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THE RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AT *ULPIA OESCUS* BETWEEN 2013 AND 2018*

GERGANA KABAKCHIEVA**

Keywords: timber-earth military building, legionary camp, Early Roman soldier barracks, Roman legion, Roman colony, Late Roman residence, Roman architecture

Abstract: The author presents in this article the results of the latest archaeological investigations at Oescus, together with an overview of the older excavations in the researched area. They are located in the two sectors of the ancient city – the temple of Fortuna in the centre of the Roman colony and the big architectural ensemble south of the main street, *decumanus maximus*.

The oldest remains belong to the Early Roman soldier barracks-block, found in four trenches under the level of the stone pavement in the courtyard of the temple of Fortuna. The discovered remains consist of fragments of the timber poles from the construction of the barrack, a fireplace and some waste pits. The building technique is the timber-earth one.

The second part presents the remains of a building from the 2nd century AD, which is built with adobe above the low level of stone foundation. The building was richly decorated with red, black and white colour painting of the walls and plasters. The building was destroyed by fire and on its place was built then the Temple of Fortuna.

The third part of the paper concerns the new excavation and research of the big Achaean mosaic building, which was serving as a residence. New trenches were recently opened. The remains of two porticos were found. They show that the residence develops in the western direction. So far, this is the richest ornamented building discovered in *Ulpia Oescus*. The residence is dated to the Late Roman Age with two construction periods.

The results of these investigations contribute to the knowledge about the Roman colony of *Ulpia Oescus* (*Colonia Ulpia Oescensium*) and the remains of the Early Roman legionary camp of *legio V Macedonica* from the 1st century AD.

Cuvinte-cheie: construcție militară din lemn și pământ, castru de legiune, barăci din perioada romană timpurie, legiune, *colonia*, reședință romană târzie, arhitectură romană

Rezumat: În acest articol, autoarea prezintă atât rezultatele celor mai recente cercetări arheologice de la Oescus, cât și o privire de ansamblu asupra cercetărilor arheologice mai vechi. Cercetările s-au concentrat în două sectoare ale vechiului oraș – templul zeiței Fortuna, în centrul coloniei romane și marele ansamblu arhitectural situat la sud de *decumanus maximus*.

Cele mai timpurii descoperiri sunt reprezentate de barăcile soldaților din perioada romană timpurie, identificate în patru secțiuni, sub nivelul pavajului de piatră din curtea templului Fortunei. Descoperirile constau în fragmente de pari de lemn de la construcția barăcilor, o vatră și câteva gropi menajere. Barăcile sunt construite din lemn și pământ.

Cea de-a doua parte prezintă vestigiile unei clădiri datate în secolul al II-lea p.Chr., cu fundație din piatră și elevație din chirpici. Pereții clădirii au fost tencuiți și decorați cu picturi în culorile roșu, negru și alb. Clădirea a fost distrusă în urma unui incendiu, iar pe locul ei a fost clădit templul Fortunei.

A treia parte a articolului se referă la noile cercetări din marea clădire cu mozaic reprezentând o scenă din piesa de teatru „Aheii”, clădire care servea drept reședință. Noi secțiuni au fost cercetate recent. Au fost descoperite vestigii

* The article is written on the basis of the public lecture of the author that was presented at the “Vasile Pârvan” Institute of Archaeology in Bucharest, as part of the project “Civilian and military landscape at the Lower Danube during the Roman Age and Late Antiquity (1st-6th centuries)”, between the Bulgarian Academy of Science and the Romanian Academy (2018-2020).

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a două portice, care arată că reședința se dezvoltă în direcția vestică. Până în prezent, aceasta este clădirea cel mai bogat decorată găsită în *Ulpia Oescus*. Reședința este datată în perioada romană târzie, având două faze de construcție.

Rezultatele acestor cercetări contribuie la îmbogățirea cunoștințelor despre colonia romană *Ulpia Oescus* (*Colonia Ulpia Oescensium*) și despre vestigiile castrului unde a staționat *legio V Macedonica* în secolul I p.Chr.

Ulpia Oescus – *Colonia Ulpia Oescensium (Oescus)* (fig. 1) is the only Roman colony in Moesia Inferior, which was founded in AD 106, during the rule of Emperor Trajan (98-117)¹. Based on the latest research on this issue², the city of *Ulpia Oescus* was granted the status of a colony right after the end of the war. Before the emergence of the town, on this place was located the permanent legionary camp of the Fifth Macedonian Legion (*legio V Macedonica*) from the Early Roman period (AD 6-102)³, with one nine-year interruption in the period from AD 62 to 71. At that time the legion was sent to the East to take part to the wars of the Romans in Armenia and Persia and moved along the northern coast of the Black Sea to Armenia⁴.

Ulpia Oescus is located near Gigen village, Municipality of Guljanci, District of Pleven, *i.e.* between the lowest part of the stream of Iskar River (Latin name *Oescus*) and the Danube River (fig. 2). The place of the legionary camp was specially selected and was a strategic one⁵. Later, the Roman colony was built on the same place. The lands north and north-east of Oescus were swamps at that time⁶. This place, naturally defended, was chosen by the Romans as headquarters for the Fifth Macedonian Legion (fig. 3).

1. RESEARCH HISTORY

The first archaeological excavations in Oescus were carried out under the guidance of Vaclav Dobruski in 1904-1905. At that time, he was the director of the National Museum of Archaeology in Sofia. V. Dobruski made the first planned excavations in Oescus after a well-organized preparation. Even since 1890 he had collected a significant number of architectural and sculptural monuments on the site of the ancient city and transferred them to the National Museum of Archaeology⁷. Thus, he became acquainted with many of the ancient monuments and evaluated the meaning of the remains of the ancient city at that time. Among the monuments transferred from Oescus to the Museum was also the colossal size marble statue of a goddess. Its preserved height was of 3 m, without the head. The statue was not identified in the first publication⁸. Later, in an article signed by B. Filov, it was described as a statue of the Goddess Demeter⁹. In 1904-1905, V. Dobruski excavated part of the temple, but did not finish that research. He made excavations in the northern part of the Forum, where he found a large temple from the Roman Age. After a long period of interruption, a Bulgarian-Italian expedition worked at Oescus in 1941-1943. One of the targets of the research was a large *extra-muros* building, located near the southern fortification wall. The research was directed by Prof. Antonio Frova from Milan, Italy. The Bulgarian archaeologist, Ivanka Akrabova-Žandova, also took part at the excavation. The results were published by A. Frova¹⁰. The Italian archaeologist found the West gate of Oescus and sought the East gate of the town by the orientation of the main street (*decumanus maximus*). He didn't find the East gate because he didn't know that the street made a turn, observation made by T. Ivanov in 1970-1980¹¹.

¹ Kabakchieva 2000, p. 25-26.

² Kabakchieva 2014a, p. 181; Piso 2001, p. 17; Găzduc, Cociș 2004, p. 9; about the foundation of the Colonia Ulpia Trajana (Xanten, Germany) and the law principle of it, see Eck 2008.

³ Gerov 1948-1949, p. 6-7; Gerov 1950; Kabakchieva 2000, p. 23-24; Breeze 2011, p. 100.

⁴ Kabakchieva 2000, p. 23; Sarnowski 1987, p. 30; Ritterling 1925, Col. 1574.

⁵ Kabakchieva 2000, p. 96.

⁶ Kabakchieva 2000, p. 96-97, karta 8.

⁷ Dobruski 1890, p. 1-2.

⁸ Dobruski 1901, p. 753-754, fig. 39.

⁹ Filov 1910, p. 2-4.

¹⁰ Frova 1942-1943; Frova 1950.

¹¹ Ivanov 1990, p. 915-916; Ivanov, Ivanov 1998, p. 64-68.



Fig. 1. Map of the Moesia Inferior province (after Samowski 2014).



Fig. 2. The location of Oescus between the Iskar River and the Danube (Google maps).

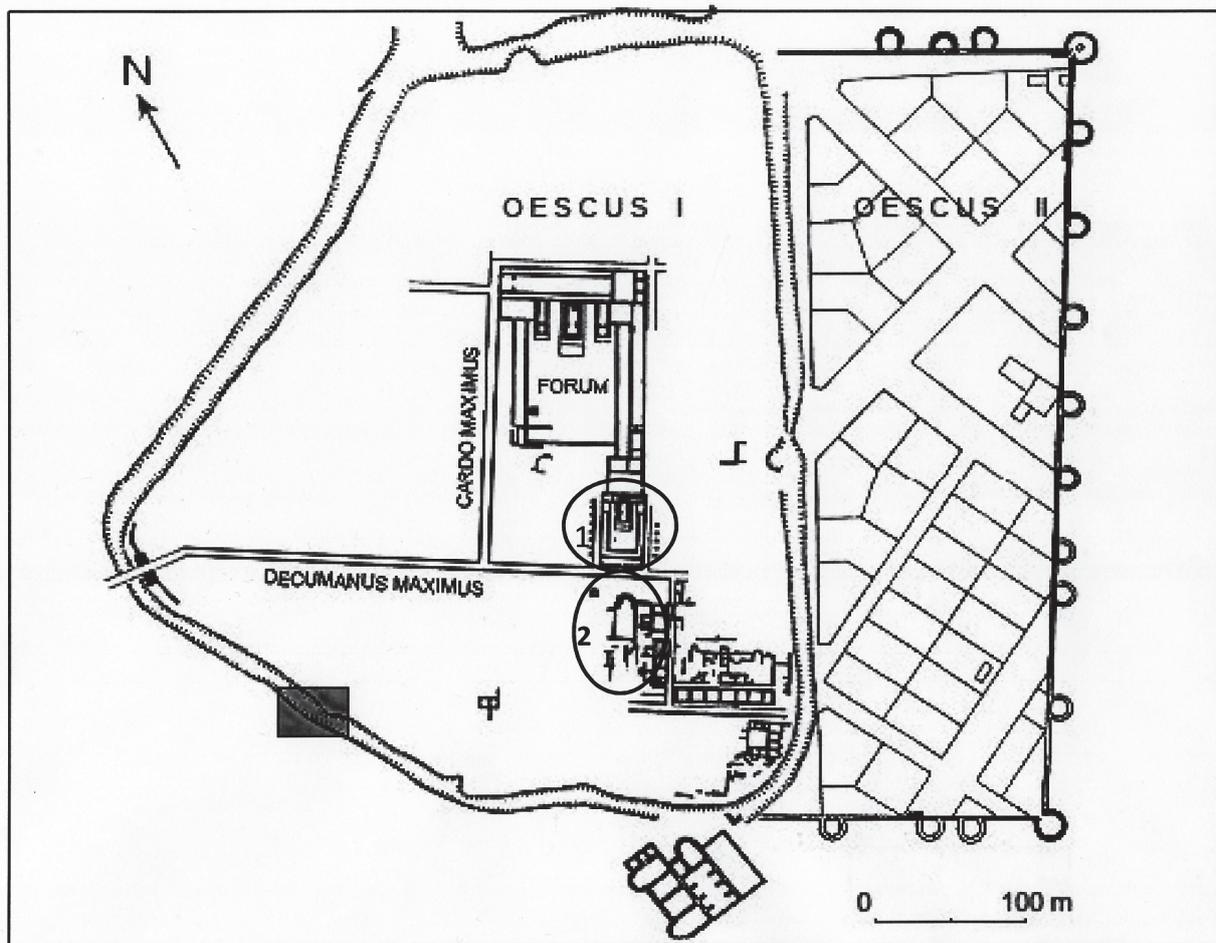


Fig. 3. Plan of Oescus: Oescus I – the Early Roman legionary camp overlapped by the Roman colony *Ulpia Oescus*; Oescus II – the Late Roman legionary camp. 1. Sector of the Temple of Fortuna; 2. Sector of the Achaeans mosaic building.

