
SANCTUARIES IN RAETIA: SPACE SACRALISATION IN ROMAN RELIGION AT THE EDGES OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

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in memoriam C. Sebastian Sommer (1956 - 2021)

ABSTRACT

The province of Roman Raetia became part of the Roman Empire in the beginning of the first century AD and was an important semi-peripheral region of the empire for more than three centuries. This paper will examine how the Roman presence and the new political, administrative reality changed the strategies of religious communication, especially in space sacralisation, the formation of sanctuaries and temples. The paper will discuss shortly the pre-Roman religion on the territory of Raetia, the religious transformations, continuities and discontinuities in sacralised spaces and finally, will present some aspects of religious communication in these sanctuaries in macro-, meso- and micro-spaces.

ABSTRAKT

Die Römische Provinz Raetia wurde zu Beginn des ersten Jahrhunderts n. Chr. Teil des Römischen Reiches und war mehr als drei Jahrhunderte lang eine wichtige halbperiphere Region. In diesem Beitrag wird untersucht, wie die römische Präsenz und die neue politische, administrative Realität die Strategien der religiösen Kommunikation verändert haben, insbesondere in der Raumsakralisierung, der Bildung von Heiligtümern und Tempeln. Der Beitrag diskutiert kurz die vorrömische Religion auf dem Territorium Raetiens, die religiösen Transformationen, Kontinuitäten und Diskontinuitäten in sakralisierten Räumen und stellt schließlich einige Aspekte religiöser Kommunikation in diesen Heiligtümern in Makro-, Meso- und Mikroräumen vor. Es bietet auch eine Liste archäologisch ausgegrabener und dokumentierter Heiligtümer und Tempel aus Makro- und Mesoräumen der Provinz Rätien.

KEYWORDS: Raetia, space sacralisation, sanctuaries, Roman religion, Danubian provinces¹

SCHLÜSSELWÖRTER: Rätien, Weltraumsakralisierung, Heiligtümer, römische Religion, Donauprovinzen

Raetia is conventionally listed in the recent archaeological and historical literature as one of the Danubian provinces, often named as a province of the Upper Danubian area or one of the Alpine provinces (**fig.1**).² These two geographical features defined this region already in the late Bronze Age and continued to remain essential factors in the La Tène and Roman period too. The impact of the Alps and the Danube on the commercial routes and networks and the political expansion of Rome is well-researched. Roman literary traditions focusing on this region are following the traditional ethnographic historiography of the Roman literature, reproducing a generalised and stereotypic view on the people outside of the Roman world³: the sources are scarred and problematic when it comes to the origins, linguistic and ethnic variety of the region, highlighting mostly some economic aspects, such as the famous wine of Raetia praised by Cato and Vergil and favoured by Augustus (Serv.georg.2.95)⁴, the commercial routes and the major Alpine passages which connected the Po area and the Northern territories beyond the Alps used by important families, such as the *Laecanii* in amphorae trade⁵ and the origins of the pre-Roman population.

¹ This study was supported by the Postdoctoral Research Grant PD NKFI-8 nr. 127948 by the National Research, Development, and Innovation Office of Hungary (2018-2021). See also: Szabó 2022 and www.danubianreligion.com.

² About the notion of the Danubian provinces see: Alföldy 2004; Szabó 2020. On the role of the Alps as a geographical and cultural barrier and its role in macro-regional interconnectivity: Rapin 2021.

³ Frei-Stolba 1984; Frei-Stolba 1991; Woolf 2011.

⁴ Dalby 2000, 90.

⁵ Bezczy 1998.

Livy claimed that the *Raeti* (Raetians) were originally from Etruria and related to the Etruscan people⁶. Pliny the Elder argued that most of the Raetian population moved from the Po area in the Alps during the Gallic (Celtic) invasion in the 4-6th century BC, although these ethnographic theories can hardly support with archaeological evidence⁷.

This area has two major features in space sacralisation since the Bronze Age: the deposition of single bronze artifacts and the so called *Brandopferplätze*⁸. The region of the later province Raetia before the 1st century AD was predominantly a sparsely populated, mostly rural area with several local specificities: in the south, near the major passages (Furka, St. Gotthard, St. Bernardino, Splügen, Julier, Septimer, Reschenscheideck, Brenner, etc.) important commercial routes were formed which served especially the short term mobilities between the Gallo-Roman koine and the Alpine Raeti. Short term mobilities of humans and animals (transhumant animals) created a persistent, rural system of settlements in the early Iron Age, identified with the Fritzens-Sanzeno culture⁹. This cultural horizon in the southern part of the later Roman province correlates with the major concentration of Raetian inscriptions¹⁰ and domestic constructions¹¹. Raetia had not only domestic and epigraphic materialities, but also a significant number of pre-Roman sacralised spaces, commonly known as *Brandopferplätze*. More than 200 such complex places and 163 single Bronze object deposits were identified¹² crowded in three major regions, which represents also the essential commercial routes and communication-networks of the later province: the route from Curia to Brigantium and the vicinity of the Brigantinus lacus, the Via Claudia from Tridentium till the Reschenscheideck passage and the central valley of the Inn¹³. The topography and chronology of these sacralised spaces and memories of religious communication in a hostile geographic area reflects the importance of the mountain passages and the commercial routes: these routes were not only economic passages, but also religious channels, where the divine agency was embodied with the mountains and the memory of religious traditions became a *habitus*¹⁴.

