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Prilog ikonografiji Herkulovih prikaza – uz dva neobjavljena reljefa

A contribution to the iconography of Hercules images: on two unpublished reliefs

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U Arheološkom muzeju u Splitu čuvaju se dva zavjetna reljefa posvećena rimskom božanstvu Herkulu. Cilj ovoga rada je ikonografska analiza spomenika, pri čemu se postavlja hipoteza o mogućnosti postojanja do sada, na našem prostoru, nepoznatih atributa u ikonografiji slavnoga mitološkog junaka. Osim toga će se pokušati ubicirati Herkulova svetišta u Saloni, odnosno njegovoj okolini.

Ključne riječi: Herkul, zavjetni reljef, svetište, Salona.

Two votive reliefs dedicated to the Roman deity Hercules are held in the Archaeological Museum in Split. The objective of this paper is to provide an iconographic analysis of the monuments, wherein is posed the hypothesis on the possibility of the existence of thus far unknown attributes in the iconography of the renowned mythical hero in Croatian territory. An attempt will also be made to pinpoint the location of the sanctuary dedicated to Hercules in Salona or its surroundings.

Keywords: Hercules, votive relief, sanctuary, Salona.

U Arheološkom muzeju u Splitu (AMS) čuvaju se dva zavjetna reljefa posvećena rimskom božanstvu Herkulu.¹ Ni jedan od njih dosad nije bio predmetom stručne obrade, no njihovo je postojanje zabilježeno u dvjema relevantnim mrežnim bazama podataka sa slobodnim pristupom (LIMC i LUPA). Cilj ovog rada je dvostruk. Jedan je ikonografska analiza spomenika, pri čemu smo postavili hipotezu o mogućnosti postojanja do sada, na našem prostoru, nepoznatih atributa u ikonografiji slavnog mitološkog junaka, dok je drugi pokušaj ubiciranja Herkulova svetišta u Saloni, odnosno njegovoj okolici. Metodologija koju ćemo primijeniti u prvom slučaju temelji se na komparativnom istraživanju, a u drugom na iščitavanju ranijih izvješća o okolnostima nalaza, kako ovih spomenutih tako i drugih spomenika vezanih za Herkula.

Reljef je dvodimenzionalni artefakt s prikazima ljudskih figura, flore, faune, predmeta, a kadikad i ornamentata, na podlozi koja može biti od različitog materijala, najčešće kamena, gline, drveta, bjelokosti ili različitih metala. U stručnoj literaturi reljefe se ustalilo dijeliti po načinu izrade na plitke i duboke, a imali su široku sepulkralnu i sakralnu primjenu. Tako su se, primjerice, rabili kao medij obilježavanja nekog povijesnog događaja, potom vrlo često u religiozne svrhe kao zavjetni darovi svetištima, mogli su biti smješteni i na nekropoli kao grobni spomenik te funkcionirati kao dekoracije građevinskih objekata i kao ukras najrazličitijih uporabnih predmeta.²

Izradu reljefa poznavale su kulture Bliskog istoka, Egipta i Grčke, pa ne iznenađuje nepregledna lista radova koji su se znanstveno i stručno njima bavili.³ Što se tiče rimskih reljefa, među brojnim radovima ističu se geografski sistematizirana monografska izdanja *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani*, koja velikim brojem objava svjedoče i o količini sačuvanih reljefnih primjeraka diljem nekadašnjeg Carstva.⁴

U hrvatskoj arheološkoj bibliografiji nalazimo više radova posvećenih rimskim reljefima, među kojima su se neki bavili i

Two votive reliefs dedicated to the Roman deity Hercules are held in the Archaeological Museum in Split (AMS).¹ Neither has thus far been subject to scholarly scrutiny, but their existence has been registered in two relevant freely-accessible databases (LIMC and LUPA). This paper has dual objectives. One is to provide an iconographic analysis of the monuments, wherein I have posed the hypothesis on the possibility of the existence of thus far unknown attributes in the iconography of the renowned mythical hero in Croatian territory, while the other is an attempt to pinpoint the location of the sanctuary dedicated to Hercules in Salona or its surroundings. The methodology applied to the former shall be rooted in comparative research, while for the latter it shall entail an assessment of earlier reports on the discovery context of not only these but also other monuments associated with Hercules.

A relief is a two-dimensional artefact featuring portrayals of human figures, plants, animals, objects and sometimes ornaments on a base which may be made of a variety of materials, but most often stone, clay, wood, ivory or various metals. In the scholarly literature, it has become the convention to divide reliefs by their rendering method into shallow and deep, and they had wide-ranging funerary and religious uses. Thus, for example, they were used as media to mark a given historical event, and then quite often for religious purposes as votive offerings to holy places; they could be installed in necropolises as gravestones or function as decorations for architectural structures or as ornaments for the most diverse functional objects.²

The production of reliefs was known in the cultures of the Near East, Egypt and Greece, so the vast list of scholarly and research works dealing them comes as no surprise.³ As to Roman reliefs and the numerous works dedicated to them, an outstanding example consists of the geographically systematized monograph volumes of the *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani*, which with its high number of publications testifies to the quantity of preserved reliefs throughout the former Empire's territory.⁴

1 Zahvaljujem muzejskoj savjetnici dr. sc. Zrinki Buljević što mi je omogućila objavu ovih dvaju zavjetnih reljefa. Rad je napisan u sklopu projekta *Razumijevanje rimskih granica: primjer istočnog Jadrana* (IP-2018-01-4934) koji financira Hrvatska zaklada za znanost.

2 Will 1955; Hausmann 1960; Hölscher 1988, str. 351-400.

3 Börker-Klähn 1982; Brovarski 2002, str. 49-89.

4 Radi se o međunarodnom akademskom poduhvatu započetom prije pedeset i osam godina na slavnom kongresu klasične arheologije (CIAC) održanom 1963. u Rimu. Cilj projekta bilo je dokumentiranje kiparskog nasljeđa Rimskog Carstva, u čemu je postignut izvanredan uspjeh, što pokazuje i gotovo stotinu do sada objavljenih knjiga u kojima je to nasljeđe predstavljeno i obrađeno. Tako je Njemačka objavila devetnaest svezaka kao i Austrija, Velika Britanija osamnaest, Švicarska devet, Španjolska sedam, Italija šest, Poljska pet, Mađarska četiri, Grčka tri, Nizozemska dva, a Češka, Portugal, Turska i Tunis po jedan. Akademik Nenad Cambi je od samog osnutka uključen u Međunarodni znanstveni odbor tog Korpusa. Vidi <https://www.corpusignorum.org/csir/publications>.

