

Akten des 15. Internationalen Kolloquiums zum Provinzialrömischen Kunstschaffen

**Der Stifter
und sein Monument
Gesellschaft – Ikonographie – Chronologie**

**14. bis 20. Juni 2017
Graz / Austria**

Barbara Porod – Peter Scherrer (Hrsg.)



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Universalmuseum
Joanneum

**Schild von Steier
Beiheft 9**

**Veröffentlichungen des Instituts
für Archäologie der Karl-Franzens-
Universität Graz [VdIGraz] 16**

Herausgeber

Universalmuseum Joanneum GmbH
Archäologie & Münzkabinett

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Kolloquiums zum Provinzialrömischen
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ISBN

978-3-903179-13-4

ISSN

2078-0141

Redaktion

Barbara Porod

Lektorat

Barbara Porod, Karl Peitler,
Erwin Pochmarski
Y'Plus
Rechbauerstraße 17/1, 8010 Graz

Grafische Konzeption

Lichtwitz -
Büro für visuelle Kommunikation

Satz

Beatrix Schliber-Knechtl

Druck

Dravski tisk d.o.o.

Für den Inhalt der Beiträge sind
die Autorinnen und Autoren
verantwortlich.

Graz 2019

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People behind the Faces: Iconography and its Meaning on Funerary Monuments in the Western Parts of the Central Balkans' Roman Provinces¹

Nadežda GAVRILOVIĆ VITAS

The territory of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces in the Roman period, i.e. the province of *Moesia Superior* and eastern part of the province of *Dalmatia* during the earlier empire (provinces of *Moesia Prima*, *Dardania*, *Dacia Ripensis*, *Dacia Mediterranea* and *Prevalitana* from the end of the third century CE), was inhabited by various tribes of Illyrian, Celtic and Thracian origin in pre-Roman times.² Upon the establishment of Roman reign, the areas occupied by the above-mentioned tribes were organised in *civitates peregrinae* under *principes civitatis*³, and although the process of Romanisation was neither aggressive nor autarchic, the acceptance of Roman culture and customs depended on many elements, which resulted in weaker or stronger degrees of acceptance or resistance to Roman rule. The main interest of Rome was, of course, to exploit the natural resources and economic profit and progress of the territory in question, therefore, the tribal aristocracy of the *civitates peregrinae* was receiving different benefits from the Roman state on their way to becoming a *municipium* or *colonia*.

The western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces however, judging by thus far conducted archaeological and epigraphic material from the beginning of the Romanisation of the above-mentioned territory, exhibited a strong degree of conservatism during the period of Roman domination.⁴ Indigenous characteristics, with a Celtic component, are confirmed by onomastic evidence, but also by different remains of material culture, such as ceramics, funerary architecture, grave inventory and of course, various details in the iconography presented on votive and funerary monuments from the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces. Encompassing the whole territory of the Central Balkans' during the period of

Roman reign as regards the topic of the iconography of funerary monuments, one cannot fail to notice an emphasized Roman influence in the northern parts of the provinces, while characteristic Hellenistic traits still prevailed in the southern parts and some parts of the south-eastern territory (fig.1). In that context, the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces⁵ represented the area where the process of Romanisation entered quite early compared to the other parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces. During the second and third centuries CE, certain changes are noticeable in the material culture of these parts, which in an onomastic context and judging by the archaeological remains, bear similarities to the population of the Delmatae from the hinterland of Salona.⁶ Through epigraphic analysis and the interpretation of archaeological material, it is presumed that – probably during the end of the first century CE – a Roman resettlement of Delmatae who lived in the hinterland of Salona happened, transferring a group of inhabitants to the western parts of the Central Balkans' provinces.⁷ The main reason for this was the space needed for veterans and their settlement in the vicinity of Salona, but also the need to populate the eastern parts of the Roman province of *Dalmatia* with a working force for the exploitation of stone and ores in quarries and mines,⁸ as well as for agricultural works. Over time, resettled Delmatae assimilated the indigenous population from the western parts of the Central Balkans' territory (mainly consisting of Thracian and Celtic tribes)⁹ and this syncretism is confirmed both by onomastic analysis and the iconography of funerary monuments, which exhibit pronounced conservatism with preserved iconographic details of local origin (fibulae, female costume, vegetable and figural ornaments etc.) until the end of Roman reign. Also, through the analysis of funerary

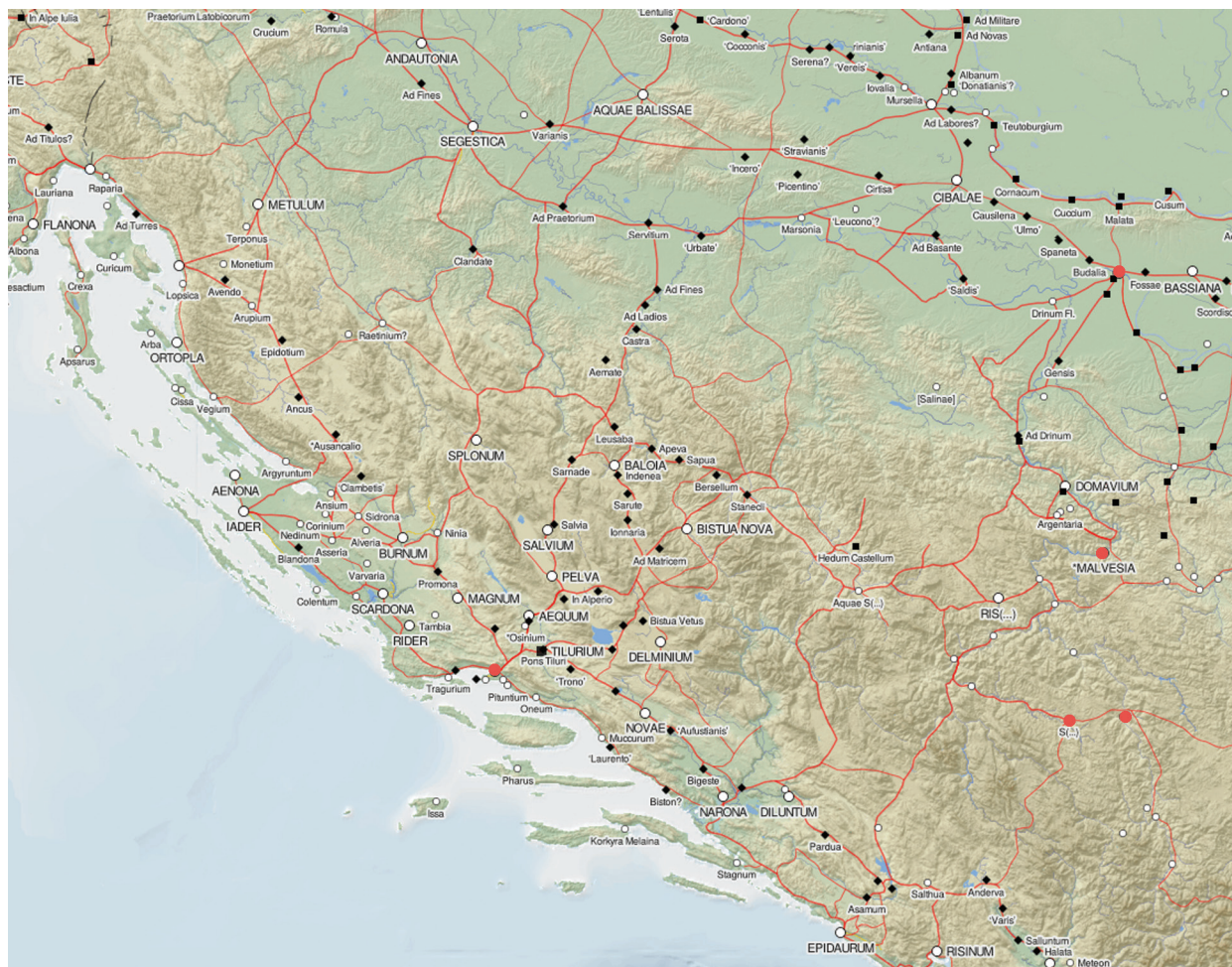


fig. 1
Map of Roman towns on the Central Balkans ((c) Digital Atlas of the Roman Empire).

monuments starting from the northern localities of the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces to southern localities, certain particularities which imply the ways certain mannerisms were diffused in funerary art along with different cultural influences, can be closely followed. Therefore, we will focus on the most important and interesting examples of the funerary monuments and their iconography, mainly in localities where archaeological excavations were conducted in addition to archaeological survey.

bent at the elbow, probably holding a scroll in his left hand. Behind the male bust, a better preserved female bust can be seen, with a round face, shorter hair and oval eyes. Her face is very realistically modelled, since even wrinkles on her forehead are visible. The funerary stele, which is dated to a wider time span from the second to the end of the third century CE, is an excellent *exemplum* of the type of stelae typical

fig. 2
Funerary stele from the church of St. Achillius, Arilje (photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).

