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THE INSPIRATION FROM THE ROMAN IMPERIALISM IN SCUPI THROUGH THE LARGE THERMAL COMPLEX AND THE VENUS PUDICA SCULPTURE

Key words: *Roman Imperialism, thermal complex, statue of Venus Pudica, relief of an eagle with a wreath, stone monuments.*

Abstract: *The studies of numerous authors on the subject of Roman Imperialism treat several terms: empire, province, Romanisation, with the last one having an essential importance in understanding the Roman Imperialism. The Roman concept of representing its power is especially perceivable in the numerous construction and architectonic executions, where the precision, strictness, proportionality, technical craftsmanship and high aesthetic principles create the cardinal Roman buildings. It was under the influence of the powerful Roman Imperialism that the 2nd century Large Thermal Complex in Scupi was built, which size, composition of the chambers, execution, decoration and position in the city is of a great importance for the rich Imperial Period and it represents the largest Roman baths in Macedonia. The luxuriousness of the Scupi baths complex inspired by the Roman Imperialism is supplemented by the marble sculpture of Venus Pudica and the several stone monuments with engraved Latin texts and a relief representation of an eagle with a wreath, which is also supplemented by the data that the baths had a wall mosaic with golden foil on the tesserae. Through the city of Scupi, the Roman imperial style became in many ways available for the rest of the Balkans and influenced the development of the cities and the taste of the city elite and aristocrats.*

Rome is the city which during the antiquity was a symbol of a metropolis, created during the several centuries BC and AD, a complex city with many building reaching for the skies, a maze of streets, plenitude of people from different nations, with constant noise, unbelievably large scale of trade, construction of new objects, a city which reminds of and can be compared to

New York, the “big apple” of today. It is the first metropolis in the history, having the finest thermae in the Empire, the finest libraries, acclaimed for the theatre plays and trade stores with the finest goods brought from all over the known world, with the best learned people, and it was a city in constant rise¹. This city, unique in many features, for centuries has been a model that almost all of the remaining urban centres in the Roman Empire desired to achieve. The Roman concept of representing its power was especially reflected in the numerous construction and architectonic works, where the precision, strictness, proportionality, simplicity, technical craftsmanship and high aesthetic principles create the cardinal Roman buildings.

The treatment of the terms Romanisation, Empire, province play a great part in understanding the influence that the Roman culture had on the numerous conquered territories and peoples. The term *Roman Empire* equally applies to the political unit, which is a result of the establishment of the Roman rule over a large part of the civilised world in that period, and applies to the system of governance, a right which Rome exercised through the role of the Emperor - an absolute monarch, idealised and unique. The Roman culture is a product of the Empire in every sense of this term. Almost by definition the rulers were builders, either because of their personal taste, or because they were the ultimate source of public patronage. The symbol of authority of the Roman Emperor is exactly what compelled them to be the main factor in creating the public taste.

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¹ Drevne civilizacije, velike culture svijeta, Rim (Italija), Biblioteka Velike civilizacije, Mozaik knjiga, Zagreb 2004, 72-85.



1. City district with the Thermal complex

Through its authority, the strong central government had a unifying effect, which was supported by many citizens of the provinces².

The researches of the Roman Imperialism in the comparisons with the world today put an emphasis on the transformation of the Roman Imperial culture in a modern global “empire” focused on the global forces of the economic integration³. The research of the Romanisation in all the regions of the Roman Empire should be directed towards the character of the Roman expansion and the infrastructure of the Roman imperial control, which in the subsequent historical period shall be applied with the acceptance of models for creating the subsequent societies. The dilemmas whether or not there is a connection of the present times with the antique Greek and Roman states, is part of the analysis of the issues initiated by the Imperialism. Some scholars make an attempt to prescribe the term *Imperialism* to the modern courses of history, so that,

² Ward-Perkins J.B., *Roman Architecture*, Milano 1974, 8-41.

³ Hingley R., *Globalization and the Roman Empire: the genealogy of ‘Empire’*, SEMATA, *Ciencias Sociais e Humanidades*, 2011, vol. 23: 99-113. In today’s world the individual states have lesser direct control over the territory than in the past, when the national borders were slowly dissolved with the movement of the population and the growth of the international economic networking.

trying to avoid anachronism, suggest that the Romans did not have a clear attitude and conscious and explicit ideology of the expansionism which they caused. By this they want to point out that the concept of Imperialism lies out of the context when the Roman state expanded during the end of the first millennia BC and during the first millennia AD. According to R. Hingley’s opinion regarding the analytical attitudes and the origins of the terms *imperium* and *provincia*, who is a researcher of the origins of these terms and change of their meanings in conditions of republican and imperial Rome, and states the definition of the term imperialism from the second century till today as an important moment, which is based on the transformation of the ideas, for which, as he states, it should be a subject of a research of serious international projects. In fact, the term *Romanisation* has an essential importance in the treatment of the Roman imperialism⁴. The different studies regarding the Roman imperialism cover treatment of the manner in which Rome has expanded over such a large area, including the people in the state with their lifestyles. At the same time, the authors impose themselves in

⁴ Hingley R., *op.cit.*, 104. This work also puts an accent on the opinion of several authors that there is an undeniable connection of the world today with the Roman Imperialism, which is a part of the history of the West European countries.



