

AKTI VIII. MEĐUNARODNOG KOLOKVIJA O PROBLEMIMA RIMSKOG PROVINCIJALNOG UMJETNIČKOG STVARALAŠTVA

AKTEN DES VIII. INTERNATIONALEN KOLLOQUIUMS ÜBER PROBLEME DES PROVINZIALRÖMISCHEN KUNSTSCHAFFENS

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 8<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON PROBLEMS OF ROMAN PROVINCIAL ART

LES ACTES DU VIII<sup>ÈME</sup> 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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PROVINCIALE

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# AFTERLIFE IDEAS ON MILITARY MONUMENTS IN NARONA HINTERLAND

BY RADOSLAV DODIG

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In the hinterland of the Roman colony Naronā, in the basin of the Trebižat River, a travel station named BIGESTE, together with the settlement PAGUS SCUNASTICUS, were mentioned in the antique time.<sup>1</sup> Today, we can find a local district Ljubuški there. About seventy Roman epigraphic monuments have so far been found in the area concerned. A group of seven monumental stelae is specially noticeable and prominent among them. Their central motif is the door. Archaeological literature has dealt with this type of monuments a great deal; however, not all questions have been answered.<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning, I would like to give a survey of Roman monuments from the district of Ljubuški. I was not able to obtain all the original photographs, as they are difficult to come by them, especially those from the State Museum in Sarajevo.

## **Stele from the locality Mlade, Vitina (T. I, Fig. 1)**

**Lit.:** Bojanovski 1985, 72–76, Fig. 4; Dodig 1997, 18, Fig. 1  
It occurs in situ above the door of a certain chapel (175 x 55 x 18 cm). It is quite damaged, and therefore reading the inscription provides great difficulties. It seems to be a tombstone of Lucius Marcilius. He was a veteran of the 7th legion from Pessinus, Asia Minor.

## **Stele from the locality Smokovice, Hardomilje (T. I, Fig. 2)**

**Lit.:** ILIug III, 1921; Patsch 1908, 110–111, Fig. 30; (=Patsch 1997, 40, Fig. 30); Patsch 1914, 167, Fig. 34; Betz 1938, 66, No. 68; Paškvalin 1983, 103–104; EDH 034241.

A tombstone of Titus Varius, a veteran of the 7th legion from Pessinus, Asia Minor (141 x 74,5 x 25 cm). Today it can be found at the State Museum in Sarajevo.

## **Stele from the locality Smokovice, Hardomilje (T. I, Fig. 3)**

**Lit.:** ILIug III, 1920; Patsch, 1914, 167, Fig. 35; Betz 1938, 66, Fig. 59; Paškvalin 1983, 102–103; EDH 034239.

A tombstone of Marcus Livius from Alorus, Macedonia, veteran of the 7th legion (222 x 61 x 22,5 cm). Now at the State Museum in Sarajevo.

## **Stele from the locality Borasi, Vitina (T. I, Fig. 4)**

**Lit.:** ILIug III, 1937; Paškvalin 1960–61, 326–327, Fig. 1; Paškvalin 1983, 185; Bojanovski 1985, 74; 104–105; EDH 034254.

A tombstone of Marcus Antonius Maximus, a veteran of the 11th legion Claudia Pia Fidelis (143 x 87 x 30 cm). It's damaged and you can see it at the State Museum in Sarajevo.

## **A Fragment of the Monument from the locality Proboj, Vitina (T. II, Fig. 5)**

**Lit.:** Bojanovski 1985, 70, Fig. 2; Bojanovski 1988, 386; Škegro 1997, 89, No. 23.

A fragment of the monument is significantly damaged (120 x 20 x 17 cm). In all probability, the names Marcellus and Martialis are mentioned on it. It can be found at the archaeological collection of the Franciscan monastery at Humac near Ljubuški.

## **Stele from the locality Blinja, Teskera (T. II, Fig. 6)**

**Lit.:** Dodig 1985, 107–115, Fig. 5–8; Bojanovski, 1988, 386; Škegro 1997, 88, No. 15; Marin et al. 2000, 513.

A tombstone of Veranus filius Caturonis, eques cohortis I Bracaraugustanorum (222 x 68 x 25 cm). This monument is covered with layers of travertine. As well as the previous example, it is in the Archaeological collection of the Franciscan monastery at Humac, not far from Ljubuški.

## **Stele from the locality Vuna, Hardomilje (T. II, Fig. 7)**

**Lit.:** Unpublished.

Again a tombstone. This time the one of Quintus Valerius, a veteran of the 7th legion from Iconium, Asia Minor (185 x 63 x 23 cm). It can be found at the Archaeological collection of the Franciscan monastery at Humac near Ljubuški.

