

# FROM *AQVILEIA* TO *CARNUNTVM*: GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY ALONG THE AMBER ROAD<sup>1</sup>

## DE *AQVILEIA* A *CARNUNTVM*: MOVILIDAD GEOGRÁFICA A LO LARGO DE LA RUTA DEL ÁMBAR

*Abstract:* Pliny has already reported the mobility of Germanic and Roman traders on the Amber Road. This important transcontinental transport axis connected the Baltic Sea with the *Caput Adriae* across a distance of 1,700 km. The settlements along the route of the Amber Road are therefore ideal for an investigation of the geographical mobility and distribution of religious ideas in the globalised world of the *Imperium Romanum*. In particular, both the native population and newcomers in the settlement area immediately south of the Danube, the so-called *deserta Boiorum*, become visible when examining the funerary practices. The epigraphic habits and onomastic corpus of the traders along the southern, i.e. Roman part of the Amber Road between *Aquileia* and *Carnuntum* are, furthermore, most illuminating. In this context, the numerous dedications and sanctuaries for the deities responsible for the protection of travellers by land and by river stand out. Furthermore, the unusually early appearance of oriental deities (*Mithras*, *Iuppiter Dolichenus*, *Iuppiter Heliopolitanus*) can be connected with the mobility of both military personnel and state officials.

*Keywords:* geographical mobility, Amber Road, Roman trade, religious practices.

*Resumen:* Ya Plinio testimonió la movilidad de los comerciantes germanos y romanos a lo largo de la Ruta del Ámbar. Este importante eje de transporte transcontinental conectaba el Mar Báltico con el *Caput Adriae*, cubriendo una distancia de 1.700 km. Los asentamientos situados a lo largo de dicha ruta son ideales para investigar la movilidad geográfica y la difusión de creencias religiosas en el globalizado mundo del Imperio romano. A través de sus prácticas funerarias se hacen visibles la población autóctona y los recién llegados en la zona inmediatamente al sur del Danubio, en los *deserta Boiorum*. Asimismo, son ilustrativos los hábitos epigráficos y el *corpus* onomástico de comerciantes documentados en la parte romana del sur de la Ruta del Ámbar, entre *Aquileia* y *Carnuntum*. En este contexto destacan los santuarios y numerosas dedicatorias a dioses protectores de los viajeros por tierra y río. Finalmente, la aparición temprana de deidades orientales (*Mithras*, *Iuppiter Dolichenus*, *Iuppiter Heliopolitanus*) se puede conectar con la movilidad del ejército y funcionarios romanos.

*Palabras clave:* movilidad geográfica, Ruta del Ámbar, comercio romano, prácticas religiosas.

*Recibido:* 12-05-2013

*Informado:* 17-05-2013

*Definitivo:* 17-05-2013

<sup>1</sup> For the translation of this text into English, I would like to thank Miriam Brandt M.A. (Berlin). Additional pieces of information are courtesy of

Thomas J., Derrick M.Phil. (Leicester) and senior lecturer Dr. Marta García Morcillo (London).

At least since the Iron Age, the Amber Road, one of the most important transcontinental transport axes of Europe, connected the Baltic Sea to the *Caput Adriae* across a distance of 1,700 km. The trade route bypassed the main ridge of the Alps on its eastern side and reached the *Danubius* in the area of the *Porta Hungarica* not far from Bratislava (Pressburg) in order to run north along the *Marus* River (Morava/March) (fig. 1-2). The main route ran via the Moravian Gate and along the Vistula River (Wisła/Weichsel) up to the Danzig Bay (Zatoka Gdań/Danziger Bucht). A side route, however, crossed the Prague Basin (Pražské Pánvi/Prager Becken), an area favourable for settling, in order to reach the Baltic Sea via the Neisse and the Oder Rivers (fig. 4). The term “eastern, Roman Amber Road” was coined in the 19th century after the unique natural resource of the Baltic Sea that was mainly traded via this route. Amber, which is predominantly found on the coast between Gdansk (Danzig) and Kaliningrad (Königsberg), in the area called Sambia (Samland), can be considered one of the most coveted luxury goods of Antiquity.

Already Pliny reports in his *Natural History* that the *Germani* living in this area set out for the south in order to transport the *sucinum* (Latin for amber) into the territory of the Roman Empire (*adfertur a Germanis in Pannoniam maxime provinciam: nat. hist. XXXVII, 43*). Especially in northern Italy, the valuable substance was not only used as a raw material for precious pieces of jewellery, but also as a remedy (*nat. hist. XXXVII 44: hodieque Transpadanorum agrestibus feminis monilium vice sucina gestantibus, maxime decoris gratia, sed et medicinae*). On the other hand, it was probably not uncommon in Antiquity for Roman traders to go north on the Amber Road, into *Germania Magna*, in order to invest in the fossil resin: *DC Mp. [= 800 km, actually 750 km] fere a Carnunto Pannonia abesse litus id Germaniae, ex quo invehitur, percognitum nuper, vivitque eques R. ad ib comparandum missus ab Iuliano curante gladiatorum minus Neronis principis ... maximum pondus is glaebae attulit XIII librarum (nat. hist. 37, 45-46)*.

Therefore, this important north-south trade route is nothing less than ideal for investigating the geographical mobility inside the frontier of the Roman Empire. Even more so since the southern section of the Amber Road with its clear natural boundaries, the eastern Alps and the swampy and boggy western edge of the Pannonian Basin, was already under Roman control at the beginning of the Imperial Roman period.

From 35 BC to the reign of Augustus, the Roman army had seized the north-western Balkans, at the time called *Illyricum*, in difficult campaigns. The conquest of Transdanubia (Hungary), the area between the Danube and the Drava-Sava region, was definitely completed during the first third of the first century AD. Therefore, the strategically decisive road link between the Roman colony *Aquileia*, founded in 181 BC, and the Danube limes near *Carnuntum* (Bad Deutsch-Altenburg/Petronell) must have been militarily secured, at the latest, under Tiberius. Since the Claudian reorganisation of the eastern Alpine region, the road ran across the territory of the provinces of *Noricum* and *Pannonia* or rather, after the division of Pannonia under Trajan, across *Pannonia Superior*. The road link was described several times in ancient *itineraria* (fig. 1; *Tab. Peut. Itin. Ant. 261f. Geogr. Rav. IV 19*). Archaeological investigations of it have shown that the corpus of the road consisted, after several repairs, of rubble strata almost two metres thick. In densely populated areas (urban agglomerations), this roadway, normally 3-4 m wide (Lake Neusiedl), could be expanded to up to 12 m (*Savaria*) and then also feature a solid stone pavement<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Kaus 1999; Cserményi, Tóth 1982; Gömöri 1999, esp. 79 fig. 1; Vomer Gojkovič 2009.

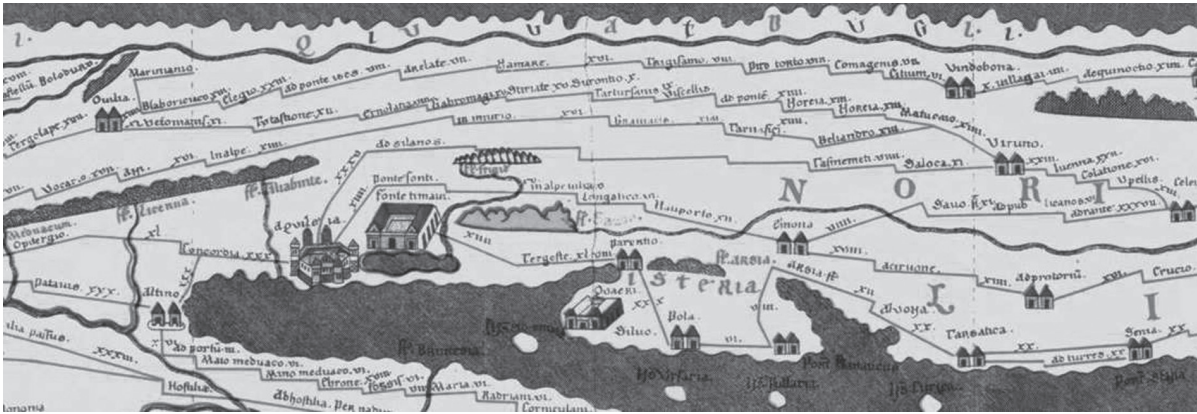


FIGURE 1. The section of the Amber Road between Aquileia and the Danube near Carnuntum that ran across the territory of the Roman Empire according to the Tabula Peutingeriana (pars V/VI)

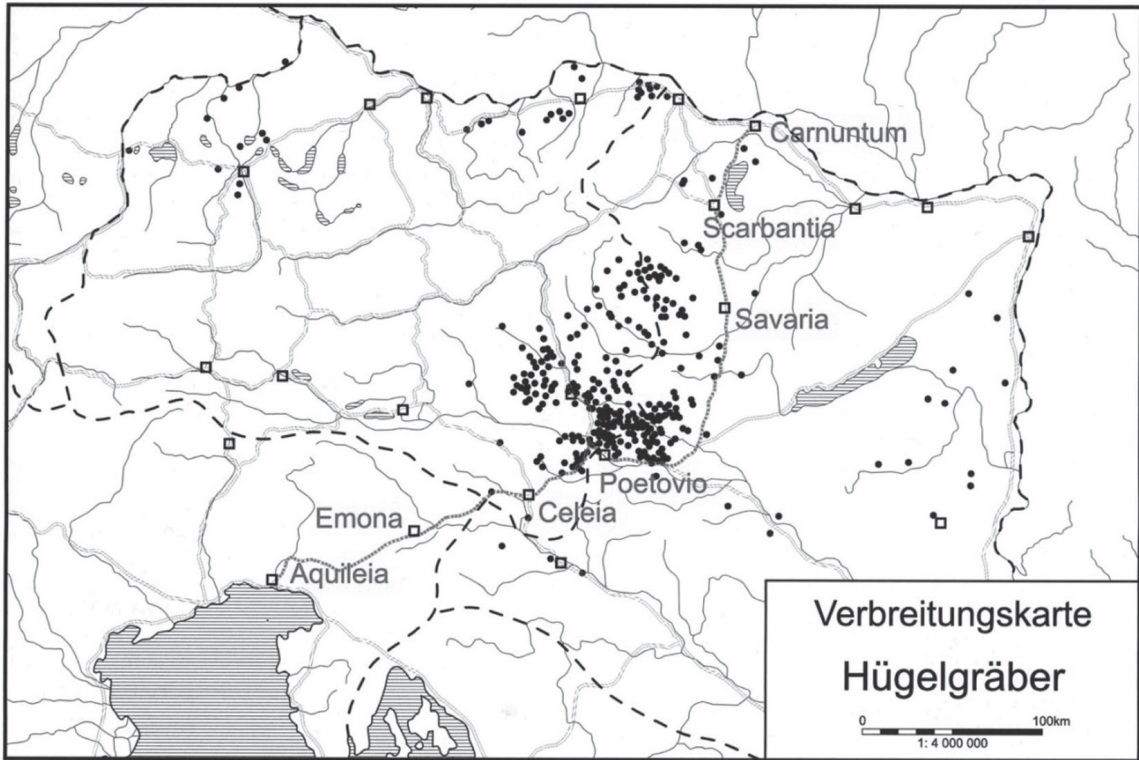


FIGURE 2. Distribution of the Noric-Pannonian tumulus burials. After: Scherrer 2002, 46 map 15

The first winter-proof road link east of the Alps not only served as a supply route for the border troops, advancing far up to the “wet limes” of the Danube, but also encouraged an intensification of the exchange of goods between north and south. The economic development of the newly founded Roman settlements of *Celeia*, *Poetovio*, *Savaria* and *Scarbantia* attest this (fig. 2).

