

TRANSFORMATION OF THE TOWN STRUCTURE IN THE CIVIL TOWN OF AQUINCUM DURING THE SEVERI (A. D. 193–235)

Both the authors and the historians of the classical period definitely date the start of the crisis of the Roman Empire from the 3rd century, the period starting with the Severi.¹ At the same time, the little more than four decades of the Severus period following the devastation of the Marcomann wars marked one of the most flourishing periods in the settlements along the Danubian *limes*. Nearly all the studies and summaries on the topography of Aquincum refer to time from the turn of the 2nd and 3rd centuries to the first third of the 3rd century as a period of the most important changes in the aspect of the town.² The estimation of the features and extensions of the changes however is diverse. Opinions vary from the simple “reconstruction” following the devastation of the wars to a general “town development”, which included the marking out of the insula and street systems. Lajos Nagy interpreted the new aspect of the civil town, which can be seen to date, as “the result of later town-planning operations”.³ According to Tibor Nagy, the major public and private constructions that started from the end of the 2nd century did not result more on the whole than “significantly modified the former town aspect of the 2nd century”.⁴ Klára Póczy considered many new aspects and factors and also the results of recent excavations when she wrote with regard to the constructions in the military town of Aquincum in the 3rd century: “The reconstruction carried out at the beginning of the 3rd century ... must have been very fast, and crowdedness, rough-and-readiness, uniformity of decoration characterises this new period. There was vivid construction activity in the civil town as well, which had by then been raised to the *colonia* rank, but to a much smaller degree than in the *canabae*. The view of the *colonia*, accordingly, could not match that of the military town.”⁵

Regarding the *reasons* hiding behind the transformation of the town appearance the obliteration of the traces of the damages made by the Marcomannic wars, the rise of the town to the *colonia* rank (in A. D. 194), the emperor’s visitations in Aquincum (in 202, 214, 216 etc.)⁶ and the modification of the boundary of the province (A. D. 214) can be mentioned and are the most frequent motives of the changes.⁷ From the respect of the Civil Town, winning the *colonia* rank and the emperor’s visitations were the most important factors. From the respect of the military town and the legionary camp at the same time, measures taken to improve the conditions of the army,⁸ and the reforms in the administration of the province, which had grown to have already two legions as a result of the modification of the boundary of the province,⁹ were the greatest stimuli of the modifications. Summaries mention among the general causes the strong support of the army by the Severi, the economic boom, first of all in respect of coin circulation, and the peaceful period in the first half of the 3rd century.¹⁰ Most of the above factors seem to have contributed to the development in the Danube region, as it is underlined in a recent summary on Carnuntum, the capital of Upper Pannonia province.¹¹

¹ G. ALFÖLDY 2000, 152–156 with references.

² L. NAGY 1942, 353ff.; T. NAGY 1973, 83ff.

³ L. NAGY 1942, 374–375.

⁴ T. NAGY 1973, 101.

⁵ PÓCZY 1983, 271.

⁶ On the list of the emperors’ visitations in Aquincum see H. POLENZ (Hrsg.): *Das römische Budapest*. Münster/Lengerich 1986, 225.

⁷ T. NAGY 1973, 101–102; MÓCSY 1974, 218ff.

⁸ T. NAGY 1973, 101.

⁹ T. NAGY 1973, 102; PÓCZY 1983, 267, 269.

¹⁰ T. NAGY 1973, 100.

¹¹ KANDLER 2000, 43–45. On settlements farther from the *limes* see: e.g. Savaria. TÓTH 1998, 20.

Two factors, however, played a special role in the development of the architectural design of Aquincum in the Severus period. One was the consequences of the modification of the frontier of the province in A. D. 214. A larger administrative body was necessary in a province with two legions.¹² The former establishments had to be enlarged to receive the growing number of the administrative staff. Besides, the residence of the proconsul, former consul, had to be of a higher quality. In Aquincum, the sudden increase of the population,¹³ especially of the ratio of eastern population elements,¹⁴ was another significant circumstance. This latter factor influenced the structure of the town, the types of the buildings and the choice of the architectural ornamental elements as well.

The development of Aquincum, as a characteristic settlement on the limes and capital of a province, was basically due to the presence of the army already in the first two centuries of the Roman period. The civil town was of secondary importance beside the development of the establishments and settlement districts that were connected to or served the interests of the army.¹⁵ The dominance and social, mainly economic power of the army further increased after the civil war following Commodus's murder. With quick measures, Septimius Severus helped the army, which had supported him in seizing the imperial purple, to economic advantages. This meant, among others, a significant rise of the soldiers' pay (*stipendium*) and occasionally distributed large rewards in gold coins (*donativa*). Furthermore, he officially permitted marriage for soldiers and the wearing of gold rings for officers (*principales*).¹⁶ In consequence of these measures, a much larger quantity of coins flowed into the settlements where significant military units were stationed and so in Aquincum, too.¹⁷ Some of the money got to tradesmen, some stayed and, as we would say it now, "it was locally invested".¹⁸ This latter process was reinforced by the relatively frequent visitations in the provinces and the official seats of proconsuls by the Severi, which appeared to be excellent occasions to offer the establishment of public buildings, shrines, baths, fountains, nymphaei, ornamental archways and larger, lasting artistic works (statues, valuable musical instruments).

To what depth did this change influence the aspect of the civil town, and how was it connected to the construction activity in the legionary camp and military town of the settlement? The present study will try to answer these questions, using, first of all, the recent results of the topographic research of Aquincum.¹⁹

The investigation of the problem has to be started with examining what damage the Marcomannic wars caused in Aquincum.²⁰ Although significant imperial propaganda manifested in Aquincum with reference to the Marcomannic wars (e.g. crustulum forms and moulds),²¹ we could not find a devastation layer that could be associated with the war and extended uniformly to every part of the town.²² While János Szilágyi spoke about the total devastation of the town based on the burnt layer often met during the excavation of the camp,²³ recent excavations only partly corroborated this "total" devastation indicated by a

¹² A. DOBÓ: Die Verwaltung der römischen Provinz Pannonien von Augustus bis Diocletians. Budapest 1968, 155, 156, 159.

¹³ Some of the authors speak about the "depopulation" of the empire in this period: T. PEKÁRY: Bevölkerungsrückgang im römischen Kaiserzeit? Zu Aussagen antiker Autoren. Festschrift für Jenő Fitz. Bulletin du Musée Roi Saint-Étienne, Serie B. 47. Székesfehérvár 1996, 81–83.

¹⁴ T. NAGY 1973, 102–103.

¹⁵ MÓCSY 1974, 236ff.

¹⁶ ALFÖLDY 1975, 153; T. NAGY 1973, 101, 142.

¹⁷ ALFÖLDY 1975, 152.

¹⁸ FITZ 1982, 28.

¹⁹ The content of this study was read on the colloquium "Die Römerzeit in Österreich und seinen Nachbarländern an der Wende vom 2. zum 3. Jahrhundert" in Hartberg in 1996. The text of lecture see in: P. ZSIDI: A városkép változása az aquincumi polgárvárosban a 2–3. század fordulóján. BudRég 31 (1997) 281–287. The present study is a version completed with the results of more recent excavations and studies. Its publication in a foreign language is justified by the recently published results of the

investigations in Carnuntum: KANDLER 2000, 43–52. Beside using the old data, we tried to rely on the results of recent excavations. Since, however, the materials of many excavations of the last thirty years have only partially been published, the results can be modified after the publication of the finds.

²⁰ On the damages caused by the Marcomannic wars as mirrored in Samian wares see: GABLER 1994, 355–370.

²¹ A. ALFÖLDI: Tonmodel und Reliefmedaillons aus der Donauländern. DissPann II:10. LaurAquín I. Budapest 1938, 323–324; SZILÁGYI 1968, 67; A. FACSÁDY: Az aquincumi terrakotta császárbrázolások (La représentation des empereurs en terre cuite au Musée d'Aquincum). BudRég 30 (1993) 264.

²² The same problem had to be faced in other towns as well e.g. in Carnuntum: KANDLER 2000, 49–50.

²³ SZILÁGYI 1969, 67. "Bei den Einfällen der Jazygen in den J. 166–178 ist selbst das befestigte Lager der Legion in A. eingeäschert worden. Bei den Ausgrabungen zeigte sich hier oft eine Brandschicht, die aus der damaligen völligen Vernichtung stammt."

thick burnt layer. It is evident that some parts of the legionary camp needed renovation.²⁴ This conclusion, however, can usually be drawn from the observation of the demolition layers following the Marcomannic wars, which, however, cannot directly be associated with the devastation of the war.²⁵ Excavations conducted in the last few years have demonstrated a larger, coherent “thick, burnt, levelled layer of building debris” dated from the time of the wars, still, the same period is characterised in the interior of the military town by layers mixed with domestic refuse, which cannot be accepted as a conclusive evidence of the devastation of war.²⁶

We can learn about the devastation of the Marcomannic wars in the civil town from the taciturn stratigraphic descriptions of old excavations,²⁷ which are only partly supported by archaeological evidences.²⁸ At the evaluation of these data, however, we must consider that, until the Severus period, mostly wooden houses and wooden constructions raised on stone foundations stood in the Civil Town.²⁹ Fire menaced without war situation as well³⁰ as it is supported by many data on the operation of the collegium of the fire brigade in Aquincum.³¹ From among the old excavation results, contrary to former evaluations,³² the important depot find unearthed in one of the rooms of the shop row (*tabernae*) along the north-south directed main road can certainly be connected to the Marcomannic wars. The assemblage consisted of entire items of South Gallic Samian wares found *in situ* in a burnt condition.³³ In the stratigraphic sequence of recent excavations in the eastern part of the civil town, however, the majority of the data suggest reconstruction and not devastation. This was the case at the study of the periods of the basilica,³⁴ the large bath, the *macellum*, the large dwelling house and the double bath,³⁵ in the environs of the northern town gate³⁶ and at the excavations of the so-called Victorinus house.³⁷ The only exception so far is the building of the *collegium centonariorum* near the southern town gate, where the excavation stratigraphy shows that the building was more than once destroyed by fire,³⁸ and one of these must certainly be connected to the war events.

