

PÉTER KOVÁCS

CHRISTIANITY AND THE GREEK LANGUAGE IN PANNONIA

Summary: In this paper the author studies the relationship of Christian communities in Pannonia. On the basis of literary (esp. Victorinus of Poetovio) and epigraphical sources it can be stated that the first communities were of Greek origin. The knowledge of Greek can be pointed out in Latin inscriptions as well. Especially the case of Sirmium was studied. In the present paper the author reinterpreted a Greek and a Latin inscription from Sirmium and Savaria as Christians.

Key words: Christianity, Epigraphy, Pannonia.

It is a well-known fact that beside the Jews (*ecclesia ex circumcisione*) Greeks (or Greek-speaking Orientals) (*ecclesia ex gentibus*) were in majority among the first Christians of the Roman Empire up to the middle of the 3rd century. It is proven by our literary sources (esp. the Acts of the Apostles, the Letters, the Apocalypse, the works of the Greek fathers and the early martyr-acts) and our archaeological-epigraphic finds (cf. Abercius' or Pectorius' inscriptions¹ or the loculi of the 3rd c. popes in the San Callisto) as well.² A similar situation was supposed in Pannonia as well.³ In my paper I wish to examine our epigraphic and literary sources concerning the Pannonian Christian communities and the Greek language. First I shall focus my attention on the literary sources.

Now it can be excluded that Paul's or Titus' evangelisation reached Pannonia (Illyricum and Dalmatia are mentioned in Rom. 15, 19 and II. Tim. 4, 10). All the bishop lists from Pannonia are legendary and coming from the 9th–11th centuries but

¹ A. FERRUA–D. BALBONI: *Epitaphium Abercii*. Fano 1953, *Le iscrizioni dei Cristiani in Vaticano*. Materiali e contributi scientifici per una mostra epigrafica. Città del Vaticano 1997, 220–222, Nr. 3.2.3–4, O. POHL: *Das Ichtyos Monument von Autun*. Berlin 1980, M. GUARDUCCI: Nuove osservazioni sull' iscrizione eucaristica di Pektorios. *Rendic. Della Pont. Acad. Rom. Di Archeologia* 1947–1949, 243–.

² P. TESTINI: *Archeologia christiana*. Bari 1980², 310–313, 363–365, 519–521, *Le iscrizioni dei Cristiani in Vaticano*. Materiali e contributi scientifici per una mostra epigrafica. Città del Vaticano 1997, 45–52.

³ NAGY T.: *A pannoniai kereszténység története a római védőrendszer összeomlásáig*. DissPann II/12. Budapest 1939, 30–35, 57–61, 217, A. MÓCSY: *Pannonia and Upper Moesia*. London–Boston 1974, 323, 325, *PWRE* IX. Supplementum. Stuttgart 1962, 750–751.

the names mentioned as bishops are Greek ones: Andronicus, Epaenetus.⁴ Our first sure data are from the middle of the 3rd century. Victorinus wrote on the Pannonian credo (Apoc. 11, 5) *ut didicimus*. He could learn this symbol already in Poetovio (see below). In the acts of Irenaeus it is mentioned that he grew up as a Christian (*passio* Iren. 3): *Deum habeo quem a prima aetate colere didici*.⁵ The first Pannonian martyr could be Eusebius, the bishop of Cibalae who was most probably executed between 257–260. The term *persecutio superior* in Pollio's *passio* (c. 3 – ed. Ruinart p. 436) may refer to the persecutions under Valerianus. The evangelisation came most probably from the East and spread first along the imperial road Sirmium-Poetovio but another way could be the Amber road from Aquileia.⁶ Bigger early Christian communities can be only found in South-Pannonia.

On the basis of their acts the first Christians in South-Pannonia were in majority Greek-speaking as the names of the martyrs and bishops (deacons) show⁷: e.g., Anastasia, Anemius, Attalus, Basilla, Demetrius, Eraclius Eusebius, Eutharius, Hermogenes (?),⁸ Irenaeus, Macarius (CIL III 10235: *diaconus*), Nicostratus, Photinus, Sebastianus (?),⁹ Sustratus, Synerotas (cf. the first chapter of his *passio*: *Acta Sancti Februarii III. Antverpiae 1658, 365, Acta mar. Sinc. Ratisbonae 1859, 517–518: civis Graecus*), Timotheus (cf. the ILJ 3031 funerary inscription from Sirmium (bis))¹⁰. It cannot be accidental that the western boundary of Arianism was Pannonia which fact also proves that the leadership of the Christian communities were Greek-speaking who understood the new teaching.¹¹ A kind of bilingualism must be supposed here. The *Altercatio Heracliani laici cum Germinio episcopo Sirmiensi* shows where in the first chapter (ed. Caspari p. 133, 9–10) Heraclianus told the bishop that he knew what *homousion* was because he understood Greek as well (*Tu ... et Graece nosti dicere*).¹² Another good example is Photinus' case. The exiled Sirmian bishop who came from Ancyra, Galatia (6th anathema of the in 344 (ed. Hahn Nr. 159, 194: Ἀγκυρογαλάτοϛ, Soz. Hist. Ecc. II, 18, 16: γένος τῆς μικρᾶς Γαλατίας) spoke Latin and published his work (Κατὰ πασῶν αἱρέσεων) in Greek and Latin as well (Soz.

⁴ J. ZEILLER: *Les origines chrétiennes dans les provinces danubiennes*. Paris 1918, 31, NAGY, op. cit., 22–23, Synax. Eccl. Const. (Ed. H. DELEHAYE) 689–690, 785, 855, Men. Bas. II. Imp. (P. G. 117), 516, Synax. Alex. II. (Ed. J. FORGET, *CShrO* 90), 133–134, Syn. Aeth. (P. O. 17), 313–315, FURLATI: *Illyricum sacrum* I. Venetiis 1780, 248, D. GÁSPÁR: *Episcopi Pannoniae. RÖ* 17–18, 1989–1990, 99–105.

