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## THE MARBLE GROUP DEPICTING DRUNKEN DIONYSUS WITH SATYR FROM MEDIANA<sup>[1]</sup>

### **Abstract:**

*During archaeological research in 1932, a rectangular base with remnants of a group of sculptures was discovered in the area of the thermae in Mediana. Two pairs of human feet, the paws of a four-legged animal, a ram's head, a tree and a rock may be recognized among the remnants of the sculpture. Previous studies resulted in the hypothesis that the marble composition might present some of the scenes from the myth of Dionysus. It was determined through several analogies that the group of sculptures presented an atypical representation of Drunken Dionysus with Satyr, because of the rare position of the satyr compared to the deity and the detail of the satyr's foot laid on the ram's head. It is assumed that there was some mix up of elements from the iconography of the gods Dionysus and Sabazios in the sculpture from Mediana, and the sculpture was most likely brought to Mediana at some point after the reconstruction of the villa with a peristyle. The manner of modelling the sculpture refers to the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD as the period of its origins, with some reservation that a later dating is also possible.*

### **Key words:**

*Sculpture, Dionysus, Satyr, Mediana.*

Besides four fragmented marble sculptures and the torso of a small marble lion, a rectangular base with remnants of a group of sculptures preserved in fragments was found during research in 1932 at the archaeological site Mediana in the area of the thermae, which was depicted in previous studies as the representation of a scene taken from the mythological scenes of the cult of Dionysus (Оршић-Славетић 1933, 305-306; Јовановић 1975, 61, fig. 19; Томовић 1992, 109, n. 148, fig. 49.5; Пилиповић 2011, 158, no. 21, Т. VI, 21). At first sight, several preserved iconographical details on the base of the group of sculptures would certainly indicate a mythological scene of the cult of Dionysus. Based on these details we shall suggest a more precise interpretation. Before disclosing further analysis of the sculptural composition from Mediana, we shall present a detailed description of the findings: Sculpture: rectangular base with preserved fragments of a tree, a rock, an animal's paws, two pairs of human feet and a ram's head.

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Archaeological site: Mediana, thermae area<sup>[2]</sup>.

Description: Base of rectangular shape, of fine-grained white marble with dark red veins, dimension 0.30 x 0.60 x 0.51 m. The left part is chipped away (Fig. 1, 2). Two pairs of human feet are preserved on the base; heels and tips of toes are also chipped away, as well as the tip of the ram's nose. Two pairs of feet of different dimensions are clearly visible, along with fragments of a tree and a rock, a ram's head and the paws of a four-legged animal. Along the left side of the base, there is a right foot of bigger size with toes extended towards the front side (in comparison to the second pair of feet), thus making a pair with the left foot shown in the middle of the base, with toes also extended towards the front side of the base. Both feet are identically shaped, with a groove that distinctly divides the large toes from the other toes, rectangular shaped nails and excessively prominent toe joints. The feet have been clearly chipped away from the base by a drill; however, the left foot is placed on the rectangular plinth with an apse-shaped top. On the right side, away from the left foot and in the lower right corner of the base, there is a ram's head with a preserved right horn spirally curled, executed with deep carving using a drill. The details of the animal's head were carefully modelled – the eye is shaped with shallow incisions (the pupil of the eye is marked using a drill), the jaw also bears parallel shallow incisions, and the fleece is modelled by incisions in the shape of round protuberances, again in shallow relief. Almost the entire surface of the ram's head up to the tip of its nose lies on the left human foot, that makes a pair with the foot laid on the rock in the back-left corner of the base. This pair of feet, although of smaller dimension, is shaped in identical manner to the other pair of feet – the large toes are distinctly separated from other toes, the nails are rectangular and the toe joints are prominent. Next to the left side of the ram's nose is the front left paw of a four-legged animal (panther), whereas the front right paw was probably placed on the outer side of the foot shown on the ram's head. Since the rear paws of the four-legged animal (panther) are placed in the back right corner, it may be concluded that the animal was lying with extended front paws in the direction of the ram's head. The surface of rectangular base is roughly smoothed with clear traces of non-completion, which may be seen on the tree remnants of this sculptural group. On the front-right and left side of the base there are traces of claw chisel, which were not polished. The back side is only roughly treated.



