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SCUPI

Transition from Imperial Colony to Late Antiquity Metropolis

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Abstract: *This research mainly focuses its attention on identifying the internal and external factors and processes (historical, geographical, political, geostrategic, socio-economic), which conditioned the formation of the Imperial military colony Scupi, the reasons for its later transformation and metamorphoses to a provincial metropolis, and its eventual demise as a Late Antiquity rural settlement. The knowledge so far indicates that in respect of its urbanistic concept the Scupi colony belongs to the category of fortified cities of the urbs quadrata type, with an orthogonal street plan. During the Imperial Period and the early phase of the Late Antiquity Period until the middle of the 5th century the city shall retain the basic orthogonal urbanistic structure with an unchanged plan of the streets, the construction complexes and the architectonic buildings, however the dimensions and the contents of its city blocks will change throughout the different periods. Later in the period of the 5th and the 6th century, as a result of the new historic, geostrategic and socio-economic conditions, standards and needs, the city shall have a complete metamorphosis, manifested with changes in the buildings' size, appearance, type, contents, urbanistic composition and purpose. Special attention shall be paid to the construction of the new city walls, which in turn shall condition changes in the city's size and its inner planning. During the period of the late 6th and early 7th century, after the buildings of the last urbanistic phase had been definitely demolished and decommissioned, the process of their deconstruction, decomposition, disintegration and ruralisation began.*

Key words: *Scupi, settlement, colony, metropolis, urbanism, construction*

On this occasion we shall make an attempt to illustrate Scupi's complex path of development, i.e. its transition from prosperous Roman colony to provincial metropolis, and then to Late Antiquity rural settlement.

The knowledge acquired from the studious, systematic archaeological research carried out during the last fifty years at the Scupi site filled some of the gaps regarding the city's topography, cultural stratigraphy, urbanistic concept and urbanistic and construction development phases.¹ Although most of the questions mentioned above

¹ The first planned archaeological research were performed by N. Vulić at the Scupi theatre in 1935/37. D. Rendić Miočević continued the research of this object in 1959/61. The first real topographic research of the Scupi site and the broader city territory were realised by I. Mikulčić in 1970. In 1966

remain open, the current level of research allows identification of several construction phases within the standard chronological periodization (Imperial - Late Antiquity period), which can be generally systemised into two basic urbanistic stages, preceded by a preparatory stage (pre-urban stage?). After the demise of the urban living, the so-called post-urban stage followed.

- *Pre-urban stage - period before the establishment of Scupi colony.*
- *Older urban stage (late 1st - late 4th/early 5th century)*
- *Younger urban stage (early/middle 5th - middle/late 6th century)*
- *Post-urban stage (late 6th - early 7th century)*

Pre-urban stage, period before the establishment of the Scupi colony

There are many uncertainties and unanswered questions regarding the events in the area of the future Scupi colony before its establishment. It is hard to resolve the problems regarding the position, status, size, interior structure and layout of the basic settlement, which is assumed that existed before the establishment of the Scupi colony at the same location or in the immediate vicinity, because of the complete lack of historic, epigraphic, and archaeological proofs. (fig. 1)

There are several hypotheses regarding the status of the assumed basic settlement, with the most exploited thesis being that during the Pre-Flavian period (the first half of the 1st century) before the veteran colony had been established, a military camp of one of the legions: 5th Macedonian (*V Macedonica*) or 4th Scythian (*IV Scythica*) was present at the same area, accompanied by a civil settlement - canabae.² Some of the basic arguments supporting this thesis are the configuration, the shape, the dimensions and certain fortification elements of the future Scupi colony's fortification. Although historically speaking this assumption has some plausibility, there are still no archaeological and epigraphic proofs for its verification. Having just scarce superficial finds and several modest topographic trial trenches, and no firm material proofs, it is hard to prove the existence of the legion camp and even harder to follow its transformation into a military colony, by identifying the assumed camp's location with that of the city Scupi.³ However, the possibility that at the beginning of the 1st century one of the listed legions had a camp for a certain period somewhere in the Skopje valley region, i.e. in the broader city areal of the future city of Scupi, should not be hypothetically dismissed in its entirety.

M. Garašanin and D. Koračević began the studious systematic archaeological research of Scupi's city territory, which are still being performed with some interruptions. M. Garašanin and D. Koračević were in charge of the research in the period from 1966 until 1979, D. Koračević was independently in charge from 1980 until 1996, L. Jovanova from 1996 until 2002, while L. Jovanova and M. Ončevska Todorovska from 2003 until today.

² A. Mócsy, *Gesellschaft und Romanisation de römischen Provinz Moesia Superior*, Budapest 1970, 44–50, 67, 69; I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolnrite tvrđini*, Skopje 1982, 36 - 38; Idem, *Antički gradovi vo Makedonija*, Skopje 1999, 132–135;

³ I. Mikulčić, *Teritorija Skupa, Živa Antika XXI/2*, Skopje 1971, 463–484; Idem, *Antički gradovi*, 36-38;

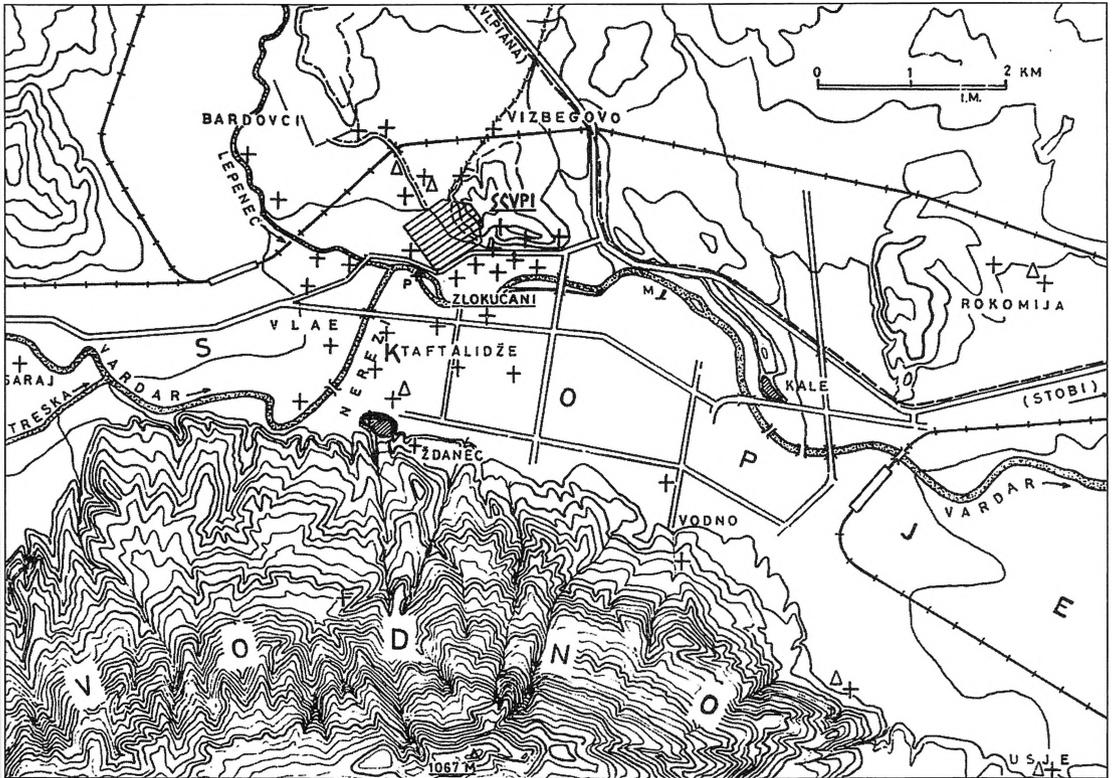


Fig. 1. The location of Scupi and the necropolises in the Skopje valley (after I. Mikulčić)

As opposed to this hypothesis, there are some opinions that the Scupi colony was located at the same location where a basic agglomeration with civil status (?) had previously existed, the size and structure of which have not been determined yet due to the lack of research. There is a possibility that the new colony was formed on an utterly new, vacant location, possibly near some older local civil settlement.⁴ The city centres of the newly established provinces were usually located near the existing peregrine civil settlements (*vici*), the peregrine civil city centres (*civitas*), the civil settlements (*canabae*) accompanying the legion or auxiliaries camps, at the very location of the legion camp after it had been abandoned, or at a completely new vacant position. The most usual practice was to either locate it near some older local vicus or to bestow the civil status of a municipium or a colony to some *canabae*, however, although rare, there are some examples of locating a city at the location of a legion camp, after the legion had been dislocated.⁵

⁴ L. Jovanova, Scupi (Colonia Flavia Scupinorum)—topografijata i urbanističkata struktura na gradot od I–III vek, *Maced. Acta Archaeol.* 18, Skopje 2008, 198–202; M. Mirković, Die Festung und die Stad an der Donau, *Römische Städte und Festungen an der Donau (Akten der Regionalen konferenz Organisiert von Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung, Beograd 16-19 oktober 2003 Beograd)* Beograd 2005, 14–15; M. Mirković, *Moesia Superior, Eine Provinz an der Mittleren Donau*, Mainz 2007, 45–48;

⁵ M. Mirković, Die Festung und die Stad an der Donau, 10–15, note 2–11; M. Mirković, *Moesia Superior*, 43–45; T. Ivanov, R. Ivanov, *Ulpia Oescus, Rimski i ranovizantiski grad*, Sofia 1998, 17–24, with relevant literature.

The antiquity sources provide scarce data regarding the settlements in the region of Skopje valley during the Pre-Roman period that might refer to the future city of Scupi.⁶ The assumption that the highest flat plateau on Zajčev Rid could have been a site of a pre-Roman oppidum is based on terrain reconnaissance and terrain observation, but without any hard material proofs.⁷ The condition today is conspicuously changed due to the numerous modern interventions which impair the identification of segments of prehistoric fortifications, if there were any. So far, material proofs have been found to support the existence of life in settlements and burials at the area of the future city of Scupi and its immediate vicinity during the Late Bronze and Iron Age (12th - 6th century BC).⁸ The Early Antiquity period represents an archaeological gap of five full centuries (5th - 1st century BC) without any material proofs about the events in this region.⁹

However, the existence of a local vicus in the immediate vicinity of the future city of Scupi before the arrival of the Romans is indirectly confirmed by an epigraphic monument mentioning vicus Cavadinus.¹⁰ It was usual to locate the new Roman settlement, or camp, at some distance from the aboriginal settlement. It is obvious that

⁶ F. Papazoglu, *Srednjbalkanska plemena plemena u predrimsko doba*, Posebna izdanja Centara za balkanološka istazivanja, ANUBIH XXX, Sarajevo 1969, 127-143, note. 119- 123; I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolnute tvrdini*, 17-35;

⁷ I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolnute tvrdini*, 27, determined the location and the dimensions of the assumed Pre-Roman fortification (200/230 x 100 m.) on the basis of the terrain configuration and the visible terrain interventions. He postulates that the dimensions and the route of the prehistoric walls coincide approximately with the Late Roman fortification.

