

IVAN RADMAN-LIVAJA, LOVORKA LUČIĆ

A CURIOUS INSCRIPTION ON A LEAD TAG FROM SISCIA

Ivan Radman-Livaja, PhD
Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu
Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog 19
HR – 10000 Zagreb
E-mail: iradman@amz.hr

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Lovorka Lučić, MA
HR – 10000 Zagreb, Gredice 4
E-mail: lovorka.lucic@gmail.com

While almost all lead tags from Siscia share identical morphological characteristics and while most of their inscriptions correspond to defined patterns with some variations, there are exceptions and oddities such as the tag presented in this paper. Despite uncertainties as far as reading is concerned – the surface of the tag is badly scratched – the inscription clearly does not have a commercial character since there is no price, nor any abbreviations usually recorded on those tags, referring to dimensions, weights, dyes, garments, wool or any other trade items or service available in the textile craft. It must have been a personal note addressed to a person the author of the message seemingly urged to meet. Did somebody use the opportunity to slip a message to his sweetheart while meeting each other in a *fullonica* or a *tinctoria*?

Key words: Siscia, lead tag, tessera, love message (*Ključne riječi: Sisak, olovna pločica, tesera, ljubavna poruka*)

A monograph, i.e. a corpus of lead tags from Siscia was recently published but, as the author himself pointed out,¹ that book should rather be considered as a starting point for the study of this material and certainly not as the definite publication. As a matter of fact, when studying a corpus of inscriptions, especially a large collection, researchers can hardly cope with all the minutiae in just one single publication. While one should strive to give a comprehensive overview, it remains rather hard, if not impossible – unless your publisher authorises you to write as many volumes as you might wish – to deal thoroughly with every detail and issue the researcher may encounter. The case of the Siscia lead tags may be

¹ Radman-Livaja 2014, 155.

considered as a good example in this respect. The corpus is fairly large – 1123 lead tags, almost all of them inscribed – and while most inscriptions correspond to well defined patterns, there are quite a few exceptions and oddities which certainly deserve a careful analysis or in any case a more systematic study than the basic overview given in the corpus of lead tags from Siscia.

All of those lead tags share basically identical morphological characteristics and most of their inscriptions correspond to a rather clear pattern with some variations.

Those small lead plates are of a more or less rectangular shape and are always pierced with a hole (occasionally even with two or three perforations) so that the tag could be attached to the merchandise. Almost all of them carry an inscription,² sometimes only on one side, but usually on both sides. Most of the tags were reused several times and thus one can often discern traces of older inscriptions. Their inscriptions by and large follow the same model: one can read personal names on one side, *duo nomina* (far more rarely *tria nomina*) as well as single names, often followed by a patronymic, i.e. names of both citizens and peregrines, perhaps even slaves sometimes. The other side of the tag usually carries an inscription mentioning the merchandise, most of the time in an abbreviated form, as well as a price and quite often an indication of quantity or weight.³ Those inscriptions are always written in capital letters or the older Roman cursive, sometimes even in a mixture of both.⁴

There are many different abbreviations on those tags but it would seem that most of them refer to garments and the textile craft. Besides words and abbreviations referring to different clothing items, one finds also abbreviations which mostly seem to refer to the dimensions and colours of those textile products. The prices present on most tags must have been indicating the value of the goods or the cost of a given service like cleaning, fulling or dyeing. It would thus appear that the vast majority of the Siscia tags kept in the Zagreb Archaeological Museum were used in the trade and production activities of textile professionals.

The tag to be discussed in this paper – and whose possible reading will be suggested in the following paragraphs – does not, however, really conform to the pattern described above (**fig. 1-2**).⁵ To tell the truth, it is not completely out of place in the corpus because it does not differ morphologically and it does have

² There are only a few exceptions, tags which were discarded before being used or reused after the original inscription had been thoroughly erased; Radman-Livaja 2014, 595, cat. 25.33, 25.34.

³ Radman-Livaja 2014, 63-117.

⁴ Radman-Livaja 2014, 52-62.

⁵ Radman-Livaja 2014, 333, cat. 01.78. (inventory number AMZ A-12676).



Fig. 1. Photography of the obverse of the lead tag A-12676.

