

## THE CELTIC GODS IN ROMAN DACIA

Caesar<sup>1</sup> comments that the Gauls were a very religious people. And this is endorsed by the seeming presence of the gods everywhere — in rivers, mountains and in each corner of Celtic territory, as well as by taboos and ritual. A glance at the epigraphic record of the Romano-Celtic period reveals about 400 god-names, over 300 of which occur only<sup>2</sup>.

The influence of Roman religious stimuli on the Celtic world took the form both of physical expression, iconography and epigraphy. The interaction between the multi-functional and more localised gods of the Celts and the more formal Roman pantheon produced a hybrid religious culture which is as fascinating as it is full of problems of interpretation<sup>3</sup>.

Among the ethnical and cultural (religious) elements coming from the Occident, those coming from the territories of Celtic and Celto-Germanic<sup>4</sup> substratum constitute a considerable group, having an important weight in the spreading of the Roman provincial civilization in Dacia.

Focusing on the Roman provincial spirituality, as the epigraphical sources attest, we have reckoned the presence of some Celtic and Germanic<sup>5</sup> deities in the pantheon of Roman Dacia. Conveyanced in the Trajanic province both by military and civilian elements, these cults drew out the Celto-Germanic component of the spiritual background in Roman Dacia. It is important, also, to observe that the weight of the Celto-Germanic cults in the religion<sup>6</sup> of the Dacian province is somehow similar to the place occupied by the Celtic names (more than 70) in the onomastic<sup>7</sup> of Roman Dacia.

*Apollo Grannus* and *Sirona* are Celtic<sup>8</sup> divinities widely spread in Gallia and on the Upper Danube. The couple *Apollo Grannus-Sirona*, one of the very frequently mixed couples<sup>9</sup> met in the "Gallo-Roman"

<sup>1</sup> Caesar, *De bello Gallico*, VI, 16.

<sup>2</sup> M. Green, *The Gods of the Celts*<sup>2</sup>, Gloucester, 1993, p. 12 and 32.

<sup>3</sup> Phyllis Pray Bober puts the problem succinctly in her comment that, on the one hand, the vacuum of Celtic aniconism produced in the Roman period cult-art which was heavily biased toward the classical. On the other hand, it appears that the Romans naively assumed that Celtic gods were Roman ones. Cf. P. P. Bober, in *AJA*, 55, 1951, p. 13—51.

<sup>4</sup> The *Celto-germanic*, composite refers to the Rhenanian ethno-cultural area where Celtic population was mixed with Germans.

<sup>5</sup> M. Macrea, in *AISC*, V, 1944—1948, p. 219—263; A. Huser, *Culte celto-germanice in Dacia*, Universitatea din Cluj, 1986 (in manuscript).

<sup>6</sup> For the synthesis of the religious monuments (inscription + iconographical material), cf. M. Bărbulescu, *Culte greco-romane în provincia Dacia*, Cluj, 1985, *Diss.* (in manuscript).

<sup>7</sup> I. I. Russu, in *L'Onomastique latine. Colloques internationaux du Conseil National de Recherche Scientifique*, no. 564, Paris, 1977, p. 353.

<sup>8</sup> *LexMyth*, I/2, c. 1738—1740, s.v. *Grannus* (Drexel); *LexMyth*, IV, c. 952—957, s.v. *Sirona* (Ihm); *RE*, VII, c. 1823—1827, s.v. *Grannus* (Ihm); *RE*, III, A 5, c. 354—360, s.v. *Sirona* (Keune); J. Toutain, *Les cultes païens dans l'Empire Romain*<sup>2</sup>, III, Roma, 1967, p. 201 sqq.

<sup>9</sup> C. Bémont, in *BCH*, Suppl. XIV, 1986, p. 131 sqq.

religion, had been assimilated in the Roman pantheon as protectors of health. In virtue of its quality to protect the human being-governing the destiny and the wealth- each Celtic divinity might be considered, last of all, as healthful. As R. Bloch observed, *interpretatio Gallica* is extremely supple, leaving the impression that „ces grands dieux représentent des dieux gaulois peut-être très difficiles à préciser, mais surtout qu'ils ont presque tous un caractère protecteur, bienfaisant, comme les divinités des sources... C'est de ce côté-là qu'on peut trouver peut-être l'explication de telle ou telle assimilation, de telle ou telle interprétation“<sup>10</sup>.

An important healer-god, or maybe a number of local curative deities, with cults centred upon the numerous thermal springs, were assimilated to the Roman Apollo, because he himself possessed a healing function. In addition there are a few very prominent Celtic epithets (Belenus, Borvo, Grannus and Moritasgus are the Celtic gods of thermal waters) attached to Apollo's name. A point of particular interest is the association between Celtic healing water-cults and sun, whilst the Roman Apollo possessed also this dual sphere of activity.

