Religious Activity in Glanum between the 1st and 3rd Century AD

INTRODUCTION

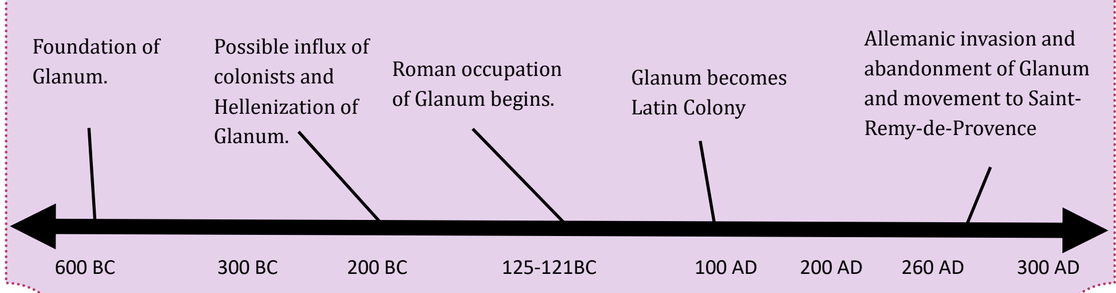
The Roman towns in Gallia Narbonensis yield a large amount of archaeological and epigraphic evidence for religious activities. A particularly interesting case is Glanum. By looking at the locations of inscriptions and structures within the oppidum, one can interpret the history of religious activity in Glanum. As such, as the religious culture of Glanum was so diverse, one can question what could be considered as "Roman" (c. 125 BC) and what was "Pre-Roman" influence, why these religious changes were significant and why evidence of earlier activity still remains in to the end of the Roman occupation.

Aerial view of Glanum

Background:

Before being built upon in Roman times, Glanum was an Iron Age oppidum, associated with the Celto-Ligurian Saluvii. It is unclear on the origins of the town's name, whether it was after the Celtic spring deities, Glan and the Glanicae or vice versa (Congès: 2000). There is speculation that the oppidum later received an influx of Greek colonists, resulting in Hellenization and the formation of a "Gallo-Greek" community (Cartwright: 2016). If this is true, then the religious foundations in the oppidum are not solely Roman during their occupation, with some origins of religious aspects stemming from the "Gauls" and the Greeks (Haeussler, 2017).

Timeline of Glanum's occupation



THE DEITIES OF THE SPRING

Located at the highest part of the town, the Sacred Spring of Glanum is believed to have been a important religious site since its foundation with the arrival of the Saluvii, being associated with the the deities Glan and the Glanicae, a triad of local Mother-Goddesses (Bridge: n.d.). Originally a basin carved in to a rock, followed by a construction in the 2nd Century BC, the spring later became a healing sanctuary under Agrippa, with a temple dedicated to Valetudo, Roman goddess of health, built nearby (Congès: 2000). In 1st Century AD, from Legionnary M. Licinius Verecundus, dedicating it to the Glanis, Glanicae, and to Fortuna Redux (Congès: 2000). Leading up to the spring, there was also a chapel, with statues and altars dedicated to Hercules, who would be shown carrying a vessel of some sort, suggesting that Hercules was the protector of the spring (Haeussler: 2019). There was also an inscription at the statue's base, stating gratitude for the safe return of C. Licinius Macer and the soldiers from Glanum who campaigned in the 2nd Century AD. The fact that this spring withstood multiple occupations with varied religious beliefs, testifies to the spring's importance to the community.

The sacred pool and spring in Glanum

Religious activities in Glanum during the Principate.

Following the foundation of the town, and the rise in significance of the spring and the various deities that were praised in relation to it, one can see the diversity of the religious activity up to and including occupation during the principate, an amalgamation of Celtic, Greek and Roman influences, and also withstanding the town's abandonment and population's movement to what is now Saint-Remy-De-Provence. Klingshirn (2004) argues that Glanum maintained a higher proportion of indigenous deities than places like Arles, due to the fact that the town was never fully "Romanized". Examples of this include the cults of the Celtic Silvanus-Succellus and *Matres Glanicae*, with suggestions of non-native religious additions such as dedications to Valetudo or the Imperial cult and possible allusions to Apollo as well (Klingshirn: 2004). However, the second Saluvian war in 90BC resulted in the settlement of the Romans and the destruction of indigenous buildings constructed prior to their (Roman's) occupation (Congès: . Therefore, evidence of the remaining Celtic religious figures does not necessarily mean that the Romans could not remove all indigenous beliefs, it may provide an argument for an attempt of a coalition between the native peoples and the Romans who also occupied the *oppidum*.

The archaeological remains of the town demonstrate just how far these various religions spanned, starting from the altars and inscriptions around the sacred spring in the south, and as one moves to the north side of town, there are examples of dedications such as *Numen Silvani, Silvanus-Sucellos, Mercury, Fortuna, Mars, Bonna Dea, Domina,* as well as statues alongside altars showing multiple animals and mythological beings (Haeussler: 2017). There are also a few statues of unidentified deities, bearing multiple era defining features, for example a head that is believed to be either some kind of female god, or Apollo, found next to the spring and also a goddess wearing a torc, which was a symbol of a Celtic religion, which is believed to have ceased around the 3rd century AD. It is also worth noting that upon Roman occupation a lot of the town was reconstructed in order to implement their own cults, but the fact that there are remains indicate the relevancy of non-Roman religious activity and causing their adaptation in to the Roman culture.

Remains of the Forum in Glanum.

There are also two forums within the town, the first containing the twin temples and the second was built during the 1st and 3rd Century AD. Looking at the layout and remains within the forums, one can see a temple dedicated to religious rituals as well as dedications to the cult of the Emperor, as did one of the twin temples, indicating the presence of imperial Rome did affect the religious activity within the town to an extent.

Inscriptions found within Glanum's Temples

IMPERIAL CULT

The cult of the Emperor was something imposed on many Roman colonies to remind those within how impressive and divine the principate was. This was generally done with temples, statues and honorific inscriptions dedicated to previous and current emperors, which in relation to Glanum can be seen predominantly within the town's forums. The evidence of the imperial cult around pre-existing cults, rather than total destruction in the town is another example of diversity and tolerance, amplifying the reputation of the emperor. That being said, Glanum has very few surviving pieces of evidence indicating such activity towards the cult, with one or two inscriptions (of which have been dated to the later end of Glanum's occupation) and remnants of a statue, believed to have been dedicated to Augustus. Nonetheless, this substantiates the relevance of the Imperial cult, and therefore expanding to other more "Roman" cults within colonial towns not as an attempt to overcome the pre-existing faiths, but to coincide amongst them.

The Twin temple forum: Temple to the Imperial cult, Glanum.

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