Sl. 1. Fotografija prednje strane olovne pločice A-12676.



Fig. 2. Photography of the reverse of the lead tag A-12676.

Sl. 2. Fotografija stražnje strane olovne pločice A-12676.

an inscription on both sides. One side shows personal names as well, but the first discrepancy compared to the usual pattern starts already there. Names of individuals are a common occurrence on those lead tags, as a matter of fact at least 949 individuals were identified in the inscriptions. The names of most of them conform to the regular onomastic practice in the Roman Empire - citizens with *duo nomina* (only rarely *tria nomina*), peregrines bearing a single name followed by a patronymic, as well as many people with just a single name. The latter may have been either peregrines or citizens whose *nomen gentile* was omitted due to the lack of space. While most labels clearly mention only one individual, presumably a

client, i.e. his or her name using either a full or incomplete nomenclature, some inscriptions obviously or at least quite likely refer to several individuals.⁶

We may only speculate why one had to write down the names of several individuals, usually two, sometimes three, once even four. In certain cases, a second name could actually belong to an older but still highly visible and well incised inscription, in which case the names would be unrelated. However, in many cases the handwriting is clearly the same and all the lines of the inscription obviously appear to have been written at the same time. We may then assume that two or more clients may have ordered together the same merchandise or the same service. Another not at all unlikely possibility would be that one of the names refers to the client while the other name (or names) refer to the craftsman (or craftsmen) in charge of the job, or more precisely in charge of one particular segment of the job not covered by the craftsman who took the order. For example, a fuller might have written down the name of the tailor in charge of mending the client's garment after the cleaning.

One side of the studied tag bears three male names written apparently at the same time and in the same handwriting. What was the exact link or bond between the three is a matter of speculation. They could have been involved all together in some kind of commercial transaction, presumably in the textile trade since other lead tags from Siscia were clearly primarily used in that context. Were they all clients? Or were they perhaps colleagues? Team workers? Each name is written in its own line and absolutely nothing in the inscription points to their particular role. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the inscription refers to three individuals whose names can be interpreted as peregrine single names, or perhaps as *cognomina* of citizens whose *gentilicia* were omitted due to lack of space. The latter assumption lies in the realm of conjecture but cannot be dismissed. The name *Niger* appears quite frequently on lead tags from Siscia, both as personal name or patronymic,⁷ which is hardly a surprise since it was a rather common name all over the Empire but more particularly so in Italy, the Iberian peninsula and *Gallia Narbonensis*.⁸ In contrast, *Egirus*, a name of likely Celtic origin, is extremely seldom encountered. The only known occurrence besides this inscription was found in Aquileia.⁹ The last name, *Speratus*, appears to have been rather popular

⁶ Radman-Livaja 2014, cat. 01.61, 01.67, 01.73, 03.08, 04.18, 06.01, 06.15, 08.14, 11.19, 12.08, 17.18, 19.111, 22.36, 23.37, 23.40, 24.02, 24.13, 24.19, 24.20, 26.10, 26.16, 26.18, 26.42, 26.70, 26.71, 26.113.

⁷ 16 occurrences, cf. Radman-Livaja 2014, 139, 237.

⁸ Dean 1916, 40-41; Mócsy 1959, 183; Barkóczy 1964, 319; Kajanto 1965, 64, 228; Alföldy 1969, 253, s. v. *Niger*; Mócsy 1983, 201, s. v. *Niger*; Mócsy 1984, 210, 219; Abascal Palazón 1994, 439-440, s. v. *Niger, Nigra*; Solin, Salomies 1994, 368, s. v. *Niger*; OPEL III: 101-102, s. v. *Niger*; Minkova 2000, 220, s. v. *Niger*; Christol 2001, 31; Rémy 2001, 80, 169; Tataki 2006, 501-502; Radman-Livaja 2014, 237.

