

INLĂCENI/ÉNLAKA DURING THE ROMAN PERIOD

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Dacia was conquered by Trajan at the end of two bloody military campaigns in AD 101 and 106.¹ During his reign in addition to Oltenia, the entire Wallachian Plain was integrated into the conquered territory, probably under the supervision of the Moesian army. The organization of the land was finalized at the command of Emperor Hadrian subsequently after the conclusion of the war against the Sarmatians and free Dacians prompted by their incursions into Dacia and Pannonia Inferior. In 119–120 the conquered territory was divided into Dacia Superior and Dacia Porolissensis², in addition to Dacia Inferior situated south of the Carpathians. The interior borders of the province are hitherto uncertain, whilst its outer frontier was clarified by the scholarly debates of recent years. As a result, the assertion hitherto embraced by the Hungarian and partly the international archaeological community, according to which the Banat was not an integral part of the province of Dacia³, the stamped tiles and other Roman finds reported in the area belonging to the military and commercial road linking Pannonia and Dacia along the Mureş (Maros) River (Figure 2). Moreover it is very likely that line of forts set along the western bank of the Olt River was in fact the eastern frontier of the province, while the parallel line situated to the east known as the *limes Transalutanus* by modern designation, was merely a fortified road which functioned during the first half of the 3rd century⁴.

The military and civilian history of Roman Dacia has been at the forefront of archaeological and historical research through the systematic investigation of its archaeological and epigraphic record for over a century⁵, revealing the image of the province's defensive system in ever greater detail. Due to its nature similar to that of an outpost, a considerable part of its army, including the legionary force consisting initially of one and eventually two legions, as well as a part of the auxiliary units were stationed in the centre of the province. The frontiers were reinforced with auxiliary troops, however their forts (*castella*) were not placed on the actual borderline along the mountain ridges, but in the inner valleys, being connected to each other by the *limes* road. Observation towers were placed further up in the mountains on the actual frontier

¹ STROBEL 1984.

² VISY 1977, 455. Corroborated later without the acknowledgement of the earlier results in: PETOLESCU 1985, 55, PISO 1993, 34 and NEMETH 2005, 149.

³ VISY 2005, 11; NEMETH 2005 passim, especially 171–187; Visy, Zs., The South Western Frontier of Dacia. In: W.S. Hanson (ed.), *The army and frontiers of Rome*. (2007) s.a.

⁴ Visy, Zs., Some notes on the Eastern corner of the province Dacia. S. COCIŞ (ed.), *Archäologische Beiträge – Gedenkschrift zum hundertsten Geburtstag von Kurt Horedt*. Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2014, 65–68. – *contra*: TUDOR 1968; BOGDAN-CĂTĂNICIU 1981; GUDEA 1997.

⁵ See the epigraphic sources in the reference list below, as well as the most important archaeological works listed there.

line, which maintained visual contact both with each other and the auxiliary forts⁶. Based on the observations made so far, the defensive system was reinforced with ditches only in the places where the natural defence proved to be insufficient. Such complex systems were established in the mountainous areas of Transylvania.

The research of Dacia's eastern frontier is expected to produce further results, given that only partial investigations were carried out in this area so far. A large body of data, including archaeological sites was registered by Balázs Orbán⁷, although archaeology was not his main concern. The first detailed synthesis regarding the area was produced by István Paulovics. Based on surveys among the material kept in the local museums and the extant literature coupled with field surveys, he attempted to offer a complete picture regarding the eastern frontier of Dacia Superior⁸. Despite his efforts, apart from the more or less accurate identification of the *limes* forts, he only rarely managed to trace the exact frontier line. His work proved beyond any doubt that the Giurgeului (Gyergyói) and Ciucului (Csíki) Basins lay outside the borders of the province, this being one of the main accomplishments of his investigations in this field. From north to south, the line of forts consists of the following sites, Marosvécs/Brâncovenești, Mikháza/Călugăreni, Sóvárád/Sărățeni, Énlaka/Inlăceni, Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc, Homoródszentpál/Sânpaul, and Oltszem/Olteni). In none of the cases do we know the ancient names of the settlements. The frontier followed the line of the Gurghiului (Görgényi) and Harghita (Hargita) mountains. The detailed investigations based on field surveys were initiated by István Ferenczi and Mihai Petică in the region between the Mureș and the Niraj (Nyárád) Rivers⁹, but eventually came to a halt due to Ferenczi's old age and subsequent death. Nicolae Gudea in his monographic study regarding the Dacian *limes* discussed in detail the archaeological remains of this frontier section¹⁰, while Felix Marcu in his monograph concerning the inner structures of the forts synthesized the latest results in this field¹¹.

Aerial surveys are among the most effective archaeological methods, looking back at a past of nearly 100 years, their rapid growth is however the result of the revolution in the field of computer sciences during the 80s and 90s. The Aerial Archaeology Collection belonging to the Institute of Historical Studies of the University of Pécs was founded in 2004 as a museum with national level collecting prerogatives. Starting from 2007 it has been carrying out investigations on the eastern frontier of Dacia in the section between Marosvécs/Brâncovenești and Bereck/Brețcu in collaboration with five Transylvanian museums¹². The main results of the investigations so far can be summed up as follows: the exact identification of the province's eastern frontier line, the partial identification of the *limes* road, running parallel with the frontier¹³, the location of numerous watchtowers¹⁴, the systematic archaeological investigation of the *principia* in the fort in Mikháza/Călugăreni carried out by the Mureș County Museum since 2012¹⁵, and finally the geophysical and archaeological survey carried out in the fort in Énlaka/Inlăceni.

