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ORIGINAL RESEARCH
PAPER

Roman imperial age belt mounting with scene from Nemeske

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ABSTRACT

Nemeske still belongs to the sparsely researched area of Baranya County. Here during plowing human bones came to light. Archaeologists of the Janus Pannonius Museum conducted a rescue excavation and an instrumental survey, too. During the excavation three Árpadian period tombs were found. In survey trenches traces of several demolished Roman walls were observed. The most interesting find is a bronze plate depicting an armed rider, a lion and an altar.

KEYWORDS

Roman Age, Árpadian Age, buildings, bronze plate, Baranya County

INTRODUCTION

The archaeological researches in Baranya County are exactly so unequal as in other counties. Prior to the 1989 change in the form of Hungarian state and government system the known archaeological sites were denser around towns of the museums, or the particular interest of an enthusiastic researcher shaped further this picture. The collection area was expanded under the new state, the number of known archaeological sites increased in the territory of large-scale investments, highway constructions and some of the less researched areas. However, Nemeske still belongs to the sparsely researched area of the county, it is far from the museums of Pécs and Kaposvár¹ (Fig. 12).

SITE AND THE EXCAVATION

Between March 25–28, 2019 a rescue excavation was carried out in the settlement of Nemeske² near Szigetvár, at Téglás-dűlő³ (Fig. 1/1). The designation “Téglás-dűlő” refers to the large number of Roman bricks visible on the surface⁴ (Fig. 1/2).

In the central part of the researched area the discovered finds were grouped in an area of approximately 50 x 30 m. Here lies the garden belonging to the house at Fő utca (Main Street) No. 1, where traces of a grave were found during plowing. During the rescue excavation three survey trenches were opened here⁵ (Fig. 2). The excavations revealed the remains of imperial buildings and three tombs of an Árpadian period cemetery. The picture was supplemented by

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¹Drawings by Éva Szakos and Andrea Vaday.

²The excavation was carried out by Gergely Kovaliczky and Olivér Gábor. Here we thank G. Kovaliczky for his work too.

³Made by László Gombor.

⁴The showed photos of the site in this article were made by G. Kovaliczky.

⁵Drawing by Gábor Nagy. The highlighted details of the trenches originated from Fig. 2.

a field survey and a metal detector survey, so with the help of these the extent of the Roman site could be determined on the basis of surface traces: in the north the kindergarten, in the south the Fő utca No. 1 house, east of Fő utca No. 5 in the area between the houses. In the west, on the other side of the road, even at a distance of 80 m, there were surface finds. This is also illustrated by scattered coins found in the surveys⁶ (Fig. 3).

In addition to Roman coins found in a ploughed field during the instrumental survey, pieces of brick, stone, and mortar indicated that most of the underground remains of the buildings had already been destroyed. This was confirmed by the excavation. The primary layer of the walls remained in spots. In most cases, however, traces of the removed funds could be documented, and thin and narrow faint traces of mortar indicated the presence of former walls. After the destruction, the upper part of the debris layer mixed with mortar, bricks and smaller stone fragments was also plowed, so that the remains were even more shattered (E. g.: Fig. 18/5A, 19/3–4). The site is located on a flat area, with no prominence or natural watercourses nearby, yet a fairly thick layer of earth has been destroyed over the past centuries thanks to erosion.

Graves of a cemetery were later dug into the Roman strata, three of which were unearthed in trench No. I (Fig. 4/1). The first grave was lying at the southeast wall of the trench (Obj. No. 1), which was plowed apart and destroyed by plowing, and its bottom was 50 cm deep and only faintly outlined (Fig. 4/6). In the grave only a pile of child bone and a thin-wire “S”-shaped hair ring (Fig. 4/3) remained in secondary position.⁷ The second tomb (Obj. No. 2) was intact (Fig. 4/4). The skull of the body laid on his back leaned toward his/her right shoulder at the western end of the tomb. The bones turned reddish in some places. Only one “S”-ended hair ring remained, which was smaller and thicker than the previous one (Fig. 4/2). Object No. 3 was a West–East grave of an adult, and only its parts, below the pelvis reached into the excavation trench (Fig. 4/5).

The thin-wire “S”-ended hair ring was in use from the late 10th to the 12th century, and the thick-wired, ribbed “S”-ended type was in use from the second half of the 11th century to the 12th.⁸ Based on this these graves of common people can be dated to the 11th–12th centuries. During the field survey, the boundaries of the cemetery could not be determined, but presumably do not extend beyond the Roman Age site. They were observed in the excavation ditches only in a small place, and no further evidence of graves or plowed bones appeared in the field.

In trench the No. I, in addition to the three Árpáadian period tombs, there were remains of imperial age Roman buildings. The grave No. 2 cut through the calcareous, mortar remains of a Roman object (Obj. No. 4), two sections of which were still visible to the north and south of the grave. Only one

brick remained from the east ascending wall (Fig. 18/3B), the rest was taken out. The thicker lime pieces of plaster also remained here (Fig. 18/3A). On the western side of the remaining brick there were traces of bricks once laid in rows of 98–100 cm wide. These bricks were took out during the demolition, and only the thin strips of mortar between the once bricks remained, as a net-like pattern (Fig. 18/3C). A larger, fallen piece of plaster from the wall (Obj. No. 6) was found, too (Fig. 18/1–2, 3D). At the western longitudinal side of the excavation trench, at the edge of the removed rows of bricks, there was a thin band mortar strip similar to its eastern edge.

On the wall of trench No. I, it could be seen due to the debris, a plowed layer, the traces of the side walls of tomb 2 remained only in the lower, untouched subsoil (Fig. 4/4); the pit was filled with mixed soil when the tomb was buried. The material of the wall (Obj. No. 4) was picked up before the Árpáadian Era, presumably because of its building material.

The large-scale destruction made difficult to interpret the archaeological remains. The two sections of Obj. No. 4 (Fig. 18/2A–2B) cut off by the tomb are widen (Fig. 18/2C), and they ended in an amorphous dig (Obj. No. 7). Another wall (Obj. No. 10) joined here perpendicularly, which was picked up much deeper, in several steps, when the wall was demolished to obtain the building material. In the north and south walls of the robber pit, a cut-out continuation of the foundation of object No. 4 was outlined. Then followed object No. 8: one square meter in size section with mortar, small pieces of brick and an imprint of a larger brick. Like in object No. 6, there was a larger piece of plaster too. The connection between the walls No. 4 and No. 10 was completely destroyed while extracting the building materials from the pit – it was no longer possible to determine whether they were interwalled.

The continuation of trench No. I was trench No. II. At the SW end of this was a 5 m long archaeological phenomenon. At the western side of the excavation trench the foundation strip of a wall running into NW–SE direction was visible (Obj. No. 12) (Fig. 19/1–2). On the walls of the excavation trench the location of another removed wall filled with debris (Obj. No. 5) also could be observed. This wall was perpendicular to the previous (Fig. 19/3, 5). After the raw material was extracted only lime, mortar brick pieces and stones remained in the debris (Fig. 19/4).

The ditch No. III was opened 19 m east of the previous ones. The large amount of construction debris made it likely that new walls would emerge there. Here, too, we found traces of barbaric vandalism. At a depth of 30–40 cm a truly contiguous mortared surface (Obj. No. 11) unfolded along the eastern wall of the excavation trench (Fig. 20/1–2). An enlarged detail (Fig. 20/3) shows the foundation of a removed part. At the southeast end of the trench the former surface deepened steeply. Here a staircase led down. This was not a robber pit, because the former stepping surface was outlined on the sidewall of the ditch (Fig. 21/2F). One of the stair bricks remained on the west side of the next step (Fig. 20/2A, 4A). At the top of the first step, the outline of a picked-up paving brick was outlined (Fig. 20/2B). On the eastern side of the staircase only the traces of mortar

⁶Compiled by Béla Simon. Only the coins with well-defined location and the finding place of the disk are shown in the image.

⁷Fig. 4/2–3. Photo: Anikó Tímárné Sinkó.

⁸In detail: SZÓKE–VÁNDOR 1987, 54–57.

remained, the fragments of the paving brick fell deeper. The upper layer of the ditches was grayish, porous (Fig. 21/1A, 2A). On the longitudinal side a part of the wall also collapsed (Fig. 21/2B). Beneath it was a debris layer of soil mixed with tiny pieces of brick and stone (Fig. 1/1C, 2C). At the narrow southeastern end of the trench, the soil deepening extended 25–27 cm long. The earth filled part here was almost black, and its outline at the bottom of the trench curved slightly (Fig. 21/1E). On both trench sides it was detectable that the construction debris filled the once-open surface more deeply. The debris layer became even more compacted and sunken over time. Below, the loose, waterlogged soil fell out in one piece during the excavation (Fig. 21/2D). On both sides of the excavation trench the debris was much looser and wetter towards the bottom of the trench, as it could be observed. In the other two survey ditches the imperial age level was almost uniform, so it is a question of why the soil deepened so much here. At this depth, there was not any building material suitable for removal. The staircase shows the internal level difference of the Roman part of the building. In a flat terrain this can only be interpreted if the stairs have led to another object. There was not any cellar, as the two steps of the stair did not lead deep enough for that. Moisture and loose soil disintegration indicate stronger wetting. The same was not detected in ditch No. I. (Fig. 8/4), therefore, the wetting of ditch No. III could not have been caused by the higher groundwater level. The subsidence of the layers indicates that here was a deeper pit in which the water is infiltrating to this day. The phenomenon suggests a well.⁹ The rim of the well pit was covered with floor bricks in a circle to prevent the well wall from collapsing. At the bottom of the ditch the arc of the dark spot draws a circle 2.9–3 m in diameter, which is also the diameter of the well (Fig. 21/1E).

