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ГОДИНА
АРХЕОЛОГИЈЕ

Време је за прошлост.



Манифестација „Година археологије 2025”

У 2025. години Српско археолошко друштво спроводи манифестацију „Година археологије”. За лого манифестације је одабрана иконична силуета скулптуре Прародитељка, пронађена на локалитету Лепенски Вир. Током 2025. године, низ активности као што су предавања, изложбе, радионице и интерактивни рад са публиком у више од 20 градова промовише културно наслеђе Србије и слави археологију у свим својим облицима. Повод за ову манифестацију је 160 година од првих документованих археолошких ископавања у Србији. У лето 1865. Јанко Шафарик, тада чувар (управник) *Музеума сербској* (данас Народни музеј Србије), спроводи ова ископавања на планини Рудник.

(лого: Dechko Tzar)

Програмски одбор манифестације „Година археологије 2025”

Manifestation “The Year of Archaeology 2025”

In 2025, the Serbian Archaeological Society is implementing a series of events under the title “The Year of Archaeology 2025”. The project logo is the iconic silhouette of the sculpture Praroditeljka (*Progenitrix – Foremother*), found at the site of Lepenski Vir. During 2025, numerous activities such as lectures, exhibitions, workshops, and interactive work with broad public in more than 20 cities are being organised so as to promote the cultural heritage of Serbia and celebrate archaeology in all its forms. This series of events is marking the occasion of 160 years since the first documented archaeological excavations in Serbia. In summer 1985, Janko Šafárik, the then custodian (director) of the *Serbian Museum* (today’s National Museum of Serbia), conducted these excavations on Mount Rudnik.

(logo: Dechko Tzar)

Programme board of the manifestation “The Year of Archaeology 2025”

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RECENTLY DISCOVERED ALTAR FROM ROGATICA DEDICATED TO LIBER PATER (EASTERN ROMAN DALMATIA)

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Abstract: *This paper presents and analyses a newly discovered limestone votive altar dedicated to the god Liber, found in 2018 during the clean-up of the Rakitnica riverbed in Rogatica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The monument, currently housed in the premises of the Tourist Organisation of Rogatica, contributes to the understanding of religious and cultural practices in the Roman province of Dalmatia. The aim of the paper is to provide a detailed description and analysis of the monument and its inscription, while contextualising it within both microregional and macroregional frameworks. Particular attention is given to the significance of the epigraphic text and the context of Liber in Dalmatia. Through the analysis of the available data and comparisons with other monuments and sites from the region, the study seeks to offer insights into the function and symbolism of this monument within the local economic and social landscape of ancient Rogatica.*

Keywords: *Agriculture, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dalmatia, economy, epigraphy, Liber Pater, mining, Rogatica, Roman period, Roman religion*

Introduction

In 2018, during the cleaning of the Rakitnica riverbed in Rogatica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the western side of the riverbank, below the bridge in Rogatičke Brigade Street, a Roman-period votive altar dedicated to Liber *Pater* was found by Bojan Tešević (fig. 1, fig. 2, fig. 3). The monument was transferred to the interior of the building of the Tourist Organisation of Rogatica (*Turistička organizacija opštine Rogatica* / *Типусџиичка опјанизаџија ојшџиине Ројатиџица*) by Boro Brusin, Zdenko Brusin, Dragan Jakšić, Mladen Mihajlović, and Zoran Stojanović.¹ The discoverers of the monument said it was brought to the finding location from somewhere else, in order to be used in the construction of the

¹ The exact location where the monument is housed is the main building of the Tourist Organisation of Rogatica, located in No. 69 Srpske Sloge Street, 73220 Rogatica, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

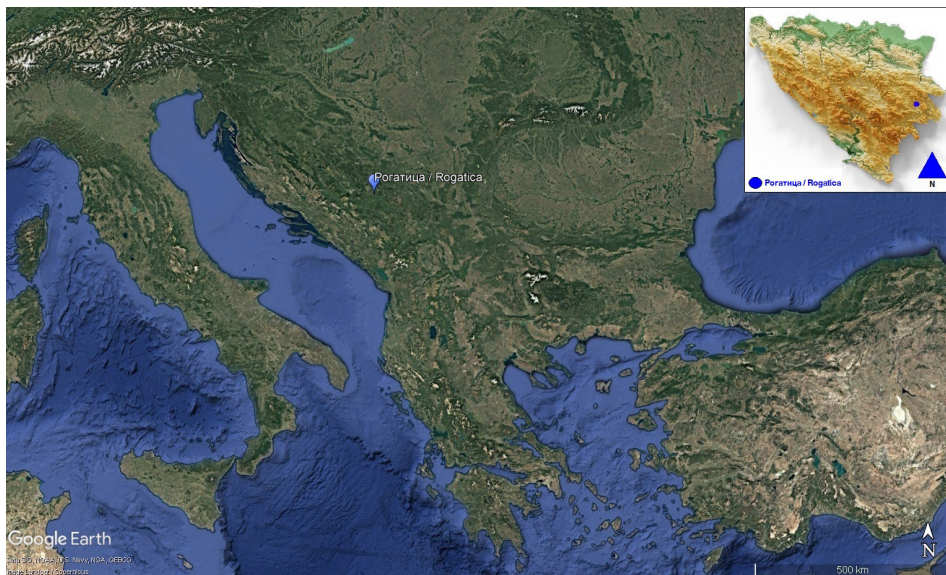


Fig. 1. The location of Rogatica within SE Europe and present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina (Google Earth Pro, Studio Maras/Alamy)

Сл. 1. Локација Рогатице унутар ЈИ Европе и данашње Босне и Херцеговине (Google Earth Pro, Studio Maras/Alamy)

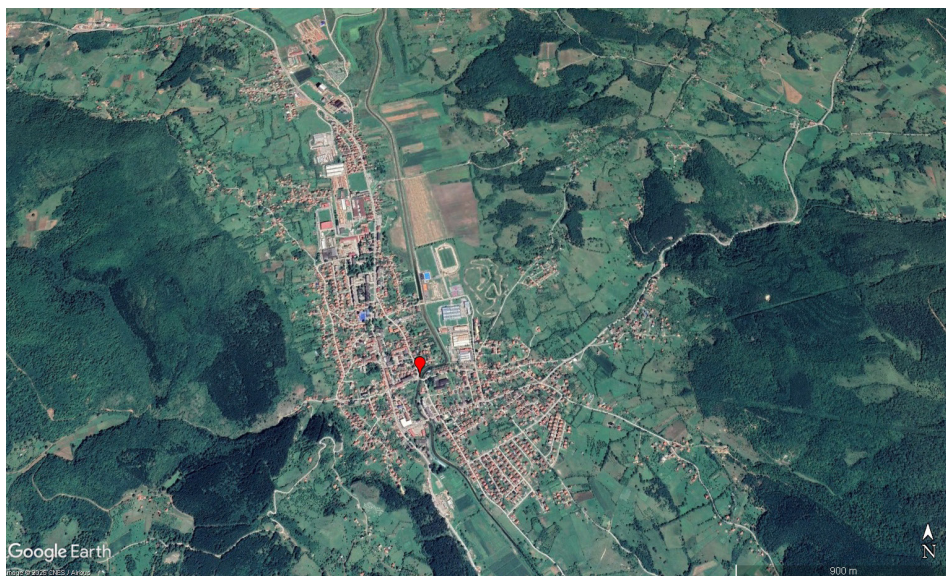


Fig. 2. The finding location of the monument within present-day Rogatica (Google Earth Pro)

