

WESTILLYRICUM UND NORDOSTITALIEN IN DER SPÄTRÖMISCHEN ZEIT

ZAHODNI ILIRIK IN SEVEROVZHODNA
ITALIJA V POZNORIMSKI DOBI

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The Defensive Policy of Valentinian I in Pannonia — A Reminiscence of Marcus Aurelius?

When the offensive policy in Germany had definitely been given up by Tiberius in AD 16, the Danube became the frontier of the Empire. Rivers such as the Rhine and the Danube never represented more than an artificial demarcation line between the regions conquered by the Roman legions and the territories that remained outside the frontiers of the Roman empire, which subsequently became known as the "*barbaricum*"¹. A river could never represent such a natural barrier as would a mountain chain: the latter, being difficult to traverse, divided countries and populations and could, in periods of crisis, contribute decisively towards their defence. This has recently been observed by C. R. Whittaker: "Come il Reno, anche il Danubio non fu mai, o solo raramente, una frontiera politica o militare. Il suo ruolo principale era quello di servire al trasporto e alla comunicazione, cosa che naturalmente comportava posti di guardia contro eventuali infiltrazioni."² The same idea — with regard to trade — has recently been expressed by W. G. Kerr: "...except in stretches where they flow through steep gorges, the Rhine and Danube are natural carriers, not barriers for trade."³ The well-known fact that the Danube was never an efficient defensive frontier has repeatedly been pointed out by scholars who have maintained that a plan of creating a new province — or perhaps two new provinces — beyond Pannonia was actually part of the foreign policy of Marcus Aurelius before and during the

* I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Ingomar Weiler and Dr. William Kerr for having read the text and offered valuable suggestions; and Mrs. Barbara Smith-Demo for having improved my English.

¹ The term is late Roman and referred in most cases to the trans-Danubian and trans-Rhine regions, see I. WEILER, *Orbis Romanus und Barbaricum*, *Carnuntum Jahrbuch* 1963/64, 1965, 34-39.

² C. R. WHITTAKER, *Le frontiere imperiali*, in: *Storia di Roma III: L'età tardoantica I: Crisi e trasformazioni*, Torino 1993, 400. See also idem, *Les frontières de l'Empire Romain* (Centre de Recherches d'Histoire Ancienne, vol. 85), Besançon 1989, *passim* (cf. also his slightly altered English edition: *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study*, Baltimore, London 1994; B. GUTMANN, *Studien zur römischen Aussenpolitik in der Spätantike (364-395 n. Chr.)* (Habelts Dissertationsdrucke, Alte Gesch. 31) Bonn 1991, 21-22, for the Rhine.

³ W. G. KERR, *Economic Warfare on the Northern Limes: portoria and the Germans*, in: *Roman Frontier Studies 1989. Proceedings of the XVth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies* (ed. V. A. Maxfield, M. J. Dobson), Exeter 1991, 442.

Marcomannic Wars⁴. This is further confirmed by the terms of peace treaties concluded by Marcus Aurelius with the Quadi and the Iazyges, according to which both peoples had to leave uninhabited zones along the Danube⁵, as well as by the fact that after the Marcomannic Wars, as early as the 3rd century, a relatively large number of fortifications and watch-towers was constructed along the left bank of the Danube⁶.

That the fluvial frontier mainly had an administrative character and attracted, rather than repulsed, the peoples settled beyond it is also attested by the progressive Romanization of the regions in question⁷, and by the request of some of these peoples on the eve of the Marcomannic Wars to gain permission to settle in the provincial territory (*HA, v. Marci* 14. 1: ... *nisi reciperentur, bellum inferentibus*; see also 12. 13, and App., *Praef.* 7. 26, for embassies to Antoninus Pius). Life along the Danube was conditioned by the presence of the Roman army to the extent that it was subordinated to the needs of the latter. Contacts with *barbaricum* were inevitable from the moment the frontier was established, and had an important role in the economy of these areas: in some cases there was an ethnic affinity between the autochthonous population and the barbarians settled on the other side of the river⁸. The question of how the population across the frontiers profited from, and was greatly influenced by Roman culture, and to what extent the frontiers and the policy of central government contributed towards the acculturation of the barbarian nations, has been analyzed by Whittaker⁹. On the other hand, B. Isaac has pointed out how often Roman policy was inspired by considerations that had nothing to do with economics, but rather with politics, ideology, and internal tensions, not rarely regardless of the realities in the

⁴ A. BIRLEY, *Marcus Aurelius. A Biography* (revised ed.), London 1987: Appendix 3: The Marcomannic Wars, 249-255; M. ŠAŠEL KOS, *Zgodovinska podoba prostora med Akvilejo, Jadranom in Sirmijem pri Kasiju Dionu in Herodijanuu. A Historical Outline of the Region between Aquileia, the Adriatic, and Sirmium in Cassius Dio and Herodian*, Ljubljana 1986, 322-335. The last to deal with the background and causes of the Marcomannic Wars was G. DOBESCH, *Aus der Vor- und Nachgeschichte der Markomannenkriege*, *Anzeiger der phil.-hist. Kl. der Österr. Akad. der Wiss.* 131, 1994, 67-125. His study, however, was published after the submission of my article.

⁵ Dio 71. 15; 71. 16. 1-2.

⁶ WHITTAKER (n. 2), 403; S. SOPRONI, *Contra Acinco et Bononia. Bemerkungen zu den Fasti des Hydatius*, in: *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms II. Vorträge des 10. intern. Limeskongresses in der Germania Inferior* (Beihefte der Bonner Jahrbücher 38), 1977, 393-397; P. BRENNAN, *Combined Legionary Detachments as Artillery Units in Late-Roman Danubian Bridgehead Dispositions*, *Chiron* 10, 1980, 553-567.

⁷ U.-B. DITTRICH, *Die Beziehungen Roms zu den Sarmaten und Quaden im vierten Jahrhundert n. Chr. (nach der Darstellung des Ammianus Marcellinus)* (Habelts Dissertationsdrucke, Alte Geschichte 21) Bonn 1984, with all relevant citations.

⁸ J. KOLENDO, *I barbari del Nord*, in: *Storia di Roma III: L'età tardoantica I: Crisi e trasformazioni*, Torino 1993, 425-441, with the relevant references.

⁹ C. R. WHITTAKER, *What Happens when Frontiers Come to an End?*, in: *Frontières d'Empire. Nature et signification des frontières romaines* (Mémoires du Musée de Préhistoire d'Ile-de-France 5), Nemours 1993, 133-141.

frontier provinces, all of which was additionally made worse by lack of information¹⁰.

I Planning New Provinces under Marcus Aurelius — An Economic Reality ?

Despite objections to the hypothesized provincialization of some of the regions beyond Pannonia, recently reiterated by G. Alföldy¹¹ and shared by M. Stahl¹², I am still inclined to think that the evidence which could be adduced in favour of the annexation of new territories to the Empire under Marcus Aurelius is too weighty to permit negative conclusions. Recently P. Oliva drew attention to some weak points in Alföldy's arguments, although he, too, doubted that any serious plans of creating new provinces had ever existed¹³. In the revised edition of his book on Marcus Aurelius, A. Birley has again argued that a plan to extend the frontiers of the empire beyond the Danube actually existed¹⁴. There would be no sense in arguing this complicated problem from its very beginnings, but it would perhaps not be superfluous to add some additional considerations. One of the main arguments in favour of the expansionistic policy of the Roman state is certainly the fact that two new legions (*II* and *III Italica*) had been recruited ca. AD 165¹⁵. Archaeological research has revealed that some of the fortresses along the Pannonian frontier were mostly wooden structures up to the Marcomannic wars, whereas those in Raetia and Germany had been rebuilt in stone during the reign of Antoninus Pius: this may perhaps be an additional indication that the Pannonian section of the *limes* had not been regarded as definitive in all sections¹⁶. The three main narrative sources about the Marcomannic Wars are explicit enough, for it cannot be denied that all contain data about annexing new territory to the Empire (Dio, 71. 20. 2, in a negative sense; cf. also 33. 4²; Herodian, 1. 6. 5-6; *HA*, v. *Marci* 24. 5-6, cf. 27. 10). The evidence in the *HA*, which is the most straightforward of these, must, however, be treated with the utmost caution¹⁷. The two planned provinces are cited by the anonymous author as

¹⁰ B. ISAAC, An Open Frontier, in: *Frontières d'Empire*, (as n. 9), 105-114, especially 113-114.

¹¹ G. ALFÖLDY, *Die Krise des Römischen Reiches* (Heidel. Althist. Beitr. u. Epigr. Stud. 5), Stuttgart 1989, 65-68; cf. idem, *Römische Heeresgeschichte* (Mavors III), Amsterdam 1987, 344.

¹² M. STAHL, Zwischen Abgrenzung und Integration: Die Verträge der Kaiser Mark Aurel und Commodus mit den Völkern jenseits der Donau, *Chiron* 19, 1989, 289-317, especially 315-317.

¹³ P. OLIVA, Marcomannia Provincia?, *Studii Clasice* 24, 1986, 125-129.

¹⁴ BIRLEY (n. 4).

¹⁵ J. MANN, The raising of new legions during the Principate, *Hermes* 91, 1963, 483-489.

¹⁶ *The Roman Fort at Acs-Vaspuszta (Hungary) on the Danubian Limes*, I, II (ed. D. Gabler), British Archaeol. Reports, Intern. Ser. 531 (1989), 642-643.

¹⁷ J. BURIAN, Die Darstellung der Markomannenkriege in den SHA (Vita Marci) und ihre Glaubwürdigkeit, *Listy filol.* 110, 1987, 114-118.

Marcomannia and Sarmatia, yet the evidence about Roman construction in *barbaricum* and about the wintering of Roman troops in the hostile territory (at Laugaricio [present-day Trenčín]) is all concentrated within the region occupied by the Quadi — with due respect to the fact that the border between the Quadi and the Marcomanni was always variable. Through attentive analysis of the text of Cassius Dio — although mostly preserved in excerpts — it becomes clear that the two peoples who had primarily been involved in the so-called Marcomannic Wars were actually the Quadi and the Iazyges. This is apparent even in details, thus Dio stated that after the final peace treaty under Commodus the Quadi had to give 13,000 soldiers to the Roman army, while the Marcomanni were requested to send less soldiers (Dio 72. 2. 3, who does not specify the number). These wars might have perhaps been more properly termed the Quadic-Iazygian Wars.

The Marcomanni, who had been an aggressive nation and had represented a serious danger to the Empire in the Augustan period, must have been decisively weakened during the Marcomannic Wars; they inhabited the southern parts of former Bohemia (the present-day Czech Republic). Indeed, even during these wars we hear less of them than we do of the other peoples. It seems that after an incursion of the Marcomanni in the reign of Valerian, they slowly disappeared from history (see, however, Amm. XXII 5. 5, where they are still mentioned in a prominent place), and from that period onwards, their former allies the Quadi were often cited as having acted in association with the Iazyges. The remnants of the Marcomanni are noted in the *Notitia dignitatum* (Oc. XXXIV 24: *tribunus gentis Marcomannorum*), where a Roman tribune is listed as having been in charge of their *gens*; some of them were settled within the boundaries of Pannonia, perhaps under Gallienus. At a later date Fritigil, the queen of the Marcomanni, asked St Ambrose to have them converted (Paulinus, *Vita Sancti Ambrosii* 36)¹⁸.