Where today the church of St. Achillius stands in the locality of Arilje,¹⁰ remains of the walls of a bigger Roman building (perhaps a sanctuary), along with fragmented funerary monuments in the shape of *stelae* and *cipi*, have been discovered.¹¹ Some of the *stelae* were used as an altar table,¹² while others were used as *spolia* and built into the walls of the church, like the fragmented funerary stele (dimensions 0.52 x 0.56 m, fig. 2).¹³ A typical presentation of portrait busts, male and female, can be seen on a preserved fragment of a funerary stele, which is unfortunately damaged in the area of the man's face.¹⁴ In the first plan, a man is presented, with elongated face and beard, and both arms



for the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces, where the portraits of the deceased were shown in this way. An analogy can be found in other fragmented funerary stelae, which were also used as *spolia* in the church of St. Achillius, where either portrait busts of a husband and wife are presented or the busts of a whole family – a husband, a wife and a child/children.¹⁵ The same expressions on their faces, similar iconographic characteristics, with the similar schematic way of modelling, imply that they were all made by the same local workshop. Certain influences of Roman culture on the indigenous population can be perceived in iconographic details like the scroll in the man's hand and chlamys on another fragmented stele, also used as *spolia* in today's church walls.¹⁶ However, further details of indigenous origin can be observed in the short hair of the women represented behind the man's bust and in the small cup with three narrow handles, similar to the cups discovered in the necropolises in Čačak and the locality of Radoinja.¹⁷ The presentations of portrait busts on the funerary monuments in the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces are the most frequent, first appearing on stelae and later on relief fields of funerary cubes. They are excellent examples of a canon of Roman art, which was widely accepted in the process of Romanisation in the above-mentioned territory, but only in the context of the way the deceased were presented, i.e. the details in the scenes (coiffure, dress, different attributes in the hands of the deceased etc.), allow us to follow their degree of acceptance or resistance to Roman culture and customs.¹⁸ Men usually held a scroll in one hand, while women were presented holding different attributes like an egg, an apple, a cup, an ivy leaf, or a pigeon etc.¹⁹

We do not know much about the autochthonous population that once inhabited the territory of today's Arilje. Beside the already mentioned remains of the antique walls (possibly sanctuary to the god Liber?) and of other Roman buildings, two necropolises from which the funerary monuments found on the area of the church of St. Achillius could have originated, were found, thus confirming the northern limits of the Roman town at Arilje.²⁰

Due to its favourable geographic position, the territory of Požega, near Arilje, was inhabited from prehistorical times on, and in several localities in the mentioned territory, remains of Roman buildings and rich archaeological material have been found. On funerary monuments, three types of iconographical representation stand out: the first type encompasses iconographic representations already known from the fragmented stelae from the territory of Arilje representing portrait busts of deceased spouses with or without children.²¹ The second type of iconographic representation consists of funerary banquet scenes, usually with the

figure of a horseman on the monument's lateral side and a male or female servant holding a set of vessels (a jug and a *paterna*)²² in their hands, on the other side of the monument. The third type of iconographic representation shows the image of *Attis tristis* (*Attis funerarius*) on the lateral sides of the monument (beside the territories of provinces *Pannonia*, *Germania*, Gaul and *Hispania*, the concentration of monuments showing the *Attis tristis* figure, is the largest in the territory of the Roman province of *Dalmatia*). The second type of iconographic representation, the funeral banquet scenes, can be seen on funerary stelae and cubes where a man on a *kline* (sometimes with a female consort seated on a *kline*) is represented alongside a three-legged table and ritual vessels, with servants or priests approaching the table with ritual vessels in their hands.²³ To this iconographic type belongs a funerary *cippus* found in the antique necropolis of Otanj, near Arilje, where a larger necropolis has been discovered, dating to the second – third centuries CE.²⁴ On the front side of a funerary *cippus*, a man reclining on a *kline* is presented with a cup in his left hand and a woman seated beside him (fig. 3). On the right side of the monument, there is a figure with a vessel in the hand, while on the left side there is a figure of a horseman with his chlamys fluttering in the air behind him. The funeral banquet scenes with a man on a *kline* and a table with vessels in front of him, are mostly known from eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, like *Moesia*, *Thracia* and *Dacia*, but also from western provinces as well.²⁵



fig. 3
Funerary *cippus* from the locality of Otanj (photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).

While the funeral banquet scenes with a man on a *kline* are ascribed to the southern and eastern areas of the provinces Macedonia and/or *Thracia*, where Greek influence was dominant, the figure of a horseman is quite rare and appears seldom on funerary stelae, while it is very often presented in funerary monuments in the form of cubes. The funerary cubes with the figure of a horseman on one (or both) lateral sides are known from the localities of Kalenić, Požega, Užice, Karan, Pljevlja, Zdravčević, Ložnica, Skelani, Crvica, Veliki Gostilj and



fig. 4
Funerary *cippus* with *Attis tristis* on a globe, locality of Karan
(photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).



fig. 6
Funerary *cippus* with *Attis tristis*, locality of Tučkovo
(photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).



fig. 5
Funerary *cippus*
with *Attis tristis*,
locality of Kremna
(photo: National
Museum Užice, Z.
Domanović).



fig. 7
Funerary *cippus*
from the church in
Davidovica, locality
of Brodarevo (Vulić
1934, 136, n. 330).

Donja Dobrinja.²⁶ This iconographic type of a horseman with a fluttering chlamys can be connected to a Thracian horseman motif, from which it was probably derived.²⁷ Its representations on funerary monuments imply that in time, the horseman motif was completely assimilated in the religious context of the indigenous population and gained a clear chthonic dimension. The third type of iconographic representation on the funerary monuments from the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces encompasses funerary monuments with the image of *Attis tristis* (*Attis funerarius*)²⁸ and appears from the beginning of the second century CE on. This type of iconographic presentation is most frequent on the monuments from the territories of Podrinje and Polimlje (localities Donje Štitarevo, Rogatica, Goražde, Pljevlja, Užice, Visibaba, Ježevica etc.).²⁹ Around 52 funerary monuments with the figure of *Attis tristis* on their lateral sides have been known so far from the Central Balkans' territory, with certain variations in the iconography. We can distinguish three main iconographic types of *Attis tristis* figures on funerary monuments: the figure of *Attis tristis* without any attribute, *Attis tristis* with a *pedum* turned upside down and *Attis tristis* with a torch turned upside down.³⁰ Without any wish to enter into a long elaboration about the origin, representations and syncretism of *Attis tristis* with the gods Silvanus and Mithras in today's western parts of Serbia, we will just mention a few monuments with the image of *Attis tristis* from this territory, with interesting alternations

in iconographic details of *Attis tristis* image, which are made due to the syncretism with local unknown indigenous deities or with the god Mithras, whose cult was very popular during the third century CE in the southern parts of the above-mentioned territory. On the lateral sides of the *cippus* from the locality of Karan, the god Attis is presented standing on a globe (fig. 4) or leaning on an upside-down *pedum*. On the lateral sides of monuments from Kremna (fig. 5), the god Attis is presented with a local kind of hat with long ends falling on his shoulders, and in the funerary monument from Tučkovo, Attis is again shown with the *pedum* turned upside down (fig. 6). On the funerary monuments from the localities of Visibaba, Otanj, Pljevlja, Klačnik and Štitarevo Donje, the figure of *Attis tristis* is represented holding a torch instead of a *pedum*, which was most probably derived from Mithras' iconography, where Cautes and Cautopates are presented with torches in their hands.³¹ On the funerary *cippus* from the locality of Komini, however, the figure of *Attis tristis* is dressed in a tunic, while his genitalia are clearly visible. This isolated presentation of the god could imply syncretism with an unknown indigenous fertility god.³² The syncretism with another unknown indigenous god is possibly present in the figure of *Attis tristis* from the funerary *cippus* from the church in Davidovica, near the locality of Brodarevo, where the deity is shown with a round object in one hand and a grape in the other (fig. 7).³³



fig. 8
Funerary stele, locality of Brodarevo (photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).



fig. 9
Funerary stele, locality of "Grobljanica", Bjelin, locality of Radoinja (photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).