In contrast with cemeteries and large, complex sacralised spaces – such as the *Brandopferplätze* – individual depositions are invisible for the later viewer and visitor. The transformation of the landscape into a space of memory and a religious agent therefore is not dependent on the materiality of these acts (which are mostly invisible or disappear in the moment of the deposition), but a religious knowledge and *habitus*, impossible to trace by archaeological methods¹⁵. Some of the well documented and complex *Brandopferplätze* had a ceremonial road, marked with various sized stones, a circular building or place where the sacrifice or deposition occurred and in several cases (the so called Alpine ash altar sites or Rungger Egg Type conic altars) a pyramidal, conic form was created, which represented a strong marker in religious memorialisation and space sacralisation¹⁶. Recent analysis of the archaeobotanical material used in these sites suggests also, that these sites contributed not only with a strong visual marker (the pyramidal form, the stone altars) but also with ceremonial movements and sensescares (smells,

⁶ Livy V.33.11. For a complete analysis of the literary sources and the topographic aspects: Marzatico 2019.

⁷ “It is supposed that the *Rhæti* are the descendants of the *Tuscans*, who were expelled by the *Gauls* and migrated hither under the command of their chief, whose name was *Rhætus*. Turning then to the side of the Alps which fronts Italy, we have the *Euganean* nations enjoying Latin rights, and of whom *Cato* enumerates thirty-four towns. Among these are the *Triumpilini*, a people who were sold with their territory; and then the *Camuni*, and several similar tribes, each of them in the jurisdiction of its neighbouring municipal town. The same author also considers the *Lepontii* and the *Salassi* to be of *Tauriscan* origin, but most other writers, giving a Greek interpretation to their name, consider the *Lepontii* to have been those of the followers of *Hercules* who were left behind in consequence of their limbs being frozen by the snow of the Alps. They are also of opinion that the inhabitants of the *Grecian Alps* are descended from a portion of the *Greeks* of his army, and that the *Euganeans*, being sprung from an origin so illustrious, thence took their name. The head of these are the *Stæni*. The *Vennonenses* and the *Sarunetes*, peoples of the *Rhæti*, dwell about the sources of the river *Rhenus*, while the tribe of the *Lepontii*, known as the *Uberi*, dwell in the vicinity of the sources of the *Ihdanus*, in the same district of the Alps. There are also other native tribes here, who have received Latin rights, such as the *Octodurenses*, and their neighbors the *Centrones*, the *Cottian* states, the *Ligurian Vagienni*, descended from the *Caturiges*, as also those called *Montani*; besides numerous nations of the *Capillati*, on the confines of the *Ligurian Sea*”. Pliny, *Nat.Hist.* III.24 in Bostock and Riley 2015, 171. About the origins of the Etruscans see also: Posth et al. 2021. On the interconnectivity of the Alpine region with Northern Italy see also: Gregori and Dell’Era 2021.

⁸ On the problem of the notion see: Gleirscher et al. 2002; Marzatico 2014, 315.

⁹ Trixl et al. 2017.

¹⁰ Marzatico 2019, 77, fig.7.

¹¹ Idem, fig.6.

¹² Gleirscher et al. 2002, 218-263, Ballmer 2017, 75.

¹³ Marzatico 2014, 316, fig.4.

¹⁴ Ballmer 2017, 74-75.

¹⁵ The ingenious study of Ballmer omits the anthropological analogies and examples of transhumant animal trade and mountain mobilities from historical times (18-19th centuries) and the oral transition of knowledge of agricultural societies. Ballmer 2017. For a detailed analysis of agricultural and botanical knowledge-transfer in this area see: Grabherr 2009.

¹⁶ Recent researches on Alpine sacrificial places: Putzer 2011.

tastes) to the successful maintenance of the sacralised space¹⁷. Occasional – probably rare and extraordinary moments in the history of a community – produced also human sacrifices, which correlates again with some case studies from pre-Roman Pannonia and Dacia too¹⁸. Inscribed votive plates and personalized brooches were also used as votive dedications in some of these complex sanctuaries, many of them having a remarkable chronological continuity since the Neolithic¹⁹. The case of Demlfeld, Ampass is one of the most well documented case studies, where a great concentration of brooches was discovered from 600 BC till 400 AD²⁰ and a beautifully decorated bronze lamella too²¹.

In the north, the Celtic Vindelici are represented by their monumental oppida, from which the most significant one was in Manching, probably a regional capital and centre probably since the Neolithic, but certainly since the late Bronze Age period²². The celtic proto-urban centre – which represents one of the largest pre-urban settlements of pre-Roman Raetia – was built on prehistoric (Neolithic, Bronze Age) settlements and was a strategic point on the Danubian road, connecting with the large sized oppidum of Heidengraben bei Grabenstetten and Kelheim, East of Manching. A special particularity of the settlement is its long lasting, three phase-built sanctuary. The last phase was created around 105 BC and left in the period of the conquest of the region by the Roman army (15-6 BC)²³. The sanctuary was the mathematical and cosmological Axis Mundi of the settlement: the space sacralisation was not only maintained by the local elite through votive depositions (bronze objects, weapons, helmets), repetitive or occasional feasts (based on amphorae finds) but also by its central position and urbanistic impact, which marked the evolution of the settlement itself²⁴. The site might be one of the numerous examples from Iron Age space sacralisation where astronomy and cosmological space orientation played a significant role: similar analogies of archaeoastronomy were identified in the Mediterranean world and in the Danubian provinces too²⁵. Similarly, to the case studies of the valleys and southern areas of the later Raetia province, the Celtic world also had intense material interconnectivities with the Roman world since 200 BC²⁶. The settlement enters in a slow decline in the first century BC which will probably end one- two decades before the arrival of the Roman army in 15 BC due to various population mobilities, mostly attributed to Germanic tribes²⁷.