Figure 1 – Fragmented marble sculpture of Drunken Dionysus with satyr from Mediana

[2] Today in the ancient collection of the National Museum in Niš, int. no. 10047



Figure 2 - Fragmented sculptural group from Mediana

After thorough analysis of the sculptural group remnants, our first assumption was that this was a superb work of an experienced craftsman. The minutely shaped and polished human feet clearly indicate that, as well as does the carefully modelled fleece of the ram's head. On the other hand, details such as the treatment of the base, the left side of the ram's head, the animal's paws and the rectangular plinth with an apse-shaped top (perhaps a sculptor's attempt to present a stylized stone?), clearly show that this is an uncompleted sculpture. The fact that the sculptor did complete his work, does not prevent the possibility of reconstructing the representation that he had modelled. Before presenting our hypothesis, we shall review the opinions of previous scholars. The first who paid attention to this fragmented marble group from Mediana was Professor A. Jovanović, who recognizes this marble group as the representation of a scene from the cult of Dionysus in his paper on certain aspects of the collected findings of sculptures from Mediana (Јовановић 1975, 61 and footnote 32). In the book "Roman Sculpture in Upper Moesia", M. Tomović provides a short description of the fragmented sculpture from Mediana, and being in accord with the previous authors regarding research of the marble group as the representation of a scene from the cult of Dionysus, he does not give a detailed analysis of iconography, meaning and dating of the marble composition<sup>[3]</sup>. In a monograph about the cult of Bacchus in the central Balkan region, S. Pilipović mentions the sculptural group from Mediana and states that it has some analogies with the scenes from the cult of Dionysus and also of Sabazios<sup>[4]</sup>. The problems of the sculptural composition from Mediana, which the previous authors identified before us, undoubtedly remain for us to solve, too. The fact that we have before us only fragments of this sculpture of monumental size additionally makes it harder, together with the fact that it is an uncompleted work. However, we think that even with these aggravating circumstances, we may reconstruct the former appearance of the marble group from Mediana with considerable

[3] M. Tomović agrees with A. Jovanović that the fragmented Mediana marble group shows a scene from the cult of Dionysus, as well as that the composition is an uncompleted work of a rather talented craftsman (Tomović 1992, 109, n. 148, fig. 49.5).

[4] The author identifies the deity through the identification of the shown animal so that the panther would indicate Dionysus and the lion Sabazios (Пилиповић 2011, 43-44). Naturally, such opinion cannot have any links with proper identification of sculptural representation from Mediana, nor could it be applied to representations known from other Roman localities – representations of Dionysus with lions are found in mosaics from Africa, while Sabazios and lion appear together only in the context of the Metroac cult (for instance, on two bronze plates from Berlin), (Lane 1985, 39, n. 81; 1989, 16-17, 26, 29).

assurance. The pair of human feet, with the right one on the left edge of the base, and the left one on the shallow plinth in the middle of the base, can clearly be identified as a pair of an adult male feet. The feet of smaller dimensions, with the right one on the rock in the upper left part of the base, and the left foot on the ram's head, present a pair of feet that is impossible to define as male or female with full certainty. Although the feet are smaller, they are the identical shape as the larger pair of feet. It is clear that this figure stands with almost all of the right side of its body behind the person with bigger feet, which immediately recalls the famous scene from the myth of Dionysus in which the god, being drunk, is held by one of his followers – a satyr, Silenus, a maenad or very seldomly Ariadne. Under that scenario, we could identify the owner of the larger feet as the god Dionysus and the pair of smaller feet as belonging to someone from his entourage. After analysing all the known Greek and Roman representations of Dionysus and his entourage, we believe that a more credible comparison with the fragmented marble group from Mediana can be found in the representations of Dionysus with a satyr. In previous examples of iconographic representations of Dionysus with a satyr it is possible to observe a rather direct iconographic analogy with the Mediana composition, and it is possible to perceive it in an example of the representation of the bronze hydria from Eretria, depicting a naked Dionysus and a satyr on whom the god is leaning. The position of the foot is the same as the position of the feet of two persons on the Mediana sculptural composition - Dionysus' feet are somewhat more forward than the satyr's feet, who stands directly behind the deity<sup>[5]</sup>.

