ARRC – Acculturation, Romanisation, Roman Culture: Processes of Integration Across the Roman Empire

Edited by László Borhy, Kata Dévai, Linda Dobosi, and Csilla Sáró

DISSERTATIONES ARCHAEOLOGICAE
ex Instituto Archaeologico
Universitatis de Rolando Eötvös nominatae



DissArch

Supplementum 5 | 2026

Dissertationes Archaeologicae
ex Instituto Archaeologico
Universitatis de Rolando Eötvös nominatae

Supplementum 5

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ISSN 2064-4574 (online)

Publisher
Lénárt Darázs

The journal is supported by the ELTE Journal Development Fund of Eötvös Loránd University.
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Budapest, 23–25 May 2025



Edited by
László Borhy – Kata Dévai – Linda Dobosi – Csilla Sáró

Budapest, 2026

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Borhy, L. – Dévai, K. – Dobosi, L. – Sáró, Cs. (eds): ARRC – Acculturation, Romanisation, Roman Culture: Processes of Integration Across the Roman Empire. *Dissertationes Archaeologicae Supplementum* 5 (2026) 611–655. 10.17204/dissarch.suppl.5.2026.611

The cult of Roman Mithras in Apulum

Glocality of Roman religion in an urban context

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Received 25 November 2025 | Accepted 12 May 2026 | Published 18 November 2026

Abstract: The Roman cult of Mithras left behind nearly three hundred archaeological monuments and several archaeologically identified sanctuaries within the territory of the province of Dacia between the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. A substantial portion of this material, remarkable both for its quantity on an imperial scale and for its importance in terms of glocal religious appropriation, is concentrated in the area of the twin city of Roman Apulum (modern Alba Iulia, Romania), comprising the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis and the *municipium* Septimium Apulense. The Mithraic corpus represents one of the major sources for the study of the religious life of the twin city. Its detailed analysis sheds light on the local and glocal features of urban religion and the specific forms of religious communication within this context.
The present study summarises the research history of Mithraic studies in Apulum, offers an in-depth examination of several significant case studies, and presents a comprehensive corpus of Mithraic monuments known from the two urban centres.

Keywords: Roman Mithras, Apulum, Dacia, urban religion, CIMRM Supplement

The Roman city of Apulum (Alba Iulia, Romania) was one of the most significant demographic, military, economic, and religious centres of the province of Dacia between CE 106 and 271 (Fig. 1).[1] The presence of the *legio XIII Gemina* and its strategic location along the Mureș Valley (at the midpoint of the *Via Traiana*, which connected the northern and southern parts of the province) made the city one of the most religiously dense areas of the short-lived province of Dacia. The legion was stationed at Apulum almost continuously for about 160 years, and the settlement (the *pagus* that developed one *leuga* south of the *castrum*, later becoming a *municipium* and then a *colonia*)[2] grew and prospered thanks to this permanent military presence, becoming one of the richest and culturally and religiously diverse

1 About the history and evolution of the settlement see: Piso – Diaconescu 1993; Diaconescu 2004; Ota 2012.

2 Piso 1995. A completely different theory on the evolution of the civilian settlement—as a consequence of another legionary fortress—see: Opreanu 1998; Nemeti 2024.

✉ Corresponding author

urban networks in the region. The urban system formed by the *castrum*, the civilian settlement, the governor's palace complex, and the *canabae* (later a *municipium*, i.e., a military settlement), together with the large surrounding *territorium*, constituted the centre of Dacia Superior.[3]

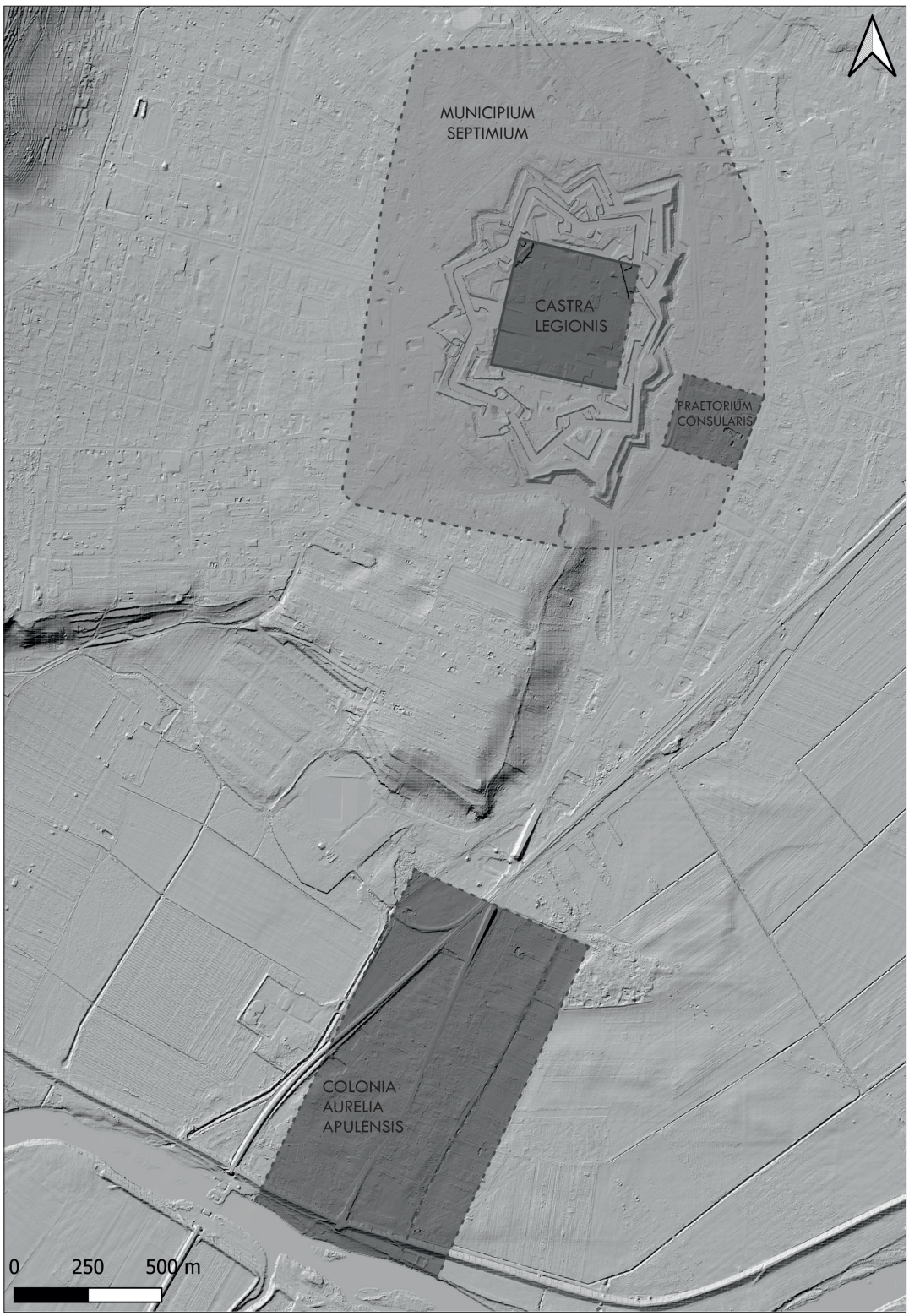


Fig. 1. Topography of ancient Apulum (*colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, *municipium* Septimium Apulense, *praetorium consularis* and *castra legionis*) (map by O. Gyurka).

3 Diaconescu 2004; Oltean 2007, 120.

Of the approximately 1,485 votive inscriptions attested in the province,[4] 474 religious inscriptions come from the twin city of Apulum, representing about 32% of the entire provincial corpus of this kind. The complete corpus of inscribed and figurative votive stone and bronze objects produced at Apulum over a period of scarcely 160 years (around 640 items)[5] is richer than the entire votive material of several other provinces, comparable only to the religious assemblages of Carnuntum (Bad Deutsch-Altenburg, Austria) and Aquincum (Budapest, Hungary) in the neighbouring Pannonia province (Fig. 2).

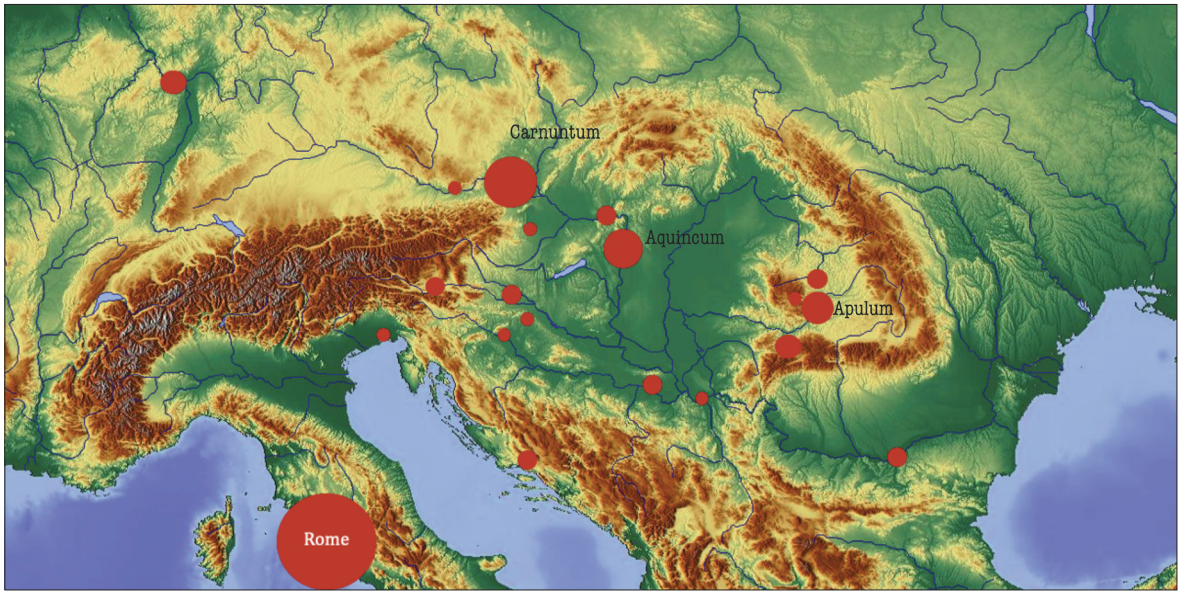


Fig. 2. Roman settlements and their votive inscriptions (after Szabó 2022c).

In this context, the local cult of Mithras must also be interpreted in relation to the exceptionally diverse and rich religious evidence, sacred topography, and pantheon of Apulum. At the same time, its interpretation cannot disregard the imperial and glocal characteristics of the cult.[6]

The cult of Mithras in Dacia: historical and chronological references

In the second half of the first century CE, a new religious movement was created most likely in Rome by an Anatolian (Cilician or Commagenean) group well-versed in Roman, Persian, and Hellenistic religious and astronomic traditions during the late Flavian period or in the time of Nerva (CE 96–98). This new religious movement spread in those regions of the Empire where the mobility and interconnectedness of merchants, tax collectors, and soldiers were especially high.[7] In the half-century following the formative and critical period for the survival of small religious movements (CE 68–90), the cult spread confidently and successfully. This phase of the second-generation of the cult's expansion coincided with the establishment of the province of Dacia, when Emperor

4 The number of votive monuments in the province varies in several statistics. The Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg (EDH) enrolls 1485 votive inscriptions. See also: Varga 2021, 94, Fig. 4 with 1226 votive inscriptions.

5 Szabó *et al.* 2024. Several inscriptions are still unpublished and were recently discovered in the autumn of 2025.

6 About the cult of Mithras see: Clauss 2000; Beck 2006; Bricault – Roy 2021. About the regional features of the cult see: Tóth 2015 and Szabó 2026.

7 Chalupa *et al.* 2024.

Trajan's large-scale administrative, military, and demographic measures brought about a radical transformation of the Danubian region.[8] The appearance of Mithraic communities in the province of Dacia during the reigns of emperor Trajan (98–117) and Hadrian (117–138) most likely represents the second generation of the cult, emerging some 20–30 years after its initial formation. With the establishment of the Apulum *castrum* and the first civilian and military communities between CE 106 and 117, the cult of Mithras presumably also made its appearance. However, the vast majority of Mithraic monuments known from Apulum—and from the province of Dacia as a whole—cannot be dated with precision, with only a few rare exceptions (Cat. II.15).[9] A similar difficulty arises in determining the precise topography of the Mithraic material, particularly in the case of discoveries made during the 18th and 19th centuries, when finds often recovered as *spolia* in secondary contexts provide no reliable topographical information.[10]

The diffusion of the Mithraic cult in Dacia—and within it, at Apulum—cannot be reconstructed within a local historical framework; only its broader macro-historical context can be inferred. The appearance of the cult in Dacia naturally followed the Trajanic foundation of the province, spreading primarily toward the end of Trajan's reign and the beginning of Hadrian's, and likely disappearing by the end of the Severan period, in the mid-third century. The final phases of the four archaeologically documented *mithraea* in Dacia can, without exception, be dated to the middle or the last third of the 3rd century.[11]

Research history

The rediscovery of Mithraic monuments from Apulum likely started during the Middle Ages, presumably in the period of major urban transformations associated with the Árpád dynasty (11th–13th centuries).[12] Evidence for this is provided by the *mithraeum* discovered in 2008 and excavated between 2013 and 2016 within the territory of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense (Cat. IV), where a medieval sunken house was found within the area of the Roman sanctuary.[13] The complete absence of figurative stone monuments from the sanctuary also suggests that they may have disappeared during this same period. Several Mithraic monuments are known among the decorative elements of Renaissance and early modern Alba Iulia's representative spaces; these were likely discovered or reused in the construction of new monumental buildings within the fortress area during the 16th–17th centuries, in the era of the Principality of Transylvania (Cat. II.22, III.9). These inscriptions and objects likewise indicate that numerous Mithraic sanctuaries once stood in the territory of Apulum, which was systematically plundered and whose rich stone material has been reused since the Middle Ages.

