

ILLYRICA



ANTIQUA

IN HONOREM DUJE RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ŠIBENIK 12th–15th SEPTEMBER 2013



Department of Archaeology
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

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Titul Aplina Bardurija, Pladomenovog sina / Titulus of Aplis Bardurius, son of Pladomenus
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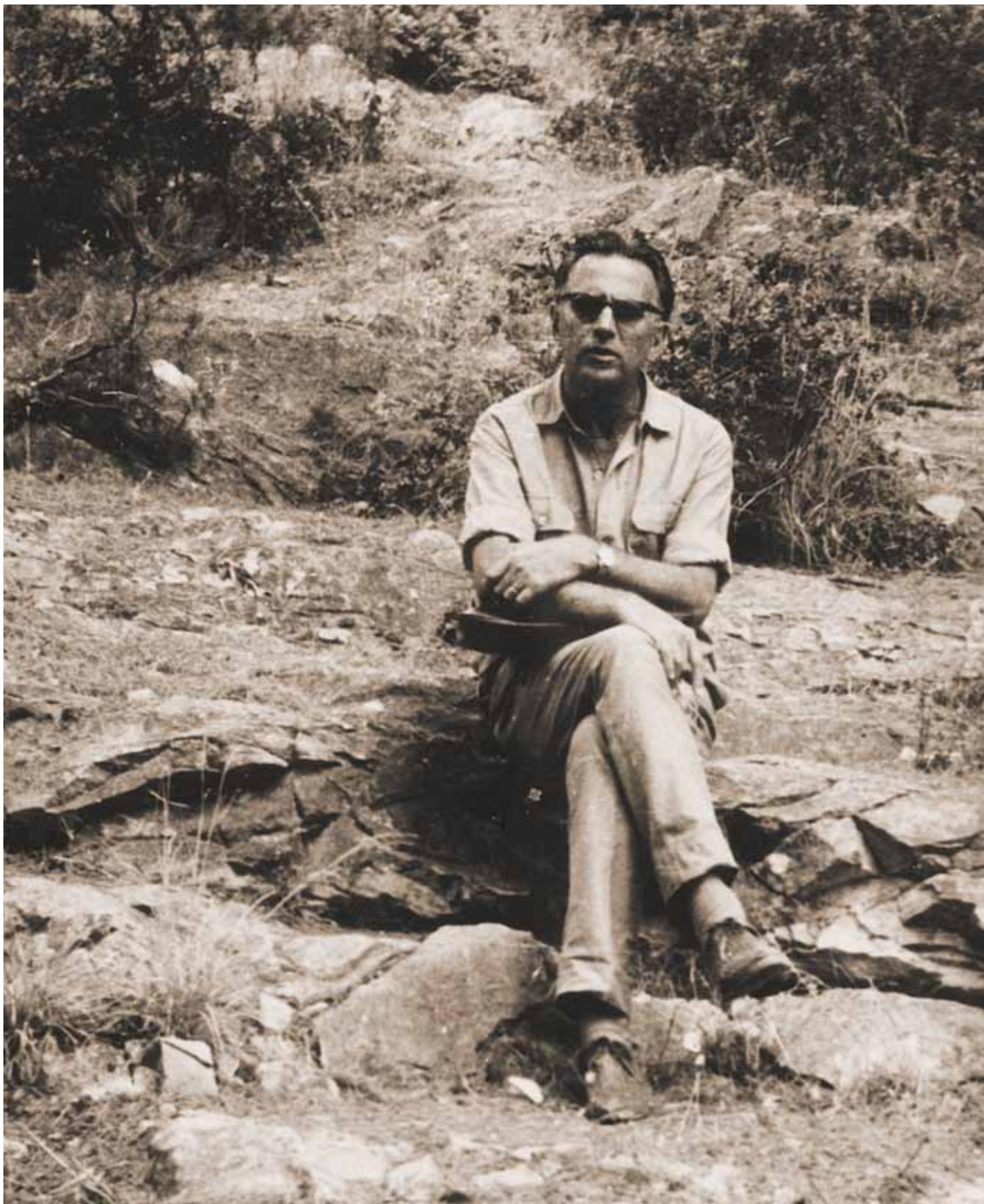
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Duje Rendić-Miočević