⁸ D. Koračević, *SKUPI – Gradska teritorija*, Skopje 2002, 37, 45; L. Jovanova, *Scupi (Colonia Flavia Scupinorum) – topografijata i urbanističkata struktura*, 199–200, remains of house daub and household pottery from the previous period (Late Bronze-Early Iron Age) were discovered during the research of several locations at the city territory (the Christian basilica, the City Bath/Horreum complex, the cardo, the south-eastern rampart) and among the Roman graves in the area of the S/E necropolis. The finds indicate a nearby settlement, with undetermined location. Necropolises of a flat type with bi-ritual burials (graves with a skeletal burial in a contracted position and cremation in urns) are located in the area of the N/W and S/E necropolis. (L. Jovanova, *Scupi (Colonia Flavia Scupinorum)–topografijata i urbanističkata struktura*, 199–200; L. Jovanova, *Colonia Flavia Scupinorum–The world of the dead*, (The 2nd International Symposium of Archaeology: MORTUI VIVOS DOCENT, 03–06 nov. Strumica 2011), Strumica 2013, 3, 6 (in print); Graves with a skeletal burial from the ripe Iron Age chronologically determined in the 8th until 6th century BC were discovered in the theatre area and in the S/E Scupi's necropolis (I. Mikulčić, *Neilirski elementi među skupskim nalazima na prelazu iz predrimskog u rimsko doba*, (Sahranjivanje kod Ilira, Naučni skup SANU, 10–12 may, Zlatibor 1976) knj. VIII, Beograd 1979, 245– 249, T. I–III; L. Jovanova, *Colonia Flavia Scupinorum–The world of the dead*, 6);

⁹ I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolnute tvrdini*, 17-35; Idem, *Antički gradovi*, 113-132, firm clues about life in settlements during the Early Antiquity period in the Skopje region have been registered at the sites: Skopska tvrđina (Kale), Gradište-Brazda, Kale-Studeničani, Gradište-Sredno Nerezi, Kale-Varvara, Kočkova naselba-Katlanovska Banja (K. Ristov, *Dva groba od Katlanovska Banja*, *Maced. acta archaeol.* 15, Skopje 1999, 113-134);

¹⁰ B. Dragojević Josifovska, *Inscriptions de Mésie Supérieure*, vol.VI, *Scupi et la région de Kumanovo*, Beograd 1982 102, n° 86 (= IMS VI), the monument was discovered in the immediate vicinity of the Scupi site, in the locality Kavgalija, near the Skopje-Gjorče Petrov railroad. The precise location of this vicus is unknown, but it is assumed that it was located either in Vizbegovo or in Bardovci.

the peregrine vicus Cavadinus continued to exist with its old name and status long after the colony had been established. (fig. 2)

Except for the status of the assumed basic (civil?) settlement from the pre-Flavian period, its topography, appearance and interior structure until the end of the 1st century are almost completely unknown. The life during this period has been confirmed by the modest remains of settlement layers, which were chronologically determined according to the vertical stratigraphy and the few finds. These layers are mainly filled with broken construction bricks and scorched earth from the debris of the architectural structures, which were built with a dominant use of wood, wattle and daub, and clay. Due to the scarce spatial research, the structure, the contents and the purpose of these buildings has not been determined yet.¹¹ In our opinion, it is impossible to resolve the complicated question regarding the location, the structure and the status of the pre-Flavian settlement, on the basis of several modest trial trenches, and without comprehensive research.

The crucial factor for the prosperous and prompt development of the basic agglomeration, if there was any, has undoubtedly been the acquisition of the rank of a veteran colony, which created the conditions for the transformation into a complex urban Roman city with all the administrative, civil and religious objects. Based on the epigraphic proofs, the only certainty for now is that the Scupi colony has been established as a result of a deduction of veterans, mainly from the VII Claudia

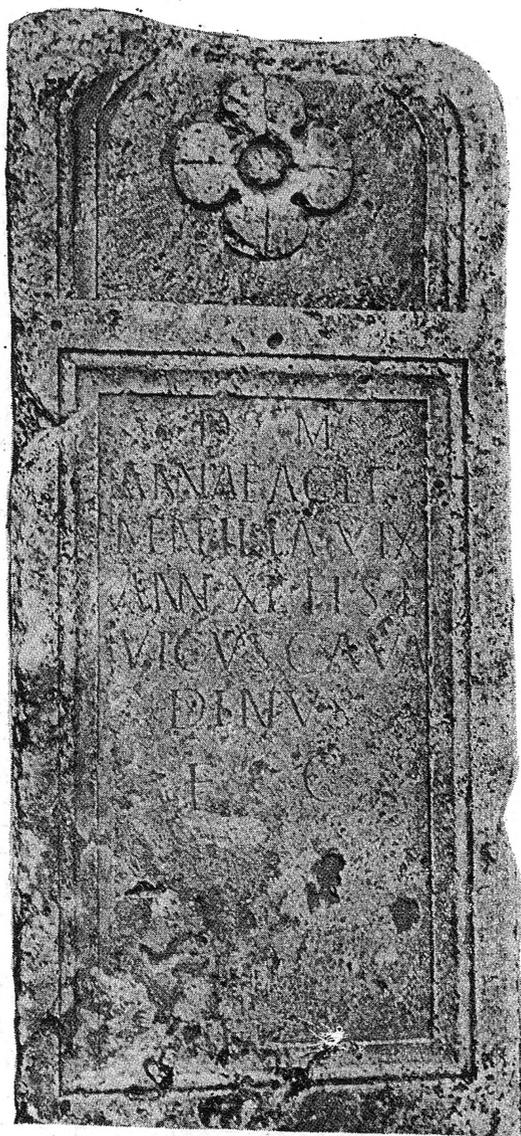


Fig. 2. The epigraphic monument mentioning vicus Cavadinus

¹¹ D. Koraćević, SKUPI, 45-56; L. Jovanova, Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem, kulturna stratigrafija (istraživanja 2008–2010 godina), Maced. Acta Archaeol. 21, 5-7 (in print).

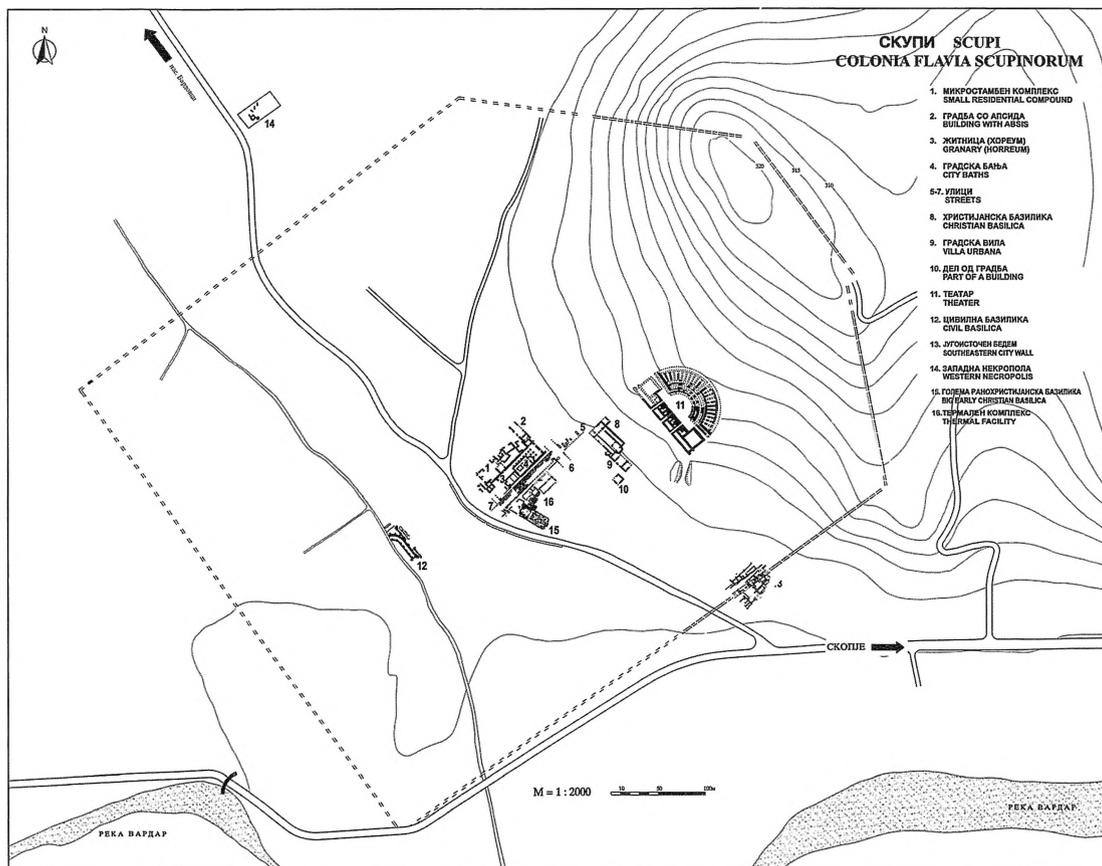


Fig. 3. Topographic layout of Scupi with researched buildings until 2013

legion, but also from the legions IV Macedonica, V Alaudae, and V Macedonica.¹² The scientific opinions as to when the colony was established are still divided. The prevailing position is that the colony was formed during the Domitian era, more precisely around 85 AD,¹³ although there is an increased popularity of the opinion that the establishment of the colony should be connected to the Vespasian era¹⁴, but this

¹² IMS VI, no 39, 41, 43, 46, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 216 (VII Claudia), 41 (V Alaudae), 43 (V Macedonica), 39 (IV Macedonica); A. Mócsy, op. cit., 68, note. 42; M. Mirković, *Die Festung und die Stad an der Donau*, 14-15, postulates that it was not until the veteran deduction that the Skopje valley had conditions and needs for forming a central settlement, which acquired the status of a colony.

¹³ A. Mócsy, op. cit., 67, note. 40; IMS VI, 25-26, note 4-9, with relevant literature, regarding the different opinions on the colony's time of establishment. I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolniti tvrdini*, 36, 41; S. Ferjančić, *Naseljavanje legiskih veterana*, Beograd 2002, 70-71, note 260-269, with relevant literature.

¹⁴ IMS VI, 25-26, note 4-9; S. Dušanić, *The frontier and the hinterland: The role of Scupi in Domitian's wars on the Danube, Roman Limes on the Middle and Lower Danube*, Belgrade 1996, 42, 43, note, 20-21, concludes that the colony was established during Vespasian's reign, more precisely in 72 AD.

would assume a possible second deduction during the Domitian era.¹⁵ Disregarding whether the colony was established during Vespasian's or Domitian's reign, the question as to what happened at this area in the previous period, from the end of the 1st century BC until the Flavian era, remains to be answered.

The knowledge of the research carried out so far, however incomplete, allow the identification of two basic urban stages within the urban development of the city (after the establishment of the Scupi colony): older stage (late 1st - late 4th/early/middle 5th century) and younger stage (early/middle 5th - middle/late 6th century), with several different construction phases within each of them, which is certainly connected with the historic, economic, military and political conditions in the Empire. (fig. 3)

Older urban stage (late 1st - late 4th/early/middle 5th century)

The Imperial Period

- *First construction phase (late 1st - late 2nd century)*
- *Costobocae Incursion in 170/71 AD*
- *Second construction phase (late 2nd - late 3rd century)*
- *Forceful interruption (Gothic and Herulian invasions in 268/269 AD)*

Late Antiquity Period

- *Third construction phase (late 3rd - late 4th century)*
- *Forceful interruption after the battle of Hadrianopolis in 378 AD*
- *Fourth construction phase (late 4th - middle 5th century)*
- *The Hunnic invasion in 447 AD (?)*

The few, scarce data provided by the historic sources,¹⁶ complemented with the data from approximately 300 epigraphic inscriptions,¹⁷ represent a good basis for following the historic conditions and the administrative development of the city during the Imperial period from the late 1st until late 3rd century. Some of the uncertainties regarding the social life in this period are complemented by the data from around 5500 graves from the north-western¹⁸ and south-eastern necropolis.¹⁹ As opposed to this, due

¹⁵ A. Móscy, op. cit., 68, note. 42, postulates that the first deduction included only the veterans of the VII C1, while the veterans of the legions V Alauda and V Macedonica were deducted later, during Domitian's and Trajan's reign.

¹⁶ Complete overview of the historic sources about Scupi in IMS VI, 20–23;

¹⁷ IMS VI, 13 - 40, no 1-206;

¹⁸ L. Jovanova, Skupi - Zapadna nekropola, Maced. acta archaeol. 13, Скопје 1992, 191-199; L. Jovanova, Colonia Flavia Scupinorum-Western necropolis grave forms and rituals, Histria Antiqua vol. 8, Pula 2002, 193-207; L. Jovanova, Colonia Flavia Scupinorum: Topography, disposition and structure of the city and its necropolises from the first to the third century AD, Homage to Milutin Garašanin, SASA Special Editions, Belgrade 2006, 626–636;

¹⁹ I. Mikulčić, Skupi-istočna nekropola 1971, Arheološki Pregled 13, Beograd 1971, 43–45; Idem, Docnorimski grobovi od Skupi, Godišen zbornik na Filozofskiot fakultet vo Skopje 26, Skopje 1974, 109- 143, fig. 1-78; Idem, Ranorimski skeletni grobovi iz Skupa, Starinar XXIV–XXV, 1973/1974, Beograd 1975, 89-102, T. I–XII; Idem, Rimski lambi od Skupi, Godišen zbornik na Filozofskiot fakultet vo Skopje 27, Skopje 1975, 127-151; Idem, Antičko staklo iz Skupi-a i ostali makedonski nalazi,

to the insufficient archaeological research, it is just as hard to define the topography and the urban character of the city in this period as it was for the previous period. The internal urbanistic structure, the construction stages, and the location of the main architectonic complexes, are almost completely unknown.

The key factor in the resolution of most of the topographic and urbanistic problems is to determine the location of the city defensive walls, the directions of their layout and their chronologically different development phases, the street grid and the dimensions of the city blocks.

