

Ivan BASIĆ

## The inscription of archbishop Ursus as a source for ecclesiastical history of early medieval Zadar (Part I)

The fragment of the inscription was discovered in secondary function built in the face of northern wall of the Zadar cathedral church of St Anastasia. This wall represents the extension of the cathedral dated in 13th century. The inscription has been noticed in 1994 and it was published recently (P. Vežić, 2013.). The text of the inscription: [n?]URSUS ARCHIEPISC(opus) FEC(it) did not arouse significant attention from historians or scholars from similar disciplines. It is simple inscription displaying name of the donor (Ursus) and his title in the ecclesiastic hierarchy (archiepiscopus). Archbishop Ursus is otherwise unknown from other sources. The author of this paper describes the monument, brings epigraphic and anthroponomastic analysis of the inscription, and places it in possible archaeological context. The paper also discusses possible origin of the inscription (provenience and function), brings transliteration and proposes dating. It also analyses function of the fragment (architrave of altar screen) and palaeographic-epigraphic characteristics of the text. Comparison with the other inscriptions from Zadar implies proposed dating of the inscription in early 9th century. A few explanations of the first grapheme of the text are given, with conclusion that it represents remains of the attributes to the title (domnus, domno) or the formula of humility (indignus, peccatur). Preliminary proposition of the reading enables wider considerations, with possible far reaching implications in historical analysis, which will be a topic of second part of this study.

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*Translated: Graham McMaster*