After the Second World War, excavations in Oescus were organised in the period 1947-1952, under the guidance of Teofil Ivanov. Two *thermae* were found in the south-eastern part of Oescus; a part of the Achaeans mosaic building, shops and a big section from the ancient streets near the mentioned buildings were also discovered¹². According to T. Ivanov, the most important results consisted in the discovery of the coloured floor mosaic, with a scene from the “Achaeans” of the Greek dramatist Menander, who lived in the 4th century BC. Based on the mosaic images and the inscription on them, T. Ivanov established that they referred exactly to this work of Menander (fig. 4). Until now, in the scientific literature, the Menander’s authorship of “Achaeans” is challenged. T. Ivanov wrote a book about the mosaic, which has already become worldwide known¹³. He interrupted the research of the building and didn’t come back to finish it.

In the 1970s, Prof. T. Ivanov made excavations in the centre of *Ulpia Oescus* where he studied the Temple of Fortuna, a significant part of the buildings of the Forum’s temples of Jupiter, Junona and Minerva, *i.e.* the Capitolium of the town, the Civil Basilica, a large building in the eastern part of the Forum complex; he also made excavations at the fortification systems of Oescus I and Oescus II. The results were published in many articles and a few monographs¹⁴. His first research in the central part of the ancient town was dedicated to the Temple of Fortuna. The temple complex was further studied¹⁵. The building inscription of

¹² Ivanov 1955; Ivanov 1957.

¹³ Ivanov 1954.

¹⁴ Ivanov, Ivanov 1998, with previous bibliography; Ivanov 2005, with previous bibliography.

¹⁵ Ivanov 1987; Ivanov 2005, p. 91-231.



Fig. 4. The coloured Achaeans mosaic from Oescus.

the temple was read and it was established that it was dedicated to the Roman Goddess Fortuna¹⁶, chosen by the inhabitants of *Ulpia Oescus* to protect the town. The temple was built with funds from the rich citizens of *Ulpia Oescus* and the college of craftsmen during the reign of the Emperor Commodus (AD 180-192), which was also revealed by the preserved building inscription¹⁷. Based on this data, T. Ivanov concluded that the temple was built in the period AD 190-191¹⁸.

Since 1989, the archaeological excavations at *Ulpia Oescus* were led by the author of this study. They were not made constantly but with smaller or larger hiatuses due to financial reasons. One of the main purposes of these excavations was the research of the Early Roman legionary camp remains in Oescus. Trenches were also made in different places in the fortified territory of the Roman colony: in the north-western part of the Forum and in the south-eastern and south-western part of the town¹⁹. Remains and materials were found from the two periods when Fifth Macedonian Legion was garrisoned here in the 1st century AD. In the period 1998-2009, a big section from the fortification system from the time of the legionary camp and the Roman colony in the southern end of Oescus²⁰ was examined. It was established that the route of the southern fortress wall in the Roman Age and until the end of Antiquity was changed²¹. There were finds from the earliest fortress wall, which was wood-and-earth-fill and dates from the time of staying of the legion in Oescus, *i.e.* in the period AD 6-9²². Remains were excavated from the second fortress wall, which was earth-and-stone and was built at the beginning of the seventh decade of the 1st century AD²³. This fortification system was used until AD 102, when the Fifth Macedonian Legion was transferred from Oescus to the north of Lower Danube in connection with the Dacian wars of Emperor Trajan (AD 98-117). During the excavations of the preserved section of the earth-and-stone wall in its base

¹⁶ Ivanov 1987, p. 27-38.

¹⁷ Ivanov 1987, p. 31-34.

¹⁸ Ivanov 2005, p. 137-138.

¹⁹ Kabakchieva *et alii* 1990; Kabakchieva 1996; Kabakchieva 1997; Kabakchieva 2000; Kabakchieva 2004, p. 105.

²⁰ Kabakchieva *et alii* 2001; Kabakchieva, Lazarova, Popova 2001; Kabakchieva, Lazarova 2005; Kabakchieva, Lazarova 2006.

²¹ Kabakchieva, Lazarova, Popova 2001.

²² Kabakchieva 2010, p. 301-302.

²³ Kabakchieva, Lazarova, Popova 2001.

was found a coin – a shekel, which was minted in Jerusalem at the time of Emperor Nero (AD 54-68)²⁴. This coin was the first of its kind found during the archaeological excavations in Bulgaria (fig. 5). From historical sources, it is known that the Fifth Macedonian Legion participated in the suppression of the rebellion of the Jews in Jerusalem during the sixth decade of the 1st century AD²⁵ before returning to its old camp at the Lower Danube in AD 71. This explains why the above-mentioned coin was discovered in the Early Roman legionary camp at Oescus.



Fig. 5. Bronze coin – shekel, minted in Jerusalem at the middle of 1st century AD.

During the research of the southern fortress wall, about 40 m of the stone fortress wall of the Roman colony were found, with a few corrections on it. It was built in front of the earth-and-rock fill fortification system from the 1st century AD. At the examined place, the two walls intersect each other and this was the reason to preserve a certain part of the earlier one. Big stone blocks from the latter were used in the fortification structures of the Roman colony²⁶. In Oescus and the region around it, as well as around the entire length of the right bank of the Lower Danube, there has always been a problem with the stone building material. In close proximity of the camp and, later, of the Roman colony, there are no natural stone formations. The earliest quarry that was used for building an earth-rock fill fortification system in Oescus was located 40 km south of Oescus, at Kreta village, Pleven District, along the stream of Vit River (ancient *Utus*). Stone belongs to sedimentation rock²⁷. It is easy to process but is non-durable. Later, in 2nd-3rd centuries AD, big deposits of limestone were found, the quarries developed, and around them was established the settlement *Lapidarius*²⁸, which existed until the end of the 6th century AD. The fortification system of the Roman colony had already been built by the time the Emperor Trajan (fig. 6). It was maintained and repaired until the time of the Second Gothic War (AD 376-378)²⁹. According to data left by Procopius, during the Late Antiquity, an attempt to restore the fortifications of Oescus I was made at the time of the Emperor Justinian I (AD 527-565)³⁰. During the latest excavations along the route of the southern fortress wall, traces of that activity were found in that sector³¹. From Jordanes³², another author important for the Late Antiquity of the Lower Danube, we learned that Huns and other tribes have settled near Oescus at the middle of 5th century AD. The name of one of these settlements is also known – *Hunion*, which, according to D. Mitova-Džonova, is located to the south-west from Oescus³³, along the stream of Iskar River.

²⁴ Kabakchieva *et alii* 2001.

²⁵ Joseph. *BJ*, VII, 4(3).

²⁶ Kabakchieva, Lazarova, Popova 2001, p. 69.

²⁷ Sultanov 2005, p. 137-138.

²⁸ For *Lapidarius*: Procop. *Aed.*, IV, 6; Beševliev 1955, p. 285.

²⁹ Kabakchieva 2015a, p. 200.

³⁰ Procop. *Aed.*, IV, 6.

³¹ Kabakchieva 2004.

³² Jord. *Get.*, 267.

³³ Mitova-Džonova 1985, p. 279.



Fig. 6. The inner side of the southern stone fortification's wall of the Roman colony *Ulpia Oescus*.

In the recent years (2013-2018), the archaeological research at *Ulpia Oescus* was made south of the Forum of the ancient town. We continued to unearth the big architectural complex known as the Achaeans Mosaic Building. In 2017, excavations were made below the ancient level of the Temple of Fortuna, which was located near the south-eastern end of the Forum Complex. The results of this recent research will be presented chronologically, *i.e.* we will first examine the results of the research of the Early Roman remains and materials beneath the Temple of Fortuna as well as those from the building that existed there in the period AD 106-190 and then we will present those from the Achaeans Mosaic Building.

2. RESEARCH AT THE TEMPLE OF FORTUNA SECTOR

Archaeological excavations below the level of the stone covering of the inner courtyard of the Temple of Fortuna were made in August 2017 (see the general plan of Oescus, fig. 3). They have been organised in connection with the project for conservation and restoration of the Temple of Fortuna prepared at that time³⁴. The purpose of the research was to clarify the issue in terms of the remains on which the Temple of Fortuna was erected and the traces that have been preserved by the Early Roman legionary camp in this part of Oescus. Four trenches were made at different places in the southern half of the temple ensemble (fig. 7).

³⁴ Kabakchieva 2018b, p. 186-187.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AT OESCUS IN 2017
TEMPLUM FORTUNAE, M 1:250

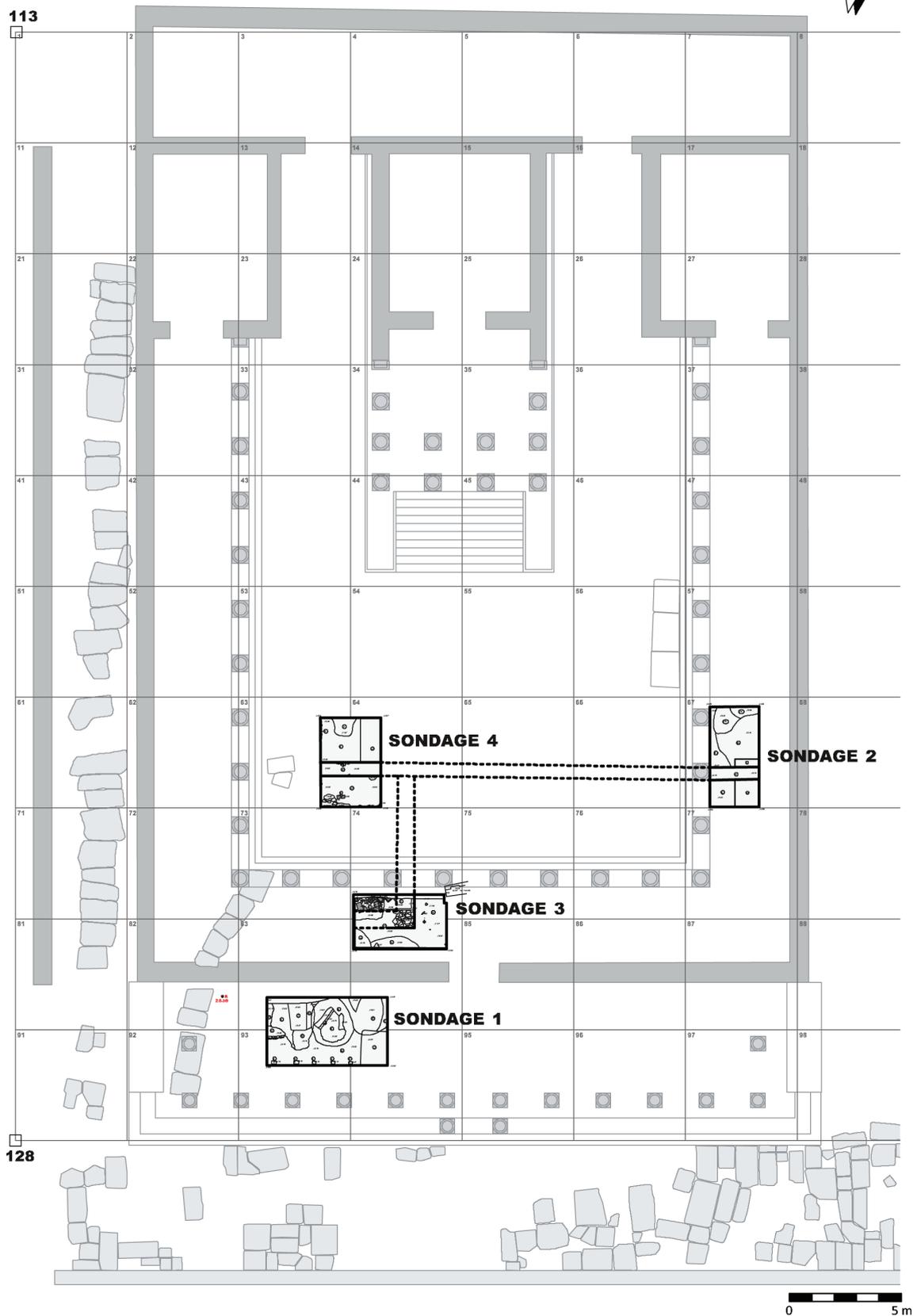


Fig. 7. Plan of the Temple of Fortuna and the trenches from 2017.

