlements that developed near the two legionary camps at Durostorum and Novae had become autonomous towns.³⁰⁵ In Moesia Inferior, the municipal development on the Danube *Limes* was not limited entirely to the legionary towns and it is possible that certain degree of autonomy was granted to some of the major auxiliary camps, like Noviodunum or Capidava on the Scythian sector of the *limes*.³⁰⁶ In neither of these cases does the juridical status of the settlement change the fact that formerly they belonged to the group of garrison settlements. Montana, the centre of a mining district, joins the group of ambiguous settlements qualified here as garrison towns because there are no traces of a pre-fourth century fort at this site, although the epigraphic evidence confirms the permanent presence of the army in the period of the Principate.³⁰⁷

At a few of the excavated sites located to the west of the legionary camp Novae, there is proof that the military occupation ended after the conquest of Dacia and the establishment of the new Dacian frontier on the River Olt. This is self-evident in the case of the Trajanic colony of Oescus and it has been ascertained in the cases of Dimum and possibly Utum.³⁰⁸ Augusta and Variana are problematic but, in view of the developments to the east of Oescus and on the section of the Lower Danube that belongs to Moesia Superior, it is unlikely that the army continued to guard these points after the end of the Dacian campaigns.³⁰⁹ Assuming that the army retreated from all of the garrison sites to the west

³⁰⁴ Gudea 2005, 324.

³⁰⁵ Gerov 1980, 113-118, 349-359; Doruțiu-Boilă 1978, 245-247; Ivanov 2003b, 75-86; Kolendo, Božilova eds. 1997.

³⁰⁶ One final possibility is that they were granted a certain degree of autonomy, but administratively still belonged to the nearest autonomous town; Doruțiu-Boilă ed. 1980; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 35-37. See Chapter Six for further references to this topic.

³⁰⁷ Aleksandrov 1994; Binev 2003, 160-182; See Chapter Six for a full bibliography on the status of Montana.

³⁰⁸ Oescus: Gerov 1980, 1-21; Ivanov 1987, 7-60; Boyanov 2008, 69-76; Dimum: Kabakčieva, Lazarova 2015, 195-203; Utum: the remains of the camp are yet to be discovered, Gudea 2005, 416, num. I. 10.

³⁰⁹ The chief problem with these military forts is that they were re-occupied soon after the abandonment of Dacia, so that it is difficult to distinguish the earlier phases of the camp without a systematic on-site research. It should be mentioned that most of the auxiliary forts built prior to the conquest of Dacia were earth and timber constructions and, unless they were re-occupied in Late Antiquity, their remains are not easily detectible, cf. Regianum or Pedoniana, Gudea 2005, 411, 413, num. I.3, I.7. Augusta: judging by the plan of the fort, Ivanov 1980, Figure 212, the visible remains are almost certainly Late Roman; Ivanov 2003c, 27-29, points to finds pre-dating the Marcomannic Wars; Variana: Gudea 2005, 412, num. I.7.

of Novae, it would be safe to assume that they continued to exist as civilian, secondary agglomerations.

As in most provinces in our study-area, the impact of the army on the urbanization of Moesia Inferior was felt beyond the category of garrison settlements. Two of the official civilian foundations - Oescus and Troesmis - emerged at the sites of former legionary camps and were chiefly inhabited by army veterans.³¹⁰ Marcianopolis and Nicopolis ad Istrum, included in Moesia Inferior only towards the end of the second century AD, were also home to sizeable communities of army veterans.³¹¹ Excluding the Greek colonies on the Black Sea coast, the autonomous towns founded in the continental part of the province represent only 12% of the settlements included in this analysis. In terms of the size of the civilian sector, Moesia Inferior was only slightly more urban than its Pannonian counterpart. In both provinces there was little room for urban development outside the aegis of the military.

The similarities in the composition of the settlement network between Pannonia and Moesia Inferior end there, as the latter province features a visibly higher number of newly founded secondary agglomerations. At least six of the settlements included in this analysis belong to this category, making up almost 15% of the settlement network. Admittedly, the group does include a few problematic examples, settlements that have not been located or in which the Early Roman phase is poorly attested. In the preceding chapter, when elaborating on the arguments in favour of a post-conquest date for these sites, we briefly touched upon the composition of this group. In addition to the abandoned auxiliary forts located in the western sector of the northern Moesian *Limes*, the group included the *emporium* Piretensium and a couple of *vici* on the Dobroudjan Plateau. The latter two settlements - Ulmetum and Libida - have been identified archaeologically, but in both cases the archaeological material dates principally to the period of Late Antiquity and their character and physical appearance at the time of the High Empire can only be surmised.³¹²

In addition to the archaeologically confirmed settlements, the group of secondary agglomerations might be extended to include some *vici* that are attested only in the epigraphic record.³¹³ Both Moesia Inferior and Thrace are set apart from the rest of the provinces in our study-area because of their very large number of epigraphically attested *vici* and *komai*³¹⁴. A recent study has counted not fewer than ninety rural settlements in these two provinces recorded in inscriptions and this must be the very minimum.³¹⁵ About one-third of these settlements were situated in Moesia Inferior and, in some cases, attempts have been made to identify them with specific archaeological sites.³¹⁶ If these were newly founded settlements, they will join the group of secondary agglomerations. However, the

³¹⁰ Oescus: Gerov 1980, 1-13; Boyanov 2008, 69-70; Troesmis: Aparaschivei 2006, 189-208; the latest archaeological research at this site suggests that the settlement mentioned by Ovid was not located at the site of the future legionary camp, Alexandrescu, Gugl 2016, 9-21.

³¹¹ Gerov 1980, 289-312; Gerov 1997, 211-314; Poulter ed. 1995.

³¹² Libida: Iacob, Ibba, Paraschiv, Teatini 2015, 559-573; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 81-82, argue that Libida was a *civitas* capital, but this is indicated nowhere in the written sources; Ulmetum: Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 37-39; Petculescu 2006, 31-41; the site is explicitly attested as a *vicus* and, judging by the similarities in their micro-locations, it represents a much better parallel for Libida.

³¹³ Poulter 1980, 733-744; Petculescu 2006, 31-41.

³¹⁴ See fn. 140 in Chapter Two.

³¹⁵ Martemianov 2012, 40-52; the author claims that the list has been purged of *emporia*, uncertain names and possible doublets.

³¹⁶ Velkov 1958, 557-565; Putiers 1975, 60-73; Doruțu-Boilă ed. 1980; Avram ed. 1999; Mihailescu-Bîrliba, L. 2012, 91-98.

problem is that the terms *vicus* or *kome* could be used to refer to any average rural settlement. This will obviously invalidate both the statistics pertaining to the chronological profile of the urban network, in particular those pertaining to the genesis of the newly founded towns.

In view of the evidence of annually elected magistrates and public buildings, some of these settlements - Clementiana, Turris Muca, Quintianus, Trullensium and Petra – displayed at least some urban features.³¹⁷ The presence of a formal hierarchy is a distinguishing feature of corporate communities and in this respect the Moesian *vici* do qualify as town-like secondary agglomerations. However, this fact does not imply that the communities in question were focused on non-agrarian economies or that they were larger than the typical village in this region. The population of nearly all of these *vici* was made up of colonists, Roman citizens and peregrine settlers from Thrace. The emergence of a formal hierarchy is hardly surprising in these ethnically diverse communities, predominantly made up of settlers, but it is unclear if this feature makes them essentially different from the rest of the rural settlements. Nonetheless, if we include the dozen *vici* in the group of secondary agglomerations that boasted self-governing institutions, this category will immediately become the most predominant among the newly founded settlements.

Over three-quarters of the Moesian *vici* were located on the Dobroudja Plateau.³¹⁸ Actually it would have seemed more likely to have encountered them in the western part of the province that had a sparser network of autonomous towns. Perhaps the key to this problem should not be sought only in the regional urban constellation. The part of Moesia Inferior that was to become Scythia Minor in Late Antiquity was set apart from the rest of the province by the large number of Roman colonists in the countryside.³¹⁹ In an area dominated by the army and the Greek *poleis*, for the Roman colonists, the *vicus* was the most appropriate form of organizing communal life. Because of the proximity of the Greek colonies on the Black Sea coast, located at distances not greater than 50 km from the Danube *Limes*, there was simply not enough room for new urban foundations in this region.

