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# CRITICAL APPROACH TO THE EXHIBITIONS OF THE IMPERIAL CULT IN THE ROMAN ILLYRICUM WITH REGARD TO ITS EARLY STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

Miroslav Glavičić, Željko Miletić

## Abstract

We discuss the period when the imperial cult was introduced in the Roman province of Illyricum, as well as political and social characteristics of that institution. On the basis of such framework we consider critically the exhibitions of the monuments at the archaeological museums in Zadar, Split and Vid. Although there is great number of monuments related to state and imperial promotion of power, they are scattered in different units concerning religion, architecture and the so-called fine arts. We must treat it as a whole which offers an opportunity to reconstruct high politics, social relations and processes of Romanization.

## 1. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE IMPERIAL CULT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DIVINE STATUS OF THE EMPERORS

The eastern Adriatic coast, which belonged for the most part to the Roman province of *Illyricum*, and *Dalmatia* later on, was an area of early introduction of the imperial cult and of intensive honouring of the imperial family. Primary intention of this article is to consider the period when the cult was introduced, to describe political and social characteristics and institutions of the Roman Empire and to describe some manifestations characteristic for the province of *Dalmatia*. On the basis of such framework we will try to consider critically the museum exhibitions of the monuments of the imperial cult and to present some new suggestions.

In the period of Hellenization of Roman culture and religion from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC divine honours were usually assigned to distinguished individuals (Fishwick 1993: 21-45). However, Roman institution of permanent divinization was not a mere copy of models from Hellenistic divine monarchies, nor was it a result of political obsequiousness of the East, which manifested itself through honouring distinguished Romans and worshipping the personified republican goddess Roma (Fishwick 1993: 46-51). The imperial cult was primarily a consequence of constant influence of the aristocracy's private religion to Roman public religion (Rüpke 2007: 25-26). That is why this institution of dominantly political character has its roots in Roman private religion. Augustus' policy made possible the institution of the imperial cult in a specific period of transformation of the republican system into principate headed by the *gens Iulia*. Gentilician cult of the god Veiovis, which was identified with *Ascanius Iulus*, ancestor of the *Iulii*, was transformed into a public imperial cult (Porte 1981: 333-340; Rüpke 2007: 27-28, 248-251). *Sodales Augustales* were formed in the year of Augustus' death, and the centre of the *collegium* was at the sanctuary of the *gens Iulia* in *Bovillae* (*CIL* 7, 1984 ff.; *CIL* 14, 2388 ff.; Strasburger 1940: 1219). The imperial cult has Roman roots, but it was also significantly affected by eastern rituals and belief in the divine character

of the emperor. Through three centuries the idea about Caesar having a remote divine ancestor to whom they join after death, was transformed into his comprehension as divine governor on Earth and finally into a vision of God himself – Diocletian who is *Iovius*.

Augustus and Tiberius created a complex structure of the cult and an imperial ideology of power in order to ratify new social and government order (Rufus Fears 1981: 56-66) (Fig. 1). They looked for support among the Empire's new inhabitants – *peregrini* who did not care much about the republican traditions. At the same time the centre of the Empire was connected with its periphery, settling down centrifugal and separatist actions. Emperors were also close with elites of different social classes, rewarding their supporters abundantly. Model of reciprocity ensured ever larger popularity of the cult. That is why *collegia* and priests were carefully organized for every social class, and for all parts of the Empire, with distinction between Rome with Italy and provinces and *municipia*. Social cohesion was strengthened by determining exact positions in the cult for senators, *equites*, freedmen, *peregrini*, and even women from families with citizenship. Performing functions in some of the institutions of the imperial cult could improve one's career and status, so it is regularly mentioned at the list of duties (*cursus honorum*) in epigraphic monuments. Caesar was the first Roman honoured as state god posthumously by a decree of the Senate and Roman people: '*Genio Deivi Iuli, parentis patriae, quem senatus populusque Romanus in deorum numerum rettulit*' (*CIL* 9, 2628). In 29 BC a temple, *aedes Divi Iulii*, was dedicated to Caesar by his nephew Octavian who was adopted posthumously (Platner and Ashby 1929: 286-287; Mowery 2002: 102), and *Sextus Apuleus* became *flamen Iulialis*, replacing Mark Antony who was once Caesar's right-hand man, at the duty of honouring the Divine (Jullian 1896: 1175). Julius Caesar marks the beginning of *domus divina*, but he never became the first of *Divi Imperatores*, they start with Augustus. Between 14 and 12 BC the cult of the imperial genius was established, which formally followed the republican tradition. A new aspect of the cult was the sacrifice of a bull like in the Jupiter's cult, instead of offering wine, flow-