Research of the remains of soldier barracks-block from the Early Roman legionary camp

Remains of the soldier barracks-block were found in Trench 1. The size of the trench is 7×5 m. The remains of a timber-earth barrack were discovered at a depth of 2.50 m below the level of the courtyard of the temple complex (levels 25.36-25.80 m). These remains belong to a construction that was built during the first construction phase, at the time of the Early Roman legionary camp of the Fifth Macedonian Legion in Oescus, *i.e.* in the period AD 6-41³⁵. The level where the remains were found corresponds to the one where similar constructions were investigated in other sectors³⁶. Only the levels of the earliest cultural layers in the trenches around the fortress wall of the first timber-earth legionary camp differ. In this part, due to the natural sloping of the land from north to east, the levels of the earliest remains from the construction are found lower *i.e.* at levels below 23 m³⁷. In Trench 1, under a thick layer of debris from 3rd-4th centuries (fig. 8) and below a levelling layer, remains of the Early Roman construction were found. The trench uncovered parts of five timber poles from the supporting structure (fig. 9a), which were located in a layer of yellow clay. The cross-section of the poles is 0.20/0.25-0.30 m. Their preserved height is 0.50-0.60 m and is very well outlined on the southern profile (fig. 10). The distance between the pillars is 0.90-1.00 m. They are visible as a row in the southern end of the trench, and are oriented east to west. The soldier barrack-block was built of clay, timber poles and beams. An area of 5 m from the length of the barrack and 2 m from its width was studied. The barrack developed towards the east and its length may have not been correctly determined. It is the same about width. Some similar soldier barracks from the military camps and forts from the Early Roman period in the Roman Empire show that the dimensions are different³⁸. In the northern part of the barrack, and 4 m from its west end, a fireplace was located, with a diameter of 1.10-1.20 m (fig. 11). A part of the fireplace extends outside the barrack. It was repaired several times, which shows that it was used for a long period.



Fig. 8. Remains of Late Roman structure in Trench 1 under the level of the stone pavement from the courtyard of the temple.

³⁵ Kabakchieva 1997, p. 388-389; Kabakchieva 1999, p. 488-489; Kabakchieva 2000, p. 109-110; Kabakchieva 2010, p. 301-302. For the early displacement of the Fifth Macedonian Legion to the region of the Lower Danube, see also Gerov 1950; Gerov 1948-1949, p. 6-7; Suceveanu 1991, p. 25.

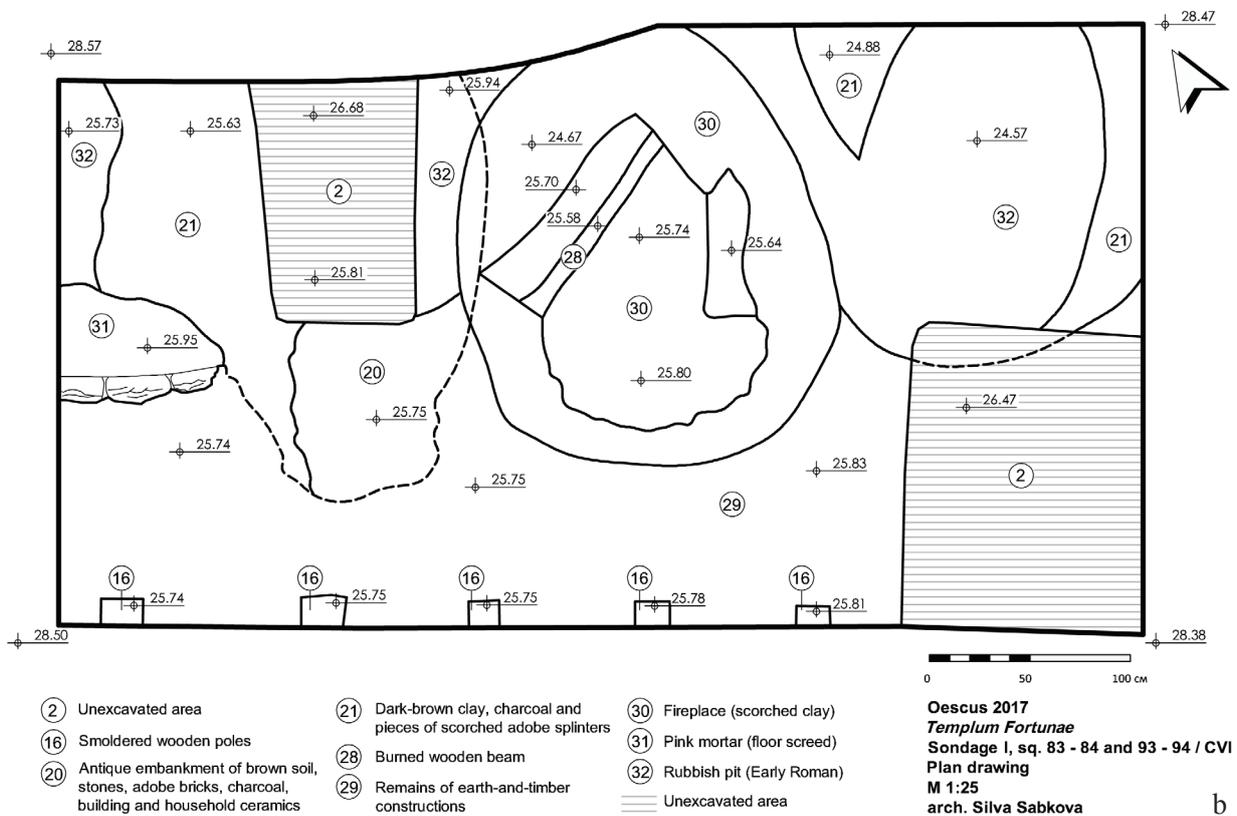
³⁶ Kabakchieva 2000, p. 31-32.

³⁷ Kabakchieva 2010, p. 301-302.

³⁸ Johnson 1983, p. 190-196, 300-303, Abb. 129, 206; Willems, van Enckevort 2009, p. 55-56, fig. 17; Breeze 2011, p. 34-42.



a



b

Fig. 9. Remains of the soldier barrack from Early Roman legionary camp: picture (a) and graphic view (b).

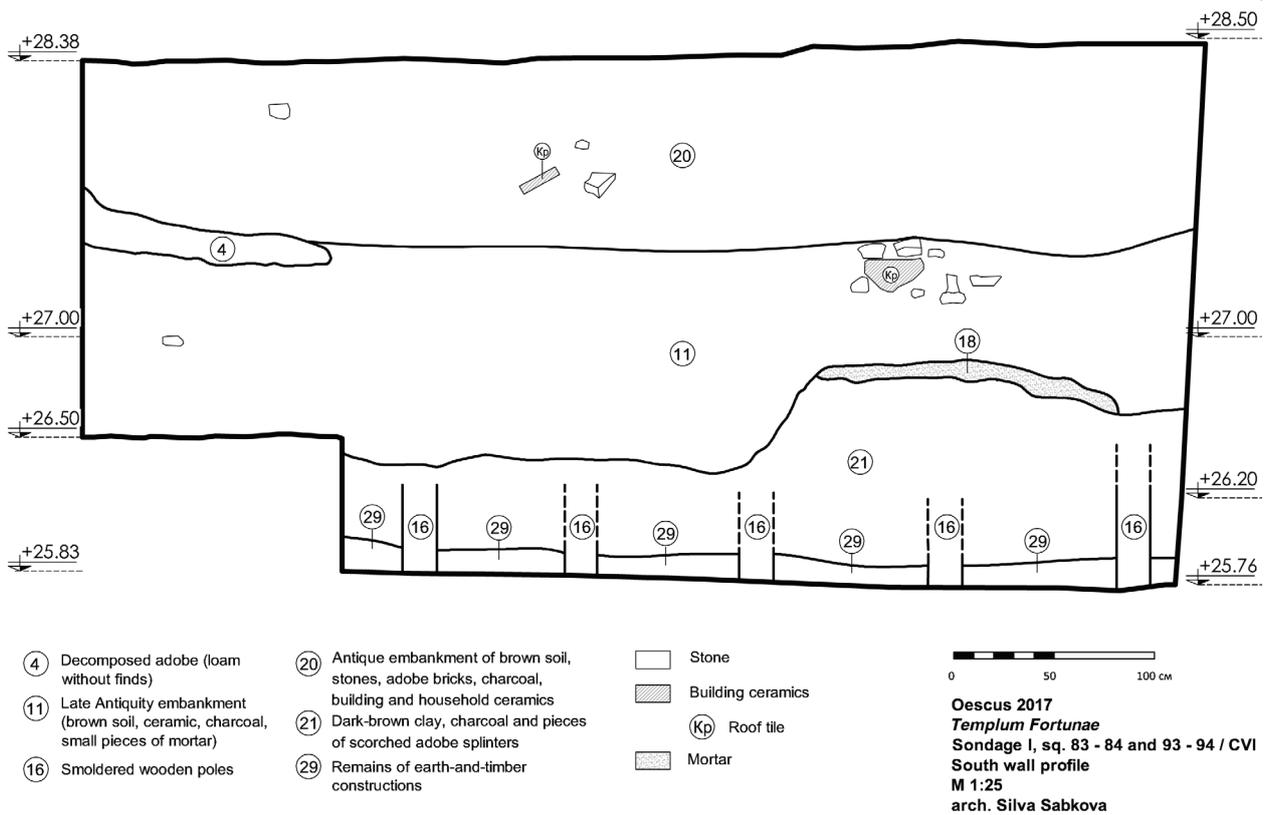


Fig. 10. South profile of the Trench 1, with poles of the timber-earth soldier barracks – block of the first phase of construction.

