

## CELTIC DIVINITIES FROM CELEIA AND ITS TERRITORY: WHO WERE THE DEDICATORS?

di Marjeta Šašel Kos

### *Introductory remarks*

Celeia was one of the most flourishing towns of the province of Noricum and was founded as a *municipium* during the reign of Claudius, along with Virunum, Teurnia, Aguntum, and Iuvavum, which were all called *oppida* by Pliny (*N. b.* III 146). Conveniently located along the Amber Route (Fig. 1), it was settled by the Celtic Taurisci during the late Iron Age; they minted their own silver and also golden coins, formerly called “east Norican” (as opposed to the “west Norican”, minted in present-day Carinthia).<sup>1</sup> With recent discoveries of new hoards this division can no longer be regarded as valid,<sup>2</sup> and the spread of different types of Celtic coins cannot well be linked in all instances to the postulated areas of settlement; nonetheless, the power of the Taurisci in Celeia<sup>3</sup> is well reflected in their coinage. Celeia must have become part of the Norican Kingdom at some time in the first century BC, since otherwise it would probably not have belonged to the province of Noricum when the latter was constituted as an independent province under Claudius. The town retained its important role during the Principate and was one of the most

<sup>1</sup> KOS 1977; ID. 1986, pp. 20-24; ID. 1984; GÖBL 1994, pp. 37 ss. and 98.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. GORINI 2005; however, his historical interpretation is most problematic.

<sup>3</sup> On the Taurisci see ŠAŠEL KOS 1998; and GRASSL 2001, and other literature cited in both articles.



Figure 1 – Southern Noricum and neighbouring regions.

important administrative centres in the province.<sup>4</sup> It was Romanized at an early date, although, simultaneously, it retained to a large extent its Celtic character, which is reflected in archaeological remains, in the attire, especially female, of the deceased on the tombstones, in personal names, as well as in the worship of the (pre-)Celtic divinities, both in the town and its territory.

<sup>4</sup> ŠAŠEL 1970 (1992). See most recently LAZAR 2002.

*The territory of Celeia: divinities related to the river Savus,  
of inter-regional importance*

The rivers Nauportus (= the Ljubljanica) and Savus (= the Sava) represented an important river way beginning at Nauportus (= Vrhnika), and continuing along the Savus to the important Pannonian *emporium* of Segest(ic)a/Siscia (= Sisak), and further down to the confluence of the Sava with the Danube at Singidunum (= Belgrade). The lower course of the Savus from Segestica/Siscia onwards was also called the Noarus in antiquity.<sup>5</sup> The busy traffic along these rivers is documented by Strabo who reported that cargoes had first been transported on carts from Aquileia to Nauportus, and thence by boat to Segestica and further (V 1.8 C 214; IV 6.10 C 207 and VII 5.2 C 314). At least three divinities were closely related to the river Savus and worshipped along it. A recently discovered dedication to the Celtic (?)<sup>6</sup> Saverčna revealed a goddess of the sources of the Sava Dolinka (one of the two main sources of the Sava River) at the site of Zelenci near Podkoren in the area of the Slovenian-Austrian state border.<sup>7</sup> This region belonged either to Noricum (the territory of Virunum?) or to the Tenth Region (Emona?), but since the dedication concerns the river of importance to the Celeians it should be studied in this context. The inscription is dated to the second century AD and was erected by one Stephanus (a slave?) *cum suis*. The cognomen Stephanus is well documented in northern Italy and Dalmatia, but has not been attested to date in Noricum or Pannonia.<sup>8</sup> *Sui* could in this case mean “members of his family”, or – if he were indeed a slave – “other slaves”. The site is at present protected as a nature reserve, and must no doubt have always been a sacred site in antiquity. It was situated in the valley dividing the Julian Alps from the Karavanke Mts, below the important Alpine pass of Korensko sedlo (Korensko Pass, Wurzenpaß) in the direction of the ancient Santicum (= Villach/Beljak), a large village in the territory of Virunum.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> ŠAŠEL KOS 2002a.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. the goddess *Vercana*, known from Germania Superior and Belgica, *CIL* XIII, 7667; *CIL* XIII, 4511.

<sup>7</sup> SAGADIN 2006 (with photo). The dedication was immured in the house at Podkoren, no. 62.

<sup>8</sup> *Onomasticon* IV, 94.

<sup>9</sup> LOVENJAK 2008.

The sanctuary of Savus and Adsalluta was situated in the territory of Celeia along the river Sava on the right bank of the river, between the hamlet of Sava near Podkraj and Radeče, opposite Hrastnik, at some distance from the confluence of the Sava and Savinja rivers at Zidani Most. The sanctuary was built above the dangerous rapids, which greatly aggravated the traffic along the river. Recently it was excavated,<sup>10</sup> and in the course of the excavations the last inscribed altar came to light, surprisingly dedicated to Magna Mater.<sup>11</sup> It is interesting, however, that the dedicator was one Cassius Restutus, without a *praenomen*, which indicates a slightly later period, perhaps the second half of the second, or the third century AD. He may have belonged to the same family as C. Cassius Quietus, who had erected an altar to Adsalluta and Savus in the same sanctuary, but at an earlier date. The Cassii were settled mainly in southern Noricum and had their centre at Celeia.<sup>12</sup> The altar for Magna Mater may be regarded as less surprising in the light of the recent hypothesis that Cybele from Galatian Pessinous would have been summoned to Rome as a Celtic deity, not as the Trojan Mother of the gods.<sup>13</sup> Of the formerly discovered altars, five were dedicated to both Savus and Adsalluta, while four were erected merely to Adsalluta, and one was uninscribed.<sup>14</sup> The inscriptions may be dated mainly to the first and second centuries AD.

