

NEW EVIDENCE FOR A ROMAN MILITARY CAMP AT VIRUNUM (NORICUM): THE GARRISON OF THE GOVERNOR'S GUARD (*SINGULARES*):*

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Abstract. Since the year 2001, aerial photographs have indicated a densely built-up zone to the east of the Roman town of Virunum (near Klagenfurt, Carinthia, Austria), the capital of the province of Noricum. The visible crop marks have been interpreted as a Roman military camp. The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Archaeological Prospection and Virtual Archaeology (LBI ArchPro) conducted an initial ground penetrating radar survey on November 19, 2013, in order to gather further information regarding the close proximity of a military installation to the civilian town. An area of 2.56 ha was surveyed using a motorized high resolution MIRA ground penetrating radar array from Malâ Geoscience. In the northern part of the plot, numerous building structures are visible, obviously from Roman times, which were situated within a walled-in area. A gateway was located on the south side of this enclosed zone. The forested western and northern sides of this enclosure seem to coincide with the modern land division. Three long rectangular structures, which appear to be Roman military barracks with double chambers and so-called "Kopfbauten" (habitation area for the officers), are a key for the interpretation of the entire complex. Another densely occupied area is located to the south of the enclosure and was probably inhabited by civilians. These new GPR data clearly provides novel insights in the manner Roman troops were housed at the governor's seat of Noricum.

Rezumat: Începând din anul 2001, pe fotografiile aeriene s-a evidențiat o zonă construită densă, la est de orașul roman Virunum (lângă Klagenfurt, Carinthia, Austria), capitala provinciei romane Noricum. Formele de relief create de aceste ruine au fost interpretate ca aparținând unui castru roman. Institutul Ludwig Boltzmann for Archaeological Prospection and Virtual Archaeology (LBI ArchPro) a desfășurat un relevu geofizic în data de 19.11.2013 cu scopul de a obține informații suplimentare asupra zonei limitrofe și distanței mici dintre garnizoană și oraș. A fost cercetată o arie de circa 2.56 ha utilizând un georadar cu sistem MIRA. În partea de nord a suprafeței au fost evidențiate numeroase structuri construite, databile în epoca romană, poziționate într-o incintă. O poartă este vizibilă pe latura de sud a acestei incinte. Laturile de vest și de nord ale incinte coincid cu granițele lotizării de epocă modernă, actualmente împădurită. Trei structuri lungi rectangulare, similare barăcilor militare romane cu două camere și așa-numitele "Kopfbauten" (locuințele ofițerilor) sunt un indiciu vital pentru interpretarea întregului complex. O altă zonă dens construită este localizată la sud de incintă și probabil a fost construită de civili. Este evident că investigațiile cu GPR vor oferi noi informații privind garnizoana trupelor romane de pe lângă sediul guvernatorului provinciei Noricum.

From a Balloon Ride in 2001 to a Ground Penetrating Radar Survey in 2013

Since the onset of aerial archaeology in Virunum in the 1970s, the scientific debate about the existence of a Roman military camp in the vicinity of the provincial capital of Noricum has not ceased (Fig. 1). Epigraphic evidence of a military presence has long since been known in Virunum. Yet, concrete evidence of a military facility only came to light during a balloon flight over the Zollfeld area, north of Klagenfurt, in the summer of 2001, when Renate Jernej discovered exceptional crop marks on the ridge east of the ancient town centre (Fig. 2). The crop marks, appearing in a field of corn, were interpreted as a military camp, including a civilian suburb (*vicus*) to the south.¹

The notion of the existence of a Roman military camp was further substantiated by an aerial photograph taken in 2010, and the topographic data derived from airborne laser scanning made available by the State of Carinthia. Based on this data the following picture emerged (Fig. 3)² The Capitol and Forum, excavated some years prior to World War I lay in the valley of the Zollfeld (Fig. 3, C-D). Just east of the city centre the terrain rises in multiple terraced levels. Several large, antique structures, such as the theatre (Fig. 3, G) and the amphitheatre (Fig. 3, E) were located in this area; the amphitheatre was excavated in large part from 1998 to 2001.³ An

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¹ Gugl, Jernej 2002, p. 26; Doneus, Gugl, Jernej 2003, pp. 397-399; Jernej 2004, p. 21; Doneus, Gugl, Jernej 2005, pp. 224-227.

² Gugl, Jernej 2013.

³ Jernej, Gugl 2004.