AKTI VIII. MEĐUNARODNOG KOLOKVIJA O PROBLEMIMA RIMSKOG PROVINCIJALNOG UMJETNIČKOG STVARALAŠTVA

AKTEN DES VIII. INTERNATIONALEN KOLLOQUIUMS ÜBER PROBLEME DES PROVINZIALRÖMISCHEN KUNSTSCHAFFENS
THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 8TH INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON PROBLEMS OF ROMAN PROVINCIAL ART
LES ACTES DU VIIIÈME COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL SUR LES PROBLÈMES DE L'ART PROVINCIAL ROMAIN

ZAGREB 5.–8. V. 2003.

RELIGIJA I MIT KAO POTICAJ RIMSKOJ PROVINCIJALNOJ PLASTICI

RELIGION UND MYTHOS ALS ANREGUNG FÜR DIE PROVINZIALRÖMISCHE PLASTIK
RELIGION AND MYTH AS AN IMPETUS FOR THE ROMAN PROVINCIAL SCULPTURE
LA RELIGION ET LE MYTHE COMME INSPIRATION POUR LA SCULPTURE ROMAINE PROVINCIALE

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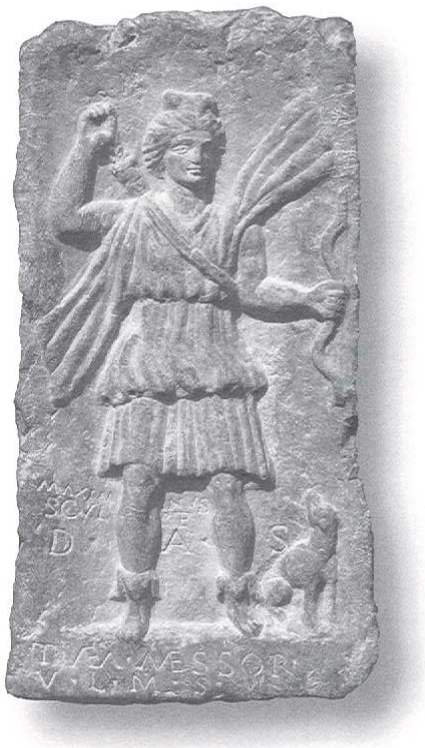

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Zagreb, 2005.

SADRŽAJ

PREDGOVOR ____ 9
BY MIRJANA SANADER

FOREWORD ____ 11
BY MIRJANA SANADER

FUNERARY MONUMENTS FROM DALMATIA, ISTRIA AND THE CROATIAN PART OF PANONNIA. A COMPARATIVE STUDY ____ 13
BY NENAD CAMBI

LES STELES FUNERAIRES A PERSONNAGES
ORIGINE DES THÈMES, MODÈLES ET DATES
À TRAVERS L'EMPIRE ROMAIN ____ 31
DE FRANÇOIS BRAEMER

FLEXIBLE INTENT: SHIFTING VALUES & DISCREPANT MEANINGS IN ROMANO-BRITISH RELIGIOUS SCULPTURE ____ 53
BY MIRANDA ALDHOUSE-GREEN

CIVILIAN SCULPTORS AND THE CREATION OF ROMANO-BRITISH CIVILISATION IN SOUTHERN BRITAIN ____ 59
BY MARTIN HENIG

TYPOLOGIE ET DÉCOR DES MONUMENTS FUNÉRAIRES DE L'ARMORIQUE ROMAINE ____ 65
DES JEAN-YVES ÉVEILLARD/YVAN MALIGORNE

LA TOMBE MONUMENTALE DE *NASIUM* (GAULE BELGIQUE): RÉFLEXIONS SUR LE SYMBOLISME DES GRANDS MONUMENTS SÉPULCRAUX DU NORD-EST DE LA GAULE ____ 75
DE JEAN-NOËL CASTORIO