The dedicators were of different social extraction; merely the names are preserved of most of them. These are: C. M[e]mm(ius), perhaps C. Mammius, P. Antonius Secundus, C. Cassius Quietus, C. Iulius Iustus, C. Caecina Faustinus, one person of whom only the initials are known: C. C() A(), further Ocellio, the slave of Castricius Marcellus, Secundio, as well as L. Servilius Eutyches. The Iulii are very well attested both in the town of Celeia as also in its territory, and so are the Antonii. The Castricii were no doubt a well-to-do family, partly also a merchant family, for whom the traffic along the Sava River must have been most important, as may be inferred from the fact that opposite the sanctuary of Savus and Adsalluta, at Klempas, a dedication to Neptune was erected by another mem-

<sup>10</sup> JOVANOVIĆ 1998.

<sup>11</sup> LOVENJAK 1997 (pp. 67-68: *M(atri) d(eorum) m(agnae) / Cassius Restut(us) / v. s. l. m.*)

<sup>12</sup> SCHERRER 2002, pp. 24-25.

<sup>13</sup> ŠTARK 2007.

<sup>14</sup> ŠAŠEL KOS 1994 (1999).

ber of the family, C. Castricius Optatus.<sup>15</sup> In Celeia, they belonged to the municipal elite, since D. Castricius Verus Antonius Avitus was a city's *decurio*.<sup>16</sup> The slave of Castricius Marcellus, Ocellio, bears a Celtic name (it is relatively rare, but attested in Celtic provinces),<sup>17</sup> and most probably he was of local Celtic origin.

Servilius Eutyches erected an altar together with his pilots, *cum suis gubernatoribus*, and he may well have been a member – most probably a freedman because of his Greek cognomen – of the Servilii family from Aquileia. The Servilii were probably a merchant family, since an altar was set up to Neptune at Bistra near Nauportus by L. Servilius Sabinus of the voting tribe of the Aquileians, *Velina*.<sup>18</sup> The Nauportus area indeed belonged to the *ager* of Aquileia.<sup>19</sup> Although Savus and Adsalluta are local divinities worshipped by the Celtic population, it is perhaps remarkable that only one of the dedicators, whose names are preserved, was undoubtedly of local, native origin; names of the others seem to suggest that they were Roman citizens, or else their slaves or freedmen. It may thus be concluded that the altars to Adsalluta alone or to Savus and Adsalluta were dedicated in part by merchant families from Celeia, but in part also by travellers in transit, mostly merchants or rather their staff, who wished to secure the good will of the gods during navigation along the river and across the dangerous rapids right below the sanctuary of the two divinities.

The river god Savus, however, was worshipped all along the course of the river, attracting very different dedicators. Dedications to him, which have been found to date at two sites along the river Sava: at Vernek opposite Kresnice (the territory of Emona) and at Andautonia (= Ščitarjevo, to the southeast of Zagreb), as well as a curse-tablet from Siscia, in which he is invoked, throw light also on the dedications in the sanctuary Savus shared with Adsalluta. The altar found at Vernek was erected by one P. Rufrius Verus (fig. 2), of whom nothing else is known, although he was most probably a merchant or somebody connected with the river traffic

<sup>15</sup> CIL III, 5137; ILLPRON 1940.

<sup>16</sup> CIL III, 5226 + p. 1830 (cf. *ILJug* 400); WEDENIG 1997, C 16; ILLPRON 1686.

<sup>17</sup> *Nomenclator*, p. 206; *Onomasticon* III, p. 109; cf. the name of local Mars, Ocelus, in Britannia, DE BERNARDO STEMPEL 2004, p. 219.

<sup>18</sup> ŠAŠEL KOS 1990, pp. 150, no. 6, 155-156.

<sup>19</sup> ŠAŠEL KOS 2002b.

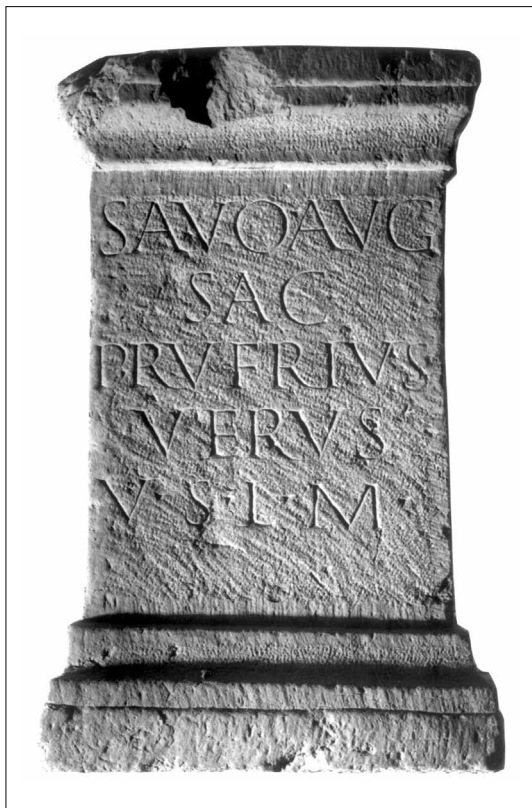


Figure 2 – Altar, dedicated to Savus (*RINMS* 95 = *CIL* III, 3896).

along the Sava.<sup>20</sup> At Andautonia, Savus was honoured by one M. Ju(v)entius Primigenius with his *socii*, i.e. the members of some association, probably in a subordinate position, since they are not mentioned by name. Perhaps they belonged to the *collegium* of boatmen, in which he may have been one of the owners of boats.<sup>21</sup> Both, Verus and Primigenius, were members of the Italian families, the Rufrii and Iuventii, who probably came from northern Italy to settle in the Norican-Pannonian regions.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *RINMS* 95.

<sup>21</sup> *AIJ* 475 = *ILS* 3908/9.

<sup>22</sup> *Nomenclator*, p. 246; 156; *Onomasticon* IV, p. 35; II, p. 211.