1 I would like to thank museum advisor Zrinka Buljević, Ph.D., for enabling the publication of these two votive reliefs. The paper was written as part of the project *Understanding Roman Borders: The Example of the Eastern Adriatic* (IP-2018-01-4934) which is financed by the Croatian Science Foundation.

2 Will 1955; Hausmann 1960; Hölscher 1988, pp. 351-400.

3 Börker-Klähn 1982; Brovarski 2002, pp. 49-89.

4 This is an international academic undertaking initiated fifty-eight years ago at the renowned International Congress of Classical Archaeology (CIAC) held in Rome in 1963. The project's objective is to document the Roman Empire's sculptural heritage, wherein extraordinary success has been achieved, as reflected in the almost one hundred thus far published books in which this heritage is presented and analyzed. Germany and Austria have each produced twenty volumes, Great Britain eighteen, Switzerland nine, Spain seven, Italy six, Poland five, Hungary four, Greece three, the Neth-

zavjetnim reljefima.⁵ Ipak, unatoč nemalom broju nalaza i njihovih objava, korpus antičkih reljefa s teritorija naše zemlje još uvijek je, nažalost, samo desiderat.⁶

Herkul je jedan od najčešće prikazivanih antičkih mitoloških likova.⁷ Iz vremena kad je područje današnje Republike Hrvatske bilo u sastavu Rimskog Carstva sačuvano je više od pedeset spomenika tog vrlo starog kulta, većinom brončanih kipića, žrtvenika, reljefa, sarkofaga, statua i natpisa.⁸ Podatci relevantni za ovaj rad nalaze se i u raspravama o ikonografiji Herkulovih prikaza u kojima su izneseni rezultati istraživanja ikonografskih shema s ukupno trideset i dva do tada poznata spomenika s Herkulovim prikazima iz hrvatskih muzeja.⁹

Prije nego se posvetimo spomenutim dvama splitskim reljefima koji su predmet istraživanja našeg rada, podsjetimo da se u AMS-u čuva još nekoliko artefakata s motivom Herkula, među kojima su i reljefi koji većinom potječu iz Salone i njezine okolice.¹⁰

PRVI ZAVJETNI RELJEF HERKULU "

Kako je zabilježeno u muzejskim arhivskim knjigama, ovaj je reljef pronađen na lokalitetu Sv. Marta u Bijaćima, a 1905. godine Arheološkom muzeju ga je darovalo društvo Bihać. Na spomeniku izrađenom od vapnenca u plitkom je reljefu prikazan antički junak i božanstvo Herkul koji se, naslonjen na toljagu, odmara između dvaju poslova. Reljef je, međutim, na gornjem i donjem rubu oštećen, zbog čega se može učiniti da je nekoć imao zaobljeni, lučni vrh. Njegove sadašnje mjere su: 68,5 cm visine, 44 cm širine i 28 cm debljine.

Slavni je antički junak prikazan frontalno, potpuno nag i u laganom kontrapostu te se može primijetiti da, usprkos vrlo erodiranoj površini reljefa, preko lijevog ramena i lijeve ruke ima prebačenu lavlju kožu. Pesnicom desne ruke obuhvatio je

In the Croatian archaeological bibliography, there are a number of works dedicated to Roman reliefs, among which some also dealt with votive reliefs.⁵ Nevertheless, despite the considerable number of finds and their publication, a *corpus* of reliefs dating to Antiquity from Croatia's territory is still, unfortunately, only a distant aspiration.⁶

Hercules was one of the most frequently portrayed ancient mythological figures.⁷ Over fifty monuments produced by this very old cult date to the time when the territory of today's Republic of Croatia was encompassed by the Roman Empire, most of them bronze statuettes, altars, reliefs, sarcophaguses, statues and inscriptions.⁸ The data relevant to this paper are contained in the discourses on the iconography of Hercules images which present the results of research into iconographic schemes, with a total of thirty-two thus far known monuments from Croatian museums featuring depictions of Hercules.⁹

Before turning to the aforementioned two reliefs which are the research subject of my paper, I would like to recall that the AMS holds several other artefacts bearing a Hercules motif, among them reliefs which largely originated in Salona and the surrounding area.¹⁰

FIRST VOTIVE RELIEF DEDICATED TO HERCULES"

As recorded in the museum's archive logs, this relief was discovered at the Sveta Marta (St. Martha) site in Bijaći, and in 1905 it was donated to the Archaeological Museum by the Bihać Society. The limestone monument contains a shallow relief

5 Potrebica 2008, str. 113-219.

6 Alka Starac pokušala se u sklopu organizacije Međunarodnog kolokvija o rimskoj provincijalnoj umjetnosti, koji je 2000. g. održan u Puli, uključiti u *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani*, ali je njezin napor nažalost ostao bez odjeka. <https://www.corpussignorum.org/csir/publications>.

7 Bonnet, Jourdain-Annequin 1992; Ritter 1995; Oria Segura 1996; Olmos 1998, str. 517-530; Moitroeux, Maligorn, *Éveillard* 2003, str. 574-597; Wurnig 2006.

8 Na prostoru Hrvatske postojala je do danas još neubicirana kolonija (*Pseudo-Skilak 22*) koja je nosila junakovo ime – *Herakleia*. Za zanimljivog natpisa (*CIL V 8139*) iz Pule doznajemo da je upravo Herkul bio zaštitnik grada te da je puno ime grada sadržavalo i njegovo ime: *Colonia Iulia Pola Pollentia Herculeana*. Sanader 1999, str. 13-84.

9 Cambi 1983/1984, str. 28-44; Ritter 1995; Sanader 1999, str. 85-97.

10 Sanader 1999, kat. br. 17-20, 29; Sanader 2008, str. 367-377; Vukov 2018, kat. br. 456.

11 U LIMC-u smatraju da je ovaj reljef bio grobna stela (LIMC Object 7749), s čime se ne možemo složiti.

erlands two, and the Czech Republic, Portugal, Turkey and Tunisia one each. Academician Nenad Cambi has been a member of the International Scholarly Committee of this Corpus since its very establishment. See: <https://www.corpussignorum.org/csir/publications>.

5 Potrebica 2008, pp. 113-219.

6 When organizing the International Colloquium on Roman Provincial Art that was held in Pula in 2000, Alka Starac attempted to involve the *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani*, but her efforts unfortunately did not yield any effect; <https://www.corpussignorum.org/csir/publications>.

