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## RIVERS AND RIVER DEITIES IN ROMAN PERIOD IN THE CROATIAN PART OF PANNONIA

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**T**he purpose of this contribution is to point out several remarks on river navigation, as well as on worship of river deities, in the Croatian part of the Roman province of Pannonia. The rivers were at the Roman period the most important were the largest European rivers, such as the Rhine and the Danube, both connecting the northern with the southern and the western with the eastern regions of the continent. Besides the Danube (*Danuvius*, *Danubius*), the border river of the Empire, the most important rivers for traffic, economy, trade, and often also for strategic and military matters of Croatian part of Pannonia were the Drava (*Dravus*) and the Sava (*Savus*), together with, due to specific circumstances, the Kupa (*Colapis*), as well as the Bosut (*Bathinus*) and some others. This is recognized in literary sources and in a vast number of archaeological finds. On their banks were built important urban centres, together with accompanying infrastructure, harbours, bridges, etc. In this context, an inscription on a brick from Siscia is suggestive, testifying the fact that there were two harbours in Siscia, on both banks of the Kupa river. The most important urban centres were the colonies of Siscia (Sisak), Mursa (Osijek) and Cibalae (Vinkovci). At the same time, Siscia was connected with Sirmium (Srijemska Mitrovica) by the Sava river, and the Pannonian fleet (*Classis Pannonica*) patrolled upon it (it received the honorary title *Flavia* during *Vespasian's* reign).

**Key-words:** river navigation, Croatian part of the Roman province of Pannonia, Danube, Drava, Sava, Kupa, Bosut, deities

The deities of these rivers are also discussed in this paper, more precisely, epigraphic and iconographical evidence of their cult. Thus the well-known monumental altar with a dedication to the Danube and the Drava (*Danuvio et Dravo*), probably from the reign of *Elagabalus*, has been discussed among other monuments: originally it stood near the confluence of the Drava and the Danube and thus could have been seen by the ship crews navigating the area. It seems that several altars kept by the Regional museum in Ptuj were also dedicated to these same deities. An altar dedicated to Dan-

ube "that flows away" (*Danuvio defluentis*) was found in Aquincum, while an altar dedicated to Jupiter and Danube (*I. O. M et Danuvio*) was found at Augsburg (*Augusta Vindelicum*). It seems that a river deity, most probably the personification of the Drava (*Dravus*), is also depicted on the fragmentary figural composition from Mursa, now in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb: beneath a semi-nude standing female figure (*Tyche*, personification of Mursa ?), a bearded long-haired small figure is depicted swimming, probably a personification of the Drava river.

An altar dedicated to the deity of the river Sava (Savo Augusto) was found at Ščitarjevo (Andautonia). The cult of Savus is evidenced on several monuments, all of them from the upper course of the river, from the surroundings of Emona, as well as from Andautonia and Siscia. Several altars dedicated to a pair of deities, Savus and Adsalluta (a female deity of the Celtic Taurisci), were also found along the upper course of the river. The name of the river deity Savus is also found on a lead tablet inscribed on both sides found in the Kupa at Sisak: it is a curse (defixio) demanding a punishment (drowning) of the individual that was the object of the curse.

Personified figures of river deities, most notably the Sava and the Kupa, also appear on coins: thus two antoniniani of the emperor Probus from a hoard found at Šimanovci in Syrmia (now in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb) bear an inscription Siscia Probi Aug(usti) XXI Q, with a depiction of a seated female figure beneath which are represented two reclining bearded male figures, river deities, obviously personifications of the Sava and the Kupa. A similar motif appears on the antoniniani of the emperor Gallienus with an inscription Siscia Aug(usti): the reclining figure of a bearded male is characteristic for the depictions of river deities, such as Nile, Tiber, etc.

Finally, a possible example of a cult of river deities, in this case the local river Bosut (Bathinus), is the statue of Neptune from Vinkovci (Cibalae), now in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb.\*

River navigation, not unlike marine navigation or navigation on lakes, was already in prehistory of vital importance for the life of local communities. This naturally also applies to the Roman period, when the main inland arteries were represented by the Rhine and the Danube. Both served as the frontiers of the Empire, but also as links between various regions of Europe. Several lesser streams were not far behind them in importance, some of them being important at a regional level. In the Croatian part of the province of Pannonia, besides the already mentioned Danube River, partly passing through Croatia, the most important streams, due to their length, were its main tributaries, the Sava (*Savus*) and the Drava (*Dravus*), but also some tributaries of the former, especially the Kupa (*Colapis*). Important fortification facilities and urban centres were erected along the courses of those rivers, including two Roman colonies, *Mursa* (modern-day Osijek) on the Drava and *Siscia* (modern Sisak) at the confluence of the Kupa

and the Sava. It is only natural that these centres were furnished with harbours, bridges, and other river infrastructure required for navigation. These rivers were thus important for traffic and, consequently, also for the economy and trade. Some other functions are also noticeable; for example, the verification of legitimacy of the newborn children and the strengthening of their resistance to cold water. It was also believed that they made the deceased's last voyage easier, in other words, that the rivers and other watercourses could lead to the Afterlife.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the rivers were often important in military context. On the other hand, other aspects of living associated with rivers were no less important, such as manifestations of cult, especially prominent in the worship of autochthonous river deities,<sup>2</sup> as testified by abundant epigraphic evidence and, in smaller measure, the preserved figural monuments. The situation was similar with regards to other major watercourses; thus Virgil and Ovid mention *Rhenus bicornis*, the deity of the Rhine, represented with tauro-morphic elements and revealing the iconography characteristic for Achelous.<sup>3</sup>

Besides the literary sources suggesting the importance of the already mentioned streams, especially for traffic and military movements,<sup>4</sup> their importance is testified by the formation of the Pannonian fleet.<sup>5</sup> Its importance was enhanced with the recognition of the need for the creation of a network that would mutually interconnect the harbours on the Sava with its most important urban centres. In the first place this applies to the Pannonian town of *Siscia* and the Lower Pannonian *Sirmium*, and it was especially manifested during Vespasian's reign, when the fleet was granted with the honorary title of Flavia (*Classis Flavia Pannonica*).<sup>6</sup> This fact was confirmed by the find of a tile-stamp at Štrbinci (Roman *Certissia*) near Đakovo in Slavonia.<sup>7</sup> *Siscia* was also connected to *Sirmium* by a road following the river course.<sup>8</sup> Numerous archaeological finds were recovered in riverbeds, although these are not necessarily connected to navigation and traffic. They appear in various contexts and are not always of Roman origin.<sup>9</sup> At least some of those belonged to ships' inventories or cargoes transported on boats. A good example is provided by the remains of a shipwreck discovered during the construction of the foundation for a railway bridge over the Drava at Osijek in 1882, which yielded several vessels, together with gold, silver and bronze coinage, today unfortunately lost, with the exception of two coins of *Antoninus* that arrived to the then National Museum in

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<sup>1</sup> Simón & Rodá de Llanza 2008, 193.

