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## **The urban systems of the Balkan and Danube Provinces (2nd - 3rd c. AD)**

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## Chapter VI: The administrative territories

### Introduction: The approach and the major problems in the data set

One of the defining features of the urban settlements of Antiquity was their role as political or administrative centres of their surrounding territories.<sup>667</sup> Secondary agglomerations, like larger villages or road-side settlements, often provided market and religious services for their respective micro-regions and in some cases, they too even developed formal institutions, but they either lacked the capacity or were not granted the right to govern their surrounding areas.<sup>668</sup> Hence, the self-governing town was by definition the headquarters of the local government. It was the base from which justice was dispensed, taxes were collected and municipal laws were promulgated. This amounts to saying that all autonomous towns implied a separate, more or less clearly delimited territory.<sup>669</sup> However, when this equation is reversed it fails to work. Not all territorial units had a recognizable central place, even when they enjoyed some degree of autonomy. In this chapter, we shall turn to the territorial aspect of the urban settlements in our study-area, bearing in mind the opening remark that territoriality was neither an exclusive attribute of the official towns nor was it inherently urban-based.

The presence or absence of local government creates yet another divide between the settlements in our study-area, the last to be considered in the present study. From the outset it is important to emphasize that the compiling of a list of autonomous towns on its own is not the ultimate aim of this chapter. The goal is to take a step farther and make rough projections of the territorial extents of the urban units. We should begin by stating that it is impossible to offer an accurate reconstruction of the municipal territories in the area at the time of the Severan dynasty. The bulk of this administrative geography is lost beyond recovery. In fact, we shall be pleased if we can catch only a glimpse of the divergent territorial extents of the urban units. Brief though it may be, this insight should already offer a reflection of the degree of administrative coverage by self-governing communities in the region. Understandably, it is the implications these figures entail that matter. The extent of municipalization in the area is closely connected to the adoption of a whole set of socio-economic values and relationships by the local communities.<sup>670</sup> Those communities that retained their autonomy, whether by upholding their native institutions or by accepting Roman forms of local government, had a far better chance of preserving their identities and consequently benefiting from the overall economic growth and prosperity. Those that failed to develop some form of institutionalized self-government were relegated to the role of passive subjects, either closely supervised by the army or reduced to small enclaves of marginal economic significance. With the exception of the communities that achieved a municipal status, there are no references to the *civitates* apart from the official lists of tax-paying people created at the time of the conquest.<sup>671</sup> After the late first century, their elites are rarely mentioned. Their ethnonyms are almost exclusively encountered in military diplomas or other epigraphic documents as epithets of the auxiliary units or as the *origo* of individual soldiers. This is an indisputable indicator of their lowly place in the political economy of the High Empire. They were little

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<sup>667</sup> Finley 1977, 305-327; Rich, Wallace-Hadrill eds. 1991; Galsterer 2000, 344-360; Edmondson 2006, 250-280.

<sup>668</sup> Cf. Burnham, Wachter 1990; the *vici* of Moesia Inferior and their institutions: Suceveanu, Barnea 1991.

<sup>669</sup> Bekker-Nielsen 1989.

<sup>670</sup> E.g. Mócsy 1970; Sherwin-White 1980; Woolf 1998.

<sup>671</sup> For the Dalmatian *civitates* see Wilkes 1969, more recently Dzino 2010.

more than pools of recruits for the military, and some scholars have even gone as far as to claim that the processes of municipalization in these areas were deliberately withheld by the provincial government in order to secure a steady stream of new recruits for the auxiliary units.<sup>672</sup> With so little surviving evidence, locating most of these peoples on the administrative map is a pretty forlorn hope. Nevertheless, in many instances, the areas attributed to these communities by modern scholars coincide with the later mining districts and imperial estates. As both their man-power and natural resources were considerably reduced, it is no wonder that the only surviving memory of the majority of these *civitates* are their obscure names.

This juxtaposition of the self-governing units and territories closely supervised or directly run by the agents of the state will be the dominant theme of the present chapter. By determining the respective extents of these two sectors, we hope to contribute to a better understanding of the different mechanisms by which our study-area was integrated into the political economy of the High Empire. In other words, the administrative divisions in the study area should reflect the various economic roles of its constituent sub-regions. Following K. Hopkins' distinction between tax-exporting and tax-importing provinces, an analogous divide on a regional level can be postulated between regions rich in natural resources and regions that enjoyed a privileged status and concomitant wealth.<sup>673</sup> Those regions that belonged to the zone of self-governing communities participated in the overall economy by converting their surplus wealth into taxes; the rest were either exploited directly by the government or indirectly by the elites of the neighbouring self-governing communities. If our points of departure are correct, this divide should be reflected in the variable growth and prosperity of the individual towns discussed in some of the preceding chapters. Admittedly, one lesson the experience of writing this study has taught is that it is often impossible to find simple, positive correlations between two given parameters. However, this finding does not necessarily challenge the validity of the point of departure. Instead, it points to the plurality and complexity of the factors that shape historical reality and are impossible to encapsulate in simple correlations. There are examples of well-established autonomous communities that failed to produce the expected urban growth and this fact indicates that the granting of autonomous status did not automatically generate urbanization. If other prerequisites like a strong economic base or elites who were willing to spend their wealth on public works and construction were absent, it is unlikely that local autonomy will have automatically translated into urban growth. This argument can be reversed. In some cases, we have come across urban growth in the extra-municipal zones and this was often acknowledged by the central government that in a later stage did grant official charters to the towns that emerged in the mining districts or near the military camps. These "aberrant" tendencies are pertinent reminders that we are dealing with dynamic subject-matter. The initial distribution of autonomous status was not always proof against the other forces at work in the development of the regional urban network.

The figures for the territorial sizes assume an even greater significance if they are viewed from a comparative perspective. This tactic is a promising way to examine the extent to which the time-period studied was exceptional. Below we shall take a brief look at the number of municipalities or counties in the constituent polities of our study-area during later periods of history, including the present-day administrative divisions. These data are easily accessible in general encyclopaedias. It is essential to

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<sup>672</sup> Mócsy 1969, 340-375.

<sup>673</sup> Hopkins 1980, 101-125; the full implications of Hopkins' suggestions are not necessarily valid in our case. It is still unclear how these regions did benefit from the increase in production.

remain fully aware of the profound differences between the periods in question. A number of amenities offered by the public administration in modern societies – social services, public health and education – had no counterparts in Roman Antiquity.<sup>674</sup> Other sources make it plain that the size and capacities of both local and provincial administrations in the period of the High Empire were by any standard very limited.<sup>675</sup> It will emerge that these aspects have had very little bearing on the administrative divisions. Although there have been important changes in the distribution and extent of individual units, their numbers have remained more or less the same.

The “proficiency” of the urban system can also be evaluated “internally” by looking at the diachronic developments within the time-period studied and their epilogue in the period of Late Antiquity. The underlying assumption is that the direction of the changes observed will give some indication of the pitfalls and difficulties experienced in the period of the initial settlement; in other words, the subsequent changes are primarily read as reactions to or modifications of the inherent deficiencies. Admittedly, the available evidence allows us to achieve this goal only in a few extraordinary cases, but, even so, the overall congruence of the results of these case-studies has encouraged us to pinpoint a gradual shift to smaller administrative units. In most parts of our study area, this tendency survived the third century crisis and continued unabated throughout the fourth century.<sup>676</sup>

After some consideration it was decided not to put too much emphasis on exploring the possible correlations between territorial extent and settlement size or location. In the great majority of the cases, we simply cannot attain the fine resolution necessary to correlate these parameters. The margin of error for the size of the individual territorial units is often greater than the size-range for the built-up areas. However, even were we to possess a finely-honed administrative map of the provinces in our study-area, question marks could still be placed about the meaningfulness of the results reached by simply correlating territorial extents with settlement size or micro-locations. As argued earlier, territorial size was shaped almost invariably by exogenous factors and it was not necessarily a guarantee of urban growth. It is therefore easy to predict that the wealth of the land or its place in the global constellation of power centres rather than the sheer size of the territory were the main factors behind urban expansion.<sup>677</sup>

In view of the scarcity of data and their problematic character, the reconstruction of the administrative divisions of the area is not an easy undertaking. A number of practical and conceptual challenges that will resurface constantly in the main body of the chapter are still to be encountered and resolved. In order to avoid making into long digressions during the discussion of the data for the individual provinces, it is best to elaborate the approach to and the problematic nature of the evidence in the introductory section.

Obviously, before even thinking about the administrative divisions in the study-area, it is necessary to present a list of autonomous centres or communities that formed the main pillars of this geography. Even though, by now, we know that a considerable proportion of the area in question belonged to the

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<sup>674</sup> Eck 2000, 238-265.

<sup>675</sup> Ott 1995, projects the number of *beneficarii* serving on the governor’s staff.

<sup>676</sup> Cf. Brogiolo, Gauthier, Christie eds. 2000.

<sup>677</sup> Cf. Keay, Earl 2011, 276-316; it should be noted that the set of parameters used to rank the urban territories in this study are not really intrinsic to the territories themselves. They relate instead to the settlement’s micro-locations and settlement patterns in the countryside.

state or was occupied by the military, there is no doubt that most of the land was assigned to self-governing communities. Although insufficient if taken in isolation, having a close approximation of the number of self-governing centres is the essential first step to reconstructing the administrative map of the study-region. At first sight, this should not have presented a particularly serious problem. The topics of local administration and urbanism have a long standing in the fields of ancient history and historical geography.<sup>678</sup> However, although for some provinces the lists of autonomous towns have been defined for quite some time, for others the differences between the conservative and optimistic counts are far more considerable and they virtually paralyze all attempts to arrive at a coherent conclusion. Difficult though this task may be, these discrepancies have to be dealt with. Unfortunately, in many instances it is impossible to reach an impartial conclusion on the basis of the surviving evidence. The bulk of it consists of examples of obscure *municipia*, known only from a few scattered sources as they have left no tangible traces in the archaeological record. Tackling the conundrum of the different categories of urban settlements or the settlement hierarchy, we concluded that the best course would be to make the reasonable assumption that most of these places were minor agglomerations. However, this does not necessarily apply to the extent of their administrative territories, as there are examples of *municipia* or *civitates* that does not seem to have had an identifiable central place and governed average- to large-sized territories. Little can be done to obviate this problem, except to accept the existence of multiple scenarios and to explore their various implications.

In principal, there is little room to question what is stated in the literary and epigraphic evidence. If a certain settlement is explicitly recorded as a *civitas* capital or a *municipium*, this has to be accepted as a matter of fact, even when the site has eluded all attempts at identification in the archaeological record. For our present purposes, the far greater problem is the fact that, quite often, there is absolutely no clue to the possible locations of these territorial entities. All that can be done is to postulate that the town in question was located in the same province in which it was attested epigraphically and one probably not too far from the original find-spot of the inscription.<sup>679</sup> As drawing Thiessen polygons around the sites of the recognized autonomous centres has to remain our main tool for reconstructing the administrative geography of the study-area, the importance of this matter is overriding. Generally speaking, our solution has been to accept the conventional views about the locations of these settlements or communities. The towns that are yet to be located have simply been placed in an empty niche nearest to the find-spot of the inscription.

Despite the fact our lists of autonomous urban-based communities, *municipia* and colonies are more or less complete, the same cannot be said about those *civitates* that failed to develop an urban centre. With the exception of Dalmatia and Pannonia, for which most scholars have placed full confidence in Pliny's list of *civitates*, for the other provinces, we lack a comparably detailed and reliable source.<sup>680</sup> This deficiency is particularly disconcerting, because its consequences touch the very core of the problem defined in the preceding paragraphs: What proportion of our study area was governed by autonomous communities as opposed to the areas governed directly by the state or the army? If we are to assume that the bulk of the historical data are superficial and deficient, we might as well

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<sup>678</sup> Wilkes 2005, 124-225, provides the most exhaustive survey of the literature up to the beginning of the new millennium.

<sup>679</sup> See for example, the case of the *municipium* Spodent in Pannonia Inferior, Dušanić 1967, 67-82.

<sup>680</sup> Alföldy 1965; Wilkes 1977, 732-766; Dzino 2010, 159-167.

abandon all hope of answering this question. In theory, this could be a valid claim. It is not inconceivable that the majority of the *civitates* encountered at the time of the conquest retained their native ways and left no written testimony about their native institutions and settlements. As we hear no more of the majority of the Dalmatian *civitates* after Pliny compiled his list, why should we automatically think that the same would have not been the case in the hypothetical *civitates* in the rest of the Balkan provinces that none of our sources mention?

Although the logic behind this argument seems sound, we remain unconvinced about its implications. Rejecting the possibility that the lack of evidence is a solid indication of a real absence of a certain process or phenomenon is to commit the same error as turning a blind eye to the validity of the positive evidence. It is important to stress that, in this particular case, we are not dealing with ephemeral phenomena, but with entire communities that represented the constituent blocks of the administrative system in the area. What was the essence of an autonomous community that left not a single dedication to the official state deities or the imperial household? In fact, notwithstanding their remoteness and economic or demographic insignificance, such behavior can easily be read as an open defiance of Roman authority in these areas. In spite of all the difficulties inherent in the traditional model that has assumed a gradual transformation of the *civitates peregrinae* into Latin *municipia*, we have not found any alternative explanation of their gradual disappearance from the written records.<sup>681</sup>

In any contemplation of the fate of the *civitates peregrinae* in the first couple of centuries after the conquest, one additional possibility needs to be taken into account. In the preceding chapters, we observed that the zone of garrison settlements is not entirely limited to the state frontiers. A number of forts have made a surprise appearance deep into the Balkan interior in nearly all provinces of our study-area. In some cases, their presence is easily explained by the strategic importance of the area, for instance, in some of the mining districts. However, this link does not supply the answer everywhere.<sup>682</sup> Leaving aside the possible role these outposts might have fulfilled, it is highly symptomatic that they often appear in areas that have been attributed by scholars to the *civitates peregrinae* or in regions known to have been the heartlands of late prehistoric cultures. A number of examples can be cited in support of this observation: *Cabyle*, one of the main centres in pre-Roman Thrace, became the garrison site of the Lusitanian Cohort;<sup>683</sup> *Abritus* in Moesia Inferior, a centre of a pre-Roman *strategeia*, was the site of an auxiliary fort throughout the period of the High Empire;<sup>684</sup> *Timacus Minus* in Moesia Superior, although usually associated with the mining districts of eastern Serbia, was obviously named after the Timok Valley or the eponymous people recorded by both Pliny and Ptolemy;<sup>685</sup> *Marsonia* on the Sava in Pannonia Superior and the castle near Dobož on the Bosna River are both located in areas traditionally associated with the *Breuci* and the *Daesitiati*, two large tribes that played a central role in the Pannonian Revolt of AD 6-9.<sup>686</sup> This list is not exhaustive, but it clearly illustrates the coincidence between the distribution of the auxiliary forts in the interior of the

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<sup>681</sup> Mócsy 1974, applies this model to the Pannonian provinces and less successfully to Moesia Superior, Mócsy 1970.

<sup>682</sup> For example, Mócsy 1977, 373-401; explaining the involvement of the Pannonian armies in the mining operations in Dalmatia; Dušanić 2000, 343-363.

<sup>683</sup> Velkov 1989, 247-256.

<sup>684</sup> Ivanov 1980.

<sup>685</sup> Petrović ed. 1995; Dušanić 2000, 354-356.

<sup>686</sup> *Marsonia*: Bojanovski 1984, 145-264; Miškov 1997-1998, 83-101; Dobož: Čremošnik 1984, 23-84; the location of the Breuci and Daesitiati and their role in the Pannonian Revolt: Mócsy 1974, 14; Bojanovski 1988; Šašel-Kos 2005; Dzino 2010, 142-149.

provinces and the hypothetical territories of various *civitates peregrinae*. The fact that in their locations, the choice of these sites also shows a clear preference for the major lines of communications does not necessarily contradict their possible role in controlling the adjoining regions.

Theoretically this is a plausible scenario, especially in view of the fact that the Romans were familiar with the idea of military administration as a form of local government.<sup>687</sup> It was widely practised in the west of our study area throughout the first century AD and there is no apparent reason to assume that this would have changed in the second century AD.<sup>688</sup> However, as with the question of the status of the *civitates peregrinae* during the second-third century AD in general, the epigraphic record has so far failed to provide evidence that will support this thesis. The sources are silent and, with a few exceptions, nothing has been heard of either military *praefecti* or of the tribal princes or communities in the epigraphic heritage of the areas in question. More to the point, at a large number of these sites, evidence of military occupation prior to the Severan period is very scarce and some scholars have related the emergence of these outposts to the increased insecurity in the region in the aftermath of the Marcomannic invasions or the introduction of the *annona militaris* under Septimius Severus<sup>689</sup>. Intriguing as it is, resolving this question will have little impact on the goals of the present study. Regardless of whether the micro-regions surrounding these military camps belonged to the *civitates peregrinae* or had a different juridical status, the presence of the military indicates that they fell under the sector controlled or administered directly by the provincial government. At the very least, they mark the limits of the municipal authority, although we are inclined to think that they were more than just tiny enclaves surrounded by municipal land. In order to account for the putative presence of these districts, we shall include the sites of the auxiliary forts alongside those of the autonomous towns in the Thiessen polygon analysis.

The same problem is encountered in the mining districts and imperial estates. The centres of the securely attested mining districts are usually non-controversial.<sup>690</sup> In the municipalized mining districts, the site of the *municipium* is equated with the centre of the district, notwithstanding the opaque relationship between the two.<sup>691</sup> Whether or not these *municipia* truly possessed some territory in the district is not very relevant to the present study, as long as the *municipium* was the seat of the mining administration and the district capital.<sup>692</sup> Far more challenging are those areas in which special fiscal districts are assumed to have existed solely on the basis of the mineral wealth, but in which there seem to be no clearly datable archaeological traces or finds of the usual votive and honorific inscriptions left by the *procurator* and his staff. So far, these remote areas have received very little scholarly attention and there is no way of inferring their status from the scant archaeological and epigraphic sources. The main challenge is not to decide if these were constituted as separate districts, but to determine whether they were attributed to the nearest autonomous towns or if they

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<sup>687</sup> Cf. the case of Roman Britain, Mattingly 2006.

<sup>688</sup> Mócsy 1974, 49; Wilkes 1977, 742; Fitz 1980, 141-159.

<sup>689</sup> Mócsy 1977, 384-385; Čremošnik 1984, fn. 30.

<sup>690</sup> For example, the *ferraria* in southern Pannonia, Bojanovski 1982, 89-121.

<sup>691</sup> The difficulties are illustrated by the examples of *Municipium Dardanorum*, Dušanić 2004b, 5-32; or *Municipium S*: Loma 2002, 143-179; Le Roux 2005, 261-266.

<sup>692</sup> Mócsy 1970, 45-46; Dušanić 1977, 54-92; cf. Domergue 1990.



remained under governmental control. As with the controversial autonomous towns, we shall have to consider both possibilities.<sup>693</sup>

Predictably, the imperial estates are much more elusive phenomena, almost impossible to trace in the epigraphic and archaeological record.<sup>694</sup> In the few instances in which their presence has been epigraphically confirmed, we place a provisional point in the geometric centre of the micro-region or at the find-spots of the altars dedicated by imperial slaves or freedmen. We have no tangible reference to the possible size of these estates. There is a chance that, by including them in the analysis, we are risking a gross overestimate of their extent. However, this possibility is counterbalanced by the fact that their number must have been far greater than the few examples included in the present study.

There are a few possible approaches open to making a reconstruction of the territorial divisions in a given area.<sup>695</sup> Incontrovertibly the best way is to look for direct evidence in the written sources, in combination with a careful study of the physical geography and archaeology of the area under scrutiny. However, fearing that, in a large number of towns and districts the epigraphic and historical evidence is non-existent, we have decided to rely primarily on the Thiessen polygons analysis.<sup>696</sup> At the very least, this approach guarantees a projection of the territorial divisions over the whole study-area and it avoids the trouble of marking out those areas for which data are missing. Unfortunately, the exception rather than the rule, in a small number of towns the epigraphic and historical sources have offered irrefutable evidence of their territorial extent. These valuable sources made us rethink the approach initially adopted. One major setback of the unweighed Thiessen polygons is the principal assumption that the boundary between two neighbouring units will always be drawn halfway between their central places. This seemingly reasonable assumption is rarely supported by the empirical evidence. To take a relatively well-documented example, the boundary between the two colonies of Aquileia and Emona in the northeast corner of Italy was drawn along a line passing only 15 km to the southwest of Emona, although the two colonies lay over 90 km apart.<sup>697</sup> The boundary between the two northern Liburnian communities, the Vegi and Orthoplini, over 25 km apart, was set only a couple of kilometres to the south of Orthopla, even encroaching on its 5-km catchment radius.<sup>698</sup> The scholars who have published these boundary-stones maintain that, in both instances, the documents were either found *in-situ* or very close to their original sites.

These and other similar cases persuaded us to look into the integral corpus of inscriptions found in the countryside. These are composed of only a handful of boundary-stones and, even within this limited set, not all record boundary disputes between two autonomous communities.<sup>699</sup> Private individuals or subordinate communities are equally well represented. Likewise exceptional are the

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<sup>693</sup> Of course, for the goals of the present study, if there really was a separate office for the regions in question or instead, if they were governed by the *procurator* based in a different district is irrelevant.

<sup>694</sup> Imperial estates in Roman Dalmatia: Bojanovski 1988, 56-57; Škegro 2006, 149-173; in Moesia Inferior: Tačeva ed. 2004.

<sup>695</sup> As far as is known, there are no methodological treatises on the problem of reconstructing past administrative divisions, although individual case-studies abound. It has to be stressed that, when studying administrative territories, one is dealing with static phenomena to which the techniques devised by geographers and anthropologists are only loosely applicable, cf. Hodder, Hassal 1971, 391-407.

<sup>696</sup> Hagget 1965; for possible applications in studies of ancient settlement patterns, see Bekker-Nielsen 1989; Bintliff 1999b, 15-33.

<sup>697</sup> Šašel-Kos 2002, 373-382.

<sup>698</sup> Rendić-Miočević 1969, 63-74.

<sup>699</sup> Wilkes 1974, 258-274; Munteanu-Bârbolescu 1979.

cases in which a building inscription explicitly states that the building consecrated was erected on the territory of a certain town or community.<sup>700</sup> All is not lost, other categories of inscriptions can also offer possible clues about which administrative centre governed a certain area, although it is essential to be acutely aware that this evidence is always indirect and context-dependent.<sup>701</sup> Because of the large number of inscription categories potentially relevant to the extent of the territorial units, it is impossible to give a brief overview of the guiding principles in the analysis of these finds. In general, we are interested in inscriptions that refer directly to the community or to its magistrates<sup>702</sup>. These references might appear in official or private honorary inscriptions, votive reliefs or epitaphs, but, when viewed in isolation, they say little about which city governed the territory in question. It was not unusual for the local magistrates in the provinces in our study-area to assume high-office in more than one town and, in theory, nothing guarantees that they were buried in the territory of the towns in which they held office. Equally circumstantial is the evidence of votive inscriptions made at the behest of the city-magistrates or by a certain community. Nothing indicates that the sanctuary or the place at which the altar was dedicated was necessarily in the territory of the administrative unit represented by the dedicator.<sup>703</sup> As far as is known, no law prevented the city-magistrates from making a religious dedication in a sanctuary outside the territory of the towns in which they were domiciled. The same observation can be made about the inscriptions erected in honour of the emperors and their families. In a few cases, these monuments were erected by relatively undistinguished communities in a completely different corner of the province.<sup>704</sup>

Obviously, these documents cannot be taken at their face value and in isolation. In the end, it might turn out that the spread of inscriptions is more informative about the epigraphic behaviour - and perhaps, the economic preoccupation - of the urban elite than be of assistance in estimating the extent of the urban territories. In essence, most of the connections that tie the administrative centre to the territory under its jurisdiction are invisible, leaving no traces in the epigraphic and archaeological record. Technically speaking, the type of source material at our disposal is uninformative about territorial relations, but does document the type of activities that are more likely to have occurred within the limits of the municipal territories on a regular basis than in the neighbouring territorial units. The burial of members of the local aristocracy or the commissioning of votive or honorary inscriptions are acts that are more likely to have taken place in the territory of the domicile town and, in the majority of the cases, this should be reflected in the epigraphic record. At the very least, in cases in which the magistrates of more than one town are represented in the epigraphic record of a given area, it can be expected that the inscriptions erected by the administrative centre in charge will be numerically superior.<sup>705</sup>

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<sup>700</sup> For instance, AÉ 1927: 49, commemorating the construction of towers in the territory of the Thracian colony Deultum.

<sup>701</sup> Kandler, Humer, Zabehlicky 2004, 11-66; point out the difficulties of using this body of evidence.

<sup>702</sup> The study of personal names could also help in making connections between an autonomous town and its surrounding area, but as this would have clearly been an impossible task within the time-frames of the current project, this corpus of data was ignored unless already introduced in the scholarly literature.

<sup>703</sup> See, for example, Mócsy 1970, 75.

<sup>704</sup> See for instance, Petrović ed. 1979, num. 69-71, *Res publica* Ulpiana salutes the family of Severus in Remesiana, located over 100 km away.

<sup>705</sup> Again, as a general rule this statement is not valid. The only evidence of the category of small *municipia* comes from the territories of other towns.

There are other potential indicators of the extent of the individual administrative units, but we cannot afford to discuss each of these sources separately. All we can do is point out the usefulness of certain toponyms, like those including an ethnonym or the road-stations designated with the definition *ad Fines*.<sup>706</sup> In those cases in which their approximate location is non-controversial, they can be read as a secure indication of the territorial limits. Equally helpful is the linguistic boundary between Latin and Greek that roughly followed the borders between Moesia Inferior and Thrace or Moesia Superior and Macedonia.<sup>707</sup> Pertinently, the councils of the old Greek colonies that maintained their civic status after the conquest continued to issue inscriptions in Greek and to use Greek terminology for their magistrates, even when they were located in a predominantly Latin-speaking province.<sup>708</sup> The distribution of certain site-categories, like stations for the collection of land-taxes, above all customs, also represent important co-ordinates in the determination of the territorial extent of the urban units, as they are most likely to have been set up close to the administrative boundaries.<sup>709</sup> Finally the changes introduced in the period of Late Antiquity, a period that from a topographical point of view is much better documented by the historical sources than the preceding era, usually respected the existing administrative divisions, so that the borders of the newly founded provinces were often drawn along the former municipal boundaries.<sup>710</sup>

Notwithstanding the difficulties surrounding the interpretation of the epigraphic documents and cartographic data, we were surprised by the wealth of information lying scattered throughout the hundreds of inscriptions or encoded in the obscure names of road-stations. The effort of systematically studying this material and plotting the relevant data was undeniably worthwhile. Nevertheless, we are still left with a large number of gaps in the administrative map of our study area. A number of towns and communities have left no epigraphic evidence in the countryside and in their case the Thiessen polygons are the sole base for projecting their territorial extents. But, for most parts of our study area, it has been possible to overlay the Thiessen polygons and the relevant epigraphic and cartographic data. The result is a much improved resolution of our territorial reconstructions. The Thiessen polygons are insensitive to linear features, like the provincial and state boundaries, therefore it is necessary to plot provisional points to account for the extra-municipal districts. On the other hand, the distribution of the epigraphic monuments illustrates the grey areas on the administrative maps more accurately, despite the fact that it often tends to exaggerate their extent.

As stated at the beginning of this section, we can only hope to catch glimpses of the administrative divisions in our study-area. The main goal is to make a rough determination of the scale of the individual territorial units and the degree of variation across different regions. Although the study of the epigraphic and cartographic sources does bring us only a little bit closer to the truth, it can offer no more than wide size-ranges. In the present climate of knowledge, this is as far as we can get in reconstructing the administrative map of the study-area. The studies of this topic do have parallels in the literature and tentative territorial reconstructions for nearly all the provinces in our study-area and for the majority of the individual towns can be found.<sup>711</sup> We believe that the present study has made at least one major advance. More often than not, the administrative maps of individual

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<sup>706</sup> Bojanovski 1976, 307-331.

<sup>707</sup> Mikulčić 1971, 465.

<sup>708</sup> Greek colonies in Moesia Inferior: Pippidi 1975; Roman colonies in Thrace: Velkov 1980, 41-48.

<sup>709</sup> Ørsted 1985.

<sup>710</sup> A well-documented example is Late Roman Aquae, a *civitas* in Dacia Ripensis; Mirković 1968.

<sup>711</sup> See the individual case studies in Šašel-Kos, Scherrer eds. 2002-2004.

provinces show neat territorial divisions between the historically attested *municipia*. However, by ignoring the presence of the extra-municipal districts, these documents convey not only a highly simplified, but also a fundamentally flawed image of the system of government in the Roman provinces. Even in the most highly urbanized provinces, the territory was probably never 100% municipal. Including this extra-municipal sector does more than simply contribute to a more precise administrative map of the study area. It also reveals the different ways in which its constituent parts were incorporated into the system of Roman provincial government.

## Northern Macedonia and Epirus

One chief difficulty in the study of the administrative divisions in this province is the problematic status of the pre-Roman towns that were not promoted to colonies or *municipia* and never attracted a sizeable community of Roman citizens.<sup>712</sup> This was the part of the old urban network that was in decline, most of it located on the northern periphery of the province, in Paeonia and parts of the Illyrian kingdom. Although it was the usual practice of Roman imperialism to maintain the autonomy of the old *poleis*, it is impossible to be sure if the ancient Illyrian or Macedonian *oppida* were truly autonomous communities prior to the Roman conquest.<sup>713</sup> If that were the case, it is unlikely that the existing autonomies were respected selectively. Quite the opposite, the Romans were more inclined to upgrade existing local institutions or recreate them where and when necessary. Consequently, the lack of evidence of urban growth in these towns cannot be tied to their administrative status. Nonetheless, in order to illustrate the effects of the reduced urban network, the maximum estimates based on the regional geography and Thiessen polygons exclude those settlements whose autonomous status is unconfirmed in the written sources.

In instances in which the autonomous status is non-controversial, the epigraphic evidence, especially that from the countryside, contains absolutely no clue as to the possible extent of the administrative territories. In contrast to the towns in the Latin provinces of our study-area, neither the town as a polity nor its political elites have left much written evidence of their activities in the countryside.<sup>714</sup> Only a handful of written sources point to the probable territorial extent of the individual towns and most of these were discovered in their immediate surroundings. Therefore, most of the estimates shown in Figure VI\_1 are derived from Thiessen polygons and, where possible, the geographical divisions in the area have been applied. The latter approach is well-suited to the character of the regional geography. Large parts of Epirus and Macedonia are made up of sequences of small- to medium-sized river-plains or plateaus, separated by high, virtually impassible mountain ranges. Communication between these micro-regional units is only possible via high mountain passes or narrow defiles. The ancient authors were fully aware of this aspect of the regional geography.<sup>715</sup> In certain parts of the province, these natural divisions must surely have been respected and they would have constituted the framework for the political geography, at least in the pre-Roman period. However, it is impossible to be sure if this situation continued undisturbed after the incorporation of

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<sup>712</sup> For the *conventus* of Roman citizens in this province see Papazoglou 1986b, 213-237.

<sup>713</sup> The debate is succinctly summarized in Papazoglou 1986, 438-448; Cabanes 1988, 480-487.

<sup>714</sup> See, for example, the corpus of inscriptions coming from Upper Macedonia, Papazoglou *et al.* 1999.

<sup>715</sup> Livy 31.34.6; Hammond, Walbank 1988.

the area into the Roman Empire. The evidence of boundary-stones from other provinces seems to suggest that, at least in some cases, the provincial authorities chose to disregard the divisions imposed by the physical geography. In order to take this possibility into account, the maximum estimates based on the geographical conditions extend the territorial units beyond the limits of single drainages.

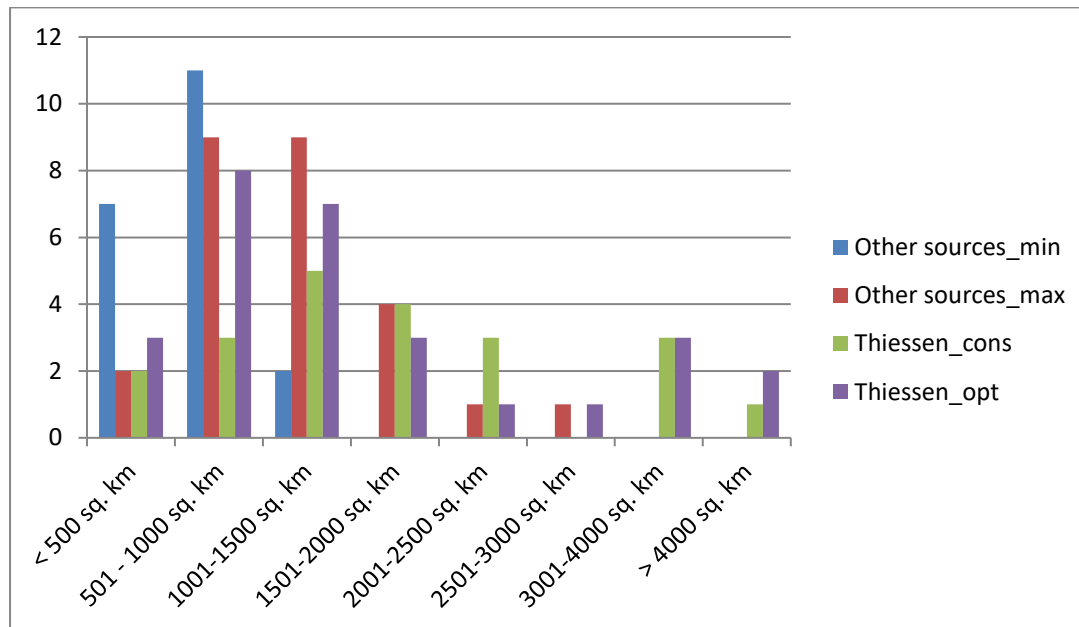


Figure VI\_1: Distribution of the territorial units in the northern part of Roman Macedonia by size-ranges

Regardless of whether the size of the regional units or the geometric divisions of the area into Thiessen polygons are chosen, the great majority of the towns of Roman Macedonia had territories falling within the range between 500 and 1,500 sq. km. Excluding the projections based on the minimum number of Thiessen polygons, the other scenarios suggest that at least one-half of all towns in the area had territories smaller than 1,500 sq. km. This could have easily been predicted by anyone with a vague knowledge of the regional geography or the intercity distances. The majority of the micro-regional units that constituted this part of the study-area were of roughly equal size. The large units in which urbanism survived the Roman conquest, like the Pelagonian Plain or the middle Vardar Valley, were regularly occupied by more than one autonomous town. Accepting the possibility that all settlements in which archaeological or epigraphic evidence suggests a continuous occupation after the Roman conquest retained their autonomous urban status, the distances between the neighbouring towns rarely exceed 30 km and, in some densely urbanized regions, like parts of Northern Epirus or the Middle Vardar Valley, they drop below 20 km. Either because of the intercity distances or the regional geography, the urban territories are often limited to several hundred square kilometres (Map VI\_1).

There are exceptions at both ends of the spectrum. Taking the minimum estimates, the majority derived from the size of the drainage basins, up to one-quarter of the towns have territories smaller than 500 sq. km. Bearing in mind the small size of some of these communities, this scenario cannot be discarded, although it implies a very limited administrative coverage. According to the maximum

estimate, only a couple of towns would have belonged to this size-range and they both fall just below the arbitrary threshold of 500 sq. km. Urban territories larger than 1,500 sq. km are predicted only if we use the maximum estimates, assuming fewer autonomous towns and a greater administrative outreach. Most of these are only slightly larger than 1,500 sq. km, but a few fall in the range between 2,000 and 3,000 sq. km. The two main questions that arise from these figures are whether the urban territories extended over more than a single micro-region, leading to a greater diversification of the territorial sizes, or whether the modular pattern dictated by the regional geography prevailed.