The representation of the bronze mirror from Greece also provides one of the early iconographic analogous examples to our sculpture. It depicts Dionysus with an oversized horn of plenty in his left hand and with his right hand over the shoulder of a naked Silenus who supports him. The interconnected position of Dionysus and Silenus, begins with the position of their feet, which is the same as the position of the feet in the Mediana composition<sup>[6]</sup>. An extremely similar representation is shown in another sample of a bronze mirror, also of Greek origin<sup>[7]</sup>. As far as the statuette is concerned, the most iconographically similar example to the sculpture from Mediana is the bronze statuette of a naked Dionysus and satyr in the Walters Art Museum, which shows the god with a wreath on his head, being supported by the smaller naked figure of the satyr. Here too the mutual position of Dionysus and the satyr, as well as the placement of their feet, completely corresponds to the Mediana sculpture<sup>[8]</sup>.

The first of very close iconographic analogies in sculpture is certainly a sculptural group from the Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens, which shows the naked figures of Dionysus and the satyr, standing next to each other. The god puts his left hand over the satyr's shoulder, who stands to the left side in such a position that his legs are behind the god's legs<sup>[9]</sup>. Another marble composition of Dionysus and the satyr, known as a sculpture of the Grimani type, shows the god who embraces a satyr of short stature with his left hand around the satyr's neck, and the position

[5] Bronze hydria found at the archaeological site in Eretria (now in the National Museum in Athens, int. no. 7913) dates to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (LIMC III/1, Dionysos/Bacchus, no. 268).

[6] Bronze mirror from Greece (now in the National Library in Paris, int. no. 1355) dates to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Ibid, no. 272).

[7] Mirror with the representation of Dionysus and young satyr from Greece, now in Louvre (int. no. 1708) dates to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Ibid, no. 273).

[8] Bronze statuette from Walters Art Museum in Baltimore (int. no. 54.1035) belongs to the early Hellenistic period, (Bieber 1955, 140, fig. 572).

[9] Sculptural group from the Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens (int. no. 245) dates to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (LIMC III/1, Dionysos/Bacchus, no. 278a). Very close replica of the group composition of Dionysus and Satyr from the Temple of Olympian Zeus presents uncompleted sculpture for the Temple of Heracles Alexikakos, which is different from the composition from the Temple of Olympian Zeus only in a few details (Dionysus position, proportions of Dionysus and Satyr heights, etc.) (Ridgway 2001, 342, ft. 8).



of the legs rather similar to the position of the legs in the Mediana sculpture<sup>[10]</sup>. We should also mention the sculpture of Dionysus with a satyr from Parma, now in the Glyptothek in Munich, which is very interesting not only for the similarity in the position of the god's feet and that of his counterpart, but also because of the fact that Dionysus' left foot stands on something like a small plinth, which is analogous to the plinth with the apse-shaped top of the Mediana composition (Pochmarski 1990, 1.P.46).

Yet, the sculpture of Dionysus with Satyr and Panther, known as the Ludovisi Dionysus (Fig. 3) from the last decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, is the first of the two analogies that are, in our opinion, closest in iconography and style to the group composition from Mediana<sup>[11]</sup>. Dionysus stands in a contra posto position with his left leg forward, completely naked and with his left arm raised above his head and holding a bunch of grapes in his right hand, while leaning on the the right shoulder of the satyr, who has a nebris thrown over his own naked body. Dionysus is slightly leaning on the tree with his right thigh, and in front of the tree there is a panther with head erected towards the god, with his left paw on the dropped cista with snakes and grapes (cista mystica). An especially interesting detail is that Dionysus' left foot stands on a lower rock, which is analogous to the smaller foot from the Mediana group that lies on the ram's head<sup>[12]</sup>. We should mention here the representation from the Demetrius sarcophagus, found in situ in one of the arcosolia of Praetextatus catacomb in Rome (Gütschow 1938 110-113, pl. 17; Turcan 1966, 106; Matz 1975, 478, no. 299 pls 316, 317. 1-2; Spera 2004, 89, 123, fig. 115; Zanker



