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# FUNERARY MONUMENTS FROM DALMATIA, ISTRIA AND THE CROATIAN PART OF PANONNIA. A COMPARATIVE STUDY

BY NENAD CAMBI

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## 1. FOREWARD

The territory of the Republic of Croatia comprises the parts of two Roman provinces: Dalmatia and Pannonia and only a small part of Istria, which mainly belonged to the 10<sup>th</sup> region of Italia. Numerous Roman funerary monuments were preserved in these areas. In accordance with the changes in burial rites the types of funerary monuments also changed. Obviously, there was a relation between these phenomena. Free-standing monuments include only stelai, altars and sarcophagi. Some of them were carved in local workshops, mostly in larger centres like Salona, Naron, Jader, Pola, or large military camps (Burnum and Tilurium) etc., or were imported from abroad. It is possible to distinguish their workshops on the basis of the structural forms of the monuments, and sometimes from their decorative repertory. But, all these types of burials did not appear at the same time, nor do they have the same origin.

This study deals with mythological scenes and their relation with other figures and motifs on various funerary monuments through the centuries. Unfortunately, the funerary monuments were not sufficiently studied. Many monuments were not even published. It is therefore hard to explain all their characteristic features for the various regions. This study might be too early, since many funerary monuments are not yet published, but I hope that all the same it may give an impetus for further research.

## 2. STELAI

Roman stelai appeared already at the end of the 1st century B.C. in Istria and Dalmatia. Before Roman colonization, a rather large number of Hellenistic stelai appeared in central Dalmatia. There are no Hellenistic figured stelai, except for a small fragment which is the only unique example for now (fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> These stelai show only a simple architectural form with pediment, acroteria and sometimes architectural decoration. Hellenistic stelai were copied in some Dalmatian areas, like Naron,<sup>2</sup> Salona<sup>3</sup> and northern Dalmatia.<sup>4</sup> They had a Greek form and Latin inscription (fig. 2), but they disappeared soon giving place to more elaborate Roman forms.

Stone quarries were opened already during the Hellenistic period and its exploitation continued later. Also, many new quarries were organized and the production of funerary monuments started after the Roman state had established its rule in Illyricum.<sup>5</sup> Stelai stood above cremation burials, sometimes in small burial areas.<sup>6</sup> Roman settlers and soldiers spread new forms. The influence for their forms came mostly from northern Italy. In the earlier period stelai were of larger dimensions (sometimes higher than 1,5 m). They were rectangular stone slabs with the decoration and inscription on the front. Such stelai reveal architectural forms, like gables, colonettes, architraves and inscription panels.<sup>7</sup> Stelai in fact imitated the front of Roman aediculae. Such stelai

<sup>1</sup> N. Cambi/B. Kirigin/E. Marin, *Arheološka istraživanja helenističke nekropole Isse (1976. i 1979. godine) – Preliminarni izvještaj*. Vjesnik Arh. i Hist. Dalmatinsku 75, 1981, 80 f. pl. XVIII.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. Wilkes, *Dalmatia* (London 1968) pl. 33. – B. Kirigin, *Tip helenističke stele u Naroni*. In: Dolina rijeke Neretve od prehistorije do ranog srednjeg vijeka. Znanstveni skup Metković 4–7. X 1977. Izdanja Hrvatskog Arh. Društva 5 (Split 1980) 169 f. figs. 1–4. – N. Cambi, *Antika* (Zagreb 2002) 149 fig. 218.

<sup>3</sup> N. Cambi, *Kiparstvo*. In: E. Marin (Ed.) *Longae Salona I* (Split 2002) 118 fig. 4.

<sup>4</sup> B. Gabričević, *O počecima rimske provincijalne umjetnosti u Liburniji*. *Diadora* 9, 1980, fig. on p. 252 and fig. 253.

<sup>5</sup> The most important quarries were on the island of Brač, the St. Ilija hill near Trogir, little island Vrnik near Korčula, islands near Zadar and several sites near Pola.

<sup>6</sup> Only very rarely there are indications about the burial areas (in fronte pedes tot in agro pedes tot) in the inscriptions of Dalmatian stelai.

<sup>7</sup> S. Rinaldi Tufi, *Stele funerarie con ritratti di età romana nel Museo Archeologico di Spalato. Saggio di una tipologia strutturale*. *Atti. Accad. Naz. Lincei* 368,

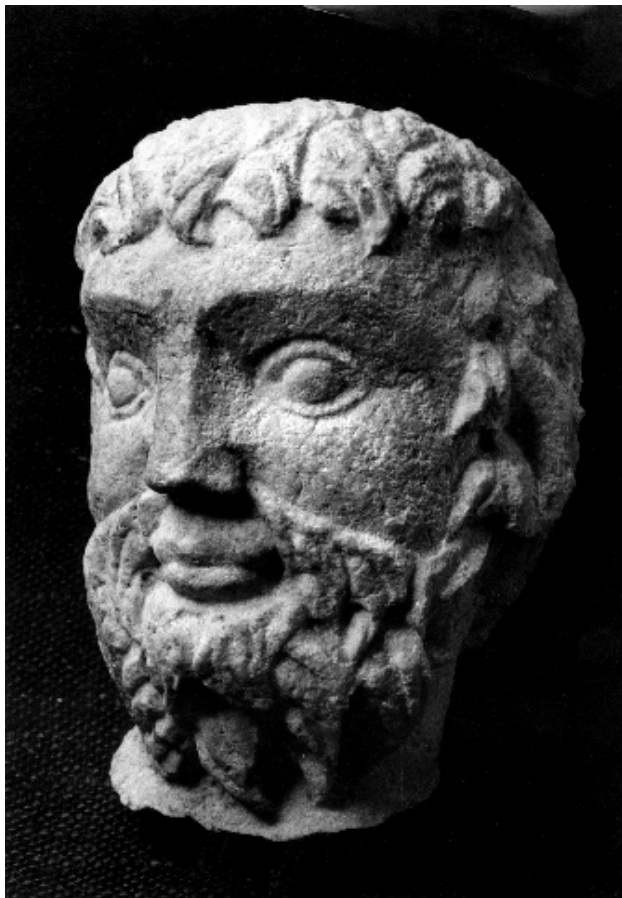


FIG. 1 FRAGMENT OF THE HELLENISTIC STELE FROM ISSA (ISLAND OF VIS). THE MUSEUM AT VIS.