ers and incense as in traditional cult of the genius (Otto 1910: 1155; Fishwick 1970: 191). Shortly before Augustus died, Tiberius dedicated the famous altar *numinis Augusti*, which was a crucial act in the process of accepting the divine character of the Emperor (Hor. *Epist.* 2. 1.15; Ovid. *Trist.* 3. 8.13; Liebeschuetz 1979: 63). Augustus became θεῦος ἀνῆρ – god’s messenger and interpreter for the human kind. Augustus was still not a god; he was a mediator for the mankind, which worshipped him with divine honours.

The intensity of the cult varied throughout the Empire. In the East it was easily acceptable as a consequence of a tradition several centuries long of Hellenistic divine monarchies. The temple of Augustus and Roma in Pergamum was consecrated at the request of the community of Asian cities (Deininger 1965: 16-19). After Augustus’ death Tiberius founded the *collegium sodales Augustales* which was formed by 21 senators, joined *extra ordinem* by the members of the imperial family – Emperor Tiberius himself, Drusus, Germanicus, and later on Claudius as well (Suet., *Claud.* 6; Smith 1870, 180; Cagnat 1908; 1371-1372; Strasburger 1940, 1219-1220) (Fig. 2). Women of the imperial family were also involved in the cult, after Livia had become a priestess of her husband, and later was divinized by Claudius (Cass. Dio 56, 46; Velleius 2, 75; Suet., *Claud.* 11; Cass. Dio 60, 5).

Although Tiberius once said that he would like that his actions speak about him rather than stone, in AD 26 another temple of the provincial imperial cult in Asia was built, and it was dedicated to Tiberius, Livia and the Senate. Smyrna was chosen among eleven candidates, with Sardis as the biggest rival. The temple of Roma already existed in Smyrna for two centuries which was its biggest advantage among other equally rich cities (Tac., *Ann.* 4, 15; 4, 55-56). Imperial statues were put up in provincial temples of Augustus and Tiberius in Asia Minor. Representations of the imperial family in different iconographic variations ensured imperial presence even in the most distant provinces; they expressed the unity of the dynasty and the ability of inheritance. During Domitianus reign, the third provincial imperial temple was built in Asia (Ephesus) in order to express loyalty to a new, Flavian dynasty (Trebilco 2004: 31-32).

Augustus rejected the possibility of erecting his own temple in Rome and Italy in his lifetime (Tac. *Ann.* 4.37; Suet., *Aug.* 52; Cass. Dio 51, 20, 6-8). However, it seems that the careful decision was only a consequence of his evaluation about a possible strong reaction among political enemies. Expressions of loyalty of people, private and public were common, as well as indirect worship through dedications to imperial virtues. Numerous places for the municipal cult were determined, even during Augustus’ lifetime, and it was always together with Roma (Fig. 3).

## 2. EARLY PROVINCIAL AND REGIONAL CULTS IN THE WEST

In the western provinces the initiative did not come from the provincials but from the imperial family. Fishwick (1993: 148) had every right to emphasize that the imperial cult in the West was introduced by the imperial family

