

MARTIJN A. WIJNHOVEN¹

An exceptional find of a Roman neck guard from Budapest

In 1911 workmen discovered the remains of a Roman building while working on the foundations for a house in Óbuda (23 Szél utca), Budapest. The structure rendered one of the largest collections of Roman wood working tools ever discovered, encompassing no less than 42 tools. The importance of this collection was recognised by Hungarian archaeologist Lajos Nagy, who dedicated an article to this extraordinary find.² The other artefacts from the same structure received less attention, which included several fragments of scale armour and a decorated chest plate.

Recent examination demonstrates that the scale fragments and chest plate actually belong to one single artefact, being a Roman neck guard. Neck guards are better known from late medieval and early modern times.³ Within Roman context there is only one other Roman neck guard known,⁴ making the Budapest specimen an extraordinary find.

The artefacts from the Roman building - tools and neck guard included - are nowadays housed in the Aquincum Museum in Budapest.⁵ Sadly, during the tumultuous events of the second World War some of the objects have become lost or damaged. To some extent this also applies to the scale neck guard. Fortunately, Nagy also included a brief description and several photographs of the neck guard elements in his pre-war article on the carpentry tools (*fig. 1*).⁶ These photographs demonstrate that the majority of the elements found in 1911 still survive today (*fig. 2*). This does not apply to all: some have indeed become lost or damaged. Likewise, some of the larger fragments of scale armour have now broken into smaller ones.

THE ELEMENTS OF THE NECK GUARD

Nowadays there are 14 scale armour fragments, in addition to three small loose pieces. The copper alloy scales are small and measure only 30 mm in length and 6 mm in width (*fig. 3*). The sides of the scales run parallel and end in a rounded tip. The scales have four pairs of holes: one pair at the top, one at the bottom, and one on each side. The holes at the sides are used to arrange the scales into rows (the left scale overlapping the right) by employing small pieces of copper alloy

¹ Institute of Archaeology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno. Email: wijnhoven@arub.cz.

² NAGY 1937.

³ EDGE-PADDOCK 1988. 179; PYHRR et al. 1998. 120, 151, 165–166. They were known as gorgets (from French *gorge*, meaning throat).

⁴ BISHOP 2009. 689–690; MCCARTHY et al. 2001.

⁵ Inventory numbers 51438, 51517, 51811, 51439, 51440, 51819, 56165.1, 56903, 56905, 56906. See also HÁRSHEGY et al. 2009. 122. Various months after the submission of this paper in March 2023 a book on scale armour was published that also includes this find. See GROH 2023. 285–289.

⁶ NAGY 1937. 168–175, fig. 7–10.

