

RaLATH VI

HELLENIC MINISTRY OF CULTURE

“TOWN AND COUNTRY
IN THE ROMAN AND
LATE ANTIQUE THRACE”

6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
“ROMAN AND LATE ANTIQUE THRACE”
(RaLATH)

10-13 OCTOBER 2024
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, ABDERA, GREECE

PROGRAMME

RaLATH VI



Semiprecious gemstone depicting Fortuna Panthea.
Abdera, South Enclosure, chance find (MA 3981)

THURSDAY 10.10.2024

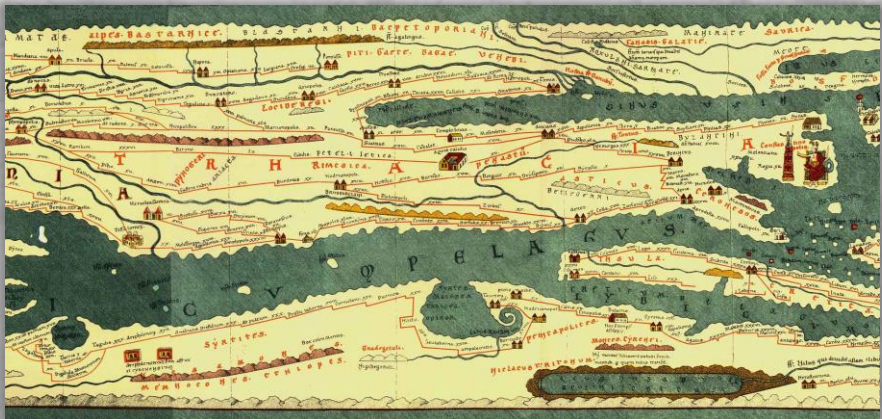
- 17.30:** Arrival and registration at the Archaeological Museum of Abdera
- 18.30-19.00:** Welcome speeches
- 19.00-20.30:** Introductory speeches:

**D. Triantaphyllos, Emeritus Ephor of Antiquities,
D. Terzopoulou, Director of the Ephorate of Antiquities
of Evros**

“Burial Tumulus of Mikri Doxipara-Zoni: A new Museum
of Roman Thrace”

**E. Sverkos, Associate Professor of Ancient Greek History,
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Department of
History and Archaeology**

“Imprints of Roman Emperors in Landscapes of Thrace”



FRIDAY 11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

Chair: Ch. Karadima

- 09.00-09.20:** **M.-G. Parissaki**
“Some First Thoughts on the Tribal Territory of the Sapaioi”
- 09.20-09.40:** **M. Tasaklaki, U. Peter**
“Topeiros and its Chora: Integrating Material Culture and Historical Records”
- 09.40-10.00:** **V. Katsarova, H. Popov, P. Georgiev**
“Rural Environment and Local Settlement Networks in the Territory of Augusta Traiana in 2nd-5th c. AD”
- 10.00-10.20:** **M. Sayar**
“Territories and Borders of the Cities and Rural Settlements in Southeastern Thrace during the Roman Rule and Late Antiquity”
- 10.20-10.40:** **A. Bâltâc, E. Paraschiv-Grigore**
“The Enigmatic Situation from Durostorum: What is the Roman Settlement from Ostrov (Farm No. 4), Constanța County?”
- 10.40-11.00:** Discussion
- 11.00-11.30:** Coffee break

FRIDAY 11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation (continued)

Chair: M. Sayar

- 11.30-11.50:** **H. Preshlenov**
“City and Territory along the Southwestern Black Sea Region. Some Remarks on the Ownership and the Income”
- 11.50-12.10:** **E. Nankov, Ph. Kolev**
“Away from the Limes, but not quite: A Newly Found Late Roman *Villa Rustica* near the Village of Gorni Dabnik, Pleven Region”
- 12.10-12.30:** **K. Chakarov**
“Nicopolis *ad Istrum*: Territory of the Roman, Late Roman and Early Byzantine City (2nd - 7th century)”
- 12.30-12.50:** **I. Valchev, N. Dimitrov**
“Kabyle in Late Antiquity: A Decade of Research in Sector V”
- 12.50-13.10:** **D. Terzopoulou**
“Roman Thrace: The Rural Wealth of the Area”
- 13.10-13.30:** Discussion
- 13.30-14.10:** Archaeological Museum of Abdera guided tour
- 14.10-16.00:** Lunch break

FRIDAY 11.10.2024

Session II: Urban and Rural Space and Infrastructures

Chair: L. Vagalinski

- 16.00-16.20:** **N. Sharankov**
“Reconstructing Urban Landscapes through Building Inscriptions”
- 16.20-16.40:** **A. Avramidou, J. C. Donati, A. Garyfallopoulos, Ch. Pardalidou, Ph. Aitatoglou, M. Tasaklaki, Ch. Karadima, A. Sarris, N. Papadopoulos**
“The Roman Station (?) along Via Egnatia at Komaros, Evros: A Study of the Finds and Local Topography”
- 16.40-17.00:** **Z. Dimitrov**
“The Military Road of the Roman Empire and Cillae Road Station - A Major Part of Thrace's Infrastructure”
- 17.00-17.20:** **M. Raycheva**
“Towns, Hills and Public Religious Life in Roman Thrace”
- 17.20-17.40:** **E. Kosmidou**
“Depictions of Architectural Structures and Urban Landscapes on the Coins of Roman Thrace”
- 17.40-18.00:** Discussion
- 18.00-18.30:** Coffee break

FRIDAY 11.10.2024

Session III: Landscapes of Thrace

Chair: D. Boteva

- 18.30-18.50: **A. Dan, W. Rabbel, H. Brückner, S. Başaran, Ch. Karadima, D. Terzopoulou, Ch. Pardalidou, E. Erkul, S. Fischer, M. Thorwart**
“Down by the Hebros River: Geoarchaeological Readings of the *Tabula Peutingeriana*”
- 18.50-19.10: **V. Evangelidis, I. Mourthos, M. Karta, D. Tsiafaki**
“Mountain Archaeology within the Rhodope Landscape during Roman Times: Insights from Spatial Analysis”

Session IV: Private and Public Space

Chair: D. Boteva

- 19.10-19.30: **O. Boubounelle, I. Chalazonitis, L. Martinez-Sève, D. Malamidou, J.-F. Guay, C. Pagnoux, P. Ralli, E. Rizos, B. Rueff, S. Kriemadi**
“Private and Public Space in the Site of Palaiokastro (Terpni) during Roman and Late Antiquity”
- 19.30-19.50: **P. Adam-Veleni**
“The presence of the Thracians in Thessaloniki through Roman Burial Monuments”
- 19.50-20.10: Discussion

SATURDAY 12.10.2024

Session V: Development of Settlement Patterns

Chair: P. Adam-Veleni

- 09.00-09.20: **M. Chrysaphi, M. Papaioannou, N. Papadopoulos**
“The Abdera Urban Plan Project (AUPP): A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Study of Urban Identities”
- 09.20-09.40: **L. Vagalinski**
“From *Colonia* to *Oppidum*. Deultum during 4th - 5th c. AD”
- 09.40-10.00: **I. D. Cholakov, P. Dakasheva**
“Deultum and its Immediate Vicinity - Archaeological Narrative through Non-Destructive Methods”
- 10.00-10.20: **T. Slavkova, E. Bozhinova**
“Topography of Philippopolis and its Hinterland during the Roman Period”
- 10.20-10.40: **I. Borisova-Katsarova**
“Serdica’s Development Patterns during Late Antiquity - A Glimpse through the Western Gate of the City”
- 10.40-11.00: **M. Vaklinov, I. Kirov, Y. Mutafchieva, B. Eminova**
“New Data on the Chronology of the Fortified Site St. Archangel in Dubnitsa Village, Southwest Bulgaria”
- 11.00-11.20: Discussion
- 11.20-11.50: Coffee break