The removed longitudinal walls in the three excavation trenches run in NE–SW directions. It cannot be a coincidence that the scatter of coins also shows this direction. Presumably a road could have led here. This is the subject of further investigation, that if the road is a vicinal connecting to the main road, or just an alley between the houses?

THE PLATE WITH FIGHTING SCENE FOUND IN NEMESKE

The most prominent finding of the excavation was a worn silver-plated bronze plate¹⁰ (Fig. 5). It was a sporadic artifact found northeast of the survey trenches¹¹ (Fig. 3/A). The 8 × 8 cm square plate was 1 mm thick and the plow slightly crumpled it. The four corners of the mounting were

perforated. The upper left and lower right holes still have mounting bronze rivets, and even a washer plate remains on one of them. The washers were attached to the plate at the four corners with round-headed rivets from the front, while the rivet holes were square, i.e. the rivets had a rectangular cross-section.

The 5 mm distance between the bronze plate and the rivet heads gives the thickness of the object to which it was attached. Traces of the remains of glue show discoloration in a 4 mm band on all four surface edges of the plate, as if the mounting had been in some kind of a frame was placed on it later, as it also covered part of the rider's head. The silver layer was applied to the surface using silver smoke technique and covers only the figures and objects depicted, not the background.¹²

THE FUNCTION OF THE PLATE

During the excavations fragmentary findings often are revealed, the original purpose of which is not always easy to establish. The situation is similar to the bronze plate. First it must be clarified what material the object was made of this plate decorated. Due to the 5 mm distance between the rivet head and the plate, as well as the usage of washer, metal and textile as the material can be excluded (Fig. 5), leaving the assumption of a thin wooden plate or leather.

Based on the size, shape and decoration of the plate, in the case of a wood-based substrate, it would be conceivable that it was a decoration of a chest. However, the cast bronze plate of Nemeske is thicker than the usual Pannonian pressed plate mountings of chests. If it had been nailed to wood *scrinium*, on the one hand it would be unreasonable to use a washer on the back side, and on the other hand, the detectable 5 mm thickness would be very thin.

Another option is, that the plate decorated a leather object. Based on the distance between the plate and the washer, it could be cowhide or horsehide. However, the skin decomposes relatively quickly in the ground. Although no organic matter was found nor its imprint on the plate. Several types of leather objects may have been decorated by this plate in the Roman Age.

On the double-edged, long sword (*spatha*) or dagger (*pugio*) holsters also had similarly sized metal plates. The plate of Nemeske could also have been on the leather-covered wooden sleeve. But the mountings always fit a little curved on the sleeve, while the artifact of Nemeske, though broken by a later injury, was originally straight.

It could also belong to a leather strap. However, it could not be a decoration of a harness, as the Roman horse harnesses were usually circular. In addition, *phalerae* are usually strap-distributor ornaments, while the distance of the mounting from Nemeske is enough only for one strap.

It is also conceivable that the plate was a mounting on a waist belt. Late antique big buckles were often adorned with also large metal plates corresponding to the width of the

⁹Unfortunately there was no longer opportunity to excavate the well.

¹⁰Thanks to István Fűzi for the photo. Below, in the analysis, some details were also borrowed from his photos, supplemented in some cases by analytical drawings.

¹¹Janus Pannonius Múzeum, Inv. No.: 2019.5.1. The plate was found by Róbert Bencsik amateur archaeologist.

¹²Thanks to the goldsmiths Kristóf Kiltau and Béla Rózsa for their observations on the silvering technology of the plate.

leather strap. However, the exact same representations of belt mountings are not known so far, just similar ones.¹³

Several embossed belt mountings and stap ends on which a rider fights a lion are known from narrower belts.¹⁴ A similar mounting was found in Pécs.¹⁵ However, these are mostly pieces with a mythological background. These representations also appear on the disc brooch of the so called Keszthely culture,¹⁶ but the plate of Nemeske does not belong to the group of brooches either in terms of its shape or size.

It is also worth mentioning a fragmentary belt mounting with a hunting scene from Somogyzsitva-Szöcsénypuszta¹⁷ (Fig. 6/1). Unlike the known fittings, this is not an embossed decoration, but a cast and scratched pattern. This mounting of the belt is decorated on both sides. Its bead frame was combine molded with the plate, and the decoration was engraved on the object, as so as on the finding of Nemeske. On one side of the mounting of the belt a rider figure wearing an imperial diamond hunts a deer, and the other side is decorated with an erotic scene. Due to the poor quality of the drawing, Edit B. Thomas thought it was just a sketch and the piece was not completed.¹⁸ Contrary to this, however, it is not a question of pre-scratching, but of drawing the surface of the plate full of definite and deep engraved lines. The drawing, on the other hand, is indeed quite rough. On the fragmentary mounting, as on the plate of Nemeske, the stabbed animal has the worst shape, so it cannot be identified with complete safety either.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MAKING THE BELT MOUNTING OF NEMESKE

Interpretation of its representation is also complicated by the injuries as well as the small size of the object. In addition to surface damage, there is another fracture at the rider's head. The impact hit the top of the plate, here it cracked slightly, bent, deformed and was split. Due to the stiffness of the bronze plate, the crack passes on at the back of the plate. The eyes of the half-profile face were apart from each other at an irregular distance, and the outline of the helmet was also changed (Fig. 7/A–B). The original shape of the face was reconstructed in a drawing (Fig. 7/C).

The figure was created in several steps. First, the main outlines of the pattern were scratched onto the plate with a thin line. The bronzesmith was free to rotate the plate held in his hand while engraving the pattern. From that on, however, the object had to be fastened, as he needed both hands. He made the final contours with metal punching tool

and hammer. However, this did not work everywhere, which can be seen e.g. on the irregular line at the rider's face. The latter is a much more superficial and simpler representation than pre-scratching (Fig. 7/A–C).

Thicker lines also draw the shape of the rider, the lion, the altar-like object, the spear, and the plants. The contour lines were engraved intermittently (Fig. 11/7). These line-sections do not reach with together exactly everywhere. At the start of the line sections the metal punching tool left a deeper mark, while their ends became shallow. The “slipping out” of the metal punching tool from the end of the line sections can be seen very well at the pikestaff, on the side of the leaf of the plant, and on the grass(?), etc. (Fig. 8/4E, G–H). Neither the altar-like object nor the grass marking the line of the ground adjust to the edge of the plate. The lines became inadvertently longer because the workpiece could slip out of the fastening, thus, the scratched further lines also appeared as an error (Fig. 10/1C), and the altar-like object also became oblique, and the grass was forced to adjust to this.

At several parts of the plate, the rough parallel lines show on engraved technic from the bottom up (e.g. on the spear and the plant) (Fig. 11/3), for the metal punching tool marks thicken and deepen towards the lower edge of the plate. In the case of curved lines, however, the metal punching tool got stuck, so they continued irregularly. For example, neither of the two tapered ends of the shield succeeded in exactly the same way. Inaccuracy can also be observed in several places on the drawing. They are visible most at the horse's mouth, trappings (Fig. 9/1A), and altar-like object (Fig. 10/1B).

In addition to the metal punching the craftsman also used another tool with a sharper tip. With this was scratched the thinner hair drawn more densely on the lion's chin and chest, and on the front leg (Fig. 11/1). The hatching is thick along the outline of the animal (Fig. 11/4) and thin at the rest of the body (Fig. 11/2).

There are two types of circular metal punching tool marks on the plate. One is framed by a circular rib with an indentation inside, the other is smaller without a circular rib. This does not refer to two devices, but only to one metal punching tool whose tip protrudes in a circular shape from the cylindrical body.¹⁹ If one hits it harder, the tip of the tool will also leave a circular mark around the point. The circular punched pattern is also roughened, in several cases not fitting to the contour lines already drawn. The punching was the latest pattern. In the case of an altar-like object, the diagonal row of punches runs over the horizontal contour line and the vertical border at the edge of the image (Fig. 10/1A). The same phenomenon can be seen in the blood splashing from the lion's back (Fig. 11/9), on the bridle (Fig. 9/1B), and on the strap around the horse's tail (Fig. 11/6).

As mentioned above, only the figures, plants, and objects were silvered. All this, together with the bronze colour of the background, created a polychrome effect. Silver plating can be done in several ways. The lines were not deepened on the plate of Nemeske, but the plate was coated with silver within

¹³E.g. BULLINGER 1969, 8, Abb. 30, Taf. 42.1.

¹⁴See with earlier literatures: TÓTH 2005; MILAVEC 2011.