as a means of controlling newly conquered provinces. In peaceful senatorial provinces which were regularly earlier territorial acquisitions, the imperial cult was generally introduced later. Early imperial cult in the western provinces was related to Gallic, Celtic-Iberian and Illyric territories, the ones marked by significant war victories of Caesar and Octavian. That is why a council (*concilium Galliarum*) for three Gallic provinces was founded, positioned in *Lugdunum*. Drusus the Elder set up an altar dedicated *Romae et Augusto* in 12 BC, also proclaiming a Heduan Vercondaridubno the head priest of the imperial Gallic cult (Livy, *Per.*, 139; Deininger 1965: 21-24, 99-110; Fishwick 1993: 97-137; Fishwick 2002, 60). Centres of the provincial cult were usually centres of the provincial *iuridicus conventus*. By the end of Cantabrian wars between 22 and 19 BC the governor of *Hispania Citerior*, Lucius Sestius Quirinalis, set up three altars (*arae Sestiae*) at the territory of Cantabria and Asturias to honour Augustus’ victories (Dopico Caínzos 1986: 265 ff.; Alföldy 2000: 185-187). The consequence of the war was annexation of Cantabria and Asturias to Roman *Hispania* which was celebrated by erecting the temple of Jupiter Tonans on Capitol, which evokes one of the episodes from that campaign (Suet., *Aug.* 91.2; Fears 1981: 59). Assimilation policy was to be expressed through strong visual state and imperial symbols. Impressive expression of the Roman power over the defeated enemy was setting up *tropaeum*, which had the magic quality to transfer the energy of the defeated into the victorious army leader by the agency of Jupiter. *Tropaeum* is a first-class political symbol of triumphant Rome. Augustus in the midst of Cantabrian wars erects *tropaeum* in Saint-Bertrand de Comminges (*Lugdunum Convenarum*), in order to commemorate the triple victory in Aquitania, the Battle of Actium and in Northern *Hispania* (Diego Santos 1975: 531-543). There were at least two examples of *tropaeum* in Illyric: the earlier one was set up to commemorate Octavian’s victories in 35-33 and it was not preserved; the later one, commemorating Delmatian-Pannonian war, was in a poor state of preservation. It was once part of an architectural construction erected somewhere near the legion camp in Tilverium (Cambi 1984; Cambi 2002: 92-93; Cambi 2005: 24-25, figs 21-24) (Fig. 4).

At the initiative of the provincials in AD 15 the Senate approved to Tarraco the building of the temple of divine Augustus, now without association with Roma (Tac., *Ann.*, 1, 58). The temple was a centre of council of *Hispania Citerior* headed by *flamen* and *flaminica provinciae* (Deininger 1965: 27, 121-126; Fishwick 1993: 150-168; Fishwick 2002: 73-137). ‘Eastern’ model was applied for the first time in Tarraco in which the provincial population initiated creation of a cult place. It is likely that the reason might be long-term existence of the early regional cult which developed around Sestius’ altars. In *Hispania Citerior* (*Tarraconensis*) besides the central place of the provincial cult there were also several peripheral ones which covered territorially regions within provinces. What is more, at least one regional *conventus* preceded the central institution of the provincial cult. In the inscription *Tabula Lougeiorum* (AE 1984, 553) the oldest known *conventus arae Augustae* is mentioned, confirmed in the first year of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, with the centre in *civitas Lougeiorum*, where one of

three mentioned Sestius' altars was placed. This Hispanic example points that regional cults, related to native communities, were created in the initial period of Augustus' administrative and religious reforms, when the imperial cult had not been divided into central (Roman), provincial and municipal one. That is why we can consider it as a separate manifestation in this early period, which is introduced into territories which were recently conquered by Caesar and Octavian Augustus. In time it gradually became a part of the structure of the provincial cult.

*Ara Ubiorum* might be another similar example from Gallic-Germanic territory. It was set up around 9 BC during Drusus' activities in this region, and its name was preserved in the later name of the place *Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium* (Fishwick 1993: 137-139). Local aristocracy was entrusted with the organization of the cult. The altar of Ubians is usually considered to be the central place of honouring the Emperor in imaginary Great *Germania*, some kind of counterpart of provincial imperial Gallic cult in Lyon. We can suppose that this is a regional cult of a population that helped Caesar in wars, because their name (Ubians) was mentioned, also because there is no confirmation of any kind about later organization of imperial cult in *Germania*, finally the province of *Germania Inferior* was constituted only during Domitian's reign. Emphasizing Caesar's divine origin was necessary in order to strengthen imperial ideology of power. Inclusion of Gauls, Ibero-Celts, Illyrians, and others into the Empire meant that they had to honour the superhuman powers of victorious emperors.

### 3. PROVINCIAL CULT IN ILLYRICUM

Illyric and Liburni were an important episode in Caesar's civil war and an important subject of Augustus' testament. Augustus' task was to strengthen and ratify the principate under the leadership of the Julian dynasty. An important method for achieving such aim was glorifying war victories and attracting numerous population of *peregrini* from new provinces, through participation in the imperial cult. Tiberius' policy was based on the divine character and conquering successes of Augustus, the emperor's adoptive father. Provincial cult in *Illyricum* was a part of complex processes of constituting the province and introducing Roman institutions after Caesar's civil war and Augustus' conquests in *Illyricum* 35-33 BC. After the disastrous war with two Batos from AD 6 to 9 the province needed to be revitalized.