Сл. 2. Локација налажења споменика унутар данашње Рогатице (Google Earth Pro)

floodbank near the former fire station.² In late 2024, the author of this paper was contacted by a classical philologist, Žarko Veljković, from Belgrade, Serbia, who sent him the cited online news article on the discovery. After searching through relevant scientific literature, the author of this paper concluded that this monument was still unpublished and asked the director of the Tourist Organisation of Rogatica, Predrag Ujić, about the whereabouts of the monument, who said that it was safely housed in the premises of the mentioned institution. The author of this paper therefore visited Rogatica in late January 2025 and documented the monument (photographing and measuring).

The aim of this paper will be to describe and analyse the monument and its inscription, and understand it in its micro- and macroregional contexts.

Brief geographic context

Rogatica is situated in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina, within the entity of Republika Srpska. It lies 54 km east of Sarajevo, 38 km north-east of Foča, and 23.5 km west of Višegrad (distances measured by air). The town is located at an altitude of 525 m and is cut by the Rakitnica River, a tributary of the Prača River, into the north-western and south-eastern halves. Two streams flow into the Rakitnica River in Rogatica itself: Gračanica (Sutjeska) and Toplik. The Rakitnica basin is bordered by the mountains of Zmijnica, Srednica, Obla Glava, Grad, Lunj, and Matovo Brdo to the north-west, west, and south-west, while the mountains of Goletnica, Oštri Vrh, Strmac, Zasada, Elevation 700 m, and Elevation 625 m enclose the area to the east and south-east. Morphologically, the region consists of a large surface, interrupted in many places by smaller or larger basins, mostly enclosed, the most important ones being the Rogatica Basin, Osovska Basin, and Godomiljska Basin. The terrain predominantly comprises Triassic limestone, with occurrences of Palaeozoic and Werfen schists with serpentine, Jurassic rocks, and occasional Upper Cretaceous layers. Karst formations in the area are shallow and sporadic. While the rivers Prača, Rakitnica, and Gračanica (Sutjeska) provide some water resources, the region generally suffers from water scarcity, with springs mainly found on the basin edges. The Roman-period settlement in Rogatica is located on a flat terrain in the western part of the present-day town, between slopes of the Lunj Mountain and the right bank of the Rakitnica River (Mandić 1962, 3; Prašo 1966, 7–9; Bojanovski 1967, 161).

The Roman-period settlement in Rogatica was located in the eastern part of the province of *Dalmatia*, established after *Bellum Batonianum* (6–9 AD) (Šašel Kos 2022, 61–70). The province spanned from the Raša River in

² <https://058.ba/2018/07/pronadjen-je-rimski-kamen-u-rakitnici/>. Accessed on: 21. 12. 2024.



Fig. 3. The monument at the finding location (photograph: Zdenko Brusin)

Сл. 3. Споменик на месту где је пронађен (фото: Зденко Брусин)

the north-west and followed the Adriatic coast towards *Lissus* (Lezhë, Albania). From there, the eastern border followed the River Drim, towards Šar Mountains and the rivers of Ibar, Lim, and Zapadna Morava (Wilkes 1969, 78–79). The northern border is somewhat more challenging to define, but recent studies trace it, starting from the west, from slightly south of Sanski Most, Bosnia and Herzegovina, towards Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Doboј, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Drinjača River. From there, it extends across the mountains of Povlen, Maljen, and Suvobor, ultimately following the watershed line between the Kolubara and the Zapadna Morava (Bojanovski 1988, 329–330; Црнобрња 2020, 21–22) (fig. 4).³

During the Roman period, the site was possibly somehow linked to the Roman road connecting Romanija and the valley of the Drina, that went north, toward *Sirmium* (Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia).⁴

³ For the most recent works, including the complete history of the research of the northern border of the province of *Dalmatia*, see Црнобрња 2020, 21–22, and Šaćić Beća 2022, 74–81.

⁴ Pašalić 1960, 70–71.

***Status quaestionis* of the name and administrative status of the Roman-period settlement in Rogatica**

The Roman-period settlement in Rogatica lies beneath the present-day town, extending between the slopes of Lunj Mountain and the western bank of the Rakitnica River (Bojanovski 1967, 143–144, 161). The problem regarding the name and administrative status of Rogatica in the Roman period is *in suspenso* up to this day due to fragmentation of existing monuments and absence of other finds and excavations.⁵

However, the most recent works dealing with this question are by Matia Vitelli Casella and Bruno Bijadija. The authors pointed out, similarly as Ivo Bojanovski, that apart from the inscription from Rogatica that *maybe* could be connected to *Risinium*, no other direct indications point towards the confirmation of the colonial status of *Risinium* (Bojanovski 1988, 172; Vitelli Casella 2018, 323–325; Bijadija 2021, 321–322). What also enhances the possibility of the identification of the Roman-period settlement in Rogatica with *colonia Ris(---)* is the fact that one *duumvir* (chief office in *municipia* and *coloniae*) and two *duumviri quinquenales* (administrators in *municipii* and *coloniae*, elected once in five years, and who were charged with the *census* of the population), are mentioned on three monuments (*AE* 1976, 533; *CIL* III 8366, 8368 = 12474; *EDRL*, “Duoviri quinquennales”; *BNP* 4, “Duoviri, Duumviri”).