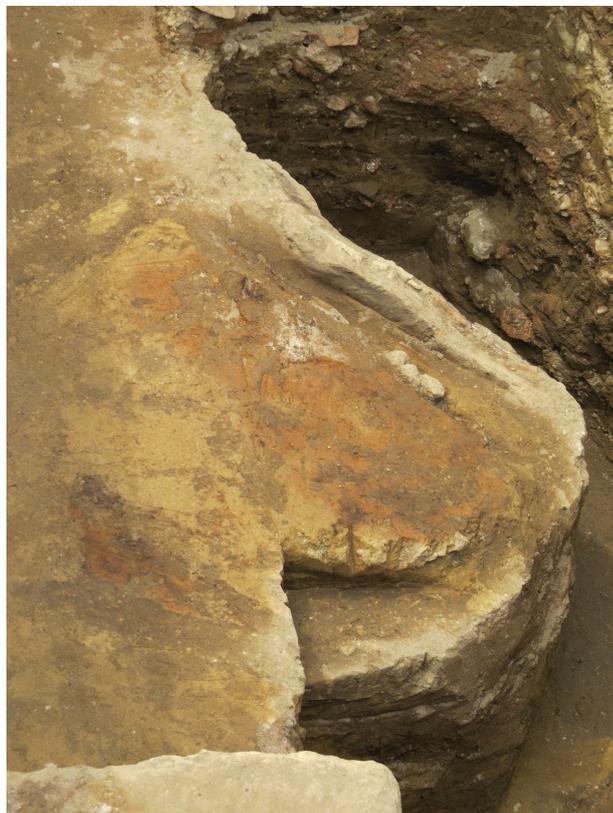


Fig. 11. Fireplace remains of the barrack.

A fireplace with the same size was found during the excavations in the legionary camp of the Augustus' Eighth Legion in Novae, near Svištov³⁹. Waste pits near the barrack were studied, synchronous with the occupation in this part of the legionary camp. In Oescus, these are remains from the second soldier barrack dating from the first phase (AD 6-41) of the first construction period of the Fifth Macedonian Legion stationing there⁴⁰. The first barrack was located south of the west end of the *decumanus maximus* of the Roman colony⁴¹. Unlike the newly found barrack, the other is oriented with its longitudinal axis north-south. The newly found barrack probably belonged to the first cohort.

Pits and embankments from the time of the legionary camp of the 1st century AD were uncovered in Trenches 2, 3 and 4 as well as different finds from the inhabitation of the area at that time⁴². The earliest coin is an *as* of Octavian Augustus (27 BC - AD 14) from year 7 BC. It is part of a small collective find uncovered in Trench 4 (fig. 12). The bronze coin-halves from the time of the first Roman Emperor Octavian Augustus are also interesting (fig. 13). Such coins were also found during the excavations of the first soldier barrack (Qu. 20/CXVI) from the Early Roman legionary camp in Oescus⁴³. It is known that the bronze coin-halves were cut at the time of the rule of Octavian Augustus⁴⁴ because there was a shortage of cash for payment of the soldiers. Some of the Early Roman coins have counter-marks dated around the middle of the 1st century AD (fig. 14). The total number of coins from that period is 18. The rest are *asses*, some of which are severely worn out due to prolonged use.

In addition to the coins, two bronze brooches (*fibulae*) were found in the trenches. One of them is well preserved and belongs to the type 3, according to the Bibracte typology⁴⁵, or type "Langton-Down"⁴⁶ (fig. 15). At Bibracte, these *fibulae* were produced since the 2nd century BC to AD 20-25. This type was distributed in the western parts of the Roman provinces, not only in Gallia and Raetia, but in Pannonia, Italia and areas of the present-day Germany and England, too. The bow of the fibula from Oescus is decorated with longitudinal fine lines and short, transversal lines (length of 2.9 cm). It is considered that this type of bronze brooches originates from Gallia or Raetia and is connected with the Celtic *fibulae* production from the latest Latené period⁴⁷. Undoubtedly this fibula is imported to the region of the Lower Danube from the western parts of the Empire⁴⁸. In the region of Lower Danube, similar *fibulae* are known from several archaeological sites in Serbia⁴⁹, as well as from the Early Roman military fort Almus (Lom, Bulgaria)⁵⁰. Taking into account the context of discovery, the new find from Oescus is dated in the period AD 10-15. The other fibula is a version of the so called "Aucissa" *fibulae* (fig. 16). The pin is missing. It is similar to the type 22 of the typology of M. Feugère⁵¹. A similar brooch was found in one of the western necropolises of Poetovio⁵² (Ptuj, Slovenia), with a dating from the 20/10 BC to the first half of the 1st century AD. Probably, the find from Oescus has the same dating. The origin of the type is in northern Italy, where *fibulae* with the inscription "Aucissa" were discovered⁵³. These *fibulae* are widespread from England to the province of Pannonia and the Balkan lands. Generally, the type is dated from the last quarter of the 1st century BC to the end of the first half of the 1st century AD⁵⁴.

³⁹ Dyczek 2016, p. 438.

⁴⁰ More about the construction periods and phases of the legionary camp from the Early Roman period in Oescus: Kabakchieva 1993, p. 85-87; Kabakchieva 1999, p. 487-489; Kabakchieva 2000, p. 109-110.

⁴¹ Kabakchieva 1999, p. 487-489.

⁴² Kabakchieva 2018b, p. 186-187.

⁴³ Kabakchieva 1999, p. 488.

⁴⁴ Chantraine 1989, p. 73.

⁴⁵ Büchsenschütz, Guillaumet, Paunier 1991, p. 33-35, fig. 1, Type 3.

⁴⁶ Ettliger 1973, p. 79; Genčeva 2004, p. 79, T. 29, 2.

⁴⁷ Feugère 1978, p. 169-170; Behrens 1954, p. 223.

⁴⁸ Büchsenschütz, Guillaumet, Paunier 1991, p. 35.

⁴⁹ Petković 2010, p. 45-46, T. IV, type 6.

⁵⁰ Kovrig 1937, p. 115; Dautova-Ruševljan, Brukner 1992, p. 83-84, T. 10-11; Genčeva 2004, p. 37-46.

⁵¹ Feugère 1985, p. 312, 323-324.

⁵² Istenič 2000, p. 152, Fig. 49, grave 471.

⁵³ Behrens 1950, p. 8.

⁵⁴ Behrens 1950, p. 8-9; Feugère 1978, p. 169-170; Ettliger 1973, p. 79-80.



Fig. 12. Bronze coin of Emperor Octavian Augustus from 7 BC.



Fig. 13. Bronze half-coin of Emperor Octavian Augustus.



Fig. 14. Bronze coin with counter-mark from first half of the 1st century AD.



Fig. 15. A small bronze fibula.



Fig. 16. Bronze fibula, version of the "Aucissa" type.

The number of the fragments of the imported terra sigillata is small, but they are important for the dating of the cultural layers and remains. Different fragments of plates were found – among them *Conspectus Formarum* 20 and 21 from Arezzo⁵⁵, one of them with an appliquéd rabbit (fig. 17). The other shape is represented by the small bowls *Conspectus Formarum* 34, with appliquéd wine leaves or rosettes⁵⁶ (fig. 18). The sigillata forms examined above are the most distributed in Oescus and other Early Roman military stations on the right bank of the Lower Danube⁵⁷. These were found in all the examined layers of the first phase of the Early Roman legionary camp in Oescus⁵⁸.

In the investigated area of Trench 1 were found cultural layers and artefacts from the second half of the 1st century AD, too. It means that they are from the time of the second stay of the Fifth Macedonian Legion in Oescus during the period from AD 71 to AD 102. Pieces from bowls *Conspectus Formarum* 39 were found in these levels, of Italian origin, belonging to the Tardo-Padana group⁵⁹. Pieces of bowls *Dragendorff* 35 were also found in these levels, imported from southern Gaul (fig. 19). Both are decorated with "barbotino technik". The remains are burned very badly by a fire (fig. 20). Between them are a lot of fragments of glass vessels. Most probably, the legionary camp of the Fifth Macedonian legion was purposefully set on fire when leaving Oescus in AD 102, at the time when the legion was moved to the north of the Lower Danube for Trajan's wars in Dacia.

⁵⁵ Ettliger *et alii* 1990, p. 86-90.

⁵⁶ Ettliger *et alii* 1990, p. 112-113.

⁵⁷ Dimitrova-Milčeva 2000, p. 5-7, T. 1-4; Kabakchieva 2000, p. 53-54, T. 8-9.

⁵⁸ Kabakchieva 2000, p. 53-55, T. 8-9.

⁵⁹ Ettliger *et alii* 1990, p. 120-121.

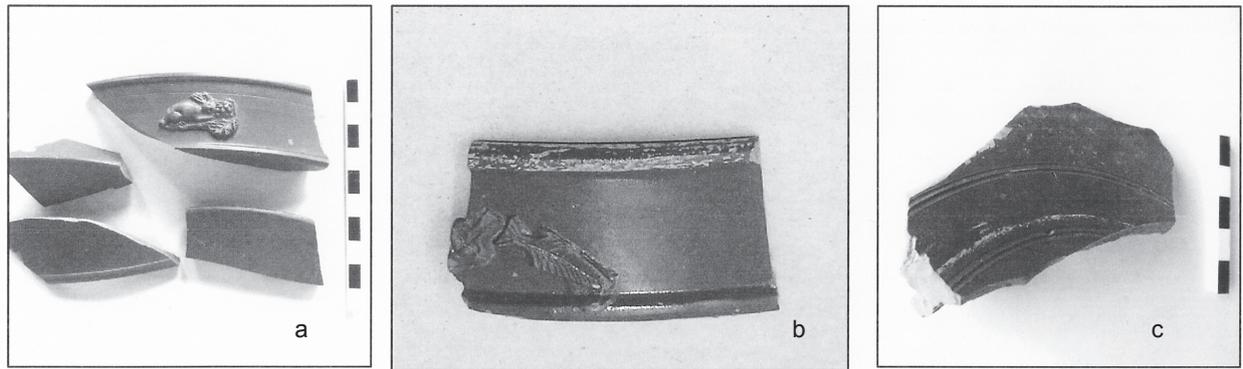


Fig. 17. Italian *terra sigillata*, plate fragments.

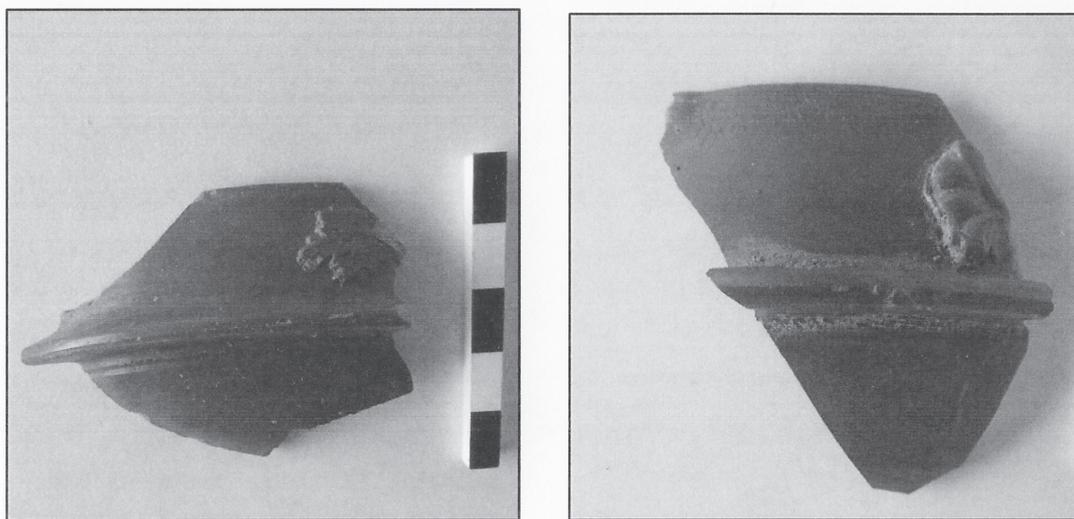


Fig. 18. Italian *terra sigillata*, bowl fragments.

