

## AN EARLY ROMAN TOMBSTONE FROM DUNASZEKCSŐ (TRHR 201)

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**Abstract:** A Roman tombstone from Dunaszekcső that can be dated to the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD is the subject of this paper. The stela is one of the earliest inscribed stone monuments in Eastern Pannonia and proves the existence of the early auxiliary fort of Lugio. As the *missicius* served 37 years and as he was a Tiberius Claudius (receiving his citizenship in 54 AD, at the latest), the tombstone clearly shows the existence of the *cohors I Alpinorum* around 17 AD, at the latest.

**Keywords:** epigraphy; Pannonia; military history; Early Roman occupation.

**Rezumat:** Subiectul acestei lucrări îl constituie un monument funerar de la Dunaszekcső, databil la mijlocul secolului I p. Chr. Stela reprezintă unul din cele mai timpurii monumente cu inscripție din Pannonia răsăriteană și certifică existența castrului auxiliar timpuriu de la Lugio. De vreme ce numitul *missicius* a servit 37 de ani în armată și a fost un Tiberius Claudius (primind cetățenia cel târziu în anul 54 p. Chr.), monumentul indică clar existența cohorței *I Alpinorum* cel târziu în anul 17 p. Chr.

**Cuvinte cheie:** epigrafie; Pannonia; istorie militară; ocupație romană timpurie.

Ferenc Halász, the well-known local historian of Dunaszekcső, reported in the 1940s<sup>1</sup> that in Ádám Heim's property at Dunaszekcső-Püspökhegy an inscribed Roman tombstone was found in 1940. Few years later the inscription was lost, therefore A. Radnóti and L. Barkóczi, in their paper on the military history of Pannonia published in 1951, only mentioned the inscription in a note with the text of the first two lines.<sup>2</sup> Despite this fact, the inscription, important from the point of view of the military history of Pannonia, was mentioned several times and it was published in the supplement of the series *Die Römischen Inschriften Ungarns* (TRHR) as follows:

*Ti(berius) Claudius [Ma]giatus equ(es) coh(ortis) I Alp(inorum) [- - -] / - - - - -*.

Literature: Radnóti, Barkóczi 1951, 199, n. 75; Saddington 1982, 217, n. 81, Lőrincz 2001, 225, no. 219; Kakoschke 2010, 383; DuBois 2015, 279, TRHR 202.

The Roman stone monument has been recently emerged at Dunafalva in a private property where we could describe the inscription (the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2017). As far as

<sup>1</sup> Halász 2000. The tombstone is not mentioned in this work.

<sup>2</sup> We received information about an early tombstone from Mr. Ferenc Halász, a Dunaszekcső collector; he made a drawing of a tombstone with the following inscription: *Ti. Claudius . . . ciatus eqv. coh. I Alp . . .* The stone was found in 1940 at Dunaszekcső, in Mr. Ádám Heim's vineyard on Püspökhegy; since it has disappeared, our only evidence for the presence of one of the *cohortes I Alpinorum* (perhaps the *cohors equitata*) is this rather uncertain drawing.

we know, the tombstone was transported to Dunafalva in the 1940s and kept in the house of Ádám Heim which was sold around 1964 to the family of the recent owner, Ferenc Balogh. Now, it can be found in the courtyard of his house at Dunafalva (Posta street No. 9).<sup>3</sup>

Description: The middle part of the fragmentary stela (Pl. I/1-2) (above, below and its left side) has been cut because of the secondary use. Below, the inscription can be seen, framed by a *cymatium* (52 x 45 cm). Above, in the undecorated picture field (36 x 49 cm) the very fragmentary *togati protoma* of the veteran can be found in a medallion.

Material: limestone.

Dimensions: height: 108 cm, width: 54 cm, thickness: 12 cm.

Letters height: l. 1: 6.2 cm; l. 2: 5.5 cm; l. 3-5: 5 cm; l. 6: 4.8 cm; l. 7: 3.7 cm. The last letter of line 4 (a D) can be found in the frame, similarly to the letter A in lines 2 and 4. Triangular *interpunctiones* were consequently used between the words; there is no ligature in the text. The letters were carefully carved and no mistake committed by the stonecutter can be observed. Above and below the letters the lines of the ordination can still be recognized. Horizontal stroke above a numeral was used only in the case of ordinal number I of the military unit. The stone monument was secondarily repainted after 1940 but traces of the original red painting can still be seen as well.