The starting point of the long-distance trade between the Mediterranean and northern Europe was the Ljubljana Basin, only just belonging to the Italic *regio X*. Here, in the area of settlement of the *Taurisci*, the *emporion Nauportus* (Vrhnika) already developed in the late Republican era. In the Imperial period, its function was taken over very quickly by the *colonia Iulia Emona* (Ljubljana/Laibach).

The sources that have been compiled by Austrian, Slovenian and Hungarian archaeologists and epigraphers for more than 100 years make it possible by now to reconstruct in detail the religious and funerary practices cultivated along the Amber Road during the Imperial Roman period<sup>3</sup>. A comparative analysis makes clear both the complexity of the provincial society that developed in the hinterland of the Road and the high geographical mobility of individuals and whole population groups.

#### FUNERARY PRACTICES OF NATIVES AND NEWCOMERS IN THE SETTLEMENTS ALONG THE ROUTE OF THE AMBER ROAD

A long section of the Amber Road ran across the territory of the Roman Empire. The northern part of this section crossed first the Mura River east of *Poetovio* (Ptuj/Pettau) and then the flat countryside at the western edge of the Little Hungarian Plain (Kisalföld). Via *Sala* and *Savaria*, it reached *Scarbantia* where a connection to *Vindobona* existed via the Wiener Neustädter Pforte (Ödenburger Pforte) (fig. 2). The main route, however, ran between the Leitha Mountains and Lake Neusiedl directly northwards to *Carnuntum* on the Danube. This natural region is characterised by Lake Neusiedl to the west, the Rába (Raab) River to the east and the Hanság (Waasen) fen region in between. In the mid-first century BC, it belonged to the area influenced by the Celtic tribe of the *Boii*, their territory reaching from *Boiodurum* (Passau) to Lake Balaton (*lacus Pelsö*). The regional centre of power, with its own mint, was situated somewhere near the *Porta Hungarica*, probably on the castle hills of Bratislava (Pressburg) and Bratislava-Devin (Thebener Burgberg). About 40 BC, the *Boii* came into conflict with the Dacians living east of them. The Dacians defeated the *Boii* so severely that subsequently the Latin sources speak only of the *deserta Boiorum* ('Boian waste' – Strabo VII 292; Pliny III 147)<sup>4</sup>. Antiquarians often have interpreted this as a sign of a far-reaching destruction of the Boian tribe and its structure of dominion. Subsequently, the area seems to have been under the influence of the *regnum Noricum* that was situated to the southwest and on friendly terms with Rome<sup>5</sup>.

That the Celtic-Boian settlement structures were not, however, completely destroyed, is illustrated by an important fact: The Roman provincial government could draw on the local elite as contacts for creating the new *civitates* even before the municipalisation of the hinterland of the Pannonian limes which started in the second century AD. A funerary inscription found right on the Amber Road, in Bruck an der Leitha, names a *pr(inceps) c(ivitatis) B(oiorum)*, one *M. Coe[c]jeius Caupianus*<sup>6</sup>. He had been elected head of a local tribe organisation in the hinterland of the mili-

<sup>3</sup> An analysis of late Antiquity, when Christianity increasingly spread, especially across the eastern Alpine region, would have gone beyond the constraints of this article.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Zabehlicky, Zabehlicky 2002/3; Teichner, Schneider, forthcoming.

<sup>5</sup> The statement of *Velleius Paterculus* II 109, 3 about the winter camp of Tiberius in AD 6 is crucial in this context: "in *Carnuntum*, a place in *Noricum*".

<sup>6</sup> AE 1951, 64: *M. Coc[c]jeius | Caupianus pr(inceps) | c(ivitatis) B(oiorum) v(ivus) f(ecit) sibi et | Cocceiae Daco| vassae coniugi | anno[r]um LV.* – Cf. Zabehlicky 1999.

tary base of Carnuntum. The *gentilicium* points to him having received his citizenship under the Emperor *Nerva*. Thanks to systematic excavations carried out by the Austrian Archaeological Institute, the half-timbered residence of this Celtic owner's large estate is known. In the following centuries, the building, still modest at first, developed into a representative peristyle villa according to Mediterranean models. For AD 375, a visit by the imperial household is assumed<sup>7</sup>.

Until now, the results of archaeological excavations and research have made one thing clear, however: In the first half of the first century AD, not only a regional administrative body for the remaining Celtic population was created, which was given the name *civitas B(oiorum)*, but also new settlers were integrated who had come to the Amber Road from the north, the *Barbaricum*, and from the south, the eastern Alpine region.

The distribution of the "Noric-Pannonian tumulus burials" (fig. 2) is illuminating in this context. This is a funerary practice of the early and middle Imperial Roman period in these two provinces characterised by raising earth mounds over graves (*tumuli*) and preferring cremation burials (Urban 1984, 136). The main distribution area was the hilly Alpine foothills, namely middle and lower Styria (as far as Slovenia) and the southern Burgenland. From the territory of the Noric *Flavia Solva* (Leibnitz, Styria), the tumulus burials spread as far as the area of the Pannonian *Poetovio*, but also as far as *Celeia* (Celje/Cilli) in the south. Therefore, the Amber Road delineates a form of eastern boundary along which this funerary practice also spread up to the Danube in the north. Here in the *deserta Boiorum*, the area of Lake Neusiedl and the Leitha Mountains, too, northern Italic samian ware grave goods signal that this funerary practice started in Augustan times and intensified from the middle of the first century AD onwards.

There is no need to repeat again the long-lived discussion about the exact derivation of the tumulus funerary practice. The native population was probably inspired to erect such monumental funerary buildings by Roman funerary monuments. The connection to the Roman tumulus practice is too apparent. The Hungarian ancient historian Jenő Fitz described the gradual diffusion of this funerary practice along the Amber Road, from the southern distribution area to the area of Lake Neusiedl, as a sign of personal mobility from a south-eastern Alpine, northern Italic, Dalmatian area<sup>8</sup>. Basically, the spreading of the tumulus funerary practice along the Amber Road mirrors the geographical mobility of a population group. Peter Scherrer has been, thus far, the last to point clearly to the complete absence of this funerary practice in the centre of the *regnum Noricum*. From this, he reasoned that the population migrating north along the Amber Road at the beginning of the Imperial Roman period from the Tauriscan-southern Pannonian area, maybe even *Dalmatia*, underwent an independent development. By this, Scherrer thought, they deliberately contrasted with the funerary practices of the *Norici* living to the west (Scherrer 2002, 49).

Completely different population elements had been reaching the *deserta Boiorum*, also, since the early Imperial Roman period from the area north of the Danube, *Germania Magna* (*Barbaricum*). *Marbod*, the Roman-educated king of the *Marcomanni*, did not desire conflict with the Romans. The Roman historian *Tacitus* reports that he and his followers were granted asylum by the Romans in AD 17 (*Tac. Ann.* II 29f.). Until his death in AD 37/38, *Marbod* spent the rest of his life in Italy. In AD 20, one of his successors, *Vannius*, was proclaimed, by the grace of Rome, king of those *Quadi* living between the *Marus* River (Morava/March) and the *Váh* River (Waag), in the forefield of the Empire's border. However, in AD 50, *Vannius* suffered the same fate as *Marbod*.

<sup>7</sup> Zabehlicky 1999; 2008; 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Fitz 1958, 9 ff. – Also along these lines: Urban 1984, 156 f.

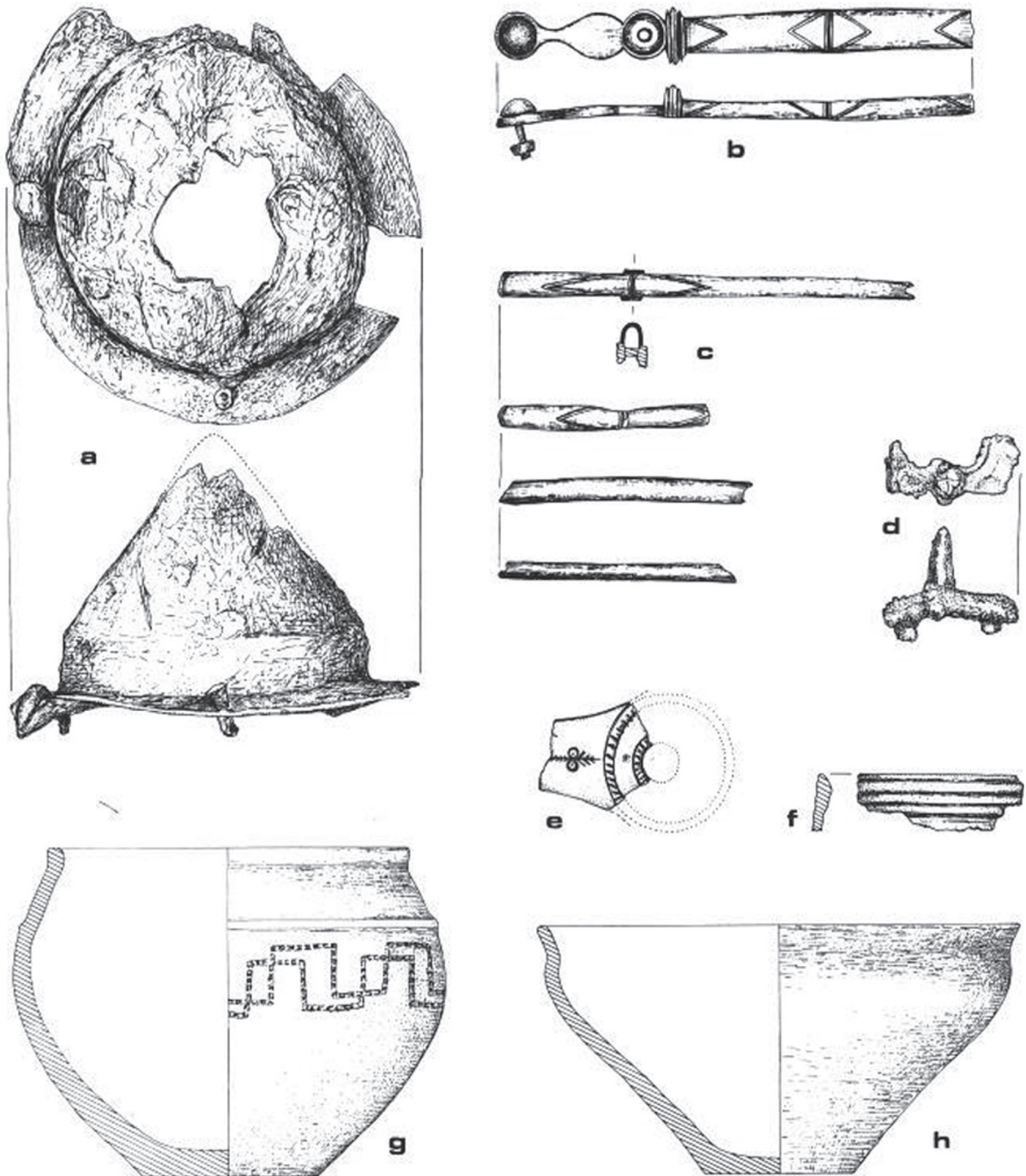


FIGURE 3. *The Germanic weapon burial discovered in Mannersdorf an der Leitha (Burgenland, Austria) in 1912. After: Adler 1979*

The followers who had fled with the king from the former *regnum Vannianum* were, in this case, given—as *Tacitus* explicitly reports (XII 29 f.)—new settlement areas south of the Danube, in the territory of the Roman Empire.

Therefore, the population of the *deserta Boiorum*, a mix of *Boii*, *Taurisci* and southern Pannonians, received a further influx of the Germanic refugees who had fled with *Marbod* and *Vannius* during the first half of the first century. For some time now, research in the area of investigation has been able to point to respective Germanic personal names on Imperial funerary inscriptions. The name *Vannius*, for example, well-known because of the aforementioned king of the *Quadi*, appears along the Amber Road on two funerary inscriptions, one found not far from the Mura River between *Poetovio* and *Savaria*, another directly in *Savaria*<sup>9</sup>.

