

The Monetary Circulation of Moesia Inferior from the Beginning of the 2nd Century AD to the End of the 3rd Century AD

(As referred from the Bulgarian evidence)

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Abstract

This thesis intends to gather and analyse all coin hoards and the majority of the single finds found on the territory of Moesia Inferior, dated between AD 100 and 300. The study will demonstrate how coins, through their existence as archaeological objects, offer profound insights not only into the matters of economy, state organization, and monetary supply but also into the local history of the cities which operated as mints. This study attempts to build a new and detailed framework for studying and interpreting coin assemblages in this area of Europe. A major aim is to create a fundamental basis for future research in the province so every new hoard or stray find can be added to the database which will allow large-scale analysis; this database will facilitate the incorporation of Lower Moesia into the numismatic map of the Roman Empire.

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Chapter I - Introduction:

Aims and background of the research project

The history of Moesia Inferior was extremely dynamic. The province was an external border of the Empire which led to its extensive military development. The concentration of armed forces, the favorable climatic conditions and access to the sea swiftly contributed to the economic growth of the province. The newly formed economic and political organization was accompanied by widespread monetary exchange. The coins became a "blood stream" of the complex economic relations between indigenous people, settlers, soldiers and traders. Unfortunately, the lack of ancient literary sources, the very few extensive archaeological excavations and the absence of a consistent monetary record makes it difficult to determine and understand in detail the numismatic history of Moesia Inferior. However, the number of recovered hoards from the province is without precedent for this part of Europe, making this province a unique case study. For the period between AD 100 and AD 300 alone, there are over 359 recorded / reported hoards some of them such as Devnya, General Toshevo and Rouse containing more than 5000

coins.¹ In comparison, for the same period, the neighboring province of Thrace only around 65 recorded hoards, despite its larger size.²

Historical Scope

The data gathered in this thesis covers the period between 2nd Century BC and 7th Century AD. The focus of the work is the period - AD 100 and 300. This period was selected because it saw the fullest development of the monetary system in Lower Moesia and was also the most flourishing period of the province. During the study period, the land of Moesia Inferior was extensively urbanized and a wide network of roads and infrastructure was developed. In addition, seven civic mints were opened, some of which struck coins for over 70 years, such as Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis (fig. 5, fig. 6 and fig. 7).

The Empire-wide state coinage (RIC – Roman Imperial Coinage) between the period AD 100 and AD 300 saw significant numismatic changes as well: the debasement of the denarius under Trajan (AD 98–117) and again by Septimus Severus (AD 193–211), the introduction of the silver radiate under Caracalla, and the progressive debasement of the latter as well as the reforms of Aurelian and Diocletian. In addition to the dynamic monetary alterations, the period in question is characterised by external military pressure on

¹ Jurukova, 1987, 6 – 8. The total number of coins considered in this work is over 200.000; 118,824 are incorporated and examined individually.

² Jurukova, 1994, 112. The number of hoards is for the part of Thrace that is located in Bulgaria.

the Roman borders. The Marcomannic wars during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (AD 161–180), the invasion of the Goths and other tribes during the middle of the 3rd century, and other wars led to a concentration of military forces and funds on the borders of the Empire. As a strategic frontier province, Moesia Inferior benefited from the concentration of troops and coins but also suffered greatly from the military conflicts on its lands.

In order to understand better the context of monetary circulation and usage, this thesis will briefly consider the period between the 2nd C BC and 1st Century AD, as a background to the study. It will also provide an overview of the period of the 3rd–7th Century AD to better situate the study-period. Consideration of the earlier periods will highlight some important developments, especially the gradual monetization of the province, which may be set in a regional and chronological perspective. The analysis of the post-3rd C AD period will underline the changes which occurred in both the function and distribution of coins in the Later Empire, many of which were foreshadowed earlier.

In summary, this study focusses on the peak of monetary circulation and development in Moesia Inferior between AD 100 and 300. In addition, by incorporating evidence from the earlier and later stages of the existence of the province, the period under question will not be

examined in isolation but will be analysed in the context of the *longue durée*.

Geographical Scope

After its formation in AD 15, the territory of Moesia Inferior underwent reorganisation several times: the borders of the province were especially problematic areas during the 2nd Century AD. Owing to limited archaeological evidence, scholars have provided various theories about the possible development of the provincial boundaries. In order to set the geographic limits of this thesis, the available evidence and concepts will be discussed.

The Bulgarian section of the Danube can be regarded as the most permanent border. It enclosed Moesia Inferior to the north and presented a natural defence against external treats. For a very short period between AD 106 and 118, large parts of Southern Romania and Moldova were part of Moesia Inferior. Forced by the Sarmatian tribes in AD 118, Hadrian formed the province of Lower Dacia which incorporated all Moesia north of the Danube.³

For a long period, the river Ciabrus had been regarded as the western border of Moesia Inferior which separated it from Moesia Superior.

³ Ruscu 2007, 221/2.

However, archaeological finds provide evidence that the hinterland of Almus, the modern-day Lom river, was also part of Moesia Inferior. This is evidenced by an epigraphic monument dated AD 156 which names *T. Viatros Pulio*, legatus of Moesia Inferior, as a local governor.⁴ This evidence extends the borders of Moesia Inferior further west. The eastern border of the province was the Black Sea. This border was particularly important for the economic development of Lower Moesia owing to its contact with states in Asia Minor and Thrace. The Eastern and Northern borders of the province were altered towards the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 4th Century AD, when the north-eastern parts of Dobruja became part of the newly formed province of *Scythia Ripensis* (in Modern Day Romania).⁵

The most challenging aspect has been the differentiation of the southern border of Lower Moesia which separated it from the province of Thrace. The problem has been discussed by many scholars, such as B. Gerov, V. Velkov, M. Tacheva, R. Ivanov, L. Ruscu, and D. Boteva.⁶ Of particular interest is the part of the border between Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis. Some scholars argue that up to the end of the 2nd Century AD, the hinterlands of these two settlements were part of Thrace. There is the evidence of seven border stones found in the region of Nicopolis ad Istrum –

⁴ Ruscu 2007, 223.

⁵ Tacheva 2000, 67.

⁶ The most substantial articles have been published by D. Boteva in 2001; the author summarises all of the available archaeological and epigraphic evidence.

Hotnica, Butovo, Novae, Maslarevo, Polski Senovec, Roman and Svishtov (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). Based on the location of these stones, Gerov suggested that the entire territory between Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis was part of Thrace, at least until the reign of Septimius Severus. The author argued that the north-eastern part of Moesia Inferior was very narrow and included only the Danubean Limes.⁷ Ruscu further supported this theory and proposed that the border of Thrace possibly reached the Danubian bank somewhere around modern day Svishtov.⁸ This statement supports an earlier concept proposed by Velkov; the hinterland of Nicopolis ad Istrum, as part of Thrace, separated the province of Moesia Inferior into two parts.⁹ Rumen Ivanov does not agree with the theories suggested. The scholar points out that the stones found near Novae and Svishtov could have been moved from a different location. The scholar also argues that the section between Novae and Sexaginta Prista is strategically too important to be controlled by Thrace with its minor military contingent.¹⁰ Most scholars agree that during the early reign of Septimius Severus, around AD 193, both Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis became part of Moesia Inferior, so the provincial border reached the Haemus Mountain. This statement is proven by epigraphic and numismatic evidence. Since the reign of Septimius

⁷Gerov 1950, 78–87.

⁸Ruscu 2007, 216–219.

⁹Velkov 1986, 25.

¹⁰Ivanov 1999.

Severus, both towns refer to the legatus of Lower Moesia as the local governor.¹¹

This thesis will discuss all coin hoards from the territory of Moesia Inferior, within the following borders coinciding with the modern Day North Bulgaria¹²: the Danube to the north excluding the North-West parts of Doubrudja which became later part of Scythia Repnsis; the Ciabrus River and Almus hinterland to the west, the Black Sea to the east, and the Haemus Mountain to the south (*fig 4 and fig 5*). However, the theories of changeable borders between Moesia and Thrace are relevant to the numismatic analysis. In particular, the possible changes in provincial attribution may be reflected by monetary circulation and supply in certain areas. The most sensitive indicator of such regional variations is the distribution of civic coinage. An interesting example is the high concentration of coins from Hadrianopolis found around Nicopolis ad Istrum which can be explained by the fact that for long periods of time, both cities were part of the same province. On the other hand, although located in close proximity, the coins from the coastal cities of Moesia Inferior (Odessos, Dionysopolis, Kallatis and others) are rarely found around Nicopolis ad Istrum. Taking such evidence into consideration, this thesis will attempt to examine to what extent provincial borders affected the circulation of civic coins.

¹¹Boteva 2001, 213.

¹² The thesis is focusing on the Bulgarian evidence only due to the time restriction of the project and the availability of data.

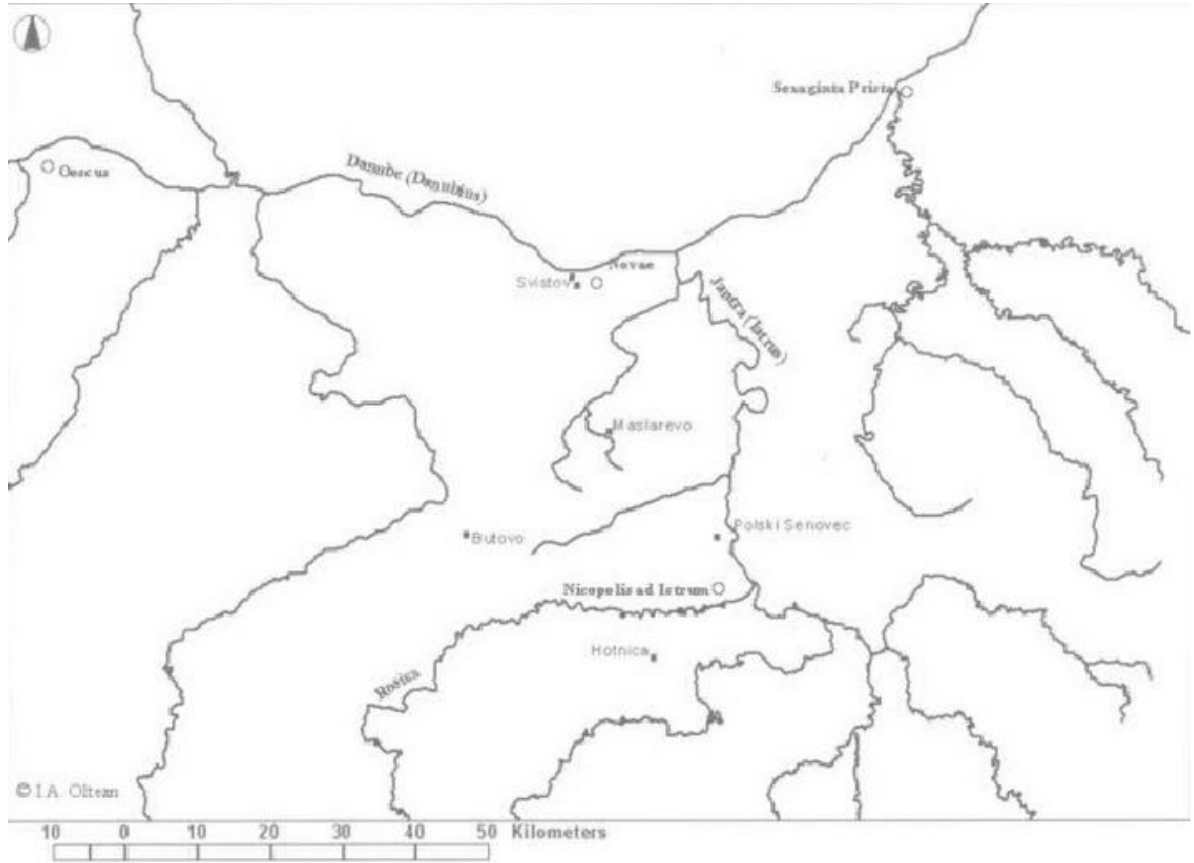


Fig. 1. Location of the seven border stones found around Nicopolis ad Istrum¹³

¹³Ruscu 2007.



Fig. 2. Possible location of the border between Trace and Moesia Inferior based on the position of the border stones¹⁴

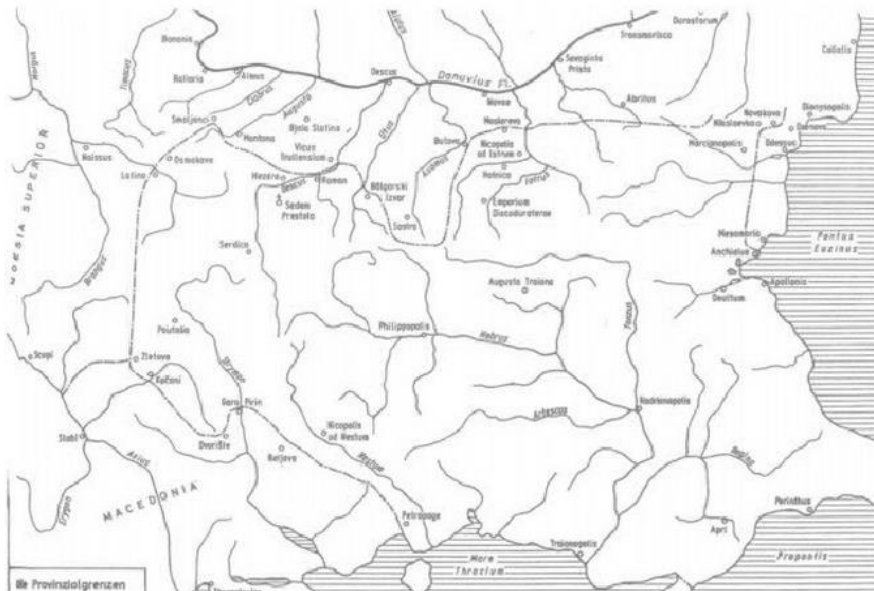


Fig. 3. The territory of Moesia Inferior according to Gerov.15

¹⁴Ruscu 2007.

¹⁵Gerov 1977.



Fig4. Map of the Balkan provinces including the complete territory of Moesia Inferior.

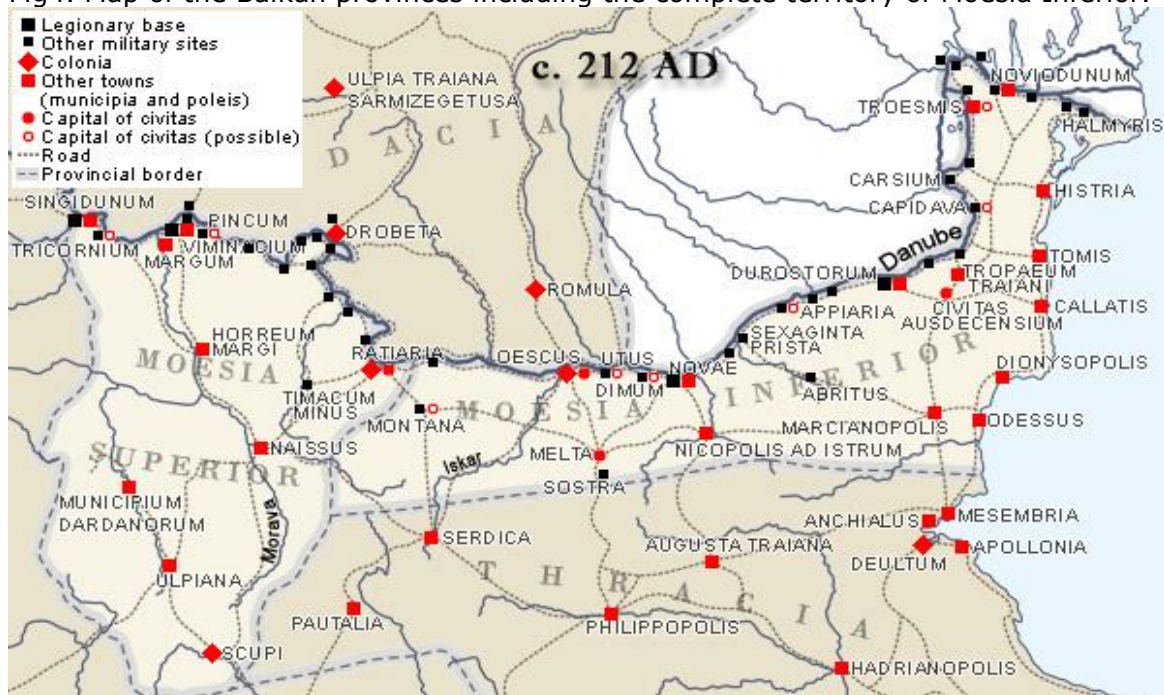


Fig. 5. Map with the major settlements in Moesia Inferior.

Methodology

Nature of Evidence

This thesis has gathered data for 359 coin hoards, composed of gold, silver, and bronze denominations. This study incorporates both published and unpublished data but only from properly reported hoards from Moesia Inferior. The total number of coins from the examined assemblages is over 200,000. Owing to the presence of widely dispersed evidence, collecting data and creating the database took four years (three prior to the commencement of my doctorate). The information was gathered through several sources:

- Published hoards – Revision of all archaeological bulletins and articles from 1900 onwards.
- Unpublished hoards – Most of the evidence for unpublished hoards was gathered during my visits to archaeological museums in Bulgaria. A large number of unpublished hoards was provided by Evgeni Paunov.

An obstacle to the creation of this database was the limited quantity of publications and the availability of some data only in small museum libraries. Another major problem was the existence of duplicate hoards, with the same hoard described in different ways. In some instances, some reports referred to the find spot area, while others, to the settlement near which the assemblage was found. In

other instances, publications systematically excluded particular types of coin. To address these impediments, the original source, which was usually available only in the municipality where it was published, had to be located and reviewed in person.

All of the data were incorporated in the Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire Project database which aided detailed analysis.¹⁶ The database facilitates the creation of maps with precise coordinates and also permits complex queries.

This thesis will also incorporate most of the available site finds in order to compare and contrast stray finds and hoards in certain settlements or areas. However, there is a marked lack of adequately published site finds. There are excavation reports from Novae and Nicopolis ad Istrum which include a good presentation of the numismatic finds, but there are no publications or catalogues of stray coin finds in the territory of Moesia Inferior housed in any museum. I have gathered evidence during my visit to the Devnya Museum (Marcianopolis), where the entire coin inventory was shown to me.

Analytical Techniques

Coin hoards are a very complex category of archaeological material, especially when the analysis is conducted from a synthetic perspective outside of the original context. When a coin assemblage is examined, one

¹⁶ <http://chre.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/>

must understand the character of monetary usage in the area, the specifics of coin distribution, the depositional factors, and the archaeological framework within which the coins existed.¹⁷ Reconstructing monetary circulation using only hoards can lead to many issues. By their nature, coin hoards are selected deposits of certain type of coins which are extracted from circulation or accumulated for a certain period of time. As shown from the evidence obtained in this thesis, only 15 out of 359 hoards are composed of mixed metal denominations, while all the others are homogeneous. Therefore, although the examined coins were circulating in the province, the hoards are not snapshots of this circulation but selective samples. This is a crucial point which can lead to misinterpretations. All the studies on Moesia Inferior conducted so far have been of limited geographic and chronological scope.¹⁸ Most previous studies focus on a small region, often a municipality.¹⁹ Therefore, to reconstruct monetary circulation, usage, and strategies, this work will analyse all of the available evidence. The primary method which will be used to gain insights into the diversity of monetary circulation and usage will involve the comparison of proportions of coins by region in a chronological manner. Although stray finds will be incorporated for certain settlements to act as a control on the hoard data, the absence of a complete database for the province means that this approach can only be partially realized.

¹⁷Aarts 2000, 19.

¹⁸ Paunov, Phd Thesis.

¹⁹Dzanev (2007) studied the monetary circulation in Razgrad Region; Bunov (1994) studied the monetary circulation of Roman coins in the Pleven region.

Regional Stratification

The province of Moesia Inferior has been divided into three regions for the purposes of analysis of monetary circulation (fig 6). The choice of the regions is based on several criteria, which are relevant to interregional variations.

Region 1 is the area enclosed by the river Cibrica (*Ciabrus*) and Lom region in the west and Osam River in the east. The area was defined because it is the border region between Moesia Inferior and Moesia Superior and it did not have any cities operating as civic mints in its territory.

Region 2 directly borders the former in the West and is enclosed by the River Jantra in the East. This area is the "heart of the province", and it had one city operating as a mint in its territory – Nicopolis ad Istrum.

Region 3 is enclosed by the river Jantra in the west and the Black Sea coast in the east. This is the largest and most urbanised area, which had six cities operating as mints in its territory.

In addition, a background study of the available data suggests that from the 2nd Century BC onwards there was a great difference between the coins found in these three specific areas. The large rivers which flow from south to north may have acted as borders in the differentiation of each area. However, there are certainly other significant economic and political factors responsible for the variations

in the monetary data which will be further examined in this thesis (chapter 2). By analysing the coin deposits from each region, a basic pattern will be established.

This work will try determining the different types of coin use and distribution in the different parts of the province and their explanation. The data will also be compared to other adjacent areas of the Roman Empire, namely Dacia and Thrace, in order to contextualize the fluctuations in monetary supply and usage. For instance, Gazdac (2002) reports a large number of civic coins from Nicaea found as single in Dacia from the 3rd Century AD; however, this pattern is not present among single finds nor hoards in Moesia Inferior.

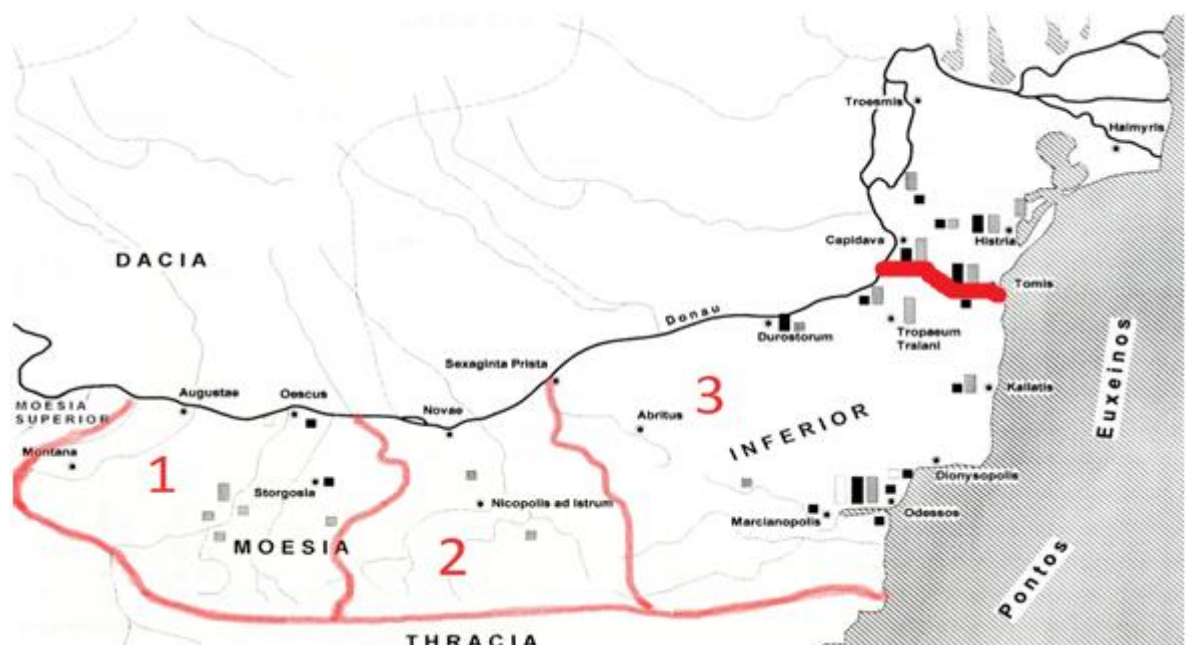


Fig 6. The examined in this work regions

Chronological Periods

In order to understand and answer complex questions related to the reasons for coin deposition and factors responsible for the fluctuation of the monetary record, the data needs to be carefully analyzed in a chronological manner. Each of these periods will be examined along with all the relevant historic and economic events that might have resulted in an increase or decrease of hoarding and non-recovery. The periods are not chosen accidentally as they encompass historic, economic and monetary changes specific to the province.

Period I is selected as it shows the earliest stages of monetary distribution in the provinces after the consolidation of the borders under Trajan and Hadrian. Period II and III include the first peaks in hoarding activity which raises many questions regarding the reasons for deposition. Separating the evidence within these time frames will intend to answer up to what extent the deposits can be related to military events or the Severan monetary reform (the debasement of the denarius) and later, the introduction of the antoninianus under Caracalla. Period IV sees some interesting numismatic changes which worth separate analysis, namely the simultaneous deposition of bronze and silver as well as the temporary closure of some mints under Macrinus and Diadumenianus. The following periods – V, VI, VII and VIII are fundamental for understanding the absolute chronology of the local coinage after the end of production in Period V. The periods help the researcher to conceptualize the monetary

circulation in the second half of the third century, outlining the specific patterns and their relation to economic and military events.

Bonchev Hoarding Periods	Time Span
Period I	AD 98 – 138 (Trajan to Hadrian)
Period II	AD 138 – 192 (Antonine)
Period III	AD 193 – 217 (Severan)
Period IV	AD 218 – 238 (Macrinus to Maximinus Thrax)
Period V	AD 238 – 249 (Gordian III to Phillip Arab)
Period VI	AD 249 – 268 (Trajan Decius to Gallienus)
Period VII	AD 268 – 275 (Claudius II to Aurelian)
Period VIII	AD 275 – 305 (Tacitus to Diocletian)

Civic Coinage

When considering micro-regional circulation patterns, civic coinage can provide a more nuanced picture than Roman Imperial Coinage. By knowing the place where a coin was struck, one can trace its movement inside and outside the province. This thesis involves the largest body of evidence for the civic coinage in Moesia Inferior ever

gathered. The majority of the evidence has been incorporated into the Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire database in detail, including all coins by emperor and by mint. Taking into consideration the potential of these data, the civic coinage of Moesia will be examined in a separate chapter independently from imperial denominations.

The civic coinage will be examined by the aforementioned regional and chronological approach. However, several additional case studies will be conducted excluding the imperial coins. First, a relative volume of coinage will be estimated based on the proportions of coins from each emperor and mint. A die study of the civic coinage in Moesia has never been conducted because the evidence is widely dispersed among museums, institutes, and private individuals. Therefore, a novel attempt will be made to illustrate the average proportions of the existing coinage. This approach is possible owing to the large body of evidence collected in this work.

Secondly, a comparative study of the proportions between local and foreign coins will be conducted.²⁰ The background study suggests that the local authorities followed certain policies regarding the distribution of small change within the province. By applying the aforementioned methodology, some of these monetary strategies will be reconstructed.

²⁰ The coins from the articular mint will be considered local, and those from other mints in Moesia Inferior and other provinces will be considered foreign.

Thirdly, a specific case study will be conducted regarding the coinage of Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis. The hoard evidence suggests the dominance of the coins from these two mints. The case study will examine the distribution of the coins in a chronological and geographical manner, highlighting the changes and outlining possible areas of influence.

Mint	Modern Name	Greek Imperial Coinage Started	Greek Imperial Coinage Ended
Dionysopolis	Balchick	Antoninus Pius	Gordian III
Histria	NA	Hadrian	Gordian III
Kallatis	Mangalia	Nero	Philip II
Marcianopolis	Devnya	Commodus	Philip II
Nicopolis ad Istrum	Nikiup	Antoninus Pius	Gordian III
Odessos	Varna	Domitian	Gordian III
Tomis	Constanta	Augustus	Philipp II

Fig. 7. Mints in Moesia Inferior: Ancient Name, Modern Location and Chronology of Coinage.

Theoretical Framework

Ancient coins are very complex artefacts, in the sense that very few objects from the antiquity have so many dimensions: economic, political, artistic, and personal.²¹ Roman coins were products of the state but used by society. Therefore, their existence led to a complex network between the private individuals and local and central authorities. In order to understand this connection, each of these dimensions will be examined.

It can be suggested that the “life” of each coin consists of four major stages – the process of production (primary), the phase of circulation (secondary), the stage of deposition (tertiary), and finally the process of recovery and interpretation (quaternary).²² Each stage is related to economic, social, and historical factors that determine the incorporation of each coin in a wider historical context.²³

Coin Production

During the Imperial period, the Roman state issued coins made from different metals, gold, silver, and copper alloy. The imperial denominational system in the 1st and 2nd Centuries AD in Rome was follows: 1 gold aureus = 25 silver denarii = 100 brass sestertii = 200

²¹Elkins 2007, 30.

²²Kemmers 2011, 90.

²³Myberg 2009, 157–59.

brass dupondii = 400 brass asses = 1600 brass quadrantes.²⁴ The existence of such a well-stratified monetary system including such a wide variety of denominations, and particularly small change, is a phenomenon of the Roman world which did not exist between AD 500 and 1500.²⁵ This suggests the complexity of coin usage during the period of the empire and the wide variety of economic purposes it served – from small daily transactions to substantial state and military payments.²⁶

In addition to the complex denominational system, the Roman state struck coins using a wide variety of iconographic types. Although the obverse, depicting the head of the Emperor with his name and titles, was generally standard, the reverse iconography remained very changeable. It is argued that the imagery of the Roman coins was a prime medium of communication in the ancient world because of its wide diffusion and expansive context, which was presented in a way familiar to the recipient.²⁷ This argument, however, suggests that although used as currency, the coins were also a means of presenting political ideology, conveying messages, and memorializing achievements. This statement leads to many questions: were certain recipients targeted by the issuing authority with specific iconographic types, and, therefore, were some coins distributed in an organised

²⁴Van Heesh 2009, 125.

²⁵Crawford 1975, 560 – 65.

²⁶Temin 2001, 171.

²⁷Burnett 1986, 65 – 70; Flower 1996; Brilliant 2007, 14–16; Norena 2001, 146 – 68.

manner? Although such theories are extremely difficult to prove through archaeological analysis, some attempts have been made. For instance, Kemmers published the coin finds from the legionary fort at Nijmegen during the Flavian period.²⁸ On comparing the finds from the neighbouring civilian and other settlements with those from the legionary fortress, the author found a remarkably high concentration of military-themed coins in the area of the military camp.²⁹

Although this thesis will not undertake a detailed iconographic study of the coin finds from Lower Moesia, the imagery of the civic coinage will be examined as one of their important characteristics. The presence of the names of cities and iconography specific for each mint certainly involved the recipient in an inter-regional dialogue. This fact, combined with the variable size of the coins of same denominations struck by different mints, could have affected the coins' acceptance. In addition, another important process which suggests the economic and political importance of the civic issues is the process of countermarking.³⁰ Sometimes, when a coin from one mint penetrated the territory of another city, it was stamped with a certain mark, which was often the abbreviation of the local mint. For example, coins from Hadrianopolis found near Nicopolis ad Istrum are

²⁸Kemmers 2006.

²⁹Kemmers 2006; There are several ancient literary sources which suggest that people perceived and understood the coins' iconography in a variety of ways. For instance, Casio Dio (47.25.3), cited by Elkins (2007), described the *EID MAR* denarius struck by Brutus as related to the assassination of Julius Caesar. Other ancient author, Socrates Scholastics in his *Ecclesiastical History* (3.17) describes the denouncement of Emperor Julian II by the Christian people of Antioch who pointed out the bull on his coinage, as symbol of his paganism, and the devastation brought by his reign.

³⁰Howgego 1985.

countermarked with the stamp "NIKO".³¹ Other coins are marked with heads of deities, monograms, and other symbols.³² In order to clarify the political importance of civic coinage, this work will, for the first time, map and compare the distribution of the coins from each mint of Moesia Inferior. The patterns outlined, combined with epigraphic and archaeological evidence of relations and unions between certain cities, will be studied to show that the distribution of the provincial coins was not random but belonged in a wider context of relationships.

Coin Circulation and Usage

Roman coinage was produced to facilitate transactions and make payments, according to metal content and value. Through their iconography, the coins were also used to express political ideology and convey messages, and as some authors argue, imply imperial propaganda.³³ Once a coin left its primary context, it reached the phase of circulation and usage. This secondary phase represents the movement of the coin as a result of contact between people and material and non-material objects, such as goods and services.³⁴ The secondary context is important because it provides evidence of the function which the coins had over time and space. There are several important questions regarding this stage: How was the coinage put

³¹Ivanov 2008, 76.

³²For more information on countermarks see Haritonov 2002, 97-112.

³³Jones 1974, 61 – 70; Levick 1982, 104 – 16; Crawford 1983, 47 – 74; Angelov 1999, 40–43.

³⁴Parry *et al.* 1989, 61–63.

into circulation? What were the mechanisms by which the coins were distributed?

First, different denominations were put into circulation through different mechanisms. The more valuable denominations, such as aurei and denarii, were certainly used for large, state payments, and small bronze denominations, for daily-based commercial transactions. The active penetration of gold and silver in various territories of the empire is most often explained by military and public spending. Some of the major components of the state expenditure were army salaries, payments for civilian employees, hand-outs to civilians and soldiers, building and infrastructural programmes, gifts/bribes to allies etc.³⁵ The distribution of small bronze denominations is harder to define, and various theories suggest the possible mechanisms through which the government introduced low-value coinage into circulation. Evidence from Gaul and Germania suggests that the army played a major role in the distribution of small change in the local markets.³⁶ Although there is no doubt that most of the military payments and salaries were made through precious metal coinage, it is possible that certain amounts were paid in bronze denominations.³⁷ The high concentration of bronze coins from the legionary camps in Germany from the 1st and 2nd Centuries AD supports this statement.³⁸

³⁵ Duncan – Jones, 1994, 33–40.

³⁶ Heesh 2009, 141 – 3.

³⁷ Wolters 2001, 581–583.

³⁸ Heesh 2009, 136.

Furthermore, some of the bronze coins have countermarks with names of generals, such as Varus. This fact also supports the evidence that partial payments in bronze were made to the army, and the countermarks represent the act of high-ranking officials paying out to their soldiers.³⁹ The evidence gathered from Lower Moesia for the 1st and early 2nd Century AD suggests a similar pattern, namely a circulation of central bronze coins, such as asses and dupondii, marked with various legionary stamps. For instance, in a small hoard of 9 imperial asses found near Oescus, 6 of the coins were countermarked with "MACV". However, even the earliest civic coins of Moesia did not follow this model and military countermarks are non-existent. This evidence does not disprove any role played by the army in small change distribution in the region, but it implies that the local coinage might have had a more urban character.

Another possible mechanism through which the local authorities of Moesia injected small cash in circulation is by restricting certain transactions to be conducted only with bronze coinage, e.g. public attendance at the baths, markets, and others.⁴⁰ Erdkamp suggests a model in which the army paid for food supply from the local *civitates* in gold and silver, but the local farmers were paid in bronze by the city.⁴¹ Local workers might have also paid in bronze coinage for small building projects or maintaining roads and other public

³⁹Heesh 2009, 137.

⁴⁰Macro 1976, 171.

⁴¹Erdkamp 2002, 65–67.

infrastructures.⁴² The major problem arising here is that of determining the actual value of the civic coinage in Moesia, which would, to a large extent, define the possible usage of the coins. Wolters *et al.* suggest that the average salary of an unskilled worker in the 1st Century AD was between 5 and 16 asses a day, and a legionary soldier was paid 10 asses per day.⁴³ Although a direct analogy between the central Roman as and the Moesian *assarion* cannot be drawn due to the great weight variations, a certain sense of the value of the civic coinage can be estimated. However, the clarification of this problem requires further epigraphic and archaeological evidence, such as price lists or payment records from the territory of Moesia Inferior, which unfortunately, are currently not present in the archaeological record.

The suggestion that the Romans who came to Moesia Inferior brought coins to the provincial economy that subsequently adopted the usage of these coins is over simplistic. It is obvious, based on the size and content of coin hoards from the province, that from the time of Vespasian, large quantities of coins reached Moesia Inferior. The evidence suggests particularly large quantities of silver denarii from the 2nd C AD were associated with military and public expenditure. In the 2nd Century AD, all camps and forts were rebuilt in stone; the construction of large urban centres such as Nicopolis ad Istrum and

⁴²Heesh 2009, 137, 138.

⁴³Wolters *et al.* 42–44.

Marcianopolis began, accompanied by the construction of roads, bridges, and aqueducts.⁴⁴ In addition, three legions were permanently based in the province, together with a large number of supporting military forces. It will be argued that the complete monetary system in Moesia Inferior, including the usage of small change, was cultivated by the Romans in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries AD. The transition into a Roman province and the urbanisation of large areas in Lower Moesia led to social, demographic, and economic changes. The influx of people and goods from various parts of the empire facilitated small trade and exchange which increased the production and usage of bronze denominations. The process of injecting these coins is not yet fully explained, but soldiers, merchants, and bankers definitely played a major role in the distribution of the civic coins. But, how did the “life” of a coin continue once it was put into circulation?

To begin with, it is very important to emphasize that coins existed as one of the many means of exchange and payment in the Roman world. Besides monetary circulation, transactions were also completed via barter or payments in kind or forms of service.⁴⁵ Howgego analysed epigraphic data from Roman Egypt and found evidence that tax, wages, and rents were paid in both cash and kind. Such statements raise questions regarding the levels of coin usage in

⁴⁴ Ivanov 2007, 60–90.

⁴⁵ Howgego 1998, 2 – 22.

certain areas or types of settlements. It is not wrong to assume that the degree of monetization and coin use varied significantly over time and space. Certain provinces or parts of the Empire adopted the usage of Roman coinage faster, most often as a result of previously existing traditions of monetary exchange or as a result of contact with more complex economic societies.⁴⁶ Provinces such as Macedonia, Greece, Egypt, and others were not strangers to monetary systems, including a variety of small and large denominations of different metal, even before they became part of the Roman Empire.⁴⁷ Other areas in North – West and North-East Europe, such as Britain, Gaul and Moesia had different approach toward monetary usage, which is difficult to define given the problematic nature of the Iron Age coinages.⁴⁸ There have been many attempts to understand coinage in Iron Age societies in Europe. Aarts describes the monetary exchange in Iron Age North – West Europe stating that the coins were among the many valuable goods circulating mainly among the high circles of the society.⁴⁹ Bland analysed the large number of silver hoards from Iron Age Britain and pointed to the importance of coinage as votive deposits in the local society.⁵⁰ The economic function of the coinage is implied by the fact that the coins were struck on a considerable scale following specific

⁴⁶Ivanov 2007 describes the economic contact between the Greek colonies on the black sea coast the Thracian population in the northern parts of Thrace.

⁴⁷ Rathbone 1989, 159–167.

⁴⁸Howego 2013, 2-5.

⁴⁹Aarts 2000, 6.

⁵⁰Bland 2012, 215.

weight standards.⁵¹ A particular problem in understanding the economic dimension of coin usage in the Iron Age period is the non-literary nature of the societies which used them. There are no documentary sources which can shed light upon the coins' functionality.⁵² The questions related to the role which coinage played in the Iron Age society are fundamental for understanding the reasons for its emergence and development. Howgego suggests a theory that the spread and development of coinage and monetary usage in Iron Age Temperate Europe bears some relation to the eventual extent of the Roman Empire.⁵³ The paper presents examples from Britain, Dacia and Gaul which indicate a link between the coins and the Roman conquest. The theory will be further supported by the evidence from Moesia Inferior, which before its incorporation into the Roman Empire, shared very similar patterns of monetary usage and development with the aforementioned areas. In Chapter 2, the coins from the Iron Age period found in Lower Moesia will be regarded as an aspect of the spread of Roman material culture, often summarized under the problematic title of "Romanization".⁵⁴

Monetary usage before the Roman conquest divides Moesia Inferior into two parts. On the one hand, we have the Black Sea coast region

⁵¹ Appadurai 1986, 3 – 63; Howgego 2005, 1 – 17.

⁵² Howgego 2013.

⁵³ Howgego 2013 25 – 27.

⁵⁴ Mattingly 2004, 5 – 25.

with its prosperous Greek colonies, such as Istros, Dionysopolis, Odessos, Messambria, and others. Most of the settlements in the region had their own coinage represented by a variety of small and large denominations from the 4th Century BC.⁵⁵ The coins produced in this area, particularly, the fractional coinage, such as silver obols, rarely penetrated the mainland of Moesia Inferior, especially before 2nd Century BC. The numismatic patterns in the internal and Western parts of Moesia between 2nd Century BC and 1st Century AD are very similar to those in Dacia and Britain, namely large precious metal coin hoards, concentrated in certain regions.⁵⁶

Monetary adoption and usage varied in different parts of the empire. Consideration of late Iron Age coin usage underlines the importance of the numismatic background of each area. Various areas, even within the same province, had diverse approaches to coinage and, presumably, the people perceived coins in different ways. The evidence from Moesia Inferior is particularly interesting because of the differing monetary practices in nearby existing regions before the Roman conquest. It will be argued that the degree of previous monetary knowledge and tradition was an important aspect of the monetization of Moesia Inferior and to a large extent defined the circulation of certain denominations in specific regions. Coins were not the only the means of exchange of goods and services, as

⁵⁵Harinotov 2000, 156.

⁵⁶Haselgrove 2004, 12 – 29; Haselgrove 2006 97; Lockyear 2004, 33 – 74.

transactions on personal and official levels will have been conducted in both cash and kind. The balance between coins and other means of payment can vary significantly and may affect the monetary circulation and the number and size of hoards. When Roman coins were introduced to more “primitive” economies and societies, many of the coins might have had function beyond the economic, e.g. votive and religious.

Examining the monetary usage in a region by looking at the coins recovered can show which coins circulated together; how quickly and how far coins spread; where and possibly by whom, they were used. This leads to the next important stage of the coins “life” - in what way and why were they deposited?

Coin Deposition – Typology of Finds

Usually, coin finds are divided in two major categories – hoards and stray finds. The main difference is that a hoard consists of a group of coins which are buried together and belong to a particular period of time, traditionally defined by the date of the last issue in the deposit. Authors such as Reece define coin hoards as “group of coins found together in a concentration distinguishable from that in the surrounding area of casual coin loss”.⁵⁷ The stray finds, although sometimes found in large groups in a certain site or field, are seen as

⁵⁷Reece 1988, 54.

single artefacts, lost or deposited separately.⁵⁸ Some scholars point out that the value of a coin should be regarded as important as its quantity. In other words, why should a group of 5 denarii be considered a hoard although they are of lower value than a single gold aureus described as a single find?⁵⁹ Such contentions may be tested from the evidence. The main aim of this work is analysing coin hoards, so the further discussion in this section will be focused on typology and reasons behind deposition.

The traditional view of scholars from the 20th Century is that the pattern of hoarding is an indicator of periods of insecurity when people buried their treasures in response to a threat but failed to recover them.⁶⁰ Gerov argues that the high concentrations of coin hoards from the territory of Bulgaria represent the times of unrest, when external events caused the death of the hoard owners, resulting in non-recovery.⁶¹ Such views of the coin hoards from Moesia Inferior, i.e. purely a response to external attacks, are still accepted by many modern scholars. Varbanov measures the extent of barbarian invasions in the provinces of Moesia and Thrace between AD 138 and 192 on the basis of coin hoards from the period. The author termed all coin hoards from Moesia Inferior as “emergency hoards” and drew maps suggesting the movement of the barbarian

⁵⁸Aarts 2000, 19.

⁵⁹Aitchison 1988, 270; Blandet *al* 2010; Callu et al 1990, 4-5.

⁶⁰Crawford, 1969, 76–79.

⁶¹Gerov 1977, 112.

forces in the province.⁶² Although part of these coin assemblages may be regarded as lost because of military activities in the region, interpreting all of the evidence from such a viewpoint tends to produce misleading results. Other scholars such as Bunov (1994) have taken a different approach towards coin hoards. The author examines the settlements and coin hoards from the Pleven Region (part of Region I in this study). Bunov considers the hoards as evidence of wealth accumulation and prosperity of the local society and continuous economic development of the region. Some scholars consider the barbarian invasions in AD 170 and AD 250 as the reasons behind the deposition.⁶³ Although many numismatic works from the region show a substantial degree of evidence of hoarding, it is surprising that very little effort has been made to clarify the concepts behind monetary hoarding. Broader discussions of hoarding patterns suggest that other factors such as monetary change and ritual deposition must be considered too.⁶⁴ The reason behind a deposition is perhaps the most important question asked when archaeologists deal with coin hoards. In order to determine these reasons, the content of a hoard should be analysed.

⁶²Varbanov 2007, 153–170.

⁶³Bunov 1944, 44–65.

⁶⁴ The problem is discussed in the following works: Guest 1994; Hobbs 2006; Bland 2013, 214 – 38; Bland 2014, 9 – 38.

3.3.1 Content of Hoards

Hoards do not always represent “snapshots” of coins in circulation but often reflect the ways in which the coins were assembled or selected for deposition.⁶⁵ Applying such an approach can shed light on the monetary strategies and original reasons behind deposition. In practice, chronologically homogeneous hoards are very rare, especially in Moesia Inferior. Both smaller and larger hoards contain coins from various emperors and periods, often reflecting the age structure of the coins in circulation. Coins could be gathered according to specific criteria, e.g. metal content, purity of content, contemporary value, etc. Therefore, a careful analysis of the content of each assemblage can provide information about the context of deposition.⁶⁶

Lockyear suggests a model in which each hoard has three different zones/parts. The first zone is the *fall out zone*, representing the oldest issues in the hoard. This part of the assemblage consists of coins which were in circulation longer than the others and tend to be more scarce or worn. The second zone is *the homogeneous zone*, usually representing the main part of the hoard. The coins from this zone had circulated long enough to create a uniform body and are often similar in hoards from the same period and region. The third zone is *the erratic zone*, representing the most recent issues in the

⁶⁵Esty 2000, 924.

⁶⁶Guest 1994.

hoard. The coins from this part are usually in better condition, drawn from a non-uniform monetary pool and therefore showing major size variations.⁶⁷ Based on this stratification model, Creighton divides coin hoards into two main groups: *archaic* or *early* hoards and *modern* or *recent* hoards. The archaic assemblages contain coins mainly from the fall out and homogeneous zones. The modern hoards contain coins mainly from the homogeneous and erratic zones. Therefore, by using such an approach, hoards from the same chronological group can be classified as archaic or modern in structure.⁶⁸ Using such models, how can the coin hoards be classified and interpreted?

Typology of Hoards

The main aim of this work is to provide a wider theoretical framework for studying the coin hoards from Moesia Inferior. The following section discusses the theoretical dimensions of hoard typology.

Philip Grierson provided a very influential classification of coin hoards. The scholar divided the assemblages into four categories: accidental, emergency, savings, and abandoned.⁶⁹ Although Reece does not consider the distinction between savings and emergency deposits very useful owing to the fact that one deposit can fall under both categories, the theoretical structure proposed by Grierson provides a good opportunity for structuring a large body of evidence such as the

⁶⁷Lockyear 1993, 368/9.

⁶⁸Creighton 1992, 81–90.

⁶⁹Grierson 1975, 134–159.

one from Moesia Inferior.⁷⁰ Another classification model is proposed by Blackburn where hoards are distinguished on the basis of their content and not the circumstances of burial. The scholar suggests that each hoard has a distinct element which can provide evidence of the ways in which the coins were assembled and for what reason.⁷¹ It will be argued that both contexts, i.e. The assembly of the hoard and its deposition or loss, are equally important and need to be studied simultaneously. In order to classify the typology of some hoards from Moesia, a model proposed by Bland will be used. The scholar proposes a simple yet practical stratification of coin hoards: (a) accidental losses, (b) hoards buried with the intention for recovery, and (c) hoards deliberately abandoned.⁷²

(a) Accidental loss

Accidental loss may be exemplified by the loss of small bags of coins used during daily activities, such as travelling. When coins were carried in small bags for convenience, there were probably different behaviours adopted for different denominations. For instance, bags of bronze coins were more likely to be lost than bags of gold coins which, owing to their high value, were not carried around on daily basis and were preserved with great care.⁷³ The evidence from

⁷⁰Reece 2002, 72; Guest 1994, also arguing against any observable distinction between savings and circulation hoards.

⁷¹Blackburn 2005, 13–15.

⁷²Bland 2012, 215.

⁷³Howgego 1992, 12.

Moesia suggests a large number of hoards containing a relatively small number of bronze civic coins, 20 to 100. Owing to the lower value of bronze coins, it can be assumed that they were carried around on a daily basis, so statistically more bags of bronze coins would get lost.

(b) Coins buried with the intention for recovery

This category possibly represents the largest body of evidence, especially in the case of Lower Moesia, given its multiple large silver coin hoards. This group of hoards includes both savings and emergency hoards which contain precious metal coinage. The obvious question arising here is how can one distinguish the reason behind deposition? Most of the hoards from AD 170 to AD 190 found in Moesia are considered emergency hoards related to barbarian invasions. However, the denarius was debased under Septimius Severus and it is logical to assume that as a response to the decrease in silver content, many people preferred to bury the earlier purer issues instead of changing them for debased ones. Our period sees other important monetary changes too. Although the emergency explanation has been argued to be applicable to almost all hoards from this category, the economic reasons behind deposition must be

considered too. The systematic analysis of hoard content provides a way to approach this question.

(c) Deliberate abandonment

The deliberate abandonment of coins has never been considered in the case of Moesia Inferior, and needs to be given more attention. In the study period of this thesis, i.e. AD 100–300, there were monetary reforms and changes on several occasions – as mentioned above under Emperor Septimius Severus; a new silver denomination (antoninianus) was introduced by Caracalla; and later under Gallienus the same denomination became further debased and only silver washed. Finally, under Aurelian and Diocletian, there were monetary reforms and the reorganisation of mints. Another major change in Moesia was the end of the local civic coinage. All of these developments underline the dynamic monetary history of the period where the population using the coins was subjected to a process of constantly making choices regarding which coins to use and which coins to keep. Therefore, hoards from Moesia can be regarded as a complex socio-political response of the local population to external treats, ritual practices and internal economic changes.

Particularly striking is the large number of civic coin hoards which contain issues of the reigns of Gordian III and Philip. First, because these coin hoards have the *terminus post quem* of AD 250, they have all been interpreted as emergency hoards as a result of the Gothic

invasion in the period. However, if so, why were the civic issues not mixed with other denominations? There is no clear numismatic evidence for the fact that the usage of the civic coinage ended at the same time as the end of production. The need for small change might have led people to continue using the civic coins in the second half of the 3rd Century or even later. However, if the local authority, namely the cities which produced the coins were no longer able to guarantee the value of their issues, were the coins still acceptable? Should we then regard the large number of purely bronze coin hoards with *terminus post quem* AD 250 as deliberately abandoned deposits as a result of demonetization or other numismatic changes, and when should we imagine them deposited?

Another important type of hoard buried with no intention of recovery is the votive deposit. Very little attention has paid to this type of hoard in Moesia Inferior either. The combination of monetary value and symbolic iconography of the Roman coins made them appropriate objects for ritual hoarding.

It is difficult to define a hoard as a votive deposit in the absence of supporting archaeological evidence. Particularly important is the location of the deposit, e.g. proximity to a temple area or site with known votive significance, as well as the iconography of the coins from the group, for instance, all coins depicting the same deity or

providing evidence for deliberate assembly. Finally, the presence of other artefacts or special features of the hoard can also be indicative.

3.4 Coin Recovery

The quaternary stage of the “life” of a hoard is the process of recovery. This process is particularly important because it can help with the interpretation of the first three stages. Ideally, coin hoards are found inside a container within an archaeologically researched context.⁷⁴ Although, in the case of Moesia Inferior, the first condition is often achieved, the second one rarely exists. The majority of the assemblages gathered in this thesis were found between 1951 and 1986 (fig. 8). A particular peak in the reporting of hoards is seen in the period 1954–1966. Interestingly, the same pattern is detected for the coin hoards from Romania (fig. 9). This is probably not a coincidence, as the period characterised by the peak in discovery and publishing of hoards matches the increase of the interest of the communist party in archaeology and associated fields as well as extremely active agriculture as most of the hoards were discovered during farming activities. Although, most of the excavations were conducted in medieval sites as part of the nationalistic agenda, attention was paid to ancient artefacts as well. In the period after 1960, an active collection and classification of Thracian and Roman art began.⁷⁵ As a result, the majority of the coin hoards known today

⁷⁴Aarts 2002, 19.

⁷⁵Haritonov 2000, 67-9

were recorded. Despite the active use of metal detectors from 1990 onwards the number of reported hoards has declined significantly. This is mainly a result of the increased awareness about the commercial value which the coins have, as well as the failure of the local authorities to draw legal boundaries between archaeology, looting and collecting.

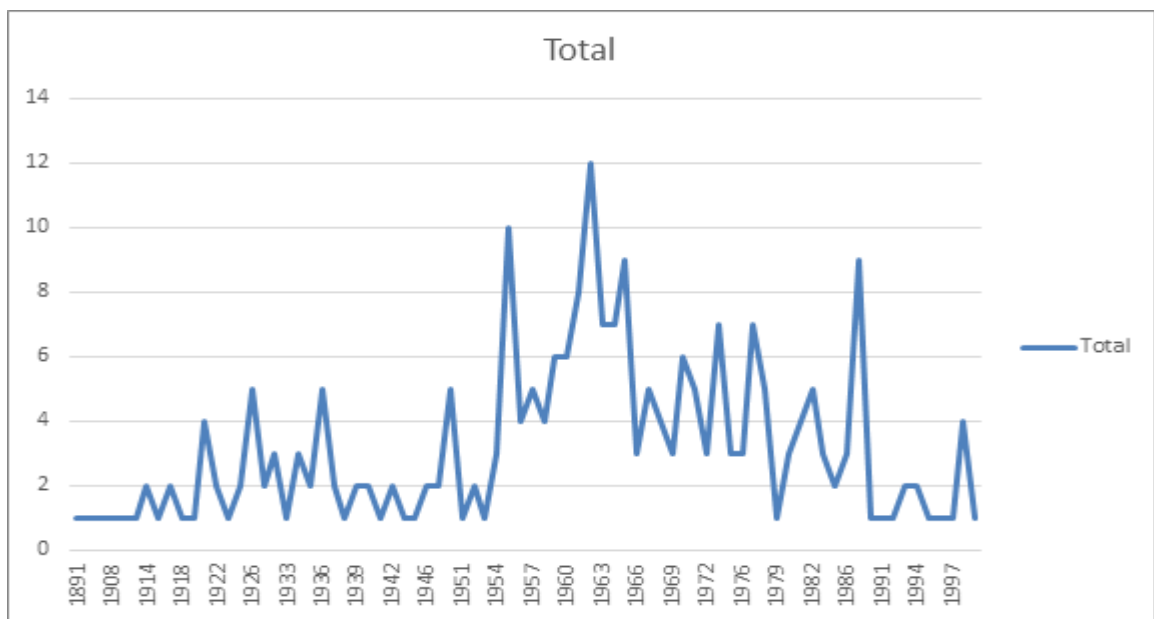


Fig. 8. Number of hoards found/reported per year – Bulgaria.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ The data is obtained after analysis of the hoards from CHRE database.

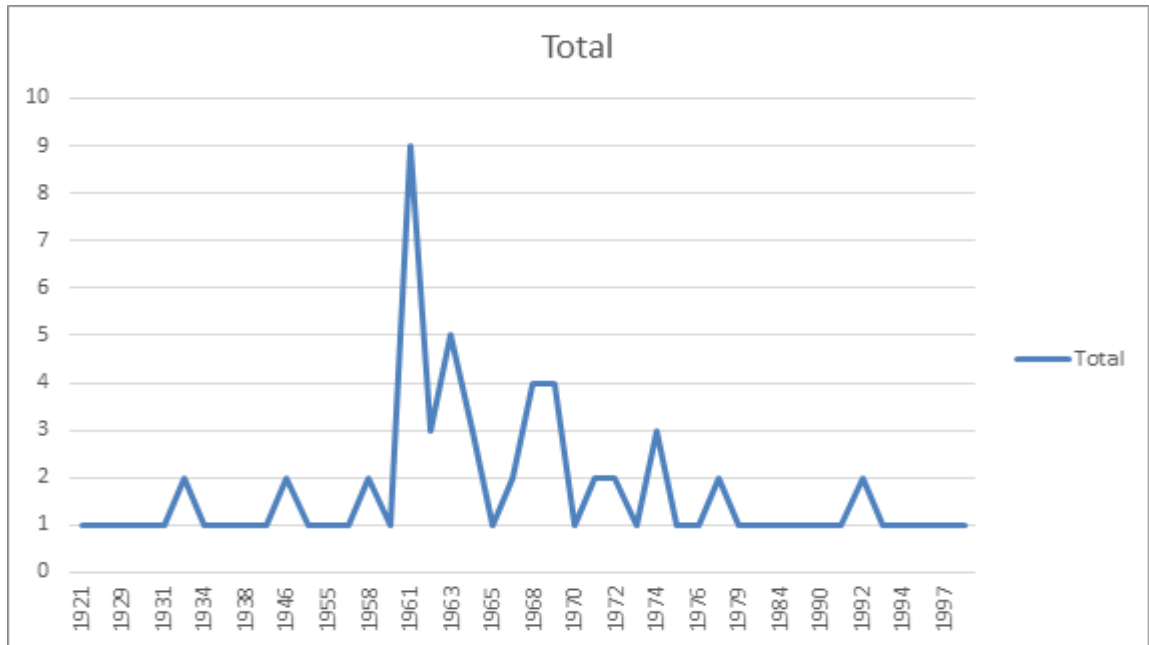


Fig. 9. Number of hoards found/reported per year – Romania

Literature Review

Hoards

Studies of coinage in Moesia Inferior vary considerably in terms of depth and methodology. Most numismatists and archaeologists focus on cataloguing and creating a corpus of issues from the cities in Moesia and Thrace. Fundamental research on coin circulation and distribution remains secondary. Most published works address only local coin finds or geographical regions.

From a chronological point of view, Mushmov, Gerasimov and Mirchev can be considered pioneers of Roman numismatics in Moesia Inferior. In the period between 1925 and 1970, the scholars had been collecting data for coin hoards from the territory of modern day

Bulgaria.⁷⁷ In the period between 1970 and 2000 the collection of numismatic data from Moesia Inferior was furthered by Cochev, Jurukova and Prodanov. Their reports were published annually as articles in various historical and archaeological journals. The scholars were particularly interested in the hoards' content and the iconography of the coins. Much attention was paid to the civic coinage which was systematically catalogued.⁷⁸

The trend of creating catalogues and exploring the iconographic characteristics of the coins continues today. Ivan Varbanov published three volumes of catalogues of all the mints in Moesia and Thrace. In 2010, Hristova et al. published two very valuable catalogues of all known coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis. These books are particularly important because the coins are presented with their physical characteristics, thereby providing an opportunity for detailed examination of weight variations and changes.⁷⁹

As far as hoards are concerned, Jurukova explored the distribution of the civic coinage from Moesia Inferior and Thrace. The scholar's major aim was to explore the economic dimensions of the civic coinage in the region. The variations in distribution are interpreted in the light of the existence of monetary unions between the different city-states. Nevertheless, the limited amount of data incorporated in

⁷⁷Gerasimov 1934, 1940, 1950, 1963, 1964 (a), 1964 (b), 1965, 1979; Mirchev 1966; Mushov 1927 (a) 1927 (b).

⁷⁸Cochev 1991, 1995, 1997; Jurukova 1977, 1978, 1983 (a), 1983 (b); Prodanov 1979.