⁹ CIL V 727; OPEL II: 114, s. v. *Egirus*; Delamarre 2003, 160, s. v. *egi(no)*; Delamarre 2007, 94, s. v. *Egirus*.

in Siscia since it is encountered on 6 tags.¹⁰ It was also far from being unpopular elsewhere, with most occurrences known from Africa, Noricum, the Rhine provinces, the Iberian Peninsula and the rest of Pannonia.¹¹

The inscription preserved on the other side is unfortunately of not much help while aspiring to understand the role and whereabouts of these three men. Indeed, it is completely out of the ordinary as far as Siscia lead tags are concerned and it does not conform to any known pattern of those inscriptions. It does not have an obvious commercial character since there is no price, nor any abbreviations referring to dimensions, weights, dyes, garments, wool or any other trade items. As a matter of fact, it is not even certain that it is related to the three men mentioned on the obverse since the handwriting does not appear to be identical. The latter observation may remain a matter of discussion but it is nevertheless certain that this inscription does not correspond by its form to any known inscription found on a lead tag.

At first glance it appears to be some kind of personal message addressed by one person to another. Unfortunately, the surface of the tag is badly scratched, which impedes the reading. Nonetheless, the surface is not evenly damaged and three of the four lines can be read with rather high confidence, but the reading of the second line remains riddled with uncertainties.

The surface of the tag is more particularly damaged there and traces of an older, mostly erased inscription could quite likely be present as well, making the interpretation even fiddlier.

We may assume though, according to what can be read, that this inscription could have been a private communication, presumably some kind of love message.

The first line is easily understandable, we may clearly read the word *FORTISIME*. It is undoubtedly the superlative form of the adjective *fortis*, *-e*, meaning “strong”, both physically and mentally.¹² Thus, depending on the context, this adjective might also be translated as “powerful”, “vigorous”, “steadfast”, “brave”, “manly”, “tenacious” or “persistent”. One letter *s* is missing, which is unsurprising since in Vulgar Latin such simplification after a long vocal or a diphthong is regularly encountered.¹³ This word may be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, it could be an adverb of the superlative form of the adjective *fortis*. Thus, we could

¹⁰ Radman-Livaja 2014, 267.

¹¹ Holder, *Alt-Celtischer Sprachschatz* II, 1625 f.; Mócsy 1959, 21, 59-60, 191; Barkóczi 1964, 324-325; Kajanto 1965, 77, 297; Alföldy 1969, 300, s. v. *Speratus*; Ben Abdallah, Ladjimi Sebai 1983, 44; Mócsy 1983, 272, s. v. *Speratus*; Pflaum et al. 1983, 88; Abascal Palazón 1994, 515, s. v. *Sperata*, *Speratus*; Solin, Salomies 1994, 406, s. v. *Speratus*; Minkova 2000, 256, s. v. *Speratus*; Raepsaet-Charlier 2001, 388-389; *OPEL* IV, 91, s. v. *Speratvs*; Radman-Livaja 2014, 267.

¹² *TLL*, vol. VI.1. 1145-1166, s. v. *fortis*; *OLD*, 726, s. v. *fortis*.

¹³ Väänänen 1981, 59.

translate it into English as “most strongly”, “most persistently” or “most boldly”, even as “very manly”. The other possible interpretation would be a superlative vocative of a masculine form. In that case the adjective, we may say quite a flattering one, would certainly be referring to someone, whose name in vocative form should be in the second line. The beginning of the message would thus be interpreted as „you, who are very strong“, “very bold” or “most manly”. This interpretation would very likely attest that the recipient of the message was a male person. Obviously, this does not imply that the message was necessarily written by a girl (or a woman), it could have been as well a message of one man to another. Depending on different possible interpretations, as we shall see, we may hardly claim with certainty that this was a message (love message?) from a girl to a boy or from a boy to a boy. As a matter of fact, if we opt for the first interpretation, i.e. the adverb in the first line, and not knowing precisely what is written in the second line, it might have been a message from a boy to a girl as well, perhaps even a message from a girl to a girl.

The reading of the second line is definitely crucial for the interpretation but, as already pointed out, it is precisely this line which defies our understanding. We may presently surmise that it contains a verb and perhaps a personal name. Before returning to it, we shall present more thoroughly the third and fourth lines, whose interpretation may provide clues allowing us to solve the second line.