With the Habsburg conquest of Transylvania and the construction of Alba Iulia's Vauban-type fortress, as well as the establishment of the riverside port and salt office along the Mureș in the 18th century, the number of Mithraic finds from Apulum increased (Figs 3–4).[14] Among these, the rich

8 Piso 2008.

9 About the chronology of the Mithraic finds in Dacia and Apulum see: Sicoe 2014, 111–112 and Szabó 2015a, 408–410.

10 Szabó 2015a, 409–411.

11 McCarty *et al.* 2020, 124.

12 On a general overview of reception of Roman religion in Apulum see: Szabó 2014.

13 McCarty *et al.* 2019; McCarty *et al.* 2020.

14 A detailed account of the 18th century Mithras research in Transylvania: Szabó 2022a. CIL III, 1111 = CIMRM 1968 = IDR III/5, 354 was discovered by Ariosti in the ruins of a temple. It is uncertain, if this dedication of Sol Invictus is a Mithraic inscription and Ariosti attested the first *mithraeum* of Apulum. No detailed description of this rare inscription is known today.

and impressive epigraphic and figurative material of the so-called Kastal Mithraeum (Sanctuary I)[15] stands out, as well as the appearance in the scholarly literature of two monumental Mithraic reliefs, whose findspots and discovery dates remain unknown (Cat. III.3, III.5). These large, panelled reliefs—and the establishment of the Batthyaneum and Brukenthal museums, which first housed them—played a significant role in the history of research on the cult of Mithras in Transylvania and in Central and Eastern Europe more broadly.[16] The railway constructions and the expansion of the lower town during the 19th century, within the area of the governor's palace and the civilian settlement (*colonia* Aurelia Apulensis), contributed to the emergence of urban archaeology and rescue excavations, as well as to the establishment of the first museum in Alba Iulia—an achievement to which Béla Cserni made an enduring and indispensable contribution.[17] Between the 1850s and 1918, numerous significant Mithraic finds came to light, among which the so-called Pap Károly "*mithraeum*" (Sanctuary II) stands out, as well as a large Mithraic relief that even attracted the attention of Franz Cumont (Cat. III.4).[18] Among the major 19th-century collections and catalogues (Seel, Hammer-Purgstall, Müller, Lajard),[19] the catalogue of F. Cumont—the leading figure in Mithras research—stands out, as it represents the first systematic treatment of the monuments known at the time from Apulum.[20] Cumont personally visited Alba Iulia and examined the monuments of Apulum first-hand.[21]



Fig. 3. Drawing of a Mithras relief from Apulum in Hene 1836 (photo: Szabó 2022a, Fig. 3).

With the radical political and cultural changes following 1918, the museum in Alba Iulia remained closed for a long time, resulting in a troubled fate for the finds discovered between 1918 and 1945. Among these, note should be made of the so-called Oancea Mithraeum, discovered in 1930 within the territory of *municipium* Septimium Apulense, along with its rich assemblage; unfortunately, without proper documentation and excavation, very little information is available regarding its precise topography and chronology (Cat. I.7, I.8, I.11, II.17–21, II.27, III.2, and III.16).[22] There would still have been an opportunity to carry out a precise investigation of the topography of the Oancea Mithraeum even in the 1970s, when another fragment of a Mithraic relief was discovered in the area. Unfortunately, however, no such research was ever undertaken in the decades following the 1930s (Cat. III.10). During the communist period (1945–1989), the most significant study was conducted by M. J. Vermaseren, who visited the site of Alba Iulia in the summer of 1958,[23] accompanied by Constantin Daicoviciu. His work was later followed by Ion Berciu and Cloșca Băluță, two leading archaeologists of

15 Detailed presentation of the discovery: Szabó 2013.

16 Szabó 2022a.

17 Szabó 2016; Szabó 2022b.

18 Ciobanu 1994; Popescu 2000; Szabó *et al.* 2014; Szabó 2015b.

19 Seel 1823; Hammer-Purgstall 1833; Müller 1833; Lajard 1840.

20 Cumont 1896, Cat. nos 194–202.

21 Popescu 2000.

22 Christescu 1933, 624; Daicoviciu 1941, 308.

23 CIMRM II, preface; Popa 1977, 143.

the local museum.[24] From this period, the studies of Alexandru Popa are also of considerable importance.[25]

The exact topographical context of the large altar discovered in the 1990s within the area of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis is unknown (Cat. III.24), but it was presumably part of a nearby sanctuary. In the early 2000s, new finds discovered near the sanctuary of Liber Pater—located in the north-western part of the *colonia*, close to the city wall and to the extra-*muros* area where an Asklepieion had been established—were long thought to indicate the presence of a new Mithraic sanctuary. However, excavations carried out in 2014–2015 did not confirm the existence of such a sanctuary in the vicinity of the Liber Pater complex (Cat. II.6, II.7).[26] The work of Ioan Pioariu and Gabriel Sicoe between 2001 and 2014 is noteworthy for their synthetic character, while the first author of the present study has addressed the cult of Mithras at Apulum in several publications since 2012.



Fig. 4. Drawing of a Mithras relief from Apulum in Hene 1836 (Photo: Szabó 2022a, Fig. 4).

The most significant discovery after the Oancea Mithraeum—and the only Mithraic sanctuary in the city of Apulum to have been systematically excavated—was uncovered in 2008 and excavated between 2013 and 2016 in the territory of the *canabae* or *municipium* Septimium (Sanctuary IV and Cat. II.1–5). This discovery once again brought Apulum's rich Mithraic material culture to the forefront of scholarly research, inspiring several important studies on the subject over the past decade.[27] Unfortunately, following the 2016 excavation season, the sanctuary has not yet been restored or made accessible for the public.

Material agency: figurative and epigraphic sources

Due to the complex historiographical and topographical difficulties outlined above, the precise number of Mithraic monuments from Apulum remains a matter of debate in the scholarly literature. In many cases, the provenance of the objects is uncertain (for example, items discovered within the *territorium* of Apulum, such as those from Vinţu de Jos (Alvinc), which may in fact have originated from the city itself, or the well-known relief from Doştat.[28] In other instances, the Mithraic character of certain objects or inscriptions is ambiguous or open to question.[29] Unfortunately, most of the objects cannot be unequivocally associated with a specific sanctuary or religious community, which complicates their broader interpretation in terms of archaeology of religion and

24 Berciu – Petolescu 1976; Şerban – Băluţă 1979.

25 Popa 1977.

26 Haynes 2005; Diaconescu *et al.* 2014.

27 McCarty *et al.* 2019; McCarty *et al.* 2020.

28 Sicoe 2014, Cat. 188, 189, and 194. Could belong also to colonia Sarmizegetusa or Apulum or perhaps, an in situ find in the rural area of Dostat.

29 CIMRM 1946, 1952, 1966–1971, 1978, 1983–84, 1989–90, 1995–99.

human agency. However, recent research has shed light on several plausible connections that have allowed scholars to link a number of these objects to particular sanctuary communities with considerable certainty. This has provided a new interpretative framework for understanding the Mithraic material from Apulum.

The Mithraic finds from Apulum were first systematically collected and catalogued by Franz Cumont,[30] yet this corpus expanded considerably over the course of his long career during the first half of the twentieth century. The catalogue published by Maarten Jozef Vermaseren in 1960, a number of debated Mithraic objects were included.[31] In his 2001 study, Ioan Pioariu sought to assemble all Mithraic monuments known up to that time,[32] a task later undertaken by Gabriel Sicoe who incorporated new scholarly perspectives as well.[33] Research and discoveries over the past decade have rendered Sicoe's catalogue outdated. Accordingly, the following analysis presents the corpus of objects from the urban area of Apulum that can be confidently identified as Mithraic, considering also the most recent findings.

By comparing the number of large reliefs (cult images) and Mithras Petrogenitus statues with antiquarian reports and archaeological excavations, it can be stated with reasonable certainty that at least five or six *mithraea* existed in the conurbation of Apulum. Information is available for the following sites:[34] the so-called Kastal Mithraeum (Cat. I), Pap Mithraeum (Cat. II), Oancea Mithraeum (Cat. III), and Vitalis Mithraeum (Cat. IV) are the main possible sites identified. Among the tauroctony depictions that served as the *signum*, or central cult image of the sanctuaries (statues and reliefs; Cat. I.1, III.1–5 and perhaps III.10), only the statue of Secundinus (Kastal Mithraeum) and the central cult image of the Oancea Mithraeum can be securely associated with a sanctuary context; the provenance of the others remains unknown. From the Vitalis Mithraeum and the Pap Mithraeum within the *colonia*, no central relief can be confidently assigned to a particular sanctuary, although it is not excluded that the known large-scale reliefs may originally have stood in these sanctuaries. The Mithraic objects from the sanctuary discovered around 1782 by Franciscus Kastal were documented in detail by Bartalis Antal. The Mithras finds held in the Brukenthal Collection in Sibiu are presumed to have all originated from Apulum, although the precise provenance of two Mithras Petrogenitus statues (Cat. I.2–5) and a statue base featuring a Mithras riding a bull-relief remains unknown.[35] The central cult image *(signum)* of the Kastal Mithraeum represented the only tauroctony in the province of Dacia rendered in statuary form. Its closest analogy is known from the Symphorus Mithraeum in Aquincum, while no other comparable examples are known from Dacia.[36] Together with the statue, a three-register, relatively small relief presumably from the same sanctuary fits well within the typology of the complex reliefs known from Apulum in terms of iconographic program (see Cat. III.1, 2, 3, 5, 10, but also III.12 and III.15).[37] The Mithras Petrogenitus representations probably from Apulum, which became part of the former Brukenthal Museum collection at the end of the 18th century, display a different iconography.

30 Cumont 1896, 308–317, Cat. 192–203.

31 CIMRM 1934–2004. The presence of a possible sanctuary of Sol, as Sun god and another of Bonus Puer confused Vermaseren, who interpreted numerous inscriptions of these gods as Mithraic.

32 Pioariu 2001. Important addition to the catalogue the epigraphic corpus of Apulum published by Ioan Piso in 2001: IDR III/5, Vol. 1.

33 Sicoe 2014, 144–166, Cat. 16–55.

34 This number is not surprising in a double town such as Apulum. For analogy see the case of Poetovio (at least four sanctuaries) and Aquincum (at least six sanctuaries): Szabó *et al.* 2025.

35 It is not impossible, that one of the representations of Mithras Petrogenitus and the statue base is part of the Kastal Mithraeum.

36 Szabó 2013.

37 Sicoe 2014, 119–120.

In one statue (Cat. I.3), the snake climbs the birth rock toward Mithras' genitals, and the deity is visible only from the groin up. In the other, more finely and elaborately crafted statue (Cat. I.4), Mithras emerges almost to the knees from the life-giving rock, with the snake resting at his feet. The two statues, differing in iconography, likely belonged to different sanctuaries, making their identification with the Kastal Mithraeum uncertain at present. In the so-called Kastal Mithraeum, the three-register complex relief and a medium-sized statue base were dedicated by the same individuals: Euthices and his patrons, Marcus Aurelius Timotheus and Marcus Aurelius Maximus. Together with Secundinus, the donor of the *signum*, they presumably formed a single religious community. The Mithras Bouklopos statue base (Cat. II.26) in the Brukenthal Museum from Sibiu shows strong similarities with a column base also from Apulum, although both were likely situated in different sanctuaries (Cat. II.25).

Three inscriptions are associated with the so-called Pap Mithraeum.[38] A distinctive feature of these inscriptions is that two of them were dedicated by the same individual, Dioscurus, with identical dedications (Cat. II.12–13). From this sanctuary context identified in the mid-nineteenth century, no figurative monuments are known; however, in his publication, Károly Torma mentions a fragment of a relief and a statue fragment in addition to the altars of Chrestion and Dioscurus, which he allegedly found in the garden of Károly Pap.[39] Dioscurus' votive column is not unique among the Mithraic monuments of Apulum: a dedication inscribed on a column is also attested in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum (Cat. II.27), and a column fragment can be presumed on one of the monuments depicting Mithras riding the bull (Cat. II.25). A distinctive feature of the so-called Pap Mithraeum is that the sides of the two altars are decorated with reliefs (a dolphin and a sacrificial jug), for which no analogy has been found in other case studies from Apulum. The altars from the Pap Mithraeum are similar in size, letter type, and decorative technique, so they were likely the products of the same workshop.

The so-called Oancea Mithraeum is one of the richest Mithraic sanctuaries in Apulum. Despite its undocumented nature, it can be established that the sanctuary was built in the 2nd century CE and was primarily used by a military community. Reliefs, statues, and inscriptions have been recovered from the prospective site of the sanctuary. Its three-registered, panelled cult relief is considered a medium-sized one in comparison to the large cult images of Dacia (Cat. III.2). Several other figurative representations of the tauroctony from the sanctuary are also known (Cat. III.8, 16). A notable feature of the sanctuary inventory is the presence of two large statues of torchbearers (Cat. I.7–8), like in the *mithraeum* in Sarmizegetusa. This follows a distinctive local iconographic type reflecting the glocal character of the cult: Cautes holds a *bucranium* and Cautopates a scorpion in his hand.[40] An interesting aspect of the sanctuary's finds is the discovery of a Jupiter altar within this context, which Richard Gordon interpreted as *spolium*; however, Jupiter appears on multiple occasions within the Mithras pantheon.[41]

The so-called Vitalis Mithraeum is the only one excavated systematically (Cat. IV); however, its sculptural material is unknown. Its epigraphic corpus (Cat. II.1–5) highlights the role of the *publicum Portorium Illyrici* and the human agency of the customs system in the Mithras cult, as repeatedly emphasised in the literature, as well as the prominent significance of the local priesthood *(flaminia)* in Dacia within Mithraic communities.[42]

38 About a recently identified column see: Szabó *et al.* 2016.

39 Torma 1863, 134. The identification of the relief and statue is impossible at the moment, as Torma didn't publish drawings or photograph and didn't provide a detailed presentation of the finds.

40 Szabó 2015c.

41 Gordon 2009. See also: Bonnet 2021.

42 Egri *et al.* 2018.

Among the Mithras monuments discovered within the urban area of Apulum but lacking contextual provenance, the most prominent are the sculptural representations of Mithras Petrogenitus (Cat. I.2–6) and several presumed torsos of the torchbearers (Cat. I.7–10 and perhaps I.12–13). The iconographic characteristics of these objects demonstrate, on the one hand, the unique, workshop-independent nature of the sanctuaries (each Petrogenitus depiction is entirely different and singular) and, on the other hand, provide examples for the visual particularities of glocality. As in other communities of the empire, the Mithraic communities of Apulum selectively adapted from the multiple narrative episodes of the Mithras myth, resulting in complex reliefs that are unique creations and exemplars of religious glocalisation. Specific features include the depiction of Helios' solar nimbus, with one ray pointing toward Mithras' face on several reliefs (Cat. III.4–5), Mithras riding the bull and the unique representation of the bull's capture on two anepigraphic statue bases (Cat. II.25–26), as well as the torchbearers depicted with a bull's head and a scorpion (Cat. I.7–10). These elements reflect the distinctive appropriations and religious glocalisation characteristic of Apulum workshops, while simultaneously indicating connections with Italian, Pannonian, and Germanic networks.[43] Due to the early disturbance and destruction of the sanctuaries, the Apulum corpus lacks figurative small finds and frescoes, and thus no relevant sources attest their presence or use. The new sanctuary discovered in 2008 did not significantly alter this situation (Cat. IV).

Divine agency: forms and names of Mithras

Mithras, as a divine agent, appears in numerous forms on the monuments of Apulum. Many episodes of the deity's presumed myth are depicted on the large, panelled reliefs from the conurbation, as well as on other statues and statue bases (e.g., Cautes with a *bucranium*, Cautopates holding a scorpion, Mithras riding the bull). The extremely varied representations, arguably the richest in Dacia, reflect the theological knowledge of the founders of the Mithraic communities in Apulum and likely indicate a direct network associated with the founding generation. The theonyms attested in the epigraphic sources (altars, statue bases, columns, reliefs, and statues) also present a highly diverse picture. The name of the principal deity appears in numerous forms: Sol Deus Invictus Mithras, Deus Sol Invictus Mithras, Sol Invictus Mithras, Deus Invictus Mithras, Sol Mithras, Sol Invictus Mytra, Invictus Mythra, Deus Mithras, Invictus Deus, Numen Invictus, Transitus Dei. The names of the torchbearers, Cautes and Cautopates, are attested on three inscriptions (Cat. II.3, II.6, II.22). Among the material associated with the so-called Oancea Mithraeum is also an altar dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, though its precise interpretation is impossible due to the lack of contextual information. In contrast to the examples from Sarmizegetusa and Aquincum, the Apulum corpus entirely lacks theonyms associated with Persianism (e.g., Arimanius, Nabarze)[44] as well as other deities that appear relatively frequently elsewhere (e.g., Mercurius). A distinctive feature of the Apulum material is the Hellenised forms of names: Mytra, Mythra, and the deity is even mentioned in Greek (Cat. III.13). The four altars referring to the deity as Mytra and Mythra, discovered in and around the so-called Pap Mithraeum between 1852 and 1867, may indicate a specific naming practice by a Hellenised provincial community, possibly from Moesia Inferior, Thracia, or Syria (Cat. II.9, 12, 13, 14). See also Cat. II.19.

