
KRIVOTVORINA RIMSKOGA NATPISA IZ ARHEOLOŠKOGA MUZEJA ZADAR

THE FORGERY OF A ROMAN INSCRIPTION FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM ZADAR

Unutar Zbirke antičkih epigrafskih spomenika Arheološkoga muzeja Zadar nalazi se brojna građa pronađena na širem području legijskog logora u Burnumu. Uvod rada tematizira burnumsku nadgrobnu stelu, objavljenu još u trećem svesku CIL-a, koju je fra Lujo Marun otkupio od lokalnih stanovnika 1903. godine. Sudeći prema sadržaju natpisa i paleografskim karakteristikama slova, stela se može i relativno precizno datirati, no ono što je indikativno jest činjenica da se u Arheološkom muzeju Zadar čuva i jedna malena kamena ploča koja sadrži identičan tekst kao i navedena stela. Budući da ploča sadrži čitav niz epigrafskih, ali i klesarskih nelogičnosti, pokušava se dokazati da je riječ o krivotvorini.

Ključne riječi: krivotvorina, XI. legija, Burnum, Lujo Marun

The Collection of Roman inscriptions of the Archaeological Museum Zadar contains a large number of monuments found on the wider territory of the Roman legionary fortress in Burnum. In its introduction, the paper discusses a funerary stele from Burnum, included already in the third volume of CIL, which was purchased from the local residents by Croatian Franciscan Lujo Marun in 1903. The content and the lettering of the inscription allows a relatively accurate dating. Symptomatically, however, the Museum's collection includes a small stone slab with the identical text as on the above mentioned stele. Since the epigraphic and tectonic elements of the slab lack logic in many aspects, the paper is trying to prove it is a forgery.

Key words: forgery, legion XI, Burnum, Lujo Marun

UVOD

Većina epigrafskih spomenika s područja rimskoga vojnog logora u Burnumu danas se čuva u Arheološkom muzeju Zadar.¹ Mnoge od njih pronašao je ili otkupio još fra Lujo Marun koji ih je gotovo redovito skicirao te opisivao okolnosti njihova nalaska u svojim starinarskim dnevnicima.² Tako je i jedan natpis (Sl. 1; AMZd inv. br. A7498), prethodno već objavljen u trećem svesku CIL-a,³ Marun otkupio od lokalnih stanovnika te o tome upisao i bilješku u svoj dnevnik, priloživši pritom i jednostavnu, ali korisnu skicu (Sl. 2).⁴

Natpis glasi:

[---] signif(er) leg(ionis) XI / ann(or)um XLV stip(endiorum) XXI / C(aius) Aemilius C(ai) f(i)lius / Marcellus ann(or)um XLIX / pater et filius // h(ic) s(itus) e(st) (sic).

Sam izgled, kompozicija te dimenzije fragmenta govore da je riječ o nadgrobnoj steli koja je komemorirala oca i sina, od kojih je prvi bio *signifer* XI. legije.⁵ Činjenica da se ime legije ne javlja s počasnom titulom *Claudia pia fidelis* upućuje na to da je stela nastala prije Klaudijeva principata,⁶ a činjenica da XI. legija na područje Ilirika dolazi tijekom rata od 6. do 9. godine⁷ govori da bi stelu trebalo datirati između kraja Augustova i početka Klaudijeva principata.

Paleografske karakteristike pak imaju odlike tiberijanskoga doba i mogu se primjerice usporediti sa slovima s Dolabelinih ploča o gradnji cesta koje su precizno datirane Tiberijevom carskom titulaturom (Sl. 3-4).⁸ No, kako ne postoji studija o paleografskim karakteristikama natpisa s područja rimske provincije Dalmacije, paleografske opservacije u ovom slučaju su dosta nezahvalne.⁹ Ako se još k tomu doda i činjenica da su Dolabeline ploče javni natpisi s carevim imenom, a natpis o kojem je riječ privatni nadgrobni spomenik, jasno je da se njihove paleografske karakteristike ne mogu stavljati u isti okvir. Ipak, Dolabelini natpisi mogu poslužiti kao određeni *terminus*, odnosno kao primjer načina klesanja slova u određeno doba, te se može zaključiti da je stela nastala u godinama Tiberijeve vladavine.¹⁰ Je li riječ o ranoj ili nešto kasnijoj Tiberijevoj vladavini, ne može se reći sa sigurnošću, no to, uostalom, i nije glavna tema ovoga rada.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the epigraphic monuments found in the wider area of Roman military fortress of Burnum are today kept in the Archaeological Museum Zadar.¹ Many of them were found and purchased by Croatian Franciscan Lujo Marun, who would usually sketch them and describe the circumstances in which they were found in his diaries (*Starinarski dnevnic*).² One such inscription (Fig. 1; AMZd Inv. No. A7498), already published in the third volume of CIL,³ he bought from the locals, making an entry about it in his diary, together with a simple but useful sketch (Fig. 2).⁴