Continuities and discontinuities in religious communication in Raetia after the Roman conquest

The land of *Brandopferplätze* and Bronze depositions became part of the Roman Empire after the short and intense military intervention of Tiberius and Drusus on 1st August 15 BC²⁸, after which the entire region entered under “calm occupation of the Romans” as Strabo mentions 30 years later²⁹. This process however was not as fast as the literary sources suggest archaeological evidence shows a slow process of provincialisation which makes the major difference between *in formam provinciae redacta de iure* and *de facto*³⁰. K. Strobel argued that this process was not a single event, but a long process, which begins with the military campaign between 44-16 BC³¹. The *Tropaeum Alpium* from 7 or 6 BC shows also, that the provincialisation process took several years³². From the period of Augustus (before 14 AD) the military presence is scarce and suggest that the military defence system was just temporary and not yet established till the death of the first emperor. The process of the “provincialisation” of Raetia

¹⁷ Heiss 2010.

¹⁸ Glerischer et al. 2002, 176.

¹⁹ Another example for fibula dedication: Marchesini-Roncador 2015, 50.

²⁰ Hye 2013.

²¹ Marchesini-Roncador 2015, 21-22.

²² Wendling 2013, 464.

²³ http://www.oppida.org/page.php?lg=fr&rub=00&id_oppidum=77. Last accessed: 25.01.2022.

²⁴ Wendling 2013, 467-468.

²⁵ Boutsikas 2020, 5-6. For Sarmizegetusa Regia see: Stănescu 2014; Oprea-Oprea 2015.

²⁶ Wendling 2013, 468.

²⁷ Idem, 482. There are no traces of space sacralisation and functional or spatial continuities after 15 BC: Sommer 2008, 214. See also: Trixl et al. 2017.

²⁸ Dietz 2004, 9.

²⁹ Von Schnurbein 1985, 18. See also: Strobel 2009, 468-470.

³⁰ Vell. 2.39.2: “at Ti. Caesar quam certam Hispanis parendi confessionem extorserat parens Illyriis Delmatisque extorsit. Raetiam autem et Vindelicos ac Noricos Pannoniamque et Scordiscos nou- as imperio nostro subiunxit prouincias. ut bas armis, ita auctoritate Cappadociam populo Romano fecit stipendiariam”. The notion of “subiunxit” doesn’t mean necessarily a complete administrative reform but a successful military conquest or control of the region: Strobel 2009, 476.

³¹ Idem, 439-441.

³² Sommer 2008, 209.

will end in the Claudian period, however in a much broader definition, this transformative process is ongoing till the end of the Roman Empire and the withdrawal of the Roman administration from the Alpine Limes.

Roman religion in Raetia was interpreted in the context of this ongoing and transformative process of the provincialisation and Romanisation – two, contemporary notions which are under a historiographic debate since a century now³³. Roman provincial religion was often presented as an “imported” religion from centre to periphery³⁴. In the post-colonialist literature, provincial Roman religion, especially on the peripheries of the Roman Empire is often presented as a field of cultural conflicts and clashes, where the resistance of pre-Roman groups and religious traditions are presented in a strong dichotomy with “Roman religion”. This approach was known in the literature focusing on Raetia as “nativismus”, now mostly abandoned by contemporary literature.

This conflict-based approach which is focusing on the dualism of “old” and “new” and “local” and “global” with a special interest in the domination of the Roman power-elite and their religious and cultural hegemony is no longer a useful methodological tool. To understand the changes of religious communication especially in the first decades of the Roman period in the newly established province of Raetia it is important not only to have well-excavated, documented and published sacralised spaces (sanctuaries, temples, shrines etc.) but also a new methodological approach. The interaction between pre-Roman and Roman groups and their religious communication can be interpreted from the theoretical approach of reinvented traditions, which is focusing on the transformative and living aspects of social changes and their human agents³⁵. In this context, the strategies of religious appropriations of the new society of Raetia shows a constant interaction between the indigenous and emerging new groups of the provincial society. This religious dialogue – named recently as “*interpretatio indigena*”³⁶ changed the already existing sacralised spaces (especially through new objects, a more varied materiality of religion) and produced new, monumentalised forms in macro-spaces (public squares, cities), meso-spaces (small group religions, *collegia* buildings) and micro-spaces (domestic religion) too. From these categories, the first one is hard to identify in Raetia and generally, in the Danubian provinces too³⁷.

The early Roman period shows archaeological evidence also on the re-appropriation or continuous use of some well-known *Brandopferplätze*: some of them show a long, sometimes 1-2 century long hiatus in use and a short renaissance again in early Roman period (Schlossberg, Burgen, Garschinger-Heide)³⁸. Others are in constant use since La Tène (Karres, Forggensee) while some exceptional cases show a continuous use from Hallstatt (Campi Neri, Mechel)³⁹. Exceptional case studies are the sacralised spaces from Spielleitenköpf, Pillerhöhe used continuously from late Bronze Age till Late Antiquity⁴⁰. Burgstall was used in the late Bronze Age and early Hallstatt and reopened after few centuries of hiatus after the Roman conquest and used till Late Antiquity⁴¹. The case study of the Veldidena (Innsbruck, Wilten) and Döttenbichl, near Oberammengau were also interpreted as reinvented, re-appropriated sacralised spaces after the Roman conquest⁴². In contrast with the emerging archaeological data on religious continuities and reinvented traditions, some authors however argued that there are no or very few certain traces of settlement, place or population continuities and questioned the possibility of religious continuities after the Roman conquest⁴³.

