

Barbara Hajdu

TERRA SIGILLATA FROM BARACS SETTLEMENT IN *PANNONIA INFERIOR*

This paper presents the terra sigillata findings of Baracs, a Roman era settlement in Pannonia Inferior, as well as the composition of the pottery sherds and their statistical and chronological analysis. The settlement's period of flourishing can be estimated to between the second half of the 2nd century AD and the middle of the 3rd century AD.

1. Introduction

A Roman era settlement was found in the years 2008–2009 during an excavation that took place before the building of a Hungarian highway in the territory of the auxiliary fort of Baracs (Roman: *Annamatia*), and south from Intercisa alongside the Danubian *limes* (fig. 1). The site's unique feature was that a river separated it into a romanized native settlement and an urbanized town, which is rare in the Hungarian part of *Pannonia*.¹

2. Terra sigillata imports

Among the excavation's findings there were 904 sherds of terra sigillata. These were various forms from the workshops of Central Gaul (mostly from Lezoux), Rheinzabern and Westerndorf. The majority of these sherds were imported from Rheinzabern, although the amount of Central Gaulish products was also fairly large among the finds (table 1).

2.1. Central Gaul

More than half of the Central Gaulish terra sigillata belongs to the Drag. 37 form (table 2). All attributable mould-decorated fragments can be counted among the production of Lezoux's workshops (fig. 2). These sherds and the stamped ones add up to 46 pieces. From the examination of the Lezoux terra sigillata we can identify 17 different potters. As the table shows, the Roman settlement mainly imported the Central Gaulish products of those craftsmen who were working during the second half of the 2nd century AD. Among the customers the mould-decorated bowls of *Cinnamus* and *Paternus* II gained great popularity at that time. Besides these potters, the wares of *Albucius* and *Censorinus* were also highly favoured. Their products were very wide-spread all over *Pannonia*.

2.2. Rheinzabern

The majority of the settlement's terra sigillata was imported from Rheinzabern, a high distribution of which can be observed at many Roman sites in the province. The growth in the consumption of the Rheinzabern wares in this region was caused by the Marcomannic Wars (166–180 AD). Due to the increasing number of settled military corps more supplies were needed of these cheaper products than ever before (quick and easy access to the manufactory through various trading routes made these vessels low-priced). Furthermore, after the wars, in the first quarter of the 3rd century AD, at the beginning of the province's revival Septimius Severus and Caracalla stayed temporarily in *Aquincum*, *Pannonia Inferior*'s capital city, which also led to a growth in the import of terra sigillata. At that time, according to Pannonian tendencies in the settlement at Baracs, we can also perceive a massive prosperity in the purchase of terra sigillata. It is observable that among the settlement's finds most of the Rheinzabern wares can be classified into the plain forms, in contrast to the Central Gaulish terra sigillata (table 3). There are a total of 126 attributable mould-decorated and stamped fragments (fig. 3), which belong to 72 different potters. Popular potters were *Ianu(arius)* I and II; *B. F. Attoni*; *Cerialis* I, II, III, IV, V, VI and *Cerialis* Ware B; *Comitalis* II, III and V; *Belsus* I; *Lucanus* I; *Mammilianus*; *Reginus* II, *Iulius* I and *Lupus*; *Verecundus* I; *Victor* I and *Pervincus*.

A Drag. 31 plate can provide us some information about the settlement's everyday life and about its inhabitants, who considered terra sigillata vessels as very precious goods. On the bottom of this plate we can find a fragment of a cursive inscription that can be read as LVPA (fig. 4). This was written by the use of the typical cursive Pannonian alphabet.² The *Lupa cognomen* may refer to the plate's owner. This name appears on two North Pannonian gravestones (*Crumerum*: CIL III 3666 = RIU 755 [2], *Aquincum*: CIL III 3534 = *Tituli Aquincenses* 541) which are rather far from Baracs.

¹ L. O. KOVÁCS, Baracs, Kokasdi-ér partja. In: Z. Bencze et al. (eds.): Régészeti Kutatások Magyarországon 2008 (Budapest 2009) 146.; L. O. KOVÁCS, Baracs, Kokasdi-ér partja. In: Z. Bencze et al. (eds.): Régészeti Kutatások Magyarországon 2009 (Budapest 2010) 139–140.

² J. HARMATTA, Pannoniai edény-feliratok. Ant. Tanulmányok 14, 1967, 67–101; 99.