The inscription reads:

[---] signif(er) leg(ionis) XI / ann(or)um XLV stip(endiorum) XXI / C(aius) Aemilius C(ai) f(i)lius / Marcellus ann(or)um XLIX / pater et filius // h(ic) s(itus) e(st) (sic).

Based on the appearance, composition and the size of the fragment, it is clear that it is a funerary stele that commemorated a father and son, the former being a *signifier* of legion XI.⁵ The fact that the legion's name does not include the honorary title *Claudia pia fidelis* indicates that the stele was erected before the reign of Claudius.⁶ Accordingly, the fact that the legion XI came into Illyricum during the war of 6–9 AD,⁷ leads to a conclusion that the stele should be dated to the period between the end of Augustus' reign and the beginning of Claudius' reign.

The lettering of the inscription is typical for the Tiberian era and could be compared with Dolabella's inscriptions about road construction, which are accurately dated with Tiberius' imperial titles (Fig. 3-4).⁸ However, since there are no systematic studies on the paleography of the inscriptions from Roman province of Dalmatia, such observations would be a bit ungrateful.⁹ Dolabella's slabs are public imperial inscriptions and the stele analyzed in this paper is a private funerary monument, so it is evident that their respective paleographic characteristics cannot be observed in the same matter. Nevertheless, Dolabella's inscriptions can serve as a certain *terminus* – i.e. as an example of the lettering of the certain period. It can therefore be concluded that the stele was produced during the reign of Tiberius.¹⁰ It cannot be positively established whether it was the early or late period of his reign, but, after all, it is not the central subject of this paper.

1 D. Maršić, 2007, 204.

2 L. Marun, 1998. Usp. D. Maršić, 2009.

3 CIL III 2832.

4 L. Marun, 1998, 125.

5 Detaljnije o steli v. kod D. Maršić, 2007, 210-211.

6 Dio 60.15.4. Usp. N. Cambi, 2009.

7 Usp. R. Syme, 1933, 31-33.

8 CIL III 3198a = 10156a + 3200; CIL III 3201 = 10159 + 3198b = 10156b. Usp. I. Bojanovski, 1974. Natpisi su datirani u godine kada je Tiberije po XLIX. i XXI. put obnašao tribunsku čast, usp. D. Kienast, 2004, 78.

9 O paleografiji latinskih natpisa v. kod J. S. Gordon – A. E. Gordon, 1957. Usp. i probleme kod datiranja natpisa pomoću paleografije kod L. Keppie, 1991, 28-29. Ovom se prilikom najiskrenije zahvaljujem profesoru Lawrenceu Keppieu, na svim savjetima i pomoći koju mi je do sada pružio.

10 O paleografskim karakteristikama natpisa od Augusta do Nerve v. A. E. Gordon – J. S. Gordon, 1958; 1958a.

1 D. Maršić, 2007, 204.

2 L. Marun, 1998. Cf. D. Maršić, 2009.

3 CIL III 2832.

4 L. Marun, 1998, 125.

5 For more details on stele, see D. Maršić, 2007, 210-211.

6 Dio 60.15.4. Cf. N. Cambi, 2009.

7 Cf. R. Syme, 1933, 31-33.

8 CIL III 3198a = 10156a + 3200; CIL III 3201 = 10159 + 3198b = 10156b. Cf. I. Bojanovski, 1974. The inscriptions are dated to the years when Tiberius received *tribunicia potestas* for the XLIX and XXI time, cf. D. Kienast, 2004, 78.