SATURDAY 12.10.2024

Session VI: Everyday Life Issues in both the Town and Country

Chair: N. Sharankov

- 11.50-12.10:** **Ph. Kokkini, I. Mourthos**
“Mosaics of Thracia: urban and rural art?”
- 12.10-12.30:** **I. Anagnostou**
“Leda and the Swan in the Roman *Triclinium*: Imagery and Function of the Plotinopolis Mosaic”
- 12.30-12.50:** **U. Peter, V. Stolba**
“An Iconographic Riddle from Deultum”
- 12.50-13.10:** **S. Petrova-Dineva**
“Architectural Forms and Elements on the Roman Tomb Steles in the Valley of Middle Strymon”
- 13.10-13.30:** Discussion
- 13.30-15.00:** Lunch break
- 15.00-17.00:** Guided tour of the archaeological site of Abdera and Polystylon

SATURDAY 12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

Chair: M.-G. Parissaki

- 17.10-17.20:** **L. Grozdanova, D. Boteva**
“From Deultum to DigiDeultum – From the Perspective of the Numismatic Materials”
- 17.20-17.30:** **H. Ivanova-Anaplioti**
“Like Father, Like Son? Imperial Portrait Distribution Strategies in Thrace during the Reign of Septimius Severus and Caracalla”
- 17.30-17.40:** **B. Borislavov**
“Settlement Pattern in Sakar Mountain during the Roman Period I - IV Century AD”
- 17.40-17.50:** **M. Gyuzelev**
“Observations on the Early Byzantine East-Balkan Fortification Wall”
- 17.50-18.00:** **K. Petkova, R. Stoychev**
“On the Road in the Periphery of Serdica. Roman and Late Roman Settlement and Production Centre near the Village of Aldomirovtsi”
- 18.00-18.10:** **V. Anevlavi, P. Andreeva, W. Prochaska**
“The Materiality of Visual Language: New Perspectives on Marble Statue Trade in Roman Thrace”

SATURDAY 12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations (continued)

Chair: M.-G. Parissaki

- 18.10-18.20: **N. Borislavova**
“Imported Wine in the Rural Areas of Roman Thrace”
- 18.20-18.30: **I. Mattuzzi, C. Kallintzi, J.M. Palet, M. Georgiadis, E. Kefalidou, A. Mayoral, A. Garcia-Molsosa**
“A Compared Study of the Landscape Dynamics in the Territories of Abdera (Greece) and Emporiae (Spain): Methodology and First Results, with a Focus on Roman Times and Late Antiquity”
- 18.30-18.50: Discussion
- 18.50-19.20: Coffee break
- 19.20-20.20: **End of Conference - Concluding remarks**

SUNDAY 13.10.2024

Excursion

- 8.30:** Departure for the Macedonian Tomb of Stavroupolis - Komnina and the Fortress of Kalyva
- 9.30-10.30:** Arrival at the Macedonian Tomb of Stavroupolis - Komnina / Guided tour
- 10.30:** Departure for the Fortress of Kalyva
- 11.30-13.30:** Fortress of Kalyva guided tour
- 13.30:** Departure for Stavroupolis
- 14.00-16.00:** Lunch at Stavroupolis
- 16.00-17.00:** Departure for Xanthe

Optional tour of the Old Town of Xanthe / Departure of participants

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ABSTRACTS

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11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

M.-G. Parissaki:

“Some First Thoughts on the Tribal Territory of the Sapaioi”

Ancient Greek and Latin authors remain desperately vague when referring to the territories of Thracian tribes, their extent and evolution into time. The territory of the Sapaioi, however, can be defined with a certain degree of accuracy, at least as far as its southern limits are concerned, due to its immediate proximity to the two important Greek colonies of Abdera and Maroneia but also, probably, to Philippi. Sapaean presence in the area, moreover, seems to have remained stable from at least the Persian Wars – on the testimony of Herodotus – to the Imperial Period – on the testimony of Strabo and later authors. Direct contact to the Greek world, combined to the complex dynamics of the tribal one, may have created an interesting reality, only partially disclosed from ancient testimonies. Archaeological research in the northern parts of the Xanthi and Maroneia Prefectures – the area probably corresponding to the southern part of Sapaean territory – began in the 1970s; and although it remains fragmented to this day, it has yielded some first, interesting results. Some of them – on the forts of the Paranestion area, e.g., or the sites located in the area of later Topeiros – will be briefly presented here, in the hope of highlighting the way historical realities may have affected the tribal landscape and, most of all, of underlining the need of further research in the area.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

M. Tasaklaki, U. Peter:

“Topeiros and its Chora: Integrating Material Culture and Historical Records”

Topeiros was one of several foundations resulting from Trajan's urbanization project in Thrace, though, similar to Bizye, it retained its original name while adopting Trajan's *nomen gentilicium*, *Ulpia*. The establishment of a city on the site of a pre-existing Thracian settlement, and in close proximity to the Roman colony of Philippi, underscores the area's strategic importance, particularly due to its location along the Via Egnatia. Situated where the Nestos River emerges from the Rhodope Mountain range, Topeiros was significantly shaped by both of these geographical features, with its survival and development largely dependent on them. The Nestos River, with its frequent flooding, transformed the landscape between Neapolis (modern Kavala) and Abdera, while the Rhodope Mountains served as both a natural and symbolic boundary with the Thracian hinterland.

This paper seeks to explore the opportunities and challenges of reconstructing Topeiros' urban and rural landscape primarily through material culture, as ancient written sources offer limited information. Central to this analysis are the remains uncovered in the area of Paradeisos, including two important inscribed pedestals bearing the names of 33 *strategoí*. Utilizing the city's inscriptions and coinage, we will attempt to delineate the jurisdictional area of Topeiros, which, like many cities situated near rivers, extended across both banks of the Nestos. We will also trace its historical and territorial development, guided by references in ancient texts, such as Strabo's description, “τὰ Τόπειρα ἔστι πρὸς Ἀβδήροις καὶ Μαρωνεῖα,” and Pliny's note that emphasizes its location near the Nestos River and Mount Pangaeus, while also designating it as a *civitas*: “Topiros civitas, Mesti amnis ostium, mons Pangaeus”.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

V. Katsarova, H. Popov, P. Georgiev:

“Rural Environment and Local Settlement Networks in the Territory of Augusta Traiana in 2nd-5th c. AD”

In the period 2008-2020, around the modern city of Kermen, located in the southern parts of Sliven region (Bulgaria), archaeological researches of different nature were carried out successively - rescue excavations, surveys, large-scale geophysical surveys and trench excavations of some of the registered archaeological structures.