The fragmentary inscription (*CIL* 3, 12762+12766; Truhelka 1893: 278, no. 8) from Zenica possibly mentioning *sacerdos* or *sacerdotalis [provi]nc(iae) Del[1]ma[tiae]* indicates that there might have been provincial cult in *Dalmatia*. Stronger confirmation of that institution is an inscription from the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century mentioning the patron of the province *C. Iulius Silvanus Melanius* (*CIL* 3, 12732; Radimský 1893: 234, fig. 30; Pflaum 1960: 734-735). He was an *eques* whose another inscription was found in *Lugdunum*, where the Gallic provincial altar was set up (*CIL* 13, 1729; Pflaum 1961: 1054). *Sacerdos provinciae* who also presided over the council of the province, was chosen

among distinguished persons from *civitates* and was regularly a member of the equestrian rank. However, we do not know when the provincial cult was created, nor where its centre was, i.e. where the central altar was around which the council gathered. We can only guess it was in *Salona*, the capital of the province, but there are no confirmations for this logical supposition. Namely the imperial cult in *Salona* was confirmed by several sculptures and inscriptions with character that can easily be interpreted as provincial and also as municipal cult of the emperor. Priest titles in the inscriptions still do not offer enough information for the identification of municipal imperial cult in *Salona*, with civil and freedmen's *collegia*.

### 4. INTRODUCTION OF THE IMPERIAL CULT INTO ILLYRICUM

Manifestations of the imperial cult in *Illyricum* started to appear in Octavian Augustus' time, although they seem scarce in comparison with Tiberius' time, mainly due to poor record of the monuments (Cambi 2000: 31, no. 16; *ibid.* 33, no. 20; Cambi 2005: 19). During Augustus' reign *Collegium Iuliales* was probably formed, whose *sexvir* was Lucius Tettius Sperches, mentioned in the inscription from ancient Zadar (*Iader*), the only colony in Roman *Liburnia*. Caesars *flamen* in Rome could have served as a model for this municipal *collegium* of freedmen (Rüpke 2008, DNr1039). It is not likely that *Iuliales* came into existence earlier than 12 BC, because that would not correspond to the general political and religious processes in the empire. The development of municipal civil and freedmen's *collegia* of the imperial cults in the West was initiated by the creation of provincial centres, especially the one in *Lugdunum*. Sacral corporations were formed for Roman citizens – *sacerdotes Augustales provinciae* and *flamines (flaminicae) Augustales provinciae*, with priests *flamines flaminicae*, and *sacerdotes* (Tacit., *Ann.* 1.10; Suet., *Aug.* 52; Cass. Dio 51, 20; Fishwick 1987: 301; García 2008). Freedmen could have served as *Seviri Augustales*, from 12 BC organized in *collegia* mentioned in the inscriptions as *collegium Augustalium*, *corpus Augustalium* or *Augustales corporati* (Wissowa 1896: 2352-2355, 2357-2360). Rich freedmen acquired social prestige through the duty of *sexvir*, offering an opportunity to their descendants to perform important city duties, and often they could enter higher classes, such as equestrian rank or even become senators (Fig. 5).

*Iuliales* were formed before Tiberius' time, because his ideology of imperial power was based on Augustus' divine character. How did this early and exceptional cult magistracy appear in Zadar? When Augustus became *pontifex maximus* in 12 BC, he gathered both profane and sacral magistrate duties in one person. He was a *pater*, *patronus* and benefactor of the Roman world, model for patrons of the cities and governors of the provinces. Augustus as a patron of the colony of *Iader* built fortifications for *Iadertines*. The forum at *Iader* was built at the same time financed by the governor of *Illyricum* *Gnaeus Tamphilus Vala*. Some time later, during Tiberius' reign this forum was decorated with reliefs representing Jupiter Amon and Gorgona, which