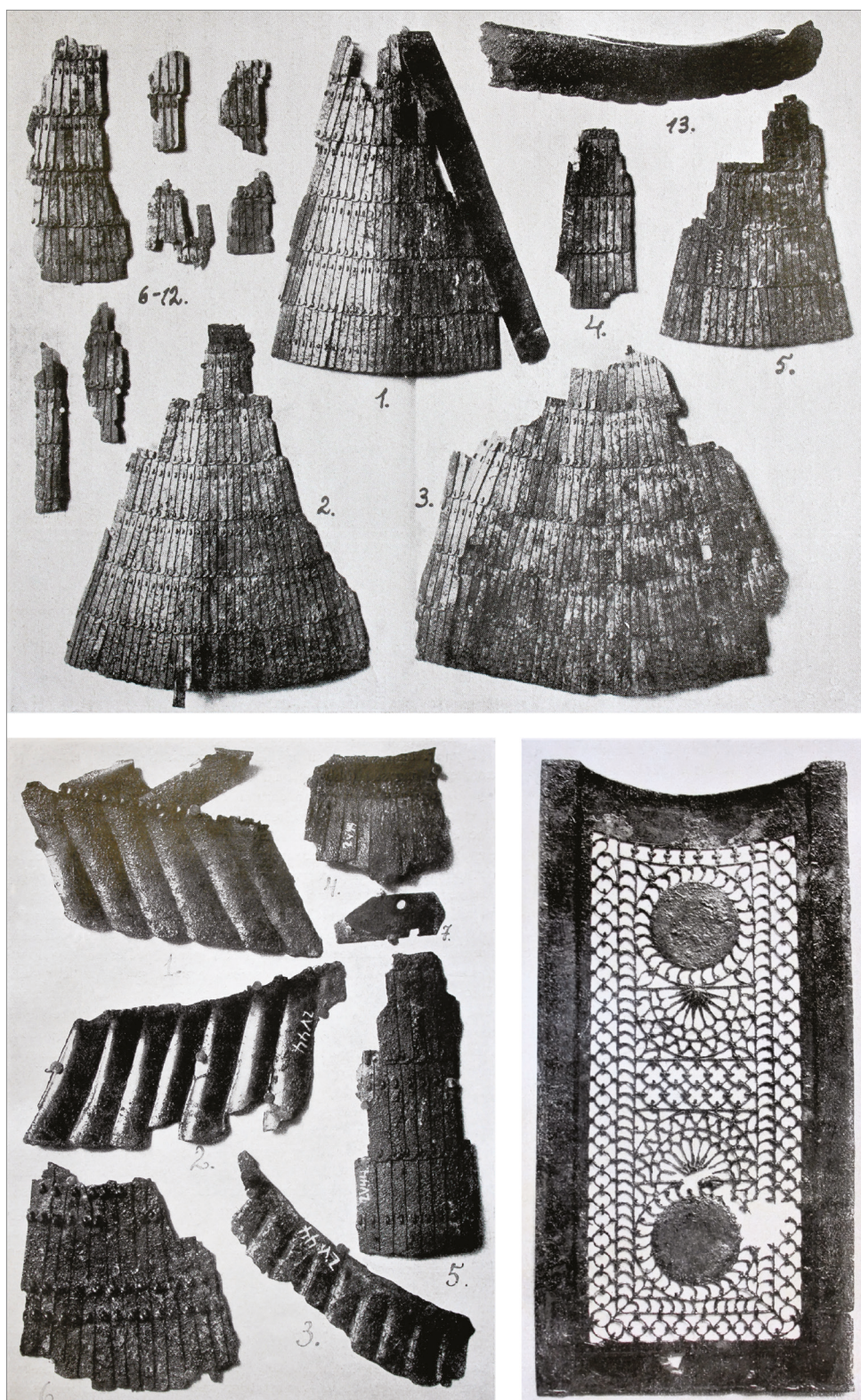


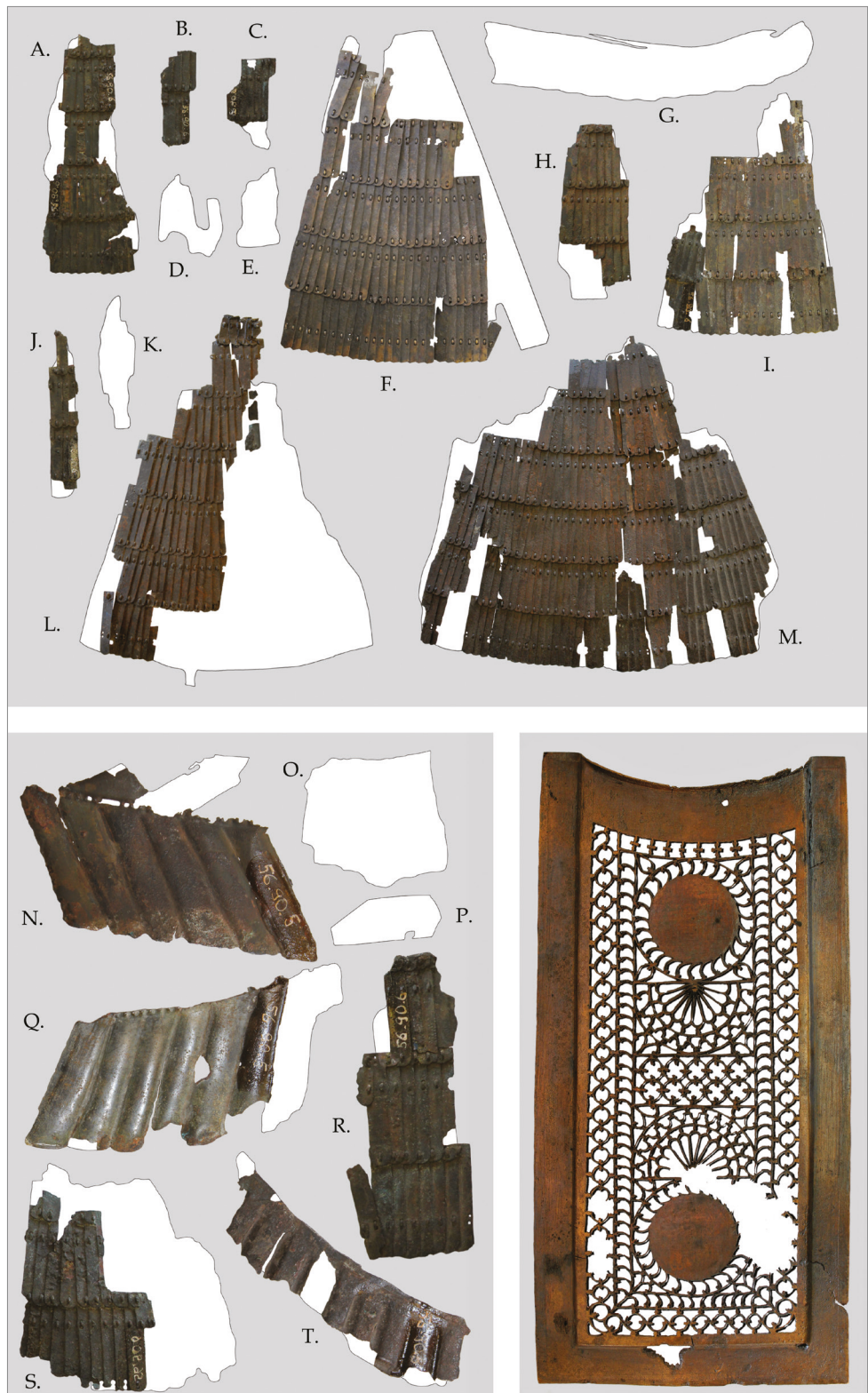
Fig. 1 – The scale armour was published for the first time in 1937 by Lajos Nagy. This publication includes photographs, here reproduced, with all the surviving elements that Nagy considered to have been part of the armour. The photographs differ in scale (from Nagy 1937, figs. 7–8, 10).

