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ON ANCIENT CULTS FROM THE SOUTH OF THE PROVINCE OF DALMATIA² *(A few examples from east Herzegovina)*

ABSTRACT. Statues that testify about the religiousness of the Roman citizens exist in east Herzegovina (south of the province of Dalmatia) as well as in all areas within the Roman Empire. The spiritual life of the citizens from the south of the province of Dalmatia (east Herzegovina) reflected in the respect for a significant number of cults. The religion of an ancient man from east Herzegovina is represented, above all, by modest archeological findings and epigraph statues. It manifested itself in the respect for a significant number of cults that relied on Illyrian tradition, Roman and oriental deities.

KEYWORDS: ancient cults; epigraph statues; the Roman Empire; the province of Dalmatia; east Herzegovina.

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After the Roman conquest of the east coastline of Adriatic Sea and its inland at the beginning of the 1st century AD, the Roman merchants, colonists and soldiers came to this area bringing all the achievements of the Roman civilization. The civilization permeated thought the locals in various ways and using various means. According to Pliny, the Romans were the most religious of all the people. The citizens respected always and everywhere the set cult rituals, offered sacrifices and directed their prayers to the union between men and gods in old Rome, which, consequently, led to a significant number of found and preserved sacrificial alters, votive inscriptions, reliefs and sculptures. The temples and sanctuaries were preserved as well as inscriptions testifying on their existence. Statues that testify about the religiousness of the Roman citizens exist in the area of east Herzegovina as well as in all areas which were within the Roman Empire (Plin. NH VI 56; Imamović, 1975/1976, pp. 13–26; Medini, 1976, pp. 185–207; Imamović, 1977, pp. 118–200; Bojanovski, 1988, p. 68).

The interest for the research and study of cult statues on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina emerged in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The biggest number of papers on the aforementioned problems was published in the Gazette of the National Museum in Sarajevo from 1888 till today. The scientific research focused on the aforementioned problems is ongoing even today because it was conditioned by new findings and thanks to that fact, the research could be more specific about the cults of individual deities (Radimsky, 1891, p. 191, pic. 47; Truhelka, 1892, p. 364; Patch, 1897, p. 644, pic. 8; Patsch, 1900, pp. 170–171; Patsch, 1902, pp. 317–319 pic. 15; Sergejevski, 1934, p. 25, pic. 37; Imamović, 1977, pp. 131, 146–147, 278–280, 362–363 pic. 92, 364, no. 96, 384–385, no. 130; 388–389, no. 36, 456, pic. 239, 456–457, pic. 240; Škegro, 1997, pp. 90 no. 30, 32; Šaćić, 2011, pp. 42–44, 46–47, 109–115, 139–140, 142–143, 146–147, 149; Marić, 2013, pp. 34–38).

The respect for Roman gods in the south of the province of Dalmatia as well as the absence of local cults resulted in early romanization. The Illyrians held on tightly to their old gods and cult rituals, but accepted those Roman deities which by their features were similar or identical to theirs. The locals, sapped by the romanization, accepted (partially) with time the respect for the Roman deities. These alignments of views on cults are known as *interpretation Romana*, which means that a local deity was named after a corresponding Roman deity (Rendić-Miočević, 1955, pp. 5–40;

Rendić-Miočević, 1967, pp. 139–156; Medini, 1976, p. 185; Medini, 1984, pp. 19–26; Bojanovski, 1988, p. 68). It is believed that this process started in the 1st century BC. The best example of *interpretation Romana* is the cult of a local god of woods and nature called *Vidasus* who became the Roman god called *Silvanus* in Dalmatia. It can be assumed that these processes affected greatly the dying away of the locals' tradition (Rendić-Miočević, 1955, pp. 5–40; Imamović, 1975/76, pp. 13–26; Imamović, 1977, pp. 118–200; Medini, 1984, pp. 19–26; Rendić-Miočević, 1989, pp. 461–521; Љубомирковић, 2016, pp. 181–205).

