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# Ancient Remesiana: A New Milestone from the Times of Severus Alexander

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In memory of Slobodan Dušanić and Petar Petrović

## INTRODUCTION\*\*

Roman *Remesiana* (modern Bela Palanka in south-eastern Serbia)<sup>1</sup> laid on the most important trans-Balkan land communication *Singidunum* — *Viminacium* — *Naissus* — *Serdica* — *Constantinopolis*, the *via militaris*, which is documented in four itineraries: *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum*, *Itinerarium Antonini*, *Tabula Peutingeriana*, *Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia*.

The significance of this road, as the shortest natural link between Europe and Orient, was recognized early, in proto-history and this ancient route has long been in use.<sup>2</sup> In Roman times, this route was a vitally significant military and trade communication. Many new settlements emerged along this route: *mansiones*, where one could spend the night, supply with food and other needs, the *mutationes*, inns and small landing where it was possible to change horses and carriages, and *civitates*, settlements, whose names are preserved in the Roman road maps (itineraries).

The road started at the right bank of the Danube, connecting the legionary centres of *Singidunum* (Beograd)<sup>3</sup> and *Viminacium* (Kostolac), the capital of the province Moesia Superior, whence it continued southward, through the valley of *Margus* (Velika Morava River)<sup>4</sup> to *Naissus* (Niš)<sup>5</sup>.

*Naissus* was an important trading and military centre of the Roman province of Upper Moesia<sup>6</sup>, established early, in the times of the Roman conquest and received

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<sup>1</sup> *TIR* K-34, Naissus: 108.

<sup>2</sup> Travel writers from the 16<sup>th</sup> century saw its remains as it is recorded in Anton Vrančić and Ghiselin de Busbecq descriptions, Iter Buda Hadriopolim Antonii Verantii Sebenicensis, *Viaggio in Dalmazia dell'abate Alberto Fortis, Venezia, 1774; Itinera Constantinopolitanum et Amasianum ab Augerio Gislenio Busbequio ad Solimanum Turcarum Imperatorem, Antverpiae, 1582.*

<sup>3</sup> *TIR* L-34, Aquincum: 102.

<sup>4</sup> *TIR* K-34, Naissus: 84.

<sup>5</sup> *TIR* K-34, Naissus: 89–90.

<sup>6</sup> *IMS* IV, introd. 37–48.

the status of *municipium* in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD<sup>7</sup>. The town gained on significance in late antiquity<sup>8</sup>. The Huns destroyed it in AD 441, and it was reconstructed later in the times of Justinian<sup>9</sup>. It is important to stress that *Naissus* was the hub of major trans-Balkan land communications. From here, the routes led in four directions: to the North — towards *Viminacium* and *Singidunum* (Beograd), to the West — *Lissus* (Lezha)<sup>10</sup> and the Adriatic coast, to the South — *Thessalonica* (Θεσσαλονίκη)<sup>11</sup> and the Aegean Sea, and to the East — *Serdica* (Sofia)<sup>12</sup> and *Constantinopolis* (Constantinople) (see Map).

After *Naissus*, the road turned eastwards, passing along the river Nišava through narrow Sićevačka gorge which opens up into a wide valley of Bela Palanka — the site of ancient *Remesiana*<sup>13</sup>. According to *Tabula Peutingeriana* (segm. VI), *Remesiana* was located 24 miles (36 km) from *Naissus* in the direction of *Serdica*, while the *Itinerarium Antonini* (134–135.4) records the distance of 25 miles for the same section. The *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum* (565.1–566.8) gives the distance of 27 miles: *civitas Naisso XII mutatio Redicibus VII mut. Ulmo VIII mansio Romansiana. Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia* (IV 7) lists only the toponyms — stations, but not their mutual distance: *Naisson Romessiana*. The differences between the mileage records in itineraries will be discussed below, since the recently discovered milestone sheds an important light on the accuracy of the recorded distances.

It is quite likely that two other ancient *viae* departed from the territory of *Remesiana*. The first road was directed to the north and ran along the Svrljiški Timok River<sup>14</sup>, joining at Niševac (*Timacum Maius*?) the main communication *Naissus* — *Ratiaria*<sup>15</sup>, which led to the Danubian *limes*. The second road led to the south, towards the mineral-rich territory of Vlasina (iron-mine of Božica)<sup>16</sup> and Pautalia, Kjustendil in modern western Bulgaria<sup>17</sup>.

The earliest clear attestations of the toponym come from the third century sources, from the itineraries (*It. Ant.* and *Tab. Peut.*). *Remesiana* also seems to be attested in the famous *laterculum* from *Viminacium*<sup>18</sup>, as a radically abbreviated *origo*: *R(emesiana?)* of thirty-five veterans of the legion VII *Claudia*, who were recruited in 169 AD and received honourable discharge (*honesta missio*) in 195 AD. Although hypothetical, this restitution should be accepted, since the only other candidate — the Upper Moesian colony of *Ratiaria*<sup>19</sup>, is represented in the same inscription by the abbreviation *Rat( )*.

The legal status of *Remesiana* is not known. There is no evidence that it was ever conferred with municipal status<sup>20</sup>. In the *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum*, *Remesiana* is qualified as *mansio*, an agglomeration along a path. In Procopius' *De Aedificiis*, *Remesiana* is mentioned as the centre of a region (χώρα), in which Justinian had renovated thirty *castella*. In contrast to *Naissus*, which is qualified as a πόλις, *Remesiana* is designated as πολίχνιον<sup>21</sup>. It was a centre of a large *del. regio*, the seat of one of Upper

<sup>7</sup> *IMS* IV 10, 18, 27.