⁷⁹Hristova et al. 2010, a and b.

the work as well as the focus on the coinage of Hadrianopolis led to many unanswered questions.⁸⁰ Further analysis of the coin hoards from Moesia Inferior have been conducted only on a regional level. Peter Bunov gathered and analysed all coin hoards from the municipality of Pleven, using it as tool for reconstructing settlement development.⁸¹ Gushterakliev has been collecting and publishing the hoards from the municipality of Lovech.⁸² Dzanev published the hoards from the municipality of Razgrad. The author discusses the hoard found in the region of Abritus to illustrate both economic prosperity and military events which led to the deposition of the hoards.⁸³

Evgeni Paunov recently successfully defended his doctoral thesis.⁸⁴ The author gathers, for the first time, all of the available evidence from the coin hoards and stray finds from the Late Hellenistic and early Imperial periods in Moesia and Thrace.⁸⁵ Based on comprehensive analyses, the work concludes that the nature of the Moesian society and economy as well as the distribution of coins followed Imperial and interregional trends as an integral part of the Roman Empire even before the actual conquest of the province. The

⁸⁰Jurukova 1994.

⁸¹Bunov 1994.

⁸²Gushterakliev 1994; 1998.

⁸³Dzanev 2007.

⁸⁴Paunov 2014.

⁸⁵Paunov's work cover the period up to Emperor Trajan (AD 98 – 117).

present thesis can be regarded as a chronological continuation of the solid background set by Paunov's work.

Substantial work on coin circulation in the Lower Danubian region was published by Cristian Găzdac.⁸⁶ The thesis focused on monetary circulation in Dacia and the provinces in the middle and lower Danube from Trajan to Constantine I (AD 106–337). This thesis is particularly important because it allows a comprehensive comparison of the findings from Dacia, Pannonia and Moesia Superior with those from Moesia Inferior.

Single Finds

Most excavation reports contain a list of artefacts discovered, but most often coins are not analysed separately, but just as part of the whole assemblage of finds. This general pattern of neglecting numismatic material has made the collection of evidence extremely difficult. There are three major archaeological sites which have been systematically studied on a detailed numismatic level: Novae, Durostorum and Nicopolis ad Istrum. The legionary camp of Novae has been examined from 1974 to 2011 by archaeological teams from

⁸⁶Găzdac 2002.

the Historical Museum of Svishtov and the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan. As a result of the active and well organized excavations approximately 700 single coin finds were recorded for the period between AD 100 and AD 300.⁸⁷ Another military site with a good coin record is Durostorum (Silistra).⁸⁸ Evidence for an urban site comes from the excavations in Nicopolis ad Istrum, organized by the Veliko Tarnovo Archaeological Museum and the University of Nottingham. A detailed summary of the single coin finds is provided by Butcher.⁸⁹ Although the available evidence for single finds is limited only to certain sites, it will stand as a control for the interpretation of the hoard evidence.

Site Typology and Archaeological Evidence

The most substantial research on the archaeology of Moesia Inferior is that conducted by Rumen Ivanov. In his books, the author gathers all of the available evidence, analysing different aspects of the development of the province: social, economic, military etc. The scholar systematically describes the archaeology of different settlements and the changes which occur over time. These works will be particularly important for creating typological groups for the site-type analysis in the thesis.⁹⁰ Furthermore, due to the similarity of the settlement patterns in Moesia Inferior and Superior, the works of

⁸⁷ Bierneckiet al 2008; Cioleket al 2011; Chodyla 1979; Dimitrov 2013 (a); Dimitrov 2013 (b); Kaczmarek 1981 (a); Kaczmarek 1981(b); Konik 1981.

⁸⁸ Dima et al 2009; Gândilă 2005; Mihaylov 2012.

⁸⁹ Butcher 1995.

⁹⁰ Ivanov 2000, 2007.

Dragana Mladenović will be used as an additional reference point in this study.⁹¹

Key Challenges

Some key challenges have hindered extensive numismatic analysis. First, there is no unified regulatory agency responsible for recording and preserving data about archaeological finds. Most museums and archaeological institutes operate independently. Thus, the coins entering museums from excavations, or in any other way, are inventoried without any scientific analysis or inclusion into a database. The second problem, also due to the lack of a regulatory agency, is the increasing rarity of reporting by citizens. This is proven by the fact that 80 per cent of the known finds were recorded before 1990.

This thesis will unify all of the published and unpublished data available from Moesia Inferior to create an overall picture of monetary distribution and usage in the province, free from regional or chronological biases.

Structure of the Work

Chapter II presents a background study of the region. The aim of this chapter is to show the emergence of coin-use in Moesia Inferior and the specific coin distribution in the region. This chapter will use 135

⁹¹Mladenović 2009, 2012.

coin hoards from the period between 2nd Century BC and 1st Century AD. This chapter partly overlaps with Evgeni Paunov's work but differs in terms of methodological approach. The analysis will demonstrate not only Roman impact on the coinage in Moesia Inferior, but also will highlight the specific regional coin distributions in relation to the later period (AD 100 – AD 300). Particularly interesting is the absence of bronze coins in most of the examined areas before the Roman conquest and their wider distribution after it. The analysis will focus on the great diversity of coin types and address questions about the process of monetization and monetary usage.

Chapter 3 will analyse the entire evidence from Moesia Inferior in the period AD 100–300. In this section of the work, detailed maps will be presented, following the distribution of each denomination by region and chronological period. The chapter will explore the variation in different denominations at regional and site levels. The major questions which this chapter will address are:

How did the monetary circulation in the 2nd and 3rd Century differ from that in the earlier period?

How and when was a more complete monetary system developed?⁹²

How, where, and when were different coin denominations buried?

⁹²A complete monetary system is composed of all gold, silver, and bronze denominations.

What are the reasons behind hoard deposition?⁹³

What was the proportion of each denomination in hoards? Is this a reflection of the proportions in circulation?

Chapter 4 will focus on the civic coinage of Moesia. First, the chapter will reconstruct the circulation of the civic coinage in the region. Then, it will try to explain the variation in the specific monetary distribution from geographic, economic, and political perspectives. Based on the available data, the chapter will try to answer the following questions:

What were the economic prerequisites for the emergence of the provincial coinage in certain cities?

How can one explain the reasons behind, and organisation of, coin production?

Why did the civic coinage come to an end?

What happened to the provincial coins after AD 250?

Chapter 5: Barbarian invasions in the second half of the 3rd Century AD destroyed many cities and most of the infrastructure of Moesia Inferior. As a result, some towns emerged as fortified settlements which existed independently from one another. This chapter will analyse and compare the monetary circulation in different

⁹³Reasons will be explored on the basis of content of the hoard and chronological frameworks.

settlements – Novae, Nicopolis ad Istrum, Abritos, Storgosia and Yatrus. The similarities and differences will be outlined and interpreted. Such a study has not been conducted before as the sites were largely recorded and interpreted on their own. The section will also summarise some important characteristics of monetary circulation on the territory of Moesia Inferior during Late Antiquity from AD 300 to AD 681⁹⁴, such as the practice of deposition of coins in graves. The section will be the starting point for further examinations of the coinage from the final stages of the existence of Moesia Inferior.

⁹⁴In AD 681, Moesia Inferior became part of the Bulgarian Kingdom

Chapter II - The Monetary Circulation in Moesia Inferior from 2nd c BC to 1st c AD – Background Study.⁹⁵

Introduction

This chapter aims to gather and analyze all coin assemblages found on the territory of Moesia from before to slightly after its inclusion in the territory of the Roman Empire, that is, from the beginning of 2nd Century BC to the end of 1st Century AD. The results will illuminate the levels of monetization and coin distribution in the different parts of the province, as well as the changes which occurred as a result of the interaction between the indigenous people and the Romans. The study will focus on the transition of the region into a Roman province and the material implications of this expansion as reflected by the monetary evidence. Coins constitute one of the very few types of artifacts that are both commonly found and well-preserved, and therefore provide a unique opportunity to approach and analyze the interaction of the Moesian Iron Age society with the material forms of “Romanitas”. In examining the coin assemblages from Moesia, the research will trace the fundamental differences in the presence of money - and, by inference, the use of money - in Moesia during the late Republic and the early Empire. In particular, the Roman

⁹⁵ This Chapter incorporates a small part of Moesia Superior (Region 1+); this area is included due to the extremely large number of hoards and the relevance of the evidence for the interpretation of the monetary patterns in the other regions. Therefore the usage of the name Moesia in this chapter will refer to the four examined regions combined.

expansion in the North parts of the Balkans (Moesia and Dacia) saw Rome encounter foreign societies which were constructed in a very different way, and which relied on other forms of commoditization not typical of or familiar with the monetized Roman world.⁹⁶ The chapter will discuss the possible existence of different regimes of value in which coins fulfilled mainly a social role. It will compare the data with evidence from Britain and Dacia, and will support the theory that Roman influence as exercised through the spread of coins bears a direct relationship with the eventual expansion of the Roman Empire. Additionally, this part of the thesis will establish a monetary background for each of the regions studied which will allow the incorporation of the main body of evidence into a broader chronological pattern.

Methodology

A large part of the data incorporated in this chapter of the work is not original and is mainly concerned with evidence gathered and presented by Evgeni Paunov in his PhD thesis "From Koine to Romanitas". In this seminal work the scholar collects, records and interprets all known coin assemblages found in Moesia and Thrace from the Late Hellenistic to the Early Imperial period. The author approaches the subject from archaeological, historical and numismatic points of view, covering the period between 146 BC to AD

⁹⁶Howgego 2013, 8-9.

117 and including data for over 48,000 coins. The main contribution of this work is the systematic presentation and comparison of Thracian, Celtic, Greek and Roman coinages which circulated in the territory of modern day Bulgaria. The author argues that coins were used as means of payment in Moesia and Thrace long before the Roman conquest. The work illustrates the transition from using Hellenistic to Roman currencies covering all economic and historical aspects of this change.⁹⁷

Although this chapter covers to a large extent the body of evidence presented by Evgeni Paunov, it uses a different methodological approach; it aims to answer different questions and to fit the data into broader chronological and regional contexts. Analyzing the province as a whole can produce misleading results. In particular, the highly monetized Eastern parts (Region III) can create a substantial bias. In order to avoid such statistical mistakes, this chapter focuses only on the territory of Moesia, separating the evidence into four regions and three time periods. Specific regional analysis will help establish boundaries between the different zones of monetary distribution. Furthermore, by separating the evidence into chronological periods, the patterns of coin influx and deposition can be isolated, compared, and interpreted. It is important to highlight

⁹⁷ Paunov Phd thesis, p. 39

that the evidence must be approached with caution as it is exclusively derived from hoards.

Regions

Four major regions will be examined in this chapter. This regional differentiation aims to reveal the variety of monetary usage and strategies which existed within the territory of the province. It aims to establish specific patterns of monetary distribution that tend to be preserved in the subsequent chronological periods of the thesis. For instance, Region I always produced the highest number of silver hoards and very little bronze (up to AD 250); Region III was always the most monetized region with the greatest presence of bronze and fractional coinage.

Region I covers the western parts of Moesia Inferior; based on the numismatic evidence this is the area that saw the first active monetary contact with Rome in the early 1st c BC. Region II covers the central parts of Moesia Inferior; it can be considered as a zone between the Greek monetized eastern parts and the Roman-influenced western parts. Region III covers the Eastern parts of Moesia Inferior, including Dobrudja and the Black sea coast. This is the only region of Moesia Inferior which had long been monetized prior to the Roman conquest. In this region, large Greek poleis with independent coinage emerged in the Archaic and Classical

periods e.g. Odessos, Tomis, Callatis etc. This is the area of the province in which we find an abundance of bronze and fractional coinage as single finds and not just as hoards. As can be seen this chapter follows the regional pattern (established in the introduction) which will be used in all other chapters of the work. There is only one methodological change and this is the introduction of Region I+ which expands Region I 30 miles further westwards. There are several major reasons for the adoption of this new area. Firstly, the division of Moesia into two smaller provinces – Superior and Inferior - happened in the 1st c AD, and therefore, for most of the time frame of this Chapter, Region I was not yet the border region of the two provinces. Secondly, the region was added because of the abundance of monetary evidence as well as its strategic and military importance. Particularly, there are over 15 000 silver coins found, dated to the 1st Century BC. In addition, the first legionary camp in the province was developed in this region, not far from modern day Lom.



Regions in Moesia Inferior

Time Periods

Three major periods will be included. Period I (2nd Century BC) will include analysis of Greek and Greek style coins. Period II (1st Century BC) incorporates the introduction of the Republican denarius, its simultaneous circulation alongside local and Greek coinage, and its transition into a major currency of the region. Period III (1st C AD) is probably the most interesting of all, as it includes the final stages of the monetary transition of Moesia from a system based on precious metals into a complete monetary system including bronze/ fractional coins.

History of the Roman conquest of Moesia

In 168 BC the final campaign in the Roman conquest of the Macedonian kingdom began, and was finally completed in 148 BC.⁹⁸ From this point onward, the Roman efforts were focused on Thrace and Moesia. This process took a long time, as the multitude of Thracian kingdoms and federations reacted differently to the Roman presence. Some were acquiescent, whereas others showed fierce resistance to Roman rule. From the 1st Century BC onwards, the actual conquest of Moesia began, with the Romans encroaching from the west and heading east. First involved were the lands indicated on map 2 as Region 1+. This section of Moesia was added to the territory of the Republic around 75 BC, after the successful military campaign led by Marcus Lucullus.⁹⁹ The Romans did not stop here, and in 29/28BC, using the rebellion of the local population as a pretext, they conquered parts of region 1 indicated on map 2. The period around AD 12 is now accepted by most historians as the date of accession of Moesia to the territories of the Empire. Ancient written sources are quoted as proof of this, since they provide evidence that during the reign of Tiberius, Moesia was subjected to Roman taxations.¹⁰⁰ The remaining parts of the province, designated as 2 and 3 on the map came under Roman control after military and diplomatic campaigns in the period AD 41-96. The Flavian dynasty

⁹⁸ Velkov 1979, 280

⁹⁹ Prokopov *et al*, 7

¹⁰⁰ Ivanov 2008, 12-15

marked the final conquest of Moesia. Around AD 87 Moesia was reorganized and divided into two smaller provinces- Moesia Inferior and Moesia Superior.¹⁰¹

The Dacian kingdom was a major obstacle for complete Roman control in the region.¹⁰² Dacians often attacked and plundered the lands of Moesia, leading to the infamous peace treaty concluded after the controversially successful military campaigns of Domitian. The conflict was ended at the time of Trajan, who defeated the Dacians and consolidated the borders of Moesia. In this period, permanent military camps were constructed along the Danubian *limes*, flourishing urban centers emerged, and an excellent road infrastructure was built across the province connecting it with Thrace and other regions.¹⁰³ This chapter will cover the time period described above. The process of converting Moesia to a Roman province is marked by a variety of dynamic events that inevitably affected the monetary circulation of the region. All of the military campaigns, taxes, and constructions stimulated the exchange and usage of coins. From the 2nd Century BC the lands of Moesia came in contact with the Romans and from the 1st Century BC the transformation into a Roman province began. Studying the rich coin assemblage from the period

¹⁰¹ Velkov 1979, 287

¹⁰² Ivanov 2008, 4.

¹⁰³ Gazdac 2010, 46/47

will provide an opportunity for tracing and interpreting these dynamic changes.

Results of the study.

Period I – Monetary Circulation in 2nd C BC

One of the most notable aspects of the monetary circulation from this period is that the hoards consist entirely of Greek coins. The assemblages can be divided into 5 major groups: Posthumous issues of Alexander III, coins from Thassos, Maroneia, the First Macedonian Region and coins from the Adriatic coastal towns - Apollonia, and Dyrrhachium. As can be seen in *fig. 1.1*, there are differences in the concentrations of each coin type within the regions studied. For instance, in Region II and Region III there is a presence of posthumous issues of Alexander III. On the other hand, the hoards from Region I and I+ are represented by coins from the Adriatic poleis. Posthumous issues of Alexander were only rarely found in these regions. Another remarkable characteristic is that the coins from Thassos and First Macedonian region are present in hoards throughout all of Moesia. Fig. 1 illustrates the proportional concentration of each coin type.

If the hoards are analyzed by the quantity of coins, a different picture emerges. The results of this examination are shown in *fig. 1.2* and *fig. 2*, where the comparison is based on the number of coins per

type from each region. From the numerical point of view, the coins of the Adriatic settlements predominate over the others. However, this phenomenon is due to a small number of large hoards rather than many hoards with relatively equal proportions of coins. Another significant pattern is that the coin hoards from the Adriatic poleis do not consist of tetradrachms but of drachms. Therefore, if the value of these 2964 coins is converted into tetradrachms (ratio 4:1), the actual worth will be around 741 tetradrachms, which makes the sum of these coins closer in value to that of those from Thasos and Macedon. Therefore, it can be concluded that the coins from Thasos and Ist Macedonian region actually suggest a pattern of much wider usage. How can these results be interpreted in terms of Roman influence? Which factors were responsible for the dissimilarity of the coin types hoarded among the different regions?

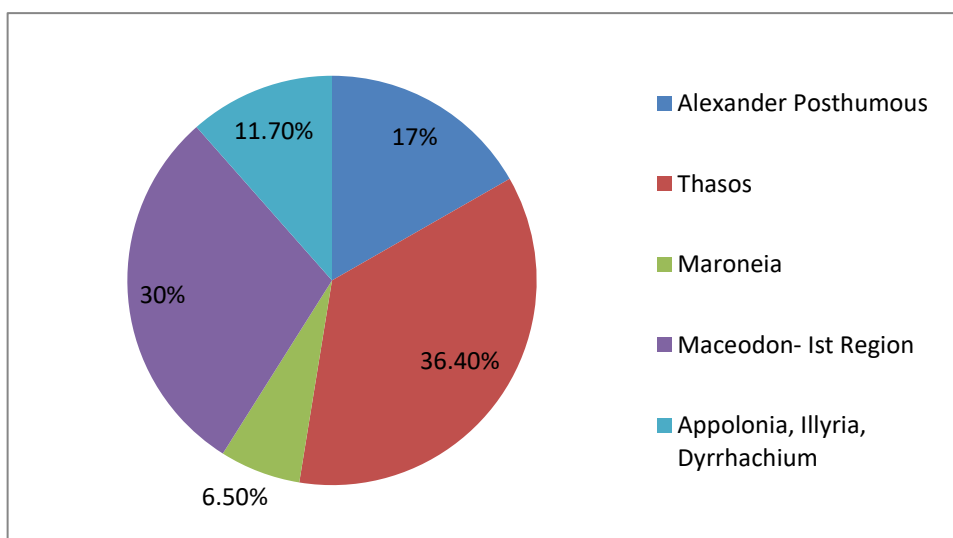


Fig. 1 This chart represents the concentrations of each coin type within the territory of Moesia Inferior and Region I+ from the 2nd C BC. The result is based on the number of hoards.

Region	Alexander posthumous	Thassos	Maroneia	Macedon-Ist Region	Appolonia Adr, Illyria, Dyrrhachium
III	11 hoards	2 hoards		1 hoard	
II	2 hoards	8 hoards	4hoards	6 hoards	
I		13 hoards		9 hoards	7 hoards
I+		5 hoards		7 hoards	2 hoards

Fig. 1.1The table illustrates the concentration of coin types within the regions studied. Some hoards consist of coins of more than one type, they are plotted separately in 2 or more columns.

Region	Alexander posthumous	Thassos	Maroneia	Macedon- Ist Region	Appolonia Adr, Illyria, Dyrrhachium
3	200 +	230 +		3 +	
2	17 +	337 +	54 +	711 +	
1		669 +		110 +	2269 +
1 +		194 +		103 +	695 +

Fig. 1.2 The table illustrates the number of coins per type in the regions studied.

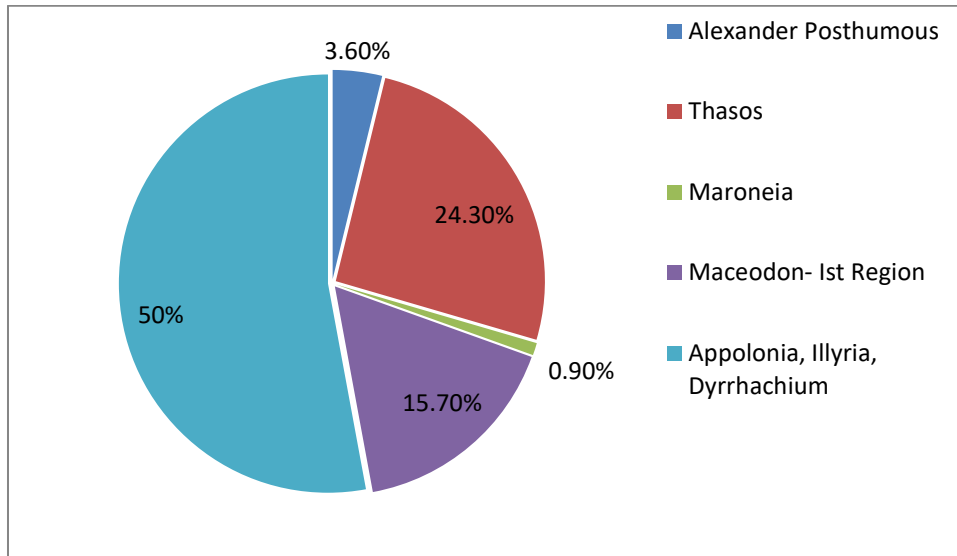


Fig. 2 This chart illustrates the quantity of different coin types found within the territory of Moesia (in %)

Two well defined zones of monetary circulation emerge. These zones are represented by similar types of coins found in hoards within their territory. Region III stands in contrast to Regions II, I and I+. This phenomenon is due to several factors. First and foremost is the geographical location of Region III which covers the coastal areas and Dobrudja. This region has a long history of coinage within the prosperous Greek colonies on the Black Sea (Odessus, Dionysopolis, Callatis and Istros) since 5th Century BC, confirmed by the numerous finds of archaic and classical coins in the region.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, the inland areas (Regions I, I+, II) were most likely not monetized before the 2nd Century BC, as suggested by the lack of coins found in this zone prior to this time, with the exception of dedicative depositions.¹⁰⁵ These distinctive characteristics of the well-demarcated zones help to determine the coin circulation in Moesia during the 2nd C BC. Specifically, in Region 3, the frequent posthumous issues of

¹⁰⁴ Talmatchi 2007, 10-40

¹⁰⁵ Haritonov 2010, 7. In this Article, Haritonov discusses the development of the Charon's obol within Thrace from Hellenistic to late medieval period and the presence of coins as grave dedicative depositions.

Alexander the Great were almost exclusively struck in Odessos or Messambria, representing the process of continuous usage of well known locally minted coins.¹⁰⁶ Accordingly, in Regions I, I+ and II the diverse geographic origins¹⁰⁷ of the coin types suggest the routes through which the coins penetrated the territory of Moesia.¹⁰⁸ The issue of the small number of Greek coins from the Black sea coast in the inland territories of Moesia has been often debated. According to scholars such as Haritonov, the Thracian tribes had conflicts with the Greeks, and did not use the coins as resistance to their economic influence.¹⁰⁹ It is difficult to prove such a hypothesis without the presence of literary sources. However, the phenomenon might be explained by the iconographic preference which the local Thracian population had. If that is the case, the coins from the Black sea coast mints might have been melted down and converted into copies of the coins favored iconographically, in this case Thasos and Maroneia. The abundance of such copies in hoards and often as single finds in Region 2 and Region 1 / 1+ suggest that the copies were produced locally.¹¹⁰ However, the question still remains as to why the Black Sea posthumous Alexander issues did not penetrate the inland areas. It is important to highlight that the question relates not just to the movement of the coins, but also to the functions which they had in the Iron-Age communities of Moesia. What can coins found within Regions 2, 1 and 1+

¹⁰⁶ Prokopov 2005, 33/34

¹⁰⁷ Coins from Greece, Macedonia and Asia Minor

¹⁰⁸ Prokopov 2012, 38.

¹⁰⁹ Haritonov 2000, 78 – 99.

¹¹⁰ Paunov, Prokopov etc.

tell us about the supply of Moesia and the function coins played in the area? Can the specified monetary supply be directly associated with the Roman influence on the Balkans?¹¹¹

As shown in *fig. 1*, the core of the hoards from Moesia is composed of coins from several main areas: Thassos, Maroneia, First Macedonian Region, and the Adriatic poleis. All of the known assemblages are dated between 150 - 100 BC, and the possibility that some of them were deposited in the 1st Century BC cannot be excluded. The dating of these coins is based on stylistic and archaeological criteria, and therefore chronological variations are possible. One should note that the coins from Thassos, Macedonia, and Maroneia are entirely represented by second generation coins.¹¹² The dating of these "new" coin types is related to the Roman presence in the Balkans. For example, coins of the second type of Thasos and Maroneia were first struck around 180 BC, when the cities were taken under Roman control.¹¹³ On the other hand, the production of the Macedonian tetradrachms from 1st region commenced between 168-148 BC, and coincided with the transformation of Macedon into a Roman province. The same argument can be applied to the Adriatic poleis with the difference that their coinage had begun earlier- around 229 BC.¹¹⁴ Based on this data, the process of active penetration of coins in Moesia

¹¹¹ For further discussion see Callatay 2011.

¹¹² Coins struck after the mints were under Roman control.

¹¹³ Thompson 1966, 61.

¹¹⁴ Todorov 1992, 56-58.

during the 2nd Century BC can be linked with the Roman economic influence over the Balkan mints.¹¹⁵

An interesting parallel can be drawn with material from hoards found in Thrace from the same period. According to Prokopov, among the assemblages in Thrace, the Athenian “new” style tetradrachms and the coins from the Macedonian kings Philip V and Perseus are most common, with over one thousand specimens found in hoards. At the same time coins from First Macedonian region and from the Adriatic poleis, which dominate in the coin hoards of Moesia, are almost entirely absent.¹¹⁶ This phenomenon is remarkable: it suggests the potential utility of comparing the hoards found in all of the provinces on the Balkan Peninsula. This would clarify whether the coin types were distributed on basis of geographic location, or if their supply was determined by other factors (as is suggested by the fact that the tetradrachms from the First Macedonian region did not actively circulate in nearby Thrace yet are found throughout all of Moesia).¹¹⁷ Whether the active monetization of Moesia from the 2nd Century BC is related to the Roman influence or driven by new economic and/or military links made by the local populations is an issue yet to be clarified. Further analysis in this work will focus on the monetary circulation in the 1st Century BC which saw the emergence of the denarius in the region.

¹¹⁵Paunovetal 2002, 88.

¹¹⁶ Prokopov 1997, 9

¹¹⁷ Prokopov 2012, 35

Period II - Monetary circulation in 1st Century BC

One of the most prominent features of the period is the high concentration of Roman Republican denarii which are wholly absent in earlier finds. As can be seen in *Fig. 3*, of the 58 hoards analyzed, 56 include Republican denarii. Sixteen are mixed with Greek or early Imperial coins, and only two are composed only of Greek coins. These results are also shown in *Fig. 3.1*, which demonstrates that homogeneous hoards composed only of Republican denarii are predominant in this region. Another remarkable observation is the extremely high number of assemblages from Region I+, representing 55% of the hoards surveyed. The fact that the highly-monetized Region III is represented by the smallest number of finds from this period is interesting - this, of course, does not indicate a decrease in the coin presence in the area, but presumably a rather low levels of hoard deposition. An important feature of the Republican denarii is that, unlike the Greek coins, they can be precisely dated, which further simplifies and refines the chronology of the hoards.¹¹⁸ Relying on this feature, the assemblages will be divided by periods. *Fig. 4* shows the hoards divided into 3 time frames: 100-70 BC (period A), 70-40 BC (period B) and 40 to 1 BC (period C). The goal of this analysis is to explore in detail the penetration of Republican denarii in Moesia and to try to trace their distributional patterns. A visualization of this study is presented in *fig.4.1*,

¹¹⁸ Copies of Republican denarii are more difficult to date. In Moesia However, the majority of the hoards are composed of official issues only.

which represents the peak in circulation of Republican denarii in Moesia. The evidence further suggests that the first Republican denarii penetrated Moesia in the period 90 – 70 BC; they are not mixed with later coins, which suggests that they were deposited shortly after their arrival in the province. It is important to highlight that coins from this period are found only in Regions I and 1+. This suggests that the first influx of denarii was to a restricted area - along the Danube bank - which the coins did not leave.

The peak of penetration and deposition of Republican denarii occurred during the second period (period B), 70-40 BC. Again, it is important to highlight that in *this* period hoards with Republican denarii were found within all of the studied regions. As for the third period, the results suggest very low deposition.¹¹⁹

The finds of Republican denarii from Moesia and Dacia in the 1st C BC are described by Crawford as “one of the most remarkable phenomena within the pattern of monetary circulation in antiquity”.¹²⁰ Most interestingly, these coins were penetrating into areas that were still located outside direct Roman control¹²¹. Two main questions emerge: How and when did these coins come to Moesia? What were the reasons for the large export of Republican coins to the region?

¹¹⁹ The coins were possibly deposited in a later period.

¹²⁰ Crawford 1985, 226 (If not of course produced locally in Dacia)

¹²¹ Lockyear 2007,167

As already discussed, the earliest hoards of denarii from Moesia date to the period from 90-70 BC. The location of these assemblages is very limited, and covers only the northern parts of Regions 1 and 1+. In addition, it is important to note that the majority of the denarii deposited from 90-70 BC were struck in the 2nd Century BC. This fact suggests that large quantities of denarii did not reach Moesia gradually, but entered into circulation in sporadic manner. This demonstrates that the 2nd Century BC denarii were imported to Moesia in the 1st C BC. Similar observations are suggested by Lockyear with regard to hoards of Republican denarii found in Romania.¹²² The scholar provides evidence that there was a significant injection of Roman coins around 70 BC, then to about 40 BC there was a decrease in the influx of new coins which led to active use of the first groups of coins.¹²³ If the coins from Moesia were analyzed in detail, one might be able to determine if Roman coin distribution and usage in this region was similar to that in Dacia. Despite the fact that Republican denarii penetrated the Northern Balkans in the same time period, there is perhaps a different explanation in the case of Moesia. It is interesting to note that the location of the hoards in Region I and especially Region I+ coincide with the military expansion of Rome in the area. It is in Region I+ in 75 BC that General M. Terentius Varro Lucullus initiated the Roman military expansion into Moesia. Additionally, a large number of hoards in Regions I and I+ were found around the Danube, an area which is

¹²²Lockyear 2007, 96-98.

¹²³ Lockyear 2007, 166/7

considered to have been highly militarized. There is archaeological evidence for two legions being based in this part of Moesia from the early 1st Century BC. In particular, the V Legion was temporarily accommodated near modern day Belene, and the permanent legionary camp of Oescus was built in the same area.¹²⁴ Based on this evidence it can be concluded that this area had considerable strategic value. Therefore the high concentration of Roman denarii in the region is likely to be associated with military expansion in the province.

Finally, 1st Century BC Moesia saw the simultaneous circulation of Greek and Roman coins. It is estimated that in around 100 BC most of the Greek mints (such as Thassos, Maroneia, and the Adriatic poleis) stopped their production. However, coins minted there are found in the hoards from all of Moesia throughout the 1st Century BC. Simultaneous circulation of Roman and Greek coins shows the dynamic changes occurring in the monetary distribution in Moesia during the period in question. Moreover, barbaric imitations of both Greek and Roman coins emerged during this period¹²⁵; a phenomenon which maybe caused by the lack of sufficient coinage in the region.¹²⁶ Although, the popular local production of both Greek and Roman coins as well as the availability of resources might imply the existence of local production. The increasing influence and quantity of Roman coins led to the gradual replacement of Greek coins and their removal from circulation in Moesia.

¹²⁴ Ivanov 2008, 95/6

¹²⁵ Todorov 1992, 59/60

¹²⁶ Hollander 2007, 146/7

Region	Republic Homogenous	Republic + other coins	Other coins
III	6	2	
II	2	4	2
I	6	4	
I+	26	6	
	40	16	2

Fig. 3 Number of coins and type of hoards per region

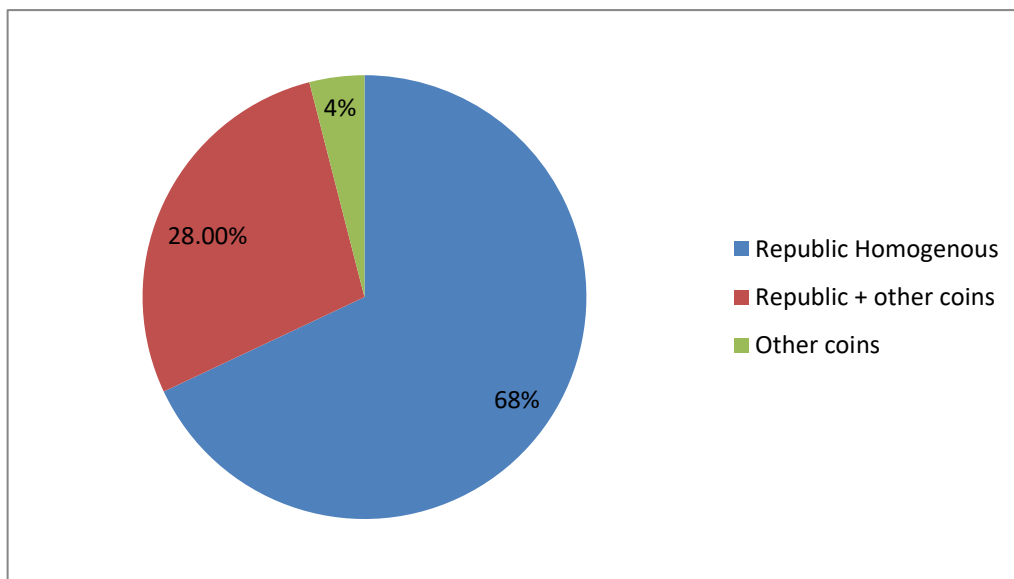


Fig. 3.1 Visual representation of fig 3.1

Region	100 – 70 BC	70 – 40 BC	40 – 0 BC
3	0	3	5
2	0	6	0
1	1	8	0
1+	12	11	0
	13	28	5

Fig. 4 1st Century BC hoards separated by period.

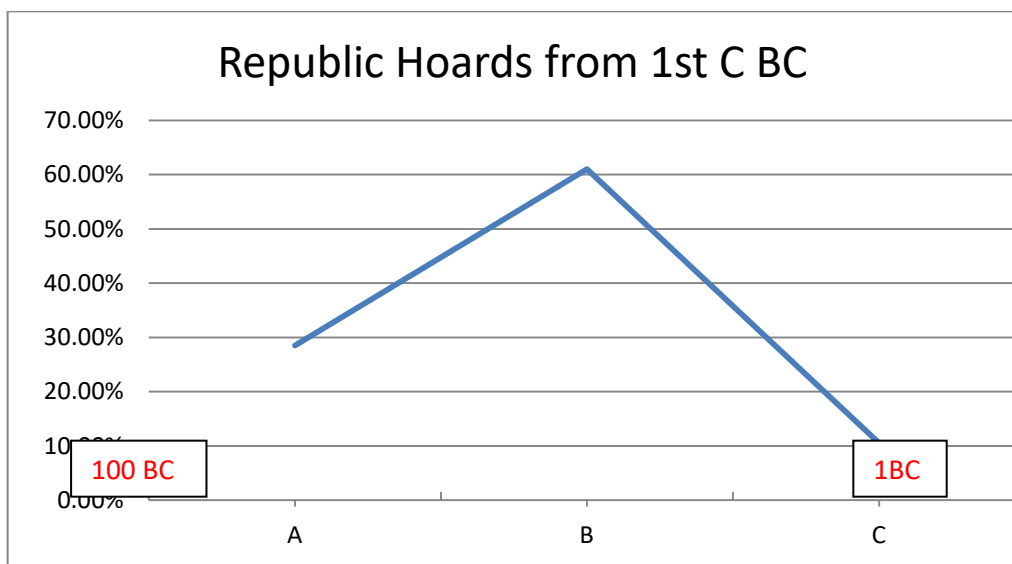


Fig. 4.1 Showing the three examined periods: 100 – 70 BC(Period A); 70 – 40 BC (Period B) and 40 – 1 BC (Period c).

Period III - Monetary Circulation in 1st and early 2nd C AD

The main changes that characterize the monetary circulation of Moesia in the 1st Century AD are associated with the arrival of the Imperial coins in the local markets. However, there is still a high presence of Roman Republican denarii in the hoards from this period mixed with 1st Century

AD issues. In particular, out of fourteen hoards, eleven consist of mixed coins, and only three are composed exclusively of Imperial coins. The number of imperial coins is three times larger than that of the Republican issues. As shown in *fig. 5/6* below, the ratio was 3163 Imperial coins to 969 Republican. The massive hoard from Region 3 might create a bias in interpretation owing to its size: this is why hoards are examined by region in this study. Results are presented in *Fig. 7*. Significant similarities can be noted between Regions III and II, and I and I+. Specifically, in Regions III and II the number of Imperial coins is considerably greater, but in Regions I and I+ the picture is very different, with a higher concentration of Republican denarii (*fig. 7*).

One of the most important facts to be noted is the lack of Greek coins that had been common in hoards of the 1st Century BC. At the same time, the high number of Republican denarii in circulation can be associated with several major factors. First, the large quantity of Republican denarii which was exported to Moesia in the 1st Century BC should be highlighted again.¹²⁷ As discussed earlier, it seems that the Republican denarii did not circulate widely and were deposited within the area they penetrated. Perhaps that is why the concentration of Republican coins in the 1st Century AD is highest in Regions I and I+ where they were most often found during the earlier period. On the other hand, the use of Republican denarii together with Imperial ones is evidence for the continuous

¹²⁷ Talmatchi 2006, 23

development of the Roman style monetary system in Moesia. Furthermore, it should be noted that only at the beginning of the 1st Century AD are there hoards consisting entirely of bronze coins in Regions II, I and I+, a characteristic which has not been observed as existing earlier. In addition, the high presence of bronze coins is corroborated by the numerous site finds recovered in the various settlements. The archaeological evidence derived from 1st century AD villas, cities and forts indicates the active usage of bronze denominations from the period.¹²⁸ Such findings provide evidence that after Moesia became a Roman province a complete monetary system was developed in which the Iron Age tradition of precious coins deposition was replaced by the Roman monetary model, in which coins from all metals circulated simultaneously, playing a presumably important role in the local economy.

A coin hoard which is worth analyzing separately is the one from Belene. It consists entirely of early Imperial bronze denominations, all countermarked by the Vth Legion.¹²⁹ There is archaeological evidence that the Vth Legion was temporarily accommodated in this region, during the late 1st Century BC- early 1st Century AD. This evidence is strengthened by the coins recovered. In addition, there are several other major hoards from this area containing silver and bronze coins, namely Belene II, Gigen

¹²⁸ Torbatov et al 2004, 165-253. In this bulletin published by the Bulgarian Academia of Science are listed all of the archaeological excavations which took part in Bulgaria in 2004. In the section cited in this work are described many of the findings dated from the 1st C AD. The excavated areas include villa sites around Oescus and Nicopolis ad Istrum as well as coin finds from the area of Novae.

¹²⁹ Prokopov *et al* 2006, 65-70

II and Gigen III (IRRCHBulg 73, 78, 79).¹³⁰ These assemblages were found near the remains of the permanent legionary camp at Oescus, and can be associated with the militarized parts of the region. Such evidence demonstrates the impact of the Roman army on monetary influx in certain areas of the province. The presence of bronze coins within, but also outside, the legionary camps is evidence that bronze coins became acceptable as means of payment even in Regions I and I+, where such practice is not observed in earlier periods.

Region	Imperial Hoards	Republic +Imperial Hoards	Number of Imperial Coins	Number of Republican Coins
III		2	1732	96
II	1	1	875	45
I	1	5	114 +	240 +
I+	1	3	442	588
Total number of coins:			3163 +	969 +

Fig. 5 Number of hoards and coins

¹³⁰ Prokopov *et al* 2002, 47-51

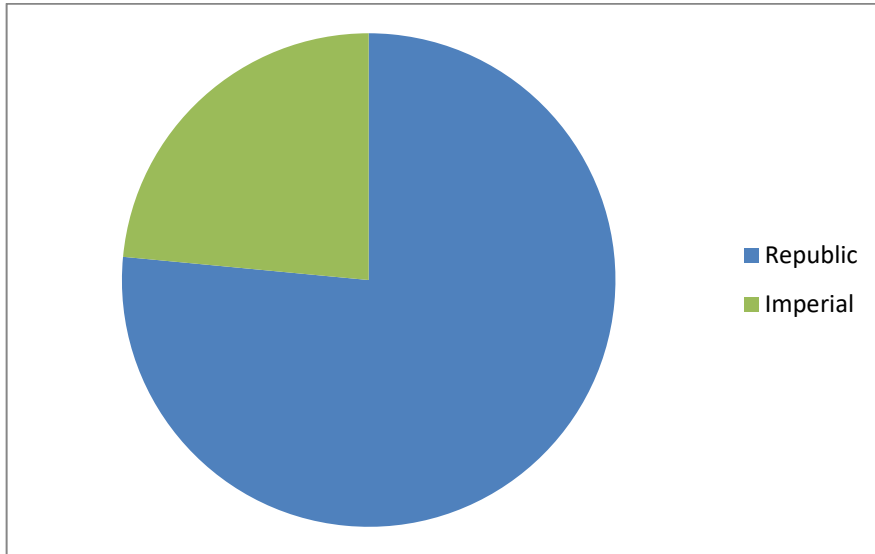


Fig. 6 Ratio between imperial and Republic coins

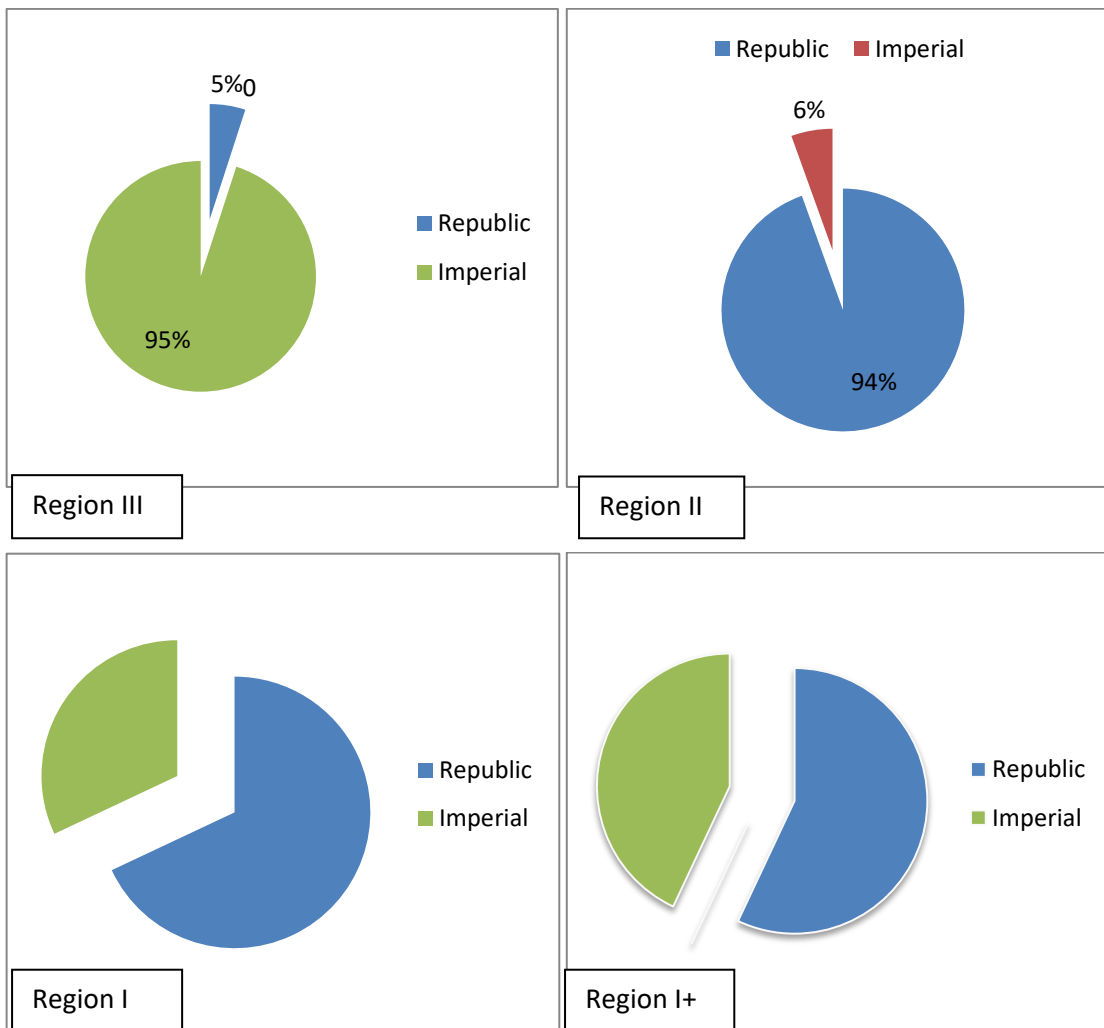


Fig. 7 Ratio between Republic and Imperial issued on regional level.

Discussion of the results:

The results obtained in this chapter show the complex chronological and regional monetary developments which occurred in Moesia between 2nd c BC to the 1st Century AD. The data reveal the gradual process of monetization of the province, starting with the influx of precious metal Greek coins in the internal regions from 2nd Century BC, then their gradual replacement with Roman Republican denarii in the 1st c BC, and finally the development of a complete monetary system, including small change, during the 1st Century AD.

As a part of the archaeological record, coins are a reflection of systems of doing things - they help us to conceptualize and reconstruct the relations which existed between people and material objects.¹³¹ Above all, coins are recognized as a form of money, especially in the Roman world. There is an abundance of literary evidence and tax records that show us how coins were used in the Roman World: as means of exchange and payment, a measure of value, a store of wealth etc.¹³² Coins played a central role in the Roman world, and can be considered as mediators of the state redistributive cycle and a reflection of the high levels of commodization.¹³³ One of the most typical characteristics of the Roman monetary system is the high scale provision of small change.¹³⁴ Coins from various metals and denominations were minted and distributed across the whole empire,

¹³¹ Reden 2010, 186.

¹³² Howgego 2013,4; Schapps 2004 discusses the processes of money development in the Greek World.

¹³³ Howgego 2013, 2/3

¹³⁴ Perkins 2009, 110-17.

contributing towards the development of highly commercialized societies with economies heavily dependent on coin usage.¹³⁵

During its rapid expansion between 2nd C BC and 1st C AD, the Roman Empire faced a variety of monetary regimes- from areas with long traditions of coin use such as Greece and Egypt, to regions with none or very limited use of coins, such as Britain and Dacia. The symbiosis between all dimensions of Roman expansion (often gathered under the somewhat problematic term of "Romanization") and the diversity of provincial economies produced variable monetary pictures.¹³⁶ It is worth noting that Rome often faced diversity in coin usage within the territory of a single province. For example, within Moesia Inferior, Region III has been monetized from around 4th Century BC. Most of the Greek *poleis* which existed in the area - Callatis, Tomis, Dionysopolis, and Odessos - had an extensive coinage in all denominations. In addition, the presence of coins from other *poleis* located in Thrace, Greece, Asia Minor and Macedon provide evidence for the active movement of goods and people. Therefore, the presence of coin hoards from the 2nd and 1st Century BC cannot be regarded as an extraordinary phenomenon. The people in Region III were familiar with the concept of coinage and its economic function. On the other hand, the spread of coins dated earlier than the middle of the 2nd Century BC suddenly ends westwards from Dobrudja (Region III) and in

¹³⁵The complex nature of the Roman economy has been analyzed as the Roman Consumer / Cultural Revolution the end of which marks the transitional period to the Middle Ages. See: Woolf, G. (1998) 96-99; 169-205; On the topic of Cultural Revolution see Wallace-Hadrill 2008; Osborne *et al.* 2010, 233-45.

¹³⁶Mattingly 2002, 536-40.

all other parts of Moesia earlier coins are particularly scarce. Individual bronze coins, most often of Phillip II and Alexander III, are sometimes found in grave contexts, placed as Charon's obol, but hoards and any abundance of individual finds are missing.¹³⁷ Dimitar Draganov has been studying the iconography and distribution of Scythian coins in Moesia¹³⁸, and his observations suggest the same picture; all known specimens come from the coastal areas and Dobrudja, but there are no known examples from the internal parts of the province.¹³⁹ This lack of coins is noteworthy considering the close proximity to monetized regions such as Thrace, Macedon and Greece and the abundance of other forms of precious metal objects (most often deposited as hoards). It is very important to highlight that Region I and Region I+, which have produced the highest number of coin deposits from 1st and 2nd Century BC, have also the highest concentration of treasures, some of which include kilograms of gold and silver objects.¹⁴⁰ Most of the objects have been discovered in burial mounds, on hill tops, or in old river beds, suggesting the ritual significance of the deposits. Here, a direct parallel can be drawn with the areas of North Dacia, which have also produced numerous ritual deposits - mainly of silver - dated to the *La Tene* period, and later of silver coins, all concentrated in the same areas.¹⁴¹ This comparison is very important,

¹³⁷Haritonov 2010, 87.

¹³⁸ Coins date to 3rd – 2nd C BC.

¹³⁹Draganov 2015, 34.

¹⁴⁰ Some of the largest know treasures dated to 6th – 3rd c BC found in the internal parts of Moesia are: Region I + (Rogozen, Miziya and Galiche); Region I (Vulchitrun, Lukovit, Letnica, Alexandrovo, Vladinya, Radovene); Region II (Borovo, Ostrica, Ivanovo); Region III (Sveshtari, Odessos, Durostorum). See Kitov *et al.* 2002.

¹⁴¹Lockyear 2004, 33-74 / 66-9.

because it reveals the different functions that coins played among the population of central Moesia and Dacia in the Iron Age period. The depositing of large amounts of silver from the 4th and 3rd Century BC gave way to coin deposits. The burial of the coins took place not only in the same style but also in the same areas. In Moesia, these are the North West parts of Region I+ and Region I, and along the Valley of Yantra River (Region II). But how can this evidence be interpreted? What function did coins have in Iron Age Moesia?

It is plausible that, as in temperate Europe, the Roman expansion encountered in Moesia a local economy constructed in a very different way to their own, with different systems of value and different objects fulfilling the function of money.¹⁴² It can be assumed that in the Iron Age societies of temperate Europe, value was mainly “defined not in economic or monetary terms but rather through the broadest range of social and cultural links people have to the material world”.¹⁴³ This statement can be related to the evidence from Regions I+, I and II in Moesia. The links we see between people and the material world prior to the 2nd C BC differ significantly from what is observed after the annexation of the province to the territory of the empire. In the earlier periods, we find a smaller number of material objects in rural or daily life contexts; what archaeology reveals is a direct link between ritual and material cultures. Almost all known findings have been discovered as part of a burial, as

¹⁴²Howgego 2013, 2.

¹⁴³Gosden 2004, 18; Woolf 1998 176-7.

burnt or broken in a ritual manner, or as deposited in specific types of areas (hill tops and river beds).¹⁴⁴ Depositing metalwork objects had been practiced in Moesia from the Bronze Age period. There are many examples of hoards consisting of Bronze Age socketed axe heads, spears, and arrows.¹⁴⁵ It is important to highlight that, unlike in other parts of Europe, the coin hoards from the 2nd Century BC recovered in Moesia do not include other type of precious metal objects.¹⁴⁶ This phenomenon is particularly interesting and raises questions such as: Why was the deposition of coins adopted? What changes does this reflect?

The pattern of coin distribution in the 2nd C BC in Moesia is remarkably consistent. The most significant variations are the lack of posthumous Alexander tetradrachms in the internal areas of Region III, as well as the absence of Illyrian drachms and the limited number of Macedonian tetradrachms in Region III. In addition, the tetradrachms from Maroneia are found only in Region II. It is important to note that all of the evidence comes from hoards and therefore from pre-selected deposits. The different criteria applied for the selection of the coins from region to region might have determined the content of the hoards. However, it is more likely that the coins did not circulate but were buried in the same area they penetrated. If the coins had circulated this would have led to

¹⁴⁴ Kitov 2002, 5-55.

¹⁴⁵ We see similar examples all across Western, Central and Eastern Europe. Bradey *et al.* 41 – 72. Bradley 2005, ch.5

¹⁴⁶ The torcs were considered as powerful symbols of power in the Iron Age societies. In Western and Central Europe they are often found buried together with coins. See Fitzpatrick 2005, 157-82; Creighton *et al.* 1999, 99 – 124.

their mixing, and would have created a more homogenous picture of monetary distribution in the whole province. Although the evidence we have is very limited, the apparent coin behavior in the internal regions suggests that they were not used as money. The coins did not circulate and were buried in the same manner and location as earlier precious metal votive deposits. Therefore, the coins can be regarded as a means of replacement and standardization of said precious metals. What factors determined the regional distribution of the coins?

The lack of Illyrian coins and the scarce number of Macedonia tetradrachms in Region III is important because it illustrates the boundary between monetary distribution in Moesia. The absence of posthumous tetradrachms of Alexander III in the internal regions of Region III is particularly fascinating. This particular denomination was produced on a large scale and circulated widely around the Black sea coast and in certain parts of Dobrudja and Thrace. Therefore, despite the closer geographic proximity and the abundance of locally produced coins, the population of Region I+, I and II favored different type of coins. The motivation for this choice could be the availability and perhaps iconography of the coins. The local imitative coinage supports this statement. In particular, the coins most copied were the tetradrachms from Thassos. The copies were produced in a very ambiguous style, with a greater emphasis on the pattern (something considered normal for Iron Age metalwork¹⁴⁷). The

¹⁴⁷ For Iron Age Art see: Jacobsthal, 1944; Jope, 2000.

key conclusion is that the idea of coinage was borrowed by the population of the internal regions of Moesia but transferred into something new; an amalgamation of foreign and local cultural practices. The production also suggests that some of the imported Greek or Roman coins were melted down for silver.¹⁴⁸ Such a practice could also impact the type of coins recovered in each region.

A major challenge for archaeology is to determine the reasons for the import of Greek and later of Roman coins into the internal parts of Moesia. It is essential to highlight that all of the 2nd Century BC Greek coins were struck in mints under Roman control. In addition, the majority of the coins were minted after 146 BC. Without sufficient documentary evidence, it would be speculative to assume that the Roman presence on the Balkans was the sole factor responsible for the monetization of Moesia. However, the evidence is important and must be taken into consideration. A parallel can be drawn with other regions of Europe in which the penetration of Graeco-Roman coins was also associated with Roman influence. For example, the use of Celts as mercenaries had significant impact on the penetration of coins in temperate Europe.¹⁴⁹ Although, it is insufficient to explain all of the import and coin production of the regions, mercenary payments define one of the mechanisms which made coins available in the non-monetized regions of temperate Europe.¹⁵⁰ Despite there being no direct evidence to suggest that Rome used Thracian mercenaries from the

¹⁴⁸ Howgego 2013, 5.

¹⁴⁹ Nash 1987, 16.

¹⁵⁰ Howgego 2013, 12.

lands of Moesia, one must not exclude this possibility. In particular, during the 1st and 2nd C BC, Rome made numerous military campaigns against the Kingdom of Macedon, against various Greek states, and above all, against Mithridates VI of Pontus. There are literary sources which refer to Thracian mercenaries, especially from the *Maedi* tribe.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, Rumen Ivanov suggests that the Iron Age population of Moesia and Thrace was significantly fragmented prior to the Roman annexation of the region. In particular, certain tribes were in favor of a union with Rome, whereas others offered fierce resistance.¹⁵² Therefore, it can be suggested that the military involvement of the Moesian population resulted in penetration of coins in the region. However, this hypothesis does not explain the consistency of different coin types in each region.

Regardless of the mechanisms which led to the penetration of Greek coins into the internal lands of Moesia, one must ask the question as to why the local population adopted the idea of coinage. The most logical explanation is that coins were able to fit into the social and artistic patterns of deposition material objects.¹⁵³ The presence of Greco-Roman coins and copies based on their prototypes cannot indicate directly the function which coins fulfilled.¹⁵⁴ However, the initial incorporation of coinage in Iron Age Moesia can be regarded as a reflection of active internal changes. Due to their convenient nature –their small size, iconographic capacity and the

¹⁵¹Ivanov 2007, 7. Rome used Maiedi troops against Mithridates VI of Pontus, one of this troops was Spartacus, later to become initiator of the largest slave rebellion in the Ancient history.

¹⁵² Ivanov 2007, 5 – 20

¹⁵³Howgego 2013, 12.

¹⁵⁴ Parry *et al.* 1989, 20/1.

general tendency for deposits to become more stereotyped and standardized - coins were swiftly incorporated in the material world of Iron Age Moesia.¹⁵⁵

So far, we have established some of the key aspects and problems of the monetary distribution in Iron Age Moesia. In order to test the results obtained in this chapter, the evidence from Moesia will be compared with evidence from Britain and Dacia. These provinces are not chosen coincidentally. Similarly to Moesia, they are marginal provinces, the last to be incorporated in the territory of the Empire to the North, marking the limits of Roman expansion to the west and east.¹⁵⁶ Much like Moesia, the models of Iron Age coinage were borrowed from the Greco-Roman world and developed in a similar manner. A comparative analysis will reveal some of the common patterns, and support the theory that Roman influence exercised through the spread of coins bears a relationship with the eventual expansion of the Roman Empire.

The evidence from Britain is significant for understanding the monetary patterns in Iron Age temperate Europe due to the large body of data collected by the Portable Antiquities Scheme.¹⁵⁷ The monetary distribution in Iron Age Britain was mainly concentrated in south-east of the Fosse way.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, it appears that the Fosse Way played the role of a cultural border for coinage, and therefore defined different regimes of

¹⁵⁵Bradley 1998, 197.

¹⁵⁶Howgego 2013, 6.

¹⁵⁷ Visit: <https://finds.org.uk/>

¹⁵⁸ Fosse Way is roughly the line between Severn to East Yorkshire. See Haselgrove 2006, 97-115.

value.¹⁵⁹ This is supported by the fact that no coins were produced or imported to Wales in the Iron Age period. The very few known finds may have been brought in during the Roman period.¹⁶⁰ There are however, numerous gold coin finds discovered on the hills above the river Wye, located on the border. Howgego (2013) suggests that this indicates a deliberate deposition which reflects a response to a culturally distinct border along the Wye.¹⁶¹ This geographic divide appears in other aspects too, such as building types, burial traditions, ritual deposition and pottery types.¹⁶² Such patterns can be regarded as reflection of different regimes of value and different exchange systems which existed in each region of the country.¹⁶³

Despite the fact that coin hoards are found all across Moesia, there is a certain similarity with the British pattern. Namely, the coastal areas (Region III) stand in contrast to the rest of the province. The monetary evidence from 3rd – 1st C BC suggests a boundary between the extensively monetized Eastern parts with an abundance of small change, and the less or non- monetized Western and Central parts. Furthermore, even though Greek and Roman silver coins are found in Regions I+, I and II, they are not recovered in random places across the whole region (which would suggest their wider distribution), but are concentrated in certain specific areas. In Regions I+ and I, this is

¹⁵⁹Howgego 2013, 8.

¹⁶⁰ Guest 2008, 33-58.

¹⁶¹Howgego 2013, 8.

¹⁶² Haselgrove 2004, 12-29.

¹⁶³Howgego 2013, 8.

the North West parts on the Danubian bank, and in Region II these are the hills around the valleys of Yantra and Rositsa rivers. This pattern is very consistent, with almost all coin hoards from 2nd and 1st Centuries BC discovered in the aforementioned areas. The pattern suggests that, as in Britain, we can assume the existence of internal cultural and economic boundaries which divided monetized from non-monetized.

