

**MONUMENTA  
MARMORE  
AEREQUE  
PERENNIOIRA**

---

**ZBORNIK  
RADOVA  
U ČAST  
ANTI RENDIĆU-  
MIOČEVIĆU**

---

**A VOLUME  
DEDICATED TO  
ANTE RENDIĆ-  
MIOČEVIĆ**

---

UREDNICI / EDITORS

**IVAN  
RADMAN-  
LIVAJA**

**TOMISLAV  
BILIĆ**

# **DOLICHENEUM AND DOLICHENUS' CULT OBJECTS FROM THE LOCALITY BRZA PALANKA — EGETA<sup>1</sup>**

---

## **CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF THE CULT OF IUPPITER DOLICHENUS**

**Nadežda Gavrilović Vitas**

Institute of Archaeology  
Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts  
Knez Mihailova 35/IV  
RS-11000 Belgrade  
nadia011@yahoo.com  
ngavrilo@ai.ac.rs

---

*Archaeological excavations led in 1962. year in the locality Brza Palanka (Egeta), yielded remains of an object in which interior, cult objects connected to the cult of Syrian god Jupiter Dolichenus, were found. Their variety, together with subsequently discovered triangular votive plate of Jupiter Dolicheus, which was also a part of the cult mobilier from Brza Palanka, confirm the existence of a dolicheneum in the locality, but not identified with the discovered object, which due to its dimensions and structure, could have only served as a sacrarium of Dolichenus' cult. The analysis of military units which were stationed in Brza Palanka, archaeological remains of the three forts from different periods in the locality and various cult objects which were discovered in Dolichenus' sacrarium, led us to the conclusion that dolicheneum in Brza Palanka (Egeta) was probably most prominent sanctuary of the god in this part of Danube Limes region, during the period from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.*

---

**Key words:**

Jupiter Dolichenus, *sacrarium*, Brza Palanka (Egeta), cult practices, Cohors I Cretum

Among all the Asia Minor and Syrian deities whose cults have been confirmed in the territory of Central Balkans' Roman provinces, the cult of Syrian god Jupiter Dolichenus has been confirmed with the majority of epigraphic and archaeological monuments.<sup>2</sup> The deity who was one of the most popular and important gods in the whole Roman empire, during the period from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> century, justified his popularity in the fore mentioned provinces with so far discovered 17 epigraphic monuments, 11 sculptures, two bronze triangular votive plates, one *tabula ansata*, two bronze statuettes and one terracotta.<sup>3</sup> Majority of the Dolichenus' monuments were discovered along the Danube limes, on the localities where the presence of Roman army (legions and auxiliary units as well) was confirmed.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is no surprise that the only locality where almost all types of Dolichenus' monuments and cult objects were discovered and where the remains of the supposed *Dolicheneum* were confirmed too, was military camp with civilian settlement and necropolis, known by the ancient name *Egeta*, today's place Brza Palanka (Fig. 1). The locality Egeta is situated on the crossroad of the Danube routes and it is first mentioned in historical sources

by Ptolomy, along with the other oldest centres in Moesia Superior.<sup>5</sup> Because of its geographic position, Egeta represented a very important strategic point, which contributed to its' being a significant military centre in the period of Roman reign. During the archaeological survey in 1956. year, the remains of two Roman forts could be clearly seen, as well as the walls from the Roman period, in the area of the civil settlement of Egeta.<sup>6</sup> Archaeological sondage excavations of Egeta, led during the campaigns in 1980. and 1981–1982., yielded the remains of three Roman forts, early Roman necropolis, civil settlement and late antique necropolis (Fig. 2).<sup>7</sup> The first, oldest fort, which is dated to a period of Flavian dynasty, was situated eastern from today's Brza Palanka, in the locality Crkveni creek and constituted the biggest fort of all three confirmed Roman fortifications dated from 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (during the archaeological excavations, it was only recognized by a terrain configuration as a big rectangular area, approximately spreading on 2 ha).<sup>8</sup> The second Roman fort of irregular rectangular form (84 × 33 m) with round angle towers, was built on the west side of today's Brza Palanka, on the left bank of the Crkveni creek and was partly exam-

1 The article 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 Roman conquest of the Central Balkans' territory in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, particularly after Trajan's Dacian wars, was followed by the arrival of the soldiers, merchants, slaves and immigrants of Asia Minor and Syrian origin, who brought their cults as part of their cultural heritage with them. The epigraphic and archaeological monuments confirm the presence of the cults of Magna Mater and her consort Attis, Sabazius, Jupiter Dolichenus, Jupiter Turmasgades, Jupiter Melanus, Jupiter Cidiessus, Zeus Okkonenos, Zeus Ezzaios, Zeus Synenos, Mên, Artemis of Ephesus, Sol Invictus and Dea Syria (Gavrilović 2010).

3 So far, 17 epigraphic monuments dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus alone or with some other/others deities have been confirmed in following localities: Arčar (Ratiaria), Košava (Vidin), Jasen, Veliko Gradište (Pincum), Čezava (Castrum Novae), Karataš (Diana), Brza Palanka (Egeta), Kumanovo, Gračanica, Prizren, Kličevac (Viminacium) (Gavrilović 2010, 293–302). Eleven statues of Jupiter Dolichenus sometimes presented with his patera Junona Dolichena were found in: Vidin (Bononia), Viminacium (Viminatum), Čezava (Castrum Novae), Brza Palanka (Egeta) and Ravna (Timacum Minus). One gilded bronze votive triangular plate was found in the locality Brza Palanka (Egeta), one bronze votive triangular plate (unfortunately disappeared) was discovered in Vidin, while the bronze statuette of Jupiter Dolichenus came from Surduk (Ritium). A fragmented terracotta presenting the deity, was found in the necropolis "Više grobalja", in Viminacium (Gavrilović 2010, 302–310).

4 The majority of Dolichenus' epigraphic monuments were found in the localities along Danube limes, while only three monuments were discovered in the southern parts of the territory Central Balkans' Roman provinces (votive monuments from Kumanovo, Gračanica and Prizren) (Gavrilović 2010, 161–164, 299–301).

5 The locality Egeta is situated on the junction of two important routes: one road went along river Danube, over the localities Transdierna and Pontes, while the other road connected localities Taliata and Egeta. The Thracian origin of the name Egeta, implies that the locality was probably inhabited by the Thracian population in pre-roman period. Beside Egeta, Ptolomy mentions Moesia Superior's centres like: Singidunum, Tricornium, Viminacium, Taliata, Dorticum and Ratiaria (Mirković 1968, 114–115; Petrović 1984, 153). In historical sources, Egeta is also mentioned by the name Aegeta (Mirković 2015, 88).

6 Вучковић-Тодоровић 1966, 173.

7 The first data and situation plan of a fort in Egeta came from the officer and ingénieur of Austrian army in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, D. F. Marsigli (he describes rectangular fort with rounded towers, antique road paved with stone), Petrović 1984, 154. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, F. Kanitz gave more detailed descriptions, with measured dimensions of all three forts and he mentioned the remains of the antique civil settlement in Egeta (Mirković 1968, 115). Archaeological excavations led in 1980. year resulted with the discoveries of civil settlement, two necropolises and the remains of the forts (only two of the forts were partly excavated) (Petrović 1984, 153–166). In campaigns from 1981–1982., in civil settlement a north-eastern part of a bath was discovered, dated by the numismatic finds in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Petrović 1986, 369–370). In the middle ages period, a medieval church (14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> century) was built above antique bath. Also, three built tombs from late antique period (the 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century) were discovered too (Petrović 1986, 369–377). Because of the building of the hydroplant, the locations on the banks are now under the water. However, in 2017. year, new geomagnetic survey have been carried out on the territory of the third fort from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, in hope that it will facilitate the planning of new archaeological researches on the territory of the locality Egeta.

