

Roman stonemasonry workshops in the Ig area

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Izvleček

V članku je predstavljena hipoteza o treh rimskodobnih klesarskih delavnicah, ki so bile na območju Strahomerja, Iške vasi in Iga na južnem robu Ljubljanskega barja, južno od Emone. Hipoteza je nastala na podlagi formalne analize nagrobnih stel in analize njihove prostorske distribucije.

Ključne besede: Slovenija, Ig z okolico, nagrobne stele, rimska doba, klesarske delavnice

Abstract

This article presents a hypothesis about three Roman period stonemasonry workshops that operated in the area of Strahomer, Iška vas, and Ig, all of them located on the southern edge of the Ljubljansko barje, to the south of the Roman Emona. The hypothesis is based on the formal analysis of the grave stelae as well as their spatial distribution.

Keywords: Slovenia, Ig area, grave stelae, Roman period, stonemasonry workshops

RESEARCH HISTORY

The Ig area (Ižansko) covers a number of settlements that became known under this name in the post war archaeology. The archaeological topography of the area was already explored in 1863, when A. Müllner surveyed it in search of epigraphic material (Pleterski, Vuga 1987, 139). As early as the second half of the 19th century Roman remains were discovered at Ig, Staje, Matena, Tomišelj, Strahomer, and Iška vas (Šašel 1959, 118). The 1985 excavations confirmed the existence of a settlement in Iška vas, and the settlement in Staje and Iška Loka were confirmed by individual finds (Vuga 1977; Vuga 1979; Pleterski, Vuga 1987; Nadbath, Brenk 2006, 60–61). In the 1980s D. Vuga contributed a great deal to the research of the area with his archaeological surveys and trial excavations (Vuga 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982; Pleterski, Vuga 1987).

Most Roman period objects were found in the centre of the village of Ig (known as Studenec prior

to World War II; Gestrin 1994, 2; Šašel Kos 1999a, 235). The debate as to what Ig was in antiquity, what sort of a history it had and who were its inhabitants has been ongoing since the 15th century. Several Roman period tombstones with typical local characteristics had been discovered already at that early time (Šašel 1957, 117). The historian J. L. Schönleben wrongly interpreted a Roman building inscription from Vrhnika (*Nauportus*) which led him to the assumption that Ig was called *Magnus vicus* in antiquity (in reality it was *mag(istri) vici*) (Šašel 1959, 117). In the second half of the 19th century A. Müllner even searched for Emona in the Ig area. Th. Mommsen and B. Saria concluded that a larger village under the jurisdiction of Emonan colonial territories was located in Ig (Šašel 1959, 117). Similar to *Nauportus*, Ig also supposedly developed as a port or a reloading area, which in the Late Iron Age might have consisted of the plain by the source of the navigable Ižica (Vuga 1980, 204), and remained in this function also in the Roman period (Šašel 1959, 118). According to

a recent hypothesis, Ig was one of the local centres in the Emona surroundings. However, its position leads us to believe this does not hold true as we usually do not expect a local centre in the immediate vicinity of a regional centre. Therefore it appears that Ig was not so much a local market as a supplier for Emona, offering agricultural products at favourable prices due to its vicinity and the low transport costs (Županek 2001, 74; cf. Šašel 1959, 122–123; Finley 1987, 122).

STONE MONUMENTS AND THE LAPIDARIUM IN IŠKA VAS

A large number of the Roman period monuments from the Ig area are today located in the church of St. Michael in Iška vas. Already during construction period 13 Roman tombstones were incorporated in the church building (Hostnik 1997, 45; Vuga 1977, 223). New monuments might be discovered during church renovations or when digging up the foundations. Apart for church buildings, Roman tombstones were also used as building material during the construction of Ig Castle, as well as other houses, stables and buildings. However, a great problem for analysis is represented by the fact that the original location can be pinpointed

for merely a few (maybe as few as three) of the approximately one hundred Roman period stone monuments.

In the second half of the 19th century, they started to ship Ig tombstones elsewhere. By ordering thirteen Emona and Ig inscriptions to be incorporated into the exterior walls of the newly constructed cathedral and theological seminary, Ioannes Gregorius Thalnitscher created the first Ljubljana “lapidarium” in the first decade of the 18th century. He presented his inscriptions in *Historia Cathedralis Ecclesiae Labacensis*, published in 1701 (Šašel Kos 1997, 41; Šašel Kos 1998, 329). Already Scönleben (1681) drew attention to the fact that the Ig monuments were poorly preserved and decaying, for he wrote: “I went to the very spot and examined them; all of them are almost entirely destroyed and barely legible” (Šašel Kos 1997, 34).

In the period leading up to World War II, the state of the epigraphic monuments was examined by B. Saria (Pleterski, Vuga 1987, 139). At the end of the 1950s, the regional office for monument protection in Ljubljana and the Diocesan Office decided to place all remaining Roman monuments inside the church of St. Michael in Iška vas. In 1957 they ordered that the church be renovated, the frescos uncovered (for they were partially covered) and the church interior organised in accordance

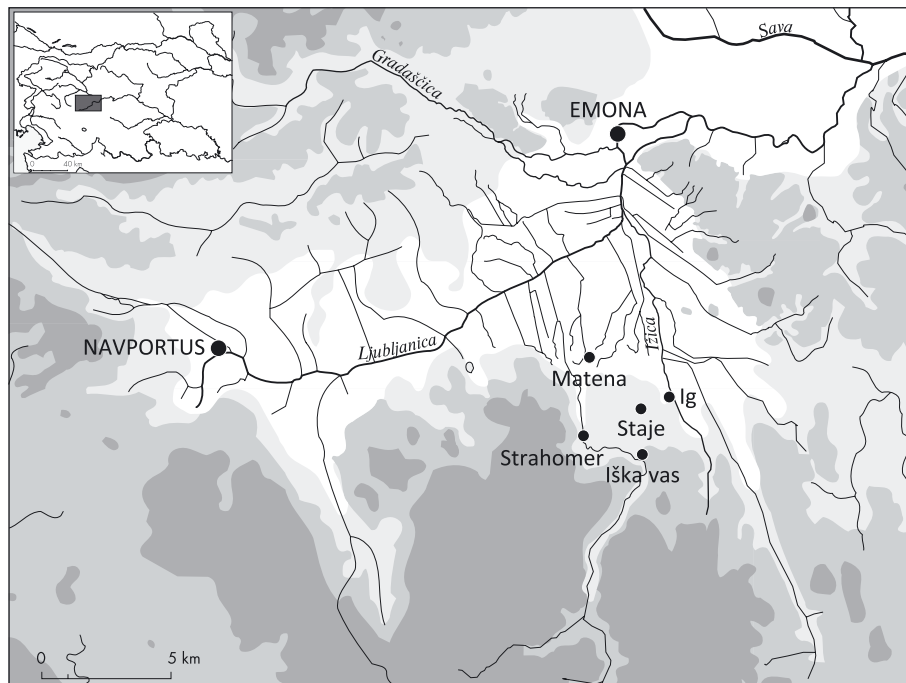


Fig. 1: Ig and vicinity. The provenience and/or site of the monuments.
Sl. 1: Ig z okolico. Prvotna hramba oz. najdišča spomenikov.

with museological principles (Hostnik 1997, 43). This led to the construction of the lapidarium that houses a large share of the Ig stone tombstones (1957–59).