In the case of northern Epirus and Macedonia, the maximum estimates are to be preferred to the conservative projections. Wherever evidence other than the sheer geographical constellation is available, it speaks in favour of the maximum projections. These include the Roman colony of Buthrintum, in which scholars who base themselves on the written testimonies have extended the territory of the town into the neighbouring Kalamas Valley, almost 30 km to the southeast, and Bylis, another Roman colony, that probably inherited the territory of the old *koinon* of the Bylliones, comprising a number of lateral valleys on both banks of the Middle Vjosa.<sup>716</sup> Styberra, a town in the northwest of the Pelagonian Plain, represents an even better-documented example. In the sources from the Hellenistic period, the town is attributed to an ancient people, the Derriopes, whose location along the Upper Crna has been accepted by most modern scholars.<sup>717</sup> At that time the Derriopes had three *poleis*, of which only Styberra survived the Roman conquest. By chance we know that at least one of its neighbours, Alkomena, was demoted in status, as it is epigraphically attested as a *kome*.<sup>718</sup> It is a reasonable assumption that Bryanion, the third Derropian community, shared Alkomena's demotion.<sup>719</sup> The ephebic lists from Styberra, dating to the second half of the first and the early second century AD, provide more evidence of the territorial size of this town. The editor of these documents observes that, in some years, the number of ephebes is remarkably high, implying a population figure of at least 12,000 inhabitants.<sup>720</sup> However, a community of this size would have required a minimum built-up area of 80 ha – assuming an urban density of 150 to the hectare – but even the most optimistic estimate for Styberra does not predict more than 25 ha.<sup>721</sup> This raises the question of whether these figures do not refer to the entire community of the Derriopes, rather than just those who lived in Styberra. At this point, it is useful to draw attention to the duality between the town and the people who inhabited the surrounding territory, a pattern observed in a number of cases in Roman Macedonia: Lychnidos and the Dessareti, Heraclea and the Lynkoi or Styberra and the Derriopes.<sup>722</sup> What lay behind this separation is still unclear, but the situation strongly suggests that the towns were in control of areas larger than the micro-regional units in which they were based. If the location of the Derriopes is correct, the territory of Styberra included both segments of the Pelagonian Plain and of the mountainous area along the Upper Crna and, if Heraclea was the capital of the Lynkoi, its territory must have extended over the entire southern half of modern Pelagonia.<sup>723</sup>

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<sup>716</sup> The location of Atticus' estates on the territory of Buthrint: Deaniaux 1988, 143-165; the territory of Bylis: Ceka 1984, 61-90.

<sup>717</sup> Strabo 7.7.9; Livy 39.53.14; Papazoglou 1988, 292-297.

<sup>718</sup> Papazoglou 1988, 302-303.

<sup>719</sup> Papazoglou 1988b, 233-270.

<sup>720</sup> Papazoglou 1988b, 243.

<sup>721</sup> See Chapter Four, the section on northern Epirus and Macedonia.

<sup>722</sup> Papazoglou 1988, 262-263; Bitrakova-Grozdanova 1989.

<sup>723</sup> The territories of these peoples are briefly described in Papazoglou 1988; Mikulčić 1999.

In other instances, other types of epigraphic evidence also hint at territories much larger than the minimum projections. At least two inscriptions from the road-side *vicus* Ad Scampsa – modern Elbasan in Albania - make a direct reference to Roman citizens registered in the Aemilia tribe.<sup>724</sup> Aemilia was the founding tribe of the colony of Dyrrhachium and it is likely that these monuments were commissioned in the territory of the colony. Ancient Scampsa is situated over 60 km to the east of Dyrrhachium (Map VI\_2). If this reasoning is sound, the territory of the colony must have stretched over an area of at least 2,500 sq. km, reaching far inland to include a long section of the Via Egnatia. According to the conservative estimate, Dyrrhachium's territory was limited to the coastal plain and the colony belonged to the group of towns with territories smaller than 500 square kilometres. Even the Thiessen polygon analysis, including only the towns whose autonomous status is certain, projects a size estimate much lower than indicated by the spread of the epigraphic sources. Nevertheless, there is a good reason to reject both these scenarios. In the preceding chapter we saw that Dyrrhachium was too large for the agricultural resources available on the coastal plains. In view of the poor drainage in these areas in Antiquity, the *ager* of the colony could have only extended into the Valleys of the Erzen and the Shkumbin.

The other example comes from the eastern part of the province and also concerns a town of a major regional importance. This time the evidence is provided by a fragment of a religious dedication made on behalf of a Roman citizen based in Stobi by a group of people with non-Latin names.<sup>725</sup> It was found on the Moriovo Plateau, at a site known as Perivol, over 40 km to the southwest of Stobi in an area rich in gold, copper and other minerals (Map VI\_3). Admittedly, this monument is not as indicative as the funerary and honorary inscriptions from ad Scampsa, as it merely documents the relationship between the Roman citizens based in Stobi and the mining area. The region in question could very well have been administered by the government or by some of the neighbouring *civitates*, although there is not tangible evidence to back up this assumption. The distribution of the securely attested autonomous towns in the area makes the expansion of Stobi's territory this far to the southwest even more of a problem, as at least one official town – albeit of minor importance – stands between Stobi and the Moriovo Plateau. It is striking that otherwise Stobi would have had one of the smallest territories in the province. Since it was surrounded by official towns on three sides, the Thiessen polygons predict an area not larger than 450 sq. km, the bulk of it spreading over economically marginal land to the northeast. It is likely that the elite based in Stobi owned assets in the territories of the surrounding *civitates*. We shall encounter more examples of strategically positioned Roman towns that apparently had surprisingly small administrative territories, but an extended economic outreach.

The majority of the differences between the projections for the urban territories derived from the physical geography and Thiessen polygons are moderate and, for a number of towns, the two estimates closely coincide. But in a small number of cases, the analysis assigns territories much larger than the average regional units in the area. Surprisingly, most of these are towns whose status is uncertain. If relatively undistinguished towns like Dimalë, Albanopolis or Antipatrea governed territories covering several thousand square kilometres, this fact was not reflected in their size or their physical appearance. The efficiency of these arrangements is doubtful, especially in view of the tiny

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<sup>724</sup> Anamali, Ceka, Deniaux eds. 2007, num. 153, 160.

<sup>725</sup> Papazoglou ed. 1999, num. 164; this inscription has not received the attention it deserves in the scholarly literature.

epigraphic heritage of these towns, consisting of just a handful of official documents. Not a single inscription testifies to the activity of the town councils of Albanopolis or Antipatrea. In all these cases, it is evident that the Thiessen polygons merely mirror the low degree of urbanization in the mountainous parts of the province. Wherever the urban network came in contact with the mountainous zone, the urban territories double or triple in size. It should be stressed that these are predominantly pastoral regions that were most probably sparsely populated and, apart from sporadic market-places did not require a heavy urban infrastructure.<sup>726</sup>

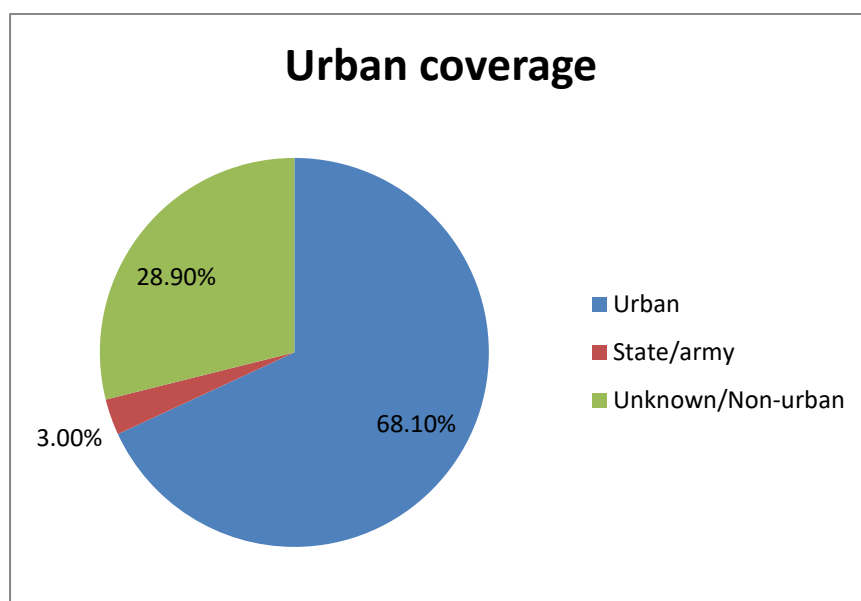


Figure VI\_2: The share of the different types of administrative units in the local government of Roman Macedonia

Taking the maximum estimates, the combined urban territories cover almost 70% of the provincial territory (Figure VI\_2). In a nutshell, about one-third of the area was left out of the urban umbrella. The size of this sector seems to match the parts of the country lying at altitudes higher than 600 meters above the sea.<sup>727</sup> This geographical zone was deprived of the basic economic and demographic prerequisites to initiate autonomous urban development, but it is impossible to postulate if it was governed from the nearest urban centres or was brought under the control of the provincial government. There is very little evidence of the activity of either the *procurator* or the army in Epirus and Macedonia. There are faint traces of a military presence in the northeast of the province, covering part of the region of the Upper Bregalnica and Mount Osogovo.<sup>728</sup> This is an area rich in silver and lead with abundant traces of ancient mining and it is possible that it was expropriated by the state after

<sup>726</sup> For the natural resources and living conditions in the area in the Early-Modern period, see the account of the Naval Intelligence Division from 1920.

<sup>727</sup> The Naval Intelligence Division 1945, Figure 5.

<sup>728</sup> Josifovska-Dragojević ed. 1982, num. 236; is an epitaph of a centurion of an unnamed cohort from the Severan period and it does not necessarily imply a permanent military presence. For the purposes of the Thiessen polygons analysis, it is simulated by the *oppidum* near modern Krupište.



the conquest of Macedonia.<sup>729</sup> This region accounts for only 3% of the provincial territory and hence is too small to compensate for the deficiencies in the urban network. It is possible that other regions rich in minerals – the Moriovo Plateau or Demir Hisar – were also governed directly by the provincial authorities, but evidence that would confirm this assumption is lacking. Moreover, the mountains in modern-day Albania are neither rich in valuable metals nor would they have been strategically important enough to require direct governmental supervision. Either the territories of the towns lying on the periphery of the network extended over these areas – as predicted by the Thiessen polygons – or they were constituted as hitherto unknown *civitates* that remained non-urban, leaving no traceable archaeological or written record.

In the preceding chapter, we saw that the urban core of Epirus and Macedonia did not coincide with the most fertile parts of the province. Examining the individual units that constitute the “grey-zone”, it turns out that they were not exclusively composed of mountainous areas. Large fertile regions, like the Bregalnica Valley, the Polog Basin in the northwest of modern-day Macedonia and possibly the Korça Basin, also belong to this zone. Cogently, they failed to develop an urban centre, even though they were located at distances of over 50 km of the nearest towns. Nothing in the written sources indicates that these areas were constituted as special fiscal districts.<sup>730</sup> It is not easy to find a reason for the fact that these fertile regions were left outside the urban network, whereas certain parts of the coastal zone or the Vardar Valley were over-urbanized, with administrative units not larger than 7-800 sq. km. We are either missing an important detail in the natural history of these regions or the data for their administrative status are deficient.

In order to explore these anomalies in the urban map of the province in more depth, it is useful to make a brief comparison of the number of towns in this area during the period of the High Empire with the number of prefectures in later periods on the territories of the modern nation-states of Macedonia and Albania. The comparison is complicated by the fact that the borders of the modern states do not coincide with the provincial borders. Nonetheless, if we focus on those parts of the province that overlap with the modern countries, it transpires that there were only ten administrative units for the entire territory of modern Albania, eight if we exclude those parts of the country that belonged to Roman Dalmatia.<sup>731</sup> This compares to between nine and twelve autonomous towns during the period of the High Empire.

The geographical handbooks do not present comparative data for the territory of Macedonia in the early twentieth century, but we have come across an equally important source listing the number of *nahiya* or the smallest administrative units that were the seat of the judiciary under the Ottomans.<sup>732</sup> In the Late Ottoman period the country was divided into seventeen units. If we exclude those parts of the country that belonged to Moesia in Antiquity, the number of administrative units on the territory that belonged to Roman Macedonia exceeded the number of autonomous towns in the area only by two or three. Going farther back in time the sources are less reliable, but it is striking that the numbers

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<sup>729</sup> AÉ 1973: 408, funerary monument to a *circitor*, a post often associated with the customs office, discovered in the same area. If this person was employed at the office of the concessionaries of the Illyrian customs zone, it indicates that the area in question was not part of Roman Macedonia.

<sup>730</sup> In view of the low conspicuousness of the imperial estates in the archaeological and epigraphic record, it is also possible that this land formed part of the imperial patrimony.

<sup>731</sup> The Naval Intelligence Division 1945, 129.

<sup>732</sup> Stojanovski 1989.

are surprisingly close to the Early-Modern period. In his historical and archaeological synthesis of the Medieval towns and forts in Macedonia, Ivan Mikulčić has counted no more than fourteen regional centres in the parts of the country that belonged to Roman Macedonia.<sup>733</sup> During the High Empire, the same area had eleven or twelve towns with an ascertained autonomous status.

The differences are not particularly sharp, although it is evident that, by the time of Late Antiquity, the large territorial units of the preceding period had begun to break up. At least four new bishoprics emerged in the Albanian part of the province, although it is not certain how many of the old towns survived the end of the third century. Towns like Antipatrea that, if not fully abandoned, must surely have been in decline in the period of the High Empire, underwent a renewed growth from the fourth century and thereafter. A similar tendency in urban growth compensating for the loss of some of the older towns can be observed in the Macedonian part of the province. The best example comes from the Bregalnica Valley. Scholars have long struggled to discover a central place in this fertile region during the period of the High Empire. However, it is undeniable that this area saw the establishment of no fewer than three bishoprics in Late Antiquity and there were important regional centres throughout the Middle Ages.

These shortfalls in the urban network of the region under the High Empire have less to do with the total number of towns than with their uneven distribution. In later periods there was a small increase in the number of towns, but the network had also been extended to some of the regions that were left out of the urban belt in the Roman period. Considering that urban developments did not bypass these regions in other historical periods seems to exclude a purely ecological explanation for the absence of urbanism during the High Empire. Until fresh evidence is brought to light, the specific circumstances that dictated these developments will continue to baffle researchers, but they should be sought in the regional socio-economic realities.

## Dalmatia

The uncertainties about the exact number of autonomous units are particularly pronounced in Dalmatia. The optimistic scenario recognizes thirty-eight, while the conservative, thirty autonomous towns in this province. As in Roman Macedonia, the discrepancy is caused by a number of *oppida* whose autonomous status is only vaguely indicated by the written sources. The problem is exacerbated by the unknown fate of many of the *civitates* encountered at the time of the conquest or constituted soon after the creation of the province.<sup>734</sup> There is no way of telling which of these communities developed into separate *municipia* that were merged with their neighbours to create a larger, functional *municipium* or others, that retained their old laws and institutions throughout the period of the High Empire. Pliny lists at least forty *civitates*, slightly more than our extended list of autonomous towns but, in reality, it is very difficult to find a full correspondence between the two lists.<sup>735</sup> Despite all scholarly efforts, Pliny's *civitates* have remained untraceable on the ground; a fact

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<sup>733</sup> Mikulčić 1996.

<sup>734</sup> Pliny *HN* 3.139-142; Wilkes 1969, 153-177; Wilkes 1977, 732-766; Vittinghoff 1977, 3-51; Dzino 2010, 164-167, Dzino 2014, 219-231.

<sup>735</sup> The idea that the general tendency was one of centralization and the merging of the smaller *civitates* into larger communities is suggested by Pliny's remark that, according to Varro, there were eighty-nine *civitates* in the *conventus* of Naronia alone, in the southeastern third of the province. Pliny *HN* 3.142; Bojanovski 1988, 47,

that suggests that these were non-urban communities. Ivo Bojanovski, whose intimate knowledge of the Dalmatian interior is virtually unparalleled, could only give a rough indication of their location, guided by the number of *decuriae* per *civitas* and assuming a geographical order in Pliny's description of the province.<sup>736</sup> However, in the absence of any tangible evidence, the whole effort descends into a game of filling-in the administrative gaps on the map. Having no way to decide if the micro-regions in question formed self-governing units or were attached to the territories of the neighbouring administrative centres, we have no choice but to account for both possibilities. This exercise will inevitably increase the discrepancy between the minimal and maximal projections.

In the Flavian period, Dalmatia became a *provincia inermis* but, as we saw in Chapter Three, much of the old military infrastructure was maintained and there was a continuous military presence, whether in the form of permanently stationed auxiliary units and legionary detachments or just individual officers seconded to the governor's staff.<sup>737</sup> If the assumption that the presence of the military was incompatible with the civilian administration is accepted, their distribution in the interior of the province can be a valuable indicator of the territorial divisions.<sup>738</sup> This situation would imply that the territory of a given town did not extend beyond the site of the camp and it would probably have terminated at a certain distance from this site. If we go a step farther and assume that at least some of these military outposts played an active role in the administration of the non-municipalized communities of the Dalmatian interior, the securely identified auxiliary camps can be treated as the provisional centres of separate districts that remained outside the municipal divisions.<sup>739</sup>

Besides the self-governing and military districts, considerable segments of the territory of the province were composed of areas owned and/or managed directly by the state, like the mining districts and imperial estates.<sup>740</sup> The territorial extent of the majority remains elusive, but the fact that their presence and approximate location have been ascertained is already an important step towards a better understanding of the administrative divisions in Roman Dalmatia. The boundary-stones setting the limits of the imperial estates and the dedications made by the Imperial *procuratores*, freedmen and slaves are of paramount importance in this respect.

In any reconstruction of the administrative territories in Dalmatia the natural geographical divisions in the area cannot be ignored. Dalmatia was the province that featured the most contrasting geography in our study-area. Here, to an even greater degree than in Roman Macedonia, the individual river basins and plateaus are separated by mountain ranges rising to a relative height of several hundred metres. These geographical barriers had channelled communication and exchange for centuries prior to the Roman conquest. If they were so instrumental in shaping the political and

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dates the passage to the early reign of Augustus; for the possible sources used by Pliny see Vittinghoff 1977, 24-30.

<sup>736</sup> Bojanovski 1988, 75.

<sup>737</sup> Wilkes 2000, 327-341.

<sup>738</sup> Cf. Mattingly 2006.

<sup>739</sup> The presence of a permanent garrison site near modern Humac undermines this approach, as the surrounding micro-region had almost certainly belonged to the Roman colony of Narona, Wilkes 1969, 113; Bojanovski 1988, 116-128. See the section on Dacia for more examples.

<sup>740</sup> Bojanovski 1988; Škegro 2006, 149-173.

ethnic map of the area in the pre-Roman period, this pattern must have been respected by the new rulers.<sup>741</sup>

The main source for the reconstruction of the territorial divisions in Roman Dalmatia is the epigraphic heritage of the province. In contrast to Macedonia, in which it took a great effort to discover even one or two inscriptions referring to the autonomous towns, in Dalmatia the relevant epigraphic record from the countryside is abundant. It comprises a whole range of different types of inscription, including boundary inscriptions, funerary monuments, votive and honorific inscriptions that either point immediately to the possible territorial extents or at least indicate the economic and demographic relationships between the various parts of the province. Given the sizeable corpus of epigraphic data, only rarely did we have to rely on the geographical specifics or Thiessen polygons to reconstruct the administrative divisions of Roman Dalmatia.

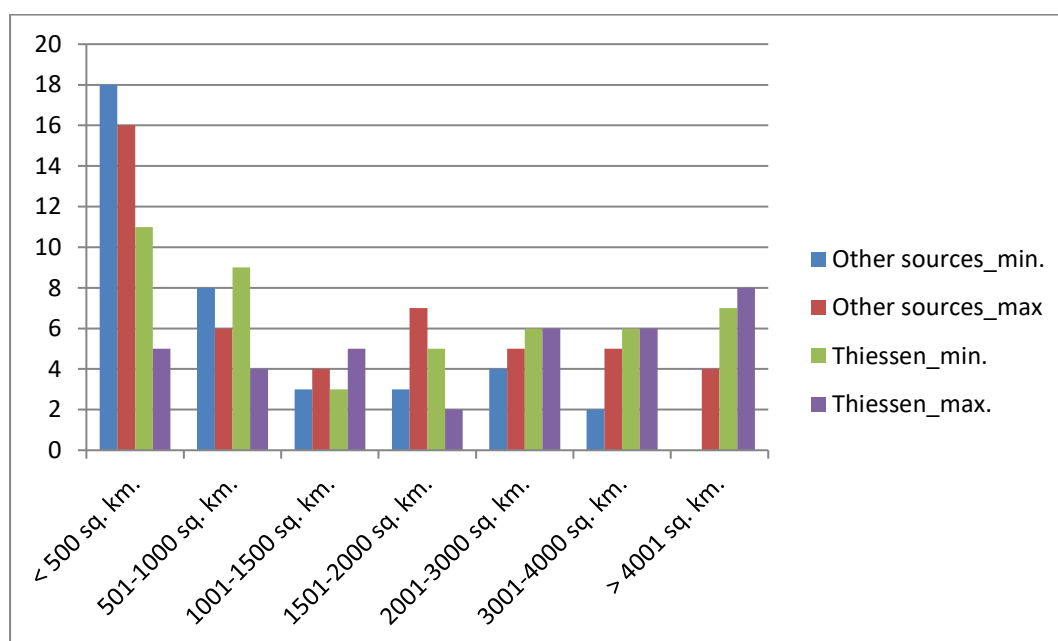


Figure VI\_3: Distribution of the territorial units in Roman Dalmatia by size-ranges

Dalmatia is characterized by a large number of very small administrative units. Both scenarios agree that over one-third of the autonomous communities in this province controlled territories smaller than 500 sq. km. This category was also prominent in Roman Macedonia, but in this instance they represented about a quarter of all autonomous districts if the minimum estimates are taken. Moreover, many of these urban territories fell short of the 500 sq. km threshold by only a very small margin. Hence it was possible to point to the threshold of 500 sq. km as the bare minimum for the normal functioning of the autonomous towns in the area. The same cannot be said for Dalmatia, in which a relatively large proportion of the units measure less than 300 sq. km. These estimates are not easy to dismiss out of hand, as most of them refer to island or coastal communities. In these cases, because of the geographical limits and proximity of the neighbouring towns, there are simply no other

<sup>741</sup> For a detailed geographical description of the region see The Naval Intelligence Division 1944, 43 ff.; Wilkes 1969, xxi-xxvii.

possibilities. This is confirmed by the distribution of the boundary inscriptions, often implying surprisingly small territories (Maps VI\_4, VI\_5).<sup>742</sup>

In view of the small size and poor quality of the land in their territories, it is surprising that these tiny communities were granted full autonomy. Evidence of the presence of magistrates or local councils in Liburnia is available for nearly all communities mentioned by Pliny.<sup>743</sup> This evidence might not always be decisive in determining their juridical status, but it cannot be entirely dismissed. As in other newly conquered territories, the Romans maintained the territorial divisions encountered at the time of the conquest, recognizing the autonomy of all the major constituents of the old federation.<sup>744</sup> The same approach was adopted in the southern Adriatic, in which the small *oppida* of Risinium and Acruvium and, possibly Buthoe and Oulcinium – former strongholds of the Illyrian dynasts –, were granted autonomy.<sup>745</sup> The results were the tiny municipal territories and the exceptionally large number of boundary-stones, plain testimony to the strained natural resources in the region.<sup>746</sup> Even Iader, a town of 20 to 30 ha and the only Roman colony in Liburnia, had to be content with a territory not larger than 750 sq. km and possibly dropping below the 500 sq. km threshold, if stricter criteria are applied. Until Late Antiquity, when only a fraction of these communities became episcopal sees,<sup>747</sup> the centralizing tendencies seem to have been kept in check by laws and regulations that protected local autonomy, despite the fact that the demographic and agricultural potential was limited. As we saw in the preceding chapter, this territorial regime was also made viable by the small size of the urban centres.

The differences with Roman Macedonia are also unmistakably apparent if we examine the other end of the spectrum. Whereas the former province contained only a couple of units measuring between 2,000 and 3,000 sq. km and none was larger than 3,000 sq. km, in Dalmatia there are no fewer than five settlements with territories larger than 2,000 sq. km, even adopting the conservative approach. Taking the maximum estimates, their number rises to fourteen or nearly 30% of all autonomous units in the province. Almost all of these towns and communities were situated in the Dalmatian interior; the few examples lying close to the coast belonged to the southern half of Dalmatia. This is not a simple effect of the great intercity distances in these areas or the differences in the physical geography. Almost one-half of these projections are based on information contained in the epigraphic and cartographic sources. Only the best documented cases will be mentioned below.

The territorial extent of the Docleatae, whose capital is attested to the north of modern Podgorica in Montenegro, is explicitly confirmed on a funerary monument for a *princeps* found in a *castellum* on the territory of this tribe (Map VI\_6).<sup>748</sup> This *castellum* is situated about 60 km to the northwest of

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<sup>742</sup> Cf. however, the very small territorial sizes of the towns in Roman Baetica, Keay, Earl 2011, Table 10.1; or Apulia, De Ligt 2012, 236-237.

<sup>743</sup> Alföldy 1965, 71; Wilkes 1969, 192-219; Wilkes 2003, 233-241; believed that all *oppida* included in Pliny's list had been granted a municipal charter by the Flavian period, if not earlier. Other scholars remain sceptical, Suić 1976; Vittinghoff 1977, 30.

<sup>744</sup> For example, Čače 2007, 39-82; although he allows that some of the Liburnian *municipia* had lost their significance by the second century AD. This raises the question if this decline would have automatically implied a loss of autonomous status.

<sup>745</sup> Suić 1976, 34-37.

<sup>746</sup> Cf. the evaluation of the area from the perspective of natural resources by Chapman, Shiel, Batović eds. 1996.

<sup>747</sup> Dzino 2014b, Map 1.

<sup>748</sup> IL Jug 1853; Bojanovski 1988, 114-115.

Doclea and it offers solid proof that most of the western half of modern Montenegro was centred on this Flavian *municipium*. The area in question is composed of a number of separate basins and karstic plateaus and extends over more than 4,000 sq. km. The fact that the Docleatae had had no more than thirty-three *decuriae* a few decades prior to the founding of the *municipium* is striking evidence of the sparse population in the area, even were we to accept the possibility that the newly founded *municipium* included some of the smaller neighbouring *civitates*.<sup>749</sup>

In the case of Malvesia, the easternmost *municipium* of Roman Dalmatia and arguably one of the most isolated sub-regions in our study area, the distribution of the funerary monuments erected for the city magistrates form a compact scatter measuring between 2,500 and 3,000 sq. km (Map VI\_7).<sup>750</sup> The territory of the *municipium* stretched from the Lim in the west, to the upper basin of the Western Morava in the east and includes a number of different micro-regional units. Accepting the conventional identification of the municipal centre on the Middle Drina, Malvesia was located on the northern edge of its territory.<sup>751</sup> Obviously, for the central place access to roads and fertile land was of a greater importance than its accessibility from any given corner in the urban territory.

The series of *municipia* with epigraphically confirmed large territories continues with settlements whose names do not appear outside the general historical or archaeological monographs on Roman Dalmatia. According to the distribution of the relevant epigraphic sources, *municipia* like Bistua Nova and, possibly the one known solely by the initial letter S, had territories stretching over at least 2,200 sq. km.<sup>752</sup>

Narona, the Roman colony founded on the site of a former Greek *emporion*, equals the territories of the Latin *municipia* in the interior of Dalmatia in size.<sup>753</sup> Narona's *ager* is well documented in the funerary inscriptions of veterans and town magistrates, spread over an area of 2,500 sq. km (Map VI\_8).<sup>754</sup> Judging by the settlement pattern and the occurrence of *gentilica* characteristic in the colony in the upper Neretva Valley, it is possible that its territory extended over an area of 3,500 sq. km.<sup>755</sup> The remainder of the Roman colonies in Dalmatia apparently had much smaller territories. The territory of Epidaurum, located on the coast in the south of the province, extended up to 1,700 sq. km according to the maximum estimate, but the few epigraphic monuments that can be directly related to this town come exclusively from the coastal zone and suggest a territory not larger than 800 sq. km (Map VI\_9).<sup>756</sup> Aequum, on the Cetinja River in the Salonitan *conventus*, had a similarly sized territory,

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<sup>749</sup> Wilkes 1969, 166-167.

<sup>750</sup> Bojanovski 1968, 241- 261; Bojanovski 1988, 177-192; even though well attested epigraphically, the location of the *municipium* has yet to be established.

<sup>751</sup> For the different opinions about the location of Malvesia see Bojanovski 1988, 177-192.

<sup>752</sup> Bistue Nova: Bojanovski 1974, 1988, 155-168. The case for the large territory of *Municipium S.* is weaker, especially in view of the presence of a *procurator* and imperial freedmen in the municipal territory, attested in official dedications. These seem to suggest that S. was yet another mining *municipium*, although its wide range of town-magistrates distinguishes it from most of the *municipia* that developed in the mining districts. As with the rest of the mining *municipia*, it is impossible to separate the municipal territory from the mines that belonged to the state treasury. Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1968, 101-107; Mirković 1975, 95-106; Loma 2002, 143-179; Dušanić 2004, 254-255.

<sup>753</sup> Wilkes 1969, 245-252; Cambi 1978, 57-66; Marin ed. 2003.

<sup>754</sup> Dodig 2003, 233-252.

<sup>755</sup> Čremošnik 1955, 107-134; Bojanovski 1988, 116-128.

<sup>756</sup> Bojanovski 1988, 76-83; suggests the maximum estimate on the bases of political and administrative divisions in the area in the Middle Ages.

ranging between 600 and 1,000 sq. km (Map VI\_10).<sup>757</sup> In comparison to Narona, both these colonies were much smaller, their territorial sizes commensurate to the size of their built-up areas.

Salona, another Roman colony and provincial capital, presents a very different case.<sup>758</sup> As we saw in Chapter Four, Salona was by far the largest town in Dalmatia, twice the size of the second largest town in the province. Like Dyrrhachium, Salona was too populous for its immediate habitat and it can be predicted that a large proportion of its subsistence needs would have been covered from the town's administrative territory. Despite this, all indices point to the fact that, by the Late Antonine period, it governed a territory not larger than 1,400 sq. km, including all the islands in Salona Bay but Issa (Maps VI\_11 and 12).<sup>759</sup> However, it has to be stressed that this estimate is derived almost entirely from the distribution of the inscriptions documenting the possible extent of the neighbouring urban territories and the distribution of the military outposts at Tilurium and Andetrium.<sup>760</sup> Once the focus is shifted to the inscriptions referring to the *curia* of Salona, they are limited either to the immediate surroundings of the town or make rare appearances deep in the interior, at locations that belonged to different territorial units. Excluding the latter group of inscriptions, the epigraphic documents commissioned by the town magistrates are spread over an area not larger than 700 sq. km, coinciding perfectly with the most fertile portion of Salona's territory.<sup>761</sup>

Hence the agricultural core of Salona's territory was of roughly equal size as that of the smaller colonies, Iader or Epidaurum. It is certain that the territory beyond this zone was also governed by the colony, but this would hardly have compensated for the relatively small *ager* as it consists mainly of barren uplands. The extremely scarce agricultural resources outside the narrower territory of the town could have only served as a basis for a pastoral economy. As it is today, the population density was certainly low in this area and, given its lack of accessibility, it would not have been a very attractive tax pool. Despite the scarcity of arable land, Salona was an extremely popular location among the veteran settlers, and in contrast to the pattern in Narona, the great majority of them were buried in the urban necropolis.<sup>762</sup>

As pointed out in the preceding chapter, the wide-spread trade connections of the colony and the involvement of its elite in the mining districts in the interior of the province would have been Salona's chief economic assets.<sup>763</sup> This claim is substantiated by the large number of funerary monuments from either Salona itself or its immediate hinterland, set up by people who served as magistrates in other Dalmatian towns,<sup>764</sup> Aequum, Rider, Salvium, Bistue Nova, Splonum, plus a number of others. We even know of a *decurio* who served in Singidunum, in neighbouring Moesia Superior, and of another who

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<sup>757</sup> Demicheli 2011, 69-97.

<sup>758</sup> Cambi ed. 1991; Wilkes 2002, 87-105.

<sup>759</sup> During the first and second century AD, the territory of Salona was much larger, including the territory of the *municipium* Novae, Bojanovski 1977, 97, 99, 134; see Appendix 1.

<sup>760</sup> Cf. Wilkes 1969, 225-6; Bojanovski 1977, 83-151. Wilkes 1969, 231-3; has argued that the colony was founded in the territory of the Dalmatian *civitates* Pituntini and Narestae. The boundary-stones locate these peoples less than 15 km to the south of Salona.

<sup>761</sup> CIL III 13873, IL Jug 124, CIL III 13288; CIL III 3084, CIL III 2676, 2680.

<sup>762</sup> Wilkes 2000, 327-341; Ferjanić 2002.

<sup>763</sup> Wilkes 1969, 234-5; Bojanovski 1974, 175-181; emphasizing the early date of the road between Salona and the silver mines in eastern Dalmatia; Škegro 1998, 89-117.

<sup>764</sup> Wilkes 2002, 93-94; has related the phenomenon to the slow decline of the *municipia* in the interior of the province, but this is not the most plausible explanation.

took office in Drobeta in Dacia.<sup>765</sup> These people were unmistakably members of the local aristocracy who had the financial means and the initiative to take on municipal duties in other towns in Dalmatia or the neighbouring provinces. It is almost certain that they would have also owned landed property in the territories of these towns. The size of Salona's administrative territory might have been unimpressive by the late second century, but this belies the economic outreach of its elite that extended over much of the Balkan Peninsula. At this point it is appropriate to mention that the aristocracy from the other important coastal communities also makes occasional appearances in the epigraphy of the interior of the province. The elites from Iader, another colony with a surprisingly small territory, were also evidently involved in the exploitation of some of the mining areas and also possibly of Risinium.<sup>766</sup>

Unlike Macedonia, Dalmatia had a large number of non-municipal districts. Even in the densely parcelled coastal zone, the epigraphic sources suggest that some of the islands belonged to the Imperial patrimony.<sup>767</sup> There is no way of determining their true number or extent, but the high urban density on the coast must have been a limiting factor. The same comment applies to the extent of the territories controlled from the military camps in Tilurium and Andetrium.<sup>768</sup> Located on the busy Aquileia-Dyrrhachium road, their actual territory was probably tiny. Although there is no tangible evidence, it probably did not exceed the areas enclosed by the market radius.<sup>769</sup>

Because of the low urban density, the extent of these special districts in the interior of the province would have been potentially much greater. Their traces have been identified in the hinterland of Epidaurum and in eastern Dalmatia, especially along the River Drina, along which there was at least one large imperial estate in the region of modern Ustikolina and a possible mining district in modern Rogatica. Unfortunately, the epigraphic evidence is extremely limited, so that even the existence of these districts has not yet been entirely established, let alone their territorial extents. Their territorial size could vary from less than 100 sq. km for the *fundus* located between the territories of Epidaurum and Doclea,<sup>770</sup> to over 1,500 sq. km in the case of the mining districts in the Upper Drina Dalley (Maps VI\_9 and 13).<sup>771</sup>

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<sup>765</sup> IL Jug 2681; CIL III 2679.