Figure 3 – The sculpture of Ludovisi Dionysus

[10] The sculpture of the Grimani Dionysus was dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, and it presents a variation of the type of sculpture from the Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens; it originated from a famous Grimani collection (now in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts). It belongs to the type of sculpture representing the god known as the Sambon-Grimani type of Dionysus, representing one of the sub-types of the Olympian Dionysus, for which we assume it was made according to Praxiteles' bronze statuette of Dionysus. The bronze statuette of Sambon Dionysus, probably found at the Athenian Acropolis (now in the Louvre, int. no. 189), presents an early copy (possibly a votive offering) from the mid-Hellenic period, made according to the bronze statuette of bigger dimensions that probably stood in the Temple of Eleuthereus on the Acropolis. The marble statue of Dionysus with Satyr from the Grimani collection is also made according to the Praxiteles bronze statuette of Dionysus, and it is possible that it also originates from Athens. It is a natural size sculpture (height about 1.60 m), and it was believed to have belonged to the late Hellenistic period (end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), taking into account an array of details such as the modelling of the Silenus figure and the himation around Dionysus' waist. However, the latest research indicates that the sculpture should be dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Corso 2004, 235-239, fig. 99, 100). Also note that the type of marble sculpture of Dionysus from the Louvre presents a variation of the type of Grimani Dionysus sculpture, and it shows a naked Dionysus with a himation that falls down from the middle of his thigh and who is embracing the satyr with his left arm (the satyr being shorter than Dionysus and looking steadily at the god's face). Although the marble composition is fragmented (the feet and head, as well as the satyr's lower leg are missing), the position of the feet is analogous to the position of the feet in the sculptural group from Mediana (LIMC III/1, 450, no. 280).

[11] Marble composition of Dionysus with Satyr and Panther, i.e. the Ludovisi Dionysus, presents an oversized sculpture of around 2.7 m in height, found in the 16<sup>th</sup> century on the Quirinal Hill and exhibited in the Ludovisi villa (now in Palazzo Altemps, int. no. 8606), as part of the famous collection of Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi (De Angelis d'Ossat 2002, 104). Sculptures of Dionysus from Dresden and the sculpture of Dionysus from Townely, which also date to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, are iconographically very close to the Ludovisi Dionysus type (Group of authors 2009, 200-201).

[12] An almost identical sculpture to the Ludovisi Dionysus is the sculpture known as the Chiaramonti Dionysus, named after the museum in the Vatican where the sculpture is held (int. no. 1735). The Chiaramonti Dionysus is dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and it has close analogies with the sculpture of Dionysus with Satyr from the Old Museum in Berlin (found in the Faustina Thermae in Miletus, dated between 160-170 AD) and the sculpture of Dionysus with Satyr from the Pergamon Museum in Berlin (dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD).

2012, 156, fig. 145; Borg 2013, 85-86, fig. 55). The late Demetrius is shown as Dionysus, who is held by a satyr standing directly behind him. Demetrius/Dionysus holds a kantharos in his right hand and there is a panther under it, whereas under the satyr's feet there is a male goat. The sarcophagus is dated to the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD<sup>[13]</sup>.

The mosaic from the house of the Drunken Dionysus, at the archaeological site of Antioch from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, depicting a naked Dionysus who embraces the satyr of short stature positioned just behind the god, belongs to the same type of representation. The god holds a kantharos in his right hand with wine pouring out and the panther, sitting beside the deity's right leg, is drinking it (Kondoleon 1995, 206; LIMC III/1, Dionysos/Bacchus, n. 82).