The landscape in this part of the Thracian plain is mostly flat. The soils are fertile and suitable for the cultivation of a variety of agricultural crops. The two main rivers in the area are Blatnitsa and Kalnitsa. Until the 60s and 70s of the 20th century, part of the territories near the springs and their upper streams were marshy wetlands.

In antiquity, the area was located on the eastern periphery of the city territory of Augusta Traiana. With several successive archaeological campaigns, it was established that the studied micro-region was densely populated in the period 2nd - the first half of the 5th century. Remains of 9 villages, 4 large villa complexes (*villae rusticae*), separate farm buildings, several burial mounds and an early Christian basilica were registered.

The analysis of the new information makes it possible to distinguish specific settlement patterns in the eastern parts of the territory of Augusta Traiana in the 2nd – 5th centuries. They are linked to the development of the large-scale production of cereals. This main economic branch significantly influenced the development of settlement forms during the period of the Roman imperial era and the beginning of late antiquity. The remains of tenants' villages and villas of large landowners testify to the prosperity and apparent material well-being of the people who lived in them. The results of the studies make it possible to clarify important questions related to the characteristics of settlement structures in the Roman province of Thrace, located outside the large provincial urban centers.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

M. Sayar:

“Territories and Borders of the Cities and Rural Settlements in Southeastern Thrace during the Roman Rule and Late Antiquity”

The process of foundations of poleis and emporia in Thrace in antiquity, during the colonisation period, turned into a homogeneous structure consisting of cities in the province of Thrace governed by the governors under the central administration during the Roman imperial time in the 1st century AD and the settlements in the rural areas connected to them and veteran colonies where retired soldiers were settled. With the provincial reform at the end of the 3rd century AD, the Roman imperial province of Thrace was divided into four administrative units. In the same period, with the tax regulation, the area of privately owned land was precisely defined with boundary stones in order to collect taxes. Within the scope of the paper, both the boundaries of the provinces of Europa and Haemimontos, which were formed during the transition from the Roman imperial period to the late antique period, will be evaluated and the effect of the tax regulation at the beginning of the late antique period on rural life will be analysed through the boundary stones found in recent years in the Southeastern Thrace.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

A. Bâltâc, E. Paraschiv-Grigore:

“The Enigmatic Situation from Durostorum: What is the Roman Settlement from Ostrov (Farm No. 4), Constanța County?”

Durostorum is a well-known Roman city on the Danube limes. The Celtic-sounding name indicates that at the time of the Roman arrivals somewhere here was an autochthonous settlement or fortress. The history of the area changes radically with the quartering of the XI Claudia legion. From this moment on the situation should have been the same as the whole of the Rhine-Danube limes, i.e. *castrum* - *canabae* - *civitas*, and later elevation to the rank of *municipium*. The data we have so far, seems to prove the pattern here, but the inscription attesting the *canabae*, indicated that they also had the imperial gentilic, which is still a unique case in the Empire. This fact has led some experts to believe that the situation at Durostorum is different and that it is the *canabae* get the municipal rank in Marcus Aurelius' time, not the civil settlement. Archaeological research would be the only way to unravel these mysteries, but unfortunately the ancient remains are overlapping by the modern town Silistra. Over more than 30 years, an important Roman settlement has been excavated at Ferma 4 (Ostrov, Constanța County), about 2.5 km east of the *castrum* of the XI Claudia legion. About the status of this settlement, which covers about 24 ha and three buildings and numerous furnaces have been investigated, several hypotheses have been put forward, including that of *municipium*. Our presentation aims are to examine these hypotheses and to question the location of a municipality, which, even in theory, would have had to administer a vast territory in the north-eastern part of the province of Lower Moesia.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

H. Preshlenov:

“City and Territory along the Southwestern Black Sea Region. Some Remarks on the Ownership and the Income”

The urban/political community is characteristic for the Greek-Roman civilization. The municipality/community with their adjacent, normatively assigned/given territory, concentrating the economic relations in/with the directly given adjacent hinterlands/people.

Fines Terrae

The route of the border separating the territories of Marcianopolis and Odessos from those of Anchialos and Mesembria probably runs along the ridge of the Emine – Kamchiya division of Haemus Mountain. Such a natural boundary for the territories of the Roman colony of Deultum and Anchialos appears to be Lake Burgas.

Land property

In the predominantly monetarized Roman urban economy, payments have a pronounced monetary form, also reflected in the topography of coin findings on the territory of the southwestern Pontic *polises*, but probably a share (especially in realization on the urban markets of raw materials and food obtained/produced in the surrounding agricultural hinterland) has the so-called “non-stock” exchange, including the production of suburban villas, which enters directly into the household of their owners. City dwellers have the opportunity to acquire land property also in the lands of rural municipalities, attributed to the urban center, from which revenues come in the form of taxes, fees, labor annuities, extraordinary payments.

Market income

The realization of raw materials and food, obtained/produced in the surrounding agricultural hinterland, on the urban markets is under the control of the cities *agoranomoi*, which are responsible for the general administrative-financial control of the city markets, and also for the cash receipts in the public coffers from the rent of municipal shops, the occupation tax and τέλος ξενικὸν due from foreigners, offering goods in the local market.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

E. Nankov, Ph. Kolev:

“Away from the Limes, but not quite: A Newly Found Late Roman *Villa Rustica* near the Village of Gorni Dabnik, Pleven Region”

This paper will discuss some features of the Late Roman villa discovered during rescue archaeological excavations conducted in 2019 near the village of Gorni Dabnik, Pleven region. The site was inhabited extensively during the Late Roman period, judging from the two architectural complexes, parts of a villa rustica, situated on a left tributary of Vit River, ca. 20 km west of the town of Pleven.

The eastern part of a complex, Building I, consisting of 12 rooms grouped around a courtyard and covering an area of ca. 870 m² was revealed. The most representative seems to be room no. 4, the walls of which have been covered with white plaster. The foundations of the walls are made of crushed and river stones and building ceramics bonded with clay, while mudbrick was used in the superstructure. A second building (Building II), covering an area of ca. 500 m², has been uncovered ca. 250 m north of Building I. The complex was built most probably in the second quarter of the 4th c. and was destroyed by an enemy attack, as evidenced by the burnt layers found in Building I and the arrowheads discovered therein. The latest coins, minted under the emperors Valens and Gratian, indicate that the attack should be linked to the Gothic wars of the last quarter of the 4th c.

Among the numerous archaeological finds, the discovery of five stamped tiles – PPRIPVAR – p(rae)p(ositus) rip(ae) Var(inia), clearly stand out. The epigraphic evidence indicates an indirect connection with the Legio V Macedonica, located in Oescus (mod. Gigen); in the 4th c., whose cavalry unit was stationed in the castellum Variana/Varinia, situated near the village of Leskovets, municipality of Oryahovo. Their date falls within 355-364 AD based on comparanda from other sites along the Danubian Limes.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

K. Chakarov:

“*Nicopolis ad Istrum*: Territory of the Roman, Late Roman and Early Byzantine City (2nd - 7th century)”

Nicopolis ad Istrum is a Roman, Late Roman and Early Byzantine city founded in the beginning of the 2nd c. in the northern limits of the province of Thrace. It has no earlier Thracian predecessor and is an entirely new Roman city centre, established on the Greek model, in the less urbanized Thracian territory between the Haemus Mountain and the Istros River. It had also its respective rural territory with villages, villas, manufacturing sites, quarries, emporia, sanctuaries, aqueducts, roads and road-side stations, fortresses. All these rural sites are situated along the two main rivers that passed through its territory – the Rositsa River and the upper and middle course of the Yantra river (the ancient Iatrus).