⁵ Th. RUINART: *Acta martyrum sincera*. Ratisbonae 1859, 433, *Acta Sancti*. Novembris II/1. Bruxelles 1894, 40.

⁶ NAGY, op. cit., 13–30, *Pannonia régészeti kézikönyve*. Budapest 1990, 261, MÓCSY, op. cit., 751.

⁷ NAGY, op. cit., 30–35, 57–61, 217, A. MÓCSY: *Pannonia and Upper Moesia*. London–Boston 1974, 323, 325. It is also important that Orientals could have Latin names as well as in the case of Victorinus: *Pannonia régészeti kézikönyve*. Budapest 1990, 261, j. 8.

⁸ ZEILLER, op. cit., 75–79.

⁹ ZEILLER, op. cit., 146–147.

¹⁰ TÓTH E., Ókeresztény ládikaveretek Ságvárról – Altchristliche Kästchenbeschläge aus Ságvár. *FolArch* 44, 1995, 107–150, 140–148.

¹¹ NAGY, op. cit., 93–94.

¹² Germinius was sent by Constantius II from Cyzicus to Sirmium (cf. Athan. Hist. Arian. 74, 5=MSG 25, 748b): NAGY, op. cit., 130.

Hist. Ecc. II, 30, 46, cf. Vincent. Lerin. Commonitorium 11: ἐν φυγῇ τε διάγων τοῦ λοιποῦ λόγους συνέγραψεν ἀμφοτέραις γλώσσαις, ἐπεὶ μηδὲ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς ἦν ἄμιρος).

The *fragmenta Ariana* most probably were also written in Sirmium (or rather translated from Greek). This work shows very strong Greek-Oriental influence (liturgical as the translation of the in manupositione, oblatio or the use of the Apost. Const. VIII).¹³

It is also noteworthy to mention the Arian bishops', Valens' and Ursacius' case. They also had to be bilinguals because they played important (sometimes leading) roles in Eastern and Western *concilia* as well. They took part in the following councils: Eastern: 335 Tyrus, 336 Constantinople, 338 Constantinople, 339–341 Antioch, 341 Constantinople, 343 Serdica. Western: 342 Aquileia, 346–347 Mediolanum, 354 Arelate, 355 Mediolanum, 356 Baeterrae, 358–359 Ariminum. Illyricum: 348–349, 351, 357, 358–359 Sirmium, 366 Singidinum. After the council of Tyrus in 335 Valens and Ursacius were among the members of the fact-finding committee in Mareotis against Athanasius.¹⁴ They were most probably the composers of the 2nd Sirmian *symbolum* in 357 which was originally written in Latin, later translated into Greek (Athan. De syn. 28).¹⁵ Most important is that these people understood Greek but they had to use the Latin because their congregations spoke Latin (cf. the Latin *Fragmenta Ariana*).

On the other hand, it is clear that the churches were Latin-speaking from the very beginning. The best example can be Victorinus' case who was the bishop of Poetovio in the 2nd half of the 3rd century and Hieronymus described him that *non aequae Latine ut Graece noverat*, (Hier. De vir. ill. LXXV) but his works were written in Latin.¹⁶ *Unde opera eius grandia sensibus viliora videntur compositione verborum*. What does the term *compositio verborum* mean? In his works several *Graecanica phenomena* (esp. in his use of words: e.g., *thronus* in the *De fabrica mundi*, *solium* in the *Commentarius* and other Greek words: as *allophylus*, *anastasis*, *cata Ionnaem*, *crystallus*, *hagios* (beside the Latin *sanctus*; Apoc. 3), *parasceue*, *tetras* (he used this Greek word first among the Latin Christian authors¹⁷)) can be observed and he used the works of the Greek ecclesiastic authors.¹⁸ He used often the Ep. ad Heb. which was canonized in this period (before the 4th c.) only in the East.¹⁹ It is obvious that in his work he used a Greek text of the Revelations as well, which is the only reason that he variously cited the text because of the translation from the Greek (e.g., *θρόνος solium* (44, 6; 46, 12) or tribunal (50, 2; 56, 10; 60, 4), *resurrectio prima* (140, 3) or

¹³ K. GAMBER: Die lateinischen liturgischen Quellen Illyriens vom 4. bis zum 6. Jahrhundert. In: *Sirmium* IV. Beograd 1982, 77–79.

¹⁴ NAGY, op. cit., 97.

¹⁵ NAGY, op. cit., 142–143, j. 142–143.

¹⁶ The Graecism can be pointed out everywhere in his works NAGY, op. cit., 35–37, DULAHEY, op. cit., 13–15 (in his earlier *De fabrica mundi* better than in the Comm. Apoc.).

¹⁷ DULAHEY, op. cit., 226–228.

¹⁸ CSEL 49 (1916), p. XXX, H. TURNER: An exegetical fragment of the third century. *JThS* 5, 1903–1904, 220–, DULAHEY, op. cit., 278–299.

¹⁹ DULAHEY, op. cit., 73–74, 370.

prima anastasis (144, 10)).²⁰ In his works the influence of the works of Iustinus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Irenaeus²¹, Hippolytus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origenes can be pointed out.²² On the other hand, he used the works of Latin authors as well: e.g., Tertullianus, Minucius Felix, Cyprianus, Novatianus, Pseudo-Cyprianus.²³

We have an exceptional possibility to study a Pannonian church, the church of Poetovio on the basis of Victorinus' works.²⁴ 1. It is also noteworthy to examine the Pannonian *symbolum* in Latin preserved in Victorinus' Comm. Ap. XI, 1 which Victorinus also learned (*ut didicimus*).²⁵ The credo was influenced by the Eastern *symbola* and it was probably originally written in Greek but already in the 2nd half of the 3rd c. its Latin version was used and remained. Especially the formulae *huius filius ... factus homo*²⁶ and *in caelis cum corpore a Patre receptus* (cf. Iren. Haer. 1, 10, 1, Epiph., 42) came from the East, most probably from Antioch.²⁷

2. The liturgical calendar also shows ancient Oriental origins.²⁸ E.g., the passion was on the 23rd of March and Easter was on the 25th of March (VIII Kal. Apr.) which could come from Asia Minor. Christmas was on the 25th of December which date occurs first in Hippolytus' works.