³¹⁷ The examples are taken from Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 41-43; Avram 2007, 104-109.

³¹⁸ Poulter 1980, 731.

³¹⁹ Doruțiu-Boilă ed. 1980, 281-287; Poulter 1980, 729-744; has rather persuasively argued that these *vici* were a result of a planned colonization of a depopulated area that formed the background to the Lower Danube *Limes*. Without a strong civilian sector in the adjacent regions, the supply of both recruits for the army and of other basic necessities would have posed serious logistical challenges. For a different interpretation, see, Alexandrescu, Suceveanu 1988, 163-173.

Thrace

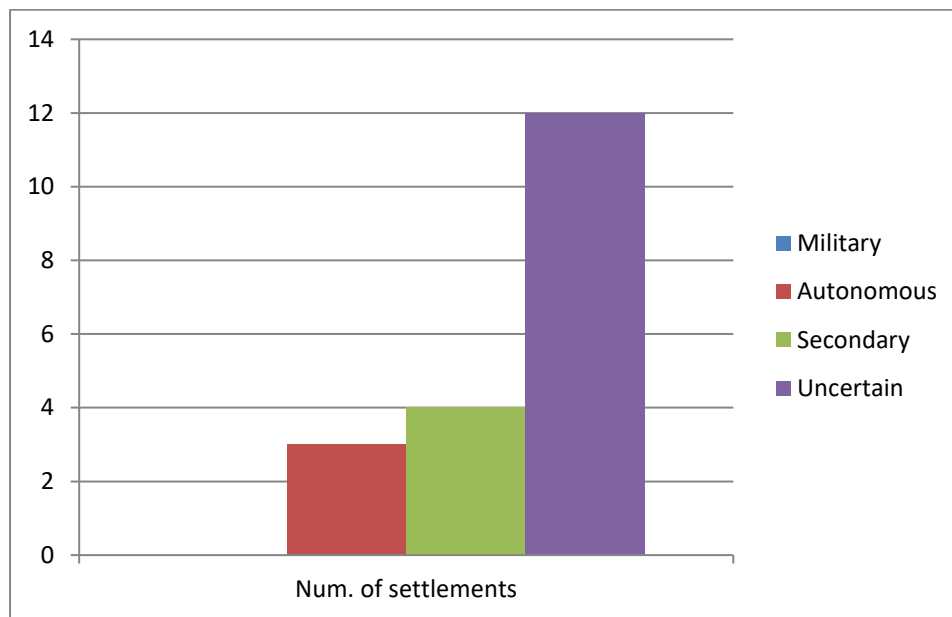


Figure III_10: The basic formal categories of newly founded settlements in Thrace

Thrace was not a frontier province, hence the absence of garrison settlements in the period of the High Empire is hardly surprising (Figure III_10, Table II_10 in Appendix 2). However, this observation is not entirely correct. Thrace had at least one, possibly two, garrison settlements during the period of the Principate, but they are not included in the list. The garrison settlement at Cabyle had developed at the site of the pre-Roman *polis*, while the archaeological remains of Germania do not predate the early fourth century.³²⁰ Both sites have therefore been classed as uncertain. In contrast to the great majority of garrison settlements in our study-area, the period of the High Empire is poorly represented in the archaeological record from these two sites. If it were not for the epigraphic evidence, the presence of these army units might have easily escaped notice. In the case of Cabyle, it is possible that the auxiliary unit was stationed in the existing settlement. Indeed, the epigraphic evidence clearly indicates that the town had a functional *agora* in the middle of the second century AD, at the same time as the *cohors* II Lucensium was garrisoned there, but there are no mentions of official magistrates or decrees issued by a local council.³²¹ Cabyle is therefore excluded from the list of autonomous towns.

Only three of the newly founded settlements in Thrace were autonomous towns, including the Roman colony of Deultum. This pattern is typical of the areas exposed to urbanizing influences long before the arrival of the Romans. However, we have seen that in relation to its large territory, Thrace was under-urbanized in the pre-Roman period and there was plenty of room for new urban foundations after the incorporation of the province in the middle of the first century AD. In the preceding chapter it was pointed out that three of the autonomous towns of Roman Thrace – Serdica, Pautalia and Anchialus – have been classed as uncertain, because of the problematic chronology of these sites. If future research proves that these were new foundations, the number of newly founded autonomous

³²⁰ Cabyle: Vekov ed. 1982; Germania: Stajkova-Aleksandrova, Stajkova 2003, 202-214.

³²¹ Velkov ed. 1982, 7-16; Velkov 1989, 247-256; Mihailov ed. 1997, 283-284. See chapter Six for the juridical status of this town.

towns will more than double. Even so, the autonomous towns remain the least numerous category in Roman Thrace.

Another indicator of the low degree of urbanization in pre-Roman and Roman Thrace is the ethnic composition of the epigraphically attested segment of the population in the newly founded settlements.³²² The prevailing element in nearly all of these settlements in Thrace were Hellenized settlers from Asia Minor and Syria. The importance of the Oriental component in the urban life of Roman Thrace is reflected not only in the onomastic profile of the urban population, but also in the arts and architecture, the local customs and institutions. In this context, it is interesting to mention that, in the rare cases when professions such as shop-keepers, inn-keepers, cooks or masons are recorded in inscriptions, the majority of their names indicate an Oriental or Greek origin.³²³ Evidently specialized labour of this sort, essential to the normal functioning of all urban settlements, was not readily available in Early Roman Thrace.

At least six of the new foundations included in this analysis can be qualified as town-like secondary agglomerations. All settlements in this group grew up next to road-stations and, as we saw in the previous chapter, their true number was almost certainly higher. The small number of autonomous towns in northern Thrace would seem to leave enormous gaps in the urban network of the province. This paucity implies that the province was divided into very large administrative and fiscal units, the majority of which remained outside the market radius of the central place. Although at this stage, it is clear that the material dates only to the period of Late Antiquity at the majority of the archaeologically researched road-stations, there are simply not too many alternative site-categories that could assume the function of lower-order central places.

For two of the settlements that belong this group – Pizos and Discoduratera – the epigraphic evidence leaves no doubts about their function and character. Like the *emporium* Piretensium in Moesia Inferior, they were market-places and road-stations, and certainly qualify as special-purpose communities. Discoduratera has been identified and partly researched.³²⁴ It is striking that, in terms of topography, this settlement, located on the road between Augusta Trajana and Novae on the Danube, did closely resemble a large road-station, as it consists of a walled *praesidium* and an adjacent civilian settlement.³²⁵ Although the remains of this settlement have not been located, the founding act of the *emporium* of Pizos has been preserved, demonstrating that it was home to a community of at least 160 families at the time of its foundation in the first decade of the third century AD.³²⁶ Other possible examples are Cilis and Parembole, stations on the Diagonal Road and possibly Tonzos on the road between Augusta Trajana and Marcianopolis, but these have been poorly attested.³²⁷ Diocletianopolis, the last representative in this group, is like many other settlements in our study-area

³²² Gerov 1997, 211-314; Tačeva-Hitova 1978, 81-88.

³²³ Gerov 1998, 72-184; Ognenova-Marinova 1987, 173-176.

³²⁴ Velkov ed. 1979, 307; Ivanov 1980, 205-206.

³²⁵ The historical sources that mention this settlement are listed in Mihailov ed. 1958, 137. The road between Augusta Trajana and Novae is not recorded in the itineraries, but its existence has been ascertained by the archaeological remains, Madžarov 2009, 222.

³²⁶ IG Bul 1960, the document has a long historiography. For a brief discussion of its significance and a full bibliography see Mihailov ed. 1964, 103-125; MacMullen 1970, 333-341; Gerov 1980, 319-348.