SADRŽAJ / CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| Dino Demicheli PREDGOVOR / FOREWORD | 8 |
| Radoslav Katičić DUJE RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ I ILIRSKA ANTROPONIMIJA | 13 |
| Nenad Cambj DUJE RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ I KNJIŽEVNI KRUG SPLIT | 19 |
| Ivan Mirnik OUR PROFESSOR DUJE RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ | 29 |
| Marin Zaninović ZAŠTO RIDER? | 37 |
| Aleksandra Faber URBANE ZNAČAJKE U LOKACIJI I RASTERU ARHITEKTURE ANTIČKOG RIDERA (DANILO KOD ŠIBENIKA) | 49 |
| Vera Bitrakova-Grozdanova DASSARETES ET LYCHNIDIENS – NOUVELLES SOURCES ÉPIGRAPHIQUES ET NUMISMATIQUES | 69 |
| Maja Miše THE HELLENISTIC WARE FROM THE INDIGENOUS NECROPOLIS AT GRADINA IN DRAGIŠIĆ NEAR ŠIBENIK, CROATIA | 83 |
| Dinko Radić, Igor Borzić EXCAVATION OF THE NECROPOLIS OF THE KOPILA HILLFORT NEAR BLATO ON THE ISLAND OF KORČULA – PRELIMINARY REPORT | 105 |
| Toni Brajković, Željko Krnčević, Emil Podrug HISTORIJAT ARHEOLOŠKIH ISTRAŽIVANJA U DANILU | 121 |
| Marija Buzov LA DOCUMENTAZIONE ARCHEOLOGICA DEGLI SCAVI A DANILO CONSERVATA PRESSO L'ISTITUTO DI ARCHEOLOGIA DI ZAGABRIA - LE RICERCHE DI DUJE RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, GIÀ MEMBRO DELL'ACCADEMIA CROATA DI SCIENZE, LETTERE ED ARTI | 135 |
| Marco Hubert Campigotto THE PSEPHISMA OF LUMBARDA: A NEW READING OF FRAGMENT N | 157 |
| Kornelija A. Giunio A CAPTAIN FROM NICOMEDIA ON A GREEK INSCRIPTION FROM ZADAR | 165 |

SADRŽAJ / CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| Marjeta Šašel Kos THE <i>STATI</i> OF RISINIUM | 171 |
| Bojan Lazinica, Dražen Maršić FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF THE NEW LIBURNIAN <i>CIPPUS</i> FROM RAB. ARBA - NEW PRODUCTION CENTER OF LIBURNIAN <i>CIPPI</i> | 187 |
| Hrvoje Manenica TWO SUNDIALS FROM NARONA | 201 |
| Nikola Cesarik, Ivo Glavaš <i>COHORTES I ET II MILLIARIA DELMATARUM</i> | 209 |
| Tomasz Dziurdzik THE RELATION OF LATE ROMAN <i>EQUITES DALMATIAE</i> TO DALMATIA | 223 |
| Manfred Hainzmann <i>NAVALE, -IS</i> : SCHIFFSHEILIGTUM ODER INKUBATIONSHALLE? ÜBERLEGUNGEN ZUR ANTIKEN BAUTERMINOLOGIE | 235 |
| Mirjana Sanader, Dino Demicheli THE EARLY CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF <i>OSTIARIUS</i> ON AN UNPUBLISHED SARCOPHAGUS WITH THE INSCRIPTIONS FROM ŠUPLJA CRKVA SITE IN SOLIN (<i>SALONA</i>) | 253 |
| Lorenzo Calvelli, Francesca Crema, Franco Luciani THE NANI MUSEUM: GREEK AND LATIN INSCRIPTIONS FROM GREECE AND DALMATIA | 265 |
| Ante Rendić-Miočević OPAŽANJA O NEKOLIKO NEOBJAVLJENIH ILI NEDOVOLJNO POZNATIH SILVANOVIH KULTNIH SLIKA | 291 |
| Ivan Basić <i>DALMATIAE, DALMATIARUM</i> : A STUDY IN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE ADRIATIC (IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW INSCRIPTION FROM CORDOBA) | 309 |
| Danijel Dzino SCULPTOR MAXIMINUS AND HIS IMAGES OF THE GODDESS DIANA AND THE GIRL LUPA FROM THE DALMATIAN HINTERLAND | 335 |
| Ljubica Perinić SILVANUS' ATTRIBUTE FROM THE TRILJ MONUMENT | 345 |
| Toni Brajković RELIEF DEPICTIONS AND MOTIFS ON RIDER TOMBSTONES | 357 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Jovan J. Martinović <i>MVNICIPIVM S() E/OVVERO MVNICIPIVM R()</i> | 373 |
| Robert Matijašić ROMANISATION OF THE HISTRI IN THE EARLY ROMAN PERIOD | 379 |
| Inga Vilogorac Brčić THE <i>TAUROBOLIUM</i> AND <i>CRIOBOLIUM</i> IN DALMATIA | 391 |
| Phyllis Culham THE DEEP ROOTS OF ROMAN COUNTERINSURGENCY IN ILLYRICUM 6-9 C.E. | 401 |
| Ivan Radman-Livaja THE ISSUE OF PEREGRINE POLYONYMY ON SISCIA LEAD TAGS | 413 |
| Maja Zeman ROMAN ARCHITECTURAL COMPLEX AT STARI ŠEMATORIJ IN DANILO (<i>RIDER</i>) – THE ISSUE OF FUNCTION | 425 |
| Alenka Miškec MONETARY CIRCULATION IN ISTRIA IN ANTIQUITY: THE FIRST AND SECOND CENTURIES AD | 449 |
| Tomislav Bilić PRE-IMPERIAL COINAGE FROM SISAK | 457 |
| Iva Kaić ROMAN INTAGLIOS WITH INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN ZAGREB | 479 |
| Alexander Minchev UNUSUAL EARLY CHRISTIAN MARBLE CROSS-SHAPED RELIQUARY FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF VARNA | 487 |
| Branka Migotti ROMAN SARCOPHAGI OF NORTHERN CROATIA FEATURING PECULIAR ICONOGRAPHIES | 499 |
| Jakov Vučić STONEMASON WORKSHOPS IN THE ROMAN PROVINCE OF DALMATIA DURING LATE ANTIQUITY | 515 |
| Bajram Doka ILLYRIAN LANGUAGES IN ALBANIAN DIALECTS | 533 |