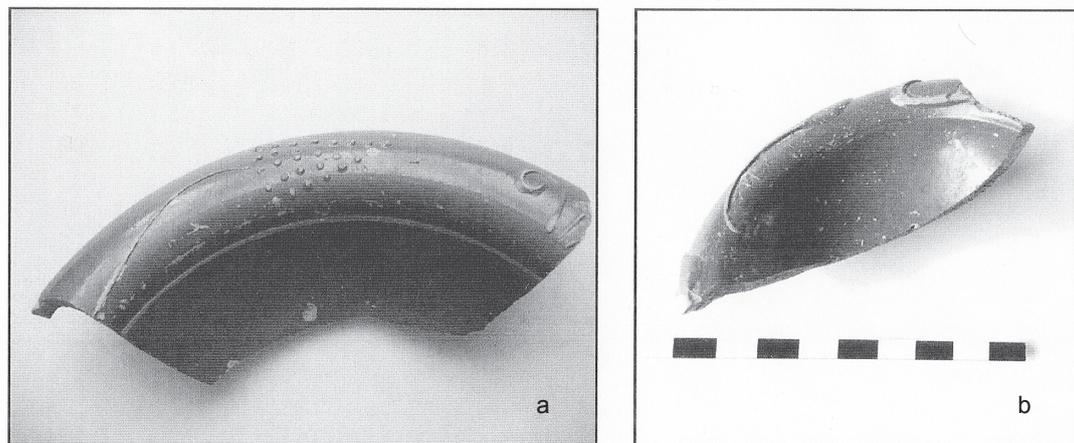


Fig. 19. a. Italian *terra sigillata*, plate fragment; b. Gallian *terra sigillata*, bowl fragment.



Fig. 20. East section of the Trench 1, with traces of the strong burned remains of the Early Roman barrack-blocks.

The examined timber-earth soldier barracks from 1st century AD on the right bank of Lower Danube are few in number. Except for Oescus, these are also known from the military fort Diana at the Iron Gates, in Serbia and from Novae near Svištov – the other legionary camp excavated in that part of the Lower Danube limes⁶⁰. The revealed remains from the timber-earth barracks in Novae were erected by the soldiers of Augustus' Eighth Legion (*legio VIII Augusta*) that stayed there from AD 45 to AD 69.

Finding the remains of the wooden-earth barrack in the central part of Oescus is indicative of the different location and size of the *principia* of the Early Roman legionary camp from the 1st century AD compared to the Forum of the Roman colony *Ulpia Oescus*. Probably the Forum was built on a larger area than the *principia* of the Fifth Macedonian Legion. Such a difference is also seen in the Novae legionary camp, in the sector of the timber-earth barracks of the first cohort of the Augustus' Eighth Legion⁶¹ and the later phase of the stone *principia*.

Remains of a large building from the 2nd century AD, beneath the Temple of Fortuna

Fillings from removed walls (negatives) of a building dated to the 2nd century AD were cleared from Trenches 2, 3 and 4, as well as other remains of constructions from the specified period. The remains in Trenches 3 and 4 show that the foundations of the walls of the building were made of stone, as well as their lower part (plinth) (fig. 21). The elevation of the walls was made of adobe. The remains are heavily scorched (fig. 22). They were decorated with coloured plasters, gypsum plinths and mouldings. Some bricks were painted with Pompeian-red paint and were part of the interior decoration of the building. They probably formed inlets or pilasters in the rooms. Preserved mortar floorings were discovered in Trenches 3 and 4. The preserved parts of the floor in both trenches, as well as their location, allowed us to assume that they belonged to a single large room. Its width could be determined (5.80 m) because its two limits were found, to the north and to the south. The walls were 0.60 m thick. The stone foundation was preserved only at the southern wall, with a thickness

⁶⁰ Kondić 1996, with previous bibliography; Dyczek 2016, p. 438, fig. 1; Dyczek 2018, p. 195.

⁶¹ Genčeva 2002, p. 62; Dyczek 2016, p. 439; Sarnowski 2014, p. 72-73, fig. 1.

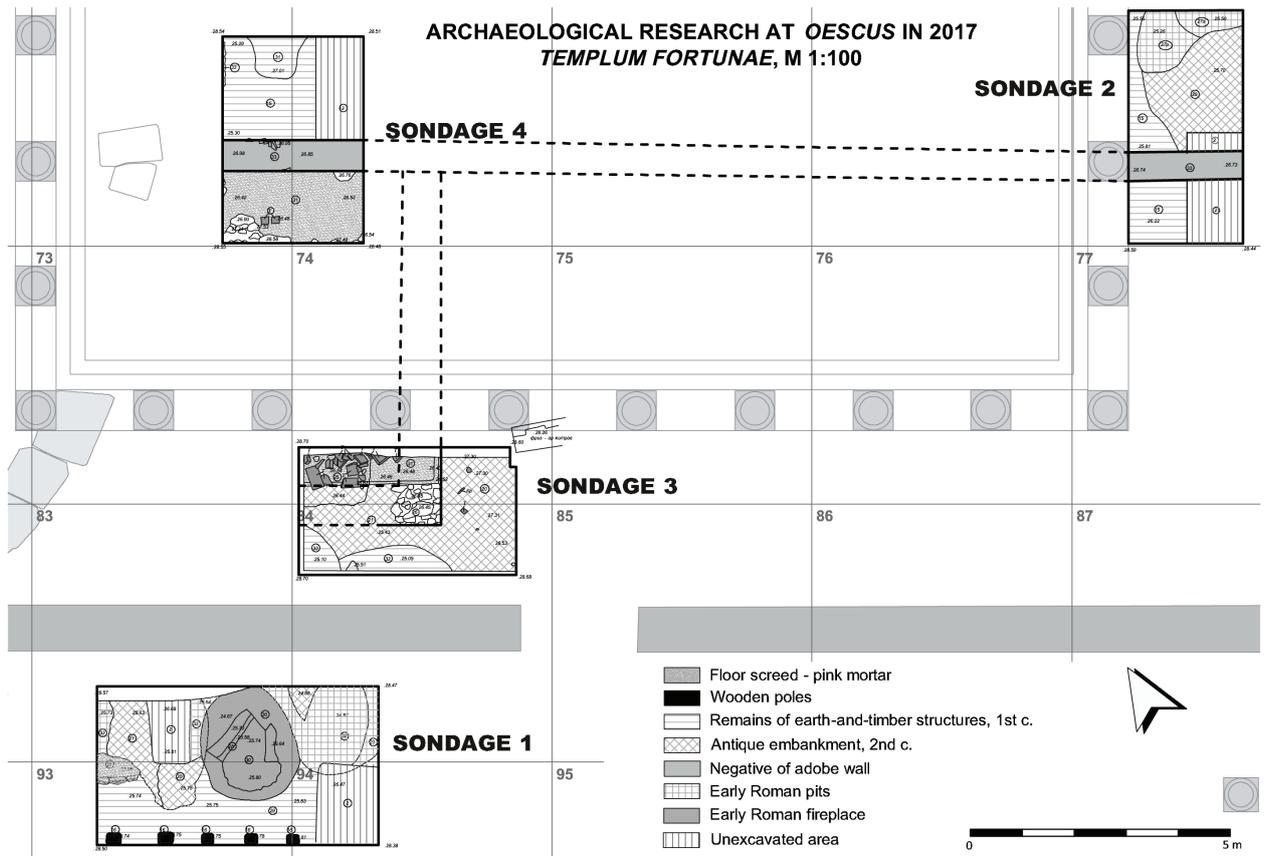


Fig. 21. The negatives of the adobe walls in Trenches 2 and 4, graphic documentation.



Fig. 22. View of the negative of wall in Trench 4.

of 0.80 m. The stone building material was removed for reuse, and remains from decayed and scorched adobe were put on that place. The negative of an east-west-facing wall, with a thickness of 0.60 m, was also found in Trench 2, similar to the one in Trench 4. When we connected graphically the two sections, it became clear that they are from the same wall that limits a number of rooms in the southern part of a large building.

The findings in Trenches 2, 3 and 4 show that the building was destroyed by a strong fire, shortly before the construction of the Temple of Fortuna. After the fire, the stones from the walls were removed. A whole clay lamp (fig. 23), fragments from bronze inlay as well as fragments of pottery dated to the 2nd century AD were found in the filling of the negatives of the walls. The lamp is type 21, version “a” of G. Kuzmanov⁶², which is dated in the 2nd century AD and belongs to the Lower Moesia production.



Fig. 23. Clay lamp found in the negative of the wall in Trench 4.

Probably, the examined remains are from a private building that existed there from AD 106 to AD 190. This conclusion is based not only on the archaeological data and materials but also on the building inscription of the Temple of Fortuna stating that the temple was built on “purchased land”⁶³. The explored part of the building is not only clearly dated but it is the first with private functions which was investigated from the beginning of the Roman colony *Ulpia Oescus*. Furthermore, for the first time it was found out that a building from the 2nd century AD was made of adobe, on stone foundations. Negatives of walls were found at other places in the Lower Danube region and the nearest examples are from the legionary camp Novae, near Svištov⁶⁴.

Traces of habitation from the last quarter of 3rd and from the 4th century and later interventions in the cultural layers were recorded in various sections of the trenches.

The research of the area beneath the Temple of Fortuna should continue in order to clarify the plan of the large building, as well as to find out what other remains dated from the period of the legionary camp in Oescus during the 1st century AD are located there.

Achaean Mosaic Building Sector

The archaeological excavations of the large Achaean mosaic building were resumed in 2013⁶⁵. The first stage of its discovery was in the period 1948-1949. Back then, the excavations were conducted by Teofil Ivanov. A significant part of the eastern half of the architectural complex was uncovered⁶⁶. A remarkable floor mosaic showing a scene from “Achaean” – a work by the ancient Greek play-writer Menander (4th century BC) was found. T. Ivanov wrote a book about it⁶⁷ but did not continue with the research in this part of Oescus. The remains of the building with the “Achaean” mosaic are located just next to the southern end of the centre of the Roman colony and the Temple of Fortuna. The building was set up on the land of two *insulae*. It was 72 m long (on a north-south direction) and 47.5 m of its width (on an east-west direction) have been already explored. The purpose of the renewed excavations is to uncover completely this very large architectural ensemble. Cultural layers and remains from this sector date to several periods: Late Roman Age, Late Antiquity and the medieval period.

⁶² Kuzmanov 1992, p. 24-25.

⁶³ Ivanov 2005, p. 144-145.

⁶⁴ Sarnowski 2014, p. 38, fig. 1.

⁶⁵ The results of the research in this sector concern only the time of inhabitation of the building from the Late Roman Age and Late Antiquity. Up to now there are no excavations of the lower cultural levels, see: Kabakchieva 2014b; Kabakchieva 2015b; Kabakchieva 2018b.

