

ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTS FROM CALLATIS. NEW DISCOVERIES OF DORIC ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract: Eight Doric architectural fragments have been discovered recently in a rescue excavation campaign in Mangalia, re-used in the structure of an Early Christian cist grave. Their stylistic and morphological characteristics suggest a provenance from the same monument or built environment as the other two known fragments of architrave-friezes, incorporated in the permanent exhibition of the Archaeological Museum of Callatis. The inventory of fastening cuttings and tool traces indicated several hypothesis regarding their assemblage and preliminary observations on the architectural characteristics of the provenance monument. The discovery of this homogenous group of architectural blocks thus confirms and strengthens the perspective of an important Hellenistic Doric monument or architectural ensemble in Callatis, supporting the older hypothesis regarding a dominant presence of the Doric in the left Pontus cities.

Rezumat: Un număr de opt fragmente arhitectonice de ordin doric au fost descoperite recent în urma săpăturilor de salvare din Mangalia, re-folosite în ansamblul unui mormânt de tip cistă paleocreștin. Caracteristicile de ordin stilistic și morfologic indică faptul că aceste piese provin din cadrul aceleiași monument sau ambient arhitectural cu celelalte două frize arhitravate cunoscute, păstrate în expoziția permanentă a Muzeului de Arheologie Mangalia, a căror context de descoperire fusese la acel moment necunoscut. Urmele de montare și de prelucrare conservate au permis formularea unor ipoteze privind asamblarea acestor piese și a unor observații preliminare privind caracteristicile arhitecturale ale monumentului din care provin. Descoperirea acestui grup omogen de fragmente arhitecturale confirmă și întărește perspectiva prezenței unui important edificiu sau ansamblu arhitectural doric în Callatis, sprijinind o ipoteză mai veche privind o prezență dominantă a doricului în cetățile Pontului Stâng.

Ten Doric architectural fragments have been discovered incorporated in a cist grave structure from an Early Christian burial complex found in Callatis, with the occasion of a rescue archaeological excavation.¹ Three fragments covered the grave, while other seven composed the side walls of the grave. According to the photographs recording the state of the discovery (Fig. 1),² their surfaces were most probably lime washed during this secondary use, as they all had a whitish colour on their surface (most probably a protective measure against water erosion). The current state of the blocks, exposed in the Callatis Archaeological Museum areas, has underwent various cleaning processes, therefore the lime wash layer is not visible anymore, but there can still be noticed a fine layer of coating on the frontal and resting surface, possibly a reminiscence of the original finishing, a fine coating of stucco.

The group of eight yellowish limestone blocks analysed as follows can be grouped into three types of pieces: five fragments representing architrave frieze blocks, two narrow fragments representing half-triglyph blocks, carved most probably for a subsequent repair phase, and one limestone Doric Mutulary geison. No architrave-frieze fragment is complete, as they are all broken at one end, the same applying to the cornice. The two repair fragments preserve both side surfaces intact.

The architrave-frieze blocks represent a type of Doric entablature which combines in the same block the architrave and the frieze, generally dated earliest in the fourth century B.C (Figs. 2-6).³ Another two

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¹ Ionescu *et alii* 2018 [in this journal]; Ionescu *et alii* 2016, pp. 172, 534-540. The structure of the cist grave comprised 10 lime stone blocks, of which only eight have been accessible for the present study. The other two, also showing similar signs of treatment (tools, surface treatment, dowel and cramp cuttings), have not been yet exposed. The cist graves uncovered and belonging to this late antique necropolis have a similar structural pattern, using limestone slabs and plaques as side walls and grave covers, especially for the more elaborate structures, some of them showing traces of precincts.

² Ionescu *et alii* 2016, p. 540. I would here like to warmly thank archaeologist Robert Constantin, who kindly offered me all the necessary documentary information and indicated access to the preserved architectural pieces, otherwise scattered in various places, and hardly accessible.

³ Winter 2006, p. 68, its appearance is dated earliest in the fourth century or as a Hellenistic innovation. For a summary discussion regarding this type of blocks, see also Ginouvès 1992, pp. 110-111, n. 442, “frise architravée” (French). The reasons for carving both the architrave and the frieze in the same block have been searched both in the area of utility in execution and production, but also as a method for amplifying the appearance of the epistyle, whose section therefore becomes larger.