Figure 4 - The marble statuette group composition from the London Mithraeum

In our opinion, the second closest analogy to sculptural group from Mediana is also a fragmented marble statuette composition of Dionysus, Silenus who is riding a donkey, Pan, a goat, a satyr, a maenad and a panther, found within London's Walbrook Mithraeum<sup>[14]</sup>. Dionysus is naked, his right hand reaches for grapes and there is a satyr directly behind him; next to him there is a maenad holding a cista mystica in her hands and beneath her legs there is a panther (Fig. 4). On the right side of Dionysus, Silenus is shown riding a donkey, a tree behind him. It is possible to see remnants of Pan's figure on the tree branch. There is an inscription on the base of the statue group *Hominibus vagis vitam*, glorifying Dionysus as the one who gives eternal life to wanderers<sup>[15]</sup>. The group composition from the London Mithraeum dates to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. According to the presented and described representations of Dionysus with Satyr, we can conclude that the sculptural group from Mediana showed the same mythological scene<sup>[16]</sup>. During the

[13] Authors date the sarcophagus of Demetrius from Praetextatus catacomb differently. M. Gütschow thinks that the sarcophagus should be dated between 285 and 295 AD, R. Turcan dates it between 230 and 250 AD, and P. Zanker and B. E. Borg believe that it belongs to the period after 250 AD (Turcan 1966, 106; Zanker 2012, 156; Borg 2013, 85). An interesting detail relative to the Demetrius sarcophagus is the conclusion of B. E. Borg, who according to the latest considerations believes that the opinions of previous authors on the possible Christian context of the sarcophagus are debatable. Although two Christian martyrs were buried in the Praetextatus catacombs, in the author's opinion, this representation of a deceased man as a naked Dionysus would be deemed inappropriate by Christians, in the mildest sense of the word (Borg 2013, 86).

[14] The statue group composition at the Walbrook Mithraeum (now in the London Museum, int. no. 822 and 823) was found during archaeological research of the Roman core in central London in 1954, within the Mithraeum with a rectangular shape (dim. 18 x 8 m), dated to 240 AD. Together with the statuette, several fragmented sculptures of different deities were also found (Serapis, Minerva, Mercury, Bacchus/Dionysus). With the excavations that ensued, it was discovered that the Mithraeum was in use for about 100 years (until 350 AD), when its inner space underwent a broader reconstruction. Taking into account the temple's architecture, the findings of this statue group of Dionysus with Silenus, a satyr and a maenad, two fragmented torsos of the god Dionysus, and particularly bearing in mind the inscription on the base of the statue composition of Dionysus from the Mithraeum, the majority of authors believe that the construction interventions from 350 AD were executed with the aim to modify the Mithraeum in the temple of the god Liber/Dionysus (Harris 1965, 6-17; Toynbee J. M. C. 1986, 41, 62 et al; Henig 2005, 84, 92, 105-106, fig. 45).

[15] On the base of the statue group there is an inscription *NOMINIBVS BAGIS BITAM*, which should be read as *hominibus vagis vitam*, and which in translation means "life to wandering mortals" (Harris 1965, 15; Toynbee 1986, 41, 62).

[16] Representations of Dionysus being drunken, leaning on or being held by a member of his ritual procession, have their predecessors in representations where the god was shown with deities such as Hephaestus or Eros (for example on an amphora of the red-figure style from Munich, depicting Dionysus and Hephaestus), Anderson 1981, 59. On the red-figure kylix of a later date, painted by the painter Kodros, Ariadne is trying to hold Dionysus and there are a satyr, Peitho and Pothos, (Avramidou 2011, 51-52).

4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the first representations of Dionysus appeared, showing him as a god who leans on or embraces and holds onto a satyr, for example in the representation on a bronze handle of a hydria from Athens<sup>[17]</sup>. The representation of a drunken Dionysus with a satyr reached Italy during the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and during the Roman imperial period this iconographic motif was presented in numerous sculptures, reliefs, bronze statuettes on sarcophagi, coins, etc<sup>[18]</sup>. However, authors' opinions regarding the model for the iconographic motif of the drunken Dionysus with his escort vary – D. Willers thinks that we cannot talk of possible iconographic prototype from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, because not until the end of the Hellenistic period was the representation of Dionysus held by a satyr established as an iconographic canon, which then became very popular and copied during the Roman period<sup>[19]</sup>. B. S. Ridgway believes the same, particularly emphasizing that the famous sculpture of Dionysus with Satyr from the Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens, which was assumed to present an early Hellenistic work, actually belongs to the period of the Roman Empire (Ridgway 2001, 342, footnotes 8). E. Pochmarski thinks that the representations of Dionysus, numbed by wine and leaning on some figure (most frequently a satyr or Silenus), known in professional literature as *Stütztmotiv*, present a common display during the ancient period and not a specific pattern, as some authors claim<sup>[20]</sup>. Nevertheless, the fact is that not a small number of sculptures, statuettes or mosaics depicting Dionysus with a satyr from almost all parts of the Roman Empire confirm the extraordinary popularity of this iconographic motif.