After the Roman conquest of Britain, coin finds are recorded throughout the whole province.¹⁶⁴ However, the division which the Fosse Way presented continued to exist, but in an altered way. In particular, the North-West has a relatively higher presence of silver coins in comparison to bronze denominations.¹⁶⁵ The evidence does not suggest that some areas were partially or less monetized, but perhaps indicates a monetization in different ways.¹⁶⁶ In terms of this pattern, the evidence from Moesia coincides precisely. Whilst it will be discussed in detail in the next chapter of this thesis, it is important to highlight the evidence at this stage too. In particular, after the Roman conquest, the Western and Central parts of Moesia Inferior had a substantially higher number of silver in comparison to bronze. Just as during the Iron Age period, small fractional/bronze coinage continued to circulate actively in Region III. Similarly, the majority of coins discovered in Region I and II are mainly silver. This tendency is

¹⁶⁴ See PAS database

¹⁶⁵ Walton 2012, 50-6/167-8; Allason-Jones et al. 50-76.

¹⁶⁶ Howgego 2013, 8.

preserved up to around the middle of the 3rd C AD, when the active production of the mint in Viminacium¹⁶⁷, as well as the introduction of base metal antoninianus, became widely distributed in the whole province. Why did Iron Age regional patterns influence the coin distribution in the Roman period?

The existence of regional monetary patterns is an expression of geographic, cultural and economic differences within each province and region. In Britain, the Fosse Way divides the lowlands from highlands, and the more militarized from more civilian areas. In addition, the proximity of South-Eastern parts to continental provinces may have further increased the monetization and coin usage in the area.¹⁶⁸ In terms of Moesia Inferior, the border between Region III and Region II marks a certain distinction between the plain terrains of Dobruja and the Black sea coast and the higher lands of Western Moesia. It also divides the highly urbanized coastal region from the more rural and militarized west. Like Britain's South-East, the Moesian Eastern parts were connected via the sea to other provinces such as Thrace and Asia Minor, which facilitated monetization. However the internal parts of Moesia are much more geographically enclosed - by high mountains to the south, and the Danube to the North - making the regions less connected. It is also important to consider archaeological components such as

¹⁶⁷ Located in Moesia Superior

¹⁶⁸ Howgego 2013,8.

infrastructure, settlement patterns, and other forms of material culture, in order to understand and explain the continuity of monetary patterns. In the Iron Age period Regions I+, I and II were characterized by small dispersed farmsteads and certain larger religious centers. Region III, by contrast, had much more developed urban and rural settlements, including very large poleis such as Dionysopolis and Odessos.¹⁶⁹ This contrast is clear in terms of material culture as well. For example, in Region III, various types of imported Greek pottery has been discovered, including Corinthian and Athenian fine ware, which is not found in the internal parts of the province.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, the well-developed Greek style architecture was only adopted in Region III. These and many other distinctions maybe regarded as reflections of differently organized social and economic structures, and therefore different needs for money. This phenomenon is expressed by the different type of coin finds in each of the studied Regions. It can be assumed that the Western parts of Moesia had very little need of coins in the Iron Age period, and perhaps only for a relatively simple monetary system in the early Roman period.¹⁷¹ It is important to remember that although we might see these patterns as static now, they were dynamic and changeable, reflecting the active contact of people and material culture.

¹⁶⁹Carov 2007, 3-9; Haritonov 2000, 98.

¹⁷⁰Bojkova 2013, 87-95.

¹⁷¹Howgego, 2013. 10.

Dacia¹⁷² is another important case study that provides a relevant connection to Moesia. Initially, Dacia had adopted coinage from the Iron Age model as early as the 3rd C BC - around 100 years earlier than the central regions of Moesia. Particularly, the Dobrudjan parts of Dacia, close to the Black sea coast relied heavily on Greek coins, similarly to Moesian coastal areas. The inland parts of Dacia used poor imitations of Hellenistic coinages up to 100 – 70 BC, relatively different from Moesian internal regions which used mostly officially struck coins. Another remarkable variation is that in Dacia the most imported and copied coins were the tetradrachms of Alexander III and Philipp II, which are almost entirely absent in the assemblages from Central and Western Moesia.¹⁷³ Of course chronological difference is an important factor impacting the monetary supply. However, the well stratified regional pattern suggests that, as in Moesia, coins did not circulate or mix with each other. The coins which penetrated Dacia were not exported and were usually buried in the same areas. Similarly to Moesia, Dacia had a long tradition of depositing precious metals and especially silver.¹⁷⁴ The style of deposition and the adoption of using coins in ritual deposits occurs similarly in both provinces. The adoption of Greek coins in Dacia can be described as more gradual, which can also be explained by its earlier chronology. There are many more mixed deposits of coins and

¹⁷² In this case study Dacia represents the parts of North-East Dobrudja and South West parts of Romania.

¹⁷³ For discusiion of Greek coin types in Dacia see Preda (1973).

¹⁷⁴ Lockyear 2004, 33-40.

other artefacts discovered in Dacia, while in Moesia the switch to coins seems to be more sudden.¹⁷⁵

The similarity of coin patterns in both provinces continues in the 1st c BC as well, when a substantial switch from Greek to Roman coins is observed. The most noticeable characteristic of the period is the sporadic influx of Roman Republican denarii followed by periods of limited supply. The major influx of denarii in Moesia occurred around 5 to 20 years earlier than in Dacia. Based on the date of deposition the first major influx of Denarii occurred between 90 – 70 BC in Moesia and between 75-65 in Dacia.¹⁷⁶ The fact that the denarii penetrated in Moesia first might indicate that the influx occurred from South to North, and indeed might suggest the actual route of the coins. It is very important to highlight that despite the switch from Greek to Roman coins, the manner of deposition and the location of burial did not change. Most of the hoards recovered in Moesia, dated to the 1st C BC, are found in the North West parts of Regions I+ and I and along the valley of River Yantra. These patterns indicate that despite the change in coin types, the main function that coins played probably did not change. This pattern is particularly interesting and requires further investigation. The practice of copying Republican denarii was very prominent in Dacia in comparison to the Moesian regions. The amount of coin dies discovered in the citadels of

¹⁷⁵Lockyear 2004, 50-74; Most of the reported hoards in Moesia content silver coins only.

¹⁷⁶Paunov et al. 2002; Lockyear 2007, 167-8.

Sarmizegetusa and Tilisca as well as casting moulds from Simleu Silvaniei is without precedent, suggesting the strong traditions of imitative coinage in Dacia, practice that was never adopted to this extent south from the Danube. Furthermore, the amount of coin hoarding places Dacia second after Rome in the Republican period.¹⁷⁷

It is very important to mention that, although some of the Greek coin hoards are dated to the 2nd C BC as indicated by the content of the assemblages, their actual deposition might have taken place in the 1st C BC. This is due to two main reasons. Firstly, all Greek coins found in Central and Western Moesia were minted in the second half of the 2nd C BC, and therefore their penetration may have taken place in the 1st C BC. Furthermore, most of the Greek mints, such as Thasos and Maroneia ceased production in the late 2nd – early 1st Century BC, so it is difficult to estimate the actual time of circulation and eventual deposition. Secondly, there is a noticeable tendency of separating Greek from Roman coins in the 1st Century BC- out of 56 coin hoards, only 16 are mixed. On one hand, if the pattern is an actual reflection of deliberate separation, this could indicate that coins were recognized and treated differently due to their novelty in relation to iconography or economic capacity. On the other hand, the pattern could be a reflection of the actual proportion of the coins in each region. The number of Greek coins decreased due to the end of

¹⁷⁷ Information kindly provided by Cristian Gazdac.

production, and simultaneously, the number of Roman coins increased which made them more available and preferred for deposition. This evidence should be approached with caution. Whilst the pattern of deposition of 2nd – 1st Century BC is very similar (i.e. large silver coin hoards buried in the same areas), it must be remembered that most of the evidence comes from hoards, and that this could create a certain bias. Indeed, the actual data reflects the patterns of deposition and not the actual presence of coins. For example, the fact that there are almost no coin hoards with denarii dated to 90-70 BC in Region III may not be a reflection of absence, but of a lack of deposition. Perhaps, the switch from Greek to Roman coins had economic implications too. Certain coins might have continued to be used in votive contexts but others might have been employed as money.

Another important similarity in both provinces is that Greek and Roman coins were copied in a variety of styles, qualities and quantities.¹⁷⁸ The tendency of copying Republican denarii is more prominent in Dacia, where the distribution of Roman coins was accompanied by active production of imitations. Some of the copies resembled the Iron Age tradition of stylized iconography with noticeable differences. Others were produced by taking a direct impression from the original coins, making them almost identical.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Some of the denarii

¹⁷⁹Howgego 2013, 10.

The chronology of coin penetration may have influenced the choice of coins copied. In particular, the production of contemporary copies of Greek coins in Dacia began earlier than in Moesia. Imitative tetradrachms of Philipp III and Alexander III were produced throughout the 3rd – 2nd Century BC.¹⁸⁰ On the other hand, the most copied coins in the internal parts of Moesia were the tetradrachms minted in Thassos. These coins were produced from the second half of the 2nd Century until early 1st Century BC.¹⁸¹ Therefore, the production of copies probably overlapped with the penetration of Roman coins. The tradition of imitative coinage had deeper roots in Dacia and therefore the extensive copying of Republican denarii can be regarded as a continuation of a long standing practice. However, it is very difficult to distinguish whether the local production of coins was a cultural phenomenon similar to patterns seen later to the North of the Roman Empire, or a result of actual demand for coin as money.¹⁸² In particular, both Moesia and Dacia relied on external supply for coins, and the production of imitations can be linked chronologically to shortages of new coins. For example, the copying of Thassos tetradrachms overlaps with the decrease in mint activity and the eventual cessation of production. On the other hand, the irregular penetration of Republican denarii to Dacia might have

¹⁸⁰ Prokopov *et al.* 2002, 100-5.

¹⁸¹ Prokopov *et al.* 2006, 33-9.

¹⁸² For example, copying Roman coins was practiced on a large scale in Ukraine, especially Chernyakov culture. Many of the coins were pierced or mounted as part of the production which could indicate their decorative function. See http://barbarous-imitations.narod.ru/index/pro_podrazhanija/0-84

stimulated the production of local coins in times of shortage too.¹⁸³ It is difficult to determine the actual factors which influenced the incorporation and copying of coins in the Iron Age societies of Dacia and Moesia. However, the significant similarity in most patterns certainly reflects the same mechanisms of penetration and incorporation, with only certain chronological differences.

Based on the available evidence, it was the 1st Century AD when the Iron Age style of coin-use ended and Moesia was incorporated into the monetary world of the Roman Empire. This major change was the end of distribution and imitation of Greek coins. However, the circulation of Republican denarii continued alongside the increasing number of Imperial coins. The most noticeable difference is the active incorporation and production of bronze coins. The increased presence of Roman troops in the newly formed province seems to have contributed to the spread of bronze coins in areas with no such previous tradition. The bronze coin hoards discovered in Regions I+ and I - associated with the Roman legions stationed in Oescus - are not the only evidence. According to Bunov, 1st Century AD Roman bronze coins are found individually on many archaeological sites in the Pleven, Vidin, and Vratsa regions.¹⁸⁴ Similar evidence is provided by museums, such as Polski Trambesh, Razgrad and Devnya.¹⁸⁵ It is

¹⁸³Howgego 2013, 10/1.

¹⁸⁴Bunov 1994, 100-110.

¹⁸⁵The information was obtained after discussions with the heads of the museums: Prof. Hristo Haritonov, Dr. Ivan Sutev and Mr. Angel Angelov.

important to highlight that after a pause the many mints along the Black sea coast were re-opened. The earliest civic coins were struck in the beginning of the 1st C AD in Tomis, Callatis, and Odessos.¹⁸⁶ What factors were responsible for the monetization of all regions in Moesia?

The addition of Moesia to the territory of the Roman Empire brought significant economic changes. During the 1st Century AD, the active construction of roads, aqueducts, and fortresses begun.¹⁸⁷ In addition, three legionary camps were stationed along the Danubean limes in Oescus, Novae, and Dorustorum.¹⁸⁸ The exchange of coins was facilitated by the improved contact with other provinces of the empire such as Thrace, Greece, and Asia Minor.¹⁸⁹ Another aspect of monetization (often underestimated in archaeological studies of the period) is the impact of social change. There is very little known about the cultural and economic processes which occurred after Moesia was conquered, how the governing of the province was organized, or about the social dimensions of this shift. The transplantation of a coin-using population such as soldiers and merchants could have impacted significantly the role which coins had begun to play in local societies.¹⁹⁰ Whilst the tradition of depositing coins in votive contexts may have continued throughout the entire Roman

¹⁸⁶Varbanov 2000 (Catalogs of Greek Imperial coins).

¹⁸⁷ Ivanov 2007, 87-93.

¹⁸⁸ Angelova et al. 2008, 3-10.

¹⁸⁹ Ivanov (2007) discusses the active import of material objects such as metalwork and pottery in Moesia in the 1st C AD.

¹⁹⁰ Onomastic evidence from Dacia suggest similar patterns of substantial incorporation of foreign people into the province (Howgego 2013,11).

period, there are obvious changes in patterns of distribution and deposition. Coin hoards are widely spread across the provinces, accompanied by high numbers of single finds. It is difficult to determine the political, economic and demographic changes which Moesia underwent between the 2nd Century BC and 1st Century AD. However, the increased amount of coins, the infrastructural developments, the presence of the Roman army, and access to new markets, all gradually accelerated the development of all parts of the province into the economic area of the early Roman Empire.

Chapter III - The Monetary circulation of Gold, Silver and Bronze Coins in Moesia Inferior

Introduction

Moesia Inferior is considered to be one of the provinces with the highest number of Roman imperial period coins found in hoard contexts.¹⁹¹ Despite this, the study of coin assemblages from the region can take the researcher in some misleading directions. First, the inclusion of coins from different rulers is often interpreted as the progressive accumulation of wealth by the coins' owner, and not as an indicator of circulation patterns.¹⁹² Secondly, in most of the published hoards, the main goal is to determine the reasons for burial and non-recovery. Often a major historical military event is considered as the only explanation for the hoard's deposition. By incorporating such an approach, hoards are used only to fill gaps in the archaeological context and interpreted as part of the general historical background, rather than as a reflection of local economic practices. Monetary components, such as comparison of denomination composition and circulation patterns, are often neglected. In addition, the monetary circulation of each site or municipality region is studied in isolation. For instance, Bunov (1994) and Dzanev (2007) published papers analyzing Roman hoards found in two different regions of North Bulgaria – the Pleven municipality and the Razgrad municipality. In both works, the finds are examined

¹⁹¹ Gazdac, C. 2010, 37

¹⁹² Bunov, P. 1994, 44

separately from other parts of the province and all evidence related to historic rather than economic events.¹⁹³ The absence of an established regional pattern for the whole province against which each region (or even each hoard) could be compared creates bias for all interpretations.

In order to avoid such bias and to provide a detailed analysis of the monetary circulation of Moesia, all regions will be simultaneously analyzed and compared. The large amount of published and unpublished coin data incorporated in this study will, for the first time, provide an opportunity to understand properly the fluctuations in coin circulation of the province. As suggested in the previous chapter (background study), the examination of the monetary circulation region by region is a helpful tool for determining a common monetary pattern. Once such a pattern is established, each regional variation can be spotted and interpreted. In this part of the work the regional division of Moesia will match the one suggested in Chapter II. This choice is not coincidental, since the large rivers which crossed the province from south to north played the role of internal borders, which possibly had significant impact on the monetary circulation in each region.

By analyzing the distribution of gold, silver and bronze coins, a general monetary circulation background will be established for each

¹⁹³ See Bunov, P. 1994 and Dzanev, G. 2007, 67

region of Moesia. The chapter will try to outline the circulation pattern of each denomination, identify the areas with a higher concentration of certain types of coin, and provide a possible explanation for this specific distribution.

The Evidence

This chapter incorporates the evidence from all 359 coin hoards discovered on the territory of Moesia Inferior in the period between AD 100 – AD 300 (fig.1). Most of these assemblages are entered in the CHRE (Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire) database, including all available information about find location, content and time of deposition. The program enables detailed analysis at regional and chronological levels, as well as the creation of precise maps and charts, illustrating the specific patterns of monetary distribution of the province.

The denominations most commonly found are the Roman denarius and the silver radiate, represented by 75690 coins / 191 hoards. The bronze denominations are also well represented with a total of 26452 coins / 160 hoards. The denomination least discovered is the gold aureus. Gold coins are rarely found in the hoards from Moesia Inferior, represented by only 155 coins / 6 hoards (fig 2). It is interesting to note that gold coins are infrequently found in hoards or even as single finds within the Lower Danube provinces. For instance, only eight hoards containing gold coins are recorded in both Pannonia

Superior and Pannonia Inferior for the period AD 106-337.¹⁹⁴ However, the low presence of gold coin in hoards cannot be regarded as a reflection of their low use. Because of their high value, gold coins were handled with care in antiquity and are rarely reported in the modern period.¹⁹⁵ In addition, unlike other metals, gold was more often melted for bullion or jewelry.¹⁹⁶ Therefore, the evidence suggested can only be used as an indication that gold coins circulated in different parts of Moesia.

The total number of hoards per period is shown in fig. 3. It is very important to highlight the very high hoarding activity in Period V and Period VI. The total number of hoards for these periods is 266 which is more than 50 % of the total sample. The distribution and the number of hoards and coins per region is shown in fig. 4 and fig 5. The average number of coins per hoard is 313, the lowest average is observed in period I – 232 coins and the highest in period VII – 1308 (fig. 6 and fig. 7). Fig. 8 shows the number of coins for every year based on the *terminus post quem* of each deposit.

When examining the location of the hoards, one must be aware of a few important factors. First, only two out of 359 hoards were found during archaeological excavations. All of the others were recovered by chance, most often during agricultural or building activities.

¹⁹⁴Gazdac 2010, 95.

¹⁹⁵Howgego 1992, 4.

¹⁹⁶Callu / Lorient 1990, 106.

Secondly, the actual reporting of the hoards was very random. A large number of people neglected to report the recovered coins or reported only a fragment of the deposit. Most often, the coin assemblages were given to a local, not archaeologically educated, authority (most often somebody like a bishop). Here it is necessary to point out the importance of the work undertaken by Nikola Mushmov and Todor Gerasimov who travelled from village to village in order to acquire and preserve all of the available numismatic data. These factors are important because they define to a large extent the location of the deposits studied. By analyzing the hoards' locations, a few patterns can be discerned (see *map I*).

The distribution of hoards in Moesia suggests that monetary circulation of all denominations was active throughout the province. The absence of gold coin hoards in Region II cannot be regarded as evidence for a lack of gold coins in circulation, but is merely a statistical fact. Hoards containing silver and bronze coins follow a very similar pattern of location, being concentrated around large cities or legionary camps such as Melita, Oescus, Nicopolis ad Istrum, Nove, Durostorum, Marcianopolis and Odessos. This is what one would expect; that monetary circulation was more active around commercial and military centers. However, one might notice certain gaps on the map where no hoards are recorded. It is important to note that the gaps with no coin hoards follow a certain geographical

order – namely, the region between the bank of the Danube and the middle areas including most of northeastern Dobrudja. Taking into account the large sample as well as the selective nature of the hoards' find spots, the absence of coin assemblages from these areas is remarkable.

This picture of coin distribution raises important questions regarding the monetary usage and level of monetization within the province. What factors could have determined the absence of coin hoards in such large areas? How can this evidence be interpreted? These questions will be analyzed in further detail in this Chapter.

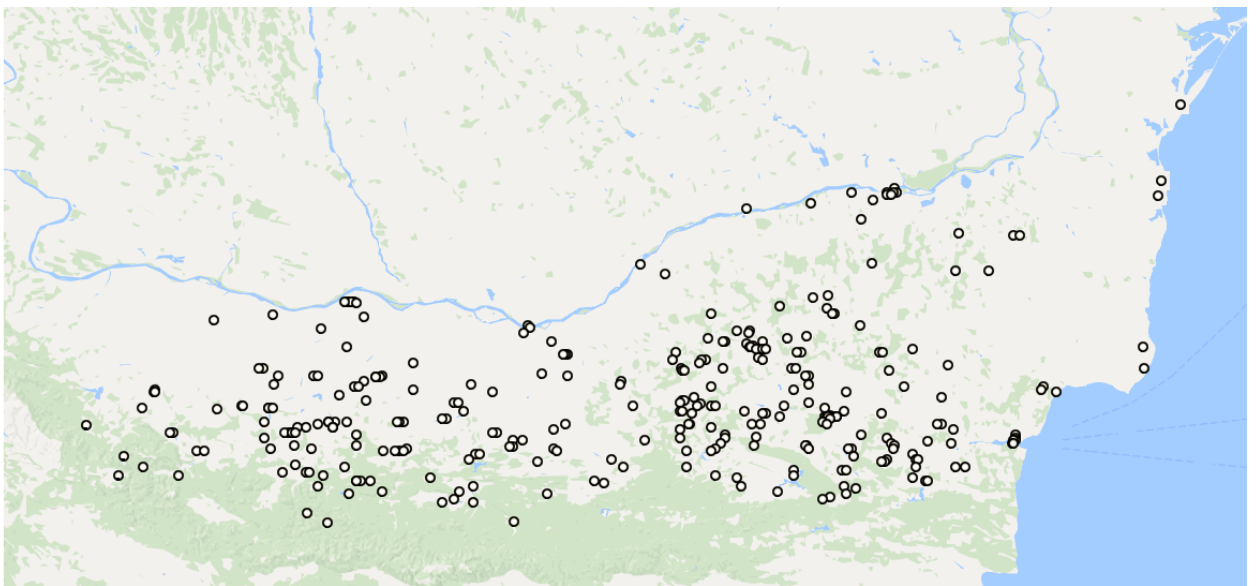


Fig. 1 All of the examined coin hoards from the territory of Moesia Inferior.

Period	AU (number of coins)	AR (number of coins)	AE (number of coins)	Total number of coins
Period I	0	1839	19	1858
Period II	0	8308	23	8331
Period III	0	3369	53	3422
Period IV	0	3958	882	4840
Period V	3	11676	13100	24776
Period VI	66	39693	12346	52039
Period VII	0	14359	31	14390
Period VIII	86	2003	10	2013
Total	155	75690	26452	111824

Fig. 2 Number of coins per metal content and per hoarding period

Period	AU (number of hoards)	AR (number of hoards)	AE (number of hoards)	Total number of hoards
Period I	0	3	2	5
Period II	0	17	4	21
Period III	0	11	8	19
Period IV	0	17	7	24
Period V	1	39	98	138
Period VI	4	99	29	128
Period VII	0	9	2	11
Period VIII	1	2	1	4
Total	6	197	154	354

Fig. 3 Number of hoards per period and per metal denomination.

	AU	AR	AE	Total
Region I	92	38280	11972	50344
Region II	0	15306	7975	23281
Region III	58	22104	16020	38182
Total (coins)	155	75690	35967	111812

Fig 4. Number of coins per Region

	AU	AR	AE	Total
Region I	3	77	43	123
Region II	0	41	44	85
Region III	3	73	73	146
Total (hoards)	6	191	160	354

Fig 5.Number of hoards per Region.

Period	Average number of coins per hoard
Period I	232
Period II	396
Period III	180
Period IV	201
Period V	179
Period VI	407
Period VII	1308
Period VIII	503
Average for the province	313

Fig 6. Average number of coins per hoard (for the whole province)

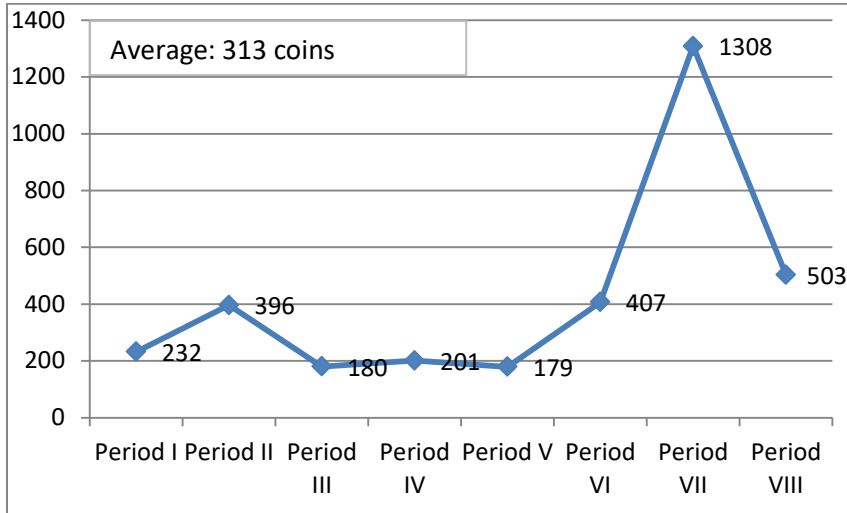


Fig. 7 Average number of coins per hoard per period.

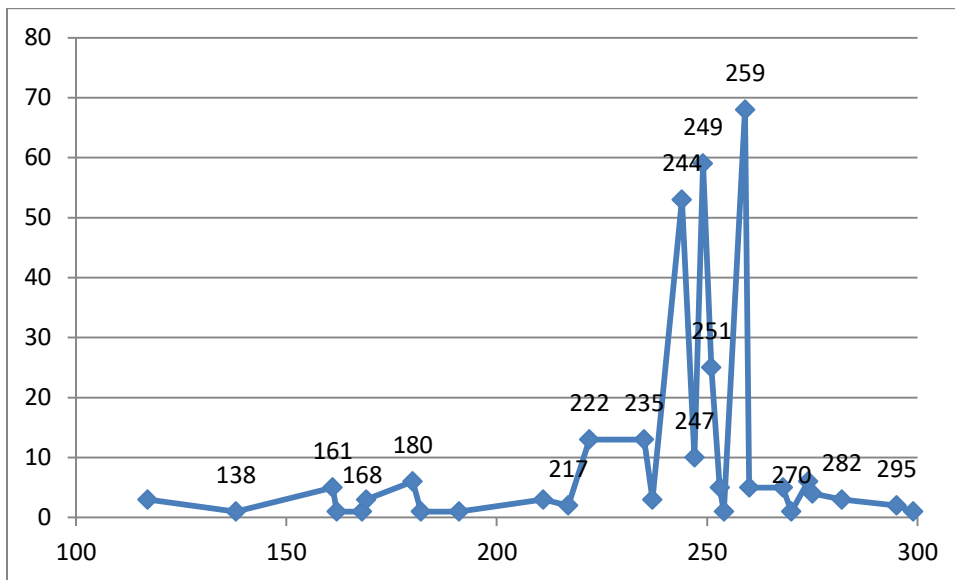


Fig. 8 General pattern of hoarding activity per year based on chronology of the hoards

Geographical study:

The pattern of hoarding in the province as shown on fig. 1 reveals that the highest number of hoards in Moesia Inferior is concentrated in the centers of Region I and Region III, especially in Pleven, Lovech, Razgrad and Varna municipalities. Before further discussion it is important to highlight the factors which could create a bias in the existing data.

First (and most importantly) is the level of data publication which to a large extent defines the monetary picture observed in this work. The report and publication of numismatic data is crucial for our understating of monetary presence, usage and hoarding. As already discussed, the core coin record incorporated in this work was developed in the period between 1950 and 1990; a period which saw the pioneering works of Nikola Mushmov, Todor Gerasimov and Jordanka Jurukova. Despite rapid developments in numismatics in the period, the collation of all recovered numismatic data was not possible due to the small number of scholars and to a conflict of archaeological agendas.¹⁹⁷ During my personal visits in various small museums I was impressed by the number of non-published hoards which exist in their inventories. It is my belief that the large amount of published and unpublished hoards incorporated in this thesis constitute a large enough sample for detailed and fruitful statistical analysis.

Another important factor is the efficiency of coin discovery. In particular, the plain and fertile terrains located in the middle areas of Region I and Region III are characterized by high levels of agricultural activities which contributed to the discovery of more hoards. At the same time, the central areas of Region II as well as the parts of it close to Mt. Haemus are characterized by more steep

¹⁹⁷ The communist period in Bulgaria saw the development of nationalistic propaganda which focused archaeological attention on the Medieval period and items related to the Bulgarian Kingdom.

terrain with less available farming land. As a result these territories might have produced fewer recovered hoards. Some important things should be noted. First, the concentration of hoards in close proximity and on Haemus in Region I and Region III can be taken as directly related to the passes which connected the province of Moesia Inferior with Thrace. The particular terrain of the mountain makes it inaccessible for crossing in most parts. The major Roman roads crossed it in Region I and especially Region III where the mountain gradually turns into a plain. The evidence clearly shows how climate, terrain, and proximity to roads and large settlements can affect the coin hoards record.

This evidence leads on to the next important factor responsible for hoard distribution and discovery, namely levels of Roman occupation. In particular, the areas where more hoards are discovered are the ones with better climatic and soil conditions which were more urbanized and presumably more populated during Roman rule. Therefore the aforementioned territories with smaller samples of hoards might be a reflection of the actual monetary use and presence in less populated parts. As already discussed, the internal and higher parts of Moesia inferior were monetized only as a result of the Roman conquest of the province and had no pre-existing monetary traditions. As a result the internal variation of coin adoption and the level of monetization may have varied significantly. This suggests that the

variable levels of hoarding can be taken as a reflection of different monetary practices. For example, the commercial activities in proximity to large urban or military settlements gave rise to the active exchange of coins on daily basis. The higher concentration of coins and the number of transactions increased the chances of hoarding or loss. On the other hand, the smaller settlements or villas located far from commercial centers might not use coins so often and would therefore perhaps rely on other forms of exchange.¹⁹⁸ This certainly could lead to smaller numbers of hoards and lesser chances of discovery as will be seen in this work.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the geographic distribution of the Moesian coins is the much lower number of coin hoards in certain areas, namely South-Eastern Dobrudja¹⁹⁹ and between the Danubian bank and inland territory. Taking into account the large size of the coin sample, the selective nature of the hoard locations, and the favorable natural conditions in these areas, the absence of coin assemblages from these parts requires further investigation. In particular, this result can be the key for answering questions regarding the monetary usage and level of monetization within the province. What factors could have determined the marked relative absence of coin hoards in these areas? How can this evidence be interpreted?

¹⁹⁸ The problem of monetary usage in areas with little or no hoarding will be discussed in further detail in this chapter.

¹⁹⁹ Bulgarian parts of Dobrudja.

In order to illuminate this phenomenon further, a particular site located in “gap area” will be archaeologically analyzed, namely Bozluka in South Dobrudja (Region III). The land in this area is considered to be some of the most fertile in Bulgaria. The plain terrain, the large number of water sources, and the favorable climatic conditions have always determined the agricultural character of the region.²⁰⁰ The archaeological record of this part of Dobrudja is also very diverse. According to the Razgrad Historical Museum, there are over 200 ancient sites in South Dobrudja. Unfortunately, none of the rural sites have been properly excavated and studied, and for this reason information about rural life and coin use in these areas is very limited. However, one of the very few archaeologically researched sites in this region can contribute to an understanding of the ancient economy and monetary usage in the rural areas of Roman Moesia.

This site in question is near the village of Odartsi, in the Dobrich region. The Bozluka area is located to the west of the village (see fig. 8.2). It is situated on top of a rocky plateau measuring 500 metres by 350 metres. In 1988–1989, construction of a wastewater treatment for a mine began on the site. During the building work, thousands of artefacts were discovered. A field survey was organized by the Historical Museum of Dobrich. It produced a large number of archaeological finds: pottery, metal artefacts and coins.²⁰¹ The

²⁰⁰Ivanov 2008, 117 - 124

²⁰¹Torbatov 1995, 47 - 48

archaeological material suggests a very long chronological frame, with the finds ranging from flint tools dating to the early Neolithic period (4900–4500 BC) to Bronze Age arrow heads to early medieval pottery (AD 600–700). The majority of the finds were attributed to the 2nd – 4th century AD. It is this material that will be addressed in this analysis.²⁰²

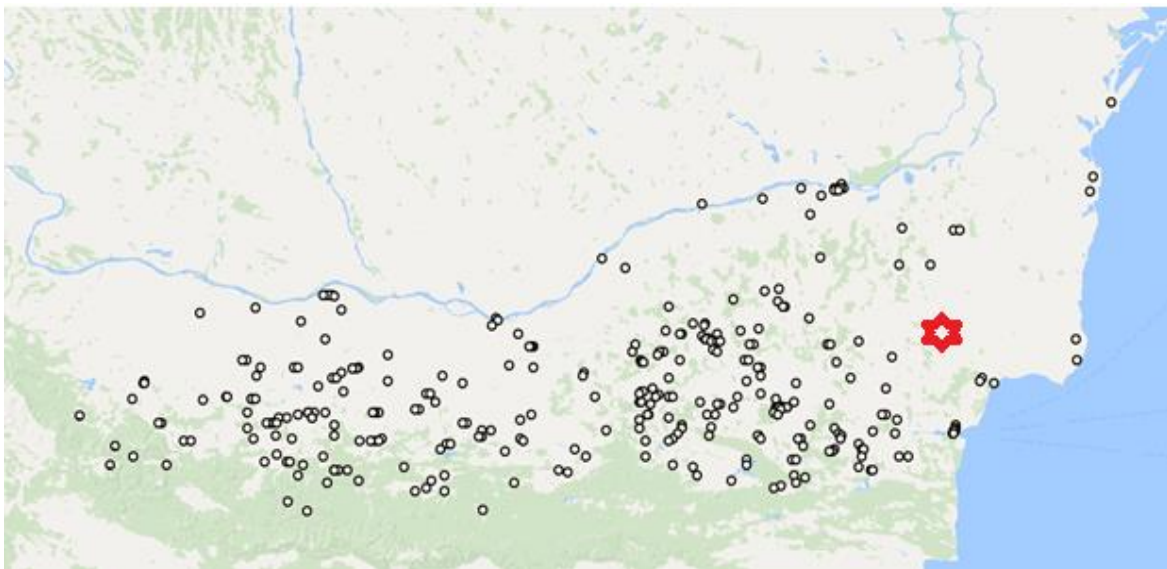


Fig 8.1. Map showing the location of Bozluka

Pottery is the most abundant archaeological material from the site. It is important to note the presence of large amounts of amphorae of different origin. According to Torbatov (1995), the high concentration of red glazed ceramics is very unusual. These are rarely found in this part of North East Moesia. From Bozluka were also collected fragments of vessels produced by Thracian and Asia Minor workshops.²⁰³ Particularly interesting is a fragment of plate, dated to the 2nd century AD and attributed to the *Emporium Piritensium* workshop, which was located near modern-day

²⁰²Historical Museum Dobrich – Inventory numbers: An 0005; Aa 2620; Aa2621; Aa 2616; Aa2615, I 4060

²⁰³Torbatov 1995, 49 - 51

Pavlikeni (Region II).²⁰⁴ In the Bozluka area, several metal artefacts were found. These include three Roman brooches dated between the 2nd and early 4th century AD and an early 3rd century lead mirror, produced in Sucidava (located in Dacia).²⁰⁵ Particularly interesting is the numismatic material discovered in the area. According to information provided by the Dobrich Historical Museum in Bozluka, several thousand single coin finds were found, the majority of which date to between the 2nd century BC and 5th century AD. Despite of the large sample, only 154 coins are currently preserved in the collection of the museum.²⁰⁶

- Hadrian (AD 117 – 138) – 9 provincial coins (Philippopolis – 1; Dionysopolis – 2; Tomis -1 ; unknown – 5)
- Septimius Severus (AD 193 – 211) – 1 denarius; 6 provincial coins (Nicopolis ad Istrum – 4; Marcianopolis – 1; Philippopolis – 1)
- Julia Domna (AD 193 – 211) – 2 provincial coins (Anchialos – 1; Odessos – 1)
- Geta (AD 209 – 211) – 2 provincial coins (Nicopolis ad Istrum – 1; Nicea – 1)
- Caracalla (AD 198 – 217) – 2 provincial coins (Nicopolis ad Istrum – 1; Nicea – 1)
- Caracalla and Julia Domna (211 – 217) – 1 provincial coin (Marcianopolis)
- Macrinus (AD 217 – 218) – 2 provincial coins (Nicopolis ad Istrum – 1; Anchialos – 1)
- Elagabalus (AD 218 – 222) – 1 provincial coin (Nicopolis ad Istrum)
- Severus Alexander (AD 222 – 235) – 1 provincial coin (Nicomedia).

²⁰⁴Ivanov 2008, 123

²⁰⁵Haralambieva 1992, 132/3

²⁰⁶Historical Museum Dobrich. Inventory numbers: I 2014; I 4061 – 4082; Torbatov 1995, 51 - 53

The remaining 127 coins are all small copper denominations, dated to early 4th C AD to early 5th C AD. The latest coin in the Bozluka area is attributed to the Emperor Honorius (AD 393 – 423)

It is particularly remarkable that despite the vast number of archaeological finds from the Bozluka area, signs of ancient buildings were not found. The site had a complete lack of stone blocks, bricks or roof tiles, which are typical indicators of the 1st to 4th century AD villages of the region.²⁰⁷ Located in the middle of an area with no record of coin hoards from the period, how can this site be interpreted in numismatic terms? What can this high concentration of coins suggest about monetary usage in the region?

First, a very large amount of pottery was recovered at the site. The fragments were mainly from large vessels and amphorae, suggesting that goods were carried extensively. In addition, some of the finds were attributed to specific workshops located in different areas and even provinces. Secondly, like the pottery, the metal artefacts recovered at the site came from distant locations, providing evidence for long distance trade. Most important for the purpose of this work is the high presence of numismatic material at the site. According to Torbatov (1993), all of the coins were found as single finds and not as hoards. Taking into account all of the available archaeological data, the Bozluka area can be interpreted as a commercial or trading

²⁰⁷Torbatov 1995, 54 - 55

centre. Furthermore, the absence of any settlement remains in a several mile radius, the lack of domestic pottery (e.g. lamps and cups,) and the high terrain with no direct access to a water source, all suggests that Bozluka can be interpreted as a periodic market place.

Ancient periodic markets played a major role in the economy of the Roman World.²⁰⁸ However, they are rarely found in an archaeological context due to their main characteristic, namely the absence of building or settlement remains. That is the main reason for the lack of historical research regarding the existence, development and functioning of periodic markets in the rural areas of Roman Moesia. However, information about the periodic markets can be derived from several sources. In some 4th centuries BC ancient Greek literary works, the temporary markets are called *panegyreis*. They were held once or twice a year and had both religious and commercial importance. Some authors translate the word *panegyreis* as a fair. The earliest Roman author who mentions the existence of periodic markets is Suetonius. The presence of temporary markets in northern Italy is described in his work *Claudius*. The markets are called *nundinae*, and it is specified that they were held two to three times per month.²⁰⁹ It can be assumed that both types of markets existed in Roman Moesia and particularly in South Dobrudja. The *panegeryris* can be considered a phenomenon that is attributed to societies with

²⁰⁸ De Ligt 1993, 6

²⁰⁹ Suetonius, *Claudius*. 12

poorly developed economies. The temporary market in Bozluka has the remains of Iron Age pottery as well as a small number of single coin finds dating from the 4th to the 1st century BC. Perhaps this was the starting point for the area becoming a commercial focal point for the region. Later, under Roman rule, with the development of the economy and infrastructure, the appearance of more frequent markets in Bozluka is very probable. In addition, there is archaeological evidence for some temporary markets which were developed into fortified settlements – Diskoduratera (Gostilica) and Emporium Peritensium (Pavlikeni). Both examples come from Region II. The archaeological evidence suggests that markets began to operate in the early 2nd century AD, possibly as periodic markets, and later, in the 3rd and 4th century AD, that they were fortified and developed into permanent trading settlements.²¹⁰

Although rarely found, there is archaeological evidence for the presence of periodic markets in the rural areas of other provinces. A good example from Oxfordshire was the periodic market discovered near Woodeaton. In 1931, archaeologists found an area near Woodeaton with a large concentration of small archaeological finds dating from the 1st to the 5th century AD. Nevertheless, signs of settlement were not found, as in Bozluka. After considering the archaeological, historical and geographic factors, the site was defined

²¹⁰ Ivanov 2006, 123

as a Roman periodic market.²¹¹ Better examples come from North Africa, where the periodic markets are very well researched. This is due to the fact that in comparison to the European parts of the Empire, the periodic markets in this region existed for a longer period of time and there are medieval sources which provide more information about their economic role. For instance, Isidore of Seville, cited by Shaw (1979), describes the temporary markets as “vice civitas”, underlining the fact that such markets played the role of urban settlements within rural areas. As a result, the periodic markets were characterized as an obstacle for urbanisation in some areas.²¹² But how did the periodic markets function? What was the role that Bozluka played in the economy of South Dobrudja?

Periodic markets may have mediated surpluses and deficits in areas where production and consumption sites were located in close proximity.²¹³ This is applicable to Bozluka, which is located in the middle of a very fertile region, with a high density of villas and small rural settlements.²¹⁴ Another major role which periodic markets played was the distribution of small manufactured goods, exotic food and certain services unavailable to rural inhabitants.²¹⁵ The high presence of amphorae as well as small metal artefacts from distant provinces confirms that the Bozluka periodic market played a role as

²¹¹ Milne 1931, 101 - 109

²¹² Shaw 1979, 79

²¹³ Mintz 1959, 21

²¹⁴ Torbatov 1993, 55

²¹⁵ De Ligt 1993, 7

a distribution centre. The objects recovered represent the movement of goods from urban to rural areas.²¹⁶ Such periodic markets in rural areas can be considered as a mechanism of local exchange. High frequency markets like Bozluka performed an internal trade function. This involved a process of movement of goods from surplus to deficit areas.²¹⁷

Chronological study

The geographic distribution of the coins presents a great opportunity for studying the levels of Roman presence and different monetary strategies in the different regions. However, in order to understand and answer complex questions related to the reasons for coin deposition and factors responsible for the fluctuation of the monetary record, the data needs to be carefully analyzed in a chronological manner. Such an approach allows the tracing and interpretation of changes in hoarding patterns. In particular, the overview of the chronological distribution of the Moesian hoards clearly highlights the periods of high and low levels of hoarding. Several periods produce higher number of hoards - Period II, Period V and Period VI. Each of these periods will be examined along with all the relevant historic and economic events that might have resulted in an increase of hoarding and non-recovery. Why do these periods produce such a large sample

²¹⁶ Eighmy 1972, 299 - 301

²¹⁷ De Ligt 1993, 6-7

of deposits and why does this occur during these particular time frames?

Bonchev Hoarding Periods	Time Span
Period I	AD 98 – 138 (Trajan to Hadrian)
Period II	AD 138 – 192 (Antonine)
Period III	AD 193 – 217 (Severan)
Period IV	AD 218 – 238 (Macrinus to Maximinus Thrax)
Period V	AD 238 – 249 (Gordian III to Phillip Arab)
Period VI	AD 249 – 268 (Trajan Decius to Gallienus)
Period VII	AD 268 – 275 (Claudius II to Aurelian)
Period VIII	AD 275 – 305 (Tacitus to Diocletian)

Period I

The early 2nd C AD period (AD 100 – 138) has noticeably low hoarding activity. There are only five coin hoards attributed to this period, three of them composed of denarii and two composed of Imperial bronzes (fig. 9). Two of the hoards were discovered in the

legionary camp of Ulpia Oescus. Hoard *Oescus III* consists of 400 silver denarii, 50% of the coins are worn 1st C BC Republican denarii. The rest of the coins are mainly Flavian with just 10 denarii of Emperor Trajan. The other hoard discovered in Oescus (*Oescus VIII*) consists of 13 coins and was discovered in close proximity to a burial. According to Bunov (1994), who first reported the hoard, it included 13 Roman asses dated to the late 1st C AD – early 2nd Centuries AD. A parallel can be drawn between these two hoards and the other three assemblages from Period I. In particular the other two silver coin hoards discovered near Svishtov and Lovech also contained Republican denarii. Furthermore, the second bronze coin hoard *Damyanovo*, discovered in Region II, reported by Gushterakliev (1994), is also considered to be a grave deposit. Similarities can be observed not just in the burial contexts, but also in the hoard content, namely 6 copper asses dated to the 1st Century AD.

Despite the small sample, conclusions can be drawn. First, the distribution of hoards in early 2nd C AD continue to follow the 1st Century AD pattern, namely concentrating along the Danubean limes and the internal parts of Region I and Region II. The silver hoards, discovered in close proximity to the Legionary camps of Oescus and Novae (Svishtov), suggest a more active monetary usage and deposition in military settlements. Secondly, the presence of Republican denarii also continues to follow the 1st C AD model and

they often appear mixed with imperial issues. Finally, the low number of bronze hoards with small quantities of coins also follows the established earlier model. Particularly interesting is the usage of bronze coins in grave customs. This phenomenon is very typical for the territories of Moesia and Thrace and continued from 1st Century BC to 5th Century AD. Such practices demonstrate that the coins played not only an economic but also a social role, and that the reasons for their deposition varied greatly.



Fig. 9 Distribution of Hoards in Period I (circle – silver; square – bronze)

Period II

Period II marks the first major peak in hoarding in the province. There are 21 coin hoards attributed to this time frame – four containing bronze and 17 containing silver coins (fig 10). For many decades the coin hoards dated to this period were considered as emergency hoards related to the long term Macromanic wars fought under emperor Marcus Aurelius. Authors such as Gerov (1977) and

Haritonov (2000) considered all hoards to be emergency deposits and related them to complex military scenarios. In order to test this hypothesis, the chronology, content, and location of the hoards have to be considered.

The coin hoards in this period are almost exclusively composed of Roman silver denarii. The 17 silver hoards contain over 8308 coins in comparison to the four bronze hoards which include only 23 coins.²¹⁸ The bronze coin hoards were discovered in two locations – Oescus and Teteven. The archaeological context is also recorded for hoard *Oescus VII* which is considered to be a grave deposit.²¹⁹ The internal structure of the silver hoards requires further analysis. Almost all of the assemblages are composed of mixed Republican or early imperial with second century coins. For example, the *Golqma Voda* hoard is composed of coins dating from Nero to Antoninus Pius. The *Baikal* hoard contains coins from Nero to Lucius Verus and others. Particularly interesting is that in this period we see the last hoards containing Republican denarii.²²⁰ Hoards such as *Oescus IV* and *Oescus V* have relatively high numbers of Republican issues. Another characteristic shared by all hoards from the period is that all coins are pre-Severan reform denarii with higher silver content which might indicate their selective nature and possible burial in a later period.

²¹⁸ It is important to highlight that coin hoard Gigen VI contain only 4 published coins; it is noticed that the coin was much larger, but dispersed between the finders during the discovery.

²¹⁹ Bunov 1994.

²²⁰ Mostly legionary issues of Mark Antony.

Two particular hoards have to be highlighted here – *Nedoklan* (Region III) and *Krivodol* (Region I). Both hoards include over 10 silver denarii of Septimius Severus, all dated to the first two years of his reign. It is possible to assume that some of the hoards predate the debasement and some post date it, being confined to earlier pure coins. In summary, the internal structures of all these hoards are very similar, namely Republican, core of 1st / early 2nd Century Imperial denarii and some Antonine / early Severan coins. Observing the content of the coins suggests that they are deliberately pre-selected pure silver coins and therefore the reason for their deposition can be considered as predominantly economic and not directly resulting from emergency situations.

In order to further test the emergency model, it is important to consider the geographic location of the hoards. As can be seen on fig. 10 the hoards in the internal parts of the province do not follow a specific pattern and are randomly dispersed. The only grouping of hoards occurs alongside the Danube bank, around the legionary camps of *Ulpia Oescus* and *Durustorum*. The burial of these hoards could be associated with military activities. Although there is a little evidence regarding barbarian invasions in *Moesia Inferior* in the period, a major military event was the raid of the *Costoboci* in AD 171/2. These hoards might have been lost as a result of the participation of Roman soldiers in conflicts leading to their death, and

the consequent failure to recover the hoards. Without archaeological and historical context such conclusions are inevitably some what speculative, however, considering that the Roman soldiers guarding the borders were heavily affected by military conflict, I believe it is a plausible assumption to make.

The most important component of the hoards which might support or disprove an emergency model is the chronology of the assemblages. In particular, if the loss of the deposits were a result of a single disastrous event, their date of burial should be very similar. Fig.11 shows the distribution of the silver assemblages from the period. It appears that the deposits are dispersed almost equally throughout the whole period, with a slight peak in AD 180. The peak of hoarding does not fit with any of the known barbarian invasions – the AD 168 invasion by Marcomanni and Quadi who besieged Aquilea, and by the Costoboci in AD 171/2. It is important to highlight that similar patterns of hoarding occurred in the internal parts of Thrace too. Coin hoards dated to Period II are found around Serdica, Philippopolis, Hadrianopolis and elsewhere.²²¹ There is no evidence that any of these cities had been affected by barbarian invasions in the period. Therefore, taking into consideration the wide geographic and chronological distribution of the hoards, it is unlikely that a single event was responsible for their burial.

²²¹ Jurukova 1988, p. 65

To summarize, the coin hoards dated to Period II consist almost exclusively of silver denarii. Bronze coin hoards are almost absent from the record; the known bronze hoards are of small size, and possibly (as in the earlier periods) represent votive deposits. The lack of bronze coins is a particularly striking phenomenon. In the nearby Moesia Superior the burial of bronze coins was more common for the period. In addition, bronze coins are often discovered hoarded together with silver denarii. Guest (1994) suggests that the closer proximity to Italy and the earlier incorporation into the fiscal system of the empire facilitated the earlier adoption of Roman coin usage in Moesia Superior, which led to more complex monetary practices.²²² A similar pattern is observed in the nearby Thrace as well, where bronze coin hoards are often discovered in 2nd Century context. A particular concentration is observed around Sofia, Plovdiv and Bourgas.²²³ It can be suggested that, like Moesia Superior, the province of Thrace was also incorporated into the territory of the province earlier which led to the swifter incorporation of Roman monetary practices. One must also bear in mind that the close proximity of Thrace to Macedonia and Greece, as well as the long tradition of coin usage from the Classical and Hellenistic periods, might have played a role in monetary usage and distribution.

²²² Guest 1994, 121-124.

²²³ Jurukova 1992, 221

It is important to highlight that the consolidation and development of Moesia Inferior began during the reign of Trajan and were advanced under the Antonine period, leading to an economic peak under the Severans. Period II saw the fastest urban and infrastructural growth of Moesia Inferior. Building projects, as well as the permanent location of three Roman legions, possibly increased the money flow to the province resulting in more coins in circulation. Therefore, the increase in hoarding might be a reflection of the economic growth of the province and not only a result of invasions. Particularly fascinating is the high concentration of silver coins, still following the patterns observed in the Late Republican / Early Imperial periods. This is also the last period in which we see a very clear concentration of coins only around legionary camps. In all following periods the focus appears more often around commercial centers in the internal parts of the province.

Logic dictates that if the emergency model is applied the hoarding pattern should follow specific criteria. Particularly, the distribution of the hoards should correlate with, or be concentrated in, the areas suffering the highest devastation. The chronological pattern should be similar, with the highest concentration of hoards occurring during the years when the disaster took place. However, the evidence suggests a high level of variation in both components – geography and chronology. On the other hand, the third component – hoard

content – shows a great level of similarity. The structure of all hoards from the period suggests a deliberate selection of pure silver coins. Based on these observations it is questionable whether the evidence fits with the framework of an emergency model. It is important to highlight that Period II deposits reveal the population’s awareness of the monetary changes in the period. Perhaps they also testify that the Severan reform faced certain resistance as the later debased denarii were not buried with earlier high silver content issues.²²⁴



Fig. 10 Distribution of Hoards in Period II (circle – silver; square – bronze)

²²⁴ Gazdac 2010.

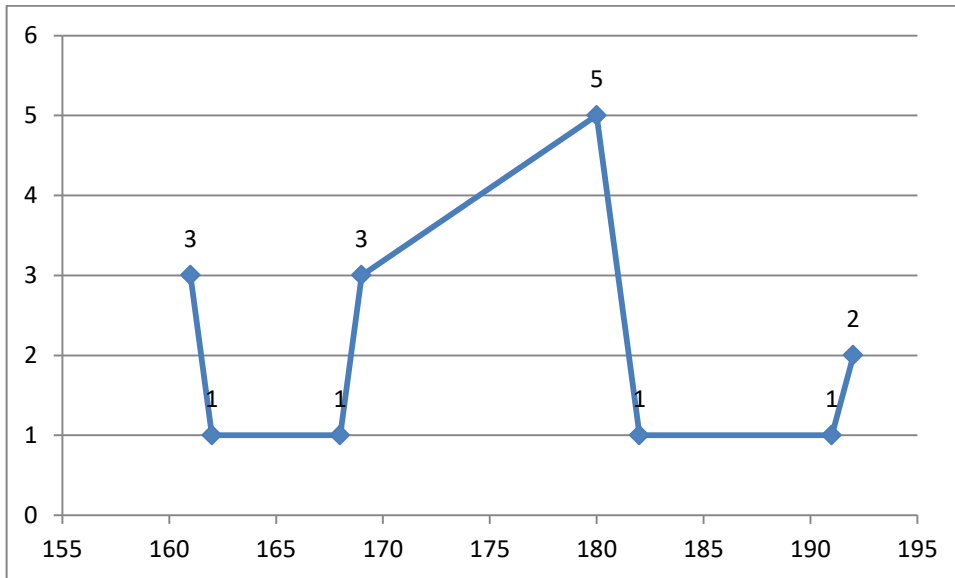


Fig 11. Number of hoards per year of deposition (period II)

Period III

Period II (Antonine) can be considered as a peak in hoarding but only in comparison with earlier periods. The following period III, shows great similarity in terms of numbers of hoards – eleven silver and seven bronze hoards. This further supports the notion that the increase of coins in circulation can directly impact the hoarding patterns in the province. The evidence for period III suggests certain variations in terms of geographic distribution and hoard content.

The geographic location of the hoards reveals an interesting pattern (fig. 12). In Period II there had been a tendency for concentration of hoards in the northern parts of the province, close to legionary camps. However, in period III the location of the discovered hoards tends to move south from the Danube frontier, concentrating around civic centers (though, there are still two hoards located close to the

legionary camp at Dorustorum). It is important to highlight that the size of these hoards is considerably smaller in comparison to earlier periods. The largest silver hoards discovered in the province are *Nedoklan* (1200) and *Knezha I* (800 denarii). Region II still produces very low number of hoards. There are only two from this period, one composed of nine bronze coins all attributed to Nicopolis ad Istrum (*Varzulitsa*) and one composed of 175 denarii (*Vladislav II*). Particularly remarkable is the lack of assemblages from the Black Sea and East Dobrudja regions. Such a pattern is difficult explain and might simply be a result of statistical anomaly.

The content of the hoards shows a decrease in the number of silver coins from Period II to 3369 silver denarii from all 11 hoards. It is very important to note that the hoards are almost exclusively composed of debased Severan denarii, with a only very small number of late Antonine coins, most often of Commodus. Furthermore, the coin hoards do not include any silver radiates, introduced under Caracalla.²²⁵ This pattern also designates a deliberate deposition of particular denomination, possibly due to economic reasons. The statement is further supported by the lack of mixed silver and bronze deposits. Up to AD 217, bronze and silver seem to be separated and

²²⁵ Perhaps they had not been supplied to the region at all at this date?

never buried together, a practice that is observed from AD222 onwards.²²⁶

The number of bronze hoards suggests a slight increase, but the quantity of coins still remains unusually low. The seven bronze coin hoards recorded from this period contain only 53 coins. The pattern is remarkable because Period III saw very rapid growth in civic coin production. According to Varbanov (2005), the number of dies produced under Septimius Severus from the mints of Nicopolis ad Istrum, and Marcianopolis increased to several hundred. Furthermore, Severan coins are very common in post AD 250 deposits, numbering over 2000. The fact that bronze coins were not mixed with silver denarii and that the recovered deposits usually number under ten coins both imply that in this period bronze civic issues were not a preferred currency for hoarding.

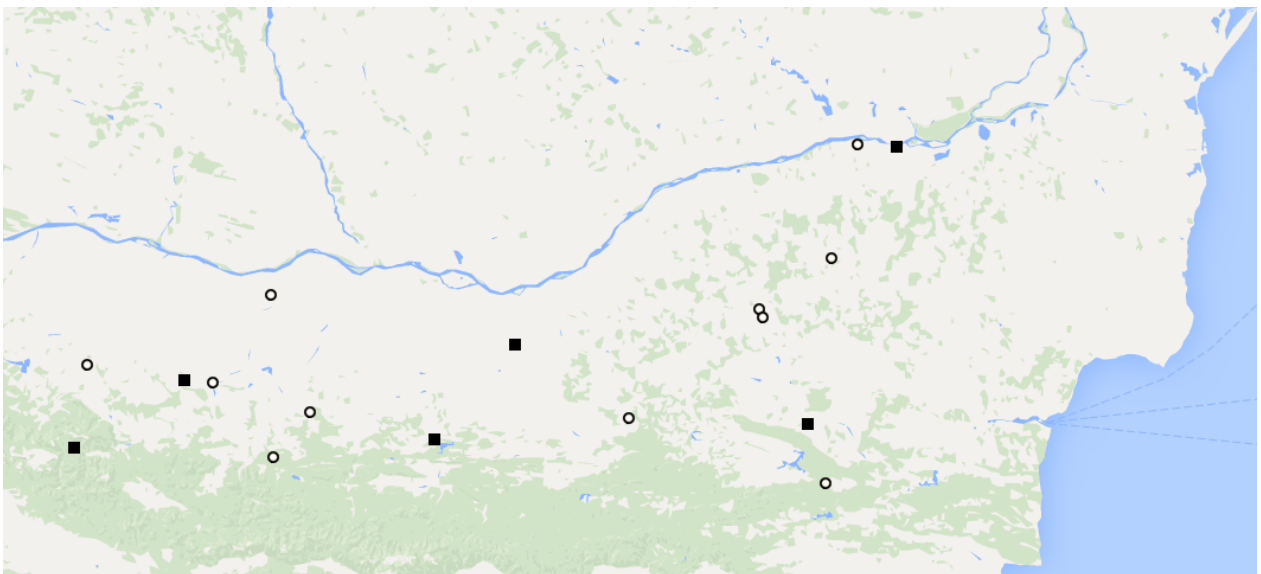


Fig. 12 Distribution of Hoards in Period III (circle – silver; square - bronze)

²²⁶ Gazdac 2010.

Period IV

The number of hoards as well as coins attributed to Period IV is higher than period III. There are 24 hoards dated to this period, 14 containing silver coins, 6 containing bronze and 4 mixed deposits. This period is particularly interesting as it saw the simultaneous circulation of denarii, silver radiates and civic bronze.

One of the most interesting geographic characteristics of the distribution is the high concentration of hoards in the central parts of Moesia - a pattern that has not been observed before (fig. 13). The hoarding took place in the area between Nicopolis ad Istrum and Melta. There are no coin hoards recorded from the Danubean limes, and very few from the peripheral areas of Region I and Region III (which produced the highest number of hoards in previous periods). This particular pattern of hoarding in close proximity to the large civic centers of Region II and the eastern parts of Region I suggests for the first time the possibility of an emergency model. In order to test such a hypothesis the content and chronology of the hoards needs to be considered.

The chronological distribution of the hoards seems very unusual. In particular, 12 silver coin hoards are dated to AD222 and nine bronze and mixed assemblages are dated to AD235. So far, the practice of pre-selection and deposition of homogeneous hoards has been

observed. However, for the first time the separation between bronze and silver is not only in terms of content but also in terms of chronology. Whilst this interesting pattern is difficult to explain fully without further evidence, it might suggest an emergency model of hoarding.

The content of the hoards also gives significant results. In particular, all of the silver coin hoards contain silver denarii and antoniniani, dated between AD 192 and AD222. There is no particular separation between radiates and denarii, but bronze coins are exclusively mixed with denarii. The content of the silver hoards is very homogeneous and 2nd C AD issues are almost absent. A hoard that is anomalous for the region is *Opaka I*, which includes several coins of Mark Antony. The content of the civic bronze coin hoards is also very homogeneous - they are composed of coins starting from Septimius Severus and ending with coins of Macrinus and Diadumenianus.

