A HEAD FROM KARATAŠ ATTRIBUTED TO EMPEROR CLODIUS ALBINUS

Abstract. – In the fortress on the Karataš site (Diana), which was enclosed in the Djerdap part of the Danube limes, a male head has been discovered, with portrait characteristics showing it as an official, imperial portrait. It is a portrait belonging to a specific, small group of imperial portraits originating from the territory of the Roman Empire, with the problem of identification and interpretation present in the international archaeology ever since the end of the 19th century. The find of the head from Karataš is connected with the mentioned small group of portraits belonging, according to a group of authors, to Septimius Severus (193–211), while the other group thinks it is a portrait of Clodius Albinus (193–197).

After a few decades, this is the first discovered find belonging to this group, which again actualizes the problem who of the mentioned two emperors was portrayed on the head from Karataš.

Key words. – Roman sculpture, imperial portrait, end of the 2nd/ beginning of the 3rd century, the Djerdap part of the limes, Septimius Severus, Clodius Albinus.

In the fortification on the Karataš locality (classical Diana) enclosed in the Djerdap zone of the Danubian border, a man’s head was discovered, with all the characteristics of an official, imperial portrait. Unfortunately, this important find remained unknown not only to our, but also to foreign scientific public (the portrait was not published within any specific work, with emphasized reasons of its distinction among the Moesia Superior portrait sculptures as one of the most important finds; it has been usually presented in the exhibition catalogues).2

The head from Karataš (Fig. 1. a–c) belongs to a special type of Roman imperial portraits which are problematic for the archaeologists around the world, since they have not been identified or illuminated since the end of the 19th century. One of the best connoisseurs (not only of that period) of the imperial portraits’ iconography, J. J. Bernoulli, in his famous and still essential and pertinent work3 has collected and analyzed all, till then, discovered works of this type: stylistically and iconographically analogous imperial portraits with an open problem still unsolved up to present days. It is the problem of the identification of a person presented through these sculptures chronologically clearly dated to the end of 2nd, or to be more precise, the last decade of the century. The decade, after the murder of Conomodus in 192 till 197, distinguished by bloody wars between the five aspirants to the imperial throne in Rome, with


3 J. J. Bernoulli, Römische Iconographie, Bd. II/3, Leipzig, 1894, 17–21.
the obvious consequences upon the imperial sculptures (short periods of rule, emperor’s bond to the restricted regions they ruled over i.e. had support of, and consequently to the sculptural workshops and mints within the region...). In view of this, the whole problem becomes more difficult and interesting regarding the fact that most authors, who have dealt with this problem in the period of the last 100 years and longer, have defined it as the portrait of Clodius Albinus, while the others were opinionated that it represents Septimius Severus – therefore, the portrait of two emperors who in the mentioned period and events had had their own special history and relation, from close allies to mortal enemies.

Two more facts give special significance to the head from Karataš: a number of discovered sculptures which can be identified for sure as the portraits of Clodius Albinus is almost symbolical – on the whole territory of the Roman Empire, only 7–8 finds have been made, almost all discovered in the last decades of the 19th century, so that the head from Karataš activates again this problem with which, after the Bernoulli’s definition, the best experts on Roman sculpture (W. Amelung, S. Reinach, R. P. Hinks, C. C. Vermeule, H. P. L’Orange, B. M. Felletti Maj, K. Fittschen, P. Zanker, E. B. Harrison etc.) have dealt with. At the same time, the head from Karataš is the only find of the Albinus’s statue, not only at the border of Moesia Superior i.e. territory, but also on the territory of other Danubian provinces.

INTRODUCTION

The Head from Karataš (Fig. 1. a–c) most obviously sublimes all the problems connected with a group of imperial portraits originating from the territory of the Roman Empire, from the late Antonine epoch (the end of the 2nd/ the beginning of the 3rd century), difficult to
define, that is to decide precisely who of the Roman emperors from the mentioned period is represented on the heads of this type.