7 Bonnet, Jourdain-Annequin 1992; Ritter 1995; Oria Segura 1996; Olmos 1998, pp. 517-530; Moitroeux, Maligorn, *Éveillard* 2003, pp. 574-597; Wurnig 2006.

8 A colony had existed in Croatia's territory that bore the hero's name, Herakleia (*Pseudo-Skilak 22*), but to this day its location has not been ascertained. An intriguing inscription (*CIL V 8139*) from Pula informs us that it was in fact Hercules who was the city's patron and that his name was included in the city's full designation: *Colonia Iulia Pola Pollentia Herculeana*. Sanader 1999, pp. 13-84.

9 Cambi 1983/1984, pp. 28-44; Ritter 1995; Sanader 1999, pp. 85-97.

10 Sanader 1999, cat. no. 17-20, 29; Sanader 2008, pp. 367-377; Vukov 2018, cat. no. 456.

11 In the LIMC this relief is classified as a grave stele (LIMC Object 7749), with which I cannot agree.



Slika 1.
Zavjetni reljef Herkulu, AMS, inv. br. D-314 (snimila M. Sanader)

Figure 1.
Votive relief dedicated to Hercules, AMS, inv. no. D-314 (photograph by M. Sanader)



Slika 2.
Zavjetni reljef Herkulu, AMS,
inv. br. 55133 (snimila M.
Sanader)

Figure 2.
Votive relief dedicated to
Hercules, AMS, inv. no. 55133
(photograph by M. Sanader)

portrayal of the ancient hero and deity Hercules who, leaning on his club, is resting between two of his labours. The relief is, however, damaged at its upper and lower edges, so that it appears likely that it once had a rounded, arched top. Its current dimensions are: 68.5 cm high, 44 cm wide and 28 cm thick.

The famed ancient hero is depicted frontally, entirely nude and in slight *contrapposto*, and one may notice that despite the relief's very eroded surface, he has a lion skin thrown over his left shoulder and arm. His right fist grips the club, which rests on the ground.¹²

SECOND VOTIVE RELIEF DEDICATED TO HERCULES

Due to the controversial records in the museum's archives, we can only speculate as to the discovery site of the second votive relief considered in this paper, but it was somewhere inside the Salonitan ager. It is made of limestone and preserved to a height of 36 cm, a width of 33 cm and a thickness of 7 cm. Although this monument, which resembles an aedicule with a pediment, is missing its lower third, the actual relief portrayal of the resting Hercules has been well preserved. The hero is depicted frontally, nude, with a lion skin covering his left shoulder and left arm, which is slightly raised because he holds several apples in his left hand. His right hand grips a large club that rests on an altar. The strap of a quiver visible behind the hero's right shoulder crosses over his chest. Three and then four letters of his name are respectively carved to the left and right of his head: *HER CULI*.¹³

toljagu naslonjenu na tlo.¹²

DRUGI ZAVJETNI RELJEF HERKULU

Zbog kontroverznih zapisa u muzejskoj arhivi, drugom zavjetnom reljefu koji donosimo u ovom radu možemo tek pretpostaviti mjesto pronalaska, a ono bi bilo negdje unutar salonitanskog agera. Izrađen je od vapnenca, sačuvana visina mu je 36 cm, širina 33 cm, a debljina 7 cm. Iako ovom spomeniku, koji oponaša edikulu sa zabatom, nedostaje donja trećina, sam reljefni prikaz Herkula koji odmara dobro je sačuvan. Junak je prikazan frontalno, nag, s lavljom kožom koja mu prekriva lijevo rame i lijevu ruku koju je lagano podigao jer u njoj drži nekoliko jabuka. Desnom rukom drži veliku toljagu koja je naslonjena na žrtvenik. Preko prsiju mu je kožni remen od tobolca koji viri iza junakova desnog ramena. Lijevo i desno od glave uklesana su po tri odnosno četiri slova imena: *HER CULI*.¹³

¹² LIMC Object 7749; LUPA 24980.

¹³ LIMC Object 7726; LUPA 24988.

¹² LIMC Object 7749; LUPA 24980.

¹³ LIMC Object 7726; LUPA 24988.

O HERKULOVOJ IKONOGRFIJI

U Hrvatskoj je do sada bilo poznato četrnaest reljefa s Herkulovim prikazom, od kojih je na njih dvanaest junak prikazan kako odmara, u manje ili više slobodnim interpretacijama grčkih arhetipova na kojima uvijek stoji u kontrapostu, frontalno, naslonjen na kijaču, uglavnom nag s ležerno prebačenom kožom nemejskoga lava preko ramena ili ruke.¹⁴ O. Palagia navodi da su od 2. st. rimski Herkulovi prikazi eklektični te da se na njima daju raspoznati tipološki uzori koji potječu još iz 5. st. pr. Kr.¹⁵

Na drugim dvama sačuvanim spomenicima Herkul je predstavljen u aktivnom položaju, jednom u borbi protiv nemejskoga lava, što je slučaj na reljefu iz AMS-a, i drugi put na sarkofagu iz Sv. Kaje na kojem se mogu vidjeti njegova tri junačka djela i to iz vrta Hesperida, spašavanje Alkestide i izvlačenje Kerbera iz podzemlja.¹⁶

Na svim tim prikazima Herkulovi atributi su gotovo uvijek koža nemejskoga lava i toljaga, često jabuke Hesperida, a kadikad tobolac, luk i strijele. Na jednom reljefu iz Škripa na otoku Braču junak u ispruženoj ruci drži plitku zdjelicu, dok na žrtveniku iz Pule njegova lika nema, nego su uklesani prikazi toljage, vepra i jednog vrča.¹⁷ Fijalu i enohoju, koje su vidljive na reljefu iz Škripa, odnosno na žrtveniku iz Pule, možemo također razumjeti kao ikonografske znakove što ukazuju na ritualno izlijevanje tekućine odnosno libaciju kao sastavni dio procesa žrtvovanja.¹⁸

Komparativno istraživanje koje smo proveli pokazalo je da se oba zavjetna reljefa iz splitskog Arheološkog muzeja dobro uklapaju u poznatu ikonografsku shemu antičkog juna-

ON THE ICONOGRAPHY OF HERCULES

Thus far, fourteen reliefs with portrayals of Hercules have been known in Croatia, of which twelve showed the hero resting, in more or less free interpretations of Greek archetypes in which he always stands in *contrapposto*, frontally, leaning on a club, generally nude with the hide of the Nemean lion casually thrown over his shoulder or arm.¹⁴ Olga Palagia stated that as of the 2nd century, Roman portrayals of Hercules became eclectic and that typological models from as far back as the 5th century BC may be recognized in them.¹⁵