All the monuments from Ljubuški which have been mentioned so far share a good deal of joint conceptions. This can be stated if we take a summary look at them.

<sup>1</sup> Bojanovski 1985, 65–94; Dodig 1985, 95–118

<sup>2</sup> Hofmann 1905, 54–57; Haarlov 1977, 21–25; Medini 1984, 112–114; Verzár Bass 1985, 198–199; Waelkens 1986, 17–19; Cambi 1991, 64–66; Ortali 1997, 337.

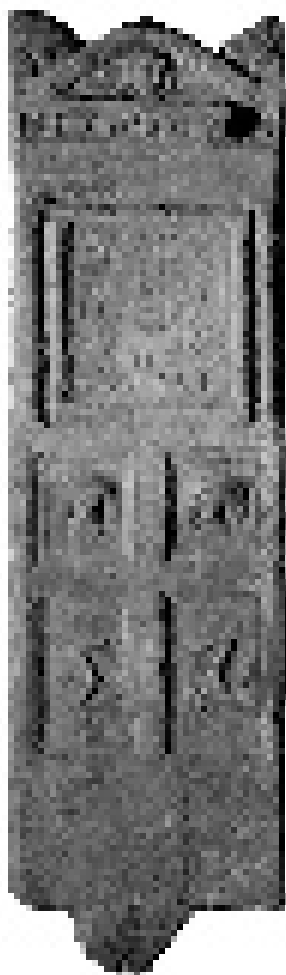
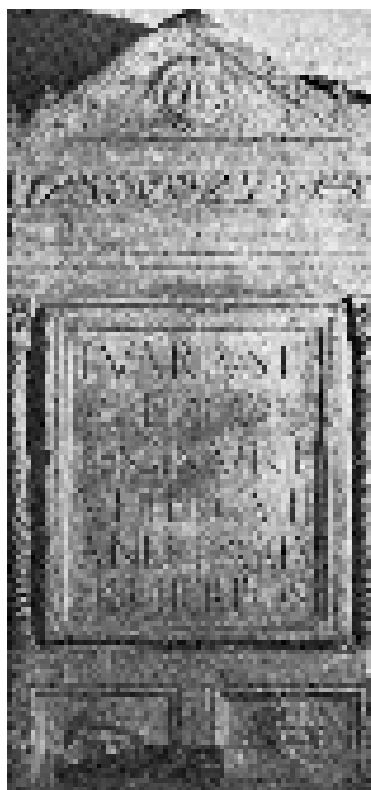
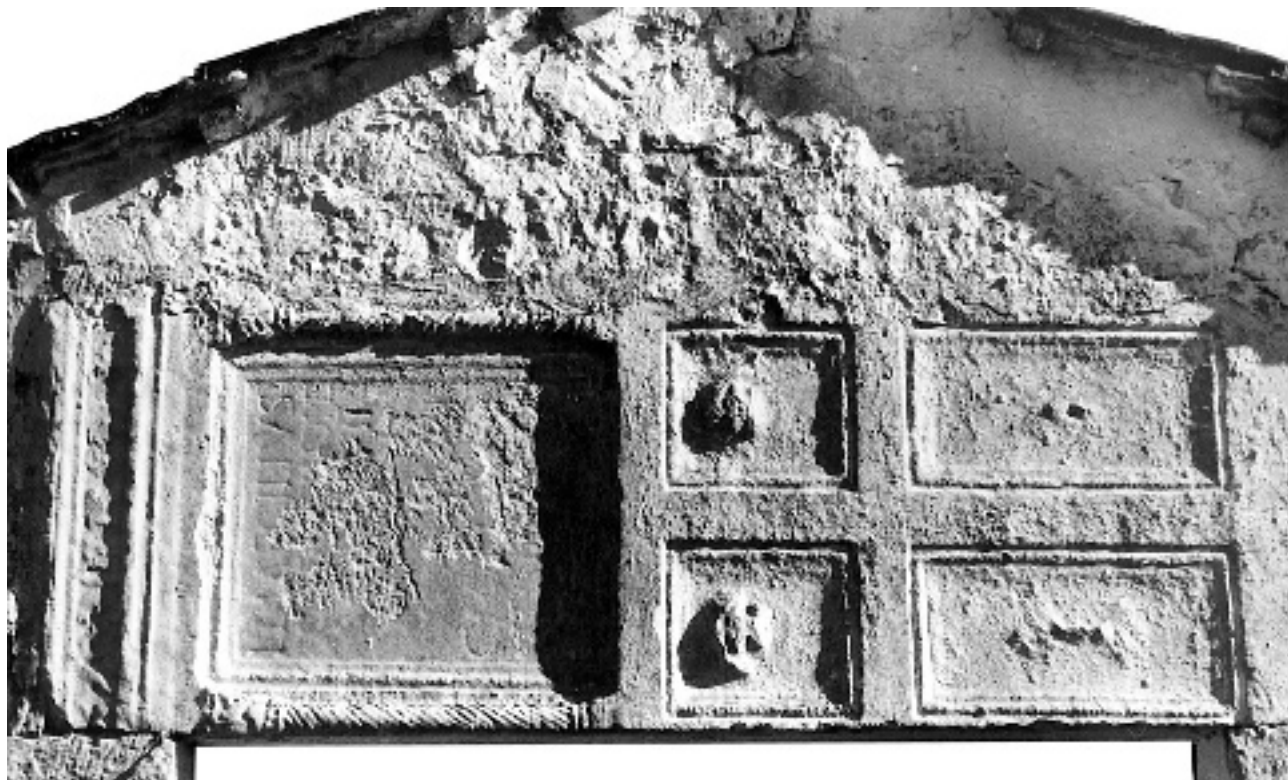