3. The calendar and the order of the fast (*statio, ieiunium, superpositio*) also has Eastern, most probably Syrian (from Antioch?) origin.²⁹ The days of the fast were Wednesday (*tetras*), Friday (*parasceue*) and Saturday. The last one can be the influence of an Eastern (Didasc. 21, 93–94) tradition or a local Jewish tradition as well.³⁰

Another fact is that Poetovio was an important centre of the Greek inscriptions in Pannonia (CatNr. 58–64). It can only be explained with the fact that the *colonia* was the centre of the *publicum portorium Illyrici* and in the office of the procurator several Greek-speaking slaves and *liberti* served.³¹

These data are not attested in our epigraphic sources. Among the numerous Christian inscriptions from Pannonia there are very few which were written in Greek.³² In the *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* the following inscriptions (with the exception of the magical gems and curse tablets) can be connected to Christianity: CatNr: 18, 35, 38, 52, 70, 72, 102, 109, 112, 121, 122, 124, 129, 132–137?, 138, 139, 140. Among these the only stone inscriptions are: CatNr. 70, 102, 129, 132–137?. The only exception can be SW-Pannonia, the late Roman *Pannonia Secunda*,

²⁰ DULAÉY, op. cit., 87–88.

²¹ There is no evidence that Victorinus would have used a Latin translation of Irenaeus, he used rather the original Greek text: DULAÉY, op. cit., 286–288.

²² DULAÉY, op. cit., 278–299.

²³ DULAÉY, op. cit., 300–307.

²⁴ DULAÉY, op. cit., 221–233.

²⁵ NAGY, op. cit., 33, 35, 37, DULAÉY, op. cit., 231–233.

²⁶ J. N. D. KELLY: *Early Christian creeds*. Oxford 1972³, 195.

²⁷ DULAÉY, op. cit., 232, 370.

²⁸ DULAÉY, op. cit., 225–226, 370.

²⁹ DULAÉY, op. cit., 226–231.

³⁰ DULAÉY, op. cit., 228–231.

³¹ DOBÓ Á.: *Publicum portorium Illyrici*. DissPann II/16. Budapest 1940, 165, 173–176, Nr. 32–54.

³² NAGY L., *Pannonia sacra*. in: Szent István Emlékkönyv I. Budapest 1938, 29–148, 100–110.

esp. Sirmium. Here, a great number of Greek inscriptions were found (among the 113 published inscriptions of Sirmium there are 9 in Greek (CatNr. 129–137)).³³ This ratio (almost 8 %) is much higher than the Pannonian average. But this ratio is much lower if we consider the fact that most of the 88 Christian inscriptions of Sirmium are not included.³⁴ These very fragmentary Christian inscriptions are almost all marble funerary inscriptions from the Christian cemeteries (of St. Synerotas or Irenaeus) of the *colonia*: CIL III 6446=10238–6449, 10231–10240, 14340^{2–7}, 15136², ILJ 3021–3055, 3057–3068, 3071, 3073–3079, 3081–3089, AĖp 1986, 601–602; 1996, 1256; N. Duval, “Ville imp  riale” ou “capitale”? Corso di cultura sull’ arte ravennate e bizantina 26, 1979, 83–84, Roman imperial towns and palaces in Serbia. Belgrade 1993, 349, Nr. 156. In this case the average is 4,545 % of the 198 Sirmian inscriptions which is also higher than elsewhere in Pannonia.³⁵

Basilianus’ funerary inscription is exceptional (CatNr. 129=ILJ 3021) because he was most probably a Syrian wandering προ[γμα]τευτης who died in Sirmium in 352.³⁶ The very fragmentary Greek inscriptions cannot be interpreted they have no exclusively Christian character (Christogrammata, cross, Christian expression) but the CatNr. 132–137 inscriptions are made of marble and they can be dated to the 4th–5th centuries. Their findspot is also noteworthy. They were found in the area of the Eastern (Christian) cemetery of the *colonia* (Srijemska str. 72 (CatNr. 137), 89 (CatNr. 133), 95 (CatNr. 135, 136)).³⁷ Together with the Greek inscriptions several clearly Christian (Christogram: ILJ 3061, the word *indictio*: ILJ 3064, *memoria*: ILJ 3062) Latin funerary inscriptions were found in Srijemska str. 95 (property of P. G  tzinger) in 1882 (VHAD 10, 1908–9, 202–203, Nr. 436–441=ILJ 3060–3065).³⁸ The only inscription which has to be interpreted here is the CatNr. 135 fragmentary marble tablet with the following text (*Fig. 1*):

[- - -]TL[- - - | - - -]ONTE[- - - | - - -]ΩANNA[- - -].

In my opinion the letters ΩANNA in the 3rd line cannot be completed but as the Christian name Ἰωάννα. The name Iohanna/Iohannes was frequently used by the

³³ There is another lost fragmentary Greek inscription but unfortunately, its text was not described: VHAD 6, 1884, 64, P. MILOSEVIĆ: Earlier archaeological activity in Sirmium. in: *Sirmium* II. Beograd 1971, 7.

³⁴ Some of them are published in Mirković’s corpus as well. These are: CIL III 10234 =Nr. 58, ILJ 3022= Nr. 59, 3024, Nr. 60, 3025= Nr. 61, 3023= Nr. 62, CIL III 14340⁵= Nr. 63, ILJ 3035= Nr. 64, 3056= Nr. 65, 3052= Nr. 67, 3033= Nr. 68, 3043= Nr. 71, CIL III 10231=Nr. 45.