Given the fact that there are not enough archeological and epigraph sources to testify on the religion of the people in east Herzegovina, we can learn more about it using analogy with neighboring areas. The Romans were tolerant with the religion and cults of the people they took in the Empire and did not forbid the respect for locals' deities. They only asked of them to recognize and respect the cult of Capitoline Triad, i.e., Jupiter, Juno and Minerva as the three most important deities in the Roman pantheon (Rendić-Miočević, 1955, pp. 5–40; Medini, 1976, p. 185; Imamović, 1977, pp. 118–200; Medini, 1984, pp. 19–26; Rendić-Miočević, 1989, pp. 461–521).

The basic materials used for collecting data about the religion of the population in the south of Dalmatia are sacrificial alters with votive inscriptions and iconographic representations on statues (Mayer, 1932, p. 110; Mayer, 1942, p. 187; Rendić-Miočević, 1955, pp. 5–40; Paškvalin, 1963, pp. 127–128; Raknić, 1965, pp. 85–86; Гарашанин, 1967, pp. 180–182; Medini, 1976, pp. 185–187; Imamović, 1977, pp. 118–200; Марић, 2003, pp. 9–18, 87).

The most respected deity in Rome and all the regions where the Romans lived was the supreme and main deity – Jupiter Capitolinus (*Iuppiter Optimus Maximus*). Every Roman settlement in the south of Dalmatia worshipped his cult. The damaged inscription dedicated to this deity can be found on the fragment of sacrificial alter which was found in Crkvine, Hodovo, Stolac (Sergejevski, 1934, pp. 24–25 no. 37; Imamović, 1977, pp. 362–363 pic. 95; Šačić, 2011, pp. 146–147). The preserved part of the text goes: *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) [- - -]oi / [- - -] / [- - -]* (ILJug 1910).

The second inscription mentioning Jupiter Capitolinus was found in Trijebanj, Stolac (Radimsky, 1891, p. 191, pic. 47; Truhelka, 1892, p. 364; Imamović, 1977, pp. 362–363 pic. 92; Šačić, 2011, pp. 147–148). Its text goes: *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) [- - -] (?) / P(ublius) Ael(ius)*

Se[ve]/rus l[ib(en)]s / p(osuit) (CIL III 12776). The dedicant's name is *Aelius*, which leads to the conclusion that his ancestors or he alone became Roman citizens during Hadrian's rule (117–138) or Antoninus Pius's (138–161) (Radimsky, 1891, pp. 191, pic. 47; Truhelka, 1892, p. 364; Imamović, 1977, pp. 362–363, pic. 92; Šačić, 2011, pp. 147–148).

The third inscription with Jupiter Capitolinus was found in Oklade, Stolac (Patsch, 1900, pp. 170–171 pic. 1; Imamović, 1977, pp. 130–131, 362 pic. 94; Škegro, 1997, p. 90 no. 32; Šačić, 2011, p. 149). Its text goes: *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / Iul(ius) Hercu(lanus) / be(ne)ff(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis) leg(ionis) / I Ital(icae)* (CIL III 14631). A consular beneficiary whose name is *Iulius* is found with the inscription. A. Šačić thinks he is a stranger because this family name was more common with the population from Gallia (Šačić 2011, 149), where Jupiter was a highly worshipped deity and was equated with local deities (Imamović, 1977, p. 131; Šačić, 2011, pp. 146–147, 149). The statue dates to the end of the 2nd century (CBFIR 487). E. Imamović assumes that every municipium on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina had one temple dedicated to Jupiter. Even though there is not solid evidence, it can be assumed that there was such a temple on the territory of Diluntum municipium. The connection between the structure of the municipium and the cult of this deity on the territory of east Herzegovina is best reflected in the fact that Jupiter's sacrificial alters were found only in Diluntum (Imamović, 1977, pp. 130–131. Уп. Šačić, 2011, p. 144).