The above data imply that there was certainly no “total” perishing in Aquincum in consequence of the Marcomannic wars,³⁹ at least nothing that would have necessitated rebuilding from scratch.⁴⁰ War devas-

²⁴ Based on old data see in A. ALFÖLDI: Budapest az ókorban. In: A. Alföldy–L. Nagy–Gy. László (eds): Budapest története (The history of Budapest) I. Budapest 1942, 204. Including the results of recent excavations: NÉMETH 1994, 144.

²⁵ SZIRMAI 1980, 187, 191, 197; K. SZIRMAI: Az aquincumi 2–3. sz.-i légióstábor praetenturája (Die Praetentur des Legionslagers in Aquincum). BudRég 25 (1984) 147; SZIRMAI 1988, 58, 59, 64. The publication of the house of the tribunus laticlavus does not mention a burnt layer, while it connects the cessation of the monetary circulation with the Marcomann wars: L. KOCSIS: A tribunus laticlavusok háza az aquincumi 2–3. sz.-i legiotáborban. Előzetes jelentés (Das Haus der tribuni laticlavii aus dem Legionslager vom 2–3. Jh. in Aquincum. Vorbericht). BudRég 28 (1991) 141, n. 235.

²⁶ MADARASSY 1999a, 70–71; MADARASSY 1999b, 644.

²⁷ The former excavation methods are analysed on the occasion of the study of the periods of the basilica: T. NAGY 1964, 9–12.

²⁸ MÁRITY 1992, 70.

²⁹ PÓCZY 1970, 180.

³⁰ T. NAGY 1964, 34, 36.

³¹ L. NAGY 1941, 192–194; J. SZILÁGYI: Tűzvédelem Aquincumban és a római birodalom más városaiban (Römerzeitliche Feuerwehreinrichtungen in Ungarn und in Alt-Rom). Tűzoltó Múzeum Évkönyve 1984, 70–89.

³² GY. JUHÁSZ: A lezoux-i terra sigillata gyárak aquincumi lerakata [The Aquincum depot of Lezoux terra sigillata]. ArchÉrt 41 (1936) 33–48.

³³ GABLER 1994, 357.

³⁴ T. NAGY 1964, 34, 48, 50–51.

³⁵ PÓCZY 1970, 189.

³⁶ P. ZSIDI: Falfestmények az aquincumi polgárvárosból és a városi territoriumról (Neue Wandmalereien aus der Aquincumer Zivilstadt und vom Gebiet der umliegenden Villen). Acta Archaeologica Brigetionensia I:1. Budapest–Komárom 2000, 135, 142.

³⁷ O. MADARASSY In: RégFüz 1:44 (1992) 29, 47/4.

³⁸ ZSIDI 1997a, 50, Fig. 2b.

³⁹ Many colleagues arrived to the same conclusion in articles dealing with the consequences of the war at the conference on the Marcomann wars in November 1993 as T. Fischer in respect of Upper Germany and Raetia, T. FISCHER: Archäologische Zeugnisse der Markomannkriege (166–180. n. Chr.) in Raetien und Obergermanien. In: Markomannenkriege 1994, 351. N. Gudea argued that in Dacia the consequences of the wars could be felt first of all in the economy N. GUDEA: Dacia Porolissensis und die Markomannenkriege. In: Markomannenkriege 1994, 376. In Western Noricum only peripheral effects of the war could be demonstrated: M. POLLAK: Auswirkungen der Markomannenkriege beiderseits des westnordischen Limes. In: Markomannenkriege 1994, 433.

⁴⁰ The above conclusions do not support J. Szilágyi's opinion: “Demnach war fast ein halbes Jahrhundert notwendig, um in den Städten auch die letzten Spuren der Feuerburnst aus der Zeit Marcus Aurelius zu vertilgen.” SZILÁGYI 1956, 15.

tation appears not universally, only scattered traces of various intensity and extent can be observed. The data we have suggest that reconstruction surpassed the extent that would have been demanded by devastation. This means that the damages, although present in all the three topographic units of the town, could be repaired and there was no need of a complex construction measure incorporating town-planning. This is supported by the data that refer to the subsequent phases of construction after the Marcomannic wars.

The start of the construction activity after the war first aimed at military establishments in connection to Commodus's frontier defence politics.⁴¹ The emperor strengthened the Eastern Pannonian stretch of the limes partly with the reconstruction of the damaged camps, partly with the establishment of watchtowers between the camps and the strengthening of the fords.⁴² The watchtower at Csillaghegy north of the civil town, the watchtower on the eastern side of the governor palace and the bridgeheads unearthed at the mouth of the Rákospatak and in the Március 15 Square were all built at that time along the Pannonian stretch of the limes and on the territory facing it.⁴³ The traces of this activity cannot be demonstrated in civilian settlements, or there are only minor indications.⁴⁴

The fast development and the numerous large-scale constructions in Aquincum following the Marcomannic wars evidently started only during the Severi. Due to the eminent role of the army it is obvious that the development was focused on the legionary camp and the military town around it.⁴⁵ The traces of reconstructions at the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd centuries could be observed nearly everywhere in the legionary camp.⁴⁶ The reconstructions of the *principia*, of the house of the *tribunus laticlavus* with a mithraeum decorated by murals and of the *thermae maiores* can be mentioned separately. In the course of recent excavations in the legionary camp, the traces of a significant elevation of the floor level was observed at several places dated from the Severus period, which was connected to the reconstruction of the *principia*.⁴⁷ This general tendency in the legionary camp suggests that not only individual constructions were undertaken in the period but a reconstruction carried out according to an integrated concept. This is supported by observations concerning the street system of the legionary camp, which reveals that "the EW axis of the camp was shifted 10 m to the N."⁴⁸ The period of the integrated reconstruction concept cannot as yet precisely be determined for lack of the analysis of the find materials. From the relevant occasions and dates, Septimius Severus's visitation in A. D. 202⁴⁹ and the time of Caracalla's reign⁵⁰ seem to be the most probable according to the research.

Based on former excavations, the general opinion about the structure of the military town is that the system set up at the beginning of the 2nd century was not altered by the later construction period in the first third of the 3rd century.⁵¹ This view was somewhat modified by archaeological excavations in the last few decades, first of all in the western and north-western regions of the military town: "The track of the exterior road of the *canabae* at the western edge of the town also changed... Here the insula system also followed this change."⁵² In the south-eastern region of the military town the street system seems to have

⁴¹ FITZ 1962, 83–89. He emphasises that the reason of the large constructions after 180 was not the devastation of the Marcomann wars in the first place but the improvement of the limes. *Ibid.* 76.

⁴² T. NAGY 1973, 100. On the Aquincum origin of the burgus inscriptions from Commodus's time see S. SOPRONI: Zu den Burgusbau-Inschriften von Commodus. Festschrift für Jenő Fitz. A Szent István Király Múzeum Közleményei (Bulletin du Musée roi Saint-Étienne) Ser. B 47. Székesfehérvár 1996, 91, 93; P. KOVÁCH: Building inscriptions of Septimius Severus from Pannonia. XI. Congresso Internazionale di Epigrafia Graeca et Latina, Roma, Atti. Roma 1999, 524, 526.

⁴³ SZILÁGYI 1956, 15; L. NAGY: Az Eskü-téri római erőd Pest város őse. Budapest 1946, 85–86; T. NAGY 1973, 100.

⁴⁴ FITZ 1982, 11.

⁴⁵ On the military town see K. PÓCZY: Aquincum als Provinzhauptstadt zur Zeit der Severer. Manuscript. The paper was

read in Hartberg in 1996 in the colloquium "Die Römerzeit in Österreich und seinen Nachbarländern an der Wende vom 2. zum 3. Jahrhundert" (I would like to thank for her permission to use the manuscript.)

⁴⁶ In a summary form: K. PÓCZY: Az aquincumi legiostábor és katonaváros romjainak a feltárása és a műemléki bemutatása (Investigations of the Aquincum legionary camp and the restoration of its ruins). BudRég 24 (1976) 14; PÓCZY 1984, 18.

⁴⁷ SZIRMAI 1980, 187; SZIRMAI 1988, 64.

⁴⁸ SZIRMAI 1980, 199; SZIRMAI 1976, 104.

⁴⁹ NÉMETH 1994, 144; M. NÉMETH: Septimius Severus 202. évi látogatásának újabb feliratos emléke Aquincumban (A further epigraphic monument from Aquincum of the visit of Septimius Severus in the year 202 A. D.). BudRég 24 (1976) 193–197.

⁵⁰ PÓCZY 1984, 18.

⁵¹ PÓCZY 1983, 270.

