

## LATEST RESEARCH IN POETOVIO

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### Izleček

[Novejše raziskave v Petovionii]

Nove raziskave Petovione v nasprotju s starejšimi domnevmi kažejo, da je legijski tabor v 1. st. ležal na levem bregu Drave, na območju Vičave in Panorame. Lokacijo dokazuje izkopano obzidje s stolpom (lesena in zidana faza), dodatno pa jo potrjujejo drobne najdbe vojaške opreme in obrisi domnevnih vojaških barak, ki so vidni na georadarskih posnetkih.

V drugem delu prispevka na podlagi georadarskih raziskav na Panorami predstavljamo urbanistični razvoj kolonije Petovione v 2. in 3. st. Sledijo kratki pregledi novejših raziskav svetišč, gospodarskih dejavnosti (lončarstvo, steklarstvo, pridobivanje marmorja in trgovina z marmornimi izdelki) ter mestnega teritorija.

**Ključne besede:** Zgornja Panonija, Petoviona, legijski tabor, kolonija, urbanizem, lončarstvo, steklarstvo, marmor, kamnoseštvo, trgovina z marmorjem, mestno ozemlje

### Abstract

Contrary to earlier assumptions, the new research of Poetovio indicates that in the 1st century, the main military fortress was situated on the left bank of the Drava in the area of Vičava and Panorama. The location is confirmed by the excavated defensive wall with a tower (the wooden and masonry phases), as well as by the concentration of small military finds and the outlines of the presumed military barracks visible on georadar images.

The second part presents the urban development of the colony in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, as revealed by the georadar survey at Panorama. This is followed by brief overviews of more recent research on sanctuaries, economic activities (pottery, glassmaking, marble production and trade) and the town territory.

**Keywords:** Pannonia Superior, Poetovio, legionary fortress, colonia, urbanism, production of pottery, glassmaking, stonemasonry workshops, marble trade, town territory

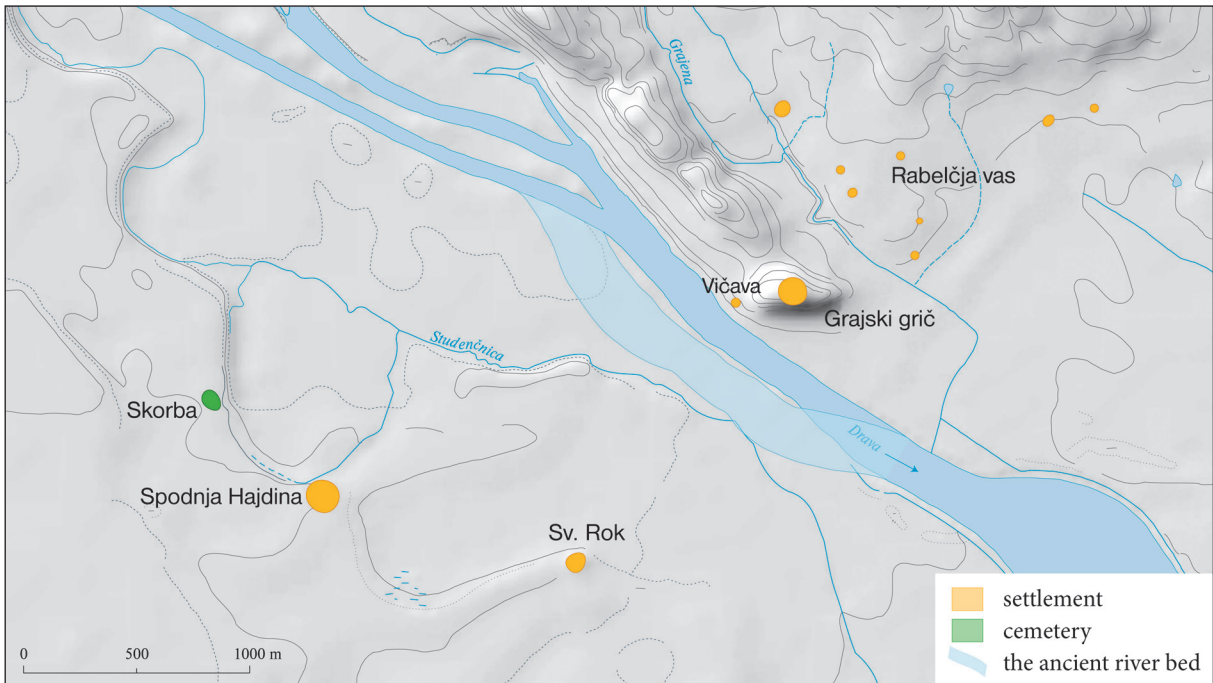


Fig. 1: Ptuj. Archaeological sites of the Late Iron Age. (Adapted from Horvat, Dolenc Vičič 2010, Fig. 46.)

New evidence connected to the Roman army in Poetovio will be presented in this contribution along with the urbanistic development of *Colonia Ulpia Traiana Poetovio* and its economic activities.<sup>1</sup> The study supplements several earlier works. A short presentation of the topography and development of the Roman town of Poetovio was produced in 2003.<sup>2</sup> General and detailed maps with settlement areas and cemeteries issued then are still valid (Fig. 1–2). In 2014, an overview article by Marjeta Šašel Kos was published with an emphasis on historical sources and epigraphic monuments.<sup>3</sup>

Poetovio was built on an old settlement point along the Amber Route and by the passage over the Drava, i.e. at the crossroads of long distance routes connecting the Northern Adriatic area, the eastern Alps, and the Carpathian Basin.<sup>4</sup> Initially, the territory of Poetovio was part of the Norican kingdom. After the latter was annexed to the Roman Empire (around 15 BC) Poetovio was included in Illyricum and later in the province of Pannonia or Pannonia Superior. A legionary fortress was soon set up in Poetovio. The first legion known here was *legio VIII*

<sup>1</sup> The research was supported by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency and by the City of Ptuj (Mestna občina Ptuj) (Project L6-4607). Graphics by Dragotin Valoh and Mateja Belak (both ZRC SAZU, Institute of Archaeology), translation by Maja Sužnik.

<sup>2</sup> Horvat et al. 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Šašel Kos 2014. Recent analyses of historical and epigraphic sources: ILSL 2/1; Fertl 2015; Visočnik 2015; Visočnik 2019; Ragolič 2015; Ragolič, Vomer Gojkovič 2016; Le Roux 2016; Lovenjak 2019; Šašel Kos 2020.

<sup>4</sup> On the traffic location of Poetovio e.g. Mikl Curk 2005.

*Augusta*, which probably arrived at the beginning of the 1st century AD. At the end of 45 or at the beginning of 46, it was replaced by *legio XIII Gemina*. At the end of the 1st century, the legion was transferred to Vindobona.<sup>5</sup>

Between 98 and 102, the *Colonia Ulpia Traiana Poetovio* was founded. It was a place of the records office of *Pannonia Superior (tabularium)*, of the central office for collecting inheritance tax in both Pannonias (*XX hereditatum ultrarumque Pannoniarum*), and of the central offices of the Illyrian customs zone.<sup>6</sup> At the peak of its prosperity, the colony extended over both banks of the Drava and approximately 3.5km along the main road (Fig. 2).<sup>7</sup>

Since Diocletian's reforms, Poetovio was included in the province of Noricum Mediterraneum. In the Late Roman period, the town shrank significantly.<sup>8</sup> It is last mentioned in 449 as an intermediate station on the route of the West Roman mission from Ravenna to Atilla's court.<sup>9</sup>

In the past two millennia, the Drava has changed its course several times, widened the floodplain, and carried away great patches of the Roman settlement. On the right bank, it has washed away the part located on the river terrace north of the road towards Celeia, including the part with the Roman bridge. It has also bitten into

<sup>5</sup> Šašel Kos 2014, 139–145.

<sup>6</sup> Šašel Kos 2014, 145–150.

<sup>7</sup> Horvat et al. 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Ciglencečki 1993; Ciglencečki 2023, 34–35; Horvat et al. 2003; Mikl Curk 2005, 243–247, 251; ILSL 2/1, 12.

<sup>9</sup> Šašel Kos 1994a; Šašel Kos 1994b.