The internal and external alliances and relationships of the peoples living beyond the upper and middle Danube were changing in the course of time, and this could also be well observed in the case of the Marcomannic Wars. Whereas some tribes and groups of peoples sent envoys to provincial governors as well as to Antoninus Pius (see above, p. 146), pleading for their annexation to the Empire, others (e.g., the Langobards and Obii) penetrated its frontiers and devastated provincial territory, mainly Pannonia, Noricum and Raetia, some of the Marcomanni and Quadi reaching far into northern Italy (for their attack on

¹⁸ R. SYME, The End of the Marcomanni, in: *Bonner Hist.-Aug.-Coll.* 1977/78 (1980), 225 ff. = *Historia Augusta Papers*, Oxford 1983, 146-155. See also H. CASTRITIUS, Barbari — antiqui barbari: k poselitveni zgodovini jugovzhodnega Norika in južne Panonije v pozni antiki (od konca 4. do srede 6. stoletja) / Barbari — antiqui barbari: zur Besiedlungsgeschichte Südostnoricums und Südpannoniens in der Spätantike (Ende des 4. bis zur Mitte des 6. Jh. n. Chr.), *Zgodovinski časopis* 48, 1994, 137-147, especially 145-146.

Aquileia and Opitergium, see Amm. Marcell. XXIX 6. 1). The Astingi and Lacingi, on the other hand, always had a friendly policy towards the Roman state. Some must have changed alliances. When a group of tribal envoys, amongst others also representing the Quadi, asked for peace terms, Marcus Aurelius granted the latter most of their demands in the hope that they would no longer fight against the Romans on the side of the Marcomanni, but denied them the attendance of markets "for fear that the Marcomanni and Iazyges might mingle with them ... passing themselves off as Quadi to spy on the Romans and buy provisions" (Dio 71. 11. 2-3). Different policies may have been conditioned not merely by the different ethnic allegiances of the peoples and tribes, and by the greater or lesser distance from the Roman Empire, but also by various factions among the nobles of the same nation (the Quadi expelled their king Furtius, presumably friendly to the Romans and imposed on them by the latter, and chose Ariogaesus, Dio 71. 13. 3-4). Social elements may also have played a certain role, as the upper classes may have been more favourably disposed towards accepting Roman rule than the lower strata of the population, who may have resisted any form of Romanization. All these different aspects are reflected in the flexible policy of Marcus Aurelius towards the various peoples and tribes involved in the wars¹⁹.

The territory vital for the defence of the Pannonian frontier seems to have been the kingdom of the Quadi, which was, like other German and Sarmatian state-like formations along the frontier, in some kind of client relationship to the Roman empire. Dio reported that Roman soldiers built a number of military (?) structures in the Quadic-Marcomannic territory, equipped with various commodities, even with baths (71. 20. 1-2). The progressive occupation of their land caused a great disturbance among the native population, who wanted to migrate to the territory of the evidently friendly Semnones (Dio, *ib.*). On the other hand, at least part of the upper class of the Quadi must have supported the Romans, since otherwise it would be difficult to imagine that any large-scale Roman construction could have been carried out during the wars in an entirely hostile territory where the Romans could expect counter-attacks at any time. It could hardly be doubted that part of the Germanic-Sarmatian population would see protection from their northern and eastern external enemies in the extension of Roman rule over their country. As can plausibly be concluded from the contradictory data in the written sources, different policies must have been pursued by different groups of officers in the headquarters of the Roman army during the Marcomannic Wars, and opinions may also have been divided in the imperial council. Some undoubtedly must have supported an offensive policy against the rebellious nations and, recognizing weak points of the lengthy river frontier, sought to transfer the existing border to a better geopolitical and strategic position that could be more efficiently protected and defended by a chain of moun-

¹⁹ See detailed analysis by STAHL (n. 12).

tains. Exactly when it became apparent that these plans could not be carried out and the exact factors that influenced the varying course of events cannot be reconstructed, yet rumours would not have circulated and been transmitted by a historian of the stature of Cassius Dio had such plans never existed.

Archaeological research has revealed a relatively high degree of Romanization — relatively high compared to other parts of *barbaricum* — especially in the regions beyond the northern Pannonian *limes* in Lower Austria and southwestern Slovakia, i.e., in the regions inhabited by the Quadi. Romanization had begun as early as the end of the 1st century AD: a probable trade base at Stupava, situated along the Amber Route, is an example of German settlement testifying to an early Roman presence in the area²⁰. Several so-called Roman stations have been discovered in elevated positions, such as the above mentioned Stupava, Stillfried in the March valley, Oberleiserberg near Ernstbrunn²¹, and Mušov in southern Moravia, while others were situated in lowland regions: Niederleis, Bratislava-Dúbravka, Milanovce, Cífer-Pác, the stations in the area of Mikulčice, and Staré Město. Some of the structures discovered are similar to Roman villas, such as Stupava, while some of them seem to have had a predominantly trade character and were probably merchant stations, although it cannot be excluded that most of them could have served as military strongholds²². Laugaricio, 120 km. distant from the Danube, is the only epigraphically attested Roman military camp, in which a military detachment of the legion II *Adiutrix* wintered in 179-180 under the command of the legion's legate M. Valerius Maximianus (*ILS* 9122 = *AE* 1956, 128)²³. According to T. Kolnik, the mentioned sites where Roman structures have been discovered cannot yet be interpreted with certainty: some may have been trade stations, some military strongholds, and some the seats of local princes, while most of them may have changed their function in accordance with changed political and military situations. In times of peace, civil elements would have predominated over the military presence, which may have been strengthened or established in a period of war or danger.

In any case, it can be affirmed that Dio's report about Roman construction in the territory of the Quadi during the Marcomannic Wars is not at all

²⁰ J. HEČKOVÁ, Römischer Baukomplex in Stupava, *Archeologické rozhledy* 38 / 4, 1986, 378-394.

²¹ H. FRIESINGER, Römische Befestigungsbauten nördlich der Donau in Niederösterreich, in: *Lebendige Altertumswissenschaft. Festgabe zur Vollendung des 70. Lebensjahres von H. Vetters*, Wien 1985, 258-259, Tab.

²² T. KOLNIK, Römische Stationen im slowakischen Abschnitt des nordpannonischen Limesvorlandes, *Archeologické rozhledy* 38 / 4, 1986, 411-434; J. TEJRAL, Neue Erkenntnisse zum römischen Stützpunkt am Burgstall bei Mušov in Südmähren, *ib.*, 395-410.

²³ È. JOHN, Laugaritio - An Attempt to Locate the Roman Camp, *Listy filologické* 115, 1992, 125-130, seems to be far too optimistic, cf. also V. SAKAŘ, Einige Bemerkungen zur Laugaritiofrage, *ib.* 131.

contradicted by the archaeological finds. Sarmatia had been far less romanized²⁴. J. Fitz has nonetheless hypothesized that there had perhaps been a plan to annex it as a province during the governorship of Ti. Claudius Pompeianus in Pannonia Inferior, before the catastrophic incursion of the Marcomanni and Quadi. This may well have been the case, but his arguments do not seem convincing²⁵. A lower degree of Romanization was partly caused by the lower level of civilization the Iazyges had reached in comparison to the German Quadi: the former were a nomadic, horse-riding nation who had come from distant eastern regions and had only gradually become settled²⁶. The Romans must have felt particularly threatened on that part of the *limes* which faced the German tribes and through which the incursion into Italy occurred at the outbreak of the Marcomannic Wars. Although it is not explicitly mentioned in Dio or any other sources, it may be assumed that in the land of the Iazyges, too, the Romans had established strongholds they were forced to give up when they concluded a peace treaty²⁷. As a consequence of the wars, several groups of tribes were settled within the territory of the Roman empire, thus in Dacia, Pannonia, Moesia, Germania, and even in Italy itself (Dio, 71. 11. 4; *HA v. Marci* 22. 2)²⁸. Most of them, and certainly Pannonia, had also been greatly depopulated by a plague that was spread by soldiers who were transferred at the outbreak of the Marcomannic Wars from the east to the Danube. A large number of German and Sarmatian auxiliaries henceforward served in the Roman army; several thousand Roman prisoners, who had most probably been employed in tilling land and other everyday occupations while the German and Iazygian male population fought against the Romans, were delivered from captivity. Their presence there had certainly contributed towards the Romanization of their captors, — on the other hand — when released, they could have informed Roman authorities about the situation beyond the frontier²⁹. Market days and places were established at fixed points along the *limes*³⁰.

²⁴ A. MÓCSY, Pannonia, *RE Suppl.* IX, 1962, 643; D. GABLER, A. H. VADAY, *Terra sigillata im Barbaricum zwischen Pannonien und Dazien* (Fontes Archaeologici Hungariae) 1986, 70-72, and *passim*. See also B. LÖRINCZ, Zu den Verbindungen zwischen Pannonien und Barbaricum: die Verbreitung und Datierung der Ziegelstempel, *Klio* 71, 1989, 96-106.

²⁵ J. FITZ, Ti. Claudius Pompeianus und die geplante Provinz Sarmatia, in: *Lebendige Altertumswissenschaft, Festgabe ... H. Vetters*, Wien 1985, 123-125.

²⁶ U.-B. DITTRICH, Die Wirtschaftsstruktur der Quaden, Markomannen und Sarmaten im mittleren Donaauraum und ihre Handelsbeziehungen mit Rom, *Münstersche Beiträge zur antiken Handelsgeschichte* 6/1, 1987, 9-30.

²⁷ J. KLOSE, *Roms Klientel-Randstaaten am Rhein und an der Donau. Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte und rechtlichen Stellung im 1. und 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Historische Untersuchungen 14), Breslau 1934, 123.

²⁸ C. R. WHITTAKER, *Land, City and Trade in the Roman Empire* (Variorum Collected Studies), 1993, III 141.

²⁹ J. KOLENDO, Les Romains prisonniers de guerre des Barbares au Ier et au IIe siècles, *Index* 15, 1987, 227-234; see also A. DEMANDT, Die Anfänge der Staatenbildung bei den Germanen, *Historische Zeitschrift* 230, 1980, 277-278.

³⁰ KERR (n. 3), 442-445.

II The Lack of Stability after the Marcomannic Wars

Some of the lines of a new development had thus been drawn: the barbarization of the frontier provinces, the barbarization of the army, a heavily threatened Rhine and Danube frontier. Much had changed in the two hundred years dividing the reign of Marcus Aurelius from that of Valentinian I. Wars and plagues had caused serious depopulation of the frontier provinces. Entire military units from the eastern army were transferred to the Danubian *limes* under the Severan dynasty, such as the Syrian archers stationed at Intercisa³¹. A large number of civilians, too, must have arrived at approximately the same time from presumably poorer areas of the eastern provinces to seek their fortune in the western Danubian lands, where it was necessary to give new impetus to the shattered life along the border and in its hinterland. An at least partial change of population is confirmed by onomastic studies³². Names recorded before and after the Marcomannic Wars show that a large number of previously flourishing families had disappeared or become less important, while some of the new names are typical of the eastern parts of the Empire. The descendants of such a family may perhaps have been the parents of St Jerome, who were rich Christian landowners in the small Dalmatian town of Stridon just beyond the border of Pannonia.

The municipalization of Pannonia had been concluded; rapid advancement in the army, made possible by the reforms of Septimius Severus, gave opportunity to many a capable soldier to attain equestrian rank and rise to a much higher position than would have ever been possible earlier. Thus the 3rd century saw a number of military emperors originating from Illyricum. The careers of Valentinian and his father Gratianus represent typical examples of the excellent possibilities open to talent in the Roman army. The family, which was of insignificant origin (*ignobili stirpe*, Amm. XXX 7. 2) was settled at Cibalae (*ib.* and also Hier., *Chron.* a. 364, Helm, p. 244), and Gratianus rose by way of having attained the rank of *protector*, *tribunus*, and *comes* of Africa to supreme command over Britain (*PLRE* 1, Gratianus 1), while his son became the last of the military emperors from Pannonia.

Emperors before him had repeatedly fought against the Quadi and Sarmatians³³. After the Marcomannic Wars, the Danube frontier was for the first time decisively shattered in 250 when 70,000 Goths under Cniva swept across the Danube and provoked the military disaster in which Decius was killed in 251

³¹ J. FITZ, *Les Syriens à Intercisa* (Coll. Latomus 122), Bruxelles 1972.