Moreover, a group of cremation burials in the area of the Leitha Mountains and Lake Neusiedl from the middle of the first century AD also stands out. Contrary to the practices in the Roman Empire, they contain weapons as grave goods<sup>10</sup>. The Germanic warrior grave discovered in Mannersdorf (Lower Austria) next to the Leitha Mountains in 1912 indicates the Germanic character of the respective grave goods<sup>11</sup>. The cremation burial contained the bronze handle of a typical Roman casserole (fig. 3e), the iron shield boss and rim of an oval wooden shield (fig. 3a+c), an iron riding spur (fig. 3d) and fragments of an iron pair of scissors. Already these defensive weapons (shield and spurs) make a Roman origin unlikely, and also the accompanying pottery, especially the pot with meandering decoration in roller stamp technique (fig. 3g), points to the buried person coming from the Elbe Germanic settlement area north of the Danube, the former dominion of *Marbod* and *Vannius*.

That the trading contacts along the Amber Road favoured to a very high degree the mobility of goods and their traders across the *finis Imperii Romani*, i.e. across the natural boundary of the middle Danube, can be demonstrated finally by an examination of the brooches typically worn by tribes living in the eastern part of *Germania Magna* at the beginning of the Imperial Roman period. In those decades, a variant of the strongly profiled brooches (“*kräftig profilierte Fibeln*”), namely the one with a profiled knot on the bow, a pin catch with step-like open-work and a one-piece spring construction, enjoyed great popularity (Almgren 67)<sup>12</sup>. The brooches of the late Augustan-Tiberian era were of east Alpine, Noric-Pannonian origin. This can be suggested based on stylistic grounds without having to find semi-manufactured products<sup>13</sup>. The distribution map (fig. 4), moreover, illustrates how the pieces produced in the Drava-Sava area, which was made accessible by the southern Amber Road, spread as far as the *deserta Boiorum* in the north. Due to the contemporaneous funerary practices, however, far more bronze Almgren 67a brooches have survived outside the territory of the Roman Empire in the Germanic settlement area. Clear concentrations are found in Bohemia (Prague Basin) and, beyond the Moravian Gate, in Greater Poland<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> *CIL* III, 4149 (= *ILJug* I, 360; Also-Lendva/Unterlimbach); *CIL* III, 4224 (= Tóth 2011b, 259 no. 232; Ober-Kohlsträtt/Felső-Szénégető).

<sup>10</sup> Adler 1979; Urban 1985, 106 tab. 2 fig. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Von Seracsin, Zehenthofer 1915, 86 f. pl. 8; Adler 1979, 37 f. fig. 17.

<sup>12</sup> Almgren 1923, 34 ff. pl. IV esp. 67-68.

<sup>13</sup> Almgren 1923, 36; Kossack 1962; Demetz 1999, 127-135; Gugl 1995, 11; Völling 2005, 144. – Even if researchers agree, by now, that native imita-

tions circulated in *Germania Magna* beside the Roman provincial imports, this proves at least the mobility of ideas.

<sup>14</sup> A similar mobility of people, goods and technology, especially for expertise in making pottery, metal working and wood processing, agriculture, methods of breeding, can be seen exemplarily in the distribution of surgical knives like scalpels and lancets in the burials in Slovakia: Kolník 2004, map 1. – Cf. Pieta 1997.

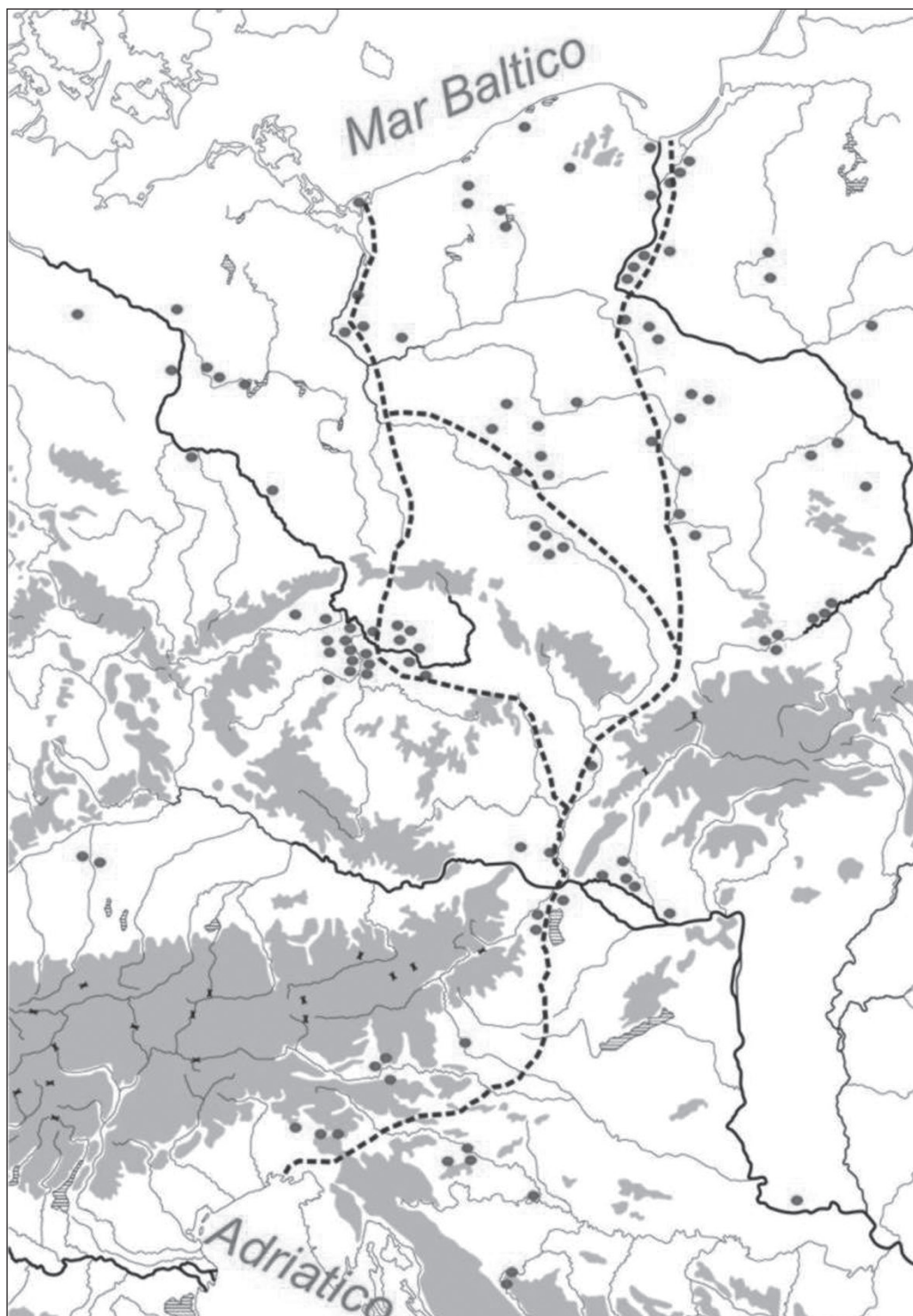


FIGURE 4. *Distribution of Almgren type 67a brooches between the Adriatic and the Baltic Sea.* © Felix Teichner, on the basis of Völling 2005, 287 ff. list 12 map 20



## THE EPIGRAPHIC HABITS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF TRADERS ALONG THE AMBER ROAD

The picture sketched thus far on the basis of funerary practices and grave goods pertaining to geographical mobility along the Amber Road can be expanded considerably by including epigraphic, iconographic and architectural evidence for religious practices. When one examines the dedicators of numerous votive offerings to local and imperial Roman deities along the road, the close connection of northern Italy to the cultural and economic development in the new province of Pannonia becomes visible.

A suitable starting point for such an analysis is the votive offering to the goddess *Aecorna* found in the *territorium* of the *Colonia Claudia Savaria* (Szombathely/Steinamanger) (fig. 5)<sup>15</sup>. The use of apices, amongst other things, points to the inscription being placed on the pedestal of a statue in the second half of the first century (Kovács 1998, 105 f.).

*Aecornae / Avg(ustae) sac(rum) / Emonienses / qui / consistunt [in] finibus Savar(iensium) / v(otum) s(olverunt) / l(ibens) m(erito)*

Furthermore, the deity *Aecorna* (originally *Aequorna*) is only documented in the Ljubljana Basin. This suggests a local deity of the native *Taurisci*, maybe connected to the Ljubljana Marshes (Ljubljansko barje/Laibacher Moor)<sup>16</sup>. *P. Cassius Secundus*, the equestrian prefect of the *ala Britannica milliaria*, for example, belonged to the quite high-ranking dedicators in *Emona* (Ljubljana/Laibach)<sup>17</sup>. A small sanctuary on the Castle Hill (Grajski grič/Burgberg) of Ljubljana was situated in such a position that it overlooked the expansive marshes to the south<sup>18</sup>. In the trading post *Nauportus* (Vrhnika), the direct predecessor of the city of *Emona*, the *magistri vici* erected a separate temple for this deity<sup>19</sup>.

Owing to this deity's origin in the Ljubljana Basin, it is not surprising that it was not the local population of *Savaria*, but rather the citizens of *Emona* operating in *finibus Savariensium* who offered the dedication. The *Emonienses* in question were, with certainty, traders or craftsmen who had formed a cooperative association, maybe a *collegium*, a corporation or a *societas*, in the northernmost citizens' colony on the Amber Road<sup>20</sup>.

Primarily the inscriptions found in commercial centres like *Emona*, *Poetovio* and *Celeia* provide specifics on the craftsmen and traders operating along the Amber Road<sup>21</sup>. The onomastic corpus has been repeatedly compiled and mapped. When summarising the results of these investigations it becomes clear that it is, above all, the influential northern Italic merchant families, mostly from *Aquileia*, who organised trade and business along the most important north-south link<sup>22</sup>. Jaroslav Šašel has exemplarily demonstrated this role, pointing towards the huge number of freedmen of the *Caesernii* and the *Barbii* in the systematic economic development of the eastern Alpine area. At the beginning, this development was directed from *Aquileia*, later also from *Emona*, the administration

<sup>15</sup> *AE* 1934, 68 fig. 1 (= *RIU* I 135; Mócsy, Szentlélek 1971, 95 no. 70 picture 56; Tóth 2011b, 238 f. no. 202).

<sup>16</sup> Summarised by Šašel Kos 1999b; cf. Szabó 2011, 130 who, on the other hand, points to the connection to the old Italic theotechny hinted at already by Th. Mommsen (*CIL* I<sup>2</sup>, 2285).

<sup>17</sup> *AE* 1980, 496; Šašel, Šašel 1977; Šašel Kos 1999b, 49 no. 5 fig. 4.

<sup>18</sup> *CIL* III, 3831-33; *ILS* 4875a-c; *AIJ*, 148-150; Šašel Kos 1998, 18; Šašel Kos 1999b, 47 f. nos. 2-4 figs. 1-3.

<sup>19</sup> *CIL* III, 3776; *ILS* 4876; Šašel Kos 1999b, 47 no. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Saria 1935, 5 f.; Kovács 1998.

<sup>21</sup> First fundamental summary already by: Mócsy 1959, 93 ff.

<sup>22</sup> Untermann 1961; Harding, Jacobsen 1988; 1989; Scherrer 2002. – Cf. Gallego 1996, 232 ff.; 1998.