⁶ For the most detailed investigations regarding the strategic characteristics of the Dacian *limes* see Gudea 1979, see also GUDEA 1997.

⁷ ORBÁN 1869–1871.

⁸ PAULOVICS 1944.

⁹ FERENCZI/PETICĂ, 1994, 139–166.

¹⁰ GUDEA 1997, 54–62.

¹¹ MARCU 2009.

¹² Mureș County Museum – Marosvásárhely/Târgu-Mureș, Molnár István Múzeum – Székelykeresztúr/Cristuru Secuiesc, Haáz Rezső Múzeum – Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc, Csíki Székely Múzeum – Csíkszereda/Miercurea Ciuc, Székely Nemzeti Múzeum – Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe.

¹³ VISY 2008a, 159–173, Visy, Régészeti kutatások Dacia superior keleti határán. Molnár István Múzeum Kiadványai 1. 2009, 107–115.

¹⁴ SZABÓ 2009, 117–122; PÁNCZÉL/SZABÓ/VISY 2011, 173–180.

¹⁵ PÁNCZÉL 2015, 909–916.; MAN/CIOATA, 2012, 85–100; PÁNCZÉL et al., 2014, 23–27.

From Sónvár/Sărățeni the *limes* road continued southward, crossing the mountain range which flanks the Târnava Mică (Kis Küküllő) River from the south and continuing along the western side of the Firtos Mountain, the frontier line of the province following the mountain ridge located somewhat to the east and parallel to the road¹⁶. This is corroborated by the watchtower discovered on the Szilastető peak east of Székelypálfalva/Păuleni¹⁷. The auxiliary fort from Énlaka/Inlăceni is located in the south-eastern periphery of the village, approximately halfway between Sónvár/Sărățeni and Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc. The site comprising the fort, the civilian settlement and the military baths lies on the hillside located east of today's village. One hundred years ago the ruins of fort and the bath house ('palace') were still visible on the surface in various places, although this is not the case anymore. The military *vicus* is situated to the west of the fort. Apart from a few excavations, no serious research was carried out on this site¹⁸. Our knowledge of the fort's structure was considerably improved by a series of geophysical surveys which also included Énlaka/Inlăceni¹⁹. Numerous inscriptions were discovered as stray finds, most of them kept at the Molnár István Museum from Székelykeresztúr/Cristuru Secuiesc²⁰. According to the results of the hitherto undertaken investigations, the fort comprised of three periods. The earth and timber fort measuring 140 × 142 m, according to the earlier research was in use either until the end of Hadrian's reign or until the beginning of Antoninus Pius' reign²¹, although based on the research undertaken in Western Europe and Pannonia, one should also consider the possibility of this phase ending with the conclusion of the Marcomannic Wars. The garrison of the fort probably consisted of the *cohors VIII Raetorum*²². The stone fort was built by the *cohors IIII Hispanorum* in the latter half of the 2nd century, probably subsequently after the end of the Marcomannic Wars. The stamped tiles displaying the name of the *cohors I Alpinorum*²³ discovered in the area of the bath house is probably part of the construction material delivered by the unit stationed at Sónvár/Sărățeni or Mikháza/Călugăreni for the construction of the baths at the beginning of the 3rd century²⁴.

The stone fort measuring 142 × 146 m was built according to the standards of Roman military architecture at that time. The *castellum* had four gates linked by interior roads at the intersection of which the forum of the fort, i.e. the *principia* was established. To the left and right, the residence of the unit's commander of equestrian rank, the granary and further public buildings were found, the rest of the fort's interior was occupied by the barracks of the different *centuria*. The civilian settlement (*vicus*), inhabited by the family members of the soldiers, veterans and merchants was situated around the fort, especially on its western side. It was here that the bath house was built, which due to its massive walls was called by the locals 'palace'. The inhabitants of the settlement established their burial grounds along the roads leading into the *vicus*. The excavations undertaken on the territory of the fort established its exact dimensions, while the topographical measurements clarified its inner structure. The archaeological survey of 2016 was meant to investigate the structure of the area situated between the *basilica* of the *principia* and the *via principalis*. The survey was supervised by Dr. Sorin Cociș, in collaboration with Zsolt

¹⁶ VISY 2008, 165–168.

¹⁷ SZABÓ 2009, 118 és 3. kép; VISY 2009, 594 és Abb. 10; PÁNCZÉL/SZABÓ/VISY 2011, 179.

¹⁸ SZÉKELY/MACREA/MOLNÁR I. ásátásai. – SZÉKELY 1946, 39–43; MACREA 1951, 304–306; summed up in: GUDEA 1979, 149–273; GUDEA 1997, 60.

¹⁹ POPA et al., 2010, 101–128.

²⁰ MACREA 1957, 239–240; MACREA 1960, 339–351; more than 25 inscriptions: IDR 3,4 263–294.