Siscia was a well-known cosmopolitan city and administrative centre, as well as an important crossroads with markets, river harbours, and a station of the *beneficarii consularis*.<sup>23</sup> Thus it is not surprising that the authors of the curse written on a lead tablet found in Sisak among the material dredged from the river Kupa/Kolpa (= the Colapis) were of “international” origin. The inner side bears the names of the opponents in some legal suit and the imprecation, which should prevent them from saying anything against the authors of the tablet, some of the text being illegible.<sup>24</sup> The curse was also inscribed on the exterior side, and in it the god Savus was invoked to drown the opponents. The curse reads: “*You (Colapis? – since the tablet was found in the Kupa) will give a command to Savus to see to it that he pulls them downwards, that they become speechless, that they cannot say or do anything against us...*”. Among the opponents first of all L. Dometiu(s?) Secundo, L. Larcio and Luccillius Vallens are mentioned (the names are cited according to Hoffiller’s reading);<sup>25</sup> they were most probably from Siscia, since their place of birth was not specifically mentioned. Further, a certain individual from Cibalae was mentioned (his name cannot be reconstructed with certainty), as well as P. (?) Citroniu(s) Cicorelliu(s) from Narbo and Lic(i)nius Sura from Hispania; the city of Novae in Moesia was perhaps also mentioned (according to Vetter’s reading). This may have been a group of merchants who transported their goods on boats, and who obviously represented (unfair?) rivals for the writers of the curse. Both river gods, Savus and Colapis, were represented on gold coins and silver medallions of Gallienus, minted in Siscia,<sup>26</sup> and on the antoniniani of Probus,<sup>27</sup> by which it is implied that they were widely worshipped.

*The local divinities: river god Aquo, Vibes, Carvonia*

Aquo was the divinity of a local stream, the small torrential river Voglajna, which often inundated the valley to the east of Celeia. His name

<sup>23</sup> LOLIĆ 2003.

<sup>24</sup> *AIJ* 557 = *AE* 1921, 95; VETTER 1960 (cf. also VETTER 1958).

<sup>25</sup> The inscription should perhaps be revised. Dometiu(s) may be interpreted as Domitius? Secundo is unusual; Larcio is a cognomen (cf. indexes to *AIJ* in the first vol. of *ILJug*).

<sup>26</sup> ALFÖLDI 1931, p. 47, nos. 14 and 2.

<sup>27</sup> WEBB 1933, Probus nos. 764-766; OSTROWSKI 1991, p. 58 and fig. 60.

has been preserved by chance on two small altars of the second century AD, which were discovered at the late Roman fortified upland settlement of Rifnik near Šentjur (570 m above sea level) in the Celeia region.<sup>28</sup> Rifnik was certainly not the site where the altars would have been originally erected, since they were reused in the construction of the early Christian basilica from the beginning of the fifth century AD. They must have stood somewhere closer to the Voglajna stream, at some sacred place, grove, or a shrine dedicated to the river god. One of the altars was set up by two dedicators, C. Stat(utius?) Masclus and Publicius Ianuarius, both bearing cognomina typical of the indigenous inhabitants of Celeia and its territory (fig. 3). The name Ianuarius, when borne by the native population, was very likely a Latinized form of a Celtic name with the root of *Ian-*,<sup>29</sup> and Masclus, too, is a name typical of Noricum. It could be interpreted as the so-called “Deckname”, most probably concealing a Celtic name.<sup>30</sup> The gentilicium of Masclus was probably Statutius and not Statius, as was hypothetically supplemented by the first editor,<sup>31</sup> due to the fact that the family of the Statutii is well documented at Celeia and Šempeter, while the Statii have not been attested to date in Noricum.<sup>32</sup> The ancestors of Publicius Ianuarius probably belonged to a family of a municipal freedman or a public slave of Celeia. The dedicator of the second altar erected to Aquo was one Abascantus, a slave of a man who was a Roman citizen, bearing *tria nomina*, but whose name was abbreviated: L. T() P().<sup>33</sup> He must have been a rich person, as well as locally well known and easily recognizable. Theoretically, his name may have been L. Trosius Propincus, known from a tombstone found in Celeia, which he had erected for himself and his wife Iantulla on the occasion of their son’s death.<sup>34</sup> The name of the divinity, Aquo, was a Celtic or perhaps a pre-Celtic river name, which was Latinized and perhaps adapted to the popular etymol-

<sup>28</sup> ŠAŠEL 1980; cf. ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 135-136.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. MOCSY 1959, p. 176, and ALFÖLDY 1977, pp. 257-258.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. *CIL* III, 4761, 4880, 5040, see LOCHNER VON HÜTTENBACH 1989, p. 101.

<sup>31</sup> ŠAŠEL 1980, p. 62 no. 1 = *AE* 1974, 488 = *ILLPRON* 1837: *Aquoni sacr(um) / C. Stat(ius?) Masclus / et / Public(ius) Ianuar(ius) / v. s. l. m.*; in *AE* the gentilicium remained unsupplemented.

<sup>32</sup> See *ILJug* 374; ALFÖLDY 1974, p. 126.

<sup>33</sup> ŠAŠEL 1980, p. 62 no. 2 = *AE* 1974, 489 = *AE* 1975, 672 (misleading) = *ILLPRON* 1839: *Aquon[i] / Abascantu[s] / L. T() P() s(ervus) / v. s. l. m.*

<sup>34</sup> *CIL* III, 5274 a = *ILLPRON* 1724.



Figure 3 – Altar, dedicated to Aquo by C. Stat() Masclus (*AE* 1974, 488).



ogy, from which the modern name of the stream was most probably derived.<sup>35</sup>

The name of the local goddesses Vibes, worshipped in southern Noricum, is closely related to the personal name Vibenus, which is very rarely attested outside Noricum.<sup>36</sup> A small altar erected to Vibes was discovered among numerous Roman inscribed monuments at the late Roman fortified settlement of Ajdovski Gradec above Vranje near Sevnica,<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> ŠAŠEL 1980.

<sup>36</sup> LOCHNER VON HÜTTENBACH 1974; see also SCHERRER 2002, pp. 55-56; 60-61; on Vibes see also ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 136-137.

