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ROMAN EPIGRAPHICAL MONUMENTS FROM ASSERIA AND BURNUM: THE ROLE OF EPIGRAPHY IN RECONSTRUCTING THE HISTORY OF SITES

Miroslav Glavičić, Željko Miletić

Abstract

The Department of Archaeology of the University of Zadar together with partner-teams performs systematic excavations of the sites Asseria (Podgrađe near Benkovac) and Burnum (military legion camp near Kistanje) in the Roman province of Dalmatia. Some examples of the rich epigraphic material from old acquisition and recently excavation can illustrate the importance of epigraphy in the reconstruction of a settlement's history in Antiquity, with consideration of the entire archaeological context and previous knowledge about social, political, military, and other circumstances happening at wider region in antiquity. All our knowledge and skills, acquired during basic archaeological education, and studies of analysis of epigraphic (and numismatic) material should be applied in practice to improve our knowledge about urbanization of certain pre-Roman and Roman settlements, about the ethnical and social structure of their populations and about many cultural and social phenomena. Finally archaeological material must be presented in an adequate manner and made accessible to a wider audience. That is why the Department of Archaeology of the University of Zadar together with partner-teams works on the foundation of the archaeological museum, conservation of the excavated objects and organization of the archaeological park in which visitors would have an opportunity to see natural beauties and historical heritage of the region.

Epigraphy (Greek *ἐπιγραφή*) is an historical sciences studying inscriptions engraved into some solid (durable) material: stone, metal, ceramic, mosaic.

The basic task of an epigraphist is to read a certain inscription properly, but the task of an archaeologist who is also an epigraphist is to read an inscription and to collect as many relevant facts as possible on the basis of the contents of the inscription, in order to analyze them and offer a thorough interpretation of the inscription. Acquired information should be observed in the context of social, political, religious, economic and all other circumstances which were affecting the lives of an individual, or of the inhabitants of a certain town or settlement at the time when the inscription was engraved. The study of inscriptions, i.e. epigraphic heritage, from a certain region must be interdisciplinary, meaning that palaeographers, linguists, onomastic experts, topographers, and numismatists (if coins with inscriptions are in question) must give their evaluation. Methodology of research and professional work of different disciplines are applied in this kind of analysis leading to scientifically based results.

We had the privilege that in our regions there were several sites which revealed a considerable amount of epigraphic material, which can serve as a basis for reliable reconstruction of historical development of an ancient settlement. New archaeological excavations and finds of new inscriptions improve our knowledge about urbanization of certain pre-Roman and Roman settlements, about ethnical and social structures of their populations and about many cultural and social phenomena. As the Department of Archaeology of the University of Zadar together with partners performs systematic excavations of the sites of Asseria (today Podgrađe near Benkovac) and Burnum (military legion camp near Kistanje), we would like mention some new facts about these sites.

Asseria was the centre of autochthonous *civitas* which became a Roman town with municipal status in the mid 1st century AD (Liebl and Wilberg 1908: 17-83; Alföldy 1965:

84-85; Wilkes 1969: 214-215; Suić 1981: 244-245; Fadić 2003b: 417-428). The settlement was founded on the flattened plateau between the fertile region of Ravni kotari and the karstic region of Bukovica, but a crucial factor for the development of the community was its position on the merchant route leading from the colony of *Iader* towards the hinterland of the province and connecting some important autochthonous *oppida* like *Nedinum*, *Asseria*, *Varvaria*, *Burnum* (Miletić 2003: 409-416; Miletić 2004: 7-21). Immigrant Italics and native inhabitants – *Asseriatas* – had benefits from the trade, especially the members of local aristocracy who gained citizenship at the beginning of the 1st century AD (Glavičić 2003b: 429-434) (Fig. 1).

The first excavations were performed by the Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut in Wien at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, and present archaeological excavations are conducted by the Department of Archaeology of the University of Zadar, the Archaeological Museum and the Museum of Ancient Glass (Liebl and Wilberg 1908: 17-83; Fadić 2003a). Results have that in the mid 1st century AD the Iron Age settlement was transformed into an ancient town after intensive building activities. A Roman forum was built in the place of the earlier centre of the Iron Age settlement, and there was found an inscription partially preserved on an architrave which was used as *spolium* in the church of the Holy Spirit that was built in the Middle Ages (Liebl and Wilberg 1908: 69-70). The same inscription suggests the time when Asseria gained municipal autonomy. We read that *L(ucius) Caninius T(itus) f(ilius) Cl(audia tribu) Fronto, duovir, flamen divi Claudii, duovir quinq(ennalis)* had built some edifice at the forum or somewhere in its vicinity. *Fronto* was a local magistrate, but he also served as municipal priest of the divine Claudius' cult (*flamen divi Claudii*), which is a very valuable information. As the cult of the divinized emperor is mentioned in the inscription, it can be dated back to the period immediately after Claudius' death (AD 54) and the first years of Nero's reign, and special sensibility towards

the deceased emperor can be related to achieving municipal status during his reign (Fig. 2).