FIG. 2 STELE SHOWING GREEK FORMS WITH LATIN INSCRIPTION. NARONA (VID NEAR METKOVIĆ), ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTION VID.

often bear busts of the dead.<sup>8</sup> In later periods, especially in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, their measures became smaller, but their number increased. Also, these late stelai show the busts<sup>9</sup> of the whole figure of the dead.<sup>10</sup> They began to serve as grave marks even for humble persons who were not cremated. The number of figured stelai was reduced at the end of the 3rd century. The stelai in the Dalmatian hinterland and Pannonia appeared about half a century later than on the Adriatic coast.<sup>11</sup>

The motifs of the main stelai from Istria<sup>12</sup> and Dalmatia<sup>13</sup> are mostly linked with the dead and their professions thus representing themselves to the public. The most important images were the short busts or waist-busts (fig. 3), but also entire figures (fig. 4). There were also stelai without figure decoration, but never without epitaphs. Mythological scenes were extremely rare. However, a very important piece was discovered at Nesactium in Istria (fig. 5). Only its schematized drawing was published.<sup>14</sup> A half-draped figure of Apollo with a lyre

1971, *Memorie classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, ser. VIII, vol. XVI, fasc. 3, 87 with pls. – Cambi (note 2) 149 f.

<sup>8</sup> For example Rinaldi Tufi (note 7) pls I–VI or Cambi (note 2) figs 219; 220; 221; 224; 225 etc. – Cambi (note 3) figs. 5; 6; 18; 19; 24; 25 etc.

<sup>9</sup> Rinaldi Tufi (note 7) pls. VII–VIII. – Cambi (note 2) fig. 230. – Cambi (note 3) fig. 81.

<sup>10</sup> Rinaldi Tufi (note 7) pl. X, 3; XIII, 2. – N. Cambi, *Nadgrobna stela s čitavom ljudskom figurom na istočnom Jadranu*. *Radovi (Zadar)* 27 (14), 1987/88, 93 f. fig. 1 pls. I–III. – Cambi (note 2) 152 figs. 228; 229. – Cambi (note 3) fig. 82.

<sup>11</sup> Cambi (note 2) 152 f. 232–237.

<sup>12</sup> V. Jurkić, *Portreti na nadgrobnim stelama zbirke antičkog odjela Arheološkog muzeja u Puli*. *Jadranski zbornik* 8, 1973, 359 pls. I–VII.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. note 7 and 8.

<sup>14</sup> V. Girardi Jurkić/K. Džin, *Sjaj antičkih nekropola Istre. Arheološki muzej Istre*. *Monografije i katalozi* 13 (Pula 2002) fig. on the p. 57.





FIG. 3 STELE WITH WAIST-BUSTS OF HUSBAND AND WIFE, SALONA, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM SPLIT.

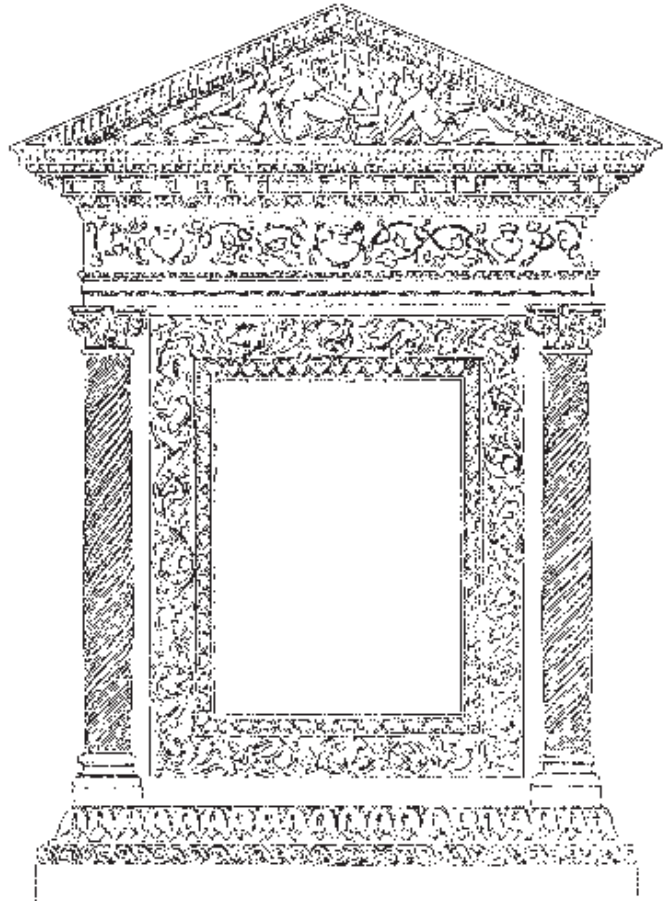


FIG. 4 STELE WITH MYTHOLOGICAL SCENE IN THE PEDIMENT, NESACTIUM (LOST ?).

leaning with his elbow on a small bench appears in the pediment. Around him there are three Muses. Apollo is higher than the Muses since he is seated on a chair under the top of a pediment. The Muses were also seated with legs in the angles of the pediment. They look side-ways from their leader looking outside the pediment frame. The composition of the figures resembles those figures of the eastern Parthenon gable.<sup>15</sup> The frieze with wine scrolls, cantharus and the acanthus-scrolls, which frame the inscription panel, demonstrates that stele belongs to the Flavian period, if the reconstruction was right.

