

# Reconstructing the Roman and Celtic Dress of Aquincum\*

**In 2000, the Aquincum Museum in Budapest organised an exhibition dedicated to the development of local dress customs during the Roman period, based on depictions on grave stele and textile remains from graves found in the region.**

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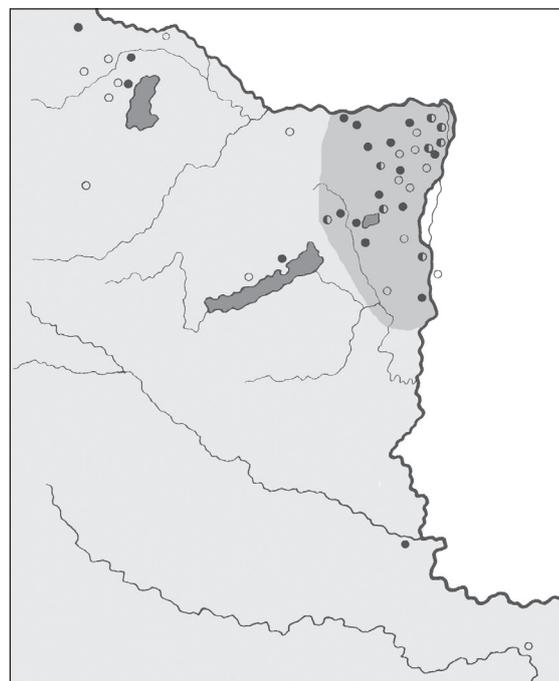
After the Roman conquest of Pannonia in the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century, indigenous people and new settlers alike began to practice the Roman custom of erecting grave steles hon-



■ **Fig. 1** A woman holding a distaff as well as spindle and whorl. This scene is depicted on a stone grave stele and was the model for this woman's clothing in this reconstruction.

ouring the dead. Although these stones were fashioned in Roman stone carvers' workshops, the patrons were both Romans and local Eraviscan Celts, judging by the names and garments depicted on the stele. These grave stele have been found around the Roman town of Aquincum located on the territory of what was to become the city of Budapest, capital of Hungary today. Reconstructions of the local Roman and Celtic fashion were on display from May 2000 to October 2001 at the Aquincum Museum in Budapest.

During setting-up preparations for the exhibition, research was conducted looking into parallels between the preserved textile remains from Late Roman Aquincum graves as well as textiles found in other Roman provinces and the often fragmentary as well as sometimes heavily stylized depictions on stone monuments in the Aquincum lapidary. The dress ensembles displayed in the exhibition have been created using traditional manufacturing methods described in Roman literary sources, analyses of archaeological finds from Aquincum (**Fig. 1**), ethnographic analogies and results of experimental archaeology. The materials were hand-woven, sewn by hand with linen, wool or silk threads, some of which were also hand-spun and coloured using dye plants. We used modern tools, materials and garments where Latin models were not available. Through this approach, it became possible to understand what the Roman and Celtic costumes of the region probably looked like. An emphasis was placed on reconstructing the altogether more colourful, diverse and decorated dresses of the women inhabitants of the town – both Roman and Celtic – although the costumes of men and children were also studied.



■ **Fig. 2** The territory of the Eraviscan Celts in the Roman province of Pannonia.

## From Celtic settlements to capital of the province

During the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century, the Celtic Eraviscus tribe occupied mid- and north-eastern Transdanubia (**Fig. 2**).

Their settlements have been discovered on both sides of the Danube and slopes of the surrounding hills with their fortified centre having been excavated on Gellért-hill in Budapest. According to the latest research, Roman occupation of the future province of Pannonia took place gradually. This historical process ended in a rather peaceful incorporation of the Eraviscus tribe's land into the Roman Empire. The Eraviscan way of life continued with hardly any changes during the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century, but after the so-called conquest the Celts quickly adapted themselves. Romanisation occurred so rapidly that by the

\* This article is based on the text of the catalogue for the exhibition Celtic Women - Roman Ladies which took place at the Aquincum Museum in Budapest. The full catalogue as well as bibliography is available on-line at <http://www.eurorea.net> The grave stele and some of the photographs can be seen as part of the permanent display in the museum. The authors would like to express their thanks to Karola Müller, without whose kind preparation and editing this article would not have been published.

middle of the century, during the reign of Claudius (AD 41–54), the whole area was organized into the independent province of Pannonia.

The first military units were generally auxiliary cavalry troops (*ala*). By the end of the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century, a legion was established in Aquincum and by the beginning of the AD 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the second and third generation of those who had been given Roman citizenship after serving in an auxiliary troop and those who were born Roman citizens had also grown up.

