

Unpublished Correspondence on Archeological Research in Sisak from the Second Half of the 19th Century

In the middle of the 19th century Sisak and the surrounding area saw intense economic and social development. The key subject of these events was the construction of the railway line from Sisak to Zidani Most in 1862, when large-scale construction work was done along the route which abounded in archaeological remains from the Roman era.

As an accompanying phenomenon, there was increased construction on the site which had in ancient times represented *Siscia intra muros*. A railway station was built, as well as many houses of larger dimensions belonging to the new, wealthy merchant class.

When digging the foundations for these buildings, archaeological material was often encountered and usually transported to foreign museums and collections of antiquities, especially during the construction of railways, when the antiques were removed without supervision.

This problem was recognized by many prominent Croatian social and political public officials, including Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, who attempted to organize the systematic collection and processing of antiquities from the Sisak area.

Under the auspices of first the Society for Yugoslav History and Antiquities, and later the National Museum in Zagreb, many famous Croatian patriots such as Mijata Sabljar and Ivan Tkalčić tried to explore the terrain of Sisak and record the archaeological importance of the findings.

As they all had business responsibilities in the capital, their studies of antiquities from Sisak were not consistent, so the local population were appointed as commissioners of the Society for Yugoslav History and Antiquities or the National Museum in Zagreb.

The first to perform this task were Alexander Bobek and Josip Jilk, with the help of Franjo Schloissnigg, and later Dragutin König.

When Sisak was united into one administrative center, the preconditions for complex social action were created and “*Siscia* – the Society for the Excavation and Collection of Roman Antiquities in Sisak” was established, in which its Secretary, Dragutin Jagić, held the most important role. “*Siscia*” as a society, after initial success, soon reduced its activities, and further archaeological research, as well as cooperation with the National Museum in Zagreb, was conducted by individuals such as Andrija Colussi, Ferdo Hefele and Milan pl. Šipuš.

The aim of this study is to disclose unpublished correspondence of several of these researchers, regarding the archaeological excavations of Sisak and is limited to the second half of the 19th century, in order to provide more complete knowledge of the dawn of Croatian archaeological science.

Key words: Siscija, second half of the 19th century, Archeological research