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# THE CULT OF JUPITER DOLICHENUS ALONG THE SERBIAN PART OF THE LIMES IN MOESIA SUPERIOR AND PANNONIA INFERIOR

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## INTRODUCTION

Due to its mobility, the Roman army was believed to have made the biggest contribution to the emergence and spread of eastern cults in the Empire's territory, both through increased transfer of troops to or from the east, and through the imperial support of a given cult. The role of senior military officers who were originally from the east, and who were highly mobile, was extremely important.<sup>1</sup> This resulted in dissemination of the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus among soldiers. Dolichenus is often considered as purely military deity, although he was also revered by civilians. The cult originated in Commagene, more precisely in the Dülük-Baba Hills, near Doliche, situated in the border provinces of Asia Minor and Syria. This deity was actually the local Baal, a result of syncretism of various gods such as the Aramean Hadad, Acadian Adad and Hurith Teshub.<sup>2</sup> The cult was popular among soldiers because it was believed that Jupiter Dolichenus was the protector of battlefields, iron, and weapons made of iron. This god was primarily a supreme deity of heaven. The cult was also popular among civilians, and a study of so-called military cults showed

that less than 40% of its adherents were soldiers. After the Roman conquest of Syria in 64 BC and annexation of Commagene in 71 AD, Dolichenus appeared in the Empire. In contact with Roman culture, Dolichenus, like other Syrian Baals, was associated and identified with Jupiter, and assumed the name *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus*. Jupiter Dolichenus was usually depicted as a man with a beard and a Phrygian cap on his head, standing on a bull, holding a winged axe in his right hand and a sheaf of thunderbolts in his left, wearing a sword in a sheath over his shoulder, all symbolizing his power over nature and people.<sup>3</sup> Thus far several studies about this cult have been written. The most important one consists of the body of all archaeological finds.<sup>4</sup> There are also special studies about the role of the cult in the army.<sup>5</sup> Knowledge of the liturgical practices of this cult is limited, because there is no historical sources testifying to it. Carnuntum, Apulum and Praetorium Latobiorum appear to have been centres of diffusion of this cult in the European provinces. Carnuntum had the most connections with the Rhine area, Apulum with the Moesias and Dacia, while Pra-

<sup>1</sup> COLLAR 2011, 236.

<sup>2</sup> MERLAT 1960, 54.

<sup>3</sup> SPEIDEL 1978, 1.

<sup>4</sup> MERLAT 1951; CCID 1987.

<sup>5</sup> SPEIDEL 1978.

etorium Latobiorum acted as a bridge between these areas and Italy and Dalmatia. Excavations have shown that the violent destruction of all known Dolichenums in the provinces along the Rhine and the Danube occurred during the reign of Maximinus Thrax (235-238).<sup>6</sup> His monuments appeared scarcely even after that, and it seems that the cult disappeared or faded at the time of Valerian and Gallienus.

Archaeological records from Moesia Superior are discussed in the comprehensive studies of Lj. Zotović, while finds from Pannonia Inferior were studied by P. Selem.<sup>7</sup> After these studies, the body of archaeological finds of this cult grew, allowing new interpretations.

### MOESIA SUPERIOR

The highest number of finds pertaining to Jupiter Dolichenus in Moesia Superior were discovered in the Danube region, along the limes, where the *legiones IV Flavia* and *VII Claudia*, as well as auxiliary units were stationed, mostly at sites that were military camps (Fig. 1.). The finds were discovered in Kostolac (Viminacium), Veliko Gradište (Pincum) Čezava (Novae), Karataš (Diana), Brza Palanka (Egeta), Jasen (Romulianum), Košava, Vidin and Arčar (Ratiaria) in the limes area and Ravna (Timacum Minus), Gračanica and Kumanovo in the provincial hinterland.<sup>8</sup> Finds from Moesia date to the late second and first half of third century, as the cult at that time reached the peak of its expansion within the Empire. It is related with the period of the Severan dynasty.<sup>9</sup>

### Brza Palanka – Egeta

The only temple of Dolichenus in the territory of Moesia Superior excavated thus far is situated in Brza Palanka, ancient Egeta. A temple of Dolichenus with a circular base was discovered in 1962 during archaeological rescue excavations. The temple was committed as a military chapel. Ancient Egeta, today's Brza Palanka, was a Roman military camp with a civilian settlement. During archaeological investigations in the area of the civilian Roman settlement from 1981 to 1982, the remains of baths and a pier were discovered, and a survey confirmed that there were four military camps.<sup>10</sup> For this work, the most important is the camp that was established in the early second century. It is believed that soldiers of *cohors I Cretum* were stationed there, and used the sanctuary of Dolichenus. The tem-



Fig. 1. Map of sites in Moesia Superior (after CCID Abb. 6, modified by M. Jovičić).

ple remains of Jupiter Dolichenus were discovered on a hill, about 120 meters from the north-east corner of the military camp (Fig. 2.).<sup>11</sup> The Dolichenum is oval, orientated north-south, with an entrance on the north side, measuring 3.50 x 3.80 meters (Fig. 3.). It is built of dressed stone and pebbles, and in some parts of the wall the fragments of brick and tegulae were found. The inner walls of the room were plastered. Larger blocks of irregular shape were discovered in the middle of the building. The inventory of the shrine consisted of several statues of Dolichenus, sculptures representing Jupiter Dolichenus standing on a bull and Juno Dolichena standing on a hind (Fig. 4.). Among them there is also the goddess Victoria, three damaged sculptures representing Jupiter Dolichenus standing on a bull, a marble divine head and 11 fragments of a sculpture containing a partial figure of a bull, and various parts of a sculpture (hand, part of a lightning bolt and part of a leg).<sup>12</sup> The sculpture has been dated to the end of second and the first decades of third century.<sup>13</sup>

