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ROMAN AMPHORAE FROM THE EAST ALONG THE *RIPA PANNONICA*

Reviewing some earlier and more recent finds from Pannonian archaeological sites we can distinguish amphora types of eastern origin in increasing number. Since the last comprehensive study by T. Bezczky, most of the data concerning amphorae from the Roman East are available from the Danube frontier area<sup>1</sup> (fig. 1).

As the research goes on, we can take note of more and more amphora types from Pannonian archaeological sites never distinguished before in this province.

The amphora trade along the Amber Route has been discussed thoroughly.<sup>2</sup> The amphora types found here correspond to those found along the *ripa Pannonica*. Next to these very important commercial routes, we have to add moreover the finds which have come to light from the area of the Drava and Sava rivers and the finds from the interior of the province.

**The first phase (fig. 2)**

In the first phase (1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD) most of the amphorae of eastern origin appear in the area around the intersection of the Amber Route and the *ripa Pannonica*: in *Carnuntum* and in *Vindobona*.

The earliest amphora finds along the Pannonian limes can be dated to the Claudian period. The first boom of the amphora trade can be observed in the time of Domitian.

‘**Koan**’ amphorae were manufactured in many parts of the Roman Empire, but they are found quite rarely on Pannonian sites. They appear first of all in the southern part of the province.<sup>3</sup>

**Dressel 5** amphorae from the Aegean can be found mostly along the Amber Route, but sometimes come to light along the *ripa Pannonica* as well, dated to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>4</sup>

The most frequent amphora type of Eastern origin in this period is the so-called ‘**Rhodian**’ type.

As a result of the latest researches, the known distribution area of the **Knidian** type has become wider. This type can be dated at the Pannonian sites mainly to the first third of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to this, a fragment from *Carnuntum* came to light from a context that was dated to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.<sup>6</sup>

Maybe the rarest type among the Eastern amphorae in *Pannonia* is the **AC4**. It has come to light only on those sites along the Danubian limes which are close to the Amber Route: from *Carnuntum*<sup>7</sup> and *Vindobona*<sup>8</sup>. They can be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

There is still a widespread search to find the manufacturing centers of the **Camulodunum 189** type. Beirut, on the Levantine coast seems to be the most probable.<sup>9</sup> It arrives in *Pannonia* mainly in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, but it is very likely that it was still common at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century as well.<sup>10</sup> An interesting and unique piece came to light from the legionary fortress in Aquincum. It has a pinkish, hard fabric, and in contrast to the classical ribbed surface it has an incised spiral line on its body. All of these phenomena propound the possibility that we face here an imitation<sup>11</sup> (fig. 5).

**The second phase (fig. 3)**

In this period (second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> – beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD) the most numerous Eastern types can be found in *Aquincum*, as it was one of the provincial capitals of the Roman Empire.

In *Aquincum*, as we have seen in the first phase, there are some fragments which can be dated to the Claudian period. From the second quarter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, when the staple economic background, the permanent payment of the soldiers and social trends created a taste for a varied lifestyle – including a multifarious diet – we find amphora a wide variety of amphora types.

The most frequently found type of Eastern amphora in this period is the **Kapitän II** type.<sup>12</sup> In connection with this, we have to draw attention to the **Amphorenlager 1** type.<sup>13</sup> It is not known where this type was produced. Its shape imi-

<sup>1</sup> BEZCZKY 1994; ID. 1994b.

<sup>2</sup> ID., Roman Amphorae from the Amber Route in Western Pannonia. BAR Internat. Ser. 386 (Oxford 1987); P. HÁRSHEGYI, Roman Amphorae from Municipium Aelium Salla (Zalalövő, Hungary) (in press).

<sup>3</sup> BEZCZKY 1994, 122; BRUKNER 1981 Taf. 157,19–21.

<sup>4</sup> Distribution: BEZCZKY 1994, 122.

<sup>5</sup> Vindobona: ID. 2005, 43. Three new fragments have been found in Aquincum, datable to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.

<sup>6</sup> ID. 1994, 117.

<sup>7</sup> ID. 1997, 173.

<sup>8</sup> ID. 2005, 39–40.

<sup>9</sup> S. LEMAÎTRE/Y. WAKSMAN/P. REYNOLDS/M. ROUMIÉ/B. NSOULI, À propos de l’origine levantine de plusieurs types d’amphores importés en Gaule à l’époque impériale. SFECAG Actes du Congrès de Blois 2005 (Marseille 2005) 517–521.

<sup>10</sup> BEZCZKY 2005, 59. Recently Brigetio: HÁRSHEGYI 2004, 113.

<sup>11</sup> KELEMEN 1990 fig. 1,1.

<sup>12</sup> BEZCZKY 2005, 44; from Brigetio: HÁRSHEGYI 2004, 116.