<sup>2</sup> On river deities in a wider religious context see Potrebica 2003, 105-106 (s.v. Božanstva rijeka).

<sup>3</sup> Simón & Rodá de Llanza 2008, 193.

<sup>4</sup> The Sava was intended to be an important communication link, both in civilian and military sense, with reference to the attempt to reach the bank of Danube and further east, towards Dacia, which was Augustus' priority, that is, one of the most important goals of Roman state policy in general (cfr. Res Gestae Divi Augusti, 30, ...Pannoniorum gentes...imperio populi Romani subieci, protulique fines Illyrici ad ripam fluminis Danui (Danuvii); also cfr. Zaninović 1986, 63 ff.

<sup>5</sup> The Flavian period is an age of prosperity in *Siscia*. The process of urbanization was intensified in Vespasian's reign, together with the importance of the navigation on the Sava, while the fleet received an honorary name *Classis Flavia Pannonica* (cfr. Lolić 2003, 134).

<sup>6</sup> For Octavian's and Tiberius' use of ships in military operations, and especially on the activities of the Pannonian fleet on the Sava and the honorary title it received in Vespasian's reign (*Classis Flavia Pannonica*) cfr. Zaninović 1993.

<sup>7</sup> CLFP (*Classis Flavia Pannonica*), cfr. Migotti 1998, 16, no. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Bojanovski 1984, 145 ff; Zaninović 1993, 57.

<sup>9</sup> Potrebica 2003, 105.

Zagreb,<sup>10</sup> clearly suggesting the existence of river navigation and transfer of cargo.<sup>11</sup> Underwater research of the remains of a Roman bridge over the Drava in Osijek have been conducted for some time now, and some of the recent finds, in the form of figural ornaments, most probably mythological in nature, are perhaps connected to the river deities. Concerning the finds from the Drava, we could also notice the two recently published marble altars with inscriptions and figural representations of the two torchbearers of Mithras, *Cautes* (Fig. 1) and *Cautopates* (Fig. 2) that were not discovered in the riverbed itself but in a nearby artificial lake south-east of Čakovec in the Međimurje region. It is possible to suggest that they were part of a cargo transported by the Drava towards some important urban centre, perhaps even Mursa. The transport was obviously conducted by the river that, judging by a number of indications, has changed its course in this part of the Međimurje over time. Thus, there are good reasons for believing that the cargo ended up in the river or somewhere in its vicinity under some unknown circumstances, most probably at the exact location of the find of these altars.<sup>12</sup> Numerous finds from different periods were also found in the Sava River, but the context of these finds is not always connected to navigation, that is, presumed incidents during the sail. But the most numerous finds of this type come from the Kupa River: they were mostly discovered during dredging, especially at *Siscia*, near the various facilities located on the riverbank. The bronze fragments found in the Kupa River near Kobilic Pokupski, not far from Karlovac, especially parts of carved monumental bronze sculptures – out of 89 fragments retrieved in 1963 and deposited in the Karlovac City Museum, the most attractive are the fragments of a monumental statue of Apollo, fragments of a head, body, feet, drapery etc., as well as inscription bearing several names – was part of a much larger cargo that was gradually over the years retrieved during sand dredging from the river bed in order to be sold as a raw material for further processing. This was a bronze cargo being transported by the Kupa, most probably to *Siscia*.<sup>13</sup> Beside shipwreck cargoes, remains of bridges etc., harbour facilities were also found in some centres, together with inscriptions mentioning the existence of harbours. An inscribed brick from *Siscia* kept in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb is of special importance in this context, as it contains information on the possible existence of two harbours of *Siscia* operating on opposite banks of the Kupa River (Fig. 3) and this fact is emphasized



Fig. 1. Altar of Cautes (relief and inscription), The Museum of Međimurje, Čakovec



Fig. 2. Altar of Cautopates (relief and inscription), The Museum of Međimurje, Čakovec

by phrases... *in hoc navali...*, and... *in alio navali...* (Fig. 4). This information, even if it does not refer to two different harbours, is a first-rate testimony for the importance of harbours, that is, to the stationing of ships in this important Pannonian town.<sup>14</sup> The inscription can also suggest the positions of both supposed harbours.<sup>15</sup>

The rivers were often associated to different divinities. Their names thus often appear on altars, occasionally together with other deities. Different interpretations of their true identity are also numerous.<sup>16</sup> Numerous authors, especially of late, have mentioned or discussed the river deities or the monuments dedicated to them, mostly in the form of interpretation of epigraphic testimonies to the cults of the autochthonous river deities: *Danuuius*, *Dravus* and *Savus*. A very well-known limestone altar dedicated to *Danuuius* and *Dravus*, kept in the Museum of Slavonia in Osijek, is among the most

<sup>10</sup> Pinterović 1978, 116; Ljubčić 1883, 94.

<sup>11</sup> Pinterović 1978, 116.

<sup>12</sup> Rendić-Miočević 2011, 333.

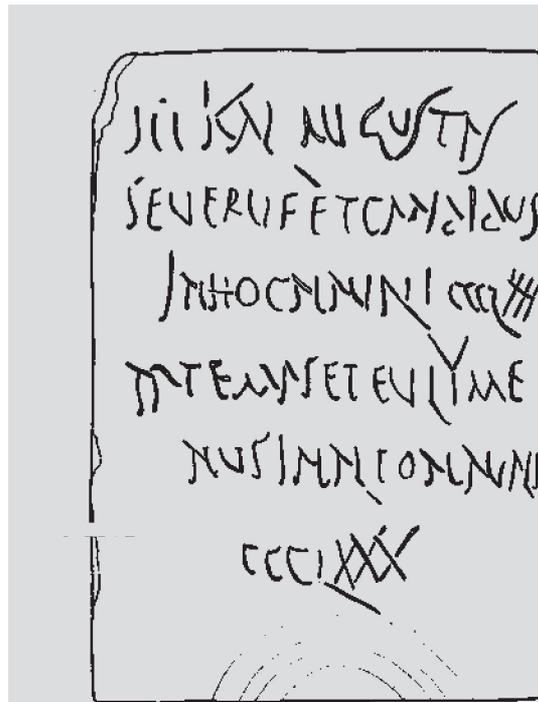
<sup>13</sup> Šarić 1986., 87.