Defensive walls

Notwithstanding the low level of research, there is sufficient data suggesting that the city of Scupi was planned as an *urbs quadrata* in advance, according to the Roman urbanistic principles. The knowledge acquired from the archaeological research indicate a relatively peaceful, continuous and prosperous development in the construction, with several short interruptions during the older urban period, the late 1st until the late 4th/early 5th century. Notwithstanding the destructions and restorations, the city shall retain its basic urbanistic concept with unchanged layout of its defensive walls, streets, construction complexes and architectonic buildings (S/W-N/E and N/W-S/E).²⁰

The more recent research greatly change the previous idea regarding the city protection, especially the belief about the period of construction of the defensive walls, its position, lines of direction, and construction phases. Until now, the data about the lines of direction of the city walls has been based on the result acquired from the terrain reconnaissance and topographic trial trenches by I. Mikulčić. Back then, only a small segment of the S/E defensive wall was archaeologically located. The position of the N/E wall was determined based on the outlines visible on the surface, while the lines of the N/W and S/W walls were assumed on the basis of the terrain configuration. Based on this, Mikulčić postulates that the fortification had a shape of an irregular rectangular with dimensions of 738 x 590 meters, and a surface of approximately 43 ha (*intra muros*). This methodological approach allowed the determination, to some extent, of the topography, the dimensions and the opus of some wall segments, while its stratigraphy, construction period and different constructive phases have not been

Arheološki Vestnik SAZU XXV, Ljubljana 1976, 191–210; Idem, Neilirski elementi među skupskim nalazima, 245–258, T. I–V; D. Koračević, Skupi, severna i istočna nekropola, Arheološki Pregled 15, Beograd 1973, 75–76; M. Bilbija, Novi arheološki naodi od Skopje i okolinata, Maced. Acta Archaeol. 4, Prilep 1978, 131–133; M. Ivanovski, Ž. Vinčić, Skupi - Istočna nekropola 1982, Maced. Acta Archaeol. 9, Skopje 1988, 165–174; L. Jovanova, D. Mihailova Kalamadeska, Skupi–Istočna nekropola 1994, Maced. acta Archaeol. 15, Skopje 1999, 203–248; L. Jovanova, Colonia Flavia Scupinorum–The world of the dead, 1–15

²⁰ D. Koračević, SKUPI, 42–96; I. Mikulčić, Antički gradovi, 136–140, 255–256; L. Jovanova, Scupi from the 1st to the 3rd century according to new archeological und epigrafic evidence, Römische Städte und Festungen an der Donau (Regionalen konferenz Organisiert von Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung, Beograd 16–19 oktober, Beograd 2003), Beograd 2005, 157–161; Eadem, Colonia Flavia Scupinorum: Topography, disposition and structure, 619–622; Eadem, Scupi (Colonia Flavia Scupinorum)–topografijata i urbanističkata struktura, 203–215; Eadem, Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem, 5–15;

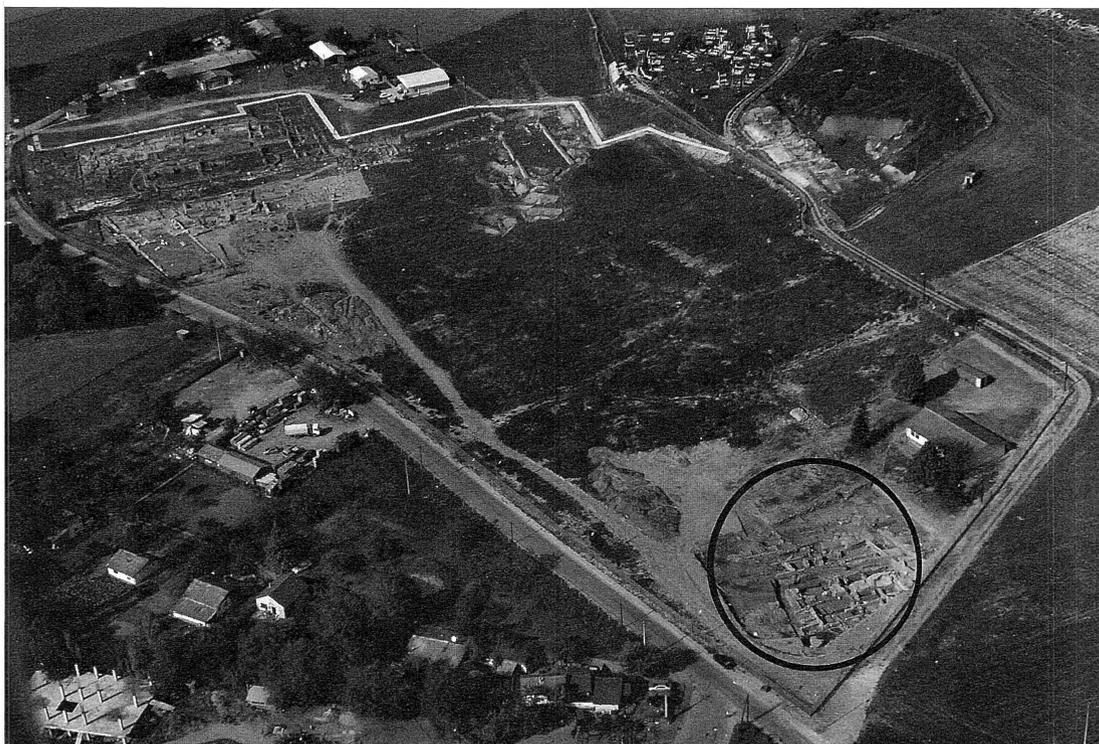


Fig. 4. Panoramic of the researched buildings in the central and eastern city zone

determined.²¹ In 2000, the Faculty for Mining and Geology from Štip (department for geology and geophysics) realised geophysical research of Scupi's fortification.²² The Conservation Centre Skopje researched segments of the S/W and N/W defensive wall on several occasions in the period from 2001 to 2005, but the results have not been published yet.²³

The more recent research (2008 - 2010) of the S/E branch of the Late Antiquity fortification implies the existence of at least two basic constructive phases intended for protection of the city with defensive walls, which probably can be divided into several sub-phases. (**fig. 4**) It has been determined that in the construction of the S/E branch of the Late Antiquity defensive wall the older architectonic structures were negated, which in turn resulted in narrowing the city area within the walls (*intra*

²¹ I. Mikulčić, Skupi–istočna nekropola i j/i sektor gradskog bedema, 131–141; Idem, Skupi-istočna nekropola, 43–45; Idem, Teritorija Skupa, 463-480; Idem, From the Topography of Scupi, 29 – 35; Idem, Skopje so okolnite tvrđine, 41; Idem, Antički gradovi, 132–144, 255–258, 351–352. All the later researchers of Scupi mainly echo I. Mikulčić's opinion.

²² The geophysical research was initiated and organized by the-then Institute for Protection of the Cultural Monuments in the City of Skopje (now Conservation Centre Skopje.) The results have not been published.

²³ The research was realized under the management of D. Mihailova Kalamadeska. The results from the research of the S/W rampart was presented at the 17th MAND Symposium. According to the masonry work opus and the movable finds, the S/W branch of the defensive wall is dated in the 2nd century.

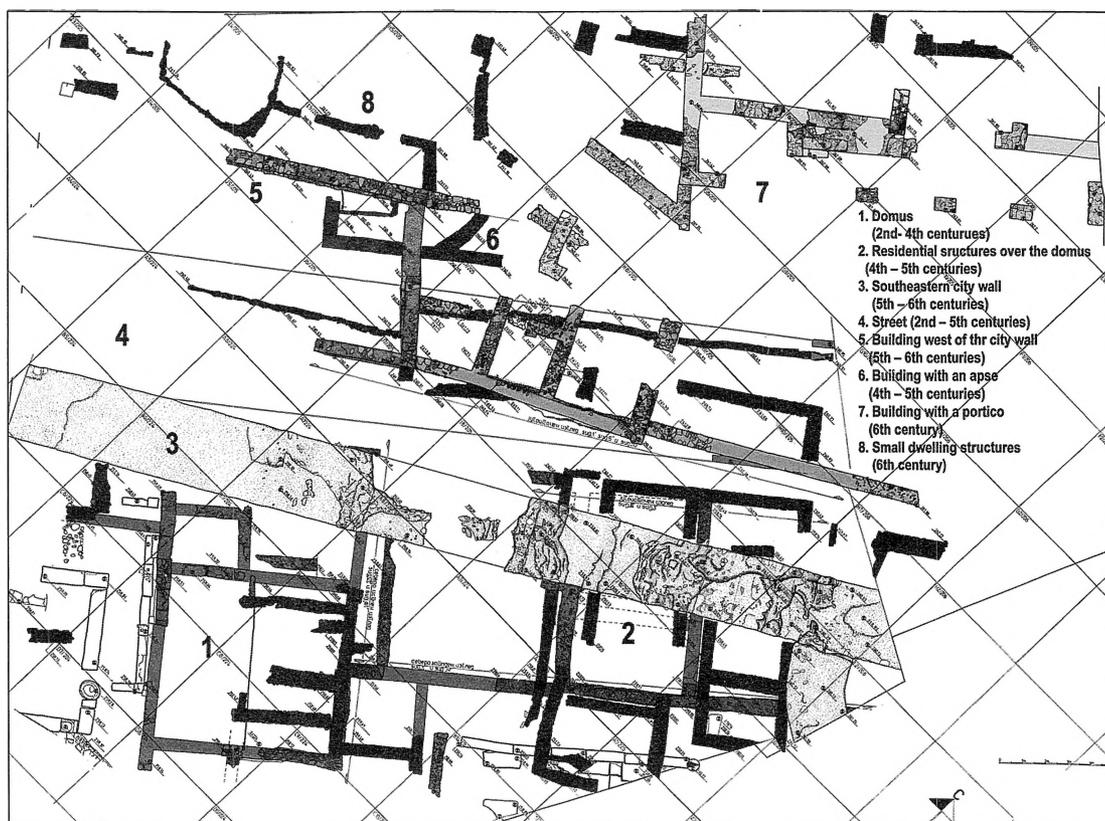


Fig. 5. Eastern city zone (sector S/E rampart) – layout of the researched buildings

muros). In the construction of the Late Antiquity defensive wall, larger segments of the older buildings, which had been decommissioned by then, remained outside the wall (*extra muros*).²⁴ (fig. 5, fig. 6) Hence, the S/E branch of the older fortification, if there has been any, should be expected in the area south-east of the discovered Late Antiquity defensive wall. (fig. 3, 8) For now, except for the conclusion that the city area in the older period was significantly larger than, and the 43 ha assumed so far, all the remaining questions regarding the appearance, the perimeter, the dimensions, the chronology, the construction stages, the constructive and fortifying elements of the older fortification, remain on a level of an assumption. This calls for a revision of the established opinions regarding the chronology, dimensions, scope and development stages of the city rampart.²⁵ In the current phase of research two separate defensive lines have been identified, with their walls differing not only in terms of the construction period, but also in their position, opus, perimeter, dimensions, etc. The older phase should cover the period from the establishment of the colony until the late 4th/possibly the middle of the 5th century. The task that the walls performed during this period was

²⁴ L. Jovanova, Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem, 1–21.

²⁵ Refer to note 21.



Fig. 6. Eastern city zone (sector S/E rampart), buildings *extra muros*

more of a representative than of a defensive nature, the main goal being to highlight the status and the functions of the city as an administrative, economic, cultural and religious centre. The younger fortifying phase chronologically covers the period from the 5th to the late 6th century.²⁶

For now there are no material proofs (epigraphic, archaeological) for the existence of a fortification in the period before and during the colony was established. If one existed, we should assume a construction of earth and wood, in accordance to the Imperial offensive policies, and analogous to the remaining cities in the region and the position that Scupi had deep in the Empire's midland.²⁷ Later on, the city was protected with a stone fortification, the time of construction of which is still disputable. Only a small segment of the S/W branch of the older stone fortification has been discovered, and according to the masonry work and the finds (coins of Faustina the Younger),

²⁶ L. Jovanova, Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem, 17–21, note 35–44; In this phase of research, the lack of firm indicators does not allow a more precise determination of the Late Antiquity fortification's construction time. The stratigraphical relations with the surrounding buildings allow setting the chronological frames of its use in the period of the 5th until the end of the 6th century.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, 31, note 60;

it can be dated in the late 2nd century.²⁸ This dating is also confirmed by the historic and epigraphic clues, which indicate that the immediate cause for building Scupi's first stone fortification might have been the advance of the Dacian tribe Costoboci in 170/171, analogous to most of the Roman cities in Moesia Inferior and Thrace. (fig. 7) The increased construction activity is a result of the defensive policies and the increased safety in the midland of the provinces, expressed with the restoration, the fortification and the system for protection of the cities and the road network.²⁹

The more recent archaeological finds imply the assumption that this fortification remained in function with the same route in the subsequent period until the late 4th / middle of the 5th century. This being the case it is possible to consider several restorations, which should be connected to the known historic events: the Gothic and Herulian devastations in 267/8, the barbarian invasions at the end of the 4th century after the battle of Hadrianopolis in 378, and possibly the Hunnic invasion in 447.

