



POKRAJINSKI
MUZEJ
PTUJ
ORMOŽ

AT THE HEART OF POETOVO

PTUJ IN THE TIME OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

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⊗ Architectural remains and street grid on Panorama.

- █ street, square
- █ workshops, humble dwelling
- █ luxurious residence
- █ sanctuary
- █ aqueduct

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AT THE HEART OF POETOVIO

PTUJ IN THE TIME OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

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POETOVIO PETOVIO



© Roman forts and fortresses in Illyricum during the first half of the 1st century AD. They were the strategic points from which the Romans controlled the newly conquered territories.

POETOVIO'S ORIGINS

Since prehistory, Ptuj has enjoyed a strategic location. It is sited where the River Drava is relatively easy to cross and where two major routes intersect, one being the Amber Route, connecting the northern Adriatic area with the Baltic, and the other one leading on and along the navigable Drava river. The first traces of human habitation at Ptuj date back to the late 5th millennium BC (beginning of the Copper Age), when a settlement was established on the hill of Grajski grič. The area has been continuously inhabited ever since.

In the 1st century BC, before the Roman conquest, the Ptuj area lay in the eastern part of the Norican Kingdom, which extended across the Eastern Alps and their foothills, and was ruled by the Celts. Several small settlements existed at Ptuj at this time.

⊗ Ptuj and Panorama. View to the southeast.



NAME

When the Celts settled along the Drava in the early 3rd century BC, they adopted the name of the place from the indigenous population living here. Linguists presume that the original name may have been *Petavio (or similar) and that it signified 'a place on the plain'.

The Romans adapted this name to suit their pronunciation. In the works of ancient authors and on stone monuments, it most commonly appears as *Poetovio*, but also in a number of variants (*Petovio*, *Petabio*, *Petavio*, *Poetavio*, *Petobio*, *Patavio*, *Potobio*, *Potabio*); sometimes the name is written in Greek (*Ποτόβιον*, *Παταύιον*, *Παταβίων*, *Πετουβιωνικόν*) or abbreviated to CVTP (*Colonia Ulpia Traiana Poetovio*).

The Slovenian name Ptuj and the German Pettau are directly derived from the Latin name.

PETABIO PETAVIO POETAVIO PETOBIO PATAVIO POTOBIO

BECOMING PART OF THE EMPIRE

In 15 BC, the Norican Kingdom and with it Poetovio was incorporated into the Roman state without bloodshed. In contrast, the Pannonian Wars fought from 12 to 8 BC were bloody; their result was the conquest of Illyricum, a large area between the Adriatic and the Danube. The Romans consolidated their rule by crushing the Pannonian-Dalmatian Rebellion in AD 6 to 9. Both military campaigns were led by Tiberius, who went on to become emperor. Until the mid-1st century AD, the area up to the Danube was gradually incorporated

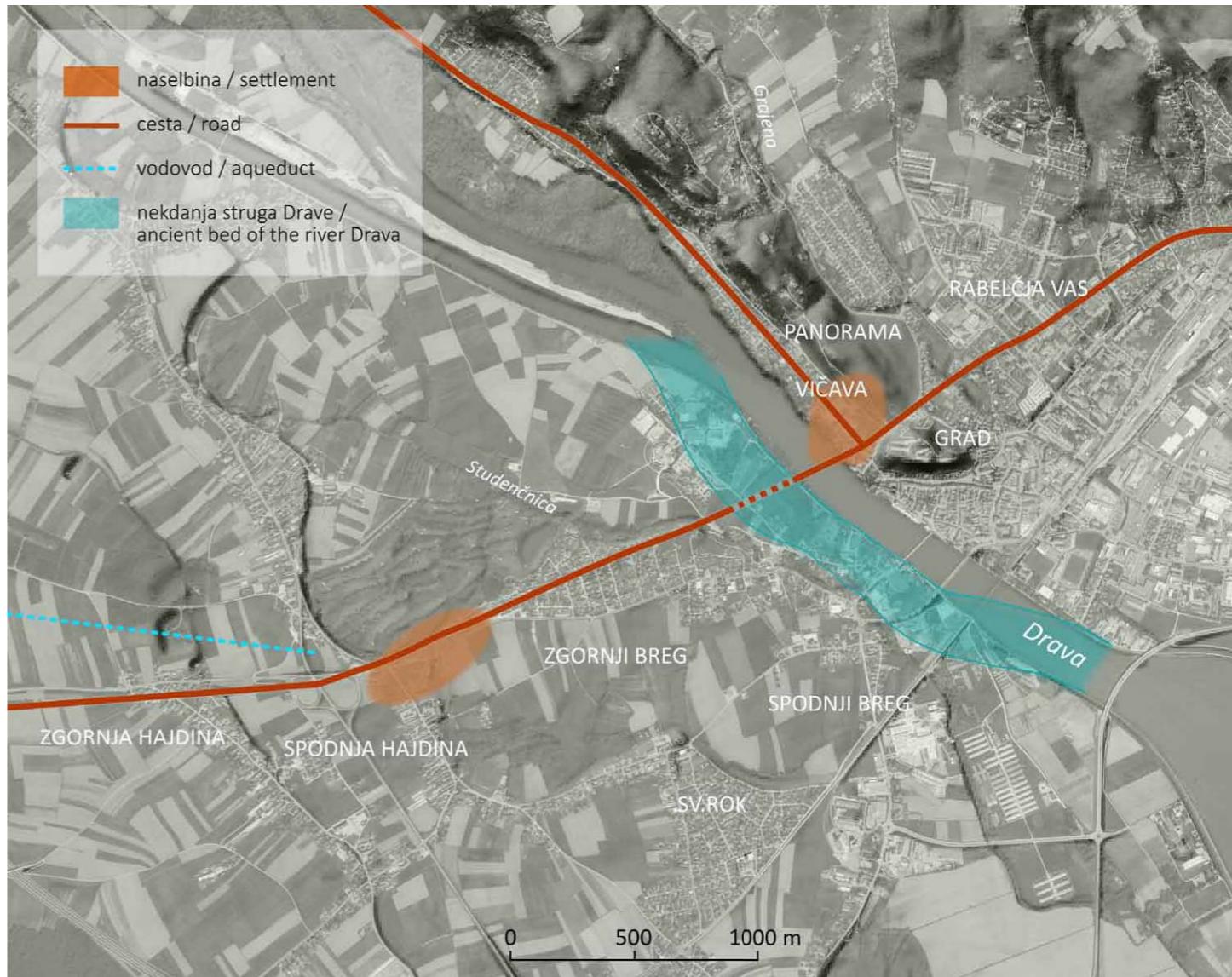
into the Roman state and formed the provinces of Noricum and Illyricum, the latter subsequently divided into Dalmatia and Pannonia.

The Romans built a fort at Poetovio, probably already towards the end of the 1st century BC, which served as a base for their military operations in the Pannonian Plain. During the first half of the 1st century AD, Poetovio was probably the seat of the military command of the Pannonian army, as well as the centre of civilian administration in Illyricum.



⊗ Head of a young man of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Marble, Ptuj, late 1st century BC or early 1st century AD.

The founder of the Julio-Claudian dynasty was Augustus, the first Roman emperor (27 BC – AD 14), under whom the Romans conquered the central Danube Basin and the western Balkans. The marble head may depict Augustus' adoptive son and heir Tiberius in his youth, when his military achievements included leading the conquest of Illyricum and the suppression of the Pannonian-Dalmatian Rebellion.



⊗ Habitation areas and traces of the army in Poetovio of the 1st century.

ROMAN LEGIONS AT POETOPIO

In the first half of the 1st century AD, Poetovio was the base of the Eighth Legion Augusta (*legio VIII Augusta*), which participated in the conquest of Illyricum. It was replaced around AD 45 by the Thirteenth Legion Gemina (*legio XIII Gemina*), which had arrived from Vindonissa (the province of Germania, today in Switzerland); it remained here until the end of the 1st century.

A Roman legion numbered 5000 to 6000 soldiers and was based in its fortress, a military stronghold at least 20 hectares in size and usually rectangular in plan. The fortress at Poetovio presumably stood on the right bank of the Drava, as indicated by the finds of votive altars and tombstones for active soldiers, the aqueduct that the XIII Augusta built to bring fresh water from the Pohorje Hills, as well as habitation traces dating to the early 1st century AD. No physical remains of the fortress have as yet been found; it is possible that it was washed away by the Drava known for its frequent changes in course.

Military finds from the 1st century also came to light on the left bank, at Vičava and Panorama, suggesting the existence of more than one fort at Poetovio.

TOMBSTONE FOR MARCUS PETRONIUS CLASSICUS

M(ARCUS) PETRONIUS
M(ARCI) F(ILII) ARN(ENSI TRIBU) CLASSI-
CUS MARRUCINUS
(CENTURIO) LEG(IONIS) VIII AUG(USTAE)
HIC EST CREMATUS.
OSSA RELATA DOMI.
P(UBLIUS) FRATER ET CON-
LEGA POSUIT.

MARCUS PETRONIUS CLASSICUS,
SON OF MARCUS,
(OF) MARRUCIAN (ORIGIN),
(OF THE) ARNENSIAN (VOTING-TRIBE),
CENTURION OF THE EIGHTH LEGION AUGUSTA,
WAS CREMATED HERE.
(HIS CREMATED) BONES WERE SENT HOME.
(THE TOMBSTONE WAS) PUT UP BY HIS BROTHER
AND FELLOW SOLDIER PUBLIUS.

