

# EMPEROR AVITUS IN PANNONIA?

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**Abstract:** In his paper the author examines the sources of the supposed Western Roman military expedition of Emperor Avitus in Pannonia in 455 that was thought to be the last Roman military action in the territory of the former Roman province. Analyzing the sources, he comes to the conclusion that during his short reign, Avitus had no time to visit the province and his route (*iter*) mentioned by Sidonius Apollinaris must be identified with his journey from Arelate to Rome. The Roman military action in Pannonia can probably be identified with a short demonstrative campaign in the SW region of the dioecesis (i.e. Savia) or with a legation of the Pannonian Barbarians to the emperor in Northern Italy.

**Keywords:** the history of Pannonia in 5<sup>th</sup> century, Roman Pannonia, Emperor Avitus, Sidonius Apollinaris

One of the last episodes of late Roman Pannonia was – according to several theories – that Emperor Avitus would have visited Pannonia in 455–456 AD and regained the control of the provinces after Attila's death and the battle of Nedao in 454.<sup>1</sup> Some scholars even tried to localize it exactly, and the last Roman period of the inner fort of Keszthely-Fenekpuszta had been connected to this event.<sup>2</sup> As the fort was interpreted as a supply base of Avitus they identified its final destruction layer and mass graves with an unknown siege of the Ostrogoths who arrived at the province in the following year.<sup>3</sup> Despite these opinions, in my paper I intend to deal with this supposed imperial visit, and first of all, with its sources.

<sup>1</sup> ANDERSON 1936, 168–169, n. 3; SEECK 1896, col. 2396; BUGIANI 1909, 90–91; SEECK 1921, VI, 328–329; ALFÖLDI 1925, 123; ALFÖLDI 1926, 91, 100; SCHMIDT 1927, 459; ENSSLIN 1927–1928, 153–154; SCHMIDT 1941, 262, 269; STEIN 1959, 369; MÓCSY 1962, col. 582; LOYEN 1967, 57–58, VÁRADY 1969, 291–292, 331–332, 399–402; MAENCHEN-HELFEN 1973, 144–147; BÓNA 1973, 306–307; MÓCSY 1974, 351; WOLFRAM 1979, 324; DEMOUGEOT 1979, 577; MATHISEN 1981, 237–240; ZECCHINI 1983, 297; LACAM 1986, 147–160; *Régészeti kézikönyv*, 51; BÓNA 1991, 114–115; SCHWARZ 1992, 51–52; KISS 1999, 112–117; WIRTH 1999, 47, 119; LOTTER 2003, 19–20, 106, Anm. 183, 157, Anm. 589; GRAČANIN 2006, 57; SIEBIGS 2010, 912–913; ANDERS 2010, 500–505; GRAČANIN–ŠKRGULJA 2014, 170–171; GRZYWACZWSKI 2014, 183; HUGHES 2015, 247–248; BATTAGLIA 2017, 29, 131, n. 512.

<sup>2</sup> BÓNA 1969, 279; SÁGI 1970, 156; BÓNA 1973, 306–307; MATOLCSI 1974; FÜZES 1978; BÓNA 1984, 289; MÜLLER 1987, 108–109; SÁGI 1989, 292–294; KISS 1999, 112–117; R. MÜLLER: Hunok, germánok [Huns and Germans]. In: *Évezredek üzenete a láp világából. Régészeti kutatások a Kis-Balaton területén 1979–1992. Zalaegerszeg 1996, 96; STRAUB 2002.*

<sup>3</sup> Based on the new correct evaluation of the finds the destruction layer must be connected to the incursion of the Sarmatians and Quadi in 374: O. HEINRICH-TAMÁSKA: Keszthely-Fenekpuszta zwischen Spätantike und Karolingerzeit. In: *Die Langobarden. Das Ende der Völkerwanderung. Katalog zur Ausstellung im Rheinischen Landesmuseum Bonn, 22.8.2008–11.1.2009.* Hrsg.: M. Hegewisch. Bonn 2008, 99–100; R. MÜLLER: Mikor épült a keszthely-fenekpuszta-i késő római kori erőd? (Wann würde die spätrömische Festung von Keszthely-Fenekpuszta erbaut?). *MFME* 12 (2011) 147–148; HEINRICH-TAMÁSKA–MÜLLER–STRAUB 2012, 37.