There are, as far as I know, only two small stelai with mythological scenes in Dalmatia. One shows Eros and

Psyche kissing in the pediment (fig. 6).<sup>16</sup> This motif appeared also on a sarcophagus acroterion testifying to the same reperory on both funerary monument types.<sup>17</sup> The second depicts Venus Anadyomene surrounded by a sea bull on the right and a sea panther on the left (fig. 7).<sup>18</sup> It is from the beginning of the 2nd century since it wears Flavian or Trajanic coiffure. A bust of a youth with a Phrygian cap was executed in another stele pediment from Trajanic times.<sup>19</sup> It is more likely that this is not the image of Attis, since there were many other mythological persons belonging to the “classical” mythology who could have worn such a cap (Ganymedes, Paris etc). A very similar figure also appears on a Raven-

<sup>15</sup> They are sitting like Dionysos or goddesses on the right side. Cf. A. Stewart, *Greek Sculpture* (New Haven and London 1990) 347–350.

<sup>16</sup> This stele is not published.

<sup>17</sup> This sarcophagus also is not published.

<sup>18</sup> Rinaldi Tufi (note 7) 114 no. 46 pl. XII, 2. with earlier literature.

<sup>19</sup> N. Cambi, *Imago animi. Antički portret u Hrvatskoj* (Split 2000) 53 no. 71 pl. 95. – Cambi (note 2) fig. 226.



FIG. 5  
STELE  
SHOWING  
EROS AND  
PSYCHE,  
SALONA,  
ARCHAEO-  
LOGICAL  
MUSEUM  
SPLIT.



FIG. 6  
STELE  
WITH  
WOMAN'S  
OBJECTS IN  
THE FRI-  
EZE) AND  
VENUS  
ANADY-  
OMENE  
IN THE  
PEDIMENT,  
SALONA,  
ARCHAEO-  
LOGICAL  
MUSEUM  
SPLIT.





FIG. 7 STELE NO. 6. DETAIL OF PEDIMENT.

nate stele.<sup>20</sup> These two or three stelai from Istria and Dalmatia are the only specimens testifying to the poor use of mythology in the funerary sphere. Also, the other subsidiary panels show that mythology enjoyed scarce popularity by the local stone cutter's workshops and among the people in the 1st century AD.

The production of monumental stelai in Pannonia also began with pieces which show the figures of single persons or whole families. Some of them have the same structural characteristics like those in Istria and Dalmatia. A stele of the horseman Titus Flavius Atebodus reveals the structure which was very popular in Noricum and Pannonia (fig. 8).<sup>21</sup> This shows the lower pentagonal panels. The Pannonian stelai started approximate-

ly in the Flavian period, but they continued in later centuries. However, a very significant phenomenon of Pannonian stelai was the appearance of mythological figures and scenes which emerged several decades later. There are rather large number of such stelai. They were carved paralelly with those showing persons. In order to document this phenomenon I am going to pay special attention only to small number of mythological specimens. A very interesting stele comes from Mursa showing sea monsters under the pediment (fig. 9).<sup>22</sup> One of them is a sea cow, rendered in a standard manner, and the other is a Triton who has both human legs that end with fish tails, which is rather unusual. Normally the whole lower part of the body had a fish like shape. It

<sup>20</sup> H. Pflug, *Römische Porträtstelen in Oberitalien. Untersuchungen zur Chronoogie, Typologie und Ikonographie* (Mainz 1989) 158 no. 18 pls 2,3; 3,2.

<sup>21</sup> Cambi (note 2) 153 fig. 236.

<sup>22</sup> D. Pinterović, *Mursa i njeno područje u antičko doba* (Osijek 1978) 149 tab. XLIII, 1. – M. Sanader, *Antički gradovi u Hrvatskoj* (Zagreb 2001), fig. on p. 41.



seems likely that this figure was influenced by iconography of Giants who had snake legs beneath the knee. That also means that Giants were very probably known in the funerary repertory of Pannonian stelai. This relief does not show a complete picture of sea thiasos which consists of divinities and fantastic marine creatures, but the two figures served only as pars pro toto for marine world. Such a relief shows the local stone carver's way of perception of classical mythology, although the stele was cut in standard Roman architectural shape.<sup>23</sup> Very important, and of rather good quality, is the stele from Osijek showing the Dionysiac motif of the Satyr and Maenad<sup>24</sup> depicting the first teasing the second (fig. 10).<sup>25</sup>

Another very important mythological stele, which I want to show here, is a piece from Bjelovar which is unfortunately known only through an old photo (fig. 11).<sup>26</sup> The stele is hidden above the entrance of the parochial church door and therefore out of sight. Two opposite birds are depicted in the pediment,<sup>27</sup> but the object between them was ruined by an iron ring which was later fixed in the stone. A mythological scene was depicted in the relief panel. The scene takes place outside the town walls with crenellated top and town gates. A woman is hurrying from the town (Iphigenia). She is expected by a man dressed as a sailor on the boat with high and curved stern. He extends both his hands in order to make it easier for Iphigenia a pass over the gang board. Other Greeks wear helmets and shields. At sea level there are small figures of Tritons. There must have been an inscription below the relief panel, but this part of the stele is missing. It is very important that the stele could be dated on the basis of Iphigenia's coiffure, which shows characteristics of 5th and 6th types of Faustina Younger portraits.<sup>28</sup> This coiffure is characterized by the hair masses which cover the ears, and the bun in the form of a ball of strings. Thus, the hair indicates a



FIG. 8 STELE OF ATEBODUS, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM ZAGREB.