⁵² MADARASSY 1999a, 71; MADARASSY 1999b, 644.

been adjusted to the former pattern.⁵³ The settlement structure, however, became denser probably due to the sudden increase of the population. The streets narrowed, the former spacious yards were built in, while the comfort standard of the flats (running water, sewerage) became higher. The dominance of stone constructions can also be noted in the period.⁵⁴ The results of the large-scale construction works in the north-eastern region of the military town during the Severus period are the palaces with mosaic floors and murals (the so-called Hercules villa and the remains of ornamented buildings in the Búvár street, the Folyamőr street and the Laktanya street),⁵⁵ and the significant construction activity carried out in the area of the proconsul's palace.⁵⁶ The major reconstruction and enlargement of the latter was probably started only after the modification of the frontier of the province in A. D. 214.⁵⁷

Construction work included the renovation of the street system. The Aquincum–Brigetio and the Aquincum–Mursa roads were renewed within the frames of repeated construction campaigns, first of all during Caracalla's and Alexander Severus's reign.⁵⁸ This activity of strategic importance was connected not only to the movements of the troops but also to the frequent visitations of emperors starting with Septimius Severus. There had to be a main road secured for the imperial processions, which, beside being safe, fast and comfortable had to please the eye as well, especially within the towns. One of the most important roads in Aquincum, which connected the separate settlement districts in the Antonines' period, approached the legionary camp of the 2nd–3rd centuries from the south,⁵⁹ crossed the camp and left it northward toward the southern gate of the civil town. (Fig. 1) Archaeological data imply that this main road retained its importance in the first phase of the Severus period.⁶⁰ Later, probably in Caracalla's time, when the replacement of the provincial frontier (A. D. 214) laid a greater administrative burden on Aquincum, the road running along the eastern side of the camp was given a greater significance,⁶¹ and the palaces of the new administrative district were built along this route in the north-eastern region of the military town.⁶² The shifting of the legionary camp further to the west in the first half of the 2nd century⁶³ probably had already provided place for the development of the eastern part of the military town in the foreground of the camp. The ornate town palaces and the governor's palace facing them on the island in the Danube offered a view that was dignified enough to be seen by the emperor.

The earlier main road, at the same time, which started northwards from the northern gate of the stone camp to the southern gate of the Civil Town, must have lost its former attractiveness in this very period. This process is excellently illustrated by the results of recent archaeological investigations between the

⁵³ MADARASSY 1999a, 69.

⁵⁴ MADARASSY 1999b, 644.

⁵⁵ M. KABA: Az aquincumi parancsnoksági épület belső dekorációja a Laktanya utcában (Innere Dekoration des Kommandgebäudes von Aquincum in der Laktanyastraße). *BudRég* 16 (1955) 255–372; I. WELLNER: The Hercules villa in Aquincum. *ActaArchHung* 21 (1969) 235–272; GY. PARRAGI: A Folyamőr utcai római villa (Römische Villa in der Folyamőr Gasse). *BudRég* 28 (1991) 201; K. SZIRMAI: Új mozaikpadlók az aquincumi katonaváros északi részén (New mosaic floors in the northern part of the Aquincum military town). *BudRég* 32 (1998) 157–158.

⁵⁶ PÓCZY 1983, 267–269; PÓCZY 1994, 224–226.

⁵⁷ FITZ 1982, 14. The latest excavations in the area of the proconsul's palace and its environs revealed that the proconsul's palace and its building complex occupied a much larger territory than expected. The building remains south of the formerly unearthed main building of the palace were raised, according to the stamped bricks, at the time of Caracalla's reign: K. KÉRDŐ: Die neuen Forschungen im Gebiet des Statthalterpalastes von Aquincum. In: N. Gudea (ed.): *Roman Frontier Studies* 17. *Zaláu* 1999, 652.

⁵⁸ Milestones are the evidences of the many renovation works carried out on the roads around Aquincum FITZ 1962, 81–83.

⁵⁹ On the place where the road reached the southern rim of the town (approximately along the present Kolosy Square) several archaeological monuments from the Severus period (watchtower, inscribed stone monuments, statues, etc.) underline the significance of the territory. On this topic see recently K. PÓCZY: Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Teutanus Aquincumban (Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Teutanus in Aquincum). In: *Pannoniai kutatások. A Soproni Sándor emlékkonferencia előadásai, Bólske* 1998 (Pannonian research. Proceedings of the conference in memory of Sándor Soproni). *Szekszárd* 1999, 201–223. An inscribed monument, although from a later period, found recently near this territory stresses the importance of the territory. A. Facsády's manuscript submitted for publication in the memorial book on the occasion of Jenő Fitz's 80th birthday in 2001.

⁶⁰ PÓCZY 1983, 253–258 and PÓCZY 1996.

⁶¹ PÓCZY 1983, 255.

⁶² PÓCZY 1983, 270. On the problem of the “administrative district” see M. Németh's manuscript submitted for publication in the memorial book on the occasion of Jenő Fitz's 80th birthday in 2001.

⁶³ NÉMETH 1994, 144.

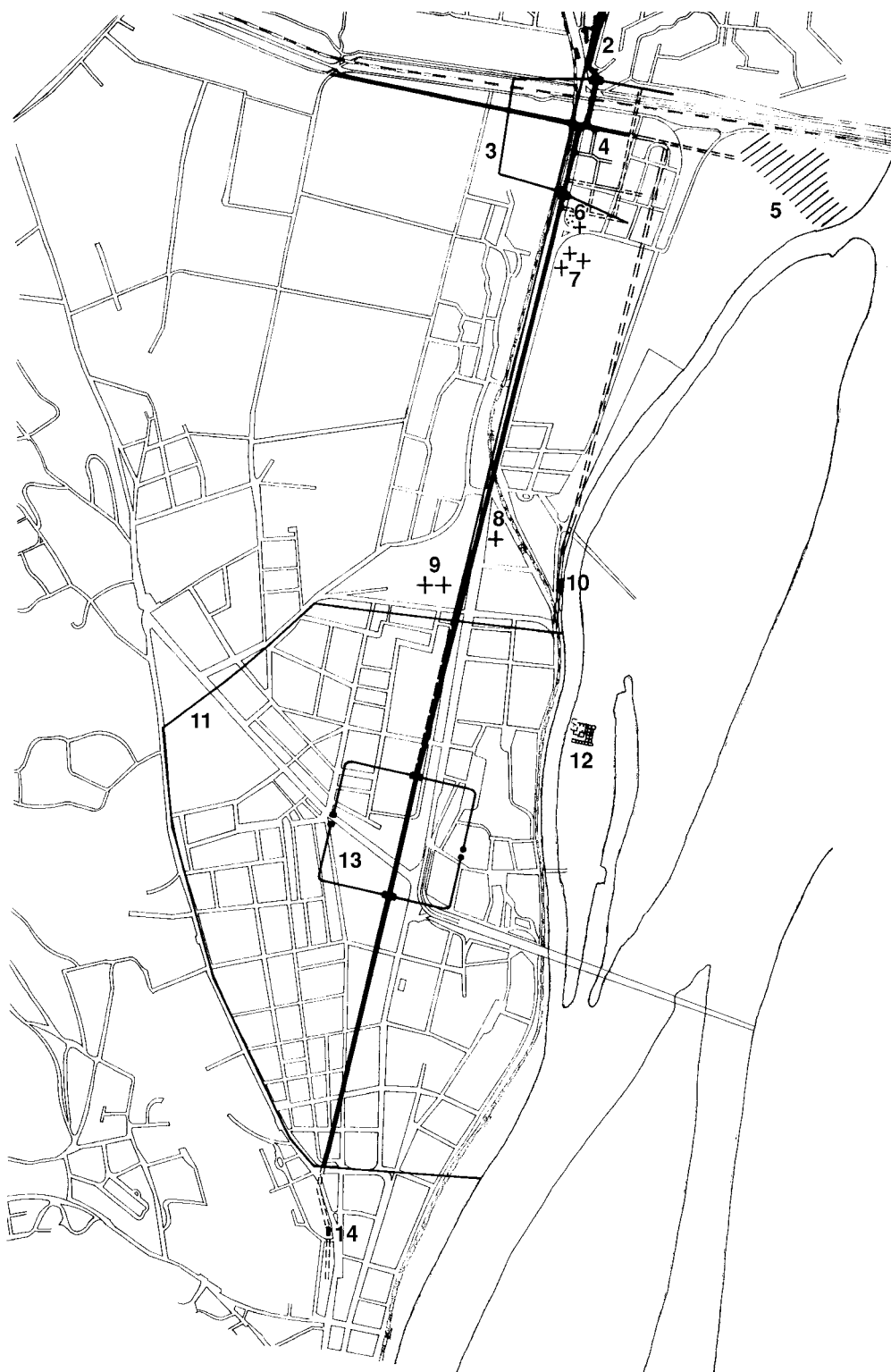


Fig. 1. Topographic plan of Aquincum before A. D. 214. 1: line of the water-conduit; 2: main road (N-S); 3: civil town; 4: street network; 5: pottery workshop (Budapest III. Gázgyár); 6: supposed shrines; 7: cemetery (Budapest III. Szentendrei Street 101–115); 8: cemetery (Budapest III. Ladik Street); 9: cemetery (Budapest III. Kaszás dűlő-Raktárrét); 10: bridgehead (Budapest III. Mozaik Street); 11: military town; 12: Governor's palace