Inscriptions found in the area of the ancient forum or built in the walls of the church of the Holy Spirit confirm the existence of other public objects that were financed by rich individuals, who spent more money for these activities than mentioned *Fronto*. One donor, which unfortunately remained anonymous, gave their fellow-citizens public objects or they built their parts – porches (*porticus* in inscription) which was common practice in Roman times (*CIL* 3, 15027). Gratitude of the community was granted so that such benefactors were honoured as town patrons (with honorary statue in the town's centre), and the same honour was paid to the town's distinguished person who earned the title *primus omnium Asseriatium* (*CIL* 3, 15026).

Although the mentioned inscriptions stand as excellent testimonies about building activities in *Asseria*, the most famous inscription about some public edifice in this town is the one at the town gates built by *Lucius Laelius L. f. Cl(udia tribu) Proculus* (*CIL* 3, 15034 + 15021; Liebl and Wilberg 1908: 71-72). The text of the inscription reveals that it was set up in honour of the Emperor Traianus, but the specific reason of the dedication is not known. Some archaeologists believe that some privilege that the emperor assigned to inhabitants of *Asseria* could be the reason for this dedication, and according to the latest theory it was made because Trajan himself visited *Asseria*, at the beginning of war campaign against Dacians in today's Romania. The town gates (so-called *Porta Traiana*) were built on the western side of the town by interpolation into the existing town wall. Walls surrounding *Asseria* were built of huge blocks of local origin in early Imperial period. Remains of the Trajan's gates had still been visible when the Austrian archaeologists excavated *Asseria* which made their reconstruction easier. The inscription stood at the front of the town gates, and restored it says: *Imp(eratori) Caesari, divi Ne[r]vae filio), / Nervae Traiano Optimo / Aug(usto), Germ(anico), Dacico, pont(ifici) max(imo), / trib(unicia) pot(estate) XVII, imp(eratori) VI, c[o](n)s(uli) VI, p(atr) p(atr)iae). // L(ucius) Laelius L(uci) f(ilius) Cl(udia tribu) Proculus / t(estamento) f(ieri) i(ussit) epuloque dedicari*. Mentioning of Trajan's titles, which he held when the inscription was made, helps to determine the precise date. He received the *tribunitia potestas* for the 17th time on December 10th in 112 and obtained it until December 9th in 113, he became an emperor for the 6th time in 106 (for the 7th time in 114), received consulate for the 6th time in 112, and the title *Optimus* in 113. To be summarized, the inscription is from AD 113. The second part of the inscription reveals the information that *L. Laelius Proculus* ordered by testament that *munificentia* should be performed and a feast (*epulum*) organized. We have no information about *Proculus*, maybe some day a lucky find might shed more light on this subject, but for the time being we can presume, according to his name, that he was a distinguished person of Italic origin, just like the aforementioned town donors (Fig. 3).

Ethnic and social structure of a certain settlement is best reflected in the funerary inscriptions, because they contain names of the deceased (one or more) and the commemorator who were usually in close family or marital relations. Stelae with portraits – great funerary monuments with

the presentation of the deceased – can be found in coastal towns of the province of *Dalmatia* and in settlements in the hinterland. The greatest number of stelae with portraits was discovered in *Salona*. They were also found in other Roman colonies and *municipia* (*Iader, Narona, Aequum*), legion camps (*Tilurium, Burnum*), and autochthonous settlements in *Liburnia*, including *Asseria*. The most famous stela with portraits from *Asseria* is the one of *Vadica Titua*, daughter of *Aplus* (*Vadica Apli filia Titua*), who had a monument set up with the help of her sons, while she was still alive (*viva fecit sibi*), to herself and her mother whose name was *Pasina Voltissa, Quinti filia* (Rendić-Miočević 1960: 117-121). All mentioned names in the inscription are Latinized native names (*Vadica, Titua, Pasina, Voltissa, Aplus, Aetor, Ceunus*), and they were confirmed in inscriptions from other settlements in *Liburnia*, where they were also incorporated in the standard Roman naming pattern, as well as other Latinized native names. There is an opinion in the literature dealing with this onomastic peculiarity that individuals with Latinized local names within Roman naming pattern had Latin citizenship and not yet full Roman citizenship. Building of expensive funerary monument shows that *Vadica* and her family belonged to the richest part of the local community, i.e. the local aristocracy whose members were about to obtain the Roman citizenship in the following generations and to become magistrates in their *municipia* (Fig. 4).