<sup>37</sup> See PETRU - ULBERT 1975; CIGLENEČKI 1987, pp. 65-67.

where they had been reused as construction material. It is not known whence exactly they had been brought to the late Roman site on the hill-top, but most probably from a Roman settlement somewhere below the hill (belonging to the territory of Celeia) that has not yet been located.<sup>38</sup> It is most unlikely that a shrine for Vibes would have stood at Ajdovski Gradec itself. The dedication to Vibes is hardly legible; it was erected by two native inhabitants of peregrine status, Serenus and Maru. Maru should be interpreted as a feminine name ending in *-u*, such as Cattu, typical of Noricum,<sup>39</sup> although it has not been attested to date. The name should most probably not be read as masculine name Marus.<sup>40</sup> Vibes are Celtic goddesses, perhaps a local variant of mother goddesses, worshipped only in Noricum; the dative case *Vibebos* is typically Celtic.<sup>41</sup> Vibes were worshipped notably at Warmbad Villach (Slov. Toplice) near Santicum, within the territory of Virunum. The exact provenance of the altar is the nearby Tscheltschnigkogel, where the altar was immured in the late Roman fortress.<sup>42</sup> The dedicators were C. Decius Succes(s)inus, with the status of an aedile (*aedilicia potestate*) at Virunum, and Vibenia Masculina; due to her names, the wife was undoubtedly a native Norican. Not only was Vibenus an indigenous name, perhaps related to the name of the goddesses, but also Masculinus and Masclus were very popular in Noricum.<sup>43</sup> The same is true of Succesinus, derived from the popular Successus, while Decius, otherwise a rare gentilicium in Noricum, may have been a Celtic “Deckname”.<sup>44</sup> Vibes are further documented at Flavia Solva and at Lauriacum; at both places they were honoured by native dedicators, at Solva where the dedication was engraved on a small pot, by one Adtresia, at Lauriacum an altar was erected by one Mosiqu Qupiti.<sup>45</sup>

The goddess Carvonia, an undoubtedly Celtic divinity,<sup>46</sup> is attested in a dedication on a votive column (for a statue?) found at Dobrteša vas

<sup>38</sup> ŠAŠEL 1975.

<sup>39</sup> FALKNER 1948.

<sup>40</sup> RINMS 115 [reading by G. ALFÖLDY]: *Vib(ebos?) posu(erunt) / Serenu(s) / et Maru / v(otum) s(olverunt)*.

<sup>41</sup> Cf., e.g., LOCHNER VON HÜTTENBACH 1974, 145.

<sup>42</sup> ILLPRON 642 = WEDENIG 1997, pp. 288-289 no. V 40.

<sup>43</sup> LOCHNER VON HÜTTENBACH 1989, p. 101.

<sup>44</sup> *Ivi*, p. 67.

<sup>45</sup> NOLL 1976; ILLPRON 923; cf. SCHERRER 1984, nos. 376-379.

<sup>46</sup> DE BERNARDO STEMPER 2004, 200.

near Šempeter, in the territory of Celeia.<sup>47</sup> She seems to have been a local Celtic divinity, in particular because she is elsewhere unknown; however, this impression could well be erroneous and due to a chance. There is no doubt that her name is Celtic, related to the word *\*car-vo-s*, which means “deer”,<sup>48</sup> and indeed, in Gallia both a personal name Carvonia is documented, as well as a toponym Carvo on the road between Lugdunum and Noviomagus.<sup>49</sup> How she could have been a river goddess, as J. Zajac supposed, is not clear.<sup>50</sup> Her cult may have indeed played an inter-regional role, which was perhaps close to that of Artemis/Diana. Due to the etymology of her name, there can be hardly any doubt that she was a divinity of nature, forests, and hunting, whose place within the pantheon of Celtic divinities must have been important. As Arrian tells us, the worship of a goddess of the type Artemis/Diana had a significant place in the cult life of the Celts. According to him, “some of the Celts”, who may well have been the Noricans,<sup>51</sup> annually celebrated – in the company of their dogs – a major holiday in honour of Artemis, in the course of which they would sacrifice an animal, a sheep, a goat, or a cow. These sacrificial animals were bought with money that they had been saving for this feast over the whole year by having paid a bounty into the treasury of the goddess for each animal they caught, according to the size of the animal: the least for a rabbit, the most for a deer (*Kyn.* 34.1-3). In Noricum, there had always been a goddess, from the early Iron Age onwards, whose cult was characterized by the symbolism of deer, as, for example, the figure represented in the cult cart from Strettweg, which probably embodied a “Great Nature Goddess”.<sup>52</sup> Carvonia’s importance is further reflected in her epithet *Augusta*,<sup>53</sup> and the fact that she could be responsible for the

<sup>47</sup> *CIL* III, 5115 + p. 1827 = *AIJ* 17 = *ILLPRON* 1771 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 27: *Carvoniae / Aug(ustae) sacr(um) / p[r]o salute / C[n.] Atili / Iuliani*. See ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 137-138, photo p. 137.

<sup>48</sup> HOLDER 1896, c. 820; cf. ALFÖLDY 1974, p. 239.

<sup>49</sup> EVANS 1967, p. 330; cf. p. 291; the toponym is attested in *Tab. Pent.* I 3/4 and *Itin. Ant.* 369.4.

<sup>50</sup> ZAJAC 1979, p. 93.

<sup>51</sup> GRASSL 1982.

<sup>52</sup> EGG 1996; for an explanation of the goddess that does not seem convincing, see GLEIRSCHER 1993.

