ANGVSTIA 27, 2023

ANGVSTIA
27

Revista
Muzeului Național al Carpaților Răsăriteni

Editura ANGVSTIA
Sf. Gheorghe
2023

Orice corespondenţă se va trimite pe adresa:
Please send any mail to the following address:

MUZEUL NAȚIONAL AL CARPAȚILOR RĂSĂRITENI
Sfântu Gheorghe, Str. Gábor Áron nr. 16
520008, jud. Covasna
Telefon/fax: +40 267 314139

e-mail: secretariat@mncr.ro
web: angvstia.mncr.ro

ISSN 2602 – 0653

ISSN-L 1454 – 8275

Cuprins – Table of Contents

DOI: 10.36935/ang.v27.5 *ANGVSTIA 27, 2023, pag. 113–132*

Nunc decet caput
professoris Piotr Dyczek
impedire myrto

The excavation in the Roman *castellum* of Énlaka/Inlăceni in 2022-2023

Cercetări arheologice din castrul roman de la Énlaka/Inlăceni în 2022-2023

VISY Zsolt[1]

Keywords: Roman limes, castellum, porta praetoria, porta principalis dextra, gate towers, defensive trenches
Cuvinte cheie: Limesul roman, castellum, porta praetoria, porta principalis dextra, turn de poartă, șanț de protecție

ABSTRACT

Previous results were to determine the full extent and warehouse wing of the principia, followed by the eastern, northern and southern vallum trimming in 2016, 2019 and 2021. The purpose of the excavations was also to verify or refute the three- and four-period defensive works assumed by Komp. The 2022 excavation did not confirm his complicated periodization.

The wall of the stone fort runs further north of the northern gate tower of the porta praetoria, based on previous surveys and geophysical surveys. The cause of this phenomenon was the slipping of the clay soil. The porta praetoria had two phases. For the first time, in 149, it was built without gate towers or only with not identifiable inner towers, the known towers were erected only at the time of repair and renovation at the beginning of the 3rd century. On the south side of the gate tower, a detail of the via praetoria was unearthed. The protective trench had three periods. The innermost one extends also under the stone foundation of the castellum, so this was the trench of the palisade camp. The II and III defensive trenches belonged to the stone-walled fortress. The pushing of the axis of trench III by one and a half meters out is a consequence of the fact that the wall of the tower jumped out of the former wall plane. Trench II can be linked to the stone fort in 149 and Trench III to the fort restored at the beginning of the third century, presumably during the time of Caracalla, when the gate towers were built.

The main purpose of the excavation in 2023 was to fully excavate the porta principalis dextra. Both gate towers and the demolished former wall were excavated. Again, it appeared that the gate towers were built later, based on a building inscription found earlier, at the time of Caracalla. The trenches of both phases of the stone fortress were narrowed in the lane of the via principalis to facilitate passage over them.

REZUMAT

Rezultatele anterioare au fost pentru a determina amploarea completă și aripa de depozitare a principiei, urmată de tăierea vallumului estic, nordic și sudic în 2016, 2019 și 2021. Scopul săpăturilor a fost, de asemenea, de a verifica sau infirma lucrările defensive de trei și patru perioade asumate de Komp. Săpătura din 2022 nu i-a confirmat perioada complicată. Zidul fortului de piatră se întinde mai la nord de turnul porții

1 Professor emeritus of University of Pécs, Department of Archaeology, visy.zsolt@pte.hu.

nordice a portei praetoria, pe baza unor studii anterioare și a unor studii geofizice. Cauza acestui fenomen a fost alunecarea solului argilos. Porta praetoria a avut două faze. Pentru prima dată, în 149, a fost construit fără turnuri de poartă sau numai cu turnuri interioare neidentificabile, turnurile cunoscute au fost ridicate numai la momentul reparației și renovării la începutul secolului al 3-lea. Pe latura de sud a turnului porții, a fost descoperit un detaliu al via praetoria. Șanțul de protecție a avut trei perioade. Cea mai interioară se întinde și sub fundația de piatră a castellumului, așa că acesta a fost șanțul taberei de palisadă. Tranșeele de apărare II și III aparțineau cetății cu ziduri de piatră. Împingerea axei șanțului III cu un metru și jumătate afară este o consecință a faptului că zidul turnului a sărit din fostul plan de zid. Șanțul II poate fi legat de fortul de piatră din 149 și Șanțul III de fortul restaurat la începutul secolului al III-lea, probabil în timpul lui Caracalla, când au fost construite turnurile de poartă.

Scopul principal al săpăturilor din 2023 a fost excavarea completă a porta principalis dextra. Ambele turnuri de poartă au putut fi dezvăluite, precum și zidul anterior demolat al fortului. Acesta a afirmat din nou că turnurile de poartă au fost construite într-o fază ulterioară, pe baza unei inscripții de construcție sub Caracalla. Șanțurile ambelor faze ale fortului de piatră au fost îngustate pentru a facilita o punte ușoară deasupra lor.

ÖSSZEFOGLALÁS

A korábbi kutatások célja a *principia* teljes kiterjedésének és raktárszárnyának meghatározása volt, majd 2016-ban, 2019-ben és 2021-ben a keleti, északi és déli vallum átvágása. A másik cél az volt, hogy igazolást nyerjen vagy elvessük a Komp által feltételezett három- és négyperiódusos védelmi rendszert. A 2022-es ásatás nem erősítette meg a bonyolult periodizációt. A kőerőd fala a korábbi felméréseknek és geofizikai felméréseknek megfelelően a *porta praetoria* északi kaputornyától kissé északabbra húzódik. Ennek a jelenségnek az oka az agyagos talaj csúszása volt. A *porta praetoriá*nak két fázisa volt. Először 149-ben épült kaputornyok nélkül, vagy nem azonosítható belső tornyokkal, az ismert tornyokat pedig csak a 3. század elején, az erőd renoválása és felújítása idején emelték. A kaputorony déli oldalán a *via praetoria* egy részlete került elő. A védőároknak három periódusa volt. A legbelső részben a *castellum* kő alapozása alatt húzódik, tehát ez a palánktábor árka volt. A II. és III. védelmi árkok a kőfalú erődhöz tartoztak. A III. árok tengelyének másfél méterrel történő kitolódása annak a következménye, hogy a torony fala kiugrott az egykori falsíkból. A II. árok tehát a 149-ben épített kőerődhöz, a III. árok pedig a harmadik század elején helyreállított erődhöz köthető, feltehetően Caracalla idején, amikor a kaputornyok épültek.