³² A. MÓCSY, *Die Bevölkerung von Pannonien bis zu den Markomannenkriegen*, Budapest 1959; L. BARKÓCZI, The population of Pannonia from Marcus Aurelius to Diocletian, *Acta Ant. Hung.* 7, 1959, 167-356; M. ŠAŠEL KOS, Prerez čez zgodovino celejanskih prebivalcev v luči onomastičnih in prozopografskih podatkov (Inhabitants of Celeia in the Light of the Onomastic and Prosopographic Evidence), *Živa antika* 34, 1984, 251-255.

³³ The last to deal with the subject is DITTRICH (n. 7).

in the battle at Abrittus. The military situation along the Rhine and the Danube was always more or less precarious from that point onwards. Diocletian defeated the Sarmatians at the end of the 3rd century and constructed fortifications on the left bank of the Danube ca. AD 294 (Hydatius, *Fasti [Consularia Constantinopolitana]*, *Chron. min.* 7, I p. 230 [MGH, AA IX]: ... *bis consulibus castra facta in Sarmatia contra Acinco et Bononia*), some of which were situated in the Hungarian plain between the Danube and Tisza rivers (cf. *CIL* III 10605)³⁴. A number of strongholds to supervise passage across the river, as well as embarkation points, may also have been constructed at that time³⁵. The so-called *limes Sarmaticus*, also termed the "Devil's Dyke", should be mentioned: this was some 700 km. of linear earth works composed of a bank and a ditch, in some sections in three parallel lines, which extended from Aquincum to Viminacium in Moesia. It delimited, in a certain sense, the plain inhabited by the Sarmatians, an early client state in the orbit of the Roman empire, from the outer *barbaricum* of the Vandals, Gepids, Taifali, and Goths. This highly visible construction, which could not, however, offer any efficient protection, although it may have been connected with some late Roman fortifications³⁶, has been variously dated and interpreted, most scholars having dated its beginnings to the 3rd century AD³⁷. Clearly the system of earthworks must have had a predominantly political character and it seems that its construction must have somehow been connected with the Romans, although it could hardly be imagined that they would have built it. It strangely corresponded to the borders of an eventual province of Sarmatia, and it may perhaps be regarded as a kind of confirmation of the data in the *HA*. In any case, the system was fortified at the end of the 3rd century or at the beginning of the 4th, and was certainly intended to protect the plain against the attacks and invasions of the barbarian tribes beyond the Sarmatians.

It was probably Constantine who united the military forces in Noricum with those in Pannonia I into the hands of one *dux*³⁸, placed under the supreme command of the *magister militum* of Illyricum. He, too, conducted wars along the Sarmatian border in the years 323 and 332-334, which were partly the result

³⁴ A. MÓCSY, D. GABLER, Alte und neue Probleme am Limes von Pannonien, in: *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms III* (Forsch. und Ber. zur Vor- und Frühgesch. in Baden-Würt. 20) 1986, 369-376. See specifically for *contra Acinco et Bononia* E. TÓTH, *Contra Acinco et Bononia*, *Arch. vest.* 33, 1982, 68-78, who argued for the identification of *Acinco* with *Acumincum* (Stari Slankamen).

³⁵ A. MÓCSY, Ein spätantiker Festungstyp am linken Donauufer, in: *Roman Frontier Studies 1969. Eighth Intern. Congress of Limesforschung*, Cardiff 1974, 191-196.

³⁶ T. NAGY, Drei Jahre Limesforschungen in Ungarn, in: *Actes du IXe congrès intern. d'études sur les frontières romaines (Mamaia 1972)*, Bucuresti, Köln, Wien 1974, 27-37.

³⁷ A. MÓCSY, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia*, London, Boston 1974, 271-272; see especially S. SOPRONI, *Die letzten Jahrzehnte des pannonischen Limes* (Münchner Beiträge zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte 38), 1985, 13-17.

³⁸ D. van BERCHEM, *L'armée de Dioclétien et la réforme constantinienne*, Paris 1952, 53-54.

of internal strife between the free Sarmatians and the Limigantes (Anon. Vales. I 6. 30; *Consular. Constant.*, a. 334: *Sarmatae servi universa gens dominos suos in Romaniam expulerunt*), as well as the pressure exerted on both by the Gepids and the Goths. The emperor allowed some of the free Sarmatians to settle in Roman territory (in Thrace, Macedonia, Italy, and Gaul), and constructed fortifications and roads on the Sarmatian side of the Danube. At approximately the same time, Constantine probably settled some of the Vandals, who had been driven away by the Goths, in Pannonia (Jord., *Get.* XXII 115). Shortly after these campaigns, between 337 and 340, both Constantius and Constans presumably fought again against Sarmatians (cf. *ILS* 724)³⁹. In 357, Constantius, from his base at Sirmium, invaded the free Sarmatians and the Quadi and conquered them, created an independent kingdom of the free Sarmatians and imposed peace on the Quadi. Subsequently he fought against the Limigantes, who had always been a dangerous neighbour to the Sirmian region. They were defeated for the second time in 359 by the praetorian prefect Anatolius and admitted to the Empire, but at the border crossing at Acumincum they attacked the emperor and were massacred en masse (Amm. Marcell. XVI 10. 20; XVII 12; XIX 11; cf. also Zosim. III 1-2). The emperor Julian also bore the title of *Sarmaticus maximus* (e.g. *ILS* 8945), although nothing specific is known of his Sarmatian wars.

III Valentinian's Policy

Such was more or less the fragile political and military equilibrium along the Pannonian frontier at the accession of Valentinian I. Having come from a minor Pannonian town, Cibalae, he was well aware of the precarious situation in the frontier provinces, and the instability of life of the provincial population living near the borders and along the main roads connecting the frontier with the hinterland. The inhabitants were constantly exposed to threats from the *barbaricum*, as well as incursions of nearby, as well as distant, barbarians that could less and less efficiently be repulsed — and never for long. The approaching collapse of the frontier defence along the Danube, which consisted of Roman military installations combined with a system of client states beyond the border, was becoming ever more apparent. Valentinian decided to fortify the Rhine and Danube frontier lines on both sides of the river systematically and on a large scale, and initiated an unprecedented building activity, documented not only in the literary sources but also by the epigraphical evidence and a large quantity of

³⁹ T. D. BARNES, *Constantine and Eusebius*, Cambridge, London 1981, 262.

military brick stamps and other archaeological remains⁴⁰. Moreover, he wanted to extend the defence system far into the interior of the territory of the Quadi, and — to a lesser degree — into the territory of the Sarmatians, where the Danube frontier had been especially vulnerable. In the *Epitome de Caes.* (45. 6), he is compared with Hadrian, which, from the point of view of strengthening the frontier defence is not at all a bad comparison. Systematic construction along the Rhine and Danube *limes*, with an intention of extending the frontier lines as much into the barbaric hinterland as the contemporary situation allowed, had certainly not been a priority in the frontier policy of his predecessors. Thus I cannot agree with C. R. Whittaker, who maintained that there was nothing substantially new in the policy of Valentinian⁴¹. The emperor is known to have been an innovator in other sections of military administration. He had introduced important changes in the field army by dividing the best units equally between the western and eastern armies, and by introducing the higher ranking palatine units into the mobile field army, as well as the lower ranking *pseudo-comitatenses* legions⁴². His fortification policy actually initiated the last important changes in the history of the Danubian frontier. How seriously the emperor, who was conscious of corruption within all levels of the civil and military administrations alike, set about his task is indicated by a letter to the *dux* of Dacia Ripensis, Tautomedes, ordering him to carry out construction of the requested fortifications, which, had he not finished them in the course of his office, would be financed by his own money afterwards (*Cod. Theodos.* XV 1. 13, a. 364). Detailed instructions in this sense had certainly been given to all military commanders in charge of various sections of the *limes*. The chronology of the military building activity, however, is not entirely clear, and at least part of it must doubtless be ascribed to earlier emperors⁴³.

Under Valentinian, the prefecture of Illyricum had been — with a short interruption — in the hands of Sex. Claudius Petronius Probus, a member of the Anicii, one of the most noble and ancient Italian families (*PLRE*, Probus 5)⁴⁴. In

⁴⁰ See for Valentinian's reign E. STEIN, *Geschichte des spätrömischen Reiches* I, Wien 1928, 266-282; R. SORACI, *L'imperatore Valentiniano I*, Catania 1971 (*non vidi*); B. STALLKNECHT, *Untersuchungen zur römischen Aussenpolitik in der Spätantike (306-395 n. Chr.)*, Diss. Bonn 1967, 58-91; A. PIGANIOL, *L'Empire chrétien (325-395)*, Paris 1972² (rev. by A. Chastagnol), 168 ff.; A. DEMANDT, *Die Spätantike. Römische Geschichte von Diocletian bis Justinian, 284-565 n. Chr.* (Handbuch d. Altertumswiss.), München 1989, 111-115; B. LÖRINCZ, Organisatorische Fragen der Herstellung und Verwendung von Ziegelstempeln, *Specimina nova Univ. Quinqueeccles.* 1991, 191-211.

⁴¹ WHITTAKER (n. 2), 405.

⁴² D. HOFFMANN, *Das spätrömische Bewegungsheer und die Notitia dignitatum* (Epigraphische Studien 7/1, II), Düsseldorf 1969, 309-424.

⁴³ E. TÓTH, Zur Chronologie der militärischen Bautätigkeiten des 4. Jh. in Pannonien, *Mitt. Arch. Inst. Ung. Akad.* 14, 1985, 121-136.

⁴⁴ W. SEYFARTH, Sextus Petronius Probus - Legende und Wirklichkeit, *Klio* 52, 1970, 411-425; see also J. MATTHEWS, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364-425*, Oxford 1975, 32-55.

April 364, he acceded for less than a year to the Illyrian prefecture which was independent for a short time; in 366 he was appointed to the prefecture of Gaul. From 368, however, he succeeded Vulcacius Rufinus at Sirmium as the prefect of Italy - Africa - Illyricum (Amm. Marcell. XXVII 11. 1) and remained in charge of the prefecture until 376⁴⁵. Several other important posts were distributed among Valentinian's compatriots. Thus the defence of Illyricum throughout Valentinian's reign had been entrusted to Flavius Equitius (*PLRE*, Equitius 2), a Pannonian and his close collaborator, *asper et subagrestis* (Amm. XXVI 1. 4), who, as a tribune of the *schola prima scutariorum*, together with Leo, another Pannonian (Amm. XXVIII 1. 12), had induced the army to decide in favour of Valentinian in 364, after the death of Jovian. In the autumn of the same year, Equitius was placed at the head of the Illyrian army with the rank of *comes rei militaris* (*Tunc et Aequitius Illyriciano praepositus exercitui, nondum magister, sed comes ...*: Amm. XXVI 5. 3). During the revolt of Procopius in 365-366, he blocked all the passages into Illyricum and was instrumental in the fall of the usurper, after which he was made *comes* and *utriusque militiae magister*. This is documented not only in Ammianus (XXVI 5. 11: *... Aequitio aucto magisterii dignitate, repedare ad Illyricum destinabat*), but also on several inscriptions: in the building inscription from Solva (Esztergom), dated to the years 364-367, where the *dux* of Valeria, Augustianus is mentioned and which originates from the fortress at Esztergom - Hidegteleőskereszt (*CIL* III 10596 = *ILS* 762 = *Die röm. Inschr. Ungarns* 770); further from the *burgus* at Ybbs, constructed in 370 (*CIL* III 5670a = *ILS* 774); in another building inscription from Solva, now lost, dated to 371 (*CIL* III 3653 = *ILS* 775 = *Die röm. Inschr. Ungarns* 771), which most probably refers to the watchtower at Esztergom - Szentkirály; and from the *burgus* at Visegrád, dated to 372 (*Die röm. Inschr. Ungarns* 804)⁴⁶. Since the uninterrupted building activity, which was carried out right to the outbreak of the incursion of the Quadi and Sarmatians, is well attested in the literary sources, and confirmed to some extent by the epigraphical and archaeological evidence, it is not quite clear how to interpret the presumed decrease of monetary circulation in Pannonia I and Valeria in the years 371-373, as postulated by V. Lányi⁴⁷. Equitius was in charge of fortifying the Danubian *limes*, which he carried out with the help of the *duces* and other subordinate officials. The *dux Pannoniae Primae et Norici Ripensis* at the crucial time of the attack of the Quadi and Sarmatians was Ursicinus (cf. *PLRE*, Ursicinus 1, where he is dated before the reign of Valentinian), who had previously, it seems, occupied the subordinate positions of a *centenarius* and *magister*

⁴⁵ J. FITZ, *L'administration des provinces pannoniennes sous le Bas-Empire romain* (Coll. Latomus 181), Bruxelles 1983, 41-42.