⁶⁶ Ivanov 1957; Ivanov 1964, p. 233-239.

⁶⁷ Ivanov 1954.

The remains and the findings from the Late Roman Age allowed us to determine two construction periods of the building. The first period was from AD 271 until the second decade of the 4th century, and the second period started around AD 325-328 and continued until AD 361-364.

The first construction period

Large portions from the southern part of the architectural complex as well as premises and porticos from the western part were investigated during the recent years⁶⁸ (fig. 24). The main entrance was uncovered at the southern end of the building. It is oriented to the southernmost *decumanus* in Oescus. A large stretch of this street (fig. 25) was discovered in the 1950s and 1980s⁶⁹ and it is known that this is the shortest connection between the legionary camp from the Late Roman Age, the so called Oescus II, and the western gate of the city. The orientation of the explored building towards this street shows that the Forum and the main street – the *decumanus maximus* of the Roman period – already lost their important role in the communications of Oescus. The new investigations show that the public life was concentrated in the Achaean Mosaic Building and the *principia* (the Headquarters) of the legionary camp from the Late Roman period in Oescus II⁷⁰. The main entrance is poorly preserved, but it can be seen that it is on the same axis with the entrance to the large hall with exedra, which was built at the northern end of the architectural complex. The latter was erected north of the inner courtyard covered with big stone plates. The big hall (*aula*) has a central position in the plan of the building (fig. 26). Its size is 27 × 12.50 m. The length of the preserved marble entrance, made of two blocks, is 4 m. It can be identified as “a hall for official receptions in Oescus”⁷¹.

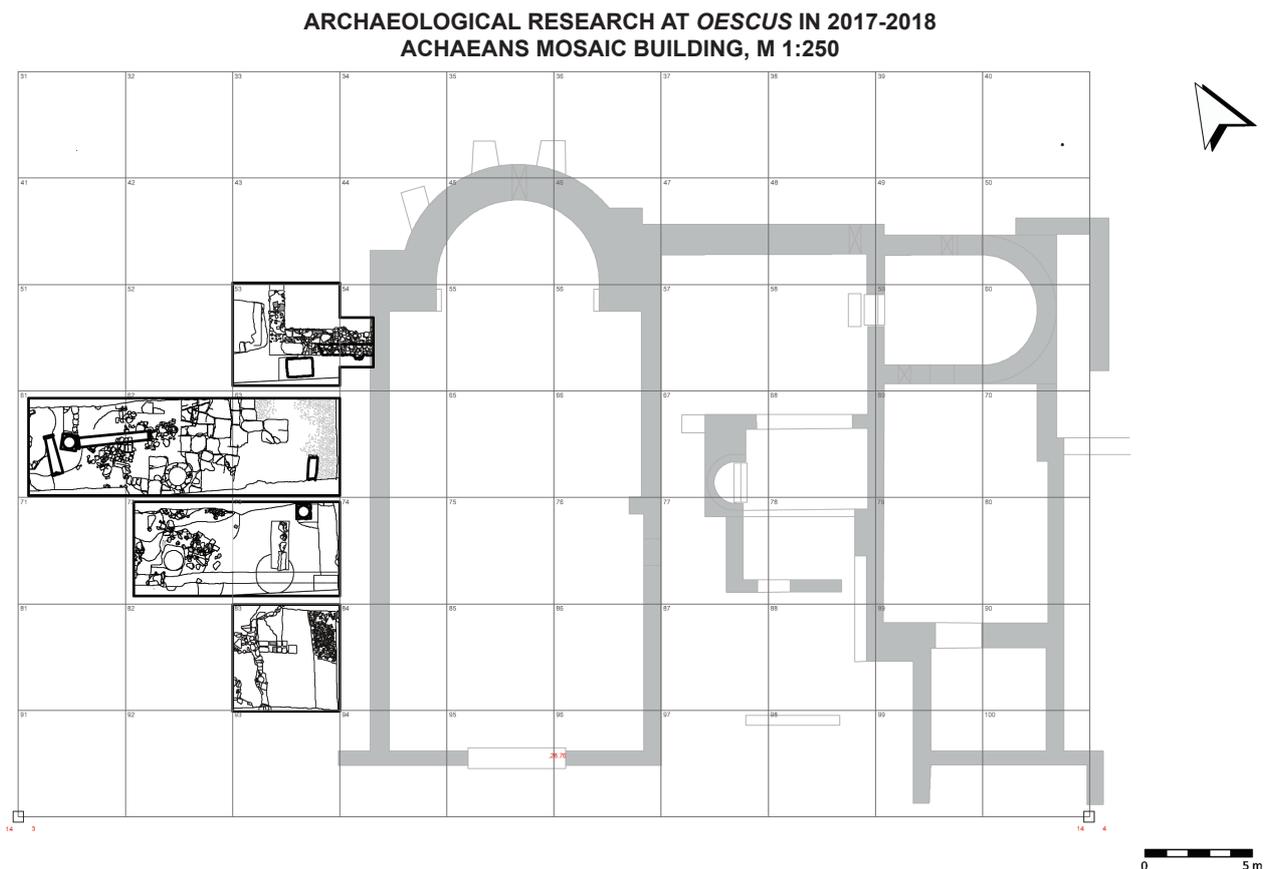


Fig. 24. Plan of the discovered part of the residence, during the last years (graphic documentation).

⁶⁸ Kabakchieva 2018a; Kabakchieva 2018b, as well as some results from the research during the year 2018.

⁶⁹ Ivanov 1964, p. 233-239; Ivanov *et alii* 1986.

⁷⁰ Kabakchieva 2018a, p. 476.

⁷¹ Wulf-Rheidt 2007, p. 64-67; Erdrich 2008; Popović 2007, p. 22-25, Fig. 5-6.



Fig. 25. The excavated part of the southern *decumanus* in Oescus, with original preserved pavement.

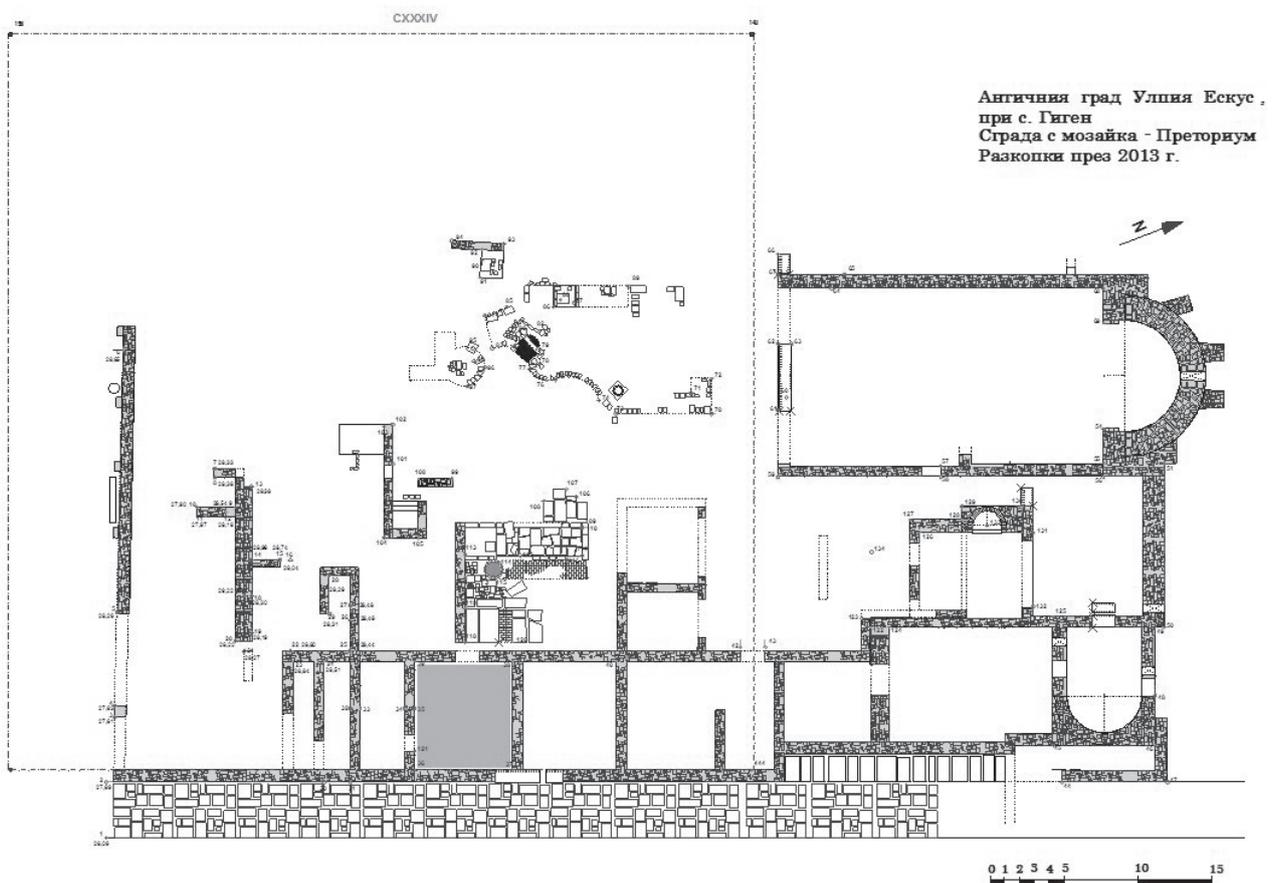


Fig. 26. Plan of the eastern part of the residence.

The results of the most recent excavations gave ground to define that this architectural complex was built as a *praetorium* shortly after the end of the First Gothic War (AD 269), when the Fifth Macedonian Legion returned in Oescus until the 5th century AD⁷². This building is dated to the first construction period from the Late Roman time. A similar architectural plan and functions had a big *extra muros* building in Novae⁷³. The architectural complex with the “Achaean” mosaic was divided into two parts. The eastern part was accessible for foreign persons and visitors of the town and the western part was a dwelling. These functions were preserved also during the second construction period⁷⁴.

The architectural decoration of the eastern premises indicates that they have representative functions. In the eastern part were located the rooms for the accommodation of the official guests of the city. The lower part of their external walls was built almost entirely from *spoliae* – big architectural details (threshold blocks, frieze-architrave, mouldings, etc.) from the older buildings in Oescus. In the north-east end, *thermae* were built, with a plan similar to the one of the public *thermae*.

In the south-east end of the residence a second representative hall, smaller in size, was found⁷⁵. It was probably a reception room because it was near the main entrance of the architectural complex. The south-east premise was decorated with marble coverings⁷⁶. A large number of marble plates cut in different shapes, by which was formed the mosaic flooring of the type *opus sectile*, were found there. Many fragments of wall lining of marble plates of different colour were found there, too. The marble lining is of Corinthian style, and a whole capitel was discovered⁷⁷ (fig. 27). There is no information about the decoration of the interior of the big hall of the first construction period. We can only suppose that its walls were covered either with mural paintings or with marble coverings.



Fig. 27. The wall marble capitel from the south-eastern hall of the building.

⁷² *Not. Dign. [or.]*, XLII.

⁷³ Vladkova 1997; Vladkova 2003; Sarnowski 2014, p. 83.

⁷⁴ Kabakchieva 2018a.