9 For the paleography of Latin inscriptions, see J. S. Gordon – A. E. Gordon, 1957. Cf. also the problems when dating inscriptions using paleography in L. Keppie, 1991, 28-29. I am using the opportunity to express my gratitude to Professor Lawrence Keppie for all the advice and assistance provided.

10 For the paleography of inscriptions from Augustus to Nerva see A. E. Gordon – J. S. Gordon, 1958; 1958a.



Slika 3. Prva Dolabelina ploča o gradnji cesta (Arheološki muzej u Splitu, inv. br. A-2269)

Figure 3. First Dolabella's slab about road construction (Archaeological Museum Split, Inv. No. A-2269)

foto / photo: T. Seser

prednje. Slova nisu klesana, već su urezivana unutar jednostavno izrađenog okvira koji se sačuvao u gornjem i donjem, te djelomično i u donjem dijelu natpisa.¹²

Već sama činjenica da je sadržaj ovoga neobičnog natpisa identičan sadržaju već objavljenoga natpisa, budi sumnju.¹³ No ono što ga čini najviše sumnjivim nije njegov izgled ili sadržaj, već način na koji je izrađen i koncipiran.

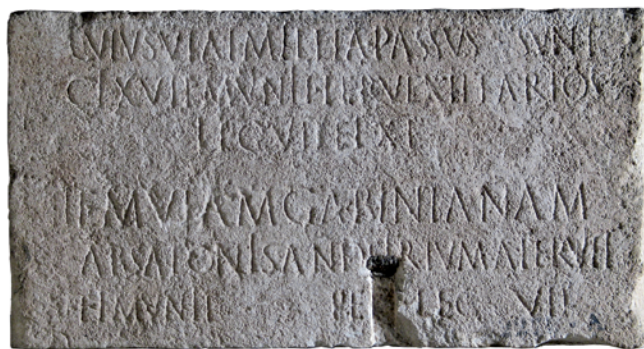
Paleografski gledano, natpis nema apsolutno nikakve veze s vremenom u kojemu je (prema sadržaju teksta) trebao nastati. Sva slova su izrazito neujednačena i nepravilna. Primjerice, slova G i C su klesana u upola manjoj veličini nego ostala, a horizontalne crte, odnosno vodilice, toliko su nespretno izvedene da već i sam pogled na njih upućuje da je riječ o kopiji, i to iznimno lošoj. Uz to, mnoga slova su i prešla tu zadanu marginu, što opet svjedoči o neuvježbanoj ruci majstora.

Ipak, uza sve navedeno, glavni argument po kojem zaključujem da je riječ o kopiji jest sadržajna koncipiranost natpisa koja jasno upućuje da je natpis načinio netko tko je imao priliku vidjeti stelu Gaja Emilija i njegova sina Marcela.

Dakle, na sumnjivom su se natpisu sačuvale desna i gornja margina, tako da je jasno da natpis nije sadržavao niti jedan redak iznad, već da je prvi redak ovoga fragmenta ujedno i prvi redak cijeloga potencijalnog natpisa. Budući da prvi redak počinje slovima LEG XI, u lijevom nedostajućem dijelu trebao bi se smjestiti čitav sadržaj koji se odnosi na oca. To su: sigla njegova prenomena; gentilicij; vjerojatno filijacija i tribus; potencijalno kognomen i mjesto podrijetla, te zasigurno i njegov čin (*signifer*) koji bi trebao stajati odmah ispred navoda legije.

12 Zahvaljujem kolegi Frani Šuniću na pomoći pri autopsiji natpisa.

13 Iako sam već onoga trenutka kad sam prvi put ugledao natpis pomislio da je riječ o falsifikatu, ipak su me savjeti profesora Wenera Ecka ohrabрили da napišem ovu kritiku. Ovom mu prilikom najljepše zahvaljujem, ne samo zbog toga, već i zbog mnogih drugih savjeta koje mi je nesebično pružio.