The city centre and its territory had its specific development through the period from the beginning of the 2nd c. until the end of the 6th – beginning of the 7th c. The unfortified rural sites continue to function until the end of the 4th c. – beginning of the 5th c., when the first elevated fortresses started to be built in the region. The urban centre suffered the great Hunnic invasion of 447. It was demolished and the city’s institution and public buildings stop to function. However modest habitation continued over the ruins in the next decades. In the end of the 5th – beginning of the 6th c. a smaller *castellum* was built outside of the Roman fortification wall. In that time in the rural territory the fortresses became the main settlement structure. They were situated already in the mountainous area of the Predbalkan and deep into the Haemus mons. The local administrative centre was shifted from the situated in the plain *Nicopolis ad Istrum* to the situate in the Predbalkan Mountain area of Haemus Early Byzantine city of Zikideva on the Tsarevets Hill in Veliko Tarnovo, which became dominant in terms of local government. Zikideva was destroyed in 619 or a bit later. Other sites from the rural territory, i.e. fortresses, shared similar fate. With their capturing and demolition during the Avar-Slav invasions ended the more than five centuries long history of *Nicopolis ad Istrum* and its territory and the antiquity period in the region at all.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

I. Valchev, N. Dimitrov:

“Kabyle in Late Antiquity: A Decade of Research in Sector V”

The paper presents the results of the archaeological excavations conducted in the central part of the ancient city of Kabyle (Sector V) over the past ten years. The stratigraphy of the cultural deposits indicates that human activity in the sector commenced in the second half of the 4th c. BC and persisted until the end of the 2nd c. BC. No evidence of Roman Age occupation has been discovered. Following a period of nearly four centuries, life was resumed at the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 4th c., at the time when Kabyle was once again granted city status. It is probable that a wall, constructed of mortar-set stones, represents the western fortification wall of a military camp. The structure was razed and dismantled in the 350s, and a new edifice, presumably intended for residential purposes (Building C), was erected upon the ruins. A second edifice, exhibiting a similar chronology, was constructed to the west (Building A). Approximately 1000 Late Antique coins have been discovered. The most numerous are the numismatic materials of the emperors Licinius I, Constantine I, and his successors, as well as those of the brothers Valentinian and Valens. The town of Kabyle suffered severely during the Gothic Wars of Valens: thick burnt layers have been excavated and the abundant numismatic material ceased with his death. The only evidence of human activity in the 5th and 6th c. is the presence of a few pits, in which a small number of coins, mostly from the 6th c., have been found.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session I: Urban and Rural Organisation

D. Terzopoulou:

“Roman Thrace: The Rural Wealth of the Area”

The annexation of Thrace to the Roman Empire in 46 AD resulted in radical changes of the Thracian society and economy through the foundation of new cities and the improvement of the transportation network. The new organization of the urban space and the redefined social hierarchies of the Imperial period had also a great impact on the landscape around the cities and the rural economy.

The paper will focus on the region of northern Evros, a small part of the Roman province of Thrace which constituted the wider rural area of two newly founded cities: Plotinopolis and Hadrianoupolis.

Epigraphical testimony and excavations in Roman Thrace testify to the organization of rural landscape and the existence of large estates with luxury villas and small agrarian settlements. In Greece, however, only isolated large and richly furnished burial mounds help us to evaluate the rural wealth of the area. In this paper the case study will be the tumulus of Mikri Doxipara-Zoni where 5 wagons and four richly furnished cremation burials have been unearthed.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session II: Urban and Rural Space and Infrastructures

N. Sharankov:

“Reconstructing Urban Landscapes through Building Inscriptions”

The paper examines the possibilities and difficulties of reconstructing the urban landscape through analysis of building inscriptions from cities in the interior of Thrace. Fortunate cases when inscriptions have been preserved within the remains of the structures they are referring to are relatively rare. Even then, confusions can occur if the building is not properly named (e.g. τὸ ἔργον meaning simply ‘the structure’) or not named at all in largely formulaic texts consisting mostly of imperial *titulatures* and providing us with little more than a date; the form of the stone itself could usually provide only some general hints towards the identification. Other texts use obscure and uncommon terms, for example, πύργος (lit. ‘tower’) denoting part of the theatre in Philippopolis according to an inscription on marble architraves found there, or name types of buildings for which no examples have been examined archaeologically. Yet building inscriptions are mostly found in re-use or without clear context, so it is still more difficult to place a building mentioned in a text – even when it is thoroughly described – in the highly fragmentary pictures of the cities we explore. A good example is a group of inscriptions from Augusta Traiana attesting a complex of buildings from the time of Severus Alexander including a temple, an odeum, a gymnasium and two porticos described down to the number of columns; however, the inscriptions were mostly found in re-use in Late antique context, so it is virtually impossible to associate them with any archaeological structure.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session II: Urban and Rural Space and Infrastructures

A. Avramidou, J. C. Donati, A. Garyfallopoulos, Ch. Pardalidou, Ph. Aitatoglou, M. Tasaklaki, Ch. Karadima, A. Sarris, N. Papadopoulos:

“The Roman Station (?) along Via Egnatia at Komaros, Evros: A Study of the Finds and Local Topography”

In 2022, the Peraia of Samothrace Project (PSP) identified a likely Roman Station along a known section of Via Egnatia near the village of Komaros (Evros Prefecture). During the intensive surface survey, large quantities of tile and pottery were recovered, as well as metal, glass and stone objects. The ceramics date primarily between the first century BCE and third century CE with isolated finds pre- and post-dating this timeframe. They include table ware and transport amphoras, but also cookware and plain wares. A subsequent geophysical survey using magnetics and ground-penetrating radar (GPR) mapped a large rectangular complex (60 x 25 m) still buried beneath the surface at the same location. The structure comprises a stoa-like corridor and a series of four or five rooms that open into a courtyard. A second orthogonal building appeared in the data adjacent to the main complex.

This paper presents the current evidence for the Roman Station near Komaros and examines the topography around the possible station, focusing on its relation to other Roman sites in the area known through the results of the Peraia of Samothrace Project and prior work conducted by the Ephorate of Antiquities. These sites expand between the Zonaia Mountains and the Aegean Sea and consist of areas with high concentrations of Roman pottery, suggestive of permanent installations such as farmsteads, hilltop sites, and coastal locales. Our goal is to explore the extent and variety of land-occupation in the area during the Roman period and highlight questions of mobility and connectivity.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session II: Urban and Rural Space and Infrastructures

Z. Dimitrov:

“The Military Road of the Roman Empire and Cillae Road Station - A Major Part of Thrace's Infrastructure”

Already almost 80 years ago, in the center of the village of Cherna Gora, Chirpan region, remains of the Roman road station and the late antique settlement of Cillae were discovered. Research was carried out here by the archaeologists Dimitar Tsonchev, Hristo Buyukliev, Milena Tonkova. Among the finds are several important epigraphic monuments and architectural details. For example, the inscription for the religious association of Dionysus is one of the largest found in Bulgaria. But the specific location of the settlement, the road station and the road structure were not known.