In the context of the available historical data, this isolated find originates from a fortress at the border of Moesia Superior, which, together with the other part of the province and adjacent Danubian provinces (Pannonia, Dacia, Moesia Minor) represents a core of the military power of Septimius Severus in his victory over the numerous pretenders to the throne, as well as the final episode of this bloody drama, when he will be denied the title of the Roman Emperor by the one he had the least expected to do it – Clodius Albinus, but whom he will, like the previous emperors proclaimed by their legions, also conquer and finally rule over the Roman Empire as the founder of the new imperial dynasty. On the other hand, the center of the Albinus’s power being on quite the opposite, west side of the Roman Empire (foremost in Britain and Gaul), all the mentioned facts, from the historical point of view, would lead to the conclusion that the statue in question is the one of Septimius Severus. All the more so as there are no discovered sculptures of Albinus yet, not only in the DJerdap part of the border (where about 40 different types of fortified towns have been found) i.e. on the territory of Moesia Superior, but also on the territory of the neighbouring provinces. Thus far, they have been discovered in the west part of the Empire, in Italy, Britain and Gaul. Finally, discovery of this head is significant for the interpretation of the character of the very Karataš fortress when compared to other fortified towns in this part of the border.

When all sculptural finds from the territory of the Roman Empire are analyzed, three groups of representations come out. First, the most numerous, are the portraits which indisputably personify Septimius Severus. Second, noticeably smaller group, encloses portraits differently interpreted by various authors – some think that those are Albinus’s portraits, while others are opinionated that the portraits represent Septimius Severus. The third, the smallest group of finds are the portraits which may be positively identified as the ones representing Clodius Albinus.

What makes the head from Karataš an exceptional find is the fact that it contains all the principal elements according to which the supporters of various interpretations, as indicated by stylistic and iconographic analyses, analogies, and summary facts from various historical sources, base their theories on the identification of emperors on this type of portraits, entering the historical stage of the Empire at the end of the 2nd century. Our opinion is that the given facts are reason enough to define the head from Karataš from all points of view within a special work which will be presented to the domestic, and especially the foreign scientific public.

**STYLISTIC AND ICONOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

The elaborately drilled locks of hair and the treatment of the eyes are clear indications of late Antonine work. The problem is that we have no unequivocal portraits of Albinus except those on coins. A further complication is that the portraits of Septimius Severus look a great deal like those associated with Albinus, even the ones on coins. There is little scholarly agreement on the portrayal of Albinus. We have one ancient account of his appearance: »He was tall, with unkempt curly hair and a broad forehead. His skin was wonderfully white; many indeed think it was from this that he got his name.«

Although all the proposed identifications show mature, bearded men with curly hair, there are many differences among them. The Riley head resembles most an example in Britain, but the arrangement of locks above the forehead is an unusual detail that is not paralleled by any of the proposed portraits of Albinus.

So far, information about the head in the context of the exploration of the fortress has not been published yet. Also, only the total height of the head with the saved part of the neck was given, while in the entry on the width of the face in both cases the information was not given.

The head had been modelled with a chisel, a drill and a rasp (its work is particularly obvious on the surface of the neck). Open face surfaces and the neck have been smoothed and polished, while other parts are just smoothed.

The head is made of top-quality marble of fine, small-grained structure, most likely originating from some famous Greek or Asia Minor quarry.² from

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² These facts were not published in either of the catalogues where they were first published (Classical Portrait in Yugoslavia, op. cit., 1987, 206, Kat. br. 170 and D. Srejović, A. Germanovć-Kuzmanović, op. cit., 1987, 30, No. 7), so that these facts are missing in later papers. According to oral data we have gained, the head had been discovered above the fortress, while a bulldozer was moving away and levelling soil at the west side of the rampart.

² Like, for example, Proconnesian or Pentelic. However, there are provincial quarries of not so quality marble, limestone, and sandstone for architectural plastic, tombstones and cult monuments.
Fig. 2. Clodius Albinus. Sestertius from a mint in Rome, 193–194. London, British Museum.
Fig. 3. Clodius Albinus. Sestertius from a mint in Rome, 193–194. London, British Museum.
Fig. 4. Clodius Albinus. Coin from a mint in Rome, 193–194. London, British Museum.
Fig. 5. Head of Septimius Severus on an Aureus from a mint in Rome, 202.
Fig. 6. Head of Septimius Severus on an Aureus from a mint in Rome, 193–4.
Fig. 7. Septimius Severus. Sestertius, a mint in Rome, 210
Fig. 8. Head of Marcus Aurelius on a Sestertius, a mint in Rome, 172–3.
which almost entire, until now discovered sculpture from Moesia Superior has been made. The head is modelled in the frontal aspect, with the straight look of the eyes. It represents a mature man with thick, curly hair, a beard and a moustache, done with wide strokes. Back locks of hair are done briefly, and the hair covers the beginning of the neck in a semi-circle. Elongated, almost rectangular face ends at a forehead with high hairline, between which there is a thick hairlock falling on the forehead.