<sup>53</sup> FISHWICK 1991, ch. VI: *Augustan Gods*, pp. 446-454; TASSAUX 1997.

welfare (*pro salute*) of her worshipper. In any case it should be assumed that goddesses with similar traits were worshipped everywhere in the Celtic world, although perhaps under different names. The name of the man for whose welfare the dedication was made is Cn. Atilius Iulianus, revealing a Roman citizen and seemingly a colonist, while the dedicator is unknown. The Atilii, too, like the Cassii, were settled in southern Noricum with their centre at Celeia.<sup>54</sup>

A case with Esus in Noricum is emblematic in this respect. The god has been attested to date only in one dedication in the province, and if it were not known from a few literary and archaeological sources that he was an important pan-Celtic god – his recently analyzed name may have been originally a divine epithet<sup>55</sup> – he would have easily been regarded as a local divinity. According to Lucan, Esus was one of the three main gods of Gallia, in addition to Taranis and Teutates (*De bello civili (Pharsalia)* I 444-446). As is written in the *scholia*, he was equated both with Mars and Mercury, since his polyvalent nature, typical of Celtic divinities, could obviously correspond equally well to that of either of the Roman gods; the so-called *interpretatio Romana* is hopelessly misleading.<sup>56</sup> In Carinthia, a small bronze base for a statue was found with a metal detector some time before 1987, probably originating from the prehistoric and Roman settlement at Gurina in the upper Gail valley.<sup>57</sup> A dedication to Aesus was incised on it, perhaps as early as the end of the second century B.C., by a native Norican, one Adginnos, son of Vercombog(i)us.<sup>58</sup> Epichoric names would further misleadingly suggest that the god was a local Celtic deity; had the other data not been preserved, we would not know of his inter-regional importance.

#### *Official Celtic divinities in Celeia*

Epona, the patroness of horses, stables and horsemen, and one of the most popular Celtic goddesses in general,<sup>59</sup> is attested on two altars at

<sup>54</sup> SCHERRER 2002, pp. 26-27.

<sup>55</sup> The evidence is collected in MEID 2004, p. 189 ff.

<sup>56</sup> ANDO 2005.

<sup>57</sup> JABLONKA 1995.

<sup>58</sup> PICCOTTINI 1996, with exhaustive commentary; ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 42-43.

<sup>59</sup> EUSKIRCHEN 1993; for Celeia see particularly pp. 688, 700.

Celeia.<sup>60</sup> It is important to note, however, that in addition to having been a Celtic goddess her cult was also one of the official cults of the Roman army, and her worshippers were predominantly soldiers. In Virunum, for example, Epona was honoured by the local *collegium iuventutis*, called *iuvenes collegii Manliensium* after their meeting place Manlia, a paramilitary cavalry youth organisation of young, probably upper and middle class Noricans, who erected an altar to the goddess, perhaps under Septimius Severus and Caracalla.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, at Celeia she was honoured by a *beneficiarius* of the Norican procurator Lisinius Sabinus (first half of the second century A.D.), C. Mustius Tettianus.<sup>62</sup> The *beneficarii* were officers who were assigned a horse and exercised functions of some kind of financial and traffic policemen.<sup>63</sup> What cults were publicly celebrated in Celeia (or in other cities in the western part of the Roman Empire) is not known, but it is clear from the *Fasti Guidizzolenses* that Epona's festival was celebrated on December 18. These *fasti* are actually a calendar, in which festivals and holidays were marked, that is, a mixture of a calendar and a *feriale*, found at Guidizzolo in the territory of Mantua, and dated to the imperial period; perhaps they refer to the festivals celebrated in Brixia.<sup>64</sup> The official character of Epona is well confirmed by a dedication to her together with Jupiter and the goddess Celeia, which was almost certainly erected by a *beneficiarius*, although the name of the dedicator is not preserved.<sup>65</sup>

As is indicated by the dedicators and their social standing, the goddess Celeia had an official character of the patroness of the city of Celeia.<sup>66</sup> It is well-known that *beneficarii* worshipped official deities, related to the

<sup>60</sup> ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 138-140.

<sup>61</sup> CIL III, 4777 = ILLPRON 764 + 765 = WEDENIG 1997, V 1.

<sup>62</sup> CIL III, 5176 + p. 1830 = WINKLER 1969, p. 52 no. 4 = ILLPRON 1637 = CB-FIR 237 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 41: *Eponae / Aug(ustae) / sacr(um) / C. Mustius / Tettianus b(ene)ficiarius / Lisini Sabini proc(uratoris) / Aug(usti) v. s. l. m.* See also EUSKIRCHEN 1993, p. 822 no. 275. On the *beneficarii consularis* in Celeia, see DISE 1996 and SCHERRER 2005.

<sup>63</sup> See lastly on the *beneficarii* in general, NELIS-CLÉMENT 2000.

<sup>64</sup> RÜPKE 1995, pp. 160-164; cf. PASCAL 1964, p. 131; on the problem of municipal holidays: RÜPKE 1995, p. 533 ff..

<sup>65</sup> CIL III, 5192 + p. 1830 = ILLPRON 1654 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 196: *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / Eponae / et Celeiae / sanctae / M(arcus) S(---) / ---*; see also EUSKIRCHEN 1993, p. 822 no. 276.

<sup>66</sup> ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 138-139.

Roman state, province or municipality where they served, thus in the first place Jupiter, Best and Greatest, and very often also the *Genius loci*. The cult of Celeia or any other eponymous divinity of a Roman town could in many ways be explained in terms of the *Genius loci* cult and accords well with customary dedications of the *beneficarii*. In AD 213, P. Aelius Verinus erected an altar to the goddess Celeia Augusta alone.<sup>67</sup> He may have been the same P. Aelius Verinus, a *beneficiarius* from Meclaria (= Unterthörl), who in AD 200 had dedicated an altar to Jupiter for his welfare and that of his family.<sup>68</sup> Meclaria was an important station along the road leading across the Carnian Alps to northern Italy (Regio X). An altar, dated to December 13, AD 211, was dedicated to Jupiter together with Celeia *sancta*, by C. Licinius Bellicianus, *beneficiarius consularis* of the legion II Italica.<sup>69</sup> As is indicated by the dedicator's cognomen Bellicianus and similar names derived from Bellicus, including the gentilicium Bellicius, which are all characteristic of Noricum, he was most probably a native Norican.<sup>70</sup> Celeia was further honoured as *sancta*, together with *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Conservator Arubianus*, by Vib(ius) Cassius Victorinus, a *beneficiarius consularis* of the legion II Italica; the dedication is dated to AD 215.<sup>71</sup> Due to his abbreviated praenomen, which should perhaps better be supplemented as *Vibenus*, a personal name very well documented in Noricum, this *beneficiarius*, too, should be regarded as a native Norican. Celeia and Noreia *sanctae* were invoked together with Jupiter by a *beneficiarius consularis* Rufius Senilis in a dedication dated to the end of the second, or the beginning of the third century AD (fig. 4).<sup>72</sup> Rufii were one of the leading families of Celeia,<sup>73</sup> thus the dedicator was most probably by origin from Celeia. Senilis, too, is a cognomen, which predominated in Noricum.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>67</sup> CIL III, 5154 = ILLPRON 1614 = WINKLER 1969, p. 125 no. 3b = CBFIR 218 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 31.