<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately the stele is not completely preserved.

<sup>24</sup> Sanader (note 22) fig. on p. 46.

<sup>25</sup> The group is an elaboration of the the Hellenistic motifs of Satyr and Maenad. Very similar position and gesture of figures shows a fragment of a Roman unfinished and unpublished sarcophagus from Salona in the Archaeological Museum in Split. The male figure is in the position of Satyr in the famous Hellenistic group of "Invitation to the Dance". – Cf. W. Klein, *Vom antiken Rokoko* (Wien 1921) 45 fig. 14 – R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (London 1995) (rep.) 130 figs. 157, 1–4. – W. Geominiy, *Zur Komposition der Gruppe "Die Aufforderung zum Tanz"*. In: "Hellenistische Gruppen". Gedanken-schrift für Andreas Linfert (Mainz 1999), 141 ff. pls. 34–39.

<sup>26</sup> J. Brunšmid, *Arheološke bilješke iz Dalmacije i Panonije*. Vjesnik Hrvatskog Arh. Društva n.s. 5, 1901, 125. – M. Medar, *O otkriću antičkoga reljefa nad portalom bjelovarske župne crkve*. Muz. Vjesnik 9, 1986, 11 fig. 1 – Cambi (note 2) 154 fig. 237. – I prepared a new paper on this stele for the volume in honour of Ivanka Reberski (in print).

<sup>27</sup> These two birds flanking the Gorgon head was very specific feature for the Pannonian regions. They appeared in the stele of *Titus Flavius Atebodus* (cfr. note 20), the before mentioned stele with marine thiasos from *Mursa* (Osijek, cf. note 21), then on numerous other stelai as for example in Steinmanger (A. Schober, *Die römischen Grabsteine von Noricum und Pannonien*. Sonderschr. Österr. Arch. Inst. 10, 1923, 36 f. no. 70 fig. 29), in Enns (Schober a.a.O. 37 no. 73 fig. 30) in Poetovio (Schober a.a.O. 41 no. 84 fig. 34), in Maribor (Schober a.a.O. 43 no. 86 fig. 35), in Ödenburg (Schober a.a.O. 65 no. 140 fig. 66), in Maribor (Schober a.a.O. 134 no. 294 fig. 155). Cf. also above mentioned stele from Osijek, Sanader (note 22) fig. on p. 41.

<sup>28</sup> K. Fittschen, *Die Bildnistypen der Faustina Minor und die Fecunditas Augustae* (Göttingen 1982) pls. 19; 22; 23,1–2; 48, 1–4.



FIG. 9 STELE, MURSA (OSIJEK), MUSEUM OF SLAVONIJA OSIJEK.





FIG. 10 STELE SHOWING SATYRE AND MAENAD, MURSA (OSIJEK), MUSEUM OF SLAVONIA OSIJEK.

date in the second half of the 2nd century. The modern hair-dress was a very well known feature of mythological scenes. Although the motif of Iphigenia in Tauris

was not very common on funerary monuments, it was preserved on several reliefs. The first is known only by a drawing in Weimar<sup>29</sup> and the second on fragments of a





FIG. 11 STELE FROM THE PARISH CHURCH BJELOVAR.



FIG. 12 STELE SHOWING ORPHEUS, PTUJ (SLOVENIJA), PTUJ.

luxury Attic sarcophagus from Thebes in Greece.<sup>30</sup> The third parallel is preserved on the family monument of Gaius Spectantius Priscianus from Šempeter (Celeia) in nearby Noricum.<sup>31</sup> The fourth example is a stele fragment from Noricum (St. Janez pri Dravinjskom vrhu near Poetovio).<sup>32</sup> Three former monuments also had other scenes which better describe the Iphigenia story. On the contrary, the stele from Bjelovar contains only the scene of the Iphigenia's flight. The stone carver of the Bjelovar stele was aware that the flight with the

statue of Artemis of Tauris is the crucial scene which is sufficient enough for understanding the motif. Other scenes would not be superfluous, but they are not very characteristic for the story. The Bjelovar stele and the family burial monument from Šempeter had nothing in common, except the motif which obviously was very well known in the northern parts of the Roman world.

A motif of the she-wolf with Romulus and Remus, which appears on a stele fragment from Osijek,<sup>33</sup> is rather an official Roman state symbol, than a kind of

<sup>29</sup> C. Robert, *Antike Sarkophagreliefs II* (Berlin 1890) no. 172. – LIMC V, 725 no. 82. – M. Bonanno Arvantisinos, *Il mito di Ifigenia in Tauride sui sarcofagi attici*. In: *Grabeskunst der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 1993), 70 f. fig. on p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> Bonano Arvantisinos (note 29) Faltafel 2.

