

## Cult of Jupiter in Singidunum Area

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**Abstract:** In the area of Singidunum and its vicinity so far the total of 30 votive monuments have been identified, 25 of them dedicated to Jupiter's independent cult, two to Jupiter and imperial cult, and one each to Capitoline Triad, to Jupiter and Hercules, and to Jupiter, Terra Mater, Liber and Libera. One dedication was inscribed into an urn, which is specific for the territory of central Serbia, not only Singidunum. The main method for this paper involves references to general characteristics of the cult of Jupiter, relation between Rome and provinces, and morphological, decorative and votive characteristics of votive monuments from the area near Singidunum and its vicinity. All the monuments may be dated into late 2nd and 3rd century.

**Key words:** Roman period, votive monuments, urn, cult, Jupiter

**JEL codes:** Z1

### 1. Introduction

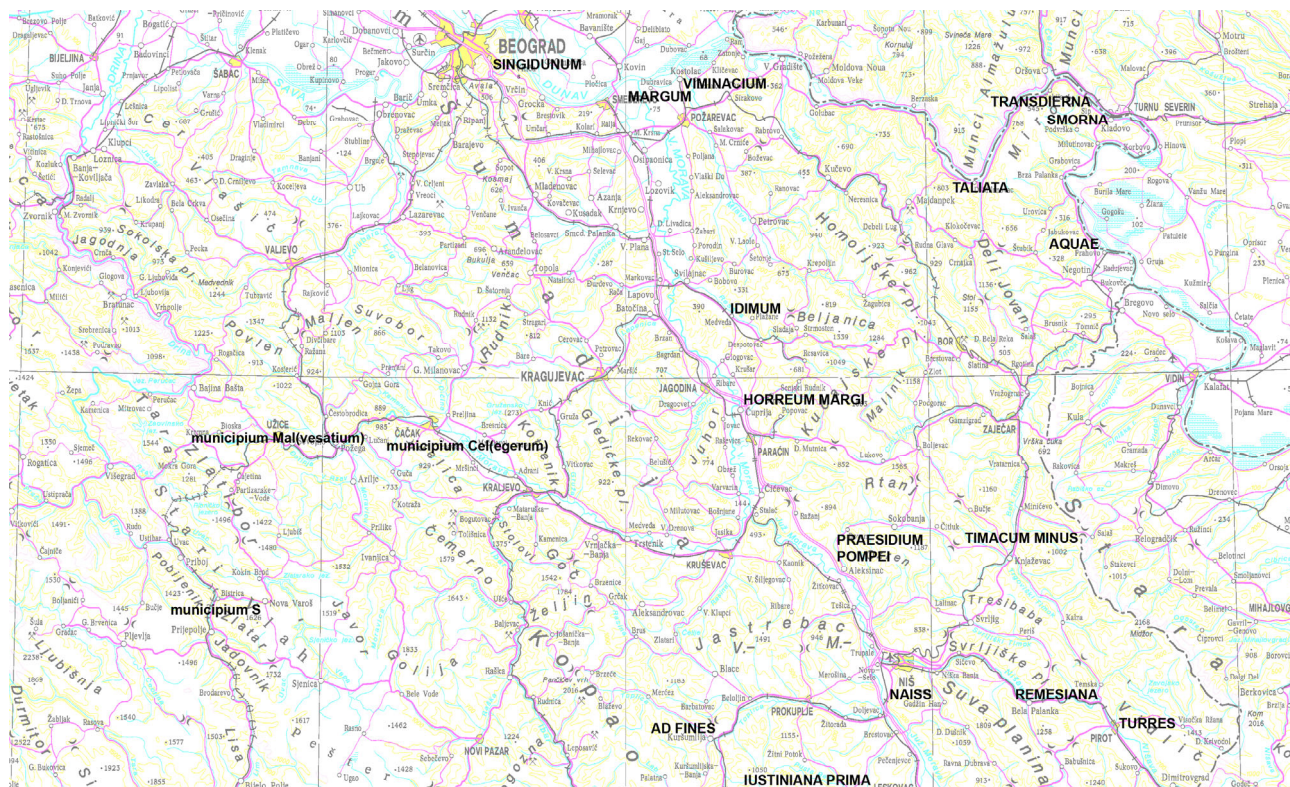
Out of the total number of 30 votive monuments dedicated to Jupiter, 25 are dedicated to Jupiter's cult as an independent cult, and the remaining five to cult symbioses of Jupiter and other deities or the imperial cult. Out of five monuments two are dedicated to Jupiter and imperial cult, one to Jupiter and Hercules, and one Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, and one to Jupiter, Terra Mater, Liber and Libera. This situation certainly results from lack of systemic explorations, and the finds being rather accidental, as is the case with archaeological explorations in Singidunum (Map 1).