During archaeological excavations that we carried out next to the northern side of *Asseria*'s wall, we discovered that in Late Antiquity (in the 5th or 6th century) a massive wall consisting of funerary monuments and parts of funerary architecture was built in front of the monumental imperial wall, in order to strengthen the town's defence system. The area between this wall and the old town's wall was used as a cemetery, and parts of funerary architecture and funerary monuments were used as building material for tombs from Late Antiquity. A stela with portraits was used as a cover for one of these tombs, actually only a part of it with an inscription whereas the upper part with portraits of the deceased was damaged (Glavičić 2003a: 79-86). The text of the inscription was written in seven lines and restored it says: *Clodia Tur[i f(ilia)] / Aeta sibi et Tito / Safinio Septumi f(ilio) / Rufo (et) Safinae Septu(mi) f(iliae) Secundae, filis / suis, / viva fecit*. The interpretation of the text is simple: the funerary monument was set up by *Clodia Aeta* to herself and her children – the son *Titus Safinius Rufus* and the daughter *Safinia Secunda*. Naming is again interesting because we have a combination of native and Roman names integrated into a Roman naming pattern. *Clodia Aeta* belongs to the native inhabitants of *Asseria* which is obvious from her cognomen (*Aeta* is feminine form of the name *Aetor*) and filiation (her father's name is *Turus*), but she has the Roman *gentilicium Clodius*. The names of her children are of Roman origin, which was usual because they represent the second or third generation after gaining the Roman citizenship. Local names were slowly disappearing, being replaced with Roman ones which made it more difficult to make difference between Romanized native inhabitants and immigrant Italics. However, there are some traces (in this case it is clear because of the mother's name) which point to the ethnical background of a certain

family even in later periods (Fig. 5).

The inscription on a funerary altar from the late 2nd century can serve as an illustration of this statement. The monument was found used as *spolium* in the mentioned defensive wall and the inscription says: *D(is) M(anibus) / C(aio) T(itio) Priscino, / aed(ili), duovir(o), a/nnorum / XXXIII, m(ensium) VII, d(ierum) / VIII. Laetilia Fructa, mater, / filio pientis/simo fecit* (Fadić 2001: 157-176) (Fig. 6). The inscription text is simple: the mother *Laetia Fructa* set up the monument to her deceased thirty-year-old son (with precise information about his age – 33 years, 7 months and 8 days which is one of the characteristics of funerary inscriptions of the late Principate). It needs to be mentioned that *Priscinus* was a magistrate in *Asseria*, serving as *aedilis* and *duovir* which means that he belonged to the local aristocracy, and because of his and his family's reputation his *gentilicium* was marked only with *sigla* – starting letter *T* (the second characteristic is that, not so often, the *gentilicia* were sometimes written abbreviated if they were derived from the *praenomen*, in this case *Titus*). *Priscinus* mother is also mentioned on an inscription from nearby village *Perušić*: *D(is) M(anibus) / Laetiliae / Aprillae / Laetilia / Fructa / matri {e}(f)ecit* (CIL 3, 2852), as a commemorator to her mother named *Laetilia Aprilla*. This dedication was made on a special type of funerary monument called *Liburnian cippus*, which is quite a firm indication for the supposition that individuals mentioned on this inscription also belonged to Romanized native families. Namely, the *Liburnian cippus* is characteristic only for the region of *Liburnia* (hence the name), and its presence and distribution is considered as a local particularity in Roman funerary art in these regions. About one hundred such monuments were found, and more than half in *Asseria* and its surrounding (Fadić 1990: 209-299).

The *Liburnian cippus* consists of a cylindrical body which at the bottom (on the basis) and at the transition from the body to the calotte has moulding, usually double, or some plastic decoration such as interwoven rope or some floral ornament. Mouldings divide the body from the calotte which is covered in scales (*squamae*), and the calotte usually had a cone at the top, which is often missing at the moment of the discovery. Moulded inscription field can be found on the body, with a very short text with main information about the deceased and commemorator, often with explanation of family relations.

For example, two women were mentioned in the inscription: *Trosiae C(ai) filiae) / Secundillae, / Veratia L(ucii) filia) / Maximilla / mater infelicissima / p(osuit)* (Fadić 2003c: 118-119). The unfortunate (*infelicissima*) mother sets up a monument to her daughter (Fig. 7).

Cippi found in *Asseria* all were made of local limestone which can be of rather poor quality. The inscription reads: *L(ucio) Papirio Rufos* (with grammatical error –*os*), / *L(ucius) Papirius Didim(us), / pater filio) se viv(o) / posuit* (Fadić 2006: 94). Translated: the father *Didimus* set up a monument to himself and his son while he was still alive (son might be deceased) (Fig 8).

The inscription field on this *cippus* is adorned with garlands on three sides. The inscription is damaged but enough was preserved to read the inscription (Fadić 2003c: 119-121): *Cae[Il]iae / Facundae, / [C]aelius [F]a/cundus, pat(er) / fil-*

iae infeliciss(imae) / pos(uit). Commemorator is the father who sets up the monument to his daughter.