The list of monuments was composed by Jaroslav Šašel (Hostnik 1997, 45). The monuments preserved in the church of St. Michael were brought from Ig, Strahomer, Staje, Matena and Iška vas (*fig. 1*). All monuments were discovered in their secondary location. Most monuments were brought from the settlement of Ig (*fig. 2*), where the highest density of Roman period objects was found (Šašel Kos 1999a, 235).

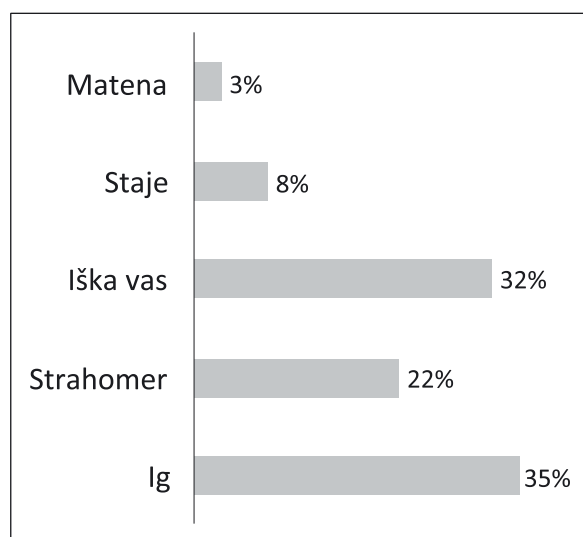


Fig. 2: Ig area. The provenience and/or site of the stelae.
Sl. 2: Ig z okolico. Prvotna hramba oz. najdišča stel.

Due to their rich epigraphic and onomastic content the Ig monuments acquired a special place in Slovenian archaeology. Most Ig tombstones carry indigenous names that form a special Ig group within the Northern Adriatic name group

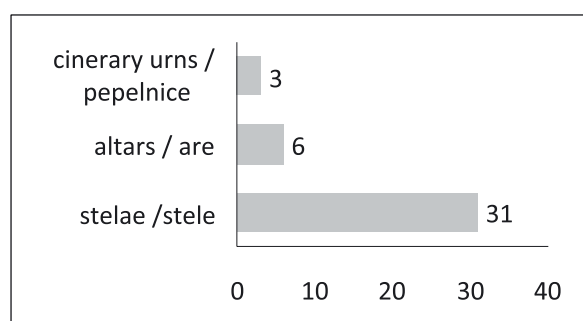


Fig. 3: Ig area. The basic stela shapes.
Sl. 3: Ig z okolico. Osnovne oblike stel.

(Lochner Hüttenbach 1965; Katičić 1968, 120; Hamp 1976, 5; Hamp 1978, 61; Lovenjak 1997, 69; Šašel Kos 1997, 255; Šašel Kos 1999a, 236; Šašel Kos 1999b, 52).

The monuments preserved in the church of St. Michael can be divided into three basic groups: stelae (31), altars (6) and cinerary urns (3) (*fig. 3*). Stelae represent the largest group of all monuments and they are the subject of the analysis that follows.

THE STELAE TYPOLOGY

When defining the typology, only those stelae were taken into account for which I could precisely define their type (42%). 13% of all stelae could have only their basic type determined, while the remaining stelae (45%) were not suitable for further analysis due to their poor condition.

The result of the typological division of stelae from the Ig area is presented in table (*fig. 4*).

The stelae can be divided into two groups, i.e. type A and B (horizontally), each of which has four subgroups (vertically). I allow for the possibility that additional types exist, however they remain unrecognised due to the poor condition of the material. The main criteria for categorising a stele as type A is the triangularly formed gable, while the main characteristics of a type B stele is the niche on the upper part of the stele. Neither of the two groups is unified by its tectonic composition. Both groups include stelae with a simple or moulded frame or with an architecturally diverse (aedicula) frontal side. This division also serves as a key for defining the various subtypes covered in the table. The entire scheme is very similar to Pflug's division of portrait stelae from Northern Italy (Pflug 1989, appendix).

Subtypes

The upper part of a frameless stele (Germ. *ungegliederte Stelen*) is formed into a gable (A/I) or niche (B/I). This is a simple reduced tombstone, without a moulded frame. Group A/I includes the stele from Strahomer (*fig. 5: 1*). This is the oldest stele (dated on the basis of the portrait) found in this area. The man has a shaven beard and short hair, combed from the top of the head towards the forehead. The facial lines, round face, pointy ears and the anatomically formed neck are typical of the

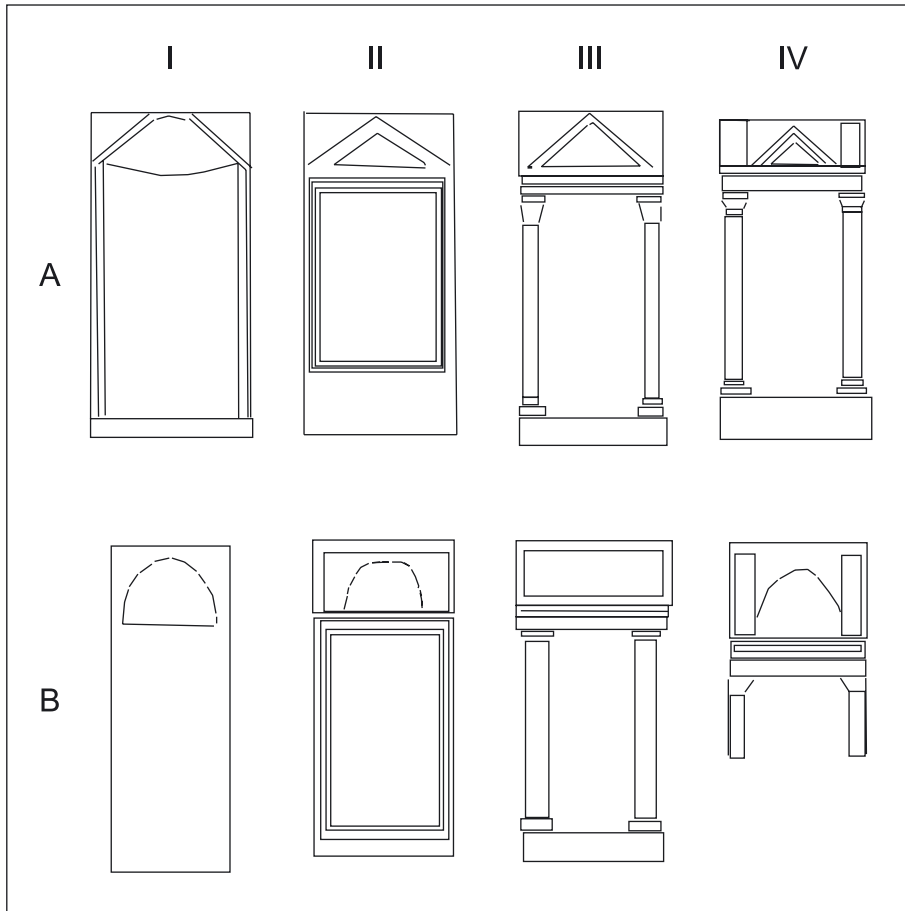


Fig. 4: Ig area (lapidarium at Iška vas). The typology of the stelae. A and B: two main types, I–IV: subtypes.
Sl. 4: Ig z okolico. Tipologija stel iz lapidarija v Iški vasi. A in B: osnovna tipa stel, I–IV: podtipi.