8 <http://virtuelnimuzejdunava.rs/srbija/kulturno-nasledje/arheoloska-mapa-dunava/brza-palanka-egeta.95.html>

ined, dating to late antiquity, probably the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>9</sup> Between the two forts, third fort was confirmed, perhaps with triangular base, from the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup> The remains of civil settlement were discovered near the Crkveni creek locality (see Fig. 2) and a fortified port which descended from the area where the third fort was detected.<sup>11</sup> This port, similar to the smaller ports in localities Hajdučka Vodenica, Diana etc., was situated next to the third fort, relying with its perimetral walls on the main defensive wall of the fort and it is mentioned in historical sources.<sup>12</sup>

In the period of Trajan's wars in Dacia, the auxiliary unit *Cohors I Cretum* was stationed at Egeta, in the oldest fort<sup>13</sup> and judging by the inscriptions on the bricks found in the locality, there is a possibility that in the fort's construction, *legion VII Claudia* was also involved (at least some parts of the legion participated in building of military and perhaps civilian objects at Egeta). This cohort consisted probably of 500 soldiers, cavalrymen and infantry and its' name is mentioned among the military units which helped with the building of *Pontes Traiani*, the fort in lo-

cality *Lederata* and the fort in locality *Pontes*.<sup>14</sup> Its presence is confirmed also in presumed locality *Timacum Maius* in the vicinity of Svrlijig, by stamp inscriptions on nine bricks discovered in the walls of the bath.<sup>15</sup> In the period of the late antiquity, three military units were stationed at locality Egeta: *cuneus equitum sagittariorum*, a part of the *legion XIII Gemina* and the fleet *classis Histrica*.<sup>16</sup>

In 1962. year, south-east from the oldest fort at Egeta, in the area between civilian settlement and late antique necropolis (see Fig. 2),<sup>17</sup> several marble sculptures and sculptural compositions of god Jupiter Dolichenus were found.<sup>18</sup> The same year, archaeological researches were conducted on the place where the sculptures were found, resulting in the discovery of other cult objects and the remains of an oval structure, identified at the time as a *Dolicheneum*. The excavated structure was long 3.5 and wide 3.8 m, oriented in the direction north-south, with the entrance on the northern side.<sup>19</sup> It was built quite simply, from stones and pebbles (with occasional fragments of bricks and *tegulae*), with

9 The fort was built on a hill which was well protected from three sides with braes, while it could be approached only from the west side. The fort had round angle towers, with one rectangular tower on the west rampart. P. Petrović noticed that this type of forts was well known in antiquity (and later, in middle ages period too) on numerous localities and that it was very similar, by its dimensions and characteristic elongated form, to the fort in locality Putinei in Romania. However, the choice of the building material (stone without bricks), characteristic entrance to the towers and stratigraphy inside of the fort, differ the fort very much from other known forts in Đerdap area, which in opinion of P. Petrović was due to its important position among so far known forts in Egeta and generally, in Danube limes (Petrović 1984, 157–158; Korać *et al.* 2014, 78–79).

10 Korać *et al.* 2014, 80. The locality Egeta is not mentioned in historical sources in late antiquity, which is quite strange considering the fact that archaeological excavations confirmed early Byzantine layers from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, its strategic importance and since it was one of the larger settlements in that period. Therefore, M. Mirković thinks that it is possible that Procopius writes about Egeta, but under different name, maybe calling it for example, after the empress Theodora (by the name of Theodoropolis) (Mirković 2015, 88).

11 As P. Petrović and M. Vasić emphasize, the traffic on the Danube had been very important for distributing supplies and for the transport of the troops. Therefore, it is expected that strategically important forts had ports, like it is known that localities Ratiaria, Margum, Viminacium and Egeta had (Petrović, Vasić 1996, 18–23). The port in Egeta belongs to a smaller type of ports, which were not separated from the main fortification (like it is the case with larger ports in, for example, Viminacium or Aque), but it was situated next to the fortification. This type of port, known in the literature also by the term Landeburg, is not so frequent along the middle and lower Danube valley, but it is often confirmed along the Rhine (Korać *et al.* 2014, 82–83).

12 It is mentioned as *Classis Aegētensium sive Secunda Pannonica* (Korać *et al.* 2014, 82–83).

13 *Cohors I Cretum* was formed in pre-Flavian period and (beside *Cohors I Cilicium*) was the part of the so far known, oldest military units located in Naissus (*Cohors I Cretum* is confirmed as *Moesia cohort* on military diploma from 78. A.D.) (IMS IV, 34; Mirković 2015, 42–43). It was located in *Moesia Superior* in the period of the preparations for Trajan's Dacian wars (confirmed by military diplomas from 93. and 100. A.D.) (Mirković 1968, 115). A considerable number of bricks from Banatska Palanka wears the stamps of military units which participated in Trajan's Dacian wars, among them the name of *cohors I Cretum* is also encountered (Mirković 2015, 71; Marcu 2004, 582–583). It is also recorded on the military diplomas from *Moesia Inferior* in 94. and 96. A.D. and in *Dacia* in 110. and 114. A.D. (Marcu 2004, 583). After temporary stay in *Dacia*, the cohort returned to the territory of the province *Moesia Superior* (confirmed on military diploma from 159/160. A.D.), where it stayed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

14 The interior size of a camp for auxiliary unit varied from 1 ha (for a unit of 500 foot soldiers) to 5–5.5 ha (for a cavalry unit of 1000 men). The number of soldiers (500 soldiers) who were in the *cohors I Cretum* coincided with the area of the oldest fort (interior size to 2 ha), which was not only the case in Egeta, but also in other localities in Danube Limes like: Čezava (Novae), Donji Milanovac (Taliata), Karataš (Diana), Kostol (Pontes), Prahovo (Aque) (Petrović, Vasić 1996, 18; Mirković 2015, 30, 42–43, 71, 97).

15 The stamps inscriptions read: *Coh(ors) I Cret(um)* (Petrović, Filipović 2015, 35–36).

16 Mirković 1968, 115.

17 D. Vučković-Todorović writes that the supposed *Dolicheneum* was situated 120m north from the north-eastern angle of the oldest fort and almost at the edge of the civil settlement at Egeta (Вучковић-Тодоровић 1966, 180).

18 While working in his orchard, M. Perić discovered four marble sculptural compositions with representations of Jupiter Dolichenus and Juno Dolichena, marble head of a man with Phrygian hat, one fragmented Mithraic relief and 11 fragments of different marble sculptures and figural compositions (several hands, part of a thunderbolt, part of a bull's torso, a fragmented sculptural composition with a tree around which is a coiled snake etc.). Beside marble cult objects, metal finds in connection with the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus were also discovered in the rubble inside the object: one bronze *tabula ansata* with Latin inscription, one bronze holder of a *signum*, one bronze lamp, two bronze figures of eagle, one iron key, 12 bronze coins and one silver *denarius* (Вучковић-Тодоровић 1966, 173). Today, all the objects found in *Dolicheneum* from Egeta are stored in the antique collection of the Museum of Krajina in Negotin.

19 The discovered object was situated on a slope of a hill, which contributed to the faster landslide of already poorly built walls of the object (Zotović 1964, 3).

the most preserved height of the northern wall of the building (1.2 m) and with the approximate width of all walls, of two Roman feet (from 0.50 to 0.60 m). The interior walls were decorated with stucco of yellowish colour and on the mortar floor of the structure, with grind stone and layer of red mortar above it, numerous fragments of roof tiles *tegulae* were found.<sup>20</sup> In the middle of the room, a big stone block in the shape of irregular parallelepiped was discovered, with four oval symmetrically positioned holes in one half of its' upper side. Four bronze coins of emperor Geta and one silver denarius of emperor Elagabalus, were found near the stone block.<sup>21</sup> All votive objects connected to the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus, were found aligned by the interior wall of the structure, while only a fragment of a marble sculpture (head of a man with Phrygian hat, probably Jupiter Dolichenus) was discovered in the northern part of the structure's interior.<sup>22</sup>

As all the cult objects and finds from the presumed *Dolicheneum* at Egeta were published in earlier literature,<sup>23</sup> we will elaborate further on the same subject with thorough analysis of the objects and brief emphasis on the most important features of every find in the context of the possible cult practices in the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus that took place in Egeta:

**1. Fragmented marble statue** of Jupiter Dolichenus standing on a bull (dimensions 0.49×0.68 m, Fig. 3).<sup>24</sup> Partial figure of a bull is preserved,<sup>25</sup> along with god's feet and a base on which the animal is standing, with Latin inscription from dedicant Pompeius Isauricus.<sup>26</sup> The figure of the bull is not so skilfully and realistically modelled (unproportionally small head of the animal in contrast with its strong neck and body turned to the right side), although around his back and under his belly there is a ritual band *dorsuale*, which is a typical feature of Roman sacrifice.<sup>27</sup> The cog-

nomen *Isauricus* implies that the dedicant's origin was from locality Isaura in Asia Minor.<sup>28</sup> Dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

**2. Fragmented marble statue** of Jupiter Dolichenus standing on a bull (dimensions 0.66×0.82 m, Fig. 4). Partial figure of a god presented *en face*, dressed in Roman military dress, with long *paludamentum* over his shoulders and left hand holding object of uncertain identification (thunderbolt?), which is leant on a bull's head.<sup>29</sup> On a rectangular base below the bull's belly, an eagle with stretched wings is presented. There is a Greek inscription in the base of a figural composition, which is well modelled and dated to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>30</sup>

**3. Fragmented marble sculptural composition** of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull and Juno Dolichena on a hind (dimensions 0.33×0.43 m, Fig. 5). Jupiter Dolichenus is dressed like a Roman emperor, holding a thunderbolt in his left hand and probably a *labrys* in his right hand (the attribute is missing). His *paredra* is holding a *patera* in her right hand and long sceptre in her left hand. Between two deities, a figure of goddess Victoria with stretched wings is presented. Two figures of eagles are also part of the composition — one eagle presented *en face* is standing between the bull's horns, while the other eagle is standing beside the left leg of Juno Dolichena, with his wings half stretched. Although because of the bad quality of the marble, all the details of deities' faces and dresses are quite damaged, stylistic characteristics of the composition (careful and realistic modelling, good presented proportions of human and animal bodies) imply high quality work of art, from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

**4. Fragmented statue** of Jupiter Dolichenus standing on a bull (dimensions 0.36×0.66 m, Fig. 6). Of Jupiter Dolichenus' figure, only remains of his feet on bull's back are visible and part of

20 The finding of numerous fragments of tegulae, along with the knowledge about the shape of the object and its primitive way of building, are the arguments for Lj. Zotović to think that the roof of the object was probably flat (Zotović 1964, 3).