A 2023-as ásatások fő célja a porta principalis dextra teljes feltárása volt. Feltárásra került mindkét kaputorony, valamint a korábbi visszabontott erődfal. Ismét kitűnt, hogy a kaputornyokat később építették, egy korábban talált építési felirat alapján Caracalla idején. A kőerőd mindkét fázisának árkait beszűkítették via principalis sávjában, hogy megkönnyítsék a felettük való áthaladást.

2022

The excavation in 2022 was carried out in the same way as before in the supervisory area of the Molnár István Museum in Székelykeresztúr, according to the contract concluded with the museum, with the permission of the *Ministerul Culturii și Identității Naționale, Direcția Patrimoniu Cultural,* as well as on the basis of an agreement and permit with the affected landowners[2].

It was not the first excavation in the porta praetoria. The north gate tower and a section of the *via praetoria* has been excavated by Zoltán Székely in 1947[3]. The tower proved to be 4 x 5 m, the width of its wall 1,6 m (front side) and 1 m (inside). There were newer excavations in the castellum in 1950, made by a research team lead by Mihael Macrea[4]. Fragments of two inscriptions were found in the threshold of the porta praetoria[5], originating from the 3rd century[6].

[2] The financing of the research program was provided by the firma MOL and two donations: Unicons Srl, Székelykeresztúr and Fresh-Color Srl for a three-week period of 17 July and 5 August 2022. I am grateful for every support and also to the scientific collaborators of the excavation: the archaeologist Katalin Sidó, the restorer Rita Visy-Késmárky, and archaeology students Bence Ábrahám and Simonetta Göblyös.

[3] Székely 1956, 33.

[4] Macrea et al. 1951, 304-306. – The research in Inlaceni was made by Zoltán Székely and István Molnár.

[5] Gudea 1979, 161-162: „un prag sau un zid di blocare", fig. 12.1.

[6] Gudea 1979, 201, nr. 5-6.