¹⁵FÜLEP–BURGER 1979, 268, Fig. 3.

¹⁶By quoting from the previous literature: TÓTH 2005.

¹⁷Hungarian National Museum, Inv. No. 94.1887.1. MILAVEC 2011, 141, Fig. 5.7.

¹⁸THOMAS 1988, 140, Pl. V. 6–7.

¹⁹The tip of the metal punching tool.

the thicker contour lines over the parallel incisions (Fig. 11/3). The disadvantage of this method is that the thin and soft silver layer on large surfaces can easily be worn out. To prevent this, the surfaces were roughened before silver plating. In the case of the horse and its rider this was achieved with very thin scratches. In addition, a medium-thick incision was used at the lion (Fig. 11/1, 2, 4). This was not just a technological solution, but it also mimicked the lion's fur.

The depiction of the horse and the rider is of much better quality than the depiction of the lion or the rough altar-like object. The question is, what is the reason for this? It may be that it is not the work of the same man: one man thinly sketched and then finalized the contours and the simpler details might have been done by his *famulus*. It needs special explanation that the horse and the rider are of good quality, in turn the shaping of the lion is quite rudimentary. The general shape of horses is very similar in Greek and Roman mythological, combat, or hunting scenes. It is not excluded that the maker of the plate of Nemeske also worked following a pattern book. The motif had been living on in later ages. Based on this it can be assumed that classical Roman pattern books may have been in use even later. But it cannot be ruled out that, since the most characteristic representation of the horse is the side view, this pictorial formulation is often repeated regardless of the pattern.

A discolored part, 3 to 4 mm wide, appears at the edge of the plate, suggesting a former frame. The inner edges of the frame-like discoloration are wavy, which may also correspond to a bead string frame. Bead string frame decoration is common on the embossed belt (Fig. 15/5–6)²⁰ and chest metal mountings (Fig. 15/3–4).

The wavy discoloration on the plate of Nemeske is similar to beaded string frames. Here, however, a separate frame was attached to the object. The frame was made in one piece, as would not have enough place for two metal sheets fastened to each other between the nail head and the plate. However, the discoloration of the edges of the plate is not uniform in colour (Fig. 9G). It is assumed that there may be the trace of an embossed bead string edge fixed with adhesive. There is not a wavy line on the outer edges of the plate because the row of beads extended beyond the edge of the plate or only the inner edge of the frame was wavy. There were several types of bead frames on craft products. Interlocking regular hemispheres (Fig. 15/5–6), or a series of non-contacting hemispheres. Both versions occurs on the Intercisa mounting (Fig. 15/4). Dense regular spherical slice shape and rice grain-shaped frame occur on the strap end, which was found in the Bogdáni Road cemetery in Budapest.²¹ Many variations of the motif are known, which occur also together on one object. There are also late imperial examples that the pearl frames and the image plates were made from separate pieces. On a piece of an Asian treasure bead frame was soldered to the plate, which also shows a rider struggling with a lion²² (Fig. 6/2). Also similar is a belt

from Asia Minor, consisting of three plates and a buckle, where the embossed gold plates were fastened in silver bead frames²³ (Fig. 6/3).

Traces of the once frame can also be seen on other similar objects. One is a rectangular bronze plate depicting a hunting from the second half of the 4th century, or from the beginning of the 5th century.²⁴ The outline of the pattern was also engraved in it, then the shapes were filled with silver and copper inserts. In addition to the discoloration caused by the once frame, the holes of the nails are also visible here in the corners. However, the polychrome plate is much larger: 15 cm high and 18.7 cm wide.²⁵ There is a similar discoloration on a copper and silver-plated bronze plate recorded at the Rome site, on which Hercules fights the Hydria.²⁶ This plate is slightly trapezoidal, 18.8 cm high, 9.2 cm at the top and 8.8 cm wide at the bottom. However, the silvering of figures and objects on the artefact of Nemeske is not an insert, and the standard of its design is also much lower, more provincial.

DETAILS OF THE REPRESENTATION

The mounting is dominated by a figure of a man riding to the left, who stabs down a maned predator with his spear. The rider's outfit is a long-sleeved outerwear and shorts. His left foot is partially obscured by the winding tail of the stabbed animal. He has a shield in his left hand, his right hand obscured by the horse's head, and holding a spear. His shaved face was cut through by the crack running on the bronze plate (Fig. 7/A–B). The error can only be partially corrected (Fig. 7/C). The sketched pattern was not exactly followed by the broader line of the redraw (Fig. 7/D). His hemispherical helmet sits tightly on his head. The front plate of the helmet was marked with three rows of dense punctures that taper toward the nape of the neck and end in a curved line. The latter is either the neck protection plate of the helmet or the neck line of the man. The helmet does not appear to have a face shield. The rest of the helmet was adorned by rarer points. Similar helmets are known from other contemporary representations (Fig. 14/4²⁷ and Fig. 14/5²⁸).

The rider leans back slightly in the saddle of the ascending horse. In his left forearm he wears his shield, holding the bridle. The shield is mandorla-shaped. Its edges

²³The find is dated to the end of the 4th century or the beginning of the 5th century. – FEUGÈRE 1992, Fig. 3:2; Pl. 1; MILAVEC 2011, 141–142, Fig. 6.1; GUŠTIN 2019, Fig. 3.

²⁴MINTO 1935, 133–134, Tav. 92; KLEINBAUER 1976, 23–24, Fig. 25; ZWIRN 1979, No. 77; VIDA 2017, 154–155, Abb. 96.

²⁵The function of the disc is questionable, it may have belonged to a box, furniture or other object: ZWIRN 1979, 87, with earlier literary.

²⁶It is only an assumption that the plate is one of a series depicting the twelve fights of Heracles: SHELTON 1979, 160–161, No. 137, with earlier literature.

²⁷KOEPP 1921, 15, after the Fig. No. 4 on the gravestone of C. Romanus.

²⁸Roman soldiers on Trajan's Column.

²⁰E.g. MILAVEC 2011, Fig. 5.1–11.

²¹PARRAGI 1963, 315, 29–31.

²²SOMMER 1984, Pl. 54,10–11; MILAVEC 2011, 142, Fig. 6.2.

were only at the upper part decorated with dot line. In the middle of its longitudinal axis, two also mandorla-shape patterns were scratched. In the middle of the shield a circle was engraved on each side on the plate. Finally, the decoration was completed by a row of dots forming a cross shape in the middle of the shield.

A cavalry shield without umbo was depicted on the plate of Nemeske (Fig. 13/1). A similar form appeared also among infantry shields, e.g. on the tombstone of Cn. Musius Aquilifer in Mainz²⁹ (Fig. 13/3), but it can also be found in many battle and hunting scenes as a cavalry shield, such as the detail of the mosaic of the Nile villa in Leptis Magna (Lebda, Libya)³⁰ (Fig. 13/2). This type of shield also appears several times on Trajan's Column with both Roman and Dacian warriors (Fig. 13/4, 14/5). Among the oval-shaped shields, the type with peak end is rare, but one of them is visible on the backs of Julius Caesar's aureus and denarius, among the weapons looted from the Gauls (Fig. 13/5), it even appears on a silver platter in northern Syria depicting cavalry lion hunting³¹ (Fig. 17/1). The two ends of the shield have different shapes, what presumably due more to inaccuracies.

The rider's helmet, shield and spear belong to military equipment. He also wears everyday clothes and not an armor-plating, which also shows that this is not a fighting scene.³² Armed riders appear also in hunting scenes.³³ Among others, these can be seen on the mosaic of Piazza Armerina³⁴ dated to the end of the 2nd century or beginning the 3rd century, and the mosaic of Villa Tellaro dated to the second half of the 4th century.³⁵ The theme also appears on the mosaic of Villa Tiendas³⁶ (Fig. 16/7) and on the floor of villa Olmeda in Pedrosa de la Vega, dated to the end of 4th century³⁷ (Fig. 13/3). Hunting scene mosaics were also popular in Africa. These include the 3rd-century mosaic in Althiburus³⁸ and the mid-4th-century mosaic in the Smirat amphitheatrum.³⁹ The same can be seen on the Lion Hunting scene of the Nile Mosaic⁴⁰ (Fig. 16/2, 4). A beautiful example of the later survival of the motif is the early Byzantine jug in Budakalász, in which the hunting scene appears in several formulations.⁴¹

The tip of the horizontally kept spear is leaf-shaped (Fig. 8/2C). The rider holds the long-handled spear at his

head height with his obscured right hand. In addition, they could even used some throwing spear in the hunt (Fig. 16/2), even several pieces (Fig. 16/4–5).⁴²

