

IMPERIAL INSCRIPTIONS OF THE CONSTANTINIAN DYNASTY IN CELEIA

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Keywords: *imperial inscriptions, emperors of the Constantinian dynasty, Celeia, East Alpine territory, 4th century.*

Abstract: *Numerous arguments speak in favour of the fact that when the Roman province of Noricum was established, Celeia was one of the most important Norican towns, which was most certainly contributed to by its strategically favourable location not far from the border with Italy. As such, it was a desired destination of Italic colonists, while we must not forget the settlement of autochthonous population (Keleia), which was a solid framework for the development of an important Roman town. Local personages definitely contributed to that; this was the elite that collaborated with the “invaders” and in this way actively contributed to the swifter advancement of Romanisation (an example is Caius Iulius Vepo – CIL III 5232 = RICE 105). From the second half of the 3rd century onwards, the situation in the Roman Empire changed drastically in many fields of life. Crisis struck many places. The East Alpine territory was especially exposed to the events in the time of emperors of the Constantinian dynasty. However, it appears that Celeia maintained its prominent role in this period, since it is the only town in this part of the empire where imperial inscriptions of the mentioned emperors have been preserved.*

Cuvinte-cheie: *inscripții imperiale, împărați din dinastia constantiniană, teritoriul est-alpin, secolul al IV-lea.*

Rezumat: *Inscripții imperiale ale dinastiei constantiniene la Celeia.* Numeroase argumente vorbesc în favoarea faptului că, atunci când a fost înființată provincia romană Noricum, Celeia a fost unul dintre cele mai importante orașe noricane, la care a contribuit cu siguranță locația sa strategică favorabilă, nu departe de granița cu Italia. Ca atare, a fost o destinație dorită de coloniști italici, în timp ce nu trebuie să uităm așezarea populației autohtone (Keleia), care a reprezentat un cadru solid pentru dezvoltarea unui important oraș roman. La aceasta au contribuit și personalități locale; este vorba despre elita care a colaborat cu „invadatorii” și în acest fel a contribuit activ la avansarea mai rapidă a

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romanizării (un exemplu este Caius Iulius Vepo – CIL III 5232 = RICe 105). Din a doua jumătate a secolului al III-lea, situația din Imperiul Roman s-a schimbat drastic în multe domenii ale vieții. Criza a lovit multe locuri. Teritoriul est-alpin a fost expus în special evenimentelor din vremea împăraților dinastiei constantiniene. Cu toate acestea, se pare că Celeia și-a menținut rolul proeminent în această perioadă, întrucât este singurul oraș din această parte a imperiului în care s-au păstrat inscripții ale constantinizilor.

I. Introduction

In 2017, a *corpus* of the inscriptions of *Celeia*¹ was published which includes almost all until today known inscriptions of this southernmost Norican municipium, which was established in the time of Emperor Claudius and ever since the beginning of its existence has been considered one of the more important Roman autonomous towns in Noricum.² Despite the fact that the town of *Virunum* was considered the capital of the province, it seems that in certain periods of history *Celeia* is just as important, if not even more important a town.³ The sole number of preserved inscriptions from *Celeia* and its ager speaks in favour of this fact. Namely, the mentioned corpus publishes 466 inscriptions, to which milestones not included in the corpus (since these milestones have been recently published in the new edition of *CIL* XVII, 4, 1) and a significant number of fragments, which were found during reconstruction works after 2001, should be added. Hence, we are dealing with more than 500 inscriptions. Here, we should point out 30 inscriptions of *beneficiarii*, who operated in *Celeia* in two periods of the *statio* there, as *beneficiarii procuratoris* until the Marcomannic Wars and as *beneficiarii consulares* after these wars until approximately 220 (the last one is attested in 217 and is precisely dated: *CBI* 230 = *CIL* III 5189 = *RICe* 44), who only elevate the town's significance. It needs to be determined that among all the preserved inscriptions the share of the so-called imperial (construction and other) inscriptions is relatively high, especially in comparison with the neighbouring towns (13 imperial inscriptions to which a few of those that only mention an emperor but are not imperial in content can be added). Monuments

¹ Višočník 2017.

² For *Celeia* see: Šašel 1970, 139-148; Lazar 2001; Lazar, 2002, 71-101; Višočník 2007; Bausovac, Krajšek, 2020 and sources cited there.

