

Marjeta ŠAŠEL KOS

A NEW ALTAR TO THE NYMPHS AND THE MAGII IN DALMATIA

UDK 903.7 (398 Dalmacija)

Original scientific paper

Received: 2. 09. 2009.

Approved: 15. 09. 2009.

Marjeta Šašel Kos
Institut za arheologijo
ZRC SAZU,
Novi trg 2 (p.p. 306)
Ljubljana, Slovenija
e-mail: mkos@zrc-sazu.si

Water springs of all kinds were often associated with the Nymphs and were of special importance in the regions where water was scarce. An as yet unpublished small limestone altar is presented in the article, which one *Magia Maxima* dedicated to the Nymphs. Since it appeared for sale in an antiquity shop in Ljubljana, its exact provenance is not certain. The altar came from a private collection in Split; allegedly it had been found somewhere in the vicinity of the city; hence probably in the area of *Salonae*, Dalmatia. The *Magii* are well attested in Italy, most of all in northern Italy including *Histria*; they are further known from *Gallia Narbonensis*, *Hispania*, and Dalmatia, particularly *Liburnia*. The worship of the Nymphs is documented in Dalmatia since the Hellenistic period.

Key words: Roman period, Dalmatia, *Salonae*, Nymphs, *Magii*

Water as one of the main sources of life has always been an object of veneration, and Pindar regarded it as the greatest good.¹ Servius in his commentary to Virgil's *Aeneid* remarked: "There is no water spring that would not be sacred".² Water and various phenomena connected with it represent an interesting topic of study. Vesna Girardi Jurkić dedicated some of her research to divinities worshipped in *Histria*, including altars and reliefs erected to the Nymphs;³ also, in 2002, she organized one of the

yearly international conferences in Pula on the subject of water. The conference resulted in a publication containing many important contributions on various subjects ranging from water cults and the significance of water in various cults to commerce and other forms of the economy, as well as sea and river traffic.⁴ Moreover, volume 13 of *Histria Antiqua* was dedicated to cults, and it, too, contained several articles concerning water cults in antiquity.⁵

¹ *Olympian Odes* 1. 1; cf. also 3. 42.

² *Maurus Servius Honoratus*, In *Vergilii Aeneidos Libros* 7. 84. 1: *Nul-lus enim fons non sacer*.

³ See her survey monograph: GIRARDI JURKIĆ 2004.

⁴ *Voda kao izvor života / Water as the Source of Life* (*Histria Antiqua* 10), Pula 2003.

⁵ *Cults and Beliefs throughout Historical Periods* (*Histria Antiqua* 13), Pula 2005.

Fig. 1. and 2. The new altar to the Nymphs.

Provenance of the altar

In the summer of 2003, a small limestone altar, dedicated to the Nymphs, appeared on sale in one of the antiquities shops in Ljubljana. The exact provenance of the altar is unknown, but according to the information obtained by the owner of the shop, the altar would have been found "somewhere around Split" and belonged for several years to a well-to-do Split family. Thus it may be assumed with great probability that the altar was discovered in the Saloniae region, if not at Saloniae itself.

The altar is made of whitish limestone, most probably from one of the local quarries, although it was not possible to make an appropriate petrographic analysis; in any case, however, the stone is not marble. Its front and lateral sides are smoothly polished and moulded, while its rear side is roughly worked; it was not cut in a straight manner but was left uneven, displaying a large embossment in the lower part. The stone is naturally damaged, with a large hole in the upper part of the rear side, as well as several small holes on all other sides. It has a hollow on its upper side, intended as a place to perform a sacrifice. The capital of the altar is decorated in the shape of a cushion (*pulvinus*), a frequent decoration of altars' capitals. The dimensions of the altar are 24 (height) x 13-13.5 (width) x 8-10.5 (thickness) cm; height of the letters: 2 cm (figs. 1-2). The inscription, consisting of four lines, is not framed:

Magia L(ucii) / f(ilia) Maxima / Nymphis (!) / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) l(aeta).

Ligatures: line 2: the second *MA*; line 3: *HI. Nymphis* instead of *Nymphis* is not an unusual spelling of the name,⁶ and neither is *Nimpis* or *Nimfis*.⁷ *Maximus/Maxima* is a very common name, from which no further conclusions can be drawn. A very similarly structured (*impaginatio*) dedication to the Nymphs is known from Tragurium (Trogir) near Saloniae, erected by Pullia C. f. Surisca,⁸ and similar small altars have been found elsewhere in the Roman Empire.⁹ The new dedication should be dated to the first or second century AD.

The Magii in Dalmatia

The gentilicium *Magius* is well attested in Italy, and this was one of the most distinguished *gentes* in Capua, who moved to Aeclanum after the Second Punic War;



from Sulla onwards the Magii from this city appear in the Roman *Fasti*.¹⁰ The Magii are also documented in northern Italy including Histria; already towards the end of the second century BC one Magius was a prefect of L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, consul in 112 BC, who held a command in Cisalpine Gaul in that year or a year later.¹¹ The Magii are further documented in Gallia Narbonensis,

⁶ E.g. ILJug 866, an altar from the territory of the Liburnian Asseria, from the area called Begovača near Benkovac (the village Donji Kašić): the theonym is spelled *Nimfis*; the name of the dedicator has not been preserved.

⁷ See also LHOTE-BIROT 2004, 67. Erroneous spellings often indicate lower class dedicators and/or poor Romanization.

⁸ CIL III 2675.

⁹ LHOTE-BIROT 2004, 58-69, see the Plate with photos.

¹⁰ CÉBEILLAC-GERVASONI 1982, 63; 81; 96; CAMODECA 1982, 108; 134-135; 160; for a couple of equestrian and senatorial Magii see PIR2 V/2 (1983), s.v.