Iva Kaić

ROMAN INTAGLIOS WITH INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN ZAGREB

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Within the glyptic collection of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, there is a small group of gems with Latin inscriptions, consisting of 7 intaglios and 2 glass intaglios. These intaglios are mainly stray finds acquired for the Museum collection in the course of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. One intaglio has no record of the site it was found, while six other intaglios and two glass intaglios have been found at sites in present-day Croatia and Serbia, which once belonged to the Roman provinces of Pannonia, Dalmatia and Moesia Superior. They can be dated between the 1st and 4th centuries CE.

Keywords: intaglios, engraved gems, glass intaglios, Latin inscriptions, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, glyptic collection, Roman Imperial period, Late Antiquity

Within the collection of Roman engraved gems from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, there is a small group of intaglios with Latin inscriptions.¹ It consists

¹ The collection of Roman engraved gems from the Archaeological museum in Zagreb consists of more than 400 gems, which were only partially published, often without photographs or drawings. Four intaglios and one glass gem with Latin inscriptions were first published by Š. Ljubić in 1876 (Ljubić 1876: 73, no. 3-4; 74, no. 5-7. During the recent examination of the glyptic collection intaglio no. 5 and glass gem no. 6 could not be found.). The first descriptive catalogue of 127 engraved gems (without photographs or drawings), which were a part of the initial museum collection, was published by F. Maixner in 1881 (Maixner 1881a; Maixner 1881b). In 1941 M. Šeper published the magical gems from Yugoslavia, and among them four magical gems from the Archaeological museum in Zagreb as well (Šeper 1941: 10, no. 7-8; 12-13, no. 15; 13, no. 16). Later on, the gems were published sporadically, selected either according to the motifs depicted on them (Degmedžić 1958; Zazoff 1968: 137-138, no. 291, pl. 53) or as part of the several exhibitions catalogues (Rendić-Miočević 1987: 141, no. 37; 162, no. 77; 189, no. 128; 190, no. 131; 204, no. 158; 205, no. 161; Nemeth-Ehrlich 1993: 160-164, no. 213, 214, 216-219, 226, 228, 229; Rendić-Miočević, Kirigin 1995: 130-131, no. 3-9; Kaić 2013b). The entire collection of Roman engraved gems was analyzed in the unpublished PhD thesis by the author of this paper (Kaić 2013a).

of seven intaglios and two glass intaglios which were mostly acquired for the Museum glyptic collection during the 19th century, and in the first two decades of the 20th century. Eight of these gems have a known finding site, while the ninth is only known to have come from Croatia.

