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THE CULT OF SILVANUS:
RETHINKING PROVINCIAL IDENTITIES IN ROMAN DALMATIA

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Earlier scholarship saw the worship of Silvanus in Dalmatia from two different perspectives. Firstly, as a continuance of the pre-Roman indigenous cult which became »recognized« as the italic deity Silvanus through the interpretatio Romana, and secondly, as a product of indigenous assimilation in Roman culture. This article reconsiders these opinions from a different perspective, making the point that we deal here with an entirely new cultural practice, rather than the survival of the pre-Roman traditions, or with the assimilation of the indigenous population into the Roman identity. It is argued that the worship of Silvanus was used as an interface for communication and display of identity of different provincial sub-cultural groups in the early imperial times. It was a new, inventive and multifaceted religious practice, which incorporated existing local traditions and visual aesthetics with global symbolics of Silvanus, bringing together distinct societies and including Dalmatian communities into the »global« world of Roman Empire.

Key words: Silvanus, Dalmatia, roman religion, Romanization, culture contact, identity

Ključne riječi: Silvan, Dalmacija, rimska religija, romanizacija, kulturni kontakt, identitet

The cult of Silvanus in Roman Dalmatia has not received sufficient attention in ongoing debate concerning the process of interaction between »global« Roman culture, and local provincial communities in the Roman Empire.¹ Discussion on this subject in the past has evolved

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around two different and mutually opposing perspectives. The first view, developed by Schneider (HIRSCHFELD – SCHNEIDER 1885: 34-47) and Von Domaszewski (1895: 14; 1902: 19-20), regarded Silvanus in Dalmatia as an indigenous divinity, visually depicted as the Greek Pan, but recognized as »Silvanus«, through *interpretatio Romana*. With variations in interpretation, this view currently remains dominant in scholarship. Earlier works, influenced by the studies of D. Rendić-Miočević (1989: 425-441, 461-507, 508-523, 531-539), saw Dalmatian Silvanus as a thin Graeco-Roman cultural layer superimposed over the existing indigenous religion.² More recent works have acknowledged the importance of negotiation between indigenous and Graeco-Roman or Roman cultural traditions in this cult.³ An opposing view was argued by Mócsy (1974: 250-52) who devoted some attention to the cult of Silvanus in the wider region of Pannonia and Dalmatia. This perspective was later endorsed by Nagy (1994: 773) and more importantly Dorcey (1992: 68-71) in his encompassing study of Silvanus. This view argues that Silvanus in Dalmatia and Pannonia was originally an Italian divinity embraced by the locals – regardless of the ways he was represented and worshipped.

Although diametrically opposed in their arguments and conclusions, both of these views observe the process of cultural interaction between the indigenous population and the Romans in the framework of »romanization«. This methodological framework is based on several assumptions. First, that both »indigenous« and »Roman« were initially opposed, but internally compact and stable cultural blocks. Second, that »romanization« was a linear process, the spread of the unique Roman »civilisation«, which was disseminated and gradually acquired, with more or less vigour by the insufficiently »civilised« indigene population in the provinces. Such approaches were based on discourse on romanization rooted into the paradigm established by the works of Mommsen and Haverfield and contemporary concerns of the late 19th and early 20th century, such as European colonialism in Africa and Asia (HINGLEY 1996; 2005: 14-48; FREEMAN 1997). In current scholarship, the concept of »romanization« is being radically re-assessed, seriously questioning the foundations on which were built the earlier opinions on the cult of Silvanus in Dalmatia. Taking this into account, this paper re-examines the function of this cult in its historical and cultural contexts, contributing to the wider debate on interactions between indigenous populations and »global« Roman culture in the provinces of the Empire.

The acceptance of Roman cults in the provinces is one of the most significant »battlegrounds« of the debate on »romanization«. The opposing dichotomy »Roman« – »native« has been challenged, showing the post-conquest development of discrete and new provincial and regional cultures and subcultures throughout the Empire, as a result of regional negotiation of indigenous traditions with imperial ideology.⁴ The initial focus on elites, their self-romanization and processes of elite-negotiation as a core which generated these regional cultures (MILLETT 1990; WOOLF 1998; TERRENATO 1998a; 1998b) expanded to the other agents of intercultural interaction, who acted as »cultural translators« (WOOLF 2009a), mediating between different traditions – such as, for example soldiers.⁵ Recent opinions see the process

² IMAMOVIĆ 1977: 55-82; MEDINI 1963-1965; 1984; RAKNIĆ 1965; ZANINOVIĆ 2007: 215-219.

³ A. RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ 1982; 1984; 2003; 2006; 2007a; 2007b; A. RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ – PEĐIŠIĆ 2005; MARŠIĆ 1993-1994; 1997-1998; CAMBI 1998-2000; BEKAVAC 2011; MATIJAŠIĆ – TASSAUX 2000: 76-91; PERINIĆ MURATOVIĆ 2009. Wilkes (2009: 43) also accepted this view, changing his earlier opinion (1992: 259) of Silvanus as an Italian divinity embraced by indigenous population.

⁴ WOOLF 1995; 1997; LAURENCE 2001a; WEBSTER 2001; MATTINGLY 2004; 2011: 203-245.