⁴⁶ S. SOPRONI, *Burgus - Bauinschrift vom Jahre 372 am pannonischen Limes*, *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms* (Beihefte der Bonner Jb. 19), 1967, 138-143; idem (n. 37), 107-112.

⁴⁷ V. LÁNYI, The Coinage of Valentinian I in Siscia, *Acta Arch. Acad. Sc. Hung.* 21, 1969, 42-46.

figlinarum within the same province⁴⁸, whereas the *duces* of Valeria were Augustianus (known from the mentioned inscription from Solva, *ILS* 762; *PLRE*, Augustianus 1), Terentius, probably ca. 366-369⁴⁹, and after him Malcianus⁵⁰, succeeded in 373 by Marcellianus [Caelestius in Zosim., IV 16. 4], the son of the praetorian prefect of Gaul, Maximinus⁵¹. Maximinus, by birth from Sopianaë but of Carpic extraction (Amm. XXVIII 1. 5), was yet another representative of the Pannonian circle of the emperor's counsellors who had gained high governmental posts. No *dux* of Pannonia II is known so far; only civil governors have been attested in this province. Two consular governors are documented during Valentinian's reign, Fortunatus from the very beginning of his rule (*Cod. Theodos.* VIII 5. 27: 28 May 365), and Messala (Amm. XXIX 6. 7), who was in charge of the province during the attack of the Quadi and Sarmatians.

IV Fortifying the Frontier - Forts in Barbaricum

Building activity under Valentinian is attested all along the Norican-Pannonian *limes*: thus in all major fortresses, at Lauriacum (*milites auxiliares Lauriacenses*), Vindobona, Carnuntum (*CIL* III 14358, 11), Brigetio, and Aquincum, as well as at a number of smaller fortifications⁵². Many small fortlets and *burgi* were strengthened or newly constructed: newly fortified sites included the *castellum* at Schlögen (Ioviacum?), constructed in the 3rd century, and the fortress at Linz (Lentia), as well as Mauer an der Url (Locus Felicis?) and Pöchlarn (Arelape), where walls were strengthened and new towers built. The military brick factory, *officina Arlapensis*, was active during the reign of Valentinian. Ursicinus' stamps dated to AD 370 are also known from Mautern (Favianis). Coins of Valentinian were discovered at Traismauer (Augustiana) and Tulln (Comagena); the fortress foundations were repaired at Zwentendorf (Asturis?, Cannabiaca?). Small *castella* were constructed at Wallsee (Adiuvense?) and Zeiselmauer (Cannabiaca?, Asturis?), as were a number of watch towers along the *limes*: Oberranna (Stanacum?), Hirschleitengraben near Willhering, Engelbach near Au, Spielberg, Bacharnsdorf, Windstallgraben near Rossatz, and Wien-

⁴⁸ FITZ (n. 45) 60-62.

⁴⁹ B. LÖRINCZ, Die *duces* der Provinz Valeria unter Valentinian I. (364-375), *Alba Regia* 15, 1976, 104-105.

⁵⁰ FITZ (n. 45), 64-65.

⁵¹ *Ib.*, 64-66.

⁵² Data for the Austrian part of Noricum and Pannonia are collected in K. GENSER, *Der österreichische Donaulimes in der Römerzeit. Ein Forschungsbericht* (Der römische Limes in Österreich 33), Wien 1986; see also *Der römische Limes in Österreich. Ein Führer* (ed. M. Kandler, H. Vetters), Wien 1986; for the Hungarian part: *Der Römische Limes in Ungarn* (ed. J. Fitz), Székesfehérvár 1976; S. SOPRONI, *Der spätrömische Limes zwischen Esztergom und Szentendre*, Budapest 1978; Z. VISY, *Der pannonische Limes in Ungarn*, Budapest 1988.

Döbling⁵³. Data about military units stationed along the frontier are preserved in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (chapters oc. XXXII: units under the command of the *dux* of Pannonia II and Savia, XXXIII: units under the *dux* of Valeria, and XXXIV: units under the *dux* of Pannonia I and Noricum Ripense). The legions *II Italica* and *I Noricorum* were stationed in Noricum, and otherwise mostly *equites*; cohorts at Boiotro, Asturis, and Cannabiaca; and *classis* at Arelape, Comagena, and Lauriacum. Naval units were transferred from Carnuntum to Vindobona. In addition to numerous *equites* and several cohorts, the legions *XIV* and *X Gemina* were stationed in Pannonia I, the *I* and *II Adiutrix* in Valeria, the *V Iovia* and *VI Herculia* in Pannonia II, and both the latter provinces also included some *auxilia* and units of the *classis*. Several troops of the *limitanei* army were transferred to the field army under Valentinian and termed *pseudocomitatenses*.

The *limes* between Brigetio and Aquincum had been especially well fortified under Valentinian. Six fortresses and 37 watch towers built of stone have been discovered along the ca. 45 km. long *limes* between Solva (Esztergom) and Ulcisia Castra (Szentendre). Tokod, Visegrád and Esztergom - Hideglelőskereszt, for example, were newly built, and the already existing ones were repaired. The legions *VIII Augusta* and *X Gemina* from Vindobona, which provided the sites with bricks, participated at the construction works, as well as *I Martia*, founded by Diocletian and stationed at Castrum Rauracense (Kaiseraugst) which, as a special building unit, is known to have carried out construction works under its *praepositus* Foscanus at Visegrád and Esztergom⁵⁴.

Ammianus explicitly noted extensive constructions supervised by Equitius in the territory of the Quadi: "For Valentinian from the very beginning of his reign burned with a desire of protecting his frontiers, which was indeed praiseworthy, but carried too far; for he ordered the building of a garrison-camp across the Danube in the very territories of the Quadi, as if they were already claimed for Roman rule." (XXIX 6. 2: *Valentinianus enim studio muniendorum limitum glorioso quidem sed nimio, ab ipso principatus initio flagrans, trans flumen Histrum in ipsis Quadorum terris quasi Romano iuri iam vindicatis, aedificari praesidiaria castra mandavit ...* [transl. J. C. Rolfe, Loeb Class. Libr.]). A few sentences further onward, Ammianus called this fortification *munimentum* (*ib.* 3). Fortification carried out in the Quadic territory provoked hostile reaction from the inhabitants and was therefore temporarily suspended by Equitius. It was continued shortly afterwards by Marcellianus, despite the protest of Gabinius, the king of the Quadi. Marcellianus had him treacherously murdered after an invitation to dinner, which directly caused the invasion of Pannonia by the Quadi and the nearby peoples; these were most probably the Marcomanni (Ammianus mentions *gentes circumscitas*, *ib.* 6), who were no longer deemed worthy to be mentioned by name; they were soon joined by the Sarmatians.

⁵³ GENSER (n. 52), 777-778, and in the relevant sections in his report.

⁵⁴ SOPRONI (n. 46).

E. Swoboda called the emperor's policy an "offensive Defensive"⁵⁵; he hypothesized that Valentinian ordered all the fortifications evacuated two hundred years previously by Commodus to be renovated, such as Oberleiserberg near Ernstbrunn and Stillfried a. d. March, besides constructing a number of new *praesidiaria castra*. Several of them earlier believed to be from the period of Valentinian, such as the stronghold at (Nógrád)Verőce near Vác, should actually be dated before his reign⁵⁶. Many *burgi*, not all of which served exclusively military purposes, were newly built. Thus the name of the *burgus* near Solva (Esztergom) is documented on a building inscription from AD 371 (*CIL* III 3653 = *ILS* 775 = *Die röm. Inschr. Ungarns* 771) as *Commercium*, and it is explicitly stated that it was constructed for the purpose of trading: *hunc burgum, cui nomen commercium, qua causa et factus est, a fundamentis et construxit et ad summam manum operis in diebus XXXXVIII ... fecit pervenire*. During the Principate, as well as during late Roman periods, trade and the army had always been closely interwoven along the Rhine and Danube frontiers⁵⁷; the *Not. dign.* (oc. XI 86) lists a *comes commerciorum per Illyricum*⁵⁸.

Coins of the 4th century have so far been discovered at several sites in south Slovakia: the majority comes from the fortress opposite Brigetio at Iža - Leányvár (Celamantia), where important construction works from the period of Valentinian have been noted⁵⁹. Further 4th century coins come from Bratislava - Rusovce (Gerulata), Bratislava - Devín, where buildings of the 4th century were found (although this important stronghold was most probably also in use during an earlier epoch), and at Dúbravka, where a building of *villa rustica* type was excavated. Further within *barbaricum*, 4th century structures have been excavated at Cífer-Pác (in the region of Trnava), a station with a predominantly military character, perhaps constructed under Constantius II⁶⁰, and at Milanovce, the interpretation of which is not clear⁶¹.

As has been repeatedly warned by T. Kolník and others⁶², the explanation of the Roman archaeological remains at various Slovakian sites is still highly hypothetical. Yet it may be affirmed that the degree of Romanization of the Quadic sector beyond the Danube was comparatively high, and that buildings of the 2nd and 4th centuries have been discovered at various sites. Marcus Aurelius and

⁵⁵ E. SWOBODA, *Carnuntum. Seine Geschichte und seine Denkmäler*, Graz, Köln 19644, 75.

⁵⁶ S. PAULOVICS, Eine römische Festung im Quadengebiet, *Bericht über den VI. intern. Kongress für Archäologie* (Berlin 21. - 26. August 1939), Berlin 1940, 526-527, but cf. SOPRONI, *Spätröm. Limes* (n. 52), 78.

⁵⁷ KERR (n. 3), 442-445.

⁵⁸ O. SEECK, *RE* IV (1900), 643-644, s.v. *comes commerciorum*.

⁵⁹ K. KUZMANOVA, J. RAJTÁR, Anfänge des Römerlagers in Iža, *Archeologické rozhledy* 38, 1986, 358-377.

⁶⁰ T. KOLNÍK, Cífer-Pác. Eine spätrömische Station im Quadenland?, in: *Limes. Akten des XI. intern. Limeskongresses* (Székesfehérvár, 1976, ed. J. Fitz), Budapest 1977, 181-197.

⁶¹ J. RAJTÁR, Vyskyt mincí v římských stavebných objektech na Slovensku (Vorkommen von Münzen in römischen Bauten in der Slowakei), *Slovenská numizmatika* 9, 1986, 99-121.

⁶² KOLNÍK (n. 22); see also DITTRICH (n. 26), where other references are cited.