³⁵ The beneficiary altars from Sirmium are not included: AĖp 1994, 1470–1478. New inscriptions: AĖp 1998, 1051–1054.

³⁶ Th. MOMMSEN: *Bullettino dell’Istituto* 1868, 143, F. KENNER, *MZK* 14, 1869, 42, A. WILHELM: *Bulletin de l’Institut Arch  ologique Bulgare* 16, 1950, 45, R. NOLL: *Vom Alterum zum Mittelalter. Sp  tantike, altchristliche, V  lkerwanderungszeitliche und Fr  hmittelalterliche Denkm  ler*. Katalog der Antikensammlung I. Wien 1974., 32, Nr. 5, Abb. 25, Nr. 410, BE 1963, 36, ILJ 3021. The Savarian pictores pelegriini (cf. RIU 77) could be similar wanderers (but craftsmen).

³⁷ VHAD 8, 1905, 101–102, Nr. 186–189, 9, 1906–7, 103, Nr. 190

³⁸ V. POPOVIĆ: A survey of the topography and urban organization of Sirmium in the late empire. in: *Sirmium* I. Archaeological investigations in Syrmian Pannonia. Beograd 1971, 122–123, P. MILOSEVIĆ: Earlier archaeological activity in Sirmium. in: *Sirmium* II. Archaeological investigations in Syrmian Pannonia. Beograd 1971, 7, id., *Topografija Sirmijuma*. Novi Sad 1994, 47, Nr. 67.

Christians in the Danubian provinces as well.³⁹ It occurs several times in Dalmatia (CIL III 9551, 9593, 9594, 12873, 14903¹) and in Pannonia (CIL III 14354¹⁸) as well.⁴⁰ A Iohannes could be the bishop of Siscia in the council of Salona in 530.⁴¹ The most important Dalmatian inscription is the epitaph of Iohanna from Salona who was *abtissa* and [*civis*] *Sermenses* (!) and died *die Veneris IIII Idus Maias indictione qu[un]ta* or *qu[ar]ta decima* (probably in 506 or 551 or 612) (CIL III 9551+ p. 2139, 2328¹²⁶=ILCV 1653=AÉp 1976, 522).⁴²

On the basis of the numerous Latin Christian inscriptions of the town it is important to study its onomastic material.⁴³ Despite of the very fragmentary inscriptions it is clear that the presence of Greek-speaking elements can be pointed out as well. These are: CIL III 10231: Aurel. Dorot[hea], 10232: Aurelia Aminia⁴⁴, Synerotas, 10235: Macarius, [Ge]rontia, 10233: Artemidora, Synerotas, 14340²: Synerotas, ILJ 3031: Timotheus (bis), 3082: [As]terius, Irenaeus: N. Duval, *Corso di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina* 26, 1979, 83–84. Several times the Greek martyrs were mentioned or the Greek names were together with the Latin ones as Aminia with Ursicina and Fl. Sanctus, Artemidora with Desiderius and Fortunatus. These data show that the first generation of the Christians was in majority Greek (and Oriental) but after Constantine's rule the congregation of the Sirmian church was Latin-speaking with a Greek-speaking minority. Our onomastic material concerns already this period. It is noteworthy here to mention the CatNr. 70=CIL III 3986 stone inscription from Siscia which is a Greek sentence written in Latin characters: *Ianuaris zaesis*.

Beside the Greek- and Latin-speaking population the presence of the Barbarians in the 5th–6th centuries must be considered as well. It is well known that the Goths ruled *Pannonia Secunda* between 456/7–473 and 504–535 and the Gepidae between 474–504 and 535/536–566.⁴⁵ German population with their own Arian bishops as Trasarich (Chron. Min. II, 212) has to be supposed in the town as well.⁴⁶ This population was explicitly mentioned in an edict of Theoderich mentioned by Cassiodorus (Var. III, 24): *Universis Barbaris et Romanis per Pannoniam constitutis* (cf.

³⁹ I. KAJANTO: *Onomastic studies in the early Christian inscriptions of Rome and Carthage*. Helsinki 1963, 95, *Onomasticon provinciarum Europae Latinarum* II. Ed. B. LÖRINCZ. Wien 1999, 223.

⁴⁰ G. ALFÖLDY: *Die Personnamen in der römischen Provinz Dalmatia*. *Beiträge zur Namenforschung*. Neue Folge. Beiheft 4. Heidelberg 1969, 222.

⁴¹ ZEILLER, op. cit., 139.

⁴² A. DOBÓ: *Inscriptiones extra fines Pannoniae-Daciaeque repertae ad res earundem provinciarum pertinentes*. Budapest 1975, Nr. 250, M. MIRKOVIĆ: *Sirmium – its history from the I century to 582 A. D.* in: *Sirmium I*. Archaeological investigations in Sirmian Pannonia. Beograd 1971, 57, n. 336a, B. GABRICEVIĆ: Question de la datation du sarcophage de l'abbesse Jeanne. In: *Disputationes Salonitanae* 1970. Split 1970, 96–101, TÓTH E.: Sirmiumi úrmérték Tarjánból – Spätantikes Hohlmaß aus Tarján. *KEMMK* 6, 1999, 213–214.

⁴³ L. BARKÓCZI: The population of Pannonia from Marcus Aurelius to Diocletian. *Acta ArchHung* 16, 1964, 285, 352, Nr. 169.

⁴⁴ BARKÓCZI, op. cit., 305.

⁴⁵ MIRKOVIĆ, op. cit., 48–52, *Magyarország története* I. Budapest 1984, 288–292, 295, 299, 308–309, H. WOLFRAM: *Geschichte der Goten*. München 1990, 321–335, 397–400.

