
Bojan Djurić
University of Ljubljana
bojan.djuric@gmail.com

DIONYSOS IN THE PROVINCE. DIONYSIAN MOTIFS ON A POETOVIAN MONUMENT

Abstract: During the era of the Severn dynasty, the worship of Dionysus/ Bacchus/ Liber Pater once again became prominent in Roman society. A belief in the circle of life, rebirth, and the immortality of the soul is visible in figural, non-figural, and motifs combining the two decorating funerary monuments. In ancient Noricum and Pannonia, these motifs as attributes of Dionysus/ Bacchus/ Liber Pater appear in the form of kantharoi, grape vines, panthers and, rarely, the god himself. These motifs appear without distinction on funerary aediculae, stelae, tombstone altars, sarcophagi, and in Poetovio also on typical tombstones – ossuaries. Although it is not possible to read these depictions exclusively in an eschatological sense, the motif of the kantharos with a vine, guarded by two panthers should be seen as a sign of faith and hope in the promises of Dionysian ideology. The transition of these same motifs into early Christian contexts with similar promises confirms their symbolic nature.

Keywords: Poetovio, ash chest, Dionysus/Bacchus/Liber Pater, kantharos, grapevine, panther

I met Petar Popović professionally for the first time in the typically Dionysian landscape of the Dalmatian island of Hvar, in January 1982. We came there on the invitation of a mutual friend,

Branko Kirigin, to conduct a field survey in the Starogradsko polje (figure 1), which holds Greek and Roman remains of the chora of Pharos. In the spring of 1983, we spent a memorable week



Fig. 1. P. Popović, B. Kirigin, B. Djurić, Starigradsko polje, Hvar, January 1982.

among Yugoslav archaeologists on a boat travelling between the Greek colonies of central Dalmatia, an excursion organised by the *Arheo* journal (figure 2). Later, we again collaborated on the island of Vis, excavating the large Hellenistic and Roman cemetery of the colony of Issa – Vlaška njiva. We continued to meet on occasion in different places across Yugoslavia, and regularly during my visits to Belgrade or his to Ljubljana. Our last professional meetings were related to his important excavations at the Kale Krševica site. Throughout our common history, we were linked with the Greeks or their contemporaries, be it in the Mediterranean or deep in the heart of the Balkans. In honour of his anniversary, I therefore wish to dedicate to him a short discussion of Dionysos. More precisely, I shall



Fig. 2. The Arheo excursion of Yugoslav archaeologists in 1983.

discuss the Dionysian motifs carved on one of the stone monuments of Roman Poetovio (modern-day Ptuj), standing as witnesses of the once culturally uniform area of the wider Mediterranean.



Fig. 3. The epitaph for Andrej Praunfalch, ca 1600, church of St George, Ptuj (photo by author).

The analysed monument is a product typical of Poetovio's stonemasonry workshops – an ash chest.¹ It was later reused as a church washbasin (figure 4), transformed in a workshop in Ptuj sometime towards the end of the 16th or beginning of the 17th century, as indicated by the motific and stylistic features on products of the same provenance (figure 3).²

Ash chests are a form of sepulchral monument typical of the cemeteries of Poetovio (Diez 1948; Djurić 2001a; Pochmarski 2014; Pochmarski 2015), but almost completely absent in those of neighbouring towns.³ Their characteristic feature is the form of the chest, which resembles a small sarcophagus, and the gabled lid with the ridge running perpendicular rather than parallel to the length, as is the case in sarcophagi. This created additional space for carved decoration, usually portraits of the deceased, in the triangular pediment facing the spectator. With a few exceptions, the longer side of the chests is divided into three panels: a usually sunken central one reserved for the inscription and two side ones intended for relief depictions. These could also have adorned the left and right short sides, while the back was left plain. In all these elements, the ash chests are identical to the

¹ Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj – Ormož, inv. no. RL 453.

² On the funerary epitaphs built into the walls of the church of Sv. Jurij (St George) in Ptuj, cf. Cevc 1981, 84-218.

³ With the exception of the Norican town of Iuvavum. Cf. Pochmarski 2018.



Fig. 4. Ash chest transformed into a washbasin (photo by author).



Fig. 5. Long side of the ash chest (photo by author).



Fig. 6. Left short side of the ash chest (photo by author).

chests of the sarcophagi produced in the Pohorje and Gummern quarries (Djurić 2001b; Djurić, Hebert *et al.* 2005). The structure of these chests, already determined in the quarry phase of production, is most frequently created with the help of four modules lengthwise – two for the central and one for each side panel – both for ash chests and

for sarcophagi (Trunkelj 2020; Vomer Gojkovič 2015). The frame of the lateral panels of the longer sides, which is consistently moulded in sarcophagi and only occasionally in ash chests, usually has a simple Norico-Pannonian volute at the top.