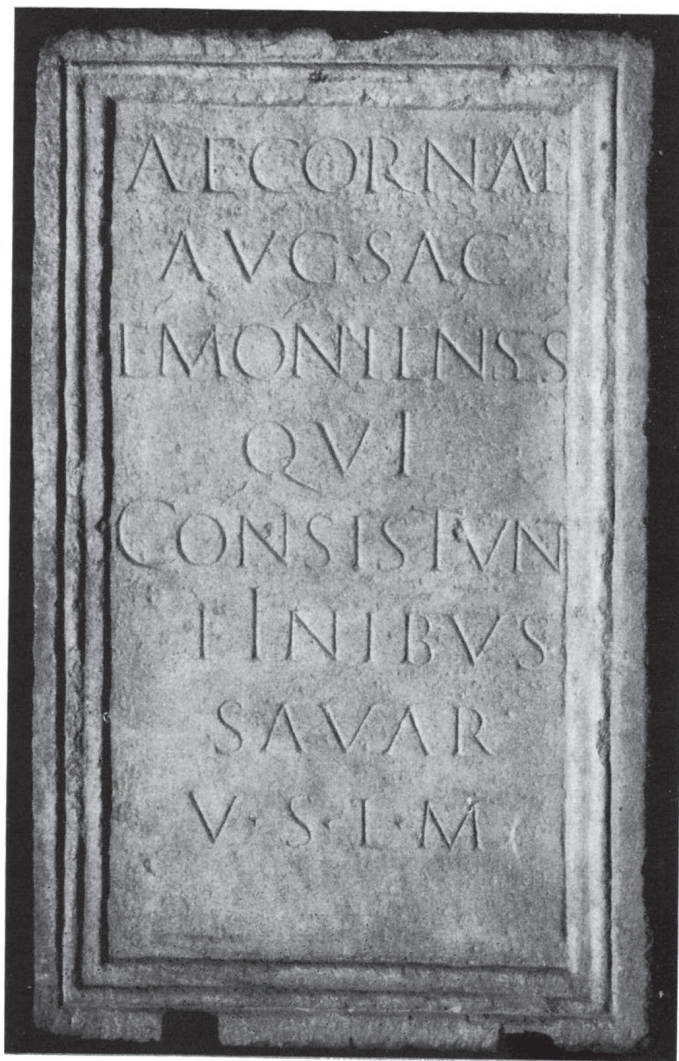


FIGURE 5. *Dedication to the goddess Aecorna by the merchants from Emona (Ljubljana/Laibach, Slovenia) active in Savaria (Szombathely/Steinamanger, Hungary). After: Mócsy, Szentléleky 1971, 95 no. 70 picture 56*

centre at the junction between Italy and the Balkans, in the role of a secondary centre<sup>23</sup>. We can see that the *Caesernii* oriented themselves to the Pannonian area, while the *Barbii* also operated in the neighbouring province of *Noricum*. The famous statue of “the young man” found on the Magdalensberg in the Zollfeld plain (“Jüngling vom Magdalensberg”) attests to this (*CIL* III, 4815 = *AE* 1957, 16). In general, the onomasticon of civilians from the areas along the Amber Road during the first two centuries AD shows clearly how intense and, above all, pervasive the influx of Italic traders, influential merchant families and their freedmen via *Emona* into this economically expanding zone of the

<sup>23</sup> Šašel 1960; 1966. – Cf. Untermann 1961, map 15 (*Barbius*); Scherrer 2002, 15 fig. 1 (*Barbii*).

Roman Amber Road between *Celeia* and *Carnuntum* was (Harding, Jacobsen 1988). The distribution of these *gentilicia* documents the corresponding mobility of the Italic traders, and also of the manumitted procurators of such merchant families and other family members.

The starting point for this expansion northwards was without doubt the Ljubljana Basin. Because of its position in the natural environment, the trading post *Nauportus*, and later the Roman-founded colony of *Emona*, could serve as a base for any conquest in Illyricum or Pannonia. The majority of the population of *Emona* consisted—except for the veterans—of branches of the important families from *Aquileia* and other northern Italic settlements. Inscriptions give distinctive *gentilicia* like *Aelii*, *Aemilii*, *Appulei*, *Barbii*, *Caesernii*, *Cantii*, *Castricii*, *Claturnii*, *Clodii*, *Dindii*, *Marcii*, *Petronii*, *Vellii*, of those who played a leading role in the colony, the so-called ‘ruling elite’<sup>24</sup>. The same families are found again northwards on the Amber Road, also in considerable numbers, for example, in the Claudian *municipium Celeia*<sup>25</sup> and in the Trajan colony *Poetovio*<sup>26</sup>. Further north, in *Savaria* and *Scarbantia*, only a few merchant families can be found so far, nevertheless we still can identify the *Barbii*, and the *Atilii*. A parallel result comparable to the epigraphic research could be illustrated as well, and with the same significance, by the influx and distribution of the trade goods that came in the first century mostly from the Po Plain, namely samian ware (*terra sigillata*), thin-walled pottery, oil lamps, amphorae and metal goods<sup>27</sup>.

The early dominance of important northern Italic merchant families is later also mirrored in the urban administration. *Nauportus* and *Emona* (Šašel Kos 2003, 15) were trading posts whose genesis and conception had been directly influenced by the interests of Italic traders. However, not only here, but also elsewhere, the new population from northern Italy rather than the local elites evidently became incredibly influential in the urban administration. Latest investigations in the neighbouring *Noricum* have shown that only about one tenth of its urban elites originated from the native population, while for all others an Italic origin is assumed<sup>28</sup>. For example, *Ti. Barbius Valens*, one of the first decurions of the *Colonia Claudia Savaria*<sup>29</sup>, and *Decimus Castricius Verus Antonius Avitus*, holding the same office in the northern *Celeia* at the beginning of the second century<sup>30</sup>, deserve mention for the area of investigation. Both the *Barbii* and the *Castricii* were families from *Aquileia*.

Respective mappings of the onomastic material correspond to the actual Amber Road running along the foot of the eastern Alps, but they usually also emphasise the important trade centre of the neighbouring *regnum Noricum* to the west, the Magdalensberg near Klagenfurt, and the river system of the Sava and Drava regions, that provided a link towards the east, the Balkan Peninsula and the Black Sea, as trade contact points and routes. If one limits oneself to mapping only the explicit mentioning of

<sup>24</sup> Harding, Jacobsen 1988; Zaccaria 1994, 56 f. Cf. Šašel Kos 2003, 15.

<sup>25</sup> Harding, Jacobsen 1989. – On a trader from Africa in *Celeia*: *CIL* III, 5230 (*adiutor*), cf. Gallego 1996, 234 f.

<sup>26</sup> It had a mixed population, particularly traders in addition to veterans and autochthonous Celts. In the inscriptions, traders from *Cremona*, *Dertona*, *Mediolanum* and *Parma* (Horvat *et al.* 2003, 159 fn. 79) are mentioned besides the family of the *Valerii*, the oldest and most important family who had been residing here since the first half of the first century and embodied the municipal elite: Alföldy 1964/5; Šašel Kos 1993, 222 ff.

<sup>27</sup> For example: Plesničar-Gec 1985; Bezeczky 1994; Buora 2001; Gabler 2006.

<sup>28</sup> Scherrer 2002, 24 f. – Cf. Harding, Jacobsen 1988, 203 supplement G with map; Wedenig 1997. – A so far unpublished PhD thesis has recently analysed in detail the composition of the population of *Celeia* during the Imperial period: J. Visočnik, *Jezikovne značilnosti napisov antične Celeje z okolico kot vir za preučevanje romanizacije celejskega prostora*. Filozofska fakulteta, Univerza v Ljubljani - PhD thesis (Ljubljana 2007). – Cf. Lazar 2010; Visočnik 2010.

<sup>29</sup> *CIL* III, 4156 (= *RIU* I, 14; Móscy, Szentlélekly 1971, 89 f. no. 40; Tóth 2011b, 92 f. no. 28).

<sup>30</sup> *CIL* III, 5226; *ILJug.* 400; cf. Harding, Jacobsen 1989, 231; Wedenig 1997, 124 f. C16.

*negotiatores* instead of the numerous instances of the presence of northern Italic merchant families, the north-south movement of goods and of the people dealing with their transport becomes even more evident and can be seen especially well in the northern, Pannonian section of the Amber Road<sup>31</sup>.

Especially in southern Pannonia, the river system formed by the Drava and Sava was another line of mobility and trade. This becomes clear when looking at the respective dedications to river deities. Native nature deities like the already mentioned *Aecorna*, *Adsalluta* and *Laburnus* were integrated in the Roman pantheon and gradually received Roman names. Not far from the dangerous rapids of the Ljubljana River near Kaltenbrunn, for example, a dedication to *Laburnus* was erected by two Roman citizens (*CIL* III, 3840 = *ILS* 4877). All dedications to the Roman god Neptune and his accompanying nymphs or to the personifications of the rivers themselves—*Dravus*, *Savus*, *Danuuius*—are concerned with the general well-being of river traffic or a secure crossing of the body of water in question<sup>32</sup>. In *Emona*, the existence of a separate *collegium navicularorum* proves how closely the trade organised from northern Italy was linked to the river traffic (*CIL* III, 10771 = *AIJ*, 178).

As expected, the members of the northern Italic *gentes* appear due to religious acts at these contact points between the Amber Road and the hydrographic system of the Drava and Sava Rivers, for example, one *Cassia Clementia* with a dedication to *Neptunus et Nymphae* in *Emona*<sup>33</sup> and one *C. Cassius Quietus* with a dedication to *Adsalluta et Savus*<sup>34</sup>. The sanctuary of these two river deities was situated in the frontier area between *Noricum* and *Pannonia Superior*, on the upper reaches of the Sava near Podkraj (Saudörfel) in Lower Carniola (Dolenjska/Unterkrain). Not far from the railway station of Hrastnik, about a dozen inscriptions dedicated to the god *Savus* and to *Adsalluta* have been discovered in the river bed of the Sava since the end of the 18th century (fig. 6a-b)<sup>35</sup>. Additionally, prehistoric artefacts have been found, proving the long tradition of this cult site that was expanded in Roman times. The first excavations took place in 1917 and were continued as a rescue excavation in 1993. The sanctuary of the two river deities from the Imperial period was situated in one of the few easily accessible places on the banks of the Sava River between the Litija Basin and the Municipality of Radeče. The uncovered areas provide an impression of the sanctuary's structure including its temple with a central, almost square *cella* and an ambulatory enclosed by walls (typical of Romano-Celtic ambulatory temples) besides the additional buildings situated along the edge of the sloping terrain (fig. 6c)<sup>36</sup>.

#### DIVINE PROTECTION FOR TRAVELLERS ON THE AMBER ROAD

In general, such small sanctuaries, whether for native pre-Roman nature deities or for new external deities, seem better suited for characterising the populations living in the settlements along the Amber Road and their geographical mobility than the classical state and imperial cults. The development of large sacred places for these Roman imperial deities and the imperial cult were an

<sup>31</sup> A compilation of the *negotiatores* in: Harding, Jacobsen 1989, 188 f. supplement C; Gallego 1996, 235 ff. map p. 247; the same *ibid.* also on the absence of *negotiatores* in the epigraphic material from *Noricum*.

<sup>32</sup> Harding, Jacobsen 1988, 205 supplement H with map.

<sup>33</sup> *CIL* III, 13400 (*ILS* 3285). – Cf. also a dedication to Neptune from *Emona* by *L. Servilius*: *CIL* III, 3778 (= cf. Šašel Kos 2008, 692).

<sup>34</sup> *CIL* III, 11684 (*Adsalluta et Savo*).

<sup>35</sup> *CIL* III, 5134 (= 11680); 5135; 5136; 5138; 11684; 11685; *AIJ*, 26-27, 255 and Müller 1879, no. 238. – Summarised by: Šašel Kos 1994, 100 f.; Lovenjak 1997, 67 f. fig. 6.

<sup>36</sup> Jovanović 1996; Krajšek, Stergar 2008. – Summarised by: Šašel Kos 1998, 19; 2010.