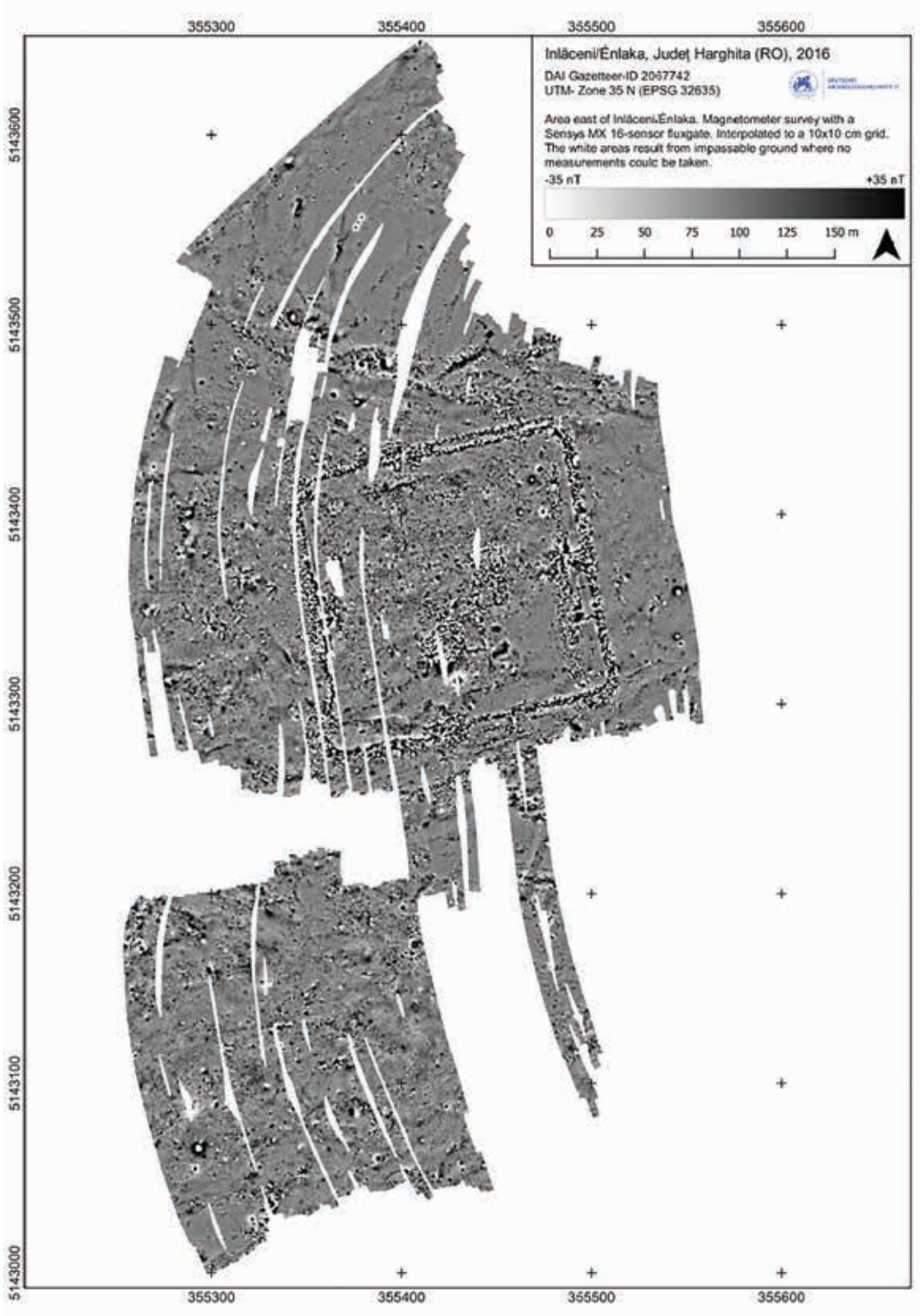

Fig. 1. The geophysical measurement of the year 2016

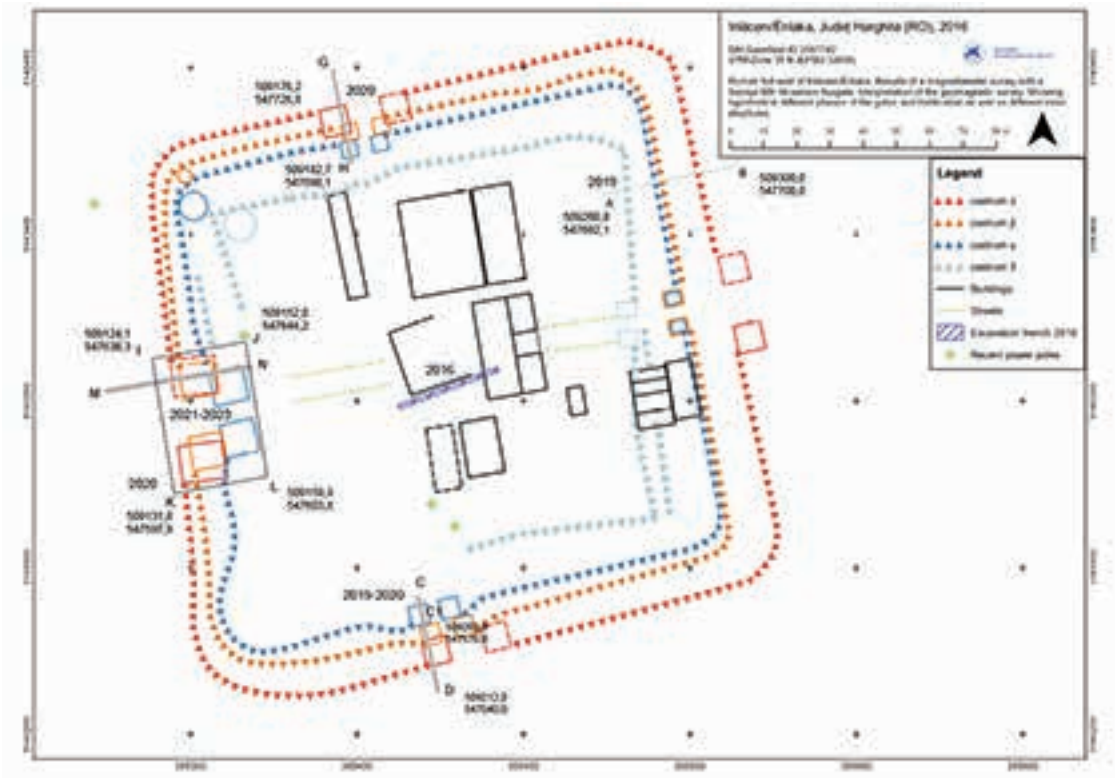

Fig. 2. The periodization of the castellum at Énlaka according to R. Komp and the trenches in the porta praetoria

Previous results in a series of our research that began in 2016 (Fig. 1) were to determine the full extent and warehouse wing of the *principia*, followed by the eastern, northern and southern *vallum* trimming in 2019 and 2021[7]. Orientation and accurate location identification of objects were provided by a geophysical survey conducted by R. Komp[8].

In addition to examining the position, condition and chronology of the Roman defensive work, the purpose of the excavations was to verify or refute the three- and four-period defensive works assumed by Komp (Fig. 2), and to gain new data for the topography and chronology of the fort.

Both the previous and the 2022 excavations (Fig. 3) did not confirm Komp's complicated periodization, the excavation observations refute his hypothesis. The *castellum* was rebuilt into a stone fort in 149 AD[9] after the palisade period, but its known gate towers were not received until the beginning of the third century. It has also been shown that presumably in the thirties of the 3rd century, all four gates were partially or completely walled off[10].

In the third year of the five-year research plan adopted by the Ministerium and the Archaeological Commission, the excavations were carried out in the territory of the north tower of *the porta praetoria*. The section is based on a geophysical survey conducted in 2016, which, according to R. Komp's interpretation, suggests three periods. As previous excavations, the 2022 excavation did not confirm the existence of the outermost and innermost *vallum*s, and

[7] Visy 2017, 229-248; Visy 2020a, 101-117; Visy 2021, 117–140.
[8] Komp 2017, 249-258.
[9] Visy 2021, 119-126.
[10] Visy 2021, 123.