⁷⁵ Kunnof 2007.

⁷⁶ Ivanov *et alii* 1986.

⁷⁷ This capitel is now in the Regional Museum of History in Pleven, inv. no. A - 3799.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AT OESCUS IN 2017-2018
ACHAEANS MOSAIC BUILDING, M 1:200

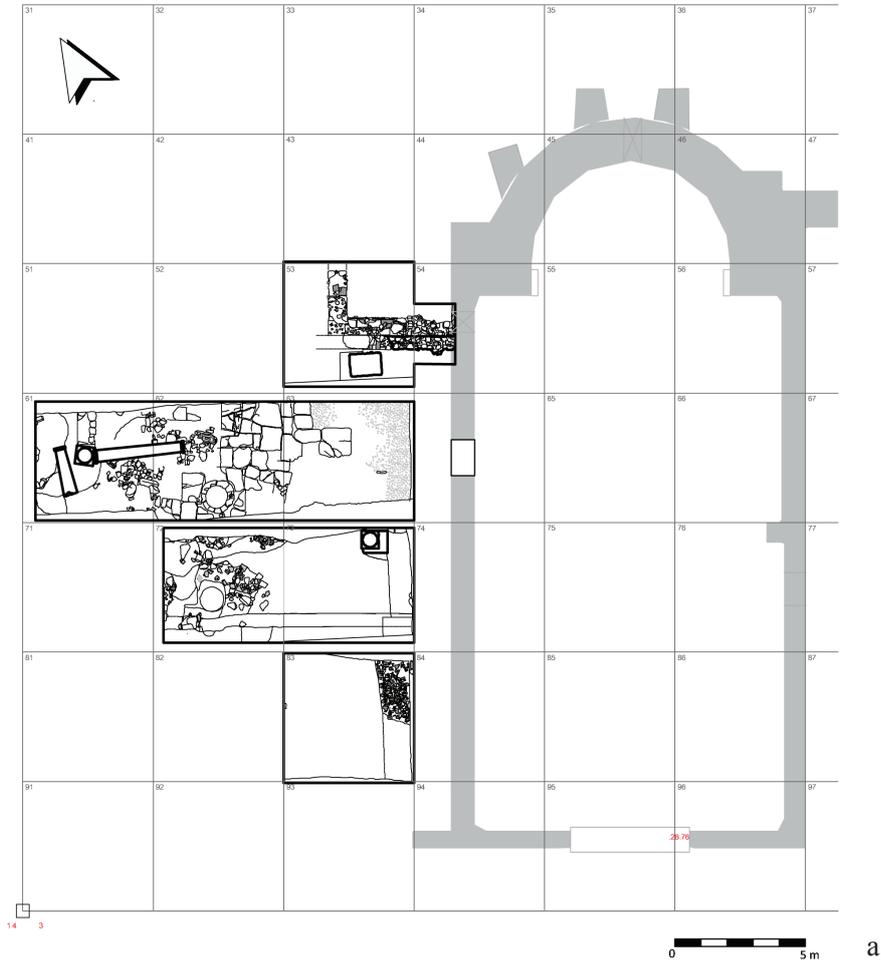


Fig. 28.a. Plan of the big hall and the discovered part of the porticos; b. View to the big hall (*aula*) from south.



a



b

Fig. 29. a. The fallen roof tiles during discovery; b. Profile of the fallen portico.

A portico was built near the western wall of the central hall (*aulla*). The remains include: stylobate plates, foundations, fragments of marble covering (fig. 28). It represents a long rectangular premise, with a length of about 20 m. Two stylobate plates from the colonnade were preserved (1.15 × 0.90 m) and one base was found *in situ*. The base is formed as a whole with the *ara* (1.20 m). To the north, the portico extended almost to the end of the big hall. Its short wall in this part was connected with the west wall of the hall. This portico shows that the architectural complex developed westwards. There are parts of fallen burnt roofs of the two construction periods (fig. 29). The roof from the first period shows that the big residence, as well as the city, was destroyed very likely in the first quarter of the 4th century AD. Most probably it was due to the attacks of the Goths south of the Lower Danube at the time⁷⁸, which is the time of the fight between the Emperor Constantine the Great (AD 306-337) and the Emperor Licinius (AD 308-324).

The second construction period

At the beginning of the second construction period, the residence was subject to a large-scale repair, which was probably urgent. Big changes in the plan of the building were not made by that repair. An essential thing was the raising of the levels of the premises and especially those in the eastern part because a Roman heating system (*hypocaustum*) was built. The mural paintings with pagan scenes were deliberately removed from the walls. In the representative premises they were replaced with marble linings. In many areas, clusters of highly cracked coloured plasters were found beneath the floor levels of the second construction period. Thus, the world-famous “Achaean” mosaic appears to be a floor level of a hypocaust in one of the guest rooms in the eastern part of the building (fig. 30), and was preserved in this way.



Fig. 30. The canal to the hypocaust from the second construction period.

During the second construction period, the big reception hall was entirely covered (floor and walls) with white, marble plates. The hypocaust in the northern part was also reconstructed. In addition to the *praeefurnium* from the northern end of the exedra, another one was built, next to the western wall of the hall (fig. 31). This facility (second *praeefurnium*) was built to improve the heating of the exedra in the big hall. The canal of the *praeefurnium* is vaulted, and the surrounding walls form a small rectangular premise.

A well-preserved part of the fallen roof was found in the southern part of the portico. A few bricks with the stamp “CTQ” of a private brick-workshop were found between the pieces of the tiles (fig. 32).

⁷⁸ For the attacks of the Goths at that time, see Veters 1950, p. 21-22, notes 210-214; Velkov 1959, p. 30-31, note 2; Velkov 1976, p. 397-398; Poulter 2007, p. 36-37.



Fig. 31. The west *praefurnium* to the hypocaust in the northern part of the hall (*aula*), second construction period.



Fig. 32. The tile with stamp in *tabula ansata*



Fig. 33. The brick with Greek inscription.

The stamp is also known from the floor of a dwelling in the south-western part of Oescus⁷⁹. A brick with a Greek inscription was also found, partially preserved, among the tiles (fig. 33). This inscription is of Italic type and can be defined as a master-potter's note⁸⁰. Numbers of bricks of different sizes are mentioned and the total number of bricks. It is supposed that the inscription is related to a brick making order for the extra-built *praefurnium* and hypocaust at the northern end of the large hall. Inscriptions with similar content, reference to the place of production or the name of the place of use from the Late Roman period, are also known from other places in the province of Thrace⁸¹.

⁷⁹ Kabakchieva, Lazarova 1997.

⁸⁰ The Greek inscription was read by Prof. Mirena Slavova from the Sofia University and I express my gratitude to her.

⁸¹ For the inscriptions of the tiles and bricks from Thrace in Late Roman period, see Gerov 1959-1960, p. 306, with previous bibliography; Gerasimova 1981, p. 207-211, fig. 6-12; Nikolov 1990, p. 170-172; Gerasimova-Tomova 1990, p. 80-86.



Fig. 34. The new-found well in the southern side of the portico, belonging to the first construction period.



Fig. 35. View from the west of the marble columns.

A stone pavement of large limestone slabs was found south of the *praefurnium* (district 62 and 63/CXX). It is part of another portico oriented east-west. The second portico was used during the first and the second construction periods. During the latest excavations, at a distance of around 10 m from the western wall of the big hall, a well from the antiquity was found (fig. 34). It was made of big stones and stone rings, with a diameter of 1.30 m. To the west of the preserved section with pavement, but at a higher level, two marble columns and the base of one of them were found (fig. 35). This marble colonnade dates from the second construction period. One of the columns is intact and has fallen from its base. It has a length of 3.58 m. Only half of the other column is preserved. The columns are smooth, and are made of high quality, white marble. These remains are part of a portico, which is a “paraded approach” to the large hall from the west, that is, on the side of *cardo maximus* of the colony *Ulpia Oescus* (see fig. 28). The examined portico was intended for the official guests to pass and to reach the large hall (*aula*).

The question is what made this major overhaul of the architectural complex necessary in the period between AD 325 and 328. Most probably it was for a public event in the town. Following analyses of the discovered remains, coins and other findings from the latest excavations, I believe that this event was the official visit of the Emperor Constantine the Great (AD 306-337) in Oescus for the opening of the bridge across the Danube on July 5th, 328⁸². At that time, Christianity was already declared an official religion in the Empire. It explains why the pagan frescoes had been removed and a large number of statues and votive reliefs of pagan deities had been hidden within earth or building embankments. An example of that is the hiding of a marble statuette of a seated goddess Cybele in the protection embankment for the rainwater canal in the courtyard of the building (fig. 36). It was found during the excavations in 2014⁸³. Besides this, there are other similar finds from the newly discovered *praefurnium*. A small part of a votive plate of Jupiter and Juno was found at the northern end of the portico, near the hall, as well as a part of the marble statuette group of the Thracian horse rider (fig. 37).



Fig. 36. Marble statuette of the goddess Cybele, partially preserved.



Fig. 37. Fragment of the marble statuette group of Thracian horse rider.

⁸² Velkov 1976, p. 397-398; Kabakchieva 2018a, p. 474-475.

⁸³ Kabakchieva 2015b, p. 399; for the cult of Cybele in the region of Lower Danube, see Suceveanu 1991, p. 129-138.

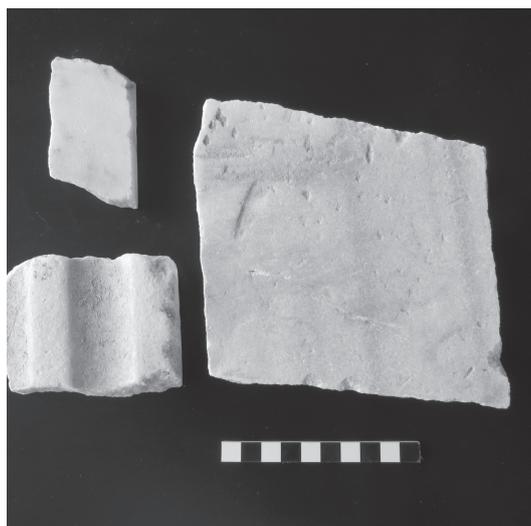


Fig. 38. The marble pieces of the wall decoration in the residence.

The coins found in the sector of the porticos are mainly from the 4th century AD. The largest number dates from the time of the Emperor Constantine the Great and the Emperor Constantius (AD 337-361). The latter show that the building was used, most probably, until the beginning of the sixth decade of the 4th century. For the destruction of Oescus at that time there are also historical data⁸⁴.

The latest research revealed many fragments of marble, floor and wall linings, capitals, columns, frames and plinths (fig. 38). These findings are proof of the rich decoration of the building, both during the first and the second construction periods. The fragments of the rich marble linings show that the residence played a representative role in the official life of Oescus during the Late Roman period.

Big residences, such as the one explored in *Ulpia Oescus*, are known from various locations in the Roman provinces⁸⁵. Some of them were residences of Emperors in the provinces during the Late Roman Age and others were residences of the provincial governors⁸⁶. The examples are from different parts of the Empire: the residence at Felix Romuliana (Serbia), the Emperor's palace at Sirmium (Serbia), the big residence at Carnuntum (Austria), the residence at Xanten (Germany), etc.⁸⁷.