<sup>8</sup> *Naissus* was the hometown of Constantine the Great, who “magnificently ornamented” (*magnifice ornavit*) this town (Anon. Vales. II, 2). In 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, it was an important Episcopalian seat, ZEILLER 1918, 165, 215.

<sup>9</sup> P. PETROVIĆ, *IMS* IV (introd.) 40?41.

<sup>10</sup> *TIR* K-34, *Naissus*: 79.

<sup>11</sup> *TIR* K-34, *Naissus*: 139–147.

<sup>12</sup> *TIR* K-34, *Naissus*: 113–114.

<sup>13</sup> *TIR* K-34, *Naissus*: 108.

<sup>14</sup> *TIR* K-34, *Naissus*: 125.

<sup>15</sup> PETROVIĆ, FILIPOVIĆ and MILIVOJEVIĆ 2012: 73–111.

<sup>16</sup> *TIR* K-34, *Naissus*: 98; DAVIES 1935, 229; DUŠANIĆ 1977, 74; P. PETROVIĆ, *IMS* IV (introd.), 57.

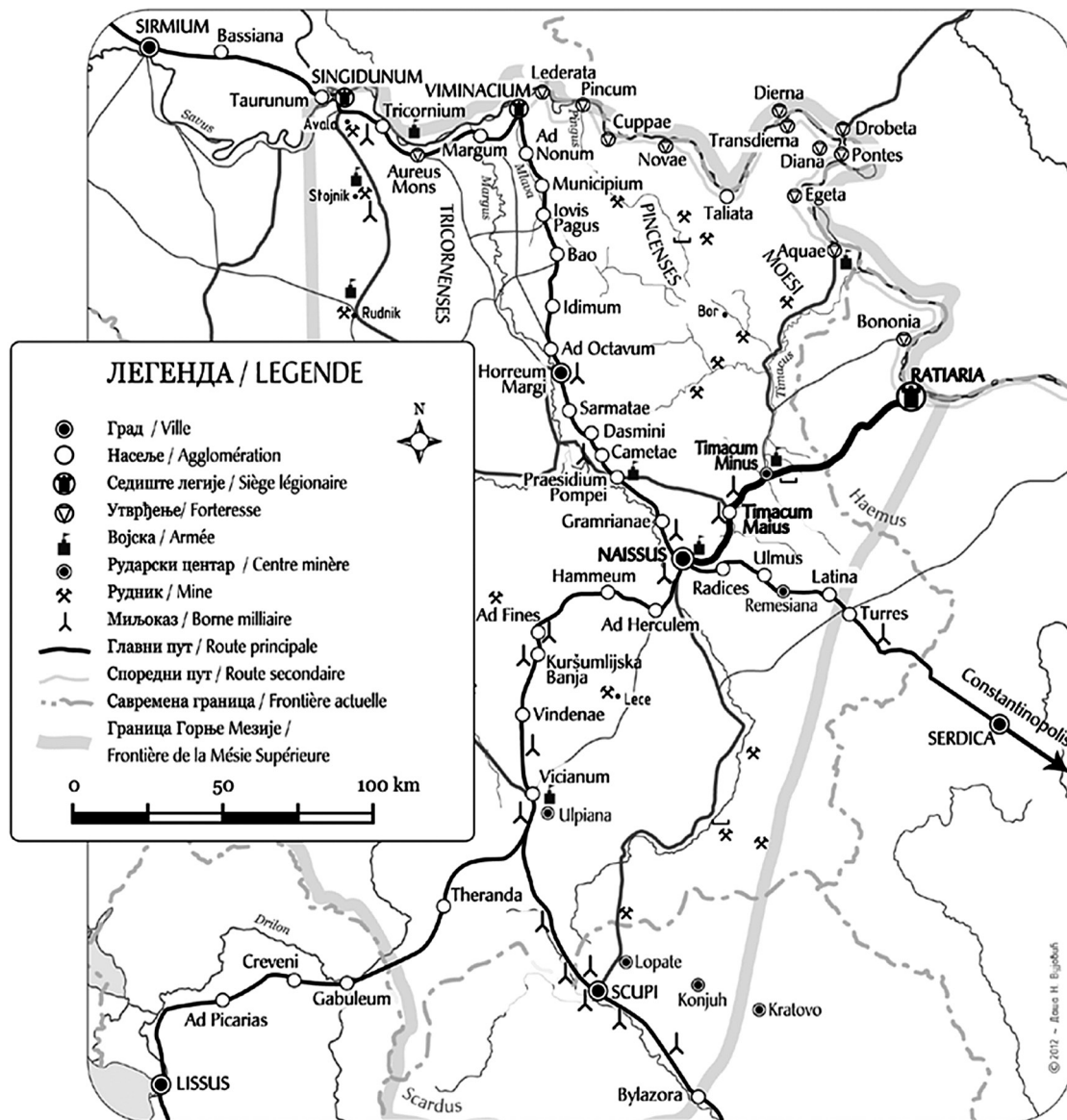
<sup>17</sup> DUŠANIĆ 1977, 73; P. PETROVIĆ, *IMS* IV (introd.) 52.