³²⁷ Cilis: Mihailov ed. 1964, 108-125; Parembole: Gerov 1958, 255-269; Mihailov ed. 1961, 245; Tonzos: Mihailov ed. 1997, 282-283

problematic because the predominant phase at this site dates to the Late Roman period.³²⁸ Very little is known about this settlement in the period prior to its re-founding under Diocletian. However, the fact that the later town developed near a thermal spring points to a possible genesis from a healing sanctuary. In view of its location, Diocletianopolis was another potential road-side *vicus* on the road between Oescus and Philippopolis or an *emporium* on the northern fringes of the territory of Philippopolis. Adding the settlements with uncertain status to the group of secondary agglomerations, it will become the most numerous category of newly founded towns, even it is assumed that Augusta Traiana, Serdica and Pautalia were all founded after the incorporation of Thrace in the Roman Empire.

Pizos was founded at the time of the Severan dynasty on the initiative of the provincial government. This is explicitly stated in the founding act, emphasizing the privileges granted to the founders of the *emporium*. It was created by a *synoecism* of the leading families from nine villages in the neighbourhood of the future *emporium*. Almost one century after the establishment of the urban network of Roman Thrace, the founding of town-like secondary agglomerations was still a centrally planned process. Even the emergence of small market towns was entirely dependent on government initiatives.³²⁹

The alternative model for the maintenance of the network of roads and markets is exemplified by the *kome* of Scaptopara and its unnamed neighbour in the Middle Struma Valley, close to the border with Macedonia. The two villages are recorded in a petition addressed to the Emperor Gordian III, in which they complain about the onerous demands made on them by the travelling state-officials and army officers.³³⁰ In addition to the duty of providing lodging and transport for the representatives of the government, these communities were also put in charge of organizing the logistics for the fair held every autumn a short distance from the villages.

The Struma Valley was an important regional corridor, but it was less important than the Diagonal Road between the Middle Danube and Byzantium. This is reflected by its absence from the Late Roman itineraries. Evidently, under such conditions, the duties of road-maintenance, providing draught animals for travelling officials or the lodging of and storage for merchants were assigned to the nearest rural settlement.³³¹ Highly specialized establishments like *emporia* or road-stations were founded only along the main roads and, in some cases at least, they were sponsored directly by the provincial government. These two episodes from the history of the Thracian countryside provide a neat illustration of the difficulty in securing a functional network of road-stations and market-centres. The two documents also indicate that proximity to the main regional roads was not necessarily beneficial to the local communities nor did it automatically change their economic focus. The only surviving founding acts for the Thracian *emporia* suggest that these settlements did not emerge as a result of

³²⁸ Madžarov 1967, 113-142; Madžarov 1993.

³²⁹ Obviously these observations lose their validity if we accept the argument that Pizos was founded as a local base for the collection of the *annona militaris*; Van Berchem 1937, 117-202; Mihailov ed. 1964, 107, rightly stresses that this conclusion cannot be inferred from the founding decree.

³³⁰ IG Bul 2236; the monument is discussed by Mihailov ed. 1966, 207-220; Gerov 1980, 317-348; cf. Mitchel 1976, 106-131.

³³¹ A curious parallel comes from the period of the Ottoman Empire, under which rural communities were charged with the responsibilities for road maintenance and security in the mountainous sections of the network in exchange for free land ownership, Stojanovski 1974.

local initiatives. Hence, these examples are a warning against overestimating the number of secondary agglomerations in the provincial settlement network.

Of equal weight is the information pertaining to the size of these settlements. It is impossible to point to any trait that distinguishes Scaptopara or its neighbour from other Thracian villages. Even the annual market was not actually held in one of the two villages but in their vicinity. There were neither special facilities in these settlements nor formal institutions responsible for carrying out the tasks related to the *cursus publicum* or the annual fair. Hence, it is unlikely that Scaptopara outgrew the size of the average village in the region. The same will have been true of Pizos. Its population of 500-600 could have easily fitted into a settlement not larger than 3-4 ha. In this context, it is hardly surprising that most of these settlements have not been identified in the archaeological record. The functions expected to be performed by these road-side settlements did not necessarily change their status and economic orientation and, in the rare cases in which this role was assigned to settlements founded specifically for that purpose, the special status did not translate into perceptible settlement expansion.

Dacia

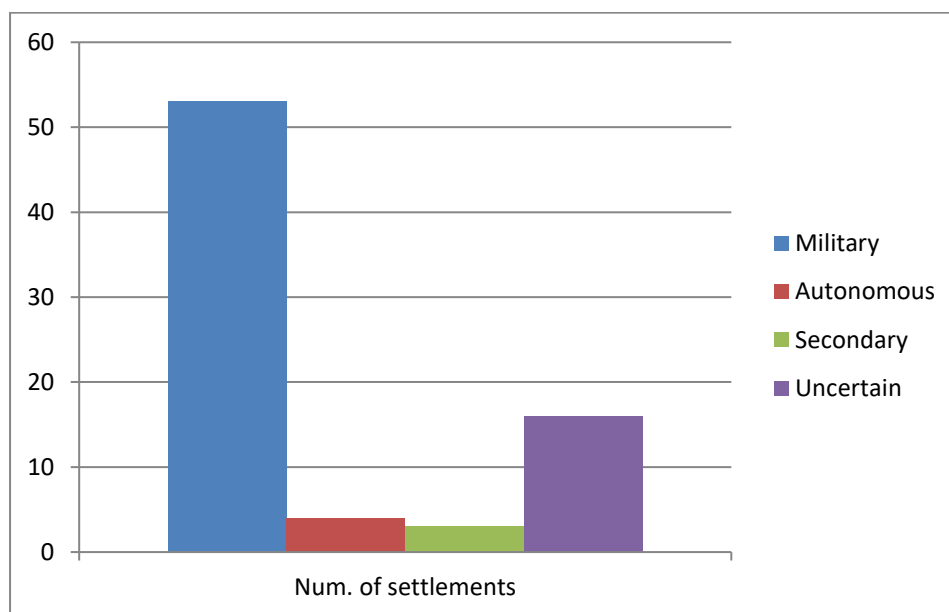


Figure III_11: The basic formal categories of new foundations in Dacia

Like the rest of the frontier provinces, Dacia had a very large number of garrison settlements. Given the length and organization of the Dacian *Limes*, the prominence of the military sector in this province was even more pronounced than in the rest of the Danube provinces. At least fifty-three or 71% of the total number of new foundations developed around army camps. The true figure is probably higher, as two-thirds of the settlements classed as uncertain are also possible garrison settlements. In most of these cases the site of the auxiliary camp has been poorly researched and there is no positive evidence for the presence of a nearby civilian settlement. It is possible that some of these forts –

Cristești, Titești, Catunele – had been abandoned by the middle of the second century.³³² Furthermore, most of the smaller *castella* garrisoned by irregular units have also been classed as uncertain. The very limited size of some of these forts – often smaller than 0.5 ha – makes it unlikely that they would have attracted permanent civilian settlements. Because of their uncertain dates, the forts along the *Limes Transalutanus*, to the east of the Olt, have also been assigned to this category.³³³

Not only were the garrison settlements by far the most numerous non-agrarian settlement category, they also included some of the largest and wealthiest towns in Roman Dacia, like Apulum. As in other frontier provinces, some of these settlements had been granted an autonomous status by the end of the second century AD. In fact, over half of the autonomous towns in the province continued to exist as garrison settlements until its final abandonment in the late third century: Apulum, Potaissa, Drobeta, Romula, Tibiscum and Porolissum.³³⁴ The rub is that the fact that the great majority of the Dacian towns developed near legionary or auxiliary forts obscures the divergent developments within the category of garrison settlements. As we will shall in the next chapter, garrison settlements came in many shapes and sizes. Even within the most numerous category of auxiliary *vici*, some settlements were quickly distinguished by virtue of their location and role in the *limes* and in the regional road network. Similar tendencies have been attested in Moesia Inferior, in which some of the auxiliary *vici* became centres of minor regions. These *vici* are poorly attested in the epigraphy of Roman Dacia, but the differences are evident in the archaeology of the individual settlements.³³⁵ The low density of autonomous towns - including the garrison settlements that were granted an autonomous status - left plenty of room for quasi-urban developments along the protracted *limes* of Dacia and some, like Micia, Ilishua or Resculum, clearly stood apart from the rest of the auxiliary *vici* in terms of size and monumentality.

