

A NEW INSCRIPTION FROM SIRMIMUM AND THE BASILICA OF ST. ANASTASIA

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Abstract. – A fragmentary marble inscription, preserved in the Museum of Srem in Sremska Mitrovica, seems to mention the basilica of St. Anastasia: *[In dom]o beati[ssimae dominae nost]re Anast[asiae] - - -*. This monument provides epigraphic evidence on the cult place of the martyr in Sirmium, already recorded by written sources. According to the *Passion of St. Demetrius*, the church of St. Anastasia had already existed in Sirmium when Leontius, praetorian prefect of Illyricum, started the construction of the basilica of St. Demetrius. Although the find spot of the plate is not known, the finds of Ostrogothic coins next to the northern city wall imply that the basilica of St. Anastasia was located in that zone of the city, as the Ostrogoths highly respected the Martyr. It is possible that it should be identified with a martyrium leaning against the northern city wall that had been unearthed and then destroyed at the end of the 19th century.

Key words. – Sirmium, Early Christianity, martyrs, St. Anastasia, inscription, basilica.

The collection of the Museum of Srem in Sremska Mitrovica includes one damaged marble plate with an inscription in Latin (fig. 1). Although the text is not completely preserved, we presume that it mentions the basilica of St. Anastasia, confirmed in Sirmium by the written sources.¹ The plate has not been published yet, although there is a possibility that it has been included in the catalogue of Early Christian inscriptions from Sirmium that Petar Petrović prepared for publication between 1975 and 1980 under the leadership of Vladislav Popović in order to be published in volume IX of *Sirmium* edition by the French School in Rome, with V. Popović and Noël Duval as editors. Unfortunately, this volume still has not seen the light of day, due to many objective and

subjective reasons and after the death of P. Petrović and then also of V. Popović, we could not get the text of the catalogue of Early Christian inscriptions neither from N. Duval nor from his collaborator Sylvain Janniard who started editing it again in 2005. As it would turn out later in this work, we assume that V. Popović knew about the inscription, considering a remark in one of his studies.² Since no data indicating the location and circumstances of its discovery have been recorded and since we did not find any evidence

¹ *AA SS, Oct. IV, 90–95 = PG 116, 1173–1184.*

² Popović V. 1982, 553.

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about its discovery in the documentation, we will try to locate the cult place of the martyr Anastasia by indirect methods.

Fragment of a slab, made of marble from east Alpine quarries of Pohorje or Gummern, broken on all sides, except the upper one. Dimensions: 39 x 24 cm. The inscription consists of eight partially preserved lines, the eighth line containing only traces of two or possibly three letters. Letter height: 5 cm in the first line, 6 cm in the second line and 4 cm in lines 3–6. The fragment is preserved in the Museum of Srem in Sremska Mitrovica. No information is available concerning its find-spot or when it was found. The preserved text runs as follows:

[---]OBEATI[---]
 [---]REANAST[---]
 [---]HOCLOCOD[---]
 [---]XQVICONV[---]
 [---]QVIVIXITA[---]
 [---]OEIVSDPRIDIE[---]
 [---]TFLDECEN[---]
 [---]++[---]

The inscription presumably mentions the basilica of St. Anastasia. Its existence in Sirmium is confirmed by the Early Christian literary sources. The first two lines could be supplemented in the following way: [*In domo*]o beati[ssimae dominae nost]re Anast[asiae] - - -. The term *domus*, meaning “church”, is relatively frequent in the Early Christian inscriptions.³ However, we must emphasize that, to the best of our knowledge, the formula *in domo*, meaning “in the church”, followed by a name of a saint or a martyr is not attested in epigraphic evidence. The term *beatissima* for a female martyr is not without analogies. It is, for instance, recorded on an inscription from the vicinity of Portus near Ostia in Italy: *Sanctis martyribus et beati[ssimis] | Eutropio, Bonosae et Zosim[ae] - -*.⁴ The term *domina*, denoting a female martyr, is rather frequent in early Christian inscriptions.⁵ Although the exact parallels for the proposed restoration of the first two lines are lacking, a close analogy is provided by an inscription from Sremska Mitrovica. It was set up in the basilica of St. Irenaeus by Macedonius and his wife Ammes and it runs as follows: *In basilica domini nostri Ereni (!) ac memoriam posuit Macedonius una cum matronam suam <A>Ammete Evenati*.⁶

After the formula *in hoc loco depositus* in the third line, there followed the name of the deceased, probably ending with an X, the first preserved letter in the fourth



Fig. 1. Plate mentioning the basilica of St. Anastasia, Museum of Srem, Sremska Mitrovica

Сл. 1. Плоча са поменом базилике св. Анастасије, Музеј Срема, Сремска Мишровица

line. The name could have been, for instance, *Vindex* or *Felix*.⁷ The following expression – *qui convixit annis* – denotes the number of years that the deceased spent in wedlock. If the inscription was erected by his wife (a possibility that will be discussed later) this segment of the text could be restored in the following way: *qui conv[ixit] mecum annis - -*.⁸ The beginning

³ *ILCV* III p. 344 sq., s. v. *domus*. Cf. *ILJug* 2275 from Solin: *domos s(an)c(t)i S[- - -]*.

⁴ *CIL* XIV 1937.

⁵ *ILCV* III p. 341, s. v. *domina*.

⁶ Поповић 2003, 262 (photograph and translation); Mirković 2006, 117 (restored text).

⁷ For *cognomina* ending with letter X cf. Mócsy 1983, 397.

⁸ Cf. *CIL* III 2225 (*Salona*); X 5986 (*Signia*); XIV 3458 (*Sublaqueum*); *AE* 1987, 389 (*Saturnia*). The verb *convivo* is also attested in Christian inscriptions: *ILCV* III III p. 502, s. v. *convivo*.

of the sixth line seems to suggest that the inscription mentioned a son of the deceased as well: [- - - fili]o eius. He might have been buried alongside his father or still alive when the tombstone was erected.