Among the group one of the earliest dated intaglios is a nicolo first published by Šime Ljubić, who recorded the information that the intaglio was found in Salona and left us a drawing of the inscription on the intaglio (Ljubić 1876: 74, Fig. 7).² Franjo Maixner brought the same data on the intaglio (Maixner 1881b: 109-110, no. 41).

² This nicolo is part of the rich collection belonging to Vinko (Vicko) Solitro from Split, who was a collector of ancient Roman monuments. His collection was bought by Šime Ljubić in the 1860s and 1880s for the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb. For more information on the collection of Vinko Solitro see Sedlar Torlak 2014.



Fig. 1. A nicolo from Solin, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. A-15951 (photo: I. Kaić)

On the nicolo³ (Fig. 1) the inscription SVIRI is engraved in retrograde form, with a palm branch above and a wreath beneath the inscription. The text reads as following: S(exti) Viri (CIL III 10188, 23). According to CIL, the inscription mentions the name Sextus Virius. The closest stylistic and iconographic parallel can be found in the nicolo from the Hannover collection (AGDS IV *Hannover*: 307, no. 1694, t. 222), with a difference in the position of the wreath (here placed above the inscription) and the palm branch (below the inscription). The Hannover nicolo is dated to the end of the 1st and beginning of the 2nd century CE (AGDS IV *Hannover*: 307, no. 1694, t. 222). One also has to mention the nicolo from Aquileia (Sena Chiesa: 1966, 417, no. 1525, t. 77), whose depiction is exactly the same as on the Hannover example, with the inscription placed below the wreath and above the palm branch.

The next nicolo⁴ (Fig. 2), known only to have been found in Croatia, is engraved with the retrograde inscription, containing three lines MOTI/AMIAN/THVS framed by a wreath. The drawing of the inscription and the information on the intaglio were first published by Šime Ljubić (Ljubić 1876: 73, no. 3), and then by Franjo Maixner (Maixner 1881b: 109, no. 40). A close iconographic and stylistic parallel can be found in a carnelian from the Hannover collection, dated to end of the 1st and beginning of the 2nd century CE (AGDS IV *Hannover*: 307, no. 1691, t. 222). The cognomen *Amianthus* can be read from the inscription. It was a name of Greek origin,

³ Inv. no. A-15951; shape 11; 11 x 9 x 3 mm (Kaić 2013a: 264, no. 299, pl. 75). Shapes of all intaglios published herein are based on AGWien I: 15, Fig. c and Mandrioli Bizzari 1987: 30, t. 2.

⁴ Inv. no. A-16111; shape 11; 10 x 11 x 3 mm (Kaić 2013a: 264, no. 300, pl. 75).



Fig. 2. A nicolo from unknown site in Croatia, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. A-16111 (photo: I. Kaić)

usually given to slaves and freedmen (Solin 2003: 785-786).⁵ The word MOTI may refer to the name *Motius*. The cognomen *Motius* was recorded on an inscription from Belgium (CAG-08: 227), and it appears on a lead plate (*tabella defixionis*) from Britain (AE 1969-1970: 311).⁶

A heavily damaged carnelian⁷ comes from Kostolac (*Viminacium*) (Fig. 3), with the retrograde inscription AVRE/LIO in two lines. Given the fact that the name was written in the dative or ablative case, and not the genitive, we can assume that the owner, who was most likely a member of the gens Aurelia, did not commission the carnelian for himself, but rather received it as a present (AG Wien III: 17).

The nicolo⁸ (Fig. 4) with the two-lined inscription CRISPI/NILLA comes from Sremska Mitrovica (*Sirmium*). The female cognomen *Crispinilla* is relatively rare and

⁵ The name *Amianthus* is derived from the Greek name *Amiantos*. For more on the name *Amianthus* see Pape 1884: 73 and Solin 2003: 785-786. It was found on one inscription which mentions the architect *Amianthus Nicanorianus*, a member of the college of imperial officials (Silig 1836: 133). The name *Amianthus* was recorded on a funerary stele from Zurzach in Switzerland (CIL XIII 5239), which was dedicated to certain *Certus*, a veteran of the *Legio XIII Gemina*, by *Amianthus*, his freedman and heir (Frei-Stolba 1981: 49-54). Furthermore, one *Amianthus* was an engraver of gems (Silig 1836: 133).