However, the modelling was mostly focused on the big, almond-shaped eyes, with pupils not highlighted, but emphasised with two additional details: supraorbital arches with thick eyebrows curving the eyes in low bows, rimmed with heavy eyelids. There are deep wrinkles between the cheeks and the nose ends. The moustache is long with hung ends, so that it thoroughly covers the upper lip and small mouth’s corners. Big ears are almost stuck to the face (the right ear is modelled more precisely). The most prominent detail on the face is the big, snub nose (which will be the crucial element in the identification of a person represented).

The neck is strong. For the reason of the mentioned wide strokes, in spite of the achieved anatomic and natural form, the head seems slightly unfinished. However, it is not because of a sculptor’s potential lack of ability, but rather his style, nor does it mean that the work is qualitative, modelled in some of the renowned artistic centres. Characteristic wrinkles on the forehead and above the nose base are also an interesting detail. They are done softly, still portraying froms trux, first appearing on the portraits of Caracalla. Contrary to his portraits, where, beside similar wrinkles on the forehead there are two slanting wrinkles going from the nose base, emphasising severe and stern face expression, on the head from Karataš they harmonise into the calm and serene face, representing either individual features, or just a sculpting aspect highlighting expression of a mature man.

The main problem regarding not only the head from Karataš, but also other portrait sculptures from Moesia Superior, is identification of a person presented on them. In most cases, this problem is not only without a solution, but also impossible to decide whether the portrait in question is an official, imperial, or a private one. There are a few reasons for that. First of all, the sculpture’s fragmentation: in most cases it’s only heads, with slight or substantial damages. As regards private portraits, only rich noblemen could afford their portraits in sculpture, made of the top quality marble in the renowned sculpting studios. In their work, sculptors usually copied style and fashion of then current imperial portraits, which consequently were a kind of models imitated by sculptors when making private portraits (most obvious in men’s portraits, in portraying hear and chin). Imitation of imperial portraits is more evident in women’s portraits, especially in hair dress modelling, so that in sculptures from the 1st–3rd century there are identical presentations of hair dresses both in imperial and private portraits. Naturally, the identification problem is easier in cases when other parts of a statue are discovered beside a head. However, in case of the sculpture from Moesia Superior, there are portraits where not only head and hear are done according to imperial portraits, but also other details, so that the whole head modelling is, more or less, in respect to its form, style, and iconography, a copy of some imperial portrait. And in such findings it is most difficult to establish whether they are imperial or private portraits (as illustrated on a finding of a man’s head from Singidunum9 or a woman’s head from Petka near Kostolac.10)

Height of the head from Karataš (36 cm) shows that it belonged to a sculpture done in super-natural size. Indirect sign of this are also Vitruvius’s data and a rule – each body part is proportional to some other – for example, a face’s height from chin to neck (hair line) is the size of a body’s tenth part; it is also the size of a palm from a joint to the top of a middle finger; or that a face’s height is the same as the third of a height from the beginning of a chin to a nose base, as well as the height of a nose from its base to its top between brows). In this context, as the height of the head from Karataš from the chin to its top is the eight part of the statue’s height, we may suppose that the super-natural height of the sculpture was about 2.30–2.40 m (8 feet).

Probable super-natural statue height, look of the head, and close analogies with heads presented on coins

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7 An illustration is a mature man’s portrait from Singidunum (Classical Portraits in Yugoslavia, op.cit., 1987, 192, No. 136, with cited bibliography), which by the hair dress style, i.e. modelling of hair and beard is similar to the portraits of Lucius Verus.
9 M. Tornović, op. cit., 1993, Cat. 1, Fig. 1.2 (with cited bibliography).
10 Ibidem, Cat. 10, Fig. 5.2 (with cited bibliography).
11 M. Vitruvius Polio, De Architectura libri decem, III, 1, 1.
Fig. 9. a–f. Bust of Clodius Albinus. Rome, Museo Capitolino, Sala degli Imperatori 37, inv. 463
undoubtedly confirm that it is an imperial portrait with accentuated individual features. Style of presenting the short, curly hair stressing high hairline on the forehead and thick, short beard show that it is another one of classical Roman portraits typical for the art of Antonine times – especially portraits where smoothed and polished face surfaces were in big contrast with vigorous mass of hair and beard, additionally underlined with a drill. Generally, in respect to form and style, the portrait from Karataš is most similar to late Antonine, i.e. early Severus portraits, while chronologically it dates back to the end of the 2nd– beginning of the 3rd century.