2. *Caldarium with the semicircular pool*

the opinions concerning the understanding and reevaluation of the modern concepts of empire and imperialism. Of course, today we make a critical retrospection of the Roman Empire's expansion to a large territory, preserving the characteristics of the society, so that the understanding of the globalisation in classical Rome is not identical to the understanding of today's term of modern globalisation, which includes the economic, cultural and language forces of integration and differentiation.

G. Woolf⁵ in his works makes an in depth analysis of the term "To be a Roman", and attracts with his interpretation of the Roman cultural identity, the social changes and manners of bringing forth new ideas on local level in the Empire, having a knowledge of the powerful imperial concepts of life in the provinces. The expression *to be a Roman* denominates the aspiration for identification with the elite, and at least an attempt to replace it. The tradition of warfare, conquers and trade have a large share in forming the attitudes about this Empire. After the great wars and victories at the beginning of the first millennia AD, the efficiency of Rome's political

organisation, its reputation and liberal treatment of the conquered enemies and allies, create the sense for federation and reconciliation of the animosities.

The Roman Empire, among the other things, also expressed its great power and strength with the architectonic buildings. The Roman sense of practicality, expressed with a dose of strictness, and at the same time with simplicity, has been especially applied in the architecture. The tendency for support of the acclaimed Roman constructions and following the imperial spirit from the seat to the provinces can be perceived in the numerous large buildings, which offered the almost unattainable Roman lifestyle to the citizens. In Macedonian conditions, *colonia Flavia Scupinorum* is a site which distinguishes itself with the buildings from the Early Imperial Period, which are modestly researched yet have an exquisite importance for the Roman provincial architecture. In addition to the grandiose theatres, amphitheatres, temples and forums, the thermal objects also developed in the Empire as true representatives of the Roman art and architecture. They show the Roman technical achievement in the use of water, taken to the highest level in the period of antiquity.

The idol of the Roman provincial power figures, the city of Rome, according to the data listed by Agrippa in 33 BC that the city had 170

⁵ Woolf G., *Becoming Roman, staying Greek: culture, identity and the civilizing process in the Roman East*, *Proceeding of the Cambridge philological Society*, 40, 1944, 116-143.



3. Part of the caldarium under the Early Christian Basilica

baths, shows how popular were the baths in the Empire even in the 1st century AD. The baths built until the 1st century BC still had erratic arrangement of the chambers, without a greater participation in the regular composition, which later appeared as linear and symmetrical. The baths of Pompeii and Herculaneum for instance, had chambers with different dimensions, which were arranged without making an attempt to achieve unity, neither in the general design nor in the facade⁶. The first planned large baths, based on a symmetrical axes, was the baths of Emperor Nero. The symmetrical plan was continued by the constructions of the Baths of Titus, finished in 80 AD and later covered by the Baths of Trajan. Vespasian's period was probably still part of the traditional phase of the baths' design, so that the Imperial construction projects in Rome were not uniformed until Emperor Trajan, when in the large thermal objects a condition was made that only half of the baths can function and only in relation with the object's axis. The baths do not show great differences in the long period from Trajan's times until the Trier Imperial Baths in 4th century.

⁶ Adam J.-P., Roman building, Material and Techniques, London and New York (Routledge) 2005, 562.

The baths have been subject of research and special interest in the analysis of the Roman architecture for a long period, with many authors confirming the difficulty of their classification⁷. The thermal objects are characterised with great diversity in the size of the object, types of chambers, their positioning within the object, execution of supply and drainage of water, execution of the floor heating system, the degree of decoration of certain chambers, adaptations of the *thermae* in the urban layout of the city, etc. In the provinces of the Empire the baths are usually with dimensions smaller than the Imperial ones, which is due to the incomparably lower financial power, and social and cultural level compared to Rome, which is connected with the tradition of the cult for body care. The *thermae* often lack some of the usual chambers, which were generally accepted in the sequence intended for the order of performing the activities connected with the bathing ceremony. This is probably a reflection of the influence of the Hellenic traditions with simpler bathing regime than the Roman.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the bathing, as a central event of the everyday life, be-

⁷ Mc Donald W.L., The Architecture of the Roman Empire, volume II, Yale University U.S., 116.