In the very locality of Brodarevo, two funerary stelae and the above-mentioned funerary *cippus* were found, implying the existence of a smaller necropolis. On the upper parts of both funerary stelae, the portrait bust of a man and a woman, deceased spouses, are presented with an ivy leaf above their heads (fig. 8). The iconography on these two stelae is almost identical: on both monuments the men's faces are round with barely emphasized eyes, bent right arms and scrolls in their hands. The women's faces are also round with carved eyes, nose and mouth, and veils on their heads. The emphasized linearism and the ivy leaf ornament (a typical symbol of rebirth) imply the local characteristics of the indigenous population and local workshops where these monuments were made, probably during the second and third centuries CE.³⁴

South of the locality of Brodarevo, in "Grobljanica", Bjelin, in the village of Radoinja, archaeological excavations have confirmed a necropolis dating to the second and third centuries CE.³⁵ On the upper parts of one funerary stele, the portrait bust of a woman is presented framed in a triangle. One woman's face is elongated, with oval eyes and a long scarf on the head. To the left and right of the triangular frame in which a woman's bust is presented, images of dolphins with their heads downwards can be seen, along with ivy leaf ornaments (fig. 9). The representations of dolphins on pyramidal funerary monuments, which are seen in other neighbouring localities, such as the locality of Municipium Malvesatium, are characteristic of the territories of the Roman provinces of *Dalmatia*, *Dacia*, Italy, while of course in *Noricum*, *Raetia* and *Pannonia*, pyramidal parts of funerary monuments with representations of dolphins are also known.³⁶ The dolphin motif was taken from Roman sepulchral art, and it could have penetrated western parts of the Central Balkans'

Roman provinces from two directions: coastal *Dalmatia* and *Pannonia*. With its diverse symbolism, the dolphin was considered as a mediator not only between life and death, but also between men and gods, as a helper facilitating the passage through death.³⁷ As a chthonic animal and psychopompos, leader of souls of the dead, a dolphin was presented in that context on funerary monuments, but also as a symbol of immortality and resurrection, triumphing over death in the context of representations of Paradise,³⁸ although in later periods it is doubtful whether the dolphin still held that symbolic dimension or was used merely as a decorative symbol on funerary monuments.

Beside the representations of portrait busts of the deceased on funerary monuments, images of whole figures are also known from the monuments of western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces, presented either in a standing or sitting position. Representations of a whole human figure on funerary stelae occur sporadically, but are more often seen in funerary cubes (usually in the context of the ritual practices). The earliest monuments, such as the funerary stele from Karan with representations of whole figures of a man and a woman holding hands, date from the beginning of the second century CE.³⁹ In that context, a very interesting and iconographically important monument for the Romanisation in these parts of the Roman Empire was discovered in the locality of "Lučića groblje (Brutule)" in Seča Reka (fig. 10).⁴⁰ Not only because of its cubic shape, but also because of many iconographic details, this monument, now kept at the *lapidarium* of the National Museum in Užice, represents an exquisite work of late third century CE provincial art. On the front side of the monument, two women are represented, the left one sitting, the right one standing.⁴¹



fig. 10
Funerary monument in the shape of a cube, locality of Seča Reka
(photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović)



fig. 11
Silver anchor-like fibulae with pendants in the form of an ivy leaf
(Popović 2010, fig. 3).



fig. 12
Funerary stele, locality of Džurovo
(photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).

The woman on the left side has a veil on her head and an anchor-like fibulae with ivy leaf-shaped pendants, which can also be perceived on her necklace. The same fibulae can be observed on the clothes of the woman on the right side. Both women are holding oval objects in their right hands. A hardly visible ornament in the shape of a rosette, between the women's heads, is reduced to a plainer form. On the left lateral side of the monument, two figures of little girls are represented: the girl on the right holds a little cup, while the girl on the left holds a kind of ritual vessel. Iconographical details such as anchor-like fibulae and ivy leaf-shaped pendants represent objects of indigenous origin of the inhabitants of the Drina valley, which have been confirmed by numerous finds in the localities of the Drina Valley such as Janja and Dvorska, but also by the grave inventory found in the older necropolis I and younger necropolis II in the locality of Komini (Municipium S) and to the north-east of the locality of Komini, in the necropolis of Kolovrat.⁴² In these parts, ivy leaf-shaped pendants (fig. 11) appear from the second half of the third century CE on and are a characteristic feature of the population inhabiting lower and middle parts of the river Drina. Also, a bracelet with crossed ends and a women's diadem in the shape of a band imply a long tradition of use from the La Tène period, for which a grave find from the locality of Rogatica dating to the fourth century CE provides additional evidence, where a bracelet made of spirally twisted bronze wire, bronze bracelets fastened with ornamented fish bone and pearls of enamel testify to the prehistoric tradition of jewellery production in these parts, which lasted until the fourth century CE.⁴³ On the other lateral side of the monument from the Seča Reka locality, two men holding scrolls are represented. In the upper register, different ornaments such as a key, a cup and a bowl can

be seen. It is most likely that the two women represented on the front side of the monument belonged to the indigenous population, as their richly draped skirts are part of a Pannonian dress, with certain Celtic influence.⁴⁴ This particular monument, which was certainly dedicated by an important and wealthy person of a higher social status, represents an isolated testimony of quality provincial work in these parts. Similar stylistic linearism, as mentioned in the examples of the stelae from the locality of Brodarevo, is again perceived in the two funerary stelae from the southern locality of Džurovo, near Prijepolje,⁴⁵ where a small necropolis from the period of the second – third century CE was confirmed. On the first stela, two figures are presented: the figure in the first plan is a man with short hair, thin smile and flat shoulders, holding a scroll in his right hand. On his right side, a woman puts her left arm around his shoulders from behind, her face being very similar to his, but her smile more emphasized, as is the veil on her head.⁴⁶ On the second stela (fig. 12), a more realistic presentation of a younger man is shown, with emphasized eyes, long nose and bent right arm, in which he holds a small cup. There is a column on his right side and ivy leaves surround him.⁴⁷ Again, the persistence of presenting and the popularity of the ivy leaf motif on funerary monuments from the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces can be noticed. However, although usually connected with the cult of Dionysus, the ivy leaf motif in the above-mentioned territory can also be seen in connection with the god Silvanus, who enjoyed significant popularity among autochthonous inhabitants. The monuments are dated widely to the period of the second – third centuries CE. Moving further south towards the locality of Kolovrat, a cube-shaped funerary monument (Dm. 0.6 x 0.6 x



fig. 13
Funerary monument in the shape of a cube, locality of Mažiči
(photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).

0.6 m, fig. 13) from the locality of Mažiči was found in front of the church of St. Georgius.⁴⁸ On the front side of the monument, five busts are presented: in the upper row, two busts of a man and woman with a rosette between them are shown. The man's face is realistically modelled, while the woman's face is elongated, with a long veil on her head. In the lower row, three busts are presented: from left to right, we see a woman with a veil and two men's busts beside her. Interesting iconographic details are presented in the attribute of a pomegranate in the right hand of a woman and the flower in the right hand of a man in the middle. A pomegranate and a flower as symbols of immortality⁴⁹ are well known in funerary stelae from the central parts of Serbia around the river Lim. The monument is dated to the fourth century CE. One of the few localities that have been archaeologically excavated and where the first data (in the context of the territory of the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces) about the indigenous population's participation in the Romanisation process was found⁵⁰ is the locality of Kolovrat. This locality was already recognized as an important Roman locality in the nineteenth century, first by the Vice-Consul of Austria and later by the English archaeologist A. Evans during his travels through the Balkans. Unfortunately, A. Evans did not describe Kolovrat in detail, but he did mention that the territory of Kolovrat was very large, judging by the numerous Roman remains, capitals, sarcophagi, columns and votive monuments that he saw on the left side of the river Seljašnica.⁵¹ The locality, which was founded at the confluence of the rivers Seljašnica and Lim, is a territory rich in metal ores like silver and lead (in the locality of



fig. 14
Funerary monument in the shape of a cube with an image of a Genius, locality of Kolovrat (photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).