Nevertheless, new finds and excavations are a *conditio sine qua non* for resolving this issue.⁶

⁵ The first group of authors believes that the *c(colonia) Ris(---)* part of the inscription on the monument from Rogatica could be related to the Roman-period settlement there (Patsch 1893, 89–90; Patsch 1907, 467–468; Patsch 1909, 181–183; Patsch 1910, 201–202; Patsch 1912, 159; Basler 1966, 32; *ELU* 4, “Rogatica”; Bojanovski 1967, 159–163; Imamović 1977, 131; Bojanovski 1988, 171–175; *BAGRW*, Maps 19–20; Zotović 2002, 23–24; Zotović 2003 [2004], 20; Jadrić 2007, 53; Mesihović 2009, 55–57; Busuladžić 2011, 105, 107, 117; Mesihović 2011, 122; Silajdžić i Mesihović 2014, 123; Mrozewicz 2014, 215; Mrozewicz 2015, 158–159; Selimović 2018, 62–67; Šaćić Beća 2018, 112–116; Veladžić 2018, 85–89; Bijadija 2021, 319–322; Lozić 2021, 32, Figs 14–15). The second group refuses such interpretation, believing that the inscription actually refers to *Risinium* (Risan, Montenegro) (*CIL* III 2766 + p. 1035 = 8369 = 12748 + p. 2256; Сепрејевски 1955, 61; Alföldy 1965, 142; Гарашанин, Д. и Гарашанин М. 1967, 157, 210–211; Wilkes 1969, 281, 316; Suić 1976, 35–36; Лома 2010, 288, note 43; Грбић 2014, 142, note 387). However, some of the authors from this group believe that the Roman-period site in Rogatica had the administrative status of *civitas* or *municipium* (Pašalić 1960, 71; Alföldy 1965, 154; Wilkes 1969, 281, 295, 297, 351). The third group of authors that mentioned this question did not express their opinion on the matter (Hoernes 1880, 45; Vuletić Vukasović 1888, 100; Wilkes 1981, 573; *ALBiH* 3, “17.288 Rogatica”; Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 471–472).

⁶ As this question remains unresolved, it did not seem reasonable to discuss the approximate period during which the Roman-period settlement in Rogatica could have obtained colonial status or an administrative structure prior to its acquisition.

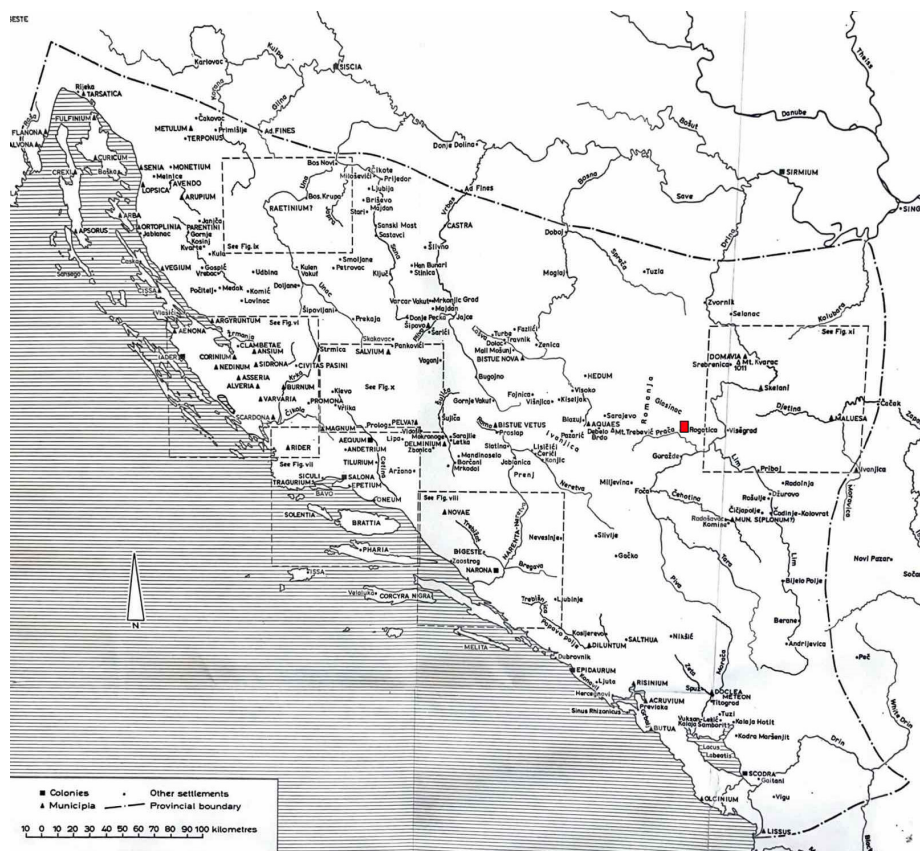


Fig. 4. The location of Rogatica within the Roman province of Dalmatia in the period from the 1st to the 3rd century AD (Wilkes 1969, Fig. 25)

Сл. 4. Локација Рогатице у оквирима римске провинције Далмације у периоду 1–3. века (Wilkes 1969, Fig. 25)

Description of the monument

The discussed monument is an almost completely preserved votive altar of limestone (fig. 5, fig. 6, fig. 7). The only petrographic analyses of Roman-period stone monuments from the area of Rogatica were performed on two funerary *stelae* from the village of Vragolovi, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Edisa Lozić, the author of the study presenting these analyses, identified the material of the *stelae* as pink micritic limestone, dated into the Cretaceous or Middle Triassic period. The source of this limestone was located near Rogatica, on the southern slopes of Lunj Mountain. Considering the proximity of this source, it is plausible that the stone for the Rogatica monument dedicated to Liber *Pater* was also quarried from this area (Lozić 2021, 32–33).



Fig. 5. The potential source of limestone used for the making of this monument (Lozić 2021, 32, Fig. 15)

Сл. 5. Могући извор кречњака коришћеног за израду овог споменика (Lozić 2021, 32, Fig. 15)

The only fragmented part of the votive altar is the left-hand side of the base. The monument exhibits numerous calcifications caused by prolonged exposure to the limescale-rich waters of the Rakitnica River, which have damaged the inscription. The inscription field is vertically cracked in the middle, with the crack spanning from the top of the inscription field to the border of the inscription field with the base of the monument. Another damaged area appears in the right-hand side section of lines 3 and 4, taking the form of a diagonal line. This line marks a chipped section of the monument, where part of the inscription has been permanently lost.

The complete height of the monument is 69 cm. The crown is 20 cm high, 36 cm wide, and 27 cm thick. The body is 30 cm high, 30 cm wide, and 24 cm thick. The base is 19 cm high, 41 cm wide, and 24 cm thick.



Fig. 6. Frontal side of the monument
(photograph: M. N. Džamtoovski, edit: Ilija Krnjajić)

Сл. 6. Предња страна споменика (фото: М. Н. Џамтовски, уредио: Илија Крњајић)

The crown begins with an S-profile (*cyma reversa*), followed by a straight beam (*fascia*). The top of the capital is flat, with stylised *acroteria* on edges (Vukov 2018, 37, Fig. 13/1a). That is the only decoration on the monument. The epigraphic field is without frame and its dimensions are 30 x 30 cm. The base has a simple plinth that is slanted towards the body of the monument and the inscription field.