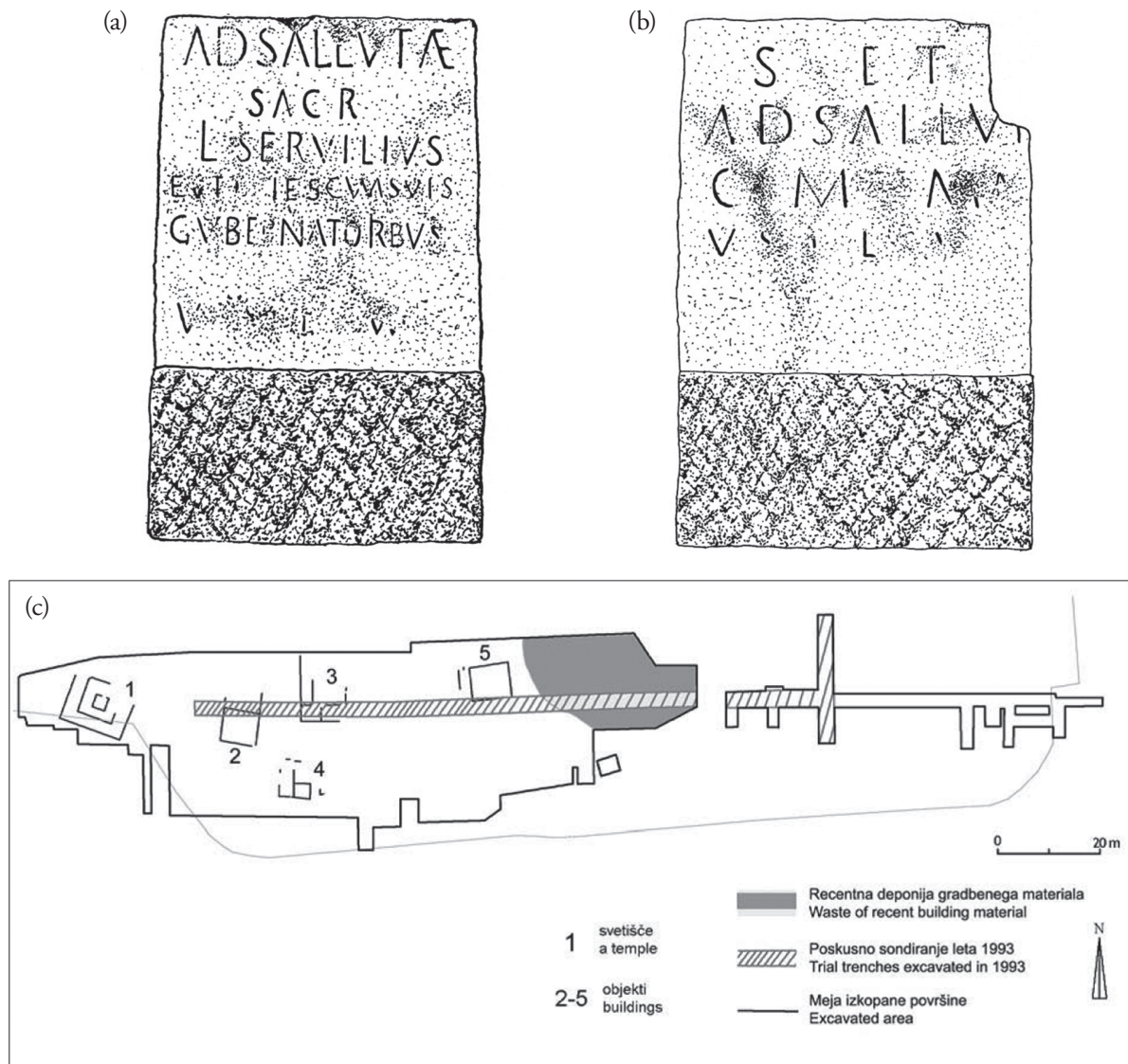


FIGURE 6. Sanctuary of Savus and Adsalluta in Podkraj near Hrastnik (Savodorf, Slovenia). Plan of the cult precinct (c) and two of the dedication inscriptions: (a) Adsallutae / sacr(um) / L. Servilius / Euty[c]hes ? cum suis / gubernatoribus / v(otum) [s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)]; (b) S(avo) et / Adsallu(tae) / C. M[e]mm(ius) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito). After: AIJ 26-27 (a-b); Jovanovic 1996 (c)

almost essential part of the basic public facilities for new provinces and urban centres<sup>37</sup>. It seems a matter of course that such official sanctuaries modelled on the city of Rome developed during the process of the 'Romanisation' and urbanisation of the newly created provinces. The surviving cult image of the Capitoline Triad from the municipal temple on the forum of the Flavian *municipium*

<sup>37</sup> Similarly, the northern Italic elites were also dominating at first in the building programmes and priests'

colleges (e.g. *Augustales*): Šašel Kos 1999d; 2003, 16 with fig. 3; 2008, 698 ff. (cf. fn. 35).

*Scarbantia* (Sopron/Ödenburg)<sup>38</sup> or the *Capitolium* in the Hadrianic *municipium Aelium Carnuntinum* (Bad Deutsch-Altenburg/Petronell)<sup>39</sup>, clearly detected by geophysical means, deserve to be mentioned as examples within the area of investigation. Even the sanctuary of *I(u)p(ite)r O(ptim)us M(axim)us* at *Carnuntum* (Pfaffenberg), with its sacred buildings that were arranged around an open space and the associated cult theatre, primarily testifies to the religious practices of the average Roman resident, or more precisely of the *cives Romani consistentes Karnunti intra leugam primam*, although the god was sometimes addressed with the byname *K(arnuntinus)*<sup>40</sup>.

However, the large sanctuary of the Egyptian mother goddess erected at the southern gate of the oldest and most distinguished Roman foundation in Pannonia, the *Colonia Claudia Savaria* (Sombathely/Steinamanger), seems more pertinent for an interesting question in this case; the question of the geographical mobility of both (larger and smaller) groups of people and religious practices from faraway parts of the empire over a wide area. In *Savaria*, one of the colonial *decuriones* had dedicated an altar to *Isis Augustae* already at the end of the first or the beginning of the second century<sup>41</sup>. Once again, this *Ti. Barbius Valens* was a member of a northern Italic merchant family, the undoubtedly worldly-wise *gens Barbia*, who had come along the Amber Road from the south. In Severan times, a separate sacred precinct for the Egyptian cult was erected directly at the trade route reaching the colony *Savaria* from the south, from *Poetovio* (Ptuj/Pettau). Different views exist in academic literature about the architectural reconstruction of this *Iseum* with its quite generous floor space of 70 m × 42 m. It seems obvious, however, that one entered the actual temple precinct via a two-bay basilica-like transept hall with a portico in front (fig. 7)<sup>42</sup>. At the top end of the precinct, that was enclosed by broad porticos, the tetra-prostyle temple rose on a high podium. A figured frieze belonging to the furnishings of the temple is decisive for considering it as a site of the Isis cult since the frieze shows, besides *Heracles*, *Isis* riding in a side saddle on *Sothis* with a *sistrum* in the raised right hand<sup>43</sup>.

In the vicinity of this *Iseum* of *Savaria*, also on the southern outward road to *Poetovio*, two more sacred buildings were situated, the temple of the *beneficarii* responsible for safeguarding the road traffic and a sacred building dedicated to *Iuppiter* who was connected to the Syrian Baal of *Doliche* (Dülük, Turkey)<sup>44</sup>. The road deities, the *Dii Itinerarii*, were directly expected to protect travellers. Two votive altars found in 1992 right at the southern town wall point to them being worshipped (fig. 8). A local married couple and a dedicator with Roman citizenship had dedicated these altars to the *Dii Itinerarii* and the divine couple *Itunus et Ituna* for fulfilled vows<sup>45</sup>. There

<sup>38</sup> Szakál 1977, 63; Gömöri 2003, 82 f.; 2006, 156 fig. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Kandler *et al.* 2004, 43 f., fig. 26; Eder-Hinterleitner *et al.* 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Piso 1991; 2003, 11 ff. has show that this (*intra leugam primam*) was the military zone around the legionary camp. – On the sanctuary: Jobst, Kremer, Piso 2002; Kremer 2004, 38 ff.; Kandler *et al.* 2004, 53 ff. figs. 36-39; Gassner 2005, 84 f. fig. 4; Jobst 2006; Jobst, Piras 2011.

<sup>41</sup> *CIL* III, 4156 (= *RIU* I, 14; Mócsy, Szentléleky 1971, 89 no. 40; Tóth 2011b, 92 f. no. 28). – Cf. *CIL* III, 10908 (= *RIU* I, 15; Moscy, Szentléleky 1971, 90 no. 41; Tóth 2011b, 94 no. 92); *CIL* III, 10913 (= *RIU* I, 30; Mócsy, Szentléleky 1971, 90 no. 43; Tóth 2011b, 126 no. 68); *CIL* III, 10914 (= *RIU* I, 104; Mócsy, Szentléleky 1971, 90 no. 42; Tóth 2011b, 127 no. 69).

<sup>42</sup> Szentléleky 1978/9; Tóth 1996/7; 2011b, 32 ff. fig. 4; summarised critically by Scherrer 2003, 73 with fn. figs. 13-14. – On the popularity of the *Isis* cult in the neighbouring *Noricum* where the Alexandrine goddess was equated with the local fertility goddess *Noreia*: Polleres 2007; Scherrer 2007; Hainzmann 2006.

<sup>43</sup> Mócsy, Szentléleky 1971, 40 nos. 71-74, pictures 57-59; Hajnóczy 1987; critically: Scherrer 2003, 75 fig. 15.

<sup>44</sup> *AE* 1947, 30 (= Mócsy, Szentléleky 1971, 86 no. 20; *RIU* I, 1; Tóth 2011b, 105 f. no. 42); *CIL* III, 13424 (= Mócsy, Szentléleky 1971, 94 no. 63; *RIU* I, 12; Tóth 2011b, 109 no. 47); Mócsy, Szentléleky 1971, 42 cat. 87; Tóth 1977. – Critically: Scherrer 2003, 66.

<sup>45</sup> Borhy, Soszartitis 1996/7; *AE* 2000, 1191; Tóth 2011b, 95 f. nos. 30-31; critically: Scherrer 2003, 69.

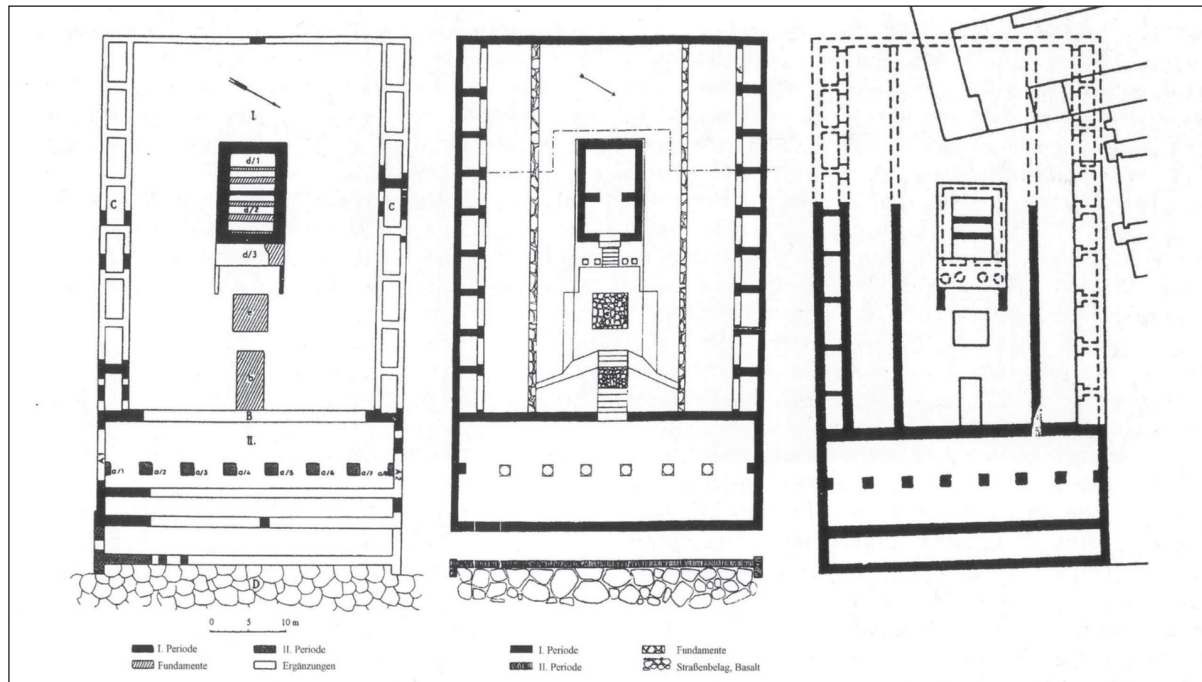


FIGURE 7. *The Temple of Isis in Savaria (Szombathely/Steinamanger, Hungary) – the different published plans. After: Scherrer 2003, 73 fig. 13*



FIGURE 8. *Votive steles to the Dii Itinerarii (left) and to the deities Itunus et Ituna from a small sanctuary at the Amber Road near Savaria (Szombathely/Steinamanger, Hungary). After: Borhy, Sosztarits 1996/7, fig. 1-2*

fore, these finds from *Savaria* fall into the group of dedications to the road and mobility deities called *Viae*, *Biviae*, *Triviae* or *Quadriviae*. Obviously, these were especially worshipped in the western Pannonian-Noric area, along the important imperial road connecting northeast Europe and the Danube area with the *Caput Adriae*<sup>46</sup>.