<sup>14</sup> The navigation on the Sava and its importance for Segestica, i.e. *Siscia*, is described by literary sources. Pliny the Elder is especially precise in this wise (NH, 3, 148); he emphasizes that the Kupa pours into the Sava near *Siscia* (...*Colapis in Sauam influens iuxta Sisciam...*). According to him *Siscia* would be located on the left bank of the Kupa, with Segestica on the right (Pogorelec ?), on an „island“ created by the double river bed (...*gemino alveo insulam ibi efficit quae Segestica appellatur*). On Pliny's remarks cfr. Vrbanović 1981, 187; Buzov 2003, 178 ff. On different aspects of the importance of the Sava cfr. also Bojanovski 1993, 63 ff (s.v. III. The Sava's importance for traffic, economy and defence).

<sup>15</sup> CIL III, 11382; Šašel 1974, 704; Matijašić 1986, 206; Radman Livaja 2007, 167, footnote 37 (the excavations of 1985 confirmed the existence of a harbour at the site „Kovnica“ (the Mint) on the right bank of the Kupa, while the other harbour was most probably situated on the left bank, to the south of the city wall, nearer to its confluence with the Sava). On river harbours at *Siscia* cfr. also: Šašel 1974, 725; Buzov 2003, 179.

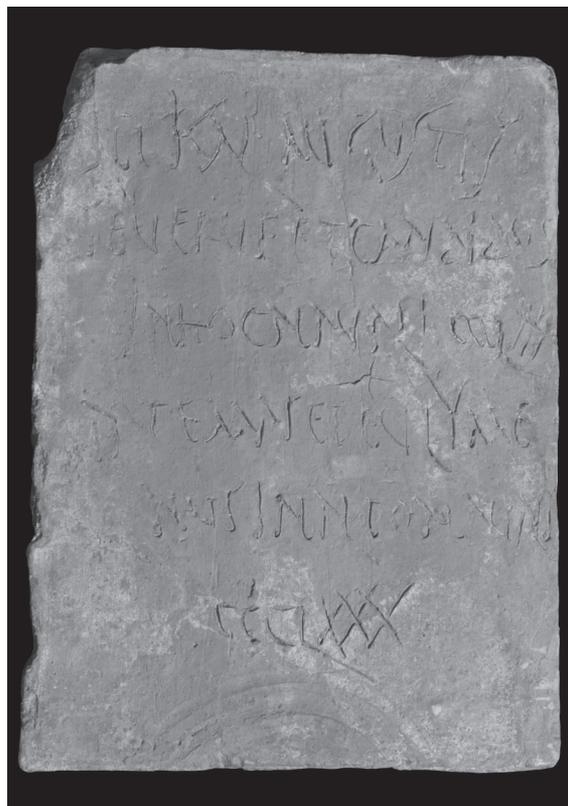
<sup>16</sup> In this context, for example, several opinions were expressed on the referent of the god *Iuvavus* (cfr. Hainzmann 2010, 23 ff).

Fig. 4. Brick from Sisak with an inscription mentioning Siscia's two harbours (drawing and transcription), The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb



1 III KAL AVGVSTAS  
 III [ante] KAL(endas) AVGVSTAS  
 SEVERVS ET CANDIDVS  
  
 IN HOC NAVALI CCCLXXX  
  
 ARTEMAS ET EVLYME  
  
 5 NVS IN ALIO NAVALI  
  
 CCCLX

Fig. 3. Brick from Sisak with an inscription mentioning two Siscia's harbours, The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb



tate, it was, it seems, originally set up on an elevated site in Aljmaš near to the confluence of the Drava and Danube, in the position called the “Drava triangle”, where, most probably, a military outpost once stood.<sup>19</sup> The altar was erected by a legate whose name is, unfortunately, not preserved. The inscription originally consisted of 12 or 13 lines, but only the first two, inscribed in capital letters (*Danuvio et Dravo*), are well preserved (Fig. 6). Several small letters are preserved at places in the lower section of the inscription (P and R, double P (?), a C (?) in the next line, as well as a V) (Fig. 7). However, they do not fit into the proposed restoration of the most important part of the inscription. On the left lateral side of the altar a cultic jug is displayed (*urceus*); a broken-off representation of a *patera* is poorly visible on the opposite right-hand side of the monument. The same applies to the upper and lower moulding on the front and the right-hand side of the altar. These sections were broken-off intentionally, since the monument was reused for a certain period. According to the proposed textual restoration - most of the text was intentionally erased already in the Roman period, including both the emperor's and the legate's name (*damnatio memoriae*) - it seems that the text went as follows:

*Danuvio / et Dravo / [pro sa]lut(e) et in[columit] a[te ? / imp(eratoris) Ca]es(aris) M. Aur(elii) [Antonini / div]i [Antonini / div]i [Ant]onini [Magni f] il(ii)..... [leg(atu)s Aug(usti)] pr(o) pr(actore)...*

interesting monuments of this type (Fig. 5).<sup>17</sup> It is reasonable to presume that it was erected for ship crews: judging by its dimensions – height: 200 cm, width: 83 cm, depth: 58 cm – it is possible to presume that it was set up in order to be seen by the crews that navigated through this area.<sup>18</sup> Although it was transferred to the Osijek Museum from the park of the nearby Tenja es-

<sup>17</sup> CIL III 10263; Brunšmid 1900, 25; Pinterović 1958, 23, 50; idem 1960, 32-34; idem 1967, 39; idem 1978, 69-70, Pl. XIV/1,2; Dautova-Ruševljan 1983, 76, Pl. 13/1.  
<sup>18</sup> Pinterović 1978, 70; Dautova-Ruševljan 1983, 76.  
<sup>19</sup> CIL III 10263; Pinterović 1978, 69-70, Pl. XIV/1,2; Dautova-Ruševljan 1983, 76, Pl. 13/1.

D. Pinterović sees a certain symbolical meaning in the erection of the altar dedicated to the river deities, presumably during Elagabalus' reign, taking into account that the site where the monument was set up was in a border area and at the confluence of two large rivers. Accordingly, she analyses its meaning in the context of contemporary threats and military movements in this area.