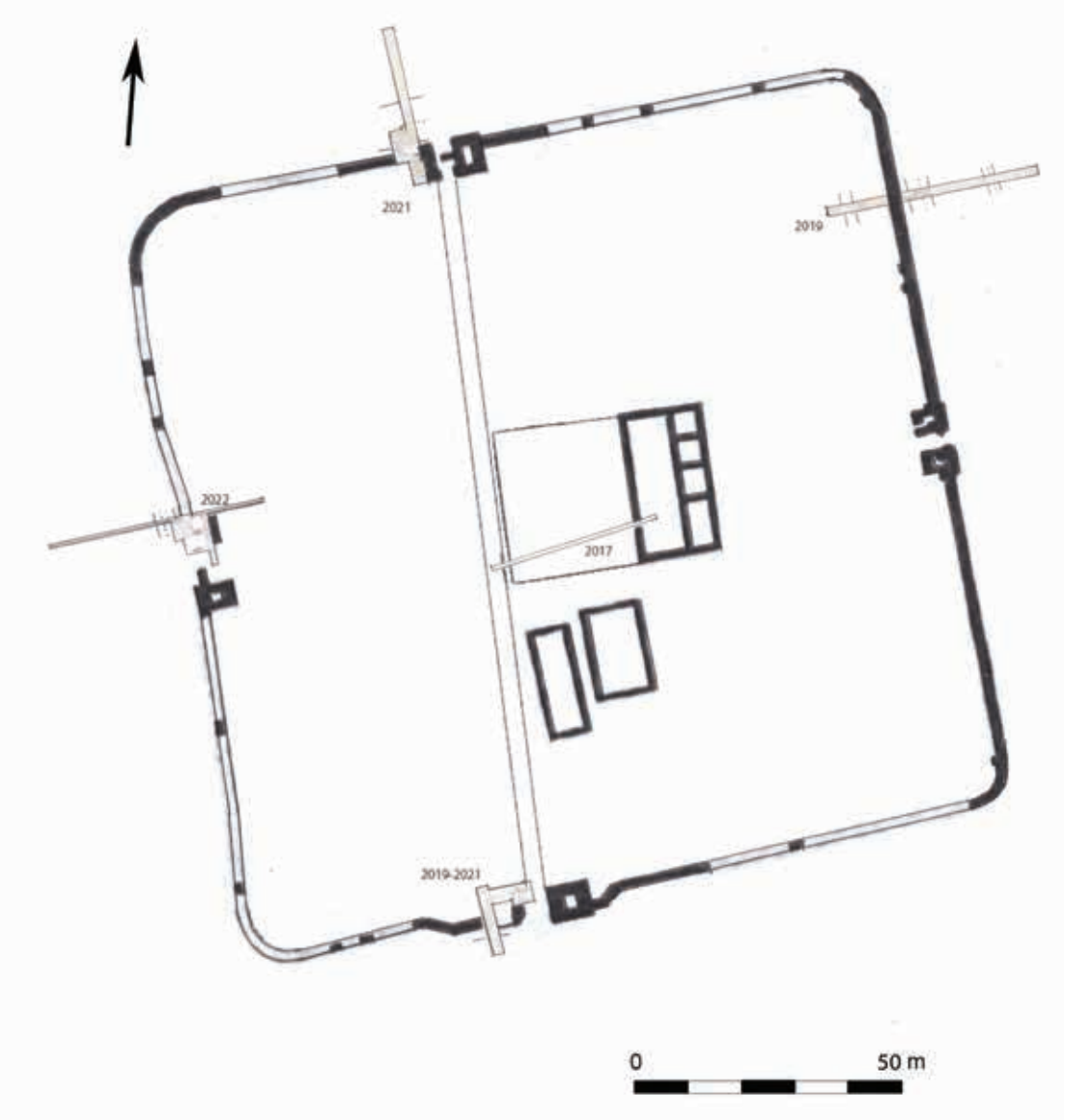

Fig. 3. The state of the research of the castellum at Inlăceni/Énlaka in 2022 using the map of Gudea 1979, fig. 12.1.

the tower did not prove to be as large as this can be seen on Komp's interpretation of the geophysical survey. The purpose of the excavation was to check the position of the *porta praetoria*, the size of the tower.

Results of the excavation

1. The larger western section of the M-N research trench, excavated 43 m long but only 1 m wide, turned out to be completely negative, meaning that it was not possible to substantiate Komp ,s assumption of multiple large-sized towers here either. In the research trench, in its eastern third, only the wall of the stone fort and its crumbling that had fallen into the defensive trench were found (Fig. 4).

2. The wall of the stone fort runs further north of the northern gate tower of the *porta praetoria*, based on previous surveys and geophysical surveys. This has been

