

THE WESTERN PART OF THE VIA EGNATIA

By N. G. L. HAMMOND

(Plates IX-X)

This article arises from a visit to Albania in September 1972, when I travelled up and down the valley of the Shkumbi river, and from recent discoveries by Albanian archaeologists which have been reported in Albanian periodicals, *Monumentet* 1971, i, 43-59, and ii, 25-35, and *Studia Albanica* 1972, i, 85-106. The new evidence has confirmed some views and overthrown others which I put forward in *A History of Macedonia* i (1972), 19 f., based as they inevitably were on the reports of Pouqueville and other travellers down to Praschniker and Schober. I have now seen part of the scene for myself and have had the advantage of conversations with the discoverers themselves, Hasan Ceka, his son Neritan Ceka and Lllazar Papajani, to whom I am most grateful. The new evidence is in Section A 1-3 of the article, and some conclusions are given in Section B.

A. I. ORAKË TO MIRAKË

In this Section the argument evolves more coherently if we move from east to west. Having climbed from the shore of Lake Ochrid to the head of the pass, we come almost immediately to Orakë which was the mansio Claudanōn of the *Itinerarium Burdigalense* (hereafter *It. Burd.*).¹ We now enter the marshy basin known as Fusha e Kododeshit; here Pouqueville² followed a raised way, 12 ft wide, which was paved, and Heuzey and Daumet³ saw a ruined bridge which corresponds in distance with the Pons Servili of the Peutinger Table (hereafter *Tab. Peut.*). The descent through the plateau of Domousova to the valley of the Shkumbi (the ancient Genusus) near Qukës is gradual and easy; here L. Vidman⁴ noted a small Roman bridge and a piece of ancient road by Përrenjë. At Qukës itself the river flows in a narrow bed between rocky outcrops of limestone, which offer excellent footings for a bridge. L. Vidman noted the remains of two Roman bridges here, which were linked on the left bank of the river by an ancient road.⁵ At this point we may place the mutatio In Tabernas (*It. Burd.*) which was evidently the Tres Tabernae of the Antonine Itinerary (hereafter *It. Ant.*).⁶

Below this point the river valley changes its nature. The river cuts a tortuous course through the high, steep and eroded slopes of a flysch formation. The slopes are very friable and offer no footings for a bridge. In the stretch from Qukës to Cotaj, where the river makes an almost right-angled turn, I noticed only one place where a limestone formation was visible beside the river. Below Cotaj the terrain changes. At first the geological formation is what Nowack⁷ calls 'mainly Peridotite and Serpentine', and at Mirakë it becomes limestone. The bed is narrow still below Mirakë, and then opens up into a wide flat area where the river pursues a frequently changing course through a maze of limestone boulders. Nowack showed two bridges over the river, one at Mirakë itself, and the other downstream where a tributary enters the river from the south. These two bridges were the first below Qukës at that time. One was called the bridge of Mirakë, the other the bridge of Hadji Bektari. An Italian map of the late 1930's shows two bridges by Mirakë and also that at Hadji Bektari.

As Pouqueville and other travellers realized and as the Albanian scholars have confirmed, the Via Egnatia below Qukës climbed high above the left bank of the river and ran along the rocky mountainside which towers above the steep slopes of the flysch formation. Here the going is much better under foot, but the slopes are steep, and very many long zig-zags were needed for wheeled vehicles. Neritan Ceka and Lllazar Papajani⁸ have traced the general line of the ancient road between Qukës and Babië, and at certain points

¹ The edition of O. Cuntz, *Itineraria Romana* i (Leipzig, 1929) is used in this article.

² *Voyage dans la Grèce* (Paris, 1820) iii, 63 f.

³ *Mission archéologique de Macédoine* (Paris, 1876) 346.

⁴ 'Voyage épigraphique à Elbasan', *Listy Filologické* lxxxv (1962), 62 with fig. 7.

⁵ *ibid.* with figs. 4 and 5.

⁶ As published in O. Cuntz, *op. cit.*

⁷ E. Nowack, *Geolog. Karte von Albanien* 1:200,000 (Berlin, 1928), based on material collected in 1922-24.

⁸ 'Rruga në luginën e Shkumbinit në kohën antike', *Monumentet* 1971, i, 43-59, with a summary in French; and 'La route de la vallée du Shkumbin dans l'antiquité', *Studia Albanica* 1972, i, 85-106. The latter periodical is referred to as *SA* hereafter.