⁶ The lead plate contains the engraved names *Enestinus / Motius / Comitinus*. The name *Motius* is most likely of Celtic origin (A. R. Birley 1980: 96).

⁷ Inv. no. A-16108; shape 11; 11,23 x 15,16 x 3,11 mm (Kaić 2013a: 265, no. 304, pl. 76). Surface is damaged, the upper right edge is chipped.

⁸ Inv. no. 9223; shape 11; 14 x 17 x 4 mm (Kaić 2013a: 264, no. 301, pl. 76). The intaglio was given to the Museum as a gift by Mr. Jaša Gamiršek in 1905 (*ibid.*).



Fig. 3. An orange carnelian from Kostolac, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. A-16108 (photo: I. Kaić)



Fig. 4. A nicolo from Sremska Mitrovica, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. 9223 (photo: I. Kaić)

has been mostly recorded in Italy, while the name appears only on a few monuments from the Roman provinces. So far it has not been recorded on epigraphic monuments from Pannonia Inferior.⁹

One more intaglio bearing an inscription was found in Sremska Mitrovica. The red jasper¹⁰ (Fig. 5) is engraved with the three-lined inscription IVSIVS/PARTEN/OPE. The letters were carved in positive which leads us to conclude that the intaglio was not meant to be used as a seal. The inscription mentions the family name *Iusius*¹¹ and the female cognomen *Partenope*¹². The inscribed text can be translated as “Lusius with Partenope” or “Lusius to Partenope”, so one can deduce that the intaglio was most likely a present.

⁹ Compare OPEL 2: s. v. *Crispinilla*. The cognomen *Crispinilla* appears on only 27 epigraphic monuments in the Claus-Slaby epigraphic database (http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi_ergebnis.php). Most of them were found in Italy (11) and in the city of Rome (10), while a small number comes from the provinces of Dalmatia (2), Pannonia Superior (2), Moesia Superior (1) and Sardinia (1). For example, this cognomen is recorded on the inscription from Ravna in Serbia (*Moesia Superior*), which mentions a little girl *Aelia Crispinilla* (ILJug 1320), and on two inscriptions from Pannonia Superior, one from Mursella and another from Emona (an amphora seal) which mention *Calvia Crispinilla* (IILPecs: 00173; AE 1994: 00658c). The cognomen *Crispinilla* can also be found on the two aforementioned inscriptions from Dalmatia (AE 1981, 0703; CIL III 1988= CIL III 1989 = ILJug 2077).

¹⁰ Inv. no. A-16093; shape 8; 10,67 x 14,27 x 2,5 mm (Kaić 2013a: 265, no. 303, pl. 76). The Museum bought the intaglio from Mr. S. Vasiljev in 1898 (ibid.).

¹¹ The nomen *Iusius* is derived from the name *Lusius*, and as such was recorded on two inscriptions (CIL III 1863 and CIL VIII 17244; OPEL 3:s. v. *Lusius*).

¹² The female cognomen *Partenope* is a version of the name *Parthenope*, and occurs on two inscriptions from Dalmatia (CIL III 6421, 9004; OPEL 3: s. v. *Parthenope*).



Fig. 5. A red jasper from Sremska Mitrovica, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. A-16093 (photo: I. Kaić)

An iron ring mounted with a hexagonal carnelian onyx¹³ (Fig. 6) was found in the river Kupa near Sisak (*Siscia*). The intaglio is engraved with an undetermined image at its centre, depicting perhaps a swallow or a fish viewed from above. On the oblique lateral sides of the gem runs the inscription SI/VI/S/VI/VA/M, carved in a cameo technique (see Platz-Horster 1987: 79, no. 141, pl. 29). The closest iconographic parallel for our carnelian onyx can be found in the ring from the Nijmegen collection, mounted with a hexagonal glass gem which

¹³ Inv. no. A-16220; flat surface, hexagonal; 7 x 8 mm (Kaić 2013a: 265-266, no. 305, pl. 77). The ring was bought for the Museum collection in 1912 from Milan Tkalac from Sisak (ibid.).