The third line presents no major difficulties and we may read it as *ME CVM*, i.e. the pronoun *EGO* in the ablative singular, with the translation “I”¹⁴ and the preposition *CVM*, “with”¹⁵. This preposition usually comes after the personal pronoun and conjoins with it in one word, just like in the present case, *MECVM*.¹⁶ It is to be translated as „with me“. In the last, fourth line, we can read *TE ESSE*, obviously a construction known as accusative with infinitive¹⁷, in this case the verb “to be” (*sum, esse, fui*)¹⁸ with the pronoun “you” (*tu*)¹⁹. Accusative with infinitive however always requires a main verb, and we believe thus that this verb had to be written in the second line. Be that as it may, the inscription seemingly appears to express somebody’s urge or desire to be with another person.

How may we interpret the second line? We already pointed out that one would expect a verb in this line, considering the accusative with infinitive which

¹⁴ *TLL*, vol. V, 2. 250-278, s. v. *ego*; *OLD*, 595, s. v. *ego*.

¹⁵ *TLL*, vol. IV. 1339-1378, s. v. *cum*; *OLD*, 467-468, s. v. *cum*.

¹⁶ Gortan, Gorski, Pauš 1998, 58; Leumann, Hofmann, Szantyr 1977, 461³; Panhuis 2006, 32; Touratier 2013, 80.

¹⁷ Kühner 1912, 687-721; Panhuis 2006, 130-132; Touratier 2013, 176, 276-291.

¹⁸ *OLD*, 1865-1867, s. v. *sum, esse, fui*.

¹⁹ *OLD*, 1982-1983, s. v. *tu*.

follows and a personal name would not be out of place either, especially if we accept the possibility that the word *fortis(s)ime* is an adjective in vocative. Nonetheless, a personal name could be present as well even if *fortis(s)ime* is employed as an adverb.

So, we may reasonably presume that the second line is composed of two words. If we assume that the first word is a verb, it would have to be in the first or second person of the singular present, or in the second person of singular of imperative. We can probably rule out the first person because the letter *O* is not to be seen, as the verb would normally end that way if it really was a first person singular. The same conclusion can be reached if we try to read it as a second person singular, since it would require an *S* as the last letter, which does not appear to be the case. If it really is the main verb, it should probably be an imperative. There are thus several possible, more or less questionable interpretations.

While the reading of some letters in the second line is hardly contentious, others remain rather puzzling. At first, we thought that the second line starts with the letter *R*, followed by the cursive form of the letter *E*, i.e. *II*. Nonetheless, we could not dismiss either the possibility that the first letter could in fact be an *L* and not a capital *R*, since the presumed "belly" of the *R* appears shallower and could thus perhaps be the trace of an older inscription. The third letter may likely be interpreted as a *C* or perhaps a *G*. The next letter appears at first sight to be an *I* followed by an *L*, but this reading is far from being certain. One may actually see a shallowly incised stroke pointing to the right above the presumed *I*, while the presumed diagonal sloping down to the right which would make an *L* of that letter could simply be a scratch. We would rather be inclined to interpret the long stroke above the letter *I* as the trace of an older *S* which should have been present in the first line, between the *I* and the *S* of *FORTIS(S)IME*, but as far as the letter *L* is concerned, we find it hard to suggest a definite reading. Instead of an *I* and *L*, could this be a clumsily incised *R*? It does not seem very likely, but it cannot be dismissed either. Another questionable interpretation would perhaps be the letter *II*, i.e. a cursive letter *E*. It does not get easier: after the presumed *L*, we may perhaps have an *R* followed by an *I* or would it rather be an *I* followed by the letters *C* and *I*? What follows seems to be less debatable: two letters *S*, i.e. *SS*, are almost certainly to be read there. The last letter could be an *A*, or perhaps a cursive *E*, i.e. *II*.

Could the first word be the verb *regero*, 3., more specifically the imperative of second person of singular: *regerere*, which means "carry", "bear" or "bring back"?²⁰ Another interpretation might perhaps be the imperative of the verb *regno*, *I.*, *regna*,

²⁰ OLD, 1598-1599, s. v. *regero*, -rere, -essi.