1. kép – A pikkelypáncélt elsőként Nagy Lajos publikálta 1937-ben. A jelen tanulmányban is közzétett fotóanyag az összes fennmaradt elemet megőrkítette, amelyet Nagy a páncélzat részének tekintett. A fényképek méretaránya eltér egymástól (Nagy 1937, 7–8., 10. ábra).

wire, that function as staples (*fig. 4*). The pairs of holes at the top and bottom of the scales are then used to connect the rows of scales (the top row covering the bottom one) with similar staples. Each scale thus connects to four adjacent scales, except the ones located at the hem of the armour.

Fig. 2 – The elements nowadays in the Aquincum Museum compared to those featured in Nagy’s 1937 publication. Although the majority still survives, a part of them has become lost or damaged. Some of the original scale fragments have broken into more segments. The scale of each photograph differs, just as in the original publication (photographs M.A. Wijnhoven).

2. kép – A ma az Aquincumi Múzeumban található elemek összehasonlító Nagy 1937-es kiadványában szereplő elemekkel. Bár a többségük továbbra is megvan, egy részük elveszett vagy megrongálódott. Az eredeti pikkelytöredékek egy része azóta több darabra tört. Az egyes fényképek méretaránya eltér, akárcsak az eredeti kiadványban (M. A. Wijnhoven fotói).



The scales have a thickness of 0.9 mm. Since the scales overlap in rows, there is a double layer of scales throughout the entire armour. What is more, the total thickness is even greater at the places where the rows connect to each other, making the neck guard a substantial piece of armour.



Fig. 3 – The scales in the Budapest armour are fairly small and elongated in shape. They measure 30 mm in length and 6 mm in width (photograph M.A. Wijnhoven).

3. kép – A budapesti páncél pikkelyei meglehetősen kicsik és hosszúkás alakúak. Hosszuk 30 mm, szélességük 6 mm (M.A. Wijnhoven fotója).

The scales employed in the neck guard are known as semi-rigid scale armour.⁷ One of the main differences between regular scale armour and the semi-rigid variant is the need for an underlying garment. Regular scale armour requires a (textile or leather) base garment onto which the scales are sewn. Contrastingly, semi-rigid scale armour does not need an underlying garment for

its structural integrity, since the scales attach to each other. Some sort of lining would still have been preferable to prevent chafing of the armour against the body or clothing of the wearer. As indicated by its name, the semi-rigid construction influences the mechanical properties of the armour. In comparison to regular scale armour, it is more rigid, but does not act as plate armour as it still retains some flexibility.

Almost all the scales throughout the fragments have the same appearance, except for two variants. In one fragment (*fig. 2 L*) the scales at the top row are slightly shorter, but otherwise of similar shape, measuring only 14.5–15 mm in length (*fig. 5*). These lack the top pair of holes and are not flat as all regular scales, but curve vertically towards the front.

The other variant is found in most fragments (*fig. 2 A, E, F, H, I, L, M, R; figs. 4–6*). These are the same size as the main stock, but lack the holes at their tip. These scales do not have a rounded tip, but have been given a triangular shape, probably as a decorative feature.

Besides the scales there is a copper alloy chest plate of a lightly trapezoid shape with a curved outline at the top to accommodate the shape of the neck (*fig. 9 left*).⁸ The curve has a small up-standing flange, probably to prevent the plate from cutting into the neck of the wearer. The chest plate measures 15.2 cm in height and has a width of 7.4 cm at the bottom and 7.0 cm at the top. The thickness of the metal plate is around 1 mm. The edges of the chest plate, about 1 cm wide, are plain, while the centre is raised. Here it is decorated with an elaborate openwork, known as *opus interrasile*.⁹ This type of decoration is also seen on other items of military equipment, such as belts and sword scabbards. However, this piece is one of the most elaborate pieces of openwork

⁷ BISHOP-COULSON 2006. 139–140; ROBINSON 1975. 154.

⁸ For more information on Roman chest plates see: D'AMATO-NEGIN, 2017. 91–104; GARBSCH 2000; SCHAMPER 2015. 50–51, 218–227.

⁹ FISCHER 2019. 85, 90–91, 147, 153, 186; HOSS 2014. 181–182, 187, 253, 282; MIKS 2007. 235–240.

and it is the only example of a chest plate with this decoration.

The photographs of this object (figs. 1-2, 9) give the false impression that there is nothing behind the openwork. However, when photographed, a sheet of white paper was placed behind the openwork to better observe the decoration. In reality there is a copper alloy base sheet behind the decoration. In fact, the plain edges of the chest plate are part of this base sheet, to which another piece, containing the raised openwork, has been soldered. This leaves a slot, several mm deep, between the backplate and the decorative plate. In modernity a mirror was placed in

this slot and this is how the chest plate is displayed at the museum. The chest plate has no holes, studs or other features that indicate how it originally connected to the scales of the armour. It might be possible that the back contains clues concerning its attachment. However, the way it is currently mounted for display, makes it impossible to examine its back.

The photographs in the publication of Lajos Nagy include a bar-like object that has now been lost (fig. 7). Fortunately, Nagy offers a short description, making it possible to understand that it concerns a thicker copper alloy bar measuring about 16.5 by 2 cm.¹⁰ Three horizontal slots are located at one edge of the bar. The bar certainly belongs to the scale armour as it was at the time still connected by three conical rivets. The rivets are fixed at the back of the armour with iron washers.

