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Zeus and Hera Souideptēnoi: The sanctuary at Belava mountain near Tures/Pirot

Nadezda Gavrilovic-Vitas, Dan Dana

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ZEUS AND HERA *SOUIDEPTĒNOI*: THE SANCTUARY AT BELAVA MOUNTAIN NEAR TURRES/PIROT

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Abstract. – In the border zone between the Roman provinces of Upper Moesia and Thrace a sanctuary dedicated to Zeus and Hera, defined by the toponymic epithet *Souideptēnoi*, was discovered on the Belava mountain, near Turre (today's Pirot). The sanctuary presumably encompassed a *temenos*, an altar and two smaller temples, oriented east-west, with the entrance on the eastern side. Unfortunately, illegal excavations were conducted on the area of the sanctuary by thieves, who stole the small reliefs offered to the deities venerated in the sanctuary, of which the authors of this paper could obtain the data of 31 fragmented votive plates, most of them inscribed. A variety of iconographic schemas, especially the standing divine couple or Zeus and Hera in quadriga, as well as the combination of three onomastics stocks (Thracian, Greek and Latin) illustrate the diversity of traditions and the cultural interferences at work during imperial times. It can be presumed that the sanctuary dedicated to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi* existed from the 2nd to the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 4th century.

Key words. – Greek epigraphy, Hera, iconography, onomastics, Pirot (Turre), sanctuary, Souidepta, Thrace, votive icons, Zeus

INTRODUCTION: DISPERSED EVIDENCE

The topic of sanctuaries in Moesia Superior has not yet been researched and published in the frame of a synthesis,¹ which would show the abundance and disparity of different sanctuaries and temple buildings (*templum*, *aedes*, *sacellum*, *fanum*, *delubra*, *spelaeum* and *sacrarium*) that existed during the period of imperial times. Therefore, rarely does the opportunity to research material from a sanctuary arise and even if it does, the architectural and archaeological material are usually quite scarce for enabling the researchers to deduce important conclusions related to the life of the sanctuary, ritual practices performed in it, dedicators, and their beliefs.²

One of these rare opportunities arose thanks to a *dossier* of more than 30 complete or fragmented votive icons mainly dedicated to Zeus and Hera with the toponymic epithet *Souideptēnoi*, yielded from the regional

sanctuary of imperial times of the supreme divine couple at the site of Markova štrapka on the Belava mountain. Unfortunately, all of them were discovered not during systematic archaeological research – which has never been conducted on the locality –, but in illegal excavations by treasure hunters who were looking for the

¹ The manuscript about the sanctuaries in the Roman Central Balkans is currently in preparation by one of the authors of this paper, Nadežda Gavrilović Vitas, and should be published in 2023.

² Not so frequent examples can be found in the sanctuary of Apollo in Paraćin, where ten votive plates depicting Apollo and the Thracian Rider were discovered (Гавриловић Витас 2021); more than dozen cult objects dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras have been found in the *sacrarium* of a *Dolicheneum* in Egeta/Brza Palanka (Gavrilović Vitas 2020); votive plates dedicated to Mithras or depicting the Thracian Rider were yielded in the *Mithraeum* in Singidunum (Бојовић 1977–1978).

³ On this phenomenon, see other dedications from the Thracian space with unknown origin published by D. Dana, M. Dana 2016.



Map 1 – Region of Pirot (D. Dana)

Карта 1 – Област Пирота (Д. Дана)

treasures of the sanctuary, before 2005.³ Thus, the destiny of so-far known discovered votive plates was not to enter into the antiquity collections of some Serbian museums (with the exception of four pieces now in the Museum of Ponišavlje in Pirot), but to be sold to private collectors in Europe and elsewhere overseas.⁴

The Belava sanctuary, located near Turre (today's Pirot, Serbia), in the territory of Serdica, was placed in Western Thrace, very close to the passage to the province of Upper Moesia (map 1). Nine dedications (eight in Greek, one in Latin) present on Internet auctions were published more than a decade ago by one of the authors of this paper, who suspected, on the grounds of the iconography and onomastics, a provenance from Bulgaria (because of the major traffic of antiquities affecting this country) and more likely from Western Thrace,⁵ which turned out to be true. At the same time, and independently, a set of 14 inscribed and un-inscribed monuments from the same sanctuary was published by Aleksandar Jovanović (using only the photos), with their precise provenance: Markova štrap-

ka on Belava mountain, near Pirot.⁶ Recently, Predrag Pejić published four other pieces, purchased by the museum of Ponišavlje from Pirot, and described (with-

⁴ Only four of the so-far known votive plates from the sanctuary of Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi* from Markova štrapka on Belava mountain were redeemed by the Museum of Ponišavlje in Pirot in 2004. We deeply thank our colleagues Predrag Pejić and Milica Ilić for this information.

⁵ Dana 2009, 189–195 (*SEG* LIX 760–767; cf. A. Avram, *BÉ*, 2009, 338; A. Chaniotis, *EBGR* 2009, 47 [*Kernos*, 25, 2012, 201]), using the illustrations generously provided by *Gorny und Mosch* (Munich) and Randall Hixenbaugh (*Hixenbaugh Ancient Art*, New York).

⁶ Јовановић 2008 (*АЕ*, 2017, 1266 *octies* 2 a, b, c and d, with the corrected readings and commentaries of Nikolaj Šarankov); five photos of reliefs also in Пејић 2015, Pl. CXXXIa.5–9. Some of these pieces arrived, through the traffic of antiquities, in Germany and in the USA, being published independently by Dana 2009; the relief no. 11 of Јовановић 2008 was known through a photo (offered by Predrag Pejić), whilst the reliefs nos. 12–14 of Јовановић 2008 (through photos) were given to him for publication by Milorad Stojić.

out illustration) another three inscribed pieces.⁷ We had the opportunity to use photos of the same four pieces, adding for this paper four anepigraphic pieces that belonged very likely to the same lot (sold on the antiquities market) and, in two appendices, other pieces depicting Zeus and Hera, also from Western Thrace. We can now present 31 pieces, complete or fragmentary, unearthed in the Belava sanctuary, most of them inscribed (at least 25). This variegated *dossier* allows us to make certain assumptions about the destiny of the sanctuary, the gods revered inside, and its dedicators, for the existence of this cult centre from the 2nd until the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 4th century.⁸

It is useful to note other recent discoveries from regional sanctuaries, especially in the western part of Thrace, combining groups of inscriptions and, when the evidence is larger, toponymic epithets: for instance, the sanctuary of Zeus and Hera from Kozi Gramadi (near Philippopolis), with a typical iconography;⁹ the sanctuary of Ἡρώς Σπαρτοκος from Strjama (dept. of Plovdiv);¹⁰ the sanctuary of Hera from Novi Han, in the territory of Serdica;¹¹ the toponymic epithet Αρβιστηνός at Ribnovo (dept. of Blagoevgrad), in the territory of Nicopolis ad Nestum;¹² other sanctuaries in the region of Pernik, for instance that of Ἡρώς Σουτουληνός on the top Ogoja, near Červena mogila.¹³

THE SITE: BELAVA MOUNTAIN AND MARKOVA ŠTRAPKA

Markova štrapka, “Marko’s foot-mark”¹⁴, is an interesting micro-toponym on the top of the Belava mountain, situated between the village of Veliki Suvodol and Pirot (to which territory Markova štrapka belongs). The site is surrounded by the Pirot valley, with Vlaška Planina to the south and Stara Planina to the north, above the Nišava river. The area where Markova štrapka lies is the westernmost part of the province of Thrace, on the border with Upper Moesia, which, by so-far known archaeological and historical knowledge, lay between the centres of Turres/Pirot and Remesiana/Bela Palanka. The modern town of Pirot, antique Turres, was an important *mansio* where several antique settlements existed, as evidenced by epigraphic and archaeological monuments and buildings (see below).

Thus, it is not unusual to presume the existence of several local larger and smaller sanctuaries and shrines in the mentioned area. Probably in the 2nd century a

prominent sanctuary dedicated to the supreme divine couple Zeus and Hera with the toponymic epithet *Souideptēnoi* was built on the site of Markova štrapka, on the top of the south-eastern part of the Belava mountain.¹⁵ Unfortunately, due to illegal excavations, no traces of a pre-Roman sanctuary that could have existed on the site were confirmed, contrary to other similar localities with Zeus and Hera sanctuaries, where Iron Age cult activities have been attested or inferred during archaeological excavations.¹⁶ Although no systematic archaeological excavations have been conducted on the area of the sanctuary, Predrag Pejić visited the site several times and concluded that the sanctuary consisted of a *temenos*, an altar and two temples, with a size of 22 x 12 m.¹⁷ The *temenos* was oriented east-west and is documented as being broken medium-sized and larger blocks of limestone joined with mortar. While remains of all three walls of the *temenos* were confirmed, only the northern wall is missing; P. Pejić supposes a devastation event either during the building of a near-by early Byzantine fort, or by looters, whilst including the fact that the north-western angle of the sanctuary was actually a wall of one of two temples. Both temples were situated in the western part of the *temenos* and each had two rooms, with the entrance on the east side. Judging by the finds of bricks and *imbrices*, both buildings had roofs. Inside the *temenos*, a cultural stratum approx. 0.5 m thick has traces of burning, fragments of stone, mortar, animal bones and,

⁷ Pejić 2022.

⁸ Important data was also obtained from the paper of colleague Predrag Pejić and his descriptions of the architectural remains of the sanctuary in Markova štrapka (Pejić 2022).

⁹ Hristov 2014 (standing divine couple, but also Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga).

¹⁰ Sharankov, Chernenova-Tilkiyan 2005; Sharankov 2007, 438–440 (only one inscription is signalled in *SEG* LVIII 709 = *AE*, 2008, 1220).

¹¹ Пенчева 2014.

¹² Паскова, Вълчев 2006.

¹³ Любенова 2008.

¹⁴ Geological phenomena and ruins associated with the legendary image of Prince Marko (Marko Kraljević), see Srejić 1958.

¹⁵ Pejić 2015, 383–384 (Pl. CXXXIab); Pejić 2022.

¹⁶ Like the sanctuary in Kozi Gramadi (near Philippopolis), where the religious activities are apparently documented as early as the 8th c. BC (Hristov 2014, 12); E. Penčeva supposes that the sanctuary dedicated to Hera (and possibly Zeus) near the village of Novi Han (near Serdica) could have existed in the pre-Roman period (Пенчева 2014, 107).

¹⁷ Pejić 2015, 383; Pejić 2022, 18, 30, pl. 1.

rarely, of ceramic vessels. A small basin for water, of a trapezoid shape (1.5 x 0.9/0.3 x 0.5 m), is situated some 60 m south-east of the sanctuary, which could have been in use during ritual practices, that is for the ritual of libation made by worshippers visiting the sanctuary.

Some 250 m west of the sanctuary, at the top of the site, an area approx. 20 x 20 m is noticeable, presumably a small tower (*burgus*), built of wood.¹⁸ The geographical position would favour such a presumption, because the site of Markova štrpka is above the road and a small fortified position or watch-tower would be expected in such a location, to control the communication in question.

THE MONUMENTS: ICONOGRAPHY AND TEXTS

The dispersion of monuments from the Belava sanctuary in the commerce of antiquities (Germany and the USA, and maybe other countries), which has occurred in the last decades, especially the Balkan regions, made impossible their study, with the exception of the four pieces entered in the collection of the museum of Ponišavlje in Pirot.

Among the votive icons recovered from the sanctuary on Belava mountain, most of them are of good execution, although few are complete, generally being broken into several pieces. The majority of the reliefs honour the divine couple Zeus and Hera (various types, see below), or just one of them. When the inscriptions are preserved or not defaced, we can see that Zeus and Hera are, in fact, epichoric deities, recognised by a toponymic epithet. With the exception of a sole Latin dedication, all others are in Greek, as Turres belonged to a Hellenophone province (Thrace). The chronology of the reliefs is indicated, when possible, by combining stylistic, palaeographic and onomastic criteria (peregrine names or imperial *gentilicia*).

The monuments are arranged in this paper according to different iconographic schemas, well-attested in Thrace:¹⁹

– (I) type *LIMC* IV 2, 720–721 B.1: standing Zeus and Hera, each of them holding a sceptre in the left hand, and a phiale in the right hand, Zeus sacrificing above an altar, and Hera holding the phiale above an eagle (1–15).

– (II) Zeus and Hera (?) enthroned (16), which remains an ambiguous identification, as the piece is broken.

– (III) type *LIMC* IV 2, 721 B.2: Zeus brandishing a thunderbolt or a sceptre in the right hand and Hera driving in a quadriga pulled by horses galloping to the right; an eagle with outstretched wings stands in the centre of the scene; under the horses, a serpent crawls to the right, towards an altar or a tree (17–28).

– (IV) Zeus sacrificing alone, holding a sceptre in the left hand and a phiale in the right hand, above an altar (29).

– (V) type *LIMC* IV 2, 720 A.1: Hera sacrificing alone, holding a sceptre in the left hand, and in the right hand a phiale, above an altar (30).

– (VI) the motif of the so-called “Thracian Rider” (31).

(I) Votive icons with the schema of Zeus and Hera sacrificing.

1. Fragmentary dedication to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi*

Two adjoining fragments of a trapezoid shaped plate of white marble (ca. 17 x 24 cm; the lower part is missing), depicting Zeus and Hera standing (type *LIMC* IV 2, 437 no. 11, 440 no. 22). On the left side of the icon, Hera is standing dressed in a long chiton, with a veil on her head. The facial traits are only indicated and the goddess is holding a sceptre in her raised left hand, while in her right hand she holds a phiale over an altar on her right side. In front of the altar, an eagle is standing with outstretched wings. On the right of the eagle, Zeus is depicted as a mature bearded man, with a naked muscular torso. His hair is wavy and falling on his shoulders, while his facial traits are as in Hera’s image, only indicated. A mantle over his left shoulder is tied around his waist and falls down his legs. Zeus is holding a sceptre in his left hand, and a phiale in his right hand. An inscription is slightly incised, above the relief (ht. of letters: 1 cm), and certainly below it; on the second fragment, the line is almost completely erased. Lunate *epsilon* and *sigma*. Private collection, thereafter *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3129); Dana 2009, 192–193, no. 6, photo (*SEG* LIX 764). II–III AD (according to the stylistic characteristics of this quite mediocre work of a local artisan, maybe in the 3rd century).

¹⁸ Пејић 2015, 384–385.