The inscription reads: *Sexto Livio Maximo, Iulia Maximilla posuit*. The names of the deceased and the commemorator are mentioned, without information about family relations (Fig. 9).

Iulia Iadestina erects a funerary monument to her friend (*amicae*) *Baebia Saturnina*, a priestess of some college (*sodali*), maybe the one of the imperial cult. *Baebiae / Saturninae, / Iulia Iadestina / amicae et sodali / bene meriate / viva posuit* (Fadić 2006: 91) (Fig. 10).

Motifs that are not usually found on other types of funerary monuments in the province of *Dalmatia* can appear on *Liburnian cippi*. *Cupids* holding a garland are represented on this monument. Between the *Cupids* there is a small niche in which we can see Roman *Mercury*, i.e. *Hermes Psychopompos*. The inscription is engraved above the garland and consists of only a name of the deceased *Iulia Secundilla*. The nominative case shows that she had the monument set up (Fadić 2004: 92-93) (Fig. 11).

The inscription field on this *cippus* was defined with garlands on three sides. The inscription reads: *Rubria Q(uinti) filia) / Rufina, / infelicis(s)i/ma, sibi p(osuit)* (Fadić 2004: 93-94). *Rufina* set up the monument to herself while she was still alive, and marked it with an inscription. Her portrait is above the horizontal garland which makes this *cippus* unique (Fig. 12).

Liburnian cippi and other funerary monuments that were mentioned above were found during the archaeological excavations at the area in front of the north-western and northern part of the town wall of *Asseria*. They were built into a fortification wall from Late Antiquity or they were used as building material for tombs from the same period. As the archaeological excavations of the area in front of the wall have not been finished, it is reasonable to expect several dozens of new monuments with inscriptions which will offer new information about inhabitants of *Asseria*, and help in better understanding of the processes related to the Romanization of the native community, which accepts readily achievements of Roman civilization and soon becomes its integral part.

The Department of Archaeology of the University of Zadar participates in excavations of another important site – the military legion camp of *Burnum* near the village of *Ivoševci* near *Kistanje*. The City Museum of *Drniš* and the *Krka National Park* also took part in this project as well as the colleagues from the Department of Archaeology of the University of Bologna (Fig. 13).

Burnum is a common name used for an agglomeration which consisted of a Roman legion's military camp (*castra*), military camp of auxiliary units (*castellum*), *municipium* which developed from *canabae*, and settlement of the *Liburnian Burnistae (oppidum)* which was situated at *Gradina* near *Puljani* (Reisch 1913: 112-135; Abramić 1924: 221-228; Alföldy 1965: 87-88; Zaninović 1968: 119-130; Wilkes 1969: 217-218; Suić 1981: 233, 248-249; Zabehlicky-Scheffenegger and Kandler 1979; Ilakovac 1984; Cambi *et al.* 2006; Cambi *et al.* 2007; Miletić 2007: 181-202) (see Pl. XVI: 1). *Burnistae* belonged to *Liburnian tribes* who were Roman allies on the border with *Delmatae*, famous for their aggressive temperament. In the first phases of the

Illyricum's pacification they presented a constant threat for the Romans. Due to strategic reasons Romans chose *Burnum* as a place to accommodate part of the provincial army and to build a military camp, at first a temporary one (*castra aestiva*), and after the rebellion of the *Delmatae* and the Panonian tribes (AD 6-9) permanent military camp (*castra legionis*) for a legion and its auxiliary units. This camp was built by the members of the Legion XI (*Legio XI*) which stayed at *Burnum* for the longest period of time, until AD 68/69 when it was withdrawn to Italy during the civil war after Nero's death. The Legion XI, called *Legio XI Claudia Pia Fidelis* since AD 42, was replaced by the Legion IV with the honorary title *Flavia Felix*, which remained at *Burnum* until about AD 86. Since that time there were no legion units in *Dalmatia*, as the previously turbulent area got stabilized over the course of about half of a century. Military functions in the province (*provincia inermis*) were taken over by auxiliary units and beneficiaries. Remaining soldiers stayed in the auxiliary camp – *castellum*.

After the army had left the camp, the area was used for civil purposes. A civil settlement (*canabae*) had earlier developed spontaneously around the military camp, but now it spread over the camp's area. The civil forum was formed at the place of the legion headquarters (*principia*), and a basilica was built as well as cult objects, etc. These building activities were probably related to the realization of the municipal status, and the civil settlement together with *civitas peregrinorum* becomes *municipium* in Hadrian's time at the latest.