Human agency: the Mithraic communities

From the dual city of Apulum, 27 men dedicating to Mithras are known, while on numerous inscriptions and sculptural monuments the dedicator remains unnamed. Taking into account

43 Szabó 2015a; Szabó 2015b.

44 Gordon 2017.

analogies and the two detailed Mithras albums (Virunum and Sentinum),[45] as well as the five or six sanctuaries that likely existed in Apulum, it can be estimated that each generation may have included at least 50–60, and possibly up to 100–150 individuals affiliated with the cult. Compared to the total population of the dual city, however, this represents a very small proportion, approximately 1–2%.

The Mithraic communities of Apulum varied in size, and their social composition reflected the broader society of Apulum. Among the Mithras dedicators, one individual of senatorial rank is attested (Cat. II.15.), a rare occurrence not only provincially but also across the Danubian region.[46] Marcus Valerius Maximianus, the *legatus legionis* of the *legio XIII Gemina* around 181/82 CE provides an excellent example of the role of personal networks in local religious appropriation and the expression of individual religious identity. The son of a prominent magistrate from Poetovio (Ptuj, Slovenia), he was likely initiated into the mysteries of Mithras for the first time in his native town. His subsequent career from Poetovio to Germania, Apulum, and Lambesis attests to a sustained loyalty to this group religion. In addition to several dedications, which reinforced both his *homo novus* status and his fidelity to the imperial family, he is also considered the first known adept of Jupiter Depulsor in Africa, thereby contributing to the spread of this cult.[47] His personally chosen favourite divinities became popular and persistent in those parts of the Empire where he was stationed for a short period of time. This suggests that the criticised theory of 'prophets' within small-group religions[48] is still plausible, but one can replace this Judeo-Christian notion by the charismatic religious entrepreneur model of Weber.[49] The case of Marcus Valerius Maximianus shows that personal charisma, individual power and respect of a senator could help or serve as a catalyst in the diffusion and stability of a cult and even in forming religious groups, as the case of the House of the Tribunus Laticlavius in Aquincum also shows.[50] The level of individual choice and innovation of senators in the spread of these cults is contested, and, due to the lack of sources, we cannot affirm whether their personal pantheon was indeed accepted by a later group or whether it should be interpreted as a general tendency of religious thought and diffusionism.[51] An interesting issue, which is hard to solve, is the role of senators in the interior hierarchy of the Mithraic groups. In any case, the example of Marcus Valerius Maximianus shows the opposite of what we observe in the religious life of the senatorial elite in the conurbation of Apulum: as a Mithras worshipper, he must be an active member of a group, interacting directly and very personally with soldiers or civilians, much 'lower' categories of society. His charisma, fame and power were transformed into a more personalised, intimate power of forming and shaping groups by direct interaction and conviviality, which made him probably the most 'visible' senator within the conurbation, the others being characterised by an unattainable and invisible attitude.[52]

45 Clauss 2000, 139; Chalupa 2006.

46 About Maximianus, as a Mithraic see: Szabó 2018, 106–110; Kovács 2024.

47 Várhelyi 2010, 147–148.

48 On the idea and historiography of small-group religions, see: Tóth 1992. He uses the word 'apostol', which obviously sounds anachronistic in this context. R. Gordon highly criticised this theory of the important role of the senatorial elite in the formation of Mithraic groups within the military groups, although he admitted that some cases, such as the group in the 'House of the Laticlavi' from Aquincum prove this: Gordon 2009. On the senators and Mithraism in Aquincum, see also: Alföldy 1963, 73–74.

49 Rüpke 1996; Winkler 2010, 32.

50 Kocsis 1991; Gordon 2009, 407.

51 Várhelyi 2010, 147–149.

52 It is important to mention, however, that there are no literary or archaeological sources on the frequency of Mithraic gatherings, meeting or events. During his short stay in Apulum, Marcus Valerius Maximianus probably met his Mithraic brothers several times.

The military, long considered in the literature as one of the main social drivers of the spread of the Mithras cult,[53] appears only marginally in the inscriptions, primarily in the context of the so-called Oancea Mithraeum (Cat. II.17,19, III.2), which was established within the *canabae* of the later *municipium* Septimium Apulense.

Among the Mithras members, however, there are attestations of an *Augustalis*, a *decurio*, several *flamines* (Cat. II.1, 24).[54] and a *beneficiarius*. In numerous cases, the inscriptions reveal the relationships between freedmen and their patrons (Cat. II.8, 13, III.1), supporting Roger Beck's and others' theory that personal, familial, friendly, and professional (occupational and economic) networks played an essential role in the establishment and maintenance of Mithras communities.[55]

The prominence of personal connections is further indicated by the large number of joint dedications. It is noteworthy that some individuals, such as Dioscurus and Vitalis, enriched the inventory of a given sanctuary with multiple objects, playing a decisive role in shaping and maintaining the sacralised space of the sanctuary interior. Similarly significant were figures like Secundinus or Eutiches, who donated large-scale tauroctony depictions (statues and reliefs) to their sanctuary communities, and Statorius, who financed the restoration of a sanctuary at his own expense. Based on a new inscription discovered in 2003 we were able to identify Lucius Octavius Gratus, *Augustalis coloniae* on two different inscriptions (Cat. II.6, III.14).

Although Marcus Valerius Maximianus' *cursus honorum*, imperial-level mobility, and network are exceptional due to his social status, the use of Greek onomastics by several Mithras dedicators suggests that some community members may have originated from Hellenised provinces (Moesia Inferior, Thracia, Syria). The appearance of Cautes depicted with a *bucranium* in Boppard further underscores the significant impact of military dislocations and mobility of members of Mithraic communities. While the topography of the sanctuaries is known in only one case, south of the *castrum*, in a densely inhabited sector of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense between the cemetery and the fort (Cat. IV), the approximate find locations make it clear that the sanctuaries were not established near the representative, central spaces of the twin city but rather within domestic, residential areas.

At the same time, they were situated in visible, frequented, and densely populated locations, confirming the cult's discreet but non-secret character. The Mithras communities in Apulum thus formed an integral part of the local urban religious landscape, and their material and human agency reflects the characteristics of citification, which could not have emerged without the city's resources, commercial activity, and economic and architectural density and intensity.[56] The individual and group dynamics emerging from the epigraphic material may indicate competition, rivalry, and internal group dynamics within the sanctuary communities that went beyond the formal social hierarchy. However, the details of these interactions cannot be reconstructed due to the limited nature of the sources (Tab. 1).

Lived religion and the limits of cognitive religion

Among contemporary approaches to Mithraic studies, the lived ancient religion perspective and the extensive application of cognitive science of religion stand out.[57] Both methodological approaches aim to illuminate the ritual world of *mithraea*, the individual and communal experience, the litur-

53 A revision of this theory: Gordon 2009.

54 See also: Sicoe 2014, Cat. 63.

55 Beck 1996.

56 About the notion see: Rüpke 2020; Rüpke – Urciuoli 2023.

57 On lived religion see: Dirven 2015; Rüpke 2018, 313–318; Szabó 2018, 98–120. On cognitive aspects: Misic 2015; Martin 2015; Panagiotidou – Beck 2017; Misic – Graham 2024.

gical sphere, the evolution of religious communication strategies, and sensory changes, although their methodological frameworks differ significantly. While certain aspects of the lived ancient religion approach, such as religious appropriation, embodiment, and the sociological dimensions of religious communication,[58] can be studied within the context of Roman provincial archaeology in Central and Eastern Europe, the cognitive dimensions of religion are considerably more difficult to investigate in this setting and largely remain limited to the speculative application of contemporary theoretical frameworks and the enumeration of hypotheses.

Tab. 1. List of dedicators attested in inscriptions from Apulum and its surrounding *territorium.*

	Name	Place	function	divinity	Bibliography	Notes
1	[Sec]undinus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (colonia)	unknown	Sol Deus Invictus Mithras tauroctony	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 16 = CIMRM 1947–48	—
2	Euthices	Apulum – Alba Iulia (colonia)	*libertus*	Deus Sol Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 17, 20 = CIMRM 1935–36, 1937	See nr. 10 and 11.
3	Marcus Aurelius Thimotheus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (colonia)	*patronus*	Deus Sol Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 17, 20 = CIMRM 1935–36, 1937	See nr. 9 and 11.
4	Marcus Aurelius Maximus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (colonia)	*patronus*	Deus Sol Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 17, 20 = CIMRM 1935–36, 1937	See nr. 9 and 10.
5	Dioscorus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (colonia)	*servus* or *filius* of Marcus	Invictus Mythra	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 21 = CIMRM 1942–43; Szabó *et al.* 2016	Two monuments (altar and column). See also nr. 13.
6	Chrestion	Apulum – Alba Iulia (colonia)	unknown	Invictus Mythra	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 26 = CIMRM 1944–45; Szabó *et al.* 2016	See also nr.12.
7	Sex(tius) Syntrofus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (colonia)	unknown	Invictus Mythra	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 23 = CIMRM 1939	See nos. 12 and 13 for the divine name
8	Lucanus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (colonia)	unknown	Deus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 25 = CIMRM 1941	—
9	L(ucius) Octavius Gratus	Colonia Aurelia Apulensis	*Augustalis coloniae*	Invictus Mithras and Cautopates	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 66 = CIMRM 2003; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 22	Sicoe was reading Cat. 22 as Cratus. The new reading see our Cat. II.6.
10	Spatalus	Apulum – Oarda de Sus (probably colonia)	*Servus – actor*	Invictus Deus	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 27 = IDR III/5, 720	Carbó García 2010 questions its Mithraic nature. See nr. 18.
11	Caius Iulius Rufinus	Apulum – Oarda de Sus (probably colonia)	*Patronus* (?)	Invictus Deus	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 27 = IDR III/5, 720	Carbó García 2010 questions its Mithraic nature. See nr. 17.
12	Anulinus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	imaginifer	—	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 29 = CIMRM 1954–55	Oancea Mithraeum

58 Albrecht *et al.* 2018.

	Name	Place	function	divinity	Bibliography	Notes
13	Titus Aurelius Fabia tribu Marcus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	*Veteranus legionis XIII Geminae*	Deus Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 30, 33 = CIMRM 1958–60	Oancea Mithraeum
14	Caius Iulius Marcianus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	*Signifer legionis XIII Geminae*	Sol Invictus Mytra	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 35 = CIMRM 1962	Oancea Mithraeum
15	[Val]er(ius) ...?uiu[s]	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	unknown	Numen Invictus	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 36 = CIMRM 1963	Oancea Mithraeum
16	Aelius Mestrius	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	unknown	—	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 37 = CIMRM 1964	Oancea Mithraeum
17	Aelius Gordianus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	unknown	Sol Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 38 = CIMRM 1965	—
18	Euhemerus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	unknown	Deus Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 41 = CIMRM 1975–76	—
19	...imus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	*Beneficiarius consularis*	—	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 44 = CIMRM 1981–82	—
20	Turranius Marcellinus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (perhaps municipium)	*Conductor armamentarii*	Sol Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 47 = CIMRM 1992–93	Together with nr. 28.
21	Ant(onius) Senecio	Apulum – Alba Iulia (perhaps municipium)	*Conductor armamentarii*	Sol Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 47 = CIMRM 1992–93	Together with nr. 27.
22	Marcus Val(erius) Maximianus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (perhaps municipium)	*Legatus Augusti*	Sol Deus Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 51 = CIMRM 1950	—
23	C(aius) Nummius Amandus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (perhaps municipium)	unknown	Sol Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 52 = CIMRM 1951	Probably an unfinished inscription or an unusual supernomina
24	Statorius [...] anus	Apulum – Alba Iulia (perhaps municipium)	*Decurio et flamen municipii Septimii Apulensis*	Deus Invictus Mithras sacrum	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 53 = IDR III/5, 709	Uncertain, if the mithraeum was in the colonia or municipium.
25	C(aius) Herenius Ermes	Apulum – Alba Iulia (perhaps municipium)	unknown	Cautes	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 55 = CIMRM 1977	—
26	Vitalis	Apulum – Alba Iulia (municipium)	*arcarius*	Sol Invictus Mithras, Transitus Dei and Cautopates	Egri *et al.* 2018 = AE 2018, 1338–1340	Three (and a possible 4th) incription dedicated by Vitalis. The name of Publius Aelius Marus is also mentioned.
27	Attius Valerianus	Apulum	unknown	relief	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 5 = CIMRM 2198; Nyulas 2021, 174	Uncertain provenience, but recently was suggested to be from Apulum (Nyulas 2021)

	Name	Place	function	divinity	Bibliography	Notes
28	Victo[r---]	Ozd (territorium Apulense)	unknown	—	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 56 = IDR III/4, 131	—
29	For[tu]natus	Săcădate (territorium Apulense)	unknown	Sol Deus Invictus Mytra	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 58 = IDR III/4, 87	—
30	Surus	Decea Mureșului	unknown	Invictus Mithras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 61 = CIMRM 1932	—
31	Marcus Aurelius Maximus	Lopadea Nouă	*Flamen municipii apulensis*	tauroctony	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 62 = IDR III/4, 63	—
32	Potinus	Oarda de Sus	unknown	Invictus Mythras	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 63 = CIMRM 2005	—
33	Αὐρήλι(ο)ς Στέφανος	Vințu de Jos (possibly Apulum)	unknown	θεῷ Μίθρᾳς	Sicoe 2014, Cat. 65 = CIMRM 2002	Ioan Piso interprets as being from Apulum

A fundamental prerequisite for studying the sensory dimension of religious experience is the availability of a sanctuary that has been archaeologically excavated with precision, documented stratigraphically in detail, and preserved with a relatively complete and materially diverse assemblage. Unfortunately, among the roughly fifty Mithras sanctuaries known from the Danubian provinces, only a few meet these conditions (Poetovio I and III; Aquincum II, IV, V, VI; and perhaps Carnuntum I and III), and none of them can be compared to the examples from Ostia, Rome, Syria (Dura Europos, Hawarte), or Güglingen.[59]

Due to the near-total absence of archaeologically and stratigraphically attested material evidence, the Mithraic material from Apulum is almost impossible to study using the methods of cognitive science of religion. Similarly, the methodological approaches of the lived ancient religion perspective could only be applied partially and fragmentarily, owing to the lack of contextual information for the objects, poor documentation, and the incomplete or only partially excavated nature of the sanctuaries.[60] In many sanctuaries across the Empire, initiation rites are indicated only by iconographic and a few epigraphic features (e.g., *Transitus Dei* dedications, reliefs of Mithras riding the bull),[61] but very few sources document the rites themselves, even considering the small finds from the so-called Vitalis Mithraeum.[62] The full spectrum of sculptural material suggests that Mithras sanctuaries in Apulum likewise followed the theological rules and the so-called sacred geography of the *mithraea*.[63] However, the local particularities, glocal forms, and strategic variations of these practices cannot be analysed in detail due to the absence of archaeological context.

