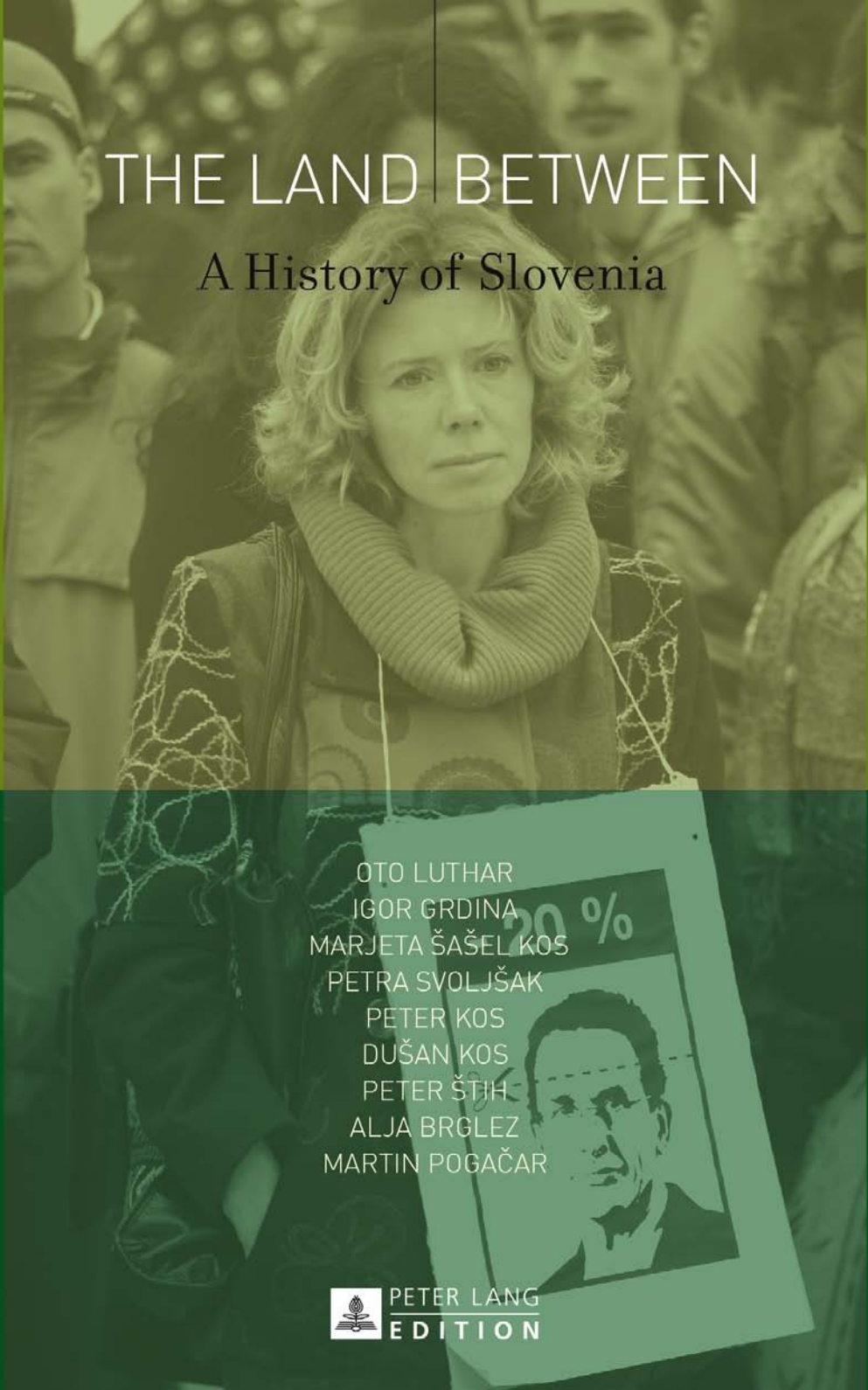
THE LAND BETWEEN

A History of Slovenia



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CONTENT

PREFACE

This is the history of the westernmost part of Central Europe. A book about the past of the land squeezed between the western Pannonian plain and the northernmost part of the Adriatic Sea, between the Alps and the Balkans. It is more a history of a region rather than a national history. Nevetheless, this is the only way to write a national history in the 21st century. We share this observation with our colleagues from Austria, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Great Britain and the United States with whom we have discussed parts of this book. We will not attempt to list them—any list will necessarily be incomplete. We hope, though, that we have recognized the most important intellectual debts through our quotations in the text.

There are a few people, however, who cannot be omitted. Following the book's chronology, we would therefore like to thank Breda Luthar, Ivan Turk, Anton Velušček, Janez Dular, Rajko Bratož, Peter Štih, Dejan Djokić, Ivo Banac, Emil Brix, and Peter Vodopivec.

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Authors, Ljubljana, April 2013

This edition is dedicated to the memory of Hanno Hardt.

INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2002, there was a huge map of the world in front of Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Actually, it was a part of a playground and therefore only children were allowed access. In fact, the map was designed for them. They were supposed to learn about the different countries of the world, while playing on it. Quite an original idea… Unfortunately, a closer look revealed that the map was largerly incomplete. As the map also included pictures of the most famous cities, a picture of Venice was placed where Slovenia was supposed to be. For an obvious lack of space, the mapmakers just covered this rather tiny country with a photograph of the famous Renaissance city. Like Vienna, Venice seemed much more important to them than a country that no one really knew…

Just as in the past, Slovenia's more influential neighbors were again spread across the country—this time metaphorically.

Therefore, when discussing the idea of writing a history of Slovenia, the authors decided that their main task would be to write about that hidden portion of the map where a person with an average knowledge of European history and geography would expect to find pieces of Italy or Austria.

When working on our respective chapters, each of us would therefore find Slovenia or the Slovenian lands serving as the region or space between two different worlds—an extension between Europe and its "periphery." On the other hand, the occasional visitors, like the first modern age tourists, have experienced the Slovenian lands as distinct from other surrounding areas. From their point of view the landscape, temperament, history, tradition, and language were different from everything else in the region. At first glance they compared it to "Switzerland or the Tyrol," until their "closer inspections" showed that the temperament was Slavic. The language was similar to Serbian or Croatian, but with marked differences. It was observed as more archaic and complicated, and far more difficult to learn.

However, the most puzzling thing for everyone who is not familiar with the Slovenes is their history. Most people who are interested in it find it hard to understand that they survived after so many centuries of foreign rule and cultural influences. Therefore, we decided to represent the history of Slovenia as also a history of this space, particularly when we were dealing with the prehistorical periods and the time before the arrival of the Slavs. Well aware of

the usual brief and superficial description of this period, we decided to present it in its full complexity as comprehensively as possible. For us, this was also a way to show that the Slavs did not settle in an empty space. And they did not simply replace the Celto-Roman inhabitants of the earlier times. On the contrary, the people who were first mentioned as newcomers in the mid-6th century discovered the West and were discovered by it as early as the 9th century. And it is from this time onward that Western writers have been in a position to give these neighboring peoples particular names (by which they are still known today), instead of lumping them all together into a great Slavic mass. However, the historians envisaged them as ready-formed "peoples," although the reality is more complex: the formation of these peoples was a matter of reciprocal acculturation.[1]

We approached the later periods in a similar manner, which is the reason why the Slavic territory in our interpretation is not depicted as a typical frontier march under various margraves throughout most of their history. We also tried not to portray them as scapegoat defenders of the empire against the Hungarians, sometimes against other Slavs, and later against the Turks. Neither do we think that the Slovenes only made two important appearances throughout the entire feudal era: a brief period of glory under the Counts of Celje and an early revival of national sentiment and language during the Reformation.

The same holds for later periods, especially for the 20th century, when the majority of Slovenes joined the resistance movement against German, Italian, and Hungarian occupation during World War II, and finally when they gained independence without being dragged into the wars that accompanied the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

The purpose of the authors of this book is simple: instead of a briefly sketched overview, we offer a concise but complete history of the Slovenian people, thereby affording the reader a view past (or through) the stereotypical depictions of the area. In short, we wish to show everything that has been hidden beneath the administrative surface of each of the different dominant ruling cultures throughout the more than 2,000-year-long history of today's Slovenian territory. In other words, we wish to present the history of that place beneath the picture of Venice to all those who wondered what was there when they looked at that London map, and of course to all those who are interested in the history of one of Europe's smallest countries.

Oto Luthar, Ljubljana, April 2013

[1] See also Thomas Lienhard, "Slavs, Bulgarians, and Hungarians. The Arrival of New Peoples," in: *Rome and the Barbarians. The Birth of a New World*, ed. Jean-Jacques Aillagon (Milan: Skira, 2008), 578–579.

FROM PREHISTORY TO THE END OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

HISTORY CREATED BY ARCHAEOLOGY

FROM THE ICE AGE TO THE DECLINE OF THE HUNTER-GATHERER COMMUNITY

In what is now Slovenia in the Middle Paleolithic period, although no fossil remains of Paleolithic man have been discovered to date. The first find is a human cranium from the Ljubljanica River dated to the Mesolithic period. Otherwise, both variants of *Homo sapiens*, Neanderthals (*Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*) and Cro-Magnons (*Homo sapiens sapiens*), have left traces of their presence. The Neanderthals lived in Europe and Slovenia during the Middle Paleolithic period (300,000 to 30,000 years ago), before they became extinct; the Cro-Magnons lived during the Late Paleolithic period (40,000 to 10,000 years ago).

Findings from the Lower Paleolithic period (300,000 years ago) are rare in Slovenia, and are known only from excavations around Postojna, e.g., the deepest layer of the Betalov spodmol (Betal Cavern). The Middle Paleolithic sites are mainly cave sites, and originated more than 200,000 years ago. Interestingly enough, Paleolithic people had visited these caves from time to time without awareness of any predecessors, although they used the same routes and pursued similar aims over the millennia. The Middle Paleolithic period was at its height during the first three quarters of the last glacial period (c. 115,000 to 30,000 years ago), when Neanderthals who made and used mainly stone tools lived there. During the transition from the Middle to the Early Upper Paleolithic era (c. 40,000 to 30,000 years ago), Cro-Magnons settled in Europe and Neanderthals became extinct. Composite tools, made of wood with interchangeable stone and bone parts, were characteristic of the inhabitants during the Early Upper Paleolithic period. The beginnings of art and religion are also attributed to this time. The rapid development of Cro-Magnon man was accelerated by great climatic changes, which took place between 35,000 and 10,000 years ago. Significant cooling caused the spread of glaciers, which interrupted contacts between certain regions and transformed the natural environment into an extremely demanding challenge for man and beast alike. Individual

groups of Cro-Magnons therefore made vast technological advances. Some 13,000 years ago, the glacial period was followed by rapid warming, the beginning of present-day conditions.

Middle and Early Upper Paleolithic sites are most common in the Postojna basin, where Friulian plain met the then continental northern Adriatic. Rich food sources provided by the fertile plain and the foothills of the subalpine and Dinaric mountain ranges significantly influenced the movement of people. The two most significant Neanderthal sites were Betalov spodmol at Zagon near the Postojna Cave, and Divje babe I above Reka in the Idrijca River Valley. At various times the cavernous shelters were home to both Neanderthals and larger beasts: cave lions, hyenas, wolves, and, especially, bears. Cave bear bones have been found alongside Neanderthal tools. A rash conclusion attributed this combination of finds to the cult of the cave bear; however, cooking debris next to rare hearths and fireplaces allowed the Neanderthals' way of life to be at least partly determined. The Neanderthals only visited the caves, mainly searching for the limb bones and skulls of large animals, particularly bears. They crushed these bones to reach the very nutritious marrow. People at that time probably consumed food similar to the bears' and may have had comparable needs for living space in caves. Competition may have thus arisen between humans and beasts, although little is known about it.[2] Neanderthals seemed not to have sought further advancements or new challenges and remained content with what they already had. Interestingly, Neanderthals and cave bears, both outstanding in their adaptation to Ice Age conditions, became extinct together, while Cro-Magnons and the brown bear—as less specialized species—continued to survive and develop. Man advanced mainly technologically.

One of the most interesting and best researched sites of Neanderthals and Cro-Magnon man is at Divje babe I,[3] where the most outstanding Slovenian Paleolithic find was discovered: the approximately 60,000-year-old bone-flute, probably the oldest flute in the world to date (Fig. 1). Divje babe I is also an invaluable cave site because it is the only Slovenian site where objects from the last Neanderthals have been found (there are only a few such sites throughout

[2] Unfortunately, only tools have been preserved. These are mainly flint stone scrapers and points, but not artifacts made of non-lasting materials, like skin or wood. Their (Mousterian) tools were used for a very long time—from the last inter-glacial period (c. 120,000 years ago) until their extinction—suggesting that they were inventive only up to a certain point. See Ivan Turk (ed.), *Divje Babe I. Upper Pleistocene Palaeolithic Site in Slovenia* (Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU, Inštitut za arheologijo, 2007).