²¹ MACREA 1960, 343; GUDEA 1997, 60: *cohors VIII Raetorum milliaria*, de helyesen *cohors VIII Raetorum equitata*, VISY 2008, 75; MARCU 2009, 141.

²² MACREA 1960, 343; GUDEA 1997, 60.

²³ GUDEA 1979, 157–170.

²⁴ MARCU 2009, 142.

Visy²⁵. The authors of the excavation together with the Csíki Székely Museum responsible for the region, convened that the finds produced by the excavations will continue to be preserved by the Molnár István Museum form Székelykeresztúr/Cristuru Secuiesc. The preparations and the organization work was aided by the archaeologist Lóránt Darvas²⁶.

The excavation carried between 22 and 30 August 2016 covered the entrance area of the *principia*, hitherto not researched. The 32 m long evaluation trench was panned between the *via principalis* and the *basilica*. The aim of the survey was to clarify the position and exact direction of the *via principalis* as well as the length of the *principia* and the number and size of the storage buildings flanking its courtyard. The excavation report and the data processing will be carried out by the research team²⁷. The owners of the land gave their consent to the excavation.

Following the finalization of the necessary calculations aimed at the establishment of the trench's coordinates, the 32 m long and 120 cm wide trench was laid out. The starting point (0 point) was placed north of the trench, the southern endpoints (A: Ny; B: K) being measured from here. The relative coordinates are:

	Y	X
A	-35.882	-25.550
B	-21.984	3.037

The coordinates of these points are:

stereo 70 projection	Y	X
0-point	509227.28	547659.85
A-point	509199.43	547625.70
B-point	509228.85	547637.73

Along the entire length of the trench the concentration of rocks was very high, occasionally mixed with fragments of Roman bricks and tiles as well as other finds. In the eastern section of the trench measuring approx. 5 m, a massive layer of rocks was observed. This proved to be a wall demolition which was removed during the excavation, thus exposing the foundation of the western closing wall of the *basilica*. Its width is: 120 cm. The foundation was preserved up to a level of one or two rows of rocks bound together by yellow clay, pebbles and earth. The depth of the foundation is 70 cm (-2.18 m) while its maximum height is 35–50 cm.

The western section of the trench also included a large amount of rock, but no wall or foundation was discovered. It is likely that the wings (*ala*) of the *principia* were in fact wooden structures erected on a stone platform. This is potentially corroborated by the occasional daub fragments found.

At the western end of the trench an approx. 3 m wide stone surface emerged subsequently under the topsoil. Although the rocks did not produce an even surface, given the fact that the spaces between the cobbles are filled by pebbles and fragments of bricks and tiles, it is likely that we are dealing with a road. Its direction corresponds to that of the crossroad of the

²⁵ I wish to express my gratitude to Sorin Cociş for his support and advice given on site.

²⁶ The identification of the earlier excavations and the hitherto researched part of the *principia* was achieved with the help of Szilamér Pánczél (Mureş County Museum) and Máté Szabó (University of Pécs). The excavation team included three students from the University of Pécs: Zoltán Lacza, Alexa Brády és Tímea Miklós-Amrein. The consultations with the land owners were carried out by Márton Szávai, retired local teacher, prior to the commencement of the work. I wish to thank all of them for their work and support.

²⁷ The founding of the research was supported by the *Nemzetstratégiai Kutatóintézet* in the framework of the research programme aimed at the assessment of Énlaka's cultural heritage.

castellum, i.e. the *via principalis*. This hypothesis was eventually confirmed by the emergence of a ditch on the eastern side of the rocky surface, flanked by a regular stone row. The feature is without a doubt the ditch of the road²⁸, further corroborated by the discovery there of a hobnail.

The first pit was discovered in the trench, however only its southern narrow strip was exposed by the excavation area. The second pit can be described as a wide and shallow scoop near to the *via principalis*.

The finds consisted of numerous pottery vessel fragments, the base fragment of a *Firmalampen* type lamp FO[RTIS], *tegula* and *imbrex* fragments, and a 5.5 cm thick floor tile piece belonging to a *hypocaustum* surface. Around the middle section of the trench two millstones lay on the yellow clay undersoil, while in the demolition layer from the eastern end of the trench a half-cylinder stone block was found, probably part of a column drum.

In numerous places within the trench the yellow clay undersoil was reached at a depth of 40–50 cm.

As a result of the excavation, the structure of the *principia* and its eastern and western extension could be established. Earlier research managed to identify the *basilica* as well as the two chambers flanking it, covering a total surface of 16.3 × 29 m²⁹. Based on the estimative direction of the *via principalis*, Felix Marcu attempted to assess the probable length of the *principia* together with the courtyard, asserting that it was around 35 m long (16.3 m + 20 m)³⁰. According to the results of the new excavations, the exact dimensions of the *principia* can be put forward. The distance between the outer edge of western wall of the *basilica* and the ditch of the *via principalis* is 22 m, therefore the dimensions of the *principia* are: 38.3 × 29 m. The width of the courtyard could hardly be 29 m, based on the structural characteristics of this building type, the courtyard was flanked by storage rooms (*alae*). Given that neither the old nor the new excavation, which crossed through the middle of the southern *ala*, could provide evidence for any stone constructions, it can be concluded that contrary to the main building, these were wooden structures erected on a stone platform. The inner walls of the possible storage place could only be implied based on the high concentration of scattered stones, the exact number of rooms and their dimensions remain unknown.