FIG. 1 STELE OF L. MARCIUS.

FIG. 2 STELE OF T. VARIUS.

FIG. 3 STELE OF M. LIVIUS.

FIG. 4 STELE OF M. ANTONIUS.

FIG. 5 FRAGMENT OF MARCELLUS.

FIG. 6 STELE OF Q. VALERIUS.

FIG. 7 MONUMENT MAMA X, NO. 33.

FIG. 8 STELE OF VERANUS CATURONIS.

They are composed of three parts. A triangular tympan with an acroterium is on the top. Acroteria in the form of palmette is situated on the lateral sides. The shape of Gorgona, with curly hair and entangled snakes under her chin is carved in the conspicuous range of the tympan. In the middle of the monument one can observe an aedicula with twisted pillars, the capitals on which is an architrave. The inscription field is in the aedicula. The door motif with four panels is in the lower part. In the upper panels the door-knockers in the form of lion heads are most likely to occur. On the other hand, in the lower panels stylized door-panels or vegetable motifs occur. However, there are differences among them. The monument No. 4, a veteran of the 11th legion, has not his frieze with weapon, while the appearance of an eagle is in the tympan. Now, let us turn to monument No. 6, the monument of the horseman Cohors I. Bracaraugustanorum. The door is reduced to two lower panels, which present two figures wearing Oriental clothes. The deadman's portrait is carved in the aedicula of the same monument. The preserved monuments are about 220 cm high and measure about 60 cm in width. Four monuments are dedicated to the veterans of the 7th legion from Asia Minor or Macedonia, one to the veteran of the 11th legion, one to Cohors I. Bracaraugustanorum. One of them is unknown. No information is available about it. They all date from the 1st century. Most of them derive before the 42nd year while two of them date from the middle of the 1st century. In order to analyze more thoroughly the origin of this type of military monuments from the Narona hinterland, it would be wise to compare them to the similar monuments from the province of Dalmatia and other Roman provinces.

**Stele of Q. Mettius Valens**

Lit.: Cambi 1987, 263, Tafel 46, d.; Cambi 1991, 62, Tafel 8, Fig. 2

A tombstone of miles leg. VII C. p. f. (248 x 79 x 23 cm). Found in Salona, dating after the 42nd year. Archaeological Museum Split.

**Stele of C. Iulius from Pessinus, Asia Minor**

Lit.: Cambi 1994, 155, Fig. 6 (=Cambi 2001, 85, Fig. 8). Found in Dugo Polje near Split (248 x 69 x 25 cm), dating between the 20th and the 40th year. Archaeological Museum Split.

**Stele of Severus Veius**

Lit.: Cambi 1994, 157, Fig. 7 (=Cambi 2001, 86, Fig. 9). It is also found in Dugo Polje near Split (213 x 64 x 23 cm), dating once again between the 20th and the 40th year. Archaeological Museum Split. The data concerning it are quite the same as in the previous example.

**Stele of the soldier Lucius Fabius**

Lit.: Wilkes 1969, Pl. 13; ILIug 1986, No. 1949; Cambi 2002, 151, Fig. 223.

Found at Vojnić (Sinj) in Croatia (230 x 76 x 20 cm). Third or fourth decade of 1st century. Archaeological Museum Split.