Indeed, a similar sanctuary of the road deities can be found at the northern end of the Roman section of the Amber Road, at the point where it reached the densely settled urban area of the upper Pannonian metropolis *Carnuntum* (fig. 9). Inside the walls of the *municipium*, a small sanctuary opened onto a forecourt that also featured a banqueting room<sup>47</sup>. Furthermore, a dedication describes the enclosed cult precinct of the *Quadriviae* that included a portico with a dining couch (*portico cum accubito*)<sup>48</sup>. Protected inside the gardens of Petronell Castle, the so-called “Tiergarten”, the group of buildings has survived in very good condition. When first uncovered in 1882, the dedications, offered to the *Quadriviae* and the local nature deity *Silvanus*, were found still standing *in situ*. The more than five dozens stone monuments give an immediate impression how, during the time of use, the inside furnishing of such sanctuaries became more and more crowded over several generations<sup>49</sup>. As it has already been observed in *Savaria*, here, too, a local deity of the Pannonian native population, *Silvanus* after the *interpretatio romana*<sup>50</sup>, was invoked together with the road deities by indigenous Celts<sup>51</sup>, Roman citizens and provincial women alike<sup>52</sup>.

#### NEW RELIGIOUS PRACTICES FROM THE EAST ALONG THE AMBER ROAD

So far, attention has been paid to the geographical mobility of civilians along the Roman Amber Road. The relevant result was that the people coming from northern Italy and identified by their *gentilicia* were usually not veterans in the newly established colonies, but civilian traders and settler families.

Military personnel, however, are the clearest group in evidence in the urban agglomeration of *Carnuntum* that had developed from a winter camp of Tiberius dated to AD 6 (*hibernia castra*)<sup>53</sup>. Since the early first century AD, this meant the continuous presence of a large number of military personnel, namely the soldiers of at least one legion and one auxiliary unit (cavalry) (fig. 9). The role of the Roman army for spreading the Roman-Mediterranean way of life and dining customs, Roman citizenship and the Latin language (*latinitas*), Mediterranean funerary and religious

<sup>46</sup> Matern 1998 esp. fig. 1; Tóth 2011a, 124 f.

<sup>47</sup> Kandler 1985; cf. Kandler *et al.* 2004, 48 f. cf. 30.

<sup>48</sup> However, since the place of discovery is uncertain, it cannot be determined with certainty whether this inscription refers to the sanctuary in the *Petronell Tiergarten* or another cult site of the road deities: CIL III, 4441; cf. Matern 1998, 615 no. 57.

<sup>49</sup> In the meantime, the neighbouring sanctuary of *Silvanus* (sanctuary Am Fischteich) has been found equally well-preserved: Stiglitz 2008. – Cf. Kandler *et al.* 2004, 48 f. fig. 31; *Carnuntum* 2011, 97 fig. 45.

<sup>50</sup> *Silvanus* as an *interpretatio romana* of the principal deity of the local Pannonian native population (*RE* Suppl. IX 1961, 515-776 s. v. Pannonia [A. Mócsy] esp. 741), in *Aquincum* 50 altars, in *Scabantia* 9, in *Savaria* 5, in *Carnuntum* 27 (*Silvanus*), 65 (*Silvanus do-*

*mesticus*) and 4 (*Silvanus Silvestris*). Cf. Weber 1994; Kandler 2005; Tóth 2011a, 124; *Carnuntum* 2011, 347 nos. 599.601-605. – Recently, however, on numerous faked dedications to *Silvanus* from *Carnuntum*: Scherrer 2008.

<sup>51</sup> *Carnuntum* 2011, 348 no. 603: *Silvano / demestico / et Maguae / sacrum / Vindus Karus / v(otum) s(olvit)*. – Cf. critically on the divine couple *Silvano et Magulae*: Scherrer 2008, 218 f.

<sup>52</sup> CIL III, 4433 (*Publius Acceptius Victorinus*); or CIL III, 11275 (*Cnaeus Veponius Lupus*). – Occasionally, Roman women are mentioned as well, for example a certain *Valeria L(ucii) f(ilia) Vitalisque et Dom(ina)*: *AE* 1950, 11.

<sup>53</sup> Velleius Paterculus, II, 110, 1.



practices is generally accepted, so there is no need to explain it further here. Corresponding phenomena have been described sufficiently also for the northern end of the Roman Amber Road, at the external frontier of the empire<sup>54</sup>.

On the Danube *limes* in *Carnuntum*, however, the return of the *legio XV Apollinaris* from the First Jewish-Roman War in AD 71 caused an expansion of the local pantheon that is significant and worth mentioning because of its speed. Until this time, the pantheon had consisted of local and imperial Roman deities. The soldiers returning from *Iudea*—where they had, according to *Flavius Josephus*, also participated in the conquest of Jerusalem<sup>55</sup>—brought new religious practices and oriental beliefs with them into the capital of *Pannonia Superior*. The altar of the unconquered Mithras, dedicated by a member of this legion, a *centurio* of Italic origin, however, one *Caius Sacidinus Barbarus*, is a prominent example of the inauguration of new religious practices<sup>56</sup>. This inscription, found in 1855 on the bank of the Danube below the *Mithraeum* I Am Stein in Bad Deutsch-Altenburg (fig. 9, right), belongs to the oldest Mithras altar from the western provinces of the empire<sup>57</sup>. Indeed, the rock sanctuary near the Danube hillside—one can assume a natural spring in the cave—had probably developed already in the first century (*Mithraeum* I)<sup>58</sup>.

Furthermore, for the years after the return of the legion from the east, a large number of legionaries are known who had grown up in Syrian towns like *Antiochia*, *Berythus*, *Cyrybus*, *Chalcis* and *Hierapolis*<sup>59</sup>. Therefore, we are not mistaken in seeing a good deal of the further pieces of evidence for eastern mystery religions<sup>60</sup> in the vicinity of the legionary camp and the auxiliary fort, the *canabae legionis*, as a result of the redeployment of these soldiers<sup>61</sup>. Furthermore, we should consider another cult building of the Iranian god of light at the western edge of the *canabae* (Petronell, Lange Gasse)<sup>62</sup>. When the *Mithraeum* III, unusually long at 23 m, was uncovered at the end of the 19th century, a large part of its original sculptural furnishings were found inside<sup>63</sup>. Moreover, a votive inscription that was placed later on an older altar with a depiction of the *Dadophores* (*Cautes* and *Cautopades*) suggests a restoration of the cult building on the occasion of the Tetrarchic conference on 11 November 308<sup>64</sup>.

On the other hand, important sanctuaries for the Syrian city deities *Doliche* and *Heliopolis* are also known from the *canabae* of *Carnuntum* (fig. 9). Particularly the built structure of a walled-in *temenos* precinct east of the camp, situated in the Mühläcker area, is well-known. Here, *Iuppiter*

<sup>54</sup> This subject summarised by: Alföldy 2005, 37 ff. (with earlier literature).

<sup>55</sup> *Tac. Ann.* 15,25-26; *Flav. Ios. Bell. Iud.* 7,3,1; 5,1-2. – Cf. Mosser 2003, 20 ff.

<sup>56</sup> *CIL* III, 4418; *CIMRM* II, 1718; Mosser 2003, 267 f. no. 204 pl. 27; *Carnuntum* 2011, 168 cat. 35 (with earlier literature).

<sup>57</sup> Clauss 1992, 157; 254; Jobst 1998, 40 f.

<sup>58</sup> *Carnuntum* 2009, 27; *Carnuntum* 2011, 164 ff.

<sup>59</sup> Mosser 2003, 29 ff. tab. 26 fig. 5; 45 ff. tab. 38.

<sup>60</sup> Summarised in: *ANRW* II 6 (Berlin/New York 1977) 583-730; Jobst 1998; Jobst 2002; Kandler *et al.* 2004; *Carnuntum* 2011, 183 ff. – On the large sanctuary on the Pfaffenberg, cf. fn. 48. – In this context, the following article has to be named due to its interesting-sounding title, although the text does not fulfil this promise, or any other: Mayer 1998.

<sup>61</sup> In Pannonia, this increase in followers of the oriental mystery religions in the Latin West in the second and

third century can be shown very clearly (cf. the erection of the *Iseum* in *Savaria*, on eastern traders in *Savaria*: Balla 1963, esp. *AE* 1962, 29; *RIUI*, 113; Mócsy, Szentéleky 1971, 119 no. 175; Tóth 2011b, 187 f. no. 140). The evidence in *Carnuntum*, however, is certainly the earliest, in most other cases, such evidence dates after the redeployment of troops caused by the Marcomannic Wars, for example the *Cohors I milliaria Hemesenorum* in the Lower Pannonian *Intercisa*: Teichner 2011, 24.

<sup>62</sup> Reichel 1895; Kandler *et al.* 2004, 49 with fn. 326-328; *Carnuntum* 2009, 27 ff.; *Carnuntum* 2011, 95.

<sup>63</sup> Schön 1988, 235 ff.; *Carnuntum* 2011, 175 ff. nos. 63-65.70-71.74.76.

<sup>64</sup> *CIL* III, 4413; *ILS* 659; *CIMRM* II, 1697-8; *Carnuntum* 2009, 75 f. no. 167; *Carnuntum* 2011, 167 no. 34.