The research was joined by Prof. Dr. Friedrich Lüth, of the Zentrale des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts in Berlin für Kulturgüterschutz und Site Management. The researchers of the German Archaeological institute Rainer Komp and Ingo Petri, together with the author of these lines undertook a geomagnetic survey using the 16 sensor magnetometer of the institute³¹ in the *castellum* and the *vicus* of Énlaka/Inlăceni between 17 and 20 November 2016. The surveyed area amounts to 11 ha, including the entire surface of the *castellum* as well as large areas of the *vicus* to the east and south of the fort. This survey, given its physical extent and the sensitivity of the employed device considerably improves the data obtained from previous archaeological and geophysical investigations³². Based on the survey, it became evident that the fort had at least two major phases, furthermore the stone fort went through a consistent process of reparation at a certain point, clearly visible in the archaeological record. The size of the earth and timber fort is: 167–171 × 160–177 m, that of the first stone: 150–155 × 148–158 m, while the second stone fort measured: 140–143 × 143 × 153 m. The rectangular gate towers measure 5 × 5 m on the northern and southern side and 10 × 10 m on the main side, while the width of the entrance is 5–6 m. In addition to the structures highlighted by previous excavations, the newest survey has revealed further storage buildings and barracks. Traces of the *via sagularis*,

²⁸ Similar find: Visy

²⁹ GUDEA 1979; GUDEA 1997, 60; MARCU 2009, 140.

³⁰ MARCU 2009, 140, the downgrading of the *principia*'s length to 26.5 m remains however unexplainable.

³¹ Multi-sensor geomagnetic survey system Magneto MX v2 manufactured by Sensys GmbH.

³² GUDEA 1997, 60; POPA et al. 2010.

running along the interior of the precinct wall could be identified in numerous places. In the *vicus* only occasional cases of possible stone masonry structures were identified, without however the possibility of assessing their size or function. The most promising trace emerged in the area of row of trees and thus impossible to measure, north of the bath house. It is possible that the building belonged to the baths. The area of the *vicus* is full of traces indicating human activity, the numerous stains on the geophysical survey map point towards pits and sunken houses. The features appearing on the southern edge of the area may also indicate burials, but this can only be clarified by excavations³³.

Rainer Figs. 01 – The map of Énlaka/Inlăceni with the topographical survey of the area,
11 – The result of the geomagnetic survey with the examined areas of the *castellum* and *vicus*

19 – The preliminary interpretation of the geomagnetic survey's results in the *castellum*

According to the decision of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO in 2005, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (FRE) represent a single world heritage site, comprised of each concerned country's individual entry of their own *limes* section. The European part of the Roman *Limes* currently spans across 10 states: The United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria. The scientific council of the FRE transnational site series founded the Bratislava Group in 2003, which during its 2004 meeting in Koblenz defined the framework for the interpretation of the Roman *Limes* as a unitary world heritage site. Accordingly the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site (FRE WHS) is comprised of the border(s) of the Empire which functioned between the reigns of Trajan and Septimius Severus (98–211) together with the different categories of military installations along these frontier lines. These include legionary fortresses, auxiliary forts, watchtowers, *limes* roads, artificial defences, and the directly connected civilian settlements³⁴.

Correspondingly the *limes* of Dacia also belongs to the frontier sections which can be entered into the registry. Based on the advanced state of scientific research and the high level of professional and lay awareness, Romania has entered its own parts of the of *limes* of Dacia and Moesia Inferior on the waiting list of World Heritage Sites. The registry for Dacia also includes the fort from Énlaka/Inlăceni. The research, mending and proper presentation of the constantly emerging frontier sections and the string of monument sites and their finds is the responsibility of the individual states, which however in time bears fruit in the form of massive numbers of visitors. If this is combined with a World Heritage status, the result and the effect is considerably increased. In this way the Roman period can become one great material record, and the *Limes* of the Roman Empire a living active force and agent of the values and culture of Antiquity as an inseparable part of the mind set and culture of the 21st century.

³³ Rainer Komp, M.A., Preliminary Field Report on a Geomagnetic Survey of a Roman Auxiliary Camp in the Community of Inlăceni/Énlaka, Romania, 17.10. – 20.10.2016. Manuscript..

³⁴ 'During the EAA Annual Conference Esslingen 2001 a preliminary definition of the FREWHS was proposed. That definition was discussed, amended and approved at the Bratislava Group meeting in Koblenz 2004. The Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site (FREWHS) should consist of the line(s) of the frontier of the height of the empire from Traian to Septimius Severus (98–211 AD), and military installations of different periods which are on that line. The installations include fortresses, forts, towers, the *limes* road, artificial barriers and immediately associated civil structures. It is accepted that Roman frontiers are more complex, and that this might be recognized in a later amendment to the above definition, but this definition is recommended as the first step in the creation of this multi-national World Heritage Site.'