The inscription has been dated by the usual formula beginning in the sixth line with the words *die pridie*.⁹ There followed the day of the month (*calendae, ides, nonae*) and the name of the month. The seventh line, obviously containing the name of the person who erected the tombstone, could be restored and interpreted in various ways. The first preserved letter – T – might be the element of a date, i.e. the name of the month: *Mart(ias), August(as), Sept(embres), Oct(obres)*. On the other hand it could also represent the abbreviated praenomen *T(itus)*. If we accept the first possibility, according to which the letter T is part of a date, it seems likely that the inscription was set up by the wife of the deceased and that her name was *Fl(avia) Decen[- - -]* or *Decem[- - -]*, depending whether the last preserved letter in the seventh line is an N or an M. The abbreviation of the gentilicium *Flavia* to *Fl(avia)* is well attested in northern Italy and western provinces of the Roman empire.¹⁰ If, however, we decide on the other possibility, the name of the person who set up the plate would be *T. Fl(avius) Decen[- - -]* or *Decem[- - -]*. He could be a relative or a friend of the deceased. The cognomen of the person who erected the plate (the wife of the deceased or someone else) is impossible to restore because it is not certain whether the last preserved letter of the seventh line is an M or an N. The names, which should be taken into consideration, are *December, Decembricus, Decembrinus/-a, Decembris, Decens, Decentius/-a, Decentiana* and *Decentinus*.¹¹

Bearing in mind all the difficulties and problems concerning the reading and interpretation of our fragment, we propose the following restoration of the text:

[In dom]o beati[ssimae] --- | --- nost]re Anast[asiae]
--- | --- in] hoc loco d[epositus] --- | ---]x qui conv[ixit]
mecum annis --- | ---] qui vixit a[nnis] --- | --- fili]o eius
d[ie] pridie [--- | ---]T Fl[avius, -avia] Decen[---] | ---
J++[--- | ---].

Judging by palaeographic features, the fragment of the inscription presumably mentioning the basilica of St. Anastasia dates from the Late Roman period. The letter A with the broken horizontal stroke and the letter L with the horizontal stroke slanting downward appear at the end of 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century. Both shapes are attested in the early Christian inscriptions.¹²

Not much is known about the life of the martyr Anastasia, while there is much more information about

the subsequent spreading of her cult. According to *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, the universal calendar of martyrs,¹³ she has been put to death on 25th of December 304 AD in Sirmium, as the last one of the group of sufferers for faith that have been executed in that year in the Pannonian metropolis. Namely, the persecution of Christians intensified in Pannonia after the proclamation of Diocletian's fourth edict against the Christians, published, according to certain scholars, during the emperor's stay in Pannonia,¹⁴ so the persecutions in that province and its capital were most severe.¹⁵ The cult of the Sirmium martyr Anastasia spread rapidly to the east as well as to the west, so her hagiography contained fantastic elements already in the Late Antiquity, and it could be classified in the group IV of martyr legends, which included texts in which real historical events were reduced to minimum, while the only reliable data are those concerning the time and place of execution.¹⁶

As chance would have it, a certain Anastasia, who was a respected Roman citizen and perhaps the half-sister of Constantine the Great,¹⁷ built in her city in the 4th century the church named after her – *titulus Anastasiae*. But as the cult of St. Anastasia very early expanded as far as Rome, in the course of time it became commonly accepted that the *titulus Anastasiae* is the church of the Sirmium martyr, whose name was even included in the Roman liturgy canon, despite the fact that the relics of St. Anastasia have never been transferred either to this or any other Roman church.¹⁸ However, the relics of this martyr did not remain in Sirmium either. Conveying the words of the church historian Theodorus Lector, Byzantine chronicler Theophanes writes that patriarch Gennadius ordered in 468 the *translatio* of St. Anastasia's relics from Sirmium to Constantinople. They were kept in that city

⁹ *ILCV III III* p. 307, s. v. *pridie*, d.

¹⁰ *OPEL II* 145.

¹¹ Kajanto 1965, 219, 231; Solin–Salomies 1994, 322.

¹² Петровић 1975, 110, 114.

¹³ *AA SS Nov.*, 41.

¹⁴ Bratož 2003, 42–43, 71–85; Jarak 2011, 56.

¹⁵ For chronology of persecution of Pannonian martyrs cf. Zeiller 1918, 68–104; Mirković 2006, 115–118; Bratož 2003, 29–98; Jarak 2011, 56–68.

¹⁶ Delehay 1955, 106–109.

¹⁷ Zeiller 1918, 85.

¹⁸ Zeiller 1918, 86.

in 468/70 in the church Ἀνάστασις¹⁹ (Resurrection). This shrine dated back to earlier times and in it Gregory of Nasianus preached in 379/80 against Arianism, so it was considered that the name of the church Anastasis–Resurrection relates to the resurrection of the orthodox in conflict with the Arian heresy.²⁰ However, that church had been reconstructed around the middle of the 5th century by the military commanders of the Eastern Empire Aspar and his older son Ardabarius, barbarians of the Gothic ancestry who were very devoted to Arianism. They ordered that the bible in Gothic language was to be read in the church of St. Anastasia on the feast days.²¹ Thus, the church where relics of St. Anastasia had been deposited in Constantinople was of the Gothic rite, so it could be assumed that the Goths, during their stay in Pannonia, had chosen the Sirmium martyr as their patron and transferred her cult to the eastern capital of the Empire. This assumption seems to be confirmed by the fact that a certain *Ecclesia sanctae Anastasiae legis Gothorum* is mentioned in Ravenna around AD 550. It probably served the Arian rite, as the single church in Ravenna whose Arian consecration continued even after the rejection of that heresy.²² The establishing of the cult of the Sirmium martyr Anastasia within the Arian church in Ravenna could be explained by long-lasting and intensive contacts of the Goths settled in Sirmium and its vicinity with Ravenna. It all started with Vidimer, who, leading a part of his tribe, entered northern Italy from Pannonia in 472, and ended with Theodoric. Passing through Pannonia, he defeated the German leader Odoacer in Italy. Having created the state with the center in Ravenna he expanded it to Pannonia with Sirmium as its capital city in 504.²³ Of course, the relations between the courts in Constantinople and Ravenna were intensive and that also contributed to favorable conditions for establishing the cult of St. Anastasia in Ravenna.

Details of subsequent transfer of relics of St. Anastasia from Constantinople to Zadar (*Iader*) on the Adriatic coast and to Fulda in Frankia²⁴ in the 9th century are not of interest for the theme of this work, while information about the Gothic milieu within which the cult had spread in the 5th and 6th centuries is, in our opinion, very important for a possible ubication of the basilica of St. Anastasia in Sirmium.

