

South East Europe Project DANUBE LIMES BRAND

Extension of the Danube Limes UNESCO World Heritage in the Lower Danube

Military finds on the excavation and archaeogeophysical prospection results upon the Danube Limes fort site Ad Militare in Croatia

Location

Roman fort *Ad Militare* is situated on a hilltop on the right bank of the Danube River west of the modern-day settlement Batina in Baranja, Croatia. Remains of the fort have been known since late 18th century (Fig. 1. a, b).



Fig. 1. a

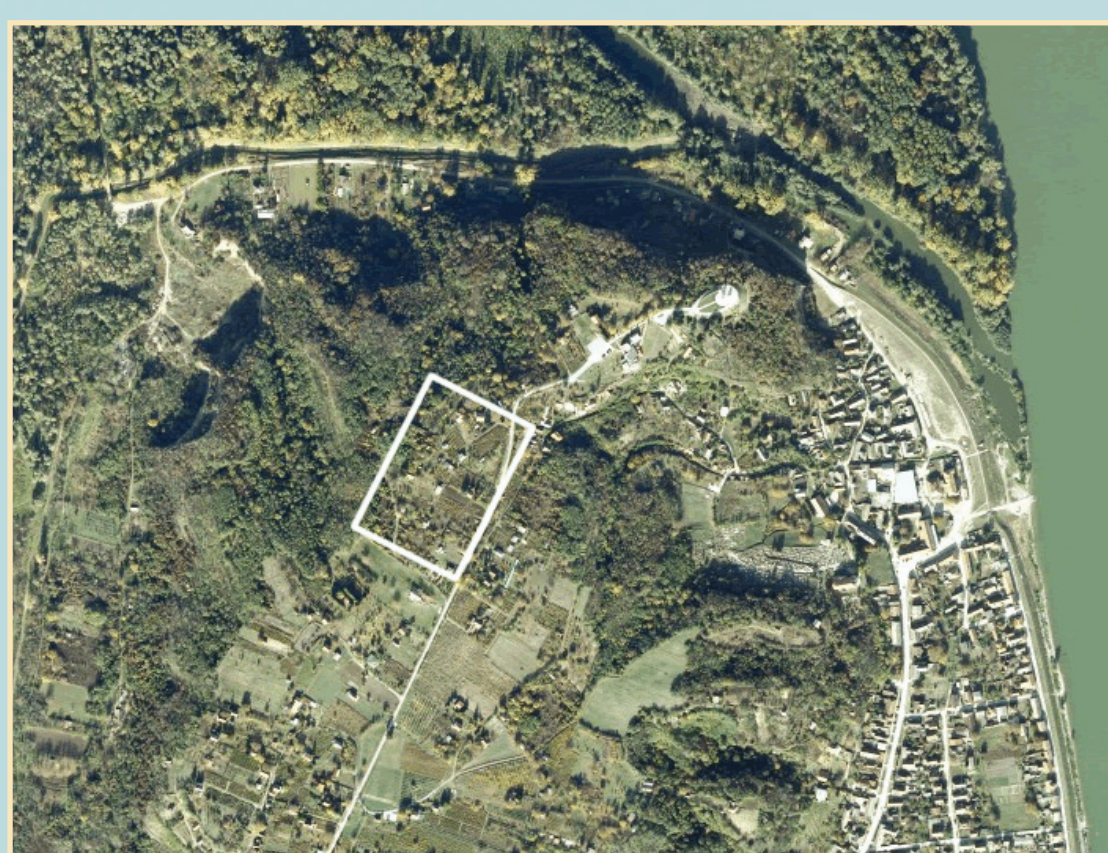


Fig. 1. b

Field survey and archaeological excavation

Modern field survey and archaeological excavation were conducted in Batina in 2008 for the first time since 1970s, with the financial support of the Ministry of Culture, Republic of Croatia. These surveys were implemented by two national projects: The Archaeological heritage of Baranja and The Danube Limes in Croatia. Both projects have been run by the experts of Museum of Slavonia and external partners. From 2008 onwards, two more Roman Limes military installations have been documented in Batina area: sections of ditches of a marching camp were excavated and buried walls of a potential fortlet or watchtower were identified on the Bansko Brdo hillside terraces.

Geophysical surveys

Croatian and Slovenian experts conducted geophysical surveys on the fort *Ad Militare* in 2010, financially supported by BRESCE Office, Italy and the Croatian Ministry of Culture in 2012 (Fig. 2. a, b).