Historical records inform us that Cillae was one of the main road stations on the main road of the Roman Empire in the Eastern European provinces. This ancient center is located along the route of the road called Via Militaris (popular name: Via Diagonalis), which leads from Singidunum to Constantinople and Asia Minor.

In 2023, the largest-scale archaeological excavations of Cillae was carried out. During these brand new excavations, large areas of the road and 8 buildings surrounding it were discovered. This became possible after rescue studies during the construction of the new railway on the road from Sofia to Burgas.

The result of these new excavations was the finding of about 100 meters of the route of the Via Militaris, which is perfectly preserved. The complexes around it were also excavated. The architectural structures are temple, residential buildings, tabernae, stables, parts of the drainage and water pipe systems.

Thus, a serious part of the empire's road infrastructure, crossing Thrace, was finally located. In addition, the structuring of the road station and the communications within it were studied. According to the new data, archaeologists have recorded the way that road was built, its chronology, the buildings and structures that developed around it.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session II: Urban and Rural Space and Infrastructures

M. Raycheva:

“Towns, Hills and Public Religious Life in Roman Thrace”

Natural features have always played a role in town planning, and they were particularly significant in the Roman period. Elevated terrains, whether in the form of slopes or individual hills, were reference and vantage points often incorporated within Roman urban fabric. Some of them had served fortification or other practical purposes since pre-Roman times, while others were newly adapted to the city environment for various needs most often related to growth and infrastructure development. In any case, these landmarks had been or were continuously made integral parts of architectural space and public life in all Roman provinces, as in Rome itself.

The paper explores the relationship between the towns of Thrace, among which Perinthos, Philippopolis, Deultum, Pautalia etc., and their elevated terrains, through the perspective of public religious life. Its main focus is on the essential public venues (multifunctional architectural ensembles, temples, entertainment buildings etc.) hosted on hills and slopes, and their use as key points in the routes of ceremonial processions, based on the extant archaeological, numismatic, and epigraphic evidence.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session II: Urban and Rural Space and Infrastructures

E. Kosmidou:

“Depictions of Architectural Structures and Urban Landscapes on the Coins of Roman Thrace”

This paper attempts to study and classify the iconography of architectural structures and urban landscapes on the reverse of coins from Roman Thrace. The main objective is to distinguish the variations in their depiction, to examine their dispersion in space and time through statistics and to explain the reasons for their selection based on the historical, social, political, religious or cultural background of the issuing authorities. In addition, it is discussed whether the representations on the reverse types of the coins depict real buildings and landscapes of Thracian cities during the Roman period. The numismatic material was collected mainly through online tools and online accessible auctions or collections.

Keywords: Thrace, iconography, coinage, reverse type, statistics, temple, city gate, fortification wall, turret, triumphal arch, nymphaeum, bridge, city landscape.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session III: Landscapes of Thrace

A. Dan, W. Rabbel, H. Brückner, S. Başaran, Ch. Karadima, D. Terzopoulou, Ch. Pardalidou, E. Erkul, S. Fischer, M. Thorwart:

“Down by the Hebros River: Geoarchaeological Readings of the *Tabula Peutingeriana*”

The *Tabula Peutingeriana* is the only detailed map of the Roman world fully transmitted through a 13th century copy. The original was variously dated between the 3rd and the 5th century, with solid arguments for a mid-4th century date. In the North-Eastern Aegean, it shows the Hebros river, with Ainos at its mouth connected by a network of three composite itineraries to the North (by the river valley), to the West and to the East. By comparing these itineraries with other late Roman texts as well as with our preliminary geoarchaeological results in Ainos and Doriskos, we suggest that the *Tabula* shows a mix of terrestrial, riverine and maritime itineraries whose detail can be established only by epigraphic and archaeological study. This paper collects the current evidence for an up-to-date discussion on the lower Hebros connectivity in Roman and Late Antique times.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session III: Landscapes of Thrace

V. Evangelidis, I. Mourthos, M. Karta, D. Tsiafaki:

“Mountain Archaeology within the Rhodope Landscape during Roman Times: Insights from Spatial Analysis”

The Rhodope Mountains have long served as a pivotal element in the cosmology of ancient Thracians, shaping both their cultural beliefs and economic activities. From the early Iron Age to Late Antiquity, these mountains functioned as vital conduits for exchange between the Aegean coast and the interior of Thrace. Despite their rugged terrain, the Rhodopes boasted rich biological diversity, harboring numerous endemic species and providing ample pastures for the sizable cattle herds of local Thracian tribes. Far from being ecologically marginal, these mountains were reservoirs of resources that drew human settlement and exploitation from ancient times. In light of the widespread presence of mountain landscapes across the Greek peninsula and the historical interactions of ancient peoples with such environments, there is a growing recognition among archaeologists of the need to delve deeper into the complexities of these terrains. This recognition extends notably to the Rhodope Mountains, urging scholars to explore and comprehend the multifaceted nature of this mountainous region. This paper aims to present preliminary findings from a project focused on leveraging spatial technology to investigate the Rhodope Mountains as hubs of habitation, economic activity, movement, and trade. Through the utilization of advanced spatial analysis techniques, we seek to unravel the intricate relationship between human societies and the mountainous landscapes they inhabited. By recognizing highland landscapes as dynamic spaces shaped by human management practices, we extend our understanding into the Roman period, thereby providing valuable insights into the enduring significance of the Rhodope Mountains throughout antiquity.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session IV: Private and Public Space

O. Boubounelle, I. Chalazonitis, L. Martinez-Sève, D. Malamidou, J.-F. Guay, C. Pagnoux, P. Ralli, E. Rizos, B. Rueff, S. Kriemadi:

“Private and Public Space in the Site of Palaiokastro (Terpni) during Roman and Late Antiquity”

Recent fieldwork by the French School at Athens, in collaboration with the Serres Ephorate of Antiquities, has significantly improved our understanding of the hilltop settlement of Palaiokastro, in the lower Strymon river plain, near modern Terpni. This paper will focus on the discoveries of the excavation team from 2022 onwards, with particular emphasis on architectural remains, the internal spatial arrangement of the settlement, and the function and significance of private and public buildings and spaces.

In 1993, excavation works directed by M. Karamperi brought to light a strong fortification wall enclosing the crest of the hilltop, a large five-nave basilica (which replaced an earlier civil basilica and bath installations), and a complex with extensive hydraulic facilities for wine production. To these early discoveries, the new excavations added a second, three-nave basilica, with its adjacent spaces and structures. They also brought to light a part of the habitat area, including both open and enclosed areas, in addition to a pottery furnace and part of the street network of the settlement. When examined as a whole, the archaeological record from Terpni illustrates how older buildings were re-purposed and how new ones were built to better fit the evolving needs of the settlement and augment its prestige.

The hilltop findings –in conjunction with surveys conducted in the surrounding area– argue for a small but disproportionately rich settlement, with relatively varied types of local production that may have sourced a large part of its wealth from the surrounding fertile landscape and the nearby auriferous stream. Although its ancient name remains uncertain, Palaiokastro occupied a central position in the Strymon river plain, at the crossroads of major urban centers such as Heraclea Sintica, Amphipolis, Thessalonica and Philippi, serving as an important waypoint between Macedonia, Thrace and the north of the Strymon River plain.