³ Scherrer 2002, *passim*; Višočník 2008, 336.

mentioning emperors: from the first one (Emperor *Augustus*) to Emperor *Carus* (*Imperator Caesar Marcus Carus Pius Felix...*), the inscription of whom from *Celeia* can be dated to 282, were collected and commented on by M. Šašel Kos.⁴ Since her discussion of imperial inscriptions ended at this point, a reader might assume that she collected and presented all imperial inscriptions of *Celeia*; however, that is not the case. To these inscriptions must be added imperial inscriptions of the Constantinian dynasty from the first half of the 4th century, which indeed do have different rules but nevertheless contain mentions of emperors. Considering administrative reforms and other changes in the perception of rulers from the end of the 3rd century, new rules in the form of new, different formulas reflect also on imperial inscriptions. Frequently, construction inscriptions are used as a synonym for imperial inscriptions; yet it seems that in the 4th century this is not completely accurate for this type of inscriptions (**Fig. 1**).

In the 4th century, the share of inscribed monuments in *Celeia* decreases significantly; the majority of inscriptions in *Celeia* are dated to the period from the end of the 1st century to the mid-3rd century. Only a few can be ascribed to the first century, similar goes for the end of the 3rd and the 4th century. It is hence in accordance with the expectations that imperial inscriptions from the latter period are also not many, but are rather an exception. The imperial inscriptions from *Celeia*, which mention emperors of the Constantinian dynasty, have been published in corpora, but have never before been addressed in detail. This article strives to bridge that gap. In *Celeia*, four imperial inscriptions containing a mention of the Constantinian dynasty have been preserved.⁵ Unfortunately, it is not possible to date them precisely and thus connect them with actual events in the town. Nevertheless, certain connections between the happening in the town and their erection can definitely be made.

⁴ Šašel Kos 2001, 383-402; in 2003, M. Lovenjak published another inedited fragment of an imperial inscription which can also be dated to 282/283 (Lovenjak 2003, 336).

⁵ Here three more milestones from the Celeian ager should be mentioned that can be ascribed to the mentioned emperors: *Constantius* II is mentioned on two: *CIL* XVII 4, 118 and *CIL* XVII 4, 119 C – both are dated to the mid-4th century; *Constantinus* II is found on *CIL* XVII 4, 131 and set into the period between 337 and 340.

Administrative reforms from the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century also brought many changes to the East Alpine territory; the province of *Noricum* was divided into the northern “along the river” (*Noricum ripense*) and southern Mediterranean parts (*Noricum Mediterraneum*). *Noricum ripense* included the Danube river basin south of the river’s course, while *Noricum Mediterraneum* encompassed the upper river basins of the Drava and the Mura and of the Savinja and the Sotla in its south-eastern part. When *Noricum* was divided, changes occurred also at its border with *Pannonia*: *Poetovio* with its western and central parts of the ager returned under the wing of *Noricum (Mediterraneum)*, from where it was excluded and annexed to *Pannonia* upon the establishment of the province of *Noricum* in the 1st century. Two towns in the Slovenian territory thus became component parts of *Noricum Mediterraneum*, in addition to *Poetovio* also *Celeia*. Each of the newly established provinces got an administrator called *praeses*, who was of equestrian rank (*vir perfectissimus*). *Noricum Mediterraneum* was therefore formed in the period between 297/298 and 304.⁶ In the administrative respect, in this time the Slovenian territory was also under other newly established units: *Venetia et Histria* (from *regio X.*), *Pannonia Prima*, *Savia*, and *Dalmatia*.⁷ In the time of the Constantinian dynasty, as well as throughout the 4th century, the East Alpine territory was part of turbulent political and military action (**Fig. 2**).

Constantine the Great (*C. Flavius Valerius Constantinus*) started ruling the western part of the Slovenian territory in 312 (western and central Slovenia). When he defeated *Licinius* in 316, he conquered the rest of Slovenia. The cause for one of the civil wars was the demolition of Constantin’s statues in *Emona*. Antique sources report that Emperor Constantin himself also crossed the Slovenian territory several times. In 326, he dwelt in the immediate vicinity of our area for the last time, i.e. in *Aquileia*.⁸

The dynasty was continued by his sons Constantin II (*Flavius Claudius Constantinus*), Constantius II (*Flavius Iulius Constantius*), Constans I (*Flavius Iulius Constans*), and his nephew Julian the Apostate.

⁶ Bratož 2014, 62-65.

⁷ Bratož 2014, 60-63.

⁸ Bratož 1999, 294-296; this turbulent period is presented in detail by Bratož 2014, 76-126.