Sacralised places in macro- and meso-spaces in Raetia during the Principate

Spaces of religious communication were omnipresent in the Roman Empire. Their special categorisation – macro-, meso- and micro-spaces – can help us to identify not only their legal state and architectural features, but also the impact of religious communication on the number of human agents (large groups, small group religions or religious individuality)⁴⁴. In this chapter I will focus only on sacralised spaces established in macro- and meso-spaces, the last category is hard, if not impossible to be identified in Raetia and most of the Danubian provinces

³³ On the problem of the notion see: Woolf 2014. A slightly different, but also valuable definition: Alföldy 1988.

³⁴ The notion itself – provincial Roman religion (Römische Provinzialreligion) is highly problematic and a modern historiographic construction. See: Cancik-Rüpké 1997, especially Bendlin 1997, on open systems in ancient religions.

³⁵ Hobsbawm 1983, 4-5. For a historiographic overview of the notion see: DeWaal 2013, 495-496.

³⁶ Haeussler 2012.

³⁷ See also: Szabó 2022, 27-88, the entire chapter of religious changes and reinvented traditions in the age of provincial transitions.

³⁸ A complete analysis of the Roman-era Brandopferplätze: Gleirscher et al. 2002, 197, abb.3.

³⁹ Arnold 2014, 28, fig. 1.2.

⁴⁰ Idem, 26. See also: Tschurtschenthaler 2010.

⁴¹ Niederwanger 2002.

⁴² Gleirscher et al. 2002, 227-228.

⁴³ Sommer 2008, 212-213.

⁴⁴ On this spatial taxonomy see: Szabó 2018, 1-14; Szabó 2021.

due to the badly preserved domestic areas of the urban and rural settlements⁴⁵. In Raetia, an important case study of sacralised place in micro-space (in a villa rustica) was identified at Marktoberdorf-Kohlhunden (cat. nr. 38.).

In the province of Raetia during the Principate (1st-3rd centuries AD) most of the newly established, major settlements were formed in the vicinity of the military forts and fortresses, especially in the Northern part of the province (Rhaetian Limes)⁴⁶. The southern area – dominated by the hardly accessible Alpine region and the strategically crucial valleys (Via Claudia) was poorly inhabited and there are macro-spaces, where new sacralised spaces were established after the conquest. A possible *spelaeum* – a natural cave re-appropriated as a mithraeum – was identified, Maulls in the valley of Eisack between rocks, however the archaeological evidence is poorly documented⁴⁷. The archaeological and epigraphic material from Curia (Chur) and Veldidena (Innsbruck) are extremely laconic and there is no evidence for sacralised spaces, although few votive inscriptions were identified in secondary positions⁴⁸.

Most of the sacralised spaces established in Raetia are related to the highly militarized Northern part of the province (**fig.2.**). From the 56 archaeologically attested sacralised spaces established in the macro- and meso-spaces of Raetia⁴⁹, 19 are attested within the territory of military forts and fortresses (cat. nr. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 32, 34, 36, 39, 41, 42, 45, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54). The *aedes* attested within the principia of the auxiliary forts shows an architectural heterogeneity, especially in their planimetry, however the apsidal form is a dominating feature. The archaeological material attested in the *aedes* is extremely poor and does not allow us for a detailed analysis of religious communication within these small compartments. The well-documented case studies from Novae, Potaissa or Apulum offers a good insight to the evolution of these rectangular, usually small (approx. 5 x 10 m) compartments and their architectural evolution⁵⁰. From Raetia, one of the best documented case-study of this type of sacralised space is from the fortress of Celeusum (Pförring), where the *aedes signorum* follows an unusual shape: the apsidal construction was integrated within the limits of the Principia and it was invisible from outside⁵¹. The site was excavated in the 19th century, the archaeological material is unfortunately just shortly mentioned in the old literature. Fragments of a large, bronze statue were discovered in this area, which might suggest that it was one of the honorary statues of an emperor in the Principia. Similar finds were attested in the forts of Eining and Künzing⁵².

Another important category of public sacralised spaces is found in urban environments. Urban religion⁵³ in the Roman Empire produced large, public spaces with monumental and impressive architectural atmospheres, which attracted not only demographic and material quantity in religious tools and agents, but also produced a high religious intensity and sensescape in religious communication⁵⁴. Large, public sacralised spaces had also a special, legal status and a much higher political and economic impact in the urban fabric of a society. Two cities are particularly rich in such spaces: Brigantium (Bregenz) and Cambodunum (Kempten). In the case of Brigantium, the most important sacralised space was the Capitolium (cat.nr. 6.), which – similarly to the case of colonia Sarmizegetusa from Dacia – was not part of the forum complex but was in the neighbouring insula (**fig.3.**)⁵⁵. The Capitolium was part of a large, walled temenos, separated by two insulae with large domestic building-complexes. The podium-temple (9,2 x 10 m) was only partially preserved. The building-complex was probably part of the main street of the city and had a direct communication with the most important urban structures and spaces. Besides the Forum and the imperial complex, four other public sacralised buildings were attested in Brigantium (cat. nr. 8-11). The exact functionality of these buildings is hard to understand, most of the large sized buildings in Brigantium were excavated in 1871 and the following decades.