Julio-Claudian period portraits (Croom 2002, 65). The basic form of this stela derives from the type of stela with a moulded frame of the inscription field and a triangular gable; however, in this case the sides and the architrave of the stela are transformed into decorative elements. The inscription field is framed by two spears or thyrsi that are joined together by a garland, the end of which is wrapped around a pole. The garland also frames the lower part of the shallow gable with the portrait. This stela is unique in its form and decoration. Group B/I is a small group in terms of numbers. Typical for this subtype is the portrait niche that is separated from the inscription field merely by a deeply carved line. This subtype consists of merely

two monuments. The first is the monument from Ig that was erected by *Hostila* in honour of her fifty year old mother (fig. 5: 12). A similar stela was found nearby, in the northern corner foundation stone of the church of St. Michael in Iška vas.

The second group consists of stelae with a moulded frame (Germ. *profilgerahmte Stelen*). The structure of these stelae is marked by the moulded frame of the inscription field. The stela is ended either by a triangular moulded gable (A/II) or a niche with a portrait (B/II). Among the tombstones under examination the following can be placed into subtype A/II: 2, 3, 4 (fig. 5: 2,3,4). It is interesting that all three tombstones were brought from Strahomer. Subtype B/II with

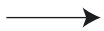


Fig. 5: Ig area. The classification of stelae in terms of the site or provenience.

Sl. 5: Ig z okolico. Razdelitev stel glede na prvotno hrambo oz. najdišče.

1 – AIJ 131, CIL III 10740, UEL 3671; 2 – AIJ 128, CIL III 3789, UEL 3668; 3 – AIJ 146, CIL III 10724, UEL 3686; 4 – CIL III 3788, UEL 5563; 5 – UEL 4230; 6 – AIJ 144, CIL III 3826, UEL 3684; 7 – UEL 5572; 8 – AIJ 136, CIL III 10741, UEL 3676; 9 – AIJ 140, UEL 3680; 10 – UEL 4649; 11 – CIL III 10744, UEL 5562; 12 – AIJ 139, CIL III 10776, UEL 3679; 13 – UEL 4648; 14 – Hostnik 1997, no./št. 4; 15 – UEL 5567.

Strahomer



1



2



3



4



5



6

Iška vas



7



8



9



10

Ig



11



12



13



14



15

a moulded inscription field is represented by the stele with a depiction of a married couple (*fig. 5: 9*). Instead of the classic triangular gable, the upper part of the tombstone houses a portrait niche with two stylised busts. J. Kastelic (1988, 177) describes this tombstone as a typical rural stele depicting two rustic heads.

Architectural stelae (Germ. Architektonische Stelen); stelae of the aedicula type

The basic characteristic of the architectural stelae (including aedicula stelae) is that the front is divided with pseudo functional architectural elements. The upper part consists of a gable (A/III) or a portrait niche (B/III). The tombstone thus copies the appearance of a reduced aedicula (cf. Jevremov 1988, 17). Monuments 5, 8, 11 (*fig. 5: 5,8,11*) belong amongst tombstones with a reduced aedicula and a gable in the upper part.

The stele from Strahomer (*fig. 5: 6*) is the only architectural stele with an inscription field surrounded by two pillars and a portrait niche. Stelae with a rectangular portrait niche and without the upper part date to the end of the 2nd or beginning of the 3rd century, while some can even be as late as the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 4th century (Djurić 2007, 897).

Subtypes A/IV and B/IV can be defined within the group of architectural stelae. These are special architectural stelae that are interesting because of their specifically formed upper part. The usual form of a reduced aedicula with a gable (A/IV) or niche (B/IV) gained a rectangular field decorated with vegetative motives on both sides (*fig. 5: 7,10*). Both monuments from this group were found in Iška vas. Tombstones with so-called decorative tiles on the sides of the gable are characteristic of the Ig area and the Dolenjska region.

Spatial grouping of types and subtypes of stelae

Even though most tombstones were discovered in their secondary location, certain characteristics as regards the spatial placement of the various types and subtypes can be noticed. *Fig. 5* lists the stelae in terms of the site of discovery.

It can be noticed that type B stelae with portrait niches are characteristic for Ig. The group from Iška vas appears as an independent group of stelae with a gable or a niche that has both sides

of the rectangular field decorated with vegetative motifs (subtype A/IV and B/IV). Type A stelae are typical for Strahomer. The spatial grouping of type B stelae in Ig, type A stelae in Strahomer and subtypes A/IV and B/IV in Iška vas points towards the presence of local workshops that provided for the needs of the local inhabitants. It is most likely that the workshops were located close to where these objects were found, i.e. in the vicinity of Strahomer, Ig and Iška vas.

The stelae are not only similar in their appearance but also in size (*fig. 6*). In terms of their width and thickness the stelae are of similar dimensions; moreover, the thickness of the stelae is almost the same and seems to be of a standard thickness. The average thickness of the stelae from Iška vas is 25.6 cm (+/-2 centimetres). Only five stelae can be found with measurements outside of these parameters. This means that 80% of the stelae preserved in Iška vas are of a standardised thickness. This might indicate that they come from the same quarry. For comparison, the difference between the maximum and minimum thickness of the stelae from Strahomer is 3 centimetres (*fig. 6*).

The homogeneity of the group is shown by two additional criteria: the choice of motifs and the production technique. Let us use stelae 3, 4 and 5 (*fig. 7*) as an example.

All three have a triangular dolphin fin in common. The triangular surface of the tail fin at stele 4 is divided by straight lines. The discordance between the size of the fin and the body of the dolphin is noticeable. The side and back fins

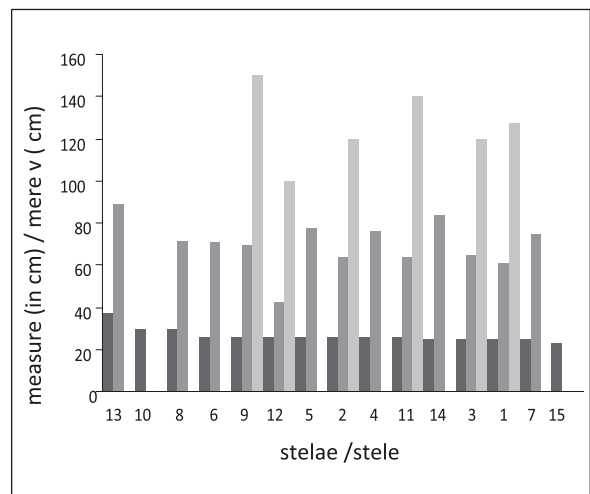


Fig. 6: Ig area. Stelae measurements (height, width and thickness).

Sl. 6: Ig z okolico. Dimenzije stel (višina, širina in debelina).



Fig. 7: Ig area (lapidarium at Iška vas). Comparison of the motifs on the stelae from Strahomer: 3 (UEL 3686), 4 (UEL 5563), 5 (UEL 4230).