⁵ JAMES 1999; GOLDSWORTHY – HAYNES 1999; DERKS – ROYMANS 2002; 2006; VAN DRIEL-MURRAY 2002; HINGLEY 2010.

as a patchwork of »discrepant experiences«, diverse local responses to »global« Mediterranean culture, occurring across various social groups, conditioned by new global and local systems of social inequality. These responses produced a number of distinctive subcultures and identity-discourses, which all together, negotiated and produced what we today call »Roman culture«. ⁶ Perhaps the most important outcome of this vigorous debate is the loose consensus, at least in the Anglophone scholarship, that everyone was an active agent in this process. The term »Roman culture« simply represents a shortcut for descriptions of »global« Mediterranean culture negotiated by all segments of society, using as reference points the discourse on Empire and imperial ideology, developed in Augustan times. ⁷ Another point is the recognition that both »indigenous« and »Roman« were not opposing or internally coherent and static systems of values. Indigenous societies experienced a break with the past that resulted in an abrupt and often violent transition to the »global« Roman world. For that reason it is difficult to see an unbroken continuity between pre-conquest and post-conquest societies, religious systems and group identities. ⁸

In accordance with this paradigm-shift related to the concept of »romanization«, views of imperial religion in the western provinces have also changed significantly. It is now becoming clear that our knowledge of religion in Rome significantly impacted upon the assessment of Roman religion in the diaspora. In other words, it was assumed that Roman religion existed as a monolithic structure throughout the provinces, which is today highly doubtful (WOOLF 2009b: 243-244). So, the process of transformation of indigenous religion could not be a process of cultural homogenisation, because there was no homogenous Roman culture or religion. The notion that the Romans »recognised« their own gods in indigenous pantheons and labelled them accordingly (*interpretatio romana*) has come under criticism because it denies agency in this process to the indigenous population (ANDO 2005; DERKS 1991; 1998: 94-118). The opinion that the »traces« of pre-Roman religious systems in provincial imperial cults represent an unbroken continuity with pre-conquest times has also been put under scrutiny. Thus, the earlier division of »Roman«, and »native« gods in the provinces was shown to have no sense in the current interpretative contexts. The *interpretatio* in religion should rather be seen as part of a wider imperial discourse, which conceptualised original indigenous divinities, traditions and beliefs within the imperial ideological framework. It was creating new cultural interfaces for the more successful integration of diverse communities throughout the Empire, combining a sense of cultural »continuity«, and affiliation with the Empire. ⁹

Silvanus was originally an Italian god of agriculture, forests, hunting and boundaries, whose origins cannot be traced with certainty. He was most frequently visually represented as a bearded older male with a *falx* (gardening sickle), a dog and the pine represented as a tree, branch or cone. Silvanus was depicted with female companions – but these representations are mostly from Pannonia and Dalmatia. Female companions usually appear in triads, like the Matres from the La Tène cultural circle or Greek triads of goddesses. The cult of Silvanus was never incorporated into public cults in Rome, and also never gained significant popularity amongst the elite, but became very popular outside Italy. The number of inscriptions and visual representations make the cult of Silvanus one of the most popular imperial cults in Pannonia, Dalmatia, Dacia and Moesia, North Africa, and Spain (DORCEY 1992).

⁶ WOOLF 1992; MATTINGLY 1997; 2004; LAURENCE 2001b; HINGLEY 2005: 91-116; HALES 2010, etc.

⁷ ZANKER 1988; GALINSKY 1996; HABINEK – SCHIESARO 1997; ANDO 2000: 19-48; WOOLF 2001; HINGLEY 2005: 54-71; WALLACE-HADRILL 2008, etc.

⁸ BARETT 1997; WOOLF 1998: 20-21; 2002; VAN DOMMELEN 2007; JIMÉNEZ 2008.

⁹ WEBSTER 1995a; 1995b; 1997; ZOLL 1994; 1995; HAEUSSLER 2007; VAN ANDRINGA 2007; BERMUNDEZ 2009.

The evidence for the cult of Silvanus in Dalmatia is based on dedicatory inscriptions, reliefs depicting the god, and a few small statues assumed to represent Silvanus. In Dalmatia more than 160 inscriptions and images dedicated to Silvanus are known.¹⁰ They are roughly placed in the period between the 1st and 4th century (CAMBI 2002: 123; WILKES 2009: 43), with a majority dated between the 2nd and 3rd century. Only one relief and one dedication have been dated to the late 1st/early 2nd century AD. The dedication from Kaštel Kamberovac (*AE* 1997: 1231) is dated loosely by Maršić (1997-1998: 52-54) in this period based on the indigenous name of the dedicant, while the relief from Peruća near Klis has been dated based on the god's hairstyle, (WILKES 2009: 43). There were three types of sanctuaries, according to Cambi (1998-2000). The most numerous were placed in natural environments, outside inhabited areas, and are characterised by either rock-cut reliefs (RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, A. 1982: figs. 1-2; 2003: fig. 12; RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, D. 1989: Pl. 80) or, more frequently, with dedicatory altars. Cave sanctuaries are unique to the Dalmatian worship of Silvanus and can be recognised on some reliefs, depicting low ceilings and no vegetation (RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, A. 1982: fig. 2; 2003: fig. 12; RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, D. 1989: Pl. 85/1). Elsewhere, Silvanus is never connected with caves, except in a vague reference of Propertius (4.4.11), who is also the only author who associated Silvanus with springs and ivy (DORCEY 1992: 94). The cave sanctuaries have recently been confirmed as such, with the find from the Vodna jama on the island of Brač, consisting of the inscription reading: *Nimfuis et Si...* (DEMICHELI 2010). It is also possible that the mithraeum in the cave Močići in Konavli, near Dubrovnik, was previously used for the worship of Silvanus, as suggested by D. Rendić-Miočević (1989: 531-537). Finally, there were sanctuaries of Silvanus in the form of *aediculae*, attested only in Kaštel Sućurac, between Salona and modern Trogir (*AE* 1912: 43=*ILJUG* 2774; RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ A. 1982: 126; CAMBI 1998-2000: 107).