“rule” or “be in control”, if we assume that the letter *N* could have been omitted by the scribe.²¹

The verb *rego*, 3. (*rege*) could perhaps be interpreted here as “guide”, “direct”, “manage”.²² If we interpret the first letter as an *L*, *lego*, 3. might be a possible reading, as the imperative *lege*, “choose” or “select”.²³

What appears to be a second word might also be an imperative, for example *cris(s)a* (from *criso*, 1). In this context, a translation such as “move your haunches (as in coitus)”, i.e. an explicit sexual message, is not to be entirely excluded, but remains quite dubious, as there is almost certainly a redundant *S*.²⁴

The last letters to be read as *ISSE/ISSA* may perhaps be interpreted as *ipse/ipsa*, a demonstrative pronoun.²⁵

Coming to our mind was also the idea that this second line could have been composed of just one single word, maybe an imperative like *recense*, to be translated as “review” or “examine”, but with a redundant letter *S* – *recensse* (*sic!*).²⁶

Nonetheless, all of the transcriptions and interpretations suggested above appear rather far-fetched, some even more than others.

Not much could be gathered from observation (and we spent hours and days staring at the second line), but thanks to a collaborative project, we were able to have a second look at this tag using RTI – an image processing and visualization technology. We used digital tools provided by the Scholarly Digital Edition (SDE) *Tesserarum Sisciae Sylloge* (TSS), accessible to anyone on the website of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb (<http://www.amz.hr>). This SDE offers the possibility to make the autopsy of our epigraphic objects, i.e. Siscia’s lead tags, through a set of digital tools. Those digital tools allow the users not only to visualize, but also to annotate and transcribe the inscriptions. Altogether, we call this the Digital Autoptic Process (DAP). This DAP is supported by the *TSS Viewer*, which provides a frame by frame inspection (with lighting from different directions) while the *RTI Viewer* simulates lighting of the object (from different directions as well) through image processing allowing better examination of the tags. The DAP also includes an annotation and transcription process which is performed through *MarkOut*, a tool for tracing letters on the tag, as well as annotating and transcribing the inscriptions and discussing possible interpretations (fig. 3-4).²⁷

²¹ OLD, 1600, s. v. *regno*, -are, -avi.

²² OLD, 1601, s. v. *rego*, -ere, -xi.

²³ OLD, 1014, s. v. *lego*, -ere, legi.

²⁴ OLD, 460, s. v. *criso*, -are, -avi; Adams 1982, 2, 136-138, 146.

²⁵ OLD, 964-965, s. v. *ipse*, *ipsa*, *ipsum*.

²⁶ OLD, 1580, s. v. *recenseo*, -ere, -ui.

²⁷ Lamé 2015; Lamé, Sarullo 2015

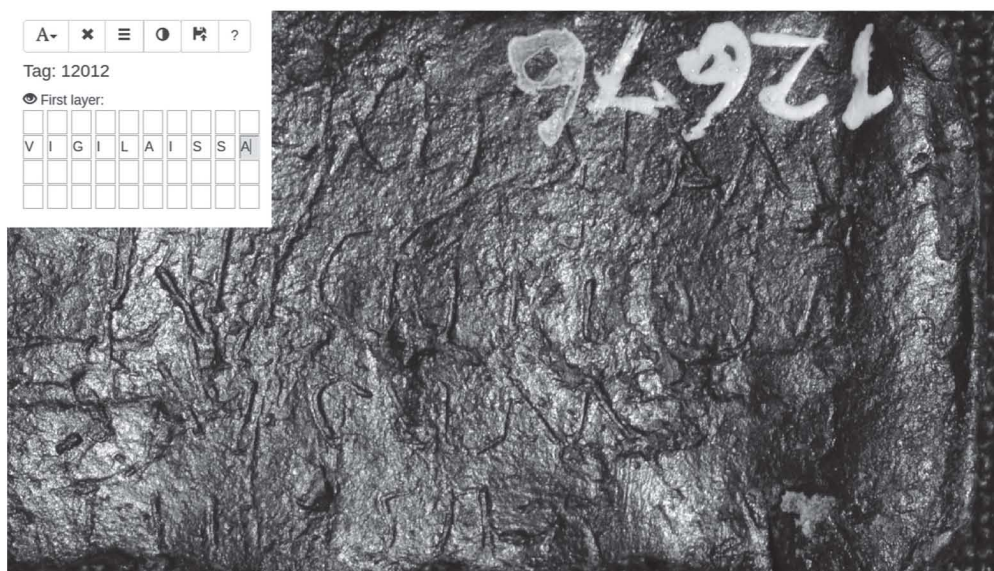


Fig. 3. TSS Viewer / Sl. 3. TSS preglednik.