RaLATH VI

11.10.2024

Session IV: Private and Public Space

P. Adam-Veleni:

“The presence of the Thracians in Thessaloniki through Roman Burial Monuments”

In this paper, an attempt is made to trace the presence of the Thracians during the imperial Roman times in Thessaloniki through its funerary monuments: the sarcophagi, the altars and the tombstones. Based on the percentages of the types of burial monuments that they choose for their afterlife and given the data from these often brief inscriptions, an attempt is made to determine their political, economic, social and professional status, the monitoring of their genealogy, their intermarriages and their “Romanization” in 212 AD by the decree of Caracalla, as well as the position held by Thracian men and women in the public and private life of Thessaloniki, seat of the Province of Macedonia.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session V: Development of Settlement Patterns

M. Chrysaphi, M. Papaioannou, N. Papadopoulos:

“The Abdera Urban Plan Project (AUPP): A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Study of Urban Identities”

The Late Classical-Hellenistic city of Abdera was designed according to a grid plan of scattered and incomplete plans of Hellenistic and Roman period houses excavated in the western section of the city. Despite their fragmentary nature Hoepfner and Schwandner in their seminal study *Haus und Stadt* (1986) present a city plan with *insulae* approximately 80 x 42 m populated by rows of uniform ‘prostas-type’ houses, a uniformity they associated with the democratic notion of *isonomia*. To investigate this proposal, the Roman period *Insula of Houses* was chosen as a case study to document the transformation of Abdera’s urban landscape (from the second half of the 4th century BC to the Roman period) and its impact on urban identities. It is the best-preserved *insula* as the boundary roads to the east, west and south are known, and it features the only best-preserved plan of a Roman Period peristyle house at Abdera.

Work during the 2024 season focused on applying geophysical surveys to confirm the dimensions of the *Insula of Houses*, identify its boundary road to the north, the north wall of the Roman period peristyle located at its north-eastern corner, the various architectural phases of the *insula’s* domestic remains to a depth of 2 m, and confirm the presence of architectural remains in the adjacent *insulae* to the north, east and south. An area of approximately 6,500 m² was investigated using Magnetic Gradiometry and Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) with Resistance Mapping applied in selective areas where additional informa -

RaLATH VI

tion was required. Finally, photogrammetry and 3D Terrestrial Laser Scanning was used to provide a digital data bank for 3D modelling and visualisation theories. Preliminary GPR results revealed a peristyle house of significant size located along the east side of the *Insula of Houses*, just at the SW corner of the Roman peristyle house. The final geophysical results combined with past publications and studies of the site will contribute to our understanding of the various political, social and economic networks that helped shape the town-plan of Abdera. Questions concerning those responsible for the project, what group of people it meant to accommodate and the types of housing that existed at different time periods will pose a challenge to long-standing theories of a standardized town plan. The results may also alter are views of Roman Abdera - a city once thought to have been in decline may very well have prospered under the Roman emperors whose images on the city's coinage replaced the traditional emblem of the griffin.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session V: Development of Settlement Patterns

L. Vagalinski:

“From Colonia to Oppidum. Deultum during 4th - 5th c. AD”

At the end of the 3rd century, Deultum suffered a severe enemy attack. After it, the city reduced its protected area drastically. Important public buildings were abandoned, others were transformed into residential and storage spaces. Streets and water pipes/canals were cut off. A strong earthquake and new enemy attacks made it more difficult for the city to adapt to the profound social changes in the Empire during the Dominate. It seems that Deultum recovered only in the second half of the 5th century, when it almost doubled the size of its fortress.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session V: Development of Settlement Patterns

I. D. Cholakov, P. Dakasheva:

“Deultum and its Immediate Vicinity - Archaeological Narrative through Non-Destructive Methods”

The focus of the present study is the immediate vicinity of one of the two earliest Roman colonies in the province of Thrace – Colonia Flavia Pacis Deultensium. The researched area is located on the territory of the modern village of Debelt, Burgas region, SE Bulgaria. A field survey was conducted over six years using the methods of complete coverage of the area. As a result, more than 32 km² were covered, and over 60 archaeological sites were recorded in the vicinity of Deultum – many of them settlement structures related to the ancient and medieval city. This paper attempts to reconstruct the development of these ancient settlements, along with their transport links, daily life and changes in rural habitation after the foundation of the colony in the late 1st century AD.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session V: Development of Settlement Patterns

T. Slavkova, E. Bozhinova:

“Topography of Philippopolis and its Hinterland during the Roman Period”

The present report will present the development of the ancient city of Philippopolis (the modern city of Plovdiv, Bulgaria) during the Roman period based on the archaeological data. The discovered fortifications, monumental public facilities, residential areas, workshops and shops, necropolises, as well as the materials found in them, give a clear picture of its urban planning, architectural appearance, economic development, cultural, religious and everyday life. Along with the archaeological excavations in the city itself, a series of field surveys have been carried out in its immediate vicinity, which provide information for number of new sites which concentrations are associated with certain urban facilities as roads and aqueduct. This new information, together with the available data gathered from the surrounding areas in the last one hundred years from random excavations and isolated artefacts allow to trace the development of the settlement system and the road network in the territories administratively subordinated to Philippopolis.

Although it is among the most intensively studied cities of Roman Thrace on the territory of Bulgaria, there is still a lack of sufficient summarizing research dedicated to the city’s topography and the settlement system of its hinterland. The article aims to present and summarize the available data related to this issue, in order to contribute to the study of Roman Thrace.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session V: Development of Settlement Patterns

I. Borisova-Katsarova:

“Serdica’s Development Patterns during Late Antiquity - A Glimpse through the Western Gate of the City”

Late Antiquity was a period with a particular dynamic in the urban development of Serdica. Then it became the main city of the province of Dacia Mediterranea. There was an urban expansion and a fortified area, followed by a contraction and a return to the original defended area. During the archaeological survey in the area of the Western Gate of Serdica in the period 2011-2016 it became possible to identify more clearly the changes in the fortifications, urban planning and development of the city between the 4th and 6th centuries AD.

At the beginning of the 4th century AD, changes in the urban fabric near the gate suggest that when the construction of a new fortification wall protecting a wider perimeter began, the old one seemed to lose its importance as a defensive structure. After a period of less than a hundred years, at the end of the 4th century, the city returned to its old limits and in turn the new wall was abandoned. The gate was rebuilt, and a ditch was dug around the rebuilt old wall. In it was found part of a wooden bridge support over the ditch in remarkably good condition. In the second half of the 5th century AD the fortification wall was reinforced with a second band, doubling the width to 4 m. Triangular towers were built, and pentagonal ones at the gates. The ditch was backfilled and a proteichism was built. The latest archaeological evidence of changes at the Western Gate dates from the late 6th/early 7th century AD, after a severe earthquake caused extensive damage to the city. It was then that the level of the *decumanus maximus* was raised for the last time, an attempt was made to rebuild the drains beneath it, and the Western Gate was rebuilt as it entered the medieval period.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session V: Development of Settlement Patterns

M. Vaklinov, I. Kirov, Y. Mutafchieva, B. Eminova:

“New Data on the Chronology of the Fortified Site St. Archangel in Dubnitsa Village, Southwest Bulgaria”

The archaeological site is located on the left bank of the Mesta River, about 10 km northeast of the town of Gotse Delchev. It is located on a prominent hill in the foothills of the Dabrash part of the Western Rhodopes. From the East and West, the hill is surrounded by deep ravines, and in the northern part of the hill, there is a spring, captured in the Medieval period in a reservoir, which also suggests its choice for habitation. From the hill on which the site is located, there is an exceptionally good view to the Nevrokop valley - to the village of Dabnitsa, the village of Koprivlen with the eponymous site there, the town of Gotse Delchev, as well as to the passes leading to the Drama valley, Serres and Thessaloniki fields. The eponymous for the region Roman city of Nicopolis *ad Nestum* is located several kilometers to the west/northwest of the site.