[3] The deposits, between 35,000 and 115,000 years old, are about 9 meters thick. See Ivan Turk (ed.), *Moustérienska "koščena piščal" in druge najdbe iz Divjih bab I v Sloveniji* (Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU, 1997).

Figure 1 *Neanderthal flute from Divje babe I. Courtesy National Museum of Slovenia, photo T. Lauko.*

Europe), and one of four Slovenian sites containing objects belonging to the early Cro-Magnons. The discovery of the Neanderthal flute utterly transformed earlier conceptions of their rational capabilities, since they had not been credited even with the most rudimentary artistic skills. The flute undoubtedly signifies these, although we do not know its purpose or its use.

During the Early Upper Paleolithic period (c. 40,000 to 20,000 years ago), Cro-Magnons, our immediate ancestors, began to settle on Slovenian land. They were identified by Aurignacian and Gravettian tools and art objects made of stone, bone, teeth, and horns; also, they probably invented the spear, and later the harpoon, boomerang, and bow. They used a bone needle: indeed, the world's oldest bone needle has been found in Slovenia's Potočka zijalka. For shaping bones, teeth, and horns they used chisels, and for hides they employed fine as well as rough scrapers. Hides were used for clothing, bedding, and tents. During warmer periods, the Cro-Magnon people even climbed to higher caves, such as Potočka zijalka (1,700 m) on Mt. Olševa, and Mokriška jama (Mokrica Cave, 1500 m) on Mt. Mokrica. At Potočka zijalka, the first Paleolithic site discovered in Slovenia, teeth of the musk ox—a characteristically arctic animal—have been found, and more recently those of yet another arctic species, the

wolverine. Inside the cave, in addition to 80 pieces of stone tools and large quantities of bear bones, another 134 bone artifacts (mostly points) have been discovered, including the celebrated flute made from a bear's jawbone.

The Late Upper Paleolithic period (20,000 to 10,000 years ago) was characterized by fast, major changes in the natural environment (glaciation, warming trends, and the extinction of great beasts). The hunting-gathering economy was at its height, and people lived in open-air settlements. The richest site is Ciganska jama (Ciganska Cave), near Željne (Upper Gravettian). During the Middle Stone Age (the Mesolithic period and the beginning of the Holocene period, about 11,000 to 7,000 years ago) the environment, including human life, began to undergo significant changes. Forests considerably expanded, and forest animals multiplied. People, using the microlithic tools of the time, still did not have permanent settlements, and subsisted largely by hunting first the mountain goat (ibex) and later deer; snail-shells indicate that they also fed on snails. At this time, wolves began to be domesticated, and the first dogs appeared. The transition to the Mesolithic period is not well known in Slovenia, and Mesolithic sites are generally rare; Špehovka, Mala Triglavca, and Viktorjev and Jamnikov spodmol are among the most significant ones. People now began to turn to farming and raising livestock.

HERDERS AND AGRICULTURALISTS OF THE NEOLITHIC AND COPPER AGES

The end of the Ice Age brought great changes: the sea encroached on what had hitherto been the continental bay of Trieste, glacial lakes emerged in the Alps, and fauna and flora were altered. People began to establish permanent settlements, and their numbers greatly increased, since cultivation and animal husbandry provided extra food supplies. This development signified a vital advance, perhaps even a revolution, in the Neolithic period. People began cultivating specific species of cereals, such as wheat and barley, and raising domesticated animals like goats, sheep, pigs, and cattle.

The Near East had already been taken over by Neolithic man in the 8th millennium BC and there was initial evidence of agriculturalists in Greece early in the 7th millennium, although they were not yet making clay vessels. Inhabitants of the upper Danubian region, however, were tilling the land during the 6th millennium and knew how to make ceramic dishes, which they decorated with uniform patterns. Approximately at that time, a Neolithic population inhabited the central Balkans, characterized by the Vinča culture

and named after the Serbian site of Vinča, near Belgrade. Influences from the Carpathian basin and the eastern Adriatic coast also reached Slovenian territory. The oldest open settlement discovered so far lies in western Slovenia, in the foothills of Sermin near Koper (the region of Capris, present-day Koper), and dates from the 6th or early 5th millennium BC. Thus far, the only other finds from the oldest Neolithic period are in the caves of the Karst hinterland of Trieste. This area was probably still settled by hunters, who came into contact with herders from the Gulf of Kvarner and Dalmatia, from where sheep and goat herders brought Danilo ceramics and Hvar pottery to the Karst region. (The ceramics are named after Danilo, a site near Šibenik, while the pottery is named after the island of Hvar.) The Sermin site suggests that the herders had settled permanently in the littoral. Interesting information about the Eneolithic (Copper Age) period in western Slovenia comes from cave sites (at Mala Triglavca and Podmol near Kastelec), which were still the main shelters for people who mostly raised livestock and hunted. Zoological and botanical studies provide evidence that herdsmen spent some time in several of the caves. The remains of sheep and goat feces in caves, the presence of grass pollen in the Neolithic cultural strata at Podmol, as well as the presence of mixed oak forest and typical pasture vegetation indicate that herds grazed near the cave. Bones provide further evidence that sheep, goats, pigs, and domestic cattle were raised.

Stone tools of the time were mainly fashioned from local stone;[4] the finds of crucibles (vessels used for smelting) indicate that Copper Age metal workers probably smelted the ore in open fireplaces. By blowing they could increase ventilation and thus accelerate the smelting process. Ventilation aids included elongations for bellows and blow pipes. The oldest copper finds at Slovenian sites are from the first half of the 4th millennium BC and include axes and daggers, probably fabricated in the east. Domestic crafts began to develop somewhat later, as evidenced by the remains of smelting vessels with traces of copper; they originate in the mid-4th millennium BC and are from Hočevarica in the Ljubljansko barje area (Ljubljana Marshes). Remnants of a clay mould

[4] They suggest that smaller stone quarries were in use in the 5th millennium BC, although there is still no direct evidence. Stone tools, mainly axes, from this time have also been found on the slopes of Pohorje, in Slovenske Gorice, in the Prekmurje region, and elsewhere. The first copper artifacts were supposedly brought from the east by metallurgists searching for copper ore in these areas. Copper in its elementary state is rarely found in nature, and oxidic carbonate and sulphite copper ores are important for its production. Slovenia does have underground sulphite deposits. See in general Anton Velušček, "Neolithic and Eneolithic Investigations in Slovenia (Neolitske in eneolitske raziskave v Sloveniji)," *Arheološki vestnik*, no. 50 (1999): 59–79.

Figure 2 *Pile dwellings on the Ljubljana Marshes. Zakladi tisočletij, 1999, 65.*

from the late 4th millennium BC were found at the Maharski prekop (Mahar Canal). Single and double-part clay moulds for small hatchets and clay vessels for molten metal from Dežmanova kolišča (Dežman pile dwellings) date from the 3rd millennium BC, i.e., the Late Copper Age, a time when metalwork was becoming more firmly established in present-day Slovenia. The pile dwellings near Ig in the Ljubljana Marshes (Fig. 2) were first researched in the late 19th century by Karl Deschmann, the curator and later director of the Regional Carniolan Museum in Ljubljana (now the National Museum of Slovenia). This period is characterized by the settlement of people of the Vučedol culture (named after Vučedol, a site in northern Croatia), whose presence has been documented mainly on the Ljubljana Marshes.

Herders and livestock breeders did not settle in the interior of Slovenia, where only hunter-gatherers had previously lived, until the 5th millennium BC.[5] The new population settled on promontories above rivers (such as Moverna vas near Semič), along river bends and in caves, by lakesides and in marshlands, and on hills; they also had the hillfort settlements (such as Gradec near Mirna), fortified by stone enclosures. A burial site regarded as marking the transition from the Late Neolithic period to the Copper Age has been discovered at Ajdovska jama (Ajdovska Cave), near Nemška vas, and close to Krško, in the easternmost part of the Lower Carniola region. The cave

[5] The Late Neolithic and Eneolithic periods. See Hermann Parzinger, *Studien zur Chronologie und Kulturgeschichte der Jungstein-, Kupfer- und Frühbronzezeit zwischen Karpaten und Mittleren Taurus* (Mainz am Rhein: Von Zabern, 1993).

Figure 3 *Anthropomorphic clay statuette from Ig on the Ljubljana Marshes. Courtesy National Museum of Slovenia, photo T. Lauko.*

has two entrances and a complex ground plan with several shafts. The dead were placed upon the cave floor according in a pre-determined arrangement and usually surrounded by a circle of stones. Beside them were found various vessels, women's bracelets, pendants, and necklaces, as well as stone axes and arrowheads characteristic of men. Corn-filled vessels, various animal bones, and fireplaces suggest burial rites, which included eating at the site or offering food for the dead. According to the remains, anthropologists have been able to identify 31 individuals: 7 men, 8 women, and 16 children.

Most of the known sites from the 4th millennium BC are found in the Ljubljana Marshes, whose inhabitants had maintained contact with the Danubian, Mediterranean, and Alpine regions. In the early 3rd millennium BC, members of the Vučedol culture also started to establish permanent settlements in the Ljubljana Marshes and elsewhere in the area of contemporary Slovenia (Vinomer above Metlika, the castle of Ptuj, and the Trieste Karst). The pile dwellings in the Ljubljana Marshes were an exceptional discovery. Over 40 settlements from various time periods have been unearthed, and even

the imperial court in Vienna was interested in Deschmann's excavations. The origin of these pile dwellings was probably dictated by the desire for security.[6]

A characteristic feature of the lake dwellers is their beautifully decorated, good quality earthenware, which is indicative of creative, artistic practices. Clay spindles, bone needles, and remnants of woolen cloth reveal that women wove and sewed. Interesting patterns on their ceramics, particularly on anthropomorphic statuettes, may suggest the type of patterns on their dresses. These, together with the beautiful vases, are the most striking relics from that time (Fig. 3).

The transition from hunting-gathering to cultivation of land was accompanied by a continuation of gathering as well as of hunting and fishing. Indeed, food remains indicative that people were eating not only fish and seafood (shellfish), but also stags, deer, wild boar, and even bears. Buffalo and bison were eaten too, though their remains are rarer. People also gathered forest fruits and nuts, and grape pips have been found at several pile dwellings in the Ljubljana Marshes. The remains of tripartite harpoons (with a wooden shaft, a bone extension, and a horn-tipped prong) have been discovered near the village of Ig, and were used for hunting beavers, otters, and larger fish. Inhabitants undoubtedly cultivated the land, as indicated not just by the permanent settlement but also by stone hoes, millstones, and harvest knives. Charred cereal grains have also been uncovered, as have culture plants like wheat and barley and the remains of large clay pots, in which they probably preserved their food stores.

The lake inhabitants of the time also used simple, hollowed-out canoes, known as logboats, which have been found in considerable numbers. Besides the logboat, remains of one of the oldest wooden carts (a wheel with an axle) in Europe have been found on the site at Stare gmajne, dating from the late 4th millennium BC. The largest number of logboats belongs to the 1st millennium BC according to radiocarbon dating, but logboats from Stare gmajne had been known and used ever since the 4th millennium BC. The pile dwellings disappeared early in the 2nd millennium BC, probably because the lake gradually drained and became marshland.

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[6] Research and excavations continue at the Ljubljana Marshes. The platforms' supporting posts, on which the rectangular houses with double-eaved roofs rested, were made of water-resistant oak and ash wood. The oldest dwelling on the Resnikov prekop (Resnik Canal) near Ig dates from the 5th millennium BC. According to analyses, inhabitants of these pile dwellings were mainly engaged in hunting, but domestic sheep and cattle bones also point to livestock, which had become more important in the 4th millennium BC. Pile dwellings are also well documented in the Eneolithic period; see Anton Velušček (ed.), *Hočevarica. An Eneolithic Pile Dwelling in the Ljubljansko Barje* (Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2004).

THE FLOURISHING OF METALLURGY IN THE BRONZE AGE AND THE FIRST HILLFORTS

During the Early Bronze Age (22nd to 16th century BC), the inhabitants of the Ljubljana Marshes mostly continued to live the way they had used to, when the Ljubljana culture reached its height and spread into the littoral region and along the coast to southern Dalmatia. However, its decline at the end of this period has not yet been fully explained. The transition to the 2nd millennium BC was certainly not as important a turning-point in central Slovenia as it was in the Aegean regions, where society was already based on a more highly developed economy. People in the Aegean regions were becoming socially stratified and lived in cities: this was the age of the blossoming Minoan and Mycenaean cultures. In the Danubian region, too, the population enjoyed a higher level of development due to ore deposits in the Carpathians and contacts with more developed cultures.