Concerning Avitus' Pannonian visit only one single written source exists, a panegyric, written and presented by Sidonius Apollinaris to the emperor, his father-in-law, on the occasion of his consulship in Rome on 1 January 456.<sup>4</sup>

**Sidonius Apollinaris** Carm. VII.588–591 *hic tibi restituet Libyen per vincula quarta, / et cuius solum amissas post saecula multa / Pannonias revocavit iter, iam credere promptum est / quid faciat bellis.*

'He shall restore Libya to thee a fourth time in chains—and when a man has recovered the lost Pannonias after so many generations by a mere march, 'tis easy to feel sure even now of what he can do by waging war' (translation by B. W. Anderson).

In the latter passage of the panegyric (lines 585–598), the poet depicted Avitus' anticipated victories, mainly a success against the Vandals.<sup>5</sup> These were illustrated by the emperor's march/route (*iter*) that recovered the province. Examining the text, it becomes clear that there was no fight and the success was achieved only (*solum*) by the route itself.

The supposed event can be dated exactly as it surely happened between the elevation of Avitus at Arelate (9 July 455) and the presentation of the panegyric (1 January 456), most probably after 21 September when Avitus entered Italy. Several written sources are available concerning his short reign in 456 (15 months: cf. Chron. Gall. 625 Chron. min. I p. 664). His Pannonian visit cannot be supposed to happen in this year because Avitus had no opportunity to leave Rome and visit Pannonia (and it should have lasted at least three months). During his reign he stayed constantly in Rome and he had to deal with several much more serious problems than Pannonia. Despite his attempts, he was never recognized by East Rome, the Vandals attacked Sicily and Corsica, there was a famine in Rome, he could hardly pay his Gaulish Barbarian mercenaries, he had to send him back. From the very beginning, he was very unpopular in Rome and in the senate that finally revolted against him.<sup>6</sup> Based on these Avitus' supposed Pannonian visit (if ever existed) should be dated between September and December 455.

The following dates are available concerning Avitus' reign.

Event	Date	Location	Source
Imperial acclamation	9 July 455	Arelate	Chron. min. I p. 304
Entering Italy	21 September 455	Rome	Chron. min. I p. 304 ( <i>Italiam ... ingressus XI k. Oct.</i> )
Consulship	1 January 456	Rome	Sid. Ap. VII.7-13, 600-602, Chron. min. I p. 247, 490, 492 <sup>7</sup>
Ricimer's successes against the Vandals	Spring of 456	Agrigentum, Corsica	Hydat. 176, 177 Chron. min. II p. 29, Sid. Apoll. Carm. II,353, 367; Prisc. Frag. 31.1
Discharging his Gaulish troops from Rome because of the famine	Summer of 456	Rome	Ioann. Ant. Frag. 202.1
Revolt, escaping from Rome to Gaul (?)	Late summer of 456	Gallia	Ioann. Ant. Frag. 202.2, Hyd. 177
Remistus' defeat	17 September 456	Ravenna	Chron. min. I p. 304
Avitus was deposed by Ricimer Avitus' death?	17 October 456	Placentia	Chron. min. I p. 304, Theoph. AM 5948 Ioann. Ant. Frag. 202.2, Chron. min. I p. 664, but according to Greg. Tur. II.11, Eugr. II.7, Jord. Get. 240, Chron. min. I p. 304, II p. 30, 186, 232 he was executed later in 457. <sup>8</sup>

The route mentioned in the text as already Anderson observed must be identified with Avitus' journey from Arelate to Rome (another is unattested before his escape from Rome),<sup>9</sup> and he entered Italy on 21 September (Auctar. Prosp. Haun. 7 Chron. min. I p. 304), therefore he could reach Rome at the beginning of October, as the earliest.<sup>10</sup> Avitus could choose a shorter and faster continental route along the seashore (cca. 880 km) and a longer

<sup>4</sup> LOYEN 1967; HARRIES 1994, 75–81; WATSON 1998; FURBETTA 2014; GRZYWACZWSKI 2014; BATTAGLIA 2017.