We are particularly concerned with Apollo Grannus who had a cult-centre at Grand in the Vosges and another at Aix-la-Chapelle which was called *Aquae Granni*. Significantly Grannus is named *Phoebus* on an inscription from Trier<sup>11</sup>, implying an important solar aspect. Grannus occurs associated with medicinal waters in Brittany, North-East Gaul and far away in the Danube Basin where an early third century temple at Brigetio<sup>12</sup> was dedicated to Apollo Grannus and Sirona, the latter being a female consort of the Celtic healer Apollo especially in the Moselle and Mainz areas. Her parallel role of fertility goddess is indicated by a portrayal of Sirona at Sainte-Fontaine with fruit and corn; at Hochscheid Sirona appears with a snake and bowl of eggs, respective emblems of healing and fertility. Sirona's images show her to have a fertility-role, and we have seen how close the concepts of healing and regeneration seemed to be. Grannus is one of the few Celtic healer-gods to be referred to in Graeco-Roman literature where Dio Cassius remarks that the Emperor Caracalla could not find a cure at the shrines of either Grannus, Aesculapius or Sarapis.

In the capital of Dacia, at Sarmizegetusa, three epigrapha<sup>13</sup> are known which attest the cult of the healer deities Apollo Grannus and Sirona; the worshippers belong to the sphere of the upper imperial officialities.

C. Sempronius Urbanus<sup>14</sup>, *procurator Augusti Daciae Apulensis* between AD 182—185, dedicated eight altara<sup>15</sup>, the greatest number of votive inscriptions from the same person in Dacia. In C. Sempronius Urbanus' personal pantheon three categories of divinities can be acknow-

<sup>10</sup> Idem, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

<sup>11</sup> CIL, XIII, 3635 — ILS, 4647.

<sup>12</sup> M. Szabó, *The Celtic Heritage in Hungary*, Budapest, 1971, p. 66.

<sup>13</sup> CIL, III, 74 = IDR, III/2, 191: Apollini Granno / et Sironae dis prae-sentibus Q(uintus) Axius Aeli- / anus v(ir) e(gregius) proc(urator) Augg(ustorum); I. Piso, in ZPE, 50, 1983, p. 236, no. 3; Apollini / Granno et/ C(aius) Sempronius / Urbanus / proc(urator) Aug(usti); I. Piso, in ZPE, 50, 1983, p. 241, no. 8.

<sup>14</sup> M. Bărbulescu, *Interferențe spirituale în Dacia romană*, Cluj, 1984, p. 154, no. 14.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

ledged: 1) the official ones; 2) ancestral deities — the character being originated from Baetica<sup>16</sup>; 3) deities proper to another provinces, to which the dedicant had been attached himself during the time he spent there. In this last category are to be found also the couple Apollo Grannus — Sirona, brought to Dacia by the treasury officer of higher rank from one of the Celtic provinces where, previously, he occupied another administrative function<sup>17</sup>.

In the case of the other dedicants — Q. Axius Aelianus<sup>18</sup>, *procurator Augusti Daciae Apulensis* between AD 235/236 — 238, and Q. Axius Aelianus iunior<sup>19</sup> — it seems that we have to do with a "hereditary inclination". In order to explain this situation two hypotheses had been advanced: 1) the first, is based on the presumed origin of the financial procurator which, by his name, would be Italic, but his connections with Gallia Narbonensis weren't excluded<sup>20</sup>; it might be said that the preservation of some ancestral beliefs, and the fact that the altar dedicated by Q. Axius Aelianus iunior to Apollo Grannus is in Greek<sup>21</sup> might be explained by the excess of erudition of the dedicant. 2) the ethnical origin of the two dedicants being uncertain, we might think about a similar explanation to the case of C. Sempronius Urbanus, as long as Q. Axius Aelianus, prior to his arrival in Dacia, exercised magistracies in Belgica and Germania<sup>22</sup>.

We make an option for the second interpretation considering that Q. Axius Aelianus worships some other Celtic deities such as Mars Camulus and the couple Mercurius — Rosmerta.

Finally, we can notice the fact that among the believers of the couple Apollo Grannus — Sirona, well known throughout the Empire, we seldom<sup>23</sup> meet characters of higher rank as the dedicants from Sarmizegetusa.

Most interesting is the inscription from Apulum consecrated to *Badonib(us) Reginis*<sup>24</sup>, a unique testimony in the Empire of this collective deity. *Badones Reginae*<sup>25</sup> were framed both by the cults of the Celtic world<sup>26</sup> and the sphere of the Germanic deities<sup>27</sup>. Thus, on the Lower Rhine we find *Baduhennae locus*<sup>28</sup> connected with *Baduhenna*<sup>29</sup>, a Fri-

<sup>16</sup> I. Piso, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

<sup>17</sup> *Idem*, p. 237.

<sup>18</sup> M. Bărbulescu, *Interferențe spirituale...*, p. 156, no. 17.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 18.

<sup>20</sup> I. Piso, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>21</sup> *Idem*, *op. cit.*, p. 241, no. 8, pl. XIV, fig. 8.

<sup>22</sup> CIL, III, 1456 = ILS, 1371 = IDR, III/2, 89 (Sarmizegetusa). Concerning Q. Axius Aelianus' career, see A. Stein, *Die Reichsbeamten von Dazien*, Budapest, 1944, p. 71 and H. G. Pflaum, *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le Haut Empire Romain*, II, Paris, 1960, p. 851—854.