At that time, the Slovenian regions were on the margins of new currents and events. During the Middle Bronze Age (late 16th to 14th century BC), two characteristic cultures had settled in the region. A population that buried its dead in barrows lived in northeast Slovenia (Styria). Their settlements were in the lowlands and on hills. Their material culture (which has been poorly researched) was characteristic of Central Europe. To the west, in the Karst region and in Istria, the population known as the "Castellieri" cultural group lived in fortified hilltop settlements ("castellieri"—"kaštelirji") encircled by defensive stonewalls.

While settlements in Slovenia have been poorly researched, those in the Trieste hinterland are far better known. It is interesting that the inhabitants of Karst settlements lived according to the old ways as recently as the late 14th and 13th centuries BC, and their flat cremation burials (known as the Urnfield culture) were a significant novelty throughout Europe. The Karst inhabitants faced great changes. One of the most significant and best preserved settlements is Debela griža in the vicinity of Volčji Grad, near Komen. It had been reinforced with an imposing double defensive wall in low-lying places and with a single wall where karstic sinkholes protected the settlement. Caves still remained attractive occasional dwelling places for Bronze Age man, e.g., at Podmol near Kastelec, and Jama pod Predjamskim gradom (the cave below Predjama Castle). The Karst dwellers began to bury their dead in flat cremation burial grounds as late as the 10th century BC: the main finds from the Late Bronze Age and in the area of the "Castellieri" culture are in the vicinity of Škocjan.

A different way of life began in Europe at the end of the 14th century BC when new peoples arrived. The new population lived in a different kind of settlement and in different ways, which considerably changed the appearance of the settlement. This is especially visible in the burial of the dead. The dead were incinerated, and their ashes preserved in urns, which were simply interred in the earth without additionally covering the barrow. Their culture was known as the Urnfield culture.

These sudden changes are difficult to explain. Perhaps they were brought about quite simply by great technological advances, which led to society becoming stratified in various European regions. However, as has been said, it was probably large-scale migrations that brought these changes to Europe. These migrations were considered to have caused the decline of the Mycenaean culture in Greece, the downfall of the Hittite empire in Asia Minor, and the fall of various important eastern cities like Troy, Byblos, and Ugarit. Egypt was also threatened; the sources mention people from the sea. However, in 1189 BC they were conquered by Pharaoh Ramses III.

These new peoples, who cremated their dead, also settled in what is now Slovenia, leaving their traces in Styria, in the Prekmurje region, and in central Slovenia. Among the two most significant settlements are Oloris near Doljni Lakoš, and Rabelčja vas in Ptuj. The diverse Slovenian sites have yielded various types of bronze axes and bronze jewelry (sometimes intricately wrought), and different, simply shaped ceramic urns and other vessels. In some places, like the cemetery of the Rabelčja vas settlement, these are the only objects to have been found in graves. The settlements in Slovenia belonged to a culture which was relatively uniform throughout the broad expanse from western Hungary to eastern Croatia and northern Bosnia. However, there were not many settlements in the Slovenian region during the early Bronze Age.

The end of the 2nd millennium BC brought yet more changes. New peoples probably arrived in these parts again and altered the appearances of settlements, although inhabitants were still recognizable by their flat cremation cemeteries. In the southeastern Alpine area, one may speak of a cultured region only in the late Bronze Age (late 11th and 10th centuries BC). Various groups were formed at that time, and they did not differ greatly, but had local particularities indicated by their material culture. In Slovenia, along the Drava and Mura rivers, people were defined by the Ruše group (Ruše, Maribor, Ormož); the second largest group (the Dobova group) was represented by the inhabitants of Posavje, along the Sava River; the third group, in central Slovenia, was identified by those who belonged to the Ljubljana cultural group (Ljubljana, Mokronog, Novo mesto). Their burial goods do not essentially differ and

indicate that society at that time was only slightly stratified. However, long-term changes began to occur during the approach of the 1st millennium BC. They would end in the 8th century BC, with the onset of the Iron Age.[7]

The majority of Bronze Age settlements originated only in the late Bronze Age, although some had already been occupied throughout the entire Bronze Age, such as Brinjeva gora near Zreče. The houses were, for the most part, wooden, single-room huts: some rested on a stone foundation and featured a clay-covered hearth on the inside. Two important lowland settlements are Oloris (near Dolnji Lakoš) and Ormož. Oloris was established in the foothills of the Lendava slopes. This is the first lowland settlement of the middle and late Bronze Age to have been discovered in Slovenia. The settlement was situated in the bend of a nearby stream, the Črnec, whose new bed covered the site with a swamp. A wooden fence encircled the village. Remains of a wooden conduit for drinking water have been found on the settlement's northern border, in a ditch of the original stream. The walls of the houses, which probably had double-eaved roofs, were made of wooden posts, interlaced with branches and plastered with clay. The houses were built close together around a central courtyard, where stoves had been placed and around which the life of the settlement revolved. The houses had fireplaces, and pits had been dug under the floor to preserve produce. Paleobotanical research has shown that settlers had cut down the forests to create arable surfaces and had cultivated pastures.

The settlement in Ormož was partly protected by the Drava River, and partly by a natural gorge. An earth embankment with palisades and a deep ditch in front of it had been set up on the exposed sides of the settlement. This was one of the most significant settlements of the late Bronze Age in the southeastern Alpine region. It was constructed according to a plan, as revealed by the remains of a road network and the remnants of houses alongside it. The houses were constructed similarly to those in Oloris, except that they were larger; one even had two rooms. The inhabitants raised livestock, mainly cattle; there were far fewer bones of pigs, sheep, goats, or horses, according to analyses of animal bones. The adjacent burial grounds have also been uncovered. The settlement was still inhabited in the Iron Age, but disintegrated after 600 BC.

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[7] Innovations penetrated the Bronze Age world from two directions, the Mediterranean area and the lower Danube region. Both regions had a higher level of development: the coastal world was constantly open to various influences and contacts, and the Danube region had rich ore deposits and advanced metalworking crafts. Innovations from the Mediterranean arrived mainly in the Karst and Inner Carniola regions, and those from the lower Danube mostly reached eastern Slovenia. See Janez Dular, "Ältere, mittlere und jüngere Bronzezeit in Slowenien – Forschungsstand und Probleme (Starejša, srednja in mlajša bronasta doba v Sloveniji – stanje raziskav in problemi)," *Arheološki vestnik*, no. 50 (1999): 81–96.

Burial customs elsewhere were different.[8] Little is known about the cults of those times, except for burial rituals, which are accessible through the manner of burials and burial objects: vessels are almost always found in graves, as well as jewelry and various other objects. Possibly anthropomorphic figurines from Ormož, and various amulets in symbolic shapes (wheel – sun, sickle – moon) which were used as pendants, may indicate the presence of religious ideas at that time.

Bronze Age hoards, especially of tools and weapons, are particularly remarkable.[9] However, their significance has not yet been clearly explained. They have been thought to be the unrecovered property of traveling traders, buried during times of migration and danger. However, prevailing opinion suggests that these were cult offerings by individuals or larger communities who dedicated them to deities and demons. The Karst region of Škocjan, with its renowned Škocjanske jame (Škocjan Caves), as well as other caves in the vicinity, are an expressive natural phenomenon, which itself evokes a religious atmosphere. The people then and later undoubtedly felt the region of Škocjan to be a holy place, and the cave of Mušja jama (Mušja Cave, Grotta delle Mosche) has been proven to be a cult site by the discovery of material evidence. The cave (50 m deep) was inaccessible to the people of those times, who threw precious objects into the cave, mainly bronze weapons and vessels which they had earlier ritually burned. With these offerings, one guesses, warriors were commending themselves to the gods of the underworld. This must have been a well-frequented area, since the objects, which testify to its supraregional importance, reflect influences not only from the Pannonian plain but also from Italy and the Aegean world, as well as the western Balkans. The significance of this cult place disappeared almost completely after 500 years, in the 7th century BC. Nevertheless, it was not completely forgotten because some objects in the cave originated in Roman times.

[8] At Mokronog (Lower Carniola), two large, flat cremation cemeteries have been discovered, dating from the late Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age (10th–8th century BC), but many finds were destroyed due to sand excavation. The burial ground at Mestne njive in Novo mesto, where large, covered urns have been found, is important, though the related settlements have not been investigated.

[9] They were buried at carefully chosen places, most often in isolated areas outside the settlements. See Biba Teržan (ed.), *Hoards and Individual Metal Finds from the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages in Slovenia* (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 1995/96).

THE HALLSTATT PRINCES AND "SITULA ART"

During this period (8th–4th century BC), the tribes that settled in present-day Slovenia remain anonymous, while others in neighboring areas were already known by name: the Histri in Istria, the Iapodes in Lika and in the Una Valley in Bosnia, and the Liburni in northern Dalmatia. This was when the first city states emerged in Greece; and when the Greek script developed on the basis of the Phoenician alphabet. It was also the time of Homer's epics and the decline of the Mycenaean Age, reflected in the Iliad and Odyssey.

Under these remote influences, central European society underwent a transformation as well: the leading class wielded economic and thus also military power, and promoted universal progress. Ironwork had become one of the most significant branches of the economy. The earlier phase, which had ended with the settlement of the Celts, is also known as the Hallstatt period (after the Austrian site of Hallstatt), and the latter is referred to as the La Tène period (after a Swiss site). With the arrival of the Celts, tribes in these parts became known by name for the first time in history.

During the early Iron Age, great changes again occurred in settlement patterns, as hitherto unoccupied regions were settled by their original inhabitants or because newcomers from the Danube areas were attracted to these parts by rich iron ore deposits.

Various tribes that had settled the lands of the present provinces lived in what is now Slovenia, yet, as their material culture indicates, they differed among themselves in settlement structure and in burial practices and objects for everyday use. The various Hallstatt groups are distinguished as: Dolenjska (Lower Carniolan), Notranjska (Inner Carniolan), Posočje (formerly Sv. Lucija, along the Soča River), Gorenjska (Upper Carniolan), Koroška (Carinthian), and Štajerska (Styrian groups). Speaking of different groups does not necessarily mean that tribes living in a certain area were ethnically differentiated. In our opinion, however, the inhabitants of the Posočje group, who lived close to what today is Italy, were under strong influence of the Veneti. Their community was among the most developed in what is now Slovenia. The Lower Carniolan community was also highly developed, judging from the wealth of the finds and from the high degree of social stratification that was reflected in burial finds and "Situla Art." In particular, its swift development became possible as a result of its advanced metalworking craft, the most significant economic branch in this community aside from the all-important livestock-raising and cultivation. Iron had become so important in the 8th and early 7th

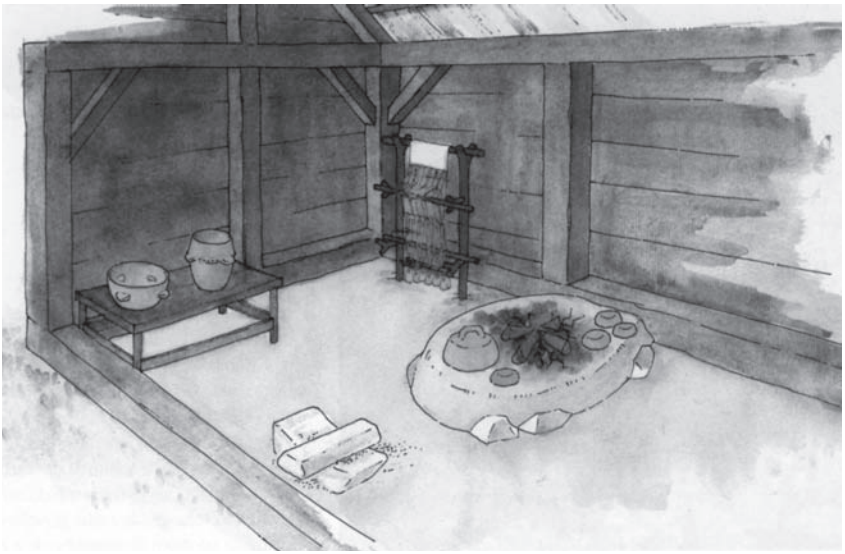

Figure 4 *Iron Age house at Kučar near Podzemelj in Dolenjska (Lower Carniola). Zakladi tisočletij, 1999.*

centuries BC that it even replaced bronze in ornament production, although bronze was far more attractive.