⁴⁶ On Germanic finds from the region: S. ERCEGOVIĆ-PAVLOVIĆ: An Eastern Germanic grave from Mačvanska Mitrovica. In: *Sirmium IV*. Beograd 1982, 14–27, V. POPOVIĆ: Topography and urban organisation. In: *Sirmium I*. Beograd 1971, 130–131.

another place concerning Dalmatia and Savia (Var. IX, 8): *universis Gothis sive Romanis*).⁴⁷ Heruli were also allowed by Iustinianus to settle down in Pannonia II after 536 (Proc. B. Goth. III, 34, 37, Men. Fr. 9 EL p. 443).⁴⁸ Barbarians could become Sirmians as soldiers, *foederati* as well. 4. Sirmium became imperial town in the 4th century and according to the NotDig. (Occ. XXXII, 49, 50, 5) it was the garrison of the *milites Calcarienses, ala Sirmiensem* and a part of the *classis I Flavia Augusta* and the seat of the *magister militum per Illyricum*.⁴⁹ It is not necessary to mention the barbarisation of the late Roman army. These elements can hardly be found in the epigraphic material of Sirmium. The only inscription which bears a German name is the CIL III 6449=VHAD 10, 1908–1909, 238–239, Nr. 388 with the following inscription:

[- -]A rquiescit / [- -]otgarius / [- -].

The name [- -]otgarius is obviously the German name Otgarius (SS rer. Ger. 7, a. 847, p. 36, 29; 857, p. 47, 22, SS rer. Merov. 5, p. 203, 25) or [R]otgarius (SS rer. Merov. 5, p. 199, 88) and on the basis of the palaeography the fragment can be dated to the 5th–6th centuries.

The presence of the Greek-speaking element in Sirmium is also connected to the event that the *colonia* became an imperial capital in the 4th c. which could attract them as well. We must also consider the fact that Pannonia II became part of the Eastern Roman empire in 427 (Chron. Min. II p. 76) (officially in 437 (Cass. Var. XI, 1, 9)).⁵⁰ It is noteworthy that Sirmium and Bassiana are mentioned in Hierocles' Synecdemus.c. XIX (ed. Burckhardt 657) and Bassiana in Iustinian's Novellae (Cod. Iust. Nov. 11: *secundae pars Pannoniae quae in Bacensi est civitate*). In this edict in 535 the emperor ordered this area under the authority of the archbishop of *Iustiniana Prima* (cf. Nov. CXXXI from 541).⁵¹ The latest Pannonian inscription is the Sirmian tile Greek inscription (CatNr. 138) which is a prayer against the Avarians and probably can be dated to the last Avarian siege of the town between 579–582.⁵² We cannot forget the fact that the Roman province was given up finally in 582. However, on the basis of the inscriptions from the latest period of the city the use of the Latin language did not cease to exist but it is clear that Greek became more and more important. The funerary inscriptions of the refugees and other Sirmians from Salona which on the basis of its Latin Christian inscriptions (the ratio of the Greek inscriptions is

⁴⁷ J. FITZ: *Die Verwaltung Pannoniens in der Römerzeit* III. Budapest 1994, 1405–1406, Nr. 1059–1061.

⁴⁸ WOLFRAM, op. cit., 399, ZEILLER, op. cit., 577, *Szent István emlékkönyv* I. Budapest 1938, 166, P. LAKATOS: Quellenbuch zur Geschichte der Heruler. *ActaAnt et Arch* 21, 1978, 98, 102.

⁴⁹ MIRKOVIĆ, op. cit., 44.

⁵⁰ A. MÓCSY: *Pannonia and Upper Moesia*. London–Boston 1974, 349–350, I. BÓNA: *Das Hunnenreich*. Budapest 1991, 50, A. ALFÖLDI: *Die Untergang der Römerherrschaft in Pannonien* II. Berlin–Leipzig 1926, 91–97.

⁵¹ *Szent István emlékkönyv* I. Budapest 1938, 156, ZEILLER, op. cit., 147–148.

⁵² The Gepida and Goth rule must be mentioned again as well.

about 10 %)⁵³ was also Latin-speaking in the late Roman period as well as still in Latin: CIL III 9551, 9576, ILCV 118.⁵⁴

It is also noteworthy to study the CIL III 13382=Kovács, op. cit., CatNr. Nr. 102=RIU S 263 gravestone from Rákospalota where at the end of the Latin inscription the formula Φ(ώς) Ζ(ωή) can be seen (Fig. 2).⁵⁵ The inscription was erected by her husband Aurelius Propincus and her mother Fl(avia) Cara to Fl(avia) Cal[v]ena nata Ulmo. There are three possibilities to identify the place-name Ulmus. The first is a small *statio* on the Amber Road between Savaria and Scarbantia (Tab. Peut. Seg. IV).⁵⁶ There is another Ulmus in Pannonia which was a *vicus* or *statio* or *mansio* along the imperial road between Sirmium (XXVI MP from the *colonia*) and Cibalae (It. Ant. 131, 3; 232, 4; 261, 2; 267, 1, 268, 3, It. Hier. 563, 4, Tab. Peut. Seg. VI).⁵⁷ The 3rd was a *mutatio* between Serdica and Naissus (It. Hier. 566, 3).⁵⁸ Kuzsinszky and Nagy identified her birth-place with the *vicus* in *Pannonia Inferior*, Graf and Anreiter without any evidence with the *statio* on the Amber Road.⁵⁹ On the basis of the palaeography (e.g., use of ligatures) and the form of the gravestone as a rectangular slab without frame or ornament the inscription cannot be dated later than the 2nd half of the 3rd–1st half of the 4th century.⁶⁰

Aurelius Propincus was the soldier of the *legio II adiutrix pia fidelis*. The legion had these honorific titles still under Claudianus' reign in 270: *leg. II adi. VI p. VI. f. constans Claudiana*⁶¹ (CIL III 3521).⁶² His wife and her mother came from Ul-

⁵³ E.g. ILJ 2245–2258, 2270–2278, 2354–2569: the Greeks: 2245, 2248, 2258, 2363, 2376, 2385, 2399, 2417, 2426, 2438, 2450, 2454, 2457, 2459–2460, 2466, 2473, 2475, 2496, 2531, 2534, 2552, 2554, 2562. J. J. WILKES: *Dalmatia*. London 1969, 427–435.