Valentinian, perhaps more than other emperors, regarded this region of vital strategic importance for the defence of the Pannonian *limes* and attempted to include it in the fortification system of the Empire. Such outposts were undoubtedly also important for gathering information about the internal dissensions of the peoples and tribes across the border, their varying mutual alliances, as well as the movements of more distant tribes who were increasingly threatening the Empire⁶³. There were plans of creating a new province, or even two provinces under Marcus Aurelius — this, I think, is sufficiently attested in the sources — but it may certainly be imagined that several factions existed in the highest governmental circles, some of which were opposed to these plans. Marcus Aurelius himself may have had doubts about them, and towards the end of the Marcomannic Wars, he and his headquarters most probably realized that provincialization would create more problems than it would solve. As earlier, a form of client relationship with these nations remained in force. Thus in a certain sense the *ius gentium* was violated by Valentinian, who had ordered extensive building activity to be carried out in the Quadic territory⁶⁴, and Ammianus does call it *ratio iusta querellarum* (XXIX 6. 1). Yet it is hard to imagine that any large-scale construction operations in a foreign territory would have been undertaken by the Romans without previous reciprocal agreement — in an exchange, perhaps, of better trade conditions, or a promise of military aid, or some similar benefit — and they certainly could not have been carried out without the support of at least part of the ruling class of the Quadi.

The situation in Sarmatia, which was far less romanized, was much more vague. The so-called *limes Sarmaticus* may have been fortified under Valentinian and a few fortresses rebuilt, such as the mentioned Felsőgöd (Contra Constantiam) and Hatvan-Gombospuszta, again with the consent of at least some of the natives⁶⁵.

Reminiscences of the policy of Marcus Aurelius towards the Quadi undoubtedly exist — *mutatis mutandis* — in Valentinian's policy towards the same nation⁶⁶. The Marcomannic Wars of Marcus Aurelius are in fact mentioned by Ammianus at the very beginning of his account of the Quadic-Sarmatian incursion⁶⁷. The causes motivating such a policy, however, were entirely differ-

⁶³ See also A. D. LEE, *Information and Frontiers. Roman Foreign Relations in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge 1993, 33, 138; 180-182.

⁶⁴ R. SCHULZ, *Die Entwicklung des römischen Völkerrechts im vierten und fünften Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Hermes Einzelschriften 61), Stuttgart 1993, 32 and n. 31.

⁶⁵ S. SOPRONI, Eine spätrömische Militärstation im sarmatischen Gebiet, in: *Roman Frontier Studies 1969. Eighth Intern. Congress of Limesforschung*, Cardiff 1974, 197-203; see also idem, *Spätrom. Limes* (n. 52), 79-86.

⁶⁶ See also KLOSE (n. 27), 112; E. NOWOTNY, Römische Forschung in Österreich 1912-1924, *Bericht der Röm.-Germ. Komm.* 15, 1923-1924, 175-176; cf. E. Kornemann, Die unsichtbaren Grenzen des römischen Kaiserreiches, in: *Gestalten und Reiche*, Bremen 1944, 323-338.

⁶⁷ Dr. Bill Kerr kindly drew my attention to the fact that echoes of Marcus' policy were also detected in the policy of Valentinian by the author of the *vita Marci* in the *HA*.

ent. It was still possible in the second half of the 2nd century to conceive the idea of extending the borders of the Empire beyond the actual frontier, although it was impossible to carry out such plans. In the second half of the 4th century, the only preoccupation of the emperor was to defend the often violated frontiers as efficiently as he could: that is, by attempting to create several lines of defence. Valentinian was the last, however, who could launch construction works outside the borders of the empire. These became threatened to such an extent and overrun so often after the battle at Hadrianopolis, that the formerly efficient client relationship collapsed and was gradually replaced by a system of border defence incorporating the *foederati* settled in provincial territory.

V Life in Pannonian Towns: A Decline or Else Renewed Prosperity

Valentinian's building activity is also well attested in the interior of the provinces; thus a number of milestones — more than that erected in the name of his predecessors and successors — testifies to a general repair of roads, especially in the frontier provinces and northern Italy⁶⁸. An interesting problem is posed by several large fortified sites in the interior of the province of Valeria and Pannonia I⁶⁹, such as Kisárpás, Fenékpusztá, Környe (perhaps Vincentia), Ságvár (perhaps Quadriburgium), Alsóhetény (perhaps Iovia), as well as Pécs (Sopianae), which, according to S. Soproni, would have been directly connected with the *limes* in such a way that the *limitanei* troops would have been stationed in them. Soproni hypothesized a triple defence system consisting of outer fortifications such as the so-called *limes Sarmaticus* and other fortifications in *barbaricum*, fortifications along the *limes* itself, and inner fortifications. He identified these sites with Roman place names documented in *Notitia dignitatum*, which is not entirely certain⁷⁰. The inner fortifications are actually too large to have been garrisoned by the relatively small *limitanei* troops, and as J. Fitz has pointed out, such troops could have protected a fortification of the size of Alsóhetény, with its 49 towers and 500 m. long walls, against bands of robbers at most⁷¹. As has been put forward by Soproni, these fortified settlements must certainly have also been utilized — besides serving as standing garrisons for the *limitanei* cohorts — as

⁶⁸ For milestones see: *ANSI*, nos. 41, 73; G. WINKLER, *Die römischen Straßen und Meilensteine in Noricum - Österreich* (Schr. Limesmuseums Aalen 35) 1985, p. 70-71, no. 34: = *RIS* 372; A. DONATI, I millari delle regioni IV e V dell'Italia, *Epigraphica* 36, 1974, 155-222, *passim*; the road from Aquileia to Lentia (Linz) was repaired in AD 373 (*ILS* 5885).

⁶⁹ J. Fitz on one side, and A. Mócsy, E. Tóth and S. Soproni on the other, propose differing border lines between Valeria and Pannonia I: Fitz postulated a much larger Valeria, see SOPRONI (n. 37) 21-22.

⁷⁰ SOPRONI, *Spätröm. Limes* (n. 52), 195-210, and *passim*; idem (n. 37), 21-26.

⁷¹ J. FITZ, *Die Innenbefestigungen der Provinz Valeria, Alba Regia* 18, 1980, 53-60, quotation p. 56.

occasional camps for the *comitatenses* legions⁷². Their function has not yet been satisfactorily explained: according to A. Mócsy they would have been centres of large imperial estates⁷³, in Fitz's opinion they would have served exclusively as garrisons for the mobile field army⁷⁴, whereas E. Tóth explains them as military provision bases, as well as temporary fortresses for the *comitatenses* legions⁷⁵. As a matter of fact, the cited three hypotheses do not seem to me to be mutually exclusive.

Several towns had suffered heavily from hostile attacks across the Danube by the second half of the 4th century, especially those along the *limes* and those situated on major routes and not too distant from the frontier, whereas some enjoyed almost an unprecedented prosperity. Several towns are explicitly mentioned in the sources in connection with the incursion of the Quadi and Sarmatae. Carnuntum was one of the first towns Valentinian had entered on his arrival in Pannonia after the incursion, and, as Ammianus remarked (XXX 5. 2), it was deserted and in ruins, although its strategic position was excellent (*Cumque exinde Carnuntum Illyriorum oppidum introisset, desertum quidem nunc et squalens, sed ductori exercitus perquam opportunum ...*)⁷⁶. A factor that may have contributed towards the decline of this once most flourishing city and legionary fortress could have been a devastating earthquake, which is possibly documented archaeologically⁷⁷. Earthquakes immediately after Valentinian's death are mentioned at several places by Zosimus (IV 18. 1). Valentinian spent three months in the town preparing his campaign against the Quadi; he also stayed at Aquincum and in late autumn searched for a suitable town in which to spend the winter. He could find no convenient place except Savaria, but life in this town, too, was reduced in comparison to former times. Ammianus said that at that time Savaria was in a poor state, having suffered from repeated misfortunes (XXX 5. 14: ... *commoda quaerebat hiberna, nullaue sedes idonea reperiri praeter Savariam poterat, quamvis eo invalidam tempore, assiduisque malis afflictam*). Evidently its position in the interior of Pannonia I could not greatly protect it, since it was situated, like Scarbantia, along the main road leading from Vindobona to Poetovio, and finds from late Roman period are also scarce in Scarbantia⁷⁸.

⁷² SOPRONI (n. 37), 17-21.

⁷³ A. MÓCSY, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia*, London, Boston 1974, 300-307.

⁷⁴ FITZ (n. 71).

⁷⁵ E. TÓTH, Die spätrömische Festung von Iovia und ihr Gräberfeld, *Antike Welt* 20/1, 1989, 31-39; E. TÓTH, Az alsóhetény 4. századi erőd és temető kutatása, 1981-1986. eredmények és vitás kérdések (Vorbericht über die Ausgrabung der Festung und des Gräberfeldes von Alsóhetény 1981-1986 - Ergebnisse und umstrittene Fragen), *Archaeologiai Értesítő* 114-115, 1987-1988, 22-61.

⁷⁶ For synthetic history of Carnuntum see SWOBODA (n. 55).

⁷⁷ M. KANDLER, Eine Erdbebenkatastrophe in Carnuntum?, *Acta Arch. Acad. Sc. Hung.* 41, 1989, 313-336.

⁷⁸ K. PÓCZY, Pannonian Cities, in: *The Archaeology of Roman Pannonia* (ed. A. Lengyel, G. T. B. Radan), Lexington, Budapest 1980, 253; 266-267, for Scarbantia.

Brigetio obviously shared the fate of Carnuntum, as Ammianus mentions that the town gates were filled with accumulated débris and the iron-clad door, which barred the exit, had collapsed (XXX 5. 17). Gorsium, the former seat of the *concilium provinciae* in the immediate hinterland of the *limes*, led only a miserable existence⁷⁹.

Sirmium, on the other hand, a seat of the praetorian prefect and a periodic residence of emperors and other high officials, enjoyed an unequalled prosperity⁸⁰. Ammianus mentioned that due to a long peace, the walls of the city had been neglected and partly fallen and were repaired at the outbreak of the incursion by order of Petronius Probus with stone material collected previously to build a new theatre (XXIX 6. 11). In the near vicinity of the city, probably at an imperial estate, the emperor's family sojourned: his wife Justina, their three daughters, and the four year old son, Valentinian, the future emperor. From a note in Ammianus that the future praetorian prefect of Gaul, Maximinus, whose father had been a clerk in the governor's office, was by birth from Sopiana, the town in Valeria (XXVIII 1. 5: ... *apud Sopianas Valeriae oppidum obscurissime natus est, patre tabulario praesidialis officii...*), it has been perhaps too hastily concluded that Sopiana at that time, i.e. the beginning of the 4th century, was the seat of the *praeses* of Valeria⁸¹. However, in view of the general decline of the towns on the *limes*, including the seat of the governor of Lower Pannonia, Aquincum, the transferal of the seat of the governor of Valeria to the interior of the province seems more than plausible. Siscia with its mint was one of the most important Pannonian towns in the 4th century⁸², and it was also the birthplace of the prefect of Rome, Viventius, another member of the emperor's Pannonian clique, whom Ammianus characterized as a Pannonian known for his integrity and prudence (XXVII 3. 11: *Advenit successor eius [of Lampadius] ex quaesitore palatii, Viventius, integer et prudens Pannonius ...*; XXVI 4. 4: *Viventio Sisciano*)⁸³.

Norican Poetovio, a former Pannonian town, and Celeia were both episcopal sees, as was Emona, situated in Italy in a triangle between Noricum and Pannonia⁸⁴. On the basis of coin finds, it may be concluded that Celeia was a relatively modest settlement at the time, whereas Poetovio, Emona and Nevidunum (Drnovo near Krško) were flourishing. The defensive system *Claustra*

⁷⁹ J. FITZ, Gorsium-Herculia im 4. Jh., *ActaAntHung* 24, 1976, 383-389.

⁸⁰ M. MIRKOVIĆ, Sirmium - its History from the I Century A.D. to 582 A.D., in: *Sirmium I*. Beograd 1971, 44-46.

⁸¹ F. FÜLEP, *Sopiana. The History of Pécs during the Roman Era, and the Problem of the Continuity of the Late Roman Population*, Budapest 1984, for the history of the town; p. 277 for the seat of the *praeses*.

⁸² J. ŠAŠEL, *RE Suppl.* XIV (1974), 702-741 (= *Opera selecta* [Situla 30], Ljubljana 1992, 600-620).