In Greece, the Iron Age had already begun in the mid-11th century BC, while in what is now Slovenia ironwork began to flourish only in the 8th. Iron objects had previously been imported, including the oldest iron sword (from the 10th century BC) found in Mušja Cave, which had come from the Aegean region. Limonite ore was plentiful, particularly in Upper and Lower Carniola.[10]

Most of the settlements from the Hallstatt period were situated on hills and minor elevations. They were encircled by sturdy defensive walls, the

[10] These deposits, nowadays exhausted, had been accessible by surface mining. Evidence for iron production is found mainly in the slag, uncovered at most of the hillforts, and frequently outside the walls, indicating that ore was smelted close to the settlements and in shaft-like stoves with built-in fireplaces. To obtain higher temperatures for smelting, bellows were used to blow air through spout-shaped clay vents into the fireplaces. They produced ingots, which were suitable for transportation and used to manufacture mainly weapons and tools. See also Janez Dular & Sneža Tecco Hvala, *South-Eastern Slovenia in the Early Iron Age. Settlement – Economy – Society/Jugovzhodna Slovenija v starejši železni dobi. Poselitev – gospodarstvo – družba* (Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2007).

so-called hillforts. The fortifications used huge rocks for both frontal sides with stone chippings and a mixture of clay poured between them. At the hillfort above Vir near Stična (Cvinger), whose periphery measures 2.3 km, excavations have revealed that houses stood close to the outer defenses, although a corridor enabled defenders to gain free access to the wall. The houses were simple, rectangular wooden structures, erected either on piles driven into the ground, or else with upright supporting pillars placed on horizontal foundation beams (Fig. 4).

Most of the hillforts can be found in the Karst region as well as in Inner and Lower Carniola. The best researched are those in Lower Carniola, where it has been shown that Urnfield inhabitants erected some unfortified settlements, but life in them swiftly declined. In the 8th century BC, new populations built larger settlements close to older ones, but also in completely new locations, and these were usually reinforced by fortified stone walls. The most densely settled was the Mirna Valley, while the main centers were Šmarje, Stična, Novo mesto, Meniška vas, Vinji Vrh, Velike Malence, Libna, Podzemelj, and Vače, in addition to many smaller settlements. In Inner Carniola, new hillforts were established at Šmihel below Nanos and Trnovo, although they waned for unknown reasons in the 7th century BC. This is surprising, as just at that time life in the Posočje and Lower Carniola communities was flourishing.

In the Posočje region, the first settlements were established mainly in the upper Soča Valley. The most significant were those in Kobarid, Bovec, Tolmin, and Most na Soči (formerly Sv. Lucija). The population spread out towards Upper Carniola during the 6th century BC and settled in the Bohinj region, where there were rich iron ore deposits. In Styria, some settlements had persisted since the late Bronze Age, while the beginning of the Iron Age saw several new settlements (Poštela on Pohorje, Ptujska Gora). However, in the middle of the 6th century BC these settlements—like those in neighboring Hungary—disintegrated, possibly because of the Scythian incursion into the Pannonian basin and their frequent raids into neighboring territories. The consequences of the Scythian incursion were also reflected in Lower Carniola, where local overlords adopted some Scythian weapons and equestrian equipment.

Not all communities buried their dead in the same way. In Posočje, the cemeteries were flat, extending along riverside terraces. At Most na Soči, more than 6500 cremation graves have been excavated.[11] Flat burial grounds have

[11] The burnt bones were placed in simple pits, which were covered with stone slabs and sometimes encircled by a wreath of stones. Urn burials were rarer, and only the rich were interred in bronze buckets (situlas). The dead were cremated in their clothes, together with their jewelry and other goods, although later goods were placed separately in graves. Weapons were usually not placed in these graves. See Biba Teržan, Fulvia Lo Schiavo & Neva Trampuž-Orel, *Most na*

also been discovered in Inner Carniola, where skeletal and cremation graves were both found, many urn burials among them. In Styria, cremation burials were customary, either in simple earthen graves or in sepulchral barrows. The barrows had rectangular stone chambers at the center, which in some cases was reached by a paved corridor.

Characteristic of hillforts in Lower Carniola until the end of the 4th century BC was the burial of corpses in barrows. Each settlement had several barrow cemeteries, which each held several dozen barrows. One of the large barrows near Stična, encircled by a wreath of stones, held 183 graves. This was an ancestral barrow, in use for several centuries; in general, barrows contained 20 to 30 graves. To accompany the deceased, who were buried in their garments, status objects (mainly arms, bronze vessels, and riding equipment) were deposited in the grave. Indeed, funeral attire and the manner of burials tell us most about the social structure. In the 8th and 7th centuries BC, this structure was still highly traditional, since society was not yet very stratified. There were few warrior graves. Prosperity during the late Hallstatt period also introduced greater social differentiation (Fig. 5): there were at least six types of male attire (the most outstanding warriors, in addition to bearing two lances and battle axes, also wore a helmet and armor), and ten types of female dresses. Women's costume varied greatly, because of the diversity of ornaments, and Italian fashion was displacing domestic styles.[12]

Each settlement had a sufficiently large economic reserve for hunting, livestock, and cultivation on arable land; the plough was pulled by cattle. All types of agricultural implements have been found, especially in late Iron Age graves and hoards. Although mainly cattle were being raised, the proportion of sheep, goats, and pigs had now increased. The inhabitants were already familiar with transhumance, the seasonal changing of grazing grounds, which played a large role in Roman times. They had relatively large numbers of dogs, but few horses. The smaller ones were work horses, while they rode valuable horses, imported from the east, whose remains have been found only in graves. The remains of wolves and foxes have also been discovered: both were probably hunted for their skins.

The various crafts of the time were practiced on a limited scale, and then

Soči (S. Lucia) II. Szombathyjeva izkopavanja/Die Ausgrabungen von J. Szombathy (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 1984/85).

[12] One barrow at Stična, called the grave of the princess, contained remnants of her attire, with tiny bronze buttons sewn on, and a whole range of fibulae, bracelets, amber and gold necklaces, and a golden diadem. See Stane Gabrovec, *Stična I. Naselbinska izkopavanja/Siedlungsausgrabungen* (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej, 1994); Stane Gabrovec, *Stična II/1. Grabhügel aus der älteren Eisenzeit – Katalog* (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 2006).

Figure 5 *Golden female attire found in a grave at Stična from the beginning of the 6th century BC. Courtesy National Museum of Slovenia, photo T. Lauko.*

Figure 6 *The Vače situla. Courtesy National Museum of Slovenia, photo T. Lauko.*

mostly at home. The people worked with wood (carpentry and carving), wove baskets and fabrics, produced ceramic dishes, and made ropes. The blacksmith held an important function. Another craft, besides toreutics and metal casting, was the production of woolen and linen goods. This, too, is well documented, since ceramic and wooden spindles made from sticks, as well as pyramidal weights for threads on wooden looms, have been preserved. Decorative objects were fashioned from bone and horn, and even colored glass. Imported artifacts are evidence of links with foreign countries and the extent of trade at that time. The southeastern Alpine area was a transit region crossed by routes from the Balkan and Apennine peninsulas. Most of the imported artifacts were found in graves. Some came from Etruria (for instance, the 8th-century BC Etruscan equestrian equipment from Stična, a three-legged stool from Novo mesto, and a bronze bowl from Črnolica), and there are some Italo-Corinthian objects or possibly domestic imitations. Apulian ceramics and other vessels were imported from southern Italy, across the Adriatic, with the Histri and Liburni as intermediaries. Trading in horses, and graphite (for producing pottery) from present-day Czech and Moravian territories, is also documented. Most important, however, was the trade in amber and salt. Amber was brought here

along the Amber Route, which connected the Baltic region with the northern Adriatic. Evidence of the salt trade is provided by a man's grave (6th century BC) at the cemetery in Hallstatt (where salt was extracted). He was dressed in a military outfit, characteristic of warriors from Lower Carniola, and had probably accompanied a trade expedition when he died in Hallstatt.

Imported objects also indicate that inhabitants of the southeastern Alpine regions cultivated relations with the Veneti, Etruscans, and other Italian peoples. At the end of the 7th century BC, "Situla Art" objects were imported from the Etruscans via the Veneti, representing the height of artistic creation of that time. The finest products date from the 5th century BC. "Situla Art" was a style that produced figural friezes with scenes from people's lives and plant and animal motifs on bronze vessels (mainly buckets (situlae)) and other bronze objects (mainly belt plates); one of the most famous is the Vače situla (Fig. 6).[13] Scenes might depict duels, including duels on horseback, or special ceremonies related to rites and sacrifices. Associated processions of people in carriages, on horseback, and on foot are depicted, and their different social position is reflected in their diverse attire. Banquets are also represented, as are flute players, erotic scenes, and other events. Perhaps they partially portray everyday life as well. However, the scenes must mainly be interpreted as depicting cult performances and ceremonies accompanying religious festivals, the death of significant members of the community, or festivals in memory of a mythical ancestor honored as a hero, not unlike in the Greek world. Despite their links with Mediterranean cultures, the Hallstatt communities in the Slovenian regions had not risen above their prehistoric levels; they knew neither cities, nor state order, nor writing. Their development abruptly ended when, in about 300 BC, the Celts arrived in these parts, virtually ending a flourishing life in the fortified settlements. It was replaced by different patterns of settlement, religion, armament, and burial.

THE CELTS: THE GREAT CONQUERORS

In the late 1st millennium BC, much of Europe was under the influence of the Celts and their characteristic culture, which took shape in the mid-5th century north of the Alps. It had encompassed large parts of France, northern

[13] "Situla Art" has been documented from northern Italy to the Danube, although most of these decorated artifacts have been found near Este and Bologna, the Southern Alps, in Nesactium, Istria, and Lower Carniola. See Peter Turk, *Images of Life and Myth* (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 2005).

Switzerland, southern Germany, and reached all the way to the Czech region. In that century the Celts already exerted great influence on the Danubian territory as far as Slovakia, and were trading their beautiful artifacts in parts of present-day Austria. They had developed a characteristic artistic style, based on close links with Greeks from Greek colonies like Massalia (Marseilles), Etruscans, and other Italian peoples. They produced articles for everyday wear, ornaments, weapons, and riding equipment, as well as bronze vessels and clay pottery. These articles were found in the graves of Celtic nobility alongside products imported from the Mediterranean.

The Celtic migration began around 400 BC and ended as the 3rd century BC began. It completely transformed the image of western and central Europe, and the Balkans as far as central Asia Minor (Galatia). The historian Pompeius Trogus, of Celtic descent, mentions overcrowding, and particularly internal divisions and wars, among the causes for migration. The Celts settled Britain at that time; attracted by the Mediterranean regions, they also settled much of the Iberian Peninsula, almost all of France, and part of northern Italy, as well as the Eastern Alps, the Pannonian plain, and the lower Danube down to the Black Sea. At first they broke through to the Apennine Peninsula, forcing Etruscans and Umbrians to retreat from northern Italy. In 387 BC, the Celts defeated the Romans at Allia, a stream in Etruria, and set fire to Rome, although they were unable to capture the capital. They extorted a costly ransom and withdrew from central Italy, although they had settled a large part of the Paduan plain. In the first wave of migration towards the east, which took place along the Danube, the Celts reached lower Austria, Burgenland, southwestern Slovakia, and northern Transdanubia during the early 4th century BC. In around 300 BC, they settled the remainder of the Pannonian plain and the Eastern Alps. The Celtic hordes invaded Macedonia, Greece and Thrace by incursion from the Balkans in the 3rd century BC, forcing the Hellenistic world to coexist with its conquerors. Once the Celts had properly settled the conquered territories, they became a significant political factor and were incorporated into the world of Greek mythology, legends, and heroes. The Greek historian Appianus of Alexandria wrote that the one-eyed Cyclops Polyphemus and the beautiful sea-nymph Galatea had produced three sons, the mythic forebears of three important peoples of the time: the Illyrians, Celts, and Galatians.[14]

The Celts introduced not only a new religion and new cults, but also a new way of organizing life, evidence of which was found primarily in plains and riverside settlements. They also brought new technologies (the potter's wheel), a new type of warfare (battle chariots, whose remains were found in two graves

[14] *Illyriké*, 2. 3

in Brežice), and swords (found at the Lower Carniolan sites; they were already appreciated at the end of the Hallstatt period). Their apparel consisted of trousers, a light cape, the characteristic torque, and two-part iron belt chains. They set off for battle with bloodthirsty war chants and cries and the banging of swords upon shields. The enemy's weapons were offered in shrines to deities, while the heads of corpses were paraded as trophies. After they had come into contact with the Hellenic civilization and been influenced by the coinage of Philip II and Alexander, they too began to mint their own currency.