¹⁹ For the iconographic types and dedications to the couple Zeus-Hera in Thrace (a considerable *dossier*), see Младенова 1966; Стојанов 1988 (Hera in Thrace); Velkov, Gerassimova-Tomova 1989, 1345–1349 (Zeus and Hera in Thrace and Lower Moesia).



After: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* 3129
Према: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* 3129

Διὶ καὶ Ἥρα Σου[ι]δε[π]τηνοῖς]
relief
[-----].

The name of the dedicator is not preserved.

2. Dedication of Silbanos son of Apollonios

A rectangular relief broken into smaller fragments (dimensions not recorded), depicting Zeus and Hera in the moment of sacrifice. Both deities are standing, with sceptres in their left hand. Zeus is holding a phiale in his right hand, above the altar, while Hera is presented in the same way, only holding her phiale above an eagle depicted with outstretched wings, as in the previous votive plate (1). Inscription above and below the relief (ht. of letters not recorded). Ligatures: HPA (l. 1), ΠΤ (l. 1), ΗΝ (l. 1, 2). This piece, not bought by the Museum of Ponišavlje, was described by P. Pejić (without illustration) and vanished thereafter in the commerce of antiquities. Cf. Pejić 2022, 12, no. 1. II AD.

Διὶ [καὶ] Ἥρα Σουιδεπτηνο[ῖς]
relief
Σιλβανὸς Ἀπολλ[ωνί]ου εὐχήν.

1 Σουιδεπτήνω Pejić || 2 Ἀπολλ[ωνίδ]ου Pej.

The dedicator, of peregrine status, has a common Latin name (*Silvanus*) and a Greek patronymic (another Ἀπολλώνιος occurs in 10).

3. Fragmentary dedication to Zeus and Hera

Fragment of the upper right corner of a rectangular marble plate (12 x 15 x 5 cm), depicting Zeus and Hera in the moment of the sacrifice (solid local work). Upper torso of the goddess standing, with a long veil on her head, falling down her back. It seems that on her head she has a cap, under which the veil is presented. She is dressed in a folded chiton and her oval face is realistically presented, with almond eyes and a small nose. In her raised left hand, Hera is holding a sceptre. On her right side, only part of Zeus' figure is visible: the god's raised left hand, in which he holds a sceptre. Analogous to other presentations of the divine pair sacrificing, we can presume that Zeus was presented as a mature bearded man, dressed in a chiton with a himation holding, as Hera probably too, a phiale in his right hand. Inscription above the relief (and certainly also below) (ht. of letters: 1–1.5 cm). Letters with small *apices*; maybe cur-sive *omega*. Pirot, Museum of Ponišavlje. Cf. Pejić 2022, 10–11, no. 2. II–III AD.



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Фото-документација Музеј Понишавља

[--- ---δ?]ώρου Διὶ καὶ Ἥρα
relief
[-----].

The dedicator, more likely of peregrine status, had perhaps a Greek patronymic, if the reading is [---]ώρου; an alternative reading, however, could be [---]ώρου (exactly as in 18). The name of the dedicator was engraved in the first position, before the divine couple, whose names were more likely followed by a generic formula below the relief.

4. Fragmentary dedication of a son/daughter of Loukios

Two adjoining fragments of the right part of a marble plate (31 x 15 x 5 cm) depicting Zeus and Hera in a scene of sacrifice (elegant execution). The goddess is presented standing, veiled, dressed in a long chiton with a himation over her left shoulder, tied around the waist and falling down her legs. The facial traits on her elongated face show shallowly carved details, like emphasised round eyes, a bulb nose and thin lips. In her raised left hand, the goddess is holding a sceptre, while in her right hand she presumably holds a phiale towards the altar, which was on her right side. Beside Hera's right leg, an eagle is presented standing, with outstretched wings. One line of inscription preserved below the relief (ht. of letters: 1–1.5 cm). Pirot, Museum of Ponišavlje. Cf. Пејић 2022, 11, no. 3. II AD.



Museum of Ponišavlje (photo: M. Ilić)
Фотто-документација Музеј Понишавља

[-----]
relief
[---] Λουκίου [---?].

The dedicator, most likely of peregrine status, had a common Latin patronymic (*Lucius*). The same name occurs in a dedication for Artemis (?) from the vicinity (Osmakovo), commanded by Λούκιος Τερεντι[ανοῦ?].²⁰

5. Damaged dedication

Two adjoining fragments of the right part of a marble plate (32 x 16 x 4 cm) depicting Zeus and Hera (only the body of the goddess is preserved). Hera's head is, unfortunately, missing, but she is dressed in a long, folded chiton, tied under her breasts and falling down covering the goddess's legs. In her raised left hand, she holds a sceptre, while in her lowered right hand she is holding a phiale above the altar. In front of the altar, an eagle is standing with outstretched wings. Beside Hera's left leg, three nymphs are presented in a xoanon form.²¹ Traces of an inscription above the relief, on two lines (ht. of letters: 1 cm), but very defaced, only an *alpha* being clearly visible; perhaps lunate *sigma*. Pirot, Museum of Ponišavlje. Cf. Пејић 2022, 11, no. 4. II–III AD (solid work; its certain linearity dates it probably in the 3rd c.).



Museum of Ponišavlje (photo: M. Ilić)
Фотто-документација Музеј Понишавља

[-----]
relief
[-----]..[-----]
[--- εὔ]χαριστ[ήριον?].

The name of the dedicator is erased and illegible. By the end of the second line, there is, possibly, a generic formula, almost illegible.

²⁰ *IMS* IV 80; *CCET* V 21 (photo Pl. XI). Other editors restored Τερεντι[ανός], which is unlikely.

²¹ The image of the nymphs in a xoanon form is known on votive reliefs from the area of Philippopolis, but also on a votive icon from the *nymphaeum* in Tatarovo (Stojanov 1988, 721, nos. 21–22).

6. Dedication of [---]pyris (?)

Lower right part of a marble relief plate (12.5 x 16 cm) depicting Zeus and Hera (quite mediocre work). On the left side of the icon, a standing figure of Hera, dressed in a long, folded chiton. It remains unclear what attribute she had in her left hand, while in her right hand she holds a phiale above the standing figure of an eagle with outstretched wings. To the right of the eagle, a standing figure of Zeus was presented – now only identified by a part of a himation, which covered god's legs and his feet. There are no traces of the sceptre that the god usually holds (as with Hera too) in his left hand and it can be presumed that in his right hand Zeus held a phiale above the altar. Stylistically, the votive icon belongs to the type LIMC IV 2 (437 no. 11, 440 no. 22), particularly similar to the votive relief from Ovčarovo (dept. of Šumen), and to the votive icon found in the vicinity of Tatarevo (dept. of Haskovo).²² Inscription less deeply engraved, below the relief (ht. of letters: 1 cm); small space between the words; empty space at the end of the line. Rectilinear *epsilon*, four-barred *sigma*; ligature HN. Private collection, thereafter *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3125); Dana 2009, 191, no. 4, photo (*SEG* LIX 762). II AD.



After: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3125
Према: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3125

[-----]

relief

[---]πυρις^v εὐχήν.^{vac.}

[---]οιρις Dana 2009

In the first edition of this inscription, one of the authors of this paper read [---]οιρις, pointing to a Greek name, such as the male name [M]οῖρις, or the female name [M]οιρίς. However, such names are rare and the reading of the first part of the line is not clear on the photo; instead, it is much more likely to read [---].υρις, pointing thus to a Thracian name, either masculine

(e.g. Σουρις or a name in -πουρις, variant of the series in -πορις), or, more probably, feminine, like the series of names in -πυρις (*OnomThrac* 280). Judging by the remaining parts of the letter, a *pi* is more likely before the *upsilon*, so we may suppose a name like Επτηπυρις (*OnomThrac* 180–181, about 15 occurrences) or, less likely, Γηπεπυρις (*OnomThrac* 187, about 5 occurrences). Moreover, such a name is attested in Turres on the epitaph of Επτεπυρις Τίτου, wife of Μάξιμος Δροληους, *bouleutēs* of Serdica (see *infra*).

7. Fragmentary dedication of a soldier (?)

Two adjoining fragments of the central part of a marble plate (dimensions not recorded) depicting Zeus and Hera. Between them stands an eagle with outstretched wings and its head turned towards the god. Although the heads of the deities are missing, we can presume that Zeus was presented as a mature bearded man, with long wavy hair. He has a himation over his left shoulder, which is tied on his waist leaving his torso naked and which falls in folds down the god's legs. Zeus holds a phiale in his left hand, pointed towards the bird, while in his right hand he



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[-----]

relief

[---]στρατ[ι]ώτης^{vac.}

[---]Αὐγού[στης?].

[---]Κωλ[?]ωτης [---]Δεκεν[?]του [εὐχήν?] Jovanović

²² Stojanov 1988, 720 (no. 11) and 721 (no. 22).

probably held a sceptre. Left of the eagle, Hera is dressed in a chiton with a himation. Due to the traces of the veil on both her shoulders, it is assumed that the goddess wore a long veil falling down her back. She is holding a sceptre in her left hand and a phiale in her right hand, which was above the eagle's head. Beside her left leg, three nymphs are presented in the shape of a xoanon (cf. 5). The presented linearity represents solid work (Zeus' torso, the folds of the lower part of Hera's himation). Elegant inscription, carefully cut on two lines below the relief (and certainly above). Letters with small *apices*; lunate *sigma*, cursive *omega*. Photo provided by Milorad Stojić to Aleksandar Jovanović. Јовановић 2008, 61–62, no. 14 (photo p. 70, fig. 14). III AD.

The restoration of the second line – the alternative reading [---]ΤΟΥ[---] is less likely – is not assured, but if we prefer it, we may expect something like [--- --- στρατ]ιώτης | [λεγιώνος γ' (or τρίτης) Α]ύγου[στης?], or the name of a *cohors* with the epithet *Augusta*. The dedicator was certainly a soldier, the quality of execution and of the gravure implying a larger cost that he was able to afford.

8. Erased dedication to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi*

Six adjoining fragments of a rectangular marble relief plate (35 x 34 x 5 cm), with a curved upper board and small acroteria (missing upper part of its central and right side), depicting Hera and Zeus standing inside an aedicula, turned to each other with an altar between them. On the icon's left side, Zeus is presented dressed in a chiton with a himation over his left shoulder and holding a sceptre in his left raised hand. In his lowered right hand, held above the altar, he holds a phiale. Hera is standing in contrapposto, with her right leg in front and her weight on her left leg. The goddess is dressed in a himation, with her left hand holding a sceptre and a phiale in her right hand, also pointed towards the altar between her and Zeus. It seems that she had a long veil on her head, the ends of which are falling down the goddess' back. Unfortunately, the heads of both deities are missing, but judging by the modelling of deities' clothes, the details were modelled decently. The inscription is very faint; on the available photos, there is no possibility to recognise the letters. Јовановић 2008, 56, no. 2 (photo p. 68, fig. 3). II–III AD.



After: Jovanović 2008, p. 68, fig. 3

Према: Јовановић 2008, 68, сл. 3

[Διὶ καὶ Ἡρᾷ Σουιδεπτῆν]οῖς
relief

(illegible inscription on two lines).

1 [Διὶ καὶ Ἡρᾷ Ὀλυμπί?]οις Jovanović

9. Anepigraphic fragment depicting Zeus and Hera

Fragment of the right upper and central parts of a marble plate (22 x 30 x 5.5 cm), depicting Hera and Zeus standing. On the left side of the icon, Zeus, whose head is missing, was presumably represented as a bearded, mature man with wavy hair. He is dressed in a chiton with a himation over his left shoulder and falling from his waist downwards. As the left part of the icon is missing, the attribute in Zeus' left hand is unknown, however it was probably a sceptre; in his right hand, he holds a phiale above the altar. On Zeus' right side, almost a full figure of Hera is visible – a standing, veiled goddess, dressed in a chiton with a himation falling from her left shoulder and from around her waist down her legs. Her hair is water-waved in lines under the long veil falling down her back, while her facial traits are quite crude and masculine – small eyes, prominent nose and strong chin. Her neck is almost oversized and thick. In her left hand, Hera is holding a sceptre, which looks more like a long thick branch, and in her right she is holding an oval object (perhaps a sacrificial bread?). The stylistic characteristics of both divine figures and their details (Hera's neck, deities' forearms) imply a not so skilful local artisan

(maybe in the 3rd c.). Piroto, Museum of Ponišavlje. Cf. Пејић 2022, 10, no. 1. II–III AD.



Museum of Ponišavlje (photo: M. Ilić)
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10. Dedication of Aur. Apollonios

Five adjoining fragments of a marble relief plate (28 x 27 cm), with small missing parts (icon's top, right side and left lower angle), depicting Hera and Zeus standing. The upper part of the icon is in the shape of an arc. Hera is presented on the icon's left side while Zeus is pictured on the right side, standing in contrapposto with his left leg in



After: Jovanović 2008, p. 68, fig. 2
 Према: Jovanović 2008, 68, сл. 2

Διὶ καὶ Ἡ[ρα] Σουιδεπτηνοῖς
 relief
 Αὐρ(ήλιος) Ἀπολ[λών]ιος εὐξάμενος ἀ[νέθηκεν].

1 [Ο]λυμπίους Jovanović : [Σου]ιδεπτηνοῖς Šarankov

front and his weight on the right leg. The goddess is veiled, with a himation tied above the waist and a phiale in her right hand, lowered towards an eagle. Her facial traits are almost unrecognisable. On Hera's right side, an eagle with outstretched wings with his head turned towards Zeus is presented. The supreme god is pictured with wavy hair and a dense beard and a himation over his shoulder, tied around his waist falling down his legs. His facial traits are modelled crudely, with only his round eyes and mouth emphasised. In his left hand he holds a sceptre, while his right arm is lowered, holding a phiale above an altar. Altogether, a moderate iconographic scene, with visible linearity. Inscription above and under the relief (ht. of letters: 1 cm); letters with small *apices*; lunate *sigma*. Јовановић 2008, 56–57, no. 3 (photo p. 68, no. 2) (*АЕ*, 2017, 1266 *ocies* 2 a). After 212 AD.

The dedicator was a recent Roman citizen and had a common Greek *cognomen* (cf. a patronymic Ἀπολλώνιος in 2).

11. Fragmentary dedication to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi*

Fragment of the upper part of a marble relief plate (dimensions not recorded; however, large format) with the upper board curved, preserving only the naked torso of Zeus, holding a sceptre in his left hand. One line of inscription above the relief (without ligatures). This piece, not bought by the Museum of Ponišavlje, was described by P. Pejić (without illustration). Cf. Пејић 2022, 12, no. 2. II–III AD.