⁸³ A. CHASTAGNOL, *Les fastes de la Préfecture de Rome au Bas-Empire* (Études prosopographiques II), Paris 1962, p. 170, no. 68.

⁸⁴ J. ŠAŠEL, Emona, in: *RE Suppl.* XI (1968), 540-578 (= *Opera selecta*, 559-579); Celeia, in: *RE Suppl.* XII (1970), 139-148 (= *Opera selecta*, 583-587); B. SARIA, Poetovio, in: *RE* XXI,1 (1951), 1167-1184.

Alpium Iuliarum gained in importance, as is indicated by coin finds from the fortress Ad Pirum (Hrušica), and in the regional headquarters at Castra (Ajdovščina)⁸⁵. Emona was a prosperous town in the time of Valentinian, with a prominent Christian community⁸⁶, members of which corresponded with St Jerome, who may himself have participated in their life⁸⁷: in his *opus* two letters to the virgins at Emona and one to a monk Antonius are preserved (CSEL LIV p. 39 ff., ep. 11 [*Ad virgines Aemonenses*] and 12 [*Ad Antonium monachum*], ed. Hilberg). As is known from the date of a rescript in the *Cod. Theodos.* (XII 13. 2), Valentinian stayed in the town on 28 August 364. The pagan community must have still been very powerful at Emona late in the 4th century, as could be concluded from the panegyric in honour of Theodosius (Pacati *paneg.* 37). As late as AD 388, after having defeated Maximus's troops in July of the same year at Siscia and Poetovio, he was still solemnly received by the *sacerdotes* and *flamines*, the priests of the Oriental cults, and by the Emonian town council⁸⁸.

Contradictions seem to have marked this period, and fundamentally different ideologies, such as Christianity and paganism, seem to have coexisted pacifically, as is also indicated by the varied religious allegiances of high officials in Valentinian's government and the army⁸⁹. Ammianus praised Valentinian for his consequent refusal to take sides on religious issues (XXX 9. 5). Differences between Italy and the provinces were blurred, and consequently also those between the Italian and provincial aristocracies. The case of St Jerome and his friend Bonosus may not be typical, but it is eloquent of the equal possibilities Italian and provincial upper class children had in getting the best available education; both young men studied under the best teacher in Rome at the time, Aelius Donatus⁹⁰. As a result of the "provincialization" of Italy, the "barbarization" of the provinces, the general economic crisis, and several other factors, the general level of culture and education, sciences and arts, had sunken considerably, and as in so many other fields, a decline was also registered in the intellectual sphere⁹¹. Superstition and the practice of magic gained the upper hand in the

⁸⁵ P. KOS, *The Monetary Circulation in the Southeastern Alpine Region ca. 300 B.C. - A.D. 1000* (Situla 24), Ljubljana 1986, 133-139.

⁸⁶ L. PLESNIČAR-GEC, Emona nel IV secolo. Problemi di collegamento con Milano e l'area padana, in: *Felix temporis reparatio* (Atti del conv. arch. intern. Milano capitale dell'Impero romano 1990), Milano 1992, 219-226;

⁸⁷ P. NAUTIN, Hieronymus, in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 15 (1986), 304.

⁸⁸ J. ŠAŠEL, Inscriptions on the Mosaic Floor in the Baptismal Chapel and Church Portico in Emona, in: L. PLESNIČAR-GEC et al., *Old Christian Center in Emona*, Ljubljana 1983, 52-59 (= *Opera selecta*, 783-794).

⁸⁹ R. von HAEHLING, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit der hohen Amtsträger des Römischen Reiches seit Constantins I. Alleinberrschaft bis zum Ende der Theodosianischen Dynastie* (Antiquitas Reihe 3, ser. in 4to, 23), 1978, 556-560.

⁹⁰ S. REBENICH, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis* (Historia Einzelschr. 72), Stuttgart 1992, 21-27, and *passim*.

⁹¹ See also R. MacMULLEN, Distrust of the Mind in the Fourth Century, *Riv. storica italiana* 1972 = *Changes in the Roman Empire*, Princeton 1990, 117-129.

highest circles of the Roman aristocracy and they were used as a tool to condemn rich adversaries in court and deprive them of their fortunes. Intelligence was persecuted when it was on the wrong side, and precious private libraries were burnt all over the Empire⁹². In view of what has just been observed, it is not at all as peculiar as it might have been earlier for Valentinian to have favoured the provincial aristocracy, especially members of the upper classes from Pannonia and other provinces in the Illyrian diocese. That is to say, it cannot be claimed that they would have been *a priori* less well educated and less cultured⁹³. Besides those already mentioned, Equitius, Maximinus and Viventius⁹⁴, a prefect of Rome — Tanaucius Isfalangius — who may have been of Illyrian (if not Iberian) origin⁹⁵, and two *magistri officiorum*, Ursacius from Dalmatia, and Leo from Pannonia (Amm. XXVIII 1. 12), should be mentioned⁹⁶. Valentinian's circle of learned friends also included Valerius Dalmatius (*PLRE*, Dalmatius 8), the governor of Lugdunensis Tertia, to whom a verse dedication was erected at his home near Mursa (*ILS* 8978), as well as Flavius Simplicius from the nearby Italian Emona who rose from grammarian to the post of *vicarius urbis Romae* (Amm. XXVIII 1. 45: *Huic successit Hemonensis Simplicius, Maximini consiliarius ex grammatico...*)⁹⁷. Less important posts were also occupied by individuals from Illyricum, and quite a few of them were employed at the court of Valens⁹⁸.

VI The Incursion of the Quadi and Sarmatians: The Narrative of Ammianus Marcellinus

This was the situation, military and cultural, on the eve of the incursion of the Quadi and Sarmatians. Once again, the frontier provinces were greatly shattered far into the hinterland, and this incursion may be regarded as the last to

⁹² J. MATTHEWS, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*, London 1989, 204-228; A. DEMANDT, *Der Fall Roms. Die Auflösung des römischen Reiches im Urteil der Nachwelt*, München 1984.

⁹³ A. ALFÖLDI, *A Conflict of Ideas in the Late Roman Empire*, Oxford 1952, 18-20.

⁹⁴ M. T. W. ARNHEIM, *The Senatorial Aristocracy in the Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1972, 93-96.

⁹⁵ CHASTAGNOL (n. 83), 194 n. 76.

⁹⁶ M. CLAUS, *Der magister officiorum in der Spätantike (4.-6. Jahrhundert)*, (Vestigia 32), München 1980, 140.

⁹⁷ R. A. KASTER, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1988, 359, no. 137; see also D. NELLEN, *Viri litterati. Gebildetes Beamtentum und Spät Römisches Reich im Westen zwischen 284 und 395 nach Christus* (Bochumer hist. Studien, Alte Gesch. 2), 1981², 162-166.

⁹⁸ ALFÖLDI (n. 93), 17-18.

have been successfully repulsed by the Roman army⁹⁹. The main and best source for the course of the incursion is Ammianus, who was a contemporary to the events¹⁰⁰. Our aim is to establish the difference between his account and that of Zosimus, who had to rely on his sources and whose narrative is generally regarded as the less trustworthy of the two. Much has been written lately about the reliability of ancient historians¹⁰¹, and recently F. Paschoud has very plausibly argued that Ammianus is often less than reliable at describing events in which he himself participated, if they happened to correspond to literary tradition and were concerned with a topic such as sieges or battles. The learned public expected the ancient historians to dramatize an event of that kind; thus, inevitably, they could not avoid attempting to combine contradictory aims, such as a truthful account of events and rhetoric descriptions of several episodes. Consequently, the fact that an ancient historian was the eyewitness of an event in itself does not mean that his narrative is more trustworthy¹⁰². Further to be considered is the inevitable impact of contemporary history on any historical account. In view of these observations, the account of a later historian need not necessarily be less reliable than that of a contemporary.

The main points of Ammianus' narrative are as follows (XXIX 6. 1 - 16 [short notes of commentary are added in square brackets]). The Quadi, formerly a very warlike nation who had invaded northern Italy across the Julian Alps under Marcus Aurelius, but were now no longer much to be feared, suddenly broke into the province. A cause of complaint was the construction of *praesidiaria castra* ordered by Valentinian in their own territory, as if it were under Roman administration.

[The expression could either have a singular or a plural meaning grammatically, but from the historical point of view there could hardly be a question of only one fortification. Several such structures could undoubtedly be postulated, which is certainly not contradicted — as has been shown above — by the archaeological data. Yet it could be presumed that the violently negative reaction

⁹⁹ The only exhaustive study of the incursion is by C. PATSCH, *Beiträge zur Völkerkunde von Südosteuropa, IV: Die quadiſch-jazygiſche Kriegsgemeinſchaft im Jahre 374/75* (Akad. Wiss. Wien, Sitzungsber. 209, 5. Abh.), 1929; see also: A. GRAF, *Uebersicht der antiken Geographie von Pannonien* (Diss. Pann. ser. I, 5 1936), 130-134; PIGANIOL (n. 40) 216-217; E. DEMOUGEOT, *La formation de l'Europe et les invasions barbares de l'avènement de Dioclétien au début du VI^e siècle*, 2, Paris 1979, 113-116; J. W. EADIE, City and Countryside in Late Roman Pannonia: the *Regio Sirmiensis*, in: *City, Town and Countryside in the Early Byzantine Era* (East European Monographs CXX, ed. R. L. Hohlfelder), New York 1982, 26-27; *The Archaeology of Roman Pannonia* (no. 78), 115-116; GUTMANN (n. 2), 86-95.

¹⁰⁰ The relevant passages from Ammianus are collected and translated in: *Griechische und lateinische Quellen zur Frühgeschichte Mitteleuropas*, 4: *Von Ammianus Marcellinus bis Zosimos*, Berlin 1992, 111-123, with a short commentary 464-468.

¹⁰¹ T. P. WISEMAN, Lying Historians: Seven Types of Mendacity, in: *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World* (ed. C. Gill, T. P. Wiseman), Exeter 1993, 122-146.

¹⁰² F. PASCHOUD, "Se non è vero, è ben trovato": tradition littéraire et vérité historique chez Ammien Marcellin, *Cbiron* 19, 1989, 37-54.

on the part of the Quadi was caused by one particular fortification (perhaps built at some key point within their territory), which the Quadi regarded as specifically unfavourable to themselves. The word *munimentum*, too, used by Ammianus for the same construction a few sentences later, can either mean a fortification or a defence system of fortified structures. Thus, strictly speaking, it is not entirely clear on the basis of the text of Ammianus alone whether the incriminated construction had been just one fortification or several of them.]

The Quadi complained. The prefect of Gaul, Maximinus, criticized Equitius for having suspended the works and persuaded the emperor to appoint his own son Marcellianus *dux* of Valeria. The latter carried out the delayed construction, invited the protesting king of the Quadi to dinner, and had him murdered (AD 374). Bands of the Quadi and neighbouring tribes crossed the Danube and fell upon the rural inhabitants unawares, most of whom they killed or enslaved.

[In the diplomatic policy of Equitius, whose aim was to prevent the threatening hostilities of the Quadi, it may be possible to detect a party inside Valentinian's headquarters that was evidently opposed to the expansionistic activities of the emperor. Ammianus himself, as has been mentioned, regarded it as a violation of *ius gentium*¹⁰³. In the evidently different assessments of Valentinian's policy within the emperor's body of counsellors, I see an interesting parallel to the above mentioned different opinions concerning the annexation of new territory during the Marcomannic Wars, as was advocated by the high military officials in the entourage of Marcus Aurelius.]

Constantius' daughter, on her way to marry Gratianus, stayed at a public *villa* called *Pristensis* and would have been captured during the devastating attack had not the governor of the province, Messala, taken her in a state-carriage back to Sirmium, 26 miles distant. The Quadi, together with the Sarmatians, extended their devastation throughout the entire neighbouring country.