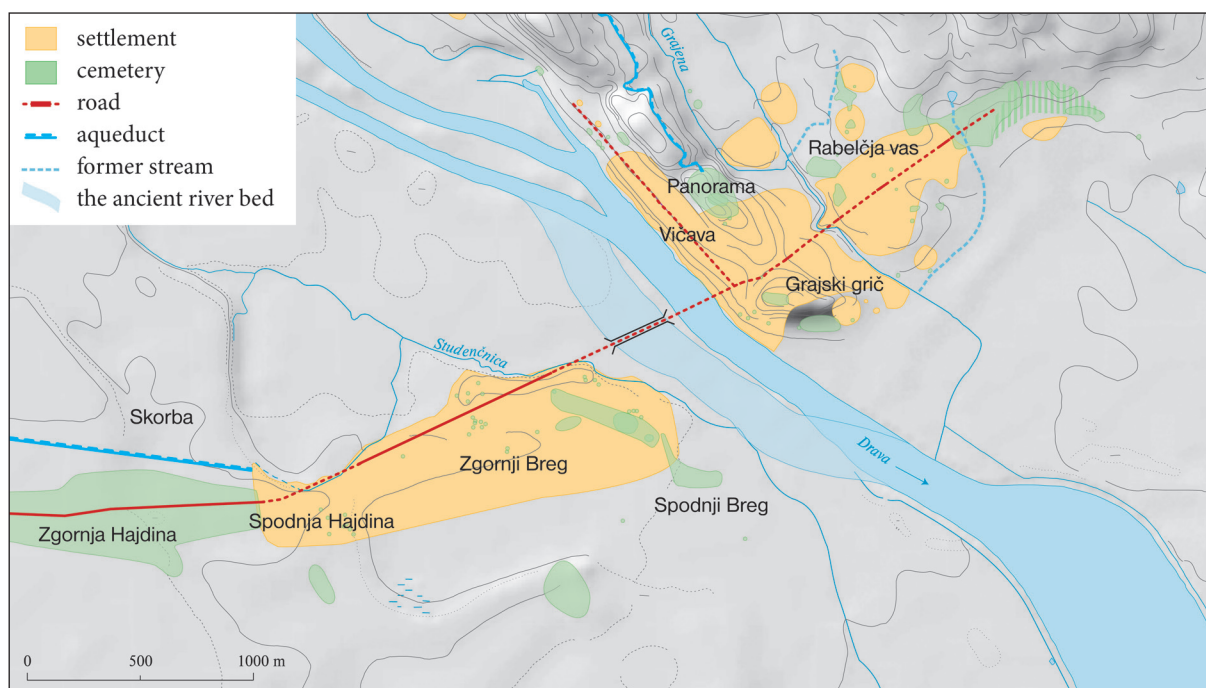


Fig. 2: The largest extension of The Roman settlement in Poetovio. (Based on Horvat et al. 2003, Fig. 3.)

the left bank and at Vičava carried away a strip almost 150 m wide that probably represented around two thirds of the town centre of Poetovio (Fig. 2).<sup>10</sup>

## THE BEGINNING OF THE ROMAN SETTLEMENT IN THE 1st CENTURY AND THE ROMAN ARMY

### THE RIGHT BANK OF THE DRAVA

In the Middle La Tène period, several hamlets were scattered over the plains in the area of Ptuj (Fig. 1).<sup>11</sup> At Spodnja Hajdina, a pottery furnace was discovered dated to the transition from the Middle La Tène to the Late La Tène period. It was probably located in a settlement to which the Middle La Tène cemetery in Skorba also belonged.<sup>12</sup> Late La Tène settlement traces have not been found.

Traces of wooden buildings from the 1st century AD were discovered at roughly the same area – in Spodnja Hajdina and in the western part of Zgornji Breg (Fig. 2). However, the researched areas were not big enough to make the reconstruction of these buildings

possible. Nevertheless, remains of a bronze production workshop were discovered.<sup>13</sup> At Zgornji Breg, in the area of wooden buildings from the first half of the 1st century AD, a pottery workshop was built in the Flavian period.<sup>14</sup> Also testifying to the importance of this area is an altar found at Zgornji Breg, which was probably dedicated to Jupiter by Hadrian in 95, when he was as the tribune of *legio II Adiutrix* on the way to Aquincum.<sup>15</sup> Graves from the 1st century AD were found at the nearby western cemetery of Poetovio, including tombstones of active soldiers and veterans.<sup>16</sup>

The aqueduct built with bricks with stamps of *legio XIII Gemina* came from the north-west and was directed towards the territory north of Spodnja Hajdina,<sup>17</sup> i.e. towards the vast area that was later carried away by the river.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the researchers assumed that the legionary fortress was constructed in this destroyed area, north of the road Poetovio – Celeia. Settlement traces from the 1st century AD south of the road (at Spodnja Hajdina and Zgornji Breg) were interpreted as the remains of

<sup>10</sup> Gaspari et al. 2021, 74–75. Cf. Curk 1999, 1–2; Mikl Curk, Tušek 1985, 285–288; Gaspari 2001; Horvat et al. 2003, 161, 172; Mikl Curk 2004; Mikl Curk 2005, 250–251.

<sup>11</sup> Božič 1993, 197; Tomanič Jevremov, Guštin 1996, 267–269; Horvat et al. 2003, 155, Fig. 2; Horvat, Dolenc Vičič 2010, 159–160, Fig. 46.

<sup>12</sup> Tomanič Jevremov, Guštin 1996. Also Božič 1993, 197.

<sup>13</sup> Settlement traces of the 1st century AD are not systematically published. Schmid 1935, 132–134; Šašel 1953; Mikl 1960–1961, 171–172, Pl. 3: 7; Horvat et al. 2003, 173–174.

<sup>14</sup> Excavations of 1999 - Mariborska cesta 68, plot nos. 1087/1, 3, cadastral unit Hajdina. Mikl Curk, Lubšina Tušek 2002, 262–264.

<sup>15</sup> ILJug 1141; HD036290; Šašel Kos 2014, 144–145.

<sup>16</sup> Saria, Klemenc 1939, 24–27; Istenič 1999, 203–206; Horvat et al. 2003, 173; ILSI 2/1, Nos. 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19.

<sup>17</sup> Klemenc, Saria 1936, 50; Saria, Klemenc 1939, 27–28.

<sup>18</sup> Horvat et al. 2003, 172–173.

*canabae*.<sup>19</sup> Further development of Poetovio speaks in favour of this hypothesis. In the 2nd and 3rd centuries, an important town district was formed in the area of Spodnja Hajdina with a series of sanctuaries and probably also the main offices of the Illyrian customs zone.<sup>20</sup>

The 1st century AD settlement at Spodnja Hajdina and Zgornji Breg has not been systematically researched. With the exception of two spearheads conditionally dated to the early period of the settlement,<sup>21</sup> and a fragment of the decorated scabbard of a Mainz type sword,<sup>22</sup> no traces of Early Roman military equipment are known from the area. Hence, the question of the existence of a military fortress on the right bank remains open.

### THE LEFT BANK OF THE DRAVA

In the Late La Tène period, a settlement existed at Grajski grič (Castle Hill) above the most appropriate river crossing.<sup>23</sup> The form of a hilltop settlement was the prevalent characteristic in the wider South-Eastern Alpine area in this period.<sup>24</sup> However, the river bank in Vičava below Grajski grič was also populated simultaneously (*Fig. 1; 3: 1*).<sup>25</sup> A similar topographic situation, i.e. populated foothills beside the river, can also be noticed in the Late La Tène period in *Emona*<sup>26</sup> and *Celeia*.<sup>27</sup> A Late La Tène settlement in Zollfeld in Carinthia was located in the vicinity of the Glan River, on the plain under Magdalensberg.<sup>28</sup> The hill and its foothills in *Teurnia*, which is situated immediately by the Drava, were populated in the La Tène period.<sup>29</sup> On a low terrace above a favourable passage over the Drava, the La Tène settlement of Görz near Feistritz an der Drau is located.<sup>30</sup> It appears that strong traffic and trade links

<sup>19</sup> Thus e.g. Klemenc, Saria 1936, 58; Mikl Curk, Lubšina Tušek 2002, 262–264, *Fig. 2*.