<sup>5</sup> For the fourth captivity, i.e. 4<sup>th</sup> Punic war see D. ÁLVAREZ JIMÉNEZ: Sidonius Apollinaris and the fourth Punic war. In: New Perspectives on Late Antiquity. Ed.: D. Hernández de la Fuente. New Castle 2011, 158–172.

<sup>6</sup> For Avitus' reign see SEECK 1896; DEMOUGEOT 1979, 576–580; MATHISEN 1981; MATHISEN 1985; LACAM 1986, 135–200; BURGESS 1987; MATHISEN 1991; HARRIES 1994, 54–81; HUGHES 2015, 226–283.

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<sup>7</sup> R. S. BAGNALL–A. CAMERON–S. R. SCHWARTZ–K. A. WORP: Consuls of the Later Roman Empire. Philological monographs of the American Philological Association 36. Atlanta/Georgia 1987, 446.

<sup>8</sup> MATHISEN 1985; BURGESS 1987; MATHISEN 1991.

<sup>9</sup> ANDERSON 1936, 168–169, n. 3.

<sup>10</sup> MATHISEN 1985, 234.

(cca. 1450 km), but more probable one was via Augusta Taurinorum–Mediolanum–Placentia–Ravenna in order to assure North-Italian capitals Mediolanum and Ravenna. Probably this time Avitus left his officer Remistus with troops (PLRE II, Remistus) at Ravenna (Chron. min. I p. 304). Both routes needed at least 45–60 days travel-time.<sup>11</sup> Why did not he leave immediately after his elevation Arelate? His only probable reason was that he needed time to organize suitable troops for his travel and he wanted to appoint new, Gaulish officials and made a pact with the king of the Goths, Theoderic II in order to avoid the Suebian danger in Hispania (Cf. Sid. Ap. Carm. VII.475–580, esp. 510–518 and 520–521, Hyd. 163, 170, 173).<sup>12</sup> During his journey Avitus could hardly make a detour in Pannonia as he had to hurry to Rome. However the senate probably acknowledged him in his absence as emperor (Hyd. 166 *a Romanis et evocatus et susceptus fuerat imperator*) (probably this date is given in Victor Tunnunensis' work: 5 August (Chron. min. II p. 186); because of his Gaulish origin Avitus remained very unpopular in Rome and in the senate as well (that is why significant Gaulish and Goth troops followed him cf. Greg. Tur. II.11, Ioan. Ant. Frag. 202).<sup>13</sup> His elevation could become complete only in Rome before the senate as the expression *praesumptus honor* mentioned in one of the continuations Prosper Tiro's Chronicon, based on the Consularia Italica (Continuatio Hauliensis Prosperi) clearly shows (Chron. min. I p. 304). Hydatius mentioned his route to Rome as follows: 163 *Romam pergit et suscipitur*. As Sidonius Apollinaris or another source omit to mention where Avitus exactly entered Italy but the suggested<sup>14</sup> route via Noricum or Pannonia must surely be excluded as a route Arelate–Noricum–Pannonia–Rome is unattested. During his route, Avitus probably stopped at Mediolanum as Lacam suggested, but a Pannonian detour seems to be improbable.<sup>15</sup>

In view of this, the emperor never visited Pannonia or any other province of dioecesis Illyricum, Avitus as Aetius' officer fought much earlier in Noricum (lines 232–233).<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, Mathisen correctly came to the conclusion that the plural *Pannoniae* used by Sidonius Apollinaris could concern the other provinces of West-Illyricum.<sup>17</sup> For instance, Savia, Noricum mediterraneum had a special role in the defence of Italy and the Alps and one of Avitus' commanders could make a detour in this direction in order to confirm the claustra Alpium that significantly weakened during Attila's Italian campaign in 452.<sup>18</sup>

Latter event could confirm the Roman authority in the region that never belonged to the Huns and local Barbarian nominally acknowledged the Roman rule (based on a new foedus?). This success could have been mentioned in the panegyric. The *revocatio Pannoniarum*, establishing the Roman rule in entire Pannonia was naturally Sidonius Apollinaris' poetice exaggeration but the use of the plural *Pannoniae* can mean that at least two provinces of dioecesis Pannonia, Savia and the Norican provinces (?) were recovered.