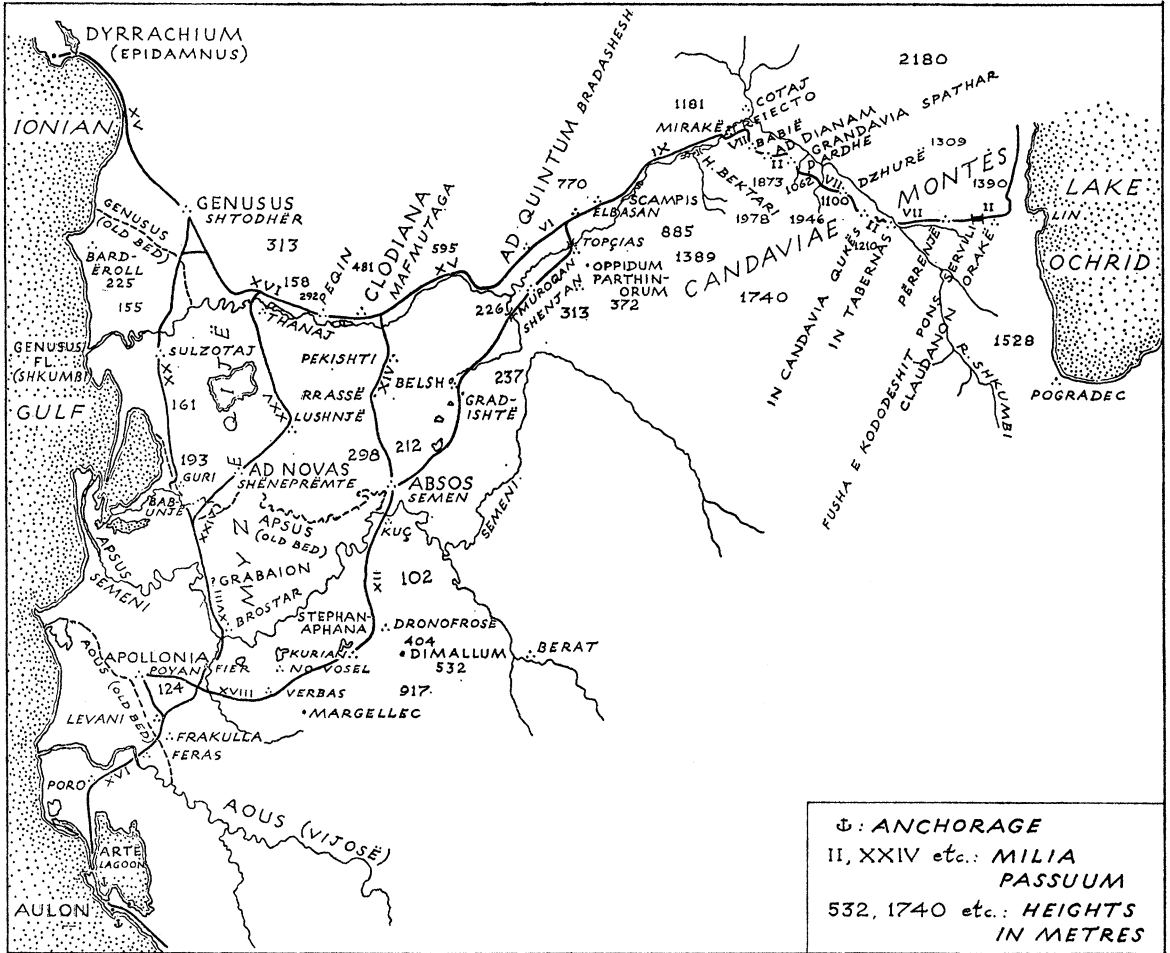


FIG. 6: MAP OF THE VIA EGNATIA

The map shows the western part of the Via Egnatia (from Dyrrachium to Claudianon); the coastal road (from Aulon to Dyrrachium); the side roads from the south (Aulon—Genusus, Apollonia—Ad Novas—Clodiana, Apollonia—Stefanaphana—Absos—Clodiana); and an earlier road (Apollonia—Semen—Belsh—Topçias). Scale: 1:800,000

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they have found pieces of pavée which they attribute to three different periods of construction as follows:

1. What is in their opinion the earliest paved track is only 1·20 m wide. This track corresponds with Pouqueville's note of a chaussée by Qukës 'four feet wide and three-quarters of a league long'. The section near Dardhe which is illustrated by Ceka and Papajani is paved with limestone. It is suitable for cavalry or pack-horses but not for vehicles.⁹

2. The next in time is a paved track 4·30 m wide. A piece between Dzhurë and Dardhe is illustrated.¹⁰ This corresponds with Pouqueville's paved way 12 ft wide in the Fusha e Kododeshit, except that it was raised there because of the marshy ground, whereas our piece was flat.

3. The next in time is not covered with a paving of flat slabs of limestone, but is built with large stones and has a top dressing of gravel. It varies in width between 4 m and 5 m. A stretch between Dzhurë and Dardhe is illustrated.¹¹

⁹ *Monumentet*, loc. cit. fig. 4, and *SA*, loc. cit. fig. 4; Pouqueville, loc. cit.

¹⁰ *Monumentet* fig. 5, and *SA* fig. 5.

¹¹ *SA* fig. 6.

4. Last in time is a route 6·70 m wide. Where it is on level ground, it was made of large stones and had a top dressing of gravel; but on sloping ground it was paved with limestone slabs and had gravel also. This route avoided steep slopes by pursuing a zig-zag course. At a later date some steps were added to the route, at the zig-zags especially. The pieces which are illustrated are again between Dzhurë and Dardhe. One photograph shows a number of zig-zags which are attributed variously to the Roman period, the Byzantine period and the Turkish period.¹²

We need to bear in mind that merchandise travelled along this route as the only practicable one between Orakë and Babië from the sixth century B.C. at least down to Turkish times. It was taken by pack-horses, except during the Roman and Byzantine periods when the route was possible for wheeled vehicles. The forms of construction in 2, 3 and 4 are suitable for carriage by vehicles and belong presumably to the Roman and Byzantine periods. Ceka and Papajani have come independently to the conclusion which I reached in my book that this was the line of the Roman road and that the stations known as In Candavia, mansio Grandavia and Ad Dianam are to be located between Qukës and Babië.¹³

The next stage is the descent from Babië to the bed of the Shkumbi (the ancient Genusus) and the crossing from the left bank to the right bank at Genesis flumen (*Tab. Peut.*) or mutatio Treiecto (*It. Burd.*), which are both VIII m.p. from the next station to the west, Scampis or Hiscampis. The problem is where the road crossed the river. When Pouqueville followed the Turkish road, he descended 'by a steep and tortuous path' to the bridge of Hadji Bektari, which had three arches (one is still standing) and crossed part of the wide flat bed of the river. The surviving arch and the flat bed are shown in Pl. IX, 1. It seemed to me when I wrote my account in *Macedonia* that this path was not suitable for the Roman road,¹⁴ and I therefore advanced the hypothesis that the Romans bridged the river higher up by Cotaj; but now that I have visited the valley by Cotaj, I do not think my hypothesis acceptable. However, the reason which led me to look for a bridge higher upstream still holds. Moreover, Malchus 257, 1 (*Corp. Script. Hist. Byz.* 1) described an attack which was made upon the Goths who were travelling with wagons on this route westwards. The vanguard of the Goths fled from somewhere near Babië, descended to the river, destroyed the bridge over 'a deep gorge' (φάρραγγι βαθεία), and so escaped onto level ground (εἰς τὸ πεδίον). The 'deep gorge' cannot be at the bridge of the Hadji Bektari, where the valley bed is wide and level.