Street grid

In addition to the fortification, the layout of the street grid and the size of the city blocks also have special importance for the urbanistic concept of the city. The discovered segments of the street grid confirm that the streets during the first urban stage were arranged in an orthogonal system, running parallel to the rampart walls (N/W-S/E and S/W-N/E). This implies the existence of two main streets: *cardo* and *decumanus maximus*, intersecting at a straight angle, and a grid of smaller streets running parallel to them - *cardines* and *decumani*, providing with their intersections the borders of city



Fig. 7. The epigraphic monument mentioning the Dacian tribe Costoboci

²⁸ D. Mihailova Kalamadeska, (Refer to note 23);

²⁹ L. Jovanova, New moments on the history of Scupi, Costoboc tribes and Scupi, Spartacus II (Meždunaroden simpozium: 2075 godini ot vostanieto na Spartak, Trako-rimsko nasledstvo, 2000 godini hristijanstvo, 1-4 oct. Sandanski 2002), Veliko Trnovo 2006, 138-145; L. Jovanova, Koga bilo izgradeno prvoto kameno utvrduvanje vo Scupi, Maced. acta archaeol. 17, Skopje 2006, 163-174.

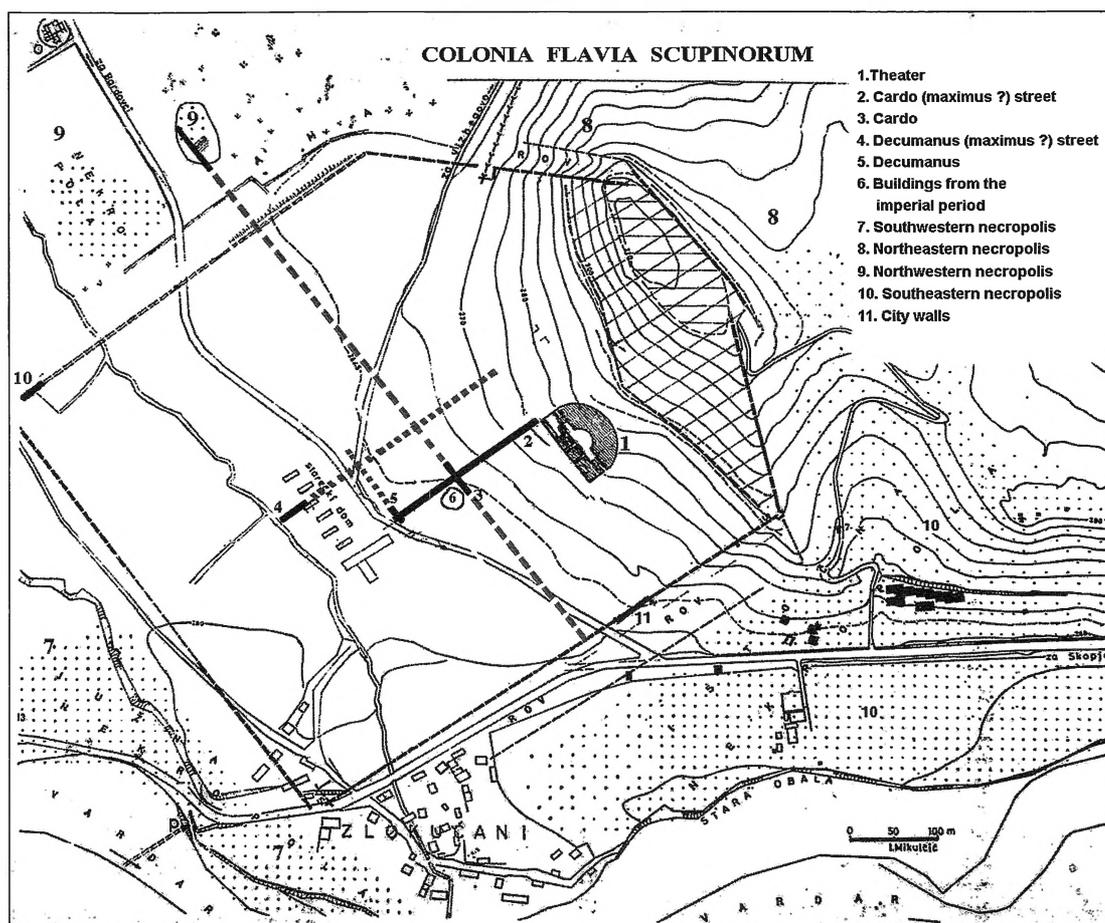


Fig. 8. Topographic layout of Scupi (1st–3rd century), researched parts of the street grid, city walls and buildings

blocks - *insulae*. While the directions remained constant, the dimensions, the contents and the purpose of the buildings contained within the city blocks changed during the different time periods. A larger section of one cardo, the crossroads of this street with two decumani and sections of two more cardines and one decumanus have been researched. (fig. 3, 8, 9, 13, 15, 19)

The most comprehensive research, at a length of 130 meters, was carried out at one of the cardines (N/E-S/W) in the central city zone. The route of this street to the N/E went out in the area west of the theatre, while to the S/W it led to the assumed forum, which was flanked with a civil basilica on its southern side. Its position, dimensions (road width of 8.30 meters, or 14 meters with the footway), infrastructure (cloaca, grid of channels for water supply and sewage for the surrounding buildings) and constructive elements suggest a possible identification as the city's main cardo (cardo maximus?).³⁰ (fig. 10, fig. 11)

³⁰ D. Koraćević, SKUPI, 141–156; L. Jovanova, Colonia Flavia Scupinorum: Topography, disposition and structure, 619–622; Eadem, Scupi (Colonia Flavia Scupinorum)–topografijata i urbanističkata

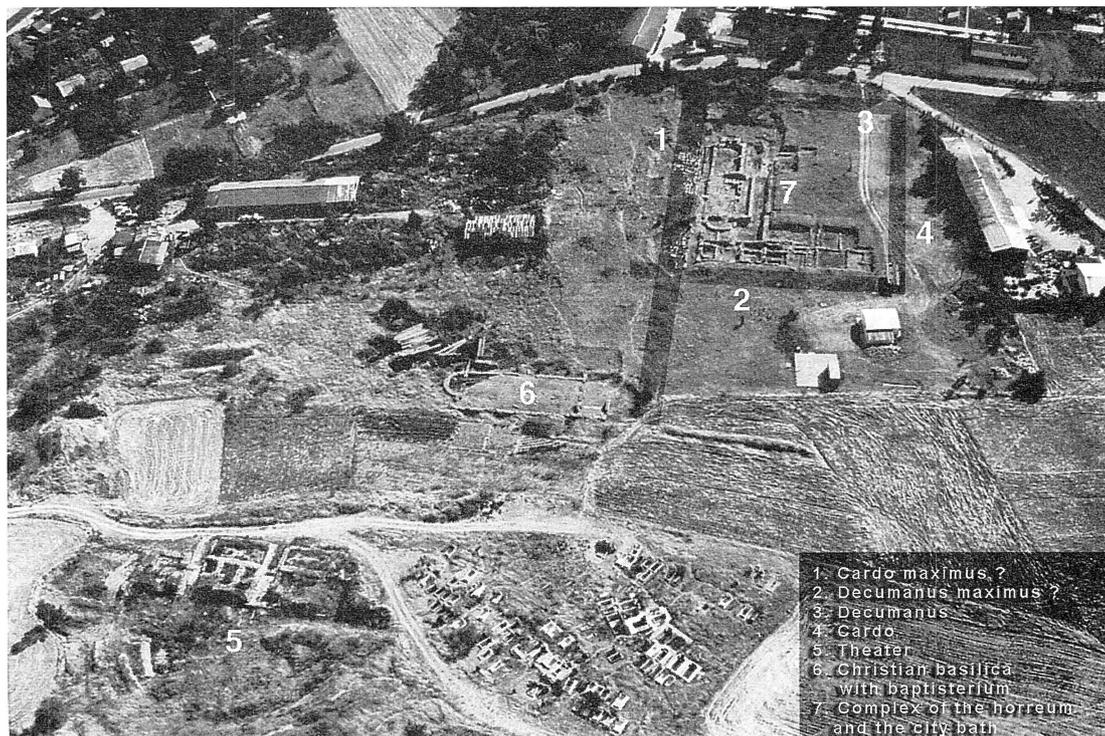


Fig. 9. Part of the central city zone with researched street grid



Fig. 10. Researched part of cardo (maximus?) street



Fig. 11. Infrastructure of cardo (maximus ?), cloaca, grid of channels for water supply

The crossroads of this street with two intersecting streets (decumani), allowed the estimation that the blocks' length in the central city zone was 74 meters. One of the decumani, which intersects the cardo to the north of the blocks was filled with the complexes: city bath/horreum on the eastern side and a thermal facility/basilica with an atrium on the western side, according to the location and the dimensions (width of 11.50 meters) was identified as decumanus maximus. This assumption is supported by the fact that the route of this decumanus to the N/W and S/E is directly connected to the main roads that entered the city from these directions. At about 74 meters to the south from the crossroad between the assumed cardo and decumanus maximus, the cardo intersects with another decumanus (6 meters wide), which borders the above-mentioned blocks on the southern side. (**fig. 12**) To the west of the civil basilica, a section of another cardo street (4 meters wide) was discovered at approximately 50/56 meters away from the mentioned cardo (cardo maximus?). If its route is continued to the N/E, this street would represent the western border of the block where the horreum and the city bath were located. Hence, the dimensions of the city insula which was bordered by the four above-mentioned neighbouring streets were approximately 74 x 50/56 meters.³¹ (**fig. 3, 8, 9, 13, 15**)

struktura, 206–208, the definite determination shall be made possible after the discovery of the forum, the main city gates and larger section of the street grid.

³¹ L. Jovanova, Scupi (Colonia Flavia Scupinorum)–topografijata i urbanističkata struktura, 206–208;



Fig. 12. Decumanus street southern of the horreum and city bath

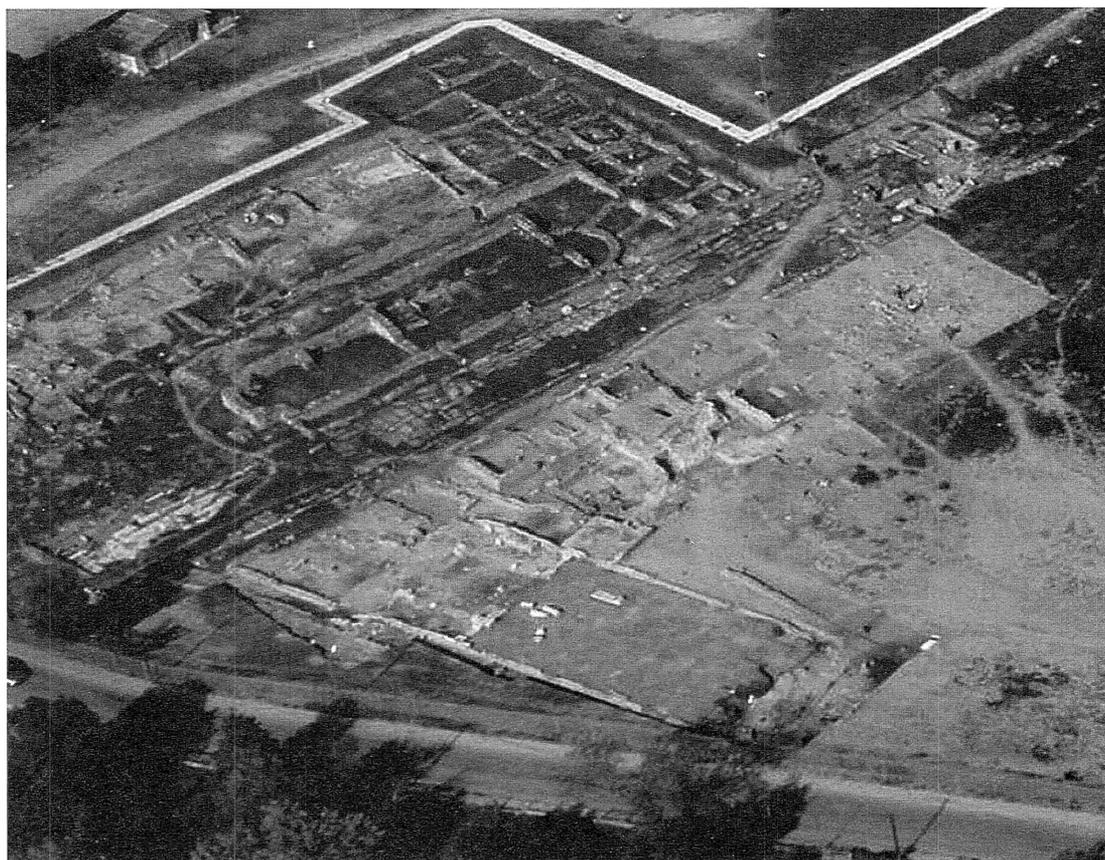


Fig. 13. Panoramic of the central city zone with researched buildings



Fig. 14. Constructive phases of the footways kerb of cardo street (2nd – 6th century)

In the eastern city zone (sector S/E rampart), at a length of about 30 meters, a 5 meters wide street was discovered, which according to its direction belongs to the streets of the cardo grid, and according to its location, should be identified as the first eastern cardo street.³² (**Fig. 19**)

The direction of the streets remained identical throughout the whole first urban period, yet their dimensions, structure, construction technique and constructive elements varied. There are clues that indicate that they were laid at the end of the 1st / the beginning of the 2nd century. The pavement, the footways and the curbs of the main cardo (cardo maximus ?) were created afterwards, probably in the late 3rd or the early 4th century, with several subsequent interventions and adjustments, which can be dated in the late 6th century.³³ (**fig. 14**)

In addition to the dimensions of the blocks bordered with the mentioned streets in the central city core, their contents we also determined. Hence, during the older urban

³² L. Jovanova, Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem, 14;

³³ D. Koraćević, SKUPI, 141–147; L. Jovanova, Scupi (Colonia Flavia Scupinorum)–topografijata i urbanističkata struktura, 207; V. Lilčić, Makedonskiot kamen za bogovite, hristijanite i za životot po životot, tom II, Skopje 2002, 540–547, 623–625, according to the architectonic plastic used in the construction of the footways' kerb, two constructive phases are identified during the 6th century.