In approximately 300 BC, the territory of eastern and central Slovenia began to be settled by the Taurisci, an East Celtic tribe, who had colonized the Eastern Alps and the Pannonian basin. Western Slovenia was settled by the Carni; the boundary between them was located around Mt. Ocra (Nanos) in the region of Razdrto. In the 2nd century BC, a Celtic kingdom known as the Norican Kingdom was formed in Austrian and Slovenian Carinthia and fostered friendly contacts with Rome. Although several princes minted their own money, the central role was nonetheless played by the king of the eponymous Norici tribe. Its religious center was perhaps somewhere in the region of old Virunum (Magdalensberg), which in all likelihood was a significant trade and crafts settlement of Roman and Italian traders at the beginning of the 1st century BC. The Norican Kingdom, due to its excellent iron (comparable to steel), was an important political factor and a vital supplier of raw materials, arms, and other iron products to the Romans. As Caesar recorded, the powerful king of the Germanic Suebi, Ariovistus, had two wives, one of them the sister of the Norican King, Voccio.[15] This indicates the political importance of the Norican Kingdom.

One of the main centers of the Taurisci was in Celeia (Celje), the seat of a prince who minted his own money. Within the wide region of Celeia, the interests of the Taurisci and Norici met and may have led to clashes between them. They each pursued a different policy towards the Roman state. The Taurisci had settled on the transit territory next to the Amber Route, which led through the Slovenian region from Aquilea and Tergeste (Trieste), via Ocra (the Razdrto region), Nauportus (Vrhnika), Emona (Ljubljana), Celeia, and Poetovio (Ptuj), to the Danube and beyond. This was also the most dangerous route for attacks on Italy. The Romans were therefore intent on securing it as rapidly as possible, which resulted in constant battles with the Taurisci and Iapodes, whose influence extended as far as Ocra.

Although the Celtic La Tène culture was more unified than the Hallstatt culture, the territory of Slovenia was not unified, because of earlier settlement

[15] *De Bello Gallico*, 1. 53. 4.

Figure 7 *Celtic necklace from Podzemelj made of glass beads. Courtesy National Museum of Slovenia, photo T. Lauko.*

by indigenous people. Four groups may be distinguished. The largest was the Mokronog group, named after Mokronog in the Mirna Valley. They may possibly be the same as the Taurisci, who came from the Pannonian basin, although one cannot always equate material cultures with a particular people or tribe.[16] Styria, which had previously been sparsely settled, came under intense Celtic influence, while in Lower Carniola the densely settled Hallstatt population continued to exist, although they had to leave their hillforts. The older, indigenous population still lived on in their settlements, which is indicated not so much by their burial customs or their attire—both had become distinctly Celtic—but

[16] The Mokronog group covered the territory of central and eastern Slovenia (the Ljubljana basin, Upper Carniola, Carinthia, Styria, Lower Carniola, and northern White Carniola). The same culture was also documented in the neighboring regions of Croatia, Austria, and Hungary. See Dragan Božič, "Die Erforschung der Latènzeit in Slowenien seit dem Jahr 1964. (Raziskovanje latenske dobe na Slovenskem po letu 1964)," *Arheološki vestnik*, no. 50 (1999): 189–213.

rather by their ceramic vessels, which were hand crafted and decorated in the old style, for instance, at the Novo mesto cemetery, on the "Kapiteljska njiva."[17]

One of the most significant sites of the Mokronog community is undoubtedly Mokronog itself, the site of some of the first La Tène graves in Slovenia to have been discovered. Also important were Mihovo below Gorjanci and Novo mesto in the Krka Valley. The male graves of the Mokronog community contained large quantities of Celtic weapons, ranging from iron helmets with neck- and cheek-protectors which were worn only by persons of rank, to oval shields with an iron boss, and double-edged swords and lances (the Celtic warriors bore only one). Female attire was similar to the late Hallstatt dresses, although notably Celtic in shape, similar to the Pannonian Celts; particularly characteristic were the fibulae, the iron and bronze belt chains, bronze bracelets with stylized animal heads at their tips, and glass and amber jewelry (Fig. 7).

The La Tène population, who lived in Posočje region in western Slovenia and were characterized by the Idrija culture (named after Idrija pri Bači), and the related communities in Inner Carniola and Karst were closely linked to Istria and Friuli. Their material culture bears strikingly few Central European Celtic characteristics. There was little Celtic jewelry (fibulae or glass beads), and the typical female attire included northern Adriatic fibulae and necklaces with three knots; they were not acquainted with glass ornaments. Roman sources mention the Carni in this region. Several articles with Venetic inscriptions (e.g., two bronze vessels and a plaque from Idrija pri Bači) were found where the Idrija community lived, while a couple of graves at the same site contained helmets (a Celtic custom) and bronze drinking vessels that were frequently added to male graves. The most typical—and unusual—thing about these graves was the presence of considerable quantities of extremely diverse agricultural and other implements. At Gradišče above Knežak, a hoard of almost 400 Republican asses (the earliest from the mid-2nd century BC) has been discovered, and a similar find was made at Dutovlje (Karst); both provide evidence of close trading and other links with Republican Italy. The area occupied by this community in the wide hinterland of Aquileia had probably come under Roman authority during the 1st century BC. Roman Republican weapons discovered at several of the hillforts indicate that they had been occupied by force.

In central and southern White Carniola, in the Kolpa River Valley, both Pliny the Elder (1st century AD) and Ptolemy (2nd century AD) mention the

[17] Due to the gradual Roman occupation of their territory at the end of the 2nd century BC, the population moved back from the dangerous lowlands to the abandoned Hallstatt hillforts. Vinji vrh above Bela Cerkev is an important such site from these times.

Colapiani. Mixed skeleton and cremation graves were excavated at the cemetery at Vinica by the Duchess of Mecklenburg, and were transferred after her death to a museum at Harvard University in Cambridge. Although the Vinica material culture produced several objects of its own, other finds reveal that people maintained close links not only with the indigenous inhabitants of Lower Carniola, mixed with the Taurisci, but also with the Iapodes of Lika. Politically, links were probably closer with the latter, since Strabo, the Greek historian and geographer from the end of the 1st century BC, refers to their territory as Iapodian.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE: CONQUEST AND PAX ROMANA

THE FOUNDING OF AQUILEIA

Our knowledge of the penetration of various Celtic tribes into the eastern Alpine area and their settlement of the Alpine and northern Adriatic regions contains enormous gaps. These tribes, as we have seen, were mainly known as Carni, Norici, and Taurisci. Their arrival and subsequent settlement during the late 4th and 3rd century BC coincided with the Romans' consolidation of their position on the Apennine Peninsula and their first conquests across the Adriatic Sea.

The Romans' first military involvement with a kingdom on the opposite coast became known as the First Illyrian War against Agron and Teuta in 229 BC. The Illyrian and Macedonian kingdoms were conquered soon afterwards in 168 BC. The beginnings of the Norican kingdom—situated mainly in present-day Austria and parts of northern Slovenia—are unclear, but towards the end of the 2nd century BC Livy (one of the leading Roman historians of the early 1st century AD) referred to a powerful Celtic community on the other side of the Alps, governed by "elders." The kingdom was known for its mineral wealth, which was the main reason why Romans established friendly relations with it at some point in the 2nd century BC. Livy reported that in 186 BC certain "Gauls from across the Alps," 12,000 armed men, peacefully crossed over to Venetia with no intention of plundering or waging war but to found an oppidum in the region, twelve miles from the future Aquileia. Their town was destroyed by the Romans.[18]

A Roman ambassador, sent by the Senate across the Alps, was hospitably received by the "elders," and was told that the emigrants had gone to Italy without the knowledge or permission of their tribal leaders. However, they did not intend to cause any harm, merely to settle in a desolate area because of overpopulation and the scarcity of farmland. Nonetheless, the Senate declared that they had been wrong to settle on foreign soil (even though the Romans were

[18] *Ab urbe condita*, 39. 54 ff.

Figure 8 *The Ocra Pass below Ocra Mt., present day Mt. Nanos. Courtesy Archives of the Institute of Archaeology, ZRC SAZU.*

probably not legally justified to claim a right over the region). No Celtic king is mentioned on that occasion, suggesting perhaps that his role within society had not yet been sufficiently distinguished. Both parties exchanged gifts and agreed that the Alps should be regarded as a barrier not to be penetrated.

According to a widely accepted hypothesis, these "Transalpine Gauls" would have been the Taurisci, who had settled in present-day Slovenia and probably wanted to dominate trade across the Ocra pass on both sides of the Alps.[19] The Ocra pass is the present-day Razdrto, below Mt. Nanos near Postojna (Fig. 8). It was part of the ancient Amber Route that connected the

[19] See Marjeta Šašel Kos,"The End of the Norican Kingdom and the Formation of the Provinces of Noricum and Pannonia," in: *Akten des IV. intern. Kolloquiums über Probleme des provinzialrömischen Kunstschaffens/Akti IV. mednarodnega kolokvija o problemih rimske provincialne umetnosti*. Celje 8.–12. Mai/maj 1995, ed. Bojan Djurić & Irena Lazar (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 1997); relevant chapters of Verena Gassner, Sonja Jilek, & Sabine Ladstätter, *Am Rande des Reiches. Die Römer in Österreich*, ed. Herwig Wolfram (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 2002).

amber-rich Baltic regions with the northern Adriatic region, where amber was used in Venetic and Etruscan workshops. These Roman negotiations with the "elders" of a transalpine Celtic people may have been the first contacts between the Roman state and the Norican kingdom, although this is not certain. The Senate probably negotiated with the Taurisci, which was strategically understandable if the Taurisci dominated the easiest crossing between the Balkan and Apennine peninsulas, the Ocra Pass. The Taurisci certainly traded along the Sava and Ljubljanica rivers via Nauportus (Vrhnika) in the direction of Tergeste (Trieste), the village of the Carni.

Livy mentions that the Celts had descended into Italy along unknown roads to found their ill-fated town.[20] This data could perhaps refer to the inhabitants of the Soča (Isonzo) Valley rather than to the Taurisci, since the road across the Ocra Pass could have hardly been regarded as unknown. The river's ancient name was the Aesontius, and it has been hypothesized that settlers in these regions, who are archaeologically defined by the late Iron Age Idrija culture, were called Ambisontes, like the Ambidravi who lived on both sides of the Drava (Dravus) River. Under Emperor Augustus the Ambisontes were known to have been one of the rebellious Alpine tribes; they are the only hostile Norican tribe mentioned in the inscription at La Turbie, above Monaco, which listed all the Alpine peoples who had been conquered in 15 BC by Augustus's stepsons Drusus and Tiberius. Moreover, the 2nd-century AD Greek geographer Ptolemy placed the Ambisontes in the south of the province, which would make the hypothesis that they inhabited the Aesontius Valley even more plausible.[21]

The identity of the enigmatic "Transalpine Gauls" (or Celts, as the Greek writers called them) is far from certain. In any case, the Roman state decided to respond to their expansionist tendencies in 183 BC by founding Aquileia, and the town was set up as a Latin colony in 181 BC. From a flourishing emporium the city soon developed into a prosperous metropolis and was, besides Rome, one of the most important cities in Italy. Aquileia's existence had far-reaching consequences for romanization, the economy, and acculturation in the regions of Noricum and Pannonia. Its influence there remained significant until the very end of antiquity.[22]

The Celts, who lived in the northern Adriatic hinterland, were influenced by their proximity to the Veneti, with whom they must undoubtedly have had

[20] *Ab urbe condita*, 39. 45. 6.

[21] Jaroslav Šašel, *Opera selecta* (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej, 1992), 288–297.

[22] Giuseppe Cuscito (ed.), *Aquileia dalle origini alla costituzione del ducato longobardo. Storia – amministrazione – società* (Trieste: Editreg, 2003).

trade relations. Individual Roman merchants had also certainly been exploring the possibilities of Celtic markets even before the foundation of Aquileia. It is therefore understandable that the Celts, especially those tribes living in less fertile Alpine valleys, were attracted to the south. However, the Romans wanted to monopolize the northern Adriatic area. The Histri, who inhabited the fertile Istrian Peninsula south of Tergeste, were the first to feel threatened by Roman imperialism, and started a war. Some Celts sided with the Romans on that occasion: they were perhaps Carni, who may have thought to take advantage of the defeat of the Histri. In 178 BC, Catmelus (in the place of his tribe's king) commanded and led 3,000 Celtic soldiers alongside the Roman consul against the Histri, who were subdued a year later. At that time Tergeste may have become known as a village of the Carni, while previously it may have belonged to the Histri.

THE NORICAN KINGDOM

Unlike some Carni, both the Taurisci and the Ambisontes were hostile to the Norican kingdom and the Roman state. The relationship between the Norici and Taurisci is not entirely clear. Both minted their own coins, but even their coinage is insufficient evidence for defining both tribes in terms of politics, territory, and supposed supremacy (Fig. 9). In the region of the Taurisci, gold was discovered at some point in the 2nd century BC, as reported by the Greek historian Polybius (and preserved by Strabo).[23] Gold was first extracted in collaboration with Roman entrepreneurs, and in such large quantities that its price dropped by a third throughout the whole of Italy. The Romans were consequently expelled by the Taurisci, who wanted to monopolize gold extraction and processing as well as the gold trade. It is questionable whether they recognized the Norican king's authority at all in the 2nd century and early 1st century BC, although the Norican kingdom had undoubtedly always endeavored to gain influence over the regions of the Taurisci.