21 Altogether 12 bronze coins of emperor Geta were found inside the object identified as Dolicheneum at Egeta (Вучковић-Тодоровић 1966, 177).

22 According to the statement of the owner of the orchard where the presumed dolicheneum was discovered, who was the first to see the structure and the cult objects in situ (Zotović 1964, 3).

23 Вучковић-Тодоровић 1966; Zotović 1966; Hörig, Schwertheim 1987; Срејовић, Цермановић-Кузмановић 1987; Tomović 1992; Bošković-Robert 2006; Gavrilović 2010.

24 On this occasion I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my colleague G. Janjić from Museum of Krajina, Negotin, for his help with the photographs of the cult finds from locality Egeta. Also, my gratitude goes to dear colleague S. Petković, for her help too with the photographs of the cult finds.

25 The right horn and ear of a bull are saved, while on the place of bull's left horn, there is an iron screw which served for the wedging of a horn, which was probably modelled from other part of the marble or from metal. Under the screw, remains of silver foil are visible, which imply a kind of silver ornament, perhaps rosetta, attached to a bull's forehead (Zotović 1964, 7, no. 2c).

26 Text of the inscription on the base of the statue: I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) D(olicheno) Pompeius | Isauricus ex | votu (!) posuit. Gentilicium Pompeius is confirmed in Viminacium and its surroundings (IMS II, n. 36, n. 53).

27 Ritual ribbon, *dorsuale*, probably made of wool, is often seen in the way it is presented in Fig. 3 from Egeta or it just falls over animal's back hanging down on both sides. It isn't presented only in Dolichenus' iconography, but also in Mithraic reliefs (Bologna, CIMRM 693, Sarmizegetusa CIMRM 2063 and 2084, Oltenia in Dacia, CIMRM 2180 and Transdierna CIMRM 2223) (Mastrocinque 2017, 38). Also, in the cult of Isis and Sarapis, some Pompeian depicts Apis' bull with the *dorsuale* on his back (Mastrocinque 2017, 163).

28 Mirković 1968, 115; Zotović 1966, 92; Hörig, Schwertheim 1987, 76–77.

29 Analogous to other similar sculptural presentation of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull, it can be presumed that god was probably holding a thunderbolt in his left hand and *labris* in his right hand.

30 Text of the inscription on the base of the statue: Ἀγαθὴ τύχη | Καστωρ Κοιντοῦ κυριῶ Δολιχηνῶ | Ευξαπενος ανεθηκα. The dedicant's name Castor is confirmed on other localities too, like locality Drmno (IMS II, n. 46); locality Ravna (Timacum Minus) (IMS III, n. 67).

god's *chlamys* (between bull's horns). Very solid work of art, with strong analogies to Jupiter Dolichenus' statues from localities Ravna (*Timacum Minus*) and Slankamen (*Acumincum*).<sup>31</sup> Dated to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

**5. Marble head** of a man with Phrygian hat, probably Jupiter Dolichenus, (dimensions 0.14 m, Fig. 7). Carefully modelled head of a mature bearded man, with emphasized cheekbones and curly beard. It probably belonged to a statue of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull. Ichographically, close analogy can be perceived in a statue of Jupiter Dolichenus from Viminacium,<sup>32</sup> while realistic treatment and the expression of the deity's face imply the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, as the possible date when the statue was made.

**6. Fragmented (three fragments) marble votive icon** of god Mithras (dimensions: width 0.8–0.18, height 0.28, Fig. 8). Right half of the rectangular relief with the scene of tauroctony — on the right upper corner, the bust of goddess Luna. Above the goddess' bust, Cautes with the torch raised up. In front of Cautes, a dog is presented, leaping towards the bull whose frontal part is only visible, with the part of Mithras' hand with knife aimed toward animal's throat. There is a snake beside the bull's leg. Although there is no inscription in the relief's border side, without any doubt the fragmented icon presented the scene of tauroctony from the cult of god Mithras. Dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

**7. Bronze tabula ansata** with Latin inscription (dimensions 0.14×0.1 m, Fig. 9).<sup>33</sup> The letters of the inscription are made by punctuation, as the frame of tabula ansata. Dated around the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

**8. Bronze holder for a signum** of triangular plate of Jupiter Dolichenus (width 0.31 m, height 0.17 m, Fig. 10a, 10b). During the conservation of the holder, Latin inscription was discovered on the front side of a holder.<sup>34</sup> The holder is attached to a pole with stylized snakes, on both sides.<sup>35</sup>

**9. Two identical bronze statues** of an eagle with half stretched wings (height 0.5 m, Fig. 11).<sup>36</sup>

**10. Fragments of different marble statues** (part of a bull's torso, two hands, sculptural composition with a tree around which is a coiled snake) and metal finds like bronze lamp, iron key and coins of emperors Geta and Elagabalus (Fig. 12). The coin finds (dated from 198. to 222.) imply that the object in Egeta was still in use in the first decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

**11. Triangular bronze votive plate** (height 0.38 maximum width 0.24 m, Fig. 13a, 13b).<sup>37</sup> The plate is made of bronze sheet heavily gilded with gold, while the presentation of Jupiter Dolichenus, his Castores and Sol and Luna, were made in the technique of embossing, punctuation and chiseling.<sup>38</sup> As in similar Dolichenus' triangular votive plates, the imagery is arranged in three registers. At the first, top register, a figure of standing eagle with his head turned to the right, is presented. The eagle is holding a crown in its beak. In the next register, the busts of Sol and Luna, are presented in profile, turned one to the other, with rays around Sol's head and a quarter-moon attribute on Luna's head. Between two deities, a sword (closer to Luna) and a two-corded whip (closer to Sol), are represented. In the middle, central register, a large figure of god Jupiter Dolichenus is shown — a mature, bearded man with Phrygian hat on the head, dressed in cuirass (with military belt, greaves with floral design and light boots). With *paludamentum* over his shoulder, the god stands on a bull, whose head with the horns can be seen. In his left hand, the deity holds a bundle of thunderbolts, while in his right hand he holds a *labrys*. Behind Jupiter Dolichenus, above his left shoulder, there is a *signum* with six discs. In the height of god's waistline, the figure of the god is flanked by two identical figures of mature, bearded men — *Castores Dolicheni*. Each Castor is dressed in armor with *paludamentum* over his shoulders and drives a *biga* with two bulls (wheels of the chariots are stylized in the form of *rosettes*). The Castores differ only by the attributes in their hands: Castor on the right side from Jupiter Dolichenus holds a sun-disc(?) in his right hand and ear of wheat in

31 The likeness with the statue of Jupiter Dolichenus from Slankamen is particularly astonishing in the treatment of the bull's body. We should, however, here briefly mention that the statue of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull from Slankamen (*Acumincum*) has been wrongly presented in older and recent Romanian literature (Miclea, Florescu 1979; Sanie 1981; S. Nemeti, *Sincretismul religios in Dacia Romana*, Cluj Napoca 2005, etc.) as "the statue originating from locality Surducu Mare (Centum Putei)". The statue was actually discovered in locality Slankamen, Serbia, in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and bought and donated to Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, in 1851. year.

32 For the marble head of Jupiter Dolichenus from Viminacium (cf. Срејовић, Цермановић-Кузмановић 1987, n. 45; Tomović 1992, n. 139, Fig. 20.4; Gavrilović 2010, 165, n. 102).

33 The text of the inscription: I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Doli | Cheni (!) C(o)hor(s) I Cretum (Вучковић-Тодоровић 1966, 174, n. 2; Zotović 1966, 93–94, n. 35G; Hörig, Schwertheim 1987, 78, n. 95; Bošković-Robert 2006, 59, n. 65).

34 The text of the inscription: Aur(elius) Caius Cen(turio) Chor(ortis) I Cretum. The holder consists of a straight tube, perforated in the upper part. In the middle of the tube was a socket into which a wooden handle was inserted (Dolichenian votive plate was applied to a base, probably a wooden one, which is also implied by the grooves on the lateral sides of the plate) (Pop-Lazić 1977, 42).

35 Similar holders were found in Dolicheneum in Brigetio (Merlat 1951, 93, n. 98) and in Dolicheneum in Vetus Salina (Panonia Inferior) (Bánki 1981, 120, Taf. II).

36 Analogous bronze statues of eagle (although more carefully modelled) were discovered in Dolicheneum in Vetus Salina (Bánki 1981, 134, Taf. IX).