When one speaks of altars dedicated to the divinities *Dravus* and *Danuvius* (*Danubius*), it is quite interesting to bring to mind some altars preserved at the County Museum (Pokrajinski muzej) in Ptuj. On the preserved marble fragment of one of them the initial letters *Da...* can be seen, suggesting that this could refer to the dedication to the already mentioned pair of river divinities.<sup>20</sup> Two other altars from the same museum, made of limestone instead, were discovered in 1903 or 1904 at nearby Studenčica and Zgornji Breg, respectively, perhaps also containing dedications to *Dravus*. On the first altar there is an inscription in 12 lines on its front and the dedication to *Dravus* (*Dravo Augusto Sacrum*) is absolutely certain,<sup>21</sup> whereas the other altar, very similar to the first one, bore an inscription in nine lines: its surface however is severely damaged, rendering the dedication hardly discernible. Judging from the last letter in



Fig. 5. Altar consecrated to the gods of the Danube and Drava (*Danuvio et Dravo*), The Museum of Slavonia Osijek

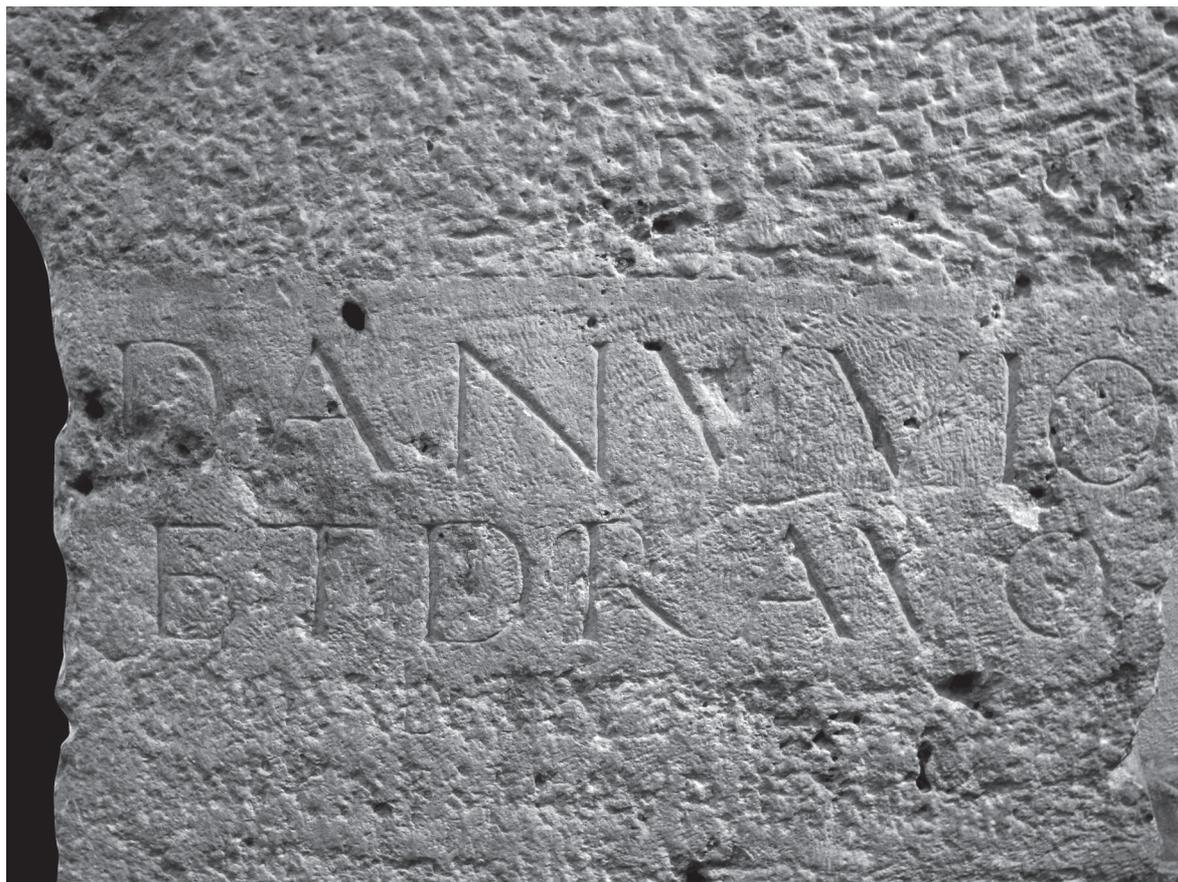


Fig. 6. Altar consecrated to Danube and Drava (*Danuvio et Dravo*) – detail of the inscription

<sup>20</sup> Hoffiller - Saria 1938, 122-123, no. 266.

<sup>21</sup> Abramič 1925, 58; Hoffiller - Saria 1938, 123, no. 267; Jevremov 1988, 77-78, no. 62.

Fig. 7. Altar consecrated to Danube and Drava (*Danuvio et Dravo*) – the traces of the lower part of the inscription



Fig. 8. Detail of the stone monument representing the male figure personifying the Drava river (from Osijek), The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb



an altar from Augsburg (*Augusta Vindelicum*) preserved in a church at Risstissen.<sup>24</sup>

While speaking about *Dravus*, it is worth to draw attention to the fragment of the bottom part of a marble figural monument from Osijek (*Mursa*), preserved at the Zagreb Archaeological Museum (Fig. 8). Its exact provenance remains obscure, but D. Pinterović tried to link it to the reconstruction of the bridge on the Drava under Caracalla – before her this had also been done by B. Saria – considering that the female divinity could be the personification of the city, the Mursan *Tyche*. She is depicted as semi-nude and, according to the previous interpretation, stands above a figure of the epichoric river god *Dravus*. The female figure, as the central figure in the composition, is with her right foot treading upon the uplifted head of a bearded (?), long-haired small human figure, who, as it seems, is swimming in the water, and trying to embrace with his right arm an unidentified bulge, probably the river bank.<sup>25</sup> The figure of this person could therefore be referring to the local river god *Dravus*. Apart from the figural depictions of river gods on coins, this could be the only preserved figural depiction of a river god in this Pannonian region.<sup>26</sup>

In a backwater of the river Sava, more precisely in the Savišće oxbow near Ščitarjevo (*Andautonia*), not far from the modern-day Zagreb, an altar with an inscription made of local sandstone and bearing the dedication to the local river god *Savus* was found in

the first line – an O, there is a reason to suppose that the altar was dedicated to the same river god (perhaps the final letter of the word *Dravo* is in question?).<sup>22</sup> The dedication to the other river god *Danuvius* (*Danuvio defluenti*, *Danuvius* „which flows away“) has been found on an altar from *Aquincum*,<sup>23</sup> while the dedication to *Jupiter* and *Danuvius* (*I. O. M. et. Danuvio*) can be read on

<sup>22</sup> Hoffiller - Saria 1938, 123-124, no. 268.