However, let us go back to the fragmented sculptural group from Mediana and to the detail that actually intrigued us so as to commit to the analysis of this representation in the first place. Next to the left foot of the god Dionysus, there is a ram's head. Although the ram does not pertain to the common circle of animals that accompany god Dionysus<sup>[21]</sup>, in several representations of the deity, the whole ram's figure is shown<sup>[22]</sup> or, as is the case of the Mediana composition, only the animal's head<sup>[23]</sup>. However, not in a single representation of Dionysus known to us does the iconographic detail of human feet on the ram's head exist<sup>[24]</sup>. This motif is very well known from the iconography of

[17] Representations of drunken Dionysus, dating to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, are very well-known and may be found on metal pots and mirrors from Corinth, Eretria and Etruria (Anderson 1981, 59).

[18] LIMC III/1, Dionysos/Bacchus, n. 278a, among others.

[19] Through a rather detailed representation of Dionysus with a satyr, Silenus or Ariadne, D. Willers concludes that the iconographic motif of Dionysus with Satyr could not be earlier than the late Hellenistic period, i.e. the earlier representations of this type cannot be deemed as prototypes for the representation of a drunken Dionysus with a satyr from the Roman period. In his opinion, although the theme of a drunken Dionysus with a satyr (or Silenus) was known from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC in smaller art forms, certain sculptural prototype from that period cannot be assumed with certainty. D. Willers supports his assumption with the fact that the majority of sculptural and statue groups of Dionysus with a satyr originate from the Roman periods (Willers 1986, 137-150).

[20] On this occasion, we wish to extend sincere gratitude to Professor E. Pochmarski, PhD for collegial kindness and comments connected to the representations of Dionysus with a satyr.

[21] Animals included in the common entourage of the god Dionysus are the panther, leopard, donkey, ram, snake, and lizard, not so frequently the lion and tiger (in mosaics from El-Djem or from museums in Sousse, the lion and tiger are depicted next to Dionysus instead of the panther). Although it was seldom shown in the iconography of Bacchus/Dionysus, the ram is frequently shown as a chthonic symbol in representations of the old Dionysus or as a sacrificial animal in the scenes of initiation into the cult (Turcan 1966, 495-496, 551-552, 583-384).

[22] In the representation on the sarcophagus from the Museum in Ostia (int. no. 10316) the god is sitting on the rock and offering fruit to the ram or in the representation from the sarcophagus from the Glyptothek in Munich (int. no. 240) where Dionysus is draped in a panther's skin, riding the ram who is led by a satyr and two women. The sarcophagus from Ostia dates to the last quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (Turcan 1966, 64, 327, pls. 52, 168, 408, pl. 8b; Huskinson 1996, 32, no. 3.4 and 33, no. 3.14).

[23] On the famous Chiaramonti sarcophagus, next to Dionysus there is a ram that will be sacrificed, while on the marble relief from the Vatican (int. no. 1024) we see a young Bacchus who is leaning on the Satyr, Heracles holding cornu copiae, and by his right leg there is the ram's head on the ground (Turcan 1966, 525; LIMC III/1, Dionysos/Bacchus, 549, no. 106).