It is very difficult to explain the large concentration of silver hoards in the inner parts of the province with a model of economic change. Scholars such as Boteva (2000) suggest that in the early years of the reign of Alexander Severus a barbarian invasion took place in the middle parts of Moesia Inferior.²²⁷ Whilst there is very little historical evidence to confirm such a hypothesis, the pattern of hoarding might indeed support this theory. The difference with earlier periods such as

²²⁷ Boteva 2000, 62-69.

Period II is very obvious- hoards are not randomly dispersed but follow a certain geographical pattern. In addition the *terminus post quem* of all assemblages is the same suggesting that the deposition took place at the same time. Certain issues arise with the dating of the bronze deposits; if an invasion took place around AD222, why are bronze deposits not recovered from that date? On the other hand, if a devastating event occurred around AD 235, why are there so few silver hoards from then?

The concentration of the bronze coin hoards with *terminus post quem* of AD 235 can be explained by monetary changes which occurred in Moesia in this period. In particular, during the co-reign of Macrinus and Diadumenianus only Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis were striking coins; all other Moesian mints were not releasing new issues. Such sudden changes in coin production might have created coin shortage in certain regions or/and increased the value of the civic issues. This can be further confirmed by the fact that for the first time we see an increased number of mixed deposits – civic bronze and silver denarii. To sum up, the changes in monetary production introduced under Macrinus and Diadumenianus might have resulted in changes of value and therefore increased the hoarding in particular regions.

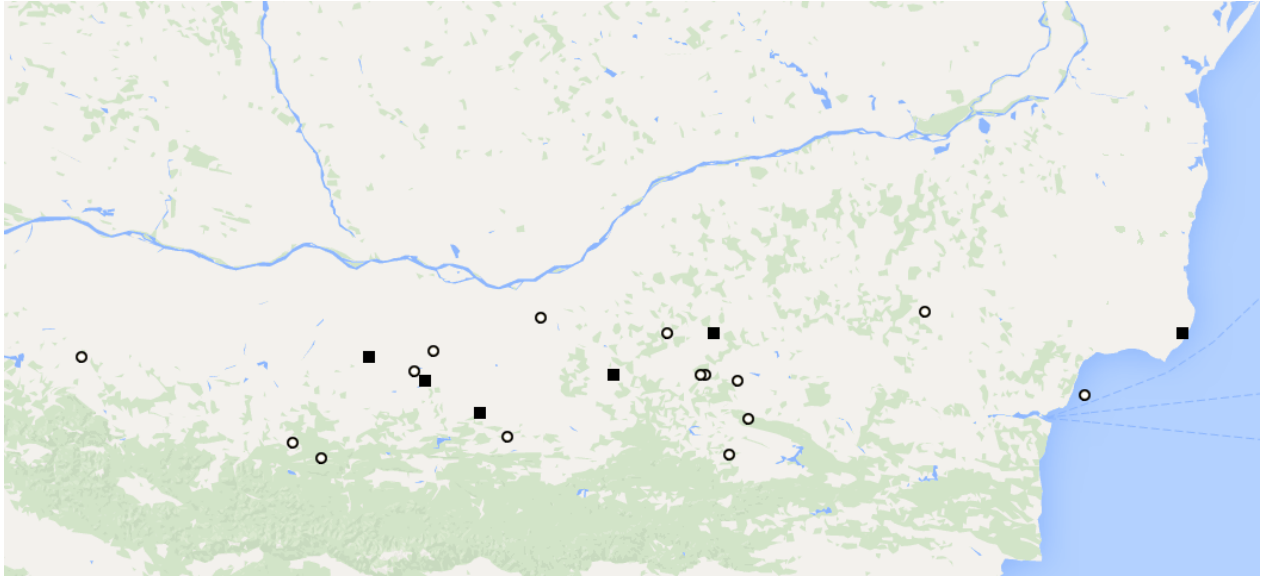


Fig 13. Distribution of Hoards in Period IV (circle – silver; square – bronze).

Period V

There are 137 assemblages attributed to this period, marking a significant increase in hoarding. The period is associated with the beginning of active barbarian invasions, especially by the Goths in AD 249 – AD 251. For many decades, scholars such as Gerov (1977), Bunov (1994) and Dzanev (2000) have interpreted all these deposits as emergency hoards, illustrative of the disastrous effects of the military conflict between AD 249 – AD 251. In order to better understand the patterns of hoarding, as well as the reasons for deposition, the evidence will be analyzed from geographic, content, and chronological points of view.

The geographic distribution of the hoards is different from the earlier periods, forming two well-segregated pools in Region I and Region III. The clustering of hoards in Region I is concentrated in the south-west parts of the region (fig. 14). The concentration of hoarding in

Region III is concentrated in the areas around Marcianopolis, Abritus, South Dobrudja and the Black Sea coast. Particularly striking is the fact that many of the hoards are found in the highlands of the province in proximity to the Mountain Haemus. At the same time, the area between the Danubean limes and the internal regions produced almost no hoards.²²⁸ The location of both bronze and silver coin hoards follow similar patterns – namely, close to urban centers, highlands, and mountain passes. This distribution fits into the framework of an emergency model, as it suggests the movement of the population from the north frontier regions to the south highland areas which offer a natural defense and swift access to the passages leading to Thrace and Greece. In addition, the concentration of hoards around large civic centers can also be taken to indicate an emergency model, as they would suffer the most from barbarian incursions. What is the content and chronology of the hoards and can they also support an emergency model?

The total number of silver hoards is 39, and the amount of coins 11,576. The hoards are composed of mixed assemblages of denarii and antoniniani, or only antoniniani. The chronology of the deposits is also very homogenous, they are composed exclusively of 3rd C denarii and radiates of Gordian III and/or Phillip I and Phillip II. There is only one hoard Knezha III, which contains 3 denarii of Emperor

²²⁸ There are only 2 small bronze hoards recovered near Novae; and two silver coin hoards located 30 km from the Danubian coast not far from modern day town of Kneja.

Vespasian. The lack of 1st - 2nd C denarii in the hoards suggests that earlier issues had already been withdrawn from circulation in this period. It is very important to highlight that the silver radiates total over 8000, which indicates the large influx of new issues to the province, probably related to military payments. Particularly remarkable is the increase in bronze hoarding. The number of bronze hoards is 98 with a total of 13,100 coins. All hoards are exclusively composed of civic bronze coins, mostly minted in Moesia Inferior and Thrace. The chronological content of the bronze hoards is very similar to the silver ones. They are mainly composed of worn Severan coins mixed with issues of Gordian III and Phillip I / Phillip II. There are only 3 hoards which contain earlier coins of Antoninus Pius, but the number of issues is so low that it has no statistical impact.

The emergency model is, however, undermined by several factors. First, we still observe a very clear pattern of pre-selection of bronze and silver coins. The fast debasement of the silver radiate in the period (to 2% silver in AD260) could have significantly influenced the deposition of earlier coins with a higher silver content. Secondly, the closure of all Moesian civic bronze mints occurred in Period V, and therefore the *terminus post quem* of all bronze hoards coincides with this event. This creates uncertainty about the chronological attribution of the deposits from this period (fig. 14a). The date of deposition cannot be precisely attributed, and therefore the large

number of bronze assemblages represents not only hoarding in the period between AD238 – AD249, but also for the entire second half of the third century. The uncertainty of the burial dates makes it difficult to attribute them to a particular military conflict, and therefore makes the emergency model hard to prove.

In summary, the geographic distribution of the hoards might suggest an emergency model for the burial of certain hoards, especially those located in highlands and mountain passes. On the other hand, developments such as the closure of the Moesian mints as well as the active debasement of the silver radiate make the dating of the deposits very difficult. The problem is further exacerbated by the lack of any additional archaeological context which might distinguish emergency from economic deposits. In other words, with dynamic economic and military events shaped the monetary circulation of Moesia Inferior during the 3rd C AD, but no single event can be identified as responsible for the deposition of hoards. The process was much more complex than solely the result of a barbarian invasion, and can rather be associated with a great variety of factors. The large number of hoards from the period is a clear reflection of the rapid historical and economic changes.

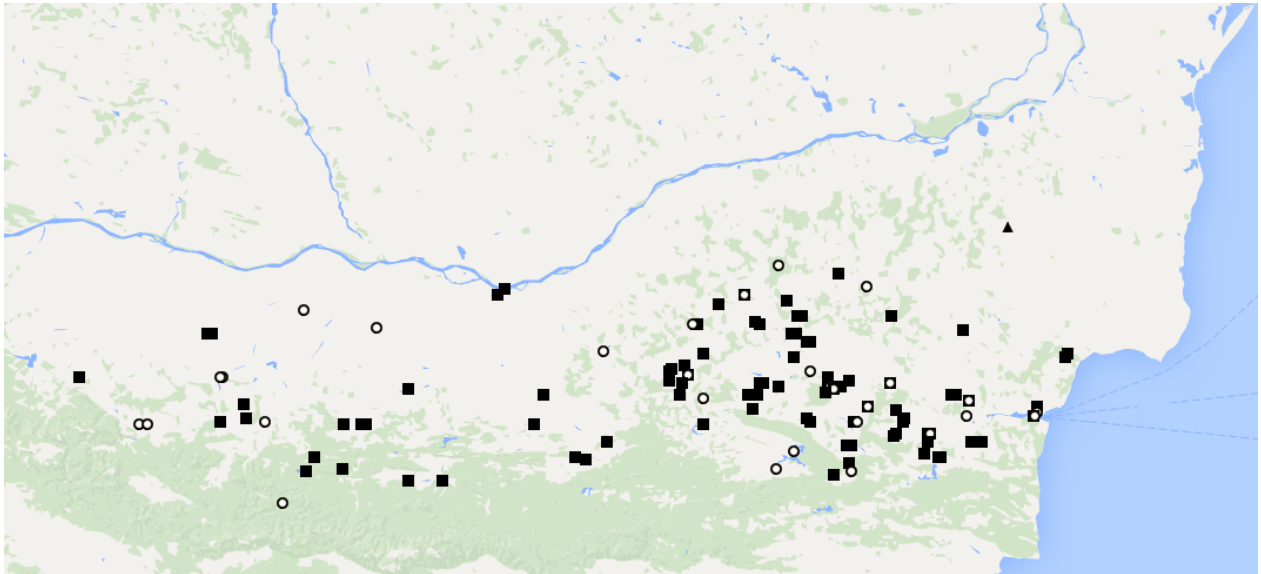


Fig 14. Distribution of Hoards in Period V (triangle – gold; circle – silver; square-bronze)

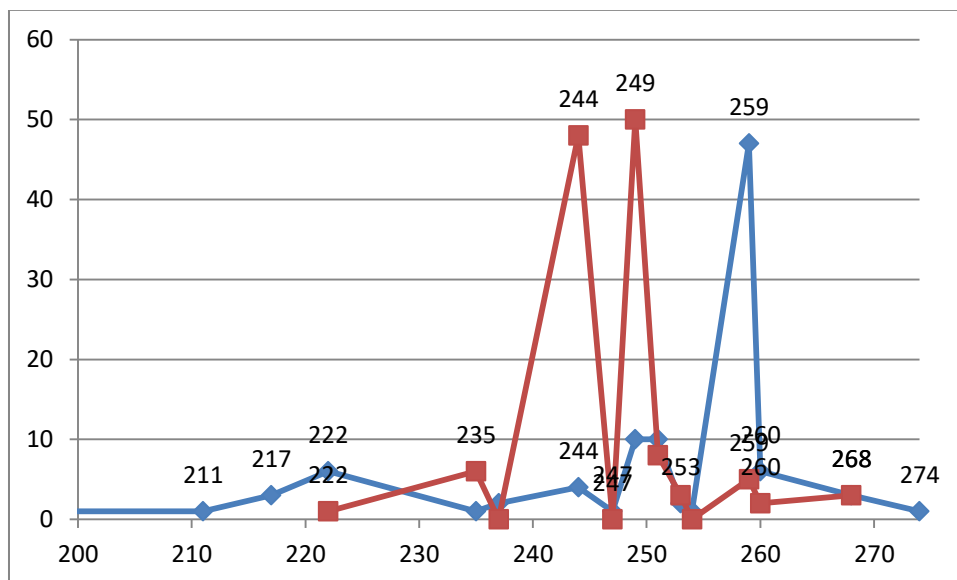


Fig. 14a Bronze (red) Vs Silver (blue) hoards number per year
Period VI

Hoarding in Moesia Inferior reached its peak in Period VI. There are over 128 hoards attributed to the period between AD 250 – 268, with the total number of coins being over 52,039. Most significant is the rise of silver coins, which increased from 39 to 99 hoards, and from 11,576 to 39,693 coins. A remarkable pattern occurs in terms of bronze hoards, which decreased considerably in number but

increased in size – 29 hoards with over 12,346 coins. This evidence support the statement that the hoards from period V might post-date period VI hoards. In particular, during period VI we still see the simultaneous circulation of civic and central coins and their collective deposition. The numerous number of smaller civic bronze coin hoards, dated to period V, possibly reflects the decreased availability of provincial coinage and presumably the discard of old and worn issues during/after period VI. The large size of the hoards in Period VI raises many questions regarding the events and reasons for the deposition of the assemblages. Can they all be associated with barbarian invasions? How severe were the military changes? How might numismatic changes such as debasement and shortage impact the overall picture of hoarding? In order to address these issues, my analysis will commence with the geographic distribution of the coins.

The geographic distribution of the coins suggests that in comparison to Period V hoards²²⁹, the hoarding took place in a more westerly direction (fig. 16). The eastern parts of Region III, located in close proximity to the Black sea coast, produced a much lower number of assemblages. The Danubian limes produced 11 coin hoards, all located in close proximity to the three legionary camps of Oescus, Novae and Durostorum. The highest number of hoards is recorded around the large civic centers. Particularly interesting are the two

²²⁹ Reader must keep in mind that Period V hoards might be buried in Period VI, VII or VIII.

clusters around Abritus (Region III) and Storgosia and Melta (Region I) (fig. 17). What is the chronological attribution and the content of the hoards?

It is important to highlight that the chronological attribution of the assemblages is very constricted, and that 112 hoards have a closing date of AD 251. There are only 16 hoards that are attributed outside this time frame – dispersed between AD 259 and AD 268. The peak in deposition can be associated with The Gothic wars from AD 250 – 251 and especially with the battle near Abritus, the area of which produced one of the hoard clusters from the period (fig. 18).

The cores of most hoards from the period consist of silver antoniniani of Gordian III, Philip I and II and Trajan Decius. Many of the hoards contain mixtures of Severan denarii – such as Ugarchin, Virovsko, Galovo, Dolni Dabnik, Dryanovec and others. Only three hoards contain Antonine denarii – Makariopolsko, Chestimensko and Teteven I. The only hoard that contains Republican coins is Lipnik I, with five legionary issues of Mark Antony. Particularly remarkable is the fact that all civic coins are mixed with post Trajan Decius radiates with much lower silver content. This interesting pattern suggests the deliberate separation of high purity silver radiates and denarii from civic bronzes and debased copper radiates.²³⁰ It is plausible to suggest that the value of the civic coins in the period became similar

²³⁰ Which can suggest and different chronology of deposition.

to that of the debased radiates. However, it is difficult to establish whether the value of the bronze provincial coins increased or decreased in the period. The closure of the mints, the extensive military conflicts and the problems related to coin supply as a result of monetary reforms and reorganization of the Balkan mints possibly led to a great variation of value and acceptance of the civic coins, varying both regionally and chronologically.

Period VI saw rapid monetary and military changes which resulted in active coin deposition. However, it is again difficult to draw a clear distinction between emergency and economic deposits. The closure of the extremely active local mints and the drastic debasement of the antoninianus from silver to copper in a short period of time directly altered the monetary behavior of the Moesian population. Both civic coins and higher content silver radiates²³¹ have *terminus post quem* AD 251, and therefore if they are not mixed with later copper radiates, their dating cannot be precisely ascertained. Therefore the Period VI (and also V) deposits consisting of silver or provincial coins can be dated throughout the entire second half of the 3rd Century AD. Even the large number of AD 251 silver deposits cannot all be associated with the Gothic raids. Many of them could have been withdrawn from circulation slightly later, and preserved by their owners for their bullion value. There is very little known about the

²³¹ Ending with Trajan Decius

Roman Empire's mechanisms for assuring an adequate monetary supply in mid-third century Moesia. Although it will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, it is worth mentioning here that the circulation of civic coins continued decades after the mints were closed, indicating the importance that civic coinage played for the local economy.

It is also important to highlight that the number of 2nd Century AD silver denarii rapidly declined in the hoards dating from the first quarter of the 3rd Century AD onwards. This raises questions related to the fate of the denarii: Were they re-struck into radiates? Were they exported or melted down for bullion? The clue to answering these questions may come from Barbaricum. In particular, there is a very large number of 2nd Century Roman denarii discovered outside the territory of the Empire - in the areas of South Eastern Ukraine, North-West Romania, Moldova and Belarus. These territories encompass an archaeological culture, also known as Chernyakhov culture.²³² It is suggested that it was a federation of Gothic, Carpic, Sarmatian and later Slavic tribes.²³³ The culture was formed in the late 2nd Century AD, but reached its expansion peak in the 3rd and 4th Centuries AD.²³⁴ (The formation of the culture along with its economic and administrative development are often debated by scholars, but

²³²Halsall 2007, 376-78; Heather 2006, 47; Kulikowsky 2007 on Gothic wars, including information on their alliances and federations with other tribes.

²³³Eidon *et al.* 1998, 488; Heather 1998, 88 - 92.

²³⁴Mallory *et al.* 104.

that is not the purpose of this thesis.) What I find remarkable is the great similarity of finds from the territory of Moesia Inferior and those from the territory of the Chernyakhov culture (see fig. 14b).²³⁵ One of the most common characteristics of the coin assemblages found in these parts of Barbaricum is the structure of the hoards - composed only of pure silver late 1st and 2nd Centuries denarii. Most of the coins are in a very worn condition, indicating a long period of circulation, although it is not known whether the circulation took place inside or outside the Empire. The fact that third century denarii and especially silver radiates are almost absent from the numerous hoards and single finds in the Chernyakhov culture indicates that either debased coins were not preferred as means of payment or plunder, or that they were melted for bullion or jewelry.

²³⁵ For detailed analysis of findings from the territory of the Chernyakhov culture see: Myzgin (2013) Liubichev (2014); Dymovski (2014); Myzgin (2014); Myzgin (2015); Bursche *et al.* (2015); Myzgin (2016a/b).



Fig. 14b Map showing the location of the Chernyakhov Culture.

It is noteworthy that the majority of civic coins found in the Chernyakhov culture were struck in Moesia Inferior and Thrace, confirming the military or commercial interactions between these areas. The rapid decline of pure silver coins in hoards in the first half of the 3rd Century AD, and their almost complete absence after AD 251 in Moesia Inferior, can be explained by the export of these coins to the Chernyakhov culture in the same period. Further and more detailed analysis of all other forms of material culture are required in order to establish explanations for this phenomenon, but this hypothesis suggests how external factors (mostly neglected in other

studies) might be an important influence on the content of coin hoards.

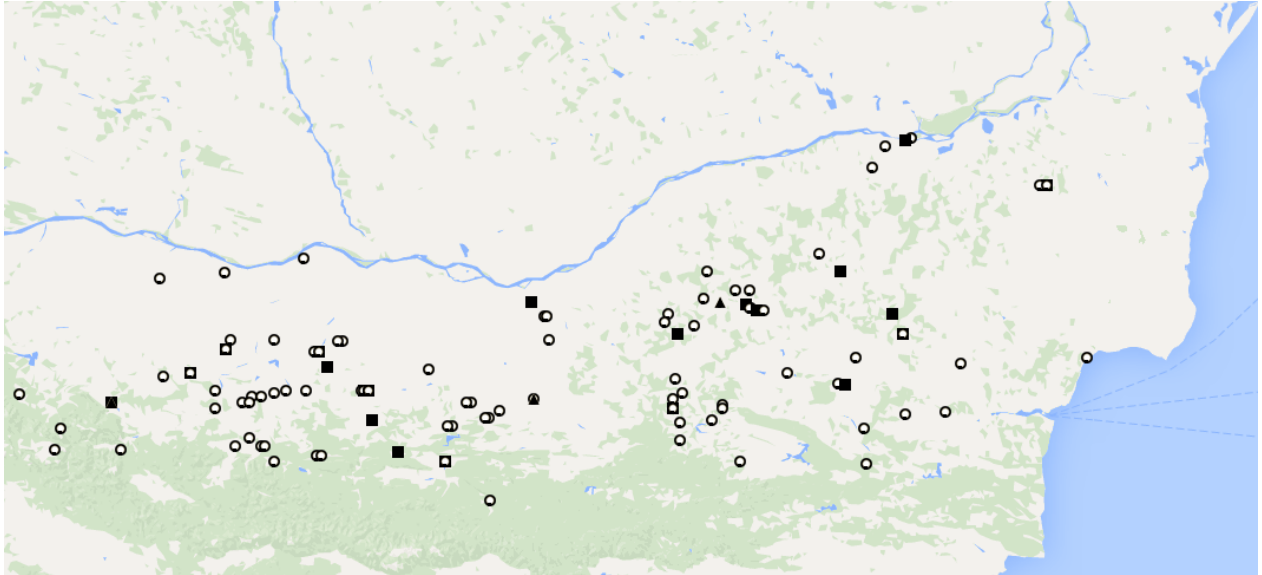


Fig 16. Distribution of Hoards in Period VI (triangle-gold; circle-silver; square-bronze)

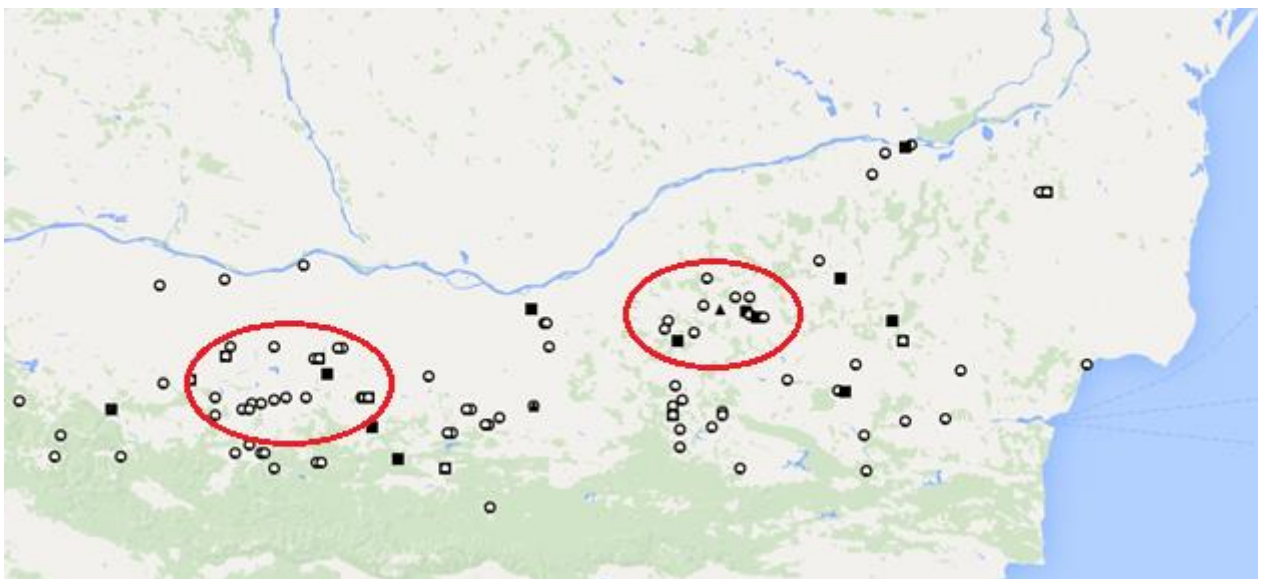


Fig 17. Clustering of Hoards in Region I and Region III (triangle-gold; circle-silver; square-bronze)



Fig. 18 Possible movement of the barbarian invasion based on monetary and historical evidence.

Period VII and Period VIII

Period VII and Period VIII will be analyzed simultaneously owing to the small number of coin hoards attributed to this time frame, as well as the similarity of the hoarding patterns. Studying the assemblages from these periods is very important for understanding the history and economy of Moesia Inferior in the last quarter of the third century. Very little is known about the economic and historical changes in Moesia Inferior post AD 251, and the period is often the subject of academic discussions. Some scholars such as Haritonov

(2000) argue that the province did not recover from the Gothic raids in the 3rd Century AD, and that improvement took place only in the 4th C AD when the influx of coins became more active.²³⁶ According to other scholars such as Torbatov (1994) the Moesian population managed to withdraw into the highlands of the province or Thrace where they stayed until the Gothic wars were ended. The author argues that the economy of the province was restored around AD 270.²³⁷ Whilst numismatic material alone is not sufficient for settling this complex historical debate, analysis of the hoards from the period can shed some light upon the coin supply and monetary strategies.

The geographic distribution of the assemblages is well differentiated. All of the deposits are discovered in Region I and Region III. The majority of the hoards in Region III are located along the Danubean Limes, in proximity to Durostorum and Abritus (fig. 20 and fig. 21). The coin assemblages from Region I are concentrated in an opposite manner, clustering in the southern, highland parts of the region. It is very interesting to note the absence of hoards from the middle parts of the province, which produced a higher number of hoards in the previous periods. It is plausible to assume that the large urban centers suffered the most damage from the military conflicts, resulting in a disturbance of the monetary circulation.

²³⁶ Haritonov 2000, 89

²³⁷ Torbatov 1994, 101- 103

The total number of hoards for both periods is only 14, but the number of coins is over 16,403 which is the largest average increase of coins per hoard for the entire period. The most important characteristic of the period is the sudden decline of civic coins mixed with other denominations. There are only four civic hoards attributed to the time frame AD 268 – 305, with a total number of 33 coins.²³⁸

It is interesting to note that all of the deposits were found in burials mixed with copper radiates. The coin hoards from Onogur, Sennik and Ovchaga included civic coins in a very worn condition, suggesting their circulation post AD 251. Therefore, based on the existing evidence it is plausible to assume that the circulation of civic coins continued more actively up until AD 270. The decline in civic bronze hoards from the later periods can be taken as a result of their gradual replacement by the copper radiates. The fact that post AD 270 civic coins are only found in burial contexts further supports the notion that monetary strategies applied towards civic coinage significantly changed in the late 3rd Century AD.²³⁹

The silver coin hoards are mainly a mixture of silver and silvered copper radiates. Unfortunately, many of them are not recorded properly, and the total proportions of silver vs silvered cannot be established. Hoards such as Lukovit I and Malak Preslav, Pleven I and Senik I include coins from Gordian III to Tacitus. It is interesting to

²³⁸ The four hoards containing civic bronze are: Onogur, Sennik II, Dushevo and Ovchaga.

²³⁹ All issues regarding civic coinage dating and hoard content will be analyzed in details on Chapter IV.

note that the silver radiates are not the most common coin, normally constituting around 10% of the total number of coins in hoards. The majority of the assemblages include radiates from Claudius II Gothicus to Diocletian. The increase of radiates post AD 268 is notable, and may explain the simultaneous circulation of civic bronzes and copper radiates. It seems plausible that the new re-organization of the Balkan mints took around two decades, and so that in this period all old coins were actively utilized.²⁴⁰ Once the supply of new coins became more adequate, this resulted in the withdrawal or change in value of the old base metal issues. This evidence partly supports the theory of Torbatov - that the economy or, at least the monetary supply, of the province recovered around AD 270. The latest hoard which includes silver denarii is Tarnene, dated to AD 257 or AD 268. It consists of 40 Severan denarii and three silver radiates.

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²⁴⁰ The re-organization of the mints include centralization of the production in Serdica, Constantinople, Heraclea and Thesalonica, Cyzicus and Nicomedia.

²⁴¹ Different authors suggest different dates (although the original hoard is missing); Varbanov 2017 suggests an earlier date for the hoard (AD 257).

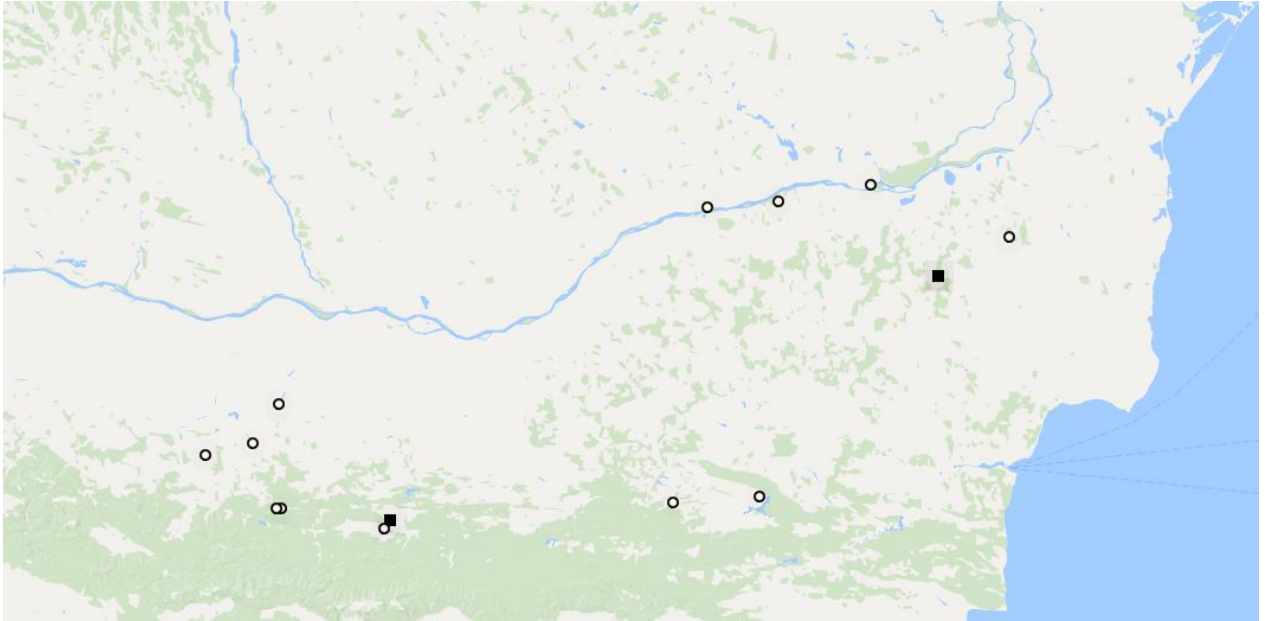


Fig. 19 Distribution of Hoards in Period VII (circle-silver; square-bronze)

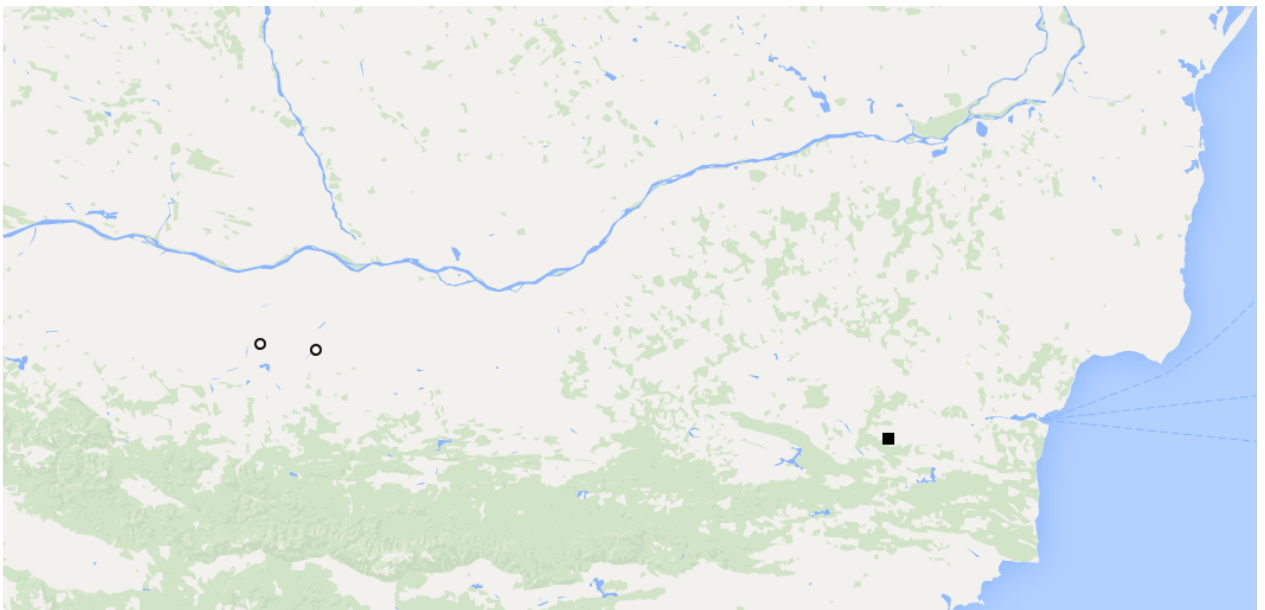


Fig. 20 Distribution of Hoards in Period VIII (circle-silver; square-bronze)

Chapter IV - The Civic Coinage of Moesia Inferior

The Civic Coinage and the Movement of People

The previous chapter provided a detailed analysis of the distribution of gold, silver and central bronze coins within the territory of Moesia Inferior. The maps and charts presented showed the potential of the evidence gathered to answer questions related to monetary strategies towards different denominations. In particular, although silver was used by the lower classes, such was the inequality in the distribution of wealth that the maps of circulation are dominated by the activity of the few.²⁴² The deposition of precious metal coinage is a representation of wealth accumulated, stored, or lost as a result of monetary reforms, debasement, or external threats such as barbaric invasions. The results obtained demonstrated the relationship between hoarding and both monetary and military events from the period. However, the evidence gave little away about the interaction between the different settlements on the territory of the province or about the movement of people within it.

This chapter focuses exclusively on the distribution of civic coinage as an important factor of the numismatic history of the province. Although the civic coins are generally considered to have very low

²⁴²Duncan-Jones 1982, 343/4.

value, maps showing their distribution are significant because they reflect the aggregate movement of people.²⁴³ Only provincial coins allow scholars to trace the movement of the coin from the mint to its spot of loss or deposition with such provision. That is because civic coins were useful for small scale transactions and commercial activities, so they circulated more actively than other denominations. As a result they travelled further and were therefore lost more often, providing the opportunity for examining the specific patterns of their movement.²⁴⁴ Civic coins were carried by people attending markets and festivals, by small traders, and workers.²⁴⁵ Particularly interesting are the long movements of civic coins, which is considered a phenomenon, and can often be connected to particular historic events and military movements.²⁴⁶

Civic coins circulated mostly in the neighbourhood of the mint that produced them forming numerous pools of circulation.²⁴⁷ Each monetary pool consisted of a mix between coins which can be defined as local, referring those issued by the local mint or province and foreign, and coins attributable to other mints or provinces. Of course, although there were over 500 cities and *koinas* issuing civic coins, the number of settlements without own coinage vastly exceeds this

²⁴³Heesch 2009, 125; Howgego 1985, 33.

²⁴⁴Heesch 2009, 125/6.

²⁴⁵Howgego 1985, 33.

²⁴⁶ For regional patterns see: Elton-Reger 2007; Katsari 2011; In terms of Moesia Inferior particularly important is the movement of coins from Asia Minor (mainly Nicea and Nicomedia) during the reign of Emperor Caracalla: (Crowford, 1972, p.564).

²⁴⁷ See Katsari 2011; Jurukova 1987 / 1994.

number.²⁴⁸ Therefore, in reality, for settlements without their own coinage, all bronze coins can be considered to be “foreign”. However, in order to establish a clear boundary between local and foreign coins, this dissertation will regard all coins struck in Moesia Inferior as local for all cities in the province, and all other coins as foreign. Such differentiation will allow an analysis of the movement and specific distribution of the coins produced in Moesia Inferior as well as those which were imported. The evidence obtained suggests patterns of movement of the people inside and outside the province, as well as links between particular cities and regions.

Studying the distribution of the civic coinage in Moesia Inferior is the best way to illustrate the aggregate movement of people in the province. All other kinds of evidence, such as pottery, glass, and metalwork, tend to be less accurate because extensive research has only been undertaken on a limited number of better excavated settlements. For instance, the best researched pottery workshops in Moesia Inferior are Butovo²⁴⁹, Pavlikeni²⁵⁰, Hotnica²⁵¹ and Nicopolis ad Istrum²⁵². All of the analyses however, focus on creating typological groups and defining working techniques, rather than establishing patterns of distribution. Pottery fragments found in certain

²⁴⁸Johnston 1984, 242. The given number of mints is related to the reign of Septimus Severus ad Caracalla when civic coin production reached its peak.

²⁴⁹Sultov 1972.

²⁵⁰Sultov 1962.

²⁵¹Sultov 1969.

²⁵²Kabakchieva *et al* 1988; Sultov 1981.

settlements in Moesia Inferior provide links to some of the specified workshops. For example, Torbatov (2000) reports that pottery originally produced in Butovo and Pavlikeni is often found in Dobruja.²⁵³ Kabakchieva (1994) reports that pottery produced in Nicopolis ad Istrum is found in the legionary camp of Ulpia Oescus. Although such information is of great importance for the study of the particular sites, its limited nature rules out large-scale analysis on a provincial level.

Another major obstacle is the fact that long-distance trade can influence and significantly complicate the maps of artefact distribution.²⁵⁴ For example, *terra sigillata* from various parts of the Empire, such as Gaul, Italy and North Africa, is found in Moesia Inferior.²⁵⁵ Metalwork, such as fibulae and bronze mirrors imported from Asia Minor workshops, have been discovered in settlements around Abritus and other parts of Dobrudja.²⁵⁶ Such evidence, although important for establishing the commercial relations of the day, says little about the movement within Moesia Inferior. It suggests that the distribution of particular types of artefact extended over a much greater area than those indicated by the circulation of civic coins.²⁵⁷ On the other hand, civic coins are typologically more

²⁵³ Torbatov 2000, 50 – 55. The evidence provided by the scholar is mainly related to Dobrich municipality, not all of Dobruja.

²⁵⁴ Howgego 1985, 33.

²⁵⁵ Dimitrova-Milcheva 1996.

²⁵⁶ Torbatov 2000, 51.

²⁵⁷ Howgego 1985, 35.

similar than other artefacts, they can be easily attributed to one production centre, and their movement tends to be restricted to certain regions. These qualities make provincial coins easier to quantify and compare.²⁵⁸

After coin circulation, the next important indicator for interaction between cities is the existence of *homonoia* between them. Although, the exact definition and existence of *homonoia* is often disputed due to absence of written documents indicating the nature of such an arrangement. The only documentary evidence are the speeches of Dio of Prusa and of Aelius Aristides, who proposed *homonoia* between cities.²⁵⁹ According to Callu, Ephesus had *homonoia* with Mesembria, Perinthus, and Alexandria; Smyrna had *homonoia* with Perinthus, Athens, Lacedaimon, Ancyra (Galatia), and Caesarea (Cappadocia).²⁶⁰ The existence of *homonoia* is not well defined as the movement of coins between certain cities and it is not a factor that directly encourages the movement of people. Furthermore, it has been suggested that *homonoia* might have been initiated by rich individuals and that it therefore does not represent a definite prerequisite for economic relations.²⁶¹ In terms of Moesia Inferior, the idea of *homonoia* between certain settlements has been discussed by Jurukova (1987). The author uses numismatic evidence, such as the

²⁵⁸Howgego 1985, 34.

²⁵⁹Aristides, cited by Howgego 1985, 36.

²⁶⁰Callu 1969, 29 – 33.

²⁶¹Howgego 1985, 26; the problems regarding *homonoia* have been discussed by Maggie 638/9; Jones 1978, chapter 10.

physical and iconographic properties of the coins, to suggest that monetary and possibly economic and political arrangements existed between the cities of Moesia Inferior and Thrace. In particular, Jurukova argues that a monetary league was established by Marcianopolis, Odessos, Dionysopolis, Callatis, Tomis and Histria. In addition, he proposes that *homonoia*, or other political arrangements, existed between Nicopolis ad Istrum and Hadrianopolis. Although the lack of documentary evidence makes such speculation uncertain, the best available way to test is by examining monetary circulation and patterns of distribution.

Evidence:

Only if all the artefacts of a certain class, in a particular region are examined simultaneously can fruitful results be obtained.²⁶² In order to accomplish such a task, this chapter will incorporate all of the available data for civic coins from Moesia Inferior. Unfortunately, due to the inadequate amount of material available on single finds from the province, the analysis will mainly rely on hoard evidence. This limitation presents a major obstacle for the interpretation of the circulation in the region. Although hoards represent an attractive field of study and provide the opportunity for exploring assemblages from a closed context, they tend to produce some misleading results.²⁶³ In particular, unlike single finds, hoards are most often pre-selected

²⁶²Howgego 1985, 34.

²⁶³Gazdac 2010, 37.

deposits which do not reflect accurately the proportion of denominations and coins in circulation. In addition, historical and economic events, such as monetary reforms and military conflicts, can influence the patterns of hoarding and lead to ambiguous interpretation of the evidence.

Hoard evidence: This chapter includes evidence for 147 coin hoards totalling 22, 728 coins, which is the first and largest database for civic coinage in Moesia Inferior. All of the hoards were incorporated in the CHRE (Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire) database which allowed the creation of precise maps and quarries. In addition, over 14, 000 of the coins were entered individually, including information about the emperor and the mint mark, which enabled detailed tracing of the movement of the coins in time and space.

Single-find evidence: In most of the excavation reports from Moesia Inferior, the data available for coin finds is inadequate in either quality or quantity. In addition, there are very few well-researched settlements that are able to provide any significant evidence. Some of the best excavated sites in the province are Novae (Svishtov), Nicopolis ad Istrum (Nikiup) and Durustorum (Silistra). Despite site reports from these settlements being published annually, the numismatic evidence varies significantly, defined by metal detecting usage and research agendas (e.g. architecture, pottery

etc.). The evidence summarized from site finds in this chapter will include approximately 200 coins.

Further evidence from single finds from the province has been collected during visits to local museums and personal discussion with scholars and numismatists.²⁶⁴ Although most museums and archaeological institutes have significant coin databases, most findings have never been properly recorded or published. This prevents the researcher from locating the find-spot and recovering further information. The evidence collected in this way will be compared with hoard data in order to cross check the results obtained. Despite the limited nature of the single-find evidence, bringing it into discussion will highlight its potential for reconstructing the monetary circulation of Moesia Inferior.

Geographical sequence:

Discussion of the internal geographic stratification of this study can be found in the Introduction chapter.²⁶⁵ This section will briefly discuss each of the three selected regions in relation to civic coinage (see fig. 2).

Region I covers the western parts of the province. The area was defined like this because it forms a border region between Moesia Inferior and Moesia Superior, and it did not have any cities operating

²⁶⁴ Most of the evidence comes from the Pleven Museum, Polski Trambesh Museum, and Devnya Museum.

²⁶⁵ See Chapter I, Regional stratification.

as mints in its territory. This makes Region I a particularly interesting case study because the hoards found in it reflect the supply and monetary strategies of settlements without own coinage.

Region II is the most enclosed geographical area. It covers the central parts of the province, surrounded by Region I and II as well as the river Danube and Haemus Mountain. There is only one city that operated as mint in this area- Nicopolis ad Istrum.

Region III is the largest and most urbanised part of Moesia Inferior. Access to the Black sea coast made Region III the most well connected part of the province. There were six cities operating as mints in this region – Marcianopolis, Odessos, Tomis, Callatis, Dionysopolis and Istrus.

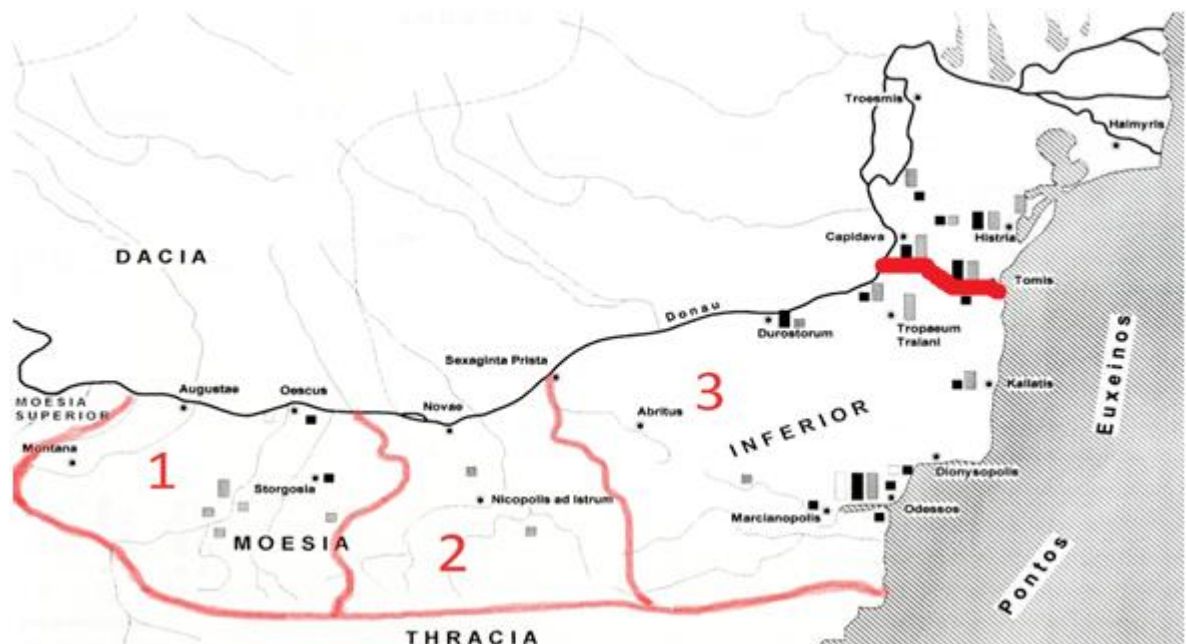


Fig 2. The regions examined in this work

Chronological sequence

Just as in the previous chapter, this study divides the hoards into eight time periods, selected to fit the historical and numismatic framework of Moesia Inferior (see fig. 30). All of the periods are applicable to both central and civic coinages. In terms of civic coinage, some modifications have been made to reflect the nature of the evidence available. For example Period I and Period II (Trajan to Commodus) are combined owing to the very low number of hoards containing civic bronze. Period III and Period IV are also combined, owing to the very low number of hoards from the Severan period, and because the hoarding of Severan coins took place around AD 235.²⁶⁶ Period V (Gordian III to Philip II) is probably the most important period for the study of civic coins, given that there are 96 hoards dated to this period, thereby forming the core of evidence for this study. All of these assemblages have a *terminus post quem* of AD 250, although their exact date of burial has been the subject of debate for decades. The periods between AD 250 and AD 305 are particularly important for defining the absolute chronology of the civic coinage as well as the economic role that civic coins played after all the mints in the region were closed. The periods will be analysed in

²⁶⁶ The reasons for the large number of hoards dated to around AD 235 are still not answered. Boteva (2002) suggests military reasons, but the wide spread of hoards over the whole province might be an indicator of monetary changes during the period.

chronological order, apart from Period V which, due to the obtained evidence, will be analysed after Period VI.²⁶⁷

Bonchev Hoarding Periods	Time Span
Period I	AD 98 – 138 (Trajan to Hadrian)
Period II	AD 138 – 192 (Antonine)
Period III	AD 193 – 217 (Severan)
Period IV	AD 218 – 238 (Macrinus to Maximinus Thrax)
Period V	AD 238 – 249 (Gordian III to Phillip Arab)
Period VI	AD 249 – 268 (Trajan Decius to Gallienus)
Period VII	AD 268 – 275 (Claudius II to Aurelian)
Period VIII	AD 275 – 305 (Tacitus to Diocletian)

Fig. 30 Chronological Periods for the hoards from Moesia Inferior

Methodology

The statistical methods used for researching numismatic material have developed significantly in the last few decades. Fundamental

²⁶⁷It be argued that the hoards attributed to Period V were buried during and/or after Period VI.

works such as those of Reece (1995), Howgego (1985), Duncan-Jones (1996), Guest (1994), Robertson (2000), Lockyear (1996a/b;2000), and Walton (2012) provide complex approaches to reconstructing monetary circulation, hoarding patterns, levels of monetization on regional and provincial scales, and so on. The limited nature of the Moesian evidence, which is often inadequate in either quantity or details, requires specific statistical methods in order to obtain meaningful results.²⁶⁸In particular, the ratio between the various civic coins will be estimated on a provincial and a regional level.²⁶⁹ The coins will be divided by mint mark, so that their precise movement can be traced. The coins will also be separated into two groups – “local” and “foreign”. Such stratification will allow the interaction between Moesia and other provinces to be traced. Furthermore, in order to avoid a synthetic analysis, the hoards will be analysed in chronological order. Such an approach towards the evidence will reveal more “dynamic” results and changes in the hoards’ content.

The first two sections of the analysis will outline the general patterns of monetary distribution as reflected in the hoards. The study will look at the presence and proportion of “local” and “foreign” coins on a provincial scale. The analysis will continue by applying the same approach towards each individual region and comparing the average

²⁶⁸ Gazdac 2002, 35; K. Lockyear (2000) points out that inadequacies in data sets can undermine statistical analysis.

²⁶⁹ The results will be estimated and compared in percent

ratio of coins for each mint to the general trend for the province. As already indicated, reconstructing monetary distribution using only hoard evidence can provide misleading results. In particular, the extent to which the percentage distribution of coins per region reflects the hoarding pattern rather than the true distribution is difficult to determine without the presence of a detailed single-finds record. Fortunately, the evidence obtained suggests that the hoarding patterns is not random, and well-differentiated circulation pools are able to be reconstructed in both Region I and Region III. Evidence from single finds also brought into the discussion partly to support the evidence obtained, but mainly to highlight the importance of maintaining a detailed record of single finds in the province. Additionally, keeping in mind the synthetic nature of the regional stratification for this study and the possible bias such an approach can generate, further analysis will test the results obtained. In particular, two new zones will be differentiated, each one exploring the hoards located within a 50-mile radius around the largest two cities with the most active mints in the province – Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis.

The discussion will end with a detailed study of the chronological patterns. This part of the work deals with some of the most controversial problems of the civic coinage of Moesia Inferior – namely, the absolute chronology and the reasons for the deposition

of such vast numbers of hoards. Chronological differences in the hoards' content will be used as evidence for changes in circulation, supply, or hoarding patterns. Furthermore, the section will examine the content of the hoards in order to establish an absolute chronology of circulation and deposition. The analysis indicates that civic bronze continued to be used up to at least AD 270, and possibly later, as a result of coin shortage or monetary reforms. This argument challenges the established theory that the large number of coin hoards which contain civic bronze were buried as a response to the Gothic invasions in AD 249 - 251.²⁷⁰

Distribution of Localcoinage:



Fig.1 The map shows the coin mints of Moesia Inferior in yellow; Thrace in Red, Moesia Superior in Blue and Greece in purple.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Jurukova 1987; 1994; Gerov 1977.

²⁷¹ Map is provided by Cyril Myzgin

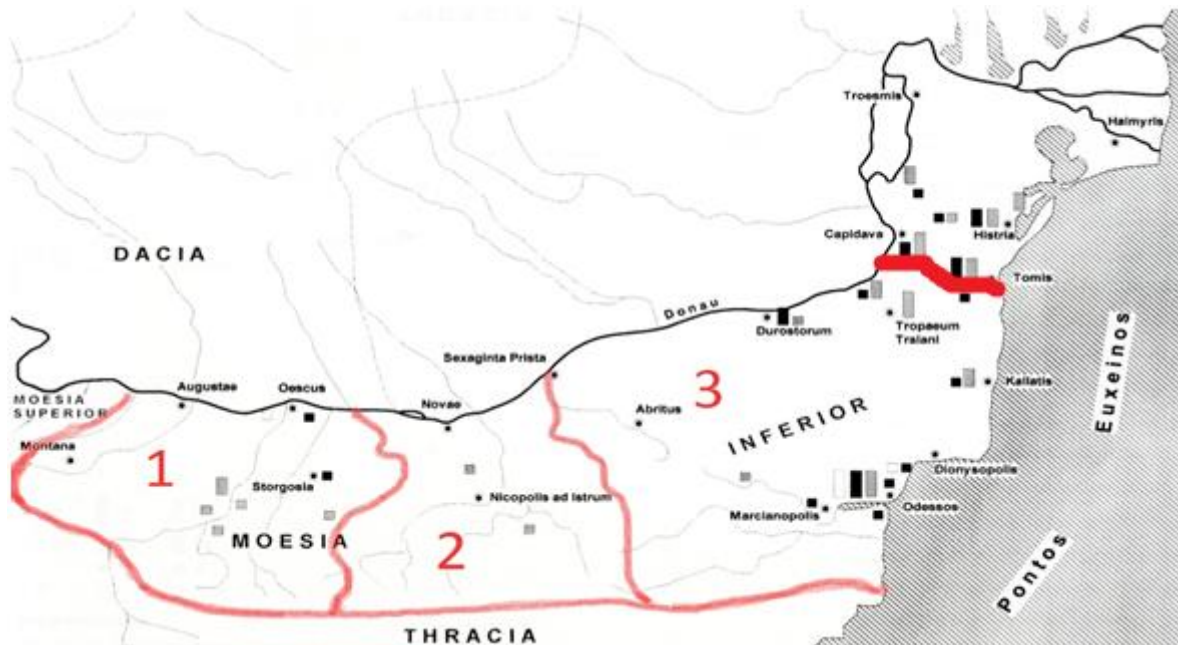


Fig. 2 The examined in this thesis regions of Moesia Inferior.

The analysis in this section focuses on the distribution of civic coins from each of the seven Moesian mints (fig. 1). It is important to note that the evidence includes only adequately described coin hoards, the details of which – emperor, chronological scope, mint and detailed reference – are available in the Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire Database (CHRE). The distribution of the coins from each city is plotted on maps and analysed separately in terms of quantity per region. Only the monetary distributions of Callatis and Istrus are analysed combined, owing to the low number of hoards and coins as well as similarity of the distribution patterns. This part of the study includes data from a total of 7,646 coins. It is important to highlight that these hoards date from the first half of the third century; thus, the main corpus of the available evidence represents the monetary circulation in the regions in this specific time period and later.

Systematic study of each region will allow us to address the following questions (fig. 2): How was the money supply to settlements without individual coinage organised (Region I)? What was the nature of the monetary supply and circulation in highly urbanised regions with high numbers of mints (Region III)? Finally, what were the specific characteristics of monetary distribution in the internal region (Region II)?

Coastal mints: From all coastal mints coins from Odessus are those most frequently found in the province (66.02%), followed by the coinage of Tomis (21.29%), Dionysopolis (11.82%), and finally Istrus and Callatis (0.87% combined).²⁷² Although the civic coins from these five mints do not dominate the overall circulation in the province, their geographic distribution creates a relatively homogenous pool in Region III (fig 23). In particular, the centre of distribution can be considered the area around Marcianopolis, covering parts of South Dobrudja²⁷³ and the south-eastern border region with the province of Thrace. This specific geographic distribution suggests that in the third century AD coins from the coastal mints primarily circulated in close proximity to the city that issued them.²⁷⁴ This differentiated monetary distribution is supported by evidence from single finds. In particular, according to I. Lazarenko, the curator of the Varna Museum, the civic coins found most frequently in the Varna municipality are those from

²⁷² The coastal cities represent 9.59% of the total number of local civic coins found in Moesia Inferior.

²⁷³ In Bulgaria

²⁷⁴ Within 50 to 60 miles of the city.

Marcianopolis and the coastal mints, dominated by Odessus.²⁷⁵ This evidence is further supported by the collection of the Devnya Museum. The collection has been studied personally by the present author; of over 160 single finds of civic coins, 120 are attributed to Marcianopolis and the coastal mints. On the other hand, the low presence of coastal coinage in Region I and Region II is confirmed by evidence from the Pleven and Lovech Museums. P. Bunov, of the Museum of Pleven, reports a complete absence of civic coins from coastal mints in Pleven, Vidin and Teteven municipalities.²⁷⁶ That scholar's observations suggest that the most frequently found single finds are attributable to the Viminacium mint. Furthermore, R. Gushterakliev, a numismatist at the Lovech Museum, also reports a very low number of single finds of coins from the coastal region. Gushterakliev(1998) also states that coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis are those most often found in the area.

Each of these five mints had an independent coinage distribution, as well as different numbers of dies and different periods of activity.²⁷⁷ Despite these differences, they form proportionally a single circulation pool, with movement outside this pool being also proportionally very similar. Out of 932 coins from these five mints, only 124 (13.3%) are found outside the centre of Region III.

²⁷⁵ Lazarenko 2008, 112-119

²⁷⁶ Bunov 1994; Vidin municipality is located in Moesia Superior.

²⁷⁷ See I. Varbanov 2010 for detailed information regarding types, periods of activity, etc.

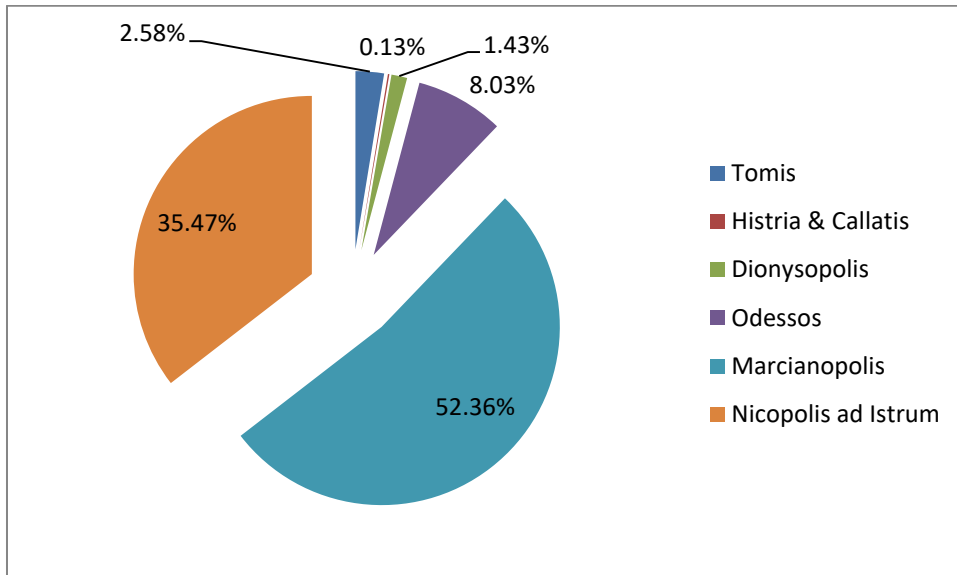


Fig. 24 the proportions of 'local' coins for the province.

Internal mints:

Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis were founded by Trajan after his successful campaigns against the Dacians and the consolidation of the Moesian border. Both cities were built on top of small Thracian settlements with no history of coinage.²⁷⁸ Despite the lack of monetary traditions the coinage of Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis are dominant both in Moesia Inferior and Thrace. Only three out of 141 hoards found in Moesia do not contain any coins from these two mints. Out of 7,464 'local' coins from hoards, 4,006 are attributable to Marcianopolis (52.36%) and 2,715 to Nicopolis ad Istrum (35.47%). A similar result is suggested by Jurukova (1986),

²⁷⁸ Carov 2000, 5-7.

who reports that, out of 41 civic-coin hoards recovered in Thrace, 39 include coins from Marcianopolis and/or Nicopolis ad Istrum. Furthermore, the observations of the author suggest that the coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis are higher or equal in number to the coins from the mints in Thrace.