However, besides Stolac, one sacrificial alter dedicated to Jupiter was found in Cerići near Konjic as well (Patsch, 1902, pp. 317–318 sl. 14; Imamović, 1977, p. 364, sl. 96; Šačić, 2011, pp. 44, 109–110; Marić, 2013, p. 34). Its text goes: *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / Petroni(us) / Maximin(us) / et Severus* (CIL III 14617, 1). The statue dates to the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century and his dedicants were Petronius Maximus and Severus (Šačić, 2011, pp. 44, 109–110). K. Patsch saw the name *Petronius* as praenomen (Patsch, 1902, p. 318), while Šačić, with every right, emphasizes that it is about a non-Empire nomen. As for the dedicant's cognomen, *Severus* can be found among the people of oriental descend while cognomen *Maximinus* among the people of Italian descend (Šačić, 2011, pp. 44, 109–110).

An epigraph statue dedicated to Mars was found on the territory of Stolac, near the military barracks (Truhelka, 1892, p. 350 no. 2; Patsch, 1900, p. 171; Imamović, 1977, pp. 388–389, no. 136; Škegro,

1997, p. 90 no. 30; Šačić, 2011, pp. 42–43, 142–143). The inscription goes: *Marti Aug(usto) / T(itus) Ael(ius) Firmi/nus b(ene)ff(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis) / leg(ionis) XIII G(eminae) / v(otum) s(olvit) m(erito) l(ibens)* (CIL III 8431= CBFIR 485). Its dedicant was Titus Aelius Firminus, a consular beneficiary from XIV *Gemina* legion. Mars's name is attributed by *Augustus*, which occurs often on votive statues dedicated to this deity (Patsch, 1900, pp. 170; Imamović, 1977, pp. 146–147; Šačić, 2011, pp. 42–43, 142–143). A sacrificial alter has been dated differently in modern historiography. A. Šačić puts the inscription in the 2nd-3rd century (Šačić, 2011,4 pp. 2–43, 142–143). K. Patsch thinks the sacrificial alter was being built between Septimus Severus's rule (193–211) and Gordian I's (from 22 March 238 to 12 April 238) (Patsch, 1900, p. 172). The publishers of the corpus of beneficiaries' inscriptions decided to put it in the 2nd century (CBFIR 485).

The confirmation of the respect for the cult of the goddess Iuno can be found on a votive statue in Potoci near Mostar (Patsch, 1904, pp. 38–39 no. 6; Patsch, 1904, pp. 270–271 fig. 142; Imamović, 1977, pp. 384–385, pic. 130; Šačić, 2011, pp. 44–45, 139–140). Its text goes: *Deae Iuno/ni sancta(e) / aram posu/it Iunia / Varena* (ILJug 1742 = AE 1906, 0185). The dedicant of the sacrificial alter was a female person of Italic descend, Iuna Varena. Her nomen *Iunia* is relatively rare in the western Balkans. Cognomen *Varena* is Italic and therefore it is possible that the person moved to the valley of the Neretva River. It is believed that *Iunia Varena* invested her own money into the erection of the statue, which points to the conclusion that certain women in the ancient times experienced certain social and economic independence (Šačić, 2011, pp. 44–45, 139–140).

Oriental cults, besides the Roman ones, can be found in the south of Dalmatia. LJ. Zotović observes, guided by archeological materials, that the oriental religion appears in the Roman provinces with the romanization at the same time. She states that the military was not the main means used to spread Mithraism, but slaves and then the freed who worked as customs officers and thus spread the cult of the Persian deity (Zotović, 1973, p. 133). E. Imamović explains the existence of oriental cults in Rome as the result of more superior position of the East compared to Rome. He thinks that the followers of these cults should be sought among the people who worshipped these as their national cults (Imamović, 1977, pp. 277–286). By providing a comprehensive survey of Mithra's statues in Dalmatia, V. Gabričević sees the penetration of oriental cults into these regions