Blood drips down from the spear between the rider's face and the horse's head (Fig. 8/1B, 2B). Starting from the tip of the spear, a flag with a tapered end was depicted, beginning in an oval hoop and its end smoothed to the spear handle (Fig. 8/3D). Beneath the flag, between the horse and the lion's head, there is also a line consists of dense, parallel oblique notches (Fig. 8/1A). The flag (*vexillum*) adorning the end of the spear is unusual for the Romans. In Roman military depictions the rectangular flag hangs from a lath attached perpendicular to the handle of a spear or rod. Both the method of suspension and their shape differ from the flag depicted on the metal plate of Nemeske. It could also arise that a so-called dragon flag would have been depicted by the engraver.⁴³ This would formally correspond to the tapered end of the flag, which was depicted on, among other things, the northeast and southwest sides of the base of the Trajan's Column.⁴⁴ (Fig. 14/1) This flag also appears in a Roman setting on the Ludovisi sarcophagus,⁴⁵ but can also be found on the Sarcophagus of Portonaccio⁴⁶ (Fig. 4/2). However, there is not a dragon head at the end of the flag on the plate of Nemeske, so it is more like a windbag. A flag, windbag, or ribbon attached to a spear may have had different functions. In wars, dragon flags could indicate their belonging to a special team or unit, but in the event of an attack, the sound of the wind blowing through them could also frighten the enemy. Several types of animal heads may have belonged to the tubular flag,⁴⁷ but it could even have been without an animal head,⁴⁸ as it is depicted on the plate of Nemeske. However, simpler flags and ribbons may have played a role also in the hunt, whereas the indication of the wind direction is also an important consideration when scouting wild animals. Nevertheless, neither its written mention nor its pictorial wording is known about windbags in imperial hunting scenes, and they appear only in military-style depictions. Interesting is the hunting scene mosaic in Oudna, already mentioned above (fn. 49), where the middle cavalry figure keeps two javelins in his left hand and attacks the female lion with the third spear in his right hand. Ribbons were depicted at the end of the latter javelin. The question, however, is for what purpose they served (Fig. 16/5). At the turn of the 5th and 6th centuries, the *vexillum* of the Heruls was the band, the *bandum*.⁴⁹ In the East, flag spears occur on the Chinese, Achaemenid, and Sassanid

²⁹KOEPP 1921, 12, Abb. 2.

³⁰ALVAREZ MARTINEZ-BASARRATE 1992–1993, Fig. 2 and ALVAREZ MARTINEZ 2017, 30, part of Fig. 6.

³¹MUNDEL MANGO 1986, 273–274; VIDA 2017, Abb. 64.

³²The hero fighting the dragon in full armor was depicted only later, in the Middle Ages: GERO 1978, 158.

³³SZABADVÁRY 2018, 397.

³⁴DUNBABIN 1999, 130–135, Fig. 137; WALKER, 2012, 67, Fig. 27.

³⁵DUNBABIN 1999, 142, Fig. 147.

³⁶ALVAREZ MARTINEZ-BASARRATE 1992–1993, Fig. 2.

³⁷DUNBABIN, 1999, 156, Fig. 160; BLÁZQUEZ MARTÍNEZ 1996, Fig. 24.

³⁸DUNBABIN 1999, 113, Figs 115, 116.

³⁹DUNBABIN 1999, 117, Fig. 118.

⁴⁰Tripoli (Libia) Museum.

⁴¹VIDA 2017.

⁴²The last one was found in Uthina (Oudna, Tunisia) as part of a mosaic dated between 200–220 AD: MECH 2017, 161 and note 18. Fig. 9.

⁴³Latest summary with antique written sources and literature: PALOTÁS 2011.

⁴⁴CICHOIRUS 1896, part of Taf. III.

⁴⁵CASTIGLIONE 1962, Fig. 60.

⁴⁶COULSTON 1991, Fig. 5. Museo delle Terme, Rome.

⁴⁷HEBBLEWHITE 2003–2004, 78.

⁴⁸PALOTÁS 2011, 96–97 and note 20.

⁴⁹Paulus Diaconus, *Historia* I. 20: *Tato vero Rodulfi vexillum, quod bandum appellat. . . abstulit*. Versions of the *Bandum* word in different readings: *bandan*, *bannum*, *blan'dum*.

representations, but in Europe, flag spears of Eastern origin appear in greater numbers only later. Such is the spear of the victorious prince on the second jar of the Nagyszentmiklós treasure, but the shape of its swallow-tailed flag differs from that of Nemeske⁵⁰ (Fig. 14/3).

The horse of the plate from Nemeske stands up on his two hind legs, kicking with his front legs, looking and nailing his ears forward, and holds up his tail. The straps of his trappings was adorned with rows of punched hoops. There is no stirrup, which is a chronological *ante quem*, since in the Carpathian Basin the first metal stirrups appeared only with the arrival of the Avars. A crescent-shaped pendant can be seen on the horse's chest (Fig. 9/1C). The *lunula* is common on antique horse trappings and their depictions, but all are usually located lower than on the plate from Nemeske.

The horse is startled by the beast turning back, or precisely the horse attacks it. It's not the rider who pulls it back because he doesn't stretch the bridle. The body of the beast is filled with incised lines imitating hair. His back and chest bleed where the spear had pierced him before, and blood splattered also from its mouth. The splashing blood is shown by tiny circular dots depicted at the end of an elongated line knot. The blood flowing in beam was represented by a row of punches between two lines. Blood can be seen in even more places in the picture. It also drips from the spear in two places, and there are blood droplets under the horse's left hind hoof as well. There are many of examples from Roman times of depicting bleeding animals in a similar style. It is clearly visible in the depiction of the Bellerophon in Villa Bruckneudorf (Fig. 16/1)⁵¹ and also on the the so-called Nile Mosaic of the villa in Leptis Magna (Fig. 16/2).

The drawing of the beast is the weakest part of the Nemeske depiction. It fights its death. Its two hind legs are on the ground, but his upper body and head are twisted. One of the front legs is up, and its claws are easy to see. A similar twisted beast was depicted on the mosaic of the villa at Olmeda (Spain) in a hunting scene.⁵² (Fig. 16/6) On its shapeless head only his mane, an eye, and an ear can be identified (Fig. 9/2). Its head appears distorted at first glance, as his lower jaw is not visible, only the teeth of wide-open mouth(?) emerge from behind his neckline (Fig. 9/2D). These could also be claws, although the claws shown (Fig. 9/2E and Fig. 9/3E) were depicted differently. The shape of the animal raises the most questions. The drawing is clumsy and meaningless, and the scratching after the drawing is in many places in the wrong place. This can also be seen on the beast's feet. The animal's two hind legs and the paw, on the other hand, are meaningful well-crafted (Fig. 9/3). This also seems to support that the engraver did not finish the record, but was left to his less talented

assistant, who did not quite understand and followed the thin scratches of the sketch. It also interferes the interpretation that the line of the abdomen below the animal's foreleg is interrupted in a stretch (Fig. 11/8). Although the animal is anatomically rough and erroneous, it can still be defined as a lion. From this we could possibly deduce a depiction of Bellerophon with the Chimera. In this case, the Greeks and Romans depicted a ram's head next to the maned lion's head and a snake's head at the end of its tail. In the case of the Etruscans we can see the same on the bronze statue of Chimaera in Arrezzo, or on a bronze mirror⁵³ (Fig. 15/2). It appears on the mountings of Roman chests, on toilet sets, and even on belts. Bellerophon, who kills the Chimaera, can be often seen on the winged Pegasus. The embossed mounting plates were usually made together with their beaded frame.⁵⁴ An example of a depiction without attributes is the relief of Villa Doria Pamphili, where the other heads of the Chimaera are barely visible and Pegasus has no wings.⁵⁵ On an Attic red-shaped *epinetron*, the goat's head almost slides into the lion's body and the snake's head doesn't stand out markedly from the tail either⁵⁶ (Fig. 15/1) Nor can it be clearly decided in the case of the chest originated from Lovas,⁵⁷ that whether the edge of the saddle cover or a part of the wing of the Pegasus was depicted (Fig. 15/3).

In the case of the Nemeske plate it can be scarcely explained that the smaller knots of the mane of the wounded animal could resemble goat horns, or the tassel of the lion's tail could be the head of a snake and the horse is not the Pegasus (Fig. 8/4F). Based on what has been said, neither the monster is Chimaera nor the horse is Pegasus. According to the myth, Bellerophon rode on the winged Pegasus, but on the our plate the horse has no wings.⁵⁸ Based on the beast's body, mane, tufted tail, and claws, it can be re-stated that a lion was depicted.

The most perplexing part of the image is the rectangular object in the lower left corner. That was depicted in plane, from the side, and the animal's blood splashed on it. The edges of the top sheet are decorated round with dots. On the edge of a solid pedestal also has a scored frame and a scored diagonal "X" inside. Three more punched points were knocked in each four parts of the box which was divided by the diagonals (Fig. 10/1). The "X" shape is common in Roman architecture, in cases of stone, clay, and wooden railings, fences, windows and doors. It also appears on a scene of a solid pedestal on the sarcophagus roof exhibited with the Ludovisi sarcophagus⁵⁹ (Fig. 10/2).

⁵³MORETTI 2016, 82, III. 53.

⁵⁴MILAVEC 2011, *passim* and Fig. 5. 1–6, 8–9.

⁵⁵Wartburg Institut 38758. Pl. Pegasus without wings: mounting from Lovas and Intercisai: TÓTH 2005, 190, with earlier literature, and at same place: Abb. 5.1, Abb. 5.3–4.