The number of recorded dies from these mints is also remarkable: combined, there are nearly 2,700 different known obverse dies for the period between Antoninus Pius and Phillip II the Arab, and this number is constantly growing.²⁷⁹ Although there is a similarity in the iconographic style of both mints, each city had its own monetary strategies. For example, Marcianopolis marked all coins with a denominational symbol, which was a Greek letter.²⁸⁰ The coin most often struck in Marcianopolis was the pentassarion (five assarion) coin, which has a double bust portrait on the obverse. On the other hand, Nicopolis ad Istrum never marked its coinage, and the coins from the largest denomination are of noticeably smaller size than the pentassarion; for this reason it is often considered that Nicopolis ad Istrum struck only tertrassarion (four assarion) coins.²⁸¹

In order to understand the distribution of the coins from each of these mints, we need to consider the geographic location of each settlement and its relation to the wider economy and monetary

²⁷⁹Varbanov 2000, Vol. II.

²⁸⁰Hristova *et al* 2010 (a), 7/8.

²⁸¹Ivanov 2007, 56

production. Nicopolis ad Istrum is located in the centre of the province, approximately 50 miles from the Danube River and 150 miles from the Black Sea coast. It is surrounded by relatively plain terrain and has access to two rivers. To the South, Nicopolis ad Istrum is enclosed by the steep hills of the Haemus Mountains, which acted as the border of the province from Septimius Severus onwards.²⁸² There were only three major passes connecting Nicopolis with the province of Thrace, but owing to the very difficult terrain movement along these routes was not always swift, especially during the winter. The archaeological evidence suggests that Nicopolis ad Istrum was located on a major crossroads, connecting Serdica with Odessus and Novae and Sexaginta Prista with Philippopolis and Hadrianopolis. The strategic location of the city turned it into a commercial and economic centre. Unlike the Black Sea Coastal region, the internal and western parts of Moesia Inferior (Region I and Region II) were not urbanised before the time of Emperor Trajan. Nicopolis ad Istrum was among the first completely Roman-style settlements in the area. Archaeological excavations conducted by the University of Nottingham and the Veliko Tarnovo Museum have proven that the city expanded very rapidly.

It is particularly important to note that the epigraphic evidence, such as grave *stela*e, inscriptions on stone and architectural fragments,

²⁸² Ivanov 2007, 48-50.

suggests that the ethnic make-up of the city was very diverse.²⁸³ The inscriptions indicate that shortly after the city was founded it was populated by settlers from Greece and Asia Minor, who mixed with the local Thracian population. As a consequence, the number of Roman villas and commercial/production settlements, such as Butovo, Pavlikeni, and Diskoduratera (Gostilitsa), grew significantly, reflecting the swift economic growth of the region. The numismatic record, from both hoards and single finds, provides evidence that the number of coins was also significantly increased in this period, possibly related to more active local production.²⁸⁴ Probably because of the need for coins of smaller denomination, the mint of Nicopolis ad Istrum was opened early in the reign of Antoninus Pius. For the period until the reign of Gordian III, Nicopolis ad Istrum remained the only mint for the central and western parts of Moesia Inferior, as well as large parts of East Moesia Superior and South Dacia. The strategic location of Nicopolis ad Istrum, well protected in the middle of the province and situated on major routes connecting Moesia with Thrace, Greece and Asia Minor, made the city a major centre of monetary production.²⁸⁵

The distribution of the coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum, as suggested from hoard evidence, is particularly interesting because it suggests a higher number of coins recovered in Region I and Region III, despite

²⁸³ Ivanon 2008, 66/7.

²⁸⁴ Haritonov 2000, 56/9

²⁸⁵ Hristova *et al.* 2010 (a) 7-9.

the fact that Nicopolis is located in the centre of Region I. The respective ratios of the coin distribution are 23% (Region II) and 41% (Region I). It is important to highlight that, although 23 hoards have been found in Region III, they were all recovered in the western parts of the region, and the distribution of coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum seems to end suddenly around 50 miles from the coast. Given the scale of the coinage, this is surprising. The coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum form two pools of circulation, one in the north-western parts of Region I and the other in the western parts of Region III, concentrated around 15 miles west of Marcianopolis.

The data from single finds provides a slightly different picture. In particular, based on the Devnya Museum collection, coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum are quite scarce in comparison with those of Marcianopolis. Furthermore, the hoard evidence suggests Region II contains the lowest number of coins (23.49% of the total number). However, the archives of the Museums of Veliko Tarnovo, Svishtov and Polski Trambesh, all located in Region II, report a very high number of civic coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum in the region. According to H. Haritonov, Professor of Numismatics and currently head of the Polski Trambesh Historical Museum, coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum are found in large quantities in all Roman settlements that have been excavated in the region.

Marcianopolis is located only 30 miles from the Black Sea coast. The city was built on a plain surrounded by several hills, and is just three miles from a major stone quarry. To the South, the city also borders the Haemus Mountains, but the terrain in this part of the range is more moderate and allows relatively easy access to the province of Thrace.²⁸⁶ Two major factors defined the economic growth of Marcianopolis. First, the access to the sea allowed easy connections with the rich coastal cities of Thrace and Asia Minor. A number of pottery, glass and metalwork finds confirm these connections. Secondly, just 15 miles to the North is the fertile area of Dobrudja, known as the 'wheat basket of the Balkans'.²⁸⁷ The favourable climatic conditions and agricultural surplus made Marcianopolis a centre of commercial and production activities. In addition, there were five cities operating as mints in the region, which had started coin production decades before Marcianopolis was founded. Probably because of the existence of local coinage, the mint in Marcianopolis began production only during the reign of Commodus (later than the mint in Nicopolis ad Istrum).²⁸⁸ By the time of Septimius Severus, Marcianopolis was established as the largest city in the region. Scholars such as Angelov (1999) argue that Marcianopolis was at least four times bigger than Nicopolis ad Istrum. The population of the city was also of very mixed origin: the

²⁸⁶ Dzanev 2007, 30 – 36.

²⁸⁷ Ivanov 2007, 67.

²⁸⁸ Hristova et al 2010 (b), 4.

epigraphic evidence suggests the presence of settlers from Greece, Asia Minor and Egypt. It is interesting to note that certain Egyptian and Asia Minor deities such as Cybele and Serapis became particularly popular, and were often depicted on coins from Marcianopolis.²⁸⁹

The mint at Marcianopolis became highly important in the region by the time of Septimius Severus. According to Jurukova (1987), Marcianopolis formed a monetary alliance with the coastal cities, which all started to mark their coinages with denominational signs and maintained similar weight standards. As already discussed, It is suggested that certain alliances, monetary leagues and *homonoia* existed between cities in the East during this period.²⁹⁰ However, Jurukova's observations are based only upon a limited amount of evidence, which does not cover monetary circulation patterns but only the physical and iconographic characteristics of the coins. Later in this chapter the work will examine Jurukova's theory isolating and analysing the specific patterns of distribution of the coins from the cities concerned.

The majority of the coin hoards which contain civic coins from Marcianopolis were discovered in close proximity, within around 30 miles, of the city itself, including a relatively high number of coins in

²⁸⁹ Alexandrov 2005, 63-65.

²⁹⁰ Howgego 1985. 26; the problems regarding *homonoia* have been discussed by Maggie 638/9; Jones 1978, chapter 10 Callu 1969, 29 – 33

South-West Dobrudja. This pattern coincides precisely with the distribution of the coins from the coastal cities. This evidence supports the theory proposed by Jurukova that Marcianopolis and the coastal cities of Moesia Inferior might have formed a monetary alliance. In order to analyse and further test this view, in the next part of the chapter a case study will be conducted: the coin hoards located in closest proximity to Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis will be isolated, regardless of their regional attribution, and the differences and similarities will be observed.

Foreign Coinage

Distribution of foreign Coins.

Thrace: Coins from Thrace are often found in hoards in Moesia Inferior. The total number of coins from the Thracian mints represents 17.75 per cent of all coins and over 97 per cent of the total number of "foreign" coins recovered in the province. This implies that the coins from both provinces were equally acceptable and took part in active monetary exchange. The circulation pools formed by the Thracian coins in Moesia Inferior match the patterns of circulation of the coastal mints and the internal mints. It is particularly striking that the coins from Serdica, Hadrianopolis, Augusta Traiana, Nicopolis ad Nestum and Pautalia form a circulation pool based in Region I. The coins from Mesembria and Anchialus are most often found in the

hoards recovered in Region III.²⁹¹ The evidence from single finds also suggests similar results. There are a large number of coins from the coastal mints of Thrace in the monetary archives of the Museums of Varna, Devnya and Razgrad. In the museum of Devnya, most common are the coins from Mesembria, followed by those from Anchialos. It is interesting to note that out of 187 civic coins, 9 are attributed to Apollonia Pontica which suggests that although there are no coins from this mint in hoards, coins were present in the area.

Furthermore, Haritonov (2000) reports that coins from Hadrianopolis, Serdica and other internal cities of Thrace are frequently found in the territory of the Polski Trambesh municipality (Region II). A similar result was obtained by Bunov for the monetary circulation in the territory of the Pleven municipality (Region I). Scholars also suggest that there are a higher number of coins from Hadrianopolis and Serdica and an absence of coins recovered as single finds from the Thracian coastal mints.²⁹²

Moesia Superior: The results obtained for the mint of Viminacium are particularly striking. The mint was extremely active, and during only one decade released a huge amount of coins. Although coins from Viminacium are frequently discovered as single finds in the territory of Moesia Inferior, the number of coins is particularly low. Bunov

²⁹¹ The number of coins from Apollonia Pontica in hoards is too low to have statistical importance.

²⁹² Bunov 1994.

(1994) and Haritonov (2000) report that most of the coins found during excavations in Region I and Region II are from the Viminacium mint. The results may suggest that coins from Viminacium were the subject of different monetary management and therefore were not mixed with coins from other mints that often. At this stage of the research, an explanation of this phenomenon cannot be provided.

Other "foreign" coins

The number of coins from other provinces is very low. The total number of civic coins from Macedon, Greece and Asia Minor is 193 which is only 0.32 per cent of the total number of coins found. The penetration of coins from distant provinces was a rare phenomenon and the fact that such coins are present in the monetary assemblages is a clear reflection of long-distance movement of people who carried coins from other parts of the Empire. The number of coins from Macedon in Greece is very low; there are only four hoards which contain, in total, seven coins from the provinces. More interesting is the evidence of the coins from Asia Minor which, although low in number – only 86 coins are found in 22 hoards – the movement of coins from Asia Minor to the Balkan provinces is related to the movement of legions between these areas.²⁹³ The evidence indicates

²⁹³ For regional patterns see: Elton-Reger 2007; Katsari 2011; In terms of Moesia Inferior particularly important is the movement of coins from Asia Minor (mainly Nicaea and Nicomedia) during the reign of Emperor Caracalla (Crowford, 1972, p.564).

that certain hoards can be related to military movements. In particular, two of the hoards are found in close proximity to the legionary camp of Novae, three of the hoards are found close to the legionary camp of Ulpia Oescus, and four hoards were recovered not far from Abritos. This evidence clearly suggests a relationship between military and monetary movements between Moesia Inferior and Asia Minor.

Regional study

So far we have looked at the distribution of coins of each mint by region. In order to understand possible patterns of circulation it is important to examine also the proportions of the coins from each for every region. Such an approach will allow a consideration of the factors which determined circulation, including any regulatory restrictions.

The evidence given in the first part of the chapter suggested two well-defined areas of monetary circulation which are not determined by administrative boundaries or geographic proximity.²⁹⁴

In Region I, there was a high concentration of coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum, and the internal mints of Thrace as well as the highest number of coins from other regions (fig. 26). When the ratio between the coins inside each region is examined, the result is similar. The

²⁹⁴ For Regionalism studies, see Elton – Reger, 2007; Howgego, 1985, 32 – 50.

number of coins from mainland Thrace and other “foreign” coins is the highest of all regions as well as being above the average for the province (fig. 29). Although, the first part of the study suggested that a higher number of coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum was found in Region I (41.21% of the overall number of coins from the province, as opposed to 33.17% for Marcianopolis) (fig. 7.1 / 8.1), the proportion within the region is different. In particular, the proportion of Marcianopolis coins is relatively high (37.3%). This result is under the average for the province, but higher than the proportion of the coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum (31.4%) (fig. 26/9).

Region II was chosen owing to its isolated nature. It is located in the middle of the province, surrounded by the Danube to the north and the steep hills of Haemus to the south. The specific location of the region might have played a role in the monetary distribution in the region. In particular, the monetary assemblages found in this area are the most “conservative” for the province, with 87.76% of the coins coming from the mints of Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis (fig. 27). The proportion of coins from the Thracian inland mints is 6.04 per cent, which is higher than for Region III, but less than the average for the province. In Region II, the proportion of Moesian and Thracian coastal mint coins is very low – 2.06 per cent and 3.24%, respectively (figs. 27; 29).

Region III has the highest proportion of coins from Marcianopolis for the whole province, at 46.76%. Furthermore, the proportion of coins from Moesian and Thracian coastal mints is also above the average for the province – 17.74% and 9.46%, respectively (fig. 28). The number of other “foreign” coins is the lowest for all of Moesia – 0.59% (fig. 28; 29).

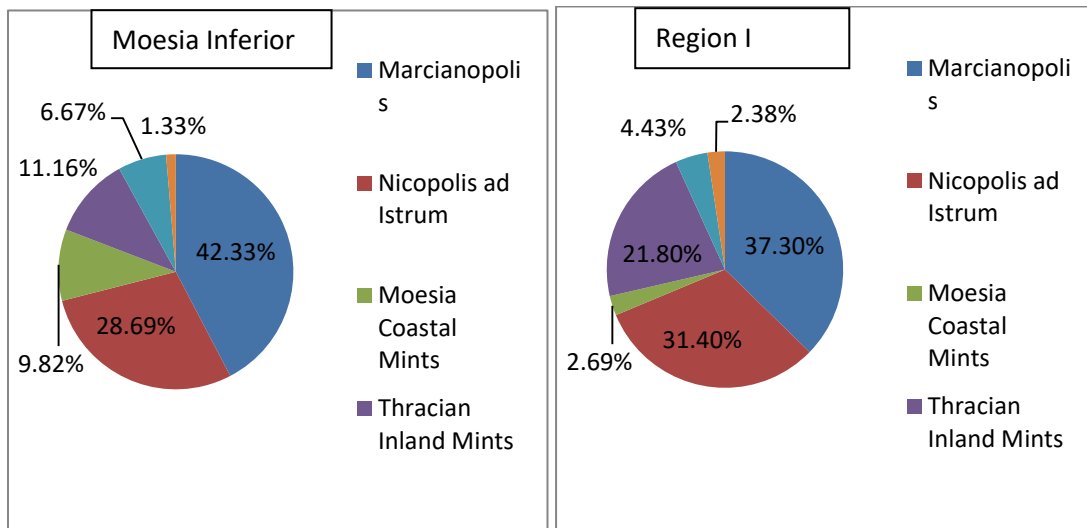


Fig. 25 Overall pattern

Fig. 26 - Region I

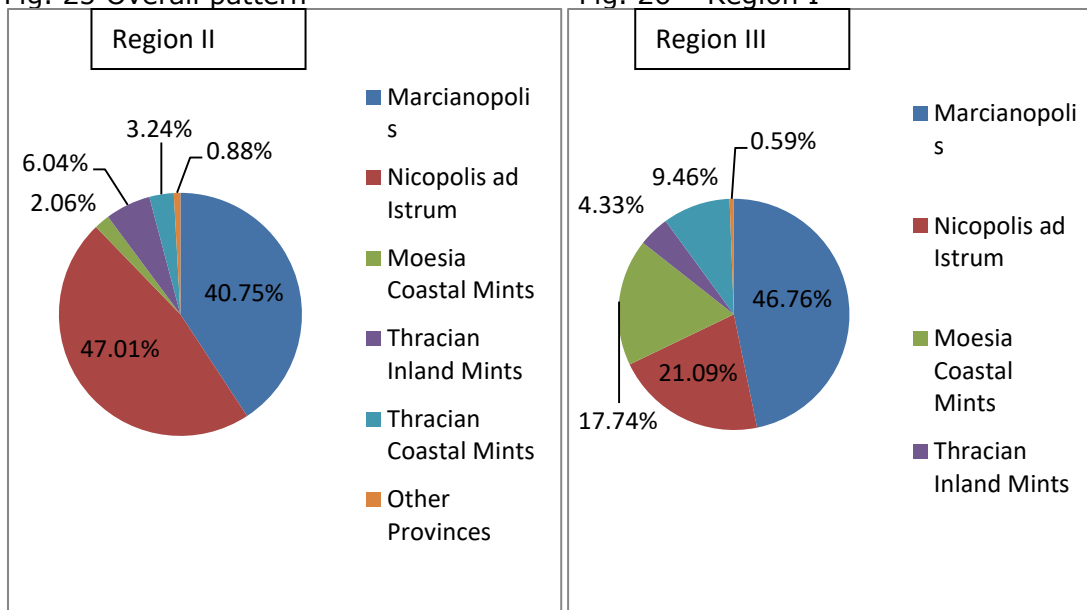


Fig. 27 - Region II

Fig. 28 - Region III

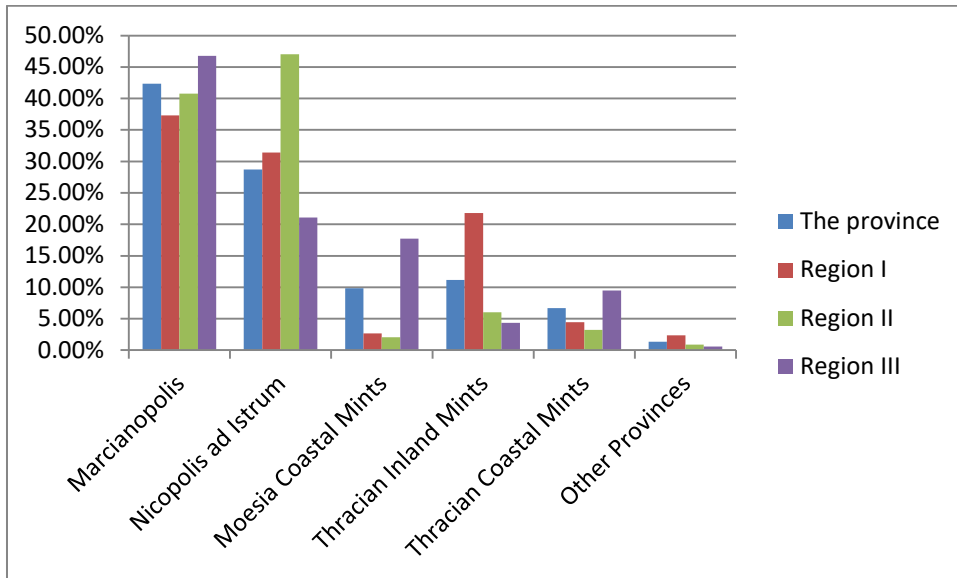


Fig. 29 – Distribution of the coins from all regions in comparison to the average for the province.

Chronological Study

So far this work has presented the evidence in a static manner, summarizing the number of coins per region and the proportions of each mint within that region. The evidence suggests that the coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis played a major role in the monetary supply of the whole province. In addition, the study has defferentiated two monetary pools: the first located in Region I, combining the coinages of Nicopolis ad Istrum and the cities of Thrace; and the second located in Region III, combining the coinages of Marcianopolis and the coastal cities of Moesia Inferior and Thrace. In order to understand the individual supply of all three regions as well as to define the absolute chronology of the civic coinage of Moesia Inferior, this part of the thesis will divide the evidence into chronological groups. The aim is to track specific changes in the coin

supply which can shed light upon monetary regulation applied by cities as well to give an answer to one of the most important questions for Moesian numismatics – What happened to the civic coinage after the end of production, in AD 250 and what was the reason for their deposition.

Period I and Period II (Trajan, Hadrian and Antonine Period)

There are only three hoards which contain civic bronze coins dated to the 2nd century AD (fig. 31). All of the coins found are unattributed owing to their poor condition and therefore their precise dating is difficult to be established. In addition, all of the hoards were found as mixed assemblages of central and civic bronze. The fact that most coins from the 2nd century AD – civic and central – both from hoards and found as single finds, are in worn condition indicates a certain shortage of bronze or later deposition.²⁹⁵ If we assume that there was a shortage of small change in the 2nd century AD, this can be considered as a major factor in the opening of large and active mints in the region such as at Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis. The lack of civic bronze hoards was noticed by Jurukova (1986), who interprets this phenomenon as indicating a very low volume of production. She also states that during the 2nd century AD, the civic coinage had only a prestige function and rarely circulated outside the

²⁹⁵ Bunov, 1994; Gushterakliev, 2002; The deposits might have been buried in the 3rd c AD.

city itself. Katsari (2011) highlights the same pattern in many parts of Asia Minor. Furthermore, Katsari explains the lack of hoards from the 2nd century AD by the active circulation of the coins and their frequent recall, for melting and restriking. I advocate the latter view which is more plausible, taking into consideration the evidence for Moesia Inferior. First, all coastal mints operated throughout the 1st century AD: Nicopolis ad Istrum operated for over 60 years during that century, whilst Marcianopolis began striking coins under Commodus. Furthermore, a major reduction of weight of the Moesian and Thracian civic coins occurred under Commodus, by around one third. Such monetary reform could have clearly had an impact on the earlier coins, which were probably melted down and converted to the new weight standards. Furthermore, the researcher must keep in mind that the major body of evidence comes from hoard deposits. Therefore, the evidence is most likely to reflect the hoarding patterns and monetary strategies towards different denominations, rather than what was circulating in the 2nd Century AD. In particular, there is no paucity of hoards in the 2nd Century AD, the number of silver assemblages for the period is over 70, which clearly indicates that hoarding took place. Therefore, the hoarding of bronze coins might have happened in a later period, when their value changed due to monetary or political reforms. Although at this stage it is extremely difficult to explain the absence of civic coins from the 2nd century AD, it is very important to continue maintaining a database of hoards and

single finds which can shed light upon the monetary strategies of the period.

Period III – IV (Septimus Severus to Maximinus Thrax – AD 193 – 238)

This period is particularly important for the analysis of this work, because it represents the earliest known evidence for civic coin distribution from the province (fig. 32/3). It is also characterized by extremely active monetary production, which peaked under Septimius Severus and Caracalla and Macrinus and Diadumenianus.²⁹⁶ The evidence will be presented by region and compared to the overall coinage pattern of the province for this period, and in general.

Particularly interesting is the evidence obtained for Region I, where 85.71% of the coins come from the mints of inland Thrace, 12.24% come from Moesia Inferior mints and 2.05 per cent from other provinces (fig. 35). It is important to highlight, not only the extremely high number of “foreign” coins, but also the absence of coins from Marcianopolis (fig. 38). This evidence suggests that what we observed as the general pattern of circulation in the previous section of the work may be explained by the monetary assemblages from this earlier period.

²⁹⁶ Varbanov, 2002, Vol. II

The assemblages for these periods for Region II reveal a high number of coins from Marcianopolis and Nicopolis ad Istrum and a low number of "foreign" coins. This evidence matches the data presented so far for this region (fig.36).

Region III also provides some remarkable results for this period. All of the hoards found in this period contain only coins from Marcianopolis and the coastal cities of Moesia Inferior. This evidence implies that the circulation pools we observe in Region I and Region III were formed in the late 2nd – early 3rd centuries AD and they influenced the overall pattern of circulation for the periods thereafter (fig. 37/8)

The increased number of hoards in this period has been noted by Boteva (2000). She explains this pattern by alluding to possible barbaric invasions, especially during the reign of Macrinus and Diadumenianus, when all mints apart from Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis, stopped production. However, there are two major objections to Boteva's theory. Firstly, the civic coinage has a sporadic nature, therefore periods that lack production cannot be considered extraordinary. Secondly, Katsari (2011) points out that many mints in Asia Minor also stopped coin production during the reigns of Macrinus and Diadumenianus. The increased number of hoards from this period, both of bronze and silver could indicate military or economic

distractions in the region, but without supporting archaeological evidence no further conclusions can be drawn.

Period V – Gordian III – Phillip II (AD 238 – 249)

This period is the most controversial for the numismatics of Moesia Inferior. It is often regarded by scholars as the turning point in the history of the province and mostly associated with the Gothic invasions. The monetary record dated to the period – gold, silver and bronze – is impressive and the number of hoards is often used by scholars as an example of the devastating military conditions during the period. However, a more careful examination of the data suggests a different picture, especially in terms of bronze coins. There are 98 hoards containing civic bronze coins dated to this period and they share some common features (fig 45). First, they are all comprised exclusively of bronze coins, 95% of them contain no more than 200 coins and secondly, a very high number of the coins (60.6%) are in poor/unattributed condition. We see civic coins mixed with denarii in Period III – IV and later mixed with radiates in Period VI. However, all coins from Period V are buried independently from central issues, which may imply abandonment rather than emergency burial. Alternatively, the high number of homogenous coin hoards, might reflect changes in the value of the civic issues. In particular, the heavily debased central currency might have made the civic bronze more valuable which lead to its deposition as storage of wealth.

The analysis of the evidence will begin by excluding the unattributed coins and focus on the ratios between local and “foreign” coins for each region. First, Region I has a high number of coins from the inland mints of Thrace and Nicopolis ad Istrum, followed by coins from Marcianopolis. The presence of coins from the coastal mints of Moesia and Thrace is very low for this period (fig. 46). Secondly, the evidence obtained for Region II indicates what is “standard” for the region: a high proportion of coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis and a low number of “foreign” coins (fig. 47). Thirdly, the proportions of the coins from Region III are also in accordance with the general trend in the area, namely, a high number of coins from Marcianopolis and the coastal mints of Moesia (fig. 48).

The most important characteristic of the hoards dated to this period is the high number of unattributed/poor coins (fig. 46/7/8). This clearly indicates that the coins were not buried during the reigns of Gordian III and Philip, but later. Particularly interesting is the evidence obtained for Region I and Region II, where the increase in unattributed coins, in comparison to Period VI, is very noticeable. This evidence suggests that the process of burial and the discarding of civic coins was not sudden and took place at different times, varying from region to region, and possibly, from settlement to settlement.

Period VI – Trajan Decius – Gallienus (AD 250 – 268)

This hoarding period represents what had happened with the civic coins in the first 18 years after all Moesian mints were shut. It is important to outline that all of the hoards recovered from this period are mixed assemblages of civic coins, with heavily debased or silver radiates (fig. 39). This helps to date the hoards but also underlines the fact that civic coins continued to be used along with the central currency for years after the mints were closed. For the first time, the number of unattributed coins is significantly increased.²⁹⁷ The growth of coins in poor condition is an indicator of active monetary usage, which is most likely explained with shortage of supply of new issues. This further supports the view that civic coins were not discarded after the mints were closed but continued to be used as money.

The highly increased number of unattributed coins creates a bias for each region. In order to illustrate the differences in the hoards content, two charts are given for each region, showing the proportion of coins including and excluding unattributed issues. The overall pattern of monetary circulation is similar to the general results for the province, namely, a high number of coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis, followed by coins from the mints of inland Thrace.

²⁹⁷ The number of unattributed coins is based mostly on non-described specimens due to poor condition/or unpublished.

However, within the individual regions, significant changes occurred. For example, the number of coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis increased in Region I in comparison to "foreign" coins (fig. 40). On the other hand, the number of "foreign" coins drastically increased in Region II (fig. 41). The coin assemblages recovered in Region III still has the highest proportion of coins attributed to Marcianopolis and the Moesian coastal mints, but at the same time, the number of "foreign" coins increased from the earlier period, forming 28.41% of the assemblage (fig. 42).

The evidence is particularly interesting, because it suggests a more chaotic pattern of monetary distribution, particularly for Region II and Region III, where the number of "foreign" coins had increased significantly. Such patterns can indicate a coin shortage, which led to a mixing of coins from various provinces.

If the number of unattributed coins is added to the evidence, a different picture emerges. In particular, 2.57% of the coins in Region I are unattributed, while 40.08% of the coins are unattributed in Region II, and 94.75% of the coins are unattributed in Region III (fig. 40/1/2). The number of unattributed coins/coins in very poor condition may actually reflect the usage of old coins due to inadequate supply of new issue. Based on the concentration of mints, the density of urban settlements and the traditions of monetary

usage, it may be assumed that Region III was the first one to experience a shortage of bronze after AD 250, which led to very active circulation of the old coins in the region. This, in turn, led to an increase in the number of worn coins being involved in circulation or hoarding. On the other hand, the low number of unattributed coins from Region I supports the view proposed by Bunov (1994): that the active usage of civic coins in the Pleven and Vratsa regions had begun much later than in other parts of Moesia Inferior. He states that all civic coins recovered as single finds, and now in the Museum of Pleven, are dated to Gordian III onwards and that the supply of bronze coins to the region occurred in the middle of the 3rd century AD. If true, this hypothesis might explain why the number of unattributed coins in Region I is so low.

Period VII and Period VIII (Claudius II to Diocletian)

There there two hoards containing civic coins and copper radiates two dated to AD 270 and one dated to AD 275 (fig. 51). One of the hoards was discovered in Region I, the other one in Region III. Common for both assemblages is their small size (less than 10 civic coins). They were also found in close proximity to rural settlements which can imply that the abandonment of civic coins took place in different periods in different types of settlements

The latest known hoard containing civic coins is dated to AD 295. This is the hoard found near the village of Ovchaga (fig. 52). It was recovered in a grave, and contained 16 copper radiates and 2 civic coins. This hoard is interesting because it implies that civic coins were still present at the end of the 3rd century AD, although it is unlikely that they had any significant importance in terms of monetary circulation in the area.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁸ Gushterakliev 1994.

Chapter V - The Monetary Circulation of Moesia Inferior in the Late Antiquity

(3rd – 7th C AD)

Introduction

The relatively scarce amount of data presents certain challenges for the reconstruction of monetary circulation for the period. The main limitation is the small number of documented hoards which come from specific sites, as opposed to having random samples from the entire province. The evidence therefore serves as an indication of monetary presence in and around the particular settlements, but does not lend itself well to a broader comparison on a provincial level.

The post-3rd century coin distribution is very different from the previous periods. Overall, the researcher observes a smaller number of entirely homogenous coin hoards. These come mainly from urban and military settlements, near to the Danubean limes. It is important to outline that the decrease of hoarding in the 4th – 5th C AD is found mainly in Moesia, and not in all Balkan provinces. Countries such as Hungary, former Yugoslavia and Romania²⁹⁹ continue to produce relatively high numbers of hoards throughout most of the late antique period.³⁰⁰ Furthermore, the Moesian hoards exhibit high homogeneity, consisting entirely of late Roman copper coins. This is another difference between the Moesian sample and areas such as

²⁹⁹ Although not in the territory of the Roman Empire, Romania continued to produce high number of hoards.

³⁰⁰ Guest 1994, 145.

Yugoslavia where 2nd and 3rd Centuries bronze coins continued to circulate in later periods.

The aim of this chapter is to summarize and identify the specific characteristics of the coin distribution of Moesia Inferior in post 3rd century AD contexts, using evidence from hoards as well as single finds. It will address fundamental questions related to monetary presence in the different areas, as well as the chronological patterns of coin supply.

Methodology

The evidence will be analyzed in three sections: Coin Hoards being the main section, along with two others on Single Finds, and Coin Hoards in Burial Contexts. The first, main section will commence with analysis of the coin hoards discovered in and around Abritus, Novae, Storgosia and Yatrus (fig.1), and will examine data for location, size, content and closing date of the hoard. The approach will look to establish the general patterns of hoarding, as well as the peak periods. The second section of the chapter will examine the single finds discovered in Abritus, Novae, Yatrus, Nicopolis ad Istrum and Oescus (fig. 1). Because all finds were discovered through archaeological excavations and therefore more accurately recorded, this allows a detailed analysis on a chronological level. The data will be divided into 17 chronological periods. Such an approach will help

to establish specific patterns, as well as to answer questions relating to coin supply and periods of coin influx. Finally the work will analyze all coin hoards discovered in grave contexts. This group of hoards is particularly interesting as it suggests a lot about the function of coins in late antiquity. All of the data will be examined simultaneously in order to establish the correlations between the evidence as well as the specific patterns of monetary circulation in the period.

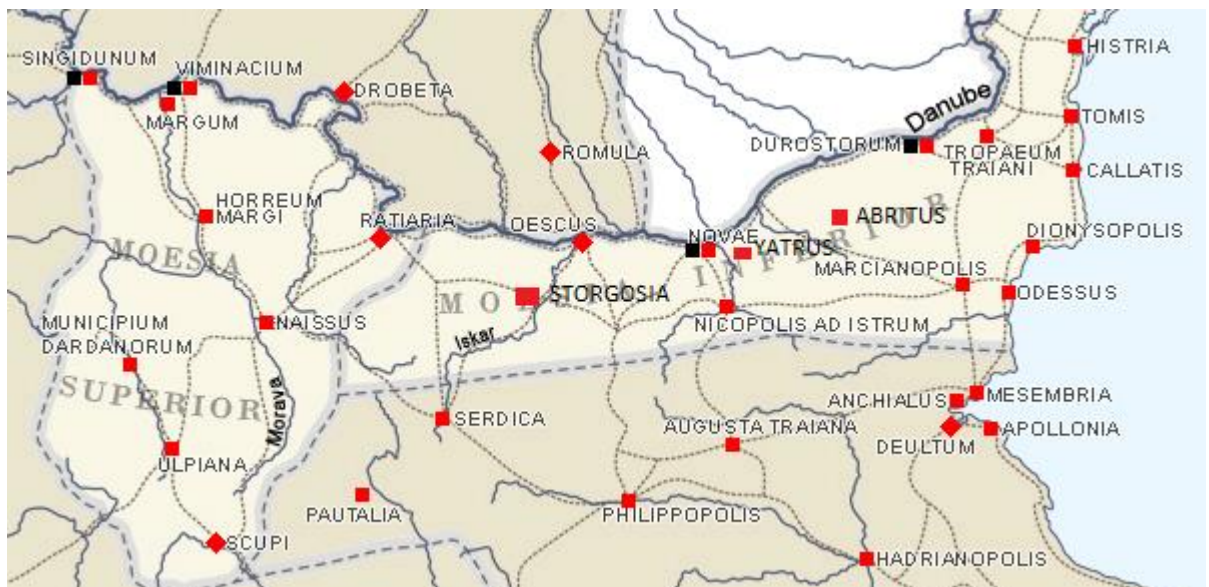


Fig.1 Map of the ancient cities in Moesia Inferior³⁰¹

Coin Hoards

Abritus

The ancient city of Abritus emerged as a military camp in the late 1st C AD on the remains of an Iron-age Thracian settlement. The city is most famous for the battle between Rome and the Goths in AD 251, when Emperor Trajan Decius was killed.³⁰² The city was expanded

³⁰¹ This is 2nd – 3rd C AD Map; it is used only for the purpose of location of the settlement.

³⁰² Ivanov 1999, 87.

and properly fortified in the period AD 305 – 307 when all the walls were built in stone.³⁰³ The first major hoard from Abritus (Hoard I) consisted of over 1000 copper folles of Licinius I and II, Constantine I, and II and Crispus, all dated between AD 317 – 324. The coins were in good condition, from within a short time period, and also came from only two mints – Heraclea and Cyzicus. The hoard was discovered under a demolished stone wall which bore signs of fire damage. Although some scholars believe that the hoard is associated with the conflict between Licinius and Constantine I, there is insufficient evidence to conclude this with any certainty.³⁰⁴ The hoard is particularly important as it suggests that Abritus received batches of coins directly from the mints of Cyzicus and Heraclea, perhaps through commercial or military activities.

There are two more coin hoards dated to the 4th Century AD, discovered in the territory of Abritus during archaeological excavations (Hoards II and III). Both hoards consisted of 50 – 150 coins, composed of House of Constantine coins with a closing date of AD 346. The coins came from a large number of mints, as well as varying in quality, suggesting accumulation throughout a longer time period.³⁰⁵

³⁰³Dzanev 2009, 139.

³⁰⁴Dzanev 2009, 134

³⁰⁵Jurukova 1985, 61-64.

There are three coin hoards found in Abritus, dated to the 5th C AD: two composed of copper coins (Hoards IV and V) and one of gold (Hoards VI). Hoard IV is composed of 68 copper folles dated AD 395 – 450. Hoard V consisted of 37 copper folles with closing dates AD 425 – 450. The hoards were discovered in close proximity during excavations in buildings demolished by fire. This archaeological context suggests that the deposits may indeed have been lost as result of the capture of Abritus by the Huns in AD 447.³⁰⁶ During excavations in the eastern parts of the defensive wall in 1972, a hoard of 835 gold solidii was discovered.³⁰⁷ The hoard consisted of coins from Emperor Theodosius II (AD 402–450) to Leontius the Usurper (AD 484–488). Some scholars such as Gerasimov suggest that the hoard was buried as result of the Ostgothic rebellion in 487 and the military march to Constantinople in the same year. Whilst the reason for deposition is uncertain, the size and content of the hoard suggest the presence of high valued coins on the territory of Abritus in late Antiquity.³⁰⁸

The chronologically latest coin hoard discovered in Abritus (Hoard VII) is dated to AD 582. It consisted of 8 large folles – 7 of Justin II (AD 565–578) and 1 of Tiberius II Constantine (578–582). The hoard

³⁰⁶Gerasimov 1967, 190/91.

³⁰⁷For a detailed description of the hoard see: Stoyanov 1982.

³⁰⁸Gerasimov 1967, 193-195.

is dated to the latest stages of the existence of the city, prior to its complete destruction by Avars and Slavs in AD 586.³⁰⁹

There are two additional hoards discovered in the hinterland of Abritus– Blagoevo (Hoard VIII) and Sveshtari (Hoard IX).³¹⁰ Hoard VIII is composed of 98 House of Constantine copper folles with an end date of AD 346-348. This hoard is very similar in content and date to Hoard II and Hoard III, possibly suggesting similar reasons for deposition. It can therefore be argued that the monetary reform from AD 346–348 resulted in the deliberate burial of earlier coins, as was observed for earlier periods in this work.³¹¹ Hoard IX is composed of 80 copper folles, attributed to the emperors Theodosius, Arcadius and Honorius, with a closing date of AD 423.³¹²

Yatrus

The ancient settlement of Yatrus is located approximately 20 km south-east of Novae. It was built in the 2nd–3rd Centuries AD as a road station, and had a large civilian population. Due to its strategic location and the suitability of the terrain, Yatrus was heavily fortified in the late 3rd/early 4th Century AD. According to evidence from the archeological excavations conducted between 1970 and 2000, the settlement was a major fortress on the lower Danubean limes, accommodating large military forces. The settlement was later

³⁰⁹Dimitrov 1989, 81-85.

³¹⁰³¹⁰Jurukova 1985; Gerasimov 1967; Dzanev 2009.

³¹¹For Example pre Severan reform denarii buried separately from debased issues; silver radiates not mixed with silvered radiates etc.

³¹²Gerasimov 1967, 188.

destroyed around AD 378, possibly as part of the Romano-Gothic wars from the period.³¹³ From the end of the 4th Century AD, the settlement had lost its former function as a military center and became a small urban center, populated by Ostgothic farmers. Most of the military buildings such as towers and thick walls were demolished or converted into farms and houses.³¹⁴

The lengthy and regular archaeological excavations produced a large number of finds, including over 878 single coin finds which will be analyzed in detail later in this chapter.³¹⁵ There was only one coin hoard (Hoard X) discovered in the territory of the city. It is a small assemblage of 21 copper folles dated between AD 364 – 423.³¹⁶ It is interesting to note that, despite the significant construction and military activities that took place at the settlement during late Antiquity, the number of hoards is very low. This illustrates well that historic events are not always the main factor responsible for coin deposition.

Storgosia

The ancient city of Storgosia is located beneath the modern city of Pleven (Region I). It was built on top of an old Iron-Age settlement in the 2nd C AD. Storgosia began as a small trading center with a

³¹³ The same period is associated with the march of the Gothic federations through Moesia and Thrace, culminating with the battle of Hadrianopolis where emperor Valens was killed. For further reading on Barbaric invasions from the period see Croke 1997.

³¹⁴ Ivanov 2007, 65-78.

³¹⁵ For the period of 4th – 7th C only.

³¹⁶ Ivanov, 1985, 145-46.

fortified part where supporting troops from the Ist Italic Legion were based.³¹⁷ During the 2nd and early 3rd C AD, the settlement flourished as an economic and urban center. The regular barbarian incursions post AD 250 resulted in heavier fortification, including a stone wall surrounding the entire city. Like most of the settlements in Lower Moesia, Storgosia suffered destructions in the post AD 370 period, and was later populated by Goths and other barbaric tribes.³¹⁸

A large part of the ancient city is located beneath the modern city, and as a result only limited sections have been excavated.³¹⁹ Two post-3rd Century AD hoards were discovered in the city. The first one (Hoard XI) contains 57 copper folles dated between AD 294 and 305. The second assemblage (Hoard XII) is particularly interesting as it bears a great similarity to Hoard I discovered in Abritus. In particular, it consisted of 452 copper folles dated in a very short time span – from AD 308 to AD 311. Like the Abritus hoard, the coins were in very good condition, and all came from the mints of Cyzicus and Heraclea. This notable similarity between two hoards discovered in two different corners of the empire indicates that sufficient amounts of coin from the mints of Cyzicus and Heraclea were imported in Moesia Inferior in the beginning of the 4th Century AD. The complex process of coin supply post AD 250 when the Moesian mints were closed is something often discussed and debated by scholars.

³¹⁷The Ist Italian Legion “Legio I Italica was based in ”

³¹⁸Bunov 1994, 65-69.

³¹⁹Mostly in the “Kayluka” area which is a large park.

Studying coin hoards on a provincial rather than a local level is a great example how monetary patterns can be traced and examined.

Novae

The ancient city of Novae is located 4km east of the modern city of Svishtov. It became a permanent legionary camp for the Ist Italic Legion in AD 69, under Emperor Vespasian. The settlement flourished during the 2nd and 3rd C AD, becoming a major military center of the province. In AD 250-251 the city was unsuccessfully besieged by the Goths, led by Cniva.³²⁰ The city resisted most of the barbarian incursions in the second half of the 3rd Century AD. Novae was finally captured in the 4th Century AD, but rather being destroyed as others were it was further developed and became a capital, firstly of the Ostrogoths and later of the Goths.³²¹ The city existed as a military and religious center up until the 7th Century AD when it was attacked and burned by Avars and Slavs.³²²

Novae is one of the most researched ancient settlements in the territory of modern day Bulgaria. It has been studied and excavated for over 50 years by both Bulgarian and Polish academics. During the numerous annual expeditions, over 1515 single coin finds were recorded for the period AD 300 – 700.³²³ However, the number of post 3rd century hoards is rather small and there are only two major

³²⁰Dimitrov 1978, 26.

³²¹Dimitrov 1992, 83/84.

³²²Dimitrov 2008a, 429-430.

³²³Dimitrov, 2008b, 514.

assemblages dated to this period. The first hoard (Hoard XIII) contains 39 copper folles dated to the period AD 367 – 416 AD. The second hoard (Hoard XIV) is particularly interesting as it is the only published 4th Century hoard which contains 2nd and 3rd Century coins. The hoard includes 456 coins in total – 15 silver denarii, 304 silver and copper antoniniani, 137 folles, 8 worn provincial / central bronze issues and numerous local copies of denarii and an argenteus. The coins date from the end of 1st Century AD to AD 317. The hoard was discovered in one of the sections of the central basilica. Understanding the circumstances responsible for the accumulation and deposition of such a variable hoard is a complex matter. The scholar Dimitrov suggests that the hoard is associated with the public function of the Basilica, and that the coins were probably deposited after years of active coin circulation in the area. However, based on the findings of this work and on the consistency of hoarding patterns in the province, I think that what is considered as one single hoard is in fact most likely two different hoards; the first one buried in the second half of the 3rd Century AD containing denarii, antoniniani and provincial coins, and a second one buried in the beginning of the 4th Century AD consisting of folles and local imitations.³²⁴ Although it is risky to reject such combination of coins as anomalous just because it did not fit in the established patterns the supporting evidence provides some further insights. Firstly, the coins were not discovered

³²⁴Dimitrov 2009, 355.

in a single container but recovered spread on a few square meters in different layers. Secondly, the assemblage contains two well differentiated chronological groups of coins – the first with *terminus post quem* around AD 270 and the second one with folles closing to AD 305-307, similar to the hoards from Abritus and Storgosia.

Single finds

The prolonged archaeological excavations in the settlements mentioned above provided a significant body of single finds which can be used for comparison with the hoard material. The data examined in previous chapters of this work lacks the same quantity of well dated single finds, which partly inhibits what can be concluded from the research. This is mainly due to the smaller number of single finds from the excavated settlements from the first three centuries of the Empire. The coin loss rate in the 4th Century AD was much higher.

In this part of the work, a total of 4092 single finds from 5 settlements will be analyzed and compared. The evidence is divided into 17 chronological periods covering the time between AD 294 and 681.³²⁵ The number of coins per settlement from each period is shown in fig. 1.³²⁶ The fields with missing data reflect an unknown / published material for this particular period.

³²⁵ In 681, the Bulgarian Kingdom was officially established, marking the end of Roman rule in Moesia.

³²⁶ The periods used are not novel, they are from the work of Dimitrov 2009, also used by most researchers of the period.

Period	Novae	Abritus	Yatrus	Nicopolis ad Istrum	Oescus	Total
I 294-310	11 5	96	45	38	28	322
II 311 -317	67	52	63	36	N/A	218
III 317 - 324	84	67	41	71	41	304
IV 324 - 341	24 9	186	112	68	55	670
V 341-364	35 2	223	123	53	17	768
VI 364 - 378	15 6	112	87	61	41	457
VII 378 - 383	51	N/A	20	16	31	118
VIII 383 - 395	96	80	57	42	16	291
IX 395 - 408	10 1	79	21 5	35	N/A	430
X 408 - 423	19	10	48	11	N/A	88
X 423 - 450	19	9	22	20	N/A	70

XI 450 - 498	12	14	4	4	N/A	34
XII 498 - 517	18	21	9	0	N/A	48
XIII 517 - 527	15	19	12	1	2	49
XIV 527 - 565	68	13	11	1	8	10 1
XV 565 - 578	69	N/A	9	1	3	82
XVI 578 - 592	24	12	0	1	1	38
XVII 592 682	0	3	0	0	1	4
TOTAL:	1515	996	87 8	459	244	4092

Fig.2. Table of the single coin finds.

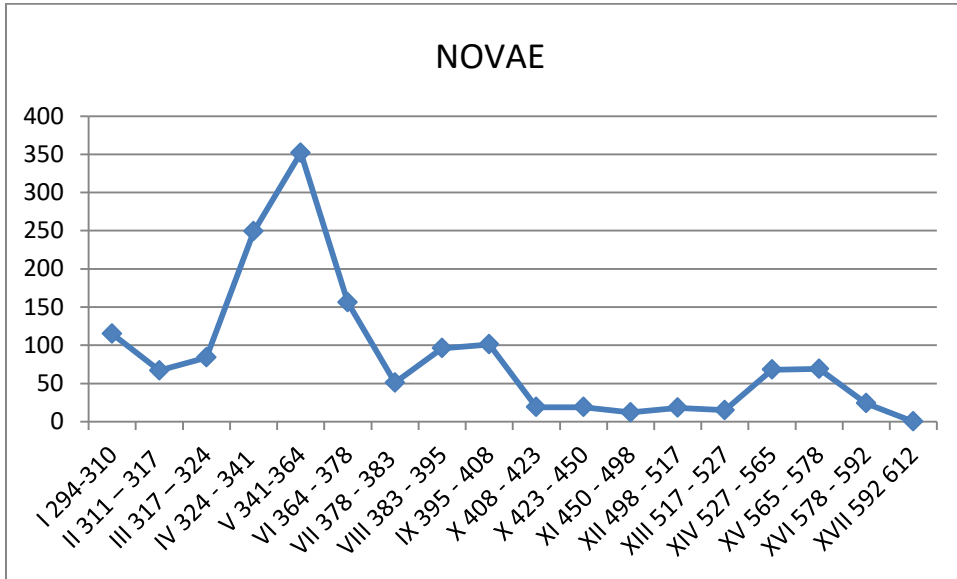


Fig. 3 Number of coins per period

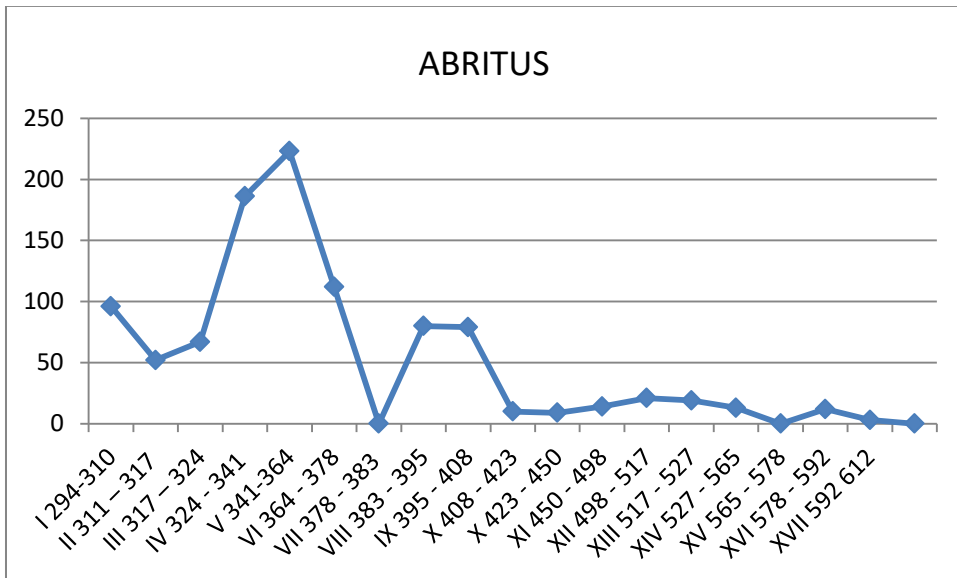


Fig. 4 Number of coins per period

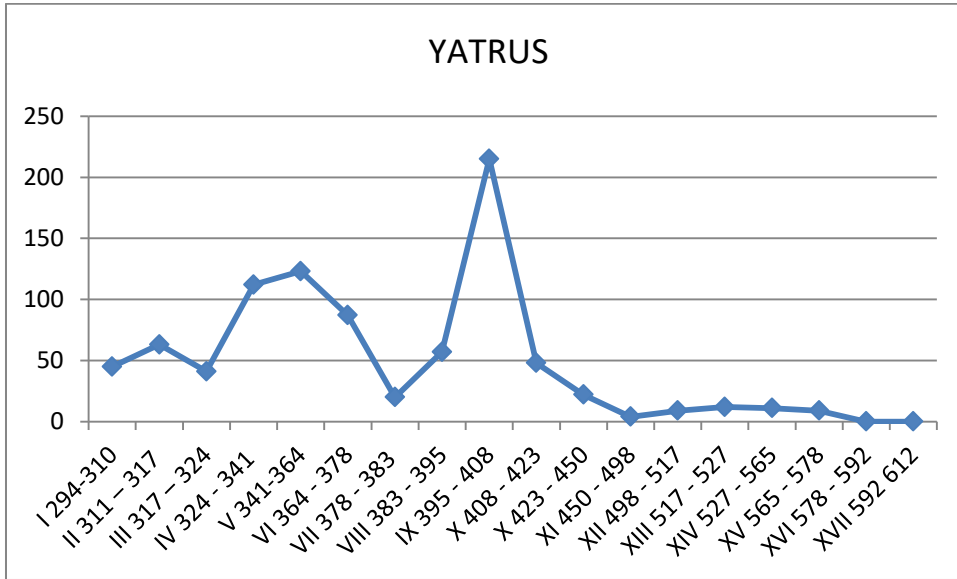


Fig. 5 Number of coins per period

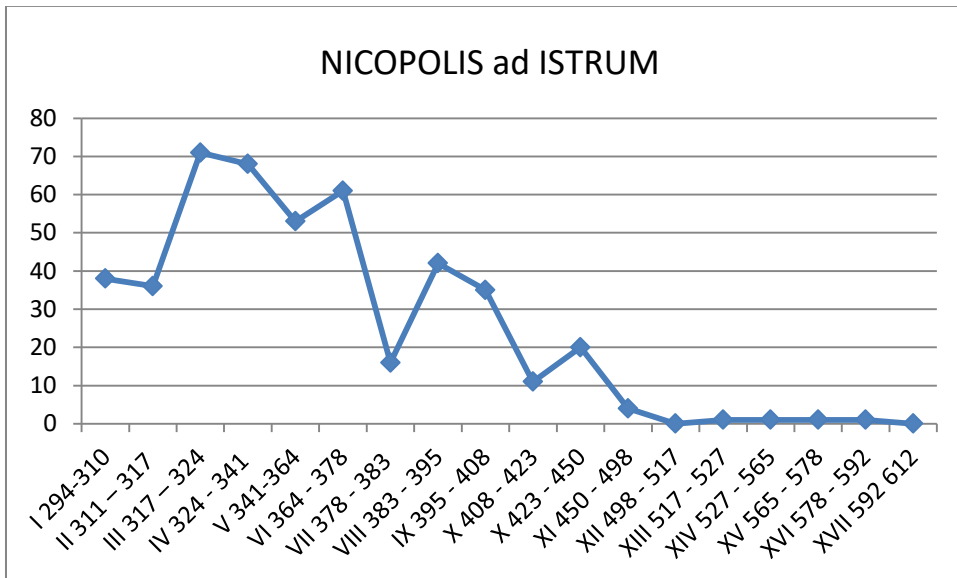


Fig. 6 Number of coins per period

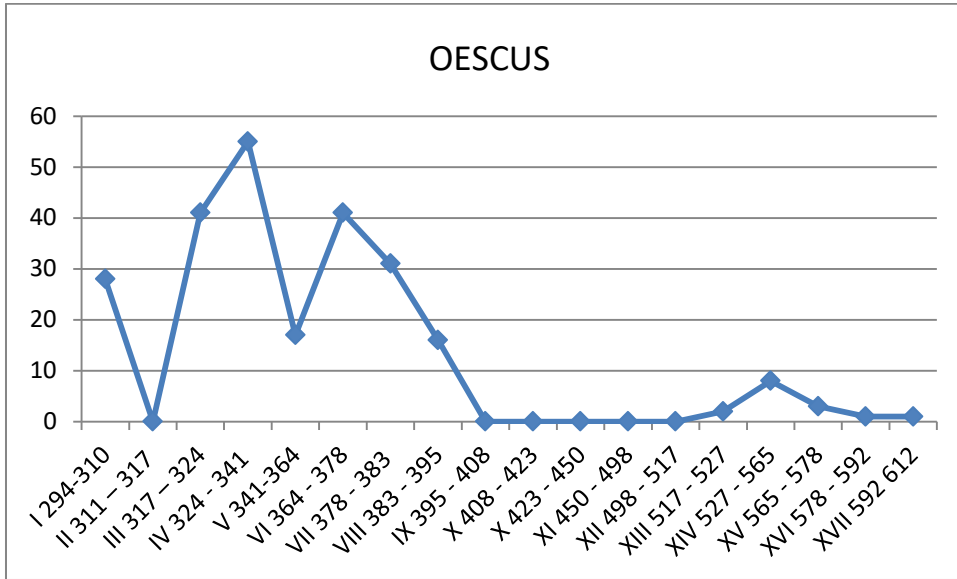


Fig.7 Number of coins per period

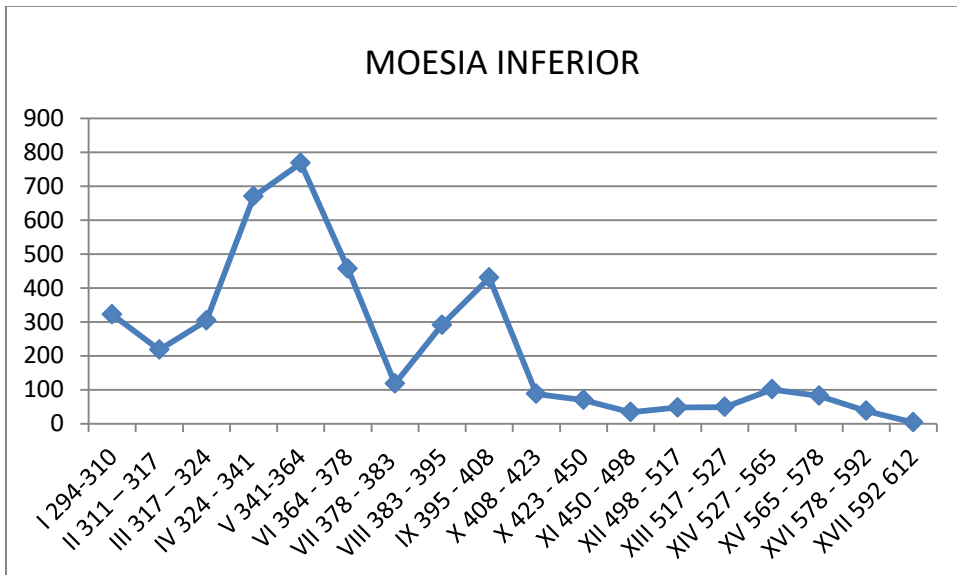


Fig. 8 Number of coins per period

Single Finds

The single finds record is quite rich, and exhibits similar patterns to those of the hoard evidence; namely, the high presence of 4th Century AD coins with an end date in the last quarter if the

century.³²⁷ Post 4th Century single finds appear in lower quantities, indicating a decline of supply or distribution. Post 5th Century coins are all but absent from the archaeological context, which may possibly be associated with the monetary decline in the province in this period.³²⁸

The results obtained in this chapter support many of the conclusions drawn by Duncan in his work "Coin circulation in the Danubian and Balkan provinces of the Roman Empire: AD 294-578".³²⁹ In his extensive survey of the circulation of Roman coins in the Balkans in the Late Antiquity, the author confirmed that although the numismatic evidence from all countries shares some similar patterns, there is a diversity of the types of coins discovered in the different provinces. Particularly, the gold solidus was most common for the northern parts of Former Yugoslavia (Moesia Superior) and the silver siliqua was restricted to the territory of Romania.³³⁰ The latter mainly explained by the tendency of silver coins to be discovered beyond the borders of the Empire into Barbaricum.³³¹

One Duncan's most important observations is the steady decline of coins after AD 375, which he suggests is a result of the cessation of supply of bronze coinage to the Balkan provinces.³³² This theory is

³²⁷Over 800 reported for the period AD 300 – 380.

³²⁸Dzanev 2009, 128 – 134.

³²⁹Duncan 1993.

³³⁰Duncan 1993, 110 – 113; 167.

³³¹Similar to the observed earlier in this work evidence for 2nd C denarii, exported to the Chernyakhov culture.

³³²Duncan 1993, 113.

supported by the evidence obtained in this chapter for both hoards and single finds. In particular, out of 14 coin hoards, seven are dated to the pre-AD375 period. The remaining 7 hoards are dispersed throughout a period of 200 years and contain a significantly smaller number of coins.³³³ In particular, there are approximately 2362 coins from the first seven hoards in comparison to only 1088 for the post AD 375 assemblages. Furthermore, the large gold coin hoard from Abritus (835 coins) is dated to AD 488, which means that total of bronze coins from post AD 375 contexts is only 253.

A similar pattern is observed in the single finds data. Out of five settlements studied, four have peak periods dated before AD 375. In particular, Novae (fig.2) and Abritus (fig.3) have coin peaks in period IV (AD 324–341), Nicopolis and Istrum (fig.5) and Oescus (fig. 6) have peaks in Period III (AD317-324) and VI (AD 364-378). The only city that has a peak period in a later stage is Yatrus (fig.4), which shows the highest number of single finds to be dated to Period XI (AD 395-408). The latter observation is interesting as it matches the coin hoards data. In particular, the coin hoard discovered in Yatrus has a closing date of AD 423. This evidence suggests that the supply of each settlement was irregular and probably driven by internal factors such as trade or military payments, resulting in the variation of coin influx over time. The analysis of further data such as mint marks can

³³³ 2362 coins attributed to the period before AD375 and 1088

help clarify the complex nature of monetary supply in post 3rd Century AD Moesia Inferior.