The kingdom of Cincibilus and his brother are mentioned in the years 171–170 BC during the affair of the consul Gaius Cassius Longinus. Cincibilus, whom Livy called King of the Celts, may be the same as the king of the Norican kingdom, or he may have been the king of the Taurisci. His brother, who is not named, intervened in the Senate in 170 BC as the king's ambassador on behalf of his allies, the Alpine peoples, whom Longinus's consular army treated like enemies. These Alpine peoples were probably no other than the Taurisci; the

[23] Strabo, 4. 6. 12 C 208.

Figure 9 *Celtic silver coins from Celeia, 1st century BC. Courtesy National Museum of Slovenia, photo T. Lauko.*

Carni, Histri and Iapodes sent their own envoys to the Senate to complain about the same matter.[24] A year earlier, after the outbreak of the Macedonian War against the last Macedonian King Perseus, command in Macedonia had been assigned by lot—a usual procedure—to Publius Licinius Crassus. Longinus, against his expectations and wishes, had received Italy with Cisalpine Gaul, where he saw no possibilities for glory and enrichment. He arrived in northern Italy and decided to leave for Macedonia through the southeastern Alpine

[24] *Ab urbe condita*, 43. 5 ff.

regions without the Senate's permission, wishing to proceed further across Illyricum.

The name "Illyricum" was used for the Balkans during Livy's time, but Livy used it anachronistically when speaking of the early 2nd century BC. During the Hellenistic period, Illyricum denoted only various Illyrian kingdoms in present-day southern Dalmatia, the Republic of Macedonia, and Albania. With the fall of the last Illyrian King, Genthius, the name gradually extended to embrace most of the Balkans. According to the historian Appian (2nd century AD), the only classical historian to devote a pamphlet to Illyrian history, Illyricum even meant—as well as the Balkans—vast regions extending from present-day southern Germany to Bulgaria.[25] The story of Cassius Longinus, however, is most interesting for the history of the Celtic transalpine kingdoms, the Balkans, and their contacts with the Romans, since it illuminates the strategic and geo-political significance of the regions along the ancient Balkan trade route. Cassius Longinus evidently departed from Aquileia, which he left unprotected, and took 30-day-worth of provisions for his legions. He ordered that guides who knew the roads to Macedonia should be solicited from among the native Carni, Histri, and Iapodes. The Senate was informed of his departure by envoys from Aquileia, who diplomatically explained that their colony had remained insufficiently protected against possible attacks by the hostile Histrian and Illyrian peoples; they dared not accuse the consul directly. The senators referred them to Longinus and were incredulous to hear that he had left his province. Three senatorial envoys were dispatched that very day to pursue him and prevent him engaging in a war against any nation without the Senate's decision. Measures to protect Aquileia were postponed for fear of what might happen to the consul and the army.

The Senate's fears were more than justified, since Illyricum was then largely *terra incognita*. Not only was Longinus marching through rough and barely passable areas, but he had plunged himself and the army among unknown nations and tribes whose reactions could be at best unpredictable, at worst hostile. Further fears were no less justified: by his action, Longinus might disclose the way to Italy to peoples settled along his route. Some information about these regions was known thanks to trade routes which had operated for

[25] I.e. not only Dalmatia (coastal Croatia and its hinterland, and parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Pannonia (northern Croatia and Hungary with parts of Austria and Slovenia), and Moesia (Serbia), as in the age of Augustus, but also Noricum (Austria with parts of Slovenia) and Raetia (parts of Switzerland and southern Germany) during the Antonine emperors' period in the 2nd century AD. To illustrate calling this large area Illyricum, Appian cited Illyrian customs collected in all of these provinces (Illyr. 6): see Marjeta Šašel Kos, *Appian and Illyricum* (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 2005).

centuries across land and rivers, conveying goods and information to the eastern Alpine areas. Yet, as far as geography was concerned, the distance between the Balkans and Italy had not been correctly estimated.

The Macedonian King, Philip V (Perseus's father), sought allies among the barbarian nations settled along the Danube River, hoping to persuade them to invade Italy. Livy adds that it would only have been possible to lead an army to Italy across the region of the Scordisci, a Celtic tribe at the confluence of the Sava and Danube around Singidunum, present-day Belgrade.[26] But Philip's utterly mistaken conception of the size of Illyricum is indicated by a story in which he climbed to the top of Mt. Haemus (Mt. Balkan), in the region of the Thracian Maedi, to simultaneously see the Black Sea, the Adriatic, the Danube, and the Alps. That would help him greatly in planning the war against the Romans. Attacks across Illyricum were also planned by Hannibal and Antiochus of Syria towards the end of Hannibal's life, as well as by the King of Pontus, Mithridates the Great, in the 1st century BC.

The southeastern Alpine region was strategically very important to Italy, since the route across the Ocra pass to the Apennine Peninsula was not only easy but also unprotected. However, the Romans did not control it at that time.[27] This is confirmed by the fact that Cassius Longinus's army had to be led by foreign guides. How far the consul actually got is questionable, but it was probably not as far as the Pannonian regions beyond Segesta/Siscia (Sisak in Croatia). Upon his return he devastated various regions of the Iapodes, Histri, and Carni, as well as those of the Alpine peoples, and took large numbers of slaves—one of the main accusations made by Cincibilus's brother.

The Alpine peoples must probably be identified with various Tauriscan tribes, regardless of whether Cincibilus was a Norican or Tauriscan king. His brother could achieve no restitution of any kind for the damage done to his allies, and envoys of the other three nations with similar claims were unsuccessful too.

Cincibilus's kingdom was the only party to gain an advantage from the tragic affair. To silence them, the Senate dispatched two highly respected consular diplomats to Cincibilus and his brother. They bestowed rich, princely gifts upon them, including the right to export horses. Economic and political interests were shared at the highest level, and Rome wanted to maintain the best possible contacts with the kingdom across the Alps, since this mountain range was regarded as the most opportune frontier for protecting Italy. An agreement of mutual political hospitality (*hospitium publicum*), which is

[26] *Ab urbe condita*, 40. 57. 7.
[27] Šašel, *Opera selecta*, 630–633 and *passim*.

known to have existed between Rome and Noricum when the German Cimbri invaded in 113 BC, may well have dated from the reign of Cincibilus.[28]

There may have been several other small kingdoms, but of lesser significance. One minor king was perhaps Balanus, who sent envoys to Rome in 169 BC to offer military aid for the Macedonian war against Perseus. The Senate did not accept his offer, but rewarded him with costly gifts. The short, one-year difference between Cincibilus and Balanus would indicate the coexistence of another small kingdom rather than suggest that Balanus succeeded Cincibilus.

THE CONQUEST OF THE EASTERN ALPINE REGIONS AND ILLYRICUM

It may have been a grave mistake to assume that the conquest of these regions was mainly the story of rapid romanization with little force: much more fighting must have been involved in conquering these lands than existing sources reflect. There are several indications that northern Italy, called Cisalpine Gaul after its inhabitants, who were mainly Celts on this side of the Alps, gradually extended across the Ocra Pass. The Karst hinterland of Tergeste came within its sphere of influence, as did the Postojna Gate and Nauportus with the Emona (Ljubljana) basin. Cisalpine Gaul was a province from about 89 to 42 BC, and then became part of Roman Empire. However, the evidence of its expansion is scattered and scarce.

The conquest of the southeastern Alpine and Balkan regions was eventually completed under Emperor Augustus, and the Slovenian territory was divided among four Roman administrative units. The northern Adriatic and its hinterland as far as Nauportus and Emona belonged to the Augustan Tenth Region (later called Histria and Venetia) in the province of Italy. Celeia (Celje) and its territory belonged to the province of Noricum, while Poetovio (Ptuj) and Neviodunum (Drnovo near Krško) were part of the province of Pannonia, which was still called Illyricum early in the 1st century AD. A small part of Inner Carniola and the region along the Colapis (Kolpa) River, with no significant settlements, belonged to the province of Dalmatia (Fig. 10).

The conquest of these regions during the late Republican period (i.e., before Augustus's reign) involves a mysterious Cornelius, who is briefly mentioned by Appian alone. The former would have at some unknown time unsuccessfully fought against the Pannonians.[29] His utter defeat spread such fear

[28] Šašel Kos, "The End of the Norican Kingdom."
[29] *Illyriké*, 14. 41.

Figure 10 *The division of modern-day Slovenia under the Roman Empire. Courtesy Institute of Archaeology ZRC SAZU, computer graphics: Mateja Belak.*

of the Pannonians among Italians that in the future no consul dared start a campaign in Pannonia. Cornelius may have been either the consul of 159 BC, Gnaeus Cornelius Dolabella, or the consul of 156 BC, Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Lupus. They are the only two Cornelii who could have possibly fought in Pannonia before 119 BC, when Lucius Metellus (an unidentified member of the famous Roman Caecilii Metelli family) and Lucius Aurelius Cotta waged a campaign against the Segestani, again mentioned only by Appian. However, there is no mention in their careers of any such action.

Nonetheless, 156 BC is usually noted as the first Roman encounter with the Pannonians. It supposedly occurred during the Roman war against the Celtic Scordisci, but, like many others, this is merely an ill-founded hypothesis.

The 119 BC campaign, of which no details are known, therefore remains the first certain event in the history of the conquest of Pannonia, although Appian reports that the Romans had fought the Segestani twice before Octavian (the future Emperor Augustus). Aquileia, whose inhabitants must have been very intent on gaining influence and stability in their hinterland, was the starting point of any military action in the direction of Segesta/Siscia.

Ten years before Metellus's and Aurelius Cotta's military expedition against the Segestani, a campaign under Gaius Sempronius Tuditanus had been

launched against the Taurisci, Carni, Histri, and Iapodes (the latter settled in modern Lika, Croatia). When Sempronius Tuditanus was consul in 129 BC, the Senate transferred to him the judicial powers of the agrarian commission established by Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus which concerned the new division of land. However, realizing the difficulties of this work, he decided to leave Rome and "march against the Illyrians." Appian mentions that Sempronius Tuditanus and Tiberius Pandusa successfully fought against the Iapodes in the Alps.[30] Pandusa may have been governor of Cisalpine Gaul or Tuditanus's legate. In fact, Livy states that Tuditanus had first suffered defeat against the Iapodes; they were only conquered by Decimus Iunius Brutus Callaicus, a famous Roman general who had successfully fought in Iberia against the Lusitani and Callaeci.[31] Pliny the Elder, who wrote a major natural encyclopedia under the Flavian emperors, also mentions Tuditanus's war against the Histri and the fact that he reached the Titius River (now the Krka in Dalmatia) in the region of the Liburni.[32] His triumphal inscription, of which two fragments were found in Aquileia, also mentions the Taurisci as a conquered people.[33] Obviously Tuditanus, with the help of other generals, conquered several peoples during his campaign.

Aemilius Scaurus is known to have fought against the Carni in 115 BC. During the century before the rise of Caesar, the economic development of the Norican regions and the strategic role of the Norici as protectors of Roman interests in the Alpine and transalpine regions were only briefly affected by the invasion of the Cimbri in 113 BC. However, the Cimbri left instantly when they heard that the Norici had a special agreement with the Romans. In a battle near Noreia (not located), the Romans were defeated due to the treachery of the Roman consul, Gnaeus Papirius Carbo, who wanted to fight the Norici even though they had agreed to leave the country. The Norican kingdom's general prosperity and its economic importance for the Romans are best reflected in the growth of the Roman emporium at Magdalensberg (old Virunum?). It became a significant trading post in the 1st century BC, compared to—*mutatis mutandis*—the settlement of Italian merchants on Delos.

Parts of the region between Aquileia and Emona must already have been controlled, or even conquered, during the 2nd century BC, like the important indigenous settlement at Grad near Šmihel below Mt. Nanos (Šmihel pod Nanosom) in the hinterland of the Amber Route and in the broad region of the

[30] *Illyriké*, 10. 30.
[31] *Periocha*, 59.
[32] *Naturalis historia*, 3. 129.
[33] Šašel Kos, "Appian and Illyricum," 321 ff.

Ocra Pass. It had probably been subdued in the early 2nd century BC, as indicated by a hoard of weapons, which must have been used in battles between the Roman army and the indigenous population. Early Romanization of this area is also indicated by the finds of victoriatii (Roman Republican silver coins) from the early 2nd century BC. The coins were discovered at several sites in the maritime and Karst regions, as well as in Inner Carniola, where tribes under the Carni rule must have settled. Republican victoriatii were also found around the Tauriscan settlements of Emona and Celeia.