At the end of the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century, the *limes* had been constructed along the Danube River marking the frontier of the Roman Empire. After Trajan's reign (AD 98–117) the Roman army was reformed. Legions were garrisoned locally in Pannonia, their ranks complemented by Roman citizens. As the Romans settled in Aquincum over a long period, the former half-timbered constructions were replaced by stone-buildings. The legionary fortress was the central nucleus of the later town. The Military Town (*canabae*), inhabited by military families and veterans, grew up around this fortress. The Civil Town (in the area around the Aquincum Museum) was constructed north of this military area. It was the habitation centre for the tribal Eraviscan aristocracy who had been granted Roman citizenship and for other Roman civilians who settled here.

At the beginning of the AD 2<sup>nd</sup> century, Aquincum became the military and administrative centre of Pannonia Inferior (Lower Pannonia) and the seat of the governor, the *Legatus Augusti*. The governor and his entourage brought the latest fashions from the city of Rome and helped spread the general Roman costume among settled civilians and merchants from various provinces. Soldiers wore military uniform although women of local origin continued to wear traditional Eraviscan dress for a long time. During the rule of Hadrian (AD

117–138) the Civil Town was given the rank of *municipium* and from this time on, it had the right to autonomous administration. Members of the civil council, the *ordo*, were elected from among civilians of Eraviscan origin.

In the period of the AD 170s, after the continuous and peaceful development of the Antoninus' era, this settlement became a military gathering place for nearly twenty years during the long Marcomann wars. Merchant and commerce were geared more to catering for the troops of the Imperial army. Importing luxury goods became less important.

In the last decade of the AD 2<sup>nd</sup> century, Septimus Severus (AD 193–211) rose to power in Rome with the support of the army in Pannonia. At any rate, as the army grew in strength as a political factor, the new emperor wished to conciliate it. At this time, *canabae* often acquired the status of *colonia* within the Empire. Nearby settlements were also granted higher status. Thus, both the Civil Town and the Military Town in Aquincum became *colonia*.

With substantial increases in wages, the financial circumstances of the population improved markedly. As a result, large-scale construction work was initiated within the town. The largest number of and, at the same time, most beautiful objects in the Aquincum Museum lapidary date to this period. It can clearly be seen from these remains what a great impact this general prosperity had on fashion and on the quality of textiles.

The Emperor Caracalla (AD 211–217) continued his father's politics and in AD 212 he gave Roman citizenship to all people born free throughout the Roman Empire. This measure did not have such a perceptible result on objects which have come to light from Aquincum, located as it was on the line of the frontier, than it did two years later in AD 212, when the emperor modified the frontier line between Pannonia Inferior and Pannonia Superior. The political importance of Pannonia Inferior grew unexpectedly as it became a province with two legions. From this time, the

governor's position could only be filled by a former consul. The governor's palace and the administrative quarter was expanded and rebuilt at this time following the latest luxurious tastes. During the reign of the Severan dynasty, more and more inhabitants coming from Africa and Eastern provinces settled in Aquincum and this fact had its own effect on fashion as well.

In the second half of the AD 3<sup>rd</sup> century, barbarian pressure in the environs of the Danube increased. Dacia was surrendered in AD 271 and Pannonia became one of the most insecure zones in the Empire. This was the time of the so-called soldier-emperors when members of the Pannonian–Illyricum army corps controlled all key positions of Imperial politics in Rome. Many of the emperors visited far-off Aquincum in order to calm any political tension, though provisory advantages gained in this way might quickly vanish.

By the end of the century Diocletian (AD 284–305) introduced a new administrative system in the region. With Pannonia Inferior divided into two parts, Aquincum became the military administrative seat of the new province of Valeria. A special defence system was established on the left (barbarian) side of the Danube of which the remains of two fortifications are located within modern Budapest: Contra Aquincum and Transaquincum.

Constantine the Great (AD 312–337) reformed the army and the whole military defence system once again. It was at that time that a Late Roman fort was built, transforming the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century legionary fortress. Most of the Aquincum army and the civilian population moved into this stronghold and its surroundings. From the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, waves of new peoples – part of the so-called Great Migration – initially attacked Pannonia but later settled as allies of Rome (*foederati*). The newly settled tribes of various origins took up Roman-style elements of attire but they also preserved their sophisticated ancient tastes, as demonstrated by the preserved remains of their clothing. No depictions of their costume have come to light from this period.



■ **Fig. 3** Reconstruction of a Roman lady's attire based on grave steles found in the area of the Roman and Celtic town in Aquincum, Pannonia. The grave steles demonstrate that there was a considerable difference between Celtic and Roman dress.

## Pleated and layered: the dress of a Roman lady

As each freeborn man in the Roman Empire displayed his social position and rank through his dress, so did women. Cloth, wrapped tightly around the body, the loins or breasts, served as an undergarment. There are also hints of small underpants and even corsets. Over this, women wore a short shirt, the *tunica*, from which only the hem, visible below the neck hole of the over garment, shows on depictions. It was generally plain white, although sometimes embroidery or a woven band decorated the hems. In sacrificial scenes carved in the lower sections of grave stele below the portraits of the deceased, the living are shown offering gifts to the dead. In these scenes, women are depicted in their everyday attire. These clothes are usually variations on a long *tunica* with or without sleeves. The *tunica* with long sleeves differs from a *stola* – the common over-garment – as it does not cover the front of the feet. Its length was adjusted with an under-belt.