Gradina – Čadinje, situated above the locality of Kolovrat, traces of antique exploitation of ores were found).⁵² Finds of fragmented Roman monuments in the valley of Seljašnica river and towards the locality of Seljani not only indicate the direction in which the larger civilian settlement in Kolovrat was spreading, but also contributed to the discovery of the Roman necropolis, confirmed by archaeological excavations in which over 200 graves were discovered.⁵³ Different forms of funerary monuments (stelae, *cippi*, stone urns), including a monumental family tomb type of *area maceria cincta*,⁵⁴ and the iconography presented on them, show the various social and economic statuses of Romanized inhabitants who lived in Kolovrat, but also the already observed conservatism and well known rustic modelling of the faces, with schematism and linearism as stylistic characteristics. The attributes that the deceased usually hold in their hands on funerary monuments are again a scroll, a pomegranate, a cup, a key, a flower, a bird, with ivy leaves often framing the inscription field of the monuments. However, in the Kolovrat funerary monuments, certain knowledge and appreciation of Roman sepulchral art is also present, mixed with the traits of local art, as on a funerary *cippus*, where on one of its lateral sides a representation of a Genius as a chunky, naked young man, with a smile, a grape in his right hand and basket of grapes on his left shoulder, is shown (fig. 14). The whole scene expresses the influence of the iconographic representations of the gods Dionysus and Silvanus, which were popular in these areas.⁵⁵ From the inscription on the monument, we learn that it was erected for the decurion of the *municipium*, a certain Aurelius Maximus of indigenous origin.⁵⁶ There is also a dolphin motif



fig. 15
Funerary monument from the locality of Kolovrat (photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).



fig. 16
Funerary monument with the portrait busts of three women, locality of Kolovrat (photo: National Museum Užice, Z. Domanović).

present, as on the monuments from northern localities in the wider area of Municipium Malvesatium and in the same manner as in the localities of the vicinity. The representations of portrait busts of the deceased, with a rosette in the tympanum and rich ornamentation made of ivy leaves, are frequent, such as on a funerary stele where a man is holding a scroll in his left bent arm, and a woman with a veil is holding a cup in her right hand (fig. 15). Around the inscription field, there are shallow grooves similar to entwined rope. The motif of ivy leaves framing the inscription field is almost always present, like the funerary stele showing the portrait bust of a woman with a veil, holding a cup in her hands or the funerary monument displaying three busts of women with their heads veiled and a rosette in the centre of the monument's gable (fig. 16).⁵⁷ Who were the persons represented in the funerary monuments of Kolovrat? Epigraphic and archaeological material confirms that the indigenous population was of Thracian and Celtic origin and that most likely from the end of the first century CE the Illyrian Dalmatae from the hinterland of Salona were resettled by Romans on the territory of Polimlje and Pljevlja, the area of the localities of Kolovrat and Komini. The onomastic analysis of funerary monuments from Kolovrat shows that the inhabitants were mostly Illyrians, albeit already Romanised population (confirmed by female names like Sita Dasi, Iaetto, Duso, Baezo and Celtemio and male names like Narens, Vapius, Lavius, and Scerviaedus Sitaes), with a strong Celtic component (Celtic inhabitants from the pre-Roman period).⁵⁸ Beside onomastic analysis, archaeological excavations conducted on the localities of Ljutići (Mataruge), Lever Tara, Borovica, Otilići and also finds from the oldest

necropolis I from the locality of Komini (Municipium S), imply that ceramics discovered there are typical for La Tène culture.⁵⁹ As for their professions, inscriptions reveal that there were high municipal representatives, decurions, rich landowners, officials in civilian administration and the administration of the mines, but also merchants, stonemasons, soldiers, slaves, among the inhabitants of Kolovrat.⁶⁰ However, the main occupation of the population living in the locality was the exploitation of ores and stone, and agriculture. Different forms of funerary monuments were discovered in Kolovrat, as were different forms of burial: cremation and inhumation. Funerary monuments from Kolovrat retain a certain degree of conservatism in iconography up to the fourth century CE, although acceptance of Roman costume, jewellery, ornaments and attributes from Roman funerary art is visible, as is more artistic and attentive modelling, expressed in the efforts of emphasizing the emotions on the portrait busts of the deceased. Certain iconographic details, typical for the indigenous population are still present, like a veil in women's portraits and the shallow, linear style, although artisans who worked on the monuments were adept in showing the deceased with a smile or spontaneous gesture, such as the funerary stele where a wife embraces her husband. Most of the funerary monuments are dated to the second and third centuries CE; there are only a few monuments from the fourth century CE and these were products of local workshops. Archaeological finds confirmed close similarity with the finds from the locality known as Komini (Municipium S), which was connected to the locality of Kolovrat by the road bending on the site at Jabuka.⁶¹

An equally important locality for tracing the Romanization process in the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces and finding out more about the population that lived there during the first four centuries, is the locality of Komini, near Pljevlja, known in the literature as Municipium S. The locality of Komini is situated in the mountainous territory of the Balkan Peninsula, far from main communications, and Roman monuments and remains of Roman buildings from the locality were recorded for the first time by Dubrovnik ambassadors at the end of the eighteenth century who were passing through the territory of Pljevlja on their way to Constantinopolis.⁶² The locality of Pljevlja, known by the Turkish term Tašlidže, was visited by O. Blau in the nineteenth century, who copied around 20 inscriptions from votive and funerary monuments that he saw in the locality, also adding his own remarks about the locality, inscriptions and the exact places where the monuments were found or seen (some of the monuments that O. Blau recorded were used as *spolia* in the church of St. Ilija, the Podstražica mosque, the Husein-Paša mosque and the Musluk mosque etc.). Very important records about Pljevlja are also known from English archaeologist A. Evans, who from 1875 – 1881 travelled through the Balkans and wrote about Roman monuments he saw in Pljevlja, grouped in three locations.⁶³ Pljevlja was also visited by the important researchers K. Patsch, N. Vulić and D. Sergejevski, who documented mainly epigraphic monuments that were present in the locality at the time of their visits. Systematic archaeological research on the locality of Pljevlja began in 1964, lasting until 1975, only to be resumed in 2007.⁶⁴ The archaeological excavations yielded two large necropolises, of which necropolis I is older and was used during the whole first century CE, with burials in its western part until the fourth century CE, while necropolis II was used from the first to fourth century CE and was much richer in grave inventory than necropolis I.⁶⁵

The same ethnic syncretism known from the locality of Kolovrat, can also be perceived in the population of Municipium S with the Roman resettlement of Delmatae from the hinterland of Salona; the Thracian and Celtic inhabitants were assimilated by the newcomers,⁶⁶ which is clearly visible in the Roman funerary forms and profane architecture, together with various finds of the material culture, followed by the iconography of the funerary monuments.

Although in scientific literature there is still no mutual agreement between different authors about the identification of the antique name of the locality of Municipium S, lately, the opinion that the abbreviation S, which could maybe refer to Splonum, the name of a *municipium* which was a centre of mining in *Dalmatia* and which is confirmed by three inscriptions from *Dalmatia* and one inscription from *Dacia*, was expressed.⁶⁷ Other authors, however, leave the question of the

identification of the antique name of Municipium S open.⁶⁸ Whatever the exact name of Municipium S in antiquity was, it was certainly a *municipium*, because numerous inscriptions confirm members of municipal aristocracy, such as decurions, *duumviri*, curators, centurions, priests, consular beneficiarii and veterans.⁶⁹ It is well known due to the analogies from the provinces of *Dalmatia*, *Moesia Superior* or *Dacia*, that when it came to mining districts, the locality where a mine administration was situated received the status of a *municipium*. Municipium S was built on the foundations of an older Illyrian settlement, which became a *municipium* probably in the second half of the second century CE.⁷⁰ As we already mentioned, systematic archaeological excavations have revealed two necropolises, identified as necropolis I, which was older and lasted from the first to the third century CE and where the indigenous population was buried, and necropolis II, which was younger, chronologically parallel to the necropolis in Kolovrat and lasted from the second to the fourth century CE,⁷¹ where among different funerary forms, a type of *area maceria cincta* family tombs were also confirmed.⁷² As for the iconography of (of a funerary) monuments in Komini, richer variations in the already known way of presenting the deceased, certain scenes, attributes and ornaments, can be observed. There is a certain degree of a syncretism with some images from Roman sepulchral art – on the lateral sides of funerary *cippus*, the *Attis tristis* image is shown, just as the figure of a *genius* of autumn and already familiar attributes in the hands of the deceased like a flower, a key, vegetable ornaments in the frames of the monuments like an ivy leaf, palmeta, acanthus, grapes and *corona funeraria*. It is particularly interesting that in three stelae found in the locality, the ornament of *corona funeraria* is presented as the central decoration in the tympanum of the monument.⁷³ Vegetable ornaments, particularly grapevine, ivy and kantharos motifs with grapevine emerging from it (and sometimes ivy), were among the most popular ornaments in sepulchral art in the province of *Dalmatia*, which beside its clear symbolism of regeneration in the context of afterlife beliefs, were connected to the religious functions and dimensions of the equally favoured gods Dionysus and Silvanus, in the afore-mentioned territory. In some funerary monuments, a high artistic degree is achieved as in the case of a funerary *cippus* of Paoonia Montana (Dm. 1.61 x 0.72 x 0.21 m), where on the right lateral side of the monument a naked, muscular male figure, probably a *genius* of autumn with a small wing on the right shoulder and basket full of grapes, is represented, holding a grape and a grape knife in his right hand.⁷⁴ Although it is most probable that the male figure represents a *genius* of autumn, we should bear in mind that a knife used in the orchard represents one of the attributes of the god Silvanus and the iconographic interpretation

fig. 17
Funerary monument of Paconia Montana – the image of a woman, locality of Municipium S – Komini (Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1998, back cover of the book).