<sup>23</sup> CIL, XIII, 8007 = ILS, 1195 (Germania); CIL, VII, 1082 = ILS, 4646 (Britannia); 1968, 230 (Hispania Tarraconensis).

<sup>24</sup> JÖAI, III, 1900, p. 186 = ILS, 9335 = V. Wollmann, *Germania*, 53, 1975, p. 172: *Badonib(us) / Reginis / Sextia Au- / gustina / ex voto*.

<sup>25</sup> RE, II, 1, c. 472—474, s.v. *Regina* (Stech); *TransAnt*<sup>3</sup>, p. 154.

<sup>26</sup> A. Holder, *Altceltischer Sprachscatz*, I, Leipzig, 1896, c. 788; S. Sanie, in *SCIV*, 21, 2, 1970, p. 295—298.

<sup>27</sup> V. Wollmann, *loc. cit.*

<sup>28</sup> Tacitus, *Annales*, IV, 73.

<sup>29</sup> M. Schönfeld, *Wörterbuch der Altgermanischen Personen- und Völkernamen*, Heidelberg, 1911, p. 40.

sian goddess. In the same geographic and ethno-cultural area are also attested *Matronae Boudunnehae*<sup>30</sup>.

Concerning the dedicant from Apulum, we can certify only the fact that *Sextia Augustina* is epigraphically mentioned for the first time. In this respect, the motivation of the religious act might be determined by the maintaining of the ancestral beliefs in the religious consciousness of the dedicant.

In the metropolis of Dacia, *Sarmizegetusa*<sup>31</sup>, *Campestres*<sup>32</sup> — the protectresses of the soldiers and, mostly, of the battlefield — are worshipped associated with *Epona*, another deity endeared by the soldiers. The occupation of the dedicant *M. Calventius Viator, exerc(itor) eq(uitum) sing(ularium)* explains its predilection for the military deities from the sphere of the cavalry, studs and the training battlefield, as the mentioning of the governor *C. Avidius Nigrinus*<sup>33</sup>, in the text of the inscription allows its dating between AD 110/112 — 114.

The stag-horned god *Cernunnos*<sup>34</sup>, one of the "great gods"<sup>35</sup> of the Celts, is known in Dacia from two testimonies, one of them calling him *Iupiter Cernenus* — name met nowhere also in the Empire. In the Roman epoch, *Cernunnos* — lord of beasts and fecundity — mostly occurs in the posture of a patron of prosperity and of trade. However, the stag-antlered *Cernunnos* also had funeral attributions, not only as a protector of the tombs, but also as a *psychopompos* god<sup>36</sup>.

Representing an *exemplum edicti de tollendo collegia funeraticio* from 9<sup>th</sup> of February AD 167, the *tabula cerata* from *Alburnus Maior*<sup>37</sup> is the unique attestation of *Iupiter Cernenus*<sup>38</sup> in the Empire. At *Alburnus Maior*, the syncretist<sup>39</sup> divinity born from the contamination between Roman *Iupiter* and Celtic *Cernunnos* appears in the posture of a patron protecting a funeral *collegium*, in front of which were *Artemidorus Apollini, magister, Valerius Niconis* and *Offas Menofili, quaestores*, who have Greek-Oriental names and the status of *peregrini*.

The deity represented on an altar without inscription found at *Sucidava*<sup>40</sup> was identified with *Cernunnos* in his tricephal appearance. The inedited aspects of *Cernunnos*' image from *Sucidava* are the two

<sup>30</sup> G. Ristow, in *Römer am Rhein*, Köln, 1967, p. 164 sq., Kat. A, 102, 103.

<sup>31</sup> CIL, III, 7904 = ILS, 2417 = IDR, III/2, 205: *Egonab(us) et / Campestris(us) / sacr(um) / M(arcus) Calventius / Viator (centurio) leg(ionis) III F(laviae) F(elicis) / exerc(itor) eq(uitum) sing(ularium) / C(ai) Avidi Nigrini / leg(ati) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(actore) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

<sup>32</sup> *LexMyth.* I/1, c. 849—850, s.v. *Campestres* (Steuding); RE, III, c. 1444—1445, s.v. *Campestres* (Ihm); A. von Domaszewski, *Die Religion des römischen Heeres*, Trier, 1985, p. 50 sqq.

<sup>33</sup> I. Piso, in *Tituli*, 4, Roma, 1982, p. 384.

<sup>34</sup> *LexMyth.* I/1, c. 866—867, s.v. *Cernunnos* (Steuding). P.P. Bober, *Cernunnos*, art. cit. (cf. *supra*, n. 2).

<sup>35</sup> F. Drexel, in *BerRGK*, 14, 1922 (1923), p. 18.

<sup>36</sup> S. Reinach, *Répertoire de Reliefs Grecs et Romains*, Paris, I, 1909, p. 150; Fr. Cumont, *Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains*, Paris, 1942, p. 154.

<sup>37</sup> CIL, III, p. 924—927 = IDR, I, *TabCerD* I.