4. Monument with a capitel in the atrium of the Thermal complex

longs to the Roman world, and according to F. K. Yegül⁸, in the peak of the highest achievement of the Empire, the *thermae* embodied the ideal of the Roman way of urban living. In the Roman lifestyle, bathing was both luxury and necessity, a way to end the tiredness of the hard day, a cure and simply a pleasure. The baths offered large chambers filled with light, marble, bathtubs and pools with hot water, relaxation with massages and scented oils, socialisation, and even practice and reading. It is not hard to visualise the richness of baths' interior, although their remains are poorly preserved, such as the decorations of the arch, marble on the floor and the walls, silver decorations of the pools, mosaics, sculptures, fountains. The baths were the place where people seat together and could enjoy the gains provided by the Roman imperial system, which proved as an ideal institution for creating an illusion among the lower social class. In their visits of the baths, the Emperor, or some highly positioned local politician, used the opportunity for gaining public support and increasing their popularity.

⁸ Yegül F. K., *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1992, 30-32.

The Roman city Scupi, with its Large Thermal Complex confirms the efforts of its citizens to create an urban centre where they could live according to the high Roman norms and feel as Romans. (fig.1)⁹ The Large Thermal Complex is an object, which with its size (40 m. x more than 30 m.), composition of the chambers, execution, decoration and positioning of the *thermae* in the city is of a great significance, not only as an example of a luxurious baths in the string of Roman baths in Macedonia, but also as an object which is a part of the lavish Roman Imperial Period from the 2nd century AD¹⁰. The research so far suggest that the Early Imperial Period thermal complex in Scupi covers an area of a whole city block, which classifies it in the rank of large baths, compared to the remaining thermal objects from the Eastern Mediterranean.

⁹ The photographs are made by Stanko Nedelkovski MA, of the City museum of Skopje.

¹⁰ Oncevska Todorovska M., *Thermal Facility in Skupi, Collection of Works from the Symposium "Water, Life and Pleasure"* in 2008, Institute for protection of the monuments of culture and museum – Strumica, Strumica 2009, 75-84. The research of the thermal complex were performed under the guidance of M. Oncevska Todorovska and the City of Skopje Museum, in the period of 2008 - 2011 and 2013.

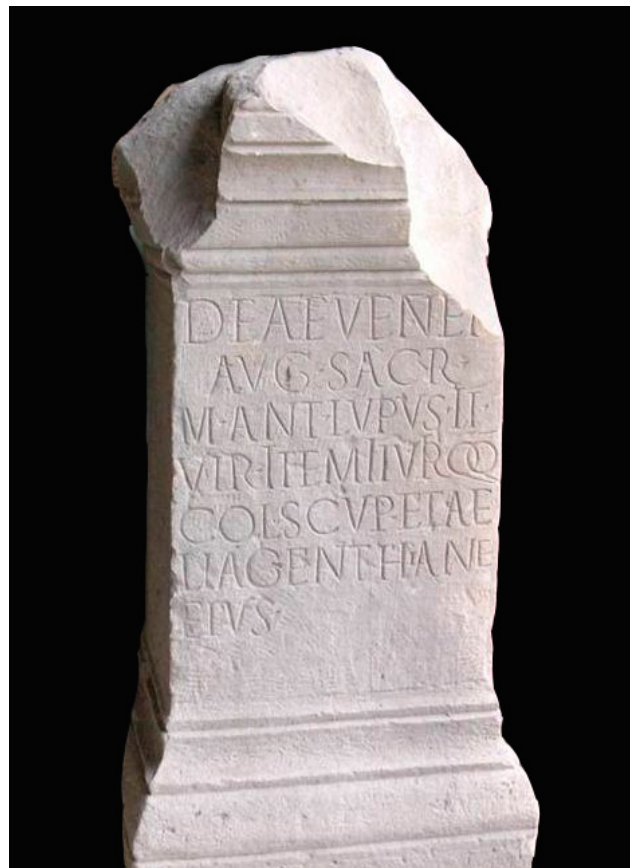
The history of the Roman Imperial Architecture marks the greatest gain of the new architecture with the use of the new, revolutionary material - the Roman concrete (*opus caementicium*), which was used throughout the Empire, and which is the reason for the endurance of numerous buildings throughout the centuries. In the construction of the Scupi thermal complex the so-called Roman concrete was used, characteristic for the construction of numerous Roman buildings throughout the Empire in the Early Imperial Period.

In the context of the elements contained by this imperial type Scupi baths, the *caldarium* has impressive dimensions and is located in the south-western part of the objects, which corresponds to the strict Roman norms for building *thermae*¹¹. (fig. 2, 3) It has a preserved semicircular pool with a diameter of almost 6 meters located in the northern end of the *caldarium*, offering the bathers a view on the remaining part of the area intended for hot bathing, where there are remains or indications for existence of several bathtubs, and it is not excluded that there was another pool. The system for floor heating is executed precisely with symmetrically positioned tubuli and masonry hypocaust pillars, which are a support of the floor made of thick layer of hydrostatic mortar. The heating of the hypocaust system was performed with two furnaces positioned at the end of the large inner yard of the *thermae*. The numerous discovered fragments of fresco decoration, which, although with small dimensions, suggests the degree of decoration of this section of the *thermae* with their intensive colour and graffiti. Different movable finds were discovered in the area of the adjacent rooms, such as pottery, metal, glass objects, coins, a dice, which suggest a diversified function of the baths' chambers¹².