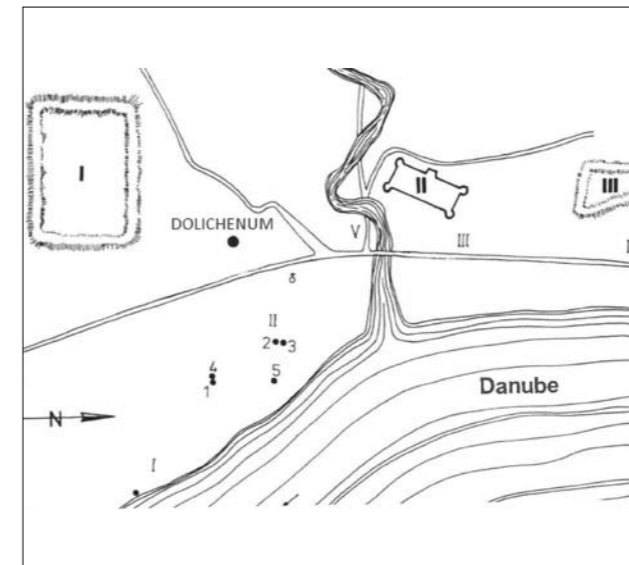


Fig. 2. Location of a sanctuary of Jupiter Dolichenus in Egeta (after PETROVIĆ 1984, Fig. 141).

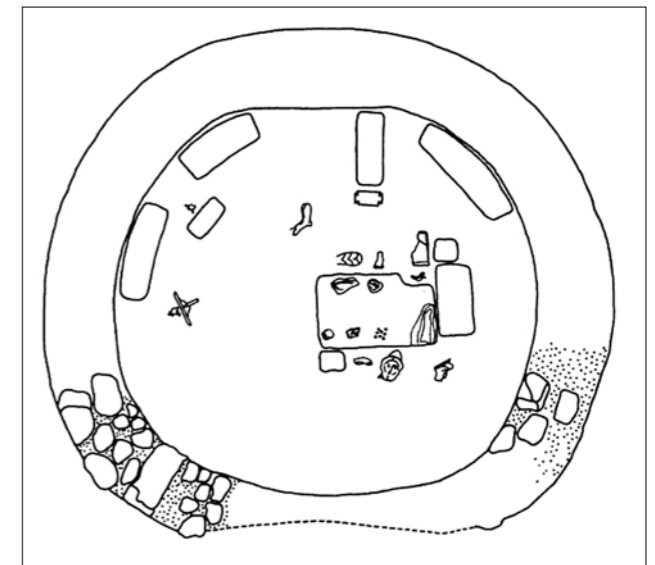


Fig. 3. Sanctuary of Jupiter Dolichenus in Egeta (after ВУЧКОВИЋ-ТОДОРОВИЋ 1966, 174, Fig. 1.).

Two of these sculptures representing Dolichenus on a bull bore dedications in Greek or Latin on their bases. The first has an inscription in Greek on the socle:

ΑΓΑΘΗ ΤΥΧΗ  
ΚΑΣΤΩΡΚΩΝΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΔΟΛΙΧΗΝΩ  
ΕΥΞΑΜΕΝΟΣ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΑ

The monument was erected by Castor Quintus to Dolichenus. The dedicants of Jupiter Dolichenus often bear the name Castor, who was one of the divine twins and played an important role in the cult and iconography of Jupiter Dolichenus.<sup>14</sup> The second sculpture of Jupiter Dolichenus had a Latin inscription on the base:

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) D(olicheno) Pompeivs / Isauricus ex / votu(sic) (=voto) posuit*

The dedicant's name indicates that he originally came from the Orient, from Isauria.<sup>15</sup> In the inventory of the shrine, one bronze *tabula ansata* with an inscription was also found:<sup>16</sup>

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Doli / cheni (sic) (=CHENO) chor (=cohors) / I Cretu(m)*

Based on the shape of the letters, the inscription was dated to the early third century. The monument was dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus by the first Cretan cohort. This cohort was stationed in the military camp in Egeta. In the temple, a relief of Mithras was also found, as well as two bronze eagles, a bronze lamp, an



Fig. 4. Statue of Jupiter Dolichenus and Juno Dolichena from Egeta (after СРЕЈОВИЋ - ЦЕРМАНОВИЋ-КУЗМАНОВИЋ 1987, 95, no. 38).

<sup>6</sup> TÓTH 1973.

<sup>7</sup> ZOTOVIĆ 1966; SELEM 1980.

<sup>8</sup> CCID, 85-119.

<sup>9</sup> ЗОТОВИЋ 1969, 71.

<sup>10</sup> PETROVIĆ 1986, 370-372.

<sup>11</sup> ВУЧКОВИЋ-ТОДОРОВИЋ 1966, 173.

<sup>12</sup> ВУЧКОВИЋ-ТОДОРОВИЋ 1966, 174-176.

<sup>13</sup> СРЕЈОВИЋ - ЦЕРМАНОВИЋ-КУЗМАНОВИЋ 1987, 94.

<sup>14</sup> SPEIDEL 1978, 22.

<sup>15</sup> ВУЧКОВИЋ-ТОДОРОВИЋ 1966, 175.

<sup>16</sup> ВУЧКОВИЋ-ТОДОРОВИЋ 1966, 176.





Fig. 5. Bronze plate from Egeta (after POP-LAZIĆ 1978, 43).