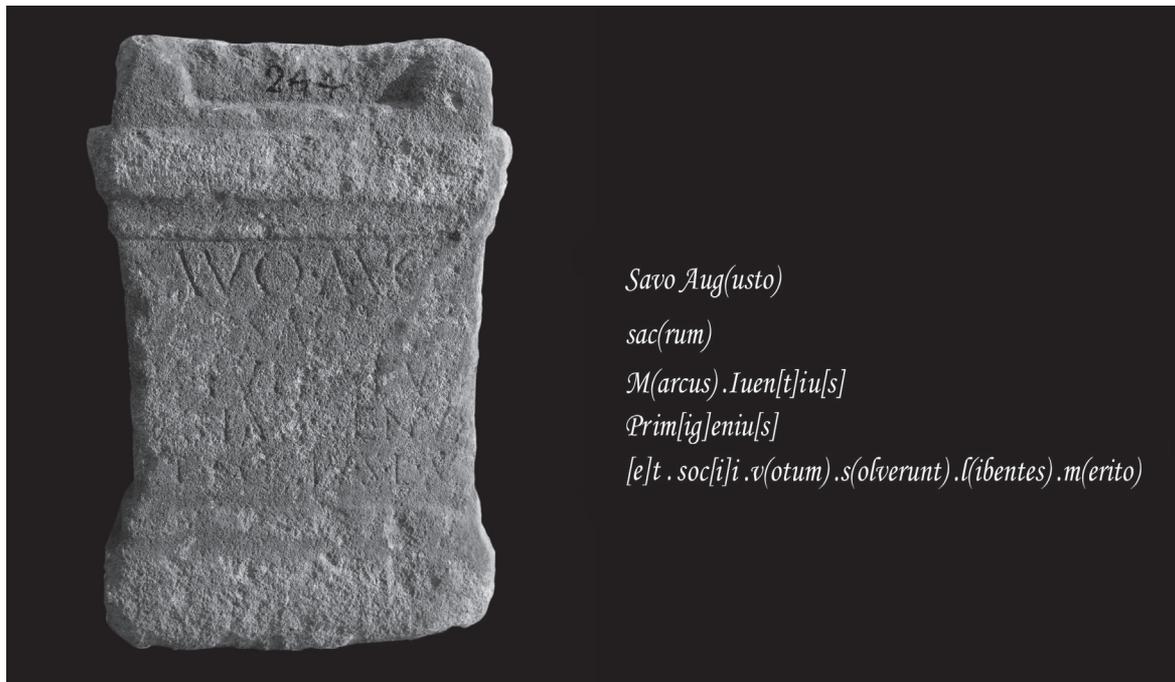
<sup>23</sup> CIL III/1 3473.

<sup>24</sup> CIL III, 5863.

<sup>25</sup> Pinterović 1958, 49-50; idem 1978, 68; Dautova Ruševljan 1983, 121.

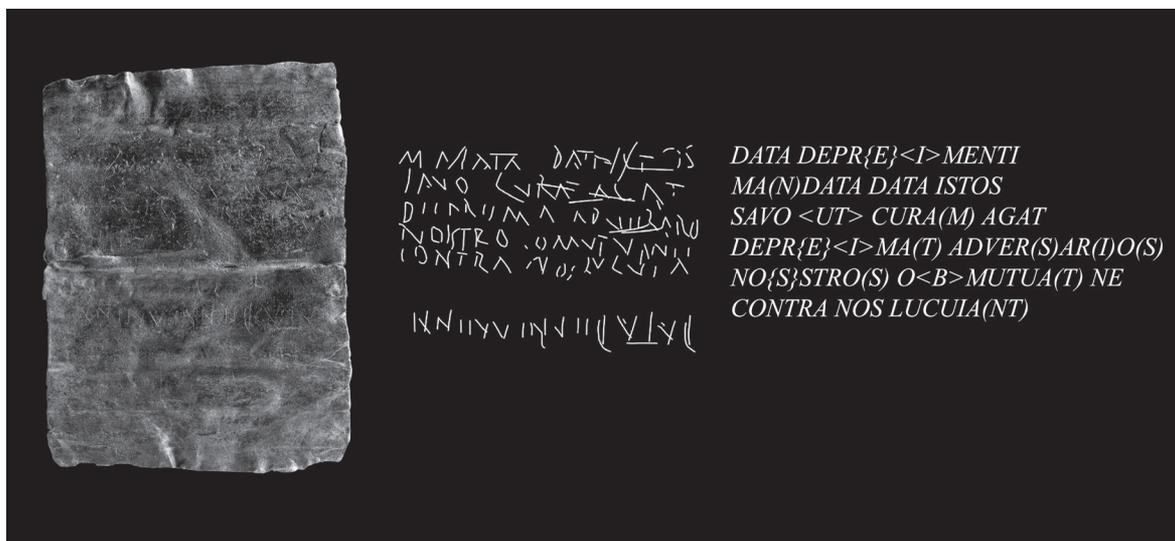
<sup>26</sup> Pinterović 1978, 68-69; idem 1958, 49-51.

<sup>27</sup> The altar is presently at the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb.



*Savo Aug(usto)*  
*sac(rum)*  
*M(arcus).Iuen[t]iu[s]*  
*Prim[ig]eniu[s]*  
*[e]t . soc[i]i . v(otum) . s(oluerunt) . l(ibentes) . m(erito)*

Fig. 9. Altar consecrated to the river god *Savus*, from Ščitarjevo (*Andautonia*), The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb



*DATA DEPR{E}<I>MENTI  
 MA(N)DATA DATA ISTOS  
 SAVO <UT> CURA(M) AGAT  
 DEPR{E}<I>MA(T) ADVER(S)AR(I)O(S)  
 NO{S}STRO(S) O<B>MUTUA(T) NE  
 CONTRA NOS LUCUIA(NT)*

Fig. 10. *Defixio* from the Kupa at Sisak mentioning the river god *Savus*, The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb

1870 (Fig. 9).<sup>27</sup> According to the recently made inspection the inscription reads as follows:

*Savo Aug(usto)*  
*Sac(rum)*  
*M(arcus).Iuen[t]iu[s]*  
*[Pr]imigeniu[s]*  
*[e]t . [s]o[ci]i . v(otum) . s(oluerunt) . l(ibentes) . m(erito)*

This monument, probably from the 2nd century A.D., has frequently been the object of interest of experts. Most of them agreed that the dedicator was of North Italian descent, and the actual opinion is that he was a merchant (as were the *socii* also mentioned in the inscription) and not a fisherman or custom of-

ficer, as some of earlier authors considered him to be.<sup>28</sup> It is interesting that the cult of *Savus* has been recorded only along the upper flow of the river and that downstream *Siscia* there are no preserved proofs of its cult. It is certain that the *Savus* altar from *Andautonia* is connected with navigation, i.e. with transport of goods and trading along this river.<sup>29</sup> The first publication of this inscription in CIL was followed by various other publications,<sup>30</sup> whereas some broader references to it have been published recently.<sup>31</sup> In this connection, the most detailed aspects of the *Savus* cult have been analysed by M. Šašel Kos in her book on pre-Roman divinities in the Eastern Alpine and Adriatic regions, in the chapter on the god's altars, as well as on altars commemorating both *Savus* and the local female divin-

<sup>27</sup> Knezović 2010, 189.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> CIL III 4009; Brunšmid 1904-1911, 140-141, no. 244; Degmedžić 1957, 103. Rendić-Miočević 1994, 131-132, no. 276.