<sup>38</sup> RE, III, c. 1948, s.v. *Cernunnos* (Mowat).

<sup>39</sup> An analogous case is known in Pannonia where *Teutates* is worshipped as *IOM Teutanus*, cf. G. Alföldy, in *ActaAnt.*, VIII, 1960, p. 158.

<sup>40</sup> S. Sanie, in *AIIAI*, XXI, 1984, p. 363—368.

heads<sup>41</sup> held by the god, protecting them. Owing to the two dolphins on the lateral surface of the monument, the deity from Sucidava was interpreted as a *psychopompos* god<sup>42</sup>. Thus, the funeral attributes of Cernunnos, well known in Gallia, attested also in Dacia by the inscription from Alburnus Maior, are confirmed by the figurative monument from Sucidava.

Epona<sup>43</sup> is first and foremost a patroness of horses<sup>44</sup>; her Celtic name is etimologically linked with the horses, and she invariably appears riding side-saddle or in company with horses and/or foals. Her attributes are the same as the mothers -*cornuacopiae*, fruits and corn. R. Magnen and E. Thevenot describe her as a specialist mother presiding over Gaul's most important beast<sup>45</sup>. The great majority of monuments show Epona to have been worshipped in rural, domestic contexts<sup>46</sup>. However, the fact that the Celtic horse-deity was female is significant.

Conveyanced, mostly, by the auxiliary troops<sup>47</sup> recruited among the Celts, the cult of Epona (the Celtic horse-goddess offered protection both for the cavalryman himself and his horse) acknowledges a wide spreading in the Empire, from Britannia to Dacia where it is attested by six inscriptions and two unepigraphical reliefs.

The great majority (4) of Dacian inscriptions stems from Apulum<sup>48</sup>, being discovered in the consular governor's *praetorium*, more precisely in the stables<sup>49</sup>. Here, as dedicants, are mentioned M. Aurelius Marcus<sup>50</sup>, *(agens) v(ice) p(raesidis)*, who consecrates an altar to *Epona Augusta pro salute dd(ominorum) nn(ostorum) Galli et Volusiani*; and Libella<sup>51</sup>, *superiumentarius*, who devotes an altar to *Epona Sancta* to the health of his master, the consular governor C. Iulius Septimius Castinus (AD 214/215 — 216).

<sup>41</sup> Concerning the numerous significations of the head as *pars pro toto*, see P. Lambrechts, *L'exaltation de la tête dans la pensée et l'art des Celtes*, Bruges, 1954, *passim*. As Lambrechts so rightly points out here we may the concept of resurrection in the underworld, and the transference of regeneration from this world to the otherworld.

<sup>42</sup> S. Sanie, *op. cit.*, p. 367.

<sup>43</sup> *LexMyth*, I/1, c. 1286—1293, s.v. *Epona* (Peter); *RE*, VI, c. 228—243, s.v. *Epona* (Keune); R. Magnen, E. Thevenot, *Epona, déesse gauloise des chevaux, protectrice des Cavaliers*, Bordeaux, 1953; P. Lambrechts in *L'Antiquité Classique*, 19, 1950, p. 103—112.

<sup>44</sup> Horses, quite clearly, had a very special significance for the Celts. They were revered for themselves in terms of fertility, sexual vigour, warfare, restige and for economic use.

<sup>45</sup> R. Magnen, E. Thevenot, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>46</sup> In a recent study about the Epona-cult (*Epona: A Celt among the Romans*, in *Latomus*, 38, 1979, fasc. 4, p. 817—837), K. Linduff is of the opinion that Epona was specifically concerned with the craft of horse-breeding and was associated with the qualities of the domestic, pastured beast where the protection and fertility of the horse itself is clearly emphasised on iconography, for instance where mares and foals are depicted.

<sup>47</sup> G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, München, 1902, p. 77.

<sup>48</sup> *CIL*, III, 7750; B. Cserni, in *ATE*, XII, 1903 — A. Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 72 — I. Piso, in *ZPE*, 50, 1983, p. 249; B. Cserni, in *ATE*, XIV, 1908, p. 45 — A. Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 65; inedited inscription, through Prof. I. Piso's kindness.

<sup>49</sup> Al. Diaconescu, I. Piso, in *Actus du Ier Colloque Roumano-Suisse* (Deva, 21—26 octobre 1991), Cluj, 1993, p. 73.

<sup>50</sup> I. Piso, in Tituli, 4, 1982, p. 394; idem, in *ZPE*, 50, 1983, p. 249 sq.

<sup>51</sup> B. Cserni, in *ATE*, XIV, 1908, p. 45 — A. Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

*Augusta, Regina* and *Sancta*, the epithets with the goddess is honoured at Apulum, are specific to Epona and frequently meet in the Roman world. It is also natural to associate Epona with the Campestres deities on the inscription from Sarmizegetusa (cf. *supra*).

At Ilişua<sup>52</sup>, Epona is worshipped by the entire cavalry troop *-ala Tungrorum Frontoniana* — an analogous case with that of Pföding<sup>53</sup>, where an entire unit put itself under the protection of the Campestres divinities.