What could be the reasons Avitus' activity in Western Illyricum?

1. First of all, as a new emperor he had to prove his abilities as supreme commander of the Roman army.<sup>19</sup>
2. After Nedao, a power vacuum is formed in Pannonia that the Gepids in Transylvania could not and did want to fill.
3. Another factor must also be considered: Marcellinus,<sup>20</sup> comes Illyrici (PLRE II, Marcellinus 6) backed by Constantinople revolted against the western rulers after Aetius' death (Proc. Bell. Vand. I.6.7), and he did not acknowledge Avitus' reign either. Because of this fact, Avitus had to secure main continental roads leading from Italy to Constantinople.<sup>21</sup>
4. The next point is that Avitus intended to recognize his rule with East Rome. His attempts (legation: Hyd. 166, coin minting in Marcianus' name: RIC 10 (1994) 2303–2305 and p. 181), according to his propaganda were successful (Hyd. 169), but Marcianus most probably never recognized him (cf. his consulship was not recognized

<sup>11</sup> I used the Roman route planner: <http://orbis.stanford.edu>.

<sup>12</sup> LACAM 1986, 136–142; HUGHES 2015, 241–245.

<sup>13</sup> LACAM 1986, 143–146; HUGHES 2015, 247.

<sup>14</sup> BUGIANI 1909, 90–91.

<sup>15</sup> LACAM 1986, 155–156.

<sup>16</sup> GRAČANIN–ŠKRGLJIA 2014, 170.

<sup>17</sup> MATHISEN 1981.

<sup>18</sup> MAENCHEN-HELFFEN 1973, 146–147, who compared the event to Majorian's action (collecting troops) in 459 in the Danube region.

<sup>19</sup> So BUGIANI 1909, 91.

<sup>20</sup> If the *coniuratio Marcell(i)ana* in Gaul in 457 concerns his person (Sid. Ap. Ep. I.11.6) he was also suitable for reign. On the other hand, the identification is at least dubious: G. E. MAX: Political intrigue during the reigns of the Western Roman Emperors Avitus and Majorian. *Historia* 28 (1979) 225–237; R. W. MATHISEN: Resistance and reconciliation: Majorian and the Gallic aristocracy after the fall of Avitus. *Francia* 7 (1979) 597–627; ZECCHINI 1983, 295–299; MACGEORGE 2002, 28–29.

<sup>21</sup> MACGEORGE 2002, 15–67; HUGHES 2015, 248.

<sup>22</sup> MATHISEN 1981, 237–240; LACAM 1986, 148–160.