The inscriptions in Dalmatia were dedicated almost exclusively by the civilian indigenous population, and just a few can be ascribed to soldiers. The dedicants are mostly free-born indigenous persons, although a handful of inscriptions have been ascribed to slaves (*CIL* 3.8684), freedmen and soldiers (MATIJAŠIĆ – TASSAUX 2000: 86-87), as elsewhere in the Empire (DORCEY 1992: 105-34). In Dalmatia, Silvanus is most frequently addressed in inscriptions by name, without additional epithets. The most popular epithet is *Augustus*, followed by *Silvestris*, while only three inscriptions show him as *Domesticus* (PERINIĆ MURATOVIĆ 2009: 236-245; MATIJAŠIĆ – TASSAUX 2000: 85; DORCEY 1992: 69 n. 117). *Silvanus communis* is known from a single dedication from Salona (*ILJUG* 2058), where the dedication is found mentioning an unknown god and Silvanus with the attribute *conservator* (*AE* 1997: 1230) In three inscriptions, two from Danilo near Šibenik (*ILJUG* 175; *CIL* 3.9867=*ILJUG* 176) and one from Bosansko Grahovo (*CIL* 3.14970) he is also referred to as Me(s)sor (the harvester), which is unique in the wider imperial context, but probably just a descriptive term (PATSCHE 1900: 163-64; DORCEY 1992: 30, 69 n. 117). D. Rendić-Miočević (1989: 461) saw Messor as an indigenous theomorphic name and one of the original names of the divinity, but this interpretation is difficult to accept. Messor, was a helper of Ceres (Serv. *Aen.* I.21) while the spread of the name Messor, Mesor, Messorianus, Messoricus, Messorinus/na, Messorius throughout the Empire, makes this opinion less likely (KAJANTO 1965: 82, 361). There is also the frequent abbreviation SVS,

¹⁰ Dorcey (1992: 169-171) lists only 90 inscriptions and reliefs without the unepigraphic Pan-like reliefs and statues (1992: 70). There were a few unpublished inscriptions and images, which can be attributed to Silvanus, when Dorcey's study was written, most of which are listed by Perinić Muratović (2009: 18-110). See also MATIJAŠIĆ – TASSAUX 2000: 104-112 (concentrating on the coast and immediate hinterland), the updated list of inscriptions from Salona (MARŠIĆ 1997: 60-63), and new publications: RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ A. – PEDIŠIĆ 2005; DEMICHELI 2010; MATIJEVIĆ – KURILIĆ 2011. The reliefs reproduced on the upper picture in HIRSCHFELD – SCHNEIDER 1885: 40 are today lost.

which has been explained in different ways by earlier authorities. It is argued that it stands for *S(ilvano) V(otum) S(olvit)* or possibly, that V stands for *vilicus*, but neither of these explanations are satisfactory (DORCEY 1992: 30, 171). Matijević and Kurilić (2011: 147-51) most recently argued in favour of *viator*, which is an interesting speculation, awaiting confirmation by possible finds in the future.