IUPPITERGIGANTENSÄULEN IM MUSEUM VON METZ – LA COUR D'OR ____ 85
VON HANNELORE ROSE UND ISABELLE BARDIÈS

DER SARKOPHAG DER CORNELIA IACAENA. EIN FRÜHER GIRLANDENSARKOPHAG IN ARLES ____ 91
VON STEPHANIE BÖHM

ÜBERLEGUNGEN ZUR FORTUNA VON BERMEL ____ 95
VON PATRICIA SCHWARZ

EINE SCHILDAMAZONOMACHIE AUS NASSENFELS ____ 101
VON GERHARD BAUCHHENSS

BAUPLASTIK AUS DEM BEREICH DES PODIUMTEMPELS VON BADENWEILER (D) ____ 107
VON GABRIELE SEITZ

AUGUSTA RAURICA, EINE STATUETTENGRUPPE AUS WEISSEM PFEIFENTON ____ 115
VON TEODORA TOMASEVIC BUCK

ATTIS, PARTHER UND ANDERE BARBAREN. EIN BEITRAG ZUM VERSTÄNDNIS VON ORIENTALENDARSTELLUNGEN AUF GRABSTEINEN DER NÖRDLICHEN PROVINZEN ____ 121
VON ALICE LANDSKRON

BEMERKUNGEN ZU DEN FREISTEHENDEN GRABMEDAILLONS IN NORICUM ____ 131
VON ELISABETH WALDE

DIE DIONYSISCHEN DREIFIGURENRELIEFS VON HARTBERG UND BAD WALTERSDORF (STEIERMARK) ____ 141
VON ERWIN POCHMARSKI
UND MARGARETHA POCHMARSKI-NAGELE

SPUNTI DI RIFLESSIONE SU ALCUNI ASPETTI DEL CULTO DI BELENO E DI ANTINOO ____ 157
ANNALISA GIOVANNINI

MANI ALZATE, MAINS LEVÉES, ERHOBENE HÄNDE. A PROPOSITO DI UN SARCOFAGO DELLA COLLEZIONE DI FRANCESCO DI TOPPO ____ 175
BY FULVIA CILIBERTO/FULVIA MAINARDIS

CULT AND MYTHOLOGICAL REPRESENTATIONS AS DECORATIVE ELEMENTS OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN ROMAN POLA ____ 185
BY KRISTINA DŽIN

RELIEFS AND SCULPTURES OF DEITIES AND MYTHOLOGICAL REPRESENTATION AS DETERMINING FACTORS OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE IN ANTIQUE ISTRIA ____ 191
BY VESNA GIRARDI-JURKIĆ

STATUE OF A ROMAN GODDESS FROM THE FORUM OF PULA ____ 197
BY ALKA STARAC

THE ICONOGRAPHY OF INDIGENOUS CULTS IN NORTHERN LIBURNIA ____ 201
BY ROBERT MATIJAŠIĆ

AFTERLIFE IDEAS ON MILITARY MONUMENTS IN NARONA HINTERLAND ____ 205
BY RADOSLAV DODIG

RELIGION AND MYTH ON MONUMENTS FROM ZADAR AND SURROUNDINGS IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN ZADAR ____ 213
BY KORNELIJA A. GIUNIO

KULTSKULPTUREN AUS DER ANTIKEN STADT SENIA ____ 223
VON MIROSLAV GLAVIČIĆ

RELIEFS OF THE LABOURS OF HERACLES ON A ROMAN "SARCOPHAGUS" IN THE CHURCH OF ST CAIUS IN SOLIN ____ 229
BY JASNA JELIČIĆ-RADONIĆ

RELIGIOUS TESTIMONIES FOUND ON ROMAN GEMS FROM DALMATIA KEPT IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN VENICE ____ 237
BY BRUNA NARDELLI

HVCVSOVE – "THIS IS WHERE SACRIFICES WERE OFFERED" – ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS IN THE SUBSTRUCTIONS OF DIOCLETIAN'S PALACE IN SPLIT ____ 243
BY TAJMA RISMONDO

SOME EXAMPLES OF LOCAL PRODUCTION OF MITHRAIC RELIEFS FROM ROMAN DALMATIA ____ 249
BY GORANKA LIPOVAC VRKLJAN

DIANA AND THE FAWN ____ 259
BY MARINA MILIĆEVIĆ BRADAČ

TYPOLOGY OF MITHRAIC CULT RELIEFS FROM SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE ____ 269
BY ŽELJKO MILETIĆ