<sup>18</sup> *CIL* III 14507 = *IMS* II 53.

<sup>19</sup> *TIR* K-34, *Naissus*: 107.

<sup>20</sup> DUŠANIĆ 1977, 74, n. 133.

<sup>21</sup> Procop. *De Aed.* (ed. HAURY) IV 1, 32; 6, 19; DUŠANIĆ 1977, 74.



Roman Roads in Moesia Superior

Moesian mining districts (copper, gold, iron), which was most probably a part of the fiscal domain, or at least originated as one<sup>22</sup>. This region formed a unity with the mines of Božica in the Vlasina district, further on the south<sup>23</sup>. As we have already mentioned, a Roman road linked this district with its centre in Bela Palanka. The mining activity in this area also seems to be reflected in the toponym, Φερραρία (*sic!*), i.e. *Ferraria*, one of the *castella* on the territory of *Remesiana* (ἐν χώρᾳ Ῥεμεσιανισίᾳ)<sup>24</sup>. *Ferraria* could be identified with the Roman iron mine of Božica or as the mine of Ruplje<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> DUŠANIĆ 1977, 74; DUŠANIĆ 2004, 258, n. 53. The name of another *castellum* in the territory of Remesiana, Δέλματας (*Delmatae*) may speak of the transplantation of the *Delmatae*, analogously to the well attested case of the imperial domains eastern

Dalmatia, Dacia and Kosmaj mines, *ibid*, n. 137.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>24</sup> Procop. *De Aed.* (ed. HAURY) IV 1, 32; 6, 19. DUŠANIĆ 1977, 74.

Carl Patsch's hypothesis that *Remesiana* was the seat of the *concilium provinciae* of Upper Moesia, based on four honorary inscriptions, is principally abandoned.<sup>26</sup> His conclusion is drawn on the basis of a dedication set up by *splendidissima et devotissima numini eorum provincia Moesia Superior*<sup>27</sup>, and three inscriptions on the bases for statues, dedicated to Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Julia Domna<sup>28</sup>, set up by *Res publica Ulpiana*<sup>29</sup> under care of the governor of the province, Q. Anicius Faustus in 202 AD. The interpretation of N. Vulić is more attractive<sup>30</sup>. He connected the erection of these monuments with the occasion of the return of Severi from the East in 202 AD. The governor of Upper Moesia, Q. Anicius Faustus<sup>31</sup> chose *Remesiana* as a place to welcome the imperial family, most probably because this was the first settlement, when entering the province from the direction of Thrace<sup>32</sup>.

From the 4<sup>th</sup> century *Remesiana* was an important regional centre of Christianity<sup>33</sup>. It was the seat of the bishop Niceta<sup>34</sup>, who lived between 366 and 414 AD, famous for his missionary work among the Thracian Bessi<sup>35</sup>, and among *auri leguli* of his bishopric<sup>36</sup>. It should be emphasized that a strong missionary activity is evidenced in these regions in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, in response to a slow acceptance of the new religion and new habits among rural population who were reluctant to break with the pagan heritage. *Remesiana*, as urban setting became the centre whence Christianity spread among rural population that has long resisted the new religious movements. We know the name of another bishop of *Remesiana*, Diogenianus, from the mid-fifth century, who participated at the Monophysite Council of Ephesus, in 449 AD<sup>37</sup>.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS IN REMESIANA

Archaeological researches have yielded very little data on ancient *Remesiana*<sup>38</sup>. Most of our scanty information about the topography of this ancient settlement come as a result of fortuitous discoveries made during the work on foundations of modern buildings as well as the construction of the modern highway E75 (Corridor X). The heart of the metropolitan area was surrounded by the late antique fortification of polygonal plan. So far, three hexagonal towers have been identified, that strengthen the angles of

<sup>25</sup> DUŠANIĆ 2004, 257, n. 53, cf. DAVIES 1935, 223.

<sup>26</sup> PATSCH 1896, 359sq. This thesis is accepted by DEININGER 1965, 119. *Contra*: VULIĆ 1961, 24; DUŠANIĆ 1977, 74, n. 133, cf. P. PETROVIĆ, *IMS IV* (introd.) 56; most recently: KOS 1992; LOMA 2010.

<sup>27</sup> *CIL III* 8257 = *IMS IV* 72, possibly dating from the reign of *Severus Alexander*, thus: A. v. DOMASZEWSKI, N. VULIĆ (cf. commentary ad *IMS IV* 72); cf. KOS 1992, 209.

<sup>28</sup> *CIL III* 1685 = *IMS IV* 69; VULIĆ 1941-1948 = *IMS IV* 70; *CIL III* 1686 = *IMS IV* 71. Cf. LOMA 2010, 226-227, KOS 1992.

<sup>29</sup> *TIR K-34*, Naissus: 129; Gračanica. Cf. P. PETROVIĆ, *IMS IV* (introd.), 52.

<sup>30</sup> VULIĆ 1961, 24.

<sup>31</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> A 595; THOMASSON 1996, 176; LOMA 2010, 228-229.

<sup>32</sup> LOMA 2010, 228-229. Analogous honorary inscription from *Nicopolis ad Istrum*, set up in 202 AD by the governor of Lower Moesia, *Aurelius Gallus*, has also been connected with the imperial visit,

HALFMANN 19, 218, 221 (see LOMA 2010, 229).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Christian inscriptions found at *Remesiana*: *IMS IV* 77; 139; 140.