Discussions about the possible location of the basilica of St. Anastasia in Sirmium and possible identification of existing cult places with it last in the academic literature from the second half of 19th century until

present day. Namely, in *Passio altera Sancti Demetrii Thessalonicensis*, while describing activities of Leontius, praetorian prefect of Illyricum, it is mentioned that after building the church dedicated to St. Demetrius in Thessalonica he wanted to build a similar one in Illyricum, so on arrival in Sirmium he deposited the chest with the bloodstained saint's chlamys and fragments of his oraria in the most holy temple of the holy martyr Demetrius, that he instituted in the vicinity of the honored home (=church) of victorious martyr Anastasia (πλησίον τοῦ σεβασμίου οἴκου τῆς καλλινίκου μάρτυρος Ἀναστασίας).²⁵

Following these topographic indications and also regarding local tradition, the investigators of Sirmium suggested various conclusions. J. Brunšmid, after revision of Hytrek's excavations at the east necropolis of Sirmium, at the site known as "Rimsko groblje" or "Gradina", passed the opinion in 1895 that the uncovered cult structure, most probably *cella trichornia* recorded by Hytrek, is in fact the basilica of St. Demetrius²⁶ and then N. Vulić assumed in 1929 that the small single-aisled chapel discovered at the same cemetery is the basilica of St. Anastasia.²⁷ The same identification of cult structures at the east necropolis of Sirmium was suggested already in 1918 by J. Zeller. His information came from the letters of I. Jung, a teacher living in Sremska Mitrovica, who was the representative of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb.²⁸ Such attribution of those cult structures allowed G. Györffy to suggest, in 1959, that the mediaeval monastery of St. Demetrius shared the same location as the antique one,²⁹ but this claim was rejected in 1961 by P. Milošević, first of all because of the small dimensions (19 x 17 m) of the building, which had been earlier assumed to have been the Late Roman basilica of St.

¹⁹ Janin 1953, 26; Deichmann 1969, 26; Николајевић 1979, 44.

²⁰ Janin 1953, 26–27.

²¹ Deichmann 1969, 26–27.

²² Deichmann 1969, 26.

²³ Stein 1968 (I), 356–357; (II), 111–124.; Mirković 1971, 48–51; Mirković 2006, 99–103.

²⁴ Николајевић 1979, 43–51.

²⁵ AA SS, *Oct.* IV, 90–95 = PG 116, 1173–1184. For French translation of the text of the *Passion* and mention of the church of St. Anastasia cf. Lemerle II 1981, 201.

²⁶ Brunšmid 1985/96, 162.

²⁷ Вулић 1929, 164.

²⁸ Zeillier 1918, 190.

²⁹ Györffy 1959, 10, ref. 3.

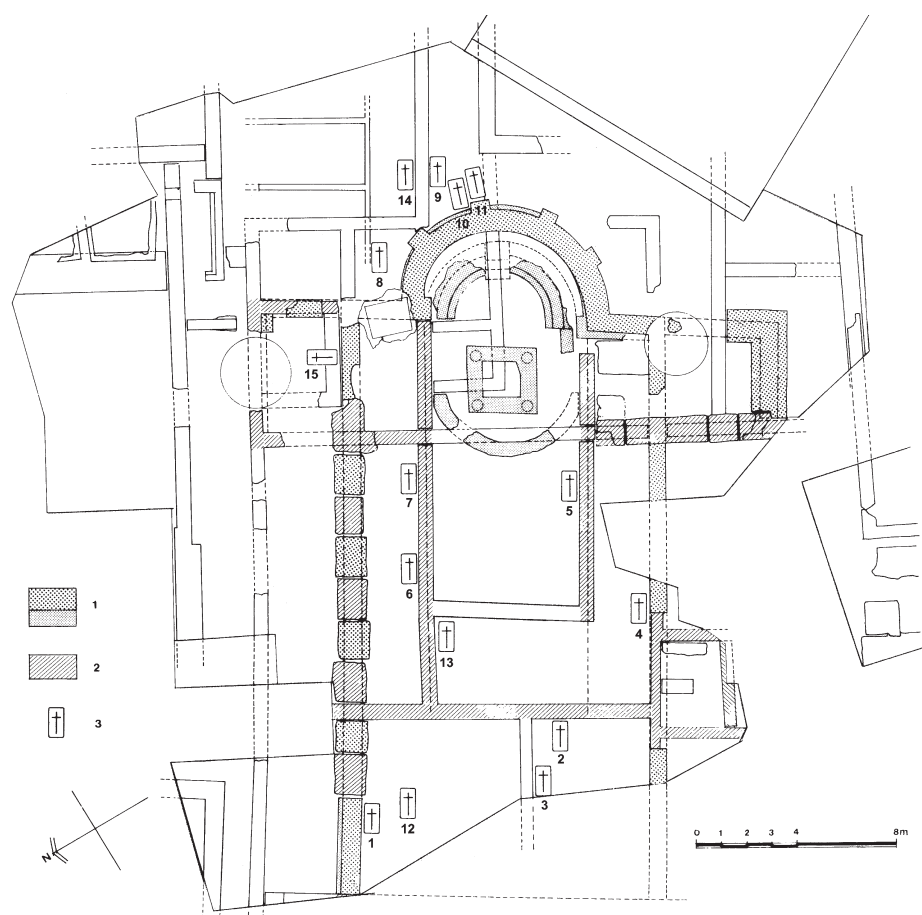


Fig. 2. Ground plan of the church of St. Demetrius in Sirmium (plan of M. Jeremić after: Popović V. 1987, 118, Abb. 3)

Сл. 2. Основа цркве св. Димитрија у Сирмијуму (план М. Јеремића према: Поповић В. 1987, 118, Abb. 3)

Demetrius.³⁰ This opinion was also accepted in 1969 by V. Popović,³¹ who like N. Duval³² in 1979, ascertained that there is nothing reliable in the identification of cult structures at east necropolis with basilicas of St. Demetrius and St. Anastasia. Later, after meticulous analysis of written sources, archaeological remains and numismatic material, V. Popović demonstrated in a number of studies that the cult structure discovered in 1979 in the center of Sremska Mitrovica (locality 59) could be identified as the basilica of St. Demetrius (fig. 2), which, according to written sources, had been erected in Sirmium by Leontius.³³ On the other hand in 2004, M. Jeremić, after architectural analyses of existing plans, came to the conclusion that the remains at the site “Rimsko groblje” or “Gradina” were a funerary complex, which included, besides structures depicted in Hytrek’s plan (fig. 3), also a triconchal martyrium and a small single-aisled basilica with apse, identified

conditionally as a chapel.³⁴ However, R. Popović, publishing in 1995 the report about the excavations at the necropolis of St. Sinerotes (with the remark that these are other Christian finds in Sirmium about which he would write later,³⁵ but never did), considered Hytrek’s plan to be the drawing of cult structures at the north cemetery and identified them as basilicas of St. Sinerotes and St. Anastasia.³⁶ Then M. Jeremić, after

³⁰ Milošević 1961a, 75.

