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**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS** 

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the two regional field armies, also listed in the Notitia and commanded by the same comites, predominantly consisted of cavalry vexillations, new legions and legionary detachments established from the late 3rd century onwards to serve alongside the old African legion, III Augusta. These African/Mauretanian comitatenses were very similar in composition to the higher ranking regiments of limitanei in other frontier commands, such as that of the dux Britanniarum. Such regiments were accorded higher status than the cohorts and alae and were sometimes termed ripenses during the early to mid-4th century (though strictly speaking this label probably only applied to those stationed along the Rhine/Danube riverine frontiers). Clearly the manner in which the two North African commands evolved had resulted in the promotion of these regiments to the rank of comitatenses at some stage (perhaps even prior to the formal definition of limitanei as a military grade from the mid-4th century onwards). This emphasises that the ranking of troops could involve a significant element of chance or contingent circumstance, with almost identical units eventually falling into different grades.

The paper will go on to examine what the documentary and archaeological evidence can tell us about the role of the African limitanei, showing how their distribution related to the unique requirements of the North African frontiers, and how these troops interacted with the wider tribal society of the frontier zone.

### 21. LIFE AND HEALTH ON THE ROMAN LIMES

Session organisers / Chairpersons:

Nataša Miladinović-Radmilović, Institute of Archaeology Belgrade (E-mail: miladinovic.radmilovic@gmail.com)

This session includes anthropological research of osteological material from old and new archaeological excavations along Limes. This will implies the impact of historical circumstances on the social and health status of the rural, urban and military populations, their paleodemographic structure, the reconstruction of economic relations and the diet, the level of medical care and protection, intentional and accidental traumas, everyday occupations and habits, relations towards children, as well as the reconstruction of funeral practice.

### The appearance of ulcer on one skeleton from Viminacium and the possibility of its' treatment in Antiquity

Nataša Miladinović-Radmilović, Ilija Mikić, Dragana Vulović, Ksenija Đukić

Viminacium (Stari Kostolac) was the largest and the most important city in Moesia Superior (Upper Moesia). It was the provincial capital, administrative, religious, military and trade centre. It was built on a strategic location at the confluence of the river Mlava and the Danube, on the crossroad of both land and river routes with large military and trade poten-tial.

On one of the necropoles of Viminacium, Pirivoj, in grave no. 325, skeletal remains of a juvenile female individual were discovered. The burial is dated into the first half of the 3rd century. The deceased juvenile was laid on the back with hands clasped on her stomach. The orientation of the grave was North–South.

Anthropological analyses revealed traces of osteomyeli-tis with proliferative periostitis on the left tibia and left fibula. The source of infection was related to a large ulcer on the left tibia. The current appearance of the bone shows poor health treatment of the ulcer and active inflammation at the time of death.

In this presentation, we will also focus on the ulcer aeti-ology and possibility of its' treatment in Antiquity. Treatments will also be briefly discussed, with preparations based on silver and lead, vinegar, honey, etc.

### Case of myositis ossificans traumatica on one skeleton from Viminacium

Dragana Vulović, Ilija Mikić, Ksenija Đukić, Nataša Miladinović-Radmilović

The Roman city and military camp of Viminacium is situated between the villages of Stari Kostolac and Drmno, 12 kilometres eastwards from Požarevac, close to the confluence of the Mlava and the Danube. During its' history, it became the biggest urban settlement and the capital of the province of Up-per Moesia (Moesia Superior), later the First Moesia (Moesia Prima). It represented one of the most important military strongholds, not only in Upper Moesia, but it also represented the area from which Roman legions operated in other provinces as well.

On one of the necropoles of Viminacium, Pećine, in grave no. 5785, skeletal remains of a juvenile male individual were discovered. The funeral took place in the Late Antiquity period. The deceased juvenile was laid on the back with hands clasped on his stomach. The deceased's skull was not found. The orientation of the grave was West–East.

Anthropological analyses revealed a fracture of the right femur followed by myositis ossificans traumatica.

Myositis ossificans is defined as a localised formation of heterotopic non-neoplastic bone in muscle or soft tissue. It usually represents one of the complications of fractures, like in our case here. The trauma to the bone can damage the overlying muscle and, occasionally, the muscle tissue will respond to the trauma by producing bone directly in the muscle tissue itself. This

condition is known as myositis ossificans traumafica (post-traumatic myositis ossificans or myositis ossificans circumscrip-ta) and is most likely to occur in response to trauma in young male individuals, and in the femoral (the quadriceps muscles) or humeral region (brachium muscles).

### Possible explanations for mass skull burials at Viminacium

Ilija Mikić, Nataša Miladinović-Radmilović, Dragana Vulović, Ksenija Đukić

Viminacium is located close to the confluence of the Mlava and the Danube, near the village of Stari Kostolac. It rep-resents an extremely complex site with a long history of re-search. There was a large number of necropoles in its' sur-roundings: late prehistoric necropoles with bi-ritual burials, sev-eral Roman necropoles, also with bi-ritual burials, as well as several necropoles with inhumation from different medieval periods.