is an example of iconography in service of imperial ideology (Cambi 2002: 89-92; Cambi 2005: 24-27, figs 25-27; Fadić 1986). Augustus decided to act benevolently towards Iadertini because Liburni had always been loyal to him and Caesar during numerous wars in *Illyricum*. A fleet of Pompey's admirals was defeated during the Battle of *Pharsalus* thanks to small and agile boats of Liburnian Iadertini who were on Caesar's side. Hirtius (*de bello Alexandrino* 42) wrote: '*...paucis navibus Iadertinorum, quorum semper in rem publicam singulare constiterat officium, dispersis Octavianis navibus erat potitus, ut vel classe dimicare posset adiunctis captivis navibus sociorum*'. Caesar's and Octavian's military actions in hostile Dalmatian territory used summer (and later winter) military camp *Burnum* at the bordering Liburnian territory as a starting point (Cambi *et al.* 2007: 13-15). An important aspect of patronage, although neglected in scientific literature, is the promotion of the cult of the imperial family.

## 5. REGIONAL CULT IN LIBURNIA

Such good relations between the Julians and Liburni resulted in the early organization of the regional Liburnian imperial cult *ad aram Augusti Liburnorum* (*CIL* 3, 2810 ff.; *ILJug* 1963, 199) and the *iuridicus conventus* (Pliny, *Nat. hist.*, 3.139) named *Conventus Scardonis* in a recently discovered inscription from Skradin which has not been published yet (Fig. 6). These institutions further confirm the specific, separate status of *Liburnia* within the territory of the province of *Illyricum*, and later in *Dalmatia* (Medini 1980). In the 1<sup>st</sup> century autochthonous inhabitants of *Liburnia* were exposed to strong process of Romanization, which was further strengthened through the cult whose centre was at altar in *Scardona*, and through the judicial processes that could take place in the *praetorium* building, which also served for the needs of the governor of the province (*CIL* III, 2809; Glavičić 2007: 251-253) (Fig. 7). The examples of the provinces of *Hispania*, *Asia* and *Dalmatia* show firm connection between the institution of *conventus* with juridical and cult activities (Dopico Caínzos 1986: 266).

For the time being it is difficult to say whether the Liburnian regional cult preceded provincial Illyric cult, as in *Hispania*, where the regional cult of Cantabria and Asturias preceded the organization of the federal cult in Tarraço. Liburnian cult was probably formed in Tiberius' time, when *civitates Liburniae* set up an inscription to Germanicus' son Nero Caesar (*CIL* 3, 9879=2808). Fishwick (1993: 145-146) believes it to be an isolated action, and that lack of evidence allows a possibility that the imperial cult in Liburnian *conventus* at *Scardona* was formed in Flavian period. It seems to us that there are many indirect indications that cult at *Scardona* was formed as early as Tiberius' time. Namely, his governor Publius Cornelius Dolabella actively organized the imperial cult in *Illyricum*. We would like to emphasize that Dolabella's inscription has been found in the recently explored Augusteum in Naroná (Marin 2004: 67) and that the inscription (*CIL* 3, 1741; Lučić 1966-1967: 543-545) of the similar character stood in a sanctuary that has still not been located somewhere in *Epidaurum*. It is also worth mentioning that the altar and the sanctuary from

*Oneum* (present-day Omiš) also date back to Tiberius' time (Cambi 1997: 78-79), and that Drusus Caesar was in *Illyricum* on two occasions over the course of three years in order to gain popularity in army and with people as a prince successor, and to promote his father's policy (Tac. *Ann.*, 2.44; Rendić-Miočević 1952: 43-47). Despite the fact that it is hard to determine whether sculptures, inscriptions and sanctuaries relate to municipal, provincial or regional cult, their great amount and historical circumstances strongly confirm the possibility that the Liburnian cult was formed as early as Tiberius' time. At the same time groups of the imperial statues were erected in the towns on the coast of the Roman province *Dalmatia* (Cambi 1998: 55; Cambi 2005: 24-36). The next Tiberius' governor *Lucius Volusius Saturninus* continued systematic activities relating the establishment of the imperial cult.

