

pod vodstvom dra Firingera mogla je na to ekipa Muzeja reambulirati taj teren i slijediti tragove rimske ceste sve do mjesta gdje se ona sjekla s jozefinskom cestom, a to je trasa današnje baranjske ceste prema Bilju. A upravo na tom mjestu gdje je u davnini stajala cestarova kućica, iskopan je 1774. iz temelja stare ceste miljokaz, koji je tako ushitio našeg Katančića i tako plodno utjecao na njegov razvoj i cijeli životni put. Njegova pak Disertacija ostala je za nizove generacija do danas trajni stimulans za ljubav prema otadžbini i stalni poticaj za historijska istraživanja.

Danica Pinterović

## M. P. KATANČIĆ — THE FIRST TO INITIATE RESEARCH ON MURSA

### Summary

On occasion of the centennial of our Museum in Osijek I thought it could be appropriate to save from oblivion the shocking experiences Katančić had in 1774 seeing the mighty ruins of old Mursa being unearthed and forever destroyed, and how this event evoked his enormous enthusiasm recognizing Mursa as a significant Roman settlement on our soil, and perceiving the ancient urban past of our town. What he then experienced, he later wrote in his first scientific work under the title »Dissertatio de columna milliaria Romana ad Eszekum reperta«, printed at Osijek in 1782. Living at Osijek in the second half of the 18th century, he became eye-witness of an important exploit, the building of a high-road that had to connect the West of Europe with the East, passing through Vienna, Budapest, Osijek (Eszek) and Belgrade to Constantinople. The workmen engaged to lay the foundation of this new high-road happened to dig out on the left bank of the river Drava, a Roman milestone with inscription. They found it among the remains of an old Roman high-road that had been connecting Mursa with the castles on the Danubian Limes in the vicinity. But not only the dam of the old road had to provide stones, bricks, pebble and sand for the building of the new road, even the ruins of old Mursa, the Roman colony on the right bank of the river, that so far had been fairly unexploited, had to be used to the same purpose.

During the processing of this technical exploit for traffic promotion in 1774. Katančić, then living at Osijek as a young franciscan friar, saw with his own eyes how masses of various and valuable archaeological findings daily came to light, such as pieces of ceramics, glass, sigillata pottery, bronze objects, fragments of

a mosaic pavement, coins, gems, inscriptions on stone monuments, sarcophagi and so forth. Then he could also discern foundations of some larger and of some smaller probably public buildings of Mursa inside the city walls as well as the directions of its walls themselves.

In his more advanced age he became professor of history, epigraphy and numismatics at the Buda University, but it was in Osijek, when he was only a learned young friar and professor of history at the local gymnasium,, that with ingenuity and foresight in his first published work he pedantically described the valuable findings that were then uncovered. Also he precisely explained the meaning of the inscriptions that were extremely important for the history of Mursa (of which many got lost forever), steadily not forgetting to indicate the places where they were unearthed. In this way he early in his life revealed himself as a true and very capable scholar to investigate the past of Mursa. His »Dissertatio« has still a great scientific value for its archaeological, epigraphic, topographic and also numismatic contents. The history of Mursa would have been but poorly represented if Katančić had not left to posterity his extensive explanations by which we can see today what an irretrievable loss the exploitation of Mursa's ruins caused when the ne high-road in 1774 started to be built.