Lastly, there were four pieces of copper alloy sheet metal with scalloped edges, of which three survive (fragments G, N, Q and T in fig. 2). These three are 0.7 mm thick and embossed,



Fig. 4 – Front and back of one of the scale armour fragments (part of fragment M in figure 2). The scales are arranged into rows by attaching them to their neighbours with small pieces of copper alloy wire. Subsequently, the rows are attached to each other, using the same staple-like pieces of wire (photographs M.A. Wijnhoven).

4. kép – Az egyik pikkelypáncél-töredék elülső és hátsó része (a 2. ábrán látható M töredék egy része). A pikkelyek sorokba rendeződtek úgy, hogy rézötvözetből készült kis drótdarabokkal rögzítették őket szomszédjaikhoz. Ezt követően a sorokat ugyanilyen kapcsolószerű drótdarabokkal rögzítették egymáshoz (M.A. Wijnhoven fotói).

¹⁰ NAGY 1937. 170, fig. 9.



Fig. 5 – Fragment L contains two of the original edges of the armour, marked by scales that differ from the main stock. At the top there are shorter, vertically-curved scales that lack their top holes. At the bottom of the fragment are scales that lack the holes at their tip (photographs M.A. Wijnhoven).

5. kép – Az L jelű töredék a páncél eredeti szélei közül kettőt tartalmaz, amelyeket az állomány nagy részétől eltérő pikkelyek is jeleznek. A felső részen rövidebb, függőlegesen ívelt pikkelyek találhatók, amelyekből hiányoznak a felső lyukak. A töredék alsó részén olyan pikkelyek találhatók, amelyeknek a csúcsán nincsenek lyukak (M.A. Wijnhoven fotói).

resembling feathers. It is uncertain what they are, but Nagy originally thought that they must have been associated with the scale armour as a type of decoration.¹¹ Although this association is not impossible, it is unlikely. There is no physical evidence for the two ever being connected.

¹¹ NAGY 1937. 168, 172. He also describes a single incomplete scale (fragment p in fig. 2) that is significantly larger than the others. It is uncertain whether this scale formed part of the same armour.

Moreover, there are no similar finds from the Roman Empire where such objects are associated with scale armour. And most importantly, their archaeological association is uncertain. The objects were excavated in 1911 without the meticulous methodology of modern archaeology. All that is certain is that the objects came from the same building, but not that they were found together.

PIECING TOGETHER THE NECK GUARD

Enough of the armour survives to determine its function and get a good idea of its original appearance. However, the armour is far from complete, and it is unlikely to have been complete when excavated in 1911 or even when deposited in antiquity. This also means that there are aspects of the armour that are understood less well.

One of the surviving elements, fragment L (figs. 2 & 5), turns out to be the most indicative to understand the armour. This fragment preserves two of its original edges, which can be recognised by a different type of scale used. The top of the fragment is demarked by the shorter type of scales, that lack the upper pair of holes and are slightly bent.



Fig. 6 – The scales in the bottom row of the neck guard lack the holes at their tip, indicating an original edge of the armour. The tips of the scales have been given a triangular shape instead of their usual round appearance, possibly as a decorative feature (photograph M.A. Wijnhoven).

6. kép – A nyakvédeő alsó sorában lévő pikkelyekből hiányoznak a lyukak a csúcsukon, ami a páncél eredeti peremét jelzi. A pikkelyek csúcsa a szokásos kerek megjelenés helyett háromszög alakot kapott, valószínűleg díszítésként (M.A. Wijnhoven fotója).

The lack of top holes indicates that there is no row above this and it is the edge of the armour. The curved shape of the scales in this row makes it possible to assign them to the opening for the head. This shape prevents the top row from biting into the neck of the wearer. The only other fragment that originally formed part of the head opening concerns fragment O (figs. 1-2), which has been lost. The second hem in fragment L is located at its bottom row. Here the scales lack the holes at the tip. This indicates that the armour did not extend downwards anymore. There are many other fragments (A, E, F, H, I, L, M, R) that also preserve the lower edge of the armour.

Fragment L makes it possible to determine one of the dimensions of the armour. From the opening of the head to the lower hem it consists of seven scale rows, measuring about 177 cm. This length of the armour conforms that of a neck guard protecting the shoulders and upper chest.

There is another important indication that proves the armour to be a neck guard, which is the tailoring of the armour. The top row at the neck has the least number of scales, while each row below forms a bigger circle and needs more scales. The increase in the number of scales per row is done by inserting additional scales that do not connect to all four neighbouring scales (*fig. 9*).¹² While the inserted scales are attached to the sides and bottom, they do not connect to the scale above. This technique can hypothetically also be employed to reduce the number of scales in a row. In that case a scale will not be attached to the scale in the row below. While the latter is possible, the Budapest armour only increases the number of scales with each row down.

The added scales are not arranged randomly, but form a clear pattern (*fig. 8*). They can be traced as diagonal lines throughout the armour. These start in the second row and continue until the bottom row. The added scales of each lower row are located one scale to the left. The number of scales between the additional scales increment with one scale each row downwards. The surviving fragments demonstrate that the number of regular scales between the added scales of the bottom row alternate between 7 and 8 scales. This means that the second row, which is the first with added scales, has respectively 2 and 3 regular scales alternating between the added scales.