The ash chest under discussion is heavily damaged on the front (figure 5). Only its far-left part survives together with a moulded frame and part of a male figure standing on a characteristic pedestal. We may confidently presume a full-figure portrait of a man depicted in the left side panel of a tripartite front side. The man is dressed in a girded tunic, most likely long-sleeved (*tunica manicata*), reaching down to just above his knees. Only the terminal part of the belt, identified as *cingulum militare*, survives and he is holding it with his right hand in a manner known from several depictions of soldiers from the first half of the 3rd century (Hoss 2014: 147, cat. nos. 20, 39, 168, 169). He has a long sagum around his shoulders,⁴ presumably fastened with a brooch on the right shoulder, though the brooch has not survived. The contours of his heavily damaged head suggest a full beard, such as is most characteristic of the Severan period. All the surviving elements point to a depiction of a military man in ‘camp dress’ (Speidel 1976: 124), dated fairly confidently to the first half of the 3rd century.

The left short side shows a standing figure of a panther/leopard in a plain frame, with the left front paw placed on a drinking vessel made of a goat horn (figure 6).⁵ Depicted on the right short side, also in a plain frame, is a centrally positioned two-tiered handleless vessel on a pedestal, out of which grows a vine with two cordons, at least two leaves, two grapes and spiral tendrils (figure 7). Even though without handles, parallels show that the vessel can safely be identified as a kantharos.

The motif of a panther with a raised paw resting on a drinking horn belongs to a fairly common depiction of standing or seated animals on sarcophagus short sides, mainly of griffins, lions or sphinxes.⁶ These creatures also frequently occur in

⁴ For the tunic, belt and sagum, see Ubl 1969.

⁵ For the identification of the horn, see Walde 2005, 110.

⁶ In addition to heraldic pairs, individual seated griffins also occur on the funerary aediculae of Noricum; cf. e.g., the griffins on the tomb of the Spectatii in Šempeter v Savinjski dolini: Klemenc, Kolšek, Petru 1972; Kremer 2001, 35-43.



Fig. 7. Right short side of the ash chest (photo by author).



Fig. 8. Pediment fragment of a funerary aedicula, Löffelbach (photo O. Harl).



Fig. 9. Part of an altar, Villach (© Stadtmuseum Villach, photo O. Harl).

heraldic pairs on the longer sides of sarcophagi,⁷ while a pair of panthers is only known from the short side of an Attic sarcophagus from Athens.⁸

Pairs of standing panthers with a paw on a drinking horn (or kantharos) are known in Noricum and Pannonia and occur in pediments (figure 8) and epistyles of marble funerary aediculae,⁹ as well as

⁷ Predominating on the Attic sarcophagi are pairs of griffins with a paw raised against a candelabrum or a vase, or a pair of lions with a paw raised on a kantharos; cf. Papagiani, 2016.

⁸ Athens, Teseion, no inv. no., 131, no. 50.

⁹ Löffelbach, Lupa 6182; Oswaldgraben, Lupa 11603.



Fig. 10. Pyramidal terminal of a funerary altar, Hörzendorf - Sankt Veit an der Glan (photo O. Harl).

aedicula-type stelae,¹⁰ and, in rare cases, also funerary altars (figure 9).¹¹ Much more common in the two provinces is the variant of a seated pair of panthers with a front paw on a drinking horn flanking a kantharos with a vine, which is most frequently depicted on the pyramidal terminals of marble funerary altars (figure 10)¹² and on the large relief panels of funerary aediculae (figure 11),¹³ and also once on a fragment of a sarcophagus, from Ptuj.¹⁴ Outside Noricum, this motif is known on a pyramidal terminal of a funerary altar from Aquileia.¹⁵ A pair of panthers without a drinking horn has been recorded as a supporting motif to a krater with a vine on the narrow panels of funerary aediculae,¹⁶ but even more so on the short sides of large marble

¹⁰ Carnuntum, Lupa 0144; Tiffen, Lupa 1955; Szombathely, Lupa 3314; Jak, Lupa 3383; Lobor, Filipec 2017, 103, no. 7; Lupa 30068.

¹¹ Villach/Bejak, Lupa 2143.

¹² Zollfeld/Gospovetsko polje, Lupa 1093; Villach, Lupa 2144 and 2172; Zweikirchen, Lupa 2357; Hörzendorf, Lupa 2400; Maria Rain, Lupa 2549.

¹³ Salzburg, Lupa 0316; Lendorf, Lupa 2079; Gurk/Krka, Lupa 2324; Zollfeld/Gospovetsko polje, Lupa 2644 and 2661; Sankt Thomas am Zeiselberg, Lupa 27311.