Before we try to solve the problem, we should note the discoveries made by Ceka and Papajani. In their report they say nothing of any sign of the Roman road between Babië and Hadji Bektari. The bridge itself shows work of three stages which they have noted for the first time. Where the bridge begins on the right bank the abutment was made of masonry with a core of rubble and mortar of a special kind, 'mortier-chamotte,' and an inset of bricks which measure 35 × 28 × 4·5 cm. Onto this abutment a piece of medieval bridge was built, and then finally the Turkish bridge ran on from there across the river in three spans. Furthermore, some 500 m downstream from Hadji Bektari, Ceka and Papajani found the remains of a bridge, called locally the bridge of Keçi. Seven piles survive. They are built with a facing of rectangular stone masonry and with a core of rubble and 'mortier-chamotte'; and there are lines of bricks in the facing and in the core. These are of the same size as those at Hadji Bektari. Remains of the arches of masonry which spanned the piles are visible.¹⁵ The river has changed its course since this bridge was in use and now flows farther north in the wide expanse of boulders.

The type of brick which is used in the abutment of the Hadji Bektari bridge and in the piles of the bridge of Keçi is known also in the citadel at Elbasan where Gj. Karaiskaj has

¹² *Monumentet* fig. 6, 7 and 8; *SA* figs. 7, 8 and 9. I am less confident about the attribution of forms of construction and types of zigzag than the authors, but the broad distinction between packhorse tracks and carriageable gradients can be made firmly; see my comments on the main road in antiquity through the Megarid in *BSA* xlix (1954) 113 ff.

¹³ The distances given in *Tab. Peut.* and *It. Burd.* 608 enabled me to place Ad Dianam southeast of

Babië near a high point '757' on the Italian map 1:50,000, reproduced by the British GS in 1944; mansio Grandavia at Spathar; In Candavia near Qukës (cf. *Macedonia* i, 28, map 4).

¹⁴ So too L. Vidman, loc. cit., describing the route as 'tout à fait impraticable', even on foot. He noticed the traces of an early road on the left bank coming up to the bridge.

¹⁵ *SA* 1972, i, 102, fig. 10.

dated its first use within the period after 378 and before 450.¹⁶ The sizes vary only slightly, and this type of brick was no doubt used for several centuries afterwards. I am inclined to think that we should regard the bridge of Keçi as earlier than the bridge of Hadji Bektari, which seems to have had a continuous history from Byzantine to Turkish times. But the bridge of Keçi itself is later than the bridge over the 'deep gorge' which Malchus mentions, because a seven-piled bridge is designed only for a wide, shallow bed. It seems probable then that we should look for the bridge of Malchus in the gorge of Mirakë where Nowack showed an actual bridge in his map of the situation as it was in 1922-24. He shows a separate path leading from that bridge to Babië and this path may be more or less where the Roman road ran. On crossing the bridge in the gorge of Mirakë to the right bank one soon enters 'the plain' which contains the wide bed of the river. As we shall see later (A. 2, below), such a position for the Roman bridge is more appropriate to the distances which are in the Itineraries.

A. 2. MIRAKË TO DURRËS

The discovery which has thrown most light on the Via Egnatia was made in 1968, when a number of buildings of the early second century A.D., including Baths and a Nymphaeum, were excavated at Bradashesh above the right bank of the river. No report of the excavations has been published, but we were taken to see the site in September 1972. The buildings are shown in Plate IX, 2. They stand in a line on a terrace some way back from the river and parallel to its course; they looked out on the Roman road which ran presumably just below them. There is a remarkably strong head-spring or 'kephalovrysi' above the buildings, and its water pours down the hillside into the Nymphaeum. The buildings certainly formed a station on the Via Egnatia.¹⁷

In this sector of the Via Egnatia the site at Bradashesh can be identified only as either the mansio Clodiana or the mutatio Ad Quintum which are mentioned in the Itineraries. It so happens that the numbers of Roman miles in them are consistent for the stretch from Clodiana to Scampis, that is from west to east; namely Clodiana XX Scampis (*Tab. Peut.*), Clodiana XX Scampis (*It. Ant.* 318), Clodiana XXII Scampis (*It. Ant.* 329), mansio Clodiana XV mutatio Ad Quintum VI mansio Hiscampis (*It. Burd.* 608).¹⁸ Thus there is every reason to regard the numbers as correct and not corrupt for this stretch. If we identify Bradashesh with Clodiana and apply the distances, we have to place Ad Quintum XV m.p. = 22 km away at Mirakë and Scampis VI m.p. = 9 km away at a point upstream from Cotaj. However this is unacceptable, because the crossing of the river at Treiecto has then to be too high up the river. It follows that Bradashesh is to be identified with the mutatio Ad Quintum.

From Ad Quintum as a fixed point we can apply the number of Roman miles for this stretch of road.¹⁹ Clodiana being XV m.p. = 22 km distant, was at Mafmutaga, some 4 km east of Peqin. Scampis, being VI m.p. = 9 km distant, was at a point some 3 km east of Elbasan at Teqin Madhe where one enters a small pass. Genesis flumen (*Tab. Peut.*) or mutatio Treiecto (*It. Burd.* 608), being VIII m.p. = 13 km from Scampis, was at Mirakë. Here the road crossed from the right bank to the left bank, and the ascent was made to Ad Dianam between Babië and Dardhe. As we have seen (p. 185 above), the crossing of the river is likely on other grounds to have been at Mirakë.

Proceeding now westwards from Clodiana = Mafmutaga to Dyrrachium, we are in no doubt about the route. It proceeded along and above the right bank of the river as far as Rogozhinë and then turned north below the foothills and followed the line of the coast to

¹⁶ *Monumentet* 1971, i, 61 f.; the Elbasan bricks measure 36 × 24 × 4.5 cm. C. Praschniker and A. Schober, *Archäologische Forschungen in Albanien und Montenegro* (Vienna, 1919) 48 f. put the first fortification of the site at any time between 300 and 530.

¹⁷ *Monumentet* 1971, i, 52, fig. 9, and *SA* 1972, i, fig. 11.