<sup>68</sup> CBFIR 268.

<sup>69</sup> CIL III, 5187 + pp. 1830, 2285 = WINKLER 1969, p. 126 no. 9 = ILLPRON 1648 = CBFIR 228 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 180.

<sup>70</sup> *Onomasticon* I, 117; SCHERRER 2005, p. 21 ff.

<sup>71</sup> CIL III, 5185 = WINKLER 1969, p. 126 no. 6 = CBFIR 227.

<sup>72</sup> CIL III, 5188 + p. 1830 = WINKLER 1969, p. 127 no. 14 = ILLPRON 1649 = CBFIR 229.

<sup>73</sup> ALFÖLDY 1974, p. 124 ff.

<sup>74</sup> *Onomasticon* IV, p. 66.

Figure 4 – Altar, dedicated to Celeia and Noreia *sanctae* (CIL III, 5188).



Neither Celeia nor Noreia could be interpreted – during the period of the Roman Empire – primarily in terms of an indigenous cult of a mother goddess, the former as a patroness of the Celtic Celeians before the settlement became Romanized and was converted into a Roman *municipium*, the latter as the patroness of the Norican kingdom, a native goddess, allegedly widely worshipped in Noricum from the Hallstatt period onwards.<sup>75</sup> Indeed, no conclusive proof has so far been offered for this hypothesis. That both goddesses enjoyed an official cult during the imper-

<sup>75</sup> GLEIRSCHER 1993. For an interesting analysis of various aspects of the modern myth of an omnipotent mother goddess see GEORGOU DI 1990. (I thank for this reference to John Scheid.)

ial period cannot be questioned.<sup>76</sup> The cult of Noreia is certainly a very complex one, she was equated with Isis in Noricum, which further illuminates her official character, but could it point at all to her presumed origin as mother-patroness of the Noricans?<sup>77</sup> H. Kenner actually defined Noreia merely on the basis of her identification with Isis, ascribing to her the features of a polyvalent mother goddess, victorious protectress of a nation, a goddess of fertility, nature, and general welfare, with healing powers, a patroness of everyday activities, as well as of life beyond the grave.<sup>78</sup> The goddess Celeia is not a unique case, and other personifications of Norican towns must be interpreted in a similar way, such as the goddess Teurnia, who was named *sanctissima Augusta*. An altar was erected to her by L. Herennius Epictetus,<sup>79</sup> perhaps a freedman of one of the richest families who came from Italy to settle in Teurnia.<sup>80</sup>

#### *Belenus and the Celtic (?) Jupiter*

Apollo had never been a supreme god such as Jupiter, but as a god of healing, related both to the sunlight and water, he always enjoyed a special place in any pantheon. Many Celtic gods were equated to him, in Aquileia and its hinterland most notably Belenus. He may be regarded as one of the important Celtic gods,<sup>81</sup> and it has usually been believed that his name would imply light-imagery.<sup>82</sup> His worship has been attested in Celtiberia, Galliae, and the western Alps,<sup>83</sup> while eventually he came to be regarded as both an important god of the Norici, who inhabited the core of the Norican kingdom – his name mainly spelled as Belinus<sup>84</sup> – and also as the most prominent god of Aquileia and the patron

<sup>76</sup> SCHERRER 2007.

<sup>77</sup> HAINZMANN 2006; GRASSL 2007, p. 231.

<sup>78</sup> KENNER 1989a, pp. 876-894. See also KENNER 1989b; cf. TAK-CS 1995, pp. 149-155; ZAJAC 1979, pp. 85-90.

<sup>79</sup> GLASER 1992, p. 50 no. 10 = *ILLPRON* 479.

<sup>80</sup> ALFÖLDY 1974, p. 125.

<sup>81</sup> DE VRIES 1961, pp. 75-76.

<sup>82</sup> GREEN 1986, pp. 162-163; cf. pp. 152-153; see also GREEN 1995, p. 474.

<sup>83</sup> OLMSTED 1994, p. 386; HATT 1975-1976, pp. 358-359; GOURVEST 1954.

<sup>84</sup> SCHERRER 1984, pp. 175-187; ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 25-27.



divinity of the city.<sup>85</sup> Interestingly, the cult of Belenus flourished in Iulium Carnicum, where the god seems to have been one of the most important divinities.<sup>86</sup> This Carnic town had the closest contacts with the Norican kingdom, and must have been an important commercial station and intermediary on the way between the kingdom and northern Italy; whether the cult of Belenus had been introduced to Iulium Carnicum from Aquileia or from Noricum is not clear. His connection with water is attested by two dedications to Fons B(eleni),<sup>87</sup> and by an altar, in which Belenus is associated with the Nymphs;<sup>88</sup> this is further confirmed by a new etymology of his name, according to which it would have been related to a spring of water.<sup>89</sup>

A recent discovery of an altar erected to Belinus at Celeia should not cause surprise since the cult could have been introduced to the Norican town either from Aquileia or from the Virunum territory.<sup>90</sup> However, due to the name of the dedicator, L. Sentius Forensis, the former possibility perhaps seems more plausible: while the *gens Sentia* is very well documented in Aquileia and northern Italy, it is only rarely attested in Pannonia and not at all in Noricum, except in this case.<sup>91</sup>

Several Jupiters with native (Celtic?) names or else with Latin epithets, but documented more or less locally, are attested in Celeia and its territory.<sup>92</sup> Since Jupiter Depulsor seems to have been a Norican god (not necessarily of Celtic origin), perhaps he should be regarded as provincial god in the manner of Jupiter Repulsor(ius) and Solutorius in Lusitania.<sup>93</sup> He is also attested elsewhere in the Roman Empire, but in several cases, in which identification was possible, it resulted in his being worshipped by Noricans abroad.<sup>94</sup> The worship of Culminalis was regionally limited

<sup>85</sup> BRUSIN 1939; MARASPIN 1967-1968; WOJCIECHOWSKI 2002; ZACCARIA 2004, pp. 131 ff.