37 Although the triangular bronze votive plate wasn't found in supposed Dolicheneum in Egeta during the archaeological excavations in 1962. year, it is certain that it came from the same place where other cult objects were found. At the end of the 1979., the Historical Museum of Serbia was offered to buy a gilded triangular bronze plate from a collector in eastern Serbia. The collector was willing only to say that the triangular plate was found in the locality Brza Palanka, by a farmer who accidentally ploughed it up in his field. When the colleagues from Historical Museum of Serbia went in 1980. year to Brza Palanka, to visit the exact place where archaeological excavations were led in 1962. year, they were shown by the locals the field where the triangular plate could have been ploughed — it was on the same area where the supposed Dolicheneum was discovered. P. Pop-Lazić presumes that since the area where the object with Dolichenus' cult objects was discovered, was quite damaged because of the military trenches that were dug during the wars in the past, a holder of the signum stayed untouched and undiscovered in one part of the area during the digging of the military trenches, while the triangular votive plate was dug up from soil and moved from its original place to the other part of the field (Pop-Lazić 1977, 41, 44).

38 I would like to thank my colleague M. Vuksan from Historical Museum of Serbia, for all his kindness and help with the photograph of the triangular votive plate from Egeta.

his left hand. Castor presented left from the god, rises his left hand with an ear of wheat in it, while it is difficult to presume the attribute in his right hand since the plate is damaged in that part. There is an altar between Jupiter Dolichenus' legs. Unfortunately, the plate is damaged in the lower register — only the head of a mature, bearded man with Phrygian hat represented from the profile, can be recognized in the lower right part of the plate. He holds a *labrys* in his raised up right hand and probably a bundle of thunderbolts (?) in his left hand. The rest of the lower register of triangular votive plate is not preserved.<sup>39</sup>

In earlier literature, authors emphasized solely the military aspect of the locality Egeta and the cult finds from the supposed *Dolicheneum* were mentioned only in and through that context.<sup>40</sup> It was assumed that as, for example in locality Karataš (*Diana*), where a small sanctuary of god Jupiter Dolichenus also probably existed,<sup>41</sup> Egeta sanctuary was a military chapel or maybe sanctuary of modest size of god Jupiter Dolichenus and another deity (most probably god Mithras), since the Mithraic votive icon was also found among the cult objects in Egeta. In the light of above mentioned description of cult objects found in supposed *Dolicheneum* in Egeta and encompassing from different angles the significance which military and strategic locality as Egeta had among other localities in Danube limes, I propose that Egeta was very significant anchor-hold point for not only soldiers' veneration of Jupiter Dolichenus, but also of civilian population and place where rituals and celebrations in the honour of the god were taking place regularly.

I shall begin from the most fragile point of the mentioned hypothesis and that is — was the supposed *Dolicheneum* in Egeta a sanctuary of the god Jupiter Dolichenus or maybe just a military chapel or perhaps a *sacrarium*, place where Dolichenus' cult objects were put or perhaps hidden before some danger? To resolve these questions, we must reach for the possible analogies in the data concerning so far discovered sanctuaries and temples of Ju-

piter Dolichenus in other Roman provinces. In the newest study of all so far confirmed *dolichena*, total number of sanctuaries dedicated to the supreme deity of Dolicha is 31, plus eight sanctuaries probably localized.<sup>42</sup> Through their analysis,<sup>43</sup> it is quite clear that, in spite of the fact that they differ one from the other (in the context of their orientation, size or form), certain similarities are constant: *Dolicheneum* is usually located near Roman fort and can be situated in the close vicinity of a Mithraeum or there is a close connection with Mithras cult (in the shape of epigraphic confirmation of the cult or some cult object). The latter occurrence is not surprising since both gods were widely popular in Roman army and among civilian population and since their cults were considered as cults with the similar ritual features (ritual washing, ritual procession, sacrifices, liturgical banquets etc.). In that context, the discovered sacral space from Egeta is no different than other archaeologically excavated structures connected to Dolichenus' cult — a fragmented Mithras' votive icon was found among cult objects in the structure, although the cult of Persian god is not epigraphically confirmed in the locality.<sup>44</sup> However, comparing to other archaeologically known *dolichena*, the sacral structure discovered in locality Brza Palanka is of very modest dimensions, with length of only 3.5 m and width of 3.8 m.<sup>45</sup> In such a small place there is no space for the priest to perform his ritual cult practices or for the worshippers to gather and celebrate the god in their ritual banquet. Also, cult finds discovered in the object must be taken into consideration: the fragmented statue of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull with Latin inscription (Fig. 3) had its back shallowly chipped off, for its building in the niche,<sup>46</sup> which implies that it stood somewhere else, before being brought to the sacral object in Brza Palanka. Noticeable is the difference in the craftsmanship of the sculptures — majority of the sculptures is carefully and skilfully modelled (like Fig. 4, 5 and 7), while some sculptures represent average works of art (like Fig. 3). A big stone block in the shape of irregular parallele-

39 Gavrilović Vitas 2019, 189–206.

40 Вучковић-Тодоровић 1966; Zotović 1966.

41 A votive altar to Iupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus was found in the locality Karataš (Diana), above the fort (*extra muros*, towards the Danube, near the bridge on Danube), in a niche which seems to have served as a cult place(?), that is for ritual practices in the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus. The votive altar was put on the behest of the provincial consul L. Marius Perpetuus, by Restutum and priests of Jupiter Dolichenus (text of the inscription: I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Dol(icheno) [p(ro) s(alute)] | M(arci) Aur(elii) Anto | nini P(ii) Aug(usti) et Iul(iae) | Domne(!) Aug(ustae) ma | tri Aug(usti) et castro | rum dedicante L(ucio) | Mario Perpetuo | c(onsulari) per Restutum | M(...) C(...) R(...) D(...) sacerdo | tes eiusdem loci | d(edicaverunt)). M. Mirković suggests that M(...) C(...) R(...) D(...) should be read: m(agister) c(ivium) R(omanorum) D(ianae). The dedication was made for the health of the emperor Caracalla and his mother Julia Domna, presumably before the emperor's visit to the fort in Karataš, in 214. year (Mirković 1977, 443–448; Hörig, Schwertheim 1987, n. 87; Mirković 2011, 126).

42 H. Schwarzer writes about 16 archaeologically confirmed *dolichena*, 15 epigraphically testified sanctuaries and eight probably localized sanctuaries of Jupiter Dolichenus. Most *dolichena* have been found in the following provinces: twelve *dolichena* in Germania Superior and Pannonia Superior (in each province six sanctuaries), in Britannia five sanctuaries, in Noricum and Dacia in total six *dolichena* (three sanctuaries in each province) (Schwarzer 2012, 168–169, 189).

43 We are aware that maybe it would be more appropriate to use the term *templa* for sanctuaries of god Jupiter Dolichenus, as it was done most frequently in Roman period (other terms were used as well like *aedes*, *aedicula*, *sacrarium*), but modern term *dolichenum*, -a is widely accepted in scientific literature.

44 So far known localities where sanctuaries of god Jupiter Dolichenus and god Mithras were confirmed, approximately close one to the other, are: Doliche and Dura-Europos in Syria, Rome (Aventine), Porolissum in Dacia, Carnuntum and Brigetio in Pannonia Superior, Stockstadt and Saalburg in Germania Superior and probably Virinum in Noricum (two *mithraea* are mentioned on the inscriptions from votive monuments) (Schwarzer 2012, 172).

45 Although there are no uniform rules in the context of dimensions of so far known *dolichena*, all the other sanctuaries are of considerably larger size, for example: the *Dolicheneum* in Balaklava was approximately 16.5 × 11.5 m, *Dolicheneum* in Vetus Salina (Pannonia Inferior) approximately 17 × 6 m, *Dolicheneum* in Virinum (Noricum) 17.7 × 11.6 m, *Dolicheneum* in Vindolanda (Britannia) 17.73 × 4.52 m (the sanctuary of the first phase, dated to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century) (Schwarzer 2012, 149, 153, 159, 166).

46 Zotović 1964, 7.

piped with four oval symmetrically positioned holes in one half of its upper side, which was found in the building, could have served for the display of cult votive reliefs, icons or plates (the holes were maybe for poles on which votive icons were put for display to Dolichenus' worshippers). Also, we must bear in mind that after 1962. year, unfortunately, no further excavations were conducted in the vicinity of the supposed *Dolicheneum* in Brza Palanka, therefore we lack the knowledge about the existence of other possible rooms which may have been adjoined to the building.<sup>47</sup> However, what we can be certain of is that inside the object, almost all types of cult objects (except bronze votive hands, plaques with three or five floriated terminals at the top and votive plaques with inscriptions) connected to the theology and doctrine of Dolichenus' cult, were stored (including the triangular votive gilded bronze plate), with the finds of a bronze lamp, fragments of ceramics (parts of dishes, wares?) and coins which were maybe a votive offer to the god. Therefore, as I already stated before,<sup>48</sup> I propose that supposed *Dolicheneum* from Brza Palanka (Egeta) was not a sanctuary of the god, but a *sacrarium*, a sacristy of Dolichenus' *templum*, which was certainly nearby located, serving for the religious purposes of the military that was stationed in the forts of and civilians from the settlement in Egeta.<sup>49</sup>