¹¹ Cic., De Or. 2. 265; MRR I, 538-539; MRR III, 46 (Calpurnius 88); 132 (Magius I).



Fig. 3. Map of Dalmatia showing places cited in the text (Computer graphics: Mateja Belak).

Hispania, and in Dalmatia; it should be added that the name *Magius* is also known as a *cognomen*. Members of the *gens* Magia can sporadically be found in Noricum and Pannonia.¹² In the hinterland of Tergeste, in the region of the Timavus River, at Duino, an altar to Hercules or more probably Silvanus was erected by one Gaius Magius Secundus.¹³

The *gens* is particularly well documented in the Liburnian part of Dalmatia (fig. 3), and several inscriptions erected by the Magii are from the period of the early Principate. Even if no Magii have been attested to date among the town magistrates, they appear among those families that were related to the municipal aristocracy by marriage.¹⁴ The Liburnian Magii may either have come from northern Italy to settle in the neighbouring province, or perhaps they would have come directly from the Italian regions opposite the northern and central Dalmatian coast. This is even more likely if some of the Republican Magii indeed came to Aquileia from Campania, as has recently been suggested.¹⁵ It may be interesting to note that Magius Celer Velleianus, brother of the historian Velleius Paterculus, was active in Dalmatia as a legate of Tiberius in the course of the great Pannonian-Dalmatian rebellion in AD 6-9.¹⁶

A veteran Quintus Magius, who had been recruited in Verona, died in Asseria, where he chose to settle down, setting up his second home.¹⁷ He had served in the legion

VII, stationed in Tilverium, early in the first century, before it got the honorific title *Claudia pia fidelis* under Claudius, after the revolt of Lucius Arruntius Camillus Scribonianus in AD 42. An early date is additionally indicated by the fact that Magius has no *cognomen*. Members of the *gens* Magia were also settled on the Liburnian islands, thus on Arba (Rab), in the city of Arba, where a nineteen year old Magia Luculla is commemorated on a plain tombstone, as the only person recorded on it.¹⁸

The upper class Magii are attested at Apsorus (present-day Osor) in the northern part of the island of Crex (Cres and Lošinj). There the wife of Lucius Magius Neus, Lartia T. f. Maxima, was honoured with a public funeral, which was decreed to her by the town council because of the merits of her father.¹⁹ Her funerary monument may be dated to the early Principate.²⁰ Neus, the name of Magia's husband, is probably of Greek origin (*Néos*), hence he may have been a freedman; the lack of his father's name in his name formula seems to confirm it. Their daughter, too, is mentioned on the side panel of the tombstone, Magia L(uci) f(ilia), bearing no cognomen, which is unusual since her mother has it. She was perhaps the only daughter or she died as a baby, or else her parents purposely gave her no surname in imitation of Italian upper class families who retained for some time this early onomastic habit.²¹ Lartia Maxima may have been the only woman in Dalmatia whose nomenclature consisted of both the

¹² OPEL III, 46; probably also RIST 64 from Kalsdorf, in which elsewhere unknown Macius is mentioned.

¹³ Inscr. It. X 4, 328; the name of divinity is not preserved, and the relief decoration is damaged.

¹⁴ KURILIĆ 1999a, 213-215.

¹⁵ CHIABÀ 2003, 89-90.

¹⁶ Velleius Paterculus II 115; CAMODECA 1982, 135.

¹⁷ CIL III 9939: Q. Magius / C. f. Publ(ilia tribu) dom(o) / Verona, vetera(nus) / leg(ionis) VII, annoru(m) / L. stipend(iorum) XXV / t(itulum) f(ieri) i(ussit). H(ic) [s(itus)] e(st).

¹⁸ CIL III 3124: Mag[i]a [L]u[c]ulla, / annor(um) XVIII, / b(ic) s(ita) e(st). Reading after KURILIĆ 1999a, AK 1275.

¹⁹ CIL III 3137: Lartiae T. f. / Maximae / L. Magii Nei (uxori) / buic d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) ob / merita patris / funus publice / datum est. // Magiae L. f. Cf. WILKES 1969, 311-312.

²⁰ ALFÖLDY 1969, 96.

²¹ KURILIĆ 1999a, 78.

names of her father and her husband, probably to draw attention to the relationship of two prominent families at Apsorus, the Lartii and Magii.²²

The Lartii are also attested in Nedinum, where some generations later a member of the local municipal upper class, Gaius Lartius Sabinianus, was *officialis Neditarum*; he was a lower municipal official attending to a town magistrate. There is evidence to suggest that the Lartii in Nedinum may have been of native origin.²³ Interestingly, the wife of Sabinianus is called Magia Maximina,²⁴ her name attesting a close relationship between two leading families in the town, the same families as at Apsorus.²⁵ There are other Magii known at Nedinum.²⁶ Nedinum was one of the most important southern Liburnian indigenous settlements in the fertile Ravni Kotari area, which – together with Asseria and Varvaria – rapidly developed from the pre-Roman hillfort settlements to *municipia*.

Nedinum may have theoretically become a *municipium* already under Augustus, since the voting tribe *Claudia* should not necessarily indicate that the town was granted autonomy under Tiberius or Claudius. Inhabitants of the northern Italian Augustan colonies of Emona and Iulium Carnicum, for example, were inscribed in the *tribus Claudia*;²⁷ in Liburnia most probably Aenona, Arba, Tarsatica, Alvona,²⁸ and perhaps Apsorus and some other towns, too, became *municipia* under Augustus; however, a later Julio-Claudian period is also not an unlikely date for this administrative promotion.²⁹ If a parallel may be drawn between the Rome-friendly Noricum, which was annexed ca. 15 BC, and Liburnia, where several towns enjoyed special privileges such as *ius Italicum* (Alvona, Flanona, Lopsica, Varvaria) and *immunitas* (exemption from tribute: Asseria, Curicum, Furfinium),³⁰ urbanisation perhaps occurred under Claudius; earlier, these towns may have been allowed to retain their own internal settlement.