Slika 4. Druga Dolabelina ploča o gradnji cesta (Arheološki muzej u Splitu, inv. br. A-2271)

Figure 4. Second Dolabella's slab about road construction (Archaeological Museum Split, Inv. No. A-2271)

foto / photo: T. Seser

[---] *leg(ionis) XI* / [*a*]nn(or)um) *XLV stip(endiorum) XXI* / [*et*] *C(aius) Aemilius C(ai) f(ilius) / [Ma]rcellus ann(or)um) XIIII* / [*pa*]ter et *filius / [h(ic) s(itus)] e(st) (sic)*.¹¹

The information in the inventory book of Archaeological Museum Zadar is very scant – it merely tells us that the monument was found in Ivoševci. The year 1960 is also included, but it is not clear if it designates the year when the inscription was brought to the Museum or the year when it was inventoried. The inscribed slab is made of soft local limestone and only its front softer surface is processed; being much harder, the back surface (Fig. 6) is unprocessed. The letters are not carved, but rather cut into it within a plain molding, preserved in the upper, right and, partially, the lower part of the inscription.¹²

The fact that the text of this unusual inscription is identical with the one of the already published inscription raises suspicions.¹³ However, what makes it really suspicious is not its appearance or contents, but its execution and concept.

In terms of paleography, the inscription has absolutely no connections with the period it was supposedly made in (based on the contents of the text). All the letters are uneven and asymmetrical. For example, the size of letters G and C is half of the size of the other letters, and the horizontal guidelines are so awkwardly executed that it is obvious, even at the first glance, that it is a fake – and a very poor one, for that matter. Also, numerous letters cross the preset guidelines – yet another evidence of an unskilled hand.

11 The inscription was published by D. Maršić 2007, 211, Fig. 8.

12 I am grateful to my colleague Frane Šunić for his assistance with the autopsy of the inscription.

13 While my first impression, the moment I saw the inscription, was that it was a forgery, it was the advice of Professor Werner Eck that encouraged me to write this review. I am using the opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to him, not just for that, but also for other ample advice he selflessly gave me.



Slika 5. Krivotvorina rimskog natpisa

Figure 5. The forgery of a Roman inscription

foto / photo: O. Harl

Ako se to usporedi sa sadržajem ostalih redaka, vidi se da u njima nema gotovo nikakvih lakuna u odnosu na stelu Gaja Emilija i njegova sina Marcela. Donji redovi sadrže identičan sadržaj kao i stela. Na primjer, ako bi na tom sumnjivom natpisu prvi redak bio odlomljen i kada na njemu ne bi bila sačuvana gornja margina, došlo bi se do sigurnog zaključka da natpis sadrži barem još dva ili tri retka jer bi se lijeva margina rekonstruirala bez problema, odnosno ne tako daleko od prvih očuvanih slova. No prvi redak je očuvan, kao i gornja margina natpisa, što dovodi do zaključka da bi natpis u prvom retku trebalo proširiti ulijevo više nego dvostruko u odnosu na ukupnu širinu fragmenta. Sudeći prema ostalim redovima, lijeva margina bi se trebala rekonstruirati nekoliko centimetara od prvog sačuvanog slova u drugom retku.

Dakle, jasno je da je riječ o krivotvorini, a razlog zašto je krivotvoritelj na početak natpisa uklesao slova LEG XI, a ne SIGNIF, krije se u već spomenutoj činjenici da ta slova nisu bila dobro vidljiva u vrijeme kada je načinjen prijepis za CIL, te posebno kada je natpis skicirao Marun. Prema tomu, krivotvoritelj uopće nije vidio slova SIGNIF, te je počeo urezivati prva slova koja je vidio, a to su bila slova LEG XI.

Možemo se zapitati zašto bi netko krivotvorio ovakav natpis, zašto bi ga načinio ovako loše i kada je uopće ta krivotvorina mogla nastati. Potencijalnih odgovora je mnogo,¹⁴ no čini mi se da nije nastala nakon 1903. godine

14 O fenomenu krivotvorenja rimskih natpisa v. kod S. Orlandi – M. L. Caldelli – G. L. Gregori, 2015. Postoji i zanimljiva skupina natpisa iz Burnuma koji su u III. svesku CIL-a okarakterizirani kao *inscriptions falsae vel alienae*. Dva natpisa iz te skupine su naknadno locirana čime je utvrđeno da je riječ o autentičnim spomenicima, v. N. Cesarik, 2016.