Was the regional imperial cult established only for the *Liburnia* or were there two more centres bound to other two *iuridici conventi* in *Salona* and *Naroná*? Numerous statues of the emperors were found in *Naroná* as well as Dolabella's inscription in the Augusteum. However many inscriptions of *sexviri* reflect cult activities of municipal freedmen's *collegia* of *augustali*, whereas inscriptions of two *sacerdotes* and a Titus' *flamen* show activities of civil municipal institutions. In any case activities related to the cult were strong (*CIL* 3, 6361; *CIL* 3, 1796; *CIL* 3 1822). The situation was similar at *Salona*. It is necessary to mention that *Salona* and *Naroná* were colonies with dominant Italic settlers, and not autochthonous inhabitants for which the regional cult was intended as at *Scardona*. Having that in mind we should pay attention to the finds from *Oneum*, Roman settlement of autochthonous origin near the eastern edge of *Salona's ager*. The big altar with inscriptions at the front and back side is one of the crucial finds (Gotovac 1993; Cambi 1997: 71-76). An earlier inscription dedicated to divine Augustus and Roma is at the front: *[Div]o Aug(usto) et [Romae] sacru[m]*. A later inscription dedicated to *Genius loci* is found at the back side of the imperial (Augustan) altar. If considered together with dedication from the front side, it shows strong characteristics of promotion of the state cult, i.e. imperial cult.

The marble head of Tiberius was discovered at the same location, which was dated to the same period as the earlier inscription from the altar by N. Cambi, on the basis of physiognomical details, classicistic style characteristics and fashion details (Cambi 1997: 71-76). However this date must be considered with caution due to heavy damages on the head. An inscription dedicated to Tiberius (Fig. 8), and another one dedicated to Claudius set up in 51/52 by governor Publius Antaeus Rufus were found on the same location (Bulić 1908; Bulić 1914: 104-105). Due to these findings we can say with certainty that this place presented an important sanctuary, which possibly could be related to the regional cult, the one of *iuridicus conventus* in *Salona*. The situation with the regional cults is made even more complex by Dolabella's inscription from Cavtat set up by *civitates Superioris provinciae Hillyrici* (*CIL* 3, 1741; Lučić 1966-1967: 543-545), as well as *ara Caesaris* from Doclea (Fishwick 2002: 289).

The restoration of the imperial cult in the province, whether municipal, regional or provincial, happened under the Fla-

vian dynasty, which is confirmed by numerous inscriptions of priests and patrons, as well as sculptures of the members of the Flavian dynasty.

## 6. ON THE MANNER OF PRESENTATION OF THE IMPERIAL CULT IN MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

This overview with discussion about certain questions served to present a wide range of themes and rich content of the imperial cult institution. Material remains should be exhibited with acknowledgement of the richness of processes and complexity of this social phenomenon. Although there is a great number of monuments related to state and imperial promotion of power, in several existing archaeological museums they are not treated as a whole which offers an opportunity to reconstruct high politics, social relations and processes of Romanization, but they are scattered in different units concerning religion, architecture, so-called fine arts, etc. Such situation in the Archaeological Museum in Zadar was made even more difficult because antique collection was completely dismantled, in order to be protected during the Croatian War of Independence. This collection will be exhibited again, now with a completely new conception. The old collection neglected sociological aspects of the monuments. They were seen as mere decoration, which is unacceptable in archaeological museums, which present places that try to offer a reconstruction of life and not collections of fine arts. As an example, Heracles' head wrongly interpreted as Emperor Commodus, together with Augustus' sculpture originally from Nin (part of a great collection scattered over Croatia, Italy, Denmark and elsewhere) used to decorate the stairway leading to the antique collection. Though it is indisputable that every monument has its own value, we believe that placing separate monuments into context can only attract audience's attention. Monuments should also be provided with additional information, offered appropriately. According to semantics communication, boredom appears when there is too much information, but also when there is not enough information.

In the exceptionally rich collection of stone monuments of the Archaeological Museum in Split, there are several exhibits that make an assemblage which could be called 'Emperor – government – state institutions in the province' (Fig 9). However, such units are difficult to recognise to a layman. Numerous monuments are exhibited without any mutual connections within a certain group, as separate artefacts and without captions. Constant accession of new valuable finds led to lack of space, and contamination by monuments that do not belong to a certain unit, because of which certain themes became senseless. The exhibition value of the monuments is diminished because many of them cannot be seen, hidden in dark corners or behind another monument, too far away or too high. Redesign of collection is necessary as well as extension of the entire collection of stone monuments. Reduction of the number of exhibits would make separate monuments more visible and the value of each should be increased by emphasizing the meaning of the whole theme. Didactic means should be introduced in an appropriate way.