### 2. General Characteristics of Jupiter's Cult

Jupiter was at first the god of the sky and ruled the weather (Замуровић, 1936; Срејовић, Цермановић-Кузмановић, 1979), becoming over time the supreme god of Roman pantheon. It was to him, as the god of the sky and light, that all the days of full Moon in the year were dedicated (ides). On this holiday, each month, the high priest would sacrifice a white sheep to him, while for the holiday of starting grape harvest a lamb was sacrificed. Jupiter was a protector of vineyard growers and vine, since they were most susceptible to weather conditions, and he was also connected in general with fertility of the land as a god who ruled weather conditions. At the times of drought, prayers for rain were made to Jupiter. It is probable that through wine he is also connected to libation, and thus also to the cult of the dead. He was often connected to Mars and Liber, as well as with Terminus, since as a god who threw lightning bolts he also ruled borders.

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Map 1 Map of Central Serbia in the Roman Period

### 3. Relations Between Rome and Provinces

The dedication to Jupiter as Jupiter Capitolinus, *O(ptimus) et M(aximus)*, made up a powerful protection of the state. This dedication is the most numerous one in all the provinces and towns in the provinces, and also in Singidunum as well. One of the first tasks of builders and architects after founding a provincial town was to erect a temple like the one in Rome, dedicated to Jupiter Capitolinus (Срејовић, Цермановић-Кузмановић, 1979). In the Capitoline temple in Rome Sibylline Books were kept, all the important documents and laws. There is no doubt that also all important documents and laws were kept in Capitoline temples in the towns in the provinces. And it is quite certain that Singidunum as well had such a temple. The dedication to Capitoline Triad, Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, also made up a complete protection of the state and society. This indicated the good relation between the Roman state and the society, and confirms that in Singidunum as well, the society and its organisation were based on the standards for the Roman socio-political system. In the Capitoline temple young men offered sacrifices to Jupiter Capitolinus when they were to become men, and it was there that consuls, and in provinces also probably magistrates as well, took their oaths.

### 4. Morphological and Decorative Elements of Votive Monuments from the Area of Singidunum and Its Vicinity

Each votive monument represents a reduced form of the temple (Zotović, 2016). Therefore each votive monument, and thus also these from the area of Singidunum and its vicinity, may be seen as three-part monuments that are made of the base, body of the monument bearing text on the front side, and the capital or the roof of the

monument. In the area of Singidunum and its vicinity, judging by the monuments preserved, capitals and bases had double or triple mouldings. As for the capital, the corners always featured *acroteria*, while in the centre the most frequent ornament was a rosette, but also there was an example each of the ornament of stone pine, acanthus leaf and a vegetable decorative element that is no longer discernible. These decorative elements were already completely ornamental and they had probably lost their symbolic meaning. Such decorative elements appeared in the pediments of funerary monuments (Зотовић, 1995), and thus there can be even more certainty about their losing a symbolic and keeping only a decorative meaning.

The dedication on the urn is an interesting occurrence, and two facts ought to be mentioned here. One is that it is a confirmation of the connection between Jupiter's cult and the cult of the dead, and the other is that the urn is the last abode of the man's soul in this world. This monument is even more important since it is the only monument of that kind in the territory of central Serbia.