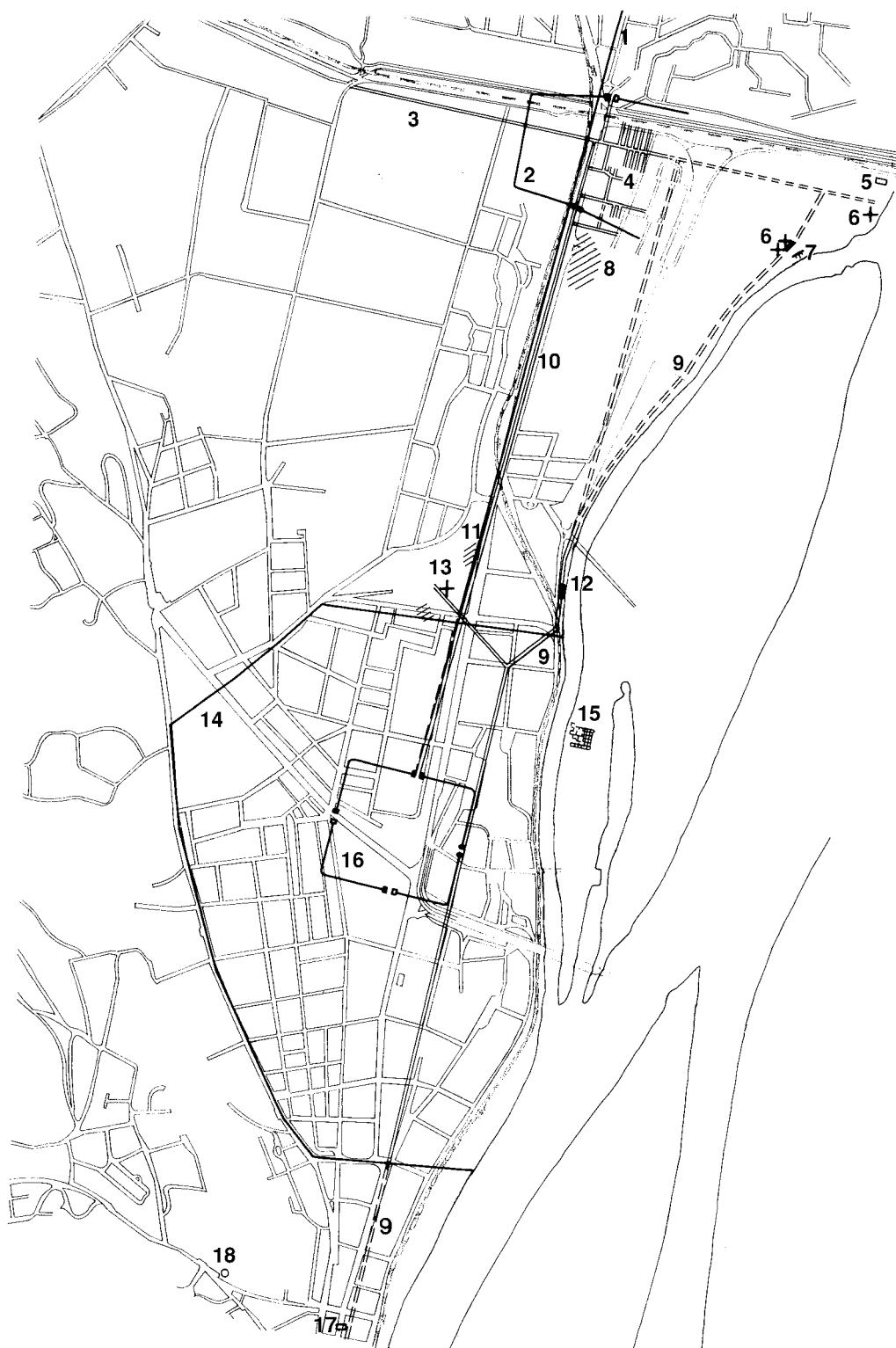


Fig. 2. Topographic plan of Aquincum after A. D. 214. 1: line of the water-conduit; 2: civil town; 3: main road (E-W); 4: street network; 5: Mithras shrine; 6: cemetery (Budapest III. Gázgyár); 7: traces of the reinforced river bank; 8: pottery workshop (Budapest III. Schütz Inn); 9: main road (N-S); 10: road (N-S); 11: bath at the cross street (Budapest III. Filatori gát); 12: bridge; 13: cemetery (Budapest III. Kaszásdűlő-Raktárrét); 14: military town; 15: Governor's palace; 16: legionary fortress; 17: bath(?); 18: temple area (?)

military town and the civil town.⁶⁴ (*Fig. 1; Fig. 2*) Before the period we are dealing with, the earliest around the turn of the 1st and 2nd centuries, a burial site was established east of the pillars of the aqueduct and the northward leading road.⁶⁵ The road, which was bordered by the grave gardens with painted grave monuments probably of rich trading families in the east and by the arcades of the aqueduct in the west, must have been one of the nicest roads in Aquincum in the 2nd century.⁶⁶ But the “via Appia of Aquincum” became the victim of the town-planning operations at the end of the Marcomannic wars. Based on the finds from the cemetery, burials abruptly stopped in the first decade of the 3rd century (around A. D. 210).⁶⁷ The traces of conscious landscaping can clearly be seen in the former burial site. The grave monuments and the walls of the grave gardens were pulled down to the original floor level. Some of the ornamental carved stone material was used in the less elite cemetery in a less favourable site on the other, western side of the aqueduct pillars.⁶⁸ The rest of the stone material was most probably used at the constructions carried out parallelly. The stone material was prepared and classified for the reuse on spot, where a small temporary stone carvers’ workshop was set up specially for this purpose. However, there is no trace of any use on the eastern side of the road right after the landscaping (clearing) until some scattered burials in the 4th century. So, as far as we can tell to date, contrary to the former representative use, the territory was “empty” and unused from the first decade of the 3rd century.

At the same time the traces of significant constructions have survived on the Danube bank east of the above territory.⁶⁹ The excavations unearthed one of the bridgeheads of the bridge that led to the Danube island where the governor’s palace stood. The trapezoid construction with vertical ashlar walls rested on posts. In its present form it can be dated from the Severus period, but it certainly had antecedents.⁷⁰

It can be observed that the centre of the territory between the military and civil towns of Aquincum was shifted toward east at the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd centuries. Even more evidences of the process can be found as we get closer to the civil town from the direction of the military town and observe the changes in the settlement structure dated from the turn of the 2nd–3rd centuries in the direct vicinity of the civil town.

It was revealed by recent excavations⁷¹ that nearly the same topographic change took place, approximately at the same time, on the eastern side of the section of the north-south directed main road that leads into the civil town as on the other section of the same road where it leaves the military town nearly a km further to the south. The southern cemetery of the civil town, which had been established in the first third of the 2nd century, was purposefully eliminated, as if following a plan, at the turn of the 2nd–3rd centuries. The burial site with ornate grave monuments was contemporary to the above discussed cemetery in the southern part of the road section, and its purposeful elimination happened in the same way and at the same time. We can find the foundations of the pulled down grave monuments⁷² and the traces of the occasional reuse of the stone monuments.⁷³ The shrine south of the southern town wall, the existence of

⁶⁴ PÓCZY 1984, 27., Anm. 78–82; M. NÉMETH: Aquincum. Feltárások az 1981–1988 közötti időszakban (Aquincum. Erschließungen in den Jahren 1981–1988). *BudRég* 28 (1991) 99; ZSIDI 1995, 38–44.

⁶⁵ ZSIDI 1997b, 109–148.

⁶⁶ P. ZSIDI: Ein in Aquincum, neugefundenes Grabmal. Akten des IV. internationalen Kolloquiums über Probleme des provincialrömischen Kunstschaffens, Celje 1995. *Situla* 36 (1997) 247–255.

⁶⁷ ZSIDI 1997a, Abb. 27.

⁶⁸ P. ZSIDI: A Kaszás dűlő-raktárréti római kori temető elemzése. Dissertation manuscript, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Faculty of Letters, Budapest 1984, 10–32.

⁶⁹ P. ZSIDI *RégFüz* I:33 (1980) 36; ZSIDI 1995, 42–43.

⁷⁰ ZSIDI, P.: Hídőállás az aquincum polgárváros és katonaváros között. (Ein Brückenkopf zwischen der Zivilstadt und den Canabae von Aquincum). In: *Pannoniai kutatások. A Soproni Sándor emlékkonferencia előadásai*. Bölske 1998 (Panno-

nian research. Proceedings of the conference in memory of Sándor Soproni). Szekszárd 1999, 260–261.

⁷¹ P. ZSIDI: Kutatások az aquincumi polgárváros előterében (Research in the southern outskirts of the Aquincum civil town). *Aquincumi füzetek* 4. Budapest 1998, 72–78; P. ZSIDI: Kutatások az aquincumi polgárváros déli előterében (Research in the southern foreground of the Aquincum civil town). *Aquincumi füzetek* 7. Budapest 2001, 68–75.

⁷² P. ZSIDI: Az aquincumi polgárváros déli előtere az újabb kutatások tükrében [The southern foreground of the Aquincum civil town in the light of new research]. *BudRég* 35 (2001) 143–157.

⁷³ J. BESZÉDES: A Budapest, Szentendrei út 101–115. szám (volt Házgyár) alatti feltárás egyik gödörobjektumából előkerült faragott kőtöredék értékelése [Considerations of carved stone fragments from a pit discovered during the excavations at 101–115 Szentendrei Road]. *BudRég* 35 (2001) 159–172.

which in the 2nd century was supposed from formerly published data, inscribed monuments and archaeological finds,⁷⁴ probably stopped operation at the same time.

The later use of the area, however, developed in another way than of the road section to the south, since there were no empty, unused spaces here. Instead of sacral functions offering an architectural view, the area was designated for industrial activity.⁷⁵ The operation of the industrial site on the Danube bank east of the civil town, where relief ornamented ceramics was produced, can be followed from the end of the Marcomannic wars to the end of the 2nd century.⁷⁶ The potter's workshop established on the eastern side of the road leading to the civil town from the south, partly in the area of the former cemetery, started working at approximately the same time at the beginning of the 3rd century.⁷⁷ With the elimination of the southern cemetery, the one on the Danube bank was more intensively used and even a mithraeum was raised in its vicinity.⁷⁸ It means that a complete exchange of functions happened in the southern and eastern outskirts of the civil town around the turn of the 2nd–3rd centuries, which, supposing that the changes were contemporary, can be placed to Caracalla's time based on the dating of the changes at the northern brim of the military town.⁷⁹

The functional exchange of the territories outside the civil town quasi “liberated” the eastern foregrounds of the town from the view of the industrial establishments. The freshly established cemetery and the Mithras shrine offered a more aesthetic view. Most probably boats could embark in this Danube section as well. The research of the recent years, however, has revealed only the traces of the one-time bank defence⁸⁰ and the road running on the dike along the Danube bank.⁸¹

This is the point, where we can actually turn to the description of the structural changes of the civil town, which would have been difficult to understand without the above antecedents. Let us first examine the two definitive elements of the town aspect: the town walls that surrounded the town and the street system. We can rely on recent research results in both cases.⁸²

The civil town was surrounded by town walls when it was yet a *municipium*.⁸³ The defensive role of the construction in this period is proved by the moat running parallelly to the wall, the bastions and the walkway built of clay bricks leaning against the interior of the wall. At that time, the town wall must have been a closed structure, although the eastern side has not yet been investigated but both the northern and the southern gates have been unearthed.⁸⁴ The structure of the town wall was basically changed at the end of the 2nd and in the 3rd centuries, which was justified mainly by its modified function. The defensive role of the town wall evidently lost importance in this phase. This is supported by the buildings that were raised following the significant east-west directed expansion of the town outside the town wall in the west⁸⁵ and on top of the supposed town wall in the east.⁸⁶ To a lesser degree, the same can be observed in the southern

⁷⁴ P. ZSIDI: Bleivotive aus Aquincum. KJb 34 (2000) 313–328.

