
Die größte Fundmenge entfällt auf eine gewölbte Decke mit verschieden geformten Medaillons auf rotem tessellatboden und das geometrische Deckenmuster als Verteilerraum charakterisiert, während Raum 71 mit seinem aufwendigen Dekor zum Verweilen einlud.

The ancient city of Carnuntum is located nearly 40 km outside of Vienna, next to the modern village Petronell-Carnuntum of reuse for modern constructions. Because of these visible monuments, Carnuntum was interesting for researchers who had conducted limited surveys since the beginning of the 20th century. The focus hereby lay on uncovering monuments for the museums and not on examining the cultural history of the place. As recently as 1948 until 1957, comprehensive excavations were carried out by E. Swoboda and his wife R.
The goal was to install an archaeological park; therefore E. Swoboda was searching for walls, instead of layers, and did not continue excavations when he found one. These walls were covered with concrete. As a result, it was not obvious for visitors that they were from different periods. Apart from this, the Pannonian winters with alternating rain and frost caused the complete destruction of the ancient walls mixed with concrete. Thus, a major project was initiated, running from 2001 until 2011, with the aim of revitalising the archaeological park. Hence, the areas have been excavated again, but this time until reaching the last layer without human influence. Additionally, the evaluation of the finds has been launched, including the exploration of the wall paintings. Especially one edifice of the archaeological park, the *villa urbana*, renders very important results regarding Roman painting. Very big fragments had been found in a large hole in the courtyard room 85 of this highly representative building. This hoard was later identified as a filling of a spring, which had been become useless because of a huge earthquake. Due to coins we know that this earthquake approximately occurred in the middle of the 4th century AD, which provides a terminus ante quem for the depictions themselves. Two groups could be classified into ceiling-paintings, as can be seen by marks on their backsides, caused by the wooden slats in the humid mortar.

Only a small amount of the fragments belongs to an octagonal coffered-ceiling-imitation on a flat surface. A blue coffer follows a red one (Abb. 1), both with a yellow-brownish rosette in the middle. The coloured octagons are surrounded by brown dentils and egg-and-dart enrichments and in some areas light brown shadows create three-dimensional volumes. Black astragal motifs with light blue shadow-projections function as separations between the coffers. Comparisons of this system can be found at other places in the Pannonian province in modern Hungary. A hexagonal coffered-ceiling-imitation of brown shades with a very similar rosette and two-dimensional egg-and-dart enrichments was found at Baláca in a villa near Lake Balaton, dating to the 2nd century AD. The rosette consists of serrated petals placed one upon the other. The petals in Carnuntum are heavily simplified, formed by dark brown serpentine stripes. A colourful octagonal coffered-ceiling was installed at the Governor’s Palace at Aquincum, decorating a corridor in the 3rd century AD. Instead of the dentils and egg-and-dart enrichments, green and brown stripes encircle brown coffers with a two-dimensional rosette. The inner circle with an inscribed cross in the middle of the flower is identical to the one at Carnuntum. Around the coffer runs an astragal with brown shadows and, like at Carnuntum, a circle is situated where three astragals come together.

During the excavations in the 1950ies, conducted by R. Swoboda-Milenović, some fragments of this ceiling were found, which were published by H. Brandenstein in an article in 1960. Thanks to the newest investigations and the larger amount of available pieces, her often quoted reconstruction-drawing can now be corrected (Abb. 2). Moreover, it is especially noteworthy that some of our fragments were found to the south of corridor room 81, on the floor of period V at the moment of their demolition, with their upper side on the ground. That is important because in the Severan period (period IV), rooms 81 and 71 had one common wall. In period V room 71 was equipped with a highly representative apse and the corridor was prolonged to the south. A terminus post quem for the decoration itself can be obtained by the fact that some of the fragments were discovered in the south-corridor, in a part that was built up in period V. The terminus ante quem results from their deposition in the fountain filled up with rubble, which was produced by the earthquake around 350 AD. Traces on the ceiling fragments prove that the surface had been roughened for a
repaînting\textsuperscript{23} after an unspecified period. The mixture of plaster contains mainly limestone, for that reason most parts of this new layer are lost due to the dissolution process when lying in the earth. Only a small quantity is left, depicting plants (Abb. 3) and red-brownish circles (Abb. 4). Owing to the perfect conditions, we come to the conclusion that the coffered-ceiling-imitation and its secondary layer were installed in room 81 from the last third of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} until the middle of the 4\textsuperscript{th} century AD\textsuperscript{24}, which corresponds to the Pannonian examples given before.