THE ANCIENT CULTUAL UNITY BETWEEN THE CENTRAL ADRIATIC LITTORAL AND THE DELMATIAN HINTERLAND ____ 275
BY MARIN ZANINOVIĆ

EINE UNVERÖFFENTLICHTE GRABSTELE AUS TILURIUM ____ 281
VON DOMAGOJ TONČINIĆ

FORTUNA-NEMESIS STATUES IN AQUINCUM ____ 287
BY KRISZTINA SZIRMAI

EIN JUPITERTORSO AUS DEM AUXILIARKASTELL IN IŽA (SLOWAKEI) ____ 293
VON KLÁRA KUZMOVÁ

RÖMISCHE GÖTTER UND MYTHISCHE GESTALTEN AUS POETOVIO AUF STEINDENKMÄLERN IM LANDESMUSEUM PTUJ ____ 299
VON MOJCA VOMER GOJKOVIČ

JÜNGLINGSGESTALTEN MIT WAFFE AUF PANNONISCHEN GEMMEN ____ 305
VON TAMÁS GESZTELYI

MACHTSPLITTER – ARCHITEKTURTEILE AUS DER KAISERRESIDENZ SIRMIUM (SREMSKA MITROVICA) ____ 311
VON CHRISTINE ERTEL

EINE NEUE BILDHAUERWERKSTATT IM OBERLAND DES BALATON (PLATTENSEE)? ____ 319
VON SYLVIA PALÁGYI

DIE GIGANTEN VOM PFAFFENBERG BEI CARNUNTUM ____ 329
VON GABRIELLE KREMER

DURCHBROCHEN GEARBEITETE WEIHRELIEFS AUS DAKIEN ____ 337
VON ALFRED SCHÄFER

CULT SYMBOLS AND IMAGES ON FUNERARY MONUMENTS OF THE ROMAN PERIOD IN THE CENTRAL SECTION OF DARDANIA ____ 343
BY EXHLALE DOBRUNA-SALIHU

DIE PLASTISCHE AUSSTATTUNG VON HEILIGTÜMERN DES THRAKISCHEN REITERS IM TERRITORIUM VON PHILIPPOPOLIS (PLOVDIV) ____ 351
VON MANFRED OPPERMANN

NOVAE – STELES WITH REPRESENTATIONS OF BIRDS ____ 363
BY PIOTR DYCZEK

PAST AND PRESENT: NOTES ON THE IDENTITY OF ROMAN IMPERIAL SMYRNA ____ 373
BY CARLO FRANCO

OMNIPOTENS ET OMNIPARENS DEA SYRIA. ASPECTS OF HER ICONOGRAPHY ____ 381
BY ILONA SKUPINSKA-LOVSET

ANTAIOS, AN EGYPTIAN GOD IN ROMAN EGYPT: EXTRACTING AN ICONOGRAPHY ____ 389
BY DONALD BAILEY

THE PAMPHILI OBELISK: TWO NOTES ON PHARAONIC ELEMENTS IN DOMITIAN IDEOLOGY ____ 399
BY EMANUELE M. CIAMPINI

ROMANIZING BAAL:
THE ART OF SATURN WORSHIP
IN NORTH AFRICA _____ 403
BY ANDREW WILSON

THE SYNCRETISM OF BELIFES
AS EXPRESSED IN ROMAN
PROVINCIAL SCULPTURE _____ 409
BY CLAIRE K. LINDGREN

ÜBERALL (GÖTTER)GLEICH? –
THEOMORPHE BILDNISSE
DER FRAUEN
DES RÖMISCHEN KAISERHAUSES _____ 415
VON ANNETTA ALEXANDRIDIS

'DIE TREFFLICHE GRUPPE DER FLUCHT
DES ÄNEAS'. EIN TROIANISCHES THEMA
IN DER PROVINZ: DIE AENEAS-GRUPPE
IN STUTTGART UND VERWANDTE
DARSTELLUNGEN. ZU IKONOGRAPHIE
UND BEDEUTUNG. _____ 423
VON JUTTA RONKE