[Διὶ καὶ Ἡρα Σουιδεπτ[ηνοῖς]
 relief
 [-----].

12. Dedication of Hermogenes son of Markos

Eleven adjoining fragments of a marble relief plate with rounded top (*ca.* 35 x 28 cm; 33 x 27 cm, according to Jovanović), depicting the standing couple Zeus and Hera in the act of sacrifice (type *LIMC* IV 2, 437 no. 11, 440 no. 22). Zeus is presented on the right side of the icon, with long wavy hair, big eyes and a thick beard. Dressed in a himation, which is tied around his waist and falls down his legs, the god is holding a phiale in his right hand above an altar. An eagle with outstretched wings is standing between the deities. On Zeus' left side, Hera is presented with a rich, long veil on her head, dressed in a chiton with a himation. She is holding, in her raised left hand, a sceptre, while

in her right hand there is a phiale, right above an eagle's head. The stylistic characteristics imply a local work, however of a somewhat knowledgeable artisan, because of the attention given to the details (deities' facial traits and clothes); the fullness of the modelled scene and the present third dimension imply the 2nd century. Inscription deeply cut, but less accurate, above and below the relief (ht. of letters: 1–2 cm); the third line is centred. Irregular letters, some of them influenced by the cursive script; *alpha* without median stroke, *epsilon* both rectangular and lunate (and even without median bar), *theta* incompletely formed, *my* sometimes cursive, *xi* similar to a *zeta* (but with a zig-zag), lunate (rectangular) *sigma*. Many ligatures: THN (l. 1), NHΣ (l. 2), OY (l. 2), ME (l. 2). Private collection, thereafter Gorny & Mosch. *Giessener Münzhandlung. Auktion Kunst der Antike. 24. Juni 2008. 168, 200, no. 534* (without photo); Јовановић 2008, 57, no. 5 (photo p. 69, fig. 5) (*AE*, 2017, 1266 *octies* 2 b); Dana 2009, 193, no. 8, photo (*SEG* LIX 766). II AD.



After: Gorny & Mosch, *Auction 168, no. 534*
 Према: Gorny & Mosch, *Auction 168, бр. 534*

Δ[ι]ὶ καὶ Ἡρα Σουιδεπτηνοῖς
 relief

Ἐρμογένης Μάρκου εὐξάμενος
vac. ἀνέθηκεν. *vac.*

2 Μουκου Јовановић

The dedicator was of peregrine status. The Greek name Ἐρμογένης, quite frequent in Thrace (*LGPN* IV 126), is attested at Turres for the priest of a *koinon* worshipping *Theos epēkoos hypsistos* (see *infra*); the patronymic is a common Latin name, *Marcus*, attested as a patronymic of a villager Μουκκας near Turres (dedication from Suvodol, see *infra*).

13. Damaged dedication to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi*

Fragment of the central upper part of a marble plate with curved pediment (*ca.* 15.2 x 18.5 cm), preserving only the head of Hera and the left hand of Zeus, holding a sceptre (type *LIMC* IV 2, 720–721 B.1). On the left side of the icon, only the head of Hera is preserved, presenting her as a standing, mature, veiled woman, with long wavy hair divided in the middle. The facial traits on Hera's oval face are carefully carved, presenting the goddess with almond eyes, a small nose and a round mouth. On her right side, we can see Zeus' raised right hand holding a sceptre. Analogous to similar iconographic scenes, it is probable that the relief presented standing supreme deities, dressed in a chiton and a himation, holding in their left hands sceptres and in their right hands phials above or pointed towards an altar. It is possible that an eagle with outstretched wings was pictured between the deities. Very faint traces of the inscription above the relief (ht. of letters: 1.5 cm); lunate *sigma*; ligature HP. Private collection, thereafter Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3120). II–III AD (according to the plasticity of the scene, maybe 2nd century).



After: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art 3120*
 Према: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art 3120*

[Διὶ καὶ] Ἡρα Σουιδεπτηνοῖς
 relief

[-----]

Only the name of Hera is vaguely legible (preceded by that of Zeus), followed by the beginning of the toponymic epithet.

14. Fragmentary dedication to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi*

Upper part of a marble relief plate with sharp triangular pediment (18 x 26 x 5 cm), carefully executed; only the upper part survives, depicting Zeus with a sceptre in the left hand and Hera veiled (type *LIMC* IV 2, 437 no. 11; 440 no. 22). On the left side of the votive icon, only Hera’s bust is preserved, presented as a mature veiled woman, with wavy hair showing under the veil, which falls down her back. Her oval face is carved carefully, presenting the deity with big almond eyes, a small nose and full lips. On her right side, the upper part of Zeus’ head with hair is preserved, with his raised left hand holding a sceptre. His hair is curly and very meticulously carved, as are his hand, fingers and sceptre. It is a misfortune that only the upper part of this votive plate is preserved, because the partially preserved details, along with the inscription, imply high quality work of a skilful local artisan, who paid attention to the details of the iconographic scene, produced most probably in the 2nd century. Inscription deeply and elegantly cut, displayed on the pediment (ht. of letters: 1–1.5 cm). Some letters have *apices*; small *omikron*; *pi* with the horizontal bar exceeding the tops of the feet; four-barred *sigma*. The words were separated. Private collection, thereafter *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3123); Dana 2009, 192, no. 5, photo (*SEG* LIX 763). II–III AD.



After: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3123
 Према: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3123

[Δι^{vac.} καὶ^{vac.}] Ἥρα^{vac.} Σουιδεπτη[νοῖς]
 relief
 [-----].

Only the name of Hera is preserved (most likely preceded by that of Zeus), followed by the toponymic epithet.

15. Dedication of Eptepouos, daughter of Iulios

Three adjoining fragments of a marble relief plate with triangular pediment (30 x 28 cm), depicting Zeus and Hera in the act of sacrifice. The whole figure of Zeus can be observed on the right side of the monument, where the god is presented dressed in a mantle falling off his left shoulder and tied around his waist, leaving his torso naked. Zeus’ hair is wavy and long, divided in the middle, while the facial traits are unrecognisable except the beard. With his raised left hand, he is leaning on a sceptre, while he pours liquid on an altar on his right side, from a phiale held in his right hand. Hera is presented on the god’s left side, dressed in a long, folded chiton tied under her chest. The goddesses’ head is missing, but it seems that she was veiled; she is also holding a sceptre in her left hand and a phiale in her right hand above another altar, which is pictured between the two deities. Quite mediocre work, with present linearity. Inscription quite carefully cut above and under the relief (ht. of letters: 1–2 cm); on the pediment, the inscription is almost completely erased. *Pi* with the horizontal bar exceeding the tops of the feet; four-barred *sigma*. Јовановић 2008, 57, no. 4 (photo p. 68, no. 4). II AD.



After: *Jovanović* 2008, p. 68, fig. 4
 Према: *Jovanović* 2008, 68, сл. 4

Δι κ[αὶ] Ἥρα Σουιδεπτηνοῖς?
 relief
 Επτηπουος Ἰουλίου εὐχήν.

2 Τονου (?) *Jovanović*

The dedicator was of peregrine status. This is the second occurrence of such a Thracian feminine name, previously attested at Serdica, for Επτηπουος daughter of [Επ?]τηλας (*IGBulg* IV 1959; cf. *OnomThrac* 181),²³ moreover with a new spelling, cf. in our sanctuary Μουκαπουος (30, with a commentary of such names). The patronymic is a common Latin name, *Iulius*. Another compound name in Επτα- occurs twice in the dedication of villagers from Sarame, found at Suvodol, near Turre (see *infra*).

The same dedicator, Επεπουος daughter of Ioulios, appears in the following dedication (16), the name being differently spelled.

(II) Only one relief presents the divine couple Zeus and Hera enthroned (rather than other deities).

16. Another dedication of Επεπουος, daughter of Iulios

Five adjoining fragments of a marble relief plate (33 x 30 cm) depicting Zeus and Hera enthroned²⁴. The central and upper left part of the icon are unfortunately lost. The goddess, whose figure is almost completely preserved, is presented on the right side of the relief, with a narrow, high



After: Jovanović 2008, p. 69, fig. 9

Према: Jovanović 2008, 69, сл. 9

[-----]
relief
κατ' εὐχὴν Επτ[η]πουεος Ἰουλιού'.

2 κατ'εὐχὴν Εσ[καδ?]ου Σοζιουμου (?) Jovanović

polos on her head, holding a sceptre (rather than a torch) in the left hand and a phiale in the right hand. The long wavy hair of the goddess is very meticulously divided in the middle and her oval face shows almond eyes and a small nose. She is holding a phiale above the altar on her right side and is dressed in a long chiton with a himation. On the goddess's left side, a lower part of other deity's body, dressed in a long mantle, is presented, unfortunately without the traces of any attribute in the hands. Inscription above (missing or faint) and under the relief (ht. of letters: 1–1.5 cm), quite accurate. Rectilinear *epsilon*, small *omikron*, four-barred *sigma*. Ligature NE; small *upsilon* added above the *omikron* at the end of the last line. Јовановић 2008, 59, no. 9 (photo p. 69, no. 9). II AD.

The same dedicator, Επεπουος daughter of Ioulios, appears in the previous dedication (15). In this second dedication, the form of the name is *hapax*, but the reading is assured²⁵; this spelling must be a variant of the forms -πουιους/-*puius*, attested for another compound name of the same series, Μουκαπουος (see 30, comm.).

(III) Another main group, well-represented in the Belava sanctuary, is that of Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga.

17. Dedication of the *bouleutēs* Heraklides, son of Dizas

13 partly joining fragments of a marble relief plate (ca. 55 x 50 cm; according to Jovanović, 60 x 50 cm) with rounded top, depicting Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga. Zeus' figure, which is presented on the left of Hera, is almost fully preserved, thus allowing us to observe a mature image of the god, with longer hair and beard standing, dressed in a himation tied around his waist, in the coach. Only the

²³ Another possible occurrence, Επτα[α]πυς at Herakleia Sintike (*IGBulg* IV 2325, useless photo Pl. 159), is in fact a wrong reading of Dimităr Dečev (followed by Georgi Mihailov) for θρεπτα[α]ρίυς, see the correction of Sharankov 2016, 343–344. Instead, the name restored as Επταπυ (Gen.) by Sharankov 2007, 431–432, no. 7 (photo p. 431, fig. 5), and 434–435, no. 11, in a dedication to Hera from Philippopolis, is a wrong reading for Επτα[λ]ου (Gen.), that is Επταλας, spelling variant of the masculine name *Eptala* (see *OnomThrac* 180).

²⁴ Rather than other deities, such as Demeter and Persephone (Kore) for Jovanović (Јовановић 2008, 59) or Pluto and Persephone.

²⁵ It is extremely rare to find the banal formula κατ' εὐχὴν followed by a Genitive: Ἀγαθὴνωρ Πόσσειος ὁ | καὶ Δαδας εὐχαριστήριον | κατ' εὐχὴν τοῦ πατρός (*IGBulg* P 286, Galata nearby Odessus); accordingly, the name in our dedication is in Nominative.

almond eyes are noticeable of his facial traits, while Zeus is holding the sceptre in his right raised hand. On the god's right side, Hera is shown dressed in a long, folded chiton. Unfortunately, only the lower part of goddess's figure is preserved – her head and possible attribute that she might have held in her hands, are missing. The horses harnessed in the quadriga are bolting and the first horse (whose figure is the most prominent in the icon) is stepping with his front leg on the altar in front of him. Beside the altar, part of a large snake is presented. Certain details in the icon, like the wheels of the quadriga, are solidly modelled, but also present is linearity and the moderate skilfulness of the artisan. Elegant inscription, carefully cut above and under the relief (ht. of letters: 0.5–1.5 cm). Letters with *apices*; small *omikron*, *xi* similar to a *zeta* (but with a zigzag), lunate (rectangular) *sigma*. The first line, providing the introductory formula, was engraved in smaller characters (0.5 cm) in the middle of the pediment. Many ligatures: HN (l. 2), ΗΣ and ME (l. 3). Interpunction after Δ(ι)ί (l. 2) and signalling the abbreviation β(ουλευτής) (l. 3). Private collection, thereafter *Gorny & Mosch. Giessener Münzhaltung. Auktion Kunst der Antike. 24. Juni 2008. 168, 200, no. 535*



After: *Gorny & Mosch, Auction 168, no. 535*
 Према: *Gorny & Mosch, Auction 168, бр. 535*

Ἄγα[θῆ Τύχη]
 Τ[οῖς κ]υριοῖς Δι • κ[αὶ Ἡ]ρα • Σο]υιδεπτῆν[οῖς]
 relief
 Ἡρακλίδης Διζου • β(ουλευτής) • εὐξάμενο[ς]
 εὐχάρ[ιστήριον].

2 Επτην[οῖς?] Јовановић || 3 Δι[ζουλ?]ου Β[εῖθ?]αρενο[---]
 χειονης Јov. : or Χειόνης (?) : or [ὑπέ]ρ Χειόνης Chaniotis :
 εὐξάμενο[ς] εὐχάρ[ιστήριον] Χειόνης? Shar.

(without photo); Јовановић 2008, 58, no. 6 (photo p. 69, fig. 6) (*АЭ*, 2017, 1266 *octies* 2 c); Dana 2009, 194, no. 9, photo (*SEG LIX 767*). II AD.

Our disposition is different from that in the photos given in the papers published in 2008 and 2009; we placed differently the fragment bearing the second part of l. 2, and, most importantly, we removed another inscribed fragment that belongs, in fact, to another plate (28).

The dedicator has a common Greek name, spelled here with the monophthongisation of */ei/* in Ἡρακλίδης;²⁶ the patronymic is native, Διζας (the same as in 21), a very frequent Thracian anthroponym (*OnomThrac* 146–151). Another patronymic Διζας and a compound name in Διζα- occur in the dedication found at Suvodol, near Turres (see *infra*). Unlike other dedicators in the Belava sanctuary, Herakl(e)ides precises his status, as he was *bouleutēs*²⁷ of an unnamed city – certainly Serdica, since Turres belonged to that territory. Another *bouleutēs* of Serdica attested in Turres is Maximos, son of Droles, β(ουλευτής) Οὐλπίας Σερδικῆς, the letter Β having a line above in order to mark the abbreviation (see below). The same abbreviation, with a *beta* having a line above, between two points, occurs on a fragmentary relief found in Nozrina near Aleksinac, in the Margus valley, between Horreum Margi and Naissus (that is, on the territory of Moesia Superior), dedicated by Ἡρόδοτος Ρασδου • β(ουλευτής) • (Thracian patronymic).²⁸ The onomastics of other *bouleutai* in Thrace clearly shows that the native component in this class of notables was quite important.