The long *stola* reached down to just above their feet. From Pannonia we know of only the later model where the front and the back were simply sewn together. This type might have also been decorated by two thin vertical stripes in line with the corners of the neck hole and woven into or sewn onto the fabric. The *stola* had short-sleeved and long-sleeved variants. They could be tied with a twine or ribbon belt just below the breast. On the inner side, the lower part that swept the ground was lined with a stronger and cheaper band of material. This hem was filled to make the edge firm.

A rectangular mantle, the *palla*, was draped over the *stola* (Fig. 3). According to reconstruction experiments, the *stola* could be 1.5 m wide and up to 5 m long. A Roman woman would have wrapped it around her body in such a way that she could hold the end of the *palla* in one hand instead of fastening it with a brooch or a pin. When leaving her home, she covered her head with the *palla* although she would also wear a small light veil. Women shown on Aquincum line steles first let the left end of their *palla* hang from their left shoulder. Then they threw it across their

back, guided the other end over their right shoulder and finally cast it onto their left shoulder; this being the classical way to wear a *palla*.

During the AD 3<sup>rd</sup> century, the edges of the *palla* were frequently decorated with woven bands. This pattern can easily be distinguished on depictions. The *palla* of the Late Roman Period was drawn behind the back with its two ends covering the shoulders and hanging down over the elbows or, alternatively, held together at the front. The thickness of the *palla* material depended on the climate and the owner's social status.

The most popular colours for festive costumes were red, purple and various shades of violet. Harmony of colour was very important in Roman fashion: a light *stola* was commonly worn with a *palla* in a darker shade of the same colour. The most common combinations were purples, violets, reds and white or yellow with the aforementioned colours. Blue and green were also customary. Use of brown or black was exceptional, probably because these were the colours of mourning. One can also derive colour combinations from depictions on grave steles from Aquincum: a yellow *stola* with a red *palla* or a red *stola* with a red *palla*. On the other hand, the remains of fabrics found in archaeological contexts are regularly of darker colour such as dark purple, dark violet, brown and dark blue. Moreover, we have some almost black fabric remains found in graves from the AD 4<sup>th</sup> century.

In Antiquity separate fashion for children did not exist. Little girls dressed like their mothers. At the time of state festivals and cult ceremonies, boys and girls under ten years of age from worthy families wore the same *toga praetexta*, that is, a toga with a purple hem. The everyday attire of children comprised a longer *tunica* for girls and a shorter one for boys. A gown was worn over this in colder weather.

## Fit for every occasion: soldiers and civilians

As a garrison of a frontier zone of the Empire was located in Aquincum, a large part of the male population consisted of active or retired



■ Fig. 4 A wall painting from Aquincum depicts a boy or young man wearing a loincloth as an undergarment while bringing in the grape harvest.

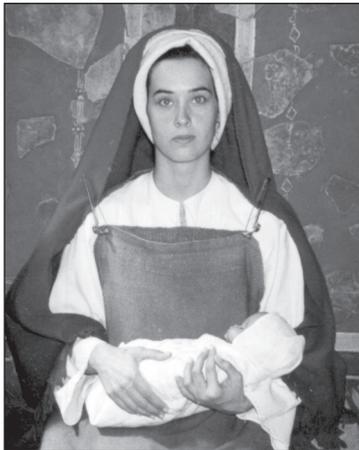
soldiers who were recognizable by the dress uniform they wore outside the fortress. There were relatively few people who commemorated themselves by wearing a toga. Military and civilian dress differed from each other in the cut and colour of the over-garment. By examining the representations in the Aquincum Museum it is possible to trace changes in “gentleman’s” fashion. Men’s undergarments consisted of a loincloth, as seen on an Aquincum wall painting depicting a boy harvesting (Fig. 4). The festive dress of a Roman civilian was made from wool and consisted of a white sleeveless or long-sleeved *tunica* and a *toga*, the white woollen gown worn over the *tunica*. The *tunica* worn by more distinguished men was decorated by two vertical purple stripes running down from two corners of the neck-hole. The *toga* was basically a blanket with approximately eight-angles. Its width was twice the size of its owner’s and its length three times his height (Fig. 5).

Draping it was very difficult, since its pleats could not be arranged without help. Because it was so complicated to put on properly, the toga gradually lost popularity although it never disappeared completely. The knee-long, long sleeved *tunica* was made from rather thick wool cloth characteristic of northern, colder regions. Sometimes it was tied with two belts. The lower belt adjusted the length of the *tunica* while the second belt held it

in place. This later variant is characteristic of military dress. The sleeves of the *tunica* were originally straight and narrow; a wider-sleeved variant came into fashion at the beginning of the AD 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Military uniform dress, often depicted on grave steles, consisted of a *tunica* and a military cloak (*sagum*) (Fig. 6). It was fixed on the right shoulder with a brooch. Its colour appears to have been red on the basis of surviving spots of red paint on stone monuments. At the back, the *sagum* covered the *tunica*, which reached half-way down the leg, while at the front it was either thrown over the left shoulder or its left side was held in left hand in an arrangement of vertical pleats. One of its ends was fringed. The fringe always hung down from the left shoulder. The fringe of a *sagum* could be either short or long and bunched.