in East, never promulgated laws together, coins were not minted in eastern mints in Avitus' name). Avitus probably tried diplomatically to solve the disputes situation of Illyricum between East and West.<sup>22</sup> This could have been followed by a demonstrative campaign of a part of his army. Based on the treaty concluded in 424, realized in 437 following Valentinian's and Eudoxia's marriage (Cassiodorus Var. XI.1.9, Jord. Rom. 329), a part of West Illyricum, probably only Pannonia II came to the jurisdiction of Constantinople (cf. Attila occupied Sirmium during a war against East Rome in 441: Prisc. Frag. 11.1 and 2, Iust. Nov. XI.1–2, Hierocles Synecdemus c. XIX, Not. ep. eccl. Const. 13,848).<sup>23</sup> The Goths were settled down into Pannonia in 456 following a foedus with Marcianus in territory of Pannonia I, II and Valeria (Jord. Get. L.264, LII.268, 270, 272).<sup>24</sup> In the former passage, Jordanes geographically described Pannonia, its boundaries and cities. The author used several late antique geographic works (esp. Rav. Geogr. IV.19, Dim. prov. 18, Oros. I.2.27, Cosm. II.27), but he mentioned only nearest and the furthest cities of the province in the point of view of Constantinople, Sirmium and Vindobona: *Ornata patria civitatibus plurimis, quarum prima Syrmis, extrema Vindomina*. His description has nothing to do with the new home-land of the Goths that he described separately: 268 *qui in Pannonia sub rege Valamir eiusque germani Thiudimer et Vidimir morabantur, quamvis divisa loca, consilia tamen unita (nam Valamer inter Scarniungam et Aqua nigra fluvios, Thiudimer iuxta lacum Pelsois, Vidimer inter utrosque manebant*. Their land lay between the lacus Pelso/Balaton in Pannonia I and two rivers, the Scarniunga and the Aqua nigra in Valeria or Pannonia II (both are unidentifiable as they are not antique hydronyms, the former is clearly German name<sup>25</sup> that show the lack of Roman provincial population in Valeria). It cannot be accidental that Eugippius later localized the Goths in Pannonia inferior: Eug. v. Sev. 5.1 *Rugorum siquidem rex, nomine Flaccitheus, in ipsis regni sui coepit nutare primordiis habens Gothos ex inferiore Pannonia vehementer infensos, quorum innumera multitudo terrebat*. That is why Goths could have fought against the Sadages/Sadagarii, *qui interiorem Pannoniam possidebant* (Jord. Get. LIII.272).<sup>26</sup> Pannonia secunda was included into the Gothic rule as the easternmost Pannonian town, Bassiana was defended by the Goths against the Hun siege (LIII.272 *venientesque ad Basianam Pannoniae civitatem eamque circumvallans fines eius coepit praedare*. 273 *Quod conperto Gothi ibi, ubi erant, expeditionemque solventes, quam contra Sadagis collegerant, in Hunnos convertunt et sic eos suis a finibus inglorios pepulerunt*). The continuation of Jordanes' account dealing with the Dalmatian incursion of the Suebi is more interesting: 273 *Quiescente vero tandem Hunnorum gente a Gothis Hunumundus Suavorum dux dum ad depraedandas Dalmatias transit, armenta Gothorum in campis errantia depraedavit, quia Dalmatia Suaviae vicina erat nec a Pannonios fines multum distabat, praesertim ubi tunc Gothi residebant*. Latter passage clearly shows that the land of the Goths was in the near of Dalmatia and Suavia, that proves, originally, Savia was not included in Marcianus' foedus with the Goths<sup>27</sup> but the Hunimundus' Suebians did not live in province as the returning Suebi were defeated by the Goths by the Balaton (LIV.274) and the Danube (LV.280). Based on this fact, already Schmidt and others suggested Avitus' role in the new treaty but Jordanes did not mention the western ruler. Avitus' route mentioned by Sidonius Apollinaris cannot be identified with a legation of the Goths who would have met the emperor at Mediolanum.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, it cannot be ruled out that other Barbarians living in Noricum or Savia as the Rugians or Suebi would have intended to settle their situation with the new emperor and Avitus could have regained the control over these provinces based on a new foedus.

These Barbarians in Savia could have been the *antiqui Barbari* mentioned in Cassiodorus' *Variae* (Var. V.14.6), who were in all likelihood Germans (probably Suebi: cp. the consciously used variant of the province name

<sup>23</sup> STEIN 1914; SEECK 1921, 121–122; STEIN 1925, 354–358; ALFÖLDI 1926, 93; SCHMIDT 1941, 261–262, 305–306; MÓCSY 1962, 582; VÁRADY 1969, 308, 331–332; MÓCSY 1974, 350; DEMOUGEOT 1979, 516; WOZNIAK 1981, 351–354; *Régészeti közlöny*, 51; FITZ 1993, 1319, 1324; MACGEORGE 2002, 32–39; LOTTER 2003, 17, McEVoy 2014, 257

<sup>24</sup> ALFÖLDI 1925; ALFÖLDI 1926, 101–104; SCHMIDT 1927; ENSSLIN 1927–1928; SCHMIDT 1941, 269–270; WOLFRAM 1979, 324–325; SCHWARTZ 1992; A. KISS: *Archeologia degli Ostrogoti in Pannonia (456–473)*. In: *I goti*. Ed.: V. Bierbrauer, O. von Hessen, E. Arslan. Milano 1994, 164–169 = *Die Ostrogoten in Pannonien (456–473) aus archäologischer Sicht*. *ZalaiMúz* 6 (1996) 87–91; LOTTER 2003, 104–106; SIEBIGS 2010, 474, 911–914, Exkurs XXV; GRAČANIN–ŠKRGULJA 2014.