Soon after 268, *Celeia* experienced a natural disaster; a catastrophic flood of the River Savinja moved its bed towards the south and destroyed that part of town, which also reduced the size of the town by approximately one third, which could have been accompanied by an earthquake. At approximately the same time, when the town saw numerous changes in its urbanism, the town was surrounded by a wall.⁹ It appears that in the period of the military emperors the towns of *Celeia* and *Emona* were in an economic and demographic recession. On the other hand, *Neviodunum* experienced another period of ascent in the late part of the period of the military emperors (260-280). The situation most probably remained beneficial in *Poetovio* too, which was in the economic respect the most important town, a centre of customs administration, and an important military town the significance of which was reflected also in the religious and cultural fields.¹⁰ Therefore, Roman autonomous towns entered the 4th century in very different circumstances.

II. Catalogue of inscriptions

1. Imperial inscription for Emperors of Constantinian dynasty

Location: Celje. It was found in the 18th century. (*Celeiae CIL*). Today it is lost.

Material: Probably marble.

Dimensions: Unknown.

Description: A *titulus* probably made of marble.

CIL III 5206 – *ILLPRON* 1668 – *RICe* 208; *HD*067236 – *EDCS*-14500518.¹¹

*Dd(ominis) n[n(ostris) Fl(avio)] Iul(io)
Crispo et Lic(iniano) Licinio
[I]u[n]io[r]i et
F[l]a(vio) [Cla]u(dio) Co[n]sta[n]-*

⁹ Bratož 2014, 40.

¹⁰ Bratož 2014, 41–42.

¹¹ References will include only publications in corpora and epigraphic databases, as an exception also the first publication or some other significant publication. All publications need to be checked in *CIL* and *RICe*.

5 [t]ino Iuniori [---]

Translation: To our lords *Flavius Iulius Crispus* and *Licinius Licinius Iunior* and *Flavius Claudius Constantinus Iunior*...

Commentary: *Flavius Iulius Crispus* was born around 300, to Constantine I and *Minervina*. On March 1st 317, he was named *Caesar* in *Serdica* and thus got the name *C. FLAVIUS IULIUS (VALERIUS) CRISPUS NOB. CAES.* and the title *PRINCEPS IUVENTUTIS*. In 321, he married Helena and in 325 celebrated *decennalia* only in the west. In 326, he was murdered in *Pola* (the reason for his execution was supposedly incest), soon after he suffered *damnatio memoriae*.¹² *Licinius Licinius Iunior* was the son of *Licinius* (308-324) and *Constantia*. He was born in July or August 315 and was named *Caesar* on March 1st 317 in na ta način pridobil ime: *D. N. VALERIUS LICINIANUS LICINIUS IUNIOR NOB. CAES.* On March 1st 321, he celebrated *quinquennalia*, but only in the east. On September 19th 324, he was deposed by Constantine, a year later he was murdered and suffered *damnatio memoriae*.¹³ *Flavius Claudius Constantinus Iunior* or *Constantinus II*, who was most probably born on August 7th 316 to *Constantinus I* and *Fausta*, was also named *Caesar* on March 1st 317 in *Serdica*, when he got the name *FLAVIUS CLAUDIUS CONSTANTINUS IUNIIOR NOB. CAES., PRINCEPS IUVENTUTIS*. On 1 March 321 he celebrated *quinquennalia* in Rome, on 1 March 325 *decennalia*, and on 1 March 336 *vicennalia*. In 328, he participated in the war with the Alemanni and defeated the Goths on 20 April 20 332. In 335, he took over the Gallic prefecture (Gallia, Britannia, and Hispania). On 9 September, he was named *Augustus* in the west and thus supplemented his name and titulature to *FLAVIUS CLAUDIUS CONSTANTINUS P. F., AUG. MAXIMUS TRIUMPHATOR AUG.* In 338, he probably participated in the military campaign against the Germans and in the spring of 340 marched into Italy. He was killed in battle against Constans' guards near *Aquileia* in 340.¹⁴

In *Serdica* on the same day (1 March 317), all three members of the imperial family mentioned in the inscription were named *Caesares*. The first two lost their lives in less than ten years, which certainly

¹² Kienast 1996, 305-306.

¹³ Kienast 1996, 294-296.

¹⁴ Kienast 1996, 310.

limits the dating of this monument. It can most probably be limited with 324, when Constantin removed *Licinianus Licinius Iunior*.

Since this inscription is known only by its transcript in *CIL* and since it was not completely preserved, we do not know what followed the stated names. The name of the erector (the town of *Celeia*?) would certainly be expected and possibly also the reason or the occasion for which the inscription was made. It does not seem impossible that the inscription was intended to commemorate the solemn moment in 317, when all three were named *Caesares*.

Date: Between 317 and 324.