<sup>20</sup> Horvat et al. 2003, 173–176.

<sup>21</sup> Šašel 1953, *Fig. 4: 1–2*.

<sup>22</sup> Abramič 1914, 142–144, *Fig. 129*. Dated to the second quarter of the 1st century AD: Gonzenbach 1966, 189, *Fig. 7: 1*; Künzl 1996, 411–412, *Pl. 53: 2*. The scabbard was found near the road in the area of the Roman cemetery. The site can be approximately located at present-day plot Nos. 481/1 and 481/3 (former 481; the Rozman plot) of the Hajdina cadastral unit with the help of document LMJ 13 published in Istenič 1999, 26, *Fig. 19*. It is kept by Pokrajinski muzej Maribor (Maribor Regional Museum), No. P - 259.

<sup>23</sup> Božič 1993, 197–198; Tomanič Jevremov, Guštin 1996, 267–268; Tomanič Jevremov 2010.

<sup>24</sup> Božič 1999, 200–201, 212; Laharnar 2020.

<sup>25</sup> Vičava 4, plot no. 1053, cadastral unit Ptuj; Janežič 2019a.

<sup>26</sup> Vičič 1994; Novšak et al. 2017.

<sup>27</sup> Gaspari et al. 2001; Tiefengraber 2011.

<sup>28</sup> Settlement between Willersdorf and St. Michael am Zollfeld: Dolenz et al. 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Gugl 2000, 129–135; Gugl 2001, 306–309, 325–328.

<sup>30</sup> Gugl 2000, 131–133; Gugl 2001, 325–327.

→ *Fig. 3*: Poetovio, the area of Vičava and Panorama. Town grid according to the geophysical survey and small scale excavations: **1** – Vičava no. 4; **2** – Vičava no. 5; **3** – excavation in 1975; **4** – Excavation in 1912; **5** – Defensive wall with tower excavated in 2020; **6** – Approximate location of the early Christian church.

of certain central settlements in the Eastern Alps and their outskirts dictated the development of settlement cores immediately by the rivers.

The Late La Tène layers at Vičava were covered by the Roman settlement of the 1st century (*Fig. 3: 1*).<sup>31</sup> Parts of military equipment from the 1st century – an armour buckle, a leather strap end, and a horse equipment – stand out among finds from the Roman layers.<sup>32</sup>

Approximately 60 m to the north, excavations in 2010 and 2011 unearthed remains of wooden buildings from the 1st century built with horizontal wooden beams and posts (*Fig. 3: 2*). It was not possible to reconstruct building floor plans due to later destruction.<sup>33</sup> In layers with wooden architecture, parts of military equipment were found: projectile heads, a stone ball, composite bow ear-lath made from bone, handguard plate of a Mainz type sword, hinged fittings, buckles and tie loops of *lorica segmentata*, scales of *lorica squamata*, and button-and-loop fasteners. Cavalry equipment was represented by a junction phalera, two pendants, and a rear left-hand piece of a saddle horn. A tegula fragment with a stamp of *legio XIII Gemina* was discovered.<sup>34</sup> The finds also included many relief oil lamps and fine tableware pottery from Italy, e.g. Arretine sigillata and thin-walled pottery. Also present were Dr. 6b oil amphorae. Other types of vessels were made in local workshops.<sup>35</sup> Hence, prior to the foundation of the colony, a Roman settlement was built at Vičava, which could have been connected to the army with numerous small finds.

The Panorama hill which was densely built in Roman period is located above Vičava. Geophysical survey revealed that a strong anomaly runs along the edge of the steep north-eastern slope. It appeared that it could be a defensive wall with rectangular towers (*Fig. 3*).<sup>36</sup> In 2020, a part of the presumed defensive wall and tower was researched (*Fig. 3: 5; 4; 5*). In a trench positioned at the edge between the gentle south-eastern and steep

<sup>31</sup> Vičava 4, plot no. 1053, cadastral unit Ptuj; Janežič 2019a.

<sup>32</sup> Janežič 2019a, 299, *Pl. 1: 1; 6: 46,47*.

<sup>33</sup> Vičava 5, plot no. 995/13, cadastral unit Ptuj (area of the former barracks): Janežič, Lazar 2015, 258–261. Schindler-Kaudelka, Janežič 2019, 115–118 (pottery finds; Phase 1 and Phase 2).

<sup>34</sup> Janežič, Lazar 2015; Istenič et al. 2018.

<sup>35</sup> Schindler-Kaudelka, Janežič 2019, 117–118.

<sup>36</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, structure XXX, p. 40, 67, *Pl. 31: 15*.



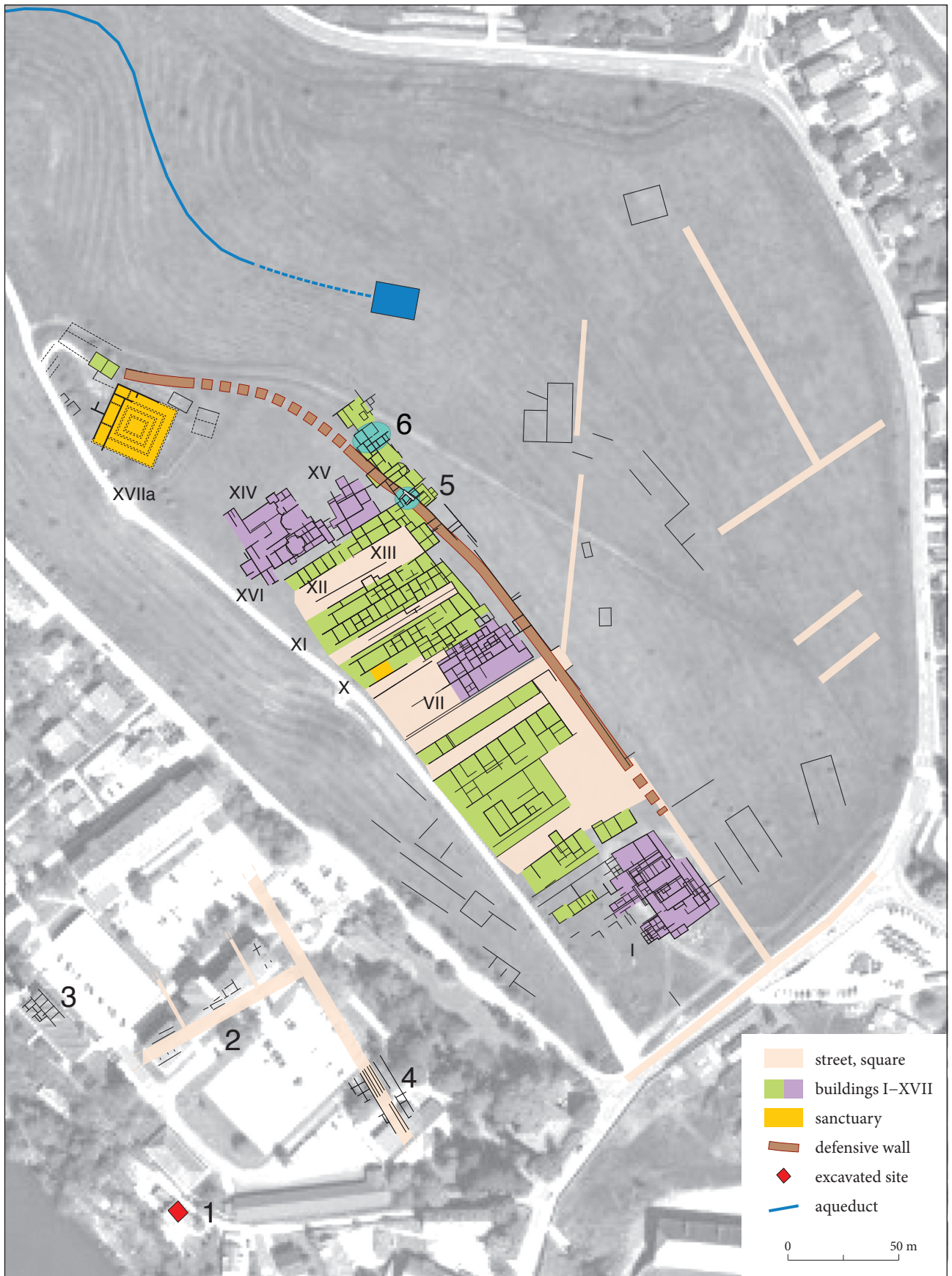




Fig. 4: Poetovio, Panorama. Interpretation of the GPR results and the tower excavated in 2020. (Adapted from Horvat et al. 2020, Pl. 27.)

north-eastern slopes four phases of Roman period building activities were found.