The image (*kultbild*) of Epona is also well known in Dacia. Epona's image represented on a unepigraphical relief from Tibiscum<sup>54</sup> belongs to the Greek-Roman iconographical type<sup>55</sup>, alike the *ex voto* from Războieni-Cetate<sup>56</sup> dedicated by Aurelius Occonius Quetianus.

Excepting M. Aurelius Marcus — higher character of equestrian rank —, the dedicants belong to the fervent worshippers of Epona: a cavalry troop; a legionary *centurio, exerc. eq. sing.*; a slave, *superiumentarius* etc.

The syncretist deity of Batavian origin, *Hercules Magusanus*<sup>57</sup>, the soldiers' protector, was mainly worshipped in Germania Inferior (12 inscriptions)<sup>58</sup>. Outside its birth place, Hercules Magusanus is attested only by six inscriptions, among which two come from Dacia.

*Deus Invictus Hercules Magusanus* worshipped at Ciumăfaia<sup>59</sup>, illustrates one of the most rare, strictly speaking, syncretism known in Dacia. Hercules Magusanus gets, in this singular case the *epitheton Deus Invictus* which seems to indicate a contamination with Mithras<sup>60</sup>. The dedicant, P. Aelius Maximus, influential character in Napoca — *ex Ilvir quinquennalis et flamen*, become *sacerdos Arae Augusti coronatus Dacia-rum III* and *decurio coloniae* at Apulum or Potaissa<sup>61</sup> — might be considered one of the most fervent worshippers of the Germanic deities in Dacia. This unusual predilection might be explained<sup>62</sup> by the fact that P. Aelius Maximus in the time of the equestrian *militiae*, somewhere on the Lower Rhine, approached himself to the Germanic deities (Hercules Magusanus, Gesahenae) worshipping them even after he returned to Dacia.

From the *castrum* of Gherla<sup>63</sup> comes the second epigraphical evidence of Hercules Magusanus, honoured by Aurelius Tato, *stator alae II Panno-*

<sup>52</sup> CIL, III, 788 — V. Wollmann, in *Germania*, 53, 1975, p. 168.

<sup>53</sup> CIL, XIII, 7725.

<sup>54</sup> D. Isac, I. Stratan, in *Banatica*, II, 1973, p. 122 sq.

<sup>55</sup> F. Drexe<sup>l</sup>, in *BerRGK*, 14, 1922 (1923), p. 38; *Römer am Rhein*, Köln, 1967, p. 162, Kat. A 92, Tafel 41.

<sup>56</sup> C. Băluță, in *SCIVA*, 41, 1, 1990, p. 83—85.

<sup>57</sup> *RE*, VIII, c. 611, s.v. *Hercules Magusanus* (Haug); *RE*, XV, c. 521, s.v. *Magusanus* (Heichelheim); *LexMyth*, I/2, c. 3018—3020, s.v. *Hercules Magusanus* (Peter).

<sup>58</sup> M. Jaczynowska, in *Arheoloski Vestnik*, 28, 1977, p. 412—420.

<sup>59</sup> A. Buday, in *Dolg*, II, 1911, p. 266—268, no. 6 — *ArchAnz*, 1912, p. 529 — *AISC*, V, 1944—1948, p. 227 — *Germania*, 53, 1975, p. 173 — *AnnEp*, 1977, 702: *Deo Invicto Herculi / Magusano / pro salute sua et suorum / P(ublius) Ael(ius) Maximus a mil(itiis) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

<sup>60</sup> M. Bărbulescu, in *ActaMN*, XIV, 1978, p. 231. Concerning the dedicant, see idem, *Interferențe spirituale...*, p. 154, no. 13.

<sup>61</sup> I. Piso, in *Potaissa*, II, 1980, p. 127.

<sup>62</sup> M. Macrea, in *AISC*, V, 1944—1948, p. 231 sq.

<sup>63</sup> *AISC*, V, 1944—1948, p. 232 — *Germania*, 53, 1975, p. 172 — *AnnEp*, 1977, 504: *Herculi Magusano / Aur(elius) Tato st- / ator al(ae) II / Pann(oniorum) v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

niorum. In this case, it seems that we have to do with a faithful believer of his homeland god.

*Mars Camulus*<sup>64</sup> — a warrior-deity originated in the land of the Remi<sup>65</sup> — is known only by a few inscriptions<sup>66</sup> from the zones populated by Remi and Treveri, to which three epigraphs<sup>67</sup>, discovered in Britannia, Dacia and Rome, are added.

What the Romans may have met in Celtic lands are tribal protector-gods with a war-role. In some cases Celtic epithets describe a war/victory or a kingly function for the native Mars; thus *Caturix* means "Master of fighting", *Camulus* — "powerful", *Segomo* — "victorious", *Rigisamus* — "greatest king" and *Albiorix* — "King of the world"<sup>68</sup>. Other Mars-epithets describe non-warlike aspects of the cult. However, sometimes Mars becomes very strange in a Celtic context. For instance, in Gaul the Roman war-god Mars became transformed to become a peaceful healer<sup>69</sup>, and the Celtic Mars is often associated with sacred waters. Lastly, in Gaul Mars too had a fertility role<sup>70</sup>, probably from his original Italian function as an agricultural and storm-god.