Who were the dedicants and worshippers of god Jupiter Dolichenus in the locality Egeta? And what did cult practices that took place in so far not archaeologically confirmed *dolicheneum* in Egeta, look like? In search of the answers to these questions, we first must turn to previous authors who presumed that since the military camp was confirmed in Egeta, the majority of Dolichenus' worshippers were therefore soldiers. However, one mustn't tread hastily because archaeological survey and epigraphic inscriptions confirmed the existence of civilian settlement and a port too and it is certain that adherents of Romanized Baal of Doliche, were not only soldiers, but also members of civilian administration, merchants, slaves and freedmen, who came and went to and from Egeta to other destinations, inhabitants of oriental origin, but also Romanised inhabitants, possibly women too, who lived in the settlement in Egeta. Votive in-

scriptions by Pomepius Isauricus (Fig. 3) and Castor (Fig. 4), but also other dedicants' names of oriental origin confirmed in inscriptions from Egeta, support previously said. However, inscriptions from bronze *tabula ansata* and bronze holder of a *signum* do confirm that maybe most devoted to Jupiter Dolichenus were after all, soldiers of *Cohors I Cretum*. The dedication to god from centurion Aurelius Gaius from the bronze holder of a *signum* does not raise brows, but dedication of whole cohort to Jupiter Dolichenus from bronze *tabula ansata*<sup>50</sup> found in *sacrarium* is not frequently met.<sup>51</sup> We already mentioned that the presence of *Cohors I Cretum* was confirmed in Egeta in two periods: first time, before Trajan's Dacian wars and second time in the period of Hadrian's reign, when it stayed stationed in the locality during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century and from that we can conclude that *Dolicheneum* was most probably built during their second stationing in Egeta. Acquainted with the working hypothesis of A. Collar about the religious network in the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus and movements of high officials to different destinations in Roman Empire who spread the god's cult in that way, we would partly agree with it, because of the obvious mobility of the *cohort I Cretum* along several Danube Limes localities (and not only there, but its presence in Dacia as well) and the possibility that the cult of the god could have been diffused in that way.<sup>52</sup> Also, the influence of the Severan emperors in the process of spreading the god's cult must be considered (since some of the Dolichenus' monuments from Central Balkans' Roman provinces were dedicated to emperors Septimius Severus, Caracalla and their mother Iulia Domna), as we mustn't neglect the factor of individual influence of prominent persons in the diffusion of Dolichenus' cult, such is the case with Marius Perpetuus, who was the governor of Moesia Superior.<sup>53</sup>

However, the reception of the Dolichenus cult in the territory of Central Balkans' Roman provinces isn't simple and must be comprehended in a wider frame: it includes the importance of routes as well (the possible cult influence from Moesia Inferior) and other factors like the degree of conservatism of indigenous population, the degree of acceptance or resistance of oriental cults and mystery religions in general and most importantly, the de-

47 As it was mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the position of the presumed *Dolicheneum* on a slope of a hill, contributed to the faster landslide of already poorly built walls of the object and in 1962. when archaeological team came to conduct the excavations, some of the object's wall were already detrited (Zotović 1964, 3).

48 Gavrilović 2010, 177.

49 The sacristy of *Dolicheneum II* in Carnuntum was of a similar dimensions as the *sacrarium* in Brza Palanka-Egeta: its size was 3.30 × 3.10 m (Schwarzer 2012, 158).

50 Votive dedications to Jupiter Dolichenus on *tabulae ansatae* from the localities of Central Balkans' Roman provinces were found in: locality Jasen (two *tabulae ansatae*) (Merlat 1951, 43–44, n. 48, 49; Zotović 1966, 97–98, n. 38, 39; Horig M, Schwertheim 1987, 82, n. 104, 105; Bošković-Robert 2006, 54–55, n. 57, 58; Gavrilović 2010, 296, n. 89, 90).

51 The dedications of whole cohorts to Jupiter Dolichenus are known from: the castellum Saalburg (cohort II Raetorum), from the castellum Stockstadt (cohort I Aquitanorum), from the locality Micia in Dacia (cohort II Flavia) (Speidel 1978, 5–8).

52 Not only by the cohort I Cretum, but also maybe by legion XIII Gemina, which was present in two important centres of diffusion of Dolichenus' cult — Carnuntum and Apulum, and in the period of late antiquity, it's presence was confirmed in Egeta as well (Mirković 2015, 132; Collar 2013, 124).

53 Cf. footnote 40.



gree of readiness and ability of indigenous inhabitants to understand and accept the theology of the cult in question.<sup>54</sup> In that context, the question of the role of the priests of Jupiter Dolichenus, is most interesting and important — several priests of the god have been epigraphically confirmed in votive monuments from Central Balkans' Roman provinces and can be connected with the ritual practices in Egeta as well. We agree with H. Schwarzer that inscriptions where Dolichenus' priests are mentioned should be taken into account, because their presence was generally required for the cultic communities, which needed a meeting place — a *Dolicheneum*.<sup>55</sup> In the territory of Central Balkans' Roman provinces, priests of Jupiter Dolichenus have been confirmed in the inscriptions from Karataš (*Diana*), Arčar (*Ratiaria*), Vidin (*Iasen*), Gračanica, Kličevac (*Viminatium*) and Glamija (the vicinity of *Pontes*) and these are all localities where the existence of Dolichenus' sanctuaries can be assumed.<sup>56</sup> All the priests were of Eastern or Graeco-Eastern origin, analogous to Dolichenus' priests in other Roman provinces (which can be explained with the fact that their eastern origin ensured better knowledge of Dolichenus' theology and cult practices)<sup>57</sup> and in that context the monument from the locality Glamija (Rtkovo) is particularly interesting: from its text, we find out that Iulius Apollinaris was not only the priest of Jupiter Dolichenus, but the priest of the goddess Dea Syria as well.<sup>58</sup> Naturally, beside assumption about priests of eastern origin present in Egeta, we can with certainty presume that among active military members and veterans present in Egeta, were also men from Syria, familiar with the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus, who acquainted other soldiers with the god's cult. Unfortunately, nothing more can be said about the organization of the priesthood in Brza Palanka (social background, profession etc.), but analogous with the

priests in neighbouring Roman provinces, it would be no surprise if priestly function in Egeta was performed by soldiers in active service.<sup>59</sup> As for the rituals that took place in so-far not localized *dolicheneum* in Egeta, but probably situated near the military camp in the locality, they would have been similar to the ones in other parts of Roman Empire — the idol of the god could have been carried in a litter around the sanctuary, while the discovery of a triangular votive plaque and other cult objects in Egeta, confirms its role in ritual processions and religious community of the *cultores* of Jupiter Dolichenus, who were as brothers (*fraters*) joined together in cult practices and liturgical banquet celebrated in the honour of the god.<sup>60</sup> The main festival in the honour of the god could have take place in the period of early summer and beside main sacrifice, could have included fire sacrifices.<sup>61</sup> After the ritual of sacrificing the animal to Jupiter Dolichenus, ritual feast took place before which the right shank of the animal was set aside for the god, some body part of the carcass was reserved for the priest, while the *extra*<sup>62</sup> was boiled or grilled and eaten by Dolichenus' worshippers in a liturgical banquet, symbolizing their absorbing a part of the divine essence.<sup>63</sup> As inscriptions in cult objects from Egeta *sacrarium* of Jupiter Dolichenus imply, worshipers of the god were military personnel but civilians as well, which would further suggest joint cultic practice of soldiers and civilians, confirmed also in other parts of the Roman Empire.<sup>64</sup> We can presume, that as in all the parts of Roman Empire where Dolichenus' cult was confirmed, the god was in Egeta too venerated by soldiers for his protection on the battlefield, as a supreme deity of strength, invincibility and success. The security and safety that god brought to his adherents were certainly some of the reasons for civilian' veneration of the god, among other, possibly soteriological functions they also as-

54 Without any wish to enter here in elaboration of all mentioned factors, there are strong proofs that in the interior of Moesia Superior, Dolichenus' cult was venerated mostly by civilians (tradesmen, miners, administrative officials) who honoured god's functions as the protector of mines and miners, but also as the deity with iatric dimensions. We can't be sure how well god's theology and doctrine were known to the inhabitants in the interior of Central Balkans' Roman provinces, but whether they were well or not well acquainted with it, it maybe didn't make such a difference in their venerating the god. Following example is quite illustrative for previously mentioned: although the theology of Metroac cult wasn't certainly widely and well known by the inhabitants of the western parts of Central Balkans' Roman provinces, the iconography of Attis tristic was very popular on funerary monuments from the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and in some localities (in south-eastern parts of Roman province Dalmatia) it was even syncretised with the image of god Mithras.

55 Schwarzer 2012, 169–170.

56 Gavrilović 2010 (with all the previous literature cited), n. 86, n. 89, n. 97, n. 100; Gabričević 1987, 143.

57 Pompeus Isauricus, dedicant known from a votive inscription on a statue found in *sacrarium* in Egeta (Fig. 3) was of eastern origin, as dedicant Surianus from Ratiaria and probably Victor Demetri and Demetrius Ambibi sacerdotes from votive monument dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus from Ulpiana (Gavrilović 2010, 293–300). Votive monument from Kličevac is most interesting, because the inscription mentions precisely the dedicants' homeland: it is a province Syria Coele, region Cyrrhastica, village Capersin(a?) (Petrović 2004, 221).