The large atrium of the *thermae* was formed as a spacious inner yard, with facades different than those of the separate surrounding rooms. In the corner of the yard, where the *caldarium* facade is located, there are benches for sitting, and in the area next to them the stone monument was

¹¹ Vitruvije, *Deset knjiga o arhitekturi*, Beograd 2006, 79-94.

¹² Unfortunately, the walls of the thermal object are only partially preserved in reduced height, so that the basis of the object is the primary data for perceiving of the monumentality of the building. The perceiving of the object as a whole, along with the remains of the listed movable objects and segments of the decorations, including the Venus sculpture, reveal the imperial spirit of the baths.



5. Votive monument dedicated to Venus

located, discovered in situ. (fig. 4) It consists of a relatively low pillar and an elaborately executed upper part functioning as a capital, decorated with palm leaves, but it is not clear what was placed on it, which is suggested by the several executed dentils, which is a rarity in the stone pillars from the Roman period. We should point out the text on the monument written in Latin, which speaks about an aedile of the city (decurion in the colony) connected with the erection of the *thermae*, who was given the place for placing this memorial with a decree of the decurions' council¹³.

In the context of representation of the elements and finds in the baths, which marks the luxurious character of the building, there is the votive monument dedicated to goddess Venus¹⁴.

¹³ Oncevska Todorovska M., *op.cit.*, 75-84, the monument, inv. no.62073, with dimensions: 80 x 35 cm, has an engraved text: **Aug (ustae, usto) sacr(um) / Q(uintus) Axenna / Q (uinti) f(ilius) Fab(ia) Rufus / dec(urio) col(oniae) / ob honor(em) / aedilitatis / l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum).**

¹⁴ Basotova M., *A Votive Altar dedicated to Venus from Colonia Flavia Scupi*, *Folia Archaeologica Balkanica*, Vol. II, Skopje 2012, 359-366. The text of the monument: **Deae Vene(r)i / aug(ustae) sacr(um) / M(arcus) Ant(oni) Lupus II / vir item II vir q(uin)q(uenalis) / col(oniae) Scup(inorum) et Ae- / lia Genthiane / eius.** The votive



6. Base for monument with an eagle

(fig. 5) The altar has a text written in Latin, revealing the dedication of the divine goddess Venus to the citizens of the Scupi colony, raised by the named Duumvir Quinkenal and his wife. The monument was discovered in the thermal object immediately next to the *cardo* street, which held the entrance, and hence the opinion that this monument, important for the city, could have been placed exactly on the main street in front of the baths.

In the area of the baths, in the Late Antiquity layer which contained several stone finds belonging to the Roman period and stored to be used as a construction material, a stone monument was discovered, which fits the range of finds characteristic for the Roman Imperial style. The stone monument is a stand with a cuboid shape, with its front side containing a relief representation of an eagle holding a wreath¹⁵. (fig. 6) The eagle (*aquila*) is a frequent animal symbol in the antiquity, connected with the Sun and the sky, and sometimes with lightning and thunderbolts. The