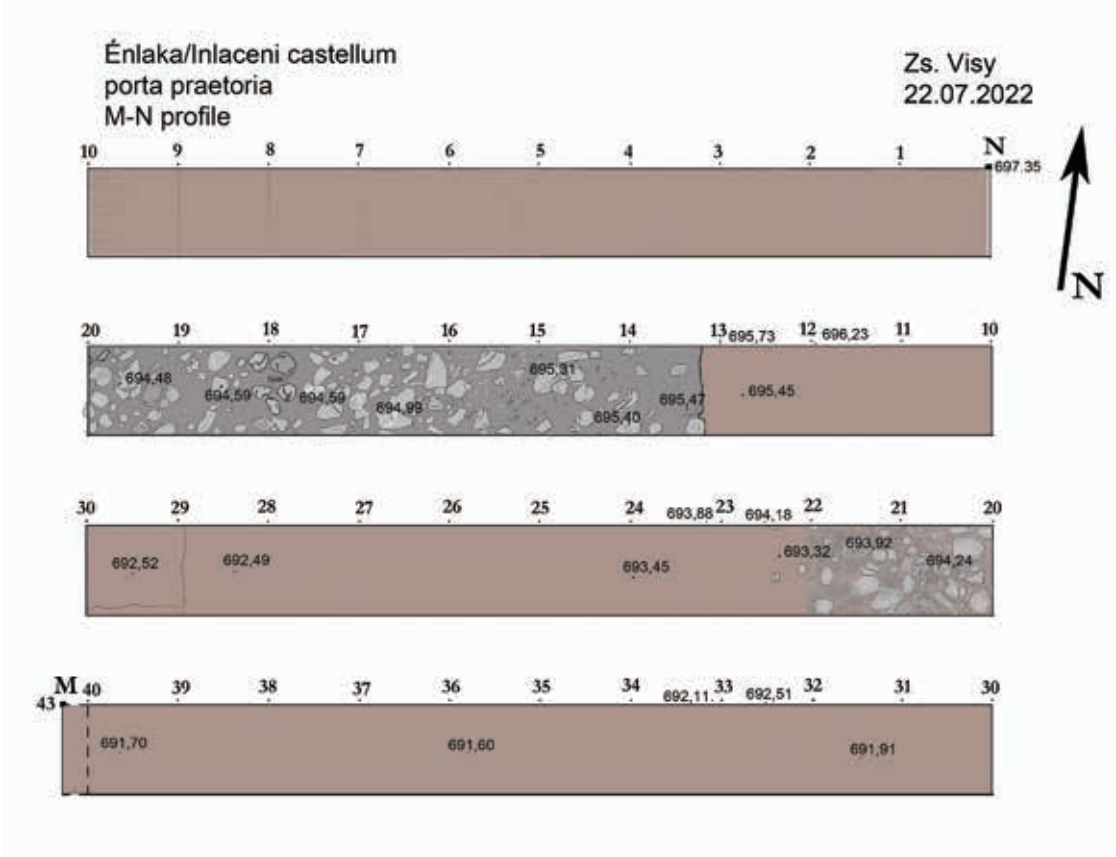

Fig. 4. The stone wall of the *castellum* in the M-N trench

Fig. 5. The wall of the *castellum* and the northern gate tower of the *porta praetoria*

Fig. 6. The wall of the *castellum*, the northern gate tower and the *via praetoria* in the trench M-N-O-P

confirmed by the present excavation. The cause of this phenomenon here, as in other places along the wall of the *castellum*, was the slipping of the clay soil (Fig. 2).

3. Unfortunately, the 150 cm wide stone wall of the fort has been preserved only in its layer below the Roman level due to quarrying. Nevertheless, what was observed earlier, too, during the excavation of the *porta principalis dextra*, was that the stone fort had two phases. In 149 it was built without gate towers or only with not identifiable inner towers, the known towers were erected only at the time of repair and renovation at the beginning of the 3rd century, on the site of demolished sections of wall adjacent to the gate opening[11]. In addition to the lower layer of the partially demolished *castellum* wall, on the outer west side, a very wrecked but identifiable protruding tower wall was unearthed (Fig. 5-6). This tower had according to Székely no protruding outer wall[12], he could not prove

[11] Visy 2021, 121-124; cf. Visy 1977, 12; Visy 2003, 76.
[12] Székely 1956, 33.

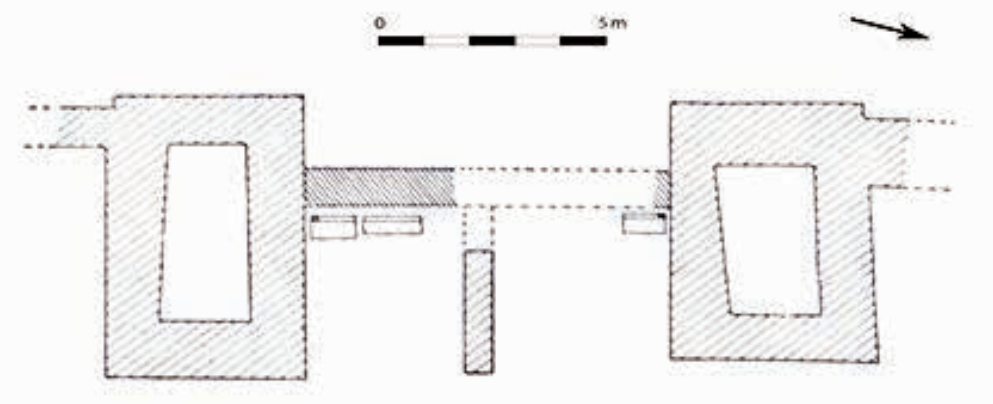

Fig. 7. The *porta praetoria*, excavated in 1950 – Gudea 1979, fig. 12.1.

two phases for the wall and the tower. However, according to Gudea who published the 1950 excavations on the basis of the documentation the wall was significantly thicker in front of the tower[13] (Fig. 7). He described it but without speaking about the two periods of the fort: first the perimeter stone wall, second the towers.

4. Three sections of the wall of the 4.5 m wide gate tower[14] were excavated. Due to the disturbances, the exact line and width of its outer wall could not be accurately determined. Its side walls were 1 m wide, and its outer wall could be 120-150 cm wide.

5. On the south side of the gate tower, a detail of the *via praetoria* was unearthed. According to the previous excavation, the gate was twofold, with a square wall in the middle of it dividing the exit road into two lanes[15]. The pillar unearthed at the end of the excavation stood in the midway of the double gate, and the width of the *via praetoria* can be determined on the basis of this argument. The excavated section is 3.5 m wide, so the total width together with the pillar was 7.5, which is the same as the observations made earlier in Inlaceni and elsewhere.

6. After the demolition of the stone rubble, it was possible to excavate the protective trench, which had three periods. In the innermost part, it also extends under the stone foundation of the *castellum*, so this was the trench of the palisade camp. Proof of this is a fragment of a cup of *terra sigillata* fortunately recovered from a layer without finds, which, based on its small size and thin walls, can be dated to the first half of the 2nd century (Fig. 8).