DIE BEFRACHTUNG GÄNGIGER
GRIECHISCH-RÖMISCHER SYMBOLE
MIT NEUEN RELIGIÖSEN INHALTEN
AUF DEN RELIEFS
DER MITHRASMYSTERIEN _____ 433
VON MARIA WEISS

RÖMISCHE STEINDENKMÄLER
IN DER WEB-PLATTFORM
WWW.UBI-ERAT-LUPA.ORG _____ 441
VON FRIEDERIKE HARL UND KURT SCHALLER

'STEIN – RELIEF- INSCHRIFT'. KONTUREN
EINES FORSCHUNGSPROJEKTES _____ 449
VON CH. HEMMERS, ST. TRAXLER, CH. UHLIR
UND W. WOHLMAYR

EIN NEUFUND AUS DER STEIERMARK _____ 455
VON BERNHARD HEBERT

PROGRAM KOLOKVIJA
(PROGRAMM, PROGRAM, PROGRAMME) _____ 457

SUDIONICI (TEILNEHMER,
PARTICIPANTS, PARTICIPANTS) _____ 459

CIVILIAN SCULPTORS AND THE CREATION OF ROMA-NO-BRITISH CIVILISATION IN SOUTHERN BRITAIN

BY MARTIN HENIG

The introduction, around the middle of the 1st century, of the craft of sculpture into the new province of *Britannia* has traditionally been associated with the army which arrived in Britain from the Rhine-Danube frontiers. There are, indeed, some good examples of military tombstones from Colchester, Cirencester and Gloucester produced within a decade or so of AD 43 similar in style to stele from military stations in the Rhineland, which are likely to have been the work of sculptors in, or closely associated with, the Roman army.[1] However in a very large area of southern Britain from the coast to hills and high ground north of the River Thames the Roman army was never much in evidence and this was true even in some areas beyond this frontier line, more or less marked by the west-east Roman road which later centuries would call Akeman Street. The over obsession with military archaeology amongst English Roman archaeologists of the 20th century (for instance Eric Birley and Sheppard Frere) have perhaps disguised the real possibility of a powerful impact from a wealthy pro-Roman native aristocracy associated with the Atrebatic client kingdom of King Togidubnus and other areas notably that of the allied Dobunni of Gloucestershire recorded by Dio as being on the side of the Romans from the beginning.[2] The scenario proposed here is in fact much closer to that described by Greg Woolf in his splendid book about Gaul, *Becoming Roman* and followed by me in *The Heirs of King Verica.*[3] The peoples of southern Britain did not need any compulsion or encouragement from passing soldiers to adopt Roman standards of *humanitas*.

At a cultural level, the events of 43 were essentially ones involving an intensification of processes started decades before. Roman consumables and vessels connected with the drinking of wine including silver cups and bronze jugs were already in use amongst members of the chieftain class.[4] Figural devices upon native coinages display a Roman attitude to life. There has even been a recent suggestion that the Atrebatic king (Verica) employed a 'Roman' regiment at what even before 43 may have been a Royal site at Fishbourne, Sussex.[5] However, no evidence has yet been found for monumental building or concomitant sculptural embellishment of native houses or shrines until contacts were intensified.

In AD 43 Fishbourne seems to have served as a supply base for the expeditionary force which, whatever its other aims, was designed to restore Verica to his realm. Verica and then his successor, whose name Tiberius Claudius Togidubnus proclaims him to have been a Roman citizen, would have continued to be associated with this site and with the nearby town of *Noviomagus* (Chichester) which grew up on the site of the previous oppidum. Unfortunately in this area of brickearth on the coastal plain and of chalk above, most sculpture has long ago been re-used or burnt for lime. What few pieces remain are very difficult to date within a half century. Fishbourne has yielded a fragmentary marble head of Togidubnus as a young man (or a member of

1 J. Huskinson, CSIR Great Britain I 8. Eastern England (British Academy, Oxford 1994) nos. 47 and 48. – G. Webster, *Military Equestrian Tombstones*. In: M. Henig, CSIR Great Britain I 7. Roman Sculpture from the Cotswold Region (British Academy, Oxford 1993) nos. 137–140.