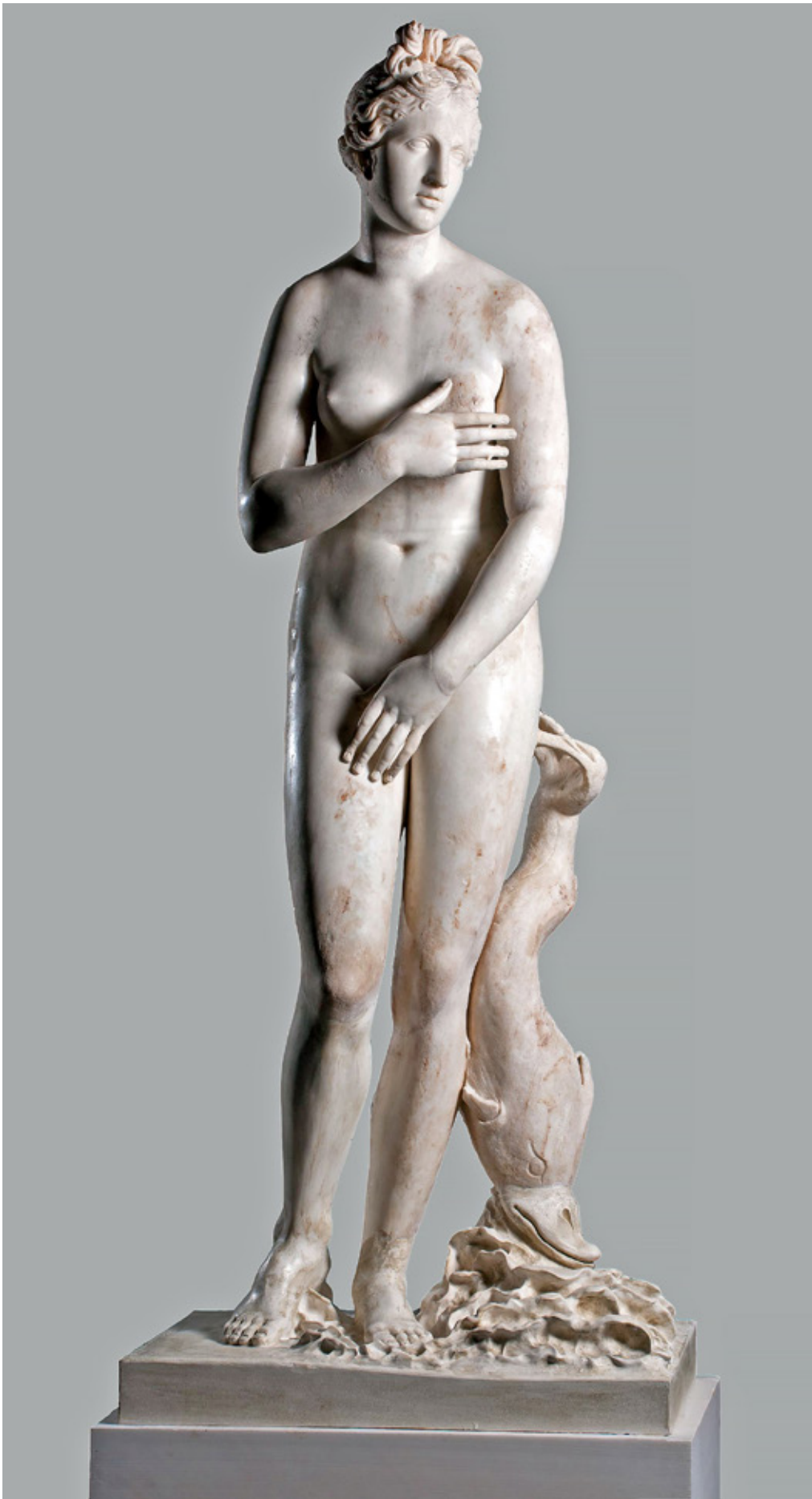
monument, inv. no.62072, with dimensions: 49 x 46 x 98 cm, was discovered in the uppermost layers above the space of the *thermae*, belonging to the Late Antiquity cultural horizon.

¹⁵ The dimensions of the monument stand with relief representation of an eagle, inv. no.84600 are: 135 x 55 x 55 cm.

eagle's strength and endurance gave the character of its symbolism. The eagle is the king of birds, and as such it acquired the symbolism of kings and gods in the Antiquity. In the Greek - Roman world of antiquity, the eagle was a companion and animal symbol of Zeus / Jupiter. After cremation, the eagle carried the sole of the ruler who rises to the gods. The Roman legions used it as their insignia. In the Roman continuous tradition it is present in many state emblems, as a symbol of sovereignty¹⁶. The eagle is one of the most recognisable icons of the Roman army and the Roman Empire¹⁷. Some of the analogies of the Scupi monument containing a representation of an eagle with a wreath are the representation of an eagle with a wreath on a stone monument discovered in the church Santi Apostoli in Rome,

¹⁶ The Continuum Encyclopedia of Symbols, ed. by Udo Becker, The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc, New York 2000, 90.

¹⁷ Mathew C.A., *On the Wings of Eagles: The reforms of Gaius Marius and the Creation of Rome's First Professional Soldiers*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010, 51. The use of the eagle as an insignia of the Roman legions is connected with the order of Gaius Marius (157-86 BC) and his second term as a Consul (104 BC) for reconstruction and organisation of the legions and reforms.



7. *Marble statue of Venus Pudica*

which is connected with the Trajan art¹⁸, the stone sculpture with a representation of an eagle fighting a snake discovered in recent times in London and dated in the 1st to 2nd century AD¹⁹, another sculpture of a standing eagle, discovered in the Nabataean city Petra, which is part of the Cincinnati Art Museum Collection, dated in the 1st century.

