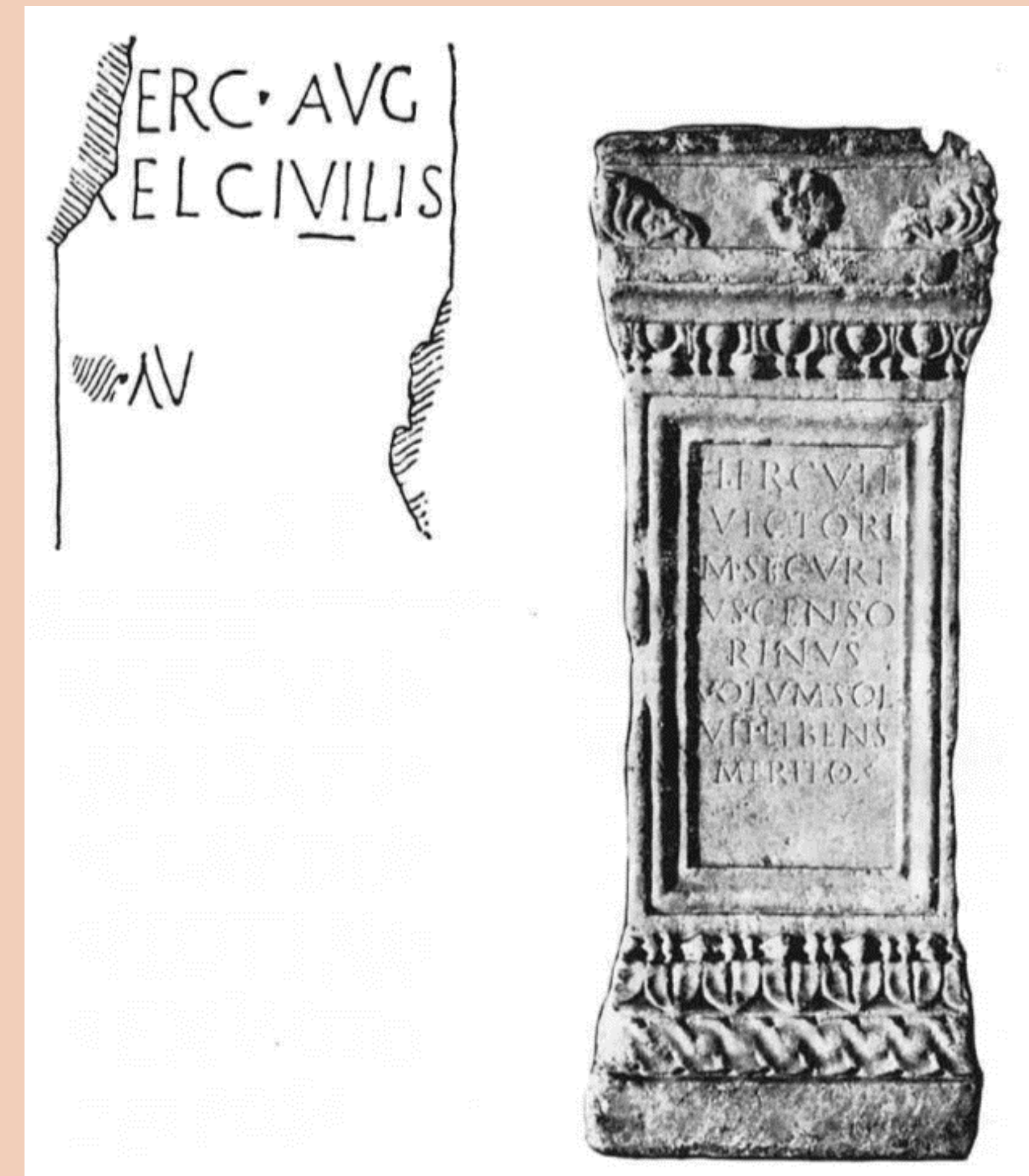


Singidunum (Belgrade); Scordisci, Main Celtic Tribe of the Balkan's region 3rd-2nd centuries BCE.



The Scordisci from the 3rd century BCE; became the main Celtic people for the Balkan's area. They made from the beginning the township of Singidunum their capital. The people of the Scordisci had warlike tendencies; they invaded as far south as Delphi in Greece reeking much damage before finally being pushed back by a Roman Army in BCE . Another campaign was fought against the Illyrians in the Balkans. After that campaign they were a reasonably peaceful group although they did get aggressive again in the 140,s AD. It is not their warlike ways that I wish to pursue in this piece,; but more their more enlightened side of how their peoples were ruled. ' The women of the Celts, ' Diodorus Siculus comments, 'are nearly as tall as the men and that they rival them in courage'. In general the ancient sources only commented on Celtic female leaders if they were exceptional. The region at the time did it seems produce some exceptional female leaders one such leader being Onomaris, which is argued as meaning ' Mountain Ash. ' Another Queen from the region emerged in 231 BCE as 'Queen Teuta'. All in all like most of the so called Celtic groupings they had as much of a civilised side with writing, coinage and indeed queens before their time ;as opposed to being purely warlike.