¹⁴ Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj Ormož, inv. no. RL 1019; Djurić 2001b, fig. 10; Djurić 2020.

¹⁵ Scrinari, 1972, 403; Ortalli, 2005, 260-1; Lupa 14081; probably erroneously dated to the mid-1st century.

¹⁶ Seggauberg, Lupa 1278; Sankt Johann bei Herberstein, Lupa 1480; Althofen, Lupa 3229; Ptuj, Tušek 1986, Tab. 4.



Fig. 11. Relief of a funerary aedicula, Zollfeld
(photo O. Harl).



Fig. 12. Short side of a sarcophagus from Sremska Mitrovica
(© KHM Wien, photo O. Harl).



Fig. 13. Short side of a sarcophagus from Veliki Bastaji
near Daruvar (© AM Zagreb, photo I. Krajcar).

sarcophagi¹⁷ that were produced in the workshops of Virunum and Poetovio and exported to different centres across Pannonia (figure 12).

¹⁷ Szombathely, Lupa 3387; Sremska Mitrovica, Lupa 4353; Šid, Lupa 26164; Veliki Bastaji, Lupa 3811.

The motif of a grape vine growing from a vessel, usually a kantharos, depicted on the other short side of the ash chest in question, is a variant of the tree of life motif (James 1966). At least two other variants are known on the Roman monuments of Noricum and Pannonia: one, earlier, with acanthus and the other with ivy. In the course of the 2nd century, this often purely decorative motif replaced the earlier acanthus tendrils and calyx popular from the Augustan period to at least the end of the 1st century; the two motifs can even occur together, on the same monument.¹⁸ The later of the two motifs is frequently depicted on funerary stelae from at least the Hadrianic period onwards,¹⁹ on funerary altars,²⁰ and, even more commonly, on the funerary aediculae put up across Noricum during the 2nd and 3rd centuries.²¹ On these aediculae, it represents the most common plant motif, in some cases very lavishly rendered.²² The motif with a double vine on the sarcophagi of the late 2nd and 3rd centuries,²³ and on contemporary ash chests from the Poetovio's workshops²⁴ (figure 14), is often depicted on the short sides, on the travertine sarcophagi of Pannonian production also as a single

¹⁸ Such is the marble pyramidal terminal of the altar of Titus Cominius Severus imported into Sirmium from Noricum in the Trajanic period; Sremska Mitrovica, Muzej Srema, inv. no. A 1. Dautova Ruševljan 1983, no. 30; Lupa 4340 and 4334.

¹⁹ E.g., on the stela of Caius Aprius Frontinus from Becsehely, dated to the first half of the 2nd century. Nagykanisza, Thury-György-Múzeum, inv. no. 81.217.1. CSIR Salla 18; Lupa 3403. Or on the contemporary stela of Salvia Vera from Szentpeterfa. Previously in Veszprem, Laczkó Dezső Múzeum, inv. no. 1955.283.15, now in Szombathely, Savaria Múzeum. Tóth, 2011, no. 197; Lupa 3327.

²⁰ E.g., the altar of Marcus Cocceus Verecundus from Zollfeld, dated to the first half of the 2nd century. CSIR Virunum 451; Lupa 2624.

²¹ E.g., on the tomb of the Ennii in Šempeter near Celje: Klemenc, Kolšek and Petru, 1972, 53, no. 243; Kremer 2001, 27-34; Lupa 13329.

²² E.g., Millstatt: Sankt Peter in Holz, Römermuseum Teurnia. CSIR Teurnia 86; Steinklauber, 2005, 489; Lupa 2114. Seggauberg: Diez, 1949, no. 30; Hainzmann and Pochmarski, 1994, no. 24; Steinklauber, 2005, 479; Lupa 1285.

²³ Szekszárd: Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, inv. no. 23.1849.1. Koch and Sichter mann, 1982, 327; CSIR Sopianae 97; Erdélyi, 1974, no. 73; Lupa 824.

²⁴ Savci: Graz, Universalmuseum Joanneum, inv. no. 84. Hof-filler and Saria, 1938, no. 445; Modrijan and Weber, 1979, 94, no. 84; Hudeczek, 2004, no. 8; Lupa 1696.

vine in the side panels of the longer side.²⁵ It is known on the short sides of the sarcophagi forming part of the Sirmium²⁶ and Salona²⁷ productions in the 4th century, also at least one of the Aurisina production.²⁸ The ash chest from Savci, near Ptuj (figure 14), bears a kantharos with a double vine on the right short side. This is almost identical to the one on the ash chest from Ptuj, revealing the great popularity of the motif in Poetovio's stonemasonry workshops of the 3rd century.