Fig. 1. Map of *Pannonia* showing Baracs settlement (modified after T. BEZECZKY, Amphorák az adonyi [Vetus Salina] kora római táborból. Arch. Ért. 117, 1990, 96–102 Fig. 1).

2.3. Westerndorf

The least significant amount of terra sigillata belongs to Westerndorf's workshops (**table 4**). These are mainly fragments of mould-decorated bowls (**fig. 5**). Out of these sherds, 51 pieces can be attributed to one or the other officina of Westerndorf. In the settlement of Baracs the most popular potter of Westerndorf was *Helenius*. A total of 11 sherds can be attributed to the manufacture of *Comitalis*.

3. Conclusion

The total lack of Italian and South Gaulish terra sigillata – which are usually common in *Pannonia* – among the finds indicates that the settlement's foundation and romanization

occurred after Hadrian's rule. This is strengthened by the fact that none of the earliest terra sigillata vessels of Lezoux were made during his reign. Generally, Baracs started to import wares from Central Gaul and Rheinzabern in the middle of the 2nd century AD. Therefore the settlement was founded around 140 AD, well before the Marcomannic Wars and existed until somewhat after the middle of the 3rd century AD. To sum up the results, we can state that the settlement of Baracs undoubtedly suffered from the destructions of the Marcomannic Wars, like other parts of *Pannonia*, but its terra sigillata supplies never stopped during these threatening times. After the wars its economy had been rapidly re-established, so it became a prospering town beside the Danubian *limes*.