The Lartii have not been attested to date outside Apsorus and Nedinum, except later at Salonae and its territory,³¹ where the Magii are also documented.³² This is not surprising at all in a large provincial capital, which attracted many immigrants from all parts of the province. However, in the early Principate, no Lartii and Magii have been attested to date at Salonae, which should probably be ascribed to chance, particularly because they are known from Epidaurum.³³

A typically Liburnian funerary *cippus* has been discovered at Iader (Zadar), in the Arbanasi suburb, now kept in the Archaeological Museum of Zadar. It was erected by one Novia Severa to her husband Marcus

Magius Galata, bearing a rather rare *cognomen*, only attested in the East and in Italy. It probably betrays the man's origin from Galatia, and his freedman status.³⁴ At Iader another funerary monument was also discovered, mentioning Lucius Cominius and Marcus Magius, two *socii*, probably two merchants, who erected the tombstone to another *socius* of theirs, whose name has not been preserved.³⁵ That they were engaged in commerce may be indicated by the word *socius*, which usually refers to traders, as, for example, at Andautonia in Pannonia, where one Marcus Iuentius Primigenius, no doubt a merchant, dedicated an altar to the river god Savus, together with his *socii*.³⁶ The Cominii, too, are well attested in northern Italy, particularly in Aquileia.³⁷ The tombstone must have been erected in the early Principate, since both *socii* have as yet no *cognomen*.

Another veteran belonging to the *gens* Magia, in addition to Quintus Magius from Asseria, is attested at Naronia, Gneius Magius, he, too, bearing no *cognomen*, hence his tombstone must also be assigned to the early first century AD.³⁸ Perhaps he had also served in the legion VII in Tilurium, closer to Naronia than Burnum, where the legion XI was stationed. Another Magius is documented in Naronia, one Lucius Magius Princeps, who erected a small column to Mercurius.³⁹

Summing up the evidence, it can be concluded that some Magii came to Dalmatia as soldiers, probably from various towns of northern Italy, while some came to the province as traders and businessmen, perhaps mainly from Aquileia. These settled down most of all in Liburnia. The *gens* must have been prosperous and wealthy, having many slaves and consequently also several freedmen, some of whom attained an eminent position in their home towns, as did most probably Lucius Magius Neus.

The Nymphs

The cult of the Nymphs was of great importance in most of the Roman Empire, and in a similar way it had earlier been important in the Greek world before the coming of the Romans.⁴⁰ It was also flourishing in the Augustan age, and Strabo mentioned that Elis, for example, was full of sanctuaries of Artemis, Aphrodite and the Nymphs, erected in sacred groves, where flowers grew because of the abundance of water.⁴¹ An exception is Roman Africa, where dedications to the Nymphs have rarely been attested, at the expense of Neptune, as it seems; he may have occasionally replaced some male deity who protected the sources there before the coming

²² KURILIĆ 1999a, 75; 247; WILKES 1969, 312, inadvertently mixed up data from this and another inscription, giving a wrong explanation of the relationship of these persons.

²³ KURILIĆ 2002, 139.

²⁴ CIL III 2868.

²⁵ KURILIĆ 1999a, 224-225.

²⁶ CIL III 13260 (= 9966).

²⁷ ŠAŠEL KOS 2003; MAINARDIS 2008, 36 ff., cf. indexes p. 307.

²⁸ ALFÖLDY 1965a, 68 ff.

²⁹ See ALFÖLDY 1965a, 68 ff.; WILKES 1969, 487-492; FORNI 1970, 575; WILKES 1977, 471 ff.; ČAČE 1992-1993.

³⁰ ČAČE 1992-1993.

³¹ CIL III 2414, a family of L. Lartius Terpinus of freedman descend, as is indicated by his Greek *cognomen* and Greek names of his family.

³² CIL III 9035 (a fragment of an inscribed monument bearing a feminine name); 9212 (a small fragment with Magi[---] preserved); cf. WILKES 1969, 311-312.

³³ They do not figure among the Saloniian families listed in WILKES 2002, 97 ff.; for the stele found in the area of Epidaurum (Lovorno), from the late Principate, cf. KURILIĆ 2006, 142-143.

³⁴ ILJug 899: M. Magio / Galatae / posuit / Novia Severa / uxor.

³⁵ ILJug 884 (Zadar, Archaeological Museum): - ann(is)] / XIII b. s. [e.] / L. Cominius [L.? f.] / M. Magius M. [f.] soceio suo / fecerunt. ALFÖLDY 1965b, 98-99, corrected the reading from Macius to Magius, pointing out the extreme rarity of the gentilicium Macius, see n. 10.

³⁶ AIJ 475 = CIL III 4009 = ILS 3908/9, see MÓCSY 1959, 23.

³⁷ Inscr. Aquil., indexes; cf. PANCI-ERA 1957, 86 f., for economic and other relations between Aquileia and Liburnia; PAVAN 1958, 119-120.

³⁸ CIL III 1815.

³⁹ CIL III 1791.

⁴⁰ GAIFMAN 2008.