Conclusions

The Mithraic material from Apulum represents one of the most significant and visually striking assemblages in the province of Dacia. These monuments have adorned the princely palace and the city's earliest epigraphic collections since the 16th century, and in the 18th century, the corpus was expanded with remarkable reliefs, elevating it to a continental fame and to the centre of Mithraic studies. Systematic collections of these monuments were undertaken by Franz Cumont, Maarten J. Vermaseren, and Gabriel Sicoe during the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

59 Siemers-Klenner 2020.

60 Szabó 2018, 98–120.

61 Nemeti – Nemeti 2007.

62 McCarty *et al.* 2020; Drăgan 2020.

63 Gordon 1976; Beck 2006.

Building on these collections and incorporating new sources, the present study aims to provide a historical overview and religious analysis, as well as to produce an updated catalogue. The study summarises the history of research on the cult as well as the agents and strategies of ancient religious communication, highlighting and substantiating the glocal character of the communities associated with the estimated five or six *mithraea* in Apulum. These communities reflect a glocalised interpretation of a universal religious narrative and visual program originating in Rome, shaped according to the city's particular social groups. In the visual sources of the Mithraic material from Apulum, one observes not only iconographic traditions common throughout the Empire but also numerous local innovations, which testify to the dynamic character of the local community, its economic resources, and its wide-ranging mobility. Epigraphic evidence, including theonyms and the onomastic patterns of human agency, provides clear support for this mobility.

Finally, it is important to note that the rich Mithras material of Alba Iulia also represents an excellent resource and creative workspace for contemporary museology and religious tourism, the valorisation of which, however, remains largely unrealised.[64]

CIMRM Supplement of Apulum

Presumed and excavated sanctuaries

I. Kastal Mithraeum

Location: unknown; on the territory of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis.
Dimensions: unknown.
Description: Around 1782 Franciscus Kastal "*ponderum magistri*" found a spectacular group of monuments dedicated to Mithras, the finest pieces of this kind from the province in the territory of the Marospartos (south part of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis). The nature of the finds (free standing Mithras Tauroctonos, complex relief) suggests the existence of a *mithraeum*. It is possible that further, unepigraphic finds came from the same spot. The exact place of the discovery is impossible to establish.
Archaeological repertory: Cat. I.1, II.8, III.1 perhaps I.3 or I.4.
Literature: Szabó 2013, 45–64; Szabó 2021, 61.

II. Pap Mithraeum

Location: uncertain. On the territory of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis.
Dimensions: unknown.
Description: In 1852 Károly Pap, shipmaster *(hajómester)* discovered the ruins of a Roman building and three Mithraic monuments in his garden, two altars (IDR III/5, 272–273) and a fragmentary relief which is considered disappeared today. The exact place of this garden is not located yet, but the first publisher mentioned the "*Marospartos*" which is the south part of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis. The function of the discoverer and the dolphin representation on the altar of Dioscorus could suggest the vicinity of the river. Recently, a votive column was found on the black market, which could belong to the same context.
Archaeological repertory: Cat. I.14, II.12, 13, 14 and a relief attested only in the 19th century.
Literature: Torma 1863, 134; Szabó *et al.* 2016.

III. Oancea Mithraeum

Location: in the area of the *canabae*/*municipium*. Found on the property, garden or field *(Grundstück, jardin)* of Ioan (or Ștefan) Oancea on the plateau of the Vauban fortress on the B-dul Încoronării (today Bulevardul 1 Decembrie 1918). Later, C. Băluță mentioned that a sarcophagus and a Mithraic relief were discovered on the Dealul Furcilor, in the garden of Tăutu Constantin at B-dul 6 Martie, no. 3 in the vicinity of this possible *mithraeum* (approx. coordinates: 46.0648, 23.5651); the place is not yet located on terrain.
Dimensions: unknown. The number of the monuments (ten or eleven) suggests a large or at least, middle sized sanctuary.
Description: In 1930 Virgil Cucuiu attested a Roman building with numerous Mithraic monuments discovered probably by the owner of the garden or field. The context and the exact location of the discovery was never

64 Szabó *et al.* 2023.

published properly. The finds and the discovery entered the literature as a sanctuary *(mithraeum)* already from the first publication and cited numerous times later. The very nature of the discovery was questioned only once and the possibility of a Late Antique *spolia* was raised based on a IOM altar that was found also at the site. Without a systematic excavation and topographic identification of the site, the existence of the sanctuary is hypothetical.
Archaeological repertory: Cat. I.7, 8, 11, II.17–21, II.27, III.2, III.16.
Literature: Christescu 1933, 620–625; Daicoviciu 1941, 299–336; Carbó Garcia 2010, 131; Ota 2012, 106; Sicoe 2014, 21; Szabó 2021, 60–61.

IV. Vitalis Mithraeum

Location: Bulevardul 1 Decembrie 1918, southwest part of the Roman fort, probably on the territory of the *canabae*, later *municipium* Septimium Apulense, part of a densely built area with numerous sacralised spaces (coordinates: 46.066403, 23.565013). Excavated during the 2010s.
Dimensions: Approx. 13 × 7 m (with naos and annexed rooms). The exact dimensions of the building have not yet been published, although several plans are available in the publications.
Description: Named by the publishers as "mithraeum III", the building is the first sanctuary dedicated to Mithras excavated systematically in Alba Iulia. The structure of the building follows a general architectural and spatial tendency of the Mithras sanctuaries, being divided in three main parts: a *pronaos* (antechamber) in the SE, a *naos* with two benches and an additional room in the NE part. The first campaign revealed that the building was built of mud with timber framing covered with tiled roof. The stratigraphy was severely damaged and modified by medieval (12th–13th century) and modern (17th–18th century) layers and interventions.
Archaeological repertory: Cat. II.1–5. The finds are not yet published. The recovered inventory consists of four altars, architectural elements, pottery, objects made of glass, iron, bronze, bone, stone and a large quantity of animal bones. Palynological, archaeobotanical, archaeozoological, soil and radiocarbon samples were also collected.
Literature: Rustoiu *et al.* 2014; Rustoiu *et al.* 2015; Egri *et al.* 2018; McCarty *et al.* 2019; McCarty *et al.* 2020.

Catalogue of the Mithraic monuments from Apulum
(*colonia Aurelia Apulensis* and *municipium Septimium Apulense*)

I. Statues, statuettes

I.1. Cult statue *(signum)* of Mithras Tauroctonos (Fig. 5)

Material: marble.
Dimensions: 108 × 108 × 30 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Partoş district, 1782 from the so-called Kastal Mithraeum.
Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no.: A 3391 (7164).
Remarks: The iconographic type is well known—though not exclusively—from Roman Italy, depicting the god in a Hellenistic manner. Fine quality marble of uncertain origin. The nature of the damage suggests a possible intentional destruction.
Description: High-quality cult statue *(Kultbild)*. The statue's base is fragmentary, semi-oval and narrow in shape, with the epigraphic field framed by a border. The statue depicts the tauroctony scene with canonical elements. The kneeling and agonising bull, executed with refined artistic skill, is fragmentary: the right hind leg and left foreleg are missing. The animal's mouth, from which the god's hand is also missing, is damaged. One of the bull's horns, decorated with meticulous detail, survives partially. Below the animal, the snake is partially preserved, and in front of it, the dog is seen fragmentarily as it leaps toward the bull's wound. Mithras, shown in the canonical pose with his left foot placed on the bull's back, is represented wearing a short tunic rendered in Hellenistic style, with elegantly crafted folds of superior quality. The god's right leg is fragmentary, and the upper body from the waist upward is missing. Traces of the dagger can be seen on the bull's neck.



Fig. 5. Statue of Mithras Tauroctonos (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17291 and Cs. Szabó with the permission of the Brukenthal Museum).

Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *[S(oli?)] I(nvicto) ◦ M(ithrae) signum | [- - - Sec]undinus ◦ ex ◦ voto ◦ pos(uit).*
Literature: CIMRM 1947–48; IDR III/5, 284; Müller *et al.* 2012, 57, no. AP32; Szabó 2013; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 16.

I.2. Fragmentary statue of Mithras Petrogenitus (Fig. 6)

Material: sandstone.
Dimensions: 50 × 46 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: "Apulum," probably the Partoș district.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no. 208.
Remarks: Judging from the size of the fragment, the statue originally must have exceeded 1 meter in height. Based on analogies, the object stood at the pronaos of a sanctuary.
Description: Statue base depicting Mithras Petrogenitus. The rock from which Mithras emerges is encircled by a serpent. The back part of the monument has a rudimentary elaboration, the cliff sems to be unfinished. The body of Mithras Petrogenitus is missing, probably destroyed, or reused (intentionally or accidentally).
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 1949; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 19. Abb. 3.



Fig. 6. Statue of Mithras Petrogenitus (photo: O. Harl, lupa 19257 with the permission of MNUAI and by Cs. Szabó with the permission of MNUAI).

I.3. Statue of Mithras Petrogenitus (Fig. 7)

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 86 × 43 cm.
Place of discovery: uncertain. As most of the Mithraic material from the Brukenthal Museum comes from Apulum, this monument was probably found there as well.
Provenance: uncertain.
Place of preservation: originally in the Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, moved probably after 1958 in the National Museum of History in Bucuresti, Inv. no.: 47438.
Description: limestone statue of Mithras Petrogenitus, representing the birth of the god from the primordial rock. The rock is rudimentarily elaborated. The rock is encircled by a large snake, moving towards the god's body. The head of the snake is in frontal view with the genitalia of the divinity. Mithras is represented naked with a Phrygian cap on his head, as a young man, rising from the rock. He is visible from thigh up, his left arm (probably holding a torch) is missing, in his right hand he holds a knife.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 2184 = Sicoe 2014, Cat. 223, Abb. 6.



Fig. 7. Statue of Mithras Petrogenitus (photo: M. Perpits, MNIR with the kind permission of O. Țentea, director of the MNIR).

I.4. Statue of Mithras Petrogenitus (Fig. 8)

Material: marble.
Dimension: 155 × 57 × 29 cm.
Place of discovery: uncertain. As most of the Mithraic material from the Brukenthal Museum comes from Apulum, this monument was probably found there as well.
Provenance: uncertain



Fig. 8. Statue of Mithras Petrogenitus (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17355).

Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no.: A 3441 (7275).
Description: Marble statue of Mithras Petrogenitus, representing the birth of the god from the primordial rock. The rock is rudimentarily rendered. The knees of Mithras are encircled by a large snake, but only the upper part of the snake is elaborated. Mithras is represented naked, as a young man, rising from the rock, visible from thigh up. The god is represented with a Phrygian cap, his right arm (probably holding a knife) is missing, in his left hand he holds a torch. The statue is beautifully executed, although anatomically doesn't follow the iconographic standards.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 2188 = Sicoe 2014, Cat. 224, Abb. 8. See also: Müller *et al.* 2012, 105, Cat. TR.1.

I.5. Fragment of Mithras Petrogenitus (Fig. 9)

Material: Bucova marble.
Dimension: 48 × 34 × 24 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Apulum, unidentified location
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: R7.
Description: Votive statue in marble representing Mithras Petrogenitus (Mithras born from the rock). The head and arms of the statue are missing. The nude and robust body of the god with a muscular abdomen is visible from waist up, the rock is encircled by a bearded serpent. The monument was known already in the early 19th century, therefore, it must be from the early discoveries (Kastal or another *mithraeum*).
Date: 2nd–3rd century.
Literature: CIMRM 1991 = Sicoe 2014, Cat. 48, Abb. 4.



Fig. 9. Statue of Mithras Petrogenitus (photo: Cs. Szabó with the permission of MNUAI).

I.6. Fragment of Mithras Petrogenitus (Fig. 10)

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 73 × 32 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Apulum, unidentified location.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: R9.
Description: Votive statue in limestone representing Mithras Petrogenitus. The head and arms of the god are missing. The nude and robust abdomen of the deity rises from a roughly worked rock composed of ovoid motifs, encircled by a bearded serpent. It is uncertain in which sanctuary and area of the Roman settlement it was discovered.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 1994; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 49, Abb. 5.



Fig. 10. Statue of Mithras Petrogenitus (photo: Cs. Szabó with the permission of MNUAI).

I.7. Statue fragment of Cautopates (Fig. 11)

Material: limestone.
Dimension: h – 92 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum on the property of Ioan Oancea in 1930, located on the Citadel Plateau, probably from the *municipium Septimium Apulense*.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: 203.



Fig. 11. Statue of Cautopates (photo: Cs. Szabó with the permission of MNUAI).

Remarks: This finely crafted statue was part of the inventory of a sanctuary.
Description: Fragmentary statue representing a figure dressed in Oriental attire with finely rendered folds, wearing a *chlamys*. In his left hand he holds a scorpion, now unidentifiable due to damage. The head of the figure is missing. The legs are not crossed.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 1956; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 32. Abb. 17; Szabó 2015c.

I.8. Statue fragment of Cautes (Fig. 12)

Material: limestone.
Dimensions: h: 52 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: the so-called Oancea Mithraeum on the property of Ioan Oancea in 1930, located on the Citadel Plateau, probably from the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: ?
Remarks: This finely crafted statue was part of the inventory of a sanctuary together with the previous one.
Description: Torso of a figure dressed in Oriental attire, wearing a *chlamys*. In his left hand he holds a *bucranium*, head of a bull, now unidentifiable due to damage. The head, arms, and legs of the figure are missing. This iconography seems to be a glocal form of religious appropriation identified especially in Apulum and Sarmizegetusa.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 1957; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 31. Abb. 16; Szabó 2015c.



Fig. 12. Statue of Cautes (photo: Cs. Szabó with the permission of MNUAI).

I.9. Statue of Cautes (Fig. 13)

Material: marble.
Dimensions: uncertain (probably large sized).
Place of discovery: probably Alba Iulia.
Provenance: uncertain.
Place of preservation: in the early 19th century it was part of the Batthyaneum collection, but as it is missing at present, it is only known from 19th century drawings. Could be identical with I.10. Inv. no.: unknown.



Fig. 13. Statue of Cautes (drawing after Hammer-Purgstall 1833).

Description: Standing figure of Cautes, shown not cross-legged, wearing a Phrygian cap and a short tunic. He has boots with scalloped (crenelated) tops, which could be an imagination of the artist from the 19th century. In his raised right hand, he holds a burning torch, while in his left hand he carries a bull's head *(bucranium)*. The iconography of the torchbearer is identical with I.8. and I.10.
Date: 2nd or 3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 2185 with the previous literature; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 222, Abb. 18; Szabó 2015c.

I.10. Two statue fragments of Cautes (Fig. 14).