<sup>34</sup> BURN 1905; cf. H. SIVAN, *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 41 (1995), 79-90. In a poem dedicated to this famous bishop and his friend, Paulinus of Nola evokes the return of Niceta to Dacia (*Dacia Mediterranea*), mentioning his homeland "not far from Scupi" (Paulinus, *Carm.* XVII, 193-196. PL, 61, p. 487): *Tu Philippaeos Macedum per agros per Tomitanam gradieris urbem, ibis et Scupos patriae propinquos Dardanus hospes*. Genad. *Vir. ill.* 22 (BURN 1905, 173).

<sup>35</sup> Paulinus, *Carm.* 206-217: *Et sua Bessi nive duriores, nunc oves facti duce te gregantur Pacis in aulam*. Niceta also seems to be the author of the famous anthem: *Te Deum laudamus*. P. PETROVIĆ, *IMS IV* (introd.), 52.

<sup>36</sup> DUŠANIĆ 1977, 74; Paulinus of Nola, *Carm.* XVII 269 (BURN 1905, 53); DUŠANIĆ 2004, 258, n. 53. Cf. *supra*, text with n. 22-24.

<sup>37</sup> ZEILLER 1918, 160.

<sup>38</sup> P. PETROVIĆ, *IMS IV* (introd.) 53, n. 9.

this fortification. The suspected location of the entrance gates is at the intersection of the main streets of the modern town, which correspond to *cardo* and *decumanus*. The course of the ramparts is also identified. The core of the walls and towers is made of stone and lime mortar (*opus incertum*), while the surface was covered by rows of large hewn sandstone blocks (*opus quadratum*). At the modern intersection of the main streets in Bela Palanka, a complex of buildings was unearthed, and the most important one has the form of a basilica<sup>39</sup>. To the west of this object, a deep apse flanked by external buttresses was uncovered and researched. On the north side, parallel to the basilica, there are three successive rows of brick pillars. The south side of the complex reveals the outlines of several small, regularly shaped rooms which form a unity with the southern wall. The findings in these edifices include ceramic tubes (*tubuli*) for heating, as well as fragments of mortar with traces of fresco decoration.

Three necropolises of *Remesiana* have been identified so far. In the vast northern necropolis, which is positioned along the route that leads into the valley of Svrljiški Timok, several graves covered with a barrel vault have been identified. One of them contained several offerings: a gold coin of Vetrico, coins of Heraclius and Constantius II, cameos in gold, bracelets, rings, etc.<sup>40</sup> Second necropolis emerged at the southern side of the town, containing rare funerary constructions of broken bricks, surmounted by a gable roof. Third necropolis, discovered at the south-eastern exit of the town, is typologically similar to the southern necropolis. By the shape of the tombs and funerary objects all three can be dated to the Late Antiquity (IV-VI century).

Regarding the movable archaeological material, many elements of architectural decoration have been uncovered<sup>41</sup>; also worthy of mention are two golden cameos of great beauty, representing a female profile<sup>42</sup>. Earlier epigraphic findings have been mentioned above. Future archaeological investigations will certainly reveal more information about this ancient settlement.

#### NEWLY DISCOVERED MILESTONE FROM *REMESIANA*

In 2012, a completely preserved Roman milestone with Latin inscription<sup>43</sup>, was discovered during construction work on the highway E75 (corridor X), which largely coincides with the route of ancient *via militaris*. The monument is unearthed in the environs of the village Špaj, on 7 km to the west of Bela Palanka (*Remesiana*) in the direction of Niš<sup>44</sup>. The spot lies on the eastern leg of the E75 highway, in the sec-

<sup>39</sup> GUSIĆ 1995, 126-135.

<sup>40</sup> JOVANOVIĆ 1978, 16, 23.

<sup>41</sup> Worthy of mention are four capitals, one Ionian, carved in white marble, decorated with a single spiral band and patterns in sheet form, while the second of sandstone has side medallions with Greek cross on one side and the omega sign on the other side. This second capital comes probably from the basilica. Two more capitals are not ornamented, SREJOVIĆ (ed.) 1993, 219-220.

<sup>42</sup> SREJOVIĆ (ed.) 1993, 317.

<sup>43</sup> The emphasis on the language of the inscription is important. The route of the Roman road left the territory of the Latinophone province of *Moesia Superior* and crossed into the area of the Hellenophone province of Thrace, somewhere near *mutatio* with the eloquent name *Latina* (*It.*

*Hieros.*), a station between *Remesiana* and *Turres* (Piro), distanced 9 miles from the former. In *Turres* (Piro), milestones are already set up in Greek, indicating *Pautalia* as *caput viae*, cf. *AE* 1913, 175 = *ILJug* 1459.

<sup>44</sup> The protective archaeological researches on the eastern part of the highway E75 (corridor X) are conducted by the National Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia. Scientific team that surveyed the construction work of the new highway at the area of Bela Palanka was led by Marin Brmbolić with participation of two archaeologists: Zoran Mitić and Katarina Lazarević. According to verbal communication of Zoran Mitić, archaeologist from Bela Palanka, traces of *villa rustica* were discovered near the finding spot of the new milestone.



tion Crvena reka – Čiflik of the future highway E 80. It is a monument of yellowish limestone, in the shape of cylindrical column, 240 cm high, 60 cm wide. Inscription is carved in the upper section of the column, in unframed field 52 cm high. The text is arranged in nine, fairly regular lines. Letters, 4,5–5 cm. The monument is now displayed on the public square in Bela Palanka.