<sup>13</sup> A. MARTIN, Amphorae at Olympia. RCRF Acta 36, 2000, 430.

Roman Amphorae from the East in Pannonia																				
		1st c.–2nd c. A.D.					2nd half of the 2nd c.–beginnig of the 4th c. A.D.					late 3rd c.–5th c. A.D.								
		Dressel 5	Koan	Rhodian	Knidian	AC4	Cam. 189	Agora G199	Agora M126	Kapitan II	Amphorenlager 1	Zeest 90/Dressel 24	Bojovic 549/554	Selov C	Kelemen 20	LR1	Carhage LR 4	Zeest 99B	Radulescu 3a	Zeest 98B
Ripa Pannonica	Vindobona/Wien			■	■	■	■			■										
	Carnuntum/Bad-Deutsch-Altenburg, Petronell	■	■	■	■	■	■			■										
	Arrabona/Győr		■									■								
	Brigetio/Komárom-Szőny						■			■	■	■	■							■
	Tokod			■			■					■								
	Solva/Esztergom			■																
	Aquincum/Budapest		■	■	■		■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
	Matrica/Százhalombatta									■										
	Vetus Salina/Adony			■																
	Intercisa/Dunapentele, Dunaújváros									■		■								
	Cortanovci																		■	
	Acumincum/Slankamen		■																	
	Rittium/Surduk												■							
Near by the Ripa Pannonica	Kölesd-Lencsepuszta		■																	
	Mursa/Osijek		■							■										
	Cibalae/Vinkovci		■																	
	Sirmium/Sremska Mitrovica	■	■	■				■		■		■				■	■	■	■	
	Gomolava/Hrtkovci			■								■								
	Dumbovo											■								
Inside	Gorsium/Tác			■						■		■								
	Balácsa								■											
	Keszthely-Fenékpuszta																■			
Amber Route	Scarbantia/Sopron			■		■				■										
	Savaria/Szombathely	■		■	■						■									
	Salla/Zalalövő			■	■	■			■											
	Poetovio/Ptuj	■	■							■		■					■			

Fig. 1. Roman amphorae from the East in Pannonia.

tates that of the Kapitän II type, but its fabric is a light yellowish buff. In Pannonia it appears in contexts dated to the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD<sup>14</sup> (fig. 6).

The Bojovic 549/554 type seems to be a very frequent amphora find in the Pannonian-Moesian area.<sup>15</sup> Its origin has not yet been determined; the type can be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries<sup>16</sup> (fig. 7). It has two variants in fabric at least, one with a hard brown fabric (A), the other with a soft yellowish-red fabric, with red slip on the surface (B). They differ also in their dimensions, the variant A seems to be a bigger type than variant B.

In recent years a large number of Zeest 90/Dressel 24 type of amphora fragments has been recorded among the Pannonian finds. This type produced along the coastal area of Asia Minor came to light mainly from the northern sites of the province.<sup>17</sup> The most interesting phenomenon is that numerous fragments of this type have been found in Sarmatian settlements in Hungary.<sup>18</sup>

Most of the fragments previously attributed to MR3/Agora F65-66 amphorae should be renamed as Agora M 126 type because of their buff fabric with partial brownish slip.<sup>19</sup> The

finds from Pannonian sites can be dated mostly to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (fig. 8).

A fairly similar form, but in a brown fabric with mica can be distinguished in Pannonia as Agora J 46-47 (?). Along the Danubian limes it has been discovered only in Aquincum<sup>20</sup> (fig. 9).

<sup>14</sup> KELEMEN 1990 fig. 6,1–4; 6,7; 8,23–27.

<sup>15</sup> D. BOJOVIĆ, Rimska keramika Singidunuma (Beograd 1977) 58.