<sup>766</sup> Iader: IL Jug 95; Risinium: CIL III 8369; for a different interpretation, Vittinghoff 1977, 18-19; *contra* Bojanovski 1988, 169-175, who maintains that there was a separate colony with a similar name in the interior of the province.

<sup>767</sup> Starac 2006, 111-112.

<sup>768</sup> These two military forts in the Dalmatian interior are usually associated with keeping control of the main Dalmatian transversal artery; Andetrium: Wilkes 1969, 135-144; Bojanovski 1974, 131-132; Tilurium: Sanader 2006, 59-71.

<sup>769</sup> Zaninović 1985, 63-79; assigns a much larger territory to the military camp Tillurium, but his argument is based almost entirely on analogies with Burnum.

<sup>770</sup> The *fundus* in the hinterland of Epidaurum: IL Jug 647; Čremošnik 1976, 41-164; has attempted to identify the archaeological remains of the villa that was the centre of this estate; Bojanovski 1988, 81-82.

<sup>771</sup> Ustikolina: IL Jug 1572; CIL III 8370-1; Bojanovski 1987, 63-174; IL Jug 85, is a IOM dedication by a *libertus*, discovered 15 km to the south of Ustikolina, the find-spot of one of the boundary-stones. So far, this might be the only epigraphic monument that has come from the region of the Upper Drina. Rogatica: CIL III 8369; see fn. 760. The elites based in Risinium were active in the territory of *Municipium S*, likewise known for its mineral riches.



The silver-mining district based in Domavia on the Middle Drina is far less controversial.<sup>772</sup> It has been confirmed by a series of dedications erected on behalf of a district *procurator* under the Severan dynasty.<sup>773</sup> However, there are hardly any clues to the approximate extent of the district (Map VI\_14). Some scholars have pointed to the possibility that it extended into neighbouring Pannonia.<sup>774</sup> This is a reasonable assumption considering the fact that the Pannonian provinces also included a silver-mining district that, unless identified with Domavia, eludes all other attempts to localize it. No other silver deposits are known in Pannonia. In that case, the silver-mining district on the Drina must have included most of the lower valley of the river, covering up to 5,000 sq. km.<sup>775</sup>

More extra-municipal districts can be located along the problematic provincial frontier with Pannonia, on which traces of mining and metallurgical activities have been located between the Vrbas and Sana.<sup>776</sup> Moreover, as we have seen in one of the preceding chapters, there was one, possibly two, military outposts in this area.<sup>777</sup> Both forts guarded the roads that leading off from the Sava Corridor ran into the interior of Dalmatia (Map VI\_15).<sup>778</sup> Nevertheless, it is impossible to ignore the fact that these areas were precisely the heartland of those *civitates* that took the leading role in the Pannonian Revolt of AD 6-9.<sup>779</sup> The maintenance of road-security would surely not have been incompatible with the supervision of the areas that had had a history of trouble-making in the past and continued to be poorly integrated into the social and economic currents of the province. The small epigraphic corpus from this region is of very little help in determining the extent of these districts but, following the geographical divisions, the combined areas of the supposed districts based in Doboj and Castra could have reached almost 8,000 sq. km.<sup>780</sup> If we look at the Thiessen polygons they become even larger, exceeding 10,000 sq. km.

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<sup>772</sup> Dušanić 1977, 52-94; Bojanovski 1982, 89-121; for the archaeological remains see Wilkes 1969, Figure 19; Bojanovski 1988, 193-203.

<sup>773</sup> Bojanovski 1982, 99-106.

<sup>774</sup> Dušanić 1977, 65-66; discusses the problem of the Pannonian *argentaria*.

<sup>775</sup> Bojanovski 1988, 200-201, sets the northern limits of the districts on the assumed provincial border with Pannonia, but extends the western border almost to the area of modern Sarajevo. See Appendix 1 for further evidence.

<sup>776</sup> The case for the Dalmatian *ferraria* is discussed in Dušanić 1977, 68-69; evidence of ore-smelting in the area comes from Leusaba located near modern Mrkonjić Grad and Velečevo on the Sana, see Bojanovski 1988, 297-300.

<sup>777</sup> The anonymous auxiliary fort near modern Doboj: Čremošnik 1984, 23-84; Castra, modern Banja Luka: Bojanovski 1988, 300-303; the small finds and architectural remains from this site: Periša 1995-1996, 111-126.

<sup>778</sup> Bojanovski 1988, 355-364; Wilkes 2000, 332-334.

<sup>779</sup> The Breuci in the Lower, the Daesithiati on the Middle Bosna: Mócsy 1971b, 41-46; Bojanovski 1974, 182-183; Maezei in the Vrbas-Una Interfluve, Bojanovski 1988, 266-273; Dzino 2010, 142-155;

<sup>780</sup> Cf. the size of the territory of the Maezei estimated by Bojanovski 1988, 266-269.

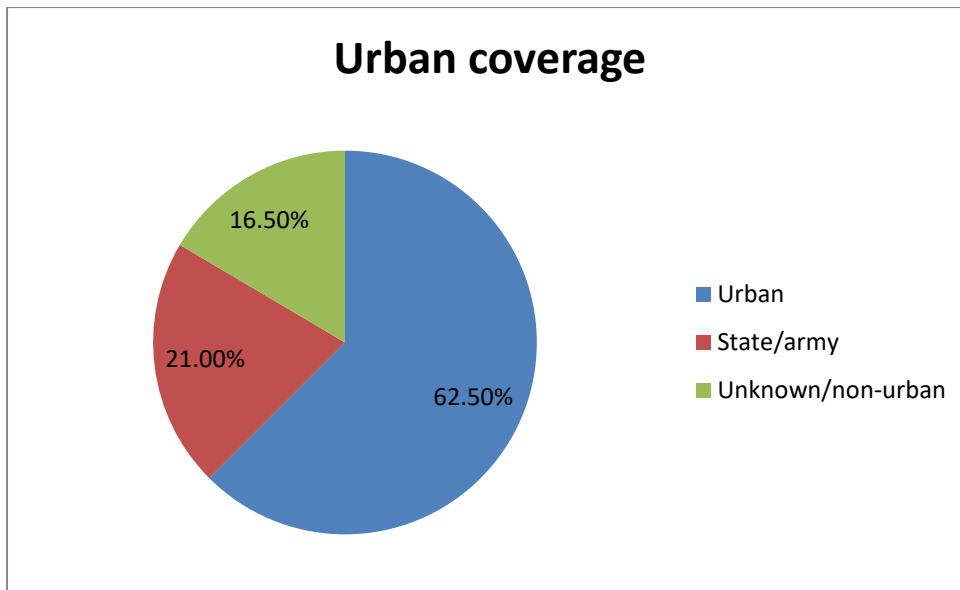


Figure VI\_4: The share of the different types of administrative units in the local government of Dalmatia

Figure VI\_4 is based on the maximum territorial estimates. If we were to assign a definite municipal or extra-municipal character only to those stretches of land for which we have concrete evidence, it is likely that the percentage of municipal territory will decrease. However, despite the continuous presence of the military, it is unlikely that over two-thirds of the province remained outside the territories of the major towns and districts. It is certain that the maximum estimates over-estimate the size of the imperial estates and army districts and they are also likely to over-rate the extent of the urban territories, especially in the cases of towns for which the epigraphic evidence suggests direct control only over the regional units in which they were based.

The share of the urban sector in Dalmatia is slightly lower than in Macedonia, including between three- and four-fifths of the provincial territory. Over 30% of the land was either put under direct control of the government or was ruled by communities that retained their native institutions and/or never adopted the epigraphic habit. Evidently, the latter option is the most problematic. As it is based entirely on negative evidence, it is perhaps best seen as an unavoidable margin of error rather than as an actual element of the local government. The important difference is that, whereas the areas left outside the urban umbrella in Roman Macedonia belonged almost entirely to the “grey zone”, in Dalmatia, about one-fifth of the land was run directly either by the state administrators or the army.<sup>781</sup> The special status of this land combined with the nature of the economic relations that linked it to the rest of the Empire would have prevented the establishment of self-governing communities, although this would not necessarily have expunged all urban-like features from this zone. For instance, the *argentaria* in the Drina Valley did develop a centre with recognizable urban characteristics and a number of larger *vici*.<sup>782</sup>

<sup>781</sup> The share of the governmental sector could in fact approach one-quarter of the provincial territory, if it were decided to treat *Municipium S.* as a mining *municipium*, see fn. 746.

<sup>782</sup> See Chapter Three.

The relatively high degree of urban coverage in Roman Dalmatia is largely attributable to the big territorial scopes of obscure towns located on the periphery of the network. Unless it is assumed, that these towns governed territories larger than 2,000 sq. km, including several separate micro-regional units, the urban infrastructure remains patchy to say the least. The pattern of oversized territories is supported by the distribution of the epigraphic evidence and cartographic material. Moreover parallels can be drawn with later historical periods. At the time of its liberation from the Ottomans, Scodra is known to have been functioning as the main market and administrative centre for the pastoral population that occupied the Prokletije Mountains, located over 60 km to the east.<sup>783</sup> There is no reason that situation would have been any different in the Roman period. This arrangement suggests a low population density on the territories in question. These arrangements would have relieved the burden on the remote local government and they also account for the absence of centrifugal tendencies in the large urban territories. This situation also explains the lack of correlation between the size of the town and its territory. The large territories of these towns were purely administrative solutions that failed to translate into a visible urban expansion. In contrast to this set-up, most of the large towns in Roman Dalmatia were associated with small- to medium-sized territories. Only in the cases of agriculturally orientated colonies, like Naron, did the administrative territories approach the size-ranges of the peripheral territorial units.

Even with the overstretched units in the periphery of the network, a large segment of Roman Dalmatia remained under direct state or military control. These regions include not only the areas of obvious economic importance, like the silver-mines on the Middle Drina, but also possibly those parts of the province inhabited by conservative communities that were unwilling or not prepared to adopt the Roman forms of self-government. Otherwise it is very difficult to understand the complete absence of urbanizing tendencies in the well-connected and agriculturally fertile micro-regions of the Middle Bosna or the Middle Vrbas.<sup>784</sup> There is also the strong possibility that large segments of these areas were expropriated by the imperial treasury, but this has yet to be confirmed by the epigraphic record. Adequate data to define the territorial extents of the individual districts are lacking, but this does not discount the possibility that some of these units belonged to the same size-ranges as the *municipia* in the interior of the province. This coincidence between large territorial units and zones of low population density or strategic resources will be a recurrent pattern in most of the provinces studied.

## The northern Adriatic

This small corner of our study area is probably the least controversial in relation to the extent of the constituent administrative units. The margins of uncertainty are greatly reduced by the regional geography. Many of the towns are located on small islands and their administrative prerogatives did not extend across the sea. Similarly, the territories of the towns located on the coast are unlikely to have extended beyond the soaring mountain ranges that rise to altitudes of over 1,000 metres above sea level within a distance of 3 to 4 km from the coastline. Besides the extreme geomorphology, the small intercity distances would also have been a contributory factor. They rarely rise over 20 km and along certain sections drop to as little as 5 or 6 km. Even if the epigraphic heritage of the region is not

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<sup>783</sup> The Naval Intelligence Division 1944b, 43-44.

<sup>784</sup> Cf. the number of urban settlements in the area in the modern period, The Naval Intelligence Division, 1944b, 19-53.

particularly helpful in delimiting the territories of individual towns, the room for fluctuations in the territorial size ranges is very limited.

The chief dilemma in this area is the status of the *oppida* situated on the eastern coast of Kvarner Bay, to the south of Senia, plus Tarsatica. Lopsica, Ortopla, Vegium and Argyruntum have all been mentioned by Pliny the Elder as *oppida*, and the Lopsi have also been included among the *civitates* of Liburnia.<sup>785</sup> A few of these communities are also attested on boundary-stones, some of which could post-date the Flavian period, but this cannot be taken as decisive evidence of their autonomous status.<sup>786</sup> The reality is that in none of these towns do we find explicit testimonies of their city-councils or magistrates. Each of these places has produced one or two inscriptions mentioning a city-magistrate, but without providing the essential link to the name of the town in which the office was held.<sup>787</sup> Therefore, the evidence for their autonomy is fairly poor. The problem is that even in the certainly attested towns of northern Liburnia, like Arba or Curricum, the epigraphic record is hardly more explicit.<sup>788</sup> Until more evidence is brought to light, the only option is to test both possibilities.

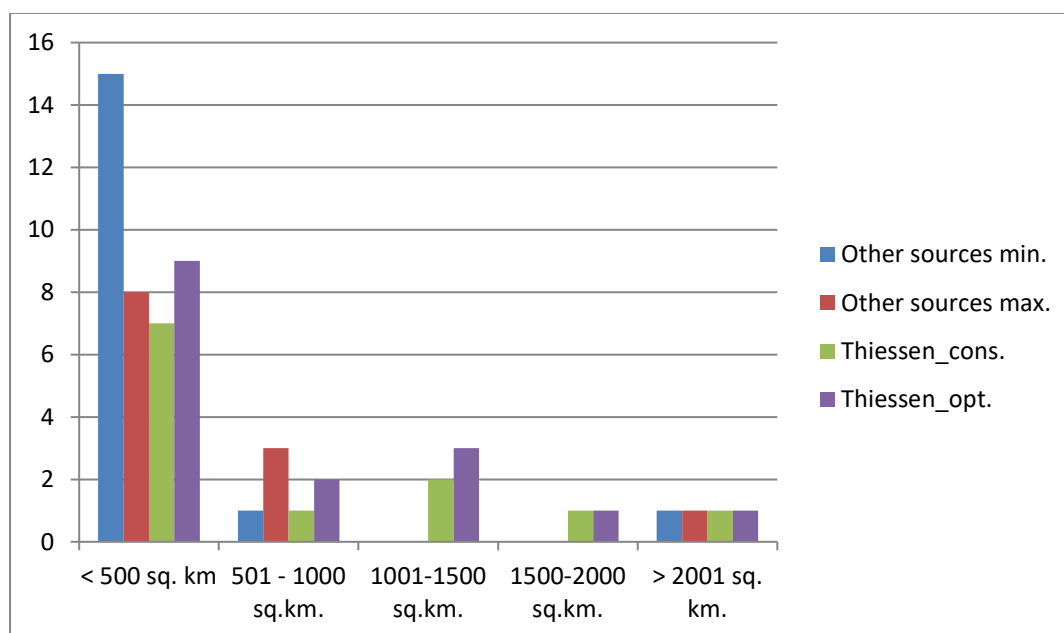


Figure VI\_5: Distribution of the territorial units in the northern Adriatic by size-ranges

Regardless of which scenario is considered, the territories of the autonomous towns in the northern Adriatic belong to the lower end of the size-spectrum. Taking the minimum estimate – that assumes that all *oppida* mentioned by Pliny had become *municipia* by the end of the first century AD – over 90% of the towns have territories smaller than 500 sq. km. Their share is reduced to two-thirds taking the maximum estimate that eliminates the group of towns on the eastern coast of the bay and

<sup>785</sup> Pliny *HN* 3.139, 140; Alföldy 1965, 75-77; Wilkes 1969, 193-203, app. XIII; Wilkes 2003, 235; Starac 2006, 107-108; Suić 1992, 11-35, recognizes only three autonomous towns in the northern Adriatic, see also the critical remarks by Vittinghoff 1977, 11-20. The source of this passage in Pliny's *Encyclopaedia* is an unknown periploous rather than the official state records and it cannot be used as evidence for their autonomy.

<sup>786</sup> For example, IL Jug 9191, the boundary-stone between the Orthoplini and the Vegi, Rendić- Miočević 1969, 63-74.

<sup>787</sup> Vittinghoff 1977, 7-8.

<sup>788</sup> The corpus of inscriptions mentioning the officials of Arba is studied by Glavičić 2009, 57-66.

Tarsatica. One possibility – not taken into account in the final figures – is that the vacuum was entirely filled by Senia, the only securely attested town on this segment of the coast.<sup>789</sup> The upshot would have been that this Flavian *municipium* had an extremely elongated territory, stretched over a length of about 160 km. Pragmatically, it would not have amounted to a very efficient administrative unit, as communication along certain sections of the coastline is almost impossible by land. A more realistic scenario splits the area between Senia and Arba, the former controlling the northern part with the region of modern Rijeka; the latter the southern half (Map VI\_16). Although an island community, Arba was in a much better position to govern this section of the coast than Senia. Pertinently, a similar arrangement has been attested during the Middle Ages when the coastal areas were under the bishop of Arba.<sup>790</sup>

It has to be stressed that there is absolutely no evidence in the epigraphic record that the administrative prerogatives of either Arba or Senia extended beyond their narrower territories. The solutions proposed on the basis of the maximum estimates are purely speculative and if we weigh up the available evidence, we have to conclude that the minimum estimates are probably more accurate in the case of the northern Adriatic. After all, similarly sized territories were encountered in the southern part of Liburnia and elsewhere in Dalmatia. In view of the number of precedents from the same area and the isolation of some of the coastal micro-regions, less scepticism should be shown towards the possibility that each of the *oppida* on Pliny's list became the centre of an autonomous community by the end of the first century AD.

Though falling within the same size-range, the few Istrian towns that belong to our study area have slightly larger territories than their Liburnian neighbours. The territories of both Pola and Parentium measured about 500 sq. km, estimates based not only on the physical geography and intercity distances, but also the epigraphic record from the countryside and the traces of centuriation.<sup>791</sup> In comparison, the majority of the Liburnian communities spread over territories not larger than 200-300 sq. km. This difference pales into insignificance if we think of the difference in size between the Istrian colonies and Liburnian *oppida*. However, whereas the Roman colonies in the western half of Istria controlled a highly fertile area, most of the small territories of the Liburnian *civitates* consisted of dry and barren karst. As was shown in the preceding chapter, many of the Liburnian communities had no more than 10-15 sq. km arable land at their disposal, probably just enough to meet their grain demand.

Emona, the only continental town in this part of the study-area, belongs to a very different territorial size-category.<sup>792</sup> The epigraphic evidence consists of funerary monuments erected for or by the city-magistrates of Emona and Celeia and the inscription marking the boundary with Aquileia. These documents already provide us with fairly precise coordinates (Map VI\_17). Equally pertinent are the

<sup>789</sup> Alföldy 1965, 76; Wilkes 1969, 200; Vittinghoff 1977, 18; for the meagre archaeological remains from the assumed site of the *municipium* see Bartulović 2007, 265-296; Glavičić 1994, 41-58.

<sup>790</sup> Suić 1992, 28-29.

<sup>791</sup> Parentium: Baldini 1999-2000, 451-457; centuriation in the hinterland of Pola, Suić 1976, 100-101. Matijašić 1982, 53-64, Figure 14, includes Nesactium in the territory of the colony. This is contradicted by the second century epigraphic evidence of self-governing institutions in this town. This is another possible example of the municipalization of the territories of the colonies, paralleled by Salona in Dalmatia; see Appendix 1. For an interesting comparison between the extent of the centuriated land in the hinterland of the Istrian and Dalmatian colonies see Begović-Dvoržak, Schrunck-Dvoržak 2004, 65-91.

<sup>792</sup> Šašel-Kos 2002, 376-379; Vičić 2003, 21-45.

names of the road-stations on the eastern and southern boundaries of Emona's *ager*.<sup>793</sup> These sources indicate an elongated territory, extending from the Lake Bled in the north to the Krka Valley in the south. They enclose an area of about 2,700 sq. km. This is the minimum estimate. It is quite probable that Emona's territory spread even farther north, including the entire upper course of the Sava and also the high plateaus to the south. This assumption is the basis for the maximum estimate of Emona's territory at nearly 3,500 sq. km.

Even with the Thiessen polygons the territories of most of these towns remain within the same size-range (Map VI\_18). Only in four or five settlements do we see major deviations from the estimates based on other types of source-material, but these projections are not very likely. It is known that Vegium's territory did not include the Island of Pag, owned by senatorial families and later possibly by the imperial household.<sup>794</sup> It is equally unlikely that the small *municipium* of Fulfinium located on the northern tip of the Krk Island controlled the mountainous hinterland of modern Rijeka or that Flanona, rather than the colony Tergeste, was in control of the main east-west axis of the Istrian Peninsula. Nevertheless, these examples do point to the problematic parts of the study-area, the "grey zones" whose attribution to a particular administrative centre has so far been impossible because of the complete absence of evidence. As in Macedonia and Dalmatia, they coincide with the mountainous, sparsely populated micro-regions; in this particular case, the spur of the Julian Alps that separates the Appenines from the Balkan Peninsula. Historically, this region belonged to the Iapodes, an important regional factor at the time of the Roman conquest and, in all probability, a separate administrative unit.<sup>795</sup> This is yet another reason to incline towards the minimum estimates for the size of the administrative units in the northern Adriatic.

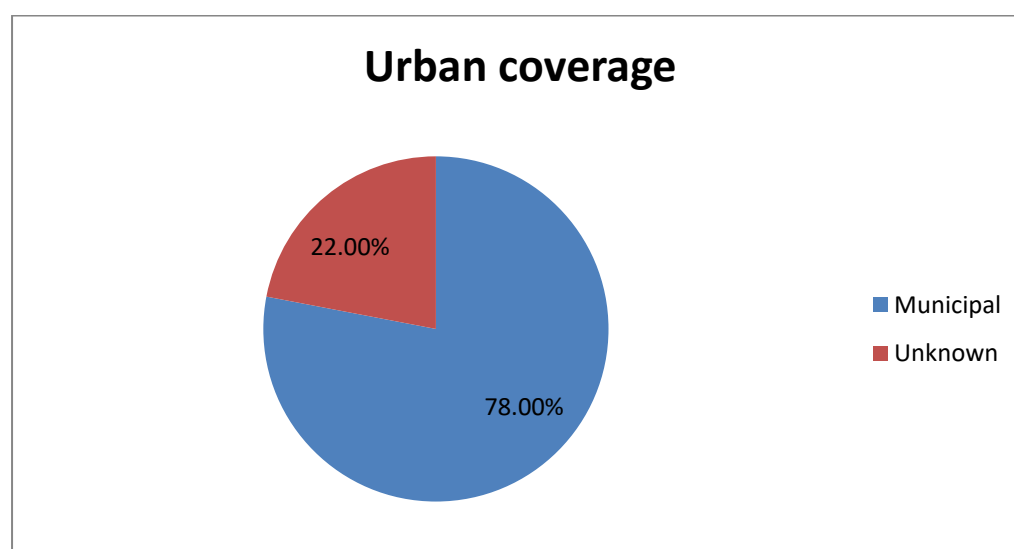


Figure VI\_6: The share of the different types of administrative units in the local government in the northern Adriatic

<sup>793</sup> Ad Publicanos: Ørsted 1989, 175-188; Praetorium Latobiorum: Lovenjak ed. 1998; 2003, 93-105.

<sup>794</sup> IL Jug 260; the status of Pag has been a controversial issue, Suić 1992, 11-35; Ilakovac, 1997-1998, 68-92, but recent excavations have failed to show traces of an urban settlement at the putative site of the town, Kurilić 2008, 368-369.

<sup>795</sup> Some ancient writers have even attributed parts of the coastal area to the Iapodes, Strabo 4. 6.10; Čače 1987-1988, 65-92; Šašel-Kos 2005, 321-329.

Taking the minimum estimates, the share of the “grey sector” increases to at least 20% of the total area, comparable to the situation in Roman Dalmatia and Macedonia. We might never learn how this area was parcelled out among the existing autonomous communities. There is no evidence of non-municipal fiscal districts in the northern Adriatic. Although some of the maritime estates that formerly belonged to senatorial families were later possibly expropriated by the imperial treasury, they could not have occupied very large territories.<sup>796</sup> It is likewise evident that there was no permanent military presence in this area. Parts of the mountainous hinterland of Tarsatica might have been included in the temporary military zone known as the *praetentura Italiae et Alpium* at the time of the Marcomannic crisis, but there are no traces of military installations in the region prior to Late Antiquity.<sup>797</sup>

The sharp divide between the towns of the coastal zone and the interior observed in Dalmatia continues into the northern Adriatic. It is important to stress that this is not simply side-effect of the much lower urban density in the interior, as the large extent of Emona’s territory is confirmed by solid epigraphic evidence. In other words, the epigraphic and cartographic material strongly indicates that the large intercity distances in the Balkan interior were dealt with primarily by expanding the urban territories. How this impacted the efficiency of the local government has to remain a matter for conjecture. At present, apart from Ljubljana, the successor to Emona, the western half of modern Slovenia has at least one other city and a dozen small towns. However, if we look at the ecclesiastical arrangements in the area beginning from the period of Late Antiquity, Ljubljana was the only diocese in this area.<sup>798</sup> In the early twentieth century, the entire territory of Slovenia, excluding the coastal area, was split between two administrative units centred on Emona and Maribor, the geographical successor to Roman Poetovio.<sup>799</sup> At the time of the High Empire, the southern half of the early twentieth century prefecture was governed from a separate town, the *municipium* Neviodunum. Although Emona’s territory includes a section of the strategically important Amber Road, it is a country of high mountains and consequently the population density must have been modest. With such demographic and geographical conditions, it is possible that there was simply no potential, and maybe no need, for more than a single self-governing unit.

## Pannonia Superior

There are only minor disagreements about the number of autonomous towns in Pannonia Superior. Some of the uncertainties have arisen because scholars can only guess at the approximate border-line between Pannonia Inferior and Pannonia Superior in the early third century AD.<sup>800</sup> In AD 214, it was moved at least 30-40 km to the west to include the legionary camp and *municipium* of Brigetio in Inferior.<sup>801</sup> Apart from Brigetio, the extended province would eventually include at least one, possibly

<sup>796</sup> Begović-Dvoržak, Schrunck-Dvoržak 2004, 68; discuss a number of maritime villas owned by senatorial families off the west Istrian coast.

<sup>797</sup> Šašel 1974, 225-233; for the archaeological remains see Blečić 2001, 65-122; Višnjić 2010, 457-461.

<sup>798</sup> Bratož 1989, 2345-2388. Carnium in the Upper Sava was an important centre in the Middle Ages, but its status in Late Antiquity is unknown; Kosi 2010, 8-44.

<sup>799</sup> The Naval Intelligence Division 1944b, Figure 67.

<sup>800</sup> Mócsy 1974, 198-199; Fitz 1975, 351-355; Mócsy 1977, 376-7; Soproni 1980, 57-63; Gudea 2013, 459-658.

<sup>801</sup> The rearrangement has been seen primarily as a political and strategic move, reducing the number of legions under the *legatus* of Pannonia Superior and a strengthening of the troublesome Sarmatian front of the *limes*, Fitz 1980b, 125-140. Cf. Chapter Three.

two, towns formerly located in Pannonia Superior.<sup>802</sup> The *municipium Faust(o)*, known solely from an inscription found in Siscia, causes an additional problem.<sup>803</sup> No more is heard of this town and modern scholarship tended to omit *Faust(o)* from the list of autonomous towns in Pannonia Superior. However, no *municipia* with a similar name are known from the neighbouring provinces, and, given the fact that the name appears on a funerary inscription of a magistrate based in Siscia, it was probably located somewhere in the southern half of the province. These unresolved questions posed by the historical geography of the province amount to a difference of one or two *municipia*, a result that does not have any major effect on the administrative map of the province.

Matters become somewhat more complicated once we move on to consider the evidence of other forms of local self-government. Again, the key problem is the fate of the Pannonian *civitates* as autonomous administrative units in the period after the final incorporation of the region into the Empire.<sup>804</sup> In comparison to Dalmatia, Pliny's list of the peoples of the Pannonian provinces tends to be somewhat less informative.<sup>805</sup> There are fewer indications of the locations of the individual *civitates* as the greater part of the list is alphabetical. There is no information about the number of *decuriae* per *civitas*, a fact that, in the case of Dalmatia, hints at the possible size of these communities. Nonetheless, combining the data contained in the works of Pliny the Elder, Ptolemy and other ancient authors, modern scholarship has managed to assign a rough location to nearly all the communities known from the written sources.<sup>806</sup>

According to the generally accepted view, by the middle of the second century AD, most of the Pannonian *civitates* had been transformed into *municipia*.<sup>807</sup> This claim is supported by the written evidence. After the reign of Hadrian, mentions of the military *praefecti* or the native *principes* are few and far between.<sup>808</sup> Moreover, in at least two *municipia* of Pannonia Superior there is an explicit link to the earlier *civitates* in the names of these towns.<sup>809</sup> Of course, it would be a different matter if there had been a full emancipation of the Pannonian *civitates* or if the granting of municipal status had completely erased all traces of the pre-municipal identities and institutions. The evidence from Pannonia Inferior suggests that this process was not all-encompassing.<sup>810</sup> Furthermore, as in Dalmatia,

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<sup>802</sup> Volgum, one of these towns, is yet to be located, but epigraphic sources indicate that it had probably belonged to Inferior from the outset. Mogentiana and its territory was also possibly attached to Inferior under Caracalla's reforms, Mócsy 1977, 3777. Including Mogentiana among the settlements in Superior does not have any consequences on the arguments of this study.

<sup>803</sup> CIL III 3974; Mócsy 1969, 349-350.

<sup>804</sup> Mócsy 1974, 134-139; this author's view on the complete municipalization of the *civitates* is more or less widely accepted; Lengyel, Radan eds. 1980; Kandler, Vetters eds. 1986; Migotti ed. 2012 – but see the section on Pannonia Inferior and the question of the survival of the *civitas* Eraviscorum after the Marcomannic Wars.

<sup>805</sup> Pliny HN 3.147-148; Mócsy 1974, 66; Fitz 1980, 141-142; Domić-Kunić 2012, 29-69; Colombo 2010, 171-202.

<sup>806</sup> Ptol. Geog. 2.14. 2; 2.15.2; Mócsy 1974, 68-69; Colombo 2010, 171, 197.

<sup>807</sup> Mócsy 1974, 134-135; notwithstanding the observation that the onomastics of the magistrates of the Pannonian *municipia* indicates a strong Italian element: Mócsy 1974, 137; Fitz 1980, 147-149; presence of Italian settlers in the countryside of Pannonia, Nagy 2002, 299-318.

<sup>808</sup> Hild ed. 1968, num. 157 is a funerary monument of a *princeps* of the Boi, dated to the first third of the second century AD; Kušan-Špalj 2015, 50-55, for a recently discovered honorific inscription attesting the *praefect* of the Scordisci, the Breuci and the Iasae, dated to the second half of the first century AD. Inscription num. 76, in the same volume mentions the *civitas* Varciani. This monument can be broadly dated to the second century AD, but the reading is not certain.

<sup>809</sup> Aqua Balissae = *Municipium lasorum*: Schejbal 2004, 99-129; Neviodunum = *Municipium Latobicorum*: Lovenjak 2003, 93-105.

<sup>810</sup> See the next section.



it is impossible to find a corresponding *municipium* or a colony for every individual *civitas* mentioned by Pliny or Ptolemy. In some parts of the province there are too many *civitates*, in others too few.<sup>811</sup>

As in Dalmatia, there is no way of deciding if the *civitas* continued to exist as a separate administrative entity alongside the *municipium* or if it was completely incorporated into the urban territory. For the moment we are more inclined to accept the latter view. With a few notable exceptions, nothing in the written record suggests that the Pannonian *civitates* continued to function as separate administrative units after the early second century. However, whenever there is a clear reference to a *civitas* as an administrative entity, as in the few examples from Pannonia Inferior, we have felt compelled to assign them a separate piece of territory. Furthermore, we also need to consider the *civitates* named after or giving their name to auxiliary forts, like the Arabiates in Superior or the Cornacates in Inferior. These examples offer further support to the hypothesis that some of the *civitates* continued to function as separate administrative units under close military supervision.<sup>812</sup>

The most important source for the reconstruction of the administrative map is the inscriptions discovered in the countryside and the information contained in the itineraries and other cartographic sources. Needless-to-say, the margin of error will remain considerable. Most of these finds mark out the minimum size of the urban territories, while the status of the outlying areas, that made up a massive portion of the provincial territory, remains problematic. The few examples in which the presence of large territories is confirmed by tangible evidence suggest that as in the interior of Dalmatia, the Roman administrators were not loath to carve out very large territorial units.

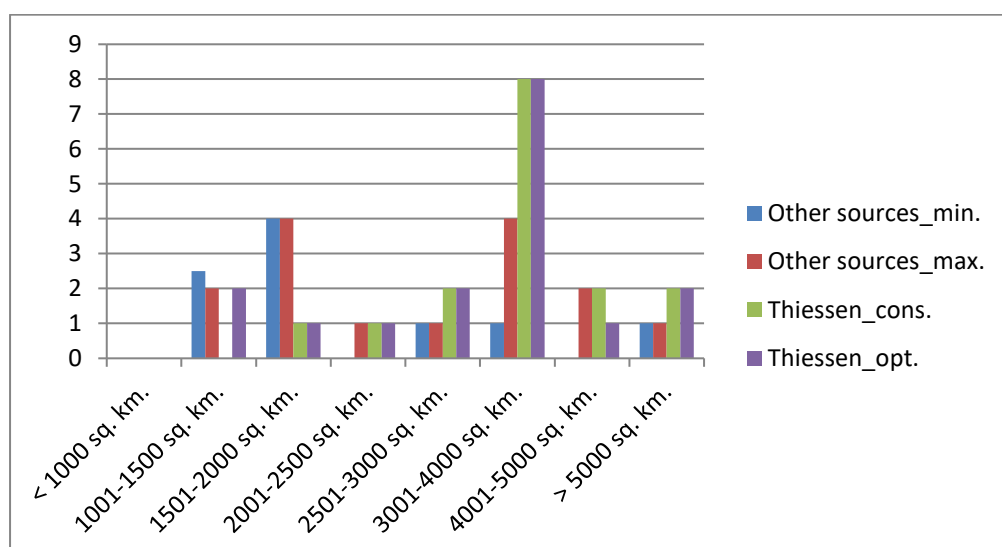


Figure VI\_7: Distribution of the territorial units in Pannonia Superior by size-ranges

<sup>811</sup> Therefore the territory of the Boi was divided between three, possibly five, autonomous towns, Mócsy 1969, 349-350; Kovács 1999, 278-295.

<sup>812</sup> Oddly enough, Mócsy 1974, 135; has suggested that the auxiliary fort Arabona was the base from which the Boi and the Azali were controlled. As their name was obviously derived from the name of an auxiliary fort, the Cornacates are traditionally seen as a post-conquest creation of the Romans, Mócsy 1971b, 43; Domić-Kunić 2012, 35-36; Colombo 2010, 195-196, has argued that the name is native, derived from the name of the central place of this people.

The administrative units of Pannonia Superior are much larger than those in the eastern Adriatic or in Macedonia. The group of very large urban territories dwarfs even the *municipia* in the interior of Dalmatia. Depending on the estimate, only thirteen or 20% of the administrative units in Pannonia Superior were smaller than 1,500 sq. km, a size category that encompassed the great majority of the territorial units in Dalmatia or Macedonia. What were considered exceptional cases in these two provinces, becomes almost the norm in Pannonia Superior. Nearly half of the units in this province have territories larger than 3,000 sq. km, if the maximum estimates are accepted. Using the Thiessen polygons, they comprise over two-thirds of all urban and non-urban districts in the province. These territorial extents are unsurprising in view of the large intercity distances in Pannonia Superior. Although larger than the part of Roman Macedonia included in our study-area, Pannonia Superior has only half the number of territorial units, including the problematic extra-municipal districts. In many parts of Macedonia and Dalmatia, the distances between the autonomous towns were often smaller than 20 km, in Pannonia Superior they rarely fell below 50 km.