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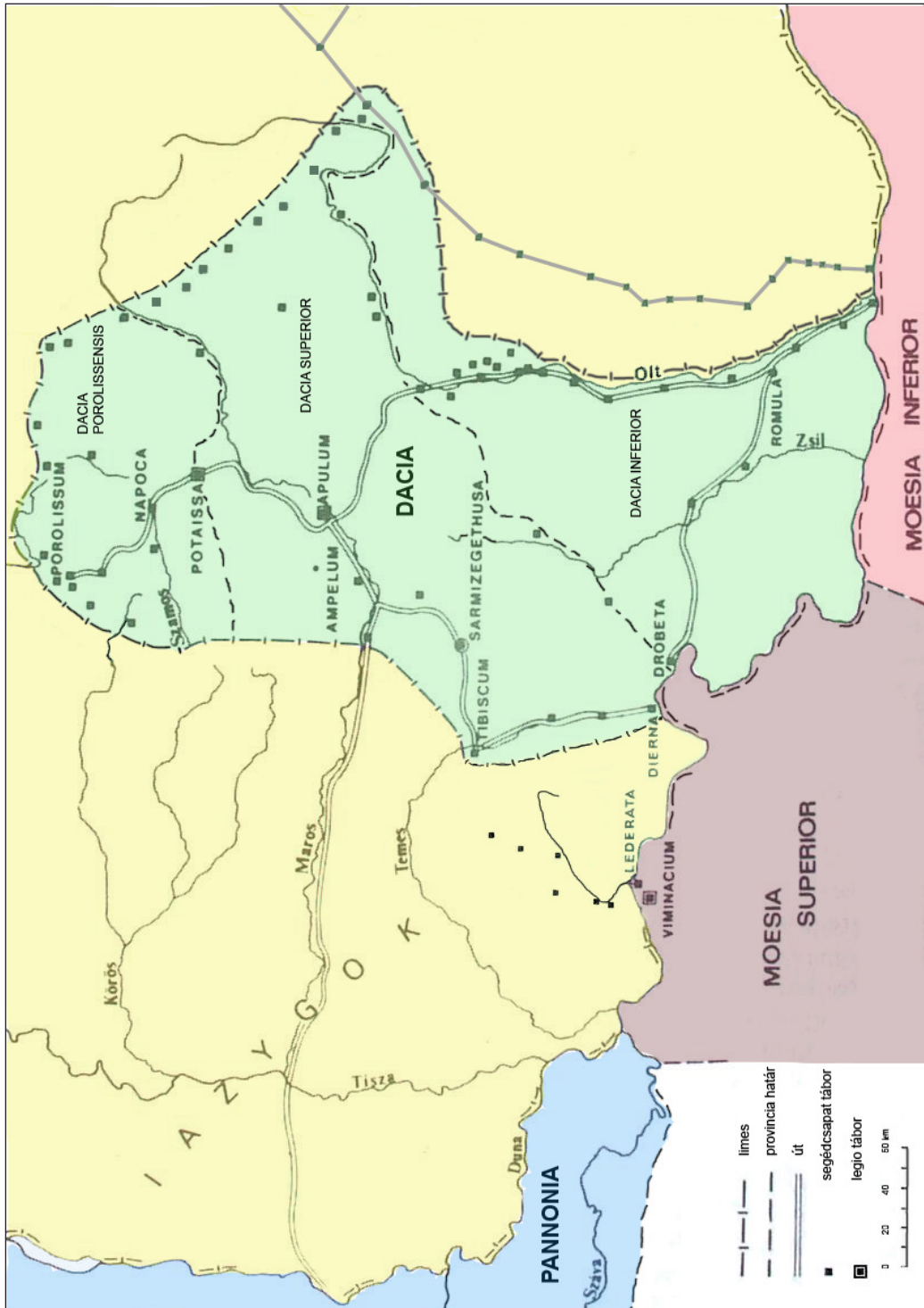
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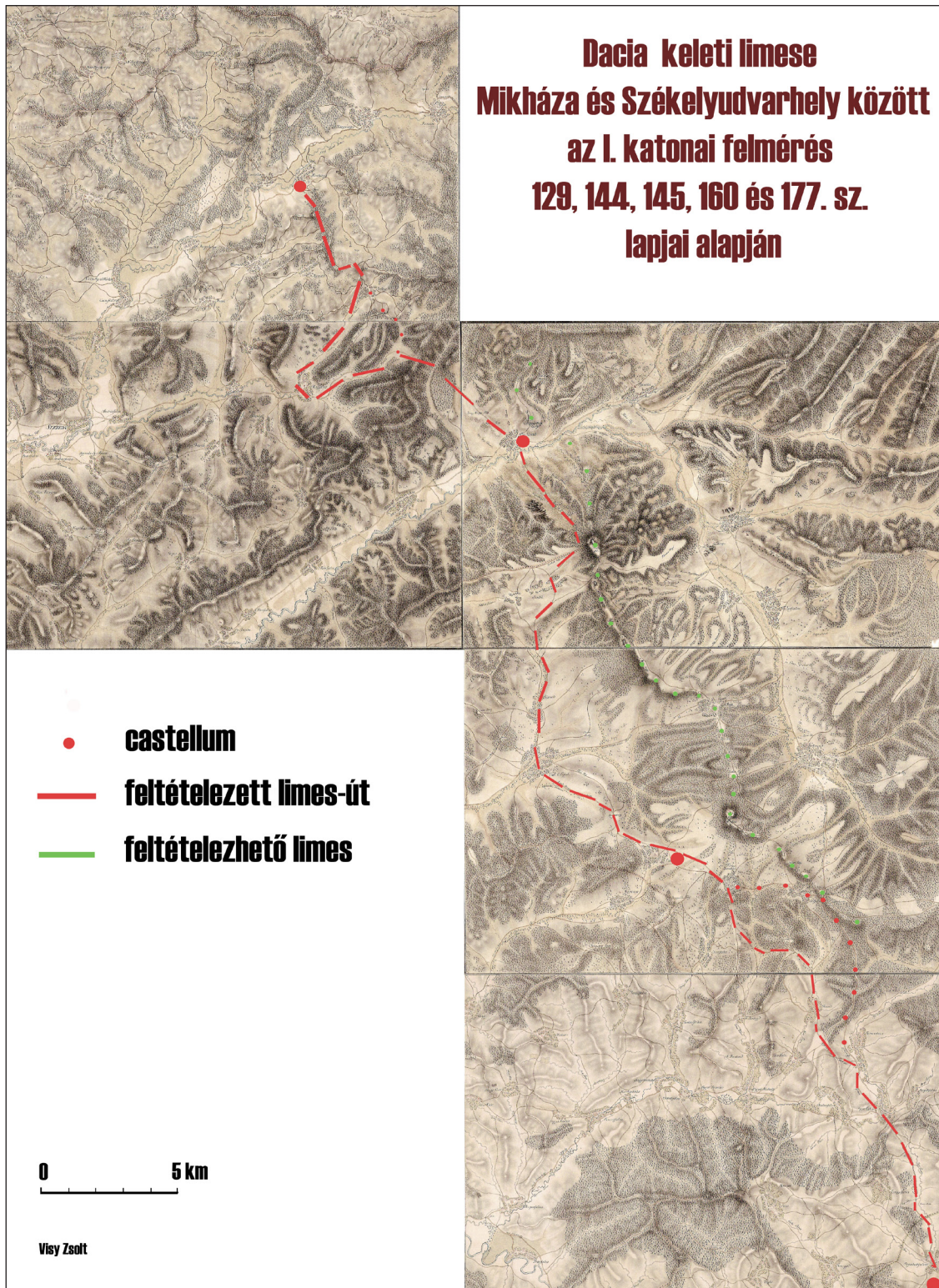
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1. The Roman Empire (based on: Frontiers of the Roman Empire, Culture 2000 programme, with the amendments of Zs. Visy)