First, several narrow terraces were dug into the slope and thus the area was prepared for construction. A double row of postholes was discovered in the natural base. Behind them, up the slope, beds for wooden beams could be seen which met at an approximately right angle. We assume that a wooden palisade made of vertical piles was constructed at the edge of the slope and the space

behind it was strengthened with horizontal beams. The beams were probably the bottom part of a non-survived earth embankment. According to the analogies, these are the remains of a wooden and earth defensive wall of the Roman military fortress.<sup>37</sup>

In Phase 2 the wooden palisade was removed and a 1.2 m-wide stone defensive wall was built in its place. The foundations were made from river pebbles thickly

<sup>37</sup> Reddé et al. 2006, 79–80; Fischer 2012, 256.

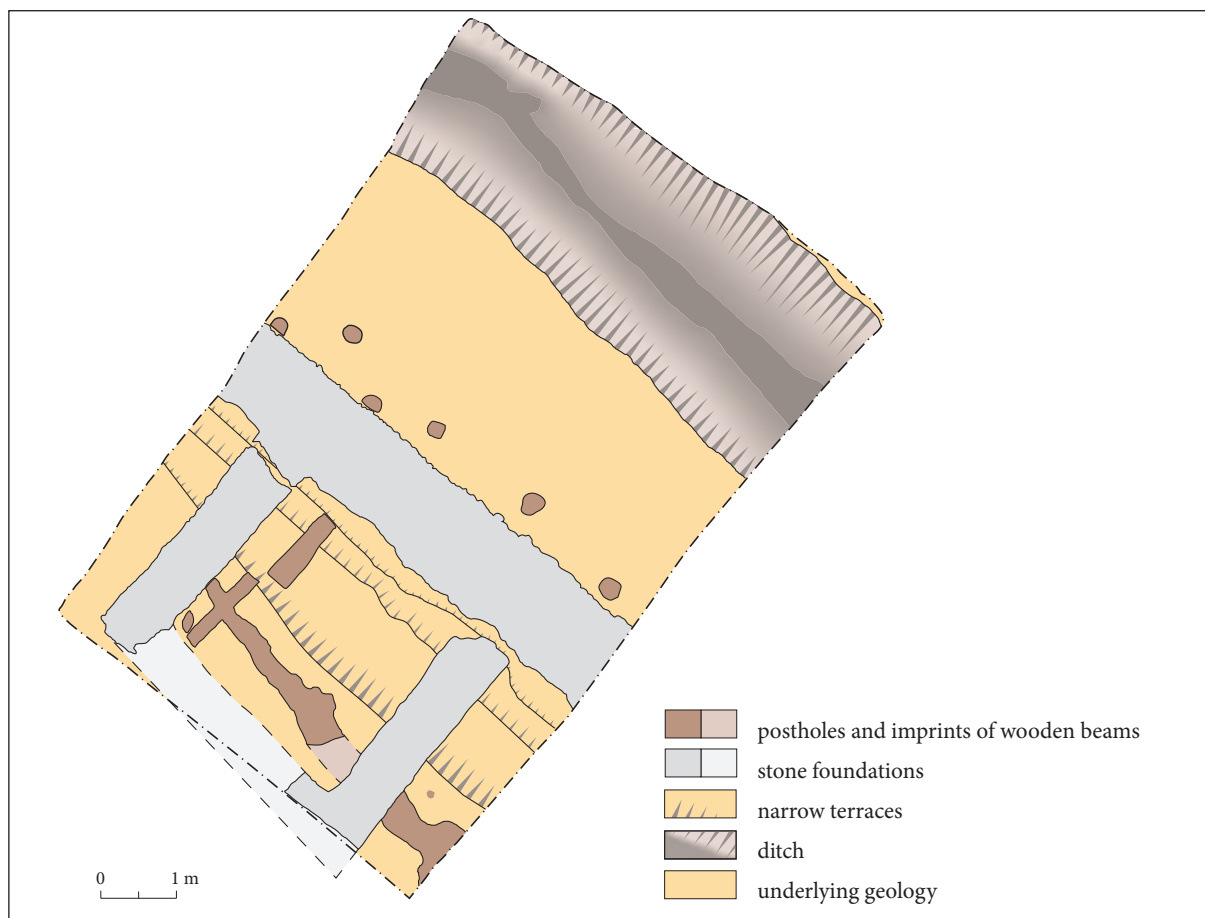


Fig. 5: Poetovio, Panorama. Layout of the 2020 excavation.

covered with mortar, while the walls above them were made of limestone quarry stones. Simultaneously with the defensive wall a rectangular tower was built on the inner side. In the area of the tower, the earth embankment with beams from Phase 1 was probably completely removed. After the construction was completed, the tower foundations were filled with a new earth embankment. The tower roof was probably made of tegulae.

On the slope beneath the defensive wall, a ditch with a V-cross-section was located which was 1.8 m deep and 2.5 to 3 m wide on top. Walls were lined with layers of turf or wooden logs. The sharp edges of the ditch indicate that it was cleaned regularly. The space between the ditch and the stone defensive wall was filled and levelled with a thick layer of mixed material, which was probably dug out of the ditch. The filling covered the remains of the palisade from Phase 1, which would indicate that the ditch was dug out only in the time of the stone defensive wall, i.e. in Phase 2.<sup>38</sup> Thus, Phase 2 represents the renovation of the defensive wall in stone, as can be seen at many military fortresses of the 1st century.<sup>39</sup>

A small number of artefacts found only in the filling of Phase 2 belong to the 1st century and do not enable a more precise dating of both phases of the defensive wall. Among other things, a part of a military belt-fitting was found.

After the defensive wall and the defensive ditch had lost their original function, the ditch was filled with waste material that included numerous small finds. These point to the time from the end of the 1st to the mid-2nd century.

Geophysical research revealed that at least three elongated buildings were located on the gentle slope behind the defensive wall, which were at least 60 m long and around 18–20 m wide (Figs. 3; 4). Structures X and XI were longitudinally divided in two, of which every part was composed of a series of smaller rooms (7 x 3.8–5 m). In front of them was a hallway or portico (about 2.5 m wide). In the north-east (towards the defensive wall), every series ended with larger rooms without the accompanying hallway. Structure XII–XIII could have been designed only as a half series or the second series was later removed.<sup>40</sup> Some walls within

<sup>38</sup> Horvat 2023, 26–29.

<sup>39</sup> Reddé et al. 2006, 32–37, 82–84; Fischer 2012, 257–258.

<sup>40</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 34–39, 52, 68, Pls. 25–35.

the buildings that differ from the basic scheme have shallower or deeper foundations than the others, which indicates that these could be later additions. Elongated buildings divided into two parts with rooms in rows are the typical form of military barracks.<sup>41</sup> Thus we assume that these at Panorama could be also military barracks, probably built simultaneously or soon after the construction of the stone wall. However, rows of small rooms that lined the streets or formed closed complexes may have had a commercial function or may have been used for storage.<sup>42</sup>

In the wider area of Panorama, parts of military equipment were found during various archaeological works or by chance: clips of segmented armours, a helmet cheek-piece, belt buckles, and fittings.<sup>43</sup>

Based on defensive wall remains and *militaria* we assume that a fortress was located at Vičava and Panorama in the 1st century. This could be a place large enough for a legionary fortress, especially if we consider the approximately 150 m-wide riverside strip that the Drava carried away after the Roman period. The fortress thus supposedly spread on two levels: on the first terrace over the river (Vičava) and on the lookout hill (Panorama). Its position near the river crossing and below the two hills, Panorama and Grajski grič, was probably chosen for strategic reasons. The previous La Tène settlement and later development indicate that this is a central point, since the centre of the colony was formed in the area of Vičava in the 2nd century (see further on).