There are two basic models used for the visual representation of Silvanus. These are usually referred to as »Pan-Silvanus« and »Youthful« Silvanus. Pan-Silvanus is found mainly in the coastal regions and »Youthful« Silvanus in the hinterland and in Liburnia (RAKNIĆ 1965). D. Rendić-Miočević (1989: 469, 475-476, 481; cf. BEKAVAC 2011: 164-165) ascribed a significance to this sharp geographical distinction between these types. »Youthful« Silvanus would be, in his interpretation, visually closest to the original Italian Silvanus, while »Pan-Silvanus« would represent the indigenous divinity. Nevertheless, finds from the last two decades show that geographic division is not as clear as it has been in the past, although »Pan-Silvanus« still dominates coastal regions and the »Youthful« Silvanus appears more frequently in the hinterland (PERINIĆ MURATOVIĆ 2009: 248-253). The first type, »Pan-Silvanus«, is quantitatively dominant. It represents the divinity very much as the Greek god Pan, bearded, mature male in a *caprarius* (goat-like) form with goat-legs, horns, pointy ears, and often ithyphallic. The attributes of the god are *syrinx* (pan-pipes), grapes,¹¹ (or generic fruits), *pedum* (hooked shepherd's staff), a goat and less frequently, a dog, which is the only recognizable symbol of Silvanus. There are only five images of Silvanus with *pedum* outside Dalmatia, noted by Dorcey (1992: 41 n. 35). This type is mostly found in Salona and the coast. Silvanus is mostly shown alone, appearing occasionally next to Diana, and the nymphs (*Sylvanae*), either actively involved in a dance or sitting and playing the *syrinx* to the dancing nymphs. The representations lack Pan's usual sexual aggressiveness. Dorcey (1992: 68-71) makes an interesting point saying that in some of these reliefs we cannot be fully certain if they represent Pan or Silvanus, especially taking into account the proportion of them which have no inscription preserved. The terminology goes back to Schneider (HIRSCHFELD – SCHNEIDER 1885: 35-47) who argued that it was in fact Pan depicted on Dalmatian reliefs. Older scholarship contradicted this idea, recognising this divinity indiscriminately as Silvanus, even in cases of images without inscriptions.¹² The argument in favour of disputing that Pan was depicted on those reliefs is that no dedication to Pan has yet been discovered in Dalmatia, and there are several reliefs with images of »Pan-Silvanus« with preserved dedications to Silvanus.¹³ A. Rendić-Miočević (1982: 135-137; 2007b: 20-21) approached this problem in a more sophisticated manner, viewing Dalmatian Silvanus as an indigenous divinity, which through *interpretatione graeca* assumed a visual image reminiscent of Pan, and through *interpretatione romana*, received the name of the Italian divinity. His approach was recently shared by few other scholars (MATIJAŠIĆ – TAS-SAUX 2000: 89; WILKES 2009: 43).

The characteristics of Pan and Dalmatian Silvanus significantly overlap, including physical appearance, the *pedum*, *syrinx* and the goat-like form, and companionship of goat, which is known to be the only animal companion of Pan (BORGEAUD 1988: 66-69). The cult of Pan and the Nymphs was no alien to the southeastern Adriatic (BORGEAUD 1988: 48-52; LARSON

¹¹ Some scholars, with good reason, view grapes as a symbol of Silvanus' connections with Liber, as in a few inscriptions these divinities were connected directly (RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, A. 2007a; MATIJEVIĆ – KURILIĆ 2011: 154-155).

¹² MEDINI 1963-1965; ZANINOVIĆ 1966; GUNJAČA 1968-1969; RAKNIĆ 1965.

¹³ *CIL* 3.1960; 8306; 8343; 9754; 12790; 13187; 14322²; *ILJUG* 155 (=1640); 261; 1592.

2001: 96-98, 160-163). There are numerous references to the temple in Apollonia, and there was probably at least one more close to Lissus.¹⁴ There is also a frequent appearance of goats on coinage of the Greek settlements in the Central Adriatic. The goat is most frequently used in different emissions of Pharos (Hvar) on the reverse, with the head of Zeus, Persephone or Artemis on the obverse. The image of the goat most certainly derives from the coinage of the mother-city of Paros,¹⁵ which was known as one of the centres of the nymph-cult in the Cyclades (LARSON 2001: 179-181). The prominence of Pan on a damaged relief from the Parian quarry (LARSON 2001: 180, fig. 4.11), is good evidence for Pan's popularity on Paros. The earliest series of the silver *tetroboloi* from Pharos also have the *pedum* placed above the goat's head (BONAČIĆ MANDINIĆ 2004: 58-59, No. 88). The other series of coinage from Pharos depicted the goat and coiling snake (BONAČIĆ MANDINIĆ 2004: 58-61, no. 89-93), which, in the opinion of Stipčević (1976: 246), represented a merging of the Pharian symbol of the goat and snake which was an indigenous sacred animal, also present in the myth of Cadmus. However, Visonà (2007: 487) recently argued that the snake on this coin might actually derive from a symbol of Zeus Meilichios. The goat appears also on coins of Issa, in the emission with the head of Athena on the obverse.¹⁶ The name of Tragourion (modern Trogir), an Issaeian settlement in the bay of Kašteli close to Salona, might also derive from the Greek word *tragos* – male goat, and *oros* – hill (MAYER 1928-1929: 7). The hill close to Trogir, where one of two rock-reliefs with Silvanus was found, is called Kozjak, derived from the Croatian word *koza* – she-goat (RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, D. 1989: 467).

The other image of Silvanus, »Youthful« Silvanus, is more frequently represented in the hinterland and in Liburnia. Interesting representations appear around Glamoč, where specific visual aesthetics appear, different from the »Pan-Silvanus« type. The attributes of »Youthful« Silvanus are similar to those of »Pan-Silvanus«, but representation differs sharply as Silvanus is represented as young, beardless, goat-legged, very stylized and disproportional, placed in an undefined space. Some authors, most recently Bekavac (2011: 154), have emphasised that this type is a result of poorer quality indigenous craftsmanship in stone-engraving, which is unacceptable for two reasons. First – as such an opinion constructs Graeco-Roman and indigenous culture in contact as two self-contained and clearly defined cultural units, and second – as it projects Renaissance and post-Renaissance elitist-colonial discourse of ancient culture as culturally dominant and the indigenous as culturally inferior (MILLER 1997; VONDERSTRASSE 2005: 3-9; ULF 2009). Thus, it seems much more appropriate to see these reliefs as a reflection of indigenous aesthetics, rather than of poor quality craftsmanship. The reliefs are less frequently accompanied by inscriptions, unlike those with »Pan-Silvanus«. »Youthful« Silvanus is also less frequently represented alone. The companions to this type of Silvanus are Diana, or the »nymphs«. The »nymphs«, accompanying both types of Silvanus are sometimes represented in very distinctive clothes, which might well reflect provincial female dress.¹⁷ As companion