MARCUS PETRONIUS CLASSICUS was a member of the Marrucini tribe, which occupied a small area on the Adriatic coast of central Italy, and century commander (*centurio*) of the Eighth Legion Augusta. His brother and fellow soldier had the tombstone – a cenotaph – put up for him at Poetovio, while his cremated bones were sent home. As many legionaries of the 1st century, brothers Marcus and Publius were recruited in Italy. The tombstone is one of the earliest funerary monuments of soldiers from Poetovio.

CHAPLET OF OAK LEAVES

THREE TORQUES or BRACELETS

VINE STAFF

EQUIPMENT AND MILITARY DECORATIONS OF CENTURION MARCUS PETRONIUS CLASSICUS

Centurions were low-ranking officers usually promoted from the ranks of the common soldiers; they represented the backbone of the army. There were 59 centurions per legion. They distinguished themselves from the common soldiers by the vine staff, greaves and a transverse crest on the helmet; they also wore their sword at the left and dagger at the right hip, just the opposite to the common soldiers.

The tombstone for Marcus Petronius Classicus shows pieces of military equipment: helmet with cheek-pieces and a transverse crest, armour (probably chainmail), greaves and vine staff.

⊗ Marble tombstone for Marcus Petronius Classicus. Videm pri Ptuju, first half of the 1st century.

HELMET WITH CHEEK-PIECES and A TRANSVERSE CREST

ARMOUR

GREAVES



Also displayed on the tombstone is a series of military decorations (*dona militaria*) awarded to Classicus. Topmost are three torques or bracelets (*torques* or *armillae*). Worn over the armour and held together by leather straps are five embossed discs (*phalerae*, their ornament not accurately carved in stone), two enclosed by the larger *torques* and three by *armillae*. He was also awarded a chaplet of oak leaves (*corona civica*) – decoration for the soldier who had saved the life of a fellow Roman citizen by slaying an enemy.

**TOMBSTONE
OF AULUS POSTUMIUS
SENECA**

A(ULUS) POSTUMIUS,
SP(URII) F(ILIIUS) SENECA
DOM(O) PARMA
VETER(ANUS) MISSI(CIUS)
LEG(IONIS) XI AN(NORUM) XXCV
H(IC) S(ITUS) E(ST).
POSTUMIA IU-
CUNDA ET
PRIMIGENIUS
POSIERUNT
LIBERTI.

AULUS POSTUMIUS SENECA,
SON OF AN UNKNOWN FATHER,
FROM PARMA,
DISCHARGED FROM MILITARY SERVICE
AS A VETERAN OF THE ELEVENTH LEGION,
AGED 85,
LIES BURIED HERE.
SET UP BY FREEDMEN POSTUMIA IUCUNDA
AND PRIMIGENIUS.

⊗ Marble
tombstone
for Aulus
Postumius
Seneca.
Poetovio's
west cemetery
at Hajdina,
second quarter
of the 1st
century AD.



LEGIONARY

A legionary of the second half of the 1st century wore a tunic under his armour, which was composed of strips of iron (segmental armour). His head was protected by a helmet. Around his waist was a military belt (*cingulum*), which was fitted with decorative metal plates and hung with leather straps with metal mounts and pendants. Suspended from the belt were a sword at the right hip and a dagger at the left hip. He was armed with a javelin (*pilum*) and a shield. His feet were protected by leather shoes with iron hobnails reinforcing the soles. The same types of weapons were used across the Roman Empire, revealing their production in large, specialised workshops.

The veteran of *legio XI, AULUS POSTUMIUS SENECA*, was born in Parma, northern Italy, and died at Poetovio, at the ripe age of 85 years. It was his former slaves, Postumia Iucunda and Primigenius, who arranged for the tombstone to be set up. Seneca's legion was stationed at *Burnum*, in central Dalmatia. Military service in those days lasted around 25 years, which would suggest that Seneca retired some 30 years before his death, soon after the fiercest military campaigns in Illyricum. With the retirement bonus following an honourable discharge, he chose to retire to the fast-growing city next to the fortress at Poetovio. The simple form and decoration of the tombstone reflect the taste of the immigrants from Italy.

ATTIRE OF A LEGIONARY. SECOND HALF OF THE 1ST CENTURY

CREST HOLDER



JAVELIN



SWORD

SHIELD

ARMOUR PLATE



⊗ Lunula. It may once have been hanging from a military belt. Copper alloy, Panorama, 1st century.



⊗ Ear lath from the terminal of a reflex bow, with a groove for attaching the bowstring. Reflex bows were composed of bone and wooden parts. Roman archers were usually of Eastern origin and served in auxiliary units. Bone, Vičava, 1st – early 2nd century.

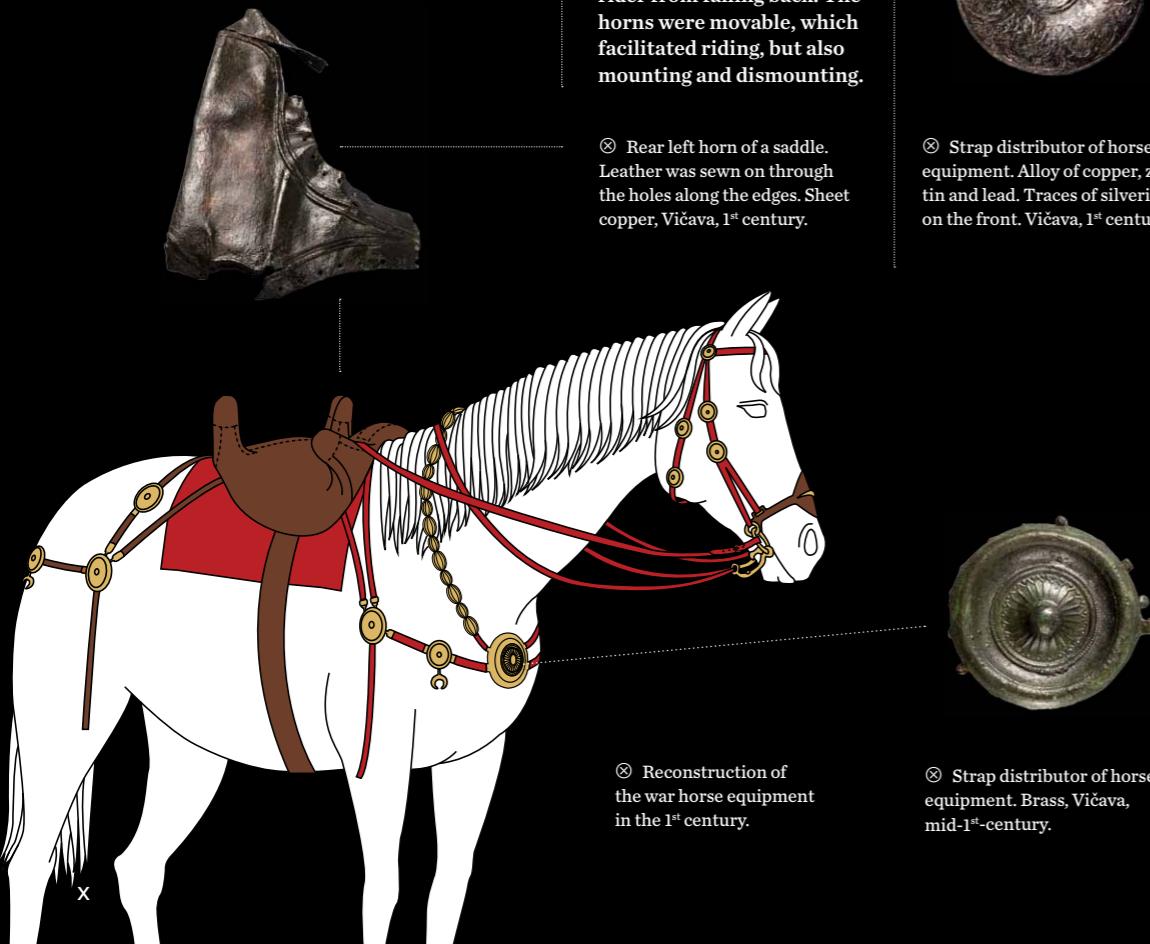


⊗ Decorative disc, possibly part of a military decoration worn over the armour. It holds the relief depiction of Medusa with snakes for hair, believed to ward off evil. Copper alloy, Panorama, 1st–2nd century.

HORSE EQUIPMENT IN THE 1ST CENTURY

Horses were equipped with a metal bridle and leather straps with distributors, decorative discs and pendants, the latter in the function of amulets, to ward off evil. The cavalrymen also used a saddle and spurs, but no stirrups; neither did the Romans shoe their horses.

The equipment of the Roman war horse differed little from that in civilian use.



⊗ Reconstruction of the war horse equipment in the 1st century.

SADDLE

The Romans took over the Celtic form of four-horned saddles in the 1st century BC. The horns were made of sheet metal covered with leather and sewn onto a padded saddle. The front horns provided support to the rider's thighs and were crucial in mounting and dismounting, while the rear pair prevented the rider from falling back. The horns were movable, which facilitated riding, but also mounting and dismounting.



⊗ Strap distributor of horse equipment. Brass, Vičava, mid-1st-century.