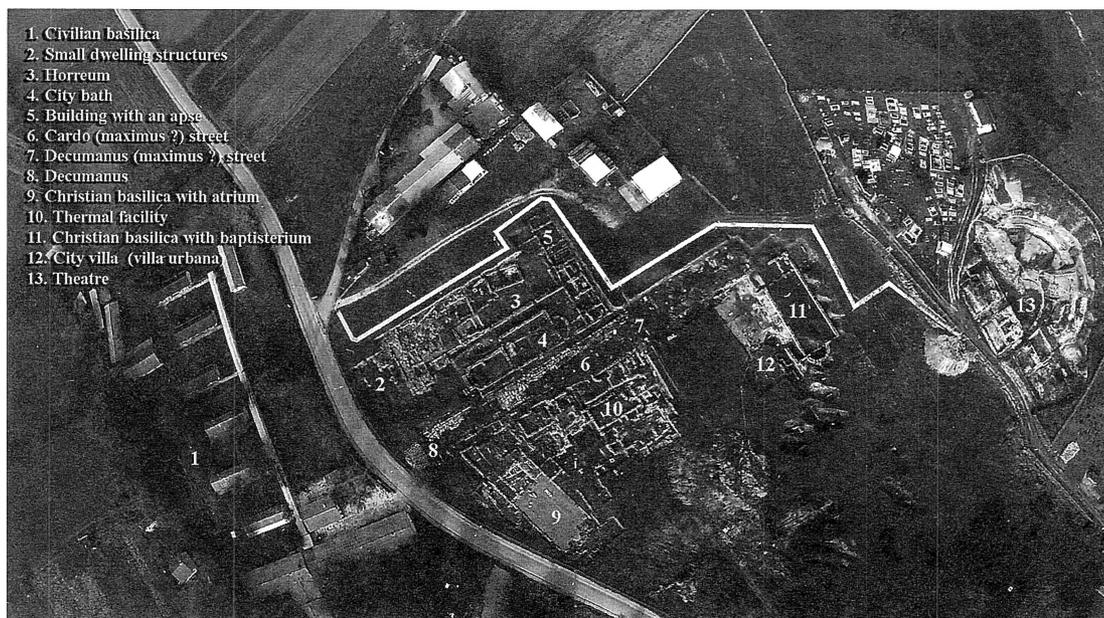


Fig. 15. Panoramic of the central and north city zone with researched buildings

period, several buildings with an unidentified purpose, the horreum and possibly the older phase of the city bath, have replaced, overlaid and upgraded one another in the block laying to the south of the assumed main decumanus, i.e. to the west of the main cardo.³⁴ The block to the east of the main cardo was filled with the contents of the large thermal facility, upgraded in several phases.³⁵ A larger residential complex was located in the block to the north of the main decumanus, i.e. to the east of the main cardo, which, in one of the subsequent development phases, has been identified as an urban villa (villa urbana).³⁶ (fig. 3, 9, 13, 15)

Older urban stage - Imperial Period (first and second construction phases) Researched buildings

The identification of the settlement layers, the stratigraphy, the topography, the individual architectonic structures and constructive phases in the period of the late 1st until the middle of the 3rd century is impaired as a result of the limitations of the researched areas and the poor preservation. All that we can diagnose is fog allowing only a glimpse of the fortification, parts of the street grid, the older phase of the domus in the sector of the S/E rampart, the outline of the theatre, the older phase of the larger thermal facility, the older phase of the so-called urban villa and parts of several

³⁴ D. Koraćević, SKUPI, 45–56, 97–122;

³⁵ M. Ončevska Todorovska, Termal Facility in Skupi (Symposium “Water, Life and Pleasure” Strumica 2008), Strumica 2009, 75–84;

³⁶ D. Koraćević, SKUPI, 86–96; I. Kuzmanovski, Zidnoto slikarstvo vo gradskata vila vo Scupi, Maced. Acta Archaeol. 19, Skopje 2010, 225–235.



Fig. 16. Thermal facility – caldarium (central city zone)

buildings with an undefined function, located mainly under the dominating layers and buildings of the Late Antiquity Period (the horreum, the city bath and the civil basilica) in the central city area.³⁷ The discovered architectonic elements confirm the intensive construction activities in the specified period.³⁸ (fig. 6, 8, 15, 16)

³⁷ N. Vulić, *Rimsko pozorište kod Skoplja*, Posebna izdanja SANU knj. 39, Beograd 1961, 3-23, fig. 1-56; Idem, *Rimsko pozorište kod Skoplja*, Antički teatar na tlu Jugoslavije, Antički teatar na tlu Jugoslavija (Naučni skup 14-17 april, Novi Sad 1980) Novi Sad, 1981, 37-43; D. Rendić Miočević, *SCUPI Istraživanja rimskog teatra 1959-1961 godine*, Novi Sad 1981, 44-51, fig. 1-4; I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolnrite tvrdini*, 27, 31-43; Idem, *Antički gradovi*, 137-140; D. Koračević, *Urbanizam i arhitektura Skupa u svetlosti arheoloških iskopavanja*, Lihnid 7, Ohrid 1989, 101-107; D. Koračević, *SKUPI*, 45-63, 80, 93; L. Jovanova, *Scupi from the 1st to the 3rd century*, 153-161; Eadem, *Koga bilo izgradeno prvoto kameno utvrduvanje vo Scupi*, 163-178; Eadem, *Colonia Flavia Scupinorum: Topography, disposition and structure*, 619-622; Eadem, *Scupi (Colonia Flavia Scupinorum)-topografijata i urbanističkata struktura*, 208-215; Eadem, *Scupi-Sektor jugoistočen bedem*, 6-7; M. Ončevska Todorovska, *Termal Facility in Skupi*, 75-84; I. Kuzmanovski, op. cit. 225-235;

³⁸ В. Лилчиќ, *Македонскиот камен за боговите, христијаните и за животот по животот*, I, Скопје 2001, 148-163;

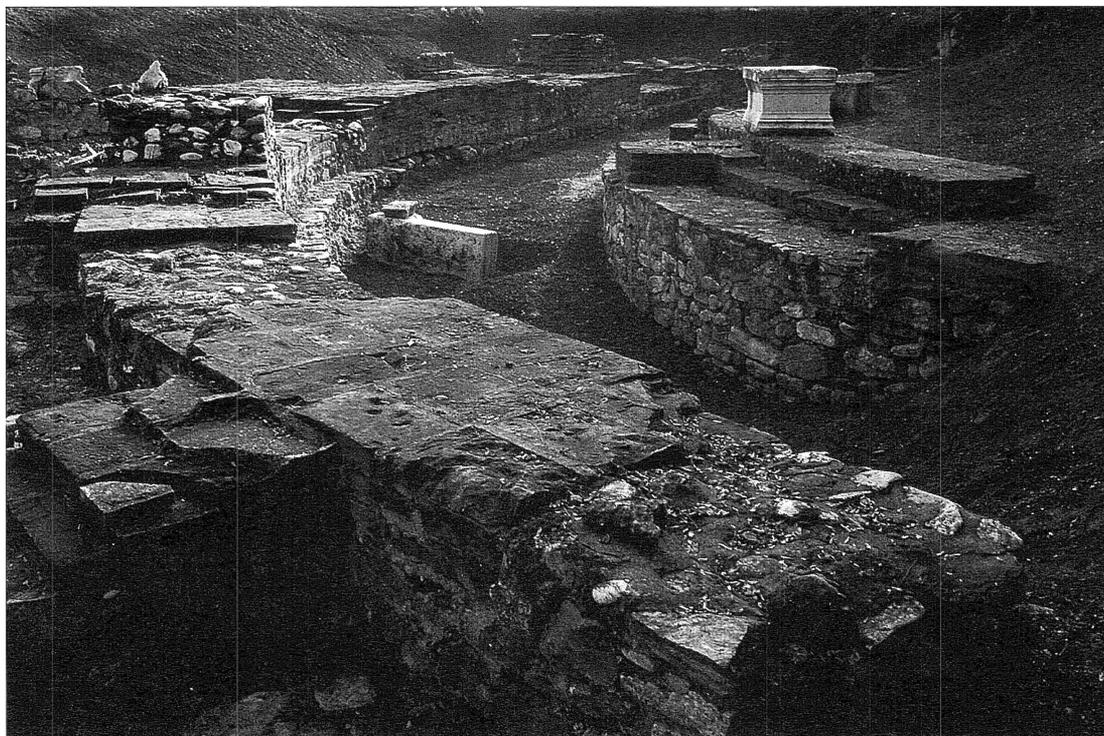


Fig. 17. Civilian basilica in the southern city zone

Forceful interruption (Gothic and Herulian invasions in 268/269 AD)

After the relatively peaceful continuous and prosperous development there are evidences of a brief interruption in the late 3rd century. Layers of debris and traces of firing can be found at most of the researched sectors in Scupi at an almost uniform level. Namely, all the buildings which are assumed to be built in the Tetrarchic Period have their foundations in this layer, which is formed as a result of forceful devastation accompanied by arson. The stratigraphy and the finds provide clues to date this in the late 3rd century, which is why it is usually connected with the devastation left behind from the Gothic and Herulian invasion in 268/9.³⁹

Older urban stage - Late Antiquity Period (third construction phase)

During this period (late 3rd - late 4th century) the role of an important administrative, business, religious and cultural centre, which Scupi had had as a Roman colony, was strengthened by acquiring the status of a metropolis of the newly established province Dardania.⁴⁰ The dynastical skirmishes, the internal unrests and the barbarian

³⁹ И. Микулчиќ, *Антички градови*, 140, 255–258, Д. Корачевиќ, *СКУПИ*, 42, 72–73, 80, 116, 122–123; Ј. Јованова, *Скупи–Сектор југоисточен бедем*, 7.