**Stele of C. Longinus from Amblada, Asia Minor**

Lit.: CIL III, 9737; Hofmann 1905, 56–57.

This example was found at Gardun near Trilj in Croatia (175 x 87 cm), before the 42nd year.

**Stele of Vадica Titua**

Lit.: Rendić-Miočević 1989, Pl. LXVII; Cambi 1993, 27–30, Pl. 1.

Found at Aseria near Benkovac, Zadar (253 x 66 cm). Middle of 1st century. Archaeological Museum Zadar.

**Greek Inscription from island of Vis.**

Lit.: Nikolanci 1961–1962, 64, Pl. VI.; Wilkes 1968, Pl. 6. Dimensions: 172 x 65 cm. It dates back to the 2nd century B. C. Archaeological Museum Split.

**Stele of Epicadus Velox, Dalmata.**

Lit.: IANice, No. 49; Benoît 1964, T. XXII.

Found at Cimiez, near Nice in France (234 x 75 x 20 cm). It takes back to the 1st ct. B. C. Musée Archéologique de Nice Cimiez.

**Stele of T. Annius Firmus**

Lit.: IANice, No. 55; Benoît 1964, 605, Fig. 51.

Found Cimiez, near Nice in France. It has dimensions 205 x 80 x 25 cm. It dates from the 1st century A. D, but from its second half.

**Monument from Urbino, Italy**

Lit.: M. Luni, G. Gori 1986, 49, Fig. 34; Righini 1965, 396, Fig. 3

It dates to the first century B.C. Now in the Palazzo Ducale, Urbino.

**Monument of liberta Helvia Arbuscula from Sarsina, Italy**

Lit.: Righini 1965, 398, Fig. 8; Susini 1985, 86, Fig. 17.

It has dimensions 107 x 47 x 27 cm. It dates from the 1st century A. D.

**Stele of Pomponaeus Gibba, regioni dei Marsi, Italy**

Lit.: Letta, D'Amato 1975, 267, Tab. LVII, No. 164.

Dimensions: 125 x 83 x 13 cm. It's dating back to the second half of the 1st century B.C. Now in the Museo Civico.

**Monument of Numerius Baebidius from regioni dei Marsi in Italy.**

Lit.: Letta, D'Amato 1975, 233, Tab. IL, No. 138.

The second half of the 1st century B.C. Dimensions: 118 x 89 x 11 cm. Now built into a wall of the church in Collelongo.

**Stele of P. Rameius Hilarus from Aquileia in Italy**

Lit.: Chiesa 1953–54, 74, Fig. 1; Mansuelli 1956, 371, Fig. 4; Scrinari 1972, 204, Fig. 649.

It is 365 cm high, much more than any other monument referred to so far, 90 cm wide and 33 cm thick. It derives from the end of the 1st century B.C. Museo Archeologico di Aquileia.

**Stele from the locality Kuyucak, Turkey**

Lit.: MAMA X, No. 5.

It dates from the 200th to 210th year A.D.

**Stele from locality Evdet, Turkey (T. II, Fig. 8)**

Lit.: MAMA X, No. 33.

It dates again from the 200th to 210th year A.D.

According to older archaeological literature, the door-motif which is also being called *porta inferi*, *porta inferorum*, *porta Ditis*, *porta dell'Ade*, originates in Asia Minor. Additionally, it was claimed that the Metroac cult had influenced it (Hofmann<sup>3</sup>, Schober<sup>4</sup>, Altmann<sup>5</sup>, Patsch<sup>6</sup>). The authors from the second half of the last century wrote very much the same (Rinaldi Tuffi<sup>7</sup>, Rendić-Miočević<sup>8</sup>, Medini<sup>9</sup>, Bojanovski<sup>10</sup>, Paškvalin<sup>11</sup>). On the other hand, different authors insisted on that the origin of the door-motif on the tombstones should be found in the central Italy or else the north of Italy – Picenum, Marsi, Umbria, Sarsina, Aquileia (Righini<sup>12</sup>, Letta, D'Amato<sup>13</sup>, Susini<sup>14</sup>, Gelichi<sup>15</sup>, Versar Bass<sup>16</sup>, Christol, Drew-Bear<sup>17</sup>, Cambi<sup>18</sup>).

Mark Waelkens contributed to finding the solution to the door-motif from Asia Minor considerably since he analyzed about eight hundred monuments of that type. A great deal of stelai from Asia Minor derives from the Roman Empire, more precisely from the 2nd and 3rd century. However, Waelkens himself says that Dalmatian stelai of soldiers and veterans of the 7th and 11th legion, which have the familiar door motif, were made under the influence of Asia Minor and the north of Italy. It is already known that the architectural type of stela with aedicule is the most commonly used type of monuments in the Julian-Claudian era<sup>19</sup>.