<sup>86</sup> *CIL* V, 1829 + p. 1053 = *ILS* 5443; FONTANA 1997.

<sup>87</sup> *Inscr. Aquil.* 153; 152 = WOJCIECHOWSKI 2000, p. 144 nos. 61; 62.

<sup>88</sup> *Inscr. Aquil.* 155 = WOJCIECHOWSKI 2000, p. 125-126 no. 12.

<sup>89</sup> DE BERNARDO STEMPEL 2004, p. 212-213.

<sup>90</sup> *Belino / L. Sentius / Forensis*: LOVENJAK 2003, p. 335 fig. 4 (he originally published the first line as *Beleno*).

<sup>91</sup> *Inscr. Aquil.*, indexes; *Onomasticon*, IV, p. 68.

<sup>92</sup> ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 140-146.

<sup>93</sup> BELTRAN LLORIS 2004.

<sup>94</sup> ŠAŠEL KOS 1995; HAINZMANN 2004.

in particular to the area of Celeia and Poetovio, and the god may well have been a supreme tribal god of the native Celtic population.<sup>95</sup> Jupiter's epithet *Culminalis* may have been the Latin translation for *Uxellimus*, who has been documented to date only once – on an altar from Bukovca near Rečica, not far from Laško, in the region of Celeia. It was erected on behalf of Serandius Verinus by his wife and his son. Verinus was a *decurio* of Celeia, and it is not clear on what occasion the dedication was erected, whether while he was still alive or perhaps after his death.<sup>96</sup> The altar is dated to the second half of the second, or the first half of the third century A.D. There is hardly any doubt that Jupiter's epithet *Uxellimus* is the superlative of the Celtic word *uxellos* meaning "high, superior, venerable".<sup>97</sup> *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Uxlemitanus*, however, bears a quite different epithet, only seemingly similar to *uxellimus*, but probably derived from the Celtic words *\*ux* (*\*oux*) = high, and *\*lemos* = elm-tree, with the meaning of "he, who is venerated in the high *\*lemos* (elm-tree?)", or "he, who comes from the place of the high *\*lemos*".<sup>98</sup> He is attested on an altar in the territory of Flavia Solva and was invoked by one Aurelius Celsinus for his son Marcellinus, a soldier of the legion XIV.

In a like manner, also the epithet of Jupiter Arubianus could be regarded as related to a toponym: *castellum Arubium* is known in Moesia,<sup>99</sup> and Arubii in Gallia Lugdunensis,<sup>100</sup> and it would not even be impossible to postulate a place-name of Arubium somewhere in Noricum or southwestern Pannonia. The official status of the cult of Jupiter Arubianus in Celeia and in Noricum in general – altogether attested in five inscriptions – is indicated by dedicators. Four of them were *beneficarii con-*

<sup>95</sup> SCHERRER 1984, pp. 112-118. See also ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 140-141.

<sup>96</sup> *CIL* III, 5145 + p. 1829 = *ILS* 4626 = *ILLPRON* 1840 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 257 = WEDENIG 1997, C 6: *I. O. M. / Uxellimo / Serandius / Verinus / dec(urio) Cel(eiae) p(oni?) i(ussit?) / Pomp(eia? -onia?) / Ursula eius / cum Urso fil(io) / v. s. l. m.*; cf. *ANSI*, 287.

<sup>97</sup> Thus also DE VRIES 1961, p. 31; cf. HOLDER 1907, cc. 61-62; DE BERNARDO STEMPEL 2004, p. 201.

<sup>98</sup> *RISt* 18 = *ILLPRON* 1255 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 258: *I. O. M. Uxlemitano / Aur(elius) Celsinus / ex voto pro / Marcell[i]no / fil(io) / mil(ite) leg(ionis) / XIII G(eminiae) [M(artiae) v(ictricis)] / v. s. l. m.* See also SCHERRER 1984, p. 116.

<sup>99</sup> TOMASCHEK 1896, c. 1487.

<sup>100</sup> IHM 1896, c. 1490. For both see also HOLDER 1896, c. 229 (Arubii, Arubium), and 244 (Arvii).

*sularis*,<sup>101</sup> while in the territory of Flavia Solva (at Stift Rein near Eischbach), the god was honoured by a provincial *sacerdos* L. Campanius Celer and his wife, probably in the first half of the second century AD. Celer was a priest of the eternal city of Rome, either at the municipal or at the provincial level.<sup>102</sup>

*Two specific cases: Genius Anigemius and Mercury*

The last to be mentioned among the Celtic divinities at Celeia is Genius Anigemius,<sup>103</sup> known only from an altar erected by his worshippers, *cultores*, of whom no names are listed.<sup>104</sup> The fact that Anigemius was so closely associated with Genius as to represent one divinity, is in itself an aspect of *interpretatio Romana*, since the concept of Genius, a guardian spirit, is typically Roman.<sup>105</sup> There were Genii of persons, including emperors, of groups of persons, divinities, institutions, peoples, communities, places; in northern Italy, for example, several Genii of the villages (*pagi*) and other communities and their inhabitants are documented, such as *Genius pagi Arusnatium* (Regio X).<sup>106</sup> Thus in this case Genius Anigemius was most probably worshipped as the protector of an association, of which nothing else is known, his cult reflecting an interesting blend of Roman and Norican features.