Late Roman Hoards in Burial Context

Throughout the process of researching late Roman coin hoards, a specific pattern became clear; the high presence of coin hoards in burial contexts. This phenomenon, whilst by no means novel for the provinces of Moesia Inferior and Thrace, is particularly interesting in Late Antiquity. The tradition of placing coins in graves was practiced since the first coinages reached the territory of Moesia Inferior.³³⁴ The pattern further continued in the first three centuries of the Empire. The most prominent characteristic of the post-3rd Century grave hoards is the significant increases in the number of coins placed in burials, sometimes reaching 100+ coins. The pattern is particularly interesting considering the more irregular coin supply as well as the overall decrease in the number of coin hoards. This pattern merits further attention, as it helps to shed light on the role of coins in the Late antique period in Moesia Inferior.³³⁵ In order to analyze this phenomenon, this part of the chapter will present data from all known coin hoards discovered in grave contexts from both Moesia Inferior and Thrace. Both provinces will be analyzed alongside each other to illuminate the similarity of the pattern.

³³⁴The earliest examples from the middle parts of the province are from the 2nd C BC (Pleven district).

³³⁵For coins in grave context see: Stevens 1991; Morris 1992 and Toynebee 1996.

The total number of coin hoards discovered in graves is 48; 10 found in Moesia Inferior and 38 found in Thrace. All of the hoards contain only 4th Century AD coins. In Region I there is one registered case of coins discovered in a grave context, two cases in Region II, and seven in Region III. It is interesting to note that the highest number of cases registered in Thrace is in the central and western parts of the province, between Serdica and Philippopolis – 25 coin hoards; 13 are discovered in the Eastern parts of the province near to the coastal area. The evidence suggests certain differences between the areas where the tradition was practiced; namely, it was most common for the west lands of Thrace and for the coastal areas of Moesia Inferior.

The location of the coins around the body is also important for understanding the ritual as well as the function of the coins. In particular, there are 11 different types of coins' deposition: random places around the skeleton; spread on the skeleton; on the chest; near the hand or in the hand; on the head; in bag/pocket; in or near a clay pot; in the mouth; between the legs.³³⁶ What can location and number of coins tells us about the status of the buried?

The number of coins in the graves increased significantly in comparison to earlier periods. For example, 32% of the total number of hoards contained between 3 – 10 coins, 21% content between 11 – 20 coins; 25% content between 21 – 50 coins; 4% content

³³⁶Tacheva 2009, 450.

between 51 – 100 coins; 4 % content 100+ coins and for 14 % the exact number of coins is unknown. It is important to highlight that both large hoards containing 100+ coins are discovered in Region I and II of Moesia Inferior. The burials were examined by A. Tenchova (2005) who suggests that most burials with coin hoards from the 4th Century AD, including these in Region I and Region II, are relatively poor. The author observes that in most cases of graves with coins there are almost no other grave gifts, with the exception of one small ceramic pot. She also points out that none of the richer burials (which include pieces of jewelry and other elaborate adornments) contain coins. This observation is very interesting as it suggests that the copper coins had a particularly low value and as a result were the preferred grave gift of the poorer population. The low value of the coins may also explain the much higher loss rate in the period.

Furthermore, it is worth emphasizing the fact that all burials contain 4th Century coins only. There are no earlier or later coins, suggesting that the decline of the supply of copper coinage in the late 4th Century AD decreased the availability of coins, and resulted in the termination or significant decline of the practice. The small number of post 4th Century AD coins discovered in graves indicates a decline in the practice of placing coins in burials.³³⁷ For example, two 5th-6th Centuries AD graves from the Polski Trambesh region contained

³³⁷Two graves from N

respectively only one and two coins³³⁸; a 5th Century AD grave from Devnya had one coin and a grave from Abritus two coins.³³⁹ The decline of the practice continued during the medieval period, up until the 12th C AD when it was renewed. It was particularly prominent from that time up to the 14th C AD, which coincides with, and is probably related to, the beginning of independent coin production in the Bulgarian Kingdom, and the increase of coins in circulation related to this event.³⁴⁰ This shows a correlation between the number of coins and coin value, which may be considered influential factors facilitating the usage of coins in grave contexts.

³³⁸Information provided by Prof. Hristo Haritonov, archives of the Polski Trambesh Museum.

³³⁹Angelov 2000, 46;58.

³⁴⁰Buchvarova 1993, 63-91.

Chapter VI - Conclusion:

Chapter II

This Chapter analyzed all of the coin data from the period between the 2nd Century BC to the end of the 1st Century AD. The aim of this section was to establish a background study for the thesis. The evidence suggested the following results.

Period I – 2nd Centuriy BC

The most noticeable aspect of the monetary circulation from this period is that the hoards consist entirely of Greek coins. There are coins from 5 major types: Posthumous issues of Alexander III, coins from Thassos, Maroneia, Ist Macedonian Region, and coins from the Adriatic coastal towns- Apollonia and Dyrrhachium. Only coins from Thasos and Macedon are found throughout the whole province. The coins from the Adriatic poleis were concentrated in Region I+ and I; local posthumous issues of Alexander III were concentrated in Region III. Furthermore, we see a large number of bronze coins discovered in Region III as single finds, especially, close to the Black sea coast and in some parts of Dobrudja. We observe the presence of both Greek and Scythian bronze coins. It is notable that all the bronze coins circulated in a very restricted area, and rarely penetrated the

internal parts of Moesia.³⁴¹ One of the most noticeable aspects of the period is the presence of imitative coinage - most often of Thasos tetradrachms, distributed and presumably produced in Region I and II. The evidence suggests a great similarity with assemblages from the same period found in Dacia and Britain (namely, concentrations of precious metal hoards in certain regions - usually hillsides, riverbeds etc.). This could suggest that the deposition of coins in Regions I+, I, and II served functions other than as money, and perhaps had a more sacred nature. Although, it is difficult to determine how the coins were used before the deposition and whether their symbolic power is derived from their original function as money/wealth. This notion is further supported by the fact that coin hoards were buried in the same manner and location as earlier precious metal deposits.³⁴²

It would appear that the Greek coins penetrated the non-monetized societies of Moesia through payment of mercenaries. Once the coins became part of a certain society or region, they were treated in the same way as all other precious metal works, and deposited in similar manner. The presence of different coins and different deposits in the period suggests that there was a great diversity of monetary strategies, and perhaps different regimes of value and exchange systems.

³⁴¹ Draganov reports that all of the 1200 Scythian bronze coins in the Bobokov Brothers collection were discovered closely to the Black sea coast and none came from the inner parts of the province.

³⁴² Or in terms of Dacia, coins buried together with other precious metal objects.

Period II – 1st C BC

One of the most prominent features is the high concentration of Roman Republican denarii which are wholly absent in earlier finds (out of the 58 hoards analyzed, 56 include Republican denarii). As in Dacia, the Republican denarii in Moesia have common features: a high concentration of deposits in certain areas, copies of coins, and sporadic influx of coins. In order to trace the penetration of Republican coins, the period was divided into three shorter time frames: 100-70 BC (period A), 70-40 BC (period B) and 40 to 1 BC (period C). The evidence suggests that Region I has the highest concentration of Republican coins – 55% of all deposits. Based on the date of deposition, it can be concluded that the denarii penetrated the region first in the period between 90–70 BC, and secondly in 70–40 BC, from which period Republican hoards have been discovered all across Moesia. It is important to highlight that the low number of hoards from Region III in the period 90–70 BC can be interpreted as indicating less active deposition rather than an absence of coins.

The Greek coins in the region were replaced by the Roman denarius because many Greek mints ceased production and the number of Roman coins significantly increased. Although we see the gradual and eventual replacement of the Greek coins by the Republican denarius, the way coins were treated does not differ from the earlier period. We observe a lack of single finds in Regions I and II; all coins came from

large deposits which (based on coin condition³⁴³) were buried shortly after they arrived in Moesia. Therefore, at this stage there is not enough evidence to indicate any significant impact of Roman-style coin-use over the traditions of the local population and the ways that people treated all coins irrespective of their origin.

Period III – 1st C AD

The main changes that characterize the monetary circulation of Moesia in the 1st Century AD are associated with the arrival of imperial coins in the local markets. There is still a high presence of Roman Republican denarii in the hoards from this period, but the proportion is 3:1 in favor of Imperial coins. The most significant changes in this period are the presence of bronze coins in all regions and the high number of single finds from all denominations. We observe a presence of countermarked worn central bronze coins, which could be an indication of shortage, but also of a need for coin by the army. It can be argued that during and after the 1st Century AD, Moesia became entirely a coin-using province, including the use of fractional coinage. Although, ritual deposition probably still continued to be practiced in the period, there is a clear shift between an Iron-age model of deposition to a Roman model, with money playing a central function in a money-based society.

³⁴³ Coin condition in the hoards examined by Prokopov and Paunov.

The monetary assemblages from Moesia suggest diverse monetary usage and strategies. In period I and II, Regions I+, I, and II produced a high number of precious metal deposits, concentrated in certain parts of each region. On the other hand, Region III is characterized by lower levels of hoarding, but a high presence of bronze coins (as single finds), indicating that coins were used as means of payment along the Black sea coast. Although the Republican denarius replaced Greek coins in the 1st Century BC, the style of deposition of coins in the internal regions did not change. The coins are deposited in roughly the same area, which suggests a continuation of the Iron Age traditions in the region. The overarching geographical division set out in this chapter is very important because it tends to remain valid for future periods. As in Britain, even after the Roman conquest, coin usage preserved its regional characteristics to a certain extent. It can be suggested that a monetary system did not exist in the internal parts of Moesia Inferior before the 1st Century AD. The incorporation of the province into the territory of the Empire, and the material dimensions of this change, possibly both reflected and altered the existing monetary traditions in the region. It has been demonstrated that coin data is an excellent means to illustrate social and economic changes in Iron Age societies for which, otherwise, written evidence is missing, and other forms of evidence are restricted. The simultaneous examination and comparison of the data from Moesia, Britain, and Dacia showed that

this approach is worth pursuing. The similarities suggested between these three marginal provinces support the theory that the spread of coinage in the Iron Age is related to the eventual extension of the Roman Empire into the regions.

Chapter III – The Monetary Circulation of Moesia Inferior between AD 100 – 300.

This Chapter presented all of the hoard evidence at a provincial level. It included all gold, silver and bronze coin hoards discovered in the territory of Moesia Inferior between AD 100-300. In order to avoid any potential bias that might result from approaching all the hoards together, the evidence was analyzed from both geographical and chronological perspectives. Such an approach enabled a more detailed analysis of the specific monetary patterns in the different regions of the province, as well as the changes over time. The chapter also established a relationship between deposition of hoards and broader contexts. The process of depositing hoards was seen to be a complex phenomenon encompassing social, military and economic events.

Geographic Distribution

The geographic distribution of the hoards form two well-differentiated circulation pools, located in the central parts of Region I and Region III. The Danubian limes also produced a large number of assemblages, mostly found in proximity to the legionary camps of

Oescus, Novae and Durostorum, and presumably associated with military activities and payments. Region II also produced a relatively high number of hoards from the Nicopolis ad Istrum zone, but overall it has lower levels of deposition. The most interesting observation comes from the lack of coin hoards recorded in the areas between the Danubean Limes and the central parts of the province. This “gap” zone covers the entire area along the province, including parts of North-East Dobrudja. Taking into consideration the favorable climatic and soil conditions in these parts, as well as the random nature of hoard discovery and report, this phenomenon is very interesting and raises important questions. Were there different levels of monetization and coin practices within the province? What is the relation between Roman occupation and levels of hoarding?

It is important to bear in mind that unlike other provinces such as Thrace, Macedonia and Achaëa, most parts Moesia Inferior had no coin history before the Romans arrived in the Balkans.³⁴⁴ The only monetized areas of Moesia were the Greek colonies on the Black Sea coast. However, based on the evidence discussed in the previous chapter, these coins did not penetrate inside the province. The advance of the Romans in the 1st Century BC saw the influx of coins into Region I and Region III. On the other hand, Region II was the last part of the province to become monetized, and in the later

³⁴⁴ See Chapter II

periods produced much lower hoarding results. Furthermore, Region I had produced the largest number of silver hoards from 2nd Century BC to 3rd Century AD. The tradition of usage and deposition of silver coins was very deeply imbedded in the areas of Moesia Superior, South-West Dacia and West Moesia Inferior in the Iron Age period, so it is not surprising that it continued during the Imperial era as well. It seems that Region I adopted the use of provincial coins later than the other parts of Moesia, as it produced very few deposits before the middle of the 3rd Century AD. This can be explained partly by the lack of mints in the region, however, the correlation with earlier monetary patterns is still worth noting. On the other hand, Region III adopted Roman bronze coinage in the early 1st Century AD following the monetary traditions already established in the region. The Region also produced the highest number of civic coin hoards of all periods. These examples are interesting as they suggest that the incorporation of Roman coinage in Moesia Inferior was not sudden, but a gradual process which involved a range of economic and social factors and traditions.

The location of the hoards from all periods (2nd Century BC – 3rd Century AD) follow the specific pattern as outlined in this chapter – higher levels of coins from the Danubian bank and the internal parts of the province (closer to Haemus), and very low or no hoarding in the areas between them. This can be directly related to the

geography of these parts. First, the Danube had been the natural border of Moesia for centuries. It had always been a militarized zone, which resulted in the concentration of more coins. Secondly, the “gap” areas encompass the flattest and most fertile lands of the province. These particular patterns have defined the agricultural and rural character of the areas. Thirdly, the central-lower parts of Moesia have a more alpine geography, including flat plateaus surrounded by steep hills. It was probably due to this naturally defended terrain that the larger urban settlements emerged in it. The urban centers attracted more commercial activities and presumably higher coin exchange. In summary, the geographic distribution of the hoards can be considered as a reflection of the levels of Roman occupation throughout the province. The militarized areas along the Danubian limes and the internal urbanized parts saw a higher concentration of coins. Such statements raise important questions regarding the levels of monetization in the different parts of Moesia, as well as the different monetary practices applied within them.

In order to illuminate this complex problem, the work included detailed information about the archaeological excavation in Bozluka, located in south Dobrudja (Region III). Based on the geographic location, the specific findings (such as imported pottery and metalwork), the numerous single coin finds, and on the lack of architectural remains, the site was recognized as a periodic market.

Periodic markets in rural areas can be considered as a mechanism of local exchange. Based on such examples, it is plausible to assume that coin usage was more active in certain parts of the province which resulted in higher coin loss. In other areas, coins would not have been used on a daily basis, with monetary transactions being conducted only periodically. Whilst the amount of available evidence is small, examples such as Bozluka suggest the existence of differing patterns of monetary practices in the province.

In summary, the geographic distribution of hoards from Moesia suggests differentiated areas; some with a high monetary presence, others with a small, or a complete absence of, coin assemblages. This phenomenon underlines the complexity of the monetary circulation in the region, and perhaps the different levels of monetization and coin use in each part of Moesia. The lack of coin hoards, the very small number of recorded single coin finds, and the presence of periodic markets, all suggest that coins in these areas were not used on a daily basis. In addition, it should be considered that trade in such rural areas might be periodic and could be conducted via bartering or kind which left no numismatic traces.³⁴⁵

So far there has been no archaeological research on monetary usage in the rural areas of Moesia. The evidence suggested in this chapter underlines the importance of conducting further analyses of sites such

³⁴⁵Torbatov 1993, 53

as Bozluka and, most of all, collecting more information about single finds from the region.

Chronology

Careful study of the chronology of the Moesian hoards contributes to our understanding of the changes over time as well as the connection between hoarding, economy, and history. This work has challenged many of the existing theories in the field; theories which tend to relate all Moesian hoards to military events, which disregard economic and monetary changes, and which fail to compare patterns from other parts of the Empire. In order to analyze all assemblages in a detailed manner, the work simultaneously incorporated chronology, geographic location, and content of the hoards. Such an approach allowed better observation of specific patterns as well as more detailed discussion of the results.

Period I (AD 98–138): There are only five coin hoards attributed to this period. Three composed of silver denominations including 1,858 coins, and two composed of bronze Imperial coins including only 19 coins. It is interesting to note that both of the bronze coin hoards were discovered as grave deposits. These are also the only bronze coin deposits that include only imperial and not provincial issues. Three of the hoards – two composed of silver and one of bronze – were discovered in close proximity to the legionary camps of Novae and Oescus. The most significant characteristic of the silver deposits

is that they represent a relatively equal mixture of Republican and Imperial denarii, a pattern observed throughout the whole 1st Century AD.

Period II (AD 138–192): This period is characterized by the first peak in hoarding. It includes 21 coin hoards in total – four composed of bronze and 17 of silver. It is interesting to note the high number of silver denarii in the hoards – 8,308 coins in comparison to only 23 AE coins. This peak in hoarding has often been related to the Marcomannic wars fought under Marcus Aurelius and the devastating military events in the territory of Moesia. A more careful observation and analysis of the hoarding patterns disproves such a model. The geography and chronology of the hoards is nearly equally dispersed throughout time and space, disproving the notion that a single event was responsible for the deposition of all assemblages. Furthermore, this observation is supported by the contents of the hoards, which are composed exclusively of mixed Republican, Antonine and pre-Severan reform denarii. Such hoard compositions suggest a deliberate deposition of high purity coins.

Period III (AD 193–217): The hoarding activity in this period provides a similar number of hoards as Period II, with a slight increase in the number of bronze coin deposits. The total number of silver hoards is 11 including 3,369 coins, and seven bronze hoards including 53 civic coins in total. It is interesting to outline the geographic shift of

hoarding from the Danubian frontier to the internal parts of the province, especially around the large urban centers. All the silver hoards are composed of post-Severan reform, lower purity denarii, some mixed with a small number of Antonine issues. This observation suggests that perhaps some of the pure silver deposits from Period II were in fact buried in Period III, when they would have been separated from the new lower purity issues. Another important characteristic of the hoards is the small number of bronze civic hoards, despite the active production under the Severans. It seems that the deposition of the early 3rd Century civic coins occurred much later, as over 2000 Severan coins are recorded in post AD 250 contexts.

Period IV (AD 218–238): There are 24 coin hoards attributed to this period – 14 composed of silver, six of civic bronze, and four mixed. It is in this period that we see for the first time the simultaneous deposition of silver and bronze coins, with the earliest mixed hoard being dated to AD235. The geographic distribution of the hoards from this period appears very different from the patterns of earlier periods. In particular, there are almost no deposits from the Danubean limes and Region III; all hoards are concentrated in the central parts of Region I and Region II. The chronological attribution of the hoards is also very similar – 12 deposits dated to AD 222, and 9 bronze / mixed dated to AD 235. For the first time, this evidence possibly

indicates an emergency model of burial, as most deposits come from the same area and have similar dates of deposition – however, other than this specific pattern of deposition being well observed, there is little concrete data to test such a model.

Period V (AD 238–249): This period saw a significant peak in hoarding. There are 137 hoards attributed to this time frame - 39 silver hoards including 11,576 coins, and 98 bronze hoards including 13,100 coins. The most striking characteristic of the hoards is their homogeneity. All the silver deposits are composed of Severan denarii and radiates, and all the bronze hoards are exclusively composed of civic bronzes. It is very interesting that 2nd century denarii are almost absent from the assemblages, and no single imperial bronze coin is recorded for the AE hoards. The composition of the hoards suggests that Moesia Inferior relied heavily on civic bronze, and that Imperial AE issues were not present or at least not preferred for deposition.³⁴⁶ On the other hand, the increased influx of pre-Severan reform denarii in Barbaricum³⁴⁷ might be the reason why such coins are missing from the mid-3rd c AD Moesian hoards. The geographic distribution of the hoards is interesting and may suggest an emergency model. In particular, there is a significant concentration of deposits in the northern, highland parts of the province. The pattern suggests a

³⁴⁶ There are single finds of Imperial bronze recorded from Novae and Durostorum, but they are rarely recorded from other (Internal) parts of the province.

³⁴⁷ Such as Chrenykhov Culture.

withdrawal of the population from south to north in response to changes in the military conditions.³⁴⁸

Period VI (AD 250–268): This period can be seen to have the highest peak of hoarding, with 128 hoards and over 52,039 coins. The assemblages include 39,693 silver and 12,376 bronze coins. Particularly interesting is the significant increase in the amount of bronze coins – an average of 426 coins per hoard, which is more than double that of previous periods. The structure of the hoards is very similar to Period V, and they are all very homogenous. A major difference is that there are 16 mixed deposits from Period VI – all composed of silvered radiates and civic bronzes. This might be evidence that the silver radiates and civic bronzes were closer in value to each other. It is worth mentioning that there are no mixed deposits of silver and silvered radiates from this period, a practice which *is* observed only after AD 270. The patterns of deposition fit with an emergency model. There are 11 hoards from the legionary camps along the Danubian limes, and 2 clusters of hoards – in Region III around Abritus and in Region I south from Storgosiya and Melta. The most striking characteristic of the hoards is that the closing date of 112 of them is the same – AD 251, which coincides with the Gothic invasion during the period as well as the battle which took place near Abritus. The major obstacle to statistical proof faced by the

³⁴⁸ Theory suggested by Dzanev 2004.

emergency hypothesis is that military and monetary changes in the period occurred at the same time. In particular, after AD 251, all Moesian civic mints were closed and the silver radiate rapidly started to lose its silver fineness, turning into a base metal currency. Therefore a precise dating of the deposits is not possible, and some of them were probably buried post AD 251. Another important characteristic of the period is that civic coins continued to circulate in relatively large numbers until at least AD 268. Perhaps after this date, the influx of new radiates increased and led to the withdrawal of the provincial issues.

Period VII and Period VIII (AD 268–305): Both periods are characterized by a low number of hoards with high coin numbers. Specifically, there are 14 coin hoards containing a total of 16,403 coins. The clustering of hoards occurs in the same geographic areas as in Period VI, namely the south-west parts of Region I and north-west parts of Region III. It is interesting to highlight that in the last quarter of the 3rd Century AD the hoarding of civic coins became very similar to that observed in the 2nd Century AD. Specifically, all of the four hoards containing provincial coins were discovered as grave deposits. Such evidence suggests that perhaps in both periods the value of the civic coins was relatively low, and therefore that they may have been used for more symbolic than economic purposes.

Chapter IV

This work has, for the first time, combined the evidence of all hoards containing civic coins found in the territory of Moesia Inferior. Taking into consideration both the limitations and advantages of hoard evidence, this section of the thesis has tried to present the major patterns of monetary distribution in the province, in both a regional and a chronological manner.

The evidence suggests that the majority of civic coins which circulated within Moesia Inferior were local, followed by those from Thrace, Moesia Superior and Asia Minor. The distribution of the local coins is not random and certain monetary pools can be identified. In particular, the coins of the Moesian coastal mints circulated primarily in Region III and the coins from the Inland Moesian mints circulated in Region I and Region II. Furthermore, the evidence suggested similar results regarding the "foreign" coins from Thrace, namely, that the coins from the coastal mints circulated in Region III and the coins from the inland mints circulated in Region I. Other important evidence has to be considered in order to understand the possible factors which regulated the movement and circulation of civic coins within Moesia Inferior.

Before 1972, it was believed that each mint had its own die workshop. However, this hypothesis was challenged by Kraft (1972) who used die-links between mints and stylistic similarities from Asia Minor in order to argue that there were centralized workshops that produced and dispatched coin dies upon request by different cities.³⁴⁹ Kraft's theory, however, fails to explain a number of issues, such as where the workshops were located, how the delivery of dies was organized, how engravers were employed in the process, and the extent of central minting for different cities.³⁵⁰ The iconography of all cities in Moesia Inferior and Thrace is very similar, which might suggest the centralization of die production. For instance, Kraft (1972) argues that under Septimius Severus, Augusta Traiana, Philippopolis, and Bizya shared common engraver.³⁵¹ Schonert-Geis also proposes an iconographic link between Augusta Trajana and Bizya.³⁵² Additionally, there are several examples of cities sharing common dies. For instance, Tomis, Odessus and Marcianopolis shared dies for Gordian III;³⁵³ Bizya and Perinthus shared dies for Caracalla;³⁵⁴ Hadrianopolis shared obverse dies with Plotinopolis for Faustina I;³⁵⁵ Marcianopolis and Anchialus shared dies for Septimius

³⁴⁹ Kraft 1972.

³⁵⁰ Robert 1975, 188; Harl 1987, 15 – 18; MacDonald 1992, 5 – 8; Nolle 1992, 78 – 97; Brandt 2002, 406 – 407.

³⁵¹ Kraft 1972, 101.

³⁵² Schonert-Geist 1995, 15.

³⁵³ Pick 1898, 75/6.

³⁵⁴ Johnston 1983, 234.

³⁵⁵ Schultz 1999, 829 – 833.

Severus;³⁵⁶ Dionysopolis and Marcianopolis shared dies for Gordian III.³⁵⁷ Based on this evidence, it can be concluded that, in addition to the common area of circulation, Marcianopolis, the coastal cities of Moesia, and the coastal cities of Thrace shared not only a common circulation pool, but certain iconographic links.

Furthermore, of particular importance regarding the similarity between the coinage of Nicopolis ad Istrum and that of the internal cities of Thrace is the fact that the issues do not bear a denominational mark. By contrast, the coastal cities of Thrace marked the denomination of their coins on the reverse, which possibly made them more acceptable in regions where this practice was generally prevalent, such as in Region III. Another important factor which might have determined the movement and presence of coins from one mint in certain regions is the volume of coinage. For example, if the mint of Anchialus was more active than the mint of Philippopolis. This might increase, statistically, the chance of more coins from Anchialus finding their way outside the territory of the city. Detailed studies of single find records do not exist, and at this stage, only a partial hypothesis can be formed. In order to present this problem and its importance, the possible value and volume of coinage was examined as crucial factor which might determine the movement of civic coins.

³⁵⁶Peter 2005, 112.

³⁵⁷Peter 2005, 112.

Chronological study:

Period I and Period II – There is an almost complete lack of bronze coin hoards for the entire 2nd century AD. Although this phenomenon cannot be explained without further evidence, it is suggested that a possible reason for this absence could be lower volumes of production or certain monetary reforms which resulted in the re-striking of old coins³⁵⁸; as a result of different hoarding patterns and strategies and/or changes of the value of the coins.

Period III – Period IV

First, up to AD 235, the coins in Region I came primarily from the internal cities of Thrace and Nicopolis ad Istrum. This indicates that the inhabitants of the region did not rely on random supply, but preferred the coins from these settlements. This can also be explained by the fact that up to the reign of Septimus Severus, the central parts of Moesia Inferior, including Nicopolis ad Istrum, were part of Thrace. This could have facilitated the interaction between the settlements in Region I and those located in central Thrace. Secondly, the monetary distribution of Region II remained relatively steady for the entire period of this study. The assemblages recovered in this area are mainly composed of coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum and

³⁵⁸ For example the weight of the tetra-assarion coins was decreased with nearly 50% under Commodus.

Marcianopolis. Thirdly, the distribution of civic coins in Region III also suggests a very well differentiated pool up to AD 235; during this period, all hoards contain coins exclusively from Marcianopolis and the coastal mints of Moesia.

Periods V and VI

The evidence suggests that civic coins continued to be used after AD 250/1 and that the large number of coin hoards ending with coins of Gordian III and Philip II are more likely to be associated with continuous usage of old coins rather than as a response to military events. Furthermore, the number of poor/unattributed coins in hoards of these periods increased significantly, which indicates a shortage of small change. There is nothing known about the reorganization of the Balkan mints after AD 250/1 and the supply of Moesia Inferior with radiates.³⁵⁹ The evidence in this chapter clearly indicates that civic coins continued to be used as money, certainly up to around AD 270 and possibly later.

The proportion of coins also changed and assemblages became more mixed. For instance, the number of coins from Marcianopolis increased in Region I, and the number of "foreign" coins increased in Region II. This evidence suggests that the lack of mints in the region

³⁵⁹ The production of coins shifted to smaller number of mints, none of which located in Moesia, the closes being Serdica (Sofia)

resulted in greater acceptance of different coins, although the overall tendency did not change and the two monetary pools remained relatively well differentiated during all periods. It can be concluded that most of the assemblages from Period V and Period VI can be attributed to Period VI and later. The deposition of civic coins mixed with radiates took place in the 250s and 270s. The difference between the hoards attributed to Period V and Period VI is that the former contains no central coins and therefore their precise chronological attribution cannot be determined. Finally, the latest hoards containing civic coins mixed with radiates are dated to AD 270, AD 275 and AD 295. All of these hoards contain fewer than ten civic coins. The hoards were discovered in rural and burial contexts. This evidence suggests that the deposition of civic coins circulated longer at different times in the different areas and settlements.

There are few possible reasons which can explain the monetary circulation of civic coinage and the existence of monetary pools after AD 250. First, up to AD 270/5 civic coins were often buried together with debased antoniniani. This pattern indicates that both coinages were used simultaneously. There are civic bronze hoards containing silver denarii or antoniniani dated before or slightly after AD 250/1. Therefore, circulation together of central debased radiates and local bronze should be considered the norm at least from the mid-third century onwards. This fact suggests that even after AD 250, civic

coins continued to circulate in the same area. As in the earlier period, civic coins were used for local small-scale transactions and central currency was used when people travelled further distances. Furthermore, the fact that mints were closed suggests that the cities no longer had responsibility for supplying/producing coins for the region. Therefore, the continued usage of civic coins within certain regions can be interpreted as a habit of the local population which had been using these coins for a long time and still recognized them as money. This would tend to validate the view that acceptability was among the most important factors in the usage of civic coinage, and the evidence confirms this in that the civic coinage in Moesia continued to be used after AD 250/1, because the local population still accepted it as a payment method or because there was a shortage of small denomination coins. The increasing production of debased antoniniani and the decline in number and condition of civic bronze coins, which were still in use, gradually made the old coins either unacceptable or overvalued which both led to their abandonment or deposition.

The problem of when the civic coins in Moesia Inferior were driven out of circulation can be explained further by analogy with the fate of the bronze coinage in other parts of the Empire.³⁶⁰ For example, in Britain and Gaul sestertii stopped being part of the currency around

³⁶⁰Howgego 1985, 67.

AD 270.³⁶¹ The hoard evidence from Athens, Eleusis and Corinth shows that central bronze coins were still in circulation up to AD 267.³⁶² The evidence from Italy suggests that sestertii were in circulation up to the 280s AD.³⁶³ In the North and West of Asia Minor the crisis in the 260s resulted in a significant decline in weight, the end of civic coinage, and a loss of coins from circulation. Howgego (1985) suggests that this might have led to a serious lack of coins in the region between AD 270–290. The existence of this shortage is supported by the fact that western antoniniani and barbaric radiates were brought to the region in this period.³⁶⁴ As can be seen, a direct parallel exists between the patterns of bronze hoarding and circulation in Moesia Inferior and other parts of the Empire. The usage of bronze coins continued until at least AD 270. However, it can be assumed that, as in Asia Minor, the severe shortage of bronze took place between AD 270-290 resulting in a large number of homogenous hoards of worn civic bronze.

Chapter V

The period examined in this chapter encompasses the final stages of the existence of Moesia Inferior as a Roman province. The coin evidence clearly outlines the stages of economic and infrastructural collapse, especially in the post 4th Century period. The main aim of

³⁶¹ King *et al* 1981, 60/2; Carson 1969, 123/8.

³⁶² Kroll 1973, 312-333.

³⁶³ Howgego 1985, 67.

³⁶⁴ Howgego 1985, 68.

Chapter V is to summarize the data and analysis so far, in order to establish a complete picture of the monetary situation in post 3rd Century Moesia Inferior.

The data for this part of the work was broken into three major sections: Coin Hoards, Single Finds, and Grave Deposits. Unlike the previous chapters of this thesis, most of the coin finds, both hoards and single, were discovered during dedicated archaeological excavations, rather than accidentally during agricultural/building activities. As such, they tend to be more precisely recorded, and allow for more complex and detailed analysis. On the other hand, the samples came from restricted sites/areas and as such do not allow a statistical comparison on a provincial level. The presence of well recorded single finds allows, for the first time in this thesis, a sound comparison between stray finds and hoards, and illustrates the importance of recording such data for the successful reconstruction of monetary and economic practices.

This chapter analyzed 14 post-3rd century AD coin hoards from Abritus, Yatrus, Storgosia and Novae. Seven of the hoards are dated to pre-AD 375, and 7 dated to the remaining period up to AD 681. The most important observation relates to the number of coins in these hoards. In particular, there are over 2326 copper coins dated to the first period in comparison to only 253 for all of the later hoards. It is important to highlight the fact that all the coin hoards contain only

late Roman copper coins. None of the assemblages contain siliquae or 1st – 3rd Century AD coins, which on the other hand are found in 4th Century contexts in nearby Serbia and Romania. The only exceptions are hoard VI (Abritus) and hoard XIV (Novae). The first one has a closing date AD 488 and contained 835 gold solidi, the largest known gold hoard from Moesia. The second one contained 457 coins, many of which are dated to the 2nd and 3rd Centuries. This coin hoard is very ambiguous, owing to its very unusual content – a mixture of provincial, central silver and late roman folles. The coins were discovered in the Basilica complex in Novae, which was actively used as a public building for over 200 years. Having taken this fact into consideration, as well as the coin patterns discovered in this thesis, it was concluded that this hoard is in fact two different assemblages. One is dated to the middle of the 3rd century and one to the beginning of the 4th c AD.

One of the most fundamental questions about the monetary history of Moesia Inferior is the organization of the coin supply after the closure of the civic mints in the middle of the 3rd Century AD. It is not just the economy of the province that began to change in the second half of the 3rd Century AD, but also the infrastructure and internal organization of the settlements. In particular, the beginning of the 4th Century AD saw a highly militarized environment in the province with fortresses and fortification walls being built all over small to large

sized settlements. This raises other questions, such as how the different cities were governed in this period. How was the monetary supply organized? What were the variations between the different areas? One of the best ways of tracing the supply patterns is through observing the mint marks of the coins. There are two coin hoards which permit this approach: Hoard I (Abritus) and Hoard XII (Storgosia). Whilst both the settlements are located in different regions (Region III and Region I respectively), the hoards demonstrate a great similarity. In particular, they both have closing dates around AD 307–311, and contain high numbers of coins – 1000+ and 452+. Furthermore, all of the coins were discovered in nearly mint condition, all coming from only two mints - Cyzicus and Heraclea. Despite the fact that such examples are relatively rare and do not allow the reconstruction of more general patterns of monetary supply, a study of the mint marks in the known hoards can shed light upon the complex issues of supply in the period.

The second section of this chapter explored the single finds from Novae, Abritus, Nicopolis ad Istrum, Yatrus and Oescus. The data included information for 4092 coins separated into 17 chronological periods. The comparison of the single find data with that of the coin hoards was extremely interesting as it corroborated some of the patterns already observed. In particular, four of the settlements have a peak of single finds dated to the period AD 317 – 383, which

precisely coincides with the data from coin hoards. Furthermore the total number of pre-AD378 coins is 2857 in comparison to 1235 for all of the remaining period (up to AD681). This evidence clearly correlates with the data for hoards, in respect of the sudden decline of the presence and deposition of coins in the last quarter of the 4th C AD.

The only exception is Yatrus, which produced a higher number of coins in period XI (AD 398–405). This data also coincides with the hoard evidence. The only known coin hoard from the city of Yatrus is dated to AD 423, later than the hoards discovered in the other settlements. This can be related to a sudden influx of coins (or some monetary activity in the settlement) in the late 4th/early 5th Century AD which then circulated and were eventually buried a few decades later. Though working with small samples makes the interpretation of the statistical data difficult, such observations as these are crucial for developing a critical evaluation of the data.

The last section of the chapter examined an interesting group of hoards, discovered as grave deposits. The group was examined separately owing to their different contexts, which had a direct link with the usage of coins throughout the period. The section covered data not only from Moesia but also from Thrace as well. These provinces were analyzed together owing to the notable similarities between them. It was assumed that a larger sample would be more

useful for the overall analysis. The study included 48 coin hoards, 10 discovered in Moesia and 38 in Thrace. Within Moesia one hoard was discovered in Region I, two in Region II and seven in Region III.

In total 78% of the hoards contain 3 – 50 coins; 8% contain 51 to 100+ coins and 14% have the exact number unknown. It is interesting to note that two of the hoards discovered in Region I and II contain over 100 coins, which is a number without precedent from the previous periods. However, the high number of coins is not associated with wealth; on the contrary, Tacheva (a researcher in late Roman coinage) suggests that all graves with larger numbers of coins are generally poor, having observed that they do not include any jewelry or adornments. Such evidence indicates that the low value of the coins in the period led to the higher rates of loss and deposition in grave contexts.

Furthermore, most of the grave hoards examined contain only 4th Century AD copper coins.³⁶⁵ The practice seems to decline suddenly and disappear in the 5th and 6th Centuries AD.³⁶⁶ This data clearly coincides with the results obtained from other hoards and single finds. The evidence suggests that the influx of coins in Moesia was relatively stable up to the 380s when it suddenly stopped and never recovered to its previous levels. This confirms that the coin loss and

³⁶⁵With exception of 3 post 4th C AD hoards with very low number of coins.

³⁶⁶Possibly as a result of Christianization.

deposition in the period is linked more strongly to supply than to historical events.³⁶⁷

This Chapter briefly outlined all of the existing major coin data from Moesia Inferior from the late antique period. Further analysis of the existing data, as well as the collection of more data, will be crucial for addressing the complex questions which remain unanswered: How was the monetary supply of post 3rd Century Moesia organized? How were coins distributed and used? How did the economy operate after the regular supply ceased?

³⁶⁷ Tacheva 2000, 90.

APENDIX:**Chapter II**Period 1- Hoards from 2nd C BC

Region 1

N.	Location	Coins provenance/type	Content	Date of Deposition
1	Silistra ³⁶⁸	Alexander posthumous	tetradr. unknown	≈150 B.C.
2	Suha Reka ³⁶⁹	Alexander posthumous Alexander post. +	tetradr. unknown	≈150 B.C.
3	Shumen 1 ³⁷⁰	Thasos	62 + tetradr.	≈150 B.C.
4	Shumen 2 ³⁷¹	Alexander posthumous	7 tetradr.	≈150-100 B.C.
5	Shumen 3 Sladka	Cistophori	unknown tetradr.	≈150- 100 B.C.
6	Voda ³⁷²	Alexander posthumous	14 tetradr.	≈150- 100 B.C.
7	Varna ³⁷³ Targovishte	Alexander posthumous	15 + tetradr.	≈150-100 B.C.
8	1 ³⁷⁴ Targovishte	Alexander posthumous	45 tetradr.	≈150-100 B.C.
9	2 ³⁷⁵	Macedon/posthumous	23 + tetradr.	≈125-100 B.C.
10	Targovishte 3 Dolna	Thasos	60 tetradr.	≈125-100 B.C.
11	Zlatica ³⁷⁶	Alexander posthumous	unknown tetradr.	≈150-100 B.C.
12	Osikovo ³⁷⁷	Alexander posthumous	27 tetradr.	≈125-100 B.C.
13	Popina	Thasos	170 + tetradr.	≈125-100 B.C.
14	Kriva Reka	Macedon/posthumous	9 + tetradr.	2nd C B.C.
15	Shumen 4	Histiaea	tetraobols	2nd C B.C.
16	Razgrad	Histiaea	tetraobols	2nd C B.C.
17	Kavarna	Scythian	bronze units	2nd C B.C.

³⁶⁸ Coins from Messambria and Dionysopolis³⁶⁹ Messembria³⁷⁰ Messembria 48, Odessos- 13, Thasos 1³⁷¹ Messembria³⁷² Messembria 4, Odessos 10.³⁷³ Messembria³⁷⁴ Messembria³⁷⁵ 2 tert. of Lysimachus, 21 Alexander posthumous from Byzantium³⁷⁶ Mesembria and Odessos³⁷⁷ Odesus 26 + 1 Maroneia

Region 2

N.	Location	Coins provenance/type	Content	Date of Deposition
1	Pirgovo ³⁷⁸	Alexander/ Macedon	17 tetr.	≈125 BC
2	Lipnik ³⁷⁹	Thasos/ Maroneia	44 tertr.	≈100 BC
3	Krushevo	Macedon Ist Region	70 tetradr.	≈150 - 125 BC
4	Krasno Gradishte	Macedon Ist Region	37 tetradr. 110	≈150 - 125 BC
5	Novgrad	Macedon Ist Region	tetradr.	≈150 - 125 BC
6	Novae	Macedon Ist Region	40tetradr. 195	≈150 - 125 BC
7	Tarnava ³⁸⁰ Gorna	Macedon/Thasos	tetradr. 355	≈150 - 125 BC
8	Oryahovitsa ³⁸¹	Macedon/posthumous	tetradr. 63 +	≈125 BC
9	Hotnica ³⁸²	Thasos/ posthumous	tetradr.	≈125- 100 BC
10	Vlasica ³⁸³	Thasos/Maroneia	59 tetradr.	≈125- 100 BC
11	Varbovka	Thasos	47 tetradr. 103	≈125- 100 BC
12	Nedan ³⁸⁴	Thasos/Maroneia	tetradr. 150	≈125- 100 BC
13	Ludjane	Thasos	tetradr.	≈125- 100 BC
14	Vurbica ³⁸⁵	Thasos/Maroneia	44 tertr.	≈150 - 125 BC

Region 3

N.	Location	Coins provenance/type	Content	Date of Deposition
1	Rakita	Macedon Ist Region	46 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
2	Riben	Macedon Ist Region	22 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
3	Qsen ³⁸⁶	Thasos/Macedon	20 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
4	Koylovtsi ³⁸⁷	Thasos/Macedon	6 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
5	Gortalovo	Thasos/Macedon	14 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
6	Gorni Dubnik	Thasos/Macedon	7 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
7	Bojuritsa	Thasos/Macedon	15 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
8	Slatina	Thasos/Macedon	12 + tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
9	Nikolaevo	Thasos/Macedon	18 + tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
10	Krushevica	Thasos	90 tetradr.	≈ 125- 100 B.C.
11	Sgalevo	Thasos	12 + tetradr.	≈ 125- 100 B.C.
12	Nikolaevo	Thasos	40 tetradr. 32 tetradr. +	≈ 125- 100 B.C.
13	Rupci	Thasos/Dyrrh/Appolonia	dr. 461 tetradr. +	≈ 125- 100 B.C.
14	Sadovec I ³⁸⁸	Thasos/Dyrrh/Appolonia	dr.	≈ 125- 100 B.C.

³⁷⁸ 9 Messembria and 8 first Macedonian region

³⁷⁹³⁷⁹ 2 Maroneia + 42 Thasos

³⁸⁰ Macedon- 116 tertradr. 79 Thasos tetradr.

³⁸¹ 338 tetradr.- Macedon 1st Region, Alexander III posthumous - 8tetradr.

³⁸² 62 tetradr. From Thasos; 1 posthumous tetradr. Of Alexander III

³⁸³ Maroneia- 48; Thasos- 11

³⁸⁴ Maroneia- 1; Thasos- 102

³⁸⁵ Maroneia- 3; Thasos- 41

³⁸⁶³⁸⁶ 2 Thasos; 18 Macedon

³⁸⁷ Thasos- 2 tetradr.; Maceodn- 4 tetradr.

³⁸⁸ Thasos- 40; Appolonia, Illyria and Dyrrhachium- 421

15	Sadovec I	Thasos/Dyrrh/Appolonia	unknown dr.	≈ 125- 100 B.C.
16	Brestovec I	Appolonia/Illyria/Dyrrh.	550 dr.	≈ 100 B.C.
17	Brestovec II	Dyrrhachium	58 + dr.	≈ 100 B.C.
18	Aleksandrovo	Appolonia/Illyria/Dyrrh.	1016 dr.	≈ 100 B.C.
19	Lovech	Appolonia/Illyria/Dyrrh.	152 + dr.	≈ 100 B.C.

Region 1+

N.	Location	Coins provenance/type	Content	Date of Deposition
				≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
1	Lipnica	Macedon Ist Region	8 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
2	Bania	Macedon Ist Region	44 tetradr. unknown	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
3	Kameno pole	Macedon Ist Region	tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
4	Mramoren	Macedon Ist Region	8 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
5	Baurene	Macedon Ist Region	28 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
6	Lesura	Macedon Ist Region	15 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
7	Portitovci	Macedon/ Dyrrhachium	9 tetradr. 605 dr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
8	Bqla Slatina	Thasos	74 tetradr.	≈ 150 - 125 B.C.
9	Gradeshnica	Thasos	60 tetradr.	≈ 125- 100 B.C.
10	Osen	Thasos	60 tetradr. unknown	≈ 125- 100 B.C.
11	Novo Selo	Thasos	tetradr.	≈ 125- 100 B.C.
12	Vraca	Appolonia/Illyria/Dyrrh.	90 dr.	≈ 100 B.C.
13	Dobralevo	Thasos	unknown tetradr.	≈ 100 B.C.

Period 2 – Hoards from 1st C BC

Region 1

N.	Location	Coins provenance/type	Content	Date of Deposition
1	Aprilovo	Republic	110 den.	≈32 BC
2	Mogila	Republic	89 den.	≈31 - 25BC
3	Obzor	Republic	56 den	≈45BC
4	Maluk Porovetz	Republic	56 den.	≈45 BC
5	Provadiya I ³⁸⁹	Republic/Imperial	11 den.	≈10 BC
6	Provadiya II	Republic	10 den.	≈58 BC
7	Shumen I ³⁹⁰	Republic/Imperial	83 den.	≈ 21- 14 BC
8	Shumen II ³⁹¹	Republic	100 den.	≈ 30 BC

Region 2

N.	Location	Coins provenance/type	Content	Date of Deposition
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³⁸⁹Denarius of Augustus³⁹⁰Denarius of Augustus³⁹¹Denarius of Marcus Antonius

1	Mindya ³⁹²	Republic/Greek	9 tetr. 1 den	≈ 50 BC
2	Gabrovo I	Republic	5 +	1st C BC
3	Gabrovo II	Republic	5+ 200 den, 1	1st C BC
4	Batin ³⁹³	Republic/Greek	tetr.	≈ 54 BC
5	Rodina ³⁹⁴	Republic/Greek	50 den. 5 tetr. 67 den. 13	≈ 50 BC
6	Mindya ³⁹⁵	Republic/Greek	tetr.	≈ 60 BC
7	Varbica	Greek	59 tetr.	≈ 80 BC
8	Samovodene	Greek	25 tetr. 50 AE	≈ 100 - 80 BC

Region 3

N.	Location	Coins provenance/type	Content	Date of Deposition
1	Orqhovitsa	Republic Dyrrhachium/	291 den.	≈ 42 B.C.
2	Brestovec ³⁹⁶	Republic	30 dr. 1 den.	≈ 85 B.C.
3	Pleven I	Republic	297 den.	≈ 42 B.C.
4	Pleven II	Republic	60 den.	≈ 45 B.C.
5	Stoyanovo	Republic	72 den.	≈ 40 B.C.
6	Teteven	Republic	12 den.	≈ 31 B.C.
7	Gulqnci	Republic	461 den.	≈ 46 B.C.
8	Trastenik ³⁹⁷	Republic/Greek	63 den. 2 dr. 280 den. 1	≈ 45 B.C.
9	Orqhovitsa ³⁹⁸	Republic/Greek	dr. 338 den, 2	1st C BC
10	Koynare ³⁹⁹	Republic/Greek	dr.	1st C BC

Region 1+

N.	Location	Context	Content	Date of Deposition
1	Bukovets Staliiska	Republic	1000 den.	≈ 77 B.C.
2	Mahala	Republic	60 den.	≈ 72 B.C.
3	Komoshtica I	Republic	70 den.	≈ 90 B.C.
4	Komoshtica II	Republic	600 den.	≈ 80 B.C.
5	Komoshnica III	Republic	several hundred	≈ 80 B.C.
6	Rabisha	Republic	284 den.	≈ 76 B.C.
7	Rassovo	Republic	200 den.	≈ 80 B.C.
8	Beli Breg I	Republic	160 den	≈ 80 B.C.
9	Dolni Vadin I	Republic	≈750 den.	≈ 80 B.C.
10	Galatin ⁴⁰⁰	Republic/ Greek	10 dr. 2 tetr. ?den.	≈ 75 B.C.
11	Gradeshnitsa ⁴⁰¹	Republic/ Greek	unknown number	≈ 80 B.C.
12	Koynare ⁴⁰²	Republic/ Greek	400 den. + dr.	≈ 75 B.C.

³⁹²³⁹² 5 posthumous of Alexander; 4 Thasos; 1 rep. denarius

³⁹³ Tetradrachm from Thasos

³⁹⁴ Tetradrachms from Maroneia

³⁹⁵ Alexander posthumous + Cistophoric

³⁹⁶ Republic denarius of L. Bursio

³⁹⁷ drachms from Dyrrhachium

³⁹⁸ drachms from Dyrrhachium

³⁹⁹ drachms from Dyrrhachium

⁴⁰⁰ Coins from Macedon, Dyrrhachium, Apollonia Adriatica.

⁴⁰¹ Coins from Dyrrhachium

13	Jakimovo	Republic	70 den.	≈ 46 B.C.
14	Jakimovo II	Republic	unknown	≈ 35 B.C.
15	Altimir	Republic	unknown	≈ 31 B.C.
16	Baurene Dolna	Republic	330 den	≈ 42 B.C.
17	Gnoynitsa	Republic	1000 den.	after 50 B.C.
18	Gradesnitsa	Republic	100 den	≈ 42 B.C.
19	Kalimanitsa	Republic	70 den.	≈ 30 B.C.
20	Tishevitsa	Republic	300 den.	≈ 44 B.C.
21	Medkovets ⁴⁰³	Republic/ Greek	83 den. 3 dr.	≈ 42 B.C.
22	Rassovo I ⁴⁰⁴	Republic/ Greek	unknown number	≈ 32 B.C.
23	Vratsa ⁴⁰⁵	Republic/ Greek	500 den. + dr.	≈ 44 B.C.
24	Rassovo II	Republic	250 den.	1st C B.C.
25	Beli Breg II	Republic	18 den.	1st C B.C.
26	Bukyovtsi I	Republic	1000 den.	1st C B.C.
27	Buykovtsi II	Republic	103 den	1st C B.C.
28	Dolni Vadin II	Republic	several hundred	1st C B.C.
29	Gorni Vadin I	Republic	150 den.	1st C B.C.
30	Gorni Vadin II	Republic	several hundred	1st C B.C.
31	Kravoder I	Republic	100 den.	1st C B.C.
32	KravoderII	Republic	100 den.	1st C B.C.

Period 3- Hoards from 1st – 2nd C AD

N.	Location	Coins provenance/type	Content	Date of Deposition
Region 1				
1	Jitnitsa	Republic/Imperial	10 RRD 1430 RID	≈AD 120 - 138
2	Prelez	Republic/Imperial	86 RRD 302 RID	≈AD 97/8
Region 2				
Tchervena voda				
3		Republic/Imperial	45 RRD 844 RID	≈119 - 124 AD
4	Lesicheri ⁴⁰⁶	Imperial	AE 31	≈119 - 138 AD
Region 3				
5	Belene ⁴⁰⁷	Early Imperial	unknown number bronzes	≈ 50 AD
6	Belene ⁴⁰⁸	Republic/ Imperial	84 rep. den. 36 imp. Den.	≈ 14 - 37 AD
7	Dolni Dubnik	Republic/ Imperial	87 rep. 47 imp. Den.	≈ 70 AD
8	Gigen I	Republic/ Imperial	400 den.	≈ 107 AD
9	Gigen II	Republic/ Imperial	36 RRD and 16 RID	≈ 102 AD
10	Gigen III	Republic/ Imperial	33 RRD 15 RID	≈ 102 AD
Region 4				
11	Altimir ⁴⁰⁹	Imperial	11 den.	≈ 105 AD
12	Gradeshnitsa ⁴¹⁰	Republic/ Imperial	435 RD and 336 ID	≈ 105 AD
13	Kladorub ⁴¹¹	Republic/ Imperial	59 RD and 1 ID	≈ 21-26 AD
14	Koynare	Republic/ Imperial	88 RD and 105 ID	≈ 85 AD

⁴⁰²Coins from Dyrrhachium

⁴⁰³Coins from Dyrrhachium + Mark Antony

⁴⁰⁴Coins from Dyrrhachium + Mark Antony

⁴⁰⁵Coins from Dyrrhachium

⁴⁰⁶22 Sestertii and 9 Dupondii of Trajan- Hadrian

⁴⁰⁷Latest coin is AE as of Claudius/Countermarked by legio V Alaudae

⁴⁰⁸Latest coin is AR denarius of Tiberius

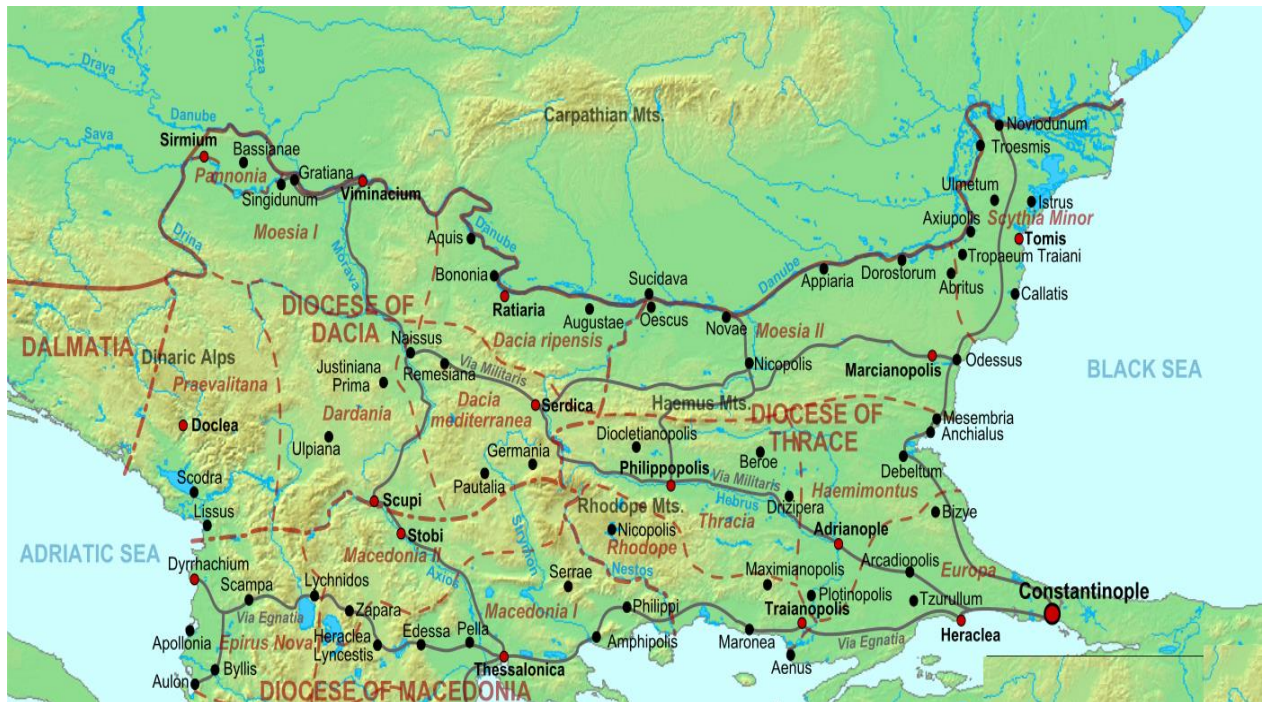
⁴⁰⁹Secind Dacian War

⁴¹⁰Secind Dacian War

⁴¹¹Thracian revolt

Chapter IV

List of Figures and results:



Map Including all of the Balkan Mints.

The coastal mints of Moesia Inferior

The coastal mints of Moesia Inferior were located at Tomis, Callatis, Istrus/Istrus, Dyonisopolis and Odessus. All of these cities were founded as Greek colonies during the Archaic and Hellenistic periods. Their coinage lasted for six or seven centuries, and may be considered ‘traditional’ for the region and the province.⁴¹²

Odessus: The coins of Odessus are among those coins from the coastal mints that are most frequently found across the province. The total number of hoards which contain coins from Odessus is 45 (fig. 3). Six were found in Region I, seven in Region II, and the remaining 32

⁴¹²Varbanov 2000, 9.

in Region III. The overall number of coins is 614; their distribution is as follows: Region I contains 11.4% of the coins, Region II 1.46%, and Region III 84.14% (fig. 3.1). The highest concentration of coins is along and very close to the Black Sea coast, around Marcianopolis, and in the West close to the border with Thrace. There is also a relatively high concentration of coins from Odessus in the rural areas of South Dobrudja, east of Marcianopolis.



Fig. 3 Distribution of the coins from Odessus

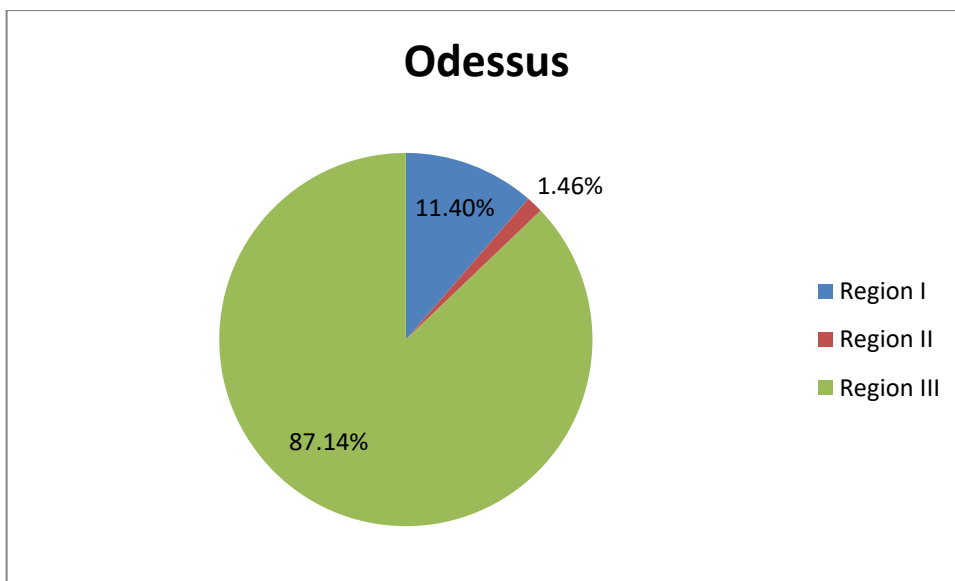


Fig. 3.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Dyonisopolis: Dyonisopolis, modern-day Baltchik, is located 20 miles north of Odessus.

Its coinage is represented in a total of 25 hoards, with 110 coins – one hoard is in Region I, four in Region II, and 20 in Region III (fig. 4). The quantity of coins per region is as follows: Region I – 9.90%, Region II – 4.40%, and Region III – 85.70% (fig. 4.1). The circulation pattern is very similar to that of the Odessus coins, with a concentration along the coast and around Marcianopolis. It is interesting to note that, unlike the coins from Odessus, those issued from Dyonisopolis are almost completely absent in South Dobrudja.