⁵⁴ Cf. CIL III 9515.

⁵⁵ NAGY T.: Az aquincumi kereszténység egy eddig félreismert emléke (Tanulmányok Pannonia kereszténységének történetéhez II). – Un monument méconnu du christianisme d'Aquincum (Études sur le Christianisme de Pannonie, II). *ArchÉrt* 1944–1945, 266–282, GÁSPÁR, op. cit., 27–28, Nr. 4.II-f. The inscription is refound in the Children's Center at Fót during the work of *Die römischen Inschriften Ungarns. Supplementum* 1 in 2002.

⁵⁶ A. GRAF: *Übersicht der antiken Geographie von Pannonien*. DissPann I.5. Budapest 1936, 77, K. MILLER: *Itinera Romana. Römische Reisewege an der Hand der Tabula Peutingeriana*. Stuttgart 1916, 457.

⁵⁷ MILLER, op. cit., 446, TIR L-34. Budapest 1968, 115, NAGY, op. cit., 266, n. 5.

⁵⁸ MILLER, op. cit., 532.

⁵⁹ KUZSINSZKY B.: Magyarországon talált római kömlékek vidéki múzeumokban és egyéb helyeken. *MKE* 2, 1908, 106, Nr. 8/e, NAGY, op. cit., 267, n. 5, B. GRAF, op. cit., 77, Anm. 5, P. ANREITER: *Die vorrömischen Namen Pannoniens*. Budapest 2001, 219.

⁶⁰ NAGY, op. cit., 268–269, NAGY T., Kőfaragás és szobrászat Aquincumban – Taille de pierre et sculpture à Aquincum. *BudRég* 22, 1971, 127.

⁶¹ J. FITZ: *Honorific titles of Roman auxiliary units in the 3rd century*. Budapest 1983, 200, Nr. 776.

⁶² On the late history of the legion: *PWRE* XII, 1925, 1451–1452, 1456, B. LŐRINCZ: Legio II adiutrix. In: *Les légions de Rome sous le Haut-Empire*. Lyon 2000, 159–168, 165, 167. The stamped bricks of the legion does not bear this epitheta: J. SZILÁGYI: *Inscriptiones tegularum Pannonicarum – A pannoniai bélyeges téglák*. DissPann II/1. Budapest 1933, 33–35. but the legio X gemina had these titles in the 4th century in stamps as well: B. LŐRINCZ: *Pannonische Ziegelstempel III. Limes-Strecke Ad Flexum-Ad Mures*. DissArch II, 9. Budapest 1981, 18–22. On the basis of this data the legio II adiutrix could also have the epitheta pia fidelis in the 4th c.

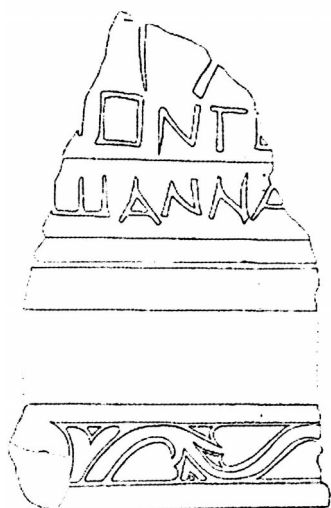


Fig. 1

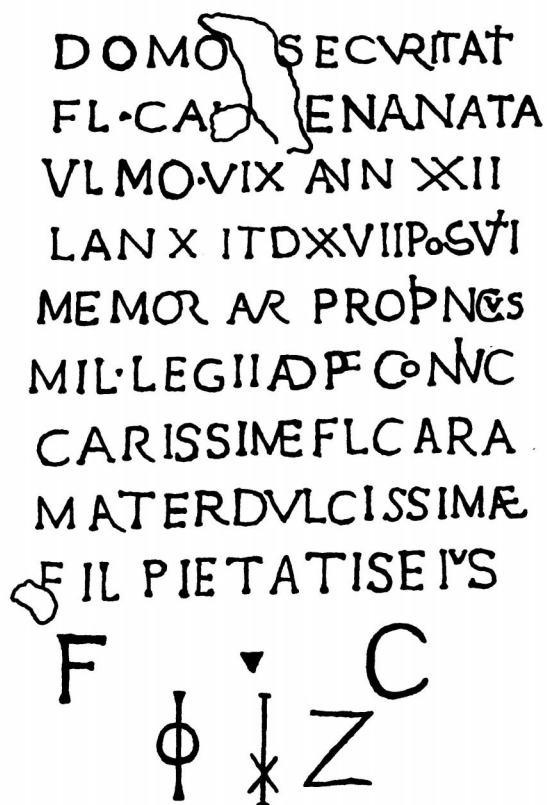


Fig. 2

mus. On the basis of their names and their knowledge of Greek the Eastern-Pannonian Ulmus seems to be more probable which was the most important one. Their names Calvena and Cara do not show Greek origin. The *cognomen* Carus was frequent in the whole empire, in Pannonia and in the East as well.⁶³ The name Calvinus occurs in the Celtic regions of the empire, in Pannonia, in Dalmatia but in the East as well.⁶⁴ The husband, Aurelius Propincus also could be the composer of the inscription and he could be of Eastern origin as well. The *cognomen* Propinquus does not exclude this possibility.⁶⁵ Another possibility is that the women from Southern-Pannonia were Latins but understood Greek because the first Christian communities here were Greek-speaking as we mentioned above.⁶⁶ The most interesting part of the in-

⁶³ BARKÓCZI, op. cit., 208, LÖRINCZ, op. cit., 39, ALFÖLDY, op. cit., 171.

⁶⁴ BARKÓCZI, op. cit., 208, LÖRINCZ, op. cit., 26–27, ALFÖLDY, op. cit., 169, NAGY, op. cit., 267, n. 5.