The inscription, its translation, and dating of the monument

The inscription is inclining towards the upper side of the inscription field. The text in lines 1, 2, and 3 is inclined more towards the left-hand side of the monument, while it is more centred in line 4 (fig. 8, fig. 9).

The letters are consistently aligned, but their heights differ from line to line: in lines 1 and 2, the letters are 4 cm high (apart from the letter *I* in line 1, which is tucked inside the letter *L* and is 2 cm high), while the letters in lines 3 and 4 are also 2 cm high.

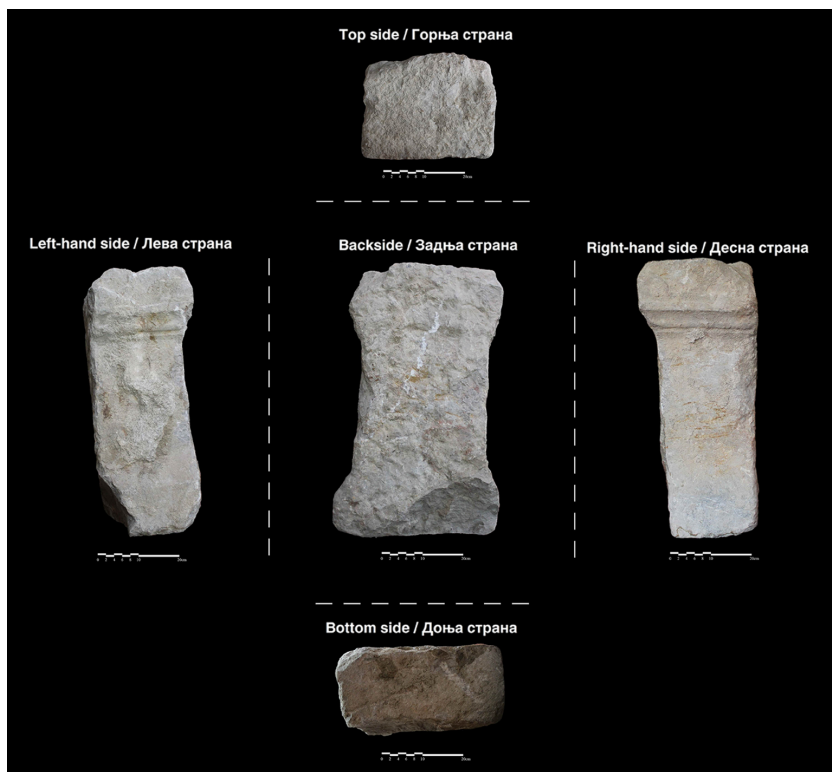


Fig. 7. Other sides of the monument
(photograph: M. N. Džamtovski, edit: Ilija Krnjajić)

Сл. 7. Остале стране споменика (фото: М. Н. Џамтовски, уредио: Илија Крњајић)

The letters are carved deeply, but the right-hand side letters in lines 1 and 2 (*O* in line 1 and *I* in line 2) are somewhat worn out. The letters in lines 3 and 4 are more shallowly carved in comparison with the letters from lines 1 and 2, and are therefore much more worn out. The bottom half of the vertical hasta of the letter *R* in line 1 is damaged by calcifications. The vertical hasta of the letter *P* in line 2 is chipped, while the letter *I* is deformed by calcifications. The letter *P* in line 3 is destroyed by the crack but could be reconstructed from the context. The left-hand side upper serifs of the letters *M* and *V* are damaged. The portion of the inscription in line 3 following the barely visible letter *I* was, as previously mentioned, carved very shallowly. Due to prolonged exposure to water, transportation, and impact damage, this section was destroyed. It does not seem possible to reliably reconstruct the number of letters lost due to the damage at the end of the line. This damaged section corresponds to the diagonal crack visible on the right-hand side of lines 3 and 4. The vertical hasta of the letter *L* in line 4 is de-

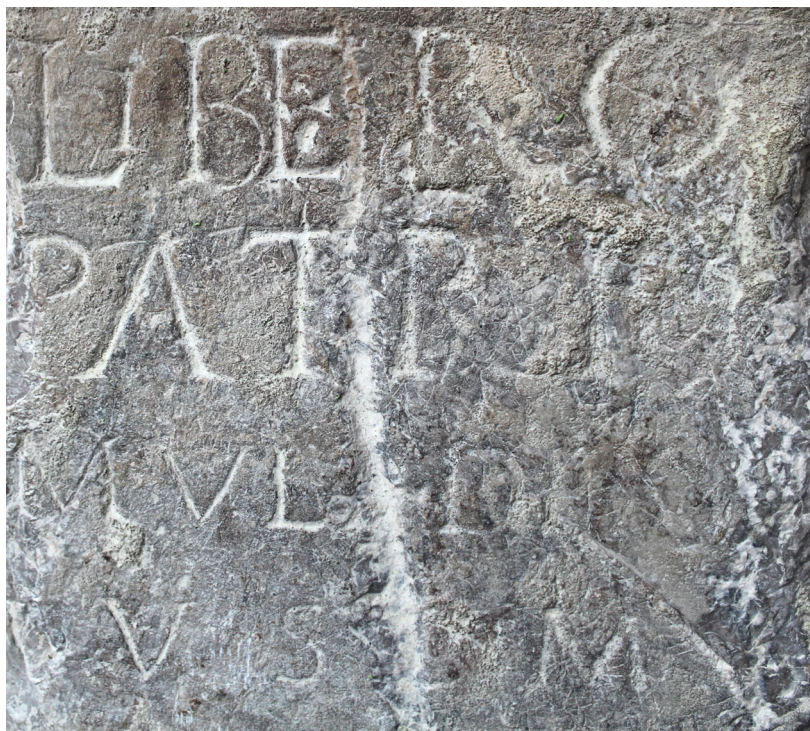


Fig. 8. Inscription with a dedication to Liber *Pater* (photograph: M. N. Džamtoovski)

Сл. 8. Натпис са посветом Либеру Патеру (фото: М. Н. Џамтовски)

stroyed by the crack, but its horizontal line and right-hand side half of the upper serif can be seen, while the letters *V*, *S*, and *M* are somewhat worn out. Therefore, the proposed reading and translation of the inscription are as follows:

Liberō | Patri | M(arcus) ULP(ius) DI[---] | v(otum) s(olvit) I(ibens) m(erito)
To Liber *Pater*, Marcus Ulpus Di[---], willingly and deservedly fulfilled his vow.