¹⁸ Differences of one or two miles may be due to inclusive or exclusive reckoning, as I have argued in *Macedonia* 1, 21.

¹⁹ The Roman mile is calculated here at 1,482 m, and I have taken my measurements on Nowack's map 1:200,000. I have also made checks on the Italian map 1:50,000. One cannot assume that the kilometres of a modern road correspond to the distance on a Roman road, because the latter was much more direct. It is interesting that the distance on the road from Durrës to Elbasan was 78 km on the Italian map of the 1930s, and 82 km on the modern international road map of the Istituto Geografico di Agostini.

Durrës. The actual distance is some 45 km = between XXX and XXXI m.p. At this point the data in the Itineraries are chaotic: *Tab. Peut.* gives XV and XXVI m.p. (totalling 41), *It. Ant.* 329.6 XXIII, *It. Ant.* 329.7 XXV, *It. Ant.* 318.1 XXXIII,²⁰ and *It. Burd.* 608 a total of 57. As we know the correct figure to be XXX or XXXI m.p. we should emend the XXVI of the Peutinger Table to XVI;²¹ its total then becomes 31 m.p., and the point of division between XV and XVI is to be put at Shtodhër, where there was evidently a 'mutatio'. Its name was probably Genusus, as we shall see (A. 3, below).

A. 3. THE ROADS FROM APOLLONIA

Having completed the run from Orakë to Durrës, we turn now to consider the roads which ran into the Via Egnatia from the south. In *Macedonia* i, p. 26 and map 3, I suggested that the discontinued line from Aulona with the figure XVI on the Peutinger Table represented the coastal road from Aulona to Apollonia, that is from the site at Cape Treporti to the site at Poyan.²² The distance XVI m.p. = 23½ km is correct for a road from the seaward end of the 'channel' which exists from the lagoon of Artë, via Poro to Poyan. Praschniker saw traces of this road as a raised way (to avoid flood-water) by Feras and Frakulla, and a Roman milestone has been found at Levani (*CIL* iii, 7365).²³ The coastal road continues on the Peutinger Table from Apollonia to Dyrrachium, crossing the rivers Semeni and Shkumbi, which are recorded on the Table as Hapsum fl. and Genesis fl. Taking the distances on the Table to be correct, I suggested that this road went via Fier, where Praschniker noted footings of an ancient bridge over the Gjanicë, onto the western edge of a low range of hills which runs northwards, parallel to the coast, as far as Bardëroll.²⁴ The figures XVIII m.p. = 26½ km and XX m.p. = 29½ km put the crossings of the Apsus (Semeni) by Guri just north of Babunjë and the crossing of the Genusus (Shkumbi) at the latitude of Shtodhër, where we have argued (p. 188 above), that there was a mutatio on the Via Egnatia XV m.p. from Dyrrachium. The name of this mutatio is preserved in the lists for the coastal road in the Ravenna Geographer 379.2 and Guido 540.3 as 'Genesis'. Thus the mutatio was named after the river, as the modern village Semen is named after the River Semeni.

It is on the line which I had suggested for this coastal road that three Roman milestones have been found. The report of them has been published by Hasan Ceka in *Monumentet* 1971, ii, 25-35 (with a summary in French). Two were discovered in 1962 in a district of Brostar called 'the bridge'. It is here that Nowack showed the crossing of the Semeni river by ferry-boat; a bridge has probably been built since then. The third was discovered in 1933, but as far as I am aware it was not published until 1971; it came from Sulzotaj, a small village near Novë, where Nowack showed a crossing of the Shkumbi by a bridge; this was the only bridge over the Shkumbi below Elbasan in 1922-24. The inscriptions on the three milestones are as follows. Two of them are shown in Plate X.

A. From Brostar; Pl. X, a, b.

Imp(erator) Caes(ar) / M(arcus) Aurelius Antoninus / Pius Felix Aug(ustus) / sacerdos amplissimus / dei Solis invicti Elagabali / Pontif(ex) Max(imus) / trib(unicia) pot(estate) III / co(n)s(ul) III / P(ater) P(atriciae) / restituit.

This inscription records the 'restoration' of the road to good condition by the Emperor Elagabalus in the year 220.

Two later inscriptions were added to this milestone; Pl. X, c.

(i) Domino no(stro) Galerio Valerio Maximino nobilissimo Caesari

This inscription was made between 305 and 308 or at the latest 310.

²⁰ With variant readings of XXIII and XLIII.

²¹ C. Praschniker, 'Muzakhia und Malakstra', *YOAI* xxi-ii (1922-24) Beiblatt, 126 came to the same conclusion: 'ausserdem ist die Zahl XXVI auf dem nach Clodiana führenden Strich in XVI zu ändern.'

²² For the site of Aulon, see N. G. L. Hammond, *Epirus* (Oxford, 1967) 132 f. and 689.

²³ C. Praschniker, loc. cit. 60. A piece of paved road 6 m wide has been reported just outside the walls of Apollonia (*Bul. Univ. Shtet. Tiranës* 1960, i, 95).

²⁴ The modern track keeps to the western side of the range of hills and that is why I have put the ancient road there; but the eastern side is also possible and there are two places on this side called Gradishte, which implies some ancient remains.

(ii) D(omino) n(ostro) Fl(avio) Val(erio) Constantino nob(ilissimo) Caes(ari)

This inscription was made between 306 and 310. One may compare these inscriptions with that on a milestone of 305-6, found on the shore of Lake Ostrovo in upper Macedonia on the line of the Via Egnatia (*BCH* xvii (1893) 635).

B. From Brostar. Hasan Ceka gave the inscription as follows; Pl. X, d.

D(omino) n(ostro), Iuliano a GBRN III m(ilia) p(assuum)

This inscription is to be dated within the period 361-3. As Brostar is not very far from Apollonia, it is most unlikely that there was a station between Brostar and Apollonia. Accordingly we may assume that *if* a place was signified by the letters GBRN, it was III m.p. = $4\frac{1}{2}$ km to the north of Brostar; it was presumably a mutatio and should be placed near Nicas on the seaward side of the range of low hills. Hasan Ceka suggested that the letters GBRN stood for G(a)br(aio)n, such a site being named as a castle in Epirus, restored by Justinian (*Procop.*, *de aedif.* iv, 4, p. 75). However, I realized that if the vowels were omitted, one would expect 'a Gabraio' and so only 'a GBR', or one could emend the Gabraion of Procopius to Gabranon.