Sl. 7: Ig z okolico (lapidarij v Iški vasi). Primerjava motivov na stelah iz Strahomerja: 3 (UEL 3686), 4 (UEL 5563) in 5 (UEL 4230).

are also precisely drawn, with straight lines. The same geometrical regularity can also be found on stele 5, depicting a bird. The depiction of the

mark in the form of the letter V on the body of the bird and the dolphin is also alike. The depiction of the bird is most likely a variant of the dolphin

and is most likely a consequence of a mistaken interpretation or a simple mistake by the carver (Schleiermacher 1960, 378). Apart from this, only the stelae from Strahomer show a depiction of a cone in the gable. This may indicate that the stelae came from the same workshop, perhaps somewhere in the vicinity of Strahomer.

Hypothesis verification

The primary analysis was performed only on the stelae that are kept in the church of St. Michael in Iška vas. I have used the remaining stelae from the Ig area to try and verify the hypothesis as regards the three stonemasonry workshops that were supposedly located in Ig, Strahomer and Iška vas. Today they are kept at the National Museum of Slovenia and the Ljubljana City Museum or they are incorporated into the Ljubljana cathedral, the nearby seminary, the Bistra Castle and various buildings in Ig. As these were not considered in my analysis, they can be used as the control group. Any sort of similarity cannot be a coincidence.

We have compared the motifs and the shapes of the stelae. The fact that for most of them the exact location in which they were found is unknown or the location of Ig was given to all stelae found in the Ig area presents a great difficulty. In the case of the stelae built into the Ljubljana cathedral it is not even clear whether they originate from Ig or from Emona.

The stelae with the portrait niche supposedly originate from the Ig workshop. The examples for which we are certain that they originate from Ig



Fig. 8: Ig. The first stela incorporated into Ig (Sonneg) Castle (photo: Andro Skaleras).

Sl. 8: Ig. Prva stela, vzdana v grad Sonneg (foto: Andro Skaleras).

seem to prove this hypothesis. We can therefore add two stelae that are immured in Ig Castle¹ (figs. 8 and 9), two from the National Museum of Slovenia (UEL 3714, UEL 3681) and one from the Ljubljana City Museum (UEL 4179) to the stelae from Ig that are preserved in the church of St. Michael in Iška vas. Apart from the stelae with a portrait, niche stelae with a gable can also be found in Ig (fig. 5: 11, fig. 10,² UEL 3669, UEL 3678), however the latter appear only in small numbers.

The Strahomer workshop is confirmed by the stela that is incorporated into the Ljubljana semi-

¹ The first stela (fig. 8) is incorporated into the eastern corner of Ig Castle. This is the upper part of the stela with a flat ending and a semicircular portrait niche (h.: 0.46 cm, w.: 0.90 cm). The downwards swimming dolphins are depicted in the corners, with a rectangular figure at the bottom edge of the niche. The dolphins have a split tail-fin that is emphasised with deep lines. Under the arch of the niche, between the busts, is a four-petal rosette in a wreath. The tombstone holds two portraits with heads, necks and the beginning of the two chests. The bodies of the deceased are merged into a singular mass. A faint line indicates the end of the first body and the beginning of the other. The two faces are similar, which makes it likely that they were made from the same general model used when the portraits were made. Compared to the body size the heads are disproportionate. The faces are round, the cheekbones are sunken, noses are thin, and the small mouths are merely indicated. The eyes are wide open with strongly emphasised eyelids while the edge of the hairline runs in a straight line above the forehead. The man has a short haircut. The wife is depicted on the left side of the niche. She has a roundish face with a serious expression, her eyes are large and strongly emphasised with the pupils and eyelids, her mouth is small and inexplicit. Her clothes show visible traces of the so-called Norican-Pannonian attire including the hood on the head and the fibulae on her shoulders.

The second stela (fig. 9) is built into the western corner of Ig Castle. The upper part of the stela, consisting of a semi-circular portrait niche (h.: 40 cm, w.: 0.69 cm), is preserved. On the left is a bust of a woman with a long pointed face, emphasised cheekbones, large eyes and a thin, long nose. The woman is dressed in the so-called Norican-Pannonian attire of which we can recognise merely traces of a fibula on the right shoulder and the Norican hood. The male portrait has emphasised eyes, an unemphasized small mouth and a slightly outlined shape of the nose. The man does not wear any traces of clothes.

² The gable and the left corner of the stela are preserved (h.: 0.27 cm, w.: 0.48 cm). This is most probably a fragment of the upper part of the stela with a flat upper ending. A rosette with round leaves spread into two lines is located in the centre of the gable. In the corner is depicted a long and thin, twice twisted dolphin tail. Beneath the dolphin lies a smaller rosette.



Fig. 9: Ig. The second stela incorporated into Ig (Sonneg) Castle (photo: Andro Skaleras).

Sl. 9: Ig. Druga stela, vzdana v grad Sonneg (foto: Andro Skaleras).

nary (*UEL* 3707), the origin of which is confirmed by Thalnitscher's report. The stela shows typical signs of this stonemasonry workshop, i.e. dolphins with a triangular tail, a round encircled dolphin's eye, and a mark in the form of the letter V on its body (*fig. 11*).

The stela incorporated into the Ljubljana cathedral (*UEL* 3696) was erected by the Roman citizen *Gaius Aetius Secundus* and might be from the Strahomer workshop. The stela depicts a wreath, a rosette and two cones on either side in its gable. Apart from its shape (subtype B/II) the lines in the design of the cone also indicate that this stela comes from the Strahomer workshop. The lines that run along the entire surface of the cone are reminiscent of the stela from Strahomer (*fig. 5: 4*).

The hypothesis of a workshop in the area of Iška vas has been based on two stelae with additional decorative fields, belonging to subtypes A/IV and B/IV (*fig. 5: 7,10*). However, the stela from the National Museum of Slovenia (*UEL* 3670) shows that such stelae with decorative fields can also be found in Ig. This could mean that the postulated existence of a workshop in Iška vas should be rejected or this stela might indicate that the inhabitants of the Roman period settlements of what is today Ig, Strahomer and Iška vas were well acquainted with the formal language of all three workshops. The latter explanation seems to be perfectly understandable for only a small circle of manufacturers was active in the area, and users lived merely a few miles from each other. On the basis of the presented arguments I would suggest that three stonemasonry workshops operated in the area.

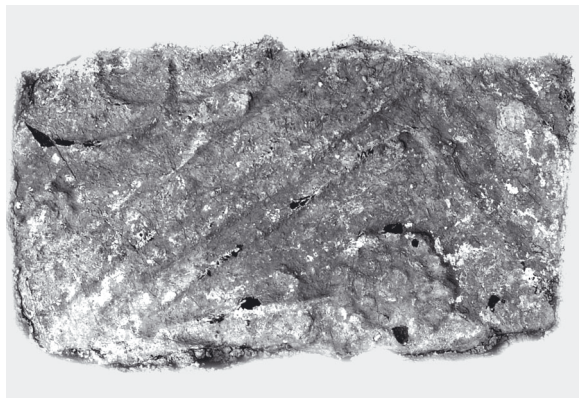


Fig. 10: Ig. The stela immured into the northwest part of the wall that surrounds the church of St. Martin.

Sl. 10: Ig. Stela je vzdana v severozahodni del zidu, ki obdaja cerkev sv. Martina.