⁴⁰ IMS VI, 21–22, note 10, the time of establishment of the province has not been determined. The first time it was mentioned is in the *Leterculus Veronesis* (a list of dioceses and provinces), the creation of which is connected with the time of shared reign of Constantine I and Licinius I (probably around 314).

invasions characteristic for the Tetrarchic Period and the period of Constantine I and his successor's reigns (Constantine II, Constans and Constantius II), and later during Valens and Valentinian I,⁴¹ did not have greater influence on the development and the prosperity of Scupi, which is manifested, among the rest, with an increased construction activity, so it can be said that a construction renaissance has happened. As opposed to the poor archaeological research of the Imperial Period buildings, for this period we have a different situation, with several researched construction complexes. It is the period when the civil basilica, the horreum and the so-called urban villa in the central city area were built, while the large thermal complex in the central city zone and the younger phase of the domus under the S/E branch of the Late Antiquity rampart were restored, upgraded, or adapted.⁴² (fig. 3, 5, 6, 15 – 19)

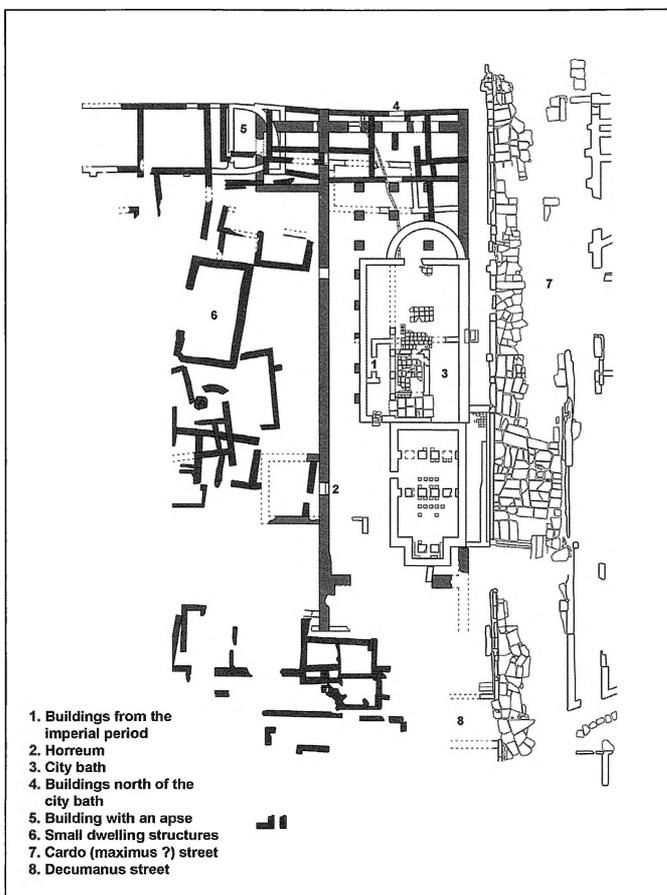


Fig. 18. Layout of the buildings in the central city zone, west of the cardo street

⁴¹ V. Velkov, *Cities in Thrace and Dacia in Late Antiquity*, Amsterdam 1977, 24–37, these events are mainly connected to the territories of the Danube provinces, while in the midlands to the region of Thrace and Mediterranean Dacia;

⁴² I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolnrite tvrđini*, 42–44; Idem, *Antički gradovi*, 255–258; D. Koračević, *Sostojbata na arheološkite iskopavanja vo Antičko Skupi*, *Maced. Acta Archaeol.* 3, Prilep 1977, 147–164; Eadem, *Antičko Skupi—rezultati od dosegašnite arheološki iskopavanja (katalog)*, Skopje 1984, 8–28; Eadem, *Arheološki iskopavanja vo Skupi 1982 g.*, *Maced. Acta Archaeol.* 9, Skopje 1988, 157–163; Eadem, *Urbanizam i arhitektura Skupa*, 101–107; Eadem, *SKUPI*, 64–123, 141–156; M. Garašanin, D. Koračević, *Arheološki iskopavanja vo Skupi 1978–1981*, *Maced. Acta Archaeol.* 7–8, Skopje 1987, 85–96; L. Jovanova, *Scupi-Colonia Flavia Scupinorum (vodič)*, 35–78; M. Ončevska Todorovska, *Termal Facility in Skupi*, 75–84; I. Kuzmanovski, *op. cit.*, 225–235; L. Jovanova, *Scupi—Sektor jugoistočen bedem*, 8–25;

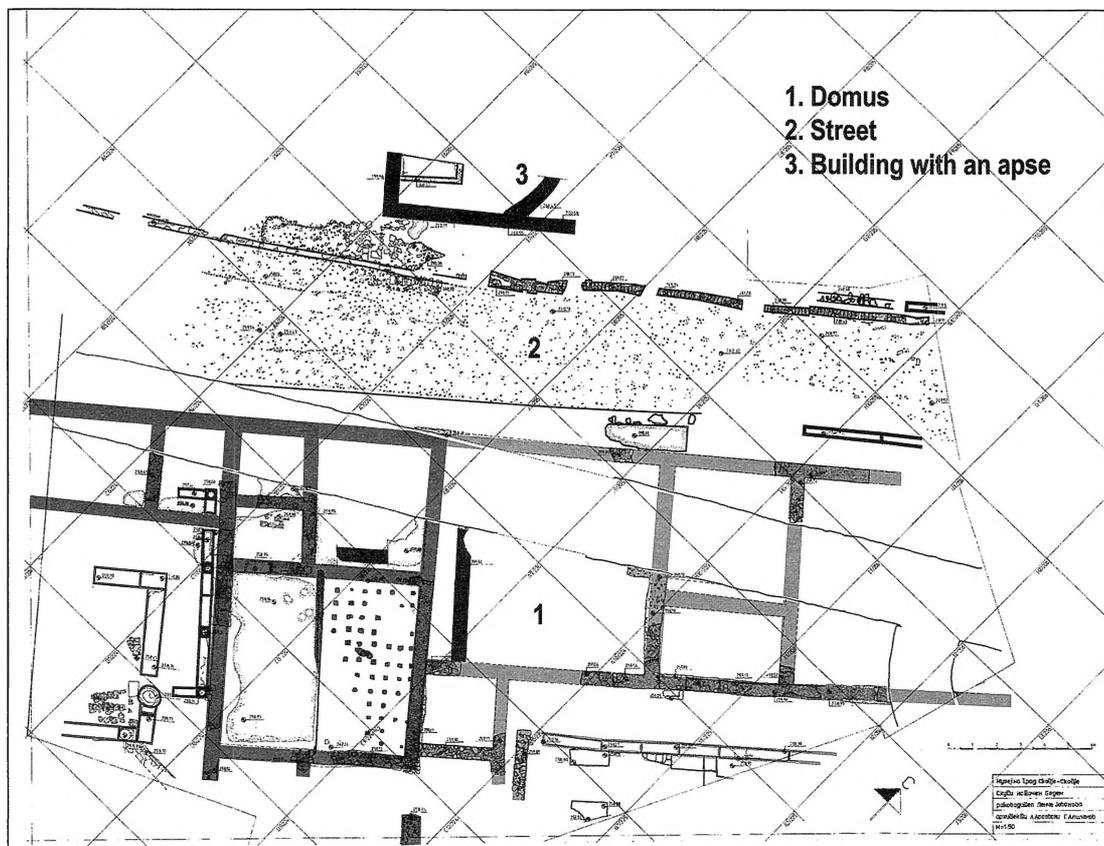


Fig. 19. Eastern city zone (sector S/E rampart), Older urban stage (2nd- late 4th/early 5th century)

Forceful interruption after the battle of Hadrianopolis in 378 AD

The rising development line shall be forcefully interrupted in the period of the late 4th century, which is usually connected with the barbarian devastations of the Balkan provinces after Valens had suffered the catastrophic defeat at Hadrianopolis in 378.⁴³ After this period of instability, the theatre, the horreum and the younger phase of the domus in the zone of the S/E rampart were no longer used in their original purpose.⁴⁴

Older urban stage - Late Antiquity Period (fourth construction phase)

In the next period (late 4th / middle of 5th century) a new construction expansion

⁴³ Amm. Marc. XXXI, 4, 9; V. Velkov, op. cit., 34–40; R. Ivanov *Dolnodunavska otbranjitelna sistema mežu Dortikum i Durostorum ot Avgust do Mavrikij*, Sofia 1999, 139–140; I. Mikulčić, *Antički gradovi*, 198–200;

⁴⁴ N. Vulić, *Rimsko pozorište kod Skoplja*, 20–22; D. Koraćević, *SKUPI*, 64–74, the abandonment of the horreum is dated after 268/9; L. Jovanova, *Scupi-Colonia Flavia Scupinorum (vodič)*, 44–47; L. Jovanova, *Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem*, 9–13;



Fig. 20. City bath (central city zone)

can be seen in Scupi, which in the sector of the S/E rampart can be recognised in the so-called building with an apse, while in the central city zone there are proofs of restorations and adaptations of the large thermal complex, the so-called urban villa, the civil basilica, and probably the first phase of the so-called city bath was constructed. (fig. 3, 15, 17-20)

These activities are a result of mending the military and political conditions during the reign of Theodosius I and the intensive construction activity of Theodosius II in the broader Balkan region.⁴⁵ Scupi's political and geostrategic importance in the late 4th century is confirmed by the two visits Theodosius I made in 379 and 388, when he issued two Imperial Proclamations from here.⁴⁶ In that respect there is compatible data in *Notitia Dignitatum*, where Scupi is mentioned as the seat of a military unit

⁴⁵ Cod. Theod. XV, 1, 49; Cod. Theod. XI, 17, 4; V. Popović, Glavne etape urbanog razvoja Sirmijuma, Sirmium, Grad careva i mučenika, Sremska Mitrovica 2003, 207, со наведена литература; Velkov V., op.cit., 40; V. Dintchev, Classification of the Late Antique Cities in the Dioceses of Thracia and Dacia, *Archaeologia Bulgarica* III/3, Sofia 1999, 41–63; I. Mikulčić, Stobi, antički grad Skopje 2003, 108–112, 168–196;

⁴⁶ Cod. Theod. VI, 30, 2 (issued on 06 July 379); Cod. Theod. XII, I, 119 (issued on 21 June 388); IMS VI, 22, note 12;

pseudo commitatenses Scupenses, which was under the command of the chief military commander of the Illyricum prefecture (*magister militum per Illyricum*).⁴⁷

The Hunnic invasions in 447

Although the historic sources offer no proofs that Scupi suffered during the Hunnic invasions in 447, this possibility should not be excluded. It is more than certain that the echo of these terrible events was felt in the life and civil engineering in Scupi.⁴⁸

Younger urban stage (middle/late 5th - middle/late 6th century)⁴⁹

- *Fifth construction phase (middle/late 5th century - 518)*
- *Forceful interruption in 518 (catastrophic earthquake)*
- *Sixth construction phase (restoration after the earthquake in 518)*
- *Seventh construction phase (restoration during Justinian's reign)*

As opposed to the knowledge connected with the events from the 1st until the 4th century, some of the newly acquired results significantly change some of the accepted positions regarding the city's size, appearance, urbanistic structure and chronology, which regard the period of the 5th to 6th century. During this phase, the city was fortified with new mighty walls, the area of the protected perimeter was reduced in respect to the previous stage, there is an inconsistency with the older orthogonal urbanistic concept, and with the type, the contents and the purpose of Scupi's buildings.

Late Antiquity defensive walls

The south-eastern branch of the Late Antiquity defensive wall was constructed from the foundations (*a fundamentis*). A beginning of a semi-circular tower was discovered at the N/E end of the researched segment. A larger section of the wall is preserved only in the foundations zone, with a thickness of 3.60 meters, while the thickness of the tower is 2.60 meters. The height of the S/E branch of the Late Antiquity fortification can be only hypothetically assumed, on the basis of the thickness of the wall's foundations zone, the masonry work and the quality of the constructive materials used. According to the determined parameters, when the thickness is larger than 3 meters, the height of the superstructure of the S/E defensive wall should be at least 10 meters.⁵⁰ The heights

⁴⁷ Not. Dig. Or. IX, 43; IMS VI, 22, note 13;

⁴⁸ I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolnite tvrđini*, 39, note 14; Idem, *Antički gradovi*, 201, note 13;

⁴⁹ In this phase of the research it is not possible to make a definite segmentation of the constructive phases, i.e. the debris layers, especially in the period of the late 5th and the 6th century. Except for the proposed disturbances of Scupi's urban context, there might have been some others during the Ostrogothic invasions in the late 5th century, but also later in the 6th century in some of the incursions of the Avars and the Slavs.

⁵⁰ L. Jovanova, *Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem*, 16–22; V. Velkov, op. cit., 201–205; G. Milošević, *Ranovizantiska arhitektura na Svetinji u Kostolcu*, *Starinar XXXVIII*, Beograd 1987, 44, 46–47, with quoted literature; M. Čanak Medič, B. Stojković Pavelka *Arhitektura i prostorna skulptura carske palate, Felix Romuliana–Gamzigrad*, Beograd 2010, 60–66, 73–76, note 38, according to the recommendations of an anonymous Byzantine author in Justinian's reign, based on older authors of the antiquity (Philo of Byzantium), the height of the defensive walls in the fortifications which are located in the plains should be 20 cubits (about 10 meters), yet there were some divergences, based on the needs.