During the 5th century, dwellings for the poor population were built over the ruins of the big architectural complex at Oescus. In the entire section, partially preserved floor levels of clay, garbage pits, as well as a furnace⁸⁸, which served several dwellings were found.

During the Middle Ages, a village from the 11th-13th century emerged on the remains of the ancient Oescus in the researched sector. Parts of dwellings, as well as several garbage pits were discovered. Various domestic items were found – adornments, weights, clay sticks, iron knives, many fragments of pottery and animal bones. A very large number of coins was also discovered. The medieval settlement was destroyed at the middle of the 13th century, probably at the time of the Tatar invasion at the Lower Danube.

The excavation of the newly found parts of the large architectural complex – a residence in the southern part of *Ulpia Oescus* – gave important information about the history of the city during the Late Roman Age and the inhabitation during the Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages on the remains of the ancient Oescus. Excavations of the examined sectors contributed to the study of the architecture and the architectural decoration of one of the largest antique cities at the Lower Danube – the Roman colony *Ulpia Oescus*.

⁸⁴ Vettors 1950, p. 27-28; Barnea 1991, p. 162-167; Liebeschuetz 2007, p. 101-104.

⁸⁵ Wulf-Rheidt 2007 with previous bibliography; Petrović 1995, p. 235-237; Vasić 2007.

⁸⁶ For the functions of the residences in the Roman provinces from the Late Roman period, see Swoboda 1924, p. 153-154; Swoboda 1964, p. 288; Jobst 1983, p. 97-98; Kunnof 2007.

⁸⁷ For Felix Romuliana, see Vasić 2007; for Sirmium – Popović 2007; for Carnuntum – Swoboda 1964 and Jobst 1983, p. 97-98; for Xanten – Erdrich 2008.

⁸⁸ Kabakchieva 2015b; Kabakchieva 2018b.

The knowledge about the Early Roman legionary camp in Oescus and about the architectural specificities and construction methods of the 2nd century AD as well as for the big residences from the Late Roman Age has enriched.

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ABRÉVIATIONS

- (AAI)TerraAntBalc – (Acta Associationis Internationalis) Terra Antiqua Balcanica, International Association Terra Antiqua Balcanica, Sofia
- (A)ARMSI – Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice, București
- ACMI – Anuarul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice, București
- ActaArchCarp – Acta Archaeologica Carpatica, Kraków
- ActaAnthung – Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest
- ActaArchHung – Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest
- ActaMN – Acta Musei Napocensis, Muzeul Național de Istorie a Transilvaniei, Cluj-Napoca
- ActaMP – Acta Musei Porolissensis, Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Artă, Zalău
- AÉ – L'Année Épigraphique, Paris
- Aetas – Aetas. Történettudományi folyóirat, Szeged
- American Antiquity – American Antiquity, Society for American Archaeology, Washington
- AMSMG – Atti e Memorie della Società Magna Grecia, Roma
- AnB (S.N.) – Analele Banatului (Serie Nouă), Muzeul Banatului, Timișoara
- Antiquity – Antiquity. A Review of World Archaeology, Durham, UK
- AnUBucurești – Analele Universității din București
- AOR ... – Arheologičeski otkritija i razkopki prez ... g.
- ArchBulg – Archaeologia Bulgarica, Sofia
- ArchClass – Archeologia Classica, Roma
- ArchéologiaParis – Archéologia, Paris
- ArchÉrt – Archeológiai Értesítő, Budapest
- ArchKorr – Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt, Mainz
- ArchRozhledy – Archeologické Rozhledy, Praha
- Argesis – Argesis, Muzeul Județean Argeș, Pitești
- ArhMed – Arheologia Medievală, Asociația arheologilor medievști din România
- ArhVestnik – Arheološki vestnik, Ljubljana
- BARIntSer – British Archaeological Reports. International Series, Oxford
- BARSuppSer – British Archaeological Reports. Supplementary Series, Oxford
- BÉ – Bulletin Épigraphique, Paris
- BerRGK – Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Frankfurt am Main
- BICS – Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London
- BMJTAG – Buletinul Muzeului Județean „Teohari Antonescu”, Giurgiu
- Brukenthal Acta Musei – Brukenthal Acta Musei, Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu
- BSNR – Buletinul Societății Numismatice Române, București
- CA – Cercetări Arheologice, Muzeul Național de Istorie a României, București
- Caiete ARA – Caiete ARA. Arhitectură, Restaurare, Arheologie, Asociația ARA, București
- CCA. Campania – Cronică Cercetărilor Arheologice din România, București
- CCDJ – Cultură și Civilizație la Dunărea de Jos, Muzeul Dunării de Jos, Călărași
- CCGG – Cahiers du Centre Gustav-Glotz, Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris
- CIL – *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin
- Classica et Christiana – Classica et Christiana, Centrul de Studii Clasice și Creștine al Facultății de Istorie a Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași
- CRAI – Comptes Rendus des Séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Paris
- Crisia – Crisia, Muzeul Țării Crișurilor, Oradea
- CsSzMÉ – A Csíki Székely Múzeum Évkönyve, Miercurea Ciuc
- Dacia N.S. – Dacia (Nouvelle Série). Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne, Académie Roumaine, Institut d'archéologie « Vasile Pârvan », București

- DissPann – Dissertationes Pannonicae. Ex Instituto Numismatico et Archaeologico Universitatis de Petro Pázmány nominatae Budapestensis provenientis, Budapest
- Documenta Praehistorica – Documenta Praehistorica, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Department of Archaeology
- DolgCluj – Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Múzeum Érem- és Régiségtárából, Kolozsvár
- DossHistArch – Dossiers historiques et archéologiques, Berck (Pas-de Calais)
- EphemNap – Ephemeris Napocensis, Academia Română, Institutul de Arheologie și Istoria Artei, Cluj-Napoca
- FolArch – Folia Archaeologica, Budapest
- Gallia – Gallia. Fouilles et monuments archéologiques en France métropolitaine
- Germania – Germania. Anzeiger der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Frankfurt am Main
- GRBS – Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies, Duke University
- HelvA – Helvetia Archaeologica, Basel
- Hesperia – Hesperia. The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens
- Historia – Historia. Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart
- I.Didyma – D.F. McCabe, *Didyma Inscriptions. Texts and List*. «The Princeton Project on the Inscriptions of Anatolia», The Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton (1985), Packard Humanities Institute CD # 6, 1991
- IDR – *Inscriptiile Daciei romane*, București
- IDRE – C.C. Petolescu, *Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae. Inscriptions externes concernant l'histoire de la Dacie*, I-II, București, 1996-2000
- IGB – G. Mihailov, *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria Repertae*, 5 vol., Sofia, 1958-2001
- IGLSyr – *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*, Paris, 1929-
- IGR – *Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes*, Paris
- ILD – C.C. Petolescu, *Inscriptiile latine din Dacia*, București, 2005
- ILS – H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, Berlin, I (1892), II (1902), III (1916)
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- Iscr. di Cos – M. Segre, *Iscrizioni di Cos*, Monografie della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente 6, Rome, 1993; 6.2, Rome, 2007
- ISM – *Inscriptiile din Scythia Minor*, București, I (1983), II (1987), III (1999), V (1980)
- Istros – Istros, Muzeul Brăilei
- IzvestijaSofia – Izvestija na Arheologičeskija Institut (1947-2012), Izvestija na Nacionalnija arheologičeskij institut (2012-), Sofia
- IzvestijaVelikoTárnovo – Izvestija na Okrašnja Istoričeski Muzej, Veliko Tárnovo
- JAnthrR – Journal of Anthropological Research, University of Chicago
- JArchR – Journal of Archaeological Research, Springer
- JRGZM – Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz
- JRS – Journal of Roman Studies, London
- Klio – Klio. Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Berlin
- Ktèma – Ktèma. Civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome antiques. Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg
- LB – Linguistique Balkanique. Institute for Bulgarian Language
- MCA – Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice, Academia Română, Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan”, București
- NC – The Numismatic Chronicle, London
- NÉH – Nouvelles Études d'Histoire, București
- Novensia – Novensia. Osfodek Badań nad Antykiem. Europy Południowo-Wschodniej, Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa
- OpArchZagreb – Opuscula Archaeologica. Zavod za arheologiju, Filozofski fakultet u Zagrebu
- Pallas – Pallas. Revue d'Études Antiques, Université de Toulouse le Mirail, Toulouse
- PBF – Prähistorische Bronzefunde, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz, Seminar für Vor- und Frühgeschichte der Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, Abteilung für Ur- und

Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie des Historischen Seminars der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität, Münster

- Peuce S.N. – Peuce (Serie Nouă). Studii și Cercetări de Istorie și Arheologie, Institutul de Cercetări Eco-Muzeale „Simion Gavrilă”, Tulcea
- PIR – *Prosopographia Imperii Romani, saec. I-III*, ed. II, Berlin – Leipzig
- PLRE – *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, Cambridge University Press, 3 vol., 1971, 1980, 1992
- Pontica – Pontica, Muzeul de Istorie Națională și Arheologie, Constanța
- PPS – Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, Cambridge University Press
- PSAS – Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
- PZ – *Praehistorische Zeitschrift*, Freie Universität, Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie, Berlin
- QuadCat – Quaderni Catanesi di studi classici e medievali, Catania
- RANarb – Revue archéologique de Narbonnaise, Presses universitaires de la Méditerranée
- RAParis – Revue archéologique, Paris
- RE – *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaften*, Stuttgart, 1893-
- RÉSEE – Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes, Academia Română, Institutul de Studii Sud-Est Europeene, București
- RevMuz – Revista Muzeelor, București
- RI – Revista Istorică, Academia Română, Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga”, București
- RIC – *Roman Imperial Coinage*, London
- RMD – M.M. Roxan, P. Holder, *Roman Military Diplomas*, 5 vol., London, 1978-2006
- RMV – Rad Muzeja Vojvodine, Novi Sad
- RPC – *Roman Provincial Coinage*
- RRH – Revue Roumaine d’Histoire, Academia Română, București
- SA – Sovetskaja arheologija, Institut arheologii Akademii nauk SSSR, Moskva
- SCIV(A) – Studii și Cercetări de Istorie Veche (și Arheologie), Academia Română, Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan”, București
- SCN – Studii și Cercetări de Numismatică, Academia Română, Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan”, București
- SEG – *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden 1923-1971, Alphen aan den Rijn 1979-1980, Amsterdam 1979-2005, Boston 2006-
- SlovArch – Slovenská Archeológia, Nitra
- SP – Studii de Preistorie, București
- Starinar – Starinar. Naučni časopis Arheološkog instituta u Beogradu
- StCl – Studii Clasice, București
- StUCluj-hist – Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, Seria Studia Historica, Cluj-Napoca
- TAM – *Tituli Asiae Minoris*, Wien, 1901-
- Thraco-Dacica – Thraco-Dacica, Academia Română, Institutul de Arheologie „Vasile Pârvan”, București
- TMA – Tijdschrift voor Mediterrane Archeologie, Groningen
- Transylvanian Review – Transylvanian Review, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Cluj-Napoca
- VAH – *Varia Archaeologica Hungarica*
- ZfN – Zeitschrift für Numismatik der Numismatischen Gesellschaft Berlin
- Ziridava – Ziridava. Studia Archaeologica, Muzeul Județean Arad
- ZPE – Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik, Bonn
- ZSAK – Zeitschrift für Schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte, Zürich