The larger amount of the finds from the hole belonged to a vaulted ceiling-decoration with picture fields of various dimensions. Circular, semi-circular and rectangular sections are arranged on a red surface and surrounded by blue garlands. Most of them are filled with ornamental motifs, some contain animals. Two water birds are swimming in light blue fields and horses are jumping over plants or agricultural implements. One can determine at least three persons, whereas two of them are definitely winged. Probably used as a middle-medallion was an Eros with a height of approximately 45 cm (Abb. 5). His body is barely covered by a pink cloak and two big brown, yellow and blue wings are growing out of his shoulders. He is flying from left to right, whereby his head is turned to look behind his right shoulder. The target of his view is unknown, but maybe it is one of the other two protagonists. The light blue picture field is framed by a combination of yellow and blue circles, separated by white astragals. The same black area between the light blue ground and the first frame circle can also be seen at Bruckneudorf\textsuperscript{25}, only a few kilometres away from Carnuntum. The Eros of this villa is also standing on a light blue sphere enclosed by a red and blue frame. G. Kieweg-Veters dated this ceiling to the 3\textsuperscript{rd} century AD\textsuperscript{26}, which corresponds with our results. The vaulted ceiling of Carnuntum is composed of mythological figures and many detailed ornaments using a wide range of colours. For this reason, only a highly representative room is worth considering for this decoration\textsuperscript{27} that had been in existence before the earthquake at the middle of the 4\textsuperscript{th} century AD. What immediately comes to mind is the big room 71, which had been remodelled in period V with an apse to make it more prestigious\textsuperscript{28}. The ceiling was possibly redecorated with a new painting at the same time, which would mean that our ceiling had adorned room 71 from the last third of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} until the middle of the 4\textsuperscript{th} century AD.

On account of the earthquake, two ceiling decorations stemming from two rooms of different style, rank and use could be compared in one building and in one period. Room 71 was a highly representative room with a complicated and elaborate ceiling with mythological figures, which invited guests to remain and to observe\textsuperscript{29}. Room 81 was a corridor where one walked through as quickly as possible from one room to another. The character of the room was expressed by its tessellated floor\textsuperscript{30} and the geometric ceiling-pattern which is typical for a side room\textsuperscript{31}. The seismological incident and the newest excavations have provided two key monuments, which are very interesting for other researchers and less secure contexts. Moreover, we now have a better idea of the Roman paintings from Carnuntum and the publications by H. Brandenstein could be corrected in some points. Furthermore, both ceilings offer close parallels to Aquincum, Baláca and Bruckneudorf and seem to represent some regional style, which has to be investigated in-depth. Also relevant for this analysis is a huge complex of wall paintings, found in 2007 in the private bath of the villa urbana. They show three-dimensional architectures and imitations of stucco friezes similar to stuccos and stucco imitations at Baláca\textsuperscript{32}. These fragments will bring out more information about Roman pattern books, the circulation of artisans and the style preferred by Pannonian inhabitants.

\textsuperscript{23} Cf. Ling 1991, 199 fig. 217; Tober 2003, 292; Kieweg-Veters 2008b, 103.
\textsuperscript{24} For the period-classifications cf.: Humeler – Maschek 2007, 48 tab. 1; Maschek 2010, 270 tab. 1.
\textsuperscript{25} Langmann 1979, 111 f. fig. 15; Kieweg-Veters 2008a, 166; Kieweg-Veters 2008b, 99 f. fig. 9.
\textsuperscript{26} Special thanks to G. KIEWEG-VEETERS for this unpublished information.
\textsuperscript{28} Maschek – Humeler 2007, 692; Maschek 2010, 267.
Roman paintings of the *villa urbana* in the civilian city of *Carnuntum* (Lower Austria). A selection


Petznek 2007

Póczy 1958

Rauchenwald 2007

Riedl 2007

Scheibelreiter 2001
V. Scheibelreiter, Studien zu den kaiserzeitlichen Mosaiken Westkleinasien (Diss. Universität Wien 2001).

Scheibelreiter 2010

Scott 1997

Strocka 1975

Swoboda 1948

Swoboda 1958

Thomas 1964

Tober 2003

Tober 2010

Wallace-Hadrill 1988

Wallace-Hadrill 1994

Weber 2001

Zahlhaas 1978

Zanker 1995

Zelle 2002

Zimmermann 2002

Zimmermann – Ladstätter 2010

Žundálek – Žundálekova 2007
Abbildungen

Abb. 1: Red coffer of the coffered-ceiling-imitation with yellow-brownish rosette
Abb. 2: New reconstruction of the coffered-ceiling-imitation of room 81
Abb. 3: Secondary layer in situ at the primary ceiling painting of room 81
Abb. 4: Red and brown circles, secondary layer of room 81
Abb. 5: Vaulted ceiling medallion with flying Eros

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