Cambodunum produced similar sacralised places in macro-spaces, although the city had a particular feature which we cannot find in Brigantium. The urban structure of Cambodunum is much better preserved and it is one of the most well documented urban settlements of the Danubian provinces, comparable only to Carnuntum, Virunum, Aquincum, Sarmizegetusa and Oescus⁵⁶. Cambodunum had three major sacralised spaces: the Forum and the so-called Forum-temple (possibly, the Capitolium – cat. nr. 12.), the large ceremonial square, interpreted as the

⁴⁵ Szabó 2022, 190-198.

⁴⁶ Farkas 2015.

⁴⁷ See the description of M. Vermaseren in CIMRM 1400.

⁴⁸ AÉ 1966, 271, Curia-Chur, Welschdörfli: -----] // *pro se et suis v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito)*

⁴⁹ See also: Szabó 2022, 209-211.

⁵⁰ Sarnowski 1992; Szabó 2018, 20-31; Bărbulescu 2020, 13-62.

⁵¹ Farkas 2015, 59.

⁵² Kemkes 2008, 143-144, abb.5.

⁵³ On the notion see: Rüpke 2020.

⁵⁴ See: Maschek 2016.

⁵⁵ Trunk 1991, 187-188. See also: Piso et al. 2012.

⁵⁶ Donev 2020.

Ara Augusti (cat. nr. 13.) and in a marginal area of the city, the so-called Gallo-Roman sanctuary complex (cat. nr. 14-29.). The podium-temple was part of the Forum, integrated within the monumentalised building complex. This was accessible only from the large, public square within the forum, therefore its visibility and accessibility were limited, despite its central position within the urban system. The *Ara Augusti* occupied a monumental area, which presume a significant demographic accessibility to this area. The monumental square with a central altar was accessible from and communicated directly with the Forum and was probably part of official ceremonies related to the imperial cult or other public events involving the local and provincial priesthood, although the epigraphic material is almost completely missing⁵⁷. A particular feature of urban, sacralised spaces was identified in North-Western edge of the city of Cambodunum, which consisted not only of the geographic periphery of the hill on which the city was built, but also the major urban structures and insulae system. The so-called “Gallo-Roman” building complex consists of 16 individual buildings with various architectural plans, dimensions, and chronology (fig.4.). The modern notion, which conventionally denominates the sacralised space is a historiographic creation, based on the assumption, that most of the pre-Roman, Celtic sanctuaries had similar architectural features to those identified in the 19th and early 20th century in Roman Gaul⁵⁸. The functionality of the rather small and usually, rectangular buildings are uncertain, however based on some inscriptions found in this area, they were identified with Epona and Hercules⁵⁹.

The monumental sanctuary dedicated to Apollo Grannus from the vicus Phoebiana (Faimingen) represents a unique case of large, sacralised space in semi-urban (or cvasi-urban) contexts⁶⁰. The Mediterranean style podium temple, in which a *peripteros*, *pseudoperipteros* or *prostylos* design temple stood on a stone podium, accessed via a perron at its front gained a regional and later, an imperial fame after the visit of emperor Caracalla and could be a reason, why the cult of Asclepius is almost completely missing from Raetia⁶¹. Similar, monumentalised temples in large vici we can observe in other Danubian provinces, where an imperial visit or the presence of religious pilgrimage changed the importance of the sacralised space into a glocal one, for example in Aquae Iasae.

Beside the macro-spaces of religious communication attested especially in two major urban centres, there are two categories of meso-spaces: small shrines dedicated to re-appropriated divine agents (especially Mercurius) and sacralised spaces of Mithras (*mithraea*). In contrast with other Danubian provinces, especially the provinces of Pannoniae and Daciae, Raetia is very poor in archaeologically attested places of small group religions (fig.5.): there are only 3-4 sanctuaries of Mithras attested (cat. nr. 37, 44, 46 and perhaps, 56). The 56 divine agents attested on the 223 votive inscriptions known from Raetia⁶² shows a different aspect from the Lower Danubian area: the pantheon of divinities of Raetia reflects a higher level of religious appropriation and the strong presence of pre-Roman religious traditions and their reinvented forms (fig.6.). The lack of small group religions can be explained with the lower level of urbanisation, rare mobility rate and the popularity of the re-appropriated indigenous (mostly Celtic) divinities.

Conclusions

Raetia was part of the Roman Empire for more than three centuries. Most of the epigraphic and archaeological material used in religious communication in micro-, meso- and macro-spaces were produced in the age of the Principate, with multiple important peaks, especially during the reign of Septimius Severus. There are very few votive inscriptions and traces of Roman religious communication after 260 AD, when the Raetian Limes temporarily, but not permanently, collapsed⁶³. The monumental, reused Victory altar from Augusta Vindelicorum (*Augsburger Siegesaltar*)⁶⁴ represents not only one of the last, monumentalised objects of religious communication

⁵⁷ For analogies see: Tóth 2001; Szabó 2019.

⁵⁸ On the problem of identifying pre-Roman sanctuaries in Roman times and the notion of „Gallo-Roman sanctuaries” see also: Ghey 2003; Andringa 2015.

⁵⁹ CSIR Deutschland 1.1, 61, Nr. 203.

⁶⁰ See also on small and middle-sized towns of the Danubian provinces: Donev 2019.

⁶¹ Eingartner et al. 1993, 122-136. See also: Glomb 2021.

⁶² After the Heidelberg Epigraphic Database. In the Clauss-Slaby there are 352 inscriptions.

⁶³ Opreanu 2004, 13.