DIPLOMATIC TRANSCRIPTION:

IMP CAESARI ŠE/(?)  
 NEPOTI ANTONINI  
 MAGNI PIO FILIO MAR  
 AVR SEVERO [[ALEXAN  
 5 DRO]] PIO FELICI AVG PO  
 NTIFICI MAXIMO TRIBU  
 NICIE (!) POTESTATE (!) VIII COS  
 TER PATER (!) PATRIE (!) MP  
*vac.* XXII

EDITION:

*Imp(eratori) Caesari Še[v(eri)] | nepoti Antonini | Magni Pio filio Mar(co) | Aur(elio) Severo [[Alexan]⁵dro]] Pio Felici Aug(usto) po|ntifici maximo tribu|nicie (sic) potestati(s) VIII co(n)s(uli) ter(tium) pater (sic) patrie (sic) m(illia) p(assum) | vac. XXII.*

TRANSLATION:

“To emperor Caesar, grandson of [Severus], son of Antoninus Magnus Pius, Mar(cus) Aurelius Severus [[Alexander]] (name erased), Pius, Felix, Augustus, chief priest, holding tribunician power for the ninth time, consul for the third time, father of the country. Miles passed XXII.”

Carving of the lettering and the overall appearance of the monument are not bad, but the formulation of the text and Latin expression are clumsy. There are several vulgar occurrences: notably, the common phenomenon *ae > e*: *tribunicie* for *tribuniciae* in lines 6–7, *patrie* for *patriae* in line 7<sup>45</sup>. In line 8, vulgar nominative *pater* is used instead of normal dative: *patri*. The end of the first line is damaged. Vestiges of characters are still visible on the stone, but they are not completely clear. The letters should probably be restored as *Še[v(eri)]*. The greatest length of lines and the dimensions of the lettering in the inscription suggest that there should not be more than 3 characters lost. Combination *d(ivi) Še[v(eri)]* could be possible, but *divus* is also omitted in the second part of the filiation<sup>46</sup>, in lines 2–3: *Antonini | Magni Pio filio*. Severus Alexander’s titulature, after 13<sup>th</sup> March 222, runs: *Imperator Caesar M. Aurelius Severus Alexander P. F. Aug. divi Magni Antonini Pii filius, divi Severi Pii nepos*<sup>47</sup>. Alexander’s name is erased (lines 4–5). His *damnatio memoriae* was a result of spontaneous reaction.<sup>48</sup>

On the ongoing archaeological investigations in the district of Bela Palanka:

