

shapeless stone heaps and bramble-covered lanes could ever have been

“the site once of a city, great and gay
(so they say)”.

Yet Salona, at the foot of the Cabani range, was reported by the Imperial topographer to have been the chief city of Dalmatia (κεφαλή πάσης τῆς Δαλματίας), and half the size of Constantinople. The soil was fertile, it was sheltered from the north wind by the Kozjac wall, it had the famous landlocked Gulf of Salona in front of it, closed by the island of Bua, into whose quiet waters the sweet-flowing Jader poured its stream.

Qua maris Adriaci longas ferit unda Salonas
Et tepidum in molles Zephyros excurrit Jader.

It harboured Belisarius' fleet, assembled for his second campaign against the Goths, and there Narses the Eunuch mustered his forces when he assumed command on the death of Germanus. The Archdeacon Thomas gives the town a bad character, confirmed by the pottery now preserved in the museum. “Illicit loves and corrupting luxury rotted the young; avarice made the old men hard; the women were poisoners; every one perverse” (“improba Venus, dissolutio voluptatis