⁶⁴ The inscription was dated on 11th September 260 AD. AE 1993, 1231 = HD044953: *In h(onorem) d(omus) d(ivinae) // [[[pro sal(ute) Imp(eratoris)]]] Sev[er]i / [[[Alexandri Aug(usti)]]] / [----- // In h(onorem) d(omus) d(ivinae) / deae sanctae Victoriae / ob barbaros gentis Semnonum / sive Iouthungorum die / VIII et VII Kal(endarum) Maiar(um) caesos / fugatosque a militibus prov(inciae) / Raetiae sed et Germanicianis / itemque popularibus excussis / multis milibus Italarum captivorum / compos votorum suorum / [M(arcus) Simplicinius Genialis v(ir) p(erfectissimus) a(gens) v(ices) p(raesidis)] / [cum eodem exercitu] / libens merito posuit / dedicata III Idus Septemb(res) Imp(eratore) d(omino) n(ostro) / [Postumo Au]g(usto) et [Honoratiano consulibus]*

in the macro-spaces of the province, but also suggests, that many of the sacralised spaces – such as those from Augusta Vindelicorum for example – have definitively disappeared. The number of sacralised spaces attested in Raetia however are significant, mostly due to the unique, mountain archaeology and systematic research of the *Limesforschung* in the last two centuries. Most of the archaeologically attested sacralised spaces are from military settlements, with the two urban exceptions, Brigantium and Cambodunum, which would worth each a detailed, global analysis in the context of urban religion. The role of rural sanctuaries from the Limes and the inner province and their significance need to be interpreted in the context of the major commercial routes which connected Italia and the Barbaricum. Raetia – although its epigraphic, votive material is poorly preserved (less, than the votive inscriptions of colonia Sarmizegetusa alone⁶⁵), the well-documented settlement systems of the pre-Roman and early Roman topography of the province. This study highlighted also the importance of religious transition, re-appropriation and the reinvention of religious traditions, which created a unique, Celtic-Roman religious language in Raetia, comparable only to Noricum, with strong cultural, military, economic and religious connections with the Alpine, the Celtic and the Germanic regions as well.

Archaeologically attested sanctuaries of Roman Raetia

Aalen

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
1.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 69.	The aedes follows the <i>aedes cum absidis</i> type with a large cellar underground used as the deposit of the ala (10 x 14 m). The aedes was probably rebuilt or restored in the Severan age as a monumental inscription from 208-209 AD suggests (AE 1989, 0581). In the cellar - which probably served as a <i>aerarium</i> - a rare Dolichenian bronze relief was discovered (CCID 475).

Abusina (*Eining-Unterfeld*)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
2.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 14; Fischer 2016; lupa 6231	

Abusina (*Eining I*)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
3.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 33-35.	The apsidal shaped aedes was modified several times. There is a construction in the middle of the apsis which indicates the multiple phases of the Principia. Archaeological finds: a bronze fragment of an imperial statue probably from the territory of the Principia.

Ad Lunam (*Urspring-Lonsee*)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
4.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 60.	

Biriciana (*Weißenburg*)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
5.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Grönke 1997	

⁶⁵ Sarmizegetusa has 265 votive inscriptions. See also a comparative analysis of the urban epigraphic material: Szabó 2022, 235-236.

Brigantium (Bregenz)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
6.	Capitolium	Trunk 1991, 187-188	Podium temple in the middle of the Forum, partially revealed
7.	Imperial cult-complex	Ertel et al. 2011	
8.	Building 38	CIL III 13542; Bereuter et al. 1985, abb. 1.	Uncertain functionality and divine agency
9.	Building 39	Bereuter et al. 1985, abb. 1.	Uncertain functionality and divine agency
10.	Building 40	Bereuter et al. 1985, abb. 1.	Uncertain functionality and divine agency
11.	Building 41	Bereuter et al. 1985, abb. 1.	Uncertain functionality and divine agency

Cambodunum (Kempten)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
12.	Capitolium	Trunk 1991, 194-196.	Podium temple integrated within the Forum. Several annexed compartments attested nearby
13.	Ara Augusti	Weber 2010, 39-44.	
14-29.	“Gallo-Roman Tempelbezirk” (16 sacralised spaces)	Weber 2010, 72-78; CSIR Deutschland I,1 Nr. 203 = lupa 6660	The exact functionality of the individual buildings is uncertain.

Castra Regina (Regensburg-Ziegetsdorf)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
30.	Mercurius sanctuary	Dietz-Fischer 2018, 176; CSIR Deutschland I,1 Nr. 452 = lupa 6576; lupa 6580; lupa 6564; lupa 6584.	During excavations, a 92-centimeter-high cult statue of the god was found there.
31.	Hercules (?) sanctuary	Gamber 1982	

Celeusum (Pförring)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
32.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 59.	The aedes follows the <i>aedes cum absidis</i> type. In the staff building, remains of hair and clothing from a large bronze were found, which are dated to the period between 150/250 AD.

Dambach

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
33.	Spring sanctuary-Asklepieion	Czys 2009	

Emerkingen

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
34.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 23.	

Gersthofen

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
35.	Mercurius sanctuary	Klein 2003; Lupa 6421	

Iciniacum (Theilenhofen II)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
36.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 67.	

Königsbrunn

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
37.	mithraeum	Czys 2002	

Marktoberdorf-Kohlhunden

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
38.	Villa sanctuary	Czys-Scholz 2013	

Mediana (Gnotzheim)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
39.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 52-53.	

Meßkirch

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
40.	Diana sanctuary	Reim 1978	

Oberstimm

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
41.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 27.	