In ancient Viminacium, so far, four graves with mass burial, mainly skulls with a slightly lesser amount of bones from the postcranial skeleton, have been found.

In the archaeological context, there are two funeral practices: incineration and inhumation. Within them, we can distinguish individual, group and mass burials. Under individual burials we comprehend the placing of skeletal remains of one person inside a grave pit, a grave construction, or a built tomb. Group funerals involve the laying of skeletal remains of two or more persons, usually members of one family, who are buried at the same or different period of time, into a grave pit, a grave construction or a built tomb. Mass burials involve the storage of skeletal remains of more individuals, usually at the same period of time, under specific circumstances (massive death toll due to natural disasters, massive death toll as the consequence of various epidemics, as well as massive death toll as a result of armed conflicts, etc.). Secondary mass burials are mostly partial, and much more attention and care is dedicated to the skulls. On one of the necropoles of Viminacium, Pećine, in grave no. 4924, skeletal remains, mostly skulls, of more than 150 individuals were discovered.

In this paper, we will try to explain this phenomenon, on the example of grave no. 4924, and show all possible causes for mass skull burials at ancient Viminacium.

### Roman Medicine and Healthcare on the Upper Moesian Limes in Serbia – Archaeological Evidences

Aleksandar P. Simić, Gordana Jeremić

After the arrival of the Roman army the first professional medics probably made their appearance in the territory of Upper Moesia, predominantly in Singidunum and Viminacium. The means of treatment, and therefore the level of medicine, can be knowledgeable from several different sources, while the most accurate data are those obtained by the archaeological discovery of original medical instruments. In ancient Rome more than 150 different types of surgical instruments have been used. More than 300 medical and surgical instruments of various types so far have been found on the Upper Moesian Limes from Singidunum to Aquae.

Roman citizens in Singidunum (Belgrade) lived in good conditions in both the town and the surrounding villages. From archeological excavations of the area of canabae and castrum, 28 various medical mainly surgical objects have been found. Also several medical objects have been found in various settlements, smaller fortifications or villae rusticae of ager Singidonensis. Even though at the main castrum of Singidunum no hospital has been discovered yet, just south of Belgrade, epigraphy from auxiliary fort Demessus (Guberevac/Stojnik), at the mining area at Kosmaj, has the word valetudinarium inscribed on it.

Presence of some graves of doctors and pharmacists and their discovered equipment testifies that medical care was at the highest possible level in Viminacium (Stari Kostolac), capital of Moesia Superior. In several tombs in Viminacium many surgical instruments from I to III century have been found. Medical instruments of an eye doctor - "medicus et chirurgus ocularius" were excavated on the southern city-necropolis.

Downstream from Viminacium several surgical instruments are found on different sites: in Le-

darta (Ram), Cuppae (Golubac), Castrum Novae (Čezava), Smorna (Boljetin), Taliata (Donji Milanovac) and at Transdierna (Tekija). At the site of Diana (Karataš) most of the medical instruments have been found dating from the II and III century, mainly made of bronze.

Well preserved traces of sewer system and water pipes even aqueducts were found not only in the town territory of Singidunum, Margum, Viminacium and Taliata but also further away. Interestingly in Singidunum, Margum, Viminacium, Porečka Reka, Transdierna, Diana and Egeta (Brza Palanka) the existence of thermae and balnea was archaeologically or epigraphically documented.

### **Burial Structures of Viminacium: Building and Construction**

Emilija Nikolić, Snežana Golubović

Viminacium, today an archaeological site near Kostolac in Serbia, was the largest Roman city settlement in the province of Moesia Superior and a significant military center founded in the I century AD. Archaeological excavations were mostly performed in necropolises, where over 13,500 thousand graves with cremations and inhumations were researched. Above-ground parts of buildings have been very poorly preserved, due to the war destructions in the ancient period and degradation for the purpose of building new constructions afterwards. Although most of them were looted, the graves and tombs have become the source of the greatest amount of information about Viminacium architecture. They provide us with valuable data on used materials, masonry techniques, constructions, as well as architectural forms.

The southern Viminacium necropolises were extensively excavated during the seventies and eighties of the XX century, but also in smaller scale during the last few years. Burials in these necropolises were performed from the middle of the I to the middle of the VI century. The variety of burial structures were found here, which enabled researchers to set up typologies of its masonry constructions, dated to the period from the middle of the III to the middle of the V century. Since the beginning of the XXI century, eastern necropolises have been researched, offering us more information on Viminacium masonry burial structures.

The numerous masonry graves were discovered in Viminacium necropolises, as well as several overground and underground monumental tombs called memorial buildings or family mausoleums by researchers, having various spatial organizations and forms. According to some of the researchers, the grave with trapezial cross-section was the specificity of Viminacium. Most of the wall painted graves had this cross-section.

The simple gravestones of Viminacium have not been preserved in situ, but many of them have been saved being used as building material or spolia in the Middle Ages. It was also done in the ancient period when the gravestones were used for the construction of later graves or city walls. Also, the building material – bricks and stone blocks, originating from various ruined structures, was often secondarily used in the ancient graves. These processes bring valuable information on ways of reusing the structures and materials during the ancient period, but also on the relation of the ancient people to the past.