AD 69 – THE YEAR OF THE FOUR EMPERORS

Following the death of the tyrannical Emperor Nero (9 June 68), a period of military and political discord, as well as power struggles ensued. Four emperors succeeded each other in the space of a single year, AD 69: Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian. Vespasian only presented himself to the public after having secured sufficient support from key armies, those in the Balkans and the Near East. The Near Eastern army was led by Vespasian himself or his friends, while the Balkan armies supported him on the incentive of their legion commanders. Led by the provincial governor of Pannonia, these commanders met in the fortress at Poetovio in August 69 to discuss the long, but quietly prepared plan to

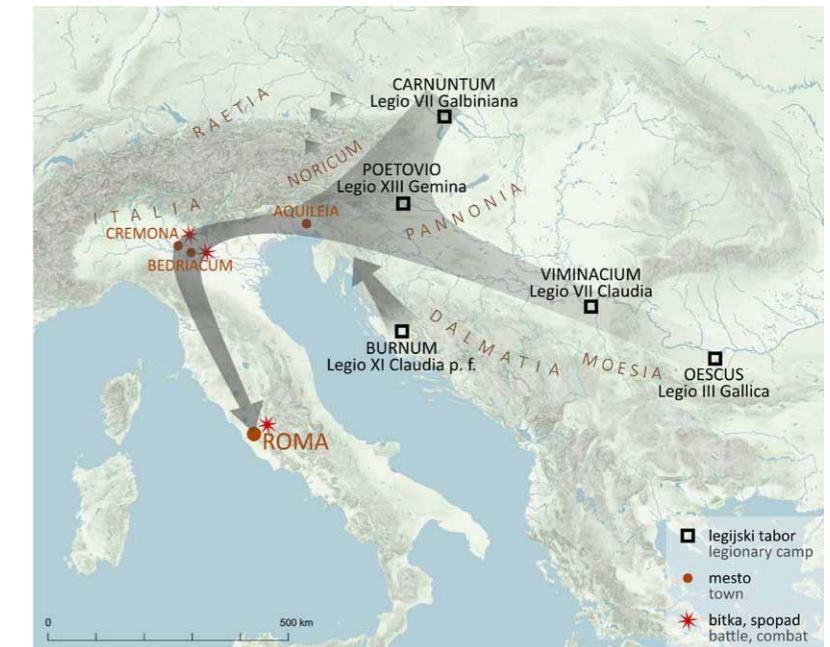
change their loyalties from the then Emperor Aulus Vitellius to Vespasian.

In the meeting, Marcus Antonius Primus, who was a young legion commander from *Carnuntum* (Petronell near Vienna), inspired the soldiers and convinced the military leaders to enter Italy even before the arrival of the Near Eastern army. Under his command, the army from Illyricum secured the border of the province of Noricum and hastened to Italy, where it defeated Vitellius' legions at *Bedriacum* and *Cremona* to capture Rome in December.

As the result of the Balkan army's decision to support him in the meeting at Poetovio, Vespasian came out victorious.



⊗ Coin with the image of the Emperor Vespasian, minted in 72–73 AD. Ptuj.



TACITUS ON POETOVIO

PUBLIUS CORNELIUS TACITUS (born around 56, died after 118), Roman senator and in 97 consul, is considered one of the greatest Roman historians. He mentions Poetovio in his great work entitled *Histories (Historiae)*, which recounts the history of the civil wars after Nero's suicide. In the beginning of Book III, he writes of the meeting that took place in August 69 at Poetovio; this is the first time the city appears in ancient written documents.

3.1 Under happier auspices and in a more loyal spirit the Flavianist leaders were discussing the plans of the campaign. They had assembled at Petovio, the winter-quarters of the 13th legion. There they debated, whether they should blockade the passes of the Pannonian Alps till the whole strength of their party should be gathered in their rear, or whether it would be the more vigorous policy to close with the enemy, and to contend for the possession of Italy. Those who thought it advisable to wait for reinforcements, and to protract the campaign, dwelt on the strength and reputation of the German legions ...

3.2 In answer to this, Antonius Primus, who was the most energetic promoter of the war, declared that prompt action would be advantageous to themselves, and fatal to Vitellius ...

3.3 With flashing eyes, and in the fierce tones that might be most widely heard (for the centurions and some of the common soldiers had intruded themselves into the deliberations), he poured out such a torrent of these and similar words, that he carried away even the cautious and prudent, while the general voice of the multitude extolled him as the one man, the one general in the army, and spurned the inaction of the others. He had raised this reputation for himself at the very first assembly, when, after Vespasian's letters had been read, he had not, like many, used ambiguous language, on which he might put this or that construction as might serve his purpose. It was seen that he openly committed himself to the cause, and he had therefore greater weight with the soldiers, as being associated with them in what was either their crime or their glory ...

Translated by Alfred John Church and William Jackson Brodribb
<http://classics.mit.edu/Tacitus/histories.3.iii.html>

LEGIONARY CAMP IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 1ST CENTURY

It was presumably the Thirteenth Legion Gemina that replaced the old wooden fortress with one built of stone, as inferred from the bricks stamped with the legion's name. It also constructed a 20-kilometre long aqueduct from the Pohorje Hills to Spodnja Hajdina. The finds of votive altars show that several sanctuaries were put up in this period, including a temple for the supreme god Jupiter.

Inscriptions tell us that Poetovio was also a port, used by the Pannonian navy (*classis Flavia Pannonica*).

A settlement (*canabae*) of artisans and merchants who supplied and serviced the army grew next to the fortress and at the river crossing, on both banks. It was a settlement of immigrants from Italy, including retired soldiers or veterans, as well as locals.

TRADE AND MANUFACTURE OF GOODS IN THE 1ST CENTURY

Economic and political stability, as well as a safe and well-organised network of maritime, riverine and land routes enabled a vast expansion of production and trade, with mass-produced goods and select luxury items reaching even the remotest of places.

Immigrants from Italy also brought with them their dietary habits, primarily based on olive oil and wine. These commodities were supplied to Poetovio from the large estates in Istria and the Po Plain. Oil was transported in amphorae, wine largely in wooden barrels. Select types of wine also came from the eastern and western Mediterranean. Roman food often involved the use of fish sauces; these were imported from the Iberian Peninsula.

During the 1st century, the large workshops in northern Italy provided a variety of high-quality tableware (plates, cups, beakers), as well as oil lamps.

Local production was rapidly growing in Poetovio. In the first half of the 1st century, marble quarries began to be opened in the Pohorje Hills; there were also workshops that produced quality table and cooking ware. An important factor of Poetovio's economic prosperity was the navigable Drava, as waterborne transport was considerably cheaper than transport on land.



⊗ Intaglio depicting Ceres-Tellus with a child in her arms and an ear of grain. Carnelian, Vičava, 2nd-3rd century.



⊗ Intaglio depicting Bellerophon on Pegasus. Carnelian, Vičava, 1st-2nd century.



⊗ Brick with the stamp of the Thirteenth Legion Gemina. Vičava, second half of the 1st century.



⊗ Amphora for wine from the Iberian Peninsula. Pottery, Vičava, 1st century.



⊗ Amphora for olive oil from Istria. Pottery, Vičava, 1st - early 2nd century.

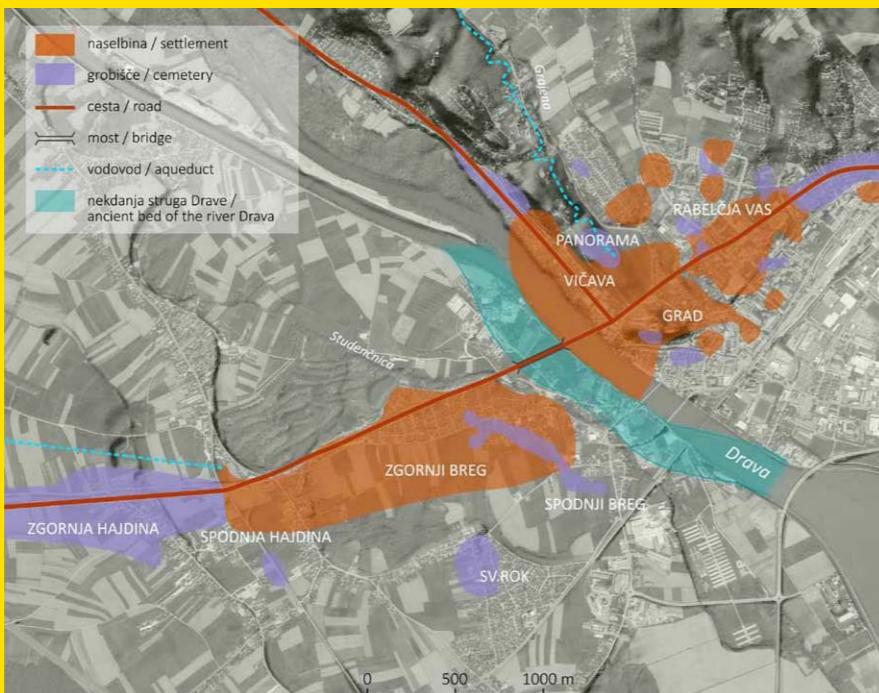
COLONIA ULPIA TRAIANA POETOVIO

The Emperor Trajan established a colony in Poetovio after the Thirteenth Legion Gemina had left the city, sometime between 98 and 102. It was given the official name *Ulpia Traiana* after Trajan's family name and cognomen.

Colonies were cities with limited autonomy that the Romans established in conquered territory and settled by Roman citizens. Each colony was allotted a territory and part of its arable land was distributed among the immigrants.

Colonists from Italy immigrated to Poetovio, as well as retired soldiers, who had received a retirement bonus in either cash or land.

The beginnings of Poetovio as a colony are marked by large and state-financed building projects; public buildings were put up in the city centre, the bridge across the Drava was either newly constructed or renovated, roads were renovated.



⊗ Greatest extent of Poetovio in the 2nd and 3rd centuries.