Numerous epigraphic findings, and specially funerary monuments – soldiers' stelae – offer information about lives of soldiers and veterans who remained on estates around *Burnum* after their military career. Besides names of soldiers and veterans, these inscriptions also reveal information about their origin (*origo, domo*). Data about units (name of the legion, *cohors*, or *ala*) in which they spent several years (*stipendiorum tot, militavit annorum tot*) are of exceptional importance because they provide basis for quite reliable reconstruction of chronology of legions' and auxiliary units' stay at *Burnum* in the 1st century AD.

E.g.: *T(itus) Fuficius C(ai) f(ilius) Pol(lia tribu) vet(eranus) leg(ionis) XX // T(itus) Fuficius T(iti) l(ibertus) Privatus / Fuficia G(aiae) l(iberta) Prisca, Fuficia T(iti) l(iberta) Prima*. Funerary monument with portraits of family members of Titus Fuficius, who was a veteran of the Legion XX which remained at *Burnum* until AD 9 (*CIL* 3, 2030) (Fig. 14).

M(arcus) Domitius / M(arci) f(ilius) Fabia (tribu) Sev(erus) (domo) Brix(s)ia / miles leg(ionis) XI / ann(orum) XXX / stip(endiorum) VIII h(ic) s(itus) e(st) / heres posuit. Inscription of Marcus Domitius Severus, soldier of the Legion XI, dated back to the period before AD 42 (after that year the Legion XI gets the honorary title of *Claudia Pia Fidelis*) (*CIL* 3, 14997, 2) (Fig. 15).

Q(uintus) Iulius Q(uinti) f(ilius) / Ouf(entina tribu) Mansuetus (domo) Co(mo) miles / leg(ionis) XI C(laudiae) P(iae) F(ielis) / ann(orum) XXXV [s]tip(endiorum) XIII t(estamento) f(ieri) i(ussit) Q(uintus) Iul(ius) / Annius mil(es) leg(ionis) / eiusd(em) f(ratri) p(ientissimo) f(aciendum) c(uravit). Funerary monument set up to Quintus Iulius Mansuetus by his brother Annius as ordered by

testament. Both brothers served in the Legion XI after AD 42 (*ILJug*, 836) (Fig. 16).

Dacnas/Apsaeif(ilius)/mil(es)coh(ortis)II/Cyrrhestaru(m) / dom(o) Berea / ann(orum) L stip(endiorum) XXIV / h(ic) s(itus) e(st). Funerary monument of Dagnas, soldier of the *Cohors II Cyrrhestarum* which was stationed at *Burnum* from AD 42 until 60 (*ILJug*, 2820) (Fig. 17).

Funerary monuments from *Burnum* were set up to soldiers or by soldiers mostly, and their analysis requires a separate study. At the moment we shall focus on archaeological material and inscriptions discovered during the systematic archaeological excavations which started in 2003 by the excavation of the amphitheatre (Fig. 18).

The Roman military amphitheatre was built at the southwestern periphery of the complex of the Roman military camp, about 500 m from the *principia* and close to the road leading to *Varvaria* and *Asseria* (Cambi *et al.* 2006). The amphitheatre at *Burnum* typologically belongs to those with four entrances (two main entrances in the crown of the ellipse and two side ones). The arena with perimeter wall has been excavated so far as well as the southern, eastern and northern entrance. Emperor Vespasian inscription was found, as well as many architectural fragments and a great amount of small archaeological finds. Architectural solutions utilizing the terrain configuration were discovered and documented, namely large a karst valley which was adapted to meet the needs of the amphitheatre builders. Archaeological excavations revealed two main building phases: the first one during Claudius' reign (works performed by so far soldiers of the Legion XI), and the second one in Vespasian's time (works performed by so far soldiers of the Legion IV).

As the natural karst valley was used for building amphitheatre, it was necessary to prepare and adjust the terrain for building separate architectural parts. The Romans have levelled the terrain by cutting and hewing bedrock, especially next to the walls, which provided better foundations and material for building, and also by filling up larger cavities and levelling certain areas with soil, which will become a rich source of archaeological finds. That is why there is a compact cultural layer in front of the entrance and underneath the stands and outer embankment of the auditorium, which is very rich in small archaeological finds such as numerous pottery sherds (amphora parts, plain pottery shreds, *terra sigillata* fragments, lamp fragments) and glass (luxury glasses and bowls), bronze and copper early Imperial coins, parts of military equipment (usually bronze *aucissa* fibulae, bronze- and silver-plated belt buckles and rings of military belts, bronze- and silver-plated pendants), bronze *strigilis*, bronze vessel – *simpulum*, bronze bell *tintinabulum*, legion ivory stamp for wax impressing, crest carrier of a military helmet, parts of the horse equipment, iron nails, and scarce iron tools and weapons. All finds can be easily dated to the early Imperial period, but the most important finds with reference to datation are coins.