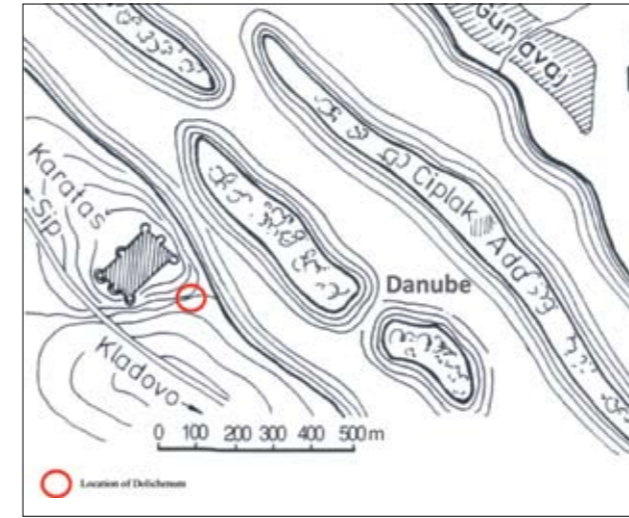


Fig. 6. Location of a sanctuary of Jupiter Dolichenus in Diana (by M. Jovičić).

iron key, 12 bronze coins of Geta (198-212) and one silver coin of Elegabalus (218-222). During excavations in 1962, a triangular plate holder reinforced with two snakes was found.<sup>17</sup> The holder bore a dedication:

*Aur(elius) Caius Cen(turio) Chor(ortis) / I Cretum*

This plate was dedicated by Aurelius Gaius, the centurion of the first Cretan cohort. As already seen, this cohort was mentioned before as a dedicant on a bronze *tabula ansata* in the sanctuary. There can be no doubt that the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus in this shrine was worshiped by soldiers of this cohort. In 1979, the Historical Museum of Serbia came into possession of a bronze plate which, according to the information provided by the donors, came from the fields near Brza Palanka.<sup>18</sup> It is a triangular plate made of bronze with gilding. On the plate there is a dominant scene showing Jupiter Dolichenus (Fig. 5). The scenes are organized vertically and divided into two main fields. The upper part of the plate shows a standing eagle facing right and holding a crown in its beak. Below the eagle, Luna and Sol are depicted, shown in profile looking at each other. A sword and a double-braided whip are between the two divinities. The second field is dominated by Jupiter Dolichenus wearing a Phrygian cap, holding a sheaf of thunderbolts in his left hand, with a *paludamentum* over his shoulder. Jupiter Dolichenus is in armour, wearing a military belt, greaves decorated with a floral motive, and light boots. He stands on the

<sup>17</sup> POP-LAZIĆ 1978, 42.

<sup>18</sup> POP-LAZIĆ 1978.

back of a bull. A *signum* is above the deity's left shoulder. A hand supporting the *vexillum* is shown on top of the *signum*. Two smaller figures, Castores Dolicheni, are depicted standing on both sides of the deity. Between the legs of Jupiter Dolichenus there is an altar. Despite the different find contexts of the holder and plate, according to Pop-Lazić they constituted a whole and belonged to the inventory of the temple in Egeta.<sup>19</sup> By comparing the dimensions of these two objects, it was concluded that they match. Such triangular plates decorated in relief are known to have belonged to the cult of Dolichenus. A similar plate with an inscription on which the holder is also reinforced by two snakes was found at the site of Mauer an der Url.<sup>20</sup> They served as a *signum* and stood in the sanctuary of the god next to statues and reliefs. This triangular plate was probably carried during religious processions, or it was placed in the temple of Jupiter Dolichenus along with other objects. There are numerous finds of triangular plates, fragmented or complete, that were discovered throughout the Empire. The iconography is very similar to that from Egeta, the only difference being in the arrangement of figures. A plate from Kömlöda (Lussonium) most resembles the one from Egeta; on it, Dolichenus also dominates the scene, shown in the same position on the bull, also wearing armour and a belt.<sup>21</sup> This small temple of Jupiter Dolichenus in Brza Palanka is the first and the only one completely excavated in Serbia. The best-known shrines of Dolichenus are rectangular in shape, such as the shrine at Brigetio or Carnuntum.<sup>22</sup> The circular base has parallels to the temple of Venus at Baalbek, and with the temple of Jupiter Sabazius at Zilmis in Thrace.<sup>23</sup> The appearance of a Mithras relief in this temple is not surprising if one bears in mind that the cult of both Oriental deities was widespread throughout the Roman Empire. When considering the inventory of the shrine, a much greater degree of working of sculptures and inscriptions, as opposed to the quality of the building, becomes apparent, which opens the possibility that this material came from elsewhere. There are four inscriptions, one in Greek and three in Latin, indicating that both languages were used in the liturgy. After the inscription, it may be concluded that among the adherents of the cult some were originally from the east, as is the case with Pompeius Isauricus, a Romanized resident of Isauria in the south of Asia Minor, the area adjacent to Doliche. The common dedication by a Cretan cohort and the dedication of their centurion support the hy-

<sup>19</sup> POP-LAZIĆ 1978, 42.

<sup>20</sup> KANDLER – HERMANN 1986, 118.



pothesis that this sanctuary was used by soldiers from a military camp. The sanctuary was built at the end of the second and early third centuries, and is considered to have been used for a very short time. This is shown by sculptures, inscriptions and a relatively large number of Geta coins (198-212).