IMP·CAES·DIVI·NERVAE·F·NERVA·TRAIANVS·AVG
GERMANICVS·DACICVS·PONTIFEX·MAXIMVS
TRIBVNICA·POTESTATE··IMP·III·COS·V·PATER·PATRIAE
COLONIAE·VLPIAE·TRAIANAE·POETOVIONENSIVM
FORVM
DEDIT

⊗ Fragment and reconstruction of a marble building inscription. The inscription slab was originally around 3.70 m long. Vičava, between 102 and 106.

[IMP(ERATOR) CAES(AR) DIVI NERVAE F(ILIUS) NERVA TRAIANUS AUG(USTUS)]
[GERMANICUS DACICUS PO]NTIFE[X MAXIMUS]
[TRIBUNICIA POTESTATE ... IMP(ERATOR)] IIII CO(N)S(UL) V [PATER PATRIAE]
[COLONIAE ULPIAE TRAI]ANAE POET[OVIONENSIMUM]
[FORUM DEDIT?]

THE EMPEROR CAESAR NERVA TRAJAN AUGUSTUS, SON OF THE DEIFIED NERVA, CONQUEROR OF GERMANY, CONQUEROR OF DACIA, PONTIFEX MAXIMUS, IN HIS ... YEAR OF TRIBUNICIAN POWER, FOUR TIMES ACCLAIMED IMPERATOR, FIVE TIMES CONSUL, FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY, BUILT THIS FORUM (?) FOR THE COLONY ULPIA TRAIANA POETOVIO.

The fragment of a building inscription found at Vičava, which can be reconstructed with Trajan's name, titles and functions, reveals that the emperor ordered an important public structure to be put up, possibly a forum (central square with administrative buildings); this occurred between 102 and 106. Before becoming emperor, Trajan was governor of the province of Pannonia sometime between 92 and 98; it is therefore possible that he was personally familiar with Poetovio.

BRIDGE ACROSS THE DRAVA



When still a young officer, **HADRIAN** travelled from Italy to join his detachments stationed at *Aquincum* (present-day Budapest) and on his way dedicated a large altar to Jupiter at Poetovio. Upon becoming emperor, he fostered the development of the new colony by financing the construction or renovation of a roughly 200 m long stone bridge across the River Drava, in AD 132 also the renovation of the main northbound road through Poetovio.

[IM]P(ERATOR) C[AES(AR)] DIVI TRAIANI PARTHICI FIL(IUS)]
DIVI [NERVAE NEP(OS) TRAIANUS HADRIANUS AUGU(USTUS)]
PON[TIFEX MAXIMUS TRIB(UNICIA) POTEST(ATE) XVI CO(N)S(UL) III P(ATR) P(ATRIAEE) PROCO(N)S(UL)]
[P]ONTE[M - - -]

BUILDING INSCRIPTION OF THE EMPEROR HADRIAN



THE EMPEROR CAESAR TRAJAN HADRIAN AUGUSTUS, SON OF THE DEIFIED TRAJAN, CONQUEROR OF PARTHIA, GRANDSON OF THE DEIFIED NERVA, PONTIFEX MAXIMUS, IN HIS SIXTEENTH YEAR OF TRIBUNICIAN POWER, THRICE CONSUL, FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY, PROCONSUL, BRIDGE ...

In 1912, a fragment of an inscription slab was found at the Drava together with stone blocks and wooden piles. The slab would have been more than five metres long when complete. It tells of the construction work on the bridge in the time of the Emperor Hadrian (117–138) and was originally positioned on the arch marking the entrance to the bridge across the Drava. The fragment was found on the current right bank, which was the left bank in Roman times, as the river changed its course on several occasions throughout history.

Found in proximity to Hadrian's building inscription was also a marble slab that had once formed part of the ceiling of the arch that stood at the entrance to the bridge across the Drava. It bears a bundle of lightning bolts – the attribute of the supreme god Jupiter, protector of the Emperor Hadrian – depicted within a moulded and decorated frame. First half of the 2nd century.



ROMAN MILITARY DIPLOMA

The bronze tablet with five lines surviving of the inscription was found in Vičava in 2011. It was recovered from a layer dated to the late 1st–early 2nd century.

It is part of a military diploma, which is a modern name for a pair of bronze tablets tied together with wire and bearing a double transcription of the issue with which the Roman emperor granted privileges to a soldier on his honourable discharge from the army. It served to the recipient as proof of having been granted Roman citizenship (*civitas*) and of the right to

a legal marriage (*conubium*). These two privileges gave the men previously without Roman citizenship the opportunity of climbing the social ladder; they were also an incentive for military service.

The diplomas were made individually, one for each soldier, and only in the central office in Rome; this made them uniform in appearance. The original imperial decrees (*constitutiones*), which the bronze tablets copied, were written on bronze plaques and displayed on the walls of different public buildings in Rome.

Partially reconstructed, the inscription on the diploma from Poetovio reads:

[IMP. CAES(AR) ---
EQUITIBUS ET PEDITIBUS QUI MILITANT IN ALIS --- ET COHORTIBUS --- QUAE
APELLANTUR --- ET --- -U]M VETERA[NA ET --- ET QUAE SUNT IN
MOESIA SUPERIORE S]UB IULIO CAND[IDO STIPENDIIS
EMERITIS DIMISSIS HO]NESTA MISS[IONE IPSIS LIBERIS
POSTERISQUE EORUM CIV]ITATEM DED[IT ET CONUBIUM
CUM UXORIBUS QUAS TUN]C HABUISSE[NT CUM EST
CIVITAS IIS DATA AUT SI QUI CAELIBES ESSENT CUM
IIS QUAS POSTEA DUXISSENT, DUM TAXAT SINGULI
SINGULAS. ---
-----]

Translation with the reconstructed parts:

THE EMPEROR ... GRANTED CITIZENSHIP TO THE CAVALRYMEN AND INFANTRYMEN WHO SERVED IN [NUMERAL] ALAE AND [NUMERAL] COHORTS CALLED ... AND ... (NICKNAMED) VETERAN ... THAT ARE STATIONED IN UPPER MOESIA UNDER THE COMMAND OF JULIUS CANDIDUS, HONORABLY DISCHARGED (AFTER 25 OR MORE YEARS OF SERVICE AND WHOSE NAMES ARE WRITTEN BELOW), AND TO THEIR CHILDREN AND DESCENDANTS, AS WELL AS THE RIGHT OF LEGAL MARRIAGE WITH THE WIVES WHOM THEY HAD WHEN CITIZENSHIP WAS GIVEN TO THEM OR, IF ANY ARE UNMARRIED, WITH THOSE WOMEN WHOM THEY MIGHT MARRY LATER, WITH ONLY ONE WIFE FOR EACH MAN...



⊗ Fragment of a Roman military diploma made of bronze.

The missing beginning of the text named the emperor with his titles under whom the diploma had been issued, as well as the number and full names of the army units of the soldiers granted citizenship.

The first surviving line relates part of the name of the unit (*veterana*), the second names the governor of the province of Upper Moesia, Julius Candidus, the third line mentions honourable discharge (*honesta missio*), the fourth line relates that citizenship (*civitas*) was

granted and the fifth line part of the formula on granting the right to a legal marriage (*conubium*).

The missing text that followed further down noted the date and the names of the consuls, the name of the unit in which the recipient of the diploma served, his personal name and rank, the statement that the text was copied and checked from the bronze tablet attached in Rome to the wall of a public building, as well as the names of the seven witnesses confirming the text to be an exact copy of the original.

TIBERIUS IULIUS CANDIDUS MARIUS CELSUS became provincial governor and commander-in-chief of the army in Upper Moesia (present-day Serbia) presumably in the autumn of 96. The recipient of the diploma, who most likely participated in the Dacian Wars fought in the late 1st century, was discharged under his governorship, possibly during the brief reign of the Emperor Nerva (96–98) or early in the reign of Trajan (98–117). He may have been part of the first wave of colonists to Poetovio.

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC OFFICES

Poetovio rapidly grew into the largest city between the northern Adriatic and the Danube. It was run by individuals from Italy born in the wealthiest of Roman families. Apart from immigrants, local people of Celtic descent also lived in the city. From the late 2nd century onwards, immigrants included those from the eastern Mediterranean.

Important public offices at Poetovio gave it special status within a wider region. The archives and the records office (*tabularium*) for Upper Pannonia were established here, as well as the central office for inheritance tax for both the Upper and Lower Pannonia (*XX hereditatum ultrarumque Pannoniarum*). From the time of Hadrian (117–138) onwards, the city held the central office for Illyrian customs that covered a large area from Bavaria to the Black Sea and involved roughly fifty customs posts. The public offices were located at the western outskirts of the city, at Spodnja Hajdina.