There are some depictions on grave steles of veterans wearing another type of cloak. This is a red cape called a *paenula* made from milled wool cloth. According to contemporary Antique sources, this kind of cape could also be worn by civilians. It was closed at the front



■ Fig. 7 An Eraviscan woman wearing a shawl, one of the characteristics of Celtic female attire in the city.

and its two sides were often sewn together. To prevent the holes for the stitches along the seam from stretching, strips and sometimes twine were used to reinforce them. The sides of the *paenula* either hung down or were arranged in pleats and draped over the shoulders. Only with the *paenula* was a red woollen cloth worn. It is easily recognizable by its characteristic globular outline. The festive dress uniform consisted of a *tunica* with ornamental armour over it and *sagum* worn over all. Soldiers of higher rank carried a commander's cloak (*paludamentum*), as a sign of their status. It was, usually violet coloured and richly ornamented. This kind of cloak can be seen on a marble statue in the permanent exhibition.

During the conquest of the northern parts of Europe, the uniform of the Roman army was enriched by clothing derived from the Celtic and Germanic costume. The *paenula*, *sagum* and trousers are examples of this borrowing. There are soldiers shown on Trajan's column, a monument carved to commemorate everyday life during the Dacian wars, who because of cold weather, wore narrow trousers reaching to the middle of their legs. Trousers may have comprised the everyday dress of cavalry soldiers in Aquincum. Descriptions of this kind of clothing have also survived. Variants on sleeveless or long-sleeved *tunicae* can be seen in sacrificial scenes on some grave steles showing that this type of clothing was also worn in Pannonia.

According to the sources, common people wore a brownish garment suggesting that their clothes were probably left in their original, natural colours. Depictions of native Celtic men in traditional attire have not yet been found on grave steles. Men who kept their traditional garments even after the Roman conquest would, presumably, have been buried according to ancient Celtic rites. In the exhibition at the Aquincum Museum, the dress of the Celtic male was inspired by modern costume reconstructions on the one hand and on the other by descriptions in contemporary sources suggesting that Celts were fond of fabrics with squares or stripes.

## Traditional or outlandish? The costume of Celtic women

Ancient literature deals in detail with the way Romans dressed, but the costume of the native population is scarcely mentioned, so there are no written records concerning their garments. The Eraviscan women's clothing from Pannonia has been preserved only in contemporary depictions. That is why, in order to complete our reconstruction, methods from modern experimental archaeology and ethnological analogies were employed. The grave steles of Roman and Celtic women can be distinguished at first glance. Although various types of Eraviscan women's dress have emerged in the surroundings of Aquincum, the important characteristics are the same. They put on woollen upper clothing over a long-sleeved long shirt. This was pinned at the shoulders with the characteristic Celtic brooches (*fibulae*) and fastened at the waist or under the breast with a belt. The upper skirt / shirt bottom never reached as far as the ankles, but were shorter. As a general rule, Celtic women left their house with their heads covered. In this characteristic detail, their attire differed from Roman custom (Fig. 7). The Celtic "turban-scarf", well known in the contemporary literature is, in fact, a combination of two individual pieces of clothing: a linen scarf or bonnet and the festive scarf over it. The under-headgear was made from various materials and in various ways. In some areas, women wound turbans made from long, narrow scarves around their heads. In other regions, ladies wore rounded, hat-like headgear with smooth surfaces, probably made from felt. Sometimes the hat and the nape were wrapped with a big shawl made from fine fabric. Red festive rectangular or triangular shawls were then draped over them. Tailored and sewn bonnets were also known.

As for under-clothing, Celtic women wore long-sleeved shirts, probably made from white linen-cloth. It is possible to distinguish various cuts from descriptions of neck-holes, the shape of the shirt-sleeves or fabric pleats. The front and the back of the shirt were sometimes

made from a single rectangular sheet with the neck hole woven in and the sleeves sewn on. These descriptions allowed us to make two kinds of reconstructions: the shirts may have been tailored as an all-in-one garment or in a shorter form with an under-skirt worn with it.

The upper clothing was made from wool and, in most cases, red wool. Although we can hardly find two depictions in the lapidary of Aquincum that are identical in all details, some typical characteristics can still be distinguished. The simplest kind of clothing was a dress made from a rectangular piece of fabric. The fabric was used just as it was cut off the loom with women wrapping the material around them (Fig. 8). No cutting or needle work was involved. It was fixed at the shoulder with a pair of fibulae. This kind of dress was fashionable mostly during the early period, in the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century but it remained in use until the beginning of the AD 2<sup>nd</sup> century, as can be seen on the earliest stone monuments in our museum. Women wore it by first placing the upper right hand corner of the rectangular piece of cloth on the left shoulder. Then it was pulled back below the right armpit and pinned at the front on the right shoulder. Then, directing the fabric further back, the first corner was pinned to the back by being pulled in place from behind. Finally, the fabric was pulled from under the left armpit where it was also held in place by fibulae in front on the right and left shoulders. Thus, the whole dress had a double fold in front with its edge hanging down vertically from the right shoulder.