Throughout its existence, Dacia remained an extreme example of a frontier province. Scholars have estimated that the military personnel in the late second century AD numbered between 55,000 and 60,000.³³⁶ The provincial administration and local government was largely in the hands of serving soldiers or veteran settlers, and the provisioning of the permanently stationed troops played an important role in the regional economy. Between the preponderant military and mining sectors, little room was left for purely civilian foundations with an autonomous status. Only four urban centres were founded as civilian towns or acquired that status. These include the financial capital of Roman Dacia, Ulpia Traiana. The other two official towns, Napoca and Dierna, were far more modest in size and appearance, although admittedly at both sites, current conditions do not allow more extensive archaeological research.³³⁷

The epigraphic evidence suggests the existence of a fourth civilian town in Roman Dacia, Ampelum, the centre of the gold-mining district in the west of the province.³³⁸ Although such developments were

³³² Matei 2012, 109-122.

³³³ Gudea 1997, 1-113; Visy 2009, 163-184; for *Limes Transalutanis* in particular, see Bogdan-Cătânciu 2009, 195-203; Nemeth 2014, 28-36.

³³⁴ For a useful though outdated synthesis, Branga 1980; see now, Ardevan 1998; Carbó-García 2002, 115-138.

³³⁵ Nemeti 2014; see the discussion in Chapter Six of this volume.

³³⁶ Russu ed. 1975; Diaconescu 2004, 120-121; Cupcea, Marcu 2006, 175-194.

³³⁷ Roman Napoca is buried under modern Cluj, while the remains of Dierna and Ampelum have been entirely destroyed by modern industrial and infrastructural projects, Napoca: Daicovicu 1977, 919-949; Diaconescu 2004, 117-120; Dierna: Russu ed. 1977; Branga 1980, 75-76.

³³⁸ Branga 1980, 76-77; Russu, Floca, Wollman eds. 1984; Ciobanu, 1998, 349-363.

not particularly common, they are not unknown. The case of Montana in Moesia Inferior or the *Municipium Dardanorum* in Moesia Superior spring to mind.³³⁹ The problem with Ampelum is that almost nothing survives of the actual urban centre, only the epigraphic evidence hinting at the existence of an *ordo Ampelensium*.³⁴⁰

Similar difficulties surround the few settlements that can be classed as possible secondary agglomerations. Only three are certain: Sucidava on the Danube –possibly pre-Roman foundation and a centre of a self-governing unit by the Severan period – and Sigishoara and Micasasa in eastern Dacia.³⁴¹ The only common feature shared by all three settlements is their location on major traffic arteries, Sucidava on the Danube, Sigishoara and Micasasa on the Târnava, on the road that links the Mureş Valley to the eastern Dacian *Limes*. These settlements are not recorded in Late Roman itineraries, but their position on major natural thoroughfares is indisputable and their existence suggests the possibility of similar developments near some of the road-stations along the Mureş, Olt and Drobeta-Romula Roads.³⁴² Excluding the stations guarded by permanent army units, there were potentially at least a dozen other civilian subordinate settlements along the main roads in Roman Dacia. In addition, we shall have to reckon with an unknown number of civilian settlements that developed at the sites of former military camps.³⁴³ It should be stressed that almost none of these settlements is clearly distinct from the typical rural agglomerations.³⁴⁴

The group of civilian subordinate settlements might be expanded with the *vici* and *castella* in the Dacian mining districts, but the archaeological remains of these settlements continue to evade all attempts at identification. They are known only from the epigraphic sources discovered in the mining district of Alburnus Maior, over 20 km to the north of the supposed site of Ampelum.³⁴⁵ Only the names of these settlements survive in the inscriptions, usually altars commissioned by the respective community, or on wax-tablets retrieved from the mining shafts in Alburnus Maior. With the exception of the latter source, on which the term *vicus* is sometimes used to designate the settlements in the district, in the inscriptions, the name of the community is often preceded by the letter K. This initial has been interpreted as *k(astellum)*, but archaeological research in the area has so far failed to locate fortified strongholds from the period of the High Empire. The centres of the communities that commissioned these inscriptions can be related neither to an isolated building nor to an agglomerated settlement.³⁴⁶ In the case of Alburnus Maior, most of the inscriptions come from hill-top sites,

³³⁹ Dušanić 1977, 52-94, stressing that that the emergence of the *municipium* did not replace the mining district; for similar developments in third century Dalmatia: Bojanovski 1982, 189-191; Škegro 1998, 89-117; Škegro 2006, 149-173.

³⁴⁰ Russu, Floca, Wollmann eds. 1984, 280-283; Carbó-García 2002, 136-137.

³⁴¹ Sucidava: Tudor 1965; Sigishoara: Matei 2012, 114; Micasasa: Mitrofan 1990, 129-138

³⁴² Fodorean 2013.

³⁴³ Matei 2012, 114-117; with the exception of the problematic Banat section, the author recognizes only two possible cases of such developments. One of these is Sigişoara.

³⁴⁴ Gudea 2009, 204-205, listing a few rural settlements much larger than the examples included in this study. It has to be pointed out though that both Micasasa and Sigişoara are exceptional in the number of inscriptions and architectural sculpture.

³⁴⁵ Russu ed. 1975, 165-172; Mrozek 1977, 95-109; Ciongradi, Timofan, Bârcă, 2008, 249-266; Nemeti, Nemeti 2010, 109-133.

³⁴⁶ Nemeti, Nemeti, 2010, 109-112.

interpreted as open-air shrines, and from cemeteries. Although clearly implied in the written documents, the remains of the mining camps remain elusive.³⁴⁷

The mining districts in Dacia were colonized by Illyrian communities from central and southeast Dalmatia. Over one-third of the personal names preserved in the epigraphy of the mining district are Illyrian.³⁴⁸ Often the name of the colonist is accompanied by a place of origin in Roman Dalmatia. The rest of the personal names suggest a Greek or Oriental origin or Romanized Greeks or Illyrians. In the towns, too, it is very difficult to find epigraphic evidence of the presence of native Dacians, unless it is assumed that they are veiled under the category of Romanized provincials.³⁴⁹ The bulk of the urban population was made-up of colonists from Italy or the western provinces and a small percentage of Orientals. This only leaves the rural sector for the native population; indeed, the only tier in the settlement hierarchy in which have found some degree of continuity from the pre-Roman period. However, in the previous chapter it was demonstrated that, even in the rural sector, a large percentage of the settlements were newly founded, and in some areas there is a clear evidence of the planned settlement of compact ethnic units of Norican or Celtic origin.³⁵⁰

The ethnic composition of the epigraphically attested part of the population of Roman Dacia is a striking testimony to the complete usurpation of the country's resources by the conquerors. Virtually all major settlements developed near garrison or industrial sites, whose urban population – soldiers, merchants, craftsmen and miners – consisted chiefly of colonists. The vast majority of the native population was confined to the rural sector, with few windows of opportunity – namely, army service – to join the ranks of the provincial elite or the urban-based segment of the population.

Conclusions: the overall composition of the newly founded settlements and the spatial patterns

The number of newly founded settlements in Figure III_12 is higher than the total number of settlements securely identified as Roman foundations in the preceding chapter. This is because the lists of newly founded settlements include sites of uncertain origin, but with a definite Roman or Late Roman phase and this category amounts to at least fifty settlements. In the preceding chapter we have explained that these were most likely green-field foundations, even though the degree of research on the majority of these settlements has been far from satisfactory.