⁵⁶MORETTI 2016, 82, III. 52.

⁵⁷Another name: Balatonlovas.

⁵⁸Among other things in the fittings of Balatonlovas and Intercisa: TÓTH 2005, 190, with the previous literature, and Abb. 5.1, Abb. 5.3–4.

⁵⁹Fort he part of the picture, see: Thinglink.

⁵⁰BÓNA 1959, Fig. 58. The flag type became more common later in the Middle Ages.

⁵¹KENNER 1965, 89, 93, Abb. 11; HILLER 1970, Abb. 22; TÓTH 2005, 185; PLOYER 2012, 15, Abb. 13.

⁵²BLÁZQUEZ MARTÍNEZ 1996, Fig. 24. Part of it is in the upper corner of the mosaic.

The chest depicted on the mosaic of the villa in Piazza Armerina is the reminiscent of the object of Nemeske. It is actually a cage in which a slave was locked to lure the griffin⁶⁰ (Fig. 10/11). In the mosaic of the Dermech district of Carthage, the top of the cage resembles the one from Nemeske, as well as the “X” motif⁶¹ (Fig. 10/12).⁶² In the hunting mosaic of the Centrale Montemartini Museum a bear is lured into a trap strengthened with “X”-shaped braces⁶³ (Fig. 10/13). In the picture from Nemeske, however, the animal is not captured but killed. A similar one can be seen in the circus scenes, where there were lions among the wild animals at the performances.⁶⁴

There are altars in front of columns on the so-called calendar mosaics. For example, in the June depiction of Saint-Romain-en-Gal (France), a female figure begs for a good harvest at an altar decorated with garlands. (The jug next to it may indicate *libatio*)⁶⁵ (Fig. 10/6). The same appears in the May scene of the calendar mosaic in Thysdrus (El Djem, Tunisia). There a sacrifice at the altar of Mercury is presented, who is standing on a pedestal similar to the Nemeske one⁶⁶ (Fig. 10/5). In the picture of Nemeske, however, it is not a sacrifice at an altar, but a hunt that can be seen. At animal sacrifice, the Greeks and Romans sacrificed domestic animals on the altars and not predators. This is indicated by the name of the sacrifice (*suovetaurilia*), which is also represented on the mosaic of the Roman villa in Skala (Ion Islands, Kefalonia, Greece)⁶⁷ (Fig. 10/10).

Another form of sacrifices can be suspected in connection with the plate from Nemeske. There is a column on the Louvre’s hunting scene plate (Fig. 10/3),⁶⁸ with a bust on the top. If it belonged to an emperor, the plate could also be an image of an imperial hunt.⁶⁹ The column is narrow above the winding plant and wider below. The shape depicted in the plane corresponds to a higher pedestal or column and the altar in front of it. This can be seen in the Hadrian’s tondo, used secondarily in the triumphal arch⁷⁰ (Fig. 10/7). A double depiction of an altar and column, among others, occurs on the hunting mosaic at Room 24 of Villa Romana del Casale in Sicily⁷¹ (Fig. 10/9). An archer statue of the goddess of hunting, Artemis/Diana, stands on the column

and in the foreground a man presents a sacrifice on the altar for a successful hunt. This theme is also the subject of Cincarian mosaic (today: Henchir Toungar, Tunisia), dated into the middle of 3rd century. An upscale man presents sacrifice before hunting⁷² (Fig. 10/4). A column-altar ensemble also appears with a statue on the mosaic of Villa Daphne in Antioch (Antakya, Turkey) that can be associated with Emperor Constantine hunting⁷³ (Fig. 10/8).

The scene of defeating predatory big cats, beasts and monsters appears in art since the Paleolithic.⁷⁴ Suffice it to mention the famous mythical and historical hunter heroes: Gilgames, Assurbanapi, Samson, Bellerophon, Hercules or Alexander the Great. In the Antiquity, depictions of hunting of lions, panthers, bears, and wild boars were the most common.⁷⁵ These occur on sarcophagi (Fig. 17/5⁷⁶ and Fig. 17/6⁷⁷), mosaics (Fig. 16/1–7), chest mountings (Fig. 17/3⁷⁸ and Fig. 15/4⁷⁹), glasses (Fig. 17/2⁸⁰), belt mountings (Fig. 15/5^{81–82}), silver plates (Fig. 17/1⁸³), etc.⁸⁴ but we can also refer to the imperial hunting scenes in the triumphal arch of Constantine⁸⁵ (Fig. 17/3–4). In addition to heroes and rulers, it was also the “sport” of princes and nobles,⁸⁶ for they were glorified by the victory over a lion or even a monster. Kings’ hunting were also common in the East, but unlike the Greeks and Romans, it was mostly hunted not with a spear but with a bow. The late Roman wearer of the belt mounting from Nemeske apparently liked the example of a hero defeating a lion or the Chimaera.

The Nemeske plate and the belt end from Somogyzsitva-Szőcsénypuszta were found near the Savaria-Sopianae road (known from the *Itinerarium Antonini*).⁸⁷ This main road was easily accessible from Nemeske, whereas it is located 6 km south of the Pécs-Szentlőrinc-Szigetvár road, on a short access main road. *Stationes* and

⁶⁰DUNBABIN 1999, 134, Fig. 135; CATULLO 2000, 52–59; PENSABENE–GALLOCHIO 2011, Fig. of page 32.

⁶¹MAHJOUBI 1967, 265–266. Fig. on page 265.

⁶²MEADOW 2018, Fig. 25.

⁶³LE QUELLEC–CIVRAC 2010, 257–258, Fig. 13.

⁶⁴For lions “sacrificed” at Roman circus games, see: MACKINNON 2006. with antique written sources.

⁶⁵NEIRA JIMÉNEZ 2014, 74–75, Fig. 46.

⁶⁶NEIRA JIMÉNEZ 2014, 75, Fig. 47.

⁶⁷NEIRA JIMÉNEZ 2014, 78, Fig. 51–52.

⁶⁸ZWIRN 1979, No. 77, VIDA 2017, Abb. 96.

⁶⁹Due to the small size of the representation, the face cannot be identified with a specific person.

⁷⁰BRILLANT 1979, 61, part of Fig. 9.

⁷¹LAVIN 1963, Fig. 110; CARANDINI–RICCI–DE VOS 1982, Fig. 99; NEIRA JIMÉNEZ 2014, 83, Fig. 56.

⁷²MECH 1971, 161 and note 22, Fig. 12. In this picture there is only an altar, just like on the Nemeske plate.

⁷³POULSEN 2009, 408, note 39. Fig. 6; NEIRA JIMÉNEZ 2014, 82–83, Fig. 55.

⁷⁴With written sources and further literature references: KALOF 2007, 13–1; ARIAS 2009; ALBENDA 1974; STRAWN 2005; SÁNDOR 2014 59.

⁷⁵Some of the lions are Chimaerae.

⁷⁶ANDRIANOU 2017, relief no. 4, Fig. 1.

⁷⁷BIRK 2010–2011, 8–9, part of Fig. 1.

⁷⁸TÓTH 2005, Abb.5.1; BOLLÓK 2014, Fig. 1.3.

⁷⁹TÓTH 2005, Abb. 5.4.

⁸⁰GINSBURG 1941, 15, Fig. 5, and note 30, with literature.

⁸¹TÓTH 2005, Abb. 4.2B.

⁸²BURGER 1974, 143, Fig. 10. and Fig. 17/1; TÓTH 2005, Abb. 4.3.

⁸³MUNDELL MANGO 1986, 273–274; VIDA 2017, Abb. 64.

⁸⁴About this topic: RADNÓTI 1957, 274.

⁸⁵The reliefs were reused, and during the construction of the triumphal arch, the head of Emperor Hadrian was replaced by that of Constantine.

⁸⁶More details on this subject: BURLIGA 2009.

⁸⁷TÓTH 2004, 47, fig. on page 45. In his opinion: ‘The road probably went south through Balatonhídvég, then southeast through Somogyzsitva in the direction of Szigetvár and Pécs.’

mansiones were established along the main roads crossing the provinces. The Roman army not only used, but the *beneficiaries* also supervised roads and state facilities (e.g. *cursus publicus statio*). It is plausible that the belt mounting from Nemeske may have been owned by a soldier or a veteran.

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS ASPECTS?

Is there any sign of Christianity on the plate of Nemeske? It would be chronologically possible since the 313 *rescriptum* of Constantine allowed the free practice of the Christian religion, Emperor Theodosius declared Christianity the state religion in a decree on February 27, 380, and then banned the practice of pagan rites in 390. Earlier, persecuted Christians were forced to indicate their religious affiliation with hidden symbols.