⁷⁵ The replacement of the industrial sites, which also resulted in a change of the product composition, was also connected to the economic situation following the Marcomannic wars but here we cannot deal with this aspect.

⁷⁶ P. ZSIDI: Újabb kemencék az Aquincum-gázgyári fazekas-telepről (Neue Öfen aus der Keramikwerkstatt von Aquincum-Gasfabrik). BudRég 25 (1984) 372; K. PÓCZY–P. ZSIDI: Römische Keramik in Aquincum. Budapest 1992, 24.

⁷⁷ K. PÓCZY: Die Töpferwerkstätten von Aquincum. ActaArchHung 7 (1956) 117; É. BÓNIS: Töpferei an der Süd-mauer der Aquincumer Zivilstadt neben dem Schütz-Gasthof. BudRég 30 (1993[1995]) 230–231.

⁷⁸ L. NAGY 1942, 376; T. NAGY 1973, 122.

⁷⁹ See note 66.

⁸⁰ P. ZSIDI: A római partépítés nyomai a Duna polgárvárosi szakaszán (Research along the Danube bank near the Aquincum civil town). Aquincumi füzetek 5. Budapest 1999, 84–95.

⁸¹ P. ZSIDI: Kutatások az aquincumi polgárvárostól keletre

fekvő területen (Research in the territory east of the Aquincum civil town). Aquincumi füzetek 7. Budapest 2001, 78–79.

⁸² In a summary form: ZSIDI 1994, 213–220.

⁸³ P. ZSIDI: Aquincum polgárvárosának városfala és védművei az újabb kutatások tükrében (Stadtmauer und Verteidigungssystem der Zivilstadt von Aquincum, im Spiegel der neuesten Forschungsergebnisse). CommArchHung 1990, 161–162.

⁸⁴ L. NAGY 1942, 368 found the model of the latter one in the model of a gate bastion found in Intercisa, which, according to the inscription, was raised by Hilarus potter around the middle of the 2nd century.

⁸⁵ Preliminary report of K. Póczy's unpublished excavations BudRég 24 (1976) 425.

⁸⁶ L. NAGY 1942, 370. Probably we cannot find the eastern section of the town wall because it was pulled down to give place to the later constructions overlapping them. Earlier excavations in the place of the eastern section of the town wall usually reached no deeper than the level of later constructions. Besides, no documentation has been left that could be re-evaluated or analysed.

section, where the moats were filled up and covered by buildings.⁸⁷ In this section, the plans of the buildings were adjusted to the former direction of the town wall, which shows that the wall must still have stood at that time. It is, nevertheless, highly probable that the town wall rather served the demonstration of the richness of the inhabitants and the significance of the town, already of *colonia* rank, than defended it from the enemy. Accordingly construction activities on the town wall must have concentrated in this period not on functional and structural elements but on ones that added to the visual appearance. This supposition is supported by the building inscription of *C. Iulius Sextinus conductor* (between A. D. 192 and 211) according to which the person who had built them had also an decorative gate raised in the civil town in honour of Syria and Baltis deities.⁸⁸

The expansion of the town towards east and west and the definitely east-west directed main traffic from the direction of the Danube brought about the greatest change in the town structure in the Severus period. Formerly research usually dated the development of the street pattern of the civil town, together with the construction of the town wall, to the Severus period in general.⁸⁹ The recent results of research into the civil town date the construction of the town wall and also the development up of the street system from the *municipium* period.⁹⁰ The new sketch of the architectural history of the civil town presupposes a rectangular street system already at that time. The theoretical reconstruction of the former conditions, which is as yet no more than a working hypothesis, can be drawn from the regular distribution of the buildings with a construction period in the 2nd century, the sewerage, which was an early development,⁹¹ the baths, etc.⁹² The size of the supposed earlier insula system can be estimated to 70 × 105 m,⁹³ and it was adjusted to the north-south directed main road in the south-eastern third of the town, which we have already investigated. The significance of the north-south directed main road is indicated in this early phase by the *forum*, the large public bath and the public buildings, collegium centres and the taberna row standing along the road. It is possible that these central buildings, at least their foundations, were made of stone already in this early phase,⁹⁴ while the wooden construction farther from the centre of the town often disappeared leaving no trace at all in the course of later reconstructions. In the 2nd century, yet larger, empty spaces can be supposed inside the spacious blocks of flats, which were built in only later. The trace of the early street system along the north-south directed main road can be best observed on the commonly known later plan, which mainly illustrates the conditions in the 3rd century.⁹⁵ The reason probably is, that the functions and the plans of the buildings, which were usually made of lasting materials, were left more or less intact by reconstructions and renovations in the subsequent phases.

However, in the later plan of the town from the Severus period, dated from the first half of the 3rd century, the east-west directed main road was bordered on both sides by a row of long, oblong-shaped build-

⁸⁷ P. ZSIDI: Római épület az aquincumi polgárváros déli városfalán kívül, 1993–94. évi feltárás (Excavations in 1993–1994 of a Roman building outside the southern wall of the Aquincum civil town) Aquincumi füzetek 1. Budapest 1995, 44–48.

⁸⁸ On the monuments found in the vicinity of the southern town wall of the eastern district see KUZSINSZKY 1937, 135–145.

⁸⁹ T. NAGY 1973, 119, 122; MÁRITY 1992, 67, although the idea of the existence of a regular street pattern from the Traian-Hadrian period had already been raised on the basis of authenticating excavations conducted in the 1960's (PÓCZY 1970, 190), at least in the central part of the town.

⁹⁰ ZSIDI 1994, 218–219.

⁹¹ The early existence of the sewerage was proved by the excavations of the so-called M. A. Victorinus mithraeum. The preliminary report of the unpublished excavation: O. MADARASSY: RégFüz 1:42 (1991) 33. 64/10.

⁹² ZSIDI 1994, 218–219. Regrettably, former excavations did not investigate the earlier, deeper period, so we do not have any documentation that could be analysed or evaluated. Since only a few excavations could be conducted in the recent years in the

area of the civil town where earlier periods were reached, and even most of these ones have not yet been published, there are no direct evidences apart from the centre of the town.

⁹³ The insula system in St Pölten/Aelium Caetium is of the same size. P. SCHERRER (Hrsg.): Landeshauptstadt St. Pölten – Archäologische Bausteine II. Sonderschriften/Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut 23. Wien 1994, Faltblatt; P. SCHERRER: Der grosse Markomanneneinfall des Jahres 170 und seine Folgen im Lichte der neuer Ausgrabungen in Aelium Cetium – St. Pölten. In: Markomannenkriege 1994, 447–453, Abb. 1; P. SCHERRER: Systematische Stadtarchäologie: Fallbeispiel Aelium Caetium – St. Pölten, Niederösterreich. In: The Roman Town in the Modern City. Aquincum Nostrum II. Budapest 1998, 33–34.

⁹⁴ Early buildings with stone foundations dated from the first and second decades of the 2nd century are, among others, the building of the *collegium centonariorum* (ZSIDI 1997 50ff.) on the north-south directed main road, and the so-called painter's house in the same district but a little farther from the road T. NAGY 1958, 149.

⁹⁵ T. NAGY 1973, the plan of the civil town published in the appendix.

ings of approximately identical measurements, separated by narrow lanes. Placing this system delineated by the houses over the reconstruction of the early street system we find that it shows not an entirely new system,⁹⁶ but rather the division of the lots within the earlier one, which happened, astonishingly, along the east-west directed roads. It is not difficult to recognise an eastern influence in the dense, comb-like building in within a street system that has a narrower cross-section than the former one.⁹⁷ The denser division of the lots and the nearly closed row of houses was partly due to the sudden increase of the population number. The significance of the east-west directed main road grew, considering the above described data on the street system of the military town, in the years following the modification of the frontier of the province in A. D. 214, and even a centrally executed lot regulation can be supposed.⁹⁸ The significance of the north-south directed main road can be demonstrated even in the early phase of the Severus period: the reconstruction of the *porticus* and the row of *tabernae* along the road and probably the replacement of the entrance of the large public bath together with the building of the decorative gate at the southern town wall in the eastern part of the town are probably related to this phenomenon.⁹⁹ This first “stage” of the constructions in the civil town in the Severus period was probably related to the rise to the *colonia* rank. The second stage of the constructions incorporating the reorganisation of the lots can be connected to Caracalla’s reign and the period that followed.