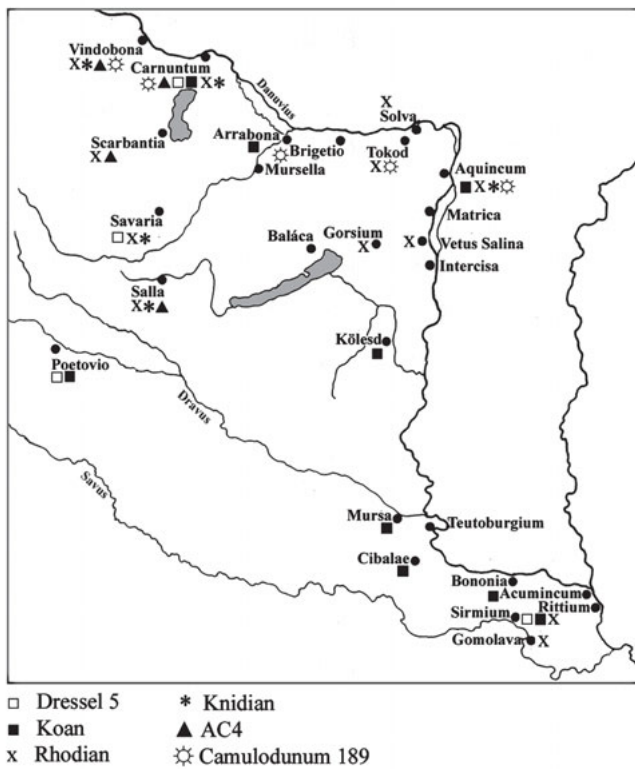
<sup>16</sup> See note 12; BRUKNER 1981, Taf. 165,91; 166,107. – Moesia: S. FIDANOVSKI, Rimska keramika Ulpijane. (Beograd 1990) T. 35,2; Lj. BJELAJAC, Amfore Gornjo Mezijskog Podunavlja (Beograd 1996) Fig. IV,31.33; S. NIKOLIĆ-ĐORĐEVIĆ, Antička keramika Singidunuma. Singidunum 2, 2000, 120–121. – Pannonia: HÁRSHEGYI 2004 Fig.1,28 (very common in Aquincum).

<sup>17</sup> Distribution: Ibid. 116–117.

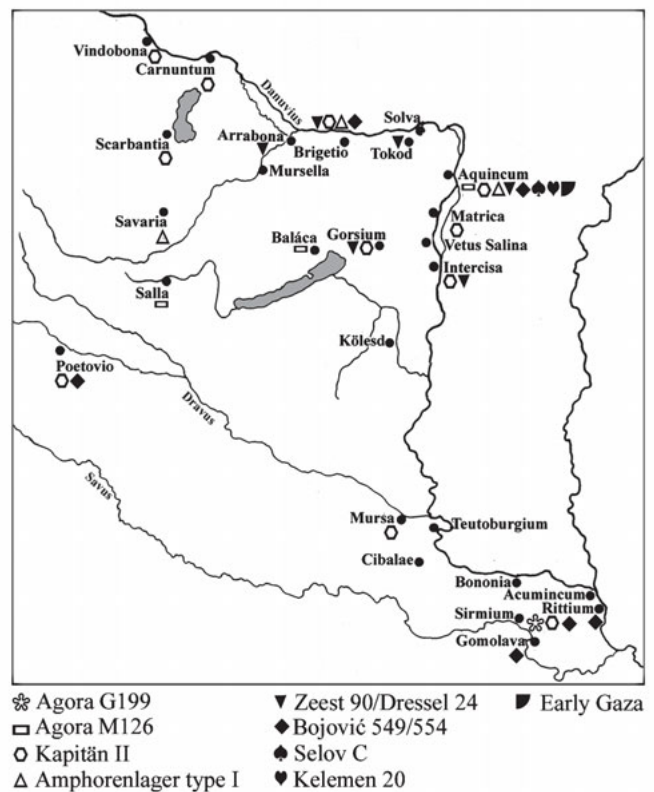
<sup>18</sup> K. SÓSKUTI/G. SZ. WILHELM, Pontus-vidéki amphorák az alföldi szarmata barbarikumban (Pontic amphorae from the sarmatian barbaricum). In: Fiatal Római Koros Régészek I. Konferenciája Győr, 2006 március 8–10 (forthcoming).

<sup>19</sup> KELEMEN 1990 Fig. 8,30–36.

<sup>20</sup> ID. 1993 Fig. 4,22.



**Fig. 2.** The distribution of amphorae of eastern origin in *Pannonia*: first phase (1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD).



**Fig. 3.** The distribution of amphorae of eastern origin in *Pannonia*: second phase (second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> – beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD).



**Fig. 4.** The distribution of amphorae of eastern origin in *Pannonia*: third phase (late 3<sup>rd</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD).