Towards the end of the 1st century BCE the entire area became part of the Roman Empire, known as Pannonia and Dalmatia at part of Augustus's conquering of what was thought of as Barbarian lands. This then led to places like Singidunum becoming Roman Colonies. Hence the area was left with much Roman iconography and written texts.

In the pre-Roman period it was reported by Aristotle , the custom of sacrificing fathers, by the Triballi . Flourus the Moesian custom of sacrificing defeated enemy chiefs and eating their entrails. Pausanias quotes the Autaria-tae of killing wounded fellow- combatants, to name only a few of the supposed atrocities of these peoples. There

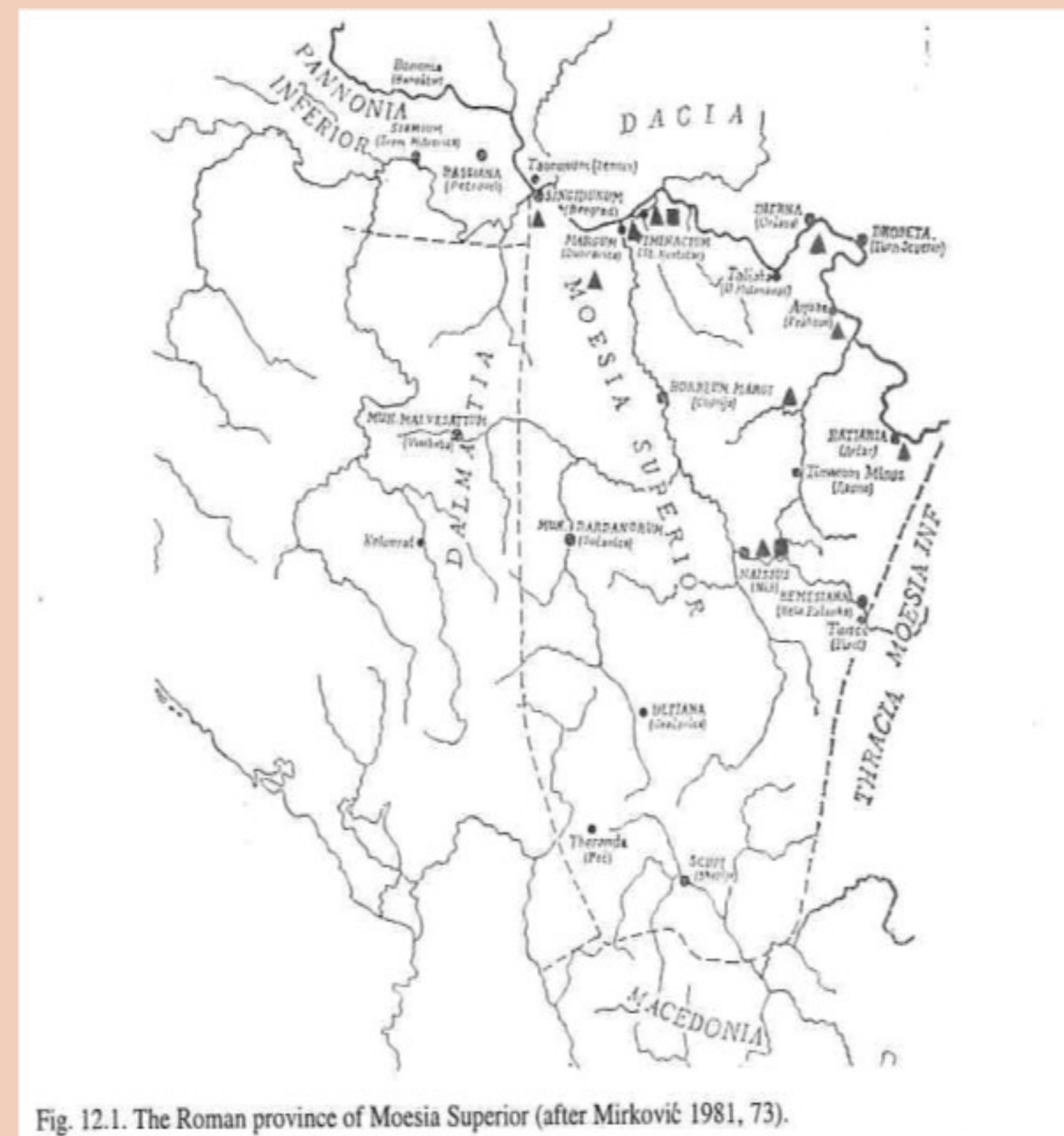


Fig. 12.1. The Roman province of Moesia Superior (after Mirković 1981, 73).

Celtic peoples who lived in the Balkans were no more blood thirsty than any other race of people. They would group together for their own protection , but their bad name is as much to do with Greek propaganda as to any actions by themselves. Celtic peoples in general farmed, traded in goods as some grave deposits show and made their own implements, war was only a necessity if pushed.

Beresford-Ellis ,P. 1998, The Ancient World of the Celts; Constable: London. P 85-90..

Reference