It is not clear what was happening in the 1st century on Grajski grič which enabled surveillance over the wider surroundings of Poetovio. At the top, where the archaeological layers were badly damaged and mixed, some small pieces of early imperial military equipment were found during excavations in 1946 and 1947.<sup>44</sup> On the southern slope, a scabbard of a Pompeji type sword with figural decoration was found.<sup>45</sup> At the eastern foothills, small parts of military equipment were discovered in the area of the 1st century AD pottery furnaces.<sup>46</sup> The presence of the army on Grajski grič is not surprising; however, based on modest data, it is not possible to speak about a potential Early Roman military fort also at this strategic point.

## THE COLONY

The beginnings of the colony in Poetovio were connected to extensive construction works. A fragment of a building inscription from Vičava, which can be supplemented with the name of Emperor Trajan and his titles, indicates that between 102 and 106 the emperor had a public building constructed, possibly the forum. It was discovered in the place where the forum was supposedly located.<sup>47</sup>

In 1912, wooden pilots and stone blocks were found on the right bank of the Drava, which, due to the shifts of the riverbed, probably represent the remains of the left bridgehead (Fig. 2). It was supposed to be a massive stone construction on foundations made of wooden pilots. Since there were no other stone remains in the area of the former riverbed, Gaspari and co-authors believe that the bridge was made of wood.<sup>48</sup> Radiocarbon and dendrochronological studies of the oak pilots revealed that the trees were cut down in the 2nd century, at the end of Hadrian's rule or during the time of one of his successors.<sup>49</sup> A triumphal arch was supposedly erected at the entrance to the bridge, to which a part of the Hadrian's building inscription discovered in 1912 and a fragment of a relief marble slab from the coffered arch ceiling belong.<sup>50</sup> As testified by the milestones, the road leading through Poetovio was renovated for Hadrian.<sup>51</sup>

A fragment of a military diploma discovered at Vičava in a wall built in the middle or the second half of the 2nd century (Fig. 3: 2) probably also belongs to the time of the beginning of the colony.<sup>52</sup> The diploma's recipient served in the area of Moesia Superior and was discharged under the governorship of *Tiberius Iulius Candidus Marius Celsus*, i.e. in the time of Nerva's rule (96–98) or at the start of the Trajan era. He could have been part of the first wave of colonists after the foundation of the town.<sup>53</sup>

## VIČAVA

In the area of Vičava, where the centre of the colony with the forum was supposedly located, three excavations enable the reconstruction of the direction of streets

<sup>47</sup> Mráv 2000; Šašel Kos 2014, 145–146 (HD037457 = lupa 8851). Site data: Mikl 1963, 94–95; Mikl Curk, Tušek 1985, 290–295; Horvat et al. 2003, 161–163.

<sup>48</sup> Gaspari et al. 2021, 71–77.

<sup>49</sup> Gaspari et al. 2021, 80–83: C14 dating of the pilot is 160±32 cal AD (2σ); as the pile did not contain sapwood, the estimated date of the tree felling is approximately 15 years after the determined dates.

<sup>50</sup> Mráv 2002; Šašel Kos 2014, 149.

<sup>51</sup> Mráv 2003, 125–127.

<sup>52</sup> Janežič, Lazar 2015, 266–267.

<sup>53</sup> Lovenjak 2019; M. Lovenjak, in: Horvat, Nestorović 2022, XVIII–XIX.

<sup>41</sup> Reddé et al. 2006, 109–111. Fischer 2012, 261–263.

<sup>42</sup> Gros 2002, 465–476; Baratto 2003.

<sup>43</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, Figs. 19–23, 28; Horvat, Nestorović 2022, IX; Pečovnik, Kovačič 2022, 89, Fig. 5, Pls. 3: 37; 4: 51.

<sup>44</sup> Klemenc 1950, Fig. 29: 3, 4 (hinge fittings); 30: 4 (catapult bolt).

<sup>45</sup> Tragau 1909, 117; Klemenc, Saria 1936, 40, No. 34; Flügel 1998; Miks 2007, 263–264, Vortafel E: 40; Pl. 207: B230.2.

<sup>46</sup> Šinkovec, Kovačič 2022, 174–175, Pl. 1: 1,4,9.



and buildings from the north-west towards the south-east, which was probably in line with the flow of the river (Fig. 3).<sup>54</sup> Excavations in 1912 unearthed the remains of a street with a marble drainage channel on each side. Stone buildings of high quality were built along the street (Fig. 3: 4).<sup>55</sup> In 1975, part of a large building was discovered that would, according to small finds, probably belong to the time from the 1st to the 2nd century. In one of its rooms was a workshop for bone artefacts (Fig. 3: 3).<sup>56</sup> A 6 m-wide street paved with gravel and provided with a drainage ditch was found in 2010–2011, to which two narrower streets 1.5 or 2 m wide were joined. Stone buildings with a colonnade along the main road were constructed over the wooden architecture of the 1st century. The streets and stone buildings are dated to the 2nd century (Fig. 3: 2).<sup>57</sup>

### PANORAMA

At Panorama, too, life continued after the fortress was abandoned. Geophysical research revealed densely clustered buildings that follow the direction of a gentle incline of the south-eastern slope (Fig. 3). Due to the falling incline the buildings were constructed on low terraces. Streets divide the space into different-sized rectangular *insulae* and open out into three squares. The streets are covered with sand or, in one example, paved with stones. Drainage ditches run down the middle of the streets.<sup>58</sup>

On the georadar image of Panorama it is not possible to see buildings immediately on the main road that ran over the pass between Panorama and Grajski grič. With the help of trenching, we know that this area was also densely built-up; however, the archaeological layers found here are very deep (more than 1.5 m).<sup>59</sup>

Based on geophysical survey, three large buildings are visible with numerous rooms and traces of reconstruction (Fig. 3: purple). Building I (approx. 48 × 37 m) is located near the pass, Building VII in the middle of the slope (approx. 30 × 15 m; Fig. 4), and building complex XIV–XV–XVI (approx. 70 × 40 m; Fig. 4) near the top of the slope. In 1913, trenching discovered a part of the peristyle in the area of Building XIV. A part of baths (Building XVI) from the 3rd century was unearthed at the south-western edge of the area. It is assumed that

buildings XIV–XV–XVI represent a thermal complex or a large domus including baths and a peristyle.<sup>60</sup>

Long and narrow buildings X, XI, XII, and XIII were possibly designed as barracks but were later partly reconstructed and used for other purposes (see above; Fig. 3: 4). A series of small rooms of equal size along the streets were appropriate for trading and crafting activities in town centres.<sup>61</sup>

Chance finds and small excavations reveal that the steep north-western slope and its foothills were also built-up (Fig. 3). Since the slope is strongly damaged by deep terraces and thick fillings of eroded material are found below, the results of the geophysical research were less illustrative here. Only the route of the aqueduct is well visible, which reached the northern slopes of Panorama at the height of 245 m a.s.l. It appears that it ended in a large structure.<sup>62</sup>

A cemetery spread across the northern slopes of Panorama.<sup>63</sup>

The layout of the streets and buildings thus indicates that Panorama was constructed according to a unified plan. This arrangement probably occurred in the 2nd century at the latest, possibly soon after the colony was founded. Based on the architecture and small finds, the greatest development can be set to the 2nd and 3rd centuries.

### SANCTUARIES

Primary and secondary positions of votive monuments from Poetovio were analysed by Maja Jerala. Based on the distribution of dedications she anticipated the existence and rough location of certain sanctuaries, even despite the absence of building remains. The groups of dedications match the three previously identified clusters of more or less researched sacral architecture: Panorama, Spodnja Hajdina, and Zgornji Breg (Fig. 6).<sup>64</sup> The absence of dedications to deities of non-Roman origin in Vičava was decisive for Zsolt Mráv to limit the colony's *pomerium* solely to this area.<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, it is the Vičava area that is the most poorly known in the entirety of Poetovio, including the epigraphic monuments, which renders the testing of the hypothesis impossible.