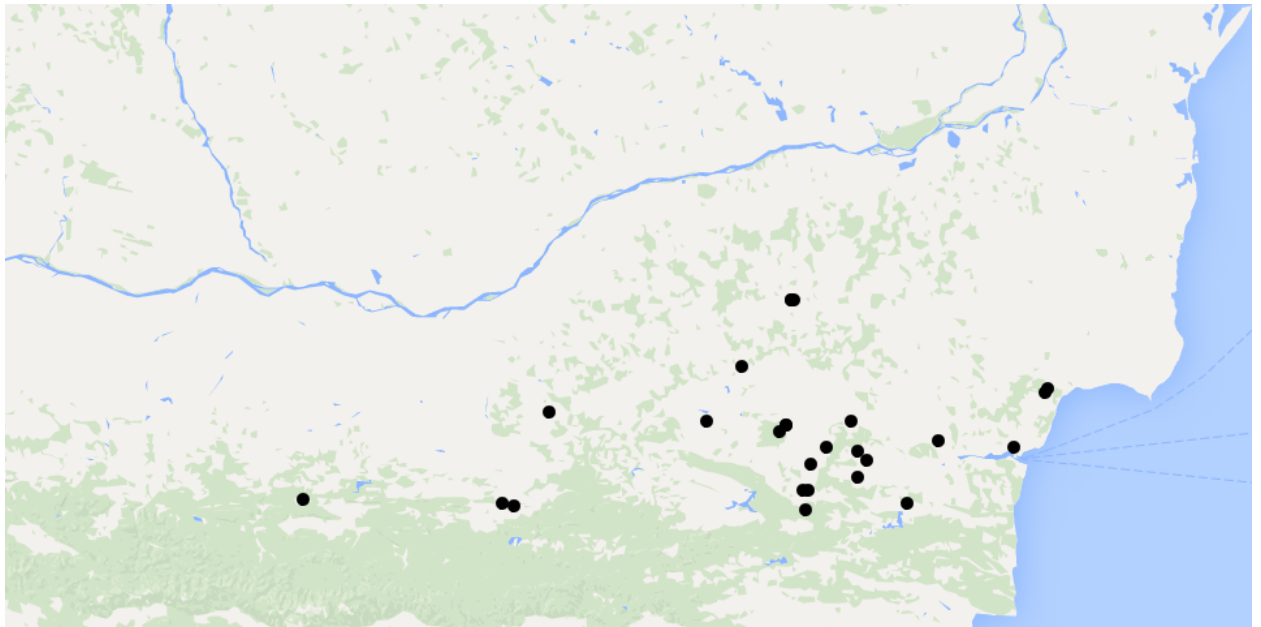


Fig. 4 Distribution of the coins from Dyonisopolis

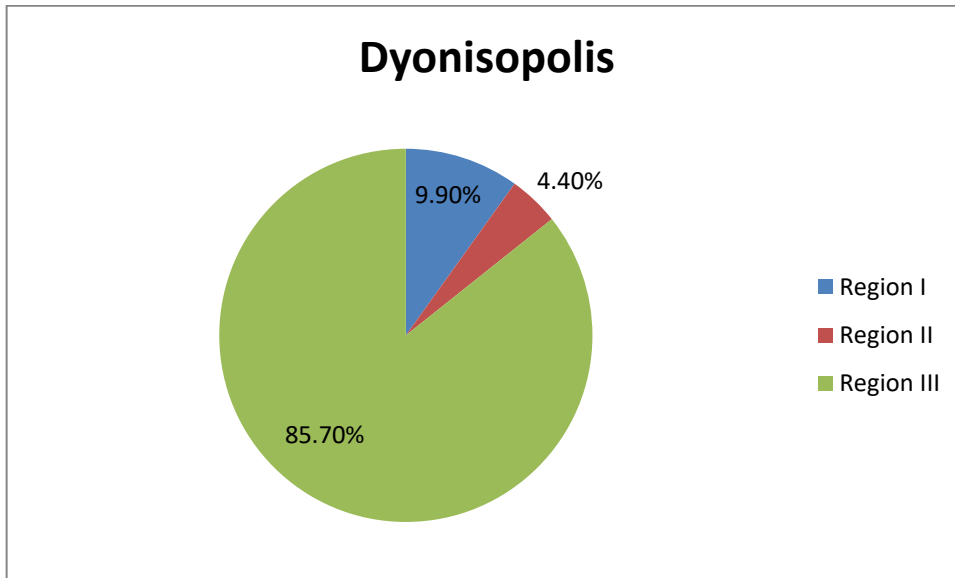


Fig. 4.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Tomis: The pattern of distribution and the respective quantities of coins from Tomis are very similar to those from Odessus and Dyonisopolis. Coins from Tomis are found in four hoards in Region I, eight in Region II, and 28 in Region III (fig. 5). The total number of coins is 198, divided up among the regions as follows: Region I – 8.58%, Region II – 6.06%, and Region III – 85.36% (fig. 5.1). It is interesting to note that coins from Tomis are very often found together with coins issued in Odessus, especially in the area of South Dobrudja.

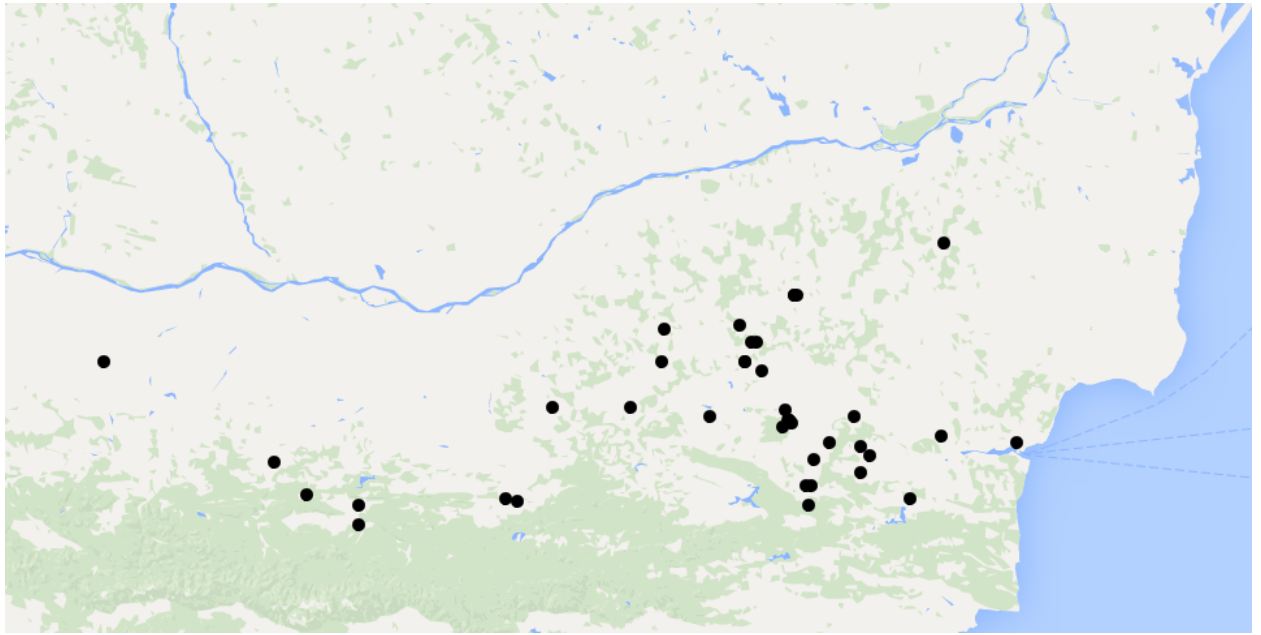


Fig. 5 Distribution of the coins from Tomis

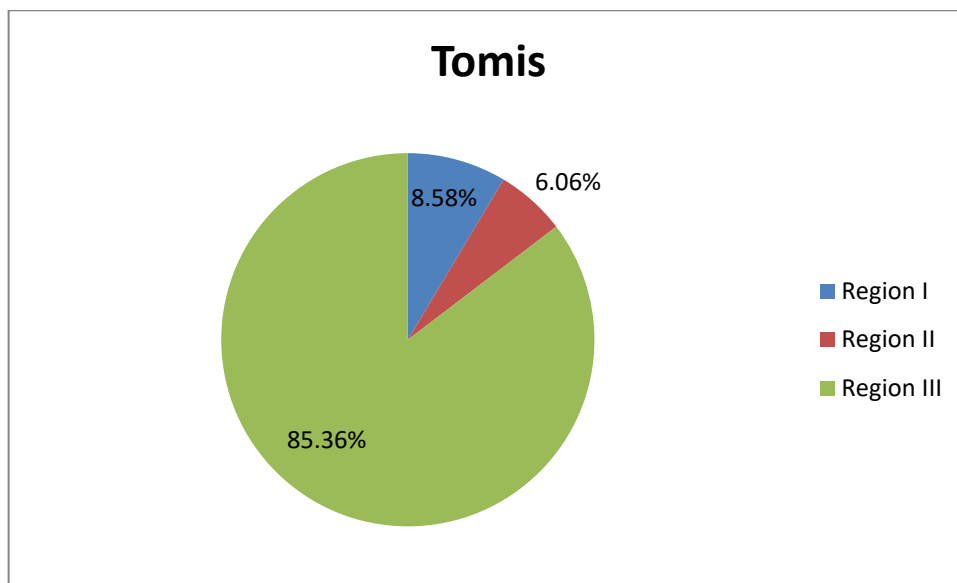


Fig. 5.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Istrus and Callatis :Among all the Moesian mints, the coinages of Istrus and Callatis are the least frequently found in hoards. The coins are present in six hoards, comprising eight coins – two in Region 1, and three each in Regions II and III (fig. 6). Proportionally, 37.50% of the coins are found in Region II and 62.50% in Region III (fig. 6.1). Although the sample is too

small for any significant observations to be made about distribution, it is worth mentioning that five out of the six hoards are found in a relatively small region, namely South and South-West Dobrudja.

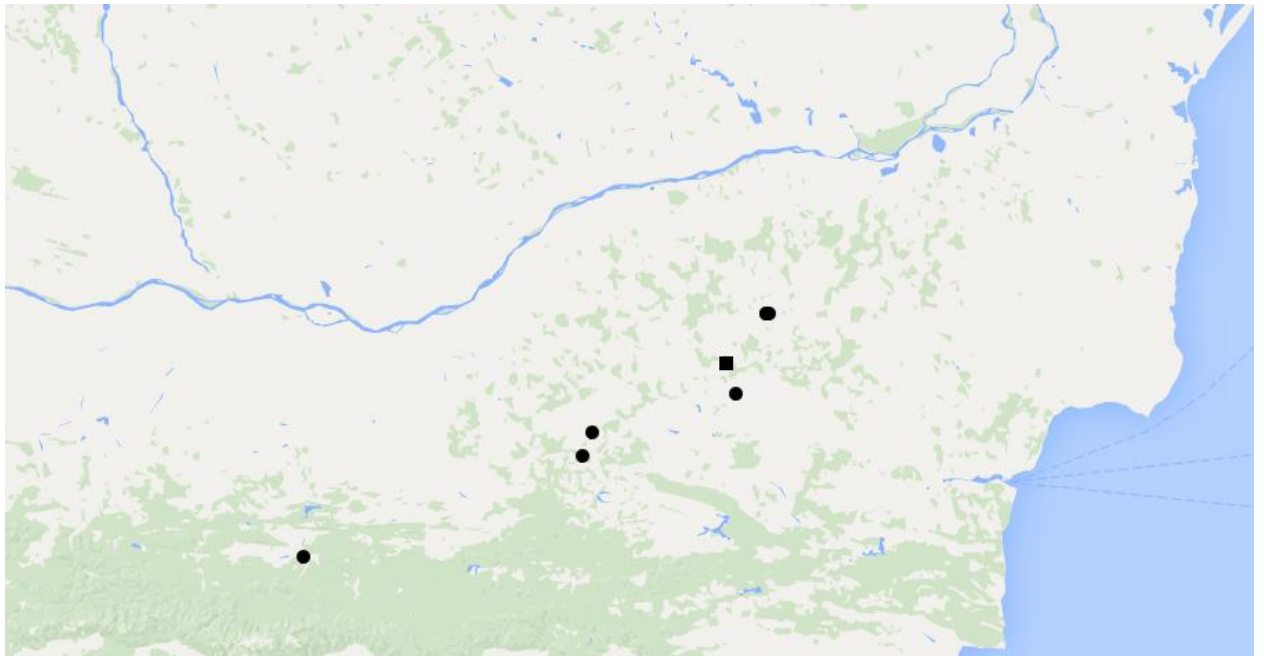


Fig. 6 Distribution of the coins from Callatis and Istrus

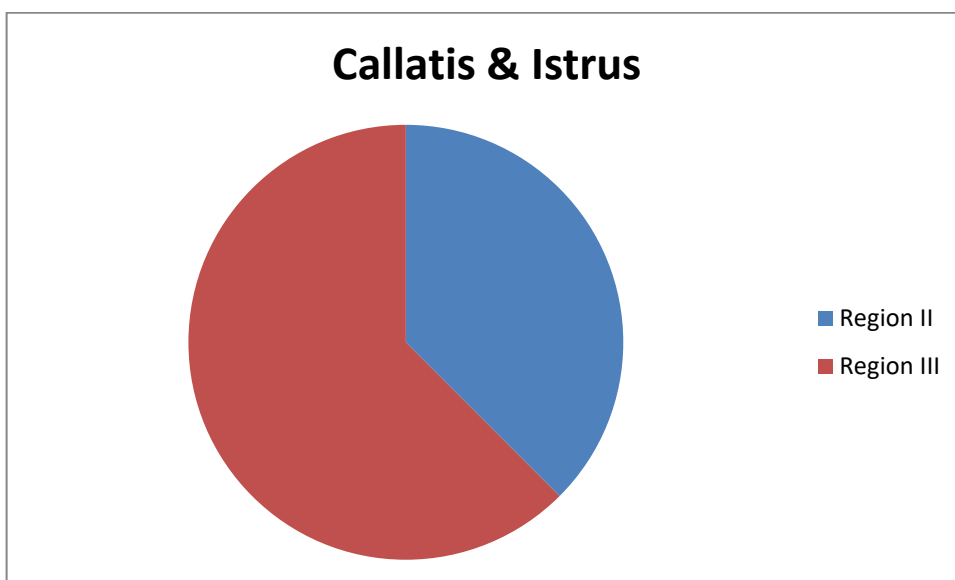


Fig 6.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

The 'internal' cities – Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis

Nicopolis ad Istrum: The total number of coin hoards from Nicopolis ad Istrum found in the province of Moesia Inferior is 51, comprising a total of 2,715 coins. There are 12 hoards in Region I, 16 in Region II, and 23 in Region III (fig.7). The highest concentration of coins is in Region I, with 41.12%, followed by Region III with 35.30% and Region II with 23.49% (fig. 7.1).



Fig. 7 Distribution of the coins from Nicopolis ad Istrum

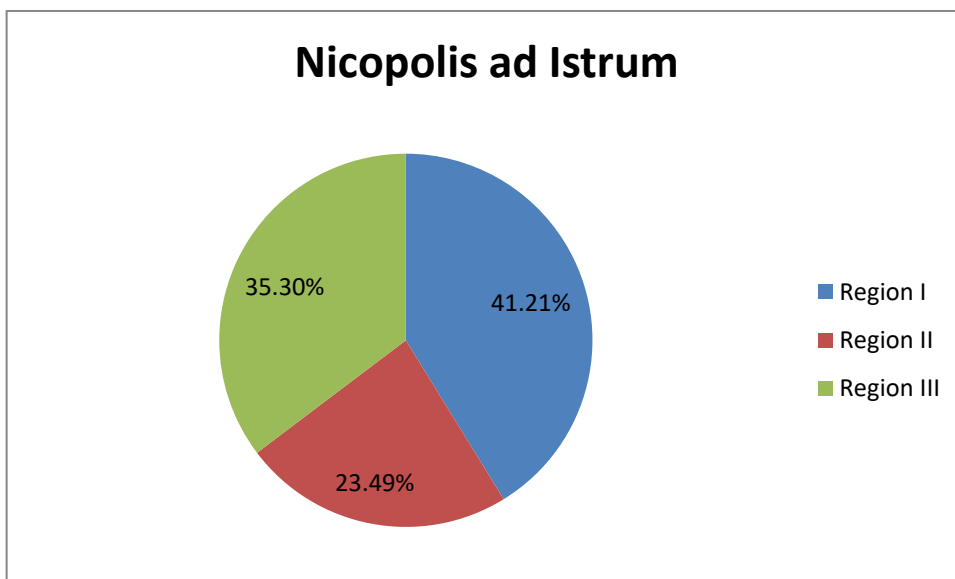


Fig. 7.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Marcianopolis: The civic coinage of Marcianopolis is represented in the highest number of hoards and coins across the province. There are 72 hoards with a total number of 4,006 coins. There are 11 hoards in Region I, 15 in Region II, and 46 in Region III (fig. 8). The highest concentration of coins is in Region III, with 53.03%, followed by Region I with 33.17% and Region II with 13.80%. It is very important to highlight that the Malinovo hoard discovered in Region I alone contains over 1,179 coins from Marcianopolis, which heavily influences these results. If this hoard is excluded from the analysis, the proportions are as follows: Region III – 75.44%, Region II – 19.26%, and Region I – 5.30% (fig. 8.1).

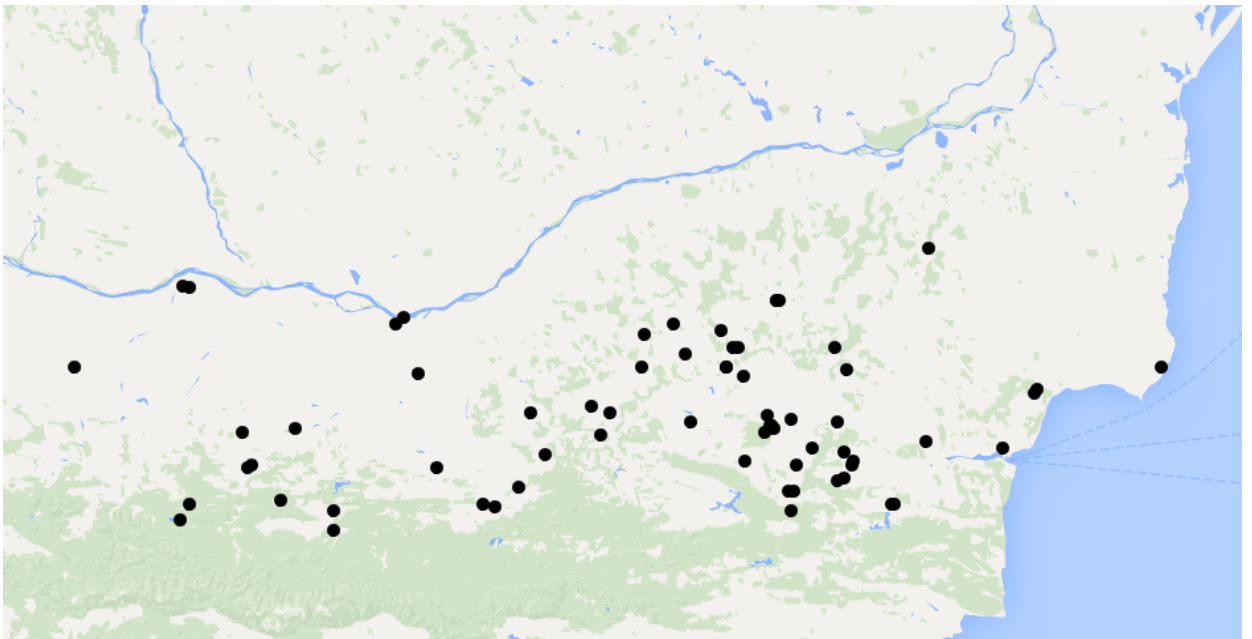


Fig. 8 Distribution of the coins from Marcianopolis

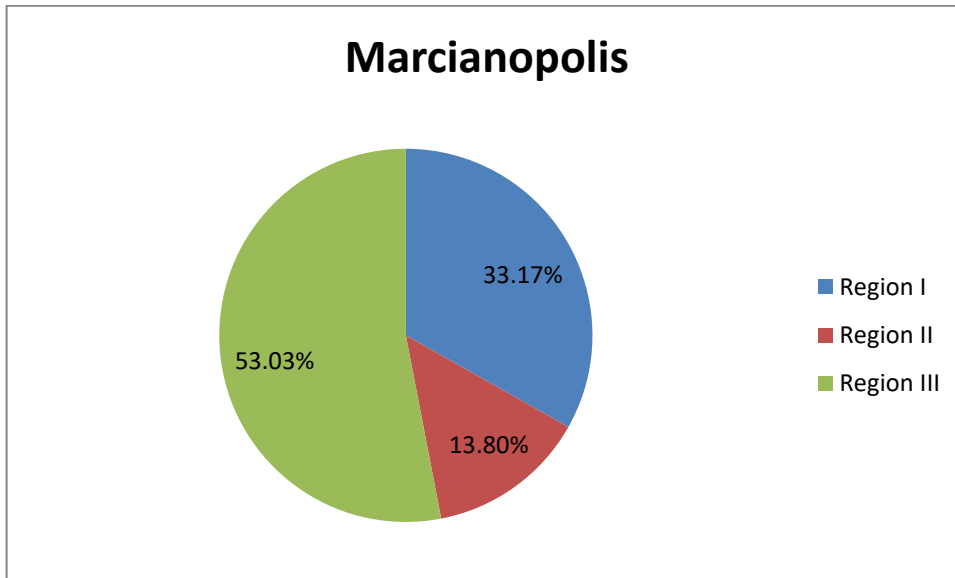


Fig. 8.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

'Foreign' coinage

Analysis of the distribution of civic coinage in Moesia Inferior remains incomplete without including all of the 'foreign' coins recovered in the province. The presence of civic coins from other cities and provinces highlights connections between Moesia Inferior and other parts of the Empire. In order to present the evidence systematically, the study will analyse the foreign coins by province. The civic coins from Thrace and Moesia Superior will be analysed separately by city, but the coinage from Macedonia, Achaëa and Asia Minor will be combined owing to the very high number of cities but very low numbers of coins from these areas. It is important to compare the circulation patterns of 'foreign' and 'local' coinage in order to explain the movement of civic coins in the region.

Thrace

Coastal cities of Thrace: Mesembria, Anchialus, Apollonia Pontica and Bizya.⁴¹³

Anchialus: Coins from Anchialus are often found in the monetary assemblages of Moesia Inferior. There are 55 hoards which contain civic coins from Anchialus, with a total number of 441 coins – nine hoards are found in Region I, 11 in Region II, and 33 in Region III (fig. 9). The highest concentration of coins is in Region III – 57.67%, followed by Region I – 33.33%, and Region II – 9% (fig. 9.1).

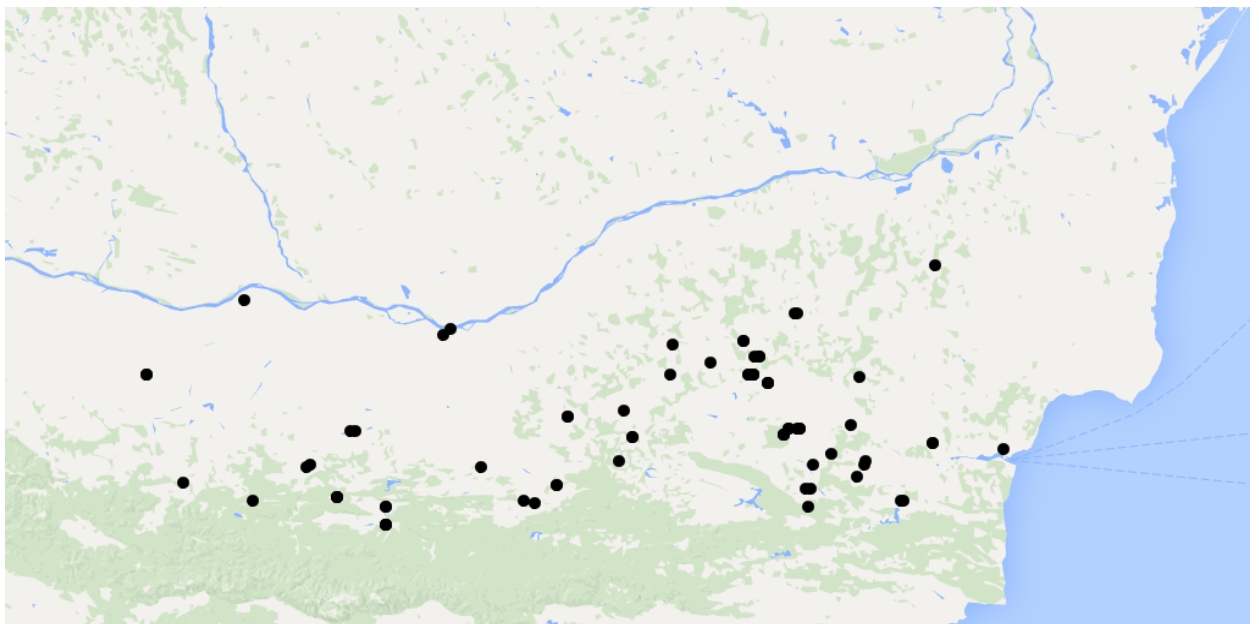


Fig. 9 Distribution of the coins from Anchialus

⁴¹³ Bizya is located approximately 15 miles from the coast, but the pattern of monetary distribution coincides with those of the coastal mints so it is attributed in this group.

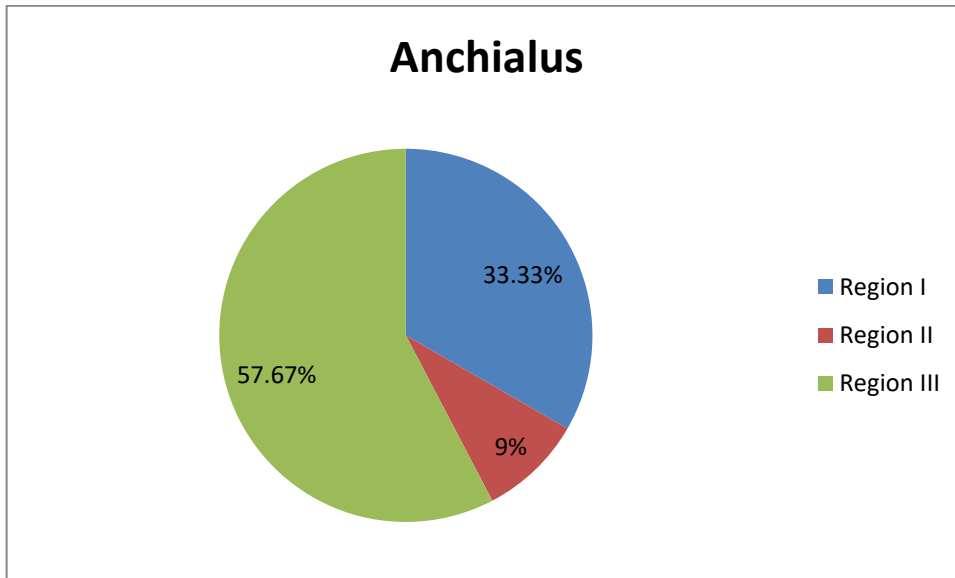


Fig. 9.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Mesembria: There are 31 coin hoards in Moesia Inferior which contain civic coins from Mesembria. The total number of coins is 176. The majority of the hoards are in Region III – 24 hoards, followed by Region I – three hoards, and Region II – two hoards (fig. 10). Proportionally, the quantity of coins is as follows: Region I – 3.90%, Region II – 1.13%, and Region III – 94.97% (fig. 10.1).

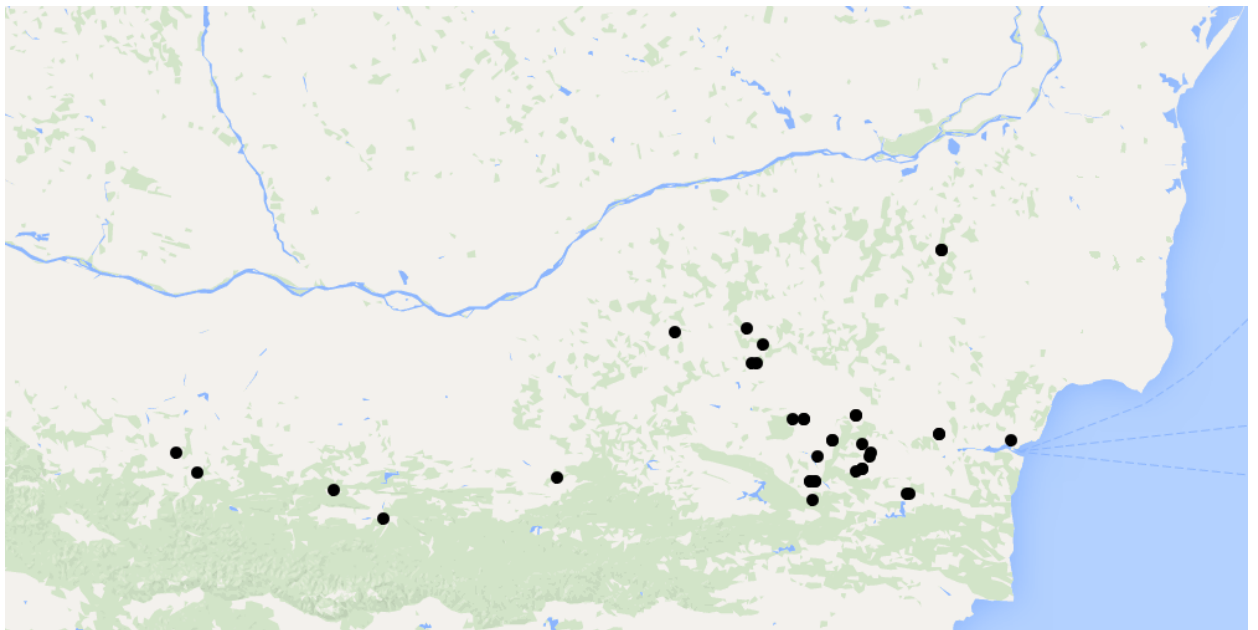


Fig. 10 Distribution of the coins from Mesembria

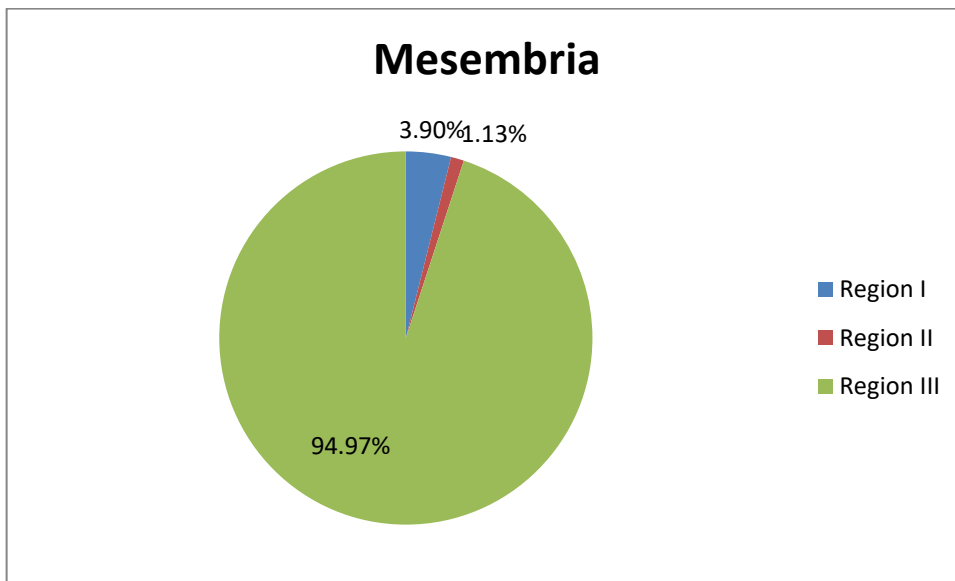


Fig. 10.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Apollonia Pontica: Coins from Apollonia Pontica are very scarce in Moesia Inferior: one hoard from Region I and one from Region II respectively contain one coin from Apollonia Pontica (fig. 11). This result is surprising because the Museum of Varna and the Museum of Devnya both have a large number of coins from this mint in their collections; many such coins have also been discovered as single finds in Region III. It is not obvious how to explain this discrepancy.

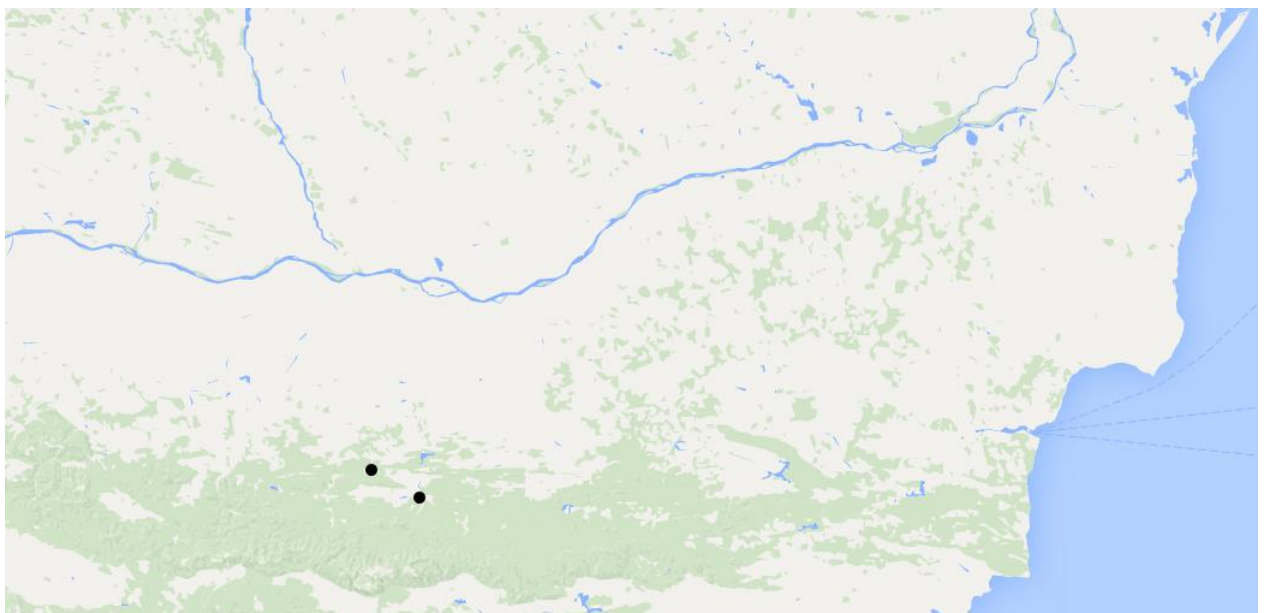


Fig. 11 Distribution of the coins from Apollonia Pontica

Biziya:The civic coinage of Biziya is represented in 9 coin hoards. There is one hoard in Region I, one in Region II and seven in Region III (fig. 11.1). Proportionally, the number of coins per region is as follows: 23 % of the coins are found in Region I, 7.69% in Region II, and 69.31% in Region III (fig. 11.2).

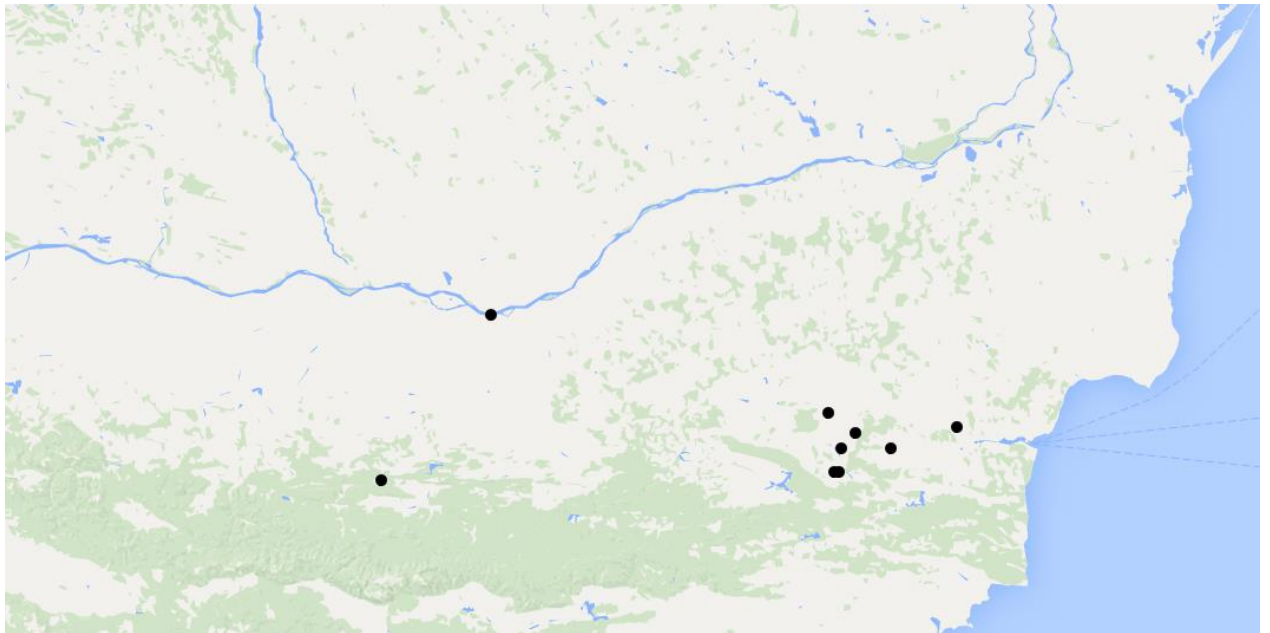


Fig. 11.1 Distribution of the coins from Biziya

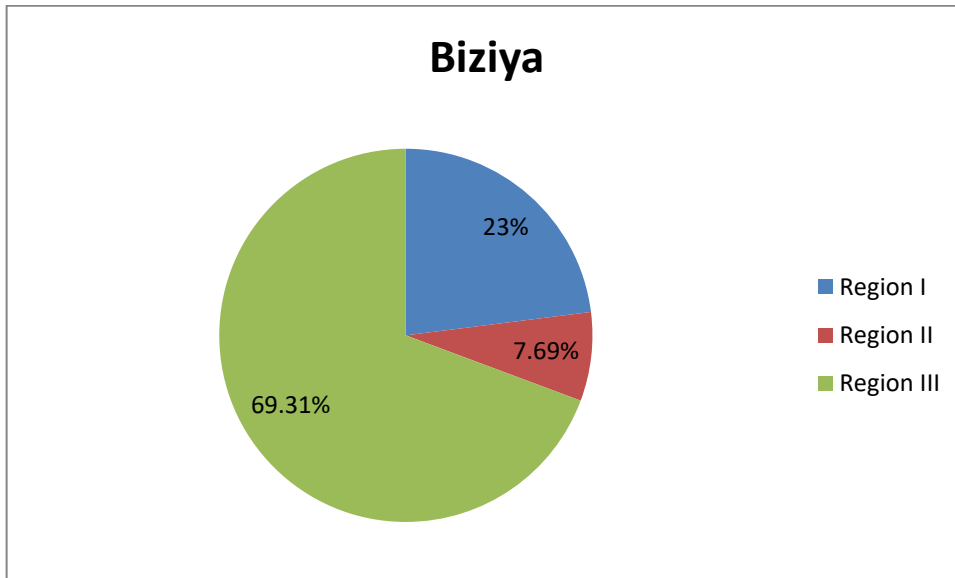


Fig. 11.2 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Internal cities of Thrace: Serdica, Hadrianopolis, Pautalia, Philippopolis, Deultum, Nicopolis ad Nestum, Augusta Traiana and Biziya.

Serdica: There are 21 hoards in Moesia Inferior which contain civic coins from the mint of Serdica. The total number of coins is 202. The quantity of coins per region is as follows: Region I has 12 hoards, which represent 94.55% of the coins; Region II has two hoards, which represent 1% of the coins; and Region III has seven hoards, 4.45% of the coins (fig. 12 /12.1).

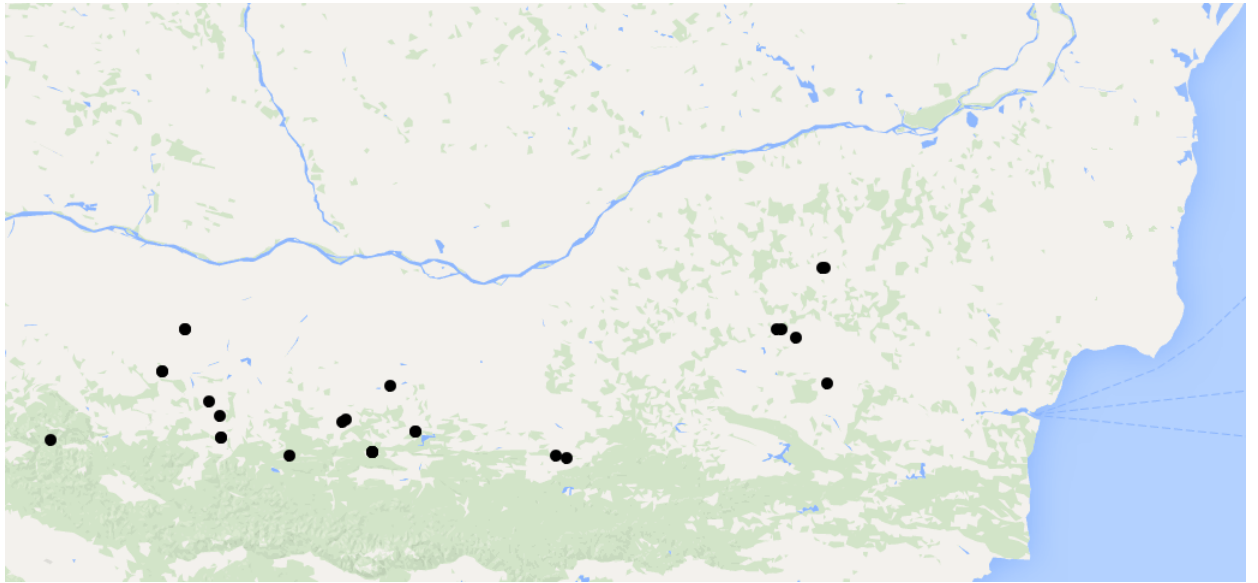


Fig. 12 Distribution of the coins from Serdica

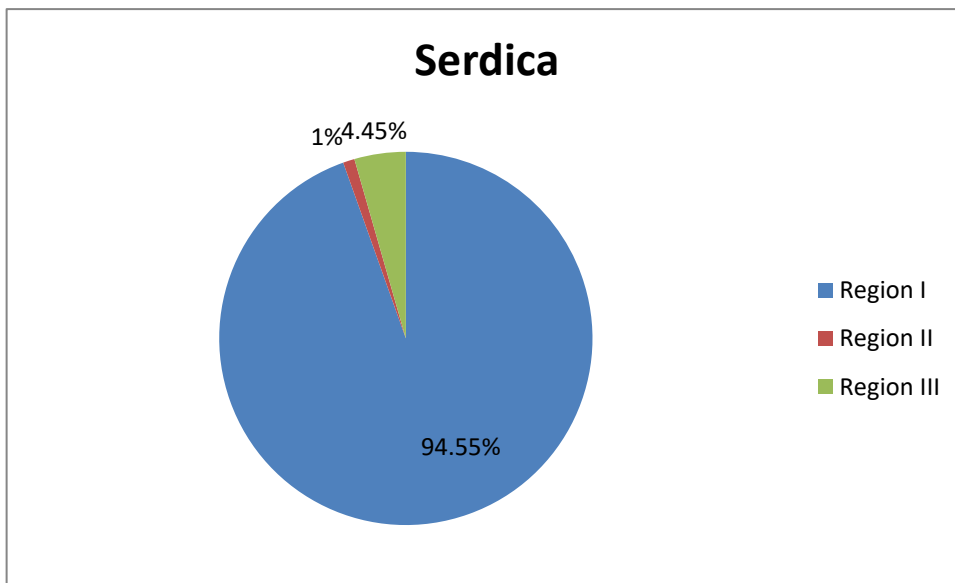


Fig. 12.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Hadrianopolis: The civic coins of Hadrianopolis are those most often found in the province of Moesia Inferior. In total there are 38 hoards, containing 555 coins – 13 hoards in Region I, 10 in Region II, and 15 in Region III (fig. 13). Proportionally the quantity of coins is as follows: Region I – 64.85%, Region II – 9.90%, and Region III – 25.25% (fig 13.1). Jurukova (1986)

observed that issues from Hadrianopolis are more often found in hoards in Moesia Inferior than in Thrace.

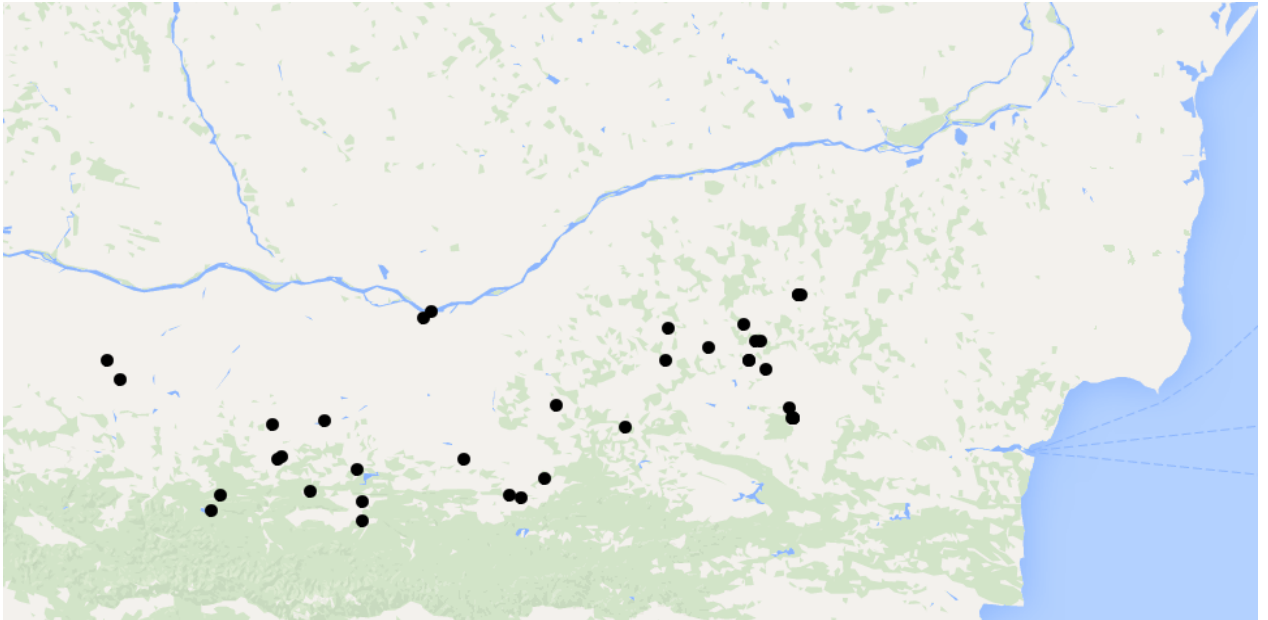


Fig. 13 Distribution of the coins from Hadrianopolis

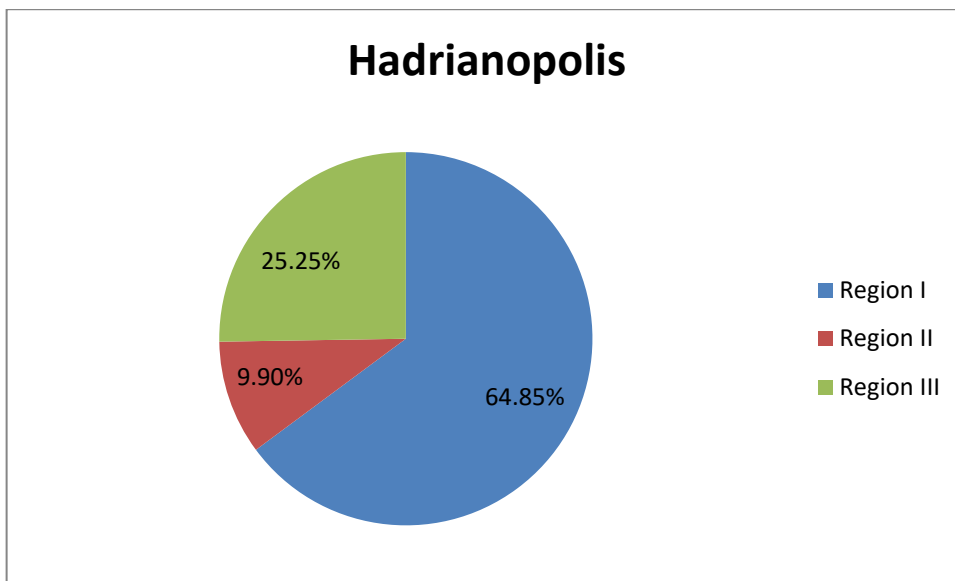


Fig 13.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Pautalia: There are 21 hoards in Moesia Inferior which contain provincial coins from the mint of Pautalia, with a total number of 134 coins. There are nine hoards in Region I, seven in

Region II and five in Region III (fig 14). Region I contains 90% of the coins, and Region II and Region III 5% each (fig 14.1).



Fig 14 Distribution of the coins from Pautalia

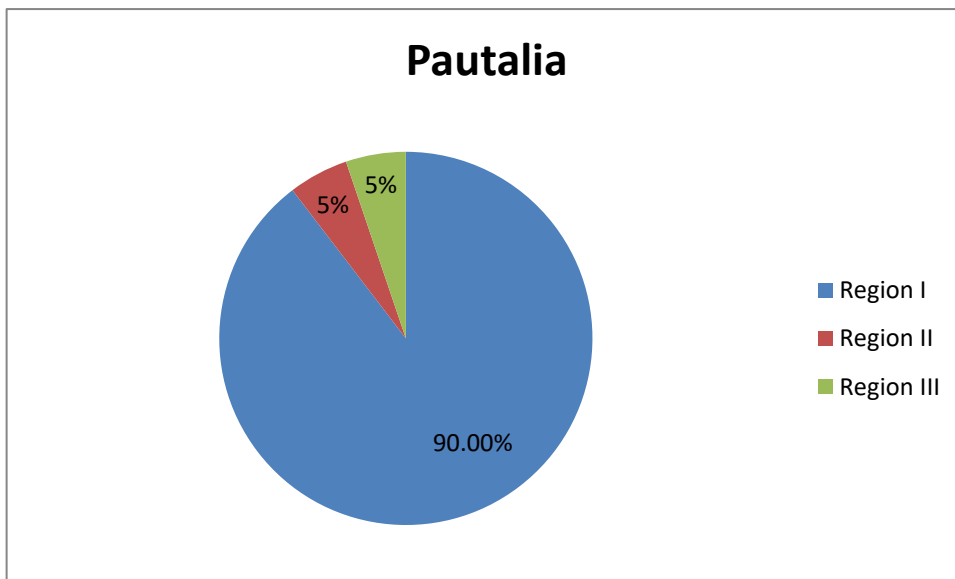


Fig 14.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Philippopolis: The coinage of Philippopolis is represented by 62 coins found in 19 hoards in Moesia Inferior. There are eight hoards in Region I, five in Region II and six in Region III (fig.

15). Proportionally the quantity of coins per region is as follows: Region I – 61.29%, Region II – 20.96%, and Region III – 17.75% (fig. 15.1).

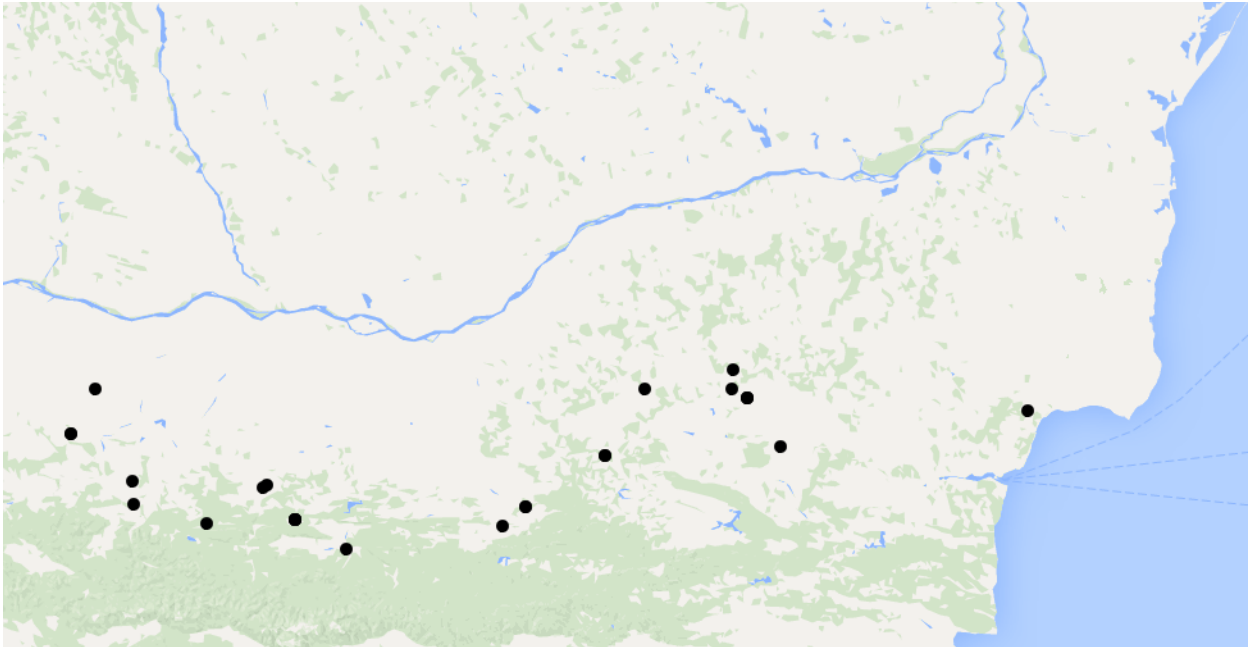


Fig. 15 Distribution of the coins from Philippopolis

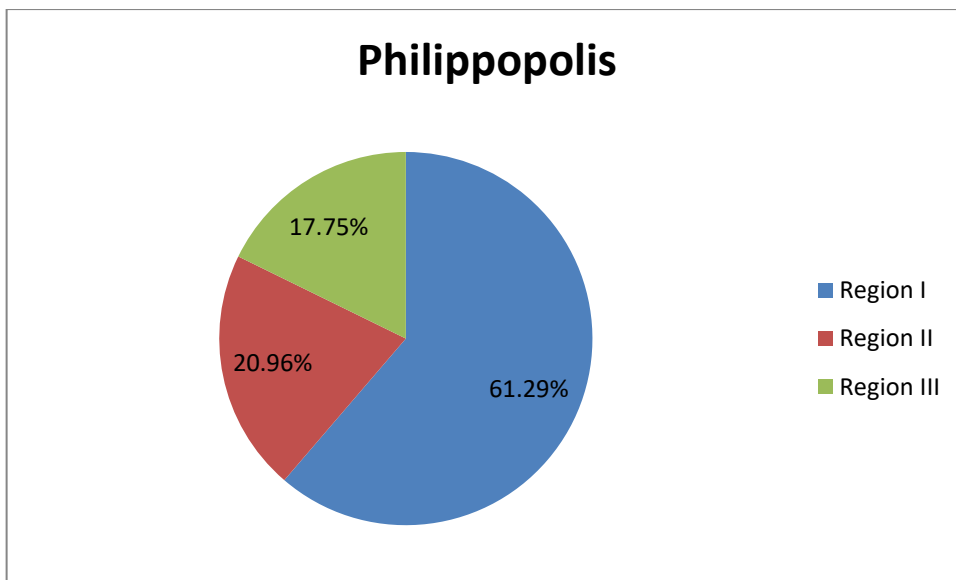


Fig. 15.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Deultum: The civic coinage of Deultum is represented by 16 coins found in six hoards, two in each of the examined regions (fig. 16). Proportionally, the number of coins per region is as follows: 50% of the coins are found in Region I, 12.50% in Region II, and 37.50% in Region III (fig. 16.1).

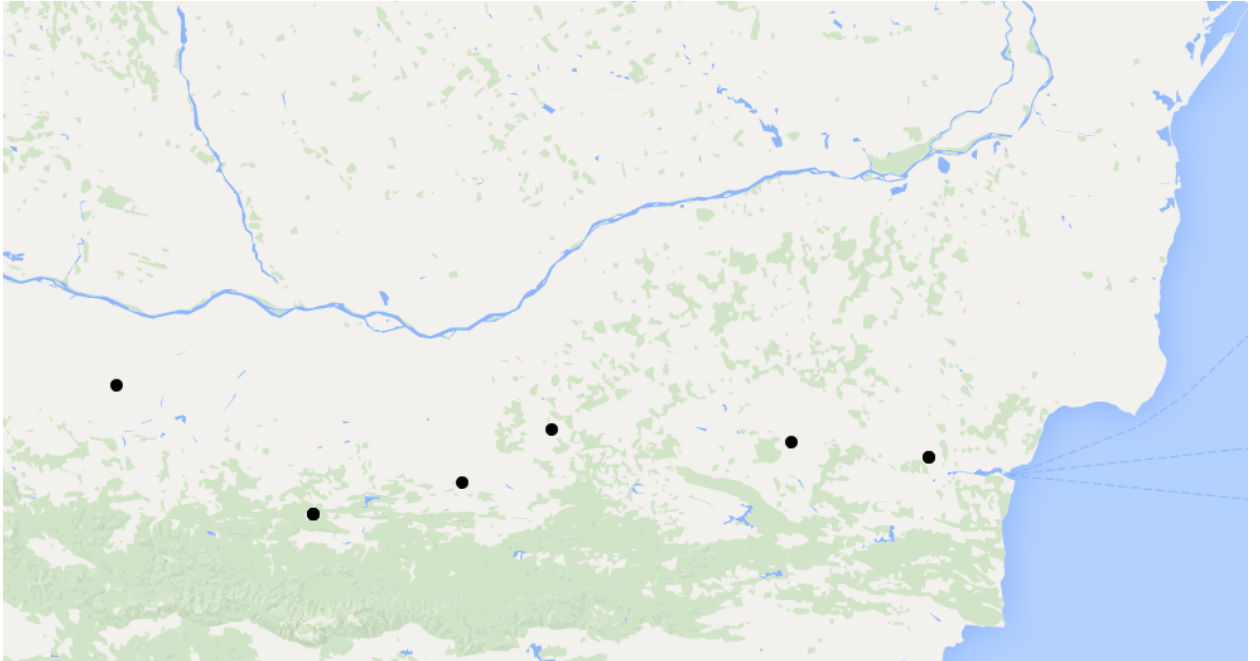


Fig 16 Distribution of the coins from Deultum

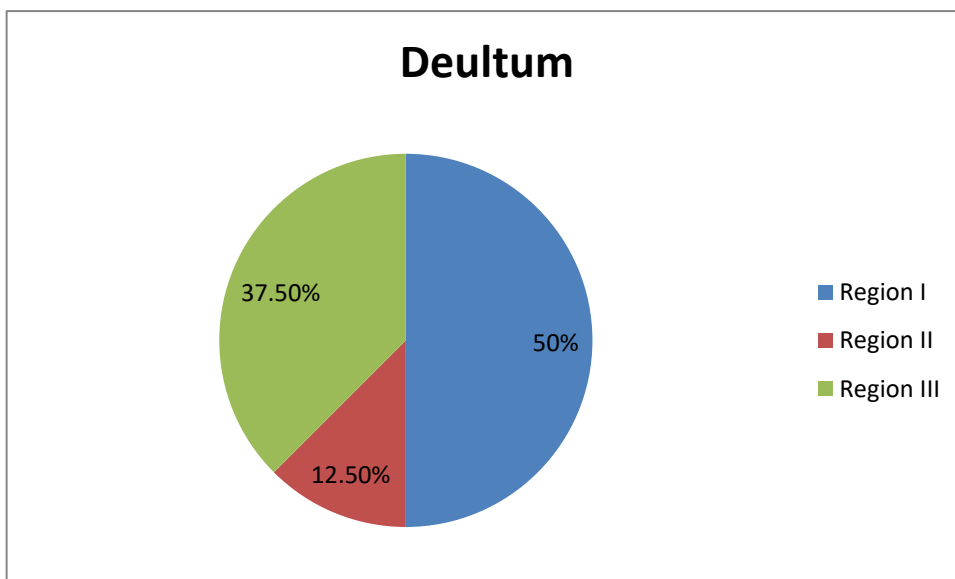


Fig 16.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Nicopolis ad Nestum: The provincial coinage of Nicopolis ad Nestum is represented by 33 coins found in five hoards. Four of these assemblages were recovered in Region I and one in Region III (fig. 17). Proportionally, the number of coins per region is as follows: Region I – 39.40%, and Region III – 60.60% (fig. 17.1).