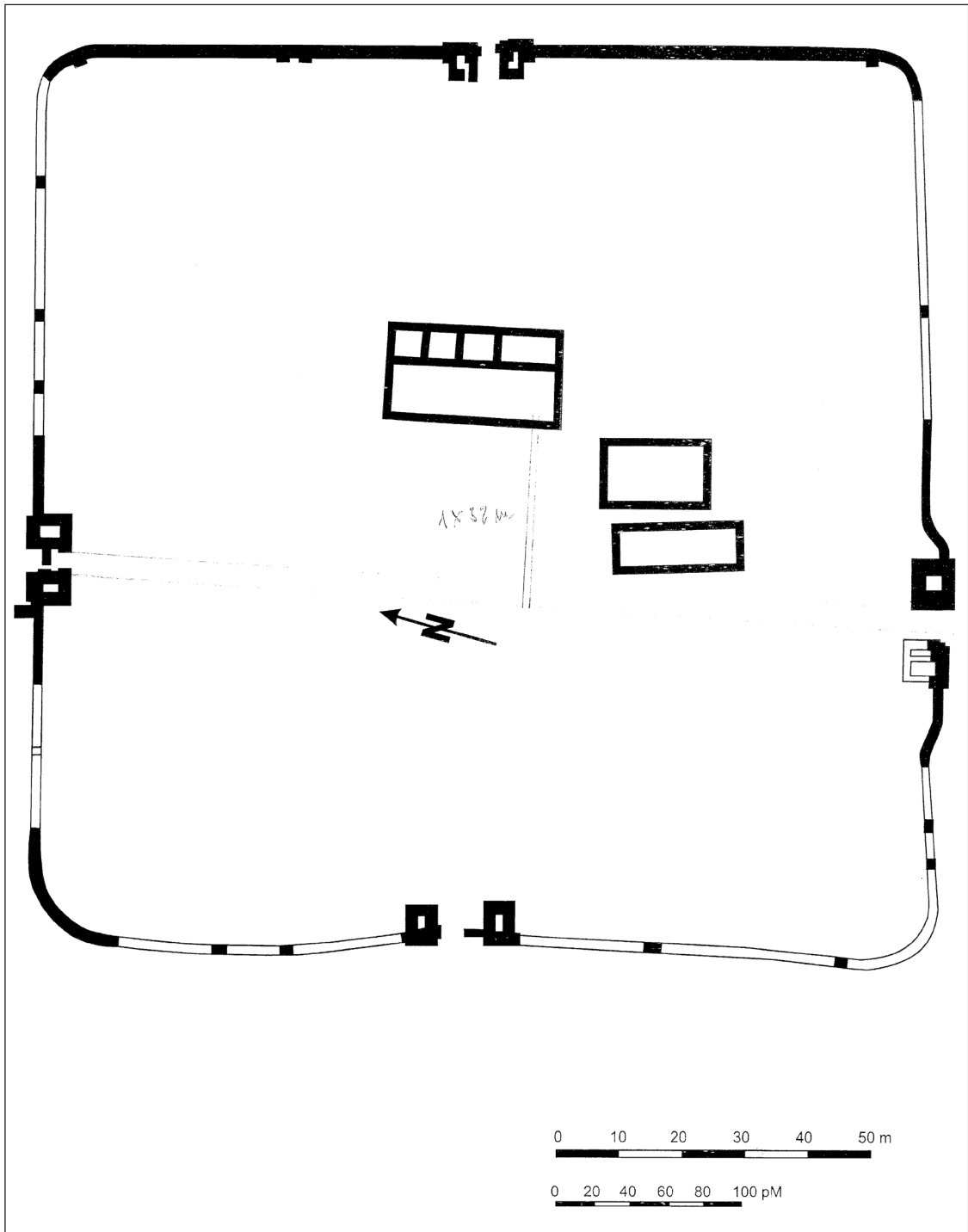
2. Roman Dacia (Zs. Vissy)