2. Imperial inscription for Emperor Constantinus II

Location: Mariborska cesta. It was found in 1829, at the Majdič's mill; Muchar reported that it was immured in the eastern side of a residential building of the so-called Kroaten Mühle (Majdičev mlin), half an hour from the centre of Celje; Knabl added the year it was found (*Innotuit lapis anno 1829 per Hartni dum Dorfmann praefectum gymnasii Celeiani, qui cum in latere orientali molae vulgo »Croatica«*). Today it is kept in the Regional Museum Celje, inv. no. L 11.

Material: Reddish marble.

Dimensions: 87 x 75 x 11cm, inscription field: 65 x 60.5cm, letter h.: 3-3.5cm.

Photo: Ortolf Harl (*LUPA*).

Description: The *tabula* is almost completely preserved. The inscription field has a double profilation. The frame is cut off on its upper corners and on its right lower edge. Lines 2 and 3 are cut off due to *damnatio memoriae*. Letters are regular, triangular punctuation marks were used in lines 1, 4, 6-8, and 12.

CIL III 5207 – *ILS* 723 – *ILLPRON* 1669 – *RICe* 209; *HD*067237 – *LUPA* 5274 – *EDCS*-14500519.

Muchar 1844, 364; Orožen 1854, 302 no. 46; Knabl 1862, 241.

D(omino) n(ostro) Fl(avio) Cl(audio)

[[Constantino

nobilissimo Caes(ari)]]

filio d(omini) n(ostrì) Constan-

5 *tini Maximi victoriosissimi*

semper Au<g>(usti)
nepoti M(arci) Aureli(i) Maximiani
et Fl(avii)
Constanti divorum
 10 *et divi Claudi abnepoti*
Norici Mediter(ranei).
Devoti numini
maiestatique
eorum.

Fig. 3.

Translation: To our lord *Flavius Claudius Constantinus*, the most noble *Caesar*, son of our lord the most victorious, *Constantinus Maximus*, always *Augustus*, grandson of deified *Marcus Aurelius Maximianus* and *Flavius Constans* and to grand grandson of deified *Claudius* people of *Noricum Mediterraneum*. Devoted to their deity and majesty.

Commentary: The inscription is dedicated to Constantine II – *Flavius Claudius Constantinus*, who was born in 316 (possibly 317) to Constantine I and *Fausta* (?). No later than on 1 March, he was named *Caesar* and thus acquired the name *FLAVIUS CLAUDIUS CONSTANTINUS IUNIOR NOB. CAES., PRINCEPS IUVENTUTIS*. On 9 September 337, he was named *Augustus* and in 340 he was killed at *Aquileia*; soon after he suffered *damnatio memoriae*.¹⁵ To make their authority and the rule of emperors of Late Antiquity more legitimate they frequently included in their titles the derivation of their origin from more important and successful emperors, if they were indeed relatives (fathers, grandfathers, great grandfathers) or not. In the discussed example, both can be noticed since the inscription first evokes father Constantine the Great, then grandfathers *Marcus Aurelius Maximianus* and *Flavius Constans*, and finally also the divine great grandfather Emperor *Claudius*, to whom the blood relation of Constantine II certainly cannot be derived.

*Marcus Aurelius Maximianus*¹⁶ was born around 250 and originated from Illyricum. At the end of 285, he was named *294aesar* and thus acquired the name *AURELIUS VALERIUS MAXIMIANUS NOB. CAES.* On April 1st 286, he was named *Augustus* for the west-

¹⁵ For more information about Constantine II see the commentary to the previous inscription; Kienast 1996, 310-311.

¹⁶ For *Maximianus* see Kienast 1996, 272-276.

ern part of the empire and thus the corresponding titulature *IMP. CAES. M. AURELIUS VALERIUS MAXIMIANUS P. F. INV. AUG.* Maximianus was married to *Eutropia*, with whom he had two children: son *Maxentius* and daughter *Fausta*, who in late summer of 307 married Constantine the Great and so here we actually do have blood relations and derivations.

The name *Flavius Constantius* most probably hides *Constantius* I, the adopted son of *Maximianus*, the entire name of whom, after his proclamation as *Caesar* on 1 March 293, is *FLAVIUS VALERIUS CONSTANTIUS NOB. CAES.* His son Constantine I (Constantine the Great) married the afore-mentioned *Fausta*.¹⁷ At the very bottom, the divine emperor Claudius is inscribed, i.e. as a great great-grandfather, which should be understood only as an ultimate point with which the rule of Constantine the Great would be made as legitimate as possible. The stating of a “pedigree” is followed most probably by the erector of the inscription, i.e. the phrase *Norici Mediterranei*, which could have been misunderstood in previous publications, namely as of *Noricum Mediterraneum*.¹⁸ It appears that it would be more appropriate if *Norici Mediterranei* were understood or translated as the Mediterranean Norici, thus inhabitants of the province of *Noricum Mediterraneum*. This once more indicates the significance of *Celeia* in the 4th century, not only in that the monument was erected exactly in this town, but most certainly also of importance are the erectors who, at least on the symbolic level, represent the entire province which showed respect to the mentioned emperor in this way.