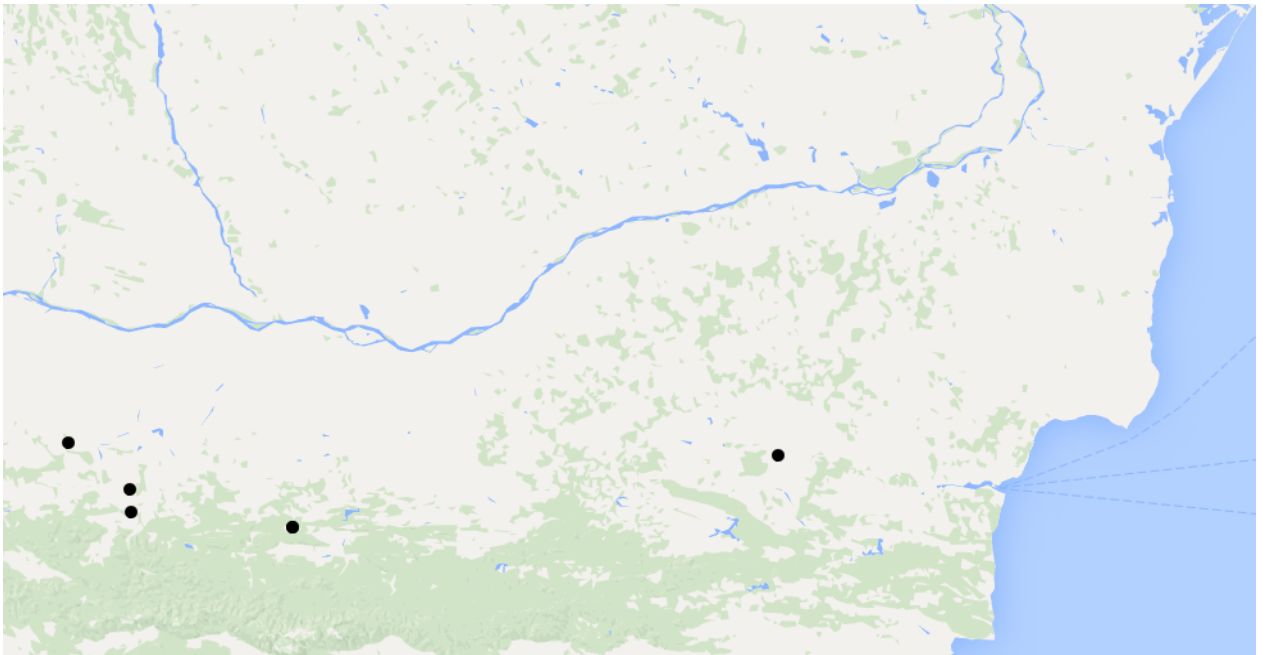


Fig 17 Distribution of the coins from Nicopolis ad Nestum

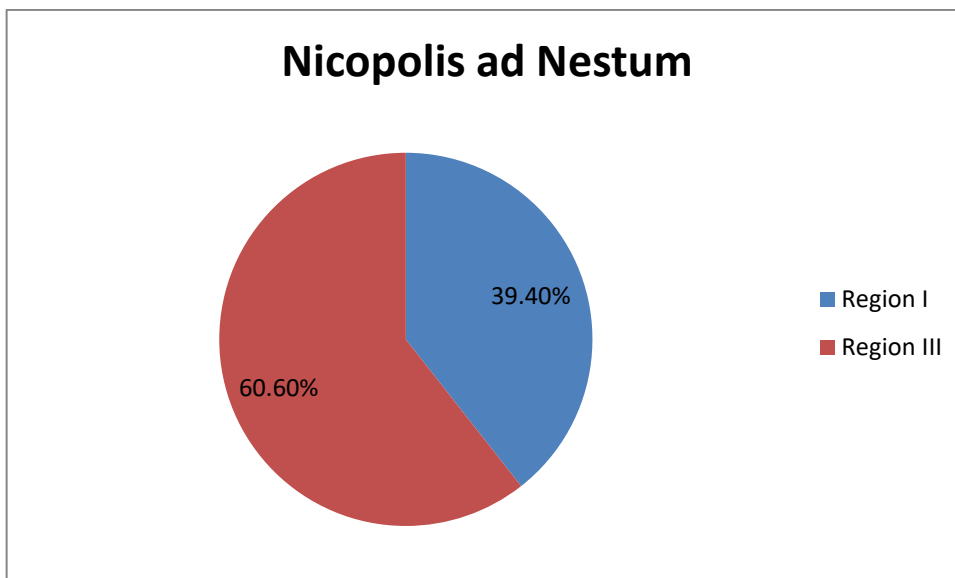


Fig. 17.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Augusta Traiana: The civic coinage of Augusta Trajana is represented by 56 coins found in 17 hoards. There are 11 hoards in Region I, three in Region II, and four in Region III (fig. 18). Proportionally, the coins per region are as follows: Region I – 87.50%, Region II – 5.35%, and Region III – 7.15% (fig.18.1).

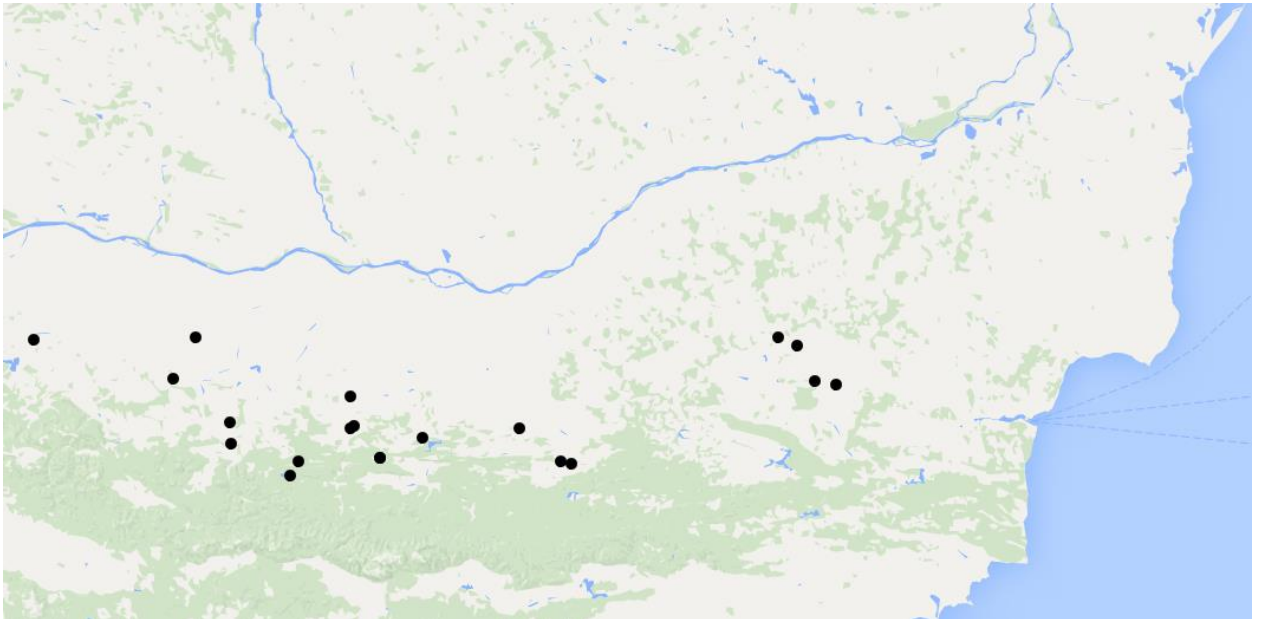


Fig. 18 Distribution of the coins from Augusta Trajana

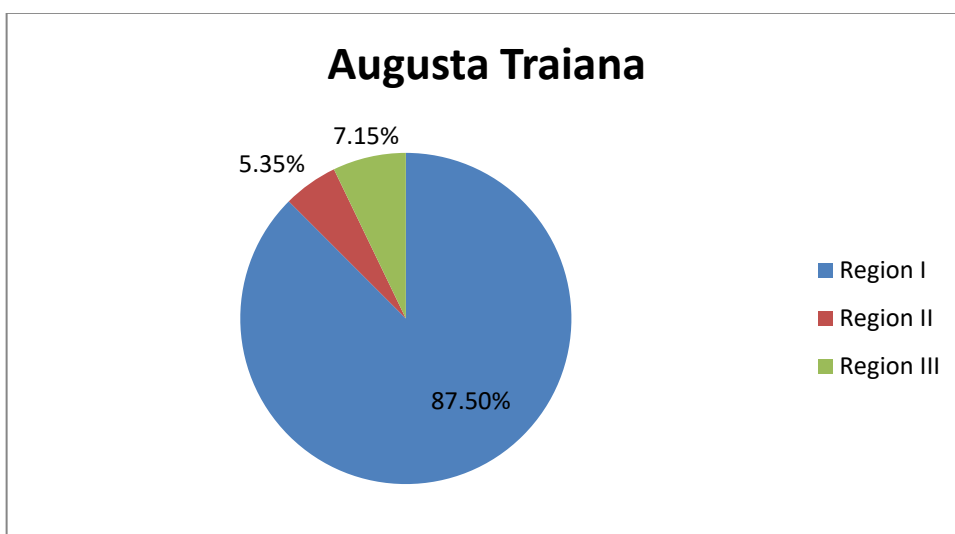


Fig. 18.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Moesia Superior – Viminacium

Viminacium: Despite the fact that the mint of Viminacium was founded much later than the other mints in the region, under Gordian III, it was extremely active and for several years issued coinage on a large scale. Although the number of single finds from Viminacium in Moesia Inferior is significant, the number of hoards containing coins from this mint is relatively low. In the province there are 10 hoards which contain coins from Viminacium, with a total number of 31 coins. There are five hoards in Region I, one in Region II and four in Region III (fig. 20). The proportions are as follows: Region I – 67.74%, Region II – 9.60%, and Region III – 22.66% (fig. 21).



Fig. 20 Distribution of the coins from Viminacium

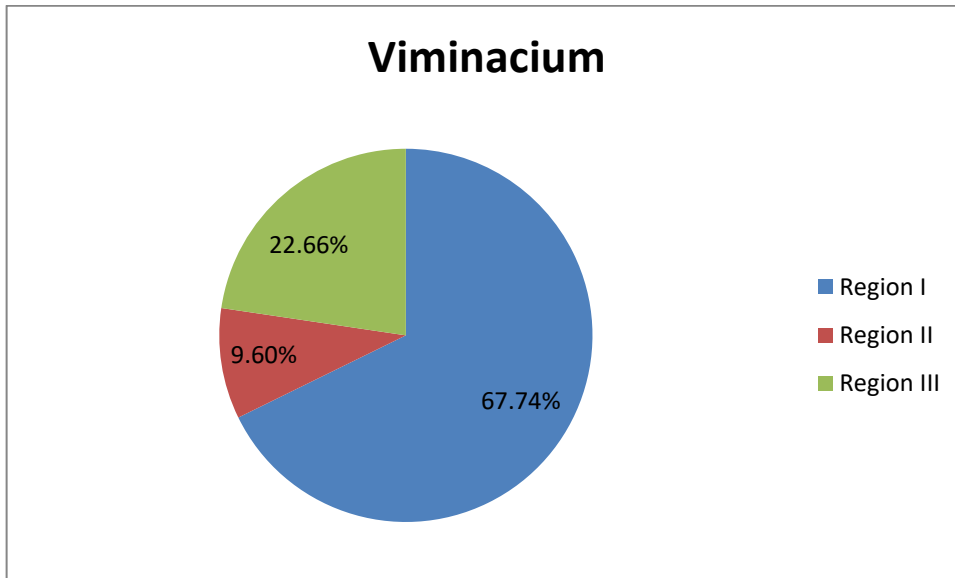


Fig 20.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Other “foreign”: Asia Minor

A variety of coins from other provinces have also been recovered in Moesia Inferior, but they represent less than 1% of the total. These include civic coins from the following cities; Trajanopolis, Plotinopolis, Nicea, Nicomedia, Juliopolis, Flaviopolis, Byzantium, Cappadocia, and Caesarea.⁴¹⁴ The total number of hoards which contain coins from these cities is 26 and the total number of coins is 93. There are seven hoards in Region I, seven in Region II and 12 in Region III (fig. 21). The proportions are as follows: Region I – 67.74%, Region II – 11%, and Region III – 21.26% (fig. 21.1).

⁴¹⁴ The evidence also includes 1 coin from Corinth (Greece) and one coin from Stobi (Macedon)



Fig. 21 Distribution of the coins from Asia Minor

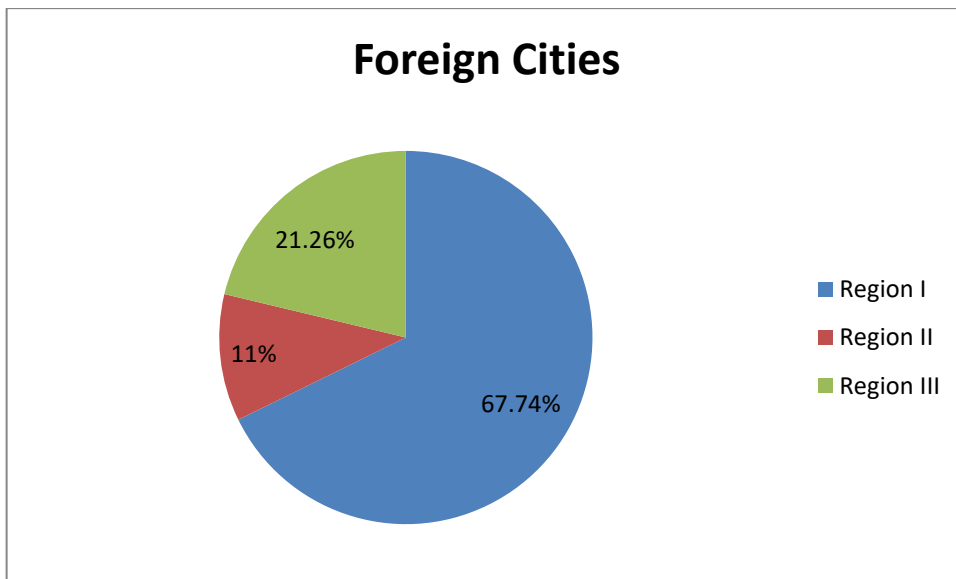


Fig. 21.1 Number of coins (in %) per region.

Chronological Study:

Period I and Period II (Trajan, Hadrian and Antonine Period)

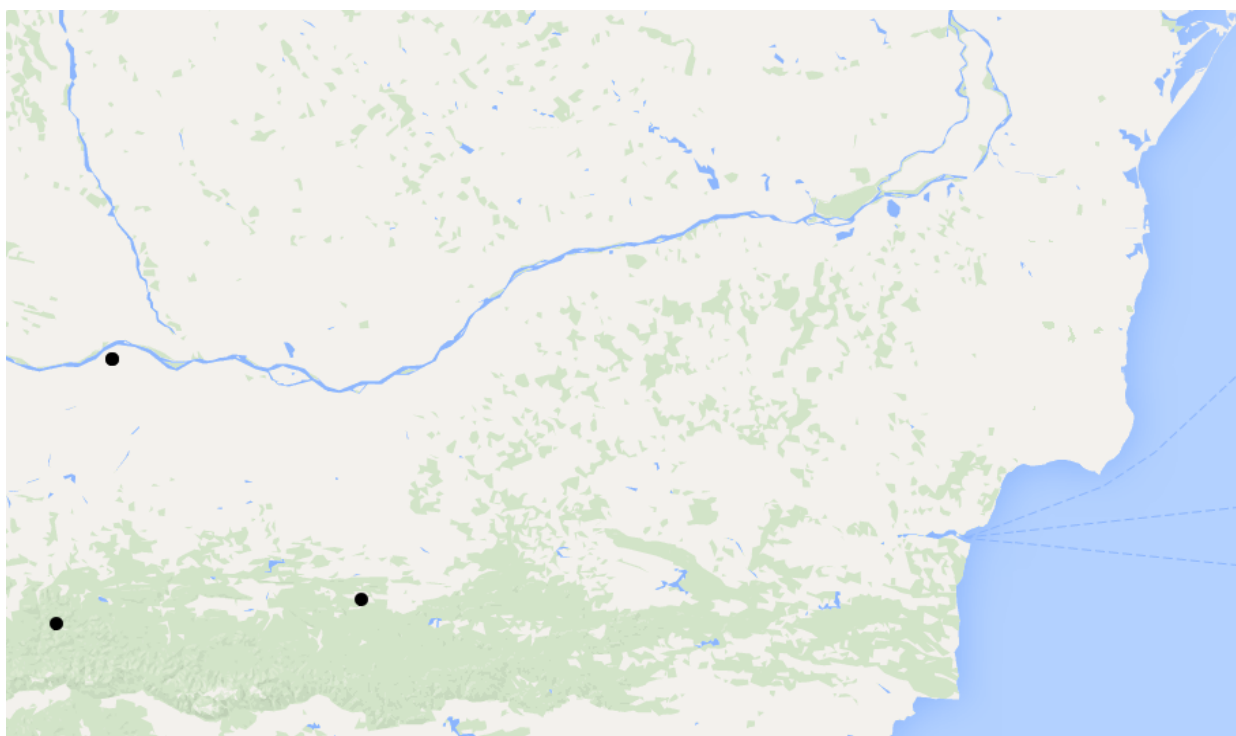


Fig. 31. Hoard distribution from Period I - II – Trajan, Hadrian and Antonine.

Period III – IV (Septimus Severus to Maximinus Thrax – AD 193 – 238)

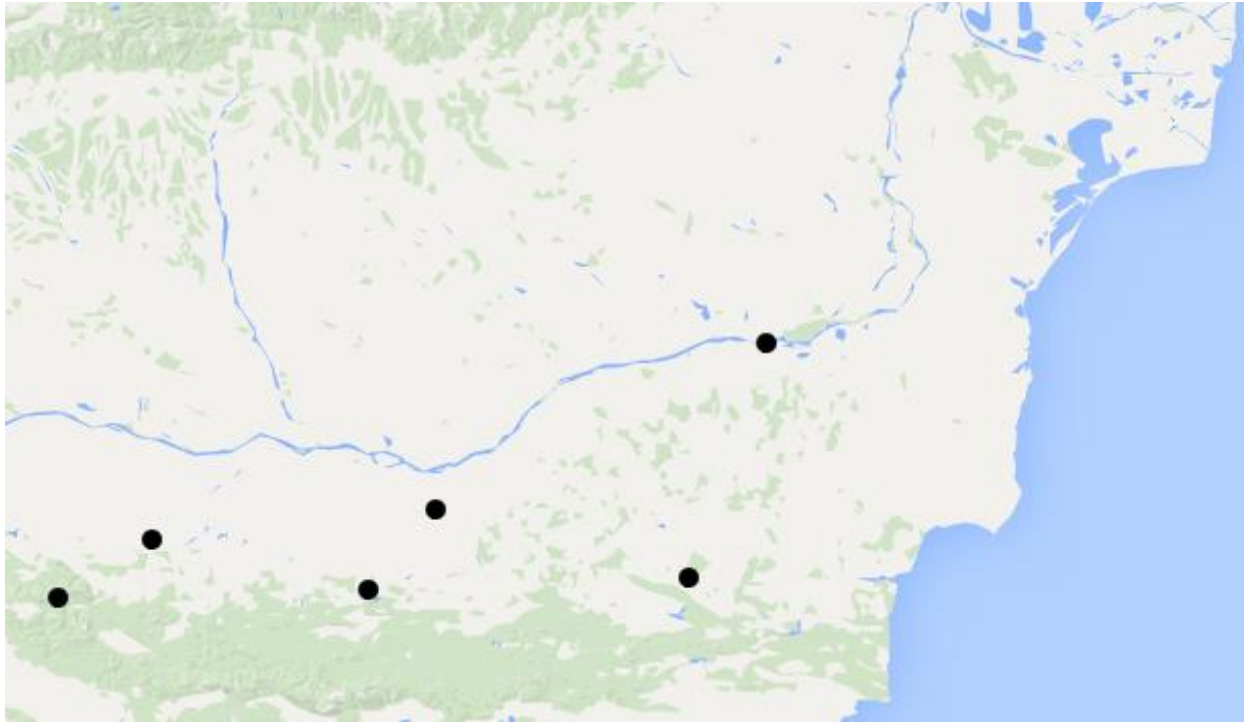


Fig. 32 – Hoard distribution from Period III - Severan period



Fig 33 – Hoard distribution from Period IV - Macrinus to Maximinus Thrax

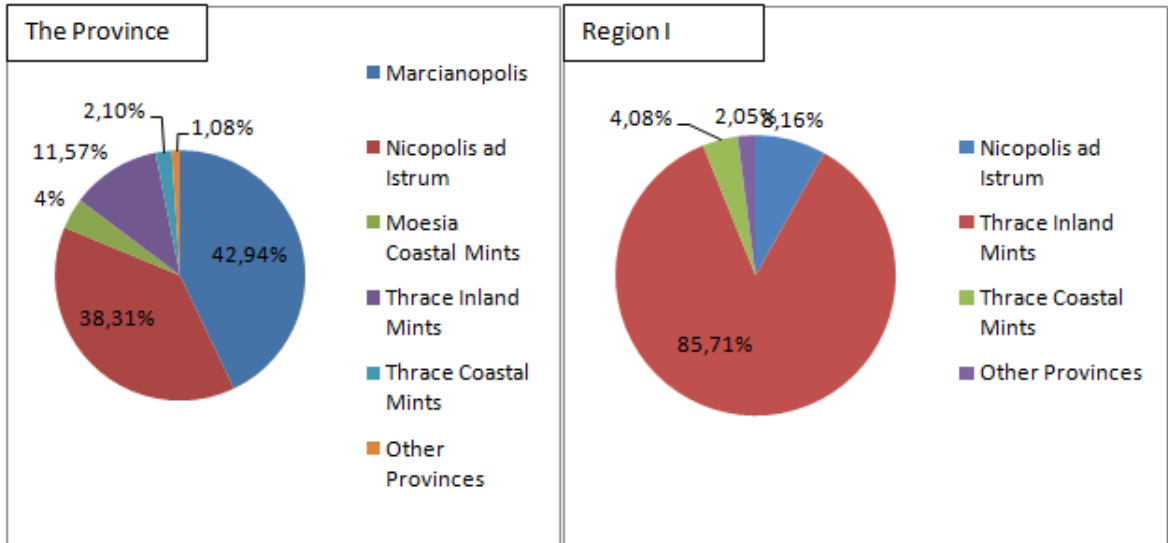


Fig. 34 - Average for the province

Fig. 35 - Region I

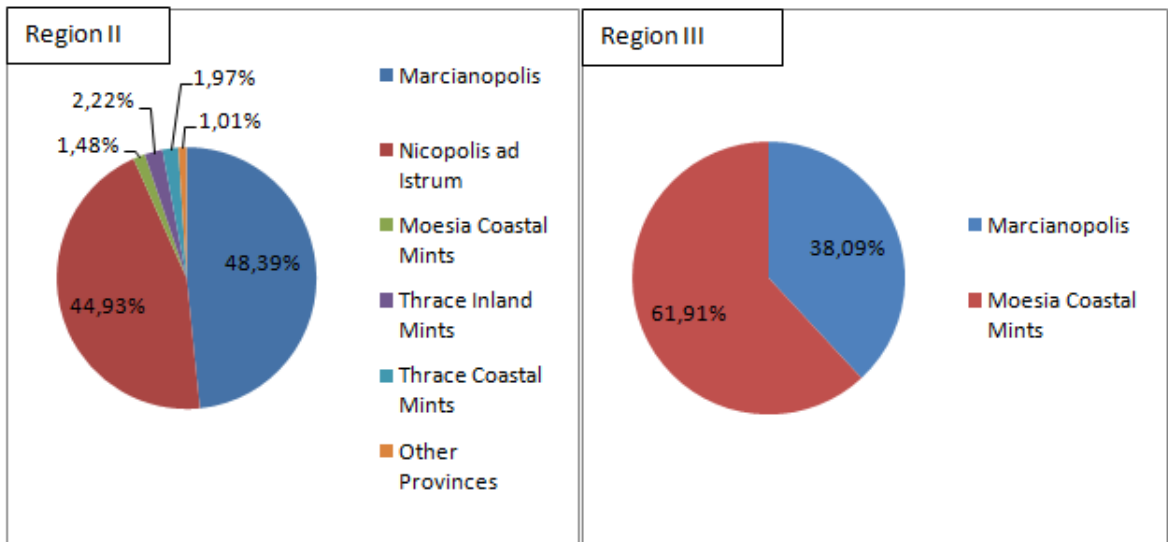


Fig. 36 - Region II

Fig. 37 - Region III

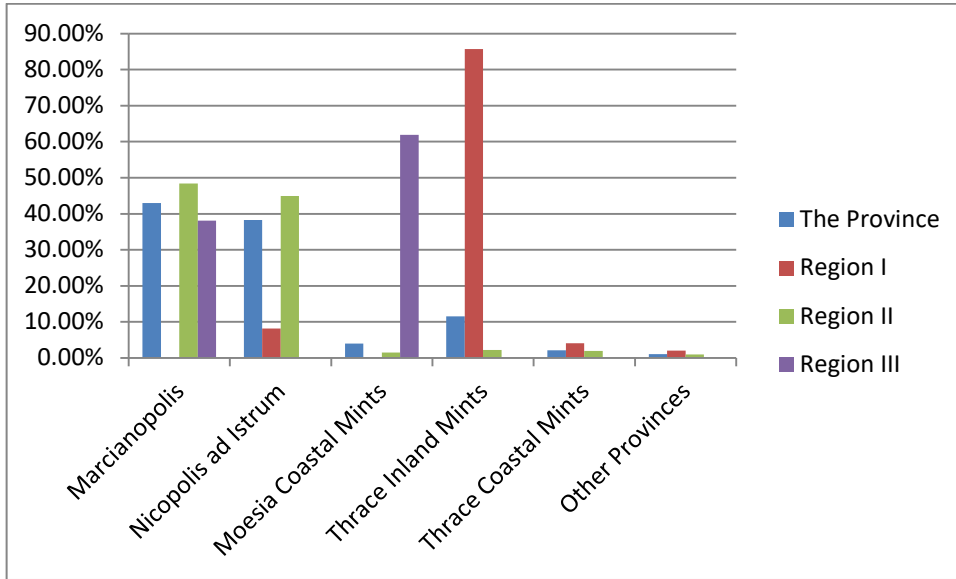


Fig 38 - Distribution of the coins from all regions in comparison to the average for the province.

Period V – Gordian III – Phillip II (AD 238 – 249)

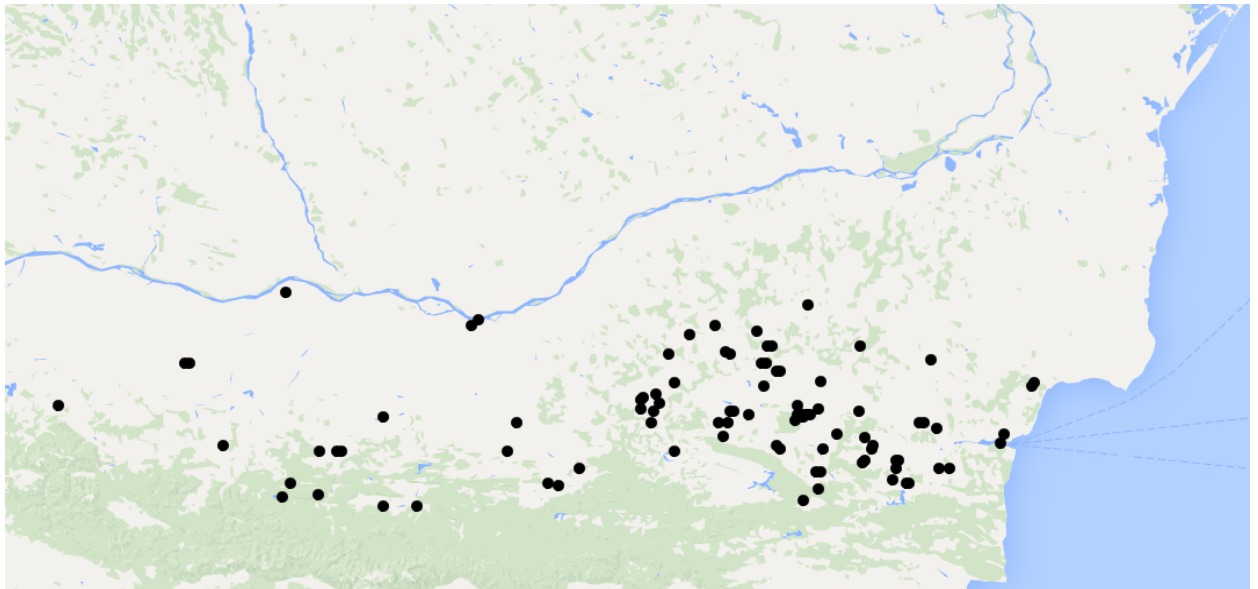


Fig. 45– Hoard distribution from Period V – Gordian III to Phillip II

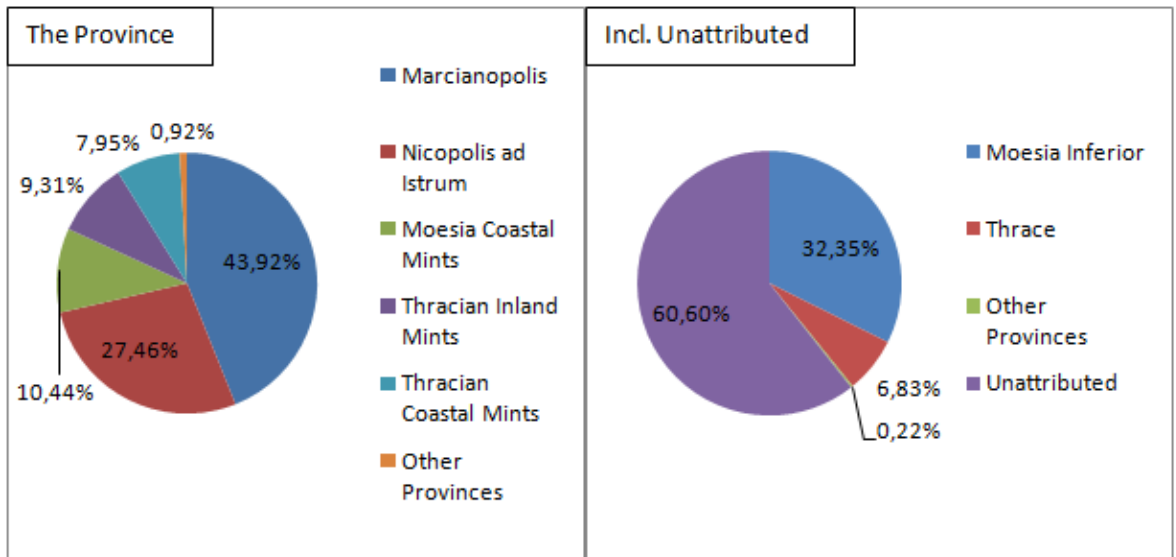


Fig. 46 Average for the province including / excluding unattributed coins.

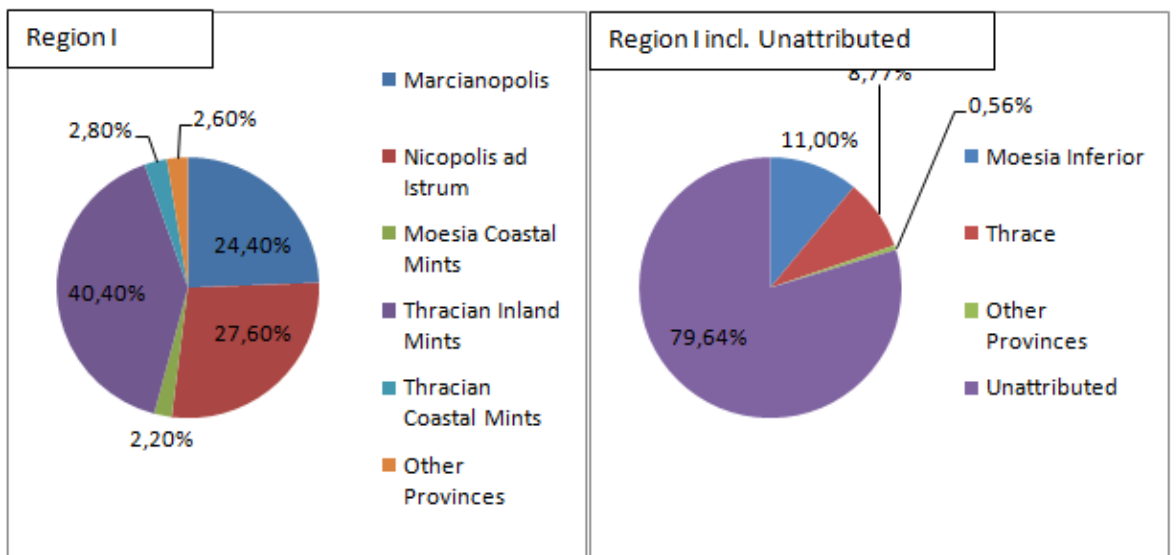


Fig. 47 Average for Region I including / excluding unattributed coins.

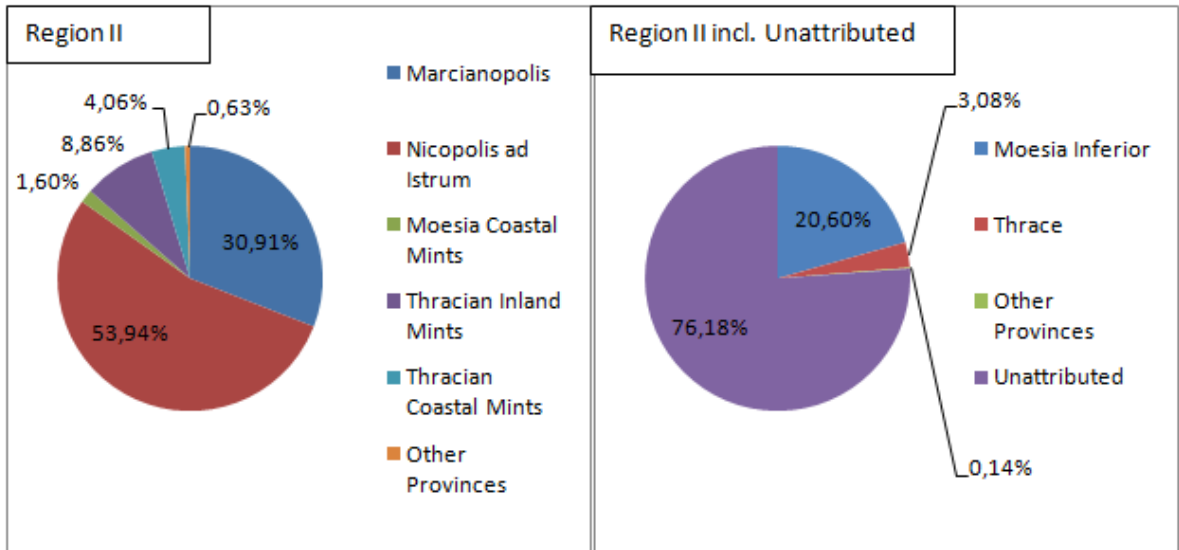


Fig. 48 Average for Region II including / excluding unattributed coins.

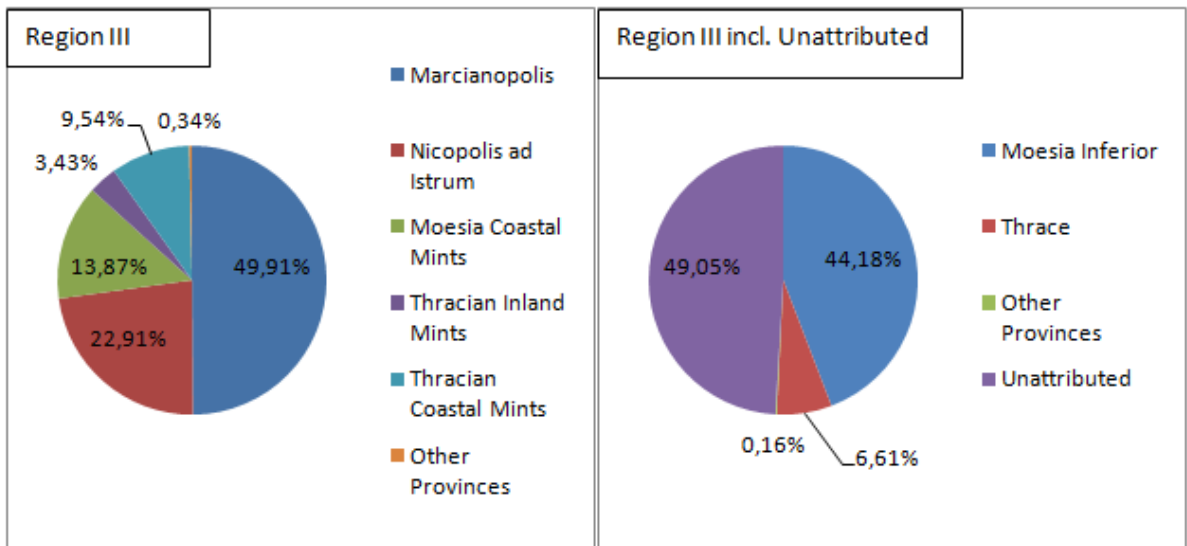


Fig. 49 Average for Region III including / excluding unattributed coins.

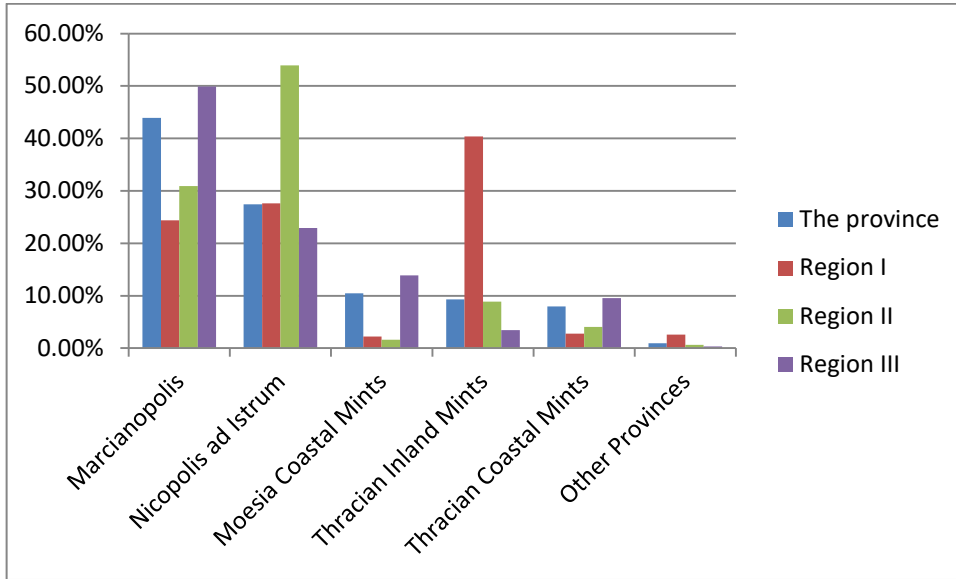


Fig. 50 - Distribution of the coins from all regions in comparison to the average for the province.

Period VI – Trajan Decius – Gallienus (AD 249 – 268)

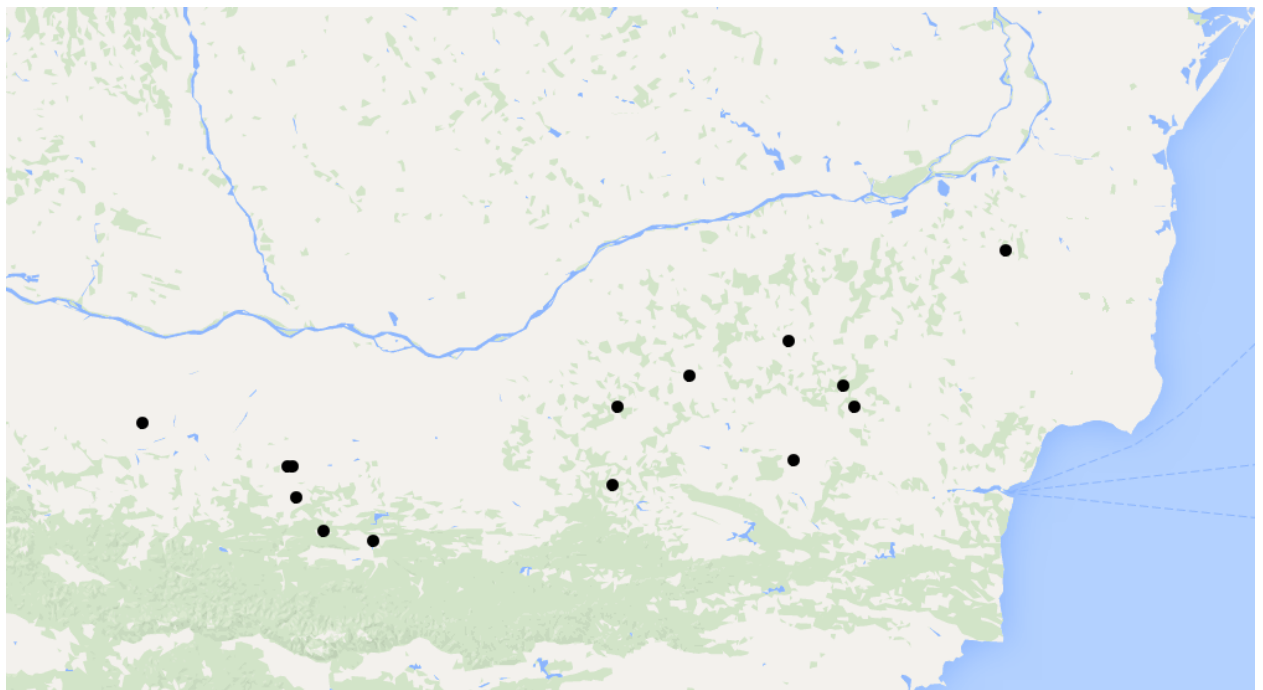


Fig 39 – Hoards distribution from Period VI – Trajan Decius to Gallienus

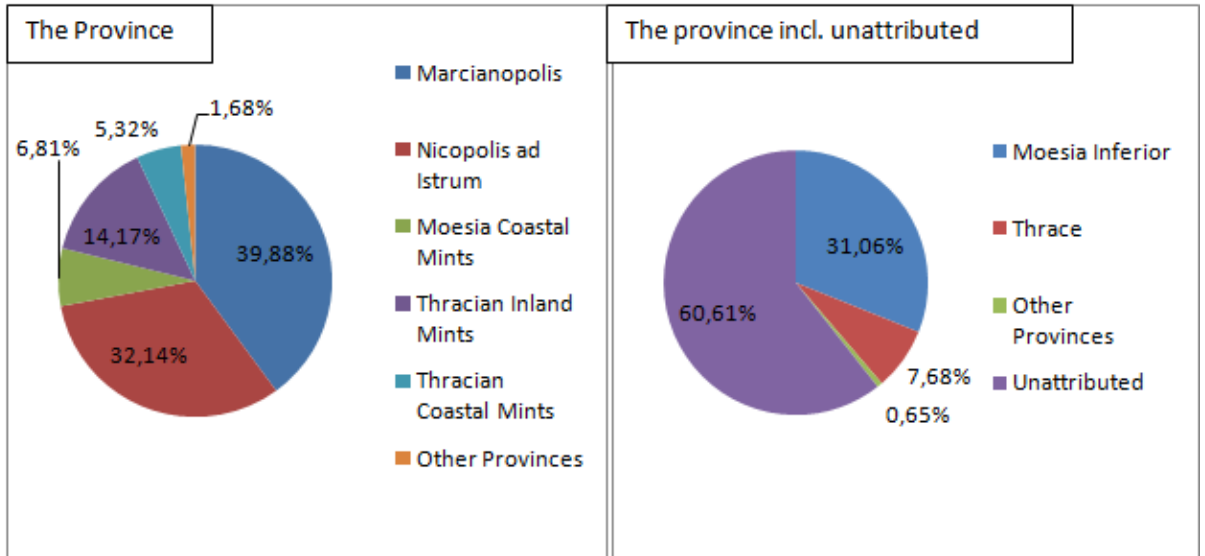


Fig. 40 Average for the province including / excluding unattributed coins.

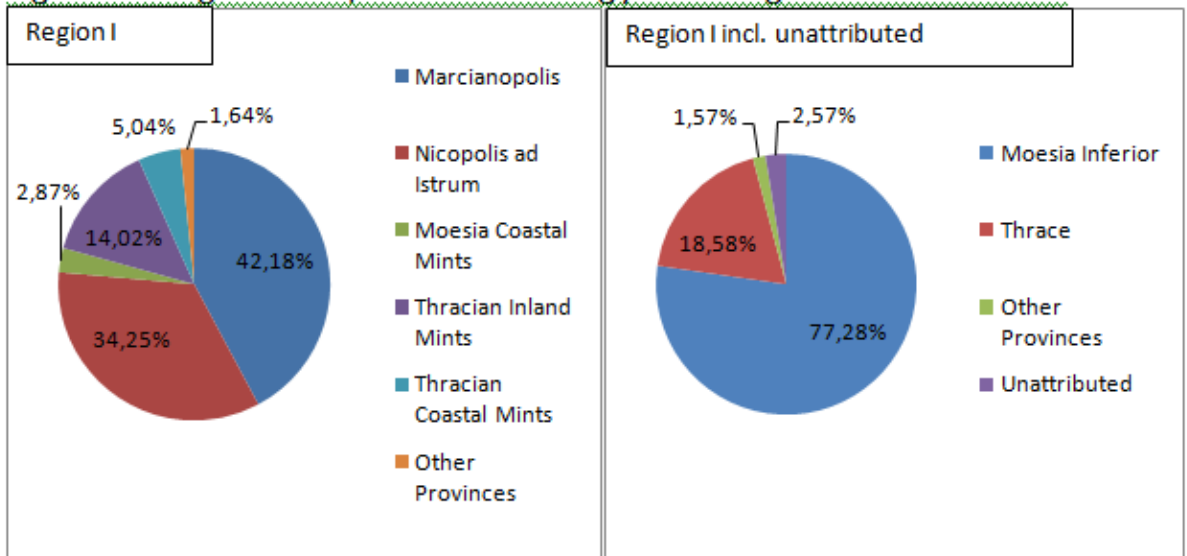


Fig. 41 Average for Region I including / excluding unattributed coins.

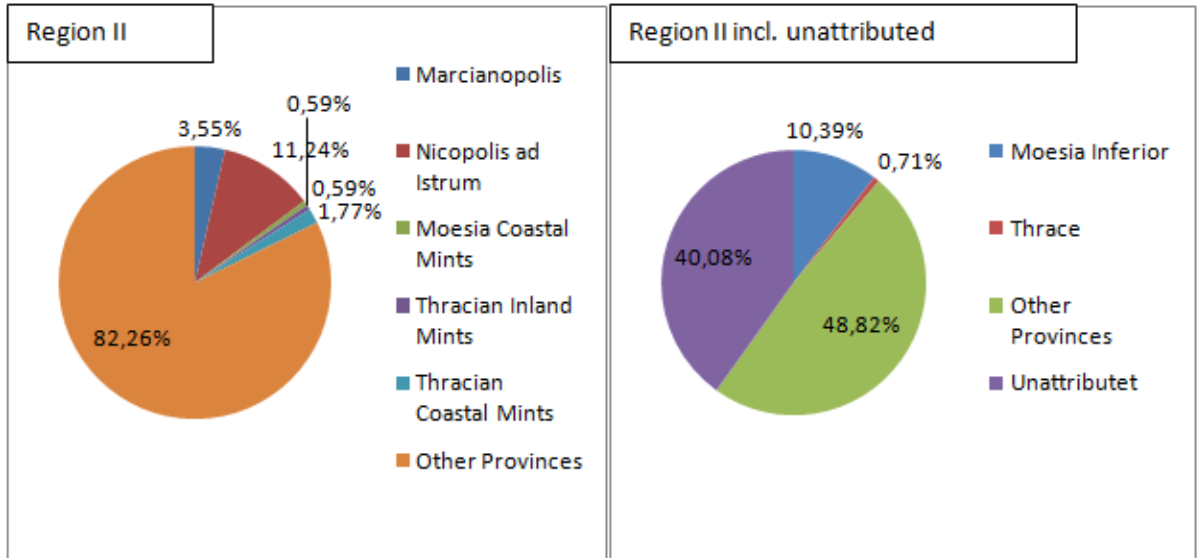


Fig. 42 Average for Region II including / excluding unattributed coins.

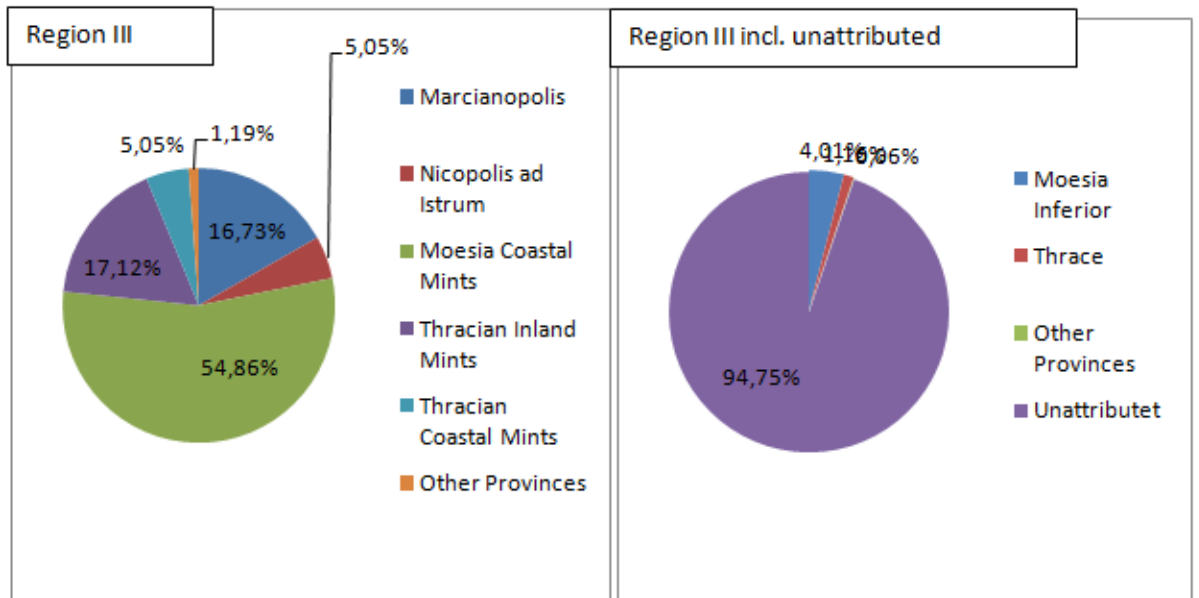


Fig. 43 Average for Region III including / excluding unattributed coins.

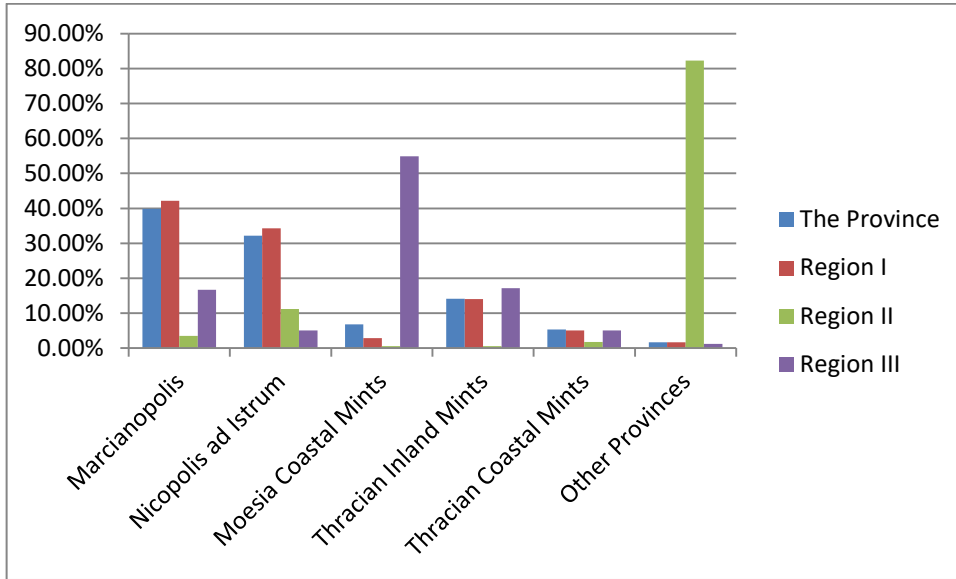


Fig 44 - Distribution of the coins from all region in comparison to the average for the province.

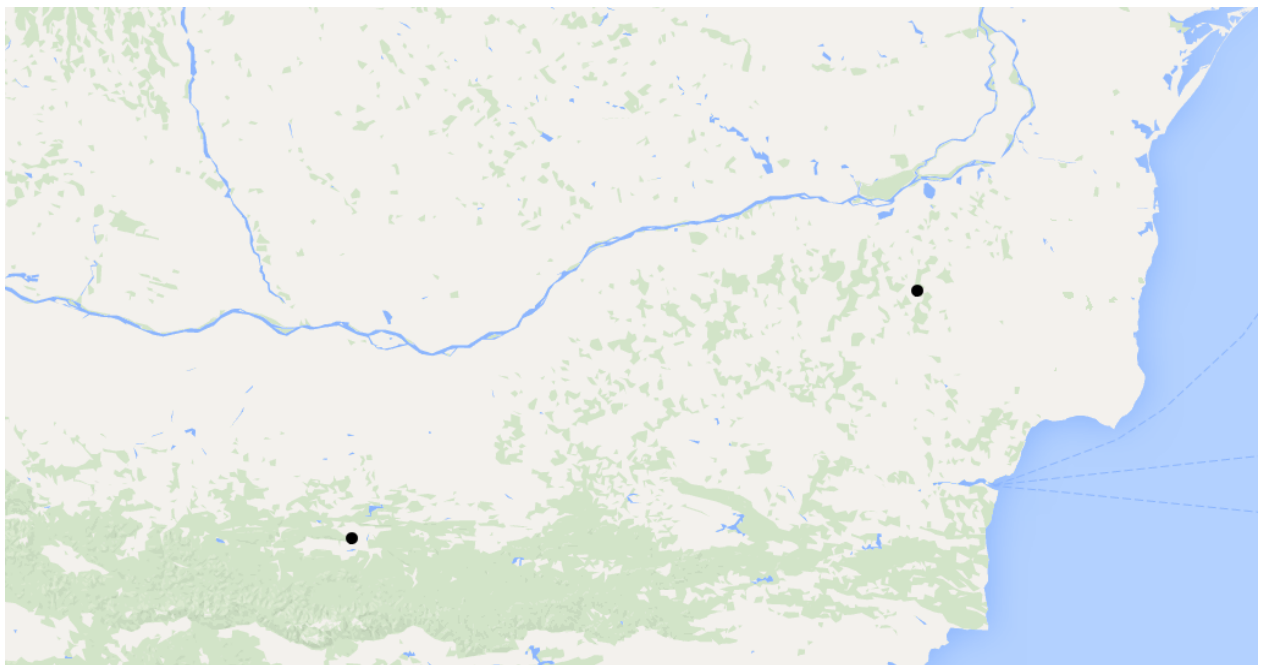


Fig 51. Hoard distribution for Period VII – Claudius II to Aurelian

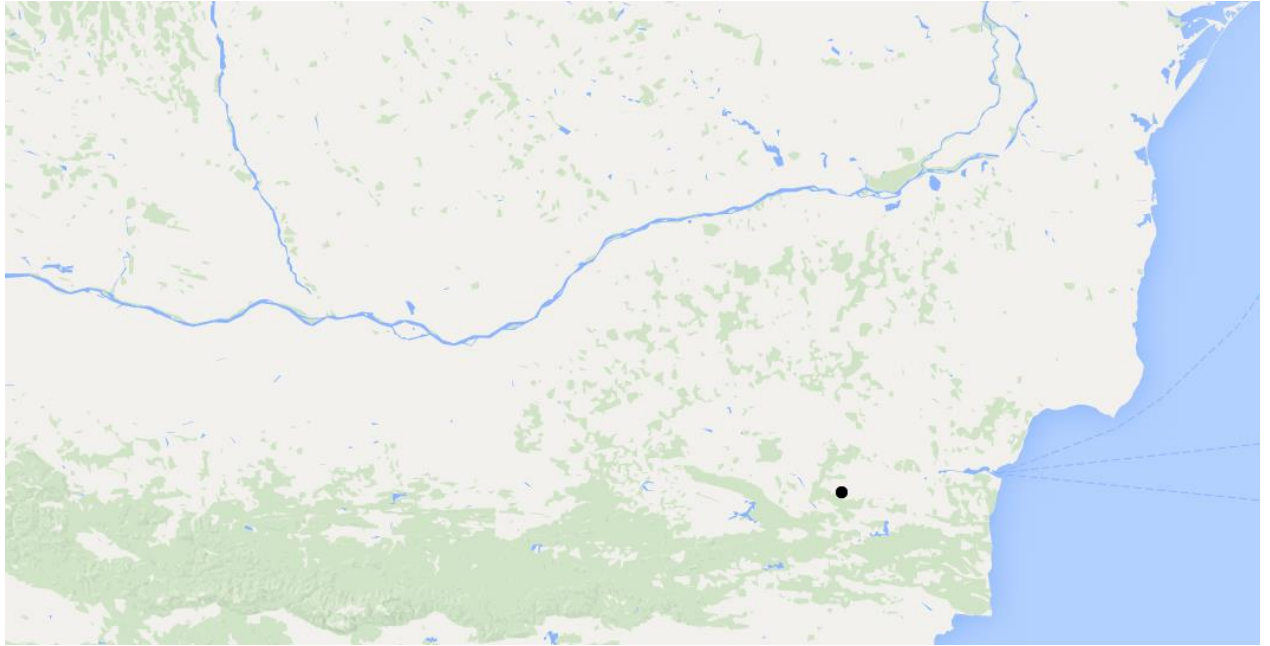


Fig. 52 Hoard distribution for Period VIII – Tacitus to Diocletian

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List of Abbreviations:

AIM-BAN – Arheologicheski Izvestiya na Muzeite – Bulgarska Akademia na Naukite

ANS – The American Numismatic Society

BAN – Bulgarska Akademia na Naukite

CUP – Cambridge University Press

IBN – Izvestiya po Bulgarska Numizmatika

INC – International Numismatic Conference

INM- Izvestiyana na Muzeite

INMV: Izvestiya na Narodniya Muzei vuv Varna

JRA – Journal of Roman Archaeology

JRS – Journal of Roman Studies

RN – Revue Numismatique

SFMA - Studien zu Fundmunzen der Antike

SPRS – The Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies

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Map of the cities listed in Hierocles' *Synecdemus* after Ernest Honigmann, *Le Synecdèmos d'Hiéroclès et l'opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre*, Brussels 1939 Florin Curta