At the top of Panorama there was a building with a central square room and surrounded by three hallways. Its external sides are about 30 m long. Nearby, a small altar dedicated to Jupiter, fragments of votive inscriptions,

<sup>54</sup> Mikl Curk, Tušek 1985, 285–290; Horvat et al. 2003, 161–163; Janežič, Lazar 2015, fig. 1; Gaspari et al. 2021, 74–75.

<sup>55</sup> Vičava 5a, plot no. 995/8, cadastral unit Ptuj: Klemenc, Saria 1936, 33, Fig. 2; Horvat et al. 2003, 161–162.

<sup>56</sup> Vičava 5 (auxiliary building), plot no. 995/10, cadastral unit Ptuj: Mikl-Curk, Tušek 1985, 295–302.

<sup>57</sup> Vičava 5 (main building), plot no. 995/13, cadastral unit Ptuj: Janežič, Lazar 2015, 258–260, fig. 1.

<sup>58</sup> Horvat et al. 2020.

<sup>59</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 30, 51, 67.

<sup>60</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 35–40, 52, 67–68.

<sup>61</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 34–39, 52, 68.

<sup>62</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 46–50, 53–69.

<sup>63</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 44–45, 48–50, 53, 70.

<sup>64</sup> Jerala 2011. Cf. Horvat et al. 2003; Vomer Gojkovič et al. 2011.

<sup>65</sup> Mráv 2002, 25–27.

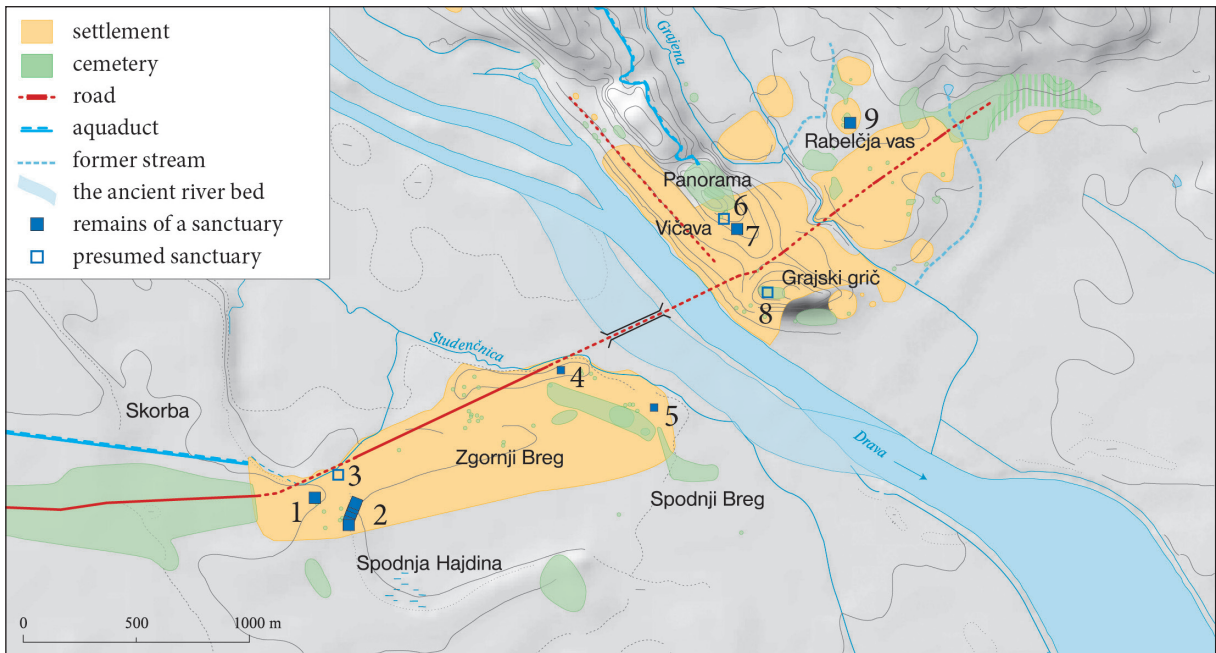


Fig. 6: Poetovio. Locations of the sanctuaries: 1 – presumed sanctuary of Nutrices; 2 – two Mithraea, sanctuaries of Vulcan, Venus and unidentified deities; 3 – presumed ambulatory sanctuary; 4 – Mithraeum; 5 – sanctuary of an unidentified deity; 6 – presumed ambulatory sanctuary; 7 – sanctuary of several deities; 8 – presumed ambulatory sanctuary; 9 – Mithraeum.

and lead votive figurines were found.<sup>66</sup> Judging from the form of its ground plan, this could be an ambulatory sanctuary (Figs. 3: XVIIa; 6: 6).<sup>67</sup>

In 1911, the south-western part of Building X (or possibly XI) (Figs. 3: 4; 6: 7) was researched at Panorama. In the corner of one of the rooms, a place delimited by marble slabs was located, similar to a well. In this and the adjacent room, fragments of sacred images were found: four slabs dedicated to the cult of Danubian horsemen, four dedicated to Silvanus, two for Liberus, and one for Dionysius, Esculapus, and Hygeia, Venus, Victoria, Eros, and the Nutrices, respectively. Numerous small stone fragments indicate intentional destruction of dedications and depictions. The inscriptions and reliefs are roughly dated to the 2nd–3rd century, only one inscription fragment could be later (4th–5th century). Everything points to the fact that in the 3rd and possibly also the 4th century both rooms were intended for the cult.<sup>68</sup>

Seven votive slabs secondarily used in one of the Late Roman graves and a statuette from the sacred rooms discovered in 1911 indicate that a sanctuary of the Nutrices had to be located somewhere at Panorama. They were protectors of children and families and the most influential cult with pre-Roman origins in the area of Poetovio.<sup>69</sup>

Fragments of a stone decoration and parts of mosaics were found by chance near the top of Panorama that testify to the Early Christian church and the continuation of the tradition of a cult centre. However, its architecture was not recognised on the georadar image (Fig. 3: 6).<sup>70</sup>

At Spodnja Hajdina (an epigraphically attested quarter of *Vicus Fortunae*), several small sanctuaries were located on the basis of architectural remains and votive monuments: two Mithraea, sanctuaries of Vulcanus and Venus, Mar(i)mogius, Fons and Nymphs, the Nutrices and possibly also Jupiter, Fortuna, and Isis (Fig. 6: 1,2).<sup>71</sup> In 1942, Walter Schmid discovered a square building surrounded with a hallway (outer side measuring 21.9 m). Only written documents have survived, on the basis of which Vesna Merc assumes that it was an ambulatory sanctuary excavated by Schmid (Fig. 6: 3).<sup>72</sup>

At Zgornji Breg, there was the so-called third Mithraeum and nearby possibly also another sanctuary of the Nutrices (Fig. 6: 4).<sup>73</sup> At the edge of the populated area and relatively close to the right bank of the Drava, pottery and lead votive statuettes and ritual vessels were found connected with relatively modest settlement traces. These finds of cult character indicate the proximity of another sanctuary (Fig. 6: 5).<sup>74</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 42–44, 52–53, 68–69; Pečovnik, Kovačič 2022, 93, Figs. 7–8, Pl. 5: 57–63.

<sup>67</sup> Groh 2005, 83–93.

<sup>68</sup> Abramić 1914; Horvat et al. 2020, 36–39.

<sup>69</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 87–94.

<sup>70</sup> Horvat et al. 2020, 40–41, 52, 68.

<sup>71</sup> Horvat et al. 2003, 173–175.

<sup>72</sup> Merc 2019.

<sup>73</sup> Horvat et al. 2003, 178.

<sup>74</sup> Mariborska cesta 17, plot no. 2070/3, cadastral unit Ptuj; Merc 2021.

In 1946 and 1947, a rectangular building with a double wall (dimensions of outer walls: 21 x 18 m) was researched at the top of Grajski grič. It was built on top of the ruins of an earlier Roman building which, based on fairly weak arguments, Klemenc assumed was an Early Christian church.<sup>75</sup> According to analogies and the stratigraphic position, the building was interpreted as a Late Roman fort of the Budakalász type.<sup>76</sup> On the contrary, Stefan Groh assumes that it was an ambulatory sanctuary (Fig. 6: 8).<sup>77</sup> The excavation report is so sparing that any final definition is not possible.