As has been mentioned above, the Celtic Esus was equated either with Mars or Mercury in the Roman pantheon. Therefore it becomes more understandable why Esus is no longer attested epigraphically dur-

<sup>101</sup> See ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 142-144, with references to the inscriptions.

<sup>102</sup> *CIL* III, 5443 = *RIS* 52 = *ILLPRON* 1321 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 205 = WEDENIG 1997, S 18: *I. O. M. / Arubi(a)no / L. Camp(anius) / Celer / sacerdos / urbis / Romae / aeternae / et Iulia / Honorata / con(iunx) pro se / et suis v. s. l. m.*

<sup>103</sup> The name *Anigemius* is included among Celtic names by HOLDER 1896, c. 154; ALFÖLDY 1974, p. 239.

<sup>104</sup> *CIL* III, 5157 + p. 1830 = *ILLPRON* 1618 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 79 = WEDENIG 1997, C 7: *Genio Anigemio / cultores / eius / v. s. l. m.* See ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 145-146, photo p. 145.

<sup>105</sup> LATTE 1960, pp. 103-104; OTTO 1983, pp. 74-78; see also GESEMANN 1998, for the transformation of the concept of Genius, who was increasingly associated with a community.

<sup>106</sup> *CIL* V, 3915; cf. ZACCARIA 2004, pp. 137; 149.

ing the Principate; indeed, he is documented merely once in an early dedication, from the late La-Tène period, when the process of Romanization had only been beginning and gods were still currently called by their old names. Some of the relatively many dedications to Mercury and Mars in Noricum may conceal the Celtic Esus or possibly some other Celtic god since the so-called *interpretatio Romana* is so often only approximative and can be most misleading.<sup>107</sup> Perhaps the names of the dedicators can help decide whether a native god such as Esus could be concealed underneath the name of the Celeian Mercury, or else we are dealing with the genuine Roman Mercury. An inscribed stone slab with a relief of the god, now lost, was erected to Mercury for the sake of nineteen of his worshippers *ex testamento* by one Iulius Lucifer.<sup>108</sup> The text is divided by the relief into two columns – the name of each person occupying one line – and reads as follows: *Mercurio Aug(usto) / sac(rum) et cult(oribus) eius / Iulius Lucifer / titulum cum scr(iptura) t(estamento) d(edit). / Viator Gaetulli, Avitus Magni, Spectatus Sexti, Secundinus Secundi, Finitus Magni, Crescens Nertomari, Maximus Quinti, Aemilius Spectatus, Iulius Maximianus, Calvinus Martialis, Avitus Secundi, // Maximus Viatoris, Maximus Terti, Iulius Secundi, A<t>ilius Firmus, Cassius Senilis, Secundin(us) Maximi, Saturnin(us) Viatoris, Praesens Respecti.*

The monument is most probably dated to the second half of the second, or to the third century AD; none of the dedicators bears *tria nomina*.<sup>109</sup> All the names, except one, are Latin; of the twenty persons listed in the inscription six bear *duo nomina*, and could have been Roman citizens, Iulius Lucifer was perhaps a freedman, while the rest seem to have belonged to the Celeians of peregrine status.<sup>110</sup> Only the name Nertomarus is Celtic, but some may be the so-called “Decknamen” (“concealed” Celtic names), such as Avitus. Many of these names were very popular among the native Celtic inhabitants, as for example all the names derived from numerals, which are predominant, and the name Maximus. There is no indication that the dedicators would have been slaves,<sup>111</sup> since charac-

<sup>107</sup> MEID 2004, p. 187 ff.

<sup>108</sup> *CIL* III, 5196 = *ILLPRON* 1657-1658 = SCHERRER 1984, no. 286 = WEDENIG 1997, C 12; cf. ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, pp. 149-150.

<sup>109</sup> See WEDENIG 1997, p. 120 for various dating proposals.

<sup>110</sup> WEDENIG 1997, p. 121.

<sup>111</sup> Thus SCHERRER 1984, p. 47.

teristic slave names are lacking. On the basis of the names of the dedicators it could be presumed that the milieu, within which the monument was erected, was typically Norican provincial, partly native, but very thoroughly Romanized, where it would be impossible to distinguish descendants of the early colonists from those of native families because provincial society had, through intermarriages, developed from the mixture of both. In the opinion of P. Scherrer, Mercury should in this case be explained as the Roman Mercury, the companion of souls, *psychopompos*, since the monument was erected to him *ex testamento*; members listed in the inscription probably contributed to pay for their funerals.<sup>112</sup> However, it seems more likely that the association was that of merchants,<sup>113</sup> or else its members were engaged in a profession linked to trading, or any other patronized by Mercury. In November 2003, the Regional Museum at Celje acquired from the antique-shop in Vienna a convolute containing some thirty written sheets of paper from the eighteenth century concerning Celeian antiquities, mainly Roman inscriptions; perhaps the most important map contained the description and two pictures of the lost dedication to Mercury. The attributes of the god, depicted in the relief, are those with which he is usually represented: a winged hat (and probably shoes, too), a *caduceus* (a herald's staff with two entwined serpents), a tortoise, and, in his right hand, probably a money bag, although of a slightly strange shape.<sup>114</sup> Since Mercury was extremely popular in the Celtic world it could be assumed that he was regarded by his Celeian *cultores* as a polyvalent god, probably with both Celtic and Roman traits.

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<sup>112</sup> SCHERRER 1984, pp. 47-48.

<sup>113</sup> Thus ŠAŠEL 1970 c. 147 (1992, p. 587); ZAJAČ 1979, p. 75 n. 151; WEDENIG 1997, p. 121; as a god of trade he was quite popular in Dalmatia, see GIUNIO 2004.

<sup>114</sup> VIŠOČNIK 2008, forthcoming.

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