At Sarmizegetusa<sup>71</sup>, *Mars Camulus* appears associated with *Invictus* *Mithras*, *Mercurius* and *Rosmerta*. If the worshipp of *Mars Camulus* in the company of some other deities of the same origin (*Mercurius* and *Rosmerta*) is very natural, one can't say the same about the occurrence of *Mithras* on the monument from Sarmizegetusa. Here, as at Ciumăfaia, the presence of *Mithras* in association with Celto-Germanic deities might be explained by the pressure of the Oriental cults, reality also illustrated by the "orientalizing" taste of the epoch<sup>72</sup>.

It is important, also, to observe that the monument from Sarmizegetusa is the unique epigraphical evidence of the couple *Mercurius-Rosmerta* — worshipped almost exclusively among the Treveri of the Moselle area — outside its native-place. The Roman fertility/prosperity facet to *Mercurius'* cult may have struck a chord in Celtic belief<sup>73</sup>. *Mercurius* possesses a Celtic apouse, *Rosmerta* — "The Good Purveyor" —, who enhances *Mercurius'* Celtic fertility-function; she adopts his attributes of *caduceus* and purse. *Rosmerta* — a version of the Celtic fertility

<sup>64</sup> *LexMyth*, I/1, c. 850, s.v. *Camulus* (Steuding); J. Lindsay, in *Latomus*, 20, 1961, p. 731—743. Concerning the Gallo-Roman Mars, see P. Lambrechts, *Contributions à l'étude des divinités celtiques*, Bruges, 1942 p. 126—131, 142—145 and E. Thevenot, *Sur les traces des Mars celtiques (entre Loire et Mont-Blanc)*, Bruges, 1995.

<sup>65</sup> H. Merten, in *Trierer Zeitschrift*, 48, 1995, p. 99. Concerning the Treveri spreading into the Roman world, see J. Krier, *Die Treverer ausserhalb ihrer Civitas*, Trier, 1981.

<sup>66</sup> CIL, XIII, 8671; CIL, XIII, 8701 — *ILS*, 235; CIL, XIII, 11818.

<sup>67</sup> CIL, VII, 1103 — *RIB*, 2166; CIL, VI, 46 — *ILS*, 4632.

<sup>68</sup> P. — M. Duval, *Les dieux de la Gaule*<sup>4</sup>, Paris, 1993, p. 71.

<sup>69</sup> M. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

<sup>70</sup> Idem, *op. cit.*, p. 36 and 98.

<sup>71</sup> H. Daicoviciu, D. Alicu, *Colonia Ulpia Traiana Augusta Dacica Sarmizegetusa*, București, 1984, p. 181: *Invicto* / *Mithrae* / *Marti Camulo* / *Mercurio* / *Rosmerta* *Q*(uintus) *A*xius *A*elianus *v*(ir) *e*(gregius) / *proc*(urator) *A*ug(usti) *I*oni(us).

<sup>72</sup> M. Bărbulescu, *Interferențe spirituale...*, p. 134, 180.

<sup>73</sup> Concerning the Gallo-Roman *Mercurius*, see P. Lambrechts, *Contributions...* (1942), p. 121—125, 135—142, 148—156 and P.M. Duval, *op. cit.*, p. 69—71, 110. Concerning the Treveran couple *Mercurius-Rosmerta*, see C. Bémont, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

goddess — frequently appears with a basket of fruit or Mercurius' purse and it is apparent that the trading function of the Roman god is here adapted to a Celtic context. Likewise, the association between Mercurius and the Mothers goddesses, for instance at Cirencester or in the Rhineland, is significant. This link with Mercurius makes sense in the context of his role as commercial/prosperity god and it is a small step from there to see him as adopted by the Celts as a general god of well-being.

During the Roman period the Celtic Mother Goddesses (*Deae Matres*, *Matrae*, *Matronae*)<sup>74</sup> — whose role was essentially concerned with procreation, well-being and prosperity — occurs in the shape of protectresses of individuals, families and even of whole communities. The *Deae Matres* — personification of the idea of maternity — ensured the fertility and prosperity. Good and generous, this well-wishing goddesses can be invoked in any situation. The triple<sup>75</sup> Mothers or *Deae Matres* / *Matronae* were worshipped as domestic, private deities, as is evidenced in Pannonia<sup>76</sup> by quantities of pipe-clay and lead figurines. The iconography of the three Mothers gives us valuable information as to how they were looked upon by their devotees. The commonest attributes are children, baskets of fruit, *cornuacopiae*, dogs, loaves, fish, *paterae* and other symbols of human or earthly prosperity. Images of a goddess associated with life and abundance are physical manifestations of a community endeavouring to control the behaviour of the seasons and to appease the forces who imposed the cycle of life and death. The *Deae Matres* had a complex and varied series of roles. All Celtic female deities were associated with the reproductive cycle and prosperity<sup>77</sup>. Life and death, war, maternity, good-luck and prosperity all come within their sphere of responsibility. In the Celtic lands the triple Mothers had as principal sphere the maternity and prosperity. Likewise the underworld is indicated by the sepulchral context of some mothers and perhaps the animal-symbolism of the dog<sup>78</sup> and the crow. But the main image projected is that of the fecundity and well-being of human beings, beasts and the earth. The *Matres* cult is especially interesting because of its evidence for the popularity of a relatively homogeneous and widespread Celtic cult. Inscriptions demonstrate that the cult was popular throughout the Roman period and devotees of the mother-goddesses were setting up altars from the time of Caligula (AD 37—41) to that of Gordian (AD 238—244). Perhaps of most interest is that the cult appealed not only to women but to soldiers, merchants and even Roman officials.