⁶⁵ BARKÓCZI, op. cit., 321, *Onomasticon provinciarum Europae Latinarum* III. Ed. B. LÖRINCZ. Wien 2000, 167–168. It occurs in Moesia Sup. twice: IMS I 122, IMS II 53.

⁶⁶ NAGY, op. cit., 272–273.

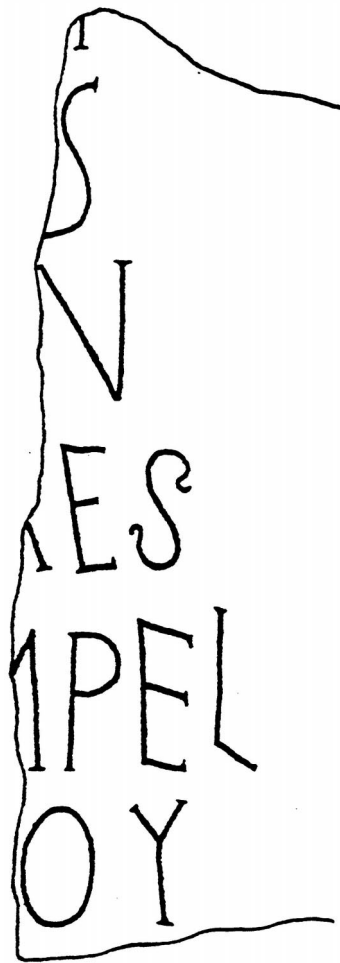


Fig. 3

scription is the formula $\Phi(\acute{\omega}\varsigma)$ $Z(\omega\eta)$. Between the letters Φ and Z an IX can be seen. On the basis of the use of the *i-chi* the formula cannot be pagan⁶⁷ but only Christian.⁶⁸ The formula was used from the 4th century esp. in Syria and Egypt and our formula is one of the earliest pieces.⁶⁹ The earliest Christian (?) Greek sepulchral inscription of this type from the year 238 mentions a Heraclitus as τέκνον γλυκύτερον φωτός καὶ ζωῆς (ICVR I, 8). The Christian formula comes from Ioh. 1, 4; 8, 12 (cf. Iren. Adv. Haer. I, 9, 3). This formula refers us again to the cited relationship of Pannonian Christianity with Syria.⁷⁰ The use of the I-CHI as compendium can be pointed out from the middle of the 3rd century (W. M. Ramsay, *The cities and bishoprics of Phrygia*. New York 1975², n. 371, 526–527, ICUR I, 10).⁷¹ The other formula (*domo securitatis*) can also be observed in Christian inscriptions (ILCV p. 406: e.g., *aeterna* or *perpetua securitas* (ILCV 811b, 1632, 2101, 3493, 3701)).⁷² The formula based on the earlier formula *domo aeternae et perpetuae securitati* from Aquincum: CIL III 6463 (formula with the term *securitas* esp. known from the sarcophagi of Brigetio: RIU 508, 569, 629, 636, 679, 696, 759, 763, 784, 792, S 97)⁷³

Finally, I wish to study a late Roman fragmentary stone inscription (RIU 122) (most likely a grave stone) from Savaria (Fig. 3).⁷⁴ Only the last letters of the six lines of the framed marble plate remained:

----- | [- - -]I | [- - -]S | [- - -]N | [- - -]AES |
[- - -]+PEL | [- - -]OY | -----.

⁶⁷ D. GÁSPÁR: Christianity in Roman Pannonia. An evaluation of Early Christian finds and sites from Hungary. *BAR IS* 1010. Oxford 2002, 27–28, Nr. 4.II.f.

⁶⁸ NAGY, op. cit., 270–272, M. GUARDUCCI: *Epigrafia Graeca* IV. Roma 1978, 439–440, n. 4, ead., *Dal gioco letterale alla crittografia mistica*. in: *ANRW* II/16, 1978, 1749, *DACL* XIV, 1939, 756–758.

⁶⁹ GUARDUCCI, op. cit., 440, n. 4.

⁷⁰ NAGY, op. cit., 272–273, DULAEY, op. cit., 370.

⁷¹ D. MAZZOLENI: Origine e cronologia dei monogrammi: Riflessi nelle iscrizioni dei Musei Vaticani. in: *Le iscrizioni dei Cristiani in Vaticano. Materiali e contributi scientifici per una mostra epigrafica*. Città del Vaticano 1997, 167, n. 72–73.

⁷² NAGY, op. cit., 269, n. 17–23.

⁷³ B. FEHÉR: *Lexicon epigraphicum Pannonicum*. Budapest 1997, 191, A. BRELICH: *Aspetti della morte nelle iscrizioni sepolcrali dell'impero romano*. DissPann I/7. Budapest 1937, 62–65.

⁷⁴ L. BALLA–T. P. BUOCZ–Z. KÁDÁR–A. MÓCSY–T. SZENTLÉLEKY: *Die römischen Steindenkmäler von Savaria*. Budapest 1971, 123, Nr. 203.

The inscription can obviously be dated to the 4th century and it most likely belongs to the numerous Christian sepulchral inscriptions of Savaria (RIU 75–86, S 26).⁷⁵ Another fact is that the inscription is written in Latin characters. The only questionable line is the last one where the letters OY can be seen. The diphthong can belong to a Latin and a Greek sentence-expression as well. The letter Y was used in Pannonian inscriptions almost only in the case of Greek (Oriental) personal and place-names. The Greek diphthong OY was almost always transcribed as U in the Latin. In Pannonia there is no similar evidence for this use but it cannot be excluded that this diphthong can occur in Latin inscriptions as well. Among the *Graecanica phenomena* of the Latin inscriptions in CIL III there are some cases where Y was used instead of the letter U (CIL III p. 2573, 2577, 2677). To this group belong those inscriptions as well where in the Latin text the Greek diphthongs AY, EY, OY were written as in the Greek (Ayr(elius): CIL III 8935, 6594, Heytycinus: 4318, OY pro U: CIL III 218).⁷⁶ This phenomenon can be observed always in the case of Latin inscriptions found in the East or in those of Greek (Oriental) persons in the West.