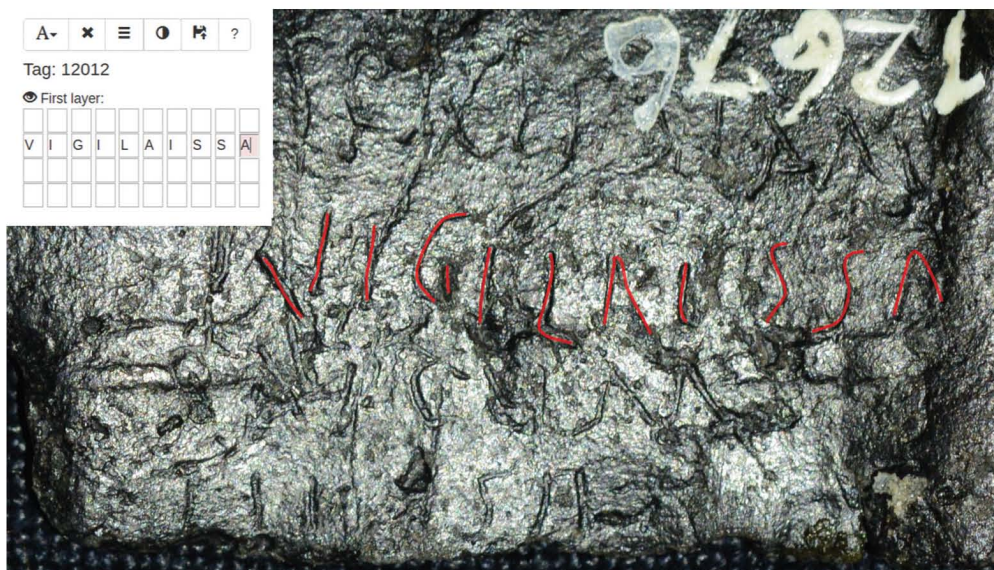


Fig. 4. TSS Viewer and MarkOut / Sl. 4. TSS preglednik i MarkOut program.

Thanks to this digital framework, we may suggest a more credible reading of this inscription.

Although the second line remained a hard nut to crack, letters were easier to discern and one could more easily distinguish traces of older inscriptions. It appeared that the second line almost certainly starts with the letter *V*. Letters that follow are quite well visible and can be read as *I G I L*. Since there is a verb *vigilo*, *l.*, meaning “to stay awake”,²⁸ we assumed that this could be an imperative form of that verb, i.e. *vigila*, “stay awake” or “be awake”.

As already pointed out, the last letters are likely to be read as *ISSE/ISSA*, perhaps to be interpreted as *ipse/ipsa*²⁹, a demonstrative pronoun. We are more inclined to read it as *ISSA*.

It obviously cannot be a vocative, since pronouns do not have vocative case but if it really is a demonstrative pronoun, in this particular case it might be interpreted as the feminine nominative related to the writer of the message (since we read it as *ISSA*). If so, she could have emphasized her desire to be with someone, perhaps a message to be interpreted as “I strongly and personally...” However, if we opt for this interpretation, how can we explain the imperative form *vigila*, i.e. the connection between the demonstrative pronoun nominative *ipsa* and the second person imperative *vigila*? Presuming that the final *M* may have been omitted, not an infrequent occurrence in Vulgar Latin,³⁰ it could be an accusative, as part of an accusative with infinitive construction, meaning “You personally...”. It would also imply that *fortissime* has to be an adverb of the superlative form of the adjective *fortis*. Lastly, *Issa* might be a female name as well.³¹

Thus, we may suggest two possible or at least not completely implausible readings (fig. 5-6):

FORTIS(S)IME
VIGILA ISSA(M) (ipsam)
MECUM
TE ESSE

Freely translated as „Stay awake persistently (untiringly) so that you may be with me personally (alone, by yourself, unaccompanied)“.