¹⁴ Strab. VII.5.8; Dio Cass. XLI.45; Theomp. *FGrHist* 115F316 (*ap. HN* II.237); *HN* III.145, location: KOCH 1989: 222-225; ANAMALI 1991: 134-135; CABANES *et al.* 1999, 571. *Nymphaeum promunturium* close to Lissus: Caes. *BCiv.* III.26; *HN* III.144.

¹⁵ BRUNŠMID 1898: 40-51; BONAČIĆ MANDINIĆ 1987; 1995; 2004: 58-67 (nos. 87-108); KIRIGIN 2006: 107-111; VISONÀ 1994; 2007: 487-489; BONAČIĆ MANDINIĆ – GÖRICKE-LUKIĆ 2010: 175-177.

¹⁶ BRUNŠMID 1898: 58-68; VISONÀ 1996: 152-153; BONAČIĆ MANDINIĆ 2004: 94-96 (no. 177-80); BONAČIĆ MANDINIĆ – GÖRICKE-LUKIĆ 2010.

¹⁷ *CIL* 3.9754; *ILJUG* 155(=1640); *CIL* 3.13187; IMAMOVIĆ 1977: no. 32 (SERGEJEVSKI 1929: 95-96); no. 33 (ČREMOŠNIK 1956); no. 34 (PAŠKVALIN 1964). See HALES 2010 on the visual representations of females in indigenous clothes, as a medium of gendering and localising identities, and ČREMOŠNIK 1958; 1963; 1964; for female clothes in Pannonia and Dalmatia.

of Silvanus in Dalmatia, Diana appears more frequently in Graeco-Roman guise as a hunter, but sometimes is shown depicted in accordance with indigenous visual aesthetics (RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, A. 2006). The relief from Opačići near Glamoč shows Silvanus accompanied by a female divinity, which is represented according to indigenous visual aesthetics, but without the usual attributes of Diana. An identical divinity is represented on a relief from Opačići with two female companions (IMAMOVIĆ 1977: no. 26, 47; SERGEJEVSKI 1929: 98; Pictures 1 and 2). This female divinity was probably celebrated as Diana, as the largest concentration of dedicatory inscriptions to Diana is located in this region (IMAMOVIĆ 1977: 83-91).

The argument that Silvanus in Dalmatia is an indigenous divinity, an »Illyrian deity«,¹⁸ or a »tribal god of the Delmatae«, appears stronger on a first sight. Silvanus in Dalmatia shows significant differences in visual representations from Silvanus elsewhere, and he was worshipped mostly by peoples of indigenous origins. An overwhelming number of images and dedications are found in the region where archaeologists located a distinctive Iron Age Central Dalmatian archaeological culture (ČOVIĆ 1987). In approximately the same region, ancient written sources located an indigenous group they referred to as the Delmatae/Dalmatae (ZANINOVIĆ 2007: 15-101; ŠAŠEL KOS 2005: 292-313). However, this argument can be challenged from a few sides. The indigenous population had no homogenous culture, and an even less homogenous religious pantheon, so it is difficult to believe that there was an existing »Illyrian national« deity with whom Silvanus could be equated (DORCEY 1992: 68-69; WILKES 1992: 244; MATIJAŠIĆ – TASSAUX 2000: 89). There are also problems establishing Silvanus as the »god of the Delmatae«. Thus far, there is no evidence that an indigenous divinity similar to Silvanus was worshipped in communities belonging to the Central Dalmatian culture before Roman conquest. Not much is known about sacral life of those communities, and present finds indicate very localised religious traditions.¹⁹ Earlier scholarship argued that stone reliefs with Silvanus represent copies of earlier woodcarving traditions, (ABRAMIĆ 1927-1928: 53; SERGEJEVSKI 1942: 163; RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, D. 1989: 463, 498). This idea was recently criticised by Cambi (2002: 122), and Perinić Muratović (2009: 276-277). The worshippers of Silvanus are not *decuriones* –members of indigenous aristocracy in imperial times (MATIJAŠIĆ – TASSAUX 2000: 89 n. 124), indicating that worship of Silvanus was not a simple continuation of indigenous traditions in Roman times, such as Bindus Neptunus amongst the Iapodes, as suggested recently (DZINO 2009). Finally, it should be pointed that the Delmatae were an indigenous political alliance formed probably in the 4th/3rd century BC with its powerbase in the regions around Glamoč, Livno, Tomislavgrad, Vrlika and Sinj. Their political presence in the coastal areas, where most of the Silvanus monuments are found, was not permanent and can be attested only in brief periods in the late 2nd and 1st century BC.²⁰

¹⁸ Some have argued that the names Vidasus and Thana, mentioned on inscriptions in Topusko near Roman Siscia, are indigenous names for Silvan and Diana (MAYER 1941-1942; 1951: 238-239, recently KUNTIĆ-MAKVIĆ 2005). It is based on indirect evidence, as Silvan is the most popular divinity in Topusko, and the fact that the inscription to Vidasus and Thana was found in the vicinity of those dedicated to Silvanus.