7. The II and III defensive trenches were the defensive trenches of the stone-walled fortress. The pushing of the axis of trench III by

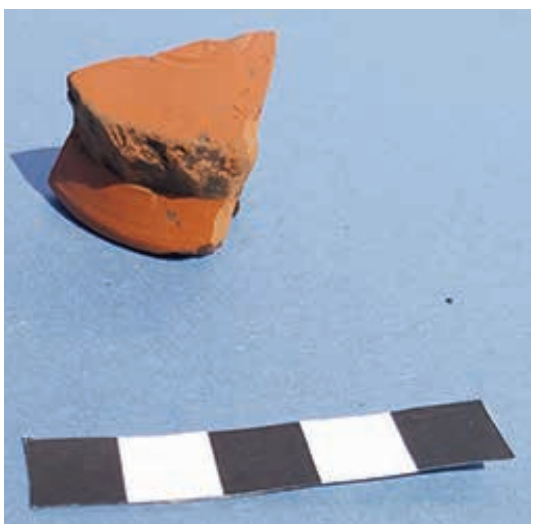

Fig. 8. Terra sigillata sherd with trace of a stample

[13] Gudea 1979, 162.
[14] Székely 1956, 33: 4x5 m; Gudea 1979, 162: 4,20x5,80 m.
[15] Gudea 1979, 162. - Fig 5, fig. 12.1.

Fig. 9. The wall of the *castellum* and defensive trenches

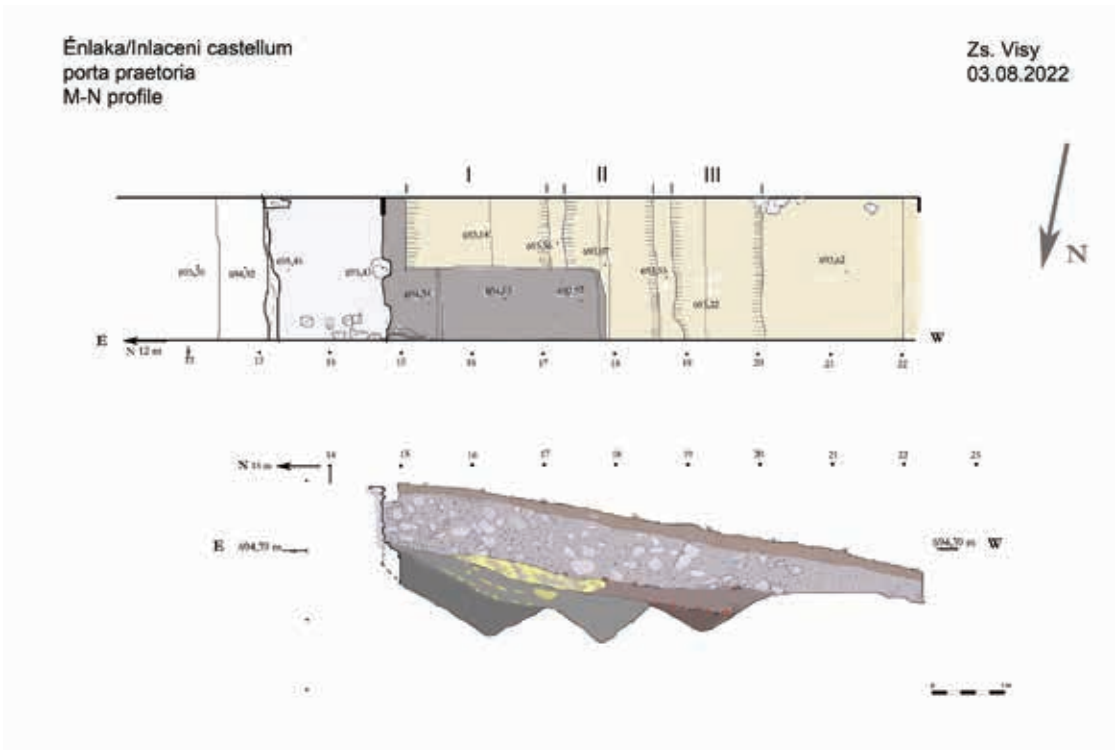

Fig. 10. The wall of the *castellum* and defensive trenches I-II-III

one and a half meters out is a consequence of the fact that the wall of the tower jumped out of the former wall plane. On the basis of this consideration – although no dated finds have been recovered from them, Trench II can be linked to the stone fort in 149 and Trench III to the fort restored at the beginning of the third century, presumably during the time of Caracalla, when the gate towers were built (Fig. 9-10).

During the excavation, few finds were unearthed, mainly smaller-larger vessel fragments. A great many *tegulas* and fragments of *imbrex* lay in the crumbs. To highlight is a fragmentary *later* with a detail of a scratched two-line inscription […]TO / […]PILA (Fig. 11).

Fig. 11. Part of a *later* with graffito

2023

The excavation in 2023 was carried out in the same way as before in the supervisory area of the Molnár István Museum in Székelykeresztúr, in accordance with the contract concluded with the museum, with the permission of the *Ministerul Culturii și Identității Naționale, Direcția Patrimoniu Cultural,* and on the basis of an agreement and permit concluded with the concerned landowners.[16]

In the fourth year of the five-year research plan adopted by the High Authority and the Archaeological Commission, excavations were carried out in the *porta principalis dextra*. It was based on a geophysical survey conducted in 2016, joining the 2021 excavation area from the east. The purpose of the excavation was to reveal the entire area of the *porta principalis dextra*, both its towers and the ditch in front of it.

In 2021, only research trench excavation of the gate could be carried out[17]. Nevertheless, the research trench that cut through the western gate tower of the *porta principalis dextra* and the ditch in front of it led to an important result. It turned out that the gate tower was built later than the fortress wall, extending to the gate opening. The tower was built by partially demolishing it, so that about half of its outer wall protruded from the plane of the wall. The inner edge of the demolished wall was excavated inside the tower. The slightly different orientation of the tower from right angles also suggests that the tower construction, which involved significant demolition, took place significantly later than the construction of the stone wall of the *castellum*. This was also indicated by the research of the ditch. We did not open the defensive ditch of the palisade camp, which partly lies under the stone wall, but we did excavate the defensive ditch belonging to the stone fortress, which was renewed once and pushed out with its axis. The *fossae* provided rich finds, especially the

[16] The scientific board of the excavation were archaeologists Katalin Sidó and Bernadett Kovács, the consultants were archaeologists Sorin Cocis, Szilamér Pánczél, Alexandru Popa, restorer Rita Visy-Késmárky, as well as archaeology students Bence Ábrahám, Szabolcs Oláh, János Korpics and Simonetta Göblyös from Szeged, and Luca Dezső and Lilla Németh from Budapest. The excavation could be financed by a grant from MOL between 19 June and 15 July 2023. I am grateful to the Balázs Orbán Foundation for the financial implementation of the grant. The Municipality of Etéd supported the excavation with free accommodation and public workers. Despite financial difficulties, the excavation achieved its stated goal. The equipment was provided by the István Molnár Museum. I am grateful to Szilamér Pánczél for setting out the area of the excavation.