On the side of the altar-like object of Nemeske plate, the lines intersecting each others. The punched decoration of the shield also gives out a cross shape. The cross was basically an ancient means of execution, so it did not become a general Christian symbol until the beginning of the 5th century. Its use as a Christian symbol was also restricted.⁸⁸ However, as a result of the ecclesiastical will expressed against the cult of the emperor, the *Christogram* was replaced by the cross till the 5th century.⁸⁹ And because of the fall of Rome in 410, the belief in the invincibility of Christianity was shaken, resulting in a decline in the popularity of the *labarum* used as a symbol of Christian triumph. However, the cross shape appeared among the motifs of simple decorations, thus, they were not necessarily Christian symbols. The “X”-shaped punched decoration on the altar cannot be considered the St. Andrew’s Cross either, as it does not occur anywhere on contemporary pagan altars or their depictions. It is more common in various architectural elements. If the appearance of the altar can be associated with religious changes, then in the Christian environment no animal sacrifice is conceivable on the altar.

It would be tempting to discover Bellerophon’s Christian paraphrased story in the picture. The depiction of the hero was widespread in Pannonia in the 4th century AD, and was depicted by metalworkers on the basis of pattern books. For example, a mounting from Dunaújváros-Öreghegy was made with the same pattern, as the one located in Mainz.⁹⁰ The Christian representation of the myth⁹¹ is also found in

the mosaics of the imperial palaces of Constantinople, and even it can also be found on the artefacts of the 6th–7th century Keszthely culture.⁹² In a Christian setting perhaps this pagan mythological scene type lives the longest in Pannonia. Most recently, a pressed belt buckle mounting was found in the grave No. 2 of the Budaörs cemetery depicting the battle of Bellerophon and the Chimaera.⁹³ This was similar to the one is known from Interca cemetery.⁹⁴

Religious interpretation is difficult, as Christian symbolism in this era can be assumed even on objects with pagan-scene. The Christian Church, excluding any other religions, sought a total presence in all areas of life from birth to death, from home to cemetery. It demolished or consecrated pagan places, more over, redefined the feasts and symbols. It also temporarily accepted some of the mythological stories and heroes, so Jesus became to be Helios⁹⁵ or Orpheus⁹⁶ in the depictions, and the winged Victoria thus received a cross in her hands on coins of Emperor Justinian.⁹⁷ Thus, since the possibility of contemporary Christian reinterpretation regularly arises in connection with pagan mythological figures from the second half of the 4th century, it could be suggested that, indirectly, the defeated beast symbolizes paganism and the equestrian hero symbolizes Christ himself. However, this cannot be proved in the case of the Nemeske plate. Based on what has been said, the plate from Nemeske is considered to be a hunting scene, where the altar may refer also to a sacrifice presented for the success of the hunt.

DATING

Only a few pottery was found in the three ditches and by the field survey. Some of the ceramic fragments had traces of mortar, i.e. they came from the removed masonry, so they were older than the walls. There were no previous objects in the excavated trenches, so the previous nature of the site could not be determined from the ceramic material found in secondary situation. Fragments of both the lower-quality hand-made ceramics made by indigenous inhabitants and the Pannonian uniform vessel types made by potter’s wheel can be dated to the period between the end of the early Imperial Period and the first part of the middle Imperial Age. Imported *terra sigillata* fragments also refer to this timespan.⁹⁸ It is striking that no late-imperial pottery was found. Due to the small area of excavation,⁹⁹ it never allow

⁸⁸*Codex Justiniani*, I, 3. 26: *Decernimus, ut posthac neque monachi aut quicumque alius cuiuslibet status aut fortunae in aedes publicas vel in quaecumque loca populi voluptatibus fabricata venerabilem crucem et sanctorum martyrum reliquias illicite inferre conentur vel occupare audeant ea, quae vel ad publicas causas vel ad populi oblectamenta constructa sunt. Cum enim religiosae aedes non desunt, possunt ibi, consultis prius ut oportet religiosissimis episcopis, reliquias martyrum non quorundam usurpatione, sed arbitrio reverentissimorum antistitum collocare...* (quoted by us).

⁸⁹VANYÓ 2005, 36.

⁹⁰TEICHNER 2011, 117; SZABADVÁRY 2018, 397.

⁹¹SZABADVÁRY 2018, 212.

⁹²TÓTH 2005.

⁹³OTTOMÁNYI 2016, 13, Taf. XXXIX.5–6.

⁹⁴SEY 2016, 523, note 21, with the earlier literature.

⁹⁵Mosaic from the vault of Julius Mausoleum (Vatican, 3rd century).

⁹⁶Catacombe of Sts. Marcellinus and Peter, Rome.

⁹⁷VADAY 2013, 1.

⁹⁸The pieces were determined by Friderika Horváth. We thank it her.

⁹⁹Almost 99 % of the finds in the settlements are ceramics, but little has been found in Nemeske, especially when compared to the relatively large amount of coins.

us to decide whether the later building was completed at all, but was no longer in use.

The coins originated from the excavation ditches and from the field survey are younger. They were minted between the second half of the 3rd century and the end of the 4th century. The distribution of the 41 medals by condition is as follows:

The dating value of the money is also quite questionable. Probus' silver denarius is the earliest.¹⁰⁰ These were followed more than two decades later by the coins of Constantine I, and follis of Valentinian I from the last third of the 4th century. One of Valens' money was drilled through and used as a pendant. The latest was Gratian's (375–383) worn coin, also assuming a longer usage period. These coins can only be considered as a *terminus*

Figure on broken down by period – although due to the smaller amount of test substance, only a cautious statement can be drawn.

post quem. The coins minted in the Western Roman Empire between 395 and 476 were no longer present at the site.

Most of the worn coins occur amongst the latest coins issued under the Valentinian dynasty. But a similar amount of worn coins can be observed among the money of the slightly earlier dynasty of Constantine.

¹⁰⁰The coin is intact and has no trace of wear and tear, although its material is significantly softer than that of bronze coins. Maybe its raw material was preserved by its owner.

The Nemeske plate was a sporadic piece, so only the help of other archaeological material makes its dating possible. The middle Imperial Age can be ruled out, as the polychrome silver plating became common only in the late Imperial Age. The parallels of the individual elements of the pattern can be made predominant for this period, moreover, the typical finds of the late imperial period included belts and strap ends depicting hunting, Bellerophon, or defeating an enemy.¹⁰¹ The usage of this shield and helmet types was continuous in later period following the early and middle imperial eras. Both are long-life equipments, so they are not suitable for more accurate determination. Due to the above, the Nemeske plate can be dated to the last third of the 4th century, or to the beginning of the 5th century.¹⁰²

CATALOG OF FINDS¹⁰³

Roman artifacts cannot really be linked to objects only to research trenches because of their secondary position.

Trench No. I. (Figs 2; 4/1, 18/1)¹⁰⁴

- 1–5 . Coins from the trench No I.:¹⁰⁵ Aurelianus (270–275),¹⁰⁶ II. Constantius (337–361),¹⁰⁷ I. Valentinian (364–375)¹⁰⁸ and two coins of his brother, Valens (364–378).¹⁰⁹
6. Fragment of the rim and neck of a light gray jug made of sandy clay on potter's wheel. Below its rim, three rows of small square dimples runs around. Diameter of mouth: 11 cm (Fig. 23/2).¹¹⁰
7. Medium gray large fragment of a pot, made of sandy clay on potter's wheel. There are black spots on it inside and outside. Its rim is smoothed horizontally inside and a thin sooty lane at its top suggests that it was a cookware with lid. Diameter of mouth: 25 cm (Fig. 22/2).¹¹¹

8. Outer side darker coated side fragment of a medium gray container pot with horizontal and oblique broom mark pattern (Fig. 23/6).¹¹²
9. Rim and side fragment of a Drag 37. terra sigillata bowl. It was made in Westerndorf or Pfaffenhofen. Diameter of mouth: 22 cm (Fig. 26/3).¹¹³
10. In places sooty, strongly bend out rim fragment of a gray vessel made of sandy clay on potter's wheel. Diameter of mouth: 21 cm (Fig. 22/1).¹¹⁴
11. Bend out rim fragment of a light gray large container pot made on potter's wheel. Its material is sandy with limestone grains. Diameter of mouth: 31 cm (Fig. 23/1).¹¹⁵
12. Rim and side fragment of a poor quality sandy brownish gray pot. There is a darker sooty lane on its outer side and rim. Diameter of mouth: 18 cm (Fig. 22/3).¹¹⁶
13. Inwardly sloping rim fragment of a thick brownish gray big bowl made of sandy clay. Diameter of mouth: 31 cm (Fig. 23/4).¹¹⁷
14. Brick-colored bend out rim and side fragment of a hemispherical bowl, made of sandy clay by the help of potter's wheel. There are secondary burned spots on its surface. Diameter of mouth Diameter of mouth: 36 cm (Fig. 23/3).¹¹⁸
15. Brownish gray rim and side fragment from a pot with straight cutaway bottom. It was made of sandy clay and there are burnished secondary spots on its surface. On its inner side the potter's fingerprint also had remained. Diameter of the bottom: 17 cm (Fig. 22/7).¹¹⁹
16. Bend out gray rim fragment from a pot with sooty spots on its surface, made of sandy clay with help of potter's wheel. Its shape had been distorted before the pot burning. Diameter of mouth: 21 cm (Fig. 22/4).¹²⁰
17. Inside brownish and outside grayish, bend out rim and side fragment from a pot made with help of potter's wheel. The rim's edge and the outside surface is sooty. The poor quality rim slightly distorted. There are irregular smoothed traces on its outside surface. Diameter of mouth: 17 cm (Fig. 22/5).¹²¹
18. Bottom and side fragment of a gray pot made of sandy clay. Its surface was burned secondarily. There are vertical cuts off traces at the bottom of the side. The bottom is burnished. Diameter of bottom: 8 cm (Fig. 22/6).¹²²

¹⁰¹E.g. REDŽIĆ 2013, 415–416.