¹⁹ Some enclosed spaces (hill-forts, or *gradine*) might have had local religious significance, such as Mandina Gradina near Tomislavgrad (BENAC 1985: 16, 20, 198; ČOVIĆ 1987: 474), while abundant finds from the river Cetina (MILOŠEVIĆ 1999) might indicate importance of river deposits in sacral life of that region. There was a temple-like structure in Gorica near Ljubuški with sacrificial weapons deposited continually between c. 6th century BC and 1st century BC (ČOVIĆ 1987: 473-474). It is not impossible that the divinity worshipped there, continued to be worshipped under the name Armatus in Roman times (*CIL* 3.14320¹; 3.14320² from Tomislavgrad). His indigenous origins are questioned by Imamović (1977: 177-179), who argued that Armatus was in fact Roman Mars.

²⁰ ČAČE 1994-1995: 118-120; ZANINOVIĆ 2007: 97-101; ŠAŠEL KOS 2005: 293; DZINO 2010: 40, 93.

Dorcey rightly noticed two more things. First, Silvanus in Dalmatia was always shown in the company of Mediterranean divinities, such as Diana or Nymphs. It is undoubtedly true that his companions are frequently depicted in accordance with indigenous visual aesthetics. However, apart from Silvanus' relief with Diana in Opačići, where the representation of his female companion is different from the ways Diana was usually depicted, it does not seem that any of those reliefs joins Silvanus to any other non-Mediterranean i.e. indigenous divinity. Silvanus is never joined with any other non-Roman divinity in inscriptions either. The epithet Messor from Rider and Grahovo is unique for Dalmatia but almost certainly nothing more than a descriptive term (DORCEY 1992: 69). Stating all of that, it is nevertheless impossible to claim that there were no indigenous traditions recognizable in the cult of Dalmatian Silvanus, such as the place of caves and the goat in sacral life. The significance of the caves in indigenous spiritual life seems today to be a well-established fact. A good example is noted on the peninsula Pelješac, where archaeologists located significant quantities of Greek pottery dated between the 4th and 1st century BC around a phallic-looking stalactite in the cave Spila Nakovana (FORENBAHER 2000; FORENBAHER – KAISER 2001; 2006). A very similar sanctuary has recently been located in the Vilina Cave in Rijeka Dubrovačka, near Dubrovnik (PERKIĆ 2010). The goat might have been a significant animal in the worship of Bindus Neptunus amongst the Iapodes, in the valley of Una. A goat is depicted on one of the dedicatory inscriptions to Bindus Neptunus from Privilica-Golubić near Bihać, in *civitates Iapodum*, while goat-bones were discovered in sacrificial deposits at the same localtion (*CIL* 3.14328; PATSCH 1899: 154-162; 1900: 36-40).

The argument of Mócsy and Dorcey that Dalmatian Silvanus was just an adopted version of Italian Silvanus is even less believable from the previous, taking into account earlier discussion showing Dalmatian Silvanus as unique in the empire-wide context of this cult. The only example of goat-legged Pan-Silvanus outside Dalmatia that I am aware of, exists on a fragment from Bassianae in southeastern Pannonia (*CIL* 3.14340; BRUNŠMID 1905: 57-58, fig. 113). There are just a few occasions recorded in Dalmatia where Silvanus is represented in a way similar to the rest of the Empire, such as the relief with human legs from Trusina-Konjic (SERGEJEVSKI 1943: 5-6; IMAMOVIĆ 1977: no. 21), or with gardening sickle in Privlaka-Nin (*CIL* 3.14322²), Lepenica-Kiseljak (*ILJUG* 1592), and the relief from Corinium in Liburnia, which is held in private hands (HIRSCHFELD – SCHNEIDER 1885: 46-47).²¹ This view of Mócsy and Dorcey is deeply rooted in assumption that »romanization« is a top-down process of cultural assimilation, without important indigenous agency, which after some time, transforms indigenous societies into "... a dull provincial culture", as Mócsy (1974: 250-252) noted for Pannonia. As pointed out earlier, this particular aspect of »romanization« was comprehensively discussed in recent scholarship, frequently regarded as misleading and difficult to maintain. The earlier mentioned opinion of A. Rendić-Miočević that Dalmatian Silvanus was the result of *interpretatio graeca* followed by *interpretatio romana* looks much more acceptable as a working hypothesis. Its major problem is the assumption that interactions of Greek and Roman cultures with the indigenous population produces cultural fusion, which is actively shaped by the Greeks and Romans, while indigenous agency, apart from providing cultural symbol and tradition is minimized. So, neither of these opposing views presents a fully satisfactory answer to the question of why the cult of Silvanus in Dalmatia was different from elsewhere in the Empire. Perhaps they do not necessarily exclude each other, as Maršić (1997-1998: 59-60) suggested, but in fact provide a multidimensional picture of this cult, which requires a different approach.