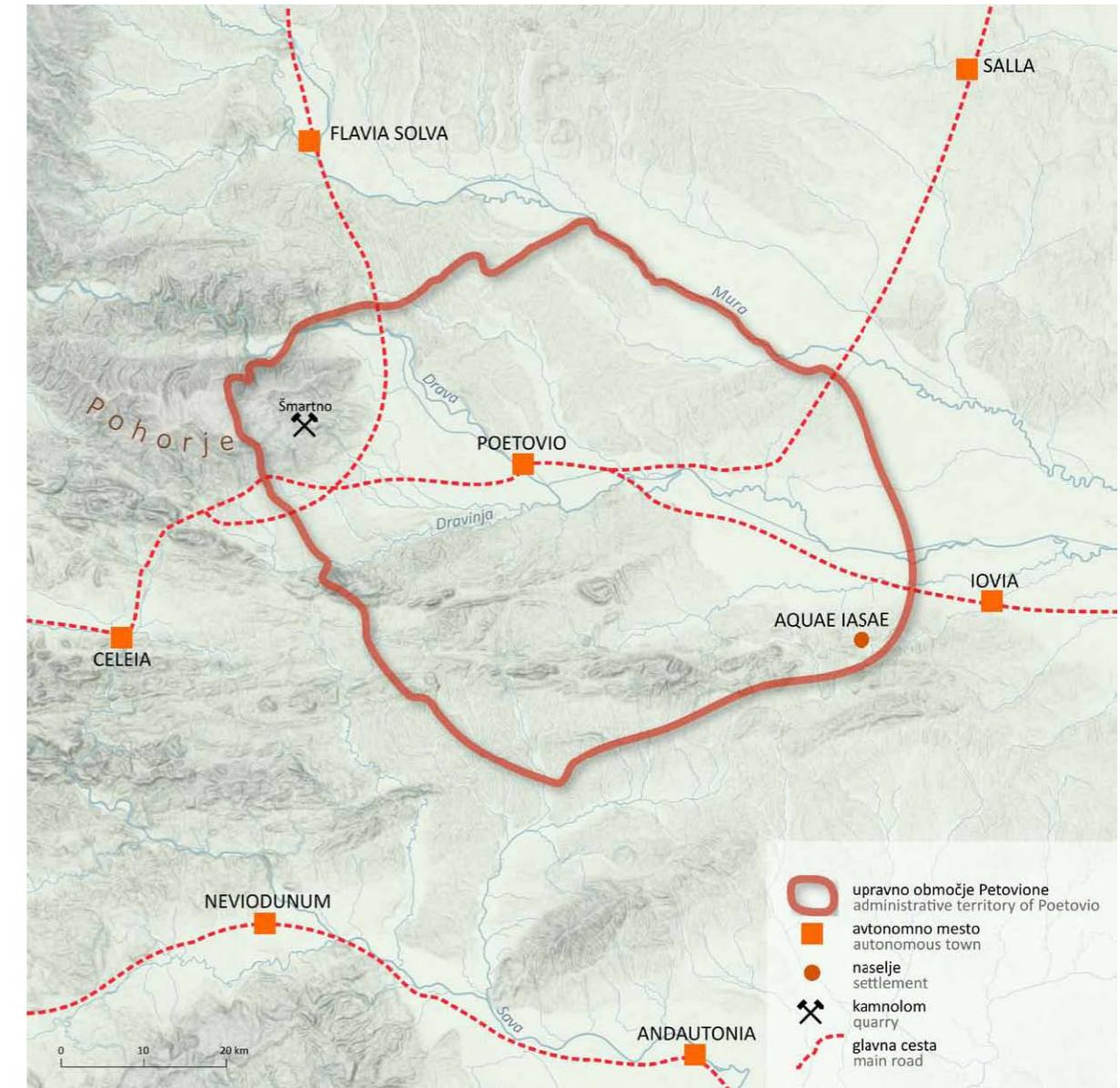
CITY TERRITORY

As all Roman towns and cities, Poetovio also had its territory. In the west, it included at least part of the Pohorje Hills and their marble quarries, while it presumably incorporated the spa town of Aquae Iasae (Varaždinske Toplice) in the west.

After the division of the province Pannonia to its upper and lower parts between 103 and 106/107, Poetovio came under Upper Pannonia.



⊗ Ear of a life-sized bronze statue, foot of Panorama. It was the statue of an important person that probably stood at the highest point along the main road connecting Poetovio with large towns along the Danube.



⊗ City territory of Poetovio.

The marble altar, dedicated to the supreme god Jupiter, was set up by Tercius, a slave employed as an official of the tax administration at Poetovio. The altar probably dates to the period of the joint reign of the Emperors Caracalla and Geta, from February 211 to February 212. It was reused as lining in a Late Roman grave on Panorama.



[I(OVI) O(PTIMO) M(AXIMO)
PRO SALUTE
..... AU]
G[[G]](USTORUM) NOSTRORUM
TABUL(ARII) VECTIGAL(IS) ILL
YRIC(I) ET VIL(ICI) STAT(IONIS) PO
ETOVIONENSIS
TERTIUS SER(VUS) EX VOTO.

TO JUPITER, BEST AND GREATEST,
TERCIUS, SLAVE OF THE TAX
ADMINISTRATION FOR ILLYRICUM
AND MANAGER OF THE TAX OFFICE
IN POETOVIO, (SET THIS UP) IN
ACCORDANCE WITH HIS VOW FOR
THE WELFARE OF ... OUR EMPERORS.

CENTRE OF POETOPIO ON PANORAMA

One of the central parts of the city was located on the hill of Panorama. It was probably built-up according to a pre-conceived plan in the first half of the 2nd century. Individual buildings were subsequently subject to renovation and adaptation works, at least until the end of the 4th century.

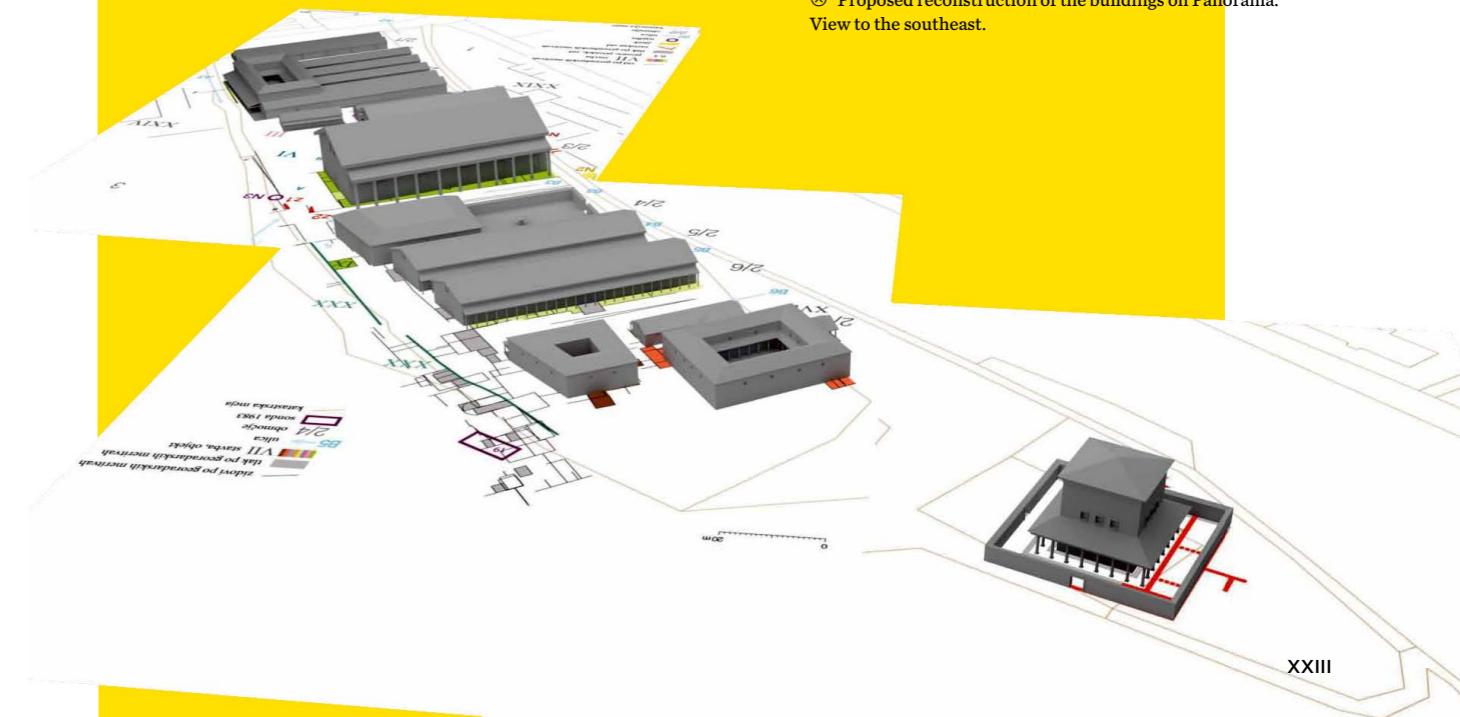
The streets were paved either with gravel or with large stones and formed a rectilinear grid with two small squares. An aqueduct led to Panorama from the catchment area in the valley of the Grajena stream, roughly 3.8 kilometres away.

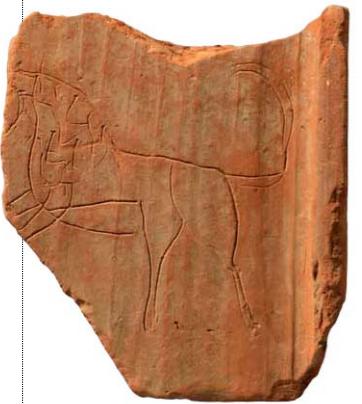
Some of the buildings were long and narrow, composed of a series of small rooms connected with a long corridor or porticus; they were workshops, stores and humble dwellings.

Investigations also revealed the houses of the city's rich, with numerous rooms, some with underfloor heating, baths with semi-circular or circular rooms, porticoes and wall paintings. On the summit of Panorama was a square building with a triple ambulatory, possibly one of the most prominent sanctuaries in Poetovio. The stone remains from Panorama suggest the existence of other sanctuaries. In the late 4th century, an Early Christian church was also built near the summit.