[17] Visy 2021, 117–140.

exterior, which *included* stamped brick of the *cohors IIII Hispanorum*, tegulas with shoe soles and other important finds, as well as two carved stone monuments. One was a relief of a *Genius* and the other was a building inscription of the stone fortress, dated to AD 149[18]. The fragmentary inscription also bears the name of the unit that carried out the construction: *cohors VIII Raetorum*. Based on analogies and an inscription from Énlaka, the construction of the gate towers can be dated to the age of Caracalla[19].

In 2023, excavation was again carried out at the north side gate, the purpose of which was to unravel the two gate towers and the defensive ditch in front of them on the eastern side of the research trench two years earlier (Fig. 12). Based on the geophysical survey, the two towers appeared directly below the surface.

Results of excavation:

• It was possible to excavate both gate towers in their entirety with the road between them and the ditch ahead of them (Fig. 13).

• The length of the western tower is 5.95 m, and its width, excavated in 2023, is 3.30 m (Fig. 14). The total width of the tower, including the strip excavated in 2021, is 4.7 m. The width of the wall is 1.40 m on the outside, 1.2 m on the east side and 0.9 m on the south side. Two pillars are attached to its eastern side. One at the southern edge: 0.3 x 1 m, the other at 3.1 m: 0.2 x 0.9 m. Together with the opposite pillars, these supported the bridge over the doorway.

• The eastern tower is not quite regular (Fig. 15). Its length is 6.2 m on the west side and 5.9 m on the east side. Its width is 4.7 m. The width of the wall is 1.4 m in the north, 1 m in the west, 0.9-1 m in the east, 0.85 m in the south. On its western side there are two pillars. One fits the southwest corner: 0.3 x 1.4 m, the other is 0.3 x 1 m. This pillar begins at 3.4 m from the outer edge of the southern wall. The two pillars are exactly opposite the two pillars of the west tower. The cracks in the walls of both towers, caused by ground movement, slightly modified the original size of the towers.

• Two pillars were attached to the roadside walls of the towers, which held the bridge over the doorway. The gate was in the line of the outer pillars (Fig. 16-17).

• It is proved that in the period before the towers, the walls of the *castellum* went up to the road. His remains have also been found inside the towers (Fig. 18). According to a building inscription found earlier, the stone fortress was built in AD 149, and a building inscription from the Caracalla period is related to the restoration of the *castellum* and the construction of the towers.

• The doorway was blocked later, in the thirties and forties of the 3rd century. The narrow, incomplete stone row of the gate masonry is aligned with the southern edge of the former gate by the pillars in the plane of the gate wings. Its width must have been 0.6 m. The missing stones at its western end may indicate a footgate (Fig. 19).

• The width of the *via principalis* was 3.4 m, traces of its gravel surface could only be observed in the foreground of the wall.

• Both phases had defensive trenches, the axis of the *fossa* (III) of the Caracalla-era fortress was one and a half meters further out than the previous one (II) (Fig. 20-21). The ditch of the palisade camp (I) was even closer to the stone wall of the *castellum*, partly under the *castellum* and towers, but it was not possible to excavate it.

• Both *fossae* were narrowed and dug shallower in the lane of the road to make it easier to pass over them[20]. No post holes suggestive of bridging were found (Fig. 22).

[18] Visy 2024, 155–164.

[19] IDR 267 construction inscription (in IDR as a sculpture base).

[20] A similar solution was applied to the southern gate *(porta principalis dextra)* of Intercisa's palisade camp, Visy 2020b, 222-223, Figs. 19-20. A similar solution could be expected for roads leading out of the gates of the stone phase, but this section has not yet been excavated in Intercisa.

During the excavation, smaller fragments of pottery and iron were unearthed, as well as a rim fragment of a large mortar from the ditch II. In the area of the towers and during the excavation of defensive ditch III, fragments of some stamped bricks of the *cohors IIII Hispanorum* were found (Fig. 23-24).

Bibliography / *Bibliografie*

Gudea, N. 1979. Castrul roman de la Inlăceni (Încercare de monografie). *Acta Mus. Porolissensis* 3, 149–273.

IDR III/4. I.I. Russu, *Inscriptiones Daciae Romanae* III/4. Bucuresti

Komp, R. 2017. Preliminary Field Report on a Geomagnetic Survey of a Roman Auxiliary Camp in the Community of Inlăceni/Énlaka, Romania, 17.10.-20.10.2016. *Ephemeris Napocensis* XXIV, 249-258.

Macrea, M. et alii 1951. Despre rezultatele cercetărilor întreprinse de şantierul arheologic Sft. Gheorghe – Breţcu, 1950. *SCIV* II. 1, 285-311.

Székely, Z. 1956. Raport despre cercetările arheologice executate de Muzeul Regional din Sf. Gheorghe între anii 1945–1955, Inlăceni. *Almanah* (Sepsiszentgyörgy), 31–40.

Visy, Zs. 1977. *Intercisa. Dunaújváros in the Roman Period*. Budapest.

Visy, Zs. 2003. *The ripa Pannonica in Hungary.* Budapest.