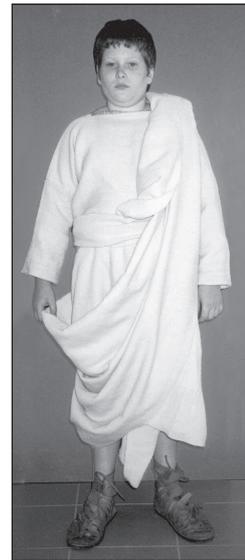
One of the most typical kinds of clothing was a pinafore (Fig. 9). This kind of upper dress reaching below the knees is depicted on most representations with under-clothing showing beneath it. The front and back parts were fastened at the shoulders with *fibulae* and sewn along the sides. In the AD 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the breast part of the dress was usually tapered. Pinafores were worn both with and without belts.

Special garments appear on a number of stone monuments, which are not found in later European clothing. The “long dress with two belts” was a

tube-like piece of cloth. Based on experimental reconstruction, its longer variant might have been 3 m long and the shorter one 1.8 m. It was either fixed at the shoulders with a pair of *fibulae* or sewn together in the same way as the pinafore. The bottom was then pulled up to the height of the ankles and the dress was fastened with a belt or twine. The surplus cloth dangled back over the belt and another belt was tied beneath the breast. This process yields very interesting contours and an arching, rounded, pleated “upper” skirt (Fig. 10, 11, 12). The linen underwear does not show on the depictions; the “lower” and “upper” skirts are the same colour.

Celtic women fastened their wool over dress under the breasts with ribbon-belts of variable thickness. We have not found any depictions of buckles on the stone monuments of Aquincum. Stone carvers depict belts as plain bands, so these could not have been knotted belts either. Most probably, 2 m long woven ribbons were wrapped tightly around the body, so the layers did not overlap with each other. Its end was then tucked in at the back, though we can observe the end of a reasonably long ribbon-belt end hanging down in front of one of the figures on a grave stele.

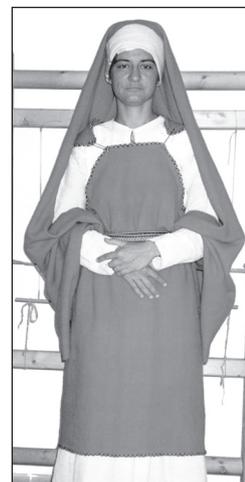
Wearing a shawl came into fashion in the AD 2<sup>nd</sup> century. It was worn over the pinafore and was a variant of the sewn shoulder version of the long dress with two belts. There were variants made from thin, fine and pleated fabric or thick fabric arranged in broad pleats. The width of a shawl would have been approximately 0.4 m and its length was either 2.5 m or 1.5 m depending on the type. Shawls were most likely in different colours from the red of the over skirt; we have descriptions of yellow and green variants. It is easy to reconstruct the way it was worn: its right end was placed on the left breast and pulled back over the right shoulder. Then it was folded in half just at the middle of the back and placed over the left shoulder so it lay on the left breast just above the right end of the cloth. Next, the left end was folded back below the right edge and the pleats were arranged at the end. This kind of clothing may have been fashion-



■ Fig. 5 Putting on a toga several metres length was not easy and could not be done without help.



■ Fig. 6 Roman official wearing tunica and sagum, the most common everyday clothing for male Roman citizens in Aquincum.



■ Fig. 9 Eraviscan woman wearing a pinafore.

able around Aquincum since it is depicted on the grave steles of at least six women in our lapidary. On the basis of sacrificial scenes shown on grave steles, it seems that clothes for everyday use were identical to the best clothing, though the hem of garments was sometimes tucked under a belt during work. Clothes sewn at the shoulder were popular, but one can sometimes find over-clothing fastened with *fibulae*. Celtic children usually dressed similarly to their elders'. Young boys wore long sleeved *tunicae*, frequently covered by a cloak similar to the *sagum* and held in place on the shoulder with a *fibula*. Girls wore various kinds of wool over-clothing over their long sleeved shirts; the sewn-on-shoulder variant was more popular (Fig. 13).

### Ornamental and practical – Jewellery

Jewellery was a practical part of traditional Celtic garments since the attire ensemble was not otherwise held together (Fig. 14). Single pieces both adorned dresses and held them together; changes in the assemblage of jewellery reflects changes in dress-patterns as well. The shirt sleeves were bunched with one or more, usually ribbed, bronze bracelets while the neck of the shirt was alternatively ornamented and closed by a heavy, twisted halter necklace called a torque. The slashed, linear neck hole of the linen

under-garments was occasionally fastened with a *small fibula*; the over-clothing was also held in place by a pair of ca. 12–15 cm long, so-called winged *fibulae*.