The letters are Roman square capitals. The *O* and *S* are serifless. The horizontal bar of the letter *A* is in the form of a triangle. The palaeographic features of the letters suggest a dating into the 3rd century. Notable characteristics include the letter *B*, composed of three strokes; the letter *E*, with transverse lines of unequal length (the central one being the shortest) and vertical serifs at the ends; the letter *L*, featuring a horizontal serif above the vertical hasta and a prominent upward-slanted serif near its horizontal line; and the letter *V*, with lines of equal length and upper ends, emphasised by shorter horizontal serifs. Certain characteristics, while present in earlier centuries, also appear in third-century palaeog-

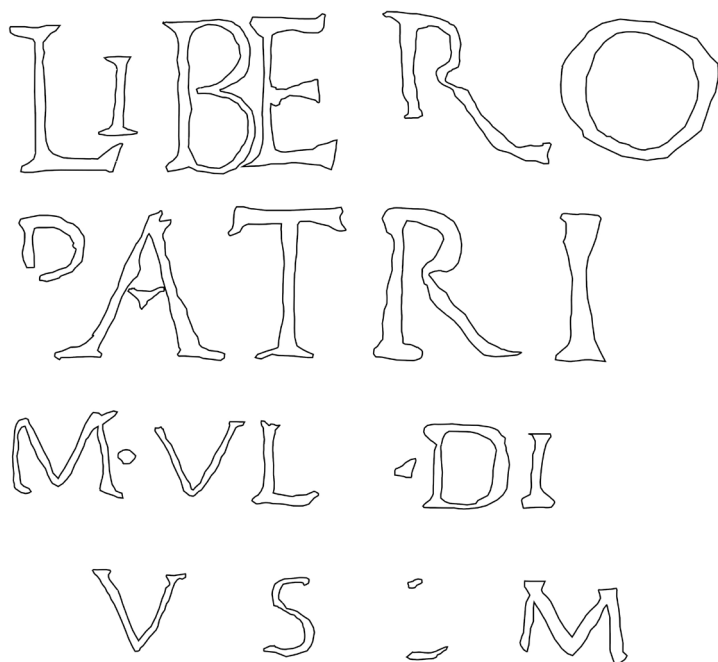


Fig. 9. Drawing of the inscription (M. N. Džamtoński)

Сл. 9. Цртеж натписа (М. Н. Џамтовски)

raphy. These include the letter *M*, where the first and last lines are vertical, the diagonal lines extend to the bottom, and horizontal serifs are present; the open letter *P*; the letter *R*, where the junction of the second and third strokes does not touch the vertical hasta, with the third stroke slightly curved; and the letter *T*, whose transverse line is slightly longer, with pronounced downward-pointing serifs (Петровић 1975, 111, 113, 115–118, 120).

There are two *hederae* that divide words in line 3: between *Marcus* and *Ul[p(ius)]*, which seems to be circular, and between *Ul[p(ius)]* and *Di[---]*, which is triangular.

Analysis of the inscription

Libero Patri

Liber was originally an italic deity of agriculture, cyclical changes in nature, fertility, healing, and public freedom. He became identified with Bacchus (Βάκχος) / Dionysus (Διόνυσος) in the 5th century BC. After that identification, his functions also encompassed mysteries, viticulture, wine, and wine trading.

Additionally, he possessed chthonic and eschatological natures (Bruhl 1953, 15–16, 19, 37, 42–44, 271, 310; *PIPM*, “Liber”; *LIMC* III-1, “Dionysus/Bacchus”, “Bacchus”; Isler-Kerényi 2010, 27–43; Пилиповић 2011: 16, 88–92). He was also worshipped in mining contexts (Imamović 1977, 165–166; Dušanić 2010 [1999], 672–673; Пилиповић 2011: 86–88).

The worship of Dionysus was already present on islands along the Dalmatian coast by the 6th century BC, where he was venerated as the god of joy, wine, and the underworld (Jadrić 2007, 47–50). Liber was one of the most widely worshipped deities in *Dalmatia*, revered in both the coastal and interior regions by people of all social strata, backgrounds, and both sexes (Jadrić 2007, 82, T. III–IV).

The earliest evidence of Liber in *Dalmatia* dates to the mid-1st century BC in *Narona* (Vid, Croatia). The worship of Liber, strongly influenced by Dionysiac traditions, spread from the Dalmatian coast into the interior, possibly replacing the local fertility deities. In fact, the majority of the authors believes that in the interior part of the province, *interpretatio Romana* occurred with some previous deity of nature (Bruhl 1953, 223; Paškvalin 1963, 137; Zaninović 1984 250–251; Olujić 1990, 9–16; Matijašić and Tassaux 2000, 67–76; Zotović 2002, 51–52; Jadrić 2007, 207).

In *Dalmatia*, Liber was celebrated as a god of agriculture, cyclical changes in nature, fertility, freedom, healing, joy, underworld, viticulture, and wine (Olujić 1990, 9–16; Matijašić and Tassaux 2000, 67–76; Jadrić 2007, 51, 81, 207; Gazivoda 2015, 90–94).

In Rogatica, two monuments dedicated to Liber were found (*CIL* III 8367 + pp. 2127, 2256; Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 472–474, no. 1).

Other deities testified on inscriptions on monuments in the mentioned area are Iuno (*CIL* III 14616),⁷ Iuppiter (*CIL* III 8366–8367 + pp. 2127, 2256, 8368 = 12474; *ILIug* II 623; Silajdžić i Mesihović 2014, 121–126; Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 474–475, no. 2),⁸ Libera (Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 472–474, no. 1),⁹ and Mithras (*AE* 1976, 533).¹⁰ The deities Attis (Bojanovski 1967, 149–152, no. 5; Bešlagić 1971, 252),¹¹ Eros/Hypnos, and Psyche are not refer-

⁷ This monument is from Živaljevići, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁸ One monument is from Plješevica, four are from Rogatica, and one is only known to have originated *somewhere* from the area of Rogatica.

⁹ This monument is from Rogatica. The pair of Liber and Libera was mostly linked to nature, vegetation, fertility, and viticulture (Пилиповић 2011, 65).

¹⁰ This monument is from Rogatica.

¹¹ Respectively, these monuments are from Rogatica and Vragolovi.