3. The eastern limes of Dacia, the section between Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc (not visible on the map, the red mark is not in the correct place) and Mikháza/Călugăreni, based on five sections of the I. Military Survey of the area.



4. Roma watchtower on the Szilasztető (Aerial archaeology Collection, Pécs, 30707, f. M. Szabó)



5. The ground plan of the *castellum* in Énlaka/Inlăceni (N. Gudea, Jahrb. RGZM 44, 2, 1997, redrawn after MARCU 2009)



6. The stamped tile of the *cohors IIII Hispanorum equitata* (exhibition of the Molnár István Museum, Székelykeresztúr/Cristuru Secuiesc)



7. Roman bricks from the bath house of the castellum (*later, tegula, tubulus*) on the fence of a house in Énlaka. (ph. Zs. Visy)



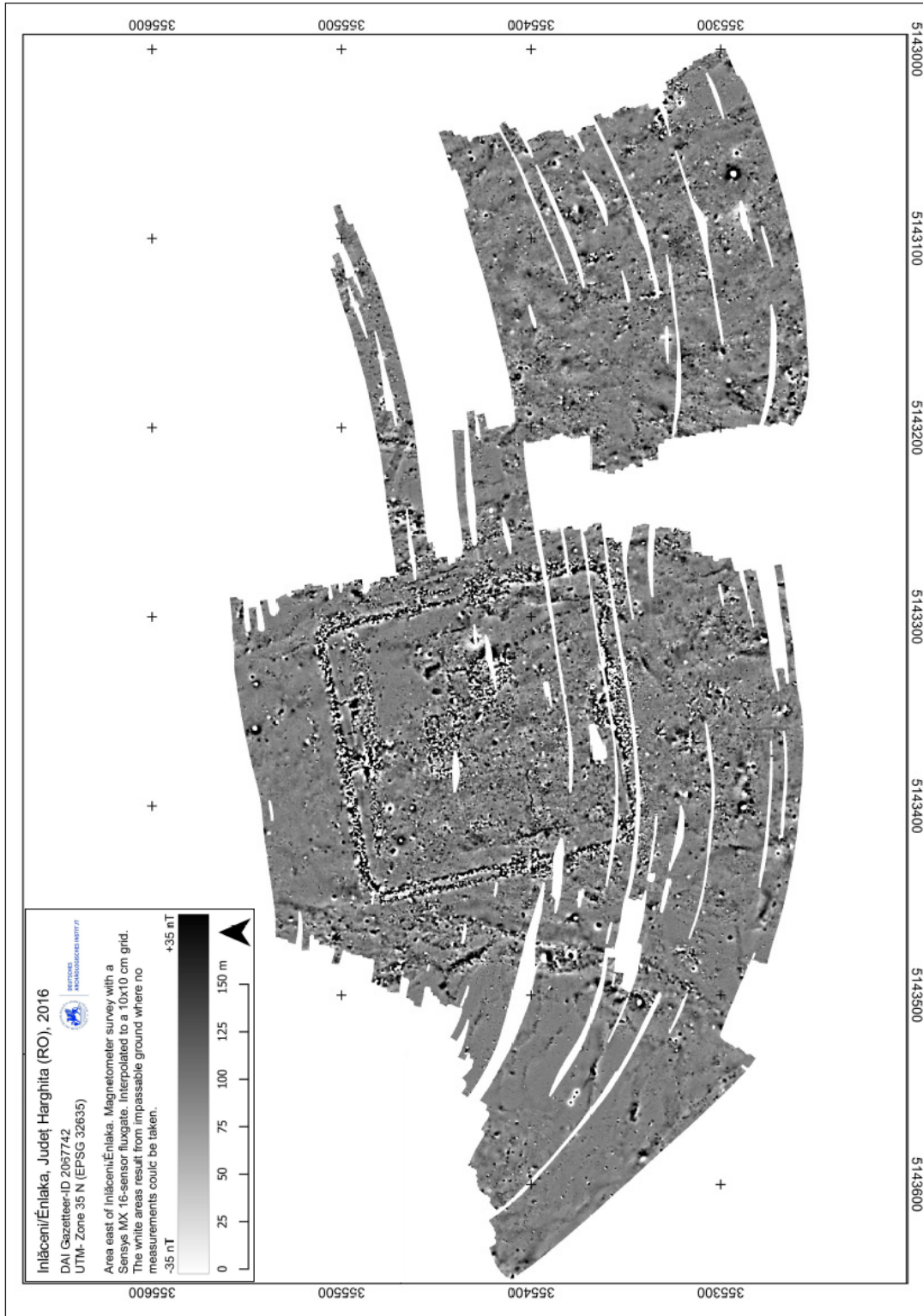
8. Votive altar for Jupiter integrated in the triumphal arch of the church in Énlaka (ph. Zs. Visy)