The other, more probable possibility is that this is a bilingual *titulus* where in the last line a Greek term was written. In Pannonia there are several bilingual inscriptions but this would be the 2nd Christian one. Beside the numerous Christogrammata⁷⁷ the only exception is the above mentioned gravestone from Rákospalota with the formula Φ(ώς) Ζ(ωή) at the end. In Latin Christian sepulchral inscriptions there are several cases when a Greek sentence (acclamation, oration) or an expression was placed in the Latin text.⁷⁸ In this case the diphthong can belong to a singular genitive. The most probable solution would be that the letters belong to the formula δοῦλος Θεοῦ (or Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). This expression can be found in Greek and bilingual inscriptions as well (ICUR I, 1778, IV, 12423+12474 ILCV 1460).⁷⁹ The problem with this possibility is that in Pannonia and the Danubian provinces this expression is unknown (CIL III p. 2522–2523, 2666, ILJ (Situla 25. Ljubljana 1986) p. 510) therefore the question cannot be decided. Its closest parallel is the expression *famula Cri* in a sarcophagus from Siscia (CIL III 3996=ILCV 1449). This solution can be confirmed by the fact that among Savarian Christians Greeks (Orientals) are known as well (e.g. RIU 78: Aur(elius) Iodorus civis Graecus ex reg(ione) La(o)dic(ena), 85: Aurelia Irene, 77: Aur(elius) Leo⁸⁰, Nemesis⁸¹, 128: Aspalia=Aspasia (?) (Πορνόπατι)).⁸²

⁷⁵ GÁSPÁR, op. cit., 122–125, Nr. 51.I.a–f, II.b–g.

⁷⁶ H. MIHAESCU: *La langue latine dans le sud-est de l'Europe*. Bucarest–Paris 1978, 183–184, Nr. 130.

⁷⁷ FEHÉR, op. cit., 228.

⁷⁸ P. TESTINI: *Archeologia christiana*. Bari 1980², 405–417, *Le iscrizioni dei Cristiani in Vaticano. Materiali e contributi scientifici per una mostra epigrafica*. Città del Vaticano 1997, 49–50.

⁷⁹ A. E. FELLE: *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*. Nova series. Concordantiae verborum, nominum et imaginum. Bari 1997, 37–38, *Le iscrizioni dei Cristiani in Vaticano. Materiali e contributi scientifici per una mostra epigrafica*. Città del Vaticano 1997, 50, 217, 225, 259.

⁸⁰ ALFÖLDY, op. cit., 228.

⁸¹ W. PAPE: *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen*. Braunschweig 1911⁴, 987, L. BALLA–T. P. BUOCZ–Z. KÁDÁR–A. MÓCSY–T. SZENTLÉLEKY: *Die römischen Steindenkmäler von Savaria*. Budapest 1971, 116, Nr. 159.

⁸² B. THOMAS E.: Savaria Christiana. In: *A 200 éves szombathelyi egyházmegye története*. Szombathely 1977, 35–93, *Savaria-Szombathely története*. Szombathely 1998, 62–67.

The letters AES in the 4th line can belong to an -aes genitive which Graecism can several times be seen in the Pannonian Latin inscriptions as well (see below).⁸³

To the 2nd bigger group of Old Christian Greek inscriptions belong the *instrumenta inscripta Graeca*. These are the *pie zeses*-type inscriptions on glasses, *vasa diatreta*, vessels, rings (including a stone-inscription) (CatNr. 35, 52, 70, 112, 121, 122, 124, 139, 140) and the gems where clearly Christian texts can be found (the name of Christ: CatNr. 72, 109 or ICHTYS: CatNr. 38, Christogrammata). It must be mentioned here that in the first case the Greek words were several times written in Latin characters as well. These objects can be dated to 4th–5th century. The formula spread in the whole empire and in Rome as well⁸⁴ but it was not exclusively used by Christians.⁸⁵ They were exported not solely from the East (as the Latin characters clearly show).

On the basis of our above mentioned data we can sum up that the hypothesis that the first generation of the Christians in Pannonia was mostly Greek or Greek-speaking Oriental is surely confirmed. The problem is that they are not attested in Pannonian inscriptions but the literary sources, esp. Victorinus' works clearly show this situation. The bilingualism of their bishops is attested but the *laici* from the 4th century spoke mostly the Latin. The origin of Pannonian Christianity shows very strong relationship with the Oriental-Syrian region (cf. the Syrian formule Φ(ώς) Ζ(ωή) in the gravestone from Rákospalota).⁸⁶

Pázmány Péter Catholic University
H-2087 Piliscsaba
Egyetem u. 1.

⁸³ KOVÁCS 2001, Addendum 2, 108–115. Unfortunately, similar phenomena cannot be observed in the Pannonian Christian inscriptions but the CIL III 14213¹ building inscription from Marcianapolis the term HOSTIA PORTAC=ostia portae can be read. On the basis of this data, occurrence of Graecanica phenomena in the Pannonian Christians inscriptions also can be supposed.

⁸⁴ P. TESTINI: *Archeologia christiana*. Bari 1980², 409–411, 491–492, *Le iscrizioni dei Cristiani in Vaticano. Materiali e contributi scientifici per una mostra epigrafica*. Citta del Vaticano 1997, 49–50, 246, 247, 249, 257, A. FERRUA: *Pie zeses per i defunti*. in: *Forma futuri. Studi in onore del card. M. Pellegrino*. Torino 1975, 1115–1124.

⁸⁵ E. TÓTH: *Das Christentum in Pannonien bis zum 7. Jahrhundert nach den archäologischen Zeugnissen*. in: *Das Christentum im bairischen Raum von den Anfängen bis ins 11. Jahrhundert*. Köln–Wien 1994, 247–248.

⁸⁶ NAGY, op. cit., 272–273, DULAEY, op. cit., 370, GAMBER, op. cit., 84.