Phoebiana (Faimingen)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
42.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Eingartner et al. 1993, 14-17.	
43.	Apollo Grannus sanctuary	Eingartner et al. 1993; lupa 6422	

Pons Aeni / Ad Enum (Pfaffenhofen am Inn)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
44.	mithraeum	Garbsch 1985	

Quintana (Künzing)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
45.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 40-41.	
46.	mithraeum	Schmotz 2000; AE 1998, 1007= AE 2000, 1140	

Rainau-Buch

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
47.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 71.	

Riusiava (*Risstissen-Ehingen*)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
48.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 29-30.	

Schirenhof-Schwäbisch Gmünd

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
49.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 73.	

Scuttarensium (*Nassenfels*)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
50.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Rieder 2003, 170-173.	

Sonthheim an der Brenz

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
51.	Building C-E	Nuber 1994, abb. 101	

Summuntorium (*Mertingen /Burghöfe*)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
52.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 21.	

Unterböbingen

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
53.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 74.	
	sanctuary	Planck-Beck 1987, 116.	

Vetoniana (*Pfünz*)

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
54.	Aedes signorum/ Principia	Farkas 2015, 65-66.	
55.	dolichenum	Arnold 1889; CCID 479-485.	In 1888 east from the modern centre of Faimingen in the cellar of a house a Roman inscription and a double, round-relief of Jupiter Dolichenus was discovered. The site was not excavated.

Wachstein

Catalogue Number	Denomination	Bibliography	Further Notes
56.	Mithraeum (?)	Schwertheim 1974, 210.	Uncertain functionality

ABBREVIATIONS

AÉ	L'Année épigraphique
ANRW	Haase, W. - Temporini, H. (eds): <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt/Rise and Decline of the Roman World. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> , Berlin-New York, 1972-
CCID	Hörg, M. - Schwertheim, E., <i>Corpus Cultus Iovis Dolicheni</i> , Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire romain 106, Leiden, 1987
CIL	Corpus inscriptionum latinarum. Consilio et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Regiae Borussicae editum
CIMRM	Vermaseren, M. J., <i>Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriacae</i> I-II, The Hague, 1956-1960
Clauss-Slaby	Epigraphik Dantebank Clauss-Slaby
CSIR	Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani
EDH	Epigraphic Database Heidelberg
lupa	Ubi Erat Lupa Bilddatenbank zu antiken Steindenkmälern (lupa.at)

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Fig. 1. The Danubian provinces (after Glomb 2021).

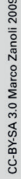


Fig. 2. Map of Roman Raetia with the archaeologically attested sanctuaries (map: Wikicommons, modified by Orsolya Gyurka)



Fig. 3. Plan of Brigantium (after Bereuter et al. 1985, 98, abb. 1.).