Large parts of the city were abandoned in the troubled times of the first half of the 5th century. Cemeteries spread among the ruinous houses until Poetovio was finally abandoned in the middle of the 5th century.

⊗ Proposed reconstruction of the buildings on Panorama.
View to the southeast.





⊗ Roof tile (*tegula*) with an incised image of a horse. It was reused as the cover of a Late Roman grave on the north slope of Panorama.



⊗ Decorated wall stucco. Panorama.



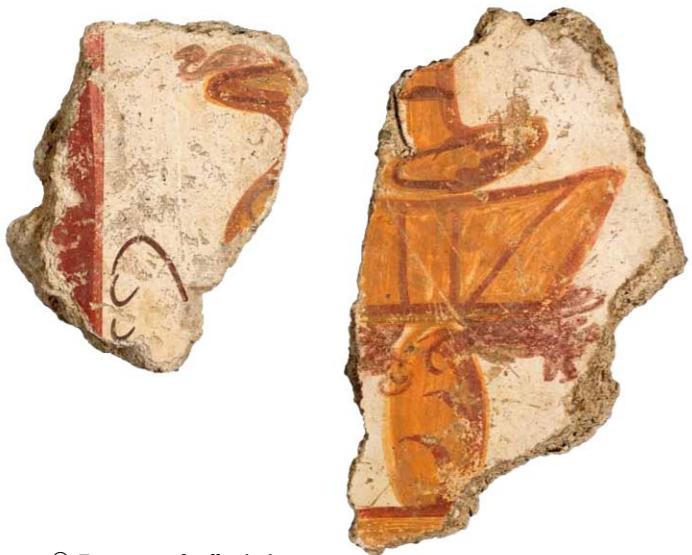
⊗ Bronze finger ring with the inscription LVALL/ERIVS TA/GILVS was found in a lavish building near the summit of Panorama. It may have belonged to a member of the prominent Poetovio family of Valerii. Second half of the 2nd or first half of the 3rd century.



⊗ Silver finger ring from Panorama. Second half of the 3rd century.



⊗ Gold finger ring. Vičava, late 3rd/4th century.



⊗ Fragments of wall paintings. Vičava, 2nd century.

CRAFTS

Poetovio was a major production and trade centre. Archaeological evidence suggests the existence of casting, blacksmithing, glassmaking, stonemasonry and bone processing workshops.

The pottery workshops at Poetovio exploited the deposits of high-quality clay in the vicinity and met a sizable proportion of the local demand for pottery across four centuries. An extensive potters' district has been recorded in the eastern part of Poetovio, at Rabelčja vas, where quality table and cooking wares were produced, as well as oil lamps and bricks.

Poetovio's pottery products had a market that mainly reached 40 to 60 kilometres outside the city. The navigable Drava, flowing to the east and already used to export products of Pohorje marble, enabled the products to reach areas as far away as northern Serbia.

The textile industry was also well-developed. Diocletian's Edict of Maximum Prices from the beginning of the 4th century mentions a brooch-fastened garment, probably female, produced in Poetovio (*fibulatorium Petovionicum*) with the price tag of 5000 *denarii* (which is the value of 200 daily payments of a farm worker). These garments were apparently of such high quality and their production so substantial, that they represented a merchandise of importance on an empire-wide scale.



⊗ Flute, half-worked horns, chisels, nails and a whetstone found in a workshop of bone and horn products. Horn, iron, stone, Vičava, 1st–3rd century.



⊗ Mortars with spouts in the shape of a pig's head were produced in Poetovio. Panorama, 2nd–3rd century.

PANORAMA – THE CULT CENTRE OF POETOPIO

In addition to other functions, Panorama was also one of Poetovio's cult centres. It yielded stone monuments and their fragments dedicated to Greco-Roman, Oriental and indigenous deities that tell us of the religious cults practised here. These took place in small sanctuaries arranged in the interiors of commercial-residential buildings, there was also a large sanctuary located at the summit, possibly as part of a religious complex. It might have been dedicated to Jupiter Depulsor (avertor of evil and healer), originally a Celtic divinity who became one of the most revered Roman gods in the south-eastern Alpine area; Poetovio was one of the centres of his cult.



⊗ Proposed reconstruction of the large sanctuary that stood on top of the Panorama hill, 2nd–3rd century.

RITUALS

In Roman times, it was imperative to publicly participate in collective rituals and thus to identify oneself as a member of a community. The supreme Roman gods, the cult of the emperor, mythology and divine worship were as important as the interests of the state and cults in the public interest were usually state financed. Roman religion was inclusive and flexible, and incorporated numerous foreign religious and magical practices, mainly Greek and Oriental, but also local – Celtic, which were particularly common in the Poetovio area. There were frequent instances of syncretism, i.e. the amalgamation of different cults. In such a colourful pantheon, each individual could find his or her own way of practising religion and a personal relationship with the gods he or she supplicated.

Performing sacrifice was the central act of any cult practice. It began with the music of a flute or lyre and proceeded according to the rules pertaining to the worship of a particular divinity. Incense, libations, plants or specific animals were offered on the altar. Sacrifice took place in the open, at the altar located in front of a sanctuary and in front of the assembled community. The ritual was performed by figures of authority, dressed in a toga worn so as to expose the hands and cover the head.

Within the private sphere of a family, it was the father who performed the rituals, while members of the family assisted him. Sacrifices on household altars were offered to the Lares, Penates, ancestors and the Genius of the family.



⊗ Fragment of a relief slab showing men offering sacrifice, dressed in a toga that ritually veils the head. They are sprinkling incense or pouring libation on a decorated altar. The priests – public officials – were tasked with performing public rituals, sacrificing to the Lares that watched over the community, or to the Genius of the Emperor who protected the ruler. Marble, Vičava, 2nd–3rd century.



⊗ Ritual vessel with three handles, with snakes slithering up the handles. Pottery, Panorama, 2nd–3rd century.

VOTIVE OFFERINGS

Votive offerings have a long history, from prehistory to modern times. People made offerings to gods either as an act or reinforcement of their supplication or in exchange for a certain favour they had been granted. In Antiquity, votive offerings were often deposited in sanctuaries or other sacred places.

The lead votive statuettes from Panorama are made in low relief in a two-piece mould. Their manufacture was quick, simple and cheap. Some are fitted onto a pedestal and stand on their own, others are depicted inside a frame that represents a shrine (*aedicula*) and were probably hung from or attached to an object. The statuette fragments have been found in the area of the large sanctuary on Panorama and represent female divinities symbolising fertility, fortune and abundance.

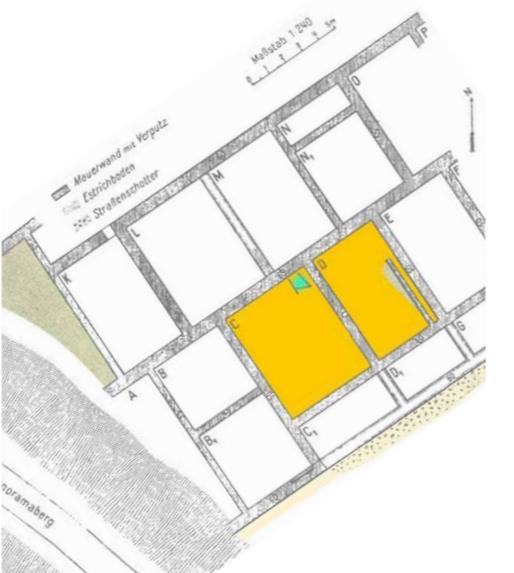


⊗ Three goddesses (possibly nymphs or Parcae) within a frame. Lead, Panorama, large sanctuary, 2nd–3rd century.

SACRED SPACES

Panorama revealed a large building with rooms in two rows and a corridor on either side, part of which was excavated in 1911. Two of the rooms, with wall paintings, contained numerous fragments of marble relief slabs, some with inscriptions, and marble statues. There were also three plain marble slabs positioned vertically in a manner to suggest they enclosed a water spring or a fountain. Different deities were venerated in these sacred spaces in the 2nd and 3rd centuries: Nutrices, Domna and Domnus, Liber, Silvanus, Salus and Aesculapius, Bacchus and Venus.

The highly fragmented stone slabs with cult images and stone altars reveal a violent end of the old gods. This may have occurred after the end of the 4th century, when Christianity became the only tolerated religion in the Roman Empire.