At this point I consulted Dr. A. R. Birley. He suggested that the inscription should be read as follows:

D(omino) n(ostro) Iuliano A(u)g(usto) B(ono) R(eipublicae) N(ato) III MP.

He pointed out that the phrase Bono Reipublicae Nato is found on milestones of Julian and that, although the usual abbreviation is BRPN, this abbreviation BRN is found on *CIL* v, 7988, a milestone on the Tergeste-Pola road. When I looked at the photograph of the stone in *Monumentet* 1971, ii, 26, d, I noticed that a small v is visible between the capital letters A and G. It is clear that Dr. Birley is correct. There is thus no indication of the name of the mansio from which the three Roman miles is measured.

C. From Sulzotaj

D(ominis) n(ostris) Crispo et Constantino Caes(aribus).

The inscription was made in the period 317-326.

The road from Aulon via Apollonia to Dyrrachium was a continuation of the coastal road which came up the coast of Greece. It was not in itself a part of the Via Egnatia, although it gave access to it. The Peutinger Table and the milestones show that the road was maintained from the late second century to the late fourth century. When we apply the distances on the Peutinger Table, we see that the Apsus (Semeni) flowed farther north *c.* 211-17 than it does to-day and was using a channel which is marked on modern maps as 'the old channel'. This channel may have been used during more than one period of time;²⁵ for Nowack shows water in the bed and a bridge over it at Babunjë. Similarly the Genusus (Shkumbi) flowed northwards between Bardëroll and Shtodhër and not as now past Sulzotaj. The same was true of the Aous (Vijosë) and the Drilon (Drin). The former used to flow past Apollonia, making the city accessible by water, but it changed its course at some time after the beginning of the Empire and before *c.* 286 when the Antonine Itinerary 329,1 gives Aulon as the terminal for the Via Egnatia.²⁶ The Drilon used to flow close to or into Lake Skutari and not beside the ancient city of Lissus; it too was navigable.²⁷ Similar changes in the courses of rivers occurred during antiquity in the coastal plain of Macedonia.²⁸

The explanation of such changes in the course of a river is well known. When the river is in an exceptional spate, it deposits such masses of rubble and silt that its channel becomes blocked and it cuts a new channel at a point of less resistance.²⁹ This comes about only when the river is left to its own devices and not contained in an artificial channel, as it is to-day. When the Apsus and the Genusus were uncontrolled, the whole plain of the Myzeqijë

²⁵ C. Praschniker, *loc. cit.* 15, gives an interesting account of changes in the course of the Semeni between 1804 and 1922.

²⁶ See C. Praschniker, *loc. cit.* 55; there has been a change again between 1868 and 1922.

²⁷ See J. M. F. May in *JRS* xxxvi (1946) 54 f.; it

was navigable according to Strabo, C 316, and Anna Comnena, *Alex.* 12, 9.

²⁸ See *Macedonia* 1, 142. f.

²⁹ Anna Comnena, *Alex.* i, 7, 3, gave this explanation.

was liable to floods. Indeed, when I travelled along the inland side of the plain in April 1932, I saw floodwater stretching as far as the eye could see. On the other hand, in September 1972, we were shown a photograph of such extensive flooding in the Myzeqijë as a sign of the primitive conditions which the present regime has abolished. The reason for the course of the Roman road near the coast is now clear. It had to keep as much as possible to the higher ground offered by the range of low hills, in order to avoid the floods. Moreover the crossing of the rivers where they entered the plain at Kuç and Thanaj was done by ferry, for instance by Julius Caesar in 48 B.C. (*Bell. Civ.* iii, 75 and 77) and by travellers in 1922–24, as we see from Nowack's map.³⁰ On the other hand on the line of the Roman road it may have been possible to build bridges near Babunjë over the Apsus and between Sulzotaj and Shtodhër over the Genusus.

These conditions in the Myzeqijë help us to understand the lines taken by three other roads which joined the Via Egnatia from Apollonia. I list them individually.

(1) From Apollonia to near Elbasan. This road is known mainly from its remains. Praschniker saw the traces of a raised way (to avoid flood-water) on the inland side of the plain near Verbas, at Novosel; and near Kurian. The road went on to Kuç where the Semenî enters the plain. Here Julius Caesar ferried his army across the Apsus. At Kuç Praschniker saw the piers of an early bridge, not necessarily an ancient one.³¹ The road went probably through a district of low hills to Belsh, where there are remains of the Greek and Roman periods at a site called Gradishte and also at a small lake fed by hot springs.³² Some 2 km to the southwest of Muroqan Praschniker saw the remains of a one-arched bridge, which he thought was of the Roman period, and a raised road extending for several hundred metres from either side of it. The piece of road to the north-east ran towards the remains of an ancient bridge over the Shkumbi near Shenjan at a point called Topçias, which Praschniker has described.³³ I have argued elsewhere that the sixteen piers of this bridge, some 300 m long, were made in the Hellenistic period.³⁴ On crossing the Shkumbi this road joined the route taken by the Via Egnatia in the Shkumbi valley a little to the west of Elbasan.

This road served the interests of trade particularly well. For it ran close to the ancient cities at Margellec³⁵ and Krotine (Dimallum)³⁶ and Gradishte by Belsh, and on a hill near Shenjan where a ramp leads up to what I take to have been the 'oppidum Parthinorum' of Caesar *Bell. Civ.* iii, 41, 1.³⁷ There is no doubt that the road existed in one form or another long before the Romans appeared on the scene, because it was vital to the trade of Apollonia and its satellites and neighbours.