The gradual expansion of Cisalpine Gaul to the northeast is archaeologically well documented. The earliest finds of 2nd-century BC Greco-Roman amphorae are located at Sermin, a significant settlement in northern Istria not far from Tergeste.[34] Italic black glazed pottery and amphorae of the Lamboglia 2 type (the turn of the 2nd and 1st centuries BC) were also found in the Razdrto area near the Ocra Pass.

CAESAR AND THE PERIOD OF THE TRIUMVIRS

When Caesar was made proconsul in Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, as well as Illyricum, in 59 BC, some strongholds had already been conquered in Cisalpine Gaul before he arrived. However, he had little time to dedicate to Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum, since he was mostly absorbed in the Gallic War. Undoubtedly he also occupied certain strategic sites, because he planned a campaign against the Dacian state, ruled by Burebistas. The Geto-Dacian king had succeeded in extending his authority as far as Pannonia; by crushing the coalition between the Celtic Boii (who had settled in parts of Hungary, northern Austria around Vienna, and southern Slovakia) and the Taurisci, he threatened both the Norican kingdom and the Roman state. Nauportus, a settlement of the Taurisci, was a large Roman *vicus* by Caesar's time, and was governed by two freedmen, *magistri vici*. Two pairs are known by name; their masters probably belonged to enterprising trading families in Aquileia (the Annaei, Fabii, Petronii, and Fulginates).

A boundary stone between Aquileia and Emona from the early 1st century AD, recently discovered in the Ljubljanica River near Bevke (12 km southwest of Ljubljana), indicates that Nauportus belonged to the territory of Aquileia.[35]

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[34] Jana Horvat, *Sermin. Prazgodovinska in zgodnjerimska naselbina v severozahodni Istri/A Prehistoric and Early Roman Settlement in Northwestern Istria* (Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU, Inštitut za arheologijo, 1997).

[35] Šašel Kos, "Appian and Illyricum," 481–482.

Other significant late Republican and Augustan finds have been located in the Ljubljanica, including Republican and Celtic coins. Italic pottery typical of the mid-1st century BC was discovered together with native Tauriscan La Tène pottery at Nauportus and Emona. Italian settlers are also documented in Emona, perhaps as early as the period after Caesar's death (the *Caesernii*). The extent of these regions' dependence on the Norican kingdom remains unclear, although, at some points at least, its influence may have reached that far. In fact much of Norican and Tauriscan history remains obscure, yet it seems clear that the Norican policy towards the Roman state was friendly, while that of the Taurisci was hostile.

Unlike Cisalpine Gaul, Illyricum at that time had not yet been organized territorially as a province, but was a *provincia* in the sense of a sphere of (military) action. It even seems that large parts of the territory between Illyricum and Cisalpine Gaul were not yet subject to Roman authority. Most of the Delmatae, Iapodes, and various Pannonian peoples and tribes, including the Segestani, had not yet been subdued by the Romans at the time of Caesar. Part of these regions first came under Roman influence during Octavian's Illyrian Wars in 35–33 BC. After Caesar's death and several years of struggle for supremacy, the Triumvirate was established, but Lepidus soon lost power. With the pact of Brundisium in 40 BC, Mark Antony and Octavian divided the Roman Empire along a line at Scodra (present-day Shkodër in Albania) in southern Illyricum.

Octavian's military campaigns in Illyricum in 35–33 BC may be considered the next, and perhaps the decisive, phase in the conquest of Illyricum, i.e., the future provinces of Pannonia and Dalmatia. It was decisive not so much because it involved conquering extensive new territories like the central Balkans (the regions of the Daesitiates, Maezaei, Ditiones, Breuci, and others), but rather because it continued Caesar's border policy in Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum, strengthened the protection of northern Italy, and represented a systematic conquest of Illyricum. It was of immediate importance to Octavian to win glory as a successful general and exploit his military successes against Antony. In his Illyrian Wars he conquered many peoples and tribes of greater and lesser significance. Among them were the Carni and Taurisci, and, in an important campaign, the Iapodes and Segestani. Two memorable events were the fall of Metulum and Segesta/Siscia, and in 34–33 BC he subdued the Delmatae and neighboring tribes.[36]

[36] Ibid., 393–471.

THE FINAL CONQUEST UNDER AUGUSTUS AND THE FOUNDING OF THE PROVINCES OF NORICUM AND PANNONIA

Cassius Dio, a Greek historian who wrote a major history of Rome at the turn of the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, reports that just prior to the Pannonian War, in 16 BC, "the Pannonians together with the Norici invaded Histria and were subdued by Silius and his legates."[37] It is generally accepted that Publius Silius Nerva had been proconsul of Illyricum in 17 and 16 BC—or, if his province was the northern Italian Transpadana, it would have included Histria and Liburnia (northern Dalmatia). In the Liburnian city of Aenona he was honored as proconsul and patron. As a result of the invasion, the Norici became dependent on the Roman state, like the Pannonians who had been subdued "earlier" (under Octavian). Dio must be referring here to the Segestani and a few neighboring peoples, whose insurrection was probably why the Norican kingdom was annexed. The invading Norici must have been a people settled in close proximity to Histria. These may have been the Ambisontes, if their location along the Aesontius could be accepted, or the Norican Taurisci, mentioned by Strabo. Independent minting of Norican tetradrachmas ended in about 16–15 BC. At the same time certain northern and western Pannonian regions may also have been annexed. The latter had been previously more or less dependent on the Norican kingdom, and included the territory of Savaria (Szombathely) and Scarbantia (Sopron) in Hungary as far as Lake Pelso (Balaton), which were all Celtic regions.

The kingdom's dependence on the Roman state is additionally confirmed by Augustus's grant of immunity and Roman citizenship to one Gaius Iulius Vepo from Celeia, probably for special merits during the Augustan conquest of the southeastern Alpine area. These privileges would have been meaningless in an independent Norican kingdom. Vepo, who belonged to a well-to-do indigenous community in Celeia, had his tombstone erected during his lifetime in an entirely Romanized manner. It presupposes that a stone-carving workshop must have existed and that Latin was well enough known. As early as the Augustan period, benefits resulting from acculturation and cooperation with the Romans were respected in Celeia, which meant that at least some members of the upper class in this Norican town had already been Romanized.[38]

The annexation of the kingdom is also proven by a small vexillation of the Pannonian legion, VIII Augusta, stationed at old Virunum (Magdalensberg) during the Augustan period. Together with a detachment of the *cohors*

[37] Dio, 54. 20. 2.

[38] Šašel, *Opera selecta*, 31–43.

Montanorum prima, they constituted a small but sufficient garrison in the country, and the presence of Roman soldiers is also confirmed elsewhere in Noricum. Further evidence are two marble moulds for producing gold bars, weighing 5.6 and 14.5 kg (17 and 44 librae) respectively, which were recently discovered at Magdalensberg and manufactured in the name of Emperor Gaius Caesar (Caligula, AD 37–41).

Noricum became a province under Claudius (AD 41–54) at the very latest, when the presence of its first governor, the procurator, C. Baebius Atticus, is confirmed. However, this could also have happened under Tiberius (AD 14–37), as one could infer from the Roman historian, Velleius Paterculus, who wrote in Tiberius's time. Although he noted that the emperor added four new provinces to the empire (Raetia and Pannonia, the Norici and the Scordisci), this passage is variously interpreted.

Illyricum came more firmly under Roman authority during the Pannonian War, which had begun in 14 BC after uprisings by the Pannonians. A year later command was given to the best Roman general, Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa. Tiberius continued it after Agrippa's death in 12 BC, and it lasted until 9 BC, when most of the territories of the future provinces of Pannonia and Dalmatia came under Roman authority. Illyricum, then the name of the undivided province, extended as far as the Danube. This was proudly proclaimed by Augustus in a long inscription in the sanctuary of the goddess Roma at Ancyra, in the province of Galatia (Turkey). The inscription lists the emperor's most significant achievements (*res gestae*), in the first person and from his point of view. Tiberius subdued the Pannonian Breuci and Amantini with the help of the Celtic Scordisci. In 11 BC, he subdued the rebellious Delmatae, but not many details of this war are known.

The great Pannonian-Dalmatian rebellion in the years AD 6–9 once again completely shattered Roman authority in Illyricum. This most serious insurrection was also put down by Tiberius. Noricum does not seem to have been affected, apart perhaps for some parts later attached to Pannonia. The uprising, led by Bato, started among the Pannonian Daesitiates, who had settled in central Bosnia near present-day Sarajevo. They were joined by the Breuci under Pinnes and another Bato, and a number of other tribes. According to Velleius, their collective strength consisted of 200,000 infantrymen and 9,000 cavalry; moreover, some tribal leaders had served in the Roman army and were acquainted with Roman strategy and warfare. One of the main reasons for the uprising, according to Cassius Dio, was the ruthless exacting of tributes.[39] The rebels failed to capture Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia)

[39] Marjeta Šašel Kos, *A Historical Outline of the Region between Aquileia, the Adriatic, and*

after massacring Roman citizens. Their original plan was a triple offensive: detachments of their army would simultaneously invade Italy and Macedonia, while a third of their strength would remain in the center of the rebellious area. Daesitiatic Bato invaded Dalmatia instead and undermined their strategy. They should have captured Siscia before Tiberius arrived in time to rescue it. Augustus moved to Ariminum (Rimini) to be closer to the war zone should his advice be needed. The war itself was a most complicated affair, involving Roman armies from the East and from Germany, as well as detachments from Italy which were delivered to Tiberius by the historian Velleius Paterculus. Tiberius's nephew, Germanicus, was a subordinate commander in Dalmatia. The war ended after four years, and Suetonius called it "the most serious of all wars after the Punic."[40]

While life in Noricum developed in tranquility, Illyricum was devastated and had to recover under massive military supervision. However, both Noricum and the Pannonian part of Illyricum had been more or less densely settled before the Romans arrived. The age and importance of the existing settlements, and which ones deserved to be designated as towns, cannot be established with certainty, since many factors played a role in settlement and colonization. Economics played a major role in deciding where to build a village or town, but settlement patterns were also affected by other, unknown, factors. Some, such as natural catastrophes and epidemics, are only rarely taken into account. Epidemics may have affected life enormously in a given area, causing major depopulations, not unlike devastation due to pestilence in the Middle Ages. The "desolate kingdoms of shepherds" (*deserta regna pastorum*) mentioned by Virgil may be interpreted as large, deserted areas within some of the Norican eastern Alpine regions, in the hinterland of the Timavus, caused by an (animal) plague at the end of the 5th or in the 4th century BC.[41] This is further confirmed by a complete lack of pre-Celtic names in certain areas, such as Upper Carniola, several areas in the region of the Norici and the neighboring Taurisci (Poetovio), in the region of Savaria, the Latobici, Colapiani, and others.[42]

Sirmium in Cassius Dio and Herodian (Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija zananosti in umetnosti, 1986), 152–191.

[40] *Tib.* 16.

[41] *Georgica*, 3. 470–481.

[42] Šašel, *Opera selecta*, 514–521.

TOWNS AND SETTLEMENTS

Economic factors to do with natural resources and trade were undoubtedly most important to the development of settlements, but so was the geo-political nature of locations, such as settlements at important crossroads, confluences of rivers, or along an ancient trade route or navigable river. Roads and caravan tracks that had been important during an earlier period might have lost their significance as political situations changed, but certain vital lines of communication remained important throughout antiquity. One was the route across Illyricum (i.e., the Balkans), which connected the Black Sea regions with Italy. It was largely a riparian route along the Danube, Sava, and Ljubljanica, and thence by land to Istria and Italy, which is mentioned by Strabo[43] and reflected in the legend of the Argonauts. Prehistoric trade of limited extent along these rivers, and poor geographical knowledge of these areas, may be regarded as the historical kernel of the legend. Settlements along these rivers, like Sirmium, Siscia, Andautonia (Šćitarjevo south of Zagreb), Emona, and Nauportus, had been ancient prehistoric settlements, as their names indicate, even if archaeological finds do not always directly confirm their importance in prehistory.

There were four Roman autonomous towns in what is now Slovenia: Emona, Celeia, Neviodunum, and Poetovio. Emona had been a significant settlement since the late Bronze Age (Urnfield culture), as indicated by a large cemetery in the courtyard of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The corresponding settlement was discovered some years ago on Grajski hrib (Castle Hill), and traces of the subsequent one have recently been excavated in the area of Gornji trg on the right bank of the Ljubljanica (the river's ancient name was Nauportus), opposite the site of the later Roman city. Its late Iron Age settlers must have been the Taurisci, who are known to have inhabited nearby Nauportus, which (before Augustus) was a more important settlement in the region than Emona. Its name is preserved in the accusative, *Pamporton* and *Nauponton*, in different manuscripts by Strabo, suggesting that the Romans had not accurately used the name "Nauportus" but adapted it to their linguistic sensibilities, which suggested "carrier of the ship." This led them to connect it with the story of the Argonauts, as reported by Pliny the Elder, who drew on ancient sources.[44] The ship Argo traveled down the Danube, Sava, and Ljubljanica as far as Nauportus, where it was transported to the Adriatic across the Alps. The settlement gained fame as a reloading station, where, according to Strabo, goods from Aquileia arriving by wagon were reloaded onto boats

[43] Strabo, 4. 6. 10 C 207.
[44] *Naturalis historia*, 3. 128.