If we accept this reading, the message must have been sent to a woman, either by a man or, perhaps, by another woman.

²⁸ OLD, 2062, s. v. *vigilo*, -are, -avi.

²⁹ OLD, 964-965, s. v. *ipse*, *ipsa*, *ipsum*.

³⁰ Väänänen 1959,71-77; Väänänen 1981, 66-67

³¹ Delamarre 2007, 112, s. v. *Issus*.

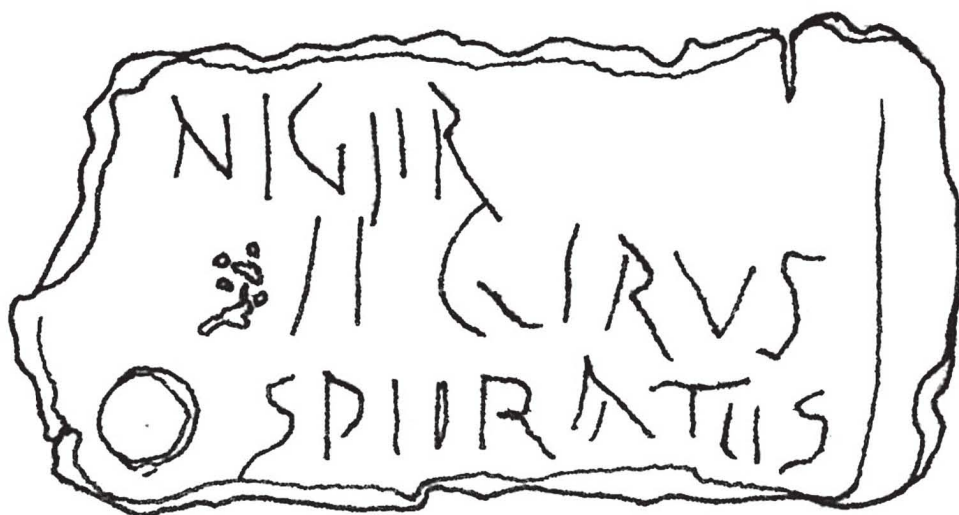


Fig. 5. Drawing of the obverse of the lead tag A-12676 (made by Hana Ivezić).

Sl. 5. Crtež prednje strane olovne pločice A-12676 (izradila Hana Ivezić).

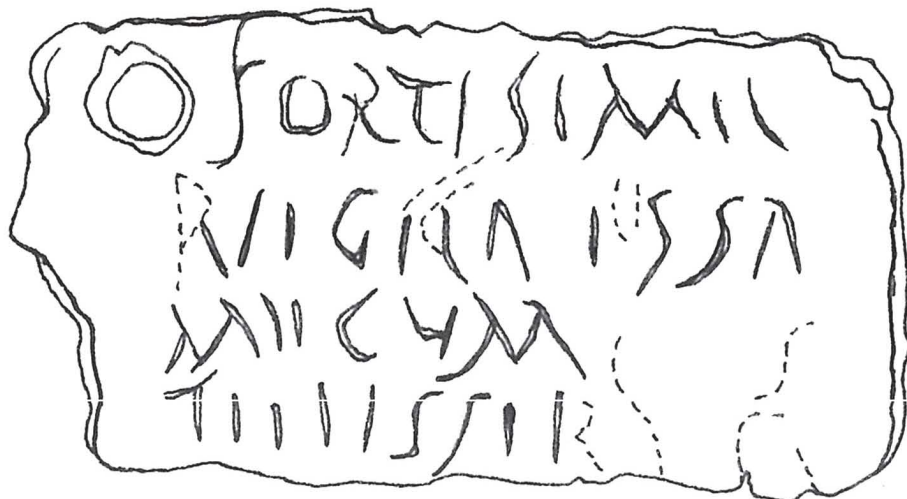


Fig. 6. Drawing of the reverse of the lead tag A-12676 (made by Hana Ivezić).

Sl. 6. Crtež stražnje strane olovne pločice A-12676 (izradila Hana Ivezić).

If we accept the possibility that *Issa* is a personal name, presumably a female name, we may suggest the following interpretation:

FORTIS(S)IME
VIGILA ISSA
MECUM
TE ESSE

„Issa, stay awake persistently (untiringly), so that you may be with me.”