#### Karataš – Diana

Diana is a Roman and early Byzantine fortress for an auxiliary unit, on the banks of the Danube at modern Karataš, not far from Kladovo. Fortifications existed here from first to the end of the sixth centuries. Based on the stamped bricks bearing the inscription *VII Claudia*, Mirković assumed that a part of this legion may have been stationed here in the second and third centuries, while in the latter half of third century, the fortress was the seat for parts of *legio XIII Gemina*.<sup>24</sup> In the Severan era, *cohors V Gallorum* was stationed at Diana or in its vicinity.<sup>25</sup> Archaeological records show the remains of ramparts, towers and military barracks from the time of Aurelian, a *principia* and other facilities.<sup>26</sup> The sanctuary of Jupiter Dolichenus was discovered in 1972. It is located at the foot of the fortress, 100 m east of the military camp (Fig. 6). The sanctuary had a vault and it was painted with red and white paint in fresco technique. The temple was not completely investigated and it was destroyed during modern construction work.<sup>27</sup> A votive altar was found in a niche in the building. The monument was erected for the health of Caracalla and his mother Julia Domna by the priests of the deity and dated to 212-214.<sup>28</sup> This votive monument bears the following inscription:

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Dol(icheno) [pro salute] / M(arci) Aur(eli) Anto(nini) Pii Aug(usti) et Iul(iae) Domn(a)e Aug(ustae) ma(tri)s Aug(usti) et castrorum dedicante L(ucio) / Mario Perpetuo / c(onsulari) per Restutum / m(agister?) c(ivium?) R(omanorum?) D(ianae?) sacerdo/tes eiusdem loci / d(edicaverunt)*

The inscription was dedicated by the consul Lucius Marius Perpetuus, who was a priest and a senior official of Diana and after the year 214 a governor of Dacia, after performing these duties in Moesia Superior.

<sup>24</sup> CCID 202.

<sup>25</sup> CCID 216, 236.

<sup>26</sup> ВУЧКОВИЋ-ТОДОРОВИЋ 1966, 180.

<sup>27</sup> MIRKOVIĆ 1968, 112.

<sup>28</sup> KONDIĆ 1994, 74-75.

<sup>29</sup> PETROVIĆ - VASIĆ 1996, 26.

<sup>30</sup> RANKOV 1980, 51.

<sup>31</sup> MIRKOVIĆ 1977, 443.

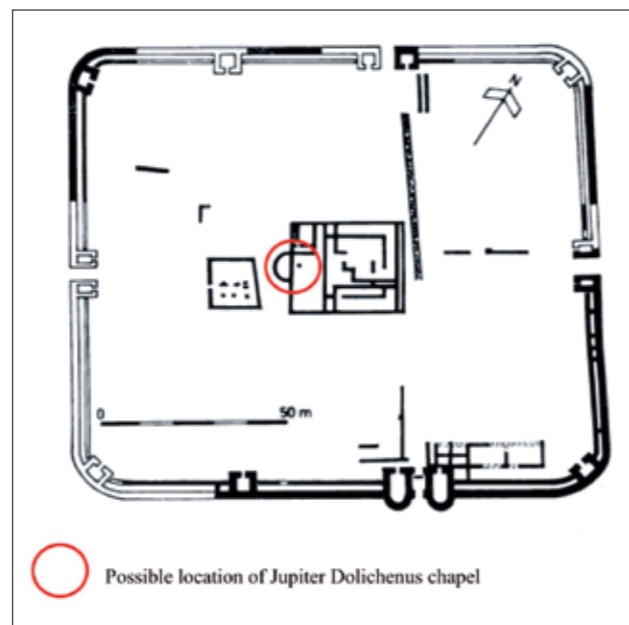


Fig. 7. Castrum Novae (after ВАСИЋ 1984, 100, Fig. 7).

This monument probably dates to 214, when Caracalla visited Diana. The dedicant consecrated the altar to Dolichenus for the salvation of the Emperor and his mother.

The sanctuary was located near the military camp, as was the case in Egeta. As this site had a military character, the cult's adherents were definitely soldiers from the fort, probably from *cohors V Gallorum*.

#### Čezava - Novae

Novae was a Roman military camp. Systematic excavation of the site took place in 1965, conducted by the experts from the Military Museum in Belgrade. Works were completed in 1970 and the walls of fortifications, *principia*, *horreum*, a part of the barracks, an early Byzantine basilica and a dock were discovered.<sup>29</sup> It is believed that a part of *legio VII Claudia* was stationed in this camp.<sup>30</sup> Inside the camp, seven construction phases, dating from the first half of first century to the end of sixth century, were discovered. In the centre of the castrum, the *principia* was examined, and it was concluded that it was built in the classical form with a central courtyard and rooms around it (Fig. 7.). The *principia* had two phases. The later stage was

<sup>29</sup> ВАСИЋ 1984, 91.

<sup>30</sup> MIRKOVIĆ 1968, 105.

<sup>31</sup> ВАСИЋ 1984, 102.

<sup>32</sup> CCID 104, 105.