[According to C. Patsch — and subsequently accepted by others — the Quadi, acting in agreement with the Sarmatians (*Sarmatae Limigantes*), first invaded Pannonia II, not the nearby Valeria¹⁰⁴. This is obviously based on the fact that the episode of Constantius' daughter having almost been captured is mentioned in the same context. In my opinion it could hardly be imagined that the Quadi would not have invaded from their own homeland into Valeria since the *dux* of this province caused the provocation. Ammianus might have omitted an explicit mention of Valeria in his narrative simply because he regarded it as an evident fact. There is to my knowledge nothing in Ammianus' account that would directly contradict this.]

¹⁰³ GUTMANN (n. 2), 90-92; see also n. 54.

¹⁰⁴ PATSCH (n. 99), 18-19; see also GUTMANN (n. 2), 92.

The praetorian prefect Probus decided not to leave Sirmium but rather to fortify the city with stone material collected for the construction of a theatre. He summoned a cohort of archers from the nearest military station.

[According to D. Hoffmann, it is far from certain whether these could be identified with either of the *equites sagittarii* stationed at Cuccium (Ilok) or at Acumincum (Stari Slankamen), and documented — probably as obsolete units — in the *Not. dign.*, since in Valentinian's time *cunei equitum sagittariorum*, who had replaced the *equites*, would have been expected. These, however, are not listed in the *Not. dign.* for Pannonia II¹⁰⁵. In any case it is clear that the mentioned cohort must have been one of the *limitanei* troops stationed in the vicinity of the capital.]

The barbarians did not attack the city but pursued Equitius, whom they believed to have murdered their king. Two legions, the *Pannonica* and the *Moesiaca* [the *Pannoniciani* and *Moesiaci seniores*]¹⁰⁶, were sent against them. They acted separately and the Sarmatians almost annihilated them. In the meantime, Theodosius the younger, *dux* of Moesia, defeated the free Sarmatians [they seem to have been defeated by his father a few years earlier]¹⁰⁷; they finally sued for peace, particularly since Gallic troops were sent to defend Illyricum.

[For the peace treaty between Valentinian I and the free Sarmatians in 374, see a note in B. Gutmann¹⁰⁸. For an attempt to identify these troops, see the relevant chapters in Hoffmann¹⁰⁹. As has been indicated by M. R. Alföldi's analysis of coins found in Trier, these Gallic units, as well as the emperor's guard, may have brought back with them coins that would have been acquired while serving on the Danube. These coin finds show an unexpectedly high percentage of Siscian *centenionales* of the years 364-375, where only specific serial mint-marks occur¹¹⁰. Since the structure of the coin finds from Trier is different from that of the coins circulating during the same period in the Pannonian provinces, V. Lányi has suggested that the presence of Siscian coins in the coin finds in Trier may have been due to an imperial policy sending coins from the Siscian mint to these parts of the Empire¹¹¹. It must be added that the structure of coins intended for army payment would not necessarily be the same as that of the coins circulating in the province; it seems, however, that this problem must remain unresolved.]

¹⁰⁵ HOFFMANN (n. 42), 210-212.

¹⁰⁶ *Ib.*, 433.

¹⁰⁷ R. EGGER, Der erste Theodosius, *Byzantion* 5, 1929-1930, 9 ff. = *Römische Antike und frühes Christentum* 2 (1963), 132-135.

¹⁰⁸ GUTMANN (n. 2), 250, no. 6.

¹⁰⁹ HOFFMANN (n. 42), 436-437.

¹¹⁰ M. R. ALFÖLDI, Fragen des Münzumschlufs im 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr., *Jb. Num. Geldgesch.* 13, 1963, 75-104.

¹¹¹ LÁNYI (n. 47), 33-46, especially p. 43-46.

Descriptions follow of events in Rome and in Armenia, of the peace treaty with Macrianus, and of events in the eastern half of the Empire. The account of the incursion is resumed in XXX 5. 1, and ends with Valentinian's death in XXX 6. 6. Valentinian left Augusta Treverorum for Pannonia in the spring of 375. Upon his arrival in the province, he met a deputation of the Sarmatians who claimed that they were not guilty of committing any outrage. He replied that he would investigate all actions.

[E. Demougeot supposed that Valentinian received the Sarmatian embassy in Sirmium, where he would have gone first¹¹², although this is not mentioned by Ammianus. His narrative would rather suggest that the embassy had travelled to the north of the province and met him upon his very arrival, even before he reached Carnuntum¹¹³. It should be added that the emperor's family was also in Pannonia during the campaign, staying at the so-called Villa Maurocincta (Amm. XXX 10. 4: ... *Valentinianus puer defuncti filius tum quadrimus, vocaretur in imperium cooptandus, centesimo lapide disparatus, degensque cum Iustina matre in villa, quam Maurocinctam appellant*; cf. Rufinus, *Hist. eccl.* II 12 = Migne, *P.L.* XXI p. 522; no site has so far been plausibly identified with it, but it could perhaps be located at the palace-like villa of Parndorf)¹¹⁴, one hundred miles distant from Brigetio, where Valentinian's son was summoned after his father's death.]

Having established his headquarters at Carnuntum, Valentinian halted barbarian attacks from a nearby station. He neither investigated the murder of Gabinius, nor who was responsible for the disaster. [Yet, as can possibly be concluded from epigraphic evidence and brick stamps, he might have recalled Marcellianus and appointed Frigeridus as *dux* of Valeria in his place¹¹⁵; however, Ammianus mentioned neither fact, nor is the chronology of Frigeridus' appointment entirely clear; he is known to have repaired large sections of the *limes*.] The only person whose conduct was questioned was Probus, who had oppressed the provincial population by imposing additional tributes and taxes, and of whose misdeeds the emperor was accidentally informed by the Epirote philosopher Iphicles.

Valentinian remained in Carnuntum for the three summer months to prepare the campaign against the Quadi. He sent his *magister peditum* Merobaudes ahead with a division of infantry¹¹⁶, and the *comes* Sebastianus, to devastate barbarian villages. The emperor constructed a bridge of boats at Aquincum and reached Quadic territory at a point elsewhere along the river. Most of the natives had withdrawn with their families to the mountains. The rest he ordered killed

¹¹² DEMOUGEOT (n. 99), 114.

¹¹³ PATSCH (n. 99), 23-24; thus also GUTMANN (n. 2), 94.

¹¹⁴ See MÓCSY (n. 37), 295; idem, Maurocincta, in: *Adriatica praehistorica et antiqua (Miscell. G. Novak)*, Zagreb 1970, 583-586.

¹¹⁵ FITZ (n. 45), 30-31; 66-72, but see LÖRINCZ (n. 49).

¹¹⁶ M. WAAS, *Germanen im römischen Dienst im 4. Jahrhundert nach Christus*, Diss. Bonn 1965, 110-116.

and their dwellings burnt, and then returned to Aquincum. He could find no suitable place for winter quarters except Savaria, but he marched on to Brigetio to rest his troops there. The list of portents foretelling his death follows. The Quadi sent envoys to sue for peace, promising to provide recruits and other useful things for the Romans. [The existence of an *ala prima Quadorum* under the authority of the *dux* of Thebais, documented in the *Not. dign.* (or. XXXI 56), may be regarded as evidence for this peace treaty with Valentinian¹¹⁷.] Having been admitted to an audience with the emperor, they wished to excuse themselves and stated among other things that there was no common consent among their chiefs in regard to attacks against the Romans, which had mostly been instigated by bands of brigands living near the banks of the Danube. They added that the cause of hostilities was the construction of the defence structure, *munimentum*, which was neither justified nor required by the occasion. These words caused an outburst of tremendous rage in the emperor and he reproached them that their nation was ungrateful and forgetful of all acts of kindness. Whereupon he was struck down as by a thunderbolt, remained speechless, and died soon afterwards (18 November 375), without the help of physicians who were attending to soldiers because of an outbreak of the plague.

Ammianus' account is logical and detailed. His report concerning fortifications in Quadic territory is interesting. As was mentioned above, there were most probably several of them. It could be concluded from Ammianus' account that the Roman headquarters regarded it as perfectly in accordance with a previous agreement to build strongholds in the territory of the Quadi. According to another interesting observation of Ammianus, there was no common agreement among the Quadi in their policy towards the Roman state — which must have been typical of client states in any period; consequently it must be concluded that king Gabinius' authority would have been limited. Attention must be drawn specifically to the fact, noted by Ammianus, that the zone along the banks of the Danube which should, according to the Roman request, remain uninhabited, was actually the dwelling place of bands consisting of foreign tribes, who were prone to raiding and looting whenever occasion arose.

VII The Account of Zosimus

Zosimus' report (IV 16. 3-4) is much shorter. Essentially it corresponds to Ammianus', except for two data not contained in the latter's account, and the fact that Marcellianus is called Caelestius by Zosimus; the latter name should

¹¹⁷ See a note in R. GROSSE, *Römische Militärgeschichte von Gallienus bis zum Beginn der byzantinischen Themenverfassung*, Berlin 1920, 207 and n. 1.

either be explained as Marcellianus' *signum*, or else his gentilicium¹¹⁸. Zosimus is the only source to report that Valentinian sent some troops from the Danube to Africa in AD 373: "... At this news (about Firmus having been proclaimed emperor) Valentinian was disturbed and at once ordered legions to leave their garrisons in Pannonia and Upper Moesia and set sail to Africa, after which the Sarmatians and Quadi who resented the military commander there, Caelestius, on account of an old offence, invaded Pannonia and Moesia ...". O. Seeck doubted the note since Theodosius the Elder had at his disposal in Africa, in one of his battles, a minimum of 3,500 men, the greater part of which was composed of Gallic and African troops (Amm. XXIX 5. 4-7; 29; 39)¹¹⁹. In Hoffmann's opinion, too, Zosimus' account is greatly exaggerated, so much so that the original context of reasons and consequences is misrepresented in it¹²⁰. However, this discrepancy between the presumed reality reflected in Ammianus, and Zosimus' data may be explained by the fact that the troops from Pannonia and Moesia failed to arrive in time because of the lengthy journey to Africa. Paschoud — like Hoffmann — observed that if the report is trustworthy, the number of troops must have been very small¹²¹. In their opinion, the frontier was not weakened to the extent of inviting barbarians to cross the Danube, which Zosimus seems to have implied in the next paragraph. The note was accepted as reliable by C. Patsch and A. Piganiol, who even added that the best troops from Pannonia were sent to Africa against Firmus¹²². There seems to be no reason to disbelieve Zosimus' statement; it may be an indication that the rhetor Eunapius, a contemporary of Ammianus, whom Zosimus is known to have used as his main source for the 4th book¹²³, and who is usually regarded to have been a rather superficial historian, had been well informed on the incursion of the Quadi and Sarmatians. He had given emphasis to certain aspects other than those that seemed important to Ammianus.

Zosimus is also the only historian to mention that the Pannonian population, especially those not far from the Danube, were plundered alike by the barbarians and by the soldiers who were supposed to defend them (IV 16. 5: "The Pannonians were exposed to the barbarians' looting because the soldiers guarded the towns carelessly; as a matter of fact they caused damage to the places along the river no less than did the barbarians."). This is an interesting observation that illustrates well the generally known barbarization of the Roman army, both the *limitanei* and *comitatenses* troops¹²⁴, and it is doubtless authentic.

¹¹⁸ FITZ (n. 51).

¹¹⁹ O. SEECK, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt*. Bd. V, Anhang, p. 435 to p. 28,10.

¹²⁰ HOFFMAN (n. 42), 432-434.

¹²¹ F. PASCHOUD, *Zosime* II, 2, Paris 1979, p. 364, n. 134.

¹²² PATSCH (n. 99), 21; PIGANIOI (n. 40), 216.

¹²³ F. PASCHOUD, *Zosime* I, Paris 1971, lvii and *passim* in his introduction.