The pantheon of Dacia comprises both Celtic *Matronae* (*Dominae*) and Germanic<sup>79</sup> ones (*Gesahenae*).

<sup>74</sup> *LexMyth*, II/2, c. 2464—2479, s.v. *Matres*, *Matronae*, *Matrae* (Ihm); *RE*, XIV, c. 2213—2250, s.v. *Matres* (Heichelheim); *Matronen und verwandte Gottheiten*, in *Beihfte der Bonner Jahrbücher*, 44, 1987, p. 1—254.

<sup>75</sup> Triplism as a basic phenomenon of Celtic religion is discussed in detail by M. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 208—211.

<sup>76</sup> M. Szabó, *op. cit.*, p. 65 sq.

<sup>77</sup> B. W. Cunliffe, *The Celtic World*, 1979, p. 74.

<sup>78</sup> But the dog may also represent healing as in the classical imagery of Aesculapius.

<sup>79</sup> The Rhineland mother-goddesses are distinguished by the number — and outlandish nature — of their epithets.



At Apulum<sup>80</sup> the *Dominæ* deities are shown as protecting a craftsman, that being one of the *Matronæ*'s proper shape. The devotee, *Mestrius Martinus, pictor*, belonged, doubtless, to the "elite" of the artists-craftsmen, as long as he offered himself to set up *pecunia sua* a *fanum* having as destination the cult of the *Dominæ*.

The *Matronæ Gesahenæ*<sup>81</sup> appears frequently on the Lower Rhine where are sometimes associated with the *Ettrahenæ*<sup>82</sup>. The monument from Napoca<sup>83</sup> reveals P. Aelius Maximus' predilection for the Germanic deities, presenting us, in the same time, the entire career of the dedicant.

The *Quadriviae*<sup>84</sup> belong to the sphere of the Celtic protecting deities of the roads and travellers. The dedications for these "policewomen" named *Biviae*, *Triviae* and *Quadriviae* are, usually, small altars set up at the road-crossings, a custom perpetuated in the Middle Ages.

In Dacia the great majority of the dedications come from Apulum where the *Quadriviae* deities are worshipped by L. Gallius Caminas<sup>85</sup>, *decurio coloniae Sarmizegetusae*, Flavia Pulchra<sup>86</sup> and Cornelia Daphnis<sup>87</sup>. The devotee from Sarmizegetusa, T. Claudius Anicetus<sup>88</sup> is the unique *augustalis* known among the believers of the divinities protecting road-crossings. Finally, an altar which might not come from Dacia is consecrated to *Trivis Quadrivis*<sup>89</sup>.

Derivating from an *epitheton* of the *Matronæ*, *Suleviae*<sup>90</sup> are collective deities having more "specialized" attributions<sup>91</sup>.

At Apulum<sup>92</sup> the *Suleviae* deities are honoured by Flavius Attalus, a *libertus* who wears a Celtic *cognomen*. Likewise, Titus Iulius, *lapidarius*, consecrated a monument to the same divinities naming them with the epithet *Montanae -Sul(eyis) Mont(anis)*<sup>93</sup>. From the description of the

<sup>80</sup> CIL, III, 1005: *Mestrius Martinus / pictor constituit / pro salute sua et / suorum / fanum Dominar(um)*.

<sup>81</sup> M. Schönfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 106; G. Neumann, in *Matronen und verwandte Gottheiten*, 1987, p. 116.

<sup>82</sup> CIL, XIII, 7890, 7895.

<sup>83</sup> M. Macrea, in *AISC*, V, 1944—1948, p. 249—254 — *AnnEp*, 1971, 395 — I. Piso, in *Potăissa*, II, 1980, p. 125—127: *Gesahenis pro / se et suis / Publius Ael(ius) Maxi- / mus Iivir q(uin)q(uennalis) et fla- / men col(oniae) Nap(ocensis) a militi(is) / sacerdos arae Aug(usti) n(ostri) / coronat(us) Dac(iarum) III dec(urio) col(oniae) / . . . . s.*

<sup>84</sup> *LexMyth*, IV, c. 1—7, s.v. *Quadriviae* (Ihm); G. Wissowa, *op. cit.*, p. 148; P.-M. Duval, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>85</sup> Indited inscription, through Prof. I. Piso's kindness.