²⁶ This spelling occurs sporadically in Thrace (Slavova 2004, 39), see *IGBulg* IV 2072 (Pautalia), 2023 (terr. of Serdica); V 5484 (Batkun). We may mention a Διζ[ας] Ἡρακλίδου at Batkun (terr. of Philippopolis, dedication to Asclepius, *IGBulg* III 1175 + V 5484); a homonymous Herakleides raised the epitaph of his father Dizas, son of Seutheilas, at Ivanjane-Banja (terr. of Serdica, *IGBulg* IV 2011). These names are, however, too frequent to propose any identification.

²⁷ Among the epigraphic evidence, almost all votive, of Thrace, this title is noted completely (quite often), but also diversely abridged, such as βουλ(ευτής), βου(λευτής) and, as in our case, β(ουλευτής), most often in the western part of the province: *IGBulg* IV 2010, 2125 (restored), 2213; V 5790, 5792, 5803, 5814–5816.

²⁸ Plemić, Vasiljević 2022, 10–14 (photo p. 11, fig. 2); the relief depicts a standing god in a chariot, naked but with a chlamys fluttering behind. The upper part of the god, maybe with one or more attributes, is missing, and his identification by the editors as Helios/Apollo is questionable; another depiction of Zeus is more likely.

18. Fragmentary dedication to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi*

Six partly joining fragments of a rectangular marble relief plate with the upper part curved (*ca.* 33 x 50 cm), depicting Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga. On the right side of the votive icon, only the figure of Zeus is preserved, showing a standing mature man, with long wavy hair and a dense beard. His facial traits are carefully carved, like his hair, with almond eyes, a large nose and small lips. He is dressed in a mantle falling over his left shoulder and tied around his waist, which leaves his torso naked. In his raised right hand, Zeus is holding a thunderbolt, while a quadriga is presented schematically with a wheel divided inside into four parts. We can presume that on the god's right side, Hera was presented, probably similarly as in analogous iconographic scenes – as a standing veiled woman, holding a sceptre in one hand and a phiale in the other hand. In the upper left angle of the icon, an eagle is partially preserved, while in the lower left angle of the relief horses bolting in front of a large crawling snake are pictured. Another fragment (not bought by the Museum of Ponišavlje), described by P. Pejić, depicts an eagle with outstretched wings, matching with the rest of the first line



After: Gorny & Mosch, Auction 168, no. 533
Према: Gorny & Mosch, Auction 168, бр. 533

Διὶ ὕ καὶ Ἡ[ρ]α Σουιδε[πτηνοῖς]

relief

[--- ---]όρου δῶρον. *vac.*

1 [κυρίως Δ]ιὶ καὶ Ἡρ[α] Επτηνοῖς? Jovanović ||

2 [--- Β]ρουθ[ενις? δω]ρον Jov.

of the inscription. Inscription elegantly cut, displayed above and below the relief (ht. of letters: 1–2.5 cm). Letters with *apices*; elegant *delta*, small *omikron*, *omega* in shape of W with vertical extremities. Private collection, thereafter Gorny & Mosch. *Giessener Münzhandlung. Auktion Kunst der Antike. 24. Juni 2008. 168*, 199, no. 533 (without photo); Јовановић 2008, 58–59, no. 7 (photo p. 69, no. 7); Dana 2009, 193, no. 7, photo (*SEG LIX 765*); for the joining fragment, cf. Пејић 2022, 12, no. 3 (without illustration). II–III AD (the plasticity and the third dimension present in the modelling of the relief suggest the 2nd century).

Only the end of the patronymic of the dedicator is preserved (cf. a similar ending in 3).

19. Fragmentary dedication to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi*

Three adjoining fragments of the upper part of a marble plate (dimensions not recorded) with curved top, depicting Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga. The central and lower left part of the icon are missing (the photo is, moreover, partial), as are the presentation of the quadriga and the full figures of Zeus and Hera. In the centre of the icon, a carefully modelled head of Zeus can be observed – the supreme god is presented as a mature, bearded man with long wavy hair divided in the middle and a dense beard, with oval eyes, a prominent nose and a small mouth. In his right hand, Zeus holds a thunderbolt that enters the upper dedication field. We can presume that, analogous to other presentations on icons from the Belava sanctuary, Zeus was dressed in a long mantle that was falling from his left shoulder, leaving his torso naked and tied around his waist. On Zeus' right side, Hera is depicted standing, veiled and dressed in a long chiton with a himation. Her facial traits comprise carefully shaped almond eyes and a small nose. On Zeus' left side stands an eagle with outstretched wings and its head turned towards the god, while on the left of the bird Hermes, small-sized, looks as though he is leading the quadriga. The ever-youthful god is presented with short wavy hair and a finely modelled face, naked with a himation around his neck and left shoulder, holding a *caduceus* in his left hand and a *marsupium* in his right hand. Under Hermes' figure, the heads and the upper parts of four horses are presented in profile, very meticulously modelled. Inscription quite carefully cut above the relief (and certainly under). Elegant *alpha* and *delta*; *theta* divided by a horizontal bar; small *omikron*; *pi* with the horizontal bar exceeding the tops of the feet; lunate (rectangular) *sigma*. Ligature HP; interponction after the name of Zeus. Photo provided by Milorad Stojić to Aleksandar Jovanović. Јова-

новић 2008, 61, no. 13 (photo p. 70, fig. 13). II–III AD (the details of the figures, such as the hair and the clothes, as well as those of the eagle and horses, suggest the second part of the 2nd century).



After: Jovanović 2008, p. 70, fig. 13
Према: Jovanović 2008, 70, сл. 13

[Ἐπιφανεστά?] τοῖς θεοῖς Διὶ • καὶ Ἥρᾳ Σουιδεπτ[ηνοῖς]
relief

[-----].

τοῖς θεοῖς Διὶ καὶ Ἥρᾳ Τουιδετ[ηνοῖς?] Jovanović

The disposition of the inscription on the top of the curved plate suggests not the superfluous τοῖς, but the superlative epithet [ἐπιφανεστά] τοῖς, divided by the thunderbolt.

20. Fragmentary Latin dedication of a legionary

Left and central part of a curved marble plate (23 x 17 cm), depicting Hera and Zeus driving in a quadriga (type LIMC IV 2, 438, nos. 16–17 and esp. 440, no. 26). Zeus appears turned to his left side, as a mature bearded man with long wavy hair. Over his left shoulder, a long mantle is thrown, which leaves his torso naked. Zeus' facial traits are indicated, as is the musculature of his torso. His left arm is holding a bridle and an eagle with outstretched wings presented frontally is standing on his arm. In his raised right hand, Zeus is holding a thunderbolt, which enters the dedication field. On his right side, Hera is presented as a mature woman with a long veil on her head, dressed in a long chiton tied under her breasts and a himation over her left arm and waist. Her hair is divided in the middle and

covered with a long veil, while her facial traits are only recognisable in the context of the shallowly carved eyes and mouth. She holds in her left hand a sceptre, and a phiale in her right hand. The closest iconographic analogy can be found in a marble relief found in Krivodolska Mahala (dept. of Vraca).²⁹ Inscription above (almost completely erased, maybe on two lines) and below the relief (ht. of letters: 0.7–1 cm). Private collection, thereafter Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3122); Dana 2009, 194–195, no. 10, with photo (p. 195) (inscription not recorded in *ΑΕ*). II–III AD (judging by the well-presented body proportions of the deities and the carefully carved details, like the wheel of the quadriga, this relief presents a solid work of a local artisan, probably produced in the second half of the 2nd century).



After: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* 3122
Према: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* 3122

[I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) (et) Iunoni Reginae?]
relief

[--- ---]es, miles [!eg(ionis) ---]
[votu]m posuit [---?].

²⁹ Stojanov 1988, 722, no. 26, ph. 26 (end of the 2nd – beginning of the 3rd c.).

This damaged plate is the only Latin inscription unearthed in the Belava sanctuary. The heading is unfortunately too damaged to decipher the Latin names and epithets of the divine couple. In the missing part below the relief was an abridged *gentilicium*; the soldier, serving in an unknown legion, had a Latin (e.g. *Vales*), Greek of Thracian (e.g. *Seuthes*) *cognomen*. His quality of *miles* matches the choice of Latin for the dedication; his legion could more likely be from Lower Moesia (*I Italica* or *XI Claudia*), without excluding Upper Moesia (*IV Flavia Felix* or *VII Claudia*), or even another province (cf. 7), as happens with veterans returning home. The sanctuaries of Western Thrace, for instance, the cult place of Zeus and Hera from Caristorum/Kopilovci (terr. of Pautalia), comprised a majority of Greek inscriptions, Latin texts being always in the minority.³⁰ Once more, the relationship between the use of Latin and the membership in the Roman army is not fortuitous.

21. Fragmentary dedication of [---]on, son of Dizas

Fragment of the lower central part of a marble plate (15.5 x 21 cm) depicting Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga (type *LIMC* IV 2, 438, nos. 16–17 and especially 440, no. 26), with the partial presentation of a horse and the legs of three other horses. Judging by the preserved details, like the wheel of a quadriga and the horse's attitude and carved hoof, the artisan was quite skilful. Inscription elegantly cut, displayed above (in the missing part) and below the relief (ht. of letters: 1–2 cm); elegant *delta* and *zeta*, small *omikron*, *omega* in shape of W with vertical extremities;



After: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3127

Према: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3127

[Διὸ καὶ Ἥρα ---?]

relief

[---]ων ^{vac.} Διζου ^{vac.} ε[---].

the three words were spaced. Ligature ΩΝ. Private collection, thereafter *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3127); Dana 2009, 191, no. 3, with photo (*SEG* LIX 761). II AD (also because of the plasticity of the iconographic scene).

The dedication was raised by the son (with a suffixed name, maybe Greek) of a certain Διζας, a common Thracian name (see another occurrence in 17, and comm.). After the patronymic, we may have a formula such as ε[ύχην]/ε[ύχαριστήριον].

22. Fragmentary dedication of Aur. Maximos and another person

Left lower corner of a marble plate (dimensions not recorded) depicting Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga. On the left side of the icon, Zeus is presented standing, presumably similarly to analogous scenes (as a mature, bearded man, with a mantle over his left shoulder and waist, holding a sceptre in one hand). On Zeus' right side, Hera is standing, presumably presented as a veiled woman dressed in a long chiton, holding a sceptre and perhaps a phiale in her hands. The details are executed with knowledge, depth



After: *Jovanović 2008*, p. 70, fig. 12

Према: *Jovanović 2008*, 70, сл. 12

[-----]

relief

Αὐρ(ήλιος) • Μάξιμος Τα[--- καὶ Αὐρ(ήλιος)? ---

^{vac.} Ἔρμο?]-
γένου[ς? --- ^{vac.}].

1-2 Αὐρ[ήλιος] Μάξιμος Τα[-----][ΓΕΝΟΙ[-----] *Jovanović* :
Αὐρ(ήλιος) Μάξιμος Τα[ρσου? καὶ --- Ἔρμο][γένου[ς? ---]
Šarankov (*AE*)

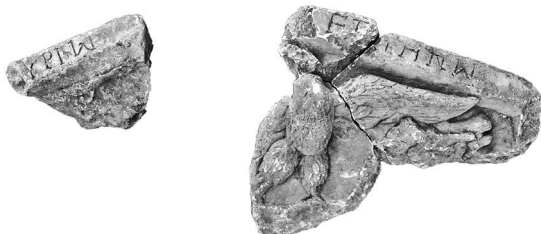
³⁰ At Caristorum, compared to dozens of Greek dedications, only two are in Latin: *IOM Caris[toreno] Faedius Sabin[us ex voto]* (*AE*, 1915, 90); *[IOM et] Iunoni Reg[inae] --- ex voto posuit* (*AE*, 1915, 91). Similarly, the sanctuary of Telerig (Lower Moesia) provided only two Latin texts for about 50 Greek dedications (*Alexandrov, Dana 2020*).

and plasticity (which is implied by details like Hera's folded dress). Inscription below the relief (and more likely above), on two lines (l. 2, in smaller letters), carefully executed. Small *omikron*; *xi* like a reversed *zeta*; lunate (rectangular) *sigma*. Interpunction between the *nomen* and the *cognomen*; the abbreviation of the *nomen* is signaled by a line above. Photo provided by Milorad Stojić to Aleksandar Jovanović. Јовановић 2008, 60–61, no. 12 (photo p. 70, fig. 12) (*АЭ*, 2017, 1266 *octies* 2 d). After 212 AD.

A. Jovanović's readings were improved by Nikolaj Šarankov (in *АЭ*). A recent citizen after the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, *Aur. Maximus* was maybe better identified by a native (?) patronymic; thereafter, in the missing part, was certainly named a second dedicator, son of [Ἑρμο?]γένης. Accordingly, at the beginning of the first line, the abbreviation could stand for both dedicators, so Αὐρ(ήλιοι). Another bearer of the name *Maximus* in Turres is a son of Droles, *bouleutēs* of Serdica (see below); for another Ἑρμογένης in our sanctuary, see the dedication 12.

23. Dedication to Kyrios Zeus *Souideptēnos*

Three adjoining fragments and another one from the right side, from a marble plate with a triangular pediment (ht. 25 cm). The central part depicts an eagle standing, with outstretched wings. The feathers of the bird, like its figure, are very carefully carved in detail. Under the eagle's left wing, a horse's head can be observed, probably presented also under the bird's right wing (that part of the monument is missing). This detail allows us to presume that on the votive relief a scene of Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga was presented. Inscription elegantly cut above (and certainly below) the relief (ht. of letters: 2–3 cm). Letters with



After: Jovanović 2008, p. 69, fig. 8
Према: Јовановић 2008, 69, сл. 8

[Κ]υρίω ^{vac.} [Δι̅ ^{vac.} Σουι]δεπτηνῶ
relief

[-----].

1 κυρίω Επτηνω Jovanović

apices; *pi* with the horizontal bar exceeding the tops of the feet; *omega* in the shape of W. Vacant space between words. Јовановић 2008, 59, no. 8 (photo p. 69, no. 8). II–III AD.

Our disposition is different from that of the first editor, because of the space needed for the name of Zeus and the beginning of the toponymic epithet. The dedication was made only to Zeus, as proven by the singular form of the epithet.