The representation of luxury in the Roman Imperial Period in Scupi, and the importance of the thermal complex is especially created by the sculpture of Venus Pudica²⁰. (fig. 7) The life size marble sculpture of the goddess was placed in the most beautiful chamber of the Large Thermal Complex in Scupi in a semicircular niche just opposite the chamber entrance. The chamber was located immediately next to the caldarium, placed at the side of the cardo street, where its entrance was located²¹. The researches revealed that the niche was covered with green and yellow marble tiles, with different thickness of the wall and floor tiles. It is important that this room had a wall mosaic with tesserae with golden foil, which were frequent and favourite in the Roman art²². (fig. 8) The sculpture is a work of some top



8. Mosaic with gold leaves

¹⁸ Strong E., Roman sculpture, Cambridge Library Collection, London 1907, 230-231, Plate LXIX - Eagle and Wreath. The author of the sculpture, which has an imperial concept from the Trajan - Hadrian period, by comparison indicates that even the Donatello's bronze eagle in Padua from the time of the Renaissance appears as provincial compared to this work. The "eagle in a wreath" motive is close to the Roman art. Usually, the eagle sits on the wreath, but in this case it is inside it. The eagle represents an image of the political and spiritual tendencies of the period and expression of technical and decorative skill.

¹⁹ This representation is perceived as a fight of the good (eagle) and the evil (snake), while the motive comes from a burial context of a Roman necropolis located in this part of London.

²⁰ Oncevska Todorovska M., The statue of Venus Pudica from Scupi, *Folia Archaeologica Balkanica*, vol. 2, Skopje 2012, 347-358; eadem, *Скулптурата на Венера Пудика од Скупи – антички бисер во Македонија, Културен живот 1-2/2013, Скопје 2013, 68-77*. The sculpture, inv. No.20548, height 1.70 m, is located in the exhibition room in the City of Skopje Museum.

²¹ This chamber, in the later period, went through several adaptations and changes, along with other chambers of the *thermae*.

²² The several mosaic fragments were discovered in the layer of construction rubble above the indicated chamber. The remains of construction rubble mainly contained parts of the hydrostatic mortar used in the construction of the chamber floor. The mosaic was executed on a thick layer of white mortar with tesserae made of white marble with ir-

regular shape, and covered with thin leaves of golden foil. I connect the discovery of parts of such wall mosaic with the construction of the thermal object and its elaborately decorated interior. During the next centuries the object was largely refurbished and adapted, and the field data indicate that this chamber was reduced in length and retained its appearance, including the Venus Pudica sculpture. The final demolition of this part of the object probably happened in the Late Antiquity, before the construction of the last cultural horizon of the city with discovered remains of housing and belonging to the 6th and early 7th century.

Although the finds of a wall mosaic with golden foil are very rare in the Roman Empire from the Early Imperial period, as opposed to their frequency in the subsequent period, especially the Early Christian period, its occurrence in the Scupi thermal complex distinguishes this baths with exquisitely expensive interior decoration.

The sculpture was conserved and restored in the Art Academy of Split, Croatia, under the guidance of I. Donelli, while the laboratory analysis of the marble was made with analysis of optical microscopy in the Laboratory for Natural Sciences of the Croatian Restoration Institute in Zagreb, by professor D. Mudronja. The Praos marble was one the most valued during the whole antiquity.

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the intention of the builder to give this thermal object with the epithet imperial.

The goddess Venus is represented naked, in a contrapposto position, hiding her private parts with her hands, and there is a dolphin next to her left foot. The representation of the head, with leaning position, wide open large eyes and slightly open mouth give the face a hazy expression, which emphasises the representation of the general gentility, calmness, gracility, chastity, and at the same time boldness, melancholy and dreaminess of the figure. The sculpture communicates great sensuality of the portrait, which is typical for the Early Imperial art. (fig. 9) There is an undeniable connection of the execution of the Scupi Venus with the Praxiteles's sculpting values and traditions in the Roman Period. This Venus Pudica, according to the typology in the relevant LIMC - *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, belongs to the type IV, variant A, i.e. Cnidian, Capitol, de' Medici²⁴. This type of Venuses include the first monumental representation of nude Cnidian Aphrodite by Praxiteles, while in the Imperial Period there is a repetition of Hellenic Capitoline and de' Medici. The iconography of this goddess can be followed mainly in the period of the Late Republic and the Early Imperial period. The 2nd century BC brought a massive copying of Greek Venus statues, made in large plastic. The Venuses iconography was greatly influenced by the other goddesses and similar mythological forms. Regarding the syncretism, for example, in the Venus in Pompeii fresco in Pompeii, the goddess lies in a shall in a sea, dressed according to the model of the Greek statues from the 4th century BC, iconographically including her in the role of the protector of the sea²⁵. In the different representation, the face of the goddess often had a face of a private or royal portrait.