2 Dio LX, 20.

3 G. Woolf, *Becoming Roman. The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge 1998). – M. Henig, *The Heirs of King Verica. Culture and Politics in Roman Britain* (Stroud 2002).

4 J. Creighton, *Coins and Power in Late Iron Age Britain* (Cambridge 2000).

5 J. Manley/ D. Rudkin, *Fishbourne before the Conquest. Royal Capital of a Client–Kingdom*. Current Arch. No. 187 [vol. xvi no.7] 290–298.

his family), while marble heads of Germanicus and , from the very end of our period, of Trajan, have come from Bosham along the coast a few miles to the west.[6]

Fragments of Corinthian capitals of distinctive type carved in limestone show that sculptors working on site embellished the Fishbourne palace. They were, probably, carved by sculptors from the south of Gaul.[7] Even more interesting for our purpose is a large block of limestone found on or near what was, or became, the forum of *Noviomagus*, carrying a dedication to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus 'in honorem Domus Divinae'.[8] The other three sides bear reliefs of which the best preserved shows two water nymphs one seen in front view and the other in rear view, with a background of water plants in low relief. The likely patron would have been an associate of Togidubnus (if not the king himself) and the sculptor very probably, once again, was a southern Gaul. The highly refined and naturalistic body modelling of the figures demonstrates artistry of a high order. Unfortunately all we have of the temple of Neptune and Minerva, which again stood in a central position in the town is the dedication showing that the principal patronage came from a guild of smiths, although the building was under the patronage of the king. The dedication is on a block of Purbeck marble, a shelly limestone that takes a high polish, quarried in Dorset.[9] Although it is very likely that this, and a contemporary circular temple on Hayling Island, Hampshire, were embellished with decoration, nothing remains.

Fortunately there is very much more from the third temple built on what was probably the western boundary of the client kingdom, though possibly not completed until late in Flavian times. This is the famous temple of Sulis Minerva in Bath, built in high quality local limestone and richly appointed with fluted Corinthian columns. The pediment is dominated by a tondo, a gorgon-head combined with a head of Neptune.[10] Once thought completely *sua generis* its resemblance to tondi at Avenches, Nyon, Vienne and Arles suggests again an artist from the same area of Gaul as those who worked at Chichester and Fishbourne.[11] There is more, for the tondo is set on a *clypeus* surrounded by oak-wreaths and supported by victories on globes with tritons beyond them. The décor employs the artistic language of Julio-Claudian victory monuments, while a star in the pediment and another on the architrave refer to imperial apotheosis, here that of Claudius- or, more probably, if the monument is as late as the reign of Domitian, of Vespasian.[12]

It is certainly not surprising to find Gaulish sculptors here. Inscriptions, indeed, include one attesting Priscus, son ot Toutius, a stonemason (*lapidaries*) from the tribe of the Carnutes who was perhaps responsible for some architectural ornament at the sanctuary.[13] How long it took for local sculptors to emerge is not known but the theophoric name of a sculptor called Sulinus suggests that he came from Bath where he practiced; he is also attested by a dedication in Cirencester.[14]

By British standards a considerable quantity of sculpture has been found in the Cotswold region of Gloucestershire and portions of contiguous counties. The local votive sculptures makes an ideal case study for, with the exception of military tombstones from the early fortress and later colonia of Gloucester in the west of the region, and the short lived fort at Cirencester, mentioned above, all other surviving sculptors seem to be the result of civilian patronage. Moreover, although none of the pieces discussed here is well dated and there is a relative absence of useful inscriptions, it is clear that at all levels it was civilian patronage, which counted. Apart from Solinus and his father Brucetus, two other native sculptors signed work, Iuventinus, the author of a relief of [Mars] Romulus from Custom Scrubs, Bisley, and Searigillus son of Searix, who is attested on a figured altar from the temple of Mercury at Uley.[15]

6 B.W. Cunliffe/M.G. Fulford, CSIR Great Britain I 2. Bath and the Rest of Wessex (British Academy, Oxford 1982) nos. 92, 89 and 90. – See also G. Soffe/M. Henig, *Roman Marble and Bronze Sculpture in the Kingdom of Togidubnus*. *ARA.* The Bulletin of the Association for Roman Archaeology 8, Autumn 1999, 8–10.