of the young man becomes more complex due to the fact that the custom of burying such a type of knife in tombs of the indigenous population of Komini has evident connections with older, autochthonous beliefs and ritual practices.⁷⁵ Therefore, we would suggest that it is possible that religious dimensions of a certain unknown indigenous deity, combined maybe with god Silvanus, whose popularity is well confirmed in these parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces,⁷⁶ are syncretised with or are comprehended in the image of a presumed *genius* of autumn. The left lateral side of the monument of Paconia Montana shows a female figure in a long dress with two flowers in her right hand and a key in the left (fig. 17). The motive of the key is known from funerary monuments in western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces and beside the usual symbolics to indicate the role of a woman as the mistress of the house, in the case of Paconia, who belonged to a distinguished family, it could also imply her position in some religious (cult) context.⁷⁷ The motive of a flower in her hand symbolises immortality, regeneration and renewal, while the fact that she is represented without the veil on her head, points to digression from the usual conservatism in the representation of women in funerary monuments in these parts, certainly analogous to Paconia's status as a Romanized inhabitant of Municipium S. An ornamental vine with grapes adorns the frame of the inscription. The text of the inscription informs us that a mother is erecting a monument for her deceased daughter by the

name of Paconia. The family of Paconii belonged to the distinguished families of Municipium S and different members of the family are mentioned on five funerary monuments known so far. In the family tomb belonging to a type of *area maceria cincta*, above which the funerary *cippus* of Paconia Montana was found, the *pater familias* of the family Paconii, L. Paconius Barbarus, his wife L. Aurelia Panto, their son L. Paconius Barbar(io) and daughter Paconia Montana, were buried.⁷⁸ Unlike the iconography on the majority of the antique funerary monuments from western Serbia with the traits of indigenous Thracian tradition and solid Celtic influence, displayed in not such a skilful manner, the iconography of this monument shows a high degree of artistry. The funerary *cippus* of Paconia Montana is dated to the late third century CE. The grave inventory from necropolis II in the locality of Komini reveals the centre's stable and strong economy and wealth of some of the citizens of Municipium S: imported glass vessels and imported works of gold and silver jewellery (for example, silver *aucissa fibulae* with granulation) were found among grave inventories of necropolis II. Municipium S was Romanised very early compared to most localities in western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces, which is confirmed by the names of families such as *Aemilii*, *Aurelii*, *Arguriani*, *Baberii*, *Cezii*, *Egnatii*, *Gavii* etc., found on votive and funerary monuments discovered in the locality. Here again, the main occupation of the population was agriculture and the exploitation of ores and stones. The votive monuments dedicated to the gods Jupiter Fulgator, Jupiter Cohortalis, Silvanus, Hercules, Mithras, Serapis and Isis, confirm that beside the gods and goddesses of the Roman pantheon, inhabitants of Municipium S, which included immigrants from oriental provinces living there from the second and third century CE on, also venerated oriental deities. Also, the iconography of some of the deities shows that a syncretism with unknown, indigenous deities similar to Roman gods and goddesses, can be presumed.⁷⁹ One more locality that yielded numerous Roman votive and funerary monuments, with a more than interesting iconography is another onomastically disputable locality: Municipium Malvesatium, recognised in today's village of Skelani in Republika Srpska.⁸⁰ In 1891, during his travels through western Serbia, F. Kanitz noticed many remains of ancient buildings, including a *forum* with fragmented votive monuments and sculptures and he recognized many other votive and funerary monuments used as *spolia* in the then contemporary buildings (like the frontier custom office, police station, etc.).⁸¹ Initial archaeological excavations in the locality of Skelani were conducted at the end of the nineteenth century by Karlo Patsch, during which 80 Roman votive and funerary monuments were found and planned to be transported to Vienna.⁸² Unexpectedly, just before the planned transport of the monuments

was due, the Drina flooded the whole locality, leaving the monuments under the earth until 2008, when research recommenced, only to discover that all votive and funerary monuments were not accessible, because of their location beneath a contemporary house. Therefore, until the resolution of that problem in the future, we only have access to the photographs of certain monuments saved during the archaeological excavations in 2008 and sketches of other monuments, which were published by Karlo Patsch.⁸³ Since the locality of Kolovrat, Municipium Malvesatium, is located very favourably on the left bank of the Drina, and it was, along with Domavia and Spolonum, one of the three most important economic and administrative centres in these parts of the Roman province of *Dalmatia*, mainly because of the silver mines, *argentaria* and quarries from which various species of stones were exploited by the Romans.⁸⁴ Several epigraphic monuments confirm that there was a beneficiary station in Municipium Malvesatium, and that *cohors I miliaria Delmatarum*, was stationed around Skelani for securing Dalmatian *argentaria* and roads.⁸⁵ Four honorary bases for the statues of the Roman emperors Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus and his son Caracalla, were found in Skelani, and from the texts of the inscriptions, it is possible to conclude that the locality was given the status of *municipium* between 117 and 158 CE.⁸⁶ The locality was of particularly great importance for the Roman imperium in the second and third centuries CE, because of the silver mines and their development.⁸⁷ Municipal aristocracy was constituted from the rich indigenous landowners, who belonged to the Illyrian Dindari tribe, such as the senator *Claudius Gallus*, who was born in Municipium Malvesatium and who was a very close associate of emperor Septimius Severus.⁸⁸ Thanks to its more than favourable geographic position, different kinds of goods could have been transported from the *municipium* to bigger centres in *Pannonia* and *Dalmatia* like Sirmium, Salona etc., either by river or by land. Because of its strategic position, Municipium Malvesatium developed into a rich and important centre in the third century CE, with many luxurious objects, temples, and probably in the fourth century CE, with two early Christian basilicas. Nevertheless, from the votive and funerary monuments found in the locality of Skelani, the same iconography as in the monuments from previously mentioned localities in this territory can be perceived: Again, we have the same forms of funerary monuments and the continuing schematism and linearism expressed in the portraits of the deceased, along with a certain simplification of the motifs, such as a rosette modelled as a plain circle or local traits in the dresses of the women,



fig. 18
Funerary monument from Municipium Malvesatium – Skelani (photo: N. Gavrilović Vitas).



fig. 19
Fragmented marble sculpture of Leda and the Swan, Municipium Malvesatium – Skelani (photo: N. Gavrilović Vitas).

who are always presented with covered heads (either with a veil or a kind of hat with ends loosely falling onto the shoulders of the figure, fig. 19). However, a fragmented sculpture of Leda and the Swan (fig. 20), accidentally found, shows an excellent work of provincial art, with closest analogies in the sculptures from Venice and from Dion, and which is dated to the period between the mid-second and mid-third century CE.⁸⁹

In 2014, the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade⁹⁰ started with the new archaeological excavations in Skelani and unearthed a whole object of around 700 m², dating to the late third and fourth century CE, which was probably an administrative and official public object, with remains of a *hypocaust* floor heating system, fresco paintings and beautiful mosaics in the rooms of the object.⁹¹ These finds clearly indicate that some of the richer Romanized inhabitants of Municipium Malvesatium were bearers of the process of Romanization and accepted Roman culture, art, religion and values. The diverse ethnic picture of the inhabitants of Municipium Malvesatium is also confirmed by the votive monuments dedicated to Jupiter, Mars, Liber, Silvanus, Asclepius, Diana and Hygieia, but also to Mithras.