In this inscription the formula *devotus numini maiestatique eorum (eius)* is used for the first time and is associated with the representation and promotion of tetrarchy under Diocletian. Composition of imperial concept on one side and unity on the other was emphasized everywhere and in every way. The formula links the divine and human aspect of the emperor who thus belongs to the human as well as the divine world, he is the divinity that dwells in this world.¹⁹

Date: 337-340.

¹⁷ Kienast 1996, 305.

¹⁸ *RICe* 209.

¹⁹ Eck 2003, 51-62; Claus 1999, 229-237; for the chronology of the formula, cf. also Popescu, Popescu, 1999, 45-53.

3. *Imperial inscription for Emperor Constantius II*

Location: Post office. It was found in 1840, in the house of Stretti no. 28, next to the post office, Orožen (*Celeiae rep. 26 Mart. 1840 in aedibus Stetterianis 'nächst dem Postgebäude'*). A little later it was transported to the stonemason, where it was reused in 1841, Orožen (*Paulo post ad lapicidam delata periit CIL*). It is lost today.

Material: Probably marble.

Dimensions: Unknown.

Description: A *titulus*.

CIL III 5208 – *ILLPRON* 1670 – *RICe* 210; *HD067238* – *EDCS-14500520*.

Muchar 1844, 365; Orožen 1854, 303-304 no. 50.

[D(omino) n(ostro)] Fl(avio) [I]u[l(io)]
Constantio, [nob(ilissimo)]
[C]a[es(ari)], filio d(omini) n(ostri)
Constantini ma-
 5 *ximi victoriosissimi*
semper Aug(usti),
nepoti M(arci) Aur(elii) Va[l(erii)]
Maximiani et Fl(avii)
Constanti
 10 *Divorum, N(orici) M(edi)-*
t(erranei), d(evoti) n(umini) m(aiestati)q(ue) e(orum).

Translation: To our lord *Flavius Iulius Constantius*, to the most noble *Caesar*, son of our lord *Constantinus Maximus*, always *Augustus*, grandson of deified *Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus* and *Flavius Constans, Norici Mediterranei*. Devoted to their deity and majesty.

Commentary: The inscription is dedicated to *Constantius II (Flavius Iulius Constantius, 337-361)*, who was born on 7 August 317 in *Sirmium* to *Constantine I* and *Fausta*. He was named *Caesar* and thus acquired the name *FLAVIUS IULIUS CONSTANTIUS NOB. CAES.* in 324 and *Augustus* in 337, when his titulature was the following: *FLAVIUS IULIUS CONSTANTIUS P. F. AUG. PONTIF.*

MAX. PATER PATRIAE, PROCONSUL. In 351, he conquered *Magnentius* at *Mursa*.²⁰

The inscription is composed similarly as the previous one; it represents the origin of *Constantius II.* through his father *Constantine the Great*, as well as grandfathers *Marcus Aurelius Maximianus* and *Constatius I.*²¹ The only difference is that confirming the legitimacy of authority here does not reach back to *Claudius*, but stops after the first generation. Parallels can once again be drawn at the very end of the inscription, which could be interpreted similarly to the previous one. Again, the erectors could be the inhabitants of the province of *Noricum Mediterraneum: Norici Mediterranei*, which would reconfirm the above conclusion about the significance and importance of *Celeia* in this period. For the formula *devotus numini maiestatique eorum* see the previous inscription.

Date: Between 324 and 337.

4. Imperial inscription for *Constans I*

Location: Celje. It was found in the 15th or the 16th century, probably in the vicinity of the Minorite monastery (*Celeiae* Peutinger, *Apianus, in circuitu monasterii Minoritarum; sive templi Franciscanorum* *Lazius*). Today it is lost.

Material: Probably marble.

Dimensions: Unknown.

Description: A *titulus*.

CIL III 5209 – *ILLPRON* 1671 – *RICe* 211; *HD*067239 – *LUPA* 13394 – *EDCS*-14500521.

Muchar 1844, 358; Knabl 1862, 282; Winkler 1969, 112 no. 3.

*D(omino) n(ostro) Fl(avio) Constanti
clementissimo atque
victori(osissimo? semper?) Augusto.
Martinianus v(ir) p(erfectissimus), praeses
5 provinciae Norici Medit(erranei).
D(evotus) n(umini) m(aiestatique) eius.*

²⁰ Kienast 1996, 314-317.