Hercules is presented in a more active posture on two other preserved monuments: in battle with the Nemean lion on one, which is the case on the relief from the AMS; and engaged in three of his heroic feats, i.e., stealing apples from the Garden of the Hesperides, rescuing Alcestis and bringing Cerberus back from the underworld, on the sarcophagus from the Church of St. Caius.¹⁶

The attributes of Hercules in all of these scenes are the Nemean lion's hide and a club, often the apples of the Hesperides, and occasionally a quiver, bow and arrows. The hero holds a shallow dish in his outstretched hand in a relief from Škrip on the island of Brač, while his figure is absent on an altar from Pula, rather only a club, wild boar and jug have been carved onto it.¹⁷ The phiale and oenochoe, which are visible in the relief from Škrip and the altar from Pula, may also be understood as iconographic symbols indicating the ritual pouring of libations as a component of offering sacrifices.¹⁸

14 Klesari su se dali inspirirati Mironovim, Skopasovim, Praksitelovim i, kako se čini, ponajviše Lizipovim predlošcima. Lizip, koji je djelovao u drugoj polovici 4. st. pr. Kr., prikazao je Herakla kao mišićavog, golog muškarca s bradom koji je upravo obavio jednu od zadaća te sada počiva. Ispod pazuha desne ruke uglavio je toljagu naslonjenu na stijenju koju je, ne bi li mu bilo ugodnije, obavio dijelom kože nemejskoga lava, dakle lava kojeg je savladao u svom prvom od dvanaest zadataka što mu ih je zadao Euristej. Lijevu je ruku lagano savio i naslonio na lijevi gluteus. Ako zavirimo iza kipa koji krase nadnaravna visina, možemo vidjeti da u toj ruci drži jabuke Hesperida. Od svih kasnijih kopija ovog Lizipova kipa, danas je vjerojatno najpoznatiji onaj Glikona Atenskog, mramorni kip nadnaravne veličine, tzv. *Herkul Farnese*, koji se čuva u napuljskom Nacionalnom arheološkom muzeju. Vidi Vermeule 1975, str. 323-332.

15 Autorica je otišla i korak dalje pa brojne Herkulove kipove i kipiče sačuvane diljem Carstva naziva kiparskim *pasticcio*. Palagia 1988, str. 795-796.

16 Sanader 1999, br. kat. 19, 23.

17 Sanader 1999, br. kat. 4, 27; Cambi 2013, str. 5-19; Vukov 2018, kat. br. 37.

18 Ikonografski znakovi koji ukazuju na kultne radnje i neke od epizoda iz junakova života pojavljuju se i na novootkrivenom Herkulovu žrtveniku iz Trogira, koji se čuva u privatnoj zbirci. Vidi Maršić 2007, str. 111-128.

14 Sculptors were inspired by the models of Myron, Scopas, Praxiteles and mostly, it would appear, Lysippos. Lysippos, who was active in the latter half of the 4th century BC, depicted Hercules in larger than natural size as a muscular nude bearded man resting after just completing one of his labours. The club set on a stone is under his right arm, and to make it more comfortable, he wrapped it with part of the hide of the Nemean lion, which he had overcome in the first of his twelve labours assigned to him by Eurystheus. His left arm is slightly bent with his hand at his left buttock. Looking behind this statue, we can see that he holds the apples of the Hesperides in that hand. Out of all subsequent copies of this Lysippos statue, today the best known is probably the so-called *Farnese Hercules* by Glykon of Athens, an enlarged marble statue held in the National Archaeological Museum in Naples. See Vermeule 1975, pp. 323-332.

15 She went a step farther and referred to the numerous statues and statuettes of Hercules preserved throughout the Empire as *pasticcio*. Palagia 1988, pp. 795-796.

16 Sanader 1999, cat. no. 19, 23.

17 Sanader 1999, cat. no. 4, 27; Cambi 2013, pp. 5-19; Vukov 2018, cat. no. 37.

18 Iconographic symbols indicating cult activities and certain episodes from the hero's life also appear on a newly-discovered altar of Hercules from Trogir, which is held in a private collection. See Maršić 2007, pp. 111-128.

ka, onu koja se odnosi na predah i trenutke opuštanja između dvaju poslova.¹⁹

Međutim, da na drugom zavjetnom reljefu (inv. br. 55133) nije donesen i jedan novi, uzbudljivi ikonografski element, njihova bi analiza predstavljala laganu zadaću za istraživačicu odavno poznatu s Herkulovom ornamentikom. Naime, antički se majstor potrudio i isklesao novi, do sada na salonitanjskom području nepoznati, ali drugdje poznati element. Tako naš junak desnom rukom drži predimenzioniranu toljagu koju je naslonio na sam *focus* žrtvenika smještena s njegove desne strane.²⁰ Takvo postavljanje scene prisutno je i na spomenicima iz Carstva s prikazima žrtvenika na kojima bogovi sami žrtvuju, a ti su žrtvenici, kao i na našem reljefu, smješteni uz desnu stranu prikazanih likova.²¹ Podsjetimo ovdje i na poznati žrtvenik liburnske božice Latre koja prinosi žrtvu na tri oltara istovremeno te na reljef Jana na kojem božanstvo upravo vrši libaciju iz patere.²²

Žrtvovanje je liturgijski ritual u kojem se božanstvu iz najrazličitijih pobuda prinose darovi. Njime se ono želi privoljeti da ispuni darovateljevu želju, ali je i izraz njegove duboke zahvalnosti i velike odanosti.²³ Prinošenje žrtve kod Rimljana je, kako je to odavno vrlo precizno formulirala I. Scott Ryberg, kulminacija kulturnih rituala.²⁴

Spomenuti ikonografski detalj koji pokazuje da žrtvu prinosi sam Herkul, štoviše da on žrtvuje toljagu, svoje najučinkovitije pa time i najbitnije oružje, nije prikazan ni na jednom Herkulovom spomeniku poznatom s naših prostora, što je analizu ovog zavjetnog reljefa učinilo naročito izazovnom. K tome, literarni izvori o antičkom žrtvovanju više nisu ultimativna polazna točka u istraživanjima koja se u novije vrijeme, uz analizu ikonografije, sve više fokusiraju na arheološke podatke iz konteksta nalaza, čak i na analizu eventualno sačuvanih kostiju, smatrajući te podatke jednako važnima.²⁵ Osim toga, čini se da je i sama gore spomenuta diferencijacija žrtvovanja po hermeneutičkim tipologijama između molbe, zahvale, obožavanja, grijeha ili apotropijske žrtve zastarjela jer, kako se misli, ritual žrtvovanja prikazuje funkcionalno plošnim odnosno jednodimenzionalnim.²⁶