The iconography of Roman funerary monuments from the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces shows similarities to the funerary monuments from the interior of the province of *Dalmatia*, particularly in the context of displayed conservatism of the indigenous population for whom the monuments were made. Owing to the forms of the funerary monuments, represented themes and ornaments, two main cultural influences can be observed: a first influence from

Pannonia (which came along the river Drina) which is most visible in the funerary monuments in the area of Užice and Skelani (Municipium Malvesatium) and a second influence that is shown in the funerary monuments from the territory of Polimlje (localities Kolovrat, Municipium S), which came from coastal *Dalmatia* with Salona as a cultural centre, and from south-eastern parts like *Macedonia* and Kosovo.⁹² However, from the beginning of the third century CE on, an intensive Romanisation on the territory of the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces can be recognized in epigraphic monuments and archaeological material, which imply a connection with the coastal part of *Dalmatia*. Furthermore, this also proves that a group of inhabitants which was resettled from the hinterland of Salona to the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces at the end of the first century CE, became the actual bearers of the process of Romanisation (along with members of the indigenous aristocracy) and assimilated autochthonous population from the afore-mentioned parts, despite an omnipresent traditional conservatism in iconographic details of local dress or jewellery in the funerary monuments, which continued until the fourth century CE.

Notes

1

The article uses results from the project: *Romanization, urbanization and transformation of urban centres of civilian and military character in the Roman provinces in the territory of Serbia* (no. 177007), financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

2

Papazoglu 1969, 45. 84. 97. 264–265; Mirković 1981, 92; Mócsy 1974, 53–54. 63–66. For the distribution of the tribes in the pre-Roman period, see Mócsy 1974, 67–68.

3

Mócsy 1974, 134–139; Loma 2002, 10.

4

We should mention, however, that what makes the whole situation more difficult for interpreting the degree of acceptance or resistance of the indigenous population in western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces and our comprehension of the identity of the population which inhabited those parts, is the low level of archaeological research compared to other parts of the Central Balkans. In the past, only few localities have been systematically researched, but also with long pauses between the archaeological campaigns; for example, the locality of Municipium S, that is Komini near Pljevlja, where archaeological excavations were stopped in 1975 and were not resumed until 2007: Ružić 2013, 28–31.

5

The western part of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces comprises the area to the west of the river Drina, from Bratunac in the north to Foča in the south, and to the east of the river Drina, from Rogačica in the north to Prijepolje and Pljevlja in the south.

6

Zotović 1995, 37; Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1998, 3; Zotović 2004; Mirković 2013; Mandić 2015.

7

The fact that the onomastic analysis of the names on the monuments from the territory of Polimlje and Pljevlja (where Municipium S is located), that is the territories that had no contact with the territory of the Delmatae, showed significant similarities with the names of the Delmatae, certain authors have explained with the hypothesis of Roman resettlement of the population from the hinterland of Salona (probably at the end of the first century CE) to the hinterland of the south-eastern parts of *Dalmatia*, that is to the territory of Polimlje and Pljevlja. G. Alföldy thinks that the letter S in the name of Municipium S, stands for the tribe named *Siculotae*, which originated from the area between Salona and Tragurium. He further states that the resettled population of the tribe gave their name to the locality of Municipium S (*Siculotarium*) and that the first wave of resettlement happened during the reign of Emperor Claudius, Alföldy 1964, 100–102.

8

For more about Roman mining in Illyricum: Dušanić 2010, 533–563; Mócsy 1974, 131–134.

9

A strong Celtic substratum in the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces has not only been confirmed through onomastic analysis, but also archaeologically. For epigraphical testimonies see Zotović 1995, 36–37, 100; Loma 2004, 36 f.; Mirković 2013, 37. 44–45; For the archaeological material see Zotović 1995; Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1998, 21; Lazić – Cerović 2013, 13–15; Ružić 2013, 27–46; Mandić 2015.

10

The church of St. Achillius is a foundation of the Serbian king Dragutin and it was built at the end of the 13th century upon the remains of the Episcopal church of the Moravica Episcopate, Čanak-Medić 1982, 35 f.

11

Archaeological excavations on the wider territory of today's church of St. Achillius yielded remains of an older building (possibly a sanctuary, because of the custom of building sacral objects on the remains of the older sanctuaries – *locus sacer*), a Roman necropolis, a building with hypocaust (floor heating system) and funerary monuments, of which some were used as *spolia*, Čanak-Medić 1982, 28–30; Mandić 2015, 14–20.

12

A Roman funerary monument, with the figures of *Attis tristis* on the lateral sides of the monument, was documented in 1860 by F. Kanitz, who during his travels through Arilje, saw the monument used as an altar table in the church: Kanic 1991, 573.

13

The fragmented funerary stele was used as *spolia* while the church of St. Achillius was built, as other fragmented antique monuments, among them an altar dedicated to god Liber, Mandić 2015, 19 n. 3, 8.

14

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my dear colleague, curator at National Museum Užice, Ljiljana Mandić, whose always useful suggestions and help with the photographs were more than valuable for this paper. Also, my deepest thankfulness goes to the photographer of the National Museum Užice, Zoran Domanović.

15

Mandić 2015, 16–17 n. 1–2.

16

Ibid, 16.

17

Dmitrović – Radičević 2009; Mandić 2015, 22.

18

The dress of men and women presented in this type of monuments usually reveals their autochthonous origin, a local way of dressing and conservatism, although this is much more evident in the presentations of women than of men: men often have a *sagum* over their shoulders, while female busts are almost always presented in local dresses with long sleeves, which were held by two fibulae of indigenous origin (for example, in the shape of an ivy leaf) on each shoulder. Women usually had either short hair or a kind of cap (made from a scarf and wrapped like a turban), with ends that fell down loosely. For more variations in female coiffure and dress, see Zotović 1995, 61–64 n. 19, 152. 160. 161.

19

The attribute of a scroll in the hands of a man probably symbolised that the deceased had an important administrative function or had received Roman citizenship. The different attributes in the hands of women, however, imply a much stronger degree of conservatism, most often symbolising their role as a mistresses

of a household, *ibid*; Dautova-Ruševljan 1983, 53. Except for a few monuments which will be discussed in the paper, none of the women in funerary monuments from the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces are presented with different attributes, such as could have been seen in the portrait busts of Roman ladies, for example with some finer attribute like a jewelry box or in a divinised shape (or some attribute pointing to the divinised shape of the deceased), see: Kleiner 1987; Kleiner 1992.

20

One Roman necropolis is presumed in the locality of “Staro groblje” in Virovo village, north of Arilje. A funerary *cippus* and a votive altar have been found there with a dedication to god Mars, dating to the third century CE. North of the Virovo village, at Pusto (Suvo) polje in the locality of “Grobница”, a second, larger Roman necropolis was confirmed before the Second World War, during which, unfortunately, the majority of the antique monuments were destroyed (part of them was used for the building works on Lekovića bridge, Mandić 2015, 20–21.

21

For example, a funerary stele from the locality of Vranjani, dating to the beginning of the fourth century CE, Zotović 1995, n. 23, or the funerary *cippus* from the locality of Otanj, dating to the second–third century CE, Mandić 2015, 85 n. 2.

22

For different types (exactly seven) of this kind of sets of vessels, Nuber 1972.

23

The scenes of a funeral banquet with only a man on a *kline* are known from stelae and are interpreted to have originated under Greek cultural influence, from southern provinces. A different variation of this type of scene is known from funerary cubes found in the territory of Užice and Požega, where a man is represented on a *kline* with a woman seated beside him. This iconographic type of funeral banquet scene was taken over from similar scenes known from Pannonian territory, Zotović 1995, 68–72. 98.

24

The antique necropolis in the locality of Otanj (where the indigenous population was presumably buried), gravitated toward the administrative and cultural influence of the locality of Municipium Malvesatium, which was close to Domavia and Splonum (?), possibly identified as the locality of Komini), one of the main three centres of administrative and economic importance in this area, but also an important mining centre, Dušanić 2010, 542–544.

25

As K. M. D. Dunbabin points out, this iconographic type of funeral banquet with a man on a *kline*, sometimes escorted by a seated woman, originates from funerary monuments in Asia Minor, although it has been widely known from the first/second? half of the fifth century BCE, from Attic votive monuments dedicated to heroes. In the Hellenistic period it represents the most common subject on funerary reliefs, while during the period of Roman reign, it is known from funerary monuments found in Britain, Rhineland, *Dacia*, the Danube provinces, Palmyra, Egypt and Asia Minor: Dunbabin 2010, 104–108.

26

Zotović 1995, 72 n. 129–135. 143. 147. 152. 153. 155–156.

27

The origin of the image of a Thracian horseman is found in Greek hero reliefs, therefore the iconography of the Thracian horseman is part of the Greek artistic tradition, which was, unlike Roman artistic tradition, fully embraced by the local population in Thrace, dating back to the times of Greek colonization on the Black Sea and Aegean coasts: Dimitrova 2002, 211–216. 226–227.

28

Iconographic representations of so-called *Attis tristis* (*Attis funerarius*) represent the god in Phrygian dress wearing the Phrygian

hat, standing cross-legged, with a sad expression on his face, sometimes with attributes such as a *pedum*, Sfameni Gasparo 1985, 91–99; Gavrilović (with all the literature until 2010) 2010, 95–106.