The chest plate must have been worn on the upper chest, as is indicated by the curving flange at its top. The slot behind the openwork was probably used to place some material to accentuate the decorative openwork (*fig. 9* middle). This is also affirmed by Nagy's observations, in which he concluded that the corrosion on the inside of the baseplate indicates the previous presence of a material, possibly textile, silk or glass.¹³ Since the slot nowadays features a mirror, it is not possible to verify this. The reason for the presence of the mirror is probably due to another one of Nagy's observations. He noticed that part of the backplate was covered in white metal.¹⁴ This application was found as a 19 mm wide

Fig. 7 – A bar-like object was originally riveted to the scales, but unfortunately this object has become lost. Its appearance can be gathered from Nagy's publication from 1937 (from Nagy 1937, fig. 9).

7. kép – Eredetileg egy pálcaszerű tárgy volt a pikkelyekhez szegecselve, de sajnos ez mára elveszett. Megjelenése Nagy 1937-es publikációjából (Nagy 1937, 9. ábra) ismerhető meg.



¹² This method is actually comparable to tailoring mail armour. Cf. WIJNHOFEN 2022. 223–230.

¹³ NAGY 1937. 173–174.

¹⁴ He refers to it as 'silvered', but it likely to concern tinning.



Fig. 8 – Left: the chest plate in its current condition, shown without its backplate. Middle: chest plate digitally restored and with a colourful element (for example of leather or textile) placed behind the openwork. Right: the same image as in the middle, but now with a band of white metal applied to the backplate. The inner field still contains the colourful element (photograph M.A. Wijnhoven).

8. kép – Balra: a mellvért jelenlegi állapotában, a hátlap nélkül. Középen: digitálisan rekonstruált mellvért, az áttört díszítés mögé helyezett színes anyaggal (feltehetően bőr vagy textil). Jobbra: ugyanaz, mint középen, a hátlapon ezúttal egy fehér fémszalaggal. A belső mezőben továbbra is megtalálható a színes anyag (M.A. Wijnhoven fotója).

band that follows the outline of the decorative openwork. The sections with white metal did not have any of the corrosion products, indicating that they were probably not covered by the contrasting material inserted into the slot (*fig. 9* right).

It is uncertain how the chest plate was connected to the scales, as there are no features that demonstrate how to integrate the two. A possible, but speculative solution is the use of a base garment. Although semi-rigid armour does not require an underlying garment for structural integrity, it still needs lining to prevent the armour from chafing or biting into the wearer.¹⁵ A sturdy lining would not only make the neck guard more comfortable to wear, but could also be the element that connects chest plate and scales. The lining goes under the scales and chest plate, but contains an extra ‘pocket’ with an open centre, where the chest plate can be inserted. The chest plate would additionally be locked into place by the semi-rigid scales that cover the undecorated bottom and side edges of the chest plate, butting up against the decorative panel. The open-centre pocket would be turned over onto the scales and serve at the same time as an edge trimming sewn to the scales. Whether this hypothetical solution actually works is still unknown, but could be verified by experimental archaeology.

The last element is the bar-like object that was riveted to the scales (*fig. 7*). This object is unlikely to have been associated with the chest plate. The two have different dimensions (respectively a height of 15.2 and 16.5 cm). Most importantly, there are no features to connect them. It

¹⁵ WIJNHOVEN 2024.



Fig. 9 – Fragment F with the yellow dots indicating which scales are added in each row. The added scales are not scattered, but neatly positioned in vertical lines (photograph M.A. Wijnhoven).

9. kép – Az F töredéken a sárga pontok jelzik, hogy az egyes sorokban melyek a hozzáadott pikkelyek. Ezek nem szétszóróttan, hanem rendezett, függőleges sorokban helyezkednek el (M.A. Wijnhoven fotója).

have been accomplished with thongs or cords (known in the medieval period as ‘arming points’) connected to the scales or to the liner of the armour. Fragment L indeed has a large hole at its bottom edge that would have been suitable for attaching a lace or thong (*fig. 5*).

The original appearance of the neck guard can now be reconstructed based upon these observations and assumptions (*fig. 11–13*). The armour had a length of about 17.7 cm. The diameter of the neck opening would have been around 14 cm, based upon current dress shirts standards for men that wear a medium to large size. This gives the armour a total diameter of just under 50 cm, meaning that it covered the shoulders and a large part of the upper chest. The neck guard was not flat when worn, but being semi-rigid, thus it adapted to the shape of its wearer. The decorative chest plate was featured at the armour’s centre, just underneath the neck of the wearer. Lastly, the armour was closed at the back with two bars, each riveted to one end of the armour.

is much more likely that the bar was used to open and close the neck guard at the back, opposite of the chest plate. The three horizontal slits would receive a counterpart, probably a bar, or something similar to solutions observed in contemporary armour, such as tie rings or turning pins (*fig. 10*), known from the *lorica segmentata* and two-part chest plates associated with scale armour.¹⁶

The location of the closing system at the back means that some additional steps are required for a person to put on the neck guard without the aid of another person. The wearer needs to rotate the guard, so the back is at the front. Once closed, it is turned into its actual position. By analogy of medieval armour,¹⁷ it is expected that the neck guard was fastened in two or more places to the underlying armour, *subarmalis* or clothing. Anchoring it in this way would guarantee that it stayed in the desired position, and not jump around unwantedly, especially during combat. The anchoring may

¹⁶ GARBSCH 1978. 7–8; THOMAS 2003. 109–113.

¹⁷ PRICE 2000. 301–315; CAPWELL 2015. 134–139, 155–157.