If we look at the size-estimates derived from the epigraphic and cartographic sources, it is possible to observe two distinct clusters. One group of territorial units measures between 1,000 and 2,000 sq. km, equalling the average-sized unit in Roman Dalmatia. These are moderately sized territories with radii not larger than 30 km. This sort of arrangements would have meant that the hypothetical central place was accessible in a day's walk from any corner of the area. The group is heterogeneous, including the civilian *municipia*, garrison towns and centres of military districts (Maps VI\_19 and 20).<sup>813</sup> It is the other, equally numerous group, that distinguishes Pannonia from the western Balkan provinces. It comprises urban territories larger than 3,000 sq. km, even though some of these towns were small and insignificant.

Both Carnuntum and Aquincum, two of the largest three settlements in the province, belong to the former group. Their territories were limited by the Danube *Limes* and the provincial frontier with Noricum that passed only 10 to 15 km to the west of Vindobona.<sup>814</sup> In addition, there are a number of epigraphic finds that offer positive evidence of the extent of the municipal territories (Map VI\_21). The entire area between the Ödenburg Gate to the south and the Danube to the north is marked by votive reliefs and epitaphs of soldiers and veterans of *legiones* X and XIV Gemina and the magistrates of Carnuntum. To the south, the cluster extends to a distance of slightly over 15 km from Scarbantia.<sup>815</sup> This group of monuments continues to the east of Lake Ferto, although it becomes visibly sparser and is made up principally of votive inscriptions. This distribution seems to indicate that Carnuntum's territory spread to the auxiliary fort of Gerulata to the east. There are no other indications in the epigraphic record. Neither Mursella nor Scarbantia have been implied in the epigraphic sources from this area. Even if we exclude the marshy eastern shore of Lake Ferto, the combined territories of Carnuntum and Vindobona remain within the same range between 2,500 and 3,000 sq. km.

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<sup>813</sup> Nevioudunum: Lovenjak 2003, Figure 1; Mursella: Szönyi 2004, 85-97; the estimate for Arrabona is based on the Thiessen polygons.

<sup>814</sup> Neumann 1968; Kandler, Humer, Zabehlicky 2004, 24-26, Map 8.

<sup>815</sup> CIL III 4236, found only 9 km to the north of Scarbantia is an exception, but Gömöri 2008, 109-122; has taken this monument as evidence that the area belonged to the *Municipium Carnuntum*. However, we have seen that the occurrence of epigraphical evidence of magistrates of the provincial capitals in distant parts of the province is nothing unusual.

The epigraphic finds do not indicate the approximate borderline between Vindobona and Carnuntum. No mention of the *curia* of Vindobona exists outside its urban necropolis, whereas veterans of the two legions were found in equal numbers in the hinterlands of both legionary camps.<sup>816</sup> Because only the magistrates of Carnuntum are represented in the local epigraphic record, this has been interpreted as an indication that, during most of the second century, the civilian settlement near Vindobona was a *vicus* on the territory of Carnuntum.<sup>817</sup> After the *vicus* was granted a municipal charter, sometime in the Severan period, it was assigned an unknown share of Carnuntum's territory, although it is likely that the members of Carnuntum's elite continued to own property in the territory of Vindobona.<sup>818</sup> We suspect that the area was split in two, with Carnuntum receiving a slightly larger portion.

In a nutshell, in Pannonia Superior we encounter the same anomaly that confronted us in Dalmatia. The largest towns in the province that could not secure their subsistence needs from the land available within their hinterlands did nevertheless not control particularly large territories. The large garrison towns of Pannonia Superior were in a more advantageous position than their Dalmatian counterparts, as most of their sizeable administrative territories were at least arable. However, it is obvious that the growth of the legionary towns was not based on the size or fertility of their administrative territories. Political and geostrategic considerations were the motor that enabled the growth of these urban centres and maintained their size over a period lasting more than two centuries. Without the direct subvention of the central government, it is unlikely that towns of this size would have emerged on the frontiers of the state.

Rather surprisingly, the largest municipal territories in the province were governed from towns whose remains are difficult to pin-point on the map.<sup>819</sup> Admittedly, most of these estimates are derived from Thiessen polygons but, in at least two instances, these oversized territories are supported by the epigraphic evidence.

There are a couple of indications of the possible extent of the territory of Aquae Balissae. The point of departure is that this *municipium* inherited the integral territory of the *civitas Iasorum*.<sup>820</sup> This will put the northern limit of the Iasae over 90 km to the north of the *municipium*, to include the healing sanctuary and the Late Roman town of Aquae Iasae (Map VI\_22). Most scholars attribute Aquae Iasae to the territory of Poetovio<sup>821</sup> but, as the cluster of inscriptions commissioned by the *curia* of this colony stops on the other side of Mount Kalnik, it is likely that the territory adjoining the basin of the Bednja to the south belonged to the *Municipium Iasorum*. Far more explicit is the inscription found in Rome. It is a funerary monument of a soldier of the Praetorian Guard, revealing the name of his native *vicus* to which have been added the name of the *pagus* and the *municipium* to which it belonged.<sup>822</sup>

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<sup>816</sup> Kandler, Humer, Zabehlicky, 25-26.

<sup>817</sup> Neumann 1968, 13; Neuman 1973, 255-262.

<sup>818</sup> Only a couple of inscriptions attest the *Municipium Vindobona*. On the basis of analogies, the granting of the status is dated to the early third century, Neumann 1973, 258; Mócsy 1974, 221; Mader 2002, 585-589.

<sup>819</sup> Mogentiana: Nagy 2004, 75-83; Aquae Balissae: the location of this town at modern Daruvar in Croatia has not been contested, but its topography is utterly confused: Schejbal 2004, 106-108; Salla: Redő 1989, 405-433; Redő 2003, 191-235; the *municipium* was little more than a road-side *vicus*, possibly abandoned after the Marcomannic Wars.

<sup>820</sup> For the connection between the Iasae and Aquae Balissae, Schejbal 2003, 393-416, Domić-Kunić 2012, 34-35.

<sup>821</sup> Rendić-Miočević 1992, 67-76; followed by later studies, Horvat 2003, 153-189; Kušan-Špalj ed. 2015, 33.

<sup>822</sup> CIL VI 3297; Schejbal 2004, 101-102.

Luckily, the name of the *vicus* is identical to the name of a road-station located in the Drava Valley, 30 to 40 km to the east of Aquae Balissae.<sup>823</sup> These documents set the minimum estimate for the territory of Balissae at about 5,000 sq. km and, if we allow for wider margins, it could be extended to a maximum of 7,000 sq. km.

Equally surprising is the case of Mogentiana. This *municipium* whose central place remains archaeologically invisible features one of the most extensive scatters of monuments commissioned by the town magistrates (Map VI\_23). It extends from the northern shore of Lake Balaton to the Danube in the north, further confounding attempts to localize this town.<sup>824</sup> Perhaps most intriguing of all is the fact that not a single inscription has come from the western foot of the Transdanubian Mountains, although this is the area in which the itineraries locate Mogentiana.<sup>825</sup> Because most of the monuments have been found on what would later become the territory of Brigetio, some scholars have argued that these finds were dislocated from their original find-spots.<sup>826</sup> In view of the relatively large number of inscriptions and the fact that they were found at different locations, this explanation is not very convincing. The civilian settlement near the legionary camp of Brigetio became an autonomous town only during the Severan dynasty, whereas Mogentiana was founded by Hadrian.<sup>827</sup> It is therefore possible that, during the second century AD, the hinterland of Brigetio was governed from Mogentiana, situated 85 km to the southwest of the legionary camp. Some of the magistrates of the *municipium* were veterans of *legio* I Adiutrix stationed in Brigetio.<sup>828</sup> They received their land plots in the Little Hungarian Plain close to the legionary camp, but served as magistrates in Mogentiana. If this interpretation is correct, the territory of Mogentiana extended over an area of 6,000 sq. km during the second century AD. After Brigetio was constituted as a *municipium* under the Severans, Mogentiana's territory was withdrawn from the Little Hungarian Plain and the northern half of the Transdanubian Mountains. It is no accident that the spread of the inscriptions commissioned by the magistrates of the new *municipium* overlaps perfectly with the outlying cluster of inscriptions referring to Mogentiana. Even after this contraction, Mogentiana would have been left with a fairly large territory of about 4,000 sq. km.<sup>829</sup>

These unexpected discoveries are not easily explained, although they were paralleled in Dalmatia and Macedonia, in which large municipal territories appeared on the periphery of the urban network. Pannonia was obviously a very different sort of countryside, although both Aquae Balissae and Mogentiana were located in the hilly parts of the province with a less propitious agricultural potential. When Brigetio became an autonomous town, it probably took away the most fertile part of Mogentiana's territory. The other discrepancy arises from the fact that the urban core of Pannonia did not coincide with the geometric centre of the province. The large and important towns were located on the periphery of Pannonia Superior. They are almost entirely limited to the Amber Road,

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<sup>823</sup> *Vicus* Coconae is a *mutatio* on the Drava Road between Poetovio and Mursa, the Pleiades database, ID num. 197215; <https://pleiades.stoa.org/>

<sup>824</sup> Barkóczy, Mócsy eds. 1976; Nagy 2004, 75.

<sup>825</sup> The distribution of these monuments is briefly discussed in Nagy 2004, fn.2.

<sup>826</sup> Barkóczy, Mócsy eds. 1976, 13-19.

<sup>827</sup> Mócsy 1974, 144, 221.

<sup>828</sup> Barkóczy, Soproni eds. 1981, num. 660, 707.

<sup>829</sup> That the younger *Municipium* Brigetio inherited the northern end of the territory of Mogentiana remains no more than a plausible hypothesis. The chronology of the inscriptions is too imprecise to offer a solid support for this suggestion.

traversing the western edge of the province and the northern Pannonian *Limes*. There were no major towns in the central parts of Pannonia and the urban density was low. This is illustrated by the distribution of the Thiessen polygons, those located in the central part of the network being much larger than the peripheral units (Map VI\_24).<sup>830</sup>

The three civilian colonies in Pannonia Superior fall in-between these two size-categories (Maps VI\_25-27). Their territories are visibly larger than those of the majority of the *municipia* and garrison towns, but they are smaller than the largest territorial units in the central parts of the province. The examples are too few to draw any far-reaching conclusions, but it is not prudent to exclude the possibility that the consistently large territorial extents of these towns were preconditioned by the agrarian focus of the communities of veteran soldiers. The *agri* of all three colonies measure between 2,500 and 3,000 sq. km, rising to 4,000 for Siscia if the maximum estimates are used.<sup>831</sup>

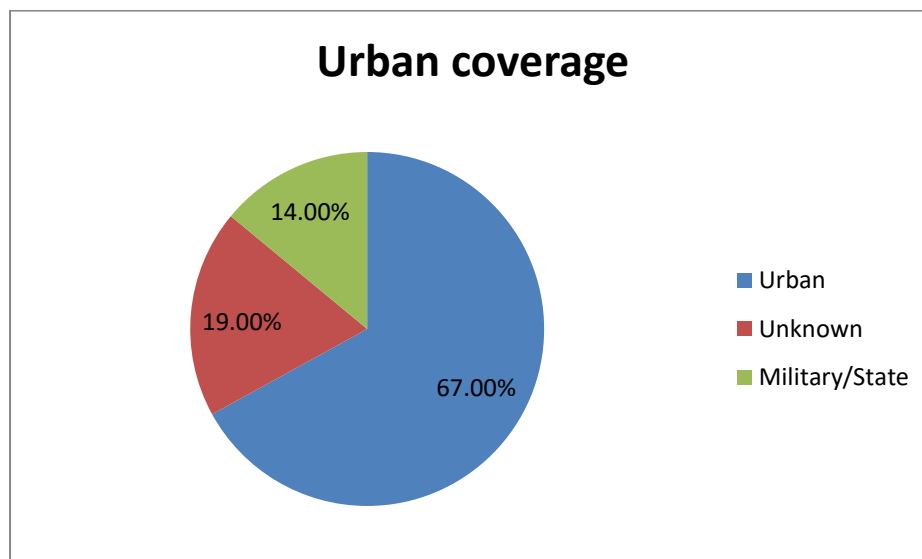


Figure VI\_8: The share of the different types of administrative units in the local government of Pannonia Superior

Despite the very large size of some of the urban territories in Pannonia Superior, a big segment of the province remained outside the municipal territories, even when the maximum estimates are accepted. If we draw the eastern provincial boundary roughly along the western shore of Lake Balaton, almost one-third of the province is not included in the municipal territories. In the minimum territorial estimates, the “grey area” will consume almost one-half of the provincial territory. A significant portion of this land was probably governed by provincial authorities. This was certainly the case with the narrow zone along the Danube *Limes*, with the exception of those segments that belonged to the municipal territories of Vindobona and Carnuntum. Overall, however, this strip of land did not necessarily extend over more than a few hundred square kilometres. From a territorial point of view, far more significant was the iron-mining district in the Sana-Japra Interfluve and the regions

<sup>830</sup> See also Nagy’s remarks on the location of Mogentiana, Nagy 2004, 75-76.

<sup>831</sup> Poetovio: Horvat 2003, Figure 1; draws the eastern boundary of the colony on the Mura, most recently Ragolič 2014, 323-351; Siscia: Durman 1992, 117-133; Šegvić 1996, 283-289; Lolić 2003, 131-152; the key documents are CIL III 10820, IL Jug 3117, CIL III 10821. Savaria: Barkóczy, Mócsy eds. 1972; Tóth 1974, 155-185. Scherrer 2003, 53-77; Bödőcs 2013, 59-67.

dominated by the military outposts in the Sava Valley and in the Lower Raba.<sup>832</sup> Tangible evidence of their territorial extent has so far not been found but, according to the Thiessen polygons, they equalled or exceeded the size of the average urban territory. They range from slightly less than 1,500 sq. km for the *civitas* of the Araviates, to over 3,000 for the mining district and the *civitas* or *civitates* overseen by the military authorities based in Marsonia (Maps VI\_23, 28 and 29).

In total, these extra-municipal units comprise about 14% of the provincial territory (Figure VI\_8). This is somewhat less than in Dalmatia, in which we estimated that slightly over 20% of the province was controlled either by the army or state administrators. It is impossible to be certain about the significance of this difference, especially in view of the wide margin of error. More significantly, in both provinces the reach of the municipal government covers about two-thirds of the provincial territories, when the maximum estimates are used. In this respect, the two provinces exhibit very similar profiles, a totally unexpected outcome in view of the differences between them in the level of connectivity and pace of romanization. Apart from the extra-municipal districts governed by the provincial authorities, both provinces had quite extensive “interiors” parcelled out between small, undistinguished *municipia*. One wonders how efficient *municipia* like Halicanum or Aquae Balissae were in governing territories comprising at least 3-4,000 sq. km. Only a handful of magistrates are known from these towns, a fact that has been associated with the scarcity of qualified men among the local elites.<sup>833</sup> We have encountered a similar phenomenon of magistrates holding offices in multiple towns in Dalmatia. In the latter instance, it was related to the economic activities of the elites based in the larger towns. The provincial elite was small and closely knit and it was not unusual for the small towns to rely on the economic interest or the good will of the magistrates based in the larger and wealthier towns.<sup>834</sup> We do not know how this impacted on the efficiency of the individual administrative units, although the area was certainly far more urbanized than it was in the succeeding period, for example, when only one bishopric is attested for the entire region of southern Pannonia.<sup>835</sup>

## Pannonia Inferior

As we have seen in the preceding chapters, there are considerable differences between the urban maps of the two Pannonian provinces. Yet, one aspect common to both provinces and of particular importance to the administrative divisions is the position of the main axis of communication. In Pannonia Inferior, as in the neighbouring province, this artery ran along the periphery – in this case the Danube *Limes* - bypassing the geometric centre or the interior of the province. This arrangement implies that the bulk of the traffic must have passed through the military zone, limiting the scope of the civilian towns to the poorly connected interior districts. This is most clearly reflected in the

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<sup>832</sup> The Pannonian *ferraria*: CIL III 3953; Sergejevski 1963, 85-102; Fitz 1972b, 213-225; Bojanovski 1982, 106-112. Dušanić 1977, 65-66; argues that the district extended beyond the provincial border with Dalmatia. Archaeological traces of metallurgical production in the region: Pašalić 1954, 47-72; Bojanovski 1988, 297-300. Marsonia: Bojanovski 1984, 184-185; Buzov 2011, 355-374. The *civitates* in this part of Pannonia: Mócsy 1971b, Map. 1; Bojanovski 1988, 330-340; Dzino 2010, 165-166. Military diplomas: RMD 204; Miškiv 1999-2000, 103-107. The Araviates: Colombo 2010, 174-175; Arrabona: Gabler 1971, 83-91; Szönyi 1990, 667-674.

<sup>833</sup> Mócsy 1974, 217; The limited spread of the epigraphic habit among the leading citizens could be added to bolster this argument, cf. Mattingly 2006.

<sup>834</sup> Fitz 1980, 147.

<sup>835</sup> Gračanin 2014, 1-12.

northern half of the province, in which there was but one, possibly two, urban settlements in the area behind the *limes* (Map VI\_30).

The key problem that arises from this peculiar circumstance is to determine how the northern half of the province, measuring over 20,000 sq. km, was administered. The issue is inextricably related to one of the greatest controversies in the study of the municipalization of Pannonia Inferior. This is the status of the *civitas Eraviscorum* after the establishment of the *municipium* near the legionary camp of Aquincum in the early second century AD.<sup>836</sup> The case of the Eravisci does not fit the conventional model in which all *civitates* had been transformed into *municipia* by the late second century. Unlike the great majority of the *civitates* in the study-area, the Eravisci are well-attested in the epigraphic record as late as the time of the Tetrarchy.<sup>837</sup> Moreover, there are a number of inscriptions referring to the magistrates of the *civitas* that post-date Aquincum's promotion to a *municipium*.<sup>838</sup> The close connections between the *civitas* and the *municipium* are undeniable, especially after Aquincum became a honorary colony, but the Eravisci maintained some degree of integrity throughout the second and third centuries.<sup>839</sup>

With the exception of the Eravisci, the rest of the *civitates* in the province are attested as separate administrative units only in inscriptions predating the reign of Hadrian and the commencement of the municipalization process.<sup>840</sup> They include the Azali on the northern Pannonian *Limes* and the Scordisci in the far south of the province.<sup>841</sup> We can also take the Cornacates into account, as their name bears an obvious relationship to the auxiliary fort of Cornacum.<sup>842</sup> The conventional view is that, by the reign of Hadrian, all of these *civitates* had either been transformed into *municipia* or attached to the territories of the neighbouring autonomous towns. However, the very process by which the *civitates* were replaced by *municipia* and colonies – the expropriation of parts of the land driving the natives into the peripheral sectors of their former territories – already implies their persistence even if only as small and ephemeral administrative units.<sup>843</sup> Their possible survival into the third century AD is acknowledged in the list of minimum estimates.

An additional problem in assigning a concrete territory to the *civitates* is the absence of a recognizable central place. This is evident even in the case of the well-attested Eravisci in which all the evidence points to the pre-Roman *oppidum* at Gellért Hill to the south of Aquincum or to one of its successor settlements at its foot.<sup>844</sup> The rub is that this site is too close to Aquincum and, judging by the distribution of the epigraphic sources, almost certainly belonged to the territory of this town (see Map

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<sup>836</sup> Kovács 1999, 278-295, provides an exhaustive overview of the debate; see also Szabó, Tóth eds. 2003.

<sup>837</sup> Tóth 2003, 385-438; the latest dedication for the well-being of the *civitas* is dated AD 282.

<sup>838</sup> RIU: 1066, RIU: 1347, CIL III 10408.

<sup>839</sup> Nagy 2003, 439-449. Tóth 2003, 411; has pointed to the possibility that the exceptional place of the Eravisci was predetermined by their privileged status as a *civitas foederata*.

<sup>840</sup> Kovács 1999, 279-280; Nagy 2003, 439-440.

<sup>841</sup> RIU: 790, RIU Suppl.: 117, refer to a *princeps* Azalorum; IL Jug 280, is the only reference to a *princeps praefectus* of the Scordisci. Mócsy 1973, 377, fn. 46; Barkóczi, Soproni eds. 1981. For the Scordisci in the period after the Roman conquest, I follow Dušanić 1967, 67-81 and Dušanić 1977b, 180-191.

<sup>842</sup> Mócsy 1971b, 43-44; Fitz 1980, 141; Kovács 1999, fn. 12, points out the reference to a *cives Cornacatum* on a military diploma from AD 154, but this term could merely denote the place of origin of the recruit.

<sup>843</sup> See, for example, the fate of the natives after the founding of the colony of Savaria, Mócsy 1974, 78-79; Kovács 1999, 280; Dušanić 1977b, 181-182; Tóth 2003, 409-415; the latter two scholars have openly argued in favour of the co-existence of the *municipium* and the *civitas*.

<sup>844</sup> Fitz 1980, 141; Kovács 1999, 288-289.

VI\_31). Those scholars who view the Eravisci as a separate unit tend to locate them farther south, without specifying a location.<sup>845</sup> For the purposes of the present study, the presence of the Eravisci is simulated by the auxiliary fort of Intercisa. This is not an entirely arbitrary choice, as the *civitas* and its magistrates are well-attested in the epigraphic heritage of this site.<sup>846</sup> On similar principles we have located the centre of the Azali and Scordisci in Solva and Acumincum. In all of these cases, the connections between the *civitates* and the auxiliary forts have been epigraphically confirmed.<sup>847</sup>

The territorial relationships in Pannonia Inferior are also complicated by the uncertain status of Gorsium and the problematic locations of the *municipia* of Volgum and Spodent. The minimum estimates based on the Thiessen polygons take the possible autonomous status of Gorsium into account, even though the arguments in favour of this thesis are far from convincing.<sup>848</sup> On the basis of the evidence available at present, it is impossible to assign specific locations to either Volgum or Spodentium. The locations adopted in this study are hypothetical (Map VI\_30).<sup>849</sup>

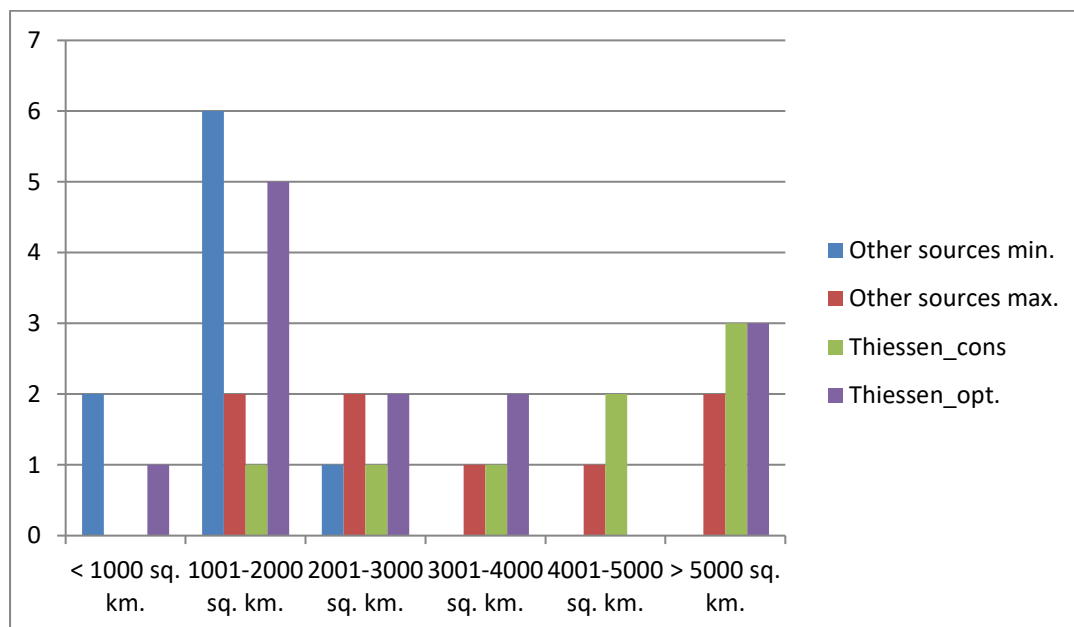


Figure VI\_9: Distribution of the territorial units in Pannonia Inferior by size-ranges

<sup>845</sup> For example, Fitz, 1971, 47-57.

<sup>846</sup> Fitz ed. 1991.

<sup>847</sup> Some scholars have remarked that, due to security reasons, the *civitates peregrinae* were removed from the frontier zone, Gabler 1991, 51-73; but the same study points to the strong peregrine enclave at Solva.

<sup>848</sup> Fitz 1972, 3-52; criticized by Mócsy 1973, 382; in later studies Fitz has moderated his initial view on the status of Gorsium, although he still maintains the position that the town was the seat of the provincial assembly, Fitz 1989, 541. Gorsium is included in the monograph on the autonomous towns of Pannonia, but its status is not discussed in greater detail, Fitz 2003, 197-207. The key documents supporting the autonomous status of Gorsium are RIU: 1495, 1527, 1540; all are funerary inscriptions dedicated to *duumviri* and *augustales* of an unnamed *municipium*; cf. to at least five funerary monuments of town-officials from Aquincum from the same site: RIU: 1502, 1504, 1506, 1541 and 1552a.

<sup>849</sup> Volgum at Keszthely: Mócsy 1969, 349-50; later research at this site has proved that the earliest remains date only to the late third century, Heinrich-Tamáska ed. 2011; in other studies, the *municipium* is located roughly in the land of the Hercuniates, Tóth 1985, 121-136. The only attestations to Volgum are RIU 1244, 1253, found in Intercisa on the Danube *Limes*. Spodentium at Obrenovac on the Sava: Crnobrnja 2011, 373-388. The single epigraphic testimony to this *municipium* is IL Jug 1048; Dušanić 1967, 70-71; Dušanić 1977, 183.



The apparent discrepancies between the maximum and minimum estimates for the territorial sizes in Pannonia Inferior can be attributed to the large number of units with an uncertain status. Although some of these, like Gorsium, are truly problematic, it is not easy to contest the integrity of the *civitas Eraviscorum* or the *civitates* under military control in the south of the province. At the same time the maximum estimates can only be applied in individual cases, Brigetio, possibly Mursa and Sirmium. All in all, there is very little positive evidence in support of the maximum estimates for the majority of the urban centres. We shall shortly see that, even using the minimum estimates, the province did have a satisfactory urban coverage. In order to simplify the discussion, we shall not comment on the maximum figures, but refer briefly to their proponents in the footnotes.

According to the minimum estimates, nearly all administrative units in Pannonia Inferior fall within the size range between 1,000 and 2,000 sq. km. Only the hypothetical *civitas* of the Azali and Mursa fall just outside this range, with 960 and 2,500 sq. km respectively. The evidence for every individual town is not equally distributed. In the case of Sirmium and Bassiana, in the south of the province, the epigraphic monuments referring to the towns' magistrates form compact clusters in the Sava-Danube Interfluvium (Map VI\_32).<sup>850</sup> They delineate moderately-sized territories in the range of 1,500 to 2,000 sq. km. The territory of the provincial capital, Aquincum, is also relatively well-defined by the inscriptions referring to its *curia*, although in this particular case there are outliers appearing as far as Intercisa to the south and Gorsium and the northern shore of Lake Balaton to the southwest (Map VI\_31).<sup>851</sup> Taking into consideration that the bulk of the inscriptions come from the area to the north of the road Aquincum-Gorsium and, if we accept the independent status of Gorsium, the Eravisci and Azali, the territory of the provincial capital is limited to about 1,500 sq. km.

Like the rest of the large urban settlements in our study-area, Aquincum controlled a moderately-sized administrative territory. Admittedly, the alternative estimate predicts a much larger territory for Aquincum, but this projection assumes that the *civitas Eraviscorum* belonged to the *municipium*, a view that is difficult to defend in the face of the available evidence. Aquincum was not necessarily an exception among the large towns in our study area. Its administrative territory was relatively fertile and it could have supported the civilian segment of the urban population even with its minimum extent. Aquincum boasts a long list of magistrates serving in the smaller towns of the Pannonian provinces, indicating that its elite owned property throughout the Middle Danube region.<sup>852</sup>

One common feature of those civilian towns in Pannonia Inferior that have left epigraphic testimonies in the countryside is the distribution of these monuments. Most of them are concentrated on the *limes* and in the adjacent areas. The few inscriptions erected by the magistrates of Cibalae and Mursa that lay outside the urban centres come from the banks of the Danube, whereas the only documents referring to the *municipium* of Volgum have been found in the auxiliary fort of Intercisa (Map VI\_33).<sup>853</sup> These documents cannot be taken as markers of the territorial extents, as it is unlikely that the state

<sup>850</sup> The territories of Bassiana and Sirmium are discussed by Dušanić 1967, 70; Mirković 1971, 5-90; Mirković 2004, 145-156. These authors have argued that the territory of Sirmium spread to the south of the Sava Basin, reaching a size of over 3,000 sq. km.

<sup>851</sup> The evidence is gathered by Fitz 1971, 50-57; for a different interpretation see Mócsy 1969, 349; Mócsy 1977, 378; Kovács 1999, 280-286. RIU 356, 1421, and possibly 1420, on the northern shore of Lake Balaton, RIU 1163, CIL III 10305, from Intercisa are for the greater part dedications rather than funerary monuments. The alternative view would imply a maximum territory of over 5,000 sq. km.

<sup>852</sup> Singidunum: CIL III 10495; Brigetio: CIL III 10533-10534; Mogentiana: CIL III 15166.

<sup>853</sup> AE 1980: 725, Cybala, AE 1973: 445; for Volgum see fn. 843.

frontier would have coincided with the border of the urban territories.<sup>854</sup> Instead, their value lies in pointing out the close relations between the civilian and military sectors in the frontier zone, whose nature is still poorly understood. By far the greatest number of inscriptions mentioning the magistrates of Mogentiana come from the hinterland of the legionary camp of Brigetio. We have drawn attention to the possibility that the members of the *curia* of this town were recruited among the veterans of *Legio I Adiutrix*. Nevertheless, there also was a flow in the opposite direction. By the middle of the second century, the autonomous towns located behind the frontier zone had become the main bases for the recruitment of Roman citizens for the legions. It seems reasonable to assume that these relations also had a strong economic component, the civilian towns supplying the military sector with goods produced in the urban territories.<sup>855</sup>

This pattern of distribution of the epigraphic monuments leaves a large segment of the interior of the province in the “grey zone”, in which it is impossible to indicate any particular urban centre or administrative entity. Accepting the minimum estimates for the urban territories, only about one-third of the provincial territory was governed by autonomous towns. This gap is only partly filled if we assign an autonomous status to some of the non-urban *civitates*. The majority of them are located in the frontier zone and their territorial integrity would have often only been possible at the expense of the territorial extent of the autonomous towns. For example, the Cornacates and Scordisci can only be located in the narrow belt between the Danube and the territories of Cibalae and Bassiana (Maps VI\_32 and 33). Besides their ethnonyms, the only indications of the putative locations of these entities are the rare inscriptions commissioned by their aristocracy on the *limes*. This leaves them with territories not larger than 1,000 sq. km. We have somewhat better co-ordinates for the location of the Azali, whose territory is indicated by the name of the auxiliary fort, Ad Azaum, and the dedications by their *princepes* in the auxiliary fort of Solva.<sup>856</sup> Taken in conjunction with the peculiar onomastics of this people, distinguishing them from the rest of the Pannonian population, these documents enclose a territory not larger than 1,000 sq. km (Map VI\_34).<sup>857</sup>

A similarly sized territory can be ascribed to the Eravisci. The majority of the inscriptions that refer to the pre-municipal institutions of the *civitas* come from the northeast corner of Roman Pannonia, in the later territory of *Municipium Aquincum* (Map VI\_31).<sup>858</sup> However, there is a second cluster of inscriptions mentioning the Eravisci, centred on the important auxiliary fort of Intercisa but also spreading as far as Lusonium to the south (Map VI\_35).<sup>859</sup> If we draw a contourline around the inscriptions referring to the *civitas*, we end up with a territory not larger than 750 sq. km. Like their

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<sup>854</sup> Oddly enough this implication has not been considered by those scholars who extend the municipal territories to the state frontier, e.g. Mirković 1971, 16; Dušanić 1977, 183, have divided the auxiliary castles in the south of the province between Sirmium and Bassiana.

<sup>855</sup> See, for example, the economic relations between Nicopolis ad Istrum and the legionary camp of Novae on the Lower Danube; Poulter 1999, 1-54.

<sup>856</sup> Barkóczy, Soproni eds. 1981.

<sup>857</sup> Mócsy 1974, 55; has maintained that the Azali were a Pannonian or an Illyrian enclave in the predominantly Celtic Transdanubia; this view has recently been challenged, Colombo 2010, 185, fn. 86.

<sup>858</sup> RIU 838, 1347, CIL III 10358; this is the chief argument in favour of the view that the *civitas* was replaced by the *municipium* during the reign of Hadrian, Kovács 1999, 292-293.

<sup>859</sup> RIU 1066, 1148, 1484; RIU Suppl. 199; this group of monuments alongside the sparser pattern of *villae* on the territory to the south of the Aquincum-Gorsium Road has been seen as the main indicator of the territorial integrity of the Eravisci after the founding of the *municipium* at Aquincum, Fitz 1971, 49-50.

neighbours occupying the narrow frontier zone, the autonomous Eravisci were confined to a small segment of their former territory.<sup>860</sup>

If they are so defined, the territories of the four *civitates* add up to not more than 4,000 sq. km and together with the urban territories, they barely cover one-half of the province. Of course, we still have to take into account the territories of Volgum, Gorsium and Spodentium. The epigraphic evidence is not very helpful in drawing the boundaries of the territories of these towns. Gorsium is epigraphically unattested but, to judge by the character of the inscriptions found in its hinterland, it did not differ from the rest of the regions behind the frontier (Map VI\_31). The two inscriptions from Intercisa mentioning the *municipium* of Volgum say nothing about the possible extent of its territory. They merely suggest that Volgum was located in the vicinity of the Eravisci, close to the Danube *Limes*. A similar dearth of evidence plagues the *municipium* of Spodent[...]. However, assuming that it was located to the south of the Sava, its proximity to the provincial borders with Moesia Superior and Dalmatia would have limited its territory to less than 2,000 sq. km (Map VI\_36). For Gorsium and Volgum we only have the estimates derived from the Thiessen polygons and, predictably, they are much larger than the minimum estimates for the rest of the territorial units in the province (Map VI\_37). As they are located in the empty area behind the *limes*, their combined territories are as large as the sum of the minimum estimates for the rest of the urban territories. This will automatically increase the coverage of the municipal government to at least two-thirds of the provincial territory, comparable to the rest of the provinces considered so far. As we have seen in the sections on Pannonia Superior and Dalmatia, such arrangements are not unparalleled. The principal reason we still remain skeptical is the unclear status of Gorsium.