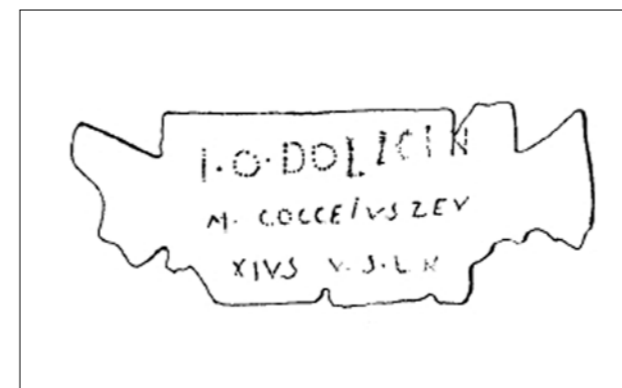


Fig. 8. Bronze *tabula ansata* from Novae (after ВАСИЋ 1984, 118, Fig. 22/11).

established in the late second and early third centuries, probably at the time of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, and lasted until the second half of the third century. There was a row of rooms on the west side of the building in which the room in the middle had an apse and formed an *aedes signorum*. The room in front of the apse had a quadrant placed on the axis of the apse, which served as a pedestal for a divine statue.<sup>31</sup> The discovery of a bronze votive plaque, *tabulae ansatae*, next to the quadrant, indicate that this was a base for a statue of Jupiter Dolichenus (Fig. 8.). The votive plaque bears a dedication to the deity:

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) Dolicin(o) (!) / M(arcus) Cocceius Zeu / xius v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*

Based on the dedicant's name it can be seen that he was originally from the Orient. Such a votive bronze plaque, as seen, was found in the Dolichenum in Egeta, and two were found in Jasen in Bulgaria.<sup>32</sup> All were dated to the late second and first half of the third centuries. The statues of Jupiter Dolichenus themselves were not found in the building of the *principia*, but rather in the *castrum* complex. The sculpture of Jupiter Dolichenus in armour and with *paludamentum* was found damaged.<sup>33</sup> The sculpture dates to the late second and first half of the third centuries. The models for the products in Čezava can be found in the statues of armour-clad Roman emperors. A sculpture similar to this one was found in Huni Alba (Bononia), which also represents Jupiter Dolichenus. Between them there is a great similarity and they belong to the same iconographic scheme.<sup>34</sup> The discovery of the fragmented statue of Juno Dolichena standing on a hind is

<sup>33</sup> TOMOVIĆ 1992, 86, no. 62.

<sup>34</sup> TOMOVIĆ 1992, 86, no. 63.

very important. The statue was found during systematic excavations in 1969 inside the fortress complex.<sup>35</sup> Since the statue was fragmented, it was difficult to determine the dating and the origin of the sculpture. The distinctive presence of the Jupiter Dolichenus cult among soldiers in the Novae castle is confirmed by the discovery of square base, probably for a statue of Jupiter Dolichenus, the bronze *tabula ansata* with dedications to this deity, and a statue of Jupiter and Juno Dolichena. All these finds indicate the existence of an improvised chapel of Dolichenus within the camp in the *principia*, dating from the end of the second to the middle of the third centuries. Jupiter Dolichenus is shown on a bronze triangular table in Kömlöda above the altar in the aedicule, which is in the sanctuary of military standards, called *aedes signorum*.<sup>36</sup> If this conclusion is correct and if Dolichenus had his place in the sanctuary of standards, then he may be regarded the official god of the Roman legions, but this opinion has not yet been confirmed. If the chapel in Čezava was in the very *principia*, in the most sacred place, this would be the first case known so far.

#### Veliko Gradište – Pincum

The Pincum site, present-day Veliko Gradište, is a Roman fort with a settlement, located at the confluence of the Pek and Danube rivers. Pincum was a mining and administrative hub, the main town in the Pek mining valley.<sup>37</sup> It is not known which units were stationed in the camp, but it is assumed that it was a part of *legio VII Claudia*. This archaeological site has not been thoroughly investigated. This site yielded a votive monument dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus bearing the inscription:<sup>38</sup>

*Iob(i) (!) opt(imo) m(aximo) Dulceno / ex vot(o) Ael(ii) Silvanus / het (!) Leonides leg(ionis) sig(niferi) / [b]en(e) mir(enti) (!)*

The names Silvanus and Leonides indicates that the dedicants originated from the Empire's eastern territories. As they were Legion signiferi, the monument allows for the assumption that the cult of Dolichenus was respected among the soldiers in the fort at Pincum. However, it cannot be acknowledged to what extent. An overview of the epigraphic material from the Empire for the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus shows that among the dedicants there are five *signiferi*.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> TOMOVIĆ 1992, 95, no. 98.

<sup>36</sup> SPEIDEL 1978, 62.

<sup>37</sup> MIRKOVIĆ 1968, 103.

<sup>38</sup> CCID 86.

<sup>39</sup> COLLAR 2011, 230.

This shows that Roman officers were closely involved with the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus. In the absence of closer determinants, the monument dates from the mid-second to late third centuries.



Fig. 9. The monument of Aurelius Iulianus, from Viminacium (after PETROVIĆ 2004, 219, Fig. 1).

### Viminacium

Viminacium, the largest urban settlement in the province of Moesia Superior, was established in the first century AD at the right bank of the Mlava River near its confluence with the Danube, close to today's Kostolac. Viminacium was the capital of the Roman province of Moesia Superior with a permanent garrison of *legio VII Claudia*.<sup>40</sup> Rescue excavations from 1976 to 1997 brought to light a necropolis with over 14,000 graves. Since 2002, systematic archaeological excavations of the Roman town and military camp have been undertaken. The spread of Oriental cults, such as the cult of Dolichenus at Viminacium, can be explained with several confirmations. During the second and third centuries, parts of *legio VII Claudia* participated in the wars in the Empire's eastern territories, in the Parthian and Armenian expeditions, where soldiers may have encountered new cults.<sup>41</sup> The emergence of new cults in the territories of Viminacium and Moesia Superior was the result of immigration of a new population, of Thracian and Greek/Hellenistic origin. The wave of immigration occurred during the reigns of Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. The second phase dates to the period of the Severan dynasty, when military units were reinforced by a large number of Syrian soldiers. A community of people from the Syrian Commagene, Doliche area, where the cult of Dolichenus originated, have also been confirmed in the territory of Viminacium.<sup>42</sup> The cult of Jupiter Dolichenus in Viminacium has been confirmed by epigraphic inscriptions and sculptures. Certainly, the most important is the discovery of a votive monument dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus (Fig. 9), found in 2003.<sup>43</sup> The inscription has been resolved as:

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) D(oliheno) | Aur(elius) Iulianus | Iuliani (filius) Sac(erdos) | eiusdem dei | ex pr(ovincia) Syr(ia) Coel(e) | reg(ione) | Cyrr(h)ens(i) | vico Capersin(a?) |*---

The dedicant is a priest of the cult, originally from the province of Syria Koele, Cyrrhastica region, village of Capersin(a?). Petrović believes that this dedicant was involved with the legions from Moesia Superior during their expedition in Syria, and that he came to Viminacium after the legion had returned home.<sup>44</sup> There are 86 known priests of Syrian or Oriental origin identified in the epigraphic materials of the Empire. Collar

<sup>40</sup> СПАСИЋ-ЂУРИЋ 2002, 21.

<sup>41</sup> MIRKOVIĆ 1968, 59.

<sup>42</sup> MIRKOVIĆ 1968, 128.

<sup>43</sup> PETROVIĆ 2004.

<sup>44</sup> PETROVIĆ 2004, 221.

concluded that priests came regularly to the west from Syria and the eastern provinces for the purpose of cult administration.<sup>45</sup> Based on the inscription, the monument has been dated to the first half of third century. From the territory of Viminacium, finds are known of one sculpture representing Jupiter Dolichenus standing on a bull<sup>46</sup> and the head of a sculpture of Jupiter Dolichenus.<sup>47</sup> These sculptures date to the second/third centuries. Data confirming that there was a Syrian community and a priest of this cult led contemporary scholars to believe that there was a temple of Jupiter Dolichenus in Viminacium.<sup>48</sup> However, so far there are no finds that would directly link soldiers of *legio VII Claudia* to the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus, although it is believed that this unit transferred this cult from the Orient during their expeditions.

### PANNONIA INFERIOR

The Roman limes in Pannonia Inferior extended along the Danube from Zemun (Taurunum) to the "knee of the Danube" in today's Hungary. In Serbia, part of the limes was in the territory of Srem, 200 km long, from Zemun to Dalj, and was defended with a number of fortifications.<sup>49</sup> Roman legions stayed in Srem only on special occasions, such as the Roman conquest of Srem, the Dalmatian-Pannonian rebellion, the wars of Domitian and Trajan.<sup>50</sup> Besides the legions, auxiliary units were also stationed in Srem. It is known that the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus was widespread among the soldiers in Pannonia. The cult was revered in the *legiones I and II Adiutrix*, and sanctuaries have been discovered in Carnuntum and Brigetio.<sup>51</sup> The first major centre in Pannonia was Carnuntum, and from there the cult spread to other parts of Pannonia, especially the central part of the limes. The last monument of this cult in Pannonia dates to the year 235-238.<sup>52</sup> The cult of Jupiter Dolichenus was confirmed on several locations in Pannonia Inferior (Fig. 10.). In Hungary, it was found at the sites of Tokod, Óbuda and Budapest (Aquincum), Adony (Vetus Salina), and Kömlöd (Lussonium).<sup>53</sup> All these sites represent military forts. Furthermore, the cult was confirmed in Osijek (Mursa) in Croatia and at the site of Sarpentela in Hungary, although these sites are not situated on the banks of the Danube. In the Serbian part of the province, mon-

<sup>45</sup> COLLAR 2011, 242.

<sup>46</sup> ZOTOVIĆ 1966, 100.

<sup>47</sup> СРЕЈОВИЋ - ЦЕРМАНОВИЋ-КУЗМАНОВИЋ 1987, 108.

<sup>48</sup> PETROVIĆ 2004, 221.

<sup>49</sup> VISY 2003, 143-150.

<sup>50</sup> ДУШАНИЋ 1968, 87.

<sup>51</sup> SELEM 1980, 235-257; CCID 216, 236.

<sup>52</sup> SELEM 1980, 246.

<sup>53</sup> CCID 182-215.



Fig. 10. Map of sites in Pannonia Inferior (after CCID Abb. 10).

uments were found in Sirmium, Rittium, Burgenae and Acumincum. In Sirmium, an altar was found with two possible dedications to Dolichenus, dated to the end of the second and early third centuries.<sup>54</sup> These monuments in Sirmium, however, cannot be directly linked to military units, so they are not included into this study.

### Novi Banovci – Burgenae

Novi Banovci was a military camp and the seat of *cohors I Tracum civium Romanorum*.<sup>55</sup> The fortress of Burgenae stood along the Danube route, 10 miles upstream from today's Zemun. It was partially investigated by experts from the Military Museum of Serbia at the Gradina site.<sup>56</sup> As for the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus, a fragment of a statue with an inscription dated to the third century originated at this site.<sup>57</sup> On the upper part of the statue, the bull that carried Dolichenus has been preserved and faces right. The base bears the following inscription:

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) / M(aximo) Dolichen(o)*

<sup>54</sup> CCID 210, 211.

<sup>55</sup> ДУШАНИЋ 1968, 96.

<sup>56</sup> PETROVIĆ 1995, 21.

<sup>57</sup> SELEM 1980, 231.