According to such chronological determination, the portrait could represent one of the pretenders to Roman throne, between Commodus (L. Aelius Aurelius Commodus, 180–192) and Caracalla (M. Aurelius Antoninus, 211–217). However, identification of one of the emperors from that period, like Pertinax (P. Helvius Pertinax, 193), Didius Julianus (M. Didius Julianus, 193), or Pescennius Niger (G. Pescennius Niger, 194) is unsound, as there are no portraits discovered which could be their presentations (their appearances on coins also have no close analogies with the head from Karataš, seeing that they are all characterized by long beard). Therefore, there are only two persons who may be the answer to the question of the emperor of those times presented on the head from Karataš: Decimus Clodius Septimius Albinus (193–197) and Lucius Septimius Severus (193–211).

IDENTIFICATION OF THE HEAD FROM KARATAŠ

As mentioned before, the fact that the Danubian provinces were on the side of Septimius Severus (Pannonian legions had proclaimed him an emperor) goes for the option that the monumental statue could preferably be his, by the aspect of history.

Albinus was in his prime for a very short period (195–197), and his activities were exclusively in the west, where commanded the army of Britain. The year 192 brought fights for the throne of the emperor of a few pretenders, proclaimed emperors by the legions under their command. At the very beginning, Pertinax lasted three months before he was assassinated by unrestrained Praetorian guards, who arranged the succession of the rich senator Didius Julianus. However, legions in various provinces, which were sick and tired of ages lasting Praetorian privileges, decided that they should proclaim the emperor, and so the Pannonian legions proclaimed Septimius, the eastern ones Pescennius Niger, and the British – Clodius Albinus. Severus ended victor from this disarray, and his legions finally marched on Rome and murdered the final pretender, Didius Julianus. His relations with Albinus, though they both were pretenders to the insignia of the Emperor, were still not hostile during the tumultuous times marked with bloody conflicts from 193 to 197.

Proclaimed emperor, but aware of Albinus’s power and influence, in Britain and Gaul in particular, Septimius makes a clever political move: beside making him his co-regent, he adopts Albinus, giving him the title of Caesar, trying to neutralize his power in case of unpredictable turn of events (different from most authors – J. Hasebroek, 1921, 84–85; J. Šável, 1983, 204; J. Birley, 1988, C. Letta, 1990) – who think that the mentioned proclamation happened in 195, D. Boteva, 1999, saying just that she supports her different chronology with a lot of evidence, claims it had happened much earlier). And just when it seemed that this »bloody saga« on throne pretence would be finally over, another turn of events happened that would gravely change the relationship between Septimius and Albinus. Namely, Pescennius Niger (193–194), the governor of Syria, who had also been proclaimed emperor by his Euphratean legions, challenged Septimius his right to throne. Septimius left Rome in 194 and went east to overthrow Pescennius. In the battle on Niger, he finally defeated the pretender who was murdered.

In the meantime Albinus, then governor of Britain, fundamentally changed his attitude, planning to make best use of the new circumstances Septimius found himself in, and went in 195 to Gaul, where he had gathered big army, and he also challenged Septimius’s right to emperorship. Septimius, surprised by his such move, and aware that, while he was so far east and away, Rome was at arm’s length to Albinus, was forced to discontinue his victorious campaign against Parthians and conquering of North Mesopotamia (started after the above mentioned battle with Niger) and return to

13 D. Boteva, op. cit., 1999, 25
the West. In February 197 in the crucial battle at Lugdunum (Lyons), Septimius definitively defeated Albinus, finalizing the long-lasting struggle over Roman Imperial throne.