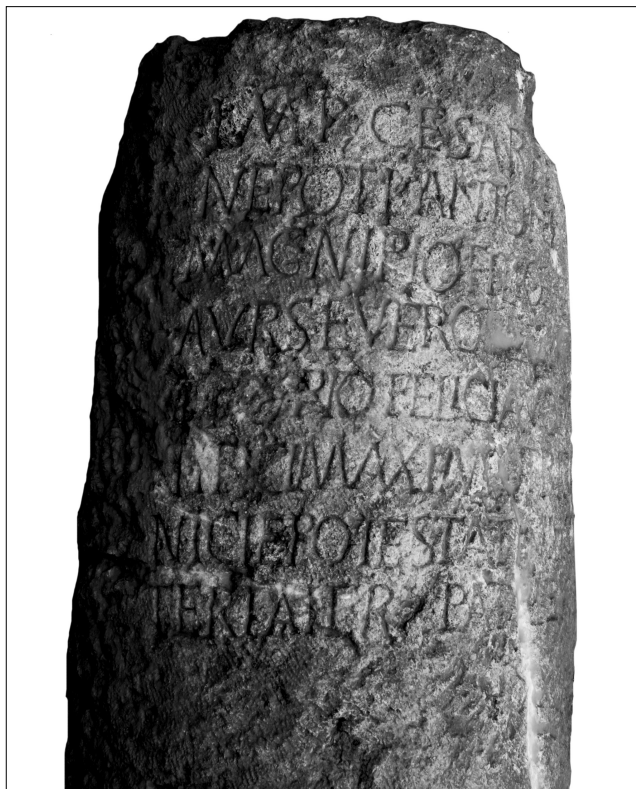
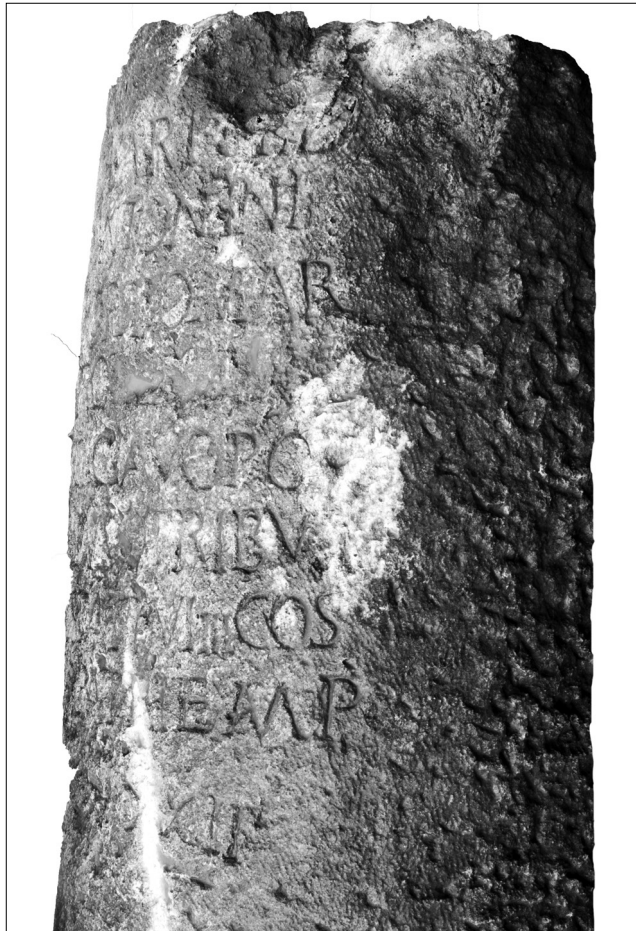
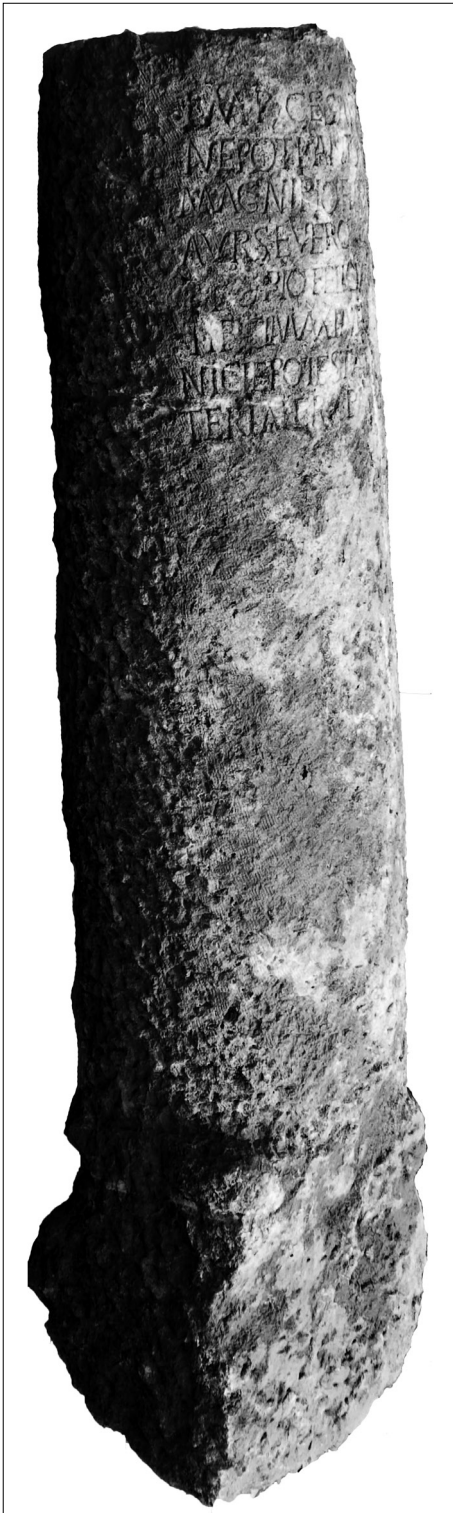
[http://www.heritage.gov.rs/latinica/zastitna\\_arheoloska\\_iskopavanja\\_koridor\\_10\\_Uvodni\\_deo.php](http://www.heritage.gov.rs/latinica/zastitna_arheoloska_iskopavanja_koridor_10_Uvodni_deo.php)

<sup>45</sup> MIHĂESCU 1978, 194–185, § 131; HERMAN 2000, 31.

<sup>46</sup> Note the reversed order.

<sup>47</sup> PIR<sup>2</sup> A 1610; KIENAST 2004, 177–178; cf. DUŠANIĆ 1964 (for the title *nobilissimus Caesar imperii et Sacerdotis*).

<sup>48</sup> VARNER 2004, 196.



New Milestone from the times of Severus Alexander.  
Inscription carved on the milestone - view from the right.  
Inscription carved on the milestone - view from the left

Milestones served to communicate the direction and distances between places. They were often set up upon the (re)constructions of the road, but milestones were also set up with other reasons. This type of monuments may also have had honorific character and served the purposes of imperial propaganda, without having any connection to the actual road-building or repairs (especially in 3<sup>rd</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> centuries). Their erection may have coincided with imperial visits<sup>49</sup>. However, the fact that the distance from *caput viae* is indicated in our inscription, testifies of its practical function. The milestone may have been erected in the course of the repairs of the roadway. Dating of the inscription sheds some light on the circumstances in which the monument was erected and provides a broader context: it is in connection with the Persian campaign of Severus Alexander<sup>50</sup>.