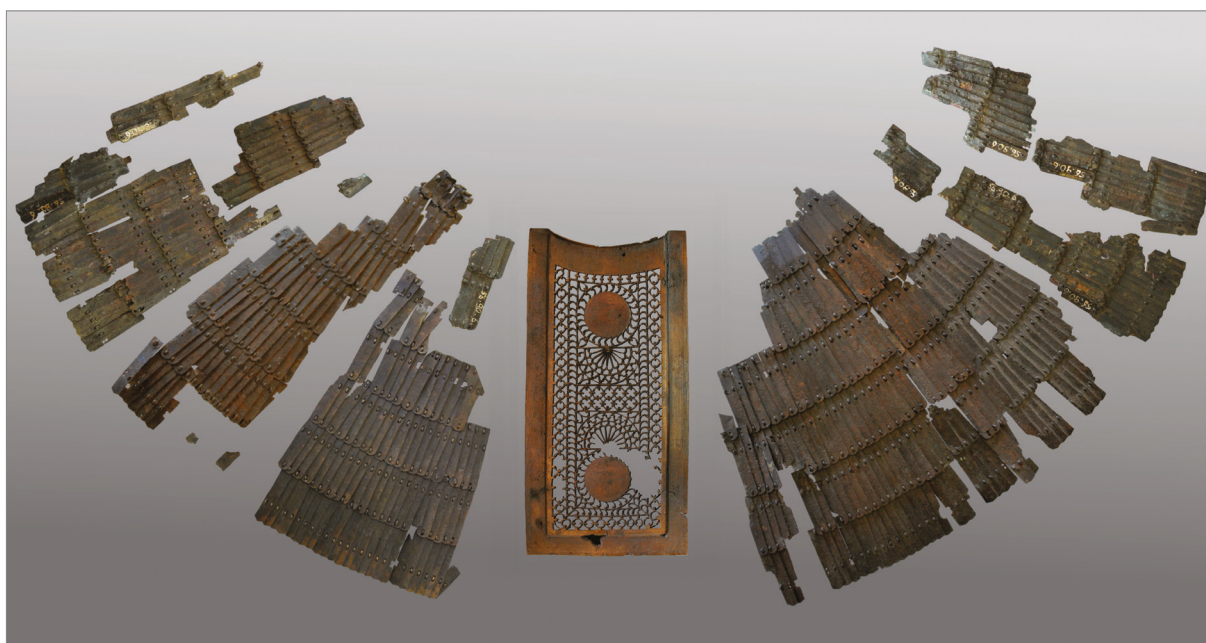
Fig. 10 – Turning pins used in two-part chest plates associated with scale armour and tie rings found in the lorica segmentata. All come from Mušov, Czech Republic, and date to the second half of the 2nd century AD (photograph M.A. Wijnhoven).
10. kép – A pikkelypáncélhoz kapcsolódó, kétrészes mellvértékben használt rögzítőpálcák, és egy lorica segmentatához tartozó rögzítőgyűrű. Mindegyik a csehországi Mušovból, a Kr. u. 2. század második feléből származik (M. A. Wijnhoven fotója).

DATING THE NECK GUARD

The excavation of 1911 did not pay particular attention to the dating of the armour and that of the other objects retrieved. This means that their age can only be established by approximation through their stylistic characteristics. For example, the semi-rigid scales found in the neck guard are not

Fig. 11 – The elements of the armour, housed nowadays in the Aquincum Museum, and arranged as a neck guard (photograph M.A. Wijnhoven).

11. kép – A ma az Aquincumi Múzeumban őrzött páncél nyakvédként rendezett elemei (M. A. Wijnhoven fotója).



used during the entire Roman period. This type of scale appears around the Antonine period, possibly some decades earlier, and continues at least until the 4th century AD.¹⁸

The openwork decoration of chest plate is also indicative. The same type of decoration is found on elements belonging to Roman military belts, specifically that of type B12 in Hoss' classification.¹⁹ Just as the chest plate, this type of openwork is defined by fittings of an elongated rectangular shape with openwork almost identical to the Budapest chest plate. The distribution of B12 belt fittings is concentrated along the Danube *limes*, although

there are finds from other parts of the Roman Empire, such as the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Spain and Morocco. As for a date, B12 fittings occur first during the Marcomannic wars and continue until the first half of the 3rd century, although the majority can be assigned to a date between AD 175 and 225.

This date fits well with the age of the tools found together with the Budapest neck guard. Nagy compared the tools with other sets from the Roman Empire and concluded that they belong to the second half of the 2nd century up to the first half of the 3rd century AD.²⁰ Within this range, he considers an earlier date (AD 150–200) as the most plausible option.

Unfortunately, there is only one other confirmed Roman neck guard, which is the scale armour from Carlisle, United Kingdom.²¹ This neck guard has been found in a layer belonging to period 4C, corresponding to the 2nd century as well, albeit slightly earlier at approximately AD 125–140/150.