Fig. 6. An iron ring mounted with a hexagonal carnelian onyx from Sisak, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. A-16220 (photo: I. Kaić)

depicts an oil lamp and has an identical inscription on its lateral sides (Maaskant-Kleibrink 1986: 50-51, no. 103). The shape and ring type can be identified from a similar gold ring in the Vienna collection dated to the 3rd century CE, also containing a hexagonal carnelian onyx engraved with the image of an ivy leaf and the inscription ME/RI/T/OTE/AM/O (AGWien III: 143, no. 2164, pl. 83, 235). Based on the hexagonal shape of the intaglio (see Tomaselli 1998), as well as the ring type, our ring from Sisak, along with the intaglio, can be dated to the 3rd century CE. Based on the inscription *Si vis, vivam* ("If thou wishest, I shall live"), we can assume that the ring was given out of sentimental reasons to its owner, as a token of love (Maaskant-Kleibrink 1986: 50-51, no. 103).

Šime Ljubić published yet another nicolo (Fig. 7), along with a drawing of the inscription, relaying an important piece of information, namely that the intaglio was excavated near the church of St. Mary in Muć Gornji, together with a coin of the emperor Gratian (367–383 CE) (Ljubić 1876: 73, no. 4).¹⁴ The intaglio was donated

¹⁴ Šime Ljubić lists in his publication that the intaglio was found "... *apud aedem s. Mariae in vico Sup. Muć in Dalmatia...*" (Ljubić 1876: 73, no. 4). However, the actual location is the church of St. Peter in Muć Gornji. According to local tradition, there was a church in Muć Gornji dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was destroyed by the Ottomans (Tadin 1980: 54, 66; Piplović 2009: 74). A stone church covered in panels, dedicated to St. Peter, was recorded in 1709 during the visitation of the Archbishop Stjepan Cupilli from Split (Katić 1957: 244; Demori-Staničić 1989: 196). That church was demolished in 1761 and in its place a new one was built (Katić 1957: 244). When don Mijo Jerko Granić was transferred to Gornji Muć from Kaštel Gomilica to become a parson in 1869, he tried to expand and upgrade the existing church (Tadin 1980: 63). However, due to the dilapidated



Fig. 7. A nicolo from Muć Gornji, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. A-16097 (photo: I. Kaić)

to the Museum by the parson of Muć Gornji, don Mijo Jerko Granić, who was a friend and associate of Šime Ljubić.¹⁵ This information was also published by Franjo Maixner (Maixner 1881b: 110, no. 42). The sites where parson Granić was excavating in Muć Gornji can be partially reconstructed thanks to the preserved letters that the parson had sent to Šime Ljubić, which contain drawings of the finds and the layouts (Mirnik 2010: 66-86; Bekić 2011: 316). In his letter dated 12th May 1873, parson Granić describes how while digging "just above the church" he found three gems, one of which contained an inscription (Mirnik 2010: 69, Fig. 12). However, the indicated data was not enough to determine with certainty the exact location of these finds, apart from providing information that they were discovered during the excavation of the site of the parish church of St. Peter in Muć Gornji.¹⁶ The aforementioned nicolo¹⁷ is engraved with a three-lined inscription in positive: GRE/GORI/VIVAS (CIL III 10188, 17). Parallels can be drawn with

state of the building, he was forced to build a new church in 1871, and while digging the foundations he discovered the famous architrave bearing the name of Croatian duke Branimir and the year 888, which parson Granić then gifted to the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb (see Mirnik 2010).

¹⁵ Don Mijo Jerko Granić partially gifted and partially sold 11 intaglios, six glass gems and one glass cameo to the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, all found in Muć Gornji (Kaić 2013a: 11).

¹⁶ Secondary excavations for revision purposes conducted on the location of the old church of St. Peter in Muć have shown that it was a case of adapting a farm building from Antiquity into an early Christian church, which was then redesigned into a Pre-Romanesque church (Zekan 1980; Marasović 1980: 83). For Roman locations in Muć Gornji, the ancient *Andetrium*, see Bekić 2011: 316-317.

¹⁷ Inv. no. A-16097; shape 11; 10,67 x 13,13 x 3,49 mm (Kaić 2013a: 264-265, no. 302, pl. 76).