<sup>31</sup> Knezović 2010, 188-193 (s.v. 1. The worship of the deity *Savus*).

ity *Adsalluta*, linked to the Celtic Taurisci.<sup>32</sup> Along the same lines, I. Knezović discussed the *Savus* altar from Ščitarjevo, as well as another important Andautonian monument, the inscription of *Lucius Funisulanus Vettonianus*, i.e. the relief with the depiction of the goddess *Nemesis* on the rear side of the same marble slab.<sup>33</sup> M. Šašel Kos concluded that the cults of river gods in the area of her discussion could be traced as early as the Late Bronze Age, as well as during the Iron Age and in Roman times, and she particularly points out that all major rivers had their own cults. She further noted that in Pannonia male river gods were worshiped, emphasising the importance of navigation on the Sava and its tributary Ljubljanica, mentioned by Strabo.<sup>34</sup> Šašel Kos also mentioned the three major centres of the cult of *Savus*: in Slovenia this was the *Emona* area, and in Croatia the towns of *Andautonia* and *Siscia*.<sup>35</sup> Her comparisons of the cult of *Savus* and *Adsalluta* with the cult of *Vidasus et Thana*, testified by a series of altars at Topusko, is also interesting. In the context of the actual topic the most important is her conclusion that *Vidasus* and *Thana* were local gods, most probably connected with water.<sup>36</sup> According to her evidence there are only three monuments dedicated to *Savus*. One of them is from Vernek in Slovenia, the second one is the previously mentioned altar from Ščitarjevo (*Andautonia*), and the third one is the inscription on a lead curse tablet from Sisak (*Siscia*). All in all, five altars were dedicated to *Savus* and *Adsalluta* and four to *Adsalluta*, the latter all found in Slovenia.<sup>37</sup>

The name of the river god *Savus* further appears, in a different context, on a lead tablet (*tabella defixionum*, *defixio*) containing a curse in a two-sided inscription, first published by J. Brunšmid (Fig. 10).<sup>38</sup> This *defixio* dates to the early 2nd century A.D. and seems to have been thrown into the Kupa in the area of *Siscia*, where it was found during the dredging in 1913.<sup>39</sup> Presumably, water was the place where such tablets containing a curse were usually deposited.<sup>40</sup> This tablet has been discussed from various aspects by many authors,<sup>41</sup> and most recently it was thoroughly analysed in 2008 by F. M. Simón and I. Rodá de Llanza in the periodical of the Zagreb Archaeological Museum. The text containing the curse was written in the vulgate Latin on both sides of the tablet and *Savus* is being invoked at the beginning of the 3rd line of the reverse of the tablet: in this part however the persons on whom the curse is being thrown are not mentioned. A part of

the abovementioned text has been restored by F. M. Simón and I. Rodá de Llanza, as follows:

*Data depr{e}<i>menti  
Ma(n)data data istos  
Savo <ut>cura(m) aga(t)...<sup>42</sup>*

The approximate translation of this fragment reads: „...that they are delivered to *Savus* who drowns.”<sup>43</sup> These words illustrate the importance of the local river divinity, but in a specific aspect of its cult.

Particularly interesting in the given iconographic context are some coin types referring to *Siscia*, as well as some imperial coins associative of the river Danube (*Danuvius*, *Danubius*), “the most conspicuous hydronymic phenomenon of the region.”<sup>44</sup> On the Gallienus’ coin bearing the legend *Siscia Aug(usti)*, the town was personified in the guise of a seated female deity with an uplifted arm and a tower-crown on her head: under her feet is a swimming male figure, very probably a personification of the Sava (*Savus*), although a personification of the Kupa (*Colapis*) cannot be excluded either, given its huge importance in the life of the town.<sup>45</sup> Short mentions or longer thematic contributions have been written by many scholars, dealing with the reverses of the *antoniniani* struck in *Siscia* under emperor Probus (276-282), inscribed *Siscia Probi Aug(usti) XXIQ*, featuring also depictions of river gods. Two specimens of such bronze coins are preserved in the Zagreb Archaeological Museum Numismatic Collection and were found in Syrmia (Fig. 11): both are from the well-known Šimanovci (near Vukovar) hoard, which consisted of coins of several emperors (Gallienus, Tacitus, Florianus, Carus, Numerianus, Carinus etc.).<sup>46</sup> Most of the authors consider the female figure accompanied by two male figures on the coin reverse as personifications of the town of *Siscia* and its two rivers, the Sava (*Savus*) and the Kupa (*Colapis*): figures of these two river divinities are placed left and right of an enthroned woman, the personification of *Siscia*.<sup>47</sup> Curiously, a similar motif also appears on some *antoniniani* of Gallienus. They, on the other hand, bear the inscription *Siscia Aug(usti)*, as well as the female figure, personification of *Siscia*: underneath her feet a river god is swimming, holding an amphora with water flowing out of it. A similar motif can be seen on gold coins (*aurei*) and on silver medallions of Gallienus, the emperor who founded the mint of *Siscia*. Gallienus’ coins were used as a prototype for the later *anoniniani* of Probus.<sup>48</sup> There have been fre-

<sup>32</sup> Šašel Kos 1999, 100; Knezović 2010, 188 ff; Šašel Kos 1998, 19.

<sup>33</sup> Knezović 2010, 193 ff.

<sup>34</sup> Šašel Kos 1999, 23.

<sup>35</sup> Idem 1999, 24.

<sup>36</sup> Idem 1999, 24-25.

<sup>37</sup> Idem 1999, 93 i d.; cfr. Šašel Kos 1994.

<sup>38</sup> Brunšmid 1915-1919.

<sup>39</sup> Hoffiller – Saria 1938, 254, no.557; Buzov 2003, 191; Simón & Rodá de Llanza 2008, 167-198.