Fig. 14. Ash chest from Savci
(© Joanneum Graz, photo O. Harl).

The differences in the rendition of the motif (shape of the leaves, grapes and vases) are mainly due to the differences between individual workshops that otherwise follow the same basic scheme in both the vine and the kantharos from which it grows.²⁹ Having said that, the joint distribution area of the Virunum and Poetovio products does reveal certain specific commonalities. One is the simple and rather stylised, probably late form of a kantharos composed of two conical parts: pedestal

belly and neck³⁰ (figure 12). This form occurs on funerary aediculae, as well as sarcophagi and ash chests,³¹ replacing a much more widespread kantharos with a hemispherical pedestal belly and a concave neck connected with a pair of S-shaped handles. The second commonality is a pointed arch that forms where the two vine cordons cross above the rim of the kantharos (figure 12); it can be observed on aediculae, as well as some stelae, sarcophagi and ash chests.³²

Both motifs carved on the short sides of the ash chest from Ptuj rank among the series of Dionysian/Bacchic motifs³³ that were increasingly popular in both the private and the sepulchral sphere of life in the western part of the Roman Empire from the Antonines onwards, when the cult of Dionysus was established in Rome (Davies 1978). The cult of Liber Pater, which in Italy became assimilated with that of Dionysos/Bacchus very early on, gained in strength under the Severans, particularly in Rome; the most prosperous period of the cult was roughly between 140 and 220 (Bruhl 1953). Margaretha Pochmarski-Nagele (Pochmarski-Nagele 1992) and Erwin Pochmarski (e.g., Pochmarski 2012) showed that the series of Dionysian motifs depicted on the Norican sepulchral monuments, consequently also on those from Pannonia, largely depended on formulations realised on the Metropolitan frieze sarcophagi with depictions of the Dionysian thiasos. They mainly consist of individual figures of maenads³⁴ and satyrs³⁵ in numerous variants,³⁶ though rarely paired together.³⁷ We may add to these the different personifications of the Seasons (Horae, genii), which

²⁵ Szöny: Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, inv. no. 45.1925.2. Erdélyi, 1974, no. 72; Pochmarski, 2001, 207, no. 22; Lupa 3427. A similar lateral position, flanking the inscription, is observable on the Early Christian limestone sarcophagus of Severilla from Sisak, now kept in the Arheološki muzej in Zagreb (inv. no. KS 351). Hoffiller and Saria 1938, no. 581; Lupa 3809.

²⁶ Sremska Mitrovica (Pivara): Sremska Mitrovica, Muzej Srema, inv. no. A/5763.

²⁷ Solin: sarcophagus of Petronia, Sophronia and Nereia. Cambi, 2010, 99, no. 14; Lupa 24449.

²⁸ Ajdovščina: Krašna, 2019, 112, no. 44. Another sarcophagus possibly of Aurisina production is that from Concordia Sagittaria, kept in the Museo Nazionale Concordiese, Portogruaro, inv. no. 317. Di Filippo Balestrazzi, 2012, 156, no. 133.

²⁹ The exceptions are the vines on the sarcophagi from Szombathely and Šid, which grow on a horizontal trellis, and the vine on the ash chest from Vranje (Lupa 1653), which is supported by a pole.

³⁰ Ulla Steinklauber (Steinklauber, 2005, 484) calls it *etagenförmiger Krater*.

³¹ Aediculae: Seggauberg (Lupa 1278), Piber (Lupa 1391). Sarcophagi: Sremska Mitrovica (Lupa 4353), Szombathely (Lupa 3387), Šid (Lupa 26146). Ash chests: Ptuj (Lupa 9439).

³² Aediculae: Millstatt (Lupa 2114), Zollfeld (Lupa 2644), Magdalensberg (Lupa 27311). Stelae: Szentpeterfa (Lupa 3327), Kostolac (Lupa 5415). Sarcophagi: Sremska Mitrovica (Lupa 4353), Szombathely (Lupa 3387), Šid (Lupa 26164). Ash chests: Savci (Lupa 1696).

³³ Cf. e.g., the statues from Alba Iulia (Apulum): Diaconescu 2001.

³⁴ E.g., a funerary altar in Celje, Lupa 4114.

³⁵ E.g., a funerary altar in Seggauberg, Lupa 1305.

³⁶ On a single monument e.g., on the Orpheus stela from Ptuj, Lupa 3106.