In the inscription field the following letters can be seen:

CLAVDIVS  
GIATVS EQV  
HO I ALPI MI  
CIVS AN LXXV D  
I XXXVII H S E  
A SECVND  
LIB ET HER  
POS P P M

The findspot – Püspökhegy (Bishop's hill) – is located north of the auxiliary fort of Lugio-Florentia, where the late Roman cemetery (and the early Principate civilian settlement) has recently been identified and some of the graves have been revealed.<sup>4</sup> The tombstone was most probably reused in this cemetery. Based on the inscription, it surely belonged to an auxiliary soldier in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, who, as he was a Tiberius Claudius, received his Roman citizenship under Tiberius' or Claudius' reign. Earlier he served as rider in the *cohors I Alpinorum equitata*, therefore the *cohors I Alpinorum peditata* must be ruled out.<sup>5</sup> The *cohors equitata* garrisoned in Pannonia in the entire 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (CIL XVI 4; CIL XVI 26; CIL XVI 30; CIL XVI 31); its first fort was at Lugio/Dunaszekcső (based on this text), but its stamped tiles show that it was transferred into Western Pannonia (Carnuntum?) at the end of Claudius' reign

<sup>3</sup> We would like to thank Ferenc Balogh and László Kaszár for their help in processing the information related to the monument.

<sup>4</sup> Kovács 1996, 46; Visy 2002, 105-106; Gábor, Nagy 2004, 10.

<sup>5</sup> Spaul 2000, 262-263. The cohort was later transferred in Pannonia.

(Lőrincz 2001, no. 220). During the Flavian period the cohort stationed probably at Gorsium (RIU 1551).<sup>6</sup> The tombstone belongs to an early (no younger than the Flavian period) type that occurs rarely in Eastern Pannonia, in which, in the picture field, the *protoma* of the deceased *togatus* was depicted in a medallion or crown (e.g. CIL III 15197; AE 1992, 1396; RIU 149, 156; TitAq 582).<sup>7</sup> In the case of this tombstone only the folds of toga can be recognized. The date of its erection is confirmed also by the fact that it was erected by the freedman of the veteran, i.e. he had no family. Based on this fact, the first letter in line 6 (an A) can only be restored as [Cl]a(udius). In line 1 the praenomen *Ti(berius)* is missing, which means that only two letters are broken in each line. The cognomen can only be restored as Magiatus that was a very rare Celtic personal name (cf. Appendix 1).<sup>8</sup> Based on the occurrence of the name in Belgica (primarily in the territory of the tribe Mediomatrici) it is also supposed that Magiatus came from this province.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the origin/home of the soldiers of the *cohortes Alpinorum* (given in Appendix 2), who were not enrolled in the province of the garrison clearly shows that they all came from the Alpine region (including Noricum) (most of the tribal names can be found in the inscription of the Tropaeum Augusti among the tribes conquered by Augustus: CIL V 7817 = Plin. *HN* III.137): *Bodionticus* (Gallia Narbonensis: cf. Plin. *HN* III.37), *Caturix*, *Eguius*, *Noricus* (later: Virunum), *Velaunus*.<sup>10</sup> Based on this fact, Magiatus' tribe can be found here, too. The word MI[---]CIVS can only be restored as *mi[ssi]cius* as no similar tribal name is attested. Based on this and on the fact that Magiatus was 75 year old one can suppose that the word *missicius* was used as a synonym of *veteranus* (and he could be identified with an active soldier who has not yet received the *honesta missio*).<sup>11</sup> It cannot be supposed that a 75-year-old man would have recently been discharged or he would have been enrolled at the age 38 (he served 37 years in the Roman army).

The word *missicius* was used in similar sense in the tombstones of auxiliary soldiers in Pannonia too (CIL III 3273 = 10258; RIU 982; TitAq 593). The number XXXVII in line 5 surely suggests the length of Magiatus' military service, therefore the word before the numeral (with the letter I) can only be restored as [st]i(pendiorum). More problematical is the interpretation of the letter D at the end of line 4 in the frame that did not belong closely to the funerary text. It is evident that it cannot be expanded as *d(ies)* as there is no enough room in the next line for a numeral. Based on this fact, the most obvious possibility is that it was the rare abbreviation of the participle *defunctus* that occurs rarely in Pannonia (RIU 1256; TRHR 38). The letters P P can most probably be expanded as *p(atrono) p(ientissimo)*, because the tombstone was

<sup>6</sup> Spaul 2000, 259–261; Lőrincz 2001, 27, no. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Schober 1923, 55–56, 126–130; Gáspár 2016, 45–46.