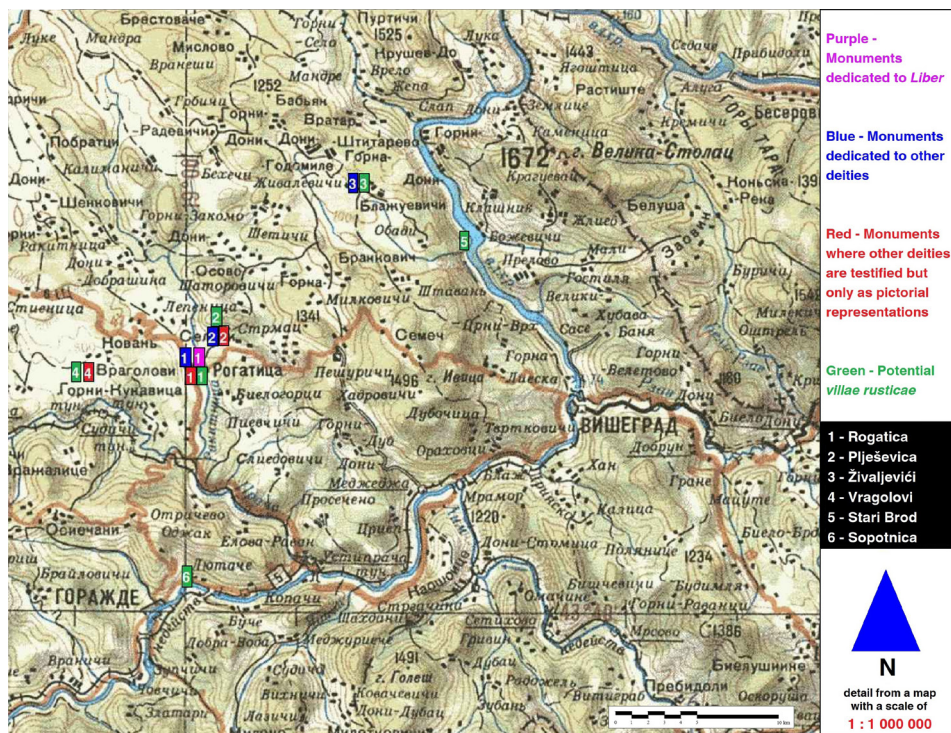


Fig. 10. Locations in Rogatica and its surroundings: dedications to Liber, other deities, pictorial representations of deities other than Liber, and possible *villae rusticae* (Генеральный штаб Вооружённых Сил Союза ССР 1989, Е-36 XII 82-Д)

Сл. 10. Локације у Рогатици и њеној околини: посвете Либеру, другим божанствима, сликовне представе божанстава осим Либер и потенцијалне виле рустике (Генеральный штаб Вооружённых Сил Союза ССР 1989, Е-36 XII 82-Д)

enced in inscriptions, but are instead depicted on one monument (Bojanovski 1967, 155–157, no. 11) (fig. 10).¹²

This is the only monument from the area of Rogatica that is dedicated to Liber alone. On the first of the other two monuments from the discussed area, he is honoured with Iuppiter. The dedicant of this monument had his name written in the *tria nomina* form and was a veteran (*CIL* III 8367 + pp. 2127, 2256). On the second monument, he is honoured with Libera. The name of the dedicant is also

¹² This stele from Plješevica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, depicting Eros/Hypnos/Somnus offers an opportunity to address a minor error from the author's previous work. In a paper published in Volume 39 of this journal, discussing an inscription dedicated to Somnus from *Bononia/Malata* (Banoštor, Serbia), the author stated that no *asklepia* existed in *Ratiaria* (Arčar, Bulgaria) (Džamtovski 2023, 106). This was incorrect, as an inscription from *Ratiaria*, the author was not aware of, indeed attests to the presence of an *asklepion* (Сроев 2014, 247–251, no. 7). However, this correction does not affect the conclusions drawn in that study.

in the *tria nomina* form, but his function is unknown (Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 427–474, no. 1).

Also, the monument presented in this paper is the sole example from Rogatica and its closest proximity where Liber carries the epithet *Pater*. On one monument, he is named Liber Bacchus (*CIL* III 8367 + pp. 2127, 2256),¹³ while he bears no epithets on other monument (Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 472–474, no. 1).¹⁴

Apart from three monuments dedicated to Liber in the area of Rogatica, in the remainder of the province of *Dalmatia*, he is testified on approximately 70 inscriptions (Imamović 1977, 394–400; Olujić 1990, 29–30; Zotović 2002, 51–52; Jadrić 2007, 99–199; Dodig 2014, 140–148; Vukov 2018, 208–491; Đerković 2023, 5, 28–30; Zotović 2024, 103–108). Furthermore, there are direct architectural and epigraphic confirmations regarding the existence of temples dedicated to Liber in the province of *Dalmatia*, located in Biograd na Moru, Croatia (*AE* 2004, 1116; Jadrić 2007, 115, no. 13), somewhere in the Ljubuški area, Bosnia and Herzegovina (*CIL* III 1790 = 6362 = 8484, 8485; Dodig 2014, 141–143; Marić 2021, 178–180), *Narona* (*CIL* III 1786; Dodig 2014, 141), Polače, on the island of Mljet (*Melite*), Croatia (Zaninović 1990, 725–732; *Salona* (Solin, Croatia) (*CIL* III 1951, 14242, 14241, 1, 14672), and *Senia* (Senj, Croatia) (*ILLug* 247). Additionally, a fair amount of depictions of this deity can be found throughout the entirety of the province (Imamović 1977, 161; Olujić 1990, 21–23; Jadrić 2007, 65–70).

The majority of the monuments are similar to the one discussed in this paper in terms of being dedicated exclusively to Liber. However, on some monuments, he is honoured together with Anubis, Harpocrates, Isis, Libera, and Serapis (*CIL* III 2903),¹⁵ with Iuno and Silvanus (Vukov 2018, 261, no. 181),¹⁶ with Iuppiter and Terminus (*AE* 1939, 301),¹⁷ solely with Libera (*CIL* III 1790 = 6362 = 8484),¹⁸ and solely with Silvanus (*AE* 2011, 927).¹⁹

The epithet *Pater* is used on the majority of monuments dedicated to Liber in *Dalmatia*. However, on some monuments in the province of *Dalmatia*, his epi-

¹³ Although Bacchus was associated with a broad range of spheres, such as fertility, nature, and abundance, he was also commonly addressed in general prayers, not necessarily tied to any specific domain (Jadrić 2007, 7–8, 96; Пилиповић 2011, 16).

¹⁴ The Liber Bacchus monument is dated into the late 2nd/early 3rd century AD, while the Liber monument is dated after the year 160 AD (Bojanovski 1967, 149; Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 474).

¹⁵ This monument is from *Iader* (Zadar, Croatia).

¹⁶ This monument is from Galovac, Croatia.