³⁷ E.g., Zollfeld, Lupa 1038; Šempeter, Lupa 13258 and 13259; Osijek, Lupa 2810

belong to the Dionysian/Bacchic/Liberian sphere of nature's renewal,³⁸ and regularly occur on funerary aediculae, sarcophagus lids³⁹ and particularly on the lids of Poetovian ash chests.⁴⁰ What is completely absent is the main figure, of Dionysos, such as formed part of the Dionysian thiasos. Also extremely rare in the funerary sphere is the other, canonical image of Dionysos/Bacchus/Liber Pater depicted on votive reliefs. The latter has thus far only been recorded on two monuments, on the lateral panels of two Poetovian ash chests.⁴¹

The panther/leopard with a raised front paw, kantharos and vine are all attributes that stem from the canonical depiction of young Dionysos/Bacchus/Liber Pater⁴² as formulated in the 4th century BC (Gasparri 1986: 511), rather than from the depictions of the Dionysian thiasos. In the mid-2nd century CE, they became separated from this image and began functioning independently or in a variety of combinations. In most cases, they acted by association and in relation to "the general popularity of bacchic scenes in domestic and non-funerary contexts" (Bruhl 1953: 317).⁴³ Having said that, we should not disregard the possibility of seeing formulations of these elements in an eschatological sense or even as an expression of the deceased as a member of the Dionysian cult.

The basic premise of the eschatological interpretation is related to the belief in the immortality of the soul, a concept present very early on in Greek Orphism, in which the myth of Dionysos played a central role (Torjussen 2005). Until the 2nd century CE, such a belief is unknown to the philosophy and religion of the Roman world with the exception of certain aristocratic Neopythagorean circles

in Rome. It is not detected with the Epicureans, the Stoics or the Sceptics, which see the soul as perishable. What was widespread among them was the concept of this-worldly immortality, according to which a person was immortal when he or she was remembered after death (Davies 1978: 18-19).

Roman written sources reveal that agnosticism and non-belief in any form of posthumous existence prevailed throughout the 1st and into the 2nd century, at least in the west. The traditional fables and concepts were at this time no longer acceptable, but not yet replaced by ideas of salvation or a mystical perception of the soul as advocated by the eastern religions and their mysteries; the presence of these only becomes more apparent after the middle of the 2nd century (Davies 1978: 20). In the time of the Antonines, the cult of Dionysos became established in Rome and the Dionysian concept of the afterlife became widespread across different social milieus, mainly as a consequence of the Hellenisation of Roman society and culture. Bacchic propaganda encountered no real opposition at this time. The cult of Liber Pater spread across the Empire and in different parts Liber came to be assimilated with different local gods. He retained his prestige in the 3rd century and, in the Christian assault on Roman polytheism, remained one of the divinities worshipped by the last defenders of paganism (Bruhl 1953: 332-333).

An eschatological reading of images on the sepulchral monuments of this time is certainly reasonable, but one needs to be cautious so as not to make the reading exclusively eschatological, as both Adrien Bruhl and Glenys Davies have already pointed out. In the past century, a very significant contribution to the understanding of Roman funerary symbolism was that by Franz Cumont (Cumont 1922; Cumont 1942), who had many followers among scholars.⁴⁴ He is known to have especially favoured eschatological beliefs of different philosophical traditions and eastern religions in his analyses, looking for equivalents in iconographic depictions. In the assessment of Cumont's work, Arthur D. Nock cautioned thus, "In ancient art, decoration was commonly decoration and did not necessarily bear any relation to the specific purpose of the structures or objects decorated, large or small" (Nock 1948: 154). The danger of overly

³⁸ Of interest in this sense is the floor mosaic with the Triumph of Neptune and the Four Seasons from La Chebba (Bardo museum, inv. no. A 292; Ako-Adounvo 1991), in which the Autumn Hora is joined with the image of Dionysos.

³⁹ E.g., on the lid of a sarcophagus from Šid, Lupa 26146.

⁴⁰ Lids in the Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj-Ormož.

⁴¹ Two front side fragments of ash chests, kept in the Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj Ormož - RL 487 and RL 600, have the figure of Dionysos/Bacchus/Liber in the lateral panels. Abramić, 1914, 105, fig. 79; Bratanič, 1952, 305, fig. 5.

⁴² Cf. a presumed funerary altar from Celje, kept in the Pokrajinski muzej Celje, Lupa 4123.

⁴³ Numerous depictions of a kantharos with vine are known on floor mosaics of private houses across the empire. Particularly interesting is the floor mosaic from Sant'Antioco, Sardinia (Museo Archeologico Feruccio Barreca), which bears a kantharos with a vine and a pair of leopards.