<sup>25</sup> P. ANREITER: *Die vorrömischen Namen Pannoniens*. *Archaeolingua SerMin* 16. Budapest 2001, 257, 7; TH. VON GRIENBERGER: *Ostgermanische Flussnamen bei Jordanes*. *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 55 (1914) 41–51, esp. 41–54.

<sup>26</sup> J. HARMATTA: *Das Volk der Sadagaren*. In: *Analecta Orientalia memoriae Alexandri Csoma de Kőrös dicata*. Hrsg.: L. Ligeti. *Bibliotheca orientalis Hungarica* 5. Budapest 1942 (1948) 17–28; J. HARMATTA: *Studies in the History and Language of the Sarmatians*. *AASzeged* 13. *Minora opera* 13. Szeged 1970, 56–57, 101, 107.

<sup>27</sup> Later, the Rugians intended to reach Italy through the Goths, i. e. on the Amber Route in Pannonia prima and Savia: Eug. v. Sev. 5. A passage of Sidonius Apollinaris and the *vita Severini* clearly show that the Goths ruled entire Pannonia prima as they attacked Norican territories: cf. Sid. Ap. II.377, v. Sev. 5, 17 (the siege of Tiburnia).

<sup>28</sup> SIEBIGS 2010, 912–913.

Savia/Suavia (i.e. land of the Suebi) in Jordanes' works and in the early medieval manuscript tradition of several other works but it is clear that they were not identical (the Goths defeated the Suebi returning from Dalmatia by the Balaton and later, Thuidimer let them go home to Suavia, i.e. North of the Balaton) and the official province name could not be Suavia (cf. Cassiodorus used always the variant Savia: IV.49, V.14.6, 15, IX.8): Jord. Rom. 218, Get. LIII.273, 274, Chron. min. I p. 539). These Barbarians recorded his earlier arrival even in the 6<sup>th</sup> century (before the Ostrogoths' rule in Italy and Savia).<sup>29</sup>

It cannot be accidental that Marcianus who intended to normalize the situation in the Danubian provinces after Nedao concluded *foedera* with the winner Gepids (Jord. Get. L.264)<sup>30</sup> and the Goths as well. It is striking that province Savia was not included in the treaty. That is why it can be supposed that the strategically important provinces remained (Noricum mediterraneum, Savia) under the control of Avitus.

Other contemporary events can show that the recovery of a part of Western Illyricum, i.e. Savia and Noricum mediterraneum/ripense cannot be excluded in this period:

1. Based on the treaty, the Goths were settled down into several provinces of West-Illyricum, i.e. in Pannonia prima, Valeria and Pannonia secunda but they avoided the provinces that were important strategically, i.e. Savia and Noricum mediterraneum.

2. Majorian collected a strong but ethnically complex army in 459 in order to regain the control over Gaul, Hispania and Africa (cf. Sid. Ap. Carm. V,472–479), but he had to fight against the revolting commander of his army, the Hun Tuldila (PLRE II, Tuldila) and his people (Carm. V,483–510).<sup>31</sup> According to Sidonius Apollinaris' remark, they came from the direction of the Danube where he lost their lords, i.e. most probably the Huns who lost their king, Ellac in the battle of Nedao in 454 (Carm. V,485–487):<sup>32</sup> *quae nuper ab Histro / rettulit indomitum solito truculentior agmen / quod dominis per bella caret*. In the description of Majorian's army the poet enumerated Huns, Suebi, Rugians, Ostrogoths, Sarmatians and Pannonians among other, fictitious or hardly known peoples. Barbarians who lived now in the territory of the former Roman province may have been called Pannonians (Carm. V,475).<sup>33</sup> Based on these two passages it seems highly likely that Majorian called these Danubian Barbarians based on foedus that could have been concluded by Avitus.