**Fig. 5.** Camulodunum 189 (*Aquinum*).

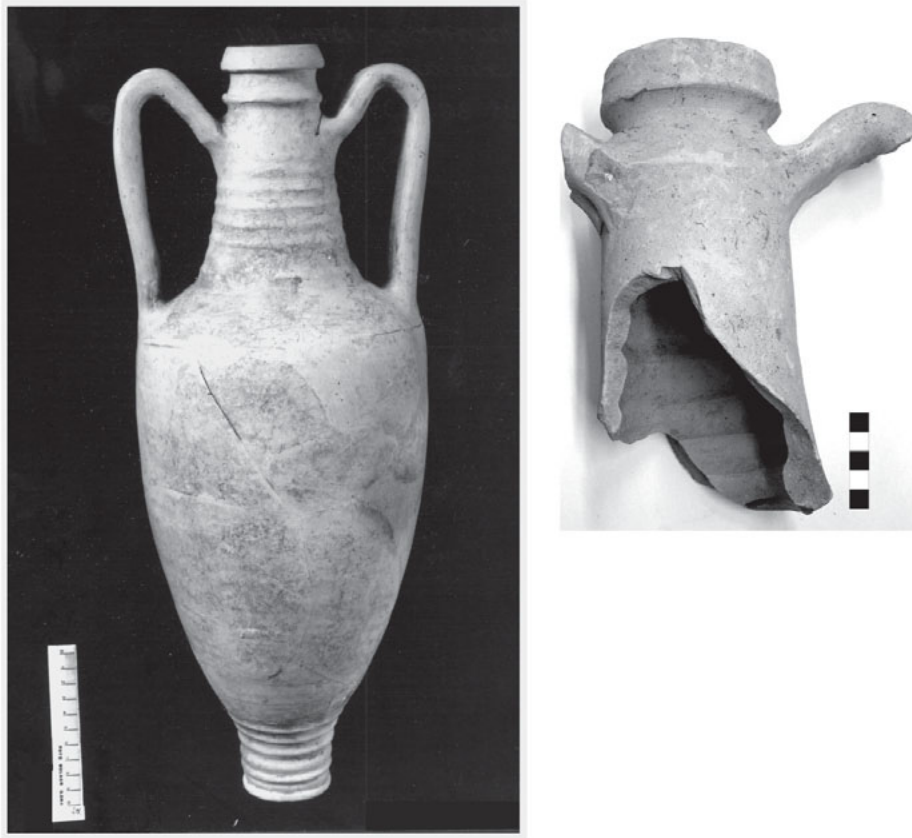


Fig. 6. Amphorenlager I (*Aquincum*).

Another type which has appeared only in *Aquincum* is the **Selov C** amphora<sup>21</sup> which was produced in *Herakleia Pontica*: it can be dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (fig. 10).

The so-called **Kelemen 20** type amphora<sup>22</sup> has a very similar fabric to that of the Kapitän II type. The piece discovered in *Aquincum* bears a published dipinto ...LEG..., but on this painted inscription also a graffito can be found with the letters ΠANK(?) in ligature (fig. 11). Its interpretation is not yet clear.

Reviewing some older archaeological material, an undoubtedly early **Almagro 54** fragment has been found at *Aquincum*, with other amphora fragments dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. In the last (third) phase the classical Almagro 54 type appears at some southern Pannonian sites.<sup>23</sup>

### The third phase (fig. 4)

This phase (end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> – beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century) is the period of commercial decline in *Pannonia*. Along the *ripa Pannonica* no amphorae have been found apart from some scattered finds, for example a **Zeest 98B** from *Brigetio*<sup>24</sup> and some **Radulescu 3a** amphora fragments along the southern Danube.<sup>25</sup>

### Summary

As we have seen, amphorae of eastern origin were shipped mainly from two areas to the Pannonian limes: wine amphorae from the Aegean in larger quantities and maybe fruits and wine from the Levantine coast (Palestine) on a lesser scale. There are occasional fragments of amphorae produced at the Black Sea coast.

We really have to draw attention to the dating of these amphora types. Sometimes there is not enough information available to date them properly. In the case of the first phase (Koan, Dressel 5, Rhodian, Knidian, AC4, Camulodunum 189) it is very probable that some of the fragments can be dated as late as the first quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>21</sup> P. DYCZEK, Roman Amphorae of the 1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD found on the Lower Danube. Typology (Warsawa 2001) 202–220.

<sup>22</sup> KELEMEN 1990 fig. 5.4.

<sup>23</sup> BEZECZKY 1994b, 165.

<sup>24</sup> KELEMEN 1993 fig. 1.7.

<sup>25</sup> BRUKNER 1981 Taf. 164, 81–84.

<sup>26</sup> F. VILVORDER/R.P. SYMONDS/S. REKK, Les amphores orientales en Gaule Septentrionale et au Sud-Est de la Grand Bretagne. RCRF Acta 36, 2000, 477–486.



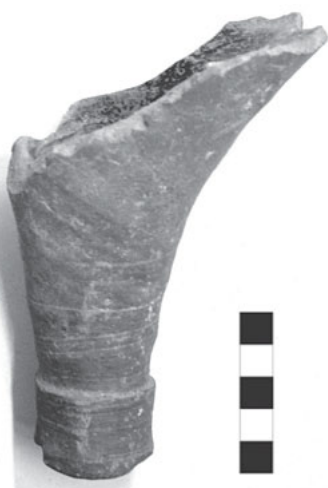
**Fig. 7.** Bojović 549/554 (*Aquincum*).



**Fig. 8.** Agora M126 (*Aquincum*).



**Fig. 10.** Selov C (*Aquincum*).



**Fig. 9.** Agora J46-47 (*Aquincum*).



**Fig. 11.** Kelemen 20 type amphora with graffito (*Aquincum*).

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