Assertion that historical circumstances prove that the head from Karataš could preferably represent Septimius Severus to Albinus is supported by the fact that Septimius Severus has not only stayed at Moesia Superior, but has also made a tour of military camps in Danubian limes. In respect to this, an interesting discovery was made, a tablet from Viminacium, put there by the soldiers of the VII Claudia legion (recruited in 176, discharged from military service in 202) dedicated to Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Julia Domna (legion’s honorary name on the tablet was Antoniniana, which is its oldest testimony). As the inscription dates back to the time before his death (the soldiers discharged in 202, after the war with Parthians was finished, put the tablet in honor of Severus), it may be connected with the emperor’s passage through Viminacium, when he was returning to Rome from the East. Although it is impossible to reenact imperial

itinerary from 202 in detail, it is documented that he has left Antioch after the New Year’s celebration, and arrived through Asia Minor and Thracia to Danubian countries, where he made a tour of military camps in Pannonia and Moesia. It is possible that the Emperor and his escort were in Viminacium at the beginning of April. Following Birley’s opinion\(^\text{15}\) that he had planned his return to Rome for 202, so that he can celebrate dies imperii on 9\(^{\text{th}}\) April in Carnutum, where ten years before he had been proclaimed an Emperor, then on 4\(^{\text{th}}\) April, on Caracalla’s birthday and the day when in 196 he had proclaimed him a Caesar, he could have still been in Viminacium.

Considering that at the moment an emperor ascends a throne many towns «immediately» erect his statues, and mints forge coins with the new sovereign’s portrait, there are a lot of problems concerning the identification of personalities presented on Roman sculptures. And instead of coin iconography helping us identify certain portrayed personalities, it often brings us to a dilemma whether coins depict real characteristics, or at least main features typical for a projected persona. Naturally, the reasons are not only minute profile presentations and their authors’ various skills which show summary and unequal portraits that give insufficient elements for their

comparison with portrait sculptures done in natural and super-natural size. It is especially distinctive in cases of short period of rule of some emperors, or pretenders to throne, and in case of emperor’s ascent and rule over a limited part of the empire, resulting in their totally different presentations, not only by different mints, but also inside one mint’s issues.\(^\text{16}\)

Besides, identification of the portrait from Karataš was made more difficult by its belonging to a rare group of portraits around which (since the end of the 19th century) there are still disputes, in which some authors treat the same portrait as the one of Septimius, and others as the portrait of Albinus (typical for a fewer number of Albinus’s portraits). The reason for that is the expressive stylistic and iconographical identity of the mentioned portraits. The typical features of the Clodius Albinus’s portraits on coins and some sculptures (clearly obvious on the head from Karataš as well) are his short, round chin, protruded forehead and especially his characteristic, snub nose,\(^\text{17}\) a key detail in differing Septimius’s from Albinus’s portraits, since it is typical for portraits of Clodius Albinus (first of all, for his coin portraits – Fig. 2–4). Portraits of Septimius Severus (like those of Lucius Verus, Commodus, Marcus Aurelius) rely on tradition and features of Antoninus’s and Caracalla’s portraits (for example, it is obvious when the iconographic and stylistic characteristics of the portraits of Septimius and Marcus Aurelius are compared – Fig. 8; while face expression, its curly hair and beard often remind of the typical presentations of Greek philosophers).

Two imperial mints worked for Albinus: in Rome and in Lugdunum (Lyons). Issues of the Roman (Fig. 2–4) mint (mostly bronze coins, with rare issues of gold and silver coins) originate from the year 193, and they usually present full busts, in armour, with the title D. Clod. Sept. Albin. Caes.\(^\text{18}\) Iconographical portrait from Karataš is much closer to the portraits presented on coins from Lugdunum (with the title Imp. Caes. D. Clo. Sep. Alb. Aug.). The head is rounder there, with thick and curly hair (opposite to Roman coins, where the curls are going in all directions), high, rectangular forehead, and in-cut horizontal wrinkle, slanting, ending at the back of the head at the beginning of a

\(^\text{16}\) An illustration is a portrait of emperor Macrinus from Boleć near Belgrade, one of the most beautiful samples of the Roman imperial portraits (V. Konić, Bronze Portrait of the Emperor Macrinus, *Archaeologia Iugoslavica* XIII, Beograd, 1973, 47–48, with cited bibliography). Macrinus (217–218) is on coins minted in Rome shown with short hair, while on coins from Antioch he has long beard. His portrait from Boleć and his description in historical sources (Herod, V. 2) show more real images, like on coins from Antioch. Reasons for that are probably his short rule, and a fact that, during his 14 months of reign he has never been to Rome.