3. According to the account of the *Fasti Vindobonienses Priores 577* that used the lost *Consularia Italica* written in Ravenna, Savaria was destroyed by an earthquake 9 September 456.<sup>34</sup> The destruction had to be big enough to record it in the *Fasti* where only the activities of emperors (mainly Western), campaigns, Barbarian incursions or ecclesiastical events and interesting natural phenomena (eclipses, bigger earthquakes) were mentioned. In this case the event was placed among the records concerning Avitus' reign. Probably the same earthquake was mentioned in Eugippius' *vita Severini* in the region of Comagene (Tulln) in Noricum in a distance of approx. 100 km from Savaria (Eug. v. Sev. 2).<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, the fact that news of the catastrophe reached Noricum and Northern Italy does not mean that Savaria and Western Pannonia I would have belonged to the Roman Empire, but it clearly shows the presence of provincial population in the former Roman colony.

Coming to conclusion, Avitus had no opportunity to command personally a military action or an imperial visit in Pannonia during his short reign. The *iter* can only be identified with his route from Arelate to Rome. There was hardly any chance to regain the control over the entire territory but a smaller military action or a legation can be supposed in the autumn of 455 and as a result of this Rome recovered the SW part of the diocese, namely

<sup>29</sup> J. ŠAŠEL: *Antiqui Barbari. Zur Besiedlungsgeschichte Ostnoricums und Pannoniens im 5. und 6. Jahrhundert nach den Schriftquellen*. In: *Von der Spätantike zum frühen Mittelalter. Aktuelle Probleme in historischer und archäologischer Sicht*. Hrsg.: J. Werner, E. Ewig. Vorträge und Forschungen 25. Sigmaringen 1979, 125–139 = *Opera selecta*. Ljubljana 1992, 746–760; H. CASTRITIUS: *Antiqui Barbari. Zur Besiedlungsgeschichte Südostnoricums und Südpannioniens in der Spätantike (Ende des 4. bis Mitte des 6. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.)*. *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 95 (1995) 72–85.

<sup>30</sup> C. DICULESCU: *Die Gepiden. Forschungen zur Geschichte Daziens im frühen Mittelalter und zur Vorgeschichte des rumänischen Volkes*. Halle 1923, 101.

<sup>31</sup> LOYEN 1967, 78, n. 3; OPPEDISANO 2013, 262–263.

<sup>32</sup> MAENCHEN-HELFFEN 1973, 161–162.

<sup>33</sup> LOYEN 1967, 78–79; R. W. MATHISEN: *Catalogues of Barbarians in Late Antiquity*. In: *Romans, Barbarians, and the Transformation of the Roman World. Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity in Late Antiquity*. Eds: R. W. Mathisen, D. Shanzer. Farnham–Burlington 2011, 17–32, esp. 26–27.

<sup>34</sup> A. RADNÓTI: *Pannóniai városok élete a korai feudalizmusban [Urban life of Pannonian towns in the early Feudalism]*. *MTAK(II)* 5 (1954) 503; BÓNA 1969, 281; BÓNA 1973, 310; F. LOTTER: *Severinus von Noricum. Legende und historische Wirklichkeit. Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters* 12. Stuttgart 1976, 156–157; A. TÓTH: *A savariai földrengés [The earthquake in Savaria]*. In: *Firkák III. Fialtal római koros kutatók III. konferenciakötete*. Ed.: P. Balázs. Szombathely 2014, 321–326.

<sup>35</sup> R. HÜBL: *Römisches Tulln. Das antike Comagenis. Tulln* 2004, 68.

province Savia and Noricum mediterraneum in order to confirm the security of Italy. Another possibility is that during his route a Barbarian legation from Pannonia met the emperor in Northern Italy and they concluded some kind of foedus that was interpreted by Sidonius Apollinaris as the recovery of Pannonia. The late Roman inner fort of Fenékpuszta and its destruction has nothing to do with Emperor Avitus.