7 Cunliffe/ Fulford (note 6) no. 191.

8 Ibid. no. 107. – Cf. RIB no.89.

9 RIB no. 91. – Cf. J.E. Bogaers, *King Cogidubnus in Chichester: Another Reading of RIB 91*. Britannia 10, 1979, 243–254.

10 B.Cunliffe/P. Davenport, *The Temple of Sulis Minerva at Bath. 1. The Site*. (Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, Monograph 7, Oxford). Cf. M. Henig, *From Classical Greece to Roman Britain. Some Hellenic Themes in Provincial Art and Glyptics*. In: G.R. Tsetskhladze/A.J.N.W. Prag/A.M. Snodgrass, *Periplous. Papers in Classical Art and Archaeology presented to Sir John Boardman* (London 2000) 129–135.

11 M. Verzar, *Aventicum II. Un Temple du Culte Imperial* (Association pro Aventico, Avenches 1977) 34–41.

12 M. Henig, *A New Star Shining over Bath*. Oxford Journal Arch. 18, no. 4, November 1999, 419–425.

13 RIB no. 149.

14 RIB no. 151. – Also RIB no. 105.

15 RIB no. 132 and A. Woodward/P. Leach, *The Uley Shrines. Excavation of a Ritual Complex on West Hill, Uley, Gloucestershire: 1977–9* (English Heritage, British Museum, London 1993) 96, fig. 80. – Cf. Henig, CSIR Great Britain I 7 nos. 60 and 73.

The best of the region's sculpture needs to be discussed first. It is characterised by delicate modelling and a feeling for texture very much in the manner of the Chichester relief and the Bath pediment. Whether any individual piece was carved by a sculptor ethnically Gaulish or by a Romano Briton is uncertain but, as with the fine second-century mosaics laid in Cirencester in the second century they seem to me to be sufficiently distinctive to call them British. Most of them show 'Roman' deities, albeit treated in a free local style: A figure of Mercury wearing a floppy *petasos* which came from a gate at Cirencester, though fragmentary, is indicative of the very high quality of workmanship available to embellish public structures.[16] Likewise from the City is the upper part of the torso with cuirass of a richly patterned statue of Minerva.[17] Another freestanding image is the statue of Mercury from the temple dedicated to that god at Uley, a remarkably vigorous recreation of a Praxitelean type embellished with Celtic S-scrolls in the hair.[18] The most striking example of Cotswold sculpture is the great-inhabited capital depicting Bacchus and his companions (Silenus, Lycurgus and Ariadne), perhaps from a Jupiter column of the late 2nd century.[19] It is a remarkable *tour de force.* A large block of stone from the villa or shrine at Box, Wiltshire represents a local deity, a huntsman (also known on much smaller monuments), who may, as proposed by the late George Boon, have been known as Apollo Cunomaglus (see below).[20] No sculpture from military stations and their vicinity in Roman Britain, certainly not those distant from civilian centres ever approaches this level of skill. When major architectural sculptures were required to embellish public buildings in London, it is not to the army but to civilian sculptors from the Cotswolds and the Lincoln-Northamptonshire region, that the patrons who, as in the case of the London Arch and the Screen of Gods, are likely to have been the representatives of the official, Imperial authorities, will have turned.[21]

Much of the sculpture from Southern Britain, however, is not the result of major patronage but orders from local sculptors whose traditions go back to those of Gaul but who were now fully competent to serve their communities and on occasion to innovate. Typical

Fig. 1 Mars altar from Hazelwood near Nailsworth (Gloucestershire). Oolitic limestone H.0.495m. In Stroud Museum. Photo: Institute of Archaeology, Oxford