TIME FRAME OF THE WORKSHOPS

Regardless of the poor condition of the tombstones found in the church of St. Michael, we can offer a word or two as regards their dates. In terms of chronology, the least problematic are the tombstones with portraits because they were modelled in the fashion of imperial portraits. The monuments found in Strahomer can be dated between the first half of the 1st century (dated on the basis of the portrait, *fig. 5: 1*) all the way to the mid 3rd century (taking into account the stela type, *fig. 5: 6*). The other pieces found in Ig can be only roughly dated to sometime between the 2nd and 4th centuries (*fig. 5: 13,14*). It is surprising that the stela with the so-called Celtic elements is dated to the late Roman period (Djurić 2007, 898; *fig. 5: 15*).

It is difficult to date the stelae from Iška vas. We can notice that they overlap with the stelae from Ig. We encountered A/IV (*fig. 5: 7; UEL* 3670) and B/I (*fig. 5: 12; unpublished*)³ subtypes in both, Ig and in Iška vas. This might indicate that they both existed simultaneously. If we set aside stela 1 (*fig. 5: 1*), which is the only one from the first half of the 1st century AD, most tombstones from Ig, Strahomer and Iška vas can be dated between the mid 2nd and mid 3rd centuries AD, which means that the workshops existed simultaneously.

³ The stela built into the foundation of the northern corner of the church of St. Michael in Iška vas. At the top one can notice the arched portrait niche, while the inscription field has no noticeable traces of moulded frame.



Fig. 11: Ig area. The common characteristics of the stelae from Strahomer are emphasised: **a** (*UEL* 3696, immured in the south wall of the Ljubljana seminary) and **b** (*UEL* 5565, lapidarium at Iška vas).

Sl. 11: Ig z okolico. Poudarjene so skupne značilnosti stel iz Strahomerja: **a** (*UEL* 3696, vzdana v južno steno semenišča v Ljubljani) in **b** (*UEL* 5565, lapidarij v Iški vasi).

CONCLUSION

Typologically the stelae from the Ig area can be divided into two basic groups: stelae with a triangular gable (type A) and stelae with a portrait niche (type B). Type A prevails in Ig, while type B is characteristic for Strahomer. The group of stelae from Strahomer is also homogenous in its decoration, for only within this group do we encounter a dolphin with a triangular tail (in one example

changed into a bird). The detail in the form of the letter V that has been preserved on the body of the dolphin and the bird indicates that the two stelae were made by the same workshop. On the basis of the explicit similarities in the decoration and the manner of manufacture we can conclude that a local stonemasonry workshop operated in the vicinity of Strahomer. A local workshop can be recognised also in the vicinity of Iška vas. This workshop produced specially ornamented stelae

with additional decorative fields on both sides of the gable or portrait niche (subtypes A/IV and B/IV). Taking into account the time frame into which we can place most tombstones from the Ig area, as well as the standard thickness of the stelae I would suggest that they are the work of three workshops in the area operating at the same time. The workshop in Ig was active for the longest, and regardless of the Romanisation it preserved elements of the pre-Roman formal language.

Acknowledgements

This article is based on the B.A. thesis *The Roman Lapidarium in Iška vas in the context of the Ljubljansko barje Nature Park (Rimski lapidarij v Iški vasi v kontekstu krajinskega parka Barje)* which was written under the mentorship of Prof. Bojan Djurić. I would like to thank him for his expert guidance, valuable advice, and remarks that directed me in the right direction. I would also like to thank Marjeta Šašel Kos for her time and valuable remarks.

Translation: Sunčan Stone

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Abbreviations

- AIJ: V. Hoffiller, B.Saria, *Antike Inschriften aus Jugoslavien 1: Noricum und Pannonia Superior*, Zagreb 1938.
- CIL: *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*.
- UEL: Web-Platform & Databases, VBI ERAT LVPA, Forschungsgesellschaft Wiener Stadtarchäologie. <http://www.ubi-erat-lupa.org> (retrieved on Okt. 10. 2009).

Rimske klesarske delavnice na Ižanskem

ZGODOVINA RAZISKAV

Izraz *ižansko območje* - uporabljamo za sklop današnjih naselij, za katerega se je v povojnem času v arheologiji uveljavila izpeljanka Ižansko in je bil predmet arheološke topografije že leta 1863, ko je A. Müllner tu iskal epigrafsko gradivo (Pleterski, Vuga 1987, 139). Tako so že od druge polovice 19. stoletja znani kot rimska najdišča: Ig, Staje, Matena, Tomišelj, Strahomer, Iška vas (Šašel 1959, 118). Poselitev Iške vasi so potrdila izkopavanja leta 1985, Staj in Iške Loke pa posamezne najdbe (Vuga 1977; Vuga 1979; Pleterski, Vuga 1987; Nadbath, Brenk 2006, 60–61).

K raziskanosti tega območja je v osemdesetih letih veliko prispeval D. Vuga s terenskimi obhodi in sondiranji (Vuga 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982; Pleterski, Vuga 1987).

Največ rimskodobnih predmetov so našli v središču vasi Ig, ki se je še pred drugo svetovno vojno imenovala Studenec (Gestrin 1994, 2; Šašel Kos 1999a, 235). Razprava o tem, kaj je bil Ig v antiki, kakšna je njegova zgodovina in kdo so bili njegovi prebivalci, se vleče že vse od 15. stoletja, ko so odkrili rimske nagrobnike z izrazito lokalnimi značilnostmi (Šašel 1957, 117). Zgodovinar J. L. Schönleben je napačno interpretiral rimski gradbeni napis z Vrhniko (*Nauportus*) in na njegovi podlagi domneval, da se je Ig v antiki imenoval *Magnus vicus* (v resnici *mag(istri) vici*) (Šašel 1959, 117). A. Müllner je v drugi polovici 19. stoletja iskal na območju Iga celo Emono. Th. Mommsen in B. Saria sta se zadovoljila z ugotovitvijo, da je šlo na Igu za večjo vaško naselbino v sklopu emonskega kolonialnega ozemlja (Šašel 1959, 117). Ig naj bi se, podobno kot *Nauportus*, razvil kot pristanišče ali prekladališče, ki je v latenskem času morda obsegalo ravninski del ob izviru plovne Ižice (Vuga 1980, 204) in je to funkcijo opravljalo tudi v rimski dobi (Šašel 1959, 118). Po novejši hipotezi naj bi bil Ig eno izmed lokalnih središč v zaledju Emone. Vendar lega Iga priča o nasprotnem, saj lokalnega središča običajno ne pričakujemo v neposredni bližini regionalnega. Ig se tako bolj kot lokalni trg kaže kot oskrbovalec Emone s pridelki, katerih cena bi bila zaradi bližine pridelovalnih površin oziroma nizkih transportnih stroškov ugodna (Županek 2001, 74; prim. Šašel 1959, 122–123; Finley 1987, 122).