³⁴⁷ Russu ed. 1975, 187-189; Mrozek 1977, 105-106.

³⁴⁸ Russu ed. 1975, 184; Protase 1979, 449-450; Ciongradi, Timofan, Bârcă 2008, 251-254.

³⁴⁹ Balla 1987, 67-70; Protase 1980.

³⁵⁰ Protase 1980, 133-134; Gudea 2009, 187-319.

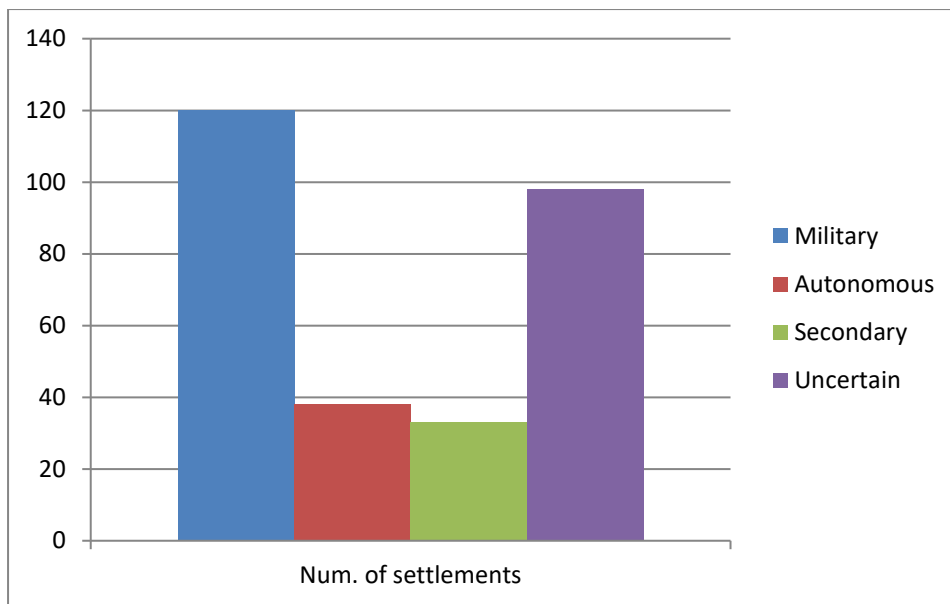


Figure III_12: The overall distribution of newly founded settlements by formal categories

120 out of 289 newly established agglomerations developed and continued to exist next to the army camps throughout the period of the High Empire. They represent slightly over 40% of the newly founded segment of the network of non-agrarian agglomerations and almost one-third of all agglomerated settlements – Roman or pre-Roman - with an autonomous or subordinate status. It has to be stressed that the list is restrictive, as it excludes the settlements at which the army camp was abandoned, as well as the rare cases in which the Roman army installed a permanent garrison at a pre-existing civilian settlement. Even so, this figure is an undisputed testimony to the role and importance of the Roman army in the urbanization of the Balkan and Danube provinces. The fairly rapid unfolding of the process of settlement foundation becomes far more comprehensible in the light of the involvement of the military. Wherever good stratigraphic evidence is available, it demonstrates that the civilian settlements surrounding the forts developed at virtually the same pace as the army camp.³⁵¹ In Dacia, the foundations of the entire urban and settlement network were laid down in the first couple of decades of the second century; the new provincial capital was established within five years of the final defeat of Decebalus!³⁵² Admittedly, Dacia is a rather exceptional case, but the evidence suggests that the great majority of the permanent camps on the Danube *Limes* were constructed during the few decades of the Flavian dynasty.³⁵³ These are well-known facts but we cannot avoid repeating them, as they are truly the hallmark of Roman urbanism in our study-region. The establishment of the settlement network was a rapid and deliberate process, guided chiefly by military considerations.

It is all the more striking that the military component did not diminish with the municipal development in some of these communities. On the contrary, its role as the key economic and demographic pillar in the adjacent urban communities only grew in importance, reaching its zenith during the reign of

³⁵¹ Barkóczy ed. 1954. (Intercisa); Nagy 1971, 59-81; Máritý 1992, 65-73 (Aquincum); Kovács 1997, 425-427 (Matrica); Diaconescu 2004, 103-117 (Apulum); Szirmai 2005, 681-684 (Albertfalva); Kandler 2008, 90-108 (Carnuntum).

³⁵² Diaconescu 2004, 89-103; Piso ed. 2006.

³⁵³ Pannonia: Fitz 1980b, 125-140; Gabler 1999, 75-86; Lower Moesia: Ivanov ed. 2003.

the Severans.³⁵⁴ Although the majority of the military settlements were not promoted to autonomous status, they included some of the most important demographic, administrative and economic centres in the frontier provinces. Indeed, in the next chapter, it will be demonstrated that some of the auxiliary *vici* on the Danube were as large as the small colonies and *municipia* in the Balkan interior. On the other hand, the autonomous military towns – amounting to between 10 and 15% of all garrison settlements – have emerged as by far the largest conurbations in our study-area, many times the size of the newly founded autonomous towns in the interior.³⁵⁵

The entries securely determined as civilian settlements represent nearly 25% of the newly founded segment of the network. This figure includes both the autonomous towns and the subordinate town-like agglomerations. The former represent about 13, the latter 11% of all newly founded settlements. Even after the prevalence of the military segment in the settlement network on the peninsula has been acknowledged, the general impression is that the figure for the secondary civilian agglomerations is too low. This is not related to the classification criteria used in this study, but to the divergence of the conspicuousness of the individual settlement categories in the written and archaeological record. The imbalance is partly rectified once we turn to the category of settlements with an ill-determined status and date. Excepting the handful of possible auxiliary *vici* in Dacia and Moesia Inferior and the few problematic garrison settlements in Thrace, it is likely that most of the sites classed here as uncertain also belonged to the civilian sector of the network, particularly to the group of subordinate settlements. This correction will increase the share of the civilian sector to about 51% of the integral settlement network. However, surely this estimate still falls short of the true number of civilian foundations, as it includes only epigraphically or archaeologically documented cases. It is almost impossible to make a guess at the number of unknown town-like settlements that developed alongside road-stations and port facilities, the micro-regional centres and mining settlements that failed to enter the historical record. We have seen that, just by adding the *mansiones* mentioned in the Late Roman itineraries, the number of the newly founded civilian settlements is likely to increase by at least 100% or about twice the number of garrison settlements. The key to the problem is the very small number of sites assigned to this category that have attracted scholarly attention, and hence it is very difficult to come up with more specific predictions.

It could be argued that the perspective adopted in this study is strongly biased towards the military segment of the urban constellation. Most garrison settlements were furnished with exquisitely constructed defence systems, paved roads and baths. It stands to reason that these relatively imposing features have a far better chance of surviving in the archaeological record than the humble dwellings that surrounded the *praesidia* or market-places along the major roads. In addition, garrison settlements tend to produce a rich epigraphic heritage and are also likely to have been recorded in the official documents. However, this is precisely the point of the comparison. Civilian settlements were certainly more numerous than those included in our lists, but the great majority have disappeared without leaving any clearly perceptible trace in the archaeological and historical record. As a consequence, even when historical or archaeological documentation is available, it is often impossible to decide if a given settlement is rural or quasi-urban, or if one is dealing with a true

³⁵⁴ Balla 1970, 61-69; Mócsy 1974, 213-265; Barkóczy 1980, 85-124; Póczy 1980, 239-274; Petolescu 2011, 83-109.

³⁵⁵ This observation requires a comment, because the largest legionary towns were dual communities, forming two, physically separate agglomerations. See the next chapter.

nucleated settlement or a name of a district. The numbers presented in Figure III_12 do not pretend to reflect the true ratio between the different segments of the settlement network, but they are a faithful index of the level of urbanization across the different settlement categories.