The regular archaeological survey carried out in the period 2020-2023 by a team of the National History Museum led to a partial clarification of the nature of the fortified site during the various stages of habitation. As a result of the excavations, 11 periods of occupation/presence were established - Late Chalcolithic Age, Late Bronze Age, Early Iron Age, Late Classical period, Early and Late Hellenistic periods, Roman period, Late Antiquity, Early and Late Middle Ages, Ottoman period. This paper will focus on the period from 4th c. BCE up to 6th c.

The materials related to the aforementioned chronological range are found on an area of more than 3 acres. Probably during this period on the “St. Archangel” hill a large settlement center that controlled the entire valley and the roads through was developed.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VI: Everyday Life Issues in both the Town and Country

Ph. Kokkini, I. Mourthos:

“Mosaics of Thracia: urban and rural art?”

Mosaic art was known in the Greek colonies of Thrace during the Hellenistic period, and more specifically in Thasos, Abdera and Maronia, but not in its interior. From the foundation of the Roman province of Thracia, especially from the 1st century AD, mosaics spread to the new province, to the north of the Rhodope mountains, to the shores of the Black Sea and to Byzantium/Constantinople. The question that arises is whether these mosaics were part of the buildings of the cities, already existing or founded by the Roman emperors, or whether they were pavements also decorating rural buildings. In other words, was it an art preferred only by the inhabitants of the cities or by the owners of rural villas too, as was the case in other Roman provinces (Africa Proconsularis, Syria, etc.)? Furthermore, did the new religion play a role in the diffusion of this art in the urban and rural environment? Therefore, the present study tries to map the expansion of mosaic art in private and public buildings in the province of Thracia. At the same time, it is also interesting to examine the preferred repertoire, and to see whether it differs between urban and rural buildings, as well as the factors that could influence it, such as the type of building, fashion, professional occupation, taste and personal ambitions of the owners, etc. The pavements are grouped by chronological criterion, before and after the foundation of the new capital of the Empire, Constantinople. Thus, the first group includes pavements dated from the 1st century to the first quarter of the 4th century, and the second group including those from the second quarter of the 4th century to the 6th century.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VI: Everyday Life Issues in both the Town and Country

I. Anagnostou:

“Leda and the Swan in the Roman *Triclinium*: Imagery and Function of the Plotinopolis Mosaic”

It is a very odd thing, indeed, to watch a swan having sex with a woman, while you enjoy a splendid dinner at the ease of your house. Of course, this is not about an actual swan or a real woman. Rather, this scene comes from a mosaic adorning a triclinium in the city of Plotinopolis, one of the many imperial establishments in the Roman Province of Thrace. Yet, as odd as it may sound, such imagery featuring unusual sexual partners, female abductions and rape scenes is quite common in the Greco-roman world, and has even inspired later artists working within the Western cultural tradition. Of course, the unconventional couple is no other than the Aetolian princess Leda, wife of King Tyndareus, and the notoriously polyamorous Zeus, the father of Gods.

Their story is one of the many mythological episodes described in the ancient sources, where a male character is portrayed as an aggressive predator, while a female one as the recipient of his sexual urges. Written by men, and popularised through various artistic mediums, such accounts essentially reflect a society dominated by the male gaze, which controlled the public sphere and shaped social perceptions. Accordingly, and having as a point of departure the mosaic of Plotinopolis, this presentation will discuss the imagery of Leda and the Swan, with the aim to explore its role within the setting of a Roman villa situated in provincial Thrace. It will be argued that images depicting such scenes were inextricably linked with the Roman sympotic culture and became a popular decorative theme in the Roman *triclinia*, reflecting wider artistic trends and local preferences. At the same time, the organisation and decoration of domestic space became the vehicle through which masculine ideals were enforced, which also affirmed the identity of the Roman elite citizen, at the fringes of the Empire.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VI: Everyday Life Issues in both the Town and Country

U. Peter, V. Stolba:

“An Iconographic Riddle from Deultum”

Despite the fact that the typology of the Roman provincial coinage was highly standardized, there is enough short-lived types specific of certain cities and periods whose meaning remains obscure. This paper deals with one such iconographic riddle from Deultum – a mysterious object emerging on the city’s coins struck in the period from Maximinus I to Philip the Arab (235-247 AD) and usually interpreted as either a beehive (Mushmov, Jurukova) or a fountain (Draganov). We argue that both of these interpretations remain problematic and other possibilities need to be considered.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VI: Everyday Life Issues in both the Town and Country

S. Petrova-Dineva:

“Architectural Forms and Elements on the Roman Tomb Steles in the Valley of Middle Strymon”

A significant number of grave stelae from the Middle Strymon Valley represent either architectural forms or individual elements. Both published and unpublished monuments were used in our study. The first task is to distinguish, according to these architectural forms and elements, the individual types; the second is to ascertain which of them are inherited from the pre-Roman period; the next is to trace exactly which modern Roman elements were introduced into the stelae; in more detail, which are characteristic features of this region as a whole, and also of each chronological period.

The typology, in some cases with variants, is based on the architectural form, the architectural elements used as frame and decoration, the subject represented, the number of image fields; and the location of the inscription(s). Four types and two variants have been identified.

The earliest examples of the same types of stelae followed by masters in the Middle Strymon valley come from the area of Thessalonica and the province of Macedonia in general. Close or similar examples can also be found in the Roman provinces of Greece and Asia Minor, in Thrace and the Black Sea coast of Moesia, and especially in Italy and Rome. Stelae from the Middle Strymon copy the manner of regions under the influence of Greek architectural forms and elements, with distinct Roman innovations in some forms and treatment of architectural elements.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

L. Grozdanova, D. Boteva:

“From Deultum to DigiDeultum – From the Perspective of the Numismatic Materials”

Has digital humanities, particularly the study of Antiquity, reached the level of synthesising new research concepts, methods, and ultimately – knowledge?

This fundamental question is in the foundation of the new project BNSF КП-06-H80/7, 08.12.2023 “Upgrading the Historical Narrative: From Deultum to DigiDeultum”. By combining traditional historical and archaeological methods with those of digital humanities and archaeological sciences (archaeometry, GIS, archaeoinformatics, etc.), the project explores whether there is a fundamental shift in the reconstruction of the historical narratives through the case study of the Roman colony of Deultum. The project covers a variety of source materials applying innovative approaches, allowing the exploration of complex social, cultural, economic, and political processes.