KAMNITI SPOMENIKI IN LAPIDARIJ V IŠKI VASI

Velik del rimskih spomenikov z Ižanskega je danes shranjen v cerkvi sv. Mihaela v Iški vasi. Že med njeno gradnjo so vanjo vzdali tudi 13 rimskih nagrobnikov (Hostnik 1997, 45; Vuga 1977, 223). Morda se bo pri obnovi cerkvene stavbe oz. pri izkopavanju ob temeljih odkril še kakšen spomenik. Ižanske rimske nagrobnike so uporabljali kot gradbeni material ne le pri cerkvenih stavbah, ampak tudi pri gradnji ižanskega gradu, hiš, hlevov in raznih drugih poslopij. Vendar pomeni veliko težavo za analizo dejstvo, da poznamo natančno najdišče le za maloštevilne, morda le za tri (?), od približno sto antičnih kamnitih spomenikov.

V drugi polovici 19. stoletja so ižanske nagrobne spomenike začeli kot gradbeni material uporabljati tudi drugje. Janez Gregor Dolničar je že v prvem desetletju 18. stoletja dal vzdati trinajst zanimivih emonskih in ižanskih napisov v zunanje stene novozgrajene stolnice in semenišča v Ljubljani ter s tem ustvaril prvi ljubljanski "lapidarij". Napise je predstavil v svoji *Historia Cathedralis Ecclesiae Labacensis* leta 1701 (Šašel Kos 1997, 41; 1998, 329). Da so bili ižanski spomeniki slabo zaščiteni pred propadanjem, je opozarjal že Scönleben (1681), ki pravi: "*Odšel sem na kraj sam in si jih ogledal: vsi so že skoraj propadli in so nečitljivi.*" (Šašel Kos 1997, 34).

Stanje epigrafskih spomenikov na Igu je pred drugo svetovno vojno ugotavljal B. Saria (Pleterski, Vuga 1987, 139). Konec petdesetih let 20. stoletja je okrajni spomeniški urad v Ljubljani v soglasju s škofijskim ordinariatom odločil, da bo zbral in namestil vse preostale rimske spomenike v cerkvi sv. Mihaela v Iški vasi. Leta 1957 je dal cerkev restavrirati, odkriti freske, ki so bile le delno vidne, in cerkveni prostor urediti v skladu z muzeološkimi načeli (Hostnik 1997, 43). Tako je med letoma 1957–1959 začel nastajati lapidarij, v katerem je zbran velik delež ižanskih kamnitih nagrobnikov.

Popis spomenikov je sestavil Jaroslav Šašel (Hostnik 1997, 45). Spomeniki, shranjeni v cerkvi sv. Mihaela, so bili pripeljani z Iga, iz Strahomerja, Staj, Matene in Iške vasi (*sl. 1*). Vsi so bili odkriti v drugotni legi. Največ spomenikov je bilo pripeljanih z Iga (*sl. 2*), kjer je tudi največja gostota rimskodobnih predmetov na ižanskem območju (Šašel Kos 1999a, 235).

Posebno mesto v slovenski arheologiji so ižanski spomeniki dobili že zaradi svojega bogatega epigrafskega in onomastičnega gradiva. Na nagrobnikih so namreč večinoma zapisana domača imena, ki sestavljajo posebno ižansko skupino v severnojadranski imenski skupini (Lochner Hüttenbach 1965; Katičič 1968, 120; Hamp 1976, 5; Hamp 1978, 61; Lovenjak 1997, 69; Šašel Kos 1997, 255; Šašel Kos 1999a, 236; Šašel Kos 1999b, 52).

Spomenike, shranjene v cerkvi sv. Mihaela, lahko razdelimo na tri osnovne oblike: stele (31), are (6) in pepelnice (3) (*sl. 3*). Največji delež spomenikov predstavljajo stele, ki jim je namenjena v nadaljevanju predstavljena analiza.

TIPOLOGIJA STEL

Za tipološko razdelitev so prišle v poštev stele, katerih tipe sem lahko določila z gotovostjo (42 %) ali jih delno opredelila, določiti jim je bilo mogoče le osnovni tip (13 %), medtem ko druge (45 %) zaradi slabe ohranjenosti niso bile primerne za analizo.

Rezultat tipološke razdelitve stel z Ižanskega je predstavljen v tabeli (*sl. 4*). Stele lahko delimo v dve skupini oz. tipa A in B (horizontalno), ki imata vsak po štiri podtipe (vertikalno). Dopuščam možnost obstoja še dodatnih tipov, ki pa ostajajo zaradi slabe ohranjenosti gradiva neprepoznani. Kriterij za opredelitev stel v tip A je trikotno oblikovan zatrep, medtem ko je glavna značilnost

stel tipa B niša na njihovem zgornjem delu. Skupini nista enotni po zgradbi. V obeh najdemo stele z enostavnim oz. profiliranim okvirjem ali pa je njihova sprednja stran arhitektonsko razčlenjena (edikula). Ta delitev služi tudi kot ključ za opredelitev podtipov, ki so prikazani v tabeli. Celotna shema se zelo približa Pflugovi razdelitvi portretnih stel iz severne Italije (Pflug 1989, priloga).

Opredelitev podtipov

Stele brez okvirja (nem. *ungegliederte Stelen*) imajo zgornji del oblikovan v zatrep (A/I) ali nišo (B/I). Gre za preprosto nagrobno ploščo z reducirano osnovno obliko, na kateri ni opaznih sledov profilacije. V skupino A/I uvrščamo stelo iz Strahomerja (sl. 5: 1). Gre za najstarejšo stelo, najdeno na tem prostoru, ki je datirana na podlagi portreta. Upodobljen moški ima gladko obrito brado in kratke lase, počesane od sredine glave naprej proti čelu. Obrazne poteze, okrogel obraz, štrleča ušesa in anatomsko oblikovan vrat so značilni za julijsko-klavdijske portrete (Croom 2002, 65). Osnovna oblika stele izhaja iz oblik stel s profiliranim okvirjem napisnega polja in trikotnim zatrepom, le da so stranici in arhitrav preoblikovani v dekorativne elemente. Napisno polje uokvirjata dve sulici ali tirsia, ki sta med seboj povezani/a z girlando, katere konca se ovijata okoli palice. Girlanda hkrati uokvirja spodnji del plitvega zatrepja s portretom. Stela je po obliki in okrasu unikaten izdelek. Prav tako skromna po številu stel je tudi skupina B/I. Za ta podtip stele je značilna portretna niša, ki jo od napisnega polja ločuje le globoko vrezana črta. V ta podtip lahko uvrstimo le dva spomenika, in sicer spomenik z Iga, ki ga je postavila hči *Hostila* za svojo petdesetletno mater (sl. 5: 12), in po obliki podobno stelo v neposredni bližini, vzdano v temelj severnega vogala cerkve sv. Mihaela v Iški vasi.

Druga skupina so stele s profiliranim okvirjem (nem. *profilgerahmte Stelen*). Njihovo zgradbo označuje profiliran okvir napisnega polja. Zgornji del se bodisi končuje s trikotnim profiliranim zatrepom (A/II) ali nišo s portretom (B/II). Izmed obravnavanih nagrobnikov lahko uvrstimo v podtip A/II nagrobne 2, 3, 4 (sl. 5: 2,3,4). Zanimivo je, da so bili vsi trije pripeljeni iz Strahomerja. V podtip B/II s profiliranim napisnim poljem pa sodi stela zakoncev (sl. 5: 9). Zgornji del nagrobnika ima namesto klasičnega trikotnega zatrepja portretno nišo, v kateri sta stilizirani doprsji oseb. Kastelic (1988, 177) opisuje ta nagrobnik kot tipično podeželsko stelo v rustikalni izvedbi z dvema glavama.