²¹ RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ, D. 1989: 469-470 (Lepenica), 474-477 (Privlaka, Trusina and Corinium).

The contact between these groups should not be seen as simple acculturation, limited to exchange and borrowings from different but self-contained and clearly defined cultures. More recent approaches towards cultural contact in antiquity emphasise the importance of research of the whole chain of exchange, from producer, through transmitter, to the recipient. The cultural contact should be seen as ongoing negotiation and repositioning of all sides in contact, meaningful process of exchange of ideas, which does not result with the simplified outcomes such as cultural assimilation or cultural fusion.²² The contact between Greeks and the indigenous population on the central Dalmatian coast, judging from the material record, seems to be intense, after the conflict which accompanied the initial settlement of the Parians on the island of Hvar in the early 4th century BC.²³ The distribution of fine Hellenistic ceramics and especially vessels and equipment for wine-drinking mostly produced in Issa, suggests a significant degree of indigenous receptivity to foreign influences (KIRIGIN *et al.* 2005). There are also some indications that coastal indigenous communities living on the coast between Trogir and the river Krka, were either allies or even members of the Issaeian commonwealth (*koine*).²⁴ However, the exchange with the hinterland does not suggest similar conclusions, as the quantity of Hellenistic imports found there compared with the coastal communities of Central Dalmatia is very modest (KIRIGIN *et al.* 2005: 9, Map 12, 18). The Roman *conventus c. R.* in the Hellenistic emporium Salona started to grow only in the later 2nd century BC, when Salona became a focal point of periodic Roman conflicts with the Delmatae. Only the final conquest firmly entrenched Salona as the Roman colony *Martia Iulia Salona*, established in the second half of 1st century BC, attracting a significant immigrant population from Italy.²⁵ The cultural contact in central Dalmatia occurred in different contexts, indicating different and changing relations between the participants in the contact, especially showing differences between the indigenous communities on the coast and in hinterland. We also have good evidence for ongoing cultural contact between indigenous communities and the Adriatic Greeks occurring in the mythological and religious domains. Recent studies established that in Dalmatia, mythology and religion was an important tool the Greeks used to incorporate this insufficiently known region within their corpus of ethnographic »knowledge« (CASTIGLIONI 2006; ŠAŠEL KOS 2004; 2005: 115-120). An even more important role played by mythology and religion was as cultural interface and the point of contact between indigenous populations and Greeks. This is confirmed through the abundant evidence for worship of the hero Diomedes in the Adriatic,²⁶ and the popularity of the story of Cadmus and Harmonia.²⁷ The colonisation of the central Adriatic islands in the 4th century BC comes exactly at the same time that the cult of Pan was spreading across the Mediterranean. Pan was a perfect global symbol with which Greek-speaking settlers and indigenous populations could negotiate their similarities and differences, creating a multiplicity of regional varieties, a whole symbolic system of cultural heritage and regional specifics (BORGEAUD 1988: 178-181).

²² MALKIN 2002; 2005; ANTONACCIO 2004; 2010; WOOLF 2009a, ULF 2009, etc.

²³ Diod. Sic. XV.4.1-2; CIG 2.1837c; BE 1953: 147-148 (no. 122); ČAČE 1993-1994: 44-52; STYLIANOU 1998: 193-196; JELIČIĆ-RADONIĆ 2005; KIRIGIN 2006: 64-67; CABANES 2008: 176-178.

²⁴ ČAČE 1993: 10-12, and recently KIRIGIN 2010b.

²⁵ ŠAŠEL KOS 2005: 307-309; DZINO 2010: 65-67; 120 n. 12; WILKES 1969: 220-238; 2002. For Hellenistic remains in Salona, see MARIN 2002: 415-416; KIRIGIN 2010a.

²⁶ KATIČIĆ 1995: 333-386; D'ERCOLE 2000; MAROHNIC 2010; KIRIGIN – ČAČE 1998; ČAČE – ŠEŠELJ 2005, KIRIGIN *et al.* 2009; CASTIGLIONI 2008.

²⁷ ŠAŠEL KOS 1993; KATIČIĆ 1995: 211-303; ROSSIGNIOLI 2004: 103-124; CASTIGLIONI 2010.

There is enough evidence, presented earlier in the paper, to suspect that worship of Pan was not foreign to the eastern Adriatic in the period from *ca.* 400 BC. The earlier mentioned sanctuaries in the caves, such as the Nakovana cave, are already suggested to be evidence of such mediation, which connected existing traditions and the Greek world through the worship of Pan (FORENBAHER – KAISER 2006: 578-579). The cult of Pan seems to be a suitable cultural interface mediating cultural contact between the Greek settlers and indigenous population in central Dalmatia. It could provide common cultural symbols and points of reference, but not necessarily shared rituals and identical meaning and symbols for different communities. Although no inscriptions to Pan exist in Dalmatia, it is possible to speculate that he is indeed represented on some images, which might have been carved prior to Italian settlement in Salona. In particular, those images which do not appear on typical Roman-era altars, such as rock-cut reliefs of »Pan-Silvanus« from Kozjak and Klis.