<sup>31</sup> The basic publication is J. Klemenc/ V. Kolšek/ P. Petru, *Antične grobnice v Šempetru* (Ljubljana 1972) p. 7. – Very important publications are also M.J.C. Toynbee, *Greek Myth in Roman Stone*, *Latomus* 36, 1977, 388 f. pl. 15 fig. 21. – P. Kranz, *Die Grabmonumente von Šempeter. Beobachtungen zur Entwicklung der Bildhauerkunst in Noricum während der mittleren und späten römischen Kaiserzeit*. *Bonner Jahrb.* 186, 1986, fig. 3

<sup>32</sup> S. Pahič, *Seznam rimskih kamenov v Podravju in Pomurju*. *Arheološki Vestnik* 28, 1977, 47 no. 1 fig. 9

<sup>33</sup> Pinterović (note 22) 43 pl. IV, 2.

mythological scene. Such a motif is depicted also on an altar from Asseria<sup>34</sup> and on a fragment from Burnum,<sup>35</sup> both from the Dalmatian hinterland, and on a fragment, probably from Salona, which is located in the Archaeological Museum in Split.<sup>36</sup>

There are many other stelai with mythological motifs, except monuments from Šempeter (fig. 12). Mention must be made of the large and luxury stele from Potovio which shows Orphaeus with beasts ("Pranger").<sup>37</sup> Ptuj lies just on the border of Panonnia and Noricum. There are also several other mythological stelai from Noricum and Pannonia that show mythological scenes.<sup>38</sup>

A type of the separate block crowns the top of the stelai from Noricum and Pannonia (fig. 13). It is an elaborated element with reclining lions which look towards the outside, and the head of an old man with long hair is among them.<sup>39</sup> This figure was often supposed to be Serapis, but it more likely represents a funerary divinity or funerary personification, since the basket did not belong to the old man,<sup>40</sup> since it is placed behind him<sup>41</sup> and it appears also in other combinations (masks of different character, erotes with reversed torches etc.).<sup>42</sup> The old man's head is very often accurately carved, but there are also bad pieces.

Stelai in the hinterland of Dalmatia, according to iconographic characteristics, are very similar to those from the littoral zone. The small busts, waist-busts and whole figures are a predominant decoration of these stelai.<sup>43</sup> However, they differ from those from littoral in their architectural pattern and their arrangement,

except for the stelai discovered in the vicinity of the military camp of Bigeste (Humac near Ljubuški) in Hercegovina.<sup>44</sup> They depended on stelai production of Tilurium (Trilj near Sinj) which was one of two main Roman castra in Dalmatia.<sup>45</sup> It is very interesting that stelai from Burnum (Ivoševci near Kistanje), another very important military camp in Dalmatia, had no portrait motifs or other motifs.<sup>46</sup> Only the use of some objects (like ascia) or professional tools were rendered. There are no mythological scenes, as far as I know, on stelai in Bosnia and Hercegovina. There busts and similar figures also appear.

### 3. ARAE AND CIPPI

Funerary altars appeared later than stelai in the entire area of Croatia. They appear a bit earlier in Istria than in Dalmatia. Both altars and cippi were very suitable for the precincts with cremation burials, which were arranged along the main roads leading to the many Roman cities.<sup>47</sup> Sometimes pillars, also resembling altars which served as the support of the precincts slabs, bear the figure decoration. A very finely decorated piece is the altar of Iulia Quieta from Jader which is slightly earlier than the mid 1st century AD.<sup>48</sup> However, the period of full development was at the end of the 1st century.<sup>49</sup> They continued throughout the 2nd century. Altars disappeared together with cremation in the

<sup>34</sup> K. A. Giunio, *Monumentalni žrtvenik s prikazom vučice Romulom i Remom i scenom žrtvovanja iz Aserije*, Asseria 1 (Zadar 2003) 133 figs. 1–6. It is very likely that this altar was used for cult purposes.

<sup>35</sup> The relief from *Burnum* are very likely an official monument because of its dimensions and shape. Cf. Giunio (note 34) 144 ff. fig. 15

<sup>36</sup> The relief is not published.

<sup>37</sup> A. Conze, *Römische Bildwerke einheimischen Fundorts in Österreich*. Denkschriften der philosophisch-historischen Classe der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften XXII Wien, II Heft (Wien 1872) 3 f. figs. V–VI. – Schober (note 27) 65 no. 141 fig. 67.

<sup>38</sup> Schober (note 27) 40 no. 83 fig. 33 from Celje (Menelaos carrying out the corpse of Patrokles from the battle); 62 no. 138 fig. 64 from Arrabona (the skinning of Marsyas); 63 no. 139 fig. 65 from Steinamanger (Tyro and Craeteus); 89 no. 191 fig. 99 from Ödenburg (Marine thysasos); 133 no. 291 fig. 153 (Adonis with erotes); 133 no. 292 fig. 154 (Amor and Psyche) from Ptuj etc. There are also numerous mythological motifs on reliefs from Schloss Seggau bei Leibnitz, cf. M. Heinzmann/E. Pochmarski, *Die römischen Inschriften und Reliefs von Schloss Seggau bei Leibnitz* (Graz 1994) passim.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. note 37.

<sup>40</sup> Cambi (note 2) 155 fig. 238.

<sup>41</sup> V. Dautova-Ruševljanin, *Rimska kamena plastika u jugoslavenskom delu Panonije* (Novi Sad 1982) 24 no. 139 pl. VI, 3.

<sup>42</sup> Datova Ruševljanin (note 41) pl. V, 3; VI, 3; VI, 5; VI, 7.

<sup>43</sup> See for example the stelai from Potrvlje, A. Grgin, *Tri nadgrobna spomenika iz Potrvlja*. Bulićev zbornik (Split 1924) 233 ff. figs. 1–3 or the stele from Sinj Cambi (note 19) 74 no. 117 pl. 160. and many others.