Venus Pudica in Scupi is a Roman copy of the adequate original Greek representations. The Roman production of copies is a proof for true respect of the artistic qualities of the previous times, which were perceived by the Roman patrons as unattainable creations of the great Greek sculptors. Starting with the Late Hellenic Period and the Roman Republican Period, the copies were included among the master pieces of



9. *The head of Venus Pudica*

sculpture. It is unclear to what extent the reproductions were a source of data about the lost statues of acclaimed artists, thus becoming a subject of analysis and critic of the copies²⁶. So for instance, Aphrodite of Cnidus was the first that was identified as a Roman copy by comparison with its representation on the Cnidus coins from the period of the Severan dynasty²⁷. This Venus, just as the one in Scupi, was made of Paros marble, following the example of Praxiteles art, who was the first to create a nude woman figure in monumental type and created the prototype of a figure which earned him a place in the history of art²⁸. There is a widespread opinion that the execution of the copies was guided by the Roman patrons, that the sculpture replicas were made according to a recognisable Roman taste and that the process of reproduction was one of the most

²⁴Ackermann H.C., Gisler J.-R., ed., 1981-1999, LIMC - *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, VIII/1, Artemis & Winkler Verlag (Zürich, München, Düsseldorf), 192-231.

²⁵ Ibidem, 227-228.

²⁶ Stewart P., *Statues in Roman Society, Representation and Response*, Oxford 2003, 231-236.

²⁷ Ibidem, 231-232.

²⁸ Havelock C.M., *The Aphrodite of Knidos and her successors: A Historical Review of Female Nude in Greek Art*, Univ. of Michigan, USA 1995, 9-50. The sculpture was destroyed in 476.



10. View of the *cardo* street and the Thermal complex in the city

creative ones. They were inspired by the current decorations which brought a sense of adequacy and elegance, which motivated them to place numerous works of arts in their properties. The idea for collecting numerous works of art was not to create new master pieces, but to create a cultural atmosphere. The Roman collecting and placing sculptures with different character, according to the style and iconography, is in fact a return to the Greek past. The representation of the figures, as thoughtful Greeks and practical and masculine Romans, shows a contrast, so that the differences between the love for the Greek art and the Roman ethics and moral communicate opposition of the two systems of thought²⁹. The extensive production of Venus sculptures, praised as a goddess of love, beauty and reproduction, is due to the evaluation which, according to the mythology, consider her as a progenitress of the Romans, taking into account the motherhood of the Trojan hero Aeneas, whose offspring Romulus established the city of Rome. During Cesar's time,

²⁹ Stewart P., op.cit., 225, 227, cited work: G.Becatti, *Arte e gusto negli scrittori Latini*, Florence 1951.

with the identification with the establishment of gens Julia and the Julio-Claudian dynasty, Venus attained a high opinion among the Romans³⁰.

Venus Pudica in Scupi has a direct analogy in the Capitoline Venus, a Roman copy of a sculpture workshop which nourished the traditions of Praxiteles, whose artistic quality is followed in the Early Imperial Period. These sculptors follow the idealism of the classical art with a tendency for more realistic manner of representing the figure, illustrating its physical characteristics and inner feelings. Many cities in the Roman empire had numerous sculptures, included in the aesthetic solutions of the public space, following the example of Rome. Namely, the cities throughout the empires have many similarities of the context, honorary inscriptions, while the

³⁰ Ackermann H.C., Gisler J.-R., ed., LIMS, op.cit., 193-194; Daniel De Puma R., 2007, *Roman Myth, Religion and the Afterlife*, Art of the Classical World in the Metropolitan Museum of Art: Greece, Cyprus, Etruria, Rome, catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 93-95, Caesar erected a large temple to the goddess Venus in his forum. The gods also played an important role in many Roman religious festivals during the Imperial style.

statues were awarded or placed by the Senate or the people of the community³¹.

The Large Thermal Complex in Scupi is the largest baths of the Roman Imperial Period in Macedonia. The representation of this baths include the architectonic characteristics and the finds from the rich decoration, which, along with the exquisite sculpture of Venus Pudica, testify about the presence of the imperial style in the Roman city, which still waits on the discovery of the remaining large objects from the Early Imperial Period. (fig. 10)

During the last several years there is an intensified activity in publishing scientific works regarding Scupi, which are a source of numerous data for the undoubtedly high level of civil lifestyle and confirmation about the aristocracy of those days, which wealth and power were important for the economic development of the provinces Upper Moesia and Macedonia³². Through the city of Scupi, the Roman imperial style became in many ways available for the people of this part of the Balkans and influenced the development of the cities and the taste of the city elite and aristocracy.

³¹ Stewart, op.cit., 157.

³² Јованова Л., Colonia Flavia Scupinorum – Аристократските семејства Rufrii и Libonii, Maced. acta archaeol. 19, Скопје 2009, 209-224. The text makes a detail analysis of the activity of these families and the connection of Scupi and Thessalonica.