hajdubarbi91@gmail.com

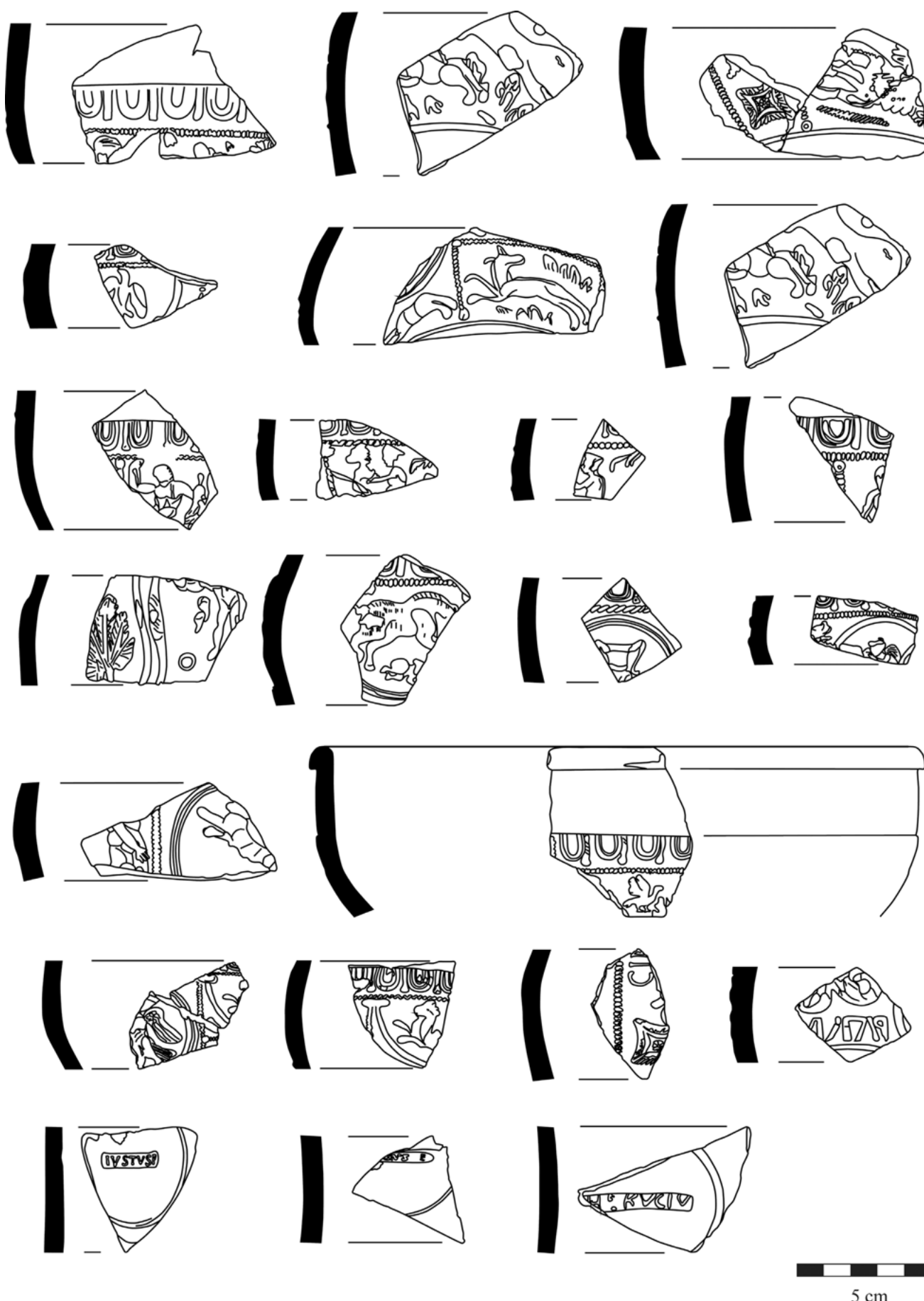


Fig. 2. Selection of the mould-decorated Central Gaulish terra sigillata fragments and the name-stamps. – Scale 1:2.



Fig. 3. Selection of the mould-decorated terra sigillata fragments from Rheinzabern and the name-stamps. – Scale 1:2.

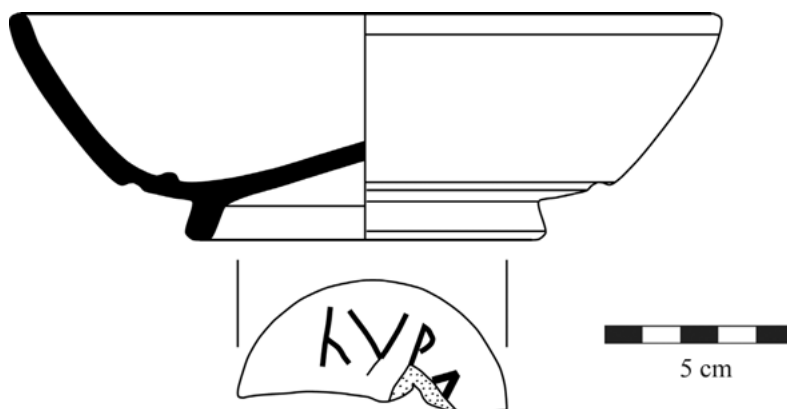


Fig. 4. The Drag. 31 plate from Rheinzabern with a cursive latin inscription. – Scale 1:2.

Production centres	Number of fragments	%
Central Gaul	196	21,7
Rheinzabern	556	61,5
Westerndorf	109	12,1
Rheinzabern or Westerndorf	43	4,8
Total	904	100

Table 1. Distribution of terra sigillata (according to the production centres).

Forms	Number of fragments	%
<i>Mould-decorated forms</i>		
Drag. 30	5	2,6
Drag. 37	105	53,6
Drag. 30 or Drag. 37	1	0,5
<i>Barbotine decorated form</i>		
Drag. 36	2	1
<i>Plain forms</i>		
Drag. 18/31	16	8,2
Drag. 18/31 or Drag. 32	2	1
Drag. 32	27	13,8
Drag. 27	9	4,6
Drag. 33	13	6,6
Drag. 38	6	3,1
not identified	10	5,1
Total	196	100

Table 2. Distribution of Central Gaulish terra sigillata (according to the vessel forms).

Table 4. Distribution of Westerndorf terra sigillata (according to the vessel forms). ➤

Forms	Number of fragments	%
<i>Mould-decorated forms</i>		
Drag. 30	7	1,3
Drag. 37	210	37,8
<i>Barbotine decorated forms</i>		
Drag. 43	3	0,5
Drag. 45	1	0,2
Drag. 43 or Drag. 45	1	0,2
Drag. 39	5	0,9
<i>Incised- or barbotine decorated form</i>		
Drag. 54	11	2
<i>Plain forms</i>		
Drag. 18/31	28	5
Drag. 31	10	1,8
Niederbieber 1	66	11,9
Niederbieber 1 or Drag. 18/31	12	2,2
Niederbieber 1 or Drag. 31	12	2,2
Niederbieber 1 or Drag. 32	4	0,7
Lud. Tb.	15	2,7
Drag. 32	111	20
Curle 15	1	0,2
Drag. 33	42	7,6
Drag. 40	4	0,7
not identified	13	2,3
Total	556	100

Table 3. Distribution of Rheinzabern terra sigillata (according to the vessel forms).