Material: marble.
Dimensions: torso: 37 cm (height) × 29 cm (width) × 6–10 cm (thickness). The head: 19 cm (height) × 4 cm width (uncertain thickness).
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia, secondary position (reused in one of the buildings of the Roman Catholic seminar since the 1990s). Before the 1990s, apparently in reused position in a late Renaissance house.
Provenance: probably Apulum.



Fig. 14. Statue of Cautes – fragments (after Szabó 2015c).

Place of preservation: decorative elements at the Roman Catholic seminar (private property), has no inventory number. The torso is in the inner wall of a private garden, the head is in the cellar.
Description: Fragment 1 (torso of the torchbearer): The preserved part represents the bust of Cautes, torchbearer of Mithras, holding the head of the bull in his left hand. The head, right arm and the lower part of the torchbearer are missing. The head of the bull is carefully carved with the details of the curly hair of the animal. The left hand of Cautes is rudimentarily carved and is oversized. He wears a long tunic, with a fibula on his right shoulder fastening his cloak *(chlamys)*, which is partially preserved. The oriental dress is decorated with carefully carved pleats. The back part of the cloak is also rendered with pleats, and a small part of the hair is preserved, which proves the statuary nature of the artefact. However, the thickness of the fragment suggests that the statue was not free-standing, but surrounded by a wall or niche, intended for a frontal view. Similar analogies from Dacia and other provinces indicate that the monument could be part of a statuary group representing Mithras Tauroctonos with the torchbearers, an individual statue of Cautes standing in a niche of the pronaos or on a statue base. Fragment 2 (the head of the torchbearer): The thick hair, curly tresses, rough lines of the face and the break line of the head prove its concordance with the torso. The Phrygian cap is partially preserved. The eyes and nose of the person are superficially carved or deformed due to the poor conditions of the statue. The face represents a young, beardless person with a melancholic expression, a very common iconography for the torchbearers. The full height of the statue was approx. 90–100 cm. The iconography of the torchbearer is identical with I.4. and I.5. The fragments could be identical with Cat. I.5. although no clear evidence for this hypothesis.
Date: 2nd or 3rd century CE
Literature: Szabó 2015c.

I.11. Statue of a man and a woman (?).

Material: unknown.
Dimension: unknown.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: unknown, probably near the Fortress (presumably from the Oancea Mithraeum).
Place of preservation: unknown, Inv. no.: unknown.
Remarks: Statues of a man and a woman from the collection of Vasile Cucuiu, who discovered and saved the monuments of the Oancea Mithraeum. Their Mithraic character is uncertain.
Date: probably 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 1967.

I.12. Head of a torchbearer or Mithras (Fig. 15).

Material: sandstone.
Dimensions: h – 35 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Apulum, unidentified location.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: 264/II (probably lost).
Remarks: The Mithraic character of the piece is uncertain.
Description: Fragment of a large sandstone statue. The preserved head depicts a young man with finely rendered, wavy hair, wearing a Phrygian cap—possibly representing one of the torchbearers, Mithras himself, or Attis.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 1987; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 254, Abb. 20.



Fig. 15. Head of a torchbearer or Mithras (after CIMRM 1987).

I.13. Head of a torchbearer (Fig. 16).

Material: sandstone.
Dimensions: h – 16 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Apulum, unidentified location.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: R803.

Remarks: The Mithraic character of the piece is uncertain.
Description: Fragment of a sandstone statue. The preserved head represents a young man with long, curly hair, without a Phrygian cap.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: CIMRM 1988; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 255. Abb. 21.



Fig. 16. Head of a torchbearer (photo: O. Harl, lupa 19358 with the permission of MNUAI).

I.14. Fragment of a Mithraic statue.

Material: unknown.
Dimension: unknown.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, the so-called Pap Mithraeum.
Place of preservation: uncertain. In 1863 was part of the Erdélyi Múzeum (Transylvanian Museum). No current information.
Description: The fragment of a Mithraic statue (uncertain iconography) is shortly mentioned by Károly Torma in his publication of the material from the so-called Pap Mithraeum.
Date: uncertain, probably 2nd–3rd century CE.
Literature: Torma 1863, 134.

II. Altars, statue bases, columns

II.1. Altar or statue base (Fig. 17).

Material: Ighiu limestone.
Dimension: 120 × 52.8 × 38.8 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: *municipium* Septimium Apulense (*canabae legionis*), the so-called Vitalis Mithraeum (coordinates: 46.066224, 23.564902).
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv.no.: R11857. Description: A statue base or altar of large size (one of the largest in the Mithraic corpus). Both the base and the cornice of the piece are decorated with mouldings. The corona features simple acroteria framing a central motif of *acanthus* leaves. The piece was discovered overturned within the nave, with its inscribed face downward and the cornice oriented eastward, toward the *mithraeum*'s entrance. A significant part of the backside is missing, proving that it was repurposed as building material during the Árpád dynasty within the sanctuary (probably was not moved).



Fig. 17. Mithraic altar or statue base (drawing after Egri *et al.* 2018, Fig. 1, and Clauss Slaby Database).

Date: 2nd century CE.
Inscription: *Soli | Invicto | Mitrhae (!) | pro salu͡te |*[5] *P(ubli) ◦ Ael(i) ◦ Ma|ri ◦ flam(inis) col(oniae) | Vitalis ◦ a͡rk(arius) | v(otum) l(ibens) s(olvit).*
Literature: AE 2018, 1338; Rustoiu *et al.* 2014; Rustoiu *et al.* 2015; Egri *et al.* 2018, 268–271; McCarty *et al.* 2019; McCarty *et al.* 2020.

II.2. Statue base (Fig. 18).

Material: Ighiu limestone.
Dimension: 60.2 × 32.3 × 25.6 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: *municipium* Septimium Apulense (*canabae legionis*), the so-called Vitalis Mithraeum (coordinates: 46.066224, 23.564902).
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: R11858.

Description: The base and the cornice of the statue base are decorated with mouldings. The monument was reused in Medieval times, split in half vertically. The upper part is partially missing and damaged. The stone was broken in two unequal parts vertically. The same dedicant as in II.1. The interpretation of the inscription, especially the letters after the name of the dedicant (G S) is problematic.
Date: 2nd century CE.
Inscription: *Transi|to (!)* ◦ *dei | sacr[u]m | Vitalis |*[5] *G(- - -)* ◦ *S(- - -)* ◦ *v(otum) s(olvit).*
Literature: AE 2018, 1339; Rustoiu *et al.* 2014; Rustoiu *et al.* 2015; Egri *et al.* 2018, 271–272; McCarty *et al.* 2019; McCarty *et al.* 2020.



Fig. 18. Mithraic altar or statue base (drawing after Egri *et al.* 2018, Fig. 2, and Clauss Slaby Database).

II.3. Statue base (Fig. 19).

Material: Ighiu limestone.
Dimension: 62.2 × 32.3 × 25.8 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: *municipium* Septimium Apulense *(canabae legionis)*, the so-called Vitalis Mithraeum (coordinates: 46.066224, 23.564902).
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: R11859.
Description: The base and the cornice of the statue base are decorated with mouldings. The monument was reused in Medieval times, split in several parts. The lower left corner is partially missing and damaged. The same dedicant as in II.1.
Date: 2nd century CE.
Inscription: *Cauto|pati | sacrum | Vitalis |*[5] *[ar]k(arius)* ◦ *G(- - -)* ◦ *S(- - -) | [v(otum)] s(olvit).*
Literature: AE 2018, 1340; Rustoiu *et al.* 2014; Rustoiu *et al.* 2015; Egri *et al.* 2018, 272–273; McCarty et al. 2019; McCarty *et al.* 2020.



Fig. 19. Mithraic altar or statue base (drawing after Egri *et al.* 2018, Fig. 4, and Clauss Slaby Database).

II.4. Statue base.

Material: Ighiu limestone.
Dimension: unknown.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: *municipium* Septimium Apulense (*canabae legionis*), the so-called Vitalis Mithraeum (coordinates: 46.066224, 23.564902).
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia (no photo available), Inv. no.: unknown.
Description: The details of this statue base are not published in Egri *et al.* 2018.
Date: 2nd century CE.
Inscription: no preserved inscription (although presumably was a dedication for Cautes).
Literature: Egri *et al.* 2018, 273; McCarty *et al.* 2019; McCarty *et al.* 2020.

II.5. Fragment of an altar or statue base.

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 7.4 × 6.5 × 4.3 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: *municipium* Septimium Apulense *(canabae legionis)*, the so-called Vitalis Mithraeum (coordinates: 46.066224, 23.564902).
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: unknown.
Description: Small fragment of a limestone inscription. The material is different than the previous Ighiu lime-

stones. Due to the fragmentary nature of the monument, it is impossible to establish its functionality (altar or statue base).
Date: 2nd century CE.
Inscription: *- - - - - - | [- - -]C [- - -] | [- - -] ◦ P[- - -] | - - - - - -*
Literature: Egri *et al.* 2018, 273; McCarty *et al.* 2019; McCarty *et al.* 2020.



Fig. 20. Statue base of Cautopates (photo: Apulum Project with the kind permission of I. Haynes).

II.6. Statue base (Fig. 20).

Material: limestone.
Dimensions: 20 × 16 × 8 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered during the 2003 excavation campaign of the Liber Pater sanctuary (RAN code: 1026.13), in the southwestern part of the building (coordinates: 46.050373, 23.564927). Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: unknown (photograph published with the permission of the Apulum Project, prof. dr. Ian Haynes).
Description: Epigraphic limestone statue base, preserving a fragment of the statue's left foot. The small pedestal of the statue was mobile and replaceable in a rectangular base with inscription. The inscription field contains three lines of text. On the upper moulding, a fragment of the left foot of Cautopates is preserved (3.5 cm).
Date: The devotee originated from *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis (after 180 CE).
Inscription: *Cautopaṭi | deo | L(ucius) ◦ Oc(tavius) ◦ Gratus ◦ Aug(ustalis) col(oniae).*
Literature: Sicoe 2014, Cat. 22.

II.7. Altar (Fig. 21).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: approx. 60 × 50 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia (Partos, Marospartos).
Provenance: Discovered during the 2003 excavation campaign of the Liber Pater sanctuary (RAN code: 1026.13), in the north-eastern part of the building, in the corner of a structure (coordinates: 46.050373, 23.564927).
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no.: unknown. (photograph published with the permission of the Apulum Project, prof. dr. Ian Haynes).
Description: Votive altar made of limestone, preserved in its entirety but roughly worked. The base and the cornice of the pedestal are decorated with mouldings. A rectangular *foculus* decorates the upper part of the altar. The inscription field is crudely executed, probably unfinished, with several depressions. The corona is decorated with incised *hederae distinguentes*. The Mithraic nature of the monument remains uncertain due to the lack of systematic archaeological excavations.



Fig. 21. Mithraic altar (photo: Apulum Project with the kind permission of I. Haynes).

Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *◦ Deo ◦ Invic|to ◦ pro ◦ salu͡te | boni com[mu͡]+|nio (!) ◦ NI+[- - -] |[5] - - - - - -*
Literature: Haynes 2005, 44; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 28.

II.8. Statue base (Fig. 22).

Material: white marble.
Dimension: 36 × 44 × 22 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Partoș quarter, territory of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, from the so-called Kastal Mithraeum.

Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no: A 3390 (7163).
Description: Traces of lead used for fixing the statue to the pedestal are visible on the top of the monument. The statue base has an unusual shape, probably a reused monument (originally an architectural element, possibly a cornice). In line 4, the name *Timotei* may also be read as *Timothi*, with an unfinished 'H.'
Dating: 161–180 CE, based on the dedicant's onomastics, or alternatively to the Severan period, according to the presence of ligatures and the form of the letters *A* and *S*.



Fig. 22. Mithraic statue base (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17290).

Inscription: *D(eo) S(oli) I(nvicto) M(ithrae) | pro salute inc|o{t}flu͡mitate M(arci) Au͡re(li) | Timotei et A͡ur(eli) M[s]aximi ◦ votu͡m nu͡n|cupavit ◦ solvit◦que | Eu͡t[l]hyces ◦ eorum lib(ertus) ◦ | retulit.*
Literature: CIL III, 1110; CIMRM 1937; IDR III/5, 281; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 20.

II.9. Altar or statue base (Fig. 23).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 43 × 23 × 20 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Partoş quarter, *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, discovered in 1867 during the railway construction.
Place of preservation: Sighişoara Museum, Inv. no: 2482.
Description: Votive altar or statue base bearing an inscription. The base and the cornice are decorated with mouldings. The dado of the monument is damaged on the right side. The corona is decorated with four vegetal motifs, the third from the left is fragmentary. The text is rudimentarily engraved. The letter c in line I was added later and is disproportionate compared to the other letters. The inscription field is damaged in several places. The decoration of the altar is very similar to Cat. II.11.



Fig. 23. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: N. Tescula with the permission of the Sighisoara Museum).

Dating: Based on the letter forms, it appears to belong to the second half of the 2nd century CE.
Inscription: *Invict[o] | Myth͡ra[e] | Sex(tius) ◦ Syn͡tr͡|ofus ◦ v(otum) ◦ s(olvit) ◦ l(ibens).*
Literature: CIMRM 1939; IDR III/5, 277; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 23.

II.10. Altar or statue base (Fig. 24).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 53 × 25 × 24 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Partoş quarter, *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, discovered in 1879.
Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no: A 3406 (17179).
Description: Rudimentarily worked votive altar or statue base with a base and cornice decorated with mouldings. Given the rough and unrefined workmanship and the small dimensions of the monument, the object served more likely as a votive altar. The reading of line II is uncertain *(G = C?).*
Dating: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *I(nvicto) ◦ M(ithrae) | A(- - -) ◦ G(- - -).*
Literature: CIMRM 1940; IDR III/5, 269; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 24.



Fig. 24. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17288).

II.11. Altar (Fig. 25).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 45 × 22 × 17 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Partoș quarter, territory of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, discovered in 1868 probably during the railway construction works.
Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no: A 3416 (7189).
Description: Crudely executed votive altar with a base and a cornice. The cornice is decorated with two corner and an acroteria. Very roughly worked piece with an epigraphic text that is difficult to interpret. As in other examples, the letter *E* is rendered with only two vertical strokes *(hastae)*. The decoration of the altar is very similar to Cat. II.9.
Dating: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *D(eo) Inv̂(icto) O(mnipotenti) M(ithrae) | vota | retuli | Lucanus.*
Literature: CIMRM 1941; IDR III/5, 268; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 25.



Fig. 25. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17287).

II.12. Altar or statue base (Fig. 26).

Material: limestone.
Dimensions: 63 × 50 × 39 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Partoș quarter, *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, discovered in 1852 in the garden of Károly Pap (the so-called Pap Mithraeum).
Place of preservation: Originally in the Museum of the History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, today in the National Museum of History of Romania in Bucuresti, Inv. no: 69933.
Description: Well-crafted votive statue base with a tall and carefully executed base. Listed as "altar" by Vermaseren, the monument is probably a statue base, based on the flat surface and large dimensions of its base. On both sides, a finely carved dolphin is depicted. The inscription is clearly legible. The corona is thin and undecorated. On the lateral sides, a dolphin and a trident are visible possibly indicating a degree of initiation. The reliefs can suggest also a reused funerary altar or workshop markers. The text of the altar is identical with the inscription on Cat. II.13.
Dating: Based on the letter forms and stylistic features, probably 2nd century CE.
Inscription: *Invicto | Mythrâe (!) | Diosco|rus ◦ Marci f(ilius) v(otum) ◦ s(olvit) ◦ l(ibens) ◦ m(erito) ◦.*
Literature: CIMRM 1942–1943; IDR III/5, 273; Nemeti – Nemeti 2007, no. 6; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 21; Szabó *et al.* 2016.