According to the inscription, which was damaged, this find cannot be directly tied to the soldiers stationed in Burgenae. However, the find originated in a military camp site, and there is a possibility that the dedications were left by a soldier from the fortress at this site.

### Surduk – Rittium

Surduk was a military camp and seat of *ala I Augusta Itryaeorum*, which was a cavalry unit composed of Syrian archers.<sup>58</sup> The Gradina site was surveyed but not excavated. Two bases of a statue with dedications to Jupiter Dolichenus originated in Gradina.<sup>59</sup> The inscriptions on both bases are identical:

*IOMD(olicheno) et Deo paterno / Comageno M. Aur(elius) Ap(olinaris) dec(urio) col(oniae) Mur(selensium).*

The dedicant was Marcus Aurelius Apolinaris, a decurion in Mursa who was originally from the Syrian Commagene. He dedicated a monument to a native god of Commagene and Jupiter Dolichenus. The dedicant may have been a priest of this deity. It is not clear why the decurion of Mursa dedicated this monument in Rittium. It is known that in Mursa the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus also was confirmed.<sup>60</sup> This monument may be dated to the latter half of the second or first half of the third century. It is known that bases with statues of Jupiter Dolichenus were part of the inventory of his cult's sanctuaries, as was the case in Egeta. At this site, a bronze statue of Jupiter Dolichenus (Fig. 11.) and bronze applications in the form of a bull were found.<sup>61</sup> The statue depicts Dolichenus dressed in Oriental attire, a short tunic with sleeves, wearing the cloak and a Phrygian cap. The statue dates to the end of the second century. A similar bronze statue of Dolichenus on a bull was found at the site of Mauer an der Url, a military fortification in the province of Noricum, and it was a part of the temple inventory.<sup>62</sup> Dušanić believes that the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus in Surduk was conveyed by members of the Syrian *ala I Augusta Itryaeorum*. The context of these finds from Surduk cannot be known with any certainty, but it may be assumed that there was a temple of Jupiter Dolichenus in or near the military fortification in Surduk. The followers of this cult were probably Oriental soldiers in auxiliary units from the fortification.

<sup>58</sup> ДУШАНИЋ 1968, 99.

<sup>59</sup> SELEM 1980, 231.

<sup>60</sup> CCID 205.

<sup>61</sup> DAUTOVA RUŠEVLJAN - VUJOVIĆ 2006, 112.

<sup>62</sup> KANDLER - HERMANN 1986, 118.



Fig. 11. Bronze statue of Jupiter Dolichenus from Surduk (after DAUTOVA RUŠEVLJAN - VUJOVIĆ 2006, 76, Fig. 41).

### Stari Slankamen- Acumincum

Stari Slankamen was a military camp and seat of *cohortes I Campanorum*.<sup>63</sup> The Roman fortification was constructed on the dominant hill Gradina, on a plateau on the Danube, across the confluence of the Tisza and Danube Rivers. Rescue excavations were conducted from 1955 to 1957 by archaeologists from the National Museum of Zemun.<sup>64</sup> Two bases with a dedication and statues dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus were discovered at the site. The first was the base of a monument with an inscription and figural group in marble representing Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull wearing a *paludamentum* and a Phrygian cap.<sup>65</sup> The base bore the following inscription:

*I(ovi) o(ptimo) m(aximo) Dol(icheno) / Aurelii Sabini-  
anus et Ma / ximus et Apollinarius sacc(erdotes) / vot(um)  
l(ibentes) l(aeti) pos(uerunt).*

The monument was dedicated by three brothers, priests of the cult, and should be dated to the early third century, when the dedicants became a Roman citizens under Caracalla. The base of a statue of Dolichenus on a bull came from this site.<sup>66</sup> The monument is a local product. The base bears this inscription:

<sup>63</sup> ДУШАНИЋ 1968, 100.

<sup>64</sup> ПЕТРОВИЋ 1995, 23.

<sup>65</sup> SELEM 1980, 232, CCID 207.

<sup>66</sup> SELEM 1980, 231.

*I(ovi) o(ptimo) m(aximo) D(olicheno) / Au(relius) Ius-  
titanus dec(urio) et Ulp(ius) / Silvinianus dup(licarius)  
al(a)e Pann(oniorum) / [pr]o se [et suis?].*

The dedicants are Aurelius Justianus, a decurion, and Ulpus Silvinianus, the deputy of *alae Pannoniorum*. This *ala* was formed in the late second century under Commodus, and drawn from the province's population. Ever since it was established, this unit was most likely located in Cusum (Petrovaradin) and was not settled in Acumincum. This inscription shows that the cult of Dolichenus was widespread not only among the soldiers from the Orient but also among the soldiers who were probably recruited from Pannonia. These two monuments from the territory of Slankamen point to the sole conclusion that the cult was present in this region, but how the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus was represented among soldiers from the fortification in Acumincum cannot be discerned.

### DISCUSSION

As shown above, all artefacts of Jupiter Dolichenus came from sites that were military camps. With regard to Moesia Superior, a sanctuary in Egeta which was near the military camp and whose dedicants were soldiers of the first Cretan cohort certainly served the purpose of a military temple. The situation is similar at Diana, where finds are located near the camp in a building that was probably a temple of Dolichenus. At the Novae site, finds came from the camp itself, and in the aedicule of the *principia* a platform was found with an epigraphic dedication to Dolichenus, which indicates the existence of an improvised chapel inside the *principia*. The finds from Pincum also indicate that the cult at this site was widespread among the soldiers, because the dedicants were a *signiferi*. The cult was probably brought to Viminacium during the military campaign in Syria in which *legio VII Claudia* participated. The movement of troops was followed by civilian immigrants, which has been confirmed by the votive monument of the *sacerdos* from Syria. The presence of a priest allows for conjecture that a temple of Dolichenus in Viminacium actually existed. It is possible that the cult was widespread in Singidunum; the monument in Iulia Concordia in Italy was dedicated by a centurion of *Legio III Flavia* and dated to the year 185-192.<sup>67</sup> *Legio III Flavia* was stationed in Singidunum during the Roman period.