<sup>40</sup> Numerous finds of defixiones come from Bath, while some such tablets have recently been found at Fontana di Anna Perenna in Rome (cfr. Simón & Rodá de Llanza 2008, 173 i 191).

<sup>41</sup> Brunšmid 1915-1919, 176 ff; Hoffiller – Saria 1938, 254-257, no. 557; Šašel Kos 1999, 100-101.

<sup>42</sup> Idem 2008, 171.

<sup>43</sup> Šašel Kos 1999, 101.

<sup>44</sup> Rendić-Miočević 1990, 83.

<sup>45</sup> Ibidem. A possibility has been mentioned that the depiction of a jar with “water pouring out of it in gentle waves” might be an allusion to another of the area’s rivers, given that *Siscia* was surrounded by three rivers: the Sava, Kupa and Odra.)

<sup>46</sup> Dukat 2004-2005, 289, no. 82; RIC 766.

<sup>47</sup> Dukat 2004-2005, 289, no. 82; Šašel Kos 1999, 101; Simón & Rodá de Llanza 2008, 192-193; Margetić & Margetić 2008, 9-38.

<sup>48</sup> Šašel Kos 1999, 101; Margetić & Margetić 2009, 5-16.



Fig. 11. River gods of Sava and Kupa (*Savus* and *Colapis*) on the reverses of two *antoniniani* of Probus (*Siscia Probi Avg*) from the Šimanovci hoard, The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb

quent discussions about Probus' *antoniniani* and especially about the object held in the outspread hands of an enthroned female personification with diadem on her head. Most frequently this object is referred to as a broad diadem, but it is also described as a floral wreath – garland, or dress, i.e. drapery. The last-mentioned suggestion is, according to the present author, only possible, given the appearance of this „mysterious“ article on specimens from Zagreb, because in all its elements it reminds one of drapery. Nevertheless, in this context we are more interested in depictions of rivers and river gods. Margetić & Margetić quote that there are several varieties of depictions of both rivers, depending on how the waves are shown.<sup>49</sup> There are also four different ways of depicting river divinities, among which the one relevant for Probus' *antoniniani* is the one featuring a figure swimming in a river, very similar to the figures on the coins of Gallienus.<sup>50</sup> The depiction of a bearded, long-haired, half naked man with a vessel (amphora, hydria etc.), from which water is flowing, is by the mentioned authors called *the standard iconography*.<sup>51</sup> Both figures on the Zagreb specimens are half nude and are depicted as facing each other and holding a receptacle turned upside down, with water pouring out from its mouth. The importance of the Danube, this huge European river and the border of the Roman Empire, was in a similar way recorded on the Trajan's coin bearing the legend *Danuvius*,<sup>52</sup> and on the Constantine's coin with the legend *Danubius*,<sup>53</sup> both issued on the occasions of the respective emperors' travels through the Danube provinces: these coins also feature Danube's personifications as characteristic depictions of the river god in the guise of a reclining adult man.<sup>54</sup> The number of reclining figures depend on the number of the personified rivers, so that, for instance, some coins of the Stobi mint feature two such juxtaposed figures, personifying the rivers Axios and Erigon.<sup>55</sup>



Fig. 12. Marble statue of Neptune from Vinkovci, The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb

Although Neptune was predominantly a sea god, he was also frequently perceived as a water divinity in general, and according to this a river god as well: in fact, during the early stages of Roman religion he was more directly linked with rivers and sources than with the sea. It is significant that some curse tablets (*defixiones*), like the previously mentioned one from the Kupa or the

<sup>49</sup> Margetić & Margetić 2008, 17-18.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>52</sup> RIC, vol. II, 251.

<sup>53</sup> RIC, vol. VII, 331.

<sup>54</sup> Rendić-Miočević 1990, 83-84.

<sup>55</sup> Cfr. Josifovski 2010, 18, figs. 38-40.

one from Bath in Britain, were addressed to Neptune.<sup>56</sup> This is also the reason why on this occasion, while enumerating examples of the worship of river gods, I have included the fragmented Neptune's marble statue from Vinkovci (*Cibalae*), now in the Zagreb Archaeological Museum (Fig. 12). This statue dates from the early 3rd c. A.D.: Neptune is shown with characteristic iconographic elements, thick hair and beard and moustaches covering his face. Most probably his left foot was resting on a boat, which is not preserved. In his left hand he held a dolphin, and in his entirely missing right hand there was obviously the Neptune's characteristic attribute, the trident, but unfortunately neither this has been

preserved. The *Cibalae* colony lay on the Bosut (*Bathinus flumen*), a left tributary of the Sava, therefore one cannot exclude the possibility that the discussed statue of Neptune was in a way the reflection of the cult linked with this river, although the piece was not found in it.<sup>57</sup>

The examples discussed in this paper can be viewed as indications of naval activities in the Croatian part of the Roman province of Pannonia, and particularly of the worship of river gods. In spite of various provenances, the data bear witness to the importance given to these segments of life of the population, particularly in connection with the cult of the local river divinities.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AIJ	Antike Inschriften aus Jugoslavien
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
CBI	Centar za balkanološka ispitivanja
NH	Naturalis Historia
RE	Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft
RIC	The Roman Imperial Coinage
IHAD	Izdanja Hrvatskog arheološkog društva
VAMZ	Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu
VHAD	Viestnik Hrvatskoga arheološkoga društva

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<sup>56</sup> Simón & Rodá de Llanza 2008, 192.

<sup>57</sup> Brunšmid 1904-1911, 28-29, no. 49 (s.v. Poseidon).