³¹ Popović V. 1969, 674, ref. 26.

³² Duval 1979, 84.

³³ Popović V. 1982, 545–556; Popović V. 1987, 95–122; Поповић В. 1998, 43–56.

³⁴ Јеремић 2004, 54–58; Јеремић 2006, 124–128.

³⁵ Hytrek 1894, 10, t. II.

³⁶ Поповић Р. 2004, 42.

Fig. 3. Disposition of cult objects around the city forum:

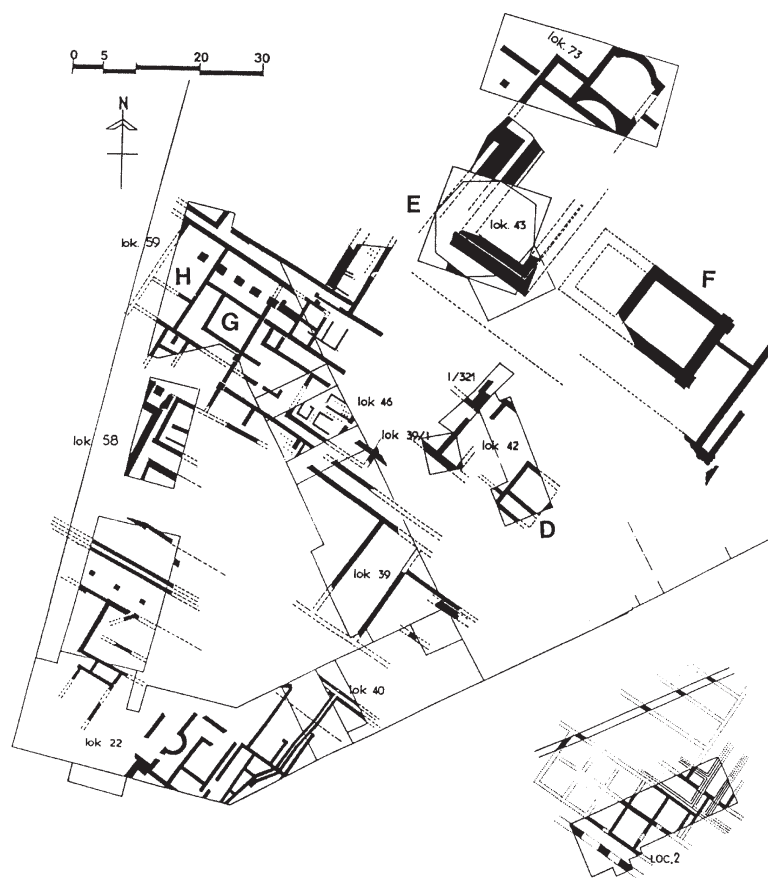
G – basilica of St. Demetrius,
F – pagan temple on top
of the had been erected?

(after: Jeremić 2008, 195, Fig. 40)

Сл. 3. Распоред кулћних објеката
око градској форуми:

G – базилика св. Димитрија,
F – пагански храм изнад кога
је подигнута црква?

(према: Jeremić 2008, 195, Fig. 40)



analyzing architectural remains of presumed pagan temples in Sirmium, has demonstrated in 2008 that the city basilica (locality 59), identified as the basilica of St. Demetrius, had been built on top of the ruins of some pagan temple, so he assumed that a Christian cult object (fig. 4) was also erected on top of the remains of a neighboring structure (locality 47), identifying it, with argumentation with a pagan temple. In two Christian temples built in the immediate vicinity M. Jeremić recognizes the basilicas of St. Demetrius and St. Anastasia, in accordance with the data from written sources that Leontius built the basilica of St. Demetrius near the basilica of St. Anastasia, but leaves open the question which of these two temples was dedicated to Him or Her.³⁷ As graves with humble grave goods (bone combs, iron knives and buckles) have been encountered at localities 59 and 47, around 60 meters far from each other and at nearby locality 46, I. Popović concluded, after analyzing the material, that these are approximately contemporary graves of the urban population, which, facing the Hunnic threat, started to bury their dead *intra muros*, but, due to the resemblance of

funerary structures and grave goods, nothing indicates the existence of two distinct necropolises.³⁸

Our short summary of available theories about possible locations of the basilicas of St. Demetrius and St. Anastasia in Sirmium (fig. 5) confirms the interest which this problem has kindled among the scholars, but also the difficulties surrounding the identification of

³⁷ Jeremić 2008, 194–196.

³⁸ Popović I. 2012, 113–135.

³⁹ Popović V. 1982, 553.

⁴⁰ Dimitrijević, Kovačević, Vinski 1962, 93, T. III, 1; Mrkobrad 1980, 41–43, T. XXXIV, 10; Demo 1994, No. 123. According to the information obtained from Pavle Popović, curator-numismatist in the Museum of Srem in Sremska Mitrovica these coins were not returned to the Museum after having been displayed at the exhibition *Seoba naroda. Arheološki nalazi jugoslovenskog Podunavlja*, organized in 1962 in the National Museum in Zemun.

⁴¹ Demo 1981, 455, 461–463; Demo 1994, 12–13, 61–62, Nos. 71, 74, 76, 80, 124, 194, 195.

⁴² Stefan 1925, 1–12; Meihner 1968, 53–54, Demo 1994, 195, Nos. 77, 81, 126.

the structures when there is no epigraphic evidence but only scarce and insufficiently precise data in written sources. On the other hand, we assume that the inscription published here should be taken as epigraphic evidence confirming the existence of the basilica of St. Anastasia in Sirmium, but we do not know from which location in the city it comes from. Therefore, in an attempt to locate the basilica of the Sirmium martyr, we would start with the already mentioned remark in the work of V. Popović, the greatest expert in archaeological remains of Sirmium. Namely, speaking about the reduction of the Sirmium urban territory at the beginning of the 5th century, which he had documented by mapping the finds of coins minted in 425/55, he concluded that the center of the city shifted southward, towards the Sava river, considering that most of coins minted between 423 and 455 have been found in the zone of the city basilica built in the first quarter of the 5th century (fig. 6). On the same occasion he claimed that “we are surprised by the find of three Ostrogothic coins in the vicinity of north wall; their discovery in this section of the city could be explained by existence

of cult place of St. Anastasia that would be confirmed by one still unpublished inscription”.³⁹ The author most probably had in mind just the inscription we are publishing in this article. When the finds of Ostrogothic coins are concerned, one Theodoric’s silver quarter siliqua, minted in Sirmium between the years 518 and 526 in name of Justin I, was discovered in 1960 in the debris near the Roman building with mosaic floors at locality 21 in Sirmium, situated next to the north city wall.⁴⁰ In the numismatic collection of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb there are seven specimens of Ostrogothic coins minted in Sirmium and six of them come from various sites in Srem and Slavonia, while one Athalaric’s quarter siliqua minted in the name of Justinian I was found in Sremska Mitrovica, but at an unknown location.⁴¹ The coin collection of the same museum also includes three Theodoric’s quarter siliquae, also minted in Sirmium and with information that they were found in Srem or in northern Serbia.⁴² Nevertheless, as many as five Theodoric’s quarter siliquae found in Sremska Mitrovica are kept in the numismatic cabinet of the National Museum in Ljubljana