58 The text of the inscription: D(is) M(anibus) | in memoria(m) Iul(ii) Apollinaris sacerdotis I(ovi) Dol(icheni) et Deae Syriae [---] (Gabričević 1987, 143). The priests of Jupiter Dolichenus and Dea Syria are mentioned also in inscriptions from Rome, CIL 465 and Apulum (Hörig, Schwertheim 1987, n. 154).

59 Speidel 1978, 76.

60 Of course, this is only hypothetical reconstruction of the Dolichenus' cult practice in military camp as Egeta was, because we would agree with P. Merlat that depending on the particular local characteristics in certain Roman province, the rites and cult practicing of the god's cult, certainly differed. Not to mention that there were possibly differences between the practicing of the cult rituals in dolichena of military character and dolichena of civil character (Merlat 1960, 205). We can't presume which animals were predominately sacrificed in ritual feasts of Jupiter Dolichenus in Egeta, since there are no finds of animal bones so far. However, analogous to other dolichena in Roman provinces, it can be presumed that animals sacrificed and eaten in the feasts (beside bull) were mostly sheep (majority of sheep was probably younger than one year) and less frequently goats, pigs etc. (Schwarzer 2012, 168; Pöllath, Peters 2011, 50–57).

61 Blömer 2015, 133. Sacrificial animal was led to the altar, where initial rites (*praefatio*) were performed by the priest who poured incense and wine on a fire lit on the altar, as can be seen on a lower part of a triangular votive plate from locality Jasen, where a priest is putting incense above the altar with fire. The consecration of the sacrificial animal to Jupiter Dolichenus was probably followed by sprinkling *mola salsa* (salted flour) on animal's back and little wine on animal's head and then purified animal was killed by the *victimarii* (Pöllath, Peters 2011, 50–57).

62 The so-called *extra* was actually meat of the sacrificial animal from the liver, lungs, gall bladder, peritoneum and the heart (Ekroth 2016, 329).

63 Merlat 1960, 202.

64 Stoll 2007, 469.

cribed to the deity. However, nothing more is known about the interaction between military and civilian on this particular locality in Danube Limes, except that certain details in discovered cult objects from Egeta imply solid knowledge of Dolichenus' theology and doctrine by his *cultores*. The emphasised Roman character of some cult objects from Egeta's *sacrarium* can be observed in certain details, like two times presented figure of the eagle (one eagle presented between bull's horns and the other eagle is presented beside the left leg of Juno Dolichena) together with the figure of Victoria in the sculptural composition of Jupiter Dolichenus and Juno Dolichena (Fig. 5) or an eagle carved on the rectangular base below the bull's belly (Fig. 4), analogous to the marble statuette of Jupiter Dolichenus from Marseille.<sup>65</sup> The hypothesis about ceremonial processions performed in the honor of god in Egeta is confirmed by the find of triangular votive plate which was, judging by the find of a similar triangular plate from Mauer an der Url in Noricum, mounted on a pole for the display during ceremonial procession.<sup>66</sup> The preserved height of the plate is 0.38 m (its lower register is missing) and the reconstruction of the plate shows that its whole height would have been around 0.50 m, which would allow the worshippers to clearly see the scenes depicted on the triangular plate during the procession.<sup>67</sup> Also, collective dedication on bronze *tabula ansata* from the entire unit *Cohors I Cretum* to Jupiter Dolichenus, implies not only god's popularity within the military, but a collective performance of a cohort although Dolichenus' cult was not an official one.<sup>68</sup> The dating of the finds from Dolichenus' *sacrarium* in Egeta confirms continuous tradition of venerating the god in the locality, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century to the second half or the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, since the cult objects were not only made in different workshops, but they were also modeled in different periods — a statuette of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull with a Greek dedication and a sculptural composition of god and his *paredra* with a dedication in Latin, could have come from certain unknown *dolicheneum*, since the traces of the plaster are visible on their back and represent a confirmation of its being attached to a wall of an object. Also, stylistic characteristics of cult finds imply that some were made in second century like a statuette of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull with a Greek dedication, while oth-

er objects, like bronze *tabula ansata*, are dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. However, regardless where or when the cult objects from Egeta were modeled, all these finds had the same purpose: to honor the ultimate authority of Jupiter Dolichenus, as a supreme deity both in earth and in heaven, they served to celebrated the power, protection and omnipotence of this *conservator totius poli*. As we already mentioned, the coin finds from Dolichenus' *sacrarium* in Egeta confirm that the cult of the god was still honored in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, precisely due to the find of Elagabalus' coin from 222. year, but we don't have any arguments for defining more closely the period of ceasing of Dolichenus cult.<sup>69</sup> Although I. Toth cites Dolichenus' *sacrarium* from Egeta among the sanctuaries of Jupiter Dolichenus on Danube limes which were destroyed because of their wealth by Maximus Thrax, we must oppose to the arguments which I. Toth gives for his assumption, because they are mentioned neither in the paper of D. Vučković Todorović who excavated the *sacrarium* in Egeta in 1962. year, nor by Lj. Zotović, to whom I. Toth refers.<sup>70</sup> However, we are not excluding the possibility that Egeta *sacrarium* of Jupiter Dolichenus could have been destroyed under the reign of Maximinus Thrax (but not in a fire as I. Toth writes). What can be said with considerable certainty is that the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus was very prominent among military personnel and civilians in locality Brza Palanka — Egeta, where probably most important sanctuary of god, with priesthood who performed regular ritual practices, existed in that particular region of Danube Limes. Concluding our preliminary study on the Dolichenus' *sacrarium* and the existence of *dolicheneum* in locality Brza Palanka (Egeta), cult objects found in it and possible ritual practices performed in the honour of god Jupiter Dolichenus, we should mention few other possible localities where not only the existence of a *Dolicheneum/Dolichena* should be expected, but also the same occurrence as in some of the localities where the sanctuaries of Jupiter Dolichenus were archaeologically confirmed — the existence of *mithraeum* or *mithraea*. The first locality in that context would be Karataš (*Diana*) where a votive altar dedicated to Iupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus was discovered in a niche, *extra muros* of the military fort. The confirmation of god Mithras' cult in Karataš is represented by two votive

65 Merlat 1951, n. 296; Hörig, Schwertheim 1987, n. 602. There is also a detail of presented dorsuale on bull's back on the fragmented statue of Jupiter Dolichenus (Fig. 3) which is not known in Near Eastern iconography, but is closely linked to the Roman sacrificial rites (Blömer 2011, 79).

66 Blömer 2011, n. 152–153; Blömer 2011, n. 294–295.

67 The triangular votive plate from locality Egeta and its iconographical analysis, cult meaning and context (comparing to the other similar finds of triangular votive plates from other Roman provinces), are the subject of a separate paper by the author of this paper. As it is known, majority of authors, starting from P. Merlat, agree in the opinion that triangular votive plates and votive bronze hands were carried on poles symbolizing the god to his worshippers during ceremonial rituals (Merlat 1960, 182, 204; Turcan 1996, 163–164).

68 Stoll 2007, 452.

69 The popularity of the cult of god Jupiter Dolichenus reached its climax during the reign of Severan dynasty, but due to several reasons among which the destruction of the Dolicheneum in Doliche by king Shapur I in 253. year represented the biggest blow to the god's cult, its demise was inevitable towards the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Analogous to other dolichena in the Roman Empire, we may presume that dolicheneum from Egeta also ceased to exist in the second half or at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

70 As the only argument for his hypothesis that Dolichenus' *sacrarium* in Egeta was destroyed in fire, I. Toth cites "the traces of calcification on the sculptural composition of Jupiter Dolichenus and Juno Dolichena" (mentioned by Zotović, Toth 1973, 111, ft. 43). However, the reasons for marble calcification can be numerous, the high temperatures can be just one of many other possible reasons for the calcification of the marble. I. Toth continues by stating that the finds from Egeta "were found scattered about the sanctuary" which is not how they were found, because both D. Vučković Todorović and Lj. Zotović write that all cult objects (except the marble head of mature bearded man with Phrygian hat) were found aligned by the interior wall of the object (Zotović, Toth 1973; Вучковић Тодоровић 1966, 1973; Zotović 1964, 3). I. Toth proceeds writing about "traces of willful destruction and fire", but there were no traces of destruction in the *sacrarium* nor were there traces of fire in any of the fragments of the archaeological material found in Dolichenus' *sacrarium* or walls of the object or in the ground of the object.