During the AD 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the shirtsleeves became narrower at the wrist and thus, bracelets became thinner. The upper part of the shirt was tailored or woven to shape to fit close around the neck. In this way a neck-chain decorated with 3 to 5 medallions were substituted for the torques. The neck hole became diversified in form and the *fibula* used to gather the neck of the shirt became more ornamented. Woollen over-clothing was made from finer fabric so that the winged *fibulae* also became smaller and lighter.

Roman costume consisted explicitly of tailor-made pieces of clothing and the jewellery played no practical role but was merely an accessory. Both the quality of clothing and the material the jewellery was made from signalled wealth and social position. A short string of beads emphasized the neck above the linear closing of the *stola*. In Aquincum, the most popular colour for beads was blue and green. The majority of the strings of beads found were made from coloured glass paste, and they could well have been worn as accessories just like the bracelets made from bronze, silver, ivory, antler, and those made with a spun

glass technique. Earrings harmonized with the neck-chain, though their ring was only made from a bent metal band or took the form of a chiselled seal ring.

The jewellery of the great could contain emeralds or genuine pearls. These were strung onto bronze, silver or gold wire. The ends of the wire looped onto each another. Jewellery made from plain polished black semi-precious stones and jet, as well as cheaper imitations in black glass paste, came into fashion from the second half of the AD 3<sup>rd</sup> century. The coiffure of ladies in Aquincum was held together with bone or metal hairpins. Shawls were fastened with metal (bronze, silver or gold) pins with ornamented heads. When a child was born, an amulet in the form of a locket (*bullae*), which they wore until they became adults, was hung around its neck. As a general rule, bronze and iron *bullae* were found in children's graves in Aquincum.

The most important objects worn by men were metal belt ornaments or military *fibulae* holding the *tunica*. The upper leather belt was fastened with metal buckles and these were sometimes adorned with fittings. On some depictions we can see straps with round metal rivet fittings hanging from under-belts down over the knee. The *sagum* was at first fastened on the right shoul-



■ Fig. 10 Eraviscan woman wearing a longer version of a double-belted dress.



■ Fig. 11 Eraviscan woman wearing a shorter variant of the double-belted dress.



der with a small disk *fibula*. The so-called crossbow type brooch was used only from the AD 4<sup>th</sup> century. Rings were more often worn by men, and served as a symbol of social status. The toga and *paludamentum*, due to the great size and the weight of their textiles, meant that the corners of clothes had to be weighted with small lead weights to maintain the fashionable, fine pleats of the clothes when the man moved.

### The mummy's long sleep: textile remains from late Roman graves

From the AD 4<sup>th</sup> century on a new and important group of sources extends our knowledge of clothing. An increasing number of fabric finds were preserved in the Late Roman graves. By the turn of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, inhumation became the burial rite of preference over earlier cremation. Erecting grave steles became less and less popular, and what is more, the depictions became more schematic. A religious or ethnic community may have lived in the villas surrounding the Aquincum *colonia* in the first half of the AD 4<sup>th</sup> century, as the members of these communities were buried by being embalmed in a special way.

The Pannonian embalming method has two characteristic features: they used pine-resin as a preserving agent and the sarcophagus was closed hermetically. This technique differs entirely from the Egyptian one, resembling that method in name only. Most of our textile finds came to light between the years 1912 to 1983. As fabric starts to decay at once when being exposed to air, the analysis of textile remains always reflects the time in which the fabric was found and the scientific opportunities available then. There is rarely an opportunity to carry on extra examinations and in some cases we can only rely on “*in-situ*” excavation observations. Material examination is also made difficult by the fact that by using pine-resin during embalming, the layers of textiles became felted together and the fibres themselves become both rigid and fragile. Multi-layer textile remains were found in every grave, but it is hard to identify which piece was part of the bandage used in the

embalming and which piece belonged to the clothes and it is even more difficult to connect the elements to concrete types of clothes. Similar Egyptian mummy portraits of the same age from Fayum can help our theoretical reconstruction experiments, as can the representations on grave steles from Aquincum.

The sarcophagus of a child excavated on Bécsi Road dates to the very beginning of the AD 4<sup>th</sup> century. Four year old Cassia was wrapped in seven-layers of flax canvas. It is conceivable that the bottommost and finest layer may have been part of a linen *tunica*. A piece of silk clothing found underneath the 8 to 10 layers of canvas bandage comes from a AD 4<sup>th</sup> century mummy grave at Szemlőhegy. The material analysis showed that this was a special kind of silk, the raw material was made from a species of shell living in the Mediterranean (“shell silk”). According to ancient sources this was produced only in the Late Roman period. Because of its delicacy and cost, this cloth could only have been part of the attire of the buried woman.