neck, and what is most important – highlighted snubby nose, appearing on almost all of his presentations (Fig. 2; 3: 4; 9. a–f; 10. a–f), opposite to Septimius’s portraits which rarely have it, and not so expressed as on Albinus’s face. As for sculptural presentations, the closest analogies are found on heads discovered in Italy, and on some findings from Gaul and Britain. Two portrait busts take special place among them: one from the Capitoline Museum in Rome (Fig. 9. a–f) and another from Palazzo Braschi, Salon (Fig. 10. a–f), defined by most authors as portraits of Clodius Albinus20 (while the latter Fig. 10. a–f was by some other authors ambiguous, either the portrait of Clodius Albinus or of Septimius Severus, K. Fittschen and P. Zanker think it is either a portrait of Albinus or of Didius Julianus).21 The quality of their work and alike-ness make possible an interesting hypothesis that they may be portraits done after standardized models of Clodius Albinus. Anyway, considering scholarly disagreement on the portraiture of Albinus, closeness to physiognomic characteristics of Albinus images on coins (Fig. 2–4), and Albinus’s sculptures (especially the bust from Palazzo Braschi, Fig. 10. a–f), our opinion is also that the head from Karataš is rather a portrait of Albinus than Septimius Severus. Though the head from Karataš was done more summarily (especially in modelling locks of hair and beard) than the portraits done in the West Empire, it is basically close to the works of the leading sculptors of the period. Similarity is clear: elongated, rectangular face, protruded forehead, two vertical wrinkles above the nose base, thick eyebrows bending over big eyes rimmed by wide eyelids, accentuated like plastic bands. The nose is short, broadening from base, deep wrinkles above moustaches cover the upper lip, short hair locks are stylishly modelled (regardless of summary, hair is equally modelled at the back of the head). All this points that, building on Lugdunum mint coin images (as an august) and Rome (as a tsar), and busts from the Capitoline Museum and Palazzo Braschi, these sculptures were done realistically, with no intention to make idealized images (for example, in order to please the Emperor, or because the sculptor didn’t see the tsar whom he was sculpting). Besides, one should have in mind the fact that within Septimius’s policy much attention was paid to

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19 D. R. Sear, op.cit., 1974, 176, No. 1632
Fig. 19. Head of Clodius Albinus or Septimius Severus? Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Inv. 721.
Fig. 20–21. Head of Clodius Albinus? Naples, Museo Nazionale, Inv. 6086 Farnese.
Fig. 22. Expression of Septimius Severus of »Severus–Serapis« type (taken from D. Baharal, op. cit., 1989, Pl. VIII, Fig. 4).
propaganda, in which a sculpture played an important role (as illustrated by his numerous statues of the "Severus–Serapis" type, Fig. 22).\textsuperscript{22} Maybe such obvious likeness of his and Albinus’s portraits, resulting in so big dilemmas of their identification, may also be explained by Severus’s propaganda regarding Albinus, resulting in sculpture with Albinus’s portraits with primary and pointed out Septimius’s physiological characteristics (special relations between them are also obvious from the fact that Septimius and Albinus have formed the first diarchy, which together with the second one, between Alexander Severus and Elagabalus, made an "introduction" to the later tetrarchy and division of the empire with four rulers – two with the title of August and two of Caesar. Formal and stylistic characteristics show that the head from Karataš was done in some of the Asia Minor sculpting centres. Similar summary of his portraits on sculptures done in the centres in the West (Fig. 9–21) exists on Albinus’s images on coins in the mint in the East, which replicate his images on coins from Roman mints (Smyrna in Ionia, Sardus in Lydia and Sebastia from Cilicia).\textsuperscript{23}