<sup>86</sup> CIL, III, 1140: *Quadri- / vi(is) sacr(um) / Fl(avia) Pulchra / pro se et su(is) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

<sup>87</sup> E. Zefleanu, in *Apulum*, II, 1943—1945, p. 101: *Quadru- / vi(is) aram / Cornelia / Daphnis / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibente) a(nimo) m(erito)*.

<sup>88</sup> CIL, III, 1440 — *IDR*, III/2, 330: *Quadrid(is) / Cl(audius) Anice- / tus aug(ustalis) c(oloniae) / Sarmiz(egetusae) / metrop(olis) / ex voto*.

<sup>89</sup> CIL, III, 8045, (*Daciae incertae*): *Philistio / Trivis / Quadr(ivis) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

<sup>90</sup> *LexMyth*, IV, c. 1592—1600, s.v. *Suleviae* (Ihm); S. Gutenbrunner, *Die germanischen Götternamen der antiken Inschriften*, Halle, 1936, p. 19; P.-M. Duval, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>91</sup> On the other hand, the *Suleviae* are linked with healing and the sun, cf. M. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>92</sup> CIL, III, 1156: *Sule(viis) / Fl(avius) Atta- / lus votum / l(ibens) s(olvit)*.

<sup>93</sup> CIL, III, 1601: *Sul(eyis) Mont(anis) / T(itus) Iulius lapid(arius) v(otum) l(ibens) s(olvit)*.

relief which attends the inscription we find out that there were represented two feminine figures, one of them carving<sup>94</sup>. In this case, the Suleviae occur in the shape of geniuses of the carvers<sup>95</sup>. An analogous situation can be met in Britannia where the most fervent worshipper of the Suleviae was the sculptor Sulinus<sup>96</sup>, son of Brucetus who set up shrines to the Suleviae in Bath and Cirencester.

Thus, presently in Dacia are attested 13 Celtic and Celto-Germanic deities on the basis of 27 monuments (24 epigraphical and 3 figurative). With one single exception (the unepigraphical altar from Sucidava), all these monuments were found in the Carpathian Dacia as follows: Apulum (11), Sarmizegetusa (7), Napoca (1), Ciomăfaia (1), Gherla (1), Ilișua (1), Răboieni-Cetate (1), Alburnus Maior (1), Tibiscum (1), Dacia incertae (1).

In Dacia, the devotees of the Celto-Germanic deities belong to all social strata. Most of them (6) belong to the equestrian order, three of them being characters of higher rank — C. Sempronius Urbanus, Q. Axius Aelianus and M. Aurelius Marcus. Among the dedicants we find soldiers — M. Calventius Viator and Aurelius Tato; at Ilișua, the religious act is carried out in the name of the entire troop (*ala Tungrorum*). In two of the cases, artists-craftsmen (Mestrius Martinus, *pictor*; Titus Iulius, *lapidarius*) and *liberti* (Flavius Attalus, T. Claudius Anicetus) are attested among the worshippers of the Celtic deities. Only once, among the devotees a slave appears — Libella, *superintendentarius*. Finally, at Apulum the women — Sextia Augustina, Flavia Pulchra and Cornelia Daphnis — occur as dedicants.

Although there aren't in Dacia too numerous evidences of the Celto-Germanic beliefs, the different position of the Trajanic province, placed at the cross-roads of the spiritual influences coming both from the Occident and the Orient, is reflected by some of the particularities of these cults in Carpathian Dacia. For instance, Hercules Magusanus on the altar from Ciomăfaia is named *Deus Invictus* as a consequence of a contamination with Mithras. We believe that is clearly framing the measure into which the antique religiosity was possible to be moulded considering the territorial and ethnical configurations.

Finally, the question of the Galatian divinities<sup>97</sup> remains yet unclear — *IOM Bussumarus*, *IOM Bussurigi* and *IOM Tavianus* — known from six dedications, out of which five come from Apulum and one from Napoca. It is important, also, to observe that these votive inscriptions frequently set up the unique written testimonies of the respective deity in the Empire: the case of Bussumarus and Tavianus; Bussurigi is attested by a inscription in Galatia and one in Dacia. We don't know in what measure these deities kept their original nature — as long as the devotees attested in Dacia wear, all of them, Greek-Oriental names —, but it was found out that the Gauls from Asia Minor preserved ancestral institutions and spoke a language related to the dialect of the Treveri<sup>98</sup>.

However, the presence of the Celto-Germanic gods, as well as the Celtic anthroponyms, the auxiliary units which wear a Celtic or Germanic ethnicon and the elements of the material culture, clearly frame out the Celto-Germanic ethno-cultural horizon in Roman Dacia.

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<sup>94</sup> CIL, III, p. 1015.

<sup>95</sup> M. Macrea, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

<sup>96</sup> *EE*, IX, 998 — *RIB*, 105 (Corinium Dobunorum); CIL, VII, 37 — *RIB*, 151 (*Aquae Sulis*).

<sup>97</sup> Al. Popa, I. Berciu, in *In memoriam Constantini Daicoviciu*, 1974, p. 315—324.

<sup>98</sup> D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor*, Princeton, 1950, p. 453 sq.