(2) Apollonia to Clodiana via Stefanaphana. This road is recorded by only one itinerary, *It. Burd.* 608, 2–8. As I have argued in *Macedonia* i, 23 f., the entry mansio Marusio should be deleted as a corruption of the text, because if it stands, we are given three 'mansiones' in a row, which is quite unparalleled, and the name Marusio occurs nowhere else.³⁸ The distances fit the first part of the road we have just described: civitas Apollonia XVIII mutatio Stefanaphana XII mansio Absos bringing us in XVIII m.p. = 26½ km to a point between Kurian and Dronofrosë and in XII m.p. = 18 km to Semenî village on the right bank of the river Semenî. It seems then that the mansio Absos took its name from the river Apsus, just as the modern village Semen takes its name from the river Semenî. The next entry, if we delete mansio Marusio, is XIII Clodiana, which distance being 21 km brings us via Rrassë and Pekishti to Mafmutaga = Clodiana.

³⁰ Also in April 1932 when I travelled on this route. The Austrian army in the First World War built a bridge 900 m long over the Shkumbi at Thanaj, but the river soon destroyed it.

³¹ C. Praschniker, loc. cit. 118 f., with figs 45 and 46.

³² *YOAI* xxi–ii (1922–24), Beiblatt 218 f., with fig. 128; *SA* 1972, i, 89. I visited the lake in 1932.

³³ C. Praschniker and A. Schober, op. cit. (n. 16 above) 59 f., with figs. 69, 70 and 71.

³⁴ N. G. L. Hammond, *Epirus* 235. Praschniker and Schober, op. cit. 60, noted that the superstructure on the piers may have been made of wood, because there is no sign of any arch: 'es sind an keinem der

Pfeiler Ansätze von einer Gewölbekonstruktion'. There were some later repairs, and these may be the reason why N. Ceka and L. Papajani in *SA* 1972, i, 98 think the bridge was of the Roman period.

³⁵ Praschniker and Schober, op. cit. 75 f., and L. Derveni, 'Gjurmë te reja në kalanë e Margëlliçit,' *Monumentet* 1971, ii, 147 f.

³⁶ *JRS* lviii (1968) 12 f.

³⁷ It was evidently the counterpart of Elbasan which is now the chief city of the Shkumbi valley; see *Epirus* 737.

³⁸ Praschniker, loc. cit. 123, did not notice the anomaly and took the road the long way round by Lushnjë and Thanaj.

(3) Apollonia to Clodiana via Ad Novas. This road is recorded by only one itinerary, *It. Ant.*, 329, 5-6: Apollonia XXIII Ad Novas XXV Clodianis. The most likely route for this road, if we assume the figures of distance to be correct, is as follows. It used the coastal road from Apollonia to near Babunjë and then branched eastwards across the plain via Sopez to Lushnjë on the edge of the plain. If we measure the distance of XXIII m.p. = 35½ km we place Ad Novas at Shëneprëmtë. In antiquity when the Apsus flowed past Babunjë, the road followed the slightly higher ground by Shëneprëmtë to the north of the river. Nowadays there is a track from Shëneprëmtë to Lushnjë; it was shown on Nowack's map as existing in 1922-24. From Lushnjë the road went along the edge of the plain to Thanaj, as the modern road does, and one then crossed the Shkumbi probably by ferry to join the Via Egnatia and reach Mafmutaga = Clodiana. The distance XXV m.p. = 37 km is correct for the journey from Shëneprëmtë to Mafmutaga. It was on the stretch Ad Novas to Clodiana that Praschniker noted traces of a Roman road between Lushnjë and Thanaj.³⁹

B. A SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It will be convenient to summarize our conclusions chronologically and from west to east. The first point to note is that the roads from Dyrrachium and Apollonia which ran into and up the Shkumbi valley were of primary importance in the earlier period for the Balkan area only. Then they served the interests primarily of Dyrrachium and Apollonia, the two Greek cities, which traded far into the interior especially in the Hellenistic period. When Philip II of Macedon extended his authority to the coast of the Adriatic Sea, it is possible that he and his successors on the Macedonian throne developed the road which ran from Ochrid via Orakë into the valley of the Shkumbi. However, when the Roman conquest of the East was completed, this road became of wider importance. Dyrrachium and Apollonia (or later Aulon) were now, as it were, the Channel ports for Italy and the West, and the eastern end of the Via Egnatia was at the entry into Asia Minor. In the same way Calais and Dieppe were only of local importance in early times but became important ports for cross-Channel trade when maritime commerce developed. The establishment of the Roman Empire thus imposed a new pattern upon the road-system which had existed in Hellenistic (and earlier) times. The influence of Rome first became effective perhaps in the period from 120 to 100 B.C.;⁴⁰ its full impact was felt after the establishment of the Principate of Augustus.

We owe our information about the Hellenistic road-system to Polybius. When Strabo reached Epidamnus (the Greek name of the city which the Romans called Dyrrachium) and Apollonia in his description of the Ionian Gulf, he described what was to him (but not to Polybius) the 'Via Egnatia leading to the east' (C 322 fin.) He then cited Polybius as his authority for the measurement of the road by stades in the Hellenistic or Macedonian⁴¹ manner and for the conversion of stades into Roman miles. Three further statements come from Polybius: that the road started from Apollonia and Epidamnus; that those who set out from Apollonia and those who set out from Epidamnus travelled equal distances before they joined 'the same road'; and that the first part of the road (i.e. 'the same road') was called 'the road of Candavia', an Illyrian mountain (C 323 init.; cf. C 327 init. and C 329, fr. 56). Thus in the Hellenistic road-system one must look for the junction of the Apollonia and Epidamnus branches at a spot equidistant from each city and in a region where 'the road of Candavia' begins. The latter requirement is easily met. At Elbasan one sees for the first time the towering ranges of Mt. Candavia; this was well expressed by J. G. von Hahn⁴² 'diese Gebirgsansicht bildet den westlichen Eingang zur alten Candavia, durch welche die römische Via Egnatia führt.' The equidistance is fortunately provided by the two roads which we have considered, namely that from Dyrrachium to just west of Elbasan and that from Apollonia to near Elbasan (p. 189 above, road (1)), the latter crossing the river Shkumbi at Topçias near Shenjan. For the former, if it was less straight than a Roman road,