CONCLUSION

We are aware that, in the context of the mentioned historical events, a question arises: how to explain the lonely discovery of a monumental statue of Albinus (in super-natural size) in a fortress in the Moesia Superior limes, in view of the fact that his portraits (sculptured and on coins) were usually related to mints and discovered in the West part of the Empire (primarily territories of Britain and Gaul)? All the more because Moesia Superior, together with other adjacent provinces (Pannonia, Moesia Minor, Dacia, and so on), was on the side of Septimius Severus in his conflict with Clodius Albinus. From the historical point of view, there is the portrait of Septimius rather than Albinus is already mentioned fact that he had not only been in Moesia Superior (in Viminacium) for a while, but had made a tour of military camps in Pannonia and Moesia Superior, and that Pannonian legions had proclaimed him an emperor. Immediately related is a well known fact linked to imperial propaganda that during Roman emperors’ stay and tours, city centres and fortresses on their way make special preparations for such events. During those celebrations, special attention was paid to the decoration of city squares, official buildings, temples, palaces and fortresses, by installing monumental bronze or marble statues of tsars (and members of their family), ordered in the most famous artistic centres, and transported by seas, rivers or land. It would explain how a monumental imperial statue got to Karataš (taking into account the character and function of Karataš, as well as the mentioned historical facts, the statue was more likely intended for some Moesia Superior city centre, most probably to Viminacium.

On the other hand, there are no such monumental statues of Albinus (or, as much we know, of Septimius) in other fortresses either (not only) in Moesia Superior limes (up to now, about forty fortresses of different type, more or less, have been systematically researched in this region). Therefore, reasons for this statue’s discovery should be found in the nature of the Karataš fortress. Previous results of the research show that it was not only a big and strong fort, but also a port, a core of the defence system of this part of the border. Through it, goods were shipped during 1\textsuperscript{st}–2\textsuperscript{nd} century, primarily from the West, and from the end of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century that priority belonged to the goods shipped, usually by Danube, from the East and afterwards distributed not only to other forts in this part of the limes, but also to towns, villas, and strongholds in this section of limes, inland Moesia Superior. Its importance is supported by the fact that it had been built near famous Danubian cataracts (underwater rocks, rapids and whirlpools) which made river transport unmanageable. In 1981, a sacrificial altar was discovered in the fort (used secondarily, in the 5\textsuperscript{th} century layer), on which the full name of the camp and the settlement was mentioned for the first time – Statio Catacaractarum Dianae ("Station on cascades"), dated back around the end of 2\textsuperscript{nd} – the beginning of 3\textsuperscript{rd} century.\textsuperscript{24} This data adds to an earlier precious discovery – an imperial tablet in the vicinity of the Karataš fort, dated back to the year 101\textsuperscript{25} with the inscription that emperor Trajan had made

\textsuperscript{22} So, for example, parts of the mentioned propaganda were the sculptures of Septimius Severus presenting compilation of his portraits and Egyptian God Serapis (the so called Severus-Serapis portraits): D. Bahral, 1989, Portraits of the Emperor L. Septimius Severus (193–211 A.D.) as an Expression of his Propaganda, "Latomus" XLVIII, fasc. 3, Bruxelles, 1989, 566–580, Pl. VIII, Fig. 1–2; Pl. IX, Fig. 5–6.

\textsuperscript{23} J. Balty, op. cit., 1966, 22, note 1, with cited literature for all findings of coins of the mentioned mints in Greece and at the East.

\textsuperscript{24} Konuč V., Statio Catacaractarum Dianae, Dredapške sveske IV – Cahiers des Portes de Fer IV, Beograd, 1987, 45–47, Fig. 1.

Danube navigable through the cataracts bypassing them with a canal where Danube was directed. The importance of the port of Karataš is also supported by the partially damaged inscription on a sacrificial altar uncovered in the fort. Besides clearing all ambiguities related to Diana toponym identification, it is also the first inscription, not only on the territory of Moesia Superior, in which remains of an earlier inscription are saved, which had probably contained an attribute of the Egyptian deity Thot (Tehuty). V. Kondić makes an indirect conclusion on the basis of this and other facts on the presence of Egyptians and their navigation terminology. Considering God Thot was primarily protector of literacy and counting, the author concludes that the dedicator of this monument could have been a member of militia officialis, responsible for administration of the III Flaviae legion.