Forms	Number of fragments	%
<i>Mould-decorated forms</i>		
Drag. 30	13	11,9
Drag. 37	76	69,7
Drag. 30 or Drag. 37	2	1,8
<i>Plain forms</i>		
Drag. 32	9	8,3
Drag. 32 or Drag. 37	2	1,8
Drag. 33	4	3,7
not identified	3	2,8
Total	109	100

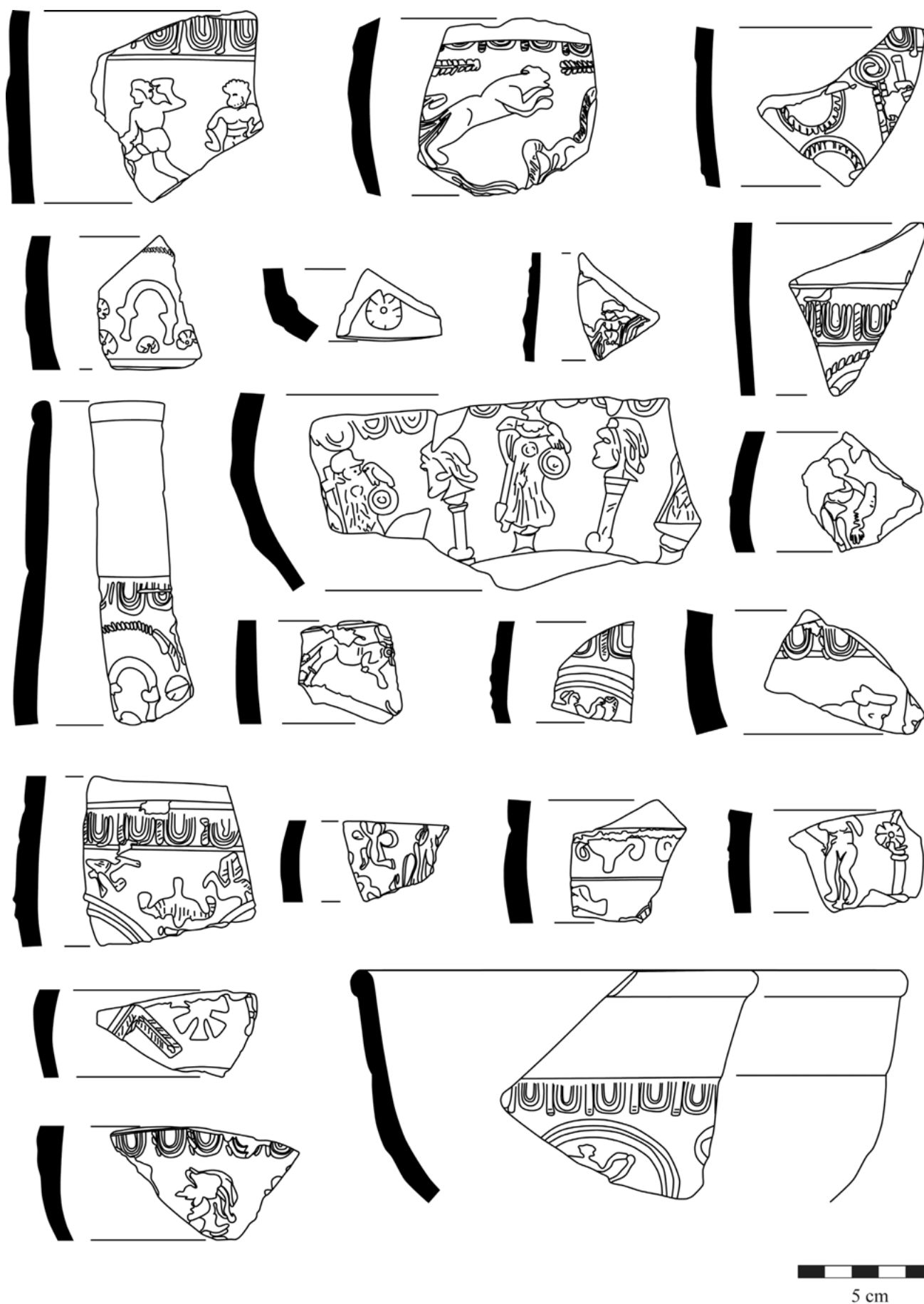


Fig. 5. Selection of the mould-decorated terra sigillata fragments from Westerndorf. – Scale 1:2.