Fig. 26. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: M. Perpits, with the kind permission of O. Țentea, director of MNIR).

II.13. Column (Fig. 27).

Material: sandstone (biomicrite).
Dimensions: the current height of the monument is 120 cm; the shaft (diam. 38 × 24 cm) has been cut with unusual care and accuracy.
Place of discovery: probably Alba Iulia.
Provenance: probably Partoș quarter, *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, discovered in 1852 in the garden of Károly Pap (the so-called Pap Mithraeum). The monument was discovered on the black market in the collection of an individual.



Fig. 27. Mithraic column (photo: C. Toma in Szabó *et al.* 2016).

Place of preservation: private collection, has no inventory number.
Description: The monument is of a coarse-grained carbonaceous sandstone (biomicrite), that occurs mainly in the eastern part of the Transylvanian basin. It is completely preserved, though it was repaired in Antiquity after suffering damage. The upper and lower part of the column each has a 7 × 4 cm hole for metal installations, possibly for fixing the corona and the pedestal, however, it is not sure if it was made in Antiquity or later. The current height of the monument is 120 cm; the shaft (diam. 38 × 24 cm) has been cut with unusual care and accuracy. The text of the column is identical with the inscription on Cat. II.12 which suggest the same context of discovery.
Dating: probably 2nd century CE.
Inscription: *Invicto | Mythrâe (!) | Diosco|rus ◦ Marci f v(otum) ◦ s(olvit) ◦ l(ibens) ◦ m(erito).*
Literature: Szabó *et al.* 2016.

II.14. Altar (Fig. 28).

Material: limestone.
Dimensions: 68 × 45 × 31 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Partoş quarter, *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis, discovered in 1852 in the garden of Károly Pap (the so-called Pap Mithraeum).
Place of preservation: Museum of the History of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Inv. no: V 51139.
Description: Well-executed votive altar. The base is damaged. On both lateral sides of the inscription field there are figural representations: an *urceus* on the left and a *patera* on the right. The altar's cornice is tall and elegantly decorated with a triangular pediment (*fronton*): a *tympanum* and two *acroteria*. Within the *tympanum* appears the image of Sol with twelve rays, slightly damaged. On the lateral side, a rosette with vegetal motifs is visible. As in other examples, in lines three and four the letter *E* is rendered with only two vertical strokes (*hastae*).



Fig. 28. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: MNIT with the kind permission of the museum).

Dating: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Invicto | Myth{i}r|ae (!) ◦ Chr|estion f v(otum) s(olvit) ◦.*
Literature: CIMRM 1944–1945; IDR III/5, 272; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 26; Szabó *et al.* 2016.

II.15. Altar or statue base.

Material: unknown.
Dimension: unknown.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Probably discovered within the area of the *canabae* or *municipium* Septimium Apulense, embedded in the wall of the medieval fortification.
Place of preservation: lost.
Remarks: The altar was drawn in 1722–1723 by Giuseppe Ariosti and belonged to the group of seventeen inscriptions later sank in the River Tisza near Szeged.
Dating: 180–182 CE.
Inscription: *[Soli?] Invicto | Mit(h)rae | M(arcus) Val(erius) Maxi|mianus f leg(atus) Aug(usti) f v(otum) s(olvit).*
Literature: CIMRM 1950; IDR III/5, 286; Ariosti 2010, 319, no. III; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 51.



Fig. 29. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17289).

II.16. Altar (Fig. 29).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 77 × 43 × 23 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.

Context: Probably from the *canabae or municipium* Septimium Apulense; discovered reused as a building stone in a modern cemetery.
Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no: A 3404 (7177).
Description: Fragmentary votive altar. The right side of the cornice and a small portion of the inscription field are missing, though the text itself is undamaged. The base is tall and divided. The cornice is fragmentary, decorated with a triangular pediment and acroteria; decoration of the corona is almost entirely lost. This inscription likely attests the existence of a Mithraic sanctuary either in the *vicus* or in the *municipium* Septimium Apulense. The last line (containing the verb *fecit*) is probably missing.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Soli ◦ I(nvicto) ◦ M(ithrae) ◦ | C(aius) ◦ Nummius | Amandus | qui ◦ et ◦ f templum.*
Literature: CIMRM 1951; IDR III/5, 283; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 52.

II.17. Altar or statue base (Fig. 30).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 63 × 40 × 30 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum in 1930, located on the Citadel plateau, probably on the territory of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 906.
Description: Altar or statue base of good quality preserved fragmentarily. The lower and upper left corners of the pedestal are broken. The inscription field is tall and rather narrow, with finely carved letters. The first line and the upper moulding are fragmented. The object is fragmented into four pieces and was probably dedicated together with piece no. 16. The letter 'E' in the first line is difficult to read. The final line allows for several interpretations.



Fig. 30. Mithraic altar (photo: R. Ota and D. Zudor, MNUAI).

Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Deo ◦ Invi|cto ◦ Mith(rae) | T(itus) ◦ Aur(elius) ◦ Fabia | Marcus | vet(eranus) ◦ leg(ionis) ◦ XIII ◦ G(eminae) | d(onum) ◦ d(edit) ◦ d(edicavit).*
Literature: CIMRM 1960; IDR III/5, 270; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 33.

II.18. Altar or statue base (Fig. 31).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 23 × 22 × 13 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum in 1930, located on the Citadel plateau, probably on the territory of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 373.
Description: The piece is fragmentary, the lower part with parts of the inscription and the name of the dedicator is missing. The corona is beautifully decorated with acroteria and plant motifs.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Invict(o) | [D]eo ◦ vo|[tum? sol(vit)?] | - - - - - -*
Literature: CIMRM 1961; IDR III/5, 287; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 34.



Fig. 31. Mithraic altar (photo: R. Ota and D. Zudor, MNUAI).

II.19. Altar or statue base (Fig. 32).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 59 × 33 × 20 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum in 1930, located on the Citadel plateau, probably on the territory of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 358.
Description: Limestone altar or statue base. The monument is damaged on the lower right side. The inscription field is well preserved. The cornice is fully preserved, without decoration, probably unfinished. Noteworthy is the rare ligature in the fourth row ('NVS').
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE, based on the shape and style of the letters, it seems to be more likely from the 3rd century.
Inscription: *Soli ◦ Invicto | Mythrâe (!) | C(aius) ◦ Iulius | Marcianus̃ f̃ signif(er) ◦ leg(ionis) | XIII ◦ Gem(inae) | libens ◦ posuit.*
Literature: CIMRM 1962; IDR III/5, 282; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 35.



Fig. 32. Mithraic altar (photo: R. Ota and D. Zudor, MNUAI).

II.20. Altar or statue base (Fig. 33).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 35 × 27.5 × 18 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum in 1930, located on the Citadel plateau, probably on the territory of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 300.
Description: Fragmentary limestone altar or statue base. The lower half of the altar with half of the inscription field is missing. The upper part is damaged and is difficult to see. The cornice is divided, decorated with a triangular pediment with a rosette and corner acroteria with plant motifs. Palmette decorations are visible on the sides.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE. Ioan Piso argued that based on the iconographic features of the corona it can be dated to the 2nd century CE (see IDR III/5, 266 as analogy).
Inscription: *Ṇumini | [in]ẏicti | [- Va]ler(ius) | [- - -] viu[s] f̃ [- - -]+[- -] | - - - - - -*
Literature: CIMRM 1963; IDR III/5, 288; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 36.



Fig. 33. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: R. Ota and D. Zudor, MNUAI).

II.21. Statue base (Fig. 34).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 70 × 37 × 28 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum in 1930, located on the Citadel plateau,



Fig. 34. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: O. Harl, lupa 19197).

probably on the territory of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 280.
Description: Limestone statue base. The base and cornice are decorated with mouldings and are slightly damaged. The inscription field is well preserved. The corona is decorated with a triangular pediment with acroteria in the corners and a tympanum with plant motifs. On the top of the pedestal, we can see where the statue was attached. The name of the god is missing from the inscription.
Date: 2nd century CE (probably Antonine period).
Inscription: *Ael(ius)* ◦ *Mes|trius* ◦ *l(ibens)* ◦*| pos(uit)*◦.
Literature: CIMRM 1964; IDR III/5, 289; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 37.

II.22. Altar or statue base (Fig. 35).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 65 × 30 × 27 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered probably on the territory of Apulum, observed by Opitz in 1622 in the wall of the Jesuit College already in secondary position, and in 1857 by Mommsen in the garden of the Roman Catholic Cathedral.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 67.
Description: Votive altar or statue base made of limestone, slightly damaged due to reuse. The base and the cornice are decorated with mouldings. The inscription field is well preserved. The corona is decorated with two corner acroteria and a rosette with plant motifs in the centre. The monument bears traces of reuse on its sides.
Date: 2nd or 3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Cauti* ◦*| G(aius)* ◦ *Hēren|nius* ◦*| (H)ermes* ſ *v(oto).*
Literature: CIMRM 1977; IDR III/5, 42; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 55 (wrongly claims that it is a lost piece).



Fig. 35. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: O. Harl, lupa 11133).

II.23. Altar (Fig. 36).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 15 × 8.7 × 8.2 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: probably the territory of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis. Uncertain.
Place of preservation: National Museum of History Cluj, Inv. no: 3672.
Description: Roughly executed limestone votive altar. The base and the cornice are disproportionately high and decorated with mouldings. An egg-and-dart motif runs along the lower edge of the cornice. The inscription field is rough and unfinished. The corona is decorated with acroteria and plant motifs. Three sides of the dado are decorated: on the left side there is a floral motif, on the right the head of an animal that is difficult to identify, probably a bull, on the back of the altar is a portrait surrounded by a wrath. Traces of paint are visible on the inscription field. The inscription is unfinished and is difficult to read in the current state of the monument. Its Mithraic nature is also questionable.
Date: 2nd or 3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Mi[thrae?] | [-] Au[r(elius?) - - -] | [-]+[- - -].*
Literature: CIMRM 1989; IDR III/5, 292; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 54 (wrongly claims that it is a lost piece).



Fig. 36. Mithraic altar (photo: with the kind permission of the MNIT).

II.24. Altar (Fig. 37).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 125 × 62 × 62 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered on the banks of the Mureş River in 1998, probably in secondary position. Presumably from the territory of *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 9568.
Description: Limestone altar of large dimensions. The pedestal is in a bad state of preservation. The inscription field is damaged on the left side, where a fragment is missing. The cornice is decorated with plant motifs but is very fragmentary. The monument is one of the largest inscriptions belonging to the Mithraic cult discovered in Dacia. It mentions the reconstruction of a sanctuary and a new *flamen*. It certainly belonged to a sanctuary *(mithraeum)*, although impossible to establish which one from the presumed sanctuaries of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis (Kastal Mithraeum, Pap Mithraeum).



Fig. 37. Mithras altar (photo: O. Harl, lupa 12244).

Date: probably 3rd century CE (after 197 CE).
Inscription: *[D]eo ◦ Invicto | [Mi]t(h)rae ◦ sac(rum) | [-] Statorius | [- - -]anus dec(urio) |[5] [et] flamen m|[uni] c(ipii) ◦ Sep(timi) ◦ Ap[ul(ensis)] | [In]vict(i) templum pr[o] | [sal]utem (!) sua ◦ suorum|[que p]ecunia mea feci.*
Literature: IDR III/5, 709; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 53.

II.25. Statue base (Fig. 38).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 118 × 35–44 × 30–38 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: uncertain place of discovery. Territory of Apulum.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 33/I.
Description: Large, fragmentary, uninscribed limestone statue base (column base?) in a bad state of preservation. Based on its size and the preserved upper fragment, the piece could have served as the base of a votive column or statue base. The piece belonged to a sanctuary. In the central field appears Mithras (or Cautes) riding the bull to the right, holding a torch raised in his right hand (possibly the symbol of the grade *heliodromus*). Under the front leg of the bull, we see three ears of wheat or the stylized representation of a tree. The cornice is tall, divided, without decorations. The iconography of the relief is almost identical with Cat. II.26.



Fig. 38. Mithraic statue base (photo: Cs. Szabó with the permission of MNUAI).

Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: no traces of inscription (the column is missing).
Literature: CIMRM 1985; Nemeti – Nemeti 2007; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 50.

II.26. Statue base (Fig. 39).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 100 × 34 × 44, 29 × 34 cm.
Place of discovery: probably Alba Iulia.
Provenance: uncertain place of discovery. Territory of Apulum.
Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no: A 3440/7274.

Description: Large, uninscribed limestone statue base. Based on its size and proportions, the piece could have served as the base of a large statue. The piece belonged to a sanctuary. The base and the cornice are decorated with mouldings. In the central field Mithras (or Cautes) is riding the bull to the right, holding a torch in his right hand (possibly the symbol of the grade *heliodromus*). Traces of red pigment are still visible. The iconography of the relief is almost identical with Cat. II.25.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: no traces of inscription (the column is missing).
Literature: CIMRM 2186; Nemeti – Nemeti 2007; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 255.

II.27. Statue base/column (Fig. 40).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 55 × 22 × 34 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum in 1930, located on the Citadel plateau, probably on the territory of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 290.
Description: Fragment of a limestone column capital, which served probably as a statue base or an architectural / decorative element in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum. There is a three-line inscription on the corona. The mouldings are elegantly carved, without decorations. The column does not follow any of the classical canons. The object is in a bad state of preservation.
Date: 2nd century CE.
Inscription: *[So]l(i) ◦ Mit(h)rae | [P(ublius?)] Ael(ius) Gordianus | v(otum) ◦ s(olvit) ◦ l(ibens) ◦ m(erito).*
Literature: CIMRM 1965; IDR III/5, 279; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 38.

II.28. Altar or statue base (Fig. 41).

Material: limestone.
Dimension: 98 × 61 × 38 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in secondary position close to the river Mures in the same area as Cat. II.24. Probably from the territory of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis. Its Mithraic nature is uncertain.
Place of preservation: National Union Museum, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: uncertain.
Description: Large sized altar or statue base of limestone. The upper part of the altar (the cornice and the first line of the inscription) is missing. The rest of the inscription field is partially preserved, but small parts of the left and the right side are missing (9 letters on both sides).
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.



Fig. 39. Mithraic statue base (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17353).



Fig. 40. Mithraic statue base or column (photo: Cs. Szabó with the permission of MNUAI).



Fig. 41. Mithraic altar or statue base (photo: O. Harl, lupa 12264).

Inscription: *Invi[cto] | Deo ◦ pro | saluſe ◦ C(ai) ◦ Iu[l(i)] | Rufini ◦ l[ibe]|rorumqu[e] | [eiu]s ◦ Spatalu[s] | [se] r(vus) ◦ actor ◦| [v(otum) ◦] s(olvit) ◦ l(ibens) ◦ l(aetus) ◦ m(erito).*
Literature: IDR III/5, 720; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 27.