⁴⁴ In Slovenia e.g., Kastelic 1998.

reading the sepulchral motifs as symbols of death and the afterlife, where every single motif has a specific symbolic meaning, can lead to an interpretation as advocated by Jocelyn Toynbee.⁴⁵ Today, it is widely believed that the Roman ‘visual picture-language’ as she proposed, with its own vocabulary and grammar, cannot be recognised in Roman sepulchral art. It is, in fact, not possible to presume that a motif/symbol consistently had the same meaning in all contexts. It is also not possible to speak in favour of the hypothesis that the meaning of a motif/symbol was the same or equally evocative for each spectator. Glenys Davies has argued quite convincingly that the sculptors/stonemasons working on funerary monuments primarily used those motifs that were known to be most popular in other contexts (Davies 1978: 58).

An eschatological significance related to the immortality of the soul and its presence in the Bacchic feasts in the netherworld, or even the possibility of the deceased being members of the Dionysian cult is an assumption that is feasible for the large reliefs on the funerary aediculae and sarcophagi of Noricum and Pannonia, where the vine dominates the relief and is guarded by panthers with or without drinking horns. The vine on these reliefs, with the panthers gazing upon it much like the panther gazed on the divinity in the canonical formulation of Dionysos/Bacchus/Liber, could be seen as a manifestation of the divinity⁴⁶ in the sense of Christ’s phrase *ego sum vitis vera* (Jn 15, 1). The specific variant of this motif on the sarcophagus from Veliki Bastaji near Daruvar (figure 13), with an unmistakable Christian connotation as Branka Migotti correctly noted (Migotti 1996), would confirm such an interpretation. It is expressed formally in the pair of panthers/leopards with heads bowed to the vine, which, in this case, stands as an emanation of a new divinity, and corresponds with the gesture of the panther on the medal of Constantine the Great,⁴⁷ which Jules Maurice (Maurice 1908: 246-247) interpreted as a sign of vanquished paganism.

The figural (panther) and non-figural (kantharos with vine) motifs such as those depicted next

to the portraits of the deceased on the ash chest under discussion are elements that in numerous and varied combinations formed the characteristically Roman visual narrative, full of decorative replication (*see* Elsner 2018). Their meaning was always determined by the context and the point of view of the customer or the spectator. It is, therefore, not reasonable to see individual motifs as pure symbols, but rather to envisage motifs that easily shift from one semantic field to another. This is also the reason for motifs such as the kantharos with vine, one of the most prominent in the Dionysian sphere of Late Antiquity, to be centrally or at least prominently positioned within the floor and wall mosaics of Early Christian churches.⁴⁸ Thus, the floor mosaic in the apse of the mausoleum of Bishop Marciano, in the church of Sant’Eufemia in Grado (6th century) (Zovatto 1967: 34-36), includes the motif of a kantharos with a double vine, identical to the one on the ash chest from Ptuj, but its context brings a completely different, Christian reading of the depiction.

⁴⁵ “It (visual picture-language) had its rules, its ‘vocabulary’, ‘grammar’, and ‘idiom’ understood and accepted throughout the empire.” Toynbee, 1956, 226.

⁴⁶ This is also suggested by Steinklauber 2005, 487.

⁴⁷ RIC VII 279, minted in 326 in Rome.

⁴⁸ E.g., in the presbytery of the pre-Euphrasian basilica in Poreč, 5th century, Mader 2003, 37; the church of San Severo in Classe (Ravenna), 6th century, Farioli 1975, 19, fig. 5; ‘basilica Probi’-San Apollinare in Classe (Ravenna), 6th century, Farioli 1975, 19, fig. 4; San Vitale, Ravenna, 6th century, Bovini 1955.

Abbreviations

CSIR – Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani
LIMC – Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae
Lupa – Ubi erat lupa <http://lupa.at/>
RIC – Roman Imperial Coinage