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Влијанието на римскиот империјализам во Скупи преку Големиот термален комплекс и скулптурата на Венера Пудика

Резиме

Римскиот концепт на претставување на моќта на империјата особено се претставил преку бројни градежни и архитектонски изведби, каде целата прецизност, строгост, пропорционалност, техничка уметност и високи естетски принципи ги создаваат врвните римски зданија. За разбирање и прафаќање на влијанијата кои римската култура ги извршила врз бројните освоени територии и население, голем удел имаат термините романизација, империја, провинција. Терминот Римска империја се применува подеднакво на политичката единка, која е резултат на воспоставување на римската власт над голем дел од цивилизираниот свет и се однесува на системот на власта, а тоа правило Рим го остварува преку улогата на императорот, кој бил апсолутен монарх, идеализиран и единствен. Римската култура е производ на империјата, во секој смисол на терминот. Речиси по дефиниција, владетелите се градители, или одличен вкус, или затоа што тие се крајниот извор на јавното покровителство. Симболот на авторитетот на императорство Рим е токму тој кој го обврзувал да биде главен фактор во формирање на јавниот вкус. Преку авторитетот силната централна власт имала обединувачки ефект, кој бил поддржуван кај се поголем број граѓани во провинциите.

Под влијание на моќниот римски империјализам бил изграден Големиот термален комплекс во Скупи - Colonia Flavia Scupinorum, од 2 век, кој со големината, составот на простории, изведбата, декорацијата и одбраната локација во градот е објект од особено значење за богатиот царски период и е најголемата римска бања во Македонија.

Римскиот град Скупи преку Големиот термален комплекс ги потврдува заложбите на своите граѓани да создадат урбан центар во кој ќе живеат според високите римски норми и ќе се чувствуваат римјани. Големиот термален комплекс е објект кој со големината (40 м. х повеќе од 30 м.) и богатата декорација е од особен значење, не само како пример на луксуз на бањаво низата римски бањи во Македонија, туку и како објект кој е составен дел на раскошниот римски царски период. Досегашните истражувања упатуваат дека скупскиот термален комплекс од раноцарскиот период се протега на простор од цел градски квартал, што го поставува во редот на големи бањи, споредливо со останатите термални објективо Источниот Медитеран. Нема сомнеж дека капењето, како централен настан во секојдневието, му припаѓа на римскиот свет. Во моментот на највисокиот дострел на империјата термата го отелотворувала идеалот на римскиот начин на урбано живеење. Бањите биле местата каде заедно седеле и богатите и оние со помал

капитал од нив, уживајќи ги придобивките на лагодниот живот обезбедени од страна на римскиот царски систем, што се покажало како идеал на институција со која требало да се создаде илузија кај пониската класа во општеството. Посетата на бањите, дали од императорот лично, или пак, од некој локален висок опозициониран политичар, била користена можноста за поддршка од јавноста за зголемување на популарноста.

Луксузно станабањскиот комплекс во Скупи инспирирана од римскиот империјален стил ја дополнува мермерната скулптура на Венера Пудика. Скулптурата е дело на некоја врвна источномедитеранска скулпторска работилница, зашто укажува извонредноста на изработката и потеклото на белиот, ситнозрнест мермер од островот Парос. Фактот дека скулптурата е изработена во врвен скулпторски центар, далеку од балканските провинциски градови и дека за нејзина изработка бил употребен еден од најквалитетните антички мермери, ја посочува намерата на градителот овој термален објект да го добие епитетот империјален. Неспорна е поврзаноста на изведбата на скупската Венера со Праксителовите скулпторски вредности и традиции во римскиот период. Таа припаѓа на типот Книдска, Капитол, Медичи. Скупската Венера Пудика има директна аналогија кај Капитолинската Венера, римска копија од скулпторска работилница која ги негувала Праксителовите традиции, чиј уметнички квалитет се следи во раноцарскиот период. Скулпторот го следел идеализмот на класичната уметност со стремеж кон пореалистичен начин на претставување на фигурата, доловувајќи ги нејзините психички карактеристики и внатрешни чувства. Низ многу градови во Римската империја биле поставени бројни скулпторски изведби, вклучени во естетските решенија на јавниот простор, исто како во градот Рим. Во контекст на прикажување на елементи и наоди во бањата, кои го одбележуваат луксузниот карактер на објектот, може да се најдат и вотивниот споменик посветен на божицата Венера подигнат од именуваните дуумвир квинкенал и неговата сопруга, потоа камениот споменик најден инситу во атриумот на бањата, со оригиналниот изглед и текстот за едил во градот, декурион во колонијата, поврзансо подигањето на термата, како и камениот постамент каде во релјеф е претставен симболот на империјата, орел кој држи венец, нашто се надврзува и податокот дека во бањата постоел сиден мозаик со златна фолија на тесерите.

Преку градот Скупи римскиот империјален стил бил на многу начини достапен до останатиот дел на Балканот и влијаел на развојот на градовите и на вкупот на градските елити и аристократи.