Usprkos spomenutim raspravama ne može se osporiti da je

The comparative research I have conducted has shown that both votive reliefs from the Archaeological Museum in Split fit quite well into the ancient hero's known iconographic repertoire, those which pertain to rest and moments of relaxation between two labours.¹⁹

However, if the second votive relief (inv. no. 55133) had not contained a new, exciting iconographic element, their analysis would be a simple task for a researcher long familiar with Hercules ornamentation. Namely, the Roman-era master took the effort to carve a new element, thus far unknown in the Salonitan area, albeit familiar elsewhere. Thus, our hero holds an out-sized club in his right hand which leans on the very *focus* of the altar situated to his right side.²⁰ Such a setting of the scene is also present on monuments from the Empire featuring portrayals of altars on which the gods themselves make sacrifices, and these altars, like those on this relief, are situated to the right of the depicted figures.²¹ We should also recall here the well-known altar of the Liburnian goddess Latra, who simultaneously offers a sacrifice on three altars, as well as the relief of Janus in which the deity pours a libation from a patera.²²

Sacrificial offering is a liturgical ritual in which gifts are presented to a deity for the most diverse reasons. It is meant to induce the deity to grant the giver's wish, but it is also an expression of deep gratitude and great fealty.²³ To the Romans, the offering of sacrifices was, as long ago formulated by Inez Scott Ryberg, the culmination of cult rituals.²⁴

The aforementioned iconographic detail which shows a sacrifice being offered by Hercules himself, moreover offering his club, his most effective and thereby most important weapon, has not been depicted on any known monument to Hercules anywhere in Croatian territory, which made analysis of this votive relief exceptionally challenging. Furthermore, in the research conducted in more recent years, literary sources on sacrifices in Antiquity are no longer the be-all and end-all point of departure, so that in addition to analyzing the iconography, increasing focus is being accorded to archaeological data from the discovery context and even analysis of potentially preserved bones, as these data are deemed equally vital.²⁵ Moreover, it would appear that the aforementioned differentiation between sacrificial offerings according to hermeneutic

19 LUPA 5519; 5793; 8899; 9352; 10845; 12363; 16084; 19336; 20437; 21323; 21373; 21374; 21375; 21816; 21822; 24770; 24980; 28589; 28590; 28813; 29798; 30638; 28103; 28494.

20 Napomenimo da se na ovom reljefu ne radi o kamenu koji leži na tlu i na koji je Herkul naslonio toljagu, kako se može vidjeti na nekim spomenicima, npr. LUPA 10845; 21375.

21 Npr. LUPA 4946; 6223; 7101; 8761; 21821; 21825; 22568; 23830; 24301; 24772; 26491; 27266.

22 Sanader 2016, str. 123-146; Sanader, Vukov 2019, str. 382-391.

23 Obbink 1988.

24 Scott Ryberg 1955.

25 De Cazanove, Scheid 2015; Mehl, Brulé 2015.

26 Bendlin 2000, str. 1228-1232.

19 LUPA 5519; 5793; 8899; 9352; 10845; 12363; 16084; 19336; 20437; 21323; 21373; 21374; 21375; 21816; 21822; 24770; 24980; 28589; 28590; 28813; 29798; 30638; 28103; 28494.

20 It should be noted here that on this relief Hercules is not resting his club on a stone on the ground, as may be seen on certain other monuments, e.g. LUPA 10845; 21375.

21 E.g. LUPA 4946; 6223; 7101; 8761; 21821; 21825; 22568; 23830; 24301; 24772; 26491; 27266.

22 Sanader 2016, pp. 123-146; Sanader, Vukov 2019, pp. 382-391.

23 Obbink 1988.

24 Scott Ryberg 1955.

25 De Cazanove, Scheid 2015; Mehl, Brulé 2015.

žrtvovanje bilo važan dio rimske svakodnevice, o čemu mogu svjedočiti ne samo brojni sačuvani žrtvenici, nego i prikazi scena žrtvovanja.²⁷ Iako su prikazi sa scenama dovođenja žrtvenih životinja na oltar poznati, a među njima se svakako ističu slavni reljefi kao što su prikaz suovetaurilija iz Louvrea (MA 1096 = MR 852 = N 111) ili reljef s Trajanova stupa (*scena VIII*), žrtvovanje se ipak najčešće prikazuje kao libacija, izlivanje sadržaja iz posude, u većini slučajeva, na oltar. Na tim prikazima može biti jedno, a kadikad i više božanstava primatelja kojima se ljudi svojom žrtvom obraćaju.²⁸

Među prikazima čina žrtvovanja, kako na grčkim tako i na rimskim artefaktima, u jednom su trenutku veliku pažnju istraživača izazvale scene u kojima bogovi ili božice stoje uz ljude koji im prinose žrtvu. Nadalje, sve veću pozornost pobuđuju i prizori na kojima božanstva sama drže ritualnu posudu u ruci, odnosno oni na kojima se čin žrtvovanja događa bez prisustva ljudi, u božanskom okruženju, što se po prvi put moglo vidjeti u 5. st. pr. Kr. na grčkim vazama.²⁹ Istraživači su pokušali ne samo odgovoriti na pitanje tko su primatelji tih bogovskih darova, nego i odgonetnuti smisao takvih prikaza. Je li primatelj samo božanstvo koje žrtvuje ili pak neko drugo božanstvo? Koja je njihova poruka?³⁰

Već je prvo istraživanje o značenju tih prikaza, ono Furtwänglerovo iz 1913. godine, navijestilo da se radi o složenom i problematičnom pitanju koje je u raspravama što su uslijedile dovelo do iznošenja nekoliko manje-više zanimljivih prijedloga.³¹ Ovdje ćemo vrlo sumarno predstaviti četiri takva prijedloga kojima su autorice i autori pokušali odgovoriti na pitanje zbog čega bogovi sami prinose žrtve.³²

Početak pedesetih godina, točnije 1952., objavljen je doktorski rad B. Eckstein-Wolf koja je u središte svog istraživanja

typologies between a boon, gratitude, reverence, transgression or apotropaic sacrifices is outmoded because, it is thought, the sacrificial offering is functionally depicted as flat or one-dimensional.²⁶