## 5. Cult of Jupiter in the Area of Singidunum and Its Vicinity

The most numerous dedications to Jupiter are the ones to Jupiter as a Capitoline deity, protector of the state first and foremost, and then of the entire society as well. This dedication is reflected in the concentrative formula *o(ptimus) et m(aximus)*, and it was further emphasised in some cases by way of using an epithet *paternus*, fatherly, thus underlining the role of Jupiter as guardian and protector of the state and of the family and individual, i.e., of all the cells of the society. It is interesting that among the identified monuments to Jupiter there are no other attributes, except in one case of a supposed attribute *sacrum* – sacred.

From the monuments devoted to Jupiter and Hercules it may be learned that in the area of Singidunum there was a temple to these deities.

The dedication to Capitoline Triad does not surprise by its presence, since, as was already said, Capitoline Triad constituted a powerful protection of the state. It is also not surprising that Jupiter is connected to Terra Mater, Liber and Libera, Liber's female counterpart. This connection is reflected certainly with regard to the fertility and conditions for the fertility of the land, and especially the grapes.

The connection of Jupiter with the imperial cult that is most prevalent in the area of Singidunum and the vicinity certainly stemmed from the divine origin of the emperor himself, thus making him worthy of connecting to Jupiter as well.

## 6. Conclusion

Votive monuments dedicated to Jupiter either independently or in a cult symbiosis with other deities may be dated into late 2nd and 3rd centuries. The dedicants of these monuments belonged to higher or highest classes of society.

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## Catalogue

### Singidunum and its vicinity

#### Jupiter

1. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.99 × 0.39 × 0.46 m. Capital and base with double moulding.  
Location: Belgrade, Tašmajdan.  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/Cilices/pro salute/d(ominorum) n(ostrorum trium)/po[su]erun[t]/[co]ntirones/[D]extro et Prisco/co(n)s(ulibus).*  
Lit.: IMS I, 45, n. 3.  
Dat.: 196.
2. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.85 × 0.37 × 0.32 m. Capital damaged, but *acroteria* visible in the corners, and in between there are acanthus leaf remnants.  
Location: Belgrade, Trg Republike (Square of the Republic)  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/SNS/ Aenilius/ Dolens/ optio.*  
Lit.: Н. Вулић, 1931, 7, n. 5; IMS I, 46, n. 5.
3. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.74 × 0.25 × 0.28 m. Capital decorated in the corners with *acroteria* and in the middle with a rosette. Capital and base with high triple mouldings.  
Location: Belgrade  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/Barbius/Ulpian(us)/cotnic(ularius)/leg(ionis) IIII Fl(aviae) f(elicis).*  
Lit.: Н. Вулић 1941-1948, 4, n. 8; IMS I, 47, n. 6.
4. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.53 × 0.21 × 0.26 m. Hardly visible *acroteria* in the corners of the capital.  
Location: Belgrade  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/FL (?) OMN/l(ibens) v(otum) p(osuit).*  
Lit.: CIL III, 8149; IMS I, 47-48, n. 7.
5. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.62 × 0.31 × 0.39 m. Capital damaged. *Acroterium* visible in the right corner and a trefoil rosette in the middle.  
Location: Belgrade  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/C. Val(erius)/Secun/[di]nus/ [l(ibens) v(otum) s(olvit)].*  
Lit.: CIL III, 8150; IMS I, 48, n. 8.
6. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 1.24 × 0.68 × 0.52 m. The base and right part of the monument are damaged. *Acroteria* in the corners of the capital, and a vegetable ornament in the middle.  
Location: Belgrade  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/Patern[o]/Aur(elius) Mar/cus (centurio) leg(ionis)/IIII Fl(aviae) Galli/ene (!) ex v(oto) p(osuit).*  
Lit.: CIL III, 8148; IMS I, 48-49, n. 9.
7. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.71 × 0.32 × 0.34 m. Capital and the right side of the monument are damaged.  
Location: Belgrade  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) P(aterno)/Aur(elius) Cres/cens/v(otum) l(ibens) m(erito) Pro/bo co(n)s(ule).*  
Lit.: IMS I, 49-50, n. 10.
8. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.80 × 0.25 × 0.27 m. The base is damaged. *Acroteria* in the corners of the capital, and a rosette in the middle.  
Location: Belgrade, Tašmajdan.  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) P(aterno)/Aur(elius) Cre/scentio/lap[i]dariu (?)/s pro salut/e sua/ st suorum.*  
Lit.: Н. Вулић 1931, 6, n. 3; IMS I, 50, n. 11.