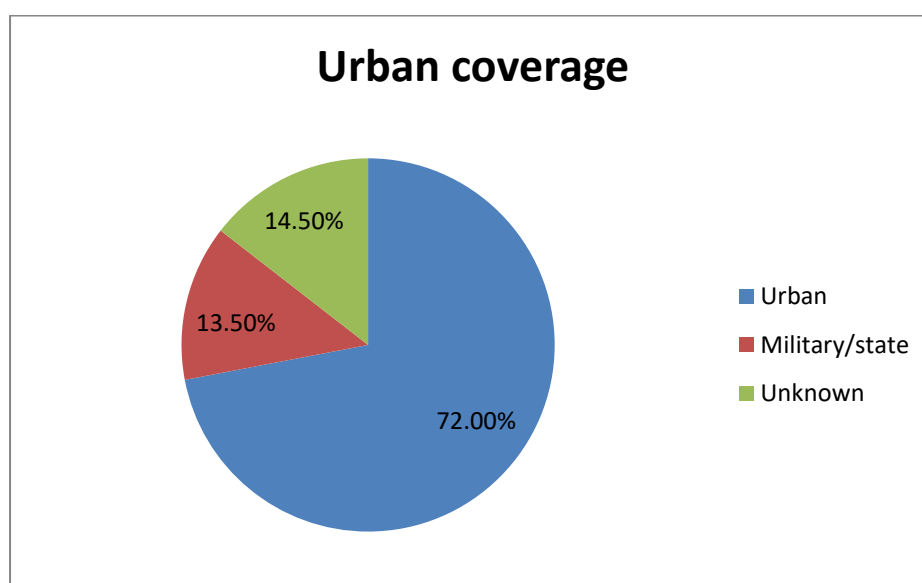


Figure VI\_10: The share of the different sectors in the local administration of Pannonia Inferior

With the exception of the *argentaria* accounted for in the section on Dalmatia, there are no mentions of special fiscal districts in Pannonia Inferior.<sup>861</sup> In the written sources there are indirect references to

<sup>860</sup> Fitz 1971, 57; has extended their territory to the eastern shore of Lake Balaton, but even so, the maximum estimate for the Eravisci is not much higher than 1,500 sq. km.

<sup>861</sup> There is an isolated mention of a *procurator* in Mursa, CIL III 3281. The evidence for *procuratores* in Pannonia Inferior has been collected by Fitz, 1972b, 213-225.

imperial domains in this province, but the lack of epigraphic testimonies prevents us from determining their size and distribution.<sup>862</sup> Finally, the absence of permanent military bases in the interior of the province suggests that the zone under military control was confined to the Danube frontier. But, although limited to the territories of the *civitates* that remained under military control, the governmental sector would have still covered at least 13.50% of the provincial territory, comparable to the situation in Pannonia Superior and Dalmatia. It is possible that we have underestimated the military sector by excluding the possible districts centred on the auxiliary camps of Matrica and Vetus Salina.<sup>863</sup> The true status and extent of these units is controversial, but their actual locations preclude particularly extensive territories.<sup>864</sup>

In view of the predominantly military character of this province, the high percentage of urban coverage in Pannonia Inferior was rather unexpected. Note that taking the maximum estimates – eliminating all districts governed from the auxiliary camps – the governmental sector all but disappears, whereas the urban coverage increases to at least 85% of the provincial territory! This distribution is just as surprising in view of the great intercity distances. In the southern part of the province they are on the same level as in Pannonia Superior, ranging between 30 and 70 km, but to the north of Mursa they rise to over 100 km, even if we were to recognize the autonomous status of Gorsium. Obviously, in such conditions, high urban coverage is only possible through the extension of the individual territorial units. It is no accident that the main dividing line between the territorial sizes in Pannonia Inferior coincides with the north-south divide of the province (Map VI\_30). Whether the minimum or maximum estimates are accepted, only the towns in the northern half of the province have territories larger than 3,000-3,500 sq. km. As in Pannonia Superior and Dalmatia, territories extending over several thousand square kilometres were governed from towns that have rarely appeared in the archaeological or written records.

With the exception of the maximum estimates for Mursa and Aquincum – the latter is particularly controversial – the largest towns in Pannonia Inferior controlled territories that were moderately-sized by regional standards. Nonetheless, as in other provinces, the elites of these towns did not limit their activities to the urban hinterlands. In one way or another, they must have been involved in provisioning the frontier garrisons, a zone that almost certainly remained outside the urban territories. We think that the vast spread of the monuments that refer to Aquincum and its officials is better understood as marking the economic outreach of the town's elites rather than its administrative territory.

If we are to judge from the developments on the urban map in the subsequent period, the high urban coverage in Pannonia Inferior was by no means an index of the high degree of urbanization. At least two new bishoprics and three larger fortified settlements of an unknown status appeared in the northern half of Pannonia Inferior in the period of the Tetrarchy.<sup>865</sup> This last wave of urbanization in the eastern part of Roman Pannonia coincides with the thorough-going military and administrative reforms in this phase of Roman history. These late developments point to some of the factors that

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<sup>862</sup> A possible exception is CIL III 10275; Mócsy 1974, 266; imperial kilns in Mursa, Pinterović 1978, 54; the vineyards of Emperor Probus: Pinterović 1978, 85.

<sup>863</sup> Matrica: RIU 1429; Vetus Salina: CIL III 10305. Mócsy 1980, 365-376.

<sup>864</sup> The different views on this topic are summarized by Bérard 1992, 75-105; see the sections on Moesia Inferior and Dacia.

<sup>865</sup> Mócsy 1977, 391; Soproni 1978; Barkóczi 1980, 114-115; Tóth 1985, 121-127.

might have impeded the progress of urbanization in the area in the earlier period, namely, the large territories of the autonomous towns or - if our reconstruction of the administrative map is wrong - the extensive zone under military control.

## Moesia Superior

The zone of low intercity distances and the increased presence of the military affected most of Moesia Superior.<sup>866</sup> In a number of large and fertile sections in the interior of the province, the only recognizable central places were the garrison sites and the settlements that grew up around them. As in other provinces, these outposts occupied highly strategic points, but this does not necessarily exclude their role in the control and administration of the surrounding micro-regions. It is no accident that at least two of the known *civitates* in Moesia Superior have ethnonyms that bear an obvious relation to the auxiliary forts in their respective areas. These are the Timachi and the auxiliary fort, Timacum Minus, and possibly the Tricornenses and the outpost Tricornium on the Danube.<sup>867</sup> Furthermore, Ptolemy explicitly connects the garrison town of Naissus with the Dardanians, the dominant polity in the south of the province.<sup>868</sup>

However, the chief cause of the sparse urban network in Moesia Superior was the large number of mining districts.<sup>869</sup> On the basis of the epigraphic and numismatic evidence, Dušanić has identified at least eight or nine separate micro-regions organized into an unknown number of fiscal units.<sup>870</sup> In some of these districts, like the Ibar Valley or Mount Kosmaj, the activity of the *procurator* is recorded epigraphically, but in other areas there are only vague clues in the archaeological and written records.<sup>871</sup> Undeniably, the question of whether a given region known for its riches in mineral ore or archaeological remains of mining activities constituted a separate district is not of particular relevance for the present study. As far as we are concerned, both the mining districts and micro-regions gravitating to the military outposts in the interior belonged to the military/governmental sector. The specific ways in which they were administered are beyond the scope of this study. Instead, the key problem is to decide if these mining areas were governed by the imperial legates or from the nearby colonies and *municipia*.

By the end of the second century AD, two *municipia* had been founded in the mining districts of modern Kosovo, Ulpiana and *Municipium Dardanorum*.<sup>872</sup> A recently discovered inscription from Ratiaria confirms earlier suspicions of the presence of yet another *municipium*, Aelianum, founded by

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<sup>866</sup> Certain forts in the Iron Gates on the Danube were apparently evacuated in the early second century, but there was no wholesale abandonment of the military infrastructure; individual forts: Petrović 1982-1983, 129-134; Kondić 1982-1983, 234-251; Popović 1982-1983, 265-284; in general see Vasić, Kondić 1986, 542-560 and Chapter Three.

<sup>867</sup> Dušanić 2000, 354-363; Dušanić 2004b, 24-25; has stressed the fact that, although most of the mining districts were expropriated from the *civitates peregrinae*, the latter continued to play a major role in the ore extraction and processing.

<sup>868</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 3.9.4; and also CIL VI 32937; Petrović ed. 1979, 33-36.

<sup>869</sup> Mócsy 1970, 37-41; Dušanić 1977, 69-79; Dušanić 2004, 247-270.

<sup>870</sup> Dušanić 2004, 255-260.

<sup>871</sup> *Metalli Dardanici*: Dušanić 1971, 241-259; Dušanić 2004b, 5-32; the unnamed district in modern Kosmaj: Mirković, Dušanić eds. 1976.

<sup>872</sup> The founding date of the *Municipium Dardanorum* cannot be determined on the basis of the epigraphic evidence, Mócsy 1970, 34-35, dates it to the reign of Aurelius; Dušanić 1997, 31-42, to the Severan period.

the middle of the second century AD.<sup>873</sup> By analogy with Ulpiana, the name of the town indicates that it was founded on a land that belonged to the imperial treasury, probably the mining district in the Pincum Valley, in the north of the province.<sup>874</sup> It is impossible to obtain a clear view of the territorial relations in the mining districts after the founding of these *municipia*. In some of these regions the epigraphic sources hint at the presence of dual communities: the *municipium* constituted by the concessioners of the mines and the colonies of miners recruited from the local *peregrini* or convicted criminals and war captives pressed into service.<sup>875</sup> If this arrangement entailed territorial divisions within the individual districts, we are still unable to pinpoint them. In this study, the territories of the *municipia* have been equated to the mining district, although such an arrangement would have presented a legal paradox. The *municipia* were obviously the central places of the mining districts, even if the latter were organized as separate fiscal unit.<sup>876</sup> They were the largest and the only urban agglomerations in these areas and, in some cases, they were definitely the seat of the *procurator* and his staff. Although the mining shafts and galleries were probably kept separate from the peregrine land, the two units were complementary.

What is more important to decide is if the municipalized districts belonged to the autonomous or to the governmental sector. Their position in this respect is inevitably ambiguous, as the *municipia* were obviously the bases of the state administration and, at the same time, they had fully developed local institutions. Admittedly the range of securely documented municipal offices is rather limited in all three mining *municipia*.<sup>877</sup> We hear only of *decuriones* and their *ordo*, a defining characteristic of the small Pannonian *municipia*, but in this case one wonders if this particularity might not have reflected the special status of the towns in the mining districts. Were the *duumviri* incompatible with the procuratorial office? Furthermore, the epigraphic corpus from the *Municipium Dardanorum* refers to a *princeps*, a title which is more usual among the peregrine communities than in the Latin *municipia*.<sup>878</sup> In this respect, the mining *municipia* approach the semi-autonomous communities that developed in the *canabae* near the legionary camps or in the *vici* in the eastern half of the peninsula. In both instances, we see the emergence of quasi-municipal institutions in settlements that were founded on land controlled by the army or the government and did not enjoy a territorial integrity.

A very similar dilemma is presented by the *municipia* that developed near the garrison sites in the interior of the province. By the early third century AD, both Horreum Margi and Naissus were granted municipal status, paralleling similar developments on the Danube *Limes* and in Dacia.<sup>879</sup> Horreum Margi has been poorly studied, but in the case of Naissus it is certain that the army was present in the

<sup>873</sup> IL Jug 527, AÉ 2010: 1391; Mócsy 1970, Figure 15, wrongly locates the centre of the district to the south of Viminacium.

<sup>874</sup> This is suggested by the name of the mining district, Aeliana Pincensia, Dušanić 2004, 259-260, fn. 58.

<sup>875</sup> Dušanić 1997, 31-32; Dušanić 2004b, 25-30, pointing to the parallels with the territory of the *Municipium S(plonum)*. Loma 2002, 143-179.

<sup>876</sup> Dušanić 2004b, 29-30.

<sup>877</sup> Dardanorum: CIL III 8297, IL Jug 503, refers to the *ordo colonorum*; Dušanić 1997, 31-42; Aelianum: IL Jug 527, AÉ 2010: 1391; Ulpiana: AÉ 1978:702, IL Jug 532, IL Jug 1380, 1418; IL Jug 1420 mentioning a *duumvir* and AÉ 1981:734 referring to an *aedilis* seem to set Ulpiana apart from the rest of the *municipia*, but the reading is uncertain; Mirković 2007, 60-62; the latest excavations at the site of this town are briefly summarized by Feraudi-Gruénais, Teichner 2014, 275-283.

<sup>878</sup> See AÉ 2004: 1226; Loma 2002, 155-160; Dušanić 2004b, 11-15; for further parallels from the western half of the peninsula. *Principes loci* or *principes vici* have also been attested in Moesia Inferior, IScM V: 4; AÉ 1957: 99; IScM V: 77; the latter giving evidence of a *princeps* of a *territorium*; Doruțiu-Boilă ed. 1980.

<sup>879</sup> Horreum Margi: CIL III 7591; Naissus: IMS IV: 10.

area even after the granting of the municipal charter.<sup>880</sup> It is therefore impossible to decide if Naissus was an autonomous town, a garrison settlement or both. By the time these settlements were promoted to *municipia*, the divide between the military and civilian sector that marked the earlier period was slowly fading away. Obviously, we would be inconsistent in denying the autonomous status of these towns if we do accept the *municipia* that developed from the *canabae legionis* on the Danube *Limes* and in Dacia. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that, during most of the period of the High Empire, the areas that gravitated towards these towns were under military supervision and, in at least some cases, the military remained even after the town had been granted autonomous status. As with the mining towns we shall have to consider these examples as special cases.

In comparison to some other provinces in our study area, the epigraphic evidence in Moesia Superior is neither particularly abundant nor very helpful in deciding the extent of the separate territorial units. A wider range of sources needs to be considered, including the known territorial divisions from the Late Roman period and, when this is relevant, the physical geography of the area.

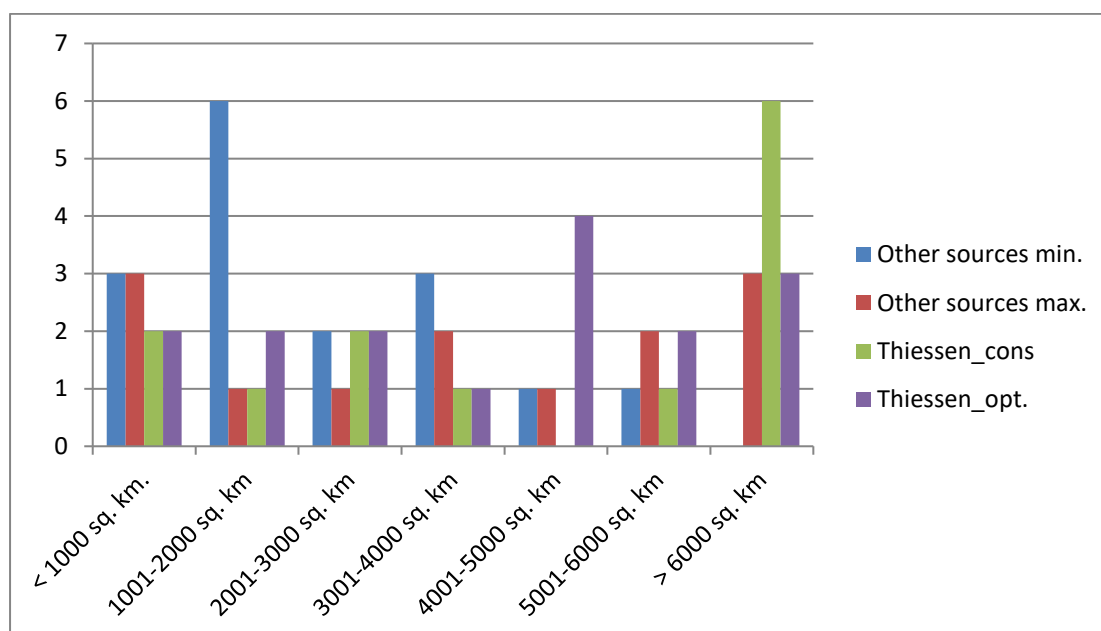


Figure VI\_11: Distribution of the territorial units in Moesia Superior by size ranges

The size-ranges of the territorial units in Moesia Superior are almost evenly distributed. Only with the minimum estimates derived from the epigraphic or cartographic sources and the maximum estimates based on the Thiessen polygons do we see a clear clustering of the territorial units, albeit at the opposite ends of the scale. Taking the other two approaches – maximum number of Thiessen polygons and the maximum projections based on the epigraphic and cartographic sources - the territorial sizes are spread in groups of two or three across all size-ranges. These pronounced divergences between the different approaches are understandable when the number of mining districts and poorly attested

<sup>880</sup> The limited excavations at the site of the *Municipium Horreum Margi* have confirmed the presence of the military in the area, but only in the period of Late Antiquity, Vasić, Kavajin-Mundrić, Popović 1989, 7-37. Earlier levels have not yet been discovered, although second century pottery has been identified, Petković, Tapavički-Ilić 2011, 251-267. Naissus: Petrović 1976; see also Petrović ed. 1979, 31.

*municipia* in Moesia Superior is taken into consideration. The territorial extent of a town like Horreum Margi, known from just one single inscription found in a different province has to be pure guesswork. The only point on which the different approaches converge is the wide range of variations between the individual territorial units. This tendency is a real reflection the peculiar territorial arrangements in Moesia Superior.

According to the minimum estimates, that assume a maximum number of territorial units and demand stricter criteria in the drawing of the territorial boundaries, almost one-half of the *municipia* and fiscal districts in Moesia Superior extended over less than 2,000 sq. km. Importantly these include some of the most reliable reconstructions, like the towns on the short section of the Danube frontier. The sparse epigraphic sources in conjunction with the distribution of the centres in the neighbouring units and the state frontier narrow the range of possibilities. The group is not homogeneous, but it does include the two largest agglomerations in the province, the *municipia* that developed from the *canabae* of the legionary camps of Singidunum and the provincial capital Viminacium.<sup>881</sup> Located in the northwest corner of the province, on the frontier with the *Barbaricum* and the provincial border with Pannonia Inferior, Singidunum's administrative territory could only expand into the interior of the province (Map VI\_38). In this direction any growth would have been hampered by the proximity of the mining district centred on Mount Kosmaj<sup>882</sup> and the *municipium* of Margum. These obstacles would have confined its territorial extent to 600-700 sq. km.<sup>883</sup>

The few epigraphic monuments found in the countryside of Viminacium, plus its proximity to its neighbouring administrative centres and military forts limit the territory of the provincial capital to not more than 800 sq. km.<sup>884</sup> To the south, a road-station called Municipium probably marked the southern limit of Viminacium's territory<sup>885</sup>. Particularly striking at both Singidunum and Viminacium is the dearth of funerary inscriptions of veteran soldiers on what were fairly restricted territories.<sup>886</sup> In contrast to Aquincum or Carnuntum, at which the veterans of the legions and the local magistrates left their mark on the surrounding territory with a large number of inscriptions, any evidence of colonization in the hinterlands of Singidunum or Viminacium is literally very thin on the ground. The latter is a surprising discovery in view of the limited agricultural capacity of their immediate hinterlands. One possible solution suggested is that until the legionary towns were promoted to colonies in the early third century, the veterans received plots of land in the colonies of Scupi and Ratiaria in the south of the province.<sup>887</sup> The absence of epigraphic material in the small urban

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<sup>881</sup> Singidunum: Mirković 1968, 37-49; Mirković, Dušanić eds. 1976, 23-41; for the more recent rescue-excavations see Ivanišević, Nikolić-Dorđević 1997, 65-150; Nikolić, Pop-Lazić 2005, 7-43. Viminacium: Popović 1967, 29-49; Mirković 1968, 56-73; Mirković ed. 1986, 21-57; brief reports on the research carried out over the past decade is available at <http://www.viminacium.org.rs/>

<sup>882</sup> The territory of this district is discussed in Mirković, Dušanić ed. 1976, 111-117.

<sup>883</sup> Even this estimate assumes that the Tricornenses, a people mentioned by Ptolemy, were included in the territory of Singidunum: Mirković, Dušanić eds. 1976, 37; Dušanić 1977, 180-191; however, in his later studies Dušanić has attributed Tricornium to the mining district in modern Kosmaj, Dušanić 1990, 217-224; Dušanić 2004, fn.47, 57.

<sup>884</sup> Dedications: IMS II: 297, 309; epitaphs: IMS II: 294, 296.

<sup>885</sup> Mirković ed. 1986, 54-57, has suggested that the name of the *mansio* indicates that one has entered the territory of the *municipium Viminacium*. This is the site erroneously identified with the *municipium Aelianum* by Mócsy 1970, 30.

<sup>886</sup> The veteran inscriptions from these two towns have been collected by Ferjanić 2002.

<sup>887</sup> Cf. Brigetio and Mogentiana. This suggestion seems highly probable in view of the large number of veteran inscriptions from Scupi. Mirković ed. 1986, 57-59; on the large number of second-century epitaphs of the VII



territories is a strong clue that the economic focus of these communities lay outside the agrarian sector. The urban elites of Viminacium or Singidunum apparently were not interested in making their mark on the countryside. The intriguing factor is that this difference cannot be ascribed to the local socio-cultural particularities, because Viminacium and Singidunum were, like Carnuntum and Aquincum, legionary towns. Instead what sets the legionary towns of Moesia apart from their Pannonian counterparts is the absence of double towns. In neither Singidunum nor Viminacium was there a separate municipal centre to host a local land-owning elite.<sup>888</sup>

Typically, it is virtually impossible to draw the limits of the mining districts solely on the basis of the epigraphic record. Most of the inscriptions referring to or commissioned by the district *procuratores* are concentrated in the administrative centres. The distribution of the known mining-sites is the only indicator of their possible extents. Good examples are the mining regions of modern Rudnik, possibly governed by the *procurator* based in neighbouring Kosmaj,<sup>889</sup> the *metalla Aelia Pincensia*<sup>890</sup> and the *Municipium Dardanorum* (Maps VI\_38-40).<sup>891</sup> The estimates range from 1,500 and 1,800 for the *Aelia Pincensia* and the district of modern Rudnik to a maximum of 3,000 sq. km for the Dardanian mines.

There is more tangible evidence in the case of the unnamed district in the region of modern Kosmaj, in which thanks to the relatively large number of epigraphically confirmed settlers from the East, it is possible to estimate the minimum extent of the district in the region of 1,200 sq. km (Map VI\_39).<sup>892</sup> There is no clear evidence of the presence of a separate *procurator* for the area of the Timok Valley.<sup>893</sup> Judging by the name of one of the Moesian *civitates* mentioned by Pliny, this micro-region might have initially been constituted as a *civitas* kept under military surveillance.<sup>894</sup> The only document that sheds some light on this area is Procopius' work, *De Aedificiis* that contains an inventory of all the forts either newly built or reconstructed by Justinian I in the region of Aquae. Most of the forts mentioned cannot be located on the modern map. The few names that have been associated with specific sites merely confirm that the district in question included the Timok Valley.<sup>895</sup> Assuming that the territorial integrity

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Claudia in the territory of Scupi, Mócsy 1970, 68-69; Ferjanić 2002, 70-78. Another possible explanation is that they received money rather than plots of land upon discharge.

<sup>888</sup> The question of the civilian towns near the legionary camps on the Lower Danube is discussed in Chapter Four.

<sup>889</sup> Mirković, Dušanić eds. 1976, 114-117; Dušanić 1990, 219-221; points out the possibility that the district *procurator* based in Mount Kosmaj governed a much wider area, with a direct access to the Danube and Velika Morava.

<sup>890</sup> Mladenović 2014, in press.

<sup>891</sup> IL Jug 1377, 1378. It should be made clear that neither of these documents refers specifically to the *municipium* but, unless the presence of a hitherto unknown centre in this area is postulated there are no other options. The known sites of mining operations have been helpfully collected in the Pleiades database, <https://pleiades.stoa.org/>.

<sup>892</sup> Mirković, Dušanić eds. 1976, 101-117; for the prominence of Orientals in the mining districts of Illyricum, see Dušanić 1971, 254-259.

<sup>893</sup> Dušanić 1977, 69-70; has located the *metalla Aureliana* in this area, implying that they were founded under Aurelius. The early history of the auxiliary camp, Timacum, is not entirely clear. The moveable finds excavated at this site and the epigraphic monuments suggest that the army units were present in this area as early as the Flavian period; IMS III/2: 23; Petrović ed. 1995, 37-45. IMS III/2: 31, is the only source that possibly does make a mention of a *praefect* of the territory, but the reading is problematic, Petrović ed. 1995, 37; further evidence is adduced by Dušanić 1990, 589-591; Dušanić 2004, fn. 54.

<sup>894</sup> Pliny HN 3.149; Mócsy 1970, 26; Mirković 2007, 43-45.

<sup>895</sup> Proc. *De Aed.* 4.3; Mirković 1968, 85-89; Petrović ed. 1995, 27-29; Dušanić 2004, fn. 59, has argued that the area was always centred on Aquae on the Danube.

of the mining district was maintained in the Late Antique period, this hypothesis will put its territory in the region of 5,000 sq km. This is only the minimum estimate, discounting the not entirely groundless claims that the district extended over the upper course of the Timok and into Nišava Basin.<sup>896</sup> These micro-regions are all part of the same metalliferous zone<sup>897</sup> but, as they were constituted as a separate region known as Remesiana in the Late Antique sources, it is possible that this arrangement dated back to the period of the High Empire.<sup>898</sup> If this was the case, Remesiana could have stretched over an area of 3,500 sq km in the southeast corner of the province (Map VI\_41).<sup>899</sup>

The territorial extent of Ulpiana is just as elusive. The question is made more difficult by the possible role of Ulpiana as the centre of several mining districts<sup>900</sup> but, above all, by the status of the Metohija Plain, in which some scholars have posited the presence of another unnamed *municipium*, located near modern Drsnik (map VI\_42).<sup>901</sup> The evidence is not particularly convincing, as most of the inscriptions mention an anonymous *municipium* that might refer to Ulpiana. Other epigraphic sources also support the view that the Metohija Basin belonged to Ulpiana.<sup>902</sup> Even if this region, fertile but poor in mineral resources, is excluded Ulpiana's territory will still stretch over an area of almost 5,000 sq km, the bulk of the land extending to the north and east of the *municipium*.<sup>903</sup>

We can have far more confidence in the estimates of the territorial extents of the two colonies in Moesia Superior, Scupi and Ratiaria. The conservative estimates, based on epitaphs and dedications referring to the town officials, predict territories in the range of 2,000 to 2,500 sq. km for both colonies (Maps VI\_43, 44).<sup>904</sup> The uncertainties are caused by a small number of monuments referring to the elites of the two colonies that have been found in the mining regions in the South Morava and Timok Valleys.<sup>905</sup> If these are interpreted as markers of the administrative territories of the two towns, their territories will double in size. Militating against this assumption is the fact that the maximum estimates are not very likely in this case. They would not only negate the integrity of the mining districts, but also ignore the involvement of the urban aristocracy in the mining sector that was a recurrent phenomenon in our study-region. These monuments are more indicative of the economic than the administrative territories of the Moesian colonies.

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<sup>896</sup> IMS III/2: 102 and the comment by the editor. Cf. Petrović ed. 1976, 112.

<sup>897</sup> Dušanić 1977, 73; Petrović ed. 1995, 37.

<sup>898</sup> Proc. *De Aed.* IV.4; Petrović ed. 1979, 51-57; Mirković 2007, 103-107; Dušanić 1977, 73-74; Dušanić 2004, 258, consider that it was a separate district under the Principate.

<sup>899</sup> The key documents pointing to the the extra-municipal character of the region of Remesiana are the three dedications by the provincial governor and the *res publica* Ulpiana, IMS IV: 69, 70, 71; Petrović ed. 1979, 55-57.

<sup>900</sup> This possibility is discussed by Dušanić 2004, fn. 51, but it is based solely on the Remesiana inscriptions, see the preceding footnote.

<sup>901</sup> IL Jug 1401, 1408; Čerškov 1969, has already pointed out the possible existence of another *municipium* near modern Drsnik; Mirdita 1975, 69-81, pointing to other candidate sites; Mirković 2007, 70-71.

<sup>902</sup> Mócsy 1970, 32; Josifovska-Dragojević ed. 1982, 32-37; Šašel 1992, 152-159.

<sup>903</sup> Most of the epigraphic testimonies for the mining district come from these micro-regions rather than the Metohija: IL Jug 1406, AÉ 2012: 1113.

<sup>904</sup> Scupi: Mikulčić 1971, 465-485; Josifovska-Dragojević ed. 1982; Ferjanić 2002, 70-78; Ratiaria: Velkov, Atanasova 1967, 143-156; Velkov ed. 1980, 61-83; Gerov 1997, 69-80; Ivanov ed. 2014. The similarities with the territorial extents of most of the Roman colonies in the region are striking. Cf. the size of the *agri* of the Pannonian colonies.

<sup>905</sup> Scupi: IMS VI: 27, IMS IV: 120, 121; Mócsy 1970, 75. Ratiaria: CIL III 8263, IMS III/2: 25, 78; a number of scholars include the Timok Valley in the territory of Ratiaria: Mirković 1968, 81; Velkov ed. 1980, 63; Gerov 1997, 69-70; and in later publications, Luka 2014, 50-64.

Having only isolated epigraphic references at our disposal, it is impossible to reconstruct the territories of *municipia* like *Horreum Margi* or *Municipium Celegerorum* (Maps VI\_46 and 45).<sup>906</sup> This high degree of uncertainty is reflected in the great differences between the minimum and maximum estimates, ranging from not more than 1,500 to 6,000 sq. km, in the case of *Horreum Margi*. Admittedly, the maximum estimates are derived from Thiessen polygons, but they have parallels in the small Pannonian *municipia*. Similarly sized territories were not unusual in Moesia Superior. This is illustrated by the somewhat better documented example of Naissus.<sup>907</sup> Like Aquae and Remesiana, Naissus was a centre of a separate district in the sixth century AD.<sup>908</sup> Among the forts reconstructed by Justinian I, Procopius mentions the names of the old road-stations that the itineraries locate over 50 km to the north of the town (Map VI\_41). This distribution would already extend the territory of the *municipium* to at least 4,000 sq km and, if the maximum estimates are accepted, it will grow to over 7,000 sq. km, rivalling the territorial extent of Ulpiana.<sup>909</sup>

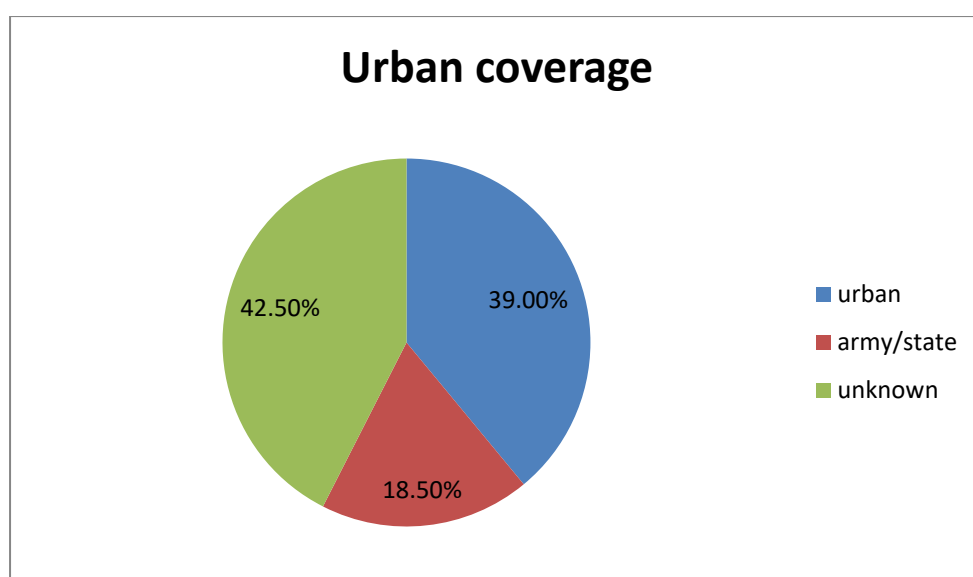


Figure VI\_12: The share of the different administrative sectors in the administration of Moesia Superior

On account of its limited urban coverage, Moesia Superior stands clearly apart from the rest of the provinces considered so far. Admittedly Figure VI\_12 takes into account the minimum estimates. However, taking the maximum estimates, the urban coverage will increase to over 60%, while the combined territories of the mining districts and military regions will account for slightly over 20% of the provincial territory. This approach brings Moesia Superior closer to the rest of the provinces in our study-area but, even so, the extra-municipal districts will still make-up almost 40% of the territory,

<sup>906</sup> *Horreum Margi*: Petrović ed. 1979, 50-51; *Municipium Celegerorum*: Pliny *HN* 3.149; CIL III 14610; Mócsy 1970, 27-28, 36; Mirković, Dušanić eds. 1976, 107.

<sup>907</sup> Petrović 1976, 81, 111-114; Petrović ed. 1979, 50-51.

<sup>908</sup> *Proc. De Aed.* 4.4; Petrović ed. 1979, 42.

<sup>909</sup> Most problematic is the region to the south and southwest of the town that according to some authors belonged to the Dardanian mining districts, Dušanić 2004, 259, fn.56. This region had become the hinterland of Justiniana Prima by the middle of the sixth century and, in view of the fact that most newly created towns appeared in the territory of the governmental districts and colonies, it is very plausible that the region belonged to the mining districts at the time of the High Empire. For the status of the Upper Timok Valley see Petrović ed. 1995, 35-36.

visibly higher than anywhere else. Furthermore, a large portion of the municipal sector belonged to the mining *municipia* or the *municipia* that emerged near garrison sites. However, it can be argued that the decision to add these towns to the governmental sector is equally justifiable. If this solution is chosen, understandably the only urban districts in Moesia Superior would have been the colonies of Scupi and Ratiaria, the mysterious *Municipium Celegerorum* and - with some reserve - the small urban territories on the Danube. Even taking the maximum estimate, they barely add up to one-fifth of the provincial territory. This organization would obviously have placed too heavy a burden on the provincial government and its tiny administration, even if it had made maximum use of the peregrine institutions and the army units stationed in the interior at its disposal. When these conditions had to be confronted, the tendency to municipalize the areas that had initially been brought under the control of the government or the military is fully comprehensible.

Turning to the relationships between sizes of territories and city sizes, Moesia Superior does not deviate from the pattern found in the rest of the provinces studied so far. The largest and most prosperous towns on the Danube controlled territories smaller than 1,000 sq. km, comparable to the average *polis* in Roman Macedonia or the coastal *municipia* of Dalmatia. Three of the eleven autonomous towns in Moesia Superior were located on the 80-km-long section of the Danube *limes* between Singidunum and Viminacium. Even though these towns had very small territories, their elites remained focused on the urban centre rather than on the countryside.<sup>910</sup> In this respect they are different to their Pannonian counterparts, Carnuntum, Brigetio and Aquincum. It is possible that the limited territorial extent of the Moesian legionary towns also kept their population size at levels lower than in the Pannonian legionary towns.

In the interior of the province 80 km would have been the average intercity distance. This fact implies that either the territories of the autonomous towns and districts were many times larger than their counterparts on the *limes* or that large section of the provincial territory remained outside the municipal umbrella. The evidence examined in the preceding passages stacks the cards in favour of the former scenario. As in the Pannonian provinces and the Dalmatian interior, it was not unusual for the municipal or district territories to extend over areas of 4,000-5,000 sq. km. Despite their exceptionally large territorial sizes, at least three of the *municipia* in the interior of the province still cannot be located with certainty and others underwent very little expansion prior to the Late Roman period. The exceptions are the two colonies in the far south of the province and possibly Ulpiana. In all likelihood, the territories of the colonies were somewhat smaller than those of the small *municipia* in the interior, but their economic privileges would have often extended into the territories of the latter. Both the lack of full autonomy and the privileged social position of the residents of the two colonies would have inhibited urban growth in the area prior to the period of the Tetrarchy.