Bibliography

- Abramić, M., 1914.** Archäologische Funde in Pettau. *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen Institutes in Wien*, 17, 88–150.
- Ako-Adounvo, G., 1991.** *The mosaic of Neptune and the Seasons from La Chebba* (Master thesis, McMaster University). Hamilton, Ontario: McMaster University
- Bovini, G., 1955.** *San Vitale di Ravenna*. Milano: Silvana
- Bratanič, R., 1952.** Rimske najdbe iz Poetovione. *Arheološki vestnik*, 3, 300–307.
- Bruhl, A., 1953.** *Liber Pater. Origine et expansion du culte dionysiaque à Rome et dans le monde romain*. Paris: Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome
- Cambi, N., 2010.** *Sarkofazi lokalne produkcije u rimskoj Dalmaciji*. Split: Književni Krug
- Cevc, E., 1981.** *Kiparstvo na Slovenskem med gotiko in barokom*. Ljubljana: Slovenska matica
- Cumont, F., 1922.** *After Life in Roman Paganism*. New Haven: Yale University Press
- Cumont, F., 1942.** *Recherches sur le Symbolisme Funéraire des Romains*. Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner
- Dautova Ruševljan, V., 1983.** *Rimska kamena plastika u jugoslovenskom delu provincije Donje Panonije*. Novi Sad: Vojvođanski muzej
- Davies, G.M., 1978.** *Fashion in the graves: a study of the motifs used to decorate the grave altars, ash chests and sarcophagi made in Rome in the early Empire (to the mid second century A.D.)*. (Doctoral thesis, University of London, Institute of Archaeology). https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1349185/1/453110_vol1.pdf [1. 8. 2020].
- Di Filippo Balestrazzi, E., 2012.** *Sculture romane del Museo Nazionale Concordiese di Portogruaro*. Roma: G. Bretschneider
- Diaconescu, A., 2001.** A Statue of Liber Pater from Apulum (Alba Iulia). *Acta Musei Napocensis*, 38, 161–176.
- Diez, E., 1948.** Die Aschenkisten von Poetovio. *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen Institutes in Wien*, 37, 151–174.
- Djurić, B., 2001a.** Ossuaria Poetovionensia: Iconography and Structure, in *Die Maastrichter Akten des 5. Internat. Koll. über das Provinzialrömische Kunstschaffen – im Rahmen des CSIR*. (Ed.) T.A.S.M. Panhuysen, Maastricht: Stichting Willem Goossens, 117–129.
- Djurić, B., 2001b.** Production of marble sarcophagi in Poetovio. *Budapest Régiségei*, 24, 47–62.
- Djurić, B., 2020.** Bakhični motiv na sarkofagu s Ptujja. *Ptujski umetnostni zbornik*, in print.
- Djurić, B., Hebert, B., Hinker, Ch., Hudeczek, E., Karl, S. and Müller H.W., 2005.** Marmore römischer Brüche und Steindenkmäler in der Steiermark und in Štajerska. *Fundberichte aus Österreich*, 43, 365–431.
- Elsner, J., 2018.** Ornament, Figure and Mise en Abime in Roman Sarcophagi, in *Ornament and Figure in Greek and Roman Art*. (Eds.) N. Dietrich and M. Squire, Berlin: De Gruyter, 353–391.
- Erdélyi, G., 1974.** *A római kofaragás és koszobrászat magyarországon*. Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó
- Farioli, R., 1975.** *Pavimenti musivi di Ravenna paleocristiana*. Ravenna: Longo
- Filipec, K., 2017.** Antički nadgrobní spomenici Lobora - prilog poznavanju antičke skulpture panonsko-noričkog žiteljstva i njegove sredine. *Arheološki radovi i rasprave*, 18, 95–144.
- Gasparri, C., 1986.** Dionysos, Bacchus. *LIMC*, III(1), 496–566.
- Heinzmann, M. and Pochmarski E., 1994.** *Die römerzeitlichen Inschriften und Reliefs von Schloss Seggau bei Leibnitz*. Graz: Leykam
- Hoffiller, V. and Saria B., 1938.** *Antike Inschriften aus Jugoslavien I. Noricum und Pannonia Superior*. Zagreb: Kugli
- Hoss, S., 2014.** *Cingulum Militare: Studien zum römischen Soldatengürtel des 1. bis 3. Jh. n. Chr.* Leyden: Leyden University (<https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/23627>)
- Hudeczek, E., 2004.** *Die Römersteinsammlung des Landesmuseums Joanneum: ein Führer durch das Lapidarium*. Graz: Landesmuseum Joanneum
- James, E.O., 1966.** *The Tree of Life, An archaeological study*. Leiden: Brill
- Klemenc, J., Kolšek, V. and Petru P., 1972.** *Antične grobnice v Šempetru*. Ljubljana: Narodni muzej
- Koch, G. and Sichtermann, H., 1982.** *Römische Sarkophage*. München: Beck
- Krašna, A., 2019.** *Arhitekturni in sepulkralni izdelki iz nabrežinskega apnenca v Sloveniji* (Diplomsko delo). Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, Filozofska fakulteta
- Kremer, G., 2001.** *Antike Grabbauten in Noricum*. Wien: Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut
- Meder, J., 2003.** *Podni mozaici u Hrvatskoj od 1. do 6. stoljeća*. Zagreb: Ministarstvo kulture Republike Hrvatske, Uprava za zaštitu kulturne baštine
- Maurice, J., 1908.** *Numismatique Constantiniense. Iconographie et chronologie. Description historique des émissions monétaires. I*. Paris: E. Leroux
- Migotti, B., 1996.** Ranokršćanski grobni nalaz iz Velikih Bastaja kod Daruvara. *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu*, 28-29, 127–157.
- Modrijan, W. and Weber E., 1979.** *Die Römersteinsammlung des Joanneums im Eggenberger Schloßpark: Verwaltungsbezirke Virunum, Ovilava, Celeia und Poetovio*. Graz (Schild von Steier 14).
- Nock, A., 1948.** Franz Cumont, Recherches sur le Symbolisme Funéraire des Romains. Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1942. Pp. IV 543, 48 plates and 105 figs. *Journal of Roman Studies*, 38, 154–156.
- Ortalli, J., 2005.** Simbolo e ornato nei monumenti sepolcrali romani: il caso aquileiese., in *Aquileia dalle origini alla costituzione del ducato longobardo. La cultura artistica in età romana (II secolo a.C. – III secolo d.C.)* (Antichità Altoadriatiche LXI). (Eds.) G. Cuscito, M. Verzar-Bass, Trieste: Editreg Srl, 245–286.
- Papagiani, E., 2016.** *Attische Sarkophage mit Eroten und Girlanden*. Ruhpolding: Franz Phillip Rutzen