A mummy found on Táborhegy also dates from this period. Experts recognized the remains of rough linen beneath 16 layers of linen-cloth, of which two layers were dyed and the bottommost was not. We can presume that the dyed fabrics were parts of a garment. This older woman wore an undyed *tunica* covered with a purple cloth. On top she wore a conventional, dark blue woollen *palla*.

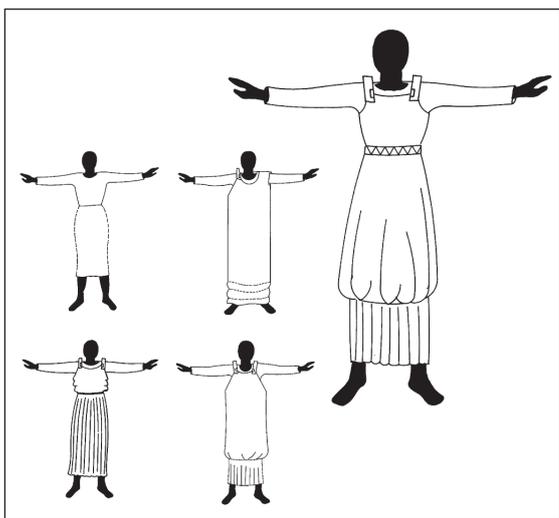
The most data we have on mummy attire comes from a grave excavated on Jablonkai Street in 1962 although its reconstruction was made difficult by the great variety of textiles found in this single grave. The remains of the two bottommost layers of undyed, fine linen-cloth must have been part of the under-garment and *tunica* of the young woman. Above this she seems to have worn a bluish purple, fine wool *stola* made from a loose cross-fabric, and a purple dyed *palla* woven from a wool-linen fabric mix. The function of some very fragmented, purple silk fibre observed among the remains of canvas and wool textile



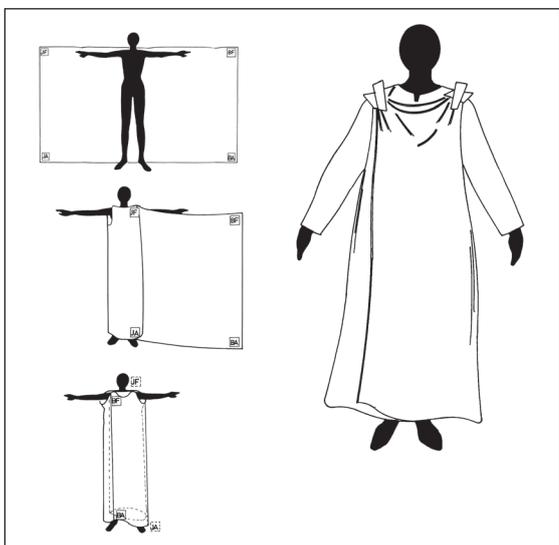
■ Fig. 13 Celtic jewellery from Aquincum.

is problematic. A linen warp thread could have been used to reinforce a fabric made from both wool and silk weft fibre, because both these kinds of fibres break easily when spun finely and for this reason it is not possible to set them up on a loom. This is why a combination of wool and silk can be excluded. As linen-wool textile remains were shown to be unambiguously present among the fabrics, and the layer below was identified as a wool textile, the silk fibres found between the two layers probably came from a shawl. In addition, the identification of the two layers of wool observed between the linen-cloth bandage and the purple fabric remains is also doubtful. The find is likely to be from a wool gown worn over a *palla*, although such dress was never depicted on stone monuments in Aquincum, moreover this would be the only example of such a textile mix from an archaeological context. It could possibly have been part of sheet or a burial shroud.

Another textile find from Perc Street may also come from a mummy grave although there was no opportunity to examine it closely, as the find disintegrated too quickly. The fine fabrics dyed with expensive dyes found in the graves and the embalming technique itself shows that, similarly to Late Roman statues, these fabric finds reflect the dress traditions of the nobility. Considering all these facts though, it can be assumed that such luxury goods could easily have found



■ Fig. 12 Putting on the double-belted dress.



■ Fig. 8 Putting on an over-garment.

their way to Aquincum in earlier times as well. From the end of the AD 4<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the Great Migration period of brought political instability and a variety of new influences. Little is known about the style of clothing from these times and the archaeological finds that would cast more light on these “dark ages of fashion” are yet to be discovered.

## Summary

### La mode vestimentaire des celtes romanisés de Pannonie

Lors d’une exposition au Musée de l’Aquincum à Budapest de mai 2000 à octobre 2001 furent tentées des reconstitutions de la mode vestimentaire des populations celtes indigènes après leur romanisation. Ceci fut fait à partir du peu de vestiges archéologiques retrouvés

et de figurations contemporaines, spécialement celles des pierres tombales gravées.