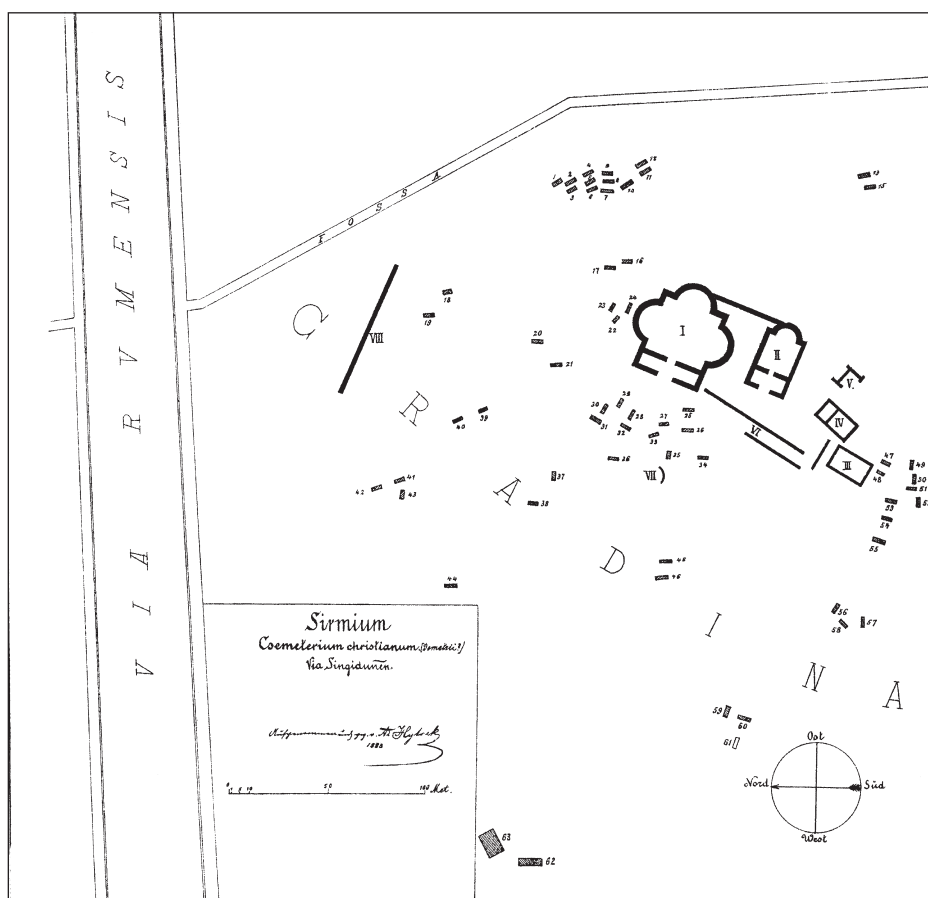


Fig. 4. Cult structures at the site “Gradina” or “Rimsko groblje” at the east necropolis (after: Hytrek 1894, Plan II)

Сл. 4. Култни објекти на локалитету „Градина“ или „Римско гробље“ на источној некрополи (према: Hytrek 1894, Plan II)

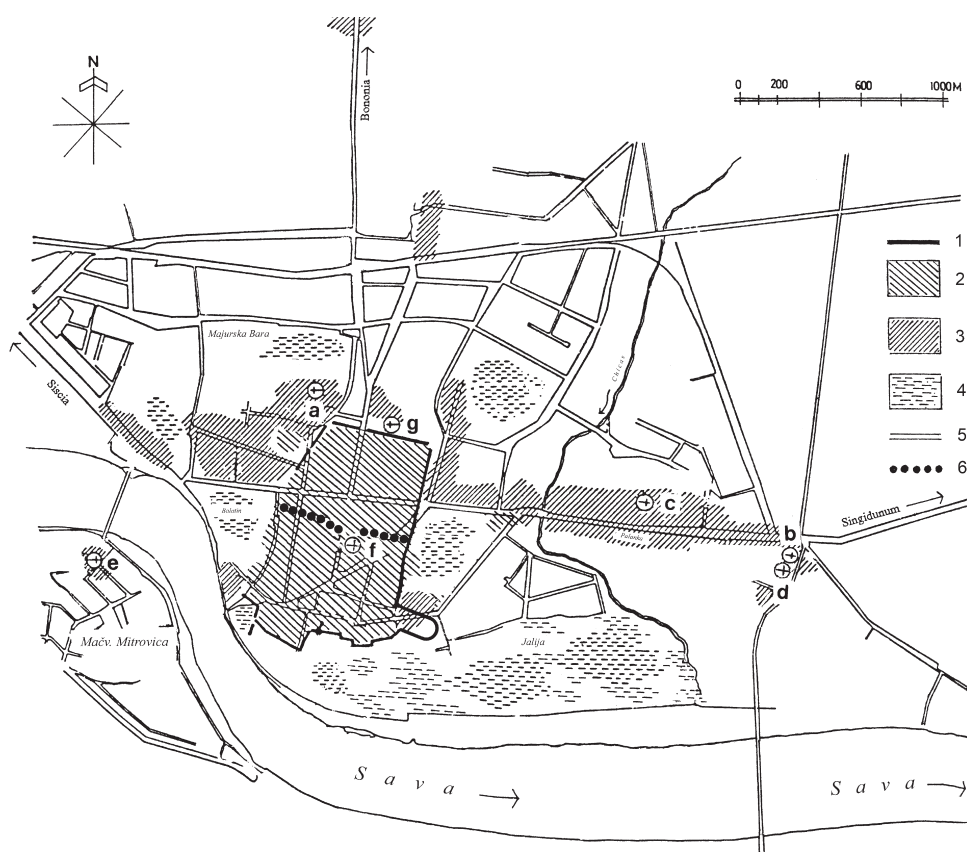


Fig. 5. Early Christian cult structures in Sirmium: a) basilica of St. Sinerotes; b, d) triconchal martyrium and chapel; c) basilica of St. Irenaeus; e) martyrium (of St. Irenaeus?); f) city church (of St. Demetrius?); g) church discovered and destroyed in the 19th century (of St. Anastasia?); 1) rampart; 2) settlement; 3) necropolises; 4) marshes; 5) streets; 6) assumed line of the inner rampart (after: Jeremić 2006, Fig. 1, with addition of church g)