<sup>44</sup> For example the stele of Gaius Licinius, Wilkes (note 2) pl. 9. – See also V. Paškvalin, *Stele arhitektonske kompozicije u formi edikule iz Muzeja na Humcu kod Ljubuškog*. In: 100 godina muzeja na Humcu (Ljubuški 1985), 120 no. 1 fig. 1

<sup>45</sup> Obviously they were made by the same stone cutters. Sometimes they have the busts in the panel under the entablature. Cf. Rinaldi Tufi (note 7) pl. IV, 2–3; pl. V, 1–2.

<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately these stelai were not thoroughly studied.

<sup>47</sup> N. Cambi, *Salona und seine Nekropolen*. In: "Römische Graberstrassen. Selbstdarstellung – Status – Standard". Colloquium in München vom 28. bis 30. Oktober 1985 (München 1987) 251 f. figs. 82–84.

<sup>48</sup> Cambi (note 2) 157 fig. 240.

<sup>49</sup> Cambi (note 2) 157 ff.



FIG. 13 THE UPPER PART OF A STELE FROM SIRMIIUM (SRIJEMSKA MITROVICA, SERBIA), ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM ZAGREB.

second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, or at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. They could not change their shape and dimensions in order to answer the needs of inhumation burials. Therefore arae and cippi disappeared. There are no mythological motifs on altars from Dalmatia. An Istrian example shows the motif of Eros riding a dolphin, which was the part of the Venus iconography, or more widely a part of marine thisos.<sup>50</sup> Some specimens from Istria depicted the scenes from everyday life.<sup>51</sup> Altars dating from the end of the 1st century show erotes,

mostly those with the reversed torches.<sup>52</sup> These type of erotes were extremely appropriate for altars. Except for a contemporary stele from Narona, erotes with reversed torches do not appear on stelai at all.<sup>53</sup> Eroles are not in fact a mythological scene, since as single figures Eroles lost a religious link with their mother (Venus). There are many altars with erotes of seasons, but they also have only a symbolical character (fig. 14).<sup>54</sup> Also, the oriental shepherds were carved on altars, but they do not belong to mythological figures.<sup>55</sup> Obviously, the sides of

<sup>50</sup> Girardi-Jurkić /K. Džin (note 14) fig. on p. 18.

<sup>51</sup> Girardi-Jurkić /K. Džin (note 14) fig 35 (the shepherd with a lamb near his legs).

<sup>52</sup> Cambi (note 2) 157 ff. figs. 241–243.

<sup>53</sup> N. Cambi, *Antička Narona – urbanistička topografija i kulturni profil grada*. In: Dolina rijeke Neretve od prethistorije do ranog srednjeg vijeka. Znanstveni skup Metković 4–7. X 1977. Izdanja Hrvatskog Arh. Društva 5 (Split 1980) 135 fig. 7

<sup>54</sup> N. Cambi, *Personifikacije godišnjih doba na spomenicima Salone*. Vjesnik Arh. i Hist. Dalmatinsku 62, 1960 (1967) 55 ff. nos. 1–10 pls. IX–XIII.

<sup>55</sup> Cambi (note 2) 158 fig. 244. – Cf. N. Cambi, *Attis or someone else on funerary monuments from Dalmatia?* In: P. Noelke mit F. Naumann–Steckner und B. Schneider (Hrsg.), *Romanisation und Resistenz in Plastik, Architektur und Inschriften der Provinzen des Imperium Romanum*. Neue Funde und



funerary altars were not good enough for mythological scenes. Funerary altars turned a new page in Roman sepulchral art in these parts of the Roman world and introduced erotes and oriental shepherds, which they later transferred to a large group of local sarcophagi.

The so called Liburnian cippi do not have mythological motifs, but they also adopted erotes, especially those carrying small garlands.<sup>56</sup>

When speaking about Pannonian altars, two facts emerge. First, it should be emphasized that their forms are similar to those in Dalmatia, and second, they appeared in the last decades of the 1st century.<sup>57</sup> Eroses, oriental shepherds<sup>58</sup> and the figures of the dead<sup>59</sup> were depicted on these altars.

#### 4. SARCOPHAGI

Slowly penetrating, inhumation led to the appearance of the sarcophagi. The sarcophagi ousted other types of funerary monuments. Imported and local sarcophagi emerged parallelly in Istria and Dalmatia in the second half of the 2nd century. Among imported groups the most numerous were Attic sarcophagi. They were decorated with many elaborated reliefs of mythological motifs which would influence the local workshops. An early piece of Attic sarcophagi is a fragment of the front side showing the motif of the Lion's Hunt of the Centaurs.<sup>60</sup> More popular mythological scenes were soon introduced. Thus, the example of a motif of Achilles on the island of Scyros from Trogir belongs to the period around 200.<sup>61</sup> The sarcophagus depicting the myth of Calydonian Boar Hunt is dating from the mid 3rd century (fig. 15).<sup>62</sup> The fragment from Pula with the scene of the Persians' flight from Marathon also belongs to this context.<sup>63</sup> This scene is very similar to the myth of the Battle for Ships at Troy and, in spite of its historical background, it has almost mythological significance. The only difference is that fugitives have Phrygian caps on the Pula reliefs, and the second type



FIG. 14 STONE BLOCK OF THE SEPULCHRAL AREA SHOWING THE EROS OF AUTUMN, SALONA, RAILWAY STATION SOLIN.

Forschungen. Akten des VII. Internationalen Colloquiums über Probleme des provinzialrömischen Kunstschaffens. Köln 2. bis 6. Mai 2001 (Mainz am Rhein 2003) 511–520.

<sup>56</sup> I. Fadić, *Liburnski nadgrobnni spomenik u Veroni* (CIL V, 2200, CIL III 8852). Diadora 10, 1988, pl. I; pl. V–VII (eros with small garland).