²¹ More on blood relation and connections of mentioned persons can be found in the commentary to the previous inscription.

Translation: To our lord *Flavius Constans* to the most gracious and most victorious always Augustus. *Martinianus*, *vir perfectissimus*, governor of the province *Noricum Mediterraneum*. Devoted to his deity and majesty.

Commentary: *Flavius Constans* or *Constans* I, the son of *Constantinus* I and *Fausta*, was born in 320 or 323 and ruled between 9 September 337 and 18 January 350. On 25 December 333, he was named *Caesar* and thus acquired the title *FLAVIUS CONSTANS NOB. CAESAR*. In 335, he took over the administration of Italy, Africa, and Illyricum. On 9 September 337, he was named *Augustus* for Italy, Africa, Illyricum, Macedonia, and Achaia. In early April 340, he defeated Constantine II at *Aquileia*. At that time he also acquired Gallia, Britannia, and Spain as well as the title *MAXIMUS VICTOR AC TRIUMPHATOR AUGUSTUS*.²²

The dedication to the emperor was commissioned by *Martinianus*, *praeses* (governor) of the province *Noricum Mediterraneum*, who performed this function between 337 and 350. It is not possible to determine the time of his appointment more precisely. It seems probable, though, that on his numerous travels to almost all provinces of his part of the empire, Emperor *Constans* also visited *Celeia*.²³ On this occasion, the province administrator enabled the erection of this inscription.²⁴ Similarly to the previous two, here once again the question of causality appears between the inscription's location and the content of the inscription. Not only is this an imperial inscription, it is an imperial inscription from *Celeia* which was erected by none other than the governor of the province of *Noricum Mediterraneum*.²⁵

Considering the phrase *vir perfectissimus* we can assign this *praeses*²⁶ to the equestrian order (*ordo equester*), since this phrase was, similarly to *vir egregius*, characteristic just for them, but was used in a later period.

²² Kienast 1996, 312.

²³ Since *Celeia* was located along the main road from the Balkans to Italy, along which *Constans* moved several times, the probability that he also stopped in the town is greater (e.g. in 340, when he embarked on the campaign against Constantine II, and also later when he travelled from *Sirmium* towards *Aquileia* in 342 and especially 345, when he met the emissary of Constantine II in *Poetovio*), cf. Bratož 2014, 67.

²⁴ Winkler 1969, 112 no. 3.

²⁵ Bratož 2014, 67.

²⁶ For the function of *praeses* cf. Ensslin 1956, 605-614.

Among the four discussed imperial inscriptions of the Constantinian dynasty in *Celeia*, this is the only one on which the name of the individual who had the monument erected is preserved or even inscribed in the first place. *Martinianus* indeed appears as a *cognomen*, but is not frequent.²⁷

Date: Between 337 and 350.²⁸

III. Inscriptions of Emperors of the Constantinian Dynasty in Other Towns

It will on the one hand only be possible to correctly understand and evaluate the value and significance of four Celeian imperial inscriptions from the period of the Constantinian dynasty in the context of other imperial inscriptions already known from this town and, on the other, with comparison with imperial inscriptions of the same dynasty attested in neighbouring towns, i.e. in the East Alpine territory or its immediate environs. It seems prudent to determine how many and what type of inscriptions were (if at all) preserved in *Poetio*, *Nevidunum*, *Emona*, *Flavia Solva*, and in *Virunum* – once the capital of Noricum, as well as in *Aquileia*, which emperors of the mentioned period also frequented.

Imperial inscriptions are well represented in *Celeia*, since we can follow emperors from the very beginning; the first emperor mentioned is indeed *Augustus*, while the last (prior to the 4th century) is Emperor *Carus* in 282. Naturally, the distribution is uneven and not all emperors are represented. Yet if we compare the “yield” of mentioned emperors and with it the number of imperial inscriptions we know from *Celeia* until today with the neighbouring towns, it becomes obvious that in this respect *Celeia* is at the forefront, and not only in the period between the 1st and the 3rd century, but most certainly also in the 4th century. Based solely on four preserved/known imperial inscriptions of the Constantinian dynasty, it is not possible

²⁷ *OPEL* III, 61; Kakoschke 2012, 505; Kajanto 1965, 59, 212: classifies the name among the so-called theophoric *cognomina*.