Arhitektonske stele (nem. Architektonische Stelen); stele tipa edikula

Osnovna značilnost arhitektonskih stel, kamor uvrščamo stele v obliki edikule, je, da je sprednja ploskev razčlenjena s psevdofunkcionalnimi arhitektonskimi elementi. Zgornji del arhitektonske stele ima zatrep (A/III) ali portretno nišo (B/III). Nagrobnik tako posnema videz reducirane edikule (prim. Jevremov 1988, 17). Med nagrobne tipa reducirane edikule z zatrepom v zgornjem delu opredeljujemo spomenike 5, 8, 11 (sl. 5: 5,8,11).

Med arhitektonske stele z napisnim poljem, obdanim z dvema stebroma, na katerih je portretna niša, sodi le stela iz Strahomerja (sl. 5: 6). Stele s pravokotno portretno nišo brez zgornjega zaključka časovno uvrščamo v konec 2. ali začetek 3. stoletja, nekatere pa še v konec 3. ali celo v zgodnje 4. stoletje (Djurić 2007, 897).

V skupini arhitektonskih stel lahko opredelimo še podtipa A/IV in B/IV. Gre za posebno obliko arhitektonskih stel, ki je zanimiva zaradi posebej oblikovanega zgornjega dela. Običajna oblika reducirane edikule z zatrepom (A/IV) oz. nišo (B/IV) ima levo in desno pravokotno polje okrašeno z rastlinskimi motivi (sl. 5: 7,10). Oba spomenika iz te skupine sta bila najdena v Iški vasi. Nagrobniki s t. i. okrasnimi ploščami na straneh zatrepja so posebnost izžanskega in dolnjskega prostora.

Značilna prostorska grupacija tipov in podtipov stel

Čeprav je bila večina nagrobnikov odkrita v drugotni legi, so opazne nekatere pravilnosti glede na prostorsko umeščenost posameznih tipov in podtipov. Na sliki 5 so stele razdeljene glede na kraj, od koder so bile prinesene (sl. 5). To so za Ig značilne stele s portretnimi nišami tipa B. Iz Iške vasi je tudi samostojna skupina stel z zatrepom oz. nišo, ki ima levo in desno pravokotno polje okrašeno z rastlinskimi motivi (podtip A/IV in B/IV). V Strahomerju prevladujejo stele tipa A. Prostorska grupacija stel tipa B na Igu, stel tipa A v Strahomerju in podtipa A/IV in B/IV v Iški vasi bi lahko kazala na obstoj lokalnih delavnic, ki so delale za potrebe lokalnega prebivalstva. Najverjetnejša lokacija teh delavnic je tam, kjer so bili ti predmeti najdeni. Torej v okolici Strahomerja, Iga in Iške vasi.

Poleg tipološke homogenosti stel je opazna tudi izjemna enakomernost velikostnih razmerij (sl. 6). Po širini in debelini so stele sicer lahko podobnih dimenzij, njihova standardna debelina pa je izrazito homogena. Povprečna debelina stel, shranjenih v Iški vasi, je 25,6 cm, z odstopanjem do 2 centimetra. Od tega povprečja izstopa le pet stel, tako da ima 80 % stel, shranjenih v Iški vasi, standardizirano debelino. Ta podatek morda kaže na to, da so bile iz istega kamnoloma. Za primerjavo, razlika med maksimalno in minimalno debelino stel, prinesenih iz Strahomerja, je 3 cm (sl. 6).

Poleg tega na homogenost skupine kažeta še dva kriterija, izbor motivov in tehnika izdelave. Oglejmo si to na primeru stel 3, 4 in 5 (sl. 7). Skupna vsem trem je trikotna delfinova plavut. Trikotna površina repne plavuti pri steli 4 je razdeljena z ravnimi črtami. Opazno je nesorazmerje med velikostjo plavuti in trupom delfina. Prsne in hrbtni plavuti so prav tako vrisane natančno, z ravnimi linijami. Enaka geometrijska pravilnost upodobitve motiva je značilna tudi za stelo 5, na kateri pa je upodobljena ptica. Skupna jima je tudi upodobitev znamenja v obliki črke V na trupu ptice in delfina. Ikonografija ptice je najverjetneje izpeljava upodobitve delfina kot posledica neustrezne interpretacije oziroma napake izdelovalca (Schleiermacher 1960, 378). Poleg tega je samo na stelah iz Strahomerja v zatrepu upodobljen storž. Vse to kaže na veliko verjetnost, da sta bili steli izdelani v isti delavnici, morda nekje v bližnji okolici Strahomerja.

Preverjanje hipoteze

Prvotna analiza je bila opravljena le na stelah, ki so danes shranjene v cerkvi sv. Mihaela v Iški vasi. Zanesljivost hipoteze o treh klesarskih delavnicah, ki naj bi bile locirane na Igu, v Strahomerju in Iški vasi, sem zato preverila tudi na drugih stelah z izžanskega območja. Te danes hranijo v Narodnem muzeju Slovenije in v Mestnem muzeju Ljubljana ali pa so vzdane v ljubljansko stolnico in bližnje semenišče, v grad Bistra ter stavbe na Igu. Ker teh stel pri analizi skupin nismo upoštevali, jih lahko uporabimo kot kontrolno skupino. Morebitno ujemanje rezultatov ne more biti naključno.

Primerjali smo motive in obliko stel. Veliko težavo predstavlja predvsem to, da pri večini ni znano natančno najdišče oz. je lokacija Ig oznaka za vse te stele z Ižanskega. Pri stelah, ki so vzdane v stolnico, ni niti jasno, ali so bile prinesene z Iga ali so bile iz Emone.

Iz ižanske delavnice naj bi izvirale stele s portretno nišo. Gradivo, za katerega zanesljivo vemo, da izvira z Iga, se ujema s hipotezo. Stelam z Iga, ki so shranjene v cerkvi sv. Mihaela v Iški vasi, lahko torej prištejemo še dve steli, vzdani na ižanskem gradu¹ (sl. 8 in 9), dve iz Narodnega muzeja (UEL 3714, UEL 3681) in eno iz Mestnega muzeja v Ljubljani (UEL 4179). Na Igu so poleg stel s portretno nišo tudi stele s trikotnim zaključkom

¹ Prva stela (sl. 8) je vzdana v vzhodni vogal ižanskega gradu. Gre za zgornji del stele z ravnim zaključkom in polkrožno portretno nišo (v.: 0,46 cm, š.: 0,90 cm). Zaklinka zapolnjevata navzdol plavajoča delfina in pravokotno oblikovan lik ob spodnjem robu niše. Delfina imata razcepljeno repno plavut, ki je poudarjena z globokimi linijami. Pod svodom niše je med doprsjem štirilistna rozeta v vencu. Na nagrobniku sta samo portretni glavi z vratom in kratkim nadaljevanjem v oprsje. Telesi pokojnikov sta združeni v enotno maso. Le rahla črta nakazuje, kje se konča telo ene osebe in kje se začne drugo. Obraza sta si podobna, verjetno gre za isto predlogo, ki so jo uporabili pri izdelavi portretov. Velikost glave v primerjavi z velikostjo telesa je nesorazmerna. Obraza sta okrogle oblike, ličnici ne izstopata, nos je tanek, pod njim so nakazana majhna usta. Oči so široko odprte in poudarjene z vekami, rob lasišča poteka vodoravno nad čelom. Moški ima kratko oblikovano pričesko. Soproga je upodobljena na levi strani niše. Njen obraz je nekoliko okrogel, izraz je resen, oči so velike in močno poudarjene s pupilo in izrazitimi vekami, usta so majhna in neizrazita. Na njeni obleki so opazni sledovi noriško-panonske noše, in sicer na glavi avba in ločni fibuli na ramenih.