The settlement of the Italians in Salona, and its growth as a provincial administrative centre represents a whole new stage in ongoing cultural contact - the conquest did not create isolated societies, which lived their separate lives. There are significant similarities between Silvanus and Pan, who remain distinct, but are indeed very similar divinities (DORCEY 1992: 40-42), so worship of the divinity Silvanus, with attributes of Pan, would have meaning to all sides in contact.²⁸ The worshippers of Silvanus had discretion to worship their divinity in the spaces that best suited them and the perception of their cultural traditions – in urban contexts, but also in open spaces of rural hinterland or enclosed caves. This spatial eclecticism in worship of Silvanus might show us differences in ritual and appropriation of this cult within different subcultures appearing in provincial societies of Dalmatia. The differences in ritual can also show new power-dynamics in provincial society. While the conquest of Dalmatia established different categories of conquered and conqueror it also generated social stratification and power-dynamics within these categories. The cult of Silvanus appealed to underprivileged, freedmen, slaves, soldiers, and the people of indigenous origins who did not belong to elite-circles of their communities. New generations needed symbols which would enable them to actively negotiate their cultural and social differences, express communal traditions, aesthetics, identity and power-dynamics. It seems that the cult of Silvanus represents a proper form or template, which would make local cultural tradition recognizable in a global imperial context, making its worshippers feel part of the empire, but also satisfying their need for expression of local belonging and identity. The rituals, dedications and reliefs witness the need of its worshippers to publicly display their affiliations with the cult, and particular place of the cult in their communities. The difference between the images of »Pan-Silvanus« and »Youthful« Silvanus and the appearance of indigenous female clothes on the nymphs seems to be part of the same attitude of active localizing and gendering visual aspects of the cult by different communities, or, provincial subcultures. Thus, it seems appropriate to reconsider social role of this cult in Dalmatia as a new, inventive and multifaceted religious practice, which incorporated existing local traditions and visual aesthetics with global symbolics of Silvanus, bringing together distinct societies and including Dalmatian communities into the »global« world of the Roman Empire.

²⁸ The cult of Silvanus was not the only cultural interface in Roman Dalmatia, the cult of Tres Matres in Salona (ŠAŠEL KOS 1999: 81-92) for example, might have played a similar role.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AE** - L'Année épigraphique: revue des publications épigraphiques relatives à l'antiquité romaine. (Paris)
- BE** - Bulletin épigraphique. (Paris)
- CIG** - Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum. Bockh, BOA, 1837.
- Mnemosyne** - A Journal of Classical Studies. (Leiden)

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SILVANOV KULT: PONOVRNO RAZMATRANJE PROVINCIJALNIH IDENTITETA U RIMSKOJ DALMACIJI

Prijašnja znanstvena istraživanja su vidjela štovanje Silvana u rimskoj Dalmaciji iz dvije različite perspektive. S jedne strane, kult se smatrao preživljavanjem predrimskog, indigenog kulta »prepoznatim« u liku italskog božanstva Silvana. S druge strane, pojava ovog kulta se smatrala kao pokazatelj djelomične ili potpune asimilacije indigenog pučanstva u rimsku kulturu i identitet. Ovaj rad pristupa problemu iz različite perspektive, implicirajući kako se radi o potpuno novoj kulturnoj praksi, rađe negoli preživljavanju predrimskih tradicija ili asimilaciji indigenog pučanstva. Argumentira se da je štovanje Silvana korišteno kao svojevrsna platforma za komunikaciju i identitetsko oblikovanje različitih subkulturnih skupina u rano carskoj Dalmaciji. Rimsko osvajanje Dalmacije je uspostavilo kategorije osvajača i osvojenog, ali je također proizvelo društvenu stratifikaciju i odnose društvene dominacije unutar i između ovih kategorija. Silvanov kult je privlačio štovatelje koji nisu bili na vrhu društvene ljestvice: oslobođenike, robove, vojnike, a ponajviše ljude indigenog podrijetla koji nisu pripadali elitama svojih zajednica. Novim generacijama su trebali simboli koji bi im omogućavali aktivno izražavanje i konstrukciju društvenih i kulturnih razlika, tradicija, i specifične vizualne estetike. Silvanovo štovanje predstavljalo je zgodan obrazac kroz kojeg su se lokalne kulturne tradicije mogle napraviti prepoznatljivim u »globalnom« imperijalnom kontekstu. Time se omogućavalo da se Silvanovi štovatelji osjećaju dijelom Carstva, ali se također zadovoljavala i njihova potreba za aktivnim izražavanjem i oblikovanjem lokalnog pripadanja i identiteta. Razlika među vizualnim prikazivanjem Silvana kao Pana i kao »Mlađahnog« Silvana, te odjevanje njegovih pratilica (»Dijane«, »nimfi«) u specifičnu lokalnu odjeću pokazuje aktivno lokaliziranje i rodno redefiniranje vizualnih aspekata kulta od strane različitih zajednica i provincijalnih subkultura.



Fig. 1 – Map of Roman Dalmatia with localities mentioned in text (D. Dzino)



Fig. 2 – Relief of Silvanus from Glamoč, Zemaljski Museum Sarajevo (D. Dzino with permission of Zemaljski Museum)



Fig. 3 – Relief of Silvanus from Glamoč Zemaljski Museum Sarajevo (D. Dzino with permission of Zemaljski Museum)