<sup>8</sup> For the name see Holder 1896, II, 375; OPEL III, 45; Kakoschke 2010, 383. The Celtic names with the beginning Mag(i)- are frequent in all Celtic areas including Pannonia (cf. OPEL II, 45–46, e.g. Magio, Magionus can be found in Belgica, Noricum and Pannonia), therefore Magiatus' home remains uncertain: Holder 1896, II, 375, 378–379; Mócsy 1959, 179; Meid 2005, 197. On the personnel of the Alpine cohorts see Spaul 2000, 257.

<sup>9</sup> Lőrincz 2001, 225.

<sup>10</sup> Holder 1896, II, 459, 859–860, 1409, III, 149–150.

<sup>11</sup> Domaszewski 1981, p. XX, 78–80; Todisco 1999, 256–259.

erected by the freedman of the deceased veteran. In line 7, between the words *libertus* and *heres*, EI is written. Here, the *hasta transversa* of the T is omitted, and the word must be restored as *et*.

Based on these data the inscription can be restored as follows:

[Ti(berius)] Claudius  
 [Ma]giatus equ(es)  
 [c(o)]ho(rtis) I Alpi(norum) mi-  
 [ssi]cius an(norum) LXXV d(efunctus)  
 [st]i(jependiorum) XXXVII h(ic) s(itus) e(st).  
 [Cl]a(udius) Secund-  
 [us] lib(ertus) e<sup>r</sup>t<sup>i</sup> her-  
 [es] pos(uit) p(atrono) p(ientissimo) m(emoriam).

Magiatus' tombstone reveals several new data on the military history of Pannonia in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and it clearly shows that the eastern Pannonian *limes* was established during the reign of Claudius latest. The first Pannonian garrison of *cohors I Alpinorum equitata* was in Lugio. Based on North-Italian Samian ware finds from the archaeological site at Dunaszekcső-Várhegy, it was already supposed that the earth-timber period auxiliary fort of Lugio was built during Claudius' reign.<sup>12</sup> Based on the *tria nomina*, the missing *Dis Manibus* formula,<sup>13</sup> the use of the nominative and the type of the stone monument and the paleography, the tombstone can be dated latest to the beginning of the Flavian period, but a Claudian-Neronian date seems to be more probable based on the history of the military unit cited above. Magiatus received the Roman citizenship in the year 54, at the latest, as he was a Tiberius Claudius. He served 37 years that clearly proves that his stela was erected latest in 75 AD if he entered the army at the age of 17/18 as usually. The formula *hic situs est* occurs in this period in Pannonia (e.g. TitAq 593; AE 1906, 111 = 1909, 198), but the expression *posuit ... memoriam* is not attested in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>14</sup> Based on the length of his military service (37 years) and on the fact that Magiatus did not serve in another unit, the *cohortes Alpinorum* must have existed already around 17 AD. This fact agrees with the supposed Augustan date of Iulius Iccus' tombstone found in Aquitania (CIL XIII 922).<sup>15</sup> Magiatus as veteran settled down in the auxiliary vicus of Lugio and he did not follow his unit when it was transferred to Western Pannonia.

<sup>12</sup> Nagy 1931, 267–271; Visy 2002, 46; Gabler 1997, 85–92, esp. 87.

<sup>13</sup> Schober 1923, 11; Mosser 2003, 20, 153 (from the Flavian period).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the funerary formulas Fitz 1961–1962, 33–48. Based on this fact, the expansions *m(onumentum)* or *m(emoriae)* (without an object as e.g. *titulum*) cannot be excluded either, but they are also unattested in Pannonia.

<sup>15</sup> Villeneuve-sur-Lot/Aginnum *Iul(ius) Attonis fil(ius) / Icco miles ex / cohort(e) Alpinor(um) / I ann(or)um LV stipend(iorum) / XXXV h(ic) s(itus) est / her(e)des pie fec(erunt)*: Saddington 1982, 59, 73; Spaul 2000, 260.

## Appendix 1 – The occurrence of the cognomen Magiatus

CIL XIII 4498 = ILS 4655, Saint-Avold: *Mediomatrici Deae Dironae / Maior Ma/giati filius / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*;  
 CIL XIII 11313, Trier: ... / [---] *Maciatus* / ...;  
 CIL XIII 11453, Fontoy, Fentsch, Mediomatrici: *D(is) [M(anibus)] / Magiatus [---]/nus sibi et Am[mae Ne]/mauso confuigi et Mar]/cello fil(io) p[osuit]*;  
 AE 1933, 118, Bad Cannstatt: *Genio Da/sag(---) Magiatu(s) / et Fla(vius) Senecia/nus d(e) s(uo) p(osuerunt)*.