Slika 6. Stražnja strana krivotvorine

Figure 6. The back of the forgery

foto / photo: N. Cesarik

Still, in addition to all the above, the main argument that makes me conclude it is a copy is the concept of the text: it clearly indicates that the inscription was made by someone familiar with the stele of Caius Aemilius and his son Marcellus.

Based on the right and upper preserved margins, it is clear that there were no lines of the text above the margin; the first line on this fragment is also the first line of the whole potential inscription. Since the first line begins with the letters LEG XI, the whole part of the text relating to the father should be written in the missing part. The line should contain the sigil of his praenomen; *nomen gentile*; probably the filiation; voting tribe; possibly the cognomen and *origo*; and certainly his rank (*signifer*) which would be carved immediately before the name of the legion.

When compared with the stele of Caius Aemilius and his son Marcellus, the remaining lines of the slab contain almost no gaps – the text in the lower line is identical with the text on the stele. For example, if the first line on the suspicious inscription was broken off and if the upper margin has not been preserved, we could conclude that it contained at least two or three more lines, because the left margin could be reconstructed without problems – not so far from the first preserved letters. However, the first line and the upper margin are preserved, which leads to the conclusion that the first line of the potential inscription should be extended to the left for more than twice the total width of the fragment. However, based on the other lines – the left margin should be reconstructed a few centimeters away from the first preserved letter.

So it is evident it is a forgery. The reason why the forger decided to start the inscription with the letters LEG XI instead of SIGNIF should be sought in the fact that these letters were not highly visible either when CIL was published

jer tada je Marun odnio stelu signifera XI. legije u Knin. Činjenica da je Marun često otkupljivao arheološku građu od lokalnih stanovnika mogla je biti i dovoljan motiv za načiniti ovakvu krivotvorinu.¹⁵

Opet, razloga za ovakvo što moglo je biti stvarno mnogo, pa smatram bezrazložnim ulaziti u raspravu o potencijalnim motivima i vremenu kada je natpis mogao nastati. U svakom slučaju, to što je natpis krivotvorina nikako ne umanjuje njegovu povijesnu i muzeološku vrijednost. Ako ništa drugo, riječ je unikatnom primjerku unutar Zbirke antičkih epigrafskih spomenika Arheološkoga muzeja Zadar, koji iza sebe ima zanimljivu muzeološku priču, ali i koji može poslužiti kao svjedok nekih drugih, „nerimskih“ vremena.

or, particularly, when Marun sketched it in his diary. As the forger could not see the letters SIGNIF, he started cutting into the stone the first letters he saw: LEG XI.

A logical question arises: why would anyone forge such an inscription and why would they make it so awkwardly? Another question is – approximately when could it have been made? Potential answers are numerous,¹⁴ but I would say it was not made after 1903 when Marun brought the stele of *signifier* of legion XI to Knin. The fact that Marun often bought archaeological finds from local residents could have been a strong motive for making such a forgery.¹⁵

Again, there could be many reasons for doing such a thing and I find it irrelevant to discuss the potential motives and the time when the inscription was made. In any case, the fact that the inscription is a forgery in no way diminishes its historical and museological relevance. If nothing else, it is a unique item in the Collection of Roman inscriptions of the Archaeological Museum Zadar and, in addition to being associated with an interesting story as such, it can serve as a witness of some other, “non-Roman” times.

Kratice / Abbreviations

CIL – *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin.

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15 I Arheološki muzej Zadar je nakon II. svjetskog rata otkupljivao građu od lokalnih stanovnika iz Ivoševaca, te je lako moguće da godina 1960. predstavlja godinu kada je Muzej otkupio taj natpis?

14 For the phenomenon of forged Roman inscriptions see S. Orlandi – M. L. Caldelli – G. L. Gregori, 2015. There is also an interesting group of inscriptions from Burnum which were marked as inscriptiones falsae vel alienae in the third volume of *CIL*. Two inscriptions from that group were subsequently located, which proved that the whole group is authentic, cf. N. Cesarik, 2016.

15 Since Archaeological Museum Zadar also used to buy archaeological items from the people of Ivoševci after World War II, it is quite possible that 1960 refers to the year when the Museum bought the inscription.