In recent times, academic Nenad Cambi has looked into the matter of stelai with the door-motif. He places its origin in the north of Italy. According to him, the door-motif is not a religious or cultural symbol, but is merely an architectural conception patterned after the mausoleums – *naiskoi*. Besides, Cambi, claims the figure in panels of tombstones, such as the monument

from Ljubuški, No.6. is, are actually defeated barbarians orientalis, but not mournful Atis in the province of Dalmatia<sup>20</sup>. Based on the mentioned facts, the following remarks can be made: the door as a universal tombstone symbol can be found in various cultures, starting with Egypt and Greece to Etruria and Galia. It represents a transfer from this-world life to afterlife. However, stelai on the military tombstones from Narona hinterland, as well as those from Salona, Tilurium, Asseria and Burnum, have their own specific qualities. Twenty-four stelai with the door-motif from Italian region Marsi, divided into three main types differ from Dalmatian stelai iconographically<sup>21</sup>.

Generally, they lack many ornaments. Their inscriptions are scanty and positioned differently. There are no gorgoneion figures or frieze with weapon. Stelai from Asia Minor differ from the Dalmatian ones even more conspicuously. Stone-cutters from different workshops in Tilurium and Burnum worked for military clients as well. Their clients came from the convent of Narona. Some native workshop may have existed near Ljubuški. Actually, this is probably true. Having in mind that local and Roman cults were undoubtedly worshipped in the Narona hinterland, the cults in question include: Silvanus, nymphae, Liber, Terra Hyllurica, Jupiter, Mars, Mitra, Junona et cetera. It seems the Roman soldiers had spread the cults and afterlife ideas, which resulted in the characteristic features of the tombstones. One cannot say for certain that all the motifs on the veterans' monuments have nothing but a decorative meaning. The door can symbolize an entrance to the afterlife (*Domus aeterna*). At the same time, the appearances of Medusa on tympan, rosettes, dolphins, palmettes, lying lions and

<sup>3</sup> Hoffmann (note 2) 54–57.

<sup>4</sup> Schober 1923, 218–220.

<sup>5</sup> Altmann 1925, 14–17.

<sup>6</sup> Patsch 1908, 110 (= Patsch 1997, 41).

<sup>7</sup> Rinaldi Tuffi 1971, 116–117.

<sup>8</sup> Rendić-Miočević 1989, 578.

<sup>9</sup> Medini (note 2) 112–114;

<sup>10</sup> Bojanovski (note 1) 72–74.

<sup>11</sup> Paškvalin 1960–61, 325–326.

<sup>12</sup> Righini 1965, 395.

<sup>13</sup> Letta, D'Amato 1975, 267.

<sup>14</sup> Susini 1985, 86–88.

<sup>15</sup> Gelichi 1979, 117.

<sup>16</sup> Verzar Bass (note 2) 197–200.

<sup>17</sup> Christol, Drew-Bear 1998, 326.

<sup>18</sup> Cambi 1987, 263–265; Cambi 1989, 46–49; Cambi (note 2) 64–66; Cambi 1993, 31–34; Cambi 1994, 166–170; Cambi 2001, 94–96; Cambi 2002, 150.

<sup>19</sup> Waelkens (note 2) 17–18.

<sup>20</sup> Cambi, see note 20.

<sup>21</sup> Letta, D'Amato 1975, 267–273.



various vegetable motifs may be included in afterlife cultic symbols<sup>22</sup>. The iconography of two female figures in lower panels probably has a symbolic and cultic role, even though the issue is not about Atis. A specific type of monuments developed from these monuments in the region of the river Drina in the 2nd and 3rd century<sup>23</sup>. We have to keep in mind a certain fact: stone-cutters were both creators and authors of tombstones. Some of them might have been from Italy and Asia Minor. All of this leads us to conclude that they had to be familiar with the symbolic meaning and importance of tombstones much more than those who had ordered them<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Haarløv (note 2) 22.

<sup>23</sup> Kojić 1965, 225; Zotović 1970, 436–438.

<sup>24</sup> For the problems of these monuments see further: Wujevski 1991, 34; Hesberg 1992, 128–131 (=Hesberg 1994, 151–154); Ortalli 1997, 337; Dodig 2003, 235–237.

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**SUPPLEMENTS:**

(Figures 1–7 R. Dodig, Fig. 8 CSAD, Cox Archive)