Regarding the street system we must speak about the observation to which recent research called attention. It can, namely, be observed at several points of the civil town that the orientation of the walls were changed by a few degrees during the reconstructions of the buildings in the Severus period. This slight modification can be noted in the track of the east-west directed main road as well.¹⁰⁰ The north-south directed main road became narrower but did not change its direction. The slight modification of the orientation can be found both in the western and the eastern parts of the town.¹⁰¹ It should be added that the slight modification of orientation related to reconstructions in the Severus period could also be observed during the excavations conducted in the military town.¹⁰²

Even the most characteristic elements of the town aspect were reconstructed in the Severus period. The significance of the aqueduct raised on pillars, which crossed the town from the very beginning, grew parallelly to the expansion of the town and the growth of the population.¹⁰³ Thus at the end of the 2nd century and the turn of the 2nd–3rd centuries the quantity of the water supply had to be increased, which probably demanded architectural technical changes in the system, which we have not yet identified. It was probably the increase of the water output that explained the walling in of the arcades enclosed by the pillars.¹⁰⁴ This architectural solution made the construction more stabile and resistant to weight, capable to carry more water. The reinforcement of the framework of the aqueduct and the significant elevation of the floor level within the town suggest that the level of the aqueduct had to be raised, at least at some points.¹⁰⁵ The further elevation of the floor level in the Severus period, at the same time, barred the passage between the two parts of the civil town on the former street level under the arcades. The solution of the problem with laying more stress on the east-west directed main road necessitated, most certainly, further measures and reconstructions.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁶ See note 88.

⁹⁷ The structure of the civil town of Aquincum in the first half of the 3rd century showed resemblance to e.g. the town of Leptis Magna (E. J. OWENS: Roman town planning. In: J. M. Burton (ed.): Roman Public Buildings. Exeter 1989, 24. Fig. 11).

⁹⁸ T. NAGY 1973, 122.

⁹⁹ KUZSINSZKY 1937, 145; T. NAGY 1973, 121.

¹⁰⁰ It is first of all the plan of the buildings that open to the east-west directed main road that reveal it in the comprehensive plan (T. NAGY 1973).

¹⁰¹ Paula Zsidi’s unpublished excavation in the western part of the town in 1992. We observed recently during the authenticating excavation of the so-called Symphorus mithraeum in the eastern area that the east-west directed wall sections renewed in the course of an enlargement in the Severus period were not accurately aligned to the earlier walls. We could not find the same phenomenon at the north-south directed walls of the same

building (P. Zsidi’s attest excavation in 2000/2001. The preliminary report published in *Aquincumi füzetek* 8 (2002) 38–48).

¹⁰² MADARASSY 1999, 71.

¹⁰³ PÓCZY 1996, 472–473.

¹⁰⁴ M. KABA: Az aquincumi aqueductus pilléreinak 1975. évi kutatása (előzetes jelentés) (The 1975 excavations of the piers of the aqueduct at Aquincum. Preliminary report). *BudRég* 24 (1976) 226.

¹⁰⁵ With regard to this theory, the ruins of the pillars and arcades of the aqueduct that survived high above the present surface are worth noting. However, it is not clear as yet, in which period the walling in was made in the construction built already in Trajan’s time. Theoretically it could be done already in the Antonine period as suggested by the level data and the construction section of the east-west directed passage of the Severan period (KABA in note 104, figs 60–61).

¹⁰⁶ On the resolution of a passage between the two parts of the town in the Severan period see PÓCZY 1996, 473–474.

The barely excavated western area of the town is a less known part of the town aspect of Aquincum. The few excavations conducted here on relatively small surfaces¹⁰⁷ show, however, that there were significant constructions along the east-west directed main road in this district as well in the same period. Larger buildings bordered the western side of the aqueduct, and the continuation of the row of *tabernae* known from the eastern side of the town¹⁰⁸ was found in the western part of the town opening to the east-west directed main road. In the eastern part of the town it ran along the north-south directed road and had several former building periods, while in the western part it stood, not by chance, on the southern side of the east-west directed main road and had no antecedents under the levels dated from the beginning of the 3rd century. This suggests that the row of shops was built when the east-west directed main road had already acquired a stressed attention.

The amphitheatre, which played an important role both in the town aspect and in the social life of the town, was also renewed and reconstructed several times. There are archaeological data on the construction of boxes of honour and new overhead passages.¹⁰⁹ The inscription of one of the altar stones tells about the reconstruction of the Nemesis shrine built against the western wall of the amphitheatre.¹¹⁰ It implies that the shrine, which had been damaged during the war events a few years earlier, was inaugurated in the presence of emperor Caracalla.¹¹¹

The construction boom of the Severus period also affected many civilian buildings either separately or incorporated in the greater town planning concept. Although we cannot draw the detailed view of the civil town of Aquincum,¹¹² we can give a list of the buildings in the civil town that were given the final shape, which we can see at present, at that time. This list, nevertheless, is far from being complete. The temple of the forum, the Corinthian capital of which was decorated by the depiction of Juppiter Ammon, gained its present shape in this period. The reconstruction of the large public bath, where bricks produced in the brickyard of the legion were used, and the replacement of its entrance into street C must have been carried out in Septimius Severus's time.¹¹³ A small potter's workshop operated in the area south of the bath before A. D. 240. After it had been eliminated, a market hall (*macellum*) was built in its place. The architectural re-evaluation of the *macellum* was carried out recently following its authenticating excavation in 1965.¹¹⁴ The eastern traits and contacts characteristic of the Severus period could be detected in the market hall, which worked between A. D. 240 and 250, just as well as in the earlier periods.¹¹⁵ The so-called double bath, bordering the so-called large dwelling house from the west, was built east of this territory. The latter contained a private bath as well, the mosaic floor of which depicts a palaestra scene.¹¹⁶ The collegium headquarters near the southern town wall and the so-called painter's house were also renewed in his period.¹¹⁷ The so-called Symphorus mithraeum was built near this building,¹¹⁸ its cultic picture is another characteristic product of the 3rd century. The *mithraeum* was built over a former, much smaller antecedent

¹⁰⁷ In a summary form PÓCZY 1984, 21.

¹⁰⁸ Preliminary report of the unpublished excavations P. ZSIDI, BudRég 25 (1984) 461–462.

¹⁰⁹ MÁRITY 1992, 69.

¹¹⁰ L. NAGY 1942, 567; CIL III 10439.

¹¹¹ FITZ 1962, 56.

¹¹² We cannot venture into a more exact definition, since most of these buildings were uncovered during excavations in the last century, and neither the excavation documentation nor the find material can always be found. Research usually borrowed the statements concerning the listed monuments from earlier publications and there is no possibility to check and re-evaluate. T. NAGY 1973, 120–122 and MÁRITY 1992.

¹¹³ HAMPEL, J.: A papföldi közfürdő [The Papföld public bath]. BudRég 2 (1890) Fig. 1. See above on the main roads of the civil town.

¹¹⁴ PÓCZY 1970, 184–186; O. LÁNG: Az aquincumi macellum: ásatási anyagfeldolgozás és építészeti analógiák. Az 1965. évi ásatás anyaga [The Aquincum macellum: analysis of finds and

architectural analogies. Find material of the 1965 excavation season]. University thesis, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Faculty of Letters. Budapest 2001.

¹¹⁵ The closest analogue can be found in Carnuntum, where beside the similarity of the ground plan, its position next to the public bath also matches, CH. ERTEL: Architekturfragmente aus der "Palastruine". Beitrag zur Baugeschichte der "Grossen Therme" der Zivilstadt Carnuntum. CarnuntumJb 1990, 202, and LÁNG 2001.

¹¹⁶ The floor was made by a local master who made floor depictions of similar topics in a richly decorated town palace in the military town. I. WELLNER: Aquincumi mozaikok (Aquincum mosaics). Budapest, 1962.

¹¹⁷ L. NAGY 1941, and on the results of recent excavations ZSIDI 1997a and T. NAGY 1958, 153.

¹¹⁸ T. NAGY: A Fővárosi Ásatási Intézet jelentése az 1938–42. évek között végzett kutatásairól (Bericht des Archäologischen Institutes von Budapest über die Forschungen der Jahre 1938–1942). BudRég 13 (1943) 384.

also of stone. The shrine was probably enlarged as the number of the community had significantly grown by the beginning of the 3rd century.¹¹⁹ We have already discussed the parallelly conducted construction of the Mithras shrine on the Danube bank and the mithraeum at the northern town wall. The features of the town plan show eastern influences in constructions related to eastern cults and also in some of the ornamental elements of the buildings (capital with Ammon head, depiction of Dea Syria etc.). The eastern impact appearing in the view of the town indicates the growing influence of eastern families in the self-government of the civil town as well.¹²⁰

Not only archaeological data tell about constructions in the Severus period, but also many inscribed monuments, especially building inscriptions. (Table 1) This group of sources is especially rich in Aquincum from the first half of the 3rd century. The quantitative growth of inscribed monuments proves, beside an economic upswing (namely the high number of events that were worth commemorating), the sudden increase of the population as well (that is there were more people who could order inscriptions). The growth of the population in the capital of the province is attested to, as we could see, by a much denser settlement pattern and the frequency of superimposed burials in the cramped parcels of the cemeteries both in the military and the civil town.¹²¹

The majority of the building inscriptions from Aquincum in the Severus period are fragmentary and very few of them carry information about the entire construction, that is when and who had something built, what and when. The majority of the dated inscriptions were made in Severus Alexander's time. Eight dated stone monuments inform about construction activity during the 13 years of his reign. Next in the line are the 6 building inscriptions from the 8 years of Septimius Severus's reign. Finally, three building inscriptions came from the 6 years of Caracalla's rule. It is striking that although two significant events exercising a great impact on the development of the town structure of Aquincum, as we have seen earlier, can be attached respectively to the latter two emperors (A. D. 194 and 214), the building inscriptions suggest that the construction boom can be placed to the time of Severus Alexander's reign. Examining, however, the persons who ordered the constructions we can elucidate this controversy. Most of the listed building inscriptions came from monuments ordered by private, first of all civilian persons, corporations and less can be associated with the authorities. The number of private builders was very high in Severus Alexander's time.¹²² It was probably the series of imperial measures reinforcing more than ever the economic conditions of military families that "led to an enlivened construction activity of private persons and corporations."¹²³ It is obvious that, at that time, a greater opportunity opened for private persons and corporations to commemorate construction ventures, donation and offerings in inscriptions, and they made the best of it. The great constructions in Aquincum that implied complex town planning incorporating more than one district of the town, and which were timed to actual events in Septimius Severus's (A. D. 194 and 202) and Caracalla's (A. D. 214) times, incur significant support from the government. These constructions, however, were represented much more modestly in inscriptions than the effect they exercised on the view of the town. At the same time, smaller investments carried out sometimes within governmental frames were sufficiently propagated later in Severus Alexander's time. Large investments extending to several topographic areas (reconstruction of the aqueduct, road maintenance, elevation of the floor level, setting up a new insula system, etc.) could be commemorated only in a single place, similarly to smaller units (shrine, fountain, decorative gate, etc.). In addition, unlike the latter type of constructions, some of the former ones did not produce a direct visual effect.