²⁸ Another fragment was preserved in *Celeia* which might also be possible to classify among imperial inscriptions; however, this cannot be confirmed and it is even more difficult to claim that it is a remnant of an imperial inscription from the 4th century, cf. *RICe* 212.

to make same grand conclusions. It is, however, unusual that similar imperial inscriptions from this period of Roman history are not many in the neighbouring towns of *Poetovio*, *Emona*, *Flavia Solva*, and *Virunum*. They would be justifiably expected at least in *Emona* and *Poetovio*, since the discussed emperors relatively frequently visited these places or at least travelled the roads leading past these towns. When we deal with Roman inscribed material, we should always keep in mind the fact that the share of preserved inscription is very small. On the one hand, this could mean that more imperial inscriptions existed in *Celeia*, while on the other, it could also mean that imperial inscriptions were erected also in the towns mentioned above but these have not been preserved until today or have not yet been found. Nevertheless, we should not remain indifferent to the preserved inscriptions from *Celeia* since they are indeed known from here (and not from any of the other mentioned towns which are also located in the area where emperors of the Constantinian dynasty experienced many decisive events and milestones). Even though the content itself does not say much about the circumstances leading to the erection, significant erectors should not be neglected: *Norici Mediterranei* (twice) and *Martinianus, praeses provinciae Norici Mediterranei*. Thus, it seems that they were mostly erected on the level of a province or at least of a town, which in itself speaks in favour of the fact that *Celeia* was indeed (again)²⁹ a very important town of the southern Noricum in this period. In the discussed epigraphic monuments with the erectors mentioned, Gassner, Jilek, and Ladstätter see an important argument in favour of the assumption that *Celeia* was in fact the capital of Mediterranean Noricum in this period. They interpreted *Norici Mediterranei* as some sort of a provincial council; furthermore, dedications were supposed to be the reflection of an official imperial cult, which certainly speaks in favour of the superregional significance of *Celeia* in the 4th century.³⁰ Since none of the inscriptions can be dated precisely, they also cannot be connected to any particular events leading to the erection.

To confirm the lack of inscriptions of the Constantinian dynasty in other towns, inscriptions from these towns had to be revised. For some, newer corpora are available, while for others the help of e-

²⁹ Scherrer 2002, passim; Visočnik 2008, 336.

³⁰ Gassner, Jilek, Ladstätter 2002, 299-300.

pigraphic databases had to be sought, in which the chance that an inscription is missed is slightly bigger.³¹

In 1998, a *corpus* of inscriptions was published for *Neviodunum*,³² which collected all the inscriptions known until then from the town and its ager. Among them a few do mention emperors; chronologically they belong between the 2nd century (from Emperor Trajan) and the mid-3rd century (Emperors Valerian and Gallienus). However, until today none are known from the 4th century.

There is no true corpus for the inscriptions of *Emona*; nevertheless, there is a corpus of inscriptions kept by the National Museum of Slovenia, which presents only two fragments of imperial inscriptions, both of which are assigned to the 1st century and are associated with the first emperors. Thus, the search had to be supplemented with epigraphic databases, among which the Roman database EDR³³ proved to be the most useful. To the two imperial inscriptions from the National Museum of Slovenia can thus be added an inscription that mentions Emperor Trajan (*EDR077905*), Valerian (*EDR152854*), two indefinable fragments of imperial inscriptions (*EDR152918*, *EDR155047*), and finally an imperial inscription from the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 4th century, which can be considered a predecessor of inscriptions from *Celeia*, since it mentions two *Augusti* and two *Caesares* from the time of Diocletian (*EDR156372*) – the time of the tetrarchy. Hence, there are more imperial inscriptions in *Emona* than it initially appeared, yet they do not include inscriptions of the emperors from the Constantinian dynasty.

While searching for inscriptions for the Constantinian dynasty in *Virunum*, we used the Heidelberg epigraphic database (*HD*)³⁴ and discovered seven imperial inscriptions that can be dated to the period between the end of the 1st century BC and mid-1st century AD (*HD002105*, *HD018230*, *HD050936*, *HD050937*, *HD054679*,

³¹ To search for imperial inscriptions in general and especially those from the 4th century, the Roman epigraphic database (*EDR*) was used for the inscriptions of *Emona*, while for all other towns the Heidelberg database (*HD*) was searched, since they appear the most appropriate for our discussed topic

³² *ILSI* 1.

³³ <http://www.edr-edr.it/default/index.php> [last checked 2022-3-4].

³⁴ <https://edh.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/> [last checked 2022-3-4].

HD056845, and *HD067503*) and another fragmentarily preserved from the 3rd century (*HD067498*).

A slightly different situation was revealed by the Heidelberg database for *Flavia Solva*, for which there are eight imperial inscriptions. In number it is obviously completely comparable to *Virunum*, yet their chronological distribution is completely different. From the time of Hadrian (131) only one inscription is documented (*HD039632*), while all others belong to the end of the 2nd or the 3rd century (between 193 and 222: *HD037917*, *HD037965*, *HD037966*, *HD037967*, *HD039132*; from 231: *HD039134*, between 268 and 270: *HD039144*). In both *Virunum* and *Flavia Solva*, no inscriptions from the time of the Constantinian dynasty is known until today.