as historic necessity, i.e., process. He concludes in the end that the spread of these cults in the West must not be seen as the result of the arrival of huge number of oriental peoples and the spread of their national tradition (Gabričević, 1953, p. 144; Gabričević, 1954, p. 37). V. Paškvalin says that the spread of oriental cults contributed significantly to economic, social and political circumstances in the Roman Empire. He thinks that they were spread by soldiers, slaves and merchants (Paškvalin, 1963, pp. 146–147). The cult of Mithra was the most present cult of all the oriental cults in Dalmatia. M. Garašanin thinks that it was spread by soldiers, slaves and the freed and thus implemented by the locals (Гарашанин, 1967, p. 190). G. Lipovac Vrkljan sees the emergence of Mithraism in Dalmatia as the consequence of the romanization in urban centers, highly trafficked areas and centers of the Roman administration (Lipovac-Vrkljan, 2001, pp. 125–140, 158–163). J. Medini thinks that Mithraism developed in the coastal area of Dalmatia under the influence of lower social classes of oriental descend (Medini, 1976, pp. 185–207). K. Patch and R. Marić think that the cult of Mithra was brought to Rome in the 1st century BC by the prisoners who Pompey brought after the war with pirates in 67 BC. Mithraism is spreading at that time among European provinces. It is probable that at the same time, or a bit later, Mithra's followers emerged in the south of Dalmatia (Patch, 1897, pp. 629–656; Марић, 2003, p. 89).

Four Mithra statues were found in Herzegovina in the area of the Neretva River upstream (Imamović, 1977, p. 452 no. 237; Šačić, 2011, pp. 46, 111–115; Marić, 2013, pp. 35–38). The text of the first one, from Potok near Mostar, goes: *Deo S/oli Invicto / Meter[ae] (!) Aur(elius) Maximinus / Flavi(us) Marcellinus / Flavi(us) Marcellus*. It is followed by a graffiti: *Romanus / Marcianus [- - -] IV / [- - -] p/ini[us] II ficus X* (ILJug 112 = AE 1906, 0184). K. Patch says that this votive statue is the example of a primitive form of provincial epigraph due to the fact that it was not made in some stonemason's workshop but by one of three men who are mentioned on the statue (Patch, 1904, pp. 35). The authors of the graffiti signed themselves as Roman and Marcian. These two names are rare in the territory of east Herzegovina and it is assumed they belonged to the freed. Graffiti are one of the forms of artistic expression of the Roman lower social classes, which is for A. Šačić a proof that the people who built this votive statue were from lower social classes. The graffiti was damaged, but Šačić deciphered words *pinus* (pine) and *ficus* (fig) as religious symbols of Mithra (Šačić, 2011, pp. 45, 139).

A votive statue found in the 19th century in Konjic is also dedicated to the oriental deity Mithra. Its text goes: *Deo Soli Inv[ict]o Meter[ae] (!)* (CIL III 14617). The names of the dedicants are not stated and therefore it is possible that the statue and the entire sanctuary were built with the money from some community (Patch 1897, p. 636; Imamović, 1977, p. 454 no. 238; Šačić, 2011, pp. 46, 111). The text was carved on the arch placed above the relief showing the cult of Mithra. It is one of the most beautiful relief statues found in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The name of the deity is written as *Meteras*, which was also the case with the statue from Potok near Mostar. It is believed it is a local occurrence which is typical only for the Neretva River upstream. The statue is from the 4th century (Imamović, 1977, p. 278–280; Šačić, 2011, pp. 46, 111).

A simpler structure appears on a third Mithra votive statue from Konjic. The statue was made following the model of votive are dedicated to the Roman deities (Patch, 1897, p. 644, pic. 8; Imamović, 1977, p. 456, pic. 239; Šačić, 2011, pp. 46, 112–113). Its text goes: *S(oli) I(nvicto) M(ithrae) / V[e]tur(ius) / Lucius / v(otum) s(olvit)* (CIL III 14222, 1). A. Šačić says that a mistake crept in and the provincial stonemason carved a letter F instead of a letter E (Šačić, 2011, pp. 46, 112–113). A personal name (*praenomen*) cannot be found in the inscription while the family name (*nomen*) *Veturius* is very rare in Dalmatia. Therefore, it is believed that *Veturius Lucius* was an immigrant to the valley of the Neretva River. The statue is from the 4th century (Šačić, 2011, pp. 46, 113).