¹⁰²After the Bellerophon–Chimaera fight representation on the buckle of the grave No. 2 of Budaörs Roman cemetery, Katalin Ottományi dated it to the last third of the 4th century: OTTOMÁNYI 2016, 13.

¹⁰³Abbreviation used in the catalogue: InvNo (Inventory Number); COH. (H. COHEN: Description historique des monnaies frappées sous l'Empire Romain. I–VIII. Paris, 1880–92.)

¹⁰⁴The finds are preserved in the Janus Pannonius Museum of Pécs.

¹⁰⁵We thank József Szingler for defining the coins.

¹⁰⁶InvNo: 2019.5.44. COH. 60

¹⁰⁷InvNo: 2019.5.43/1. COH. VII/188. DN CONSTAN-TIVS PF AVG SPES REI PVBLICAE. Mintage: ?

¹⁰⁸InvNo: 2019.5.42. COH. VIII/37. DN VALENTINI-ANVS PF AVG, SECVRITAS REI PVBLICAE. Mintage: ASISC (Siscia).

¹⁰⁹InvNo: 2019.5. 43/2. COH. VIII/47. DN VALEN-S PF AVG, SECVRITAS REI PVBLICAE. Place of the mintage: ASIS (Siscia) and InvNo: 2019.5.52. COH. VIII/11. Mintage: Aquileia.

¹¹⁰InvNo: 2019.5.47/2.

¹¹¹InvNo: 2019.5.47/1.

¹¹²InvNo: 2019.5.47/4.

¹¹³InvNo: 2019.5.47/3.

¹¹⁴InvNo: 2019.5.47/5.

¹¹⁵InvNo: 2019.5.41/1.

¹¹⁶InvNo: 2019.5.41/8.

¹¹⁷InvNo: 2019.5.41/4.

¹¹⁸InvNo: 2019.5.41/2.

¹¹⁹InvNo: 2019.5.41/7.

¹²⁰InvNo: 2019.5.41/3.

¹²¹InvNo: 2019.5.41/9.

¹²²InvNo: 2019.5.41/6.

19. Fragment of a bottom from a medium gray pot made of sandy clay. Its surface is sooty and its bottom is burnished. Diameter of bottom: 9 cm (Fig. 23/7).¹²³
20. Large, horizontal-headed forged iron nail with a square cross section peak, which is curved. Length: 9.8 cm. Head width: 3.2 cm (Fig. 23/5).¹²⁴
21. Iron puncher. Its handle stalk has a square cross-section, tapering slightly at the end, the upper part of the tip is also square in cross-section and broken. Length: 13.5 cm (Fig. 23/8).¹²⁵

Trench No. II. (Fig. 19)

1. Thin side fragment from a terra sigillata bowl from (Rheinzabern, Drag 37.). A small portion of the decorating "eggs' row" of the dish remained. Thickness: 2 mm (Fig. 26/1).¹²⁶
2. Light gray thin side fragment of a jug made of sandy clay with help of potter's wheel. Thickness: 5 mm (Fig. 24/4).¹²⁷
3. Medium gray, sooty inside and out pot lid made of sandy clay with help of potter's wheel. Diameter: 18 cm (Fig. 24/1).¹²⁸
4. Medium gray, sooty inside bend out rim and side fragment of a pot made of sandy clay. There are horizontal traces of smoothing on the rim. Diameter of the mouth: 22 cm (Fig. 24/2).¹²⁹
5. Brick-colored fragment of a bowl with a clay bottom-ring on its base. Diameter of bottom: 10 cm (Fig. 24/5).¹³⁰
6. Medium gray fragment of a small vessel made of sand clay. It has a bend out thick rim with traces of smoothing. There are traces of mortar on the inside and outside of the surface of the fragment. Diameter of mouth: 13 cm (Fig. 26/3).¹³¹
7. Fragment from a terra sigillata (Type Curle 15 from Rheinzabern) with bend out rim. There are horizontally smoothed traces inside and out. Diameter of mouth: 36 cm (Fig. 26/5).¹³²
8. Fragment of the lower part from a terra sigillata (Rheinzabern, Drag 18 or Drag. 37) (Fig. 26/2).¹³³
9. Thick rim fragment from a terra sigillata bowl (Rheinzabern, Drag 18 or Drag. 37?). Diameter of mouth: 24 cm (Fig. 26/4).¹³⁴

¹²³InvNo: 2019.5.41/5.

¹²⁴InvNo: 2019.5.45.

¹²⁵InvNo: 2019.5.46.

¹²⁶InvNo: 2019.5.53/2.

¹²⁷InvNo: 2019.5.53/3.

¹²⁸InvNo: 2019.5.54/6.

¹²⁹InvNo: 2019.5.54/6.

¹³⁰InvNo: 2019.5.54/4.

¹³¹InvNo: 2019.5.54/3.

¹³²InvNo: 2019.5.53/1.

¹³³InvNo: 2019.5.54/1.

¹³⁴InvNo: 2019.5.54/2.

Trench No. III. (Figs 20–21)

- 1–2. Bronze coins of Valens (364–378).¹³⁵
3. Two fragments from a mid gray jug made with help of potter's wheel. Its thick rim bends out, and the part under of it is curved. The rim is smoothed horizontally and there is the grooved trace of the lid. The ribbon tab rises slightly above the rim. Mortar stuck to its surface inside and out. Diameter of mouth: 14 cm (Fig. 25/1).¹³⁶
4. Inside light gray, outside dark gray sooty bottom fragment from a vessel made of sandy clay with help of potter's wheel. Diameter of bottom: 7.5–7.7 cm (Fig. 25/2).¹³⁷

Sporadic archaeological findings collected under field survey

1. Neck and side fragment from a light gray, brownish-spotted pot, made of sandy clay with help of potter's wheel. The neck is divided by a horizontal canelura. There are mortar and brick grains on the horizontal swept surface (Fig. 27/2).¹³⁸
2. Mid gray fragment from a straight cutaway bottom fragment of a vessel made of sandy clay. Residues of lime mortar deposited on its surface indicate that it was incorporated into a wall or building foundation. Diameter of bottom: 7 cm (Fig. 27/3).¹³⁹
3. A lime mortar fragment from the wall of a Roman building (Fig. 27/1).¹⁴⁰

SPORADIC ROMAN AGE COINS COLLECTED DURING FIELD SURVEY

This group of coins can be divided into four groups based on their condition: intact (in good condition, easy to read), slightly worn (legible), worn (difficult to read), very worn (illegible to read).

- 1–11. Very worn bronze coins, illegible to read.¹⁴¹
12. Slightly worn coin of Valerian.¹⁴²
13. Slightly worn coin of Gallienus.¹⁴³

¹³⁵InvNo: 2019.5.55. COH. VIII/47. DN VALEN-S PF AVG, SECVRTAS REI PVBLICAE (Place of the mintage: ?); InvNo: 2019.5.56. COH. VIII/11–12. GLORIA ROMANORVM. (The obverse of the coin and the place name of the mintage are not legible.)

¹³⁶InvNo: 2019.5.57/2–3.

¹³⁷InvNo: 2019.5.57/1.

¹³⁸InvNo: 2019.5.39/2

¹³⁹InvNo: 2019.5.39.1.

¹⁴⁰InvNo: 2019.5.40.

¹⁴¹InvNo: 2019.5.2., 2019.5.11., 2019.5.25., 2019.5.27–29., 2019.5.31.1–2., 2019.5.33.1–2.–2019.5.34.

¹⁴²InvNo: 2019.5.37. COH. V/248, IMP CP LIC VALERIANVS PF AVG, VICTORIA GERM.

¹⁴³InvNo: 2019.5.36. COH. ? GALLIENVS AVG.

14. Worn coin of Salonina (wife of Gallienus).¹⁴⁴
15. Intact coin of Probus.¹⁴⁵
- 16–17. A worn and a legible coin of Constantinus I.^{146 147}
18. Very worn coins of Constantinus I *et filii*.¹⁴⁸
19. Slightly worn coin of Constans.¹⁴⁹
20. Worn coin of Constans?¹⁵⁰
21. Worn coin of Constans or Constantius II.¹⁵¹
- 22–23. Two slightly worn coins of Constantius II.¹⁵²
24. Worn coin of Iovian.¹⁵³
- 25–31. Two intact,¹⁵⁴ a slightly worn,¹⁵⁵ and four worn¹⁵⁶ coins of Valentinian I.
- 32–36. Three worn,¹⁵⁷ a slightly worn,¹⁵⁸ and a drilled through¹⁵⁹ coins of Valens.
- 37–40. Four worn coins of Valentinian I or Valens.¹⁶⁰
41. Worn coin of Gratian.¹⁶¹

¹⁴⁴InvNo: 2019.5.9. COH. V/94. SALONINA AVG, PVDICITIA.