⁴¹ 8. 3. 12 C ??

of the Romans.⁴² Since coastal areas of Dalmatia and most notably the major Dalmatian islands were colonized by the Greeks, Hellenization played an important role in Illyria. Greeks were settled in the mainland at Epetium (Stobreč) and Tragurium (Trogir), perhaps also in Salona and in several other places along the coast as is explicitly stated by Pliny the Elder; by his time, he says, many once flourishing Greek cities had become extinct.⁴³ Greek colonists came in contact with many indigenous peoples, introducing the cult of the Nymphs to the eastern Adriatic, which is not least reflected in the coins of Issa from the early third century BC, bearing a depiction of a Nymph on the obverse.⁴⁴ Along the central Dalmatian coast and particularly on the islands spring water is scarce and therefore appreciated.⁴⁵ In some places and under exceptional circumstances water even had to be paid for, as, for example, in Attica on the coast along the road from Athens to Sounion, in the sanctuary of the Nymphs at the water source called Halykos (present-day Pigádi toû Alykoû). There, according to the Delphic oracle, sacrifices to the Nymphs had to be performed, costly as it seems, for which priests needed money.⁴⁶

The Nymphs, whose dedications are most often found in the vicinity of water sources, at thermal springs and in accompanying sanctuaries, or at fountains, were worshipped either alone or with one or more other divinities. They could bear various epithets ranging from *Augustae* to *aeternae*, *salutares*, *sanctae* or *sanctissimae*, *novae*, and *fontanae* to epithets deriving from place-names or names of peoples.⁴⁷ Epithets derived from toponyms or peoples, such as *lasae* (Aqua Lasae, modern Varaždinske Toplice),⁴⁸ or *Griselicae* (present-day Gréoux-les-Bains), and occasional association of the Nymphs with the *Matres* suggest that in several such cases the Nymphs may have been indigenous local divinities.⁴⁹ As is indicated by an altar from the area of Doclea, the Nymphs were perceived as three deities.⁵⁰

While in Italy they sometimes appeared in the company of Fontanus and Apollo, but also with Silvanus,⁵¹ in the Gallic provinces, for example, they were occasionally worshipped together with Apollo, Silvanus, Neptune, and Mercury. In Dalmatia, particularly in the regions of the Delmatae, they were frequently depicted together with Silvanus or with Silvanus and Diana. Silvanae, who sometimes occur in dedications from this area, should probably be regarded as some kind of fairies dwelling in woods. Interesting for the close relationship between Silvanus and the Nymphs is a building inscription found at Klis, where a small Salonitan village must have been

located, and a control post supervising the road leading from the Dinaric hinterland to the coast near Salona. Fescenia Astice had a sanctuary to Jupiter erected together with her husband Faustus,⁵² adding to his cult also that of Silvanus and the Nymphs. They did this in accordance to the command of Jupiter and the council (*consentium*) of gods and goddesses. It is significant that in the beginning of the last century, when the inscription was first published, the oldest inhabitants of Klis remembered that a well existed some 200 m from the place of discovery of the inscribed stone. It was found reused in the pavement of the early Christian church there.⁵³

As has long been known and subsequently analyzed and redefined by Duje Rendić-Miočević, Silvanus of the Delmatae has certain characteristics of the Greek Pan, which should most probably be interpreted as an influence from the cults of Greek settlers along the coast. He has been regarded as an indigenous divinity of forests, woods, pastures, and breeding sheep and goats, somehow transformed under the influence of Greek Pan and Roman Silvanus.⁵⁴ The god is depicted as having goat legs, ears and horns, playing on a pipe (*syrinx*) or flute, and holding shepherd's staff (*pedum*), while the Roman Silvanus is represented in a human form, holding a gardening sickle (*falx*) and a pine branch.

Although it was argued by Peter Dorcey, against the general opinion, that Silvanus in Dalmatia would not have been an "Illyrian" god,⁵⁵ this has recently been twice rejected on iconographic and onomastic grounds.⁵⁶ It may well be added that Silvanus should not be called "Illyrian", as has inexactly been done by Dorcey, since D. Rendić-Miočević emphasized that the worship of the god was most of all centred on the territory of the Delmatae. Thus it can be concluded that Silvanus, who was worshipped in the area of the Delmatae and their neighbours, and is usually accompanied by Diana and/or the Nymphs or Silvanae, was most probably an indigenous local god of pastures, stockbreeding, and woods, of similar characteristics as Pan and Italian Silvanus. The same may be true of his attendants. This is indicated most of all by iconographic peculiarities such as the typically indigenous attire of the depicted divinities (*fig. 4*).⁵⁷ Diana on the monuments analyzed by D. Rendić-Miočević does bear the name of the Italian/Roman goddess, also having some of her attributes, but in the hinterland of coastal Dalmatia, in Delmataean communities and adjacent areas, she was no doubt perceived as their own deity, and the same would have been true of the Nymphs. This was their "humble pantheon",⁵⁸ so important for the population living in

⁴² ARNALDI 2004.

⁴³ N. b. 3.144; cf. CAMBI, ČAČE, KIRIGIN (eds.) 2002; BRACCESI, LUNI (eds.) 2002.

⁴⁴ KOS 1998, 156-158, with literature cited.

⁴⁵ Zaminović, M., *Voda i naselja na središnjoj ilirskoj obali i otocima* (Water and settlements on the central Illyrian coast and islands), *Histria Antiqua* 10, 2003, 35-43.

⁴⁶ MEYER 2004.

⁴⁷ See indexes to the ILS, and dedications to the Nymphs in this epigraphic collection.

⁴⁸ ILJug 1170.

⁴⁹ LHOUE-BIROT 2004, 64.

⁵⁰ ILJug 1850: *Nymphis Augggustis tribus* / *sacrum. M(arcus) S(O) M(O) / cum suis*.

⁵¹ ILS 3873-3876a; together with Silvanus: 3877, and 3878: additionally with Asclepius.

⁵² ILJug 2003. Woman's gentilicium is otherwise only known from Ostia, and her cognomen sporadically in southern Gallia and Hispania, cf. ALFÖLDY 1969, s.v. Her husband's gentilicium is broken off.