24. Anepigraphic relief depicting Zeus and Hera in a quadriga

Fragment of a marble relief plate (18 x 25 cm), with only the central part of a scene preserved with Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga (cf. type *LIMC* IV 2, 721 B.2). On the left side of the icon is a naked torso of Zeus with a mantle over his left arm and waist, which falls downwards the god's legs. The deity is slightly turned towards his left side, which implies that the quadriga was turned to the left side. Judging by the position of his right hand, which is raised, analogous to similar iconographic scenes on other votive icons, Zeus probably held a thunderbolt. The goddess Hera is standing on Zeus' right side, dressed in a long chiton, tied under her breasts, with a himation. In her left hand, she is holding a sceptre, while in her right hand a part of a phiale is presented. Iconographic characteristics are analogous with votive reliefs from Mogilovo (dept. of Stara Zagora), Ratiaria, Suhače (dept. of Vraca) and Basarbovo (dept. of Ruse).³¹ Private collection, thereafter *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3128). II–III AD (stylistic characteristic of the scene suggest mediocre local work; in the modelling of Zeus' torso a certain plasticity is present; judging by Hera's figure linearity, a suggested date is in the 3rd century).



After: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* 3128
Према: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* 3128

³¹ Stojanov 1988, 721, nos. 16–19.

25. Anepigraphic relief depicting Zeus and Hera in a quadriga

Fragment of a marble plate (19 x 13 cm), preserving the body without the head of Zeus brandishing his thunderbolt (cf. type *LIMC* IV 2, 721 B.2). Only the partial figure of Zeus is preserved, from which we can presume that the god was turned towards his left side and probably pictured as a mature bearded man, with naked torso and a himation that falls from his left shoulder, wrapped around his waist and falling down his legs. The deity was probably holding bridles in his left hand, while in his raised right hand a thunderbolt was figured. On his right side, a fragment of Hera's left hand is visible, presumably holding a sceptre, analogous to similar iconographic scenes. Private collection, thereafter *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3121). II–III AD (clear linearity and artisan's inattention to iconographic details suggest the 3rd c.).



After: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3121
Према: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3121

26. Anepigraphic relief depicting Zeus and Hera in a quadriga

Fragment of a marble relief plate (ca. 11 x 11.5 cm) preserving the bust without the head of Zeus brandishing a thunderbolt (cf. type *LIMC* IV 2, 721 B.2). A small part of the iconographic scene of the supreme divine couple driving in a quadriga is presented – the torso of Zeus with a mantle over his left shoulder. Traces of the god's hair are preserved, as is his raised right hand in which he holds a thunderbolt. Also, a part of a sceptre that Hera held in her left hand can be recognised. By the position of the god's body, slightly turned to his left side, we can presume that

the scene was analogous to those mentioned in the votive reliefs above. Private collection, thereafter *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3126). II–III AD (the mediocre quality of the iconographic details, such as the unskilfully carved arm of the god and the himation, or the emphasised linearity present in Zeus' torso, suggest the 3rd century).



After: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3126
Према: *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* 3126

27. Anepigraphic relief depicting Zeus and Hera in a quadriga

A small fragment of a marble relief plate (dimensions not recorded), depicting the horses from a scene with Zeus and Hera in a quadriga. We can observe a prancing horse with the front legs of another three horses harnessed to a quadriga. This scene is analogous to already described presentations of Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga, as standing deities holding their usual attributes (sceptres and phials) in their hands. Photo provided by Predrag Pejić to Aleksandar Jovanović (the purchase by the museum of Pirot was not realised). Јовановић 2008, 60, no. 11 (photo p. 70, no. 11). II–III AD (quite schematic and simply performed presentation, without paying attention to the details, suggesting the 3rd century).



After: *Jovanović* 2008, p. 70, fig. 11
Према: *Jovanović* 2008, 70, сл. 11

28. Fragmentary dedication on behalf of Chione

One fragment (*ca.* 20 x 10 cm) from the lower right corner of a marble relief plate depicting Zeus and Hera on a quadriga. The fragment was photographed together with more fragments from a different relief (17) and published with the inscribed fragments of that plate. However, the iconography is slightly different (the shape of the snake) and also the palaeography (*epsilon* without *apices*). On the fragment, a partial image of a snake is visible with an altar, in front of which it coils; and the front leg of a horse. Inscription above (lost) and below the relief (ht. of letters: 1–2 cm); small *omikron*, lunate (rectangular) *sigma*. Ligature NHΣ. Private collection, thereafter Gorny & Mosch. *Giessener Münzhandlung. Auktion Kunst der Antike. 24. Juni 2008. 168, 200, no. 535, without photo*; Јовановић 2008, 58, no. 6 (photo p. 69, fig. 6) (*АЭ*, 2017, 1266 *octies* 2 c); Dana 2009, 194, no. 9, photo (*SEG* LIX 767). II–III AD (the plasticity of the modelling and the carefully performed details suggest the second half of the 2nd century).



After: Gorny & Mosch, *Auction 168, no. 535*
Према: Gorny & Mosch, *Auction 168, бр. 535*

[-----]

relief

[--- --- ὑπὲρ τῆς θυγατρὸς?] Χειόνης
[---?].

2 [---]χειονης Јовановић : Χειόνης? Sharankov (?) :
[ὑπὲρ] Χειόνης *sugg.* Chaniotis (*SEG*)

According to Nikolaj Šarankov, the fragment with the Genitive form Χειόνης could have belonged to plate other than 17. This is now certain, since the shape of the snake is not the same on the two reliefs, and especially because the *epsilon* is without *apices* on this small fragment, while the *apices* are so neat in the dedication 17. The present dedication was made on behalf of the daughter (or wife) Chione (“Snow”). This name is borrowed from a mythological figure, that is

the daughter of Boreas and the mother of Eumolpus (son of Poseidon); Boreas and Eumolpus were associated by the ancient literary tradition with Thrace.³² The name Χιόνη occurred previously three times in Thrace (*LGPN* IV 356), as well as an ἀρχι[έ]ρεια in *Serdica* (*IGBulg* IV 1949). A fifth occurrence of this name in Thrace was recently provided by a dedication to Zeus and Hera from the sanctuary at Kozi Gramadi (terr. of Philippopolis).³³

(IV) Only one relief presents Zeus alone, standing.

29. Damaged dedication of Bithys (?)

Three adjoining fragments of a marble relief plate (26 x 17 x 5 cm) depicting Zeus. The supreme god is pictured standing in contrapposto, with his weight resting on his left leg and a slightly forward, bent at the knee, right leg. His wavy hair is divided in the middle, but besides the beard, the traits of his face are hard to distinguish. Zeus’ upper part of the body is naked, with carefully modelled musculature and a mantle over his left shoulder, tied around his waist, covering the god’s legs. He holds a sceptre in his left bent upwards hand, while in his right hand he holds a phiale above the altar. Beside his left leg, an eagle is standing (only the contours of the bird’s lower part are barely visible), presumably with his wings outstretched. Geographically, the closest analogy would be the votive relief of Zeus in the act of sacrifice from Poganovo (of much better iconographic quality).³⁴ The iconographic details imply a mediocre work of a not so skilful local artisan, while stylistically

³² Boreas, as the Greek north wind, was associated with cold and winter and presumed to originate from Thrace (Athanasakis, Wolkow 2013, 186). Eumolpus was the son of Poseidon and Chione, the daughter of Boreas and Oreithyia; after his banishment, he escaped to Thrace.

³³ Hristov 2014, 149 and 183, FIN 192, where the reading must be Χιόνη Αθυ[ος?].

³⁴ Вулић 1934, 60, no. 69; now in the National Museum in Niš (inv. no. 45/R; dim. 27.5 x 17.5 x 3 cm). This relief presents the god standing in a contrapposto position, with his right leg slightly forward and the weight of his body resting on his left leg. Zeus is presented frontally, as a mature, bearded man with a mantle over his left shoulder wrapped around his waist and falling down to his feet; he is holding a sceptre in his raised left hand, while in his lowered right hand he holds a phiale above an altar. The iconographic details, like the emphasised muscularity of Zeus’ naked torso, skilfully carved facial traits and the attention with which the proportion of the presentation is modelled, imply a very knowledgeable artisan and a date in the 2nd century. We would like to express our gratitude to our colleague Vesna Crnoglavac, the director of the National Museum in Niš, for her kindness in providing us with a photo.

the presence of linearity and a certain degree of rigidity suggest a later date (however, the dedicator has a peregrine status). Traces of letters (ht. ca. 1.5 cm). Јовановић 2008, 55–56, no. 1 (photo p. 68, fig. 1). II AD.



After: Jovanović 2008, p. 68, fig. 1

Према: Јовановић 2008, 68, сл. 1

[Κυ]ρίω [Δῑ --- ?]

relief

Βῑθυς ἀνέθ[ηκεν]

^{vac.} εὐχάρ[ιστήριον].

1 [Τῶ κυ]ρίω [Δῑ] Jovanović || 2 [Α]θυ[ς] ἀνέθ[ηκεν] Jov.

It is impossible to confirm in the photo the readings of A. Jovanović. According to his proposition and the traces visible in unclear photos, our suggestion is slightly different, but not assured. The dedicator, of peregrine status, was identified only by his anthroponym, the most common Thracian name (*OnomThrac* 40–58); this name also occurs for a villager in the dedication of Suvodol (see *infra*).

Similar plates depicting Zeus alone, most often with an eagle to the right of his feet, are known in Lower Moesia, e.g. *IGBulg* II 489 (Pl. 3), near Mezdra, and *IGB* V 5315 (Pl. 49) in Draganovec; and in Thrace: Philippopolis (*IGBulg* III.1 965–966, Pl. 37–38); Poptop-Jordankino, terr. of Serdica (*IGBulg* IV 1984, Pl.

33), Rosoman, terr. of Pautalia (*IGBulg* IV 2114, Pl. 83), Caristorum/Kopilovci, terr. of Pautalia (*IGBulg* IV 2166 and 2176, Pl. 98 and 100), and very close to Pirot, in Caribrod/Dimitrovgrad.³⁵ We may add a similar rectangular marble plate of very good execution, presumably from Western Thrace (antiquities market), with a curved top (27.7 x 19.3 cm), depicting only Zeus and engraved Δῑ Δεινεῖλας | Δραλου εὐχῆν.³⁶

(V) Again, only one relief depicting Hera alone, standing.

30. Dedication of Moukapouos, daughter of Papas

Lower part of a rectangular marble plate (ca. 13 x 21 cm) depicting Hera alone, standing. We remark on the fact that her body is dressed in a long, folded chiton; its position implies that she is turned to her right side, presumably holding a phiale in her right hand, since an altar is present on the goddess's right side. The closest iconographical analogies can be found in a marble relief from Timacum Minus/Ravna³⁷ and a votive relief discovered in the territory of Philippopolis (now at NAIM, Sofia).³⁸ Mediocre local work with obvious linearity. Inscription engraved above (lost) the relief and below, on two lines. Letters cut less accurately (ht. of letters: 1–1.5 cm), but with *apices*; smaller *omikron*, larger *pi*, lunate (rectangular) *sigma*, *upsilon* of various shapes. Ligature HT. Private collection, thereafter *Hixenbaugh Ancient Art* (inv. no. 3124); Dana 2009, 189–191, no. 2, photo (*SEG* LIX 760 = *ΑΕ*, 2017, 1266 *octies* 2 e). II AD.

The dedication was made on behalf of Moukapouos, daughter of Papas, of peregrine status, through the intermediary of her son Valens. This Thracian compound female name (*OnomThrac* 233–234) is every time attested with different Greek and Latin spellings for the second element: Μουκαπουιους Βάλεντος in Burdapa (terr. of Philippopolis, *IGBulg* III.1 1354), so, daughter of *Valens*); Μουκαπουους in Viden (terr. of Augusta Traiana, *IGBulg* III.2 1736), daughter of

³⁵ Вулић 1934, 60, no. 69 (photo); Вулић 1941–1948, 306, no. 71 (photo).

³⁶ *Hermann Historica* (Auktion 65, 15–16 Oct. 2012, no. 339); see Dana 2014, 188–189, no. 6 (photo fig. 4). Cf. also an anepigraphic relief, of less accurate execution, depicting Zeus and Hera (*Hermann Historica*, Auktion 63, 26 Oct. 2011, no. 1745).

³⁷ Вулић 1941–1948, 308, no. 80.

³⁸ Stojanov 1988, 720, no. 3.



After: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* 3124
 Према: Hixenbaugh *Ancient Art* 3124

[Ἡρα -----?]

relief

Μουκαπουος Παπου

vac. διὰ τοῦ ὑοῦ Οὐάλητο[ς].

1 or Πάπου

Μουκαπουρις; *Mucapuius* in Čomakovci (terr. of Oescus, Lower Moesia, *ILBulg* 165), daughter of *Diza*; *Mucapuis* at Arcobara (Dacia Porolissensis, *CIL* III 809), wife of an auxiliary horseman; *Mucapus Mestitu filia* in Rome (*CIL* VI 3215 = *DKR* 726), wife of *Aur. Mucianus, eques singularis Augusti*. Therefore, we have more terminations in Greek (-πουιους, -πουις, -πουος) and in Latin (-*puius*, -*puis*, -*pus*). The same diversity of spellings concerns another Thracian female of the name family, also attested in our sanctuary: Επτηπουος (15)/Επτ[η]πουεος (16).

Conversely, the name of the son is a frequent Latin name, *Valens*; the Genitive as -ητος, favoured sometimes for Greek (and Thracian) names as -ης, indicates that the name was originally pronounced *Vales*, a phonetic evolution that is banal in Latin, being attested frequently in the Latin epigraphy of the Balkans.³⁹ The spelling ὑός for υἰός is attested more times in Thrace.⁴⁰

Despite some divergent opinions, this name Μουκαπουος (and variants) is always feminine.⁴¹ If the first element μουκα- is very frequent in Thracian onomastics (and attested for other names, simple or assonant, in the region of Turres, see below), the second one, under diverse spellings (cf. *supra*), is used exclusively for feminine names, and always in the second position: so, Επτηπουος in Serdica (*IGBulg* IV 1959)

and in our sanctuary Επτηπουος (15)/Επτ[η]πουεος (16).⁴² The *Lallname* Παπας, quite frequent in Thrace (*LGPN* IV 269–270),⁴³ is considered altogether Thracian⁴⁴ and Greek (Παπᾶς as the hypocoristic of πάπας, “father”) or Asianic;⁴⁵ however, in our case, the context is native, as it occurs sometimes in some cities of the western Black Sea shore.⁴⁶ The accentuation of this name present in more onomastic stocks varies according to the editors: Πάπας, Παπᾶς, or unaccented as an indigenous *Lallname*.