16 Ibid. no. 69
17 Ibid. no. 85.
18 Ibid. no. 62.
19 Ibid. no. 18.
20 Cunliffe/ Fulford (note 6) no. 122. Cf. G.C. Boon, *'A Roman Sculpture Rehabilitated: The Pagans Hill Dog'*. Britannia 20 (1989) 201–217.
21 M. Henig, *Sculptors from the West in Roman London*. In: J. Bird/ M.Hassall/ H.Sheldon, Interpreting Roman London. Papers in memory of Hugh Chapman (Oxbow Monograph 58. Oxford 1996) 97–103.

of the region are votive altars and reliefs, many of which are not inscribed but are characterised by portrayals of the deity invoked set within a niche, which is often round-headed. Mars is represented as an armed standing figure by thirteen images mainly from the Stroud region. Most are helmeted but one is bareheaded like the triad cited below. A majority of the portrayals figure the god holding a small round shield (**Fig. 1**), but four including the relief carved by Iuventinus and dedicated by Gulioepius show him supporting the normal long shield. There is no necessity to invoke a direct military prototype whether from votive reliefs of Mars or tombstones of soldiers for any of these. The findspots are remote from any military station and the round shield is characteristically a local Celtic form and is carried by each of the three similar, but bare-headed, and surely indigenous warrior gods on a relief from Lower Slaughter, while the one dedication attested is likewise made by a native.[22] Mars would appear here,as elsewhere, to be a purely agricultural deity associated with fecundity as the two *cornucopiae* on Gulioepius' relief proclaim. There are, in addition, three reliefs of an Equestrian Mars, one on an altar from Bisley and the others upon votive slabs from Ducklington, Oxfordshire and from Kingscote. The Bisley altar and Kingscote relief show him holding a round shield, and on the latter he appears to be associated with a mother-goddess and three *genii cucullati* (see below).[23]

Another deity associated especially with pastoralism, notably sheep, an important aspect of the economy in the uplands is Mercury. He is attested by votive reliefs from Cirencester and at least two round-headed niche altars (including the one carved by Searigillus for [L]overnius, at Uley.[24] This site has also yielded the statue discussed above. There was evidently also a temple of Mercury in Gloucester on the fringe of the area under discussion, which became a *Colonia* under Nerva (or perhaps earlier under Domitian) but clearly always had a large local element in its population; the reliefs from here show the god with a female consort, perhaps Rosmerta, also attested at Bath where they are accompanied by hooded godlings (*genii cucullati*), and at Cirencester.[25]

Fig. 2 Relief depicting Mercury and Minerva from Aldsworth (Gloucestershire). Oolitic limestone. H.0.30m. Photo: Institute of Archaeology, Oxford

A most interesting variant has turned up recently, a plaque, which was evidently attached to the wall of a shrine, was found at Aldsworth, in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds and shows Mercury with Minerva (**Fig. 2**) who here may be performing the same fertility function as 'Rosmerta'.[26] Votive images of Minerva from Lower Slaughter are associated, indeed, with the triple-warrior gods, mentioned above, and also with *genii cucullati.*[27]

The *genii* are also to be seen with a seated female deity, on a relief and a group partly in the round from Cirencester, on reliefs from Daglingworth and nearby Stratton (**Fig. 3**) and possibly a relief from Easton Grey, Wiltshire signed by a certain Civilis.[28] The Daglingworth relief is inscribed with the name Cuda who, it

[22] Henig (note 15) nos. 48–60 and 131.
[23] Ibid. nos. 123–125.
[24] Ibid. nos. 70 and 71 (Cirencester); nos. 72, 73 and probably 74 (Uley).
[25] Ibid. nos. 78–80 (Gloucester); no. 81 (Cirencester); no. 82 (Swalcliffe,Oxfordshire). – Cunliffe/ Fulford (note 6) no. 39 (Bath).
[26] M. Henig/R. Cleary/P. Purser, *A Roman Relief of Mercury and Minerva from Aldsworth, Gloucestershire*. Britannia 31, 2000, 362–363.
[27] Henig (note 15) nos. 86–88 (Minerva); cf. no.95 (Genii Cucullati) and 131 (warriors).
[28] Ibid. nos 101–103. – M.Henig, *A Relief of a Mater and Three Genii from Stratton, Gloucestershire*. Transact. Bristol and Gloucestershire 116, 1998, 186–189. – Cunliffe/ Fulford (note 6) no. 120