Fig. 2. a



Fig. 2. b

In 2010, remains of stone headquarters building (*principia*) with semicircular apse and five back rooms were identified in the *retentura* of the fort. During the geophysical survey, parts of transversal chamber were found next to the front face of the headquarters. To the north, an L-shaped building was discovered; possibly the remains of a commander's house (*praetorium*) or barracks (*centuriae*). Other buildings in the interior of the fort might have been made from organic material. In three places, sections of curtain walls of the fort were detected by ground penetrating radar. The same area was also surveyed with the geoelectrical resistance method. In 2012, there was a georadar survey in the northwestern area of the *Ad Militare* to identify the shape of the corner towers of the fort. However, they could not be detected on the ground penetrating radar survey results. It has been confirmed, beyond any doubt, that northeastern section of *Ad Militare* rampart was destroyed by road construction in the 20th century.

Architectural findings

Many tiles with stamps made by different Roman auxiliary and legionary units originate from *Ad Militare* or from the fort's immediate surroundings. Some of them are kept in the depot of the Museum of Slavonia.

Considering the names of military units identified on stamped tiles, several building phases of the fort *Ad Militare* can be presumed. *Cohors II Asturum* could have populated the fort in the 2nd century. The tile stamped *coh II ast* is the only one so far that originates from an archaeological excavation undertaken by Danica Pinterović in 1972 (Fig. 3. a). Since 2008, two more tiles, also likely to have been made by *cohors II Asturum* were found in Batina and stored in the Archaeological Museum Osijek depot (Fig. 3. b, c). In 2012, the Archaeological Museum became part of the Museum of Slavonia Osijek.

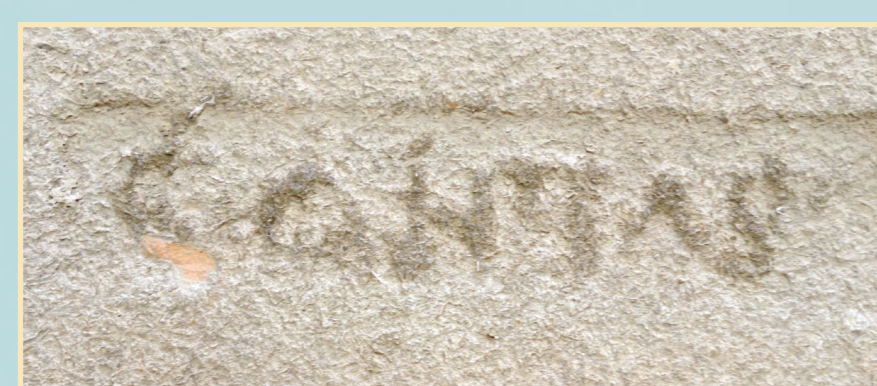


Fig. 3. a



Fig. 3. b



Fig. 3. c



Fig. 3. d



Fig. 3. e



Fig. 3. f

Cohors VII Breucorum could have been on the site during the first half of the 3rd century while the detachments of *legio VI Herculia* could have been situated in the fort after 296 AD. Detachment or an engineer of *legio II Adiutrix* could have renovated the fort any time between 1st and the 4th century because the legion was permanently situated upstream in *Aquincum* (Budapest) during the period in question. Three tiles stamped by that unit were found on the fort site as chance finds (Fig. 3. d, e, f). Twelve more tiles stamped by *legio II Adiutrix* from Batina should have been stored in the Museum of Slavonia. They are inscribed in the Museum's Inventory book but are presently unaccounted for.

More tiles found in the late 19th and early 20th century are known from the site. They were published by Janos Szilagyi and stored in the National Museum of Hungary, Budapest.

Results

The site *Ad Militare* was the first locality in the Croatian section of the Limes whose precise boundaries were determined by Igor Vukmanić and Branko Mušić at 1.7-1.9 ha (210x90m) in 2010. In 1975, Mirko Bulat published that the surface of the fort occupied about 4.4 ha (220x200m). However, the topography of the place and the results of geophysical surveys confirmed that the area of the fort is two times smaller than what was initially believed.

Objectives

Based on the geophysical research conducted in 2010 and 2012 (the surveys will continue) and results of archaeological excavations conducted in 1970s, improvements for the visualization of the *Ad Militare* fort will be implemented through the South East Europe-Danube Limes brand project.

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