III. Reliefs

III.1. Panelled relief with three registers (Fig. 42).



Fig. 42. Mithraic relief (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17299).

Material: White marble.
Dimension: 62 × 63 × 10 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Found in the territory of Partoş (*colonia* Aurelia Apulensis) district in 1782 as part of the so-called Kastal Mithraeum.
Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no: A 3389 (7162).
Description: The relief belongs to Type II.a1 in Gabriel Sicoe's typology and is divided into three registers. It could have served as the central relief of the sanctuary, although the context of discovery (Kastal Mithraeum), the moderate size of the relief and the presence of the *signum* dedicated by Secundinus (Cat. I.1.) indicates, that this monument was not the central dedication of the sanctuary. In the central register the tauroctony scene takes place: Mithras, dressed in Persian attire, tunic girded at the waist, fluttering *chlamys*, long trousers fastened at the ankles, and Phrygian cap; he turns his head to the left toward Sol. With his right hand he holds a dagger, killing the bull, whose head he pulls back by the jaw with his left hand. The head of the god is damaged. The bull's tail ends in three coarsely rendered ears of wheat. The votive inscription D·S·I·M appears on the bull's body, which is unusual in Mithraic iconography. The scene is surrounded by the usual elements of the tauroctony: the raven perched on the god's cloak, the serpent under the bull rising toward its spilled blood, and the dog leaping toward the wound on the right side of the relief. The torchbearers are also placed in the central register *(dadophoroi)*, Cautes (right) and Cautopates (left), in typical Persian dress with Phrygian caps, holding their torches upward (left) and downward (right) respectively, both unusually facing directly toward the tauroctony. The head of Cautes is damaged. Cautopates probably holds a scorpion in his left hand. Mithras is depicted on horseback over the bull and Mithras Taurophoros on the left side of the central register; on the right side, a *krater* and a lion in vertical position can be seen. Above the lion stands Mithras Petrogenitus, holding a torch and a dagger. The central register is separated from the upper register by a row of seven altars. There are small scenes in the upper register, from left to right: the bust of Sol without the solar crown; Mithras seated on a rock, shooting an arrow toward another rock in front of which a human figure kneels; a crescent-shaped boat containing a bull appears as an independent, yet associated motif; near the rock stands a structure resembling a house with a deformed bull inside. In front of these elements unfolds a bucolic scene showing a running dog, a resting ram, and a figure with crossed legs leaning on a staff-like object. A recumbent figure lies below him, probably Oceanus or Saturnus (a special form of the lion-headed god, Arimanius). On the right side of the upper register is the bust of Luna with a crescent moon. The left part of the lower register is missing; only a fragment of an arcade remains, probably representing the *dextrarum iunctio* between Mithras and Sol. In the next arcade appears the ritual banquet scene, with Mithras and Sol seated and holding an object, or possibly an animal on the table. The final scene depicts Mithras ascending in Sol's quadriga, holding a torch in his hand; before him lies an elderly figure, reclining and gazing toward the chariot, surrounded by a serpent. The dedicatory inscription is placed under the lower register. The lower left part of the relief is damaged.
Date: 161–180 CE, based on the onomastics of the dedicator, or alternatively, the Severan period according to the presence of ligatures.
Inscription: *◦ D(eo) ◦ S(oli) ◦ I(nvicto) ◦ M(ithrae) ◦|| [pro sal(ute) et incolumi]taſe ◦ M(arci) Aur(eli) ◦ Thimotheſi ◦ eſt ◦ Aur(eli) ◦ Maximi | [votum nuncupavit so]lviſq(ue) ◦ Euthices ◦ eorum li[b](ertus).*
Literature: CIL III, 1109; CIMRM 1935–6; IDR III/5, 280; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 17.

III.2. Panelled relief with three registers (Fig. 43).



Fig. 43. Mithraic relief (photo: O. Harl, lupa 19324).

Material: Marble.
Dimension: 63 × 74 × 3.5 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum in 1930, located on the Citadel plateau, probably on the territory of the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 455.
Description: Central relief with three registers, belonging to Type I.b in Sicoe's typology, displaying the same iconographic program as reliefs Cat. III.1, III.3, with minor variations. The central register is framed by two pilasters with capitals decorated with vegetal motifs. The tauroctony scene is represented beneath a semicircular arch composed of vegetal elements imitating the form of a grotto *(spelaeum)*. In the central scene, Mithras is shown in canonical pose slaying the bull, turning his gaze toward Sol. The raven is absent from the god's *chlamys*. Cautopates on the left is depicted with crossed legs, holding an arrow in his hand; the head and upper part of the body are missing. Beneath the bull, the serpent and the dog appear; the scorpion is either absent or not visible. Cautes stands on the right side, also with crossed legs, in Oriental dress, holding a raised torch with both hands. On the left side of the central register, outside the semicircular arch, Mithras riding the bull is probably missing. Above this area Mithras Taurophoros can be seen and the bust of Sol with a radiate crown. On the right side are the bust of Luna with a crescent, Mithras Petrogenitus holding a torch (right hand) and a dagger (left hand), and below them, a lion and a *krater*. The central and the upper register are separated by a band containing the dedicatory inscription. In the upper register, from left to right, one observes: an unidentified figure in Oriental attire with Phrygian cap, placing his left hand on the shoulder of Mithras, the archer. In front of him, Mithras stands on a rock, shooting an arrow toward a tree. In front of them, a figure in Oriental dress is climbing a tree. Near the tree is the crescent-shaped boat containing a bull, beneath which are two rams. In the following scene, an animal leaps onto the back of a figure in Oriental dress, beside whom stands another figure with crossed legs and a fluttering cloak. The final scene of the upper register depicts Oceanus or Saturnus (probably a special form of the lion-headed god Arimanius) reclining on a *kline*. The lower register is fragmentary, the left corner is missing. Beneath a fragmentary semicircular arch is the scene of the sacred banquet, with Sol and Mithras reclining on a *kline*; with a *mensa tripes in the foreground*. The final scene represents the ascension of Sol's *quadriga* with Mithras before him; in front of them lies a semi-nude figure surrounded by a serpent (probably Arimanius, representing the cosmic depth of the Mithraic myth). The relief has been preserved in several large fragments, now restored. A rectangular block is missing from the left corner. The thickness of the object (3.5 cm) indicates that it was used as a *Kultbild* in the apse of a sanctuary.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *D(eo)* ◦ *I(nvicto)* ◦ *M(ithrae)* ◦ *T(itus)* ◦ *Aur(elius)* ◦ *F(abia)* ◦ *Marcus* ◦ *vet(eranus)* ◦ *leg(ionis)* ◦ *XIII* ◦ *G(eminae)*.
Literature: CIMRM 1958–1959; IDR III/5, 271; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 30.

III.3. Panelled relief with three registers (Fig. 44).

Material: Marble from Bucova.
Dimension: 120 × 100 × 8 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in the territory of Apulum. Uncertain context, known already in 1823. Although it was certainly a central relief of a sanctuary, it cannot be associated with any of the presumed *mithraea*.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 204.II.
Description: Central relief with three registers, belonging to Type I.b according to Sicoe's typology, exhibiting the same iconographic program as reliefs Cat. III.1, III.2 with minor variations. In the central scene, Mithras is depicted in canonical pose slaying the bull, gazing toward Sol. The dagger is disproportionately large. The raven is rendered in a rudimentary manner on the god's *chlamys*. Cautopates (left), dressed in Oriental attire, is shown with crossed legs, holding a torch in his right hand and with his left, grasping

the bull's tail, which ends in stylised ears of wheat. Beneath the bull appear the scorpion, serpent, and dog. On the right side stands Cautes, also in Oriental dress with crossed legs, holding a raised torch with both hands. On the left side of the central register appears Mithras riding the bull and Mithras Taurophoros, executed with fine workmanship. Above Cautes's head is a bearded figure reclining on a *kline,* probably Saturnus (or a special form of Arimanius), holding an object, perhaps a falx, in his right hand. Next to him Mithras Petrogenitusis holding a dagger in his right hand, but his left hand and shoulder are missing. Beneath Cautes a lion is depicted beside a *krater*. In the upper register, from left to right, Sol can be seen in a *biga* (two-horse chariot), the head and shoulder of the deity are missing. A figure in Oriental costume with a fluttering *chlamys* assists Mithras, who stands upon a rock and shoots an arrow toward another rock. A figure in Oriental dress kneels in front of him, facing the rock. Near the rock appears the crescent-shaped boat containing a bull, beneath which stands a structure resembling a house with a bull or ram inside. Below this 'house of the bull' are seven altars. Further to the right are two figures in Oriental dress: the first, probably Mithras, looks and strikes toward the house with a torch; the second is shown with crossed legs, leaning on a staff-like object. The next scene depicts Luna in a *biga* drawn by two oxen; only the whip and the deity's hand are preserved, the body is lost. The left corner of the lower register is missing. A fragment of an arch is still visible. The final scene represents the ascension of Sol's *quadriga*, with Mithras standing in front of it. In the lower right corner sits a bearded, semi-nude figure, probably Saturnus (or Arimanius, the god of cosmic creation and eternity) surrounded by a serpent, his hands raised. The lower left corner and parts of the left side of the upper register are missing.



Fig. 44. Mithraic relief (photo: O. Harl, lupa 19314).

Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: no inscription visible.
Literature: CIMRM 1972; Müller *et al.* 2012, 48, AP13; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 40.

III.4. Relief with one register (Fig. 45).

Material: Marble from Bucova.
Dimension: 104 × 67–77 × 9–12 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in 1905 in the territory of the *colonia* Aurelia Apulensis in secondary position. It is uncertain if it was ever used as a central relief of a sanctuary.
Place of preservation: Museum of Arad, Inv. no: unknown.
Description: The relief is one of the biggest known representations of Mithras Tauroctonos in Dacia and the biggest of its type. The upper part of the relief is fragmentarily preserved, the edge and the framework of the relief are missing. Similarly, the Phrygian cap of Mithras and the bust of Luna in the right corner is fragmentarily preserved. The face and cloak of Mithras, the radius of Sol and some parts of the raven is beautifully carved and well preserved. The face of Mithras is represented in an unusual, frontal position, not turning to Sol, but staring towards the viewer—a very rare iconographic feature. His face, as Cserni mentioned in his second letter, is extremely detailed, one of the most beautiful features of the provincial art from Dacia. Even the cheeks and eyelids are carved. Cautopates is entirely battered, similarly to the bull,



Fig. 45. Mithraic relief (photo: V. Sava in Szabó *et al.* 2014).

whose legs and corns are the only identifiable parts. The lower part is also severely damaged. No traces of the dog or the scorpion is visible. Cautes appears fragmentarily, but with clear lines of his attribute and shape. There is no inscription on the relief. It is possible it never was marked with an inscription, as is the case with many reliefs of this size (see Cat. III.3, III.5.) but in its present condition it is impossible to determine.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: no inscription visible.
Literature: CIMRM 1938 and 1986 (wrongly interpreted as two monuments); Sicoe 2014, Cat. 46. (wrongly considered as lost); Szabó *et al.* 2014.

III.5. Relief with one register (Fig. 46).

Material: Marble of unknown origin.
Dimension: 113 × 145 × 10–23 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in the territory of Apulum. Uncertain context, known already in 1823. Although it was certainly a central relief of a sanctuary, it cannot be associated with any of the presumed *mithraea*.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 203.II.
Description: Central relief with a single register. The main scene is placed beneath a semicircular arch imitating the mythical Persian grotto *(spelaeum)* described also by Porphyry. In the central scene, Mithras is depicted in the act of slaying the bull. The god is shown in Oriental attire, wearing a finely worked *chlamys* with rich folds and a double tunic. His face is damaged, slightly inclined toward Sol, and he wears the Phrygian cap. His trousers are decorated with an elaborately embroidered pattern. The kneeling bull bears a wide ornamental band around its body, its tail ends in oversized ears of wheat. Beneath the bull the scorpion, the serpent are depicted, and a dog leaping toward the wound. To the left of the tauroctony stands Cautopates, dressed in Oriental costume but without his torch (possibly holding a scorpion); on the right, Cautes holds a raised torch in his right hand and an object (possibly a *bucranium*) in his left. Above the arch, in the upper left corner is the bust of Sol with a crown of twelve rays, one of which points toward Mithras. Along the upper band runs a row of seven altars with flames, alternating with daggers and trees topped with Phrygian caps. This rare iconography points to the Germanic provinces (Heddernheim). In the upper right corner is the bust of Luna with a crescent.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: no inscription visible.
Literature: CIMRM 1973; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 39.



Fig. 46. Mithraic relief (photo: O. Harl, lupa 19256).

III.6. Relief (Fig. 47).

Material: Marble of unknown origin.
Dimension: 33 × 23 × 4.5 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in the territory of Apulum. Uncertain context, known already in 1823.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: R644.
Description: Small cult relief with three registers, executed according to the Moesian model. The three registers are framed by a border bearing the inscription. The central register is filled with the tauroctony scene. Mithras, in canonical pose, is dressed in Oriental costume, wears the Phrygian cap and kills the bull with a dagger. Beneath the bull is the serpent, while on its right side the dog leaps toward the wound. The scorpion and raven are absent. The scene is flanked by the *dadophoroi*: on the left, Cautopates



Fig. 47. Mithraic relief (photo: O. Harl, lupa 19290).

stands with legs uncrossed, holding the torch downward; on the right, Cautes holds an upright torch in his right hand and a bow. Behind Mithras the busts of Sol and Luna can be seen. In the upper register several figures are depicted from left to right: a figure in Oriental attire advancing toward Mithras, who stands upon a rock shooting an arrow; next follows a crescent containing the bull, beneath which appears the 'house of the bull', rendered in a rough manner. On the right is the continuation of the miracle of the water: a kneeling figure in front of a rock. The final scene depicts Mithras Petrogenitus with raised hands. In the lower register are three scenes separated by arches. In the first, Sol is represented kneeling before Mithras, who holds an object in his right hand. The second scene shows the sacred banquet with Mithras and Sol, while the final scene depicts the ascension of Mithras in Sol's *quadriga*. On the right side a roughly executed figure appears, probably Saturnus (a form of Arimanius, *cosmokrator*).
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Deo Invicto Mithr(a)e || Euhemerus ◦ ex voto | posuit.*
Literature: CIMRM 1975–6; IDR III/5, 274; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 41.

III.7. Relief fragment (Fig. 48).

Material: Marble of unknown origin.
Dimension: 27 × 9.5 × 3 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in the territory of Apulum. Uncertain context, possibly discovered in the first half of the 20th century.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 290.
Description: Three fragments of a votive marble relief, probably with two registers, heavily damaged. Only the left part of the relief is preserved. In the lower register the head of Mithras can be seen wearing the Phrygian cap, situated beneath an arch; above it is an altar. From the central register only the leg of a *kline*, the raven, and part of the bust of Sol are preserved.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Soli ◦ Invi[cto Mithrae - - -] || - - - - - -*
Literature: CIMRM 1979–80; IDR III/5, 278; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 45.



Fig. 48. Mithraic relief (photo: R. Ota and D. Zudor, MNUAI).

III.8. Relief (Fig. 49).