⁵³ See the commentary to ILJug 2003, first published by F. Bulić in 1907.

⁵⁴ RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ D. 1989, 461-506 (= 1955, 5-40, Pl. I-V), with older literature cited. See also IMAMOVIĆ 1977, 70 ff.; new reliefs come to light in the territory of the Delmatae, see, for ex., MARŠIĆ 1993-1994.

⁵⁵ DORCEY 1992, 68-71.

⁵⁶ MATIJAŠIĆ, TASSAUX 2000, 81 ff., particularly 84 and 88 ff.; RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ A. 2003, 407-419; see also BRAJKOVIĆ 2008, 68-71; 200-206 (Silvanus); 214 (the Nymphs).

⁵⁷ See the cited articles of D. and A. RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, footnotes 48 and 50?; cf. also SANADER 2008, 166 ff.

⁵⁸ RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ D. 1989, 904.

Fig. 4. Relief depicting Silvanus and the Nymphs from Dol (the island of Hvar/Pharos). From: KUNTIĆ-MAKVIĆ, DIZDAR, SANADER 2007, 28 fig. 22.



Dinaric karst regions, who most of all depended on flocks of sheep and goats, and on hunting.

However, Romanization and epigraphic habit made these divinities known to us under their Roman names, while their original names are no longer known. In northern Italy, too, the Nymphs may have been worshipped as local indigenous divinities even among members of the upper class,⁵⁹ and this could have often been the case elsewhere, among people of all social classes. This is not at all an isolated case in the Roman Empire; an example from the neighbouring Pannonia would be the Celtic Nutrices, whose cult is attested only in Poetovio, and whose worshippers were in several instances local Celtic inhabitants.⁶⁰ The question why these non-Roman deities were venerated under the Latin names cannot be answered with certainty, but there are several possibilities to explain the phenomenon. The Latin theonyms may have been translations of the epichoric names; possibly names such as Silvanus or Nutrices may have been similar in both languages. Perhaps Latin names were adopted to share the cult with the entire community, members of which were undoubtedly also Roman immigrants from Italy or immigrants from other parts of the Empire.

Clearly not all dedications to Silvanus, and even less so to the Nymphs in Dalmatia reflect an indigenous cult. Their worship was no doubt also directly brought to Dalmatia by Italian immigrants who settled down in the province. This, actually, must have also been the case for the new dedication, since - as has been seen - the Magii were among the Roman colonists in Dalmatia. The Nymphs protected public baths in the towns, as well as *Nymphaea*, public fountains offering drinking water, which were both an indispensable and often prestigious architecture of every Roman city. Thus at Salona a

large and luxurious *nymphaeum* was unearthed near the Porta Caesarea, which was supplied with water from an aqueduct, entering the city in this area. The Porta Caesarea was built in the Augustan age, a period most important for the urbanization of coastal Dalmatia. Another *nymphaeum* was located at the northern city wall of the oldest Salonitan settlement nucleus, and *Nymphaea* are also known from Pola, Arba, Iader, and Varvaria.⁶¹

At Alvona (present-day Labin) in the Liburnian part of Histria, public baths are documented in an interesting dedication to the Nymphs, which was discovered immured in the church of St Gallus in the nearby village of Gondolići. The Nymphs were honoured by the aedile and the *duumvir* (the chief magistrate) of the town Tiberius Gavillius Lambicus, who had taken a vow to erect the monument after the construction of the public baths (*balineum*) was successfully completed under his supervision. As an aedile he was responsible for public buildings and the welfare of the town inhabitants.⁶² The Gavillii, who were among the first colonists of Aquileia,⁶³ are documented as the most prominent family in Alvona, which was a major harbour; the family was equally important also in Parentium, perhaps a Caesarian or Augustan colony.⁶⁴

A most interesting dedication to the Nymphs was found on the Liburnian island of Arba (present-day Rab), commemorating the discovery of a hitherto unknown source of water. It is emphasized in the inscription that not even the oldest inhabitants of the town remembered its existence. The source was fitted out and made publicly available at the expense of the senator Gaius Raecius Rufus, whose freedman Gaius Raecius Leo supervised the work.⁶⁵ Leo dedicated the accompanying inscribed monument to

⁵⁹ MENNELLA 2003, 486; 491.

⁶⁰ ŠAŠEL KOS 1999, 153-192.

⁶¹ SUIĆ 2003, 280-282.

⁶² CIL III 3047; GLAVIČIĆ 2003, 85-86.

⁶³ Livy 41. 5. 1; BANDELLI 1988, 102; 145-146.

⁶⁴ ŠAŠEL 1987, 67-74 (= 1992, 661-668); cf. also TASSAUX 1986, 170 f.

⁶⁵ CIL III 3116 = ILS 3869; cf. ŠAŠEL 1982, 566 (= 1992, 175): *Nymphis Aug(ustis) sacrum / C. Raecius Leo aquam quam nul(lus antiquorum in civitate / fuisse meminerit, inven(tam) impendio et volu(n)t[ate] C. Raeci Rufi c(larissimi) v(iri) patron(i) / [in civit(atem) perduxit et de]dicavit, / [Severo est Pompeiano II co(n)s(ulibus) VI Idus / Nov(embres)]. Cf. KURILIĆ 1999a, AK 2322; GLAVIČIĆ 2003, 85.*

his patron on 8 November, AD 173; it obviously decorated the public fountain. Ronald Syme believed that the senator had originated from a well-to-do upper class Liburnian family from Arba, and he identified him as a senator from Dalmatia.⁶⁶ His Liburnian origin was accepted by most scholars,⁶⁷ although it has been suggested that the family of Raecius Rufus had come from Italy and only had estates and/or other economic interests and clients in Liburnia, since the gentilicium is also well attested in Italy and other western provinces.⁶⁸ And indeed, the native personal name R(a)ecus, although relatively well documented in Liburnia, is also known in Histria,⁶⁹ as well as among the Veneti and in the entire northern Adriatic region;⁷⁰ hence, the Liburnian origin of the senatorial Raecii family should still be regarded as doubtful.