¹⁷ This monument is from Ustikolina, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

¹⁸ This monument is from Hardomilje, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

¹⁹ This monument is from *Salona*.

thets are *Augustus* (*AE* 2011, 927; *CIL* III 1787, 2730 + p. 1613),²⁰ *Magnum Pater Torclensis* (*CIL* III 3093 = 10100),²¹ *Pater Augustus* (*AE* 1980, 695; *CIL* III 3046 + p. 1643, 14673; *ILluc* III 1826),²² *Pater C(---)* (*ILluc* 78),²³ *Pater Cap(---)* (*ILluc* III 1504),²⁴ and *Pater Torclensis* (*CIL* III 3065 = 10082).²⁵ Sometimes, he had no epithets (*AE* 2004, 1116; *AE* 2010, 1227; *CIL* III 1786, 2903; *ILluc* 226; *ILluc* II 673; Vukov 2018, 407, 450, nos. 438, 525).²⁶ Additionally, on some monuments from *Dalmatia*, he is not mentioned as *Liber*, but as *Deus Laetus* (*CIL* III 8673a; Olujić 1990, 12)²⁷ or *Deus Magnus Conservator Loci* (*CIL* III 14242,1, 14242).²⁸ Finally, one monument is dedicated to the *Genius* of *Liber Pater* (*CIL* III 8365).²⁹

The dedicant

The name of the dedicant is in the *tria nomina* form. Since the monument is dated into the 3rd century, the *praenomen* and *nomen* of the dedicant indicate that his ancestors acquired Roman citizenship during the reign of Emperor Trajan (98–117). This *nomen* was very common throughout the entire Roman Empire and the province of *Dalmatia* is no exception, where it was attested on numerous monuments (Alföldy 1969, 42–43; *OPEL* IV „Vlpivs”). In the territory of Rogatica, three monuments with the *nomen* *Ulpus* were found. Every *Ulpus* in Rogatica had the *praenomen* *Marcus* (*CIL* III 14616; *ILluc* II 623; Silajdžić i Mesihović 2014, 121–126).

Other *nomina* recorded on the monuments from the territory of Rogatica are *Aelius* (*AE* 1976, 533; *CIL* III 8366–8367 + pp. 2127, 2256, 8368 = 12474, 12754), *Aurelius* (Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 474–475, no. 2), and *Claudius* (*CIL* III 2766 + p. 1035 = 8369 = 12748 + p. 2256;³⁰ Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 472–474, no. 1).

²⁰ Respectively, these monuments are from *Salona*, *Iader*, and *Aequum* (Čitluk in Split–Dalmatia County, Croatia).

²¹ This monument is from Škrip, on the island of Brač (*Brattia*), Croatia.

²² Respectively, these monuments are from Kolovrat, Serbia, *Albona* (Labin in Istria County, Croatia), *Salona*, and *Doclea* (Podgorica, Montenegro).

²³ This monument is from Užice, Serbia.

²⁴ This monument is from Užice.

²⁵ This monument is from Žrnovo, on the island of Korčula (*Corcyra Nigra*), Croatia.

²⁶ Respectively, these monuments are from Biograd na Moru, *Varvaria* (Bribir in Šibenik–Knin County, Croatia), *Narona*, *Iader*, *Raetinium* (?) (Golubić, Bosnia and Herzegovina), *Salona*, and Trbounje, Croatia.

²⁷ This monument is from *Salona*.

²⁸ These monuments are from *Salona*.

²⁹ This monument is from Selenac, Serbia.

³⁰ This monument is from Rogatica.

Finally, the *cognomen* could not be reconstructed due to the fragmentation of the monument. The only thing that could be said is that this is a new Roman-period individual registered in the area of Rogatica, as other Marci Ulpri had the *cognomina* of Marcianus and one of the four possible *cognomina* due to the fragmentation of the monument: Apollodorus, Apollonianus, Apollonides, or Apollonius (*CIL* III 14616; *ILJug* II 623; Silajdžić i Mesihović 2014, 121–126; Ferjančić and Samardžić 2017, 474).³¹

Economic activities related to selected Liber's functions in the Roman-period area of Rogatica

Economic activities in the Roman-period settlement in Rogatica and its surroundings are considered in this paper not because the newly discovered votive altar to Liber *Pater* directly implies agricultural, mining, or viticultural function. Rather, this context is included to provide a broader understanding of the local setting, as one of Liber *Pater*'s key associations is with nature, agriculture, fertility, mining, viticulture, and wine.

There are two reasons why it is impossible to determine the reason for the erection of this monument and what exact function(s) of Liber *Pater* were invoked by the dedicant: the multifacetedness of Liber *Pater*'s functions and the laconic character of the inscription, which offers no details about the reason for the erection of the monument.

Despite the fact that the present-day area of Rogatica yielded a considerable number of Roman-period monuments and has been a subject of scholarly discussion for over a century, much about its past remains unknown. Excavations in the area have been infrequent, and the relatively recent lists of Roman-period sites in the wider Rogatica region, meticulously compiled by S. Mesihović and Adnan Busuladžić, remain unchanged up to this day. Because of that, there is no comprehensive study and/or overview of economic activities in the area of Rogatica during the Roman period (Mesihović 2009, 63–65; Busuladžić 2011, 147–148).³²

Additionally, the discovery of iron tools offers no deeper insight into the economic activities practised in the area of Rogatica during the Roman period, as the only find is an axe (Busuladžić 2014, 148).

³¹ Marcus Ulpius Marcianus is mentioned twice on monuments from the area of Rogatica. Tarik Silajdžić and Salmedin Mesihović have suggested the possibility that the same individual erected both monuments (*CIL* III 14616; Silajdžić i Mesihović 2014, 123).

³² The only exceptions regarding the excavations of Roman-period sites in the municipality of Rogatica are graves in Borovsko, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bradva – Kramer Selo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brankovići, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ciganska Sokolovina – Rogatica, Mramorje – Okruglo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Planje, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Rusanovići, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mesihović 2009, 63–65).

Previous works on economic activities in the Roman-period area of Rogatica

Economic activities practised in the Roman-period area of Rogatica were marginally mentioned in the works of I. Bojanovski, Ante Škegro, and Radmila Zotović.

The first author noted the probability that Romanija Mountain, located west/north-west of Rogatica, was covered with pastures and forests (*compascus et silvae*). Additionally, he suggested that certain Greek *cognomina* found on inscriptions from Rogatica might be the *cognomina* of the descendants of newcomers who arrived in the region during Emperor Trajan's reign (98–117), coinciding with the establishment of mining activities in Podrinje (Bojanovski 1988, 169–170, 173).³³

The second author argued that the monuments dedicated to Liber in the area of Rogatica do not imply viticulture, since it most likely was not cultivated there due to the cold climate (Škegro 1999, 173).

The third author suggested that the colonial status was granted to the settlement in Rogatica for economic reasons linked to the mineral exploitation around present-day Foča, prior to *Domavia* (Sase, Bosnia and Herzegovina) becoming the administrative centre for mining in the region in the late 2nd century AD (Zotović 2002, 23–24; Šaćić Beća 2022, 254).

Evidence of agricultural activities

Some of the sites in the vicinity of Rogatica were interpreted as the so-called *villae rusticae*. These sites are in Plješevica, Rogatica, Sopotnica, Stari Brod (Municipality of Rogatica), Vragolovi, and Živaljevići. However, none of them have been excavated, hence, the functions of these sites still remain unknown (Busuladžić 2011, 32, 117, 168–170).