Material: Marble of unknown origin.
Dimension: 13,5 × 25 × 5 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in the territory of Apulum. Uncertain context, possibly discovered in the first half of the 20th century.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 643.
Description: Fragment of a votive marble relief, probably with a single register, belonging to Type I in Sicoe's typology. Only the lower part of the bull is preserved, together with the serpent, the dog, and the crossed legs of Cautes, who is depicted wearing a short tunic.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE (probably after 168 CE based on the consular title).
Inscription: *[- - -]imus ◦ b͡e(ne)f(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis) ◦ v(otum) [s(olvit)].*
Literature: CIMRM 1981–82; IDR III/5, 291; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 44.



Fig. 49. Mithraic relief (photo: I. Piso).

III.9. Relief.

Material: unknown (perhaps marble).
Dimension: unknown.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in the territory of Apulum. Uncertain context, possibly discovered in the 15–16th century. Based on the inscription it might come from the territory of the *canabae* or *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: disappeared.
Description: Fragment of a Mithraic relief (probably of large size) representing the tauroctony (Mithras killing the bull) with the accompanied symbols (snake, dog). In the 17th century the monument already decorated the palace of the Transylvanian prince, today it is lost.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *S(oli) ◦ I(nvicto) ◦ M(ithrae) ◦ Turranius ◦ Marcellinus | et ◦ Ant(onius) Senecio ◦ Iunior ◦ conductores ◦ armament(arii) | ex voto posuerunt.*
Literature: CIMRM 1992–93; IDR III/5, 285; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 47.

III.10. Relief fragment (Fig. 50).

Material: marble.
Dimension: 42 × 45 × 8.5 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in the territory of the *canabae*, *municipium* Septimium Apulense, probably in the same area as the so-called Oancea Mithraeum.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: 656.
Description: Fragmentary votive relief with three registers, belonging to Type I.a according to Sicoe's typology. Part of the lower register and of the main scene, the tauroctony is preserved. From the tauroctony scene the kneeling and wounded bull, the scorpion and serpent beneath it are visible, as well as the dog leaping toward the wound. The god's leg and part of his short tunic can be seen on the animal's back. From the lower register, a section of the arcade is preserved, showing a figure in Oriental attire holding a torch in the right hand, and Sol with a torch before the *quadriga*. The relief fragment could belong to a large relief that once stood in a sanctuary in the *canabae*.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: no inscription preserved.
Literature: Sicoe 2014, Cat. 43.



Fig. 50. Mithraic relief (photo: S. Olea with the kind permission of the author).

III.11. Relief (Fig. 51).

Material: marble.
Dimension: 40 × 34.5 × 3 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in the territory of ancient Apulum based on the manuscript of József Kemény. Franz Cumont cited the place of discovery as Apulum, the later bibliography associated with Potaissa (Turda). Nyulas 2021 confirmed its provenance as Apulum based on the Kemény manuscript.
Place of preservation: National History Museum of Transylvania, Cluj, Inv. no: 1135.
Description: Single-register marble relief. The upper part of the relief is curved, marked by an elegant border that frames the sculpted surface and symbolises the mythical Persian cave *(spelaeum)*. At the centre of the composition, Mithras, depicted in Persian at-



Fig. 51. Mithraic relief (photo: with the kind permission of MNIT).

tire and finely carved, turns slightly to the right toward Sol as he plunges the dagger into the bull. At the bull's leg and genitals are the serpent and scorpion, while from the left a small dog leaps toward the wound. The tauroctony scene is framed on both sides by the torchbearers Cautes and Cautopates: Cautes on Mithras' left holds the torch raised upward, while Cautopates on the right holds his torch downward. Above the deities a large, pinecone-shaped tree stands. A raven is shown descending upon Mithras' *chlamys* from the right, with the busts of Sol and Luna appearing to his right and left, respectively. Unusually, a lion's protome is depicted above Mithras, which may refer to the dedicator's grade of *leo* or to an astrological constellation or seasonal moment.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Pro [salute? - - -] | Att(ius?) ◦ Va[- - -].*
Literature: CIMRM 2198; CIL III, 901; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 5; Nyulas 2021, 174, 188.

III.12. Relief (Fig. 52).

Material: marble.
Dimension: 24 × 19.5 × 3 cm.
Place of discovery: Vinţu de Jos (Alvinc), close to Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in Vinţu de Jos in the river Mureş in secondary position in 1859. The detailed context of the discovery is not documented. It was in the possesion of László Bartschi, surgeon from Orăştie (Broos, Szászváros). The Brukenthal Museum bought it on 11th March 1875 for 100 forint.
Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no: 1826.



Fig. 52. Mithraic relief (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17466).

Description: Small-sized marble relief divided into three registers. The central, main register is filled with the tauroctony scene, rendered in detail with unusually refined and elegant execution. Mithras, shown in an almost frontal position, slays the bull, whose hide and dewlap are elaborately modelled. Beneath the bull is a schematically depicted scorpion; the serpent is missing, and the dog is crudely represented. The two torchbearers, Cautes and Cautopates, appear in elegant form, each wearing a *chlamys* over the shoulders. The Persian trousers *(braccae persicae)* are absent on both Mithras and the torchbearers, giving the impression that their legs are bare. Both *dadophoroi* hold their torches raised upward. In the right *dadophoros*' right hand, a club is visible, from which presumably the bull's hide or a bundle is suspended. The busts of Sol and Luna are placed above Cautes and Cautopates. A finely carved raven descends onto Mithras' cloak from the right, while above him nine small altars stand in a line, five to Mithras' right and four to his left. The upper register depicts various episodes from the *vita* Mithrae: Mithras as Taurophoros (carrying the bull on his shoulders, the *Transitus Dei*), the bull in a boat, Mithras seated on a rock shooting an arrow (the *Fons Perennis*), the bull housed within an *aedicula*-like structure, and three kneeling male figures, likely representing Mithras' various trials and preparations for his struggle with the bull. The last scene on the left of the upper register shows Mithras Petrogenitus, suggesting that the narrative may be read from left to right. In the lower register the post-tauroctony episodes can be seen between Sol and Mithras, placed beneath schematic arcades symbolising the mythical cave (three cave-like arches). In one scene Mithras kneels before Sol; in the next, the divine pair reclines at the ritual banquet *(convivium)* on a *kline*; this is followed by their celestial ascent in a *biga* (or *quadriga*). The sequence likely concludes with a depiction of Saturnus–Arimanius, symbolising eternal cosmic renewal, though the figure is rendered in a very schematic manner. The relief is almost completely identical with Cat.III.15. The central and upper part of the relief has a bronze copy in the Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek from München (Inv. no. NI 3431). The object has been acquired after 1872 from the art dealer Aron Drey (1813–1891).
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: no inscription preserved.
Literature: CIMRM 2000; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 64.

III.13. Relief (Fig. 53).

Material: marble.
Dimension: 23 × 16 × 2 cm.
Place of discovery: Vinţu de Jos, close to Alba Iulia.
Provenance: discovered in Vinţu de Jos in the river Mures. Probably in secondary position, although the detailed context of the discovery was not documented. Cumont and Ioan Piso considered as monuments from Apulum.
Place of preservation: Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu, Inv. no: A1277.
Description: Small, single-register marble relief. The central scene depicts the tauroctony. Mithras, shown in the traditional canonical pose, slays the bull. Beneath the sacrificial animal, the scorpion and the serpent are crudely represented, while a dog leaps toward the wound from the left. On either side of Mithras appear the busts of Sol and Luna, and a raven descends onto Mithras' *chlamys*. The tauroctony scene is framed by the two torchbearers, Cautes and Cautopates, both of whom, in an unusual manner, are shown holding their torches raised. Along the lower frame of the relief runs a Greek inscription.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *Αὐρήλι(ο)ς Στέφανος θεῷ Μίθρᾳ | εὐχαριστήρι(ο)ν.*
Literature: CIMRM 2001–2; IDR III/5, 267; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 65.



Fig. 53. Mithraic relief (photo: O. Harl, lupa 17451).

III.14. Relief.

Material: unknown.
Dimension: unknown.
Place of discovery: he relief was attested in the 16th century by Mezerzius as a reused monument in the Dominican monastery of Alvinc, later reused in the Martinuzzi castle.
Provenance: uncertain, probably the ancient territory of Apulum, although it was associated also with Vinţu de Jos.
Place of preservation: disappeared (known since the 16th century).
Description: Mithras relief. No details known.
Inscription: *Invicto | Mit[h]rae | L(ucius) ◦ Octavius | Gratus |ˢ v(otum) ◦ s(olvit) ◦ l(ibens) ◦ m(erito).*
Literature: CIL III, 1119; CIMRM 2003; IDR III/5, 275; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 66.

III.15. Relief (Fig. 54).

Material: marble.
Dimension: 24 × 19.5 × 3 cm.
Place of discovery: probably Alba Iulia.
Provenance: uncertain, probably the ancient territory of Apulum.
Place of preservation: Cumont mentioned in his catalogue that a marble relief—originally kept in the collections of the Transylvanian Museum from Cluj (Kolozsvár)—was later in a private collection in Budapest. No current data about the monument. Gypsum copy of the monument was made in 1877 in Vienna by the Hofmuseum. Today the copy is at the Archaeological Museum of Innsbruck, inv. no. 105.
Description: Small-sized marble relief divided into three registers. In the central, main register appears The tauroctony scene fills the central register, rendered in detail with unusually refined and elegant execution. Mithras, shown in an almost frontal position, slays the bull, whose hide and dewlap are elaborately modelled. Beneath the bull is a schematically depicted scorpion; the serpent is missing, and the dog is crudely



Fig. 54. Mithraic relief (gypsum copy) (photo: M. F. Müller, with the kind permission of the Archaeological Museum of Innsbruck).

represented. The two torchbearers, Cautes and Cautopates, appear in elegant form, each wearing a *chlamys* over the shoulders. The Persian trousers *(braccae persicae)* are absent on both Mithras and the torchbearers, giving the impression that their legs are bare. Both *dadophoroi* hold their torches raised upward. In the right *dadophoros*' right hand, a club is visible, from which presumably the bull's hide or a bundle is suspended. Above Cautes and Cautopates are the busts of Sol and Luna. A finely carved raven descends onto Mithras' cloak from the right, while above him nine small altars stand in a line, four to Mithras' right and five to his left. The upper register depicts various episodes from the *vita* Mithrae: Mithras as Taurophoros (carrying the bull on his shoulders, the *Transitus Dei*), the bull in a boat, Mithras seated on a rock shooting an arrow (the *Fons Perennis*), the bull housed within an *aedicula*-like structure, and three kneeling male figures-likely representing Mithras' various trials and preparations for his struggle with the bull. The last scene on the left of the upper register shows Mithras Petrogenitus, suggesting that the narrative may be read from left to right. In the lower register, the post-tauroctony episodes between Sol and Mithras are depicted, placed beneath schematic arcades symbolising the mythical cave (three cave-like arches). In one scene Mithras kneels before Sol; in the next, the divine pair reclines at the ritual banquet *(convivium)* on a *kline*; this is followed by their celestial ascent in a *biga* (or *quadriga*). The sequence likely concludes with a depiction of Saturnus–Arimanius, symbolizing eternal cosmic renewal, though the figure is rendered in a very schematic manner. The relief is almost identical with Cat. III.12. The only minor detail is a krater represented under the raven. The monument can be also a forgery based on Cat. III.12, however the available data does not allow us to prove it.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: no inscription preserved.
Literature: CIMRM 1974; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 42.

III.16. High relief (Fig. 55).

Material: marble.
Dimension: 36 × 10–33 cm.
Place of discovery: Alba Iulia.
Provenance: Discovered in the so-called Oancea Mithraeum on the property of Ioan Oancea in 1930, located on the Citadel Plateau, probably from the *municipium* Septimium Apulense.
Place of preservation: National Museum of the Union, Alba Iulia, Inv. no: uncertain.
Description: Fragment of a marble high relief, a rare type in Apulum (known in some case studies in Sarmizegetusa). The bull-slaying scene is represented on a standing slab. On the right shoulder of Mithras Tauroctonos there was a dagger originally, of which only the base remains. The scorpion is not depicted, while the serpent and the dog are shown beside the bull's wound. To the right of the tauroctony scene appears Cautes, with crossed legs, holding a raised torch in his right hand, resting it upon his right shoulder. In his left hand he holds a round object. Above him is the bust of Luna. Cautopates is no longer preserved, nor are the head and right leg of Mithras Tauroctonos, as well as the hind leg and tail of the sacrificial bull.
Date: 2nd–3rd century CE.
Inscription: *[- - -] Ạn͡ulinus imag(inifer) l(egionis) XIII G(eminae).*
Literature: CIMRM 1954–55; IDR III/5, 290; Sicoe 2014, Cat. 29.



Fig. 55. Mithraic high-relief (photo: A. Diaconescu and A. Schäfer, after Sicoe 2014, 151, Cat. 29. with the kind permission of the author).

IV. Other objects

None of the Mithraic sanctuaries discovered before 2008 were excavated, therefore Apulum is completely lacking in the small finds (ceramic, metal, bone objects) of the sanctuary-inventories. The small finds of the so-called Vitalis Mithraeum, discovered in 2008 and excavated in 2013–2016, are not yet published.[65]

65 McCarty *et al.* 2019. The sanctuary was used in the Medieval times and almost completely destroyed, the number of small finds is extremely limited and cannot be compared to undisturbed sites, such as Güglingen.

V. Uncertain place of discovery / debated monuments

There are several monuments in the catalogue of Maarten J. Vermaseren and Gabriel Sicoe, which have an uncertain provenance or their Mithraic nature is uncertain. In the catalogue above, we included only those monuments, which were certainly found in the territory of the two cities of Apulum (the *colonia* and the *municipium*) and their Mithraic nature is certain (the case of Cat. II.23 is problematic). CIMRM 1966 (an altar dedicated to Jupiter) might come from the so-called Oancea Mithraeum, although the details of the discovery are uncertain. An altar dedicated to Deus Invictus was considered as uncertain by some authors,[66] however, it might be Mithraic (Cat. II.28). The monuments from Vinţu de Jos (Cat. III.12–14) probably come from the territory of Apulum, as there are no traces of Roman buildings associated with these finds in Vinţu de Jos. The provenance of a large, extraordinary marble relief[67] was often associated with Apulum, however, its exact provenance is problematic: Karl Gooss mentioned that it was discovered on the 16th of July, 1723 in Comuna Doştat (Hosszútelke, Dorstadt), while later bibliography claimed that it was found in Apulum or Sarmizegetusa. Several monuments were identified on the *territorium* of Apulum in present-day Ozd, Boian, Săcădate, Lopadea Nouă, Oarda, Cincşor.[68] The context of their discovery is uncertain, but most of them seems to be local finds and not *spolia* from Apulum.

Funding

This work was supported by the MTA–SZTE Lendület (Momentum) Mithras Research Group, hosted by the University of Szeged and funded by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (LP 2025–9/2025).

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Dana Zudor (MNUAI) for her kind help and support in the *lapidarium* of Alba Iulia, and to Gabriel Rustoiu, Ovidiu Ţentea, Sidonia P. Olea, Gabriel Sicoe, Ian Haynes, Irina Nemeti, Eugenia Beu-Dachin, Martin Florian Müller, Ortolf Harl, and Nicolae Tescula for their assistance with new photographs.

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