

ROMAN AND BYZANTINE COINS DISCOVERED AT TROPAEUM TRAIANI IN SECTOR A, BETWEEN THE YEARS 2005–2016

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Abstract: In the present article, 22 coins resulting from the archaeological research in Sector A from Tropaeum Traiani (Adamclisi, Constanța County) archaeological site are analysed; among them 17 are from the Late Roman period while five are Byzantine, dated to the 6th century AD. All the above-mentioned coins were excavated between 2005 and 2016.

Cuvinte-cheie: Tropaeum Traiani, Sectorul A, monede romane și bizantine

Rezumat: Autorii prezintă un lot de 22 de monede descoperite în perioada 2005–2016 pe șantierul arheologic Tropaeum Traiani (Adamclisi, județul Constanța); 17 monede sunt datate în epoca romană târzie, iar cinci sunt bizantine, datate în secolul al VI-lea.

One of the sectors of the Tropaeum Traiani (Adamclisi, Constanța County) site on which systematic research has been carried out is Sector A. It is dominated by Basilica A, and delimited by the eastern and northern sides of the city wall and the *cardo* and *decumanus* main streets (Fig. 1). Previous excavations carried out by Alexandru Barnea (1968–1974) led to the uncovering of a part of one of the Late Roman city's neighbourhoods, represented by five edifices, four of which were totally investigated and a fifth one only partially (A 1–5); they were all located along a street (AV1) (also part of the investigated area), starting from the *decumanus* and running north; the buildings were all positioned between the eastern side of the city wall (next to the Eastern Gate), the main gate of the city, and Basilica A (Fig. 2/a–b). The buildings had different functions – habitation, commercial, and grain storage – and were completely excavated in order to allow the investigation of the last occupational level or that of the repair and use of buildings¹. All the buildings were in use during the Late Roman period, with their dating also confirmed by the coins discovered during the excavations².

Basilica A (Fig. 2/c–d) was identified by Grigore Tocilescu and later investigated by Ion Barnea between 1971–1973³. It has then been established the existence of

a Christian basilica with three naves, a crypt and an atrium, and some annexes on both the southern (five rooms) and northern sides, the latter partly investigated by the present authors. The church was built around AD 500, overlapping the levelling debris of the 2nd–4th century buildings and also superposing the pavement of a 4th century street. During a later phase in the 6th century, the basilica was repaired and the pavement level went up with ca. 0.50–0.60 m from the original one. The chronological relation between the present day basilica, on the one hand, and the atrium and the other annexes, on the other hand, is as follows: the walls of the annexes are abutted – not bonded together with those of the basilica; for the atrium, and at least some of the annexes on the southern side, one must consider their almost contemporaneity. A transformation of the atrium during the second phase of the basilica must also be taken into account⁴.

Research in Sector A was resumed for a short period between 1995 and 1998 by Liana Oța⁵, and thereafter systematically by the opening of two excavation areas (Fig. 1/b, areas 3 and 4): North of Basilica A (from 2005 on) and along the ABV IV street (from 2000 on). The main purpose of these excavations was to verify the results of previous geomagnetic investigations⁶, as well as to extend

¹ Barnea *et alii* 1979, p. 79–88.

² Barnea *et alii* 1979, p. 80–83. In Room 1a of Edifice A1, a bronze coin from Justinian (dated AD 546/547) was discovered in the debris above the occupation layer, and another one, also made of bronze, near the southern wall of the building, but outside it, dated during Justin II, in 572/573 AD. In Edifice A2, in the rubble that destroyed the clay floor was discovered a bronze coin from Justinian, minted in Constantinople and dated to 538/539 AD. In Room 3d of Edifice A3 the coins discovered, all made of bronze, are dated between the end of the 5th century and the end of the 6th century; one possibly dated during Emperor Leon (AD 457–

474), and the last one during the time of Tiberius II Constantin (the year AD 580/581). Also, between Edifices 3 and 4 was discovered a bronze coin from Justin II, year AD 568/569, minted at Nicomedia.

³ Barnea *et alii* 1979, p. 19.

⁴ Barnea 1978, p. 181–187.

⁵ The research reports prepared by Liana Oța for the years 1995, 1997 and 1998 are in the Archive of the "Vasile Pârvan" Institute of Archaeology of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest.

⁶ Ionescu *et alii* 2013; Gămureac *et alii* 2015–2016. See also Scurtu, Barnea 2004–2005.