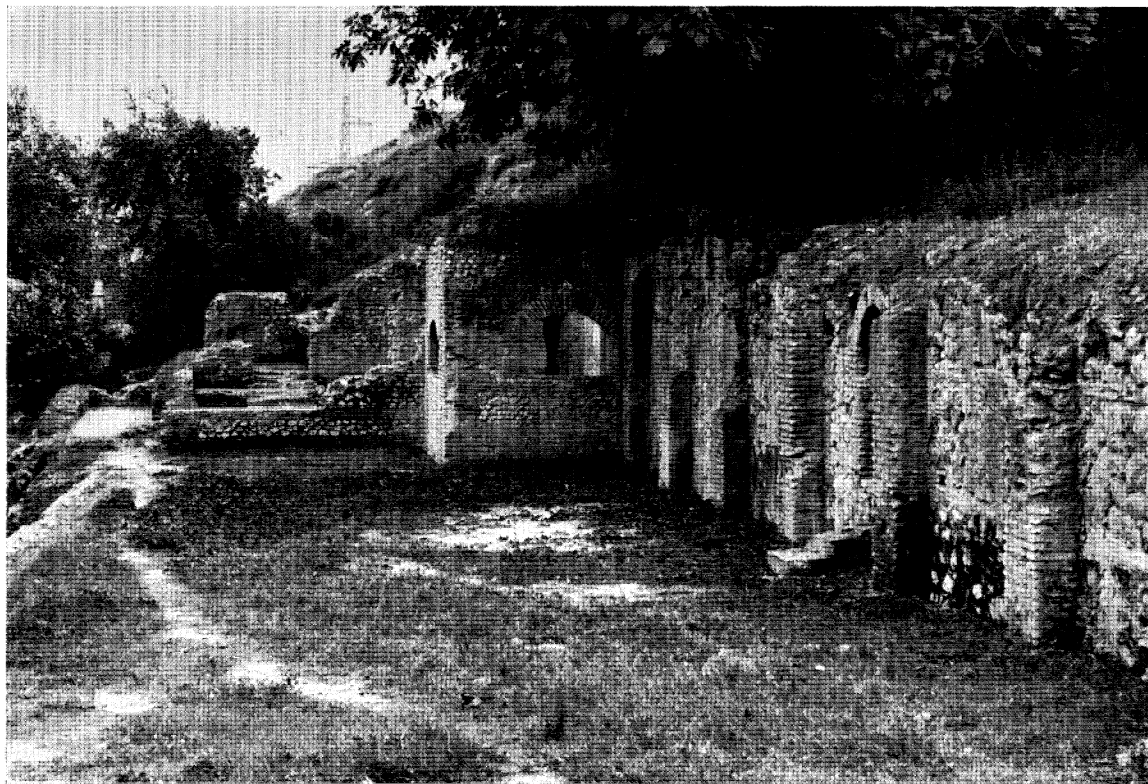
³⁹ *ibid.* 122.

⁴⁰ See *Macedonia* i, 56, n. 2.

⁴¹ For a stadion-stone and road-markers in Macedonian sections of the route see C. F. Edson,

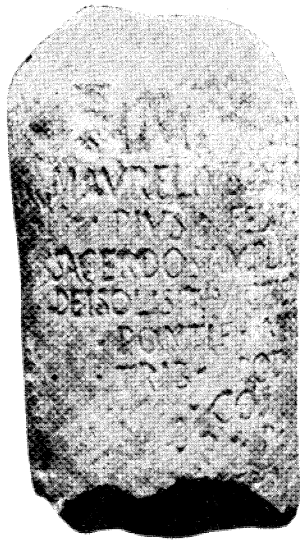
'The Location of Cellae and the route of the Via Egnatia in Western Macedonia', *CP* xlvi (1951) 11 f. The stone was published in *AM* xviii (1893), 419.

⁴² *Denkschriften* (1867) 2, 50, n. 3.

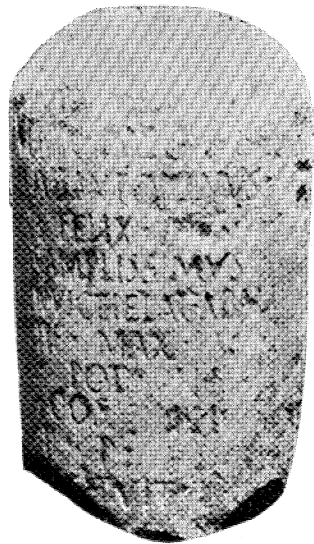


THE VIA EGNATIA: (1) THE SITE OF THE HADJI BEKTARI BRIDGE (MID-PICTURE) OVER THE SHKUMBI, LOOKING UPSTREAM FROM THE ROAD ON THE RIGHT BANK OF THE RIVER (see p. 187). (2) THE STATION AT BRADASHESH, SHOWING ENTRANCE TO NYMPHAEUM ON THE RIGHT (see p. 188)

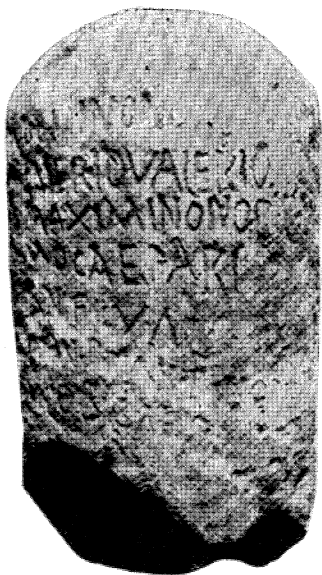
Photographs (1) by R. A. Crossland, (2) by A. F. Harding. Copyright reserved



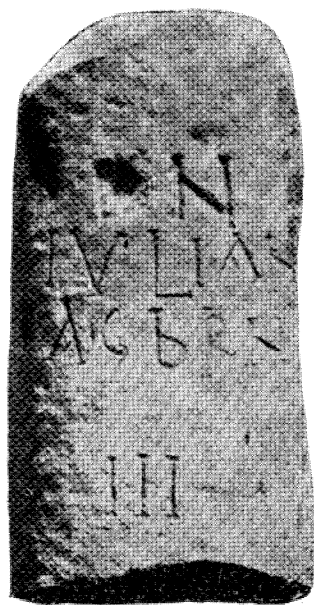
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