The sparseness of the urban network in Moesia Superior was still in evidence in the period of Late Antiquity, when an increase in population density possibly further accentuated this problem.<sup>911</sup> We have already pointed out the two newly founded bishoprics in the towns of Aquae on the Danube and Remesiana in the southeast of the province that had been created by the mid-fourth century AD.<sup>912</sup> In

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<sup>910</sup> Another possibility is that the high population density in the countryside of these towns made the purchase of land difficult.

<sup>911</sup> I am referring to the retreat from Dacia and its impact on the territories to the south of the Danube, Gerov 1980, 38-39.

<sup>912</sup> Mirković 1968, 85-89, Petrović ed. 1979, 51-57.

the early sixth century, two new bishoprics are recorded by Hierocles in the territory of Ratiaria, Castra Martis and Bononia and one, Merion, in the territory of Scupi or in the former mining districts.<sup>913</sup> Finally, this source also mentions one or two new bishoprics in Late Roman Moesia Margensis, although in this instance Margum and Aelianum are not included in Hierocles' list.<sup>914</sup> The process continued under Justinian I with the founding of the new metropolis of Justiniana Prima. If we confine ourselves to the number of towns known to Hierocles and discount the old mining districts that had presumably been abandoned, we see an increase of almost 30% in the number of the administrative units in the era of the High Empire. The comparison is somewhat complicated by the fact that in the period of Late Antiquity, the western half of the province is literally a blank spot on the administrative map. No more is heard of the *municipia* of the Dardanians or the Celegeri. Most of the new towns were founded in the newly created provinces in the south and east of Moesia Superior, Dacia Ripensis and Dardania, either in the former mining districts or in the territories of the colonies. As yet, it is difficult to recognize an urban growth in this area in the fourth century AD. Therefore, the tendencies that marked this period could perhaps be better described as focusing on and reorganizing the available potential than as urban expansion. Regardless of how we interpret these tendencies, they cannot be read as a simple reaction to the patchy urban infrastructure of the preceding era.

## Moesia Inferior

Although there are a number of ambiguities in the list of autonomous units in Moesia Inferior, they can be classed into two general categories. The first involves the districts centred on some of the auxiliary camps on the Lower Danube. In the epigraphic record they are referred to as *regiones* or *territoria* and, in some cases, they reveal evidence of the presence of local magistrates, including *decuriones* and *quinquennales*.<sup>915</sup> This sort of reference is not specific to Moesia Inferior. Names of communities derived from the name of the auxiliary forts and their adjacent *vici* have also been attested in Pannonia Inferior and in Dacia.<sup>916</sup> The precise nature of these communities has been closely bound up with the controversy about the status and extent of the military territories.<sup>917</sup> It is possible that their names simply refer to the *vici* near the auxiliary camps that developed local institutions but remained subordinate to the camp's *praefectus*. There are numerous examples of parallel developments from the interior of Moesia Inferior, especially from the area of the Late Roman province of Scythia Minor. These *vici* were either located in the territory of the nearest town or in the military districts and did not enjoy a full autonomy.<sup>918</sup>

The other possibility is that they grew into separate administrative units, in which taxes were collected by civilian administrators.<sup>919</sup> In view of the quantity and nature of the evidence, this is the less likely scenario. Nonetheless, in at least two cases in Moesia inferior, Aegyssus and Capidava, the rare

<sup>913</sup> Hier. *Synec.* 655.3.5, 656.1; Ivanov ed. 2003, 11-22.

<sup>914</sup> Hier. *Synec.* 657.2.

<sup>915</sup> Kovács 2001, 42-66. See *infra* for further references to specific case studies.

<sup>916</sup> Mócsy 1980, 365-376; Glodariu 1977, 950-988; Nemeti 2014. These are easily confused with the *civitates* with an eponymous auxiliary fort; for example, Protase 1980b.

<sup>917</sup> Vittinghoff 1971, 299-318; Mócsy 1972, 134-138; Bérard 1992, 75-105; the latter study reviews the different opinions and collects the entire epigraphic corpus related to this issue.

<sup>918</sup> Suceveanu, Barnea 1991; Avram 2007, 91-109.

<sup>919</sup> Bérard 1992, 91-92; Kovács 2001, 49-50.

epigraphic sources are fairly explicit in delineating the territorial integrity of the unit.<sup>920</sup> Another convincing example in which the *curiales* of the territory of Sucidava are attested comes from Dacia Inferior.<sup>921</sup> We suspect that a similar process or tendency led to the formation of *municipia* from the *canabae legionis* on the Lower Danube.<sup>922</sup> It is possible that, in the case of Aegyssus or Capidava we are seeing *municipia* in the making. Therefore, we have included them as separate territorial units in the conservative estimates for the territorial size.

Without exception these ambiguous examples all represent small territorial units and their inclusion will result only in minor shifts in the administrative map of the province. More to the point, their civilian status remains uncertain and, like the mining *municipia*, it is difficult to place them either in the autonomous or in the state-run sector. Of far greater significance to the administrative divisions in this province are the effects of the different readings of the epigraphic sources scattered throughout the Moesian countryside. In contrast to Moesia Superior, these are both more numerous and more indicative of the territorial extents of the individual administrative entities. Unfortunately, they are usually open to more than one interpretation. A study of these sources gives rise to the familiar dilemma of whether the urban territories were limited only to the areas demarcated by the dense clusters of funerary and votive inscriptions set up by the town magistrates or whether they extended to the nearest military outposts and stations or to the provincial borders. As we shall shortly see, the differences are considerable and they impact not only on the specific territorial organization, but also heavily influence the respective shares of the autonomous and state-run sector in the administration of the province. A number of funerary inscriptions or military diplomas that reveal the place of origin of deceased or discharged veterans suggest that the urban territories were much larger than indicated by the group of inscriptions referring to the magistrates of particular towns or districts. However, it is important to bear in mind that the epigraphic record of Moesia Inferior refers to imperial estates whose exact location and extent still remain beyond our grasp.<sup>923</sup> References to *regiones* in the interior of the province add to the confusion, as it is impossible to decide if these were extra-municipal units or separate districts within the enlarged urban territories.<sup>924</sup>

Equally troublesome are the vestigial mentions of the *civitates* in Moesia Inferior, the second group of units of uncertain status. Both Ptolemy and Pliny are very vague in their descriptions of the communities of this province.<sup>925</sup> Pliny cites only two entities on the territory of the later province, the *Moesi* and *Thraces*.<sup>926</sup> These are ancient ethnonyms that are not easy to associate with a particular region and, moreover, they remain poorly attested in the written sources from the period of the High Empire. Some scholars have attempted to reassert the validity of Pliny's account by associating the names of these peoples with a series of boundary inscriptions found between the legionary camp of

<sup>920</sup> Capidava: IScM V: 77; Doruțu-Boilă ed. 1980; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 51; Suceveanu, Barnea 1993, 159-179; Aegyssus: AÉ 2004 1281, is an explicit testimony to a *decurio* of the territory.

<sup>921</sup> IDR II 190.

<sup>922</sup> The point is disputed by scholars who maintain that the *municipia* could have developed only outside the area marked by the *leugma* radius; cf. the case of Durostorum, Ivanov 2003, 75-86; Donevski 2009, 105-130; for the *leugma* radius rule see Piso 1991, 131-169.

<sup>923</sup> IL Bulg 16, CIL III 13722; Gerov 1997, 87-88; Velkov ed. 1980, 1-16; Dinčev 1997; Tačeva ed. 2004, 115-136.

<sup>924</sup> Examples of individual *regiones* are given below and in the section on Thrace; Gerov 1980, 273-283; Avram 2007, 99-100.

<sup>925</sup> Pliny HN 3.149; Ptol. Geog. 3.10; Jones 1937, 491-501; Gerov 1998, 411-418.

<sup>926</sup> Moesi: Papazoglou 1969; Tačeva 2005, 185-194; Thraces: Jones 1937, 1-27; Velkov ed. 1979; Tačeva 1987; Valeva, Nankov, Graninger eds. 2015.

Novae and Nicopolis ad Istrum, as well as with the *Thracēs* mentioned on the boundary inscription found in the hinterland of Odessos on the Black Sea.<sup>927</sup> This study adopts the conventional view and treats these documents as the provincial boundary-markers between Moesia and Thrace and between Thrace and the territory of the Greek *poleis* that were situated in Thrace but enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy that exempted them from the authority of the Thracian governor.<sup>928</sup>

The names of the peoples listed by Ptolemy are unknown from the other written sources - the Krobyzi or the Troglodytoi - or refer to the newly founded communities based near the auxiliary camps and stations on the Danube – the Dimenses, Appiarenenses and Utenses.<sup>929</sup> Ptolemy's laconic description is not a great help in deciding whether these names refer solely to the communities that emerged near the military outposts and stations or if they indicate separate territorial units based on the auxiliary camps.

This obscurity in the ethnography of Moesia could reflect either that both Pliny and Ptolemy were poorly informed about the lands on the Lower Danube or that the individual tribal entities were not as strong as their counterparts in the western half of the peninsula.<sup>930</sup> Given the background, it can be surmised that the domination of the proto-state formations of the Thracians and Getae in the pre-Roman period could have contributed to the weakening of the earlier tribal formations in this part of the Balkan Peninsula.<sup>931</sup> Nor should the evidence for low population density in the area, suggested by the frequent references to communities being introduced from Thrace or from the land to the north of the Danube, be overlooked.<sup>932</sup> There is no way of knowing if these peoples were constituted as autonomous *civitates* or assigned to existing administrative centres in their new homeland. To judge by the majority of the epigraphic sources from the Dobroudja Plateau in the eastern half of the province, most of them were small communities settled in *vici* in the territories of the Greek colonies or in the zones under military control.<sup>933</sup> However, this same area has produced the only direct testimony to *civitates* in Moesia Inferior, reaffirming the possibility that at least some of these peoples were constituted into distinct territorial units. This is the late-second-century boundary-stone between the *Ausdecenses* and the *Daci*, found near Tropaeum Trajani.<sup>934</sup> Apart from indicating the possible presence of *civitates peregrinae* in Moesia Inferior, this unique document is of little help in reconstructing the administrative divisions of the province. For the purposes of the Thiessen polygon analysis, it can only be speculated that they were located in the empty zone to the south of Tropaeum. The best that can be done at the moment is to see them as negative indicators of the extension of the territory of Tropaeum Trajani. For the time being, these two and an unknown number of other *civitates* seem doomed to remain in the "grey zone" on the administrative map of Moesia Inferior.

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<sup>927</sup> Kolendo, Božilova eds. 1997; Tomas 2007, 31-47.

<sup>928</sup> Gerov 1998, 437-467; Gerasimova-Tomova 1987, 17-21; Tačeva ed. 2004, 58-78.

<sup>929</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 3.10.4; Gerov 1997, 20-21; Ivanov 1992, 26-31.

<sup>930</sup> Jones 1937, 497-501, Sarnowski 2007, 15-23.

<sup>931</sup> Jordanov 1974, 208-217; Bodor 1981, 7-22.

<sup>932</sup> Gerov 1997, 50-52; Tačeva ed. 2004, 124-125; and from an archaeological perspective, Poulter ed. 1995; Tomas 2007, 38.

<sup>933</sup> Doruțiu-Boilă 1980b, 281-287; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 45-46; Avram 2007, 99-101.

<sup>934</sup> AÉ 1957: 333; Popescu 1979, 273-292; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 54-55.

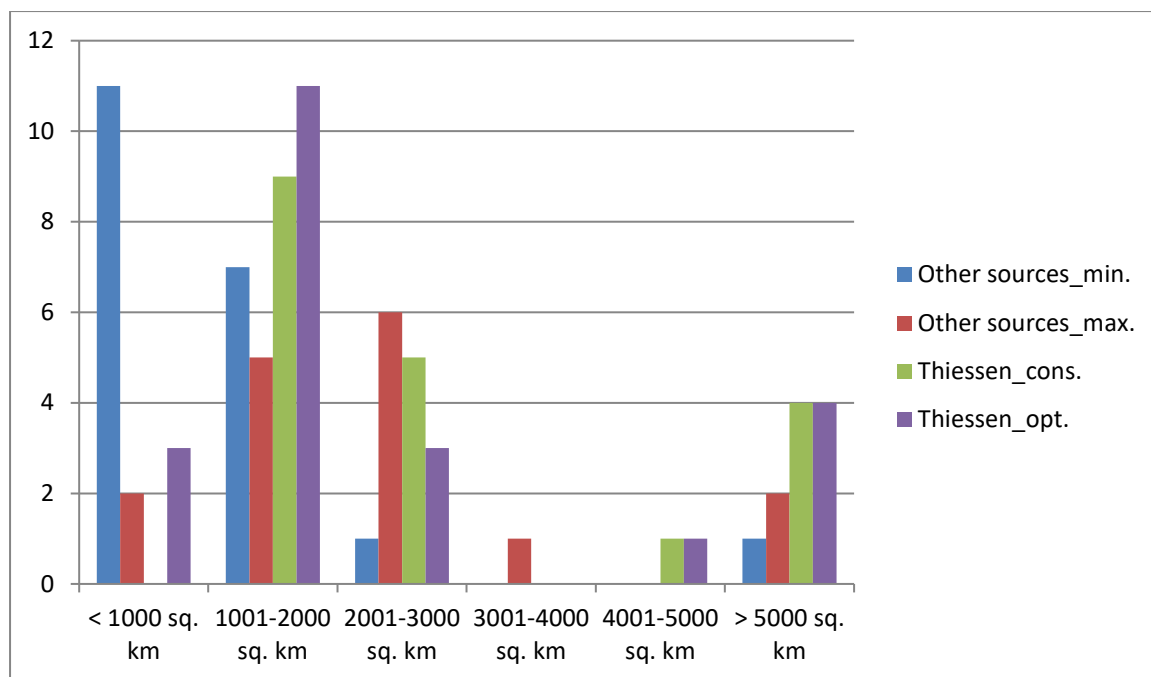


Figure VI\_13: Distribution of the territorial units in Moesia Inferior by size-ranges

The east-west divide within the province is immediately apparent in the bar-chart that shows the distribution of the administrative territories by size ranges (Figure VI\_13). On the left are the *poleis* and districts in the eastern part of the province that composed up to two-thirds of all administrative units, regardless of the method applied. On the right are the autonomous towns and military districts in the western half of Moesia Inferior, representing no more than one-third of all administrative entities. Taking the maximum projections, the average territorial unit in the east measures around 1,500 sq. km, whereas in the west, it increases to nearly 3,500 sq. km. Similar differences have been observed in other provinces in our study area and they are chiefly related to the variations in urban density. Moesia Inferior is not an exception in this respect. Along certain sections of the Black Sea coast, the distances between neighbouring towns do not exceed 30 km. In the inland parts of the later province of Scythia Minor, they increase to an average of 40-50 km, rising to 80 km in the western half of Moesia Inferior (Map VI\_47).

No other obvious characteristics can be observed in territorial size categories. The group of units with territories smaller than 1,000 sq. km includes one or two of the Pontic colonies and the hypothetical special districts that can be assumed to have developed around some of the military camps on the Danube. In most of these cases – Capidava, Noviodunum, Aegyssus and the unnamed district centred on modern Barboși - the territorial reconstructions are based on intercity distances and on proximity to the Danube frontier.<sup>935</sup> However, the estimate for Odessos has been derived from the distribution of the boundary inscriptions and dedications made by a member of the staff of the provincial governor (Maps VI\_48-50).<sup>936</sup> The territories of these units range from as little as 200 sq. km for Barboși, to

<sup>935</sup> Capidava: IScM V: 6, 77, Doruțu-Boilă ed. 1980, 30-32; cf. Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 77-79, 99-100; Avram 2007, 96-99; Noviodunum: AÉ 1990: 867; Barnea 1988, 51-60; Baumann 2008, 189-206; Aegyssus: AÉ 2004: 1281; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 191-192; Petculescu 2006, 31-41; Barboși: IScM V: 296; mentions a *quinquennialis* of an anonymous entity in this area. Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 79-80.

<sup>936</sup> Gerov 1980, 289-312.



almost 1,000 sq. km in the case of Noviodunum. Tomis, possibly the largest town in the Moesian section of the Pontic coast and the provincial capital, had a slightly larger territory extending to about 1200 sq. km.<sup>937</sup> This information is derived from a handful of inscriptions, almost exclusively limited to the 20-km radius from the town (Map VI\_49).<sup>938</sup>

The rest of the towns in the eastern half of the province have territories in the range of 1,000 to 2,000 sq. km. The group is extremely heterogeneous, including the remaining colonies on the Black Sea coast, the Scythian *municipia* of Troesmis and Tropaeum Trajani, Marcianopolis, a town founded on Hellenistic principles in southern Dobroudja, and the two *civitates* of the Daci and Auscenses (Maps VI\_50-53).<sup>939</sup> For most of these units, the estimates based on the Thiessen polygons and the spread of the epigraphic finds agree. However, there is a reservation. This statement is true only if we accept the minimum estimates, that is, the semi-autonomous status of the regions based around the auxiliary camps on the Danube. However, here there is a hitch. A small number of inscriptions discovered in some of the auxiliary camps on the Danube shed some doubt on the validity of this reconstruction. These are dedications commissioned by town officials of Histria, Troesmis and Tropaeum Trajani and honorific decrees voted by the *boule* and *demos* of an unnamed *polis*.<sup>940</sup> Their appearance on the Lower Danube has given rise to the opinion that the area behind the Danube *Limes* was governed from the autonomous towns in the Scythian interior and on the Black Sea coast.<sup>941</sup> Pertinently, this interpretation is corroborated by the conventional reading of the document known as the *chorothesia* of Histria, issued for the last time in the late second century AD.<sup>942</sup> If the territories adjacent to the Danube *Limes* were constituted as separate *regiones* under the jurisdiction of the colonies on the western Pontic coast, the urban territories would have extended over more than 2,000 sq km. This possibility is acknowledged in the maximum estimates, although in the case of Histria we remain convinced that its territory did not extend to the north of Mount Babadag (Map VI\_49).<sup>943</sup>

Some scholars have suggested that these monuments were brought to the Danube *Limes* from the interior of the province during the rebuilding of the defences in the Late Roman period.<sup>944</sup> This explanation seems wide of the mark. These inscriptions indicate either that the regions along the Danube frontier fell under the jurisdiction of the urban authorities or, conversely, they point to the economic orientation of the urban elite and are not indicative of the administrative outreach of the towns. The involvement of the urban aristocracy on the Danube *Limes* is nothing unusual in our study-region. The same pattern can be observed in the Pannonian section of the *limes* to the Danube delta.

<sup>937</sup> Inscriptions commissioned by the provincial governor: IScM II 41, 43-45, 56-57; Gerov 1997, 38-39; Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 27.

<sup>938</sup> IScM II 43, 249, 299.

<sup>939</sup> Callatis: IScM III 241, AE 1978: 717; Doruțiu-Boilă 1971, 325-333; Avram 1991, 103-137; Avram ed. 1999; Dionysopolis: IG Bul 16, 32; Mihailov ed. 1970; ISM III 241; CIL III 7589. Dionysopolis' borders are also partly documented in a *chorothesia* – IG Bul 5011 – but from the time of the Thracian client kings; Avram 1991, 105-108; Slavova 1998, 57-62; Tačeva 2001, 77-84; Histria: IScM I 329, 333, 373; Avram 2006, 66-67; Tropaeum Trajani: CIL III 12466; AE 1964: 243 and possibly CIL III 12463; indirectly CIL III 14211; Marcianopolis: AE 2000 1268, Gerov 1980, 289-312; possibly RMD 140; Troesmis: IScM V 219, 239; Doruțiu-Boilă 1972, 133-144.

<sup>940</sup> Histria: IScM V 123, 124; Troesmis: IScM V 252; Tropaeum Trajani: AE 1998 1143; AE 1963 175; Tomis: IScM II 111; unknown *polis*: ISM V 126.

<sup>941</sup> Pippidi ed. 1983; Avram 2006, 67-70.

<sup>942</sup> IScM I 67, 68; Pippidi 1975, 141-150; Pippidi ed. 1983, 17-21; Avram 2006, 59-67; Lytle 2006; Bounegru 2009, 375-383.

<sup>943</sup> Cf. Pippidi ed. 1983, 196; see Appendix 1.

<sup>944</sup> Doruțiu-Boilă ed. 1980, 140-152.

It cannot be taken as a proof that the boundaries of the urban territories coincided with the Danube *Limes*, but neither can it simply be discarded on the pretext that the finds were removed from their original find-spots.

The administrative units that constituted the western continental half of Moesia Inferior were on a slightly different scale. The only possible exception in this area is the poorly documented example of Dimum.<sup>945</sup> There is some evidence to suggest that Dimum was the centre of a special fiscal district along the former border between the Illyrian and Thracian customs zone.<sup>946</sup> A small number of votive inscriptions set up by the members of the station's staff indicate that the jurisdiction of these officials extended over an area of 1,000 to 1,500 sq km (Map VI\_54).<sup>947</sup> The other autonomous districts in the western part of the province were considerably larger, but only according to the maximum estimates. As in the eastern half of the province and in the other provinces included in our study-area, there is a considerable discrepancy between the territorial sizes indicated by the dense clusters of funerary and votive inscriptions from the areas enclosed by the 15-20 km radius from the central place and a small number of outliers from more distant locations. We are fairly confident that the variable densities in the epigraphic documents primarily reflect the pattern of land ownership practised by the urban elite. In a nutshell, the high density areas mark out the zones in which a large proportion of the land was owned by the urban aristocracy, while the peripheral belts of low density point either to areas brought under the jurisdiction of the town or simply indicate that the economic interest of the elite extended beyond the boundaries of the urban territory. Accepting the distribution of the former group of monuments, the urban territories were not much larger than those in the eastern half of the province. The territories of both Nicopolis ad Istrum and Oescus were limited to areas not larger than 2,000 sq km in the fertile valleys of the Rosica and the Vit (Maps VI 55 and 56).<sup>948</sup> However, the distribution of the outlying inscriptions referring directly to these towns or their magistrates increases the extent of their territories for up to 75%, taking them in the range of 3,000 to 3,500 sq. km.<sup>949</sup> Both interpretations are possible although, in view of the evidence from neighbouring Thrace, we are inclined to accept the maximum estimates.

There is much less evidence of the territorial extents of the *municipia* that developed from the *canabae* of the legionary camps of Novae and Durostorum. Of the two, Novae is a much better documented case-study, on account of the cluster of veteran inscriptions discovered in the hinterland of this town.<sup>950</sup> They are spread out over an area of about 1,800 sq. km. The maximum territorial extent would not have been much greater given their relative proximity to the neighbouring auxiliary

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<sup>945</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 3.10.5; IL Bul 237 and in the Histrian *chorothesia*, IScM I 67, 68; for the archaeological remains see Mitova-Džonova 2003, 47-48.

<sup>946</sup> CIL VI 32549; Mitova-Džonova 2003, 41; points out a reference to a region with this name in the histories of Theophylact Simocatta.

<sup>947</sup> IL Bul 237, 336, 441-442.

<sup>948</sup> Nicopolis ad Istrum: IL Bul 378, 382, 391, 405; IG Bul 701, Gerov 1997 108-109; the territory of this town has been primarily discussed in the light of the series of border-stones erected by the provincial governor Anteius Rufus, see fn. 920-921 and Appendix 1; Poulter 2003, 203-213; Tačeva ed. 2004, 58-78, Ruscu 2007, Figure 2; Oescus: IG Bul 56; IL Bul 214-216, 220; Gerov 1997, 90-91; Ferjanić 2002, 84-90.

<sup>949</sup> Nicopolis ad Istrum: IL Bul 405-406, IG Bul 764, IG Bul V 5199; AÉ 2004 1308; for further evidence see the Appendix; Oescus: IL Bul 172; Gerov 1997, 84.

<sup>950</sup> IL Bul 346, 351, 354; Gerov 1980, 113-118. The funerary monuments of veterans of this legion are scattered throughout the province, but this dispersion is related to the fact that the detachments of *Legio* I Italica were garrisoned at a number of forts along the Danube and in the interior of the province.

forts. There are no adequate sources from the rural districts near the second legionary camp of Durostorum, but the intercity distances limit the territory of this town to no more than 2,000-2,500 sq. km. (Map VI\_57).<sup>951</sup>

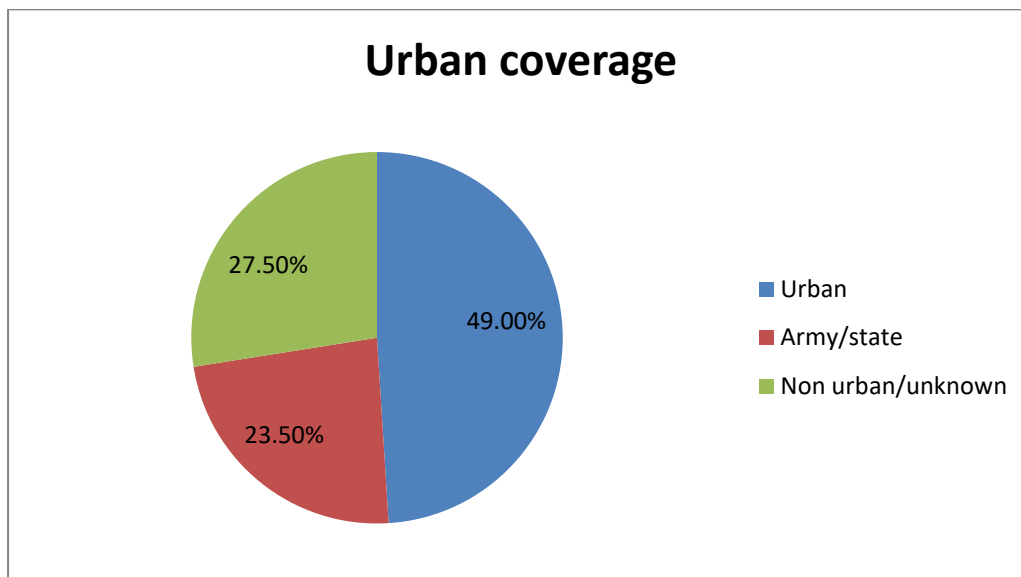


Figure VI\_14: The share of the different administrative sectors in the government of Moesia Inferior

Even when the high estimates are accepted only one-half of the territory of Moesia Inferior would have fallen under the jurisdiction of self-governing units. It is very unlikely that we have underestimated the percentage of urban coverage in Moesia Inferior. In a number of individual cases the maximum extents were simply drawn along the known provincial or state-frontiers or they happened partially to coincide with the Thiessen polygons. As elsewhere, the bulk of the epigraphic evidence comes from the immediate hinterlands of the towns, leaving aside wide swathes of land whose place in the administrative arrangements is still impossible to determine. If we follow stricter criteria in delineating the individual administrative districts, the share of the self-governing units will drop to only one-third of the provincial territory. Some of the maximum estimates will have to be reviewed in the light of future research. It is conceivable that future evidence will point to the presence of more *civitates peregrinae* similar to those of the *Daci* and the *Ausdecenses*. If these communities were fully exempted from military supervision, they will increase the share of the autonomous sector, but the share of the urban-centred units is unlikely to change.

From this point of view, Moesia Inferior is much closer to its Moesian neighbour than the rest of the provinces studied so far. Superficially this similarity sits uneasily with the other aspects of the administrative maps of the two provinces. Whereas Moesia Superior included at least four separate mining districts, only one has been identified in Moesia Inferior. Moreover Moesia Inferior boasted at least fifteen autonomous towns, as opposed to the eleven towns - including the *municipia* that are attested only epigraphically - of the slightly larger Moesia Superior. Whence the similarity between the profiles of these two provinces?

<sup>951</sup> Some scholars have pointed to the boundary inscription discovered some 12-13 km to the southwest of the camp, but this document probably concerns a territorial dispute between private parties, AÉ 1969-70: 567; Velkov ed. 1980, 111-116.

Although fewer in numbers, the pieces of epigraphic evidence suggest that the state-run districts of Moesia Inferior were much larger than those in the neighbouring province. This is especially evident for Montana, the only known mining district in Moesia Inferior. Epigraphic references to this district and its officials appear as far as the Danube to the north and the Lom to the west (Map VI\_58).<sup>952</sup> When these are considered in conjunction with the traces of ancient gold-washing activities and the ancient toponymy, they extend its territory to at least 3,500 sq. km.<sup>953</sup> Abritus, the other military outpost in the interior of the province, was the centre of a large region that cannot be attributed to any of the neighbouring self-governing towns (Map VI\_59). So far, there is no positive evidence of the presence of a separate fiscal district in this area, but the occurrence of rare monuments commissioned by the officials from distant towns, like Tomis or Napoca in Dacia Porolissensis, was a typical feature of the extra-municipal districts in the rest of our study-area.<sup>954</sup> Furthermore, Abritus was probably a centre of one of the Thracian *strategeiai* and, judging by the relatively large number of inscriptions erected by people with Thracian names, it remained a strong peregrine enclave throughout the period of the High Empire.<sup>955</sup> In this respect it resembles the large territories on the border between Pannonia Superior and Dalmatia, attributed to some of the largest tribes in this area. Common to these micro-regions is the presence of permanent army camps and the absence of urban centres.

The territory surrounding the auxiliary camp of Abritus and the neighbouring Šumen Plateau occupies between 6,000 and 8,000 sq. km and in conjunction with the district of Montana, these regions make up almost one-quarter of the provincial territory. This is almost certainly an underestimate as it does not take into account the increased presence of the military in the area between the territory of Oescus and the border with Thrace. The epigraphic record from this peripheral region also hints at the presence of yet another *regio* probably called *Dianensium* (Map VI\_56).<sup>956</sup> If this was another state-governed district rather than an urban region, the share of the extra-municipal sector will rise to almost one-third of the provincial territory.

Despite these considerations, at present a large portion of Moesia Inferior can be attributed neither to the governmental nor to the autonomous sector. In fact, it is impossible to attribute the large empty area in the southern Dobroudja between the legionary camp Durostorum and Marcianopolis, as well as the mountainous country along the new provincial border between Moesia and Thrace to any of the known administrative entities. If these areas did fall under the jurisdiction of the civilian sector, they were either constituted as separate regions on the periphery of the nearest towns or governed by hitherto unknown *civitates*. Whatever their formal status, they remained under-urbanized throughout the period of the High Empire. The chief reason for the relatively large extent of this “grey zone” in Moesia Inferior is that the epigraphic sources limit the administrative outreach of the autonomous urban centres to no more than 2,000 sq. km on the Dobroudja Plateau and to 3,500 sq.

<sup>952</sup> The status of Montana: AÉ 1927 95; CIL III 12376; Rankov 1983, 40-73; Tačeva 1996, 177-182; the territory of the district: CIL III 12385; AÉ 1969/70 577.

<sup>953</sup> Aleksandrov 1994, 50-51. This is a reference to the name of the auriferous River Augusta. See Appendix 1 for further evidence.

<sup>954</sup> AÉ 1939 246; CIL III 7446; these finds were discovered in the region of modern Šumen, to the southwest of Abritus. This area did not necessarily belong to the same district as Abritus, but it is likely that both micro-regions remained outside the municipal territories, Aladžova 2003, 149-159.

<sup>955</sup> IG Bul 743; Mihailov ed. 1958, 153-155.

<sup>956</sup> IL Bul 223; the large number of votive offerings made by soldiers and officers of *Legio I Italica* on active service- IL Bul 192, 235, 256 - alongside the fairly high concentration of *villici* - IL Bul 182, 233 - also point to the special status of this region, Gerov 1997, 84, 88.

km in the western half of the province. There are no securely attested examples of very large urban territories as in Moesia Superior or in the Panonian provinces. From this point of view, the estimated coverage of self-governing centres in Moesia Inferior conveys a more accurate image of the degree of urbanization in this province than in some other provinces of our study area, in which the high degree of urban coverage is only possible by attributing very large territories to small and insignificant *municipia*.

In the following period, the discrepancy between the highly urbanized east of the province and the predominantly rural west was accentuated even further. Most of the new bishoprics appeared in Scythia Minor, the area that already displayed high urban density.<sup>957</sup> These sees were founded on the sites of auxiliary forts that were either attributed to the territories of the western Pontic colonies or had already been established as centres of separate districts. Pertinently, three of the new bishoprics appeared precisely in the non-urban sector between Abritus and Appiaria and in the hinterland of Durostorum.<sup>958</sup> The most plausible explanation for these choices would be that the underprivileged status of these communities thwarted the processes of urbanization during the period of the High Empire.

## Thrace

The number of autonomous urban centres in the part of Thrace that belongs to our study-area has been more or less ascertained. After the border between Thrace and Moesia Inferior was pushed southwards to the ridge of Mount Haemus under Septimius Severus, eight autonomous towns remained in the Thracian portion of the study area; ten if we include Hadrianopolis and Byzie that are in modern Turkey but for whose territories we have also managed to collect relevant data. Some of the old pre-Roman centres, like the Greek colony of Apollonia or Cabyle in the Thracian interior, although showing traces of continuous occupation after the conquest might have lost their autonomous status.<sup>959</sup> Their demotion was not necessarily related to the incorporation of the area into the Roman Empire under Claudius. For example, Apollonia's autonomy had already been reduced by the Thracian dynasts, when the town is known to have been a part of a *strategia*.<sup>960</sup> However, an official dedication to the imperial family from the Severan period made by the *boule* and *demos* suggests that Apollonia regained its earlier status by the early third century.<sup>961</sup> Moreover, the numismatic evidence shows that the town briefly minted coins in the period between the reigns of Pius and Severus.<sup>962</sup> Apollonia is therefore included in the list of the minimum territorial estimates.

What happened at Cabyle is clearer, as there are no mentions of its institutions among the small number of inscriptions that can be dated to the period of the High Empire.<sup>963</sup> More to the point, Cabyle was the home of an auxiliary unit throughout the second and third century AD, a fact that is difficult

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<sup>957</sup> Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 154-207; Suceveanu, Barnea 1993, 173-179.

<sup>958</sup> For the list of bishoprics in the territory of present-day Bulgaria I follow Beševliev 1966, 207-223; an increase in the number of urban settlements in the area is also argued by Dinčev 1998, 16-23.

<sup>959</sup> This is indicated by the rare archaeological traces surviving from the Roman period in Apollonia, Lazarov 1972, 153-158; Panajotova, Draževa 2003, 215-234. Cabyle: Velkov ed. 1982.

<sup>960</sup> IG Bul 743; Ogdenova, Lazarov 1962, 197-202; Gerov 1980, 229-238.

<sup>961</sup> IG Bul 396; Mihailov ed. 1970, 343-347.

<sup>962</sup> Mihailov ed. 1970, 345.

<sup>963</sup> Mihailov ed. 1964, 164-165; Mihailov ed. 1997, 283-284.

to reconcile with its supposed autonomous status.<sup>964</sup> Prior to the third<sup>d</sup> century crisis and the Gothic invasions, arrangements like this would have been unparalleled in the demilitarized provinces of our study area. The presence of the military also makes it unlikely that Cabyle and its surroundings were divided between the territories of the neighbouring towns. In the analysis that follows Cabyle is included as the centre of a district under military surveillance.