- Pochmarski, E., 2001.** Zur Ikonographie und Chronologie der römischen Sarkophage aus Brigetio., in *Akten des 6. Internationalen Kolloquiums über Probleme des Provinzialrömischen Kunstschaffens, Historisches Museum der Stadt Budapest, 11.–16. Mai 1999* (Budapest Régiségei 34). (Eds.) P. Zsidi and E. Hanny, Budapest, 201–221.
- Pochmarski, E., 2012.** Grabaltäre mit dionysischen Darstellungen und ihre Vorbilder in Rom, Oberitalien und Noricum. *Anodos. Studies of the Ancient World*, 12, 205–218.
- Pochmarski, E., 2014.** Die Aschenkisten von Poetovio und Celeia. *Arheološki vestnik*, 65, 353–366.
- Pochmarski, E., 2015.** Aschenkisten und Sarkophage aus Poetovio, in *Römische Sarkophage. Akten des Internat. Werkstattgesprächs Graz, 11.–13.10.2012, Schild von Steier. Beih. 5 und Veröff. Instit. Arch. Karl-Franzens-Univ. Graz*, 12. (Eds.) B. Porod, G. Koiner Graz, 212–225.
- Pochmarski-Nagele, M., 1992.** *Die dionysischen Reliefs in Noricum und ihre Vorbilder*. Wien: VWGO
- Scrinari Santa Maria, V., 1972.** *Museo Archeologico di Aquileia. Catalogo delle sculture romane*. Roma: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato
- Speidel, M.P. 1976.** Eagle-Bearer and Trumpeter. *Bonner Jahrbücher*, 176, 123–163.
- Steinklauber, K., 2005.** Krater und Weinstock - römerzeitliche Grabreliefs aus der Steiermark, in *Vis imaginvm. Festschrift für Elisabeth Walde zum 65. Geburtstag*. (Eds.) G. Grabherr, B. Kainrath, A. Larcher und B. Welte, Innsbruck: Institut für Klassische und Provinzialrömische Archäologie Universität Innsbruck, 477–496.
- Torjussen, S.S., 2005.** The Study of Orphism. *Nordlit*, 18, 287–305.
- Tóth, E., 2011.** *Lapidarium Savariense: Savaria római feliratos köemlékei*. Szombathely: Vas Megyei Múzeumok Igazgatósága
- Toynbee, J.M.C., 1956.** Picture-Language in Roman Art and Coinage, in *Essays in Roman Coinage presented to Harold Mattingly*. (Eds.) R.A.G. Carson, C.H.V. Sutherland, New York: Oxford University Press, 205–226.
- Trunkelj, R., 2020.** *Sarkofagi in pepelnice Petovione. Analiza oblik in strukture z rekonstrukcijo in prezentacijo*, Ljubljana 2020 (Master thesis, Filozofska fakulteta Univeze v Ljubljani)
- Tušek, I., 1986.** Novi rimski reliefni kamni in napisi iz Ptuja. *Arheološki vestnik*, 37, 343–370.
- Ubl, H., 1969.** *Waffen und Uniform des römischen Heeres des Prinzipatsepoche nach den Grabreliefs Noricums und Pannoniens*. Wien (PhD Thesis, Universität Wien)
- Vomer Gojkovič, M., 2015.** A sarcophagus from Orešje near Ptuj, in *Römische Sarkophage: Akten des Internationalen Werkstattgesprächs, 11. - 13. Oktober 2012 (Graz)*. (Eds.) B. Porod, G. Koiner (Schild von Steier, Beiheft, 5), Graz, 256–268.
- Walde, E., 2005.** *Im herrlichen Glanze Roms*. Innsbruck: University of Innsbruck
- Zovatto, P.L. 1967.** *Grado, Nuova guida storico-artistica*. Udine: Del Bianco