¹²⁴ DEMOUGEOT (n. 99), 101-105; 116-121; HOFFMANN (n. 42), *passim*.

It perfectly confirms the presence of various German and Sarmatian troops which these and other client nations had to deliver to the Roman state according to the various peace treaties concluded with them. Naturally more or less close contacts between some of the *limitanei* soldiers and the populations across the river were inevitable. Valentinian's decree (*Cod. Theodos.* III 14. 1), by which he prohibited under capital penalty marriages and relationships between the inhabitants of the provinces and barbaric regions across the frontier, was aimed exactly at preventing a lack of loyalty towards the Roman state. Contrary to Ammianus, Eunapius as a civilian was interested in different problems and also in the social aspects of a situation created by political and military actions.

VIII Coin Finds

The impact of the invasion must have been far-reaching, as is indicated by a number of coin hoards concealed throughout Pannonia and Noricum. A town as distant as Poetovio must have been seriously threatened: two small hoards, Ptuj - Zgornji Breg and Ptuj - Panorama should almost certainly be connected with the incursion, and perhaps also the partly retrieved hoard of Ptuj - Vičava¹²⁵. P. Kos suggested that the concealment of these hoards was most probably directly caused by the partial devastation of the town, which would be reflected in a lesser intensity of monetary circulation in the period of AD 378-382, as indicated by casual coin finds from Ptuj¹²⁶. Other coin hoards of the same period have been discovered elsewhere in western Pannonia, such as at Szőkedencz south of Lake Balaton¹²⁷, Kazsok¹²⁸, and Lupoglav in western Savia¹²⁹. The finds correspond to several hoards with *terminus post quem* of the year of the invasion in 374-375 deposited in Pannonia and the *barbaricum*, such as Carnuntum, Wien-Krottenbach near Vindobona, Jabing (Burgenland), and Öregcsém-pusztá, several km. to the southwest of Szőny (Brigetio). Four more hoards occasionally cited in connection with the incursion (Veszprém in Pannonia I, Árpás, a fortified settlement from the 4th century in Pannonia I not far from the Danube, Vinkovci [Cibalae] in Pannonia II, and Öcsöd in the Sarmatian *barbaricum*) must be later, as they contain some sporadic coins of Valentinian II. M. R. Alföldi connected the first group of hoards with the Quadic-Sarmatian invasion, disregarding the retardative factor, i.e. the fact that the closing dates of the hoards should be earlier than the year in which they were deposited. V. Lányi

¹²⁵ P. KOS, *FMRSI* II, 434/3, 434/16, 434/24.

¹²⁶ P. KOS (n. 85), 158, see also 145-147.

¹²⁷ M. R. ALFÖLDI, A szőkedencsi későrómai éremlelet (Monnaies du Bas Empire découvertes à Szőkedencs), *Antiquitas Hungarica* 3, 1949, 86-92.

¹²⁸ A. SZ. BURGER, *Numizmatikai Közlöny* 66-67, 1967-1968, 3-22.

¹²⁹ J. BRUNŠMID, *Vjesnik Hrvatskog arheološkog društva* 12, 1912, 284-286.

would rather see in these hoards echoes of later years equally fateful for the Danube *limes*¹³⁰. M. Alföldi also suggested that for some time Siscia had been cut off from the Danube *limes* and its hinterland because of these invasions, which must have greatly threatened the Siscia - Mursa road. This is indicated by the structure of the hoards from Árpás and Öcsöd, where the only coin of Valentinian II is from Aquileia, while both hoards lack the first series of the young Valentinian from Siscia. The old amber trade route, the importance of which must have been considerably increased, was most probably reutilized in this period¹³¹.

It is hardly probable that Emona would have directly suffered from the attacks of the barbarian hordes during the incursion, although towns in Italy, too, must have been stricken by panic, as is indicated by an Emona coin hoard on one hand, and by the increased importance of the defence system of the *Claustra Alpium Iuliarum* on the other¹³².

Claustra Alpium Iuliarum became more and more vital for the defence of Italy. St Ambrose mentioned hastily constructed wooden structures in the Alpine passes (*Exc. Sat. I 31* = Migne, *P. L. XVI* p. 1300: ... *si nunc urgeri Italiam tam propinquo hoste cognosceres, quantum ingemisceres, quam doleres in Alpium vallo summam nostrae salutis consistere, lignorumque concaedibus construi murum pudoris!*): his account may refer either to the incursion of the Quadi and Sarmatians, which took the Roman state entirely by surprise — hastily built defences would thus correspond well to the situation — or else it referred to the events of 377-378. Two hundred years after the Marcomannic Wars, the Quadi and Sarmatians again threatened Italy proper, and the territory of the former *praetentura Italiae et Alpium*, organized under Marcus Aurelius, again became important in the concept of the defence of Italy.

¹³⁰ LÁNYI (n. 47).

¹³¹ M. R. ALFÖLDI (n. 127), 86-92; see especially eadem (n. 107), 86-98; 103-104 for Öcsöd. See also LÁNYI (n. 47), 44, and G. L. DUNCAN, *Coin Circulation in the Danubian and Balkan Provinces of the Roman Empire AD 294-578*, London 1993, 17-19.

¹³² KOS (n. 85), 158.

Povzetek

Obrambna politika Valentinijana I. v Panoniji - odmev politike Marka Avrelija?

Ko je Tiberij leta 16 po Kr. dokončno opustil ofenzivno politiko v Germaniji, je meja rimskega imperija obstala na Donavi, vendar Ren in Donava nikdar nista predstavljala kaj več kot umetno razmejitveno črto med ozemljem, ki so ga osvojile rimske legije in deželami, ki so ostale izven njegovih meja in za katere se je sčasoma udomačilo ime barbarik. Rečna meja je imela v veliki meri administrativni značaj in je barbarska plemena onstran reke prej privlačevala kot odbijala. To je doseglo višek v času tik pred markomanskimi vojnami, ko so obmejna plemena, na katera so pritiskali barbari s severa, skušala dobiti dovoljenje za naselitev v imperiju, česar jim vladar *Antoninus Pius* ni odobril.

Eno še vedno odprtih vprašanj, povezanih z markomanskimi vojnami, ostaja nameravana ustanovitev dveh novih provinc pod Markom Avrelijem. Zanimivo je, da vsi trije glavni literarni viri o markomanskih vojnah, Kasij Dion, Herodijan in *Historia Augusta*, omenjajo priključitev novih območij rimskemu imperiju: Dion v negativnem smislu, medtem ko je v *HA* izrecno omenjeno, da je Mark Avrelij načrtoval ustanovitev Markomanije in Sarmatije. Rimska gradbena dejavnost je na ozemlju Kvadov arheološko dobro dokumentirana, prav tako tudi novčni obtok, najdbe rimske keramike in drugih drobnih predmetov, kar se lepo ujema z Dionovim poročilom o delni rimski zasedbi kvadskega ozemlja. Onkraj Donave so rimske postaje ugotovljene tako na višinskih postojankah (v krajih Stupava, Stillfried v dolini reke March, Oberleiserberg pri Ernstbrunnu, Mušov na južnem Moravskem), kot v nižinah (v krajih Niederleis, Bratislava-Dúbravka, Milanovce, Cífer-Pác, postaje v okolici Mikulčic in Staréga Města). Takšna arheološka podoba nekdanjega kvadskega ozemlja nedvomno priča o določeni stopnji romanizacije. Po vsej verjetnosti je bila ustanovitev nove province ali celo dveh provinc v času markomanskih vojn politična realnost, kar bi potrjevalo tudi dejstvo, da sta bili tik pred izbruhom vojn rekrutirani dve novi legiji (2. in 3. Italika). Nedvomno pa drži, da bi bila priključitev novega ozemlja imperiju ekonomsko nevzdržna, kar se je verjetno izkazalo še pred koncem vojn in ni izključeno, da so takšne načrte opustili tudi tisti generali v vojski Marka Avrelija, ki so se bili zavzemali za osvajalno politiko.

Markomanske vojne so nedvomno pomenile veliko cezuro v razvoju obdonavskih provinc, posebej če pomislimo na učinke katastrofalne kužne epidemije, ki je v istem času pustošila med prebivalstvom. Obmejne province so si ekonomsko opomogle šele pod Septimijem Severom, vendar vladar žal ni mogel izboljšati razmer, ki so nastale zaradi nestabilne obmejne vojaško-politične situacije. Pogosti sovražni vpadi so bili bolj ali manj uspešno zavrženi, nestabilnost je nihala, ponovno jo je želel odpraviti Valentinijan I. in sicer s sistematično izgradnjo trdnjav in opazovalnih stolpov vzdolž Rena in Donave. Odločil se je celo za gradnjo obrambnega sistema na delu kvadskega ozemlja. Te gradnje, ki jih je iz Panonije vodil Ekvicij, je kvadski kralj Gabinij odločno obsodil, zato je Ekvicij vsa dela začasno prekinil. Nadaljeval jih je njegov naslednik Marcelijan in s tem sprožil kvadsko-sarmatski vdor v Panonijo leta 374, zadnji, ki ga je rimski vojski še uspelo dokončno zavrniti, kljub vladarjevi nenadni smrti sredi pogajanj leta 375 po Kr. v Brigecioni.

V Valentinijanovi obrambno-ofenzivni politiki na rensko-donavskem limesu se dejansko zrcali — *mutatis mutandis* — politika Marka Avrelija, kar je pri Amijanu Marcelinu tudi jasno izraženo, saj pripoved o Valentinijanovem panonskem vojaškem pohodu začne z uvodom, v katerem omenja markomanske vojne pod Markom Avrelijem. Vzroki, ki so v 2. stoletju narekovali ofenzivno politiko na markomansko-kvadski in jaziški fronti, pa so se bistveno razlikovali od vzrokov, ki so motivirali Valentinijanovo politiko. Medtem ko je bilo za Marka Avrelija še mogoče pomisliti na osvojitve novega ozemlja, čeprav so bili bržkone ti načrti že za njegove vlade neuresničljivi, pa sta bila dvesto let pozneje vladarjev edini namen in skrb kolikor mogoče uspešno zaščititi meje imperija. Valentinijan se je zato odločil za več vzporednih obrambnih sistemov, ki so deloma posegli, podobno kot v času markomanskih vojn, celo dlje na ozemlje barbarika.

O vdoru Kvadov in Sarmatov v Panonijo poročata predvsem dva vira, Amijan Marcelin in Zosim. Analiza odlomkov iz obeh zgodovinskih del, ki se nanašajo na to vojno, je pokazala, da Zosim z nekaj podatki, ki jih pri sicer precej bolj izčrpnem Amijanu ni, njegovo pripoved smiselno dopolnjuje. Zanimive so tudi novčne najdbe iz obdobja Valentinijanove vlade, v katerih se je sovražni vdor nedvomno odražal. S tem vdorom bi mogli po vsej verjetnosti povezati nekaj zakladnih najdb v Sloveniji na ptujskem območju, v sosednji Hrvaški, v Avstriji in na Madžarskem. Zakladna najdba v Emoni kaže, da je strah pred posledicami vdora dosegel meje Italije, kar zgovorno dopolnjuje povečan obtok novcev z najdišč utrbenega sistema *Claustra Alpium Iuliarum*. Pomen alpskih zapor za obrambo Italije je tedaj postal zelo aktualen in ni izključeno, da se pri sv. Ambrožu omenjene, na hitro zgrajene lesene utrdbe, ki naj bi varovale Italijo, nanašajo prav na vdor Kvadov in Sarmatov pod Valentinijanom I. (*Exc. Sat.* I 31). Vsekakor se je tedaj prvič po markomanskih vojnah zgodilo, da bi sovražni vdor ogrozil samo Italijo; prostor, v katerem je bila za Marka Avrelija ustanovljena *praetentura Italiae et Alpium*, je za obrambo Italije ponovno postal ključnega pomena.