The ratio of newly founded autonomous towns to subordinate agglomerations is likewise grossly inaccurate and for the same obvious reasons. Only by adding the civilian segment from the group of uncertain sites – about sixty, excluding the sites of military camps but possibly including rural settlements – will the ratio of subordinate town-like settlements to autonomous towns increase to 3 to 1. An identical ratio is predicted in one of the models proposed by Central Place Theory³⁵⁶ - the so called market principle – but, in our case, this could only be the minimum and, as we shall see below, their distribution was far from regular. Another way of predicting the number of missing subordinate settlements is to focus on the garrison settlements. As the divide between the autonomous and subordinate settlements cuts across the military and civilian sectors, we have every reason to believe that there are far fewer gaps in the network of garrison sites than in the civilian segment of the network. Excluding the small group of garrison settlements located outside the frontier zone, between one in four and one in five garrison settlements were granted an official urban status. Hence, after all, it is possible that we are not missing as many of the secondary agglomeration as was initially thought.

On the basis of the ratio of autonomous to secondary settlements in the military sector, we could also predict the total number of secondary agglomerations in our study-area, excluding the narrow belt of pre-Roman urbanism, in which the very short inter-city distances probably led to a different pattern of distribution among the low-ranking settlements. The total number of newly founded autonomous towns ranges between sixty and seventy, depending on the criteria used to recognize local autonomy and pre-Roman origin. Given that the ratio of 1 to 4 or 1 to 5 continued into the civilian segment of the network – an assumption that needs to be proven by future research – there were between two hundred and fifty and three hundred and fifty newly founded secondary agglomerations in our study-area. Of these, we have been able to find concrete archaeological or written evidence for not more than two hundred, including the garrison settlements that never achieved an autonomous status and the settlements that potentially belong to the rural sector. The archaeological remains at the majority of these sites barely distinguish them from the mass of rural settlements and farming estates that dotted the countryside of the Peninsula in the period of the High Empire. This is the main factor that prevents us from arriving at a more precise estimate of the number of civilian secondary agglomerations. The indistinctiveness of these sites raises the question of the integrity of this settlement tier in the regional hierarchy.

³⁵⁶ Christaller 1966; Chorley, Haggett eds. 1967.

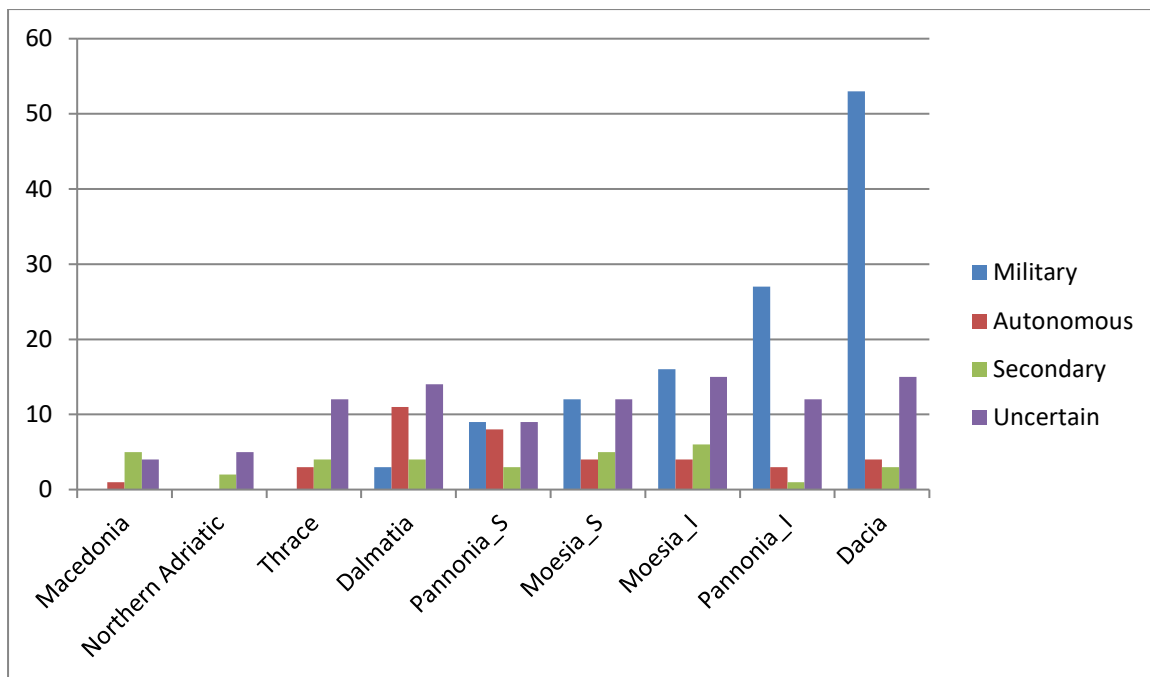


Figure III_13: The distribution of newly founded settlements across topographic categories, by provinces

The province-based survey already gives the reader a general idea of the spatial distribution of the different categories of newly founded settlements under the High Empire. It is unnecessary to describe in great detail what has been clearly implied throughout this chapter. In general, the spread of the different categories of new foundations is zonal and this is nicely summarized in Figure III_13 (Map III_2). Outside the southern and western peripheral belts of the study-area – the regions that were conquered by Rome in the period of the Republic – the garrison settlements are by far the most predominant element on the map of major agglomerated settlements. Nearly 90% of all garrison settlements are located along the Danube and on the Dacian *Limes* (Map III_3).

There are only a few isolated garrison towns in the Pannonian interior, Thrace and Dalmatia and along the major roads in Dacia and Moesia Superior. However, in view of their role in the regional settlement networks, a distinction has to be made between these isolated examples. Despite their small number in comparison to the frontier provinces, the garrison settlements in the interiors of Moesia Superior and in Dacia constituted the backbone of the settlement networks. In the northern half of Moesia Superior and in most of Dacia, purely civilian settlements were either a tiny minority or non-existent (Map III_4). On the other hand, the few garrison sites in Thrace and Dalmatia or Pannonia were of only marginal importance to the development of the settlement network in these two provinces (Map III_5).³⁵⁷ The presence of the army in these demilitarized provinces has to be related to the need to control and police a population that had been only loosely integrated into Roman provincial society. These conditions are reflected in the distribution of the military towns along the major roads in the mountainous regions of the provinces, in the immediate vicinity of natural resources or near the old political and religious centres. Their persistence throughout the period of the High Empire, centuries

³⁵⁷ Marsonia in southern Pannonia might also belong to this group. Buzov, 2011, 355-374; Zaninović 2003, 443-449.

after the final pacification of the two provinces, only serves to highlight the slow pace of Romanization in the Dalmatian and Thracian interior.

The rest of the one hundred and twenty garrison settlements were located on the Danube and on the Dacian *Limes* (Map III_3). They form a narrow belt of very high settlement density that runs uninterruptedly from Klostreneuburg on the frontier between Noricum and Pannonia Superior to the mouth of the Danube and encircles the Dacian provinces on all three sides that face the *Barbaricum*. Civilian enclaves appear only on the Lower Danube in Moesia, and there they are limited to the sections that face Dacia Inferior or on the naturally protected sections of the *limes* in Scythia Minor (Map III_6). Throughout the period of the High Empire, the Romans maintained the principle of separating the military from the civilian sector and, with the exception of Dacia and Dalmatia, in which we have encountered a sequence of alternating garrison and civilian settlements along the main provincial roads, these two settlement categories were kept in separate zones.³⁵⁸

This principle is plainly evident on the settlement maps of Moesia Superior and Pannonia Inferior (Map III_7, III_1). In both provinces, the large civilian foundations are limited entirely to their southern halves. In Pannonia Inferior, they are clustered behind a short section of the *limes* dominated by small auxiliary forts. The municipal developments near the legionary camps at Aquincum and Brigetio in the north probably drained away much of the demographic potential in that part of the province. In Moesia Superior, nearly all autonomous civilian foundations belong to the southern, demilitarized half of the province. It is no accident that, by the time of Late Antiquity, these parts of Moesia and Pannonia would be constituted as separate provinces.³⁵⁹ As we shall see in Chapter Six, these irregularities in the distribution of the civilian autonomous settlements were partly made good by the granting of autonomous status to the largest among the garrison settlements and the centres of mining districts. The settlements in the different formal categories performed a similar range of functions, providing the system with the necessary degree of coherence despite the apparent zonality.