Cabyle is not an isolated example in Thrace. More evidence of the presence of the military comes from the western parts of the province, the hinterland of Pautalia and the Upper Bregalnica Valley.<sup>965</sup> It should be emphasized that the evidence of the presence of the military in these micro-regions consists exclusively of rare epigraphic monuments.<sup>966</sup> The remains of the camps have not been located and therefore it is impossible to be certain about the size of these units or the length of their stay.<sup>967</sup> Nonetheless, the significance of these documents should not be overlooked. Cogently, the Late Antique developments at these military outposts repeat the pattern observed in the other provinces of our study area. Both Germania and Cabyle, like Abritus in Moesia Inferior, became bishoprics in the Late Roman period, implying that the areas that gravitated towards these sites had become relatively populous and prosperous by the end of the preceding era.<sup>968</sup>

Under the Odrasian dynasts, Thrace was divided into administrative units known as *strategeiai*, headed by *strategoi*.<sup>969</sup> There is very little information about the character of these units, but their names are often derived from the names of tribes known from the written sources.<sup>970</sup> In this sense, they are roughly equivalent to the *civitates* in the Latin provinces of the Empire although, in the case of Thrace, they were the administrative units of a large territorial polity rather than independent communities. Perhaps this circumstance contributed to their complete demise soon after the first autonomous towns were founded by Trajan. By the reign of Pius, all references to the old *strategeiai* or their corresponding ethnonyms disappear from the written records.<sup>971</sup> In the corpus of military diplomas from the province and in dedications commissioned by Thracians serving in the Praetorian Cohorts in Rome, the towns had replaced the *strategeia* as an indicator of a soldier's origin.<sup>972</sup>

Most modern scholars agree that, by the middle of the second century, the process of urbanization of the province and the demise of the old administrative units was complete.<sup>973</sup> Although by and large this view is valid, it is not fully borne out in the epigraphic sources. We have already pointed out the evidence of a military presence in this province that in some instances can be related to the areas attributed to some of the Thracian tribes or to major agglomerations, like Cabyle. Even though the epigraphic and cartographic sources indicate that the Roman towns of Thrace had unusually large

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<sup>964</sup> Velkov 1989, 247-256.

<sup>965</sup> Gerov 1998, 72-184, 437-467.

<sup>966</sup> CIL III 12339, AÉ 1934 212.

<sup>967</sup> Ivanov 1980, 211-212; see also the section on Thrace in Chapter Three.

<sup>968</sup> Germania: Hier. *Synec.* 654, 5; Mihailov ed. 1966; Cabyle: Hier. *Synec.* 635, 8; Mihailov ed. 1964, 167; Dimitrova 1974, 135-146.

<sup>969</sup> Pliny *HN* 4.40; Ptol. *Geog.* 3.11.6; Jones 1937, 491-501; Velkov ed. 1979, 286-296; Gerov 1980, 229-238; Tačeva ed. 2004, 32-47; 105-114.

<sup>970</sup> Gerov 1980, 319-348.

<sup>971</sup> There is some evidence to suggest that the number of *strategeiai* began to decline immediately after the annexation of the kingdom, but the sources are not completely reliable, Mihailov ed. 1966, 29-292; Gerov 1980, 235-236.

<sup>972</sup> Tačeva 1997, 199-210; Tačeva ed. 2004, 155-179.

<sup>973</sup> Lozanov 2015, 75-90.

territories, considerable sections of the provincial territory cannot be ascribed to any of the recognized urban centres. It is therefore conceivable that some of the *strategeiai* continued to exist as functional administrative units alongside the urban territories. The obvious temptation is to look for these administrative relics in the mountainous parts of the province like Mount Rhodope, the home of the *Bessi* and *Digeri*, but the activities of these *strategeiai* have not been recorded in the epigraphic sources found so far.<sup>974</sup> Because so few of the known Thracian *strategeiai* have been located, it is very difficult to account for this factor in the administrative map of the province. It is equally plausible to postulate that considerable areas were expropriated by the imperial treasury, although concrete evidence of imperial slaves or freedmen is once again lacking.<sup>975</sup> In the absence of direct testimonies to the earlier *strategeiai* and special fiscal districts, their presence can merely be surmised to have been located in the areas that cannot be attributed to a particular urban unit.

As in the rest of the Hellenistic provinces, the urban elites rarely advertised their activities in the countryside by recording them in inscriptions. Evidence of epitaphs commissioned for or by the town magistrates are almost non-existent, even in the rare Roman colonies in the province like Deultum.<sup>976</sup> Luckily this is counterbalanced by a number of inscriptions that contain detailed geographical references and official dedications made by the local authorities along the main roads. These two categories of evidence have proven far more valuable as sources of information about the territorial divisions in the province than the funerary inscriptions in the Latin provinces. We have seen that the majority of the latter indicate only the minimum extent of the administrative territories. In contrast to this, the official road-side dedications erected by the town authorities and the building inscriptions with detailed geographical indications offer more explicit testimonies and they often come from the peripheries of the urban territories. Their original find-spots are therefore important markers of the maximum extent of the administrative units. This specific feature of the epigraphic record has already enabled the editor of the corpus of Greek inscriptions found in Bulgaria to present the material by urban territories.<sup>977</sup> Needless-to-say the evidence of every individual town is not of equal quality but, from a comparative perspective, the territorial extents of the administrative units of Thrace are among the best documented in this study-region.

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<sup>974</sup> Tačeva ed. 2004, 111-112.

<sup>975</sup> See, for instance, Velkov ed. 1980, 137-149.

<sup>976</sup> Mihailov ed. 1964, num. 1835-1869.

<sup>977</sup> Mihailov ed. 1958, 1964, 1966, 1970.

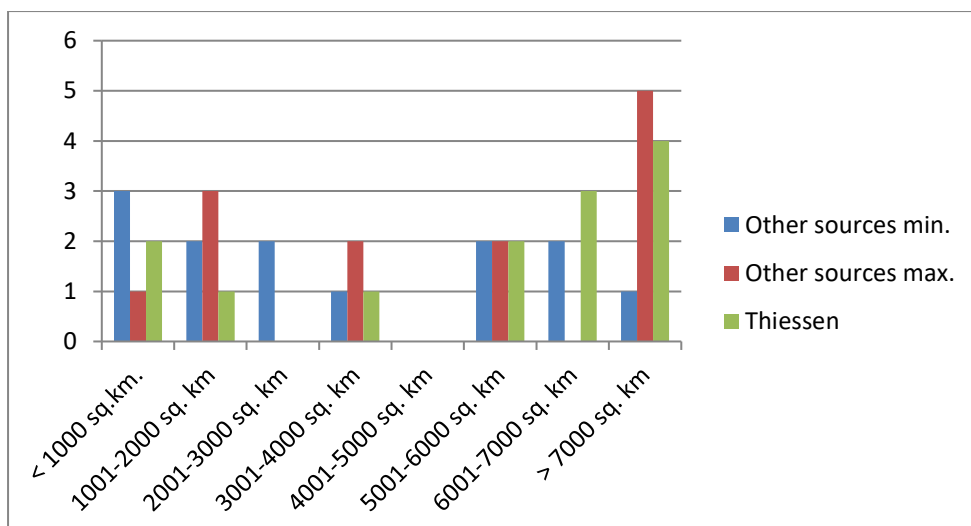


Figure VI\_15: Distribution of the territorial units in Thrace by size-ranges

The divide between the territorial extents of the Greek colonies and the towns in the interior, observed in Moesia Inferior is even more pronounced in Thrace (Figure VI\_15). The difference is particularly noticeable if we focus on the maximum estimates or the projections based on the Thiessen polygons. The small group of towns on the left of the bar-chart with territories smaller than 2,000 sq. km consists exclusively of the Greek colonies on the coast. The majority of the towns in the interior of the province belong to size categories that are several times larger than those of their coastal neighbours, in a number of cases exceeding the 5,000-square-kilometer threshold. Only a few of the towns in the west of the province, located close to the provincial border with Moesia Superior and Macedonia, have moderate territorial extents.

These variations are chiefly determined by the intercity distances (Map VI\_60). These increase from less than 30 km along the coast to over 80 km in the interior, reaching over 100 km in certain parts of the province. These fluctuations are characteristic of those areas in which the belt of pre-Roman urbanism met the zone of newly founded towns. The fact that in Thrace, as in Moesia Inferior, they are observed in the same province underlines the low degree of integration between the coastal and inland districts. The early presence of the Greek colonies on the Black Sea coast had a very limited urbanizing effect on the Thracian interior prior to the Roman conquest, and the two areas remained only loosely connected after the incorporation of the Thracian kingdom.<sup>978</sup> This situation is reflected in the administrative arrangement in the Roman provinces, under which the coastal towns were exempted from the authority of the provincial governors. The Greek colonies in Thrace and Moesia Inferior formed a separate *koinon* that existed side by side with the Thracian *koinon*, centred on Philippopolis.<sup>979</sup>

Our territorial estimates for the coastal towns are not based solely on intercity distances. The epigraphic corpus from the countryside is rather poor, but in general it accords with the limits drawn on the basis of the short intercity distances. The scatters of epigraphic monuments, together with the scant cartographic data, indicate that two Greek colonies, Mesembria and Apollonia, governed

<sup>978</sup> Fol 1965, 309-317; Velkov ed. 1979, 304-312; Gerov 1980, 338-339; Bouzek 2005, 1-7.

<sup>979</sup> The Pontic *pentapolis*: Pippidi 1975, 141-150; Popescu 1979, 273-292; Bârbulescu 2007, 139-145; the Thracian *koinon*: Velkov ed. 1979, 307-308, 336; Andreeva 2013, 31-41.



territories occupying not more than 1,200-1,300 sq. km (Maps VI\_61 and 62).<sup>980</sup> These are the maximum estimates for the territories of these two towns. They fall in the same range as the minimum estimates for the territories of the Greek colonies in the Moesian section of the Black Sea coast. These towns shared a similar status at the time of the Roman conquest, and the fairly modest territories of the Greek colonies in Thrace seem to support the minimum estimates for the Greek colonies in Moesia Inferior. Although it had a different history, Anchialus' territory was of a similar extent (Map VI\_61).<sup>981</sup> Along the entire coastline of our study area, the urban density was much higher than in the interior and the urban territories were consequently small, regardless of the character and chronology of the individual towns.

This observation is supported by the example of Deultum, the only Roman colony in the part of Thrace included in our study-area. Located near the head of the Bay of Burgas, Deultum belonged to the coastal zone and according to the minimum estimate, its territory comprised no more than 1,700 sq. km (Map VI\_62).<sup>982</sup> Admittedly, the maximum estimate projects a territory of almost twice that size, but there is very little evidence that the *ager* of the colony included the northern half of Mount Strandja.<sup>983</sup> The extent and location of Deultum's territory seem to encapsulate the destiny of most of the earlier *strategeiai* in Thrace. Regardless of which estimate is accepted, it is evident that the *ager* of the colony was carved out of the territories of two *strategeiai*, Anchialus and Astike.<sup>984</sup> Deultum's territory to the northwest extended to about 18 km from Anchialus, and it must have been made up of parts of the former *strategeia*. Moreover, Pliny is fairly explicit in placing the *strategeia* of Astike across the entire breadth of eastern Thrace, from the Bay of Burgas on the northeast to the Sea of Marmara and Perinth on the southwest.<sup>985</sup> As Apollonia was also a part of this *strategeia*, it is reasonable to suppose that it included Mount Strandja. Anchialus and Apollonia belonged to two different *strategeiai*, and the founding of Deultum in the hinterland of these two towns would have only been possible by disregarding the integrity of the earlier administrative units.

As elsewhere in our study-area, there is hardly any positive evidence of the extent of the territories that were kept under military supervision. Their extents are barely marked by the few official dedications made by army officers.<sup>986</sup> The testimonies to the possible sizes of these districts are mostly negative, consisting of the official dedications made by the members of the *curia* of the neighbouring towns.<sup>987</sup> These finds suggest that the territorial extents of the military districts were not uniform. They range from 1,200 sq. km in the case of Germania and the unnamed district in the Upper Bregalnica Valley, to a maximum of 3,200 sq. km in the case of Cabyle (Maps VI\_63 and 65). Cabyle was one of the seats of the Thracian dynasts and its large territory suggests that it had been composed of an integral *strategeia*.<sup>988</sup> The evidence of a military presence in the other two districts dates to a

<sup>980</sup> Mesembria: IG Bul 345, 356; Venedikov ed. 1969; Mihailov ed. 1970, 307-308; the estimate for the territory of Apollonia is based solely on Thiessen polygons.

<sup>981</sup> IG Bul 369, 378, probably IG Bul 381, CIL III 12329; Mihailov ed. 1970, 334, Velkov ed. 1980, 41-48.

<sup>982</sup> AE 1927 49; Mihailov ed. 1964, 204-205; Tačeva ed. 2004, 180-188; IG Bul 1844, 5652.

<sup>983</sup> IG Bul 1851, 5653; Mihailov ed. 1964, 210-211; Velkov ed. 1979, 314.

<sup>984</sup> Gerov 1980, 231.

<sup>985</sup> Pliny HN 4.11.45; Gerov 1980, 230-231.

<sup>986</sup> The Upper Bregalnica: AE 1934 212; Mihailov ed. 1966, 210-211; Gerov 1998, 150; Germania: CIL III 12337-9, IG Bul 2135; Cabyle: IG Bul 1845, 5646, possibly CIL XVI 158.

<sup>987</sup> Germania: IG Bul 2192, 2214, 5867; cf. Gerov 1998, 91-95, 148-150; Božkova, Vâlčeva 2002, 153-169, who claim that the fort was located in the territory of Pautalia; Cabyle: IG Bul 1766.

<sup>988</sup> See fn. 965, 966.

later period, possibly implying that the area under military control was limited to segments of the pre-Roman administrative units. Evidence of permanent garrisons in the region of Mount Rhodope, the home of the most warlike Thracian tribes, would have been expected, but these have yet to be discovered.<sup>989</sup>

The territories of the remaining Thracian towns are on an entirely different scale. The only possible exceptions are Nicopolis ad Nestum and Pautalia, although in these cases too, the maximum estimates project territories in excess of 5,000 sq. km, whereas in the minimum estimates, their territories are at least twice the size the territories of the coastal towns (Maps VI\_64 and 65).<sup>990</sup> Nicopolis ad Nestum is simply a poorly attested example, but the discrepancies between the minimum and maximum estimates for Pautalia can be attributed to the uncertain status of the mining region in the northwest of the province, in the area of modern Trn. The scant evidence from this micro-region is extremely ambiguous and, although it has been adduced in support of the thesis that the area in question belonged to Pautalia, it can just as well be read as evidence to the contrary.<sup>991</sup>

Because of the regular patterning of the road-side dedications erected by the *poleis* of the Thracian interior, the territories of the other Thracian towns are less controversial.<sup>992</sup> The proposed reconstructions are also supported by the building inscriptions commemorating the construction of military outposts in the hinterlands of Serdica, Augusta Trajana and Byzie (Maps VI\_66-69).<sup>993</sup> In all of these cases, the texts explicitly state that the buildings were constructed in regions located within the urban territories. These inscriptions not only confirm that the territories of these towns were made up of areas of over 5,000-6000 sq. km, they also shed light on the composite nature of the urban territories, consisting of an unknown number of sub-units or regions.<sup>994</sup> The valuable evidence that comes from the Thracian countryside is highly relevant to one of the central problems of this chapter. It definitely tips the scale in favour of the view that the urban territories extended well beyond those areas in which the properties of the urban elite were concentrated.

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<sup>989</sup> Tačeva 1997, 199-210, Gerov 1998, 411-428.

<sup>990</sup> Nicopolis ad Nestum: IG Bul 2305; Mihailov ed. 1966, 285, Gerov 1998, 60-71; Pautalia: IG Bul 2192, 2214, 5867, IG Bul 2235, 2236, possibly RMD 76; Mihailov ed. 1966, ed. 113-114, 211; Gerov 1998, 151-156.

<sup>991</sup> Stajkova 2003, 259-261; the documents in question are IG Bul 2109, 2111, 2239. More evidence has been sought among the road-side dedications, IG Bul 2013, 2037-38, 2041; see Appendix 1.

<sup>992</sup> Serdica: IG Bul 488, 1992, 2005, 2024, 2033, 1989; Philippopolis: IG Bul 1069, 1515, 1491; Augusta Trajana: IG Bul 1690 1706, 1710, 1756; Hadrianopolis: IG Bul: 5604.

<sup>993</sup> Serdica: IL Bul 211; Gerov 1998, 70; Augusta Trajana: IG Bul 1741b; Byzie: Velkov 1978, 174-181.

<sup>994</sup> Gerov 1998, 407-410.

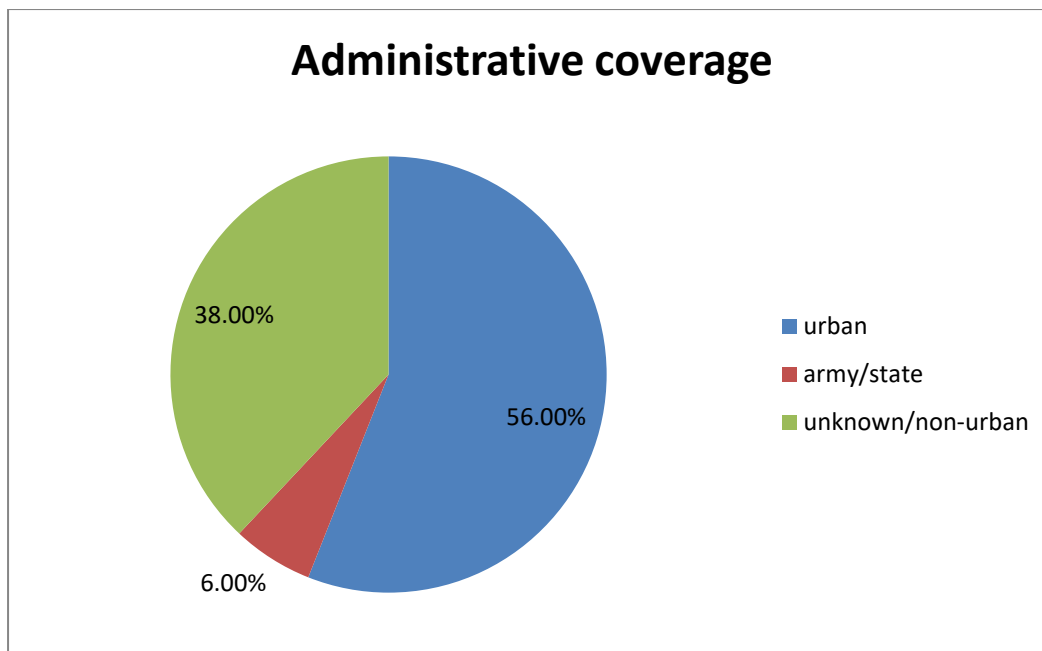


Figure VI\_16: The share of the different administrative sectors in the government of Thrace

Despite the very large territories projected for a number of Thracian towns, almost one-half of the provincial territory was not part of the autonomous sector. From a comparative perspective, Thrace joins the two Moesian provinces, characterized by a reduced urban coverage limited to one-half of the provincial territories. The obvious difference is the restricted size of the sector run by the military or the government. However, it is worth remembering that unless these districts were assigned to separate procuratorial posts, there is no hope of finding epigraphic confirmation of them. Hence we suspect that this sector was more extensive, spreading over parts of the area that remained outside the urban territories. By adding the parts of the Strandja Massif that belong to our study area and the mountainous region along the border with Moesia Superior to the equation, the share of the sector run by the government will increase to almost 15%, comparable to the situation in most of the provinces in our study-area.

Figure VI\_16 is based on the minimum territorial estimates. These should be preferred for Thrace, because most of the evidence cited in support of the maximum estimates is less convincing. It offers hardly any clues to suggest that the territory of Nicopolis ad Nestum extended over the western part of the Rhodope or that Philippopolis controlled the central parts of this massif. The finds that do suggest the view that Pautalia controlled the entire territory up to the Diagonal Road on the north or that the territory of Augusta Trajana spread over the ridge of Mount Haemus can also not be said to be particularly conclusive. Accepting these arguments, the urban coverage of the provincial territory in Thrace would increase to almost 85%, more than in any other province in our study-region. However, the only argument that supports this reconstruction is the observation that the minimum estimate fails to explain the complete absence of written testimonies to special fiscal districts or non-urban *civitates* in this province. This is indeed problematic as, even after the share of the military and mining sectors is increased to 15%, the “grey zone” still makes up almost 30% of the provincial territory.

In the absence of positive evidence, the mechanisms by which these micro-regions were governed can only be guessed at. Theoretically, they can be attributed either to the nearest autonomous town or military outpost or to an unattested *civitas*. As just said, bearing in mind that the administrative outreach of the urban centres in Roman Thrace is relatively well-documented in the epigraphic sources, we are inclined towards the reconstruction of administrative divisions based on the minimum estimates. This view naturally implies that the traditional, non-urban administrative entities were preserved, at least in the mountainous corners of the province.<sup>995</sup> Of course, it is possible that it is sheer chance that they do not appear in the written sources. Their inconspicuousness might also be taken as a token of the low degree of emancipation of these communities and their demographic and economic insignificance. The situation is reminiscent of the numerous *civitates* in Dalmatia and Pannonia known exclusively from Pliny's *Natural History* or the "small *municipia*" known from only one or two inscriptions. Even the largest and most important *civitates* in the western part of the study-area have left very few traces in the archaeological and written records.

The evidence provided by the epigraphic sources from the Thracian countryside suggests that, even if the minimum estimates are accepted, the territorial units were too large for the urban centres. The building inscriptions commemorating the construction of *burgi* and *praesidia* in the distant regions of the Thracian *civitates* are particularly informative in this respect. These texts discovered on the territories of four Thracian cities date to the time of Antoninus Pius and they are usually related to the unrest in Thrace during the otherwise peaceful reign of this emperor.<sup>996</sup> The scale of these measures carried out by the provincial government has to be appreciated. The inscription from the *regio Dyptensis* in the territory of Serdica lists no fewer than four *praesidia*, twelve *burgi* and over 100 *phrouria*!<sup>997</sup> Cogently in nearly all of these cases, the regions in question were located on the edge of the mountainous zone, probably coinciding with the line separating the intensively exploited areas owned directly by the urban elites and the untamed mountainous regions whose economic importance was marginal. The principal function of these military outposts was probably keeping the communities occupying the isolated corners of Roman Thrace under surveillance; a position that would have brought them closer to the sector controlled by the military than to their civilian counterpart.<sup>998</sup>

If this reading of the data is correct, it obviates the question of whether or not the urban territories extended beyond these defensive lines. In theory, it is possible that the authority of the local administration did extend over parts of the mountainous regions, but in practice, they would have evidently been hard-pressed to guarantee the peace even in the low-lying sections of their territories. The control of these poorly integrated and hostile regions was a logistically demanding exercise and it would have brought few benefits to the urban centres. It stands to reason that these expenses could not have been met by the recently established Thracian towns and the support of the provincial government would have been necessary to maintain law and order in the very large territorial units. The example of the Thracian towns and their territories is an outstanding example of the ambiguous relationship between the size and importance of the urban centre and the extent of its administrative territory. In a nutshell, a territorial unit of a very large size was not necessarily a guarantee that its

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<sup>995</sup> Gerov 1980, 234-235; Kolendo, Božilova ed. 1997, num. 72; Tačeva ed. 2004, 111-112.

<sup>996</sup> In Bulgarian scholarship opinions differ about the role of these forts. The road security and urban territories: Ivanov 1980, 202; internal strife: Tačeva ed. 2004, 182-183; Barbarian invasions: Velkov ed. 1979, 294-296.

<sup>997</sup> Gerov 1998, 70.

<sup>998</sup> Gerov 1980, 273-275.

potential was put to full use, nor is the extended urban coverage symptomatic of a high degree of urbanization in a given area.

One final possible indicator of the overstretched extent of the urban territories in Roman Thrace is the development on the urban map in Late Antiquity.<sup>999</sup> On the Thracian coast, densely urbanized during the period of the High Empire, the *Synecdemos* of Hierocles records only two bishoprics.<sup>1000</sup> Apollonia and Mesembria, the two Greek colonies, are not on his list even though they survived the Slavic and Avar invasions at the end of Antiquity.<sup>1001</sup> Conversely, in the predominantly rural interior we hear of four, possibly five, new bishoprics alongside the existing pre-Christian *poleis*. Two of these new establishments, Germania and Cabyle, renamed Diospolis, replaced the old military districts. However, Diocletianopolis, Sebastopolis and, possibly, Kereopyrgos emerged at sites whose character in the preceding period is unknown.<sup>1002</sup> These towns are located in the Late Roman provinces of Thrace and Rhodope and their territories must have been carved out of some of the oversized administrative units that existed in the first to third century AD.<sup>1003</sup> Although the number of newly established ecclesiastical centres is not particularly stunning, they still represent an increase of almost 25%.

## Dacia

All in all, there were ten *municipia* or colonies in the three Dacian provinces, including the towns founded in the mining districts and near the military camps.<sup>1004</sup> We have already observed that these categories of urban settlements were special in way or another and it is not easy to decide if they should be assigned to the civilian or the military sector. In view of their size and importance, as well as confirmation of the full spectrum of town magistrates and institutions, they have been attributed to the civilian sector despite the fact that, technically speaking, they were garrison towns. The gradual municipalization of the frontier zones and mining areas was a general tendency in our study-region that commenced from the second century AD and, by including the territories of these towns in the military sector we ran the risk of de-emphasizing this important development on the periphery of the urban network.<sup>1005</sup> These processes suggest a gradual demilitarization of the frontier zone that was accompanied by increased population densities and economic prosperity. Although it does seem paradoxical, the frontier zone proved far more susceptible to the process of municipalization than the territories of the *civitates* in the interior of the provinces.

We believe that a similar process led to the constitution of *regiones* and *territoria* centred on some of the auxiliary forts along the Dacian *Limes*. Evidence of such *territoria* comes from the auxiliary camp near modern Ilişua, identified with Arcobadara, as well as from Samum and Micia, on the northern

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<sup>999</sup> Beševliev 1966, 209.

<sup>1000</sup> Hier. *Synec.* 635.9-14; Janin 1959, 136-149.

<sup>1001</sup> However, both towns appear on the lists of bishoprics compiled in the Middle Age, by which time Anchialus has lost its status and importance, Janin 1959, 136-149.

<sup>1002</sup> Hier. *Synec.* 635.3-8, Thrace, and 635.1-2, Rhodope.

<sup>1003</sup> This is certain in the case of Diocletianopolis, founded on the northern periphery of the territory of Philippopolis; IG Bul 1473, 1476; reused in the Late Roman walls indicate that the area formerly belonged to Philippopolis. For the archaeological remains and possible genesis of Diocletianopolis, see Madžarov 1993.

<sup>1004</sup> Branga 1980; Ardevan 1998; list eleven, counting the double town Apulum twice.

<sup>1005</sup> Vittinghoff 1971, 301-303; Mócsy 1980, 365-376; Bérard 1992, 88-95.

and western Dacian frontiers.<sup>1006</sup> Most convincing of all is the evidence pertaining to Sucidava in Dacia Maluensis, on the provincial border with Moesia Inferior.<sup>1007</sup> These territories were not governed by civilian institutions and, with the exception of Sucidava – that might have been a civilian settlement prior to Late Antiquity –, they are included in the governmental sector.

There have been no finds in the countryside that might point to the extents of these districts. One possible indicator is the fact that two of the known regions in Dacia were centred on neighbouring auxiliary forts, Samum and Ilişua, that stood only several kilometres apart (Map VI\_70). If these were autonomous units, their territories must have been very small, probably in the region of a few hundred square kilometres. The limited extent of their territories was also a characteristic of these districts in Moesia Inferior. In the end, the recognition of their autonomous status is unlikely to have had a major effect on the ratio of the civilian to military sector.

In contrast to the western provinces of the Empire, the *civitates*, if ever constituted, did not play a major role in the administration of Roman Dacia.<sup>1008</sup> This argument is based on the fact that not a single *civitas* is mentioned in the post-conquest epigraphic or written sources.<sup>1009</sup> However, as in Moesia Inferior, the silence of the written sources cannot be taken as a sure sign that the native communities played no part in the administrative divisions of the province. Their failure to leave traces in the written sources is hardly surprising in view of the situation in the other Balkan and Danube provinces.<sup>1010</sup> The invisibility of the Dacian *civitates* merely points to the sluggish and only partial emancipation of the peregrine communities. Even if these peoples were granted a certain degree of autonomy, they probably remained under close military supervision throughout the Roman period.

There are a number of auxiliary forts in the interior of Dacia. Almost always situated at locations of high strategic importance, these outposts are normally seen as a constituent segment of the Dacian *Limes*.<sup>1011</sup> In our opinion this does not cancel their potential role as bases for the administration of the extra-municipal portions of the province but there is no way of determining the approximate extent of these units on the basis of the epigraphic record. We face an almost identical problem in determining the limits of the individual mining districts, salt-pans and pastures.<sup>1012</sup> All that can be done is to point to their likely locations, and therefore their territorial extents are based solely on the Thiessen polygons. A common feature to these districts is that they fell under the direct jurisdiction of the provincial government, their status indicated by the presence of permanent military garrisons or the activity of *conductores*.

One of the major methodological assumptions underlying this study is the principle that the urban territories did not include those sites that were permanently occupied by the military. Even in the case

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<sup>1006</sup> Ilişua: AÉ 2006 1130; Nemeti 2014; Samum: AÉ 1957 326-328; Nemeti 2014, 89-90; Micia: IDR III/3 69, 80-83; Russu, Floca, Wollmann eds. 1984.

<sup>1007</sup> Sucidava: IDR II: 190, possibly IDR II: 211; Tudor 1965; Florescu, Petolescu eds. 1977, 101-102; Petolescu 2011, 83-109; for the socio-economic make-up of Sucidava see Chapter Three.

<sup>1008</sup> Carbó-García 2002, 115-138; Ruscu 2004, 76-87; Ardevan 2005, 1-11; Oltean 2007; see, however, Bogdan-Cătănăciu 1990, 223-234.

<sup>1009</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 3.8; mentions the names of about fifteen peoples in Roman Dacia, but their locations are unknown and Ptolemy's testimony could have referred to Dacia prior to the Hadrianic withdrawal in AD 118-119; Gostar 1980, 25; Bogdan-Cătănăciu 1990, 230-234.

<sup>1010</sup> Cf. Protase 1980b.

<sup>1011</sup> Gudea 1979, 63-87; Gudea 1997.

<sup>1012</sup> Glodariu 1977, 950-988, Benea 2007, 41-46.

of the legionary towns, the immediate surroundings of the forts and *canabae* did not belong to the municipal territory, but were constituted as an extra-municipal island held by the military.<sup>1013</sup> A securely established chronology is of crucial importance if we are to apply this approach consistently. Unfortunately, only a small portion of the auxiliary forts in Roman Dacia have been systematically excavated and it is impossible to be certain if all of the known sites were used simultaneously.<sup>1014</sup> The example of the Transalutianian *Limes* and some of the forts in the interior of the province shows that the network of military camps underwent a complex and poorly understood evolution.<sup>1015</sup> It is even less clear if all garrison settlements retained their military character throughout the period of Roman domination. These are problems that we cannot hope to solve. All that can be done is to point to those cases in which the chronology of the fort is uncertain or in which inscriptions that might have been commissioned by the military are lacking.

Compared to Thrace and some of the Latin provinces of our study area, the epigraphic evidence from the Dacian countryside is of limited value in determining the extent of the individual self-governing units. The number and character of the finds varies greatly from town to town but, as a whole, neither the epigraphic nor cartographic sources is very informative about the extent of the urban territories. An additional problem is posed by the strong connections that existed between the elites of the different towns in the province.<sup>1016</sup> The phenomenon of holding offices in multiple towns was not unusual in Roman Dacia and quite often it is impossible to link the act commemorated on an inscription or its find-spot to a particular town.

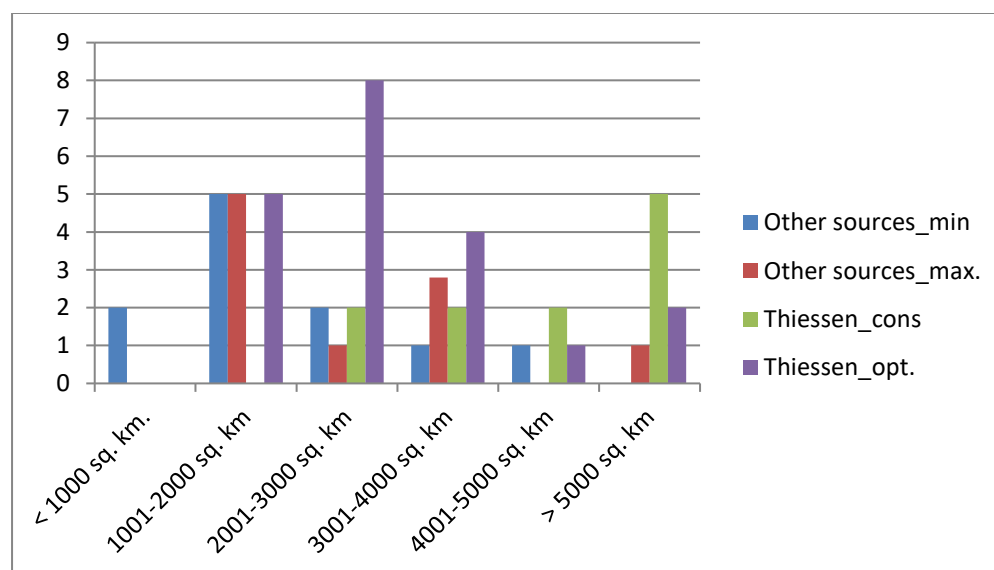


Figure VI\_17: Distribution of the territorial units in Dacia by size-ranges

In Roman Dacia there are considerable differences between the estimates based on the epigraphic sources and those derived from the Thiessen polygons. The reason for this is the reduced radii of the

<sup>1013</sup> Piso 1991, 152-155.

<sup>1014</sup> Gudea 1997, 2.

<sup>1015</sup> Tudor 1974, 235-246; Bogdan-Cătănăciu 1986, 461-468; Gudea 2005; Bogdan-Cătănăciu 2009, 159-203; Gudea 1997, num. 73, 93-94, 102.

<sup>1016</sup> Balla 1977, 51-58; Piso ed. 2001.

clusters of inscriptions discovered in the Dacian countryside. Whether we consider the minimum or maximum estimates based on the epigraphic evidence, the discrepancies with the projections based on the Thiessen polygons remain considerable. Although the epigraphic finds suggest that over one-half of the territorial units of Roman Dacia measured less than 2,000 sq. km, the Thiessen polygons predict that the majority fell in the range between 2,000 and 4,000 sq. km. These projections are valid only if we recognize the territorial integrity of the areas that gravitated towards the auxiliary forts in the interior. By restricting the number of territorial units to the autonomous towns, almost one-half will extend over more than 5,000 sq. km. The key factor behind these discrepancies is not the method used to measure the territorial extent, but rather the number and character of the units with a recognized territorial integrity. If we opt for the view that the permanent garrison sites in the interior of the province were centres of separate districts, the differences between the two sets of projections are visibly diminished.