icons with the scene of tauroctony<sup>71</sup> and maybe on votive *arula* with two preserved letters D, M, which could be read as *Deo Mitrae*.<sup>72</sup> The second locality would be Arčar (*Ratiaria*), where four votive monuments dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus have been found,<sup>73</sup> of which one monument was erected by dedicant Arelus Surianus (cognomen *Surianus* could imply dedicant's oriental origin)<sup>74</sup> and the cause of the dedication is the restoration of god's sanctuary in Ratiaria.<sup>75</sup> Other marble votive reliefs with the scene of tauroctony, marble statuette of god Mithras and votive monument dedicated to *Sol Invictus Mithra*, were also discovered in Ratiaria.<sup>76</sup> The third locality would be Viminacium (*Viminatum*) with its wider territory, where previously mentioned votive monument of Jupiter Dolichenus dedicated by his priest was found, along with two marble sculptures of the god.<sup>77</sup> In that context, we should also mention votive monument with Greek inscription (unfortunately lost), also discovered in Viminacium, dedicated by an immigrant who came from the village *Hairomuta*, from the land of Doliche.<sup>78</sup> Other inscriptions from Viminacium also confirm inhabitants of oriental origin, like a Syrian from the village *Abdamrisu* or dedicants from villages *Siga* and *labanata*.<sup>79</sup> Other Asia Minor and Syrian cults are confirmed in Viminacium as well (like Metroac cult, cult of gods Sabazius and Jupiter Turmasgades)<sup>80</sup> and also the cult of god Mithras, to whom seven votive monuments are dedicated, along with the finds of marble votive icons with the scene of tauroctony.<sup>81</sup> A few other localities, like Čezava, Glamija near Kostol (*Pontes*), Ravna (*Timacum Minus*) and Gračanica, should be taken into the consideration as possible locations where sanctuaries of Jupiter Dolichenus could have existed, because of the epigraphic and anepigraphic finds connected to the god which were discovered there, but for the present we lack stronger arguments for that kind of assumption.<sup>82</sup>

71 On one votive icon, there is a damaged inscription (which would probably be read as D(eo) I(nvicto) M(itrhae)) and a scene of tauroctony, while on the other icon there is only the representation of the tauroctony act (Zotović 1973, 74–75, n. 96, 97).

72 Mirković 2015, 93.

73 Gavrilović 2010, 156–158, n. 84–87 (with further literature).

74 About the different opinions in literature about the origin of cognomen Surianus (Gavrilović 2010, 294).

75 Merlat 1951, n. 42; Zotović 1966, n. 30; Hörig, Schwertheim 1987, n. 109; Bošković-Robert 2006, n. 60; Gavrilović 2010, n. 84.

76 CIMRM II, n. 2225 – 2231; AE 1966, 344.

77 The votive monument dedicated to Iupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus, was found in the village Kličevac, in the vicinity of Viminacium (Petrović 2003–2004, 217–224). One fragmented marble statue of which a head of the deity is preserved (already mentioned in the upper text, because of its' iconographic and stylistic similarities to the marble head of the deity from Egeta) and fragmented marble statue of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull. Both statues are dated to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Gavrilović 2010, n. 102, 103).

78 The inscription was found in the vicinity of the locality Viminacium. The text of the inscription:  
 ΟυσΑΡΗΙ ΧΩΡΑ ΔΟ/ΛΙΧΕΟΝ ΚΟΜΕΣ/ΧΑΙΡΟΥΜΟ/ΥΤΑ  
 (Вулић, Ладек, Премештајн 1903, 85, n. 2; IMS II, n. 213).

79 Mirković 2010, 130.

80 Gavrilović 2010.

81 IMS II, n. 29–34, n. 308; Zotović 1973, 31–33, n. 36–41.

82 Already mentioned funerary monument from Glamija of Iulius Apollinaris, sacerdos of Jupiter Dolichenus and Dea Syria (Gabričević 1987, 144–145). In P. Petrović opinion, a group find of marble sculptures and votive reliefs found in 1934, in Roman civil settlement of Ravna (Timacum Minus), belonged to a Dolicheneum, which in author's opinion was situated close by to a sanctuary of goddess Diana (sanctuary of the goddess is epigraphically confirmed, but not by archaeological researches). Unfortunately, beside the fragmented statue of Jupiter Dolichenus on a bull, there is no epigraphic confirmation of Dolichenus' cult in Ravna. It is clear that because of the iconographical similarities between the statue from Ravna and one of the statues from sacrarium at Egeta, P. Petrović presumed that the statue from Ravna could have been brought by soldiers from the dolicheneum in Egeta (IMS III/2, 50). That hypothesis could be true due to the fact that such small finds were easy to transport. However, in our opinion, there is a great possibility of discovering in the future not only Dolicheneum, but also maybe the sanctuaries of other oriental deities as well in locality Ravna, like for example the sanctuary of god Sabazius (because of the votive monument dedicated to him found in the locality Kuline, in the vicinity of Ravna) (cf. Gavrilović 2010, 135–149, n. 73). Also, three votive monuments dedicated to god Mithras were found in the civil settlement in Ravna, which could imply the existence of a mithraeum too in that locality (IMS III/2, 42).

## ABBREVIATIONS

AE	<i>L'Année épigraphique</i> , Paris
CIMRM	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum et Monumentorum Religionis Mithriacae</i>
IMS	<i>Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure</i> I, II, III/2, IV, VI, 1976–1995

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

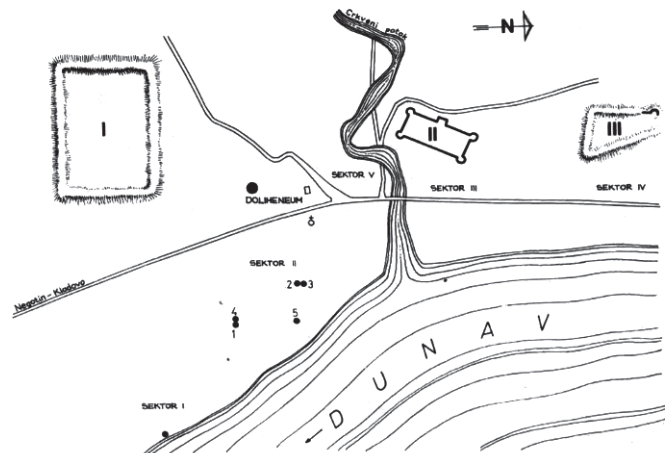
- Bánki 1981 — Z. S. Bánki, Heiligtum der Iuppiter Dolichenus, *Alba Regia* 19, 1981, 95–133.
- Blömer 2011 — M. Blömer, Die Stele von Doliche, in Winter, E. (ed.), *Von Kummuh nach Telouch: historische und archäologische Untersuchungen in Kommagene*, *Asia Minor Studien* 64, Dr. Rüdolf Habelt, 2011, 69–104.
- Blömer 2015 — M. Blömer, Religious Continuity? The Evidence from Doliche, in Blömer, M. Lichtenberger, A., Raja, R. (eds.), *Religious Identities in the Levant from Alexander to Muhammed. Continuity and Change*, Brepols Publishers, 2015, 129–142.
- Bošković-Robert 2006 — A. Bošković-Robert, *Le culte de Jupiter en Mésie supérieure*, PhD thesis, Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2006.
- Collar 2013 — A. Collar, *Religious Networks in the Roman Empire. The Spread of New Ideas*, Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Gavrilović 2010 — N. Gavrilović, *Kultovi maloazijskih i sirijskih božanstava u rimskim provincijama na centralnom Balkanu (The Cults of Asia Minor and Syrian deities in Roman provinces on Central Balkans)*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2010.
- Gavrilović 2015 — N. Gavrilović, Asia Minor and Syrian Cults and their Main Traits in the Territory of the Central Balkans, in Nikoloska, A., Müskens, S. (ed.), *Romanising Oriental Gods? New Finds and Novel Perspectives*, Makedonska akademija na naukite i umetnostite, University of Leiden, 2015, 333–356.
- Gavrilović Vitas 2019 — N. Gavrilović Vitas, Votive plaque of Jupiter Dolichenus from Egeta, *Zbornik Narodnog muzeja Beograd*, 24/1, 2019, 189–206.
- Ekroth 2016 — Gunnel Ekroth, Animal Sacrifice in Antiquity, in Campbell, G. L. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life*, Oxford University Press, 2016, 324–354.
- Hörig, Schwertheim 1987 — M. Hörig, E. Schwertheim, *Corpus Cultus Iovis Dolicheni*, Brill, 1987.
- Korać et al. — M. Korać, S. Golubović, N. Mrđić, G. Jeremić, S. Pop-Lazić, *Roman Limes in Serbia, Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, Institute of Archaeology Belgrade, 2014 / M. Korać, S. Golubović, N. Mrđić, G. Jeremić, S. Pop-Lazić, *Rimski Limes u Srbiji, Granice Rimskog carstva*, Arheološki institut Beograd, 2014.
- Marcu 2004 — F. Marcu, Military tile-stamps as a guide for the garrisons of certain forts, in Ruscu, L., Ciongradi, C., Ardevan, R., Roman, C., Găzduc, C. (ed.), *Dacia, Orbis Antiquus. Studia in honorem Ioannis Pisonis*, Nereamia napocae press, 2004, 570–594.
- Mastrocinque 2017 — A. Mastrocinque, *The Mysteries of Mithras: A Different Account*, Mohr Siebeck, 2017.
- Merlat 1951 — P. Merlat, *Répertoire des inscriptions et monuments figures du culte de Jupiter Dolichenus*, Librairie orientaliste P. Genthner, 1951.
- Merlat 1960 — P. Merlat, *Jupiter Dolichenus*, Presses Universitaires De France, 1960.
- Miclea, Florescu 1979 — I. Miclea, R. Florescu, *Tezauru transilvane la Kunsthistorisches Museum din Viena*, Meridiane, 1979.
- Mirković 1968 — M. Mirković, *Rimski gradovi na Dunavu u Gornjoj Meziji*, Arheološko društvo Jugoslavije, 1968.
- Mirković 1977 — M. Mirković, L. Marius Perpetuus consularis, *Živa Antika* 27, 1977, 443–448.
- Mirković 2011 — M. Mirković, Car i Iuppiter Dolichenus u Gornjoj Meziji, *Zbornik Matice Srpske za klasične studije* 13, 2011, 123–132.
- Mirković 2015 — M. Mirković, *Rimljani na Đerdapu. Istorija i natpisi*, Narodni muzej Zaječar, Muzej Krajine Negotin, 2015.
- Nemeti 2005 — S. Nemeti, *Sincretismul religios in Dacia Romana*, Ed. Presa Univ. Clujeană, 2005.