Fig. 8. A yellow glass intaglio from Trilj, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. A-15957 (photo: I. Kaić)

a cameo portrait from Geneva, dated around 300 CE, which bears the inscription A(Π)A (G)REGORI VIVAS (Vollenweider 1979: 261-263, no. 272 bis; Aubry 2011: 241, n. 36). The inscription can be interpreted as an early Christian formula, which translates as “May you live and be wakeful” (Vollenweider 1979: 261-263, no. 272 bis; Aubry 2011: 241).¹⁸ Since the nicolo from Muć was found together with the 4th century coin of the emperor Gratian, it too should be dated to the same period, which is further confirmed by the phrase inscribed on the intaglio.

As previously mentioned in the introduction, the Zagreb collection also holds two glass intaglios bearing inscriptions. The intaglio¹⁹ made of yellow glass (Fig. 8) bears the inscription HAVE (a version of the word “Ave” meaning “Hail”) written in retrograde form. The intaglio was found at Trilj near Gardun (*Tilurium*), a site rich with glyptic finds (compare Nardelli 2011). A parallel for the material and inscription can be found in the intaglio made of greyish glass from Vendeuil-Caply in

¹⁸ The inscription GREGORI VIVAS consists of the imperative mood of the Greek verb *γρηγορέω* (“to be awake”), written in the Latin form, and the word *vivas* (Aubry 2011: 241). The word ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙ, written in Greek, can also be found on two cameos from the Content collection, dated to the 3rd century CE (Henig 1990: XIII, 26-27, no. 47-48). The Christian symbolism of that term comes from the words Jesus uttered to his disciples, asking them to keep vigil (Mk 14 38; Mt 26: 38, 41) (see Vollenweider 1979: 261-263, no. 272 bis, n. 15).

¹⁹ Inv. no. A-15957; yellow transparent glass; shape 10; 6,5 x 8,3 x 1,3 mm (Kaić 2013: 303, no. 399, pl. 100). Bought in 1911 from Mate Žuljević, from Trilj (ibid.).



Fig. 9. A hexagonal black and red glass intaglio from Sisak, Archaeological museum in Zagreb, Inv. no. 426 (photo: I. Kaić)

France, bearing the inscription HAVI, which was dated to the mid-first century CE based on the context of the find (Guiraud 1988: 192, no. 928, t. 61).²⁰

The last in the collection is the hexagonal intaglio²¹ from Sisak (*Siscia*), made of black and red glass, with an image at its centre, which might depict a fish, while its inclined surface contains an inscription (Fig. 9). This glass intaglio belongs to the same type and was made in the same manner as the aforementioned carnelian onyx (Fig. 6), which was also found in Sisak. The inscription on the glass intaglio is difficult to read, the letters are barely discernible, perhaps forming the text ME/M/I/NI/TV/I.²² The phrase *memini tui* (“I remember thee”) can be found on a glass intaglio from Carnuntum, preserved in a ring and dated to the 3rd century (Dembski 2005: 163, no. 1121, pl. 115). Based on its hexagonal shape, the glass intaglio from Sisak can also be dated to the 3rd century CE, and its inscription clearly points to the possibility that this intaglio was another love token.

²⁰ One can also mention a yellow glass intaglio mounted in a bronze ring, bearing the retrograde inscription AV (Kamenjarin 2011: 147, 149, no. 3818). The ring and the glass intaglio are dated around the 1st and 4th centuries CE (ibid.). The ring was found in 2007 during the archaeological excavations at Resnik (*Siculi*) near Kaštel Štafiljić in Dalmatia (ibid.). Judging from the published photograph of the aforementioned glass intaglio, perhaps the inscription could be read as HAV.

²¹ Inv. no. 426; red and black glass; shape 9, hexagonal; 8,44 x 7,15 x 2,78 mm (Kaić 2013a: 303, no. 400, pl. 100).

²² I would like to thank dr. sc. Dino Demicheli for his assistance in reading this inscription.

CONCLUSION

As our finds mostly have no archaeological context, apart from the nicolo from Gornji Muć (Fig. 7), it is hard to date them with precision. Based on the technical and stylistic characteristics, and parallels drawn from similar finds from other glyptic collections, we can date them to the Roman imperial period (Fig. 1-5, 8). Several of the intaglios can be dated more precisely, thanks to the shape of the ring (Fig. 6) or the phrase written on them, to the 3rd (Fig. 6, 9) and 4th centuries (Fig. 7).