Druga stela (sl. 9) je vzdana v zahodni vogal ižanskega gradu. Ohranjen je njen vrhnji del, in sicer polkrožna portretna niša (v.: 40 cm, š.: 0,69 cm). Levo je doprsje žene s koničastim podolgovatim obrazom, poudarjenima ličnicama, velikih oči ter ozkim podolgovatim nosom. Ženska je oblečena v noriško-panonsko nošo, od katere prepoznamo le v sledovih ločno fibulo na desnem ramenu in noriško avbo. Moški portret ima poudarjene oči, neizrazita majhna usta in rahlo nakazano obliko nosu. Sledovi oblačila moškega niso vidni.

(sl. 5: 11 in sl. 10,² UEL 3669, UEL 3678), vendar so le v manjšem številu.

Tudi strahomersko delavnico potrjuje stela, ki je danes vzdana v semenišče v Ljubljani (UEL 3707) in katere izvor potrjuje Dolničarjevo poročilo. Na steli najdemo tipične znake te klesarske delavnice, delfina s trikotno repno plavutjo, okroglo obrobjenim očesom in znakom v obliki črke V na trupu (sl. 11).

Morda je iz strahomerske delavnice tudi stela, vzdana v ljubljansko stolnico (UEL 3696), ki si jo je dal postaviti rimski državljani *Gaius Aetius Secundus*. V njenem zatrepu je upodobljen motiv venca, v katerem je rozeta, levo in desno od nje pa sta storža. Poleg oblike stele (podtip B/II) tudi enake poteze oblikovanja storža – linije, ki potekajo po njegovi celotni površini – kažejo, da je stela iz strahomerske delavnice (sl. 5: 4).

Hipoteza o delavnici na območju Iške vasi je bila postavljena na podlagi dveh stel z dodatnim dekorativnim poljem, podtipov A/IV in B/IV (sl. 5: 7,10). Vendar primer stele iz Narodnega muzeja (UEL 3670) kaže, da so bile takšne stele z dekorativnimi polji tudi na Igu. To lahko pomeni, da domneva o delavnici v Iški vasi ne drži ali pa da so prebivalci antičnih naselbin na območju današnjih naselij Ig, Strahomer in Iška vas poznali formalni jezik vseh treh delavnic. Slednja razlaga se zdi povsem razumljiva, saj gre za majhen krog izdelovalcev in uporabnikov, ki so živeli vsega nekaj kilometrov vsaksebi. Torej na podlagi predstavljenih argumentov menim, da so na Ižanskem delovale tri kamnoseške delavnice.

ČASOVNI OKVIR DELAVNIC

Kjub slabi ohranjenosti nagrobnikov, shranjenih v cerkvi sv. Mihaela, lahko povemo nekaj tudi o njihovi dataciji. Najbolj časovno izpovedni so nagrobniki s portreti, ki so se zgledovali po cesarskih. Spomenike, najdene v Strahomerju, lahko datiramo od prve polovice 1. stoletja n. št. (datiranje na podlagi portreta, sl. 5: 1) pa vse do sredine 3. stoletja (glede na tip stele, sl. 5: 6). Ostali opredeljivi kosi so bili najdeni na Igu in jih lahko le ohlapno umestimo v čas od 2. oziroma 3. do 4. stoletja (sl. 5: 13,14). Preseneča predvsem datacija stel s t. i. keltskimi elementi v poznorimski čas (Djurić 2007, 898; sl. 5: 15).

Stele iz Iške vasi je težko datirati, saj se oblikovno prepletajo s stelami z Iga. Na Igu in v Iški vasi srečamo enaka podtipa stel A/IV (sl. 5: 7; UEL 3670) in B/I (sl. 5: 12; neobjavljeno),³ kar bi lahko morda kazalo na sočasnost in povezavo z ižansko delavnico. Če pustimo ob strani primer stele 1 (sl. 5: 1), ki je edina iz prve polovice 1.

² Ohranjen je zatrep in levi zaklinek stele (v.: 0,27 cm, š.: 0,48 cm). Fragment njenega vrhnjega dela z verjetno ravnim zgornjim zaključkom. V sredini zatrepja je shematizirana rozeta z okroglimi listi, ki so razporejeni v dveh vrstah. V zaklinku je viden dolg in ozek, dvakrat zavrt rep delfina. Pod delfinom v skrajnem spodnjem kotu zaklinka je vidna manjša rozeta.

³ Stela, vzdana v temelj severnega vogala cerkve sv. Mihaela v Iški vasi. Zgoraj je vidna polkrožna portretna niša, napisno polje nima opaznih sledov profilacije.

stoletja n. št., lahko večino nagrobnikov z Iga, iz Strahomerja in Iške vasi uvrstimo v čas od sredine 2. stoletja do sredine 3. stoletja n. št. Kar pomeni, da so bile kamnoseške delavnice sočasne.

SKLEP

Tipološko je stele z Ižanskega možno razdeliti v dve osnovni skupini, in sicer na stele s trikotnim zatrepom (tip A) in stele s portretno nišo (tip B). Zanimivo je, da tip A prevladuje pri stelah z Iga, tip B pa je značilen za stele, prinesene iz Strahomerja. Skupina stel iz Strahomerja je homogena tudi v smislu okrasa, saj je le na njih upodobljen delfin s trikotno oblikovano repno plavutjo, ki jo je klesar v enem primeru spremenil v ptico. Podrobnost v obliki črke V, ki se je ohranila na trupu delfina in ptice, kaže na to, da sta steli delo iste delavnice. Na podlagi izrazite skupne poteze v izboru okrasa in načinu izdelave lahko sklepamo, da je v okolici Strahomerja delovala lokalna kamnoseška delavnica. Lokalno delavnico lahko prepoznamo tudi v okolici Iške vasi, ki je izdelovala posebno okrašene stele z dodatnimi dekorativnimi polji ob zatrepu oz. portretni niši (podtip A/IV in B/IV). Glede na časovni okvir, v katerega

lahko opredelimo večino nagrobnikov z Ižanskega, in standardno debelino stel menim, da gre za sočasno produkcijo treh delavnic na Ižanskem. Med njimi je najdlje delovala delavnica na Igu, ki je kljub romanizaciji ohranila elemente predrimskega formalnega jezika.

Zahvala

Članek temelji na diplomski nalogi z naslovom *Rimski lapidarij v Iški vasi v kontekstu krajinskega parka Barje*, ki je nastala pod mentorstvom profesorja Bojana Djurića. Rada bi se mu predvsem zahvalila za strokovno vodstvo, dragocene nasvete in pripombe, ki so me vodile v pravo smer. Zahvaljujem se tudi Marjeti Šašel Kos za namenjeni mi čas in dragocene pripombe.

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