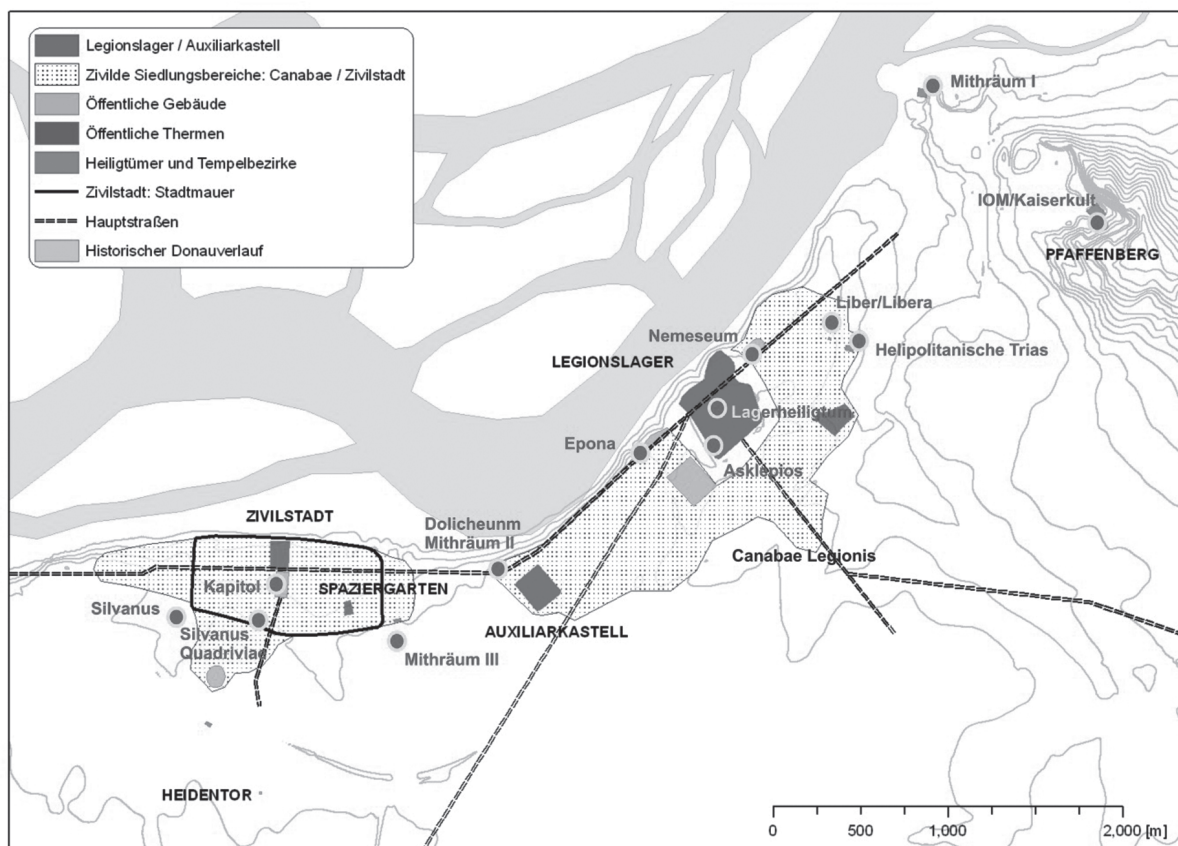


FIGURE 9. Topography of the cult places in and around Carnuntum. On the basis of *Wikipedia/Archaeotux* (GNU-licence) and *Carnuntum 2011*, 102 fig. 48

*Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus* and *Venus Victrix* were worshipped. The cult complex for the Syrian weather god *Baal Hadad* of *Heliopolis* (Baalbeck) was unique north of the Alps and probably had, due to its size, an importance that reached far beyond the provincial capital *Carnuntum*. Having developed in the first half of the second century, soon after the return of *legio XV*, the building complex consisted of two successive temple buildings, a trapezoid precinct enclosed by porticos, several halls and a bath complex<sup>65</sup>. However, not only soldiers of the *Carnuntum* military garrison, but also civilians dedicated here, for example one *Q. Pomponius Sosipater* who came without doubt from the Greek East of the empire<sup>66</sup>.

Another Syrian Baal, the celestial deity of *Doliche* (Commagene), identified with the Roman *Iuppiter*, was worshipped in the vicinity of the so-called second *Mithraeum*, west of the auxiliary

<sup>65</sup> Kandler 1981; Kandler, Zabehlicky 1986, 345 ff.; Eschbaumer *et al.* 2003 (esp. 162 f. on the dating of the foundation and the beginning of the worship of the Heliopolitan *Iuppiter* in *Carnuntum*); Gassner, Kandler 2002, esp. 147-150 fig. 1; Gassner 2005, 81 fig. 3; *Carnuntum* 2009, 278 ff.; Gassner, Steigberger 2011.

<sup>66</sup> *AE* 1982, 774; Eschbaumer *et al.* 2003, 126 fig. 7; *Carnuntum* 2009, 278 f. no. 1062; *Carnuntum* 2011, 253 no. 292. – Cf. *Lucius Pomponius Protomachus* who was governor of Upper Pannonia around AD 218 and dedicated a votive offering to *Aequitas/Eudikia* in Greek (*AE* 1903, no. 206; *Carnuntum* 2011, 291 no. 401).

fort on the *Pfaffenbrunnwiese* (fig. 9). Inside the enclosing wall, there were the actual sanctuary—with a simple *pronaos* and three-bay *cella*—and an associated club house with a connected kitchen. Due to the remarkable inventory of stone monuments, among them the marble statue of the god, the sanctuary ranks among the most important ones of this cult<sup>67</sup>. For the emergence of this new cult, there might also be another concrete connection to a dislocation of troops. At the beginning of the second century AD, the *legio X Gemina* was redeployed from Commagene to the legionary camp of *Vindobona* (Wien) less than 24 Roman miles further west. Significantly, a *centurio* of this exact legion dedicated in *Carnuntum* an altar-shaped limestone base with a cult statue to *Dolichenus*<sup>68</sup>. Until now, the construction date of the cult building of the Romanised *Baal Hadad* in *Carnuntum* has been dated only very generally to the first half of the second century<sup>69</sup>. The quoted building inscription of an *iuventus colens Jovem Dolichenum*, a youths' association of the god, attesting to the erection of a wall with a gate for the sanctuary on the *Pfaffenberg* during Hadrian's rule, is thus far the earliest piece of evidence for this oriental cult on the Danube frontier<sup>70</sup>.

In the military-oriented vicinity of *Carnuntum*, the climate seems to have been especially advantageous for the relatively early spreading of these oriental religious practices and also their expansion and pervasiveness in the public and official sector. Even very high ranking dignitaries were involved; the *legatus legionis XIII Geminae Martiae Victricis Antoniniana* dedicated to the Egyptian deities *Isis* and *Serapis*, for example<sup>71</sup>.

Even in the middle Imperial period, however, the spreading of oriental cults should not ultimately be seen as an exclusive phenomenon of the large military garrisons of the limes frontier, as a so-called *religio castrens*. It could just as well be seen to indicate the high geographical mobility of civilians in the *Imperium Romanum*. This may be shown by a final example of an archaeological feature from the southern Amber Road. In the first century, one of the most important crossings across the Drava (Drau) in the eastern Alps was secured by a military camp. After the withdrawal of these troops, the *Colonia Ulpia Traiana Poetovio* (Ptuj/Pettau) was founded<sup>72</sup>. The Roman town that extended along both banks of the Drava River, i.e. both on the eastern Panorama Hill and the western Dravsko polje (Draufeld), had been raised to the status of a colony and was characterised by a, for inner Pannonia, unusually high concentration of cult sites dedicated to Mithras, the oriental god of light.

Five *Mithraea* have been identified so far in the settlement area; the floor plans of three of them, those on the right bank of the Drava River, were completely excavated already before World War I (fig. 10)<sup>73</sup>. They have the same typical, rectangular basic form that is divided by low walls

<sup>67</sup> *Carnuntum* 2009, 18 ff.; *Carnuntum* 2011, 157 ff. no. 29; Kandler 2011. – On the interpretation of the former *Mithraeum* II as a cultic banqueting room: Gassner 2005, 81 fig. 2.

<sup>68</sup> *CIL* III, 11134; *Carnuntum* 2009, 19 no. 2 (albeit only under Emperor *Commodus*).

<sup>69</sup> Kandler 2011, 17; 32 fn. 17.

<sup>70</sup> *AE* 1936, 132; Piso 2003, 18 f. no. 3; *Carnuntum* 2011, 204 f. no. 155 – The building was erected on the *Pfaffenberg*; this should affirm the loyalty of the followers (*pro salute Caesaris*).

<sup>71</sup> Weber 1985, 649–652 pl. 12.1; *Carnuntum* 2011, 227 ff. no. 219. – *Ibid.* also further evidence of Egyptian mystery cults in *Carnuntum*.

<sup>72</sup> Summarised by Horvat *et al.* 2003.

<sup>73</sup> The existence of the *Mithraea* IV and V situated east of the Drava, on its left bank, has so far been deducted primarily from inscriptions and fragments of the sculpture furnishings. On the *Mithraeum* IV, situated on the Panorama Hill and apparently restored in Diocletian times: *CIL* III, 4039 (= *CIMRM* II, 1614); Mikl 1962; Horvat *et al.* 2003, 162. – On the *Mithraeum* V, situated at the eastern edge of the town (Rabelčja vas): Tušek 1990; 2001; Horvat *et al.* 2003, 170 with fn. 231; Horvat, Dolenc Vičič 2010, 67 no. 10. – On the *Poetovio* cult topography in general: Jerala 2009.

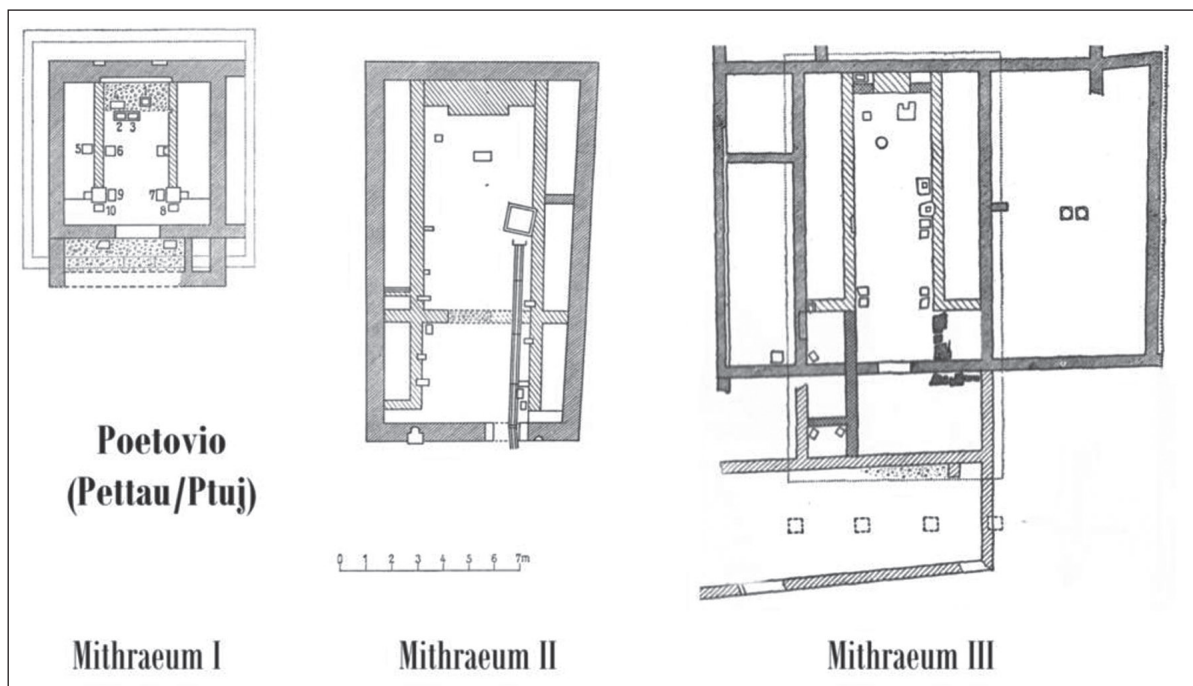


FIGURE 10. *The Mithraea 1-3 of Poetovio (Ptuj/Pettau, Slovenia): the cult places of the Illyrian customs officials.* © F. Teichner 2013, after: Abramič 1925, fig. 15; 115; 122

into a sunken central aisle and two raised benches along the side walls<sup>74</sup>. Especially in the first *Mithraeum*, situated in the western suburb *vicus Fortunae* (Spodnja Hajdina/Unter Haidin), twelve stone sculptures showing the Phrygian god in different stages of his life have been found *in situ*. The related dedications prove the existence of a large *collegium* since at least the middle of the second century AD<sup>75</sup>. The second *Mithraeum* was situated in the vicinity, also on the upper terrace above the Drava River and furnished as elaborately. In its central aisle, a sacred spring (*fons perennis*) was found, another basin stood beside the entrance door that was guarded by two lions<sup>76</sup>. In 1925, the analysis of the inventory of inscriptions and the historical implications of the general structure caused Michael Abramič to assume that this building was erected about 50 years later than the first *Mithraeum* in Severan times, as an independent additional building<sup>77</sup>. When finally, under Emperor

<sup>74</sup> Recently critically on the structural reconstruction of such buildings: Ertel 2001. Especially the *Mithraeum* II of *Carnuntum* that is by now being interpreted as a banqueting house advises caution: see fn. 75.