[24] There are rare representations in which Dionysus is shown with his feet on the panther's back. Such is the case with the representation of Dionysus with Ariadne on a pyxis from Egypt made of ivory, dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, or the representation on the sarcophagus found at the archaeological site in Acquatraversa, now in the National Museum in Rome, int. no. 123711, LIMC III/1, Dionysos/Bacchus in peripheria occidentale, n. 121 and LIMC III/1, Dionysos/Bacchus, 94.



another deity, who was closely connected to Dionysus according to the written sources – the god Sabazios<sup>[25]</sup>. In several representations of Sabazios, of which we shall select the statuette of the god from Augustopolis, bronze plates from Copenhagen and Empúries as well as the mould for plates from Zadar, the god is shown with one leg forward and placed on the ram's head<sup>[26]</sup>. Without going deeper into the complex issue and iconography of the cult of Sabazios and the common characteristics of Dionysus and Sabazios, we conclude that the detail of the satyr's foot on the ram's head of the sculpture of drunken Dionysus from Mediana, indicates a certain mix up of iconographic elements from the representations of both gods, but not the possible cult content and hypothetical syncretism of the two gods, as in the example found in the temple of Dionysus in Cosa<sup>[27]</sup>. This assumption is additionally supported by the fact that the god's foot isn't on the ram's head, but rather the foot of his counterpart, the satyr.

After the analysis and review of several analogies, we would conclude that the fragmented sculptural composition from Mediana presents a drunken Dionysus with Satyr. On the basis of the most similar iconographical analogies, such as the sculpture of the Ludovisi Dionysus, the Dionysus with Satyr from Parma and the statue group of Bacchus with entourage from the Mithraeum in London, we can assume the following appearance of the Mediana composition: Dionysus was shown as a naked young man with longer curls that fall on his shoulders, in *contra posto* posture with one foot forward and placed on the plinth. The right arm of the god is perhaps raised above his head, while he uses his left arm to lean on the right shoulder of the presumably naked satyr (perhaps with a *nebris* knotted on the left shoulder) with legs spread apart. Dionysus' escort stood directly behind the god, holding and preventing him from falling down. The satyr's right leg stood directly on the rock behind Dionysus, while his left foot was placed on the ram's head. Next to the satyr, there was a figure of a panther<sup>[28]</sup>, perhaps with head erected towards the god and his escort. Due to specific discrepancies, the sculpture of a drunken Dionysus with Satyr from Mediana should be deemed unusual in comparison to familiar representations of this iconographic type – the position of the right

[25] We learn from written sources of several different genealogies attributed to the god Sabazios. Mnaseus from Patara notes that Sabazios is Dionysus' son, which is confirmed by Hesychius of Alexandria. Cicero thinks that Sabazios is one of the hypostasis of Dionysus, and Diodorus Siculus thinks that Sabazios is actually an older Dionysus. Two orphic hymns also offer different explanations of the link between Dionysus and Sabazios, and numerous ancient writers such as Strabo, Plutarch, Macrobius, etc., tend to strongly emphasize their extreme familiarity, among other certain similarities between the figures and cults of Dionysus and Sabazios. However, epigraphic and archaeological monuments support a completely different view, in which Dionysus and Sabazios remain two distinctly separate deities, in the eyes of believers, but also taking into account the cults and ritual acts (Gavrilović 2010, 130).

[26] A statuette of the god Sabazios, found at the archaeological site Augustopolis, Cavdarli, shows the god with his right foot on the ram's head. On a bronze plate in Copenhagen (found in Rome) Sabazios is shown within an aedicula (with the heads of Selena and Helios in the upper corners of the aedicule, along with many other attributes characteristic of the cult), placing his right foot on the ram's head. A bronze plate found in a child's grave at the archaeological site Ampurias in Spain shows a complex representation of Sabazios, Disocorus, a figure of a woman and a wood cutter, as well as an array of attributes characteristic of the cult of this deity, but an interesting detail once again shows Sabazios' right foot on the ram's head. A mould with a reverse representation shows Sabazios among the remnants of the temple of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva in Iadera, depicting the god in an aedicula with his right leg forward and placed on the ram's head (Lane 1985, 37, n. 77, 38, n. 80, 40-41, n. 85a-b, 41-42, n. 87; Medini 1981, 457).