Сл. 5. Ранохришћански култни објекти Сирмијума: а) базилика светије Синејота; б, д) триконхални мартиријум и капела; с) базилика светије Иринеја; е) мартиријум (светије Иринеја?); ф) градска црква (светије Димитрија?); г) црква откривена и уништена у XIX веку (св. Анастасије?); 1) бедем; 2) насеље; 3) некрополе; 4) мочваре; 5) улице; б) претпостављена линија унутрашњег бедема (према: Jeremić 2006, Fig. 1, са додатоком цркве г)

and four of them had been minted in Sirmium and one at the Mediolanum mint.⁴³ We do not know whether V. Popović was informed that the three coins from this group have been found in the vicinity of the northern Sirmium wall or he had in mind some coins, which did not reach museum collections,⁴⁴ as in his plan⁴⁵ (fig. 6) three Ostrogothic coins are mapped to the east of locality 21 and to the north of localities 50–53, where the remains of residential structures and wall of the northern city rampart have been recorded in the course of excavations conducted in 1973–1975.⁴⁶

Connecting the finds of Ostrogothic coins and the basilica of St. Anastasia is utterly in accordance with the above mentioned data, which bear witness that the

cult of Anastasia spread in the Gothic milieu and that the Goths, by all appearances, accepted the martyr as their patron and transferred her cult from Sirmium to

⁴³ Demo 1994, 56, 185, Nos. 2, 70, 72, 78, 122.

⁴⁴ According to the information, for which I am very grateful to Dr. Željko Demo from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, the collection of the numismatist-collector Dr. Ivo Meisner contains three quarter siliquae found in Sremska Mitrovica. Unfortunately, we could not be certain whether these are three Ostrogothic coins mentioned by V. Popović.

⁴⁵ Popović V. 1982, 556, Abb. 12.

⁴⁶ Milošević 1994, 38–39.

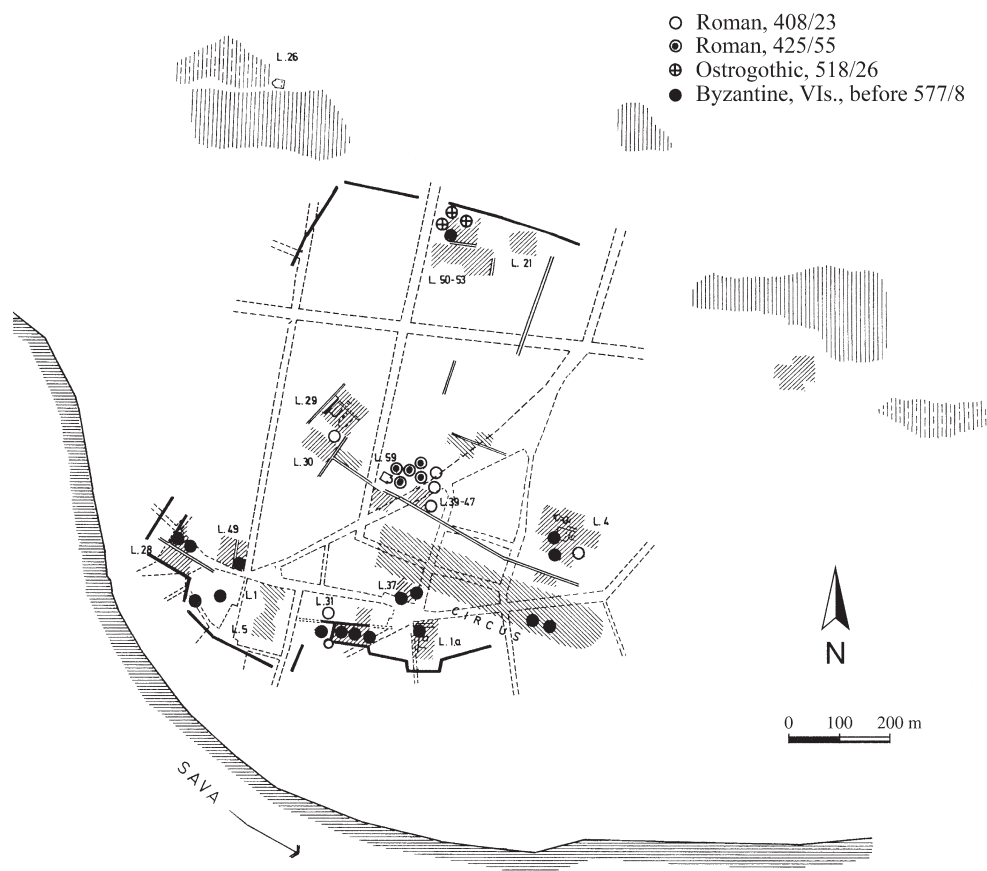


Fig. 6. Finds of coins from the 5th and 6th centuries in Sirmium (after: Popović V. 1987, 122, Abb. 6)

Сл. 6. Налази новца V и VI века у Сирмијуму (према: Поповић V. 1987, 122, Abb. 6)

Constantinople and also to Ravenna. After all, the relics of St. Anastasia were transferred from Sirmium to Constantinople in 468/70, at the time when the Ostrogoths, after the fall of Hunnic state in 454 and an arrangement with the emperor Martian, settled in central and southern Pannonia and took on the defense of Roman frontier from other tribes. They successfully protected Pannonia first of all from the Suebi, but also from the remaining Huns. The tribe of the Sadagi, living around Sirmium, was probably of Hunnic descent. However, if the court in Constantinople did not pay tribute, the Ostrogoths raided Illyricum. As a guarantee that they would observe the agreement with the Empire, they sent sons of their leaders to Constantinople and among them was Theodoric, son of their leader Thiudimer. Young Theodoric, met in Constantinople the military commander Aspar, who restored the church of St. Anastasia, and was very much impressed by him. He was allowed to return home around 470 and joined his

father as ruler in 471. Around AD 472 Ostrogoths left Pannonia and a group of them under Vithimer invaded Italy.⁴⁷ These historical circumstances greatly favored the spreading of the cult of St. Anastasia first to Constantinople, where her relics had been transferred probably to be protected from barbarian invasions and pillaging, and then to Ravenna, the center of Theodoric's state.