La réalisation des vêtements a été autant que possible réalisée à l’aide de méthodes originales et traditionnelles: un tissage manuel de fibres de lin, de laine et de soie teintées à l’aide d’espèces végétales. Lorsque les données étaient trop lacunaires, des méthodes modernes ont été utilisées. Cette opération a permis de donner une image concrète du costume des celtes romanisés, notamment pour la mode féminine (plus variée et plus ornementée) mais également pour la mode masculine dans la zone d’influence de la cité d’Aquincum. Il est à savoir que la romanisation de cette région a été rapide (Ier siècle) et que l’essor de l’Empire romain à la fin du IIe siècle a considérablement influencé la mode, qui deviendra alors plus riche et de meilleur qualité.

L’habit est très important pour ces populations car il est porteur de marqueurs sociaux tant pour les hommes que pour les femmes (la mode enfantine n’existe pas). L’harmonie des couleurs est travaillée et joue sur les mauves, violets, rouges, blancs et jaunes essentiellement. Les plus modestes ne teignent pas les textiles et conservent les couleurs naturelles. S’il y a de nombreuses variations, tous les habits comportent des sous-vêtements ajustés sur lesquels vont se succéder différentes couches.

Sur ces derniers, les femmes portent une tunique généralement blanche avec quelques ornements possibles au niveau du col, seul élément visible de la tunique. Cette dernière est longue et comporte ou non des manches. Elle est maintenue par une ceinture. Par-dessus s’ajoute une stola longue et également de longueur de manches variable et qui se serre juste sous la poitrine avec une ceinture (simple ou double). Les femmes drapent une grande étoffe (la palla) sur le tout, ce qui leur permet de sortir la tête couverte.

Pour les hommes, le vêtement civil diffère de l’habit militaire dans les coupes et les couleurs. Le civil porte une longue tunique et une toge décorée suivant le statut social. La difficulté de draper cette toge va entraîner son relatif abandon avec le temps. Le militaire porte une tunique et une cape fixée à l’épaule avec une fibule.

Les fibules, les épingles, les torques et les autres accessoires vestimentaires témoignent de la mixité des influences avec des décors inspirés des motifs traditionnels celtes.

La connaissance des pratiques vestimentaires permet donc de discerner les cadres sociaux et également l’interpénétration des pratiques romaines des colons et des usages celtes des populations indigènes.

### Zur Rekonstruktion der romano-keltischen Tracht Pannoniens

Im Jahr 2000 organisierte das Museum Aquincum (Budapest) eine Ausstellung, die der Entwicklung der regionalen Tracht während der romano-keltischen Zeit gewidmet war. Während der Ausstellungsvorbereitungen wurden auch Forschungen durchgeführt, welche die Parallelen zwischen den erhaltenen textilen Resten aus den spätrömischen Gräbern Aquincums sowie anderen römischen Provinzen und den oft nur fragmentarisch erhaltenen und teilweise auch stark stilisierten bildlichen Darstellungen im Aquincumer Lapidarium herausarbeiteten. Die in der Ausstellung gezeigten Trachtenssembles wurden auf der Grundlage traditioneller Fertigungsmethoden, die in den römischen Schriftquellen überliefert sind, sowie auf der Basis von archäologischen Funden aus Aquincum (Abb. 1), von ethnographischen Analogien und von den Ergebnissen experimenteller Archäologie angefertigt. Die Materialien wurden handgewebt und in Handarbeit mit Leinfasern, Wolle oder Seidenfäden – die teilweise handgesponnen und mit in antiken Quellen erwähnten Färberpflanzen eingefärbt wurden – hergestellt. Wir verwendeten aber auch moderne Geräte, Materialien und Kleidungsstücke, sofern römische Vorlagen bzw. Angaben für bestimmte Stücke nicht vorhanden waren.

Die Tracht war in dieser Periode von großer Bedeutung, denn sie zeigte sichtbar die soziale Stellung sowohl von Mann und Frau. Die Grabsteine der römischen und keltischen Frauen können allein dadurch auf den ersten Blick voneinander unterschieden werden. Die römischen Frauen trugen normalerweise eine Tunika oder eine Stola und eine Palla. Ein harmonisches Zusammenspiel der Farben war für die römische Mode wichtig: Eine helle Stola wurde üblicherweise mit einer Palla kombiniert, die einen dunkleren Ton in derselben Farbe aufwies. Die häufigsten Farbkombinationen waren türkis, violett und rot mit weiß oder gelb. Die keltischen Frauen trugen dagegen langärmelige Hemden, vermutlich aus weißem Leinentuch. Das Obergewand bestand aus Wolle und wies zumeist eine rote Farbe auf. Kittel gehörte zu den geläufigsten Kleidungsstücken. Mehrere Steinendkmäler zeigen auch spezielle Kleidungsstücke, die in der jüngeren europäischen Kleidung nicht mehr nachweisbar sind, so z. B. ein langes Kleid mit zwei Gürteln (Abb. 10 – 12).

Römische Männer trugen normalerweise eine Tunika und einen Umhang; was die keltischen Männer trugen, wissen wir nicht. Kinder wurden üblicherweise wie die Erwachsenen gekleidet.