<sup>57</sup> Cf. the altar of Titus Comminius Severus from Sirmium, Schober (note 27) 141 f. no. 323 fig. 162 a–c.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. the same altar of Titus Comminius Severus (note 57).

<sup>59</sup> Schober (note 27) 143 no. 326 fig. 163 a–c.

<sup>60</sup> N. Cambi, *Antički sarkofazi na istočnoj obali Jadrana* (Split 1988) 124 no. 29 fig. 6 pl. XVI, a–b. – Cambi (note 2) 160 fig. 245.

<sup>61</sup> Cambi (note 60) 105 no. 3 pl. VI b. – Cambi (note 3) 132 fig. 70.

<sup>62</sup> G. Koch, *Die mythologische Sarkophage: Meleager*. Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs 12 (Berlin 1975) 6, 145 ff. no. 178 pl. 139. – Cambi (note 60) 127 no. 31 f. Pls. XVIII; XIX; XX a, b. – Cambi (note 2) 161 fig. 247. – Cambi (note 3) 137 fig. 97.

<sup>63</sup> Š. Mlakar, *Istra u antici* (Pula 1962) pl. III, 1. – Cambi (note 2) 162 fig. 249.



FIG. 15 ATTIC SARCOPHAGUS SHOWING THE KALYDONIAN BOAR HUNT, SPLIT, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM SPLIT.

of reliefs shows Asian people while assaulting. Obviously, the Attic workshop compared these two scenes exploiting the same pattern. Only small details were changed. The Marathon victory was represented as the Greek revenge for the mythological defeat.

At the same time the sarcophagi from the workshops of the city of Rome appeared. The earliest example shows the head of Oceanus with sphinxes which belonged to the marine thiasos (fig. 16).<sup>64</sup> There were also pieces without mythological scenes, like fragments showing the funerary banquet, but in a mythological atmosphere.<sup>65</sup>

Among extremely large numbers of local sarcophagi, many show bodies with *tabella ansata*, but without fig-

ures. However, there are also sarcophagi which show some figured or ornamental decoration which were inherited from local funerary altars. Various types of *erotes*, among which the most popular were those with reversed torches, were borrowed from altars.<sup>66</sup> Decoration appeared also on lids. Narrow sides were normally left without figures. The busts of the dead, which were very popular even earlier, appear on *acroteria*.<sup>67</sup> Lids had sometimes a central pediment which could be decorated, even with figures.

Undoubtedly, imported sarcophagi influenced local production by their reliefs. Such local sarcophagi became the cheaper substitute for imported pieces. Two local fragments are worth mentioning. One has the

<sup>64</sup> N. Cambi, *Die stadtrömische Sarkophage in Dalmatien*. Arch. Anz. (Berlin 1977) 449 no. 4 fig. 125. – Cambi (note 2) 160 fig. 246. – Cambi (note 3) 132 fig. 71.

<sup>65</sup> Cambi (note 64) 450 no. 5 fig. 126–130. – Cambi (note 2) 165 fig. 252. – Cambi (note 3) 135 fig. 85.

<sup>66</sup> About the decoration of local Roman sarcophagi cf. N. Cambi, *Sarkophage aus salonitanischen Werkstätten*. Akten des Symposiums 125 Jahre Sarkophag-Corpus (Mainz 1998) 177 f. fig. 84, 4. – Cambi (note 2) 166 ff fig. 260. – Cambi (note 3) 139 f. fig. 90.

<sup>67</sup> Cambi (Anm. 66) 176 f. pl. 84, 3. – Cambi (note 3) 139 f. fig. 107.





FIG. 16 FRAGMENT OF THE SARCOPHAGUS SHOWING THE HEAD OF OCEANUS, IMPORT FROM ROME, SALONA, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM SPLIT



FIG. 17 FRAGMENT OF THE SARCOPHAGUS SHOWING THE SCENE OF Achilles ON THE ISLAND OF SCYROS, SALONA, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM SPLIT

motif of Achilles on the island of Scyros (fig. 17).<sup>68</sup> Obviously, it was deeply influenced by such Attic examples which local craftsmen could see and copy in Salona. Deidameia with stretched arms is shown in the middle. Ulysses with trompette and other Greeks are on the right, while the daughters of Lycomedes are on the left side. Another Trojan motif was executed on a fragment showing the scene in front of the fortifications of Troy.<sup>69</sup>

The second example is a small fragment of the front side. It depicts the myth of Endymion.<sup>70</sup> Only the figures of Selene and Eros holding a torch upright are preserved. These two figures reveal the theme of the sarcophagus body. The Endymion's myth came to Dalmatia with the import of sarcophagi from Rome since it was very popular there.<sup>71</sup> This myth was never realized by Attic workshops. A figure in the pose of sleep-





FIG. 18 ACROTERION OF THE SARCOPHAGUS LID OF VALERIUS DINENS, SALONA, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM SPLIT.

ing Satyre (Barberini type<sup>72</sup>), was shown on the right acroterion of a sarcophagus of Proconnesian marble, but executed in Salona (fig. 18).<sup>73</sup> If this figure were really Satyre some other Dyonisiac figure must have been shown on the left acroterion.