Evidence of viticulture

Various authors share the view of A. Škegro, who mentioned that viticulture was not practised in the inland of the province of *Dalmatia* due to the cold climate – a fact first noted by Strabo in the seventh book of his *Geographica*, written in the late 1st century BC/early 1st century AD (Zaninović 1996 [1976], 391–392; Olujić 1990, 16; Strabo 2001, 259, 269, 271; Jadrić 2007, 207; Busuladžić 2011, 85; Busuladžić 2015, 57).

Evidence of mining

There are no mining-related finds nor inscriptions in Rogatica and its direct proximity. In the Roman period, mining was extensively carried out in the extended proximity of Rogatica, specifically in the Podrinje region, but also

³³ This interpretation of I. Bojanovski was challenged by S. Mesihović, who stated there is no evidence of mining and mining-related inscriptions in Rogatica (Mesihović 2009, 59).

around present-day Foča. Mining-related inscriptions were typically found either in areas where such activities were practised or in the administrative centres overseeing these mining regions, sometimes located outside the mining zones themselves (Škegro 1999, 65; Dušanić 2010 [1977], 490–494; Šačić Beća 2022, 250).

At the moment, the absence of mining-related inscriptions, the fact that there are no traces of exploitation and processing of the mineral sources in the direct proximity of Rogatica, and the fact that administrative centres of the mining districts close to Rogatica were located in *Domavia* and *Municipium Splonistarum* (Komini, Montenegro), and not in Rogatica, discourage the notion of the practise of mining or mining-related activities (Prašo 1966, 7–12; Dušanić 2010 [1977], 542–544).

Final remarks

This article provides limited concrete insights about the social and economic conditions of the enigmatic Roman-period site in present-day Rogatica, as well as religious practices and origins of Liber in eastern *Dalmatia*. That is due to the fragmented state of the inscription, its laconic character, and the absence of field research of Roman-period Rogatica and its area. The reason why the altar to Liber *Pater* discussed in this paper was erected remains unknown due to the multifaceted nature of Liber's attributes.

However, this votive altar does give some new information: it is the third inscription dedicated to Liber in the area of Rogatica, the first dedication to Liber *Pater* in this area, and the addition of another individual in the Roman-period area of Rogatica, Marcus Ulpius Di[---], who lived here in the 3rd century AD. Although this monument does not offer substantial information on its own, its significance becomes clearer when considered alongside other dedications to Liber in the area of Rogatica. Taken together, these attestations indicate that Liber was the second most venerated deity in this region, right after Iuppiter, who is mentioned on six monuments, possibly making the Roman-period settlement in Rogatica a local centre of Liber's worship.

The presence of a third monument dedicated to Liber in the area of Rogatica could suggest agriculture (cultivations of crops and/or animal husbandry) as one of the dominant economic branches practised in this region during the Roman period, given Liber's strong association with these activities. Minor supporting arguments for this perspective are the absence of viticulture, and mining-related finds and inscriptions in the area of Rogatica, despite mining being practiced nearby, particularly around Foča and more extensively along the Drina River.

In addition to this significant confirmation of the veneration of Liber *Pa-ter*, the area of Rogatica has already yielded many interesting finds, even in the absence of systematic excavations, suggesting its potential for uncovering new insights into the Roman-period administration, culture, economy, religion, and society in the eastern part of the province of *Dalmatia*.

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НЕДАВНО ОТКРИВЕНИ ЖРТВЕНИК ИЗ РОГАТИЦЕ СА ПОСВЕТОМ ЛИБЕРУ ПАТЕРУ (ИСТОЧНА РИМСКА ДАЛМАЦИЈА)

Кључне речи: *пољопривреда, Босна и Херцеговина, Далмација, економија, епиграфика, Либер Пајер, рударство, Ројатица, римски период, римска религија*

Овај рад представља и анализира новооткривени римски жртвеник од кречњака, посвећен богу Либеру Патеру, пронађен 2018. године током чишћења корита реке Ракитнице у Рогатици (источна Босна и Херцеговина, ентитет Република Српска), који је ту донесен с друге, непознате локације, зарад изградње обнове насипа. Споменик је тренутно смештен у просторијама Туристичке организације општине Рогатица. Циљ рада је да се пружи детаљан опис и анализа самог споменика и његовог натписа, као и да се он контекстуализује унутар микро и макро регионалног оквира.

На основу анализе једноставног натписа утврђено је да га је у част бога Либерера подигао извесни Марко Улпије, чији когномен није очуван услед оштећења споменика. Натпис је датиран у 3. век на основу палеографских карактеристика. Споменик је значајан јер представља трећи посвећени Либеру у Рогатици, али први у којем се јавља епитет *Pater*. Такође је значајан јер представља скроман допринос просопографији римске Далмације и рогатичког краја пошто додаје још једну индивидуу чије је име делимично остало сачувано.

Либер је првобитно био италски бог пољопривреде, природних циклуса, плодности, исцељења и јавних слобода. У 5. веку пре нове ере изједначен је са Бахусом (*Βάκχος*), односно Дионисом (*Διόνυσος*), чиме су му додељене и нове функције повезане са мистеријама, виноградарством, вином и трговином вином. Поред тога, имао је хтонски и есхатолошки карактер, и поштован је и у рударским контекстима.

Култ Диониса био је присутан на далматинским острвима већ у 6. веку пре нове ере, где је штован као бог радости, вина и подземног света. Либер је постао једно од најраширенијих божанстава у римској Далмацији, забележен на преко 70 споменика у виду посветних натписа и представа, а зна се и за постојање неколицине његових храмова. Био је штован у примор-

ским и унутрашњим деловима провинције, међу припадницима различитих друштвених слојева, етничких група и оба пола.

Најраније сведочанство о Либеру у Далмацији потиче из средине 1. века пре нове ере из Нароне (данашњи Вид у Хрватској). Његов култ, под утицајем дионизијских традиција, проширио се са обале у унутрашњост, вероватно замењујући домаћа божанства плодности. Већина аутора сматра да је у унутрашњости дошло до *interpretatio Romana* – изједначавања Либер са ранијим божанствима природе.

Узевши у обзир Либерову повезаност са економским активностима (пољопривреда, узгој винове лозе и рударство), дат је њихов преглед у контексту римскодобне Рогатице, упркос чињеници да скоро и не постоје радови на ту тему. Иако сам натпис не наводи конкретан разлог подизања жртвеника, одсуство налаза везаних за рударске активности и Страбонов помен немогућност узгоја винове лозе у унутрашњости Далмације услед хладне климе, жртвеник би могао указивати на могућност да је штовање Либер у Рогатици повезано са пољопривредним активностима у римској Рогатици. Међутим, ни та интерпретација није финална, услед неистражености римскодобне Рогатице и широких функција Либеровог култа.

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