Fig. 3 Relief depicting mother-goddess *(Cuda?)* and three *genii cucullati*. From Stratton (Gloucestershire). Oolitic limestone. Surviving H. 0.155m. Photo: Institute of Archaeology, Oxford.

has been convincingly argued by Stephen Yeates, may have given her name to the Cotswold Hills.[29] Cuda is characterised on the Stratton relief by a very large round object, perhaps a fruit (or could it be a ball of wool), upon her lap and she is clearly associated with fecundity. As mentioned above the goddess and her associates appear to be associated with a figure of Mars on horseback on a relief from Ashel Barn, Kingscote.

A final example of an endemic deity must be included though he has received considerable attention elsewhere. If the other deities attest the agricultural and pastoral economies, hunting was also important as well as a popular diversion. This is the Cotswold hunter god armed with a bow, generally accompanied by a hound and sometimes shown with a stag as well as on a relief from Chedworth (**Fig. 4**) He wears a 'Phrygian' style cap and it is possible that he was sometimes equated with Attis, but the equation with Apollo Cunomaglus, 'Apollo the hound-prince' attested on an altar from Nettleton, Wiltshire is more convincing. The finest image of the god is on a large block from Box, Wiltshire and he is shown on the front of an altar from Bisley-with-Lypiatt and reliefs from Stancomb Wood, Winchcombe, Upton St Leonards and,as stated above, Chedworth.[30]

[29] The name *Cuda* on the Daglingworth Relief (Henig (note 15) no. 102 and RIB no. 129) will be discussed by Yeates in Glevensis 37, 2004.

[30] Henig (note 15) nos. 110–14. – M.Henig, *Syncretism in Roman Britain. The Huntsman with the Phrygian Cap*. In: C.M. Ternes/F.P. Burke, Roman Religion in Gallia Belgica and the Germaniae (= Bull. Ant. Luxembourgeoises 22, 1993) (Luxembourg 1994) 78–92.

Fig. 4 Relief depicting hunter god *(Apollo Cunomaglus?).* from Chedworth villa (Gloucestershire). Oolitic limestone.H.0.455m. Chedworth villa, site museum. Photo: Martin Henig.

The Cotswold hunter was actually introduced to London where three representations are known, two in the City and one from the south suburb,Southwark.[31] These suggest the presence of both Cotswold patrons and sculptors from western Britain in the capital. Back in the Cotswolds the hunter-god proved to be of enduring importance and his iconography, shown alone apart from his hound, gave rise to a highly distinctive type of Orpheus mosaic first recorded in Cirencester and its region in the time of Constantine.[32] His origins,together with the other deities discussed here, must lie much earlier in the local religious culture of the Dobunni.

This paper does not maintain that such a pattern of indigenous belief, manifested by sculpture in which the arts of Rome have simply been used to interpret native contexts is unusual. On the contrary there were many places around the Empire where the impact of the legions was nugatory. As far as Britain was concerned there were until a few years ago two views. One, following in the wake of military archaeologists such as Eric Birley and Sheppard Frere, would have seen the impulse of Romanisation as coming from the Roman army and administration and this view would previously have been espoused by the author of this paper. The other school led by Anne Ross and Miranda Aldhouse Green would have minimised the impact of Roman culture to an unacceptable degree. Increasing emphasis on cultural interchange has in recent years very much brought my views and those of Miranda together, which means that I now reject the military origins of Romano-British art in the very regions where it was first manifested and continues to be seen at its most vibrant throughout the Roman period.[33]

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[31] R. Merrifield, *The London Hunter–god and his significance in the History of Londinium*. In Bird/Hassall/ Sheldon (note 21) 105–113.
[32] M. Henig, *The Art of Roman Britain* (London 1995) 152–154.
[33] Ibid. 23 and 42–43 follow the traditional view of S. Frere, *Britannia. A History of Roman Britain* (London 1967) 317–318. – Contra see A. Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain* (London 1967) and M. Green, *The Gods of Roman Britain* (Aylesbury 1983).