Except for these myths, there are three fragments showing some of the deeds of Heracles. Heracles motifs were not the influence of Attic workshops since they used this myth only rarely. Heracles was much more popular on sarcophagi from Rome.<sup>74</sup> On the contrary,

Salonitan sarcophagi show only a small number of his deeds and figures. So it is hard to guess the origin of the artistic influence. The sarcophagus cut in the rock in the western Salonitan necropolis (now in the church of St. Kajo) clearly demonstrates the Attic influence in some details of sculptural execution like trees, Heracles' heads and the gestures of the figures (fig. 19).<sup>75</sup>

Only a very small number of sarcophagi were found in the Dalmatian hinterland. Most of them were very simple and late, except for fragments of a sarcophagus from

<sup>68</sup> M. Abramić, *Il bassorilievo dei "Cinque ponti"*. *Vjesnik Arh. i Hist. Dalmatinsku* 45, 1922, 58 f. pl. III. – Cambi (note 67) 177 pl. 84, 5. – Cambi (note 2) 169 fig. 262. – Cambi (note 3) 135 f. fig. 89.

<sup>69</sup> The fragment is not published.

<sup>70</sup> Cambi (note 67) 177 pl. 84, 6. – Cambi (note 3) 139 fig. 106.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. G. Koch/H. Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage*. *Handbuch der Archäologie* (München 1982) 144 ff. figs. 155–161.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Smith (note 25) 135 f. fig. 168.

<sup>73</sup> N. Cambi, *Sarkofag Dobrog pastira i njegova grupa* (Split 1994) 94 f. no. 1 fig. 29, 50–51. – Cambi (note 3) 136 fig. 94.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Koch/ Sichtermann (note 71) 148 f. 166–169.

<sup>75</sup> F. Bulić, *San Kajo papa e confessore*. *Bull. Arch. et Hist. Dalmates* 39, 1916, 91 ff. pl. 26. – Koch/ Sichtermann (note 71) 317; 322 fig. 344.



FIG. 19 SARCOPHAGUS CUT IN THE ROCK SHOWING HERACLES DEEDS, CHURCH OF ST CAIUS, SOLIN.

FIG. 20 FRAGMENT OF THE SARCOPHAGUS SHOWING THE DANCING MAENAD, MURSA (OSIJEK), MUSEUM OF SLAVONIA OSIJEK.



Šipovo showing the funerary banquet which reveals the iconographic pattern of Roman sarcophagi workshops.<sup>76</sup>

There are not, as far as I know, local sarcophagi with mythological themes in Istria. But a fragment from Tarsatica (present-day Rijeka) has a nude hero with a spear under an arcade.<sup>77</sup> This fragment is of Aquileian type although Tarsatica was in Dalmatia. This fragment demonstrates that such sarcophagi might have been expected even in Istria.

The sarcophagi from Pannonia rarely have mythological themes. It is also very probably that mythologi-

<sup>76</sup> N. Cambi, *Sarkofag iz Šipova*. Godišnjak 20. Centar za balkanološka ispitivanja knj. 18, Sarajevo 1982, 91 figs. 1–4.

<sup>77</sup> H. Gabelmann, *Die Werkstattgruppen der oberitalischen Sarkophage* (Bonn 1973) 68; 211 no. 36 pl. 18, 2.





FIG. 21 FRAGMENT OF THE SARCOPHAGUS SHOWING SEATING WOMAN, MURSA (OSIJEK), MUSEUM OF SLAVONIA OSIJEK.

cal sepulchral reliefs or sarcophagi belong to two fragments from Osijek. One is depicting a nude dancing Maenad (fig. 20),<sup>78</sup> and the other fragment shows a seated girl looking upwards towards a figure whose only remain are the right foot (fig. 21).<sup>79</sup> Under the base on which figures are positioned, there are the frieze with spindles, shells, a short booth and some other objects.

These two fragments were obviously influenced by Attic patterns. This demonstrates the head, facial features of the girl and the dress folds. On some other sarcophagi mythological motifs appear only as subsidiary motifs. The Pannonian sarcophagi very often show the whole figures of dead standing on the sides of the front of sarcophagi.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Pinterović (note 22) pl. XXXVI, 2. – Dautova–Ruševljanin (note 61) pl. XXXVI, 3. – Cambi (note 2) 170 fig. 265.

<sup>79</sup> Pinterović (note 22) pl. XLII, 3.

<sup>80</sup> As for example the sarcophagus of Romania Nevia from Siscia, cfr. Cambi (note 2) 170 fig. 263.



## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The territory of present-day Croatia, which belonged to different Roman cultural areas, demonstrates quite a different picture of employment of figured decoration and its changes on funerary monuments. Although these areas belonged to various administrative units, it is quite clear that this fact has nothing to do with the funerary habits and practice, especially in the use of mythological themes. Mythological scenes did not find their place on stelai in the early period since the social factor was much more important for the representation of the dead in public. If a person was rich enough to afford the sumptuous funerary monument, he would engage himself primarily with the idea of self representation. When the mythological scenes appeared, it was no longer important to point out the status of the dead. Obviously, mythology had not yet the emphasized funerary symbolics. Only sarcophagi brought significant changes in this respect. This was the influence of imported pieces. Basically, the use and

development of mythological and other figures in Pannonia was similar to Dalmatia. The funerary stelai from Pannonia demonstrated also the status of the dead and his family at the beginning of their development. Stelai and other monuments showing mythological themes appeared slightly later. It was stelai that introduced the mythological scenes and they highly contributed to their popularity in funerary art.

When the Pannonian sarcophagi with the standing figures of the dead appeared, it was obviously the impact of Aquileian architectural sarcophagi. Generally, the influence of Aquileia was pretty strong in Pannonian sculpture. The development of funerary decoration in these Croatian areas reveals the attitude of society and demonstrates the status and cultural belonging to the Roman world. As far as I know, the mythology gave a very important impetus for the development of funerary iconography since it was a very efficacious instrument for afterlife speculations. The social, moral and religious standards changed, which we can follow in the funerary art in these parts of the Roman Empire.

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