Let us conclude with a most interesting epigraphic testimony in honour of a local Nymph from southern Dalmatia. In the region of Aronia and/or Mucrum (the present-day area of Makarska), at Živogošće, two beautiful poems in elegiac couplets are carved into the rock above a source of water, which no longer exists, while the rock is now situated in a small bay close to the sea coast.⁷¹ The inscribed poems, which must be dated to the fourth century AD, commemorate the Nymph, the mistress of this

source; two signs of cross are engraved before the first and the last verse of the first epigram, as well as before the last verse of the second one. The good quality of the water is praised and the Nymph is thanked for having provided it to Licinianus and Pelagia, the owners of an estate there, who had the verses carved into the rock above the source.⁷² These epigrams indicate that the Nymphs were worshipped in Dalmatia well into the late Roman period. However, it is significant that homage is rendered to the Nymph in singular, not to the Nymphs in plural, as was usually the case. This may be explained by the increased spread of monotheistic religions in the late Roman period, and particularly by the growing popularity of goddesses such as Isis and most notably the Magna Mater (Cybele), who often supplanted previous divinities. In certain cases the worship of the Magna Mater replaced the cult of former water goddesses.⁷³ Nonetheless, despite the new religious trends, the Nymph was not forgotten along the eastern Adriatic coast, where there has always been a shortage of good drinking water and people knew how to appreciate it.

My sincere thanks are due to Anamarija Kurilić for having kindly read my text and for offering valuable comments.

⁶⁶ SYME 1940, 229.

⁶⁷ ALFÖLDY 1968, 122-123; WILKES 1969, 332-333; WILKES 1977, 759; KURILIĆ 1999a, 152; 155-156; 170; 224; 238; KURILIĆ 2008, 93-94.

⁶⁸ ŠAŠEL 1982, 565-566 (= 1992, 174-175).

⁶⁹ KRIŽMAN 1991, 247; KURILIĆ 1999b, 236-237; KURILIĆ 2002, 132.

⁷⁰ UNTERMANN 1961, 163; KATIČIĆ 1976, 179; KURILIĆ 2002, 141.

⁷¹ RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ D. 1987, 268-269; KIRIGIN, MARIN 1989, 231-233.

⁷² RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ D. 1987, 236-239 nos. 82 and 83; 268-269 (= CIL III 1894 = 8471).

⁷³ ŠAŠEL KOS 1998, 119.

ABBREVIATIONS:

AIJ	V. Hoffiller, B. Saria, <i>Antike Inschriften aus Jugoslawien, Heft I: Noricum und Pannonia Superior</i> , Zagreb 1938.
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> .
CIL	<i>Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum</i> .
ILJug	A. and J. Šašel, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Jugoslavia inter annos MCMXL et MCMLX repertae et editae sunt (Situla 5)</i> , Ljubljana 1963; <i>idem</i> , <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Jugoslavia inter annos MCMLX et MCMLXX repertae et editae sunt (Situla 19)</i> , 1978; <i>idem</i> , <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Jugoslavia inter annos MCMII et MCMXL repertae et editae sunt (Situla 25)</i> , 1986.
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae selectae</i> , ed. H. Dessau, Berlin 1892-1916.
Inscr. Aquil.	J. B. Brusin, <i>Inscriptiones Aquileiae, I-III</i> , Udine 1991-1993.
Inscr. It.	<i>Inscriptiones Italiae</i> .
MRR	T. R. S. Broughton, <i>The Magistrates of the Roman Republic</i> . Vols. I-II, New York 1951-1952. Vol. III. Supplement (Philol. Monographs - American Philol. Assoc. 15/III), Atlanta, Georgia 1986.
OPEL	B. Lőrincz, <i>Onomasticon provinciarum Europae Latinarum</i> , Vol. I: <i>Aba - Bysanus</i> , Budapest 2005; II: <i>Cabalicius - Ixus</i> , Wien 1999; III: <i>Labareus - Pythea</i> , Wien 2000; IV: <i>Quadratia - Zures</i> , Wien 2002.
PIR	<i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani</i> .
RISl	E. Weber, <i>Die römischezeitlichen Inschriften der Steiermark</i> , Graz 1969.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

ALFÖLDY G., 1965a	<i>Bevölkerung und Gesellschaft der römischen Provinz Dalmatien (mit einem Beitrag von A. Mócsy)</i> , Budapest.
ALFÖLDY G., 1965b	<i>Epigraphica</i> , in: <i>Arheološke študije II / Varia archaeologica II (Situla 8)</i> , Ljubljana, 93-112.
ALFÖLDY G., 1968	<i>Senatoren in der römischen Provinz Dalmazia</i> , <i>Epigraphische Studien</i> 5, 99-144.
ALFÖLDY G., 1969	<i>Die Personennamen in der römischen Provinz Dalmatia (Beiträge zur Namenforschung Bb. 4)</i> , Heidelberg.
ARNALDI A., 2004	<i>Osservazioni sul culto delle Nymphae nell'Africa romana</i> , <i>Africa Romana</i> XV/2, 1355-1364.
BANDELLI G., 1988	<i>Ricerche sulla colonizzazione romana della Gallia cisalpina (Studi e Ricerche sulla Gallia Cisalpina 1)</i> , Roma.
BRACCESI L., M. LUNI (eds.), 2002	<i>I Greci in Adriatico, 1 (Hesperia 15)</i> , Roma.
BRAJKOVIĆ T., 2008	<i>Antika</i> , in: <i>Arheološki tragovi kulta i religija na Šibenskom području [Archaeological Traces of Cults and Religions in the Šibenik Area]</i> , Šibenik, 53-89; catalogue, pp. 191-228.