¹¹⁹ See note 102.

¹²⁰ ALFÖLDY 1975, 149.

¹²¹ In the parcels used at that time in the northern cemetery of the military town, for example, often four or five burials can be found one above the other, P. ZSIDI: Temetőelemzési módszerek az aquincumi katonaváros északi temetőjében (The northern cemetery of the military town at Aquincum. Methods of analysis). *ArchÉrt* 123–124 (1999) 21, 41.

¹²² The same can be found concerning the inscriptions that came from the territory of the Aquincum municipium, most of which can also be dated to Severus Alexander's time. (P. ZSIDI: Die römische Villa von Kaszás-dűlő–Csikós utca und die Frage der Villen in Territorium des Municipiums von Aquincum (am Gebiet der heutigen Stadt Budapest). *Balácai közlemények* 3 (1994) 295).

¹²³ T. NAGY 1973, 102.

Table 1. Published and famous building inscriptions from Aquincum*

Nr.	Dedicatio	Who?	Status	What?
01.	–	<i>Caius Iulius Severus</i>	<i>magister coll. fabrum</i>	<i>...silanum pecunia sua fecit...</i>
02.	–	<i>...L. Sept./ S]everus et M. [Aur. Antoninus/ Aug]usti</i>	<i>[Imperat]ores d[d(omini) nn(ostr)]...</i>	<i>...templu(m) D[olicheni ve]t[us]tate conlap[su]m res- titu[erun]t...</i>
03.	–	<i>C. Cornelius Corinthus</i>	<i>augustalis</i>	<i>splendidissimo (!) templum [refecit]</i>
04.	<i>Deae Syriae et Balti ...</i>	<i>Caius Iulius Sextinus</i>	<i>conductor</i>	<i>...arcum cum ianuis tegu[ll]a tectum...</i>
05.	–	<i>Caius Titius Antonius Peculia- ris</i>	<i>dec. col. Sept. Aq. item dec. m. Sing.</i>	<i>...ornamentum forus...d(ono) d(edit)</i>
06.	–	<i>Caius Titius Antonius Peculia- ris</i>	<i>dec. col. Aq. dec. m. Sing...</i>	<i>...nymphaeum pecunia sua fecit et aquam induxit</i>
07.	<i>Pro salute d(omini n(ostr)] imp(eratoris) M(arci) Aurel(ii) Antonini Aug(usti)</i>	<i>Aurelius Florus, Aurelius Mercator</i>	<i>duumviri col. Aq.</i>	<i>...templum [Ne]mesis vetustate [con]lapsu[m] restituerunt...</i>
08.	<i>He[rculi] sacrum</i>	<i>[sub cura---]</i>	?	<i>...templum Herculis [vetust(ate) con]lapsu[m] resti- tut]...</i>
09.	–	<i>P. Turranius Firminus</i>	<i>veteranus</i>	<i>...excubitorium ad tutel(am) signor(um)...</i>
10.	<i>Pro sal(ute) d(omini) n(ostr)] Aug(usti)</i>	<i>Caius Iulius Pacatus, Domit.Domitianus, Ti. Asinius Felicianus, Aur. Nigrinus, T. Sept. Ingenus, Cn. M. Masvetus, Vibius Lucius)</i>	<i>[m(agistro)]f(ani) colleg(ii) ... and dec(urione) dec(uriae)</i>	<i>...cocinatorium / col- lat(ionibus) suis...</i>
11.	–	<i>Claudius Claudianus</i>	<i>centurio</i>	Fulfillment of the building vow
12.	–	<i>Claudius Sextinus</i>	<i>beneficiarius legati</i>	<i>templum / a [so]llo rele/vavit</i>
13.	–	<i>Ael. Optatus, Ael. Candidatus, Macr.Sabinianus, Iul. Secun- dianus, Iul. Emeritus, Cass. Fuscus, Iul. Probinus, Ael. Urbanus, Publ. Martinus, Val. Festus, Iul. Alexander, Fl. Emeritus, Val. Clementinus, Iul. Priscianus, Ver. Verissimus, Iul. Ingenus, Iul. Celerinus, Iun. Adiutor, Aur. Lupus, Fl. Celsi- nus, Aur. Pertinax</i>	?	<i>Scola speculatorum legionum I et II adiutricium... refecta...</i>
14.	–	<i>M. Aur. Severus [Alexander]...</i>	<i>Imp. Caesar</i>	<i>balneum</i>
15.	<i>Genio v[ale]tudin(arii?) leg(ionis)] II adi(utricis)</i>	<i>Au[r(eliu)s]...</i>	?	<i>...templum] a solo sum[ptibus suis] cum cubicu[lo] et porti- cum]</i>
16.	–	<i>Aurelius Iaunarius</i>	?	<i>...inpendis suis fecit</i>
17.	–	<i>Aurelius Iaunarius</i>	<i>tribunus leg. II adiutricis</i>	<i>temple (?)</i>
18.	<i>Balti diae divinae et Dias- uriae</i>	<i>T. Fl(avius)</i>	?	<i>templum f(ecit)</i>
19.	–	<i>....., Aurelius A..., Vibianus, Rusticus, Rusticianus</i>	<i>dec. col. Aq., duumviri, adiutor officii</i>	<i>...[tab(ernas)] inpendis suis fecerunt...</i>
20.	–	?	<i>leg. augg. p.p.</i>	<i>...dedicante...</i>
21.	–	<i>?...tor V...</i>	?	?

* I would like to thank Margit Németh for her collaboration at this part.

Where?	When?	Provenance, (Coll., Inv.nr.)	Literature
?	201	Aq. Military Town (coll. Hung. Nat. Mus.)	CIL III 3580; FRÖHLICH 1891, 162; PÓCZY 1983, 259.
?	202	Sárpentele (secondary deposit)	CIL III 3342; ALFÖLDI 1940, 197–198.
?	190–210 ?	Óbuda, (AqM. 64.10.16.)	CIL III 3579; KUZSINSZKY 1897, 138; L. NAGY 1942, 579; T. NAGY 1973, 134.
?	192–211	Aq. Civil Town (AqM. 64.10.9.)	KUZSINSZKY 1937, 135; L. NAGY 1942, 580; T. NAGY 1973, 134.
?	192–211	Aq. Military Town (Victoria brickfabric)	CIL III 10495; FRÖHLICH 1891, 160; PÓCZY 1983, 259.
?	193–211	Bátmonostor (secondary deposit)	CIL III 10496=6452; TORMA 1874, 141; L. NAGY 1942, 580; FITZ 1982, 32.
?	214	Aq. Civil Town, amphitheater (AqM. 64.10.159.)	CIL III 10439; FRÖHLICH 1891, 156; L. NAGY 1942, 583; T. NAGY 1973, 104.
?	216	Aq. legionary fortress (AqM. 81.7.31.)	BÁNOSI 1984, 46, 51.
?	216	Buda	CIL III 3526; L. NAGY 1942, 404; FITZ 1962, 80; BARKÓCZI 1964, 344, Nr. 113.
?	223	Pest, curia (AqM. 63.10.53.)	KUZSINSZKY 1904, 166–167; BARKÓCZI 1964, Nr. 191.
?	230	Óbuda, Kiscell (AqM 63.10.109.)	CIL III 3515; L. NAGY 1942, 576/97; T. NAGY 1973, 102.
?	228	Budai vár (AqM. 64.10.141.)	SZILÁGYI 1950, 320; NÉMETH 1999, Nr. 142.
?	228	Óbuda	CIL III 3524 BARKÓCZI 1964, 110.
<i>...a solo territorio leg(ionis)/ II ad(iutricis)...</i>	222–235	Budaújlak (AqM. 63.10.65.)	CIL III 10489; L. NAGY 1942, 580; PÓCZY 1983, 269; NÉMETH 1999, Nr. 178.
?	222–235	Óbuda, Shipyard Island (coll. Hung. Nat. Mus.)	CIL III 10403; NAGY L. 1942, 580; T. NAGY 1973, 102.
?	222–235	Óbuda, Lajos and Kulcsár utca	L. NAGY 1942, 580.
?	222–235	?	L. NAGY 1942, 580 (CIL 10208?)
?	Severan	Óbuda (coll. Hung. Nat. Mus.)	CIL III 10393.
?	Severan ?	Óbuda, Gázgyár, Aq. Civil Town (AqM. 63.10.114.)	SZILÁGYI 1967, 73–75, Nr. 5; NÉMETH 1999, Nr. 95.
?	Severan ?	Óbuda, Civil Town (AqM. 63.10.82.)	CIL III 10478; KUZSINSZKY 1900, 44; NÉMETH 1999, Nr. 35.
?	Severan ?	Óbuda, Külső Szentendrei út, Aq. Civil Town (AqM. 63.10.66.)	T. NAGY 1943, 467; NÉMETH 1999, Nr. 54.