29

For more details about the Metroac cult and funerary monuments with *Attis tristis* on the territory of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces, see Gavrilović 2010.

30

There are also two funerary monuments where *Attis tristis* is presented completely differently: On the first funerary monument from the locality of Komini, *Attis tristis* is dressed in a tunic with visible genitalia, while on the second funerary monument from Crvica, *Attis tristis* holds a *pedum* in his left hand and a key, mirror or maybe a pine in his right hand, *ibid.* 102–103 n. 41. 46.

31

The cult of the god Mithras is epigraphically and archaeologically confirmed in the third century CE in the western parts of the Central Balkans' Roman provinces, and although in earlier literature it has been suggested that the attribute of a torch was borrowed from the iconography of the winged genius of death, it is more probable that due to the widely popular Mithras' cult in this area, the attribute of a torch was taken from Mithras' iconography, *ibid.* 102.

32

Some authors think that on the funerary *cippus* from the locality of Komini, the figure of god Attis was syncretised with some unknown autochthonous deity of fertility. However, we should remember that the presentations of the god Attis with visible genitalia are known from other Roman provinces as well, *ibid.* n. 41.

33

Mandić 2015, 141 n.1.

34

Ibid., 139–145.

35

The Roman necropolis from the locality of “Grobjanica”, Bjelin, was discovered in the churchyard of a new church in Radoinja village, with the remains of a basilica, architectural sculpture, funerary monuments and votive altars dedicated to Jupiter Cohortalis and Silvanus, *ibid.*, 65–68.

36

Zotović 1995, 54–55.

37

Beaulieu 2016, 240. 242–243.

38

Toynbee 1996, 206–208.

39

In the representation of a man and a woman holding hands in a funerary stele from the locality of Karan, a man and a woman hold some unrecognizable objects in their free hands. From the text of the inscription, we learn that freedwoman Flavia Tatta and the manager of the estate by the name of Dazier are represented on the monument, Zotović 1995, 62 n. 35.

40

The locality of Seča Reka is some 16 km north of Požega and comprises several locations with remains of Roman buildings, a necropolis and monuments. Unfortunately, during the 2012 and 2013 archaeological survey, no remains of other Roman funerary monuments (beside the one described in the paper, which was earlier transferred to the *lapidarium* of the National Museum in Užice) were found, Mandić 2015, 42–43.

41

The monument was discovered near the remains of the antique sanctuary (due to the missing inscription, it is unknown to which deity the sanctuary was dedicated), *ibid.*, 47. It is presumed that the iconography of a seated woman from the funeral banquet scenes (seated female figure beside the man on a *kline*) was transferred to the front side of funerary cubes, like on this one which was found in the locality of “Lučiča groblje (Brutule)” in Seča Reka, where one of the presented women is seated, Zotović 1995, 62.

42

As A. Cermanović-Kuzmanović and I. Popović rightly point out, in the older necropolis I in the locality of Komini, where burials of cremated deceased took place from the first to the end of the third century CE, a fragmented silver chain was discovered, which implies that silver fibulae were also part of the jewellery that made up a grave inventory. In the younger necropolis II in the locality of Komini, where burials took place from the end of the first to the end of the fourth century CE, in the graves from the second and third centuries CE (where the remains of cremated persons were placed in small boxes for ashes and urns with a lid), silver knee-like fibulae in combination with chains made of twisted silver wire (grave n. 2/1975) and a two-armed silver chain with loops for hanging in at the ends and a pendant in the shape of an ivy leaf (grave no. 73/1974) were found. Similar finds were discovered in the necropolis in the locality of Kolovrat, in graves n. 113 and 313 B, silver knee-like fibulae were found and a chain made of twisted silver wire with loops at the ends next to the fibula from the grave n. 113, Popović 2010, 99–101.

43

Zotović 2004, 6.

44

However, this type of draped skirt can also be considered part of the local costume in *Noricum*, *Pannonia*, *Illyricum* and *Moesia*, Čremošnjik 1963, 111.

45

A larger number of Roman monuments is mentioned in older literature, found on two locations in the locality of Džurovo – Derikonjića brdo and Zagrad locations. Lj. Mandić presumes that a Roman necropolis existed on a location at Derikonjića brdo, Mandić 2015, 108–109.

46

Ibid., 119 n. 1.

47

Ibid., 120 n. 2.

48

It is presumed, however, that the monument was transferred from a larger Roman necropolis in Kolovrat, *ibid.*, 112, n. 1.

49

Toynbee 1996, 218.

50

We are referring to the inscription: *P. Ael(io) P[ro]adome[no] Carvanio an...[praef(ecto)] civitatum ...m praef(ecto) [mun...?] Aurelii S[p]lo(nistarum)*, dating to the first half or during the middle of the second century CE: Zotović 2004, 2.

51

Mirković 2013, 18.

52

The silver and lead mine was located at Čadinje, where remains of furnaces, slag-heaps and fragmented votive monuments were found, such as a votive monument dedicated to god Silvanus by an *argenti* actor and the votive monument dedicated to the goddess Diana (who was the protectress of silver and lead mines), by an *eques Romanus*, Dušanić 2010, 759.

53

Archaeological excavations conducted during several campaigns in the 1960s and 1970s, confirmed two necropolises (mostly cremated deceased) in the locality of Kolovrat: an older necropolis of indigenous inhabitants from the 1st and 2nd century CE and younger necropolis of the Romanised population from Kolovrat, from the 3rd and 4th centuries CE, where representative family tombs of type *area maceria cincta* (so called „tomb II“) dating to the second half of the 3rd century CE and which belonged to a member of the wealthier municipal aristocracy, was discovered, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1990, 227–234.

54

A family tomb of type *area maceria cincta* was discovered in 1978 (marked as „tomb II“), dimensioned 4.30 x 3.20 m, covering an area of 13.76 m². Inside the tomb, two funerary pits with cists for cremated deceased were found, along with the third grave of an inhumated deceased who was subsequently buried there (the burial did not belong to the family who owned the family tomb). The grave inventory is quite rich, consisting of glass cups, a glass balsamarium, two silver combs, a silver box for pins, golden earrings, ivy leaf pendants, fragmented bone pin and a bronze chain, etc. All these finds imply that the person buried was female. On a stone urn, the name of P. Ael(ius) Firminus is mentioned and that name also appears in the votive monument from Municipium S, dedicated by P. Aelius Firminianus, to P. Ael(ius) Firminus, sacerdos. We can presume that one owner of this family tomb was also P. Aelius Firminianus, who was an important person in the town's political or administrative life, perhaps a decurion. A. Cermanović-Kuzmanović thinks that it is possible that the family of P. Aelius Firminianus first lived in Municipium S and afterwards moved to Kolovrat, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1990, 227–231.

55

Mandić 2015, 129 n. 14. 136.

56

The inscription dates to the 3rd century CE and mentions Aurelius Maximus, decurion of the *municipium*, Mandić 2015, 130 n. 14. There is no unique opinion about Kolovrat's status during the period of Roman reign. M. Mirković thinks that Kolovrat was the centre of the mining district of the south-eastern part of *Dalmatia*, while S. Dušanić is of the opinion that Kolovrat was a vicus and not a *municipium*, Mirković 1975, 105–106; Dušanić 2010, 544.

57

It is interesting that the specific kind of female head dress (a scarf twisted into a kind of turban), often seen in the monuments from Kolovrat and Pljevlja, can be seen in the monuments from Priboj and Kosovo as well. In those cases, the names of the dedicators are Illyrian, Zotović 1995, 64; Mirković 2013, 49.

58

As S. Loma emphasizes, on the territory of Podrinje, epichoric anthroponomy is characterized by certain names of Celtic origin, which can be attributed to Celts who probably constituted a part of the indigenous inhabitants and settled on the territory of Kolovrat in the pre-Roman period, Loma 2004, 37–57. Therefore, it can be concluded that Kolovrat was already inhabited by a population of Thracian and Celtic origin, when Illyrian inhabitants from the hinterland of the central Adriatic (wider area of Salona) were resettled to the locality of Kolovrat, Popović 2010, 107. For Celtic names in the locality of Kolovrat see Mirković 2013, 44–50.

59

It is presumed that *tumuli* from the older Iron Age belonged to the Autariatae tribe, who lived in the Lim valley, upper and central Podrinje and on the Glasinac plateau in eastern Bosnia. However, there are no archaeologically confirmed finds related to Autariatae after the mid-5th century BCE in the mentioned territories and it is believed that only in the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE, tribal groups of Scordisci, of Celtic origin, together with Dardanians, inhabited the territory of Podrinje and Pljevlja, Лазић, Церовић 2013, 11–15.