THE VIA EGNATIA: TWO MILESTONES FROM BROSTAR (see p. 189)

Photographs taken from 'Monumentet' 1971, 2, 25

takes some 75 km, and the latter takes some 44 km to Semen and some 32 km from Semen to the same point near Elbasan, totalling some 76 km. Any other pair of branch-roads gives very unequal distances: Clodiana-Ad Novas-Apollonia is 73 km, while Clodiana-Dyrrachium is only 45 km, and Genusus-Apollonia is 66 km while Genusus-Dyrrachium is only 22 km. We conclude then that the Hellenistic roads from Apollonia and Dyrrachium met just west of Elbasan.

The Roman road-system began to develop towards the end of the second century B.C. During the Republic it was used primarily for military purposes; Cicero regarded it as a military road in 56 B.C. (*Prov. Cons.* 2), and Pompey's officer Bibulus travelled along the road from east to west by day and night with changes of horses in the Civil War in 49 B.C. The road-terminal on the Adriatic coast was now Dyrrachium. For when Roman armies, and merchants also, were travelling from Italy to the East, the best route was from Bari or Brindisi to Dyrrachium and thence by the Via Egnatia; for this did not involve the crossing of any large river until one came to the crossing of the Shkumbi far inland at Mirakë. On the other hand the voyage from Brindisi to Apollonia involved contending with the current of the Vijosë, and the journey from Apollonia to the Via Egnatia meant that one had first to be ferried over the Semen (Apsus), as we know from Caesar, *Bell. Civ.* iii, 77, and then to cross the Shkumbi probably near Shenjan, perhaps by the Hellenistic bridge. Strabo, for instance, when he was not quoting the views of Polybius but writing for himself, referred to the Via Egnatia as starting from Dyrrachium (C 329, fr 10.). The Via Egnatia was described as starting from Dyrrachium in two inscriptions which record a repair of the road by Trajan (*BCH* lix (1935) 403 'Viam a Dyrrachi(o) usque Acontisma' and 408). This is the case also on the Peutinger Table, which may be based on a Roman road map of the Antonine period, and in the Antonine Itinerary 317,7 which was compiled in 211-17.

At a later stage in the Empire Aulon was the road-terminal. This is so in the Antonine Itinerary 329, 1, which was composed shortly after 286, and again in the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, which was written by a traveller who used the Via Egnatia in 333. Aulon, not Apollonia, was now the port of the Via Egnatia. It is probable that the Vijosë (Aous) had changed its course and flowed far away from Apollonia. In addition Aulon was an all-weather harbour, since it had two havens.⁴³ But it is not easy to see why Aulon was preferred to Dyrrachium at this period. It is possible that the inner harbour at Dyrrachium, which was presumably to the east of the town where there was a lagoon until recently, had silted up and become less serviceable.

When Aulon became the terminal, it was more than ever desirable to have a good route into the Shkumbi valley. The road Aulon-Apollonia-Ad Novas-Clodiana is recorded only in that part of the Antonine Itinerary which was composed shortly after 286. It must have been constructed at a time when the Semen (Apsus) was flowing to the south of Shëneprëmtë and when either the plain between Babunjë and Lushnjë was not subject to flooding, or when floods were controlled by channels or dams.⁴⁴ These conditions no longer obtained, we may assume, when the traveller of the *Itinerarium Burdigalense* passed this way some 50 years later; for he alone recorded a different route from Apollonia via Stefanaphana to Clodiana, the Semen (Apsus) being crossed by ferry or by a bridge at the point of entry into the plain. The route from Dyrrachium was of course also in use at this period, and the fact that both the roads from Apollonia aimed for Clodiana on the route from Dyrrachium shows that the northern side of the Shkumbi was still preferred. There was apparently no attempt to develop the Hellenistic road from Apollonia to near Elbasan as a substitute.

One reason for keeping to the northern side of the Shkumbi was that the road was already fully developed and had been maintained with regular stations for changing horses and for staying the night. The excavations at Bradashesh have shown us for the first time what fine facilities were provided at a mere 'mutatio' on this part of the route from the early second century A.D. onwards. It was desirable also to be on the north side of the river from Elbasan to Mirakë, because the terrain there was much more suitable than the terrain on the south side. From Mirakë to Orakë there was only one route in use as far as we know, and this was due primarily to the configuration of the mountains which were called 'Candavia'.

⁴³ Described in *Epirus* 132 f.

⁴⁴ There is an interesting parallel in the coastal plain of Macedonia, where a Roman road was built

across the plain for the first time at the end of the third century A.D. or thereabouts; see C. F. Edson, *CP* 1 (1955) 180, and *Macedonia* i, 160 f.

The coastal road was a part of the Roman road-system in Greece and Illyria. For instance, in Epirus the road ran along the coast, keeping as close to the sea as possible and touching on the main ports of the period. Side-roads ran inland from the ports, for instance from Ambracia (Arta) to Larissa and from Onchesmus (Sarandë) to Hadrianopolis (near Gjorgucat).⁴⁵ The road from Apollonia to Dyrrachium was just such a coastal road. As long as the Aous (Vijosë) flowed close at hand and was navigable, Apollonia was an important port from which one road ran inland to Hadrianopolis and another road went to join the Via Egnatia. It is possible that the Apsus (Semeni) and the Genusus (Shkumbi) were navigable at some seasons of the year; if so there were probably subsidiary ports near the mouths of these rivers. However, during most of the Roman period Dyrrachium was the most important of the harbours; from it ran the main road which connected the western provinces and Italy with Macedonia and the eastern provinces of the Empire.

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⁴⁵ See *Epirus* 690 f. and map 18. A Roman milestone found recently near Murzinë has shown the

existence of a branch-road from Onchesmus to Hadrianopolis.