#### POTTERY WORKSHOPS AND POTTERY TRADE

Poetovio was an important pottery centre, the vessels and bricks of which also reached distant markets along the Drava. In the 2nd and 3rd centuries, pottery and brickmaking activities were clustered in the eastern part of Poetovio, i.e. in Rabelčja vas, while individual workshops were also discovered in other town districts.<sup>78</sup>

The eastern quarter in Rabelčja vas, where great areas were archaeologically excavated, was located on a slightly inclined plain limited by creeks to the west and east (Fig. 7). A strip of large stone buildings stretches along the main road to the east: it extended 25 to 75 m to the south and 125 m to the north. A special cluster of big stone buildings was also situated approximately 320 m north of the road. Individual buildings of higher quality construction including rooms with a hypocaust, mosaics, and painted plaster were erected immediately by the road, but have not been extensively researched. Buildings connected to pottery and brickmaking furnaces prevail; some large rooms can be interpreted as drying halls. Traces of metallurgic, glassmaking, and stonecutting crafts and furnaces for burning lime were also found. The strip with stone buildings was surrounded by areas with pottery and brickmaking furnaces, individual wooden buildings, and depots of waste material from pottery workshops. The majority of stone buildings and pottery workshops are dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries. On the edge of the pottery workshops, about 260 m north of the main road, remains of a Mithraeum were discovered (Fig. 6: 9; 7: 1). On the western edge of the quarter, a building with an apse and a hypocaust stands out which

<sup>75</sup> Klemenc 1950, 23–32. The issue of stratigraphic position and dating: Ciglencečki 1993, 506–507.

<sup>76</sup> Klemenc 1950, 23–32; Klemenc 1967, 115–117; Ciglencečki 1987, 55; Janžekovič 2023, 66–71, 103–107.

<sup>77</sup> Groh 2005, 90–93.

<sup>78</sup> Overview of pottery: Istenič 1999, 83–202. Maps of pottery workshops: Horvat et al. 2003, Fig. 14, 21; Istenič, Tomanič Jevremov 2004, Fig. 2. See also: Istenič 2004; Tomanič Jevremov 2004a; Tomanič Jevremov 2004b; Žižek 2012; Vomer Gojkovič 2016; Šinkovec, Kovačič 2022. Bricks with stamps: Lovenjak 2004. Workshops in Rabelčja vas: Horvat, Dolenc Vičič 2010.

is differently directed than other buildings and is also later – it belongs to the 4th century (Fig. 7: 3). At the edges, the artisanal area intertwined with the cemeteries. Individual graves from the 4th and the beginning of the 5th century were dug into the ruins of buildings.<sup>79</sup>

Material from a pottery workshop, which operated in the 2nd century and until the mid-3rd century near the present-day Dom upokojencev (Fig. 7: 2), was analysed in detail. The research of Maja Janežič was based on the pottery fabrics and forms as were already defined by Janka Istenič. While vessels from a longer time period are present at the cemeteries, which is reflected in a larger number of pottery fabrics and wider variety of forms, the workshop near the Dom upokojencev specialised in the production of certain types of common tableware and cooking pottery in some Poetovio fabrics (F7, F14, and F19).<sup>80</sup>

Due to special forms of oil lamps and cups, which are not known from other sites in Poetovio, the pottery workshop from the 2nd–3rd century on the right bank of the Drava stands out.<sup>81</sup>

The image of the pottery production and trade in Poetovio<sup>82</sup> was supplemented by the analysis of stratigraphically classified pottery from settlement layers in the central part of Vičava (Fig. 3: 2).<sup>83</sup> In the 1st century AD, fine pottery was imported to Vičava mainly from Italy. Amphorae for oil Dr. 6b prevailed among transport vessels. In the first half of the 1st century, workshops in Poetovio made common tableware, such as jugs, fine pots, and censers, and kitchenware linked to the Norican tradition. Large quantities of local fine tableware appeared in Vičava in the second half of the 1st century AD.<sup>84</sup>

The picture of the Flavian period pottery is supplemented by a set of damaged products from a workshop on the right bank of the Drava.<sup>85</sup>

From the 2nd century on, local workshops met the greatest share of needs for pottery in Vičava. However, at the end of the 1st century and in the first half of the 2nd century (Phase 3 at Vičava), fine pottery trade routes changed completely. The import of Italian sigillata decreased, there was a lot of late South Gaulish sigillata, and Central Gaulish sigillata was present as well. Amphorae came from Istria and Baetica.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Horvat, Dolenc Vičič 2010. Additionally: Lubšina Tušek 2004; Tomanič Jevremov 2004a; Tomanič Jevremov 2004b.

<sup>80</sup> Dom upokojencev (Retirement home): Janežič 2019b; Janežič 2021; Istenič 1999, 83–202; Istenič 2004.

<sup>81</sup> Zgornji Breg, Povodnova ulica 12, plots nos. 1151/1 ad 1152/3, cadastral unit Hajdina: Istenič, Tomanič Jevremov 2004.

<sup>82</sup> Istenič 1999, 83–202.

<sup>83</sup> Janežič, Schindler-Kaudelka 2022.

<sup>84</sup> Schindler-Kaudelka, Janežič 2019, 117–120.

<sup>85</sup> Zgornji Breg, Mariborska cesta 68: Mikl Curk, Lubšina Tušek 2002.

<sup>86</sup> Schindler-Kaudelka, Janežič 2019, 118–119.



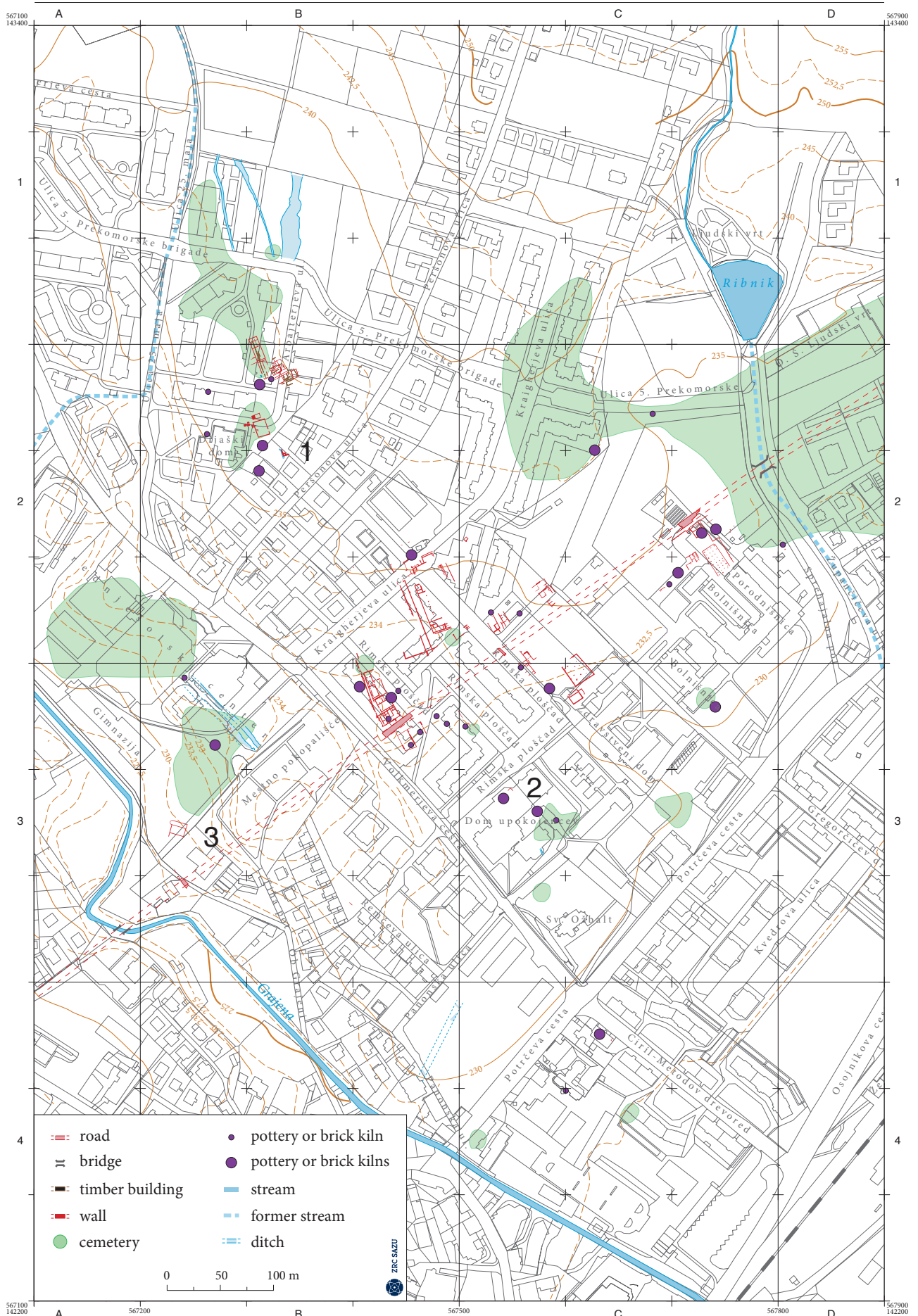


Fig. 7: Poetovio, Rabelčja vas. 1 – Mitraeum; 2 – Pottery workshop in Dom upokojecev; 3 – 4th century building. (Adapted from Horvat, Dolenc Vičič 2010, Insert 4.)