This poster will showcase some possible directions for exploring and reinterpreting the concept of the town of Deultum and its organisation, spaces, and dimensions of everyday life from the perspective of numismatic materials. The research aims to identify innovative and interdisciplinary approaches and interpretation methods to address the numismatic data. Thus, it will formulate new, possibly breakthrough questions and research directions to trace whether there is a comprehensible difference in the historical construct of Deultum and the one of DigiDeultum, i.e. the new narrative.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

H. Ivanova-Anaplioti:

“Like Father, Like Son? Imperial Portrait Distribution Strategies in Thrace during the Reign of Septimius Severus and Caracalla”

Portraits are the main resource for the countryside population to imagine the central imperial power during the Roman Empire. When imposed they embody the message that is to be spread and when adopted - the loyalty of towns. Numismatics offers insight into how the central power defined and administered these images, and into their spatial distribution as a controlled source. Provincial coinage, however, literally bears another side of the coin that is usually connected to local preferences and peculiarities. A combination of a certain portrait type, already known in central imperial coinage for its bound message, with provincial motifs displays the tension of two official custodianships. The imperial strategy was adopted and spread from on-site administration, in both public and private spaces, in the cities and the countryside. During the reign of Septimius Severus portraiture clearly shows different stages and mirrors important events. This applies to the years of his successors. In Thrace, the early Severans influenced the development of the province with their frequent appearances. This clearly was expressed in both official and non-official portraits in every media where they were represented. This paper will trace the distribution of the portraiture from the perspective of the ERC project RESP giving a new approach through provincial coinage and other portraiture media in synergy.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

B. Borislavov:

“Settlement Pattern in Sakar Mountain during the Roman Period I - IV Century AD”

The aim of this research is to reveal the characteristics of the settlement pattern in Sakar Mountain. Sakar is an important region of Roman Thrace between Tonzos and Hebros. At the same time, it is almost unexplored. One of the main routes in the Province passes through the mountain, which is rich in resources. Recently new data based on archaeological excavations and surveys have been accumulated. This research will be an attempt to summarize the current picture.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

M. Gyuzelev:

“Observations on the Early Byzantine East-Balkan Fortification Wall”

The focus of this contribution is based on our knowledge of Early Byzantine fortification available so far: literary sources, modern historiographical analyses and field archaeological surveys. The present poster considers the questions of the role of this sector in the entire Balkan fortification system of the East Roman Empire and its strategical significance, focusing here on its end at the Black Sea coast near the present town of Obzor (Nesebar Municipality, Burgas District, Bulgaria). Parts of the fortification wall have been discovered there in the last two years, namely two towers - the northwestern and the southeastern one. The different building materials and techniques used will be discussed too. Our conclusions present the latest achievements on this topic so far, while the field work is still ongoing both in the old town and its adjacent territory. The results of the surveys have not been published yet and are presented here for the first time.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

K. Petkova, R. Stoychev:

“On the Road in the Periphery of Serdica. Roman and Late Roman Settlement and Production Centre near the Village of Aldomirovtsi”

The study presents the results from the archaeological rescue excavations carried out between 2022 and 2024 in relation to an infrastructure project.

The discussed settlement is located in the Izvor locality and is situated near the village Aldomirovtsi, Sofia region. It is located 5 km to the north of the village at a spring with a large flow, which gives rise to a small unnamed river, a left tributary of the Slatina River.

Nine houses, five buildings with economic functions, eight lime wash kilns, an ancient road and more than 180 pits were excavated. The features and the related artefacts reveal an intensive human occupation in three main periods: The Early Iron Age (11th – 8th c. BC), Roman and Late Antique period (late 3rd – early 7th c.) and the medieval period (9th – 11th c.).

The most numerous and varied are the features dated to the Roman and the Late Roman period. All the ancient houses and buildings are rectangular or square in plan. Their construction is identical although there are a small differences depending of the constructions functionality. A stone plinth with one or two courses of stones in substruction was documented in the all buildings. The bronze and silver coins found in the houses are dated to the late 3rd and the third quarter of the 4th c.

All excavated lime kilns can be divided into two types – a pit cut into the ground or the build construction made by brick and stone. All of them followed the Roman and the Late Roman construction models although in various details of the construction were documented.

The establishment of the settlement and the production centre is related to the excavated section of an ancient road.

12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

V. Anevlavi, P. Andreeva, W. Prochaska:

“The Materiality of Visual Language: New Perspectives on Marble Statue Trade in Roman Thrace”

This paper contributes to the study of marble distribution patterns in Roman Thrace by using statues to understand producer-consumer dynamics and reconstruct spatial and social connections among artisans and workshops at both the micro (local) and macro (regional/interregional) scales. The research employs a bottom-up approach through archaeometric analysis to investigate the marble provenance of sampled sculptural artefacts, tracing the development of interactions among cities in Roman Thrace and their dependence on local and distant quarries. Additionally, it underscores the region's integration south of the Lower Danube within the expansive marble networks of the Roman Empire.

Archaeometric investigation of marble sources and their exploitation yields valuable insights into supply dynamics and the connections between raw materials and cities within the province. From a network perspective, this highlights inter-city interactions through marble statue production, illustrating the influence of artisans and workshops. Evaluating the connectivity between cities and the renowned quarries of antiquity, along with the links between cities and local marble quarries within the provincial territory, is essential for this research. The data on statue production are also analyzed in relation to evidence of the geographical expansion of the empire-wide marble trade.

The study raises several questions within a broader socio-economic and cultural context concerning the interplay of mobility and itinerancy among the artisans, social interactions, practical considerations of supply, and technical aspects of carving. It further highlights the influence of elites in provincial contexts on the spread of artistic styles, often exemplifying *imitatio Urbis* during the process of the formation of visual language of Roman Thrace. Keywords: statues, marble quarries, marble networks, Roman Thrace.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

N. Borislavova:

“Imported Wine in the Rural Areas of Roman Thrace”

The aim of this research is to present the distribution of imported wine in the rural areas of Roman Thrace. Issues of trade patterns, links between production centers, redistributive centers and consumption sites will be discussed. The study will be an effort to outline the supply routes of the countryside and the regional specifics of that supply. The changes in the distribution pattern after the urbanization of the Roman province of Thrace will be revealed.

RaLATH VI

12.10.2024

Session VII: Poster presentations

I. Mattuzzi, C. Kallintzi, J.M. Palet, M. Georgiadis, E. Kefalidou, A. Mayoral, A. Garcia-Molsosa:

“A Compared Study of the Landscape Dynamics in the Territories of Abdera (Greece) and Emporiae (Spain): Methodology and First Results, with a Focus on Roman Times and Late Antiquity”

This work presents the preliminary results of a PhD research project addressing ancient colonial and conquest phenomena in the Mediterranean through an integrated multidisciplinary landscape archaeology approach. We compare the territory and landscape dynamics of Abdera (Aegean Thrace) and Emporion (Catalunya, Spain): both sites were settled in the 7-6th c. BC by Ionian colonists and later incorporated into the Roman Empire. Furthermore, they share a similar environmental context as they were both located in comparable and highly dynamic fluvio-costal environments, with landscapes characterized by the presence of wetlands and by periodical modifications in the coastline and water courses. The study is focused on three main research axis: 1) the chrono-typological definition of sites and the analysis of their spatial distribution; 2) the archaeomorphological analysis of road networks and field systems, based on historical cartography and aerial photographs and archive data; and 3) the palaeogeographic and palaeoenvironmental reconstruction, based on available data, enriched by the application of remote sensing techniques and the geoarchaeological study of pedo-sedimentary archives. This presentation intends to introduce the approach and methodology as well as the first results, with a focus on the evolution of the landscape of Abdera in the Roman and Late Antiquity periods.

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