About 120 coins have been found in this stratigraphically clearly defined formation, which is a satisfying amount for making reliable conclusions. Almost all discovered coins were analyzed and preserved. Most coins can be dated to the beginning of the Empire, i.e. mainly copper and bronze sestertii (*sestertius*), dupondia (*dupondius*), asses (*as*) and

quadrantes (*quadrans*) were found, coined from August until Claudius. Emperor August's *aureus* (minted 19-18 BC) was found in the cultural layer in front of the southern entrance and represents a special rarity. A few coins from the Republican period were also found, silver denarii (*denar*) and quinarii (*quinarius*), which were quite worn out because they were in use for a long time owing to their quality and constant value.

We will see some examples of Republican Roman coins ordered chronologically.

AR Denarius (3.7 g), L. Flaminius Chilo, Roma, 109-108 BC.

AV: Head of Roma right, ROMA, X (Fig. 19).

RV: Victory in biga right, L FLAM[INI / CILO] (Fig. 20). Crawford 302/1.

AR Denarius (4.02 g), D. Iunius Silanus, Roma, 91 BC.

AV: Head of Roma right.

RV: Victory in biga right, D SILAN[VS L F / ROMA] Crawford 337/3.

AR Denarius (4.13 g), C. Annius T. f. T. n. and C. Tarquinius P. f., Roma, 82-81 BC.

AV: Diademed head of Anna Perenna right; scales beneath chin, [C. ANNIVS. T. F. T. N. PRO. COS.] EX S C around.

RV: Victory in biga right; [XXXXII] above, Q below, C. TARQVITI P [F] in exergue. Crawford 366/4.

AR Denarius, Q. Sicinius and C. Coponius, 49 BC. Minted in the East during Pompey expedition.

AV: Diademed head of Apollo right; star below, Q. SICINIVS III. VIR.

RV: Club of Hercules surmounted by a facing lion's scalp; arrow left, bow right, [C COPONIVS] PR S C. Crawford 444/1a.

AR Denarius (3.87 g), Man. Acilius Glabrio, Roma, 49 BC.

AV: Laureate head of Salus right, SALVTIS upward behind.

RV: Valetudo standing left, leaning on column and holding snake, [MN AC]ILIVS III VIR V [ALETV] behind and before.

Crawford 442/1a.

AU Aureus (7.75 g), Octavian as Augustus, Roma, 19-18 BC.

AV: CAESAR / AVGVSTVS between two laurel branches (Fig. 21).

RV: OB / CIVIS / SERVATOS within oak-wreath (Fig. 22).

RIC 249 (Augustus).

Coins from later Imperial period and Dominate are rare and as they were found at the surface, i.e. in the shallow deposit formed above the original walking surface which is well preserved at the southern and eastern entrance, they are not relevant for determination of the building chronology.

According to the discovered material and especially coins we can assume that the building of the amphitheatre started in Claudius' time, which is also when the first building phase was finished.

The amphitheatre at *Burnum* got its final form in AD 76/77, when Vespasian's inscription was placed on the front of the southern entrance which marked the end of the amphitheatre building. Members of the Legion IV performed works financed by Vespasian, an activity that can be considered as a reconstruction or construction of an annex. At that time passages were vaulted, funnel walls were added at the entrances, the auditorium was enlarged and the arena was walled-in by regular white limestone blocks.

The monumental inscription of the Emperor Vespasian that originally stood over the main entrance was found in the debris of the collapsed vault (Cambi *et al.* 2006: 13-14). The slab was broken in two pieces. The left part of the inscription was found in the debris in the front part of the entrance, and the right part was lying on the floor in front of the entrance. The inscription was inscribed in a large limestone block of good quality, which is 294 cm long, 100 cm high and 32 cm thick. The inscription was inscribed using monumental Roman capitals in the moulded field in the shape of *tabula ansata* and it reads: *Imp(erator) Caesar Ve[s]pasianus Aug(ustus) pont(ifex) max(imus) / trib(unicia) pot(estate) VII imp(erator) XVIII p(ater) p(atriciae)*. The explicit mentioning of the public tribune service, obtained by Vespasian for the eighth time, is of exceptional importance because it reveals the precise date of the inscription in AD 76/77, i.e. it confirms the end of the works on the amphitheatre, which were financed by the emperor, as his name is in nominative case. Works were performed by members of the Legion IV (*Legio IIII Flavia felix*) which was stationed at *Burnum* at the time, when the amphitheatre served for military needs but also for leisure. Organization of different spectacles attracted numerous spectators, not only soldiers but also civilians from the surrounding area, which was certainly one of the important means of imperial politics promotion, and an aspect of the Romanization of the native community which was in that way getting to know and accept the Roman customs and way of life. Therefore Vespasian's financing of the building of the amphitheatre at *Burnum* was not accidental, and he was probably favourably disposed to commanders and soldiers of the Legion IV, who had the honorary title of its founder (*Legio IIII Flavia felix*).