## APPENDIX

**The relevant sources**

**Sidonius Apollinaris** Carm. V.474 *Hoc totum tua signa pavet; Bastarna, Suebus, Pannonius, Neurus, Chunus, Geta, Dacus, Halanus, Bellonotus, Rugus, Burgundio, Vesus, Alites, Bisalta, Ostrogothus, Procrustes, Sarmata, Moschus post aquilas venere tuas; tibi militat omnis Caucasus et Scythicae potor Tanaiticus undae.*

**Fasti Vind. prior.** 577 Chron. min. I p. 304 *et eversa est Sabaria a terrae motu VII (scr. IV) idus Septembr. die Veneris.*

**Eugippius** v. Severini 2 *Die autem tertio, cum sacrificii vespertini sollemnitas impleretur, facto subito terraemotu ita sunt barbari intrinsecus habitantes exterriti, ut portas sibi Romanos cogere aperire velociter. Exeuntes igitur conciti diffugerunt, aestimantes se vicinorum hostium obsidione vallatos, auctoque terrore divinitus noctis errore confusi mutuis se gladiis conciderunt.*

**Hyd. Chron.** 166 Chron. min. II p. 28 *Per Avitum, qui a Romanis et evocatus et susceptus fuerat imperator, legati ad Marcianum pro unanimitate mittuntur imperii. 169 Marcianus et Avitus concordēs principatu Romani utuntur imperii.*

**Jordanes** *Get.* L.264 *Nam Gepidi Hunnorum sibi sedes viribus vindicantes totius Daciae fines velut victores potiti nihil aliud a Romano imperio, nisi pacem et annua sollemnia, ut strenui viri, amica pactione postulerunt. Quod et libens tunc annuit imperator et usque nunc consuetum donum gens ipsa a Romano suscipit principe. Gothi vero cernentes Gepidas Hunnorum sedes sibi defendere Hunnorumque populum suis antiquis sedibus occupare, maluerunt a Romano regno terras petere quam cum discrimine suo invadere alienas, accipientesque Pannoniam; quae in longo porrecta planitiae habet ab oriente Moesiam superiorem, a meridie Dalmatiam, ab occasu Noricum, a septentrione Danubium. Ornata patria civitatibus plurimis, quarum prima Syrmis, extrema Vindomina.*

LII.268 *Ergo, ut ad gentem, unde agimus, revertamur, id est Ostrogotharum, qui in Pannonia sub rege Valamir eiusque germani Thiudimer et Vidimir morabantur, quamvis divisa loca, consilia tamen unita (nam Valamer inter Scarniungam et Aqua nigra fluvios, Thiudimer iuxta lacum Pelsois, Vidimer inter utrosque manebant), contigit ergo, ut Attilae filii contra Gothos quasi desertores dominationis suae, velut fugacia mancipia requirentes, venirent ignarisque aliis fratribus super Valamer solum inruerent.*

270 *Post tempus ergo non multum rex Valamir eiusque germani Thiudemir et Vidimir, consueta dum tardarent dona a principe Marciano, quae ad instar strenuae acciperent et pacis foedera custodirent, missa legatione ad imperatorem ...*

LIII.272 *Postquam ergo firma pax Gothorum cum Romanis effecta est, videntes Gothi non sibi sufficere ea quae ab imperatore acciperent simulque solitam cupientes ostentare virtutem, coeperunt vicinas gentes circumcirca praedari, primum contra Sadagis, qui interiorem Pannoniam possidebant, arma moventes. Quod ubi rex Hunnorum Dintzic filius Attilae cognovisset, collectis secum qui adhuc videbantur quamvis pauci eius tamen sub imperio remansisse Vltzinzures, Angisciros, Bittugures, Bardores, venientesque ad Basianam Pannoniae civitatem eamque circumvallans fines eius coepit praedare. 273 Quod conperto Gothi ibi, ubi erant, expeditionemque sol-*

*ventes, quam contra Sadagis collegerant, in Hunnos convertunt et sic eos suis a finibus inglorios pepulerunt, ut iam ex illo tempore qui remanserunt Hunni et usque actenus Gothorum arma formident. Quiescente vero tandem Hunnorum gente a Gothis Hunnumdux Suavorum dux dum ad depraedandas Dalmatias transit, armenta Gothorum in campis errantia depraedavit, quia Dalmatia Suaviae vicina erat nec a Pannonios fines multum distabat, praesertim ubi tunc Gothi residebant.*

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