Different discoveries from big production centres, both in the East and the West centres (terra sigillata, glass vessels, stone and bronze figurines, jewellery) also prove that the Karataš fortress and port had been an exceptionally significant distributive centre and the crossroad of water and land ways, where ships were reloaded for further transport, and merchandise delivered for the supply of Roman troops in fortifications in the limes, as well as for its transport inland the province, or further shipment Eastward, i.e. Westward the Empire. The sculpture (among the dominating bronze statuettes) discovered on Karataš shows all characteristics of works done in principal artistic workshops: as an illustration, we shall give the example of one of the most beautiful bronze statuettes discovered on the territory of the Empire (unfortunately, with the exception of a few findings, this depot has not been published) – image of Neptune from the 1st century, done according to some well known model from the classical Greek sculpture of the 4th century BC, or a unique bronze horse figure. It is also obvious on the head of emperor Albinus, made from marble not only excavated in some of the renown Greek or Asia Minor quarries, but also modelled in some of the famous Eastern sculpting centres, from where it had been first shipped (by the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, and then by Danube) to its destination, i.e. customer. Summarizing all the mentioned possibilities, we think that stylistic and iconography analyses and the closest analogies with the images on discovered sculptures and coins minted for these two emperors show that it is preferably the portrait of Albinus. In that context, it is important to mention that Septimius, after he had eradicated Didius Julianus from the Roman throne, he adopted Albinus, then legate of Britain, giving him the title of Caesar. It may also be an answer to the puzzle of Albinus’s statue in Danubian region, i.e. in Moesia Superior, a part of Septimius’s empire. Purely political reasons, among other things, statues of emperors’ adopted children used to be put on public places, as well as of those they proclaimed their dyarchs, or successors. Results of stylistic and iconographic analysis, analogies with images on sculptures and coins, as well as the mentioned fact of adopting Albinus, show that the head, i.e. statue from Karataš may be more precisely chronologically defined to the beginning of the last decade of the 2nd century (most likely to the period of 193–194). Whether the Karataš fort was the final destination is difficult to determine with certainty. Theoretically, it is also possible that events turned out so that the statue transported from the East by Danube, instead of being reloaded and further transported, remained on Karataš. We also think that hypothetical destination should not be searched for in the Western part of the Empire (Italia, Gaul, Britain), but in some of the Moesia Superior town centres (first of all, maybe in the very Viminacium).

Translated by: Ljiljana Krstić

26 Kanitz F., Römische Studien in Serbien, Wien 1892, 50. Till Trajan, ships could navigate on Danube only when pulled from banks.

27 Kondić V., Balneum Iugora Diana – Le Balneum du Camp de Diana, Dardanske sveske IV – Cahiers des Fortes de Fer IV, Beograd, 1987, 45–46, Fig. 1, note 8.


ГЛАВА СА КАРАТАША КОЈА СЕ ПРИПИСУЈЕ ЦАРУ КЛОДИЈУ АЛБИНАУ

У утврђењу на локалитету Караташ (античка Дива), које се налазило у оквиру Берданског дела Дунавског лимеса, откривена је једна глава мушкараца са свим портретним карактеристикама официјелног, царског портрета. Накато ст, значај овог налаза остао је недоколо познате само домаћој, него и страшно научној јавности (портрет није објављен у оквиру неког посебног рада, у коме би били истакнуте разлике који га, у оквиру горњомезијске портретне скулптуре, сврставају у најзначајније налазе: углавном је презентирао, у катализму и излажу).

Глава са Караташа (сл. 1. a-c) припада једном посебном типу римских царских портрета, који је са проблем њиховог идентификације и тумачења присутан у светској археолошкој још од краја XIX века. Један од најважнијих познавалаца (не само тог времена) иконографије царских портрета, Ј. Бертону, је у свом знаменитом и још увек незабележном и актуелном делу Романсе комонографије, сакупио и анализирао све, до тада откривена, дела овог типа, који чине укуће стилске и иконографске блиски царски портрети, који постоји један проблем који је све до данас остао отвешен и нерешен. То је проблем њихове идентификације, али и личности која је приказана на тим скулпторским дељимцима, која су хронолошко јасно дефинисана — крај II, или прецизније, последња децембра тог века. За деценију која је, после убиства Камода 192. године, све до 197. обележена крајем ратова који су се волели између петорице претендентата на право да седну на царски трон у Риму, чије по- следице су се опражнавале и на царска скулпторска дела (кратко владавине, везаност царева само за опрећени простор којим су владали, односно имали подршку, а самим тим и само за скулпторске радионице и ковилице на том простору). У том контексту, ако проблем је утолико тежи и занимљивији, што је ради о портретима који су, од стране њених аутора који су се овим проблемом бавили током претходних 100 и више година, опредељивани као портрети Клаудија Альбина, док су други били мишљени да се пре ради о портретима Септимија Севери. Дакле о портретима двојице царева који су у споменутом времену и догађајима имали посебну «причу», са биских савезника па до смртих непријатеља.