¹⁴⁵InvNo: 2019.5.14. COH. 87, IMP CMAVR PROBVS AVG, CLEMENTIA TEMP SISCIA.

¹⁴⁶InvNo: 2019.5.12. COH. VII 306, IMP CONSTANTINVS PF AVG, IOVI CONSERVATORI, SIS.

¹⁴⁷InvNo: 2019.5.4. COH. VII/17, VRBS ROMA.

¹⁴⁸InvNo: 2019.5.5. COH. ? GLORIA EXERCITUS.

¹⁴⁹InvNo: 2019.5.35. COH. VII/197, DN CONSTA – NS PF AVG VOT XX MVLT XXX VSMK.

¹⁵⁰InvNo: 2019.5.17. COH. VII/50, FL IVL CONST – ANS NOB C GLORIA EXERCITVS CONS.

¹⁵¹InvNo: 2019.5.24. COH. ? FEL TEMP REPARATIO.

¹⁵²InvNo: 2019.5.10. COH. VII/293, CONSTAN – TIVS PF AVG VICTORIAE DD NN AVGG SMSIS, and InvNo: 2019.5.16. COH. VII/57, DN CONSTAN – TIVS PF AVG, FEL TEMP REPARATIO NA (Nikomedia?).

¹⁵³InvNo: 2019.5.3. COH. VIII. Jov.34., DN IOVIA – NVS PF AVG VOT V MVLT X SIRM.

¹⁵⁴InvNo: 2019.5.59. COH. VIII/37, DN VALENTINI – ANVS PF AVG SECVRTAS REI PVBLICA, and InvNo: 2019.5.8. COH. VIII/12, DN VALENTINI-ANVS PF AVG GLORIA ROMANORVM SISC.

¹⁵⁵InvNo: 2019.5.18. COH. VIII/37, DN VALENTINIANVS PF AVG SECVRTAS REI PVBLICAE SMAQS (Aquilaia).

¹⁵⁶InvNo: 2019.5.7., COH. VIII/? DN VALENTINI – ANVS PF AVG SECVRTAS REI PVBLICAE, InvNo: 2019.5.13., COH. VIII/12, DN VALENTINI – ANVS PF AVG, GLORIA ROMANORVM, InvNo: 2019.5.15., COH. VIII/37, DN VALENTINI ANVS PF AVG, SECVRTAS REI PVBLICAE, InvNo: 2019.5.30. COH. VIII/37, DN VALENTINI – ANVS PF AVG SECVRTAS REI PVBLICA.

¹⁵⁷InvNo: 2019.5.19. COH. VIII/47, DN VALEN – S PF AVG SECVRTAS REI PVBLICA, InvNo: 2019.5.21. COH. VIII/47, DN VALEN – S PF AVG, SECVRTAS REI PVBLICAE SIS, InvNo: 2019.5.32. COH. VIII/47, DN VALEN – S PF AVG SECVRTAS REI PVBLICA.

¹⁵⁸InvNo: 2019.5.58. COH. VIII/11–12, DN VALEN – S PF AVG GLORIA ROMANORVM.

¹⁵⁹InvNo: 2019.5.38. COH. VIII/11 DN VALEN – S PF AVG GLORIA ROMANORVM N SIS.

¹⁶⁰InvNo: 2019.5.6. COH. VIII/? GLORIA ROMANORVM, InvNo: 2019.5.20, COH. VIII/? SECVRTAS REI PVBLICAE, InvNo: 2019.5.22. COH. VIII/? SECVRTAS REI PVBLICAE, InvNo: 2019.5.23. COH. VIII/? SECVRTAS REI PVBLICAE.

¹⁶¹InvNo: 2019.5.26. COH. VIII/16, DM GRATIANVS PF AVG GLORIA ROMANORVM, (Siscia).

ABBREVIATIONS

AWE	Ancient West and East, Peeters Online Journals, Leuven
FAH	Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae, Łódź
JMR	Journal of Mosaic Research, Bursa
JRMES	Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies, Armes
SHHA	Studia Historica: Historia Antiqua, Salamanca

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Fig. 1. 1: Location of the archaeological site; 2: Roman bricks in the field

Fig. 2. Summary drawing of the trenches

Fig. 3. A: Location of the bronze plate was found during the field survey; B: and coins

Fig. 4. Location of graves; 2: Hair ring from No 1 obj.; 3: Hair ring from No 2 obj.; 4: No 3 obj.; 5: No. 2 obj.; 6: Remains of No. 1 grave and its outlining shape

Fig. 5. Bronze plate decorated with figure

Fig. 6. 1: Belt end from Somogyzsitva-Sz csénypusztá; 2: Belt mounting from Asia Minor; 3: Belt buckle and mountings from Asia Minor

Fig. 7. Injured head of the rider and its reconstruction

Fig. 8. Sample analysis. 1-2: Spear, 3: Flag; 4: the lion's tail and plants

Fig. 9. Sample analysis. 1: Horse head; 2: Lion head; 3: Hind legs of lion; 4: The edge of the plate

Fig. 10. 1: Altar-like object of the plate; 2: Representation of pedestal on sarcophagus cover; 3: Column altar on a plate preserved in the Louvre; 4: Sacrifice for success of hunt; 5: May-sacrifice to Mercury; 6: June-sacrifice; 7: Column and altar on triumphal arch of Constantine; 8: Column-altar on mosaic of Daphné villa; 9: Column and altar on mosaic of room No. 24 in Villa Romana del Casale (Piazza Armerina, Italy); 10: Representation of *Suovetaurilia*; 11: Griff with a caged man; 12: Carpentered iron-reinforced wooden cage; 13: Trapping a bear with a trap

Fig. 11. Sample analysis. 1-5: Lion; 6-7: Trappings

Fig. 12. Imperial age archaeological sites in county Baranya. 1: Archaeological sites, sporadic archaeological findings; 2: traces of Roman road

Fig. 13. 1: Shield on plate of Nemeske; 2: Cavalry shield on mosaic in villa Nyle; 3: Infantry shield on gravestone of Cn. usius; 4: Infantry shield on Traian column; 5: Looted shield on aureus of Iulius Caesar

Fig. 14. 1–2: Dragon flag on the SW side of the base of the Trajan's Column; 2: Dragon flag on Portonaccio sarcophagus; 3: "Ensigne prince" in second jug of Nagyszentmiklós treasure; 4: Rider with helmet on gravestone of C. Romanivs; 5: Roman soldiers with helmet on Trajan's Column

Fig. 15. 1: Red figure *epinètron*; 2: Etruscan mirror; 3: Plate from Balatonlovas; 4: Mounting from Intercisa; 5: Belt mounting from Pilismarót; 6: Belt mounting from grave No. 61 of Szomor-Somodorpuszta cemetery

Fig. 16. 1: Fight of Bellelrophon and Chimaera; 2, 4: Lion hunt on mosaic of Nile-villa; 3, 6: Female lion and panther hunting on the mosaic of Villa Olmeda; 5: Hunting on a mosaic in Uthina (Oudna, Tunisia); 7: Hunting scene on mosaic of villa Tiendas

Fig. 17. 1: Equestrian lion hunting scene on a 4th century silver plate from North-Syria; 2: Equestrian hunter in glass bowl from Bonn-Kölner Reichsstrasse; 3-4: Imperial hunting scenes on Constantinus' triumphal arch; 5: "Barbarian" hunting; 6: Lion hunting on sarcophagus No. I. in Palazzo Mattei

Fig. 18. 1–2: Drawing and photo of No. I trench; 3: Location of removed wall (Obj. No. 4) (3A: Plaster, 3B: Brick, 3C: Imprint of bricks, 3D: Fallen mortar pieces of masonry, Obj. No. 6); 4: Burnt surface (Obj. No. 8) and digging-in (Obj. No. 7) with place of removed wall (Obj. No. 10); 5: Cross section of removed wall; 5A: Plowed field layer with Roman construction debris; 5B: Original humus; 5C: Yellow clay subhumus; 5D: Place of the removed wall filled with rubble of lime mortar and bricks

Fig. 19. 1-2: Drawing and photo of ditch No. II; 3, 5: Cross section of the obj. No. 5 in Western wall of ditch; 4: Rubble of lime mortar and bricks in place of removed wall

Fig. 20. Drawing of ditch No III; 2B: the foundation of the removed wall, 3: and its magnified image; 2/A, 4/A: the brick strais

Fig. 21. Trench No. III. 1: South side; 2: East wall

Fig. 22. 1-7: Ceramic fragment (ditch No I)

Fig. 23. Ditch No. I. 1-4, 6-7: Ceramic fragments; 5: Iron nail; 8: Iron puncher tool

Fig. 24. 1-5: Ceramic fragments (ditch No. II)

Fig. 25. 1-2: Ceramic fragments (ditch No. III)

Fig. 26. Terrae sigillatae. 1–2, 4–5: ditch No. II; 3: ditch No. I

Fig. 27. Sporadic finds. 1: lime mortar fragment; 2-3: ceramic fragments