Figure 11 *The tombstone of Plaetor and Moiota, carved into natural rock at Staje near Ig. Zakladi tisočletij, 1999.*

to be transported to the Danubian regions.[45] Nauportus may have also been a Tauriscan customs outpost. The 1st-century AD Roman historian Tacitus called it "almost a small town."[46]

Near the end of the 1st century AD, and with the decline of Nauportus, some late Roman writers declared Emona to have been founded by Jason. Emona became a Roman *colonia*, at the earliest some years after Octavian's Illyrian Wars, or at the latest any time under Augustus (27 BC–AD 14); it was named Iulia in his honor. Some veterans of the XVth and VIIIth legions settled there, along with many Roman traders and artisans from northern Italy, mainly from Aquileia. The presence of an indigenous population is poorly recorded in Emona, but extremely well documented in the nearby village of Ig, where most men must have worked as stone-cutters in local quarries with high quality limestone (intended primarily for Emona); this would explain why so

[45] Strabo, 4. 6. 10 C 297.

[46] *Annales*, 1. 20. 1; Jana Horvat, *Nauportus (Vrhnika)* (Ljubljana: SAZU, 1990).

many family tombstones were erected at Ig. The names of the Ig inhabitants are northern Adriatic (like Laepius, Plaetor, or Voltupar), Celtic (like Adnamatus, Broccus, Manu, or Nammo), or typically local (including Moiota, Buctor, and Buquorsa) (Fig. 11).

Emona's ground plan is rectangular, and the southern city walls are still preserved. A regular network of roads divided the town into so-called *insulae*, small plots of land on which houses were built. Houses were usually mostly restricted to the ground floor or one storey, and were open to the inner court or atrium. Two dwellings have been excavated and are open to visitors in the southern part of the city.[47] The town's central area was occupied by the *forum*, the sanctuary and the main administrative building, the *basilica*. Various Roman and eastern gods had been worshipped in Emona; the most numerous dedications named Jupiter, while the most significant indigenous goddess was Aecorna. Aecorna's sanctuary is attested at Nauportus; she was also worshipped in Savaria (Szombathely), but by a community of Emonians. Aecorna must have been a polyvalent goddess, connected to the once extensive Ljubljana Marshes. Among the notable Emonian families were the Caesernii, probably active in metallurgy, the Barbii, who may have owned a building enterprise, and also the Cantii, a merchant family. Glass and pottery were also manufactured in Emona.

In the late Roman period, an early Christian community settled in Emona, as confirmed by an early Christian center developed in and near the former baths. Although the church has not yet been unearthed, its existence is inferred from its baptismal chapel, whose preserved mosaic floor (including inscriptions of its donors) was excavated and presented as a monument *sub divo* (*Fig. 12*). In St. Jerome's time Christians had been well established in Emona, and in AD 376 and 377 he corresponded with Emonian virgins and a monk, Antonius. In AD 381 Bishop Maximus from Emona is known to have taken part in an ecclesiastical council at Aquileia.

The town's administrative reach was large, and Upper Carniola probably belonged to it. Villagers in small rural settlements tilled the land, worked in the woods, and were breeders of cattle and small stock. Some places had ironworks. The main settlements were Nauportus, Ig, and Carnium (Kranj), which must have played some role as a military stronghold during the Augustan age. It was an important fortress in the late Roman period, and became more so during late antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Another internationally

[47] Boris Vičič, "Colonia Iulia Emona: 30 Jahre spätter," in: *The Autonomous Towns of Noricum and Pannonia. Pannonia I*, eds. Marjeta Šašel Kos, Peter Scherrer et al. (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 2003), 21–45.

Figure 12 *Partly preserved baptismal chapel at Emona. Archelaus and Honorata donated 1.8 m² of the mosaic floor. Zakladi tisočletij 1999.*

significant prehistoric communication line was the old Amber Route with Nauportus and Emona as important posts. It led through Celeia, Poetovio, Savaria, and Scarbantia to Carnuntum (Petronell-Bad Deutsch Altenburg, not far from Bratislava on the opposite bank of the Danube), and across the Danube to the north. These settlements must originally have belonged to the Norican kingdom. Celeia (almost certainly a pre-Celtic name, like Noreia, a major Norican settlement which has not yet been located) had been one of the centers of the Norican kingdom. It had probably been situated at Miklavški hrib, where traces of an Iron Age hillfort have been discovered, and a settlement developed at the site of modern Celje when the Celts arrived. It was ruled by rich princes with their own mint, who competed for supremacy with other important centers of the kingdom. Roman rule seemed to have been imposed in a friendly way.

The founding of towns and the creation of provinces went hand in hand. The former kingdom was probably organized as a province under Tiberius (AD 14–37), or at the latest under Claudius (AD 41–54), when five large Celtic

towns became Roman municipia,[48] i.e., Roman towns where the indigenous population predominated. These were Celeia, Virunum (Ger. Zollfeld), Teurnia (St. Peter im Holz), Aguntum (Dölsach near Lienz), and Iuvavum (Salzburg). They enrolled in the voting tribe Claudia. The native Claudii are attested even in the hitherto poorly Romanized areas, such as north of Zollfeld in the upper Mura Valley, and even north of the Alps. Solva (Wagna near Leibnitz) became a municipium under Vespasian (AD 69–79), founder of the Flavian dynasty, and was thus named *Flavia*, while Ovilavis (Wels) and Cetium (St. Pölten) became municipia under Hadrian (AD 117–138) and were named *Aelia* after the emperor's family name. Urbanization was concluded under Caracalla (AD 211–217), who elevated a civil settlement outside the legionary fortress of Lauriacum (Lorch near Enns) to the rank of a municipium, while Ovilavis became a Roman colony. Villages and their native inhabitants were organized according to Roman ways throughout urban territories. The Norican mines seemed to have been in imperial possession ever since Augustus.

Virunum was the provincial capital, but Celeia was undoubtedly the second most important town. At least at the very beginning of Roman rule, Celeia may have been the principal administrative center of the province,[49] and possibly the seat of the provincial governor, who was a procurator rather than a legate (of the army), since no legion was stationed in Noricum before the Marcomannic Wars.

Among the notable local families were the Vindonii, Varii, Bellicii, Spectacii, and Serandii. Some members of the municipal elite lived in a village at the site of present-day Šempeter in the Savinja Valley, where a cemetery with beautiful marble funerary monuments (some in the form of *aediculae*) has been discovered. Four of the monuments, with mythological reliefs (Europa, Ganymede, Iphigenia on Tauris) were reconstructed and are on display in the archaeological park. These tombs were preserved due to the catastrophic flooding of the Savinja River in the late 3rd century AD, when the late Roman Celeia was limited to the left bank of the Savinja's new course.

Water cults were, understandably, most important to Celeia's inhabitants. Adsalluta and Savus were worshipped in a nearby sanctuary at the hamlet of Sava, opposite Hrastnik, and so was Aquo, the divinity of the locally significant Voglajna River. Neptune, the supreme god of rivers and seas, was honored by all the town's inhabitants. Other gods who were worshipped included Jupiter

[48] Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 3. 146. See *The Autonomous Towns of Noricum and Pannonia. Noricum*, eds. Marjeta Šašel Kos, Peter Scherrer et al. (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 2002).

[49] Irena Lazar, "Celeia," in: *The Autonomous Towns of Noricum and Pannonia/Die autonomen Städte in Noricum und Pannonien – Noricum*, eds. Marjeta Šašel Kos & Peter Scherrer (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 2002), 71–101.

of the High Peaks, known as Culminalis and Uxellimus, Jupiter Depulsor, the averter of evil, and the Celtic goddess Epona, as well as Noreia and Celeia, personifications of the province and the town.[50] Forum and sanctuaries, built in a Celtic way, were recently discovered in the late 1990s and the first years of the new millennium; before that, the remains of beautiful marble buildings, frescoes, and mosaics were mainly found during rescue excavations, since most of Celeia lies underneath the modern town. Two baths and sections of richly paved roads were also discovered. A large sanctuary, perhaps dedicated to the imperial cult, has been partly preserved at Miklavški hrib.

Town walls with towers were probably built after the outbreak of the Marcomannic Wars in the late 2nd century AD. The city was an episcopal see in the late Roman period: an early Christian basilica was built, probably early in the 5th century, and a mosaic floor with inscriptions by donors and a baptismal chapel have been preserved. Ioannes, Bishop of Celeia, was among the signatories to the protocol of the church synod at Grado, between 572 and 577. This meeting occurred after the Lombards came to northern Italy. Life in Celeia must have ceased after the mid-5th century, however, as indicated by the lack of archaeological discoveries.

The most significant minor settlement around Celeia was Atrans (Trojane), a road and post station and an important pass (563 m) across the hills that divided the Emona and Celeia basins. It was located in the border area between Italy and the province of Noricum. Atrans was also an important customs post and a station of the *beneficiarii* (road and financial police). Its pre-Celtic name indicates that there must have been a prehistoric settlement nearby: Atrans itself was a Roman settlement, with no prehistoric finds. Many notable discoveries have emerged at Atrans, including fragments of one or two gilded statues of horses, which no doubt belonged to at least one equestrian statue of a Roman emperor. An important imperial building (a repaired *mansio*), documented on a fragmentary inscription, is dated to the reign of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus.

Urbanization in Pannonia began under Vespasian (AD 69–79) who founded the first municipia and colonies: Neviodunum, Andautonia, Siscia, Sirmium, and Scarbantia. They coincide, as expected, with settlements along two main communication lines, the old Amber Route and the river route across Illyricum which was connected with the legend of the Argonauts. Neviodunum (now Drnovo) is the only one of the four Roman towns in the Slovenian regions that lost its importance after the fall of the Roman Empire, and its role was

[50] Marjeta Šašel Kos, *Pre-Roman Divinities of the Eastern Alps and Adriatic* (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 1999).

taken over by Novo mesto in modern times. The province of Pannonia, based on civil self-government, was presumably not established before Vespasian. Until then Pannonia seems to have been a military district, known in official texts as Illyricum and placed under the command of a military legate. Three legions were stationed in Pannonia.

The territory of Neviodunum (meaning "the new town") was settled by the Latobici, probably one of the tribes formerly under Taurisci rule. After Octavian conquered the Taurisci during the Illyrian Wars (35–33 BC), the Latobici were probably organized as a *civitas* under the supervision of a Roman commander or a local tribal prince. In the early 1st century AD, two important settlements developed in the region: Neviodunum, and Praetorium Latobicorum (Trebnje), the principal station along the main road which led across Illyricum to the east. Both towns were seats of the *beneficiarii*, and Praetorium Latobicorum was strategically valuable for its location near the border between Italy and Pannonia. On the plain along the Sava River, Neviodunum developed into a significant port city with everything needed for its functions—in particular, large magazines. Remains of rich buildings and baths were discovered, but the town had no walls. Most of its population remained Celtic, and one of the notable local families were the Eppii. A member of this family was a distinguished Roman knight and one of the co-mayors of Neviodunum. A teacher was also confirmed to have lived in the town; he was either an elementary teacher or taught Greek.[51] Pottery workshops and brick kilns were discovered on the outskirts of the town. One of the tombs, unearthed in a nearby cemetery, contained beautiful frescoes, representing a ritual family meal after the burial of a deceased member. Life in the town ended in the first half of the 5th century.

The last Roman municipal foundation in present-day Slovenia was Poetovio, where a legionary fortress had been built on the right bank of the Drava River early in Augustus's reign. Legion VIII Augusta was stationed there until it was replaced in about AD 45 by XIII Gemina from upper Germany. That legion was transferred to Vindobona (Vienna) under Emperor Trajan (98–117), and Poetovio became a Roman *colonia* called *Ulpia Traiana*. A Pannonian navy detachment was stationed there, and the town became one of the province's administrative centers.

Poetovio, too, bears a pre-Celtic name. In the late Iron Age it must have been a Tauriscan settlement (perhaps that of the Serretes and Serapilli, who had settled along the Drava), and was probably situated at Panorama and Grajski grič, along the Amber Route, at the Drava's crossing on its left bank. Indeed,

[51] Milan Lovenjak, *Inscriptiones Latinae Sloveniae 1. Neviodunum* (Ljubljana: Narodni muzej Slovenije, 1998).