The distribution of the garrison settlements within the frontier zone is not entirely isotopic. On the most basic level, the variable distribution of these sites across the individual provinces has been determined chiefly by the length of the *limes* and the local conditions. Consequently, the share of the military sector in the settlement networks of the frontier provinces ranges from over 70% in Dacia, surrounded on three sides by the *Barbaricum*, to only about 35 and 30% in Moesia Superior and Pannonia Superior, provinces that faced shorter sections of the *limes*. In Pannonia Inferior, - sharing a longer frontier with the *Barbaricum* - the participation of the military sector increases to over 60%. A similar share has been projected for the garrison settlements in Moesia Inferior, although in this case clear evidence of a permanent military presence has been found in only one-third of the settlements included in this analysis (Figure III_13).

It is indeed difficult to overstate the impact of the Roman army in the shaping of the settlement network of our study area. Quite apart from the substantial military sector, it is impossible to avoid mentioning the potential input of the army in the geneses of a number of civilian settlements.

³⁵⁸ It could be argued that this principle was negated by the promotion of some of the garrison settlements, but this practice became widespread only in the Severan period. All earlier examples of garrison settlements that became autonomous towns belong to the special category of double-towns, see fn. 397-398, Chapter Four.

³⁵⁹ Mócsy 1974, 266-267.

Although the view that many of the civilian settlements in the Balkan interior grew at the sites of former military camps has been contested for certain towns – most notably, Sarmizegetusa and Emona³⁶⁰ - no one doubts the military origin of towns such as Oescus, Troesmis or Burnum.³⁶¹ A similar genesis has been proposed for Scupi and Ratiaria, but in these cases there is very little positive evidence to support such claims.³⁶² Scholars have also pointed out the role of the army in the urban genesis of Siscia, Poetovio and Mursa, all featuring continuity from the pre-conquest period.³⁶³ This is not a very large category, but it includes some of the largest and most important civilian towns in our study-area. The fact that the army participated in the building of these towns is inconsequential to their socio-economic profile, but at least it is certain that logistical and strategic considerations were what that determined their micro-locations.

In order to get a better understanding of the importance of the military in the creation of the settlement map of our study-area, it is worthwhile casting a swift glance at the developments in the frontier zones prior to the establishment of the Danube *Limes*. One, possibly two, pre-Flavian *limites* have been identified in the area between the Adriatic and the Danube. These are the so-called Dalmatian *Limes*, guarded by two legionary camps and three or four auxiliary camps in the period of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, and a less likely candidate, the Drava *Limes*, with two legionary camps at Poetovio and possibly at Mursa.³⁶⁴ In the case of the Dalmatian *Limes* at least, it is clear that the army left behind massive infrastructural achievements – roads, bridges and aqueducts – the essential prerequisites to urban growth. However, when we look at the later urban development along these axes, the density of urban settlements is rather disappointing (Maps III_8, III_9). The 250 km long Drava Corridor between Poetovio and Mursa is literally devoid of major agglomerations. The former Dalmatian *Limes* featured a much higher density of civilian settlements, including two or three of the eleven new autonomous towns in the province, but these settlements were invariably small and exerted little significance beyond their respective micro-regions. The restricted urban developments along the former *limites* in Dalmatia and Pannonia speak against assigning too much weight to the impact of the military infrastructure on the later urban developments in the provinces. The decisive factor in urban growth was the continuous presence of the army units and their immediate contribution to the economy and demography of the urban communities rather than their putative involvement in the act of town founding.

Apart from the preponderance of the category of garrison settlements, the only other distinctive feature of the settlement network in our study-area is the relatively small number of newly founded autonomous towns. This is hardly unexpected in view of the large extent of the military and mining sectors and the survival of the pre-Roman urban network in Roman Macedonia and in the coastal regions. In a nutshell, these are the key factors that determined the variable distribution of the newly founded towns across the individual provinces. In the zone of pre-Roman urbanism, Epirus, Macedonia and the eastern Adriatic coast, the share of the newly founded autonomous towns was zero or close

³⁶⁰ Šašel-Kos 1995, 227-244; Diaconescu 2004, 89-93.

³⁶¹ For the cases of Oescus, Troesmis and Burnum, see Ivanov 1987, 7-60; Gerov 1980, 1-13; Aparaschivei 2006, 189-208; Campedelli 2011, 33-64.

³⁶² Mikulčić 1971, 463-484 (Scupi), Dimitrov 2014, 28-35, Ivanov ed. 2014. (Ratiaria).

³⁶³ Lolić 2003, 131-152 (Siscia); Horvat 2003 153-189, (Poetovio); Pinterović 1978. (Mursa).

³⁶⁴ Dalmatian *Limes*: Wilkes 2000, 327-341; Sanader 2002, 713-718; not everyone agrees with the existence of a true *limes* in Dalmatia, Periša 2009, 507-517; the case for the Drava *Limes* is even weaker; Pinterović 1978; Fitz 1977, 543-556; Colombo 2010, 189-192.

to zero (Figure III_13). It rises only slightly in the highly exposed frontier provinces Dacia, Moesia and Pannonia Inferior, ranging between 5 and 10% of all newly founded settlements. Some of these provinces, most notably Pannonia and Moesia Inferior, had very limited space outside the frontier zone (Map III_3). Given its riches in precious metals, Moesia Superior should join this group, notwithstanding the fact that some of the mining districts had been municipalized by the Severan period. Because of the uncertain founding date for some of its towns, the position of Thrace is somewhat ambiguous in this respect. However, the comparatively small number of self-governing towns, alongside the significant input from the pre-Roman period, puts it closer to the frontier provinces. Only in Pannonia Superior and Dalmatia does the share of the newly founded autonomous towns reach nearly 30%, with the important distinction that the area of Dalmatia was almost twice as large as Pannonia Superior.

A great number of scholars have observed a close correlation between the location of the urban centres and the major interregional roads that traverse the peninsula.³⁶⁵ Indeed a superficial look at the map of the autonomous towns in the area reveals that nearly all newly founded civilian settlements were not only located on the major inter-regional thoroughfares, but they often developed at the crossings of at least two important natural corridors (Map III_10). This circumstance, coupled with the fact that the great majority of the towns were green-field foundations, once again emphasizes the planned, deliberate character of the process of urbanization and colonization in our study-region, both in the military and civilian sectors.³⁶⁶ The entire network was fine-tuned to control the flow of goods and people, in some cases at the expense of the agricultural potential or defensive considerations.

The uneven distribution of the new civilian foundations emerges quite explicitly when it is compared to the density of garrison settlements in the frontier zone. The close spacing of auxiliary *vici* and garrison towns along the Danube *Limes* is truly impressive. With distances between two neighbouring forts rarely exceeding 30 km, they approach the urban density in the pre-conquest segment of the network. As a result, a large number of the newly founded settlements in our study region appear in the periphery of the network, often lining the state-frontier. The security of the frontier is an obvious explanation for this development, although it can be argued that this is one of those widely accepted truths that conceal another important aspect of the Danube. Apart from being a convenient line of demarcation, this river is also a giant thoroughfare that links the eastern Alpine regions and the Carpathian Basin to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean.³⁶⁷ Therefore, the same principle that influenced the distribution of the civilian establishments in the interior of the Empire also applies to the high concentration of garrison settlements along the Danube. Brought under the control of the Empire, the Danube Corridor became the single most important line of communication in this part of the Empire, stealing a considerable proportion of the urban-minded, civilian population away from the interior.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁵ See bibliography.

³⁶⁶ Cf. Burghardt 1979, 1-20.

³⁶⁷ Whittaker 1994.