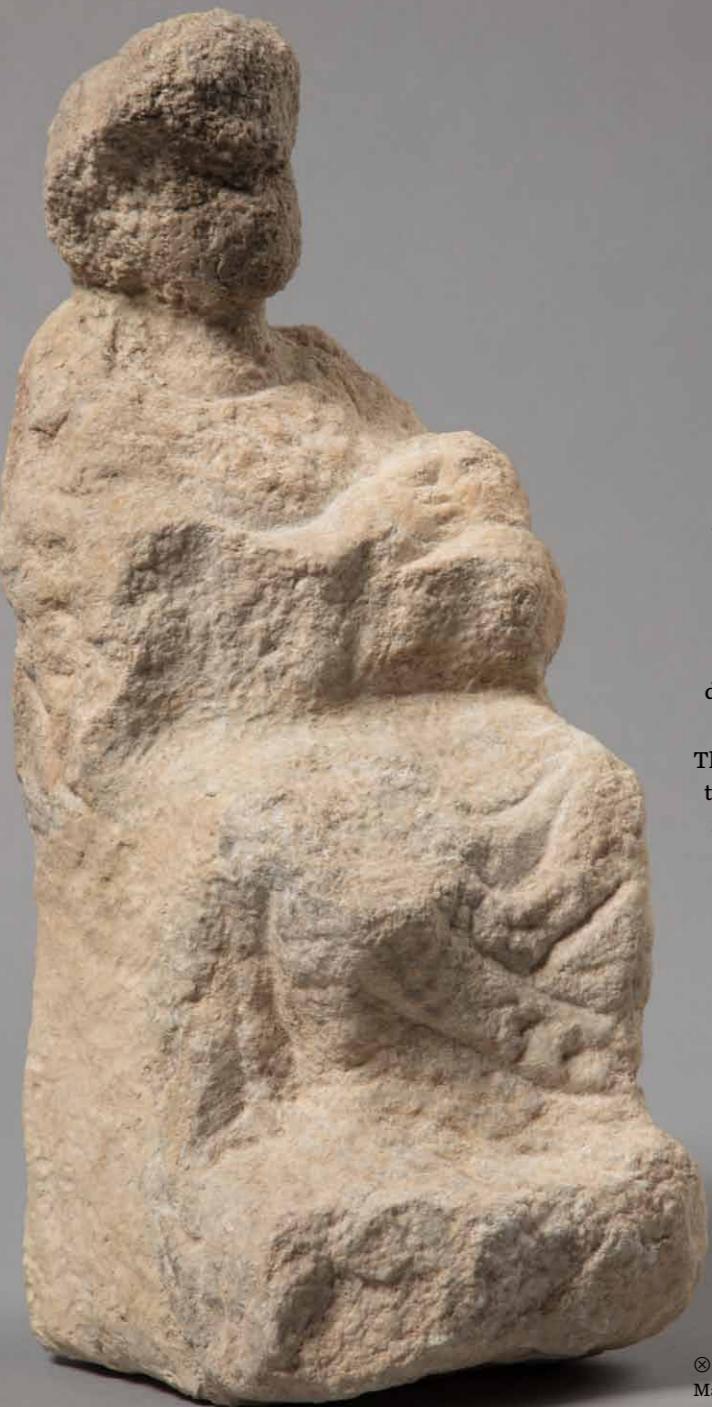
⊗ Sacred rooms in which different deities were once venerated. Excavations on Panorama in 1911 (adapted from *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen Institutes in Wien* 17, Beiblatt, 1914, Fig. 68).

NUTRICES

Nutrices were the protectors of families and the health of children.

In Roman times, the mortality rate in early childhood is known to have been high across all social classes, and it was not unusual for individuals of very different standings to turn to them for help, from the city's elite to the slaves, from Roman citizens to indigenous inhabitants, locals to immigrants. The large number of stone monuments dedicated to them at Poetovio is evidence of their popularity in the area. In fact, the Nutrices were worshipped in this manner only in the Poetovio area, suggesting it is a cult with indigenous roots. A sanctuary dedicated to the Nutrices also stood on Panorama.

Their veneration was very popular in the 2nd century. It gradually stopped in the second half of the 3rd century and was later banned, together with all other pagan cults, and the sanctuaries destroyed. The marble slabs dedicated to the Nutrices originally stood in a sanctuary and were reused in the Late Roman period, in the 4th century, as lining for grave pits. However, a deep-seated belief in mother goddesses survived the ages and can be found in the popular tradition, while the Virgin Mary took over their role in Christianity.



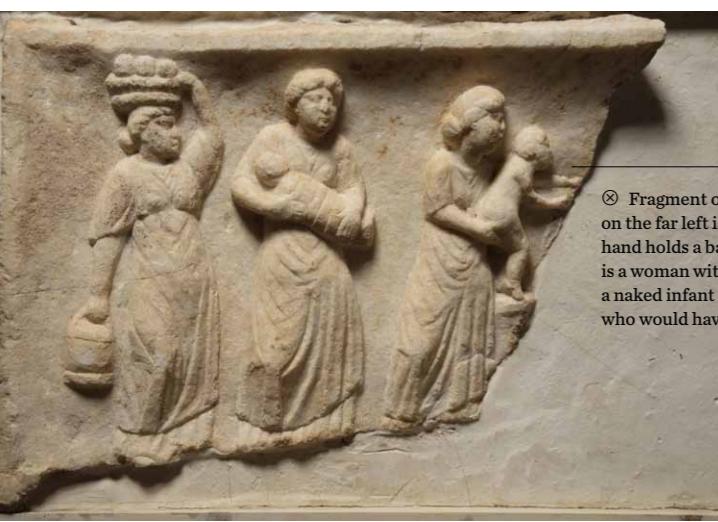
⊗ Statuette of a Nutrix breastfeeding a child. Marble, 2nd–3rd century.



**NUTRICIBVS AUG(USTIS)
SACR(UM) P(UBLIUS) MI[--].**

TO THE AUGUST NUTRICES, PUBLIUS MI[--]
CONSECRATED (THIS MONUMENT).

⊗ Fragment of a votive relief slab with part of the inscription. The woman on the left has a platter with loaves of bread or pastry on her head, holding it with both hands. The woman next to her is holding a nude child above the altar. The Nutrix standing to the right are missing. Middle or second half of the 2nd c.

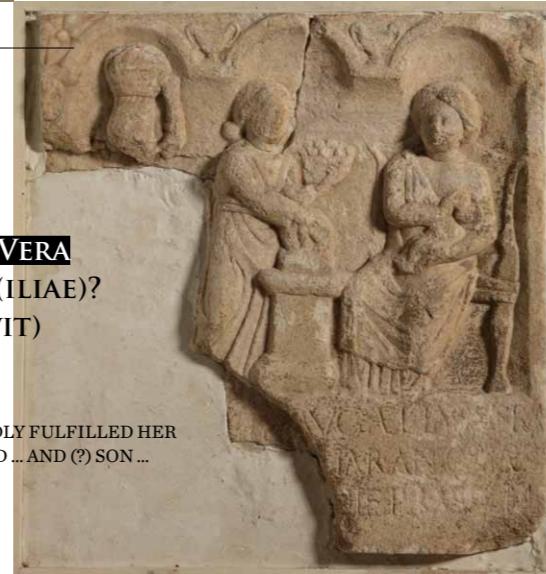


⊗ Fragment of a votive relief slab with a missing inscription. The woman on the far left is holding a lamp in her lowered right hand and with her left hand holds a basket with fruit or pastry on her head. Standing next to her is a woman with a swaddled infant. The woman on the right side is holding a naked infant over the altar, turning the child towards the missing Nutrix who would have been depicted on the far right. 2nd c.

⊗ Damaged votive relief slab with an inscription. The woman on the left is holding a basket with fruit or pastry on her head. The central figure is also holding a basket with fruit or pastry in her left hand, offering sacrifice on the altar. On the right is a sitting Nutrix breastfeeding a naked infant. Panorama, middle or second half of the 2nd c.

[NUTRICIB(US)] AUG(USTIS) AELIA VERA
[PRO SALUTE ? ---]IAR(ONI) ANTONIAE F(ILIAE)?
[--- ANTO]NI FILI V(OTUM) S(OLVIT)
L(IBENS) M(ERITO).

TO THE AUGUST NUTRICES, AELIA VERA WILLINGLY AND DESERVEDLY FULFILLED HER
VOW FOR THE WELFARE (?) OF HER DAUGHTERS (?) ANTONIA AND ... AND (?) SON ...



**NUTRICIBVS AUG(USTIS) SACR(UM)
VITALIS ET VI[N]TUMILA CONIUGI PRO
MAXIMILLA F(ILIA)**

TO THE AUGUST NUTRICES, VITALIS AND HIS WIFE VINTUMILA CONSECRATED
(THIS MONUMENT) FOR THEIR DAUGHTER MAXIMILLA, WILLINGLY AND
DESERVEDLY FULFILLING THEIR VOW.

⊗ Votive relief slab with an inscription. Sitting at either end of the relief is a Nutrix, breastfeeding a swaddled infant. Between them is a woman, possibly a mother, who is holding a votive vessel in her right hand and offering sacrifice on the altar, and with her left hand holding the hand of a girl. Late 2nd–first half of the 3rd c.



**NUTRICIBVS AUG(USTIS) SACR(UM) T(ITUS) CASSIUS
VERINUS, DEC(URIO) COL(ONIAE) POET(OVIONENSIMUM),
PRAEF(ECCLUS) FABR(UM), PRAEF(ECCLUS)
PRO II VIR(IS) ET DONNIA MAXIMILLA CON(IUNX)
PRO SALUTE T(ITI) CASSI SEVERI FILI.**

TO THE AUGUST NUTRICES, TITUS CASSIUS VERINUS, MEMBER OF
POETOVIUS CITY COUNCIL, OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF THE GUILD OF
CRAFTSMEN, ACTING MAYOR, AND HIS WIFE DONNIA MAXIMILLA
CONSECRATED (THIS MONUMENT) FOR THE WELFARE OF THEIR SON
TITUS CASSIUS SEVERUS.

⊗ Damaged votive relief slab with an inscription. The woman on the left is holding a lamp or a bucket in her right hand. The central figure holds an infant over the altar, turning the infant towards the Nutrix. The goddess is depicted sitting on the right, breastfeeding a naked infant. Middle or second half of the 2nd c.