If we accept that Ostrogothic coins found next to the northern Sirmium rampart indicate the possibility that the basilica of St. Anastasia had been located in that city zone, the question could be asked where it was actually situated. Archaeological excavations reveal the residential character of the localities where Ostrogothic coins have been found. However, the martyrium was

⁴⁷ Stein 1969, 356–357.

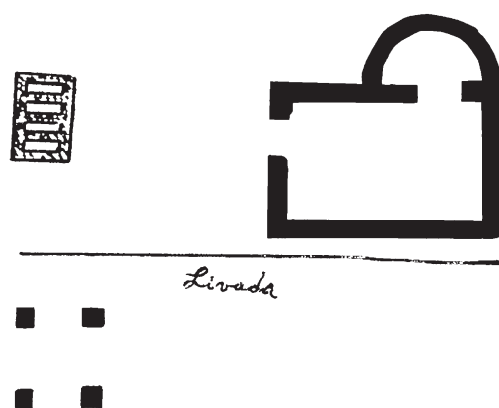


Fig. 7. Ground plan of the martyrion discovered in the 19th century next to the northern city wall (plan of I. Jung after: Milošević 2001, figure on page 183, bottom)

Сл. 7. Основа мартѿирија откритеној у XIX веку уз северни градски бедем (план И. Јунга према: Милошевић 2001, сл. на сѿтр. 183 доле)

discovered at the end of 19th century to the north of them and against the external side of the northern rampart, but it was later destroyed. There is an information, preserved in the letters of I. Jung, that in 1878–1880 the foundations of a rectangular chapel with an apse had been excavated probably in the east side. The structure had been built of stone, but the material was immediately carried off. Approximately 300 tombs, lead and stone sarcophagi were discovered around that structure in the 19th century. One stone sarcophagus, decorated probably with Christian symbols, was transferred to the chapel at the Mitrovica catholic cemetery. In the plan presented by Jung (fig. 7) there are four tombs in front of the chapel entrance.⁴⁸ Archaeological excavations in this area (locality 60), carried out in 1979, have revealed the remains of destroyed graves and unearthened sarcophagi. The graves were mostly oriented in N–S direction and in two instances both arms of a skeleton were placed on the pelvis.⁴⁹

The assumption that the martyrion at locality 60 could be identified with the basilica of St. Anastasia is based on proximity between this location and localities where the Ostrogothic coins were found (fig. 6), but also on the already proposed thesis that, after the disintegration of the Hunnic state in 454, various tribes, including the Ostrogoths, who were engaged in protecting Pannonia from other barbarians, lived in the vicinity of Sirmium.⁵⁰ It is possible that the martyrion

of the saint who through time became the patron of the Goths was located on the northern city periphery. It remains to be seen whether the discovery of four cross-arranged horse heads and a large quantity of fragmented lids of pottery vessels, recorded in 1961 next to locality 21,⁵¹ where Ostrogothic coins were found, could be related to the remains of Huns, possibly the Sadagi tribe, with whom the Ostrogoths came into conflict by the end of sixth decade of the 5th century.⁵² Was the danger of plundering raids of these barbarians the reason for transferring the relics of St. Anastasia from Sirmium to Constantinople?

If the assumption about the possible location of the cult place dedicated to St. Anastasia next to northern rampart is correct, the confusion in the text of Passion of St. Demetrius could be easily explained. Namely, the text mentions that Leontius crossed the booming Danube River (τοῦ Δανουβίου ποταμοῦ καχλάζοντος τῷ ρεύματι) before arriving in Sirmium. Already the editor of the Passion of St. Demetrius noticed that it was not necessary to cross the Danube on the way from Thessalonica to Sirmium and suggested that Leontius possibly first went from Thessalonica to Dacia and then to Sirmium.⁵³ But, as he already stayed in Dacia where he fell ill and then St. Demetrius cured him on his return to Thessalonica, this thesis does not seem plausible. On the other hand, quoting this fragment from the Passion, V. Popović thinks that the anonymous compiler of the text meant the Sava river,⁵⁴ quoting the opinion of P. Lemerle that the rivers Danube and Sava are frequently confused in written sources.⁵⁵ But, if Leontius, starting from Thessalonica, took the land route through the valleys of Vardar and Morava, he could have, upon his arrival in Singidunum, continued along the usual navigable route by the Danube and reached Bononia, the northern harbor of Sirmium. So, he “could have crossed the booming Danube” and entered the city from the north via the road connecting Bononia and Sirmium. Thus, on his entering the city he first saw the church of St. Anastasia so this could

⁴⁸ Милошевић 2001, 172–173, fig. on page 183 bottom.

⁴⁹ Miladinović-Radmilović 2011, 310.

⁵⁰ Mirković 2006, 101.

⁵¹ Milošević 1961 b, 85–86.

⁵² Mirković 2006, 101.

⁵³ PG 116, 1183, nap. 22.

⁵⁴ Popović V. 1987, 97, ref. 6.

⁵⁵ Lemerle II 1981, 201, ref. 20.

explain the quotation from the Passion that he built the new basilica dedicated to St. Demetrius in the vicinity of the existing temple of St. Anastasia, that he noticed previously. Of course, all reflections on the direction of Leontius' journey and the location of the church of St. Anastasia in Sirmium must remain in the domain of hypothesis, due to the lack of more precise data.

As the comprehensive analysis of written sources, archaeological, epigraphic and numismatic material has revealed, Leontius could have built the basilica of St. Demetrius in Sirmium only after yielding this city to the Eastern Empire, most probably in 424 or 425 and it means that the church was consecrated in 426.⁵⁶ Considering the information from the Passion that Leontius built his church in Sirmium in the vicinity of the existing church of St. Anastasia, the year AD 426 could be the *terminus ante quem* for its construction. Considering the increasing danger of the Hunnic invasion and the general disintegration of the city at the beginning of 5th century, the church dedicated to the Sirmium martyr was probably built in the period between the third decade and the end of the 4th century, approximately at the same time when the martyrdom of St. Sinerotes was built at the north city cemetery and the martyrdom of St. Irenaeus at the east cemetery.