- Петровић 1984 — П. Петровић, Брза Паланка — Egeta. Извештај о археолошким истраживањима у 1980. година (антика), *Ђердапске свеске* 2, 1984, 153–166.
- Petrović 1986 — Brza Palanka — Egeta. Recherches archéologiques menées en 1981–82, *Ђердапске свеске* 3, 1986, 369–377.
- Petrović, Vasić 1996 — P. Petrović, M. Vasić, The Roman frontier in Upper Moesia: Archaeological Investigations in the Iron Gate Area — Main Results, in Petrović, P. (ed.), *Roman Limes on the Middle and Lower Danube*, Arheološki institut Beograd, 1996, 15–26.
- Petrović 2003–2004 — V. P. Petrović, Sacerdos of Jupiter Dolichenus from an inscription recently discovered in the vicinity of Viminacium, *Старинар* 53–54, 2004, 217–224.
- Petrović, Filipović 2015 — V. P. Petrović, V. Filipović, The First Cohort of Cretans, a Roman Military Unit at Timacum Maius, *Balkanica* 46, 2015, 33–39.
- Pöllath, Peters 2011 — N. Pöllath, J. Peters, “Smoke on the Mountain” — Animal Sacrifices for the Lord of Doliche, in Winter, E. (ed.), *Von Kummuh nach Telouch Historische und archäologische Untersuchungen in Kommagene*, Asia Minor Studien 64, Dr. Rudolf Habelt GmbH, 2011, 47–69.
- Pop-Lazić 1977 — P. Pop-Lazić, A Votive Plate of Jupiter Dolichenus Brza Palanka–Egeta, *Archaeologia Iugoslavica* 18, 1977, 41–44.
- Sanie 1981 — S. Sanie, *Culte orientale in Dacia Romana*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1981.
- Schwarzer 2012 — H. Schwarzer, Die Heiligtümer des Iuppiter Dolichenus, in: Blömer, M., Winter, E. (eds.), *Iuppiter Dolichenus. Vom Lokalkult zur Reichsreligion*, Orientalische Religionen in der Antike 8, Mohr Siebeck, 2012, 143–210.
- Speidel 1978 — M. P. Speidel, *The Religion of Iuppiter Dolichenus in the Roman Army*, Brill, 1978.
- Срејовић, Цермановић-Кузмановић 1987 — Д. Срејовић, А. Цермановић-Кузмановић, *Римска скулптура у Србији*, Српска академија наука и уметности, 1987 / D. Srejić, A. Cermanović-Kuzmanović, *Roman Sculpture in Serbia*, Serbian Academy of Science and Arts, 1987.
- Stoll 2007 — O. Stoll, The Religions of the Army, in Erdkamp, P. (ed.), *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007, 451–476.
- Tomović 1992 — M. Tomović, *Roman Sculpture in Upper Moesia*, Arheološki institut Beograd, 1992.
- Toth 1973 — I. Toth, Destruction of the Sanctuaries of Iuppiter Dolichenus at the Rhine and in the Danube Region (235–238), *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 25/1–2, 1973, 109–116.
- Turcan 1996 — R. Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, Blackwell, 1996.
- Васић 1982–1983 — М. Васић, Чезава — Castrum Novae, *Старинар* 33–34, 1984, 91–122.
- Вулић, Ладек, Премерштајн 1903 — Н. Вулић, Ф. Ладек, А. ф. Премерштајн, Антички споменици у Србији, *Споменик СКА* 39, 1903, 43–89.
- Вучковић-Тодоровић 1966 — Д. Вучковић-Тодоровић, Светилиште Јупитера Долихена у Брзој Паланци, *Старинар*, 25–26, 1964–1965, 1966, 173–182.
- Zotović 1964 — Lj. Zotović, *Likovne predstave orijentalnih božanstava na teritoriji Jugoslavije*, nepublikovana doktorska disertacija, odbranjena na katedri za arheologiju, Filozofski fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu, 1964.
- Zotović 1966 — Lj. Zotović, *Les cultes orientaux sur le territoire de la Mésie Supérieure*, Brill, 1966.
- Зотовић 1973 — Љ. Зотовић, *Митраизам на тлу Југославије*, Археолошки институт Београд, 1973.



FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2



**FIGURE 1**  
The map of  
Moesia Superior  
(Hörig, Schwertheim 1987,  
Abb. 6)

**FIGURE 2**  
The situation plan of Egeta  
(P. Petrović 1984,  
Fig. 141)

**FIGURE 3**  
The fragmented  
marble statue  
of Jupiter Dolichenus  
standing on a bull,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin.  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

**FIGURE 4**  
The fragmented  
marble statue  
of Jupiter Dolichenus  
standing on a bull,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin.  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

**FIGURE 5**  
The fragmented  
sculptural composition  
of Jupiter Dolichenus  
and Juno Dolichena,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin.  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

**FIGURE 6**  
Fragmented statue  
of Jupiter Dolichenus  
standing on a bull,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin.  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

FIGURE 3



FIGURE 4



FIGURE 5



FIGURE 6



FIGURE 7

FIGURE 8



FIGURE 9



FIGURE 11



**FIGURE 7**  
Marble head of  
a man with Phrygian hat  
(Jupiter Dolichenus?),  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

**FIGURE 8**  
Fragmented marble  
votive icon of god Mithras,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

**FIGURE 9**  
Bronze tabula ansata,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

**FIGURE 10A**  
Bronze holder  
for a signum,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

**FIGURE 10B**  
Bronze holder for a signum  
(Pop-Lazić 1977)

**FIGURE 11**  
Bronze statue of an eagle,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

FIGURE 10A

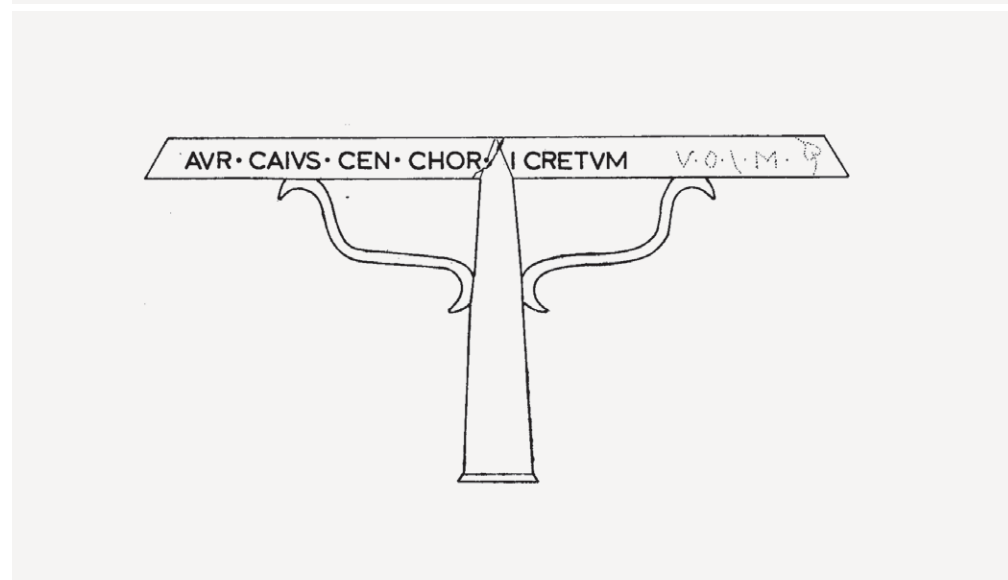


FIGURE 10B

FIGURE 12  
A



B



C



D



**FIGURE 12**  
Fragments of different  
marble sculptures  
and sculptural scenes  
and metal finds,  
Museum of Krajina,  
Negotin  
(N. Borić, S. Kostić)

F



E



G



**FIGURE 13A**  
Triangular bronze  
votive plate  
(archive of  
Historical Museum  
of Serbia)

**FIGURE 13B**  
Triangular bronze  
votive plate  
(Pop-Lazić 1977)



FIGURE 13A



FIGURE 13B



arheološki  
muzej  
u zagrebu  
archaeological  
museum  
in zagreb

250,00 kn

# am



# 2