**NUTRICIBVS AUG(USTIS) SACR(UM) L(UCIUS) FUSC(INIUS)
EXSUPERATUS, AUG(USTALIS) COL(ONIAE)
POET(OVIONENSIMUM) ET
[AE?]LIA HONORATA PRO SALUTE
[F]USCINI HONORATI FIL(II) V(OTUM) S(OLOVERUNT).**

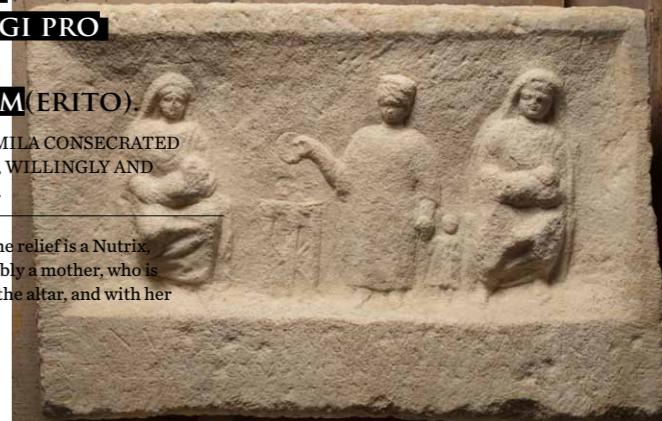
TO THE AUGUST NUTRICES, LUCIUS FUSCIUS EXSUPERATUS, PRIEST
OF THE IMPERIAL CULT AT POETOVIUS (AUGUSTALIS), AND AELIA
HONORATA CONSECRATED (THIS MONUMENT) FOR THE WELFARE OF
THEIR SON FUSCIUS HONORATUS.

⊗ Damaged votive relief slab with an inscription. The woman on the left is balancing a basket on her head with the help of a ribbon or strap on each side. The central figure is holding a naked infant over the altar, turning the infant towards the Nutrix on the right who is sitting and breastfeeding a swaddled infant. Mid-2nd c.

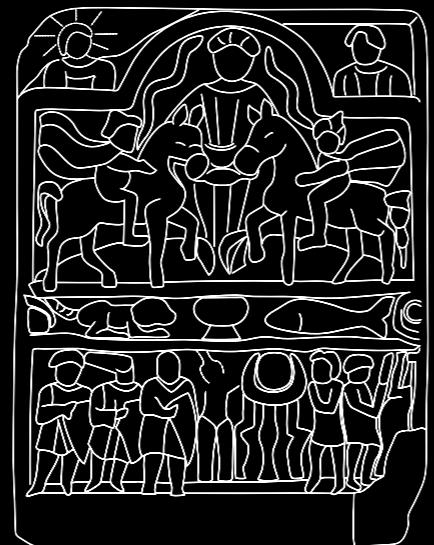
**NUTRICIBVS AUG(USTIS) SACR(UM)
VITALIS ET VI[N]TUMILA CONIUGI PRO
MAXIMILLA F(ILIA)**

V(OTUM) S(OLOVERUNT) L(IBENTES) M(ERITO).

TO THE AUGUST NUTRICES, VITALIS AND HIS WIFE VINTUMILA CONSECRATED
(THIS MONUMENT) FOR THEIR DAUGHTER MAXIMILLA, WILLINGLY AND
DESERVEDLY FULFILLING THEIR VOW.



LIBER PATER

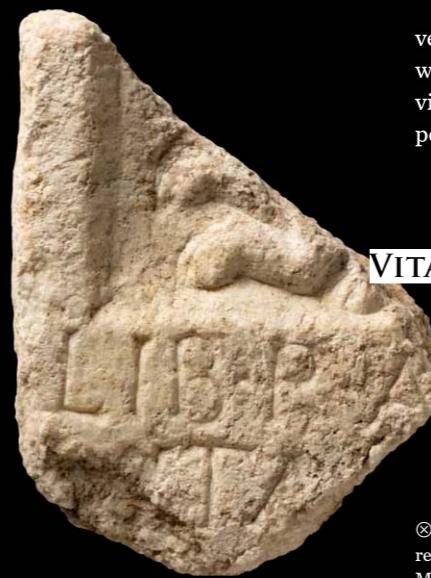


⊗ A small sanctuary, set up in two rooms within the large building on the Panorama hill, revealed several relief slabs of the cult of Domna and Domnus. One of them bears the central depiction of the goddess flanked by snakes and the heroic mounted twins trampling (presumably) human figures. Above them, in the celestial sphere, are Sol (Sun) and Luna (Moon). A narrow frieze below, depicting a lion, a vessel and a fish, separates the central from the bottom scene that shows initiation and sacrifice. 2nd–3rd century.

DOMNA AND DOMNUS

Traces of the cult of the divine couple – sun god and earth goddess – have mainly come to light in the Roman provinces along the Danube. Their sacred names are unpronounceable and shrouded in secrecy, hence their worshippers referred to them simply as Domna et Domnus, which roughly translates as ‘Ma’am and Sir’. Hundreds of images in lead and stone show scenes and symbols of their cult that also involves an array of assistants, sacred animals and

objects. The goddess occupies the central place in the cult’s iconography, suggesting that He was likely an exalted creator, while She was the divine mother, provider and saviour, to whom followers turned with their supplications. The mystery cult reached its peak in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Similarly as Mithraism and Christianity, it presumably promised a religious experience, rebirth and salvation through discipline, sacrifice and purification.



LIB(ERO) P(ATRI) A[---]
VITALIS V(OTUM) S(OLVIT) L(IBENS) M(ERITO)

TO LIBER PATER, A[---]
VITALIS WILLINGLY AND DESERVEDLY FULFILLED HIS VOW.

⊗ Fragment of a votive relief slab with an inscription. The surviving relief shows a recumbent panther and below it the inscription in two lines. Marble, Panorama, 2nd–3rd century.

SILVANUS

Silvanus was an Italic divinity whose name ties him to the forest. He was the protector of forests and fields, also of livestock, and was mainly venerated in wooded and arable farming areas. Silvanus’ action was in nature, outside the civilised world. His attributes, a pine branch and pruning knife, were symbols of the forest and of tree growing; he cultivated the wilderness and brought prosperity.



AESCUAPIUS AND SALUS



Aesculapius and Salus – the divine pair of father and daughter – are Roman gods of healing and welfare. Their priests in numerous sanctuaries and health resorts healed and at the same time performed healing rituals. The gods' typical attributes are snakes and fire, both associated with fertility and renewal, as well as the power over life and death. Because of its healing powers, the snake was and still is a symbol of pharmacy.

⊗ Fragment of a relief slab. It depicts Salus to the left, with her head ritually veiled and with a snake coiling around her right arm. Bearded Aesculapius is shown on the right. Marble, Panorama, 2nd–3rd century.

PRIAPUS



The cult of Priapus, ancient god of fertility, mainly developed in the pastoral and arable farming areas of Greece, whence it came to Italy and into the Roman pantheon. Priapus protected and encouraged all kinds of procreation, including that of livestock and plants that grew abundant crop, particularly the vine. His images would often be placed in gardens and fields, as well as field boundaries.

⊗ Fragment of a relief slab with an inscription. It depicts Priapus bearing fruits of nature. His large and erect penis was perceived as effective protection against demons and magic spells. The inscription *T(erminus) Fel(ix)* below the depiction shows that the slab served as boundary protection. It may even have protected the boundary of the *pomerium*, the legally and ritually determined and marked sacred ground of any Roman city, in this case the pomerium of Poetovio. Marble, Panorama, 2nd–3rd century.



SOL

Sol (Sun) is at the centre of the universe and rules over stars and planets. Every day, he drives his flaming chariot drawn by four wild horses across the firmament. The annual and daily cycle of the sun makes him an omnipresent deity who can see everything from his chariot and is the universal provider of vital energy. As such, he is associated with other Oriental solar deities and mystery cult figures, such as Mithras, as well as Domna and Domnus.

⊗ Fragment of a large relief slab. There is a marine creature, presumably hippocampus or snake, in each of the spandrels. Below them, Sol is depicted under an arch, wearing a radiate crown with nine rays, a long-sleeved tunic and a cloak billowing out behind him. His right hand is raised with the palm towards the spectator. The part of the relief with a four-horse chariot is missing. Marble, Muzejski trg, 2nd–3rd century.

In Late Antiquity, his worship was increasingly important. As *Sol Invictus* (Invincible Sun), he became a central deity and symbol of the emperor. It is not unusual for the winter solstice, which is the birth of the sun in calendar fertility cycles, to be considered the birthday of saviours, among them also Mithras and Jesus, who actually borrowed numerous characteristics from Sol.

D(EO) **I**(NVICTO) **M**(ITHRAE) **A**[---]
ET AUR(ELIUS) V[---]
[----?]

TO THE INVINCIBLE GOD MITHRAS, A[-] AND AURELIUS V[-]
 (CONSECRATED THIS MONUMENT)

MITHRAS

Mithras and Sol are allies, their roles intertwining, and represent the male element and the highest divine power. As such, they stand for absolute power and are also protectors of soldiers. Mithraism is a mystery religion based on the cycle of life and death, and the harmony of opposites, in the broadest sense the harmony of good and bad, and on salvation. It also stands at the transition to monotheism. During its development, it incorporated the elements of Gnosticism, Christianity and other religions, and influenced them in turn.

☈ Fragmented relief slab with an inscription. It shows Sol in the upper left corner. Below him is the head of Cautopates. The arch to the right presumably held the image of the bull-slaying Mithras, while Luna would have been shown to the left of the arch, opposite Sol. The association of Sol and Luna symbolised a day and cyclic eternity. The slab formed part of the furnishings of a mithraeum, as yet unidentified and located in the area of Panorama or Vičava. Marble, Vičava, 2nd–3rd century.





AT THE HEART PTUJ IN THE TIME OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE OF POETOVIO

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PLANS FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION
OF THE BUILDINGS ON PANORAMA

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