The cult of Mithra was found in Lisičići near Konjic. A votive statue with a relief plate and an inscription was found there (Patch, 1902, pp. 318–319, pic. 15; Imamović, 1977, pp. 456–457, pic. 240; Šačić, 2011, pp. 47, 114–115). Its text goes: *L(ucius) Antonius Menander Aphro/disieys (!) (i)nvicto / Aug(usto) v(otum) f(ecit)* (CIL III 13859 = ILJug 1748). The relief shows Mithra killing a bull. The dedicant *Lucius Antonius Menander* was from *Aphrodisieus* in *Caria*. His cognomen *Menander* is Greek and his nomen *Antonius* is from a distinguished Roman plebeii family of *Antonius*. He was probably a freed man who got his nomen from his previous owner. Stating the place of origin was very common among the freed. Given the fact that a word *Aphrodisieus* was carved in Greek with epsilon instead of a Latin U, it is assumed that the stonemason was a foreigner or *Lucius Antinius Menander* was a dedicant and a stonemason for the statue at the same time. The statue is from the 4th century (Imamović, 1977, p. 456; Šačić, 2011, pp. 47, 114–115).

The tombstones from the south of Dalmatia often had iconographic representations of the god Attis, in short underarm chiton, with his legs crossed, wearing a hat and leaning against a cane. He is iconographically closely related to the cult of Mithra. However, one more deity, very similar to Attis, can be found on tombstones from this area. Its pose is similar, but it is naked and it has wings with a torch in the hand. It is believed it is the genius of death (Вулић, 1941/1948, p. 138, no. 303; 140, no. 307; Гарашанин, 1967, p. 191).

Mosaics and frescoes from Panik (Bileća) are highly significant in the late Empire due to preserved symbolic representations of then unrecognized Christianity. This location, which is the part of the inland area of Adriatic Sea, recognized Christianity early, which proves the strong influence of the East (Čremošnik, 1974, pp. 243–247). During the research (from 1957 to 1967) in the valley of the Trebišnjica river, the remains of the Roman ruins in Crkvine in Panik were studied. A luxurious villa was discovered. The villa was consisted of few construction complexes and had an agricultural settlement in immediate vicinity, on Dračevo side. The remains of mosaics and frescoes from the 3rd and 4th centuries were found in the luxurious villa. In the age when Christianity was not recognized by the state, Christian symbols were hidden under pagan representations which had the same or similar messages. One of the most present symbols is the representation of Orpheus, partially preserved on a mosaic in the north wing of the construction complex of U building where the rooms for social gatherings could be found. The very room, where the representation of Orpheus can be found, is basically shaped as a cross, which sets it apart from all the other rooms. The picture of Orpheus surrounded by animals is partially preserved. His head is damaged, but the fragments of the Phrygian cap are visible. He was represented in a green tunic with a red belt, draped in a red cape and turned right with the lyre in his right hand. A string of crosses is visible on his right arm's sleeve. There are a snake and a bull to Orpheus's right side and fragments of some animal's legs to his left side. The fields surrounding Orpheus represent a leopard, a billy goat and a bird. It is believed that he symbolizes God as the shepherd of his flock. The representation of Muse visible on the mosaic before the representation of Orpheus can be categorized as Christian as well. She has feathers on her head and it is assumed that symbolizes Orpheus's knowledge and wisdom, as a personification of Jesus Christ (Čremošnik, 1965,

pp. 174–175; Čremošnik, 1974, pp. 243–247; Čremošnik, 1976, pp. 65–70).

The frescoes in Panik show traces which point to Christian symbols. It is about parts of a naked figure of some deity with two right hand's fingers raised. Given that this gesture is frequent in early Christianity and characterizes blessing, it is believed that this representation carries the message of Jesus Christ, the teacher and the ruler of the world. The representations on mosaics and frescoes from the tomb in Panik can be described as illusionistic style, which appeared in the Roman painting from the 3rd century (Čremošnik, 1974, pp. 243–247; Čremošnik, 1976, pp. 65–70). A small church built in the 6th century above the construction complex points to the early presence of Christianity in the area of Panik. A medieval graveyard was formed around it (which influenced the name of the complex – Crkvine) (Popović, 1973, pp. 347–363).