³⁶⁸ Cf. Mócsy 1970, 17-18, claimed that the Diagonal Road between Singidunum and Byzantium was more important than the Danube Road. This claim is probably true, but only in the Late Roman period, with the slackening grip on the Danube and the founding of Constantinople.

All well and good, but this positive correlation between the major civilian foundations and interregional corridors is not as strong as it might appear at a first sight. While not minimizing this aspect of the newly founded towns, it is impossible to escape the impression that a high regard for connectivity was not always decisive in the urbanization of the area. Long sections along the Sava and Drava Valleys and along the Diagonal Road between Naissus and Philippopolis are devoid of major agglomerations, despite the fact that these were relatively fertile areas that fell outside the zones of military and pre-Roman urbanism (Map III_8, III_11, III_12).³⁶⁹ Why was the same principle of urbanizing the zones of high connectivity not consistently applied throughout the studied region? When trying to explain this problem it seems as if we are faced with an insoluble conundrum. It is noteworthy that the rule of locating autonomous towns close to natural corridors was not replaced by a different principle in these areas. Major agglomerations were simply lacking in these well-connected and fertile regions.³⁷⁰

It is these large gaps in the urban network that have called our attention to the possible role of secondary agglomerations, especially the road-stations or road-side *vici*, as micro-regional centres. By virtue of their regular spacing, they appear to have been preordained to compensate for the patchy urban coverage. Undeniably, even road-stations are unevenly distributed, partly because we lack data of equal quality for all the major roads in this region and partly because of the variable population densities and environmental conditions. Overall, however, it is evident that the road-stations had the potential to function as a second tier of settlements, providing the rural population located beyond the normal outreach of the autonomous towns with market services.

In actual fact, there is very little positive evidence to support this model. Although over 50% of our secondary agglomerations can be related to a road-station or port facility, the bulk of the archaeological finds at a number of these sites do not predate the period of the Tetrarchy. Focusing solely on those sites that have been identified with the remains of agglomerated settlements does not reveal a clear pattern. In most of the provinces, the variations are slight and are very inconsistent. Thrace has more secondary agglomerations than Macedonia and the northern Adriatic, areas that are known to have had much higher urban densities, but Pannonia Superior, one of the most urbanized provinces in the frontier zone had more secondary agglomerations than Pannonia Inferior (Figure 3.13). Only Dalmatia stands apart by the visibly higher number of road-side *vici*, but this is probably a reflection of the character of our data-source, the fairly intensive surveys along the main roads in the province. Nevertheless, it is striking that, even within the borders of Roman Dalmatia, most of the evidence comes from the interior of the province. Over three-quarters of the sites qualified as large road-side *vici* are located either in the mining districts of central and eastern Bosnia or on the high plateaus in Herzegovina. If we exclude the couple of minor port-settlements, none of these sites can be located in the coastal zone. A second concentration of secondary agglomerations that probably served as road stations can be traced in the mountainous area that separated Thrace from Moesia Inferior from the Severan period. As we shall see in a later chapter, this area did not belong to the

³⁶⁹ However, it has to be stressed that, until the modern alterations of the river-beds, waterlogging might have presented a serious problem in these regions.

³⁷⁰ Even rural settlements are scarce along the supposed trace of the Sava Road, see Bojanovski 1984, 145-264. A possible explanation might be sought in the juridical status of this land, but the evidence is thin. See Chapter Six.

special fiscal districts, but it certainly lay in the periphery of the extensive urban territories of Roman Thrace.

It is also evident that the frequency of secondary agglomerations increases as distance from the urban centres grows. Only three or four out of almost fifty agglomerations that can be qualified as road-side *vici* or port-towns fall within the 15-km buffer radius drawn around the autonomous towns (Map III_13).³⁷¹ Even when the buffer radii are increased to 30 km, nearly half of the road-side *vici* are still located outside them. Although we lack adequate data to examine these relations in greater details, it is difficult to ignore the negative correlation between urban density and the occurrence of secondary agglomerations. At present, we have no means of determining the reasons behind the sporadic nature of this tendency. It might depend equally on the amount of research done in particular regions of our study-area and on the variable socio-economic conditions.

With the exception of the settlements that emerged near road-stations, we lack adequate data to distinguish between the different types of secondary agglomerations. All that can be done is to point out the small number of sites that can be classified as spa-towns or mining colonies. Even in these cases, the formal distinctions are blurred by the occurrence of military forts near thermal springs and in the mining districts or, conversely, evidence of industrial activities at the sites of road-stations. In comparison with the broader settlement categories, their distribution exhibits a pronounced cluster, coinciding with the distribution of the natural resources around which their economies revolved. Far more important is the observation that the number of settlements that can be associated with these sectors is too low to offer a sufficiently broad base for an optimal exploitation of the thermal springs or mining areas (Map III_14). As evidenced by the epigraphic sources and the archaeological remains of mining activities, the small number of settlements that can be attributed to these sectors cannot be seen as an indication of low productivity. We suspect that it was the status of this land that inhibited urban growth. In most of the mining regions and at thermal springs the land belonged to the imperial government and could not be sold, privatized or passed on to posterity. Hence the inducement to make any investment even in private residences or workshops was certainly minimized in these areas.

It has to be stressed that these settlement categories were not evenly distributed across our study-area. An increased number of spa-towns is discernable in the urban territories of Pannonia Superior in comparison to the other provinces, while only certain mining districts show evidence of municipalization or secondary town-like settlements. In view of the small number of examples, it is not easy to interpret these departures from the overriding patterns. However, at least in the case of the mining districts, these divergent developments can be related to the variable modes of administration in this sector, but the specifics of these relations remain poorly understood.³⁷²

Common to the great majority of secondary agglomerations in our study-area, whether road-stations, mining *vici* or spa towns, is the late chronology of the earliest monumental phases or the first epigraphic evidence of district procurators. In a great number of cases, these date only to the Severan and post-Severan periods and, quite often, only to the period of Late Antiquity.³⁷³ At least in the case

³⁷¹ Cf. De Ligt 1993, 123-124.

³⁷² Dušanić 1977, 52-94.

³⁷³ Domavia: Bojanovski 1988, 193-203; Srejšević 1965, 7-48; Kosmaj: Mirković, Dušanić eds. 1976, 95-170; Dušanić 1990, 217-224; Remesiana: Petrović ed. 1979, 51-57; Timacum Minus: Petrović ed. 1995; Montana: Binev 2003, 160-182.

of the mining districts, these late developments have been related to the rise in production in the area.³⁷⁴ But, as these are not limited to the mining sector, we would also like to point out that they coincide with the increased involvement of the central government in the exploitation of the mineral riches and the maintenance of the road-network. Once these sectors came under the direct control of the government, an intensification in the building activities along the main roads and in the metalliferous regions of our study-area is distinctly visible. The low proportion of privately-owned land in these regions, in conjunction with the short duration of the contracts during the Early Principate, had probably been the major disincentive to the urbanization of these regions. As demonstrated by the epigraphic evidence from the countryside of Roman Thrace, spontaneous urbanization in these sectors was in all likelihood exceptional. Where evidence of secondary agglomerations is available, it regularly points to the direct involvement of the provincial or central government.

Throughout this chapter we have been trying to de-emphasize the most obvious element in the newly founded segment of the settlement network in the study-area. The preponderance of the category of garrison settlements has been relativized by the fact that only a small fraction of the secondary conurbations have been included in the analysis and, in this context, we have also drawn attention to the municipal developments in the military sector in the second and early third century AD. While the majority of these observations are both valid and important, they have failed to alter the general impression given by this survey of the genesis of the newly founded settlements. By far the largest proportion of the settlements, whether civilian or military that belong to this category emerged as planned foundations. Outside the categories of garrison settlements and autonomous towns, urban growth was rare and, until the period of Late Antiquity at least, fairly unpretentious. Although the road-side *vici*, the spa and mining towns certainly played a whole range of urban functions, the material aspects of urbanism never reached these communities nor were they demographically significant.

³⁷⁴ Mladenović 2014, in print.