9. Ara, limestone.  
Location: Belgrade.  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/Pater(no)/Aur(elius) Iuli/anus m(iles)/l(ibens) p(osuit) m(erito).*  
Lit.: CIL III, 6303; IMS I, 50-51, n. 12.
10. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.60 × 0.27 × 0.29 m. The upper right part of the capital is missing.  
Location: Belgrade  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Pa(terno)/T. Aur(elius) L(?) [.] /nus ex v(oto) pos/uit.*  
Lit.: IMS I, 51, n. 13.
11. Urn.  
Location: Belgrade  
*M./ Iovi votum/[A]elius Marcus/Apamenus/d(onum) d(edit).*  
Lit.: CIL III, 1662; IMS I, 51, n. 14.
12. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.97 × 0.41 × 0.38 m.  
Location: Ritopek.  
*I(ovi) o(ptimo) m(aximo)/pro salute/ sua et suo/rum Aur(elius)/Marcelli/nus V. E. v(otum) p(osuit).*  
Lit.: Н. Вулић 1933, 29, n. 81; IMS I, 88, n. 79.
13. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.98 × 0.55 × 0.37 m. *Acroteria* visible in the capital.  
Location: Ritopek.  
*I(ovi) o(ptimo) m(aximo) pater(no)/ ...../...../ ... (centurio) leg(ionis).*  
Lit.: Н. Вулић 1931, 49, n. 111; IMS I, 89, n. 80.
14. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.87 × 0.39 × 0.27 m. Upper left part of the monument is missing.  
Location: Ostružnica.  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/C. Agellius/ Zoticus/v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*  
Lit.: IMS I, 91, n. 86.
15. Base, marble, dimensions: 0.18 × 0.18 × 0.04 m.  
Location: Višnjica.  
*Iovi op(timo) m(aximo) Ediuna/ f[rat]er confratri[b(us)].*  
Lit.: А. Фон Премерштајн – Н. Вулић 1903, 86, n. 4; Н. Вулић 1909, 143, n. 64; IMS I, 91, n. 87.
16. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 1.12 × 1.38 m.  
Location: Babe  
*[I]ovi s(acrum ?)/[Iup]iter/ Cresces (!)/Mucati/v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*  
Lit.: Н. Вулић 1909, 168, n. 108; IMS I, 121-122, n. 90.
17. Ara, limestone.  
Location: Stojnik.  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/<P.> Ael(ius) Sex<t>i/<l>ianus [.*  
Lit.: IMS I, 122, n. 92.
18. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.84 × 0.37 × 0.36 m.  
Location: Babe  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/ sacrum/ Aur(elius) (?) [ ]/[*  
Lit.: Н. Вулић 1909, 168, n. 109; IMS I, 122-123, n. 93
19. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.87 × 0.35 × 0.26 m. In the corners of the capital there are *acroteria*, and pine stone in the middle.  
Location: Babe.  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/Iuppiter/M. Aur(elius) Cre[s]/centio pr(o)/se et suos (!)/et cives (!)/v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*  
Lit.: Н. Вулић 1909, 167, n. 105; IMS I, 123, n. 94.
20. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.91 × 0.42 × 0.28 m. The upper right corner of the capital is missing.  
Location: Suvodol  
*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/ Aur(elius) Va/lerius/ dec(urio) col(egii)/fab(rum) ABH/renovait (!)/v(otum) p(osuit) l(ibens) m(erito).*  
Lit.: IMS I, 123-124, n. 95.
21. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.60 × 0.34 × 0.30 m. Primitive workmanship. *Acroteria* in the corners of the capital, and a rosette in the middle.  
Location: Lisović.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/Bitio B<i>ti/libes (!) vo<t>u (!)/ solvit.*

Lit.: IMS I, 124-125, n. 96.

22. Ara, limestone, dimensions:  $0.89 \times 0.46 \times 0.30$  m. *Acroteria* in the corners of the capital, and a rosette in the middle.