- CAMBIN, S. ČAČE, B. KIRIGIN (eds.), 2002 *Grčki utjecaj na istočnoj obali Jadrana / Greek Influence Along the East Adriatic Coast (Proceedings of the Intern. Conference held in Split from Sept. 24th to 26th 1998), Split.*
- CAMODECA G., 1982 *Ascesa al senato e rapporti con i territori d'origine. Italia: Regio I (Campania, esclusa la zona di Capua e Cales), II (Apulia et Calabria), III (Lucania et Bruttii), in: Epigrafia e ordine senatorio II (Tituli 5), Roma, 101-163.*
- CÉBEILLAC-GERVASONI M., 1982 *Ascesa al senato e rapporti con i territori d'origine: Italia: Regio I (Campania: la zona di Capua e Cales), in: Epigrafia e ordine senatorio II (Tituli 5), Roma, 59-99.*
- CHIABÀ M., 2003 *Spunti per uno studio sull'origo delle gentes di Aquileia repubblicana, in: Aquileia dalle origini alla costituzione del ducato longobardo. Storia - amministrazione - società, ed. G. Cuscito (Antichità Altoadriatiche 54), Trieste, 79-118.*
- ČAČE S., 1992-1993 *Broj liburnskih općina i vjerodostojnost Plinija (Nat. hist. 3, 130; 139-141) (The Number of Liburnian Communities and the Credibility of Pliny [Nat. hist. 3, 130; 139-141]), Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta Zadar 32 (19), 1-36.*
- DORCEY P. F., 1992 *The Cult of Silvanus. A Study in Roman Folk Religion (Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition XX), Leiden, New York, Köln.*
- FORNI G., 1970 *Varvariana, in: Adriatica praehistorica et antiqua - Miscellanea Gregorio Novak dicata, Zagreb, 573-577.*
- GAIFMAN M., 2008 *Visualized rituals and dedicatory inscriptions on votive offerings to the Nymphs, Opuscula 1, 85-103.*
- GIRARDI JURKIĆ V., 2004 *Dubovna kultura antičke Istre I: Kultovi u procesu romanizacije antičke Istre (The Spiritual Culture of Roman Istria I: Cults in the Process of Istria's Romanization), Zagreb.*
- GLAVIČIĆ M., 2003 *Epigrafski podaci o korištenju vode u Liburniji (Epigraphic data on the usage of water in Liburnia), Histria Antiqua 10, 83-89.*
- IMAMOVIĆ E., 1977 *Antički kultni i votivni spomenici na području Bosne i Hercegovine (Monuments cultuels et votifs antiques sur le territoire de la Bosnie-Herzegovine), Sarajevo.*
- KATIČIĆ R., 1976 *Ancient Languages of the Balkans I; II (Trends in Linguistics State-of-the-Art Reports 4; 5), The Hague, Paris.*
- KIRIGIN B., E. MARIN, 1989 *Arheološki vodič po srednjoj Dalmaciji, Split (English version: The Archaeological Guide to Central Dalmatia, Split 1989).*
- KOS P., 1998 *Leksikon antičke numizmatike, Zagreb.*
- KRIŽMAN M., 1991 *Rimska imena u Istri (Latina et Graeca, Radovi IX), Zagreb.*
- KUNTIĆ-MAKVIĆ B., M. DIZDAR, M. SANADER, 2007 *Zwischen Griechenland und Italien, in: M. Sanader (ed.), Kroatien in der Antike, (Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie / Sonderbände der Antiken Welt), Mainz, 20-36.*
- Kurilić A., 1999a *Pučanstvo Liburnije od 1. do 3. st. po Kristu: antroponimija, društvena struktura, etničke promjene, gospodarske uloge, Diss. Zadar (unpublished).*