Visy, Zs. 2017. Inlăceni/Énlaka During The Roman Period. *Ephemeris Napocensis 27, 229-248.*

Visy, Zs. 2020a. Preliminary Report about the Investigation in the Énlaka/Inlăceni castellum in 2019. *Angustia* 24, 101-117.

Visy, Zs. 2020b. New research conducted in Intercisa castellum and watchtower INT 5. In: G. I. Farkas – R. Németnyi – M. Szabó (eds.), The Danube Limes in Hungary Archaeological Research Conducted in 2015–2020 Pécs 2020, 211-238.

Visy Zs. 2021. The castellum Énlaka and the eastern limes of Dacia. *Angustia* 25, 117–140.

Visy Zs. 2024. Eine neuere Inschrift der cohors VIII Raetorum aus Inlăceni/Énlaka. Studia epigraphica et militaria. In Memoriam Miroslava Mirković. In: Eds.: Marietta Horster, Olga Pelcer-Vujačić, Snežana Ferjančić. Berlin, De Gruyter 2024, 155-164.

Fig. 12. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra* from the east

Fig. 13. Top view of *Énlaka/Inlăceni castellum, porta principalis dextra*.

Fig. 14. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra,* western gate tower from north

Fig. 15. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra,* eastern gate tower from east

Fig. 16. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra,* eastern gate tower with pillar from southwest

Fig. 17. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra*, top view of the excavations in 2021-2023. Red: *castellum* wall, blue: tower wall, yellow: gate walling

Fig. 18. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra,* demolished *castellum* wall inside the towers from west

Fig. 19. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra,* gate walling from the north

Fig. 20. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra,*
defensive trenches II and III during excavation from the northwest

Fig. 21. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra,*
defensive trenches II and III from the north-east

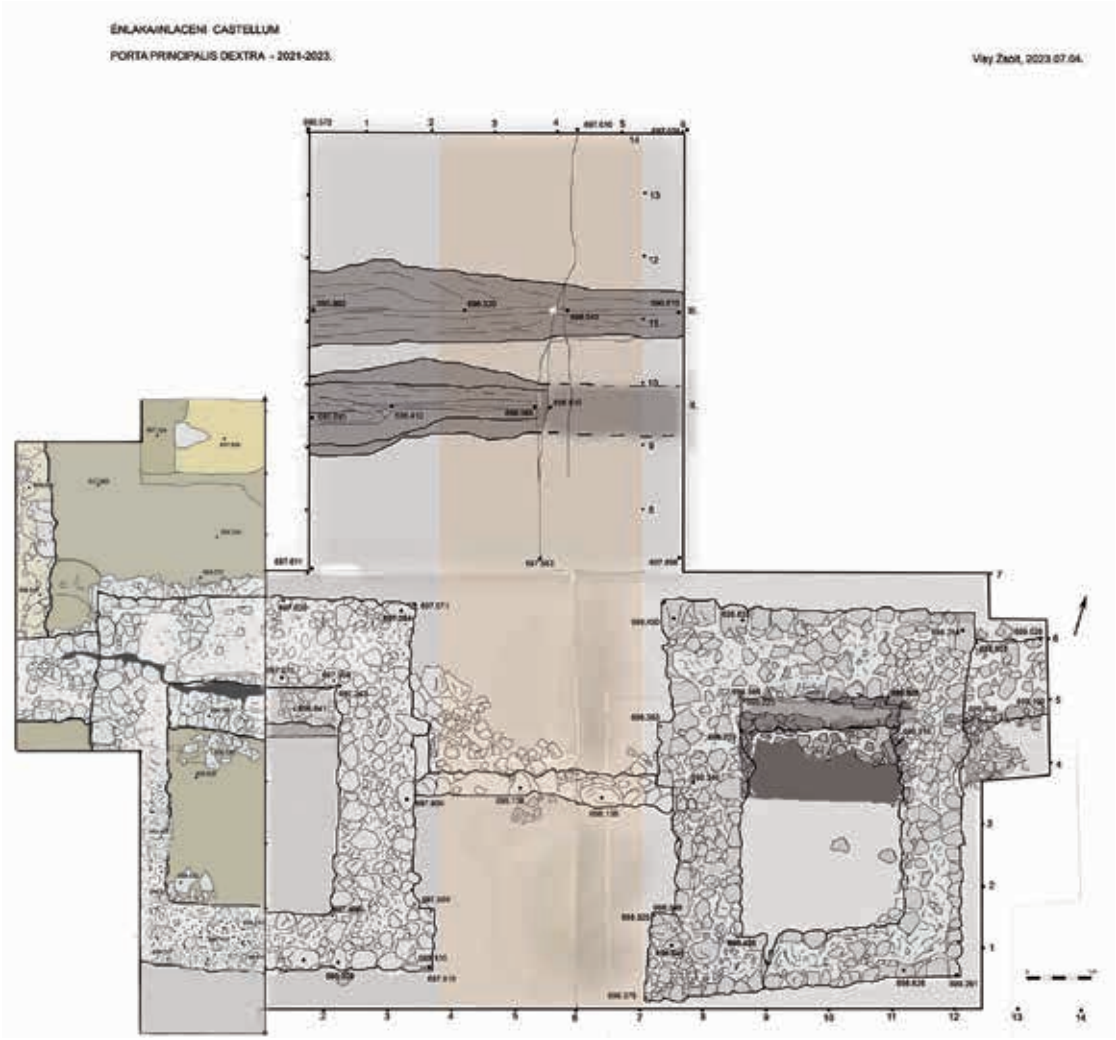

Fig. 22. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra*.
Unified plan of the excavations in 2021-2023

Fig. 23. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum*, *porta principalis dextra,*
rim fragment of a mortar from ditch II

Fig. 24. Énlaka/Inlăceni *castellum, porta principalis dextra*,
stamped *imbrex* fragment of *the cohors IIII Hispanorum* from ditch III