After all, the formula *in domo (?) beatissimae dominae nostrae Anastasiae*, that is presumably recorded in our inscription, has good parallels in formulas *in basilica domini nostri Ereni*,⁵⁷ from the inscription in the basilica of St. Irenaeus, and in *ad dominum Synerotem*⁵⁸ as well as *ad beatu Syneroti*,⁵⁹ from two inscriptions in the basilica of St. Sinerotes. On the other hand, the inscription from the basilica of St. Irenaeus records that a certain *Macedonius* erected the plate together with his wife *Ammes*, daughter of *Evenatus*. The two latter names suggest an eastern origin of the family.⁶⁰ *Artemidora*, the woman mentioned in the inscription from the basilica of St. Sinerotes, was by all appearances of Greek origin. Unfortunately, in the inscription we are discussing in this paper, the names of the deceased and of the person who set up the monument are not preserved.

Despite all the perplexities resulting from the fragmentary character of our inscription and the necessity to eventually locate the church of St. Anastasia using indirect evidence, we hope that this paper contributed to our knowledge about the cult structures in Sirmium. The inscription from the Museum of Srem seems to confirm the data from written sources and we have suggested a possible location of the church of the martyr Anastasia.

⁵⁶ Popović V. 1982, 548–550; Popović V., 1987, 95–122; Поповић В. 1998, 43–56.

⁵⁷ Duval 1979, 83–84, fig. 6; Поповић В. 2003, 262, сл. 2.

⁵⁸ *CIL* III, 10233.

⁵⁹ *CIL* III, 10232.

⁶⁰ Jarak 2011, 61.

ABBREVIATIONS:

AA SS	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i>
AE	<i>L'année épigraphique</i> , Paris
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
ILCV	E. Diehl, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres</i> I–III, Berolini 1961.
ILJug	A. Šašel–J. Šašel, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMXL et MCMLX repertae et editae sunt</i> , Ljubljana, 1986.
OPEL	<i>Onomasticon provinciarum Europae Laitnarum</i> I–IV.
PG	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i> (J.P. Migne, éd., <i>Patrologia Graeca</i> , Paris 1960)

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Резиме:

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НОВИ НАТПИС ИЗ СИРМИЈУМА И БАЗИЛИКА СВ. АНАСТАСИЈЕ

Кључне речи. – Сирмијум, рано хришћанство, мученици, Св. Анастасија, натпис, базилика.

У Музеју Срема у Сремској Митровици чува се једна оштећена мермерна плоча са натписом на латинском језику (сл. 1). Иако натпис није у потпуности сачуван, мишљења смо да се у њему помиње базилика Св. Анастасије, о чијем постојању у Сирмијуму сведочи податак из писаних извора. Текст натписа могао би се реконструисати на следећи начин:

[In dom]o beati[ssimae - - - | - - - - -]re Anast[asiae - - - | - - - in] hoc loco d[epositus - - - | - - -]x qui conv[ixit mecum annis - - - | - - -] qui vixit a[nnis - - - | - - -] filio eius d[ie] pridie [- - - | - - -] T Fl[avius, -avia] Decen[- - - | - - -]++[- - - | - - -].

На почетку натписа се помиње базилика Св. Анастасије, чије је постојање у Сирмијуму посведочено у ранохришћанским литерарним изворима. Термин *domus* у значењу „црква” релативно је чест у ранохришћанским натписима. Прва два реда могла би се допунити на следећи начин: [In dom]o beati[ssimae dominae nostr]ae Anast[asiae - - -]. После формуле *in hoc loco depositus* у другом реду следило је име покојника, које се вероватно завршавало словом Х, првим сачуваним словом у четвртном реду. Заједно са покојником је, изгледа, био сахрањен и његов син, чије име није сачувано. На њега би се односила формула *qui vixit annis* у петом реду. Судајући према палеографским одликама, фрагмент натписа на којем се помиње базилика Св. Анастасије припада добу позне антике (IV–VI век). Слово А са попречном цртом сломљеном на доле и слово L са косо спуштеном другом цртом јављају се крајем III и почетком IV века.

Расправе о могућој локацији базилике Св. Анастасије у Сирмијуму и евентуалној идентификацији постојећих кулних места са њом у стручној литератури трају од друге половине XIX века до данашњих дана (сл. 3–5). Наиме, у *Passio altera Sancti Demetrii Thessalonicensis*, помиње се да је он, пошто је у Солуну подигао цркву посвећену Св. Димитрију, желео да такву сагради и у Илирику, па је, дошавши у Сирмијум, ковчег са окрвављеном свечевом хламидом и деловима његовог орарија одложио у пресветом храму светог мученика Димитрија (сл. 2), који је он основао у близини поштованог дома (= цркве) славодобне мученице Ана-

стасије (πλησίον τοῦ σεβασμίτου οἰκίου τῆς καλλινίκου μάρτυρος Ἀναστασίας). Не зна се на којој је локацији у Сирмијуму откривена плоча са натписом, а на основу налаза остроготског новца уз северни градски бедем (сл. 6), претпоставља се да се базилика Св. Анастасије налазила у овој градској регији, будући да су Остроготи веома поштовали Мученицу. Могуће је да је реч о мартријуму наслоњеном уз северни градски бедем, откопаном и затим уништеном крајем XIX века (сл. 7).

Како је исцрпна анализа писаних извора, археолошког, епиграфског и нумизматичког материјала показала, Леонтијева градња базилике Св. Димитрија у Сирмијуму могла је да се догоди тек после уступања овог града Источном царству, највероватније 424. или 425. године, што би значило да је црква освећена 426. године. Следствено податку из Пасије да је Леонтије у Сирмијуму своју цркву саградио у близини цркве Св. Анастасије, која је, дакле, већ постојала, година 426. означавала би *terminus ante quem* за њену градњу. С обзиром на растућу опасност од надирања Хуна и општу дезинтеграцију града почетком V века, црква посвећена сирмијумској мученици вероватно је подигнута у периоду између треће деценије и краја IV века, приближно у исто време када и мартрији Св. Синерота на северном и Св. Иринеја на источном градском гробљу. Уосталом, формула *in domo (?) beatissimae dominae nostrae Anastasiae*, која се среће на натпису, добре паралеле налази у формулама *in basilica domini nostri Ereni*, са натписа из базилике Св. Иринеја, и *ad dominum Synerotem*, односно *ad beatu Syneroti*, са два натписа из базилике Св. Синерота.

Уз све недоумице које доноси фрагментарност натписа о којем је у овом тексту било речи, али и уз неопходност да се евентуално лоцирање цркве Св. Анастасије у Сирмијуму изведе посредним путем, па да, стога, остане у домену хипотезе, надамо се да је овај рад допринео бољем познавању кулних грађевина Сирмијума, макар у погледу потврде податка из писаног извора да је у овом граду постојала црква мученице Анастасије.