## Appendix 2 – The home of the soldiers of the *cohortes Alpinorum*

CIL III 6366 = 8491, Caturix;  
 CIL III 8495, Bodionticus;  
 CIL III 9907, Bodionticus;  
 ILJ 115, Eguius;  
 CIL III 14935, Noricus;  
 ILJ 1922, Velaunus [cf. also RIU 1033 (coh. III Lusitanorum)];  
 RIU 1435, Virunum.

## Enrolled in the province where the cohort garrisoned

CIL XVI 104, Azalus;  
 RMD 266, Eraviscus, Vetus Salina;  
 CIL XVI 112, Eraviscus;  
 RIU 1551, Sirmium.

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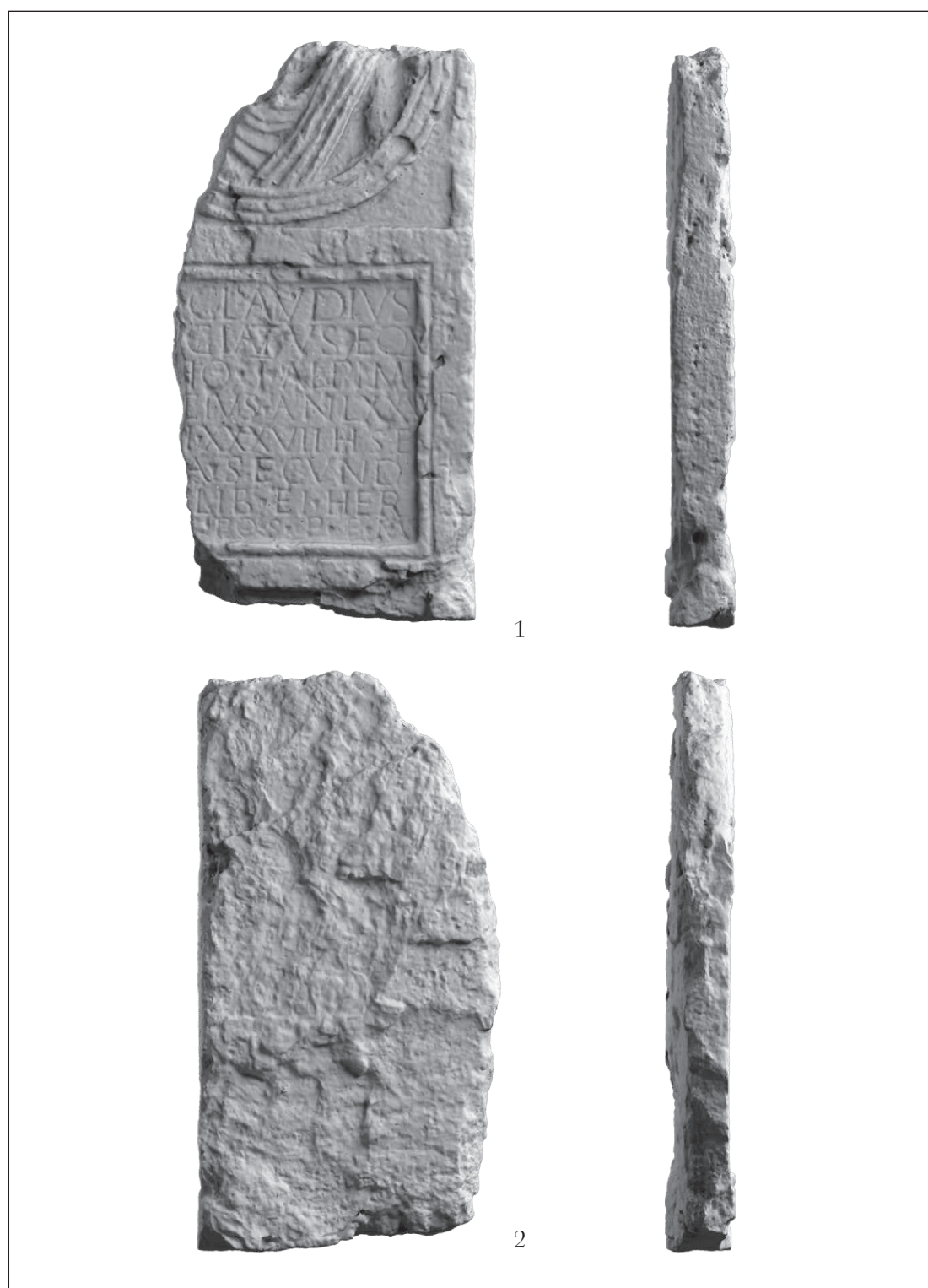
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Pl. I. Roman tombstone from Dunaszekcső. 1. Front view; 2. Back view.



Pl. II. Roman tombstone from Dunaszekcső, detailed view.