We have used two important ancient sites (*Asseria* and *Burnum*), with the presentation of only a small part of the rich epigraphic material, to illustrate the importance of epigraphy in the reconstruction of a certain settlement's history in antiquity, with consideration of entire archaeological context and previous knowledge about social, political, military, and other circumstances happening at wider region in antiquity. All our knowledge and skills acquired during basic archaeological education and specialistic studies of analysis of epigraphic (and numismatic) material should be applied in practice. Finally, the archaeological material must be analyzed professionally and scientifically, but it also has to be presented in an adequate manner and made accessible to a wider audience. That is why the Department of Archaeology of the University of Zadar together with

team-partners works on the foundation of the archaeological museum, the conservation of the excavated objects and the organization of the archaeological park in which visitors would have an opportunity to see the natural beauties and historical heritage of the National Park.

ABBREVIATIONS

CIL 3 – Mommsen, T. et al. (eds), 1873, *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*, III (Berlin) (Suppl. 1902)

ILJug – Šašel, A., Šašel, J., 1963, *Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMXL et MCMLX repertae et editae sunt*, Situla 5 (Ljubljana: Narodni Muzej)

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RIC – Sutherland, C.H.V., Carson, R.A.G. (eds), 1999, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, I (London: Spink and Son Ltd) (rev. edition)

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NOTE

All sketches and photos were made by Miroslav Glavičić and Željko Miletić, except Figs 2-3.



Fig. 1 - Asseria (Gradina near Podagra-Benkovac).

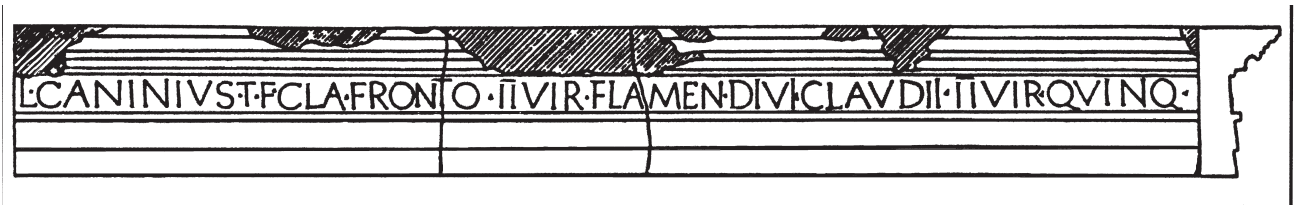


Fig. 2 - Beam with the inscription mentioning L. Caninius Fronto, magistratus of Asseria (after Liebl and Wilberg 1908).

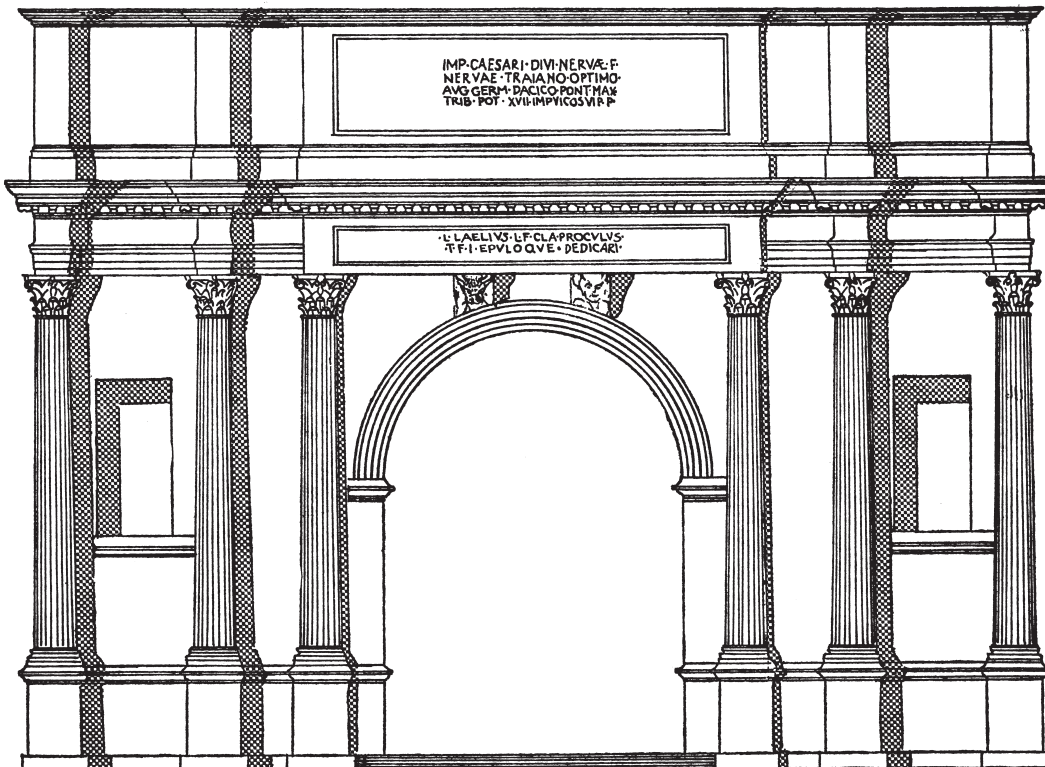


Fig. 3 - Reconstruction of Porta Traiana (after Liebl and Wilberg 1908).