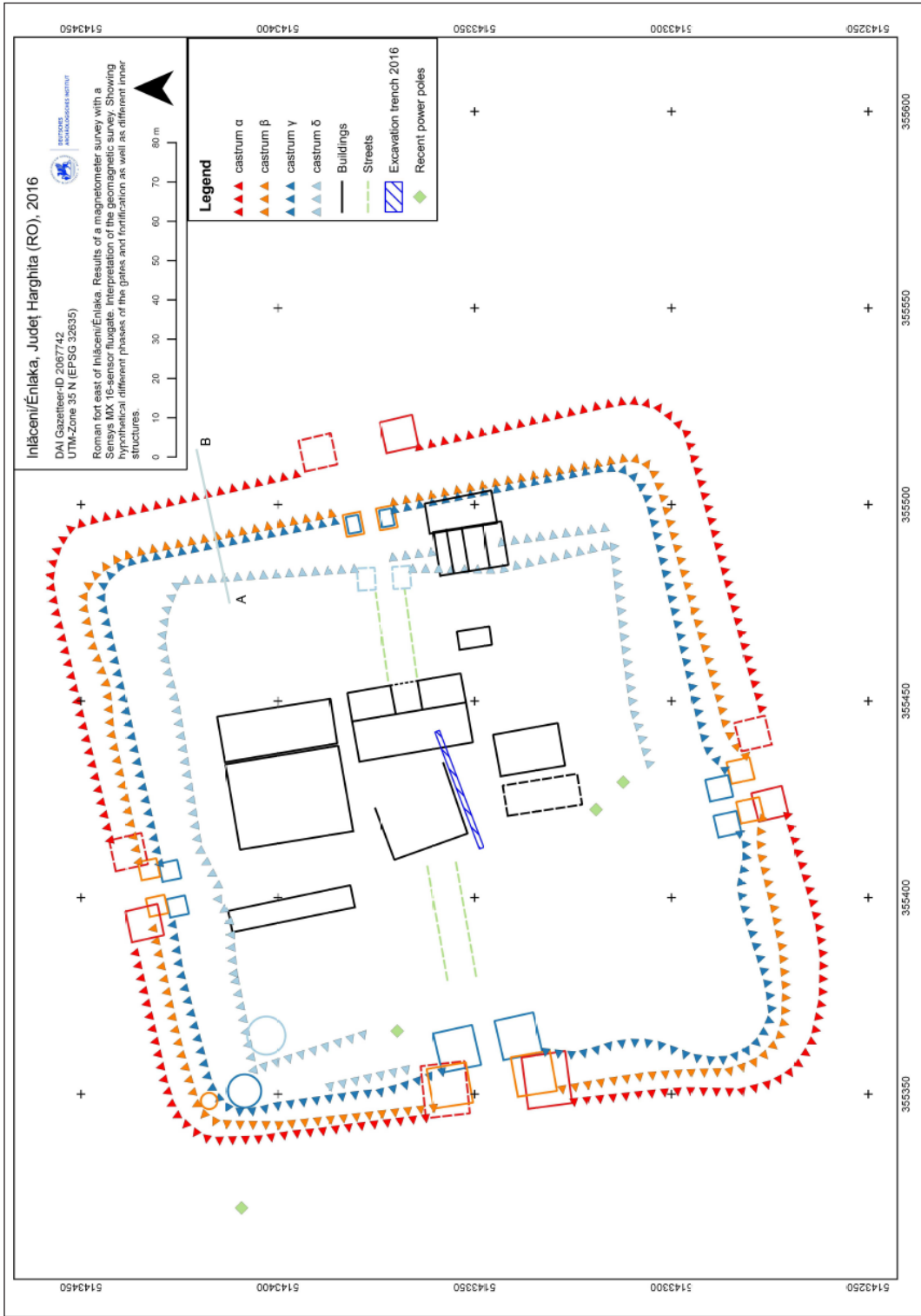
9. Roman altar with faded inscription integrated into the foundation of a house in Énlaka (ph. Zs. Visy)



10. The location of the castellum from Ēnlaka. The bath house was situated in the wedge-shaped lawn (PLT 2008, ph. Zs. Visy)



12. 11 – The result of the geomagnetic survey with the examined areas of the *castellum* and *vicus*



13. 19 – The preliminary interpretation of the geomagnetic survey's results in the *castrum*