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## SAŽETAK

### RIJEKE I RIJEČNA BOŽANSTVA U RIMSKO DOBA U HRVATSKOM DIJELU PANONIJE

Ante RENDIĆ-MIOČEVIĆ

Rijeke su oduvijek služile prometovanju i bile su važnim čimbenikom u svakodnevnom životu stanovništva. U rimsko doba na europskim su prostorima u tom pogledu prednjačile velike europske rijeke Rajna i Dunav koje su povezivale sjeverne i južne, odnosno zapadne i istočne oblasti kontinenta. Na području hrvatskog dijela Panonije u prometnom, gospodarsko-trgovačkom, a nerijetko i u strateško-vojnom pogledu, osim Dunava (*Danuvius*, *Danubius*) koji je ujedno bio i graničnom rijekom Carstva, od prvorazredne su važnosti bile Drava (*Dravus*) i Sava (*Savus*), a zbog specifičnih okolnosti uz njih još i Kupa (*Colapis*), zatim Bosut (*Bathinus flumen*) i dr. O tomu svjedoče povijesni izvori i brojni arheološki nalazi, a na obalama navedenih rijeka bila su podignuta i značajna urbana središta, zajedno s karakterističnim pripadajućom infrastrukturnim sadržajima, lukama, mostovima i sl. U takvom kontekstu znakovit je natpis sačuvan na opeki iz Siscije koji donosi podatak o Sisciji koja je, čini se, imala čak dvije luke na suprotnim obalama Kupe. Među najznačajnijim urbanim središtima bile su kolonije *Siscia* (Sisak), *Mursa* (Osijek) i *Cibalae* (Vinkovci). Sava je ujedno prometno povezivala Sisciju sa Sirmijom (*Sirmium*), a na njoj je bila aktivna panonska flota (*Classis Pannonica*) koja je za vladavine Vespazijana stekla počasni naziv *Flavia*. Među arheološkim nalazima otkrivenim u koritima navedenih panonskih rijeka mnogo ih je koji nisu izravno povezani s plovidbom ili štovanjem riječnih božanstava nego su u riječna korita dospjeli u drugačijim okolnostima. Za neke od njih moguće je, međutim, pretpostaviti povezanost s plovidbom, odnosno s prometovanjem rijekama. Pretpostavka je, primjerice, da su Dravom bili transportirani mramorni žrtvenici dvojice Mitrinih bakljonoša Kauta (*Cautes*) i Kautopata (*Cautopates*) pronađeni u umjetnom jezeru, odnosno međimurskoj šljunčari jugoistočno od Čakovca, a plovidbi vjerojatno treba zahvaliti i mnogobrojne brončane ulomke monumentalnih skulptura otkrivene u Kupi nedaleko od Karlovca. I drugih sličnih nalaza ne nedostaje, premda je teško sa sigurnošću utvrditi način na koji su dospjeli do mjesta nalaza i sa sigurnošću zaključiti da su nalazi posljedica plovidbe rijekama. Vrijedan je isticanja i zanimljivi zapis na jednoj opeki otkrivenoj na siscijskom području iz kojega je moguće pretpostaviti da su u tom gornjopanonskom gradu postojale čak dvije luke na suprotnim obalama Kupe.

Osobita pozornost u ovoj je prigodi posvećena božanstvima navedenih rijeka, odnosno epigrafičkim i figuralnim potvrđama njihova štovanja. Među najzanimljivijima svakako je spomenik gotovo monumentalnih dimenzija s posvetom Dunavu i Dravi (*Danuvio et Dravo*). Riječ je o žrtveniku, vjerojatno iz vremena Elagabala, koji je izvorno bio podignut na povišenom mjestu u današnjem Aljmašu, u blizini ušća Drave u Dunav, po svem sudeći s namjerom da bi bio dostupan pogledima članova posada brodovlja koje se kretalo tim područjem. Od teksta koji je bio znatno

duži ostali su sačuvani samo retci u kojima se nalazi posveta navedenim rijekama, uz još nekoliko teško čitljivih riječi i pojedinačnih slova u donjem dijelu natpisa: preostali dio teksta većim dijelom je naknadno bio namjerno eradiran. Istom paru božanstava bilo je posvećeno i nekoliko žrtvenika pohranjenih u Pokrajinskom muzeju u Ptuju. Od drugih spomenika posvećenih Dunavu zanimljivi su žrtvenici s posvetom Dunavu „koji otječe“ (*Danuvio defluenti*) iz Akvinka (*Aquincum*), kao i žrtvenik posvećen neobičnom paru božanstava, vrhovnom rimskom božanstvu Jupiteru i Dunavu (*I. O. M et Danuvio*) koji potječe iz Augsburga (*Augusta Vindelicum*).

Čini se, također, da je lik riječnog božanstva, vjerojatno personificirani lik božanstva rijeke Drave (*Drav, Dravus*) prikazan u sklopu kamene figuralne kompozicije iz zagrebačkog Arheološkog muzeja, podrijetlom iz Murse. Na tom fragmentarnom figuralnom spomeniku dominira sjedeći ženski lik (*Tyche*, personifikacija Murse?), a pod njim je u položaju plivača u vodi prikazan bradati i dugokosi čovječuljak (*Dravus*?) za kojeg je moguće pretpostaviti da prikazuje personificirani lik istoimene rijeke.

Od spomenika posvećenih Savu (*Savus*), božanstvu istoimene rijeke, često je privlačio pozornost stručne javnosti žrtvenik s posvetom Uzvišenom Savu (*Savo Augusto*) iz Ščitarjeva (*Andautonia*). Štovanje tog božanstva evidentirano je na nekoliko spomenika, a zanimljivo je da svi potječu iz gornjeg toka rijeke, iz okolice Emone te iz Andautonije i Siscije. Potrebno je, također, istaknuti da je u gornjem toku Save, na području Slovenije, otkriveno nekoliko žrtvenika posvećeno paru božanstava Savu i Adsaluti (*Adsalluta*), ženskom božanstvu keltskih Tauriska. Ime riječnog božanstva Sava (*Savus*) zabilježeno je, također, i na olovnoj pločici s dvostranim natpisom otkrivenoj u Kupu u Sisku: riječ je o tekstu koji sadrži kletvu (*defixio*) u kojemu se od Sava priželjkuje kažnjavanje (potapanje) pojedinaca kojima je kletva bila upućena.

Personificirani likovi riječnih božanstava, poglavito rijeka Save i Kupe, pojavljuju se i na novcu. Na dva primjerka antoninijana cara Proba iz ostave Šimanovci u Srijemu s legendom *Siscia Probi Aug(usti) XXIQ* – oba su pohranjena u zagrebačkom Arheološkom muzeju – na reversu su pod sjedećim ženskim likom, personifikacijom grada Siscije, još i likovi dvojice odraslih, bradatih muškaraca prikazali u ležećem položaju, riječnih božanstava koji su očigledno personifikacije riječnih božanstava Save (*Savus*) i Kupe (*Colapis*). Sličan motiv pojavljuje se i na antoninijanima cara Galijena (*Gallienus*), osnivača siscjske kovnice, s legendom *Siscia Aug(usti)*: lik ležećeg bradatog muškarca karakterističan je za ikonografiju riječnih božanstava, a najbolji primjer su personifikacije nekih dobro poznatih rijeka, poput Nila ili Tibra.

Naposljetku, kao mogući pokazatelj štovanja božanstava voda, što podrazumijeva i rijeke, u konkretnom slučaju Bosut (*Bathinus flumen*), moguće je u takvom kontekstu promatrati i nalaz mramornog kipa Neptuna, otkrivenog u Vinkovcima (*Cibalae*) i danas pohranjenog u Arheološkom muzeju u Zagrebu.