Diocletian's villa in Split, a huge building with complex functions, is a world important monument of Cultural Heritage. Its basic function was to serve as an apartment of the retired emperor, who was of divine character. This is visible in the iconography of the villa's decoration and also in the disposition of the edifices. The peristyle with the protyron takes the central position which served as an architectural scenographic framework that emphasized the vision of the emperor – *dominus* (Gabričević, 1987: 249-255) (Fig. 10). That is where Diocletian was presented as a supernatural being whereas his subjects prostrated in acts of proskynesis. The palace is an exceptional symbol of imperial power. It should be a part of permanent exhibition in the Archaeological Museum in Split, not only as an object representing the beginning of formation of the town Split, but also as a monument-metaphor of new social order – dominate, a period in which the emperor-god is positioned at the top of the social pyramid.

Diocletian's Villa vividly reflects the decline of paganism, and the ways in which Christians subdued the pagan elements and transformed the residence of the emperor-prosecutor into the late antique town Split decorated with symbols of Christian emperors (Cambí 1994: 23-25; Cambí 2002: 173-181). The educative and didactic approach, which would be difficult to achieve in the palace as a living organism and museum exhibit at the same time, could be easily presented in a museum. It is worthwhile for such a purpose to solve a great problem of lack of place, maybe by erecting a pavilion in the garden behind the museum or in some other way.

Finally, the new museum at Naronā was planned to isolate and protect the imperial sanctuary – the Augusteum in situ (Fig. 11). Placing of the monumental modern architectural construction over undoubtedly valuable site implies consistent compliance with the central theme – the imperial cult. The concept of the first floor, above the Augusteum, though useful for archaeology and tourists, diminishes the main idea which is the presentation and protection of separate object with its contents. The upper floor is organized as a general museum for different valuable monuments from Naronā, which were previously deposited in different inappropriate rooms or other museum institutions. The terrace of the museum serves as a gazebo and a depot of stone monuments that are not exhibited. In that way a certain presentations of life in ancient pagan and early Christian Naronā is created, but the main idea of representing a pagan sanctuary of the imperial cult has somehow faded away. The question of usefulness for the audience is open for discussion. The problem is that the museum of Augusteum is at the same time the museum of the colony of Naronā, captured in the Augusteum shell and vice versa. The area around the building has not been archaeologically excavated, and its neighbourhood consists of overgrown gardens and plain houses. By its appearance and its meaning this sanctuary-museum is isolated like an island in a rural environment with scarce archaeological patches, with little understanding of local community, a situation which creates strong semantic tension. The only solution is the purchase of a piece of land and demolishing recently built houses close to the museum that have no environmental, aesthetic and cultural value; clearing new areas for archae-

ological excavations and forming a park, as well as recreating of exhibitions on the upper floor of the museum above Augusteum in situ.

To put it briefly, there is a lot of space for improvement of the exhibition of numerous and valuable monuments of the imperial cult in *Dalmatia*, as well as for presentation of that social phenomenon.

## ABBREVIATIONS

*AE* – *L'Année épigraphique. Revue des publications épigraphiques relatives à l'antiquité romaine*

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

*CIL* 7 – Hubner, E. (ed.), 1873, *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*, VII (Berlin)

*CIL* 9 – Mommsen, T. (ed.), 1883, *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*, IX (Berlin)

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## NOTES

All photos were made by Miroslav Glavičić and Željko Miletić.



Fig. 1 - Two statues of Julio-Claudian emperors, part of the group discovered in Aenona, present-day Nin (Archaeological Museum in Zadar).



Fig. 2 - Monument in honour of A. Ducenius Geminus, sodalis Augustalis, governor in the province Dalmatia during the reign of Nero, patronus of the colony Narona (Archaeological Museum in Narona).