Where available, the epigraphic scatters in the countryside usually limit the range of activities of the urban aristocracy to areas not larger than 2,000 sq. km. Nearly one-half of the administrative units in the Dacian provinces belong to this category. The funerary and votive inscriptions referring to the *curia* of Napoca, the capital of Porolissensis, are scattered over an area of 1,000 sq. km.<sup>1017</sup> If the distribution of the garrison sites is taken into account, the maximum territorial extent of this town would be limited to less than 1,500 sq. km (Map VI\_70). The distribution of inscriptions set up by the veterans of *Legio V Macedonica* and the few epigraphic references to town officials place Potaissa's territory in the same range (Map VI\_70).<sup>1018</sup> Dierna and Porolissum governed similarly sized territories, although in the case of these towns the reconstructions are based entirely on the constellation of auxiliary forts and their proximity to the imperial and provincial boundaries (Maps VI\_70 and 71).<sup>1019</sup>

The relatively large epigraphic corpus from the countryside of Sarmizegetusa provides not only a solid basis for a reconstruction of its territory towards the end of the second century AD, it also gives an important insight into the process of municipalization of Roman Dacia.<sup>1020</sup> These sources suggest that in the early second century the entire territory of the later province of Dacia Apulensis was attributed to Sarmizegetusa, extending its territory over at least 8,000 sq. km. In the course of the second century AD, this vast territory was gradually sub-divided into smaller administrative units, centred on the newly founded *municipia* of Apulum and Tibiscum. The newly promoted urban communities inherited segments of Sarmizegetusa's territory, together with the *ius Italicum*.<sup>1021</sup> When this process of municipalization of Sarmizegetusa's *ager* was completed, the old Dacian capital remained in control of no more than 2,200 sq. km, limited to the fertile Hateg Depression and the Strei and Mureş Valleys; a territory only slightly larger than that of Napoca or Potaissa (Map VI\_72).<sup>1022</sup> The *ferrariae* near modern Deva was probably exempted from the jurisdiction of the colony, as were possibly, the Oraştie

<sup>1017</sup> AÉ 1933 21; AÉ 1977 702; ILD 533, provides solid negative evidence. The economic outreach of the elite of Napoca was much greater, see the Appendix.

<sup>1018</sup> CIL III 910, 7694; cf. Fodorean 2013, 45-49; CIL III 903, 7709.

<sup>1019</sup> Porolissum: possibly, but not very likely CIL III 828; the minimum estimate predicts a much smaller territory for this *municipium*, see Appendix 1; Dierna: CIL III 8011; IDR III/1 93; AÉ 1999 1304; IDR III/1 75, all of these documents provide negative evidence.

<sup>1020</sup> Piso 1995, 63-82; see Appendix 1.

<sup>1021</sup> Piso 1995, 63-64, 76.

<sup>1022</sup> Piso 1995, Figure 1; excludes the mountainous parts of Sarmizegetusa's territory, reducing it to no more than 1,200-1,300 sq. km.



Mountains, the core of the old Dacian kingdom.<sup>1023</sup> Undeniably, this reconstruction is not without its problems, but it parallels closely the situation in Dalmatia, in which a new *municipium* was founded on the territory of the provincial capital and in Pannonia Superior, in which Carnuntum's territory was reduced after the founding of the *municipium* of Vindobona. This process continued into the Late Roman period, with a number of new towns emerging on the large urban territories of the preceding era.<sup>1024</sup>

It is possible that the remaining Dacian towns did have much larger territories but, unlike in Thrace, this claim is not substantiated by the epigraphic sources. The best documented example is Apulum, the seat of the governor of the three Dacian provinces and the commander-in-chief of the Dacian army (Map VI\_73). The funerary and votive inscriptions referring to the town's magistrates or business and religious associations are spread over an area of 3,100 sq. km, the minimum estimate for Apulum's territory.<sup>1025</sup> Taking into account the outlying inscriptions and the estimates based on the Thiessen polygons will raise the territory of this town in the region of 5,000 sq. km.<sup>1026</sup> It should be emphasized that this is also predetermined by the central position of Apulum in the urban network of Transylvanian Dacia. The territories of the mining district centred on Ampelum and the *municipium* of Tibiscum are poorly documented in the epigraphic record. The distribution of the mining sites and Thiessen polygons indicate that these units covered between 3,000 and 4,000 sq. km (Maps VI\_74 and 75).<sup>1027</sup>

Only two autonomous towns are known from the parts of Roman Dacia lying to the south of the Carpathian Range and the Iron Gates. Because of the low urban density in this province, the Thiessen polygons predict territories in excess of 5,000 sq. km. for both Drobeta and Romula (Maps VI\_76 and 77). However, the projections are not supported by the spread of the epigraphic evidence. This is scarce and uncertain in the case of Drobeta and non-existent for Romula on the River Olt.<sup>1028</sup> Taken in conjunction with the distribution of the auxiliary forts on the Olt *Limes* and in the interior of the province, these finds indicate that the territories of Drobeta and Romula were smaller, ranging between 1,500 and 2,500 sq. km in the case of Romula and between 2,500 and 4,000 sq. km in the case of Drobeta.

As noted above, the territories of the few epigraphically confirmed districts in the Dacian provinces, like Arcobadara, Ansamensium or Micia, were much smaller.<sup>1029</sup> If these were indeed separate territorial units, they did not extend over more than several hundred square kilometres. Sucidava in Dacia Maluenses is a possible exception.<sup>1030</sup> Although there is no evidence of the extent of its territory, the liminal position of the central place and the distribution of the auxiliary forts in the area confine it to no more than 1,750 sq. km.

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<sup>1023</sup> Iron mining in the region to the north of Sarmizegetusa: IDR III/3: 37; Balla 1979, 135-143; Piso 1995, 82; the Oraştie Mountains: Piso 1995, Figure 1.1, does not include it in the territory of the colony.

<sup>1024</sup> A more distant parallel comes from Carthage in Africa Proconsularis, Corbier 1991, 211-239.

<sup>1025</sup> CIL III 7788; IDR III/4: 60, 63; IDR III/4: 8, 12, 13, possibly IDR III/2: 319 and 389.

<sup>1026</sup> IDR III/4: 126, possibly IDR III/4: 114.

<sup>1027</sup> Gold-mining sites in Dacia: Mrozek 1977, 95-109;

<sup>1028</sup> IDR III/1: 62, IDR II: 135; possibly IDR III/1: 71 and IDR II: 181.

<sup>1029</sup> Arcobadara, Ansamensium: see fn. 349; Micia: IDR III: 69, 80, Piso 1995, 72-73.

<sup>1030</sup> See fn. 1008-9.

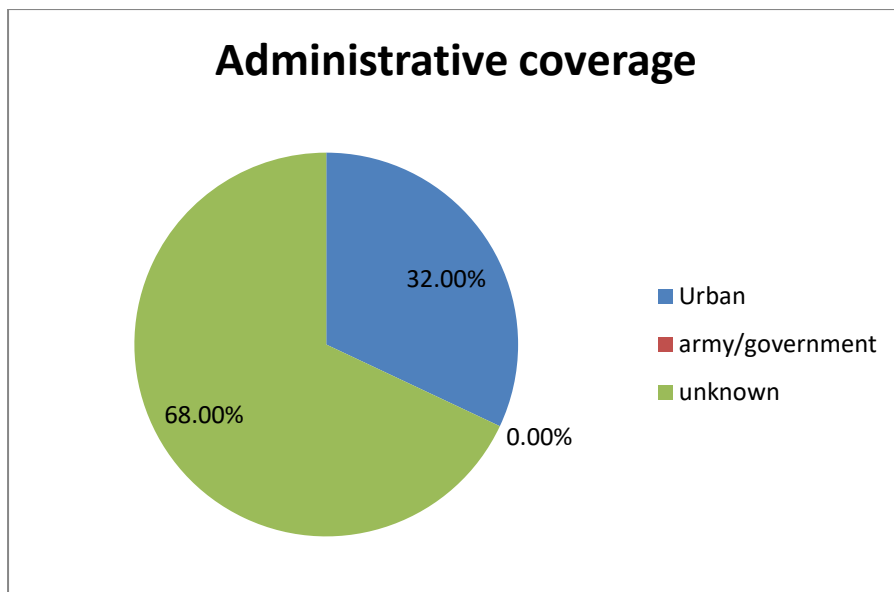


Figure VI\_18: The share of the different administrative sectors in the government of Dacia

We have no way of telling the approximate extent of the districts that remained under governmental or military control in Roman Dacia. The rare epigraphic sources merely indicate the possible locations of these regions. Only the *procurator* of the gold-mining district in western Dacia is securely attested in the epigraphic record but, as the district had either been in its entirety or in part promoted to a *municipium* by the Severan period, this unit has been assigned to the civilian sector.<sup>1031</sup> Besides the gold-mines in the mountains of western Dacia, the Dacian provinces were also rich in iron ore, extensive pastures and salt-pans. Pertinently, these resources were not only economically less important than the gold mines, they were also probably more wide-spread and did not require a separate procuratorial office. Nevertheless, the rare references to the *conductores* of the iron-mines, salt-pans and pastures prove that these resources were state-owned rather than municipal property.<sup>1032</sup> We also need to consider the iron-mining areas in modern Banat and Hunedoara, in the west of the province.<sup>1033</sup> Excluding the official dedications of the concessionaires of the salt-pans and pastures that have been found in the vicinity of the main traffic-nodes and commercial centres of the province, Apulum and Micia, the rest of the evidence for the Dacian *salinae* comes from eastern Transylvania (Map VI\_78).<sup>1034</sup> In view of the environmental conditions in eastern Transylvania, it is very likely that the pastures leased by the provincial government were located in the same part of the province.<sup>1035</sup> Not only were there no official towns in this part of the province, but so far there is very little epigraphic evidence referring to magistrates of other Dacian cities.<sup>1036</sup>

Of course, this does not necessarily imply that the whole of eastern Transylvania and large portions of sub-Carpathian Dacia were imperial property. In most of the provinces of our study-area, the state-run sector comprised between 10 and 25% of the provincial territories, but this arrangement cannot

<sup>1031</sup> The district *procurator*: CIL III 1312; IDR III/3: 281, 285; the *Municipium* Ampelum and its institutions: CIL III 1293, 1308.

<sup>1032</sup> Balla 1979, 175-182; Benea 2008, 410-430.

<sup>1033</sup> Balla 1979, 180-182; Benea 2008, 416-417.

<sup>1034</sup> Benea 2007, 41.

<sup>1035</sup> Keefe 1972; Benea 2010, 50, also points out the grazing potential in the southwest of the province.

<sup>1036</sup> Russu ed. 1988.

be applied to Roman Dacia, a province that was exceptional in many other aspects, without due considerations.<sup>1037</sup> Nonetheless, it is impossible to exclude the possibility that considerable portions of the provincial territory were assigned to peregrine communities that remained under military supervision. The numerous auxiliary forts in the interior of the province certainly hint at this possibility, although a military presence was the rule rather than the exception in most of the state-run districts. Even if we allow that the peregrine communities constituted separate administrative units in Roman Dacia, the fact that not a single reference to their names and institutions survives in the written record clearly underlines their limited role and inferior juridical status in the provincial society.

The only alternative solution is to assume that the whole of eastern Transylvania and Oltenia were subdivided between the autonomous towns of Dacia. In practice, this would imply that the provincial territory was divided into extremely elongated strips of land, stretching from the Mureş Valley to the eastern Carpathians in Transylvanian Dacia and from the Jiu to the Olt and Danube in sub-Carpathian Dacia. This scenario would increase the average extent of the administrative unit to 9,000 sq. km. This is simply a hypothesis, unsupported by the archaeological and written sources. The evidence of *regiones* within the urban territories attested so frequently in Thrace and Moesia Inferior is so far missing in Dacia and the urban constellation in this province – with 80% of all towns located on a single road in the west of the province – would have been rather ill-suited to a similar arrangement.

The vast extent of the governmental and military sector in Roman Dacia appears far more credible in view of the fact that nearly 80% of all major settlements in this province grew up near army camps. The bulk of the human resources was dedicated to the defence of the long Dacian *Limes* and the exploitation of the natural resources. The civilian sector was limited to the fertile Mureş and Someş Valleys and to the Danube. Unquestionably, the autonomous towns of Dacia were instrumental in the exploitation of the mineral riches, but the regions in which these assets were located remained outside the municipal jurisdiction. The large number of permanently stationed troops offered a ready pool of administrators needed for the large tracts of land that remained under governmental control.

The withdrawal from Dacia in the second half of the third century AD means that there is no opportunity to look at the developments in the Late Antique period. We can only guess at the direction in which the Dacian experiment would have evolved after the reforms of Diocletian and Constantine. To judge by the developments in later historical periods, the urban geography of Roman Dacia was to a large extent exceptional. Five of the seven fortified towns in Medieval Transylvania are located in the eastern half of the Roman province, a region in which not a single urban centre developed under the Roman Empire.<sup>1038</sup> In contrast, the urban core of Roman Dacia was located in an area that was well-connected to the provinces on the right bank of the Danube. It was an extension of the dense urban constellation along the Danube, geared towards the exploitation of the natural resources of the province rather than securing a full administrative coverage.

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<sup>1037</sup> Piso 1995, 68; estimates that only about 10% of the provincial territory was governed by the army and the provincial government, a statement difficult to reconcile with his projections for the size of the urban territories.

<sup>1038</sup> Petrovics 2011, Figure 1.

## Conclusions: The correlates of territorial size and the administration of the study-area

The presence of considerable variations in the size of the administrative units is one of the hallmarks of Roman urbanization in our study-area. The differences are dramatic, even if we confine ourselves to the minimum estimates. They range from less than 500 sq. km in the northern Adriatic to 5,000 sq. km in the Thracian interior. It is important to stress that territorial size was irrelevant to the role of the urban centres. From an administrative point of view, both the smallest insular town in the northern Adriatic and the largest Thracian *civitas* were autonomous units of the same rank. Most of this chapter has been dedicated to presenting the evidence of the proposed territorial reconstructions. Inevitably, we have also tried to explore the ways in which this variability is related to the other aspects of the urban settlements. At the end of this long chapter a brief synthesis is in order, to ensure that the main points of the study are not lost from sight.

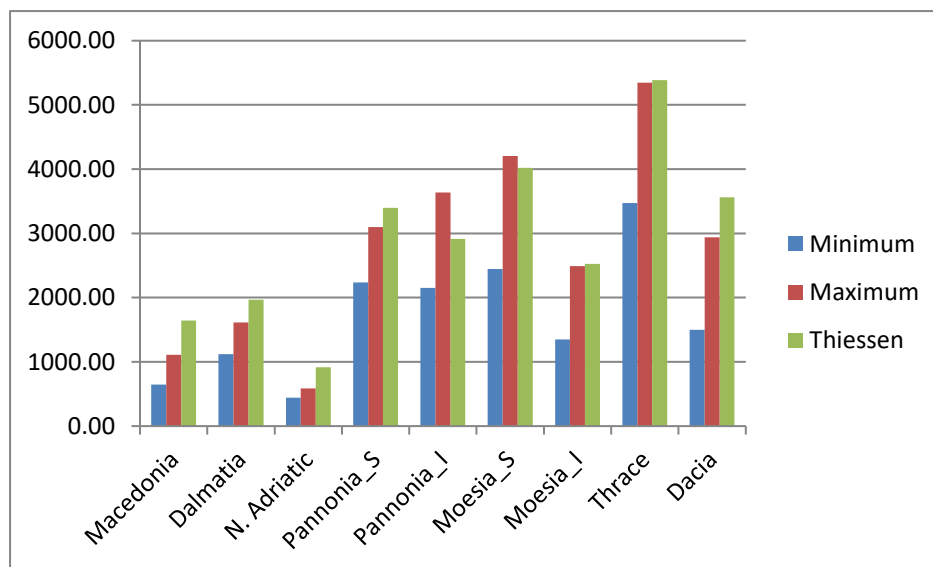


Figure VI\_19: Average sizes of the administrative territories per individual province

The principal divide obviously lies between the western and eastern half of our study-region, roughly coinciding with the zones of pre-Roman and newly founded towns (Figure VI\_19). On account of the Greek colonies on the western Pontic coast, Moesia Inferior is the area that lies in-between the two groups. By contrast in Thrace, the few coastal towns are completely overshadowed by the very large units in the interior of the province. The fact that these differences of scale are reflected both in the estimates based on geographical conditions or epigraphic sources and in the Thiessen polygons is a clear indicator that one of the underlining causes behind this divide were the variations in intercity distances between the two segments of the study-region. In the zone of pre-Roman urbanism, the distances between neighbouring towns almost never exceeded 30 km, whereas in most provinces in the interior of the peninsula they rarely fell below 50 km. The two main causes of this divergence are the different socio-economic conditions in the coastal areas and the interior at the time of the conquest and the evolution of Rome's imperialist policies. By and large, the Romans maintained the existing urban networks in ancient Epirus, Macedonia and on the Adriatic coast, recognizing and protecting the status of even the smallest self-governing communities. In the other provinces, there

was neither a stable pre-existing infrastructure nor an urban tradition comparable to the coastal zones. The only tangible framework in the interior of the Balkan Peninsula and the Danube provinces at the time of the conquest was that provided by the fluid tribal divisions and it is still unclear to what extent they were incorporated into the administrative maps of the provinces. In not a single province did it prove possible to find a full correspondence between the number of *civitates* and the later *municipia*. There is no way of telling if this was a result of the incomplete process of municipalization of the provinces or the merging of two or more *civitates* into a single administrative unit. The odd fact that does stand out is that the administrative units in the belt of newly founded towns were in any case much larger than the urban-based communities in the coastal zones or in the southern part of the peninsula.

The variable ecological conditions between the two principal zones of our study-area would have also been a very influential factor in the differences in the size of the administrative units. The island communities of the northern Adriatic occupied geographical niches that were several times smaller than the average micro-regional unit in ancient Epirus or Macedonia, that in their turn were dwarfed by the vast expanses of the Pannonian or Thracian plains. However, the large urban territories in the Dalmatian interior or in western Thrace demonstrate that the rugged relief was not the essential precondition for the emergence of small territorial units. Most of the *municipia* in these mountainous regions encompassed several different micro-regional units, often belonging to more than one drainage basin. In fact, the distribution of the extant boundary-stones demonstrates that outside the belt of pre-Roman urbanism, the physical geography rarely dictated the limits of the urban territories.

Closely related to this finding is the observation that most of the administrative units in the zone of pre-Roman urbanism were centred on towns that were much smaller in size than the newly founded colonies and *municipia* in the interior. In the preceding chapter, we have seen that these urban centres and their dependent communities could have easily provided themselves with enough food from the small patches of fertile land within one- or three-hours' walking distance from the central place. As a territorial entity, the pre-Roman town was on a different scale to the newly founded *municipia* and *civitates*. The old towns were both the administrative and economic centres of physically well-defined micro-regions. Breaking away from this pattern, the primary function of the newly founded towns in the Balkan interior was to be the administrative centres of large regional units. Because of their large territories and their excentric locations they would not have been in position to provide market services to every corner of their administrative territories. In theory, their large territories should have enabled them to outgrow the pre-Roman *poleis*, but in a number of cases this projected outcome failed to materialize.

On a more general level, the investigations in this study demonstrate the lack of positive correlation between the rank and built-up areas of the towns and their territorial sizes. Three or four of the five largest agglomerations in our study-region had average sized administrative territories, measuring less than 2,500 sq. km.<sup>1039</sup> Even in the top ten, no more than two urban centres had territories larger than 3,000 sq. km. More to the point, the size of the population in most of these settlements would have exceeded the agricultural potential of their immediate hinterlands. The most extreme examples are the *municipia* that developed near the legionary camps on the Danube, like Singidunum or

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<sup>1039</sup> It is important to stress that the territories in question belonged to the civilian towns that emerged near the legionary camps. If detached from the legionary camps and *canabae*, these settlements would belong to the same size-range as the average autonomous town in the Balkan and Danube provinces.

Viminacium, with territories smaller than 1,000 sq. km. These examples only serve to highlight the special place and privileges enjoyed by the military agglomerations and their independence of the agrarian potential and other natural riches in their hinterlands. The most sensible conclusion to be drawn from this juxtaposition of the territorial sizes and built-up areas is that, although an average to large territorial size was an essential precondition for the existence of a large town, it was not necessarily the decisive factor behind urban growth.

In some cases, the most valuable resource in the urban territories were the inter-regional roads that passed through the area or the presence of good natural harbours, or a combination of both.<sup>1040</sup> It stands to reason that towns like Dierna or Stobi would have made maximum use of their locations on important regional cross-roads. The proximity to their neighbouring towns or to the provincial and imperial frontiers would have confined the territorial extent of these towns. Neither Dierna nor Stobi can be qualified as a large town, but they were nevertheless slightly too big for their territories and a considerable segment of their urban populations must have been involved in trade or transport. These two examples serve to underline the absence of a positive correlation between the size of the territorial units and their genesis or geographical location. The micro-locations of some of the urban settlements, taken in conjunction with the small territorial extent suggest that, in addition to agriculture, these communities were involved in other export-oriented economies.

It has already been stressed that the military agglomerations did not have to rely solely on the resources available on their territories, as they had access to other channels of supply. However, there were other mechanisms that secured settlement growth among the top settlements of the regional hierarchy. Evidence of the activity of the aristocracy residing in the principal civilian towns has often been discovered throughout the provincial territories and, in some cases, beyond the provincial borders. They have been most prominently associated with the extra-municipal territories, the mining districts and frontier zone, but they were also regularly represented among the *curiales* of the neighbouring, smaller towns. The majority of the epigraphic sources that confirm these connections are irrelevant to the administrative divisions, but they are highly valuable as indicators of the scope and range of economic activities undertaken by the elites of the major towns. These documents suggest that the economic foci of the urban elites – whether that be the extraction of natural riches or provisioning the army – were located beyond the territory of their *civitas*. Likewise, the shortages of arable land in the urban territory could have been compensated by land ownership in the territories of other towns. This implies yet again that, as long as the chief economic assets were accessible to its elites, the territorial extent was not of crucial importance to the size and prosperity of a given town. Herein lays a possible reason for the stunted urban development in certain parts of our study-area. A large proportion of the economic profit from the areas endowed with valuable resources was siphoned off to the provincial capitals and major ports, while the costs of administering the large, rugged territories of the mining districts had to be shouldered by the native communities, often under the watchful eye of the provincial government. The political economy of the region largely revolved around these arrangements. Town-like settlements emerged only in a few of the extra-municipal districts – Domavia and Ampelum – and this was often a late development co-inciding with the withdrawal of private contractors and an increase in the involvement of the government. Looked at

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<sup>1040</sup> Cf. Keay, Earle 2011, Table 10.1.

from this angle, the small to moderate size of the territories of some of the major towns in the region would have been an advantage rather than a handicap.

The correlation between the territorial size-ranges and the socio-juridical status of the central places was equally small. Only in the territories of some veteran colonies is it possible to observe a consistent tendency of the territorial sizes to cluster in the range between 2,000 and 3,000 sq. km. Pertinently, this group is relatively extensive, including at least one or two colonies from every province of our study area. Too little is known about the economy of these towns to claim that they form a truly coherent group and the epigraphic record from their countryside indicates that the composition and the economic interests of their elites could be variable. This should not blind us to the possibility that the colonies with a predominantly agrarian orientation would have required a certain minimum of arable land that should have produced similarly sized territories. The fact that many of the veteran colonies were of roughly equal size serves to underline this point.

Looking at their territorial sizes, the *municipia* make up by far the most heterogeneous group of urban settlements. They are spread across virtually the entire spectrum of size-categories, from the tiny *municipia* on the eastern Adriatic coast to the Latin *municipia* that were the centres of vast territorial units in the continental parts of the study-area. From a purely logistical point of view, the persistence of the small territorial unit – smaller than 1,000 sq. km - entails neither particular difficulties nor does it require special conditions. The great majority of these *municipia* were small communities that could live comfortably off the land and the resources available in their immediate hinterlands. In this respect, the juridical status is irrelevant to the territorial extents of these towns. Both in terms of built-up area and territorial size, they are in the same basket as the pre-Roman *poleis*, although the group has been extended to include some *municipia* that emerged near the strategic points on the imperial and provincial frontiers. Even though they were no less autonomous than the veteran colonies, the authority of the elites based in these *municipia* was far more restricted. Both groups enjoyed the same juridical status, even though their economies and administrative apparatus are not readily comparable.

Far more intriguing is the group of Latin *municipia* that occupied the opposite end of the territorial size spectrum. These are the large urban territories that, with the mining districts, made up much of the interior of the provinces. Most notable is the fact that this group often included the so-called “small *municipia*”, communities known only from a handful of inscriptions and, in some cases, lacking a recognizable central place. At first sight, it seems impossible to try to disentangle the paradox of vast extents of difficult land governed by towns whose only surviving memory are their obscure names.

At this stage we are convinced that the explanation for this phenomenon lies outside the size, status or economic profile of these urban centres. Looking at the maps of population densities of the different nation-states that constitute our study-area reveals that the regions featuring low population densities coincide with marked regularity with the largest administrative units. The higher the population density, the smaller the size of the administrative unit or the higher the number of sub-units. There seems no reason that the same principle should not have applied in Antiquity. The largest prefectures in early twentieth century Albania were located in the mountainous, continental parts of the country.<sup>1041</sup> The territorial units on the coastal plains were two to three times smaller, with Tirana,

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<sup>1041</sup> The Naval Intelligence Division 1945, *cf.* Figures 41 and 25.

the capital and most populous town in the country, governing by far the smallest administrative unit (Map VI\_79). A similar tendency can be observed on the administrative map of the kingdom of Yugoslavia in the 1920s (Map VI\_80).<sup>1042</sup> The largest prefectures or *oblasti* were located in the western half of the country, coinciding with the karstic regions of the Dinaric Alps, namely, inner Dalmatia and parts of Moesia and Pannonia Superior. In contrast to Antiquity, the smallest administrative units were located in the fertile and densely populated valleys of the Morava and Sava rather than on the Adriatic coast, on which population densities were comparable to those found in the Dalmatian interior.<sup>1043</sup> In this particular case, the lack of continuity between Antiquity and the modern period is not necessarily related to changes in the demographic map of the province, but to the disadvantageous juridical status of the communities that lived in these valleys. Nevertheless, the negative correlation between population density and the size of the administrative units persisted.

It is not too difficult to account for this coincidence between the oversized territorial units and low population density. The sparsely populated mountainous parts of the Balkan Peninsula offered a very limited base for urban growth, regardless of the time-period in question. The persistence of the ancient tribal identities might also have been an additional inhibitive factor, as this organization favoured the survival of multiple micro-regional centres and prevented potential investment in a single regional centre. It is no accident that the known examples of territorial fissions and the emergence of new administrative units occurred almost exclusively in the moderately sized territories of the largest and most prosperous towns rather than in the overstrained territories of the “small *municipia*” of the Balkan interior. This paradox seems inexplicable unless the implications of the variable population densities are considered. High population density implies both high urban densities and small urban territories. In the cases of the small *municipia* of the Balkan interior, the large territorial extents are a symptom of the weak demographic potential often coupled by a scarcity of natural resources. Judging by the degree to which the provincial government involved itself in the internal affairs of these towns, the cost of governing these extensive stretches of difficult terrain would have outweighed any potential benefits. This is reflected in the ubiquity of the *curatores* and *beneficarii* in the epigraphic corpus of the Balkan towns and, even more directly, by the heavy investment in defensive infrastructure in the large territories of the Thracian towns.<sup>1044</sup>

There was a great deal of continuity in the administrative map of the region between the first few centuries of the Roman Empire and later historical periods. Admittedly, in many provinces we have observed that, in the Late Roman period a number of new towns were introduced, chiefly in the territories of the largest urban centres or in the districts under military or governmental control. However, in most of the provinces the number of newly founded towns was limited and, without further studies, it is impossible to be certain if this growth was accompanied by urban contraction and

<sup>1042</sup> The Naval Intelligence Division 1944b, Figure 67.

<sup>1043</sup> The Naval Intelligence Division 1944b, Figure 1; a similar tendency can be observed on the administrative map of the Austrohungarian Empire in the late nineteenth century: <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/hungary/counties.html>; note that the large counties occupy roughly the same parts of the country as they did in the Roman period.

<sup>1044</sup> Evidence of *curatores*: Dacia: Petolescu 2011, 83-109; Moesia Inferior: Suceveanu, Barnea 1991, 97; Dalmatia: Bojanovski 1988, 56-57. The Balkan and Danube provinces feature the highest number of urban *stationes* in the Roman Empire: Ott 1995, 88-100; this author presupposes a fairly narrow range of duties assigned to these officers, nevertheless they remain the only representatives of the provincial government outside the provincial capital.



decline in the existing urban settlements.<sup>1045</sup> Overall, the stability in the number of autonomous units over long periods of time is striking. Where the differences are more pronounced, as in Dacia or Moesia Superior, it is likely that the shortage of autonomous towns was compensated for by an unknown number of state-governed districts. This long-term stability in the number of administrative districts in the region points to their primary role as administrative and tax-collecting units.

Far more significant than the changes in the number of administrative units were the transformations in their spatial distribution in the post-Antique period. Although no development would fit each case, two major trends can be observed. One is the urban withdrawal from the coastal areas, observed both on the Adriatic and the Black Sea coasts.<sup>1046</sup> Both regions underwent a period of urban decline after the end of Antiquity, although the timing and pace of this process differed between the two littorals. The other pronounced trend was the renewed urban growth in certain parts of the Balkan interior, often datable to the beginning of Late Antiquity. In a way, this last wave of urbanization was a rectification of the anomalies in the urban map of the previous era rather than any expansion into a new ecological zone. For regions like the Morava Valley, the Drava or the Bosnian Valleys, the period of the High Empire was truly exceptional. These productive, well-connected regions show no evidence of autonomous towns in this period, although they had been densely populated in earlier periods and boasted at least one urban centre in later centuries. Although the Roman Empire introduced urban life to most parts of the Balkan Peninsula and the Danube, the urban map of the era preserved many of the features of the pre-Roman urban geography. Disregarding the military sector along the frontier, the urban core of the region remained within the coastal zone. The true urbanization of the interior took hold only with the emergence of the land-locked polities in the Middle Ages.

This uneven distribution of the autonomous towns meant that the urban coverage rarely surpassed 70% of the territories of individual provinces. This is true even of the demilitarized provinces, in which evidence of the presence of imperial domains or mining districts is scarce. The differences between the individual provinces are not inconsiderable. Again, there is an apparent divide between the western half of the study-area, in which the coverage by autonomous administrative units ranges between 60 and 70%, and the eastern half of the peninsula and Dacia in which it drops below 50% of the provincial territories. This is a fair indicator of the variable degree of urbanization of the provinces that constitute our study-area. The number of towns in provinces like Moesia Superior or Dacia barely reached ten, whereas in Dalmatia even the pessimistic estimate predicts no fewer than thirty autonomous towns. The sheer number of autonomous units in Dalmatia compensates for the presence of large mining districts and regions under military supervision in the continental parts of the province. On the other hand, in Thrace or Moesia Superior even the partial urban coverage is only made possible by extending the areas governed by the municipal authorities over very large swathes of territory. It is tempting to relate this difference to the varying roles of these groups of provinces in the regional economy. However, in the preceding chapters it has been demonstrated that the variable urban densities were dictated chiefly by the divergent histories of the urban networks in the western and eastern halves of the peninsula.

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<sup>1045</sup> Cf. Poulter 2002, 99-135.

<sup>1046</sup> This change was far more dramatic on the Adriatic than on the Black Sea coast, on which some of the coastal towns survived until the Ottoman period. The western Pontic coast: Poulter 2002, 114-115; Crampton 2005, 29-33. In Dalmatia there had been a drastic reduction in the number of coastal towns by Late Antiquity: Dzino 2014b, Map 1.

The study of the epigraphic sources has demonstrated that, in the majority of the provinces in our study-area, between 15 and 25% of the territory was under direct governmental control, excluding the specific cases of the *municipia* that developed in the mining districts or near the military camps (Map VI\_81).<sup>1047</sup> Of course, it might be sheer chance that such districts are not attested in greater numbers in Dacia or Thrace, provinces in which the autonomous administrative units covered no more than half of the provincial territory. Even in the parts of Italy X included in our study area and in Roman Macedonia, the only senatorial province in this region, the existence of special fiscal districts cannot be excluded. Therefore, it is a reasonable conclusion that the share of the governmental sector has surely been minimized.

In contrast to the autonomous towns, those districts that were brought under direct military or governmental control were evenly spread between the individual provinces of our study-area. They form a discontinuous arch, stretching from the Pannonian *ferrariae* in the northwest to the Black Sea coast in the southeast and over most of Roman Dacia. The best illustration of this is the distribution of the mineral resources. The provincial boundaries often cut through the wealthiest metalliferous regions of the Balkan Peninsula.<sup>1048</sup> These arrangements can hardly be ascribed to chance. As with the distribution of the military units, the prevalent tendency was to avoid the concentration of power in single administrative posts and to spread the concessions for ore-extraction evenly among the urban elites of the individual provinces. This makes it almost impossible to make a clear differentiation between the individual provinces in terms of their place and role in the political economy of the study-area. The inequalities in access to capital and resources were confined to individual provinces or smaller regional units. It is very difficult to recognize such disparities on a broader regional scale, a telling sign of the low degree of economic integration between the provinces of our study-area. Every individual province was made up of a densely urbanized core and outlying areas that either underwent minimum urban growth or remained under governmental or military control. The divide between the areas that exported taxes and raw materials postulated at the beginning of this chapter might not have been played out on a regional level, but it was the main organizing principle of the provincial economies.

The bulk of the territories of most of the provinces fell under the control of the autonomous administrative entities. However, urban coverage should not to be confused with the degree of urbanization. The civilian sector includes all territories in which municipal institutions have been attested, regardless of the presence of archaeologically identifiable urban centres. A slightly different image emerges when we try to distinguish between the autonomous units that developed an urban centre and those that remained non-urban, that is, the areas in which the central place is either archaeologically invisible or failed to emerge from under the shadow of the military fort (Map VI\_82). This exercise will throw a different light on the urban map of the peninsula, unmasking the veneer of urbanism cast by the large extent of the self-governing sector and simultaneously pointing to the areas in which the lack of autonomy did not prove a hindrance to the emergence of towns. In other words, one final distinction has to be made between the urban and non-urban administrative units in order to delineate the two principal components of the regional economy more sharply; the communities entitled to capital and privileges and those endowed with valuable natural resources.

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<sup>1047</sup> Cf. Piso 1995, 68.

<sup>1048</sup> Dušanić 1977, 65-66.

On the surface, the differences between the map showing the extent of the autonomous and governmental sector and that showing the distribution of the urban and non-urban districts are not spectacular. With a few exceptions, the zone of non-urban administrative units overlaps chiefly with the spread of the governmental and military districts, following the metalliferous zone along the Dinaric Alps, Mount Haemus and the Carpathian Range. It has merely become more compact and somewhat more extensive, engulfing much of eastern Dalmatia and nearly half of the territory of Moesia Superior. The close coincidence between the state-governed and non-urban belts is no accident. Cogently most of the non-urban *civitates* were adjacent to the mining districts or the areas under military control and this is another essential feature of the urban systems in our study-area. The efforts made to municipalize some of the mining regions or the outlying areas rarely resulted in any perceptible urban growth. At least until Late Antiquity, the area marked in blue on Map VI\_82 continued to figure as the rural outback of our study-region. At the same time, there are only a few shifts in the opposite direction. Only a handful of extra-municipal districts feature an identifiable urban centre unrelated to a military fort.

Once the number of autonomous units that failed to develop an archaeologically recognizable central place are considered, the belt of non-urban *civitates* expands into the Pannonian provinces and the areas of high urban density, coastal Dalmatia, Epirus and Macedonia. Although, both the small *municipia* of the Balkan interior and the declining *poleis* in the pre-Roman urban belt enjoyed an autonomous status, they hardly deserve an urban label. At both ends of the territorial spectrum, a fairly large number of self-governing units are encountered that failed to develop a central place that would meet the urban standards of their time. It was essential to consider this aspect of the administrative units in order to arrive at a fairer image of the level of urbanisation in our study-area. The number of autonomous units without an urban centre outnumbers the districts under governmental or military control by almost 50%. Earlier scholars were right to observe that, although the underlining tendency of the Roman government was to promote self-government on a local level, the variations in the distribution of labour, natural resources and privileges set a rigid limit to urban growth.