<sup>75</sup> Abramič 1925, 163-171 figs. 115-116; AIJ, 133 ff.; Vomer Gojkovič 2001, 111 f.; Horvat *et al.* 2003, 174 fig. 26.

<sup>76</sup> Abramič 1925, 67-73 figs. 15-17; AIJ, 139 ff.; Vomer Gojkovič 2001, 112 f.; Horvat *et al.* 2003, 174 fig. 27.

<sup>77</sup> The following observation was the cause for assuming a relative succession of the two buildings (*cf.*

fn. 83-84), something that can hardly be verified again today: "During the excavation, no fragment has been found that definitely belongs to the cult relief. Therefore, the assumption that it [the cult relief] was moved to a new *Mithraeum* (probably to the close-by so-called second *Mithraeum*) is more likely than the assumption of so thorough a destruction" ("Vom Kultrelief ist bei der Ausgrabung kein einziges sicher zugehöriges Bruchstück gefunden worden. Daher ist die Annahme, dass es in ein neues *Mithräum* (vermutlich in das nahegelegene sogenannte II. *Mithräum*) übertragen worden ist wahrscheinlicher, als jene einer so gründlichen Zerstörung") (Abramič 1925, 163).

*Gallienus*, large units (*vexillationes*) of the Dacian *legiones XIII Gemina* and *V Macedonica* were stationed in *Poetovio*, a third *Mithraeum* was established on the lower terrace above the Drava River (Zgornji Breg/Ober-Rann), possibly as an expansion of an older temple<sup>78</sup>.

In the settlement phase when the first of the sanctuaries of the oriental mystery religion developed in *Poetovio*, the actual military garrison had long been withdrawn. Instead, we encounter in the many dedications of the *Mithraea* I and II the semi-governmental officials of a customs bureaucracy, namely slaves belonging to the *conductores*, but also the managers (*vilicus*), their deputies (*vicarius*), the actual inspectors (*contrascriptor*) and the “ransackers” (*scrutarius*) as followers of Mithras<sup>79</sup>. Indeed, at the beginning of the second century, the central administration of Illyrian customs for the entire *publicum portorii Illyrici* had been established here in the valley of the Drava River<sup>80</sup>. At different stations, all transport vessels going into the Danube provinces were tarified. Besides those of the central administration, the officials of the subordinated customs posts dedicated here as well; this included, of course, the *statio* directly in *Poetovio*<sup>81</sup>, but also the customs posts on the Noric-Pannonian provincial border in *Atrans (statio Antrantinae: Trojane near St. Oswald)*<sup>82</sup>, on the Noric-Raetian customs border in *Pons Aeni (statio Enensis: Rosenheim, Germany)*<sup>83</sup> and on the Danube near *Sigindunum (statio Confluentes: Belgrad, Semlin, Serbia)*, i.e. on the border between *Pannonia Inferior* and *Moesia*<sup>84</sup>.

Furthermore, the slaves and freedmen who had come to the Pannonian Amber Road with the establishing of the customs administration and who reveal their Oriental background through their personal names—*Charidemus*<sup>85</sup>, *Hyacinthus*<sup>86</sup>, *Philo*<sup>87</sup> and *Theophilus*<sup>88</sup>, but also *Theodorus*<sup>89</sup>—ensured the spreading and shaping of the cult of Mithras in southern Pannonia and the Danube region<sup>90</sup>.

Finally, the noticeable emphasis in *Poetovio* on certain individual aspects and details of the cult, hardly found elsewhere, also points to the Mithraists’ close knowledge of the original mysteries. Iconographic and inscriptional evidence of the rock-birth (*petra genetrix*) which is central to salvation<sup>91</sup>, the god’s nature (*natura dei*)<sup>92</sup>, the everlasting spring (*fons perennis*)<sup>93</sup> and the divine transition (*transitus dei*)<sup>94</sup> has been discovered prominently in the oldest *Mithraeum*, *Mithraeum I*.

<sup>78</sup> Abramić 1925, 172-190 figs. 122-128; *AIJ*, 145 ff.; Vomer Gojković 2001, 113 f.; Horvat *et al.* 2003, 178 fn. 308. In this chronological context, the analyses of the pottery finds from the area of the *Mithraeum III* that have been recovered without recording the stratigraphical context are, unfortunately, not informative at all: Vidrih Perko/Lovenjak 2001; Žižek 2001. – A dedication from the time of *Gallienus*: *AE* 1936, 53-57 (= *AE* 1960, 351; *AIJ*, 313-317; *CIMRM* II, 1584-85.1590-96).

<sup>79</sup> Summarised by Beskow 1980; Merkelbach 1994, 170-173; cf. Winkler 1969, 147 ff. – *Mithraeum I*: *CIL* III, 14354, 27-34 (= *AIJ*, 291-298; *CIMRM* II, 1487-1507; *ILS* 4244-47; *AE* 1899, 75.77.180). – *Mithraeum II*: *CIL* III, 15184, 3-7.10a.11-14.18 (= *AIJ*, 299-310; *CIMRM* II, 1509-1577).

<sup>80</sup> DeLaet 1949, 175 ff. maps III-IV.

<sup>81</sup> *CIL* III, 14354, 27 (= *AE* 1899, 180; *AIJ*, 291; *ILS* 4244; *CIMRM* II, 1497).

<sup>82</sup> *CIL* III, 15184, 4 (= *AIJ*, 299; *CIMRM* II, 1529).

<sup>83</sup> *CIL* III, 15184, 7 (= *AIJ*, 302; *CIMRM* II, 1532).

<sup>84</sup> *CIL* III, 15184, 8 (= *CIMRM* II, 1536).

<sup>85</sup> *CIL* III, 15184, 7 (= *AIJ*, 302; *CIMRM* II, 1532).

<sup>86</sup> *CIL* III, 14354, 33-34 (= *AIJ*, 297-8; *CIMRM* II, 1501.1503).

<sup>87</sup> *CIL* III, 15184, 25 (= *AIJ*, 327).

<sup>88</sup> *CIL* III, 14052.

<sup>89</sup> *CIL* III, 14354, 27 (= *AIJ*, 291, *ILS* 4244, *AE* 1899, 180, *CIMRM* II, 1497).

<sup>90</sup> Cf. on people from the east in *Pannonia*: Gallego 1998, 34 f.; 328; 341 f.

<sup>91</sup> *CIL* III, 14354, 30 (= *AE* 1899, 75; *AIJ*, 294; *ILS* 4247; *CIMRM* II, 1490).

<sup>92</sup> *CIL* III, 14354, 29 (= *AE* 1899, 77; *AIJ*, 293; *ILS* 4245, *CIMRM* II, 1493). – Cf. *CIL* III, 15184, 5 (= *AIJ*, 300; *CIMRM* II, 1531).

<sup>93</sup> *CIL* III, 15184, 24 (= *CIMRM* II, 1533).

## CLOSING REMARK

Even if it has only been possible here to consider a small part of the rich archaeological and epigraphic sources for religious and funerary practices—we just have to think of the meaningfulness of the countless funerary reliefs besides the inscriptions, especially, for example, the impressive grave monuments of Šempeter (Sankt Peter, Slovenia)<sup>95</sup>—the particularly high geographical mobility along the Roman Amber Road should have become quite clear. It is important to emphasise that the mobility of individuals common in the globalised world of the *Imperium Romanum* has not been focused on. Therefore, paths through life like the one of *Euhodia*, who got from *Ephesos* in Asia Minor to *Celeia*<sup>96</sup>, or the one of *C. Domitius Zmaragdus*, who got from *Antiochia* to *Carnuntum*<sup>97</sup>, would have had to be analysed in more detail. The mobility phenomena shown here apply in particular to whole population and occupational groups.

The varied and cosmopolitan nature of the Roman provincial population along the Amber Road was a consequence of economic, trade and political connections in and outside the Empire. Natives and newcomers, merchants, travellers and civilians, semi-governmental officials and military personnel have been specifically identified as moving along this trade route. What is more, because archaeological and written sources have been analysed here as equally valid, it has become possible to describe also those groups of the population not reflected in the epigraphical habit. Thanks to the adoption of this interdisciplinary perspective, it has become clear that the Mediterranean, Italic south did not only play a giving role and the barbarian north did not only play a receiving one. Northern Italic merchant families organising the sales and marketing of the goods from the north can be compared with Germanic traders organising the exchange of goods as far as the Danube (Pliny, see quotation above). The funerary practices spreading north from the southern Pannonian, Illyric area (tumulus burials) can be contrasted with the spreading of weapon burials from *Germania Magna* to *Pannonia*.

A final comparison with the surrounding area of the province might show that this high diversity within religious and funerary practice was a marked characteristic of the population living in the settlements along the ancient European transcontinental road link focused on here. While the percentage of dedications to oriental deities (of the whole inventory of religious dedications) in the Roman provinces of *Noricum* and *Pannonia* during the early and middle Imperial period amounted to about 14% and 16% on average, these deities were invoked in the urban centres along the Amber Road up to twice as often 21.4 % in *Emona*, 24% in *Savaria* and 35 % in *Poetovio*. This was caused by, or a result of, the high degree of geographical mobility present in the local population<sup>98</sup>.

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<sup>94</sup> *CIL* III, 14354, 28 (= *AIJ*, 292; *ILS* 4246; *CIMRM* II, 1495). – Cf. R. Beck in *ANRW* II 17, 4 (1984) 2040 f.; Vomer Gojkovič 2001, 112.

<sup>95</sup> Summarised with earlier literature by: Kranz 1986.

<sup>96</sup> *CIL* III, 5231 (= *AIJ*, 6; *ILJug* I, 395; II 1184); Kolšek 1962/3, 489.

<sup>97</sup> *CIL* III, 14359, 2 (= *AE* 1901, 247; *ILS* 7121).

<sup>98</sup> Belak 1993, 234.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AE</i>	<i>L'Année épigraphique.</i>
<i>AIJ</i>	V. Hoffiler, B. Saria, <i>Antike Inschriften aus Jugoslawien I: Noricum und Pannonia Superior</i> (Zagreb 1938).
<i>ANRW</i>	W. Haase, H. Temporini (eds.), <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> , Berlin/New York: de Gruyter 1972 ff.
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.</i>
<i>CIMRM</i>	M. J. Vermaseren, <i>Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriacae I-II</i> (Den Haag 1956, 1960).
<i>ILJug</i>	J. Šašel, A. Šašel, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MXMXL et MXMLX repertae et editae sunt</i> , Situla 5, Ljubljana 1963. – <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMLX et MXMLXX repertae et editae sunt</i> , Situla 19, Ljubljana 1978 – <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMII et MCMXL repertae et editae sunt</i> , Situla 25, Ljubljana 1986.
<i>ILS</i>	H. Dessau, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae selectae I-III/2</i> (Berlin 1892-1916).
<i>Opera selecta</i>	J. Šašel, <i>Opera Selecta</i> . Situla 30 (Ljubljana 1992).
<i>RE</i>	<i>Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaften.</i>
<i>RIU</i>	<i>Die römischen Inschriften Ungarns.</i>

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