The inscriptions on the five intaglios (Fig. 1-5) record six persons. Among them, one person bears *praenomen* + *nomen*, two persons are with *nomen* only, another two with *cognomen* only, and one person bears two *cognomina*. In total, there are one *praenomen* (*Sextus*), three *gentilicia* (*Virius*, *Aurelius*, *Iusius*) and four *cognomina* (*Amianthus*, *Motius?*, *Crispinilla*, *Parthenope*). Two names are of Greek origin (*Amianthus*, *Parthenope*) and one is Celtic (*Motius*), while the name *Crispinilla* rarely appears in the Roman provinces and has not been recorded in Pannonia Inferior so far, where our intaglio comes from.

The collection includes inscriptions which contain phrases (Fig. 6-9), such as the inscription *Have* on the glass intaglio from Tilurium. Furthermore, one hexagonal intaglio and one hexagonal glass gem from Sisak (*Siscia*) contain phrases which can be interpreted as love tokens (*Si vis, vivam; Memini tui*), while the inscription *Gregori vivas* alludes to the words of Jesus and can be interpreted as an early Christian inscription.

We can conclude that, despite being small, this collection of intaglios bearing inscriptions from the glyptic collection of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, expands our knowledge of the *instrumenta* in the Roman provinces of Pannonia Superior, Pannonia Inferior, Moesia Superior and Dalmatia in the period of the 1st to the 4th century CE.*

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SAŽETAK

RIMSKI INTAGLIJI S NATPISIMA
IZ ARHEOLOŠKOG MUZEJA U ZAGREBU

Među brojnim rimskodobnim gemama koje se čuvaju u Arheološkom muzeju u Zagrebu, može se izdvojiti skupina gema s natpisima na latinskome jeziku. Ona se sastoji od sedam intaglija i dvije staklene geme. Ti su predmeti, uglavnom kao slučajni nalazi, pribavljeni za muzejsku gliptičku zbirku tijekom 19. stoljeća i u prva dva desetljeća prošlog stoljeća. Mjesto nalaza poznato nam je za osam od devet primjeraka, koji su nađeni na lokalitetima na području današnje Hrvatske i Srbije. Datiraju se u razdoblje od 1. do 4. st.

Ključne riječi: intagliji, staklene geme, latinski natpisi, Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu, gliptička zbirka, rimsko carsko razdoblje, kasna antika

ABBREVIATIONS

AE - L'Année Épigraphique, Paris 1888- present.

AGWien II - E. Zwieler-Diehl, Die antiken Gemmen des Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien. Band II: Die Glasgemmen. Die Glaskameen, München 1979.

AGWien III - E. Zwieler-Diehl, Die antiken Gemmen des Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien. Band III: Die Gemmen der späteren römischen Kaiserzeit, Teil 2: Masken, Masken - Kombinationen, Phantasie- und Märchentiere, Gemmen mit Inschriften, Christliche Gemme, Magische Gemmen, Sasanidische Siegel, Rundplastik aus Edelstein und verwandten Material, Kameen, München 1991.

AGDS IV Hannover - M. Schlüter, G. Platz Horster, P. Zazoff, Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen. Band IV. Hannover, Kestner Museum, Wiesbaden 1975.

CAG - Carte archéologique de la Gaule, 08: Les Ardennes, Paris 2011.

CIL III - Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum, vol. III. Inscriptiones Asiae, provinciarum Graecarum, Illyrici, Berlin 1902.

CIL VIII - Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum, vol. VIII. Inscriptiones Africae Latinae, Berlin 1881-1919.

CIL XIII - Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum, vol. XIII. Inscriptiones trium Galliarum et Germaniarum Latinae, Berlin 1899-1943.

ILJug - Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia reperiatae et editae sunt, Ljubljana 1963-1986.

IILPecs - Instrumenta Inscripta Latina. Das römische Leben im Spiegel der Kleininschriften, Pecs 1991.

OPEL 2 - B. Lörincz (ed.), Onomasticon provinciarum Europae Latinarum. Vol. 2: CABALICIVS – IXVS, Wien 1999.

OPEL 3 - B. Lörincz (ed.), Onomasticon provinciarum Europae Latinarum. Vol. 3: LABAREVS – PYTHEA, Wien 2000.

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