(VI) Finally, one monument displays the widespread motif of the so-called “Thracian Rider”.

31. Plate depicting the “Thracian Rider”

Two adjoining fragments (and a third above) of a rectangular marble relief plate (width 24 cm; thickness 3 cm) depicting the “Thracian Rider”, oriented to the right (type A Kazarow). The central parts of the votive icon, along with its upper left part, are missing. The divine personage is depicted as a young, beardless man, dressed in a tunic, and riding a horse. He has a cloak on his back, which freely flutters and he holds an oval object (perhaps an apple or a pine cone?) in his right hand. In the lower right angle of the icon, part of a tree, an altar and a woman’s legs are presented. We can presume that the scene depicted the immensely popular motif of the “Thracian Rider” in the company of a woman standing in front of him along with the altar, the tree and, perhaps, a snake curled up around the tree. No inscription is visible (maybe completely erased). Јовановић 2008, 59–60, no. 10 (photo p. 69, no. 10). II–III AD (stylistically, a solid work of a local artisan, but its simplicity and not so skilful ability to present the proportion of the figure and also the plasticity in modelling the scene suggest the 3rd century).

³⁹ Mihăescu 1978, 205–206, § 173.

⁴⁰ Slavova 2004, 67 (six examples).

⁴¹ Only three occurrences were known at the time of Detschew 1957, 316; two different entries in *LGPN* IV 241 (including *IGBulg* III.2 1736, considered a masculine name, according to G. Mihailov).

⁴² The spelling of the second element, -πουος, is identical to that of our dedication.

⁴³ Another occurrence of this name could be added, in a dedication to Zeus and Hera in Caristorum, *IGBulg* IV 2179, in the sequence [---] Παπου [---] θυγάτηρ [---].

⁴⁴ Detschew 1957, 356; see also *OnomThrac* 267–268.

⁴⁵ See for the bibliography Dana 2009, 190–191.

⁴⁶ See *OnomThrac* 267–268.



After: Jovanović 2008, p. 69, fig. 10

Према: Jovanović 2008, 69, сл. 10

For a commentary of this occurrence, see below. The closest geographical and iconographical analogy to our relief from the Belava sanctuary is the votive icon from the area of Prilep (now in the Archaeological Museum in Skoplje).⁴⁷

TWO MORE RELIEFS DEPICTING ZEUS AND HERA

APPENDIX 1.

Anepigraphic relief from Pakleštica depicting Zeus and Hera in a quadriga

Fragment of the left and central part of a marble plate (41 x 22 x 6 cm) depicting Hera and Zeus driving in a quadriga. Found in the village of Pakleštica, at about 12 km east of Turres/Pirot, near Lake Zavoj. On the left side of the fragment, a standing figure of Zeus is presented, dressed in a mantle, which was probably over his left shoulder, wrapped around the waist and falling down to god's feet. His body is slightly turned to the left side and although missing, we can presume, analogous to similar iconographic presentations, that Zeus held a thunderbolt in his raised right hand. On the god's right side is a standing figure of Hera, who is presented frontally in a long chiton tied under her breasts. The heads of both deities are missing, but they were probably, as in other votive icons of the same iconographical type, presented as a mature bearded man and a mature veiled woman. National Museum of Niš

(inv. no. 176/R). Вулић 1934, 50, no. 43, photo; Pejić 2015, 445. II–III AD (the carving of the details, such as the deities' clothes, and the wheel of the quadriga, imply a very modest local work and the present linearity suggests the 3rd century).



Photo-documentation of National Museum of Niš, inv. no. 176/R

Фото-документација Народног музеја Ниш, инв. бр. 176/R

APPENDIX 2.

Anepigraphic relief of unknown origin depicting Zeus and Hera

Almost complete marble plate (19.5 x 13.5 cm), presenting a scene of Zeus and Hera sacrificing above a lit altar. On the left side of the icon, Hera is presented standing, with a long veil on her head, dressed in a long chiton tied under her breasts. In her left hand she is holding a sceptre, while in her right hand she holds a phiale above the altar with fire. Beside her right leg, between her and Zeus, a lit altar is pictured. A standing figure of a mature, bearded Zeus with wavy hair divided in the middle is presented on the right side of the icon. The god is dressed in a mantle which falls from his left shoulder, wraps around his waist and falls down his legs. While the facial traits of Hera are not recognisable, due to the damage of that part of the

⁴⁷ ССЕТV 77.

icon, the facial traits of Zeus are visible, although not so skilfully modelled – he has small eyes, a prominent nose and mouth with a dense beard. In his raised left hand he holds a sceptre, while his right hand is pointed towards the altar holding a phiale. Ichnographically, the closest analogy can be found in the votive relief from Belaštica (dept. of Plovdiv; now at NAIM, Sofia), although in that scene Hera is accompanied by another female deity and not by Zeus.⁴⁸ *Collector Antiquities*, no. 1770.⁴⁹ Unpublished. II–III AD (the stylistic characteristics suggest a local work of mediocre quality, maybe in the 3rd century).



After: *Collector Antiquities* 1770
Према: *Collector Antiquities* 1770

THE GODS HONoured IN THE BELAVA SANCTUARY: NAMES, EPITHETS, ICONOGRAPHY

Complete dedications and those that are more or less fragmentary allow the recognition in the majority of cases in the divine addressees the couple Zeus and Hera, sometimes with generic titles and honoured in almost all cases by toponymic epithets:

– Κύριος/Κύριοι (17; 23 and 29, for Zeus alone). Zeus alone or Zeus and Hera, defined by the same toponymic epithet, are sometimes qualified as “Lords”, which is a frequent designation for many divinities in the Thraco-Moesian space, as an appellative of domination. This mark of honour in the lexical field of power identifies one or another god as master in his sanctuary and patron of the community that he protected.⁵⁰

– most likely ἐπιφανέστατοι θεοί (20, restored). This superlative acclamation epithet for Zeus and Hera, as “gods whose power is most manifest”, is not absent from the Thracian lands (e.g., *IGBulg* II 670, for Zeus Keraunios; *IGBulg* III.1 1134, 1137, 1138, 1140 and III.2 1628, for Asclepius and Hygia; *IGBulg* III.1 1126, for Asclepius); see below a dedication to Zeus *Souideptos* on Thasos, referred to as θεὸς ἐπιφανής. This Zeus from Souidepta was also honoured as θεὸς ἐπήκοος, as in the dedication from Suvodol (see below).

– the toponymic epithet Σουιδεπτηνοί, in the majority of dedications (more or less complete): 1, 2, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, [15], 17, 18, 19, 23 (sg., only for Zeus). A variant of this toponymic epithet, Σουιδεπτος, is present in two dedications from Suvodol and Thasos (see below). For such variations of toponymic epithets, we may invoke the cases of two sanctuaries from Lower Moesia: Δαβατοπ(ε)ιος/Δαουατοπ(ε)ιος, Δαβατοπιας/Δαβαταπιας and Δαβατοπ(ε)ιης for Hero Hephaistos in Telerig (dept. of Dobrič);⁵¹ Αιλουσαδηνος (*IGBulg* V 5287–5289)/Αιλουσεδης (*IGBulg* V 5294)/Αιλουσαδας (*IGBulg* V 5290–5293) for Apollo in Draganovec (dept. of Tărgoviște).

Ordinarily, the inscriptions unearthed in the Belava sanctuary display the name(s) of the god(s) above the relief, and below the identity of the dedicator, then his status, sometimes adding a generic formula. The variations and displays are, as in every consistent epigraphic dossier provided by a regional sanctuary, manifest, including the opposite way, that is the name of the dedicator preceding the divine addressees (3). The formulary of the dedications is habitual for the Thracian lands (as in the corpus *IGBulg*). In one case, the dedication opens with the auspicious formula Ἀγαθῆ Τύχῃ (17). More dedications were made upon vows or in fulfilment of vows: εὐχὴν (2, 6, 15), *votum posuit* (20); we may remark upon the pious expression κατ’ εὐχὴν in 16, “according to a vow” (cf. Lat. *ex voto*). The inscriptions express in various ways the act of consecration: εὐξάμενος (10, 12, 17); εὐχαριστήριον (5?, 17, 29); the mixture εὐξάμενος εὐχαριστήριον

⁴⁸ Stojanov 1988, 720, no. 2.

⁴⁹ <http://www.collector-antiquities.com/18/?pcat=1&vitem=1926>, consulted on 8 Dec. 2008, with the misleading precision “found in the area of eastern Europe which was once the Roman province of Dacia”.

⁵⁰ See now Belayche 2020, studying the occurrences in three regions (Near East, Thrace and Egypt).

⁵¹ Alexandrov, Dana 2020, 47–52.

(17); in one case, the relief is labelled as a gift, δῶρον (18); more rarely we encounter a verb like ἀνατίθημι (10?, 12, 29), but many dedications are too broken. The motivations are not specified (as, naturally, the purpose is to ask for well-being), but two dedications were made on behalf of others: a woman represented by her son (30, διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ), and an anonymous dedicant for his daughter (?) (28).

Thanks to recent publications, two other Greek dedications must be added to the *dossier* of Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi*. The same epithet pointing to a place-name **Souidepta* occurs on an amazing dedication found near Turres, published on two occasions. The lower part was edited long ago by Nikola Vulić,⁵² whilst the upper part (with the epithet) was published less than a decade ago by Predrag Pejić.⁵³ The two adjoining fragments are part of a pedestal of limestone (140 x 69 x 65 cm), that was found sometime before WWI; the lower part was found in 1928 near Veliki Suvodol, and is kept now in the yard of the Museum of Ponišavlje (Pirot); its upper part was embedded as a support of the altar table in the cemetery church of Mali Suvodol, until 1914, when the church of Sveta Paraskeva was reconstructed and the old support was left in the diaconicon area. The editions of N. Vulić and P. Pejić were considerably improved by the Bulgarian epigraphist Nikolaj Šarankov, who had the occasion to examine the lower part of the inscription and only photos for its upper part. We present here a slightly different edition from Šarankov's readings (*AE*, 2017, 1266 *octies* 1):⁵⁴

vac. Ἀγαθῆ Τύχη· *vac.*
 θεῶ ἐπηκόω Διεὶ
 καὶ Ἥρα Σουειδεπτῶ (1)
 4 ἀνέστησαν οἱ κωμῆ-
 ται Σαρμῖνοι ἐκ τῶ[ν]
 εἰδείων ἐπειμελο[ν]-
 [μένων ---]-
 8 [πορ?]εος Επ[τ]ακενθο[ν]
 καὶ Διζασκενθοῦ
 Επτακενθοῦ καὶ
 Τηρου Διζου καὶ Μουκ-
 12 κου Μάρκου καὶ Βειθυος
 Μουκου καὶ Βλικειση-
 ος Αουλουπορεος.
vac. Εὐτυχῶς· *vac.*

This dedication honours a couple of epichoric gods, associated to *Souidepta*; however, the stone-cutter made

an error, since he used for the two gods a singular form, moreover the masculine one, even though the epithet is preceded by Hera's name. Zeus is praised as θεὸς ἐπήκοος, “the god who listens” and fulfils the prayers. Given the lack of *gentilicia*, the inscription was engraved before 212 by six villagers from **Sarme* (a Thracian place-name?), that could be identified to the Roman remains in the site Gradište (a speaking name), near Veliki Suvodol. All dedicators have Thracian names, with the exception of the common Latin patronymic *Marcus* (l. 11), and, therefore, betray a native extraction.

As if this (re)discovery was not enough, another stunning dedication to Zeus *Souideptos* was recently published. The surprise is both the location and the date: this basis of marble (79.5 x 43 x 37 cm), which supported a marble statuette, was engraved by the beginning of the 2nd century on Thasos,⁵⁵ that is a free city attached to the province of Thrace:

Διὶ Σουιδεπτ[ῶ]
 θεῶ ἐπιφα-
 νεῖ Ζωσίμ[ῆ]
 4 [Ν]εικάδο[ν]
 [ὕ]πέρ τοῦ υἱ[ῶ]-
 οῦ Εὐφρίλλ[ου]
 τοῦ Ἡραγό[ρου].

The onomastic connections – as Euphrillos and Heragoras are epichoric names on Thasos – point to a Thasian family that gave at least two members in the collegium of archontes in the first and second centuries of our era. The dedication of the statue honoured Zeus alone, being apparently the oldest one in our evidence, and moreover in a familial context, far from the region of Turres (300 km as the crow flies). However, we ignore the reasons for the implantation on Thasos of such an epichoric god from another extremity of the province, defined as θεὸς ἐπιφανής, “the god whose power is manifest”.⁵⁶

⁵² Вулић 1941–1948, 127 (no. 280) and 277, with a drawing; Пејић 2015, 368–372 (Pl. CXXIII.8).

⁵³ Пејић 2014 (photos of both fragments, p. 191–192, fig. 1–2).

⁵⁴ We used new photos for the lower part, for which we thank our colleague Milica Ilić from the Museum of Ponišavlje, Pirot.

⁵⁵ Fournier 2021, 363–366, no. 2.

⁵⁶ Cf. a dedication θεῶ ἐπιφανῆ ἐπηκόω (*sic*) Σουρηγεση from Dobroplodno (*IGBulg* V 5329, terr. of Marcianopolis).

If the iconographic and textual evidence from the Belava sanctuary indicates that the cult place was placed under the joint protection of Zeus and Hera, local protecting divinities, this never excluded dedications to other divinities⁵⁷ or, more precisely, the use of other types of reliefs, like the plate depicting the omnipresent motif of the “Thracian Rider” (31, type Kazarow A), so widespread in the Thracio-Moesian space⁵⁸. This also occurred in the sanctuary of Zeus and Hera from Kozi Gramadi, where two types depicting the couple (standing and driving in a quadriga) are accompanied by the motif of the “Thracian Rider”.⁵⁹ In the border region of Upper Moesia and Thrace, that is in the wider territory of Turres/Pirot, this iconographic motif of the Thracian Rider occurs on more votive monuments from Blato (ruins of the Maglič monastery),⁶⁰ Krupac,⁶¹ Golemo/Veliko Selo,⁶² Lanište,⁶³ Ragodeš,⁶⁴ and Osmakovo.⁶⁵

Other divinities were depicted on three icons from the Belava sanctuary in a secondary role, as accompanying the couple Zeus and Hera, standing for an iconographic variation.