- KURILIĆ A., 1999b *Family structure and relationships in early-Roman Liburnia - Liburnian "upper class" families, in: XI Congresso Internazionale di Epigrafia Greca e Latina. Roma, 18-24 sett. 1997. Atti, Roma, 229-237.*
- KURILIĆ A., 2002 *Liburnski antroponimi, Folia onomastica Croatica 11, 123-148.*
- KURILIĆ A., 2006 *Recent epigraphic finds from the Roman province of Dalmatia, in: D. Davison, V. Gaffney, E. Marin (eds.), Dalmatia. Research in the Roman Province 1970-2001. Papers in honour of J. J. Wilkes (BAR Intern. Ser. 1576), Oxford 2006, 133-147.*
- KURILIĆ A., 2008 *Ususret Liburnima. Studije o društvenoj povijesti ranorimske Liburnije, Zadar.*
- LHOTE-BIROT M.-CH., 2004 *Les Nymphes en Gaule Narbonnaise et dans les Trois Gaules, Latomus 63/1, 58-69.*
- MAINARDIS F., 2008 *Iulium Carnicum. Storia ed epigrafia (Antichità Altoadr., Monografie 4), Trieste.*
- MARIN E., see KIRIGIN, MARIN.
- MARŠIĆ D., *Reljef Silvana i Nimfi i ulomak predromaničkog zabata iz crkve sv. Ante i Roka u Podstrani kod Splita (The relief of Silvanus and Nymphs and the fragment of the pre-Romanesque gable from the St. Anthony and Rochus church in Gornja Podstrana near Split), Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta Zadar 33 (20), 1993-1994, 109-120.*
- MATIJAŠIĆ R., F. TASSAUX, 2000 *Liber et Silvanus, in: Les cultes polythéistes dans l'Adriatique romaine, eds. C. Delplace, F. Tassaux (Ausonius Publ., Études 4), Bordeaux, 65-117.*
- MENNELLA G., 2003 *Culti ufficiali ed élite in Cisalpina: appunti da un database epigrafico, in: Les élites et leurs facettes. Les élites locales dans le monde hellénistique et romain, eds. M. Cébeillac-Gervasoni, L. Lamoine (Coll. Ét. fr. Rome 309), 481-502.*
- Meyer G., 2004 *Le prix de l'eau et le tarif du sanctuaire des Nymphes : IG, I3, 256, Revue des Études Grecques 117, 321-325.*
- MÓCSY A., 1959 *Die Bevölkerung von Pannonien bis zu den Markomannenkriegen, Budapest.*
- NEDVED B., 1990 *Felix Arba, Rab.*
- PANCIERA S., 1957 *Vita economica di Aquileia in età romana, Aquileia.*
- PAVAN M., 1958 *Ricerche sulla provincia romana di Dalmazia, Venezia.*
- RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ A., 2003 *Les traditions autochtones dans les représentations culturelles figurées sur le territoire des Delmates illyriens, in: Romanisation und Resistenz in Plastik, Architektur und Inschriften der Provinzen des Imperium Romanum. Neue Funde und Forschungen, eds. P. Noelke et al., Mainz am Rhein, 407-419.*
- RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ D., 1989 (1955) *Silvan i njegova kultna zajednica u mitologiji Ilira, in: Iliri i antički svijet / The Illyrians and the Classical World, Split, 461-506 (= Répresentations illyriennes de Sylvanus sur les monuments du culte dans le domaine dalmate [in Croat. with a summary], Glas. Zem. muz. 10, 1955, 5-40, Pl. I-V).*
- RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ D., 1987 *Carmina epigraphica, Split.*
- RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ D., 1989 *Iliri i antički svijet / The Illyrians and the Classical World, Split.*
- SANADER M., 2008 *O antičkim kultovima u Hrvatskoj / On the cults of Antiquity in Croatia, Vjesnik za arh. i povijest dalmatinsku 101, 157-186.*
- SUIĆ M., 2003 *Antički grad na istočnom Jadranu [Ancient City in the Eastern Adriatic], Zagreb (revised edition of 1976).*

- SYME R., 1940 *Roman senators from Dalmatia, in: Hoffillerov zbornik / Serta Hoffilleriana (Vjesnik Hrvatskog arb. društva n.s. 18-21), Zagreb, 225-232.*
- ŠAŠEL J., 1982 (1992) *Senatori ed appartenenti all'ordine senatorio provenienti dalle province romane di Dacia, Tracia, Mesia, Dalmazia e Pannonia, in: Epigrafia e ordine senatorio II (Tituli 5), Roma, 553-581 (= Opera selecta, Ljubljana 1992, 162-190).*
- ŠAŠEL J., 1987 (1992) *Etape u administrativnom razvoju rimskog grada Parentium (Le tappe dello sviluppo amministrativo della città romana di Parentium), Zbornik Poreštine 2, Poreč, 67-74 (= id., Stages in the development of Roman Parentium, in: Opera selecta, Ljubljana 1992, 661-668);*
- ŠAŠEL KOS M., 1999 *Pre-Roman Divinities of the Eastern Alps and Adriatic (Situla 38), Ljubljana.*
- ŠAŠEL KOS M., 2003 *Emona was in Italy, not in Pannonia, in: The Autonomous Towns of Noricum and Pannonia. Pannonia/ Die autonomen Städte in Noricum und Pannonien - Pannonia I, eds. M. Šašel Kos, P. Scherrer et al. (Situla 41), Ljubljana, 11-19.*
- TASSAUX F., 1986 *La population et la société de Parentium, in: Aquileia nella "Venetia et Histria" (Antichità Altoadr. 28), Udine, 157-183.*
- TASSAUX F., see MATIJAŠIĆ, TASSAUX.
- UNTERMANN J., 1961 *Die venetischen Personennamen, Wiesbaden.*
- WILKES J. J., 1969 *Dalmatia, London.*
- WILKES J. J., 1977 *The Population of Roman Dalmatia, in: ANRW II 6, 732-766.*
- WILKES J. J., 2002 *A Roman Colony and its People, in: Longae Saloniae I (Niz Salona 11), Split, 87-103.*
- ZANINOVIĆ M., 2003 *Voda i naselja na središnjoj ilirskoj obali i otocima (Water and settlements on the central Illyrian coast and islands), Histria Antiqua 10, 35-43.*

SAŽETAK

NOVI ŽRTVENIK POSVEĆEN NIMFAMA I MAGIMA U DALMACIJI*Marjeta ŠAŠEL KOS*

Raznovrsni izvori vode često se povezuju s nimfama i imali su posebnu važnost u područjima koja su oskudijevala vodom. U ovom članku predstavljen je do sada neobjavljen mali vapnenački žrtvenik, koji je izvjesna Magia Maxima posvetila nimfama. Kako se taj žrtvenik pojavio u prodaji u jednoj staretinarnici u Ljubljani, njegovo se podrijetlo ne može točno odrediti. Taj je žrtvenik stigao iz jedne privatne zbirke iz Splita, navodno je bio pronađen negdje u blizini grada, te se stoga daje zaključiti

da vjerojatno potječe iz područja Salonae u Dalmaciji. Magi su potvrđeni brojnim primjerima u Italiji, ponajviše u sjevernoj Italiji, uključujući i Histriju; poznati su i iz Galije Narbonensis, Hispanije i Dalmacije, osobito Liburnije. Štovanje nimfa zabilježeno je u Dalmaciji još od belenističkog razdoblja.

Prijevod s engleskog: Nenad Patrun