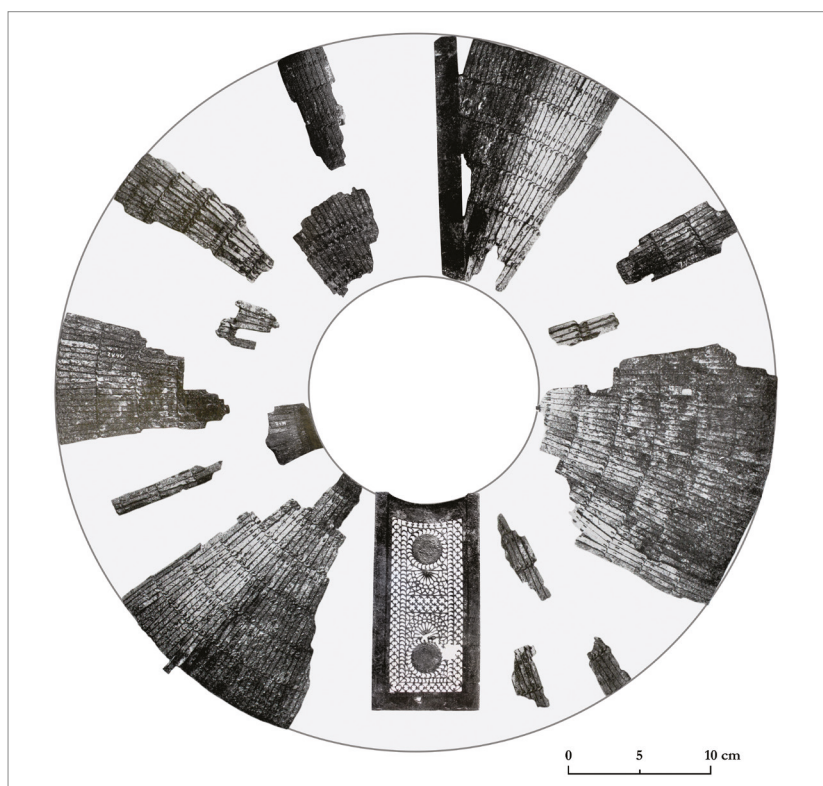


Fig. 12 – The neck guard has a total diameter of almost 50 cm. The image demonstrates how the armour's elements, as published by Lajos Nagy in 1939, were part of the neck guard (photographs Nagy 1937, reworked image M.A. Wijnhoven). / 12. kép – A nyakvédő teljes átmérője közel 50 cm. A képen látható, hogy a vért elemei, ahogyan Nagy Lajos 1939-ben publikálta, a nyakvédő részei voltak (fotók: Nagy 1937, M. A. Wijnhoven átdolgozott képe).

¹⁸ WIJNHOVEN 2024.

¹⁹ HOSS 2014. 253–254 (vol. 1); 149–151, pl. 47 (vol. 2). I thank Stefanie Hoss for her kind help with this subject. See also: FISCHER 2019. Fig. 126–127.

²⁰ NAGY 1937. 167–168.

²¹ BISHOP 2009. 689–690; MCCARTHY et al. 2001.