Two reliefs (5 and 7) from the Belava sanctuary are depicting, aside from Hera and small in size, the motif of three nymphs in the xoanon form. The cult of nymphs was quite popular in Thrace, bearing in mind not only their mythological background related to Thrace,⁶⁶ but also their identification with nature, forests, water and springs. In that latter context, the presence of nymphs in these reliefs together with Zeus and Hera should be comprehended – as divine beings of life-giving waters (lakes, springs), who underline the already existent aspect of the fertility of the two supreme deities.⁶⁷ As protectors of springs and caves, nymphs had several sanctuaries in Thrace – in Ognjanovo, the oldest sanctuary, in Burdapa, a rural one,⁶⁸ and in Kasnakovo, the only *nymphaeum* discovered in a Roman *villa*, while other sanctuaries were mainly connected to Roman baths: Aquae Calidae/Burgas, Pančarevo, Augusta Traiana/Stara Zagora and Hisar (later Diocletianopolis).⁶⁹ Votive monuments where three nymphs appear together with Zeus and Hera are known mostly in the region of Thrace, in the area of Philippopolis (more than dozen of them).⁷⁰ However, depicting nymphs in the form of xoanon on votive plates represents a Greek influence of more archaic forms and iconography.⁷¹

The presence of Hermes on the relief 19 is not surprising, bearing in mind the multiple roles that the god could have in different contexts. As one of the most popular Greek and Roman gods, Hermes was equally

honoured in the Roman provinces of Upper Moesia and Thrace: in Moesia Superior, his popularity is confirmed by more than 70 archaeological monuments (epigraphic monuments, sculptures, bronze statues and gems),⁷² while in Lower Moesia and Thrace he was no less honoured, whether alone or in the company of other gods, in many votive monuments, sculptures, votive reliefs, 30 herms and bronze statues.⁷³ The iconographic scenes where Zeus and Hermes are pictured together are known from Odessus⁷⁴, Krivodolska Mahala (near Montana) and Nicopolis ad Nestum.⁷⁵ One of the most prominent roles of Hermes, besides being the protector of trade, roads and abundance, is his role as a Psychopompos.⁷⁶ However, in the context of his image presented together with Zeus and Hera on the votive icon from the Belava sanctuary, we would propose an association with invoking wealth in the general sense.

⁵⁷ The identification of the couple of divinities depicted on the relief 16 remains unclear (see comm.), with the possibility of Zeus and Hera enthroned as the most probable.

⁵⁸ The image of the “Thracian Rider” appears on more than 2,000 published votive reliefs discovered in various localities in Thrace or other territories populated by Thracians; see Dimitrova 2002 and the magnificent monograph of Oppermann 2006.

⁵⁹ Hristov 2014, 153 (three tablets). It is, however, important to notice that one of these tablets depicting the Thracian Rider honours Zeus and Hera, in Greek (Hristov 2014, 160, FIN 89), thus suggesting that the main god(s) were variously figured, and that the artisans differently presented them.

⁶⁰ Пејић 2009; Пејић 2015, 360–361, 271–280.

⁶¹ ССЕТ V 23; Петровић 1979, 182.

⁶² ССЕТ V 24.

⁶³ Јеремић 2003, 53–60.

⁶⁴ ССЕТ V 22; Пејић 2015, 503–505.

⁶⁵ ССЕТ V 21. In Upper Moesia more than 100 representations are known of the Thracian Rider, in limestone and marble votive reliefs, mostly discovered inland of the province, while a minority of monuments is known from the *limes* area and urban centres.

⁶⁶ Rhesus, the mythical king of Thrace, was raised by the nymphs.

⁶⁷ Hristov 2014, 151.

⁶⁸ Rabadjiev 2015, 451.

⁶⁹ <http://bogdana-krivoshieva.com/кои-са-божествените-нимфи-и-техните-хр/>.

⁷⁰ Oppermann 2010–2011, 264.

⁷¹ The xoana were used in Thrace during ritual practices, either in the statuary form or in votive reliefs (Petrova 2020, 216).

⁷² See Gavrilović 2014.

⁷³ About the cult of Hermes in Lower Moesia and Thrace, see Драганов 2011, 2018a and 2018b.

⁷⁴ Velkov, Gerassimova-Tomova 1989, 1358.

⁷⁵ Stojanov 1988, 722, nos. 26, 28.

⁷⁶ Gavrilović 2014, 63 and further.

THE TOPONYM **SOUIDEPTA*

In the paper from 2009,⁷⁷ a smaller group of inscribed monuments testified for another epithet of Zeus and Hera in Thrace, Σουιδεπτηνοί, most likely toponymic; this was confirmed not only by other pieces unearthed in the same sanctuary,⁷⁸ but also by dedications from Suvodol and Thasos, providing the variant Σουιδεπτος. The main epithet is constructed like an ethnic with the suffix -ηνός, so productive in Asia Minor and the Near East,⁷⁹ and so frequent in the Thracian space in Roman times.⁸⁰ Σουιδεπτηνοί was then derived from a locality *Σουιδεπτα, just like the toponymic epithet *Καριστορηνοί, again for Zeus and Hera, in the territory of Pautalia in Western Thrace (*IGBulg* IV 2150–2158, 2160–2168), was derived from *Καριστορον/*Caristorum* (today Kopilovci, dept. of Kjustendil). This place-name *Σουιδεπτα could be a compound one or suffixed:

– the best parallel for the first element remains the name of the ἐμπόριον Θουιδαί (today Sliven), in the territory of Augusta Traiana (*IGBulg* V 5634), that occasioned the toponymic epithet of Apollon Συιδηνός (*SEG* LIII 646; *ΑΕ*, 2003, 1567), from a parallel form *Συιδαί/Θουιδαί. *Σουιδεπτα and *Συιδαί share the same root Σο(υ)ιδ-. We may add an epithet of Hero, Σουιτουληνός (*IGBulg* IV 2139, in Boboraci, terr. of Pautalia), probably toponymic (from *Σουιτουλα).

– as for the second element (or suffix) -επτα, it occurs for the place-name *Burdipta*/Βουρδέπτω in the region of Svilengrad, on the road between Philippopolis and Hadrianopolis.⁸¹

The ancient name of Pirot, Tures, is Latin, and could have been a parallel form of a native name like *Σουιδεπτα, but this remains, for the moment, only speculation.

THE DEDICATORS

The number of personal names present in the complete or fragmentary dedications is remarkable, placing the Belava sanctuary among the most valuable onomastic sources for the Thracian regions. We can list about 20 different anthroponyms completely preserved, and at least 19 dedicators with the onomastics or the status more or less complete. The names range, from a linguistic point of view, in three main categories, almost equally:

- Thracian names (6 occurrences, 7 persons): Βιθύς, Διζας (twice), Επτηπουος/Επτ[η]πουεος (f.), Μουκαπουος (f.), Παπας, [---]πυρις (f.);
- Latin names (6 occurrences): Ίούλιος, Λούκιος, Μάξιμος, Μάρκος, Σιλβανός, Ούάλης;
- Greek names (4 occurrences, 6 persons): Ἀπολλώνιος (twice), Ἐρμογένης (twice?), Ἡρακλίδης, Χειόνη;
- incomplete names (5): Τα[---] (name?), [---]ες, [---]ων, [---]όρου (Gen.), [---]ώρου (Gen.).

For men and women alike, it is striking to constate an onomastic mixture, so typical of the Balkan provinces and other spaces (like Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt) during imperial times:

- Thracian idionym, Thracian patronymic (*Lall-name*): Μουκαπουος Παπου (22) (her son has a Latin name, Ούάλης);
- Thracian idionym, Latin patronymic: Επτηπουος/Επτ[η]πουεος Ίουλίου (15/16);
- Latin idionym, Greek patronymic: Σιλβανός Ἀπολλ[ωνί]ου (2);
- Latin *cognomen*, Thracian (?) patronymic: Αύρ. Μάξιμος Τα[---] (22);
- Greek idionym, Thracian patronymic: Ἡρακλίδης Διζου (17);
- Greek idionym, Latin patronymic: Ἐρμογένης Μάρκου (12);
- fragmentary name (Greek?), Thracian patronymic: [---]ων Διζου (21).

Such diverse combinations show not only the profound imbrication of the three onomastic stocks, Thracian, Greek and Latin,⁸² but testify also, in a Hellenophone region, the progressive ascendent of Latin names.

As for the juridical status, the onomastic formulas indicate a majority of peregrines – identified by their idionym (5, 29) or more often by their idionym + patronymic (2, 3, 4, 12, 15/16, 17, 18, 21, 30) –, but also

⁷⁷ Dana 2009.

⁷⁸ Јовановић 2008.

⁷⁹ Fraser 2009, 196–197.

⁸⁰ See Detschew 1936; Dana 2014, 184 and n. 17.

⁸¹ *Iin. Ant.* 137,2 and 231,6 (*Burdipta*); Procopius of Caesarea, *De aed.* 4.11 (Βουρδέπτω); corrupted in *Burdista* (*Iin. Burdig.* 569,1) and *Burdenis* (*TP* 8.3). *Burdipta* could be slightly corrupt. See Detschew 1957, 81; Beševliev 1970, 39 (explaining Βουρδέπτω as an Abl. form of a singular, *Burdipta* being a plural) and 134–135.

⁸² About this phenomenon, see Dana 2011.

some recent Roman citizens (two or three *Aurelii*: 10, 22). One dedication emanates from a *bouleitēs* (17), certainly of the city of Serdica; finally, two dedications were made by soldiers of the Roman army, one in Greek (7, [στρατ]ιώτης, maybe a legionary), the other in Latin (20), a legionary: *miles* [/*eg(ionis)* ---].

Four women appear as dedicators, directly or indirectly, in our evidence: Επτηπουος/Επτ[η]πουεος Ίουλίου (15/16), Μουκαπουος Παπου (22), Χειόνη (28) and [---]πυρις (5); two of these names belong to the native series in *-puius*, *-puiis*, *-pus*, *-πουιους*, *-πουις*, *-πουος* (*OnomThrac* 279)⁸³. All four are, judging by their names, of native extraction. This feminine involvement is explained by the presence of Hera, alone or in a couple with Zeus. It is important to note that Επτεπουος, daughter of Ioulios, visited the Belava sanctuary at least twice (15/16).

This onomastic evidence must now be correlated with the already known sources regarding the anthroponymy of the inhabitants of the region of Turres:

- a complete gravestone with a human head in relief, found in Pirot, for the wife of a *bouleitēs* of Serdica, who died at 36 years of age: Ἀγαθῆ τύχη | Μάξιμος Δρο|ληους β(ουλευτής) Οὐλ|⁴πίας Σερδικῆς | Επτεπυρι Τίτου | τῆ συμβίω μνή|μης χάριν ζη|⁸σάση ἔτη | λς';⁸⁴ again, we can observe the mixture of Thracian and Latin names for these peregrines;
- a list of members of a *koinon* from Turres worshipping *Theos epēkoos hypsistos*, The Most High God “who listens” (to the prayer),⁸⁵ under the priest Hermogenes and the *prostatēs* Augoustianos, by the end of the 2nd or the beginning of the 3rd century.⁸⁶ More than a quarter of the names are Thracian (including assonance ones): Μοκας (l. 9), Μο[κι]ανός (assonance name, twice: l. 9, 12), Πύρος (assonance name, l. 11), and a theophoric name like Σεβαζιανός (l. 14–15), associated with the particular name *Sebastianus*/Σεβαστιανός;⁸⁷
- a dedication from Suvodol, already discussed (see *supra*), listing the names of more villagers from Sarme (Thracian idionyms and patronymics, and only a Latin patronymic): [---πορ?]ις Επτ[τ]α|κενθο[υ], Διζασκενθος Επταικενθου, Τηρης Διζου, Μουκκας Μάρκου, Βειθου Μουκου, Βλικεισης Αυλουπορεος.

If we analyse the native names from the Turres region, of explicitly Thracian facture, the majority are pan-Thracian, but some of them are western Thracian

names, as Μουκας/Μοκας, and the assonance name Πύρος. From this point of view, Turres lay again in a border region (onomastics, languages, epigraphic habits and iconography).

A REGIONAL SANCTUARY

The Belava sanctuary of Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi* appears now to have been the most important sanctuary in the area of Turres,⁸⁸ today Pirot,⁸⁹ in a natural depression between Stara Planina, Vlaška Planina and Belava, in the hydrographic basin of Nišava (affluent of Južna Morava). Turres, a *statio* on the road from Naissus to Serdica, was situated in the territory of Serdica, in the westernmost part of the province of Thrace before entering Upper Moesia. More Greek inscriptions and some Latin milestones, as well as a military diploma, are known in Turres or in its

⁸³ For this series of names, see Georgiev 1978 (proposing an etymology, which requests caution). In the neighbourhood, we may invoke a fragmentary name [---π?]ους, at the sanctuary of Caristorum (terr. of Pautalia, *IGBulg* IV 2180); cf. also *Deopuis* in Eastern Macedonia (*OnomThrac* 124).

⁸⁴ Вулић 1934, 53, no. 51 (photo); Пејић 2015, Pl. CLXVI-II.5 and CXXXVIIIb.8 (photos, allowing to improve the first edition). Differences of readings: Δρο|λήου τῆς Οὐλ|πίας Σερδικῆς and ἔτη λη' Вулић; β(ουλευτής) Οὐλ|πίας Σερδικῆς and ἔτη λς' Sharankov (friendly communication, as he examined the monument, and remarked that “the letter B is marked as an abbreviation with a line above it”).

⁸⁵ About the epithet *hypsistos*, see Belayche 2005 and 2011.

⁸⁶ Ἀγαθῆ [Τύ]χ[η].| Θεῶ ἐπικῶ ὑψίστω | εὐχὴν ἀνέστησαν |⁴ τὸ κοινὸν ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων, διὰ ἱερέως | Ἐρμογένους καὶ προ|στάτου Αὐγουστιανοῦ·⁸ Ἀχιλλεύς, Αὐρήλις, Δίος(ς), Ἀλέξανδρος, Μοκας, Μο[κι]ανός,| Δομήτις, Σοφείνος, Παυ|λεῖνος, Πύρος, Ἀπολινά|¹²ρις, Μοκιανός, [Σ]ῆλυς (?) | καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀσκληπιάδου, Θια[---], Σεβαζιανός Θη[...]| ΤΟΥΤΑC |¹⁶ [---]. See von Domaszewski 1886, 238–239, no. 2; Dumont–Homolle 316, O; Tacheva–Hitova 1983, 178 (no. III.24) and 197–198 (no. IV.11); Gavrilović Vitas 2021, 169–171 and 249; cf. *IGBulg* IV 1924 = V 5674. This altar (81 x 60 x 40 cm) was found in Pazar (formerly, the Jewish quarter of Pirot) and was kept before 1904 in the yard of the church from that quarter of Pirot. While von Domaszewski supposed a θία[σος] Σεβαζιανός, Boris Gerov recognised a personal name. As the inscription seems lost, it is not possible to improve the reading of the last lines.