Regrettably, the majority of the building inscriptions were found either in the 19th century or not in their original places. So we have barely any data from the sites of the constructions. It is, nevertheless, certain that the constructions marked in the inscriptions were scattered all over the town but we do not know in what proportions. Judged from the places where the inscriptions were found, which, as we have already emphasised, is not identical to the relevant construction sites, there was an approximately even distribution between the territories of the civil town, the military town and the legionary camp. Regarding the circumstance that more civilians and administrators working in the self-government of the town ordered inscriptions than soldiers, we could suppose that the majority of the buildings mentioned in the inscriptions stood in the civil town or the *canabae*. From this respect. *P. Turrianus Firminus veteranus*'s inscription is interesting. He was the leader of the commander's office of *legio II Adiutrix* and had a watch cabin, *excubitorium*, built from his own money within the camp, probably next to the building of the *principia*,¹²⁴ in Caracalla's time (A. D. 216). Uncharacteristically, the inscription is the document to a typically private construction project within the territory of the legionary camp.¹²⁵ The building inscription of the Hercules shrine refers to another construction in the territory of the camp the very same year.¹²⁶ The Dolichenus shrine was reconstructed also in the legionary camp during Septimius Severus's reign (A. D. 202), according to the inscription.¹²⁷ In the military town, *C. Titius Peculiaris* ornamented the forum from his own money (A. D. 192–211) and *C. Iulius Severus collegium fabrum magister* had a fountain built.¹²⁸ Most probably constructions in the civil town are documented by the inscriptions commemorating the building of a shrine by *C. Cornelius Corinthus* (A. D. 190–210), the reconstruction of the Nemesis shrine by *Aurelius Florus* and *Aurelius Mercator* (A. D. 214) and the raising of a decorative gate by *C. Iulius Sextinus* (A. D. 192–211).¹²⁹

The names of several persons related to construction activities in Aquincum appear several times, or can be found elsewhere in the province as well. Such is the above mentioned *C. Titius Antoninus Peculiaris*¹³⁰ *decurio* in Aquincum, who was also member of the town council of Singidunum and high priest of the emperor cult. He financed not only the decoration of the forum of the military town, but also had a *nymphaeum* built. We can meet his name on a customs seal from Savaria, where he is marked as a tax-farmer of provincial customs. This fact indicates his great economic influence reaching beyond the boundaries of the town of Aquincum.¹³¹ Another person of the category was *C. Cornelius Corinthus*, who, beside his inscription commemorating the reconstruction of a temple, raised an altar stone offered to Silvanus. The latter names the job of the liberated slave: banker (*nummularius*).¹³²

In Carnuntum, where there are less building inscriptions than in Aquincum, the majority of the evaluable data came from the time of Septimius Severus, which is understandable regarding the historical events. Less inscriptions can be dated from Caracalla's time and even less from the time when Severus Alexander reigned.¹³³ In Carnuntum, the inscribed monuments also provide a continuous documentation of the 40 years of constructions in the Severus period in all the three areas of the town (civil town, military town and legionary camp). The inscribed monuments imply that the construction boom lasted much longer in Aquincum, and a larger proportion was undertaken by the expanding layer of wealthier citizens, whose role in the town administration and weight in the economy had significantly grown. The higher number of inscriptions in Aquincum can also indicate that this layer was stronger and perhaps counted more people in Aquincum.

To sum up the above: changes referred to as “constructions of the Severus period” can be evaluated as activities carried out in several waves and stages in Aquincum as well. We tried to separate the sub-

¹²⁴ SZIRMAI 1976, 104.

¹²⁵ FITZ 1962, 80.

¹²⁶ BÁNOSI 1984, 43–51.

¹²⁷ J. FITZ: Der Besuch des Septimius Severus in Pannonien im Jahre 202 u. Z. *ActaArchHung* 11 (1959) 237ff.

¹²⁸ On both inscriptions from the military town see PÓCZY 1983, 259.

¹²⁹ T. NAGY 1973, 104, 134.

¹³⁰ L. NAGY 1942, 580. On the knightly descent recently J. FITZ: *Pannonsche Ritter*. *Alba Regia* 29 (2000) 126, 132.

¹³¹ TÓTH 1998, 25–26.

¹³² GY. ÜRÖGDY: A banküzlet nyomai Aquincumban (Spuren von Bankgeschäften in Aquincum). *BudRég* 21 (1964) 239–245; K. PÓCZY–P. ZSIDI: Gods, Soldiers, Citizens in Aquincum. Guide to the exhibition. Budapest 1995, 31.

¹³³ KANDLER 2000, 45–47.

sequent construction phases, which followed closely one after the other, from the results of recent excavations and epigraphic data, first of all in the case of the civil town.¹³⁴ We had to learn, however, that the topographic changes in the legionary camp and the military town cannot be neglected if we want to understand the changes in the plan of the civil town. The constructions of complex town planning concepts, which changed the aspect of each topographic unit, were not started directly after the Marcomannic wars. This also shows, that there need not have been a direct contact between the war devastation and the construction boom. The constructions in the Commodus period, which were basically of strategic importance, were followed by greater constructions, already adjusted to town planning aspects, usually in connection to actual political purposes (imperial visitation, administrative changes, etc.)¹³⁵ In Septimius Severus's time it was the visit of the emperor in A. D. 202 which provided the occasion for constructions that changed the whole topography. In Caracalla's time, beside the visitation of the emperor, it was mainly the increased administrative task of the capital of the province that necessitated the modification of the former town structure. The shifting of the provincial border (A. D. 214) brought about changes not only in the political contact system, the military and civil administration¹³⁶ but also in the aspect and structure of the capital of the province. Beside the above described constructions of the Severus period that changed the town structure and were certainly financed by state investments, the traces of smaller architectural reconstructions can be found in each settlement unit, which were accomplished to meet the local demands. Most of these private constructions can be dated from the reign of Severus Alexander. The many stone fragments that came from this period show that the wealthy, economically potent layer of the town population took a significant part in the constructions and liked to have their grandiose activity commemorated in inscriptions.

The archaeological and epigraphic data delineated some features of the constructions in the civil town during the Severus period. The changes in the structure and the aspect of the civil town at the end of the 2nd century and the beginning of the 3rd century were the consequences of several construction activities of complex town-planning that equally affected the legionary camp, the military camp and the civil town. The two most important factors that provided occasions to the planned modification of the town structure were the visitation of the emperor (A. D. 202) after the town had been raised to the *colonia* rank, and the modification of the frontier in A. D. 214. Archaeological data suggest that the street system was drastically changed in consequence of the latter event. At that time, the stress was shifted from the road that started from the northern gate of the legionary camp to the road that ran along the eastern side of the legionary camp, which went on along the Danube bank toward the civil town, then circumvented it in the east.¹³⁷ The shift of stress resulted an exchange of functions in the area around the civil town (exchange between cemeteries, shrine districts and industrial sites). Within the town, the east-west directed main road

¹³⁴ The building campaigns that were accomplished in a short time are very difficult to separate, especially because construction itself starts with demolition.

¹³⁵ Searching for the causes of the large construction wave after the Marcomannic wars, we shall not deal with the climatic change demonstrated from after 186 and its possible consequences in Aquincum (W. VETTERS: *Der Taupo und das Klima um 200 A. D. in Europa*. In: *Markomannenkriege 1994*, 457–461; H. ZABEHLICKY: *Kriegs- oder Klimafolgen in archäologischen Befunden?* In: *Markomannenkriege 1994*, 463–469). The joint research project of the Aquincum Museum and the Geographical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences researches into the geomorphological changes of the Aquincum area within the frames of the National Scientific Research Foundation. The research was launched from the fact that many data had been found (traces of floods, significant elevations of the terrain) that can help to draw, at least partially, the geographical frames and its changes that defined the environment of Aquincum in the Roman period.

¹³⁶ With the change of the provincial border the territory of

Pannonia inferior grew with a legion and its camp and also with large territories. On this topic recently J. FITZ: *Epigraphica XV. 28. Die Grenze Pannonia Superioris und Inferioris nach 214. Alba Regia 29 (2000) 160–161*. The boundaries and legislation (taxation, jurisdiction, etc.) had to be modified in several towns. The epigraphic evidence of the latter see in Á. SZABÓ: *Suetrius Sabinus c. v. "újabb" felirata Pannoniából*. *Ad CIL III 10490 = RD 369. FolArch 48 (2000) 85–109*. It was read in the conference "Town development in the Antiquity and epigraphy" in November 2000. The short summary of the paper read under the title "Iudex vice Caesaris in Pannonia. A so far unknown inscription of Suetrius Sabinus" In: Gy. NÉMETH: "Az ókori városfejlődés és az epigraphica" (*Antique town development and epigraphy*). *Ókortudományi Értesítő 7 (2001) 19*. On Suetrius Sabinus's mission earlier J. FITZ: L. Alfenus Avitianus. *AT 8 (1961) 92*.

¹³⁷ This road orientation is not a unique phenomenon, since, for example, a similar one can be found in the civil town of Vindobona. O. HARL: *Der Verlauf der Limesstrasse im Stadtgebiet von Wien. Roman Frontier Studies 1989*, 255ff.

stepped functionally in the place of the former north-south directed one. The significance of this road was underlined by the fact that it led westwards towards Brigetio, which had freshly been attached to the province. Several milestones attest to the renovation of the section of the road outside the town in the Severus period.¹³⁸ The change of the main road necessitated a new division of lots in the civil town, which was more-or-less adjusted to the former one. Probably this new division caused the slight modification in the orientation that could be observed at the reconstruction of the old buildings. Parallely, the floor level was significantly raised. The above described frames, which were delineated by the constructions certainly financed from state budget, were filled in during the decades following Caracalla's reign. The wealthy layer of the town, which was represented in the leadership of the self-government and contained a significant proportion of population elements of eastern origin, took also an active part in the financing of these constructions.

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¹³⁸ L. NAGY 1942, 383, note 64, compare note 58.

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