

## THE OWNER OF THE GREAVE AG 711 FROM THE AXEL GUTTMAN COLLECTION

Among the considerable number of Roman “sports” armours of the renowned Axel Guttman Collection from Berlin, published lately, there are two plain and one decorated greaves<sup>1</sup>.

The brass greave Inv. No. AG 711 is decorated with embossed motifs: Mars standing on a cloud above a Capricorn flanked by two snakes<sup>2</sup>.

A punched inscription running upwards is placed in the two zones left between one long edge of the piece and the curlings of the corresponding snake (fig. 1)<sup>3</sup>.



Fig. 1. The inscription on the greave AG 711 (after Born and Junkelman)

The inscription was read by K. Dietz ICTO (or ISTO)RINDI. It was thought to be the rest of the unidentified names of two different owners and thus it was considered to represent in fact two inscriptions<sup>4</sup>.

However, it is obvious that the correct reading of the inscription is: VICTORI(s) MO(desti) or (-derati).

The same name Victor Modestus or Moderatus appears on the triple chamfron-plate no. 6 from the Eining Hoard, which has not less than six or seven owner inscriptions<sup>5</sup>. On the Eining chamfron-plate the inscription of Victor Modestus/Moderatus, which is certainly complete, is: T. VIC MODE; and it was correctly read Turma Victoris Mode(sti) or (-rati).

The missing lower end of the greave AG 711 was just as large as to allow the writing of the letter T for *turma* in front of the name of Victor Mo(destus/deratus). So one cannot know if the inscription on this object is complete and consequently there are two possible readings of it. In case this inscription is complete, it means that Victor Mo(destus/deratus), who had not reached the rank of a *decurio*, was the proper owner of the

<sup>1</sup> H. Born and M. Junkelmann, *Römische Kampf- und Turnierrüstungen, Sammlung Axel Guttman VI*, Mainz 1997, 114-131, pls. XV-XVI, figs. 81-83.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, 114-126, pl. XVI, fig. 81.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, fig. 81.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, 126-127.

<sup>5</sup> H.- J. Kellner, *Der römische Verwahrfund von Eining*, Münchner Beiträge zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte 29, München 1978, 20-22, pls. 28, 30/3.

greave. Alternatively, if one has to complete the inscription with a T, it results that, the same as for the Eining chamfron-plate, the unknown owner of the item was enlisted in the turma of Victor Mo(destus/deratus). In this situation, it is probable that the name of the owner of the greave was written on another piece of armour, the knee-guard or the other greave.

I think that, complete or not, the inscription on the greave AG 711 refers to the same person as the one on the chamfron-plate no. 6 from the Eining hoard. If my supposition is correct, it results that the greave AG 711 should originate in Eining and not in an unknown site of the Danubian region, perhaps Carnuntum, as Born ascertains<sup>6</sup>. It is even most likely that the greave was part of the famous hoard from Eining and that the landowner who found it did not report its discovery for financial reasons.

The accepting of this assumption implies that the Eining hoard was not recovered and published in its entirety and probably more pieces belonging to it came into the antiquarian trade as unprovenanced items. Anyway, the decorated greave AG 711 suits very well with the rest of the contents of the Eining hoard and fills the existing gap in its range of cavalry "sports" armour.

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<sup>6</sup>H. Born and M. Junkelmann, *op. cit.*, 114, 125.