⁸⁷ On this name, see Dana 2010.

⁸⁸ *Turribus* (*TP* 7.5 and *It. Ant.* 135,2; also *Annon. Rav.* 4.7); *mansio Turribus* (*It. Burdig.* 566,8).

⁸⁹ Valtrović 1884, 150; Kanitz 1892, 82–83; Гарашанин 1951, 170; P. Petrović, in *TIR* K 34, 1976, 128–129, s.v. *Turres*; Petrović 1977; P. Petrović, in *IMS*, IV, 1979, 26; Пејић 2015, 448–498.

immediate vicinity,⁹⁰ but the epigraphic knowledge of the region remains insufficient, mostly for modern reasons: this peripheral region that, with Caribrod/Dimitrovgrad, was claimed by Serbia and Bulgaria, was not included in the corpus of inscriptions from Upper Moesia (because it lay in Thrace) nor in the corpus *IGBulg* of Georgi Mihailov (because it was in Serbia).⁹¹ Accordingly, this part of ancient Thrace and modern Serbia appears as an epigraphic no man's land.⁹²

To the dedications and epitaphs already mentioned in the previous section, we may add other Greek inscriptions published by the end of the 19th century: more honorific dedications on milestones for the dynastic families (some of them emanating from the city of Serdica, and one from Pautalia), such as Septimius Severus,⁹³ Cornelia Paula Augusta (Elagabalus' wife for a short period, 219–220), raised by ἡ Σ[ερ]δῶν πόλι[ς],⁹⁴ for Elagabalus, most likely raised by the same city of Serdica,⁹⁵ for Marcia Otacilia Severa, wife of Philipp the Arab, raised by ἡ Σέρδ[ων] πόλι[ς],⁹⁶ for the same couple, raised by the city of Pautalia;⁹⁷ fragments of a civic decision⁹⁸ and of two epitaphs.⁹⁹ Recently, Nikolaj Šarankov republished more milestones found along the road from Turres to Serdica, on the occasion of Emperor Julian's passage through the territory of Serdica on his way from Naissus to Constantinople, along the *Via Diagonalis/Militaris*.¹⁰⁰ Turres lay on the *Via Militaris*, which assured the communication from Singidunum and Viminacium *via* Naissus to Serdica and then to Byzantium and Asia Minor. It went through the valley of the river Nišava, which was an important communication axis and very suitable for the formation of settlements because of its fertile land and many thermal springs. Between Turres (Thrace) and Remesiana (Upper Moesia) was located the *statio Latina*, marking the entry into the Latino-phone part of the Balkans.¹⁰¹ Not far away was the territory of another province, Lower Moesia – however, with changing borders –, in an area where the sanctuary of Zeus from Gaganica (Montana dept.) was situated, which also provided reliefs with Zeus and Hera driving in a quadriga.¹⁰²

Further, the inclusion of Turres into the larger territory of Serdica is confirmed by the find-spot of a military diploma from 7 January 222: Planinica, a small village South of Pirot, near Dimitrovgrad. The bronze document was for the praetorian *C. Aurelius C. f. Vlp(ia) Valens Serdic(a)*.¹⁰³

In the cultic domain, we may list several Greek dedications (most of them fragmentary) on reliefs depicting

the Thracian Rider in more sites in the close vicinity of Turres: in Osmakovo, for Artemis (?), from Λούκιος Τερεντι[ανοῦ?];¹⁰⁴ in Ragodeš, [Κυρ]ίω [---];¹⁰⁵ in Krupac (near Pirot), a complete dedication for Apollo and Asclepius Βερακεληνοί from Gaios son of Proklos,¹⁰⁶ testifying a compound placename **Berakela* (the second part meaning “springs”); in Golemo/Veliko selo, Κυρίω Ἀσκληπίω,¹⁰⁷ in Poganovo near Caribrod/Dimitrovgrad, an almost complete relief depicting Zeus standing, inscribed Διὶ πατρῶω.¹⁰⁸ Accordingly, thanks to such religious offerings, we are informed of the native toponymy of the region: **Berakela*, **Sarme*, **Souidepta*.

The sanctuary of Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi* at the Markova štrapa site on the Belava mountain belongs

⁹⁰ Other remains in the vicinity: Vrgudinac (antique architecture), Krupac (remains of antique building, a milestone of Philip the Arab, a votive relief dedicated to Apollo and Asclepius), Ragodeš (reliefs of Mithras and depiction of the Thracian Rider), near Caribrod/Dimitrovgrad (two milestones and a necropolis, see Petrović 2007, 80–81).

⁹¹ Sharankov 2019, 41 n. 5, rightly observed: “Numerous stone monuments in Pirot and its region attest the presence of experienced local stonecutters”.

⁹² “The extreme south-eastern corner of Serbia that belonged to the Roman province of Thrace is archeologically almost unexplored” (Petrović, Grbić 2019, 23).

⁹³ Вулић 1931, 117, no. 282, photo (maybe from Pirot).

⁹⁴ von Domaszewski 1886, 238, no. 1; Dumont–Homolle 316, N; *IGR* I 689.

⁹⁵ *CIG* III 3708; *IGR* I 686; Dumont–Homolle 315–316, M.

⁹⁶ Вулић 1933, 62–63, no. 184 (*АЕ*, 34, 196).

⁹⁷ *АЕ*, 1913, 175 = *ILJug* III 1459 = *АЕ*, 2017, 1266 *septies* (found in Krupac, near Pirot).

⁹⁸ Вулић 1933, 63, no. 185.

⁹⁹ Вулић 1933, 63, no. 186; Пејић 2015, 479–480 (Pl. CLX–Va.11 and CLXVIII.1).

¹⁰⁰ Sharankov 2019 (two columns from Pirot).

¹⁰¹ *Mutatio Latina*, situated some 13 km east of Remesiana, near the sites of Crnoklište and Staničenje, was probably the last station after Remesiana before the territory of Thrace began, judging by the Latin epigraphy documented until there, while the Greek language prevails further along the road. See *IMS*, IV, 1979, 25; Petrović 2019, 155–157; Petrović, Grbić 2019.

¹⁰² See Морфова 1957.

¹⁰³ *RMD* I 75; *Sardic(a) intus*.

¹⁰⁴ *IMS* IV 80; *CCET* V 21 (photo Pl. XI).

¹⁰⁵ *CCET* V 22 (photo Pl. XI); Oppermann 2006, 167 and 329, no. 203 (photo Pl. 19).

¹⁰⁶ Depicting two riders: *CCET* V 23 (photo Pl. XII); Oppermann 2006, 167 and 327, no. 152 (photo Pl. 14).

¹⁰⁷ *CCET* V 24 (photo Pl. XII); Oppermann 2006, 167 and 335, no. 405 (photo Pl. 36).

¹⁰⁸ Вулић 1934, 60, no. 69 (photo); Вулић 1941–1948, 306, no. 71 (photo); Пејић 2015, Pl. CIX.8 (photo).

to the type of most frequent rural sanctuaries, which were founded on the mountain tops.¹⁰⁹ This type of sanctuary was not only most frequent, but also most popular in the inland regions of the Roman province of Thrace¹¹⁰. The dimensions of the sacral space at Markova štrapa and the architectural remains of monumental building elements of sacral structures speak of its importance, as do the abundance of at least one type of votive offering given by worshippers – 31 votive icons. The iconographic scene of the supreme divine couple sacrificing together or separately (Zeus alone or Hera alone) is very frequent and well-known from numerous Thracian sites. Different iconographic types of scenes presented on ex-votos from the Belava sanctuary, however, have one unique trait, whether the supreme divine couple is pictured together in the act of sacrifice or driving in a quadriga or whether the deities are presented alone sacrificing¹¹¹ – all three iconographies are alluding to Zeus and Hera as protectors and patrons of fertility.

Different shapes of votive reliefs and skilfulness in the carving of inscriptions and iconographic scenes pose the unavoidable question of possible workshops where the icons from the Belava sanctuary were produced, at the same time bearing in mind their similarities (in shape and iconography) with the already known ex-votos from the above mentioned sanctuaries (Pernik, Gaganica, Kozi Gramadi etc.). Since it is clear that the Belava sanctuary was locally one of the larger and main (if not the main) Zeus and Hera sanctuaries in the region of Tures, we can presume that votive plates came from different workshops – to the support of this assumption goes the fact of the different quality of so-far known icons: some of them are distinguished with carefully and knowledgeable carved inscriptions and figural images, while the majority of icons are characterised by mediocre artisan work and are of less quality – which is again compatible with the financial means of venerator, presumably the majority of worshippers were of average financial means. Thus, we suggest that more qualitative votive reliefs from the Belava sanctuary came from the workshops under the stronger Hellenic influence, south of Tures, while those that are of mediocre quality were mass produced, probably in the workshops that were distanced and where the artisans were less acquainted with the Hellenic models.

Almost all so-far known votive reliefs from the Belava sanctuary were found in a very fragmented state, which does not allow the assumption about the existence of holes on icons for fixing on the walls (or some

other part)¹¹² of the sanctuary. If we are to judge by the four votive reliefs, now in the antiquity collection in the Museum of Ponišavlje in Piroto, their reverse sides are not treated and are without holes, which implies that ex-votos were just placed as offerings in the sanctuary.

Since the area of the Belava sanctuary was plundered during the last decades, it is unknown what other artefacts were also given as offerings to the deities (which are expected in analogous sanctuaries such as Kozi Gramadi, for instance), such as lamps, spindle whorls (offerings related to the weaving that was present in the rural areas), ceramics, coins, votive statues, etc. Again, because of the lack of systematic archaeological excavations, we cannot presume the existence of the Belava sanctuary earlier than the Roman period. However, if the pre-Roman existence of a sanctuary at the Markova štrapa site could be presumed, then it could also be probable that an unknown Thracian local god and goddess were venerated, who were by their roles and functions similar to the Greek supreme divine couple Zeus and Hera and, thus, identified with them and were venerated during the Roman period (with their unique epithet *Souideptēnoi*) and perhaps in the period before.

Finally, the observation of P. Pejić while visiting the site of Markova štrapa and the presumed area of the Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi* sanctuary, that two smaller buildings could be perceived, raises a question of their function: if one building was presumably the sanctuary of Zeus and Hera, was the second building a sanctuary of some other deity or was it perhaps a building used as a *sacrarium* or for communal meals of worshippers?

This sanctuary placed on Belava mountain dedicated to Zeus and Hera *Souideptēnoi* reveals as one of the most important in the large territory of Serdica. It stands already as one of the most documented cult centres in Western Thrace, serving as the main reference of protection near an axis of circulation at the borders of three Roman provinces, in the middle of the Balkans.

¹⁰⁹ Hristov 2014, 269.

¹¹⁰ On extra-urban sanctuaries in Thrace, see Вълчев 2015.

¹¹¹ On more than 30 votive reliefs from Thrace and Moesia Inferior, Zeus is presented alone in the act of sacrifice (Hristov 2014, 154).

¹¹² For instance, on wooden beams which are presumed to have existed in Zeus and Hera sanctuary in Kozi Gramadi (Hristov 2014, 138).

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Резиме: НАДЕЖДА ГАВРИЛОВИЋ ВИТАС, Археолошки институт, Београд
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ЗЕВС И ХЕРА *SOUIDEPTENOI*: СВЕТИЛИШТЕ НА ПЛАНИНИ БЕЛАВА КОД ПИРОТА/*TURRES*

Кључне речи. – Грчка епиграфика, Хера, Иконографија, ономастика, Пирот (*Turres*), светилиште, *Souidepta*, Тракија, вотивне иконе, Зевс

Трагови архитектонских остатака античког храма посвећеног божанствима Зевсу и Хери, са епитетом Соуидептенои, изведеним од локалног топонима, откривено је на локалитету Маркова штрапка на планини Белава код Пирота, у пограничној зони римских провинција Горње Мезије и Тракије. Светилиште је обухватало теменос, жртвеник и два мања храма правоугаоног облика, оријентисана исток–запад, са улазом на источној страни. Иако су светилиште више пута пљачкали илегални копачи, који су девастирали објекте и покрали налазе из њих, аутори овога рада су успели да лоцирају чак 31 фрагментовани вотивни рељеф, од којих се на већини, уз иконографске представе божанстава, налазе и дедикације истима на старогрчком језику.

За анализу и интерпретацију култова Зевса и Хере Соуидептенои, поред архитектонских остатака светилишта, најзначајнији су садржаји до сада познатих вотивних рељефа, на којима се може разликовати више типова иконографских представа: Зевс и Хера који стоје и врше либацију изнад жртвеника, Зевс и Хера на престолу, Зевс и Хера у квадриз, Зевс са фијалом изводи либацију изнад олтара, Хера са фијалом изводи либацију изнад олтара и представа Трачког коњаника. С обзиром на то да су на већини иконографских представа приказана два врховна грчка божанства, иако поред њих фигурирају и друга божанства попут Хермеса, Трач-

ког коњаника и три нимфе, јасно је да су се дедиканти примарно обраћали њима, на шта указују и текстови дедикација. Ономастичка анализа указује на дедиканте претежно трачког и грчког порекла, као и на четири женска дедиканта. Сам топоним Соуидепта вероватно представља или старогрчки назив античког Пирота (латински *Turres*) или пак старогрчки назив некога од локалитета у околини.

Ако се сагледају архитектонски и археолошки налази из светилишта на Белави, може се закључити да је оно представљало изузетно значајно светилиште у области Пирота у антици, који се налазио на стратешки врло важном месту, на *via militaris*, повезујући Сингидунум преко Виминацијума и Ниша са Сердиком, а потом и Константинополисом. Иако је у питању рурални тип светилишта који се најчешће и гради на узвишењима, може се претпоставити да је храм Зевса и Хере Соуидептенои доминирао над другим мањим светилиштима и представљао значајно сакрално место, аналогно светилиштима у Пернику, Гаганици и Кози Грамади у Тракији, те да је живело од 2. до краја 3. или почетка 4. века, када услед царских едиката уперених против пагана и паганских светилишта, као и ранохришћанских активности, долази до уништавања културних предмета у храму и престанка постојања светилишта на Марковој штрапки на планини Белава код Пирота.

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