Based on the on the number of consulships (*consul tertium*) and the number of the tribunician power (*VIII*), the inscription from *Remesiana* can be dated in the period from 10<sup>th</sup> December 229 – 11<sup>th</sup> December 230 AD, when Severus Alexander held the consulship with Cassius Dio, *consul bis*<sup>51</sup>. In that year, the first news of the unrest at the East reached Rome. With the ambition to renew the Persian empire of the Achaemenids<sup>52</sup>, Ardashir I (Artaxerxes), the founder of the Sassanid dynasty, overrun Mesopotamia and led an attack on Hatra<sup>53</sup>. As we learn from Herodian's account, Alexander Severus employed diplomatic devices at first, but he started preparations for the war and begun to recruit in Italy and provinces, and especially in Danubian provinces<sup>54</sup>. The emperor left Rome for the East in the spring of 231 AD and reached Antiochia in the summer<sup>55</sup>, "after" as Herodian reports "visiting the provinces and the garrison camps in Illyricum; from that region he collected a huge force of troops"<sup>56</sup>. Expecting not only the passage of the Emperor through the province, but also heavy movement of the troops through the main military road, it could be envisaged that some improvements were made on the road network as part of preparations for the forthcoming Persian campaign. Several milestones in Upper and Lower Pannonia date from the same year, all connected to the Persian campaign: *CIL* III 11331, O-Szőny; 11335, Puspoki; 6470<sup>2</sup> = 10633, Titel; 10657, Pilis-Szanto; *AE* 1980, 715, *Aquincum*; *AE* 1969/70, 510, *Vetus Salina*; *AE* 1969/70, 529, Rácalmás. Two milestones are uncovered on the road section *Aquincum* – *Sirmium* in the Serbian part of Pannonia: Lačarak, Sremska Mitrovica<sup>57</sup> (*CIL* III 6466 = 10652 = MIRKOVIĆ 1971, no 94): [*Imp(erator) Caes(ar)*] | [*M(arcus) Aurel(ius)*] | [[*Severu*]]s | [[*Alexan*]]der Pius | [*Fel*]ix Augustus | [*pon*]tifex maximus | [*tribu*]niciae potestatis | *VIII* co(n)s(ul) III p(ater) p(atriciae) restituit | ab Aquinco | m(ilia) p(assuum) CCXXV and a fragmented

<sup>49</sup> Cf. the suggestive place in Alexander Severus' biography HA, Sev. Alex. (ed. D. MAGIE, LCL) 45: *tacebantur secreta bellorum, itinerum autem dies publice proponebantur, ita ut edictum penderet ante menses duos, in quo scriptum esset, "Illa die, illa hora ab urbe sum exiturus et, si di voluerint, in prima mansione mansurus."* deinde per ordinem mansiones, deinde stivae, deinde ubi annonae esset accipienda, et id quidem eo usque quamdiu ad fines barbaricos veniretur. iam enim inde tacebatur, et omnes operam dabant ne dispositionem Romanam barbari scirent.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. ENBLIN 1939, 69; MIRKOVIĆ 1971, 87 and *infra*.

<sup>51</sup> Dio Cass. LXXX 5.1.

<sup>52</sup> Dio Cass. LXXX 3.1-4.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. ALFÖLDY 1971; *CAH*<sup>2</sup> XII, 25 (B. CAMPBELL).

<sup>54</sup> Hdn. (ed. WITTAKER, LCL, 1970), 6.3.1; 6.4.3.

<sup>55</sup> Hdn. 6.3.1; 6.4.3. *Acta frat. arv.* for 231 AD (ed. W. HENZEN 1874), also cf. the coins with the reverse legend *PROFECTIO AUGUSTI*, issued in 231 AD, as the Emperor was about to depart for the Persian campaign (*BMC* VI, Sev. Alex 747, 749, 775, 776, 781, 782).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. the Upper Moesian inscriptions from the epoch of Severus Alexander, and the epithet *Severiana Alexandriana: Singidunum: IMS* I 4, 104; *AE* 1997, 1301 (229 AD); *Viminacium: IMS* II 58, 59, 85; *IMS* IV 3; 101; *IMS* IV 92 (Paraćin); *ILJug* 1404, *ILJug* 1413; *CIL* III 8173.

<sup>57</sup> *TIR* L-34, *Aquincum*: 72.

(now lost) *CIL* III 3407 (= MIRKOVIĆ 1971, 87), found in *Sirmium* which explicitly mentions renovation of the road: *Imp(erator) Caes(ar) | [Marcus Aurelius | Severus Alex] | ander pius felix Augustus pontifex maximus | tribuniciae potestatis VII [I co(n)s(ul) ?] | III p(ater) p(atriciae) restituit —*]<sup>10</sup> *m(ilia) H(?) p(assum) XV*. The third milestone is discovered in the village of Vagan near Dobrinč (Srem, Serbia)<sup>58</sup>, in Lower Pannonia which lies on the road *Sirmium – Singidunum* that continues on the *via militaris* (*AE* 1981, 712): *Imp(erator) Caes(ar) | [Ma]rcus Aureli(us) | Severus A[lexan] | der Pius Felix | Aug(ustus) pontifex | maximus tribuniciae potestatis VIII co(n)s(ul) III p(ater) p(atriciae) | restituit | mil(ia) p(assum) XVII*.<sup>59</sup>

#### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In order to compare the evidence from the Roman itineraries with the data obtained from the new milestone, let us repeat the entries from different itineraries relating to the section *Naissus – Remesiana* in the Central Balkans:

*Tabula Peutingeriana*, *segm. VI: Naisso XXIII Romesiana*;

*Itinerarium Antonini*, 134–135.4: *Naisso XXV Remisiana*;

*Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum*, 565.1–566.8: *civitas Naisso XII mutatio Redicibus VII mut. Ulmo VIII mansio Romesiana*;

*Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia*, IV 7: *Naisso Romesiana*.