Despite the aforementioned debates, one cannot dispute that the sacrificial offering was a vital component of Roman everyday life, to which not only preserved altars but also portrayals of sacrifice scenes testify.²⁷ Even though the depictions of sacrificial animals being brought to an altar are known, and among them famed reliefs such as the suovetaurilia scene from the Louvre (MA 1096 = MR 852 = N 111) or the relief on Trajan's Column (*scena VIII*) stand out, sacrifices are most often depicted as libation, the pouring of content from a vessel onto, in most cases, an altar. These depictions could feature one and sometimes several receiving deities being addressed by people with their sacrifices.²⁸

Among the depictions of the sacrificial act, both on Greek and Roman artefacts, scenes on which the gods or goddesses stand alongside the people offering sacrifices to them garnered great attention from researchers at one point. Furthermore, increasing attention is also being drawn by scenes in which a deity holds the ritual vessel in his/her hand, i.e., on which the sacrificial act occurs without the presence of people, in a divine setting, which could first be seen on Greek vases in the 5th century BC.²⁹ Researchers have attempted to not only answer the question as to who the receivers of such godly gifts are, but also unravel the meaning of such depictions. Is the receiver the very deity offering the sacrifice, or some other deity? What message was being conveyed?³⁰

The first research into the meaning of these depictions, that done by Furtwängler in 1913, already indicated that this is a complex and problematic question which in the discourse that followed led to the proposal of several more or less intri-

27 Tako je samo s područja Hrvatske sačuvano gotovo tisuću rimskih žrtvenika. Vidi Cvetko 2022. Na Trajanovu stupu žrtvovanje je prikazano čak devet puta. Vidi Pogorzelski 2012.

28 O tome kako su njihovi bogovi gledali na žrtve koje su im se prinosile, antički izvori, logično, šute. Jedino što možemo doznati je što su darovatelji mislili o tome što bogovi drže o njihovim žrtvama. Prema Pindaru (4. *Pythia* 189-200) se čini da su ih odobravalu budući da je naveo kako bogovi odobravaju Jasonovu libaciju, što su pokazali tako što su neposredno nakon prinošenja žrtve proizveli grmljavinu. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0162%3Abook%3DP.%3Apoem%3D4>.

29 Veyne 1990, str. 17-28.

30 Možemo li odgovor na ovo posljednje pitanje pronaći kod Hesioda (*Theog.* 781-804), gdje čitamo opis jedne prisege među bogovima? Oni su, naime, prisegu potvrdili libacijom vodom iz rijeke Stiksa. Slijedom tog Hesiodova opisa može se činiti da su Grci smatrali kako su bogovi libacijom potvrdili i istaknuli određena pravila koja su vladala među njima, npr. važnost prisege. <https://chs.harvard.edu/primary-source/hesiod-theogony-sb/>.

31 Furtwängler 1913, str. 93. Furtwängler je ovakve prikaze nazvao *vermenschlichung der Götter*.

32 U literaturi su se već analizirali neki od ovih prijedloga, npr. Keel, Uehlinger 1998.

26 Bendlin 2000, pp. 1228-1232.

27 Thus, almost a thousand Roman altars have been preserved in Croatia's territory alone. See Cvetko 2022. Sacrifices are depicted as many as nine times on Trajan's Column. See Pogorzelski 2012.

28 Classical sources are, logically, silent on the matter of how their gods viewed the sacrifices offered to them. The only thing that we may learn is what the givers thought about how the gods perceived their sacrifices. According to Pindar (4. *Pythia* 189-200) they apparently approved, since he stated that the gods approved of Jason's libation, which they demonstrated directly after the offering with a peal of thunder. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0162%3Abook%3DP.%3Apoem%3D4>.

29 Veyne 1990, pp. 17-28.

30 Can we find the answer this last question in Hesiod (*Theog.* 781-804), where we can read the description of an oath among the gods? They confirmed the oath with a libation of water from the river Styx. Based on Hesiod's description, it would appear that the Greeks believed that the gods used libations to ratify and underscore certain rules that governed them, e.g., the importance of oaths. <https://chs.harvard.edu/primary-source/hesiod-theogony-sb/>.

postavila najranije prikaze antičkih bogova koji žrtvuju, a za koje je smatrala da bi mogli predstavljati poseban ikonografski tip, te ih je nazvala *spendetyp*.³³ Usto je smatrala kako oni predstavljaju božansko odobravanje žrtvovanja. E. Simon složila se da se u slučaju prikaza na kojima bogovi i božice u rukama drže posude za izlivanje radi o znaku božanskog odobravanja žrtve koju dobivaju.³⁴ Drugi je prijedlog onaj Himmelmannov koji je smatrao da ritualna posuda u rukama bogova nije ništa drugo doli simbol njihove božanske prirode.³⁵ A. F. Laurens smatra da prikaz fiale koju bog drži ne znači da on samom sebi ili jednom od bogova, ako ih je na slici više, vrši čin libacije, nego da je ta scena simbolička gesta koja upućuje na uspješnu komunikaciju u savezu između ljudi i bogova.³⁶ Četvrta je teza ona P. Veynea koji se u svom zapaženom radu najprije nemilosrdno obračunava sa svim dotadašnjim prijedlozima, da bi na kraju vrlo samouvjeren pokušao riješiti, kako on kaže, misterij: autor u libacijskoj posudi u rukama božanstva vidi ikonografski atribut koji naglašava osobitost i uzvišenost božanstva koje tu posudu drži.³⁷ Međutim, držimo da ni jedan od ovih prijedloga nije ponudio zadovoljavajući odgovor na pitanje: što su značile slike božanstava pri činu libacije, jer svi redom, na ovaj ili onaj način, samo ponavljaju da se tako ističe njihova božanska priroda.

Nadalje, istraživači su pri donošenju svojih prijedloga ispuštali iz vida one scene na prikazima gdje su bogovi predstavljani kako žrtvuju neki od svojih atributa, kao što to primjerice radi Herkul na splitskom zavjetnom reljefu postavivši na oltar svoju toljagu.³⁸ Kako bismo osnažili mogućnost da se u takvim prikazima doista radi o žrtvovanju, dali smo se u potragu za analogijama s prikazima bogova pri žrtvovanju nekih od svojih atributa.³⁹ Nismo je doduše našli u Herkulovoj mitologiji, ali jesmo u Merkurovoj, Apolonovoj pa i u Ateninoj. Ovdje ćemo spomenuti dva reljefa s prikazom Merkura koji na oltaru žrtvuje svoj važni atribut *marsupium*, vrećicu s novcem, pa jedan reljef Apolona koji žrtvuje stručak te jednu crvenofigural-

guing hypotheses.³¹ Here I shall rather summarily present four such hypotheses wherein the scholars in question attempted to answer the question as to why the gods themselves would offer sacrifices.³²