### Settlement Size, History, and Mortality at Roman Viminacium: Testing the Urban Graveyard Hypothesis

C. Scott Speal

It is a widely held view that ancient cities were decidedly unhealthy environments. Some scholars would go so far as to proclaim an 'iron law' in which larger pre-Industrial cities with populations of over 10,000 or so were unable to sustain their numbers without constant immigration from the rural hinterlands due to excessive levels of mortality. Critics, on the other hand, have cited the trend of increasing urban growth over the last several millennia, and the ability of the rural component of urbanized civilizations to grow in unison with their urban counterparts, to discredit this 'Urban Graveyard Effect' as any such general principle.

The present study therefore examined mortality at the city of Viminacium on the Danube fron-

tier in an attempt to test the Urban Graveyard Hypothesis using skeletal remains from a provincial Late Roman context. Given the known trajectory of urban development at Viminacium, which began as a small military outpost on the Roman Limes in the 1st Century and concluded as a large, regionally important political and economic center of some 30,000 persons during the 5th century, it was possible to study changes in health as settlement size and density increased over this period through the examination of osteological material from the graveyards surrounding the ancient city. Associated grave goods were used to assign chronology to 93 skeletons recovered from the immediate vicinity of the city. Recently developed skeletal aging techniques designed to transcend some of the traditional limitations of paleo-demography allowed construction of an overall composite mortality curve for the site, as well as evaluation of changes in survivorship and the age-dependent hazard of death over time as the city grew, through computational survival analysis using STATA analytical software.

Mortality estimates produced through the survival analysis for the 4th Century—associated with the highest degree of urbanism—suggest greater survivorship at that time than during either preceding period. This finding contradicts the tenets of the Urban Graveyard Hypothesis. Instead, analysis found survivorship to be clearly lower during the 3rd Century, and the hazard of death for all ages from adolescence up to around age 60 to be substantially higher during that period, than in either earlier or later centuries. These results tend to suggest that historically specific conditions, namely the Third Century Crisis known from ancient literature and documentary sources, were more influential upon population dynamics than overall settlement size or density at ancient Viminacium.

### 24. ARTS AND CRAFTS ALONG LIMES

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## Roman Cameos With Female Busts from the Limes Region: Their Meaning and Role in the Political Propaganda

Ivana Popović

In the Limes region about 40 cameos with the representation of the female bust in profile were founded. In contrast to the summarily treated faces, the female hairstyle on the cameos is represented in detail, authentically reflecting the fashion dictated by the empresses. Judging the depicted hairstyle the datation of the cameos were possible: 1) Late Antoninian Period, between 160 and 180; 2) Severan Period, between 200 and 230; 3) Late Severan - Period of Military Emperors, between 230 and 250; 4) second half of the 3rd - beginning of the 4th century. From Viminacium come 10 cameos of this type, but the specimens from Intercisa, Ratiaria, Novae and Durostorum are also known. The stylistic analysis of cameos with the representation of the female bust in profile, observed together with the place where they were found, shows that they were produced in the workshops located in the civilian settlements next to the military camps on Danube Limes which, mostly, originate from the late Antoninian and Severan Period. The answer to the question why this happened at this time could be found in the fact that at first Marcus Aurelius and after him Septimius Severus have transgressed the earlier established rule that the emperors through the principle of adoption do not appoint their successor from the group of their descendants. These two emperors by proclaiming their sons their successors tried to establish their dynasties based on consanguinity. Because of that the wives, the mothers of the future emperors, had a special role. The representations on the cameos are probably the models of these empresses, whose characteristic feature was the specific hairstyle. As the features of the face of the represented women mainly lack any individual characteristics, we believe that they were made on the basis of the models-cardboards with the representations of the empresses, which were in circulation in the workshops along the Danube-Rhine Limes. In the time of Marcus Aurelius the provinces on Danube became very important for the defence of the Empire, and because of their strategic position they came into the focus of the imperial propaganda politics. The military troops from the Danube regions proclaimed Septimius Severus the emperor. He had, as also did his son and heir Caracalla, visited the cities on Danube, appropriating large sums of money for their reconstruction. The number and quality of cameos of this type is declining rapidly at the end and after the rule of the emperors from the dynasty of Severi.

### Roman engraved gems from Burgenae in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb

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Within the Roman-period glyptic collection in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, which contains more than 400 pieces, there is a small group of mainly unpublished engraved gems from Novi Banovci (Burgenae). It consists of 4 intaglios and 3 glass gems, all of which were stray finds acquired for the Museum collection at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. At the site of Novi Banovci, situated on the Danube river in Vojvodina, Serbia, in 1st century AD a Roman military fort Burgenae was built, with many auxilliary units garrisoned there during the four centuries of its existance. The site is well-know for numerous archaeological finds. Engraved gems from Burgenae in the Archaeological museum in Zagreb, although stray finds, can be connected with the presence of military units on the site. They

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