60

For example, the funerary stele of vilicus Vurus or the funerary stele where the slave Amace and her husband are mentioned, as Amace's mistress Aelia Panto, who was maybe the wife of the magistrate in Municipium S, by the name of Publius Elius Pladomenus Carvanus (who was also buried in the necropolis in Kolovrat). Publius Elius Pladomenus and his wife Aelia Panto were probably from Delmatae Rider, because their names are the most frequent in Rider onomastics, Loma 2004, 39–42; Marić 2014, 142–143.

61

Mandić 2015, 132.

62

In the short report written by Dubrovnik ambassadors on numerous Roman monuments and remains of antique buildings, they also recorded two inscriptions on which *eques Romanus* and decurion of the Municipium S, are mentioned, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1998, 1; Mirković 2013, 11.

63

A. Evans writes that all the Roman monuments he saw were located in the town of Pljevlja, in the valley 2 km from the town (a place called Staro Pljevlja) and on the St. Ilija hill, south-east of Pljevlja, *ibid.*, 15–16.

64

During archaeological research which lasted until 1976, two antique necropolises were discovered: necropolis I, situated on the smaller plateau of Belo brdo, with 390 burials (cremation) and necropolis II, east of the plateau of Belo brdo, with 295 burials (cremation and inhumation), Ružić 2013, 28.

65

A. Cermanović-Kuzmanović, who belonged to the team conducting archaeological excavations in the locality of Komini, thinks that only the indigenous population was buried in necropolis I, and that judging by the burial forms and grave inventory, a stronger connection to the prehistoric way of burial exists than to the Roman type of graves. She emphasizes similarities in the type of ceramic urns where the remains of the deceased were placed, beside which a crooked knife was usually stuck. That burial custom, along with the custom of covering the urn with stone slab, is attributed to the Japodi tribe: Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1998, 2–4; Mirković 2013, 33.

66

Mirković 2013, 47–50.

67

Loma 2002, 17–18.

68

Mirković 2013, 61 (with the whole summary of opinions of different authors on the antique name of the Municipium S, 56–61).

69

Ibid., 61–75.

70

According to the analysis of epigraphic finds, not before 161 CE. Only after 161 CE, in the opinion of S. Loma, the Roman settlement in Komini was given the status of a *municipium*, Loma 2002, 11.

71

In the middle of the fourth century CE, barbaric tribes (A. Cermanović-Kuzmanović thinks that a hypothesis about Sarmati should be taken with a reserve) who came to Municipium S buried their dead on the area of the younger necropolis II without paying any attention to the older graves, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1998, 23; Ružić – Janić 2011, 225.

72

During archaeological excavations, ten monumental family tombs of type *area maceria cincta* were found in the younger necropolis II. Rich grave inventory was found in ceramic urns: glass cups with gilding (fondi d'oro), golden and silver jewellery, earrings, necklaces, pendants, fibulae and one example of a luxurious Late Roman glass cup, a so called cage cup – *diatreta*, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1998, 4–10.

73

The corona with rosette, with a disc or spiral in the middle, is a type of *corona funeraria* ornament known from funerary monuments in the locality of Municipium S. It is, however, differently presented in all three monuments: on the first stele the disc is presented in the middle of tympanum, on the second stela a simple rosette with four leaves can be seen, while in the third stela a spiral in the corona is shown: Ružić – Janić 2011, 217–230.

74

A funerary *cippus* of Paconia Montana was found on the western part of the younger necropolis II in the locality of Municipium S, above one of the family tombs of type *area maceria cincta*, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1998, 5–7.

75

In a group of ten graves discovered in the older necropolis I, in pits with remains of cremated deceased, a particular funeral ritual was noticed – in each grave, a crooked iron knife was stuck in the ground beside the urn (with its top stuck in the ground). This type of knife is attributed to older, pre-Roman inhabitants and analogous examples were confirmed in the south-eastern necropolis of the locality of Doclea. A group of 10 tombs with this kind of funeral ritual can be dated from the end of the first century CE to the middle of the second century CE. Another confirmation that this kind of funeral ritual is connected with the indigenous population are urns made in the manner of local tradition and the way the remains of the cremated deceased were placed in them can also be attributed to the indigenous population (the remains were first rinsed with water, which is a custom inherited from the Bronze Age). The crooked knives could be connected to certain functions of god Silvanus, who was venerated in these parts as the protector of peasants and shepherds, the god who guarded one's homes and land and of course, the deity of fertility and nature (perhaps also as Bellator, since in the grave n. 17/1970, the top of a spear was stuck beside the urn instead of a knife.). The knives stuck in the ground beside the remains of deceased could be interpreted in an apotropaic and eschatological context, as the substitute of an unknown local deity who protects the souls of the deceased, Ružić 2009, 105–112.

76

M. Ružić presumes the existence of the sanctuaries of gods Silvanus and Hercules in the locality of Komini, mentioning the find of a votive monument to Hercules from the locality of Grad in Komini and a votive monument dedicated to god Silvanus, *ibid*, 113–114.

77

Although the above-mentioned presumption is not so likely, since Paconia is dressed in habitual dress. However, the fact that she belonged to a rich and noble family of Municipium S (Paconia is presented without the usual veil on the head, with a hairstyle in the manner of Roman women), allows us to imagine the possibility that she took part in some cult and had a certain position in that context, Breton Connelly 2007, 92 f.

78

Mirković 2013, 115–118.

79

Votive dedications to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Adventus, Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Fulgurator, Iuppiter Cohortalis, Hercules Sanctus, Silvanus Augustus, Sol Invictus, Serapis and goddesses Isis and Nemesis, have been confirmed in the locality of Municipium S.

80

Most contemporary authors agree that the antique locality of Municipium Malvesatium should be identified as today's locality of Skelani in Republika Srpska, Bojanovski 1968, 252 f.; Imamović 2002, 10; Loma 2009, 109. For a summary of the opinions about the ubication of Municipium Malvesatium by different authors, see Gavrilović Vitas – Popović 2015, 216.

81

Kanic 1991, 552. Soon after, Č. Truhelka found the honorary base of a monument dedicated to the emperor Caracalla and in 1895, a custom official, J. Kulaš, discovered the votive monument of a *duovir quinquennalis* T. Flavius Similis, from which we discovered that as to the first decurion of the Municipium Malvesatium, a statue was dedicated to him in a basilica in the locality of Skelani, on the day of the emperor Marcus Aurelius' birthday, Patsch 1907, 431 f.; Loma 2009, 118.

82

In three archaeological campaigns (from 1896 to 1898), K. Patsch discovered two early Christian basilicas and 80 Roman votive and funerary monuments. Until the planned transport of the monuments to Vienna, he temporarily stored them in room F of basilica I, which today lies beneath a contemporary private house.

83

Patsch 1907.

84

Dušanić 2010, 544.

85

Imamović 2002, 9, 13.

86

It is presumed, primarily on the basis of two epigraphic monuments, that the locality received its municipal status in the period from 117 to 158 CE: Patsch 1907, 440–443; Bojanovski 1968, 254; Imamović 2002, 10; Loma 2002, 117–118.

87

The term *Argentaria* was given in *Tabula peutingeriana* to the whole area of east Podrinje, because of the many silver mines, including the localities of Ljubija and Domavija, as well as Skelani.

88

The locality of Skelani is situated on territory inhabited in the pre-Roman period by the Illyrian Dindari tribe, who were gradually Romanised upon the arrival of Romans, Loma 2002, 117–118.

89

For the find of the marble sculpture of Leda and the Swan and its iconographical, stylistic analysis and the interpretation of the sculpture, see Gavrilović Vitas 2017, 151–166.

90

Archaeological excavations in the locality of “Zadružni dom”, Skelani, in 2014, were conducted by Dr Nadežda Gavrilović Vitas (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade), with: curator Mirko Babić (Museum of Semberija in Bijeljina, Republika Srpska), curator Ljiljana Mandić (National Museum Užice), Bojan Popović (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade), Goran Ilijić and Igor Bijelić. Control was done by Ljubica Srdić from Republican Institution for Heritage Protection of Banjaluka, Republika Srpska. The excavations were conducted in cooperation with the director of Archaeological museum “Roman *municipium*” in Skelani, Sveltana Marković, and were financed by the Ministry of Education and Culture, Republika Srpska.

91

Gavrilović Vitas – Popović 2015, 197–220.

92

Zotović 1995, 141.

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