Fig. 21. The south-eastern branch of the Late Antiquity defensive wall

of some of the researched larger Late Antiquity fortifications in the broader Balkans region range between 10 and 12 meters, sometimes even more.⁵¹ The layout route is positioned with a direction of N/E-S/W, with 10° inclination to the east, which is inconsistent with the basic directions of the orthogonal concept (N/E-S/W and N/W-S/E), characteristic for the previous urbanistic period. This is a characteristic of the period, thus resulting with positioning of most of the concurrent or the subsequent buildings according to the new rules, along with the Late Antiquity fortification.⁵² The bad preservation and the relatively low level of research do not allow a more precise determination of the period of construction, existence and abandoning of the Late Antiquity defensive wall. The masonry work, the use of spolia, the semicircular shape of the tower and the chronological and stratigraphical relations with the other

⁵¹ G. Milošević, *op. cit.*, 44, with quoted literature; S. Bojadžiev, *Prinos km istoriata na kreposnata stena na Serdika*, *Arheologia* 1959/3-4, Sofia 1959, 43, the control path of Serdica's Late Antiquity fortification was located at a height of 15 meters, which implies that the walls were approximately 17 meters high. The Late Antiquity walls in Serdika were 17 meters high.

⁵² D. Koraćević, *SCUPI*, 157-164; M. Ončevska Todorovska, 2009, *The Great Early Christian Basilica in Scupi and Early Christianity*, *Macedonian Heritage*, 34-35, Skopje 2009, 97-111; M. Ončevska Todorovska, *Novata golema ranohristijanska bazilika od Skupi*, *Maced. Acta Archaeol.* 20, Skopje 2011, 365 - 379; L. Jovanova, *Scupi-Sektor jugoistočen bedem*, 16 - 25, 29 - 41;

buildings indicate broader chronological frames for the period of its use (5th until late 6th century). (fig. 3 – 6, 21)

Possible clues could be found in the analogies for the construction time of the Late Antiquity fortifications of the cities on our territory including Stobi,⁵³ Heraclea,⁵⁴ Bargala,⁵⁵ and Lychnid,⁵⁶ as well as of the fortifications of the larger cities in the eastern part of the Empire, such as Constantinople,⁵⁷ Serdica⁵⁸ and Thessalonica.⁵⁹

Hence, we consider that the earliest date for the construction of the Late Antiquity fortification in Scupi would be the reign of Theodosius II, or even more probably, in the period after the middle of the 5th century. This dating is supported by the fact that the construction of the Late Antiquity fortification in Scupi represents only a part of the whole transformation of the city, manifested mainly by fortifying the defensive potentials, narrowing the fortified city area, inconsistency with the older

⁵³ I. Mikulčić, Stobi, 102, dates the Late Antiquity restoration of Stobi's fortification in the second half of the 4th century, based on a coin of Valentinian I discovered in the wall's foundation; I. Mikulčić, *Antički gradovi*, 335, postulates that the 4th century fortification existence throughout the 5th and the 6th century; Dj. Mano–Zisi, *Stratigraphic Problems and the Urban Development of Stobi*, *Studies in the Antiquities of Stobi I*, Beograd 1973 224, the restoration of the walls and Porta Heraclea were made after the Gothic invasions in 479; V. Sanev, S. Saržoski, *Iskopuvanja na vnatrešniot bedem vo Stobi*, *Studies in the Antiquities of Stobi III*, Titov Veles 1981, 229–231, the construction of the internal rampart is set after the times of Theodosius I, i.e. at the end of the 4th or the beginning of the 5th century.

⁵⁴ I. Mikulčić, *Antički gradovi*, 328, dates the restoration of the city walls after the Hunnic destruction in 447; I. Mikulčić, *Herakleja, antički grad vo Makedonija*, Skopje 2007, 94–97, sets the last restoration of the southern branch of the city rampart at the end of the 5th century, but also in the 6th century; E. Maneva, *Za istočното predgradie na Herakleja*, *Maced. Acta Archaeol.* 9, Skopje 1988, 184, states that the city wall was restored in Anastasios reign.

⁵⁵ F. Papazoglu, *Makedonski gradovi u rimsko doba*, Skopje 1957, 245, one epigraphic find suggests that the gate of Bargala's fortification was restored in 371 during the shared reign of Valens and Valentinian I; R. Petkovski, Z. Georgiev, *Konzervacija i rekonstrukcija na gradskata porta na Bargala*, *Zbornik na Štipskiot naroden muzej IX–X*, Štip 2003, 186–188, they distinguish four constructive phases: the first is dated in the early 4th century, the second in the second half of the 4th century, the third in the end of the 5th/beginning of the 6th century, and the fourth in the middle of the 6th century; T. Nacev, *Antički grad Bargala*, Skopje 2008, 129–136;

⁵⁶ V. Bitrakova Grozdanova, *Topografijata i urbaniot razvoj na Lihnidos*, *Istorija*, XXII/2, Skopje 1986, 259–263; V. Bitrakova Grozdanova *Битракова*, *Ohrid vo ranohristijanskiot period I negovoto urbano jadro*, *Jubileen zbornik 25 godini mitropolit Timotej*, Ohrid 2006, 259–260, the restoration and the expansion of Lychnidus walls are connected with the barbaric invasions at the end of the 4th century, while the sources confirm that they remained in function until the end of the 5th century.

⁵⁷ J.B. Bury, *History of the Late Roman Empire from the Death of Theodosius I to the Death of Justinian*, I–II, New York 1923, 69–73, The Late Antiquity fortification was restored and expanded during Theodosius II reign.

⁵⁸ S. Bojadžiev, *Prinos km istoriata na kreposnata stena na Serdika*, 20, 35–45; Idem, *Gradoustroistvo, kreposno stroitelstvo*, 128–135; V. Velkov, *op. cit.*, 94; The fortification of this metropolis in Mediterranean Dacia was restored after the Hunnic destructive invasions in the middle of the 5th century and restored again as a part of Justinian's grand constructive endeavours.

⁵⁹ P. Adam–Veleni, *Roman Thessaloniki*, Thessaloniki 2003, 147, 170–172, Thessalonica's walls were restored at the end of the 4th century, during Theodosius I reign and restored again somewhat later after the Hunnic devastation in the middle of the 5th century.

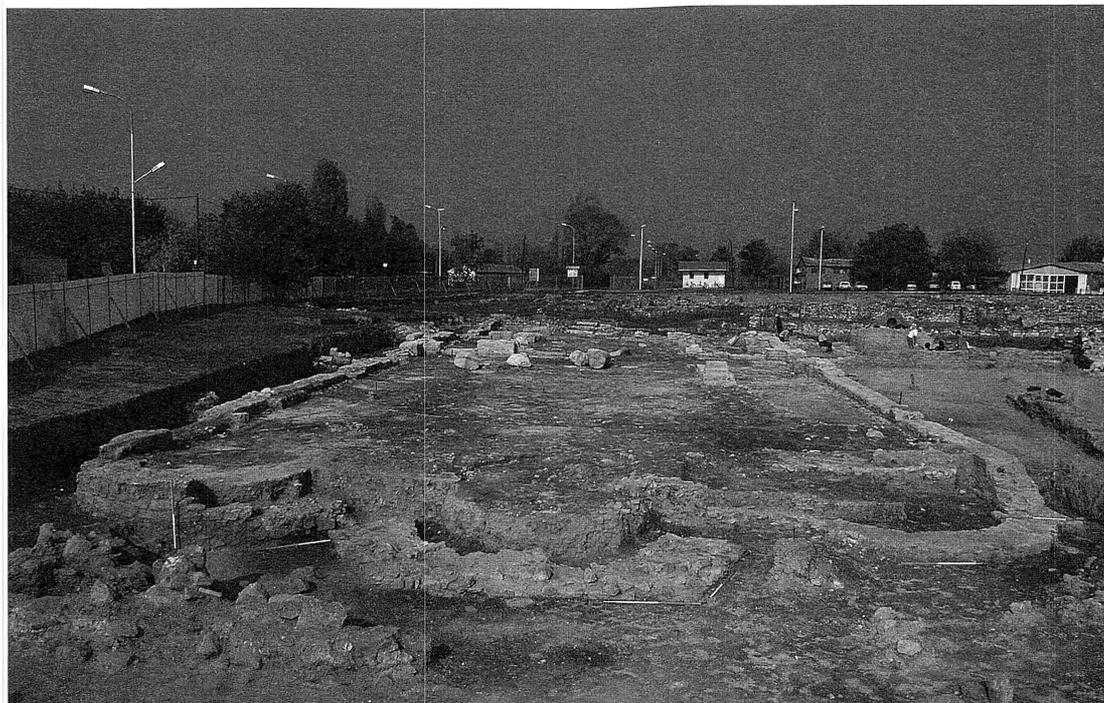


Fig. 22. The Christian basilica with an atrium (central city zone)

orthogonal urbanistic concept, change in the representation and the use of the public space, dominance of the sacral buildings at the expense of the profane ones, etc. In compliance with the new standards and needs, the walls became the basic feature and indicator of the defensive capacity, the geostrategic and socio-economic importance of Scupi in the region and beyond. Such endeavours, grand both in scope and in cost, were part of the then governmental strategy for protection of the cities, infrastructure, resources and the population in the interior zone of the eastern part of the Empire. Hence, the development processes of the Dardanian metropolis Scupi in the 5th and 6th century were analogous to the transformation of the remaining larger Late Roman cities in the midland of the Illyricum prefecture. The crisis and the metamorphoses of the larger cities, which also included Scupi, came as a result of the military and historic occasions, the frequent internal and external unrests, the economic impoverishment, the social layering, the religious conflicts, the numerous migrations and demographic changes that took place in the 5th - 6th century.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ I. Mikulčić, *Über die Grösse der spätantiken Städte in Makedonien*, Živa Antika, Skopje 1974, 191–212; V. Velkov, *op. cit.*, 77–133, 201–230; V. Popović, *Dezintegracija i ruralizacija grada u istočnom Iliriku od 5. do 7 veka n. e. Sirmium, Grad careva i mučenika*, Sremska Mitrovica 2003, 239–259; R. Ivanov, *op. cit.*, 147–206, 240–251; V. Dinchev, *op. cit.*, 39–62; S. Torbatov, *Ukrepitelna sistema na provincia Skitia (krai na III–VII v.)*, V. Trnovo 2002, 395–441; F. Karagiani, *The development of the cities during the transition from Late Antiquity to the Early Christian Era*, Niš & Byzantium VII, Niš 2009, 121–128; C. Snively, *The fates of Balkan cities in Late Antiquity: Recent views*, Niš & Byzantium VII, Niš 2009, 39–42, with relevant literature;



Fig. 23. The Christian basilica with a baptisterium (northern city zone)

These conclusions are compatible with the results acquired in the research of the Late Antiquity horizon in Scupi. The discovered buildings imply permanent constructive activities with varying intensity and quality in the late 5th and almost throughout the 6th century. This conclusion is confirmed by the Christian basilica with a baptisterium, the Christian basilica with an atrium, the younger phase of the city bath and the building with an apse in the central city zone, the so-called building west of the rampart, the building with a portico in the sector of the S/E rampart, but also by the numerous archaeological finds (coins, pottery, objects made of metal, glass, stone, etc.).⁶¹ In this phase of the research, it is not possible to make any precise chronological determination for the time of construction, the period of existence and the constructive phases of the mentioned buildings. (fig. 3, 13, 15, 18, 20 - 24)

The archaeological proofs for the intensive constructive activities in Scupi during the first half of the 6th century are contradictory to some of the data listed in the historic

⁶¹ D. Koraćević, *Sostojbata na arheološkite iskopuvanja vo Antičko Skupi*, 159; Eadem, *Urbanizam i arhitektura Skupa*, 103-104; Eadem, *SKUPI*, 124-140; M. Garašanin, D. Koraćević, *Bazilikata II vo Skupi*, *Maced. Acta Archaeol.* 5, Prilep 1979, 31-46; M. Garašanin, D. Koraćević, *Arheološki iskopuvanja vo Skupi 1978-1981*, 79-85; I. Mikulčić, *Skopje so okolnite tvrdini*, 43; Idem, *Antički gradovi*, 351-352; M. Ončevska Todorovska, 2009, *The Great Early Christian Basilica in Scupi*, 97-111; M. Ončevska Todorovska, *Novata golema ranohristijanska bazilika od Skupi*, 365-379; M. Ončevska Todorovska, *Scupi I the 6th century through movable material (coins and pottery)* *Macedonian Heritage* 17, *Skopje* 2001, 71-81; M. Ončevska Todorovska, *Belt Bucles and Appliqués from Scupi at the time of the Great Migrations*, *Macedonian Heritage* 25, *Skopje* 2005, 21-32; M. Ončevska Todorovska, *Zanaetčivoto i primenetata umetnost vo docnata antika preku metalni predmeti od Skupi*, *Maced. Acta Archaeol.* 19, *Skopje* 2010, 281-297; V. Lilčić, *Makedonskiot kamen*, tom II, 540-547, 623-625; L. Jovanova, *Scupi – Sektor jugoistočen bedem*, 22-24;