At the beginning of the 1950s, specifically in 1952, Brigitte Eckstein-Wolf's doctoral dissertation was published. Her research focused on the earliest portrayals of the Classical gods offering sacrifices, as she believed that they may have represented a separate iconographic type, which she called the *spendetyp*.³³ She additionally believed that they represented divine approval of sacrificial offerings. Erika Simon agreed that depictions of gods and goddesses holding libation vessels in their hands were meant to signify divine approval of the offerings they were receiving.³⁴ The other hypothesis was put forth by Nikolaus Himmelmann, who believed that the ritual vessels in the hands of gods were nothing more than symbols of their divine nature.³⁵ A. F. Laurens believed that the depiction of the phiale held by the god does not mean that he is pouring a libation to himself or some other god – if there are more in the image – but rather that the scene is a symbolic gesture pointing to successful communication in the bond between people and gods.³⁶ The fourth hypothesis was suggested by Paul Veyne, who in his notable work first rather harshly took issue with all previous hypotheses, only to rather audaciously attempt to resolve the mystery, as he called it: he saw the libation vessel in the hands of the deity as an iconographic attribute that underscores the uniqueness and transcendence of that deity.³⁷ However, I believe that none of these hypotheses offers a satisfying answer to the question of what these images of deities pouring libations mean, because all, in one way or another, simply repeat that it is a way to emphasize their divine nature.

Furthermore, when formulating their hypotheses, these researchers overlooked those depictions in which the gods are shown offering some of their own attributes as sacrifices, such as, for example, Hercules placing his club on the altar on the votive relief from Split.³⁸ In order to verify the possibility that

33 Eckstein-Wolf 1952, str. 39-75.

34 Simon 2016², str. 137. Erika Simon je 2016. objavila dopunjeno izdanje disertacije, no nije značajno izmijenila ovu tezu koju je iznijela 1953. godine.

35 Himmelmann-Wildschütz 1959, str. 24-31.

36 Laurens 1985, str. 35-59.

37 *Si l'on croit à une analogie entre les langues naturelles et ceq u'on appelle la langue des images, on dira que la phiale ou patère aux mains des dieux, devenue purement sémiotique, équivaut à un adjectif qualificatif ou plutôt à une épithète de nature: sacré, saint.* Veyne 1990, str. 28.

38 Eckstein-Wolf 1952, bilj. 6: poznaje amforu iz Louvrea (G60) sa scenom u kojoj je Atena prikazana kako na oltar polaže cvijet, no smatra da se nužno ne radi o žrtvovanju.

39 Istražili smo LIMC online, LUPA.at, kao i kolekcije muzeja koji na mrežnim stranicama imaju otvoren pristup zbirkama (Louvre, British Museum, Metropolitan Museum u New Yorku, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Antikensammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, itd.).

31 Furtwängler 1913, p. 93. Furtwängler called such depictions *vermenslichung der Götter*.

32 Some of these hypotheses have been analyzed in the scholarly literature, e.g. Keel, Uehlinger 1998.

33 Eckstein-Wolf 1952, pp. 39-75.

34 Simon 2016², p. 137. In 2016, Simon published a supplemented edition of her dissertation, but she did not significantly alter the theory that she had postulated in 1953.

35 Himmelmann-Wildschütz 1959, pp. 24-31.

36 Laurens 1985, pp. 35-59.

37 *“Si l'on croit à une analogie entre les langues naturelles et ceq u'on appelle la langue des images, on dira que la phiale ou patère aux mains des dieux, devenue purement sémiotique, équivaut à un adjectif qualificatif ou plutôt à une épithète de nature: sacré, saint.”* Veyne 1990, p. 28.

38 Eckstein-Wolf 1952, note 6, was aware of the amphora from the

nu amforu s Atenom koja žrtvuje svoj cvijet.⁴⁰ Na reljefu koji prikazuje Apolona, Minervu i Merkura, Apolon je na oltar položio svoju kitaru.⁴¹

Podsjetimo i na činjenicu da prikazivanje bogova koji nešto žrtvuju sami sebi nije specifičnost rimske religije nego i grčke, gdje se takvi prikazi pojavljuju već u 5. st. pr. Kr. Njih nema previše, ali su prisutni tijekom gotovo cijelog tisućljeća, zbog čega se čini da bi božanska prisutnost kod oltara, kao i sudjelovanje bogova u žrtvovanju, u religijskoj svijesti antičkog čovjeka mogli biti nešto sasvim uobičajeno, oduvijek jasno i blisko. Kako osim spomenutih prikaza u antičkim vrelima nismo pronašli ništa zapisano, zasad ćemo se morati pomiriti s činjenicom da o božanskom liturgijskom darivanju samih sebe, i nakon našeg istraživanja, ne znamo mnogo više. Stoga naš prijedlog shvaćamo samo kao prilog ovoj raspravi i poticaj za razmišljanje.

O HERKULOVOM SVETIŠTU

Važnu skupinu žrtvenih darova čine zavjetni reljefi koje su određenim božanstvima posvećivali pojedinci, obitelji, različita društvena ili profesionalna udruženja kao i donatori, uglavnom graditelji svetišta ili obnovitelji pojedinih njihovih dijelova. U tu skupinu pripadaju i dva reljefa iz AMS-a koja smo u ovom radu analizirali.

Nalaz nekog zavjetnog reljefa izravni je dokaz ne samo postojanja određenog kulta, nego i pojedinog tipa svetišta jer je mjesto pohrane zavjetnih reljefa bilo upravo svetište onog božanstva kojemu je reljef bio posvećen.⁴² Proučavanje zavjetnih reljefa i žrtvenika, zajedno sa studiranjem arhitekture hramova i drugih svetišta, dalo je važan doprinos dosadašnjem znanju o antičkoj kulturnoj praksi. Osim toga, spomenuti su reljefi, kako nisu bili osmišljeni kao pokretni zavjetni reljefi nego za trajno postavljanje na određenim mjestima u svetištu, sudjelovali u oblikovanju i izgledu samog svetišta. Ukoliko im je izvorno mjesto postavljanja bilo poznato, ti su reljefi mogli biti korisni i u rekonstrukciji kulturnog objekta.