<sup>67</sup> CCID 449.

As for Pannonia Inferior and the territory of Srem, all artefacts are random finds. However, the monuments from Surduk, Banovci and Stari Slankamen are from the military camp areas, and the first monument from Stari Slankamen was dedicated by soldiers from a Pannonian unit. Second monument was dedicated by three brothers, priests of the cult, which indicates that a temple of Dolichenus in Acumincum actually existed. Analysis of epigraphic dedications shows that out of fifteen dedicants, the occupations of eleven are stated. Five of them were dedicated by soldiers; five were raised by priests of the cult and two by higher civilian officials. As far as the four monuments are concerned, it was not possible to determine the occupations of the dedicants. As for the names of the dedicants, seven of fifteen names were of eastern origin, or they emphasized eastern provinces as their homes, which is 46%. However, a significant fact is that 54% of all were dedicated by a non-eastern citizens, which leads to the conclusion that the cult was not only respected by immigrants from the Orient. Of course, this conclusion must be taken with some caution, since the sample is small. All sites from the Serbian Danube Basin date from the second half of second century to the mid-third century. The spread of the cult dates from the period of the Severan dynasty, which can be linked to their support of Oriental cults.<sup>68</sup> It may be assumed that after this period and from the arrival of Maximinus Thrax onward, the shrines of Dolichenus were destroyed and plundered. When it comes to the analysis of figurative sculpture, those from the temple in Egeta are believed to have been made in the eastern centres of the Empire, in the south of Asia Minor, while the heads from Viminacium and Egeta and the sculptures from Čezava and Vidin are believed to have been carved in a local workshop in Moesia Superior.<sup>69</sup> The existence of local workshops certainly suggests that the cult was widely accepted. Iconographic representations are common for this cult and have analogies with finds from neighbouring provinces. Jupiter Dolichenus is shown on a bull, holding a sheaf of thunderbolts and a winged axe and wearing military armour, except for the sculpture from Surduk on which Dolichenus is wearing Oriental attire. Based on the finds identified thus far, it may be concluded that the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus along the Roman limes in the territory of present-day Serbia was the most revered by soldiers. Priests and the civilian aristocracy also appear to have been among the cult's adherents. The largest number of followers were non-oriental, but a significant number were originating from the east.

<sup>68</sup> BIRLEY 1999, 72.

<sup>69</sup> TOMOVIĆ 1992, 72-73.

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# THE DANUBE LIMES IN CROATIA - LIMES OFFICE ACTIVITIES 2008-2010

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The Danube Limes in Croatia has been registered on UNESCO tentative list<sup>1</sup> as the site which has potential to join the monument Frontiers of the Roman Empire. That property was the first transnational, serial World Heritage Site which currently includes Hadrian's Wall and Antonine Wall in Great Britain and Upper German-Raetian Limes in Germany. Remains of Roman frontier fortifications in some other modern European, Asian and African countries could also become part of the UNESCO World Heritage.

Once acting as the natural obstacle along the frontier of the province *Pannonia* and the Roman Empire, the Danube River (*Danuvius*) today marks the 188 km long<sup>2</sup> eastern Croatian border towards the Republic of Serbia. The exact Limes length that followed the Danube course in Croatia is somewhat shorter. It is about 137 km long<sup>3</sup> because Limes, due to large marshland areas of Kopački rit, deviated from the meandering Danube throughout the northeastern Croatian region of Baranja.

The northernmost Roman site in Baranja was *Ad Militare* (Batina). The military road connected it with the fort *Ad Novas* (Zmajevac). Along the edge of the Dan-

ube diluvial terrace, from Zmajevac to the south, the road could descend to the potential Roman military site in present day settlement Kamenac and then beyond, to forts situated in Dragojlov Brijeg, Lug and Kopačevo. The Roman localities in the immediate hinterland of Limes such as *Antianae*, *Mons Aureus* and *Mursella* and also Limes sites *Albanum*, *Donatiana* and *Ad Labores* referred to in Roman itineraries have not been matched to the ground. The road further on led towards *Mursa* (Osijek) and/or Nemetin, an obscure site on the former bank of the Drava River (*Dravus*). Since Limes road usually cut river meanders it could bypass the Danube bend and continued to the forts *Teutoburgium* (Dalj) and *Cornacum* (Sotin) in Slavonia, leading forward to *Cuccium* (Ilok) in Srijem, the southernmost Croatian region that Limes was made in Roman era. Aforementioned localities have been registered and protected but the accurate dimensions of sites have never been determined. The precise route of the Limes road is also not known although five milestones on its course have so far been found: one in Batina<sup>4</sup>, Bilje<sup>5</sup> and Podravlje<sup>6</sup> and two in Osijek<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> ILKIĆ 2008, 199.<sup>4</sup> FRÖCHLICH 1888, 291.<sup>5</sup> PINTEROVIĆ 1971b, 62.<sup>6</sup> HOFFILLER 1912, 6, 7, sl. 6.<sup>7</sup> PINTEROVIĆ 1971b, 62; PINTEROVIĆ 1978, 95, 96, T. XIX.<sup>1</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2014/><sup>2</sup> SANADER 2003, 463.