[27] Interpreting the iconography of Dionysus on sarcophagi from the Roman period, R. Turcan points out the chthonic character of the representation of the old, bearded Dionysus, where we can find some elements and attributes of the cult of Sabazios – as the most obvious examples of syncretism of Dionysus and Sabazios in the context of iconography, the author identifies representations from the Chiaramonti sarcophagus and the sarcophagus from Latran, where the old, bearded god sacrifices a ram, as well as the representation on the sarcophagus from Lyon and the relief representation from the Vatican Gallery of the Candelabra, where the old, bearded god and various animals are depicted, as well as the attributes of the god Sabazios (a lizard, fir cone, snake, *cista mystica*, etc.) (Turcan 1958, 296 et al; 1959, 277; 1966, 515). We would add that this issue of the possible existence of Dionysus' and Sabazios' cult syncretism is familiar to us in the example of the Temple of Liber Pater from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, discovered at the archaeological site Cosa. Beside the findings of money that indicated how long the temple lasted (even until the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD) and Bacchus, statues of other deities were found (Hercules, Venus, Minerva), as well as the fragments of vessels with applied snakes. It is these vessels with a snake motif (the animal par excellence for the god Sabazios) that served some authors with the argument that a syncretistic cult of Dionysus-Sabazios existed in the temple in Cosa; see also Collins Clinton 1977, 38-45.

[28] Apart from the fact that sculptor of the Mediana composition did not finish shaping the animal's paws, comparisons with analogous representations of the drunken Dionysus, mainly with the sculptures of the Ludovisi Dionysus and the Dionysus with Satyr in the Old Museum in Berlin, clearly indicate that the animal shown next to the satyr was most probably a panther.



leg of the satyr indicates that he stood behind Dionysus with almost the whole right half of his body, in comparison to the analogous representations where the satyr generally stands next to the god. There is also this uncommon iconographic detail of a human foot on the ram's head, which is atypical in the iconography of the god Dionysus and belongs to his counterpart in the Mediana sculpture, and not to the god himself. These stated discrepancies might be explained by the fact that the sculptor himself had insufficient knowledge about the Dionysus iconography. We also assume that the Mediana sculpture could possibly be linked to Asia Minor, because of the detail of the foot on the ram's head, either in terms of the sculptor's origins or his stay and/or work in workshops of Asia Minor. The extraordinary quality of the modelling of the Mediana group composition fragment, as well as the chronological references of its closest analogies, indicate its dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, with some reservation that it is possible to assign the modelling of the sculpture to a later period, according to the sculpture model of the same iconographic type from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD<sup>[29]</sup>. On the other hand, the fact that the sculpture was not finished would speak in favour of the assumption that it was brought to Mediana as a semi-finished sculpture. It is difficult to assume that at least some details could not be subsequently polished, if the sculpture was dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD and brought to Mediana in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, like other sculptures found from that point in time ( $\pm$  340 AD) and placed within the *thermae*, where the fragments of Dionysus and his entourage have been determined<sup>[30]</sup>. Therefore, it cannot be excluded that the sculpture of the drunken Dionysus is from a later date, which would be closer to the London group. We hope that during prospective research in Mediana, other fragments of the group composition of Drunken Dionysus with Satyr will be discovered, revealing to us the real appearance of the sculpture as well as giving us the answer to the more precise time period when this rather interesting sculpture was carved.

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[29] On this occasion we would like to express our deep thankfulness to Professor E. Pochmarski for all his useful suggestions and his opinion that the sculpture of Drunken Dionysus with Satyr from Mediana can be most likely dated to the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

[30] Along with the fragmented sculptural group of Drunken Dionysus with Satyr, the following fragments were also found in Mediana: sculpture of a boy Dionysus (?), a scene from the cult of Dionysus, Satyr's torso, Satyr's head, sculpture of Bacchus as a child (or a path?) (Јовановић 1975, no. 6, T. 6/7, no. 9, T. 8/10, 61, fig. 18, 58, T. 7/8; Tomović 1992, 113, no. 162, 109, no. 149, fig. 50/5, 111, no. 159, 113, no. 166, 103, no. 127, T. 47/8; Петровић 1994, 38, no. 7, fig. 26, 37, no. 6, fig. 25; Дрча 2004, no. 81, no. 71, no. 82).

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