U Arheološkom muzeju u Splitu čuva se još nekoliko artefakata s motivom Herkula. Međutim, iščitavanjem relevantne literature suočili smo se s činjenicom da u najvećem broju slučajeva o svetištu u kojem se nekoć nalazio određeni spomenik, pa tako i zavjetni reljefi, nije moguće išta saznati. Razlog tome leži u potpunom nepoznavanju konteksta nalaza, što je nerijetka pojava u slučaju otkupljenih spomenika, te u vrlo općenitom navođenju izvornog mjesta spomenika, najčešće samo imena lokaliteta nađenog predmeta, što je slučaj ne samo kod

these are actually depictions of sacrificial offerings, I searched for analogies with depictions of gods offering some of their attributes.³⁹ I did not, to be sure, find it in the mythology of Hercules, but did in that of Mercury, Apollo and even Athena. Here I shall note two reliefs with depictions of Mercury offering his vital attribute, the *marsupium*, a satchel containing money, on an altar, and one relief of Apollo offering a bouquet and Red-figure amphora together with Athena, who offers her flower.⁴⁰ On a relief showing Apollo, Minerva and Mercury, Apollo is placing his kithara on an altar.⁴¹

I also recall the fact that depictions of gods offering something to themselves were not specific to Roman religion, as they had already appeared in Greek religion in the 5th century BC. There are not many of these, but they were present over the course of an entire millennium, which is why it would appear that a deity's presence at an altar, as well as the participation of gods in sacrificial offerings, may have been something entirely ordinary, always clear and familiar, in the religious consciousness of people in Antiquity. Since I have found nothing written in Classical sources aside from the aforementioned depictions, for now we shall have to reconcile with the fact that even after additional research we do not know much more about the liturgical offerings made by deities to themselves. Thus, my own hypothesis should be seen as merely a contribution to this debate and an impetus for further consideration.

ON THE SANCTUARY OF HERCULES

A major group of sacrificial offerings consists of votive reliefs dedicated to specific deities by individuals, families, various associations or trade guilds, as well as donors, generally the builders of places of worship or restorers of parts thereof. The two reliefs from the AMS analyzed in this paper belong to that group.

The find of a votive relief is direct evidence not only of the existence of a cult, but also of an individual type of sanctuary, because votive reliefs were in fact held in sanctuaries or shrines of that god to whom the relief is dedicated.⁴² The study of votive reliefs and altars, alongside the study of architectu-

Louvre (G60) bearing the scene in which Athena is shown placing a flower on an altar, but she did not think that this was necessarily a case of an offering.

39 I consulted the LIMC online, LUPA.at, as well as museum collections which have open online access to their collections (Louvre, British Museum, Metropolitan Museum in New York, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Antikensammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, etc.).

40 LIMC ID: 42435; LUPA 21825; LUPA 21821, for the item in Apollo's hand, see ThesCRA 2004, 398.

41 LUPA 6223.

42 Will 1955; Sanader, Cvetko 2021.

40 LIMC ID: 42435; LUPA 21825; LUPA 21821, za predmet u Apolonovoj ruci vidi ThesCRA 2004, 398.

41 LUPA 6223.

42 Will 1955; Sanader, Cvetko 2021.

otkupljenih artefakata nego i u starijim objavama arheoloških istraživanja. Sukladno tome, ovo naše istraživanje, kao i mnoga ranija, ali i ona koja će tek uslijediti, ne mogu dati potpunu sliku određenog kulta, već samo selektivno osvjetliti tematski, regionalni, ikonografski ili neki drugi aspekt analiziranog spomenika. Izostanak informacije o kontekstu nalaza velike većine zavjetnih reljefa, pa tako i dvaju zavjetnih reljefa posvećenih Herkulu iz AMS-a što smo ih predstavili u ovom radu, razlog je zbog kojeg istraživanje na relaciji *zavjetni dar – kult – svetište* ne može rezultirati cjelovitom slikom.

Na samom bismo koncu, inspirirani radom na ovom članku, predložili da slavni zavjetni reljef iz Opačića, artefakt o kojem u ovom tekstu nije bilo riječi, pogledamo iz druge perspektive, to jest da konačno napustimo narativ o posebnosti epihorskog kulta tajanstvenog domaćeg božanstva koje je doživjelo *interpretatio romana* u Dijani i usporedimo taj reljef s prikazom žrtvovanja Dijani na reljefnom medaljonu s Konstantinova slavoluka.⁴³ Zar je moguće da sva tajna reljefa iz Opačića leži samo u dljetu majstora i njegovoj skromnoj klesarskoj vještini?

re in temples and other holy places, has greatly contributed to knowledge on cult practices in Antiquity. Moreover, the aforementioned reliefs, since they were not conceived as movable votive reliefs but rather as those to be permanently installed in specific places in the sanctuary, contributed to that sanctuary's design and appearance. Insofar as the original location of their placement is known, such reliefs can also be useful in the reconstruction of a given cult structure.

Several other artefacts with a Hercules motif are held in the Archaeological Museum in Split. However, based on a thorough reading of the relevant sources, I have had to confront the fact that in most cases, nothing at all can be learned about the sanctuary in which a specific monument, including any votive relief, was once situated. The reason for this lies in the complete lack of knowledge about the discovery context, which is a not uncommon phenomenon in the case of purchased monuments, and in the rather vague designation of the monument's original location (most often simply the name of the site of the discovered item), which was the case not only for purchased artefacts but also in older publications of archaeological excavations. Consequently, this research on my part, like many earlier instances as well as future research, cannot provide a full picture of a given cult, but rather selectively shed light on some thematic, regional, iconographic or other aspect of the analyzed monument. The absence of information on the find context of the vast majority of votive reliefs, including the two votive reliefs dedicated to Hercules from the AMS and presented in this paper, is the reason why research into the *votive offering–cult–sanctuary* sequence cannot result in a complete picture.

At the end, inspired by work on this paper, I would suggest that the votive relief from Opačići, an artefact not covered in this text, should be considered from a different perspective, that is, we should finally abandon the narrative on the specific nature of the epichoric cult of a mysterious local deity which underwent an *interpretatio romana* into Diana and compare that relief to the depiction of offerings to Diana in the relief medallion on the Arch of Constantine.⁴³ Is it possible that the entire mystery of the relief from Opačići lies solely in the chisel of the craftsman and his modest skill?

43 Koeppel 1986, str. 1-90; Rendić-Miočević 1989, str. 545-558.

43 Koeppel 1986, pp. 1-90; Rendić-Miočević 1989, pp. 545-558.

Kratice / Abbreviations

- LIMC Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae,
<https://weblimc.org/page/home/Basel>.
- LUPA Ubi Erat Lupa. Bilddatenbank zu antiken
Steindenkmälern, <http://lupa.at>.
- ThesCRA Thesaurus Cultus Et Rituum Antiquorum

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