There is still no way to know if the message was sent by a boy or a girl, although we may assume that *Issa* was a female person.

If we have to opt for just one interpretation, we would be more in favour of the second reading, i.e. a message addressed to a girl named *Issa*.

Obviously, these are only suggestions. As long as we will not be able to read the second line with certainty, we will remain very cautious with our interpretations and conclusions. Nevertheless, we do not doubt about the purpose and general meaning of this inscription. It must have been a personal, we may actually say intimate message, addressed to a person the author of the message urged to meet. We will probably never know who was behind this love story (or was it just a sordid affair?) but we may imagine that somebody used the opportunity to slip a message to his sweetheart (or object of his lust) while meeting each other in a *fullonica* or a *tinctoria*. What a subtle way for an employee to court a client if both wanted to remain discreet in order not to raise the suspicion of parents or spouses...

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SAŽETAK

Neobičan natpis na olovnoj pločici iz Siscije

Većina tesera iz Siska dijeli iste ili vrlo slične morfološke karakteristike, a natpisi im uglavnom odgovaraju određenim obrascima – mada varijacije nisu rijetkost – no neki primjerci sasvim odudaraju od uobičajenog. To je slučaj i s olovnom etiketom predstavljenom u ovom radu. Unatoč dvojbama oko čitanja natpisa – površina tesere je vrlo oštećena i u značajnoj mjeri otežava čitanje – očito je da natpis nije bio komercijalnog karaktera. Nema, naime, cijene kao ni uobičajenih kratica koje se odnose na dimenzije, težinu, boje, vrste odjeće, vunu ili bilo koju vrstu usluge, odnosno svega onoga što redovito nalazimo u natpisima na ovim tesimalama. Po svemu sudeći je riječ o osobnoj poruci koju je autor natpisa uputio nekome koga je želio susresti.

U prvoj objavi je dio natpisa ostao nepročitan, no zahvaljujući RTI snimanju bili smo u mogućnosti bolje razlučiti slova, posebice u drugom redu na reversu koji je predstavljao najveću poteškoću u čitanju i interpretaciji. Na žalost, još uvijek ne možemo tvrditi da je natpis pročitan s apsolutnom sigurnošću, no vjerujemo da su barem ponuđene donekle uvjerljive interpretacije.

Treba naglasiti da natpisi na aversu i reversu vjerojatno nisu istovremeni ni međusobno povezani. Na aversu se spominju tri muška imena – *Niger*, *Egirus* i *Speratus* – no točna uloga tih ljudi nije poznata. Možda je riječ o klijentima koji su zajedno naručili neku robu ili uslugu? Ili su to pak kolege, odnosno suknari, bojadisari ili krojači koji su zajednički morali izvršiti neki zadatak ili ispuniti narudžbu? Za revers predlažemo dva moguća čitanja:

FORTIS(S)IME
VIGILA ISSA(M) (ipsam)
MECUM
TE ESSE

U slobodnom prijevodu: „Ostani uporno (neumorno) budna, kako bi bila sa mnom osobno (sama, bez pratnje)“.

Ako prihvatimo mogućnost da je *Issa* osobno ime, za pretpostaviti žensko, možemo predložiti i slijedeću interpretaciju:

FORTIS(S)IME
VIGILA ISSA
MECUM
TE ESSE

„Issa, ostani uporno (neumorno) budna, kako bi bila sa mnom“.

Ukoliko bi se morali odlučiti za samo jednu interpretaciju, bili bi skloniji drugom prijedlogu, odnosno poruci upućenoj djevojci ili ženi imena Issa.

Dokle god se drugi red ne bude mogao pročitati sa sigurnošću, ovo ostaju samo sugestije kojima treba pristupiti s oprezom. Ipak, nema stvarne dvojbe po pitanju smisla i svrhe ovog natpisa. Riječ je o osobnoj poruci upućenoj osobi s kojom je autor teksta priželjkivao susret. Nećemo vjerojatno nikad saznati detalje te (valjda) ljubavne priče, no možemo zamisliti kako je netko iskoristio priliku te dragoj osobi predao poruku prilikom susreta kod suknara ili bojadisara.