Location: Stojnik.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/ Cn. Clodius Cn./ fil(ius) Classicianus/ trib(unus) coh(ortis) XIIII vol(untariorum) c(ivium) R(omanorum)/ et translat(us) ob opti/mis maximisq(ue) imp(eratoribus) in/ coh(ortem) I Ulp(iam) Pan(noniorum) (miliariam) eq(uitatam)/ v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

Lit.: CIL III, 6302; IMS I, 125, n. 97.

23. Ara, limestone, dimensions:  $0.91 \times 0.44 \times 0.32$  m. *Acroteria* in the corners of the capita.

Location: Suvodol.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/C. Gellius/Exorastus/praef(ectus) coh(ortis)/V Lucens(ium)/v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito).*

Lit.: CIL III, 14542; IMS I, 125, n. 98.

24. Ara, limestone, dimensions:  $0.42 \times 0.40 \times 0.50$  m.

Location: Bačevac.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/Vitalis/pro <se> et su/is v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

Lit.: A. Фон Премерштајн – Н. Вулић 1903, 87, n. 6; IMS I, 126-127, n. 100.

25. Ara, limestone. The corners of the capital decorated by *acroteria*.

Location: Guberevac.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) P(aterno)/Sent(?)/[i]a Flav/[en?]til[la ?]/v(otum) m(erito) l(ibens) s(olvit).*

Lit.: IMS I, 127, n. 102.

#### Jupiter – Hercules

1. Ara, limestone, dimensions:  $1.00 \times 0.37 \times 0.22$  m.

Location: Guberevac

*Iovi et Herculi/templum fecit/Vecilia Tyranni Aug(usti)/lib(erti) proc(uratoris). Locus datus/ab Appaeo Hermete et Fabis/ tribus.*

Lit.: CIL III, 14536; A. Фон Премерштајн – Н. Вулић 1903, 81, n. 71; IMS I, 127-128, n. 103.

#### Jupiter – imperial cult

1. Ara, limestone, dimensions:  $0.60 \times 0.28 \times 0.23$  m.

Location: Belgrade.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/ pro salute/ d(omini) n(ostri) Sev<e>ri Ale/xandri Aug(usti)/ Cl(audius) Lupercu/s mil(es) leg(ionis)/ IIII Fl(aviae) S(everianae) A(lexandrianae) ex vo/to posuit l(ibens) m(erito).*

Lit.: Н. Вулић 1931, 6, n. 4; IMS I, 46, n. 4.

Dat.: 222-235.

2. Ara, limestone, dimensions:  $9.36 \times 0.29$  m. part of the inscription filed preserved.

Location: Stojnik.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/ [p]ro salute/[Caes]ar(is) n(ostri)/ [ .*

Lit.: Н. Вулић 1905, 96, n. 57; IMS I, 127, n. 101.

#### Jupiter – Juno - Minerva

1. Ara, marble, dimensions:  $0.70 \times 0.61 \times 0.28$  m.

Location: Belgrade, Kalemegdan.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/Iunoniq(ue) Miner(vae)/P. Terentius/Aquilinus et/Tretenica (?) Sabina/consis(s)tentis Aqu/ileiae/ v(otum) s(olverunt) l(ibentes) m(erito).*

Lit.: Н. Вулић 1941-1948, 5, n. 9; IMS I, 51-52, n. 15.

#### Jupiter – Terra Mater – Liber – Libera

1. Ara, limestone, dimensions:  $0.89 \times 0.44 \times 0.35$  m. The last line of text inscribed into the base.

Location: Belgrade, Čubura.

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) et/Terrae Matri/ Libero Pat(ri) et Lib(re) (!) sac(rum)/T. Aur(elius) Atticus/vet(eranus) leg(ionis) IIII Fl(aviae) ex/sig(nifero) P.K. q(uin)q(uennalis) Sing(iduni)/dec(urio) col(oniae) Sirmens(ium)/v(otum) l(ibens) m(erito) p(osuit).*

Lit.: Н. Вулић 1909, 142, n. 62; IMS I, 52-53, n. 16.