Using the Heidelberg database, seven imperial inscriptions are found for *Poetovio*,³⁵ which are dated to the time of Trajan (*HD037457*) and Hadrian (*HD037458*); one fragment can be ascribed to the second half of the 3rd century (*HD004975*), the following three to the time between 193 and 222 (*HD068690*, *HD068691*, *HD068802*), and another fragment to the period between 221 and 283 (*HD074753*). Until now, there is no trace of any inscriptions from the 4th century.

The *EDR* database was again used for the search for imperial inscriptions in *Aquileia*.³⁶ In accordance with the expectations, there is a significantly higher number of imperial inscriptions here than in other reviewed towns. Also interesting is their distribution according to individual centuries: there are ten from the first and second centuries (five respectively in each century). The most are documented in the third century, i.e. no fewer than twelve; the fourth century does not lag behind since emperors are attested on no fewer than nine monuments. However, they include as many as six milestones, two from 305/306 (*EDR007203*, *EDR007205*), one from the period of 324 and 337 (*EDR117401*), one from 363 (*EDR117366*), and two that can be dated between 364 and 367 (*EDR116988*, *EDR117348*). The rest include three "ordinary" imperial inscriptions, among which one belongs to 305/306 (*EDR163165*), the second to the period between 326 and 333 (*EDR079514*), and the third between 337 and 361 (*EDR117437*). Among all the reviewed towns, it is only *Aquileia* which

³⁵ <https://edh.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/> [last checked 2022-3-4].

³⁶ <http://www.edr-edr.it/default/index.php> [last checked 2022-3-4].

has a number of imperial inscriptions from the 4th century. Hence *Celeia* becomes comparable to *Aquileia*, the significance and influence of which in Late Antiquity is generally more than obvious.³⁷

Even though we take into consideration the fact that we are today not familiar with all the inscriptions erected originally (since they are not preserved or have not yet been discovered), it appears that the preserved inscriptions of the Constantinian dynasty from *Celeia* confirm the great importance of the town in this period. A relatively small number of such preserved monuments in the neighbouring towns on the one hand and the content (especially erectors) of the Celeian in the other confirm the above statement, which will be possible to confirm (or refute) even more strongly in the future with the help of other historic and archaeological sources.

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³⁷ Ausonius named *Aquileia moenibus et portu celeberrima* and placed it among the nine most famous cities of the Roman Empire at that time, cf. Ausonius, *Ordo Nob. Urbium*, 67; Gentili 1992, 193.

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List of photographs

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- Fig. 2:** The East Alpine area with its surrounding in the 4th century (after Bratož 2004, app. 2). Prepared by Mateja Belak, Institute of Archaeology, SRC SASA.
- Fig. 3:** *RICe* 209 (photo from *RICe*).

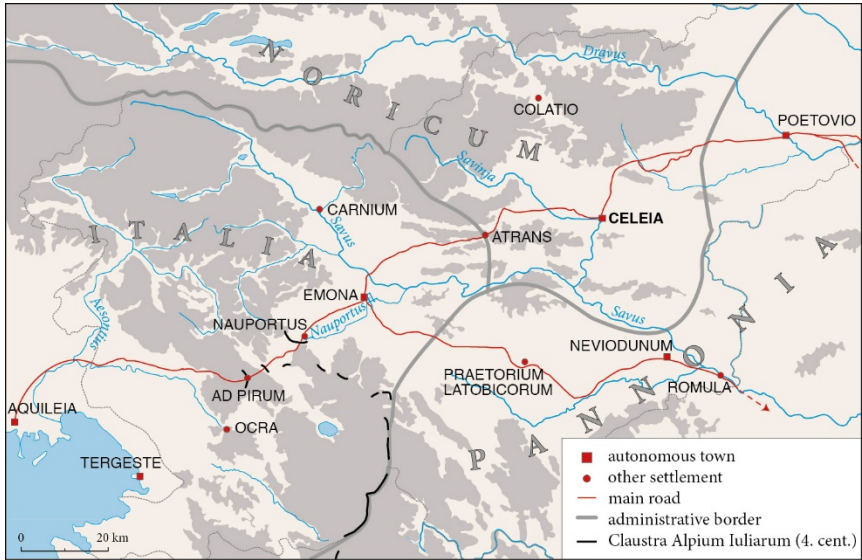


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

**Fig. 3**