Fig. 4 - Portrait stela of Vadica Titua, daughter of Aplus, from Asseria (Archaeological Museum in Zadar).



Fig. 5 - Stela of Clodia Aeta, daughter of Turus, from Asseria (City Museum of Benkovac).



Fig. 6 - Funerary altar of C. Titius Priscinus, magistratus of Asseria (City Museum of Benkovac).

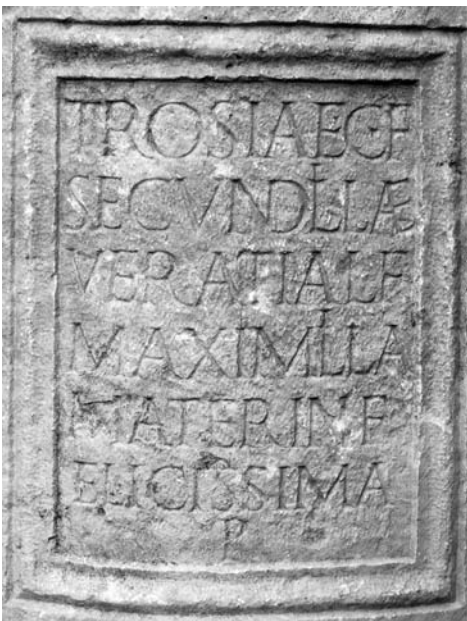


Fig. 7 - Inscription on Liburnian cippus of Trosia Secundilla (City Museum of Benkovac).

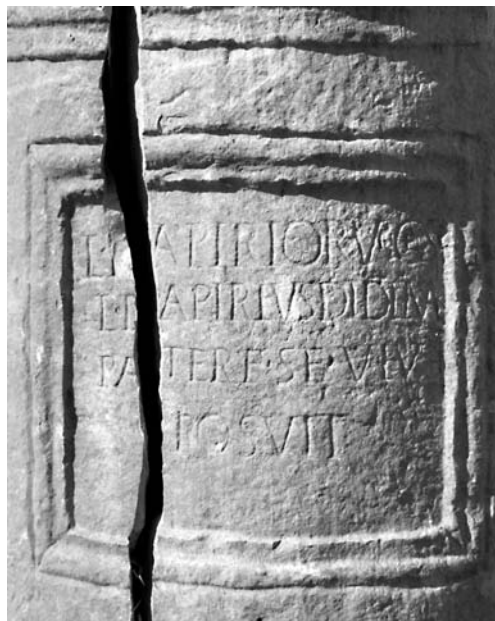


Fig. 8 - Inscription on Liburnian cippus mentioning L. Papirius Rufus (City Museum of Benkovac).



Fig. 9 - Liburnian cippus of Sex. Livius Maximus (City Museum of Benkovac).



Fig. 10 - Liburnian cippus of Baebia Saturnina (City Museum of Benkovac).



Fig. 11 - Figure of Hermes Psychopompos shown on Liburnian cippus of Iulia Secundilla (City Museum of Benkovac).



Fig. 12 - Liburnian cippus adorned with garlands and portrait of Rubria Rufina (City Museum of Benkovac).



Fig. 13 - Aerial view of the Roman legionary camp in Burnum.



Fig. 14 - Family of T. Fuficius, veteranus of the Legion XX, portrayed on funerary stela (Archaeological Museum in Split).



Fig. 15 - Funerary Inscription of M. Domitius Severus, soldier of the Legion XI (Archaeological Museum in Zadar).



Fig. 16 - Funerary stela of Q. Iulius Mansuetus, soldier of the Legion XI CPF (Archaeological Museum in Zadar)



Fig. 17 - Funerary monument of Dagnas, soldier of the Cohors II Cyrrhestarum (Archaeological Museum in Zadar).



Fig. 18 - Burnum. Aerial view of the amphitheatre during the excavations in 2007.



Fig. 19 - Denarius, L. Flaminius Chilo, Roma, 109-108 BC. AV: head of Roma.



Fig. 20 - Denarius, L. Flaminius Chilo, Roma, 109-108 BC. RV: Victory in biga.



Fig. 21 - Aureus, Octavian as Augustus, Roma, 19-18 BC. AV: CAESAR / AVGVSTVS between two laurel branches.



Fig. 22 - Aureus, Octavian as Augustus, Roma, 19-18 BC. RV: OB / CIVIS / SERVATOS within oak-wreath.