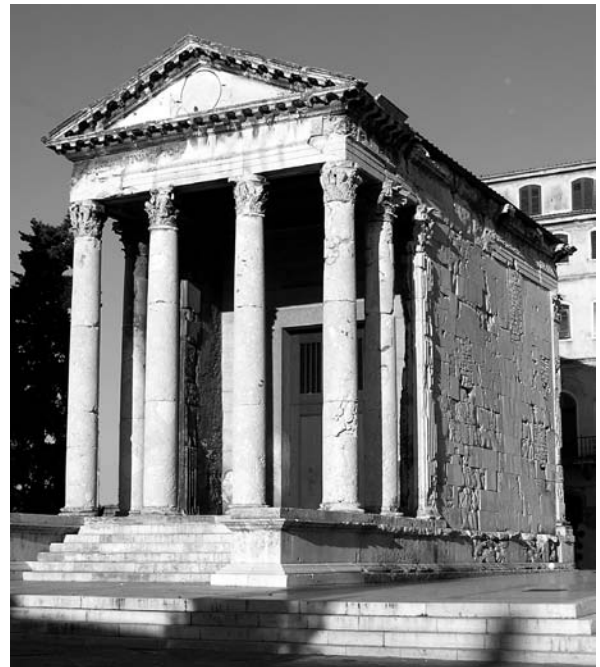


Fig. 3 - Temple of Augustus and Roma on forum in Pola, present-day Pula in Croatia.

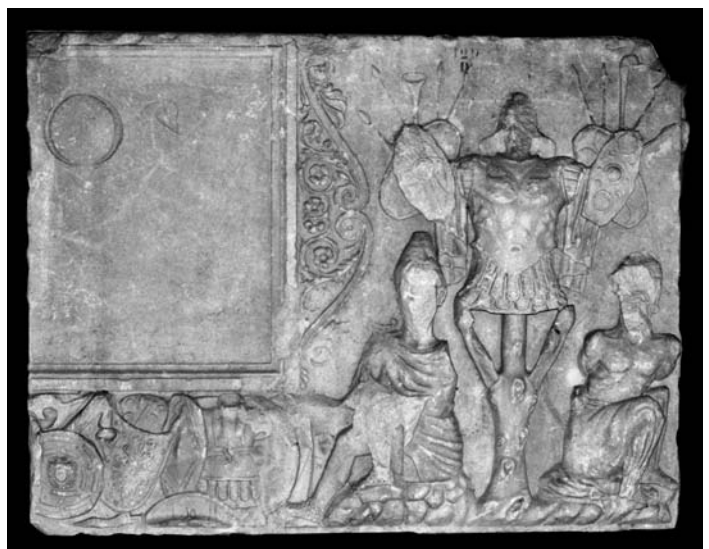


Fig. 4 - Inscription panel from the front of a tropaeum, found in Tilverium (Archaeological Museum in Split).



Fig. 5 - Funeral titulus of VI vir L. Annaeus Palaesticus, erected by the thiasus iuventutis of the colony Narona, (Archeological Museum in Narona).

Fig. 6 - Roman public inscription recently discovered mentioning conventus Scardonis (Parish office at Skradin).

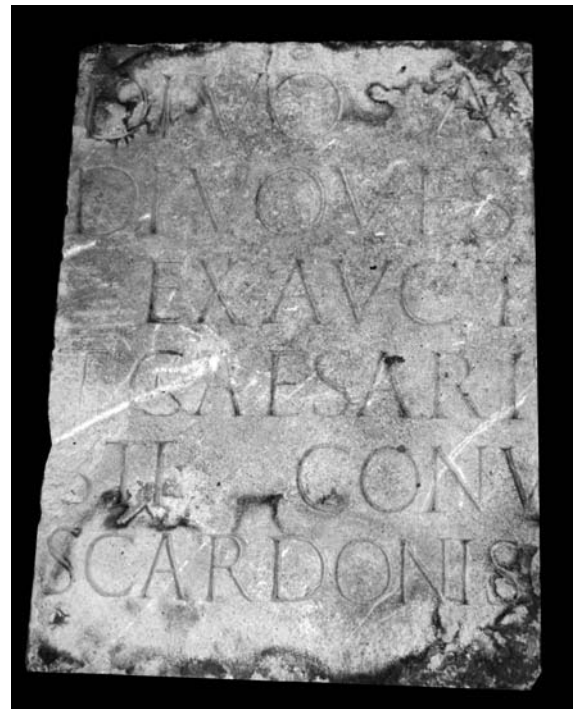


Fig. 7 - Inscription mentioning the renovation of the praetorium in Scardona (Parish office at Skradin).



Fig. 8 - Emperor Tiberius inscription from Oneum (City Museum at Omiš).



Fig. 9 - Students of archaeology from Zadar are visiting the collection of Roman imperial sculptures in the Archaeological Museum in Split.



Fig. 10 - The peristyle with prothyron in the Diocletian's palace in Split.



Fig. 11 - Shrine of emperors exhibited in situ inside the Archaeological Museum in Narona.