CONCLUSION The paper presents data on ancient cults from the south of the province of Dalmatia (east Herzegovina). The corpus was comprised of data on religiousness of the people in the south of the province Dalmatia collected from sacrificial alters with votive inscriptions and iconographic representations on statues. These findings have a significant historic value due to the fact that they describe more precisely the religion of the people from the areas of east Herzegovina in ancient times.

The statues that testify on religiousness of the Roman citizens exist in the areas of east Herzegovina as well as in all areas within the Roman Empire. We learn about the religion of an ancient man from east Herzegovina, above all, from modest archeological findings and epigraph statues. It manifested itself through the respect for the cults that relied on Illyrian tradition, Roman and oriental deities. The Roman cults emerge with the romanization of the province, first in urban centers where the Roman lifestyle is most visible and present. The locals, sapped by the romanization, accepted (partially) with time the respect for Roman deities. These precise cult alignments are known as *interpretation Romana*, which means that a local deity was replaced by the name of a corresponding Roman deity. The Illyrian gods were gradually replaced through the process of romanization by the Roman ones and therefore they can be found on the statues under their Roman names. For example, Vidasus was a local god, but was replaced by the Roman Silvanus. Epigraph statues from urban centers from the south of province of Dalmatia

(Hodovo near Stolac, Oklade near Stolac, Trijebanj near Stolac, Potoci near Mostar, Lisičići near Konjic, Panik near Bileća) testify on Roman and eastern cults which were worshipped at the time. It can be said that the oriental cults, incorporated with the Roman religion, were integral part of the Roman culture for the people in the south of Dalmatia (east Herzegovina). These cults were not independent, but, just like local cults, became integral part of the polytheistic religious system of the province.

ABBREVIATIONS	AE	L'Année épigraphique. Revue des publications épigraphiques relatives à l'Antiquité romaine, Paris 1980.
	CIL	Corpus Inscriptiones Latinarum, Berolini 1873.
	GZM BiH	Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini, Sarajevo 1891, 1892, 1897, 1900, 1902, 1904, 1953, 1955, 1963, 1973, 1976.
	ILJug	Šašel, A. et J., (1963). Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia Inter annos MCMXL et MCMLX repertae et editae sunt. Ljubljana: 5, Narodni muzej Slovenije. Šašel, A. et J., (1986). Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMII et MCMXL repertae et editae sunt. Ljubljana: Situla 25, Narodni muzej Slovenije.
	VAHD	Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku, Split 1932, 1942.
	WMBH	Wissenschaftliche Mittheilungen aus Bosnien und der Herzegowina, Wien 1904.

SOURCES	L'Année épigraphique, (1980). Revue des publications épigraphiques relatives à l'Antiquité romaine. Paris.
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ГЛИГОР М. САМАРЏИЋ

УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ У ПРИШТИНИ СА ПРИВРЕМЕНИМ СЕДИШТЕМ
У КОСОВСКОЈ МИТРОВИЦИ, ФИЛОЗОФСКИ ФАКУЛТЕТ
КАТЕДРА ЗА ИСТОРИЈУ

РЕЗИМЕ

О АНТИЧКИМ КУЛТОВИМА СА ЈУГА ПРОВИНЦИЈЕ ДАЛМАЦИЈЕ
(НЕКОЛИКО ПРИМЈЕРА ИЗ ИСТОЧНЕ ХЕРЦЕГОВИНЕ)

У раду се презентују подаци о античким култовима на југу провинције Далмације. На подручју источне Херцеговине (југ провинције Далмације) као и у свим подручјима која су била у саставу Римског царства налазе се споменици који свједоче о религиозности римских грађана. Духовни живот становника на југу провинције Далмације (источна Херцеговина) огледао се у поштовању значајног броја култова. Религију античког човјека источне Херцеговине познајемо, прије свега, по скромним археолошким налазима и епиграфским споменицима (Јупитер Ка-

питолски, Марс, Јунона, Митрин култ). Она се манифестовала кроз поштовање значајног броја култова који су се ослањали на илирску традицију, римска и оријентална божанства.

Кључне ријечи: антички култови, епиграфски споменици, Римско царство, провинција Далмација, источна Херцеговина.



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