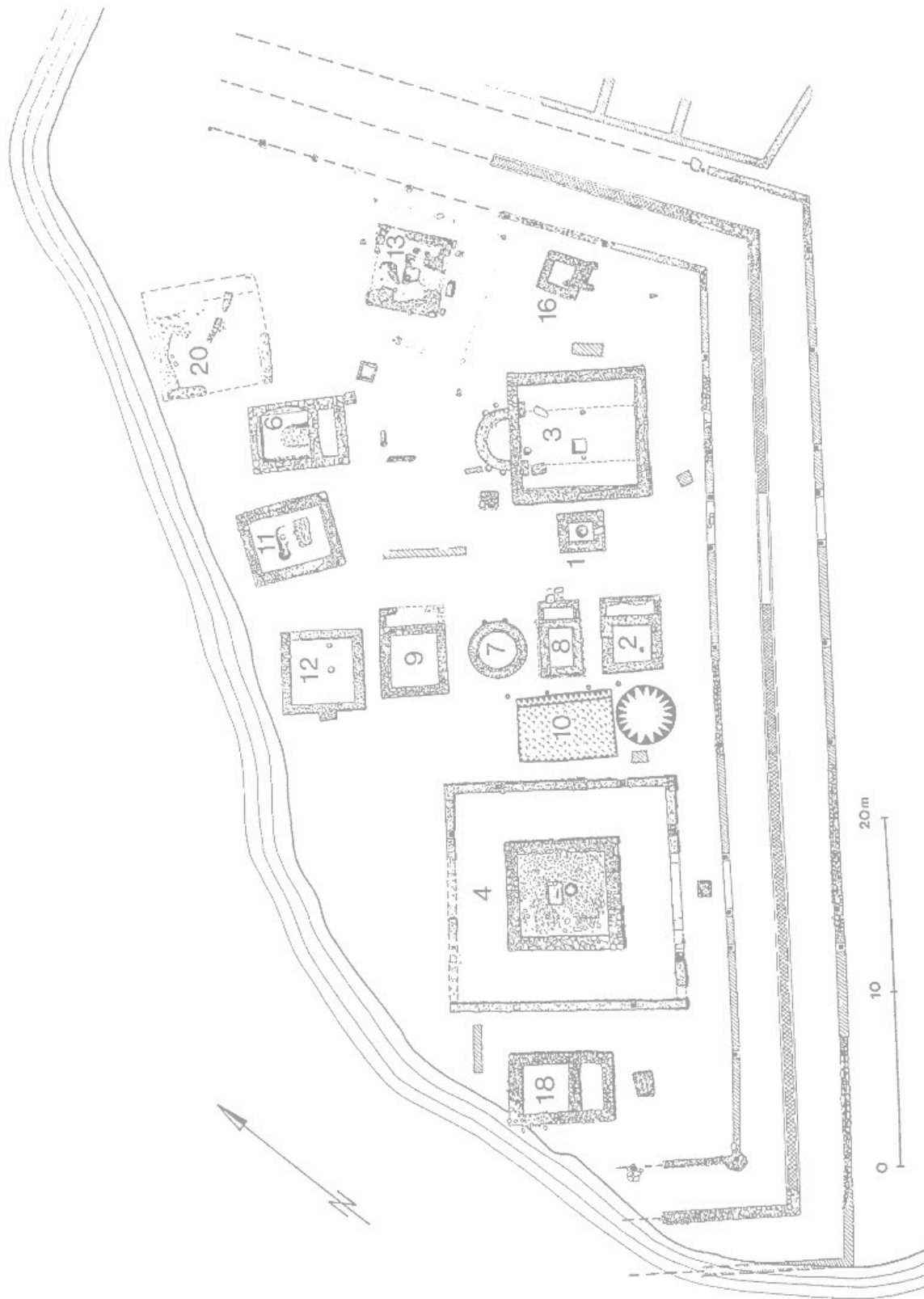


Fig. 4. Plan of the so-called Gallo-Roman sanctuaries in Cambodunum (after Weber 2000, 73, abb. 115.).

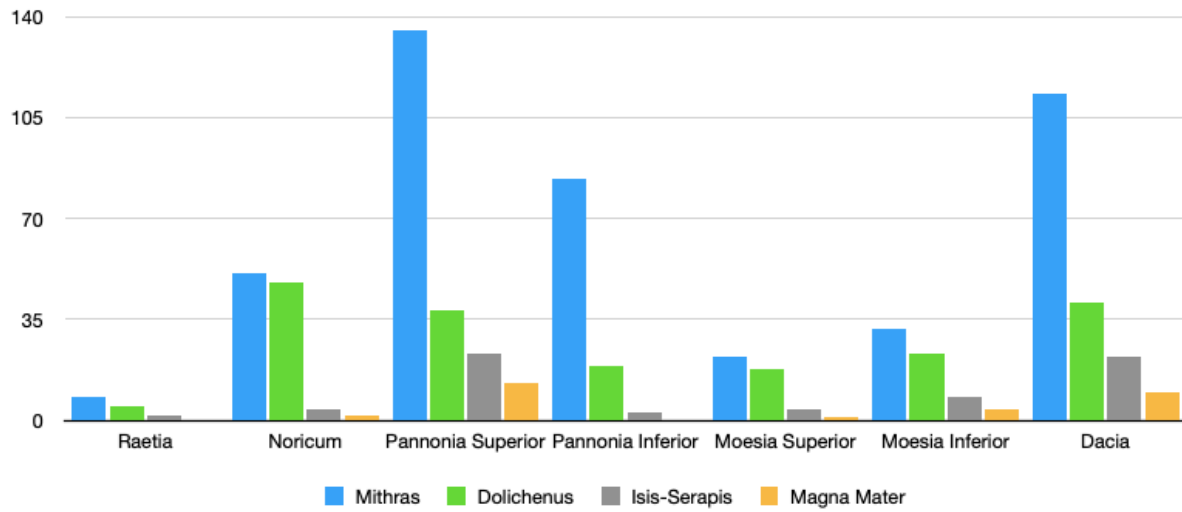
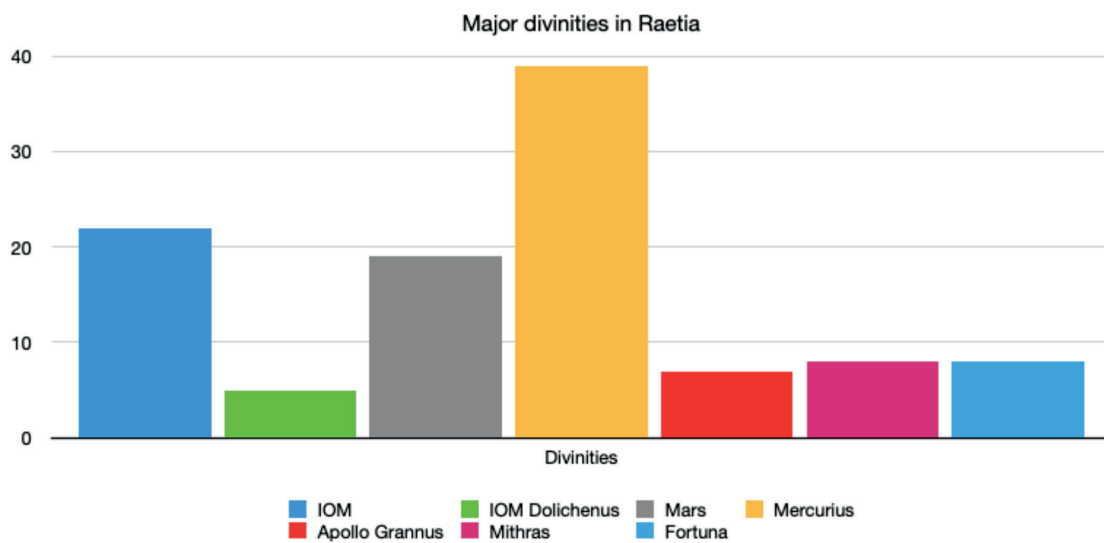


Fig. 5. Distribution of votive inscriptions dedicated to the mystery cults and small-group religions in the Danubian provinces.



6.

Fig.6. Major divinities in the province of Raetia.