It is obvious that the data from the itineraries differ in a number of elements. The distance in Roman miles between the road stations in different itineraries varies considerably as well as the tradition of ancient toponyms. Let us take the total distance between *Naissus* and *Remesiana* (Bela Palanka). According to *Tabula Peutingeriana* it is 24 Roman miles, *Itinerarium Antonini* records the distance of 25 miles and *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum*, 27 miles. *Ravennatis Cosmographia* registers only the names of stations but not the distance between them. Explaining such differences between itineraries is not simple and it requires a broader analysis, which is beyond the scope of this article. Clearly, not all of them were assembled at the same time, with equal motives and purpose. Furthermore, not all survived in equal number of copies and equal quality of transcript. Measuring of distances on the same section of the Roman road could vary due to different circumstances. It is difficult to interpret whether these divergences occur as a result of copyist's error, or differently calibrated measuring instruments, the choice of starting and ending points of measurement, or variability of the path of old or new road, even to a lesser degree.

The shortest modern road Niš – Mediana<sup>60</sup> – Niška Banja<sup>61</sup> – Bela Palanka largely coincides with the path of the Roman road. The section is about 41 km long, which equals 27 Roman miles. It appears that the record in the *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum* of 27 Roman miles best fits the actual distance between the two cities. Milestone that was recently found *in situ* during the construction of a modern highway was located by the route of the Roman road from *Remesiana* to the west, in the direction of *Naissus* in the area of the modern village of Špaj<sup>62</sup>. However, the distance of XXII miles (32.5 km) indicated in our milestone, clearly represents the distance from the first large city (*civitas*) which has to be *Naissus*, and not one of the intermediate stations, *mutatio Ulmus*<sup>63</sup> and *mutatio Radices*<sup>64</sup>, mentioned only in *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum*. The distance that we read from the milestone corresponds to the path that

<sup>58</sup> *TIR* L-34, Aquincum: 54.

<sup>59</sup> DUŠANIĆ 1990, 646.

<sup>60</sup> *TIR* K-34, Naissus: 84-85 ; PETROVIĆ 1994.

<sup>61</sup> *TIR* K-34, Naissus: 92.

<sup>62</sup> Coordinates of the village Špaj: 43.271667, 22.233322.

<sup>63</sup> Ostrovica, *TIR* K-34, Naissus: 129.

<sup>64</sup> Prosek or Jelašnica, *TIR* K-34, Naissus: 105.

could be passed during the daylight. Judging by the position of its finding spot, the milestone appears to have been set approximately 5 miles from the centre of the Roman *Remesiana* in the direction to *Naissus*.

Comparing the data on mileage indicated in the itineraries with the distance recorded in the milestone and also, taking into account the actual distance between *Remesiana* and *Naissus* as *caput viae*, it could be concluded that the data from the *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum* are most accurate and that they correspond with the text of the new milestone. To this may point the relatively late date of *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum*, also known as *Itinerarium Burdigalense*. It is the earliest itinerary in connection with Christian pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land, from today's Bordeaux (*Burdigala*) in Aquitania, dated in 333 AD, in the year of the consulship of Flavius Dalmatius and Domitius Zenofilus<sup>65</sup>. Besides the relative accuracy in mileage, of which also testifies our new milestone, this itinerary reflects the path of the road as it was in the Late Roman period. It surely differed to some extent from the original path of the road which was built in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, when the Roman government in the Central Balkans was established. *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum* is characteristic not only for its high accuracy in communicating the character of the stations on the Roman road (*civitas, mansio, mutatio*) and their mutual distances, it is evidently the most exhaustive itinerary; it registers many places and their names which are not documented in other itineraries<sup>66</sup>.

New milestone further confirms that the Roman road *Singidunum – Viminacium – Naissus – Serdica – Constantinopolis*, the *via militaris*, represented a suitable choice when traveling between Central Balkans and *Constantinopolis*. Alternate link with *Constantinopolis* would go to the south from *Naissus* through *Scupi*<sup>67</sup> and through the province of Macedonia, via *Stobi*<sup>68</sup> to *Thessalonica* and further on by famous *via Egnatia*<sup>69</sup>. However, this communication would have been significantly longer than *via militaris*.

<sup>65</sup> HERRMANN 2007, 176.

<sup>66</sup> HERRMANN 2007, 175.

<sup>67</sup> TIR K-34, Naissus: 112–113.

<sup>68</sup> TIR K-34, Naissus: 119–120.

<sup>69</sup> FASOLO 2003.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- AE = *L'année épigraphique*, Paris.  
 ANRW = *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, Berlin – New York  
 CAH = *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Cambridge  
 CIL = *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin.  
 GZM = *Glasnik Zemaljskog Muzeja*, Sarajevo.  
 ILJug = A. et J. ŠAŠEL, *Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMXL et MCMLX repertae et editae sunt*, Ljubljana 1963.  
 IMS = *Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure*, Belgrade, (I, II, III/2, IV, VI) 1976-  
 PIR<sup>2</sup> = *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*, Berlin  
 TIR L 34, Aquincum = *Tabula Imperii Romani*, Aquincum – Sarmizegetusa – Sirmium, Budapest 1968.  
 TIR K 34, Naissus = *Tabula Imperii Romani*, Naissus – Dyrrachion – Scupi Serdica – Thessalonike, Ljubljana 1976.

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