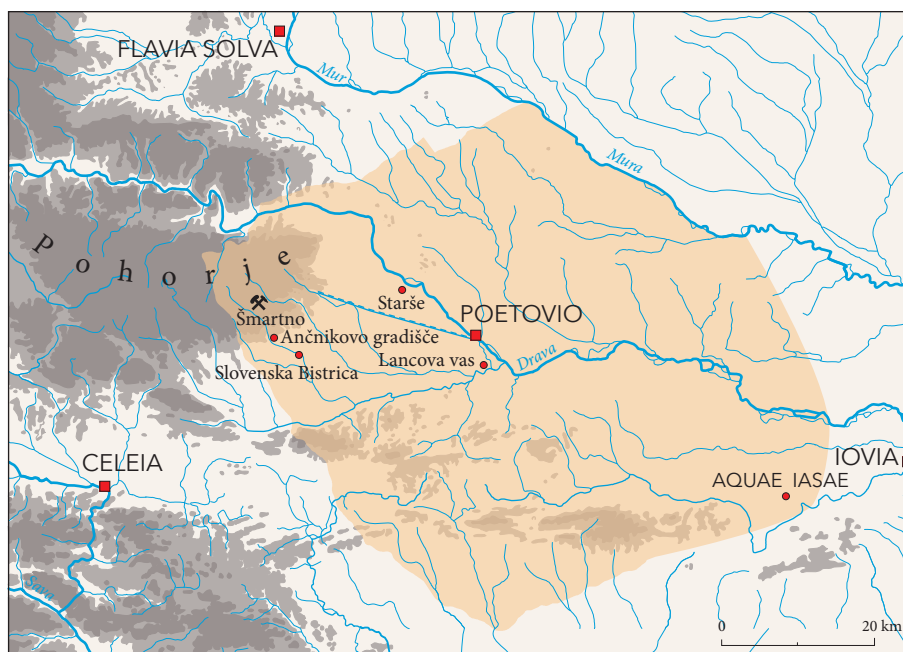


Fig. 8: The territory of Poetovio. (Adapted from Ragolič 2014, Fig. 4.)

### GLASSMAKING

Remains of glassmaking workshops were discovered in different parts of Poetovio: glassmaking furnaces, crucibles, amorphous glass pieces, glassmaking waste. Judging from the vessel forms, they operated between the second half of the 1st and the 3rd century.<sup>87</sup> Luxurious glass items came to Poetovio from faraway production centres.<sup>88</sup>

### STONEMASONRY

The study of Pohorje marble quarries, stonemasonry products, and their dispersion and trade is supported by systematic research in natural science. Marble quarries that were located in Pohorje were probably included in the Poetovio ager (Fig. 8).<sup>89</sup> Traces of Roman period extraction of stone and a relief dedicated to Saxanus were found at Šmartno na Pohorju. The quarries were opened in the second quarter of the 1st century AD and operated until the 4th century. Stone blocks were transported to the Celeia–Poetovio road, by which a stonemasonry workshop was located at Velenik near Slovenska Bistrica. In the 1st century AD, Pohorje marble covered the local needs of the legion in Poetovio, which was simultaneously also supplied with marble

<sup>87</sup> Lazar 2003, 219–232. See also: Lazar 2001; Lazar 2006, 339–340.

<sup>88</sup> E.g. Lazar 2009; Lazar 2019, 34–36; Vomer Gojkovič 2015; Vomer Gojkovič 2019; Vomer Gojkovič 2020.

<sup>89</sup> Ragolič 2014, 334–335.

from Gummern (Carinthia). In the 2nd century, trade in products made of Pohorje marble took on a greater significance in a wider region. To the north, the marble was primarily transported to Flavia Solva in Noricum. The main transport route was the Drava, along which products made of Pohorje marble travelled at least to Moesia Superior.<sup>90</sup>

Characteristics and the chronological development of products from Poetovio workshops were discussed from various aspects, as were the stonemasonry products imported to Poetovio from elsewhere.<sup>91</sup> Several studies were dedicated to the s. c. Orpheus monument, the great funerary stele from the Severan period.<sup>92</sup>

### TERRITORY

The administrative territory of Poetovio was reconstructed on the basis of epigraphic monuments, archaeological finds, and geographic characteristics. In the east, it includes the spa town of Aquae Iasae, while in the west probably the quarries in Šmartno na Pohorju.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Djurić 2004a; Djurić 2004b; Djurić 2005; Djurić 2008; Djurić, Müller 2009; Djurić 2019a; Djurić 2019b; Pochmarski 2012.

<sup>91</sup> E.g.: Djurić 2001a; Djurić 2001b; Djurić 2004a; Djurić 2015; Djurić 2016 – a workshop from Flavia Solva; Pochmarski 2003; Pochmarski 2014; Pochmarski 2015; Maver 2008; Šmid 2020; Šmid 2022; Šmid 2023.

<sup>92</sup> Šmid 2019a; Šmid 2019b; Šmid 2019c.

<sup>93</sup> Ragolič 2014; ILSL 2/1, 12–14.

Certain sections of the border, primarily in the north and south, remain problematic (Fig. 8).<sup>94</sup>

In Slovenska Bistrica, along the Celeia–Poetovio road, an important roadside station was located which was probably connected with the marble quarries on Pohorje and stonemasonry workshops.<sup>95</sup> Above Slovenska Bistrica, on the southern slopes of Pohorje, a fortified settlement of Ančnikovo gradišče was built in the second half of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th century. It arose during the time when the settlements in the flatlands slowly died down. Small finds indicate that in addition to civilians, a small military crew was

<sup>94</sup> Visočnik 2017, 21 (the border with *Celeia*); Migotti 2018, 134–135 (the border with *Andautonia*); Groh 2021, 189 (the border with *Flavia Solva*).

<sup>95</sup> Strmčnik Gulič 2020.

stationed here which probably monitored the traffic over the plain and possibly also the nearby quarries.<sup>96</sup>

Among countryside settlements of the Poetovio ager, more extensive research was performed only in Lancova vas, a good 5 km south of Poetovio. A settlement with wooden buildings (including a *horreum*, 21 x 12m) was built at the junction of two roads in the middle of the 1st century AD, or even a little earlier. After a flood in the last quarter of the 1st century, the settlement changed. A villa rustica with stone structures was built. A cemetery with tombs was arranged by the road, among which a great tomb in a tumulus stands out. The settlement was abandoned at the beginning of the 4th century.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Modrijan 2020.

<sup>97</sup> Plestenjak et al. 2022.

### Abbreviations

HD = Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg (<https://edh.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/>)

ILJug = A. Šašel, J. Šašel, *Inscriptiones latiane, quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMLX et MCMLXX re-pertae et editae sunt*. – Situla 19, 1978

ILSL 2/1 = A. Ragolič, *Poetovio, römische Grabdenkmäler*. – Inscriptiones Latinae Sloveniae (ILSL) 2/1, Situla 46, 2023

*lupa* = *Ubi erat lupa* (<http://lupa.at>)

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