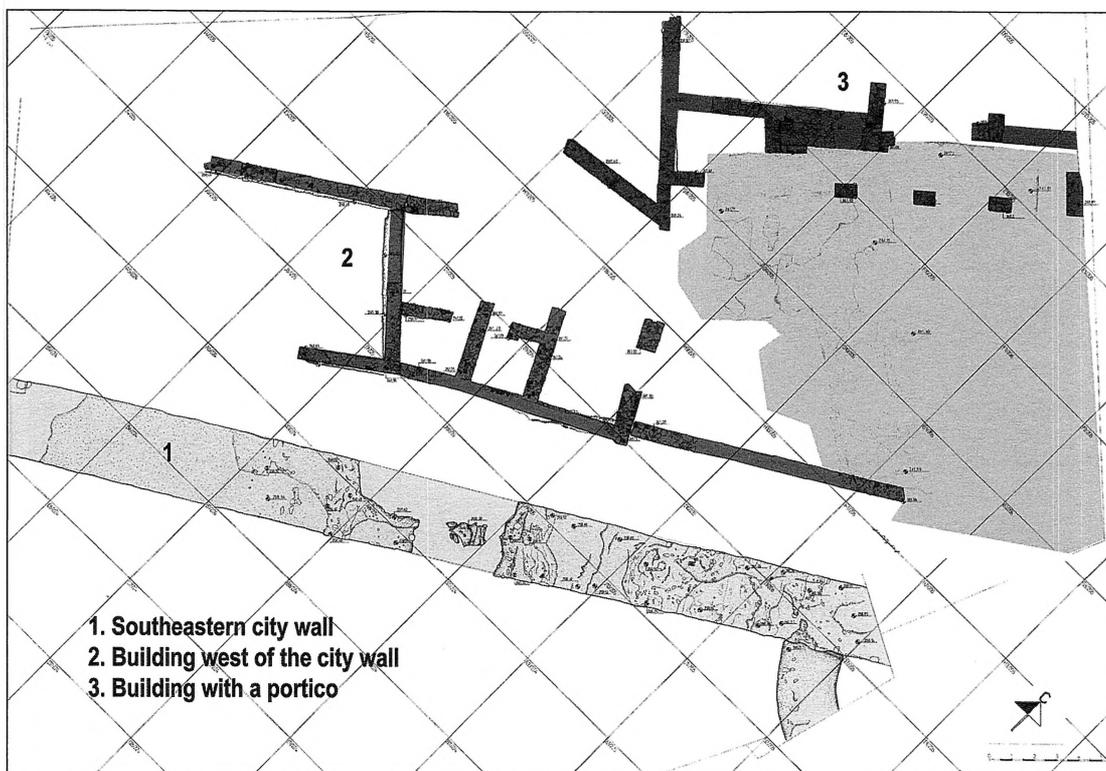


Fig. 24. Eastern city zone (sector S/E rampart), Younger urban stage (middle/late 5th - middle/late 6th century)

sources. Namely, the Marcellini Comitibus Chronicon notes that the Scupi metropolis was almost completely destroyed in the catastrophic earthquake that hit the Dardania province in 518.⁶² Also, Scupi is not mentioned as one of the cities with newly constructed or restored fortifications during Justinian's construction offensive.⁶³ These data and the low level of research of the Scupi site in the previous period contributed to the conclusion that urban life in Scupi ceased after the 518 earthquake, and that the city continued to exist as a modest rural settlement.⁶⁴

The 6th century construction activities mentioned above increasingly deny the validity of these claims. They imply that the results of the earthquake were not as fatal,

⁶² Marcell. Com. Chron. ad a 518 (XI/1); IMS VI, 23, note 23; L. Jovanova, Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem, 33, the earthquake's consequences should be probably recognised in one of the debris layers of the final stage of the Late Antiquity period, which in this phase of the research are not chronologically divided with greater precision.

⁶³ Procop. De aedif. IV, 1, 17;

⁶⁴ I. Mikulčić, Skopje so okolnitate tvrdini, 41; Idem, Antički gradovi, 351 – 352; D. Koraćević, Sostojbata na arheološkite iskopuvanja vo Antičko Skupi, 161; Eadem, Urbanizam i arhitektura Skupa, 103-104; Eadem, SKUPI 43, 124-140, 157-165; M. Garašanin, D. Koraćević, Bazilikata II vo Skupi, 44-46; Until recently, as a result of the lack of new knowledge about the Late Antiquity horizon in Scupi, these positions were accepted by almost all researchers, not only in the R. Macedonia, but also abroad.



Fig. 25. Small dwelling structures from post urban period (central city zone)

and that the life in the city was normalised soon after the earthquake, while the urban life continued almost throughout the 6th century in somewhat altered form.⁶⁵ This claim is supported by the entry in the Hieroclis Synecdemos, dated around 527, where Scupi is still being mentioned with its status of a provincial metropolis.⁶⁶

This chronologic development and resolution of the event in Scupi is confirmed by the coins' depot in the central city area, which ends with a coin of Emperor Mauricius Tiberius from 583/4, which represents *terminus post quem non* for the end of the development path and the organized urban life in Scupi.⁶⁷ This is a confirmation that the processes and the time for definite demise of the city are identical and synchronous with the similar events in the remaining larger Macedonian cities in the Late Antiquity - Stobi, Heraclea, Lychnidus and Bargala.⁶⁸

Post-urban stage (late 6th - early 7th century)

After the buildings of the last urbanistic phase were definitely demolished and decommissioned, the process of their decomposition, dissolution and disintegration began. During this so-called post-urban period, sections of the walls of the older, demolished buildings, or even the whole debris, were incorporated in the constructive

⁶⁵ Refer to note 62;

⁶⁶ Hier. Synek. 655, 8;

⁶⁷ M. Ončevska Todorovska, Coin treasure from Skupi, Macedonian Heritage 23, Skopje 2004, 28–42;

⁶⁸ M. Hadži Maneva, Numizmatički svedoštva za krajot na VI i VII vek, Maced. Acta Archaeol. 18, Skopje, 2008, 383–389, *The terminus post quem* for three depots in Stobi and two collective finds in Heraclea are the coins of Mauricius from 583/4. The Bargala depot ends with a coin from 584/5, while the Lychnidus depot received deposits in 586/87.

structures of the new residential complexes. The walls were built using the rustic technique of dry construction, binding the mixture of unprocessed stones and fragmented brick with mud, and with frequent application of spolia. These constructive structures basically served for residential purposes with some additional functions. There are proofs for manifold upgrades and adaptations of the space during its use, according to the needs and the conditions. Some movable finds that were discovered within the buildings, mainly the pottery, the coins, the metal and bone objects, imply organised rural living in the period of the late 6th and the first decades of the 7th century. Some remains of this cultural horizon with similar contents were discovered at almost all researched locations in Scupi.⁶⁹ **(fig. 3, 5, 13, 15, 18, 25)**

After a short recess, the life, although modest in scope, continued in the Middle Age period with the same space being used for a life in settlement in one period, and for burials in the other.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ D. Koraćević, SCUPI, 157–165; L. Jovanova, Scupi-Colonia Flavia Scupinorum (vodič), 39–42; M. Ončevska Todorovska, 2009, Thermal facility in Skupi, 76–77; M. Ončevska Todorovska, The Great Early Christian Basilica in Scupi and Early Christianity, 108; M. Ončevska Todorovska, Novata golema ranohristijanska bazilika od Skupi, 347; L. Jovanova, Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem, 24;

⁷⁰ D. Koraćević, SCUPI, 156–173; Ončevska Todorovska, Novata golema ranohristijanska bazilika od Skupi, 374; L. Jovanova, Scupi–Sektor jugoistočen bedem, 25–28;

Скупи – Транзиција од империјална колонија во доцноантичка метропола

Резимé

Направен е обид да се претстави развојниот пат на Скупи од римска колонија, преку провинциска метропола до доцноантичка рурална населба. Утврдени се две основни урбани етапи на кои им претходела подготвителна (предурбана ?) и следователна постурбана етапа.

На просторот на Скупи и непосредната околина, постојат докази за населбинско живеење и погребување во доцното бронзено и железно време (XII-VI век пред н.е.), додека периодот на раната антика претставува археолошка празнина (V-I век пред н.е.). Третирано е прашањето за локацијата, статусот и изгледот на базичната агломерација (цивилна населба или легиски логор) во првата половина на I век. Претпоставката дека на истата локација, претходно бил лоциран логор нема археолошки и епиграфски докази. Утврдено е дека колонијата Скупи е основана со дедукција на ветерани, во времето на Веспасијан или, поверојатно, Домитијан во 85 г. Животот во предфлавијевскиот период е потврден преку остатоци од населбински слоеви со употреба на дрво, плитар и глина. По основањето на колонијата се одделуваат две основни урбани етапи.

Постара урбана етапа

(доцен I-доцен IV/ран/средина на V век)

Империјален период: *Прва градителска фаза, доцен I–доцен II век; Упад на Костобоките во 170/171 година; Втора фаза, доцен II–доцен III век; Прекин по готско–херулски продори во 268/269 година; Доцноантички период: Трета фаза, доцен III–доцен IV век; Прекин по битката кај Хадријанопол во 378 година; Четврта фаза, доцен IV–средина V век; Упад на Хуните во 447 година (?)*

Во текот на првата урбана етапа утврден е континуиран градителски развој со неколку кратки прекини. Градот ќе ја задржи основната урбанистичка концепција со иста поставеност на бедемите, улиците, градежните комплекси и градби (југозапад-североисток и северозапад-југоисток). Обидието имало форма на неправилен четириаголник, но површината на градот била значително поголема од досега претпоставените 43 ха. Продорот на дакиското племе Костобоки во

170 г., веројатно, бил повод за градба на првото камено утврдување. Скупи бил планиран како *urbs quadrata* со две главни улици: кардо и декуманус максимус, кои се сечат под прав агол и со мрежа од помали улици паралелни со нив, меѓу чии пресеци се наоѓале градските квартави. Истражени се делови од една улица кардо (*cardo maximus?*), крстосниците на оваа улица со два декумана (едниот е, веројатно, *decumanus maximus?*) и делови од уште две улици кардо и еден декуман. Утврдено е дека димензиите на една од инсулите во централното градско подрачје приближно изнесувале околу 74 x 50/56 м.

Од периодот, доцнен I до средината на III век, откриени се делови од обидието и уличната мрежа, контурите на театарот, постарите фази од големиот термален комплекс и градската вила, делови од неколку неопределени градби под хореумот, градската бања и цивилната базилика и постарата фаза од домусот во секторот на југоисточен бедем. По готско-херулските нарушувања во 268/269 г., во периодот од доцниот III до доцниот IV век, се забележува зголемена градителска активност. Изградени се цивилната базилика, хореумот и градската вила, а обновени се големиот термален комплекс во централната градска зона и помладата фаза од домусот во секторот на југоисточен бедем. По битката кај Хадријанопол во 378 година, биле напуштени од автентичната употреба театарот, хореумот и помладата фаза од домусот во секторот на југоисточен бедем. Во периодот од доцниот IV до средината на V век, се забележува нова градежна активност, која на секторот југоисточен бедем ја препознаваме во градбата со апсида, а во централната градска зона во преадаптациите на големиот термален комплекс, градската вила, цивилната базилика и можната изградба на првата фаза од градска бања.

Помлада урбана етапа (средина/доцен V–средина/доцен VI век)

Петта фаза, средина/доцен V–518 година; Земјотрес во 518 година; Шеста фаза, обнова по земјотресот во 518; Седма фаза, обнова во времето на Јустинијан

Откриените градби упатуваат на градителски активности со променлив интензитет и квалитет во доцниот V и во текот на скоро целиот VI век. Градот бил утврден со нови моќни ѕидини, а површината на заштитениот опфат била намалена. Се јавува отстапување од постарата ортогонална урбанистичка концепција, а се јавуваат и промени во застапеноста и употребата на јавниот простор, видот, содржината како и намената на градбите, со доминација на сакралните во однос на профаните градби. Потврда за тоа се базиликата со крстилница, базиликата со атриум, помладата фаза од градската бања и градба со апсида во централната градска зона, градбата западно од бедемот и градбата со портик во секторот на југоисточен бедем. Колективниот наод на монети кој завршува со монета на Маврикиј Тибериј од 583/584 година претставува *terminus post quem non* за крајот на организираното урбано живеење.

Постурбана етапа (доцен VI - ран VII век)

По дефинитивното уривање и напуштање од употреба на градбите од последната урбана фаза, следел процес на нивно разградување и реупотреба во микростанбените градби од постурбан период, којшто ќе потрае до раниот VII век.