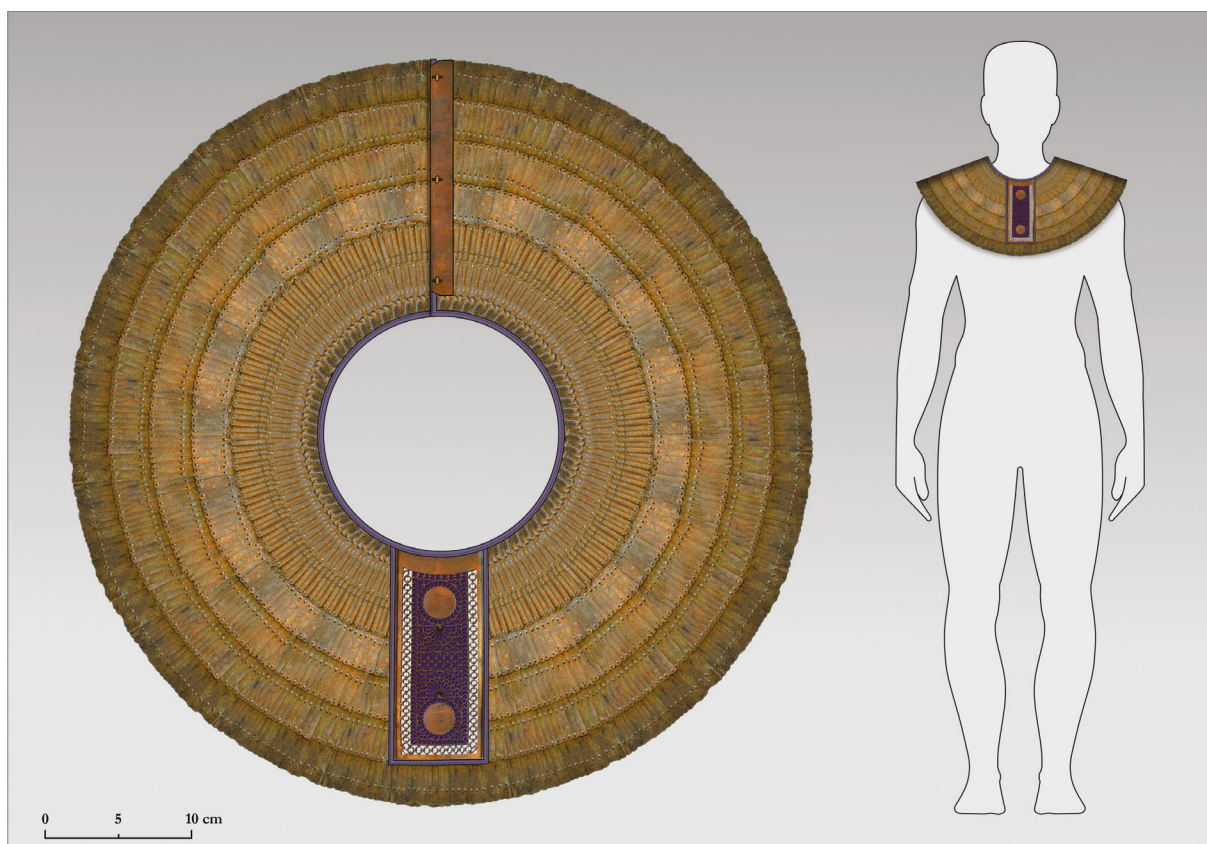


Fig. 13 – A reconstruction of the Budapest neck guard. The colours of all non-metal elements are all speculative. On the right there is the armour worn by a figure with a height of 175 cm. The neck guard protects the shoulders and most of the upper chest (image M.A. Wijnhoven). / 13. kép – A budapesti nyakvédő rekonstrukciója. A nem fém elemek színei mind spekulatívok. Jobbra egy 175 cm magas alakon láthatjuk a páncélt. A nyakvédő a vállakat és a felső mellkas nagy részét védi (M. A. Wijnhoven fotója).

All the facts considered, the Budapest neck guard can be given a tentative date between the mid-2nd century and the start of the 3rd century AD.

AN EXCEPTIONAL FIND

The popular and scientific image of the equipment of the Roman soldier does not include a neck guard. The Budapest specimen reveals that the neck guard was actually part of the armour used by the Roman army. Moreover, the existence of the Carlisle example demonstrates that this is not a one-off. It is still too early to determine how common neck guards were during the Roman period, for how long they were used, and by whom. At the moment, the merit of the Budapest armour is that it brought the Roman neck guard out of obscurity and is able to solidify it among the other, established pieces of Roman military equipment.

FUNDING INFORMATION

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Egy kivételes lelet: római nyakvédő Budapestről

1911-ben az óbudai Szél utca 23. szám alatt egy ház alapozásakor építómunkások egy római kori épület maradványaira bukkantak. Az ásatás során felfedezett ácsszerszámok mellett – amelyek az egyik legnagyobb, valaha feltárt ilyen leletegyüttest alkotják – több pikkelypáncél-töredék és egy gazdagon díszített mellvértlemez is előkerült.

A legújabb vizsgálatok azt mutatják, hogy a pikkelyek és a mellvértlemez egyetlen lelethez, egy római kori nyakvédőhöz tartoztak. A kutatások jelen állása szerint csak egyetlen másik római kori nyakvédőt ismerünk, így a budapesti példány rendkívüli leletnek számít.

A nyakvédő különböző elemekből áll. A kis méretű, rézötvényből készült pikkelyek, amelyek 30 mm hosszúak és 6 mm szélesek, teszik ki a nyakvédő nagy részét. A pikkelyek vastagsága 0,9 mm, és mivel átfedik egymást, a páncélzaton dupla réteget alkotnak. Ez teszi annyira jelentőssé ezt a nyakvédőt a páncélzat egészére nézve.

A leletegyüttes része emellett egy enyhén trapéz alakú, rézötvényből készült mellvértlemez, amely ívelt körvonalú tetejével igazodik a nyak alakjához. A mellvértlemez magassága 15,2 cm, szélessége alul 7,4 cm, felül 7,0 cm. A lemez díszítését áttört motívumok, ún. *opus interrasile* adja. A budapesti lelet az áttört díszítéssel rendelkező, jelenleg ismert római kori tárgyak közül egyértelműen az egyik leglátványosabb.

A harmadik elem, amely szintén a nyakvédőhöz tartozhatott, azonban mára elveszett, egy pálcaszerű elem: egy vastagabb rézötvényből készült, körülbelül 16,5 x 2 cm-es rúdról van szó, amelynek egyik szélén három vízszintes bevágás található. A rúd minden bizonnyal a pikkelypáncélhoz tartozhatott, amivel három kúpos szegecs kötötte össze.

A rendelkezésre álló darabok alapján minden kétséget kizáróan nyakvédőként azonosíthatjuk az együttest, és ez alapján képet kaphatunk az eredeti megjelenéséről is. A nyakvédő nagy része pikkelyekből készült, és körülbelül 17,7 cm hosszú volt, ami azt jelenti, hogy a vállak és a mellkas felső részének védelmét is ellátta. A mellvértlemez elöl, közvetlenül a nyak alatt helyezkedett el, és három oldalról pikkelyekkel volt körülvéve. A pálcaszerű tárgy a rögzítőrendszer része volt, és a páncél hátsó részén helyezkedett el.

Bár az 1911-es ásatás eredményei alapján nem lehet datálni a nyakvédőt, a stílusjegyek alapján megközelítőleg a Kr. u. 2. század közepe és a Kr. u. 3. század eleje közötti időpontra tehetjük a keletkezését.

A római katonák felszereléséről alkotott közkeletű vagy éppen a tudományos képnek jelenleg nem képezi részét a nyakvédő, azonban a budapesti példa a bizonyíték arra, hogy valóban a római hadsereg által használt páncélzat része volt. Azt, hogy a római korban mennyire volt elterjedt, meddig és kik használták, még korai lenne egyértelműen kijelenteni. Jelenleg a budapesti lelet érdeme, hogy a római nyakvédő mint tárgytípus új megvilágításba kerülhet, és a római katonai felszerelés egy új elemmel egészülhet ki.